

# The Early Indian Postal Cancellations

(Victorian Era - 1854-1884)

Aim:

To show case beautiful postal history of India regarding Early postal cancellations of the "Victorian Era" from 1854 to 1884. Changes in the postal acts and expansion of postal services nook and corners of India saw frequent changes in designs of cancellations that were used to deface the stamp and. The large number of different types of cancellations used all over India as distinctive marks for the various postal circles had naturally created a nightmare to the Indian postal Administration and so in 1873 a solution was attempted by the introduction of all India cancellations.

Purpose :

My collection is to achieve two different goals first is to know my self the vastness of Early Indian postal cancellation and its varieties. And secondly to put before the present generation and to preserve the same for future the rich heritage of Indian Postal History. As on date it is hard to get good copies of these cancellations and preservation of the same for future is big challenge.

What is a Cancellation / Post Mark.

A cancellation (or cancel for short; French: oblitération) is a postal marking applied on a postage stamp or postal stationery to deface the stamp and to prevent its reuse. Cancellations come in a huge variety of designs, shapes, sizes, and colors. Modern cancellations commonly include the date and post office location where the stamps were mailed, in addition to lines or bars designed to cover the stamp itself. The term "postmark" refers specifically to the part that contains the date and posting location, but the term is often used interchangeably with "cancellation" as it may serve that purpose. The portion of a cancellation that is designed to deface the stamp and does not contain writing is also called the "obliteration" or killer.

## Exhibit Organisation

The time line below is the order in which the entire exhibit is organised spreading to 5 frames. The exhibit is not designed to be a catalogue of all the examples of cancellations used during the Victorian era. It is an attempt to showcase the different cancellations changed over the period in different provinces and areas and the reasons behind the changes in types of cancellations all over India.

