

POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET

PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



Dr. Wolfgang C. Hellrigl signs the Roll Of Distinguished
Philatelists with Colin Hepper in attendance.



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DR. WOLFGANG C. HELLRIGL SIGNS THE ROLL OF DISTINGUISHED PHILATELISTS

Colin Hepper

During the weekend of 9-11, September, 1994, the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain held its annual meeting in Chelmsford in the county of Essex. During the three days there were various papers read and discussed as well as some static displays and specialist society meetings.

The highlight of the weekend was the signing of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. Three people were invited this year; Juan Santa Maria from Columbia, Brigadier Wallberg from Sweden and our President, Wolfgang Hellrigl.

The signing ceremony was held in the Chelmsford Town Hall council chambers. This is a very impressive building and there were around a hundred delegates in the chambers.

Colin Hepper gave the citation to introduce Wolfgang which covered his philatelic achievements, as follows: Wolfgang is acknowledged as an authority and expert on all aspects of the Post in Nepal, a position which is supported not only by his fine collections, which have been awarded International Large Gold Medals and the Tilleard Medal of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, but also by his very many contributions to the philatelic literature of Nepal and Tibet. He has done much research into the philately of these countries and has written extensively on his findings. In 1978, 1984 and 1992 he was awarded the Martin Memorial Trophy by the India Study Circle. His book, Nepal Postal History - The British Indian Post Office, published in 1991, has received International Gold Medals.

As an expert in his field, he is Director of the Association Internationale des Expertes Philatelists. His remarkable reference collection of the forgeries of Tibet is frequently displayed Hors Concours. Also in International philately, he is a member of the FIP Commission for Literature and serves as a judge for literature.

The Study Circle would like to offer Wolfgang our congratulations for this very well deserved honour.



"Dr. Hellrigl, FRPSL, born in 1941, is an economist and lives in the South Tyrol region of Italy. He started collecting stamps at a very early age and later developed a keen interest in Asian postal history, with special emphasis on Nepal, Tibet and India."

[Photo from Nepal Postal History - The British Indian Post Office]

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EDITORIAL

Leo Martyn

An E-Mail Internet link for anyone interested in the Himalayan research community has been established. Messages are sent out as a newsletter digest (typically once per week). If you want to subscribe to the HimNet mailing list, send an E-Mail to: HimNet@erdw.ethz.ch with the command Suscribe <your name>. For further information contact: Coordinator - Dr. David A. Spencer; E-Mail/Internet: DASpencer@erdw.ethz.ch; Postal address- Geologisches Institut, ETH-Zentrum, CH-8092 Zurich, Switzerland; Telephone- +41-1-632-3698; Telefax- +41-1-632-1080.

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Heinz Schobel sent me a copy of Nepal's 1991 4R. Royal Chitwan National Park (Scott #488) with the gold impression apparently missing ("R4" and "Nepal") for my opinion. Recently, I bought a pair from an auction with the same gold inscription missing. The estimate wasn't high and I suspected foul play (not by the auctioneer who is a member in good standing and merely offered it at the request of the consigner). Under magnification of 30X I could see traces of gold on my pair - in fact if you held the pair at the proper angle you could see a shadow of the missing value inscription. On Heinz's stamp I could also see traces of gold under magnification (though not as apparent as my pair). Also, by comparing the suspect pair and single to a single with gold the shades of color are not the same - especially the green border (lighter on the stamps without the gold). I suspect that the stamps without gold have been chemically treated.

I also, recently, bought from Nepal a strip of three of Nepal's 1975 5p Deer Wildlife Conservation stamp (Scott #305) with the left stamp blank. I can see traces of "1975" and appears somewhat faded - another case of a chemically treated stamp?

Heinz would like to research and publish an article dealing with such errors and or forgeries plus color shifts, perforation errors, etc. Any members interested in such material can contact him at: Hornerstr. 1, 28203 Bremen, Germany.

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An article by Dick van der Wateren, titled "Postvervoer In Het Himalayarijk Nepal" appeared in the November, 1993 issue of De Aerophilatelist (Netherlands).

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Member Art Ackley, who operates an "old-fashioned" type stamp store in Colorado Springs, was featured in an article which appeared in the Mar. 12, 1994 issue of The Stamp Wholesaler. Not only does his store, "Ackley's Rocks & Stamps", deal in stamps and supplies, but also rocks, minerals and lapidary supplies and has been open for 30 years. Art has presented his Tibet exhibit quite often and has been the dealer-chairman of Socopex for 25 years. He can be reached at 3230 N. Stone Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80907; phone 719/ 633-1153 - if you are in the area stop and say hello.

o o o o o

Our annual meeting will take place Sunday, April 23, at 11:00 am in the Embarcadaro room of the Quality Hotel-Cathedral Hill, in San Francisco, as part of Westpex '95 (May 21-23). We hope to have a speaker - any one interested please contact Roger Skinner. This will be a great stamp show, as usual, with dealers from around the country plus several from overseas.

Hope to see you there!

