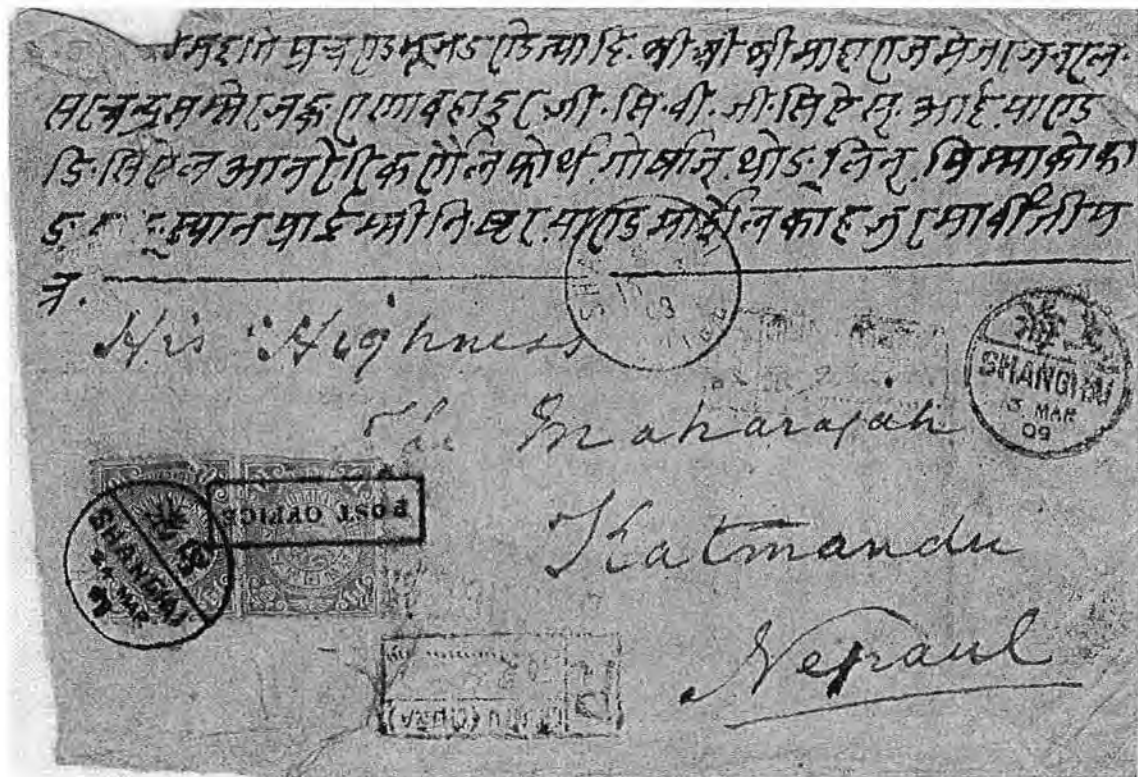


# Postal Himal

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE

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## Officer's Corner

The hot news, of course, is the big show at WESTPEX, San Francisco Airport (Friday - Sunday) Marriott Hotel, 1800 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlington, CA, May 7-9, 2004. Our Circle is one of the two sponsors this year and we are allotted a minimum of 35 frames (16 pages each). Besides Dick van der Wateren's revenues and another Nepal exhibit by Peter Planken, Leo Martyn's Sri Pashupati, Bob Gould's mountaineer pages, I'm showing a comprehensive Nepal exhibit and my 'Chinese Presence in Tibet', updated since two years ago. Jeremy Brewer is contemplating letting us see a selection of his fabulous Tibet.

Other exhibits by our Circle are promised. We meet as a group Friday and Saturday. Beg, borrow, or steal the long green and be there - our prime activity for 2004. [www.westpwx.com](http://www.westpwx.com) for exhibit details. Reservations at [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com) or 1-800-228-9290.

My own monograph on the essays and proofs of Tibet should appear soon with Geoffrey Flack. He is also publishing Danny Wong's new history of the Tibetan postal

system, with the emphasis on the Chinese part of the story, some parts of which have recently been appearing in the *Journal of Chinese Philately*. With luck the book should be ready this spring. We're expecting him in person, and possibly Jeremy Brewer and Wolfgang Hellrigl. Leo Martyn will be making his annual appearance, along with Roger Skinner, and hopefully Frank Vignola (and his son?), Al Zulueta, and others as yet unconfirmed.. Bob Gould is coming in from Wisconsin, and of course, as your President, I'll put in my appearance, but our Editor Richard is begging off, spending his entire vacation in Hawaii. Dick and Peter are coming across from the Netherlands. This will be the meeting of the addicted; join us.

