

NEPAL CALLING

Stamps the Telegraph System, 1917 to 1930



The telecommunication system of Nepal was born in 1917 when a telephone line connecting the capitol, Kathmandu, via an intermediate station, Chisapani, with the border town of Birganj was completed. Based on the British model, its governance was vested in the Post Office department. At the border town of Birganj a telephone connection with the cross-border town of Raxaul, India provided an access point to the world via the Indian telegraph system. A sub-station Amlekanj, located between Chisapani and Birganj, was added in

1927 when the railway line was completed between Raxaul and Amlekanj. This hybrid system that combined telephone and telegraphic communications is termed a "Tel-Tel" system.

In 1917, the remainder of the classic design postage stamps that had been stored at the Treasury in 1907 were re-purposed for use in paying the new Tel-Tel fees. When the stored stamps were exhausted, additional printings were ordered. Although the stamps printed between 1917 and 1930 were intended for the Tel-Tel service, they were also valid for postage within Nepal.

The classic design issue stamps were printed by typography using clichés locked into print formes until a one anna plate-printed stamp was issued in 1928. Many of the clichés had seen use since 1881 and were generally heavily worn. The settings often included missing, inverted or transferred clichés.

This exhibit includes the distinctive cancels followed by a review of the stamps by denomination.

Telegraphic Cancels

Head Telephone Office at
Kathmandu - 1917 internal date



one anna



two annas



four annas

Telegraphic Period, 1917-1930

Telegraphic Cancels



Sub Office I - 1917
Chisapani



4 annas and 1/2 anna blocks; Chisapani cancels with internal 1917 date



Sub Office II - 1917
Brigandj

1/2 anna block, top pair tête-bêche and 4 annas, Brigandj cancels with internal date



Amlekanj - internal date 1927
office opened in 1927



telegraph form, 10 1/2 annas fee for 14 words paid with 1/2 anna single and 2 annas block

Telegraphic Period, 1917-1930

Postal Cancels

Some few telegraphic period stamps bear postal cancels, most dated between 1928 and 1930. The scant information available indicates that the devices may have been transferred from post office control to use in the the telegraph offices in at least Chisapani and Kathmandu.



Kathmandu
postal cancel



1 anna, Kathmandu 1929 cancel



Chisapani
postal cancel



2 annas, 1928 Chisapani cancel and 4 annas, 1928 Kathmandu cancel



1/2 anna, 1928 Kathmandu cancels

Telegraphic Period, 1917-1930

Used on Telegraph Forms



2 annas single, pair ½ anna and three copies 4 annas affixed to portion of telegraph form used to Chisapani



मिनेट २४ | २७०५ | १०/११/१९२८

यि सर्भिस हेडिङ्गको खण्डको तैय्यापठाउनेले केहि नलेखनु यसदेखि मुनिक।

खबर पाउनेको नाम पत्ता ठेगाना पुरातत्त्वसंग यसखण्डमा लेखनु
 नाम *श्री. क. लाल शर्मा*
 ठेगाना

*Hawken wires cable the 14th
 notations sent tenth februe
 rel Kaiser Kalthianan*

टेलिफोनबाट भेज्ने
 पठाउनेको नाम
 ठेगाना

१०/११/१९२८

½ anna, setting 7, pos D3-8/H3-8, Birganj cancels, on part telegraph form (as shown reduced)

Stored Sheet, Setting 5

A very few sheets from setting 5, at press between 1906 and early 1907, were stored in the Treasury when the classic issues were replaced in late 1907. The items shown below, from the stored stock, were released in 1917 for telegraphic use. **These are the proving pieces.**



tête-bêche pair, pos. H1-2
position H1 inverted
Birganj telegraphic cancel



positions A1-3/F1-3 on telegraph form
Birganj telegraphic cancels

Setting 6, 1917

A short print run of the one-half anna in orange-vermilion rather than black was printed from a new setting in 1917. The tête-bêche items shown are two of the four known unused.



discovery sheet block
pos. C2-C3/D2-D3



tête-bêche pair, pos. A7-A8
pos. A7 with flattened base is inverted



bottom half of the O'Sullivan discovery sheet found in 1921, positions E1-E8/ H1-H8
inverted cliché position H1 (bottom left corner stamp), the largest known multiple

ex O'Sullivan, Watts, Dawson and Hellbrig

Tête-Bêche Multiples

Setting 6 included three inverted clichés. All are shown in used pairs below.



inverted position A7 has
flattened base flaw



tête-bêche pairs, position A6/B6, A7-8 and G1/H1
inverted clichés positions A6, A7 and H1
three of the eight used tête-bêche pairs known



block of twelve, positions F3/H5 and block of four, positions A2-3/B2-3
fewer than ten known used blocks, most being blocks of four

One-Half Anna Orange Yellow Shade setting 6

The one-half anna printed in the so-cataloged "lemon" shade, or more accurately, orange-yellow, is known only in four used singles and one cover.



$\frac{1}{2}$ anna orange yellow, position A3, Kathmandu telegraphic cancel
four known used examples of this shade

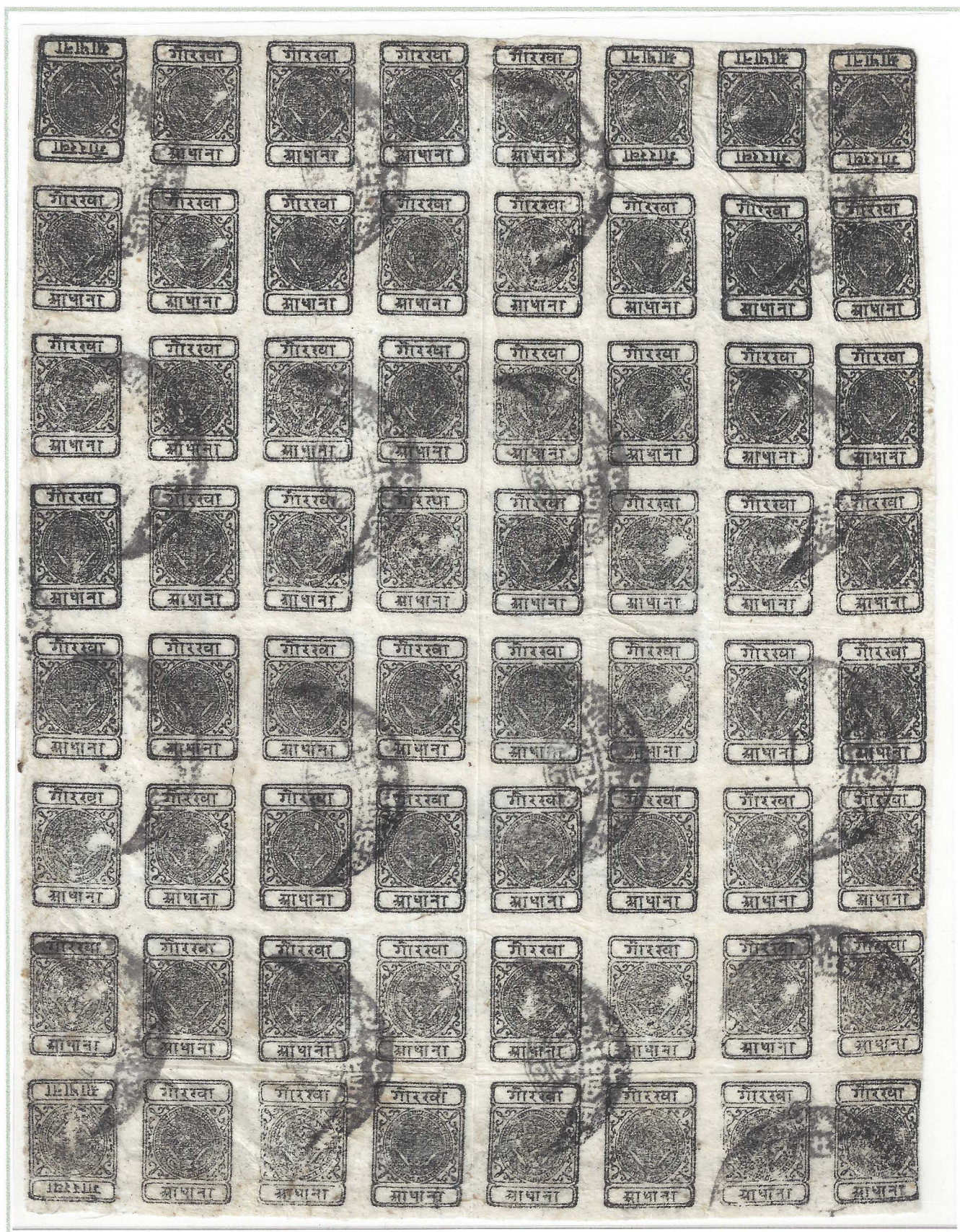


January 1921 cover from O'Sullivan in Ghumdhang, via British office in Kathmandu, to India
philatelic overpayment with $\frac{1}{2}$ anna orange yellow plus additional Nepal and India stamps
the only reported example of this shade on cover

ex Singer

Setting 7, 1917-1919

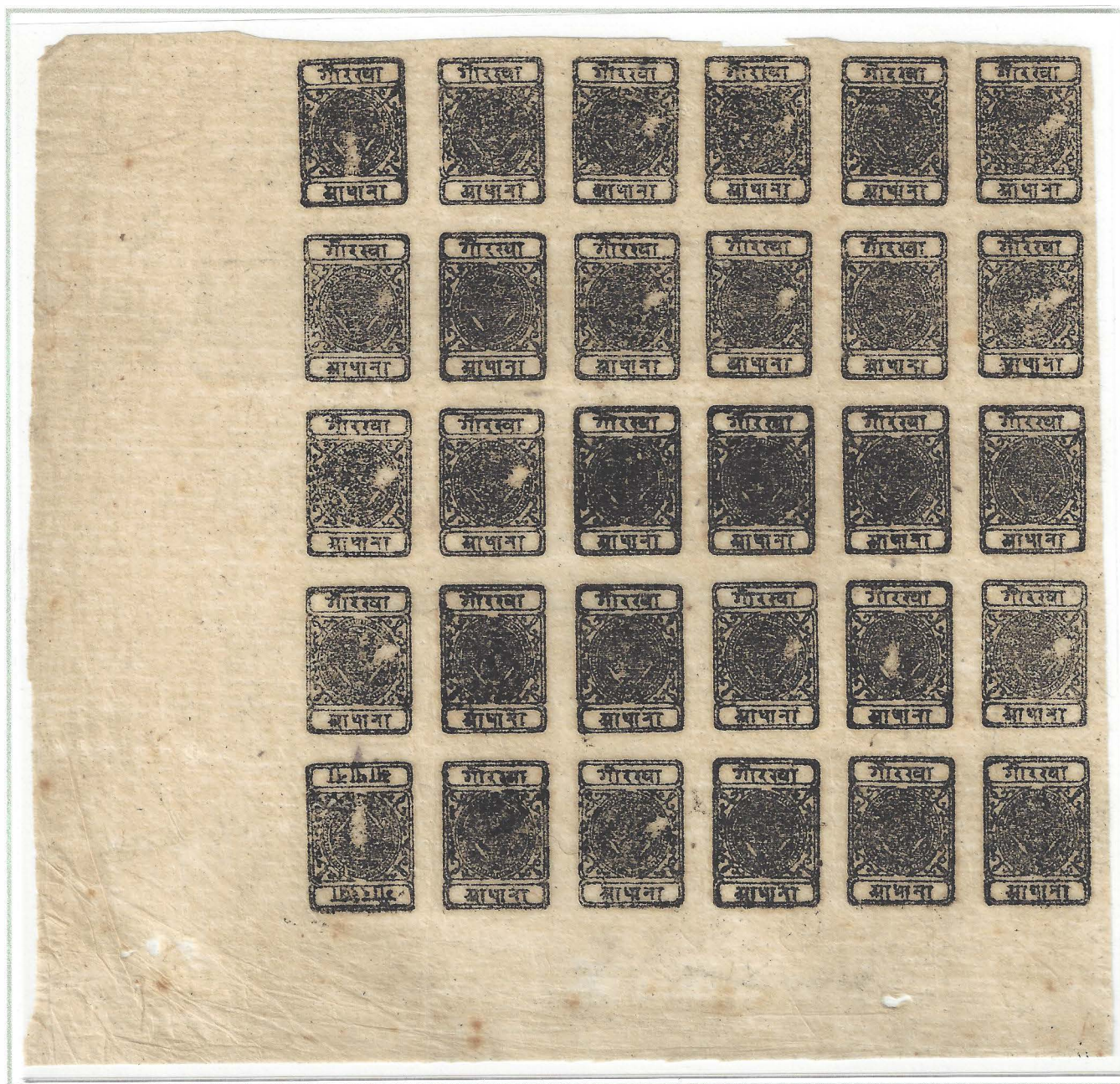
This setting was the first used for the black printings during the telegraphic period.



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6, A7, A8 and H1; flattened base in inverted position A7

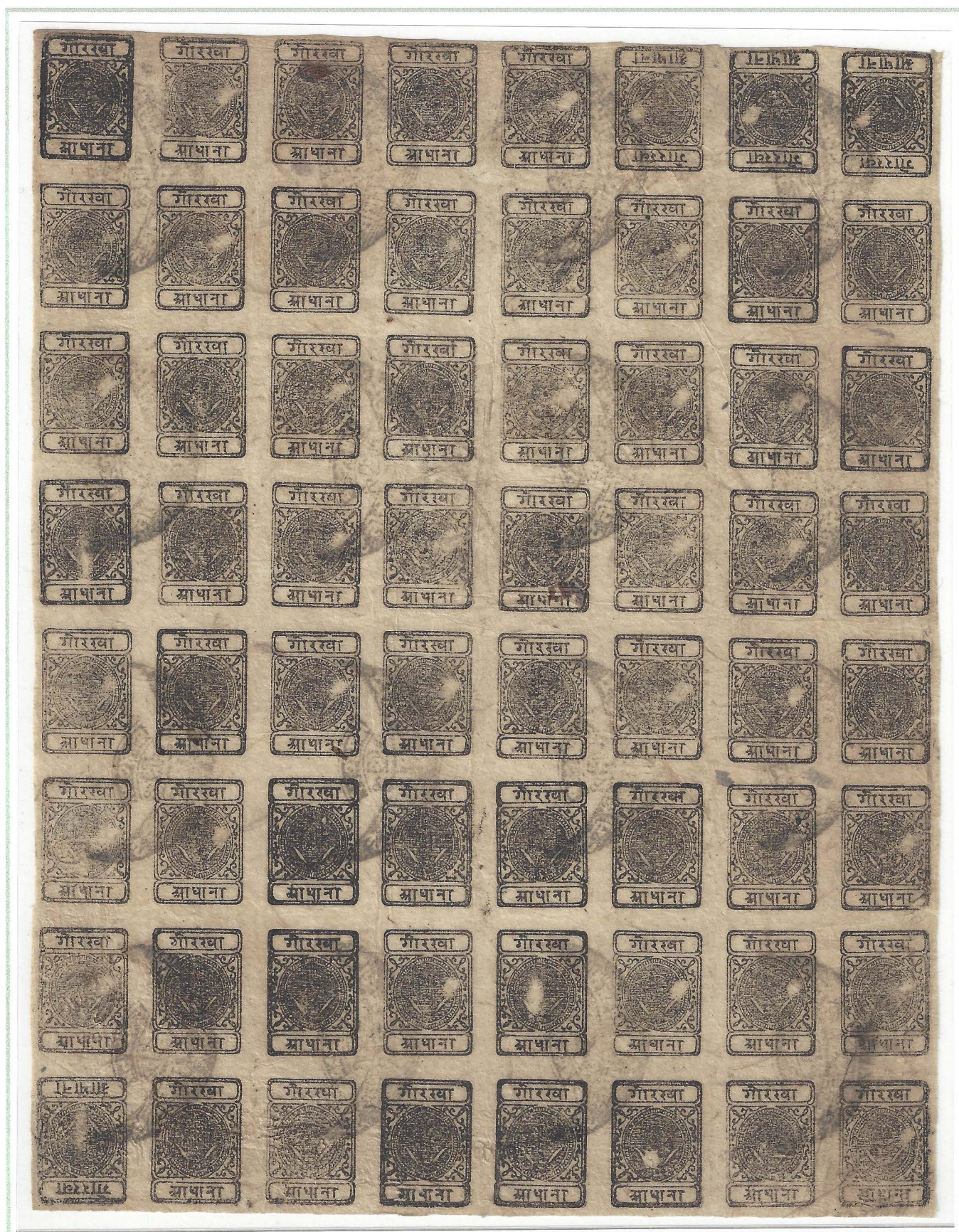
Setting 8, 1919-1921

This setting, which includes four inverted clichés also includes a new flaw, a dash after word of value in tablet at foot of position H8.



