

KUWAIT: Varieties of Registration Handstamps & Labels 1915-1948

The post office officially opened in Kuwait on Jan 21, 1915. It was under the Indian Post administration and became one of its subsidiaries. Kuwait Mail service was given the privilege of using Indian mail fares, which was very useful for merchants who used local mail fares with India and other Gulf countries. Accordingly, Indian stamps were used along with other postal stationary. Indian handstamps were in use including outgoing mail, which was used on stamps, incoming mail used on letters, underpaid mail, registration ones in addition to registration labels.

Scope: The Exhibit review is categorized according to varieties of Registration Handstamps their chronical use and the varieties of registration labels used under Indian Administration from 1915 to 1948.

The first period 1915-1923:

This extends from launching the post office on January 21, 1915, until April, 1923 a period during which two registration handstamps were used bearing the French spelling of 'Kuwait'; 'Koweit'.

- **Type 1:** A large square handstamp bearing the word 'Kuwait' and the letter 'R'. it was brought from India post office and was in use for two years.
- **Type 2:** This handstamp was in use after 1918. It is similar to the ones used by the British Occupation's civil administration in Mesopotamia.

The second period 1923-1941:

This period lasted for 18 years during which three forms of bilingual (Arabic-English) registration handstamps were used. It witnessed a variety of registration label forms but sometimes there was a lack in labels and thus, they were directly stamped on covers.

- **Type 3:** It was the first bilingual (English/Arabic) handstamp, which was used for a short period. According to its shape, it appears that it had been hastily designed as the Arabic word 'Kuwait' was so frail and inconsistent with the name in English.
- **Type 4:** It was designed following some improvement. It was a small handstamp suitable for use on registration labels. In some rare case cases, it was traced used a 'The Postmaster' handstamp.
- **Types 5:** It was simultaneously designed with the previous type but was larger bearing the word 'Kuwait' in both Arabic and English. It was also used a postmaster handstamp on covers ordered by philatelists and on official documents.

The third period: May-Sep 1941:

This was a short and critical period for Kuwait post office as the postmaster had left taking away all postal and registration handstamps. Temporary, alternative ones sent from India post office were sent and used. They were known as 'The experimental handstamps'.

- **Type 6 & 7:** Following full transition to Indian post administration, and in view of the lack of a registration handstamp, an experimental handstamp was immediately used.

The fourth period 1941-1948:

Only one registration handstamp was used during this period but there was a variety in registration labels before they became rare and were substituted by V.P. registration labels in some cases and direct stamps on covers in others.

- **Types 8:** It was the last Indian handstamp used. It was used on registration labels and, sometimes, on direct mail whenever registration labels were unavailable.

Reference: -

Donaldson, Neil: The Postal in Eastern Arabia and Gulf; Harry Hayes Philatelic Study, 1975. & (Supplement) 1994.

Abdul-Mughni, Khaled: Beginning of Postal Services in Kuwait (1896-1922), in Arabic, Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 2012. (Published by The Exhibitor).

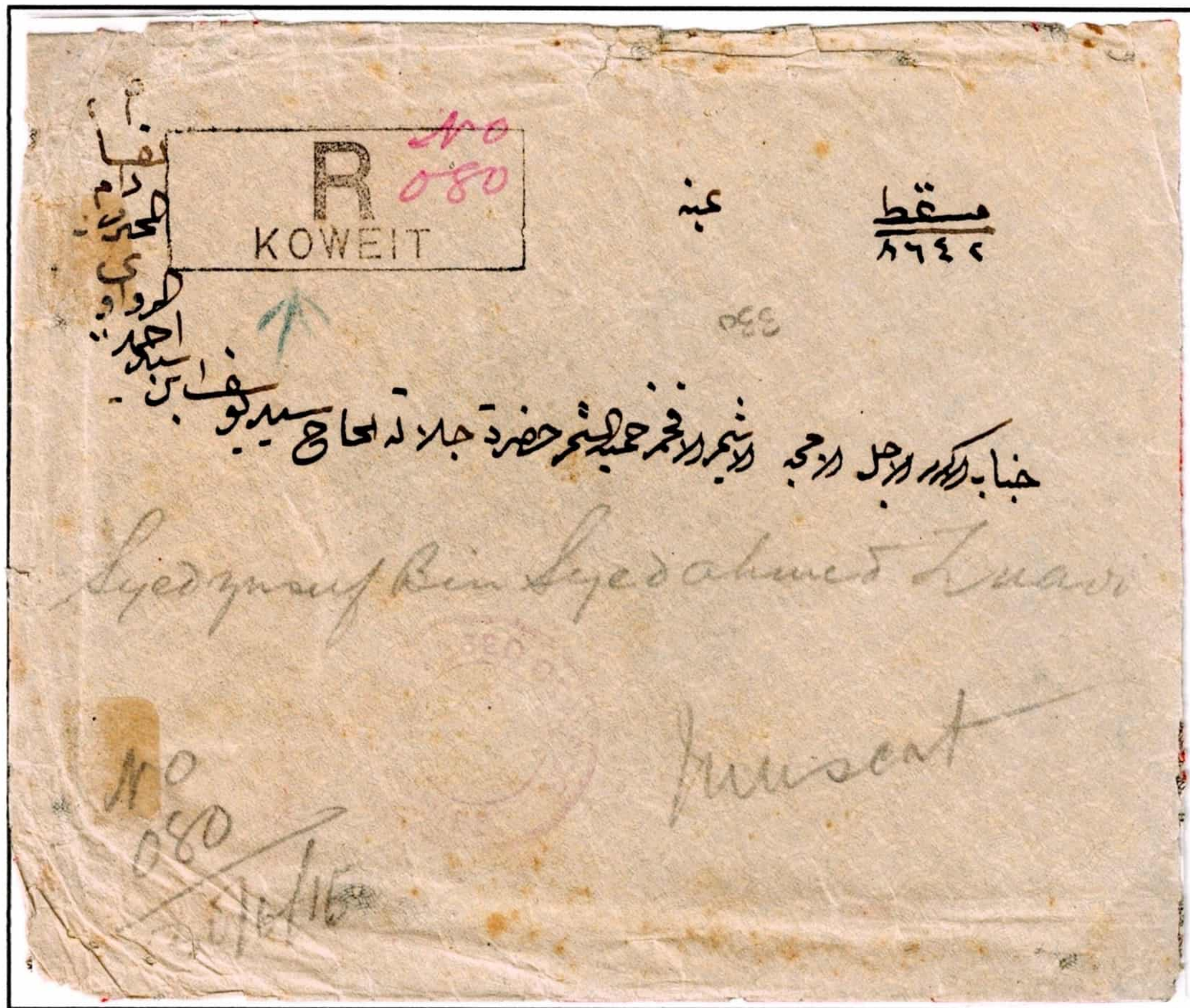
Type 1 : 1915-1923
"R/KOWEIT" Boxed Handstamp



Earliest Usage: 18-Feb-1915 - **Latest Usage:** 29-Nov-1916

The Kuwait Post Office opened (21st Jan 1915) and Cancellor bearing the French form of name "KOWEIT" were utilized, Killer Cancel for Outward Mail, used of Indian stamps without overprint. Indian Inland & Imperial Penny Postage Rates.

Found in 4 covers only



1916 (Jun. 30) A registered cover from Kuwait to Muscat, Oman (Jul. 13) on the back bearing "KOWEIT" cancel, franked 2½as. to pay ½as. surface postage and 2as. registration fee, sent by sea mail via Bombay-Karach steam ship.

"R/KOWEIT" Boxed Registration Handstamp (Type 1) endorsed in red with "NO 080".

Type 2: 1915 - 1923
"KOWEIT" Boxed Handstamp

KOWEIT

Earliest Usage: 18-Feb-1918 - **Latest Usage:** 29-Apr-1923

"KOWEIT" Boxed Registration Handstamp (Type 2) used on blank numbered registration labels.

Found in 4 covers only



1922 (Dec. 5) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bushier (Dec. 9), on the back bearing "KOWEIT" cancel, franked 10as. to pay ½as. surface postage and 2as. registration fee, sent by sea mail via Bombay-Karach steam ship.

