

# INDIA-Registration Markings

by R. S. NUTTALL.

## I-INTRODUCTION

"Registration" popularly implies a specially secure system of transmitting mails, providing compensation for loss or damage. Originally, however, the term meant no more than is implied in its derivation - "the act of entering an item in a register or record for any purpose".

In this sense, registration was the normal method of handling all mail in India from a very early date, but no extra fee was charged and no compensation given. There were two primary purposes; to keep track of every item so as to avoid loss or mis-delivery; and as part of the complicated system of charging and recording postages by weight and distance, a system designed to prevent postal employees from abstracting letters or falsifying accounts.

Mr. D. Hammond Giles, in his "Companion to the Handstruck Postage Stamps of India", introduces the subject of registration at the very beginning of the book by illustrating a sheet from a book used for recording the delivery of letters to the Post Office. The year is 1804. Then, on page 6:- "From time to time, different instructions were issued by the Post Office for the benefit of the Public, as to the time that letters should be sent to the Post Office, and the manner.....". He then quotes from regulations published by Calcutta General Post Office on 21st. April 1828:

"It being a Standing Rule of the General Post Office, that the name of the senders of letters as well as those of persons to whom they are directed, are to be regularly registered with the view of assisting to trace letters which may have failed in reaching their destinations. The Officiating Post Master General requests that all persons, in sending their letters to the Post, will have the goodness to put their name on the paper or book which accompanies them; where books are used, the name being entered on the first sheet, or on the cover will be sufficient - The Caution is given, with a view to prevent the necessity which frequently now exists of returning letters to the senders, by which it occasionally happens that they miss the Post for that day".

He mentions that it was a practice of long standing that when letters were posted, they were entered on a piece of paper or in a book, and that the Post Office applied against each entry the same handstruck stamp as had been applied to the letter, so that the writer had a receipt as evidence of posting.



This form of registering letters continued for many years, but, as Mr. Hammond Giles observes, since it cost nothing extra, the public registered all and sundry letters, involving the Post Office in considerable unnecessary work.

By 1850 the volume of mail handled in this manner had increased to such an extent that the Post Office had to call a halt.

On 27th. Dec. 1850 came the following announcement:-

"Notice is hereby given, that under instructions from the Government, the present detailed and indiscriminate Registry of Covers and Packets passing through the Post Office in Bengal, will be discontinued from the 1st. proximo. A special Registry of Letters on payment of a Fee of EIGHT ANNAS will be introduced, from the date abovementioned."

Ivie G.J. Hamilton, in his "An Outline of Postal History and Practice", reviewing the 1851 report of the Commissioners on the workings of the Post Office, states, on page 161 under the heading - CALCUTTA G.P.O., 1850-1, "A system of specially registering letters, adapted from the English system, was recently introduced on payment of a fee of 8 annas in addition to the postage. The number of such registered letters posted at Calcutta G.P.O. during the month of March 1851, was 120; and 138 received for delivery."

The actual report of the Post Office Commission, 1851, page 244, mentions that "Special Registration" had recently been adopted in Bengal and Bombay, and was about to be adopted in the North West Province, and recommends its general adoption.

Mr. Hammond Giles ended his remarks on Registration by mentioning that he possesses a Registered Letter Receipt issued by the Madras G.P.O. dated 5th. Oct. 1854, with the pre-stamp despatch mark, Madras/Date/Paid impressed on it. It is interesting to note that this date is after the introduction of the half-anna postage adhesive.

Suddenly to demand a fee of 8 annas for a service which hitherto had been free must have appeared exorbitant to the Public, and the figures quoted above referring to the number of items handled in a month at the largest office in the country, show how little the service was being used.

In 1854, Registration as we know it today was introduced.

At the same time the Registration Fee was reduced to 4 annas.

It should be noted that Registration in India did not, and still today does not, offer automatic compensation, though small ex-gratia payments are sometimes made. A separate fee for Insurance was introduced on 1st. Jan. 1878 to provide compensation for inland letters and parcels.

In 1854 new rules were introduced. Although it is intended that a separate section on Rules and Regulations will be published later, a few brief extracts are necessary here.



Rules for Registration.

(From the Post Office Manual, 1864-8)

Under Rule 1. Registration was applicable to all descriptions of letters - without distinction - and also, to Packets of Books.

" - Any Postmaster, Deputy, Receiver or other Officer must Register any letter tendered for Registration, but must demand a Registry Fee of 4 annas, writing distinctly on the front, "Registered Letter".

Rule 24. The Fee must in all cases be paid in money - For guidance of Staff. The Registration Fee must be paid before a receipt is given.

Stamping Rule No.2 states that "the receipt will then be stamped with the Dated Office Seal" - (illustration - plate 1) At the time of Delivery the "usual official receipt must be obtained, signed by the Addressee".

## II-THE EARLIEST HANDSTAMPS

There is wide variation in wording and design in the early period, and no rule as to colour of impression. A broad pattern can be seen:

(a) Some Presidency G.P.Os and large cities originally had their own distinctive types - Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, Delhi.

(b) Other places had marks of a type common to their particular postal circle - Madras Circle, North-West Provinces and Bombay Circle.

(c) A very few offices had types anomalous to their circle - Poona and Manwath.

(d) The Foreign Mail Offices of Bombay and Madras had special types, incorporating the date.

(e) Some offices used no handstamp but recorded the registration details in manuscript.

A tentative classification has been made on the above basis.

Minor variations in size have been discounted to allow for such features as over-inked impressions, and possible errors in taking measurements. Where a substantial difference has been found (usually of at least 1mm.) this has been classified as a sub-type.

All the dates so far collated show a singular gap. The earliest mark seen is 11th. Oct. 1855, a gap of over a year with no mark recorded! However, the extract from Rule 1 covers this by the instruction to officers to write "Registered Letter" on the front (of the cover). Such a letter has been recorded as early as



5th. Dec. 1854.

About 100 covers have so far been recorded, spanning the years from 1854 to 1872. The highest number recorded for a single type is 22. Several types have only the one example recorded for them. This puts all registered covers of this period in the 'Scarce' category. Therefore details of every cover reported will be given.

**REGISTRATION  
FEE.**

**Paid 4 annas**

TYPE 1. 36 x 20 mm.

Kurrachee. 7Jan57 Reg.No.20 Colour: Red 1a (adhesive)  
on cover.

This handstamp is the most obvious candidate as No.1, despite the fact that it is not the earliest one recorded. It is unique in that it is the only stamp which includes a reference to the 4 anna Fee. It is the fullest in form, in fact, the legend tells the whole story.

The design follows the pre-adhesive pattern, being slightly smaller than the All India Town Types (39 x 25 mm.) which include either "Bearing" or "Paid" in roughly the same position in the stamp, (a possible indication that local offices designed their own stamps).

The stamp did not have a very long life. By 1861 Karachi had adopted the Bombay Circle type (7b). The actual period of use cannot be determined more closely as only the one example has come to light.

**REGISTERED  
LETTER N°**

TYPE 2. 49.5 x 18.5 mm.

Bombay G.P.O. Type

<u>Date</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>	<u>Adhesives</u>
5May56	Black	65	1a.
5Dec56	"	125	1a.
27Feb57	"	372	1a,
-Sep57	"	-	1a.
27Oct57	"	-	1a.
- - 59	"	696	4a. + 2 x 1a.

The stamp has the wording "Registered Letter" in full.

Like Type 1, this stamp had a very short life. In 1861 Bombay was using Type 7a.







REG<sup>d</sup> LETTER N<sup>o</sup>

TYPE 3a.

52 to 58 x 9 mm.

Calcutta G.P.O. Type

<u>Date</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Adhesives</u>
11Oct55	Red	14885	53 x 9	4 x 4a.
- - 57	"	1026	58 x 9	-
*11Mar59	"	9802	58 x 9	2 x 4a; 6 x 1a.
?	"	8100	52 x 9	4 x 2a.
30Aug60	"	15379	52 x 9	8a.
25Oct67	"	D/740	52 x 9	4a; ½a.
2Jul72	Black	A/164	52 x 9	4a; ½a.
30Dec72	Red	A/16299	52 x 9	4a; ½a.

The handstamp contains the word "Letter", but the word "Registered" has been abbreviated.

This stamp had the longest life of all - 1855 to 1872.

Differences in size are difficult to explain. The earliest mark is clearly 52/53 mm. (heavily inked). The 58 mm. impressions have been verified. The illustration shows how the longer stamp was altered in size about 1859/60. When cut down, a 2 mm. projection was left at the top right of the frame. Later strikes show that the projection has been removed. (Tracings indicate that this and later impressions were from the same stamp).

