



SHAH PURA - A newly discovered stamp issuing Indian Princely State

Background:

The September 1962 issue of India Post, Journal of the India Study Circle, made headline news when it reported the discovery of adhesives issued by the Indian Princely State of "Shahpura". Prior to this article by Mr. P.M. Medora, the philatelic world was unaware of the existence of a Shahpura State run Postal System let alone postal adhesives.

Scope & Purpose:

This exhibit is an attempt to display an in-depth study of the Franks & Adhesives (both Postal and Postal Fiscal as well as the exceptional postal use of Court Fee adhesive) issued and used by the State from its postal inception to its closure. This exhibit excludes philatelic material used to and from the Imperial (British) Post Office at Shahpura City with the exception of two combination covers that were handled by both the State and the Imperial Postal System in Shahpura.

History & Geography:

Shahpura came into existence in 1629 when Sujan Singh received from the Emperor Shah Jahan, as a reward for services, a grant of the Pargana (district) of Phulia. Sujan Singh changed the name of the district to Shahpura to please his benefactor. Shahpura is located in the Rajputana Agency (now Rajasthan State). Shahpura was a comparatively small state both in size (405 square miles) and population (54,233 in 1931). The Capital of the State was Shahpura City. There were 133 villages in the State of Shahpura.

Philatelic History:

The Imperial (British) Post operated just one post office at the State Capital (Shahpura City) from 1830's to 1947 when India gained its independence. Other towns, villages and remote areas could not avail the postal services of the Imperial Post.

The State operated an elaborate postal system within its boundaries initially for the purpose of transmitting Official Correspondence, which traveled for free. It is now believed, based on the existing examples of covers, that the State post started in 1870's and not in 1890's as was previously presumed by philatelic students of Shahpura. Private mail was accepted for transmission within the State boundaries for a fee of 1 pice (prepaid in cash) irrespective of size and weight. The prepayment of this fee at the time of dispatch was compulsory. Four types (two discovered by Exhibitor) of seals (Franks) were used during the pre-adhesive period.

Adhesives were issued in 1914 and the pre-stamp seals (Franks) were now used as a canceller.

Manuscript cancellations, incorporating date, initials of the authority and the place of posting, generally replaced the use of postmarks, obliterations and pre-stamp seals (Franks) as canceller by 1920's when the postal rates were increased from 1 pice to 1 anna (3 pies = 1 pice; 4 pice = 1 anna; 16 annas = 1 Rupee).

The State of Shahpura was incorporated into the State of Rajasthan on 15 April 1948. All unused remaining adhesives were ordered to be handtamped "RAJASTHAN". These remainders with handstamps were valid for use within the state of Shahpura until ordered by the Indian Government to close its postal system on 1 April 1950.

Exhibit Layout:

- Pre-adhesive Frank - type 1
- Pre-adhesive Frank - type 2
- Pre-adhesive Frank - type 3
- Pre-adhesive Frank - type 4
- 1914 1 pice Adhesive
- 1917 1 pice Adhesive
- 1920 1 pice Adhesive
- 1928 1 anna Adhesive
- 1930's 1 anna Postal / Fiscal adhesive - Die I (Perforated)
- 1930's 1 anna Postal / Fiscal adhesive - Die I (Pin-Perforated)
- 1940's 1 anna Postal / Fiscal adhesive - Die II
- Court Fee adhesive used for postage
- Shahpura adhesive validated for use in Rajasthan
- Postage Due Seals

Highlights of the Exhibit:

- Only known example of the Pre-adhesive Frank - type 1
- 1 of 2 known examples of the Pre-adhesive Frank - type 2
- 2 of 7 recorded examples of the 1914 1 pice adhesive on cover
- Only known unused example of the 1917 1 pice adhesive
- 2 of 5 recorded examples of the 1917 1 pice adhesive on cover
- Only known unused example of the 1920 1 pice adhesive pair
- 1 of 3 recorded examples of the 1920 1 pice adhesive on cover
- 3 of 5 recorded examples of the 1930 1 anna adhesive on cover
- The only 2 recorded Br. India / Shahpura combination covers
- 1 of 5 recorded examples of the 1930's 1 anna pin-perf adhesive on cover
- 1 of 3 recorded tete-beche block/4 of the 1930's 1 anna adhesive on cover
- 1 of 2 recorded Shahpura Court Fee adhesives on cover
- 2 of 3 recorded usage of the "Postage Due" seals

(1) Franks

Prior to issuing adhesives, Shahpura made use of four different Franks. Franks were impressed by the dispatching office upon receipt of a cash prepayment of a flat rate of 1 pice (1 pice = 3 pies = $\frac{1}{4}$ anna) per article of private mail irrespective of weight, size and distance of travel so long as the mail originated and was delivered within the State boundaries. Official mail traveled for free.

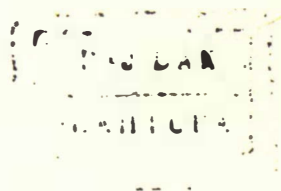
The first Frank (Jaiswal type 1) was used circa 1870's and was very shortly replaced by the second Frank (Jaiswal type 2). The third Frank (Jaiswal type 3) was introduced circa 1890 and from 1914 was used strictly as a canceller till 1920's. The fourth Frank (Jaiswal type 4) was introduced circa 1899 and from 1914 was used strictly as a canceller till 1920's.

Franks **Jaiswal type 1** and **Jaiswal type 2** were discovered by the exhibitor and to date unrecorded.