Trivia: I just got back from a popular culture conference at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. I gave an informal paper on the connections of stamps and the postal system with popular culture, with emphasis on philatelists, and Tibet and Nepal as examples.

Armand E. Singer

## Editor's Ramblings

As you can see above, our President is definitely excited about the upcoming WESTPEX show. I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend. As noted above, I will not be there having already made plans to spend 4 weeks in Hawaii.

There has been a price change in Dick van der Wateren's book *Nepal Revenues* to account for the change in the value of the \$ vs the €. The cost of the book is either €20.00 or \$25.00. The price includes postage. Please send only

banknotes, not checks or credit cards, to Dick for his book.

Elsewhere in this issue (page 9) you will find the balance of the accounts from Colin Hepper. As usual, the largest cost that we have is for postage, not printing. It is necessary that everyone pay their dues promptly and you might also prepare for an increase in dues in the future. No one likes to pay more, but my personal thought is that the US Postal Service is not planning to reduce postage costs.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Paul Hager. His exhibit 'The Pashupati Era of Nepal 1907-1959' won a vermeil along with the American Philatelic Society 1900-1940 Medal of Excellence and the American Philatelic Congress Award at the COLOPEX show in Columbus, Ohio in February.

## Caveat Emptor: Did a Franco-Belgian Expedition Really Summit Everest in 1960?

by  
Armand E. Singer

Here's the evidence con and pro: you judge for yourselves.

Early in February 2004, three items were sold on E-Bay. The first consists of a postcard depicting Mt. Everest, cancelled Kathmandu 31/5/90 (?) with 3 and 2 rupee Nepal stamps, part of the se-tenant strip of three issued 18 November 1982. No addressee, but lower left, three signatures, one of which could be 'Dyrenfurth' (but not 'Norman'!). No expedition name given, no dates, no camp location mentioned, not offered at the same auction as the two below. In my humble opinion, the card is too vague to be properly collectible, and only brought up here because E-Bay is becoming a hot spot for mountaineering covers and represents in this case a good reason to be cautious before relinquishing cash.

The other two items (the real reason for this article's title), here illustrated, are a different story.

The oblong box (upper left, first cover; back side on the other), reads:

Expédition Franco Belge Bhoutan Sikkim Népal
Ascension du Mount Everest Avec départ au Dzong Simtokha Au Royaume de Bhoutan 1960

The lettering under the circle (with the outline of Mt. Everest and the words 'Mount Everest Sommet') reads, 'Cette lettre a été oblitérée au sommet du mount Everest'. Both covers are addressed to a Capitaine Louis Lenoir in Simtokha. I have inserted all accent marks as required but am not absolutely certain they actually appear - the reproduction off the Internet is faulty. The exotic cancel is Bhutanese, and the stamps, one blue (or green), one red (or orange), are from Bhutan's first issue (the set of four

depicting the 'dorje' or thunderbolt), originally fiscal, but legitimized for domestic postal use in 1955, according to Stanley Gibbons). The colors are not accurate and could be the lower values or either of the two higher ones (though the two envelopes look identical and supposedly would require the same postage). The wording of the text, lower left, reads in translation, 'This letter was cancelled at the summit of Mt. Everest'. 'Oblitérée', properly used, must refer to the cancel and the Bhutanese stamp, not the circular cachet. The text is in blue, the cancel in black.

A few bits of data: 1) The stamps were for domestic use only, and in any case not valid in Tibet or Nepal. 2) The cancel (see *Himalayan Echoes*, No. 15, September 1975, centerfold) is monger Dzong, and is Bhutanese. No problem except that Everest is not in Bhutan in the first place, as every schoolboy should know. 3) Simtokha is a fortress ('dzong') in Bhutan, sometimes visited by tourists. 4) If Capitaine Lenoir is a mountaineer, much less one connected with Everest, I cannot find him listed on the Internet nor in Unsworth's authoritative and exhaustive *Everest: The Mountaineering History* (third and latest edition, Seattle, WA, 2000). 5) By 1960, we can count the Hillary / Pasang Norgay British first ascent of Everest in 1953; the second ascent in 1956 by the Swiss; the third ascent, usually accepted by now the Chinese / Tibetan party in 1960. A 1960 summiting by a Franco-Belgian expedition would have been world news worthy. No such expedition seems to have reached recognition. 6) We must imagine a scenario involving an expedition so small and inconspicuous that it could ascend from the Tibet side (almost inconceivable, with the Chinese on the spot in the first place) or the Nepal side with the native authorities unaware of its existence (highly improbable: 1960 was not like the early days where one or two men could try their luck or