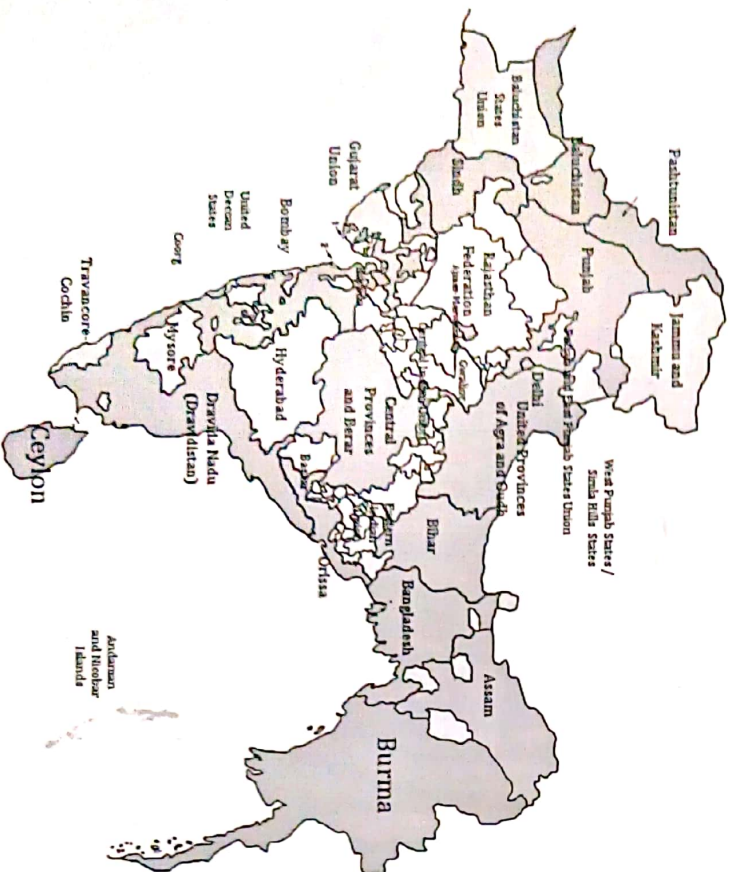
## Plan and Exhibit organisation

1.0.	Introduction & Plan page	5.0.	Other Circle Cancellations. Type 10-13
2.0.	Early cancellations 1854-55. 2.1. R. Type 1 2.2. R. Type 2.	6.0.	Some Plain cancellations before 1873. Type 14 to 16.
3.0.	The First Series of Town number Cancellations 3.1. The Bombay Circle Type 4. 3.2. The Northern Circle Type 5. 3.3. The Madras Circle Type. 6. 3.4. The Bengal Circle Type 7. 3.5. The Northern & Punjab Circle Type 8. The All India cancellations. 1861-73	7.0.	All india series of 1873-1884 Type 17 to 20
4.0.	The All India cancellations. 1861-73 Type 9	8.0.	Local Cancellations.
		9.0.	Railway Cancellations.
		10.0.	Experimental cancellations.
		11.0.	District post cancellations.

\* Rare cancellation covers are framed in **Red**  
\* All types of cancellations referred in my collection are R. Type (Renouf type) and some J.Cooper type as mentioned in pages.

## Bibliography:

1. Early Indian cancellations and Postmarks by W. Renouf. I.C.S.
2. Early Indian Cancellations by Jai Cooper. F.R.G.S.
3. Numbers in Early Indian Cancellations 1855-1884 By D.R. Martin.
4. Encyclopedia of Early Indian Cancellations and Postmarks.
5. Images / Maps and information extracted from Internet.

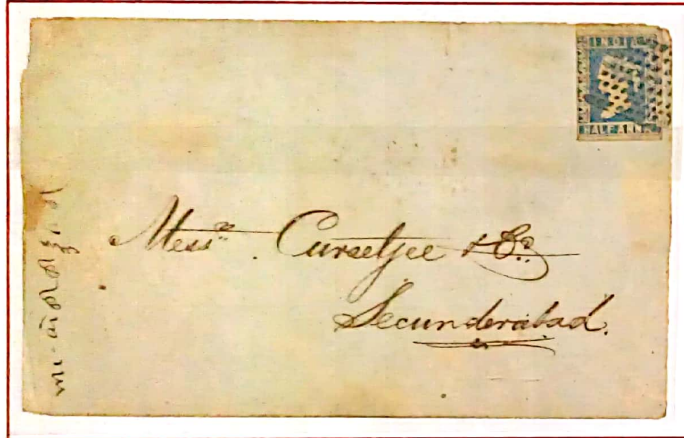


Provinces and Princely States of the Federation of India

# Early Indian Postal cancellations Victorian Era

## 2.1. Early Cancellations -1854-55 R. Type 1.

The third phase of "Indian Cancellations" commences with the introduction of postage stamps in India in 1854. In 1854, there were four "Postal circles" which regulated the Provincial Postal services in India 1. Bengal and Lower provinces, 2. North West provinces, 3. Madras circle and 4. Bombay Circle. The first all India cancellation ( R.type 1 ) was of a similar type to that found on the first issues of France. It is generally known as diamond of dots as the dots are arranged so as to form a diamond of varying sizes. The commonest type consists of 9 rows of 9 dots, either round or square. Examples of 8x8, 8x9, 8x10, 9x10, 10x11 and 11x12 also given as known to exist.



Letter from Madras - 20 September 1855 to Secunderabad. 1/2 anna Litho tied with R. type 1.

Rectangular Madras Paid and Secunderabad paid Postmark in Red on the back.



R. Type 1 10x11  
19mm to 28mm



Cover posted from Calcutta to Yorkshire, England dt 8 July 1855 via Southampton. reached destination on 22nd Aug 1855. Cover bears E.I. 4 annas x 2 Litho ( Cut to shape ) tied with R.type 1 diamond of 9x9 dots. Rectangular "INDIA PAID" Round Delivery mark in red on the front side and Huddersfield Dly mark dt 22/08 in Green and Dispatch mark in red of CALCUTTA G.P.O. on the back side.



R.type 1b 9x9

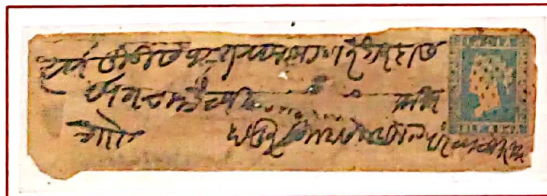


Dispatch and Dly postmarks on the back.

