

POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



Mr. Lok Man Siddhi, First Postmaster of Nepal
(See article by J. B. Manandhar on page No. 32)

No. 59

3rd Quarter 1989



POSTAL HIMAL is a quarterly publication of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle. Membership subscriptions run from January through December of each year. Dues should be paid to the society representative in your area. Information on advertising rates may be obtained from the editor.

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EDITOR: Lester Michel 309 Yucca Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80906-2150, USA
PUBLICITY: F. Westbrook 2886 Carambola Circle South, Coconut Creek, FL 33066, USA

Representatives

EUROPE Colin Hepper, 12 Charnwood Close, Peterborough, Cambs., PE2 9 BZ, ENGLAND
INDIA Sohan Lal Dhawan & Sons, National Agencies, Sheranwala Gate, Patiala 147 001, INDIA
NEPAL Surendra Lal Shrestha, K'du. Dist. P.O.Box 72, 5/148 Ombahal, Kathmandu, NEPAL
USA Roger D. Skinner, 1020 Covington Road, Los Altos, CA 94022, USA

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
FOR MEMBERS USE ONLY

Dear Friends,

Our President, Dr. Pierre Couvreur, reports that his albums (described in the editor's letter to members -- PH No. 58, p. 15) will be sold in separate lots at the 5th October 1989 Bournemouth Auction (Christies or Robson Lowe). This is an unusual opportunity to acquire some of the finest albums made, with lettering in gold for Tibet (10), Nepal (10) and Indian Native States.

Roger Skinner reports that a copy of POSTAL HIMAL No. 58, mailed to one of our Indian members, Mr. Arun Bhattacharya, 60/1 Mahendra Bannerje Road, Calcutta, 700 060, INDIA, was returned without any postal notation. We must assume that his address has changed. Can anyone give us his current address?

We wish to extend our special thanks to Mr. J. B. Manandhar for his article titled "The First Postmaster of Kathmandu", together with the cover picture on this issue -- and our thanks to Mr. Dhruva Rudra, the first Nepal Representative for our Study Circle, for sending these materials to us. Although he is no longer in business as a stamp dealer, his interest in postal history as it relates to Nepal is as keen as ever. Thank you both for sharing this unusual bit of history, which would not have been shared with our members without your combined efforts.

In Postal Himal No. 58, page 18, we reported some interesting collector's items under the heading: "Souvenir items from the Tibet Philately Association." Your editor did not include the addresses of the two groups of items described, as he was somewhat concerned about the requirement of payment in advance in cash, in the form of USA bank notes. So, on 23 February 1989, he sent the required cash (\$6.00), together with a covering letter requesting the set of 4 cards marking the successful April/May 1988 China, Japan & Nepal joint expedition to Qumolangma/Sagarmatha. The cards, together with several other interesting items (See p. 36 of this issue.) arrived via registered mail on 1 June 1989, despite the fact that I sent my order via ordinary airmail unregistered!

In the meantime I had received several letters from members, requesting further information -- letters which I have not

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 letters, numerals, punctuation marks and blank spaces between words. Ads will be placed under appropriate headings without charge for the headings. See the Classified Ad section in the final pages of any issue of The AMERICAN PHILATELIST for typical ad headings -- or simply send your own ad, asking the editor to place it under an appropriate heading (at no extra cost).

DEADLINE: Ad and payment in USA dollars (or in mint USA postage stamps) 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 mailed about one month later. Any change of copy after the first insertion will be counted as a new advertisement.

WANTED

Bhutan. Anything: covers, FDCs, stamps, proofs, essays, etc. Also loose stamps & broken sets to use for postage. Write first. Nildo Harper, 510 Main St. 1910 Roosevelt Island, New York 10044

answered due to one problem which had developed. One of our members had ordered the set of Tibetan Bi-lingual Postmarks, consisting of 130 cards, etc., enclosing the required cash -- all via registered airmail. After some time his letter was returned, unopened, and with no markings to indicate why the Chinese postal system had returned the letter. Your editor has ordered a second set of the Mountaineering cards. Address: Mr. TEH YU-SHUEN, c/o "JI YOU", LHASA, Tibet Aut. Region 850 000 People's Republic of China.

The address for the set of "Tibetan Bi-lingual Postmarks" consisting of 130 cards is: XIZANG DI MIN YOU, LHASA, TIBET A.R., PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

We will report any further developments as they unfold. See pp. 36 & 37.

Lester A. Michel

EXHIBITION NEWS

FLASH! -- Roger Skinner has just informed your editor that a meeting of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle has been scheduled at the WORLD STAMP EXPO '89 at 3:00 PM on Sunday, 26 November. -- Mary Ann Owens is the Meetings/Seminars Coordinator. Due to the necessity of tight scheduling, no more than 15 minutes before the hour and no more than 15 minutes after the hour is allowed, in addition to the scheduled hour, so please be prompt. The meeting place will be in the Convention Center and a program titled "Nepal and the UPU" will be presented. All programs at the Convention Center are open to the public and we trust that many of our members (and especially those living within the Washington, DC area) will make a special effort to attend this meeting.--Ed.

Colin Hepper received a LARGE SILVER for his entry of "Nepal Postal History" at PHILEXFRANCE '89 (July 7-17) in Paris. He also met with Peter Planken and Dick van der Wateren (both Life Members of the Study Circle & both from Holland) and also Jos Gobert from Belgium. Our congratulations to Colin for his fine award.

P.S.-- In his hurry to assemble the "News Flash" (at left) your editor forgot to mention that WORLD STAMP EXPO '89, is not only arranged by the United States Postal Service, but will have many unusual exhibits. It will be open November 17-20 and November 24 to December 3, 1989 at the Washington Convention Center, in Washington, DC. Don't miss it!

STAMP WORLD LONDON '90

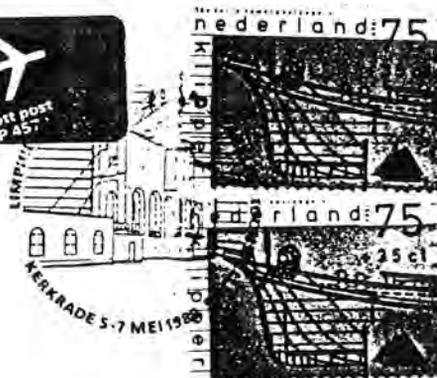
As a reminder, it is not too early to begin your planning to attend this special event -- in London on 3-13 May 1990, now only months away, for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black, the world's first adhesive postage stamp. A very special meeting of our Study Circle is being planned and we hope to have the largest number of members present since the founding of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle. It is not too early to report to Colin Hepper your own plans to attend one (and possibly two) meetings of our Circle. -- Only two more issues of POSTAL HIMAL will be mailed out before this once-in-a-lifetime event.