unused block of 30, positions D1-6/H1-6, inverted cliché position H1
second largest reported unused multiple of this setting, the other being a full sheet

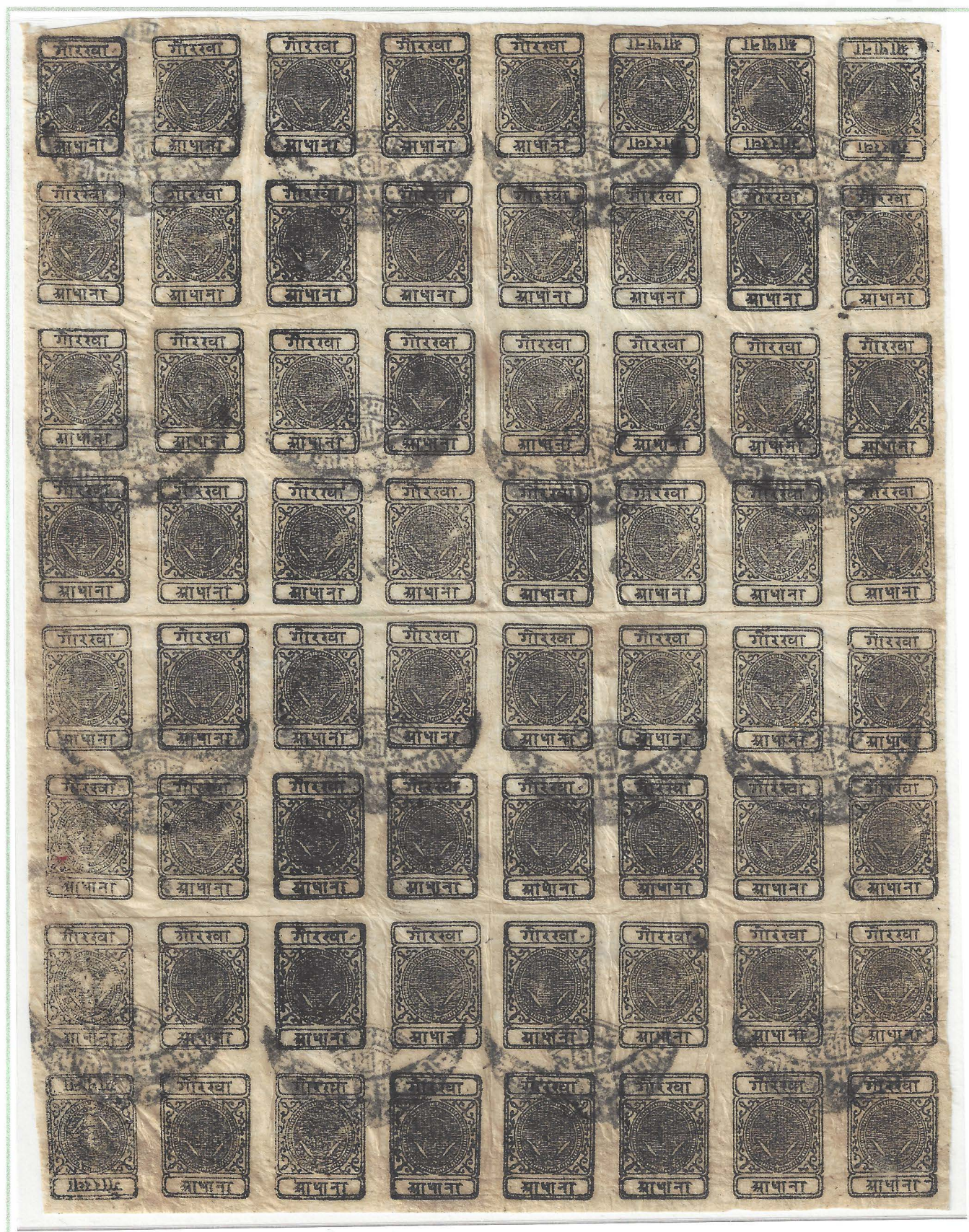
Setting 8, 1919-1921



inverted cliché positions A6-8, H1, Birganj telegraphic cancels

Setting 8, Late State

In the late state, position H8, shows a prominent dash at right of lower tablet of value.



late state, inverted cliché positions A6-8, H1, Birganj telegraphic cancels

Setting 10, 1922-1924



inverted cliché positions: A6-8, D1 and H1, flattened base cliché transferred to position A1

Setting 11, 1924-1925

Single Blister Flaw

position F2
earliest state
largest multiple



positions E1/F2
discovery block

ex Michel



>>

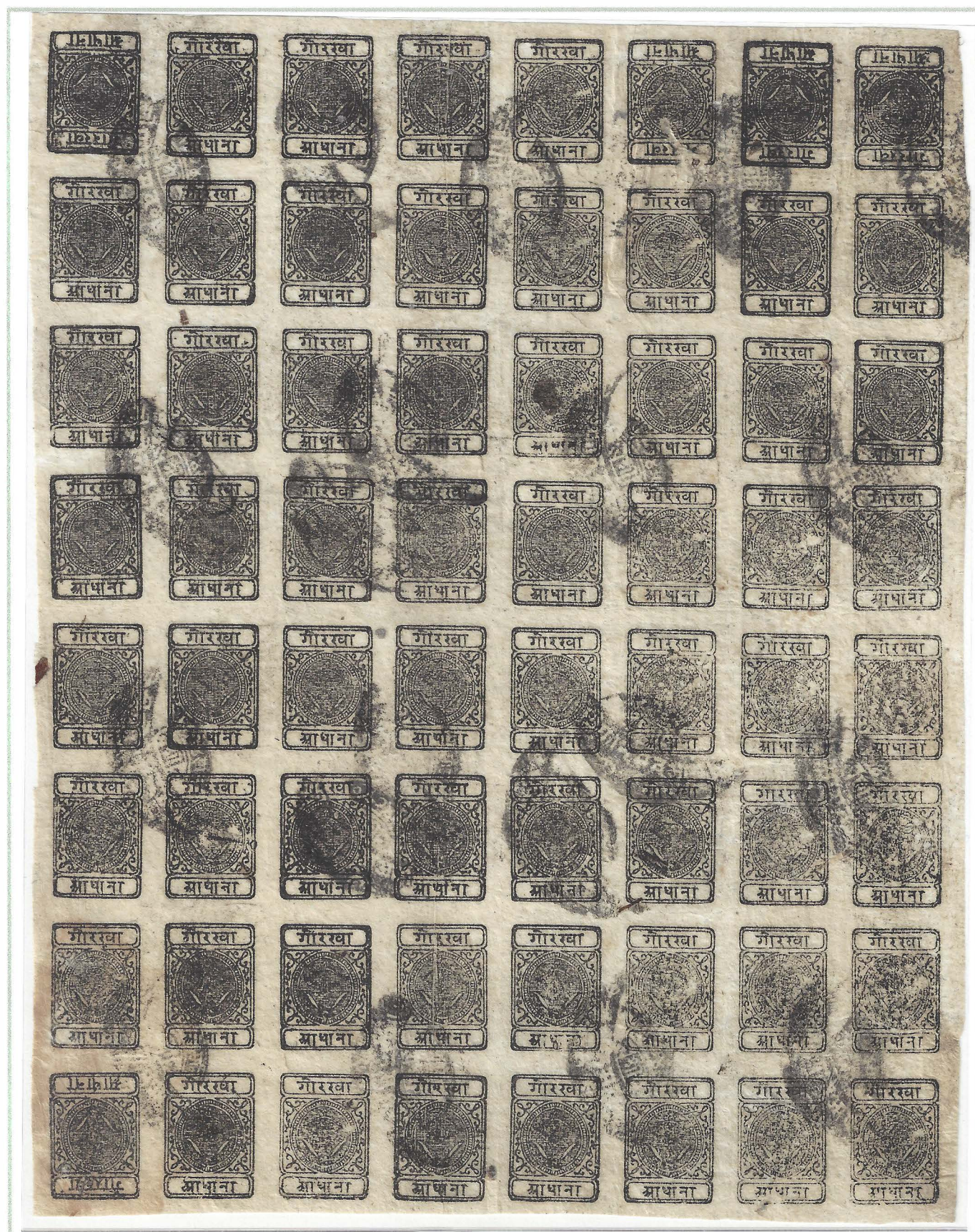
single blister flaw
earliest state which
shows slash to left
possibly caused by
a pin on the plate.



positions A1-5, B2-6, C1-6/H1-6, blister flaw pos. F2, inverted cliché pos.: A1, D1 and H1

Setting 12, First State, 1925-1926

The first state shows a single blister flaw at F2, the second state has a double blister flaw.



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, and H1, single blister flaw: position F2, only reported sheet

Setting 12, Second State, 1925-1926

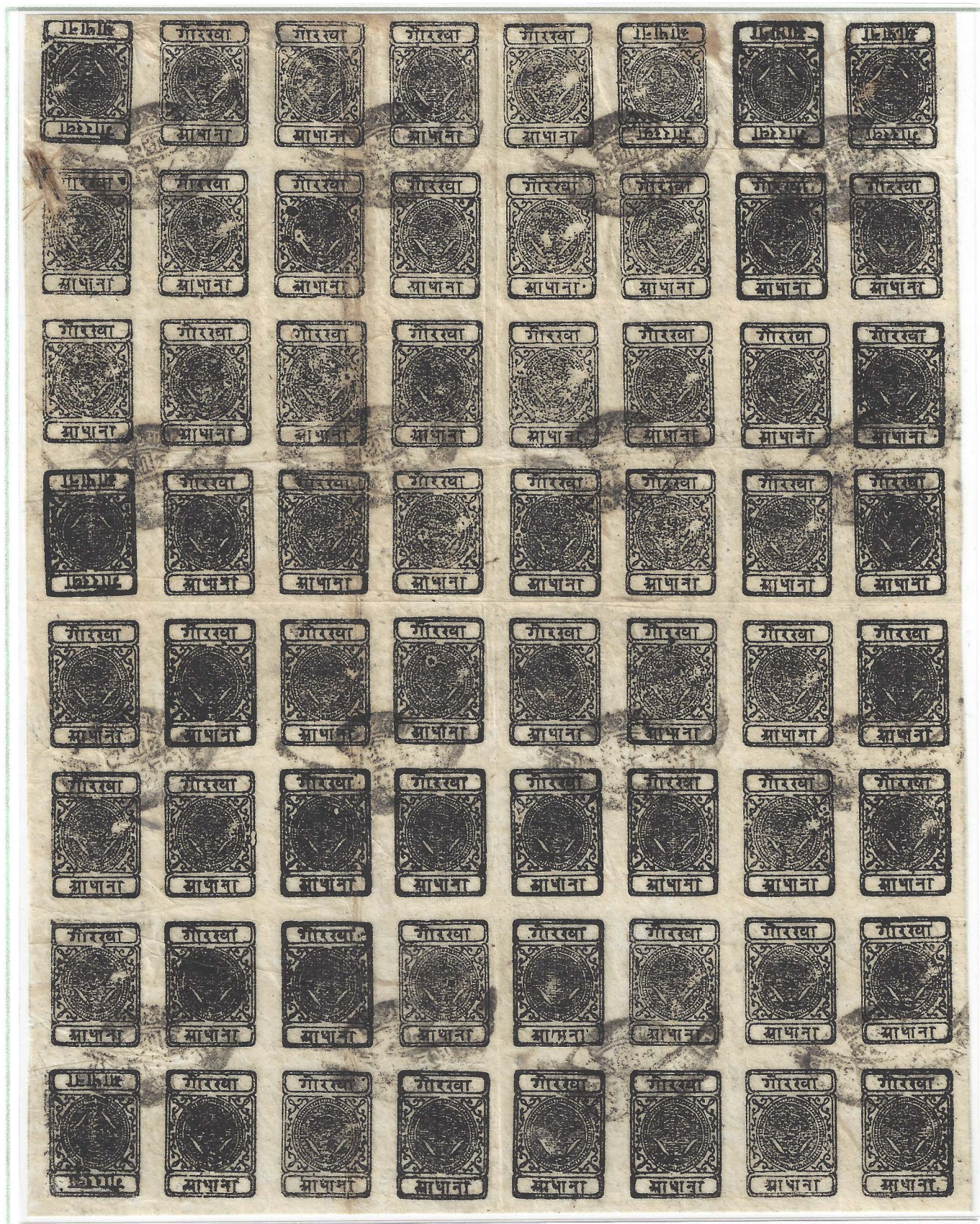
The second state has what is now a double blister flaw at position F2.



gray black shade, inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, and H1, double blister flaw: position F2