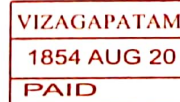
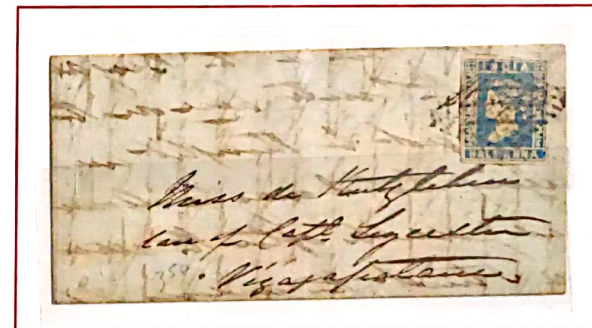
The basic dimensions are 23mm x 20mm taking the long and short diagonals. The short diagonal is fairly constant at 19mm or 20mm. In case of long diagonals length 24, 28, 30 and 32mm have been seen.



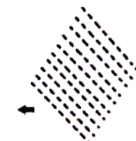
R. Type 1  
9x9 dots



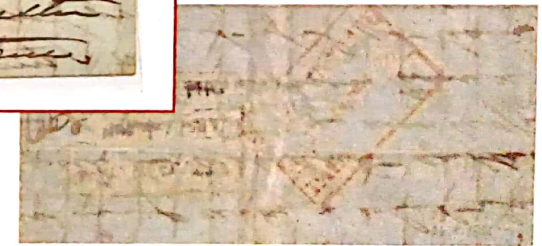
Letter to Belgaum dt-- . Belgaum paid rectangular Postmark in Red on the back along with A.M. in Square in Black.



Cover addressed to Vizagapatnam dt 20th August 1855 East India Half anna litho tied with R.type 1 10 x 10 dots VIZAGAPATAM paid Rectangular Postmark in red on the back.



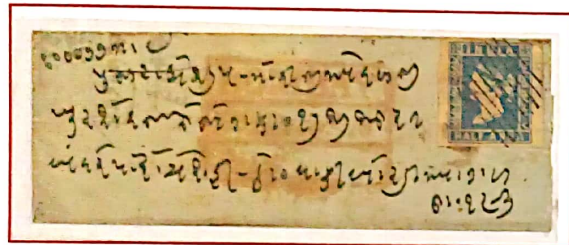
R type, 1  
10x10 dots



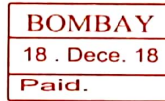
Cover Backside . Reduced image.

**2.2. Early Cancellations -1854-55  
R. Type 2.**

Unlike Type 1 which was used as an all India cancellation, the type 2 was used in a very restricted way as the Majority of original covers are found from Bombay only. Though the supersession of Type 1 from further use commenced from May 1855, the use of type 2 was begun before this as original covers with type 2 cancellations are found with October 1854 dates.



R.Type 2  
Diamond of 9 bars



A folded letter posted from Bombay to Surat dt. 18 Dec 185- bears R.Type 1 cancellation Diamond of 9 bars in black and Rectangular 3 rows cancellation **BOMBAY - 185- Dece. 18 - paid** in red and other not clear cancellations in red on the back side.

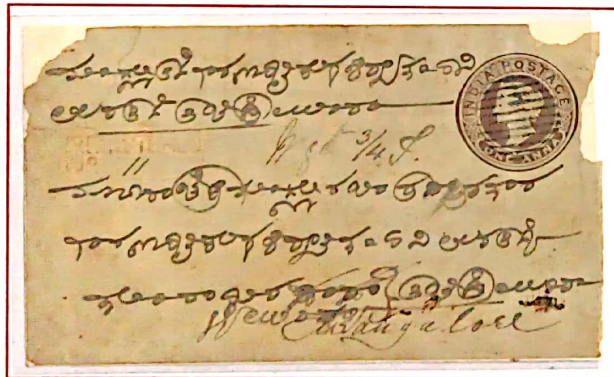
The Type 2 is a diamond-shaped cancellation of parallel bars, the bars being parallel to of the sides. As a rule there are 9 bars. The diagonals measure 26 or 27 mm and 19 or 20 mm respectively.