## Letter to a King

by

Ken Lewis

The prelude to this article, entitled Emei Mountain (editor: Emei Mountain, *PH* 116, pg 4), contained the background to this cover. To recap: during the 19th and early 20th centuries there was an influx on missionaries throughout the world, the majority of which were of the Christian faith. This article is concerned with the Nepalese monasteries located on Emei Mountain near Chentu, Szechwan Province, China. There are many religions in Nepal, but the most popular now is Hinduism; in 1909 it was Buddhism. This article is concerned with one cover, which was sent from the Buddhist temples to the Maharajah of Nepal. During the research into the background of this cover quite a number of unusual items were unearthed.

### **The Temples (or monasteries)**

The Buddhist temples were set up at Emei Mountain, 150 miles to the south south west of Chentu in the province of Szechwan at the southwestern corner of China. Monks from Nepal had established it by crossing the Himalayan mountain range, by one of the 'Silk' Roads, traveling through Tibet, eventually reaching China with the intention of promoting their religion. At the time there were no roads as such, just well trodden paths between Nepal and Tibet into China used by the local inhabitants to gain access into China. Only twenty temples (or monasteries) now exist, originally there were one hundred on the side of Emei Mountain.

### **The 'Royal' family of Nepal**

Up until 1846 the King ruled Nepal, but due to a series of events he was reduced to being just a puppet. The Prime Minister gained control of the country and ran it as the head of state with the King just attending in a ceremonial role. When the Prime Minister, Chandra Rana, was in control he bestowed the title of shree shree shree Maharajah upon himself. This compares with

the title of the King, which was shree shree shree shree shree Maharajah. In Nepal the highest title had five shree's and were only permitted for those of Royal descent, all other noblemen had a lesser number of shree's. This reign lasted until 1951, when it reverted back to the Royal Family.

### **The cover**

This cover (editor - please see page 7) contained a petition, as mentioned in the Nepalese script. It is understood that the only monks allowed to communicate with the 'King' of Nepal were those located at the Golden Summit of Emei Mountain. These monks decided to send a petition to Chandra Rana (as the address {in English} indicates 'His Highness The Maharajah, Kathmandu, Nepal') for a probable change in the laws governing Nepal and its overseas missions. As there are twenty temples from the Golden Summit to the base of Emei Mountain, this letter passed down the mountain from temple to temple until it reached the lowest temple. At this lowest temple a monk was selected, with about four or five other monks, to take the cover to the post office in Chentu. The nearest post office, at Chentu, was 150 miles from the base of the mountain, and the monks had to walk there and back, irrespective of the weather. These expeditions were regarded as one way of spreading the word of their faith, and a number of the monks, from the lowest temple, set out together for Chentu. When the monks reached Chentu they called at the post office, handed over the 20 cents for postage (including the registration fee) and this sealed cover was put into the Chinese postal system.

As can be seen the postmark on the rear of the cover indicates acceptance of this cover into the Chinese Postal System at Chentu on 15th February 1909. During February the weather is very similar to the British climate, and to travel the 150 miles on foot to Chentu must have been

an arduous feat. Obviously the trek back to Emei Mountain, in similar weather, was just as arduous.

Also on the back can be seen a form of manuscript seal that is similar to '||78||', which means that any unauthorized person who opens this item of mail will be committing a sin that is equivalent to the slaughter of 25 sacred cows - in other words they can expect a fate worse than death

For those who are interested the full address, as written in Nepalese (on the front) is:

**Swasti Shree Maddati Prachanda  
Bhujdandetyadi Shree Shree Shree  
Maharaj major General Sir Chandra  
Samser Jung Rana Bahadur G.C.B.  
G.C.S.I. and D.C.L. Honorary Colonel  
Fourth Gurkhas Thong Lin Pimma Ko  
Kang Wang Syan Prime Minister and  
Marshel Ka Hajurma Bintipatra**

As must be agreed, this is some title for just one person!

