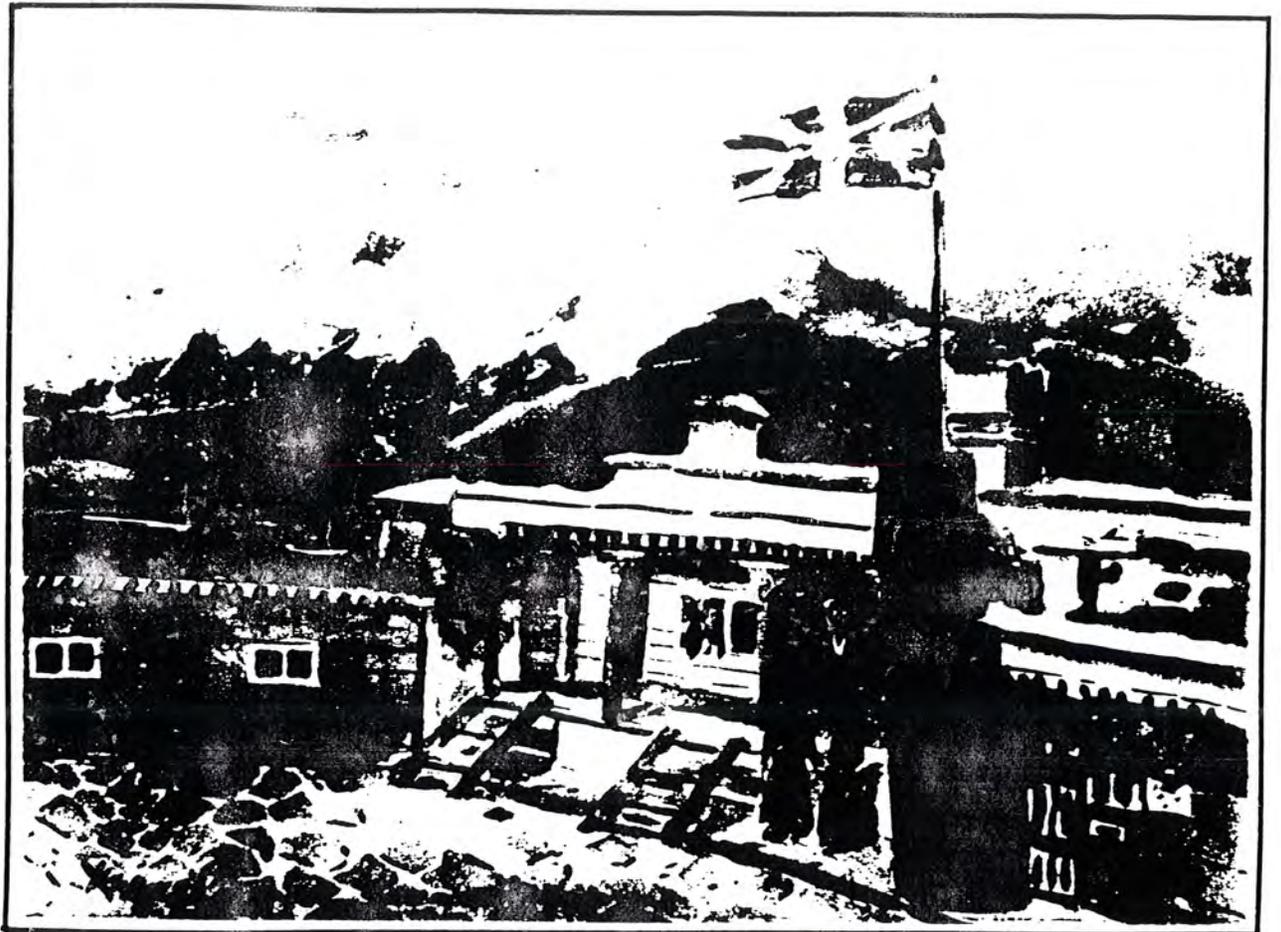


POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



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COVER ILLUSTRATION: We are indebted to member N. G. Rhodes for our cover picture & can offer only regrets that we are unable to show it in full colour -- taken from a watercolour by Kunwal titled "Phari Post Office 16.7.1939." -- This seems to be an appropriate place to call your attention to Nick's article titled, "An Interesting Cover from Yatung". See page 27.

Dear Friends,

We all know that many calendars have been developed by various civilizations and cultures over recorded history, but we have a special interest in calendars coming from Central Asia. Your editor is pleased to report that Ted Miller has sent us a very attractive "LOSELL DIARY 1988" which incorporates the Tibetan & Gregorian Calendars in such a way that each page also provides space for notes, etc. for four days. A plastic cover protects the handmade paper 'book' which includes full page native drawings that are delightful, to say the least. A copy can be obtained from Ted (P O Box 59031, Chicago, IL 60659, USA) for a donation of \$2.00 or more which goes to help support the Dalai Lama & the Tibetan Government in exile. Incidentally, the Tibetan New Year coincided with 18 February 1988 A.D.

Your editor was also pleased to receive a calendar as a gift from Mr. B. L. Shrestha, formerly Secretary of The Nepal Philatelic Society and now a Member of the Executive Committee. This calendar now hangs in my 'office' & is very useful as each page covers one month, with captions in both English & Devanagari script. I easily note that the first day of the New Year for the Bikram Sambat year 2045 falls on 13 April 1988 A.D. This calendar, in two colors, has much information on each page -- mostly in Nepali -- but I can especially enjoy the emphasis on the phases of the moon -- the same moon I watch in the evening or early morning. And I know that our Asiatic friends see the same moon about 12 hours earlier (or later?) than I. Truly we all share the same world even though we are far apart.

A recent letter from Mr. S. P. N. Pradhan, now Secretary for the NPS, informs us that they have suggested the date of 26 January 1989 for a joint meeting of our two societies during INDIA '89 in New Delhi. We trust that many members of our Study Circle will be able to attend. This is an auspicious day -- the annual celebration of National Day (or Independence Day) in India.

Colin Hepper reports that he is already making arrangements for an International Meeting of our Study Circle

during STAMP WORLD '90, to be held in London in May 1990. It is not too early to begin making plans for that event.