Type 3: 1923 - 1925
Small Unboxed Handstamp

KUWAIT
كويت

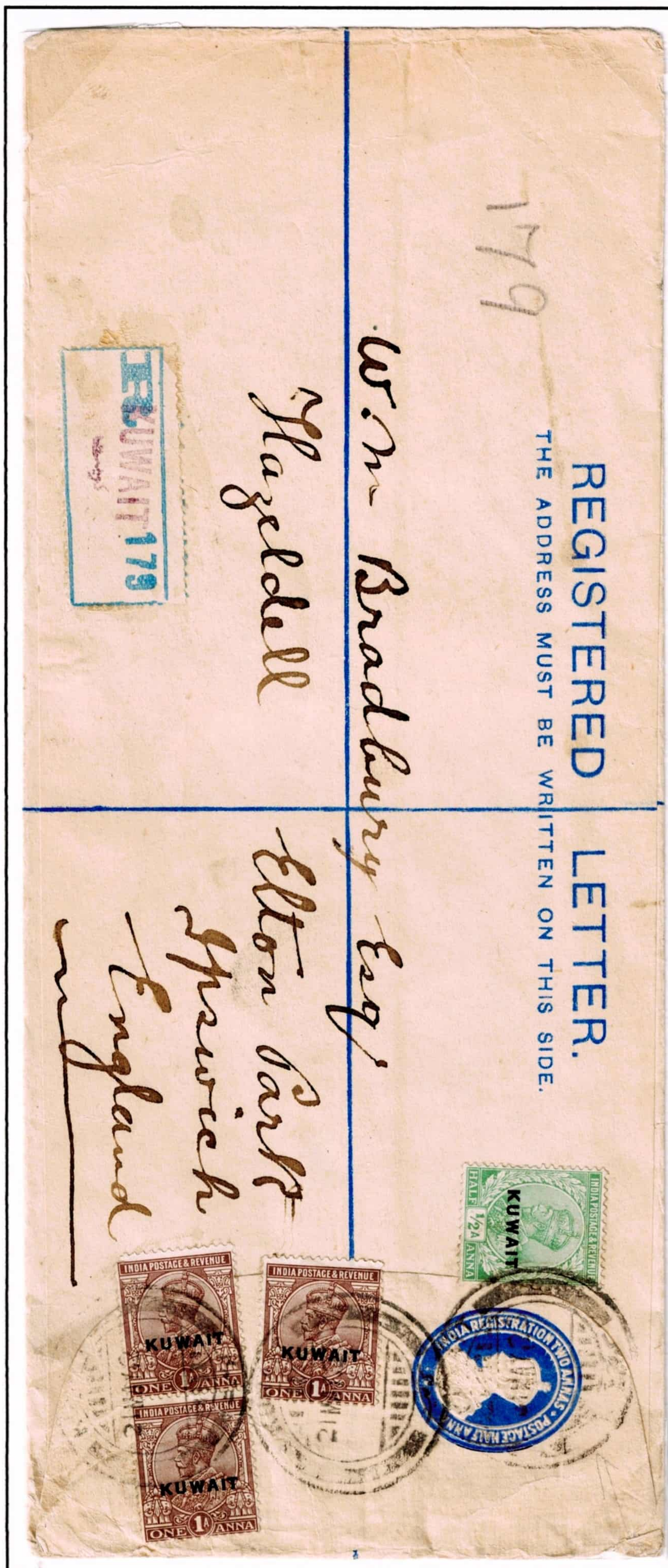
Earliest Usage: 7 -Apr-1923 - **Latest Usage:** 9 -May-1925

Less than 5 covers have been found

On 1/4/1923 KGV stamps overprinted with KUWAIT were issued as the first group for Kuwait and cancellers with the new name (bilingual Kuwait/ كويت) were utilized.

1923 (May. 21) A 2½ as Large registered letter from Kuwait to Ipswich, England, bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/كويت" Cancel instead "REG" cancel up-rated by 3½as. (total 6as. = 3as. surface postage and 3as. registration fee).

Unboxed registration with handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic in Purple, applied to a blank registration label.



Type 4: 1923 - 1941
Unboxed Handstamp

KUWAIT

كويت

Earliest Usage: 15 -Apr-1924 - **Latest Usage:** -Jan -1941

A registration unboxed handstamp with "Kuwait" stamp written in English and Arabic, applied to a blank numbered registration labels.

1923 (May. 21) A ½as. Smal registered letter from Kuwait to Ipswich, England, bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/كويت" "REG"cancel up-rated by 5½as.on back siede (total 6as. = 3as. surface postage and 3as. registration fee).

Uboxed registration with handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, applied to a blank numbered registration label.

To pay the 3as surface postage and 3as registration fee.



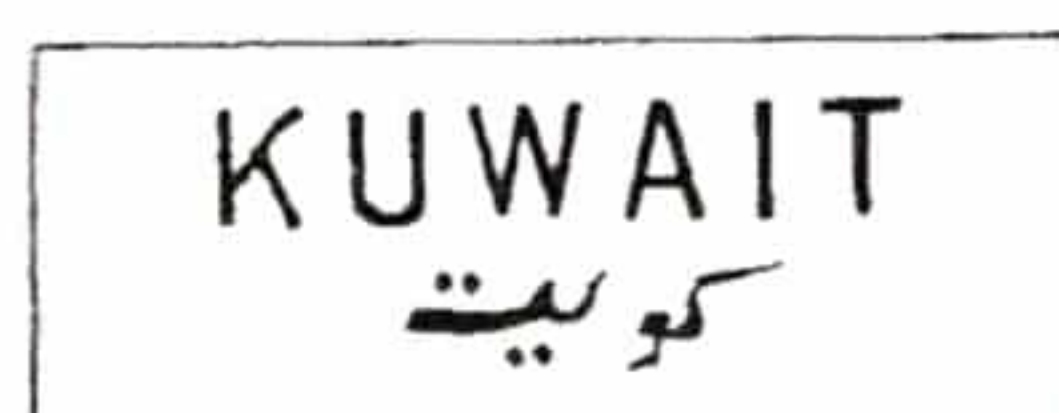
1925 (Jun. 30) A registered cover from Kuwait to Trieste, Italy (Jul. 21), via Port Said, Egypt (Jul. 14) by overland bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/كويت" "REG" cancel, franked 9½as.

Unboxed handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic applied to a blank numbered registration label.

Franked 9 as to pay 3as surface postage and 3as for overland fee & 3as registration fee.



Type 5: 1923 - 1941
Large Boxed Handstamp



Earliest Usage: 11-Aug-1925 **Latest Usage:** 28-Apr-1941

A new 'Large' boxed handstamp which was used on blank numbered registered labels and sometimes on the cover directly.

'Large' boxed handstamp
 'KUWAIT' in English and
 Arabic .

1929 (Oct. 29) A registered cover
 from Kuwait to California, USA (Nov.
 26), bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/
 كويت" "REG" cancel, and registration
 label with Large boxed handstamp
 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic.

To pay the 3as. surface postage
 and 3as. registration fee.
 (½a. overpaid)



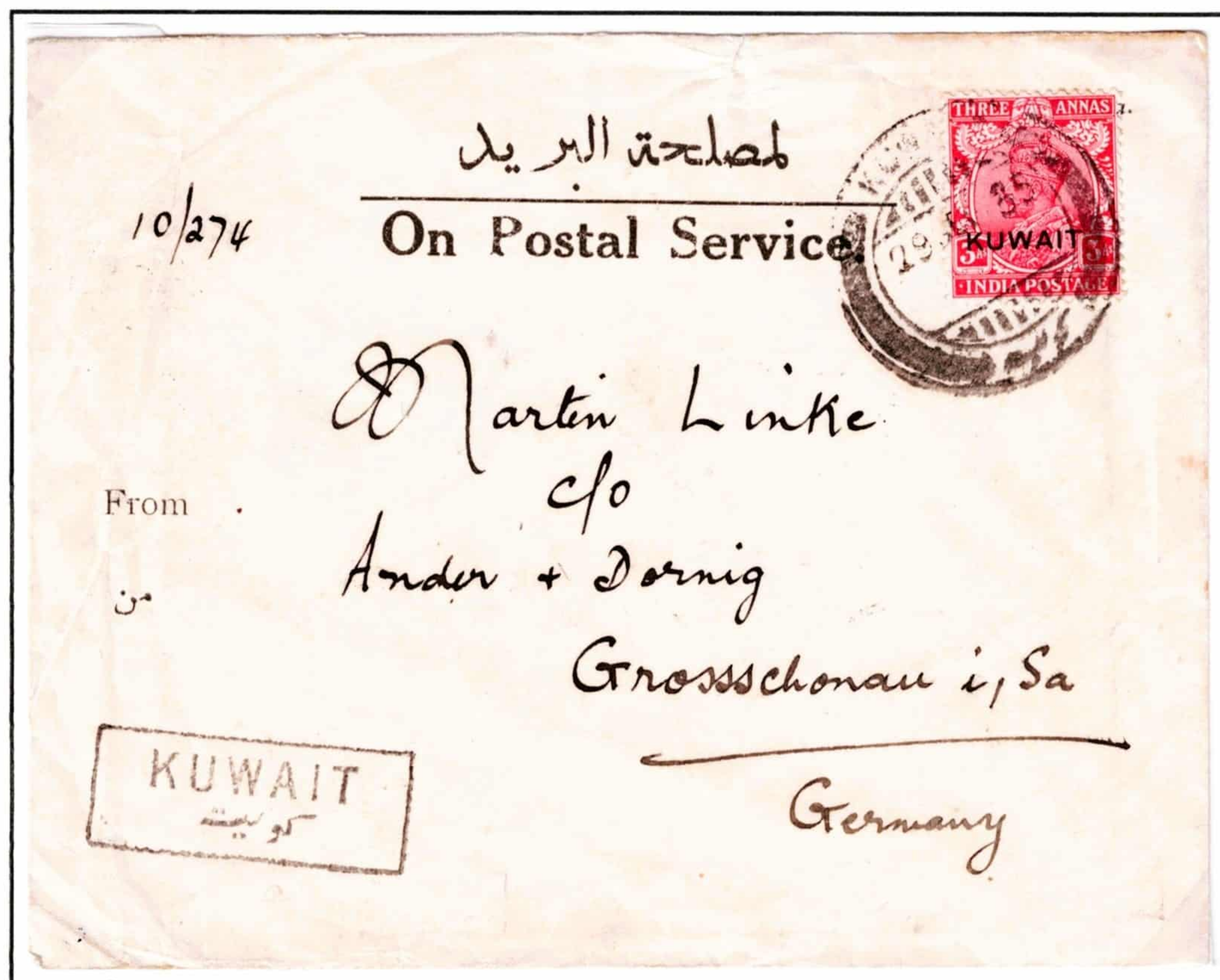
Used a postmaster
 handstamp on covers
 ordered by philatelists.

