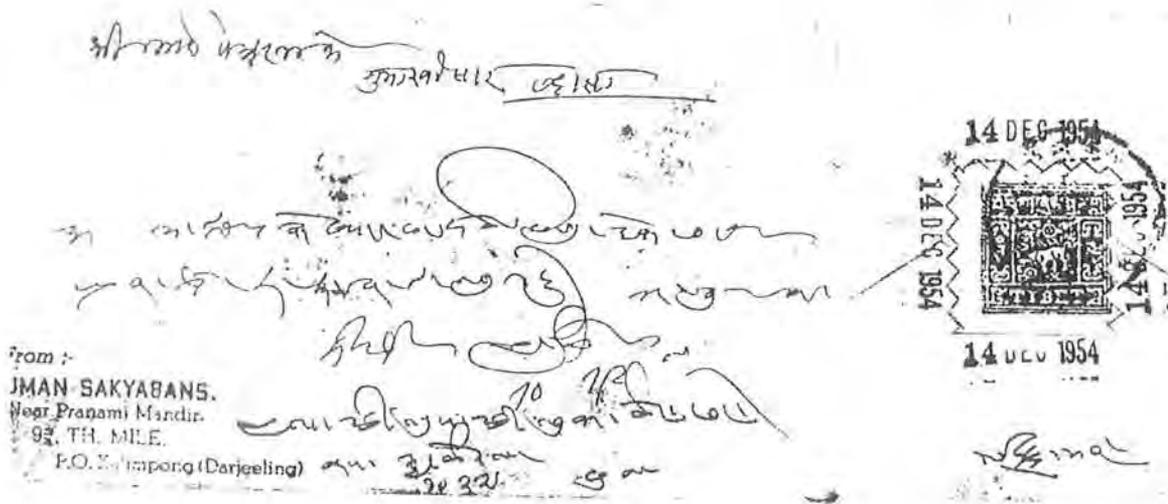


# Postal Himal

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE

NTPSC Homepage (courtesy of Rainer Fuchs) <http://fuchs-online.com/ntpssc>



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## Officer's Corner

We had a well-attended, most spirited meeting in Washington, Monday, May 29 (0900-1200), as part of Washington 2006 (in itself a magnificent exhibit with some 65,000 pages of exhibits), as satisfactory a get-together as any I can recall (Toronto, San Francisco, London). We had, as well, a shared table (with the India Study Circle) and a very attractive one-frame display (thanks to Alan Warren, as one of the many duties he performed for us and the show in general - he was literally everywhere all day long; and Roger Skinner, equally busy out West and thus unable to attend). The meeting attracted some 30 members and guests and featured a talk by Geoffrey Flack on his unique find of the Tibet 1912 proofs.

We brought in three new members and possibly two more. Exhibit-wise our Society had its share of entries, all of whom won awards (see below - editor).

I sat behind our table during almost the entire week's exhibit and never got bored. We enjoyed a pretty constant flow of traffic of

information seekers, possible new members, old friends meeting old friends, the presence of Geoff Flack (with goodies) and Alan Warren (when he could spare a moment), your editor in person (bringing in a huge reproduction of the cover of PH #126) and Danny Wong (exuberant as always), among others. Most of us (including me) rarely left the floor, despite all of D.C.'s famous attractions and non philatelic exhibits (I didn't even do the National Stamp Exhibit, though the Show arranged for a bus).

The Association of Collecting Clubs (info@collectors.org or 18222 Flower Hill Way #299, Gaithersburg MD 20879) issues flyers, promotes club interaction, build coalitions and networking. We're a member. Do we want to become active? Will participation result in more information, more membership for NTPSC, rewarding contacts, or just more organization clutter? There may be a need for an ACC. Please send you thoughts. Don't forget that we already have our own website.

A. E. S.

## Editor's Ramblings

I hope that everyone enjoyed the last issue with the color illustrations. I plan to use color, on occasion, in future articles, but for now the use of color for the entire issue would be prohibitive.

By the time that you get this issue, your editor will be visiting India, Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand and Cambodia. It has been awhile since I have

been there and I am anxious to see the changes which have taken place. This will be my first visit to Bhutan, Thailand and Cambodia.

As you will see on page 3 we are in fairly good financial condition.

Welcome our newest lifetime member, **Danny Kin Chi Wong**.

## CONGRATULATIONS to our members for winning the following awards:

At Washington 2006 in May

**Wolfgang Hellrigl** Gold and a special prize for his exhibit "Jammu and Kashmir 1860-1883". Also Gold for a literature entry *The A.I.E.P. Handbook of Philatelic Expertising*.

**Leo Martyn** Gold for his exhibit "The Development of Nepal's Postal System 1775-1911"

**Danny Wong** Large Vermeil for his exhibit "Tibet—A Postal History"

**Armand Singer** Vermeil for his exhibit "Postal History of Tibet"

**Kedar Pradhan** Vermeil for his exhibit "Revenues of Nepal"

**Dick van der Wateren** Vermeil for his exhibit "Nepal Revenues"

**Keshab Man Mulmi** Large Silver for his exhibit "Postal History of Nepal"

At the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition in February

**Paul C. Hager** Gold for his exhibit "The Pashupati Era of Nepal"

## NTPSC Meeting at Washington 2006

Alan Warren

President Armand Singer introduced several of the officers and directors present in the room. Danny Wong was presented with a prize for having traveled the furthest to the show, of those in the room. A suggestion was made that we consider expanding the Himalayan areas of interest to places such as Jammu and Kashmir including Poonch. There were several exhibits of Jammu and Kashmir were on the show floor.