\*A note of what adhesives were used on each cover is given in order to establish when the 4 anna Fee began to appear as adhesives, in other words, when the "Paid in Cash" rule was abolished. In 1859, as indicated by this and all subsequent covers (except one) we find the 4 anna Fee shown as adhesives. It is a curious fact that many of these early covers have a separate 4 annas adhesive to indicate the Fee, even though it might have been easier to apply other combinations, or higher value adhesives.

REG<sup>d</sup> LETTER N<sup>o</sup>

TYPE 3b

60 x 9 mm.

Calcutta Sub-Office Type

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Reg.No.</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Adhesives</u>
Calcutta "B"	19Oct60	Red	860	60 x 9	9 x ½a.
"	16Sep71	"	B11337	60 x 9	4a. + ½a.

This handstamp has been classified as a sub-type because of the similarity to the Head Office Type. The size and form are almost the same except for the sans-serif letters. Although the

cf P. Reg/113



abbreviated form of "Registered" ends in "T", the probable explanation is that the native maker of the stamp just made a mistake or the example he was copying was indistinct. (The strikes are perfectly clear and there is no doubt that the terminal letter is a "T").

## REGISTERED

TYPE 3c.

38 x 4 mm.

Calcutta Sub-Office Type

cf P. Reg 154/13

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Reg.No.</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Adhesives</u>
Calcutta "A"	-Mar65	3050	Red	?
"	3Feb71	A17021	"	2 x 8a. + 2 x 8p.
"	26Apr72	1465	"	?

This handstamp is completely different from the Head Office Type, unboxed and sans-serif letters. On cover the mark may be qualified (in manuscript), e.g. with the word "Cal" and the date below; weight "½" before; number and possibly indicator letter, "A17021" after the mark.

**REGISTERED**  
N<sup>o</sup>.

TYPE 4.

43.5 x 11 mm.

Delhi Head P.O. Type

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Reg.No.</u>	<u>Size</u>
Delhi	12Feb61	Red	248	43.5 x 11 mm.
"	12Apr61	"	963	43.5 x 11
"	10Jul62	"	1130	43.5 x 11
"	4Jan64	"	4133	43.5 x 11

"Registered No." in two lines and with seriffed letters. With only four examples recorded it is impossible to say how long the stamp was in use.

**REGISTERED**N<sup>o</sup>.

TYPE 5a.

55 x 11 mm.

Madras Circle Type



1/67/C1.

REGISTRATION/7.

*cf. Reg. 1/14*

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
Bangalore	26Apr57	Orange/Red	918	56 x 10	1a.
Bangalore	4Jun57	Red	308	-	1a.
Hyderabad (Deccan)	6Jul58	Orange/Red	331	54 x 11	1a.
Hyderabad	7Jul58	Red	-	55 x 11	-
Nagore	14Jul59	Red	-	54 x 11	-
Madras	-Jul61	Red	3240	54 x 10	4a.+2a.+2 x 1a.
Hyderabad	11Feb62	Red	3506	55 x 11	6a.
Hyderabad	14Mar62	Red	1679	55 x 11	6a.
Hyderabad	5Oct62	Red	6247	55 x 11	6a.
Secunderabad	20Jan62	Red	1490	55 x 11	6a.
Secunderabad	24Feb64	Red	2330	55 x 11	10a. Sp.
Mangalore	9Dec65	Red	7310	54 x 11	6a.
?	-Jan66	Red	-	52 x 10	-
Mangalore	1Jun68	Red	152	54 x 11	4a.+ 2 x 1a.
?	19Mar69	Red	-	55 x 11	-

Only "Registered No." in the wording; "Letter" is not included.  
This open-ended type is difficult to measure accurately in many cases but the basic form is the same.

Some strikes are a distinct bright orange-red in colour.

Type 5b. see P. Registration/13  
5c

REGISTERED  
NR

TYPE 6a.

29 x 10 mm.

## North West Provinces Type

*cf. Reg. 1/14*

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
Dera Ismail Khan	-Sep57	Black	-	29 x 10	1a.
Ajmere	10Oct57	Red	-	28 x 10.5	2 x 1a.
Mooltan	18Jan57	Red	74	28 x 10	1a.
Mooltan	1Jul58	Red	340	28 x 10	1a.
Erin Poora	-Mar61	Red	-	29 x 10.5	2 x 2a.+ 1a.
Aboo	7May61	Red	136	28 x 11	4a.+ 1a.
Aboo	-Oct61	Orange/Red	-	28.5 x 10.5	4a.+ 1a.
Umritsur	23Jan62	Black	2808	-	4a.+ 1a.
Agra	8Aug64	Red	116	28.5 x 10.5	-
Erinpoora	20Oct64	Red	-	28 x 10.5	4a.+ 2 x 1a.
Roorkee	22Mar66	Red	1276	28 x 11	4a.+ 2 x 1a.
Lahore	7Aug66	Black	1009	- x 10	6a.
Simla	11Dec65	Black	180	28.5 x 10.5	4a.+ 1a.
Rohtuk	- Aug66	Red	116	29 x 10.5	11 x 1a.
Mooltan	-	Red	4322	29 x 10.5	-

TYPE 6b.

30 x 11 mm.

*cf. Reg. 1/14*

Umritsur	12Apr63	Red	7341	30 x 11	4a.+ 1a.
Jullundur	26Jul66	Red	6866	30 x 11	-
Umritshur	23Jan69	Red	5967	30 x 11	4a.+ 1a.
Tonk	27Apr67	Red	-	30 x 11	4a.+ 1a.



Types "a" and "b" are exactly the same, "Registered No." in two lines; the letters are plain and sans-serif. The size of the frames differs slightly as indicated in the table.

This type was in use for the whole of the early period. Dates recorded for "b" show no early dates, but with only 4 examples recorded, no conclusion can be drawn.

cf Type 10  
cf P 15.

REG<sup>d</sup> NO

TYPE 7a. *cf 2*

39 x 10.5 mm.

*cf Registered*

Bombay Circle Type

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
?	1Aug57	Red	-	39 x 10.5	-
Poona	17Oct57	Red	1667	39 x 10.5	1a.
Mahableshwur	7Apr57	Black	261	39 x 10.5	2 x 1/2a.
Khandella	24Aug60	Red	219	39 x 10.5	4a.+ 8 x 1a. + 4 a 1/2a.
*Bombay	10Aug61	Red	103	39 x 10.5	2 x 4a.
Bombay	3May62	Red	-	39 x 10.5	-
Bombay	10Jul62	Red	-	39 x 10.5	-
Jaulnah	11Sep62	Black	281	39 x 10.5	3 x 4a.
Bombay	4Jan64	Red	28	39 x 10.5	-
Jaulnah	5Apr64	Black	646	39 x 10.5	4a.+ 1/2a.
Alrangabad	11Jan65	Red	71	39 x 10.5	4a.+ 2 x 1a.
Sawantwari	10Jan66	Red	228	39 x 10.5	4a.+ 1a.
Jaulnah	7Oct67	Red	286	39 x 10.5	4 x 4a.
Surat	3Nov68	Red	179	39 x 10.5	4a.+ ?

TYPE 7b.

40 x 10.5 mm.

*cf Registered*

Sukkur	30May57	Red	45	40 x 10.5	-
Jaulnah	1Aug57	Black	970	40 x 10.5	8a.
Nagpore	-Jan60	Red	1065	40 x 10.5	3 x 2a.
*Kurrachee	1Aug61	Black	5764	40 x 10.5	2 x 4a.
Kurrachee	24Jun62	Black	786	40 x 10.5	8a.+ 4a.+ 2a.
Kamptee	-Dec62	Black	1169	40 x 10.5	3 x 4a.
Kurrachee	15Apr63	Blue	2066	40 x 10.5	4 x 4a.
Dharwar	8Feb64	Red	2317	40 x 10.5	4a.+ 1a.

Types "a" and "b" are the same except for the size of frame.

This is the most abbreviated form of any stamp. It had wide usage in the Bombay Circle and the period of usage covers almost the whole of the early period. More examples of this type have been reported than any other type.

\*The two marks indicated (Bombay, type 7a and Kurrachee, type 7b) both appear on the same cover. This phenomenon is not unique for this period - 1861 to 1864 (and possibly before). So far we have noted 4 covers, invariably with Bombay type 7a in addition to another mark. The covers emanated from Kurrachee, Patna and two from Delhi,



all addressed to places overseas. The explanation lies in a section of the Rules from the 1854-8 Post Office Manual which states that "When items for countries outside India are to be Registered, they must be sent to the Port of Despatch - " (for registration).

