

Postal Himal



QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE
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Steve Chazen

Member and Expert Philatelist

Bio and Obituary Page 4

Number 192

4th Quarter 2022



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USA/Canada	\$20.00	\$50.00	N/A
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American Philatelic Society Affiliate #122;
British Philatelic Federation Affiliate #435

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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 through the Treasurer, Eddie Hackstaff.

Your subscription for 2023 is due on 1st January. Subscriptions must be renewed by the end of February so that you will not be dropped from the membership list. Subscriptions can be sent by check to Eddie Hackstaff or by PayPal using NepalTibetPSC@gmail.com

We hope that you enjoy being a member of our Society and look forward to having you renew your subscription with us.

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Dear Members:

We are coming to the end of another year that has seen a number of changes in the Society with new officers being appointed. Unfortunately, there will be another change in the new year as a long-standing member and current Postal Himal editor Frank Vignola caught a rather serious dose of Covid and as I write this is still in hospital. Frank has had to resign his editor's position and we have to thank Ken Goss for stepping in and producing this issue for us. To Frank, we thank you for the excellent work you have done in producing

Postal Himal for the past few years and we wish you a speedy recovery.

Looking forward to the New Year. Our hard-working secretary Anurag Srivastava is in the final stages of producing a new web page for us and he has also volunteered to replace Frank as the Editor of Postal Himal.

I am looking forward to 2023 with renewed enthusiasm and I wish you all a happy Christmas and good collecting in the New Year.

Colin Hepper

“Temporary” Editor’s Ramblings

The bulletin proof reader will assemble this quarter’s Postal Himal while current editor Frank Vignola recovers from a prolonged illness. I have been shared Frank’s back log of articles and have received new articles from several members. Thank you to all who contribute!

Ken Goss

New Postal Himal Editor

Anurag Srivastava is taking over the Editor’s position and will start with the March 2023 issue.

He will need articles as he is more or less starting from scratch so new articles are a priority. Anurag can be contacted at anurag0583@gmail.com

Show and Tell

The four Nepal exhibits by Leo Martyn at Sescal 2022 can be viewed at <https://sescalexhibits.org>
Eddie Hackstaff has videos on his Everest presentation at [Himalaya Expedition Mail \(hackstaff.com\)](http://Himalaya Expedition Mail (hackstaff.com))

Awards

At the **SESCAL** show held in Glendale, California in October, Leo Martyn received the following awards:

“Nepal – Tibet Relations” – Large Vermeil

“Nepal: Postal History of the First Pashupati Issue, 1907” – Large Vermeil

“World War II Censored Overseas Mail from Nepal” - Large Silver

“Recutting Nepal’s Classic One Anna Postage Stamp” – Large Silver, Women Exhibitors Sterling Achievement award

Steve Chazen

By Alan Warren



N&TPSC member Stephen Ira Chazen of Houston, Texas, died September 22, 2022 after a long battle with cancer. He was editor and co-author with Danny Kin Chi Wong of the landmark book *Tibet Stamps and Postal History*, published by the Royal Philatelic Society London in 2019. In addition to Tibet he collected other far eastern philately, notably the foreign post offices in China and Japan, and the postal history of China to the end of World War I.

Another collection focused on the stamps and postal history of India. His large collection of Mongolia was used to illustrate Wolfgang Hellrigl's *The Postal History of Mongolia*. Other areas of interest were the shipping and mail routes of the Middle East to and from the Far East, as well as the postal history of Texas to the end of the Civil War.

Steve held degrees in geology and worked with NASA's Johnson Space Center in studying lunar samples. He obtained a degree in finance and worked in the oil industry briefly before joining Merrill Lynch. He then moved to Occidental Petroleum where he advanced to CEO in 2011 and retired in 2015. The following year he started the small firm of Magnolia Oil and Gas and later rejoined Oxy as chairman of the board.

Chazen was involved extensively in philanthropic work with his appointment to the University of Houston board of regents, director of the Houston Methodist Institute for Academic Medicine, Rice University's Baker Institute, and he served on the board of the National Park Foundation. He is survived by two sisters and their families.

For more info: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/bellaire-tx/stephen-chazen-10941437> (editor)

The Status of Postal Services in Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet in 1951 according to Indian Official Correspondence and the Hand-over of Indian POs in Tibet in 1955

By Aranya Dutta Choudhury

An American collector by the name of Frank A. Tamas from Madison in Wisconsin sent an



aerogramme dated 7 April 1951 to the Philatelic Department of the Indian Post and Telegraph in Bombay (now Mumbai) asking for information about the usage of stamps "in the country of Bhutan" , especially on the following three areas of interest:-

- a. Types of stamps used in Bhutan
- b. Whether or not the country issues its own stamps?
- c. Whether Bhutan uses stamps of India subject to postal agreement?

