

RAJPIPLA

Feudatory State of India

By H. D. S. HAVERBECK

The State of Rajpipla, erroneously spelled Rajpeepla in most catalogues, is located in the Rewa Kantha area of the Bombay Presidency. It lies not far from the Gulf of Cambay between the Nerbudda and Tapti rivers. Its geographic co-ordinates are 21 degrees 23 minutes and 21 degrees 59 minutes North Latitude; and 73 degrees 5 minutes and 74 degrees East Longitude. At the time of issuing stamps, the population numbered approximately 60,000. The total area of the state is 1514 square miles comprising one town and 211 villages. The Capital is the city of Nandod.

The family of the Raja derives its origin from the Raja of Ujjain. They are by caste Rajputs, and carry the name of the Bhaonagar family. It has ruled in Rajpipla since 1470. The state pays a tribute of 65,000 rupees annually to Baroda. It maintains an army of 566 infantry. The Raja is entitled to a salute of 11 guns.

Rajpipla is one of the states that has given little trouble to philatelists. Its stamps and postal stationery have been straightforward. It is most interesting to note that the issuance of postal stationery preceded that of adhesives. We shall consider the issues in chronological order.

The exact date of the issuance of the letter sheets has not been definitely determined. But a study of the papermakers embossed devices leads us to believe that it was no earlier than 1875. The earliest embossed date found is 1874. The series consists of four denominations printed by typography in black ink on thin white wove paper bearing the maker's watermark of "Dorling & Gregory". The denominations are 1, 2, 3 and 4 pice.

The design of the impressed stamp which is found in the upper right corner is substantially the same for each denomination. It consists of a circle divided horizontally into two half circles, surrounding an inner circle containing the denomination. In the upper half circle appears the inscription, "Rajpipla Dak" (Rajpipla Post) in Gujarati characters. In the lower half circle is an ornamental design of leaves. At the upper left of the space for the address, on all four denominations are three Gujarati characters which read "nabr" meaning number. There is no other inscription upon the 1 pice letter sheet. (Fig. 1) On the 2 pice there is inscribed in English, "Registered" in the upper center, and "From Nandode Post Office—Unkleshwar" in two lines in the lower left



Fig. 1. The upper portion of the 1 pice letter sheet.

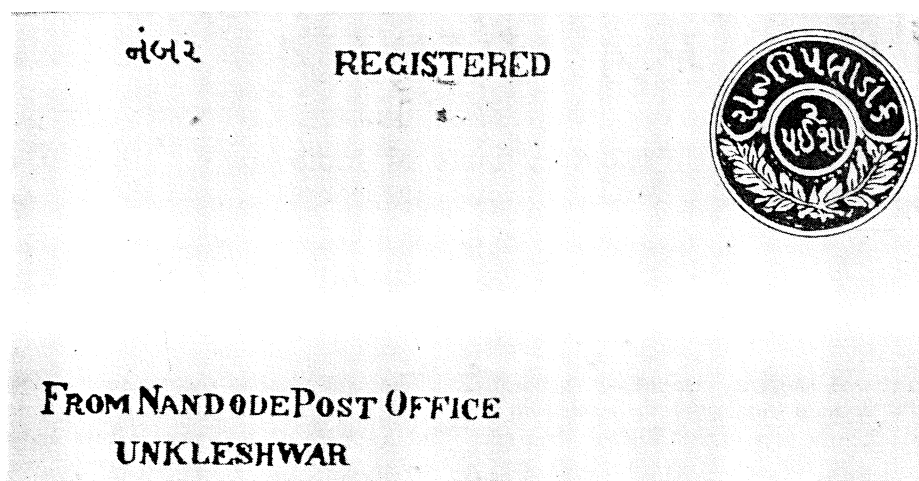


Fig. 2. 2 pice letter sheet.

corner. (Fig. 2) On the 3 pice appears, again in English "Rajpeepla State Post Office—Rewa Kanta" in two lines in the lower left corner. (Fig. 3) On the 4 pice there is a Gujarati inscription in two lines in the same position which is translated, "Nandode Post Office—Unkleshwar Gujarat". (Fig. 4)

The four denominations were all printed together upon a large sheet of paper measuring about 16 x 12 inches, which was afterwards cut into four. By a study of guide lines the arrangement has been determined

to be:

2 Pice	4 Pice
3 Pice	1 Pice

The 2 pice letter sheet has been reported on yellow paper. This is believed to be a proof.