Richard Hanchett, Editor of *Postal Himal*, has analyzed printing costs for the journal and advised that we cannot yet afford color

illustrations throughout, but would continue to use color on the front cover. On occasion a page or two of color may also be included inside the journal. It was also suggested that we have an annual index and an updated cumulative index. Another project would be to make the back issues available on a CD.

Several members provided show-and-tell items which were circulated. The session began with Armand Singer showing a telegram from the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama.

## Philately in 2004

Nicholas Rhodes

When leafing through an old issue of The Philatelic Journal of India, (Vol. VIII No. 9) published in Calcutta in September 1904, I noted a spoof article entitled "Philately in 2004", which gives some insight, not only into the great interest in Tibet generated in Calcutta at the time when the Younghusband Expedition was actually in Lhasa, but it also shows the complete lack of knowledge and the general suspicions about Tibet at that time. The article was written as a report on "the 857th meeting of the Imperial Philatelic Society, London, held in the Council Chamber of the Hall of the Society, Kingsway, Aldwych, London, on Friday, the 1st April 2004". Readers of *Postal Himal* may find the following extract of this 'Report' amusing:

"Professor K. P. Jones, M.A., then read a paper on the first issue of British Thibet. This paper, which evidenced the commanding erudition of its author was listened to with marked attention and will be published in extenso next month. The first issue of Thibet has long been a favourite study of the learned professor, and it may be remembered that it was first he who pointed out that the multiple Yak's head watermark is lacking or reversed (probably by "yakcident" as he laughingly observed) in the last three stamps in the third row of the left-hand pane. The issue is that bearing a portrait, a bearded one, of the

Grand Lama. The Grand Lama, Llama or Llarmour, has ever been a subject of controversy. Even now there is little of him known with certainty. The D.N.B. is silent about him, as is also Notes and Queries. Professor Jones' paper, however, has opened up clues which may possibly remove the mystery surrounding his personality from the romantic obscurity of that enveloping the "Man-with-the-iron-mask" into the clear light of day of the twenty-first century. The Llarmour has all along supposed to possess a dual personality, mythical or actual. Professor Jones has proved from the records of the Philatelic Society of India that still exist in the Imperial Library of Calcutta that he had at least two sets of initials. He seems to have flourished with Victoria until the last year of whose august reign all philatelic traces of him (or should it be them?) disappear. There are indications that a Councilor of Bengal flourished as a Llarmour about the time of the first treaty of Lhasa; he is described as HONBLE (a term difficult to interpret), and about the same time there are disconnected references to him (or them?) as a "prince of China" (whatever that may mean). Both the philologist and the philatelist should make a point of carefully studying the professor's enlightening train of reasoning on an obtuse and difficult subject.

NTPSC Statement of Accounts for the year 01 January 2005 - 31 December 2005  
**Colin Hepper**

**Statement of Accounts - USA (\$)**

	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Subscriptions	687.50	
Transfer from UK Account	902.20	Postal Himal Printing 776.48
Miscellaneous	110.00	Postal Himal Postage 242.82
PH back issues	1.60	Miscellaneous 132.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1701.30</b>	<b>Total Expenditure 1151.30</b>
Balance (Income - Expenditure)	550.00	
Balance Brought Forward	883.09	
Savings Account	1042.27	
<b>Total (Balance + Savings)</b>	<b>2475.36</b>	

**Statement of Accounts - Europe (£)**

**Current Account**

Carried Forward	1171.04	Postage 3.30
Subscriptions	191.00	ABPS Subscriptions 15.00
<b>Business Account</b>		Transfer Funds to Roger Skinner 500.00
Carried Forward	5085.12	Misc. Transfer to Roger Skinner 60.00
Bank Interest	89.89	
<b>Total Income (Current + Business)</b>	<b>6537.05</b>	<b>Total Expenditures 578.30</b>

Balance (Income - Expenditures) 5958.75

**Combined Totals (£'s)**

USA converted to £'s 1375.20  
 Europe 5958.75

**Grand Total 7333.95**

## Book Review - The Modern Postmarks of Nepal

Armand E. Singer

Colin Hepper, *The Modern Postmarks of Nepal* (Torrevieja, Alicante, Spain: The Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle, 2005). 265 pp.

Other than the pioneer *Postage Stamps of Nepal* by Smythies and Dawson (Lahore, India, 1945), updated by them and Haverbeck in 1950(?) and again by Haverbeck himself alone (New York. Collectors Club, 1962[?]) as a hardback, Nepalese philatelic handbooks lagged behind Tibet's. Then came the indispensable *Native Postmarks of Nepal* by Wolfgang Hellrigl and Hepper, the former mostly taking care of the classic examples (1879-1949) and Colin the more recent ones, Wolfgang revised his part of the book as *A Catalogue of Nepalese Postmarks (1879-1935)*, a paperback in German and English (Wiesbaden, West Germany, 1982). *The Congress Book 1996* has an article by Dr. Hellrigl on "The Early Registration Markings and Labels of Nepal" (pp. 45-56). What with Hellrigl/Vignola's *Classic Stamps of Nepal* (1984), Hellrigl's later *Nepal Postal History* (1991, which deals only with the British-Indian system (it just won gold at Washington 2006), Colin's fine study of *The Sri Pashupati Issues of Nepal* (1982), Dick van der Wateren's books on Nepalese postal stationary (1995) and its

revenues (2002), Nepal has long since caught up with Tibet. Other than a promised volume by Hellrigl on the native Nepal Postal History, we could ask, what's left? We would be wrong.