On the front it can be seen that the stamps were cancelled at Shanghai and it is considered that the stocks of stamps at Chentu post office had run out and were awaiting a fresh supply. To allow the mail to continue on its course unhindered all the unstamped mail was put into a sealed bag (on 15th February 1909) together with a note indicating that no stamps were available and requesting the clerks at Shanghai to affix and duly cancel them. Before this cover was put into the closed bag, two Registered Handstamps were applied (in black) together with its number (248) in manuscript. From Chentu the mail was put onto a boat to travel 160 miles down the min Jiang River to Yibin. At Yibin there was a landing stage that was on the Yangtze River (probably at the most western of all stages), and it was here that the mail was transferred to the larger river craft to travel the 180 miles to Chongqing. The next stage was from Chongqing to Anking, a total of 760 miles, and then the final 400 miles to Shanghai. Because the Yangtze is a long river the river craft varied in size as the depth of the water increased. As the mail was transferred to

other ships along the route it was joined by other mail collected en route. When the mail eventually reached Shanghai, some 31 days later on 18th March 1909, two 10 cent stamps were affixed as requested and duly cancelled. In addition to this duty the Shanghai post office applied their Handstamp (in red), which reads 'SHANGHAI' in quite an unusual style. From the appearance of the cover the inner 10-cent was cancelled by another boxed Handstamp reading 'POST OFFICE' and tying it to both the other stamp and the cover. Experts in Chinese markings have not seen this boxed Handstamp previously and are currently investigating its origin.

From Shanghai this cover was put onto a ocean going ship heading westward. This ship would most probably have called at the treaty Ports between Shanghai and Hong Kong to collect and off load mail and cargo as well as refueling (or bunkering). From Hong Kong the ship would travel along the Vietnam coastline, across the South China Sea to Singapore, up the Strait of Malacca, across to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and finally to Tuticorin (India). Tuticorin is an Indian port opposite Sri Lanka, and where this cover was entered into the Indian postal system. When this cover entered India it had a transit mark (registered) dated 31st March 1909. From Tuticorin the cover traveled by train to Calcutta where it was sorted and carried to Rauxal station. Rauxal is the closest point to Nepal for mail, and where a runner would take the mail across the Indian/Nepalese border and deliver it to the post office in Kathmandu for delivery to the addressee. Unfortunately there is no receiving mark for Nepal; it is considered to have taken about 3 days to reach Rauxal from Tuticorin and a further 5 days to reach Kathmandu. How long it took to deliver it the 150 miles to Chentu from Emei Mountain is unknown.

The distance from Chentu to Kathmandu, via the old 'Silk' Road was only 1,300 miles, which could have only been done on foot and across the inhospitable Himalayan mountain range. The postal route and mileages taken for this cover are:



### **Route to Shanghai**

	Miles
From Chentu via Min Jiang to Yibin	160
From Yibin via Yangtze Kiang to Chongqing	180
From Chongqing via Yangtze Kiang to Anking	760
From Anking via Yangtze Kiang to Shanghai	400
Total	1,500

### **by Sea**

From Shanghai to Singapore	2,650
From Singapore to Tuticorin	2,350
Total	5,000

### **by Train**

From Tuticorin to Visakhapatnam	850
From Visakhapatnam to Calcutta	500
From Calcutta to Raxaul	400
Total	1,750

### **by Runner**

From Raxaul to Kathmandu	200
--------------------------	-----

**Overall mileage from Chentu to Kathmandu 8,450**

### **Conclusion**

As can be seen from the background to this grubby piece of cover is both surprising and fascinating, with a colorful story to tell. Who would have thought that a monk would want to petition the king of Nepal and expect some poor novice to walk 150 miles to post the letter, and then walk all the way back during the ravages of the February weather? The experts are still trying to determine the origin of the previously unseen boxed Handstamp. It is these small items that create more understanding to the routes, and by which offices, the cover took to reach its destination.

It is a pity that it is not known what the

petition concerned, as this would have completed an already fascinating story. There is great probability that the petition was just one of many that appeared on the Maharajah's desk each morning, and finding out which one was sent by the monks of Emei Mountain will be an impossibility after all these years.

### **Acknowledgements**

This article could not have been written without mentioning the invaluable help given by Colin Hepper and S. L. Shrestha, both of the Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, and Major Richard Pratt of the Chinese Philatelic Society of London.