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Mr. Krishna Raj-Bhandari sent the following information from the Mar. 11, 1957 (2013-11-28 B.S.) issue of Nepal Gazettee Notification (unofficial translation):

P.W. & Communication Ministry

"It has been decided early that the stamps with the effigy of H.M. the King will be for the postal uses and those with the map of Nepal for the revenue purposes such as for official documents, petitions and other forms. Such differential use of the stamps could mislead or cause inconvenience to the general public. So it is notified that henceforth the stamps with the map of Nepal, the stamps with the effigy of the King and also other stamps issued so far could be used for all purposes as per the Governmental decision dated 2013-10-27-1 B.S. (Feb. 10, 1957)."

Note - apparently the above refers to the 1954 sets picturing King Tribhuvana Bir Bikram and the Map of Nepal.

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We are presently making plans for meetings at Capex '96 (Toronto, June 8-16) and Pacific '97 (San Francisco, May 29-June 8) - two great International shows. We will have meetings with speakers plus member exhibits (a surprising number of members are qualified to exhibit Internationally).

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Mr. Surendra Lal Shrestha, our Representative in Nepal, placed the following ad, at his own expense, in Kathmandu's largest circulating newspaper, Mahanagar, on behalf of the Study Circle.

<p>Join Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study circle Phone 216726</p>

He also sent covers with special cancels (to be illustrated in a future issue) and two recently issued postal stationery items - an aerogramme and an envelope which are shown below - many thanks to Surendra.





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Malcolm Campbell recommended the use of a special screen for photocopy illustrations and very kindly sent one for my use. This should improve illustrations in future Study Circle auctions - in fact one member questioned the genuiness of some of the Nepalese stamps in Auction 66 based upon the illustrations which were quite poor (all of the stamps are genuine). I am sure to make good use of the screen. Another member suggested using starting prices to indicate reserves instead of estimates reserved at 2/3rds of the indicated amounts. Sounds good to me - look for this change in the next auction.

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Mr. Ajit Shah reports the existence of Nepal's 1962 Mahendra 10p with the "Kaj Sarkari" overprint doubled.

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Dick van der Wateren and Wolfgang Hellrigl showed exhibits at Fepapost '94, held at The Hague, Netherlands. Dick's exhibit of Classic Nepal was awarded a Gold Medal. Wolfgang's exhibit of Tibet was awarded a Large Vermeil. Both were of six frames. This show was the first international European show under the auspices of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations (FEPA). Roger Skinner won the Reserve Grand award for one frame exhibits at Sunpex '94 with "Nepal - The Half Anna and Its Postal Usages". He also took the Gold Sunnyvale Stamp Society President's award. Alan Warren received a Vermeil Award for his exhibit, "Tibet: Stamps and Postal History" at Midaphil '94 and at Vapex '94 a Vermeil and the Nepal And Tibet Study Circle Award. Congratulations to all - GOOD SHOW!

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An article titled "The Strange Stamps of Bhutan" by Eric Glasgow appeared in the October, 1994 issue of Stamp Lover.

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In response to the information in the last newsletter regarding Himal Magazine, Khwaja Philip offers several other publications regarding the Himalayan area which might interest our members: Tibetan Review (published in India), monthly, \$20/yr., available from: Potala, 9 East 36th St., New York, N.Y. 10016. Also two journals devoted to contemporary Buddhist affairs:

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Member Dr. Derek Pocock was a commissioner from Australia and a judge at Bangkok '93.

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Mr. D.R. Pandey, Officier-In-Charge in the Postal Services Department at the Nepal Philatelic Bureau, wrote a very nice letter regarding our journal: "Our Bureau highly appreciates your publication 'Postal Himal'. I have the pleasure to inform you that our Bureau has decided to send you regularly our folders or First Day covers after we release the new postage stamps from 1995 onwards." I will illustrate these in future issues as a way of presenting the new issues of Nepal. We can thank Mr. Surendra Lal Shrestha for bringing our journal to the attention of the Philatelic Bureau.

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Prepared calling cards (phone cards) seem to be finding their way into philatelic publications and auctions. For those who might be interested I offer the following: As part of the "People & Places" series by Liberty (Quest Telecommunications, 242 Falcon Drive, Forest Park, GA 30050), "First Destination: Kathmandu" (four cards plus bonus card - face value of \$36 for the four cards and \$2 for the bonus card) was offered for \$36 plus \$6.50 shipping and handling in a full page ad appearing in the February, 1995 issue of Moneycard Collector. Also, in a German Postal Auction the following lot was offered (and sold according to the unsold lot list): "Telefonkarten, 1992 Tibet Schwarz - Weib erste Probeausgabe, Auflage 1.000 St ungebraucht, ausruf 980 DM".

* * * * *

A TWELFTH PRINTING OF THE 2 PICE SRI PASHUPATI LOCAL PRINTS

By Paul C. Hager, Ph.D.

The Sri Pashupati series constituted the longest running definitive series in Nepalese postal history. In fact, its 48 year history makes it one of the longest running definitive series in all of philately. This article is concerned with the 2 pice brown from the fourth issue -- the local prints.

