

# POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET

PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



**IMPORTANT DISCOVERY**



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EDITORIAL

Leo Martyn

Our President, Dr. Hellrigl, has been invited by the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. This is a tremendous and well-deserved honor for him. Our Secretary, Colin Hepper, sponsored Wolfgang on behalf of the Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle and will be giving the introductory speech before the signing. This will take place at the Philatelic Congress meeting in Chelmsford, Essex, from September 9-11. Please see the announcement from Colin in this issue.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is no Study Circle auction accompanying this issue of the Postal Himal. The unsold lots from Auction 64 are as follows; please contact Colin Hepper if interested:

Unsold lots from Auction 64 offered at 2/3 estimate:

- 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34,
- 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63,
- 64, 65, 66, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 87, 104, 105, 113, 121, 12
- 3, 124, 125, 126, 130, 132, 135, 137, 140, 142, 144, 146, 147, 151, 152, 153, 157, 158, 162, 1
- 63, 164, 165, 166, 169, 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 185.

\* \* \* \* \*

Plans for the Study Circle meeting at Napex (see "Editorial", Postal Himal nos. 75/76) are going smoothly, thanks to Armand Singer's efforts. He has lined up three excellent presentations: on Friday, June 24, from 3:00 to 5:00, Geoffrey Flack will give a talk titled - "Tibet: New Discoveries", and Sidhartha M. Tuladhar will give "A Slide Talk About Nepal and Tibet Philately"; on Sunday, June 26, from 1:00 to 2:30, Armand gives his presentation titled - "Nepal and Tibet - Some Philatelic Facts (?) or Fantasy(?)". Anyone needing further details can contact Armand or me. At the Indian Study Circle meeting, which is also a participatiing society, Dr. Kenneth Robbins will be giving a talk on the Princely States of India. At this moment I think we are still invited to join the ISC Friday night (June 24) at a local Indian restaurant for good food and talk (you pay for your own food).

\* \* \* \* \*

Our annual meeting at Westpex (San Francisco) will have two speakers on Sunday (at 10:00 I think): Frealon Bibbins' presentation is titled "Plating the Third Series of Tibetan Stamps and Other Matters"; Geoffrey Flack's talk will be "Tibet: New Dimensions".

\* \* \* \* \*

It seems that now is the time to plan a National Meeting for 1995. It should probably take place at one of the A.P.S. "Champion of Champions" qualifying shows which take place at various places and times of the year since they are set up to accomodate Society activities and are willing to reserve a certain number of exhibit frames for members. Also possible would be one of the larger shows in Canada or Europe. Please send any suggestions to me.

\* \* \* \* \*

In an article titled "A record number of stamps issued in 1992", by Denise Hatton (Linn's Stamp News, January 31), the number of stamps and souvenir sheets issued by each postal administration in 1992 is given. Bhutan issued only 20 items and Nepal only 17: both very low numbers on the list.

Roger Skinner is V.P.-Acquisitions for Friends of the Western Philatelic Library and occasionally comes across articles relating to our areas of interest. Following are two such items:

Vol. III

April-June, 1930

No. 9

# New England Philatelist

A Quarterly Magazine for Collectors and Dealers

Editor: Antonio P. Rezendes,  
159 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, Mass.

ADVERTISING RATES		DISCOUNTS	
ONE PAGE .....	\$5.00	20, 30 and 40% for 2, 3 or 4 publications,	without changing copy.
HALF PAGE .....	3.00	Payment in advance for one insertion:	
QUARTER PAGE .....	1.75	when contract is signed, at least 25% of	
COLUMN INCH (limit 30 words) .....	.50	payment must accompany copy, balance	
ECONOMIC ADS: 1 cent the word;		to be paid after first insertion.	
minimum, 20 cents.			



## THE FORBIDDEN CITY



**HIBET** is the loftiest known inhabited plateau in the world to-day. It is a bleak, wind-swept plateau of extreme temperatures. In summer, during the day, is extremely hot. The temperature at noon will register over 90 degrees. As the sun sets, it cools off and by

mid-night the thermometer has dropped to zero. In winter, the temperature seldom rises above zero. To protect themselves from such extremes, the natives cover their skins with a coating of oil and then put on all the clothes their bodies can carry. Such is the country in which the forbidden

Unfortunately, the article does not make any reference to the illustrated cover or any other philatelic aspects of Tibet.

Indias

Stamp

Journal

*A monthly paper of Philatelic information with the largest circulation in India, Ceylon & Burma*

## Nepal Imperforate Between

We can supply the following mint pairs of *Imperforate* between of the 1941-1946 Nepal issue:-



2 pice, chocolate, S.G. 57a

4 pice, green, S.G. 58a

8 pice, scarlet, S.G. 59a

**Price : Rs. 5 per pair**

Cash With Order :: NO V.P.P. :: Postage Extra

JAL COOPER, F.R.G.S.,

Standard Building, Hornby Road,  
BOMBAY.

\*\*\*\*\*

I asked Ward Marden, limercist extraordinaire, to write a piece in regards to the "Tibetan 'Spoof' Sheet incident" (see "Editorial", Postal Himal no. 73, which took place at Westpex last year) to keep the coals hot, since the parties concerned and most of those present at the "Happening" will be at Napex. Will we see more pranks (?) - I hope so.

### WORDS TO THE WISE

That Bibbins's stamps from Tibet  
Are fraudulent, never forget;  
Once he had the temerity  
To create a fake rarity  
Which caused even experts to sweat.

\*\*\*\*\*

In March, New Zealand issued an 80¢ stamp commemorating the ascent of Mount Everest by Edmund Hillary on May 29, 1953.



Roger also found an article titled "The Early Stamps of Tibet" by Dr. Eric Glasgow in the December issue of the Stamp Lover.

DR. WOLFGANG HELLRIGL

We are delighted to announce that our President and founder member of the Society has been invited by the British Philatelic Congress to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. This is an honour that is awarded to three or four philatelists each year with the first signature on the roll being that of King George V. The ceremony will be held in England on September 10. This is a most well earned honour and we all offer him our congratulations on receiving this award. Further details will be published in the Postal Himal.

Colin Hepper

## PHILATELIC PROGRAMME

1994

Contact : NEPAL PHILATELIC BUREAU

Sundhara, Kathmandu,

Nepal

Phone No. 2-14695



फिलाटेलिक कार्यक्रम

१९९४

for

Nepalese Postage Stamps, First Day Covers,  
Folders, Postal Stationeries etc.

- Note:- 1. This Programme is subject to change with or without Notice.  
2. Details of each issue will be available from Nepal Philatelic Bureau, Kathmandu.