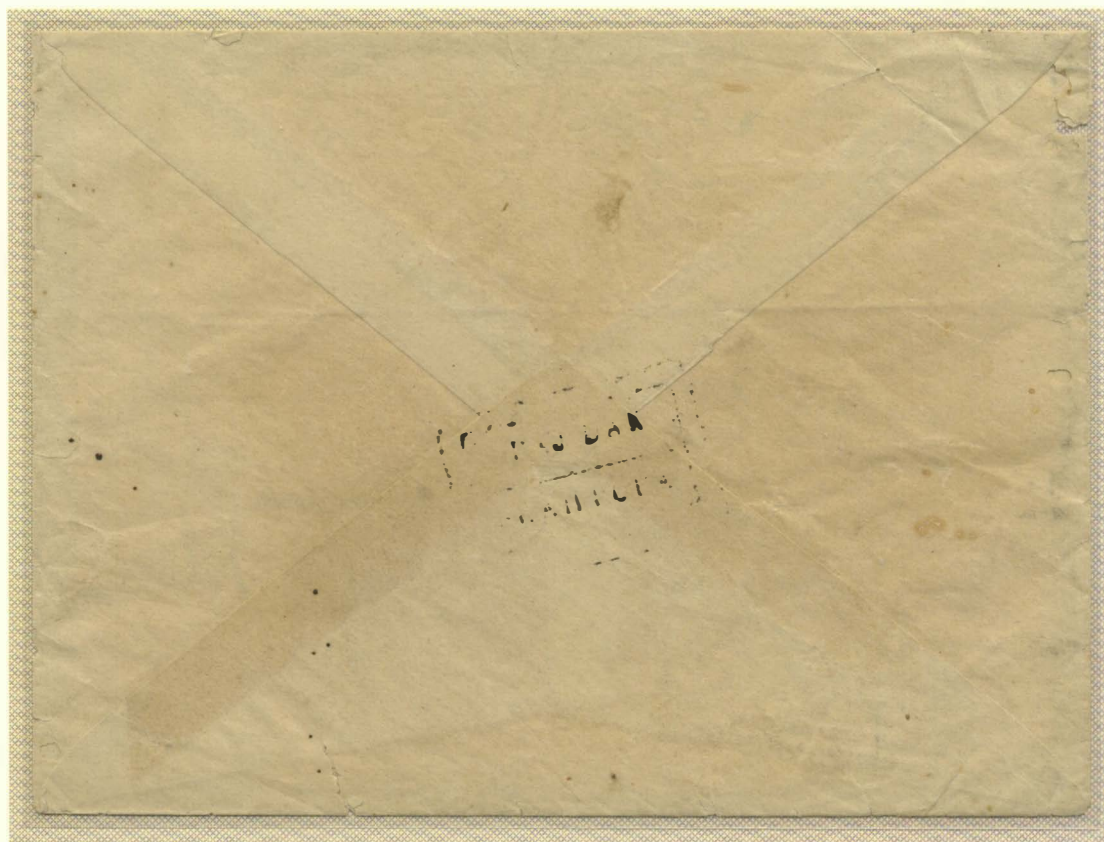
(1A) "RAJ DAK / SHAHPURA" in bisected box

Circa 1870

Jaiswal type 1



"RAJ DAK / SHAHPURA" =
State Post / Shahpura



Local cover to Kachola, Shahpura

This is the only known cover bearing Jaiswal Type 1 Frank

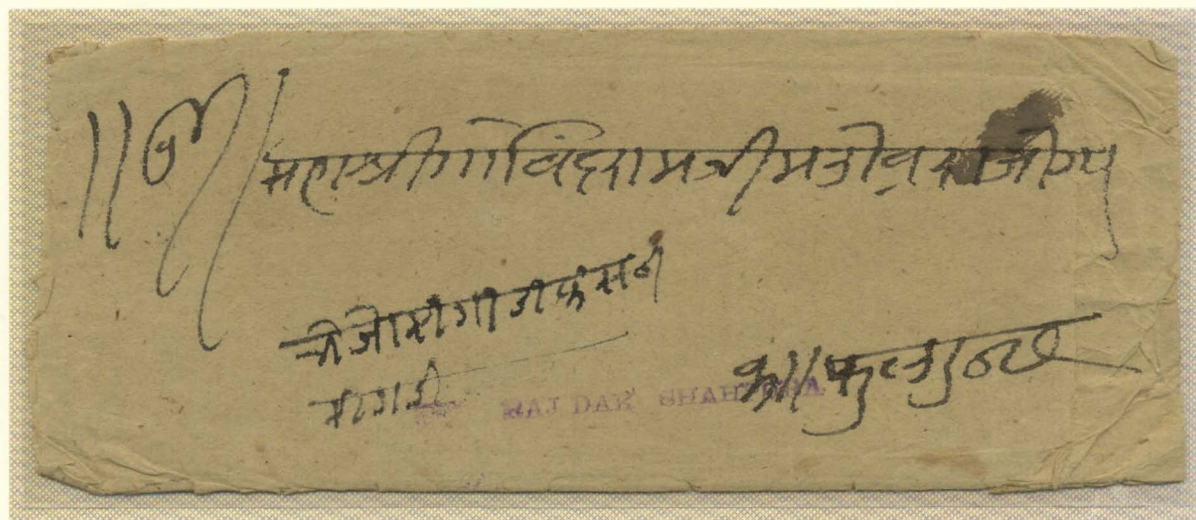
(1B) "RAJ DAK / SHAHPURA" in unboxed single line

Circa 1875

Jaiswal type 2

RAJ DAK SHAHPURA

"RAJ DAK SHAHPURA"
= State Post Shahpura



One of two known covers bearing Jaiswal Type 2 Frank

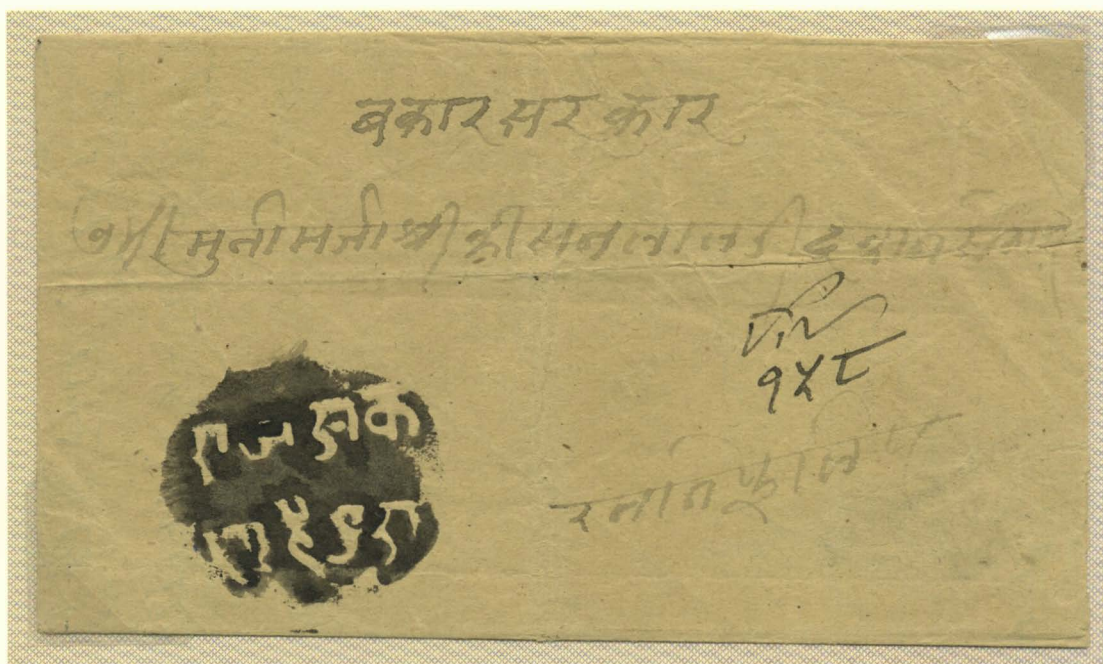
The third type of Frank (Jaiswal type 3) was introduced around 1890. This was an oval intaglio seal bearing the inscription "RAJ DAK / SHAHPURA" (i.e. State Post / Shahpura) in Devnagri. The seal measures 33mm high by 38mm wide but it's strikes are sometimes smaller or larger - the variance being caused by the amount of ink and pressure exerted during it's application.

