

# The Pigeon

Since its domestication many thousands of years ago, the pigeon has been revered by many religions, including Hindu, Islam, Christian and Sikh. Although Neolithic man (circa 8500 BC onwards) undoubtedly domesticated the rock dove, there is little indication that the bird was used for anything but food. The pigeon is probably best known for its ability to return 'home' from long distances and has therefore been used extensively throughout history as a **messenger**, dating as far back as 2500 BC and continuing into the 21st century. In Christian and Jewish symbolism **pigeon** that is manifestation of Holy Spirit in New Testament is symbol of purity, simplicity and even when carries olive branch into Noah ship is symbol of **peace**.

**SCOPE-** To explore many facets of this bird, the homing ability to perform a role of a messenger during times of peace and war and moreover love making demeanors, beside its relevance and mention in major religions, unique fact sheet of very existence of pigeon in avian world which often is spectacular, sometimes unexpected, and always fascinating.



Imperf proof, mounted on board

1960. New Zealand Pigeon. Health stamps-Charity / Sur-charged, Pre decimal issue MS, Plate A - Position 1 Printed by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co. Ltd. New Malden, Surrey

**PURPOSE-** To rediscover the backyard bird we call it as Pigeon, its very purpose of existence in human world.

**METHODOLOGY-** Historically pigeons have survived much before the new world birds have arrived on the avian scene and found its relevance in human life. Reference have been found in Biblical times right through two world wars and modern times before onset of Airmail, carrying messages, due to its homing abilities.

**RESEARCH-** Several religious theories, books of worship, Police diary, War diary, fact sheet of biological importance and few others documents contribute enough evidences for deep insight. This exhibit contributes to lesser explored world woven around this Bird of **Columbidae** family of **Columbiformes** Order of Class **Aves** of Phylum **Chordata** of the Kingdom **Animalia**.

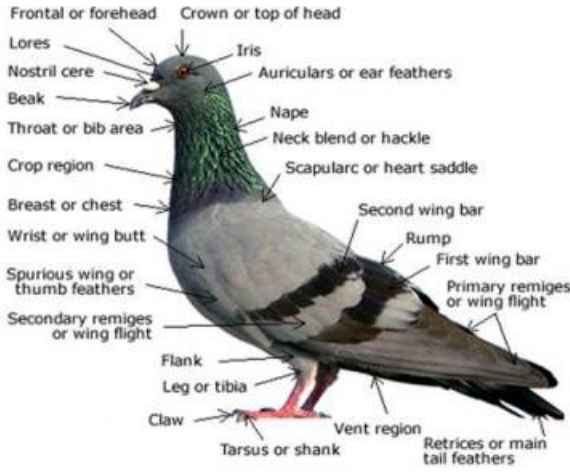


## EXHIBIT PLAN

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## 2. A "ROCK DOVE" OR A "ROCK PIGEON"

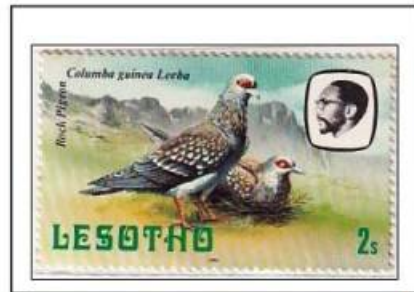
WHAT IS A PIGEON



Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon  
Imperf Color Trials  
Issued 15.12.1983



ROCK PIGEON  
With Imperf  
Marginal Proof  
Issued on  
20.04.1981  
Perf - 14 1/2



Pacific Imperial Pigeon  
Issue 10.07.1967



OVPT BAR HIDING "BRITISH"  
Claret Breasted Fruit Dove  
Issued on  
12.11.1975



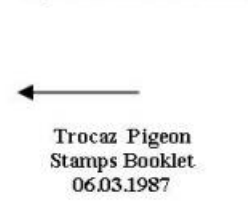
Christmas Imperial Pigeon  
Se-tenant Block  
Issued on 01.05.2002. A WWF Issue



Micronesian Imperial Pigeon  
Definitive 14.02.1966



Micronesian Imperial Pigeon  
Ovpt Issued on 31.01.1968



Trocaz Pigeon  
Stamps Booklet  
06.03.1987

Palau Fruit Dove  
Error- Crown Feathers discolored on the stamp on right.  
STAMPS BOOKLET  
ISSUED 23.08.1991



2010. India. Displayed above are few errors and color shade varieties of Pigeon (Male & Female)



The feral pigeon that we see in our towns and cities today is descended from the **rock dove** (*Columba livia*), a cliff-dwelling bird historically found in coastal regions.

