I. Establishment of Postal System and Introduction of Postmarks, 1879

According to Hepper and Hellrigl, as many as 43 post offices were established in 1879. New postmarks also were introduced. These new postmarks usually consisted of a town name with a space for the handwritten date. A few towns, like Kathmandu, had postmarks with mechanical dates. Postmarks were shaped as circles, rectangles, squares, or ovals.

Sampling of Early Classic Postmarks
Illustrated Examples for This and Following Page

Bara (=Kalaiya)
Consists of town name, *"Bara"* (the old name for Kalaiya), separated by horizontal line and space for handwritten date below.

Hanumannagar
Handstamped circle with *"Hanumannagar"* town name in top segment. Dates handwritten in blank space below town name.
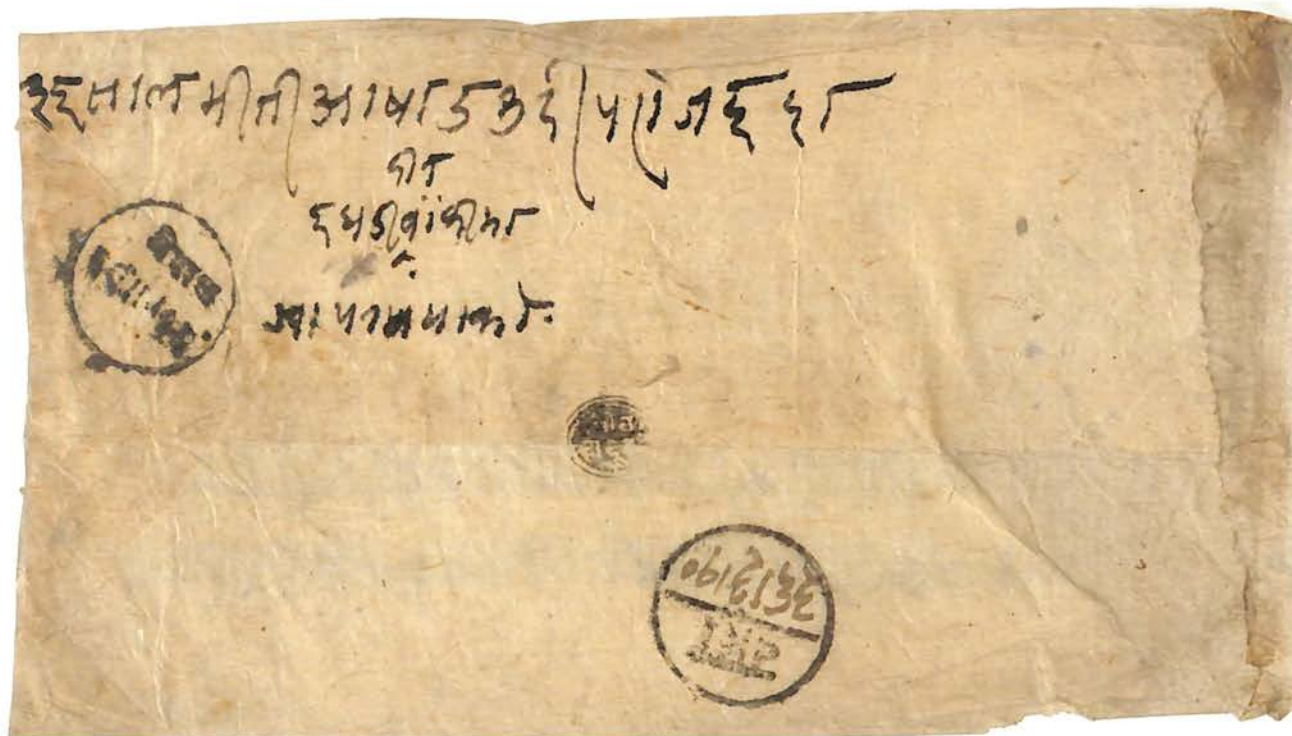
Pokhara
Referred to as a "datestamp," this postmark features, for the first time, a mechanical date. Town name is in top segment.

