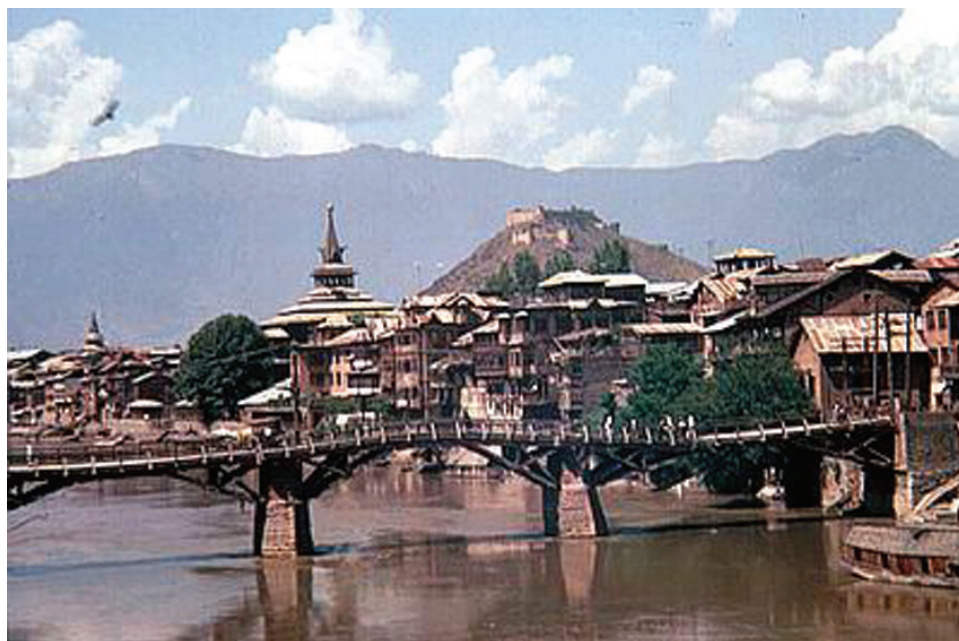


From the Stamp Specialist: **Jammu and Kashmir**

By Winthrop S. Boggs

*(From The Stamp Specialist Blue Book, #6,
published in 1941, with new images)*



View of Srinagar, Kashmir, The City of the Sun

“The subject is complicated and as one explores the relative abundance of reprints and forgeries, giving up would seem to be a reasonable choice. Jammu & Kashmir is not rare without a reason. The existence and survival of the watercolor impressions in a damp climate with high rate of rainfall is a genuine reason for rarity. The crude and mottled appearance of the genuine stamps which is a welcome signal for the forgers who did not even have to be very accurate or precise, is another fact that enforces the rarity of genuine J & K material.”

This quote, from a preview of an as-yet unpublished book, “JKL: Jammu, Kashmir & Lasbela: A detailed study of stamps & posts” may also be applied to the article that follows. Starting to process this Stamp Specialist article on a pleasant Saturday afternoon, by midnight I was begin-

ning to get lost in the details described by world-renowned expert Winthrop Boggs, much of it made difficult by the lack of good illustrations. So I gave up for the evening, determined to begin again tomorrow to complete my first reading of the Boggs article and, more important, to find clarification on the internet.

A couple of sites worth mentioning are:

<http://www.stampsociety.com/article3.html>, within the website of the Peshawar Stamp Society.

And the site that truly saved this article:

<http://www.kashmirstamps.ca/index.html>, a tremendous study, with links to still more great reference works. In my opinion, once you finish reading this Boggs reprint, you will be well advised to go to the Kashmir Stamps site to fill in the gaps in the Boggs article and to fully appreciate the complexity that led to the quote that introduces this article. JFD.