The present exhaustive, beautifully printed and bound volume, updating postmarks from 1949 to the present is proving to be as necessary as its 1978 predecessor.

Dr. Hellrigl in his foreword praises its remarkable total of some 1650 postmarks. My own count came to the even more remarkable 1780. Color is not infrequently employed. There is a government list of Nepalese towns (among them, villages and sparse settlements) of some 850. Not all seem to have a post office. In short, as Hepper admits (p. 5), these totals aren't and can't be complete, however impressive. They do give us a cancel volume for the future, absent only a good map (as he and Hellrigl had for the 1978 volume: 2-page spread, though only 85 towns are marked). With this minor omission, I can think of nothing depreciatory to say about the whole enterprise, so well-rewarded, a true labor of love. Not inexpensive, but to specialists worth every penny.

Editor's Note: *The Modern Postmarks of Nepal* can be ordered in North America by sending a check for 95 US \$ to Roger Skinner, 1020 Covington Road, Los Altos CA 94024-5003. All others can send a check for £45 or €65 either to the Nepal & Tibet Study Circle account or directly to Colin Hepper. Colin's address is 12 Charnwood Close, Peterborough, Cambs. PE2 9BZ, UK. The Nepal & Tibet Study Circle account is: Bank: Lloyds TSB., Sort Code: 30-96-60, Account No.: 02693386, BIC: LOYDGB21157, IBAN: GB31 LOYD 3096 6002 6933 86

The prices have been lowered to reflect the lower cost of posting the book from the UK instead of from Spain.

## More on Nepal's New Post Card

Jaya Hari Jha

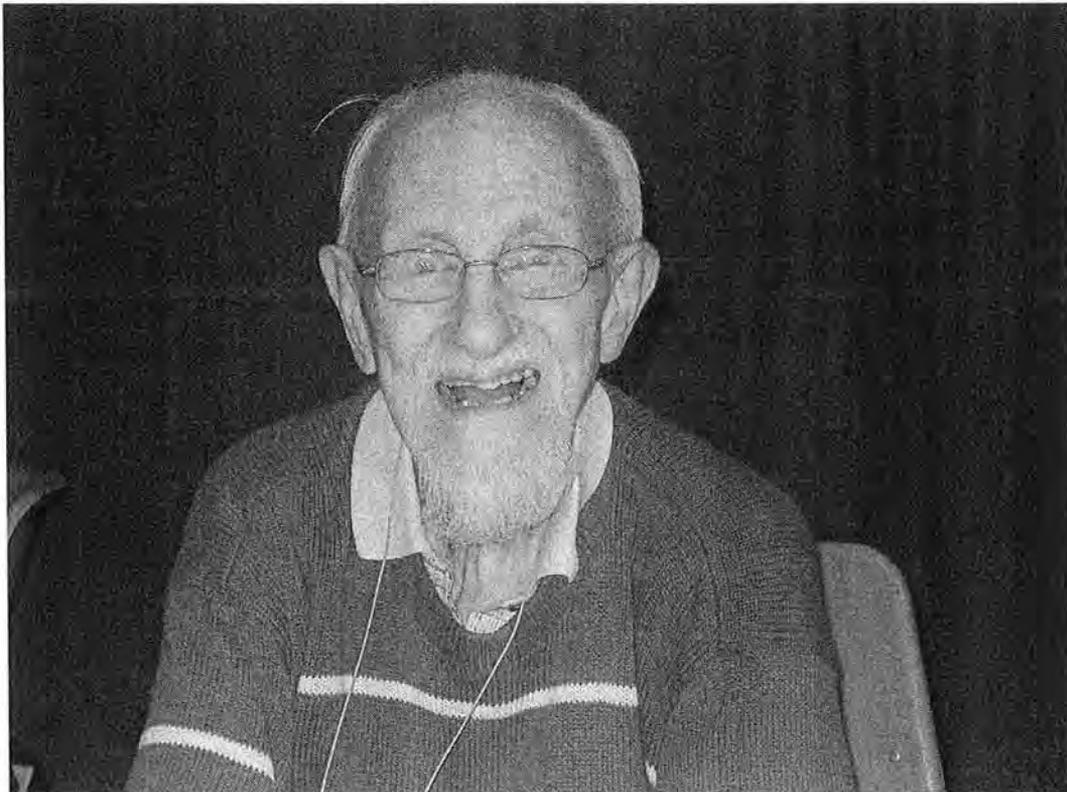
from Jaya Hari Jha following up on the article by Surendra Lal Shrestha in PH 126 page 8

After seeing the article by Surendra Lal Shrestha regarding the fact that only 8,972 copies of the new post card were available, I recalled reading in a news piece in the national paper that only 8,900 copies of the post card were issued. This difference in the existing number of post cards struck me as unusual and I decided to investigate.

I went to the Postal Service Department and contacted Mr. Dipak Raj Pandey, the Section Chief of the Publication Section of the Department. He referred to the Department file in question and a different story came to the

fore.

The Department had originally placed an order for 150,000 copies of the post card with the Government Printing Press. The Press however could not print the required number of post cards because it did not have enough paper of the requisite quality. So if the Press had printed the entire consignment we would have had post cards of varying paper quality in the market. Therefore the Press printed and delivered only 8,963 copies to the Department! The Department in turn issued the same number of post cards to the market.



