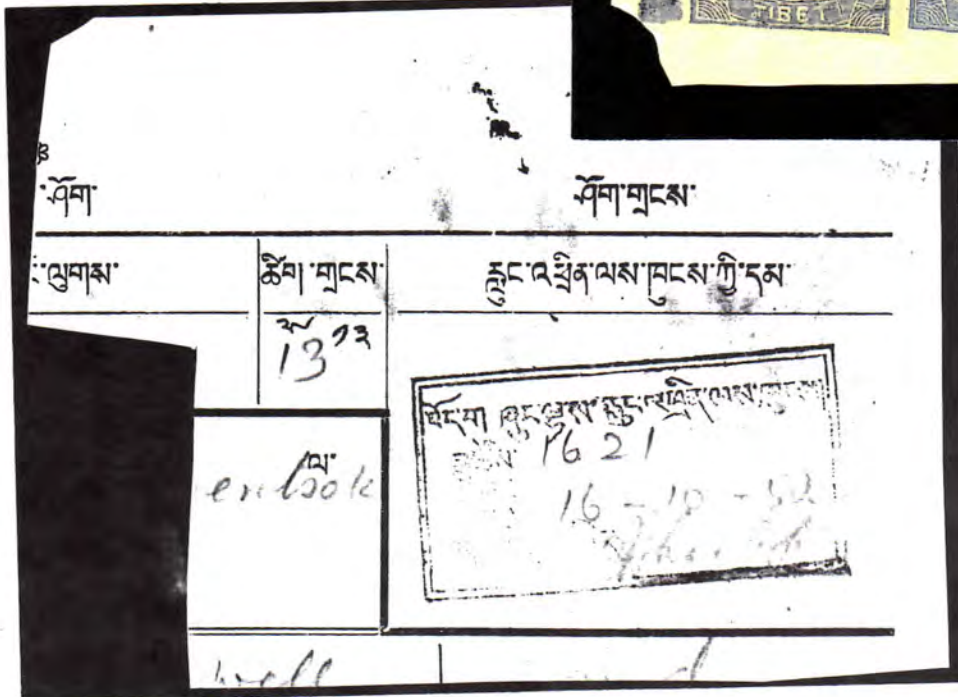


POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET

PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



**TIBET'S
WIRELESS
TELEGRAPH**



Postal Himal is a quarterly publication of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle. Membership subscriptions run from January through December of each year. Dues should be paid in local currency at the prevailing exchange rate to the society representative in your area.

MEMBERSHIP DUES AS OF January 1993

3rd & 4th Quarters 1993	One Year £12	Three Years £33	Life Member £250
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American Philatelic Society Affiliate #122 / British Philatelic Federation Affiliate #435

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Address Changes, Classified Ads	43
Editorial Leo Martyn	44
Letters To The Editor	46
Questions And Answers	47
P.O. Box Notice Kathmandu G.P.O.	47
"References To Bhutan In <u>The American Philatelist</u> " Roger Skinner	48
"Obituary - Dr. Alfred Orth" Wolfgang C. Hellrigl	48
"Tibet's Wireless Telegraph" Geoffrey Flack	49
"Nepal-India Combination Postal Card" Roger Skinner	56
"Fact Or Fantasy?" Frealon Bibbins	57
<u>"Nepal, Catalogue Of The Postal Stationery - 1887-1992 - New Information"</u> Dick van der Wateren	58
"Greetings For The New Year" Surrendra Lal Shrestha	61
"Nepal's 1941 Pashupati Two Pice Used On Land Document" Surrendra Lal Shrestha	62
"Of Sewing Machines, Perforations, and Other Kindred Tibetan Matters" Armand E. Singer	63
Auction Action Leo Martyn	70
"Australian Firm Buys Tibetan Stamp Rights" <u>The Stamp Wholesaler</u>	71
"A Tibetan Fantasy" George Bourke	72

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* * * * *

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING: FOR MEMBERS ONLY

One insertion, per line \$1.00
Four insertions, per line \$3.50
To calculate the number of lines your advertisement will require, count 74 letters, numerals, punctuation marks and blank spaces between words. Ads will be placed under appropriate headings without charge for the 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.

FOR SALE: TIBETAN STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY. I currently have a large stock of quality material from all periods. I would be glad to send you a selection tailored to your specific needs. Want lists invited. I also have a list of out-of-print books and articles on Tibetan philately for which I can provide photocopies. This will be sent to anyone requesting it. George Bourke, P.O. Box 1174, Jackson, Mi., 49201, U.S.A.

WANTED: Tibetan Local Post Stamps and Postal History from 1912 - 1960. Single stamps, multiples, sheets, covers and proofs. I am willing to pay good prices and or exchange other Tibet material of all periods, Nepal stamps (Pashupati and Gorkha Patra Press issues) or quality stamps of the whole world. Write to: Rainer Fuchs, Am Burkardstuhl 31, 8702 Himmelstadt, Germany.

WANTED: NEPAL FDCs, Folders, Gurkha Patra Press imperfs., classical issues, covers 1900-1960. Please ask for want-list. Heinz Schobel, Hornerstr. 1, D-2800 Bremen 1, Germany.

WANTED: CLASSIC AND PASHUPATI COVERS FROM Nepal. I will purchase and or trade better stamps and covers. Also wanted, better or unusual Nepalese covers from the 1950's and 1960's. Leo Martyn, P.O. Box 49263, Los Angeles, CA, 90049-0263, USA.

WANTED TO BUY - Bhutan. Postal history material. Especially fiscal stamps on cover or as tax documents, stampless covers ("skirt letters"), Indian, Tibetan or Nepalese covers addressed TO Bhutan prior to 1965. Also dual franked covers-Bhutan/Tibet, Bhutan/India and Bhutan/China. Write: Len Nadybal, Box 523, APO AE 09090, U.S.A.; or Goethestr. 11a, 65719 Hofheim, Germany; or FAX (Germany +49) 6192-27207.

TRADE: Nepal Postal Stationery Cards. I will trade a mint W5bb with double frame for one of the following - USED: W1a, 2aa, 2ab, 5a, 5bc, 6b; OR a mint 5b. Dick van der Wateren, Ysbaanweg 8, NL-8391 HZ Noordwolde, The Netherlands.

NEPAL: Extensive Price List free for the asking. Leo Martyn, P.O. Box 49263, Los Angeles, CA 90049-0263, U.S.A.

EDITORIAL

Leo Martyn

The site for the Study Circle mail auctions will be changing, starting with no. 66, as Colin Hepper is giving up the post as auctioneer.

The first auction was part of Issue No. 7 (Dec., 1977), totaling 10 lots! Since then, under Colin's control, the auctions have grown to some 250 lots per auction, sometimes offering items not available from any other source.

Preparing an auction is time consuming and arduous. Each item must be checked as to its condition, description (hopefully by the consigner) and evaluation; then listed. After, the auction funds have to be collected, recorded, lots sent out and proceeds distributed. Thank you Colin for an excellent job.

Now, for some insane reason, I have volunteered to take over some of the responsibilities of the auction (receiving material, lotting and describing). Roger Skinner has agreed to take care of the bookkeeping duties (I knew he had some free time Sunday mornings from 2:00 to 5:00 a.m.). Send all auction items to me and NOT to Colin, as he will probably be basking in the sun somewhere in Spain. I have also convinced Frealon Bibbins that he should be involved - so he will screen questionable Tibet items. The lots will be estimated in U.S. dollars - more details in the next issue.

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Our Study Circle meeting (s) at Napex '94 (June 24-26) should be something quite special. In attendance will be many members from the states plus some members from Europe, Canada and possibly other areas. We have been allocated 50 exhibit frames - applications should be sent in NOW as the official closing date for receiving prospectuses is Feb. 15. If you decide at the last moment that you want to exhibit you can FAX Michael Dixon (301 983 0857) by Feb. 15 stating that you want a certain number of frames and the prospectus and check are in the mail - be sure that you follow through. Any unrequested frames will be given to other exhibitors. So far, four of our members will be presenting exhibits, totaling 35 frames - only 15 more are available. If you need a prospectus contact me or Michael Dixon.

There will be some 50 to 60 dealers at the bourse including many of the bigger dealers in the U.S. and possibly some from Europe. Members can also bring items for sale/trade - this should be done outside of the show.

Since the Indian Study Circle is also a participating society there will be the opportunity for discussions concerning our very closely related areas of interest. John Warren, the Regional Secretary for the society, has suggested that our two groups get together (probably June 24) for dinner at a local Indian restaurant which is conveniently located to the show - this should be great fun. There is also a Nepalese restaurant called "Kathmandu" in Washington - very good but is somewhat more expensive. Listed below is some additional information.

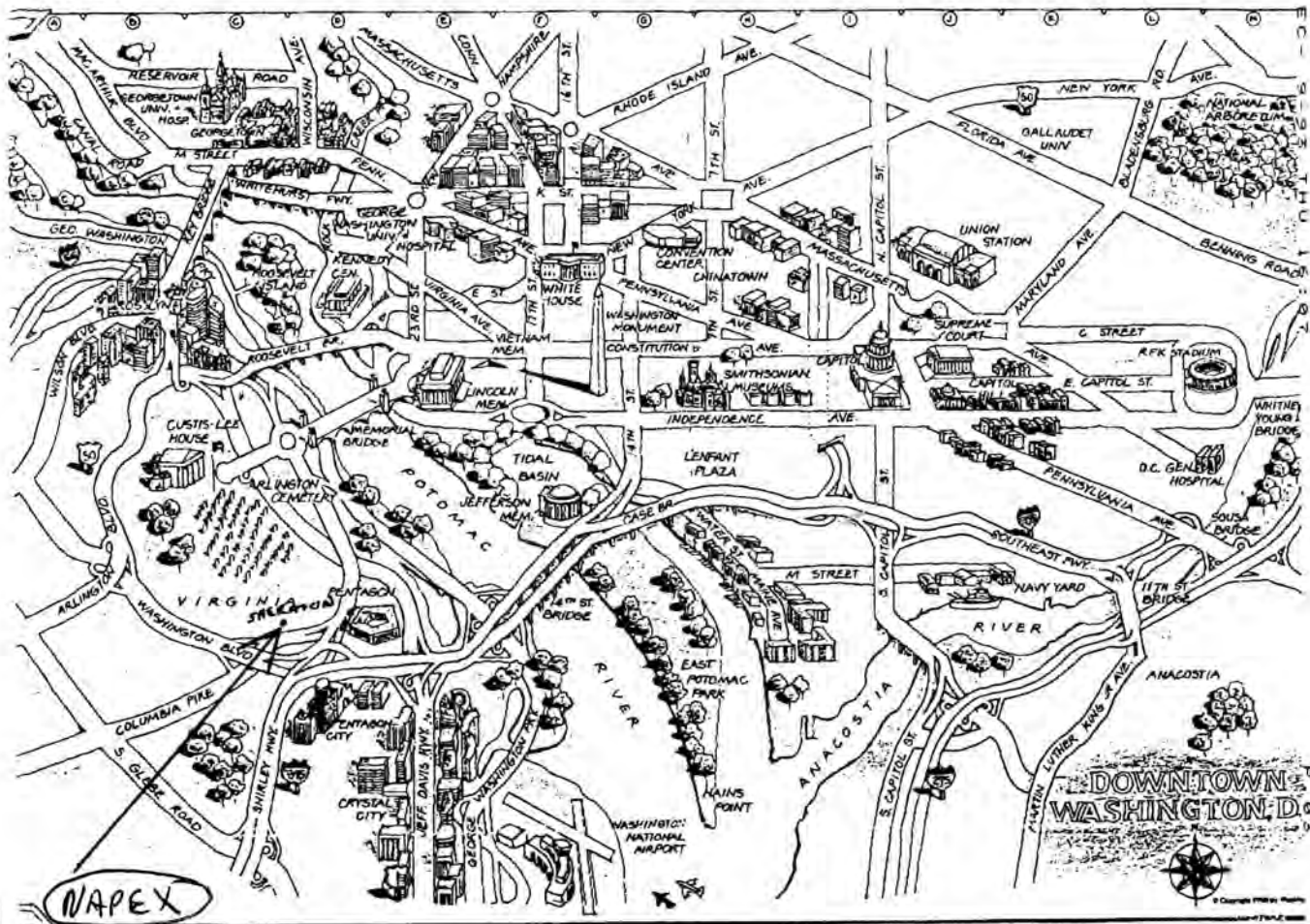
Napex '94 - National Stamp Exhibition June 24-26, 1994

Sheraton National Hotel - Columbian Pike & Washington Blvd.,

Arlington, Virginia 22204. Phone: 703/521-1900, 800/468-9090; FAX: 703/521-2122. Room rates: \$75.00 for single or double occupancy per room per night plus tax (9.95%). Reservations should be made by June 9 for guaranteed rate and availability. Complimentary shuttle service to and from the National Airport (use courtesy phone at the airport and call the hotel for pick-up). If you come in at Dulles Airport you can take the "Washington Flyer-Airport Connection" ground transportation to the National Airport (\$15 one-way, \$24 round-trip), then call the hotel for the free shuttle service. The "Washington Flyer" also goes to major hotels in the area but I do not know if this includes the Sheraton National.

Since the show is so close to Washington D.C. (some 15 minutes via the metro subway) there is the opportunity to visit the Capitol and all it has to offer,

including the truly wonderful and gigantic Smithsonian Institution and the new National Postal Museum (I have been told that there will be free shuttle service from the show to the Postal Museum). The Metrorail System provides access to most of the city's attractions and is an efficient and economical means of getting around. The Sheraton Hotel offers free shuttle service from the hotel to the metro stops at the Pentagon and Pentagon City. If you can spend more than three days in the area all the better - you need at least a week for the Smithsonian alone.