The first three issues (1907, 1930 and 1935 A.D.) were printed in England by Perkins-Bacon by the intaglio process (Hepper, 1982). However, German activity in the Mederranean made it difficult to receive new supplies of the stamps from Europe. As supplies were exhausted, the Nepalese government decided to print their own stamps. Interestingly, the intaglio plates of the 1907 series were in the archives of the Nepalese Treasury (Hepper, p. 36). An attempt was made to produce stamps using these plates as one would typographic plates. This resulted in the "negative" prints (Matthiesen and Vignola, 1993). These process proved to be unsatisfactory, so the Government Printing House photographed sheets of the 1930 and 1935 issues and prepared copper typographic plates. The result was the Sri Pashupati local prints produced from 1941 to about 1955.

More than one printing was made of most of the seven stamps of this issue over the 14 or so years these stamps were produced. The more commonly used stamps were reprinted so often that the copper plates frequently wore out or were damaged, resulting in easily identifiable settings as new plates were prepared. In the latter years (and after the postal need had passed), several additional printings were made to meet the needs of Nepalese stamp dealers. These latter stamps, including the perforation varieties, were postally valid, so one finds them being used on mail well into the 1960's.

Colin Hepper, in his 1982 definitive book on the Sri Pashupati issues, states that there were eleven major local printings of the 2 pice brown (Scott 44, S.G. 57). Each major printing is based on the dates of production and are identifiable from the marginal inscriptions, paper type and colors of the ink. Even within a particular major printing, the colors changed as new batches of ink were used. In each case, the sheets consisted of 36 stamps except Printings 1 & 2 - 40 stamps each.

It is the eleventh printing (early 1950's) that the author wishes to address. Hepper identified five different printings. The first four (Hepper's *a - d*) differ only in the inscriptions, with *b* also exhibiting color variations. Figure 1 shows stamps 27-28, 31-32 and 35-36 from a *b* printing imperforate sheet on laid paper. The inscription is at left and is of Hepper's second type. A single pin head (used to secure the plate) can be seen between stamps 35 and 36.

However, the fifth issue (*e*) shows major differences from the other four. Hepper speculates that the plate was damaged and then repaired for the last printing. Stamps in positions 28, 32 and 36 are now misaligned and a new cliché has been inserted in position 36. The pin heads securing the cliché clearly show in Figure 2. The inscription is a type used only for printing 11*d* and *e*, with a slightly different placement for the *e* printing. This replacing of cliché 36, the misalignment of the three stamps and the placement of the inscription leads the author to believe that a 12th major printing should be considered -- one distinct from the other 1950's settings of the 2 pice brown. The author will be happy to hear from other collectors who might shed some light on this minor question.

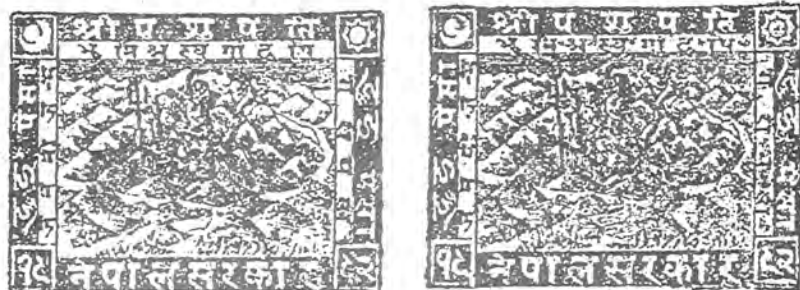
References

- Hepper, Colin (1982). *The Sri Pashupati issues of Nepal*. Peterborough, England: Nepal and Tibet Study Circle.
- Matthiesen, Thomas & Frank E. Vignola (1993). "The Sri Pashupati experimental negative proofs." *Postal Himal*, No. 73, pp. 10-15.

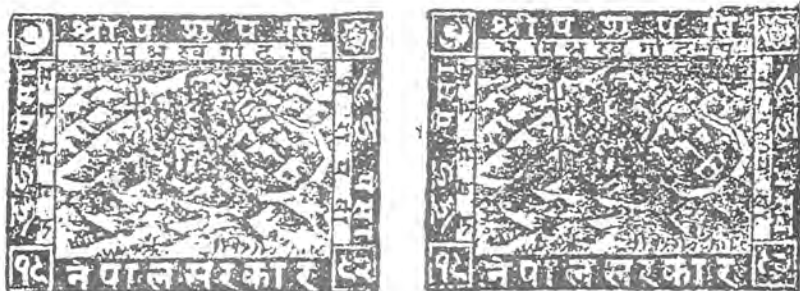
* * * * *

Figure 1

27



31



35



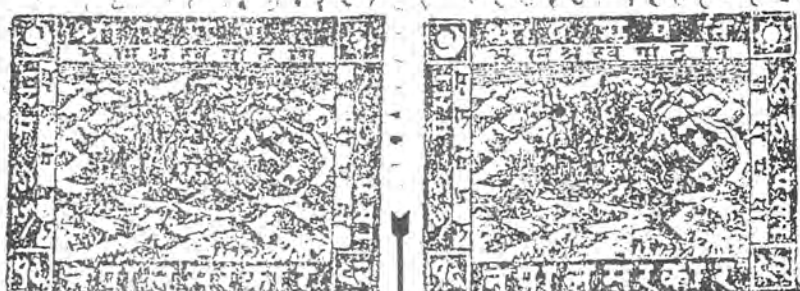
Printing 11b

Figure 2

28



32



36



Printing 11e/12

Nepal Postal Stationery

A Review by Frank J. Vignola

By Dick van der Wateren. Published 1995 by Dick van der Wateren (Ysbaanweg 8, 8391 HZ Noordwolde, Netherlands). Illustrated, A-4 format, 109pp., stapled, soft cover cover. Printed in English.