Your editor thanks Dick van der Wateren for the attractive cover (shown below) posted at the National Show, LIMPHILA '89, held in Kerkrade, Netherlands on May 5, 6 & 7. (See report in PH No. 58, p. 16.)

NATIONALE
POSTZEGELTENTONSTELLING
"LIMPHILA '89"



5, 6 en 7 mei 1989 - Kerkrade



Mr. Lester A. Michel
309 Yucca Circle
Colorado Springs CO 80906
U S A

ABOUT ZAKANG POSTAL SERVICE OF TIBET

(An interview with Doji Wangjiu by Ye Yushun, published in CHINA PHILATELY, for January 1988, pp. 45-46 and sent to us by Mr. S. L. Shrestha, Nepal Representative of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle.--Ed.)

The posts and telecommunications system under the 'Gasha' government in the old Tibet was called 'Zeji'. The postal service operated by 'Zeji' was called 'Zakang' in Lhasa was opened in 1912 and stopped operation in 1959. The 47 years between represented a historical period in running postal services by the localities of Tibet. After 1959, the whole of the postal services in Tibet was replaced by the Chinese People's Posts founded in Lhasa in 1954. The five years 1954 to 1959 were a transitional period, during which the Chinese People's Posts and 'Zakang' co-existed. This situation resulted in the appearance of the phenomenon that there were two kinds of stamps stuck to the same envelope, as is shown in the entire in Fig. 1. (below)

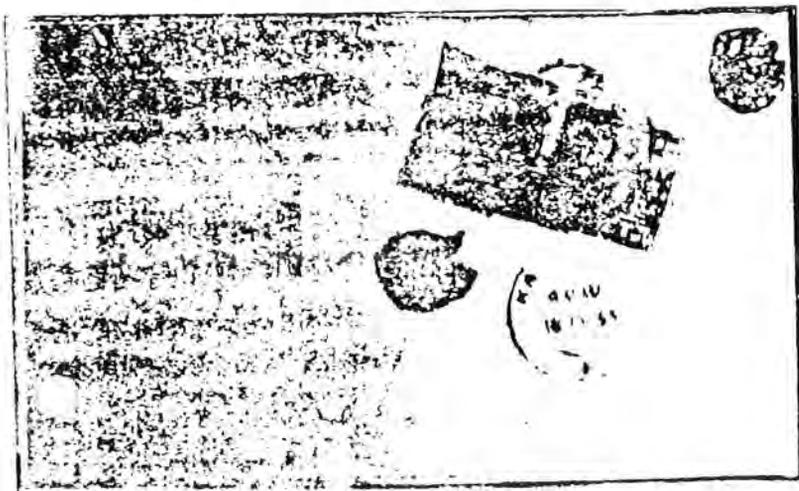


Fig. 1 (above) is reduced in size. Fig. 2 (right) is shown in the actual size of the stamp used.--Ed.



Doji Wangjiu began to work with 'Zakang' in 1957 as 'Zezong' (meaning "secretary" in the Tibetan language, which can be interpreted as a postal clerk). He stayed there until 'Zakang' was closed. There were two postal clerks at the 'Zakang'. As one already died,

Doji Wangjiu is the last who had worked with the Tibetan postal service when it was run locally. For the purpose of collecting and sorting out the data about the history of the Tibetan Postal Service, Ahwang Danzeng, Deputy Manager of the Tibet Stamp Co., Mr. Liu Yuan, permanent council member of the Tibet Philatelic Association and I had a special interview with Mr. Doji Wangjiu.

Q: Would you say something about the sales and use of stamps by 'Zakang'?

A: At that time, we sold and used the "lion" stamps¹ (Fig. 2). The stamps were printed by the Tibet Minting Factory in the northern suburbs of Lhasa. The stamps were sold by 'Zezong'. One sheet had 12 stamps. When on sale, they were cut out with a pair of scissors. The biggest buyers were big merchants and Nepalese. We kept a special wooden box, very small in size. In it we put our tools, stamps and money. We had only two clerks. One was in charge of the box and the other kept the key.

Q: Were there many letters to handle at the time?

A: There were people who sent letters every day. We handled several hundred letters a month.

Q: How many people worked in the 'Zakang' at the time?

A: There were one manager called 'Zezong', two clerks taking charge of selling stamps, receiving and sorting letters and affixing postmarks, three 'Zabas', meaning postmen, two persons responsible for connecting telephone calls and one person taking care of the houses.

Q: How about your monthly pay?

A: Payment was computed on an annual basis. Each year, we were given 50 Ke³ of 'Qingko' (high land barley) and 150 'Sang'⁴ of cash. In addition, each of us was given a small booklet, on the strength of which we may receive three to four 'Jin' of butter oil and a piece of tea. The 'Zabas' who delivered letters got more than us clerks, because the addressees also gave them money or things as gifts.

Q: Did the Chinese People's Posts and the 'Zakang' have any business relations or division of labour?

A: I am not quite clear about matters relating to administrative affairs. What I know is that newspapers were delivered by the 'Zakang'. Once they said that what was to be done when the Gandan Mon-
(concluded on next page)

....POSTAL SERVICE OF TIBET (concluded)

astery could not get newspapers. The monastery was situated high on a mountain and it was very hard to walk up there. So I went to a village at the foot of the mountain and asked a villager to deliver the newspapers for two pieces of silver coin a day. As to other businesses, each went its own way, as far as I know.

Q: Could you say something about the postal routes of 'Zakang'?

A: The 'Zakang' mainly operated couriers' posts. One route started from Lhasa and went westward to Yadong via Baidi, Jagarze, Gyangze and Poli. Another route branched out from Gyangze to Xigaze via Bainang Eastward. I could only remember that it reached Laizhao and there were not many letters to deliver there. There were no means of transport. The couriers had to walk all the way, changing at every ten kilometers. That was in 1957.

Q: What marks did the couriers bear?

A: They wore Tibetan clothes, with a yellow wrapper to carry letters slung over the back and a red-tasselled spear in hand. There was a bell tied to the spear.

Mr. Doji Wangjiu took us to see the former site of the 'Zakang'. It was a two-storeyed Tibetan building and each storey had about 60 square meters of floor space. The building faces south.

Notes:

1. The Lion stamps are those used by the 'Zakang'. The design features a lion, hence the name. The local Tibetan post issued the lion stamp of three occasions. What Mr. Doji Wangjiu referred to should be the third set issued between 1933 and 1959.