Nepal (=Kathmandu)
Also features a mechanical date. Town name *"Nepal"* in top segment. Exists with various town name and date arrangements.

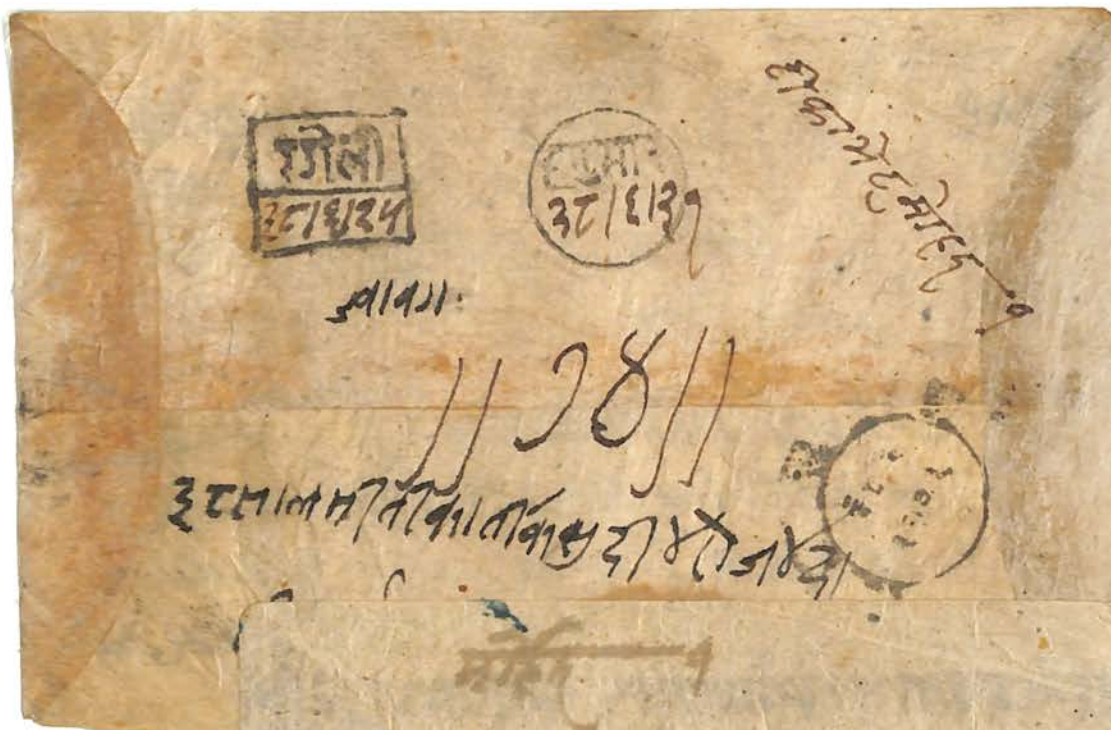### Bara (=Kalaiya) Postmark, 1879
To Nepal (Kathmandu). This Cover Posted "36/3/10" (June 24, 1879) • Nepal (Kathmandu) Postmark Applied on Arrival; Illegible Date • Addressed to *Rana Udip Singh, Narayanhity Durbar* in Kathmandu • In 1879, During the Rule of Rana Udip Singh, the Postal System Was Established

Period Postmarks • Early Hand-dated Types

Examples on Stampless Official Covers, 1881 and 1882
Rangeli, Hanumannagar, and Bara (Kathmandu Postmarks Not Illustrated)

Rangeli to Kathmandu. Posted Rangeli, October 8, 1881 (38/6/25). Hanumannagar
transit, October 14, 1881 (38/6/31). Kathmandu arrival, October 16, 1881 (38/7/2).