One more type of Bars cancellation exists called R.type 2b. This type appears to be almost a square of 9 bars ,the Diagonals measuring 29 x 25 mm This cancellation are dates between October 1856 and May 1857.



Cooper type 2c

Cover ( One anna Brown ) Pale  
grinish posted from Gangolli  
to Bangalore dt.24-04-1869 bears  
Rare Cooper type 2c a circle formed  
by bars of 11 lines



It's a circle of 11 parallel bars, diameter 18 to 20mm. It is found from Madras circle. The letters from "Takiij Taoook" of various places, stamps were cancelled by this type. It is a District post cancellation and found from 1854 issue to 1856.

*Early Indian Postal cancellations*  
**Victorian Era**

**3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations  
3.1. Bombay Circle. R. Type 4**

The First Series of Town number cancellations. R.type 4 is a diamond composed of lines parallel to one of the sides. The lines framing a number. The design is a simple adoption of type 2. In type 4 which is the General type, the lines ascend from right to left. In type 4 (1) which is very rare indeed and which is Obliteration "Error" The lines ascent from left to right.



R.type 4(IV) Baroda  
28. 12 lines R to L



R.type 4 Kemptee  
76. 10 lines R.to L



R.type 4 Poona  
52. 11 lines R.to L



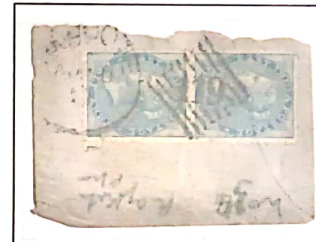
R.type 4(VI)a. RAJKOT 119 9 Lines R to L  
Duplex



R.type 4. Malligaum 35. 10 lines  
R to L



R.type 4(IV)



R.type 4 (VI) a



R.type 4 (IV)  
11 Lines

over posted from Nagpur to Calcutta. Postage 1/2 anna x2 (One anna) tied with R.type 4(IV) dated 23rd April 1859. Dispatch post mark of GPO calcutta in Red and Rectangular Nagpore paid postmark in red also seen.

The common dimensions of the lines are 24 or 25 mm by 18 to 20 mm but the longer diagonals vary on many occasions between 23 and 27 mm. The lines are found very thin, medium or thick, there being no fixed rule for any type. The inset numbers measure about 7 mm in height but considerably vary in detail.

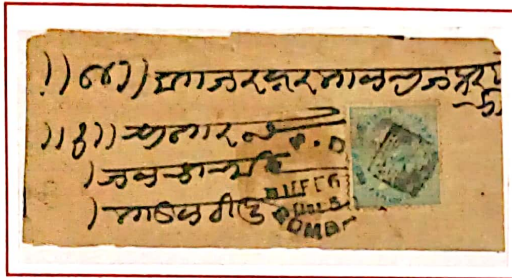
# Early Indian Postal cancellations

Victorian Era

## 3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations

### 3.1. The Bombay Circle. Type 4.

R. type XIII is a small diamond with 11 or 12 lines but framed in a square. In this type however, we have seen the numbers 1,3,5,9 and 10. These examples are extremely rare.



G.P.O.  
\* 25 MAR 69 \*  
BOMBAY



11 X11 mm R.type 4 XIII 12 lines  
Very Scarce cancellation

Cover from Bombay to Ajmeer with E I 1/2 anna stamp cancelled with Very rare BOMBAY G.P.O. Duplex cancellation ( Small diamond ) 12 bars with in square frame.. On reverse un common oval post mark P.M. and Ajmeer sorting postmark in Red.

The earliest Bombay Urban Cancellations is the R.type 4 parallel of bars framing a Roman Numeral. The Diagonals are generally 25x22 mm and the number of lines generally 12 - though the examples show 9, 10, and 11 lines are known.