Mr. S. L. Shrestha, Nepal Representative for the N,T&BPSC has sent us a copy of the "Philatelic Programme for 1988" recently issued by the Postal Services Department of His Majesty's Government of Nepal. This was especially desirable to your editor, since he has been unable to obtain these programmes from the Philatelic Bureau for the past two years. A copy of the programme can be found on page 25 of this issue. We note that five of the fourteen listed issues have already appeared, including the very first one being issued on 28 March to mark the Auspicious Upanayan Ceremony of H.R.H. Crown Prince Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. The denomination is Re. 1.00. -- Mr. Shrestha also informs me that the 1987 supplement to his NEPAL STAMP ALBUM is now ready for distribution. His address can be found on the inner side of the front cover of any recent issue of POSTAL HIMAL.

Our Secretary, Colin Hepper, has pointed out an error in the listing of the cost of a Life Membership in Nepalese Rupees as it appeared in POSTAL HIMAL No. 53. Please note that the error has been corrected in this issue and we wish to apologize for any inconvenience the error may have caused our readers.

Lester A. Michel

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING INTRODUCED FOR MEMBERS ONLY

One insertion, per line \$1.00

Four insertions, per line 3.50

To calculate the number of lines your advertisement will require, count 39 characters per line, including all letter, numerals, punctuation marks and blank spaces between words. The final line, although it may require less than 39 spaces, is counted as a full line. No charge is made for headings and adverts will be placed under appropriate headings as needed. See the Classified Ad section in the final pages of any issue of The AMERICAN PHILATELIST for typical advert headings -- or simply send your own advertisement, asking the editor to place it under an appropriate heading.

DEADLINE: Ad & payment in USA dollars must reach the editor by the first day of one of the following months -- February, May, August, November -- in order for ad to appear in issues normally sent about one month after the deadline.

EXHIBITION NEWS

Lawrence B. Scott, a long time member of our Study Circle, exhibited his fine collection of early Nepal at FILATELIC FIESTA 1988, in San Jose, California, 19-21 February this year. His title was "Nepal's Postal Service - Some Steps in Its Development to Modern Status" and was awarded a GOLD, plus the APS Award of Excellence for pre-1900 exhibits. He showed 8 frames (96 pages) and Frank Vignola reported that Larry's exhibit was outstanding as it contains many rare items. Frank also mentioned that Larry received a Special Award for the Best Exhibit by a resident of Nevada. Congratulations, Larry. Your awards were well deserved.--Ed.

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEPAL & TIBET STUDY CIRCLE HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO DURING WESTPEX '88

--Frank Vignola

Another successful annual meeting of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle was held on Sunday, May first, at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco during the WESTPEX '88 National Philatelic Exhibition.

Members in attendance at the meeting were: Roger Skinner (USA Representative of the Study Circle), Ed Lupton, Al Zulueta, Vernon Richards, Leo Martyn, Dr. Frank E. Vignola and Frank Vignola. Member Gerhard Wolf, although unable to attend the meeting, did get to meet with the members on several other occasions during the show. Vernon Richards travelled to the meeting from Vancouver, B.C., Canada, and Dr. Frank E. Vignola attended from Eugene, Oregon. The rest of the members came from various cities in California.

Leo Martyn gave a most interesting talk on the early Tibetan private message slates. Leo brought along several different types of these slates to show the listeners. These slates were normally sprinkled with white chalk and the message was written, or scratched on the chalk-covered slates, which were then inserted into wooden protectors to prevent damage, tied with leather thongs and then forwarded by runner to their destinations. The slates could be erased (or cleaned) and reused. This was a most unusual presentation by Leo

and was much appreciated by the members in attendance.

The scheduled one hour meeting lasted three hours because it was such an enjoyable get-together. Some members brought new acquisitions to show, while others brought material to trade or sell if a trade was not forthcoming.

Dr. Frank E. Vignola exhibited 10 frames (160 pages in all) of his exhibit, "Nepal, The Rectangular Design Sri Pashupati Issues, From 1907-1941", which, of course, was entered in the competitive section of WESTPEX '88. During each of the three days of the show we often used the area in front of his exhibit as a place to congregate and spent quite a bit of time looking over the material in his excellent exhibit, reviewing the covers, die proofs, plate proofs, experimental negative proofs in half sheets, the rectangular design Sri Pashupati blur postal cards (including the unique postal card die proof with imprinted stamp in brown on cardstock) and the numerous large multiples of every stamp (including some examples of large multiples with hand-stamped dates and approvals in the margins).

The exhibit received a VERMEIL Award plus the Michael Rogers Award for Best Asian Exhibit -- which pleased the exhibitor considerably. Unfortunately there were no Asian specialty judges on the judging panel to appreciate the quality and extent of the coverage of the exhibit. Most of the members had a good laugh when they saw a Vermeil Award ribbon on the exhibit rather than a Gold Award ribbon. It really is up to us -- the members of the Study Circle -- to write more articles in the U.S. philatelic press in order to familiarize the judges with the Nepal material they are called upon to judge.

We all felt that this was one of the best annual meetings held in San Francisco at the WESTPEX National Philatelic Exhibitions and we are looking forward to another get-together next year like this. The combination of a speaker, an exhibit of Nepal in the competition, a private room to hold our meeting, the fellowship, the opportunity to show new acquisitions, trade, sell, or purchase from each other or from the bourse dealers seems to be the conglomeration needed to make the Study Circle the huge success this one was. We hope to see more members attend next year in San Francisco during WESTPEX '89 on April 28, 29 and 30.

LATE USAGE OF CLASSIC STAMPS

--Leo Martyn

Last year, when I was preparing material for an exhibit, I came across several covers which I had assumed were philatelic but now feel that they represent a late commercial usage of the classic stamps.

I compared fifteen such covers, including four from Frank Vignola's collection and five from George Alevizos' reference collection.

The earliest cover is dated February of 1950 and the latest June of 1962, with the majority being used in 1953. The following information pertains to all of the covers except the June 1962 cover.