This seal was used as a Frank from circa 1890 to 1914 when postal adhesives were issued to replace Franks. It was used as an adhesive obliterator from 1914 till 1920's.

Jaiswal type 3



"RAJ DAK / SHAHPURA"
= State Post Shahpura



Local cover to Phulia, Shahpura with manuscript Samvat date "1956" = 1899 AD

(1D) "RAJ DAK / KOTWALI / SHAHPURA" oval intaglio seal

Circa 1899

The fourth type of Frank (Jaiswal type 4) was introduced around 1899. This was circular intaglio seal bearing the inscription "RAJ DAK / KOTWALI / SHAHPURA" (i.e. State Post / Magistrate / Shahpura) in Devnagri. The seal measures 38mm in diameter but it's strikes are sometimes smaller or larger - the variance being caused by the amount of ink and pressure exerted during it's application.

This seal was used as a Frank from circa 1899 to 1914 when postal adhesives were issued to replace Franks. It was used as an adhesive obliterator from 1914 till 1920's.

Jaiswal type 4



"RAJ DAK / KOTWALI / SHAHPURA"
= State Post / Magistrate / Shahpura



Local cover to Shahpura City

4 different postage stamps (three stamps in 1 pice denomination and one in 1 anna denomination) were issued between 1914 and 1928. Sometime by mid 1930's the postal authorities decided to use the existing 1 anna Fiscal stamps for postal purposes. These stamps are referred to as the "Postal Fiscal" stamps of Shahpura. They were used for postage from 1930's till 1948 when Shahpura was incorporated into the Indian State of Rajasthan at which time the remaining unused "Postal Fiscal" stamps had to be validated for use by having them hand-stamped "RAJASTHAN".

Shahpura allowed the use of its 4 anna "Court Fee" adhesive for postage as and when it was deemed necessary due to temporary shortage of the "Postal Fiscal" stamps. Two covers bearing the 4 annas Court Fee adhesives have been recorded.

The postage rates were the same irrespective of size, weight and distance of travel - i.e. 1 pice for all ordinary mail, Registered mail was charged at 4 times the rate of Ordinary mail i.e. 4 pice = 1 anna. The rates were increased to 1 anna for Ordinary mail and 4 annas for Registered mail in mid 1930.

Shahpura was a very small State both in size and population and considering the fact that the literacy rate was less than 5% it is no surprise that only 20 covers have been recorded bearing postage stamps of Shahpura.

The stamps of Shahpura were valid for postage within the State only. They were not valid at the Imperial Post office in Shahpura City.

Exhibitor's Listing of Postal Adhesives

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2A | 1914 1 pice carmine on bluish grey - perf |
| 2B | 1917 1 pice carmine on drab - imperf |
| 2C | 1920 1 pice carmine on drab - imperf |
| 2D | 1928 1 anna black on pink - imperf |
| 2E | 1930 1 anna red Postal Fiscal Die I - Perf |
| 2F | 1937 1 anna red Postal Fiscal Die I - Pin-Perf |
| 2G | 1940 1 anna red Postal Fiscal Die II - Perf |
| 2H | 1940 4 anna red Court Fee adhesive |
| 2I | 1948 1 anna Postal Fiscal ovpt. "RAJASTHAN" |

(2A) 1 pice carmine on bluish grey**1914**

The 1914 1 pice carmine was typographed on bluish grey wove paper. The stamps were perforated 11 on 2 or more sides.



Ordinary notice cover posted on 24 Jan 1915 to Shahpura City, stamp tied by two line two line intaglio seal (Jaiswal type 3) ©

One of seven known covers bearing the 1914 1 pice carmine on bluish grey adhesive



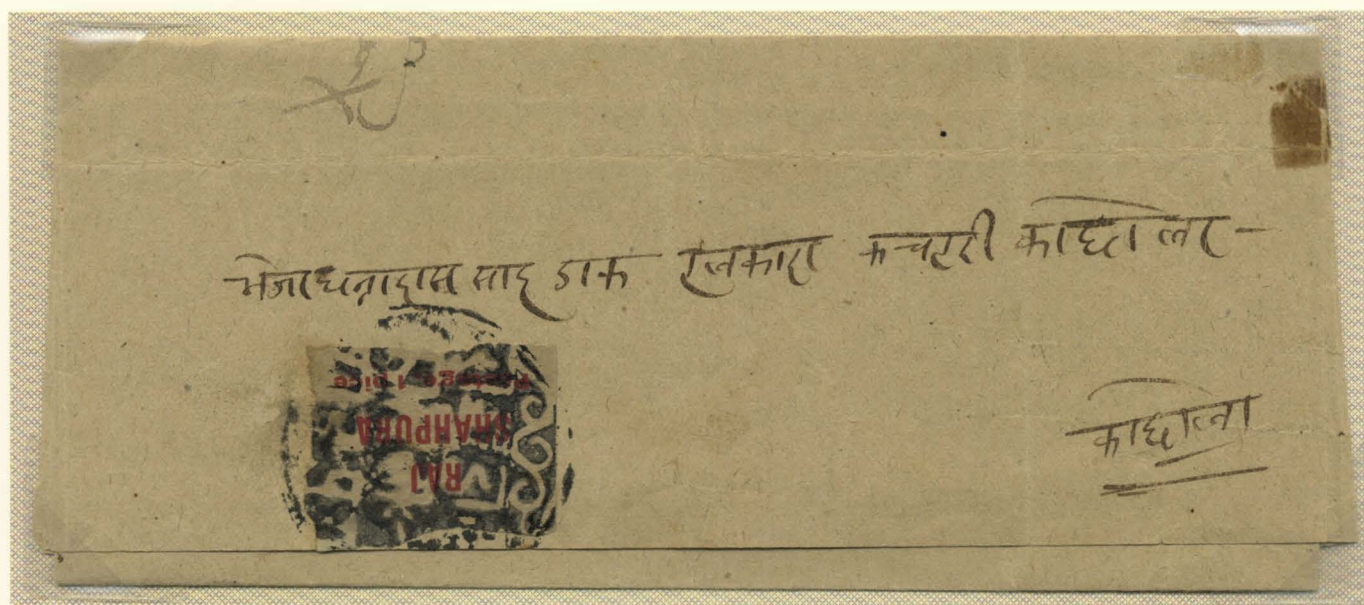
Ordinary cover to Shahpura City, stamp tied by three line intaglio seal (Jaiswal type 4) -ex Haverbeck and Staal

One of seven known covers bearing the 1914 1 pice carmine on bluish grey adhesive

The 1917 1 pice carmine was typographed on drab wove paper. The stamps were issued imperforate.