2. 'Xugang' is a kind of copper cash. It was valued as one-tenth of a Sang. In Tibet, the postage for an ordinary mail had always been one 'Tranka', quite different from what Mr. Doji Wangjiu said. Maybe, postage differed from year to year or maybe there were other reasons. This problem remains to be studied.

Foreign stamp catalogues indicated the face values of Tibetan stamps with the letter T, which is the first letter of the word 'Tranka'. For stamps with values less than a T, Foreign stamp ca-

talogues usually converted them into T. For instance, the second stamp of the third set of lion stamps had the face value indicated in 'Xugang'. But foreign stamp catalogues converted it i to two-thirds of a T, instead of 'Zuga.g' as indicated on the stamps.

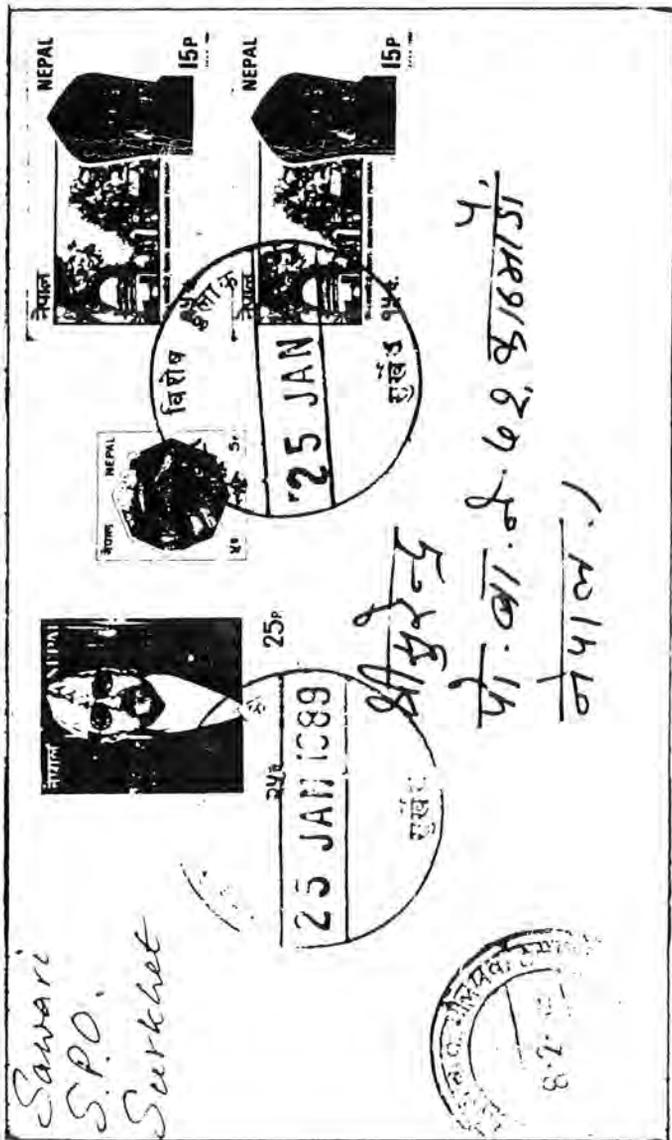
3. 'Ke' is a Tibetan unit of weight. One 'Ke' is equal to 14,000 grams.

4. 'Sang' is a monetary unit of Tibet. One 'Sang' is equal to six and two-thirds of a 'Tranka'. At the time of the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the official quotation was that 15 'Sang' may exchange for one silver coin.



SAWARI S.P.O. - SURKHET

We thank Mr. S. L. Shrestha, Nepal Representative for our Study Circle, for a cover bearing two strikes of this S.P.O. cds dated "25 JAN 1989". The cds at lower left is dated 8.2.89. The back bears a clearer strike of the Kathmandu GPO and a note: "JAN 15 to MAR 21".--Ed.



SIKKIM-TIBET 1903-1908: A REVIEW

-- Alan Warren

(from the series on postal history of Indian military campaigns, by Brig. D. S. Virk, published jointly by the Philatelic Congress of India and the Army Postal Service Association, New Delhi, 1989; hardbound, 150 pages, 17 x 24.5 cm, 250 Rupees.)

In his column on INDIA 89 on page 2 of POSTAL HIMAL No. 57, Wolfgang Hellrigl mentions this excellent new book on the postal history of the Sikkim-Tibet campaign. The book consists of three parts. The first, by Virk, constitutes the main body of the text. He describes the efforts to build the Sikkim Road and the establishment of the Tibetan Frontier Commission under Col. Younghusband.

Virk describes the temporary and experimental post offices established for the road builders, followed by the Field Post Offices of the expeditionary forces. In each case the author provides the dates of opening and closing the offices, where known. He quotes extensively from documents and archives of the India Post Office to indicate the conditions and purposes for which the offices were to be used.

A number of covers are illustrated, even a few in color, showing various markings. The mail routes and transit times are discussed as well as the closing of the FPOs in 1908. This first part is followed by a series of appendices which tabulate the various military units and their officers, the post offices (civil and FPO) with their opening and closing dates, the postal officers during the 1903-08 period, the postal rates in effect at that time, and a list of the handstamps and seals used during the period. This first section concludes with a two-page bibliography.

The second part of the book was prepared by Dr. Wolfgang Hellrigl and tabulates the postmarks used during the period, with dates and illustrated examples of each recorded marking. The final part of the book is the reprinted diary for 1903-04 of the superintendent of field post offices of the Tibet mission and force. He was required to send such records to his superior who passed them on to the Director General of India posts.

This book brings together the archives of the postal service and the research of Tibet philatelists over the years, to obtain the best overall picture of events and the documented markings used during this period. Brig. Diljit Virk joined the India postal service in 1939 and was assigned to the Army Postal Service three years later. Since retiring as director of the Army Postal Service, Virk has devoted much time to military postal history with the publication of four books in addition to this new title.

I obtained my copy of Virk's book by sending \$25 in U.S. bank notes by registered mail to The Secretary, Philatelic Congress of India, 56 Dr. S. Sirkar Road, Calcutta 700 014, India.

NEPAL POST OFFICE DATA 1972-1988

--Lester A. Michel

Some months ago, Roger Skinner sent me a copy of a report titled "NEPAL - NUMBER OF POST OFFICES BY ZONES 1983/84 TO 1986/87", which appears on page 35 (lower right corner of the page) in this issue. In Roger's covering letter he remarked that it would be helpful if someone could provide the names & types of post offices in each of the zones. Can any of our readers provide such a list?