Other common names include 'domestic pigeon' and the '**feral pigeon**'. In 2004 British and American ornithologists officially re-named the bird the '**Rock Pigeon**'.

The word 'pigeon' is actually derived from the Latin word '*pipio*', which means 'young bird'. The word then passed into Old French as '*pignon*' and thus the English name 'pigeon' was derived, which is now used the world over as a common name for the rock dove.



2. "A "ROCK DOVE" OR A "ROCK PIGEON" contd...

BRUCE'S GREEN PIGEON

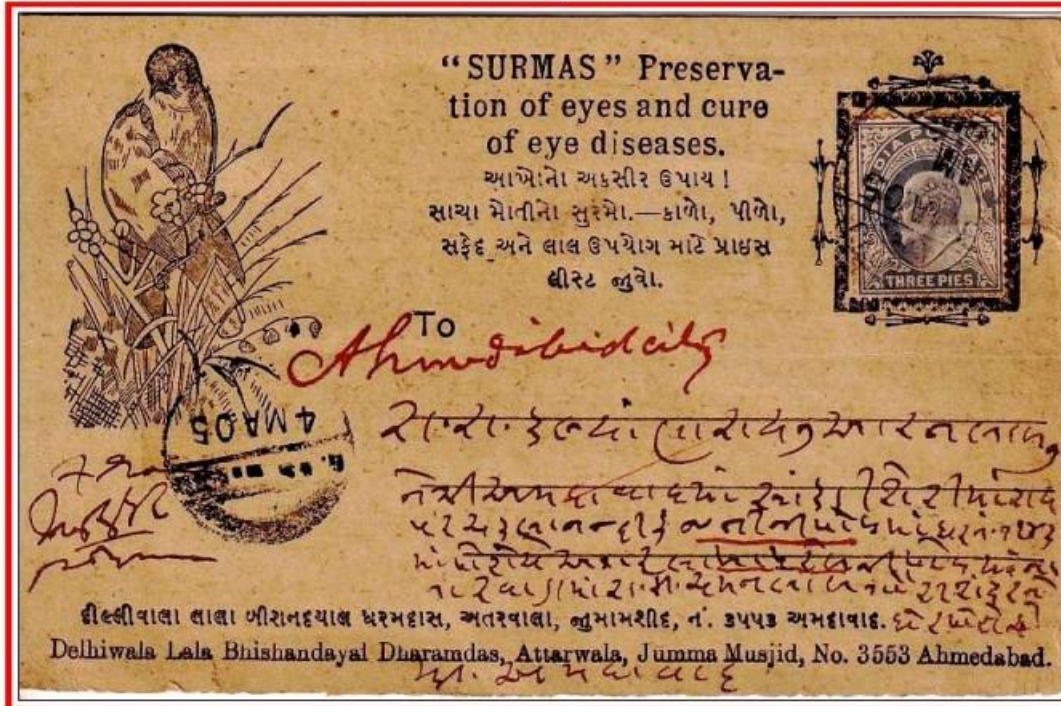
Bruce's green pigeon is a canopy-feeding *frugivorous* pigeon that specializes on consuming the fruits of just one species of fig tree,

*Ficus platphylla*.

A PRE ISSUE BLOCK DATED 29.04.1966



Many colored Fruit Dove  
(*Ptilinopus perousii*)  
Issued 1.08.1988  
Issued in a  
10v Set of Birds



↑ Error-Color variety - Lower Left Stamp

Bazaar Card Tied to Three Pies K.E. depicts a cachet of Pigeon. Such cachets were very popular during Br. India period, and were used for advertising on private post cards, popularly called as Bazaar Card.



The turtle dove's Latin name is *Streptopelia turtur*.

← The second part comes from the bird's soft 'turr turr' call.

Issued 31.12.2007 in a 5vSet on Birds



1939. Princely state of Jodhpur, India. Dove in Coat of Arms, Quasi Judicial stamp paper

2. "A "ROCK DOVE" OR A "ROCK PIGEON" contd...