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We will be having our annual meeting at Westpex '94, April 29-May 1 in San Francisco. There will be one (May 1, 11:00 a.m.), possibly two meetings. Any member who would like to present a talk and or a slide-show should contact Roger Skinner (1020 Covington Road, Los Altos, CA 94022) so that the title of the presentation can be included in the program. This is always a great show with many fine exhibits, a rewarding bourse (some 50 dealers including three or four from Europe) and all that San Francisco has to offer. All members who can attend are encouraged to do so. Additional information is available from Roger or me. See you there?

WESTPEX '93

April 29 - May 1 Quality/Cathedral Hill Hotel Van Ness at Geary Avenue
 San Francisco California

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Vernon Richards was awarded a Vermeil award for his "Tibet 1933 Issue" exhibit at Vicpex '93 (Victoria, Canada).

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Geoffrey Flack's article titled "Tibet's Wireless Telegraph" is only a prelude to a much more in depth treatise on the subject, which will probably be published later this year (an announcement will appear in the Postal Himal).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Martyn,

14 November 1993

I am writing to you in your capacity as Editor of the excellent Postal Himal. Since becoming a member of the Study Circle I have greatly enjoyed receiving and reading your publication.

I started collecting stamps as a young child, under the watchful gaze of my late grandfather. After some years I became rather bored with "Britain and Commonwealth" and my albums and tweezers lay neglected. So how did I become interested in the stamps and postal history of such a far-away and exotic place as Tibet? Well - on a whim, and through my work!

I was greatly interested by Dan Edward's article on "Books on Nepal: Travel Guides" in Postal Himal No. 74. His statement about wanting to learn about the language, culture or history of a country of which one collects stamps is an exact reversal of how things happened for me.

For three years I worked as a copyeditor for the Royal Society in London. During that time I dealt with papers and reviewed articles for publication in the Society's journals, mainly in the physical sciences (physics, maths, chemistry, geophysics etc.). Two special publications might be of interest to some readers of Postal Himal. The first is Tectonic Evolution of the Himalayas and Tibet, ed. Shackleton, Dewey and Windley, 1988, The Royal Society, 325 pp., £ 65. This book reviews the mountain range and plateau, and is based on a discussion meeting held at the Society.

The second book is The Geological Evolution of Tibet. Report of the 1985 Royal Society - Academia Sinica Geotraverse of Xizang - Qinghai Plateau, ed. Chang Cherfa (leader) and others, 1988, The Royal Society, 413 pp., pullout, microfiches, maps, £ 95 (U.K.).

Both publications were a joy to work on, and anyone who is especially interested could try a library, or buy a copy from the Royal Society (Publications), 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG, England. I hope that some copies are still available!

So how did this lead on to collecting the stamps of Tibet? Well, one day we went to our local stamp dealer; my husband was looking for something obscure from Russia or the Baltic States. I said "I bet you haven't got any stamps from Tibet" - but he had! I then read about the Study Circle, joined, got in touch with George Bourke (who has sent me some beautiful material) and so here we are, up to date! And believe me, Tibetan philately is certainly a conversation stopper!

Kindest regards,
Beverly Lawrence
England

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Dear Mr. Martyn,

'The Postal Himal' No. 74 is in hand. I am glad to go through the report of the finding of the Tibetan Booklets but disappointed to see the pane of the same in original colour. It is likely to be misused later on as proof. It would have been much better if some prints were made at the back of the same.

My congratulation to Mr. Geoffrey Flack.

Yours Sincerely,
S.C. Sukhani
India

[Editor. I believe Mr. Sukhani is suggesting that the reverse of the illus-

tration on the cover should have had a handstamp indicating that it was not genuine. This did not occur to me, but I doubt that it could be passed off as genuine since the reproduction was fourth generation (original-photo-color photocopy-color photocopy), resulting in a color quite different from the original. I hope more members will write as suggestions and criticisms are always welcome.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Dear Editor,

This is a 1989 cover bearing 5 Bhutanese stamps, one of which is an inverted 55ch surcharge on 3nu (Mi. 81) which apparently seems to be a variety of Mi. 461, one of the 1971 surcharge set of 13. Does any catalog list this stamp?

Nakagawa Susumu, Poste Restante, Ono Post Office, Itami, Hyogo-Pref, 664 Japan.

Due to construction work sorting to P.O. Boxes cannot be done from

20 March through 27 March, 1993

This measure affects all P.O. Boxes Nos. 705 onwards.

The new P.O. Box Section will be re-opened on

28 March, 1993

The Chief Postmaster, Kathmandu G.P.O.

[Ed. This P.O. box notice was sent in by Mr. Ajit Shaw.]

REFERENCES TO BHUTAN IN THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST

Roger Skinner

The Western Philatelic Library received a donation of the recent (1991) new index to the first 100 years of The American Philatelist. The list of articles dealing with Bhutan from 1887 to 1986 is as follows - the references are to: Volume/Issue:Page numbers.

BHUTAN

Air Mail		
First Flight Covers: Fraudulent (by West)		85/3:497.
Postage Stamps		
1954-70 Issues, markings, (by West)		84/5:423-30. 84/6:518-22. 85/6:500.
1962, First Issues, (by Lidman).		75/12:915.
1978, Provisional overprints		93/11:1036.
Postal History		
Postal Offices, Services, Development, 1962-65 (India's Stamp Journal)		80/2:138.
Postal Markings		
1954-70 Issues, Markings (by West)		84/5:423-30. 84/6:518-522, 568. 85/6:497-500.
Revenues		
1953-70's Issues		91/4:254-56.
1954-70 Issues (by West)		85/6:497.

All are available from the Sunnyvale Public Library through the inter-library loan system; usually at a low cost from your own local library. Or they can be obtained from the Friends of the Western Philatelic Library (FWPL) for a small charge of 15 cents per page plus \$1.50 for postage and handling.

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Obituary - Dr. Alfred Orth

Wolfgang Hellrigl

A member of our Study Circle, Dr. Alfred Orth, of Germany, died on 14th July, 1993, at the age of 68 years. His main philatelic interests centered on Tibet and Mongolia, of which he formed outstanding collections. Although he rarely exhibited, his Mongolia was shown at Stamp World Exhibition London 1990 where it was awarded a Large Vermeil medal.

His vast reference material and his studies enabled him to become an expert and, in the 1980s, he was granted membership of the A.I.E.P., the International Association of Philatelic Experts. He published various articles on Mongolia, with special emphasis on the local overprints and their various forgeries.

With Dr. Orth our Study Circle sadly loses a philatelist who had an excellent knowledge of Tibet, particularly of the Imperial Chinese period but also of the local issues. A retired dentist, he leaves his wife and a daughter.

TIBET'S WIRELESS TELEGRAPH

...by *Geoffrey Flack*

Important philatelic discovery throws new light on the Postage Stamps and "Wireless Telegraph" stamps of Tibet.

Since they first appeared in the early 1950s, the so called "wireless telegraph" or "radio telegraph" stamps of Tibet have presented a problem for Tibet collectors. There has been no agreement on whether they were ever genuinely used or whether they were produced solely for collectors and their money.

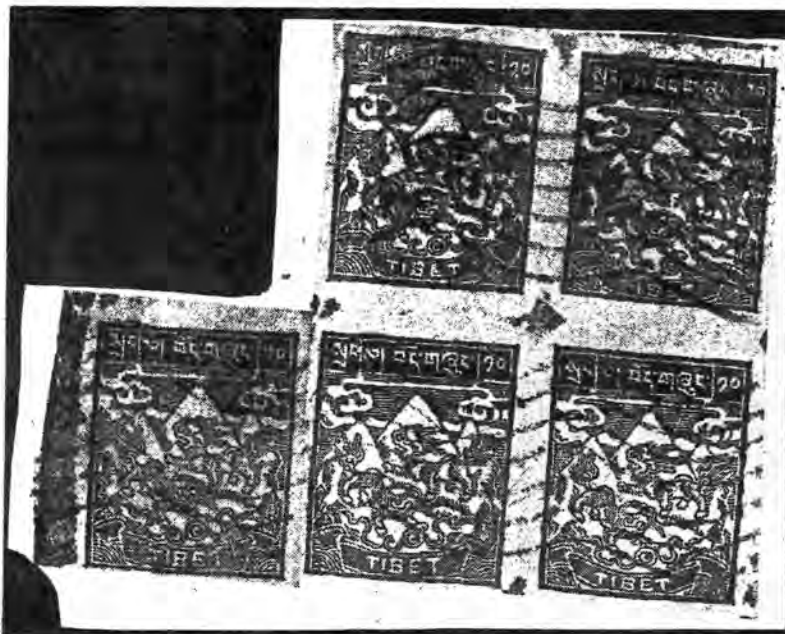
The wireless telegraph in Tibet had its origins soon after World War One and by the middle of the 1930s both the British and Chinese Legations in Lhasa were able to communicate with the outside world by wireless. With the end of the Second War and the possible victory of the Communists in China, the Tibetan Government started to see the advantages of setting up a wireless telegraph system under their own control.



Robert Ford leaving Gangtok on his journey into Tibet.

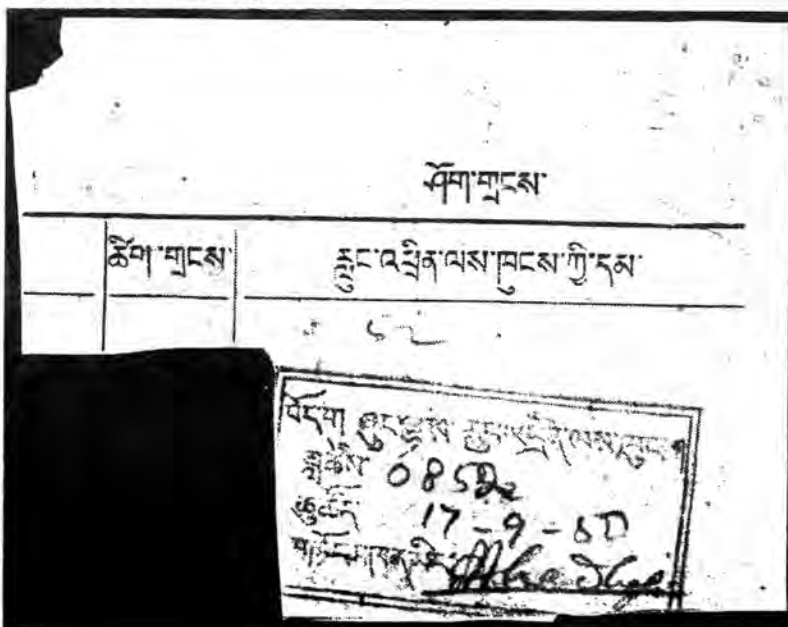
In May of 1947, a young Englishman, Robert Ford, was given the job of setting up this system. In his book, *Captured in Tibet*, Ford made reference to the fact that "every telegram and call had to be backed with a receipt with a cancelled stamp". Despite Ford's words, many serious collectors of Tibet still doubted the legitimacy of these stamps and saw them solely as philatelic creations. Their appearance in the early 1950s (at a time of great turmoil in Tibet) meant they were to be lumped together with the "Officials" and other items of a questionable "philatelic" nature.

In the early 1980s, a most important philatelic "find" was made in Nepal. This original "find" consisted of four stamp items backed by small pieces of wireless telegraph "forms" or paper bearing the (rubber?) cancel of the "Lhasa Telecommunications Centre". (The stamps found on these documents were... 10 Sang Wireless stamps, 8 Trangka 1914-20 design and 1 Sang ..1912 design.) I was fortunate to buy this material two years ago. Since then, I have been able to find a few more items and to slowly piece together the puzzle. The story is not complete, but what has been found helps to clear up several of the mysteries of Tibetan philately. These new discoveries not only prove the legitimacy of the "Wireless Telegraph" stamps, but they show the purpose of the mysterious One Sang (1912 design) and the late printings of the 8 Trangka. This material also throws new light on late printings of the 1/6 Trangka.



10 Sang Wireless Telegraph stamps on partial wireless telegraph form.
(Back shown below.)

Two of the most important items each bear five copies of the 10 Sang wireless stamp tied to partial wireless forms. The piece on the left is the most important of the two and bears a complete sheet of the 10 Sang plus a single. It is cancelled with a seven wavy line killer in black. The sheet and the single are in two distinct shades of blue.



"Page or Form" (i.e. Telegraph Form)

"Words" Number of words.	"Seal of Telecommunications Centre"
-----------------------------	---

"52" (It should be franked with 52 Sang .. 2 Sang in postage has probably been removed.)

