

# Postal Himal



QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE  
NTPSC Homepage (courtesy of Rainer Fuchs) <http://fuchs-online.com/ntpsc>



*Photograph of the Polkara Post Office*

*Photo submitted by Colin Hepper, taken in 2016. A series of photographs of ten Nepalese post offices have been submitted by Johannes Bornmann taken in the 1960's and 1970's. Several are shown in this issue. There is little change from this image and the photo submitted by Johannes Bornmann taken approximately 50 years earlier (see pages 6 and 11).*

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Dear Members

Time to reflect on another year, which did not start off very well with the death of our long serving editor Richard Hanchett. This initially gave us a few problems with producing and distributing the magazine and my thanks go to Frank Vignola for taking on the role of editor and to Ken Goss for his assistance in distributing to the USA members.

WESTPEX saw a good attendance of our members from the West Coast in April.

As a result of that meeting we applied for and have been accepted as the featured guest society at WESTPEX 2021, so our members have four years to prepare any exhibits for this show.

In October we had another very fine postal auction organised by Leo Martyn. Auctions are very time consuming with describing lots and producing illustrations and our thanks go to him for this work and also to Rainer Fuchs for organising the illustrations on our web page.

The end of the year has the very fine Olsson & Larsson collections of Tibet for sale by David Feldman. The catalogue is a must as a reference book for all Tibet collectors.

Finally with this issue will be a reminder to those of you whose subscriptions are due, I would ask you to give serious consideration to having the magazine by email as it makes distribution easier and takes less time and money.

*Colin Hepper*



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(advertisement)

**Editor's Ramblings:** I would like to thank Bo Olsson, Sidhartha M. Tuladhar, Leo Martyn, and Colin Hepper for supplying articles to the Postal Himal. I would also like to thank Johannes Bornmann for the photographs of the Nepalese post offices and Alan Warren information about awards received by those who exhibit Tibet and Nepal. Your help is truly appreciated. Ken Goss also deserves my gratitude for proof reading the articles and numerous suggestions to help improve the quality of this newsletter.

The contributions of members makes this

### Congratulations!

At the Stampex national show in London in September, Colin Hepper received a large silver for his single frame exhibit "Nepal – Negative Postal Seals." He took part in a team competition for Mid Anglia.

At the Brasília 2017 show in Brazil in October, Johannes Bornmann received a vermeil for "Nepal: Pre-Philately and Classic."

newsletter informative. If you have an interesting item, share your interest with other club members. Recently there has been an increased interest in Nepalese and Tibetan philately, especially with some interesting items that have become available.

There is a certain challenge with collecting countries that have minimal official postal history documents. It is only through research and sharing your ideas that the postal history can be unraveled.

The next issue is scheduled to come out by the end of March, 2018.

# The End of the Local Tibetan Post and Start of the National Chinese Postal Organisation in Tibet

by Bo Olsson

When did the first Chinese post offices open in Central Tibet?

Route:		First known National mail:	Notations:
1	Lhasa	10.09.1953	
	Dongkur	---	
	Chushu	---	Quxu
	Pelti	---	
	Nangartse	---	Jagarze, Nanggarze
	Gyantse	21.01.1955	
2	Dechen	---	Tibetan PO closing late 1956. Dagze.
	Medagongkur	25.03.1956	Jenchinli, Maizhokunggar
3	Gyamda	04.10.1955	Gyandie, Taichi Gongbo`gyamda
4	Penam	---	Bainang
	Shigatse	30.06.1954	
5A	Phari	23.04.1955	Tibetan P.O. is closing Dec. 1955
	Yatung	30.08.1954	Yadong – No local P.O. In Yatung
5B	Oga Dzong	14.01.1956	Today Sangri?
6	Chomorak	---	Today Nyingchi?

