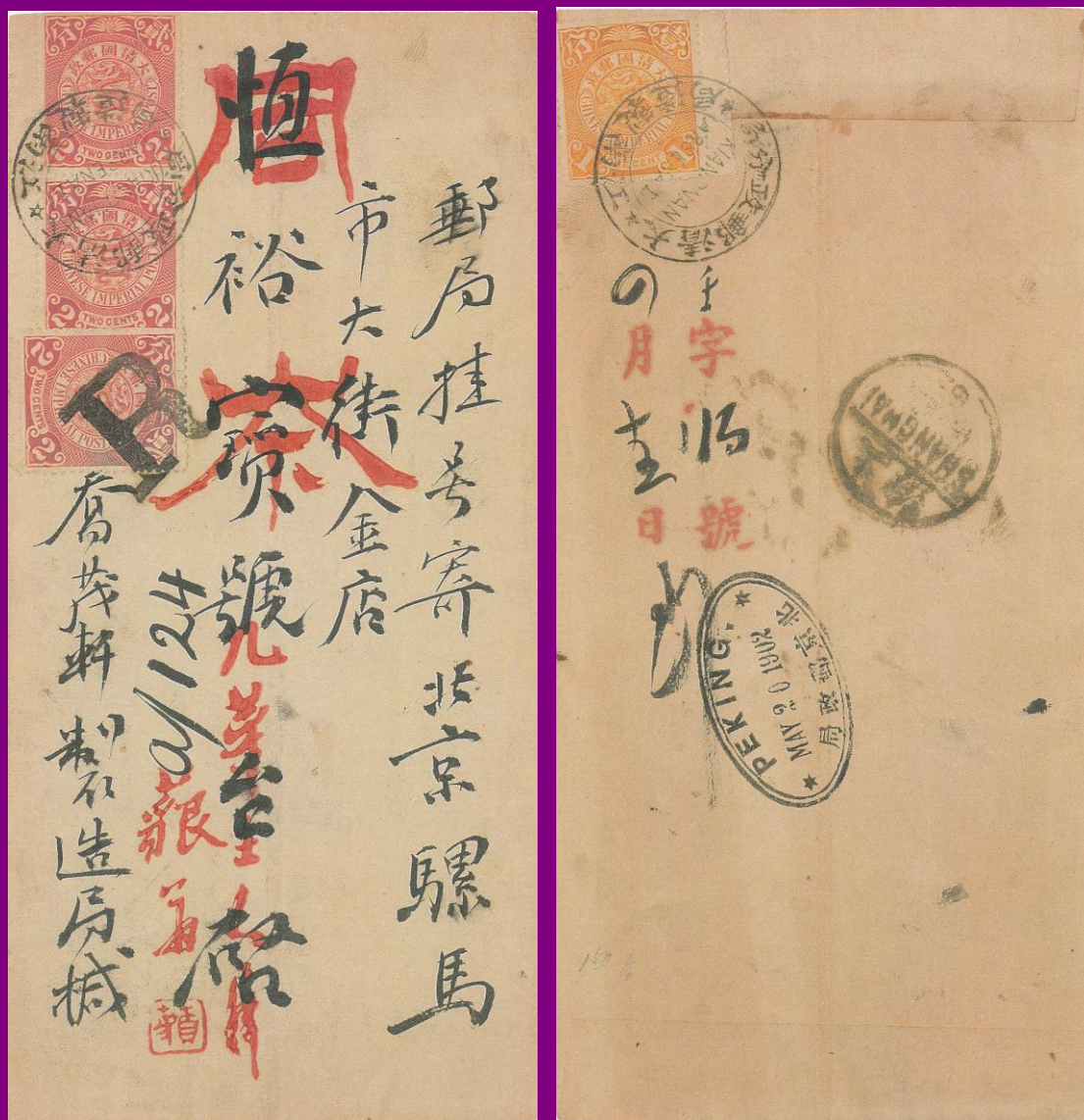


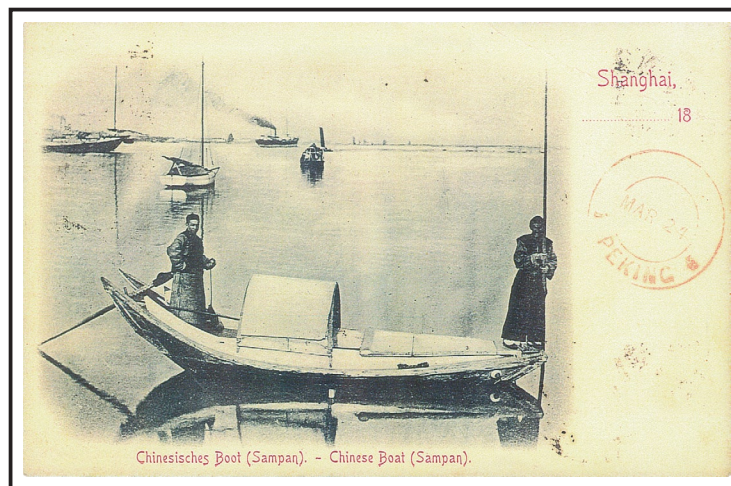
大清帝国国家邮政时期 (1897-1911) 始发戳系列  
不规则的分局、支局、代办所、信柜邮戳集 1



DA QING IMPERIAL POST PERIOD (1897-1911)  
CANCELLATIONS OF ORIGIN  
NON STANDARD SUB-OFFICE, BRANCH OFFICE, POSTAL  
AGENCY & LETTER COUNTER MARKINGS COLLECTION 1

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

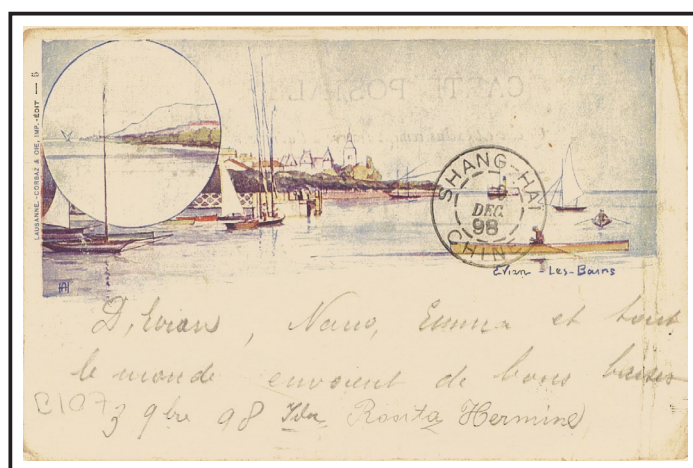
PEKIGN  
of CHIHLI Province



When Chinese Imperial Post Offices began their business in February 1897, large circular bilingual daters made of brass had been ordered from Japanese manufacturers and since they were of the same size as the Mexican dollar, they were called “Dollar Chop” but these were only available in mid-May 1897. The use of “Customs” daters continued during this interim period but Peking was faced with another problem : three more branch offices were in existence at the inauguration of Chinese Imperial Post. Even though mail items handled by these branch offices could be centralized in the head office for further handling the lack of daters was still a problem to be solved. Record shows that Peking was the first post office to use the “Dollar Chop” on May 12, 1897 because the two different types of “Customs” daters can now be used for other purposes, the English inscription “CUSTOMS” was excised from both daters and these were handed down to two of the three branch offices for use as regular daters.

**EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911**

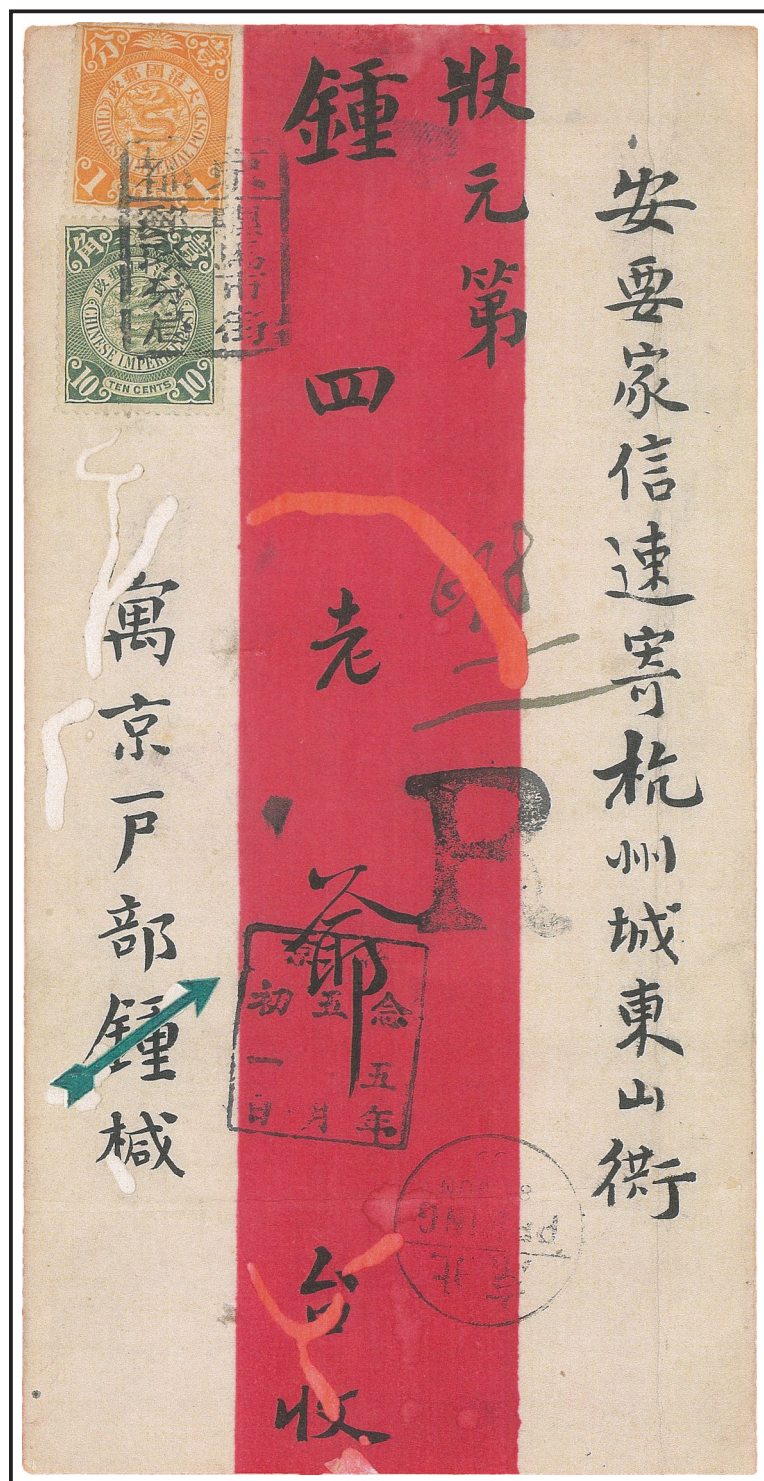
**PEKING**  
*of CHIHLI Province*



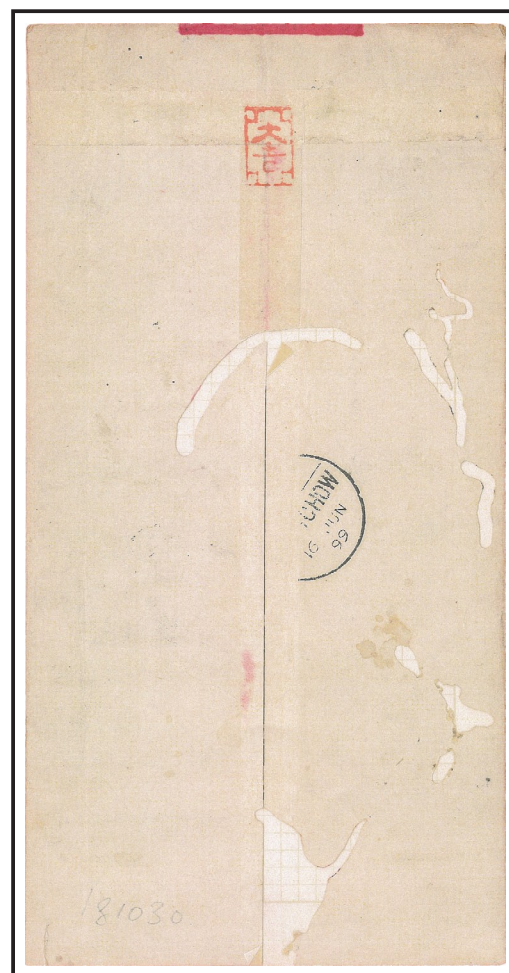
Another larger size “CUSTOMS excised” dater of Peking with day/month/year arranged horizontally in a single row at the centre of inner circle was handed to another branch office around mid-1897 for use as regular dater and a clue was revealed by the above incoming postcard from France, that this branch office was situated near Hotel de Peking.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
of CHIHLI Province



京  
驛馬市街  
都  
郵政分局



A two segment "nameplate" type Chinese language handstamp with Peking at top segment and year (annotated in Emperor Kwong Hsu's reign), month and day in lunar calendar reckoning in two vertical rows contained in lower segment, previously used by Customs courier services of Peking began to be used by the third branch office which happened to be the one located at 驛馬市街 Horse & Mule Market Street as illustrated in the above example. The standard sub-office cancellation did not give any indication regarding date and had to be supplemented by the aforesaid "nameplate" dater and when it transited Peking head office, it received bisected circle bilingual dater.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
of CHIHLI Province



“Nameplate” type cancellation might serve the purpose of handling domestic mail but it became inefficient on international mail items because in case of non-delivery, postal administrations of foreign countries did not know where the returned mail should be directed. To overcome this difficulty, Peking head office ingeniously used bilingual oval daters as from January 1901, perhaps inspired by the multiplicity of types adopted by Kaiochow Post Office of Shantung Province. The size of the daters, arrangement of year month date and inclusion of 5, 6 or 8 pointed stars all served to distinguish individual branch offices which used these oval daters on international mail items handled by them.

The above registered combination cover illustrates an example of 38mm x 24mm type with month/day/year (4 numerals) and with 8 pointed stars on both sides.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
of CHIHLI Province



Two examples of 36mm x 22mm and 38mm x 23mm types with month/day/year (4 numerals) and with different shaped 6 pointed stars on both sides, used during 1902-03 are illustrated by the above examples which can be easily differentiated one from the other.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

## PEKING, PAOTING of CHIHLI Province



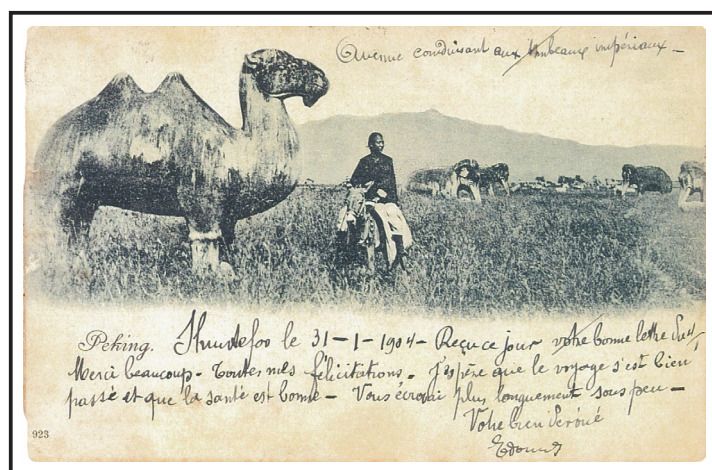
A 1901 36mm x 24mm type with day/month/year (4 numerals) used in 1904 had a diamond shaped ornament on both sides in the unusual purple ink was recorded to cancel a 2 cent stamp on a picture postcard which was later reused in 1904 without any additional stamp.



Paoting also adopted bilingual oval dater, a 37mm x 23mm type with month/day/year (4 numerals) cancelled two 2 cents stamps on picture postcard to Belgium.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

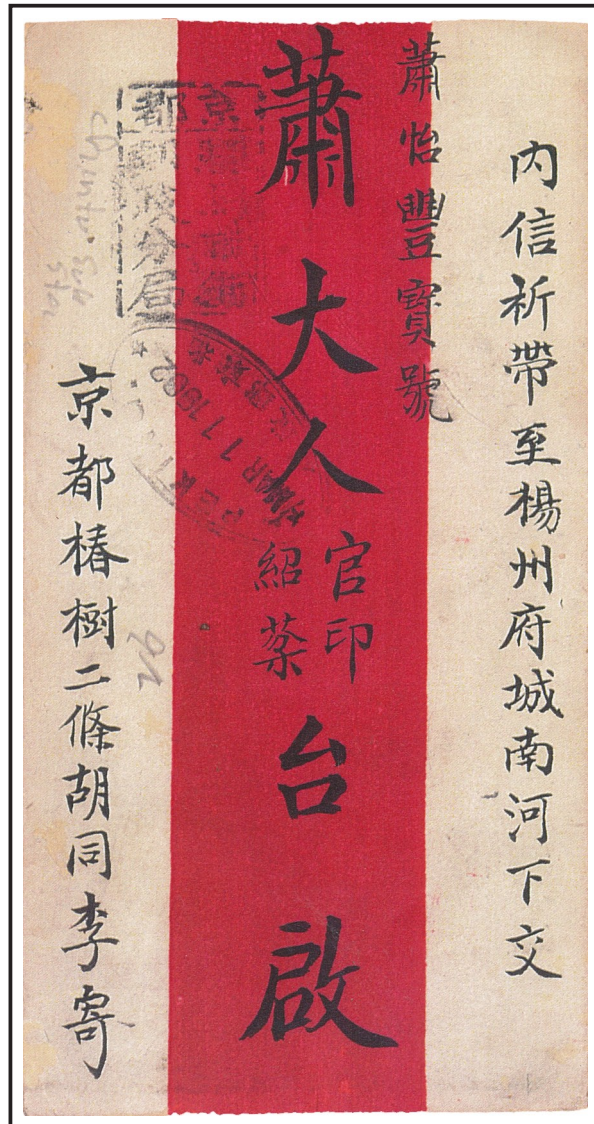
SHUNTE  
of CHIHLI Province



Apart from Peking and Paoting, Shunte also adopted oval bilingual dater of slightly larger size, 33mm x 24mm with day/month/year (4 numerals) arrangement, a 1904 example was recorded to cancel four 1 cent stamps on a postcard to Africa which transited Tientsin and Shanghai.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
of CHIHLI Province