Prices: Europe - £ 13 or DM 31, postage and packing included if paid by cash (an additional £ 5, DM 13 if paid by bankdraft).
U.S. - \$16 plus \$8 for postage and packing if paid by cash (an additional \$8 if paid by bankdraft).

After Nepal, Catalogue of Postal Stationery, 1887-1992 by Prof. Dr. Alex Werner and Dick van der Wateren was published in 1993 it was not surprising to see that interest in Nepalese postal stationery increased considerably. The new information, new discoveries and continuing research made it apparent to Dick van der Wateren that there should be a new revised edition in the form of a comprehensive handbook.

When the 1993 Catalogue was published, Dr. Wolfgang C. Hellrigl wrote a book review which included an excellent constructive critique proposing various knowledgeable suggestions regarding an eventual revision of the catalogue. He felt that by adding more detail to the 1993 Catalogue it would enhance considerably the postal history value of the Catalogue which eventually should be revised in the form of a handbook. With the encouragement of Prof. Werner, who co-authored the 1993 Catalogue, Dick accepted the challenge to take on the project as both author and publisher of this new detailed reference handbook, Nepal Postal Stationery.

In the introduction to the new handbook, the author wrote that there were several areas in which he changed the contents of the 1993 Catalogue that brought about the writing of the revised book. He added a new chapter that gives a complete review of all of the previous publications he could locate relating to the postal stationery of Nepal. He included a detailed chapter on the history of the first postal card and another on the printing dates of the early postal cards, giving us the best chronological sequence of issues possible at this time. Another chapter deals with the numbering system which he revised and simplified so that future discoveries could easily be inserted into the proper numbering sequence.

Included are illustrations of all of the known types of postal cards, stamped envelopes, registration envelopes and aerograms issued from 1887 through 1994. The sections on the early postal cards, including sub types, simplify classifying the cards, especially with the new detailed historical text appearing on the same pages as the illustrations. The catalogue now becomes a reference book with the addition of such postal history relating to Nepal's postal stationery.

Also included in the revised handbook are chapters on rarity and prices (now in U.S. dollars rather than German DM), and postal stationery rates. Also present is a bibliography.

In the Forward to the book, Dr. Hellrigl succinctly expressed his opinion as follows: "Extended from a concise catalogue to a detailed handbook, this volume may be considered as the definitive reference work on the subject". I commend the author, Dick van der Wateren, for what he has accomplished by bringing this invaluable research book to fruition. Do not miss the opportunity to add this book to your personal library.

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The Postal Rates of Tibet, 1912-1956

Wolfgang Hellrigl

The recent article on Tibetan postal rates, by Geoffrey Flack (1), has brought to light some new and important information. Since I have been working on the problem of Tibetan rates for some years, I should also like to publish my findings, in the hope that other collectors might be able to fill in some pieces of this puzzle.

There are three fundamental reasons for the difficulties in reconstructing the system of the postal rates applied by the Tibetan Post Office, during the period of independence, 1912-1956. The first reason is the lack of official records, which makes us dependent on covers and on contemporary scraps of information. Secondly, only a very small percentage of Tibetan covers is actually datable, which means that the rest cannot be used to prove or disprove a given rate. Thirdly, Tibetan postal rates had a tendency to change rather frequently, thus complicating matters even more.

To overcome these difficulties, I recorded as many dated commercial covers as possible, from various collections, articles and auction catalogues. With very rare exceptions, the only Tibet covers that can be dated are combination covers bearing postal markings of other countries, notably India and Nepal. Obviously, philatelic covers have to be ignored, since they do not always represent a correct rate, overfrankings being a normal practice.

The first oddity I noticed when trying to come up with useful rate charts, was that the rates for unregistered and registered letters did not necessarily change at the same time. The authors of earlier articles on postal rates had assumed that, as anyone would normally expect, such changes had taken place simultaneously. By separating these two categories, I was able to straighten out more than one problem area.

Unregistered Letters:

STANDARD LETTERS (UNREGISTERED)		
RATE	RECORDED PERIODS	PROBABLE PERIODS
1/6 tangka	Jun. 1916 - Jan. 1930	1912 - 1930
1/2 tangka	Aug. 1930 - Aug. 1935	1930 - 1935
1 tangka	Jun. 1936 - Jun. 1944	1935 - 1945
2 tangka	Dec. 1952 - Jan. 1955	1945 - 1956

The above chart of the basic rates for unregistered letters shows the dates I have been able to record. By narrowing down the gaps between the individual periods, we could come closer to pinpointing the exact dates of the various rate increases. The largest gap lies between June, 1944 and December, 1952, a period where only few covers were sent unregistered. W. Salmen (2) dates the exis-

tence of 2-tangka rates at "presumably May, 1945," but I have not been able to verify this early date. Unfortunately, unregistered 2-tangka letters are hardly ever dated.