"Lhasa Telecommunications Centre" (the first 3 characters denote Lhasa)
Time ... 8:52 am
Date .. September 17, 1950
Operator's Name

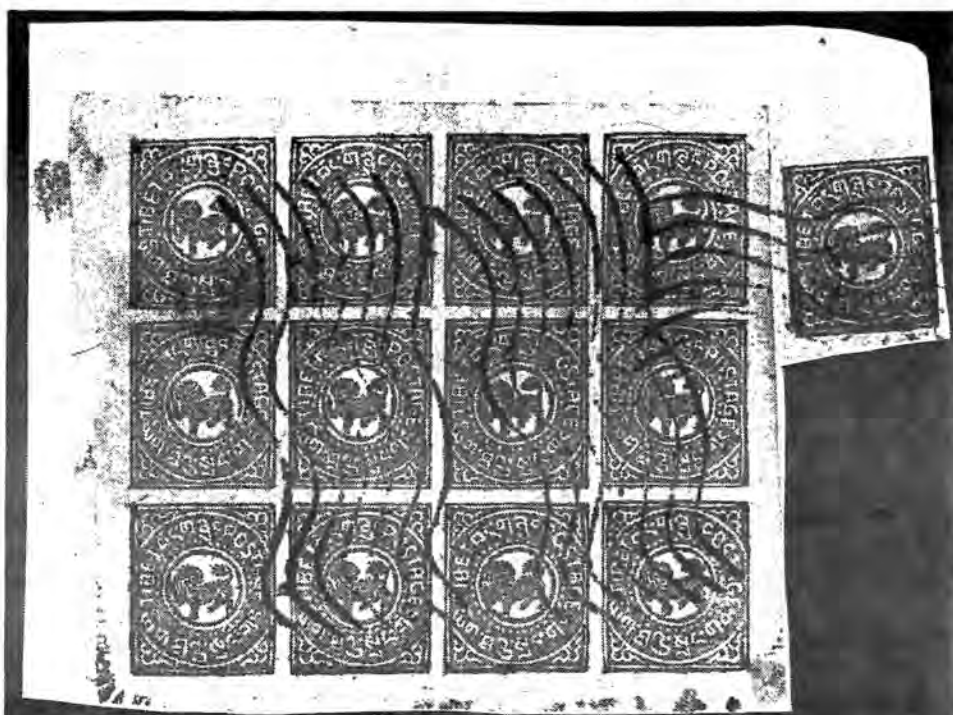
The other piece bearing wireless stamps also has five copies of the 10 Sang, but this time they are all singles stuck on thin native paper (this piece has not been illustrated). I believe the paper is part of the trader's account book. The stamps were, in this case, removed from the wireless form and stuck into this account book as a receipt or record. The top three are cancelled by a black wavy line cancel whereas the bottom two bear a similar cancel in violet. The cancels do not actually tie the stamps to the native paper. The three stamps at the top are backed by part of a wireless form and bear the "Lhasa Telecommunications Centre" cancel on the back. The cancel is dated August 10, 1950, the earliest date to be found on any of the pieces. The fact that the two cancels are different colours might indicate they came from different wireless forms or it might mean the stamps were sometimes cancelled prior to being stuck to the form. Ford said the forms were backed by "cancelled stamps".

The 10 Sang value is the only "Radio Telegraph" stamp found on any of the documents, but it shows the legitimacy of the issue and there is little doubt that the other values of this series were used on similar forms. I believe many of the used copies that have been found were genuinely used on wireless forms and later removed. Examples of these stamps can be found on covers which appear to be philatelic. It is possible that such covers were used to deliver the telegrams, but this is purely speculation and the covers may be no more than interesting philatelic creations.

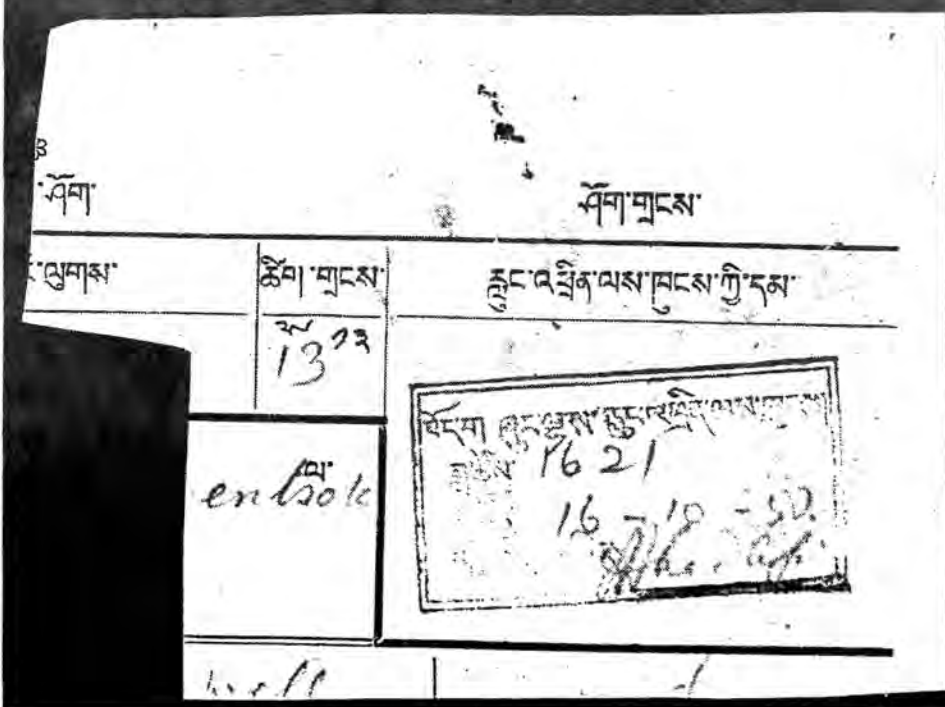


"Philatelic" (?) cover bearing 3 values of the Radio Telegraph stamps tied by the "Seven Wavy Line" cancel in black. The cover also bears a "Lhasa to Gyantse" (Hellrigl Type I) directional mark and boxed Registration Mark.

The 1 Sang issue of Tibet was first recorded in the early 1950s. Its discovery startled Himalayan collectors at the time and has remained one of the great philatelic mysteries of Tibet. These 1912 type stamps first appeared in 1952 and can be found mint, CTO (Lhasa Type VIII) and cancelled with a seven wavy line cancel in various colours. Philatelic covers, dating from the early 1950s exist, but it is unlikely the stamps had any postal value (or were ever commercially used). Most Tibet specialists believed the blocks or printing plates of the 1 Sang were produced in 1912 at the time of the other five values, but they were not issued at that time. In the early 1950s there was a frenzy of activity for all things Tibetan and many specialists believe the blocks were found and the stamps printed purely to satisfy collector demands and to make a little money in the process.

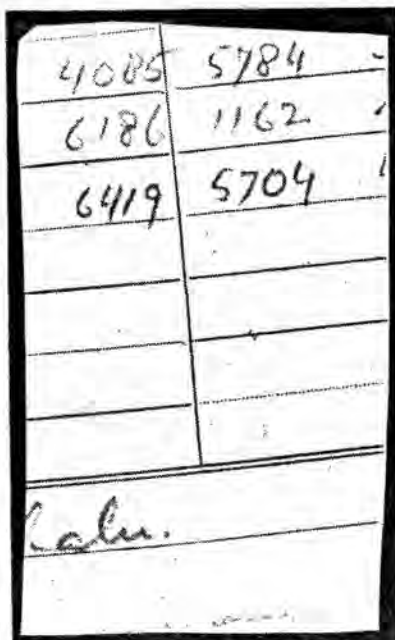


The sheet and single, to the left, throw new light on the One Sang. It proves that the purpose or reason for introducing this high value stamp was for use with the wireless telegraph and it was not purely philatelic. They may have been introduced as a temporary measure to be used until the special wireless telegraph stamps were ready, or they may have been viewed as having an ongoing purpose. (The date on this particular document suggests the latter, though they may have been using up old stock.)



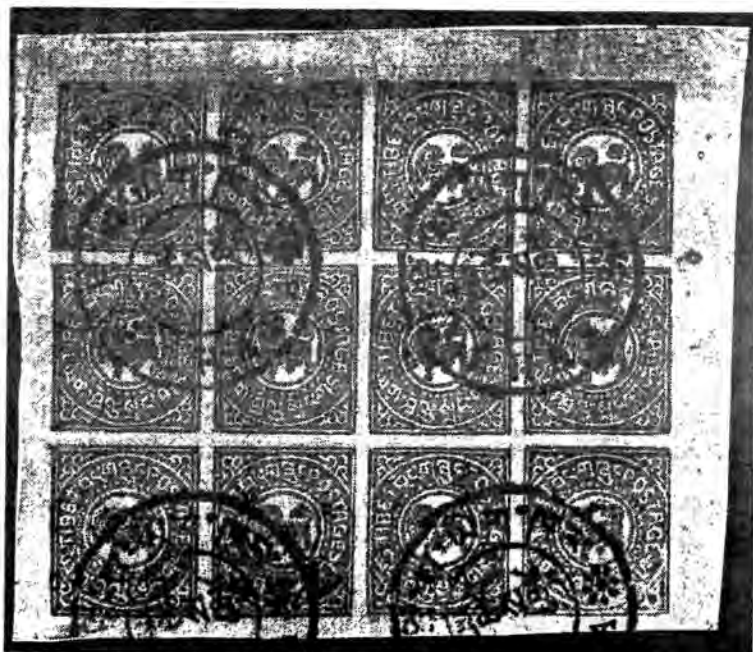
This is the largest piece of a radio telegram form that has been found. It is also from the Lhasa station and was sent at 4:21 in the afternoon of October 16, 1950. The telegram was 13 words

long and bears 13 Sang in payment, from which we might conclude the rate was 1 Sang per word (unfortunately we do not know the destination). We can see enough of the telegram to see that it was written in English.



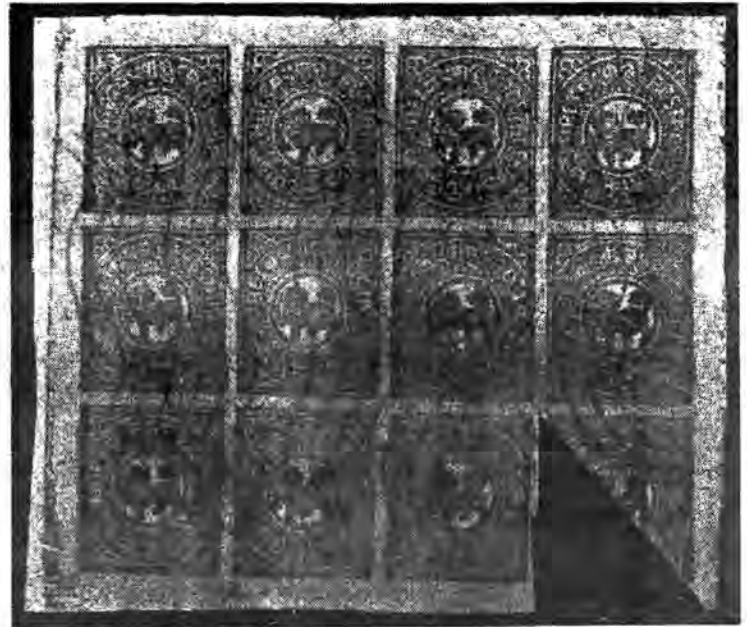
Several other multiples of the 1 Sang on partial telegram forms have been found. One of the more interesting is a half sheet showing the message in numerical code. Robert Ford, in his book *Captured in Tibet* explained how numerical codes were used to send commercial messages. *"When the service was started each Tibetan letter was assigned a two-figure number, and copies of this letter-number code were printed and put on public sale. There was also a copy in the radio station, and we made it a rule that anyone wanting to send a radio telegram should turn it into numbers before he handed it in. Similarly the message was delivered in numbers at the other end, and the recipient had to turn it back into letters."* Ford went on to say, *"Some of the traders, fearing the messages might be intercepted by business rivals, had made up codes of their own."* (I have

been fortunate to meet with Mr. Ford on several occasions and he said the wireless system was set up primarily for diplomatic and military reasons, but there was some paid commercial traffic. He said the commercial traffic was soon discontinued because of the worsening military situation.) This piece not only shows the message in numerical code, but the form is perforated along the bottom. This tells us the forms were printed in books or pads.



One of the most important pieces to be discovered is this sheet of 1 Sang cancelled with Lhasa Type VIII native cancels. There is a small part of a telegram form on the back. This shows us the Lhasa Type VIII postal cancel was used as a wireless telegraph cancel as well. Is it possible, that all the so called CTO sheets were legitimately used for sending telegrams or wireless messages?

A number of telegraphically used sheets of the 1 Sang have been found with half a stamp removed. These might indicate a rate of eleven and a half Sang ... requiring one stamp to be bisected. Unfortunately, they were thought to be damaged and many of these sheets were cut up or the 1/2 stamp was cut off making sheets of 11 Cliches. None of these sheets has been found attached to wireless forms, but enough examples have been seen to indicate they were much more than sheets with one damaged stamp.



A number of copies of the 1/6tr. (1912 Issue) can be found with wavy line cancels. These seem to be late printings in the same colour as the 1 Sang. Waterfall records these late printings, but they have not been mentioned with the wavy line cancel. There is evidence of a wireless rate of 1 Sang a word .. which would require more than 40 of these stamps per word! One possible explanation might be that the 1/6tr. plate or printing block was mistakenly used rather than the 1 Sang. Both values are printed in the same colour and there is only a small difference in the design of the two stamps. It would be easy to mistake the two. An error of this kind might account for the scarcity of this value and would also explain why such a low value might have been printed. Late printings of the 1/3tr and 2/3tr values of the 1912 design are known to exist, but they are not known with radio telegraph cancels.



As with the 1 Sang stamp, most Tibet specialists believed that the late printings of the 4 & 8tr. values of the 1914-20 issue were produced solely to satisfy collector demands in the early 1950s. The early printings of this Second Series of Tibet are very rare and were possibly printed for use on land-line telegrams or parcels. By the mid-1920s the plates or printing blocks were put aside and stored. With the introduction of the wireless or radio-telegraph system, the 8 Trangka was reprinted and put to use. Several examples of this 8tr. value tied to partial wireless-telegraph forms have been found, including the piece on the left. This pair is backstamped with a dated cancel of the "Lhasa

Communication Centre" or Radio-Telegraph office (the cancel is dated October, 1950). This pair of 8 Trangka does not seem to be attached to a "printed" telegraph form. The stamps were glued to blue lined paper, the back of which bore the telegraph cancel. This paper in turn was glued to some thin native paper. This native paper was in all likelihood the account or record book of the person who sent the message. In addition to the pair I have illustrated, I have found a block of four of the 8 Trangka cancelled with the wavy line cancel and glued to the blue paper. Part of the telegraph message is visible, but the back of the piece does not bear the telegraph cancel.