I recalled the list of Nepalese Post Offices as at 31.12.1972. on Appendix II, pp. 126-130, which appeared in "The Native Postmarks of NEPAL" by Wolfgang Hellrigl & Colin Hepper, which lists 626 post offices of all types.

Then I also recalled a bit of related information in a government folder sent to me by Mr. S. L. Shrestha, our Nepal Representative, in which the total number of Post Offices in 1982 is listed as 1,590.

Finally, the brief report on page 32 of this issue (lower right corner of the page) gives the total number of post offices of all types as 2,022.

So we note that, in little more than a quarter of a century, the number of post offices in Nepal has grown from 626 to 2,022. It is almost a certainty that the postal system of Nepal has grown more rapidly than any other country in the world. Every postal system has its problems and Nepal may have had many, but surprisingly few -- or so it seems to me.

S. O. S.

In re the Nepal Nalis Dastoor or Court
Fee Stamps

--Armand E. Singer

In PH, No. 26 (Summer 1981), p. 20, I discussed all the shades, papers, denominations and printings of the pice & rupee values of the court fee stamps that I had found to date, namely: 1,2,4,8,25, 50 & 75 pice; 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,15,20 & 25 rupees -- twenty (not counting paper colors) in all. They were the same number and denominations already listed by S. L. Shrestha in his own fine article, in Philately (the Nepal Philatelic Society's Journal), 5, No. 1 (Jan. 1978), pp. 52-53. George Alevizos's Mail Sale auction catalogue No. 14, lot No. 205, 14 Feb. 1989, offers what he calls a complete set, values 1 pice to 25 rupees, twenty in all. I still suspect that these are all the denominations ever printed, but Dr. Mac Ricketts's price list (circa 1960) offered a 12-pice value, which he termed obsolete. More than one dealer or collector, over the years, has written me to claim the existence of will-o'-the-wisp denominations, to wit: 7, 10 and 20 pice and 30, 50, and 100 rupees. Shrestha, however, specifically notes in his article that twenty-five is the top value (p. 53).

One way or the other I would greatly appreciate it if collectors would go through their holdings to see whether perhaps we can lay these ghosts once & for all. Do any of these putative denominations exist or not?

Be it noted in passing: the different values occur on white, gray, and blue paper, of varying shades and textures, some values on more than one paper. There are several errors already found in the value panels, some not listed by Shrestha. Since whole sheets must be very rare if not unobtainable, it is difficult to be sure all the errors have been caught. Though the design appears to be made from just one cliché reduplicated for all the values, the letters and numbers in the value panels seem to have been individually typeset for each value and for each cliché of each value. Hence, errors are possible in each case. Some values exist part imperf.

Please report your findings to our editor and/or to me, 248 Grandview Avenue, Morgantown, West Virginia, U.S.A., 26505.



MORE SINGER PUBLICATIONS

That peripatetic author, Prof. Dr. Armand E. Singer, writes interesting works in other areas than Nepal & Tibet philately, mountaineering, etc. Some of you might enjoy reading the following articles by this prolific author:

Prof. Dr. Armand E. Singer, for many years a member of the Department of Foreign Languages at the West Virginia University, has sent us copies of two very interesting articles he has published recently. The first, titled "PHILATELY", begins by defining the word as "Stamp collecting and study. By extension, interest in all phases of postal systems." He then sketches the background of his subject, going back 100 years and more, referring to many sources found in the literature of the western world.

The second article, titled "MOUNTAINEERING", requires a somewhat longer definition, followed by this statement: "The climbing of mountains is one of the few outdoor sports to have aired a large body of serious, often excellent literature, fictional as well as factual." He then considers the "Background from Ancient Times up to the Advent of Romanticism", followed by an examination of Nineteenth Century writings, concluding with Twentieth Century literature. He ends with a two-page bibliography, a number of which this person has not read. One excuse being the simple fact that your editor has followed both 'hobbies' since boyhood. Can you imagine the fun these two 'old timers' have when they get together? -- I recently received a letter from Julie Marshall (one of our Australian members), in which she mentions that Tasmania is her "home state", and that "we always climb Mt. Wellington when we go home each Christmas". -- So I can now 'dream' that Prof. Singer and I may get together on a mountain with Julie. Perhaps Dick van der Wateren and a few others would like to join us!--Ed.





NEWS FROM KATHMANDU

WORLD POSTAL DAY OBSERVED

(Our thanks to Mr. Surendra Lal Shrestha, Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, for sending us this article which appeared in the English language newspaper, THE RISING NEPAL, for 10 October 1988 (Ashwin 24, 2045)-- Ed.)

Kathmandu, Oct. 9 (RSS):

The World Post Day is being celebrated in Nepal by organising a variety of programmes today.

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) which was set up by 22 countries in Berne, the capital of Switzerland on 9th October, 1874 completes its 114 years of existence today.

Nepal had become a member of the UPU on 11th October 1956. At present UPU has a total of 168 member countries.

The world post stands under the motto of universal nature of the post, with its slogan "The Post Always and Everywhere".

In a radio statement given on the occasion of the World Post Day today, Minister for Communications Hari Bahadur Basnet expressed the hope that the National Communications Policy and Programme-2045 B.S., Mr. Basnet said that Nepal had been giving emphasis to promoting and improving her domestic postal system after becoming a member of the UPU on one hand and increasing her postal contacts with other countries on the other.

The Minister also threw light on the various steps taken to make the postal services more dynamic, speedy, reliable and effective.

He added that the measures taken have contributed greatly towards improving the postal services.

In a message Director-General of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union Adwaldo Cardoso Botto De

Barros has said that in today's world, things are constantly developing, and so are demands. Clients and users rightly demand an excellent quality of services, speed, reliability and security.

This is precisely why the post is currently going through one of the most exciting periods in its history, he said, adding that the long neglected, with very little support for its plans for modernizing, revitalizing and adapting to this era of accelerating development, the post is again striving to take up the challenge thrown down to it.

The post has too many values born of noble causes and spring from tradition and an outward-looking attitude to fail in its mission, he added.

The Director General appealed to all those responsible at national level for management and in particular for budgeting, planning and implementing resources to actively support the post in its efforts to modernize and to adjust to the rapid pace of development so that it can respond promptly and effectively to its customers' needs.

For its part, the Universal Postal Union is trying to expand its activities in the field through its technical assistance programme in conjunction with the beneficiary postal administrations, he said, adding that its aid can only be complementary and can only support the efforts of the national administrations themselves.

In any field, development is primarily a matter for the countries concerned, he said and added "give the post the tools it needs, and it will do the job expected of it".

At present Nepal dispatches postal materials to 16 countries directly and receives postal materials from 23 countries directly.