The covers examined all showed the appropriate marks and numbers for internal use. The second registration mark would have been applied to each cover at Bombay (type 7a). This is confirmed by the various Bombay receipt marks on the backs of each cover, which was then re-numbered for "Foreign Registration".

This situation must have been unsatisfactory, having in some cases two similar registration marks and two different numbers on a cover. Bombay and Madras, therefore, introduced what a previous writer described as "Artistic" handstamps, more correctly termed (in postal circles) "Foreign Mail Registration Number Stamps", (type 11).

REGISTERED  
N<sup>o</sup>

TYPE 8.

29.5 x 8 mm.

Bengal Circle (Patna) Type.

cf Regista/15

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
Patna	3May62	Red	3	29.5 x 8	2 x 4a. + 2 x 1a.
*Rangoon	15Jul62	Red	794	29.5 x 9	8a. + 2a.

The form is similar to the Delhi type, "Registered No." in two lines, seriffed letters, but the stamp is much smaller and has a bar dividing it into two equal sections.

\*At this time the Burma Circle had come into being (1 Jan 1862) but still continued to use the Bengal Circle type handstamps. It has been confirmed that the registration stamp was in use prior to 1862 - as part of the Bengal Circle.

REGISTERED  
N<sup>o</sup>

TYPE 9.

32 x 13 mm.

Poona (anomalous) Type.

cf Regista/15

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
Poona	16Ma-69	Red	156	32 x 13	4a. + 2 x 1a.
*Poona	22May69	Red	360	32 x 13	3 x 2a.

The same as type 8, North West Provinces, except for size, this handstamp being very much larger. Does not conform with the Bombay Circle type. It is possible that the stamp was a locally-made replacement, the letters being uneven and amateurish. The correct stamp, Type 7, was in use in 1857 (see type 7a table).

\*5 months after the last reported date above, the stamp had been replaced with the All-India 4-tier type (13th. Oct. 1869).



REGISTERED  
N<sup>o</sup>

TYPE 10.6c

30 x 11 mm.

Manwuth Type. (Hydraulic Stamp)

Office	Date	Colour	Reg.No.	Size	Adhesives
Manwuth	14Jul69	Red	228	30 x 11	9 x 1/2a.

The same as type 6, North West Provinces, and conforming to type, but where type 6 has "dots" under the "o" of "No.", this has exaggerated commas.



TYPE 11a.

47 x 27 mm.

FOREIGN MAIL REGISTRATION NUMBER STAMP.

Bombay (Inscribed "P.O.")

Date	Reg.No.	Colour	Adhesives
5Sep61	309	Black	On receipt
8Jan62	583	Black	-
24Jan65	-	Black	6a.
20Jul65	-	Black	-
22Jan67	2527	Black	-
1Apr67	-	Black	-



TYPE 11b.

44 x 24 mm.

Bombay (Inscribed "G.P.O.")

2Apr69	346	Red	4a. + 1/2a.
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Possibly the smaller stamp replaced the larger one but, since only the one example of type 11b has been reported, this is conjecture. As can be seen from the tables, both types 7a and 11a were in use at the same time, 1861 to 1864.

Most of the examples seen are on internal covers, possibly because these would be more likely to survive than external covers. Bombay had a reputation for the liberal use of all its handstamps with total disregard for their actual purpose! This is just as well, as examples of other postmarks (to be dealt with later) might not otherwise have survived.





TYPE 12. 45 x 22 mm.

FOREIGN MAIL REGISTRATION NUMBER STAMP

Madras G.P.O.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>	<u>Colour</u>
28Sep66	9793	?
8Apr67	23895	Black
27Jul67	-	?

"With only three examples reported it is impossible to say how long the stamp was in use. The earliest date is only three years before the introduction of the All India types.

(It is not known if a Calcutta "Foreign Mail" type exists)



TYPE 13. 21 mm. diameter.

Delhi Field Force.

This handstamp was used to cancel ordinary mail and was not used for registration purposes by the Field Force during the Mutiny in 1857.

It is not known for what town or area the stamp was intended, nor is it known to have been used anywhere other than at Delhi. All that is known is that the Postmaster of Ambala brought this stamp with him when he joined the Field Force.

TYPE O. Manuscript Mark only. No Handstamp.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>	<u>Manuscript Endorsements.</u>
Cochin	5Dec54	23	"Registered Letter, No. 23".
Sumbhulpore	7Feb60	60	"Regtn N 60".
*190	6Feb64	6	"Registered No. 6".
Dwarka	21Mar66	332	"Stamped & Registered letter No. 332".
Newgong	4May66	644	"Registered and Paid 8a."
Raepore	11Feb69	766	"Registered & Stamped" "No. 766" from Raepore P.O. 11/2/69. W. T."

\*This item is on cover cancelled 190 in Renouf T.4 (Bombay Circle). Col. Martin quotes the number as recorded only in official lists as MHIJJIE (Dhoolia) - seasonal office open only Jan. to March each year for the annual fair.



In this early period of introduction of the new service it was inevitable that some offices would not have received their new stamps. The examples on the previous page and the number of items they had dealt with (particularly Nowgong and Raepore) make this feature worthy of classification as a distinct type. Compared with the total number of covers recorded, they represent a scarce item.

(Some readers will have seen a Kamptee mark illustrated on the cover of India's Stamp Journal issue of April 1970. It is not proposed to list this mark without a sight of the actual cover. Too many features are wrong).

### CONCLUSION.

The All India Types to be dealt with in the next section were introduced in 1869. It will be seen from the tables that some early types overlapped this date. This is natural, and all the succeeding types overlapped; it would have taken some time to replace all the stamps in all the offices.

I will repeat my plea for reports of any dates of those early types - even if only a single example. Anything significant can be published as an addendum.

Acknowledgments are due to the numerous members of the India Study Circle who have already contributed to this section with photo-stats, tracings and the loan of actual items.

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INDIA - Registration MarkingsAlterations and Additions to Chapter II - THE EARLIEST HANDSTAMPSCORRECTION - Pages REGISTRATION/5 and /6.

Under Types 3b and 3c the word "Office" should be deleted from the sub-title, which should read "Calcutta Sub-type".

These two stamps were used at the Head Office in addition to Type 3a. Clearly, 3a was the principal stamp. The others would have been "Security sets", signed out by additional clerks when pressure of work made it necessary (the "set" of stamps signed for by the clerk also included an obliterator which contained the letters A, B or C to identify a particular clerk for that spell of duty). Thus the security letter in the cancellation usually matched a manuscript endorsement of the same letter preceding the Reg. number.

ALTERATION - Page REGISTRATION/6. "Type 5" should read "Type 5a".

ADDITIONS - New Types

**REGISTERED**

TYPE 5b. 58 x 11 mm.

Madras Circle Sub-type

Raichoor 8Jun58 Red No.8 58 x 11 mm.

This type is the same as the Circle type except that one end is "closed" (probably an error on the part of the maker).

**REGISTERED**

TYPE 5c. 38 x 4 mm.

Madras Head Office - Sub-type

Madras	--	Red	No.3507	38 x 4 mm.
Madras	--	Red	No.8524	38 x 4 mm.
Madras	23Nov65	Red	No.13790	38 x 4 mm.

When first reported, this mark posed a problem. "On piece", the size and spacing of the letters exactly fitted the Calcutta Sub-type 3c, but the cancellation "C/1" (Renouf Type 6) indicated that the mark emanated from Madras. Later, a clear example was produced; This is illustrated exactly as it appears. It shows slight differences in the shape of the initial "R", the "G" and the "S". Another example of a security stamp, but used without an indicator letter.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS.

Type 2 - Bombay G.P.O. Type: Nine additional dates have been recorded for this stamp, making it the "most reported" stamp of all. The earliest date remains the same (5May56), but the latest date has been extended to -Jan1861; see below under Type 7a regarding the overlap of dates.



Type 5a - Madras Circle Type: Five more offices (underlined below) have been reported as using this type and one report for Bangalore advances the first use of this stamp by more than a year.

Bangalore	2Mar56	Red	No.241	55 x 10 mm.
Bangalore	19Jan67	Orange/Red	No.2379	54 x 11 mm.
<u>Cochin</u>	28Feb57	Orange/Red	No.1442	-
<u>Cochin</u>	24Mar68	Orange/Red	No.792	-
<u>Bolarum</u>	10Sep59	Red	No.99	54 x 11 mm.
<u>Kirkumbaudy</u>	25Sep59	Red	No.130	54 x 11 mm.
<u>Masulipatam</u>	24Feb68	Red	No.582	-
<u>Hingoli</u>	1May63	Red	-	-

Type 6a - North Western Provinces Type: Three new offices have been added to this list.