25X22 mm.  
R.type 4 9 lines



Bombay Postmark  
in Red on backside

The cover from Bombay to Madras tied with R type 4 cancellation on Half anna E.I. stamp

G.P.O.  
BOMBAY




11 X11 mm R.type 4 XIII 12 lines  
Very Scarce cancellation




This obliterator is a modified and reduced version of the Duplex obliterator of Bombay circle. The barred diamond containing the number "1" is made up of seventeen fine parallel lines, rising from right to left. But in this example the lines are "Reversed, (left to right) The recorded measurement of the diamond in type 4 is 22 x 15mm, while this example shows a diamond 16 x 13mm. Cover from Bombay to Umritsur.

On paper (letter from Bombay to -----) with very scarce, Bombay GPO cancellation (Duplex) with Numeral "3" this number not catalogued - Very scarce.


25x22mm  
R.type 4 12 lines




Bombay paid  
Postmark in Red

Cover from Bombay to Jaulnah dt 25th March 1869 tied with R type 4 25x22 mm 12 lines on E.I. stamp. Bombay paid and rectangular Jaulnah paid in Red are on the back side of the cover.


BOMBAY  
6 MY 67



R. Type 4 XIII -Duplex -17 lines left to right  
15mm - Very Rare cancellation



S  
AGRA  
MY 10



UMRITSUR  
MY 12  
67



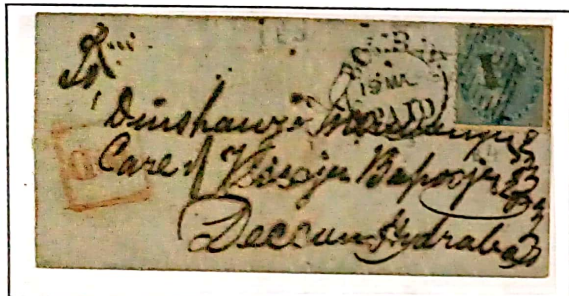
Cover from Bombay to Umritsur dated 6th May 1867. Hexagon Sorting office mark and Umritsur delivery mark in Red are also seen on this cover.

Cancellation R.type 4 XIII, without the word "Paid" at the foot of the left hand circle.

Variations in Cancellation size, number of lines, or lines right to left or left to right were observed in Early Indian cancellations mainly because of replacements or locally made cancellations in place of damaged or worn out cancellations. some cases cancellations were changed with locally made cancellations till the replacement seals received by the post office.

It is very hard to get fine examples of these early Bombay circle cancellations on cover due to poor paper quality covers used, or use of worn out obliterator and poor quality ink.

3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations  
 3.1. The Bombay Circle. Type 4.



P.M. 1<sup>ST</sup> D



Cancellation (Duplex) R type 4 VIII has the word "Paid" at the foot of the left hand circle

Cover from Bombay to Hyderabad dated 19th March 18652

On the backside of the cover post marks, P.M. in black \* 1st D ( First delivery) in square and Delivery office post mark of Hyderabad dt Mar 22 1862 in red.



R. Type 4 VIII -Duplex  
 9 lines left to right



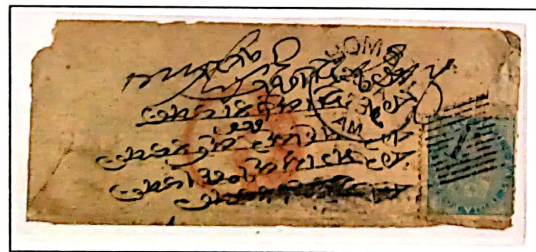
Entire from Bombay to Dholarah dt. 10th August 1866. Duplex cancellation left side receiving house cancellor has the word. P.M. and word " PAID "



Delivery Post mark in Red of Ajmere.



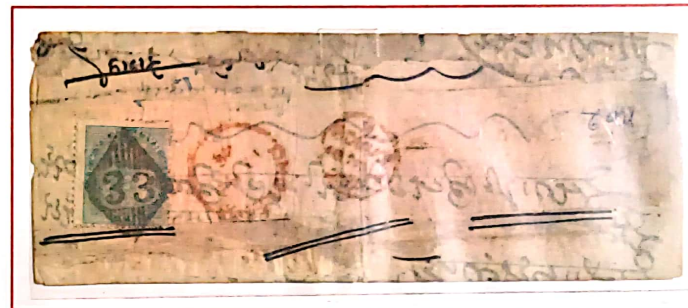
Duplex cancellation R.type 4 VIII  
 24 x 20mm. 11 Lines.



