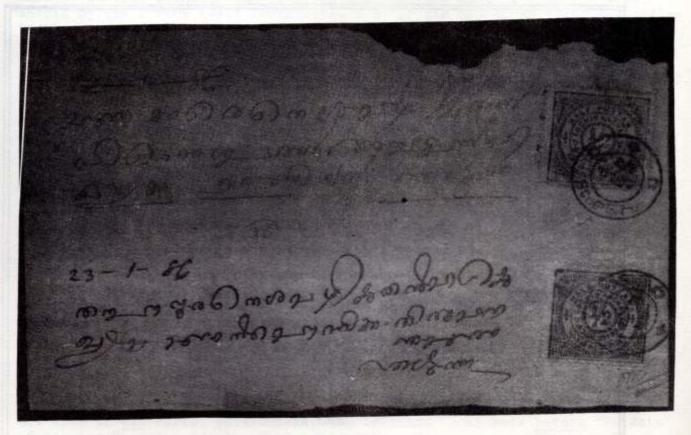
by D. B. GRIFFIN.

This little article is written with the hope that it will elicit comments and additional information concerning the Certificates of Posting from other collectors of Cochin postal history material.

The "Certificate of Posting" was a service of the Cochin Anchal whereby the person mailing an unregistered letter, card, book packet or parcel was provided with an acknowledgment that the article, identified as to addressee, had been properly posted. The Certificate did not provide any special or expedited treatment, nor did it infer compensation or tracing if the certified item was damaged, delayed ot lost.

When this type of service was initiated is not known as yet. A study of a file of the Cochin Government Gazette (if anyone has access to one) should clarify the date that this type of Anchal service was first introduced. Lacking the Government Gazette (or a copy of the Anchal Operating Manual) the rates for this service can only be deduced from the Certificates themselves.

The first Certificates were hand written on, apparently, whatever paper was available in the anchal office. Next, a small printed form was made available. This form, unlike subsequent ones, did not include the print order data. Beginning with the forms provided in 1089ME, all forms printed included the print order data. This data included the number of forms ordered and the date of the print order.



(Fig.1)

Since the handwritten forms were used as late as early 1088 (my latest one is dated 22 Kanni 1088 - Fig.1) and since the earliest dated printed form bears the date 17-9-89 (17 Meedam 1089) (Fig.2), it is probable that the undated printed form mentioned above was printed in late 1087 or early 1088, to be followed by the small (6,000 sheets) 1089 printing. Subsequent printings ranged from 6,000 to 10,000 sheets. Dated printings are known for the years 1089, 1095, 1096, 1104, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1121 and 1122ME. (Fig.3).

Initially, and up to mid 1086, it appears that the cost of a certificate was one half puttan per item (equivalent to five pies) (Fig.1). With the change over to Indian currency and the advent of the first Perkins Bacon issue the rate was reduced to four pies per item (Fig.4). Sometime during the year 1089 a major revision seems to have been made in the cost and applicability of the Certificates. The first of the dated printed forms provided that a Certificate covering up to three items comprising unregistered letters, post cards, book packets and/or sample packets, if mailed by one person at the

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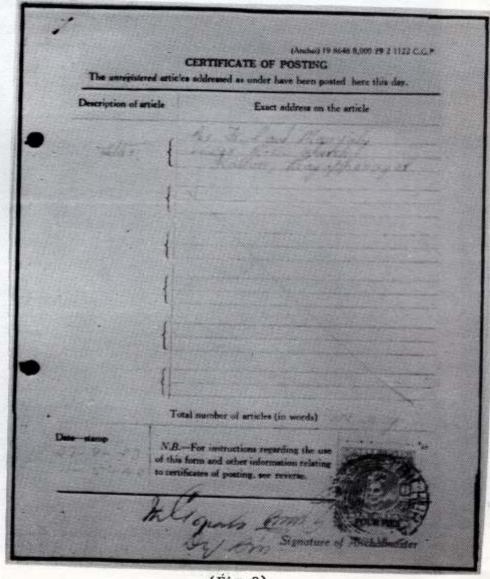
(Fig. 2)

same time, could be obtained for two pies. Additionally, a Certificate covering up to six items comprising unregistered parcels or v.p. (value payable) book packets could also be obtained for two pies. Payment of the fee was to be indicated by affixing and cancelling an anchal stamp on the face of the Certificate.

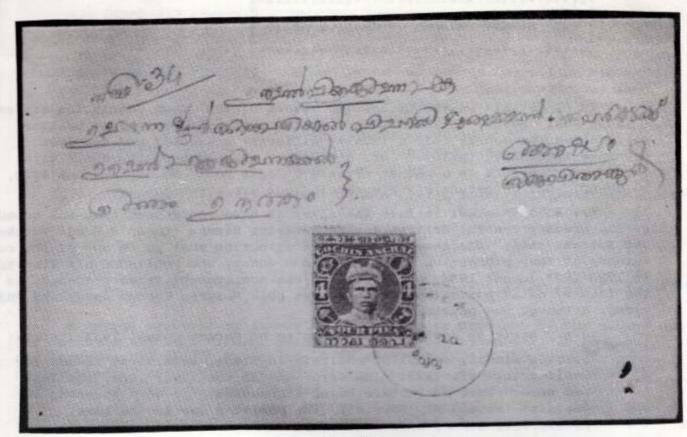
Some time in the period between 1096 and 1104, v.p. parcels were dropped from the group of items for which Certificates could be obtained. Further, during the period between 1114 and 1118, the instructions for issuing a Certificate were modified to specify that Service stamps should be used to pay the fee in those cases where official articles were being posted, and that the rate was four pies per six items.

The last rate change occurred in the period between 1118 and 1121. The rate for unregistered letters, cards etc. was raised from two to four pies for three items, and that for parcels was raised from two pies to four pies for six items. The rate for official items remained unchanged at four pies for six items.

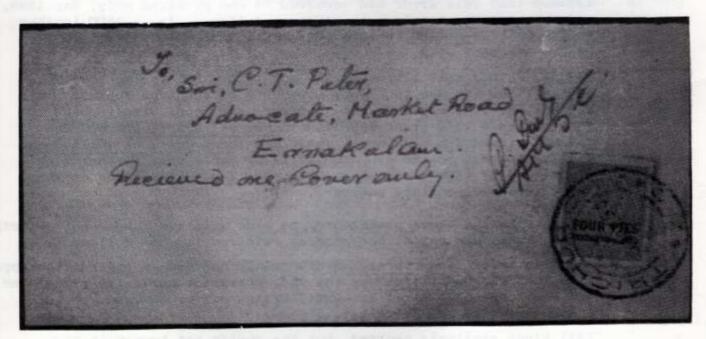
Certificates of Posting continued to be issued until the integration of the Tr-Cochin anchal into the Indian P & T. During the last year of the anchal Certificate forms were not reprinted as supplies became exhausted, and the handwritten Certificates were again issued after a period of thirty eight years (Fig.5).



(Fig. 3)



(Fig.4)



(Fig. 5)
