

Soruth: The 1929 Pictorial Definitive

by Kusum and Dhirubhai Mehta

The pictorial definitives in the denominations of 3 pies, 6 pies, one anna, two annas, three annas, four annas, eight annas and Re.1 were issued on 1st October, 1929 to coincide with the revision of postal rates. The new rates required higher values.

The pictorial stamps depicted:

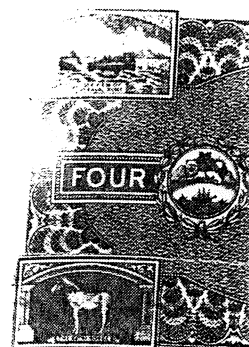
- 3 Pies — Junagadh City with the Gir Mountain in black and the frame in blackish green.
- 6 Pies — The Gir Lion with the Gir Mountains in the background—black and the frame in deep blue.
- 1 Anna — Portrait of Nawab Sir Mahabat Khanji in black and the frame in carmine.
- 2 Annas — The Kathi Horse in black and the frame in dull orange.
- 3 Annas — Junagadh City in black with the Gir Mountains in the background—in black and the frame in carmine.
- 4 Annas — The Gir Lion with Gir Mountains in the background in black, and the frame in purple.
- 8 Annas — The Kathi Horse in black and the frame in yellow green.
- 1 Rupee — Same as One anna portrait but in black and the frame in pale blue.

There are shades in colors.

While the frame design is common to all the pictorial stamps, a different color scheme has been used as described above. The denomination in words appear at the bottom.

The only information on the designs that we could find is that these have possibly been based on photographs supplied by the State. The frame design could be the art work of the India Security Press. Final designs being made, it was found that the lion displayed on the half anna and 4 annas stamps were not to the mark. The photograph was possibly based on a lion in captivity in Junagadh State Zoo. The Security Press was requested to use a better lion picture if one was available. What finally happened and which lion finally appeared on the stamp needs to be explored.

While the four designs have been used on a set of eight stamps, we have in our possession the design of the state stamp paper where identical designs have been used in three of the four corners of the stamp paper: on the left bottom the Kathi Horse; in right top Junagadh City and bottom right, the Gir Lion. The top left stamp shows the Veraval Port and a sailing



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vessel. The portrait of the state crest, depicting a lion within a floral circle within a floral frame appears in the design.

We have a few questions.

Was the Veraval Port a pictorial stamp? If yes, in the pictorial series, when Veraval was a very busy port having a large shipyard.

Can the lion on the stamps be from some other place, possibly from the Security Press?

While access to the Security Press, which was at that time, some light on them.

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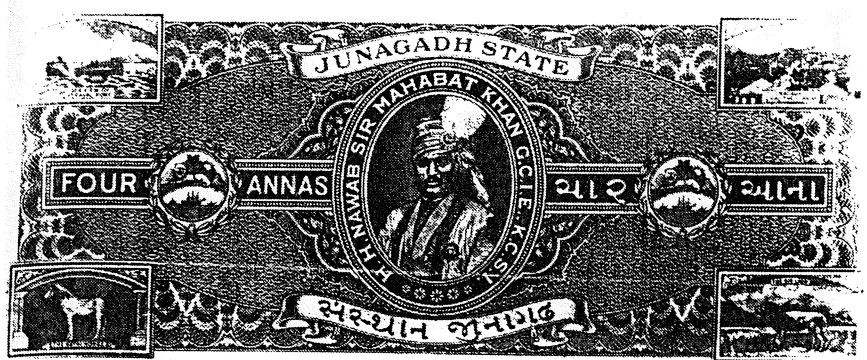
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vessel. The portrait appears in the center of the stamp paper with the state crest, depicting the fort, the lion and the Veraval Port, in a small circle within a floral design on the right and the left. The state crest also appears in the design of the post card.

We have a few questions to ask:
Was the Veraval Port design suggested and a proof prepared for the pictorial stamps? If yes, why was it not included on a stamp in the pictorial series, when Veraval was a lifeline for the state's trade? It was a very busy port having sailings to African and Gulf ports.

Can the lion on the stamp be identified as the Gir Lion or a lion from some other place, possibly based on some photograph with the Security Press?

While access to state records may not be easy, possibly the India Security Press, which designed the pictorial stamps, could help throw some light on them.

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