

POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



Mr. N. G. Rhodes has sent us photocopies of some fine old black & white photographs in his Tibet collection. This one is titled "Postal establishment and families at Phari" (ca. 1910 A.D.)

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Dear Friends,

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members in our Study Circle. In this issue we list an enthusiastic Tibet collector in Japan who exhibited in INDIA '89 and a member of the fair sex in England. In the last issue we listed two new members - one from Nepal and the other in the USA. If you are a new member who has not been listed previously, please let your editor know of his oversight, as any such omission is purely accidental.

None of us care to consider the day when we must part from our beloved collections, but that time has arrived for our President, Dr. Pierre Couvreur, whose ill health has caused him to make that difficult decision. He has asked your editor to inform you as follows: "I have sent all my remaining stamps and albums to Christie's Robson Lowe in Bournemouth and I will sell at the same time my albums with cases, but without leaves or stamps. There are 125 binders with cases - in Frank Godden's New Popular Album (colour: green), with lettering in gold, including Tibet (10), Nepal (10), and Indian Native States (all the rest). They will be offered at about one-third of current prices." Dr. Couvreur expects the date of the auction to be in September - possibly about the time you receive the Third Quarter issue of POSTAL HIMAL.

Due to a suggestion made by Roger Skinner, our USA Representative who also prepares the envelopes for mailing each issue, we provided a Table of Contents (on the inside of the cover page) for the first time in the First Quarter issue in 1989. This issue contains a much longer Table of Contents, and we hope the variety in this issue will please all readers - and especially those with interests in both Nepal & Tibet philately.

We call your attention to the TABLE OF CONTENTS (at left) -- to the variety of authors and subjects, including the very fine piece of postal history by Julie Marshall -- one of our 'new' authors. We call your attention to Index Supplement No. 3, by Ken Jones, covering the issues of POSTAL HIMAL for 1987 & 1988. Ken and Roger Skinner are working on a new computer format which will allow a complete index printout, covering all issues of PH and its predecessor News Letters. Ken hopes to offer such an index, complete

One insertion, per line \$1.00
Four insertions, per line 3.50
To calculate the number of lines your advertisement will require, count 39 characters per line, including all letters, numerals, punctuation marks and blank spaces between words. Ads will be placed under appropriate headings without charge for the headings. See the Classified Ad section in the final pages of any issue of The AMERICAN PHILATELIST for typical ad headings -- or simply send your own ad, asking the editor to place it under an appropriate heading (at no extra cost).

DEADLINE: Ad and payment in USA dollars (or in mint USA postage stamps) must reach the editor by the first day of one of the following months -- February, May, August, November -- in order for ad to appear in issues mailed about one month later. Any change of copy after the first insertion will be counted as a new advertisement. Example:

WANTED

A group is interested in the study of the varieties and 'errors' of 'modern' stamps printed in Nepal. These consist of Scott Nos. 102, C1, 118, 119, 120, 121-123, 125 & 134 (S.G. Nos. 115, 116, 118, 119, 134a, 135-137, 137a & 143). If you would be interested in participating in this study, please write to: J. R. Wright, 8 Windrush Close, Riverdene, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2BY, England.

through the most recent issue, at a modest cost -- to be announced later.

Many readers will note the unusually small number of offerings in Auction No. 48. Colin can only offer what is sent to him, so send your duplicates to him so that the next Auction List can be more extensive.

Finally, remember to start making your plans to attend STAMP WORLD LONDON 90 on May 3-13 -- less than one year away. It celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black, the world's first adhesive postage stamp. We hope to have the best Study Circle meeting ever.

Lester A. Michel

EXHIBITION NEWS

Bo Olsson reports that he was invited to give the opening speech for the exhibition 'Estonian Postage Stamps 70th Anniversary' in Estonia House, Göteborg, Sweden and favored us with a souvenir cover dated 2 April 1989.

