

A Nepal Philatelic Food Feast

Nepal has a cuisine that reflects its isolated location and rarified air as well as its heritage. Beef is rarely served in Nepal. This exhibit is intended to answer the question first posed in the last century, "where's the beef?"

A Set Menu

Starters: Won-Half Anna Soup Surprise

Main Course: Triple Delight

Palate Cleansing: Kalaiya with Ants Climbing a Tree

Desert: Upside Down Cliche

The Check With: Bill of Tariffs

Introduction

Before diving into the feast, a little philatelic history is in order - The first postage stamps of Nepal were issued in April 1881 in sheets of 64, eight by eight. The central design feature of the stamps was the Nepalese crossed kukris (a curved knife as shown above left) and the royal feathered crown. The stamps, in three denominations, as shown below were normally issued imperforate after June 1881. A new design for a one-half anna denomination was introduced in December 1898 and saw very limited use. The stamps were only valid for postage only within Nepal.

None of this material is common by normal philatelic standards. For example, there are fewer than sixty reported covers of the 1881-1885 issue and almost all bear single frankings of the one anna. All postal uses of the two and four annas stamps are exceptional. Although the classic issues remained valid for postage until 1930, those printed after 1917 were intended to be used to pay telegraph fees.

1881 designs



one anna



two annas



four annas

1898 new denomination



one-half anna, pin-perforated
tete-beche pair

The 1881 to 1885 printings were on European wove paper. With the exception of a scarce 1 anna printing on European paper in 1902, the 1886 to 1930 printings were printed on native paper. After June 1881 pin-perforated stamps were not normally issued but were apparently available upon request.

First Printings (April to June 1881), pin-perforated



one anna



two annas



four annas



one anna



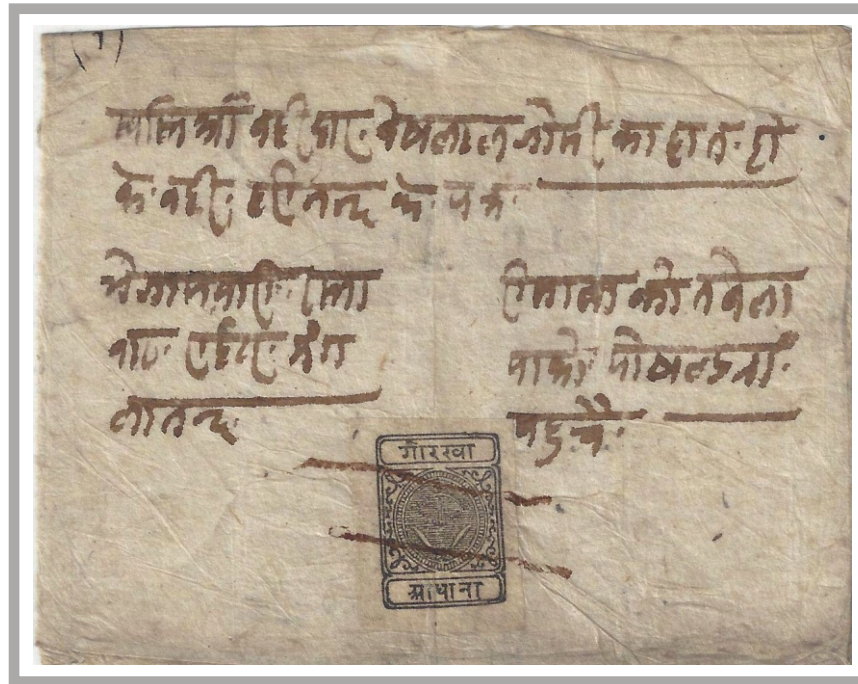
two annas



four annas
only known
used example



The 1898 Nepal stamp issues included the addition of a new one-half anna denomination in a new design. The stamp, printed in black, was intended for use on official mail between Sawari, the royal hunting camp located at Kasra, and Kathmandu. Such mail was now subject to one-half anna postage.