The covers are registered and seem to be local usages. The cancelling post-mark is either the "Late Pashupati GPO Type VI" or the "All Devanagari GPO Type I" (see Hellrigl/Hepper pp. 47 & 67). Unfortunately, most of the receiving marks are not clear, but two of the covers have the GPO Type I as receiving marks with transit time of one or two days. The cancels of the office of origin are all the GPO Type VI. Does this indicate an internal Kathmandu usage? -- When I have the addresses translated the usage should make more sense.

All but one bear 4 anna stamps from various settings, ranging from very clear (See Figure 1) to blurred printing (One cover bears a pair with crude perforations. See Figure 2). Twelve of them bear the 4 annas in combination with stamps from the 1941 Pashupati series, 1949 Temple issue or the 1954 Map series. Two covers bear only classic stamps -- one with a single & pair of the two annas from the telegraph period (An additional stamp may have been removed from the cover.) and a beautiful cover bearing a 2 anna and a 4 anna (Vignola collection).

One additional cover which has not been mentioned yet, bears a 4 anna stamp plus three copies (two on the back) of the 1962 12 paise W.H.O. issue. It is registered and addressed to Calcutta (Vignola collection).

The majority bear the rate of 24 pice, several at 28 & 36 pice, one at 48 p and the Calcutta item at 41 paise.

These covers should not be confused with the philatelic covers produced in the 1950s and 1960s which usually bear imperf Pashupati pairs, classic and "new design" one anna stamps.

Write your editor expressing your thoughts concerning these types of covers.

Figure 1 -



Figure 2 -



My "British-Indian Postmarks of Nepal" (American Philatelic Congress's Congress Book 1970, pp. 195-210), in addition to the correction of a few (I hope) out-and-out errors, needs updating, a task I plan to undertake soon. I have managed to extend dates of usage in many cases, and some new cancels and labels have surfaced in the past eighteen years.

A case in point: the two most basic cancels of the British Legation (my No. 40) and the Indian Embassy (No. 45) that followed it. In the case of the former, I can now extend the usage from 11 February 1942 to 19 November 1947. (Previously, I had listed 8 February 1945 - 24 September 1947.) Surendra Lal Shrestha, the well-known Kathmandu dealer and student of Nepalese philately, attests to the 11 February date, on a registered cover, marked "REG." in the upper half moon on the cancel. Lester Michel has the 19 November example. I now have a "REG." cover, dated 5 November 1947 of my own. The British Legation became the Indian Embassy in 1948, not long after India became an independent nation, 15 August 1947, possibly with the advent of the Sambat New Year, around mid-April. I can still find no reference to an earlier No. 40 Legation cancel, although Harrison D. S. Haverbeck's Postage Stamps of Nepal (New York: Collectors Club Handbook Number 14, ca. 1961-1962), p. 122, says it was in use since 1923, at the time the Britese-Nepalese pact established the complete independence of Nepal (p. 16). If true, despite the author's description of it as the "usual cancellation," it must be as rare as the proverbial teeth in the beak of the rooster's wife.

No. 45, which followed No. 40 (along with other varieties -- Nos. 41-44 and 48), lasted long enough to require at least two dies, possibly three or even four, and is known with diameters from 31 to 32 mm. The dates I originally listed were 19 July 1948 to 27 December 1963. I can now extend the latest use to 19 August 1966, found on a block of four, India one rupee, 1958-63, Scott No. 316, with "PAR" in the half moon.

I have noted above that there are other Embassy cancels (Nos. 41-44 and 48), but No. 45 is the most extensively used as far as I can ascertain and cer-

tainly shows the widest variety of applications. I am assuming in the following examples that the different abbreviations were inserted or changed or removed by the postal clerks as needed just as they do with new dates for each day of the year. I see no reason to postulate a whole set or sets of different cancellers, though, to be sure, I have no proof. Examples where the frames were badly worn, but the abbreviations nice and sharp, would be necessary to be really certain. In any event, No. 45 is seen with the upper half moon plain, or with "INS." [-ured] or "REG." [-istered]; "TEL." [-egraph or -egram] -- surely in error for a telegram receipt or perhaps because the clerk was out of the blanks, or even possibly, the receipt is correct but the "TEL" is in error for "PAR" or ?; (I now have one on a certificate of posting dated 11 JUN. 61 & franked with an India 3 n.p., Scott No. 277 or 304, as required. "PAR." [-cel]; and "DELY." [= delivery], this one above an 11.75 mm bridge, instead of the usual 8 mm, with 15 AUG. 49/8-A.M. on two lines instead of the usual one-line date (another example dated 28 APR. 58).

Just recently I have come on two previously unseen varieties, courtesy of Mr. Shrestha. First, an "M.O." in the upper half moon, obviously standing for "money order" and seen on an actual receipt for such, dated 22 SEP. 60. The other one reads "S.B.", seen on three insurance receipts, two of them dated 1 AUG. 48 and one 11 APR. 62. I at first theorized "Savings Bond," more or less on the analogy of the 6-line cancel I have reading "BUY DEFENCE/ SAVINGS CERTIFICATES / DELIVERY / 16 SEP. 40 / 9:30 A.M. / NEPAL," rectangular in shape, 25 x 51 mm, arranged horizontally, and another example dated 5 APR. 41. Government savings, telephone and telegraph, and postal operations are generally run under the same agencies in foreign countries, and even here in the U.S.A. the P.O. sold war bonds. However, Mr. Shrestha did some research in old Indian Post Office manuals and found the term "Post Office Savings Bank." He concludes, and I am now inclined to agree, that the letters stand for "Savings Bank." The insurance receipt form was seemingly used for more than one type of transaction. Line one reads "Received a registered*... ..," plus an extension of the line to be filled in. The asterisk refers to two

lines below, reading "Write here 'letter,' 'postcard,' 'packet,' or 'parcel,' with the word 'insured' before it when necessary." On these "S.B." examples, the line has been left blank.

(continued from POSTAL HIMAL No. 53, page 13)

Naturally, there could scarcely be any letters or parcels found with "TEL.", "M.O.", or "S.B.", unless through error. However, I do have, in addition to the 3 n.p. mentioned above, a "TEL.", with usage of No. 45, dated 9 MAR. 64, and socked on the nose of a block of four, India service stamps, 5 rupees denomination, 1959-71, Scott Type O 10, No. O 149, seemingly from a telegram itself. Would savings bank deposits or certificates or whatever, and/or actual money orders, themselves bear stamps, fiscally used (a detail which unfortunately I neglected to ask of Mr. Shrestha)? If so, "S.B." and "M.O." should exist on stamps though not on covers, as did the "TEL.".