While the letter sheets are fairly common in unused condition, it is interesting to note that they are extremely scarce used. In figures 5 and 6 are illustrated the only two used specimens that the author has found. The cancellations are not at all similar to

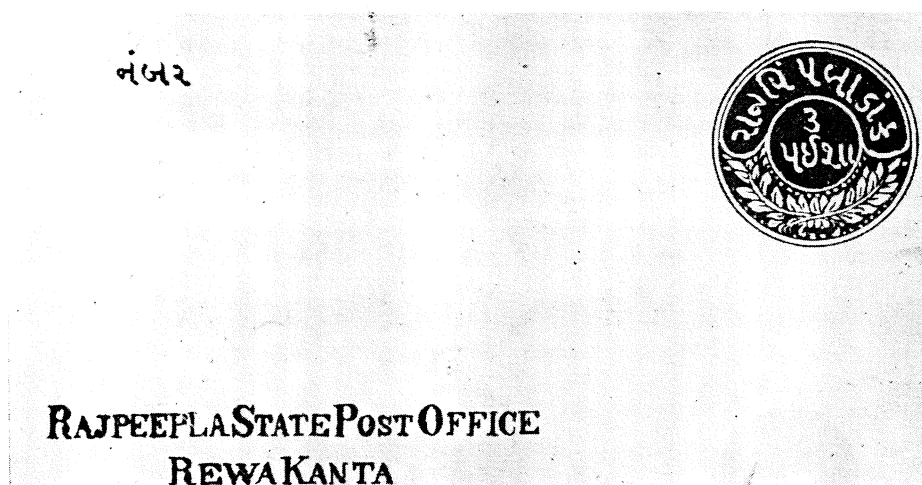


Fig. 3. Upper portion of 3 pice letter sheet.

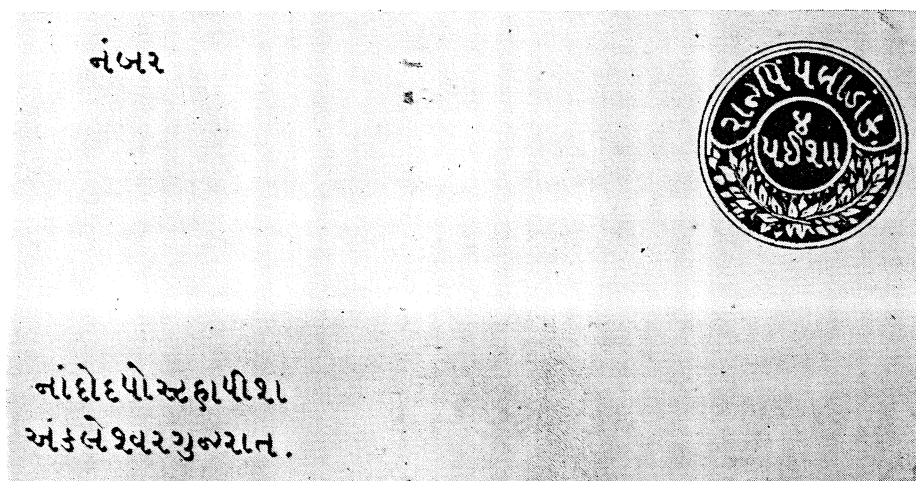


Fig. 4. Upper half of 4 pice letter sheet.

those found upon the adhesive stamps.

The paper bears a maker's watermark, "Dorling & Gregory" in large outline capitals repeated approximately 8 inches apart. A portion of this watermark usually appears on each letter sheet. Major Evans reported seeing a single example of the 2 pice sheet on yellow paper in 1902. This is believed to have been a proof impression.