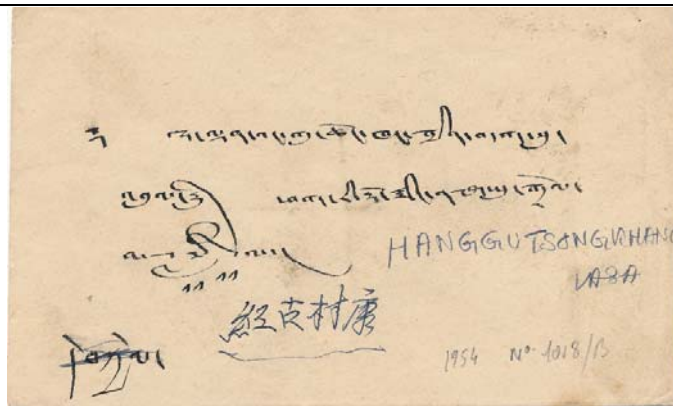
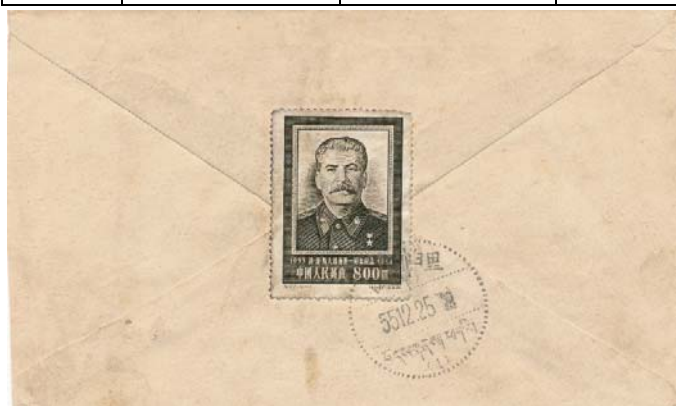


Illustration of the Chinese National post office in Phari postmarked December 25, 1955. The Tibetan Phari post office closed in December 1955.

NB. Some small villages apparently were too small to get a Chinese P.O. These are marked with ---.

Early 1956 two highways connecting China with Tibet opened.

## Opening of main roads Chinghai (Amdo) to Lhasa and Sikang to Lhasa:

Ready for use on 3rd Oct. 1954 and opened officially 25.12.1954.

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

### Opening of local roads in Tibet:

#### West:

Lhasa to Gyantse: Jan. 1955.

Gyantse to Phari: April 1955.

Gyantse to Shigatse: Aug. 1956.

#### East:

Lhasa to Oga Dzong: Oct. 1956.

### When did the local mail exchange with India end?

The protocol handing over the Indian P.O.s in Tibet to China was signed on April 1st 1954.

The Indian post offices in Tibet closed 1955.04.11.

For a short period Indian and Chinese P.O.s co-existed in Gyantse and Yatung.

### Inward mail (examples):

#### From China:

Peking to Lhasa, pmk. Peking	1954.10.27.	Pmk Ya Yun in Schezwan	54.11.8. . (In transit about. 2 months!)
C233 Lhasa	1954.12.18.	addressed to Lhasa	Tibet 1 + 2 tr.

#### From India:

#### Nepal to Lhasa:

Indian Embassy pmk	1955.1.2.	addressed to Lhasa	No reg. Tibet 2x2 tr. pmk. Phari VIII
C??? Yatung	1955.5.8.	addressed to Lhasa	No forwarding
C201 Yatung	1955.5.19.	addressed to Lhasa	No forwarding
C260 Lhasa (4)	1955.7.4.	addressed to Gyantse	No forwarding

#### New York to Lhasa via Gyantse:

C165 Yatung	1955.7.7.	addressed to Lhasa	Tibet 4 tr. pmk. Gyantse VIII
C152 Gyantse	1955.7.10.		"Exchange with C.P.O."
C201 Yatung	1955.7.14.	addressed to Lhasa	No forwarding
C290 Lhasa	1955.08.06.		No forwarding
C294 Yatung	1956.10.14.	addressed to Lhasa	No forwarding

### Outbound mail (Examples):

#### Shigatse to Kathmandu:

Kalimpong, India	1955.09.26.	addressed to Nepal Arrival pmk (bad strike)	Tibet 2 tr. pmk. Shigatse VIII "Courier to Kalimpong?"
------------------	-------------	--	---

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

## Shigatse to Kalimpong:

C225 Shigatse	1956.3.19.	addressed to India	(Two Tibetan stamps added later to create a combination cover)
C201 Yatung	1956.3.26.		
Kalimpong	1956.3.28.		