'Large' boxed handstamp
 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic .

1935 (Sep. 29) A cover from
 Kuwait to Germany via Bsrh,
 Iraq (Oct. 1) bearing Bilingual
 "KUWAIT/كويت" "REG" cancel.

Franked 3as. Indian stamps
 overprint 'Kuwait'.

To pay 3as. surface postage.



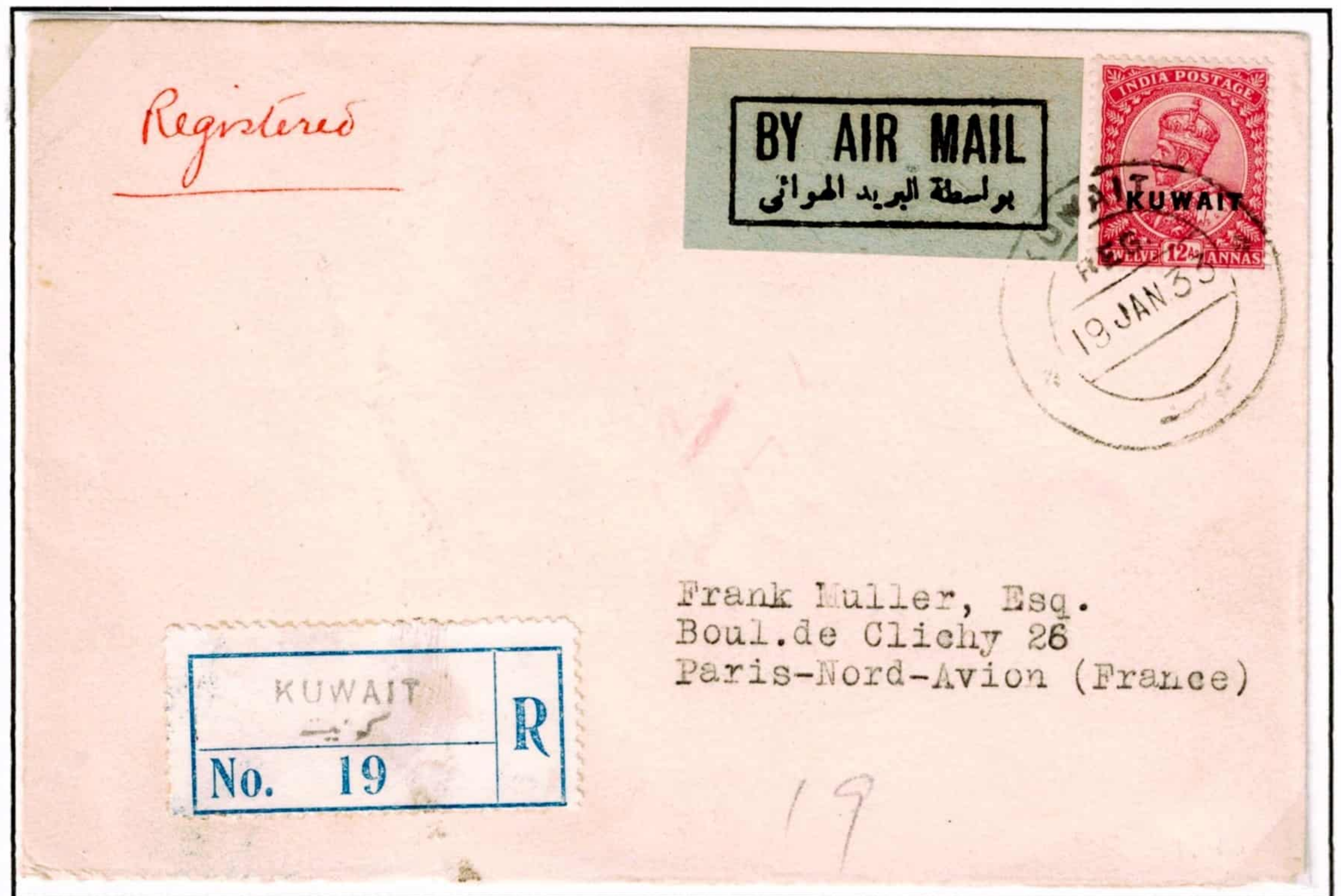
Type 4: 1923-1941

Registration label with a Narrow R

By Jan and May 1933, the registered label was introduced character sue with narrow R.

1933 (Jan. 19) A cover from Kuwait to France (Jan. 33, via Basra, Iraq (Jan. 21) by air mail, 'Large' boxed handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, registration label with 'Small' handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, Franked 10as.

To pay 3as surface postage and 3as registrations fee & air fee 4as. fee. (2as. overpaid)



Registration with Handstamp in "PURPLE" overprint Recorded on Aug and Sep 1934

1934 (Aug. 15) A cover from Kuwait to Norfolk, England (Aug. 21) 'Large' boxed handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, registration label with 'Small' handstamp 'KUWAIT' in purple color.

To pay 3as. surface postage and 3as. registrations fee & air fee 3as. fee.



Type 4: 1923-1941

Unusual Registration Labels

A shortage of registration labels in late Aug 1935, the introduction of the so called 'cloakroom ticket' which were probably produced locally.

Unusual Registration Label with manuscript numbering

1935 (Sep. 29) A cover from Kuwait to Oregon, USA (Sep, 19) by surface mail, bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/كویت" "REG" cancel, registration label with 'Small' handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, Franked 6¼as.

To pay 3as surface postage and 3as. registrations fee & ¼a. overpaid.