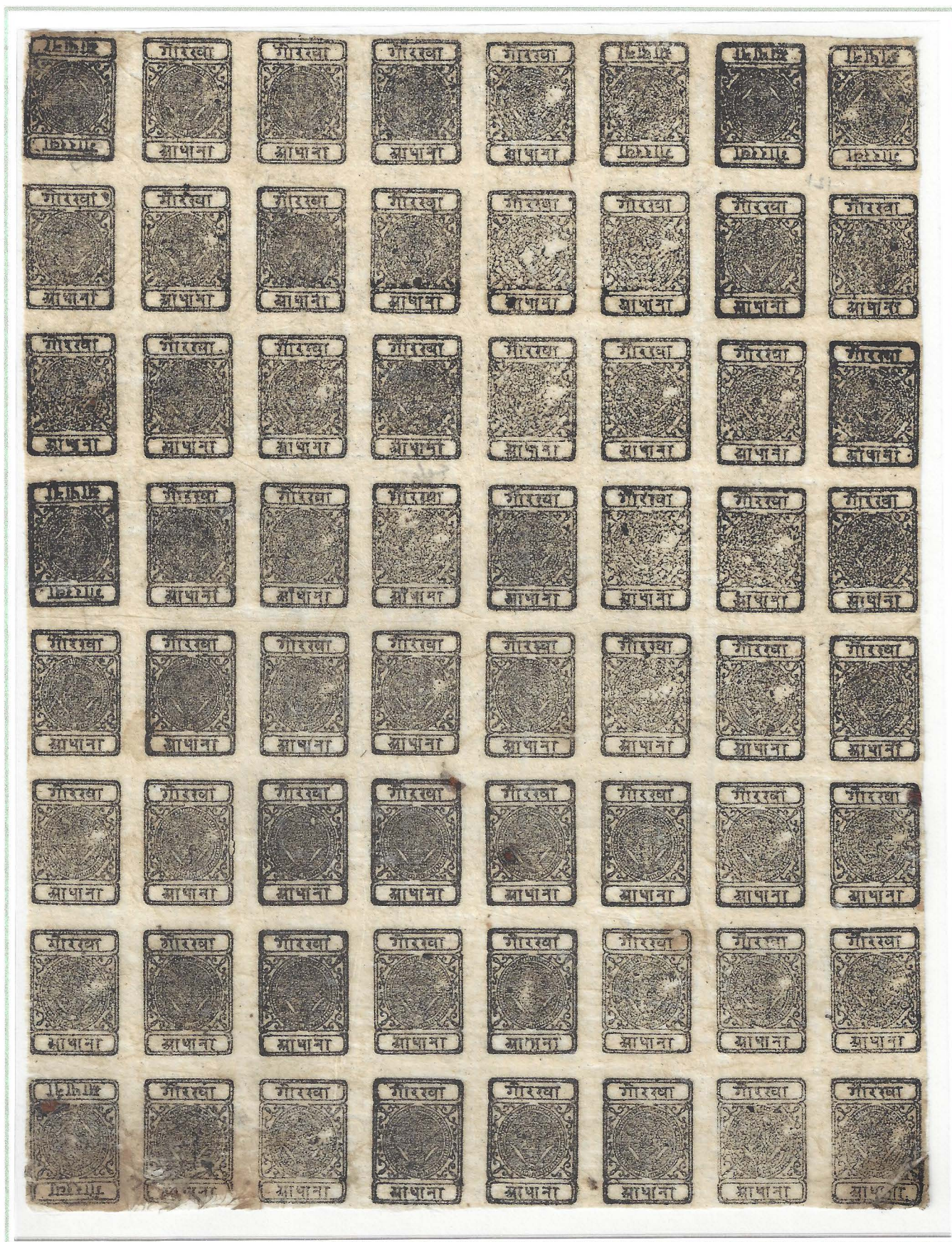
Setting 12, Second State, 1925-1926

The second state has what is now a double blister flaw at position F2.



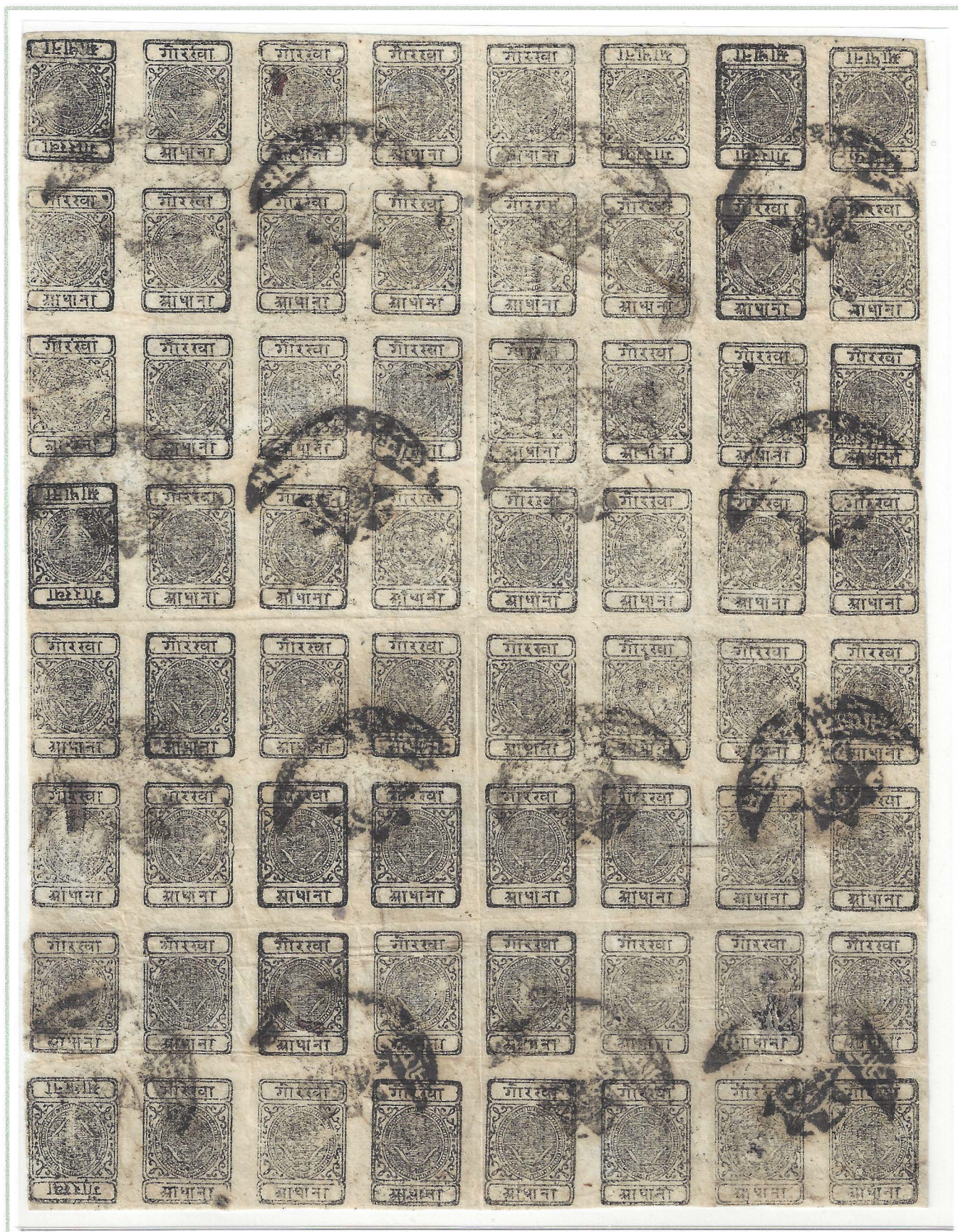
deep black shade, inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, and H1, double blister flaw: position F2

Setting 13, 1926-1930



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, D1 and H1; double blister flaw position: F2
four reported mint sheets

Setting 13, 1926-1930



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, D1 and H1; double blister flaw position: F2
Kathmandu telegraphic cancels

Setting 13, Pin-Perforated



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8, D1 and H1; double blister flaw position: F2
the only reported used pin-perforated sheet of the period 1917-1930

Setting 13, 1926-1930
Partial Double Impression

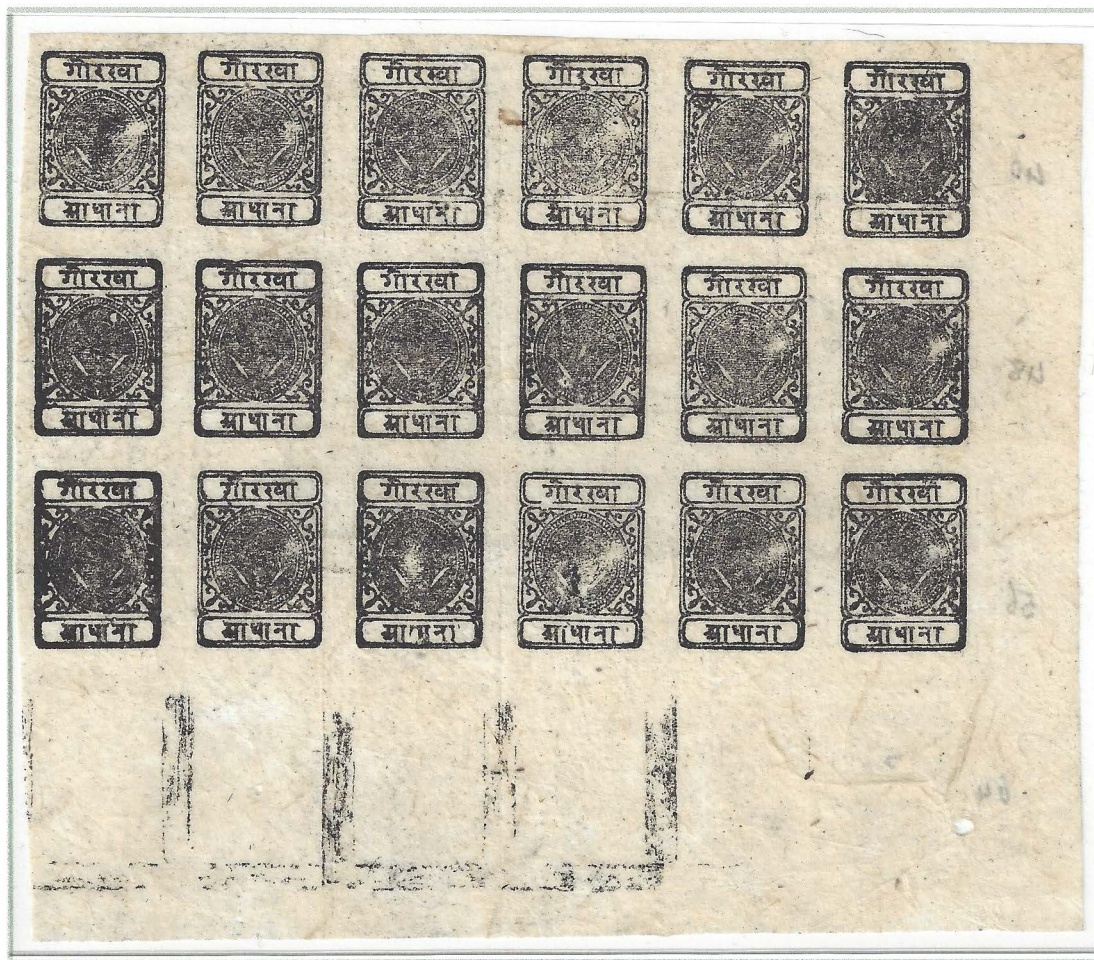


block, positions C1-H8, inverted cliché positions: D1 and H1
missing double blister flaw usually found on position F2

cert Flack, ex Sanford

Setting 14, First State, 1929-1930

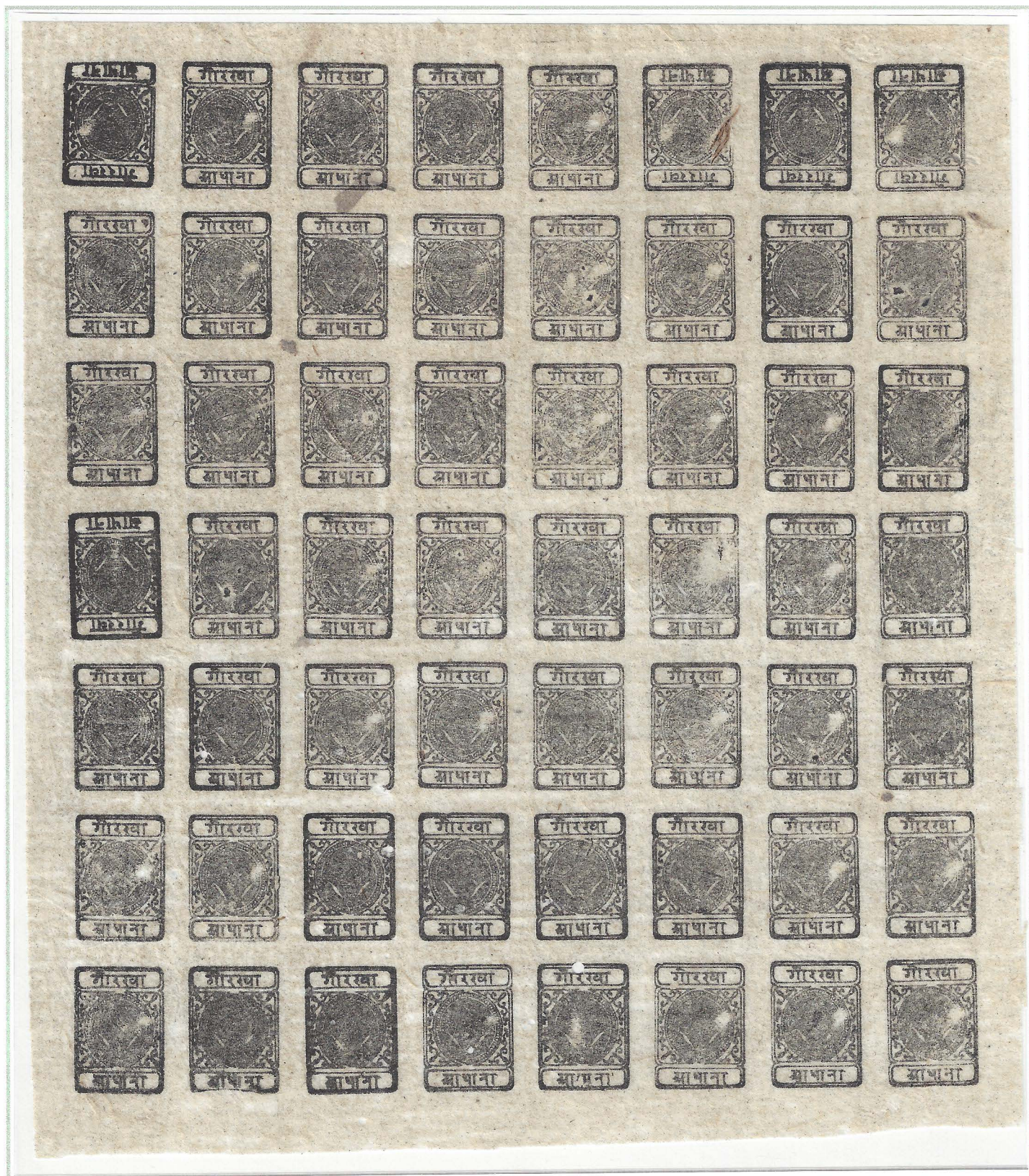
Setting 14, with only 7 rows instead of 8, was the last setting used to print the one-half anna stamps. The first state shows impression from spacers where clichés were removed at foot. Not known used.



block from bottom right corner of sheet, positions E3-E8/G3-G8
this block and two complete sheets are known