### When did the local Tibetan post close?

Waterfall #223 Bright Apple Green seem to be the last printing of the 4 tr. value. The majority of all post was sent as registered mail at the 4 tr. rate.

Early 1956 rumors from Lhasa said that native Tibetan stamps are nearing the end of their term of service.

Lhasa 56.9.20 addressed to Gyantse Tibet 4 tr.  
Insured  
mail Pmk  
Lhasa VIII

During a time of less than two years the Chinese managed to outmaneuver the national Tibetan postal organisation. The possibility of direct mail exchange with India was transferred to the Chinese system. And, how is it possible to compete with postal runners against lorries? The Tibetan case was a lost case, the Chinese didn't need to forbid it to operate.

However, according to an interview <sup>1)</sup> in China Philately in 1988 with a postal clerk working for the Zhakang (Tibetan Post) in Lhasa he should have been employed in 1957. Does he remember correctly? According to Geoff Flack the local Tibetan Post continued to sell stamps to dealers (and collectors?) up to 1958-59. Some of the late printings may well have been printed only for such use since no covers are known.

What is interesting in this interview is however a mail route never mentioned before was mentioned. It started in Lhasa and branched out eastward from Gyantse to Shigatse via Penam to Lhatse Dzong. The interviewed said this was in 1957. Since no commercial mail is known after 1956 and no commercial use of the late stamp printings I suppose he must remember wrong.

<sup>1)</sup> See Postal Himal No. 59, page 27.



Polkara Post Office, circa 1970. Compare with image taken approximately 50 years earlier on the front cover. Change can come slowly.



Biratnagar Office, circa 1970. Post office photos submitted by Johannes Bornmann. (See page 11 for photographs of other post offices.)

## Modern Postal Markings of Nepal

by Sidhartha Tuladhar

This is the fourth in a series of articles on Postal Markings of Nepal I have written for Postal Himal (PH #168, PH#169, PH#171). The first article was on The Standard Bi-Lingual Postmark (Type A). I think this Type A - Standard Bi-Lingual Postmark was the most abundant of all the postmarks. For most of these places one can find two types of postmarks - normal and registration cancellers. Some of these postmarks are little different than others, which needs to be explored for the sake of curiosity. Next two articles were on Registration cachets and Postal Slogans on different themes. All of the illustrations were from my collection. The articles were written on the basis of my observations and consulting the books by Colin Hepper and archive of Postal Himal which I have in my collections along with books and articles on Nepal's Postal History. I have not done any serious investigation of the covers or markings. My intention for writing these articles is to document the postal markings which supplements Colin Hepper's excellent books which Mr Hepper has put massive effort to publish the monographs.

This time I have categorized the postal markings slightly different than in Colin Hepper's book. It is for my ease to write the descriptions of the markings. I hope it will not confuse the audience. I have categorized the markings by the type of post-offices rather than the general looks of the postal markings. These categorizations are fewer so it is easy to handle and I have not many postal markings to make many categorizations. Accordingly I have made seven categories as follows:

**GENERAL POST OFFICE:** In Nepali, General Post Office (GPO) is Gwoswara Hulak. It's office is situated in Sundhara, Kathmandu. In this category I have only one postmark for illustration, which has not been recorded. Almost all of the postmarks originating from GPO have been recorded by Colin Hepper.



GWOSWARA HULAK, KATHAMANDU

**DISTRICT LEVEL POST OFFICE:** These are the district level Type A - Standard Bi-Lingual postmarks which I added to my list of my first article published in PH # 168. There are three types of postmarks: 1. With REG in Nepali 2. With English REG and 3. With both Nepali and English REG such as Panauti. There are only few covers of this type.