December 1912 letter and cover dated from Sawari (Royal) camp to Kathmandu **six reported covers franked with single one-half anna stamps**



1917 Bhaktapur to Kathmandu, pair ½ anna, prepaid letter rate to one tola **three reported covers with pairs paying one anna rate**

the largest reported unused multiple of the most famous stamp of Nepal

The one-half anna in orange vermillion was printed in 1917. Hellrigl notes that only about 100 unused and 300 to 400 used examples exist. The sheet included 3 inverted cliches (positions 6, 7 and 57). It was first reported in 1921 when a sheet was discovered by WG O'Sullivan, a British postal inspector in Nepal.



unused block from O'Sullivan discovery sheet
 positions 18-19, 26-27
 (aligned here above original position)
fewer than 100 unused examples reported



½ anna orange vermillion, unused bottom half of the O'Sullivan discovery sheet found in 1921, positions 33-64
inverted cliché position 57 (bottom left corner stamp), ex WG O'Sullivan, HP Watts, LE Dawson and WC Hellrigl



cover from WG O'Sullivan prepaid with 1/2 anna **yellow shade** in combination with all other classic issue stamps 1921 Ghumdhang to India, a philatelic use overpaying Nepal internal postage to British post office in Kathmandu **the only reported example of this shade on cover**, three other used singles are known



block of 12 used telegraphically at Birganj
fewer than 10 known used blocks



tete-beche pairs, (positions 49-57 and 7-8)
8 used tete-beche pairs known



This section includes the rare three color frankings of the 1881 to 1907 printings. No more than twenty covers that show combination use of the 1 anna blue, 2 annas violet and 4 annas green stamps are known. There were two ways to reach the 7 annas total rate of a three color franking. The first was a single weight inland postage rate of 1 anna, plus 5 annas registry fee plus acknowledgment of receipt fee of 1 anna. The second was a double weight inland postage rate of 2 annas, plus a 5 annas registry fee.



The stamp designs are shown above. The Nepali words of denomination that appear in the side panels (one, two and four) are highlighted in red.

1881 - 1885 Printings

Registered cover bearing the complete set of Nepal first issue of 1881

The 1881 to 1885 printings were on European white wove paper. Each denomination was printed three different settings.



October 1881 Jaleswar registered cover to Kathmandu, Jaleswar hexagonal cancels prepaid for double weight plus registry with 1 anna (setting 3), 2 annas (setting 2) and 4 annas (setting 1) Jaleswar dispatch postmark (middle image) and Kathmandu (lower) arrival backstamp **three known covers bear the complete set of the 1881 to 1885 printings**



Cover bearing the complete set

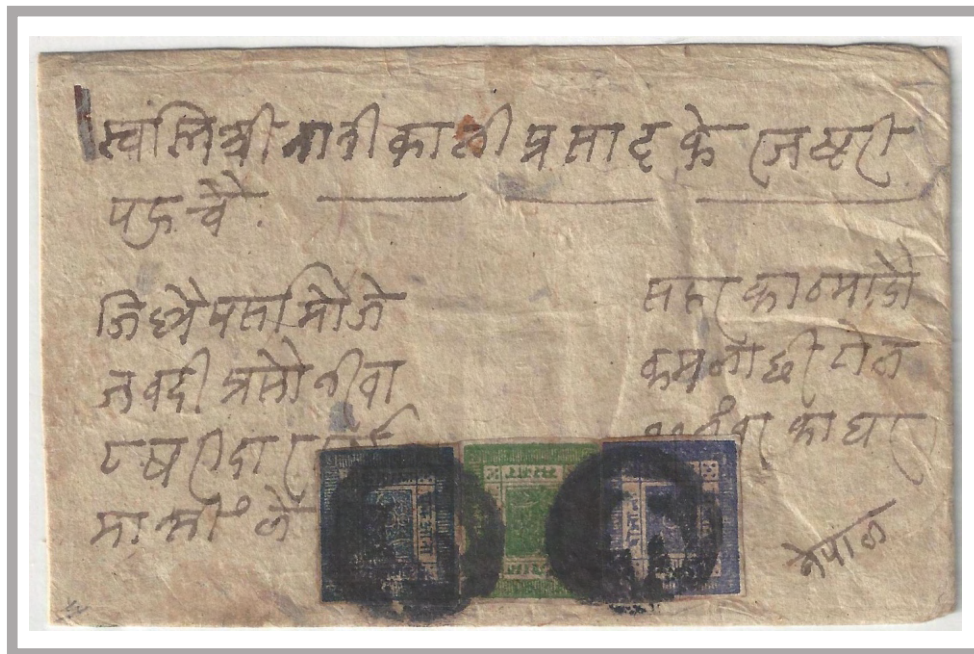
1886 - 1898 Printings

The 1886 - 1898 printings were on native paper of good quality. The paper was manufactured from the inner bark of an evergreen native to the mountain regions of Nepal.