京驛馬市街  
都郵政分局

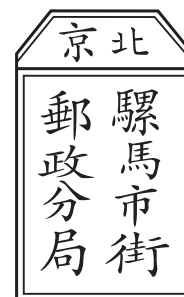
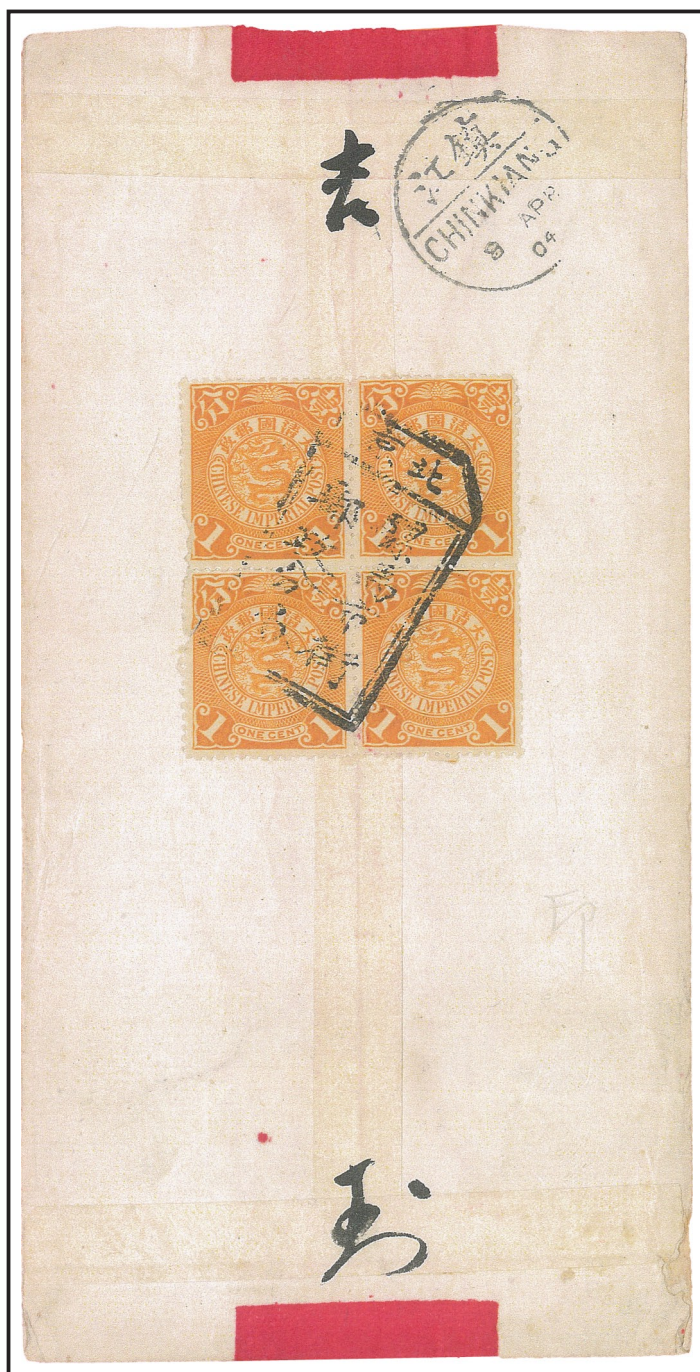
資費付訖  
不另取費



At the turn of the century, competition from Min Hsin Chu's became fierce and inevitably Peking head office had to evolve by the adoption of various types of bilingual oval daters, differentiated from each other by the arrangement of month/day/year or day/month/year, the sizes and the inclusion of 5, 6 or 8 pointed stars or other types of ornamental symbols. 驛馬市街郵政分局 being sub-office No. 1 wished to retain its distinguished status as sub-office No. 1 and it adopted a different bilingual oval dater of its own, the Chinese inscription 北京驛馬市街郵政分局 seems quite normal but the English inscription "PEKING SUB-OFFICE NO.1" says it all. In this example, it was used to cancel stamps on cover and another "nameplate" type became a supplemental cancellation to identify the origin. There is another instructional handstamp advising staff of the official postal system that POSTAGE PAID IN FULL DON'T DEMAND ADDITIONAL FEE" from the recipient as was the prevailing custom of Min Hsin Chu's when the recipient had to pay additional "wine money".

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

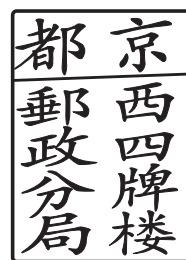
PEKING  
*of CHIHLI Province*



The 17.5mm x 30mm nameplate type handstamp from 驛馬市街郵政分局 was disused, perhaps because of wear and tear, a 24mm x 39mm new type was adopted later, with double outer frame and chipped top corners. The inscription 京都 at top was changed to 北京.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

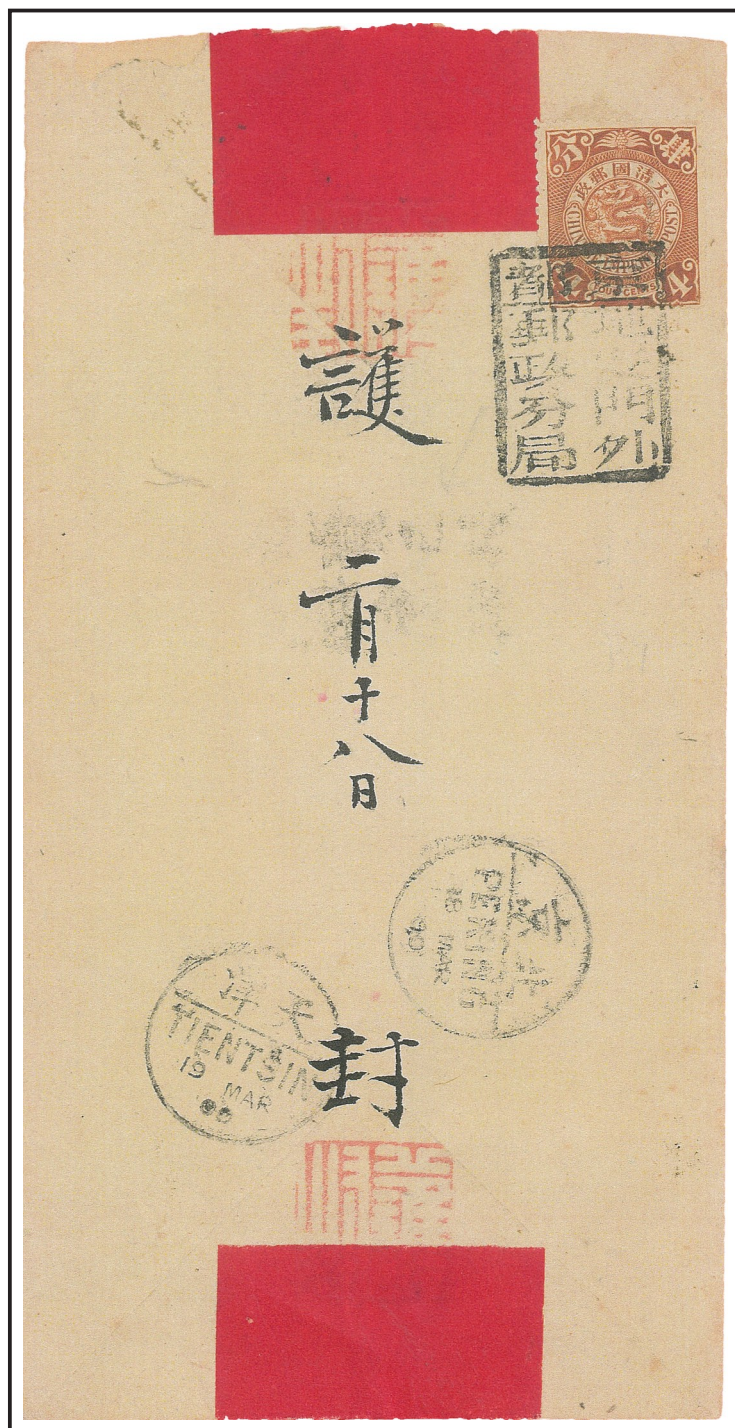
PEKING  
*of CHIH LI Province*



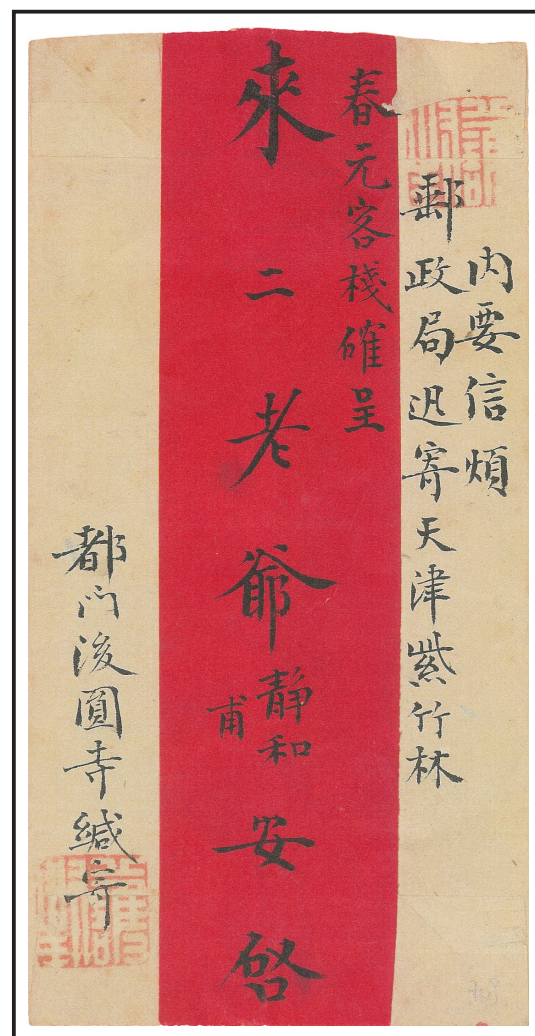
西四牌樓郵政分局 is another prominent branch office of Peking and the nameplate handstamp was of similar type as 驛馬市街郵政分局. It was quite probable that when it commenced business at its early days, one of the “CUSTOMS” excised daters could have been used by this office as supplemental cancellation to identify the date. Even in 1902, competition with Min Hsin Chu’s can still be felt because the sender wrote down in manuscript WINE MONEY BEEN PAID, alerting the addressee not to pay wine money to the postal staff of the official post office.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
of CHIH LI Province



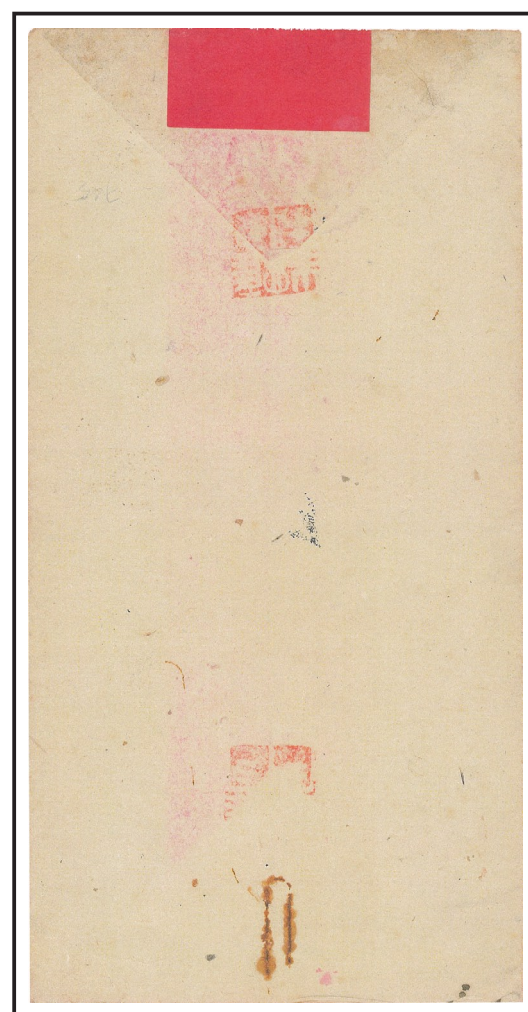
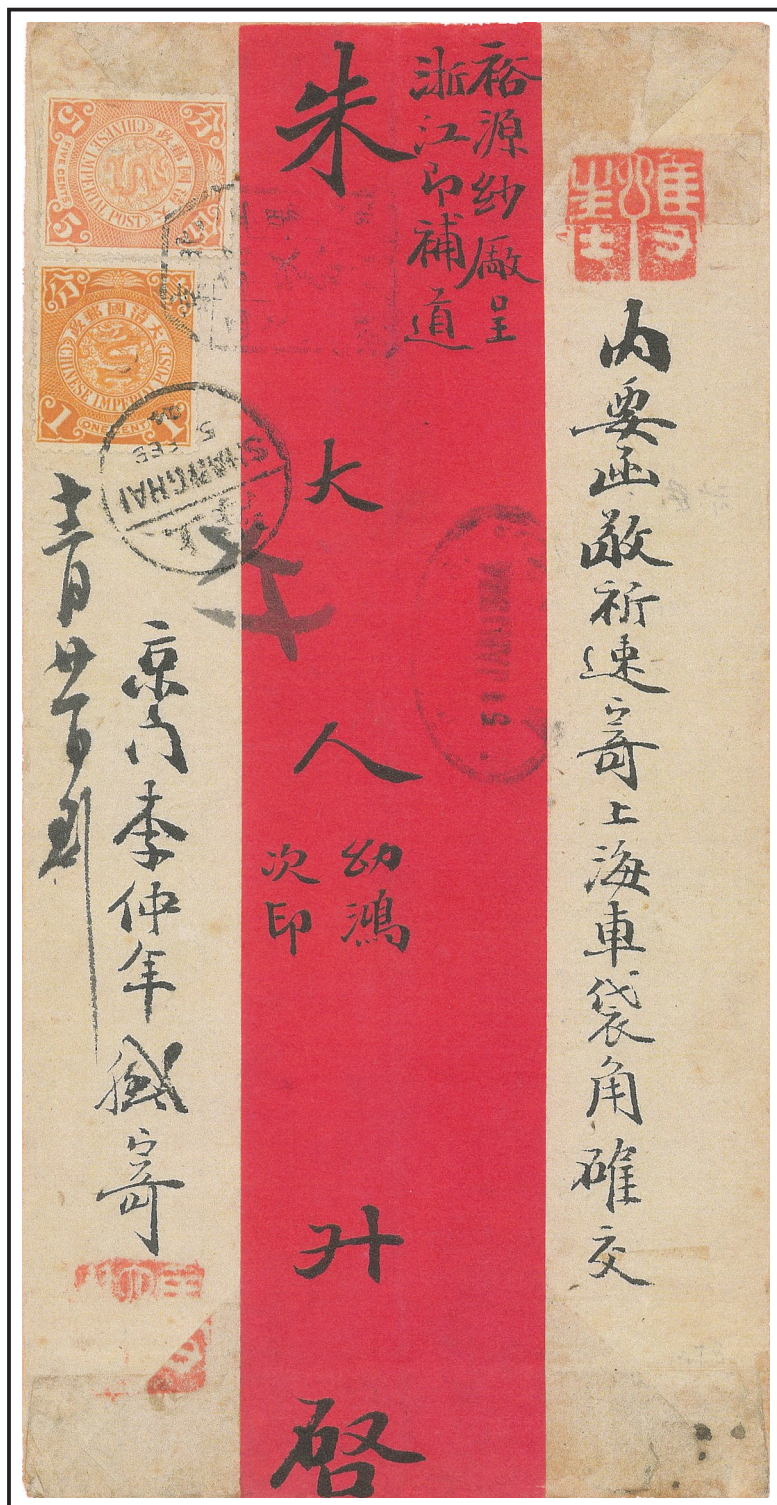
京地安門外  
都郵政分局



地安門外郵政分局 is yet another prominent branch office of Peking adopting similar type nameplate cancellation with thick outer frame. Judging by the amount of extant covers from this branch office and that of 西四牌樓郵政分局, it is quite probable that another "CUSTOMS" excised dater had earlier been used from one of these branch offices as supplemental cancellation to identify date.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

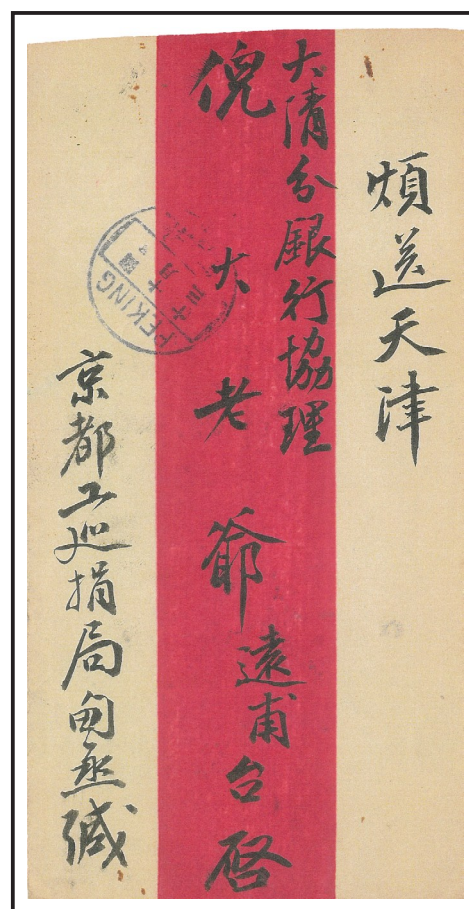
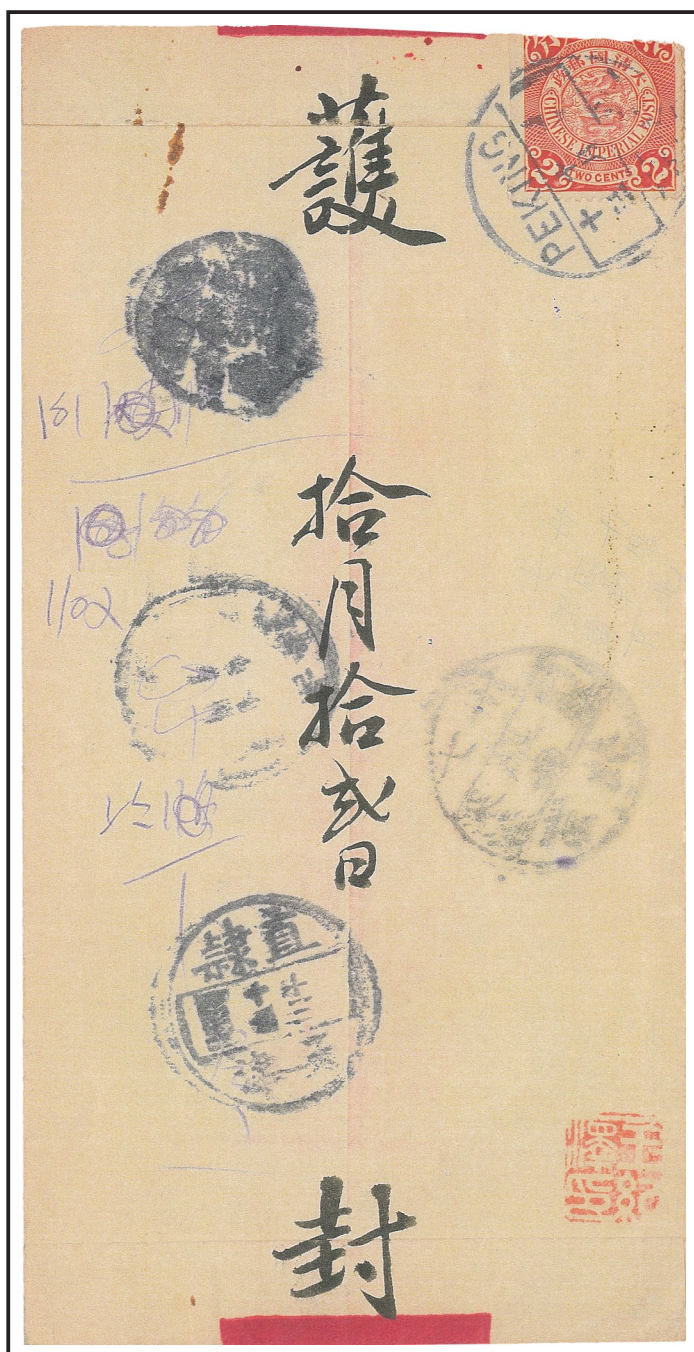
PEKING  
of CHIHLI Province