Only known unused copy



Ordinary folded letter from Shahpura City to Kachola, Shahpura dated 26 November 1917, stamp tied by two line two line intaglio seal (Jaiswal type 3)

One of three known covers bearing the 1917 1 pice carmine on drab adhesive

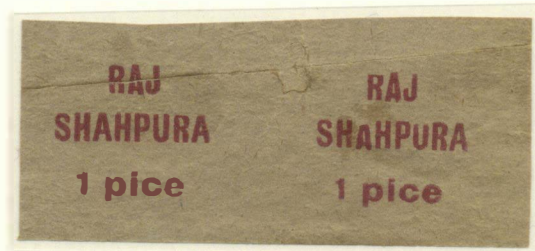


Registered cover with contents from Shahpura City to Partabpura dated 4 March 1917, stamp tied by three line intaglio seal (Jaiswal type 4) -ex Staal

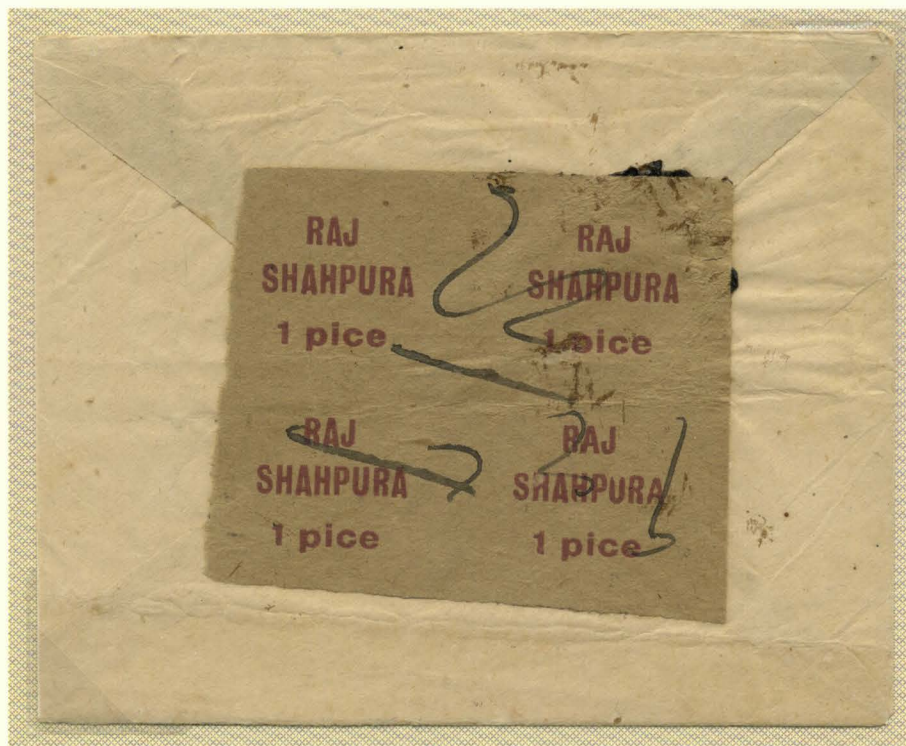
One of two known registered covers bearing the 1917 1 pice carmine on drab adhesive

The 1920 1 pice carmine was typographed on drab wove paper. The stamps were issued imperforate. The word "POSTAGE" is now removed from the stamp design. These stamps were also valid for fiscal use.

Manuscript cancellations, incorporating date, initials of the authority and the place of posting, generally replaced the use of postmarks, obliterations and pre-stamp seals (Franks) as canceller by 1920's.



The stamps have a repaired diagonal split
Only known unused copy

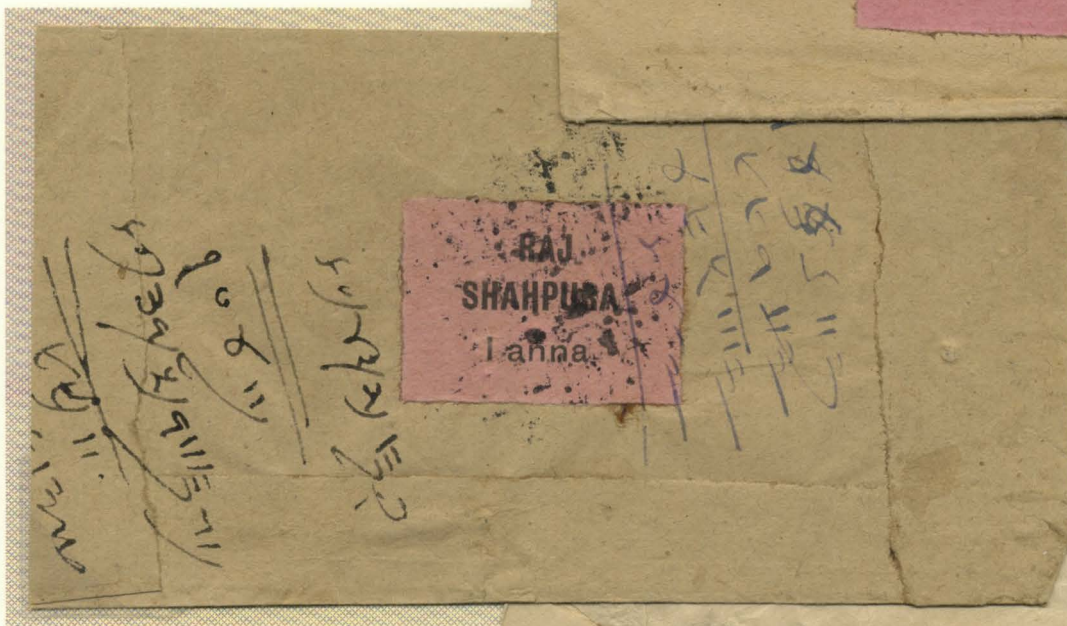
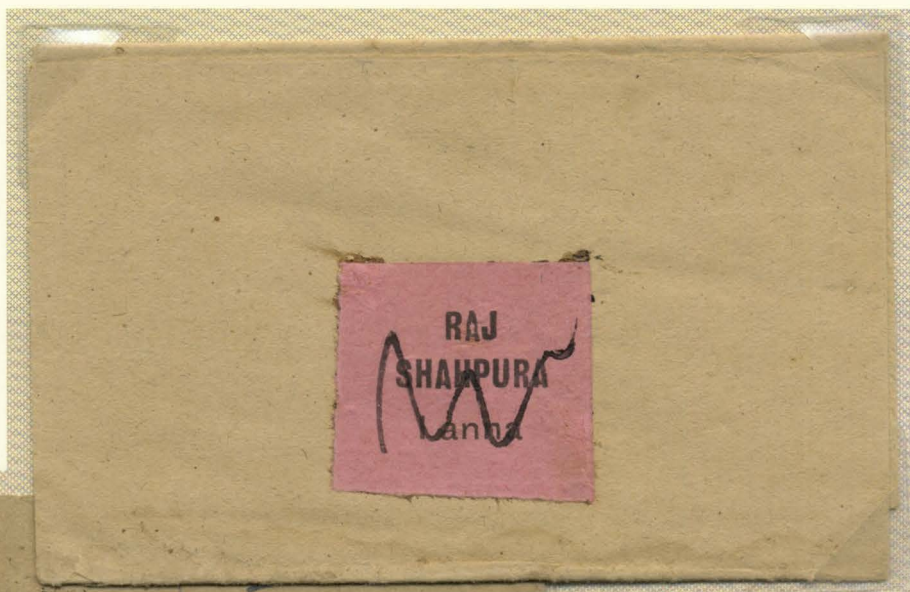