The first adhesive stamp of Rajpipla appeared in 1880. It is chronicled in both "Le Timbre-Poste" and "The Philatelic Record"

in November of that year. "Le Timbre-Poste" stated that it had been issued on June 1, 1880. M. Moens also assigned that date to its appearance. The great scarcity of covers has made it impossible to verify this attribution.

The simple square design of the stamp can be seen in figure 7. The central circle bears crossed swords surrounded by an inscribed band, enclosed in a hexagonal frame with curved sides. The inscription around the upper part of the circular band reads, "Raj-

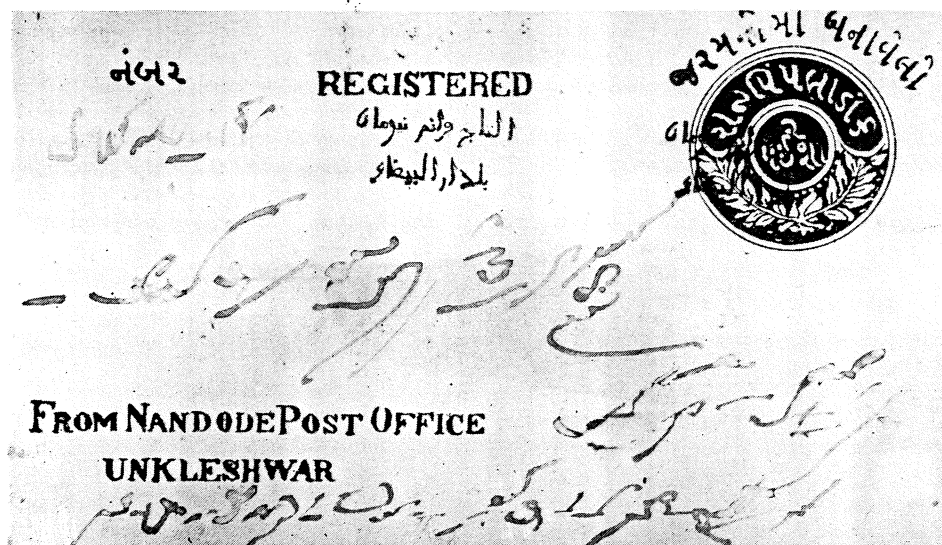


Fig. 5. One of the few examples known of a used letter sheet.

RAJPIPLA

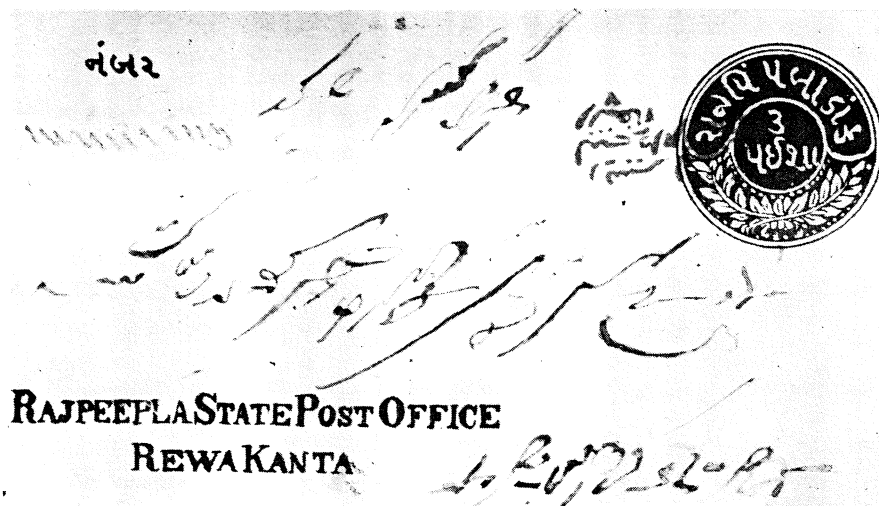


Fig. 6. Another scarce used letter sheet.

pipla Tapal" (Rajpipla Post) and that in the brackets below "Hashil" (Possibly "Value"). The characters in the upper corners are "e" and "k", those in the lower, "Pai" and "So" (Ek Paise = 1 pice, a quarter anna).