Some of these 8 Trangka stamps ended up in the hands of philatelists or their agents and, like the 1 Sang, they are known mint, CTO, on philatelic covers and with wavy line cancels. The late printings of the 4 Trangka (milky blue) are much scarcer than the 8 Trangka and no examples bearing wireless cancels have been recorded. In all likelihood, a few copies of this 4 Trangka were printed for philatelic purposes at the same time the 8tr was resurrected and reprinted for use with the wireless.

The wireless telegraph system in Tibet was established in the closing days of an Independent Tibet, on the very eve of the Chinese takeover. Use was restricted to a matter of months, which helps explain the rarity of these items and why so little has been found in the intervening years. These few stamps tied to radio telegraph forms are very important, as they help to solve a number of the mysteries of Tibetan philately. They help to clear up the controversy which surrounds the wireless telegraph issue and they reveal the purpose of the 1 Sang as well as the late printings of the 8 Trangka.

For hundreds of years, the "Roof of the World" was a land whose secrets attracted so many great explorers. Tibetan philately and the chance of a "discovery" allow us to become modern day adventurers and share in some of her mysteries.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people who helped me in researching this article. Foremost is Robert Ford .. the man who set up the Tibetan Government's radio-telegraph system in the late 1940s. I was fortunate to meet with him in 1992 as well as earlier this year. Mr. Ford has never been a philatelist and many years have passed since his days in Tibet, but his help was invaluable and I am honoured by his friendship. I would also like to thank Nic Rhodes for his contribution and support. Mr. C. Tulsyan, Kurt Danke, George Alevizos, Leo Martyn and Ben Kaufmann must be mentioned and thanked. Without the help of these individuals this article could not have been completed .. that said, any shortcomings are mine alone. For the last two years, Mr. Nic Rhodes and I have been compiling information on the Telegraph and Radio-Telegraph system of Tibet ..any additional help or information would be appreciated.

*Geoffrey Flack
Box 65987, Station F
Vancouver, B.C.
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NEPAL-INDIA COMBINATION POSTAL CARD

Roger Skinner



This Nepalese postal stationery postcard was used as an illustration in an article titled "INDIAN NATIVE STATES" by A. Eugene Michael in Stamps magazine of August 31, 1940 (Vol. 32, No. 9). This multipaged article only contained the following brief paragraph with reference to Nepal:

"Nepal had a postal system which was intended exclusively for the Nepalese, and letters franked with its stamps were not accepted outside the state. If a foreigner posted a letter from one place in Nepal to another, and the address was not inscribed in native characters, it was rewritten by the postmaster. Nepal is not really an Indian Native State, but its postal practice is in about the same category."

Herman Herst Jr., the noted philatelic writer and historian, offered the following information regarding Mr. Michel:

"A. Eugene Michel was an elderly man in my time. He did a weekly column for over ten years in Lindquist's "Stamps". He called his column "Covers that Scream History". There is a complete file of them in the Western Philatelic Library (in Sunnyvale) as well as the APRL, CCNY and other good philatelic libraries.

"He did not care about the philately of cover collecting. He liked the story that the cover told. He must have died in the 1940's or a bit later, when the feature stopped."

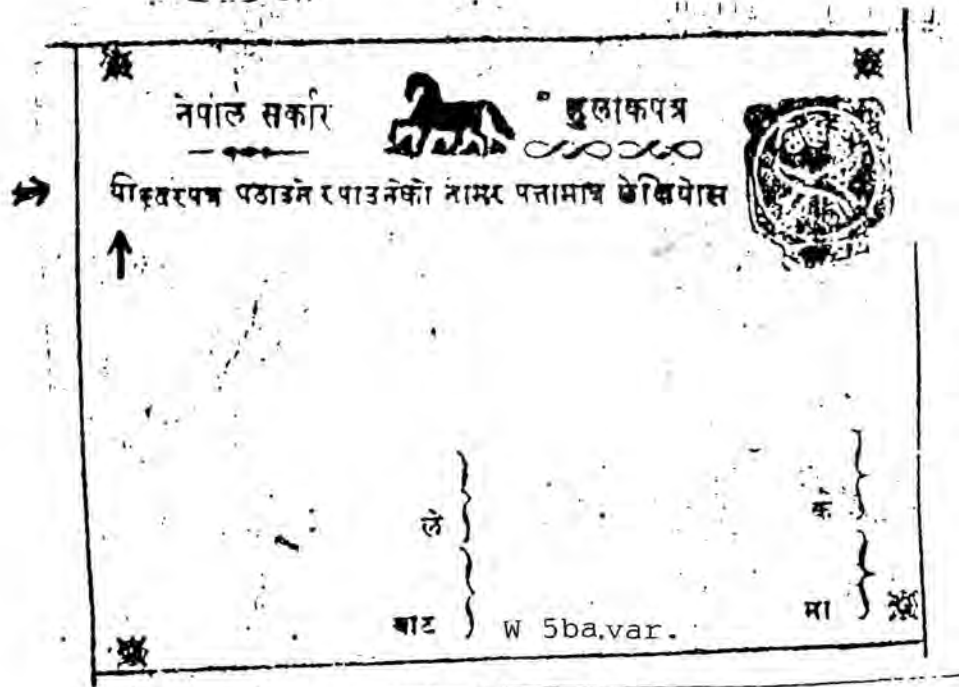
And that's it! Okay for 1940 but WHERE is that first issue post card now? If any one can supply a photocopy of the back of the card please send it to me or the editor.

"NEPAL, CATALOGUE OF THE POSTAL STATIONERY - 1887-1892 - New Information"

Dick van der Wateren

After publishing the "Catalogue" I received a number of reactions from some collectors, varying from photocopies of stationery which differ from illustrated ones to new dates of use. Also, after obtaining a large lot of mostly early postcards, I found some unrecorded types or sub-types.

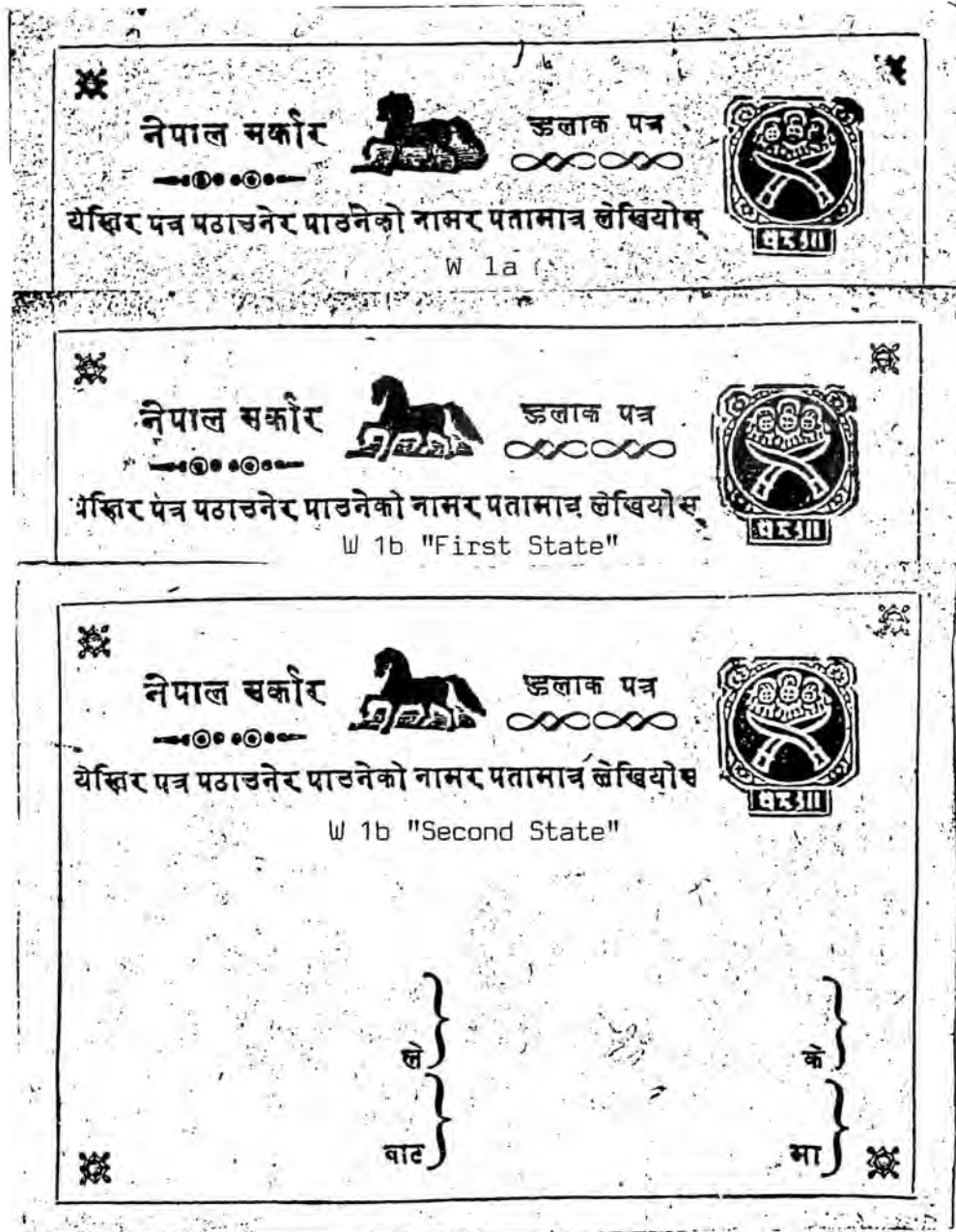
I would like to thank Derek Bates, Michael Furfie, Colin Hepper, Leo Martyn, Bishnu Lal Shrestha and Surendra Lal Shrestha for their respected assistance.



Colin Hepper sent me a photocopy of postcard W 5ba with the vowel on "YASTIR" placed on the first character instead of on the second. Colin's card also shows a very large break in the right hand frame. Text and frame are of a smaller size than the card illustrated in the "Catalogue".

From Derek Bates, Michael Furfie and Leo Martyn I received photocopies of used W 5a cards, all sent from Kathmandu with clear KTM-date stamps varying from June 1905, February 1907 to November 1910. The rarity of this card in used condition listed with (?) must be indicated as (RRR) and priced (1300). The copy Leo sent me (with Hellrigl certificate 1988/46) shows some small differences in the spacing of some characters and ornaments. That may be right, but on the other hand comparable differences can be found on many other card types. For instance, all my W 4ab cards meet the criteria used for the "Catalogue", but show differences in the length of the text, the framelines and in the corner ornaments, etc.

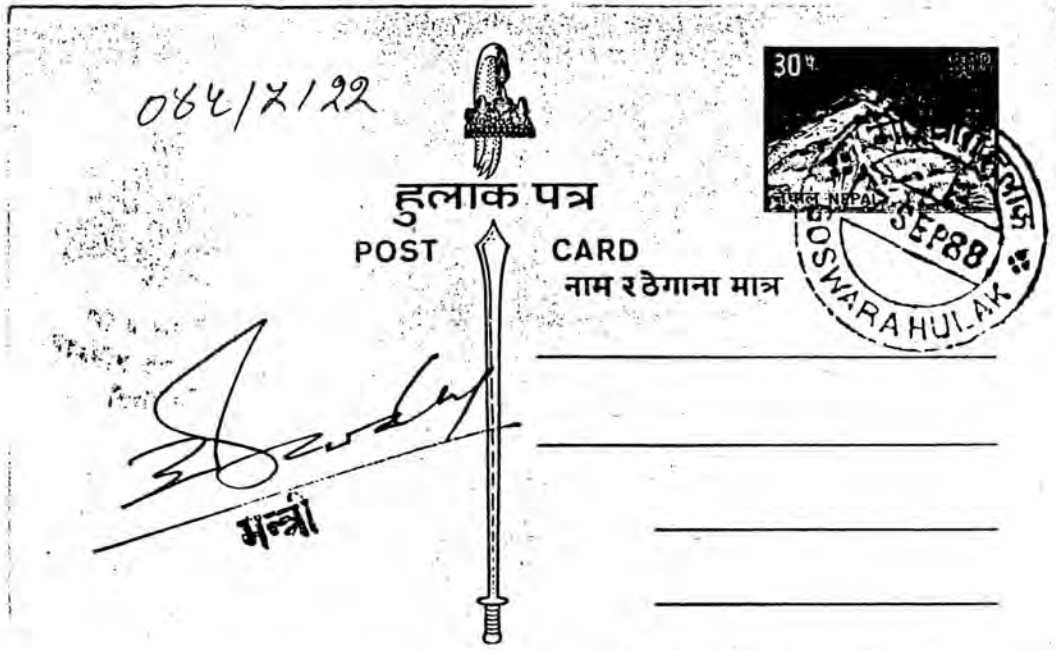
In March, 1993, I bought at the counter of the Kathmandu G.P.O. a handful of 50 paise aerogrammes, all of which were type 18. So the catalogue prices of DM 25 (X and O) are to be reduced to DM 2 and DM 3 respectively.