Nepal has direct surface mail links with eight countries and air mail links with ten countries.

Likewise, money order service is made available at 254 district and area post offices of the five development regions.

A money order revolving fund of six million rupees has been set up to solve the problem of money order payment.

Likewise, saving bank services are available at 91 area and district post offices.

THE FIRST POSTMASTER OF KATHMANDU

--J. B. Manandhar

(Submitted via Mr. Dhruva Rudra, first Nepal Representative of the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle.--Ed.)

When I was associated, directly or indirectly, with 'HULAK' - the house Journal of the Postal Training Centre (HMG/Nepal), I used to impart some general knowledge type of information on postal matters under the title of 'Do you know?' in Nepali. In this series I introduced Major Captain Bijay Jung Panday as the Talukwala (Director General) ⁽¹⁾ of Nepal Postal Services in 1935 B.S. ⁽²⁾ And I stated, in one of my articles, that Goswara Hulak (the General Post Office) was first stationed in front of the Hanuman Dhoka palace.

Now, as I happened to go through my old notes, I came across one important personality who should be remembered by all interested in Nepalese postal history. He is Mr. Lok Man Siddhi, the first postmaster -- then termed a Nayab Mukhiya of Nepal Hulak Ghar (directorship cum post office). He was appointed on 15th Poush 1935 B.S. (ca. 28 December 1879 A.D.) under the director-generalship of Jamor Captain Bijay Jung Pandey. At that time he drew Rs 15/- per month. Under him there was one Nausinda (assistant), two Janchaki Jamdars (line overseers) and one postman on pay-roll to run the post office. On the basis of government documents it can be said that he (Mr. Lok Man Siddhi) served the postal service in different capacities. He is traced in one of the documents of the year 1959 B.S. (ca. 1907 A.D.) as Nayab Dittha of Nepal Hulak Goswara Ghar during the premiership of Chandra Shumsher J.B.R.

Amidst the difficulties of locating Lok Man Siddhi's home and his descendants, one day, while attending the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Salt Trading Corporation, Kathmandu, it suddenly occurred to me that my two colleagues, Messrs. Tej Siddhi Gubhaju and Khadga Siddhi Gubhaju, might be the relatives of the man in question.

To my surprise, they were none other than the sons of the late Mr. Siddhi Man Siddhi and grandsons of the late Lok Man Siddhi. As they did not have any knowledge of their grandfather, they referred me to their eldest brother, Mr. Yog

Man Siddhi for consultation. Arranged by Mr. Khadga Siddhi, I interviewed, on 15th Chaitra, 2043 B.S., his 88-year old brother, in feeble health and hard of hearing, at their ancestral home at Makhan Bahal in Kathmandu. My impressions, after the interview, are as follows:-

- a) Lok Man Siddhi was a Dittha of the Postal Services Department.
- b) Nearly 82 years ago, Yog Siddhi used to go to his grandfather's office to learn the three R's. According to him, the post office was located on the second floor of the building having the golden window, adjoining the temple of Sweta Bhairab in the Hanuman Dhoka Durbar Square, Kathmandu.
- c) Under Lok Man Siddhi's jurisdiction, there were, altogether, 42 post offices in those days. Mr. Siddhi was so powerful that he was instrumental at the time of the Pajani (annual reappointment and dismissal) of all postal employees of the kingdom.
- d) Lok Man Siddhi visited China as a Bhariya Naike (the chief of porters).
- e) Lok Man Siddhi died after 9 days of illness, when Yog Siddhi was nearly 11 years old. He passed away 1½ months after his return from China.

References:

- (1) The Postal Training Centre - Hulak No. 2, Asar 2021, page 20.
- (2) Manandhar, J.B., "Goswara Hulak", (the Gorkhapatra Daily dated 16th Magh 2023 B.S.).

(With Thanks to Messrs. Yog Siddhi Gubhaju, Tej Siddhi Gubhaju, Khadga Siddhi Gubhaju and philatelist Jai Hari Jha, without whose help and information this article would not have been possible in this form.--J. B. Manandhar, the writer.)



1988 POSTAL SERVICE DATA

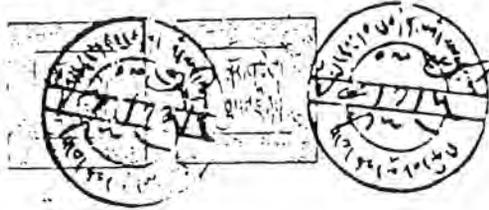
The number of district, area and village panchayat post offices was 2,022 by the end of the last fiscal year -- 31 December 1988. This represents an additional 78 post offices in the past year.

The Postal Services Department is reported to have recovered revenues totaling Rs. 67.6 million (sixty-seven point six million rupees) during the last fiscal year.--Ed.

AN UNIDENTIFIED TIBETAN ITEM?

Some months ago Mr. Surendra Lal Shrestha, Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, sent me a photocopy of a light orange perforated stamp pair on a piece of cover bearing two different violet cancels with two different dates as indicated by what appears to be Tibetan manuscript:

2/3/77
2e/19



More recently your editor received a letter from Prof. Dr. Armand E. Singer, who now holds this interesting item, in which he asks for help from our readers. He states that Mr. Shrestha said that the item came from some Tibetan refugee material. Furthermore, Prof. Singer states that the writing is in the Tibetan language but that he cannot identify any words that he knows. He observes that the dates seen on both the cancel 'bridge' and the handwritten numbers to the left of the two cancels appear to be the same, and asks: "Is the item related to some sort of revenue payment -- & is it a Bhutan rather than a Tibet item -- or, possibly, a Sikkim?"

Professor Singer would be pleased to hear from any of our members who could shed some light on this item. His address is: 248 Grandview Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505, USA. Or, if you prefer, you may write to your editor.--Ed.



"A SANCTUARY FOR THE HIMALAYA"

As your editor was putting the 'finishing touches' on this issue, the daily mail brought the September 1989 issue of the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC and the above title caught my eye, as the 'table of contents' is on the cover. Turning to page 391, I discovered that the article and the photographs were by Galen Rowell, my favorite climber-photographer-author. Anyone who is in the least concerned about the future of one of the earth's most beautiful wild areas will find the article well worth reading.--Ed.

A STEAMSHIP NAMED "NEPAUL"

Roger Skinner, our USA & Canada Representative, came across a listing for the P & O shipping line steamer "Nepaul" that ran between Japan and India. The following information came from the Hong Kong Study Circle Bulletin No. 203, page 7:

27 NEW 'SUNBURST' COVER - With reference to Mr. W. R. Wellsted's Appendix II to Bulletin 201 we quote below a possible answer to this question, put forward by our Secretary, Mr. R. Kirk:-

"Mr. Wellsted refers to a possibility that the "sunburst" could be a ship-board cancellation used between Shanghai and Yokohama. On comparing steamer dates between the two places, it could well have been used on P & O steamers."