After a full morning in and around the Jokhang temple complex, we were escorted back to our hotel for lunch. Some of us retired to our rooms for some rest while the younger and, perhaps more adventurous used the time to rent bicycles and do some exploring on their own, before our 3 o'clock rendezvous with our bus. This time we were driven to Norbulinka -- the Summer Palace grounds. If I had realized how close this was to our hotel, I would have walken, since I had trouble getting enough exercise to keep 'regular.'

In conclusion I would argue that these cancels from telegraphic, bank & money order usage are collectible as peripheral items just as any other fiscal examples.

Norbulinka, meaning 'Jewel Park', but now renamed the 'People's Park', comprises approximately 100 acres of land on which a number of buildings have been built for the use of the Dalai Lama and his retinue. According to my guide book, the Seventh Dalai Lama put up the first palace on the grounds in 1755, with each successive ruler adding more buildings.

(continued on page 20)

Front:

Handwritten number: 20505952124940

Drawing:



Commission

Date stamp

being amount of money or

Received Rupees (in ink)

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

The unregistered articles addressed as under have been posted here this day at ... hours.

Class of articles

Exact address on the article

Back:



N.B.—For instructions regarding the use of this form and other information relating to certificate of posting, See below.



1. The sender should enter, in ink, the class of articles viz., postcard, letter etc. and exact address on the article in the places provided on the face of this form. No other entry such as amount of postage prepaid, weight of article etc., should be made in the form.

2. The fee charged for a certificate of posting is Three nP. for every three articles or for any less number, and should be paid by affixing a postage stamp of same value in the place provided on the face of this form.

3. Any postal articles in respect of which this certificate is issued are not registered, and will not be checked in the post and will be treated as if they had been posted in a letter-box.

4. In the event of loss, damage or delay, this certificate will confer no title to compensation.

5. This certificate furnishes no proof of the nature of contents.

6. To obtain complete check in the post, insurance should be had to registration. Title to compensation in the event of loss or damage can only be secured by insurance. No valuable article should be sent by post unregistered.

Michel, VISIT TO LHASA....(continued)--

The elaborate entrance gate is guarded by a pair of stylized white lions -- the symbol of power & authority in ancient Tibet.

To me, one of the most striking aspects of this park was the numerous large trees. The latitude of Lhasa is about the same as that of Northern Florida, but the elevation here is almost 12,000 feet above sea level. The largest trees were a variety of willow and must have been irrigated liberally over many years to produce trees some 40 feet tall, with trunks up to 2 feet and more in diameter. The grounds are fairly close to the river and, although I did not notice any irrigation system, I may have overlooked it, since my eyes were drawn to more exotic structures.

Another remarkable sight was the variety of people. Some of these, in dress & appearance, were strikingly like the pictures we have seen of people living in the high Andes of South America. -- But, as always during our stay, the variety in facial features, dress and behaviour of both Asians and Westerners was striking.

The newest 'Summer Palace' was built in the early 1950s by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and is open to visitors for a small charge -- a matter which our guides took care of for us. The living quarters were most interesting, with some furniture of western style and other of Asian style. Pictures of family members and other mementoes, made us conscious of the fact that this Great One was a human being like you or I.

An artificial lake was constructed many years ago and, we were told, is often dry these days, but, there was some water in it that day, and its surface mirrored the Potala which was a significant backdrop for the lake and the small pavilion which was not open to the public at the time. But, of course, we did take a few pictures in that lovely spot.

The sun was setting in the West (as usual!) as we gathered for the short ride back to the hotel and dinner. We relaxed that evening, trying the TV in our room. During the evening several 'canned' programs were offered -- some in English, but most in Chinese. I was trying to jot down a few notes and also

make preparations for the morrow, when Martha suddenly stopped what she was doing and with surprise on her face, said: "Hey! I knew that word!" -- The program at the time was in Chinese, and she had suddenly recognized the meaning of a word that she could not remember ever hearing before -- a word from her early childhood in China, no doubt, when she had been cared for by a Chinese nurse (an 'amah') and was in regular contact with other Chinese workers in and around the home -- besides her brothers and her parents, who spent much time learning the language. -- Indeed, Martha remembers a story that her father enjoyed telling in later years concerning Martha herself. It seems that, when the family had returned from China to the USA, the family was in great demand for entertainment, part of which involved the toddler, Martha. Her father would ask her, in English, to go and get his slippers. Martha would not respond, since she did not understand the order. Her father would, then, ask her to get his slippers, but, this time the request would be made in Chinese, whereupon Martha would toddle off and bring back her father's slippers, much to the delight of the visitors.

The major event the following day was a visit to Sera monastery, at the Northern edge of Lhasa, perhaps about 3 miles from our hotel. The bus took us East on Kingfu Xi Lu Street -- the main East-West street through the city, past the main post office (whose location I noted), in the old Tibetan section of the city, to Jeifang Bei Lu Street, which is the main street (and only paved one) going North toward the monastery. Young trees, newly planted, were spaced along both sides of the street, but we were all entranced by the marvellous views of the Potala which glistened in the clear morning light. After much clamor, the bus driver finally pulled over and stopped to let us pile out with our cameras for a few pictures -- by this time getting mostly the North (or back) side of the Potala -- just as impressive from the rear as from the front, in my opinion.

As our bus took us further North, we passed the 'Regional People's Hospital' (on our right), an electrical generating station, No. 1 Middle School, the Sports Complex and Lhasa Normal College (all on our left) -- all of which have been built by the Chinese, of course.

Michel, VISIT TO LHASA....(continued)--

We also noted, on our right, as we turned onto the winding unpaved road which led toward the monastery, a large nursery, in which trees and other plants for use along the streets, were being grown. Watering was being done by hand with buckets which were filled at a tank truck standing nearby.