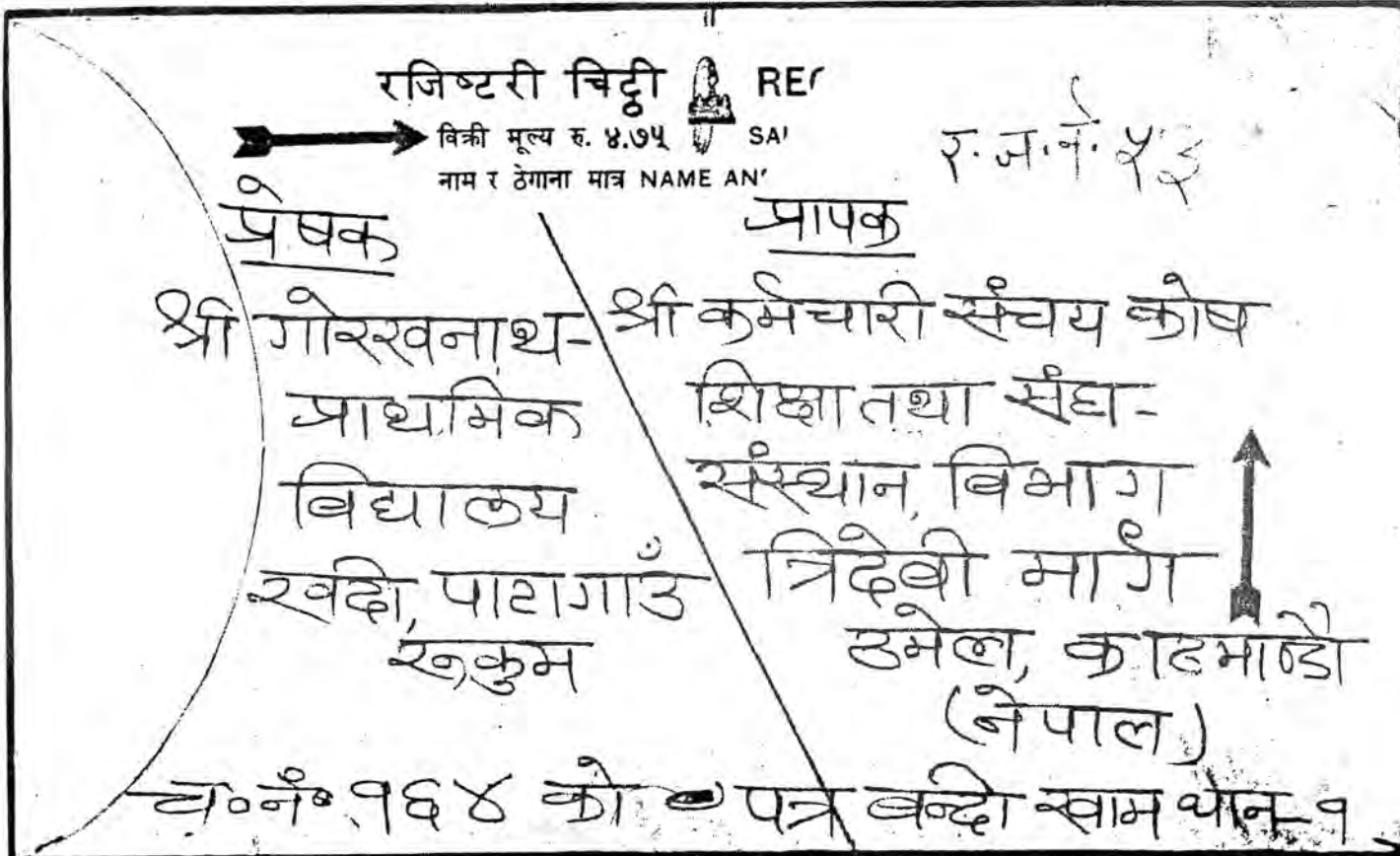
I found, what I believe, a remarkable variety of card W 1b. Compared to card W 1a, card W 1b (both illustrated in the "Catalogue") shows three differences:

1. Type of horse: 1a-type 1, 1b-type 2.
2. Last word of the large text does not end with the "tail".
3. Upper right corner ornament is shifted 2 mm towards the corner.

The new variety I found shows only one difference - the horse, otherwise it is identical to card 1a (the "tail" after the word Lekhiyos is the same and the upper right corner ornament is in exactly the same position as on card W 1a). This new variety is loosely related to card W 1a and can be regarded as the "first state" of card 1b; the card illustrated in the "Catalogue" as the "second state" of W 1b. So far I have found four copies of this "first state".



Bishnu Lal Shrestha advised me that the date of issue for postcard W 16 and envelope W 12, listed as September 8, 1988 is not correct. The correct date is September 7, 1988 as shown on copies of both items with manuscript dates of 045/5/22, corresponding to the September 7 cancel (Goswara Hulak) and the signature of the Communication Ministry, H.E. Hari Bahadu Basnegat.



From Surrendra Lal Shrestha's collection I received a photocopy of the Rs. 4.50 Registry Envelope W4 with the stamp and part of the printed text omitted, an interesting variety. The envelope is used, but not cancelled on the front.

In addition, I have found card W 2c used in June of 1896 and card 5bd used in May of 1922.

I have not received any notice from collectors regarding the text (said to be longer than on W2ca) on card W2c and therefore cannot illustrate this type. This also goes for card W 5b for which I would like to receive a clear photocopy. Can anyone supply illustrations of these two cards?

Furthermore, I would be very glad to receive photocopies of first issue cards sent from towns other than Kathmandu. So far I know of the following cancellations: Birganj (W 4a), Chisapani (W 4aa and 4 ab), Kalaiya (W 2ca and W 3), Palpa (W 2ab) and Parasi (W 3).

Regarding cards type W 6 I know of cancellations from: Amlekhganj, Chisapani, Birganj, Bhimphedi and Lalitpur - all addressed to Kathmandu. And of cards types W 7 cancellations are known from: Bhimphedi (to KTM), Birganj (to KTM and Lalitpur), Lalitpur (to Birganj), Trisuli (to KTM) and Kathmandu (to Birganj).

Any collector who has additional information is kindly requested to send me such for publication in the Postal Himal.

* * * * *

To, All the members of N&PSC

नयाँ वर्षको उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक शुभ-कामना

*Best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year
1994*

Meilleurs voeux pour la nouvelle annee



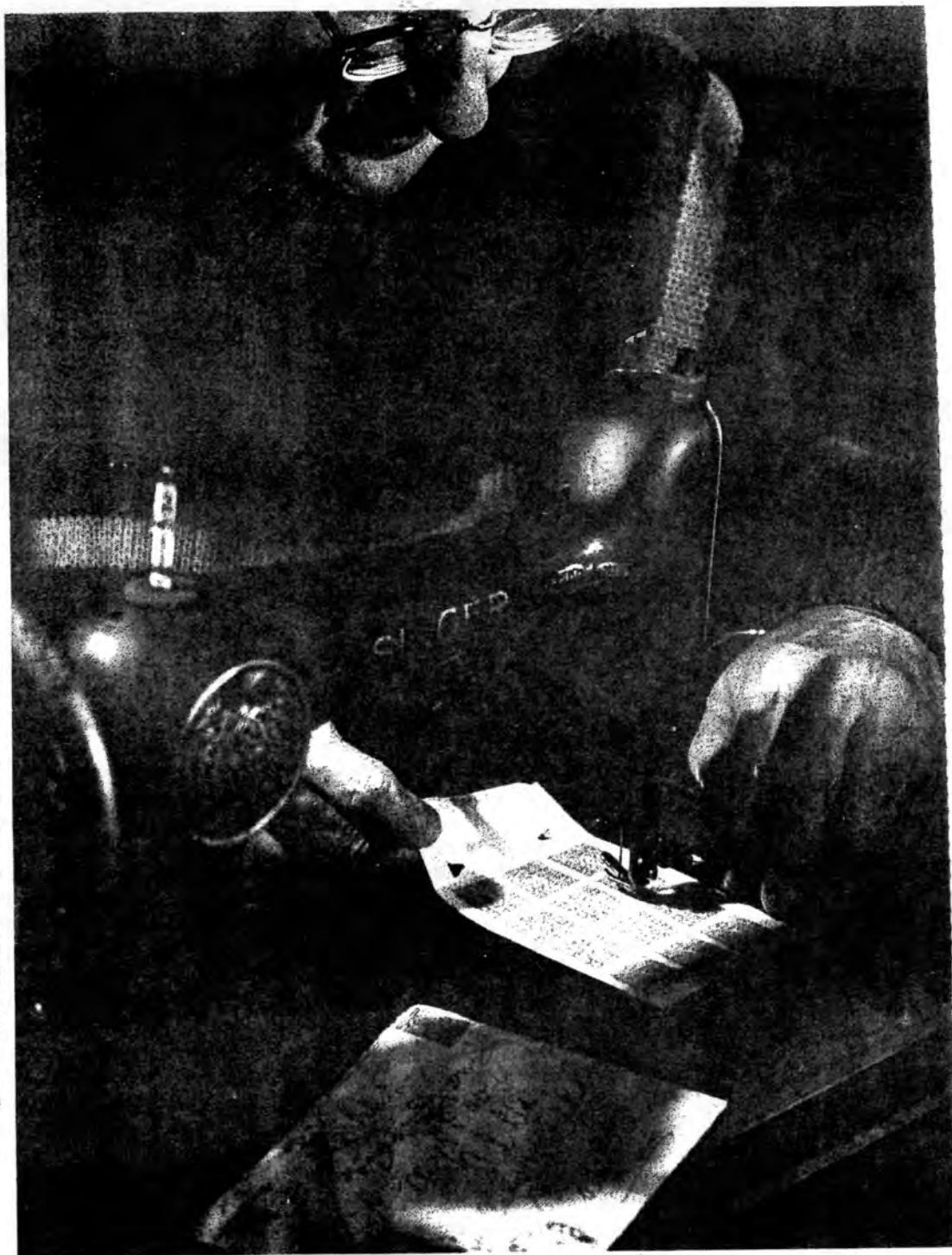
*S. Shrestha
Nepal Representative
for N&PSC*

Nepal 1993 5R stamp showing Sundari Chowk (also known as Tusha Hiti). Built by King Siddhi Narsingh Malla (circa 1620-57 A.D.) it is located within the Patan Durbar complex, a world heritage site of UNESCO.

[Ed. "Of Sewing Machines, Perforations, and Other Kindred Tibetan Matters" by Armand E. Singer is reproduced here as it first appeared in The American Philatelist of April, 1986, with the permission of its editor, Bill Welch. Contrary to appearance Armand is not actually perforating the sheet as illustrated on the front cover(reduced in size) below.]

April 1986

The American Philatelist



A Stitch in Tibet. See Page 328

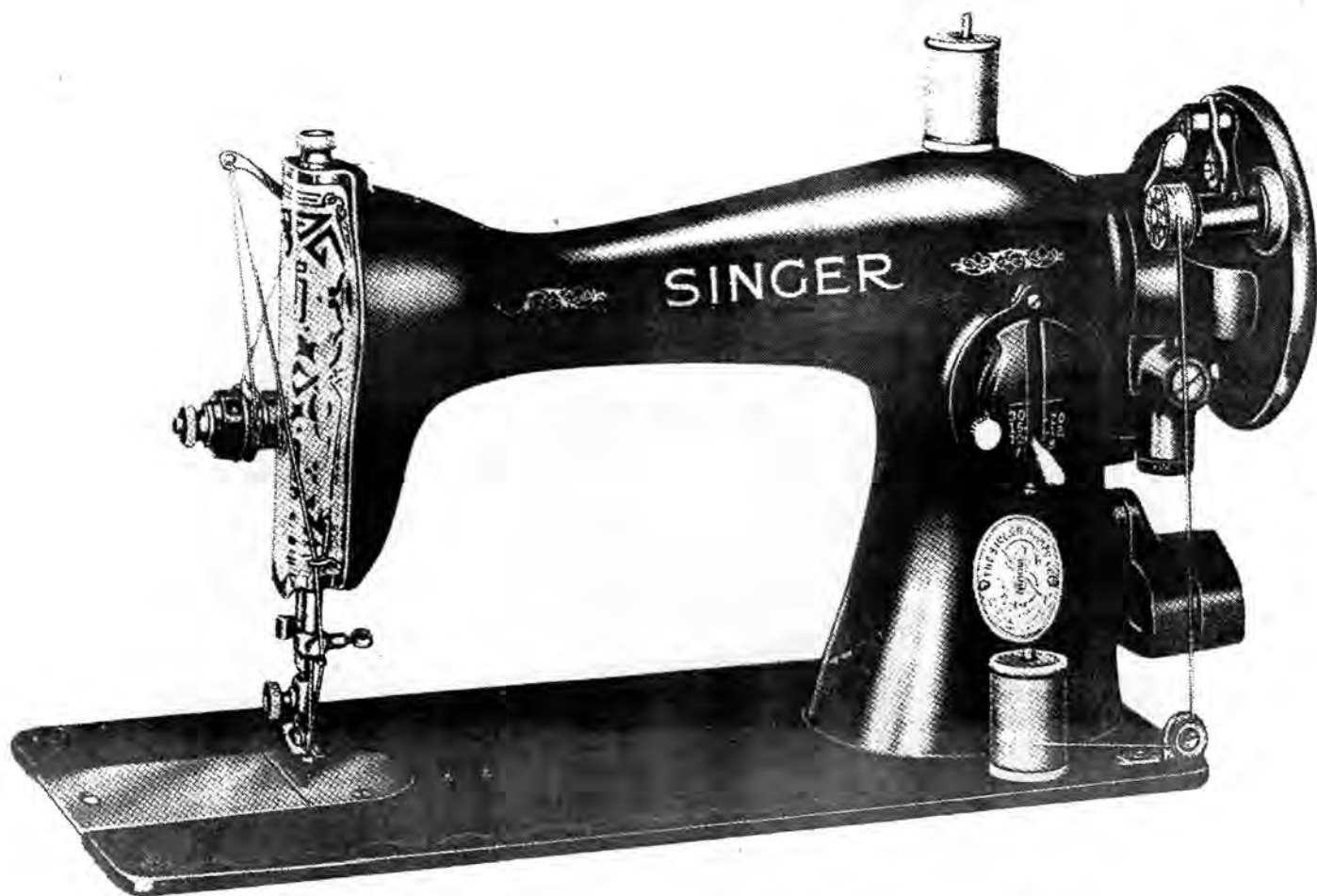


Photo courtesy of Bruce Kaukas, director, Corporate Communications and Advertising, The Singer Co., Stamford, Connecticut.