मसदाते प्रचण्डभूजड एडित्यादि की श्री श्री महाएजमेजागवान्  
 सन्त्रुसमो जक्राणा वहाइ जी. सि. वी. जी. सि. रे. सु. आई. पा. एड  
 डि. सि. ए. ल. आ. न. टो. क. ए. ले. को. थ. गो. ध. ज. थो. ड. लि. नू. मि. म्मा. को. क.  
 इ. ए. इ. म्मान. प्रा. इ. म्मी. नि. म्म. ए. म्मा. एड. म्मा. इ. नि. का. इ. नू. ए. म्मा. वी. जी. य  
 न.

His Highness  
 The Maharajah  
 Katmandu  
 Nepal

SHANGHAI  
 5 MAR  
 09

SHANGHAI  
 5 MAR  
 09

POST OFFICE  
 SHANGHAI

धलमा. पुरुच. जो चाही  
 ने. वे. हो. ए. को. ज. वा. व. ले. धी.  
 म. हा. इ. धी.

117811

SHANGHAI  
 5 MAR  
 09

SHANGHAI  
 5 MAR  
 09

## Book Review

by

Wolfgang Hellrigl

*The Chinese Presence in Tibet*, by Prof. Armand E. Singer. Topanga, CA: George Alevizos, 2002. Softbound, 129 pages, with numerous illustrations, some in colour.

This volume is the latest effort by the doyen of Tibetan postal history, who for the past decade has produced books on Tibet and Nepal, respectively, at an impressive pace.

After reading *The Armand E. Singer Tibet 1809-1975* (G. Alevizos, 1995), *Supplement to the Armand E. Singer Tibet 1809-1975* (G. Alevizos, 1998), *The Officials of Tibet* (G. Flack, 1999) and the marginally related *Catalog of Himalayan Mountaineering Correspondence* (G. Alevizos, 2002), I wondered what further surprises the new book could possibly hold.

The author himself supplies the answer in his introduction when he says that he wishes to show a 'more varied evidence than simply covers and stamps, along with the odd extra'. In his effort to convey 'a truer, more complete, more valid picture', he offers to present a part of his outstanding collection in a more interesting and informative vest. Even if a number of the items illustrated were evidently included in his earlier publications, they are now shown in a different context.

The complete story of the Chinese presence in Tibet is documented with extraordinary material, both covers and ephemera such as official seals, postal warrants, army communiqués, telegraph forms, revenue papers, postal memos, a custom pass and the like.

The red-seals section - opened in great style with a fabulous Panchen Lama letter of 1731 - is simply superb.

The period of the Imperial Chinese postage stamps (1910-1913) has been studied thoroughly before, making it almost impossible to add new findings. However, several of the items illustrated appear not to have been published elsewhere. The various documents

relating to the Chinese withdrawal from Tibet in 1911-1912 are outstanding as is an official cover of 1912 from a little-known Chinese military expedition into Tibet.

To bridge the period from 1912 to 1950, is a nearly impossible task as far as the Chinese presence in Tibet is concerned: in view of the fact that virtually no Sino-Tibetan covers exist, Prof. Singer shows collateral documents and covers from the eastern border regions instead.

The highlight of the book, however, is the splendid coverage of the 'liberation' period of the early 1950s, with a great variety of rare mail from Tibet to China.

Correspondences connected with the People's Liberation Army, motor brigades, road construction teams, military hospitals, mobile and Field P.O.s tell a fascinating story. This is applied history taught through covers and documents. I was particularly pleased to find some previously unrecorded military markings (Military P.O.s Nos. 20011, 48211, 48212 and 48927) as well as an equally unrecorded Chamdo datestamp of 1953 (page 94). These modern rarities are important additions to our knowledge of this difficult period.

As always, the author's captions are thorough, highly informative and interesting. By now, readers of his numerous books and articles have learned to appreciate Prof. Singer's way of selecting, documenting and commenting his fine material. In short, this book reflects the author's personal interpretation of Sino-Tibetan postal history in the widest sense of the word. To us collectors, this volume represents a highly valuable source of information on elusive material, commented by a master in this field.

Thank you, Armand, for sharing your treasures with us.