Cover from Bombay to Ajmere dated 20th Jan 1873 bears Type 4 VIII duplex cancellations tied on 1/2 anna E.I. stamp. Delivery Post mark of Ajmere dt Jan 21 1873 in Red is also seen .

Early Indian Postal cancellations  
 Victorian Era

For sometime in 1864, DHOLAERA in Bombay circle used this type. It obviously a locally made replacement for a damaged or worn type 4 cancellor. "33" is the only number known in this type. Renouf had noticed this cancellation, but could not identify the issuing office.



R.Type Diamond of vertical lines 25x20mm



Year wrongly reads 46 for 64 (1864)



The year in the despatch office stamp wrongly reads 46 (1846) for 64(1864) the slide stamps have been carelessly inserted. Cover from Dholarah to Bombay. Dt. 12 th Nov 1864.



R.type 4c "33"  
 DHOLERA.  
 With reversed lines  
 left to right



The folded letter above, also from DHOLERA, shows its office number "33" in Type 4, but with lines reversed Numbers reported with Type 4 lines reversed are 52,62,69 to 72, 119,134, 165,137 and 139. Recently "33" also added to the list of Office numbers with reversed lines.

According to Renouf this is a small and rather deform version of type 5, framing the number 33 which runs along the shorter diagonal, instead of a longer. Some were of the opinion, that the Type 4 b manufactured locally may be due to wear and tear of original type 4 and the local manufacturer prepared it with faults.

DHOLERA is in Bombay circle and is allotted No. " 33 "in type 4. An example of Type 4 is also exhibited for comparison.

3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations  
 3.1. The Bombay Circle. Type 4.

There is a remarkable range of sub-varities of this type found in use between the years 1856 and 1873. A number of offices show obliterators with the lines reversed - i.e. , rising from left to the right. Cancellations in colour are known - in blue, violet and red-brown and are rare.



27x22 mm- 14 lines  
 R.type 4 "361" -Anjar  
 Cancelled in Blue,



Cover from ANJAR to MANDAVEE , Letter dated 15th July 1865. Bears R.type 4 cancellation in Blue.



Delivery stamp



R.type 4 , Single  
 22x22mm. 9 lines

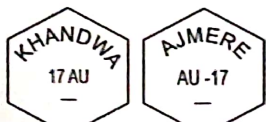


Railway marking



Despatch office stamp

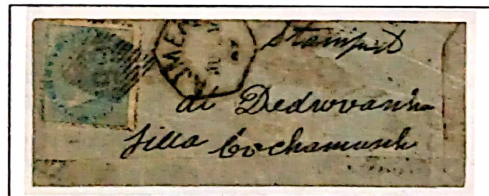
Cover from PACHORA (AHMEDNUGGUR) to POONA showing R.type 4 cancellation of PACHORA No.297, Despatch office stamp (13 Dec) Railway sorting mark and delivery stamp of POONA Dec 14.



Despatch and Sorting office stamps



R.type 4 c. 20x15mm  
 13 lines "65" KHANDWA



Cover from KHANDWA to NAWSHEERAH dt 17 August Bears R.type 4 c cancellation (Small diamond) comprising of 13 lines right to left 20x15mm.

Early Indian Postal cancellations

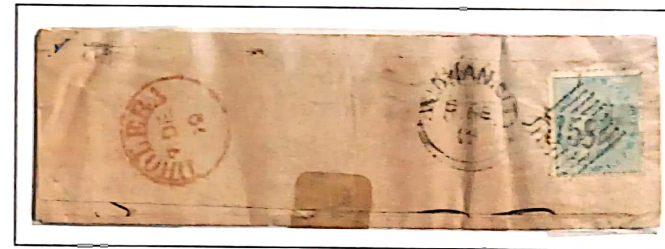


R.type 4(IV)- 19 L



Cover from Wudwan City to SYEELA dt 2nd May bears R.type 4(IV) cancellation 19 lines R.to L. 22 to 25 mm 5 mm. Numerals in well defined space Rectangle.