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Among the most fascinating, and philatelically important of the Indian Native States, are the issues of Jammu and Kashmir. There was a time, some forty years ago, when these stamps were “extremely popular, much sought for by specialists, while no general collector failed to secure a representative showing of them. With the passing of the years however, those familiar with these stamps have passed also, so that today they are practically a virgin territory to the philatelist who is seeking new worlds to conquer. Among the issues of Jammu and Kashmir are some of the classic rarities of philately, as well as some of the commonest stamps in the catalog. The lack of authoritative information concerning these stamps has undoubtedly been the most serious obstacle in the way of those who have ventured to collect them, or who have toyed with the idea that they might try to form a collection of this Indian State.

The catalog lists of both Scott and Gibbons could be revised and corrected, also the rather vague and discouraging footnotes about reprints and official imitations make matters seem worse than they actually are.

A chronological arrangement of the stamp issues of Jammu and Kashmir is as follows:—

1866 (Scott #1 to 5). Circular stamps for use in both provinces. [Listed under Jammu and Kashmir. JFD.]

1866 to 1878. Separate issues concurrently for each province. Kashmir, rectangular stamps only (Scott #62 to 73). Jammu, rectangular stamps (Scott #6 to 23), supplemented by circular stamps (Scott #24 to 61).

1878 to 1894. Rectangular stamps only for use in both provinces (Scott #74 to 126, and O1 to O20). [Listed under Jammu & Kashmir. Since this article was published Scott 61 and O18-O20 have been dropped from the listings. JFD.]

From this arrangement it is easy to follow the various issues. If a collection is arranged with the circular issues grouped together, followed by the rectangular stamps, classification will be still easier. The rectangular stamps for the separate provinces are known as the “Old Rectangulars”, while those for use in both Jammu and Kashmir are known as the “New Rectangulars”.

One of the most frequent questions that a specialist in these stamps has to answer is, “How do you read the inscriptions and denominations?” . We will translate the inscriptions in answer to that question.

First the Circular Stamps.

If the stamp is placed so that the character similar to a figure “3” is at the top, and then read in a clockwise direction we have “Dak Jammu” in Dogra characters, meaning “Post of Jammu”. To the left of the “3” reading in a counter clockwise direction is the Persian inscription, “Kamrao riyasat Sarkar Jammu Kashmir, 1923.” This when translated is “Dominions of the Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, 1923”. According to the Dogra Calendar “1923” is equivalent to 1866 A. D.

The “Old Rectangular” stamps have the same inscriptions in the oval band surrounding the central medallion. The “Sun” at the top separates the two inscriptions, the Dogra being on the right, and the Persian on the left.

The “New Rectangular” issues from 1878 onwards have the Persian inscription in the central medallion

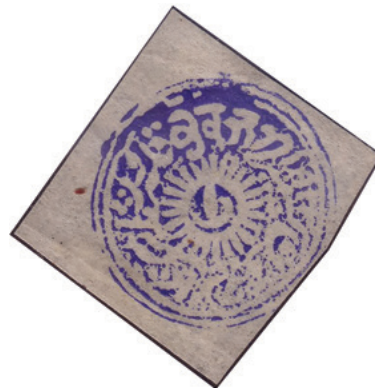


Left, Old Rectangular, 1866-70 8a, Kashmir Sc. 73; right New Rectangular, 1878-80 Jammu & Kashmir 2a, Sc. 90.

above the value, while the Dogra inscription is in the oval band around the central medallion. [Reminder: for a closer look, use your pdf magnifier tool.]

In the Circular stamps there are only three denominations, viz:—1/2 anna, 1 anna, and 1/4 rupee (4 annas).

In the center of the design is a saw toothed circle (representing the sun, since Srinagar, then the Summer capital of Kashmir, is known as the city of the Sun), in which the figures of value are placed.



Left, 1/2 anna. In the center, the two straight lines indicate 2 paise (or 1/2 anna), the curved line would be a divider stroke for any units to the left of it, here none; right, Jammu Kashmir 1a; center symbol indicates 4 paise (1 anna)

1 / 2 a is represented by a curved line followed by two strokes

1 anna is represented by a stroke and a curved line

1/4 rupee (4 annas), is represented by simply a stroke (see page 5).