Of Sewing Machines, Perforations, and

by Armand E. Singer

Tibet, the remote, forbidden land that stretches north from the Himalayas, has proved as fascinating to philatelists as to explorers. And as mysterious.

Indeed, over its independent philatelic life, 1912-55, Tibet issued but thirteen different postage stamps, in three basic designs. Nevertheless, its postal history is replete with problems, unanswered questions, rarities, somewhat dubious denominations like the 1-sang green, insufficiently documented items like the telegraph and revenue stamps, and highly suspect issues like the "officials."

Except for the citizens of such towns as Lhasa, Shigatse, and one or two others, the population is widely dispersed and rarely literate, and only in the past three or four years has the country been opened up to a few hardy and curious visitors. Thus, dealers cannot boast of stocks of Tibetan stamps and covers in any real sense and, for the most part, the philatelic items that

do reach market command the respect due their scarcity. Even the not-so-rare counterfeits fetch generous prices.

Among the many problems that proliferate for philatelists under such conditions is the matter of perforations, especially those of the 1933 issue. In what, for most countries, would be little more than a list of Scott catalogue variants, Tibet proves its usual exception: Its perforations are seen as something special. How were they produced? Why? Where did the perforating machinery originate? How many systems were employed? Were they legitimate?

It is my belief that these perforations were done with a Singer (no relation) sewing machine, which would account perfectly for almost all of the known examples, except the so-called Smythies type. But let us first examine past research on the subject.

In 1958, in *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Tibet*¹ H.D.S. Haver-

beck enlarged on his 1952 monograph,² his additions being based on an article by E.A. Smythies.³ Smythies, in turn, had cited Haverbeck's 1952 words: "The Postmaster at Lhasa made a hand perforating device consisting of a wooden handle holding a steel wheel with spikes in it, much the same as a dressmaker uses when doing pattern work" (Pages 241-42).

Smythies's verbatim quote is itself almost a verbatim reprinting of a sentence in Theodore M. Newman's important, generally well-documented, three-part article on Tibet.⁴ Newman, however, reported that the postmaster "has" the device, not that he "made" it. He also stated that whether the stamps got perforated was at "his [the postmaster's] whims and fancies," his point being that the 1933 issue, except for the 4-trangka value, which occurs both ways, is officially found only imperforate, perforations for the other values depending on the postmaster's whim.

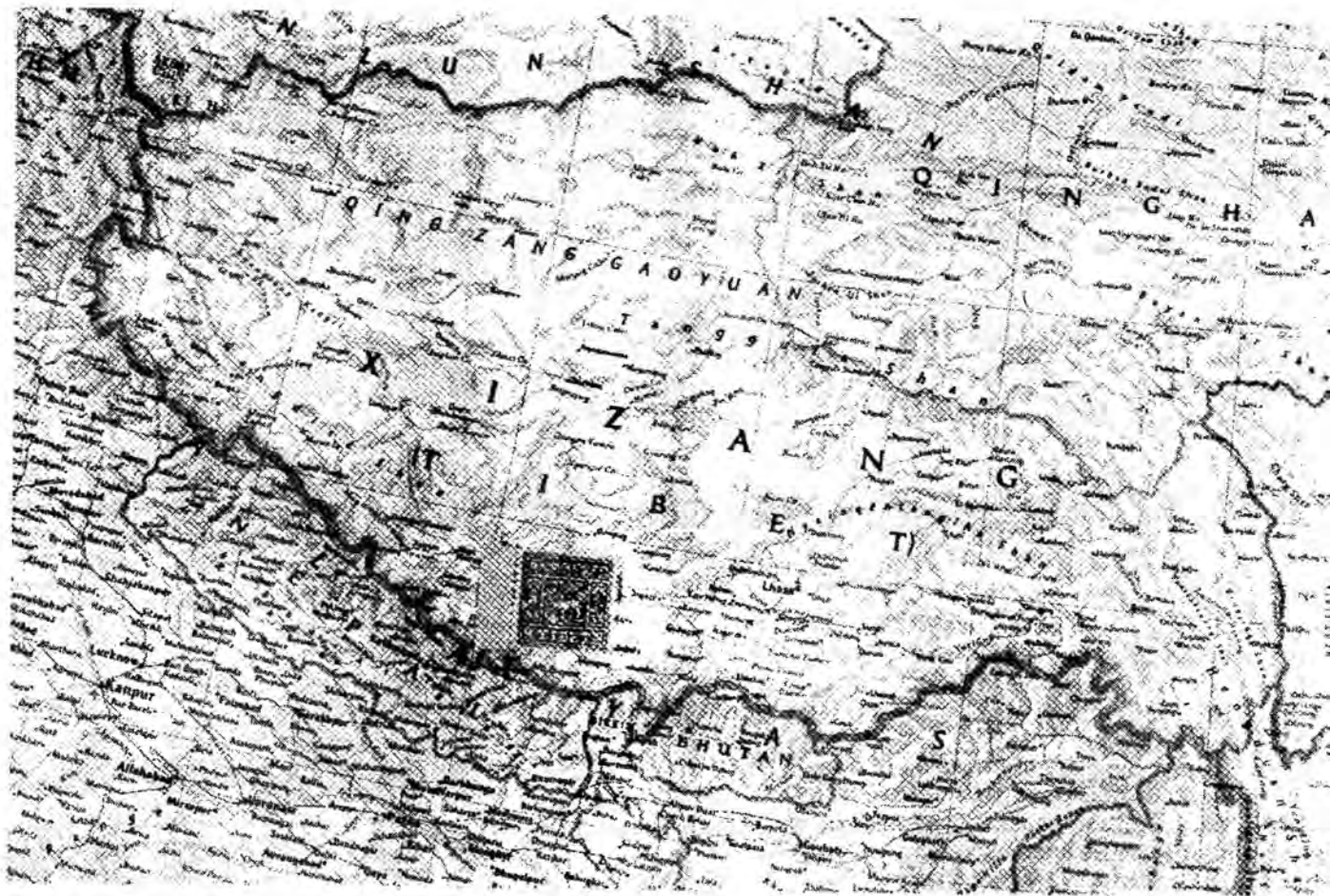


Figure 1. In 1940, Lhasa and Shigatse (Xigaze on the map) could be considered cities mostly by default. Nangartse (Nagarze) is barely a tiny village, and Gyantse (Gyangze), a very small town. Map courtesy of the National Geographic Society.

Other Kindred Tibetan Matters

H.R. Holmes's seminal *Postage Stamps of Tibet*⁵ also refers to the postmaster's whims and the spiked wheel. He and Newman were writing at about the same time, but I do not know whether the two authors were working independently, or whether they had knowledge of each other's material. At any rate, although Holmes's observation may have derived from Newman, Newman is not mentioned in the text (nor Holmes in Newman's, for that matter). F. Spencer Chapman is, but his famous book,⁶ in its passage on the Tibetan postal system, says nothing about perforating devices.

Newman's series was prefaced by an editor's note stating that the data contained therein were verified, to assure accuracy, by Tibetan authorities in Lhasa. Maybe so, but Newman's account, however trustworthy on the whole, is not entirely error-free.

He wrote, for example, of Nangartse, Gyantse, etc., as being large cities (Page 33). In fact, Nangartse is barely a tiny

The American Philatelist

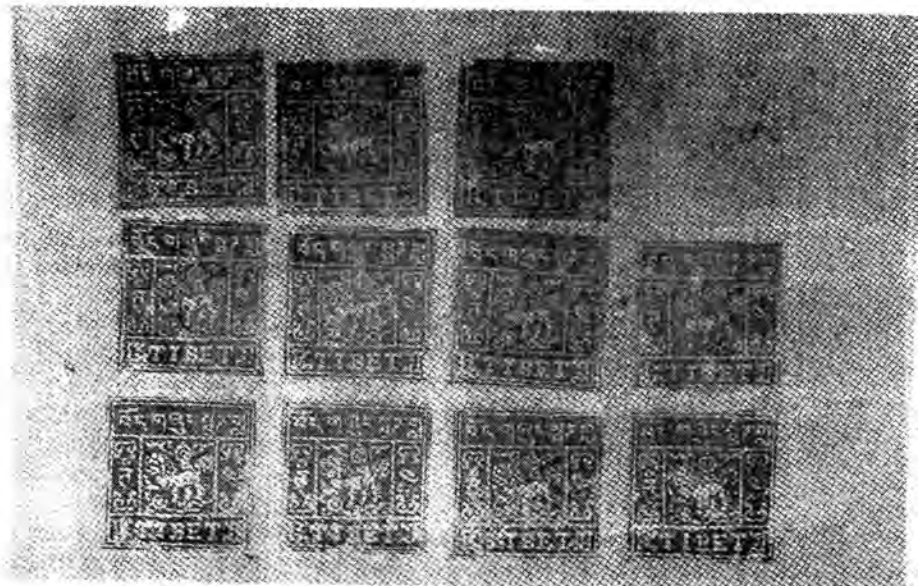


Figure 2. This sheet of the 4-trangka green of the 1933 issue supports Waterfall's observation that perforations varied from 6.75 to 16.



Figure 3. So-called Smythies-type perforations on a 1933 4-trangka green.

village, and Gyantse, a very small town. In 1940, when Newman was writing, even Shigatse and Lhasa could be considered cities mostly by default.

And what are we to make of his statements about some towns being "as high as 18,000 feet,"⁷ and about mail couriers running fifty-five miles in twenty-four hours at altitudes of up to 29,000 feet (Page 36)?

In sober truth, Tibetan towns are seldom found at altitudes much higher than 14,000 feet (Tingri, for instance, and it is hardly more than a village), and commonly used routes over the mountain passes top out some 3,000 feet higher. Luckily, there are, of course, no such routes at altitudes as high as the summit of Mt. Everest, or the great Sir Edmund Hillary-Tenzing Norgay feat of mountain climbing would have been for naught. And rare the runner who does fifty-five miles in twenty-four hours, even at elevations way below that of the summit of Mt. Everest.

If Tibetans checked Newman's manuscript and let howlers like these slip by, we have small guarantee for other data. Really, attempting verification by resorting to native Tibetan official sources is usually a bootless game. The inquirer is likely to hear what he seems to want to hear, the answerer so often wishing to be polite.

Linguistic and cultural differences erect further barriers against the truth. The officials consulted by Newman's editor may very well not even have understood what Newman was talking about, assuming that they cared.

Consider the reply Arthur C. Scarlett received from the Dalai Lama's secretary, in response to his query about the genu-

ineness of the "official" and the telegraph stamps:

Wrote the secretary, both samples sent "are not genuine," the telegraph stamp "does not exist at all," and the so-called official "is a Tibetan stamp alright but not one that is issued by the Tibetan government."⁸

Now back to Smythies. After citing Haverbeck, he went on to discuss the perforation variants he himself had found: pin perf 8.5 to 9.5, small, widely spaced holes; pin perf 11, small holes; rough perf 11, larger holes, closer together; and finally, pin perf 12, small holes. He added that there may be others, and concluded (Page 242):

By the appearance, one or more of the pin-perforations might have been made with a sewing machine, if such machines occur in Tibet! Alternately there must have been at least four spiky wheels, or some similar perforating devices, registering different gauges of perforation. The gauge sometimes varies appreciably in the same sheet.

Haverbeck reproduced these sentences in his second edition (Page 41) — including a Smythies typographical error of "II" for "11."

Arnold Waterfall's detailed conclusions about the early and late perforations done with pins, pinking shears, etc., and whether they were official, genuine, or made-to-order for gullible collectors, may be found in his *Postal History of Tibet*.⁹ As for the perforations of the earliest printings of the 1933 issue, he noted that they vary from 6.75 to 16, and wrote (first edition, Page 105; second edition, Page 111):

How they were done is not clear — the spiked wheel seems to be the consensus of most writers

— but if this method was used — more than one wheel must have been employed. One sheet I have, has a complete uninterrupted semi-circle in the sheet margin between one horizontal line of perfs. and the next, which suggests the wheel theory, or a sewing machine.

He also told the story of a putative perforating machine, carried to Lhasa on the backs of porters, that broke down after a few sheets had been perforated and was discarded. In view of the uneven holes found in these sheets, he scoffed at this tale (first edition, Page 104; second edition, Page 110).

K.H. Dahnke's *Tibet Handbuch* seems to contain the most recent theorizing on the subject, but adds little new.¹⁰ The author retells the abandoned perforating-machine story, but, unlike Waterfall, he seems to take it seriously.

This short review of pertinent research to date may fail to mention a name or two, but it remains substantially complete. Clearly, much of what has been written suffers from inbreeding, the researchers often having leaned on and cited each other.

The Sewing Machine Theory: The Case for the Defense

It is my belief that the possibility raised by Smythies and Waterfall — that a sewing machine could have been used to perforate the stamps of Tibet — has considerable merit.