**Statement of Accounts of the Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle**  
by  
**Colin Hepper**

**Statement of Accounts - USA (\$)      01 January 2003 - 31 December 2003**

	<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>
Subscriptions	805.25	Postal Himal Printing	641.67
Postal Himal - Back Issues	20.00	Postal Himal Postage	1183.11
Trans. From Europe Account	3096.95	Miscellaneous	160.39
Auction 71 Income	1362.99	Auction 71	1484.55
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5285.19</b>	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>3469.72</b>
<b>Balance</b> (Income-Expenditure)	1815.47		
Balance Brought Forward	41.10		
Savings Account	1035.72		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2892.29</b>		

**Statement of Accounts - Europe (£)      01 January 2003 - 31 December 2003**

	<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>
Bank Interest	39.52	Trans. Funds to USA Acc.	1500.00
Subscriptions	470.59	Postage	17.33
		Auction Payment + Trans. to USA	608.96
		ABPS Subscriptions	12.60
Balance Auction 71	608.96		
Balance Forward	3661.69		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4780.76</b>		
Life Members Account	3050.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7830.76</b>	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>2138.89</b>
<b>Balance</b> (Income - Expenditure)	5691.87		
Combined Total (£)			
USA converted to £'s	1701.35		
Europe	5691.87		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7393.22</b>		

## Commercial Frankings of the 1912 and 1933 Issues of Tibet

by  
Wolfgang Hellrigl

Some twenty years ago I started to record every commercial franking of Tibet that I have come across. Since then, whenever I have seen a Tibetan cover, in books, in exhibits, in auction catalogues, etc., I checked whether it was on my list of different frankings. Over the years, this list has grown steadily and now comprises a total of 115 entries (39 entries for the 1912 issue, 73 for the 1933 issue and 3 for mixed frankings of both issues).

The purpose of this listing is twofold. Firstly, collectors should find it quite interesting to know which frankings exist. In addition, rare frankings are identified by the codes R, RR and RRR, respectively.

The second purpose is to link the frankings to the postal rates. There are still several lacunae in our knowledge of the postal rates, especially of the 1950-1956 period. Further investigations into this field will definitely benefit from these

franking charts. Although some of the frankings listed represent rate combinations (e.g., registration and insurance), and others are the result of postal fraud (e.g., the 2 ½ t. rate of the 1933 issue), the charts will make it easier to establish and/or check rate theories.

The list only records the Tibetan part of the postage and disregards any British-Indian, Nepalese, Chinese or stamps of other countries that may have been combined with the Tibetan postage recorded.

By publishing this list I hope that readers check their own holdings and record any further frankings. I would estimate that at least another twenty franking combinations should exist. However, please do only record strictly commercial covers, as philatelic or cancelled-to-order frankings, or covers with missing stamps, are meaningless for the outlined purpose.

Rate - Issue of 1912	1/6	1/3	1/2	2/3	1	Rarity
1/6 t.	x 1					
1/3 t.		x1				
	x2					
1/2 t.			x 1			
	x 3					
	x 1	x 1				R
					bisect	RRR
2/3 t.				x 1		
		x 2				
	x 4					
	x 1		x 1			R
	x 2	x 1				R



Rate - Issue of 1912 (continued)	1/6	1/3	1/2	2/3	1	Rarity
5/6 t.	x 1			x 1		R
		x 1	x 1			R
	x 3	x 1				R
	x 1	x 2				R
1 t.					x 1	R
	x 2			x 1		R
	x 3		x 1			R
		x 3				RR
	x 6					RR
	x 4	x 1				R
		x 1		x 1		R
1 1/6 t.	x 3			x 1		RR
	x 1				x 1	RR
1 1/3 t.				x 2		RR
	x 2				x 1	RR
	x 4			x 1		RR
1 1/2 t.	x 1	x 4				RR
1 2/3 t.				x 1	x 1	RR
	x 2			x 2		RR
2 t.		x 1		x 1	x 1	RRR
		x 4		x 1		RR
	x 12					RR
2 1/3 t.	x 2				x 2	RRR
2 2/3 t.				x 4		RRR
3 1/3 t.				x 5		RRR
3 5/6 t.	x 1			x 1	x 3	RRR
4 2/3 t.				x 1	x 4	RRR

Rate - Issue of 1933	1/2	2/3	1	2	4	Rarity
1/2 t.	x 1 perf x 1					
2/3 t.		x 1 perf x 1				RRR RRR
1 t.			x 1 perf x 1			RR
	x 2 perf x 2					
1 2/3 t.		x 1	x 1			
2 t.				x 1 perf x 1		RR
	x 2		x 2 x 1			
		x 3				
	x 4					R
2 1/2 t.	x 1 x 1		x 2		x 1	
2 2/3 t.		x 1 x 1 x r	x 2		x 1	RR
3 t.			x 1 perf x 1	x 1 x 1		RR
	x 2			x 1		
			x 3			
		x 3	x 1			
	x 4		x 1			R
	x 6					RR
	x 2	x 3				RR
4 t.					x 1 perf x 1	RRR
				x 2		
			x 2 x 4	x 1		
		x 6				