As can be seen this reverses the 1a and 1/4 rupee as given in all the standard catalogs. [Scott now shows images that agree with those above.] The reason for this change is based on both theoretical and pragmatic reasoning. Briefly it is as follows:-

Early students were greatly puzzled by the characters of value on these circular stamps, but by 1875 it was pretty well agreed that they were as we have given them above. In those days it was an accepted fact that there were two dies of the 1/2a, and 1/4 rupee, of which "Die I" was very rare. Major Evans in his "Philatelic Handbook" of 1885 felt that it was more reasonable that there should be two dies of the most used values, the 1/2a, and 1a; and the 1/4 rupee should have only one die. He accordingly made the transposition, and they have so appeared since in the catalogs.



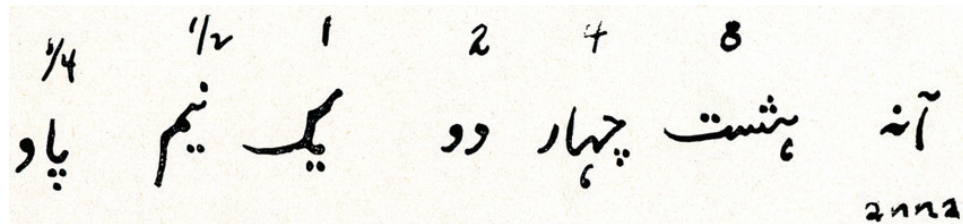
Jammu Kashmir 4a; center symbol indicates 1/4 rupee, or 4 anna

In 1899 Sir David Masson conclusively proved that the so called "Die I" was a forgery pure and simple, so that there had never been more than one genuine die for each of the early circular stamps. This of course nullified the argument that Major Evans advanced in 1885, but the connection between the two has never to our knowledge been realized. Sefi and Mortimer in their book on this country admit considerable difficulty in trying to explain the fact that the commonly accepted 1/4 rupee (4 annas) is so common used, pairs and strips even being known on flimsy little covers that scarcely weigh an ounce, whereas the accepted 1 anna is rarely seen.

In putting the order of the denominations in the way accepted before 1885 a number of puzzling problems are answered. There are further facts which would require an article in itself to discuss fully which still further support our argument that the correct order of the values is as we have given them. So ends an error of over fifty years standing!

Of the rectangular stamps there are only seven denominations, viz:—1/8 anna, 1/4 anna, 1/2 anna, 1 anna, 2 annas, 4 annas, and 8 annas. The 1/8 anna occurs only on the New Rectangular issues, and the other denomina-

tions occur on all of the Kashmir stamps, while the Jammu rectangular stamps are of only two values, namely 1/2 anna and 1 anna. The denominations are written in Persian, and are read from right to left. They appear on the stamps as shown in the illustration herewith.



(On the 1/8a, the value is written as 1/2 a 1/4 anna.)



The earliest known Jammu & Kashmir cover. The white space to the right of the J&K stamp suggests that British postage, probably a 1/2a blue Victoria, had once been affixed to the envelope. This cover was posted at Srinagar on 6 zelqa'de 1282—Friday March 23, 1866—and arrived at Amritsar, via Sialkot on March 29, 1866 according to the British receiving date stamp.



The Earliest known usage of Jammu Circular to Europe in Jan (error for 'JUN' 1866. Probably unique! (Nanjee Collection)

The Old Rectangulars have the value written in the upper part of the central oval, while on the New Rectangulars it is in the lower part of the oval. (See Old and New Rectangulars, page 4).