Dick van der Wateren has sent us a souvenir cover from LIMPHILA '89 which was held on 5-7 May in Kerkrade, in the Netherlands. Dick was awarded a GOLD for his exhibit titled "The Classic Period of Nepal" and also received a Medal of Honour from the League of Dutch Philatelic Societies. One of the judges asked him several questions concerning the matter of dating old covers and, of course, Dick was happy to answer those questions satisfactorily, whereupon the judge gave him a higher score than he would otherwise. It is pleasing to note that some judges recognize their lack of knowledge about the philatelic history of Nepal and are willing to learn. Congratulations, Dick.

In STAMP COLLECTOR (a leading USA weekly philatelic newspaper) we note (in "The Winners' Circle" on page 7 of the issue for 29 April 1989) that a SILVER was awarded to Stephen Luster for his exhibit titled "The Native Postmarks of Nepal" at INTERPEX '89, in New York City. INTERPEX is an annual exhibition sponsored by the American Stamp Dealers Association. Does anyone know the exhibitor? He should be invited to join our Study Circle.

Alan Warren plans to enter his fine Tibet exhibit at SEPAD '89 -- an outstanding USA national show in Pennsylvania, 6-8 October. If any of you are planning to attend, your editor suggests that you contact Alan and, just possibly, arrange an informal meeting. Alan's address is: P. O. Box 17124, Philadelphia, PA 19105.

Your editor receive a VERMEIL medal for his exhibit titled "Nepal - Postage Stamps Used in the Telegraph Service" at ROMPEX '89, in Denver, Colorado. This annual show is the premier philatelic exhibition in the Rocky Mountain Region and is supported by no fewer than 18 stamp clubs in Colorado & Wyoming. This year it attracted no fewer than 320 16-page frames of material and competition was very strong. The US Postal Service honored the exhibition by a First Day of Issue Airmail Postal Card on opening day, with a special ceremony which brought the largest crowd of visitors in the long history of this exhibition. One of the editor's friends won the Grand Award for his French historical exhibit.



NEPAL: Collector has some highly interesting duplicates for sale at very reasonable prices:

- * Classic period: covers, blocks, tel. used sheets, genuine ½ anna orange -vermilions (mint and tete-beche);
- * Pashupati period: mint sets of 1930 and 1935, covers;
- * India used in Nepal: covers of British Residency P.O., British Legation P.O., Indian Embassy P.O.;
- * Classic post cards: including rare used cards with double framelines.

All items guaranteed to be genuine; certificates issued on request. Interested collectors please write to Dr. Wolfgang C. Hellrigl, P.O. Box 349, I-39100 Bozen, Italy, for full details.

MY STUDIES OF TIBET FORGERIES

--George Bourke

Forgeries have been with us since the very early years of stamp collecting. Considered by many to be a blight which renders otherwise collectable countries into places to be avoided, negatively affecting prices and collector interest for generations. Yet for some, forgeries offer a challenge, an area for research and study as important as the issues themselves.

No country has been more blessed or cursed with forgeries than Tibet. Every form known to philately can be found: forged stamps, forged stamps with forged cancels, forged stamps with genuine cancels. Nowhere has the forger been more creative. Few countries can boast a notation as can be found at the end of the Tibet section in Scott's, "Excellent forgeries of all values exist" and some not so excellent as well. No collection of Tibet is complete without an extensive showing of the many forgeries that exist. For a dead country, there surely is a lot of activity.

Study of the older forgeries (sets 1-7) of the 1912 issue is an area that promises great rewards to the serious student. One might think that these forgeries had been thoroughly researched in the more than twenty-five years since Waterfall wrote his book on Tibetan postal history and that little remains to be learned. As it turns out this is not the case. In thirteen years of publication not one article dealing with new information on the older 1912 forgeries has appeared in POSTAL HIMAL. Hopefully this lack will be corrected in the future.

For the beginning collector on a modest budget, forgeries offer a rewarding and relatively inexpensive area in which to collect. With the growing cost of Tibetan material, forgeries are an area where one can, with perseverance and a little luck put together an impressive and important collection at little cost but of considerable research value. Although it is true that older material is not available in large quantities, it can still be found.