On the one hand, no one has claimed actually to have seen the spiked wheel, much less the fabled perforating machine. On the other hand, a sewing machine would account perfectly for almost all of the known perforations, except the late, so-called Smythies type, the status of which are doubtful (Waterfall, first edition, Page 104; second edition, Page 110), and which may well have come from India. As for the sewing machine:

Many years ago, reviewing the second edition of Haverbeck's monograph, I mentioned the possibility that Tibet was supplied with sewing machines.¹¹ I also mentioned that my own collection boasted three sheets of the 1933 ½-trangka of the earliest orange shade (Waterfall No. 105) on which the perforations run horizontally along the space between the middle and bottom rows, turn in a sharp semi-circular curve at the right selvedge, and return horizontally along the top inside path.

These sheets, incidentally, were part of a packet of six or so sheets, once fastened together by one of those no-longer-popular devices that ties separate sheets with paper torn from the sheets themselves, using no wire but leaving a small triangular hole in the paper. I sold several of the sheets after

unting them from the stack, but the three I retained show clearly that the perforations went through the whole stack.

Running a roulette wheel through six or more sheets of tough native paper and turning the corner neatly within a radius, as it happens, of only 18 mm is next to impossible. But the same feat is quite easily accomplished with a sewing machine needle (minus thread, obviously). In fact, it is probably as simple as letting the needle run off the paper, which presumably was done when the vertical perforations were made. Bent-down remnants of paper still present on the reverse side of my 1/2-trangka sheets are commensurate with needle holes.

To test my theory, I tried to duplicate the procedure with a Singer sewing machine and had no problems. The perforations appear to be the same as those in my Tibet sheets.

I no longer recall where I had originally read the suggestion about a sewing machine but, in a letter to me commenting on my Haverbeck review, A.C. Scarlett noted that, should I ask the Singer people, they would confirm sales of their product in Tibet. Later, he wrote that he had actually had such confirmation from them.

I never saw this Singer letter, but I soon initiated correspondence with the company on my own behalf. Not until 1971-72 did I receive a definitive answer. I cite pertinent excerpts from two letters sent to me by D. Muncherji, at that time an old hand in Singer's New Delhi office and the last of several of the company's helpful managerial personnel who forwarded my request on its way:

Nepal was controlled by our . . . then [i.e., 1920s-1930s] . . . Central Office at Calcutta. . . We obtained a bulk order from a wholesale trader in Kathmandu. . . The goods were booked to a railway station called Raxaul [whence they] were taken to Kathmandu by the Nepal trader. . . While I am not sure whether our product went into Tibet from Nepal . . . I know . . . that our . . . machines did find [their] way into Tibet from our representing shops at Kalimpong and Siliguri, as the traders from Tibet came into these [towns] to buy their requirements.

We also had contact for the sales of our Singer products through foreign missionaries who donated our machines to various people in Tibet who were needy. . . I am proud to say that our company's . . . flanged red "S" sign throughout the Indian continent in remotest villages and States such as Nepal, Tibet and Sikkim through traders was talked of in the towns [as] giving livelihood to hundreds of people. . .

[As to the exact year Singer introduced its machines into Nepal and Tibet] I am unable [to say], but knowing that both these States were part and parcel of the territory controlled by

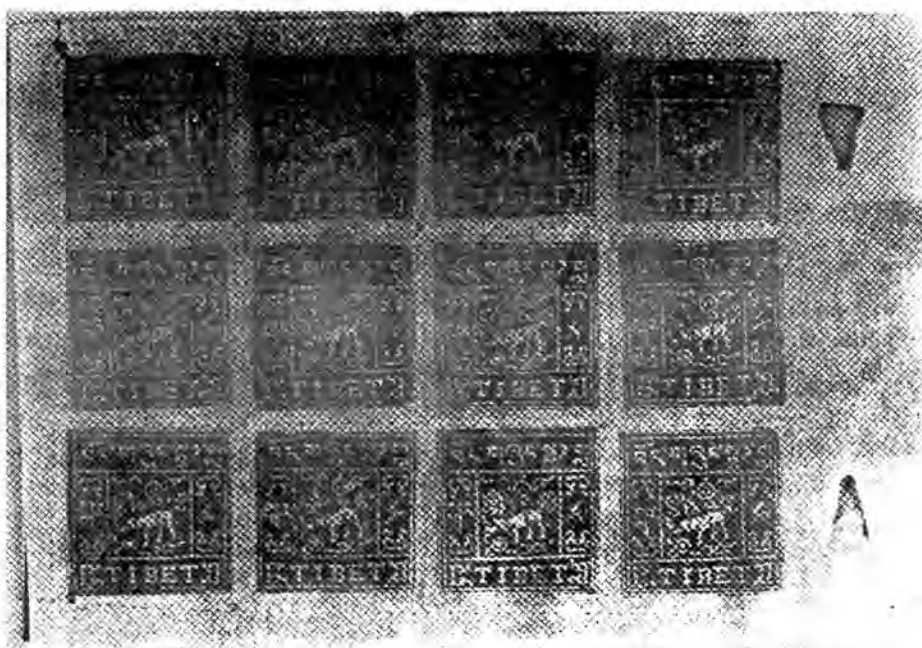


Figure 4. A full sheet of the 1/2-trangka orange with "sewing machine" perfs. Note the turn-around in the sledge at the right, as well as the triangular holes produced by the wireless "stapler." To produce the turn-around, which has a radius of only 18 mm, with a roulette wheel is next to impossible, but it is easily accomplished with a sewing machine.

Singer's India Management, as such, since Singer in India started its business in the year 1851, it is obvious the . . . sales in Nepal and in Bhutan may have found [their] way a few years later, or say between 1855 and 1860. To take a safer course . . . say the latter years of the 19th century. . . .¹²

In sum, Singer sewing machines could already be found in even the smallest villages of Tibet, as well as Nepal, probably as early as the late nineteenth century.¹³

If we can almost surely prove the presence of such machines in Lhasa, there is, as well, the strong likelihood that they were the means of perforating at least most of the 1933 sheets. In addition to the three sheets of the 1/2-trangka value mentioned above, I have other sheets of the 1933 issue with similar perforations, and a single 1-trangka sheet with the hollow staple marks, but I have no others with the loop of perforations in the sledge. However, as noted above, Waterfall reported that he had one such sheet.¹⁴

The 1912 issue of Tibet is also known perforated. Waterfall mentioned what he considered a genuine experiment in the 1920s, undertaken by Tsarong Shaphe, Master of the Mint, to achieve an easier way to separate stamps. He added, "Shortly after, when the 1933 stamps were issued — the experiments were used to a larger degree by the Postmaster — quite probably on the instructions of Tsarong Shaphe," so he apparently dated the experiment in the late 1920s.

Waterfall also recorded that covers bearing these perforated stamps, which he simply termed "pin perfs," are found commercially used (first edition, Pages 72-3; second edition, Pages 78-9), and he listed usage on three Tsarong family crested envelopes from Lhasa and on two Gyantse covers. In his second edition, he added a sixth example, from Shigatse, as well as several on piece, but he discussed only 1/6- and 1/2-trangka usages.

As for the date of these perforation experiments, Chapman wrote that Shaphe was in charge of the mint for ten years, until removed from office by the Dalai Lama in 1923 (Page 81). This period coincides better with a cover of my own, a commercial, registered example, Lhasa to Calcutta, dated on arrival September 24, 1916, bearing a block of six 1/6-trangka greens, canceled Waterfall Type II.

The perforations of these stamps, like those of other singles in my possession, would seem to have been made with a sewing machine, but lack the stronger evidence of my orange 1/2-trangka sheet. At the least, this rare cover helps to prove that perforated stamps were used a good ten years before Waterfall's implied date.

My half-trangka 1933 sheets are perf 11.5 to 12, with slight variations but reasonable regularity. I also have a 3/4-trangka blue, first setting, perf 11 x 11, and a 4-trangka green, first setting before damage to cliche No. 8, perf 12 x 12. The minor variations could represent different settings of the sewing machine needle.

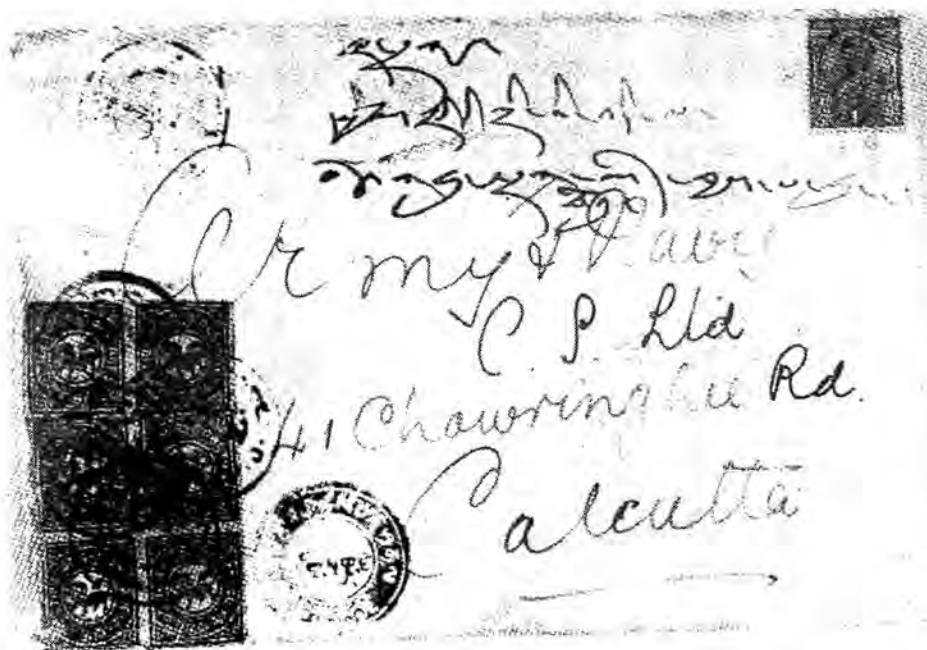


Figure 5. A commercial, registered cover from Lhasa to Calcutta, dated on arrival September 24, 1916, and bearing a block of six 1/2-trangka greens, canceled Waterfall Type II. The stamps appear to be sewing-machine perforated.

Of course, a rouletting wheel with loose pins would act similarly, and both wheel and needle leave bits of paper behind. A true perforation machine, on the other hand, is more likely to punch out a clean hole, except near the bottom of a sizable stack of sheets. We have no evidence in these early sheets to support use of such a machine, though later sheets — which Waterfall and others pretty well reject as privately produced — show larger, cleaner holes.

It is probably worth stating in reference to these and other details concerning the operation of the Lhasa post office that it was a very small, informal sort of operation, functioning under trying conditions in a huge country almost without roads and virtually illiterate.

As for other Tibetan post offices, some of the towns were little more than a collection of mud huts at a bend in a trade route. And still are. In the fall of 1982, I passed through the tiny villages of Nangartse and Chuchul, where the need for any sort of postal service would be minimal — and these are names better known than most to philatelists. In years past, even the Lhasa post office was not run by true professionals.

As recently as 1982, despite Communist China's much more sophisticated postal system, when I wanted to send souvenir post cards to some of my friends, I found no overseas air mail or local stamps available at the Lhasa post office. If I had purchased the highest denominations on hand, I would have had to use a minimum of ten stamps per card.

I had a few stamps of my own, purchased in advance in Peking and at the local Lhasa guest house, so instead I asked the postal clerk (in sign language) to hand-stamp them and let me have them back. I had in mind handing them directly to the addressees, undamaged, after my return to the United States, rather than trusting them to the rigors of the postal service. (Here, by the way, I was unduly apprehensive. All those I actually did drop into the box reached their destinations in good condition.)

The clerk politely handed me the canceler and an ink pad to allow me to mark my own cards. Another clerk had done the same thing when I wanted to stamp my passport for a souvenir, the immigration officers not having the custom of marking them, so it seems. All of which not only helps to confirm reports of individual Tibetan courtesy, but those of official casualness, as well.

These incidents do not appear to represent anything new. Discussing the period of the 1920s, Chapman lauded the efficiency of the postal and the telegraph systems, the latter maintained by Nepalese linemen with occasional visits from British engineers (Page 87). But he described as well how the muleteers sometimes used the telegraph-line posts for firewood and threw stones at the insulators, and he told of the hard lot of the post runners from Lhasa to Gangtok (330 miles in eight to ten days in some eight-mile relays). I might add that one pass on the route rises to 16,300 feet, Lhasa itself being about 12,000 feet above sea level.

Arthur Vernay, who was with Suydan Cutting in Lhasa for four months in 1935, wrote to me on January 18, 1956, as follows:

I also have some Tibetan stamps [these included the perforated 1/2-trangka orange sheets described above], of which I will send you a few. . . . As far as the Postal Office is concerned, there is never much trouble or care taken about the posting or by the Post Office, as when I wanted any stamps or to stamp a letter I went into the Post Office myself and just took them out of the book and stuck them on and arranged for the payment later.

Newman, crediting his information to Theo S. Bernard, who resided in Lhasa for three months during his May to October 1937 stay in Tibet, told much the same story about the city's post office (Pages 87-8). Things were unsystematic, to say the least.

According to his account, stamps might or might not be affixed to a letter upon payment, depending upon the clerk's whim. Supplies were small, never more than a dozen sheets (of twelve) of each value. New quantities seem to have been inked and printed on the spot, from wood blocks inserted in a square of black stone 12- x 12- x 6-inches thick (which, incidentally, helps to explain the countless shades of each value and the existence of errors of color). And this at the post office that supplied postage for the whole of Tibet!¹⁵

If conditions remain rather primitive and unmethodical even today, half a century later, in the only major post office in all of Tibet, let us not forget that Lhasa has mushroomed like a California real estate

boom since the Chinese took over in the 1950s.