Dr. Wolfgang Hellrigl sent the above picture of our President Armand E. Singer. He took the picture at Washington 2006, probably at our Society table.

(Does anyone know who has the group picture taken at our meeting? If anyone has it, please send a copy to me. - Editor)

## Modern Mountaineering Covers

Alan Warren

With the waiting line of trekkers wanting to ascend Mount Everest and other Himalayan peaks, it seems that never a day goes by without someone attempting to reach these lofty summits. Many of these expeditions sell souvenir items to raise funds either for the ventures or for other needy organizations.

Figure 1 is a rather busy item that is a first day cover of the United Kingdom's first class value from the Extreme Endeavour self-adhesive booklet issued April 29, 2003. The stamp depicts Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, and the pictorial cancel marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first ascent of Everest.

The cover was then taken on a 2003 trek called the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Everest North Ridge Expedition of 2003 in support of King George's Fund for Sailors. A label in the lower left corner indicates that the Nepal/China border was closed as part of the program to control the spread of SARS disease and the label is signed by trek leader Cdr. S. Jackson of the Royal Navy.

The other signatures on the cover are those of Jackson's team members. The cover also bears two Nepalese stamps cancelled at Lukla.

Figure 2 is another first day cover, this time of the miniature sheet marking the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Horticultural Society. It was cancelled May 25, 2004 with a pictorial cancel in silver ink that reproduces the Mount Everest label and celebrates the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Captain John Noel's 1924 Mount Everest Expedition.

There are several other noteworthy features about this cover. An imperforate reproduction of the blue Mount Everest label is tied with a red 2-ring handstamp reading, "Mount Everest Expedition 1924-2004 / Rongbuk Glacier Base Camp." At the lower left is a colored cachet reproducing a photo taken by Captain Noel of the expedition's crew and their tents in the forest on their approach to Everest in 1924.

The final touching elements are the autographs of Noel's daughter Sandra Noel and George Mallory's son John Mallory.



Figure 1

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING ANNIVERSARIES  
2004

Celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Capt. John Noel's  
1924 Mount Everest Expedition Postcard and Label



Captain Noel's Camera in the Forest, from a photograph taken on the Expedition's approach to Everest, 1924.  
© The John Noel Photographic Collection

'Royal Horticultural Society 1804-2004' Miniature Sheet, issued 25<sup>th</sup> May 2004.

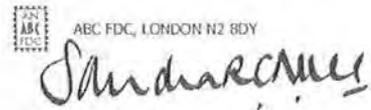


Figure 2



FDC courtesy of  
HMG/N Postal  
Services  
Department

Technical Details

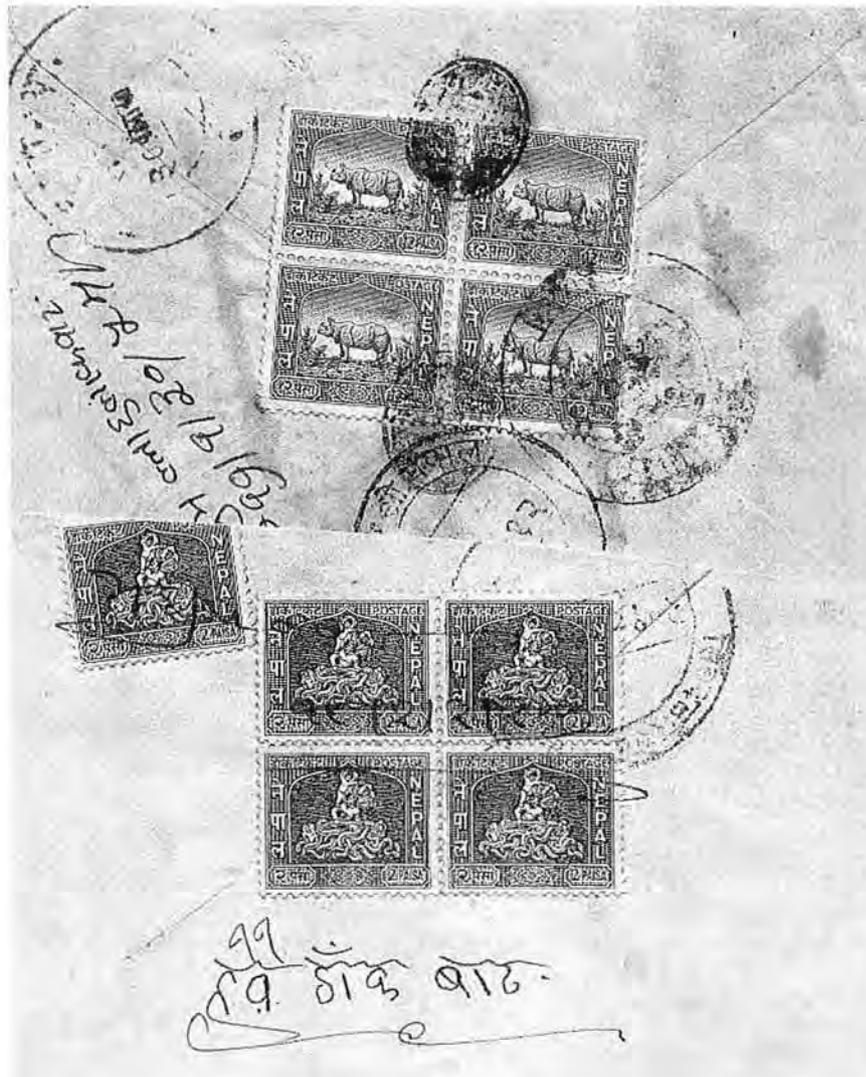
Subject	Bio-diversity series	Quantity	One million
Denomination	Rs 10.00 each	Format	Square
Color	Four plus Phosphor print	Paper	Security stamp paper with fiber
Composition	50 stamps per sheet	Designer	Mohan N. Rana
Size	32 x 32 mm	Printer	Walsall Security Printers, UK
Process	Offset Lithography		