Hanuman[nagar]
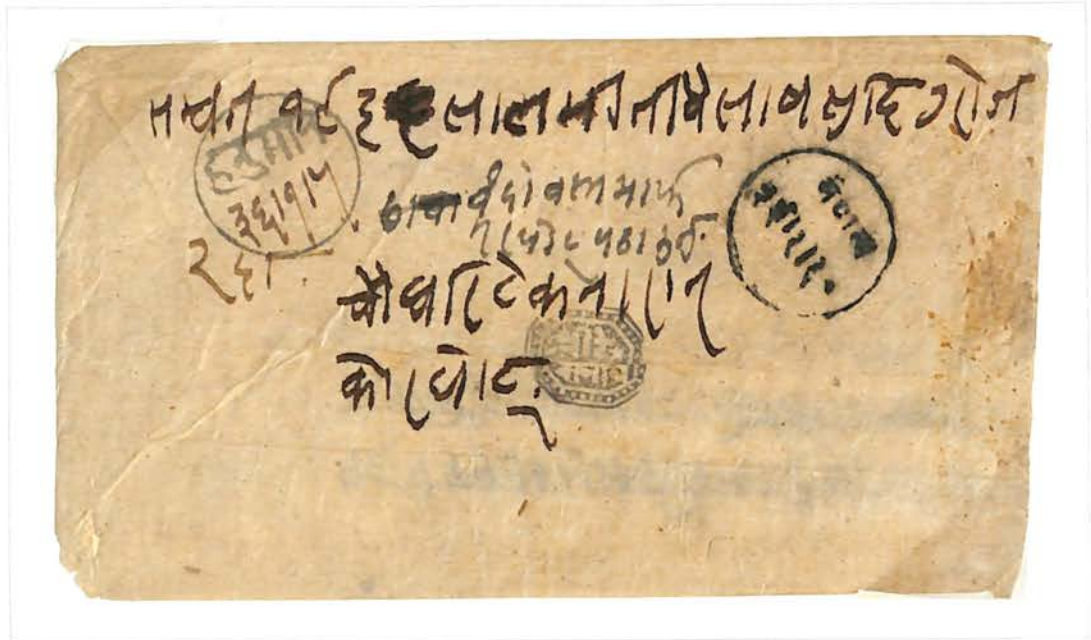"38/6/31"

Rangeli
"38/6/25"

Bara (in Blue)
"38/9/25"

Bara (Kalaiya) to Kathmandu. Posted Bara, January 8, 1882 (38/9/25).
Kathmandu arrival one day later(?), January 9, 1882 (38/[9]/26).

Early Classic Postmarks, continued

Hanumannagar Datestamp, 1879

Hanumannagar to Kathmandu. Posted "36/1/5" (April 19, 1879). Hand-dated Hanumannagar postmark. Circular "Nepal" (Kathmandu) arrival postmark.
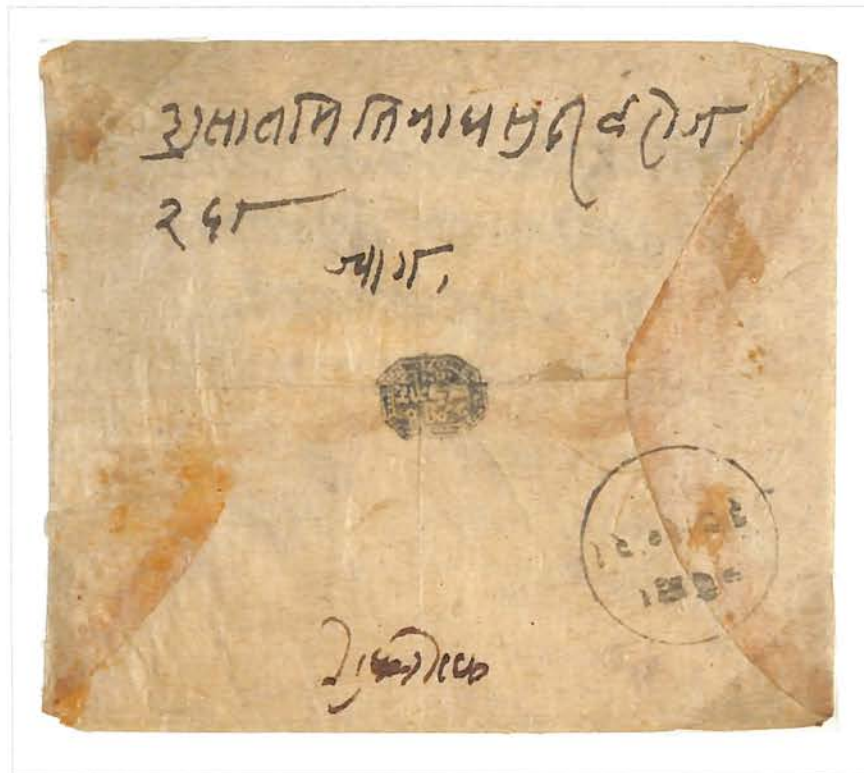
Pokhara and Nepal Datestamps, 1881
Unusual Use of Ring Seal as Inked Handstamp and Wax Seals