Registered letter to Shahpura City dated 1 August 1928, stamps cancelled by postal clerks's manuscript annotating date
One of three known covers bearing the 1917 1 pice carmine on drab adhesive

Postage rates for ordinary letter was increased from 1pice to 1anna in 1928 creating a need for a 1 anna stamp The 1928 1 anna black was typographed on pink wove paper. The stamps were issued imperforate. The word "POSTAGE" is now removed from the stamp design. These stamps were also valid for fiscal use.

Ordinary folded letter bearing 1928 1a black on pink cancelled by postal clerk's manuscript initials. ©

One of five known covers bearing 1928 1a black on pink adhesive.

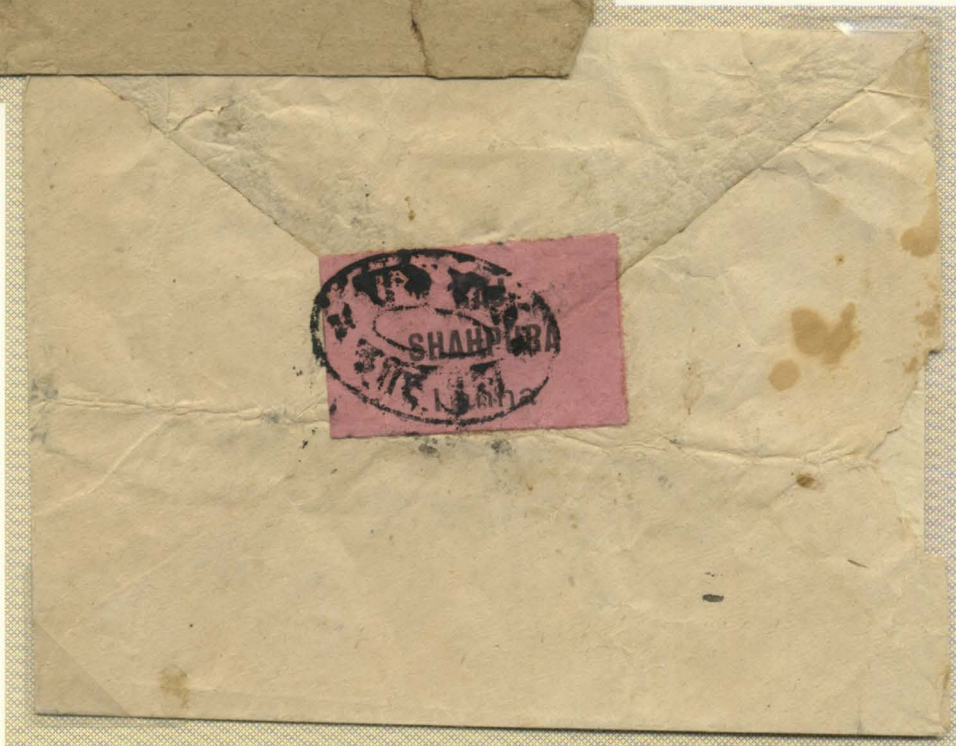


Native cover bearing 1928 1a black on pink cancelled by 3 line intaglio seal (Jaiswal type 4)

One of five known covers bearing 1928 1a black on pink adhesive.

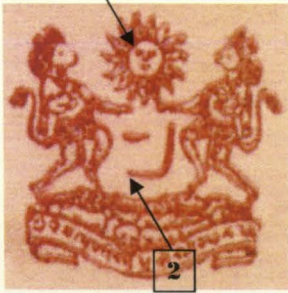
Native cover bearing 1928 1a black on pink tied by new ova obliterator reading "State Post / Shahpura"

One of five known covers bearing 1928 1a black on pink adhesive.



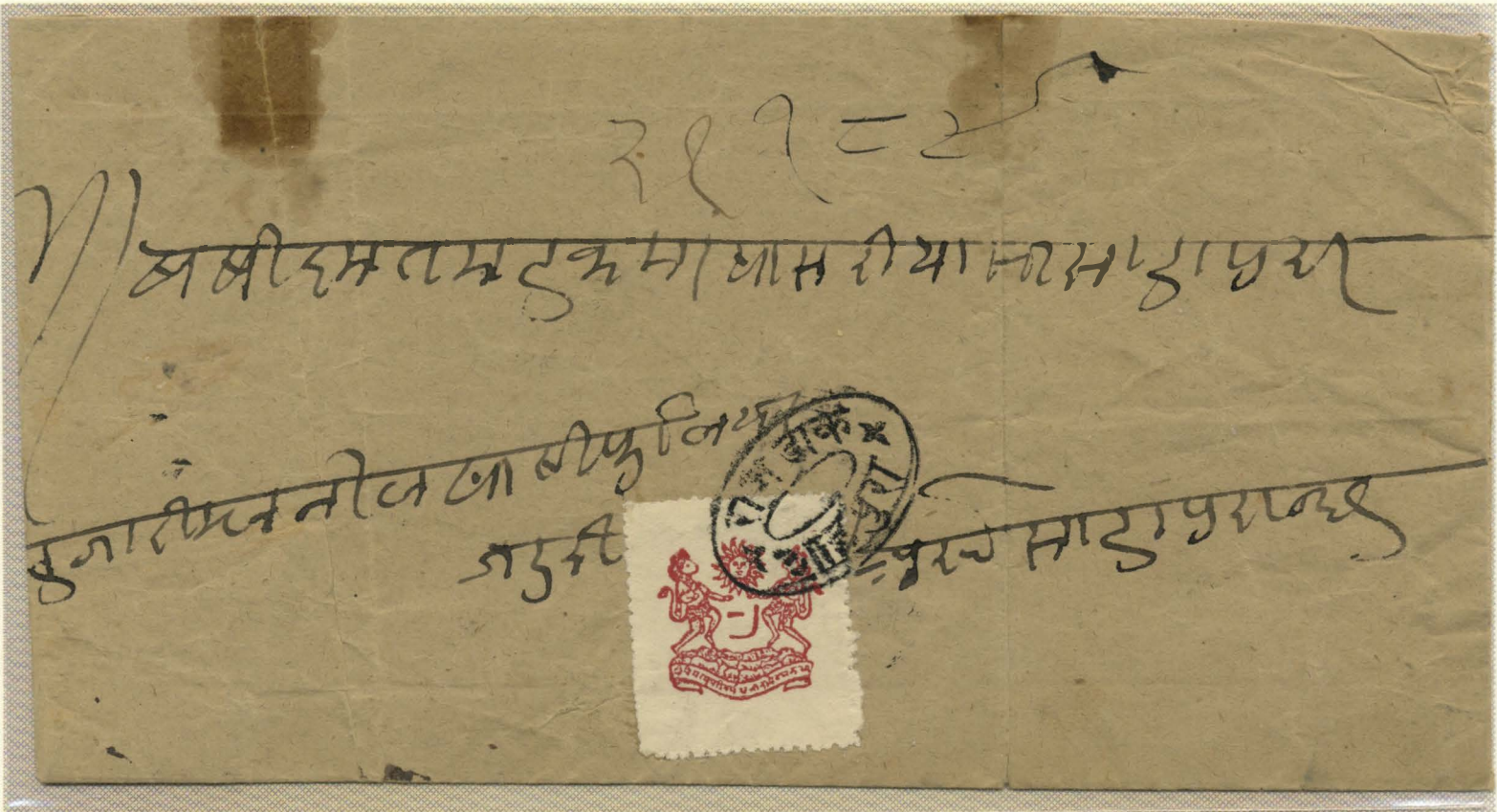
Rather than continuing to produce the previous stamp, in 1930, the postal authorities decided to authorize the use of the existing 1a red fiscal stamp as postage stamps. There were several printings of these stamps from two separate dies. 4 clichés were produced from each die. Die I was used for printings up to 1940 when a new die (Die II) was used to produce stamps printed between 1940 - 1947.