Setting 14, Second State, 1929-1930

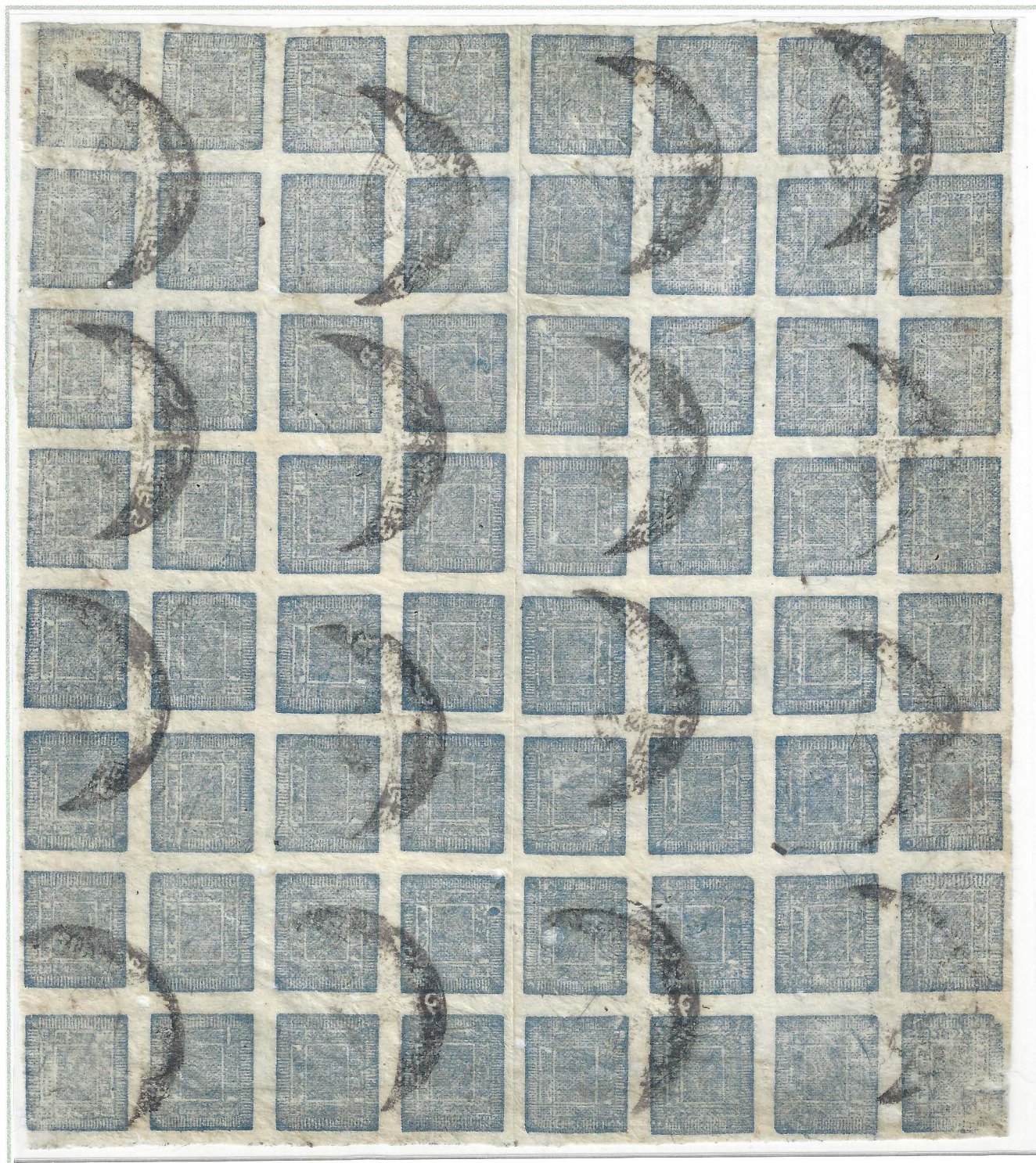
Setting 14 contained seven rows instead of eight. The second state, after the blank spaces at foot had been trimmed away, show damage to the base of position G2.



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6-8 and D1
with the removal of row H in this setting, position G2 was damaged at foot

Stored Sheet, Setting 27, First State, 1903-1907

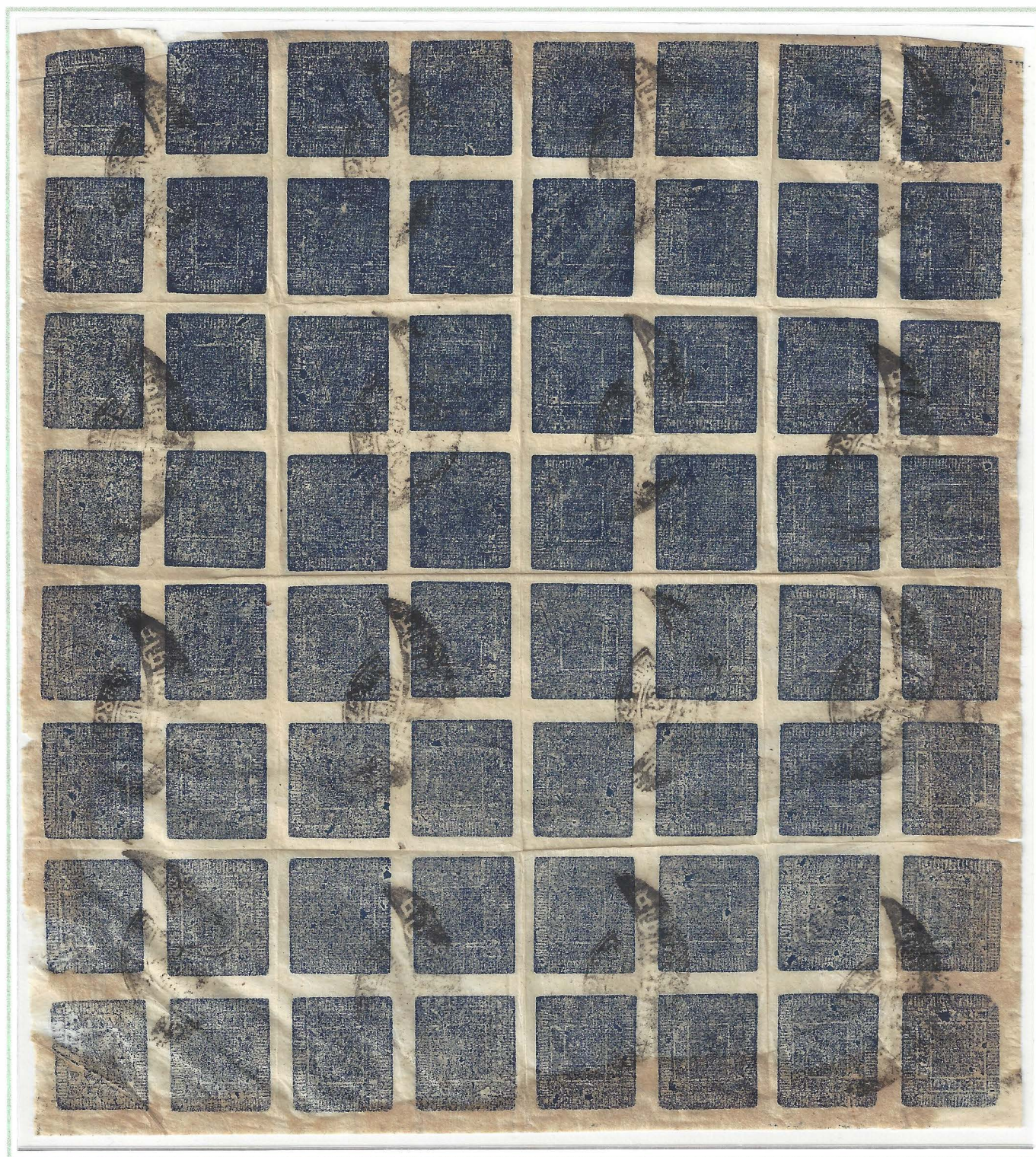
The first state of setting 27, at press only during the 1903 to 1907 period, has no "gash flaw" in position B2. The sheet below is a remaindered sheet used telegraphically after 1917.



inverted cliché positions: B7, C2, C7, D3, E5, E8, F1, G3 and H8
no gash flaw at position B2, inverted cliché position H8 shows corner flaw

Setting 27, Second State, 1917-1928

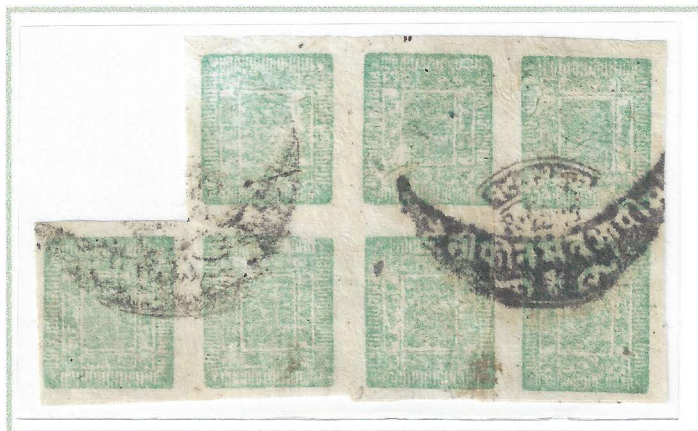
The earliest prints from the second state, such as this sheet, are the first to show a wide gash flaw in frame at top left of position B2.



inverted cliché positions: B7, C2, C7, D3, E5, E8, F1, G3 and H8
gash flaw at position B2, inverted cliché position H8 shows corner flaw

Emerald One Anna Error of Color**Setting 27, Second State, 1917**

The one anna printed in emerald shade of the four annas stamps are from the earliest printings of the period. The prints in green are slightly later. Neither are not known unused.



emerald shade error of color, Kathmandu and Birganj telegraphic cancels

Green One Anna Error of Color

"Kumari Chauk"
(Auditor General) cancel

This cancel was unknown to Hellrigl when he wrote his book in 1984. This is one of two blocks from the same sheet that were discovered in 1992.



positions: A6-8/C6-8, inverted cliché: position B7

Setting 27, Second State, 1917-1928

The late prints from the second state, such as this sheet, show evidence of heavy cleaning of the lettering as well as the gash flaw in position B2.



inverted cliché positions: B7, C2, C7, D3, E5, E8, F1, G3 and H8
gash flaw at position B2, inverted cliché position H8 shows corner flaw

Plate II, 1928-1930

Plate II, in use 1928 to 1930, was not a form of individual clichés as previous but rather a true plate of identical subjects of a new design. Note the "teardrop" corner ornaments.

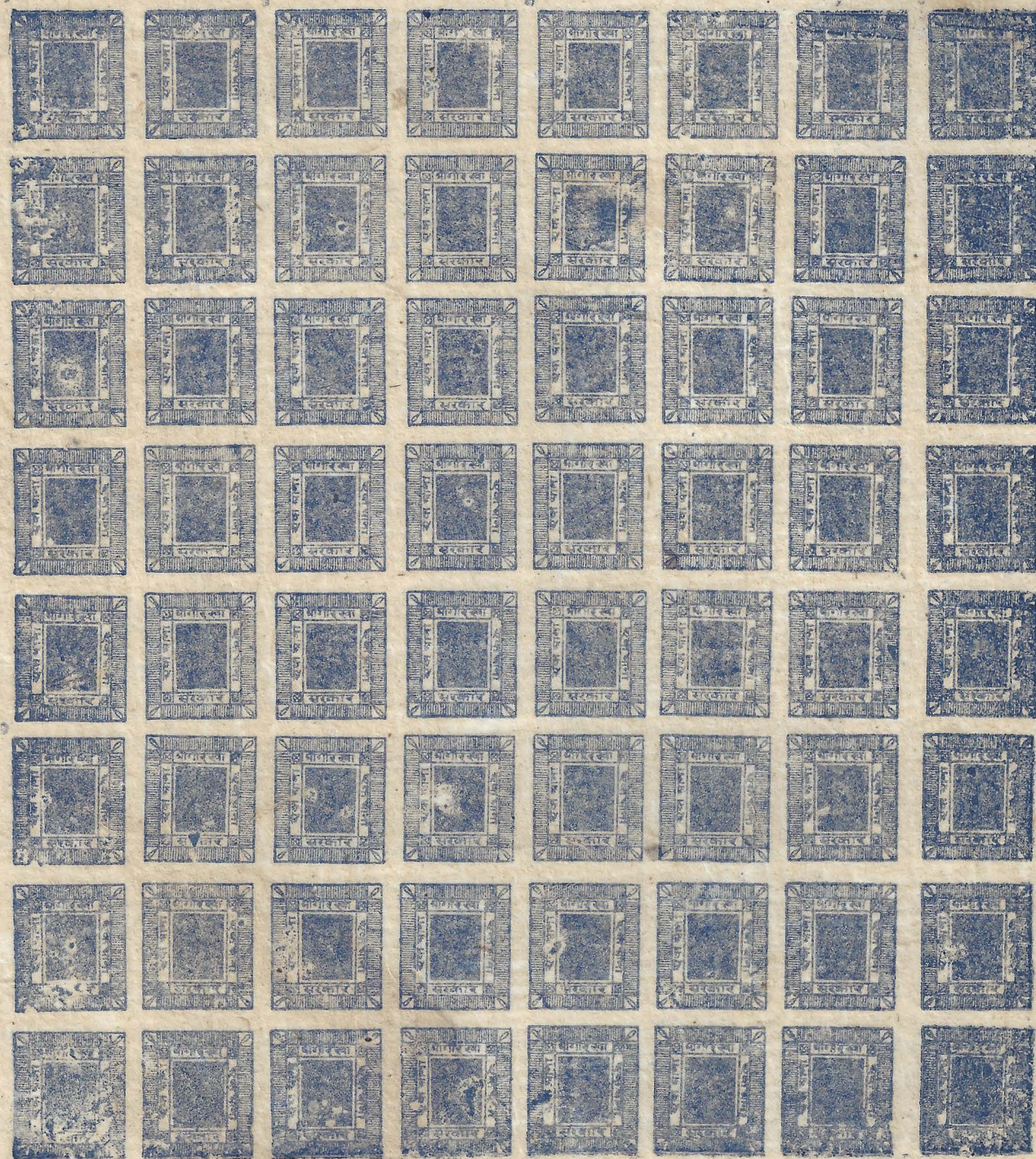
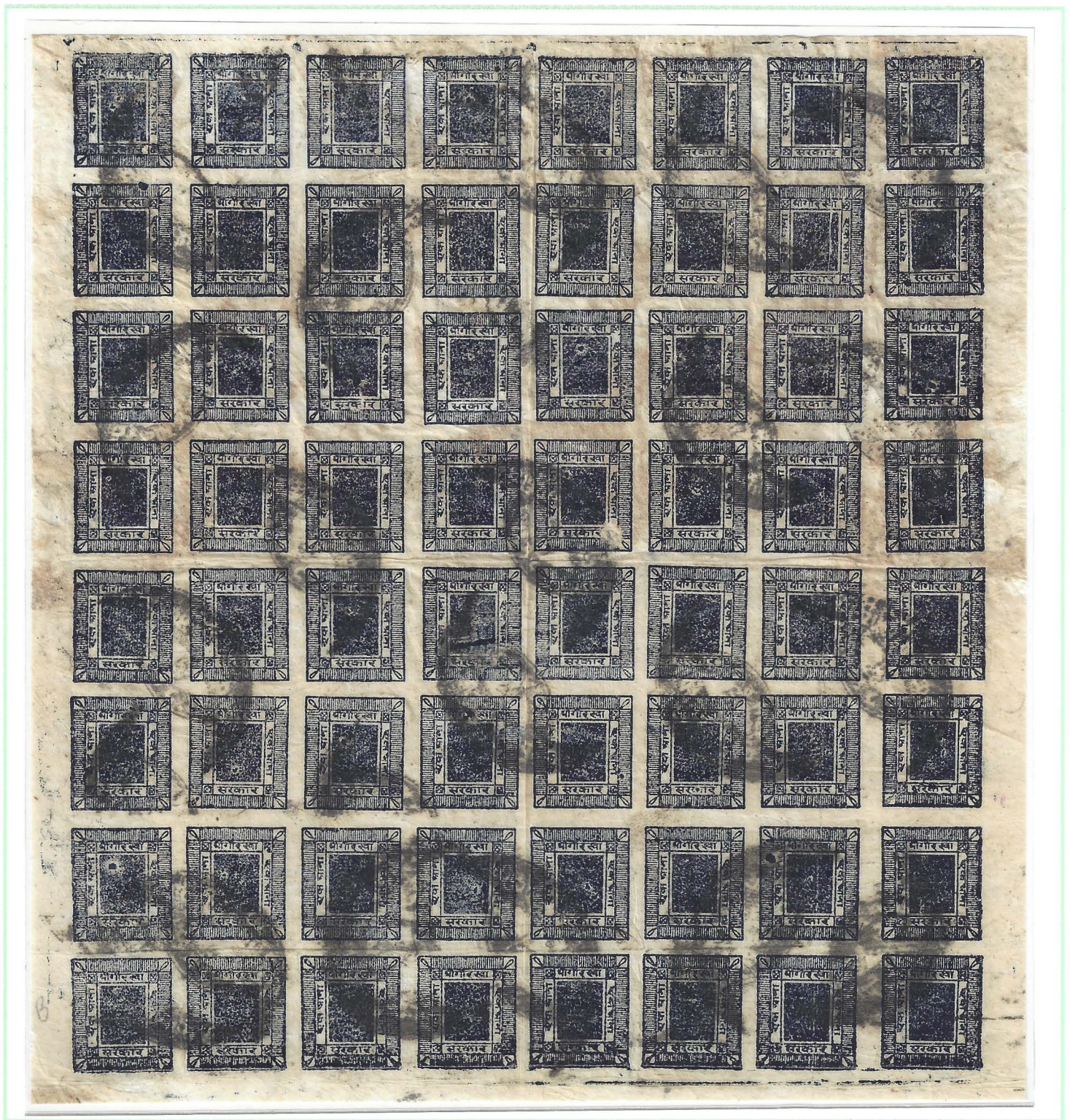