The stamp was printed by lithography in sheets of 64 (8 x 8) on white wove paper. (Fig. 7) There is a colored frame line to the sheet at the top and right only about 8 mm. from the stamps. In the bottom margin is an oblong tablet bearing the same inscriptions as upon the stamps. The size and positioning of the transfer report has not been determined. But careful study of the sheets leads us to believe that the two frame lines around each stamp were drawn in by hand separately around each subject. This would indicate that each subject in itself constituted a separate transfer report.

The stamps are perforated 11 by a single line machine. Sometimes a thick brown gum was applied by hand after perforating. The color of the stamps is blue, with a variety of shades ranging from a milky blue to dark

blue.

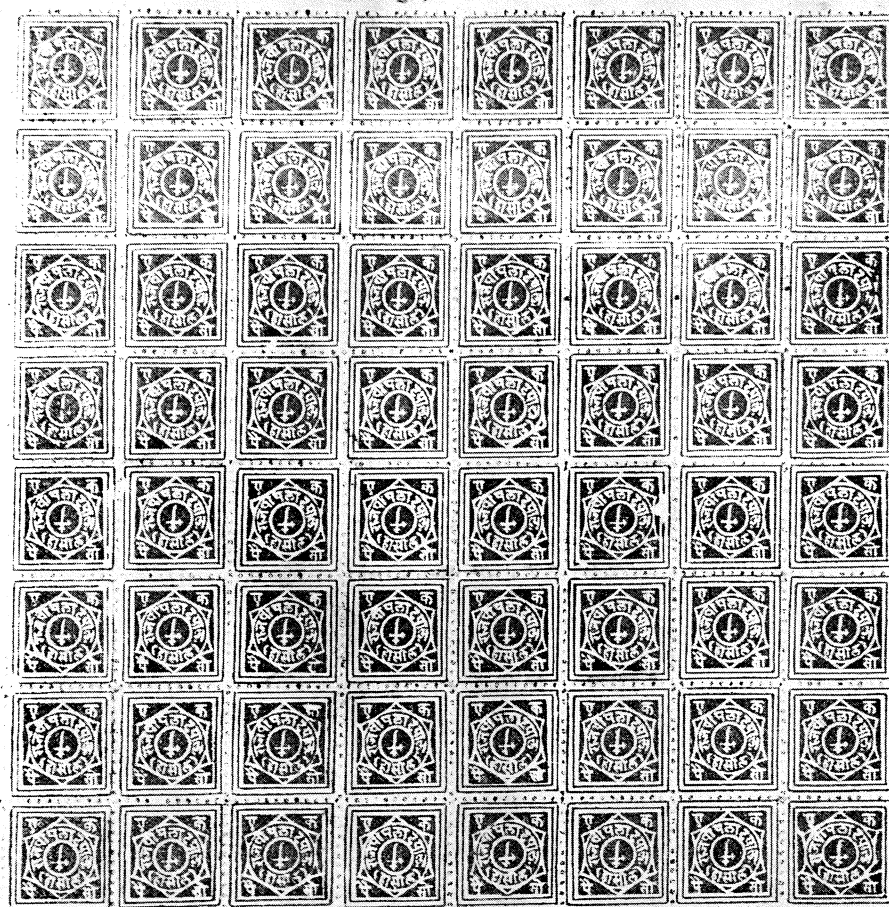
In the latter part of 1880 two additional denominations appeared—2 annas printed in green and 4 annas in red. The design of the 2 annas stamp shows an upright sword in an oval surrounded by the same inscription as appears on the 1 pice. (Fig. 8) The whole is set off with a pearl and floreate design with the denomination, "Be Ana" (two annas) in a horizontal tablet at the foot. The design of the 4 annas repeats that of the 1 pice surrounded by a square zigzag border. The denomination is given as "char Ana" (four annas). (Fig. 9) Both stamps are lithographed in sheets of 20 (4 x 5) upon thin, toned wove paper. There is a colored line at the top of the 2 annas sheet 3 mm. away from the stamps. The 4 annas sheet has colored lines at the left and bottom of the sheet, 4 mm. at the side and 5 mm. away at the bottom. There are constant defects in the designs of these stamps, which may be used as a guide in plating.