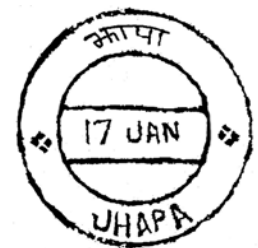
BAJHANG (69)



BAJURA (68)



DINGLA (69)



JHAPA (ND)



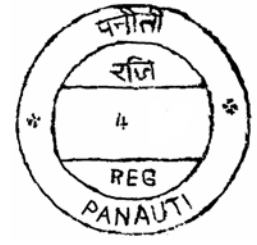
KHUDIBENI (69)



KHURTKOT (ND)



NARAYANGHAT (84)



PANAUTI (74)

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)



SIBARAJ (66)



SYANJA (69)



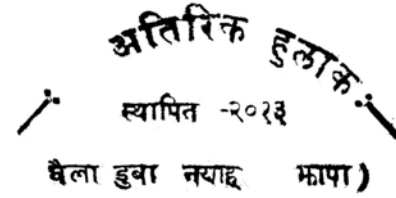
PHURPING (69)



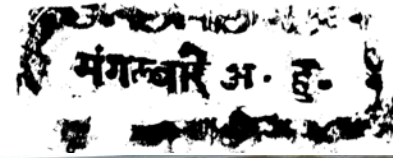
RATNA NAGAR (68)



WAMI (69)



GHALADUBA (67)



**ADDITIONAL (ATIRIKTA) POST OFFICE:**

Postmarks of Atirikta Post Offices are all Nepali or bi-lingual. In the circular types when they are bi-lingual. Ratna Nagar canceller is written with abbreviated R.N. A. Hulak, where A stands for Atirikta.



CHAURI (86)



KHOPASI (61)



LALPATI (ND)



NALA (74)



MANGALEBARE (69)

हाङ्पाङ् अतिरिक्त हुलाक  
१३ थुम

HANGPANG, THERHA THUM (68)



CHUNHANDANDA (67)



PHIKKAL (ND)

**COOPERATIVE (SAHAKARI) POST OFFICE:**  
These postmarks have the most interesting designs. Cooperative post offices are established with cooperation of local communities. In the Ekamba

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)



EKAMBA (69) CHIDIPANI SATDOBATE



PHAPLU (67)

**SUB-POST OFFICE:** Four postmarks of this category are illustrated. The oval shaped postmark is from Everest Area. Interestingly this postmark has three places' names. The first line - Phaplu Sub Post Office. Second line is written as Solu Salleri. The last line is the Solu Khumbu East No.1. Phaplu is the place where the airport is located. Salleri is the district head quarter of Solu Khumbu District. Solu Khumbu, East No. 1 (abbreviated Nepali Pu. No. 1) is written in the last line. During 60s Everest area was known as East No. 1 region-wise (East of Kathmandu). Date 2022 BS (1965 AD) shown in the third line is established date of the post office. The cancellation is blurred. I have few (8) of these covers. All of them are too blurred; I did not try to clean them so as to show in original cancel.

postmark the date in the centre bar only has 202 typeset with the last number of year to be written by hand at time of the mailing. In Nabalpur Bazaar postmark, first line is written as East No. 1 Cooperative Post Office; middle line date of mailed and last line is Nabalpur Bazaar Established 017, which means the Nabalpur Bazaar post office was established in 2017 BS (1961 AD).



हनुमाननगर शाखा हुलाक

Hanuman Nagar (68)



NABALPUR BAZZAR

सेमरी शाखा हुलाक

SEMARI (68))

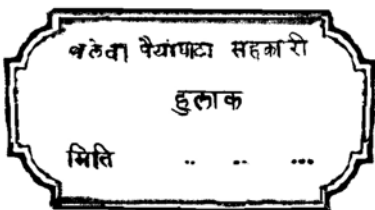
सिमरा शाखा हुलाक कार्यालय

SIMARA (ND)



AURABANI

(Continued on page 10)



BALEWA PAINYAPATA (ND) BABIAYA BIRTA (69)

सहकारी हुलाक  
बविया विर्ता या० पंचायत  
मिति : २०२५

औराबनी सहकारी हुलाक

AURABANI (69)

**MISCELLANEOUS TYPE OF MARKINGS:**

I lumped the rest of the 11 postmarks into a miscellaneous category. Many of them may be Atirikta post offices.