To Nepal (Kathmandu). Stampless official cover posted "37/??/29" (January ??, 1881) in Pokhara. From *Major Captain Katrinda Bikram Rana*. Addressed to the *Commander-in-Chief General Bhim Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana, Narayanhity Durbar, Kathmandu*. Kathmandu datestamp in blue records arrival on "37/10/2" (January 16, 1881). Stamps were issued in April, 1881.

Typical Official Stampless Cover of the Period, 1881

"Kaj Sarkari" काज् सकारि (= Official) • *Jaleswar to Kathmandu*

Background During the entire Classic Period, government officials in outlying towns would use "free franking" to communicate with their superiors in the capital, Kathmandu. For Nepal postal historians, stampless covers are important because they, in some cases, are the only way to show certain cancellations and postmarks of the period!

As was customary during the period, official covers inscribed *"kaj sarkari"* (= official) by hand on reverse side.

From *Mekhman Singh Jung Adhikari Chhetri* of the *Jaleswar Bhari Mal Kachhari* (= main court office). Single postmark of Jaleswar dated "37/10/2" (January 16, 1881), about 4 months before stamps issued.

Evolution
of a Datestamp
Lyanlyang and Dolakha, 1886-1889

February (?), 1886 (42/10/??)
Mail from Lyanlyang went via Dolakha to Kathmandu. At each town, dated postmark applied.

Postmarks of Lyanlyang (right) and Dolakha (upper left) are legible. Mark of Lyanlyang, already damaged, only reads *lya*.

May 3, 1886 (43/3/20)
Now, both postmarks are damaged. *Lya* for Lyanlyang is gone (right) and inscription reading *dolakha* is incomplete (lower left).

February 26, 1889 (45/11/12)
By 1889, because of damage to both postmarks, postal clerks write town name and date inside a handstamped circle! As before, Lyanlyang abbreviated *lya*. Both postmarks are now manuscript postmarks.

Selected Period Postmarks on Stampless Covers

Unrecorded Chitwan Negative Postmark is variety with no *shri*, sun, or moon in top segment. Dated July 9, 1887 (44/30/28). Stampless cover from Chitwan Law Court to Kathmandu.
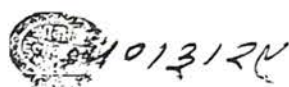

Rangeli Hand-dated Postmark dated "49/10/9" (January 23, 1893) on stampless cover. Kathmandu arrival mark, at right, illegible.

Manuscript Postmark with Postmaster's Seal

Stampless Official Covers Inscribed *"[Kaj] Sarkari"*

Banke to Kathmandu, 1887. Manuscript portion features town name written above the posting date, "44/8/4" (November 18, 1887). Kathmandu arrival, November 26, 1887.

Banke to Kathmandu, 1889. Oval postmaster's seal with posting date "50/3/29" (July 12, 1893) written alongside. Arrival date illegible. Center handstamp is seal of sender.

Transition from "Postmark without Date Field" to "Negative Postmark," 1898

Circular postmark with large *Devanagari* letters, this mark reads "Sisaghadi" (= Chisaghadi, later renamed Chisapani).