The weight of a standard letter was 1 tola (11.7 grams). According to F. Ludlow ⁽³⁾, the rate for every additional tola was 1/6 tangka. Ludlow's brief article was published in 1928, so I have no doubt that this rate applied until the rate increase of 1930. In any event, Tibetan postal clerks must have been very lenient, for double-rates for extra weight were hardly ever charged. In fact, commercial letters franked with single 1/3 tangkas are extremely rare.

We can only assume that, with the introduction of the basic 1/2 tangka rate, the rate for every additional tola would have also been increased to 1/2 tangka.

Perhaps I should briefly comment on the mysterious 3-tangka rate, which Radgowski, Ricketts and Singer ⁽⁴⁾ - later followed by Salmen - believed to have been at first a "forwarding rate" and then an ordinary rate on unregistered mail. These authors placed the 3-tangka rate after the 1-tangka and before the 2-tangka rate. While a rate decrease is not an impossible event, I still find it highly unlikely that things could have gone this way. It would seem much more logical - and the dates I have recorded would confirm this - to transfer the 3-tangka rate to the registered section, although the covers that I have seen do not bear registration markings.

Registered Letters:

REGISTERED LETTERS (POSTAGE + REGISTRATION FEE)		
RATE	RECORDED PERIODS	PROBABLE PERIODS
2/3 tangka	Jun. 1924 - Feb. 1934	1912 - 1934
2 tangka	Feb. 1934 - Apr. 1940	1934 - 1940
3 tangka	Dec. 1940 - Mar. 1948	1940 - 1948
4 tangka	Oct. 1948 - Mar. 1955	1948 - 1955
5 tangka	May 1955 -	1955 - 1956

In the case of registered letters, the gaps between recorded rate increases are much less pronounced. However, there remains the problem that the 3-tangka letters that I have seen do not bear any registration markings, hence we are not absolutely certain that they were, in fact, registered. However, most of my 3-tangka covers were sent from Nepal and forwarded from Phari, where manuscript registration markings were generally omitted.

The only reference to heavier registered letters comes from Geoffrey Flack whose important discovery reveals that, in the early 1930s, 2/3 tangka actually applied to registered letters weighing up to 5 tolas while the 1-tangka rate applied to registered letters weighing more than 5 and up to 10 tolas. We can only assume that the basic 5-tola weight limit was maintained throughout the following rate changes, but there are absolutely no indications of how the 10-tola rates might have developed from 1934 onwards.

Incidentally, the different weight treatment for registered and unregistered letters is most interesting and highly unusual. Taking a critical look at the pre-1930 rate structure, we cannot but notice an inexplicable inconsistency: an unregistered 5-tola letter cost 5 times the basic rate of 1/6 tangka, i.e., 5/6 tangka, while the rate for a registered letter of the same weight was only 4/6 tangka! If we take the 10-tola rates, the incongruity is even greater: an unregistered letter would cost 1 2/3 tangka, while a registered letter cost only 1 tangka! Surely then, there should have been no need for unregistered letters above a weight of 3 tolas, because, starting from 4 tolas, it would have been more convenient to register letters than to send them unregistered.

Parcels:

This is always a difficult category, for it is almost impossible to verify both the postage and the weight. Hence we must rely on earlier records.

Ludlow mentions that (in 1928) parcels up to 20 tolas were charged 1 Shokang (2/3 tangka) and 1 Shokang for every additional 20 tolas. In my opinion, the information supplied in Geoffrey Flack's article could possibly suggest that, in the early 1930s, this rate had risen to 1 tangka.

I am convinced that the 4 and 8-tangka stamps of Tibet's second issue were exclusively intended for use on parcels.

Finally, Ludlow reassures us that "insurance of parcels, as might be expected, is not understood in Tibet."

In concluding these notes, I must admit that the picture of the Tibetan postal rates is, by no means, complete. We are probably seeing things a little clearer now than we did some years ago and I hope to have contributed towards this aim. What we would require is that collectors take a close look at their dated commercial Tibet covers and let us know if they find anything which could close, or reduce, the gaps between the various rate periods. Any dated covers that are in contrast with the above rate charts are, of course, equally important, as they could provide valuable clues for amendments and corrections.

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- (1) G. Flack. "New Information on Tibetan Postal Rates." *Postal Himal*, No. 77 (1994), pp. 15-17.
 - (2) W. Salmen. "Die Portosätze der tibetischen Post." *Der Sammler-Dienst*, No. 25 (1973), pp. 1807-1808.
 - (3) F. Ludlow. "Tibetan Postage Stamps." *Philatelic Journal of India*, Vol. 32 (1928), pp.21-22.
 - (4) S. Radgowski, M.L. Ricketts and A.E. Singer. "Postal Rates in Tibet, 1903-1960." *Weekly Philatelic Gossip*, Vol. 66 (1961), pp.232-235; and *The Great Wall*, Vol. 4-5 (1961), pp. 71-73, 112.