Last three postmarks namely Sawari Special Hulak, Baitadi Seal and Kathmandu Horse Shoe due are described briefly here. The Sawari Special Hulak was used during King of Nepal (Birendra) visited as Royal Tour to Pokhara for about 2 weeks. Small Baitadi Seal type (cross wire) postmark was used in Baitadi registered cover. In the cover (illustrated) there is Baitadi canceller as well. At first I thought it was used somewhere when mailed from different place to Baitadi. But I noted that it has registration hand manuscript registry mark Bataidi in Nepali. So it must be used in Baitadi. Next one Horse shoe due was used in Kathmandu. It was a local mail posted within Kathmandu. It reads Mail Centre Kathmandu Set II(2) in English and Nepali and 30 pice due.



KUPONDOL (67)



SHREE DUBAR TOLE (67)

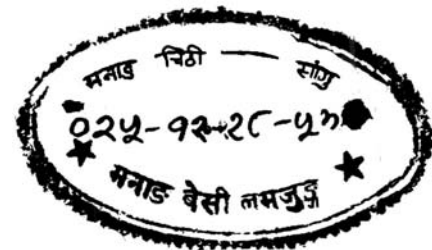


SRINGAA, GULMI (ND) MAHENDRA NAGAR (65)

**महेन्द्रनगर हुलाक  
मुनसरि (नेपाल)**



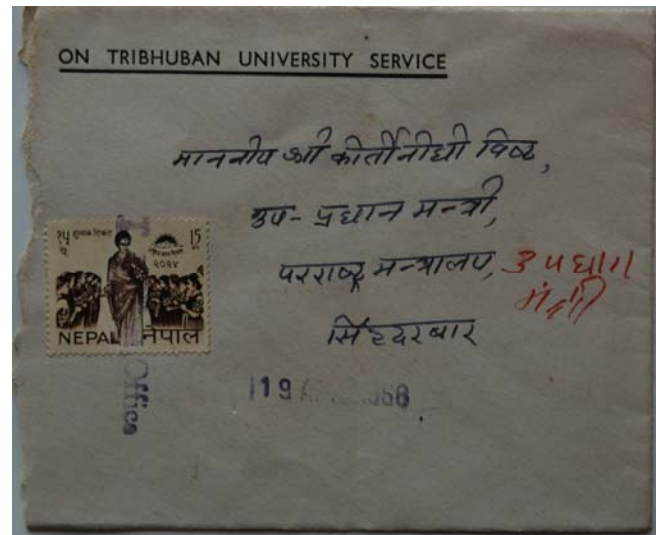
SEAL TYPE BATADI (68) KATHMANDU DUE (ND)



MANANG BESI (69)



BATADI SEAL

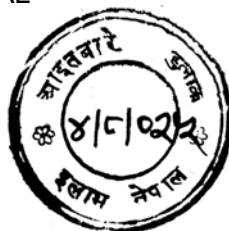


**T. U. Post Office**

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY (68)



DHULABAARI (69)



AITEBARE (67)



SAWARI SPECIAL HULAK, POKHARA (75)

**RECENT TYPE OF POSTMARKS:** Last three postmarks are the latest type of postmark introduced by the Nepalese government. There is no any

(Continued on page 11)



(Continued from page 10)

information on how many of these post offices exist and when these postmarks were introduced. The postmarks illustrated were mailed from Dolakha, Balal Ganeshsthan and Bhaktapur to Kathmandu. All of them were mailed in April, 2015 AD. Interestingly they were mailed just before the Great Earthquake of Nepal, 2015. Dolakha's cancellation date is 3 days before the earthquake (25<sup>th</sup> April is the Earthquake Day). Two of them Dolakha and Bhaktapur are District Post Offices and Balal Ganeshsthanis is the Atrikta Post Office in Kavre Palanchowk.



DOLAKHA (2015)



BALAL GANESHSTHAN BHAKTAPUR (2015)  
KAVRE (2015)



Kathmandu foreign post office circa 1970.



Palpa post office circa 1970.