Lahore	11Aug58	Red	No.790	28.5 x 10 mm.
<u>Ferozepore</u>	14Sep59	Red	No.115	-
<u>Umritsur</u>	19Aug61	Black	No.1309	28.5 x 10 mm.
<u>Peshawur</u>	16Apr63	Red	No.3436	-
<u>Peshawur</u>	9Jan69	Red	No.6978	28 x 10 mm.
<u>Alyghur</u>	30Apr66	Red	No.279	28.5 x 10.5 mm.

Type 6b - North Western Provinces Type: Five new offices have been added to this list.

<u>Kohat</u>	22Mar59	Black	-	30 x 11 mm.
<u>Lucknow</u>	5Dec61	Red	No.7869	30 x 11 mm.
<u>Hurdai</u>	4Jan62	Red	No.131	30 x 11 mm.
<u>Landour</u>	14Jun64	Red	No.286	-
<u>Landour</u>	18Mar65	Red	-	-
<u>Ajmere</u>	16Apr65	Red	No.9	30 x 11 mm.

Type 7a - Bombay Circle Type: Several reports of Bombay GPO using this type show that the stamp was introduced as early as 24Sep59 or before, and thus overlapped Type 2, with both types in use at the same time until 1861. However, the covers with Type 2 have generally been inland covers; those with Type 7a destined for abroad - frequently with "double" registration (see note on Foreign Registration after Type 7a).

Bombay	24Sep59	Red	No.99	39 x 10.5 mm.
Bombay	16Mar66	Red	-	39 x 10.5 mm.

Type 7b - Bombay Circle Type: Only one new office reported.

<u>Belgaum</u>	20Aug63	Red	No.1159	-
<u>Jaulnah</u>	5Jly57	Black	No.71	40 x 10.5 mm.



Type 8 - Bengal Circle Type: This type continues to be a mystery because of the scarcity of examples.

Two more reports from Rangoon extend this office's use of the mark from 1859 to 1863. Only one other example reported from another office - Arrah.

Rangoon	7Apr59	Orange/Red	No.5561	29.5 x 8.5 mm.
Rangoon	- 63	Red	No.2743	29.5 x 8.5 mm.
Arrah	-Jly66	Red	No.911	29.5 x 8 mm.

A possible explanation for the scarcity of Bengal Circle marks may be the practice of Calcutta Head Office registering items in transit which originated from subordinate offices. An early example from Rangoon and another from Moorsheedabad would seem to suggest this - the former had Type 3a, the latter 3b. All the marks so far reported for the Bengal Circle are comparatively late, after 1859.

Type 9 - Poona (anomalous) Type: This office appears to have been a "law unto itself"!

The original reported type differed from the Bengal Circle Type 7, being a larger version of the North Western Provinces Type 6. Two more reports in the year previous to the published dates of the larger stamp show another, smaller version in use - exactly the same in every respect except size. This stamp measured 30 x 11 mm. (Later stamp - 32 x 13 mm.).

Poona	2May68	Red	No.646	30 x 11 mm.
Poona	12Oct68	Red	No.364	30 x 11 mm.

(Another reported date for Poona in Type 7a - the correct Circle stamp - shows it was in use from 1857 to 1860).

Type 10 - Previously named the "Manwuth" type: This type, a variation of

Type 6 of the N.W.P., but having commas instead of stops under the "o" of "No", was only recorded originally from Manwuth, a Sub-Office in Hyderabad State. It was therefore listed separately. Two more reports now bring it back to the N.W.P. - Delhi and Nowshera, the latter being a Sub Office under Peshawar and located in the N.W.P. up to 12/60, when it was transferred to the Punjab. The type should probably therefore be renumbered as Type 6c for N.W.P.

The apparent anomaly of Manwuth may be partly resolved by reference to Col. Martin's lists, though dates do not fit exactly. The office opened in 1/61 in Madras Circle, but its number is unknown. At some date between 2/63 and 7/66 it was transferred to Bombay, but still the number is unknown. In 4/70 it was placed under the N.W.P., less than a year after the only recorded use of Type 10; it seems possible that the mark in a N.W.P. type (or sub-type) could have been issued by that Circle, since Manwuth appears to have been an unwanted responsibility throughout the decade!



Delhie	21Jly65	Red	No.5387	30 x 12 mm.
Delhie	-Nov65	Red	No.5216	30 x 12 mm.
Nowshera	-Feb66	Black	No.550	30 x 11 mm.

The Delhie examples are significant, showing that this office had abandoned its own type, Type 4 (last reported Jan64) in favour of the Circle type.

Type O - Manuscript mark only - No Handstamp:

Singapore	24Apr56	No number.	Endorsed - "Registered letter".
Jaulnah	4Sep56	No.501	Endorsed - "Stamped and Registered Letter No.501".

It is strange that although Singapore correctly endorsed the cover "Registered letter" it did not number it (which suggests the office had not started a registered journal). The Jaulnah date is interesting as it is shown as using Type 7b handstamp in July '57. \*

GENERAL NOTES. \*

The deduction concerning the abolition of the "Paid in Cash" rule in 1859, arrived at by studying the adhesives used on early covers (see note \* after Type 3a) has now been confirmed. The official date for the introduction of payment of the Registration Fee by means of adhesives is given as 1st Feb. 1859.

Production of the first Section, "The Earliest Handstamps", produced a world-wide response. Details of some 60 covers came in, resulting in two new Types and extending the life of nearly all the types listed.

For economy of space, we do not list details of all these reports; it is sufficient to say that, in all cases, they have confirmed the original findings concerning Circle types.

All "New" offices have been listed here and, where a report sheds light on, for example, the introduction of a different stamp (as with Poona, Delhie and Jaulnah), details have been given.

In all, some 160 covers have been listed, covering the period 1854 to 1872.

\*\*\*\*\*



### III - ALL-INDIA REGISTRATION HANDSTAMPS

The need for uniformity in design and practice is clearly demonstrated by the study of the early handstamps.

Head Office stamps differed from Circle types; stamps in the same office differed in the cause of security. Most offices, even at the end of the period, still awaited the issue of a Registration stamp. There was no definite rule as regards colour. But, although the need was obvious, it was not possible under the existing set-up. In many offices, for example, Registration work was done by the Parcel Clerk, in addition to his own work, without the aid of a proper set of Registration stamps and seals. Uniformity could only be achieved by the introduction of a separate Branch or Department within the Post Office, with the necessary staff and the appropriate stamps and seals to deal with Registration work.

By Indian Post Office standards, the establishing of the new department and the introduction of the new stamps was rapid. Only in the case of Calcutta do we have evidence of the use of the "old" stamp after 1869/70. (The three stamps in use at this office appear to have been retained until 1872 - see dates after 3a, 3b and 3c).

One of the first stamps to appear (though not the earliest) was a 5-tier type and it is proposed to classify this as Type 21.

C
REGISTERED
CALCUTTA G.P.O.
N <sup>o</sup> W
DATE

TYPE 21.      Width 45 mm. Height 30 mm.

Colour - Red; Earliest date seen - 27/12/69; latest - 30/5/70.

The only stamp to incorporate the Circle letter "C". Apart from this feature, it differed from other stamps to follow in two respects. All later stamps, with one exception, have a plain "N" instead of "N<sup>o</sup>" to indicate the Number compartment; and none has "Date" in full. This stamp was used specifically by the Head Registration Clerk's Dept. (see general notes later).

REGISTERED.
C.
N.      W.
D.

TYPE 22a.      Width 42-45 mm. Height 22-24 mm.  
Period of use: 1869 to 1891.



"O" for Office; "N" for Number; "W" for Weight; "D" for Date, all to be entered in manuscript.

Examples prior to 1870 are very scarce. So far, only Mooltan 15/6/69, Delhi 12/7/69, and Poona 13/10/69 have been reported. There are only 9 examples recorded for 1870 and 8 examples for 1871. Up to late 1872, there was still no rule as to colour; reports show an equal number of Black and Red strikes, with an occasional Blue or Green (both from Monghyr). From late 1872 all strikes are in Black. "Registered" in the top line appears in large and small, thick and thin lettering. The "Weight" space can be filled in in a variety of ways - usually just a simple fraction, like " $\frac{1}{2}$ " or " $\frac{1}{4}$ " or " $\frac{4}{8}$ " or " $\frac{4}{16}$ " or " $\frac{15}{16}$ "; occasionally with "Tola" or "T" written alongside.