Bombay experimented with three different type of cancellors for use as a duplex cancellation, and eventually adopted the type shown below. The left hand duplex is a circle of 20 mm diameter, while the right hand duplex - a square showing the office number also measures 20 mm diagonally.



R.Type 4a with inverted lines  
 20 x 20 mm 9 lines



Cover from WADWAN CITY TO DHOLERA. Although Type 9 was introduced in Bombay circle by 1867, the use of TYPE 4 a appears to have continued in some offices as late as 1873.



R.Type 4a with lines Right to left  
 20 x 20 mm 9 lines



Folded cover from AHMEDABAD to WADWAN CAMP dt. 1st Aug 1878 with R.type 4c cancellation "170" of AHMEDABAD. Dispatch cancellation of Wadwan camp is also seen.

# Early Indian Postal cancellations

Victorian Era

## 3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations

### 3.2. The Northern circle. Type 5.

The North western provinces used Type 5 .The Original series of Oct, 1865 but after that many renumbering. The Original series ends to No. 261. Earliest date recorded by Mr. Martin is 23 rd November 1855. No 262 to 270 added afterwards but before the renumbering of 1860 series. The circle included United Province, Punjab the North West Frontier Province, Indore and part of the Central Province.



R.type 5 (on 4 annas)  
Mihidpore (Indore)



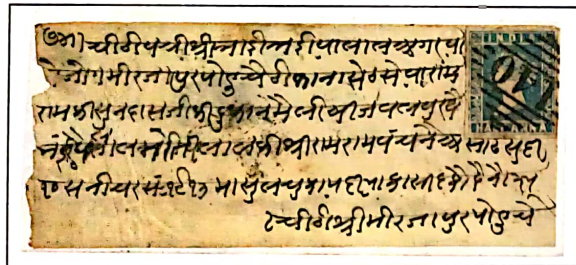
Type 5 is a diamond composed of lines parallel to the long diagonal, the office number inset being placed at right angles to the longer diagonal. The diagonals are about 28 x 24mm respectively and appear to be fairly constant. There are three broken lines flanking the number on each side, while there are 4 or 5 lines above and below the number.



R.Type 5.  
158 Office Number of Lahore

Folded cover from Lahore to Calcutta tied with R. type 5 "158" Lahore on 2 anna Yellow green Typograph issue of 1854

Clear markings of Lahore and Calcutta GPO in red and Too late postmark in Black.



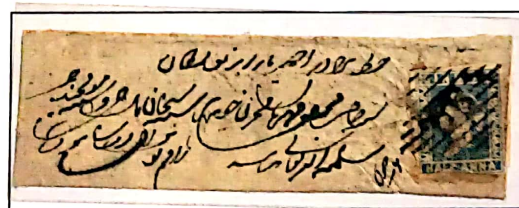
R.type 5 "140"  
JUBBULPORE

Folded cover with 1/4 anna litho stamp cancelled with R.type 5 of JUBBULPORE to Mirzapore

According to Renouf Type 5 There are three broken horizontal lines flanking the number on each side. While there are usually four lines above and below the number. Examples may be found with three or five lines above and below the number. The lines vary in thickness. The diagonals about 28 and 21 mm and are fairly constant.



R.type 5 - 5 lines.  
"66" AURANGABAD



Folded letter with 1/2 anna Blue (Litho) cancelled with R,type 5 from AHMEDABAD . Dispatch marks not seen on this cover.



R.type 5, "228"  
PESHAWUR



Other postmarks on the cover

Type 5 . A special type of cancellation was provided at the end of the year 1855 for the then Northern circle comprising of the United Provinces, the Punjab, the N.W.F.province, some adjoining parts of Indore, the Central province.

Cover from Peshawur to Lahore dt 8 th January 1859 tied with R.type 5 cancellation on 1/2 anna E.I. stamp. Post markings of Peshawur ( in red ) and Lahore ( in Green ) and P.M. Marking in Black were also seen on this cover.