He also requests the department to help him with some contacts in Bhutan who can provide him with covers, cancellations or stamps of the country.

Further as a Postscript Mr Tamas added that he is interested also about usage of stamps of India in Tibet and the

further following clarifications:

1. Are Indian Postal Agencies maintained in Lhasa or any other town?
2. Is there a postal service to Gartok, Tibet and has it been suspended since recent political events in Tibet?
3. How to communicate with these places?

Incidentally, the recipient has pencil corrected Gartok into Gangtok, which actually itself is an error from the Department. Hence the clarification from the Indian Posts and Telegraphs department also included the postal arrangement in Sikkim, of which Gangtok is the capital city. Mr. Tamas aerogramme and the Post and Telegraph Department correspondence it triggered can be found in the National Archives of India in New Delhi.

The Status of Postal Services in Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet in 1951 according to Indian Official Correspondence and the Hand-over of Indian POs in Tibet in 1955

Mr. Tamas aerogramme was forwarded to P&T Department New Delhi who further wrote on 25th June 1951 to Mr N.N. Banerji, Postmaster- General, West Bengal Circle at Calcutta (now Kolkata)¹. Mr N.N. Banerji replied to the Director General, P&T, New Delhi on 9th August 1951² that the Superintendent of POs, Jalpaiguri division would address the clarifications sought in this regard.

Finally on 21st September 1951, Mr. Banerji provided the result of his enquiry into the matter of Postal Services of Bhutan and Tibet. As understood by the department, he also added Sikkim due to the confusion between Gangtok (Sikkim) and Gartok (Tibet). One should remember that Sikkim was then a Indian protectorate and a kingdom with its own Head of state (Maharaja). Hence it was natural for the Indian authorities to make this erroneous assumption.

Mr Banerji's findings mentioned in the letter is reproduced as below:

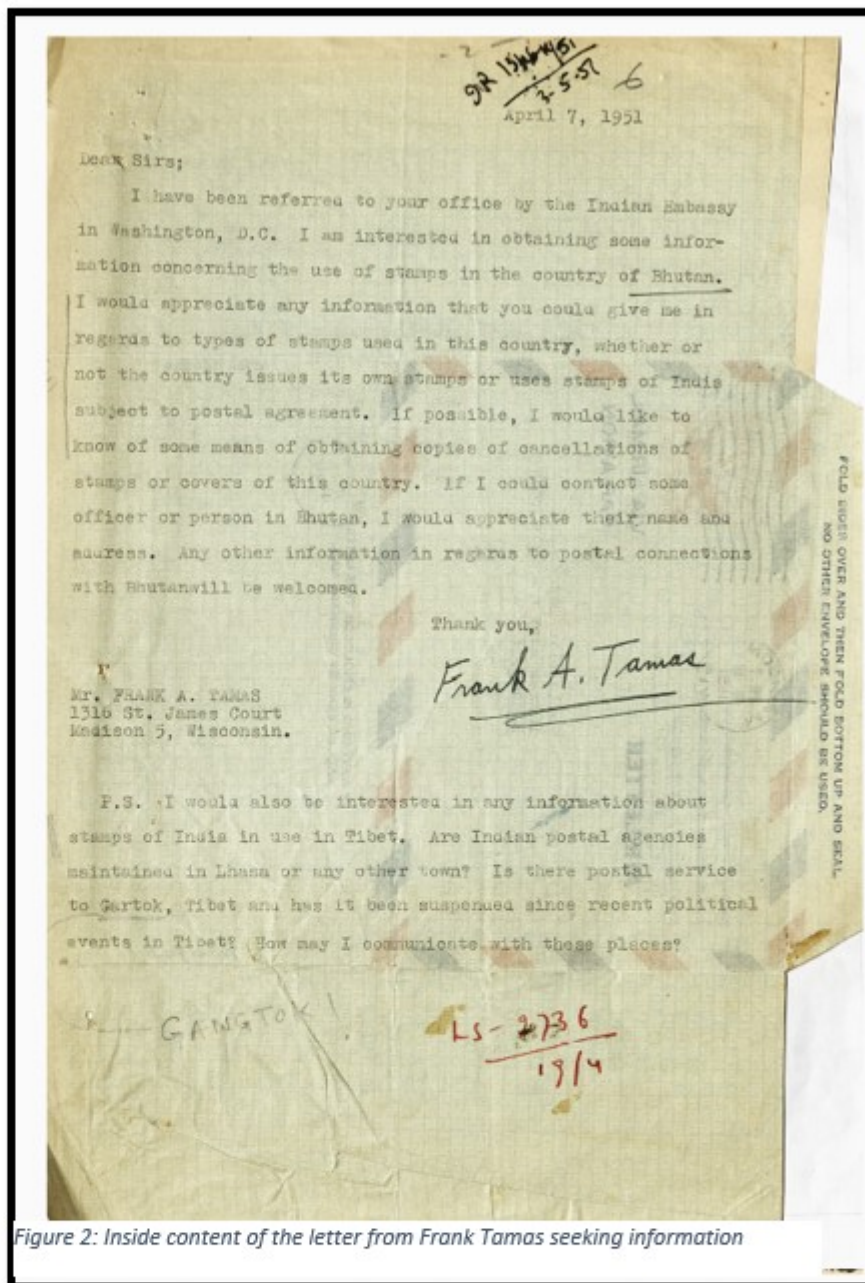


Figure 2: Inside content of the letter from Frank Tamas seeking information

¹ Letter no IR-6029-C/51) dated 25th June 1951

² Letter no MSB/A-52 dated 9th August 1951,

The Status of Postal Services in Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet in 1951 according to Indian Official

Correspondence and the Hand-over of Indian POs in Tibet in 1955

1. There is no postal system in Bhutan. The mails (letters etc.) intended for Bhutan come up to Yatung (Tibet) and the same are collected from the Yatung P.O. twice a week. As there is no



Figure 3: The Statesman Dated August 21, 1951 - highlighted area refers the transfer of Indian post offices in Tibet to the Chinese

postal system in Bhutan, the question of types of stamps used in that country does not arise.

2. The Government of India maintains a postal service in Sikkim of which Gangtok is the Capital. Postal articles for places in Sikkim are treated as articles for India and given the same treatment as Inland articles of India.

3. The Government of India also maintains a postal service at three places in Tibet., viz, Yatung, Pharijong and Gyantse. The mail service in Tibet I maintained mainly for the purposes of Government and Government servants; any other purpose served is incidental and subsidiary only.
4. Although there are Indian post offices at Yatung, Gyantse and Pharijong, the Tibetan Government has its own Post Offices at Pharijong, Gyantse, Shigatse and Lhasa. These Post offices are not in communication with the Indian Post offices in Tibet. |

5. Indian Postage stamps are in use in the Indian Post offices. The mails intended for places beyond Gyantse are delivered to the Agents of the Residents of Shigatse, Lhasa and Gyantse.

6. Tibet issues her own postage stamps for use in her own Post Offices. These stamps are to be obtained from Tibetan Post offices.

Mr Banerji signs off by writing that Frank Tamas can communicate with the Political officer in Sikkim for further information on the subject, if needed.

Here, it is worthwhile to mention that a protocol was signed between China and India at Lhasa on 1st April 1955, on the handing over of the P&T installations and the rest houses operated by the Government of India in Tibet, to China. The Chinese and the English texts of the protocol was signed by Yang Kung-su, Foreign Affairs Assistant of the Government of the People's Republic of China in Tibet, and Mr I. N. Menon, Consul General of India at Lhasa, on behalf of their respective Governments.

The final handover at Yatung took place on 11th April, 1955.³

³ File no : 30(3)-NEF/55 named Political situation reports on Sikkim from the political officer in Sikkim Gangtok (1955) from National Archives of India, New Delhi

The Basil Gould Mission to Lhasa and the Return of the Panchen Lama, 1936-1937

By Clark Miller

After the 13th Dalai Lama's flights into exile, first in 1904 during the British invasion and again in 1910 with the Chinese invasion, ill feeling arose between the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. Both the British and the Chinese had used the Panchen Lama to undercut the authority of the Dalai Lama. The Panchen Lama, seeing an opportunity to expand his influence and gain greater independence from Lhasa, collaborated with the invaders.

While in exile in India the Dalai Lama became convinced that preserving Tibetan independence required transforming the country into a modern nation state. To pay for his modernization campaign, the Dalai Lama increased taxes on the nobility and the monasteries. A tax increase on the Panchen Lama's Tashilhunpo monastery widened the rift between the two leaders. On 26 December 1923, the Panchen Lama fled to Mongolia, then made his way into exile in China. In retaliation, the Dalai Lama seized the Tashilhunpo monastery and all its property.

The Republic of China gave the Panchen Lama sanctuary and financial support in return for his taking pro-China positions in its disputes with Lhasa. The Chinese covered the expenses of the Panchen Lama's Tibetan Residence Office in Chongqing and provided annual salaries to the Panchen Lama and his entourage. The Nationalist government in China, like the Imperial Chinese government before it, sought to end Tibet's independence and incorporate Tibet into the Republic of China. (1)

After the Dalai Lama died, in December 1933, the Tibetan government felt it was imperative to bring the Panchen Lama back to Tibet, where the Chinese could not so easily manipulate him. They also needed the Panchen Lama to help unify the country and tamp down the emerging power struggles within the Tibetan National Assembly.