Prices for forgeries have been on the rise, with scarcer older material showing price increases and increased buyer interest. Gone are the days when a group of eighty-seven 1912 forgeries from the Waterfall collection (Robson Lowe 1978),

including the very rare 1/6 trangka carmine of the 4th set, brought 190 Swiss francs or \$104.00 U.S. The 1/6 trangka carmine would bring several times that by itself if it were offered today. In Alevizos auction No. 70, (Dec. 1988, lot No. 4613) a group of fifty-seven older 1912 forgeries from the 20's and 30's estimated at \$125.00 brought \$160, not including the 10% buyer premium. This provides an indication that there was some competition for this lot. Still forgeries are within most people's budget and offer an exciting and challenging area for study and research.

In the beginning my interest in the forgeries of the 1912 issue was very practical, how to tell the genuine from the false. But as time went on I became interested in the forgeries themselves. I set a goal, which is still somewhat uncompleted, of acquiring all of the types, subtypes and shades listed by Waterfall.

With the help of several Study Circle members and a couple of auction purchases, I put together more than two hundred examples. In sorting through these, several previously unrecorded varieties were found: the 1/2 trangka and 2/3 trangka of the first set, type "A", in shiny ink. Several copies of each were found. Although Waterfall mentions the 1/6 trangka olive in shiny ink, no mention is made of other values of the first set being found thus. The 1/6 trangka olive is fairly common it seems; the 1/2 and 2/3 trangka less so as they should have been noticed earlier. More interesting was the discovery of the 1/2 trangka of the second set in a dull carmine rose and having a type II cancel common to this set. It is the same cliché as normally found and does not represent a new cliché. This is an error of color unlisted by Waterfall. The only error of color Waterfall mentions is the very rare 1/6 trangka in carmine of the fourth set. This newly discovered error must rank as one of the most desirable of the older 1912 forgeries. It will be interesting to see if any more copies surface. Several additional forgeries were also found in previously unlisted colors. They are the 1/3 trangka of the first set in paynes gray and the 1/6 trangka of the fifth set in olive green. Both of these bear cancels com-

(continued on the next page)

Bourke,TIBET FORGERIES (concluded)--

mon to their sets and neither represent new cliches. Also found was the 1/6 trangka of the fourth set type "A" in yellow green. Waterfall mentions a yellow green and a carmine shade for this set and designates them both type "C", representing a different cliché. It is clear from the photo in Waterfall's book that the 1/6 trangka carmine is a different cliché, being neither type "A" or "B". No photo of the yellow green type "C" is shown. Is the yellow green shade mentioned by Waterfall actually type "A" and not type "C" as he states? Possibly Dr. Singer who acquired a large portion of Waterfall's forgeries can shed some light on this question.

On a more recent note, in regard to the 1912 issue facsimile sheets produced by J. Crow, it is worth mentioning that there have been two printings of these sheets, shiny ink on stiff off white (egg shell) paper and dull ink on soft cream colored paper.

With the continued production of Tibetan forgeries it is probable that the final chapter on this subject will never be written. Sophisticated photo reproductive techniques are allowing for the production of ever better quality forgeries. This only highlights the need for more study of this material. In future articles I will address some of these modern productions. I hope that this article will encourage others to take more interest in Tibetan forgeries and to publish their findings.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON TIBETAN FORGERIES

--Bo C. Olsson

After writing my small article concerning forged Tibetan stamps, I obtained a copy of POSTAL HIMAL No. 48. On page 49 of that issue N. G. Rhodes and Derek Bates gave a warning concerning the "new issue 1986" of forged 1914 Tibetan stamps and postmarks -- the same "issue" I was concerned about in my article. Immediately I had a feeling of seeing that cover described as Lot 1026 somewhere else. A check of my files and yes! That cover is the same one as described for Lot 962 in Holden & Pemberton's 16 January 1987 auction. I don't know whether it was sold or withdrawn. Many such items have

been "tried" in Scandinavian auctions recently. Kühler's had a set of two sheets in their October auction 1987. Fortunately withdrawn. But they have also been offered in Hong Kong auctions.