Although there was a significant increase in the amount of mail sent within in Nepal during this period, the two and four annas denominations used on cover are rare as most letters were sent at the one anna rate.



Kalaiya



1893 Kalaiya registered cover with acknowledgment of receipt to Kathmandu prepaid 7 annas (5 annas registry plus 1 anna rate plus 1 anna for AR) with 1 anna, 2 annas and 4 annas manuscript arrival notation "Registry Pahucha Paune" of acknowledgment of receipt on back **fewer than six known covers with the entire 1886 - 1898 printings**



Cover bearing the complete set

1898 - 1907 Printings

The 1898 to 1907 printings were on thin native paper of poor quality. The stamps printed from the now-worn cliches show blurred impressions. The one anna stamps printed after 1901 all show recut outer frames.



Pokhara



November 1904 Pokhara registered cover to Kathmandu double weight registry rate prepaid by 1 anna, 2 annas and 4 annas **fewer than ten known covers with the entire set of 1898 - 1907 printings**



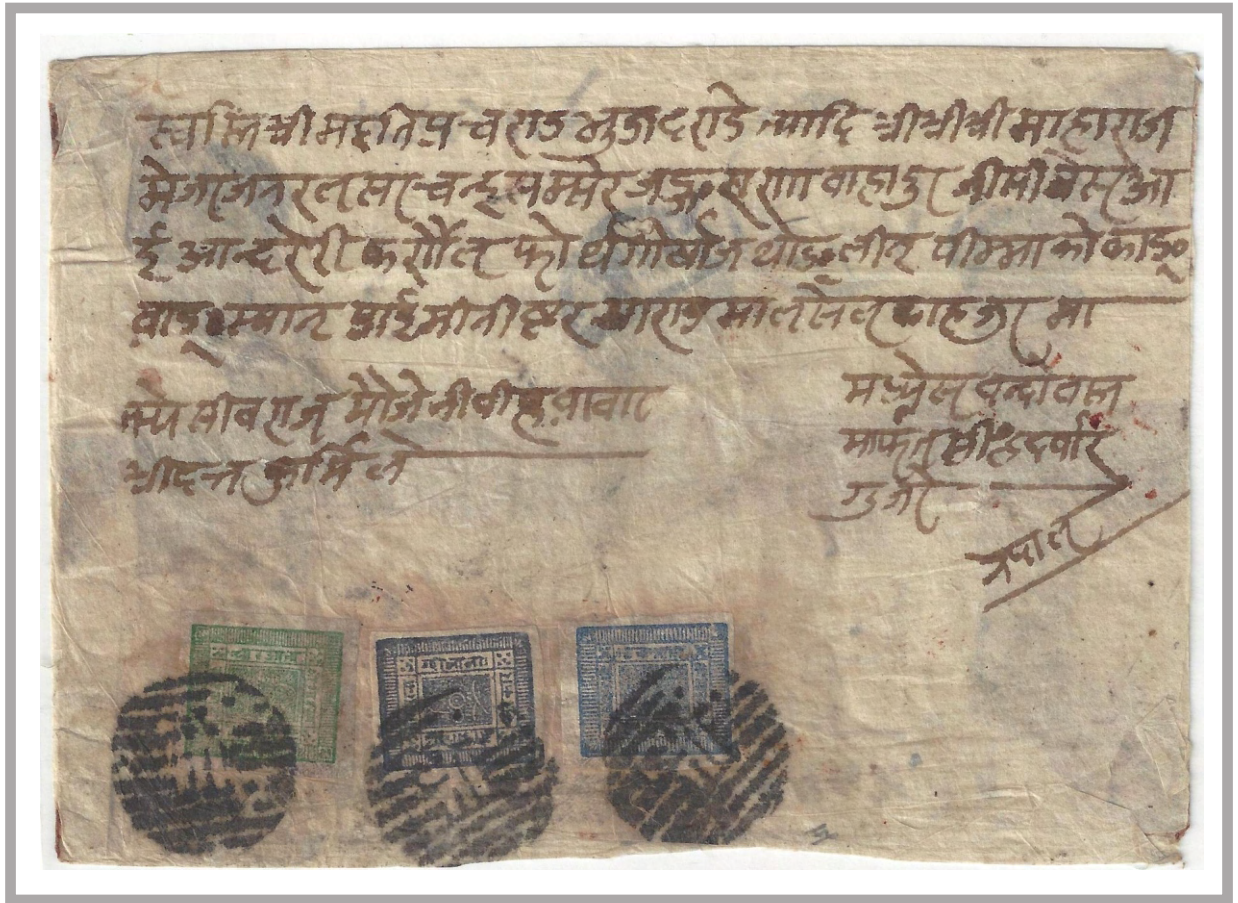
Ridi

fragment with 7 annas registry rate prepaid by 1 anna, 2 annas and 4 annas, Ridi cancels