In addition to his presence in China, the Panchen Lama had set up an office in Kalimpong to conduct diplomatic relations with the outside world. Tsa Serkhang, his Representative at Kalimpong, in effect functioned as the Panchen Lama's foreign minister. In February 1936, Tsa Serkhang told Basil Gould, the British Political Officer for Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet, that the Panchen Lama planned to return to Tibet in the summer, accompanied by Chinese officials and a large Chinese military escort.

On 18 May 1936, the Panchen Lama left the Kumbrun monastery in Amdo for Jyekundo on the border with Central Tibet, escorted by 20 Chinese officials and 500 Chinese soldiers. The Tibetan government wanted the Panchen Lama to return to Tibet, but they were opposed to seeing him enter the country accompanied by Chinese troops. The Tibetan National Assembly sent two special envoys to meet the Panchen Lama, to accompany him home to the Tashilhunpo monastery and block the entry of his Chinese escort.

The tension between the Panchen Lama and the Tibetan government worsened in mid-July when Tibetan border guards at the Nagchuka check post searched a large, advanced shipment of his baggage. They found rifles, hand grenades, and ammunition, which they confiscated. The Panchen Lama protested the seizure, deepening the Tibetan government's suspicions of his intentions.

Basil Gould feared that the Panchen Lama would, if necessary, force his way into Tibet. To defuse the situation, the British government sent Gould to Lhasa in August 1936 as the head of a mission to advise the Tibetan government. He was instructed to impress on the Tibetans the need to strengthen their international position by making peace with the Panchen Lama and reorganizing their army.

Gould's staff included Brigadier General Philip Neame, who was assigned the task of evaluating the readiness of the Tibetan army and its capability to defend Tibet against a Chinese invasion. Neame found that in the eleven years since Tsarong Shape had been removed as Commander in Chief, the Tibetan army had

(Continued on page 10)

The Basil Gould Mission to Lhasa and the Return of the Panchen Lama, 1936-1937

By Clark Miller

deteriorated badly. [Figures 1 & 2]



Figure 1. Official Registered cover from Brigadier General Philip Neame in Lhasa to the Army & Navy Stores in Bombay. The cover entered the British India post at Gyantse on 6 September 1936 and arrived at Bombay on 12 September 1936.

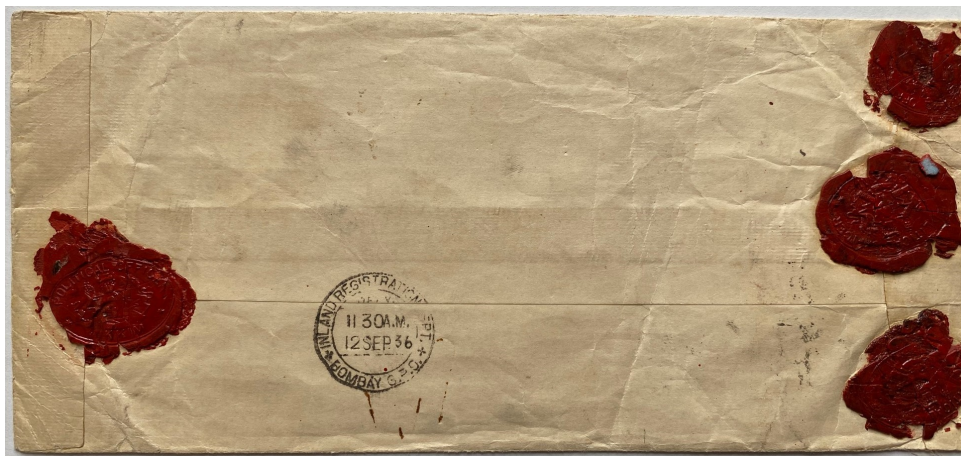


Figure 2. Reverse of Neame cover. The envelope is closed with red wax impressed with Basil Gould's official seal for the "British Political Officer, Sikkim."

Neame recommended modernizing and reorganizing the Tibetan army, including the creation of a 3,000-man elite brigade to be provided with British training and armed with the latest British weapons and communications equipment. This brigade would be stationed in Central Tibet, ready to be dispatched to the frontier if China threatened an attack.