However, one endorsement, occasionally found, which has caused confusion, is "at". This can be written before or after the fraction; e.g. before or after " $\frac{1}{4}$  tola" - this means "above"  $\frac{1}{4}$  tola. The stamp was used by Head Offices, Sub Post Offices and Branch Offices.

In 1879, a reduced fee of 2 annas was introduced for Books and Pattern Packets.

From 1881-2 Annual Report: Registration fee for letters reduced from 4 annas to 2 annas from 1st Aug. 1881.

REGISTERED	
O	DELHI
N	W
D	

TYPE 22b. Width 42.5 mm. Height 22.5 to 24 mm.  
Period of use: 1874 to 1877.

As Type 22a but with the Office Name an integral part of the stamp.

Note: In this stamp only, the indicator letter "O" has been retained.

Only two examples recorded for this type:

Delhi 15/1/74 (as illustrated), and Calcutta W 15/10/74.

The Delhi mark has a manuscript "B" in front of the office name; Calcutta has "W" in the stamp. Both are Head Office stamps, used in conjunction with Firms or Individuals posting more than 10 Registered items daily. (See notes on Window Ticket system later).



REGISTERED.
SHIKARPORE.
N.      W.
D.

TYPE 22c. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 22 to 24 mm.  
Period of use: 1871 to 1892.

As Type 22b, but with "O" for Office removed. The office name is an integral part of the stamp.

Except for Bombay G.P.O. all strikes are in Black. Dates for Bombay G.P.O. are from 31/7/71 to 11/12/72 and all in Red. (A much later example in Black has been seen; no date, but after 1875). This office is the only one recorded to have used any other type than 22a in Red (There is no report of Bombay using Type 22a). Apart from Bombay G.P.O., earliest examples of this stamp are from 1876. This type was used by Head Offices, Sub Post Offices and Branch Offices.

(An error has been noted in the stamp for Peshawar - the "W" has been omitted from the stamp. However, it is felt that this is not worthy of classification since it is obviously a mistake in the manufacture of the stamp. This fact was recognised, and in some cases "W" was written in).

REGISTERED.
PALI.
N.      W.
D. JAN:31

TYPE 22d. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 21 to 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1873 to 1884.

As Type 22c, but with Date-Slide in bottom line.

Note: Indicator letter "D" has been retained.

Only 5 reports of this type, all from Head Offices.  
Earliest is Ghazeepore 31/12/73. Later dates are approximate, only the date, 1882, confirmed.

REGISTERED
CALCUTTA
N.      W.
D. 20.7.77.

TYPE 22e. Width 52 mm. Height 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1877.



As Type 22d, with Date-Slide in bottom line and retaining "D". The impression clearly indicates that this is a rubber stamp; frame lines are not straight but vary in thickness and are "splayed-out" in places. The stamp is 10 mm. wider than normal. Whether this is an additional or replacement stamp is not known; only this one example (date as illustrated) known. It is the only Calcutta stamp with Date-slide to have retained the indicator letter "D". The impression seen has a manuscript "E" in front of the number.

REGISTERED	
CALCUTTA.	
NA	W.
1 12	

TYPE 22f. Width 42 to 43 mm. Height 22 to 23 mm.  
Period of use: 1877 to 1882.

As Type 22d and 22e but with indicator letter "D" removed.  
The Date-slide sometimes includes the year.

The main feature of this type (for Calcutta) is the inclusion of letters of the alphabet after "N" in the stamp (as illustrated). These letters identify firms or individuals who post 10 or more Registered articles daily (see general notes later). Illustrated is the letter "A". Also recorded - "B", "C", "D", "E" and "G".

10 examples recorded from Calcutta and one from Poona. The Poona example has no year in the date and no identifying letter after "N".

In the case of one of the "A" stamps seen, a crude attempt has been made to alter the "N" to what vaguely looks like a "K". This "botch-up" has then been deleted by superimposing a diagonal bar. The impression appears as a "crossed-out" "N", with "A" alongside. Later, the stamp shows a clean "N" where the stamp has been repaired.

REGISTERED.	
O.	
N.	W.
D.	

TYPE 22g. Width 42 to 43 mm. Height 19.5 to 20 mm.  
(Top of R to base of D)  
Period of use: 1878 to 1882.

As the basic Type 22a, with all the indicator letters "O", "N", "D", "W", but without frame-lines. This type was peculiar to the Punjab.

10 offices recorded: Head, Sub, Branch and one Experimental.



During the period covered by this type (up to 1882), study of a large batch of covers has revealed two significant changes. Both of these can be of help in the "dating" of Registered covers in this, the period of "No Year" stamps (1875 to 1883).

Blue Cross: All the covers up to and including 1881 have no Blue Cross. All the covers from 1882 onwards have the familiar Blue Cross on back and front. Two covers in this batch narrow the gap to between 17/6/82 (no Blue Cross) and 25/7/82 (with Blue Cross).

It is assumed that this rule applied to the rest of India, since no covers have been seen with Blue Crosses prior to 1882 to refute the above. Though an occasional cover is found after 1882 without the Blue Cross, this can generally be put down to clerical error. In two cases seen this fact has been made evident -

(a) by drawing the cross in Red ink; the work of the Registration clerk, and (b) by an officious clerk endorsing the cover "Blue Cross is omitted" and signing the statement!

(Another aid to "dating" covers of this era is the appearance of 2a. adhesives in place of 4a. - the Registration fee being reduced from 1st Aug. 1881).

"Rates": As previously indicated, the weight of covers was expressed as fractions of a tola. In 1878 this rule was changed in connection with the introduction of Insurance in January of that year.

Between 13/4/78, the latest date seen for the use of the fraction, and 27/1/79, the method of indicating weight became "Rates", thus - "5 Rates" or "5 R" or just plain "5" on its own, in the "W" compartment.

Definition: a "Rate" is equal to  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a tola.



+ Insurance 1878  
1/75

TYPE 23a. Width 40 to 42 mm. Height 21 to 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1878 to 1904.

The variations in the original 4-tier type, with its time-wasting 4 compartments to be filled in in manuscript, pointed to the need for a new design. But the introduction in Jan. 1878 of "Insurance" made it essential that a new series of stamps be brought in to indicate the new service.

The above type was dual-purpose, for ordinary Registration or for combined Registration with Insurance. Later types indicated restrictions on Registered business (e.g. a complete ban on Insurance).

Thus, the simplified 3-tier stamp was introduced, with the Office



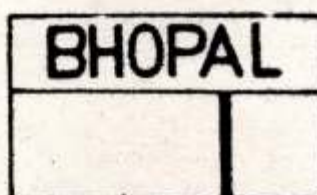
Name generally in large bold letters. But, where the name was sufficiently long to warrant it, the lettering could be as "fine" as "Registered" in the illustration. The bottom line, which previously contained the date-slide, was omitted as superfluous, since a date stamp would be used to show the date of despatch. This stamp was issued to every category - Head Office, Sub Offices, Branch Offices, Town Offices (e.g. Bombay S.W. & W.C.; for Calcutta, Jorasanko N.C. & Garden Reach R.H.W.; also Meerut City Receiving Office) - in fact, all offices which had no restrictions on their Registered business. "Meerut City Receiving Office" in this type has a small refinement in that, instead of "N" in the bottom line, it has "N<sub>o</sub>" (with commas below the bar under "o").



TYPE 23b. Width 42 mm. Height 22 mm.

As Type 23a but with "W" omitted and date in bottom line alongside "N". (The number has been entered after the date, - 26 Apr 1881).

More than 50 offices are listed as using the standard Type 23a, but only this one office has been noted with the date in the bottom line. The impression is not clear enough to determine if this is a date-slide or a date stamp applied separately.



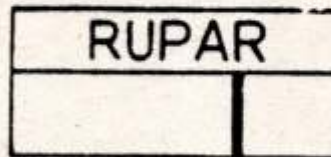
TYPE 24a. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 21 to 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1882 to 1904.

Stamp again simplified; the top line with "Registered" has been eliminated. Office Name generally in heavy type (but dependent on the length of the name). Bottom line much enlarged, vertically, and with heavy dividing bar to right-hand side of stamp. The much larger left-hand section is for the number, but "N" is omitted. Smaller right-hand section for Weight/Rates, but "W" is omitted. The size of the Weight compartment varies from 11.5 to 13 mm. Regarding the "filling-in" of this compartment, a gradual laxity has been noted. Hitherto the weight has been scrupulously entered, by either one or other of the methods previously detailed,



but, during the study of this stamp (and 24b) it has been noted that the later the use, the less likelihood there is of it being filled in.