China's earliest railway section from Peking to Tientsin was operational in January 1900 but was soon destroyed during the Boxer Movement which took place a few months later. When the effects of the movement subsided, rebuilding and extension of railway network continued, including the establishment of train stations which became ideal locations to set up branch offices like the WESTERN TRAIN STATION in Peking outside 正陽門 which could even handle registered mail items like the one above.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

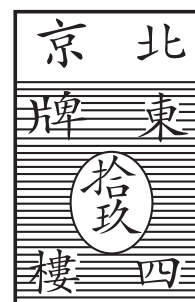
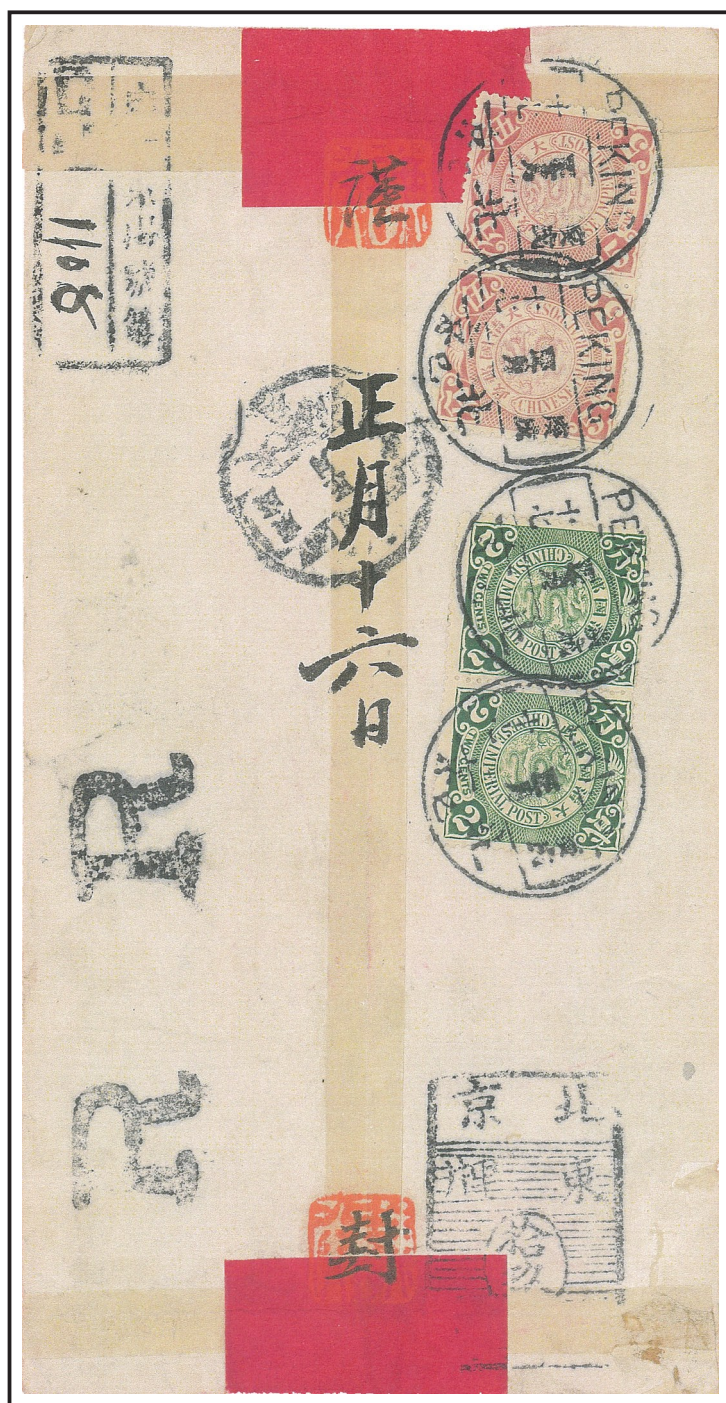
PEKING  
*of CHIHLI Province*



Postal agencies also filled every sector of Peking and many of them chose to diversify their own version of cancellation like the above example of circular three segment type with THIRTY SEVEN at upper segment, description of location 打磨廠南深溝 in the middle and Peking below. Each postal agency had to obtain a license from the head office and the number 37 did show that at least 37 postal agencies existed in Peking at this time.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
*of CHIHLI Province*



The “nameplate” type postal agency handstamp specified in the Notification from Postal Administration Head Office lacked date and approximate location, both of which may weaken competitiveness when faced with Min Hsin Chu’s. The postal agency at 東四牌樓 elected to add its location at four corners of the lower segment, with its license number NINETEEN prominently displayed in the central circle in the lower segment. The 1910 example above illustrated that this agency could handle acknowledgement for receipt items, even though the stamps on the cover had to be cancelled by another higher ranking sub-office in the vicinity.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

PEKING  
*of CHIH LI Province*



The same story can be said of postal agency number twenty six which added another horizontal segment to identify its location 西直門 and chipped both top corners and its license number is TWENTY SIX. As usual, the stamp on the cover had to be cancelled by a higher ranking sub-office in the vicinity.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

TIENTSIN  
*of CHIH LI Province*



Tientsin followed the example of Peking and when the “Dollar Chops” had arrived, the inscription CUSTOMS in two CUSTOMS daters were excised and the excised daters were handed to two branch offices for use as regular daters. Just like Peking, the one with month/day and year in two rows in central circle was the one more commonly seen as illustrated by the above example from Tientsin to Peking dated AUG 12 98. Owing to the weight of contents, 4 cents postage was not sufficient and postage due was charged indicated by bold T handstamp.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

TIENTSIN  
*of CHIHLI Province*



Unlike Peking, the larger 28mm type CUSTOMS excised dater from Tientsin arranged month/day and year in two rows in central circle and it is no surprise to find it used in blue ink, a characteristic of cancellations from Tientsin. The above 1898 combination cover to London was handled by Hong Kong Post Office hence Hong Kong 5 cents x 2 were added and cancelled by British Post Office Shanghai with a fine array of 4 transit or arrival backstamps.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

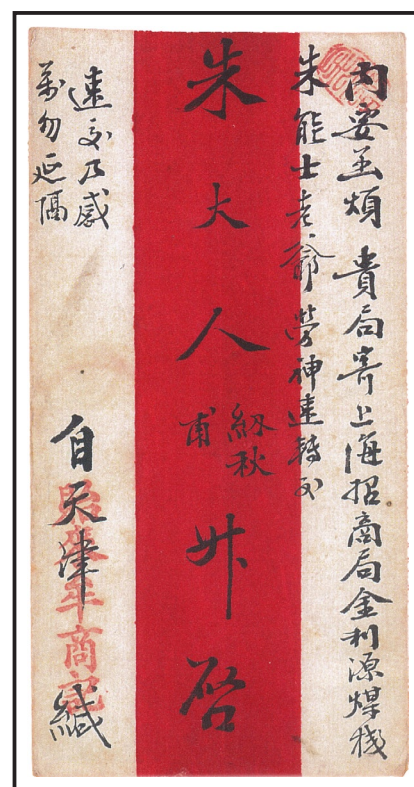
TIENTSIN  
*of CHIHLI Province*



Nameplate type cancellations from Tientsin evolved to include additional information at the very early stages of their use and invariably the location of branch office was included rather than date as was the case with branch office at 針市街肉市口 when inscriptions to identify location were arranged in two vertical rows at lower segment. In the example above, both the originating cancellation and Tientsin transit daters are in blue ink and when it arrived Paoting, the “Dollar Chop” was still used there as an arrival dater in 1901.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

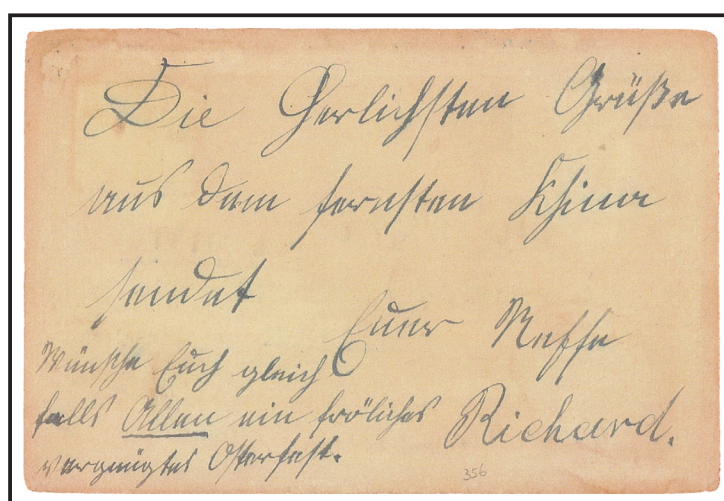
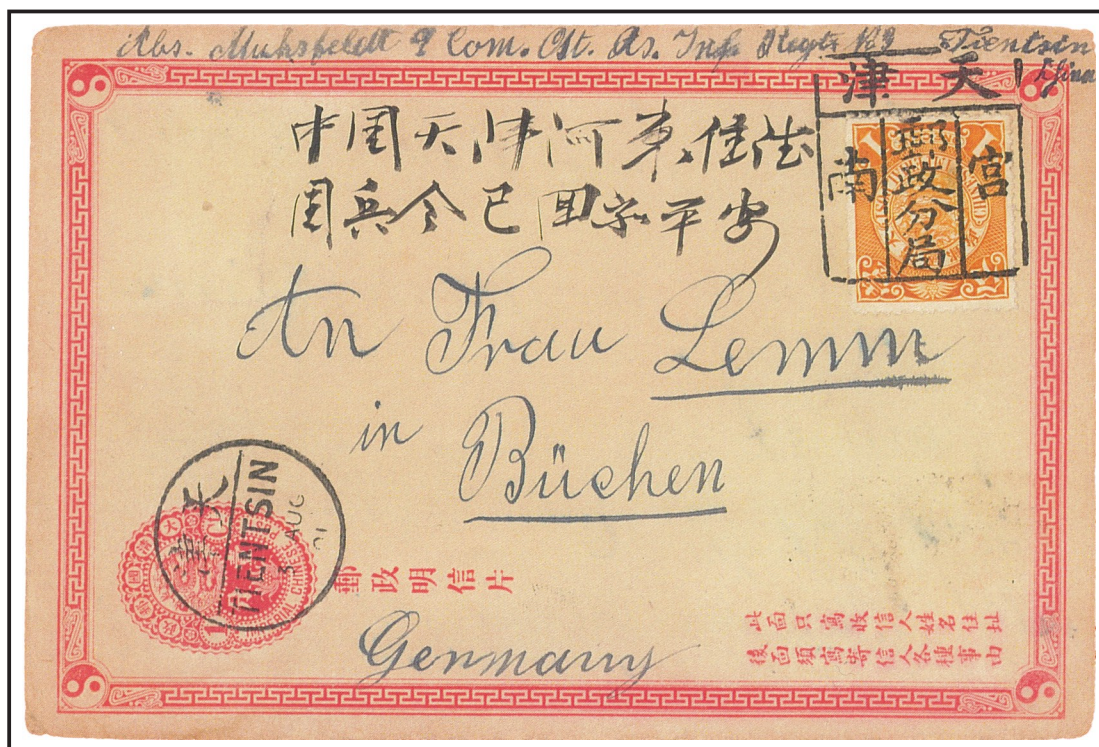
TIENTSIN  
*of CHIHLI Province*



The “nameplate” cancellations adopted by branch offices in Tientsin are modified types in that the lower segment was divided into three compartments to contain more information about the location such as the above example from 針市街/肉市口 clearly indicating the location at the junction of “needle market street” and “meat market”. Again blue ink was used.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

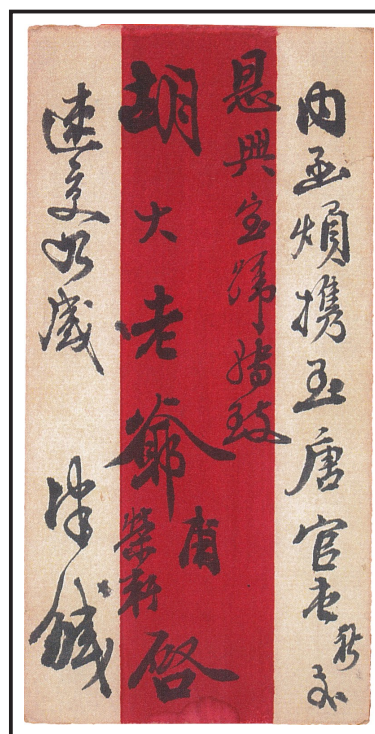
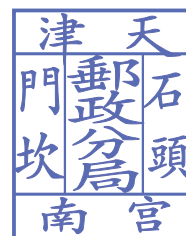
TIENTSIN  
of CHIHLI Province



Another sub-office in Tientsin adopted 4 segment type with “palace” and “south” placed within two of the vertical compartments of the lower segment to indicate location to the south of the palace and black ink was used. It canceled a 1c stamp on first issue postal stationery card to Germany but was not treated as postage due item (4 cents required for international postcards), perhaps the 2c printed matter rate was applicable in this case.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

TIENTSIN  
*of CHIHLI Province*



Still another 5 segment nameplate type also from sub-office at “palace south” which included more detailed address of 石頭門坎 arranged in two vertical rows in the central vertical segment. Blue ink was used and towards May 1904 it will soon be replaced by standard lunar year daters.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

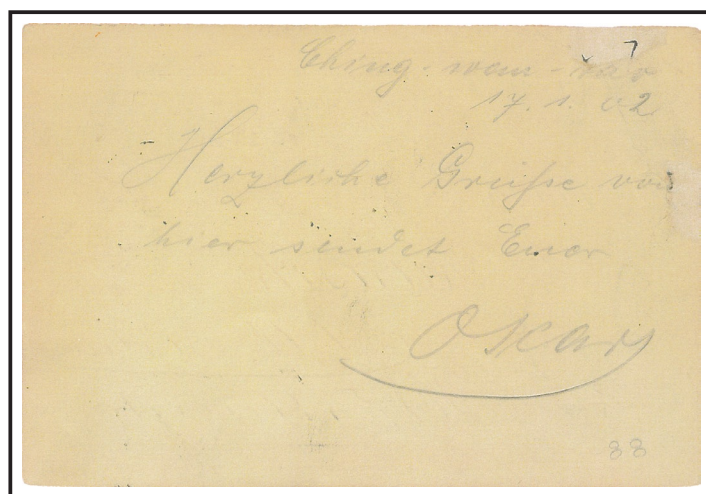
## PAOTING *of CHIHLI Province*



局政郵  
保定府

Paoting post office was among the first “inland” post offices to open for business at the inception of Chinese Imperial Post, probably before the Postal Notification of June 1899. Research reveals that PEHTUNGCHOW and PAOTING were the first two post offices to adopt the modified “nameplate” type sub-office cancellation. (i.e. inscriptions inside two segments switch place). The above 1899 example to England illustrated the handling by Hong Kong Post Office and two Hong Kong 5 cents stamps had previously been affixed and tied by PEKING framed I.P.O. tie print and subsequently cancelled by British Post Office Shanghai.

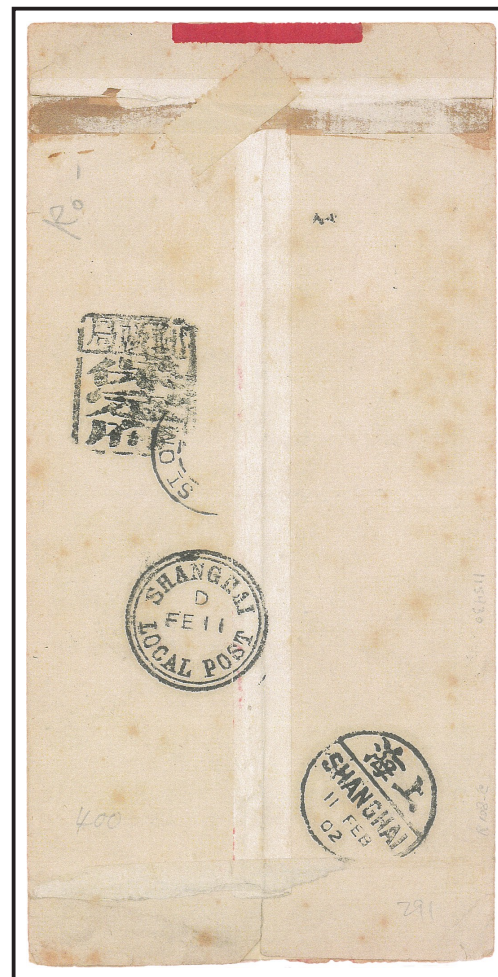
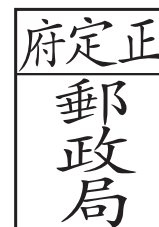
CHINHWANGTAO  
*of CHIHLI Province*



23

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

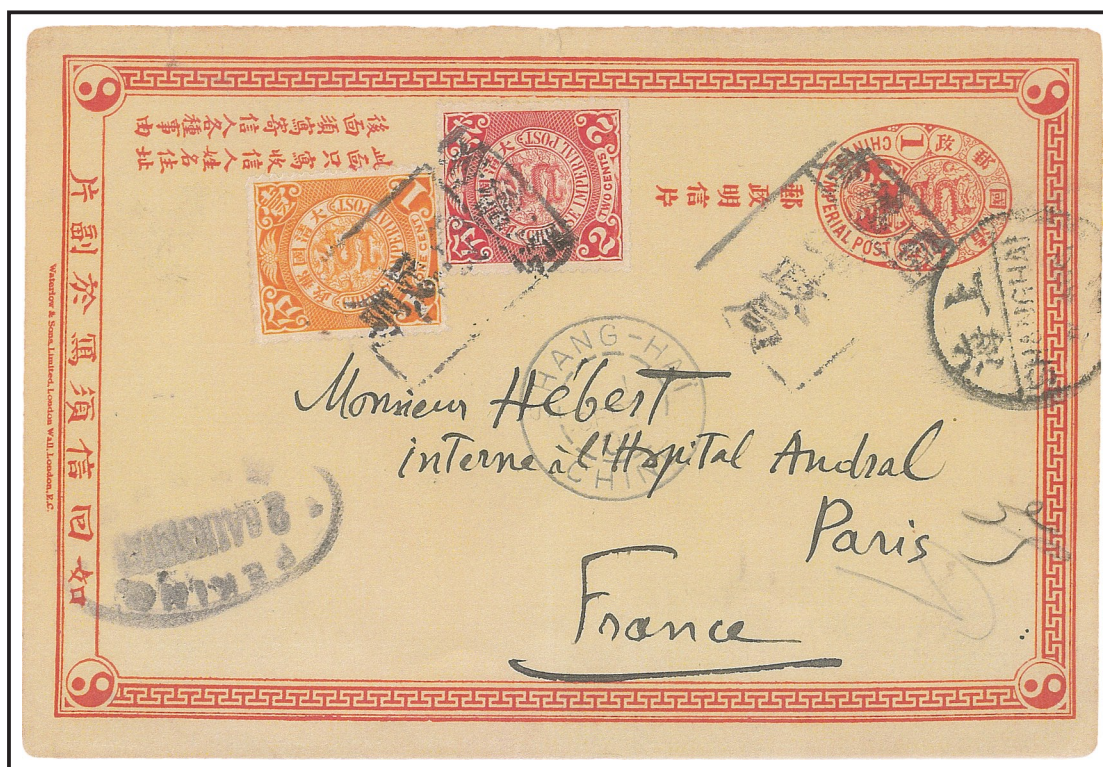
CHENGTINGFU, PAOTINGFU  
of CHIHLI Province



Chengtingfu adopted the standard “nameplate” type which cancelled 4 stamps (paying 10c international letter rate) in the above red band cover to France, the Paotingfu transit recorded the modified “nameplate” when the inscription switched places. The cover was then directed to Shanghai and subsequently handled by the French Post Office Shanghai.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

SHUNTEFU  
of CHIHLI Province



17 Aout 1903. Cher Vieux,  
Je viens de recevoir ta carte du 25 juin où tu te plains de mon  
silence. On je trouve sur mon registre il y a 13 mai, lettre avec photo tibi,  
Tobie le 16 mai, lettre et photo, 26 carte au Tob, 25 mai lettre à Bulo  
avec photo N-28A. — 14 Avril Bulo — 24 Cédès, carte —  
25 Avril lettre au Tob. 6 mai, Tob, lettre et chèque 300.  
recommandée. 10 mai, longue lettre à Bulo. 14 Cédès Postal au Tob.  
16 lettre à Chabéles, 16, lettre au Bulo. 17 Santreane avec  
2 photos — 23 Ambertin 8 juin lettre à Tobie Photo, palais de  
Protiny Fle 19 juin Hébert 1 lettre 24 Santreane 1 lettre avec  
un reçu postal chinois. 15 juillet lettre à Bulo 29 carte à Bulo  
26 lettre recommandée à Tobie 12 Aout carte Santreane  
15 Aout, Envoi de journaux à Hébert Tabary, Santreane — Voilà.  
Je suis sûr qu'il s'en para beaucoup. J'attends des nouvelles de Tob  
cette silence depuis une lettre énergique et passionnée de blâme  
et de sévères predictions. Hélas, je mérite tout, mais j'ai tout  
de même : vultus ad coelum erigens Tamen. J'ai tout fait de projets  
de travail. As-tu reçu ta part de colis postal des Tob ? Bases de l.