In POSTAL HIMAL No. 50, Mr. Q. J. Shea wrote about forged Tibetan stamps. He mentions that Waterfall states that the forged 4 and 8 tr stamps lack the line of colour around the sheet, but he has a sheet (see picture on page 13) with such a line in the margin. Yes, at the time of writing his book, Waterfall was right. They only existed without the colour line. But now it is wrong. From 1986 they are also known with the colour line "thanks" to a "new issue" of forged 1914 stamps.

The faked postmark mentioned by G. M. Rosamond in POSTAL HIMAL No. 51 is probably of the 1912 type -- to match the "Crow issue". However, is it possible for Mr. Rosamond to photocopy his item and have it included in POSTAL HIMAL? This would help us to keep an eye on the recent "development" of forgeries relating to Tibet.

SOUVENIR ITEMS FROM THE TIBET PHILATELY ASSOCIATION

F. C. J. De Ridder sent us some interesting information from the Tibet Philately Association in Lhasa. Mr. Yeh Yu-Shen offers two groups of items as follows:

(1) Tibetan Bi-lingual Postmarks consisting of 130 cards bearing the bi-lingual date stamps of 28 February 1987 for each of the following types of Tibetan Post Offices: 7 District Head Offices, 71 Country Post Offices, 5 Country Sub-Post Offices, 37 Postal Stations and 10 Postal Agencies. The set of cards is obtainable for US \$10.00 in banknotes.
(2) A set of 4 cards marking the April/May 1988 China, Japan & Nepal joint expedition to Qumolangma/Sagarmatha, which was successful on 5 May 1988 - obtainable for US \$6.00 in banknotes.

Your editor decided to order this interesting set (#2) and sent the required cash via ordinary airmail and has just received these items via registered airmail from Lhasa. Space does not permit more information or illustrations, but members may write to me for more information.--Ed.

* HENRY ROBERT HOLMES *
In Memoriam
--Alan Warren

The author of one of the first "separates" on Tibet, H. R. Holmes, passed away on 22 January 1989 at the age of 91. In 1941, Holmes published his 24-page monograph, The Postage Stamps of Tibet, thus establishing a single source for information on the stamps and cancels of Tibet. Holmes' collection was acquired by Arnold C. Waterfall, who went on to write the standard reference work today on Tibet postage.

Holmes joined the Royal Philatelic Society, London in 1929 and served that organization in several capacities including member of Council, President, and chairman of the expert committee. He edited the Philatelic Journal of Great Britain, and then The London Philatelist. After winning a silver medal in the junior class of the 1912 Jubilee International Exhibition, Holmes went on to be a distinguished philatelic judge for over forty years.

Other honors bestowed on Henry R. Holmes include the Lichtenstein Award, the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, and Honorary Fellow of the Royal. He was a member of the Academie de Philatelie of France, and an honorary member of the British Philatelic Federation.

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A SHIP NAMED "NEPAUL"

Roger Skinner came across some bulletins from the Hong Kong Study Circle that indicate the existence of a British steamship named "Nepaul" which operated between Yokahama (Japan) and Shanghai (China). It is possible that a few of our members may collect covers bearing a "sunburst" cancel applied on this ship, named for "one of our Favourite Countries", in the 1860s. If any of our readers are interested, write to the editor of POSTAL HIMAL for some additional information.--Ed.

EXPRESS MAIL DELIVERY SERVICE TO BE
STARTED FROM MAY 12

(This article appeared in THE RISING NEPAL -- an English language newspaper -- on May 11, 1989 (Baishakh 29, 2046 B.S.) and was sent to us by Surendra Lal Shrestha, Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle.--Ed.)