Cover bearing the complete set

1898 - 1907 Printings



August 1907 registered cover from Taulihawa to Kathmandu
7 annas registered rate (5 annas registry fee plus double weight postage of 2 anna)



Dhankuta

जखी

Registered

पौचपाउने

Acknowledge
Due

August 1907 Dhankuta registered cover with acknowledgment of receipt (endorsements at top as shown)
prepaid 7 annas (5 annas registry plus 1 anna rate plus 1 anna for AR) with 1 anna, 2 annas and 4 annas
fewer than ten known covers with the entire set of 1898 - 1907 printings

Kalaiya cancels



manuscript "tree" drawn in stamped postmark rim
1 anna and 4 annas, 1881 prints



manuscript "Ka" on 1 anna, 1881



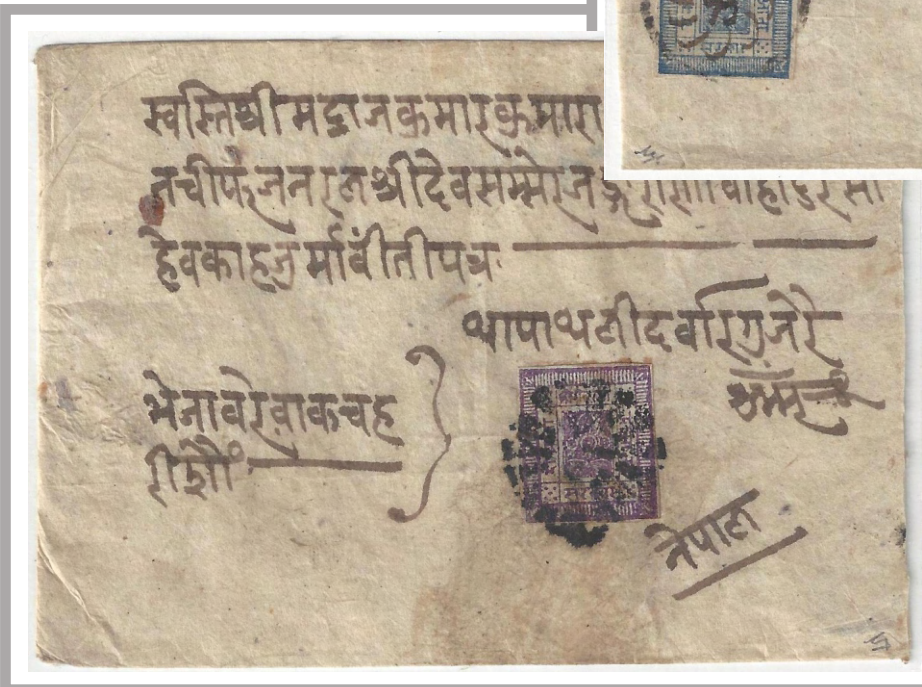
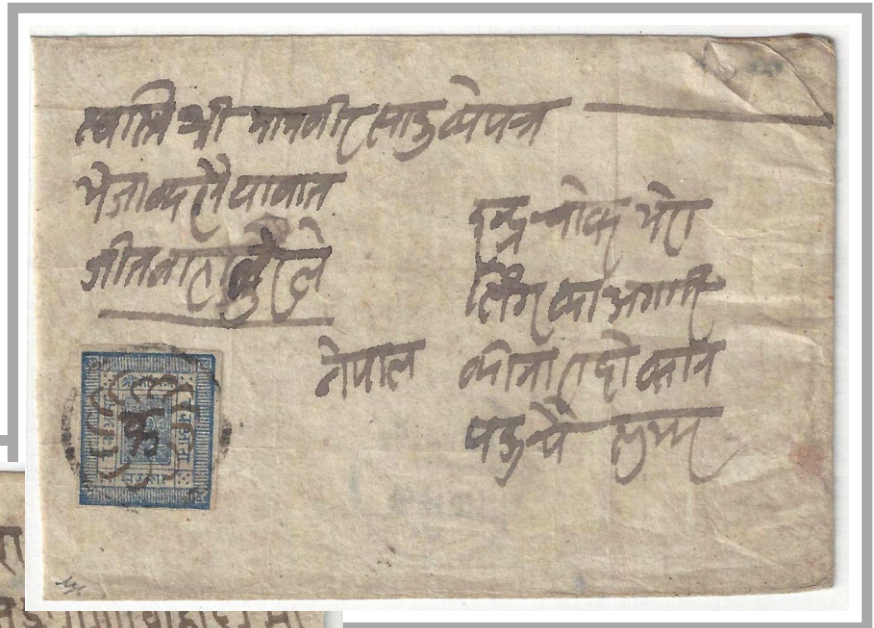
Kalaiya postmark used as cancel
overstruck with Kathmandu swirl
1881 1 anna **pin-perforated**