SHANGHAI DATES

From Shanghai: 21.10.64 Uncertain.
"Nepaul" struck a rock off Yokohama
From Shanghai: 2.11.64 COREA (Christianson), Shanghai, 3.11.64, , Yokohama 8.11.64
To Shanghai: 2. 6.65 NEPAUL (Soames), Yokohama 28.5.65, Shanghai 2.6.65
To Shanghai: 2. 7.65 NEPAUL (Blake), Yokohama 27.6.65, Shanghai 2.7.65

Since the known examples have passed through the BPO's at either end, the covers were not posted in the moveable box on the quayside and the adhesives should have been cancelled at the PO. Could the sunburst have been used by the Admiralty agent to cancel adhesives missed by the relevant P.O.?

There is no reference in the P & O Nautical Reports to postal matters other than "mails left", "mails taken on board", etc., so therefore there can be no corroborations from that source. The six covers above are the only sunburst covers known to me. Should any member know of other ones, I would be willing to check them with my Shanghai-Yokohama tables."

Roger observed that it might be of interest to some of our members that the British used the name of our favourite country for its ships -- and it might explain that others thought were from Nepal?? (Does anyone out there have any covers that might relate to the subject? Roger's discovery just might provide an answer to some puzzlers.--Ed.)

POSTAGE, HULAK & DAK INSCRIPTIONS ON
NEPALESE STAMPS

--Krishna Rajbhandary

The postage stamps of Nepal, since their issuance in 1881 (circa), do not bear any inscription as to the purpose for which these stamps were released. This practice was followed for about eight decades.

In the course of time, it was realized that the purpose of the issue should be clearly stated on the stamps, following the practice of other countries, the stamps were issued with the following variations in the inscriptions:

1. POSTAGE Curiously enough, the first set of stamps issued on 22-6-1957 was the CROWN series in 12 denominations with the inscription 'POSTAGE' in Devnagari script. These are the first stamps in which mention was made of the purpose for which these stamps were released.
2. HULAK TIKAT Next, we find the stamps bearing 'HULAK TIKAT' in Devnagari script. The first specimen of such issue is the 10p Bird carrying a letter (Airmail) stamp released on 16-10-1958.
3. DAK TIKAT The third type has the inscription 'DAK TIKAT' in Devnagari and also 'Postage' in Latin. A set of 14 such stamps in different denominations was issued in 1959 on the admission of Nepal to the UPU. On 13-4-1960 the Rs. 5 Monal Bird was released with the same impression.
4. POSTAGE IN LATIN The fourth type of stamps bear the word 'Postage' in Latin -- the 10p Tribhuvan stamp was issued on 18-2-1961.
5. HULAK TIKAT/POSTAGE Lastly, we come to the stamps bearing 'POSTAGE' in Latin and also 'HULAK TIKAT' in Devnagari. The First Election stamp was issued on 1-7-1959.

Mostly, thereafter, the stamps bear the purpose for which they were issued, i.e. postage and/or hulak tikat.

(This article, published in POSTAL HIMAL No. 56, p. 50, was featured in a discussion of that issue in LINN'S STAMP NEWS -- one of the most popular weekly philatelic newspapers in the USA. The same article brought an interesting response from Nick Rhodes and which we now share with our readers.--Ed.)

21 December 1988

Dear Mr. Jones,

I was very interested to read your article in POSTAL HIMAL on your "'Bamboo' letter". I have always called such items "Palm-leaf land grants" - certainly the Nepalese call them "Tara Patra" (तारा पत्र), which translates as 'palm leaf' or 'palm letter' in my dictionary. However, bamboo is certainly more available in the Kathmandu valley than palm-trees!?

The importance of your document is that it is the latest reference I have seen to a sum of money expressed in "Shivakas", or rather "Damma Shivakas" as it is written. I had located documents with this term dated between AD 1359 and AD 1447, but none later! I have a document in my own collection dated AD 1568 with money expressed in "Tankas" - a denomination, variations of which were used from then until the end of the Malla period in AD 1768.

I specialise in the coinage of Nepal - so this new information is very welcome indeed, particularly as it indicates the purchasing power of the Dhivaka. I would now like to find out when - presumably between AD 1511 & AD 1568 - the currency system changed, and what were the relative values of the (Damona) Dhivaka, the Pla and the Dam, which were the smaller denominations at this period.

Incidentally, many congratulations on finding someone to translate the text. I have 11 such items, only one earlier than yours, but have not been able to read them fully - only dates, King's names, sums of money, etc. - words that I can make out myself.

I look forward to the next document! (Your editor has one of these items and also wrote to Ken Jones, enquiring about the possibility of getting a translation. Ken wrote back, explaining that his translator lives in Nepal and that communication by mail is slow. He assured me that new information will be passed on to our readers.--Ed.)

POSTAL GRIEVANCES

(A letter to the editor of THE RISING NEPAL -- an English language newspaper. This item was sent to us by Mr. Dhruba Rudra, first Nepal Representative for our Study Circle. The issue in which the letter appeared was dated 13 February 1983 -- more than six years ago. -- We print it now for two reasons: (1) to correlate this letter with the editorial titled "The Postal System of Nepal" in the same newspaper ca. six years later, and (2) because your editor and his wife sent some money to a grandchild about one year ago via the USA postal service but the letter & money never arrived -- apparently due to the actions of a thief who was almost certainly working in the USA within the postal service. So we observe that problems within the Nepal Postal Service are similar to problems in the USA postal service.--Ed.)

The letter reads as follows: "Good to see your page one coverage of postal employees being urged "to work honestly" (Feb. 11). The headline carried a double meaning, both applicable I think.

"With outgoing international mail, postal items have a good chance of arriving at their destinations. With incoming mail, however, it's barely more than a 60 percent chance. This statement reflects my personal experience during the past six months and is based upon concrete certainty, not speculation -- i.e., items and correspondence I know to have been sent, or have posted myself from outside the country, from the U.S., U.K., Thailand, Singapore and Australia.

"A visit to the General Post Office does not exactly inspire confidence either. People are generally served in accordance with their ability to push and shove. During rush periods, the overall impression is more that of the Bombay railway station than of a government department. Security suffers as well. The day before your story appeared, my wife's leather shoulder bag was slashed by three men while she was waiting to buy stamps in what, with some imagination, could be called a "queue." She, having quick reflexes, was lucky, and the thieves got nothing. Not so, however, a Japanese tourist five minutes earlier. She was robbed of cash, passport and personal docu-

ments only a few steps away. The post office guards' function during all this drama was apparently one of mere decorative interest.