On 29 January 1937, Gould met with the Kashag, the governing council, and offered military training for Tibetan army officers. However, Tibet's religious and secular establishment saw the creation of a modern and efficient army as a threat to their power. The Tibetan government, fearing a confrontation between a new "military faction" and the monasteries and nobility, declined the British offer of military aid. This left Tibet unprotected against future Chinese aggression. (2)

The Panchen Lama affair was soon resolved by events. In early July 1937, full-scale warfare broke out between the Republic of China and the Empire of Japan, the Second Sino-Japanese War. Beijing fell to the

(Continued on page 11)

The Basil Gould Mission to Lhasa and the Return of the Panchen Lama, 1936-1937

By Clark Miller

Imperial Japanese Army the following month.

The Panchen Lama and his entourage left Jyekundo on 16 August 1937, crossing the border from Amdo into Central Tibet and arriving at the Lungshigön monastery. Suddenly on 26 August the Chinese government ordered the Panchen Lama to “postpone” his return to Tibet. On 6 September, the Chinese government advised him that entering Tibet with a Chinese military escort would harm their relations with England. China could not afford to offend Great Britain, an ally in its fight against Japan.

The Panchen Lama left Central Tibet and returned to the Jyekundo monastery. While waiting there for the Chinese State Council to determine his future residence, he became seriously ill. The Panchen Lama died on 1 December 1937, ending the threat of a Chinese invasion of Tibet on his behalf. His body was returned to the Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse where his funeral was held on 4 February 1941.

As a consequence of the Panchen Lama incident, a permanent British Mission was established in Lhasa. Before he left Lhasa in February 1937, Basil Gould asked the Tibetan government for permission to establish a permanent British office at Lhasa. The Tibetan government rejected Gould’s formal request.

However, Gould left behind a commercial representative, Hugh Richardson, who in July 1936 had been appointed as the British Trade Agent at Gyantse. Richardson, supported by a small staff, functioned as the de facto British representative in Lhasa from 1936 to 1947. The Tibetan government treated the British office as “temporary” and made no attempt to shut it down. [Figures 3 & 4]



Figure 3. Philatelic cover from Basil J. Gould, head of the British Mission at Lhasa, to Major General Sir Percy Cox in London, November 1936. Franked with 1933 Third Issue stamps: 2/3t dark blue (Chan TL17. Scott 10), cliché 3 with large margins and early printings of ½t, 1t and 2t. Each canceled by a "Lhasa P.O." large double-ring postmark.

(Continued on page 12)

The Basil Gould Mission to Lhasa and the Return of the Panchen Lama, 1936-1937

By Clark Miller

(Continued from page 11)



Figure 4. Enclosed hand painted Christmas card of the Potala Palace. Tibetan calligraphy inside translates as: “May you enjoy the three blessings (health, wealth, and good repute), and may your days be filled with peace and happiness.” Hand signed: “With best wishes, B. Gould, Lhasa Nov. 1936.”

On 15 August 1947, India became an independent nation and inherited the British role in Tibet. Hugh Richardson, the last British representative in Lhasa, became the first representative of India, continuing in that role until his retirement in September 1950. (3)

NOTES:

Melvyn C. [Goldstein](#), **A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State**, University of California Press (1991), paperback, pp. 110 – 120; Fabienne Jagou, **The Ninth Panchen Lama (1883-1937): A life at the Crossroad of Sino-Tibetan Relations**, EFEO– Silkworm Books (2011), paperback, pp. 42-57, 104, 119-120; Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, **Tibet, A Political History**, Potala Publications (1984), paperback, pp. 263-264.

Goldstein, pp. 260, 273-288, 291-293; [Jagou](#), pp. 136-137, 155-156, 167-168, 209; Jamyang Norbu, **The Lives of the Panchen Lamas**, Amnye Machen Institute (1996), p. 20; Shakabpa, pp. 280-283.

Goldstein, pp. 295-296, 298-299; Norbu, p. 21; **Hugh Edward Richardson**, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Edward_Richardson; [Jagou](#), pp. 168, 210; [Shakabpa](#), pp. 281-283.



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Did Dictator's Death Delay Dispatch and Delivery?

By Edmond Weissberg

Leo Martyn recently displayed an interesting cover from Libya to Tibet, dated January 1953, with an inside letter highlighting philatelic transactions. (1)

Here is an almost matching cover, in the reverse direction FROM Tibet TO Libya, but with different sender and addressee, and no letter inside.

On the front of the cover [FIG.1] there is:

Written in Tibetan, in blue ink:

To be presented to the Gyantse English [should be: "Indian"] Post Office.
Sent from Lhasa, Chu Shar Steng Trade House, on 19th day of 1st month.

In 1953, this corresponds to: 04 March 1953. (Just mind this date !)

The Tibetan stamps 1 Tamka reddish + 1 Sho grey blue, cancelled LHASA (Hellrigl T 42)*.