Plate II, 1928-1930



indigo blue shade

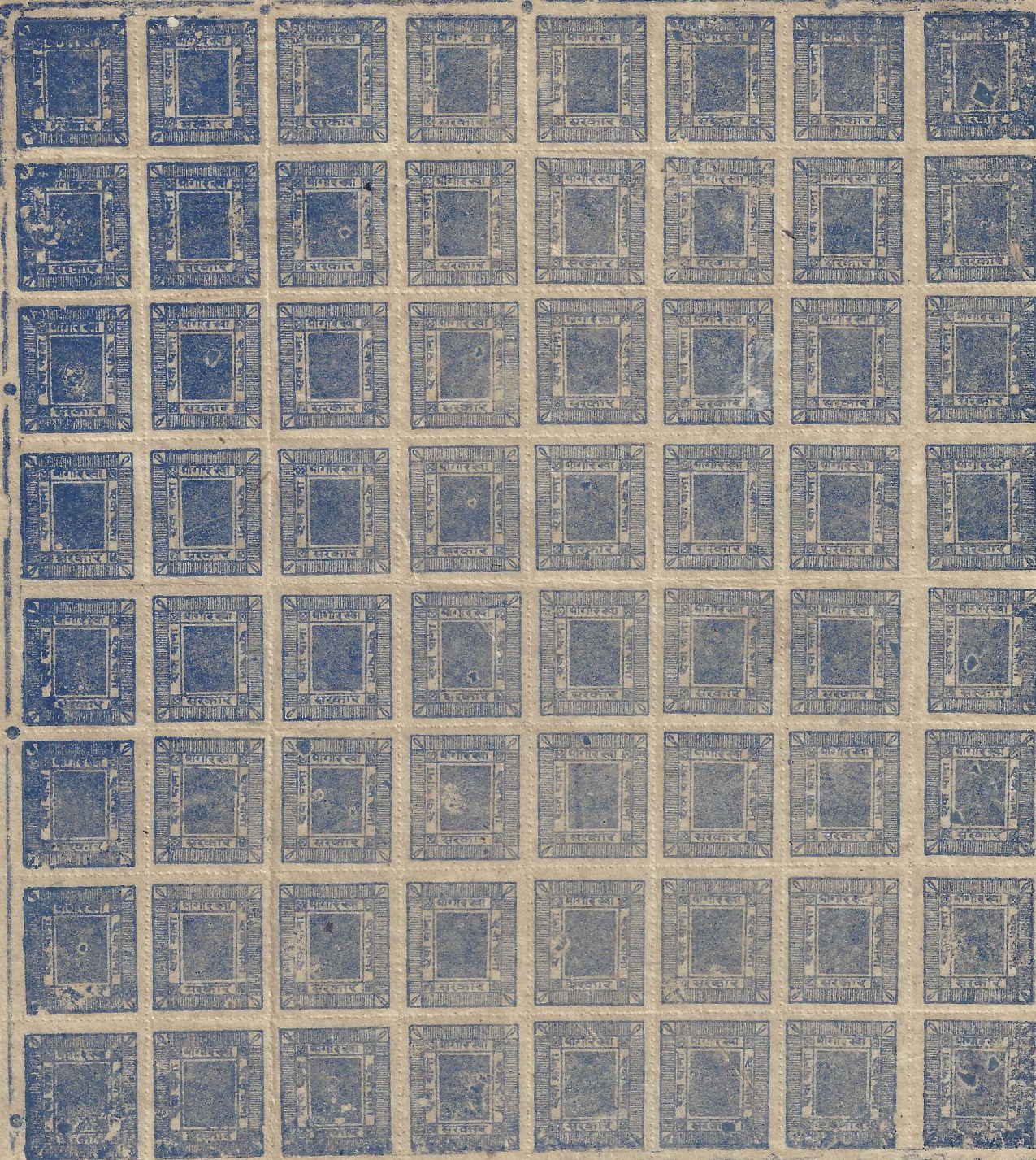
Plate II, 1928-1930



blue black shade, Chisapani cancels

Plate II, Pin-Peforated

Pin-perforated plate II stamps are not known used.

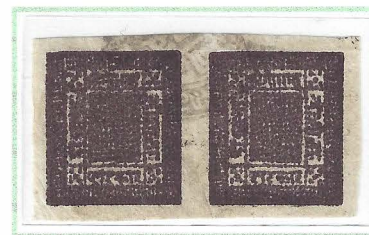


Shades

The two annas stamps printed during the 1917 to 1930 period exist in an almost infinite array of shades. Hellrigl attempted to reduce the named shades to 18.



positions A5-A8/C5- C8
inverted clichés positions: A8, B7



Shades

The ex Hellrigl blocks in his 18 named shades are shown on two pages.



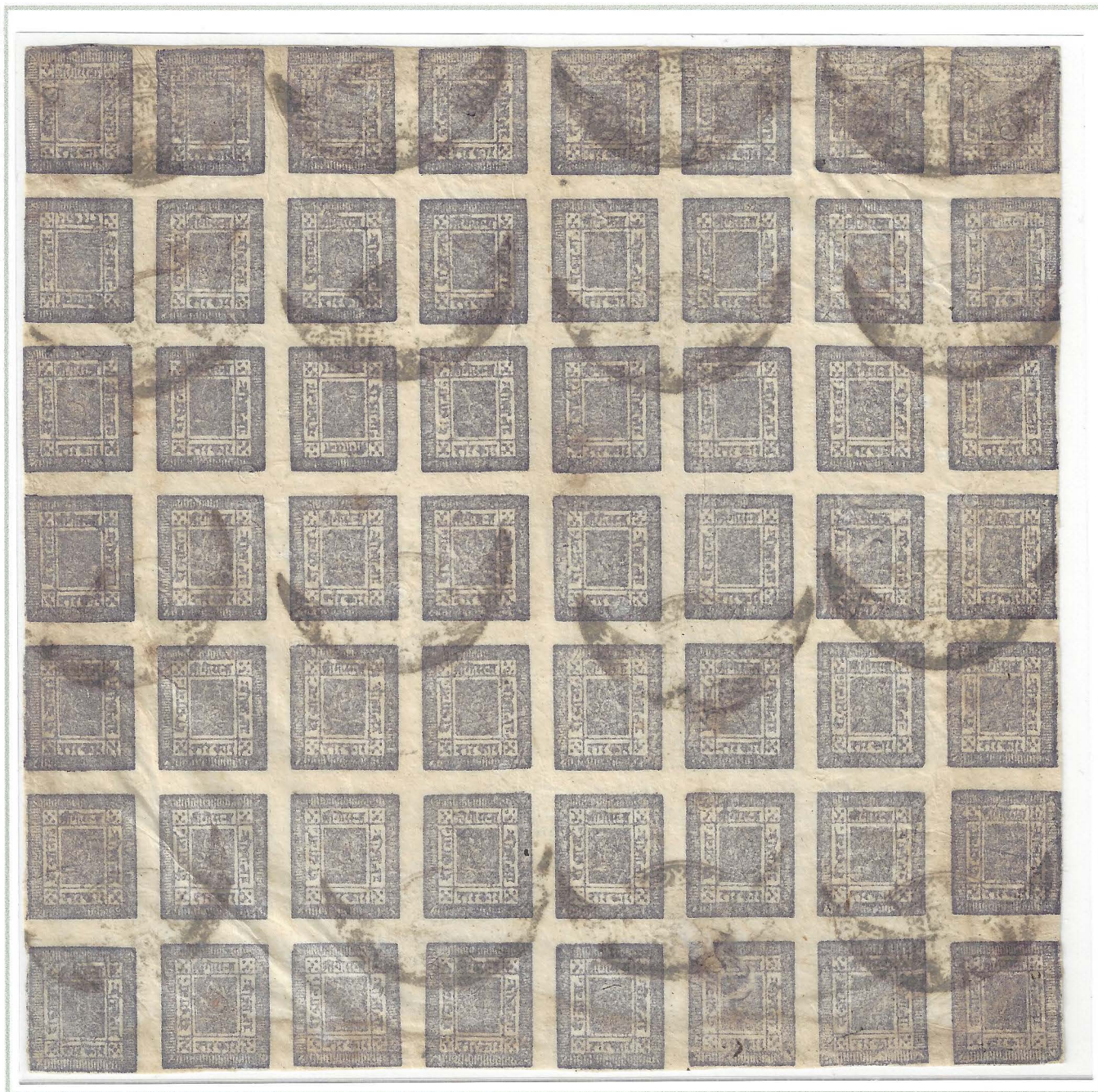
Shades

The ex Hellrigl blocks in his 18 named shades are shown on two pages.



Stored Sheet, Setting 20, 1905-1906

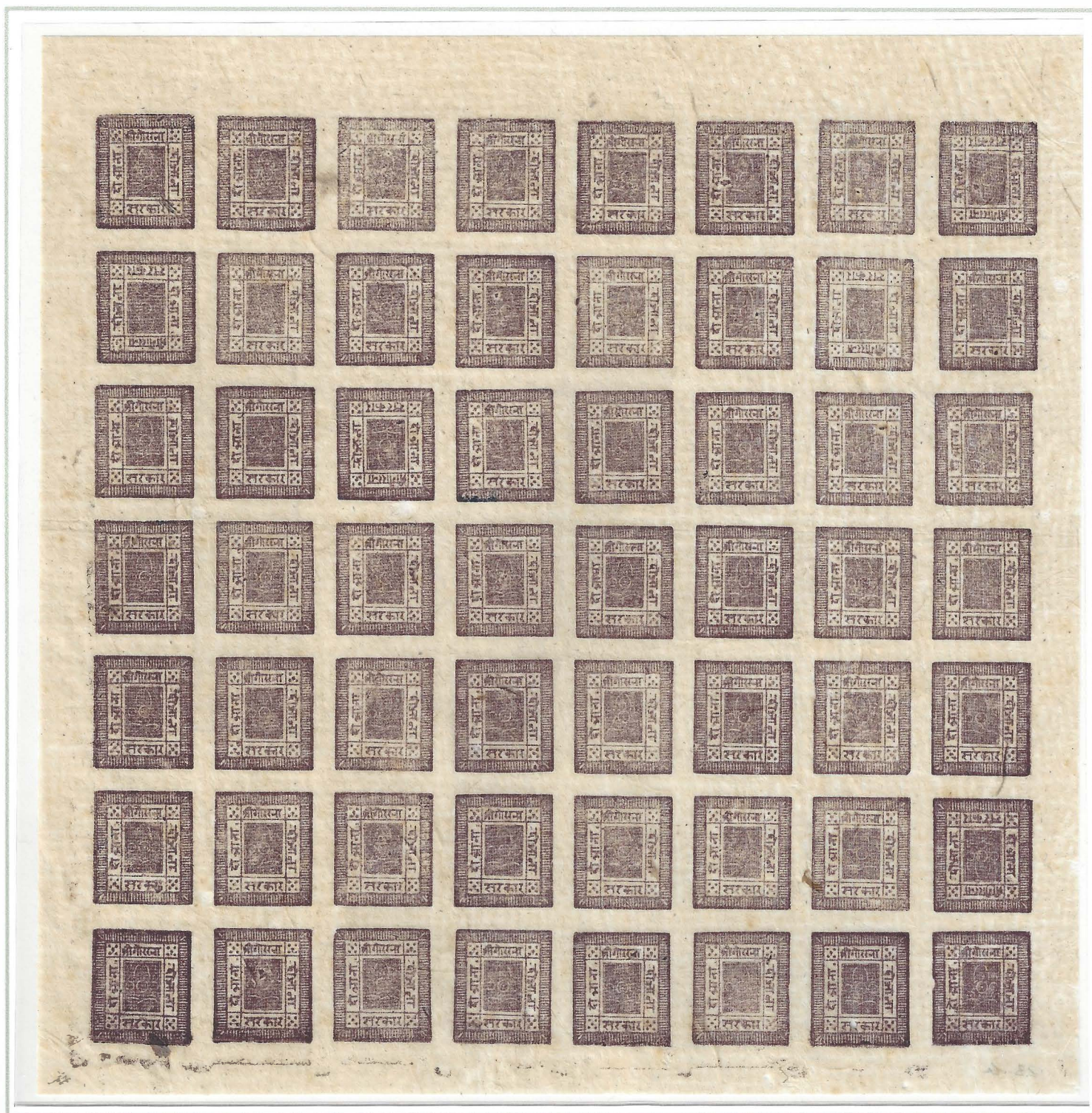
Remainder sheets from the 1905-1906 printings of setting 20 that had been stored in the Treasury were used telegraphically after 1917.



setting 20, inverted cliché positions: A7, A8, B1, and C3
two known complete used sheets of 56 subjects

Setting 23, 1917-1919

Setting 23 marks the first appearance of the progressive flaw, dent at bottom left, on the cliché in position B7. The damage likely occurred when the cliché was inserted into the forme inverted.



brown-purple shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B7, C3 and F8
two known complete unused sheets of 56 from this setting

Setting 23



plum shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B7, C3 and F8



slight double impression, tête-bêche pair, positions B6-B7

Setting 23



brown-purple shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B7, C3 and F8
Birganj telegraphic cancel

Pale Blue Two Annas Error of Color
Setting 23

This block of the two annas in the pale blue shade of the one anna stamps rather than the normal range of purple shades was considered by Dr. Singer to be an error of color.



top four rows (positions A1 to D8) of sheet, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B7 and C3
the only reported large multiple of this error of color

Setting 24, 1919-1920

Setting 24 is the first two annas setting with the cliché in position B6 inverted.