Two stampless covers: top, dated February 8, 1891 (47/10/23); bottom, dated September 2, 1894 (51/5/19). In addition to Sisaghadi postmark, lower cover also shows negative postmark of Chisapani which replaced Sisaghadi mark sometime in 1898.
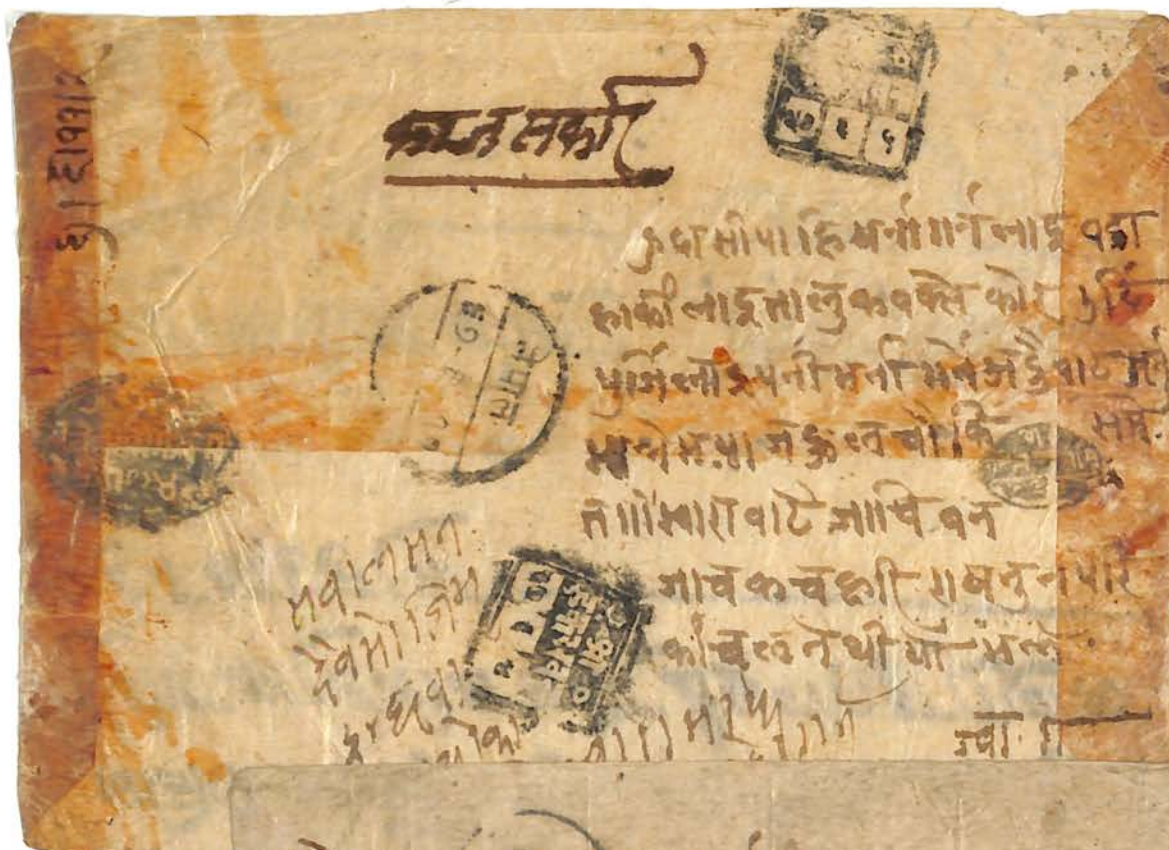
Inscribed *"Shri Gorkha"* with Date in Lower Segment

On stampless official cover—properly inscribed *"Kaj Sarkari"*—posted "Gorkha" on "61/7/14" (October 28, 1904). Kathmandu arrival "61/7/18(?)" (November 1, 1904).

Postmark Examples on Stampless Official Covers

Kadarban Postmark with Mechanical Date (Late Use). *Kadarban to Kathmandu.* One strike of Kadarban postmark applied for *each* day letter was in Post Office before being sent on for delivery. Posted, Kadarban, "67/6/3" (June 17, 1910). Inscribed *"kaj sarkari."* Circular Kathmandu arrival dated "67/6/11" (June 25, 1910).

Dahaban Hand-dated Postmark Used as Transit Postmark. *Banke to Kathmandu.* Posted Banke, March 5, 1902 (58/11/22); Banke negative postmark. Transit Dahaban, March 7, 1902 (58/11/24). Kathmandu arrival, illegible date.