White Tipped Dove  
Error – color variety  
Issued 30.09.1980  
(Extreme Right)

Tongan Ground Dove  
SPECIMEN pair  
Issued 05.02.1981

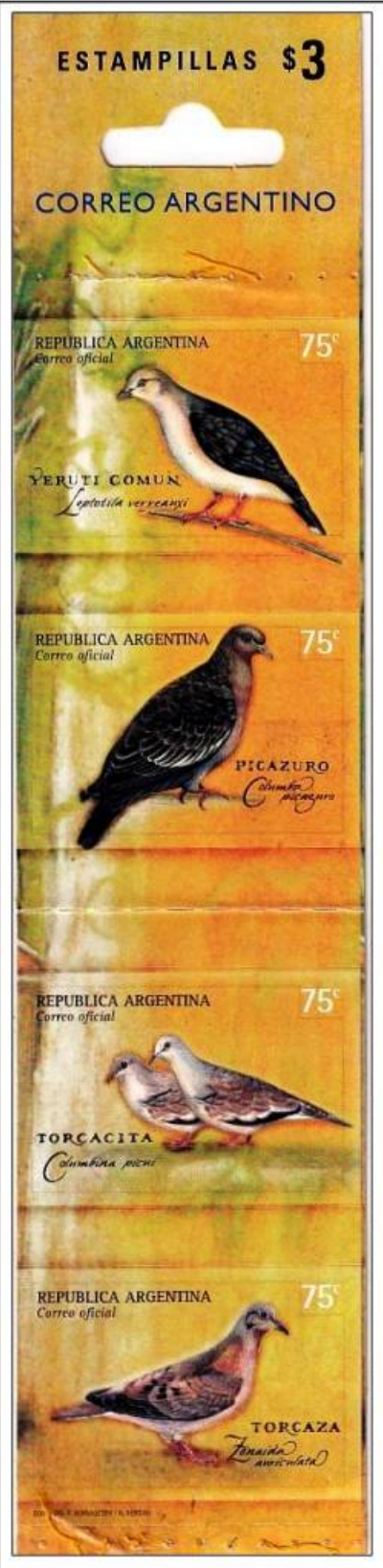
SELF ADHESIVE STAMPS  
BOOKLET-ISSUED 18.03.2010  
DEPICTS  
White Tipped Dove  
Picazuro Pigeon  
Picui Ground Dove &  
Eared Dove



LEMON DOVE – GUTTER PAIR  
COLOR VARIETY



ZENAIDA DOVE  
SPECIMEN  
GUTTER PAIR  
COLOR VARIETY



ONLY 1000 IMPERF MINIATURE SHEETS WERE ISSUED FOR THE  
WORLD PHILA EXHIBITION HELD AT PORTUGAL – 2010, DEPICTS SPOTTED DOVE

There are many theories about how pigeons manage to return 'home' when released 100s of miles from their loft. A champion racing pigeon can be released 400-600 miles away from its home and still return within the day. This amazing feat does not just apply to 'racing' or 'homing' pigeons; all pigeons have the ability to return to their roost. A 10-year study carried out by Oxford University concluded that pigeons use roads and motorways to navigate, in some cases even changing direction at motorway junctions. Other theories include navigation by use of the earth's magnetic field, visual clues such as landmarks, the sun and even infrasound (low frequency seismic waves). Whatever the truth, this unique ability makes the pigeon a very special bird.



1954, India Postage Centenary Commemorative Cover, Commercially used. Depicts Pigeon carrying mail.



The Federal Stamp Co:  
42 Churchgate Street  
Fort, Bombay.



**Doar Ivri Southern Africa**

INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

תערוכת בולים בין-לאומית

INTERNASIONALE FILATELISTIESE TENTOONSTELLING

**Doar Ivri Suider - Afrika**

KAAPSTAD

CAPE TOWN

קיפטאון

**DUIWEPOS**

**PIGEON POST**

**דואר יונה**

... he sent forth  
a dove from him  
Gen. 8:8

... laat hy 'n duif  
van hom af weg-  
vlieg  
Gen. 8:8

**PIGEONGRAM** RR No 575

CARRIED ON 30th MARCH 1979

TO: EXHIBITION COMMITTEE  
DISA 79  
P.O. Box 6160  
ROGGERBAAT  
8012 CAPE TOWN.