- द्रष्टव्य:- १. आवश्यकतानुसार यस कार्यक्रममा थपघट हुन सक्नेछ।  
२. प्रत्येक प्रकाशनको सम्बन्धमा विशेष जानकारी नेपाल फिलाटेलिक ब्यूरो, काठमाडौंबाट समय-समयमा उपलब्ध हुन सक्नेछ।

## PHILATELIC PROGRAMME

1994



## NEPAL PHILATELIC BUREAU

- c. Poet. Dharanidhar Koirala  
d. Narayan Gopal Guruvacharya
12. Nov. 1994. - Holy Place Series 7.00  
a. Bhimeshwar Temple, Dholakha  
b. Siddhanath Temple, Kanchanpur  
c. Tal Barahi Temple, Pokhara  
d. Hiranyavarna Mahevihar, Lalitpur
13. Dec. 1994 - Tourism Series  
a. Mt. Nampa 30.00  
b. Thanka 9.00
14. Dec. 1994 - International Civil Aviation Organisation 5.00
15. Dec. 1994 - International Year of Family 10.00
16. Dec. 1994 - 50th Birthday of H. M.

- (ग) धरणीधर कोइराला  
(घ) नारायणगोपाल गुरूवाचार्य
१२. २०५१ संतीर - धार्मिक स्थल टिकटमाला ७।-  
(क) भोमेश्वर मन्दिर, दोलखा  
(ख) सिद्धनाथ मन्दिर, कन्चनपुर  
(ग) ताल बाराही मन्दिर, पोखरा  
(घ) हिरण्यवर्ण महाविहार, ललितपुर
१३. २०५१ संतीर - पर्यटन टिकटमाला  
(क) नाम्पा हिमाल ३०।-  
(ख) थाङ्का ९।-
१४. २०५१ संतीर - अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नागरिक उड्डयन संगठन ५।-  
१५. २०५१ पोष - अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय परिवार वर्ष १०।-  
१६. २०५१ पोष - श्री ५ मङ्गराजाधिराजको ५० औं शमजन्मोत्सव ५।-

S.N.	Date of Issue	Subject or Occasion	Rate	क्र.सं.	प्रकाशन मिति	विवरण	दर
1.	May 1994	Golden Jubilee of Dharmodaya Sabha	8.00	१.	२०५१ वैशाख	धर्मोदय समाको स्वर्ण जयन्ती	८१-
2.	May 1994	Fight Against Smoking	1.00	२.	२०५१ जेठ	धुमपान विरुद्ध संघर्ष	११-
3.	July 1994	Traditional Nepalese Weapons	5.00	३.	२०५१ असार	परम्परागत नेपाली हतियार	५१-
		a. Khukuri				(क) खुकुरी	
		b. Khuda				(ख) खुडा	
		c. Dhaal				(ग) डाल	
		d. Katari				(घ) कटारी	
4.	Aug. 1994	Orchide Series		४.	२०५१ आषाढ	सुनगाभा टिकटमाला	
		a.	1.50			(क)	११५०
		b.	5.00			(ख)	५१-
		c.	8.00			(ग)	८१-
		d.	20.00			(घ)	२०१-
5.	Sep. 1994	Child Activity Series	1.00	५.	२०५१ भाद्र	बाल क्रियाकलाप टिकटमाला	११-
		a. Child Survival and Nutrition				(क) बाल बचाउ र पोषण	
		b. Education				(ख) शिक्षा	
		c. Games				(ग) खेलकुद	
		d. Stamps Collection				(घ) टिकट संकलन	
6.	Oct. 1994	Taleju Temple, Kathmandu	25.00	६.	२०५१ आश्विन	तलेजु मन्दिर, काठमाडौं	२५१-
7.	Oct. 1994	Development of Mail Conveyance in Nepal	5.00	७.	२०५१ आश्विन	डाँक परिवहन विकास	५१-
8.	Oct. 1994	World Food Day	3.00	८.	२०५१ आश्विन	विश्व खाद्य दिवस	३१-
9.	Nov. 1994	Nepali Carpet	10.00	९.	२०५१ कार्तिक	गर्लेचा सम्बन्धी	१०१
10.	Nov. 1994	Mushrooms Series	50.00	१०.	२०५१ कार्तिक	च्याउ सम्बन्धी	५०१-
		a.				(क)	
		b.				(ख)	
		c.				(ग)	
		d.				(घ)	
11.	Nov. 1994	National Personalities Series	1.00	११.	२०५१ कार्तिक	राष्ट्रिय व्यक्तित्व टिकटमाला	११-
		a. Bahadur Saha				(क) बहादुर शाह	
		b. Abal Brahmachari Shadananda				(ख) आबाल ब्रह्मचारी पडानन्द	

\* \* \* \* \*

### 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). After receipt, the ad will appear in the next Postal Himal.

**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: 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.

**NEPAL: Extensive Price List free for the asking.** Leo Martyn, P.O. Box



## Nepal's First Issue: The 2 Annas Tête-Bêche

by Wolfgang C. Hellrigl

The unexpected appearance, in a Swedish Auction, of a previously unknown tête-bêche of 2 annas of the 1881-1885 issue (H/V No. 5a), represents the most important discovery that Nepalese philately has had to offer for a long time.

As is often the case with exceptional stamps or covers, secondary features compound the rarity of the basic item. In this particular instance, the tête-bêche is not a pair, but a strip of three, and it is used - all other known tête-bêches of this stamp being mint pairs. Moreover, this very strip of three happens to be the largest known used multiple of imperforate 2 annas of the first issue. With these impressive credentials in its favour, and despite some faults, the item can justly claim a place amongst the greatest rarities of Nepal. The stamps are clearly printed in a deep purple and bear the cancellation of Dhankuta (Type C10).

This used strip brings the known tête-bêches of the 2 annas on European paper to five: of the four mint pairs, three are imperforate (one is in the Tapling collection in the British Museum, the others formed part of the ex Haverbeck and ex Heddergott collections) and one is pin-perforated (ex Dawson collection).

A close scrutiny of the used strip has revealed that the inverted cliché is not in position 21, as had been generally believed, but in position 22. Both the ex-Haverbeck and ex-Heddergott pairs had erroneously been taken to consist of pos. 21 + 22, whereas they are actually pos. 22 + 23. The error in plating was due to the fact that only pos. 22 could be safely plated, while the neighbouring positions 21 and 23 are virtually flawless; since in both pairs the left-hand stamp is inverted, this could be taken either as pos. 21 (if the pair was viewed upside-down) or pos. 22 (if the pair was viewed correctly). Unfortunately, the fact that pos. 21, was definitely inverted in the following settings, led to the wrong assumption that this was also inverted in H/V setting 3. Now the truth has finally been revealed by the newly discovered strip of three, which includes pos. 14, 22 and 30.

This change in the position of the inverted cliché is important and, moreover, has repercussions on the sequence of settings 2 and 3. An early authority, Major Evans, maintained that the setting with the inverted cliché came before H/V setting 2. He based his claim on the colour and on the clarity of the impression. In *The Classic Stamps of Nepal* (pp. 122-124), Frank Vignola and I opposed this view on the grounds that it would have indeed been highly improbable for pos. 21 to be inverted in setting 2, upright in setting 3 and again inverted in setting 4.