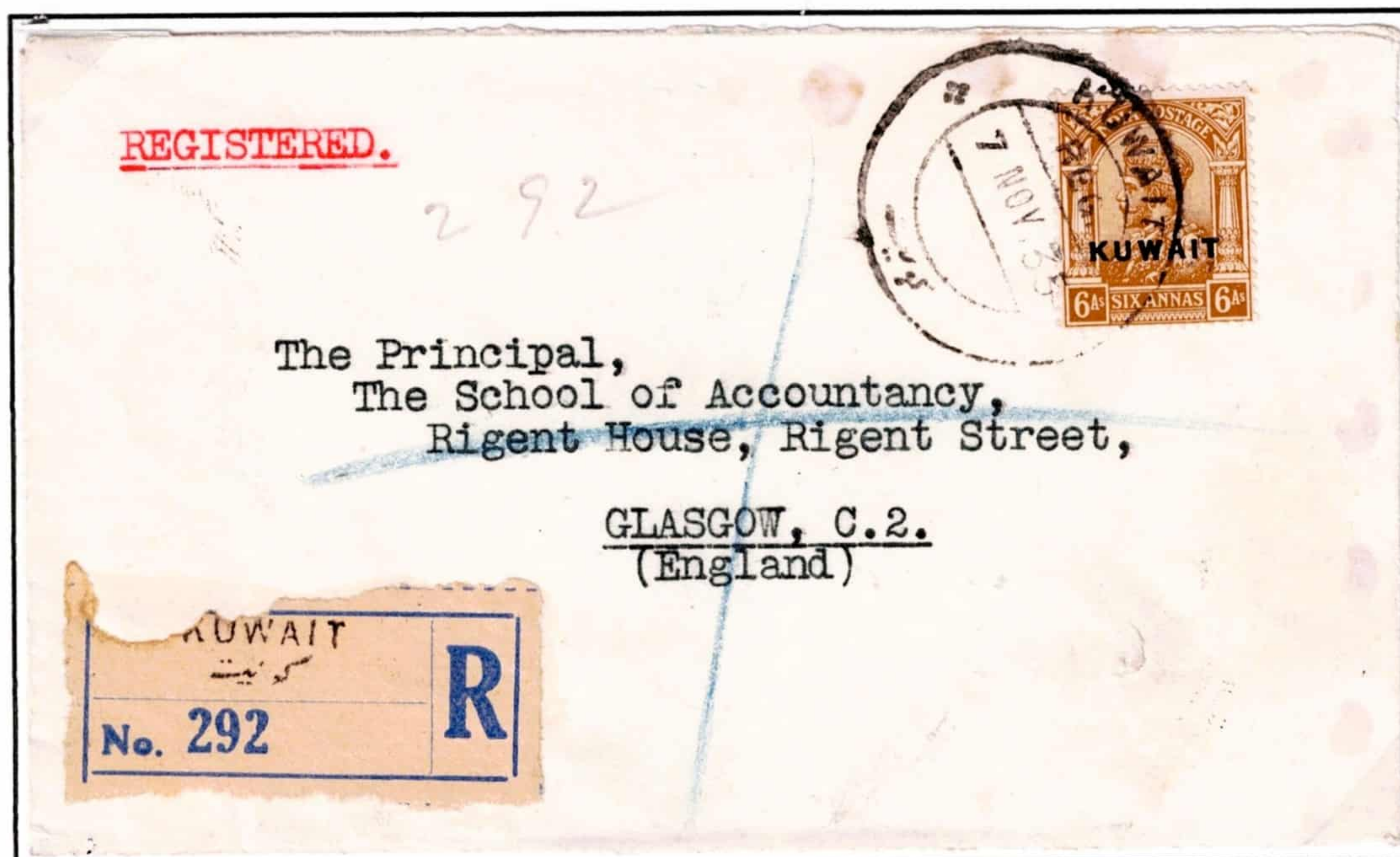


New registration label recorded from Oct 1935

Large registration Label With "R" at right

1935 (Nov. 17) A cover from Kuwait to Glasgow, England, via Basrah, Iraq (Nov, 9) by surface mail, bearing Bilingual "KUWAIT/كویت" "REG" cancel, registration label with 'Small' handstamp 'KUWAIT' in English and Arabic, Franked 10½ as.

To pay 3as. surface postage and 3as. registrations fee.



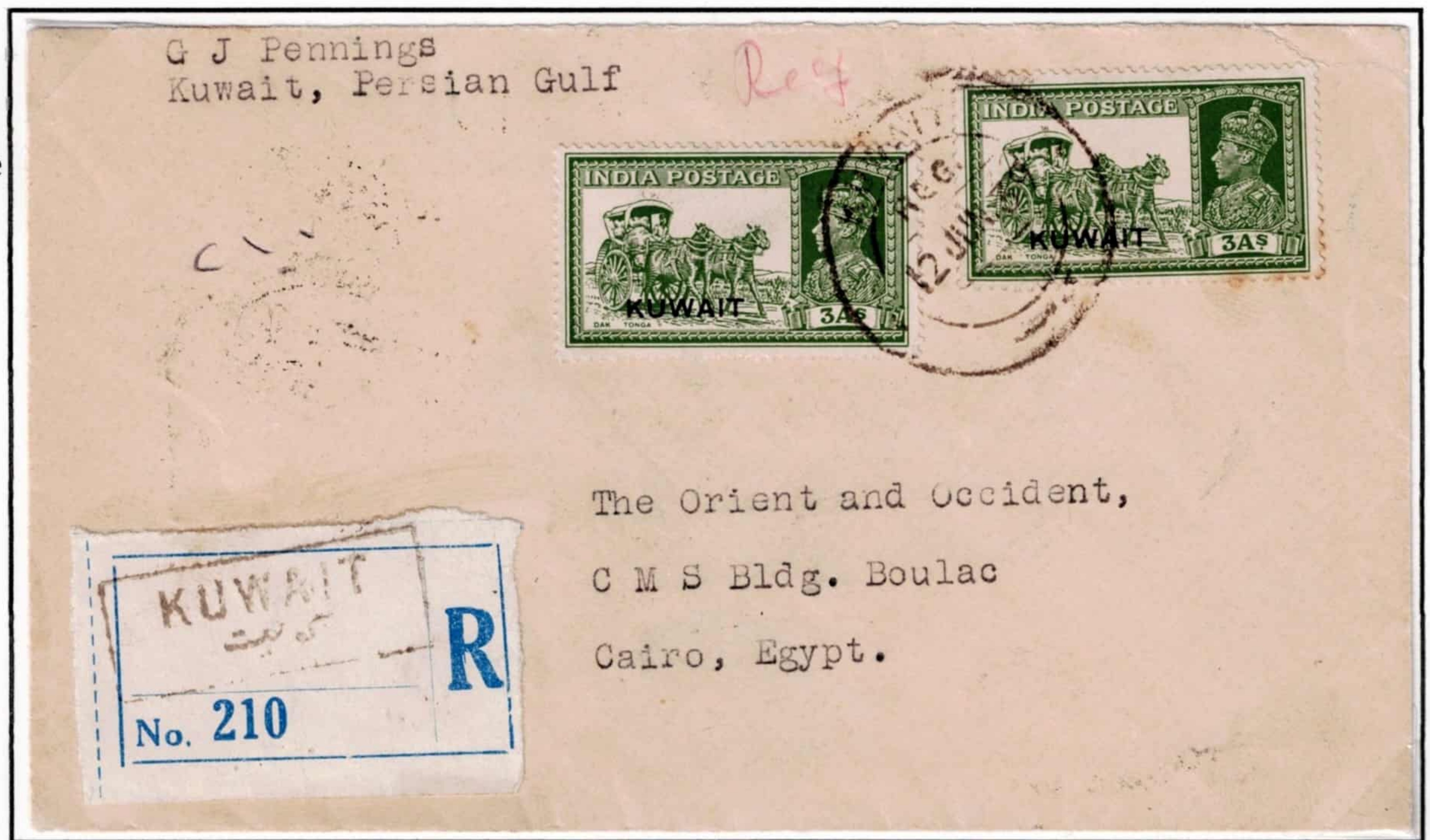
Type 5: 1923 - 1941

Large Registration label with "R" at Right

By Oct 1937 and late 1940, the registered label was introduced character R.

1939 (Jun.12) A cover from Kuwait to Cairo, Egypt (Jun. 19) by surface mail via Basrah (Jun. 13) bearing 'REG' cancel, blank numbered registration label with 'Large' handstamp 'KUWAIT', blank numbered registered labels franked 6as.

To pay 3as. surface postage and 3as. registrations fee.