Let us now look at the Scott Catalog and see if we can't simplify matters there. (Remember to read 1/4 rupee for 1 anna, and 1 anna for 1/4 rupee). [Note: because of changes in the Scott numbering over the years, some of the notes that follow are now out of date. Rather than try to correlate the numbers from this article to current numbers, it would be more advisable to simply refer to a current Scott catalogue for the correct listings. Nevertheless, these notes are useful as a guide to the intricacies of Jammu and Kashmir stamps. JFD.]

#3 has never been found used, and can therefore be ignored by the average collector. It is, however, very common as a reprint. #2b is so rare as to be of academic interest only. There should be a corresponding #4b which is even rarer than #2b. [#3 is now listed used, valued at \$2,100 in the 2013 *Scott Classic Catalogue*. JFD.]

Continuing the circular stamps, Jammu re-issues, #24 to #61. #29, 30, 33, 34, and 38 are unknown in used condition by students of these stamps, and can therefore be relegated to the "prepared for use, but not issued" category. [Almost all are now listed used, but most are in italics, indicating a thin market with little pricing information available. JFD.]

In the oil color impressions #43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 56, and 60 are nonexistent, except as reprints. [This is so footnoted in Scott.]

From the above it can be seen that for all practical purposes we have eliminated fourteen stamps. This certainly makes the list far less formidable.

All of the circular stamps were handstamped from single dies. That considerable care was used is shown by the fact that so far only one double strike has been found, and that *tete-beches* are to the best of our knowledge unknown. Such accuracy on the part of an ordinarily, none too careful a printer, argues for the use of a device similar to a numbering machine, which would make it impossible to produce *tete-beches*, but not overlapping or double impressions. This, however, is pure conjecture.

The paper is usually a native made substance which we call "laid" but which is not a true laid paper. It is grayish in color, and polished on one side by a coating of boiled rice flour, which has been hand rubbed. A few stamps are known on an English made laid paper, and one stamp of great rarity is known on thick yellowish wove.

Before passing to the rectangular stamps, we can lay down a general rule concerning the circular stamps as follows:

ANY CIRCULAR STAMP ON WOVE PAPER IS A RE-PRINT OR COUNTERFEIT. (The only exception to this is a 1/2a oil color in red, on thick yellowish wove, of which less than a dozen copies are known.)

The Jammu Rectangular issues next call for attention. These are #6 to #23. We can do some more pruning of the list. #17 and # 21 are simply nonexistent, except as



Left, the Jammu 1/2a indigo Old Rectangular watercolor, Sc. 7; right, the 1a, Sc. 9, one of only about a half-dozen now likely in collectors' hands.



reprints. #23, and 23a were printed, but no copies have ever been found, although there may be an unrecognized example in some dealer's stock or a private collection. [23a is no longer listed, and 23 is listed, but without unused or used values.]



Of the remaining numbers, #9, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, and 22a, are so rare that few specialists have even seen them.

Block of four, with three 1/2a (Sc. 8) and one 1a (lower left, Sc. 11). Notice the difference in the inscription in the oval of the lower left stamp

All of the Jammu Rectangular stamps were printed from a small plate of four subjects, consisting of three 1/2 anna, and one 1 anna, arranged in a block of four, as shown in the illustration. Several impressions from the plate were taken on a sheet of paper, and as a consequence a strip of three of the 1/2a, or a strip consisting of a 1/2a+1a+1/2a can be found.



The practice of cutting out the 1a subject (very carefully) is known with certain of the postal items from the watercolor period. Left, the 1a red in the lower left is a single, Sc. 11, that has been placed there, the other three stamps being the 1/2a, Sc. 8; right, the three 1/2a indigo stamps, Sc. 7, with the 1a, Sc.10, missing.



Shades of the Jammu 1876 1a watercolor on native paper, Sc. 10

Again we can lay down a general rule that ANY JAMMU RECTANGULAR STAMP ON WOVE PAPER IS A REPRINT OR COUNTERFEIT. (The only exception is both values in dull brown red oil color on very thick European wove paper, which are excessively rare).