府德順  
郵政局

Shuntefu is another post office which adopted the standard sub-office cancellation and it cancelled 2 stamps and the indicia of second issue postal stationery card to France.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HULUHSIEN, PAOTING, CHENGTING  
*of CHIHLI Province*



府定正  
郵政局

縣鹿獲  
郵政局

局政郵  
保定府



Most sub-offices in Shantung and Chihli adopted the standard “nameplate” type sub-office cancellations as specified in the Notification dated June 1899 and the following example illustrates that in mid-1902 Huluhsien and Chengtingfu still used this standard type whilst Paotingfu swapped the inscriptions in the two segments.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HOKANFU, PAOTING  
of CHIHLI Province



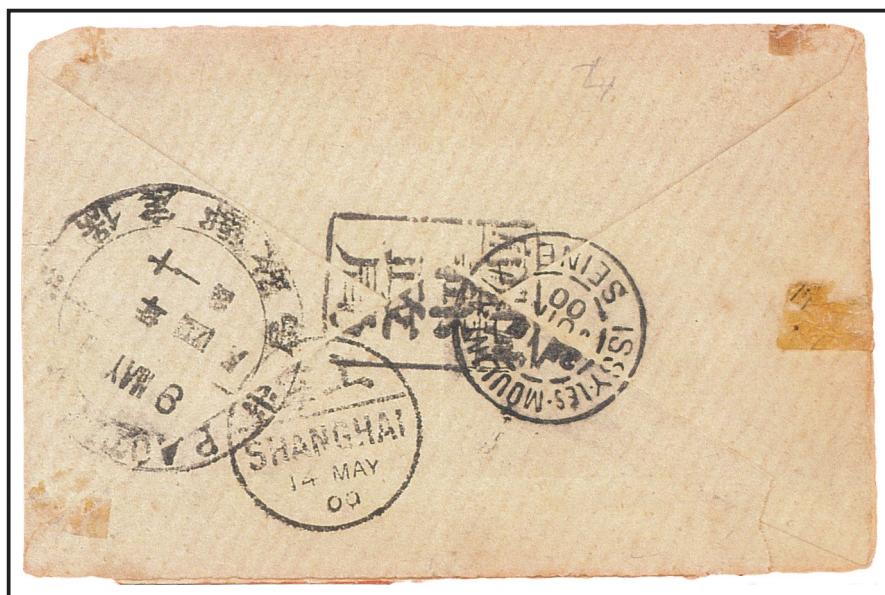
府間河  
郵政局



Hokanfu and PAOTING are two other sub-offices in Chihli Province to have adopted standard sub-office cancellation, the former cancelled two 2c stamps on picture postcard to Vienna in 1903 and the latter cancelled a 4c stamp on a redirected picture postcard to Holland via Paoting, Shanghai, French Post Office Shanghai and France, exhibiting a fine array of 8 postmarks.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HSIANHSIEN  
*of CHIH LI Province*

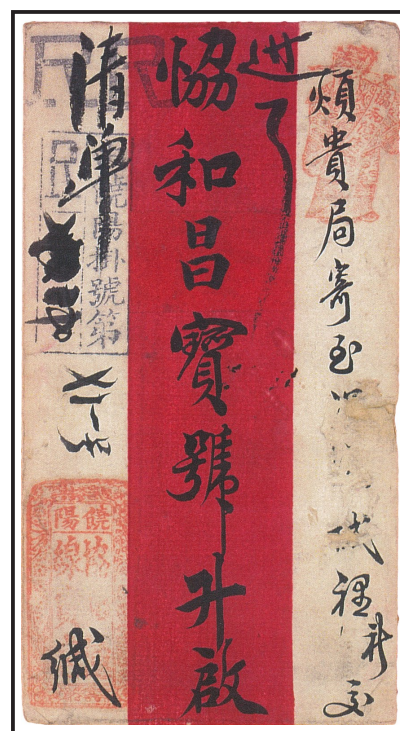


縣獻  
郵政  
局

Hsianhsien also adopted the standard sub-office cancellation and used it as an originating marking on the above cash prepaid cover to Seine of France, franked with Chine overprint on French 25c. It transited Paoting, Hokanfu and Shanghai, handled by French Post Office Shanghai and was carried by French mail boat “LIGNE N PAQ. FR. NO.1” with Seine arrival backstamp.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

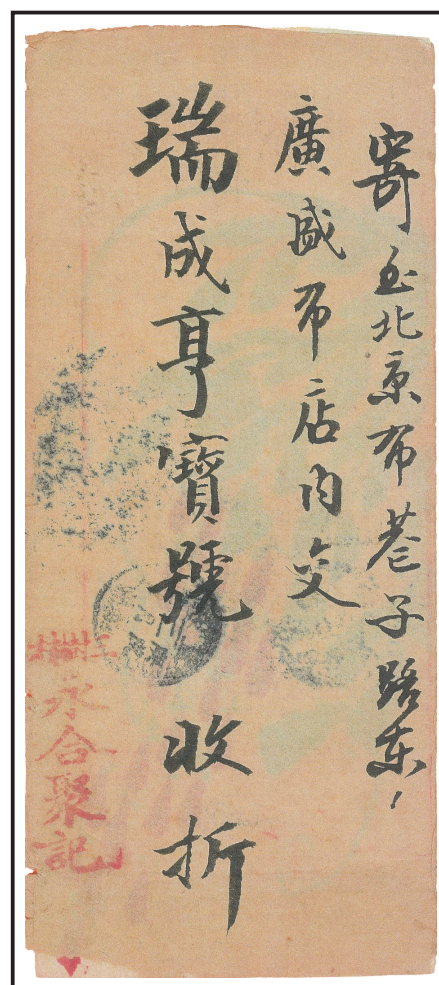
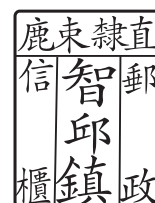
JAORYANG  
*of CHIH LI Province*



Some sub-offices in Chihli Province adopted circular three segment type cancellation with 直隸 at top segment, 郵政分局 in the middle and sub-office name in the lower segment. An example from Jaoyang was recorded on the above acknowledgment of receipt red band cover when it cancelled 10c and 2c stamps on cover back with bilingual vertical type registration cachet on cover front. Manuscript notation in Chinese 過了清單 evidenced that proper entry had been made in the record relating to acknowledgement of receipt items.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

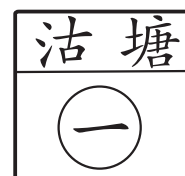
LETTER COUNTERS  
*of CHIH LI Province*



As postal business boomed around 1906, the great expansion took place when Letter Counters began to be established in busy parts of the city, run and managed by postal office staff rather than staff members of the postal agencies. The operating staff member need not be present, a letter box or pillar to facilitate the dropping of mail items would suffice. The need to identify individual mail items collected from such letter counters required the inclusion of detailed location of province, appertaining “hsien” or township and in the above example, 直隸東鹿 was placed at top segment, township 智邱鎮 in the middle vertical segment flanked by two other segments on both sides with Chinese inscription 郵政 and 信櫃.

EVOLUTION &  
DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL  
AGENCY CANCELLATIONS  
IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST  
PERIOD 1897-1911

TANGKU  
of CHIHLI Province



Branch office No.1 of Tangku city adopted the standard postal agency cancellation specified in the postal Notification of June 1899 and it cancelled three 2c stamps on the triple rated red band cover to Pukow via Peking and Nanking.

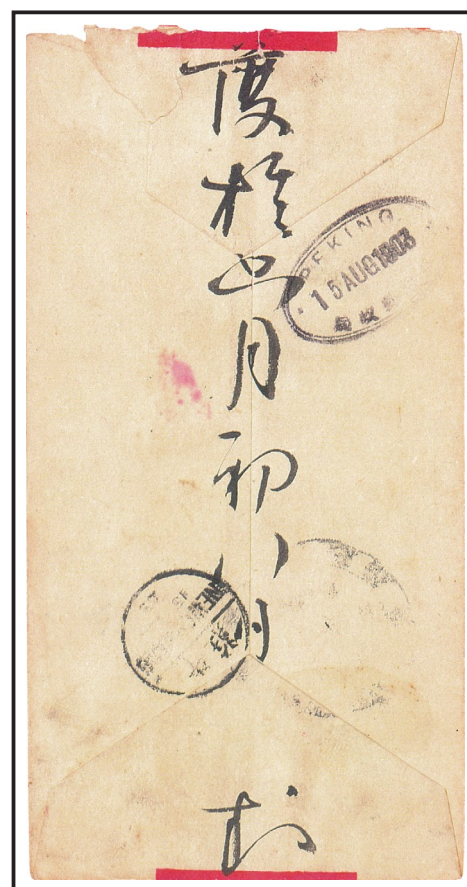
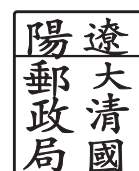
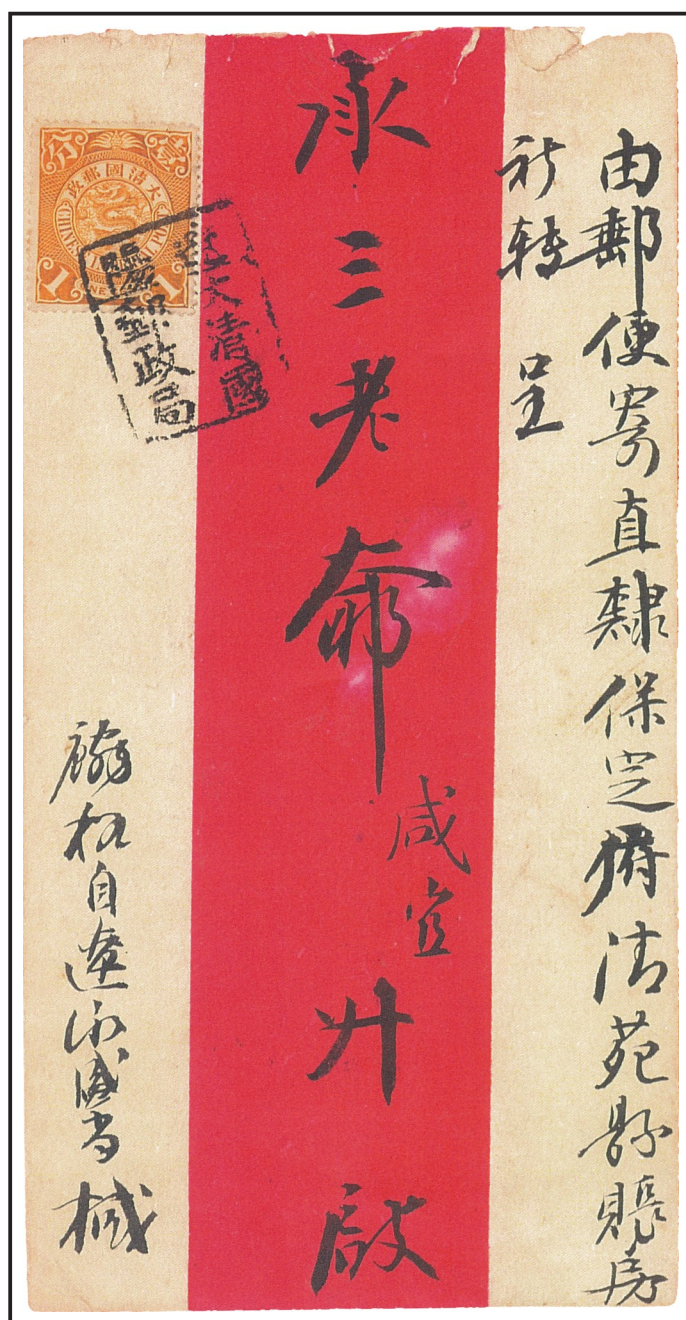


An additional feature of this cover is that all three 2 cents stamps exhibited **RETOUCHED** Chinese characters 貳 and 分 hitherto unrecorded by any catalogue.



EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

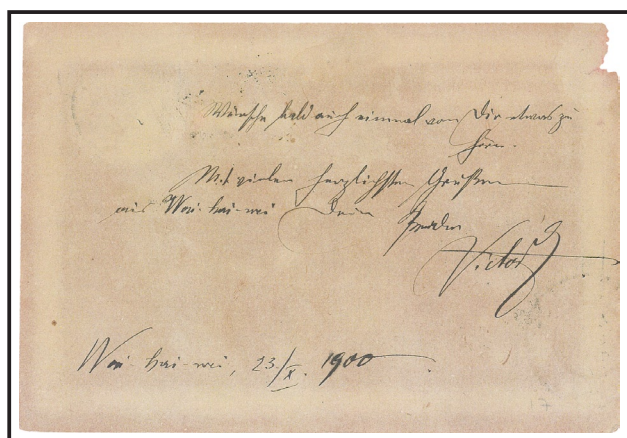
LIAOYANG  
*of NORTHEAST Province*



The Chinese Northeast Provinces were the cradle of Manchurian tribe which ruled China as Da Qing Empire and a majority of higher ranking sub-offices in Northeast Provinces modified the standard sub-office cancellation by the addition of Chinese inscription 大清國 to indicate Imperial Chinese Post. The above red band cover from Liaoyang to Paoting transited Newchwang and Peking when a faint strike of Paoting “Dollar Chop” was still used in late 1903 as arrival dater.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

## WEIHAIWEI of SHANTUNG Province



Weihaiwei became a Crown Colony of the British Empire on May 24, 1898 for so long a period as Port Arthur shall remain in the occupation of Russia. A fourth class Chinese Post Office was set up in the walled city of Weihaiwei and the first cancellation employed was a negative seal type circular cancellation with inscription IMPERIAL POST OFFICE WEIHAIWAI arranged between concentric circles and Chinese characters of the same meaning inside the inner circle. Chingchow Post Office of Shantung Province also adopted similar type but Tengchow Post Office also from Shantung Province adopted different inscription in English : POST OFFICE TENGCHOW. This is the second generation of sub-office cancellations, used by post office which opened for business prior to the widespread use of the "Dollar Chops" from May 1897 onwards. As foreign residents in Weihaiwei began to settle in areas around the ferry point of Ma Tau, a new sub-office was opened there and two entirely different cancellations had been used, the oval dater from the walled city of Weihaiwei and a circular bilingual type from Ma Tau even though the English inscription in the latter adopted WEIHAIWEI instead of MA TAU. In the 1900 dater of the latter the year slug "90" was erroneously used, as illustrated by the above example.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

WEIHAIWEI  
of SHANTUNG Province

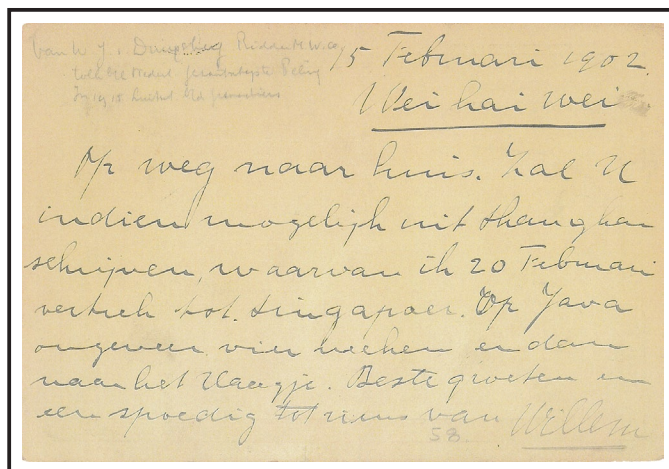


局政郵  
威海衛

The Boxer Movement in 1900 aroused anti-foreign sentiment across the country and soon spread from Chihli Province to the neighbouring Shantung Province. As a measure of safety the residents of Weihaiwei were relocated to Liu Kung Tau island, guarded by British Army at the ferry point of Ma Tau. At this time, all foreign language items to European destinations had been canceled with “nameplate” type Chinese language sub-office cancellations of Weihaiwei or Liu Kung Tau in order not to attract unnecessary anti-foreign antagonism.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

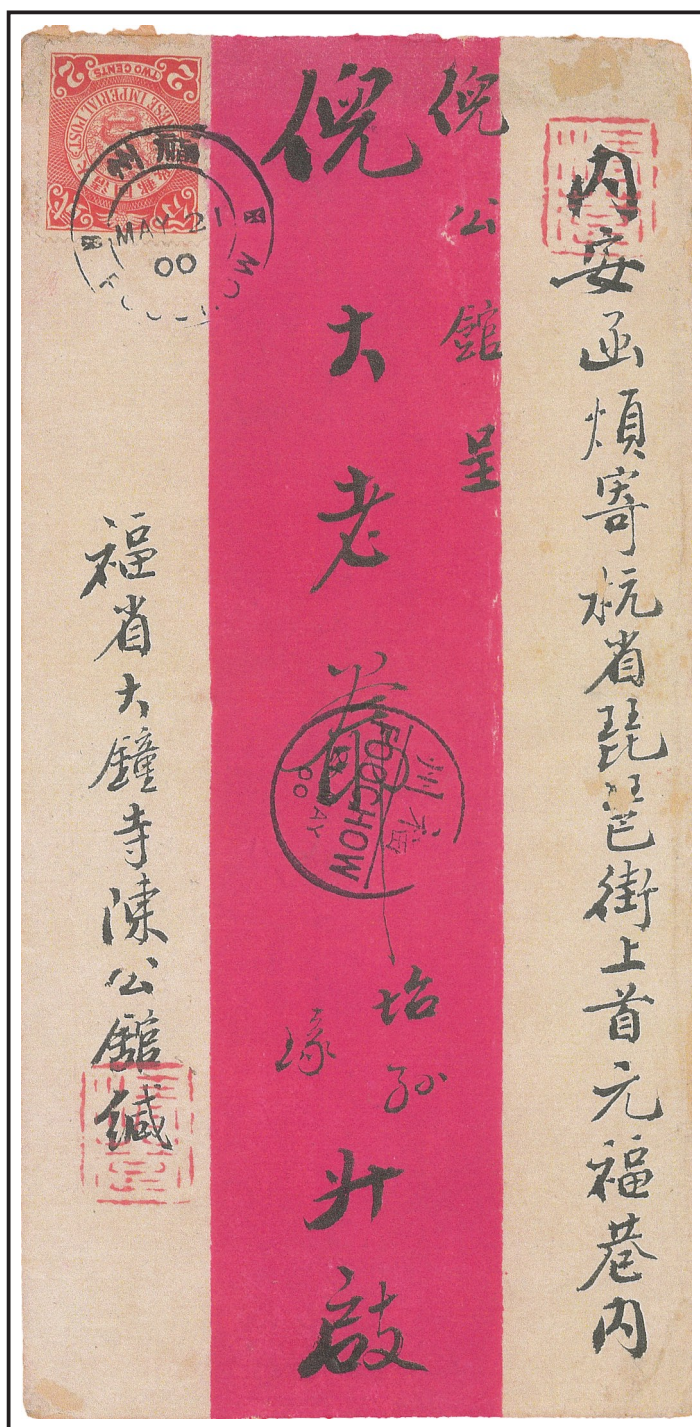
WEIHAIWEI  
of SHANTUNG Province



When the anti-foreign sentiments aroused by the Boxer Movement had subsided in a year or two, foreign residents returned to Ma Tau area when Ma Tau Post Office continued to use circular bilingual type dater. At the end of 1902 there was preparations in anticipation of the inauguration of "via Siberia" mail service and this bilingual dater was later replaced by a small thick outer circle bilingual type with English inscription MA TAU instead of WEIHAIWEI, repeating the example from its neighbouring post office of LIU KUNG TAU. Following the opening of the British Post Office in Liu Kung Tau in April 1904, sharp decline in business had caused Chinese Imperial Post to close its inland offices at Liu Kung Tau and Port Edward (formerly Ma Tau).