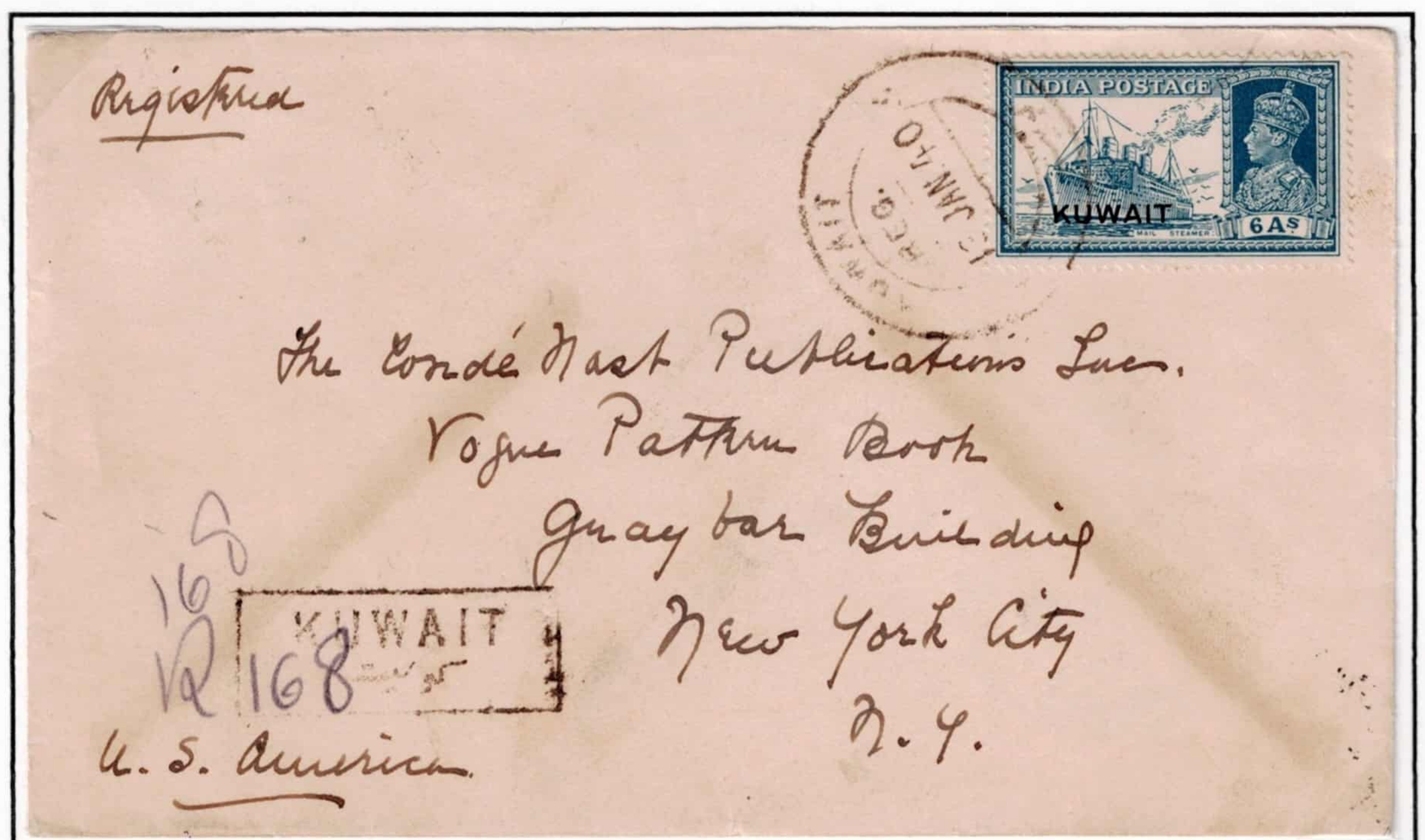


Shortage of Registration Label, 1940

In Jan. 1940, registration labels become repeatedly not available in the Kuwait Post Office and owing 'Registration' handstamp appeared directly on the covers.

1940 (Jan. 12) A cover from Kuwait to NY, USA (Feb. 23), by air mail via Basrah, (Jan. 15) and Baghdad (Jan. 16) bearing 'REG' cancel, blank numbered registration with 'Large' handstamp 'KUWAIT', franked 6as.

To pay 3as. surface postage and 3a., registrations fee.



Type 6: Jun. 1941

'Kuwait' in manuscript applied to a blank registration label

Earliest Usage:

10-Jun-1941 -

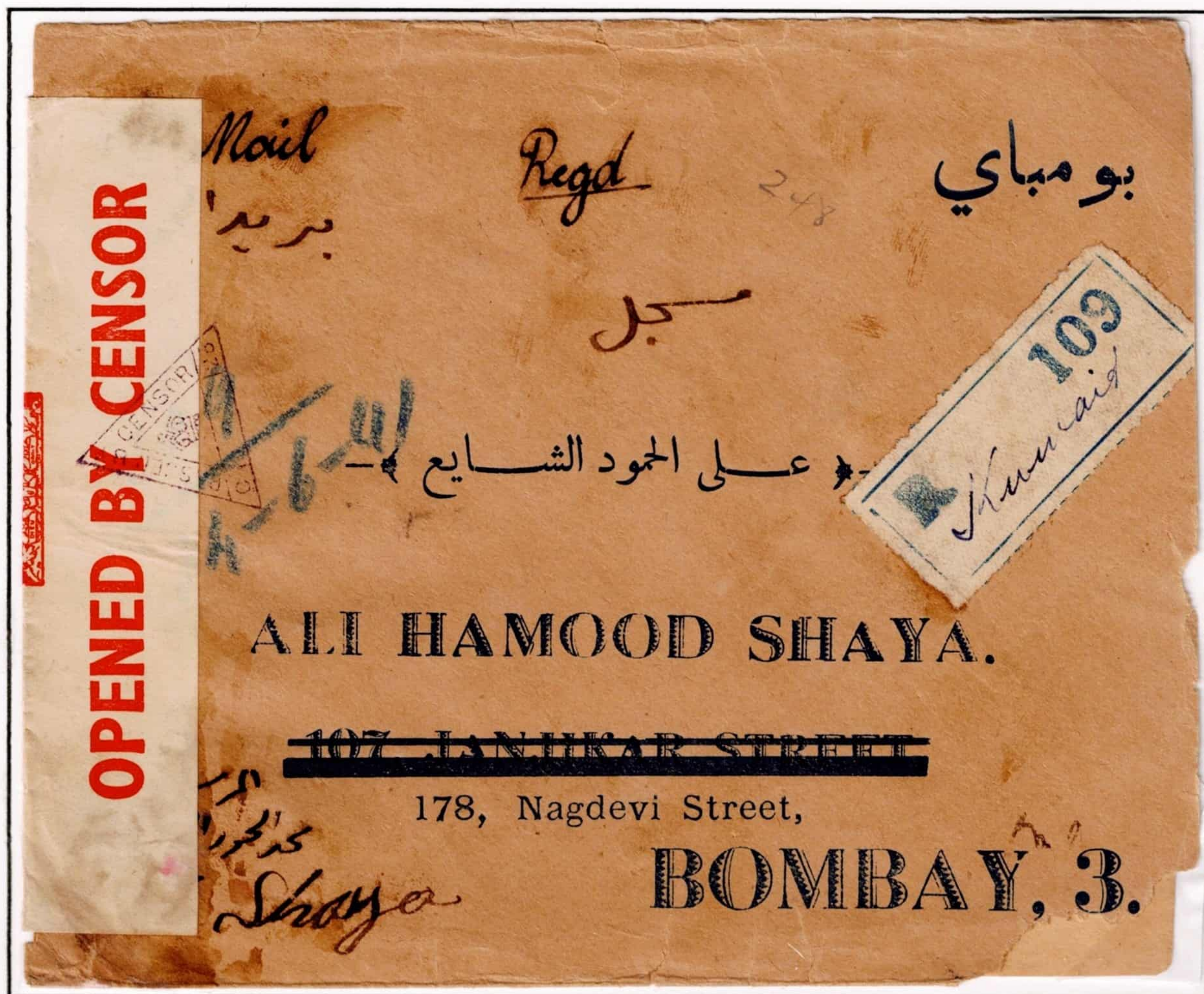
Latest Usage:

22-Jun-1941

1941 (Jun. 22) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bombay, India (Jul. 25) via Bahrain (Jul. 21), bearing EXPERIMENTAL P.O. K-79 cancel, franked 5½as.

To pay 1¼as. surface postage and 1a. Air fee & 3as. Registration fee

This cover with the latest date used for the blank label with 'Kuwait' in manuscript.



Type 7: Jun/Sep. 1941

EXPERIMENTAL P. O.
K-79

Earliest Usage: 04-Jul-1941 - Latest Usage: 29-Sep-1941

From June 26th, the Labels were handstamped Experimental P.O. K-79 applied to a blank registration label.

1941 (Sep. 29) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bombay, India (Jul. 25) via Bahrain (Jul. 21), bearing EXPERIMENTAL P.O. K-79 cancel, franked 5½as.

To pay 1¼as. surface postage and 1a. Air fee & 3as. Registration fee.

This cover with the latest date used Experimental handstamp



Type 8: 1941 - 1948:
Small Unboxed Handstamp

KUWAIT

Earliest Usage: 15 -Oct-1941 - **Latest Usage:** May -1949

A registration small unboxed handstamp with "KUWAIT" stamp written in English, applied to a blank numbered registration labels.

**Blank numbered
Registration label
handstamp handstamp**

1942 (Mar. 8) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bombay (Nov. 18) via Bahrain (Nov. 12) bearing Kuwait double Ring' cancel, franked 5½as. (Back side) sent by airmail.

To pay the 1½as. for surface mail and 1a. air fee & 3as. registration fee and 1a. for A.D

Resealing censor tape in Bombay "opened by examiner" applied on arrival.