However, now that we know that the inverted cliché was originally in pos. 22, there is no longer that direct link with setting 4 which we felt compelled to safeguard for the sake of maintaining a logical, uninterrupted sequence of settings. On the contrary, we now have tangible evidence that - somewhere after setting 1 and



prior to setting 4 - changes must have taken place. Considering these new developments, nothing prevents us from endorsing Major Evans' original proposal. In fact, we have contributed a couple of additional points in favour of this theory in *The Classic Stamps of Nepal*, viz., the wider spacing of the sheet inscriptions of H/V setting 3 and the dash below the second T of TEKAT.

In view of the totally new situation brought about by the revised plating of the original tête-bêche, I now believe that H/V setting 1 was followed by H/V setting 3 (which contained the inverted pos. 22) and then by H/V setting 2 (which did not contain any inverted clichés). Thereafter, setting 4 (on native paper) started the long and well-known run of inverted clichés in pos. 21. If these assumptions are correct, setting 3 could tentatively be dated 1882-1884, and setting 2 1884-1885.

I am of the opinion that, in the light of the information available at this moment, the above theory is probably the most logical solution to this long-standing problem.



The used strip of 2 annas, on European paper, (pos. 14, 22, 30), featuring the inverted cliché in pos. 22

\* \* \* \* \*

## INDIAN MILITARY POST OFFICES IN BHUTAN

By Leonard A. Nadybal

Esoteric to some, but well documented never-the-less, is the fact that with the invasion of Tibet by China in the 1950s, Bhutan closed its border with its northern neighbor and the Indian government became the country's major benefactor, both for general economic development and military protection.

What is esoteric to almost everyone and completely undocumented in the philatelic press is the existence of Indian military post offices in Bhutan.

The first non-British Indian military mission to Bhutan occurred at the invitation of the King of Bhutan when, on 20 May 1961, a party of 5 Indian officers and 30 other military support personnel entered Phuntsholing, Bhutan, then only a border settlement and camp at the foot of the Himalayas. The mission was secret and the task was to travel to the high Himalayan border regions with Tibet and scout the Chinese military settlements visible from Bhutan's highest peaks in the Tibetan plateau below.

The party was headed by Indian LTG E. A. Vas. He was accompanied on part of his route by Lhendup Dorji, a former Bhutanese Prime Minister and self-styled "postmaster general" who was intimately involved in the first stamp issues of Bhutan, which appeared in 1962. During his highland trek, General Vas was surprised by the approach of a Bhutanese postal runner who brought him his mail from India. As he relates in his book Dragon Kingdom, Journeys through Bhutan, he was surprised because "I had not given a forwarding address to my previous unit and only four people in the world knew where I was". Later, upon parting company with Mr. Dorji, they exchanged addresses and promised one another they would stay in touch. The General recollected "I had no settled home in India and the Army postal address was the only permanent one I could give him with any assurance... I airily said 'Oh, 56 APO will find me!'"

Little did the general know that within a year, and before Bhutan itself had opened its own post offices, 56 APO and 99 APO would be regularly delivering Indian mail to Indian officials in Bhutan through Indian post offices. The upshot of the General's visit was the decision taken by Bhutan and India to build border roads for defense; to enable troops and material to get close to China quickly in the event of invasion from the north. China had issued maps showing portions of Bhutan in Tibet... an unsettling event to those in the south.

India quickly established two organizations in Bhutan which continue to function to the present day; IMTRAT (the Indian Military Training Team) and DANTAK. DANTAK is a quasi-military engineering organization, headquartered on the India-Bhutan border at the

Bhutanese town of Deothang. Under DANTAK are road maintenance units scattered all over Bhutan. These sub-units include the BRTFs (Border Road Task Force road maintenance offices) and the GREFs (General Reserve Engineer Force), plus medical units, administrative and communications units. IMTRAT is based in the west central Bhutanese valley of Ha, 20 miles east of Sikkim and 20 miles south of Tibet, and is co-located with the Bhutanese Army headquarters.

When road building was in full swing, there were dozens of field post offices; virtually every road building camp had one, and each carried its own FPO number (TABLE 1) which appear on cancellation marks applied to outgoing mail. Incoming mail was (and still is) always addressed to units at either 56 or 99 APO. Mail sorting offices in India know, from the unit designations which direction and country to which the mail is to be dispatched. FIG 1.

It is odd, given present circumstances, that the Indian FPOs in Bhutan still operate. There is no visible advantage to the government of India in having Indian post offices in Bhutan any longer, given the diminished size of the Indian presence. Basically, it can be said that the Indian FPOs functioning after 1965 or so are holdovers from the earlier days in the 1960s when there were no Bhutanese post offices. FIG 2. The Bhutan P&T was modelled after the Indian system under the guidance of a postal advisor from India, Dr. K. Ramamurti, who was deputed to Bhutan by the Indian P&T. Until 1974-5, the Bhutan postal system under the Bhutan Government Development Wing had no real identity distinct from that of the Indian system. Indian workers in Bhutan set up and operated most of the Bhutan post offices until the mid 1980s and a great deal of mail from Bhutanese post offices even travelled in DANTAK jeeps. There was little benefit for postal customers, either... postage rates in Bhutan equalled those of India, Indian currency was accepted for Bhutanese stamps, and many Indian forces members did in fact use Bhutanese postal facilities for their personal mail. FIG 3.

Over the years, the number of Indian FPOs operating has diminished as Bhutan opened its post offices. Today, only four FPOs continue to function. All four of them are in places where there are also Bhutanese post offices<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> FPO 869 at the capital, Thimphu (serving also the Indian embassy); FPO 955 serving DANTAK and FPO 857 serving IMTRAT, both at the southern border town of Phuntsholing; and FPO 655 at DANTAK Hq in Deothang (or Phuntsholing - see footnotes, Table I.) FPOs 955 & 857 appear to have branch, sub-offices attached to them.

TABLE 1

## Location List - Indian FPOs in Bhutan

Town/Location	FPO Nr.
Deothang (South central Bhutan)	655, 808, 869 <sup>2</sup>
Gelegphu (South central Bhutan)	unk.
Haa (Central western Bhutan)	unk
Paro (Northwest Bhutan)	956
Phuntsholing (Southwest Bhutan)	857, 655 <sup>3</sup>
Punakha (Old capital, central Bhutan)	unk
Samdrup Jongkhar (Southeast Bhutan)	unk
Simtokha (Thimphu valley)	unk <sup>4</sup>
Thimphu (Capital, central western Bhutan)	869
Tongsa (Central Bhutan)	unk
unknown	803
unknown	904
unknown	919

<sup>2</sup> Exactly when each FPO functioned, or if they all functioned simultaneously in this location is not known.