Kathmandu, May 10 (RSS):

The Postal Services Department is to operate express mail delivery service at Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Birgunj, Pokhara, Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj town panchayats from May 12.

According to the Postal Services Department, the customers wishing to send their mail through express delivery service to the six town panchayats are required to submit their mail at the district post offices of Kathmandu, Morang, Parsa, Kaski, Rupandehi and Banke districts.

The Department has the objective of delivering the postal materials under the express delivery service within a day after the date of mailing.

Postal material to be posted under the express delivery service should be submitted to the counters of the districts posts offices at Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Birgunj, Pokhara and Bhairahawa between 10:15 am and 2:00 PM and at Banke district post office between 9:00 and 12:00 noon.

Ordinary letters and aerogrammes not exceeding 100 grams can be sent through express delivery service to the six town panchayats.

Customers wishing to send letters through the express delivery service are required to add a postage stamp of Rs. 1/- in addition to the regular postage charges.

They are also required to clearly write down the name, district town panchayat, ward number and locality of the addresses.

Arrangements have also been made to handover the mail to the addresses upon his signature and to return the mail to the sender if letter is not properly addressed or the addressee is not found.

Postal materials sent to places outside the limits of the town panchayat will be delivered through ordinary mail.

NEPAL & TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE

Statement of UK Accounts
for year ending 30th April 1989

<u>INCOME</u>	
Subscriptions	£ 444.00
Bank Interest	222.72
Donation	3.00
Commission on Auctions:	
No. 44	120.46
No. 45	111.13
No. 46	164.43
Sub-total	1,065.74
Cash at Bank (1988)	629.92
Total	£ 1,695.66

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Postage	53.35
Transfer to L. Michel	439.12
Transfer to R. Skinner	79.73
Mini Office Software	29.95
Insurance	24.00
Stationery	4.60
BPF Subscription	16.00
President's Prize	10.00
Trans. to 'Extra Interest Acct'	300.00
Sub-total	956.75
Cash at Bank (1989)	738.91
Total	£ 1,695.66

Amount held in 'Extra Interest Account'	£ 2,600.00
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Editor's Account
for year ending 30th April 1989

<u>INCOME</u>	
Transferred from C. Hepper	\$ 657.00
Advertising Income	35.00
Membership Dues	63.00
Sub-total	\$ 755.00
Cash at Bank (1988)	(-207.74)
Total	\$ 547.26

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Printing of POSTAL HIMAL	
No. 54	\$ 95.00
No. 55	125.00
No. 56	150.00
No. 57	156.00
Folding & stuffing (4 issues)	20.00
Postage	-68.44
Miscellaneous Expenses	59.39
Sub-total	\$ 673.83
Cash at Bank (1989)	(-126.57)
Total	\$ 547.26

S. O. S.

In re the Nepal Nalis Dastoor
or COURT FEE STAMPS
--Armand E. Singer

In POSTAL HIMAL, No. 26 (summer 1981), p. 20, I discussed all the shades, papers, denominations, and printings of the pice and rupee values of the court fee stamps that I had found to date, namely: 1,2,4,8,25,50, and 75 pice; 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,15,20, and 25 rupees, twenty (not counting paper colors) in all. They were the same number and denominations already listed by S. L. Shrestha in his own fine article, in Philately (the Nepal Philatelic Society's journal), 5, No. 1 (Jan. 1978), pp. 52-53. George Alevizos's Mail Sale auction catalogue No. 14, lot No. 205, 14 Feb. 1989, offers what he calls a complete set, values 1 pice to 25 rupees, twenty in all. I still suspect that these are all the denominations ever printed but Dr. Mac Ricketts's price list (circa 1960) offered a 12-pice value, which he termed obsolete. More than one dealer or collector, over the years has written me to claim the existence of will-o'-the-wisp denominations, to wit: 7, 10, and 20 pice and 30, 50, and 100 rupees. Shrestha, however, specifically notes in his article that twenty-five is the top value (p. 53).