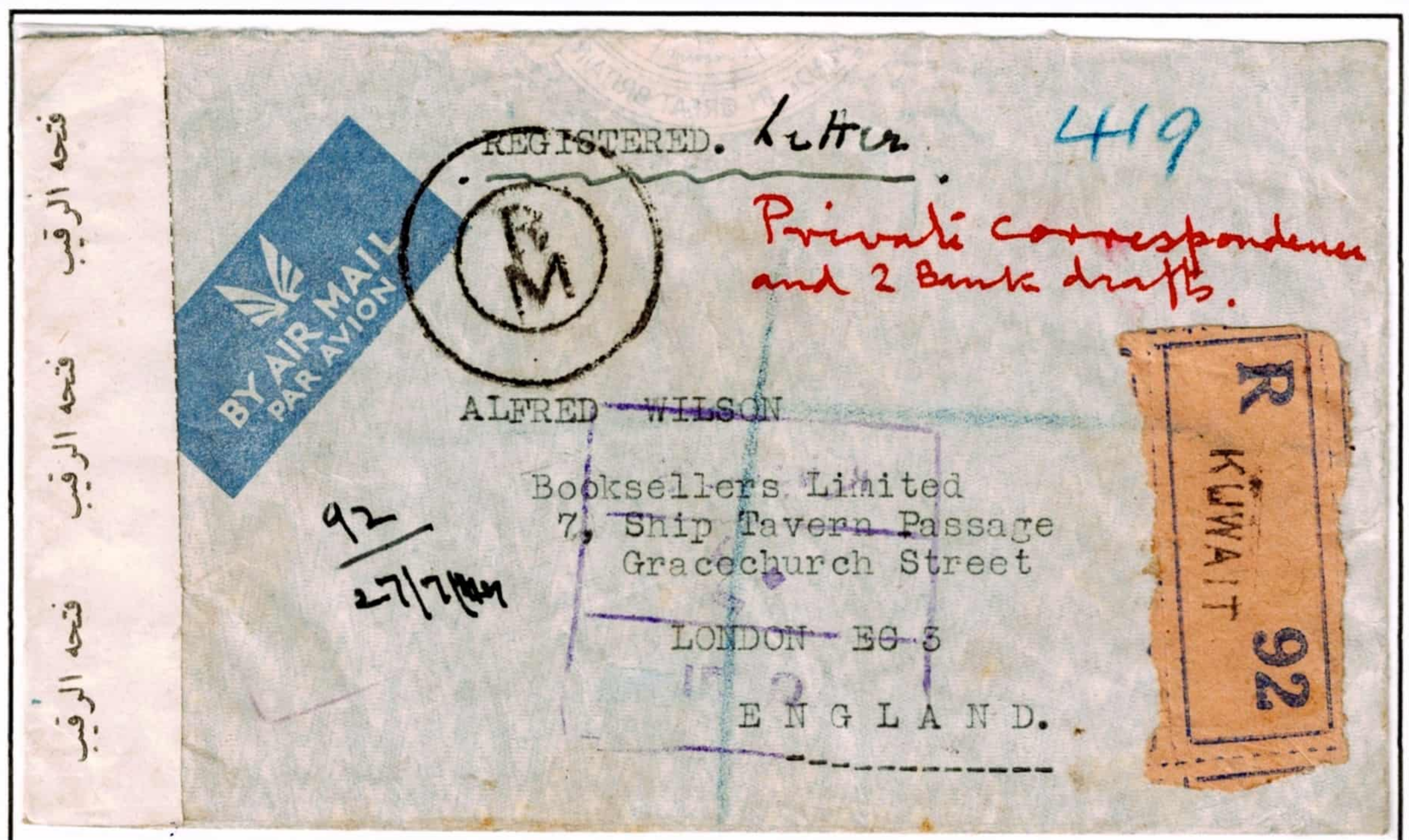


Blue printing on Buff Registration Label

1944 (Jul. 27) A registered cover from Kuwait to London, England, via Cairo, Egypt, bearing Kuwait double Ring' cancel, franked 17as. (Back said) sent by airmail.

To pay the Combined rate 14as. per ½ oz. and 3as. registration fee by surface mail.

Cachet and censor tape with "opened by examiner" Iraq censor tape at left.



Type 8: 1941 - 1948:

Registration Label with Blue "R".

Blank numbered Registration label handstamp handstamp

1944 (Oct. 9) A Postal Stationery India KGVI 1½as. cover from Kuwait to Bombay, India by Airmail, bearing double ring cancel, up-rated by 5as.

To pay the 1½as. for surface mail and 1a. air fee & 3as. registration fee and 1a. for A.D

With 'PASSED BY CENSOR/KUWAIT' hand stamp and resealing censor tape in Bombay "opened by examiner" applied on arrival.



Registration Label with Serifed "R"

1945 (Apr. 12) A registered cover from Kuwait to Basrah, Iraq (Apr. 14) bearing Kuwait double Ring' cancel, franked 6½ as. (Back said) sent by overland.

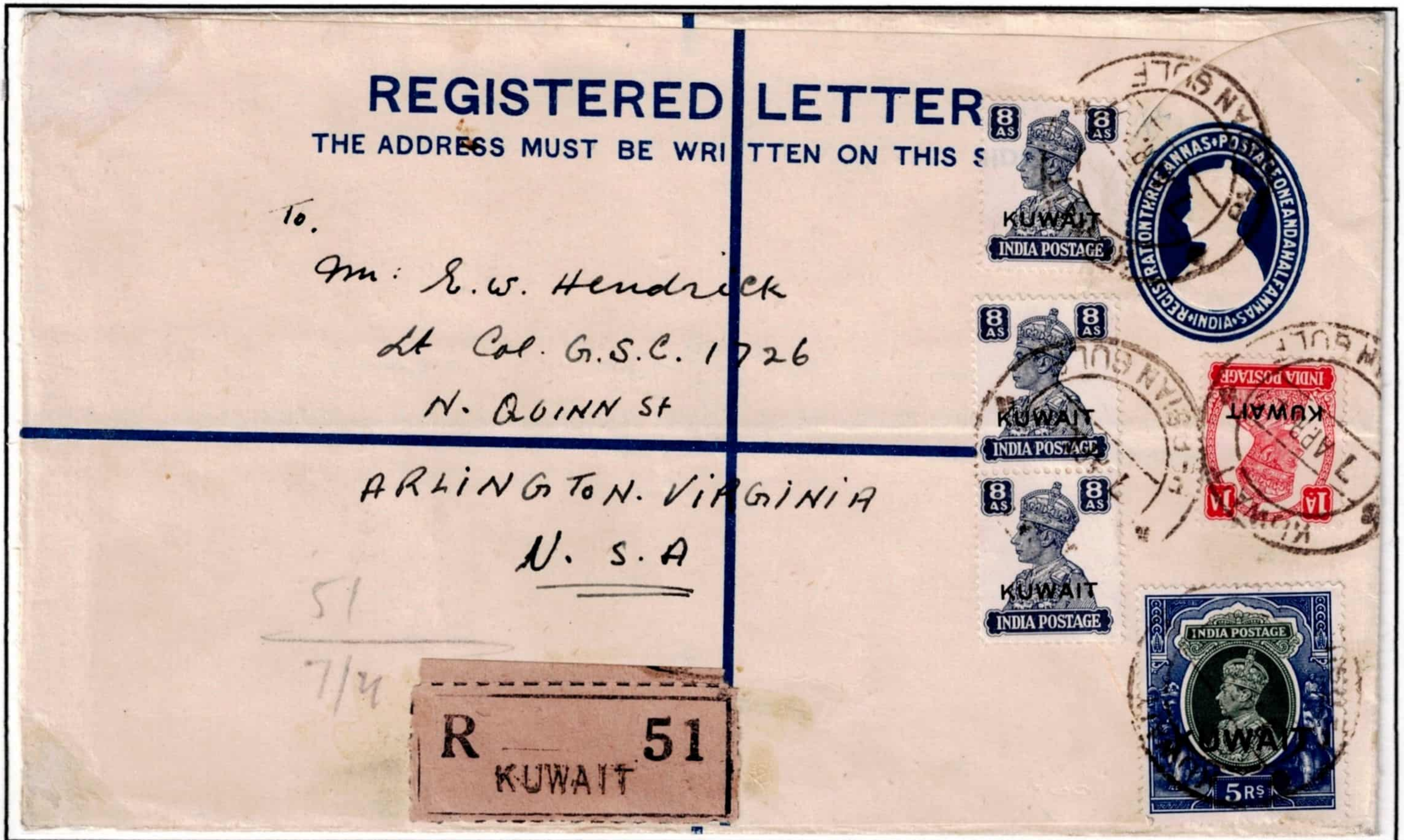
To pay 3½ as. and 3as.
Registration fee by surface mail.

Applied on arrival Censor in Iraq.



Type 8: 1941 - 1948:

Registration Dark Blue Label "R"



1947 (Feb.11) A Registered Letter KGV 4½ as from Kuwait to Virginia, New York (Apr. 28) via Cairo (Apr. 18), uprated 6R. 9as, (total 109½as), with blank numbered registered label with dark blue, sent by Airmail
Air fee at that time 23as. covered a weight of 2 ounces
(4 x 23as. + registration 3as. for first ounce surface + 2as. for the second ounce= 100½as- 9as. overpaid)

**Registration Label with
Narrow "R".**

Blank numbered Registration
Label.

1947 (Dec. 19) A 1½as. Postal
Stationary KGV from Kuwait to
Michigan, USA (Jan. 7), via Cairo,
Egypt (Dec. 29) bearing double
ring cancel, by Airmail., up rated
2as. and 2Rs (total 35½as.) India
stamp overprint Kuwait.