<sup>3</sup> It is well established that FPO 655 is located at Deothang and is operated by the 503d Postal Unit of the Indian Army. Deothang is far east of Phuntsholing. Yet, a return receipt for a letter sent in 1991 to the Postmaster, Indian Forces Post Office, Phuntsholing was signed for with a return address stamp "Postmaster FPO 655" and the receipt was dispatched with a postmark from the Phuntsholing GPO.

<sup>4</sup> Simtokha and Thimphu are so close to one another, FPO 869 may now serve both locations. When this FPO moved from Deothang is not known, but it is known that the HQ, Border Roads Task Force moved from Deothang to Simtokha on 11 Oct 1970.

# LEGEND

- All Weather Road
- Foot & Mule Path
- Mountain Pass  x
- Airport or Helipad  †

# BHUTAN

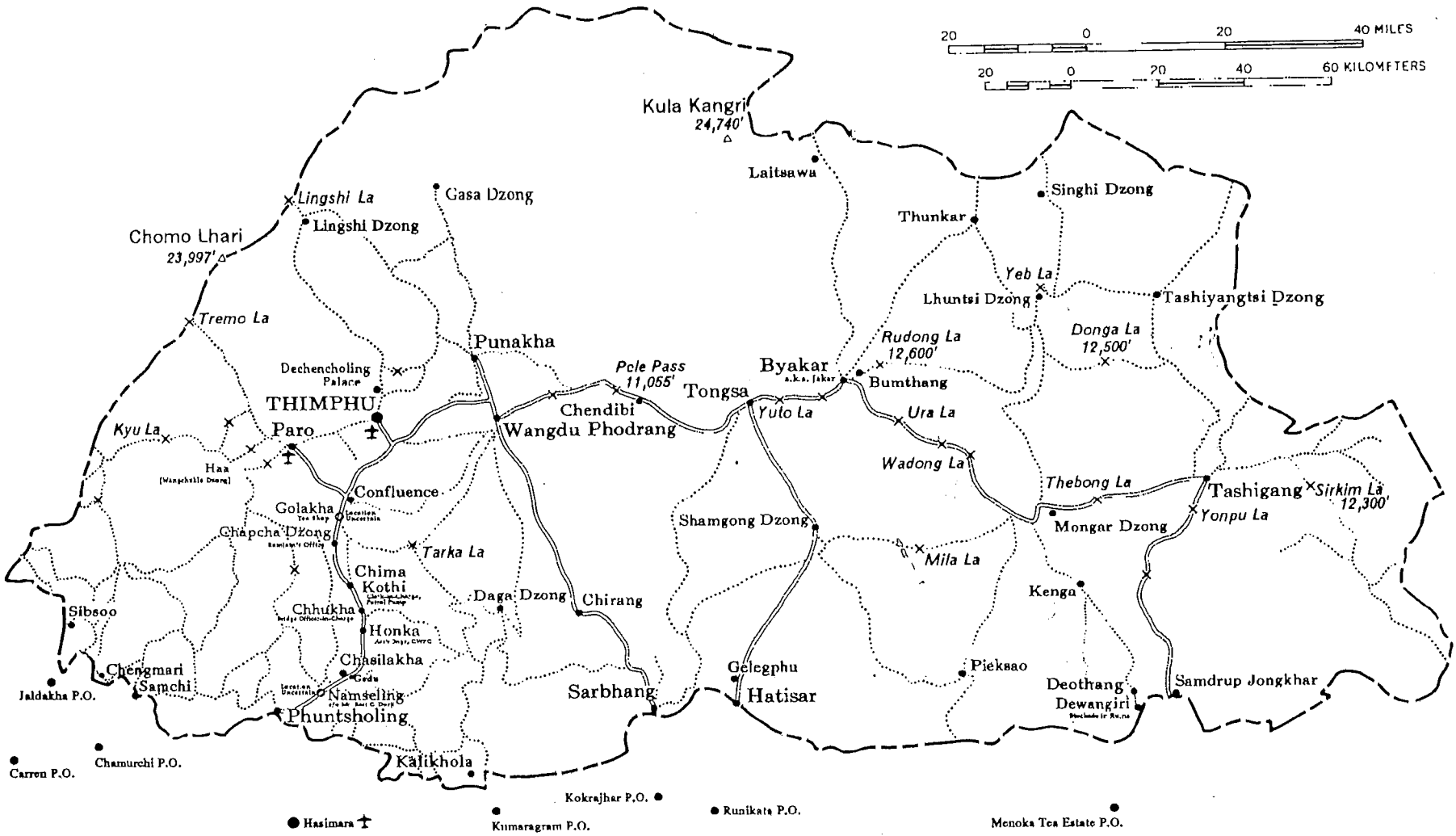
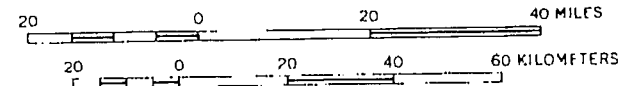




FIG 1 Letter sheet posted from Poona, India on 29 July 1964 to someone at DANTAK's 352 Workshop, 56 APO, (at Deothang where DANTAK's headquarters is located). On 3 August, the clerk at FPO 808 at Deothang corrected the address to read 351 Workshop, and redirected the letter to FPO 803. The cover shows an arrival backstamp date of 13 August. The Bhutanese post office at Deothang didn't open until five years later, on 21 March 1969.



FIG 4 At some point, there was Indian censorship of outbound military mail from Bhutan, which it seems could have been avoided without difficulty, given that there was



अन्तर्देशीय पत्र  
INLAND LETTER



Mr. C. D. Godse B.S.O.  
361, work's & PK. Coy.  
Project DANIAK  
C/o 56, A.P.O.

ना :- Sender's name and address :-

N. C. Godse  
Poona



NO ENCLOSURES ALLOWED

FIG 2 Letter sheet posted on 9 October 1962 - one day before the opening of the first post office in Bhutan, and arriving at FPO 655 (located at Deothang) on 11 October 1962 - one day after the inauguration of the Bhutan Post & Telegraph system.