One way or the other I would greatly appreciate it if collectors would go through their holdings to see whether perhaps we can lay these ghosts once and for all. Do any of these putative denominations exist or not?

Be it noted in passing: the different values occur on white, gray, and blue paper, of varying shades and textures, some values on more than one paper. There are several errors already found in the value panels, some not listed by Shrestha. Since whole sheets must be very rare if not unobtainable, it is difficult to be sure all errors have been caught. Though the design appears to be made from just one cliché reduplicated for all the values, the letters and numbers in the value panels seem to have been individually typeset for each value and for each cliché of each value. Hence, errors are possible in each case. Some values exist part imperf.

Please report your findings to our editor and/or to me, 248 Grandview Avenue, Morgantown, West Virginia, U. S. A., 26505.

THE SEALS OF AMAR SINGH THAPA
--Julie G. Marshall

In recent years a number of Anglo-Nepalese War covers have been offered at auction with the seals of Amar Singh Thapa. Most of these covers have a large seal (Fig. 1) but some covers occasionally have a small seal (Fig. 2).

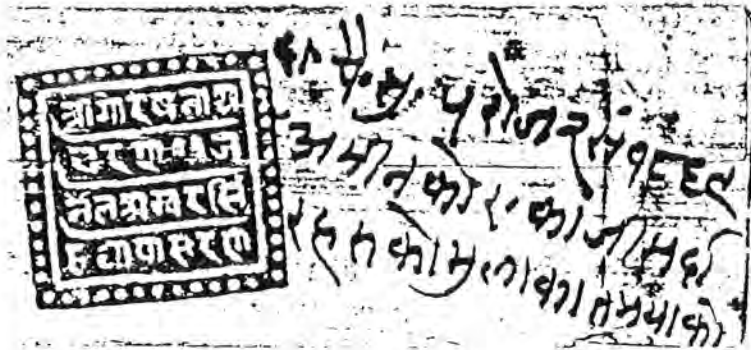


Fig.1. Large Seal of Amar Singh Thapa.



Fig.2. Small Seal of Amar Singh Thapa.

The small seal has been described as an earlier seal of Amar Singh Thapa while the larger seal was due to his promotion to general.

There were, however, two military commanders called Amar Singh Thapa in Nepal in the early years of the nineteenth century. General Amar Singh Thapa was Governor of Palpa from 1806 and father of the Prime Minister of Nepal, Bhim Sen Thapa. He died in 1814 just before the outbreak of the Anglo-Nepalese War. Kazi Amar Singh Thapa was Commander-in-Chief of the Nepalese Army and led the military expansion of Nepal's territory to the west from 1804. He also commanded the Nepalese troops against Sir David Ochterlony in the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-1816. He died in 1816 at Nil Khanta, north of Kathmandu, while trying to negotiate help for Nepal from the Chinese (1). Although many histori-

cal works on Nepal refer to only one man or, if referring to both, mix up their careers, the existence of these two commanders is well documented in contemporary accounts. The Secretary to the Government at Fort William, J. Adam, wrote to Ochterlony on 3rd August 1814 stating:

"... with reference to your remark that the outrage in Bootwul was probably committed under the orders of Ummer Sing Thappa, the Goorka commander in the western possessions of the Nepalese, that there are two chiefs of that name, and that the commander in Palpa and other districts in that quarter, who was the author of the encroachments in Bootwul, and probably of the late outrages there, is a different person from him who commands to the westward. The Palpa commander is the father of Bheem Seen, the Principal Minister of the Rajah of Nepal, and by that means possesses considerable influence at Court, which has been employed to obtain support to his iniquitous proceedings towards the British Government."(2)

Francis Buchanan Hamilton, who accompanied Captain W. D. Knox during his term as the East India Company's Resident Nepal from 1802 to 1803 also referred to, and distinguished between, both generals (3).