Sera monastery was, at one time, one of the most powerful and independent monasteries in all of Tibet. Our guide book states that: "It became famous for its Tantric teachings while Drepung (monastery) drew fame from its governing role. The monks of Sera were considered clever and dangerous. Its small army of warrior-monks, the 'dob-dobs,' were admired as athletes but feared..... In 1947, its leaders planned to kill the Regent and install a rival. The plot failed, but witnesses recount that shops in Lhasa were barricaded and the nobles armed their servants for fear of ram-paging monks."

At its peak, Sera was occupied by some 7,000 monks but only about 300 live there today. -- It is interesting to note that we saw a good many dogs in Lhasa, and not a few in the monasteries. During the early years of Chinese occupation, famine was rife and dogs were being killed by the Chinese for food. Many of the local inhabitants took their dogs to the monasteries, knowing that, as Buddhists, the monks would not kill them. Furthermore, the monasteries seemed always to have food, which they had managed to hide from the occupation forces.

As we climbed numerous stone steps up from the parking area into a courtyard, we noted more steps leading up to the main 'chanting hall.' Most of us were more interested, at the moment, in the unfolding view, as we were well above the valley floor. Looking about, we immediately noticed the striking rock paintings to the East, and saw smoke rising from the top of a huge boulder where, we surmised, a funeral involving cremation, was taking place. We had all heard, or read, of the 'sky burial' and the cremation practices in Tibet, and, of course, were interested in such things. Several of our group were preparing to rush over to the site for picture taking. -- As I think back on it, I am convinced that our guides pur-

posely confused us with dis-information at that moment. We were told that the sites for the 'sky burial' and for 'cremation' were far away -- on the other side of the mountain -- and the smoke we saw was simply from a religious activity at which tourists would not be welcome. I have no doubt that the latter statement was true! In any case, the photo 'bugs' in our group were dissuaded and we stayed with our leaders. Of course, I cannot be sure, but I am convinced that a cremation ceremony was, indeed, going on at the site mentioned, and that, in at least one of my photos, I can see a stone platform, high on a ridge, which is very likely a 'sky-burial' site. -- Later, when we were all in our moving bus, Chung Li gave us, in his quiet way, one of his capsule lectures on burial practices in Tibet. To summarize, he pointed out that the early animistic religion of Tibet (modified later by the infusion of Bhuddism) considered the great birds as the intermediaries between earth-bound men and 'heaven.' The 'sky-burial' was considered as the ideal way of disposing of the dead -- if it could be afforded. Monks took care of transporting a corpse to a high site on a mountain, where the body was hacked into pieces, which were fed upon by the large birds (eagles, ravens, etc.) who were thus strengthened for the task of escorting the soul of the deceased to heaven.

For those who could not afford the cost of a sky burial, cremation was considered a suitable alternative. Of course, fuel was always scarce and expensive, and, as usual, monks carried out the process, accompanying the cremation with prayers & chanting, while the smoke rose to heaven, carrying the soul of the departed with it.

For the common people, neither of these methods was affordable, but, since their religion considered all life sacred, it was their custom to break up the body of the deceased themselves and throw the pieces in a river, where the fish could feed on them. Thus the body of the dead was returned to augment an important food source. Even in winter it was possible to find, if not open pools on the rivers, at least, places where the ice was fairly thin and easily broken.

Finally, the last and most shunned method of disposal of the dead was by burial in the ground. Indeed, this

Michel, VISIT TO LHASA....(continued)--

method was normally reserved for criminals! After all, if heaven is above, hell must be under our feet. Furthermore, the body of a criminal is unfit for food for any creature. In winter, bodies could easily be kept frozen -- awaiting the thawing of the ground, when the body could more easily interred.

Returning to our personal experiences, I can note that this was the first opportunity we had had to be close to a mountain. The landscape was rocky and largely barren -- and, of course, very dry. But our attention was usually drawn, as always, to the constructions of mankind and, in particular, to the exotic buildings of the monastery, with their gilded ornaments, finials, and towers, as well as their unusual construction materials and methods. -- If we could only show you some of our pictures!

By the time we got back to our hotel for a late lunch, most of us were ready for some rest -- though some went adventuring on their own. We (Martha & I) were among those who opted for rest, for (we learned) our leaders had discovered that an important song and dance program was scheduled in the Fine Arts Auditorium, across the street from our hotel, that very evening. We wanted to be wide awake for that! -- So, after dinner, we gathered in front of the hotel and were escorted across the street (on foot, this time!) by our guides, who pressed through the throng at the gate and handed each of us a ticket as we filed through. It turned out that we had seats at the very back of the balcony -- the farthest seats in the house from the stage! If Martha had not mentioned her interest in seeing such a performance, our guides might not have enquired and we might never have known of this event. In any case, all seats were good and the acoustics were excellent. We were among the first people in their seats and we enjoyed watching the local people hunting for their own seats in the hall, while preparations for starting the show were in progress.

We had no program, nor any oral information about what we were to see, but had only been told that the performance was being given by a Tibetan travelling troupe that had just returned from Europe. Judging from the rich costuming and the

types of singing, dancing and music performed, I felt that we were seeing a sort of combined Tibetan-Chinese performance, rather than a truly Tibetan-style presentation. Nevertheless, it was an excellent show, which the locals, as well as the tourists enjoyed. The locals were rather unrestrained in their applause, foot-stomping and other activities used to show their enthusiasm. -- As for me, it was a fitting climax to another full day.

The next morning, our destination was the Drepung monastery, located some 5 miles or so to the Northwest of Lhasa. Drepung was the largest & richest monastery in all of Tibet. It was here that each new Dalai Lama ('child-King') received his training and where it was decided whether he had the qualifications for leadership or whether he would be a figure-head, with a Regent actually in charge of the government & the religious structure of the country. At its height this monastery is said to have housed 10,000 monks. It governed some 700 subsidiary monasteries and owned "vast estates." In 1959 there were 6,000 monks, half of whom fled into exile with the Dalai Lama and the various 'high lamas.' Today about 400 monks & novices live there. There are many halls and buildings, most of which are white-washed on the outside -- a most interesting complex, set into a rocky mountain-side in much the same fashion as Sera, which we saw earlier.

On the drive out, we passed the local 'car wash.' I had wondered how the buses were kept so clean when many of the roads were so dusty and unpaved. Well, they are simply driven down into the bed of a small stream not far from the Lhasa hotel. There, with the aid of many willing hands, buckets of water were being thrown onto the vehicles by some, while others did the necessary scrubbing.