"Ka" hexagonal struck in blue green
1 anna **pin-perforated** and 2 annas, 1881 prints



Nov 1886 Kalaiya manuscript "Ka" and swirl
drawn inside postmark rim, 1 anna
earliest use of native paper on cover
the only example of cancel



Oct 1889 "Ka" in wedges cancel **six**
known covers bear
2 annas 1881 printing

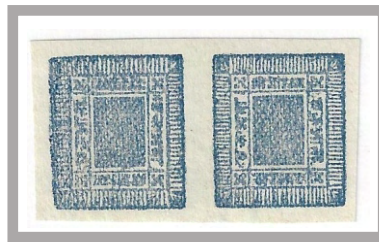
One Anna European Paper Issue

In 1901 all of the outer frames of the one anna cliches were recut to help refresh them. The initial printing from the new setting was made on high quality European white wove paper. Of this printing Hellrigl wrote, "This stamp ranks amongst the rarest of Nepal with only 200 to 250 copies believed to exist."



the ex Garratt-Adams and Armand Singer block

margin block of four, positions 23-24, 31-32, bottom pair is **tete-beche** with cliche 32 inverted
the only reported block of four and the largest known multiple of the European paper printings



tete-beche pair, positions 26-27 (cliche 27 inverted)
about 12 tete-beche pairs known on European paper

Pin-Perforated



tete-beche pair, positions 63-64, (cliche 64, the major damaged corner cliche)
the only reported example



The only Inverted Cliche of the First Printings

The first example of an inverted printing cliche in Nepal philately occurred in the third setting of the two annas denomination. This setting was used for the last printing before the switch from European wove paper to native paper in 1885. The resulting tete-beche pairs are the first of these varieties that would become a notable feature of many of the later printings. There are only two unused pairs and the used strip shown below are known.

Surprisingly, a strip of three is the largest used multiple of any denomination of the 1881 to 1885 printings and only the one anna and two anna are known in used strips.

center stamp inverted cliche, position 22



<< inverted cliche >>



strip of three (positions 14, 22, 30), position 22 the **inverted cliche**
Dankuta barred circle cancels, largest reported used multiple of any denomination

the only reported used tete-beche of any denomination of the issue

This used strip corrects the record regarding the position of the inverted cliche. Hellrigl, based on examination of the two known unused pairs published in 1984 that the inverted cliche was in position 21. His certification of this strip in 1994 led him to revise that to position 22.