## Interesting Covers from my Collection

Colin Hepper

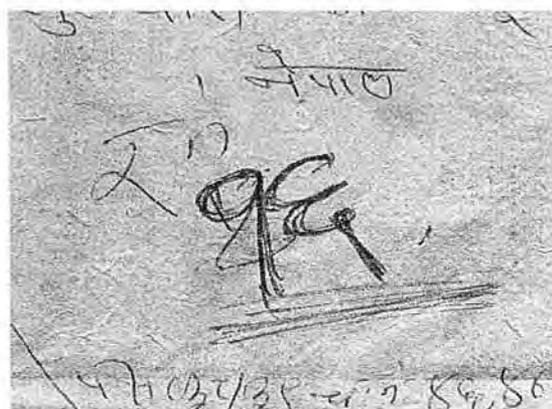
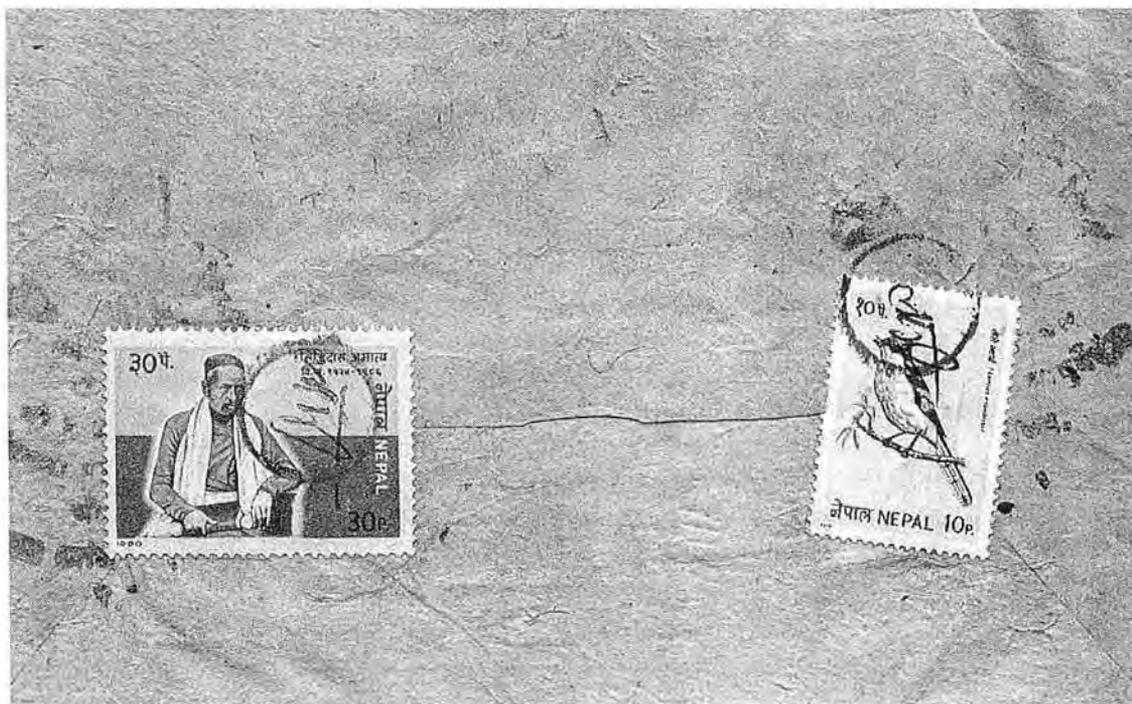
Two letters from Madhumalla Sub Post Office in the Morang District, both manuscript cancelled. The top letter has the date written along the lower left corner 17/1/30 = May 1960. The stamps have been 'tied' to the envelope with the postal officials seal.

The lower letter is dated 18/2/2 = May 1961 with the stamps manuscript cancelled, showing that a year later they still had no official cancellor.



Rumallamikade – Dadeldhura

The illustrated registered cover is from Rumallamikade in the Dadeldhura District. It is undated but the stamps used were issued in 1979/1980 so it can be assumed that it was probably sent in 1980. The post office does not appear to have any cancellors of any description as the two stamps have been cancelled with a small circle into which the postal official has signed his name. On the reverse there is a simple hand written R16 for the registration number.



## Tibetan Proofs

### Wolfgang Hellrigl

The newly discovered Tibetan proofs described in the last issue of *Postal Himal* by Geoffrey Flack and Armand Singer, are indeed a most remarkable find. In particular, the dated piece of paper bearing three impressions in violet, each in a different denomination, is a fabulous item. Since each of the three clichés in question is slightly different from any of the 12 clichés of the issued sheet, its philatelically correct term is essay, or die-essay, not proof. This in no way detracts from their importance.

I assume that the engraver prepared these single dies in order to illustrate his interpretation of the original design. After the work had been approved - we now even know the date of approval, 20 April 1912, - he went on to engrave the plates for the respective sheetlets of twelve.