Rate - Issue of 1933 (continued)	1/2	2/3	1	2	4	Rarity
4 t. (continued)		x 3		x 1		
	x 4	x 3				RR
	x 4		x 2			RR
	x 8					RRR
	x 2	x 3	x 1			RRR
	x 4			x 1		R
		x 3		x 1		R
4 1/2 t.	x 1				x 1	
	x 1			x 2		
4 2/3 t.		x 6 perf + x 1				RRR
		x 1			x 1	
		x 1		x 2		
		x 7				RR
	x 4	x 4				RR
5 t.			x 1		x 1	
	x 2				x 1	
			x 1	x 2		
	x 2			x 2		
			x 5			RR
					x 1 + quadrisect	R
				x 2	quadrisect	R
				x 1	three quarters	RRR
				bisect	x 1	
				x 2 + bisect		
	x 4			x 1 + bisect		RR
		x 3		x 1 + bisect		RR
5 1/3 t.		x 8				RRR
6 t.				x 1	x 1	
				x 3		
6 2/3 t.		x 1		x 1	x 1	RRR

Rate - Issue of 1933 (continued)	1/2	2/3	1	2	4	Rarity
7 t.			x 3 perf		x 1 perf	RRR
			x 3		x 1	R
			x 1	x 3		R
8 t.					x 2	R
				x 4		R
9 1/3 t.		x 2		x 4		RR
10 t.			x 2	x 4		RR
12 t.				x 6		RR
					x 3	RR

#### Mixed Frankings of the 1912 and 1933 Issues

Rate	1912 Issue	1933 Issue	Rarity
4 t.	2/3 t. x 3	2 t.	RRR
	2/3 t. + 1/3 t.	2/3 t. x 3 + 1 t.	RRR
	1/6 t. x 2	1/2 t. x 2 + 2/3 t. + 1 t. x 2	RRR

**NB:** All stamps in the above charts are imperforate, except when expressly stated 'perf'.

## Philatelic Exhibition in Nepal

from Stamps of India Collectors Companion ([stampsofindia@vsnl.net](mailto:stampsofindia@vsnl.net))

A philatelic exhibition highlighting the age-old bilateral ties between India and Nepal opened in Kathmandu on January 25, 2004. Nepal's Parliamentary Standing Committee Chairman, Parashunarayan Chaudhari, opened the three day exhibition which was organized by the Nepal India Friendship Society to mark the 55th Republic Day of India.

The stamps on display included those issued by the Nepalese Government on Lord Ram and Sita, those on late King Tribhuvan with his two wives, Kanti and Ishwori, from Punjab whom he married in 1918, Golden Jubilee of the 1st ascent of Mount Everest, Lord Buddha, Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and many others.

President of the Nepal Philatelic Society, Kedar Pradhan, recalled that the Indian post office stationed at the India Embassy premises in Kathmandu provided postal service to the Nepalese Government since 1816 and continued until 1965.

The show was very successful and attracted more than ten thousand visitors over a period of three days.



## Early Himalayan Climber's Cover

by  
Armand E. Singer

This article originally appeared in the *Collector's Club Philatelist* July-August 2003, page 197-198

In our recent book, *A Catalog of Himalayan Mountaineering Correspondence* (Topanga, CA: George Alevizos, 2002), Robert F. Gould and I agreed that such material pretty much dates from the three George Leigh Mallory Everest expeditions, 1921, 1922, and 1924. However, the Himalayan era starts as far back as the middle of the nineteenth century, and builds up to climbing strength with Lord Conway of Allington, the Duke of the Abruzzi, Douglas Freshfield, Dr. Kellas, Vittorio Sella, the man-and-wife American team of Dr. and Mrs. Workman, among others around the turn of the century. We argued that some correspondence must surely have survived. Hound autograph dealers as well as the philatelic community, we advised, though until now we had never actually seen an appropriate piece. (editor - see page 16 for the cover.)