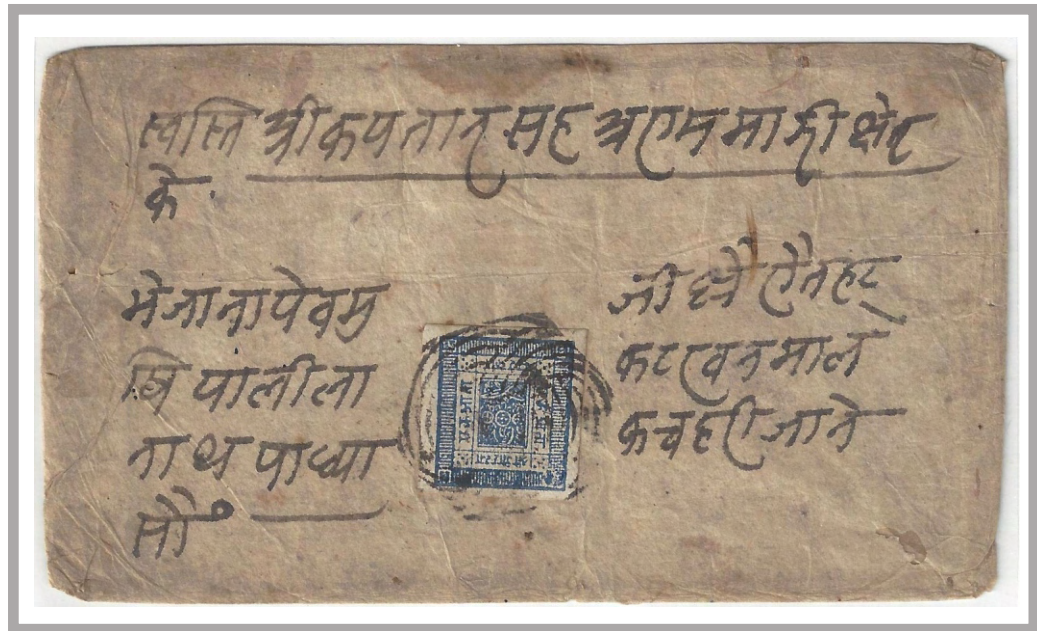
Tete-Beche Pairs on Cover



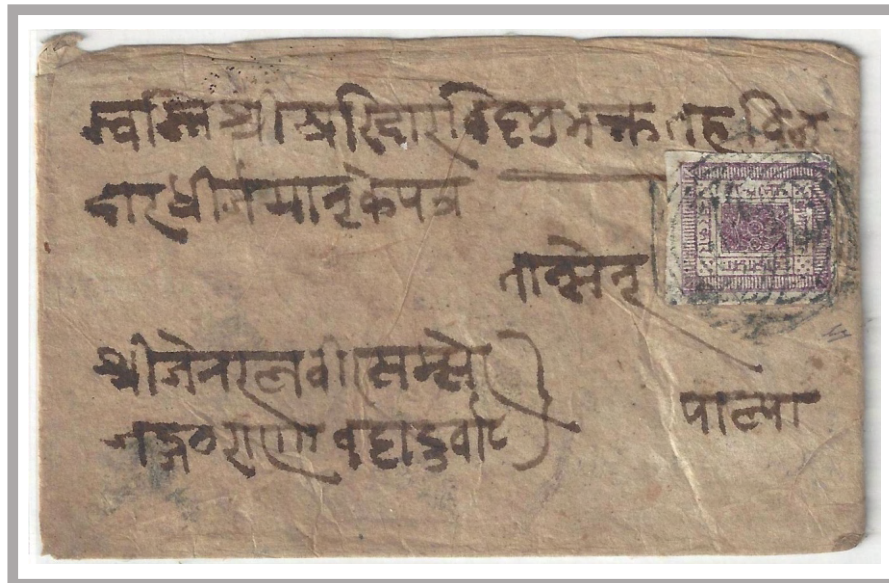
September 1907 registered cover from Kanchanpur, 2 annas strip with **tete-beche pair at right**
8 annas total rate, registry, double inland and AR fee prepaid, positions 8-16-24 (position 8 inverted cliche)
the only reported example of rate make-up



September 1907 registered cover from Karnali, 2 annas strip with **tete-beche pair** (at top right)



August 1883 Kathmandu to Kadarban, 1 anna, 1881-1885 printings paying single weight rate
Kathmandu swirl cancel



13 June 1881 double weight cover from General Bir Shansher at Kathmandu to Palpa
2 annas, 1881 - 1885 printings paying double weight rate
earliest reported use of a 2 annas stamp
six reported covers with the two annas of 1881 - 1885 printings