The address to Dr. Rolando Guidotti (2) in Sidi Mesri Experimental Farm, (3) Tripoli, Libia, North Africa. (Libya became an independant kingdom in 1951).

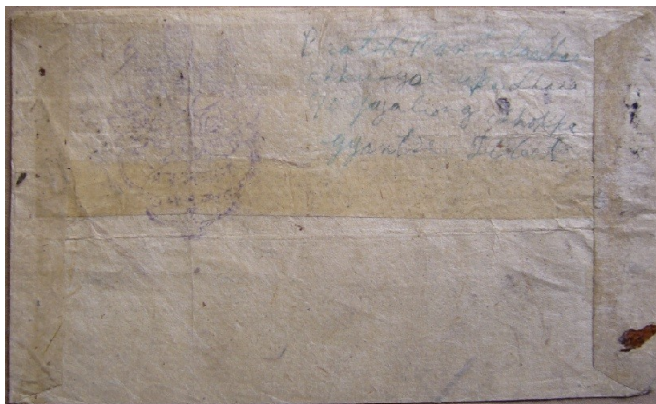
An indian - 1951 - 4 Annas bright blue "temple of Bhubanesvara" stamp, cancelled:

Gyantse Tibet 11 March 1953 (Hellrigl B 16)*, and a small single circle in arabic meaning "not read", i.e. a censor marking similar to "not opened by censor".



On the back of the cover, [FIG. 2] there is a faint handstamped violet elaborate trader's mark (looking downright like a coat of arms) of the Tuladhar family, and in faded blue ink, the sender's name and address:

Pratek Man Tuladhar / Chhusyar Up Lhasa / C/O Gyaling Chhokpa / Gyantse / Tibet (4)



It is noteworthy that from 04 to 11 March, it took one full week to carry this letter from Lhasa to Gyantse... Now, guess what actually happened on the very next day after the letter was hand dated ? i.e. on 05 March 1953 ?

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Did Dictator's Death Delay Dispatch and Delivery?

Well, the Gardener of Human Happiness, Father of Nations, aka Iossip Vissarionovitch Dzhughashvili, merely departed from the Kremlin city walls of faraway Moscow towards the Heavenly Fields.

Thereby, there was so deep sorrow amongst the blue and white collar workers and clerks at the Tibetan Post Office, and so many memorial services and mourning ceremonies that were conducted and that were to be attended, that this much disrupted the normal working schedule, and finally delayed the dispatch and delivery of mails. (5)

NOTES

(1) In Postal Himal N° 188, 4th quarter 2021, p.13.

(2) Biographical data concerning Dr. Rolando Guidotti is rather scanty, probably kept within the family.

It seems Rolandino Guidotti is more appropriate a first name. Dates are probably 1892 - 1989.

Definitely, he worked as a high ranking specialist for agriculture from the 1930's to early 1950's in Italian Colonies, Eritrea, Somalia, Tripolitania..., and also as an agricultural adviser in Ethiopia. His bibliography is more copious than his biography.

(3) Sidi Mesri: the Royal Experimental Agricultural Institute was founded in 1914, about 5 km south-eastwards of central Tripoli, and still exists as a park and agricultural school. See [FIG. 3] for an aerial view of this 70 ha complex, in the 1930's (L'Italia Coloniale, Agricoltura Sperimentale in Tripolitania, by Alberto Alpozzi - <https://italiacoloniale/tag/sidi-mesri>).

(4) M. Pratek Man Tuladhar (1924-1991) was indeed interested in philately, maintaining a worldwide correspondence network. See: PH 99/100 3rd/4th quarter 1999, pp. 23-26: "Dharma Man Tuladhar & Pratek Man Tuladhar: Nepalese Traders in Tibet", by: Sidhartha Man Tuladhar.

(5) More seriously, the Chinese Communist Party was eager to know the feelings of the Chinese people after the death of Stalin. Accordingly, 30 reports were compiled by Xinhua (news agency) reporters: "Reactions of Chinese citizens to the death of Stalin: Internal Communist Party Reports", by: Hua Yu Li (Journal of Cold War Studies, Vol.11, n°2, 2009, M.I.T. Press).

Although the investigations were not conducted in Tibet, which was not yet constitutionally integrated (only in september 1965),

some results are highly surprising: near Kököhoto (in "inner Mongolia", where the main religion is Tibetan Buddhism), *"The leaders*

of all lama religious communities requested all believers to read scriptures and to pray for Stalin speedy rebirth, so that he could again bring happiness to the people". Mind boggling! In fact, it appears that Stalin was rather well considered by the ethnic and religious minorities (christians, Hui muslims, and so: lamas, etc...) *because he was believed to be the one who cared about ethnic minorities.* After all, he was a Georgian, and one of his first jobs was indeed People's Commissar for Nationalities... and compared with chinese leaders, that was perhaps for some a done deal.