"A clandestine visit through the back rooms and sorting areas of the post office is equally revealing. Here (allowing myself a modicum of poetic exaggeration) the scene falls somewhere between a paper shredders' convention and the aftermath of a Wall Street ticker tape parade. Letters already cancelled at their place of origin receive additional cancellations on the soles of shoes. And it is also here that much mail, inadvertently or otherwise, could go astray. Certainly nothing would have prevented me, or anyone else, from selecting valuable looking items at random and simply walking off with them.

"Being a guest in this country, I realize it is rather poor form to criticize my host government; and I do so in a spirit not of malevolence but rather in the hope that some constructive action will come of it which will, in turn, benefit the country as a whole. Nepal has many good things going for it -- but the postal system isn't one of them."

Signed, Howard R. Houck
Thamel, Feb 12

NEPAL

NUMBER OF POST OFFICES BY ZONES
1983/84 TO 1986/87

ZONE NAME	83/84	84/85	85/86	Nov87	# Chg
Mechi	120	123	123	124	4
Koshi	169	173	175	177	8
Sagarmatha	135	139	147	147	12
Janakpur	166	170	179	178	12
Bagmati	215	217	234	237	22
Narayani	137	141	140	142	5
Lumbini	152	152	162	162	10
Gandaki	158	164	170	170	12
Dhawalagiri	97	101	105	106	9
Rapti	105	108	110	109	4
Bheri	86	90	94	91	5
Karnali	67	69	75	75	8
Seti	96	100	101	101	5
Mahakali	118	121	125	125	7

NEPAL Totals 1821 1868 1940 1944 123

This represents a 7 % growth for the three year period.
Source: Dept of Postal Services, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1988. Statistical Pocket Book, Nepal 1988.
Courtesy of Sidhartha M. Tuladhar.

TIBETAN BI-LINGUAL POSTMARKS

September 1st, 1986 was the 21st anniversary of the declaration of autonomy of the Tibet Region of the People's Republic of China.

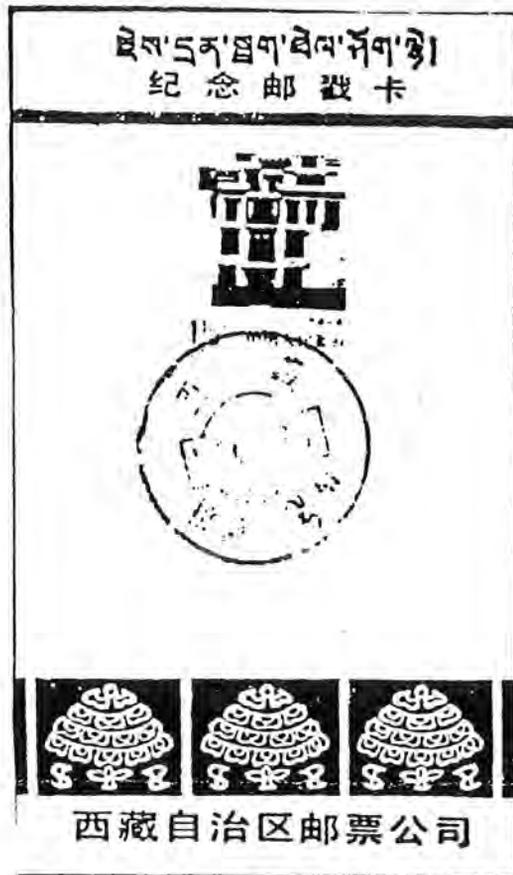
The "Tibet Stamp Company" in Lhasa produced for that occasion a set of 130 cards with the bi-lingual date stamps of February 28, 1987 of each of the following types of Tibetan Post Offices:

- 7 District Head Offices
- 71 Country Post Offices
- 5 Country Sub-Post Offices
- 37 Postal Stations
- 10 Postal Agencies

The cards measure 4 3/16" by 2 5/8" and are franked with the 1 1/2 fen stamp of the R.23 series depicting a Tibetan style building (see illustration).

The set of cards is obtainable for US\$10.00 in banknotes from:

XIZANG DI MIN YOU
LHASA, TIBET A.R.
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF CHINA.



The 7 Postal Districts are:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------|----------------------|
| 1) Lhsashi | with 19 offices | - | Head Office in Lhasa |
| 2) Xigazediqu | " 26 | " - " | " Xigaze |
| 3) Nagqudiqu | " 16 | " - " | " Nagqu |
| 4) Nyingchidiqu | " 23 | " - " | " Nyingchi |
| 5) Qamdodiqu | " 19 | " - " | " Qamdo |
| 6) Shannandiqu | " 18 | " - " | " Shannan |
| 7) Ngaridiqu | " 8 | " - " | " Shiqanhe |

FDR

BHUTAN

(Our thanks to Mr. S. L. Shrestha, Nepal Representative for our Study Circle, for this one-page entry (p. 384) in THE STATESMAN'S YEAR-BOOK, 1890. Although this was written about 100 years ago, much of its contents would be about the same today. Don't you agree?--Ed.)

BHUTAN. An independent State in the Eastern Himalayas, between 26 45' and 28 N. latitude, and between 89 and 92 E. longitude, bordered on the northeast and west by Tibet and on the south by British India. Extreme length from east to west 160 miles; extreme breadth 90 miles.

The original inhabitants of Bhutan, the Tephus, were subjugated about two centuries ago by a band of military colonists from Tibet. In 1774 the East India Company concluded a treaty with the ruler of Bhutan, but since then repeated outrages on British subjects committed by the Bhutan hill men have led from time to time to punitive measures, usually ending in the temporary or permanent annexation of various dwarfs or submontane tracts with passes leading to the hills. In November 1864 the eleven western or Bengal dwarfs were thus annexed. The Bhutanese at first acquiesced in the annexation, but in January 1865 attacked an English outpost, and it was found necessary to send an expedition into their country. Peace being restored, a treaty was signed (November 1865) by which the rulers of Bhutan receive a subsidy of Rs. 50,000, on condition of their good behaviour. This gives the Indian Government an effective control over them, while the occupation of two strong positions at Buxa and Dewangiri, within a few miles of their frontier, serves as a material guarantee against further aggression.