Kathmandu GPO post office circa 1970.

Post office photographs are from Johannes Bornmann.



## MAIL SALE # 74 Report

By Leo Martyn

Over 300 lots were offered with sales of 45% and a total realization of over \$18,000. This was a joint (adventure!) with Colin Hepper, Ken Goss, Frank Vignola and Rainer Fuchs (who graciously hosted the mail sale on his web site: fuchs-online.com).

Listed below are some of the unsold lots at reduced prices plus a few new items – first come basis. If interested, please contact me for scans and further information: [himalayan@att.net](mailto:himalayan@att.net).

Leo Martyn  
auctioneer

	<u>BHUTAN</u>	US \$
1.	Bhutan/Tibet/India: 1955 (Mar.25) combination cover from Shee Lok Duk (pencil notation), bearing a one tr. blue fiscal stamp tied by a very clear red, dated cancel of Tashichho Dzong. Indian stamps were canceled in Yatung, Tibet, for delivery to Kalimpong (March 28 receiving postmark on back). Rare usage.	1,200
2.	Bhutan: 1973 "Record", complete set, mint, never hinged.	100
	<u>NEPAL</u>	
3.	1881, complete imperf. set, scarce Taulihawa seal cancels (Hellrigl S5 & S6), 4 annas touched at one place.	450
4.	1881, one anna, group of 8 postally used, various cancels and shades. F-VF.	285
5.	1881, two annas, group of 4, various shades and cancels – rare Kathmandu seal cancel (small thin touched at corner, Hellrigl S3), Kalaiya ( <b>blue cancel</b> , touched at right), Taulihawa seal cancel (hole at right), other tear at bottom.	90
6.	1886-89, one anna, unused block of 8 with top inscriptions, positions 1-4, 9-12, setting 8.	225
7.	1889-98, four annas, unused block of 6 with top inscriptions, positions 3-4, 11-12, 19-20, setting 4.	300
8.	Four annas, used block of 6 with Kathmandu octagonal cancel, <b>rare olive green shade</b> .	300
9.	1 anna, 2 annas, 4 annas, with Taulihawa postal seal cancels (Hellrigl S5 & S6).	75
10.	One anna, recut, unused block of 44 (positions, 9-49, 54-57), including 7 tete beche pairs.	225
11.	1941 Pashupati, <b>imperforate between pairs including the 2p green error of color</b> , complete set, never hinged and lightly hinged.	275
12.	1941 Pashupati 8p, complete sheet of 36, full gum, early setting, small tear in margin not affecting stamps.	75
13.	1906 (Nov. 15), cover bearing recut one anna, tied by <b>rare Parewadanda cancel</b> (C82,100 points), to Pokhara.	250
14.	1909 (March 3) registered cover bearing seven 4p Pashupati stamps tied by Dandelhura negative hand-dated postmarks used during the Classic/Pashupati transitional period. Very scarce usage.	200
15.	Circa 1961, rare use of the one rupee official stamp in the proper period. Hellrigl certificate.	95
16.	Two rupees Land Lord stamp, wide margins, VF.	45
17.	Circa 1873-1876, cover bearing Indian stamp tied by C37 Duplex cancel (Hellrigl B11), no year postmark era, date not underlined variety (scarcer). Corner of back missing affecting two postmarks.	150

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

#	TIBET	US \$
18.#	Cover bearing pair of 2tr red, third series, scarce <b>Nangartse</b> cancel (T43), hand drawn registration mark.	145
19.#	1932 (Feb. 1) cover from India to Lhasa via Pharijong (recv. Pmk.). Possible <b>postage due usage</b> – Phari postmark added (T34). Unusual.	100
20.#	1955 (April 16) registered cover from Lhasa (hand carried) to the Gorkha office in Gyantse (Indian stamps applied), onto Nepal via Sikkim (Gangtok registration label). Unusual routing most likely attributed to the flood which destroyed the post office in Nyang Valley.	75
21.#	Large letter/edict (30 inches x 19 ½ inches) with previously <b>unrecorded Sakya Lama seal, Iron Hog Year</b> (most likely 1851). The document assigns the estates of a failing Laprang Monastery to another Laprang Monastery. Mounted on fine embroidered cloth.	3,500
22.#	Modern Tibetan illustrated Buddhist manuscript book with hand-done deity paintings.. Folded book, 23.5cm x 7cm, 24 hand- illustrated pages (12 paper sheets).	45
23.#	Group of <b>Laden Lal correspondence</b> : 1932 letter and unmailed cover, 1902 book post cover, 1928 letter and cover, 1912 letter and cover, two 1959 metered covers. Laden Lal was in charge of the <b>Dalai Lama's camp</b> in Darjeeling in 1922, and superintendent of Police in Darjeeling.	125