The Chinese brought with them a large army of occupation, but they have brought about, as well, a dramatic increase in literacy among the younger Tibetans. Whatever one may think of the Communist invasion, it has undeniably brought health and education to at least some of the people of Tibet.

The remains in Lhasa of its older, sleepier past are not much more than a reminder of what it once was. And yet, Newman and Vernay (and Weir) lead me to suspect that little has changed in the transition from Tibetan to Chinese suzerainty.

These anecdotes, however revealing, do not prove the point of the present article. Nor are they meant to. What they do suggest is that we are dealing with a small, loosely structured postal system.

Surely, such an informal operation allows for perforation experiments, more or less official, of all kinds, and we know that even pinking shears have been used to separate Tibetan stamps, a practice attested to on commercial covers.¹⁶ Perforate varieties of many of the same settings and shades that are known imperforate support the theory of informal experimentation.

There seems no doubt that at least the early perforate sheets are quite genuine. Vernay, for example, wrote to me that his material was obtained directly from the Lhasa post office. Although use of some sort of rouletting device is arguable, an expensive, heavy, perforating machine cries out for real proof. Porters would have had to carry it over high mountain passes, and the need for it would have been marginal, at best. No sheets have surfaced illustrating that such a machine was ever used, either. We are not, after all, dealing with a branch of the U.S. Government Printing Office.

No, when all of the alternatives are considered, the only one that makes real sense is the sewing machine. I believe I have



Figure 6. The reverse of the cover shown in Figure 5 bears a highly ornate Tibetan family crest.

established strong evidence for claiming that a sewing machine was indeed the device used to perforate the stamps of Tibet.

One final question demands an answer: Why was perforating as a means of separation used so infrequently and abandoned after such a short trial? The answer is, doubtless, "Pragmatism."

Most Tibetan paper is tough. It is commonly (although not almost exclusively, as in Nepal) made of daphne bark pulp. Any small holes punched in it would scarcely render it tearable. Knives or scissors would work much better, and Tibetans, bowing before the inevitable, used them. **AP**

References

- *1. H.D.S. Haverbeck, *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Tibet*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Collectors Club, 1958), pp. 40-1.
2. *Ibid.*, 1st ed. (1952), p. 32.
- *3. E.A. Smythies, "Tibet - The 1933 Type," *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 32, No. 5 (September 1953), pp. 241-56.
- *4. Theodore M. Newman, *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 19 (January 1940), pp. 33-9; (April 1940), pp. 79-90; (July 1940), 197-212; data on perforations, Vol. 19 (April 1940), p. 84.
- *5. H.R. Holmes, *Postage Stamps of Tibet* (Leominster: Sefi Pemberton, 1941), p. 19.
6. F. Spencer Chapman, *Lhasa: The Holy City* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1939), p. 87.
- *7. *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 19 (January 1940), p. 33. Note that Newman himself was somewhat less optimistic than his editor. At the end of his article [*The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 19 (July 1940), p. 212], he wrote of the difficulties of translating from one language to another and of the necessity of restating inquiries to get correct information.
8. Arthur C. Scarlett, personal correspondence, October 10, 1960.
- *9. Arnold Waterfall, *Postal History of Tibet*, 1st ed. (London: R. Lowe, 1965), pp. 103-105; also see pp. 72-3, 81, and 109. *Ibid.*, 2nd ed. (1981), pp. 109-11; also see pp. 78-9, 87, and 115.
10. K.H. Dahnke, *Tibet Handbuch und Katalog der Marken und Stempel* (West Germany: Forschungsgemeinschaft China-Philatelie e.V., 1978-81), pp. 76-9.
- *11. Armand E. Singer, *Weekly Philatelic Gossip*, "Haverbeck's Tibet: A Review with Suggested Additions," Vol. 68 (Aug. 8, 1959), p. 564; reprinted

in *The Great Wall*, Vol. 4 (1961), p. 55. In the review, I actually used the words "a sheet."

12. Armand E. Singer, personal correspondence. Conflation of two letters dated May 11, 1971, and September 6, 1972.

13. For those unacquainted with the hold the Singer Co. established around the world soon after Elias Howe secured his patent for the sewing machine in 1846, I offer the following first-hand account, although it is but peripherally germane to this article: One summer day in 1947, I was hiking in the mountains of northern Haiti, near King Christophe's Citadelle, about as far from the centers of even rural Haitian culture as one might venture, when I came upon a woman working an old foot-treadle model Singer in a tiny, grass-hut village. As she proudly explained to me, in native patois, it gave her real status in the community.

*14. Waterfall, 1st ed., p. 105; 2nd ed., p. 111. Waterfall may actually be referring to one of the sheets in the lot of three or so that I sold a good number of years before his book appeared. He would have had ample opportunity to have purchased it.

15. I also recall (but cannot put my finger on the reference) mention by LTC James Leslie Rose Weir, trade agent in Gyantse for Great Britain, Sikkim political officer, etc., that there were few sheets of any denomination available at the Lhasa post office at any given time. He noted that once, when he needed a quantity of stamps to affix to Christmas greetings, he had to request that an extra supply be printed. If we assume that Col. Weir's Christmas list might have included, say, 200 or so names at most, he would not have needed more than about thirty of the twelve-cliche sheets, a couple of singles to a greeting. They would have been only for show, as Tibet's stamps had no validity outside its own borders. As it happens, I have one of the colonel's little holiday greetings, to which he affixed two of the 1912 issue, canceled with Waterfall Lhasa Type VII, dated 1932.

16. A Tibet collector, K.H. Teumer, wrote to me in the fall of 1959 that the pinking shears perforations were definitely privately produced and that all came from or went to a Nepali merchant in Gyantse. He said that he, Teumer, had gotten in touch with one of the senders in Kalimpong, who stated that the stamps, already cut into singles, were sent to him from Gyantse. Teumer added that he also had a cover that had been cut open with pinking shears by the same Gyantse merchant. The only example in my own collection does not disprove Teumer's claim, except that the cover is franked with an unsevered pair of the 2-trangka orange, Kalimpong to Gyantse to Lhasa (Tibetan stamps added in Gyantse, March 31, 1953, to send the letter on to Lhasa).

*Available from the American Philatelic Research Library, P.O. Box 8338, State College, PA 16803.

The Author

Armand E. Singer, Emeritus Professor of Romance Languages, West Virginia University, and editor for more than thirty-five years of the WVU Philological Papers, has also written extensively for the philatelic press. Although this is his first article for the AP, his work has appeared in the *Weekly Philatelic Gossip*, the *American Philatelic Congress Yearbook*, and, most recently, the *Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle's Postal Himal*. At RIXEX in 1985, Mr. Singer's Tibet exhibit won a gold medal, as well as the APS award for best research.

AUCTION ACTION

Leo Martyn

Michael Rogers' auction of Oct. 9-10 offered 69 lots of Tibet material, 37 of which were covers. Some of the lots worth noting are (prices, in U.S.\$, do not include the 10% buyer's fee):

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| 1903 (Aug. 28) cover from Younghusband to his wife in India, bearing Indian 1a tied by "Experimental PO C46" CDS. | \$1150. |
| 1904 (Aug. 23) Bailey cover to Edinburgh, Indian 1a tied by Lhasa CDS. | \$1350. |
| 1906 (Sept. 16) Bailey cover to his father in Edinburgh, two Indian half anna tied by "Gyantse-Tibet/Siliguri Base" CDS. | \$375. |
| 1914 (May 12) registered (Waterfall BR2) "Wilson" (philatelic) cover, Pharijong to U.K., "Gyantse-Tibet/Siliguri Base" CDS. | \$275. |
| 1924 (Dec. 1) Indian 1a Postal Stationery bearing "Yatung-Tibet Via Siliguri" CDS, addressed to Bailey in Gangtok (Sikkim). | \$280. |
| 1928 (Jan. 30) colorful cover from Pharijong to England bearing unusual markings and labels - "By Air" in double circle, yellow air sticker, green tissue sticker in the shape of a star, manuscript "From Basra to Cairo via Karachi", "Highest PO in the World". | \$220. |
| 1937 (Nov. 18) cover from Gyantse to Bailey in Kathmandu. | \$250. |
| 1912 2/3 tr. upper right corner block of four containing "Potsage" error. | \$200. |
| 1912 one sang complete sheet of 12. | \$500. |
| 1933 1/2 tr. imperf complete sheet of 12. | \$160. |
| 1933 four tr. complete sheet of 11 (lost cliché unprinted). | \$160. |
| 1933 four tr. on cover bearing non-postal receiving handstamps of "14 Sep 1954". | \$170. |

Bidding was quite active as there were five bidders on the floor including three auction agents (one from N.Y.).

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Christie's Swine Auction House (Hong Kong) held an auction Oct. 26 which offered some very desirable Tibetan items (21 lots). Prices, in Hong Kong \$, do not include the 15% buyer's premium.

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| 1904 (Aug., Sept.) - two covers from the Younghusband expedition to Edinburgh bearing "Lhasa" cancels. | \$9000. |
| 1910 Chinese Office "On Postal Service" unfranked registered cover from Lhasa to Shanghai, bearing: registration label with H.S. reading "Yatung-Tibet/Via Siliguri"; Lhasa registration H.S., Lhasa cancel (Waterfall type C1); postmarks of Gyantse (Waterfall type C2 and C3) on reverse. (Estimate \$2600) | \$35,000 |

A very similar cover realized U.S.\$3500. in Michael Rogers' auction of June 12-13.

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|--|----------|
| Chinese Office-mint 3p on 1¢ with overprint inverted (S.G.C1a). | \$24,000 |
| Chinese Office cover bearing 1/2a on 2¢ and 1a on 4¢, tied by "Lhasa-Tibet" CDS (Waterfall type C3) to Gyantse. | \$8500. |
| Chinese Office - used 2R on \$2 variety - Chinese "Two" with re-entry (S.G. C11 variety). | \$26,000 |
| 1912 one sang grey-green, complete sheet of 12. | \$3000. |
| 1955-84, twenty covers bearing Chinese adhesives used various towns, including Chamdo, Gyantse, Yatung and Yenching. | \$4000. |

George Alevizos' auction of Dec. 14 offered nine lots of Nepal and ten lots of Tibet material, including (estimates indicated - U.S. \$):

Nepal

1959 First General Election, 6p (Scott #103) - handpainted essay from the Bradbury Wilkinson archives (est. \$1000-1500).

1965 International Cooperation Year, 1R (Scott #188) - cut down engraved die proof affixed to Bradbury Wilkinson presentation card with manuscript "Approved"; plus proof copy of Presentation Folder (est. \$750-1000).

1907-1946, Pashupati cover collection with over 500 covers including registration label on cover, 1929 5R block of four on cover, two 1935 issue censored covers, "Thimi" coin cancels, ten non postal stationery post cards and 75 mixed issue covers (est. \$7500-12,500).

Tibet

1912 Waterlow 1/6 tr. engraved essay in blue - Waterfall #2 (est. \$750-1000).

1912-50, mint set of six in blocks of four (est. \$600-800).

1914 8tr. carmine pink, complete sheet (est. \$1500-2000).

1945 Official, 1/3 tr., corner block of four (est. \$1250-1750).

1933 cover sent by a member of the Everest Flight to London, bearing Indian 1a3p pair tied by "Houston Mount Everest Flight Purnea" cds in magenta, dated April 21, the last day at Purnea (est. \$1000-1250).

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Trade News

Australian Firm Buys Tibetan Stamp Rights

An Australian firm, REVIEW PUBLICATIONS PTY LTD, has bought the rights to all the remainder stocks of the local stamps that were issued in the 1970s by the Tibet Government in Exile in India.

These old locals have been off the market for many years, but the firm can now supply the Universal Postal Union set to the trade. The animals set is also available, but only in limited quantities, according to owner Bill Hornadge.

In 1952, China invaded and occupied Tibet. The Dali Lama, the spiritual head of Tibet, was forced to flee to India along with thousands of monks and other followers.

They set up a Government in Exile in northern India, and in 1974 they issued a set of four stamps honoring the centenary of the UPU. This was followed by a set of four stamps featuring animals of the Himalayas.

The Indian government asked the Tibet Government in Exile to

cease issuing further stamps so as not to antagonize China. The Indian government did, however, allow mail with the stamps affixed to pass through both internal and international mails.

Review Publications specializes in Cinderella material and publishes regular illustrated price lists that offer dealer discounts off of the retail price.

For further information contact Review Publications Pty Ltd, P.O. Box 1463, Dubbo, N.S.W., Australia, 2830.

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A TIBETAN FANTASY

George Bourke



For those that may not be familiar with the word, a fantasy (or phantasy), is a term used to describe something that never existed as a genuine production. Airmail stamps from a country that never issued airmail stamps, would be considered fantasies. A Tibetan postal stationary envelope certainly qualifies as a fantasy.

Found in 1991, in a long dormant collection, it is thought to date from 1970 or before. Only two examples were found. The envelope measures 164mm x 94mm and has a very crude forgery of the 4 trangka printed in the upper righthand corner. The paper is watermarked, WHITING'S MUTUAL BOND, in double line capital letters and RAG CONTENT, in single line capital letters.

Undoubtedly, this is one of the more unusual of Tibet's non genuine emissions and we can only speculate as to why it was produced. It certainly would not fool anyone into thinking it was genuine. Possibly it is meant to be amusing. At that it succeeds completely.