The government of Bhutan resembles that of Tibet, the chief authority being nominally divided between the Deb Raja, or secular head, on the one hand, and the Dharma Raja, or spiritual head of the State, on the other. Practically, the Deb Raja is a mere instrument in the hands of powerful barons (penlops and jungpens), while the Dharma Raja is only supposed to be concerned with the spiritual welfare of his people. In theory the Deb Raja is supposed to be the incarnation of his predecessor, and is chosen in infancy. The most power-

ful chieftains of Bhutan are the penlops of Tongsa, Paro, and Taka, and the jungpens of Thimbu, Punakha, and Angduphorang.

Area about 16,800 square miles; population about 20,000 in 1864, but now much larger.

The chief towns of Bhutan are Punakha, the capital, a place of great natural strength; Tashichhu Jong, Paro, Angduphorang, Tongsa, Tarka, and Biaka.

The people are nominally Buddhists, but their religious exercises consist chiefly in the propitiation of evil spirits and the recitation of sentences from the Tibetan Scriptures. Tashichhu Jong, the chief monastery in Bhutan, contains 300 priests.

The military resources of the country are insignificant. Beyond the guards for the defence of the various castles, there is nothing like a standing army. In 1864 it was estimated at 6,000.

The chief productions of Bhutan are rice, Indian corn, millet, two kinds of cloth, musk, ponies, chowries, and silk. Muzzle-loading guns and swords of highly tempered steel are manufactured.

The trade between British India and Bhutan amounted in 1888-89 to Rs. 153,000 imports from and Rs. 252,000 exports to India. The chief imports are tobacco, European cotton goods, betel-nuts, and rice: the chief exports, wool, musk, ponies, and caoutchouc.

See Report on Explorations in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet, 1856-86. Edited by Lieut.-Colonel G. Strahan. Dehra Dum, 1889.



RECENT BHUTAN EMISSIONS

The Bhutan Philatelic Bureau has sent us details on three sets of stamps issued in recent months. They include:

1. WORLD AIDS DAY -- a set of three issued on 1.12.89
2. SEOUL OLYMPICS ISSUE -- a set of eight plus two souvenir sheets. All items available perf. and imperf. with issue date on 15.2.89
3. TITIAN (GREAT ARTS) ISSUE -- a set of 12 denominations plus twelve souvenir sheets -- all issued on 15.2.89



THE POSTAL SYSTEM OF NEPAL

(This Editorial appeared in THE RISING NEPAL -- the English language daily -- for 20 February 1989, and was sent to us by our faithful Representative for Nepal, Mr. S. L. Shrestha.--Ed.)

At a time when the many means of world communication are advancing at an unprecedented pace, there can be no excuse for postal services to lag behind. The postal system is a relatively cheaper means of communication and hence its popularity as a common means. This system should, in its turn, justify its avid acceptance by the people by striving towards further reliability. The postal system needs to stubbornly discourage activities which could work to diminish the people's faith in the system, and should be effortful in promoting efficiency, as a close synonym of 'the postal system' is 'efficiency'. The postal service in Nepal has come a long way since its inception. How far this has been possible because of the efforts of our postal system and how much is the result of external elements such as the development in world transportation systems could be an interesting subject for study. However, the fact of the matter is that the postal service has made a positive contribution to the country's communication sector. The distribution of letters has been somewhat encouraging compared to the case of a few years ago. The introduction of services such as stamp cancellation should go a long way in boosting the public's confidence in the postal system and its efforts to strive for betterment. However, this is not to say that all is well on the postal front. Instances of theft of mail, loss of letters and inconsistencies in the distribution of mail persist, which are to the detriment of the postal system. Complaints relating to such cases should be taken up by the postal authorities and remedial measures taken effectively. Actions taken by the authorities against people within the postal system who were found responsible for theft of mail and other unscrupulous acts are indeed laudable. Such actions should be taken in the future also with sternness and earnestness so as to weed out all elements within the postal sys-

tem who work towards bringing disrepute to the system. Also, the provision made some months ago to open some district on holidays can also be described as a step aimed at enhancing efficiency.

The poste restante section of post offices has been providing valuable service to tourists. The contribution of this section to tourism development, however modest this may be, cannot be negated. The post office could work towards further streamlining this service with the suggestions of the tourists. An area where the postal system needs to focus attention is to further develop the efficiency of the postmen. Sometimes letters which have arrived at the post office are received by the addressee only after a gap of some days. This tendency is seen even in cases where the address is easily accessible within the city. Measures should be devised to have letters promptly delivered, and this would go a long way in boosting public confidence in the post office and also in further developing an important element in the communication sector which the postal system undisputedly is.



AN UNUSUAL PUBLICATION!

Julie Marshall, a reference librarian at La Trobe University, has sent us a copy of her article titled "The Postal History and Early Stamps of Nepal". This interesting and informative article appeared in The Australian Philatelist, Volume 1, No. 2, November/December 1987 (pp. 13-20). The article is lavishly illustrated (some in color) and we have selected page 14 as our SHOWCASE item for this issue. (See next page.) Note the concise but thorough descriptions of the items on this page -- characteristic of the entire article. -- Julie mentioned that this new journal discontinued the use of color in illustrations after this issue -- due to costs -- something this editor can appreciate!

Reading the introduction we learn that she "is the author of an extensive annotated bibliography on British relations with the Indian-Tibetan border region; and that "Her collection of Nepal was awarded a silver medal at Stampex in Adelaide" (in 1986). Congratulations to you Julie.--Ed.

SHOWCASE



1852 cover to India with circular seal of Commander-in-Chief Krishna Bahadur with an early postmark of the British Residency Post Office at Kathmandu. The seal is inscribed in Persian, Devanagari and English.



सलि श्री प्रमहा राजा वि...
 आगे काजी बीर केशव रणोडे प्रति डिस्लिवाले बैद्य गजपति एय मिश्र के ६३ सा
 ल डुनु प्राञ्जवादि बिगहा २०० बैरानी बिगहा ३०० आ बिगहा ५०० कुल विनाग
 गीब कल्याको तेसजगा को साद जि लैवा एव सीमा व कल्या का आवादि बैरानी वि
 गहा ३०० काजी बिगहा २०० को सादे धेत ४ अ आ रि स मे त कुल बिगहा दि
 व क्यो जगा हे रि चेत एव आ रि स मे त को को र कि सा ध सि मा नाल गा ए दे मे
 ड व दि न मो जी प्र मो हे ता वा पत्र ग दि व क्यो को र सि स ख त प ८६७ साल मि
 ति... मार्ग सि... वदि... १ ऐज...

Royal document catiled by the Tulak Service dated November 1811 with the red seal of Girbana Yuddha Bikram Shah, King of Nepal from 1799-1819. It concerns the granting of land to Kazi Bir Keshar Pandey.