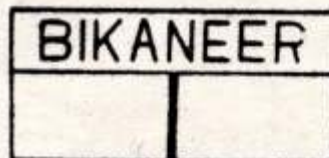
Used by 2nd Class Head Offices and Sub Post Offices (see general notes later).



TYPE 24b. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 16.5 to 17.5 mm.  
Period of use: 1882 to 1902.

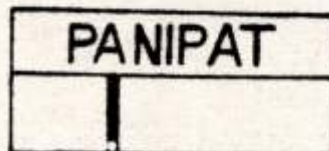
As Type 24a, but height of stamp approximately 17 mm. (as against 22 mm. for 24a.).

Used by 2nd Class Head Offices and Sub Post Offices.



TYPE 24c. Width 42 mm. Height 17.5 to 18 mm.  
Period of use: 1888 to 1891.

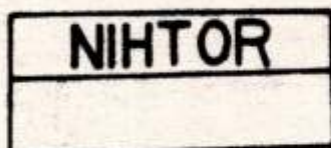
As Type 24b, but with dividing bar central in bottom line. A very scarce type, with only three offices recorded - Bikaner, Worliur and Seohara. (Bikaner at this time was a 2nd Class Head Office; category of the other offices is uncertain).



TYPE 24d. Width 42 mm. Height 17.5 mm.  
Period of use: 1897 to 1910.

Anomalous type - with dividing bar to left-hand side of stamp. Four reports from this office spanning 13 years, but no other office is known to have had the dividing bar on the left. It is felt that placing the bar to the left of the stamp was an error, since this made the "number" compartment too small for practical purposes, while an unnecessary amount of space was left for the rarely filled in weight compartment. However, the stamp remained in use for at least 13 years, and the possibility of another report confirming the above as a definitive type has not been discounted.





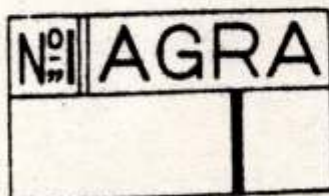
TYPE 24e. Width 41 to 42 mm. Height 15 to 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1884 to 1900.

As Types 24b, 24c and 24d, but no dividing bar in bottom line. Height of this bottom compartment varies from 9 mm. (as above) to as little as 5 mm. (as with Majeeth-Mandi, Amritsar, which occupies two lines in the top compartment). Other offices noted - Golden Temple Amritsar, Chandni Chowk, Suddur Bazar, Murwara, Mandalay, Wellesley St. T.S. Calcutta and Bara Bazar T.S. Calcutta.

Used by Sub Offices (the Mandalay report has not been checked). The absence of the dividing bar in the bottom compartment indicates that the office was not permitted to accept Insured articles. (See general notes later).

TYPE 24f. (Not illustrated).  
Width 42 mm. Height 22 & 27 mm.  
Period of use: 1888 to 1892.

As Type 24e above, but a much larger stamp, vertically, dictated by office name. Writers Building Calcutta (27 mm.), Bombay S.E. (22 mm.) Category: Sub Offices.



TYPE 24g. Width 42 to 44 mm. Height 21 to 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1882 to 1904.

Town Office Type. As Type 24a, with dividing bar to right in bottom compartment, and, in top line, compartment for the Receiving Office Number. "No.1" is comparatively common in this type (15 reports); 6 reports of other numbers, "No.11 Calcutta" being the highest so far noted. Apart from one office, the period of use is confined to 1882-85. "No.2 Manekchok" being the odd one out, dated 17/2/1904.

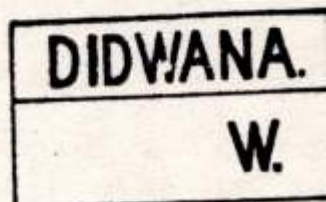


TYPE 24h. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1882 to 1885.



Town Office Type. As Type 24g above, but only 17 mm. high. Very much scarcer than the larger stamp with only 2 offices noted; "No.1 Ferozepore" and "No.1 Delhi".

Both the above Town Office types were introduced following the up-grading of these offices upon the introduction of the Money Order Office "structure" in 1880 (see general notes later).



TYPE 24i. Width 43 mm. Height 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1880 (approx.)

Anomalous Type. Probably a locally-made replacement. Based on the 3-tier type, the size is about the same; "W" has been retained but is very much larger; a hybrid of Types 23 and 24. The cover cannot be dated accurately (4as. fee, "Rates" endorsement and no Blue Cross, place it as 1879 to 1881). A later cover with the correct Type 24a, probably dated Feb. 1883 (2as. adhesive, with Blue Cross) indicates that the hybrid stamp had a very short life. Didwana, during the period of this stamp, was a Branch Office.



TYPE 25a. Width 39 to 44 mm. Height 15 to 18 mm.  
Period of use: 1884 to 1949.

The final stage in the process of simplification; the commonest Registration Handstamp of all. The height of the "R" varies from 6 to 9 mm. Length, approximately 39 to 44 mm. - ("Railway Stn." marks, which have been classified separately under Type 32a in the R.M.S. section, can be as long as 50 mm.) The earliest example seen is from Nawanshahr, a Sub Office of Abbottabad, dated 2nd Nov. 1884. This shows a curious usage of the stamp. Nawanshahr has impressed its stamp on the back of several covers seen, but these have been despatched to the Head Office for Registering. Abbottabad cancelled the adhesives and applied its own 3-tier (Type 23a) stamp to the front of the cover. The odd fact is that Nawanshahr had recently been up-graded to a Sub Office, authorised to do its own registration work.

Many examples of offices retaining their stamps long after the introduction of Registered Number Slips around 1910 have been seen in the 20's and 30's, but the prize must surely go to Pondicherry, still using theirs on a Registered Number Slip 27th. Oct. 1949. Used by every category of office.





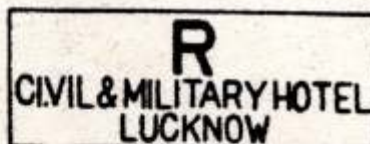
TYPE 25b. Width 42 mm. Height 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1901 to 1902.

For Foreign Registration. Calcutta being the H.Q. of the supreme Postal Authority in India was always the first to introduce new classes of postal business and also to create the necessary departments and staff establishments to run them. Being the foremost trading city in the Orient, with the largest concentration of Europeans, a vast amount of Registration business would have been transacted with the general public and with commercial and mercantile firms. Much of this would have been "Foreign" and it is clear that the volume had increased to such an extent that a separate department had to be set up to deal with it. It follows that this department would have its own stamp. However, despite what must have been a considerable volume of business, examples of this stamp are rare with only 5 reports to date, these being confined to a very limited period. The earliest is Feb. 1901; the latest 18 Dec. 1902.



TYPE 25c. Width 44 mm. Height 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1927.

As Type 25c, but Small "R". Office name in two lines. Probably other District Office stamps exist. Used on a Registered Number Slip. Kalbadevi-Bombay also reported in this type, but without date.



TYPE 25d. Width 50 to 55 mm. Height 16 to 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1903 to 1907.

As Type 25c, with Small "R", but much larger stamps, depending on the length of the name. Office Name in two lines.

Coronation Durbar Central H.O. Delhi	3 Jan 1903 - 55 mm.
Civil & Military Hotel Lucknow	8 May 1906 - 50 mm.
Gun Carriage Factory Jubbulpore	8 Oct 1907 - 55 mm.





TYPE 26. Width 41 mm. Height 16 mm.  
Period of use: 1887.

Without "R". 5 examples of this stamp seen, all in 1887. There is no clue as to the identification of the office. Technically, this is not a Registration Name Stamp but an "Office" stamp (which would, for example, have been impressed on an acknowledgment card). But here, it has been used for Registration.



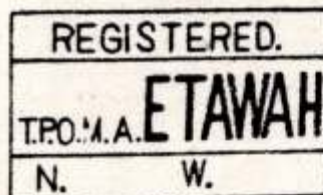
TYPE 27. Width 23 mm. Height 10 mm.  
Period of use: 1925.

Anomalous Type. A crudely-made rubber stamp, probably locally-made by an amateur! Used on a Registered Number Slip. Only the one example of this mini-size stamp seen.

#### THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

Travelling Post Office; Mail Agent; "Kevan" types.