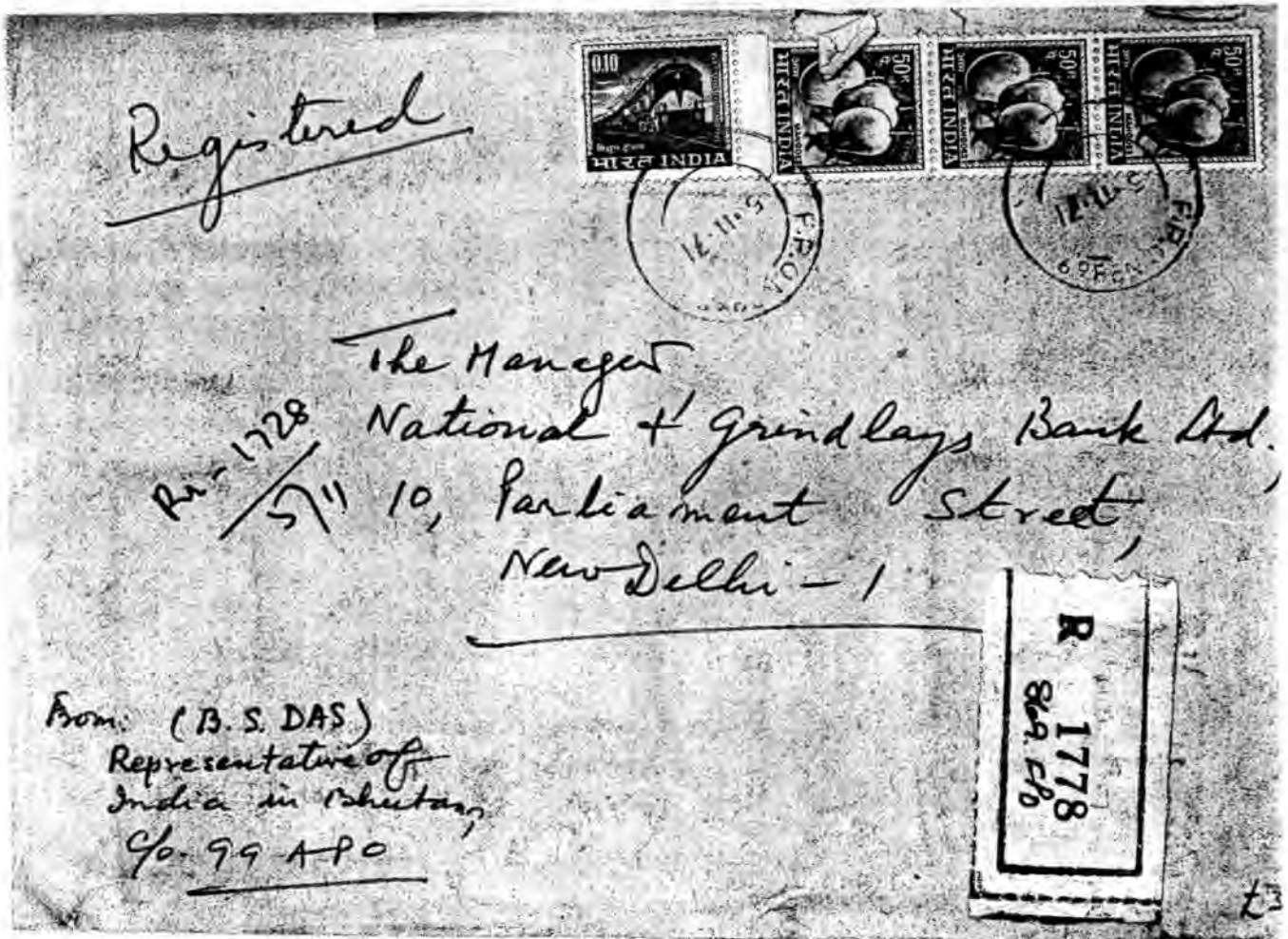


FIG 6 A personal letter from the Indian Representative to the Bhutan Government at Thimphu. Note the return address used is the "generic" c/o 99 APO (as opposed to the FPO acronym which appears in the cancellation marks of the individual post offices in



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The General Border Roads  
Kashmir House  
DHO PO NEW DELHI-11.  
25/5/71  
F.P.O. No. 655

DEPARTMENT  
HQ JE (P) DANTAK

FIG 3 A cover posted by an employee of DANTAK's 16th Road Maintenance Unit Paro (served by Indian FPO 956) but mailed from Bhutan's Rinpung Dzong post office Paro to Nepal. Transit time was 24 days.



FIG 5 An official registered letter from the DANTAK HQ at Deothang, Bhutan. Note the use of service (official mail) stamps. Use of service stamps at Bhutan-based Indian FPOs is scarce when compared to the number of letters seen with no stamps affixed and posted "On Indian Government Service".

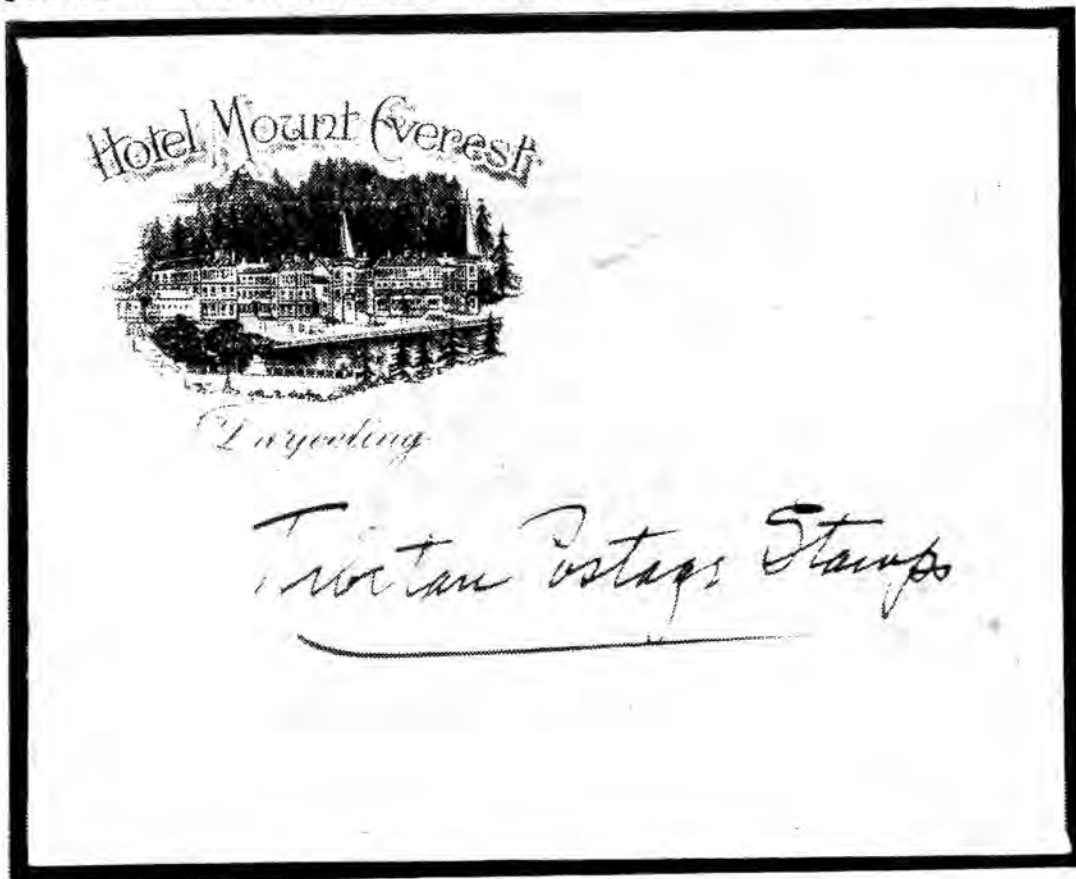
# NEW INFORMATION ON TIBETAN POSTAL RATES.