**To pay the 3as. for surface
postage, 3as. registration fee, and
29½as. air fee.**



Type 8: 1941 – 1948:

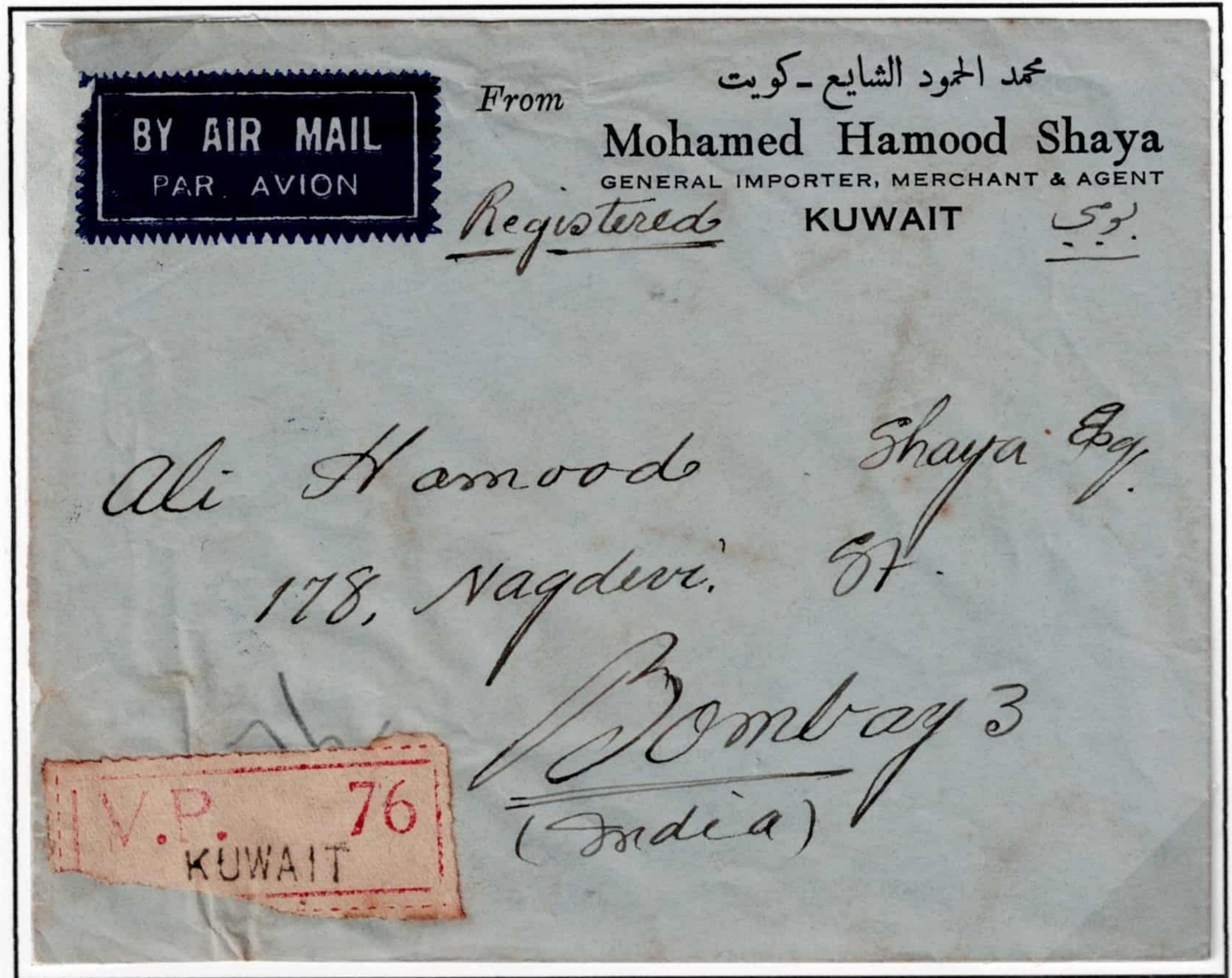
"V.P. Label" Used for Registration

On four occasions during the forties, the Kuwait Post Office ran short of registration labels, straight-line 'KUWAIT' handstamps (Type 8) were impressed on V.P. labels (V.P. = 'Value Payable', the Indian Post Office of Cash on delivery (C.O.D.), being altered to 'R' manuscript.

Blank Numbered 'V.P. Label' printed in Red on Creem.

1947 (Jun. 26) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bombay, India (Jul. 1), bearing 'double ring KUWATT' cancel, franked 6as. India stamp overprint Kuwait (back side), Sent by airmail.

To pay the 1½as. for surface postage and 1a. air fee and 3as. registration fee. (½a. overpaid)

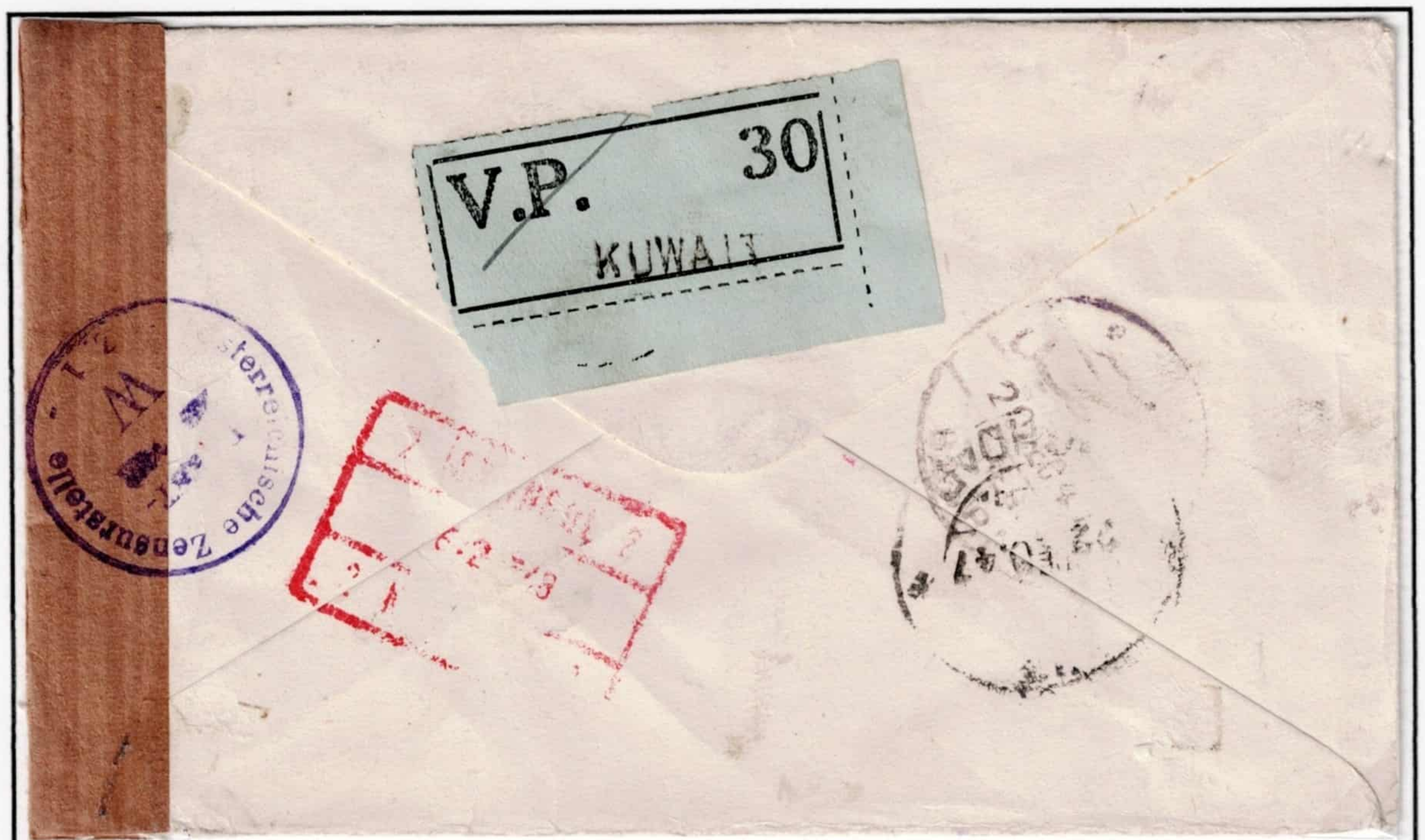


Blank Numbered 'V.P. Label' printed in Black on Green.

1947 (Dec. 18) A registered cover from Kuwait to Austria, 1948 (Feb. 2), via Baghdad, Iraq (Dec. 20) bearing 'double ring KUWATT' cancel, franked 6as. India stamp (front side), Sent by surface mail.

Austrian censorship during Germany occupation

To pay the 3as. for surface postage and 1a. air fee and 3as. registration fee.