### Postal Card Postmarked at the British Legation

By Frank Vignola

British postal regulations state that Nepalese stamps should not be canceled by the British Legation postal system in Nepal. A few examples exist showing the British Legation postmark on Nepalese stamps. Combination covers exist that have Nepalese stamps canceled by a Nepalese postmark and Indian stamps canceled by the British Legation postmark. This combination was necessary if the letters were sent out of Nepal. However it is most unusual to see a Nepalese cover (a postal card in this case) without a Nepalese cancelation and only the British Legation postmark.

The address of the send is in Baneshwor, a residential area in Kathmandu. The postal card is address to a person in East Magnolia(?). East Magnolia could be a district or a city, but the translation from Nepalese may not be totally accurate. This postal card engenders several questions. Did it go through the Nepalese postal system before it went to the British Legation? If the Nepalese postmark was missing, maybe the clerk at the British Legation canceled the postal card to make sure the indicium was canceled. A bigger question is why this went through the British postal

system in the first place. There is no indication that this postal card traveled outside of Nepal. It is always possible that a worker at the legation dropped the postal card in the legation mail room instead of carrying it to the local post office.

Nepalese philately is full of oddities and this is just another unexplained item.



Postal Card WA 12, postmarked at the British Legation, April 4, 1896

## Hotel Post Offices

*By Colin Hepper*

Special post offices are sometimes opened in hotels when V.I.P.'s visit Nepal. These hotels are used either by the individuals themselves or for the party that was traveling with them.

In 1986 President L. General Hussain Muhammad Ershad and his wife Begum Ershad from Bangladesh used the Hotel Yellow Pagoda for the state visit to Nepal.



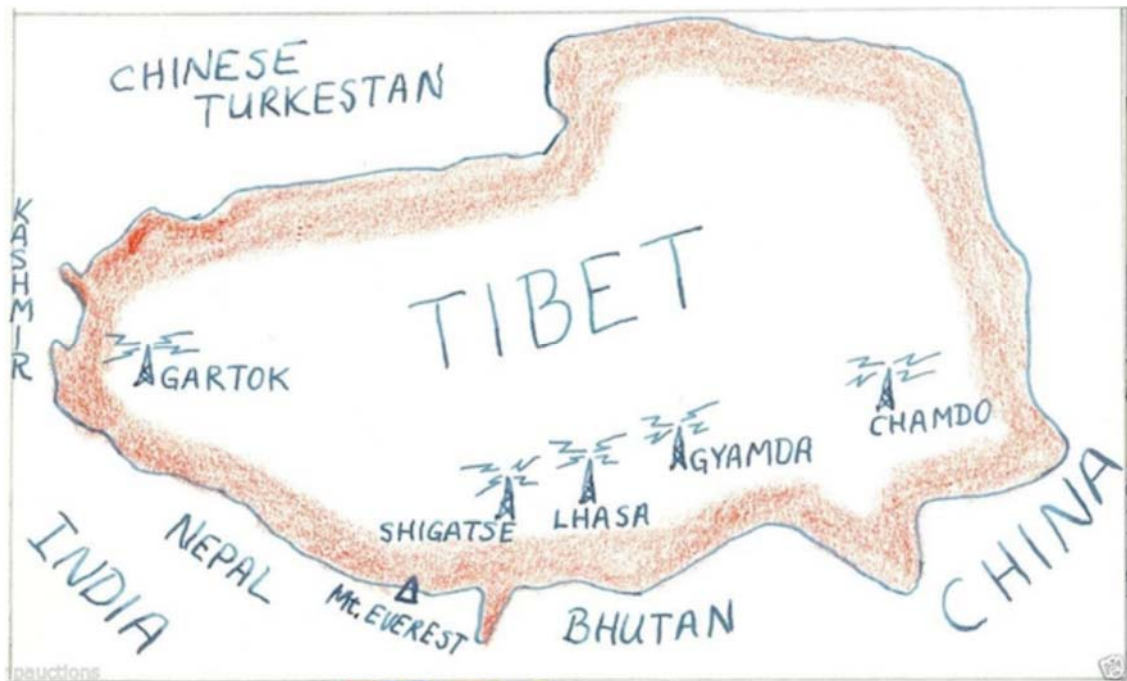
The special post office opened at the Hotel Yellow Pagoda for the three day visit.