A special point of interest is that the 1 sang was one of the three die-essays of April 1912. The question now is: was the 1 sang plate actually engraved in 1912, too? If it was, then it was presumably stored in the treasury, only to be recalled around 1950, for the well-known

printings. In my opinion, it would be wrong to use the existence of the die-essay of the 1 sang in order to prove that it must have been issued together with the basic five denominations.

There are just too many facts that speak against an issue of the 1 sang as early as 1912:

The "Wilson" covers, and similar philatelic correspondence, are all neatly franked with the full set of the basic five stamp, but not the 1 sang.

The same applies to numerous early "sets" stuck to pieces of paper, and cancelled to order.

No genuine commercial covers franked with the 1 sang stamp is known prior to the 1950s.

In this context I should like to quote A. C. Waterfall (1981 edn., page 80): "Was [the 1 sang] a reversal to the 1912 type? - Or was the plate engraved many years earlier, lost, and found, and brought into service again about 1950? It was never contemporary with the other 5 values."

## New Beijing to Lhasa Train

**based on Alan Warren and several news articles - ed.**

The train from Beijing to Lhasa makes its final climb into nosebleed territory, pulled by three locomotives instead of the usual one. Even though some oxygen is pumped into the train cars as they roll through Tibet, the air inside has 30% less oxygen than it did some 2,100 miles ago, back in Beijing. As the express passes over its highest point - the 16,640-foot Tangula Pass - many on board begin to feel it.

Dozens of passengers strap on oxygen masks - some experience bloody noses. Pens spit their ink and potato chip bags burst their seams with

the dramatic drop in atmospheric pressure.

For those looking for a novel way to visit one of the world's more remote corners, the new express train to Tibet offers an extraordinary trip. From the ubiquitous oxygen outlets to the vacuum flush toilets, from the flat-screen TVs in first class to the tracks anchored in the shifting permafrost, the "Sky Train" as China calls it, is a marvel of modern engineering.

The Chinese government, which spent \$4.2 billion to build the train line, says that it will invigorate Tibet's economy. Critics say that it threatens to crush a Tibetan culture already

weakened by 56 years of Chinese rule.

Many passengers on the first train from Beijing, which departed July 1 and arrived in Lhasa 48 hours later, seemed content to take in the views and overlook the controversy. They gazed out the train's windows (tinted to protect passengers from the harsh ultraviolet rays) mouths agape and eyes wide, drinking in the scenery.

Tibetan antelopes, wild donkeys, yaks and sheep grazed on wide open plains carpeted with spongy, bright green turf. In the distance, mountains rose up to the sky, their caps blindingly white with snow.

Only very occasionally were there signs of human life - a herder's brown tent with a puff of smoke, a Chinese soldier standing guard along the tracks, a child in bright Tibetan dress waving madly as the 16-car train zipped past at 60 mph.

This pristine desolation is why many Tibetan rights groups and environmentalists have called on travelers to boycott the train. They say it will pollute the environment and threaten the wildlife. China says the line will help double Tibet's annual tourism income to \$725 million by 2010. Many Tibetans seem conflicted over the railway. The exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, has said that it remains to be seen how the railway will be used and whether it will bring real benefit to Tibetans.

On the environmental front, Beijing has earmarked \$190 million for preservation projects along the railway and employed special technology to help protect the delicate permafrost that lies under much of the last third of the rail line.

The locomotives and cars have been especially designed so that the fine dust of the Tibetan plateau does not get into the wheel bearings or the engines of the locomotives or into the cars themselves.

Engineers designed sunshades, cooling pipes and loose gravel beds that conduct heat away from the ground to ensure the rail would stay frozen and stable.

The cooling pipes - resembling big metal golf tees - stick up on either side of the tracks for

much of the journey. They use solar energy to turn liquid ammonia into a gas, chilling the ground like a tiny refrigerator or air conditioner.

The trains' squat toilets might give some travelers pause, but it is cleaner and more spacious than the average Chinese train, and offers at least one handicapped facility with a seat-style toilet.

"It meets Western standards, it's fairly clean," said passenger Liu Yuejiang, a research scientist from Gaithersburg, Maryland, who works at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in Bethesda.

Those considering a trip should go soon. Chinese engineers say global warming could threaten the permafrost and integrity of the rail line in as little as 50 years.

Trains leave daily from Beijing, and every other day from Chengdu in Sichuan and Lanzhou in Gansu. One-way tickets range from \$40 for a seat to \$140 for a bunk in a four-bed cabin. There are rumors that a deluxe train will be operational in a year or so - prices for that service have yet to be determined.

Oxygen is provided on the train but tourists are advised to bring their own basic medications for headache, diarrhea and minor ailments. Extra water and some high-energy snacks are also a good idea. Because of the supplemental oxygen, smoking on the train is forbidden for the last 12 hours of the 48-hour trip.

The train has power outlets and spotty mobile phone service between Beijing and Lhasa. The disk drives of some laptop computers and other portable electronic devices may crash at high altitudes and data could be lost.

*Riding the Iron Rooster By Train Through China* by Paul Theroux remains an excellent introduction to the delights and peculiarities of Chinese trains even though it was written nearly 20 years ago.