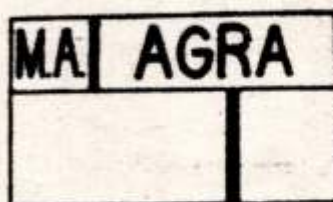
See general notes below for an explanation of the different functions of these offices. The designation "Kevan" types was adopted by the I.S.C. from the name of the member pioneering their study, as a general reference to the Sorting Mail Office and Transit Mail Office stamps numbered from 50 upwards, many of which showed no office name or location (see "India Post" Vol. 6, No. 1, page 5 - Jan. 1972).



TYPE 30a. Width 42 mm. Height 22 to 23 mm.  
Period of use: 1881.

Conforming to the 3-tier Type 23a which came into use about 1878, this stamp was probably in use prior to 1881 (Etawah was sanctioned 25/12/1879). It is impossible to hazard a guess as to the life-span of this stamp, due to its great scarcity. Only two reports of the above, with one date, which has to be 13 Aug. 1881 (2as Reg. fee, from 1st Aug 1881, but no Blue Cross, introduced July 1882). There are two other reports, T.P.O.M.A. Ghaziabad, and T.P.O.M.A. Delhi, - dates not known for either, but both were sanctioned from Feb. 1880. (M.A. = Mail Agent).





TYPE 31a. Width 42 to 43 mm. Height 21 to 22 mm.  
Period of use: 1884 to 1911.

Conforming to the 2-tier type with dividing bar in bottom line, Type 24a, which came into use about 1882.

Other offices noted: M.A. Barrackpore; M.A. Agra.

In place of "M.A." can be found "R.S." (= Railway Sorting, not Station). Offices noted: R.S. Howrah; R.S. Hardoi.

The M.A. Barrackpore example is unusually late - 18/7/1911, and is used in conjunction with an early example of a Number Slip.



TYPE 31b. Width 41 to 42 mm. Height 17 mm.

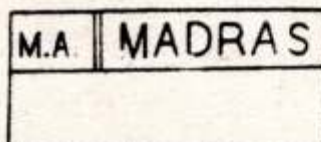
Smaller version (vertically) of Type 31a above.

Other offices noted: M.A. Grant Road; M.A. Peshawar.

In place of "M.A." can be found "R.S."

Offices noted: R.S. Delhi; R.S. Sukkur; R.S. Rawalpindi.

The compartment with "M.A." or "R.S." is separated from the office name by either a heavy bar, or by two fine lines (both types of "dividers" are shown in the illustrations above).

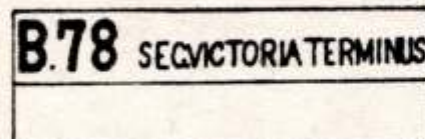
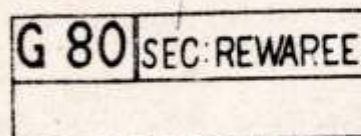


TYPE 31c. Width 41.5 mm. Height 16 mm.  
Period of use: 1882 or 83.

Conforming to the 2-tier type with no dividing bar in bottom line, Type 24e.

Only this one example seen; date uncertain; Blue Cross places it as 1882 or after.

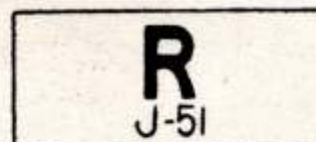




TYPE 31d. Width 48 to 55 mm. Height 15 to 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1890 to 1892.

As Type 31c above, with no dividing bar in bottom line, but very much wider stamps, with "Sec" or "Terminus" elongating the Name compartment. Other offices noted: G.52. Sec. Cawnpore; G.78. Sec. Etawah.

Some stamps have a dividing bar, or lines, between office code compartment and name compartment; others have no dividers - both types illustrated above.



TYPE 32a. Width 40 to 49 mm. Height 15 to 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1885 to 1905.

As Type 25a, the common "R" stamp, this also is the most common of the R.M.S. marks, though with only 19 reports, it can hardly be termed "common".

There are at least 3 group-types of office names:

"Railway Station" marks, such as Mooltan City Ry. Stn.; Meerut City Ry. Stn.; Delhi Ry. Stn.; Grant Road Ry. Stn.; Bathinda Ry. Stn. (Note the last named, being a station in Patiala State, one of the Convention States. Railway Stations in these States were (with very few exceptions) administered by the Indian, and not the State, Postal Authorities).

"Kevan" types, with the Office Name, such as G 50 Delhi; O 75 Chandausi; (Note, for students of "Kevan" types - 6 reports of the C 50 Delhi mark, 5 of which have the complementary G 50 cancellation; but one example seen has F 51 cancellation).

"Kevan" types, without the Office Name, such as J-51 (Agra Rly. Stn.) and O-52 (Bareilly Rly. Stn.). These have only the office code letter and number in the stamp.

Also noted in this type: M.O.Delhi R.S.; M.O.Rewaree R.S.; Victoria Terminus.



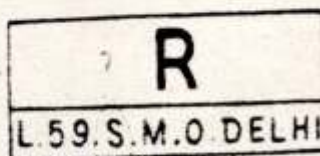
TYPE 32b. Width 41 to 43 mm. Height 16 to 17 mm.  
Period of use: 1893 to 1902.

With "R" the same size as in the common Type 32a. Bottom



line with two compartments; office code in one, office name in the other.

Offices noted: A-50 Allahabad; J-51 Agra; O-77 Aligarh;  
O-56 Cawnpore; O-52 Bareilly; G-50 Delhi;  
F-51 Delhi; F-78 Delhi; C-54 Howrah.



TYPE 32c. Width 41 to 42 mm. Height 16 to 16.5 mm.  
Period of use: 1908 to 1920.

With small "R" in top line. The Trichinopoly stamp cannot be guaranteed; the above is reproduced from an illustration in the "Hyderabad Philatelist", Feb. 1965. Date uncertain - 18 Jul 0?.

Though the policy in this series is to illustrate direct from covers, this mark is included because it contains an example of a "Set No.". Only one other example has been seen - "Delhi R.M.S. Set No.2" dated 8 Jan. 1920.

There are two reports of the Delhi stamp (illustrated) Apr. and Dec. 1908.



TYPE 33. Width 11.5 mm. Height 12.5 mm.  
Period of use: 1870.

Little is known about this mark; it appears on a cover which bore "Travelling Post Office" circular stamp, Renouf type 101b(i). This is the earliest example of a T.P.O. Registration mark. Since it does not conform to any particular type, the proper classification might be among the "Earliest Handstamps", but it was thought better to include it in the T.P.O. section.

GENERAL NOTES ON THE RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE. (Contributed by Mr. E.G.OEHME).

The Travelling Post Office was made up of Sorting Mail Offices and Sorting Sections. Transit Mail Offices and Transit Sections. Registration work was done by the Mail Offices (SMO and TMO), which were stationary, not by the Sections (Travelling Offices). The Travelling Offices dealt with the Registered articles in the Mail Bags, made them up into separate bundles for the various offices which had to deliver them, enclosed them in Registered covers or bags, addressed and sealed them. The seals used were the only Registration equipment, apart from forms and covers, supplied to them. (Examples of these seals are sometimes found on cover, and are usually the intaglio or keyhole type).



From 1880 onwards, the designation "Travelling Post Office" was changed to "Railway Mail Service", while revision of establishments in all the Divisions was undertaken. This was effected by the first quarter of 1881. At the same time, revision of Post Office establishments indicated that some distinction had to be made between the Post Office establishments and those under the R.M.S., particularly in large towns. So, Registration Name Stamps supplied to Town Offices were given serial numbers such as "No. 1". R.M.S. offices, when a S.M.O., were given the abbreviation "R.S." (Railway Sorting) and, when a T.M.O., the prefix "M.A." (Mail Agent) - Types 31a, 31b, 31c.

There were security reasons for this; the different stamps and seals indicated to the Inspectors and Superintendents whether an office was permitted to do Insurance, Delivery and so on; also the category of office.

All Town Offices now acquired the status of Sub Office.

The presence or absence of the bar separating the Reg. No. space from the weight compartment indicated that the office was, or was not, authorised to accept Insured articles; Types 31a, 31b, 31c, 31d.

By 1890, the rapid increase of line mileage on the various railway systems and the corresponding increase in postal business made it necessary for the R.M.S. establishments to be revised once again. Additional trains classed as Express, Local and Special, which had been introduced earlier, had now become more regular, with the result that at important junction and terminal stations, more transit rather than sorting offices were necessary.