1

Die I

1. Inside diameter of sun measures 4mm
2. Tip of character resembling "J" curves upwards

Native cover bearing 1930 1a red Die I Postal-Fiscal tied by new oval obliterator reading "State Post / Shahpura"



Native registered cover bearing a block of four of the 1930 1a red Die I Postal-Fiscal stamp each cancelled in blue ink.

Combination Usage

Shahpura stamps were valid within the State of Shahpura only. Furthermore they were accepted as valid pre-payment of postage by the State Post, Imperial Post did not accept Shahpura stamps as valid postage. The Imperial Postal Service operated one post office at Shahpura City. This post office acted as an exchange office with the State post office at Shahpura City. All mail addressed to areas out the State's boundaries were handed over by the State post office to the Imperial post office for onward transmission. Such mail required to be franked with Br. India adhesives.

Only two such combination covers of Shahpura State are known.



Royal envelope from Shahpura to Jaipur bearing a crest of the State on the flap bearing Shahpura 1930 1a red Die I Postal-Fiscal stamp tied to cover by new oval obliterator reading "State Post / Shahpura" also franked with Br. India KGV 1a brown tied by "SHAH PURA/20 APR 30" double ring cds with "JHUN JHUNU/20 APR 30" delivery cds. The Shahpura stamp paid for postage to the Imperial Exchange post office at Shahpura City

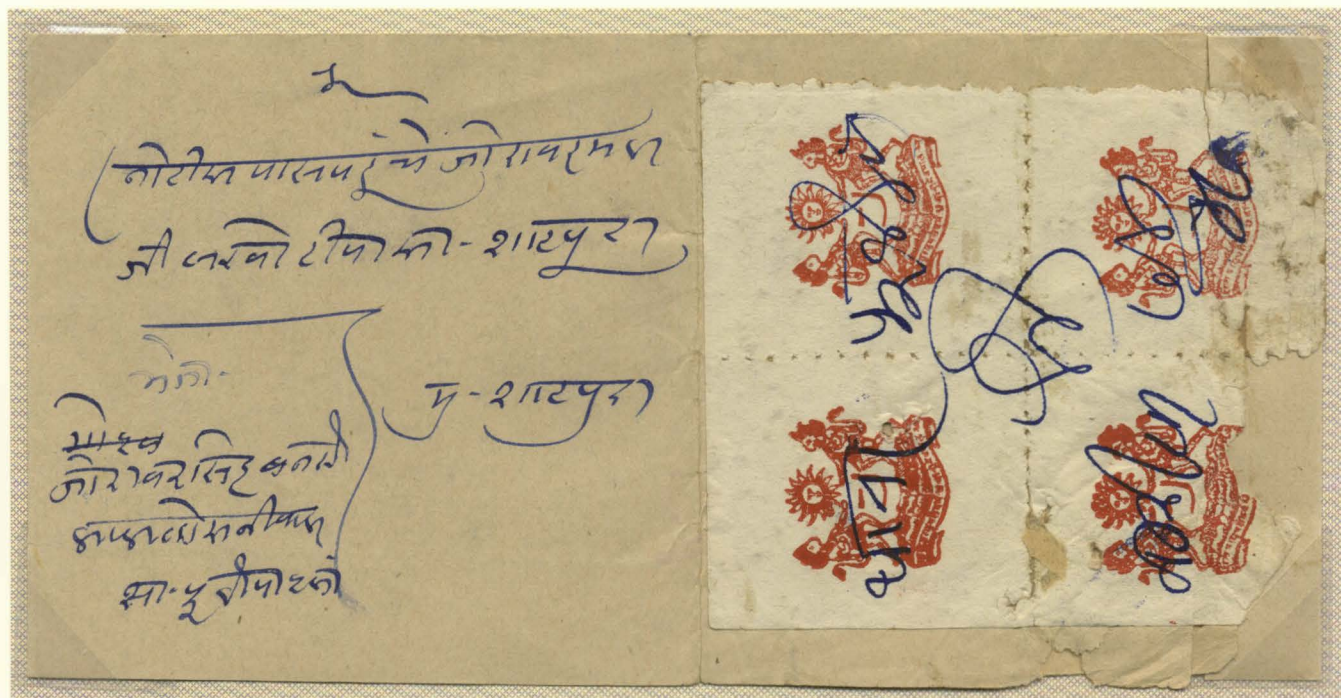
One of two known combination covers bearing Shahpura stamps.



Br. India KGV 1a postal stationery envelope FROM Shahpura to Ajmere bearing Shahpura 1930 1a red Die I Postal-Fiscal stamp tied to cover with pen cancel, the Br. India indicia cancelled by "SHAH PURA/ RAJPUTANA/8 DEC 40" double ring cds. The Shahpura stamp paid for postage to the Imperial Exchange post office at Shahpura City

One of two known combination covers bearing Shahpura stamps.

Pin perforation was experimented with for a short period of time and was soon abandoned. Few examples of pin perf are known.