## The Zig-Zags of the 1950s

Jeremy Brewer

When Tibet issued a new set of stamps in 1933 the very first printings were perforated. Almost immediately perforating was discontinued and all subsequent printings, right up until the last of the 1950s, were printed imperforate. One can find later sheets that have been perforated, but not by the Tibet Government. These would have been prepared by "enterprising" traders selling them to unsuspecting (probably) collectors who wanted examples of perforated stamps. Fortunately, only later settings, papers and shades were employed so that they are quite distinct from the genuine early perforated issues. I have, by the way, never seen these privately perforated stamps used on commercial covers.

During the early 1950s small quantities of stamps with zig-zag "perforations" having been cut with pinking shears (large scissors with serrated edges for cutting cloth) began to appear. I have seen the odd sheet cut around the sheet edges only with pinking shears and a few loose stamps cut on one, several or all sides; also, a few covers prepared specially by favour for collectors and therefore "philatelic" only.

Waterfall, in his "Postal History of Tibet" Chapter 9, under the sub-heading "Perforations from 1933 and 1950" has nothing complimentary to say about these stamps which he groups generally as roulettes. He is evidently dubious regarding their appearance on so-called commercial covers and notes all were USED from Lhasa. I interpret this as meaning that they were all CANCELLED with the Lhasa postmark, which is not necessarily the same as being used.

The general assumption has been, then, that any stamps cut with pinking shears and affixed to covers were merely to satisfy the whim of collectors. However, over the years I have been gathering together covers from the Tejman Sakyabans correspondence from which it does appear that stamps cut from sheets by that

merchant's employees (not by the postmaster) with pinking shears have been genuinely used on his mail. Tejman was one of the Lhasa Newars conducting business during the 1950s at the Indian end of the trading line between Kalimpong and Lhasa. Kalimpong, of course, was a major trading center for goods traveling to and from Tibet. Pinking shears was a standard piece of equipment of those Lhasa Newars involved in the textile trade embracing as it did cottons, woolens, velvets, silks and so on.

The portion on the correspondence studied here is all ingoing emanating from Kalimpong. It is addressed in Tibetan to Pancha Tatna at Gumakhangsar in the business area of Barkhor in Lhasa. As well as covers bearing the zig-zag stamps there are others franked with imperforate values. During a period of about two years, from May 1953 to March 1955, I have recorded 18 covers of the Tejman firm. Of these 7 are franked with imperforate Tibetan values and 11 with the zig-zag stamps; the latter bear either the 4 tankas value or pairs of the 2 tankas value. The 4 tankas stamps, both imperforates and zig-zag are printed in the Waterfall listed colours green, dull green or bright yellow-green on brown paper from setting II and the 2 tankas stamps are printed in bright orange from setting IIa.

Some of this mail from Kalimpong is franked with both Indian and Tibetan stamps, the rest is franked with Tibetan stamps only.

The envelopes bearing Indian stamps are addressed in English and Nepalese to the shop at Gyantse of the merchant Indra man who undertakes responsibility for handling the exchange between the Indian and Tibetan post offices at Gyantse. At Kalimpong they have also been addressed in Tibetan with the final destination at Lhasa; additionally they bear the Tibetan date of mailing often together with the English date, which correspond to the date on

the postmark of the Indian office of dispatch. Affixed to these covers, applied likewise at Kalimpong, is either a 4 tankas stamp or a pair of 2 tankas stamps for the leg of the journey Gyantse to Lhasa. Some of these combination covers have the receipt postmark of the Indian office at Gyantse struck but some do not. Those without the postmark were sent during the flooding of the Gyantse valleys when the post office was washed away. However, the postmark of the Tibetan office canceling the Tibetan stamp is apparent if not wholly readable (so was that office unaffected or the postal equipment moved to higher ground?). At Gyantse, Indra Man inscribed upon the envelopes, in Tibetan, his own shop address (as the place of forwarding) together with the date the mail was passed to the Tibetan postal service. This seems to be the day after the arrival of the mail at the India office at Gyantse - however, this aspect requires further research as a separate subject.

There are also covers that are franked with a Tibetan stamp only. Accordingly, they could not have been posted in the Indian system. These are also addressed and dated twice in Tibetan. Firstly at Kalimpong with the destination address at Lhasa together with the date of sending from Kalimpong. Secondly by Indra Man with his own forwarding address together with the date of dispatch in the Tibetan service. These covers, bearing only a Tibetan stamp, must have been placed inside a larger envelope containing mail set to go as far as Gyantse and no further. When this larger envelope (or package) was opened and the contents sorted the Lhasa mail was forwarded appropriately.

Tejman's procedure of applying Tibetan stamps at the commencement of the mail run outside Tibet's borders is most unusual. It is not the only instance of this, though, for mail is known from Nepal addressed to Tibet having been franked with Tibetan stamps, together with appropriate Nepalese of course, in Kathmandu.

There is no doubt that the rubber-stamped date impressions appearing on many of the covers, especially noticeable hedging the Tibetan

stamps, and which are in the same violet colour as the rubber-stamped name and address of Tejman at Kalimpong and, when applied, of Indra Man at Gyantse were placed upon the covers at Kalimpong and not at Gyantse. The date of these rubber stamps is the same as that of the postmark struck by the post office at Kalimpong. On 50% of the covers studied the rubber stamps were positioned ostensibly around the stamps so as to deter their unauthorized removal. Various ploys from the nineteenth century onwards have been used in India to combat this tiresome practice.

Pictured are covers which illustrate the foregoing. All are franked with stamps cut using pinking shears producing the zig-zag effect. Both the front and back of the envelopes are shown and those selected also give an insight into how the Lhasa Newars maintained contact between their depots and places of business using two postal services.