Type 8: 1941 – 1948:

"V.P Label" Used for Registration, 1948

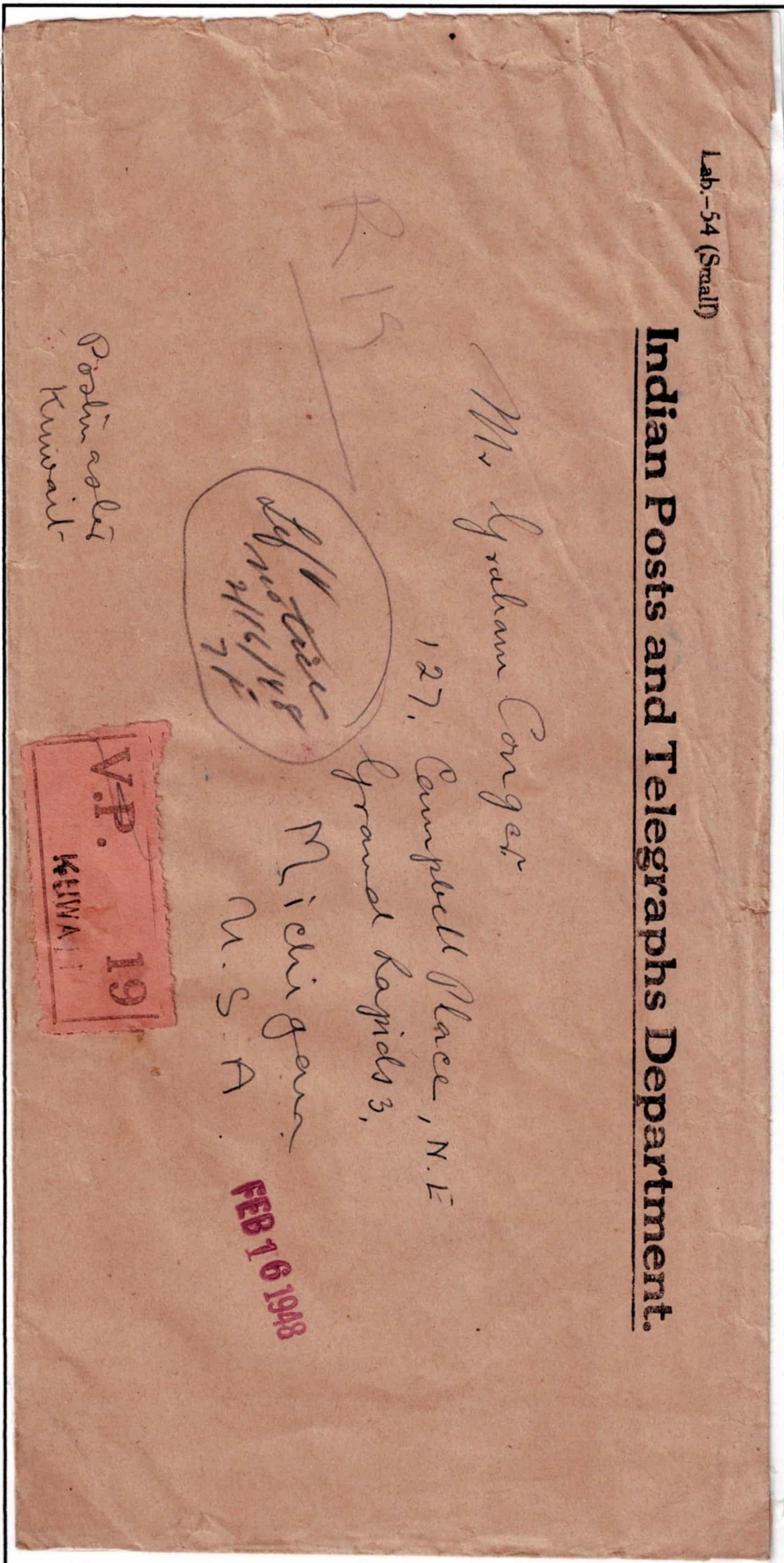
Blank Numbered 'V.P. Label'
printed in Black on Brown

Used for Registration in Jan and
Feb 1948.

(Only 2 covers recorded)

1948 (Feb. 3) A registered cover
from Kuwait to Michigan, USA
(Feb. 18) via Cairo, Egypt (Feb.
11) bearing 'KUWATT' cancel
(back Side) sent by Airmail.

Sent by from Kuwait Postmaster
"India Posts and Telegraphs
Department", Official mail
passed free of charge.



Type 8: 1941 - 1948:

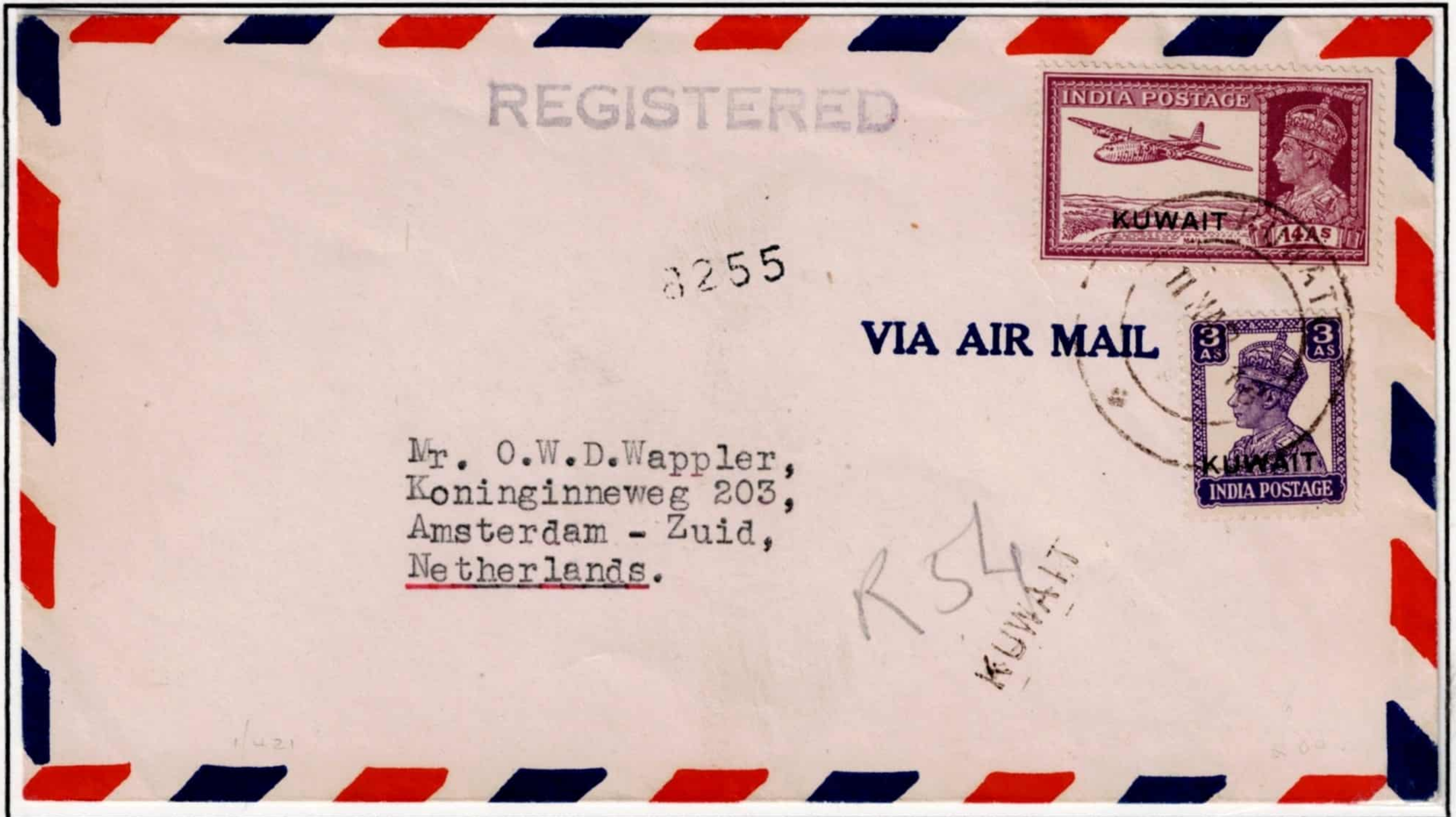
Shortage of Registration Label, 1948

The straight-line registration hand stamp was imprinted on the cover directly as there was a shortage of labels for that purpose.

Shortage of Registration Labels, Mar 1948

1948 (Mar. 11) A registered cover from Kuwait to Amsterdam, Netherland, bearing 'KUWATT' cancel, franked 17as. India stamps overprint Kuwait, sent by Airmail

To pay the 3as. for surface postage and 11as. air fee and 3as. registration fee.



British Postal Administration, 1st April 1948

British Foreign Office took over Administration of Postal Services in Kuwait from 1st April 1948, contemporary Great Britain KGV overprinted 'KUWAIT' and the Indian canceller continued in use until as late as July 1949.

Blank Numbered Kuwait Printed Label in blue introduced in late 1948.

1949 (Mar. 9) A registered cover from Kuwait to Bombay, India, bearing 'KUWATT' cancel, franked 9as. British stamps overprint Kuwait.

To pay the 3as. for surface postage and 3as. air fee and 3as. registration fee.