The ability to distinguish between the watercolor and oil color impressions is necessarily important in the study of these issues. The watercolor impressions are extremely soluble, and used copies are usually badly smeared. Furthermore the surfaced paper did not take the impression of the color well, and the color pigment frequently gathers in lumps. The hues are usually bright.

The oil color impressions are flatter, more distinct, and the oil usually penetrated the paper so that the impression can be seen on the back of the stamp. The hues are much duller, and they are only slightly soluble, sometimes not at all. Used copies are usually as clear as unused. Heavily inked specimens or those from dirty plates seem to have a gloss about them that no watercolor ever possesses.



The Kashmir 1866 1/2a grey-black watercolor on native paper, Sc. 62.

The Kashmir Rectangulars are a much simpler series than the Jammu Rectangulars. The Kashmirs are #62 to #73 inclusive. No cutting of the list is necessary, but #66 and #70 are extremely rare, so the general collector can safely pass them



The Kashmir 1866-70 2a yellow watercolor on thin pelure wove, Sc. 71

by. The first 1/2 anna (#62), was handstamped from a single die, several impressions on a sheet of paper. It is very rare used, and practically unknown unused, less than half a dozen such copies having been found so far.

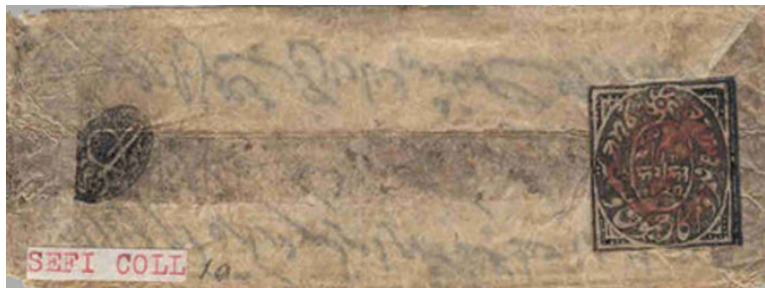
The other Kashmir stamps were printed as follows:

1/2a + 1a. From a composite plate of 25 (5 x 5), consisting of 20 of the 1/2, and 5 of the 1a, the lower horizontal row being the 1a.



Full sheet of 25 of the 1/2a and 1a: twenty of the 1/2, and in the bottom row, five of the 1a.

The Kashmir 1/2a black watercolor plate printing, Sc. 64, earliest known use, 24 assij [1923]—9 October 1866.



The letter was mailed to Amritsar without British postage, without sign of postage due charges, and without javab notation.

The earliest known use of the Kashmir 1866-70 2a yellow watercolor, Sc. 71. It is an external registered cover from



Srinagar to Amritsar dated "22 baisikh 1929" (May 2, 1872). The Native stamp is matched by two 1a British stamps, plus the 4a British stamp for registration, a total of 8 annas with the Umritsur cancellation in a rare red and a manuscript registration cachet.



The Kashmir 1866-70 4a emerald, Sc. 72, on a registered Srinagar to Amritsar cover, dated on the reverse "7 jedh 1932" (May 19, 1875).



The Kashmir 1866-70 1/2a black watercolor, Sc. 64, on a 9 rajab (17 November) [1866] cover. The cover passed from Srinagar to Amritsar without British postage.

1/4a + 2a. From a composite plate of 10 (5 x 2), the top row being 1/4a, and the lower row 2a, five of each.

The 4a, and 8a, were struck from a single die, usually four impressions to a sheet. Since the plates were hand cut, each subject differs from the other, hence the 1/4a to 2a may be plated.

As can be seen by referring to the catalog these stamps were printed in water color on native paper, hence we can lay down the rule that: ANY KASHMIR STAMP NOT IN WATERCOLOR ON NATIVE PAPER IS A REPRINT, PROOF, ESSAY, OR COUNTERFEIT.

To Be Continued