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Len Nadybal

A cursory examination of editorial content shows Scott improves the listing of Bhutan only in stages. In 1993 - the first year Bhutanese stamps were listed without resorting to the "for the record" cop-out, most sets were without prices, which is no longer the case. Many sets were out of chronological order - which is still the case. Look for more number changes in the coming years. Much more improvement in the notations relating to first days of issue need to be undertaken - Scott still insists on indicating dates of issue based upon the days on which the EX-Bhutan Stamp Agency in Nassau, Bahamas, placed the stamps on sale (I wrote them concerning this years ago). These dates do not correspond with the official dates of issue the Bhutanese established. The P&T never released part sets over drawn out periods of time as the agency did. All stamps within sets (regular postage and air values plus souvenir sheets, perforate and imperforate) always appeared together on the same date.

Despite letters from many readers, Scott still remains the only major catalog publisher to not recognize the 1955 revenue stamps as valid postage stamps. Maybe it's because every subsequent issue would have to be renumbered - and that means every Bhutan stamp from number 1! [Ed. Stanley Gibbons solves this problem by numbering this set as F1-4.]

A couple of issues are still missing entirely and the mentioning of many imperforate sets (which is about all the recognition they get nowadays) is waiting to be seen also. It's known, for example, that 500 sets of the 1991 World Cup History set and 66 each of the souvenir sheets "got away" over the Philatelic Bureau sales counter. Imperfs weren't authorized, but they showed up in Thimphu in the shipment from IGPC'S contract printer in London in excess of the authorized quantity. Apparently they got in the wrong box and were supposed to have been shipped to New York - allegedly without the knowledge of the P&T!

The World Wildlife souvenir block of four of 1993, also an IGPC misproduction, was eventually released by the P&T in 1993. Scott didn't bother to change last year's note that said this sheetlet was never issued, even though they left a number available for it this year. The story behind this was that the P&T planned to have the set distributed as an official WWF omnibus issue, complete with WWF logo and name in the block margins. After producing the stamps, IGPC found out they couldn't get the issue sponsored by the WWF and the WWF wouldn't allow its logo on the set because of a previously negotiated exclusivity contract with a Swiss firm. The Bhutanese withheld their order to have the stamps printed, and tried to get the sponsorship on a governmental level - to no avail. In the meantime, IGPC went to press, anyway, and billed the Bhutanese for the printing. The issue was to be a charity set for the WWF, with all the proceeds of the sales (100% of the face value!) slated to go to the joint Bhutan government/WWF Wildlife Preservation Fund. Bhutan obliged itself to raise money to match, dollar for dollar, what the WWF put into the fund. By the time the dust settled, the WWF had even changed it's name and the stamp inscriptions were obsolete. The Bhutanese were contemplating destroying the stamps when, to top it all off, officials learned the IGPC had supplied a couple of stateside new issue dealers with the as yet unissued stamps, and that they were on the market without having been officially released. The Bhutanese gave up at that point and released the stamps as a normal issue in 1993.

The P&T also released the "infamous" Reading and Writing Set in 1993 after learning that the supply sent to them from the extinct agency in Nassau (IGPC'S predecessor) was "stuck" in Bhutanese Customs at Phuntsholing. They had been there for 15 years! Customs at first (in 1973) wanted to collect

duity on their value from the P&T. The P&T balked, and the stamps went into storage and were forgotten. Tender negotiations in 1992 got the stamps freed up, and they were placed on sale in perforated and imperforated versions. Almost all the manifested quantity of the perforated 30ch value from the set was missing from the customs warehouse - which explains why Calcutta dealers have been able to offer sheets of that value over the past ten years.

As far as the values of the stamps go, Scott is pretty well on the mark with the newly assigned prices of sets that went unpriced over the last two years. The drop in price of No. 68-75 (the first surcharged [reduced values] set from 1965 that was issued as an emergency issue) corrected a price that wasn't realistic, considering recent auction results. It's still a scarce set - it was issued to meet a need and few mint values went unused. Most valuable are the two 5ch stamps - existing in quantities of less than 3,500 each; only one of the two has ever been seen on cover in the West - and only on one cover!

The catalog correctly reflects strong action in the family of 3D sets - driven mostly by topical collectors. The Mushrooms set is the star in this regard, with the souvenir sheets easily bringing 70 Pounds Sterling at weekend stamp shows. The playable Records set, which continues to be the novelty type of issue unique to Bhutan (as far as I know), almost doubles in this year's Scott to about \$75. Compare this with \$130 in Michel and the \$200+ being asked by dealers in the "Philatelic Palace" building near Shinjuku train station in Tokyo! I have a standing order for 10 sets at \$200 a set from a speculator in Europe, and can't find anything to supply the buyer at a price which will allow me a margin of earnings! Oddly, the Columbus Discovery of America set from 1987 remains partially unpriced and what is priced is underpriced. There is no mention in the catalog of the imperforate versions of the set, souvenir and mini sheets which exist...but watch the imperforate of the mini sheet (Scott 589a) - there are only 1200 of them.

Set 764-772, the Japanese overprint on an earlier Masks series, only mentioned in Scott but not priced, is another strange issue. The Deputy Director of Posts didn't know it existed until I pointed it out to him at Philanippon. Apparently, Toppan, the printer that did the issue for the government and planned the set specifically for distribution at the commemorated exposition in southwest Japan, decided to make life easy for the Japanese public and did two overprints - one in English and one in Japanese. The Japanese language set is somewhat scarce, 14,000 sets reportedly produced, but still inexpensive because so few people realize what occurred. There is little demand to raise the price at the moment. Michel also left the set unpriced. I doubt if any complete sets exist on FDCs.