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

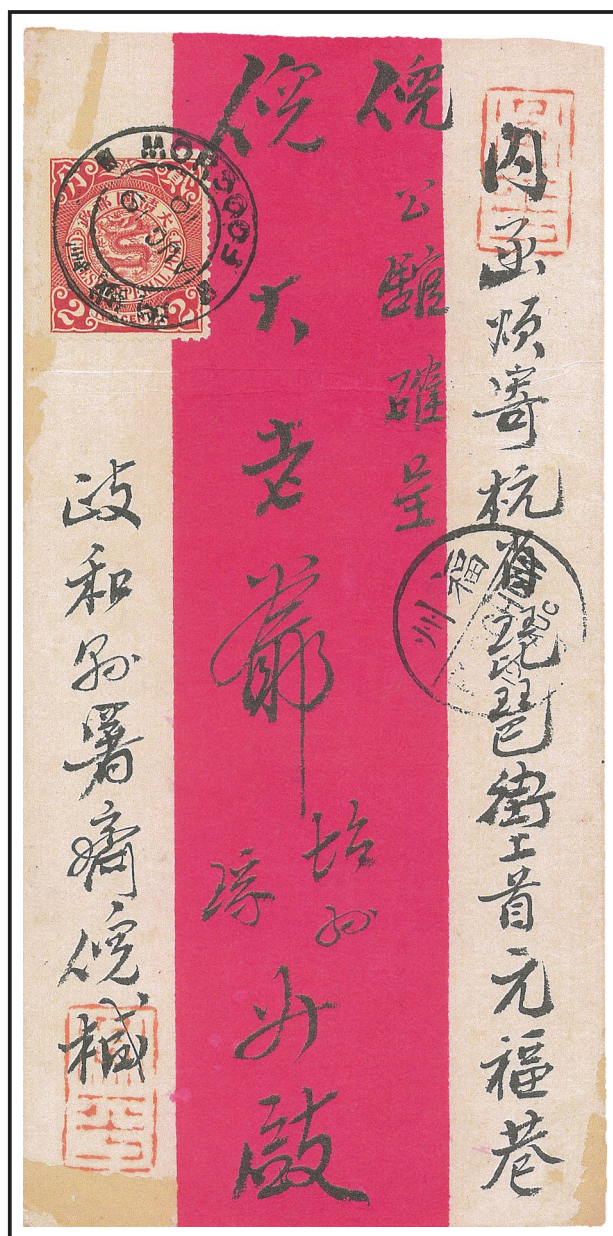
FOOCHOW  
*of FUKIEN Province*



FOOCHOW CITY sub-office opened for business in May 1899, initially it adopted double circle bilingual "Customs" type dater but with Chinese inscription 福州 replacing CUSTOMS. This created some ambiguity and seemed to give the impression that the mail items originated from Foochow head office. Even though returned mail items could easily be transferred from Foochow head office to the Foochow City sub-office in the immediate vicinity, the improper name had to be corrected when in late 1900 the Chinese inscription 福州 had been replaced by 福州城内 in the new dater.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

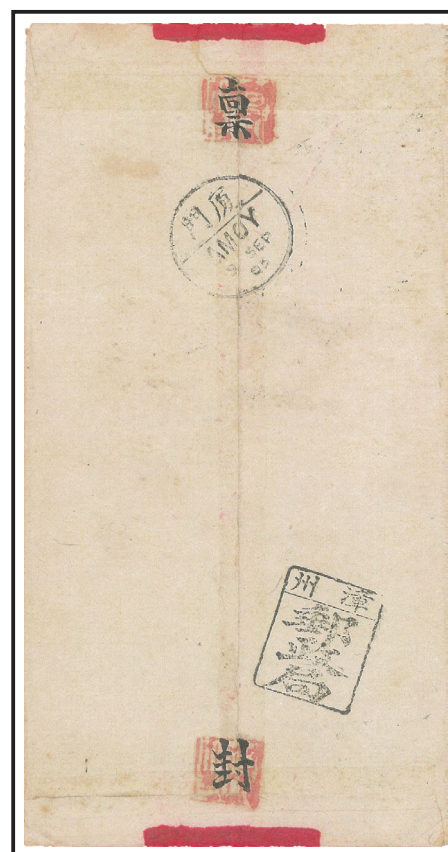
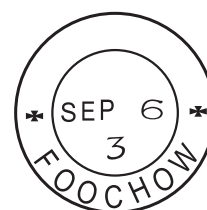
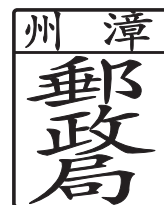
FOOCHOW  
*of FUKIEN Province*



In October 1900 a new double circle bilingual dater was used by FOOCHOW CITY sub-office with correct Chinese inscription 福州城内 meaning Inside Fuchow City. It is observed that two distinctive types existed, one with four Chinese character evenly spaced out and the other with narrow spacing between the second and third characters. Perhaps business was brisk and two different daters were required there and then.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

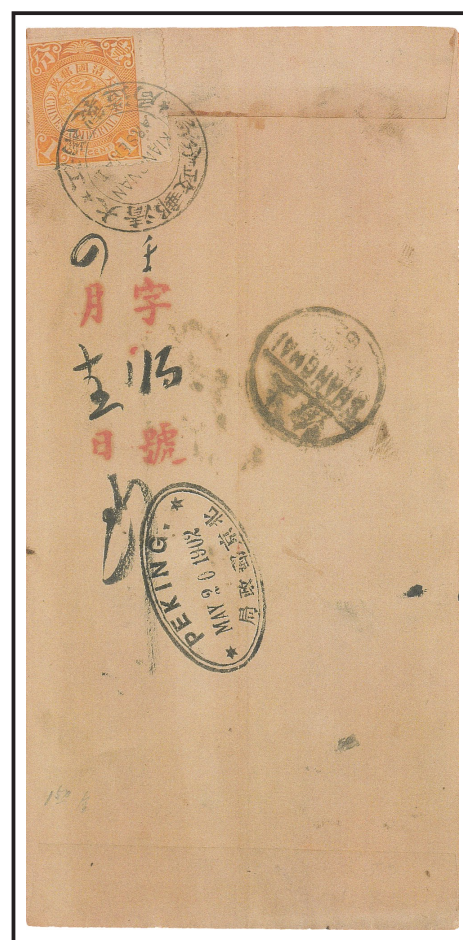
FOOCHOW  
*of FUKIEN Province*



In late 1902, FOOCHOW CITY dater evolved yet again when the Chinese characters 福州城内 in the double circle bilingual 福州城内/FOOCHOW dater was excised to resemble "CUSTOMS" excised daters from Peking and Tientsin, for use as an international dater. Another "inverted arch" type dater native to Fukien Province had been adopted as domestic dater initially by Foochow City and then by 11 other sub-offices across Fukien Province.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

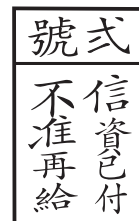
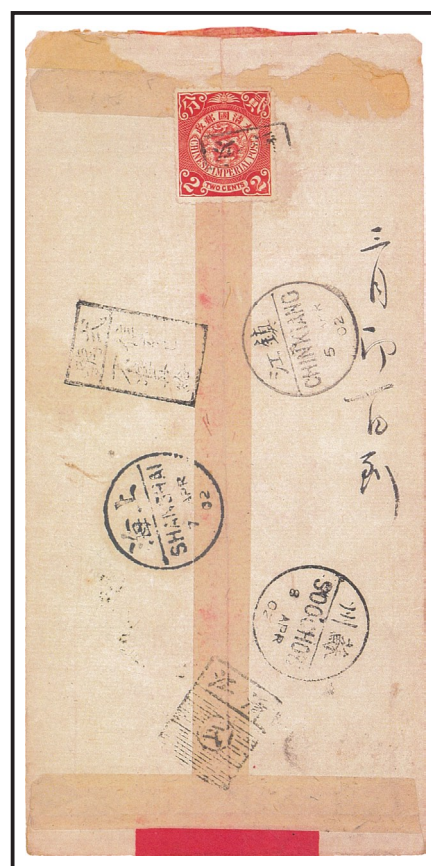
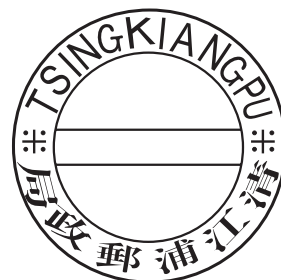
KIANGNAN ARSENAL  
*of Kiangsu Province*



Kiangnan Arsenal was one of the two shipbuilding arsenals in China at the turn of the century and was located at southern district of Shanghai, the other being Foochow Arsenal in Fukien Province. It evolved a unique type bilingual double circle cancellation not resembling "Customs" or "Dollar Chops" with Chinese inscription 大清郵政分局 placed at top and 江南製造局 below, both between concentric circles and English inscription KIANGNAN ARSENAL inside the inner circle. Less than a handful of this dater had been recorded on covers and the following registered cover recorded two excellent strikes.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

YANGCHOW  
of KIANGSU Province



When Yangchow Post Office opened for business, the “Dollar Chop” daters were widely used across China and this prompted the adoption of a Dollar Chop resembling regular dater. To simply the matter more, the year/month/date slugs were all dispensed with, leaving a central blank strip to be filled in by manuscript when different postal clerks adopted various approaches : (a) manuscript year in Emperor’s reign and month/date in lunar calendar reckoning, (b) manuscript year/month/date in common era reckoning or (c) in majority cases, no manuscript date was filled in at all as was the case with the above example.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

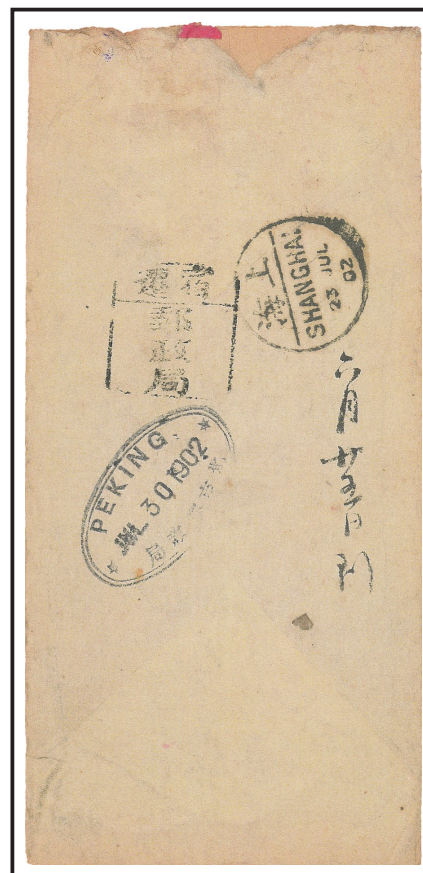
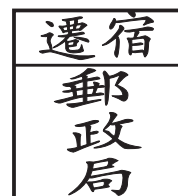
YANGCHOW  
of KIANGSU Province



In 1903 another type of double circle wooden dater had been adopted with English inscription YANGCHOW at top and Chinese inscription 揚州郵政局 below with year/month/date to be filled in by manuscript in the inner circle and as expected the postal clerk did not bother to do so as in the case of "Dollar Chop" resembling dater used earlier.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

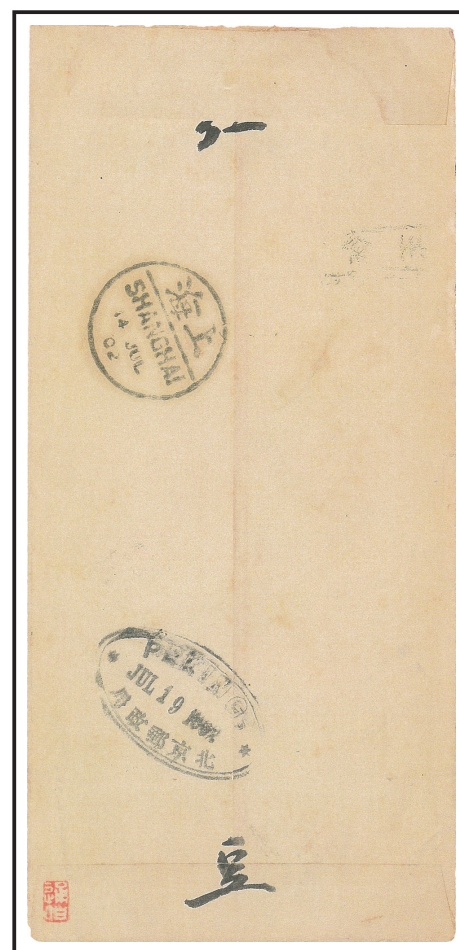
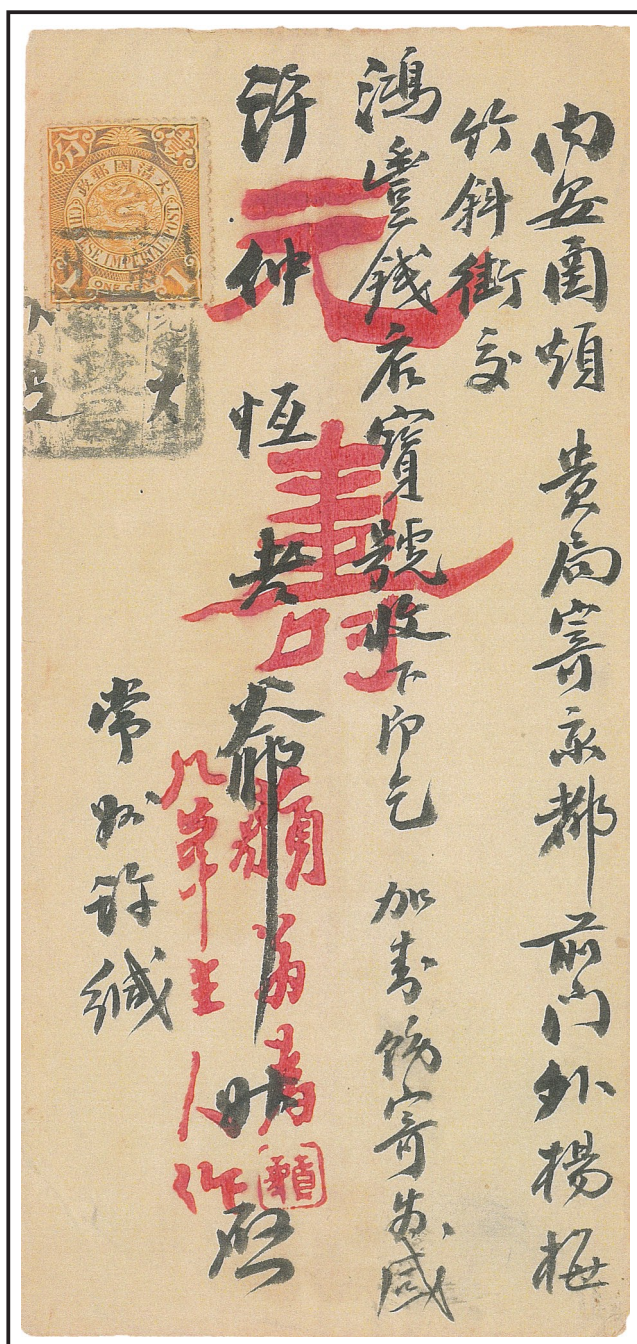
SHUCHOW  
*of KIANGSU Province*



The standard sub-office cancellation was adopted by some post offices in Kiangsu Province and modified by some others as illustrated by the above example when Shuchow type included year (in Emperor Kwong Hsu's reign) month and date in lunar calendar to be filled by the manuscript and the Hsuehien transit cancellation indicated the adoption of standard type. Since this was an acknowledgement of receipt cover, an unframed registration handstamp cancelled two stamps on cover front.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

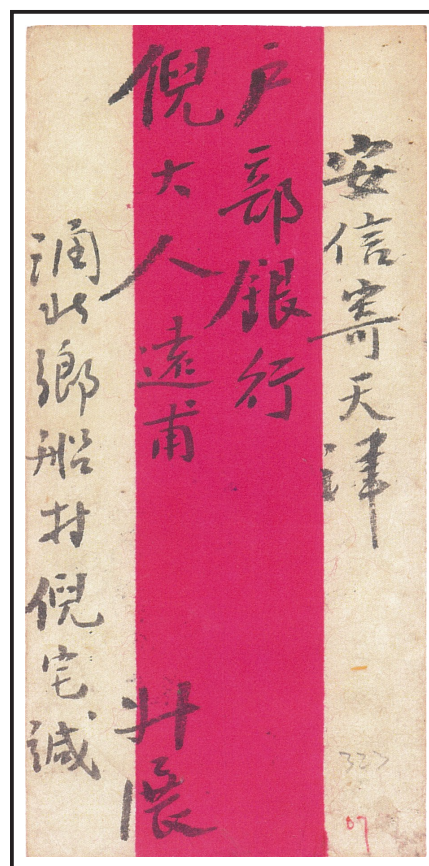
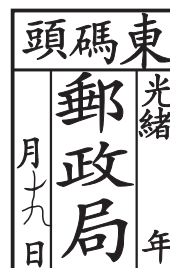
SHAANCHOW  
*of KIANGSU Province*