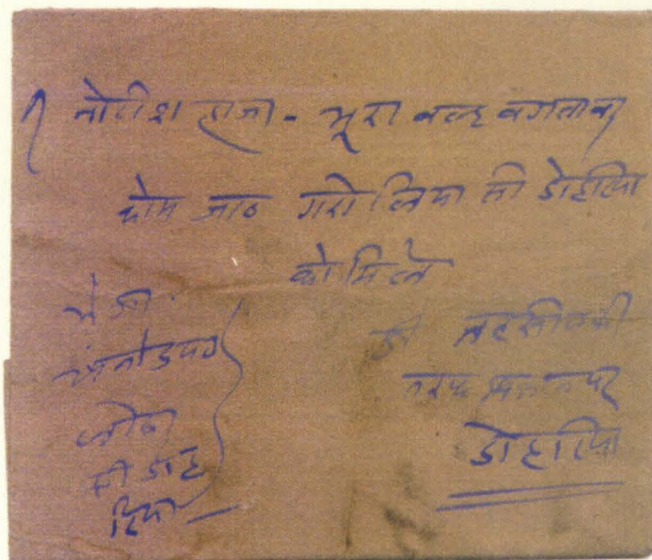


Folded registered letter from Phulia to Shahpura bearing 1a red Die I pin-perf block of four cancelled by "Thana Phila / 7-4-47" + initials of postal official in manuscript.

One of five recorded covers bearing 1a pin-perf stamps

Tete-beche pair

Horizontal tete-beche pairs are known of the pin-perf issue.



Photocopy of obverse



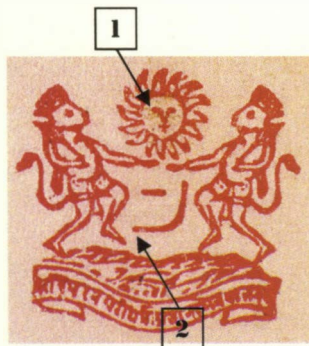
1947 Registered folded letter bearing block of 4 of 1a red Die I pin-perf with variety stamps tete-beche horizontally.

One of three recorded covers bearing tete-beche blocks

A new Die of the 1 anna Postal-Fiscal stamp was made around 1940, possibly due Die I getting damaged. The discovery of this new Die was made by the exhibitor - previously unrecorded.

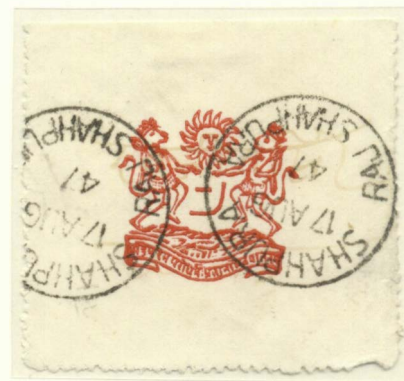
Die II

1. Inside diameter of sun measures 4mm
2. Tip of character resembling "J" is straight



Forgery

The ink color tends to be a distinct shade of red-dish vermillion in the forged examples. An obvious give-away is the fact that genuine vertical tete-beche pairs do not exist.



Previously unrecorded Shahpura cds.



1940 native envelope bearing 1a red Die II cancelled by "25-10-40" in manuscript with initials of the postal clerk.

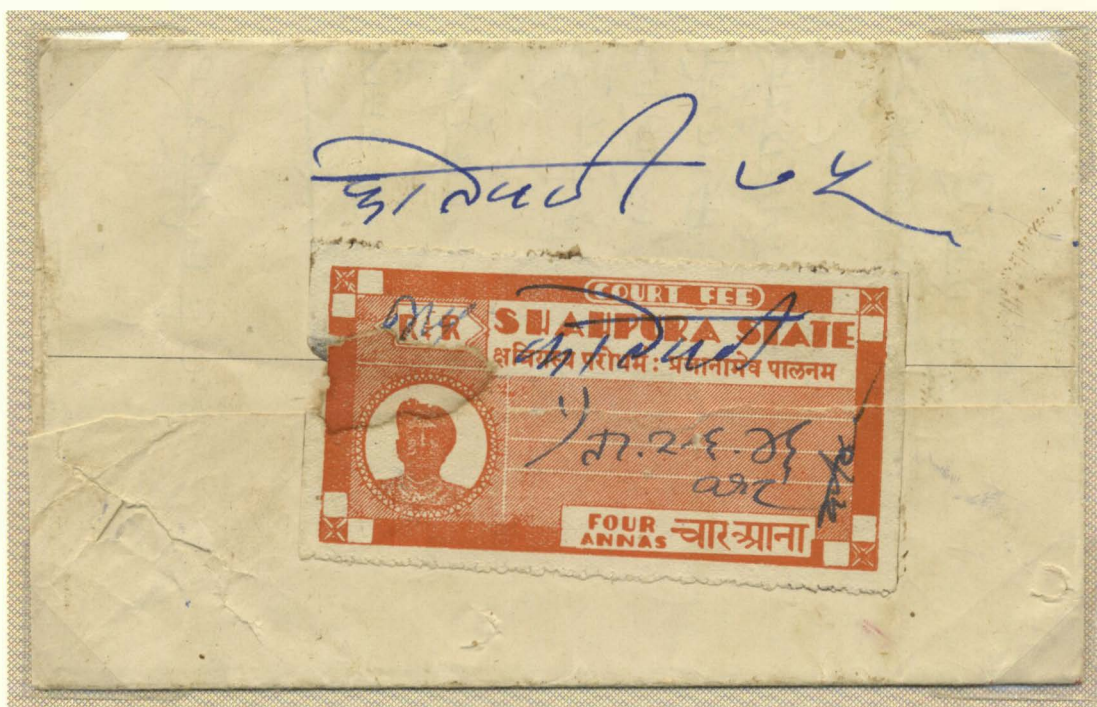


Native envelope bearing 1a red Die II - two singles each tied by new oval obliterator reading "State Post / Shahpura".



