

Synopsis

Kotah - 19th. Century Dual Postal System

Kotah, an Indian Princely States, had a very interesting postal system in place (actually two to be precise) till 1900 when the State Postal System was taken over by the Imperial Postal System on March 1st. 1901.

The stamps and postal history of Kotah were brought into the limelight by Mr. P.M. Medora's article "*Postage Stamps of Kotah State*" which appeared in the India Stamp Journal - October 1974 issue where Mr. Medora had written about his discovery of the adhesives of Indian Princely State of Kotah.

There have been many articles written on Kotah philately, since the initial discovery in 1974, but none as in-depth and scholarly as Dr. Frits Staal's 20 page article "*Kotah Stamps and Postal History*" which appeared in the London Philatelist - Volume 14 June 2005. It was the 2010 Scott Classic catalog that listed, for the first time, the stamps of Kotah.

Due importance was given to Kotah philately when they were exhibited at the 3rd "*Rare Stamps of the World*" exhibition at the Claridge's in 1999.

I have been collecting the stamps and postal history of Kotah for the past 22 years and philatelic items from Kotah rarely appear on the market - it has been 16 years since the last Kotah cover was sold at a public auction - that being the December 1994 Christie's Robson Lowe sale. The rarity is attributed to the fact that a total of only 19 genuine covers bearing adhesives of Kotah State have been recorded.

While there have been several great scholars and collectors of Kotah philately including H.D.S. Haverbeck, Mr. C.G. Jain, Mr. C.T. Sturton, Mr. Peter Rover, Dr. Frits Staal and Mr. J. Veldman - to name a few, none have been able to put together an assembly of Kotah in the depth that it is presented in my exhibit. .

Although some of the greatest highlights of the exhibit are the 10 adhesive bearing covers, the scope of this exhibit is to show an in-depth study of the postal history of the following two Postal Systems that operated concurrently and sometimes in unity within the State of Kotah from mid 1800's to 1900.

- The Postal History of Kotah from the start of the Imperial Postal System in the mid 19th. Century to 1900 when both the State and the Imperial Postal Systems were merged into one.
- The Postal History of Kotah from inception of the State Postal System in 1874 to the close of the State Postal System on March 1st. 1901 when it was taken over by the Imperial Postal System.

Some of the highlights of the exhibit, indicated throughout the exhibit with a red bullet, are:

Imperial Postal System

- 2 of only 2 known incoming postage due covers - pre 1851
- The only known incoming pre-paid cover - pre 1851
- The only known double weight cover - 1851 - 1854
- The only known cover bearing the bisected strike of Kotah
- The only known cover with 22mm serifed cds of Kotah

Native Postal System

- 3 of 7 known covers bearing forerunner to adhesives
- 3 of 11 known covers bearing the 2p green on yellow adhesives
- 1 of 2 known covers known bearing uncanceled copies of the Kotah adhesives
- The unique cover bearing a copy of the adhesive printed double
- The unique cover bearing a copy of the 1p adhesive
- 1 of 4 known covers bearing the 2p black on yellow adhesive
- The unique cover from Nahod
- The unique cover from Naraina
- The unique cover from Anta

References

- Scott 1840 - 1940 Classic Specialized Catalog
- "*Kotah Stamps and Postal History*" by Dr. Frits Staal - London Philatelist - Volume 14 June 2005
- "*Postage Stamps of Kotah State*" by Mr. P.M. Medora - India Stamp Journal - October 1974
- "*An Aftermath of extending postal unity in Kotah State*" Part I by Prof. K.D. Singh - India Post # 69 July 1981
- "*An Aftermath of extending postal unity in Kotah State*" Part II by Prof. K.D. Singh - India Post # 70 October 1981
- "*The Imperial Post in Kotah*" - by Mr. Peter Rover - India Post # 44 April 1975
- "Postal History of Jhalawar and Kotah" by David Padgham - India Post # 136 April 1998
- "*The Robson Lowe Sale 23rd September, 1981*" by Dr. Philip Kinns - India Post # 71 January 1982
- "*The postage stamps of Kotah State*" by unknown author - India Post # 43 January 1975