We also saw a few yaks along the way, but our driver would not stop for picture taking. Apparently, he felt that time did not allow it, for he did stop on our return trip, so that we could photograph these beasts -- so important to those Tibetans who inhabit the high lands of the country.

Drepung was most interesting and we were given more explanation concerning the pictorial method of presenting Tibetan history -- a method which uses painted pictures to tell the stories of great events
(to be continued)

(Tenth in a series of discussions for beginners and intermediate collectors)

POSTAL STATIONERY: (Part II)

In the last instalment we examined Nepal's postal cards. In this article we will review its stamped envelopes & aerogrammes, completing the postal stationery discussion.

Nepal issued its first stamped envelopes in 1933. There were two denominations -- 4 paisa green & 8 paisa red. The stamps depict the Goddess Shiva on the Himalayas. The envelopes are of native paper, natively printed & barren except for the rather crudely printed stamps.

As is the case with most of Nepal's early postal issues, there are varieties and errors. The 4p envelope, for example, comes in two sizes with pointed & rounded flaps, representing different printings. According to J. N. Manandhar (POSTAL HIMAL No. 32, page), the larger envelope was issued in 1933, whereas the smaller did not appear until 1937.

The 8p also comes with pointed and rounded flaps. Both denominations appear in varying shades.

Most interesting, however, is an error in which the 2p red stamps used on postal cards at the time were printed on what were supposed to be 8p envelopes. The error was not discovered for some time, and, when it was noticed, residual stocks were overprinted 8p in black -- which led to some more errors & varieties. The overprints appear on the stamps in one and two words, right side up and upside down, positioned vertically and horizontally, and with double impressions.

The Second Issue

In 1959, the year of its admission to the Universal Postal Union, Nepal postal authorities abandoned the local handmade paper for a light blue laid Indian paper on which to print a 6p red oval vertical stamp depicting the King's crown. Available with pointed or rounded flaps, it is the last of Nepal's natively printed envelopes. It shows important quality improvements over the previous issue. It is also Nepal's first envelope available with a prepared first day cancel.

Three years later Nepal began issuance of a series of envelopes featuring modified crowns in a vertical oval format. Printed in India on wove paper, they are

1962 -- a 6p purple stamp on yellow-tan paper and a 12p red on off-white paper.

1965 -- a 15p brown stamp on shades of off-white paper with a violet tint.

1968 -- a 10p stamp on shades of buff-white paper.

Finally, in 1980, Nepal issued a 30p envelope with a purple vertical rectangular stamp showing the King's crown over Mt. Everest.

NOTE: There may be later stamped envelopes, but we have not been able to get replies from the Nepal Philatelic Bureau, despite several inquiries.

Registered Envelopes

In 1935 Nepal issued a special 24p continental-style stamped envelope for registered letters. Made of native paper, with a cloth lining, it bears an orange stamp in various shades of a similar design to those of the regular envelopes of 1933-1958 -- namely, an upright oval with Shiva atop the Himalayas. The envelope was natively printed and carries a single two-word line of Nepalese text in black, which translates into "Registered Letter." Copies are available with the text line omitted.

This registration envelope carried Nepal through to 1962, when a new version was introduced on white wove paper bearing a dark green vertical oval stamp of the type on the regular envelopes of 1968 with the King's crown. The wording on the stamp, however, is quite different, reading in English: "Registration 40p - postage 6p." The stamp is printed on the flap of the continental-style envelope and there is a three-line text, also in dark green -- two lines in Nepalese and one in English saying: "Registered Letter." The stamp and text also can be found in light green. The envelopes were printed in India.

Finally, a third registered letter envelope appeared in 1980, printed in India on white wove paper and still bearing a dark green upright oval stamp and matching text. The stamp, depicting a Rhododendron blossom, continues on the flap of the continental-style envelope.

(concluded on next page)

Westbrook, BUILDING.....(concluded)--

The English wording on the stamp reads: "Registration R.2 - Postage 30p." The text lines on the envelope, still three lines, is more informative than on the previous issue and is dressed up with a small ornament. It gives the sales price of the envelope and specifies "name and address only" in English and Nepalese. Again we must add that we have no later information on registration envelopes.

Aerogrammes

Nepal's first aerogrammes appeared in 1959, marking the country's association with the UPU. These items were the first of nine letter sheets featuring the mystical Garuda Bird on the stamps. While the designs of the stamps are virtually identical, except for colors & denominations, the designs of the aerogrammes themselves fall into two distinct groups.

The first four of the nine were issued in 1959. In overall appearance, they are quite similar, with a six-line text, an ornamental border around the four edges of the folded sheet, and address lines, all printed in blue. The last 3 of the 4, however, had an addition to the ornamental border in the form of swastikas at each corner and at center top and bottom. There also are differences in the spacing of the text and address lines.

All are printed on white bond paper, the first (the one without swastikas) in Nepal, the others in India.

In 1960, the design of the sheets, except for the Garuda Bird stamps, was radically changed. The width was substantially reduced, while the depth was slightly increased. The entire sheets were overlaid in some cases the same color as the stamps. The Garuda Bird format was used for the next five issues -- through 1965. Aerogrammes of this design were:

- 1960 -- 1p green with two text lines & overlay also green, and 1 R red with four text lines & overlay in light green.
- 1963 -- 1.5 R, violet stamp, four text lines, blue text & overlay.
- 1964 -- 8p purple-brown stamp, two text lines, with text & overlay in brown.
- 1965 -- 10p green stamp with two green text lines & overlay. The shades of the overlays vary on some of these issues.

Conclusion

In subsequent years Nepal abandoned the Garuda Bird to issue a variety of air letter sheets -- most of them variations of the 1960-65 format and in a majority of cases with stamps depicting Himalayan peaks and temples. They are an attractive group.