The last issue of 1988 is worth note - the Aids overprint trio. There were only 1,400 sets produced, according to the clerk in the P&T Philatelic Office who suggested an Aids issue to his management. I've seen a lot of activity in the philatelic press surrounding Aids as a topic - and I wonder how many of the collectors interested in this topic even know of these three - the set wasn't announced in advance of its issue. Official FDCs exist; there are no imperforates.

Other undervalued sets (compare Michel with Scott) are the Munich Olympics issue of 1972 (the souvenir sheet is \$22 in Michel, reflecting German interests in Munich and Olympics, vs. \$3 in Scott). The Scout sets - Boy Scouts ('67), Boy Scouts ('71) and Girl Guides ('67) are all undervalued in Scott when compared to prices being paid in Europe. This is especially true of the imperforate souvenir sheets from each set. Try to find an imperf 86f!!

Happy hunting.

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Lost Lhasa: A Review

by Alan Warren

Lost Lhasa: Heinrich Harrer's Tibet, text and photos by Heinrich Harrer, 223 pages, 9¼ by 11¼ inches, hard-bound, illustrated, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1992, ISBN 0-8109-3560-0, \$39.95.

Many of us know about 20th century Tibet prior to the Communist Chinese takeover through Heinrich Harrer's vivid account of the time he and Peter Aufschnaiter spent in that country after escaping from prison in India. Harrer's Seven Years in Tibet is a classic that has been reprinted and translated a number of times.

Harrer now resides in Liechtenstein at the age of 80. He is an accomplished explorer and mountain climber. Fortunately he not only took many photographs while he was in Tibet during the late 1940's using borrowed cameras, but he was also able to bring with him the photographs of others who had left them behind when they fled the Chinese in the early 1950's.

This treasure trove of historic photos is the basis of this lovely book which carries an introductory message from Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama. Harrer tutored the young lad during his stay in Tibet and they became life-long friends.

Heinrich Harrer has prepared a new text to accompany the photos, so that we can once again relive, to some extent, his Tibet of those seven years. However, the narration is not directed so much to the author's day to day activities but more to the people, customs, and buildings of Tibet during that time. Through some 200 photographs we see the young and old of Tibet, the religious, the poor, members of the Dalai Lama's family and entourage, monasteries, rituals, criminals, the marketplace, and leisure time activities. Some of the latter were introduced from the west, such as table and lawn tennis.

One brief chapter of interest to postal historians describes the private carriage of mail by runners who bore the mail in cloth bundles slung over their shoulders. Running was in relays of about 4 miles each. Important government messages were known as arrow letters and consisted of the message written on cloth and wrapped around an arrow.

Harrer tells of the difficulties in sending mail to his relatives in Europe via the British Trade Mission. Since he had escaped from prison in India and fled to Tibet, his letters were considered POW mail. They had to be typewritten and were then censored by the British. Heinrich Harrer even designed a series of some forty Tibetan stamps* in contemplation that the country might join the Universal Postal Union. However, the invasion by China terminated that project.

= The book is highly recommended to anyone interested in an armchair visit to the Forbidden City, to see it as it was 40 or so years ago.



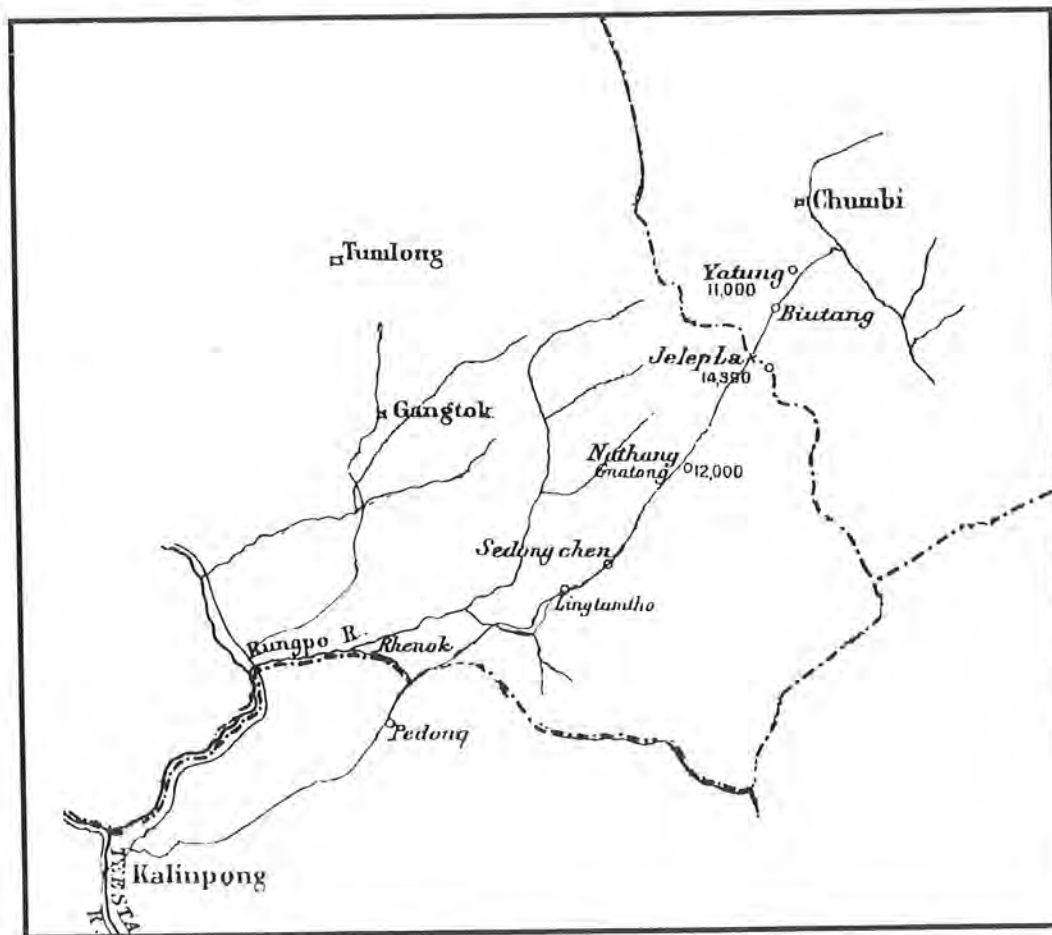
* One of Harrer's designs for a new Tibetan stamp.