### *The Story Behind the Cover*

In June 1895 the fabled British climber A. F. Mummery, who could get a hold on any piece of rock and surmount it (a true 'spider' one enthusiast once called him), fresh from victories in the Alps and the Caucasus, decided to try his hand in the Himalaya, specifically the formidable *Nanga Purbat*, 8,126 meters (26,600 feet) in the Indian Karakorams (now in Pakistan). With him were Geoffrey Hastings (addressee of this cover) and J. Norman Collie, both fine alpinists. It was a reconnaissance expedition. Ascertaining risks, routes, and strategies. They reached more than 20,000 feet more than once, retreated, regrouped, and attempted different expedients. One last scramble: Mummery would go up the Diamir Face, the others would meet him in the Rackhiot

Valley on the other side. They waited and waited, but Mummery and his two Gurkhas were never seen or heard from again.

Today, some theorists argue it was a dangerous, really hopeless goal, needing more equipment, more time, more camps. The consensus is that Mummery probably perished in an avalanche on the Diamo Glacier, common on the Diamir Face. The disappearance elicited almost as much interest as that of Mallory and Irvine on Everest almost thirty years later.

Hastings and Collie finally left after much searching in early September as mountain winter was setting in - about the time this letter would have reached them

### *Routing and Postal Markings*

Sent via Brindisi (Italy, a common sending-off port for Asian mail at that time).

Cancelled Skipton, England, July 18, 1895.

Postmarked Rawalpindi, India, as directed, AU. 6 (2 strikes).

Readdressed Srinagar, via Bandipur (a railroad).

Postmarked Srinagar (2 strikes) SE. 8

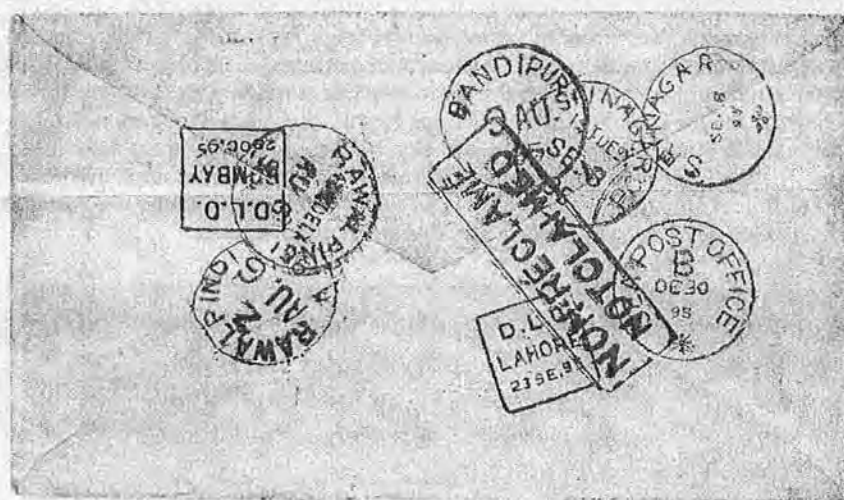
Postmarked D.L.O. Lahore, SE. 23.

Postmarked D.L.O., Bombay, 28 OC.

Postmarked SEA POST OFFICE, DE 30.

A stamp NON RECLAMÉ/NOT RECLAIMED, (and on the left of face, in faint violet ink manuscript, 'Not Claimed') given it at the Sea Port Office unless in Skipton by the clerk or postmaster, presents a minor problem. How did the letter get saved? See Karl M. Herrligkoffer, *The Killer Mountain: Nanga Purbat* (New York: Knopf, 1954) (orig. in German) for a fuller account of the whole story (pp. 6-22).

**NOTE:** Several of the markings have been enhanced to ensure readable reproduction, though all were originally quite readable; the cover is slightly reduced.



Thanks to HMG, Nepal Post,  
Nepal Philatelic Bureau,  
Kathmandu for providing this  
First Day Cover.

### Technical Details

- |                 |   |              |  |
|-----------------|---|--------------|--|
| 1. Subject      | : Golden Jubilee of the First Ascent of Mount Everest, 2003 | 7. Quantity  | : Half Million   |
| 2. Denomination | : Rs 25/-   | 8. Format    | : Horizontal   |
| 3. Colour       | : Four  | 9. Paper     | : High Quality Stamp Paper                             |
| 4. Composition  | : 16 stamps per sheet                                       | 10. Designer | : K. K. Karmacharya                                    |
| 5. Size         | : Stamp: 38.5 x 29.6 mm                                     | 11. Printer  | : Austrian Government Printing Office, Vienna, Austria |
| 6. Process      | : Offset Lithography  |              |  |