GREETINGS DISA 79 GROETE

**RR**

No

אודותי מאת  
בראשית ח ה

CAPE P. & L. W. E5828

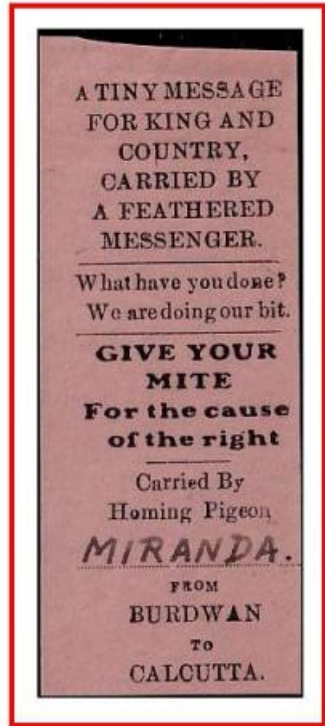
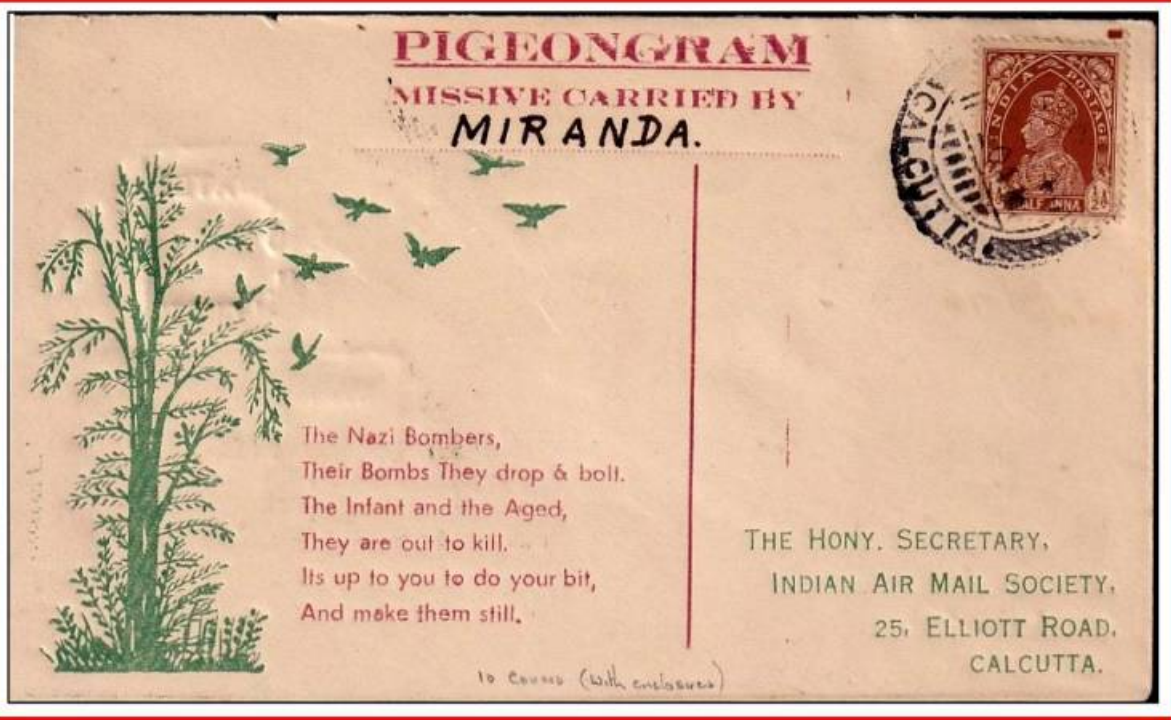
### 4. A WAR HERO

In modern times the pigeon has been used to great effect during wartime. The birds also played a vital role in intelligence gathering and were used extensively behind enemy lines where the survival rate was only 10%. In the Second World War pigeons were used less due to advances in telecommunications, but the birds still relayed invaluable information back to the allies about the German V1 and V2 Rocket sites on the other side of the English Channel.