claret shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B6, B7, C3 and F8
two complete sheets known of this setting

Setting 25, 1920-1922

Setting 25 is identical to setting 24 except the cliché in position C2 is now inverted.



aniline purple shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 26, 1922-1925

This setting, with eight inverted clichés, contains the greatest number of inverted clichés of any in setting used in the period.



claret shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 26, 1922-1925

This setting contains the greatest number of inverted clichés of any in setting used in the period.



brown shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B1, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 27, 1925-1927

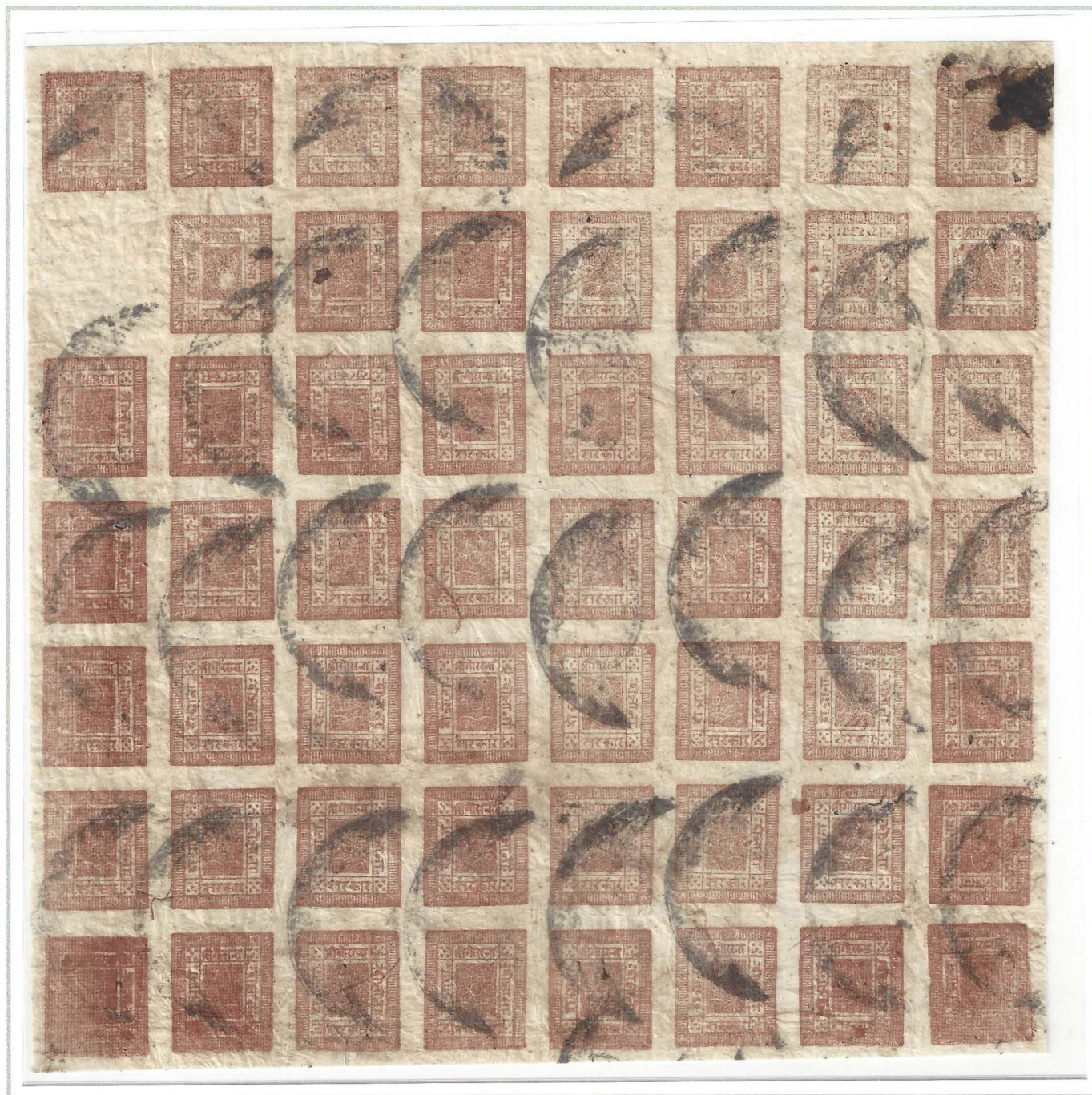
This setting has six inverted clichés.



reconstructed sheet, inverted cliché positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 28, 1927-1929

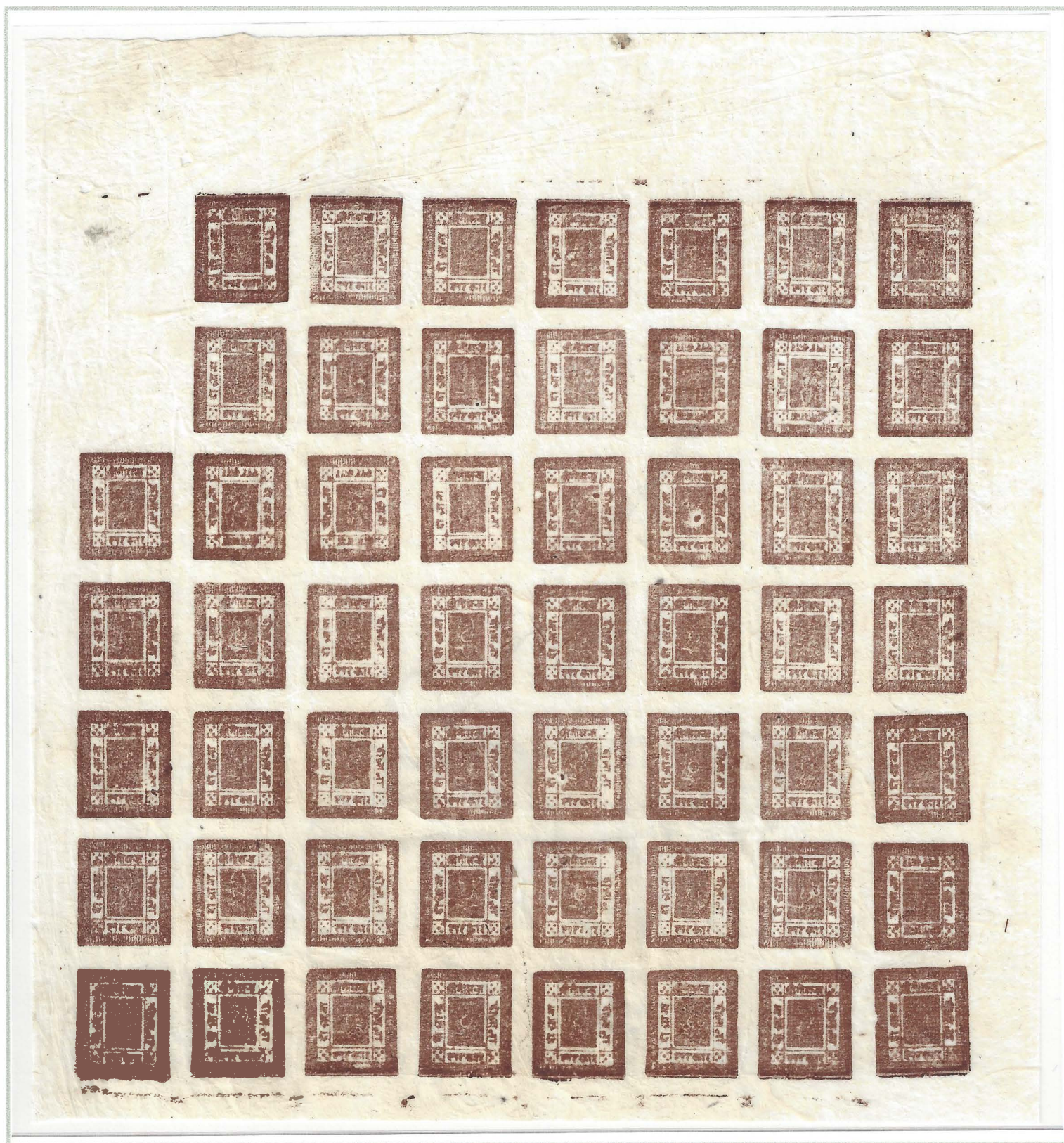
Setting 28 was the first to contain only 55 clichés. There is a blank space in position B1.



chestnut shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 29, 1929-1930

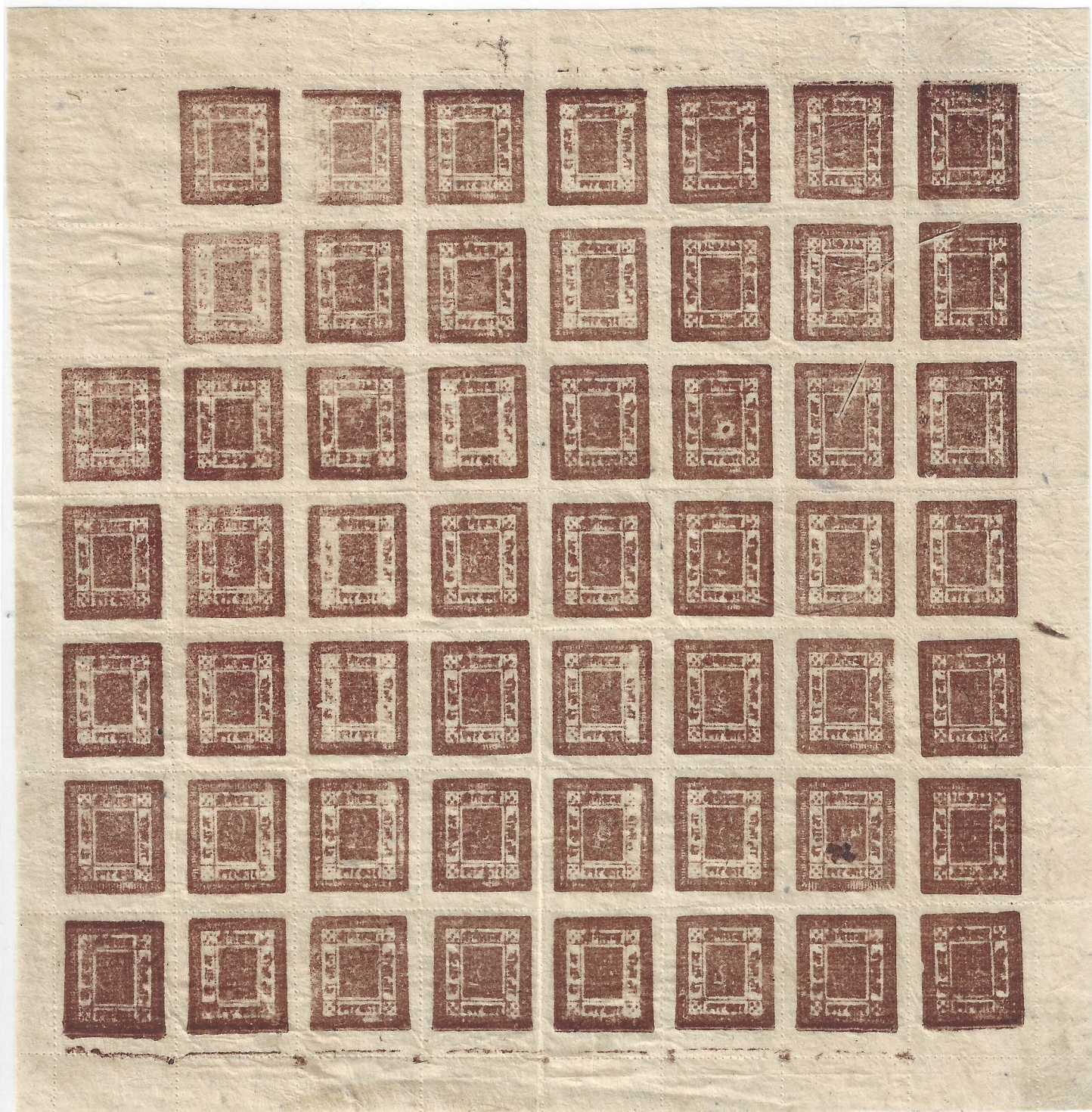
Setting 29 has clichés in position A1 and B1 missing. It is the last setting known used.



pale brown shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 29, Pin-Perforated

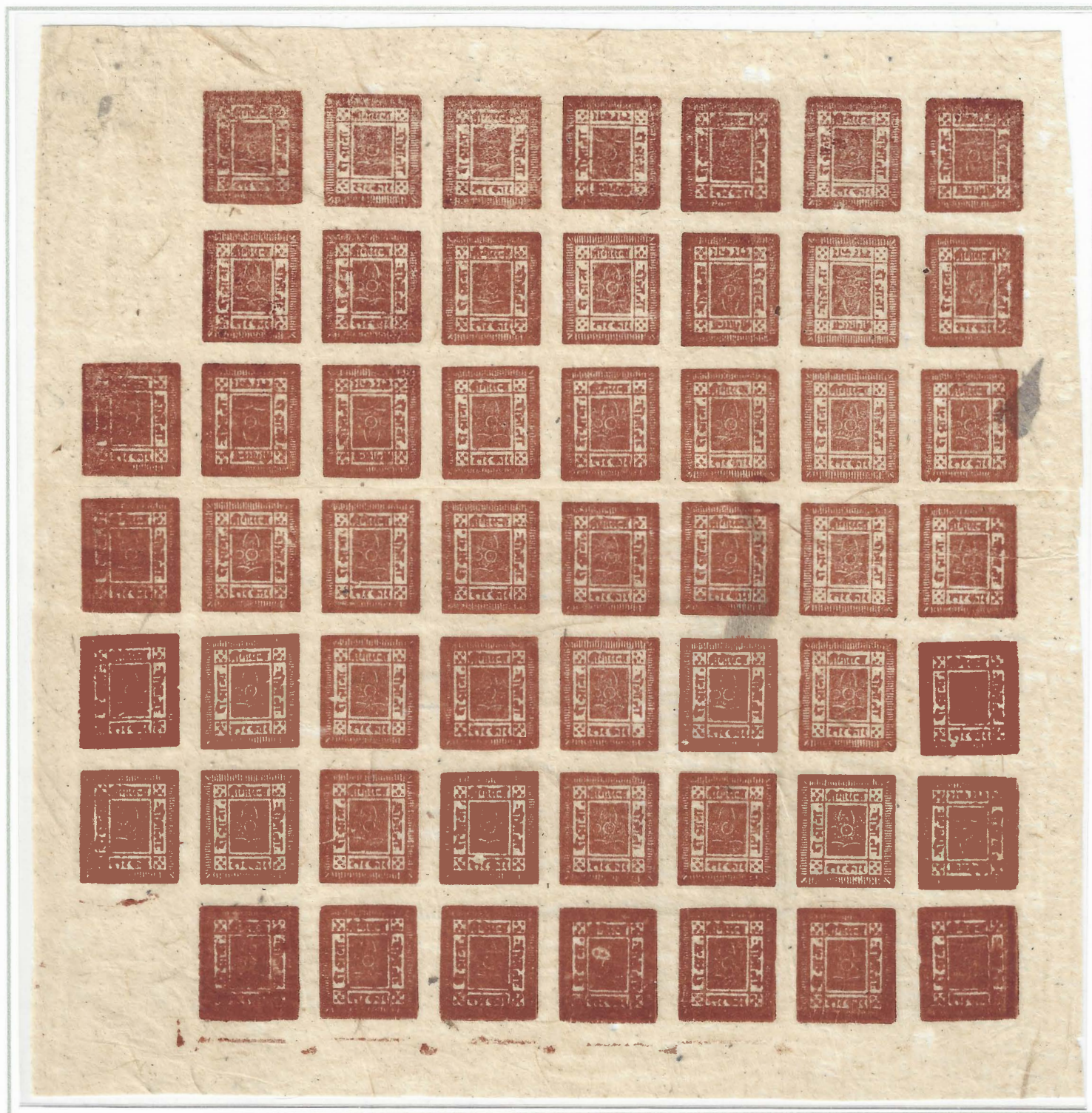
Setting 29, clichés in position A1 and B1 missing. Pin-perforated sheets are not known used.