By Geoffrey Flack

In 1961, the Weekly Philatelic Gossip published an article entitled "Postal Rates In Tibet, 1903-1960" by Stanley Radgowski, Mac L. Ricketts and Armand E. Singer. No official records of postal rates had been found and the 1961 study had to be based solely on an examination of covers. The authors published a partial table of rates for both 'Non-Registered' and 'Registered' covers. Many of their conclusions have proven to be accurate, but there is still much to be learned. At

the end of the article they stated: "*We admit to grievous gaps in this table, but count upon fellow philatelists to fill them and to correct any of their errors from material in their own collections.*"

This challenge has yet to be answered and in the more than 30 years since their study was published very little has been added to our knowledge of these rates.

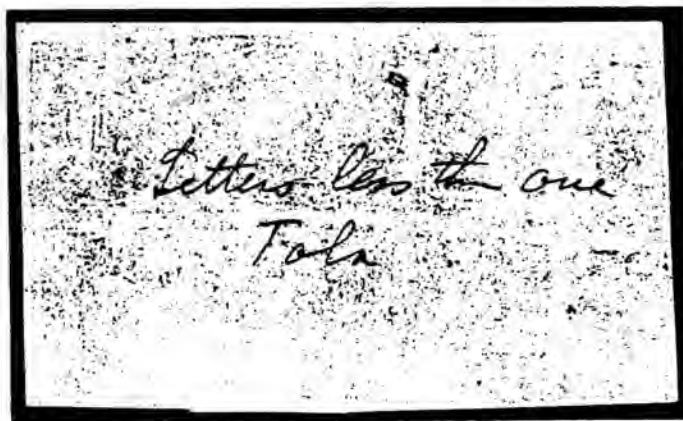
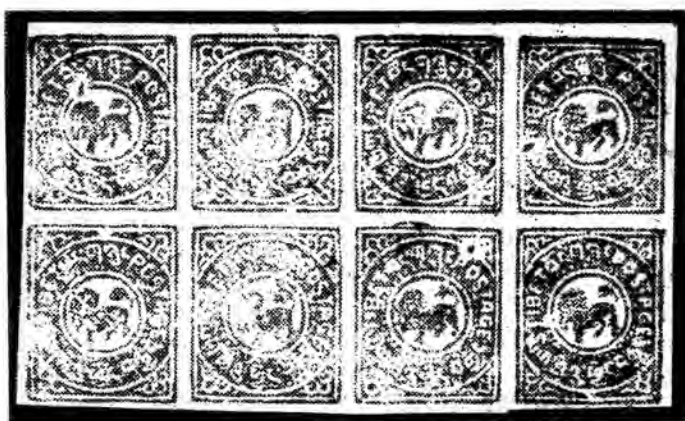


I recently made a small discovery which could help us with the Tibetan postal rates used in the early 1930s. I was sent an attractive envelope with a beautiful cachet of the "HOTEL MOUNT EVEREST, DARJEELING". Across the front of the envelope was written: "*Tibetan Postage Stamps*". A definite invitation to look inside!

The envelope contained a small selection of 1912 Issue Tibetan stamps... 3 horizontal strips of 4 as well as a block of 8. I was quite excited as three of the multiples were from the Shiny Enamel period of the late 1920s and early 1930s... all of them very scarce, but especially a **very shiny** strip of 4 of the 1 Trangka in Bright Carmine. I was quite disappointed to find all four pieces had writing (in ink) on the back. The writing would undoubtedly detract from the value of the stamps, but there was a redeeming factor ... this writing has given us some new information on the Postal Rates of Tibet.

The large multiple in the lot was a block of 8 of the 1/2 Trangka printed in Pale Reddish-Purple (Shiny Period, Waterfall #51). This printing helps us to date these stamps as well as the writing on the back of each. This particular Pale Reddish-Purple shade can be found on a number of covers used between 1930 and 1932. Waterfall also dates this printing from this period and it is consistent with the findings of Radgowski, Ricketts and Singer. The Shiny 1 Trangkas also date from the early 1930s leading me to conclude that the envelope and contents date from this period.

It is generally accepted that "1/2 Trangka" was the 'Non-Registered' rate for the period, but until now we haven't had any information on the allowable weights for these letters. On the back of the block of 8 is written: "*Letters less than one Tola.*" (The 'tola' is an Indian unit of weight equal to 180 grains troy or 0.4114 ounces.) We now know that the 1/2tr rate in the early 1930s was for non-registered letters weighing approximately 0.40 ounces or 11.2 grams.



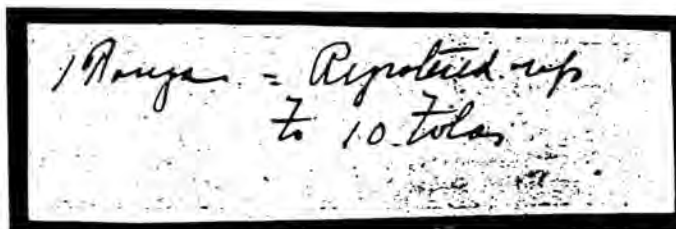
The strip of four of the 1 Sho (2/3 Trangka) is a Shiny Enamel printing in Rose-Carmine. On the back is written: "*1 Sho - for Registered letter weighing 5 tolas.*" The 1961 article speculated that the Registered Rate was 2/3tr (1 Sho) from 1912 until 1930 and then changed to 1tr. Waterfall mentioned this value as being the normal registered rate to India, but he did not give any years nor weight limits. (It is possible that the Weekly Philatelic Gossip article is correct and that these four multiples date from 1930, but it is also possible the change in rates might have occurred little later than the 1961 article speculated.)



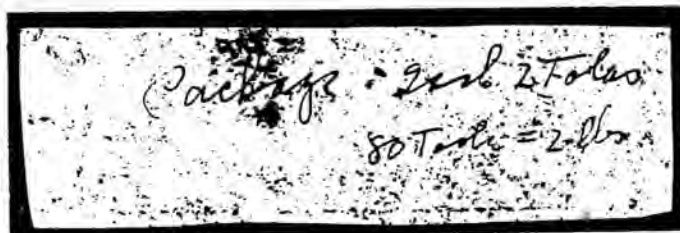
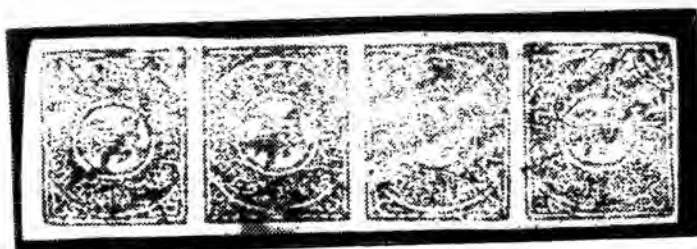
The lot also contained a strip of the 1 Trangka, a Dull Red printing (flat ink). The writing on the back of this multiple reads: "*1 Tanga - Registered up to 10*"



Tolas." So few 1 Trangka covers exist that it is almost impossible to do any research on the use of this stamp. This information throws a little light on the commercial use of this value.