The system of Divisional indicator and serial numbers for S.M.Os and T.M.Os now made its appearance in Registration stamps, such as G-80 and F-51 (types 31d, 32a, 32b, 32c). The allocation of serial numbers for stationary offices was as follows:

Nos. 50 to 59 for Sorting Mail Offices; 60 to 69 reserved for additional S.M.Os;  
Nos. 70 to 80 for Transit Mail Offices; 81 to 100 reserved for additional T.M.Os; (some numbers in the 81+ group were subsequently used).

With the ever increasing postal business and the introduction of new offices, many R.M.S. offices found it necessary to transfer some of their establishments to the Post Office Department, in which case they became Sub Sorting Offices and were responsible for "Town Delivery". This "legend" may have been observed in single circle datestamps of the time, e.g. "Darjeeling Town Delivery" (it is not yet known if Registration stamps exist with this "legend").

In certain large towns, where the R.M.S. undertook to do Post Office work night and day, Registration work was confined to certain hours of the day, as in normal post offices, and new



versions of Registration Name Stamps were introduced showing "Ry. Stn." locations; Type 32a.

All S.M.Os were authorised to do Insured Registered Mail but, for T.M.Os the P.M.G. of the Circle had to sanction this class of business.

#### GENERAL NOTES.

More than 30 different types and sub-types are illustrated here spanning the years from 1869 to approximately 1910, when Number Slips and Registered Number Slips were introduced.

Why were so many different stamps introduced in this 40 year period?

First, was the need to simplify the original 4-tier stamp which was cumbersome and time-consuming to use, with its four different compartments to be filled in in manuscript. Thus, we have four basic types - 4-tier, 3-tier, 2-tier and finally, the common "R" stamp.

Second, was the introduction of Insurance in 1878 and the need to indicate this class of business, or restrictions on it.

Third, in 1880, with the introduction of Money Order business, a complete revision of Head Offices and Sub Offices all over India was implemented. Many offices which hitherto had been Head Offices, were downgraded to Sub P.Os, and Sub P.Os to Branch Offices. The only offices to be upgraded were Town Offices. These, being under the direct control of their respective Head Offices, were permitted to receive and despatch Insured Registered articles. Head Offices were now graded as 1st or 2nd Class; Sub P.Os were graded from 1st to 4th Class.

All this, coupled with the changes in the structure of the R.M.S., accounts for the many different stamps which made their appearance.

In addition to the above, another class of business was added; a directive from the Director General stipulated that from 1st Oct. 1882, "Value Payable Registered Letters may also be insured".

Some explanation of the various types (21, 22a, 22b, 22c, 22d, 22e and 22f) used by Calcutta is necessary.

In 1869 the Registration branch had a Head Registration Clerk with three assistants under him. Also, there were two "Window" clerks who acted as receipt clerks for "special" postings, though these were under the "Receipt Department". The "G.P.O." stamp (Type 21): any stamp with "G.P.O." and the name of the office belongs to the Head of the department. This stamp would not have been used for routine work, which accounts for its great scarcity. Only one other stamp is known, "Bombay G.P.O.", Type 22c. (It is interesting to note that all the



examples of these two "G.P.O." stamps are in Red). The stamp would probably have been used on internal business, personal mail from the Head and, where the public comes into it, letters which for a variety of reasons have been sent to the Head of the department, possibly under separate cover, for re-posting.

Those types with letters of the alphabet after the indicator "N" (Type 22f) or with manuscript letters before or after "N" (Types 22c, 22e) were used in conjunction with holders of "Window" tickets.

The larger firms and offices had agreements with the G.P.O. on a large cash deposit basis; smaller firms and individuals could have a Rs.12 annual account, paid in advance. The former neither paid nor received any cash at the "Window"; all postage charges being kept in books and adjusted quarterly, half-yearly or annually, as agreed with the Post Office.

Those large concerns who posted more than 10 registered articles daily were supplied with special forms of registration books called "journals" which were prefixed with a letter of the alphabet, allocated by the Postmaster, which identified each particular firm. The corresponding registration stamp, with inset letter, was reserved for that firm. The rules provided for the possibility of there being more than 26 firms - double letters could be issued. No example of this has been seen.

Lesser firms and individuals who posted more than 10 registered articles at a time, but not regularly, were also given a letter of the alphabet (probably the manuscript one), but they were not issued with a journal. These firms recorded their postings on their own forms, or on pieces of paper, which were presented with the items. The postage would be entered in their Account book or, if the Rs.12 deposit had been exhausted, paid in cash. (Incidentally, the special "Window" system originated in Calcutta G.P.O. on 21st Nov. 1821, when 7 "Wickets" were opened for an equal number of "Principal Agency Houses").

Type 24e (with no dividing bar in bottom line): restrictions were placed on the acceptance of Insured articles at this time in ~~some~~ areas. This was particularly so in Rajputana, Central India and Kathiawar, because of the high incidence of highway robberies. Many Post Offices in Rajputana had a total ban on the receipt or despatch of Insured items. Didwana (Type 24i) was one of these; the absence of a dividing bar in the bottom line indicated this fact. However, the unusual presence of the large "W" in this "hybrid" stamp may have been an indication of the intention to upgrade this office which, at this time, was a Branch Office. A directive issued in 1880 stated that no insured article must be sent to any office which was not an authorised Money Order Office. In April 1881, Didwana was made up to a Money Order Office and, at the same time, permitted to do Insurance. A cover dated Feb. 1883 shows that the hybrid stamp (24i) had been replaced by Type 24a, with dividing bar in the bottom line.



The safe transmission of registered articles through the post depended on certain precautions which, up to 1868, were directed mainly at protection from outside malpractices. But, in 1868, it was reported that two registered letters from Simla to Meerut, containing between them notes valued at Rs.1700, were found on delivery to be short by Rs.700. Investigations by the police and postal officers led to suspicions being narrowed down to 13 offices through which these items had been routed. However, nothing concrete emerged but, from that year on, the Post Office took measures to protect itself from within.

The Postal Detective Agency was thus born in the Punjab and became a regular Department within the Post Office, but it was never advertised as such. The general public, having been advised up to this time that registration made transmission through the post safe, were now given the added assurance that such articles would now be handled by "comparatively few Postal Officers under certain precautions". This meant that, although all classes of offices could accept articles for registration, one of the precautions taken was the discriminate issue of Registration stamps. Those to whom they were issued were made responsible for their security, safe custody and proper use.

The Punjab was the testing ground for new stamps, mainly those used for departmental purposes. This may account for the unusual format of Type 22g, without frame-lines (however, the stamp had a very short life, 4 years, and was not used outside the Punjab). It was in the Punjab that the Blue Cross was introduced, and also in the Punjab that we have the first example of the final type to be issued - Type 25a, the common "R" stamp. (A detailed study of the introduction of this stamp can be found in "India Post" Vol.10, No.2, Apr/Jun 1976, page 57).

#### CONCLUSION.

"Number Slips" and "Registered Number Slips", to be dealt with in the next section, were introduced around 1909.

As with the Earliest Handstamps, which overlapped the introduction of the All India types by some three years, so do some of the marks illustrated in this article. But, in this case, by design, and for a longer period. "Number Slips" were to be used in conjunction with the "Common 'R' Stamp".

My thanks to the many members who still send in useful reports; it is hoped that this excellent state of co-operation will continue.

A special vote of thanks to Mr. E.G.Oehme, who spent many hours at India House researching into Rules, Regulations, Category of Offices, and much more.

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india study circle/r s nuttall/1977



REGISTERED LETTER RECEIPTS - EARLY TYPES

**REGISTERED LETTER RECEIPT**

No. 617

Post Office, Dated 28 October 1860

Received from *Thimmaiah Pillai*

the undermentioned Letter for despatch:

Address *Shriyugiswami*

Destination *Madras*

Weight *2 1/2 lb*

Postage *600*

25 Paise  
511

T.M.C.  
28-10-60

(25) Number—Printed at the Government Press.

Fig.1 - 1860 - receipt issued at Trichinopoly (Receiving House No.1)  
Form printed at Madras Govt. Press. Reduced to  $\frac{1}{2}$  linear.

**REGISTERED LETTER RECEIPT.**

No. 209

Bombay Post Office, dated 5 Sept 1861

Received from *Seyyid Sowlabram*

the undermentioned Letter for despatch:—

Address *Sowlabram K. S. S. S.*

Destination *Calcutta*

Weight *5 lb*

Postage *12*

BOMBAY P.O.  
1861  
SEP 5  
REGISTERED

**TOO LATE**

Fig.2 - 1861 - receipt specially printed for use at Bombay Post Office, showing the "Foreign Mail" mark. type 11a though the address is Calcutta). Reduced to  $\frac{1}{2}$  linear.