Cover sent to England from this post office, dated 3 July, 1986.

## A Small Note Concerning the Tibetan Radiotelegraph Stamps

By Bo Olsson



A radio wireless system was organized in Tibet in 1949 or 1950 for transmission of messages. A set of 5 stamps was issued to collect the transmission fees. One word was 1 sang which is a high fee. 5 stations were in operation, namely Lhasa, Shigatse, Gyamda, Chamdo and finally Gartok in the far west. Probably all stations had different marks for cancelling the stamps, although cancellations from only Lhasa and

Shigatse are known. Lhasa had seven wavy lines in the canceller and Shigatse ten. No markings from the remaining stations are known so far. Denominations of the Radio stamps are far too high to be useful for postal purposes. Registered covers franked with these high value stamps are known, but most probably such covers are of a philatelic nature.



A complete sheet of Radiotelegraph stamps cancelled with the Shigatse ten wavy lines cancellation.

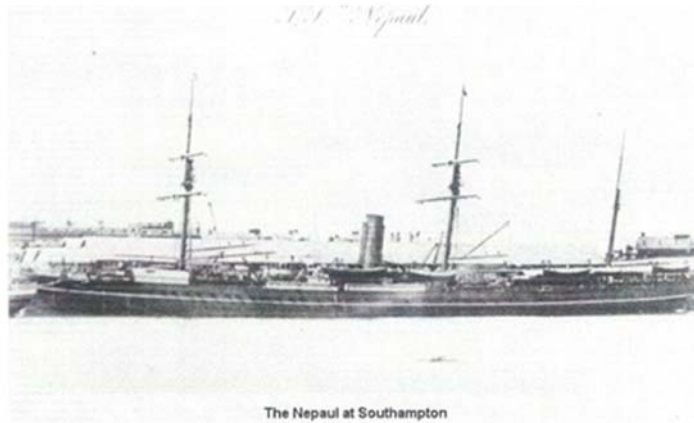


A 1/6 tranka low value stamp fraudulently used in Lhasa (7 wavy lines) as a 1 sang stamp.



# THE "NEPAUL"

By Leo Martyn



Occasionally I come across items which indirectly relate to our areas of interest; such as my article in the last Postal Himal (no. 171) dealing with a board game and rubber stamps.

I found this cover on eBay regarding a Royal Mail steamship named "Nepaul" (the early 19<sup>th</sup> century spelling of Nepal). Built in 1876, she had a gross tonnage of 3536 tons and was 375 feet in length. In addition to mail, there were accommodations for 160 passengers.

The "Nepaul" was used on the Calcutta route and was involved in several serious mishaps. In 1877

she rammed and sank a Chinese transport ship off of Shanghai, resulting in over 200 deaths. Eleven years later the ship struck a rock during an approach to Marseilles as a result of the Captain suffering a heart attack.

The fatal blow came on December 10, 1890, when on a voyage from Calcutta to Plymouth during a heavy fog, she hit a reef in Plymouth Sound, tearing away most of the bottom of the ship resulting in a total loss. Fortunately, no lives were lost as the passengers had disembarked in Marseilles and the crew were able to reach safety.



Cover mailed to a passenger on the SS Nepal, April 1884