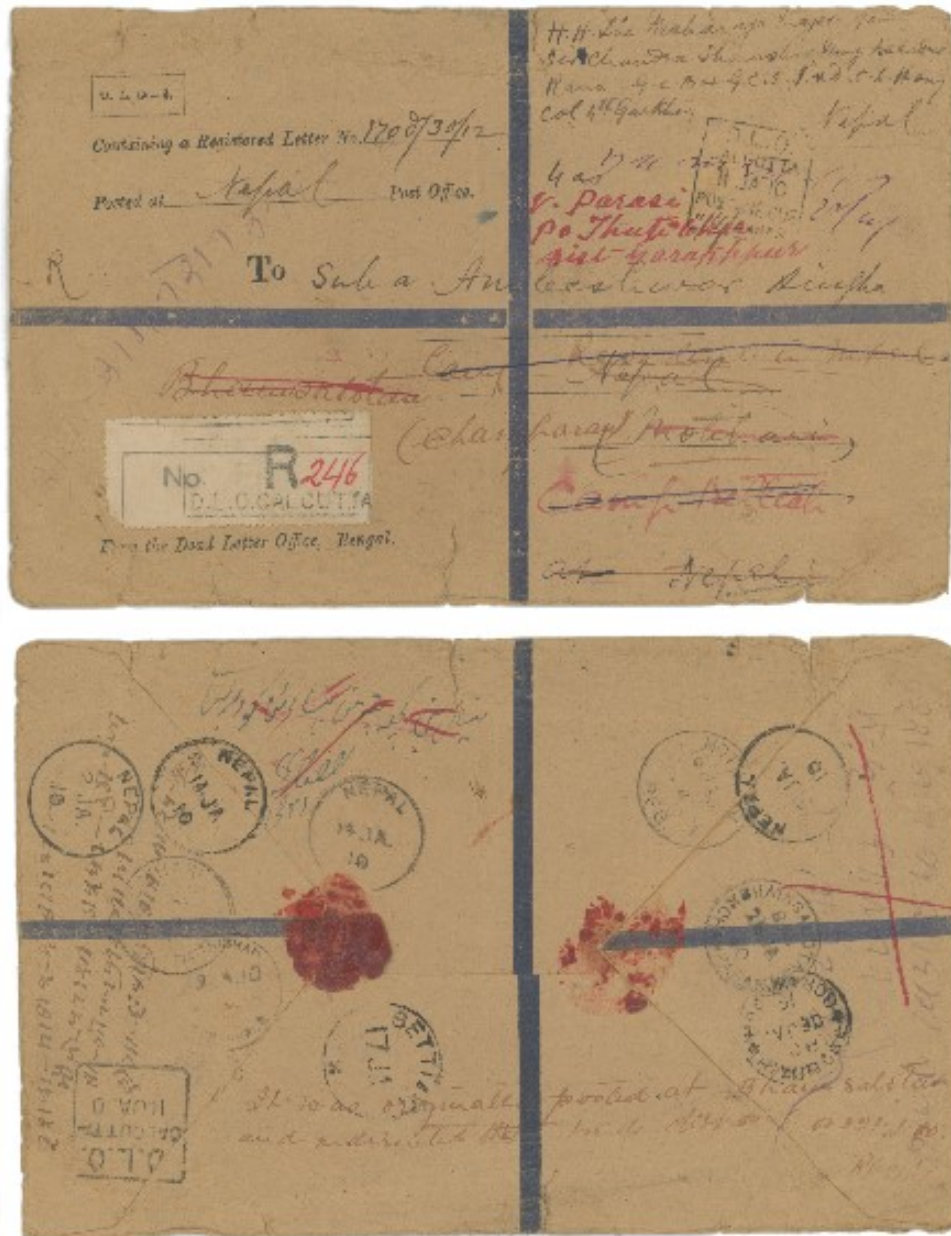
*And as usual: all reference numbers of the Tibetan postmarks types are as per:

Wolfgang Hellrigl: The Postal Markings of Tibet - 1996 - Dr. W. Hellrigl, Bozen, Italy - G. Flack, Vancouver, Canada.

"Ambulance Cover" to Nepal

By Leo Martyn

The letter was enclosed in this "Ambulance Cover" and posted in another attempt to deliver it in Nepal. Eventually the ambulance cover with its contents was returned to the letter's original posting.