brown shade, inverted cliché positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 31, 1929-1930

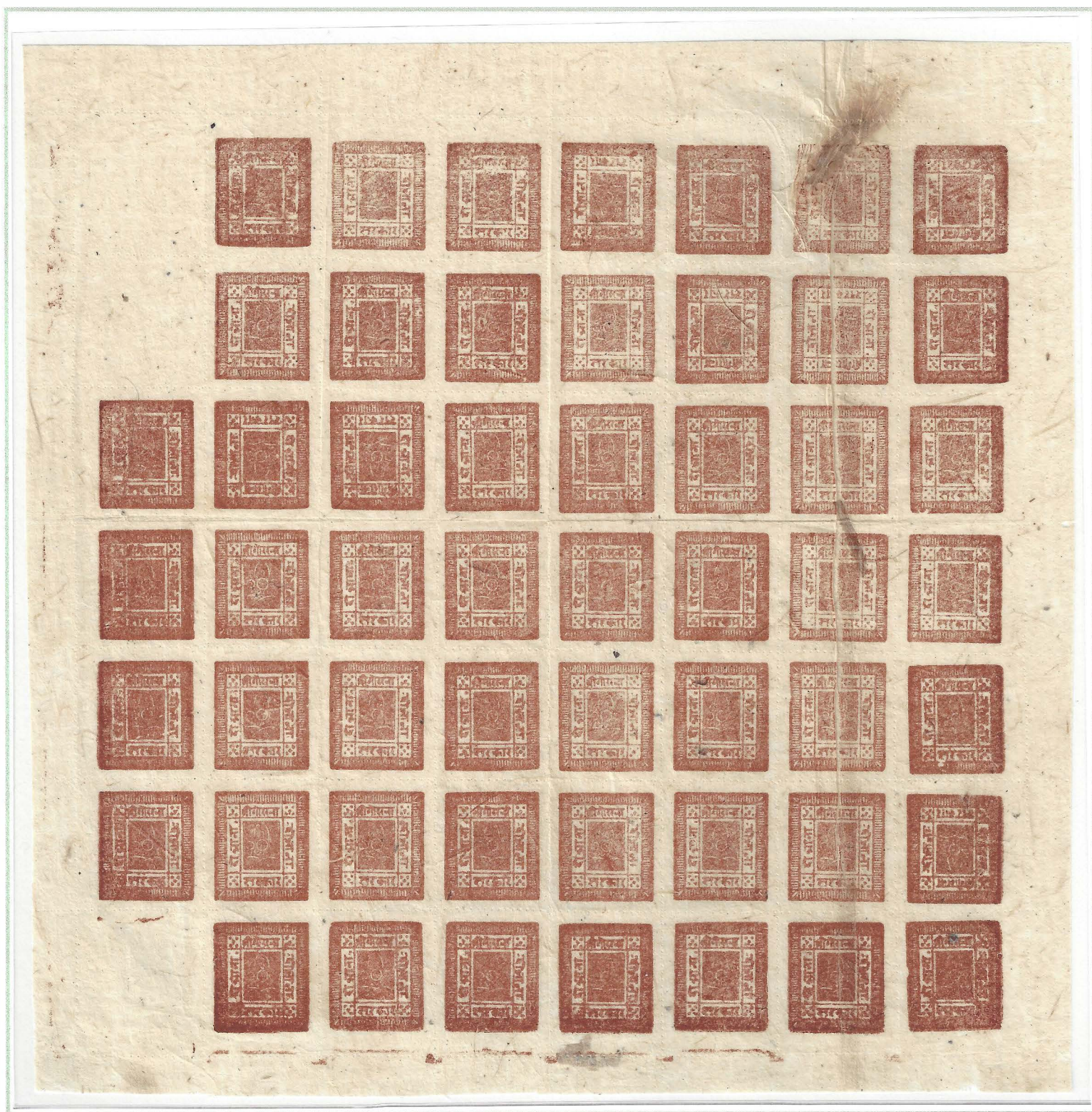
Setting 31 has clichés A1, B1 and G1 missing. It is not known used.



chestnut shade, inverted cliché in positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

Setting 31, Pin-Perforated

Setting 31 has clichés A1, B1 and G1 missing. It is not known used.



chestnut shade, inverted cliché in positions: A8, B6, B7, C2, C3 and F8

the only reported pin-perforated sheet

Settings 11 and 12, 1917-1930

Sheets of the four annas from setting 11, first state, that had been stored in the Nepal Treasury were issued for telegraphic use in 1917. New printings were then made from later states of setting 11 and 12 between 1917 and 1930.

Setting 12 produced one of the great errors of Nepal philately as shown below and in sheet form on a following page. A single cliché of the one anna was inserted in position A8 (the top right corner position). Fewer than 60 examples exist.



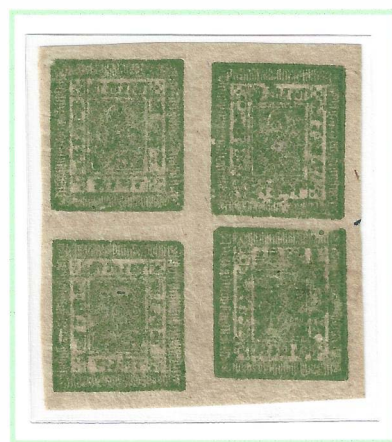
setting 11, third state (1924-1926), positions C5-8
the only unused examples reported from this state



setting 11, fourth state, G7-H8
position G8 heavy solid color



setting 12, position A2
gash flaw at left



setting 12, positions F7-G8
inverted cliché position G8

One Anna Cliché in Pair with Four Annas

setting 12, tête-bêche pair, 4 annas se-tenant with 1 anna, positions A7-8
the one anna error cliché was placed into position A8 inverted

Shades and Impressions

The four annas shades are not as varied as those found with the two annas stamps. Clarity of impression varies from mostly clear to a solid block of color.



Setting 11, Second State, 1917-1924

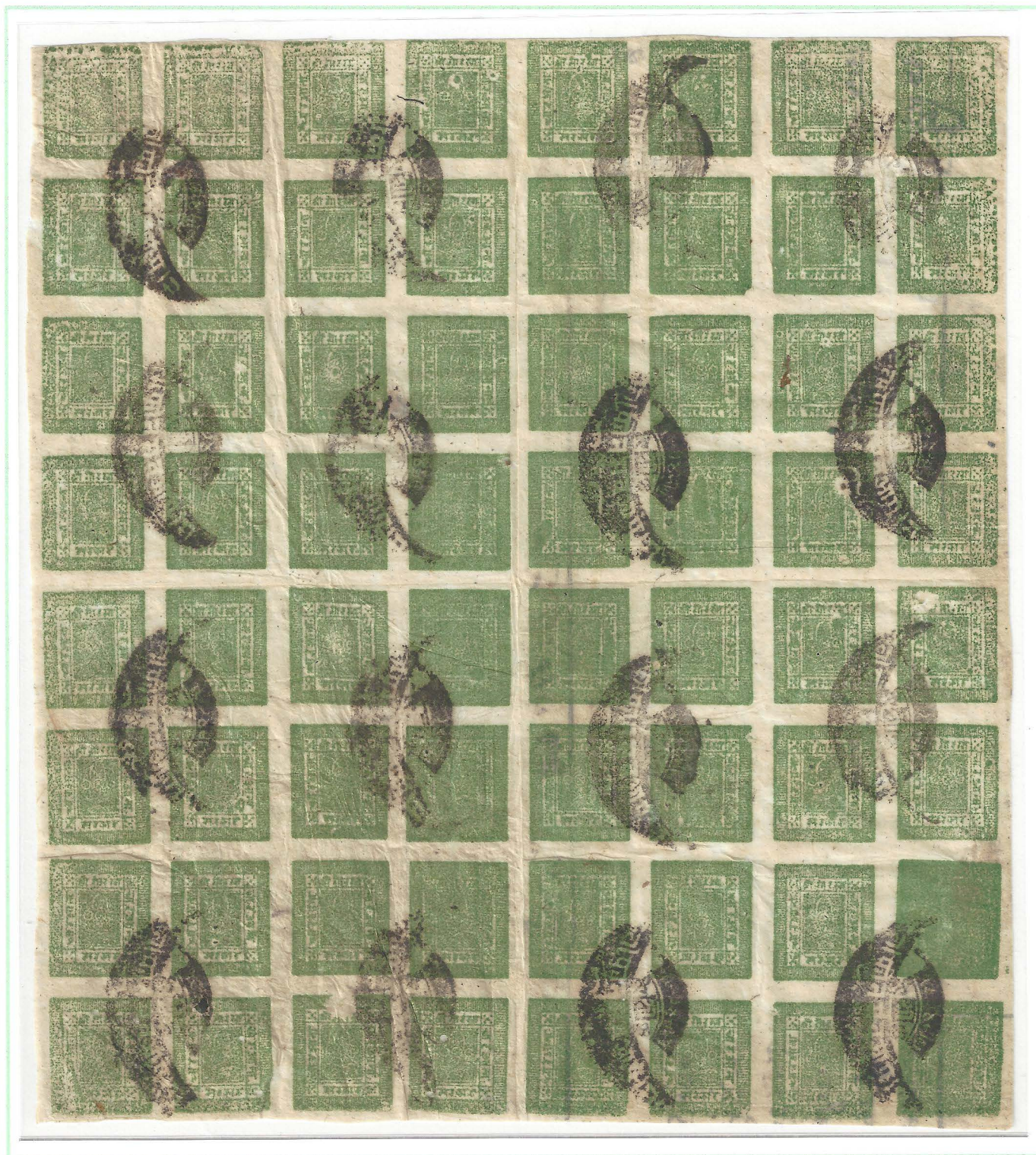
The second state printings of setting 11 show mostly clear impressions throughout.



emerald green shade, inverted cliché position: G6

Setting 11, Third State, 1924-1926

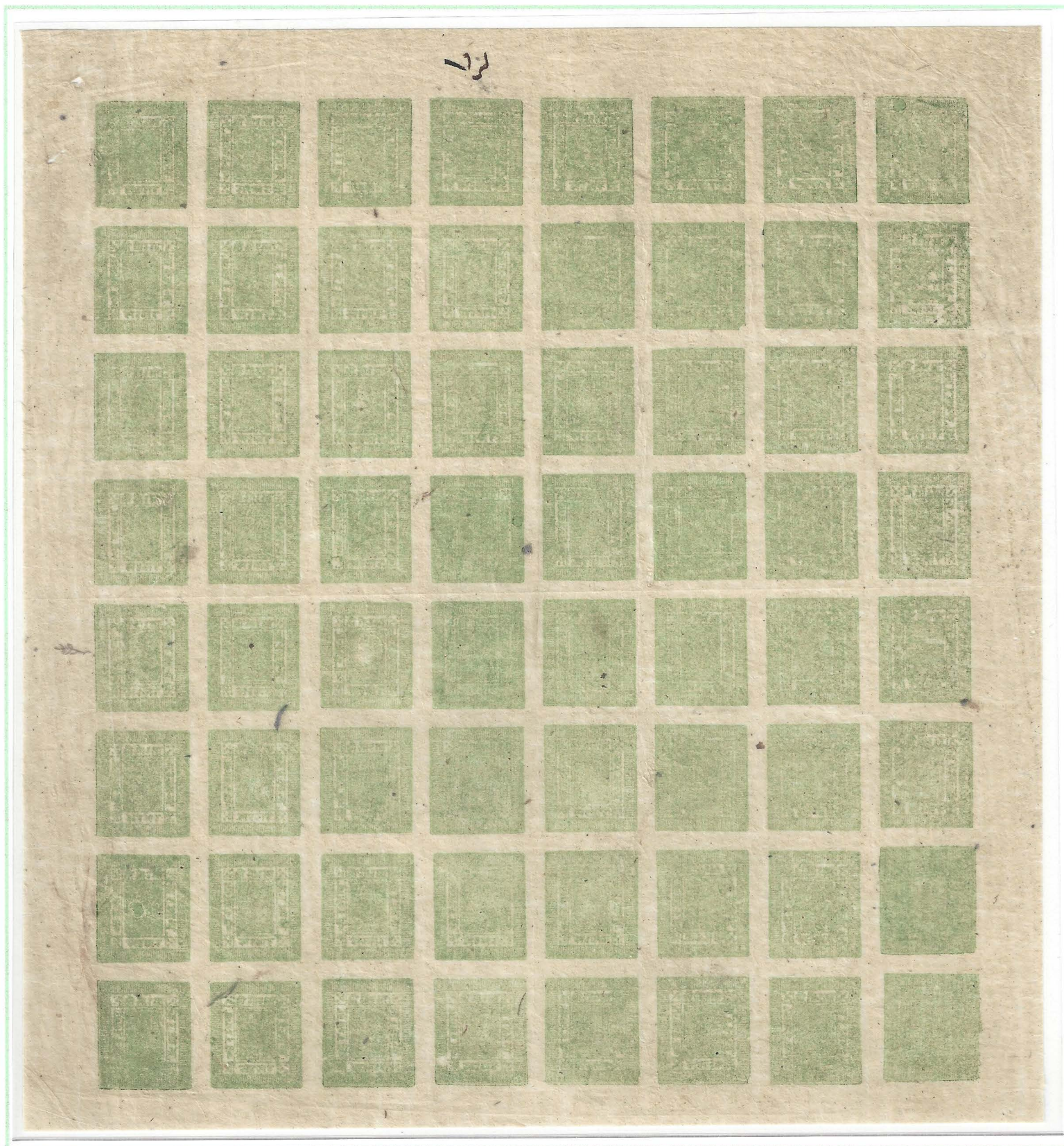
In the third state, position G8 has now become virtually a solid block of color.



inverted cliché position: G6

Setting 11, Fourth State, 1926-1929

Position B6 and E1 now show prominent flaws. Position G8 is a heavily impressed block of color.