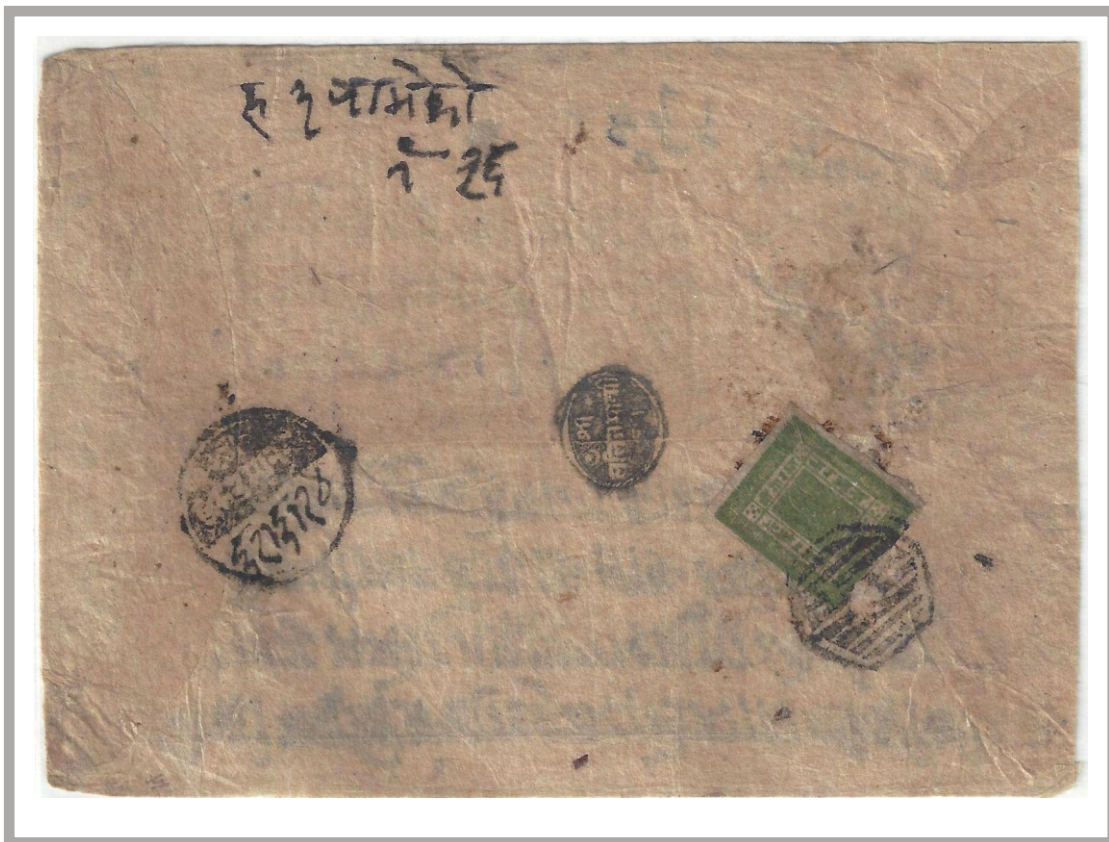
There were four basic postal rates for letter mail within Nepal during the period of classic issues:

1. A letter to one tola weight (11.66 grams, the legal weight of one rupee coin), 1 anna
2. A double weight letter weighing up to two tolas, 2 annas
3. A registered letter with wax seals, registry fee of 5 annas plus the postage by weight
4. A registered letter with acknowledgment of receipt, additional fee of 1 anna



October 1904 Dhankuta to Kathmandu, triple rate postage (weight between 2 and 3 tolas) prepaid with 2 annas plus 1 anna recut

fewer than five reported examples of this rate make-up



October 1905 quadruple rate cover from Hanumannagar to Kathmandu 4 annas rate to 4 tolas weight prepaid by single 4 annas green, setting 11
the only reported example of the 4 annas rate during the classic period

Registered Rate



Dhankua cancel and dispatch postmark



November 1898 registered double weight cover from Dhankuta to Kathmandu
7 annas registered rate (5 annas registry fee plus double weight postage of 2 annas)
prepaid with 4 annas and three copies 1 anna **pin-perforated** (partially separated by scissors)

Registered Rate
with
Acknowledgment of Receipt



Jaleswar non-standard cancel
used 1893-1907



December 1901 registered cover from Jaleswar with acknowledgment of receipt
8 annas total rate (5 annas registry, 2 annas double rate postage, plus 1 anna AR fee)
prepaid with 4 annas green pair, Jaleswar postmark and cancel

the only reported example of pair 4 annas on cover

The first stamps issued, printed between April and June 1881, were pin-perforated. In later periods (1898 - 1902) pin-perforated stamps were available at the post offices only upon request.

1881 First Printing



1 anna, setting 1, first printing, bottom row, positions 57-60 and 63-64
scarce large mint multiple of pin-perforated one anna showing border ornaments

1886 - 1900 Printings



2 annas, setting 14, **pin-perforated** double row of horizontal perms double row of vertical perms at left **only known example of double perforation error** in classic issues



4 annas, setting 8, marginal inscription block, **pin-perforated** positions 1-8, 9-16
two reported examples from this setting