DISPLAYED HEREBELOW ARE TWO PIGEONGRAMS CARRIED BY HOMING PIGEON DURING WORLD WAR II. COVERS AND MISSIVES AUTOGRAPHED BY PHILATELIST AND A ROCKET SCIENCE PIONEER STEPHEN SMITH, IN INDIA. COVERS TID WITH Sienna 1/2 Anna, K.G.VI



Reverse of the cover



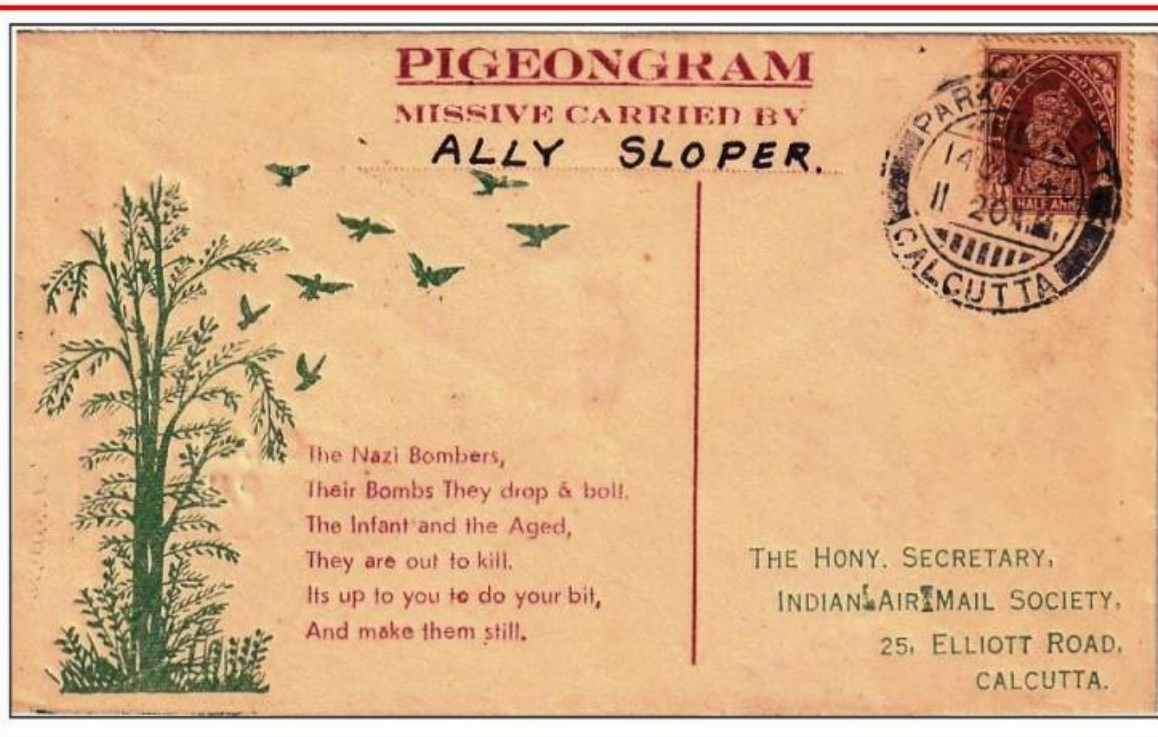
#### THE WAR CRY PROPAGANDA OF THE BRITISH DURING FIRST WORLD WAR CACHED ON PIGEONGRAM

HOMING PIGEON **MIRANDA** CARRIED THE MISSIVE FROM BURDWAN TO CALCUTTA Dt 14.10.1940

“The Nazi Bombers,  
Their Bomb They drop & bolt,  
The infant and the Aged  
They are out to kill.  
Its up to you to do your bit,  
And make them still.”

HOMING PIGEON **ALLY SLOPER** CARRIED THE MISSIVE FROM BURDWAN TO CALCUTTA Dt 14.10.1940

Reverse of the cover



### 5. PIGEON POST

It is a term coined where homing pigeons are used as effective as messengers (attributable to their natural homing abilities) to communicate the messages & mails from one place to another. Pigeons, transported to a destination in cages or lofts, attached with missives secured to their feet would be released, who would fly back. The missives will carry messages to destined place and would return to the owner with a reply in same fashion.



PROMOTIONAL STAMP PACK GIFTED BY AIR-INDIA CONTAINING INDIAN POSTAGE STAMPS FOR

The first organized pigeon airmail service was started in 1896 between New Zealand and the Great Barrier Island. The sinking of the SS Wairarapa off the Great Barrier Island, with the loss of 134 lives, was a catalyst for the service. News of the disaster did not reach New Zealand for 3-days and as a direct result a pigeon-gram service was set up between the two islands. The first message was carried in January 1896 and took less than 1.75 hours to reach Auckland. Up to 5 messages were carried by each pigeon with the record time for the journey being held by a pigeon called 'Velocity' taking only 50 minutes and averaging 125 kmph (only 40% slower than a modern aircraft!).