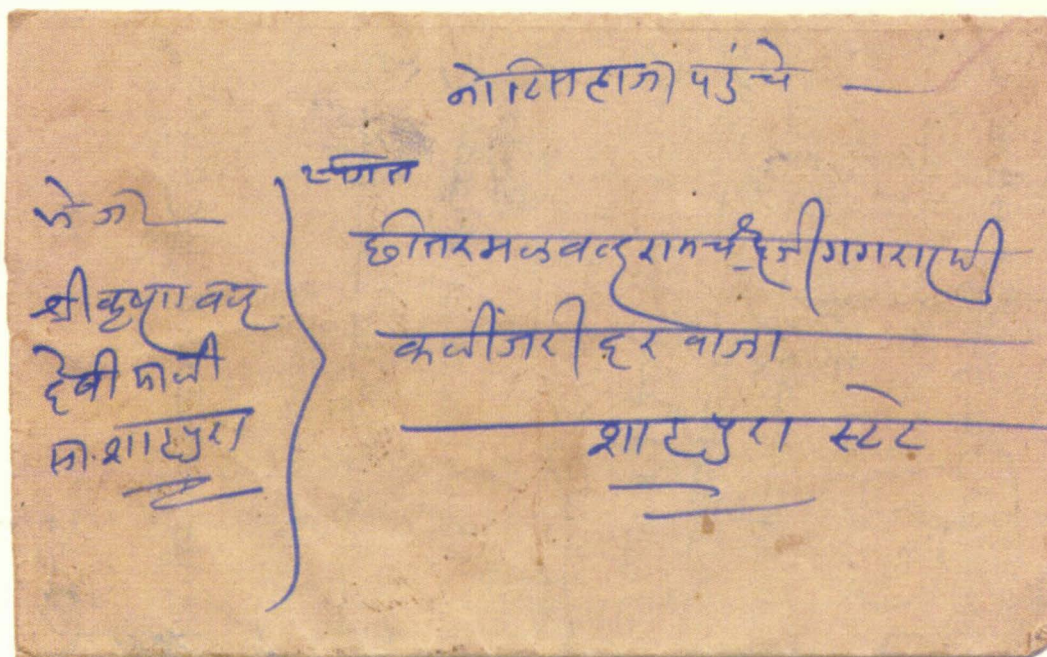
Registered cover bearing 1a red Die II block of three + single each cancelled by "7-4-40 / Kotwali" in manuscript.

The State Post authorized the use of Court Fee stamps for postage as and when there were shortages of the 1a Postal-Fiscal stamps. While this authorization was in effect for a period of three years, these stamps were seldom used for postage. Only two covers bearing Shahpura Court Fee stamps have been recorded to date.



Shahpura 4a red Court Fee adhesive (K&M # 103) used postally on folded letter with manuscript cancellation of "Kotwali No. 75" dated "2-6-46" addressed to Shahpura.

One of two known examples of the Court Fee stamp used for postage.



Photocopy of obverse

Shahpura became part of Rajasthan State on 15 April 1948. Existing stock of Shahpura stamps were handstamped "RAJASTHAN" in violet to be valid for use after this date. These stamps were still only valid within the State of Shahpura and not throughout the State of Rajasthan. These stamps were valid for a very short period of less than two years as all Rajasthan stamps were made obsolete on 1 April 1950 and replaced by Indian stamps.



Shahpura 1a Postal-Fiscal handstamped "RAJASTHAN" on petition document.

Shahpura State Post levied a postage due of 1 anna on all incoming mail, from outside the State's postal system, that was ultimately delivered by the State Post within the State boundaries. A large intaglio postage due strike was stamped on the article of mail and the postage due amount was collected from the recipient. This Postage due strike was used for a very short period in 1928 based on the three known exam-

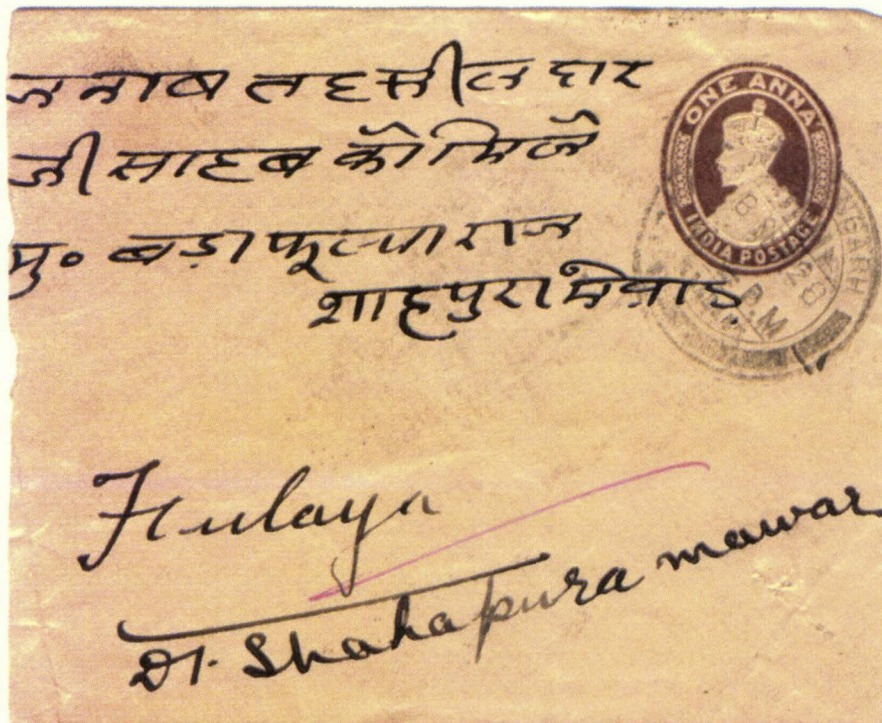


Br. India KGV 1a postal stationery envelope from Kishangarh to Shahpura, stamp indicia cancelled by "KISHANGARH/8 SE 28" dispatch with "SHAH PURA-RAJ/9 SEP. 28" arrival cds of the Imperial Exchange Post Office in Shahpura City on reverse. The letter was handed over to the State Post where the envelope was stamped with the large intaglio postage due strike and was delivered to the recipient who was charged 1a postage due charges.

One of three known examples of the intaglio postage due strike.

1928 Newspaper sent from Udaipur via the Brahmani Dak to the Shahpura State Exchange post office where the newspaper was stamped with the large intaglio postage due strike and was delivered to the recipient who was charged 1a postage due charges.

One of three known examples of the intaglio postage due strike.

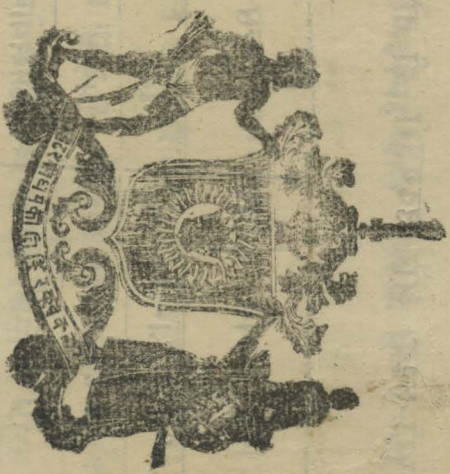


Photocopy of obverse

श्रीकलिंगोविजयत.

ता० १ अक्टोबर सन् १९२८ ई०
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THE SAJJAN KIRI SUOHAKAR,



Incorporated with Mewar Gazette

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जिसमें भेदाह गजद भी संयुक्त है.

यह राज्यचिन्ह सूर्यवंशी महाराजा मेदपोदधर का है.