There was also a second strip of 1 Trangka, but this time it was a very rare Shiny Enamel Printing in Bright Carmine. The ink or paint was totally unsuitable for fine printing and consequently very few seem to have been produced. The writing on the back reads: "Packages - ? 2 Tolas / 80 Toola = 2 lbs". This is a little confusing .. a tola and a toola seem to be the same as 80 tolas would be approximately two pounds. This does not explain what is meant by "Packages - ? 2 tola". Possibly another collector can help clear up this problem? Despite the confusion the notation points to the use of the 1 Trangka value on packages. This may account for the few very rare commercially used multiples of the 1 Trangka value which have been found.



### TIBETAN POSTAL RATES (Circa - 1930)

	Non-Registered	Registered
1/2 Trangka 2/3 Trangka 1 Trangka	up to 1 Tola (0.4 oz or 11.2 grams)	up to 5 Tolas (2 oz or 56 grams) up to 10 Tolas (4 oz or 112 grams)
The 1 Trangka was also used for Packages.		

Tibetan covers from the early 1930s are scarce and the lack of material has made studying the postal rates from this period quite difficult. The notations on the back of these stamps are not a major philatelic find, but they do add a little to the story and might in a small way help us to better understand the postal rates for this period.

## FORGERIES OF THE 1933 ISSUE

### SET 3

George Bourke

This set consists of the five values of the 1933 issue and can be separated into two different types, sheets of which are made up of a single cliché. Both types are printed on the same poor quality yellow toned paper and are found imperforate and uncanceled. No used copies or forged covers are known.

Dating this set is problematical (as is the case with many forgeries). Kurt Dahnke remembers buying examples in Germany in 1952<sup>1</sup> but at the time, was unaware that there were two different types. Arnold C. Waterfall briefly mentions and illustrates (all Type I) this set in his book<sup>2</sup> but neither he nor Dahnke mention the unusual sheet format (which they could hardly fail to do, if it had been known to them), nor do they differentiate between the two types. Waterfall was not aware of when the 3rd set forgeries were produced<sup>3</sup>. Though there are those that feel that this set dates from the 1940's, and this may very well be the case, the earliest confirmable date is Dahnke's 1952. Although the Type II double sheets were not seen until the 1970's, it is probable that both types were produced at the same time, as they are printed on exactly the same paper and show the same degree of yellowing, due to the high acid content of the paper. Still, attributing the Type II forgery to a date earlier than the 1970's, must remain at best, speculative. The most that can be factually stated about dating this set, is that the first confirmable appearance of the Type I forgery dates to 1952 and the Type II, to the 1970's.

#### TYPE I

Sheets consist of twelve impressions, but only a single cliché, arranged in a 3 x 4 format. The lettering is thin and spidery and does not fill the panels.

1/2 trangka - Pale Lemon Yellow.

2/3 trangka - Indigo.

1 trangka - Salmon.

2 trangka - Bright Rose Red.

4 trangka - Dull Green.

#### TYPE II

Derived from the Type I forgery but the inscriptions are bigger and bolder and more completely fill the panels. Sheets consist of twenty four impressions, but only a single cliché, arranged in a 6 x 4 format.

1/2 trangka - Bistre Yellow, Lemon.

2/3 trangka - Royal Blue.

1 trangka - Scarlet Vermilion, Indian Red, Chestnut.

2 trangka - Bright Scarlet.

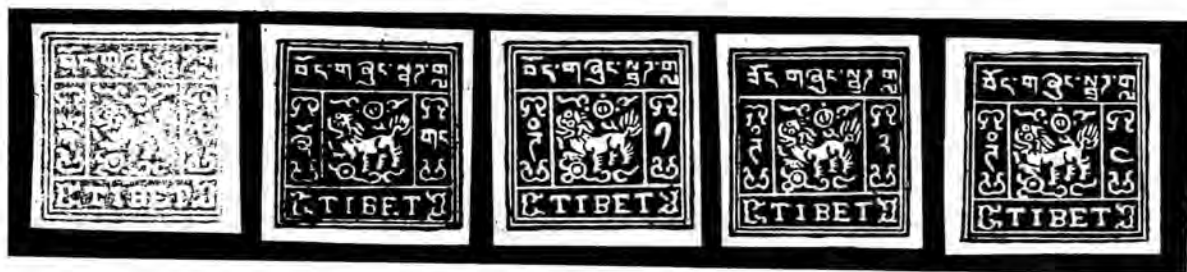
4 trangka - Yellow Green.

Regarding scarcity, it should be noted that the Type I forgery, in either singles or sheets, is among the rarest of the early 1933 forgeries. On the other hand, the Type II forgery is very common in any form, although some shades are comparatively scarcer than others. Sheets of the Type II are often found cut down. A sheets of twenty four being cut in half to produce two "normal" looking sheets of twelve.

While no covers exist for this set, I do have a set of Type II glued to a pink sheet of paper printed with information on the geography and people of Tibet. This appears to be some kind of retail sales sheet, as the stamps are listed as "replicas" and priced at .35 cents. Although the sheet is not dated, it mentions that the Communist Chinese took over control of the country in 1951 and that the seat of the Dalai Lama is in Lhasa. This information seems to indicate that the sheet was produced after 1951 but before 1959, when the Dalai Lama fled to India.

Notes

- (1) Letter in the possession of the author.
- (2) Arnold C. Waterfall, "The Postal History of Tibet", London: Robson Lowe, 1965 edition, p. 85, 93, 97, 98, 101, 152. 1981 edition, p. 91, 95, 99, 103, 107, 158.
- (3) Letter in the possession of Kurt Dahnke.