A similarly evolved type of sub-office cancellation was adopted by Shaanchow post office and the only difference was that the postal clerk there filled in the year (29th year in Emperor Kwong Hsu's reign, or 1902) 6th lunar month and 26th lunar day.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

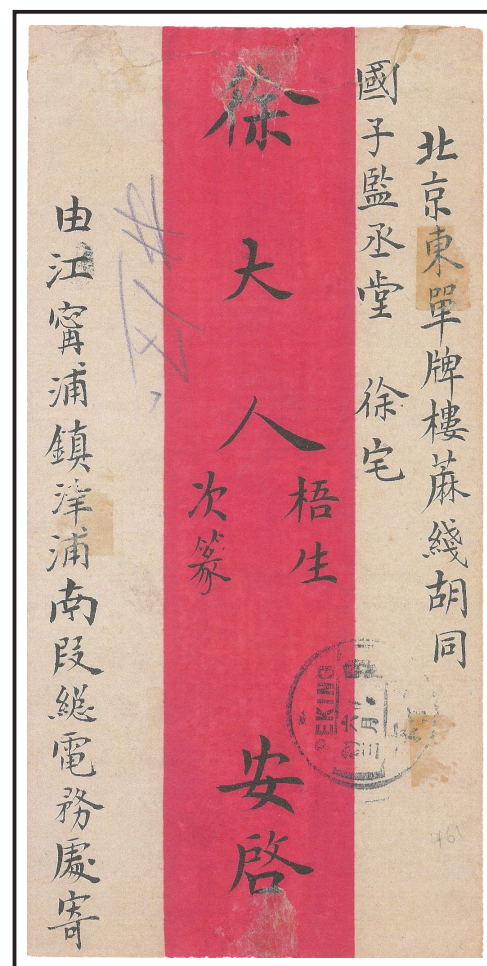
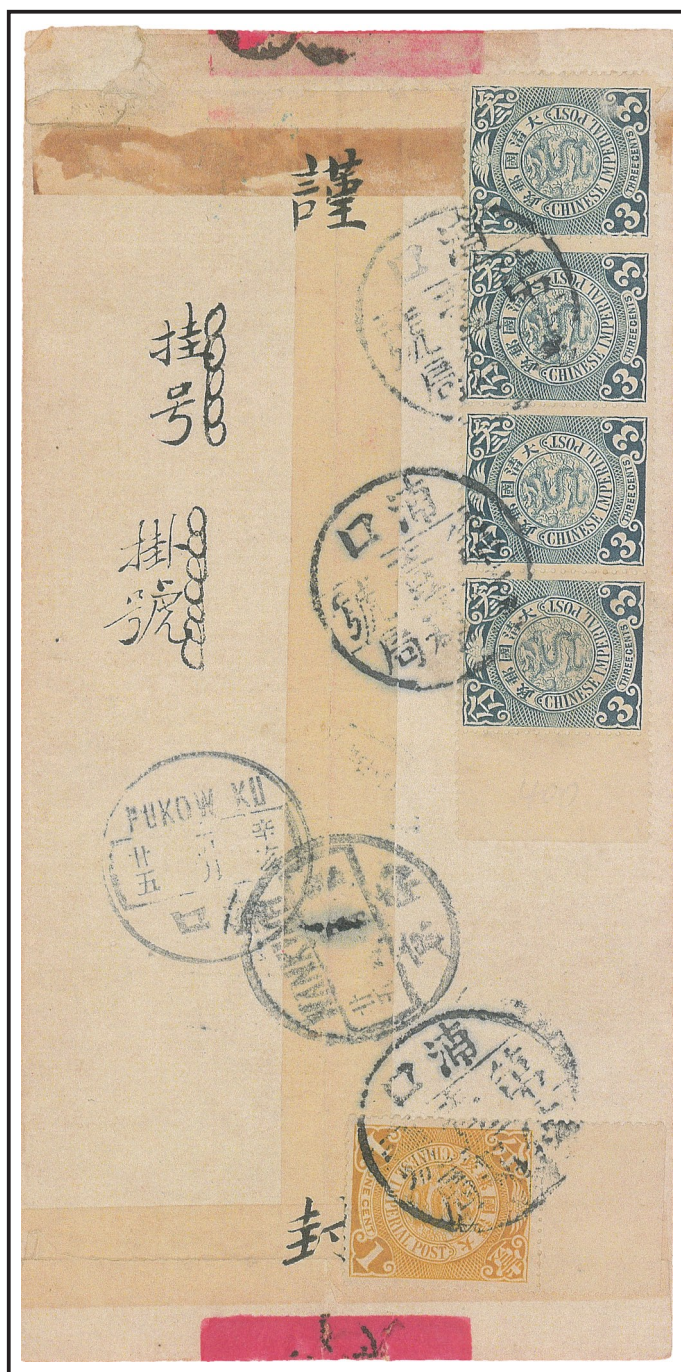
TUNGDATAU  
*of KIANGSU Province*



Another similar type was used from TUNGDATAU post office, here the postal clerk filled in 七月十九日 but did not bother to note the year.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

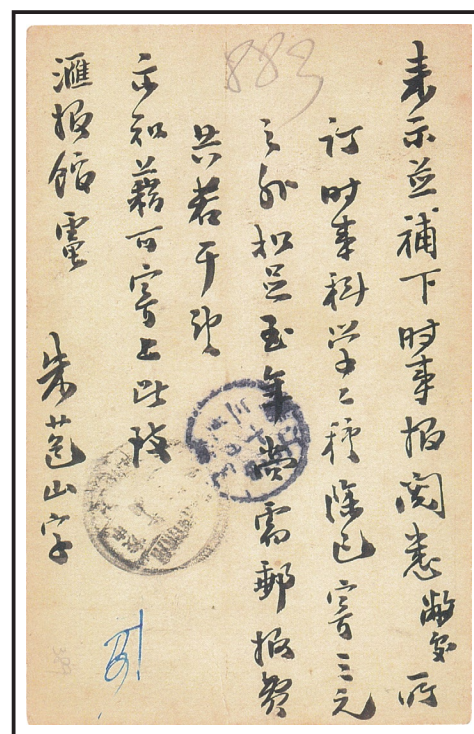
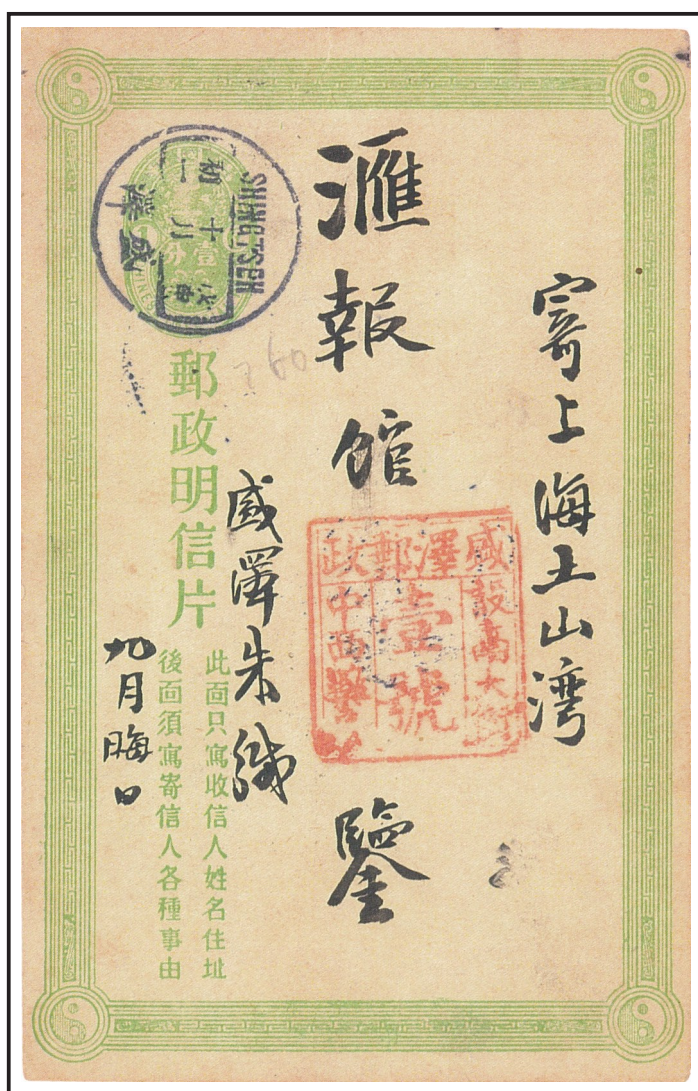
PUKOW  
*of KIANGSU Province*



As the great expansion took place from 1906, the installation of letter boxes and letter counters became more efficient and cost saving than soliciting the services of postal agencies when most of the cancellation adopted often showed Chinese inscriptions of 信箱 or 信櫃. The above example recorded the rare usage of Chinese inscription 信箱局 perhaps Pukow was the terminal station of Tientsin-Pukow Railway and the mail volume was so great as to justify the nomenclature of 信箱局 (Letter Box Office) and indeed this acknowledgement of receipt cover served to show some justification.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

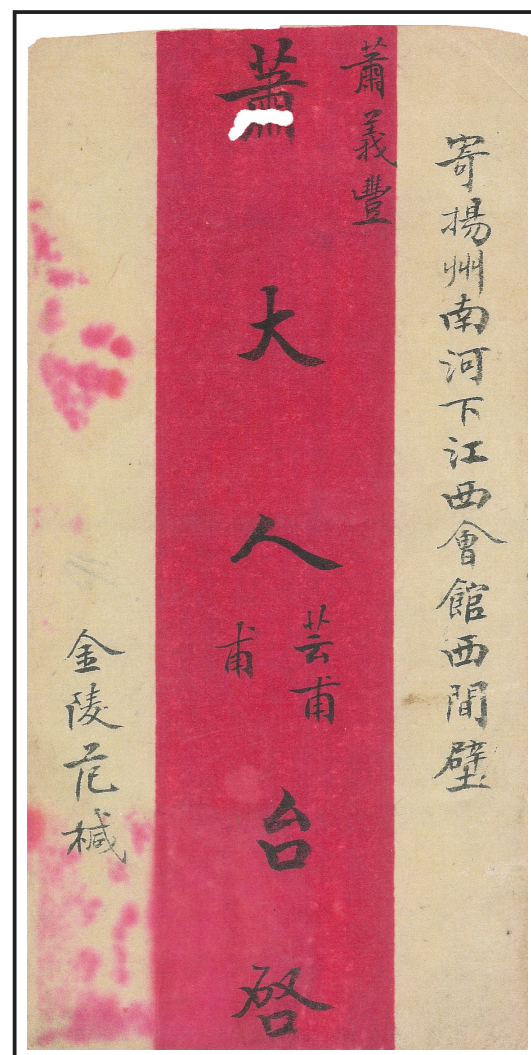
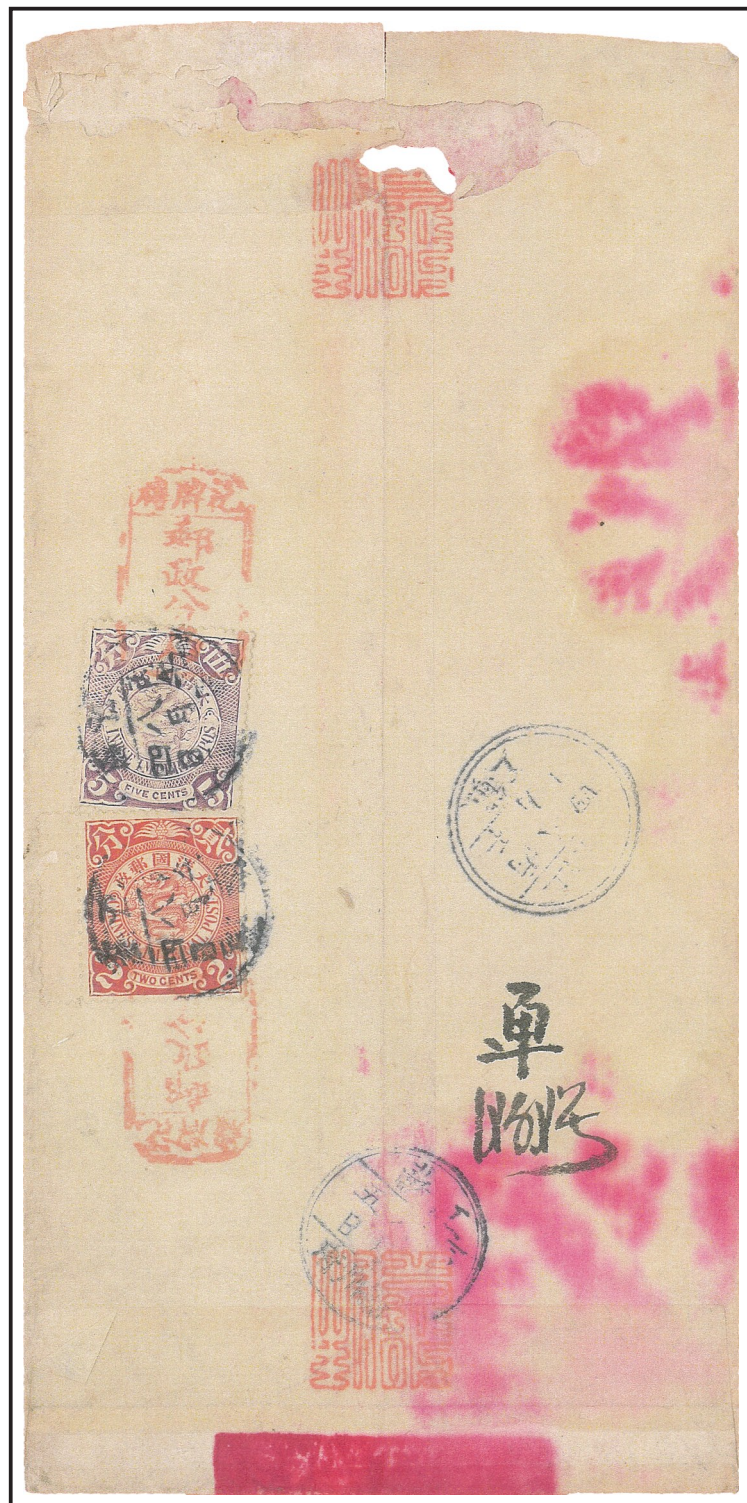
SHINGTSEH  
of KIANGSU Province



In small towns like Shintseh, it was uneconomical to install letter boxes or letter counters and postal agencies which charge commission on business handled, became more cost effective. Such postal agencies still had to compete with Min Hsin Chu's and the cancellation they adopted sometimes resemble that of their competitor when detailed address such as 設南大街中西藥房 was included in the cancellation as illustrated by the above example on third issue postal stationery card.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

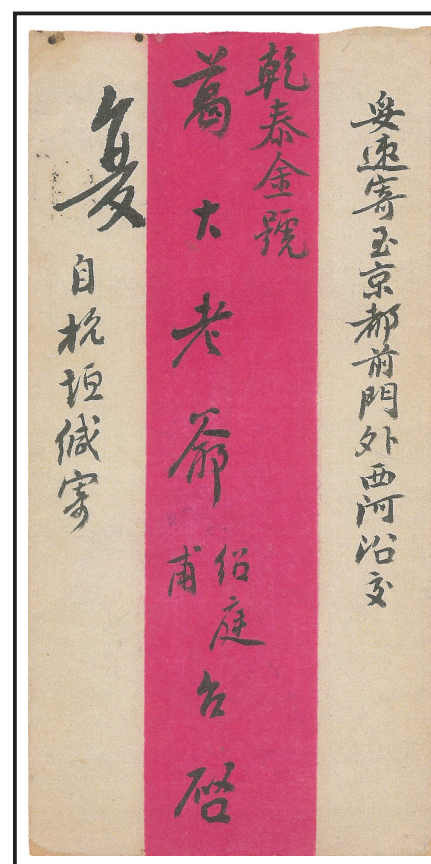
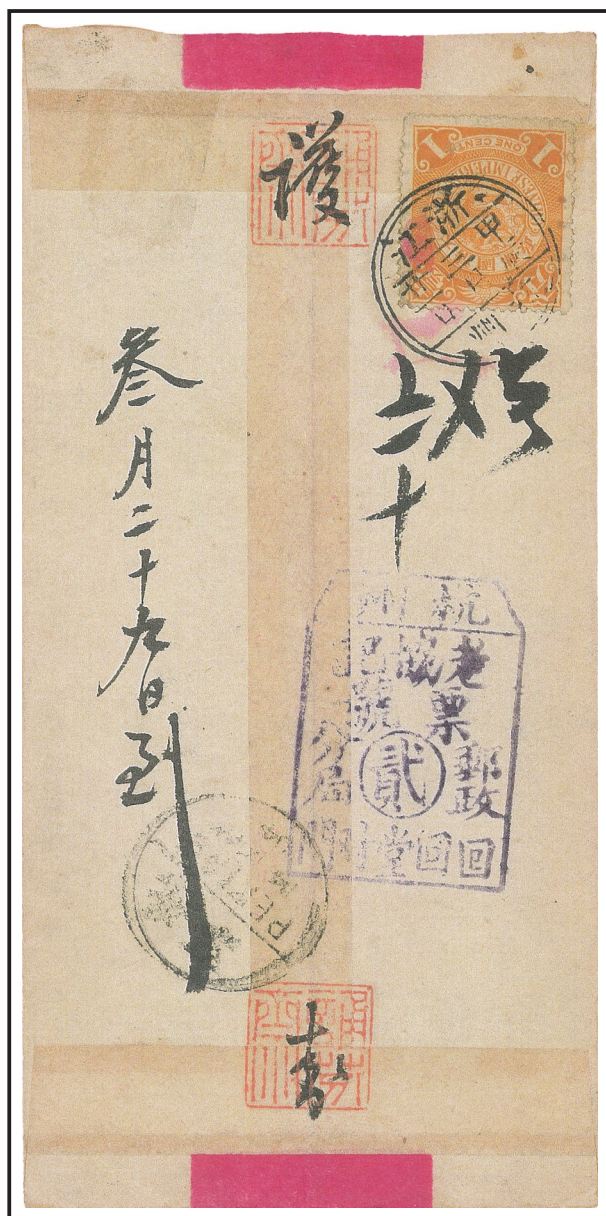
HUAPAILAU  
*of KIANGSU Province*



Huapailau was in fact a branch office of Nanking, it did not adopt the standard postal agency cancellation but instead it adopted the standard sub-office cancellation with identification of 郵政分局 instead of 郵政局. In the above 1906 cover, it handled a registered cover to Yangchow but did not completely cancel the stamps on cover back but just tied them to cover to be canceled later by Nanking head office.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HANGCHOW  
of CHEKIANG Province



Similar story repeats itself in Hangchow of Chekiang Province when three sets of additional information were jammed into the nameplate type cancellation with chipped corners: 老協記票號 being name of the postal agency in full, 郵政分局 meaning postal administration sub-office and 回回堂對門 identified location. This is an appealing type of dater, less than five examples had been recorded on covers.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HUCHOW  
*of CHEKIANG Province*



The oval bilingual dater adopted by Huchow Post Office was larger in size 42mm x 30mm with English inscription IMPERIAL POST OFFICE at top, HUCHOW below and month/day/year (4 numerals) in common era reckoning in the middle beneath which is Chinese inscription 湖州郵政局. Blue ink was used and a fine example of 1904 usage is illustrated by the above cover to Kinhwa via Lanchi, Shaohing and Hangchow.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