The careers of the two generals are difficult to unravel prior to 1804. An Amar Singh Thapa was prominent in Nepalese attempts to extend their empire westwards as early as 1781 and was one of the commanders of the forces that attacked Kumaon in 1790 and Garhwal in 1791-1792. All the western troops were recalled in 1792 to help defend Nepal in the war against Tibet and China. According to Stiller, who has based his detailed account of this period of Nepal's history on Both Nepali and English sources, this Amar Singh Thapa was the father of Bhim Sen Thapa (4). He was again in Kumaon in 1795 when he attempted to extend Nepali rule to part of the Kumaon Terai, an area under the protection of the Nawab of Oudh. He seems to have acted without the sanction of the court at Kathmandu in this action and was soon recalled when the Nawab began military preparations to counter the attack (5). General Amar Singh Thapa now seems to disappear from view until 1804 when he

(continued on next page)

Marshall, SEALS OF A. S. THAPA (cont.)--

was in Kathmandu with his son Bhim Sen Thapa, who returned with Ran Bahadur from Benares in that year.

Assuming that Stiller is correct in assigning the early western conquests to General Amar Singh Thapa, the early career of Kazi Amar Singh Thapa is obscure, although Pemble reports that he had "spent his life soldiering" (6). The first definite reference to him is a report that he had been "newly made" a Kazi in 1802 (7). This was a time of great unrest in Kathmandu. Rana Bahadur Shah, who took over control of Nepal from his uncle, Bahadur Shah, in 1794, abdicated in favour of his infant son, Girbana Yuddha Bikram Shah, in 1799, because of the wishes of his favourite rani who was dying. After her death he was responsible for such atrocities that he was forced to retire to Benares in 1800 leaving his junior rani as regent and Damodar Pande in charge of the government. The British took advantage of this crisis in Nepalese politics to press for a treaty with Nepal and the establishment of a British resident in Kathmandu. Captain Knox was appointed in 1801 and, despite much opposition in Kathmandu, including that of Kazi Amar Singh Thapa (8), a treaty was concluded in October of that year and Captain Knox entered Nepal in 1802. Meanwhile Rana Bahadur's senior rani, Rajrajeshwari Devi, left Benares and returned to Nepal. Damodar Pande and most of the military transferred their allegiance to her, and Damodar Pande was made her senior minister and most offices were filled by his supporters. Sometime during this period Kazi Amar Singh Thapa was jailed by Damodar Pande's faction. Soon after the senior rani's return Knox left Nepal and the 1801 treaty was declared null and void.

Rana Bahadur Shah returned from Benares in 1804 accompanied by a relatively unknown Nepali sardar named Bhim Sen Thapa as his advisor, and soon his chief minister. Damodar Pande was arrested and killed and Kazi Amar Singh Thapa released from jail. He was immediately assigned control of the armies in the west and given a large amount of autonomy in the way the campaign in this area would be conducted.

Rana Bahadur was himself killed in

1806 by his brother. Bhim Sen Thapa was now in control and one of his first actions was to kill the Raja of Palpa who had been imprisoned by Rana Bahadur. He then raised his father, Amar Singh Thapa "to the English rank of general" (9), appointed him Governor of Palpa and sent him with a large force to control the region. He established his headquarters in Tamsen and his efforts to extend the Gorkha influence further soon brought him into conflict with the British. It was the border conflicts in this area, particularly in Butwal and Sheoraj which were former tributaries of the Governor of Palpa, which were directly to lead to the outbreak of the Anglo-Nepalese War in 1814. General Amar Singh Thapa was at the forefront in the Gurkha defiance of British demands. As mentioned earlier he died in 1814 just before the outbreak of the War.

In contrast Kazi Amar Singh Thapa in the west counselled restraint and concession on the court at Kathmandu. During the expansion of the Nepalese territories to the west he had come into contact with the British and realised the differences between fighting the hill rajahs and taking on the forces of the East India Company. He carried on a correspondence with Colonel David Ochterloney on disputes in the hill areas, and even attempted to negotiate with Ochterloney on the disputes occurring in Butwal. When war broke out he commanded the Nepalese forces in the west against the forces led by Ochterloney by whom he was defeated in 1815 and forced to surrender. I have not described the events occurring in the years 1804-1814 in detail as they are fully documented in a number of books and the careers of the two Amar Singh Thapas are not generally in dispute in this period (10).