inverted cliché position: G6

Setting 11, Fourth State

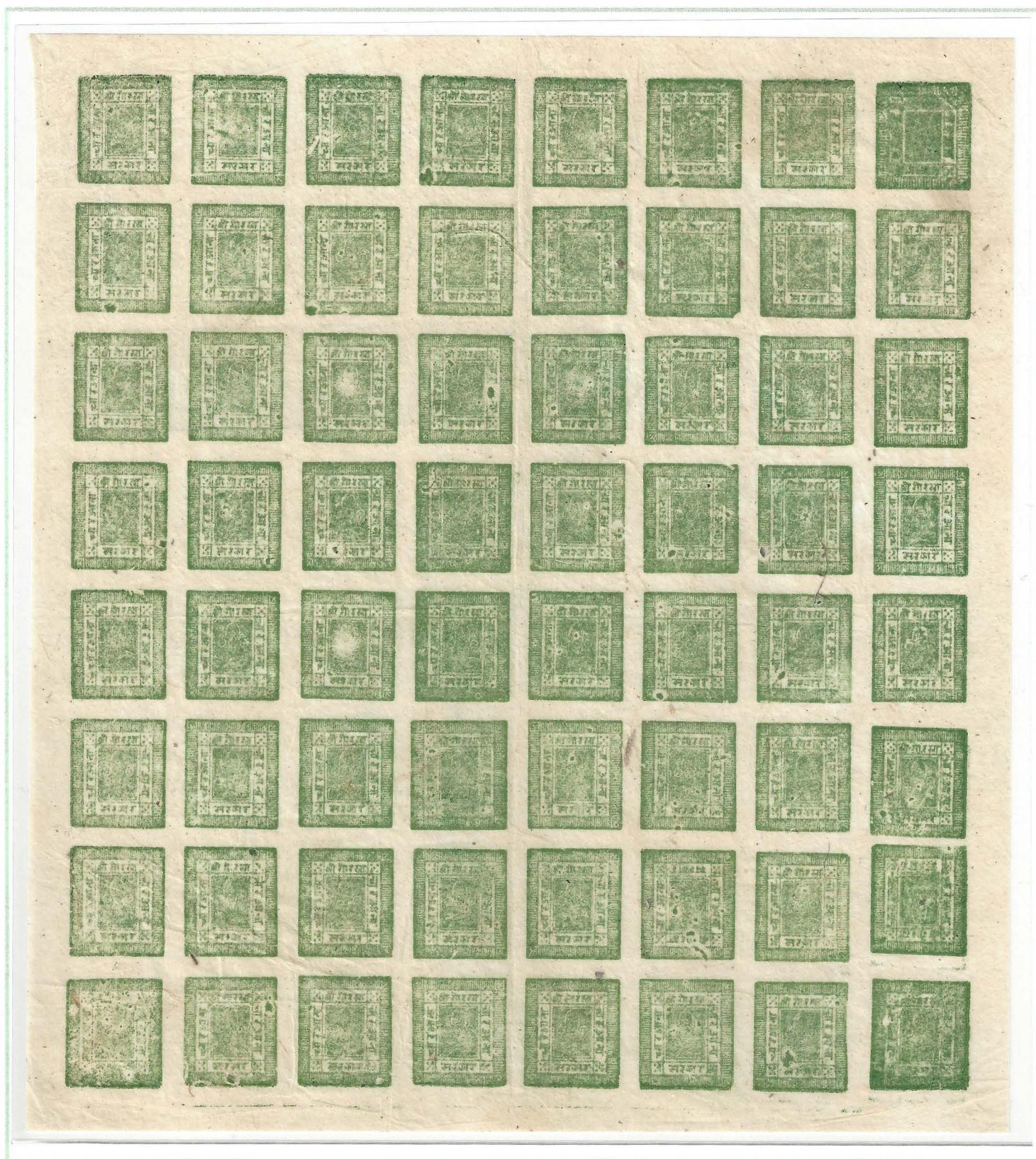
Position B6 and E1 now show prominent flaws. Position G8 is a heavily impressed block of color.



inverted cliché position: G6, the only reported used sheet of this setting

Setting 12, 1929-1930

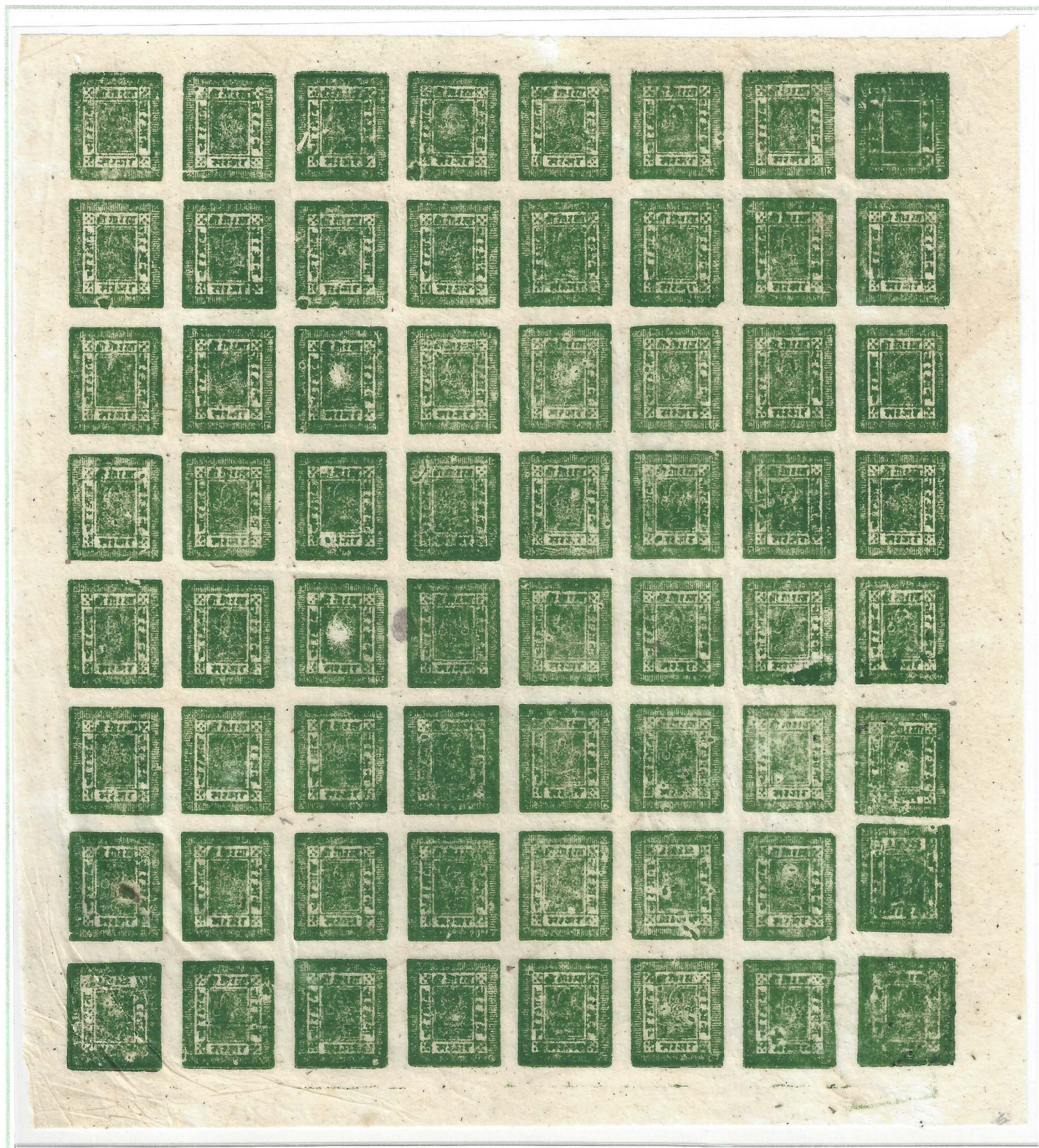
Green One Anna Error of Color in Four Annas Sheet



substituted 1 anna cliché in A8, inverted cliché positions: A8, G6, G8 and H1

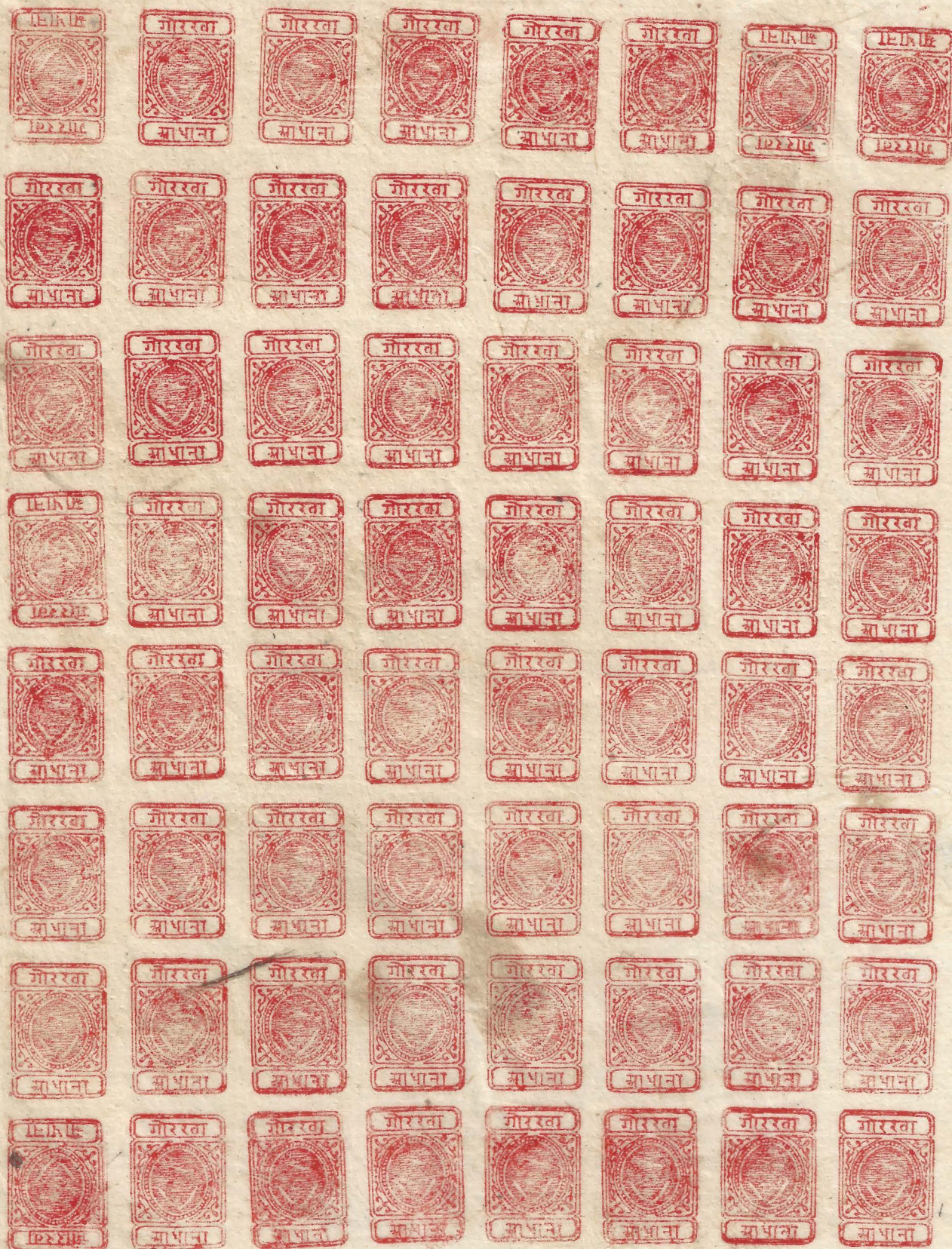
Setting 12, 1929-1930

Dark Green One Anna Error of Color in Four Annas Sheet

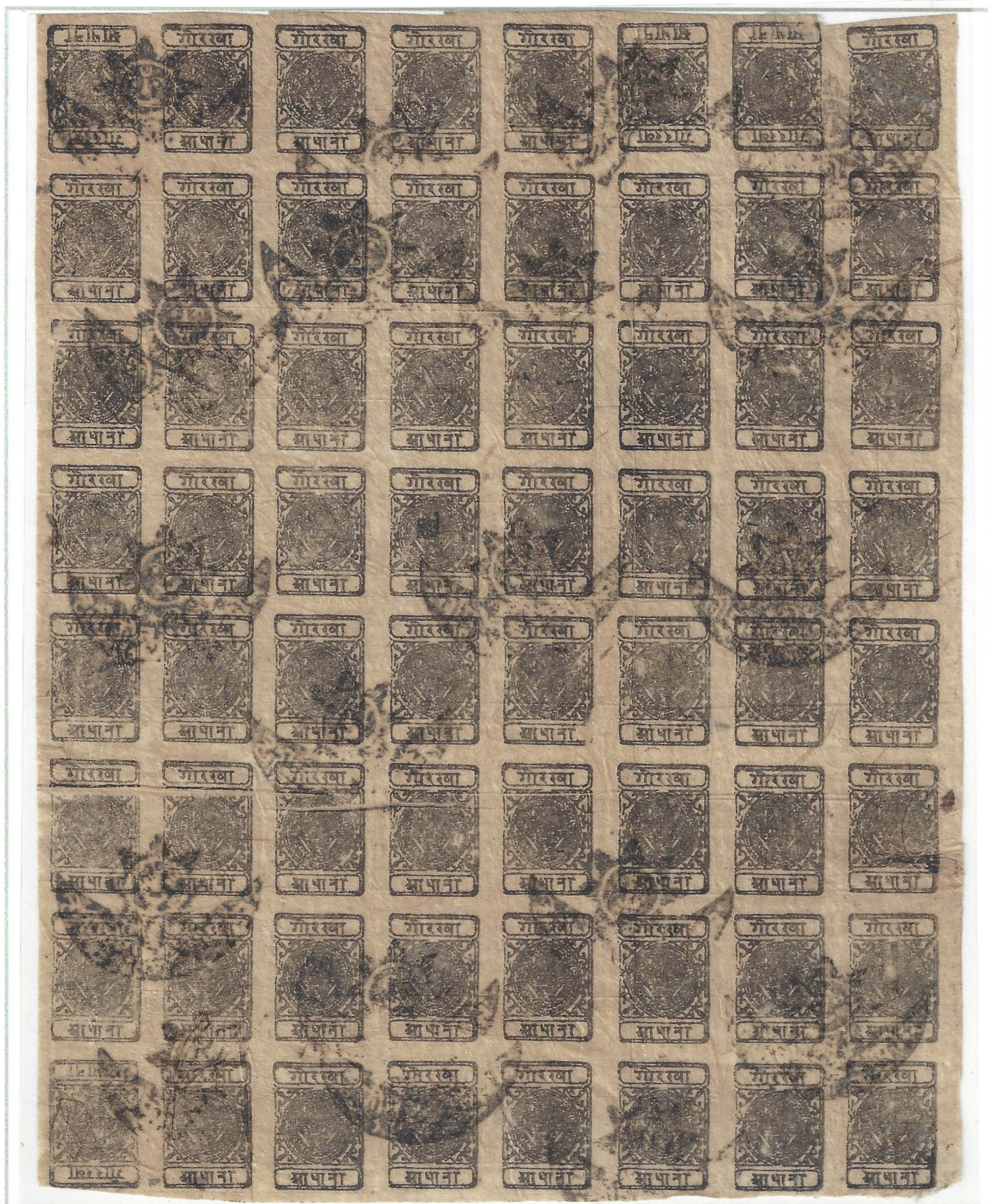


1 anna cliché in A8, inverted cliché positions: A8, G6, G8 and H1, two known sheets in this shade

Forgery Sheet (dot of color in right frameline at midpoint, illustrated in Singer



Forgery Sheet



inverted cliché positions: A1, A6, A7, and H1, same cliché used throughout
fake Kathmandu telegraphic cancels

Forgery Sheet (once considered to be an essay)