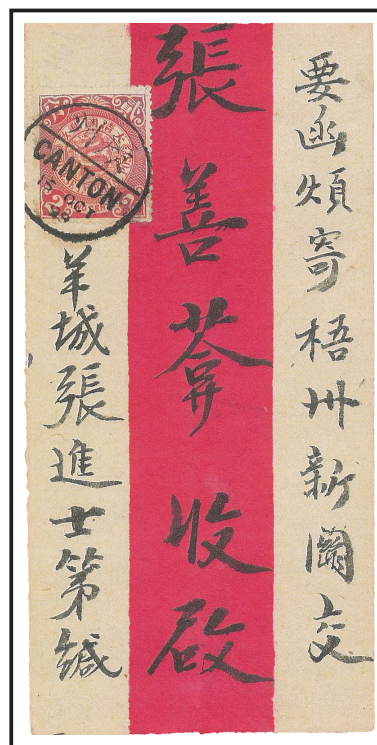
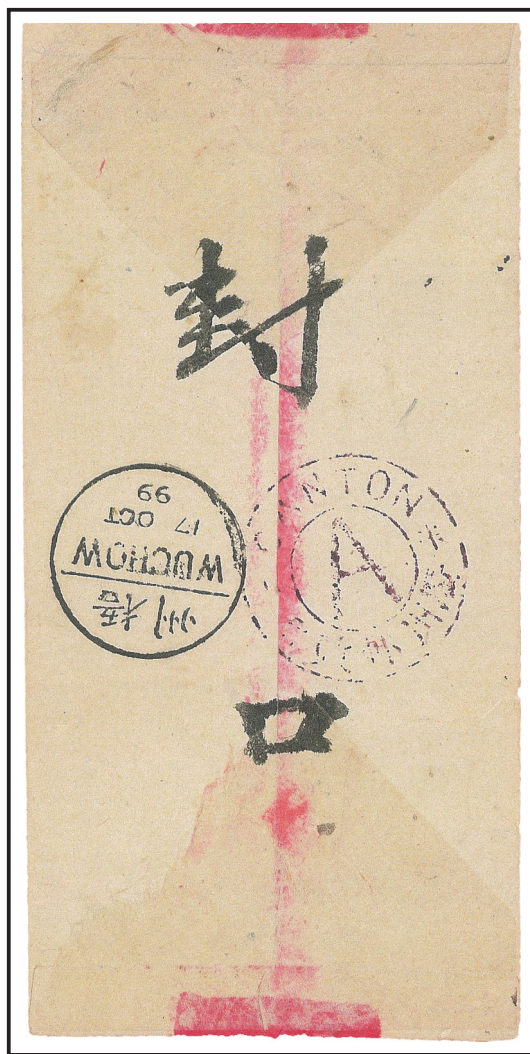
YANGKIANG  
*of KWANGTUNG Province*



When the official Notification from Postal Administration Head Office reached various post offices in China in June 1899, full compliance followed by post offices in Chihli and Shantung Provinces whilst some post offices in Northeast Provinces, the cradle of the ruling Manchu tribe, additional Chinese inscription Da Qing 大清 was added before 郵政局 to show reverence. Several post offices in Kwangtung Province also followed this example by adding Da Qing into the lower segment of the cancellation and chipping off the top corners.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

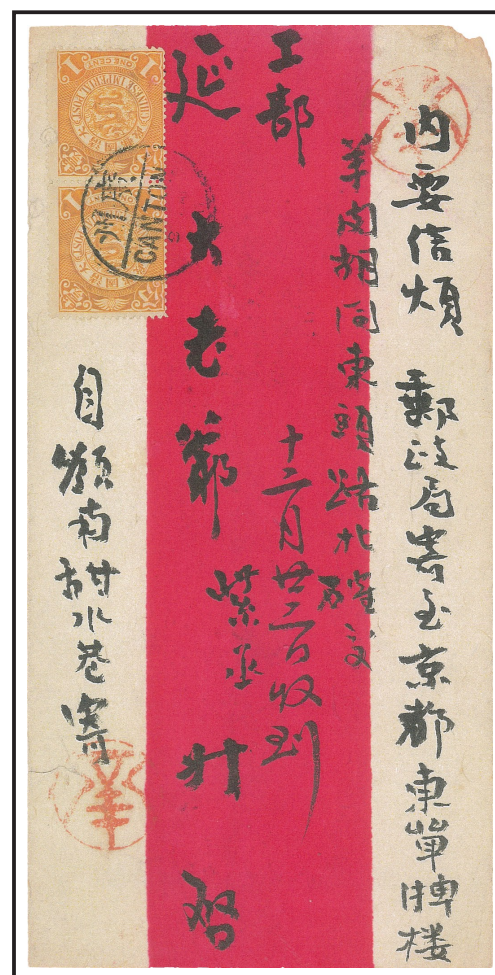
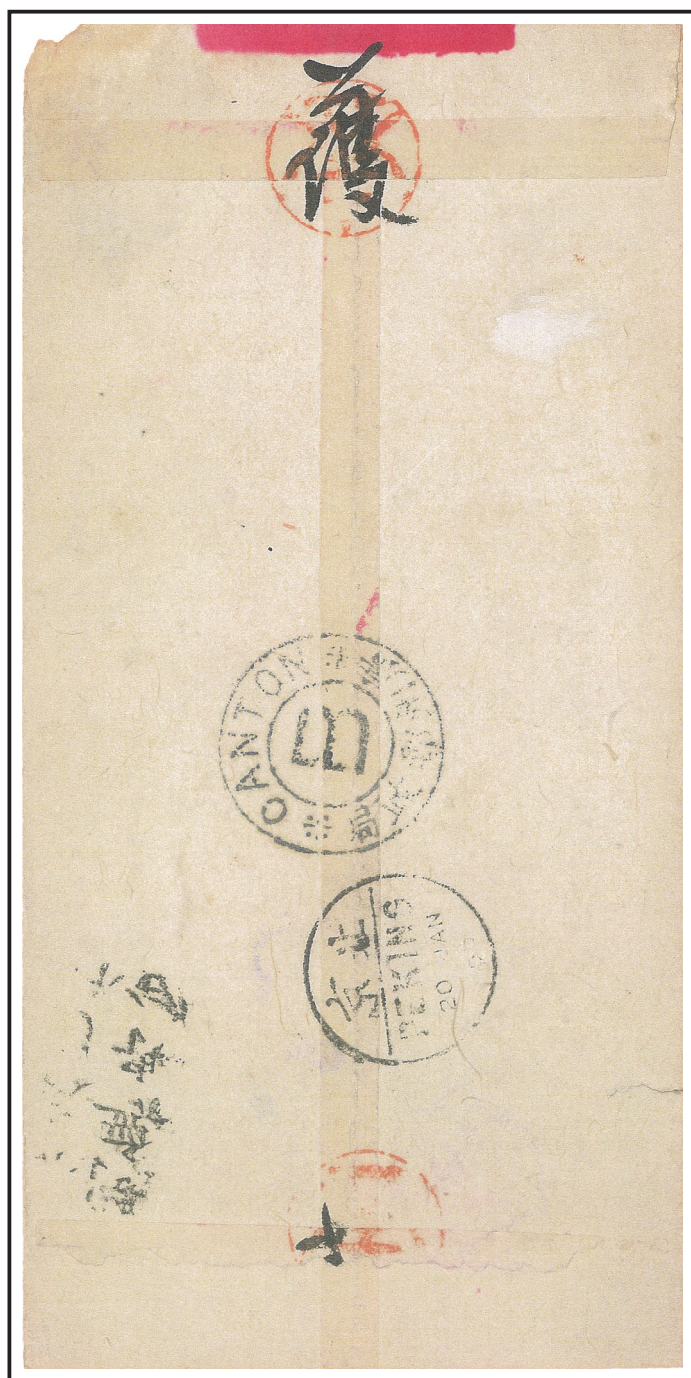
CANTON  
*of KWANGTUNG Province*



Canton was a busy commercial city in southern China and as time progressed, branch offices were set up and three different types of cancellations had been used, two of which were bilingual double circle type wooden cancellations with English inscription CANTON at top and Chinese inscription 廣州郵政局 below flanked by 8 pointed star on both sides and bold alphabet A inside to indicate sub-office A. There was a rule that sub-office or branch offices were not allowed to cancel stamps on mail items, they had to be delivered to the head office for cancellation as is the case with the above item from sub-office A to Wuchow.

# EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

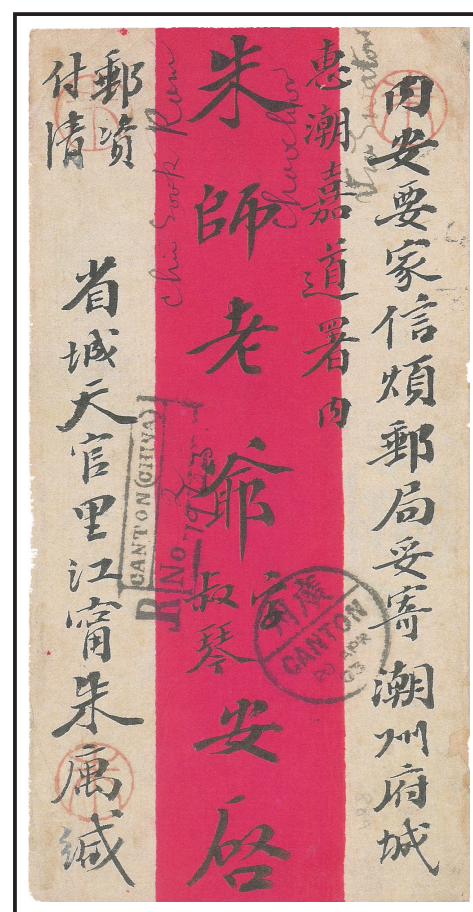
CANTON  
*of KWANGTUNG Province*



Canton branch office B adopted similar type circular bilingual non-standard cancellation as sub-office A, its appearance on 1900 red band cover to Peking was to indicate the origin, and the stamps had to be cancelled upon its arrival at Canton head office. Since the style of this cover resembled those carried by Min Hsin Chu's and that's why a handstamp was applied by Peking post office with inscriptions meaning POSTAGE ALREADY PAID NO OTHER PAYMENTS REQUIRED.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

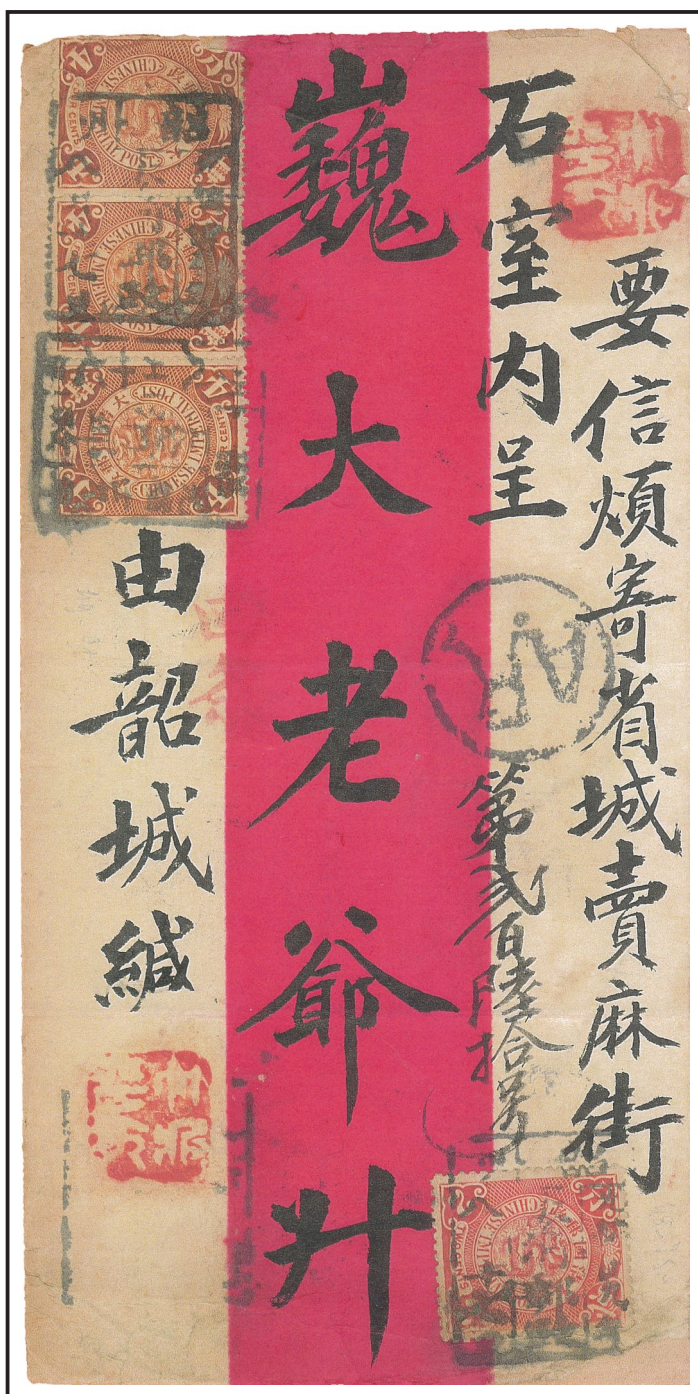
CANTON  
of KWANGTUNG Province



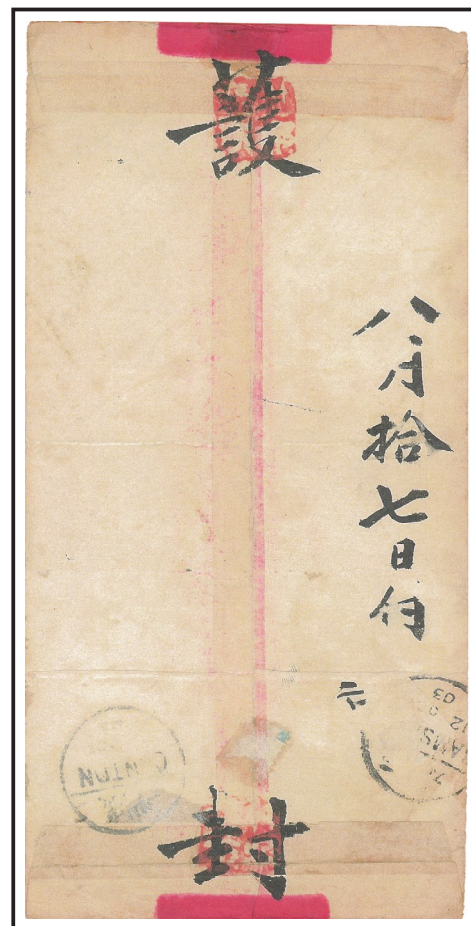
The primitive bilingual circular non standard type cancellation later evolved with the inclusion of date and at the same time specifying location of post office as illustrated by this example in red ink : English inscription CANTON at top, Chinese inscription 廣州老城內郵政局 at bottom, flanked by 8 pointed stars on both sides and with year (regal year in Emperor Kwong Hsu's reign), month and day (lunar calendar reckoning) inside the centre circle. A careful look at the cover revealed that it originated from sub-office two whose standard cancellation appears on reverse. From this, it could well be said that the sub-office B cancellation has now been replaced by this type of evolved dater which specified INSIDE CANTON OLD CITY instead of being labeled as sub-office B.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

SHAOCHOW  
*of KWANGTUNG Province*



|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| 州     | 韶     |
| 八月廿七日 | 大清郵政  |
|       | 光緒廿九年 |



Faced with competition from Min Hsin Chu's, the official postal system had to evolve and the essential element was the inclusion of date in cancellations so that recipient of mail items could evaluate the efficiency of the official postal system. Various post offices in Kiangsu Province evolved a 4 segment "nameplate" type with post office name at top, 大清郵政局 in central vertical column flanked by two other columns to indicate year (regal year in Emperor Kwong Hsu's reign) month and day (both in lunar year reckoning). The evolved type from Shaochow is slightly different in that the Chinese inscription in the central vertical column is 大清郵政 instead and with matching characters for year/month/day instead of being filled in by manuscript.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

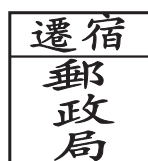
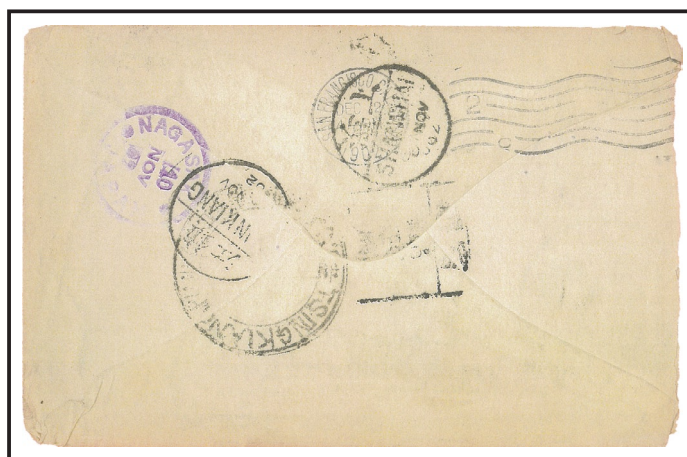
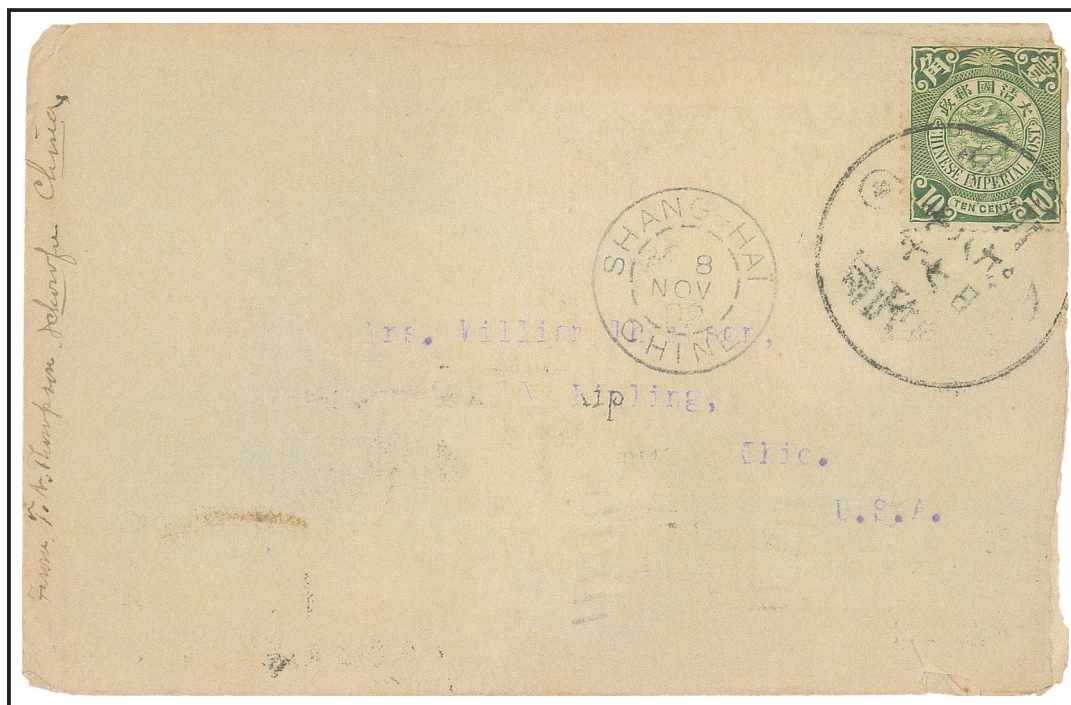
TUNGHING  
of KWANGTUNG Province