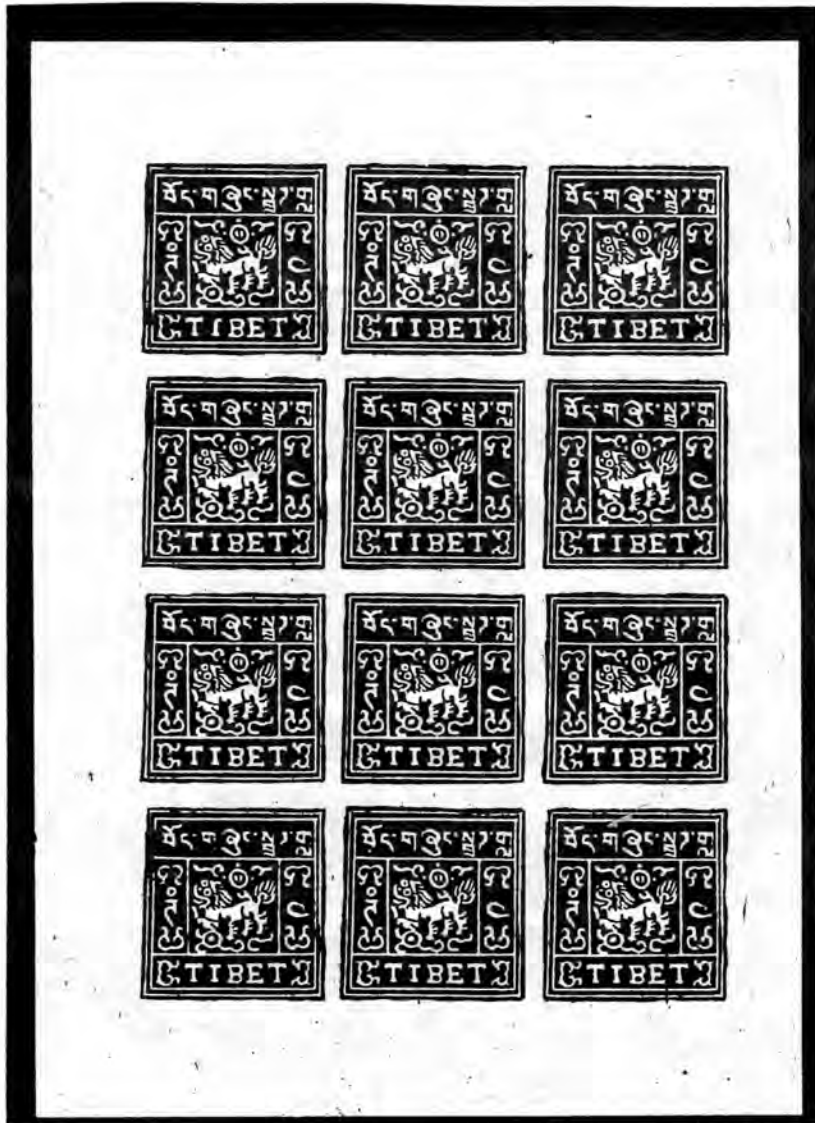


FORGERIES SET 3 TYPE I



FORGERIES SET 3 TYPE II





FULL SHEET TYPE I FORGERY

NS No. 1011 TIBET (Shangri-la) Famed and Fabled . . . Set of 5 val. (Replicas) .35

Located in Central Asia and situated on what is known as the "Top of the World," between the Himalayas and the Kunlun Mountains.

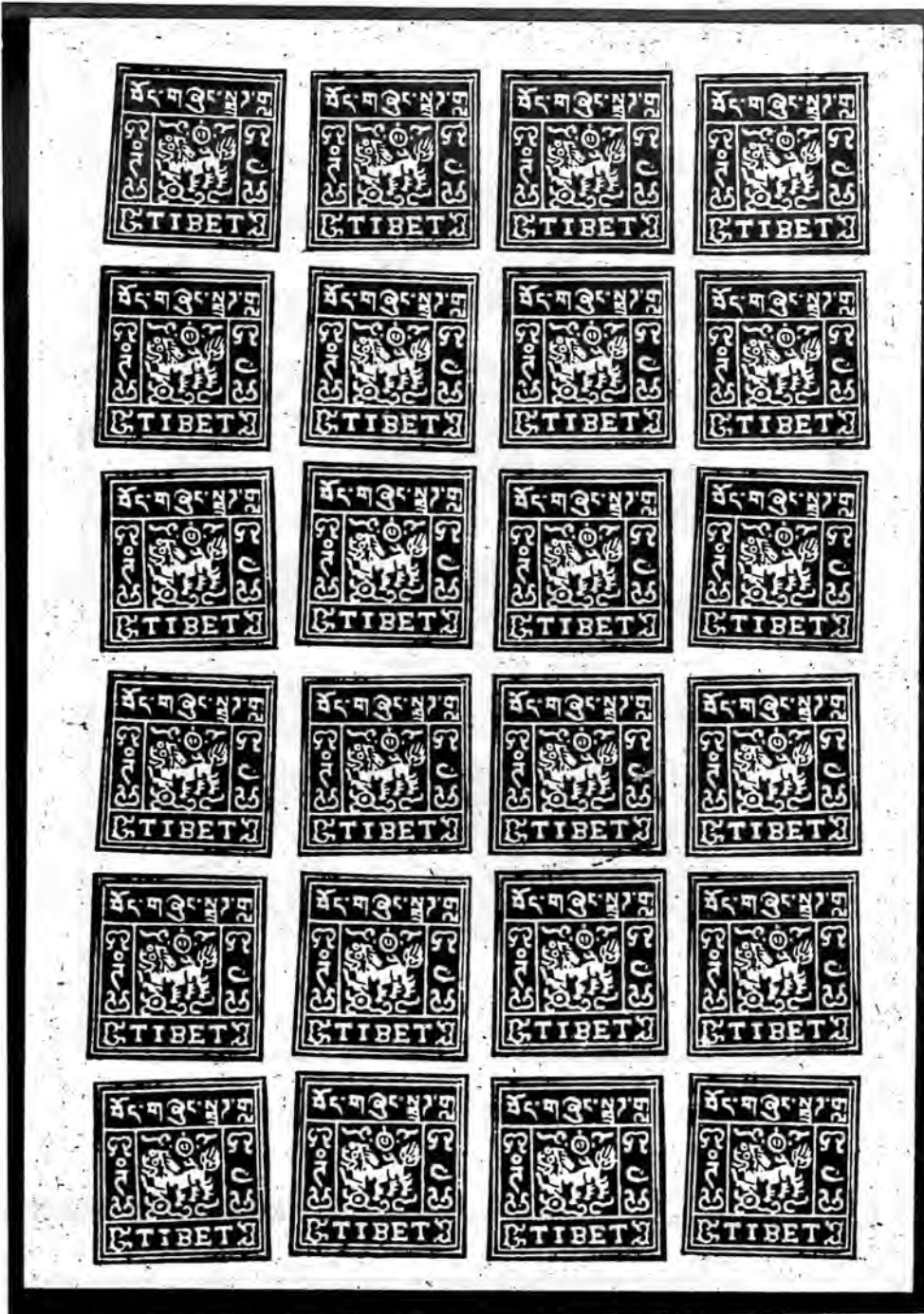
Government — a semi-independent state — nominally under the control of China. The Communist Chinese government took over control of Tibet in 1951.

Area — 463,200 square miles. Population — 1,500,000. Capital — and Seat of the Dalai Lama his Lhasa.

The people are fine friendly, honest, pious folk. Their religion is Lamaism — a form of Buddhism.

The average altitude in Tibet is 16,000 feet. Tibet is bounded on the North by Sinkiang, and on the South by Nepal, Burma, India and Pakistan.

Tibet is what is known as a Theocratic state ruled by the Dalai Lama. Tibet is not a member of the Universal Postal Union and its stamps are valid only within the confines of its own borders.



FULL SHEET TYPE II FORGERY

\*\*\*\*\*

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