A basic collection of Nepal's stamped envelopes and aerogrammes, as is the case with its postal cards, can be put together without undue difficulty, the cost depending upon the depth the collector wishes to attain. A representative collection can be assembled at reasonable cost. As one progresses into the assemblage of varieties, shades & errors -- particularly of the early postal cards & envelopes, costs will rise. But much variety can be built into a collection by looking for the shade variations of the less costly items, such as the 1933-1958 envelopes and the 1960-1965 overlaid aerogrammes. Much can be done to add color to album pages by collecting used postal stationery items that have had additional postage added. Such material is quite common. And those interested in cancellations & FDCs have whole new fields for expansion.

Bibliography

Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationery Catalog, Section 13/N.-O., P.O. Box 5637, Huntington Beach, CA 92646.

(Note: Specialized articles on Nepal postal stationery exist and a Nepal bibliography, compiled by Dr. Wolfgang C. Hellrigl, has been published by George Alvarez.--Ed.)



His Majesty's Government, Postal Services Department, Nepal Philatelic Bureau has the pleasure to announce the philatelic programme for the year 1988.

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

S.N. Date of Issue Subject or Occasion Rate

1.	March 1988	Auspicious Upanayan Ceremony of HRH Crown Prince Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev	Re. 1.00
2.	March 1988	Royal Sukla Phanta Wildlife Reserves	0.60p
3.	1988	Silver Jubilee of Kanti Children's Hospital	0.60p
4.	April 1988	Golden Jubilee of Nepal Bank Limited	Rs. 2.00
5.	April 1988	Bindhyabasini Temple, Pokhara	0.15p
6.	August 1988	40th Anniversary of the World Health Organization	Rs. 4.00
7.	Sept. 1988	Oral Rehydration Treatment & Immunization (4 stamps -- each)	Re. 1.00
8.	Sept. 1988	Silver Jubilee of the Nepal Red Cross Society	Rs. 5.00
9.	Sept. 1988	24th Olympic Games, Seoul	Rs. 25.00
10.	October 1988	International Year	
11.	Nov. 1988	Pashupati Area Development Fund	Re. 1.00
12.	Nov. 1988	Late Rudra Raj Pende	0.50p
13.	Dec. 1988	Golden Jubilee of the National Museum	0.60p
14.	28 Dec. 1988	44th Birthday of H.M.King Birendra	0.50p

DICK VAN DER WATEREN VISITS NEPAL AGAIN

(Your editor has extracted the following from Dick's letter dated 9-2-1988, after his latest trip to Nepal, including a trek with one of his sons.--Ed.)

"We started our trekking at Trisuli (Nuwakot) and then followed the trail along the Bhote Kosi and Langtang Khola in a northeast direction up to 16,000 feet. The weather was very nice -- no rain or fresh snow, but always sunny & warm in the daytime -- though cold at night.

"In a small mountain village called Syabrubensi, there was a small 'post-office' and I posted a card, addressed to myself at my hotel in Kathmandu. I received it but, unfortunately, there was no postmark on the card.

"It was a very nice trek indeed and my son and I really enjoyed ourselves. During these three weeks we, together, took more than 500 pictures (color slides), so I can give you a good idea of the region if you visit my home in Holland." (Your editor has never been to Nepal -- or Holland, either, for that matter, and looks forward to a visit with Dick, also an enthusiastic Nepal collector, in his home some day.--Ed.)

STAMPS from OVERSEAS

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Mail auction catalogues, with a good run of Nepal postal stationery, are in preparation. Study Circle members are invited to apply as early as possible. Your postage will be refunded if you bid successfully.

(Another article from "The Rising Nepal" submitted by our Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, Mr. Dhruva Rudra.--Ed.)

Panchkhal--

Two butane burners hiss fire as the balloon slowly inflates with hot air. It grows with the rustle of fabric, and finally jostles the wicker gondola upright. Another short blast of hot air and the balloon rises effortlessly into the wide blue sky.

The place is the Panchkhal Valley on the Arniko Highway and the time seven-thirty in the morning. Exactly two hundred years after the world's first hot air balloon flight, this exciting sport seems to have come to Nepal at last, this time to stay.

Nepal's International Trekkers and the Adventure Travel Centre of Sydney, Australia, have joined hands to introduce ballooning in Nepal. "Ballooning can add an exciting new dimension to sight-seeing in this country," says Chris Dewhirst, balloon pilot from Adventure Travel, whose father, John Dewhirst, regularly flew delivery of Pilatus Porters into Kathmandu in the fifties.

Ballooning, one of the world's oldest sports, is also the world's newest craze. Over four thousand hot-air balloons are now flying all over the world. The buoyancy and thrill of lighter-than-air flight has made it very popular, and its organisers in Nepal believe that it will be a highly successful venture if promoted here for sight-seeing purposes.

Permission to make flights in the Kathmandu Valley, however, have not yet been granted by the government. The reasons seem to be two-fold: Strategic and air safety. The organisers are therefore pressing for flight rights between Thimi and Bhaktapur, where they will neither be over-flying the urban area nor installations. As for balloons tampering with air traffic space, pilot Dewhirst says he has been regularly flying in the vicinity of much more busy airports, like Sydney. "Balloons have a better safety record than private planes," says Dewhirst, "and are more maneuverable."

Balloonists also have transceivers so they can remain in touch with air traffic control which will keep them posted on other aircraft in the area. If required, balloons can come down at rates of descent of up to fifteen feet per second, it is understood.

If permitted to fly in the Kathmandu Valley, this will be Asia's first commercial hot-air ballooning programme, according to the organisers. The Australians, for their part, have their sights only on Kathmandu, and think it would not be worthwhile operating in other areas due to temperature and retrieval problems.

Travel agents, too, are excited about the prospects of selling clients balloon tours, and attribute the government's present indecision to birth pangs, similar to that suffered by river rafting when that sport was first introduced in Nepal.

The organisers are already looking forward to representing Kathmandu at the bi-centennial celebrations of the first balloon flight that will be held in France in November 1983. (Although this article has been buried in our files for some 5 years, we thought our readers might find it interesting. Souvenir covers of this first flight may still be available.--Ed.)

NEW NEPAL SLIDE SHOW BECOMES AVAILABLE ON
1 AUGUST 1988

A long awaited slide show designed to introduce Nepal philately will become available in the USA, beginning 1 August 1988. Member Jim Booth (address in 1988 Directory) has agreed to handle this 76-slide program as well as a shorter slide program on Tibet philately, which has been available for the past few years. A charge of \$3.50 must be paid in advance for each slide show to cover postage and insurance, but both shows can be sent together to the same address for a charge of \$4.50. While these programs are designed as introductions to the philately of Nepal and/or Tibet, we would welcome constructive criticisms and comments concerning them. Your reactions to these shows may be sent either to Jim, or to the editor of POSTAL HIMAL.