COVER 1 was posted at Kalimpong 26 March 1954 using a 2 annas Indian stamp (the internal unregistered rate). It also bears a 4 tankas dull green (registered rate) serrated on one edge cancelled by the Tibetan postmark at Gyantse. On the reverse is a strike of the Indian office at Gyantse postmark dated 30 March - it was placed in the Tibetan mails on the same day.

COVER 2 was posted at Kalimpong 27 October 1954 using a 2 annas Indian stamp. It also bears a 4 tankas dull green serrated on all four sides and hedged by the sender's rubber-stamped date, being the same day as the Kalimpong postmark. There is no receipt postmark of the Indian office at Gyantse, probably because of the flood. The Tibetan stamp is cancelled by the Tibetan office which received it 7 days after leaving India.

COVER 3 was sent from Kalimpong under separate cover within the Indian mails as far as Gyantse. It is franked with a pair of 2 tankas bright orange serrated on all edges. Placed in the Tibetan mails 5 days after leaving India the Tibetan stamps have been cancelled at Gyantse

and the cover noted with a manuscript date 24 May 1953 at Lhasa.

COVER 4 was sent from Kalimpong under separate cover in the Indian mails to Gyantse. It is franked with 4 tankas green serrated on three edges hedged with violet rubber date-stamp 14 December 1954. Eight days elapsed before it entered the Tibetan system where the Tibetan stamp was postmarked.

COVER 5 was sent from Kalimpong under separate cover in the Indian mails to Gyantse. It bears 4 tankas dull green serrated on three edges and is endorsed in Tibetan "from Kalimpong on 9th of 1st month wood horse year" (early 1954). Placed in the Tibetan mails 5 days later where the 4 tankas value was cancelled.

COVER 6 - this final item is an example of a blatant attempt to inveigle a collector into buying what at first sight is an unusual and desirable cover. It bears a pair of 1/2 tanka chrome from the top right of setting IV, a pair of 2/3 tanka indigo from the bottom left of setting III and a strip of three 1 tanka salmon pink from the right margin of setting III, all having a mixture of straight and serrated edges; all, too, cancelled Lhasa. Mr. Russell, the addressee, incidentally, was an avid cover collector with whom I was fortunate in having a correspondence until, at a great age, he sadly died during the 1980s. The Indian stamp on the

reverse represents the correct postage rate to New Zealand - sent by air presumably using the weekly flying boat service from the Yamdrok Tso. Unfortunately, the postal cancellor has missed the stamp so we have no date. However, Mr. Russell, with admirable prescience for the present researcher, has noted the cover "mailed 1950". En route, probably on arrival in New Zealand, a postal clerk has obliterated the stamp with a penciled scribble.

Although stamps with serrated edges have never seemed as numerous as the so-called "private perforations", and fall into a narrow band of late shades, there is no reason why they should command a premium over imperforate stamps. If anything, the jagged edges tend aesthetically to spoil them - so there is no advantage in any replication.

Undoubtedly, there will be readers who have similar covers to those I have illustrated or described, probably from the same correspondence, but maybe from another. If so, please do write in to the editor with photocopies and observations.

Almost as a postscript I must just add that on arrival at Lhasa some of the envelopes mentioned were opened by cutting with pinking shears. Thus, don't overlook the possibility of zig-zag envelopes!

References for translations and advice:  
Sidharta M. Tuladhar and Tsultrim Gyatso



Handwritten text in Nepali script, including a signature and address details.

From: JMAN SAKYABANS.  
Near Pranam Mandir.  
93 TH. MILE.  
P.O. Kalimpong (Darjeeling)

To: C/o. Sahu.  
Sokong Stant  
Gyantse. (Tibet)

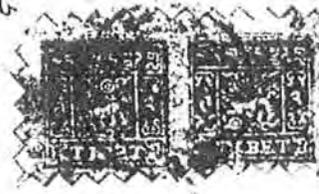


COVER 2

From: JMAN SAKYABANS.  
Near Pranam Mandir.  
93 TH. MILE.  
P.O. Kalimpong.

To: Panchan  
C/o Sahu. J.  
Sokang  
Gyantse.

Vertical handwritten text in Nepali script, likely a message or note.



COVER 3

From: JMAN SAKYABANS.  
Near Pranam Mandir.  
93 TH. MILE.  
P.O. Kalimpong (Darjeeling)

To: Panchan  
C/o Sahu. J.  
Sokang  
Gyantse.

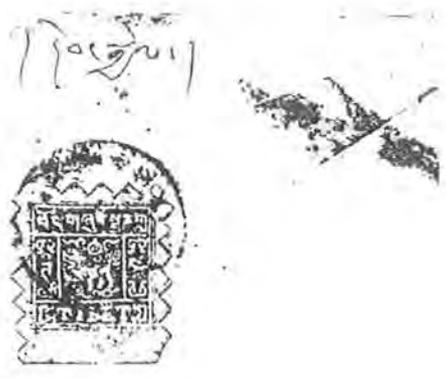


COVER 4

From: TEJAN SAKYABANG  
 1. C. P. S. (Darjeeling)  
 C/o. Saju Indraman:  
 Sabong Stambu:  
 Gyantsi (Tibet)

13/11/47  
 13/11/47

COVER 5



Mr. G.S. Russell,  
 P.O. Box 467,  
 Auckland, NEW ZEALAND. (via Australia)

COVER 6