To return to the seals of these two military commanders. The large seal (Fig. 1) is definitely that of General Amar Singh Thapa, the Governor of Palpa. There are a number of further examples of this seal in A postal history collection of the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-1816 published by George Alevizos in 1981. This collection was compiled by Frank Vignola but was sold some years ago. It refers to only one Amar Singh Thapa - the father of Bhim Sen Thapa (concluded on next page)

Marshall, SEALS OF THAPA (concluded)--
and Governor of Palpa.

I feel it is possible that the small seal is that used by Kazi Amar Singh Thapa. My example (Fig. 2), dated 1809, seems to prove this as it concerns the war being waged against Sansar Chand in Kangra which the Kazi conducted from 1806 to 1809. There are four examples of covers with the small seal in Vignola's collection. Two, which show the reverse side of the covers to the seal, concern the campaign in the west. However the other two, according to the translations given, originated in Butwal. This I cannot explain although, as I have mentioned above, Kazi Amar Singh Thapa did write about the events there. I should perhaps mention that I have tried to contact the present owner of Frank Vignola's collection to get photocopies of both sides of the relevant covers but have had no success.

I should be interested in any comments members may have about these seals and my proposal that the small seal is that of Kazi Amar Singh Thapa.

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6. John Pemble, The Invasion of Nepal: John Company at war, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971, p. 20.

7. B. D. Sanwal, Nepal and the East India Company, London, Asia Publishing House, 1965, p. 108.

8. ibid.

9. Pemble, op. cit., p. 18; Hamilton, op. cit., p. 176.

10. For example see Pemble, op. cit. and Stiller, The rise of the house of Gorkha, op. cit.

TIBET TOTAL: A REVIEW

--Alan Warren

In 1988 a 48-page booklet was published in Spain entitled Tibet Total: For Stamp Collectors, written by Herbert Wachtel in an edition of 200 copies. The booklet measures 15 x 21 cm, is softbound and stapled, with the text given in both English and German. The monograph is well illustrated, with emphasis on the various stamp issues of Tibet. I would recommend this book to intermediate collectors who desire something more than what is found in the brief Scott or Gibbons catalogue listings, but the work is not nearly so detailed as Waterfall or the writings of Haverbeck.

The booklet begins with two rather crude maps of Tibet followed by brief discussions of the stamps and posts of Tibet and the history of the country. The Tibetan characters found in the text and values of that country's stamps are defined. Each stamp is illustrated twice, with English and again with German text. The major color varieties for each issue are listed, but the lists are nowhere near complete. A number of sheets are illustrated.

One page only is devoted to the Chinese offices in Tibet. The "official" stamps are described, but not the "telegraph" stamps. Cancellations are given short shrift, as are covers. The book is available from the author for 12 German marks. Write to Herbert Wachtel, Montemar 34 C, Benissa, Alicante, SPAIN, and enclose two IRCs for details.

SHOWCASE



Two impressions of the reverse side of a very rare cover purchased recently by Dick van der Wateren are shown above. Dick states that "I asked Wolfgang Hellrigl for a certificate. The cover is a so-called MAHASUL CHUKTI cover, sent in May 1880 from Jumla to Dailekh, both in the far West of Nepal -- about 350 miles West of Kathmandu.

The manuscript postmark reads: "MAHA(SUL) CHU(KTI) PAI(SA) (4?)" which means "Post paid, paisa (4?)" with the seal (Jumla) above, to the right of the middle. Dr. Hellrigl states that this is, at this time, the only known MAHASUL CHUKTI cover from Jumla and is, therefore, a unique cover." Dick's excitement is evident from his statement that he bought the cover for only DM 10.- (!). Your editor would add that the study of postal history can bring satisfying dividends.