The first cancellation adopted by Tunghing post office is a circular non-standard type with Chinese inscription TUNGHING 東興 at top segment and Postal Administration Office 郵政局 below. It was not until 1911 that Tunghing post office became a second class post office, eligible to use the standard bisected circle bilingual dater as an international dater. It's appearance on commercially used 1c + 1c postal stationery cards is very scarce especially when a clear mail route is indicated by the transit daters of 欽州, Pakhoi and the French Post Office PAK-HOI-CHINE.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

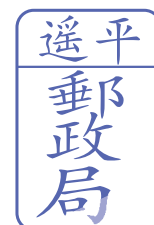
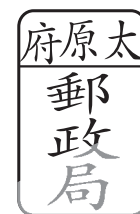
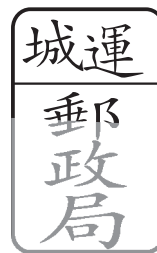
ICHOW  
of SHANTUNG Province



The “Sun and Moon” daters of Shantung Province basically evolved from a circular non-standard type adopted by Chinan Post Office at the turn of the century in order to compete with Min Hsin Chu’s. Later Chowtsun and Tsowping post offices added the sun and moon sign on both sides to signify the Chinese characters “day” and “month” correspondingly, thus creating a special breed of rare cancellations unique only to 14 post offices in Shantung Province, including Ichow as illustrated by the above example.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

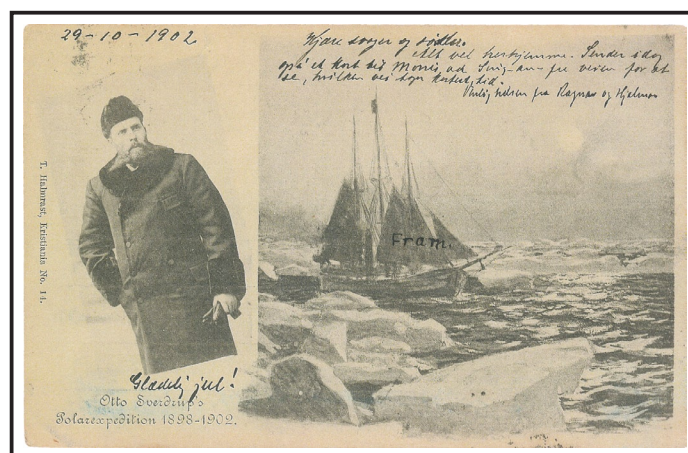
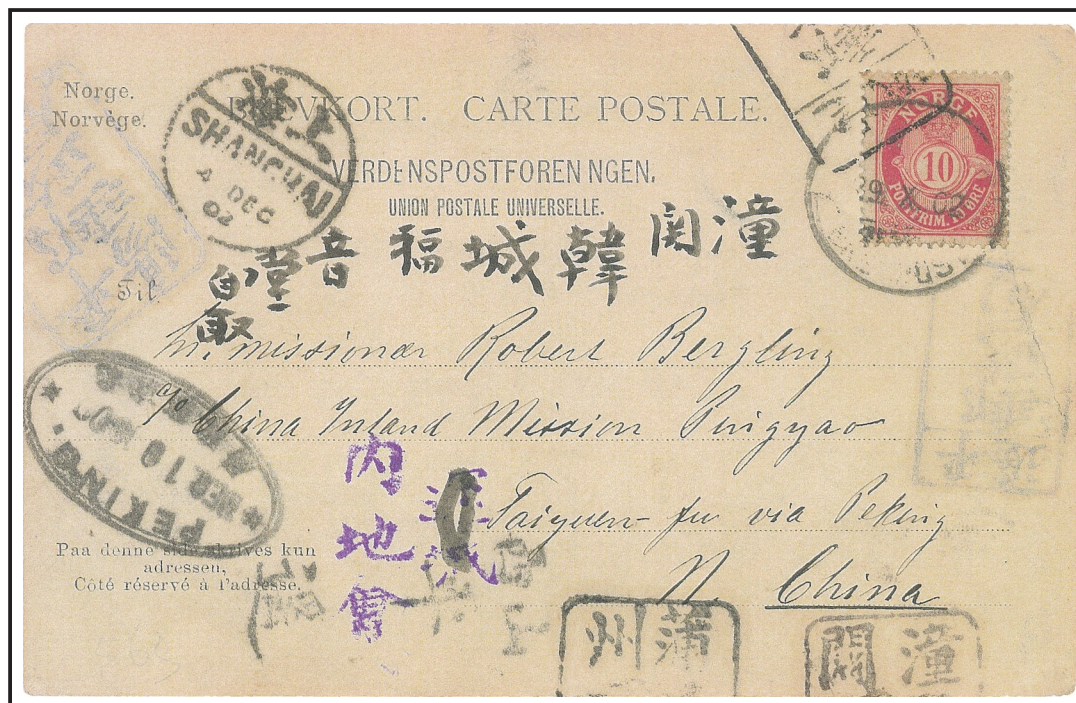
YÜNCHENG, PINGYAO, TAIYÜAN, PINGYANG  
of SHANSI Province



A 1902 incoming postcard from Norway to Lingnanfu transited via Peking, Hankow and recorded an array of standard "nameplate" type sub-office handstamps of Yuncheng, Pingyao, Yaiyuan and Pingyang of Shansi Province.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

YÜNCHENG, TUNGKWAN, PUCHOW, PINGYANG, PINGYAO  
of SHANSI Province



蒲州  
郵政局

潼關  
郵政局

運城  
郵政局

平陽  
郵政局

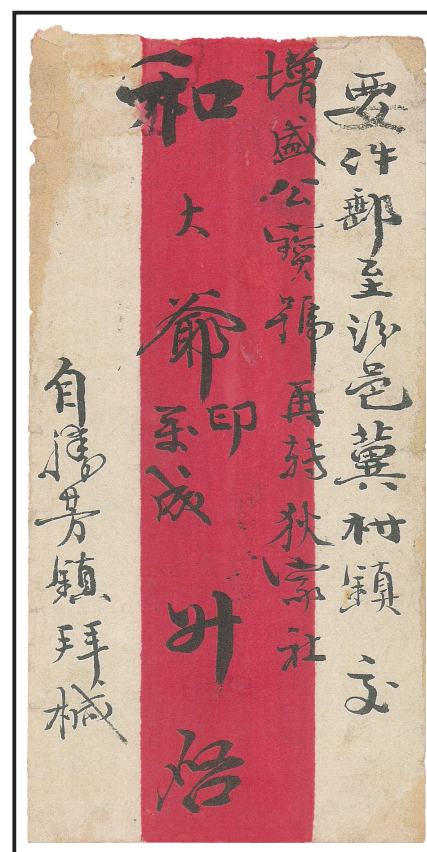
平遙  
郵政局

西山  
平遙

A similar 1902 incoming postcard from Norway to Pingyao transited Shanghai and Peking but with a slightly different route and recorded standard "nameplate" handstamps of Puchow, Tunghwan, Yuncheng, Pingyang and Pingyao.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

CHIHTSUNCHUN  
of SHANSI Province



Some postal agencies in Shansi Province adopted circular three segment type "nameplate" handstamp with 山西 at upper segment, 郵政代辦 (postal agency) in the middle and location of postal agency 冀村鎮 below. In the above example the flap was sealed by specially printed tape with Chinese inscription 大清宣統二年庚戌.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

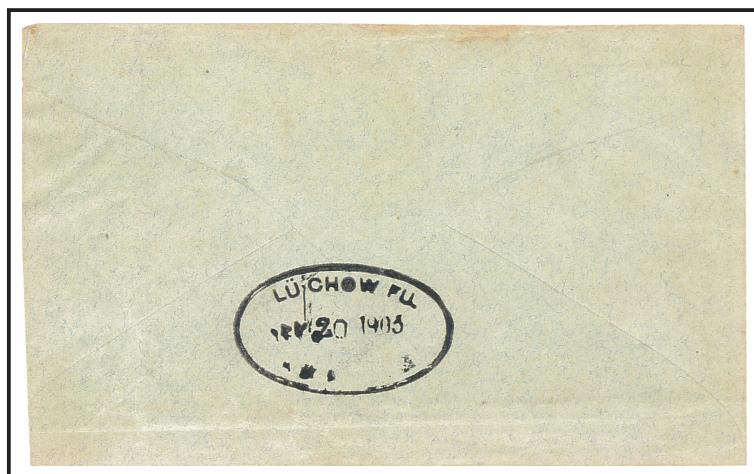
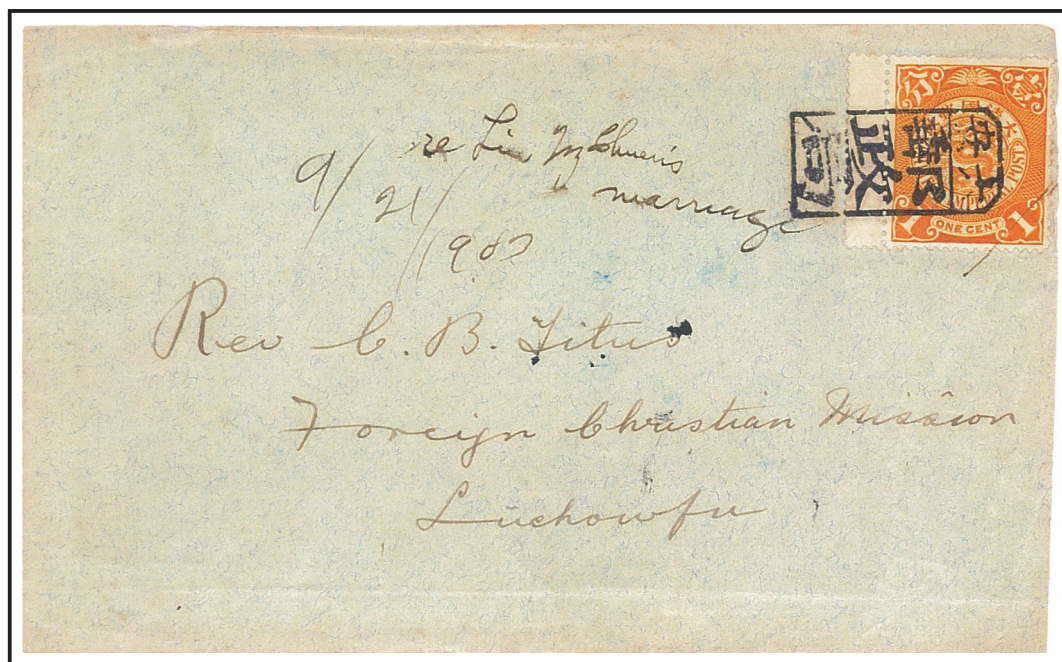
SIANGTAN  
*of HUNAN Province*



The adoption of oval bilingual daters by Peking Post Office had prompted some post offices in Hunan, Chekiang and Kiangsu to follow suit as illustrated by the above example from SIANGTAN of Hunan Province which was used as a transit dater in purple ink, on a cover from Yungchow to Wuchang via Hengchow, Yochow, Hankow and Siangtan. It is quite uncommon that the standard sub-office cancellation of Siangtan was used in conjunction with bilingual oval dater on the same cover.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

LUCHOWFU  
of HUNAN Province



A few post offices in Hunan, Hupeh and Kiangsu Provinces followed the example from Peking and adopted bilingual oval dater as regular cancellation both on domestic and international mails as illustrated by the above 1903 cover from LUAAN to LUCHOWFU arriving MAY 20 1903.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

HANKOW  
of HUPEH Province



Diversification of sub-office cancellation in earlier examples took the form of making post office name more conspicuous, the insertion of year/month/date and location, sometimes the identification of its nature as postal agency, letter counter or even letter box. Hankow post office went a step further, it produced a three segment nameplate type with 大清郵政 at top, 漢口局 below and an unorthodox instructional advice in the centre: 信力已付勿索勿給 Letter Rate Already Paid, Don't Demand, Don't Pay. The above example originating from a Min Hsin Chu in Foochow but subsequently handled by the official postal system was a perfect example to record such dual purpose handstamp from Hankow.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

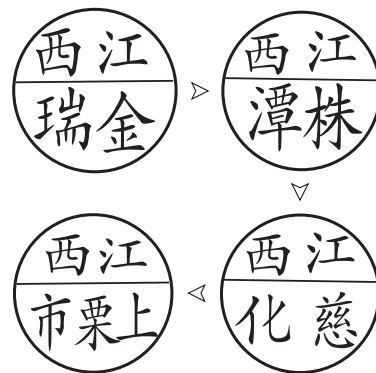
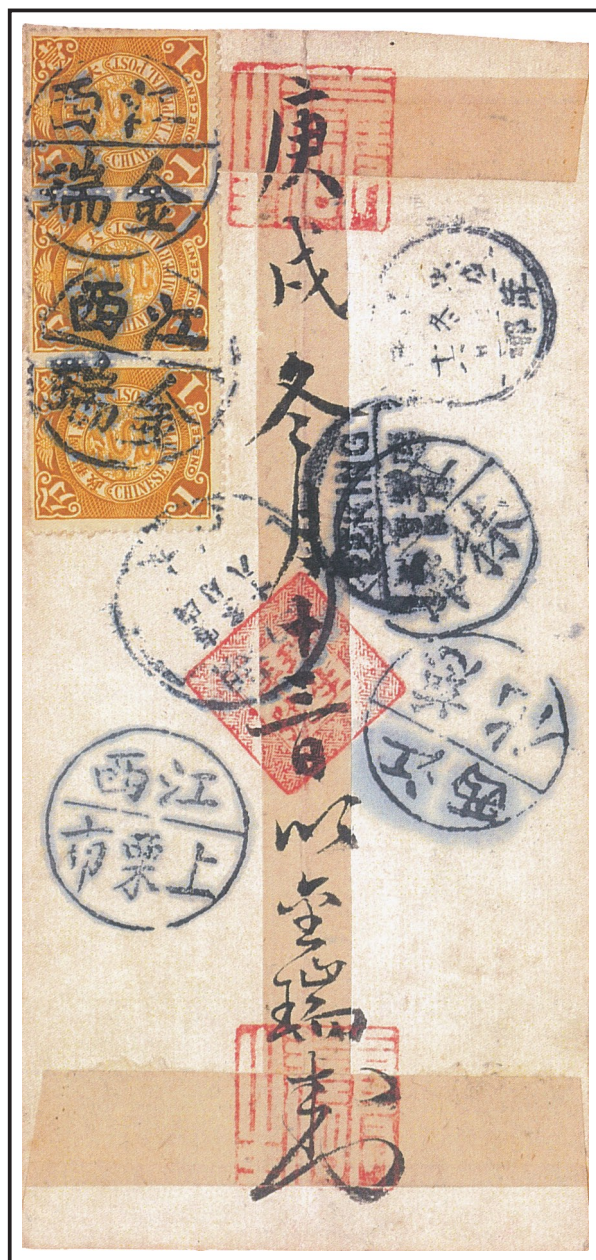
KAIFENFU  
of HONAN Province



Perhaps the bilingual oval daters from Shantung and Chihli Provinces had inspired some post offices in Hunan Province to adopt Chinese language oval daters with inscription 大清郵政局 at top, 年, 月, 日 in the middle and post office name, in this case 開封府 below. Undoubtedly Kaifeng relied on the bisected circle bilingual dater to cancel stamps on international mail items and this sub-office dater for domestic mail.

EVOLUTION & DIVERSIFICATION OF  
SUB-OFFICE & POSTAL AGENCY CANCELLATIONS IN  
CHINESE IMPERIAL POST PERIOD 1897-1911

JINREI, ZHUTAN, ZHUHUA, SHAUNRESHI  
*of KIANGSI Province*



A fine array of 4 circular postal agency cancellations and three transit or arrival lunar year daters have been recorded on the above 1908 cover from 金瑞 via 株潭, 慈化, 上栗市 and 萍鄉 in Kiangsi Province, thence to 長沙 of Hunan Province finally arriving Peking. Perhaps postal staff in smaller post offices dutifully applied their postal markings on mail items which happened to transit their district.



1



2

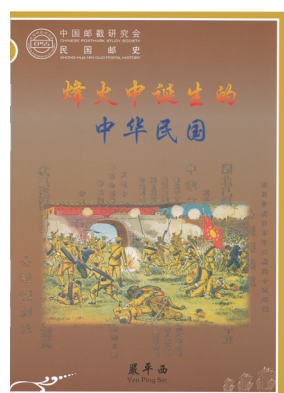


3

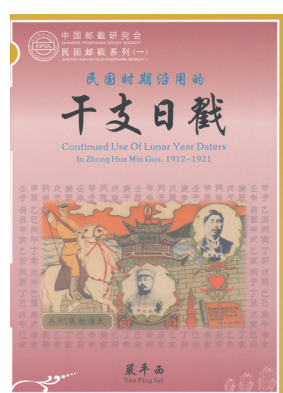


4

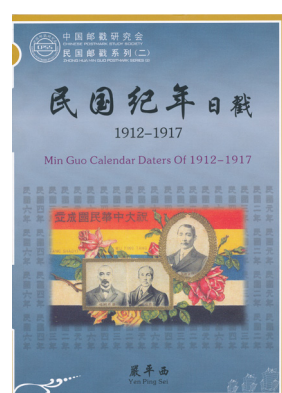
1-4 平装及精装



5



6



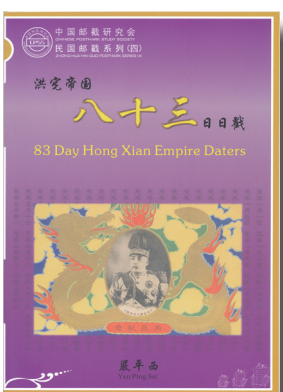
7



8



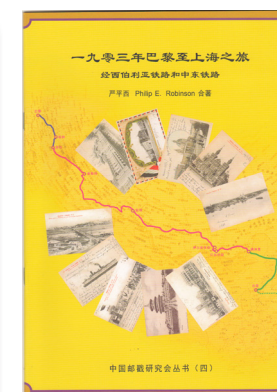
5-8合订本



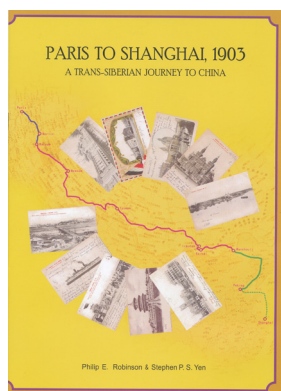
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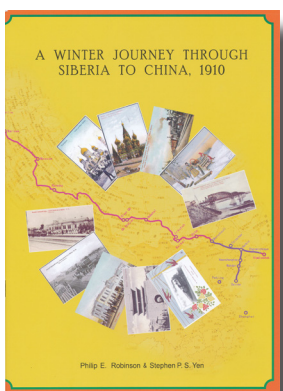
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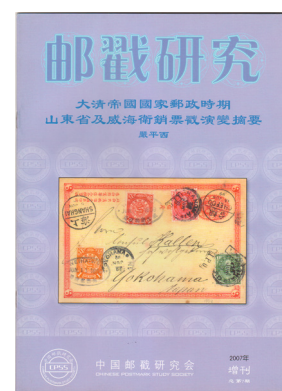
11



12



13



14



15