* * * * *

"Biutang" or "Camp Byutan" Located

Geoffrey Flack

Last year I wrote an article for the Postal Himal (Vol.78, 2nd Quarter 1994) relating to the Sikkim Field Force of 1888-89. This article, based on the Sandbach correspondence, contends that a British-Indian Post Office existed inside Tibet ...at "Camp Byutan" from November 9th until December 3rd 1888. When writing the 1994 article, I was unable to find a map showing the location of "Camp Byutan". At that time I wrote: *"The exact location of camp Byutan is not known, but we know it was on the Tibetan side of the frontier and in all likelihood just east of the pass near the border of Bhutan."*



Derek Dawson, of Edinburgh, Scotland, has been able to throw some light on the problem. He sent me a section of a map of Sikkim, published in 1904, by Edward Stanford (12-14 Long Acre, London 6). The map shows "Biutang" (camp Byutan) about 2 1/2 miles inside Tibet. This information is quite important as it is my contention that "Experimental P.O. C-7" accompanied the troops who crossed the Jelep La into Tibet and that it was here, at "Biutang", or Camp Byutan, that the British operated their first post office in Tibet.

The map Derek sent me was very detailed. Using "scanner and computer magic" I have left in only information I felt was relevant. Copies of the more detailed map can be sent to anyone interested.

A PREVIOUSLY UNRECORDED CLASSIC TIBETAN FORGERY

George Bourke

The discovery of a previously unrecorded forgery belonging to one of the classic 1912 forgery sets (1-7) is certainly an unusual and exciting occurrence.

Recently, while sorting through a group of forgeries, one forgery, although obviously in an early style, just didn't match any of the known types. It quickly became apparent that it was a new, previously unrecorded type belonging to one of the early sets, but which one?

Assigning this new type to a specific set is not easy and no determination can be final, but it was possible to eliminate most sets on purely stylistic grounds. Anyone familiar with the first seven sets is aware that the members of each set share common stylistic similarities. Thus by comparing the new type with existing sets, it has been possible to eliminate most of them.

Eliminating the most obvious first, it was easy to discard set 3, it being the most distinctly different of all the sets. Likewise set 7, which bore little similarity to the forgery in question. Also sets 4 and 5, both of which differ greatly in the size and shape of the lion. I likewise discarded set 6, as it is thought that this set (consisting of only the 1/6 trangka¹) is actually part of set 1 and does not form a separate set as such but rather a sub-type of the first set².

This leaves only sets 1 and 2, both of which share strong similarities with each other as well as with our unattributed forgery. Comparing the word "POSTAGE" and it's position to the corner ornament, it will be seen that it is nearly identical in all three forgeries. In fact the similarities between the 1/6 tr. value in sets 1 and 2, often make them difficult to tell apart. They do have one tellingly different feature, the outer frame line. In the set 1 forgery this is of normal thickness but in the set 2 forgery, it is very thick. Comparing the outer frame line of our unclassified forgery, it will be seen that it is similar to the frame line found on the 1st set forgery and is not thick, as would be found on the 2nd set forgery.

From these facts, I feel that this newly discovered forgery of the 1/6 trangka forms part of the 1st set and represents a previously unrecorded third cliché. I have given it the designation "Type C".

Notes:

(1) George Bourke, "Tibet - Forgeries of the 1912 Issue: A Correction Offered to Waterfall's Listing", Postal HIMAL, Quarterly of the Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, No. 68, 3rd quarter 1991, p. 73-74.

(2) Arnold C. Waterfall, "The Postal History of Tibet", London: Robson Lowe, 1981 edition, p. 152. Where Waterfall speculates on the relationship between Sets 1 and 6.



1/6 TRANGKA FORGERY 1ST SET TYPE "C"

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