Fig. 8.



Fig. 9.



राजपीपला टपाल हांगरील एक पैसो.

Fig. 7. Complete sheet of the first adhesive stamp.



Fig. 10.

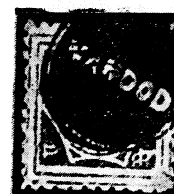


Fig. 11.



Fig. 12. Front and back of a cover bearing the 1 pice stamp showing the postmark and cancellation.

Photos by L. W. Giles

The perforation gauges between $12\frac{1}{2}$ and 13, there being 38 holes in a space of 60 mm. The stamps were issued without gum.

These two stamps differ so greatly from the 1 pice, both in the style and execution of their designs, and in the nature of their paper and perforation, that they must be considered the work of different craftsmen. It is thus somewhat logical to consider them as different issues. But there is no actual proof that they were not issued at the same time.

Rather crude counterfeits of all three stamps are known. There is no report of any proof impressions.

When these stamps were first chronicled in 1880, a 2 pice stamp was stated to form a part of this set. It never seems to have been issued because no copies have ever been reported. "Le Timbre-Poste" in May, 1884, reported an 8 annas stamp in the design of the 2 annas but in the color of the 4 annas. This stamp also has not been seen. Fiscal stamps were issued in 1889 in a somewhat similar design, but bearing a crescent moon in place of the sword.

In the year 1886 (?) postal stationery was again used. This time stamped envelopes of the denominations of 2, 3 and 4 pice were

RAJPIPLA

issued. The same design as with the earlier letter sheets was used. They were printed on white laid paper in a size 136 x 79 mm, uniformly in black. These are exceedingly scarce items.

The cancellations usually found on these stamps consists of a rectangle of four thick horizontal bars inclosing the Devanagari characters "RA" and "1" separated by two

short thick bars parallel to the others. (Fig. 10). There also exists a circular black seal inscribed "NANDOD" in white. This is illustrated in figure 11 through the courtesy of Mr. T. W. Ward. The author has also seen portions of a device similar to the design of the 1 pice stamp used as an obliterator. It has not been seen in sufficient detail to copy, thus no illustration is given.

Check List

1880, June 1 (?) Lithographed on White wove paper. Unwatermarked. Perf. 11

1 Pice Blue (shades) c s Multiple pieces 4N. Covers RRRR

1880, Nov.-Dec. (?) Lithographed on toned wove paper. Unwatermarked. Perf. 12½

2 Pice Green (shades) s R Multiple pieces 4N Covers RRRR

4 Pice Red s RR Multiple pieces N Covers U

Became obsolete at the end of 1886, when the post was taken over by the Indian Post Office.

Postal Stationery

1875 (?) Letter Sheets

1 Pice Black s RRRR

2 Pice Black s RRRR

3 Pice Black s RRRR

4 Pice Black s RRRR

Proof of 2 pice reported on yellow paper.

1886 (?) Stamped Envelopes

2 Pice Black RRRR U

3 Pice Black RRRR U

4 Pice Black RRRR U

Bibliography

Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Vol. XI, pp. 60-64. "Stamps of Rajpeepla" by E. B. Evans

Philatelic Journal of India, Vol. XLVII, pp. 14-16

Philatelic Journal of India, Vol. XLVII, pp 14-16

(Reprint of Evans Article with notes by L. E. Dawson)

Die Ganzsache, 30 Jahr. No. 2 (April, 1956) p. 11 "*Die Ganzsachen der Indischen Feudalstaaten, 17, Radschpipla*," Dr. W. Pohligh.