3.0. The First series of Town Number Cancellations  
 3.3. The Madras circle. Type 6.

Early Indian Postal cancellations

Value

Type 6: This is a diamond composed of dots as in type 1 framing capital letter "C" and a number below it. The letter "C" is found in three sizes, viz small, medium and large with figures in corresponding sizes. The diamond is normally diamond shaped but are also found as thin round dots. Its use was restricted to the Madras Circle only, including Mysore, Travancore and few parts of the Nizam's Dominion.



R.Type 6 "C/10"  
Bangalore



R.type 6 "C/41"  
Hyderabad



R.type 6. "C/60"



R.type 6. "C/84"  
Vizanagram.

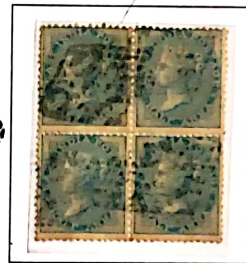
Scarce R.type 6 cancellation.. Very crude engraving. The letter "C" and figures are very crude and the diamond is composed of crude shaped dots and thick lines.



R.type 6. "C/94"  
OOTACAMUND

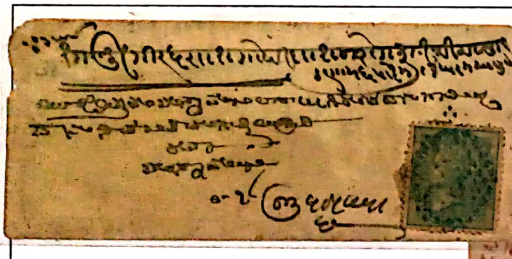


R.type 6. "C/85"  
CANNANORE



R.type. 6 "C/130"  
COCHIN

Cover from VIZANAGRAM to JUGGIAHPETT dt 1868 bears scarce R.Type crude version ( Locally made ) and scarce triangular stamp of Secundrabad , sorting mark of VIZANAGRAM and delivery mark in red also seen.

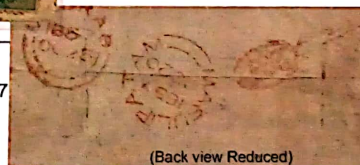


R.type 6 "C/68"  
MASULIPATAM.  
1856-57

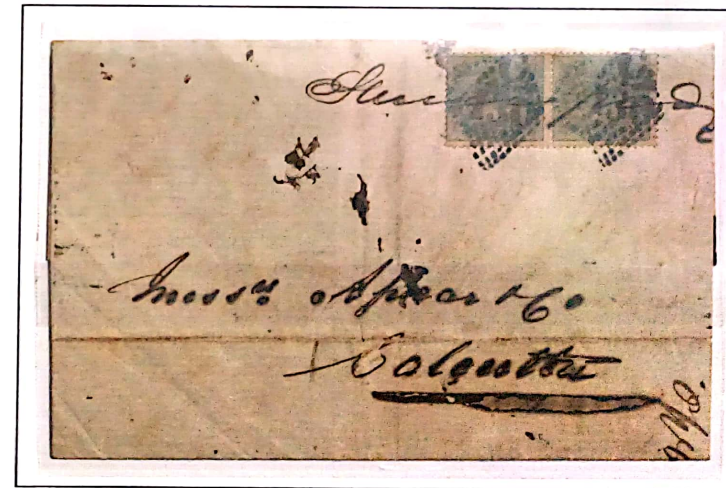


R.Type 6 "C/130"  
Cochin

Cover from MASULIPATAM to MADRAS dt. 20 Oct 1857 it bears R.type 6 cancellor "C/68" and Madras Delivery marks (oval) in Red along with other marks on back



(Back view Reduced)



Madras circle includes, Madras, Mysore, Travancore and part of Hyderabad (Derccan ). The original series was published in the Madras Gazette of 18 December 1855. It had No 1 to 154. New offices allotted obliterator in type 9 and 12.

Type 6 is a diamond of dots framing a capital letter "C" above the town number. This is an adoption of Type 1.

Cover from COCHIN to CALCUTTA dated 14th May 1858 bears R.type 6 "C/130" and Rectangular Cochin paid, Dispatch marking of Madras and other markings in Red on the back.