NEW ISSUE NEWS FROM BHUTAN

The Department of Posts & Telegraphs Services of the Royal Government of Bhutan has recently announced the release of a set of stamps recognizing the development of transportation. The set includes 10 stamps, ranging from 50 Ch to 10 Nu and 4 Souvenir Sheets are included, at 25Nu each. The individual stamps are printed in sheets of 10 stamps and the cost of one mint set is Nu 47.50, while a complete set on a First Day Cover is priced at Nu 52.50. The actual date of release was 31 March 1988. Inquiries and orders should be addressed to: The Manager, Philatelic Bureau, Phuntsoling, BHUTAN.

AN INTERESTING REGISTERED COVER FROM
YATUNG

--N. G. Rhodes

The registered cover illustrated on page 24 is most unusual in having two registration marks -- Waterfall Type YB stamped, as is often the case, directly onto the envelope, and Type YC stamped in red on a Label of Type BR.2. (A scarce late usage as Waterfall only records this mark for 1911.) The cancellations are also interesting, the stamps being cancelled using a normal Type B2 Yatung handstamp dated 4th March 1913, while on the back, as a transit mark, is a Type B1 Yatung handstamp with the same date.

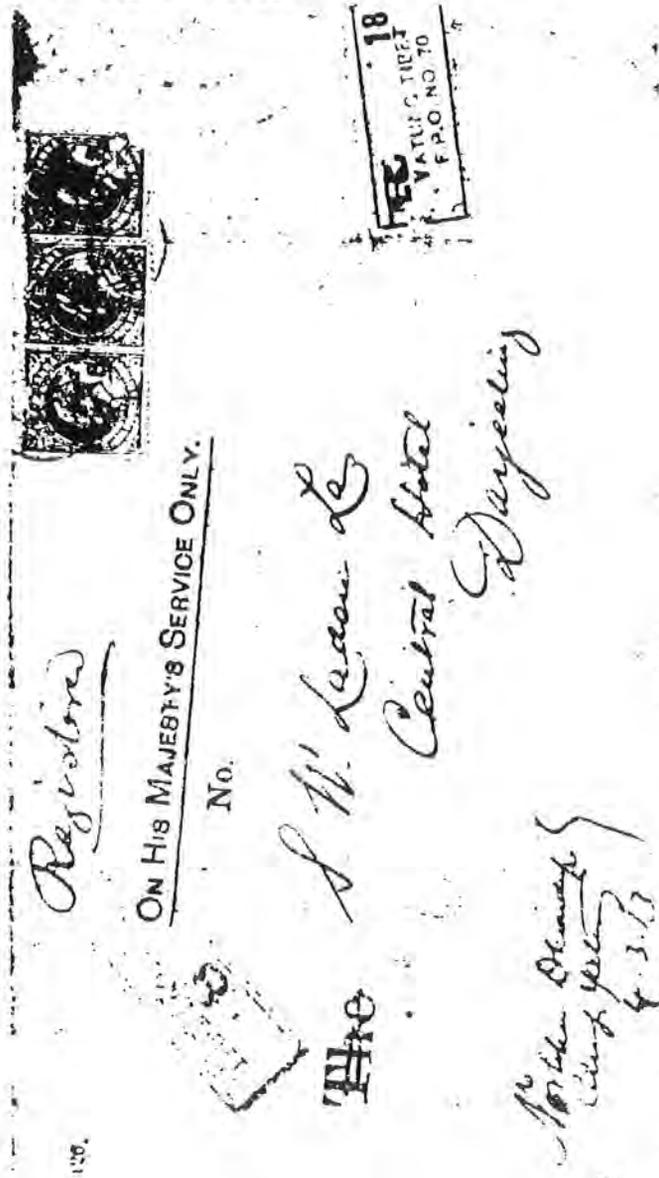
This use of two different registration marks, and two different handstamps, on the one cover is most strange and not, as far as I am aware, previously noted. Could it be that at this time there were two post offices in the Yatung area -- one using handstamps Types B2 and YC, being the military office F.P.O. No. 70, and the other a few miles away at the old village of Yatung, being the civilian post office? This letter may have been posted at the first office and could have then received the additional markings as transit marks on its journey to Darjeeling in India when it had to be transferred from one mail bag to another at old Yatung. See map on page 28.

This is not based on any direct, incontrovertible evidence, but it is a plausible hypothesis as F.P.O. No. 70 is connected with Chumbi on the registration mark Type B23. By 1908 F.P.O. 70 was connected with "Yatung" with a rare Type B1 handstamp, but it should be remembered that after 1904 "Yatung" tended to be applied to the whole area. The Chinese had their own post office named "Yatung" -- probably located at the Chinese Customs House at Pibithang (Rinchenpong on the map), on the Amo Chu about 3 miles below Old Yatung. Could it be that F.P.O. 70 was located near (and perhaps even before?) this office after the Chinese withdrawal? Certainly David McDonald records that the British Government of India established the Pibithang Registration Post there for recording goods being traded between India & Tibet and, where appropriate, levying duty. This Post was only abolished in 1924, so it is quite possible that there was a Post Office located there in 1913.

Naturally, that additional office could have been closed down any time between 1913 and 1924, and the handstamps of Type B2 used later in the main post office at Old Yatung.

Do other readers have any further evidence to support or reject this hypothesis? For example, am I correct in thinking that all combination covers of 1910/11 with Chinese and Indian stamps cancelled at Yatung, always use Type B2? If so, there may have been close liaison at Pibithang between a Chinese post office and a British-Indian post office to handle the transfer of mail between the two postal lines -- which were rivals, presumably, along the Gyantse to Yatung sector!

References:-
David MacDonald, "Twenty Years in Tibet" London (1932)
Arnold C. Waterfall, "The Postal History of Tibet" (1965)



(Cancels shown below as seen on back of cover illustration -- half size -- on page 27)