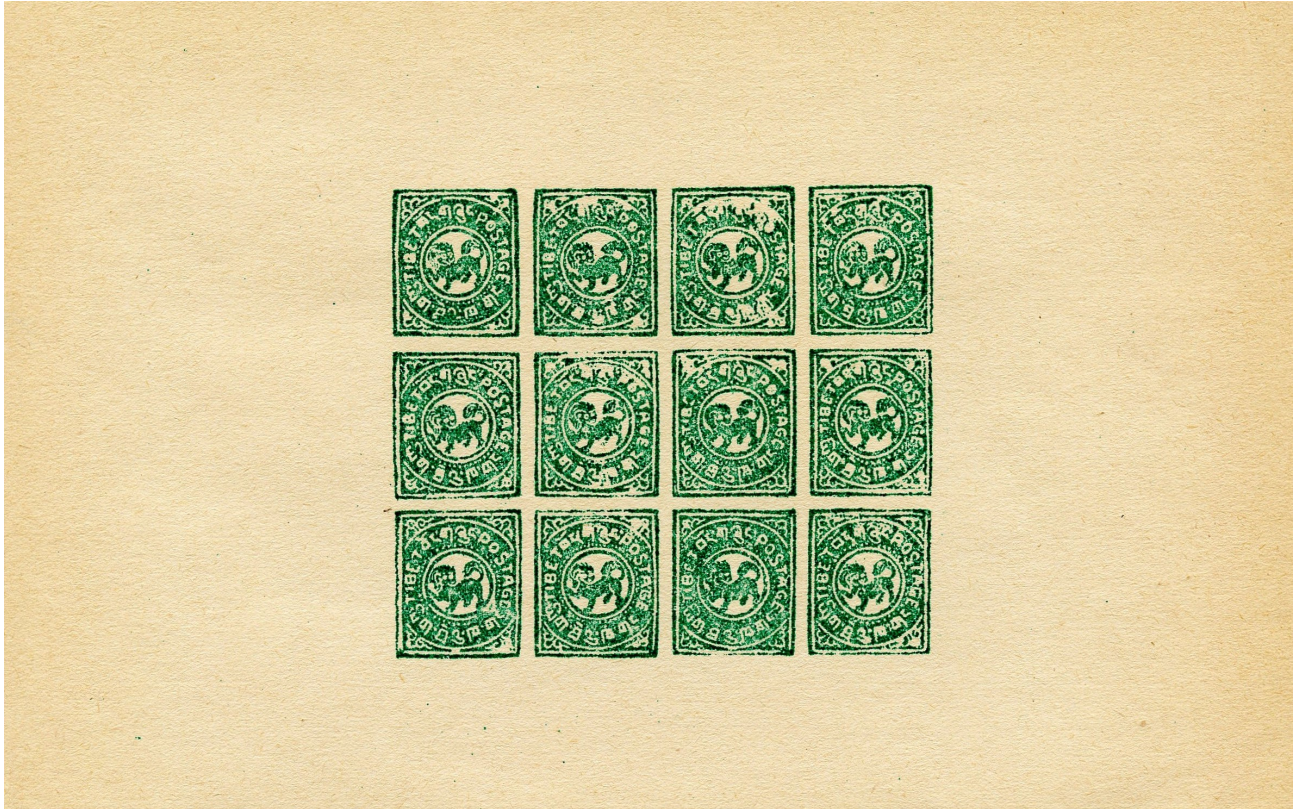


1910. The undelivered cover was enclosed in this official ambulance cover which was sent from the dead letter office in Calcutta to Suba Anandeshwar Singha, a district high ranking Nepalese official in Nepal via the Indian post offices of Bilrahpur on January 6 and Bettiah on January 9. It returned to the Calcutta dead letter office on January 11 and sent back to Nepal's British Residency Post Office on January 14. A manuscript notation states that the letter was "originally posted in Bhainsaiotan and redirected there for us." The ambulance cover then departed Kathmandu on the 14th received in Motihari, India, on the 16th and Bettiah on the 17th in an attempt to find Sabu Singha at Camp Bettia. Another delivery attempt was made in Nepal on January 21 but was unsuccessful and eventually was delivered back to Bhainsaiotan on January 26. Note that the registration number 170 referred to in the upper right hand corner matches the registration number on the original correspondence.

Tibet Ephemera #1 – 1/6 trangka Sheet

Alan Warren

This article is the first of a planned series on odd items that have turned up over the years while collecting the stamps and postal history of Tibet. This reprint of the 1/6 trangka first issue of Tibet is printed on wove paper (definitely not “native paper”) in an unusual blue-green shade. The wide-margin sheet measures 5 by 8 inches.



The issue date is unknown, but it was supposedly printed in Australia, and is mentioned by Arnold C. Waterfall in the first (1965) edition of his book *The Postal History of Tibet* on page 148. If any readers have additional details concerning this item, let the Editor of *Postal Himal* know.