Odd shaped MS with odd shaped set of 4 stamps was issued during AUPEX '97 @\$2.40, MS carried image of original stamp of 1894 and a Tete-beche pair in Blue

This first flight airmail cover commemorates the golden jubilee of the world's first distinctive airmail stamp, which was flown by pigeon from Okupu, Great Barrier Island, on 19.11.1898.

Through the courtesy of the Auckland Racing Pigeon Federation, the Jubilee Etiquette, a replica of the original stamp, was actually flown by pigeon from Okupu to Auckland on 19.11.1948, and was affixed to the cover on its return from the post.

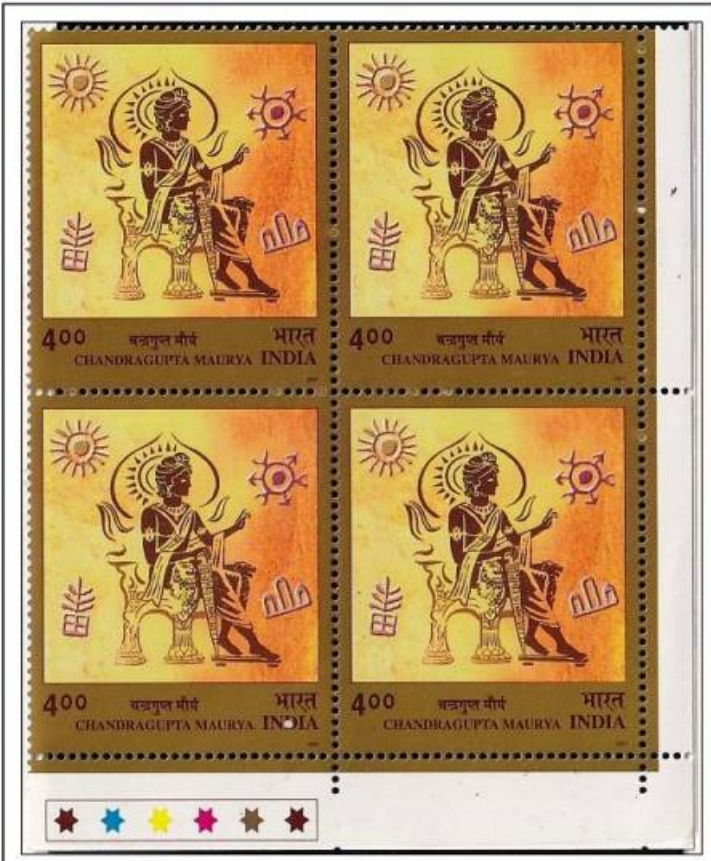
The etiquette is tied to the cover by an impression from one of the actual obliterations used in the service.



5. PIGEON POST contd.

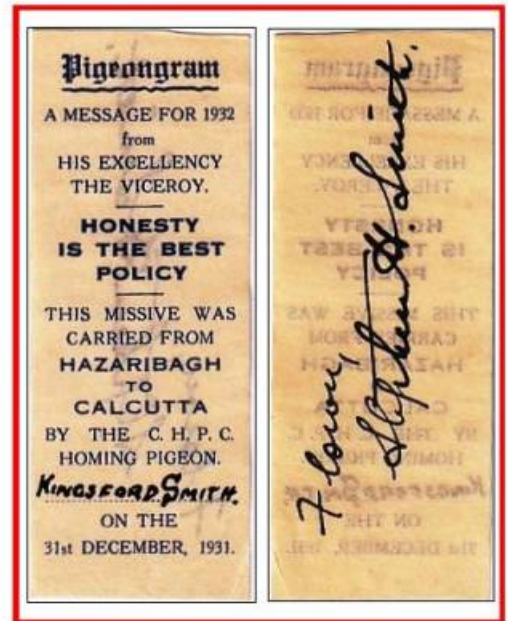


HOMING PIGEON - KINGSFORD SMITH, Pigeongram, flew from Hazaribagh to Calcutta, dated 31.12.1931 with Missive, carrying message for H.E. The Viceroy- "Honesty is the best policy". Cover Tied with Half Anna, Green, KG-V, posted at Park Street P.O. Autographed by Stephen Smith



PIGEON POST IN INDIA

King Chandragupta Maurya, (340-293 BC) and his grandson Emperor Asoka, The Great (304-232 BC) are believed to have pioneered commissioning pigeons as messengers to carry strategic messages and also collection of revenue data between capital and the outlying provinces of their vast kingdoms.

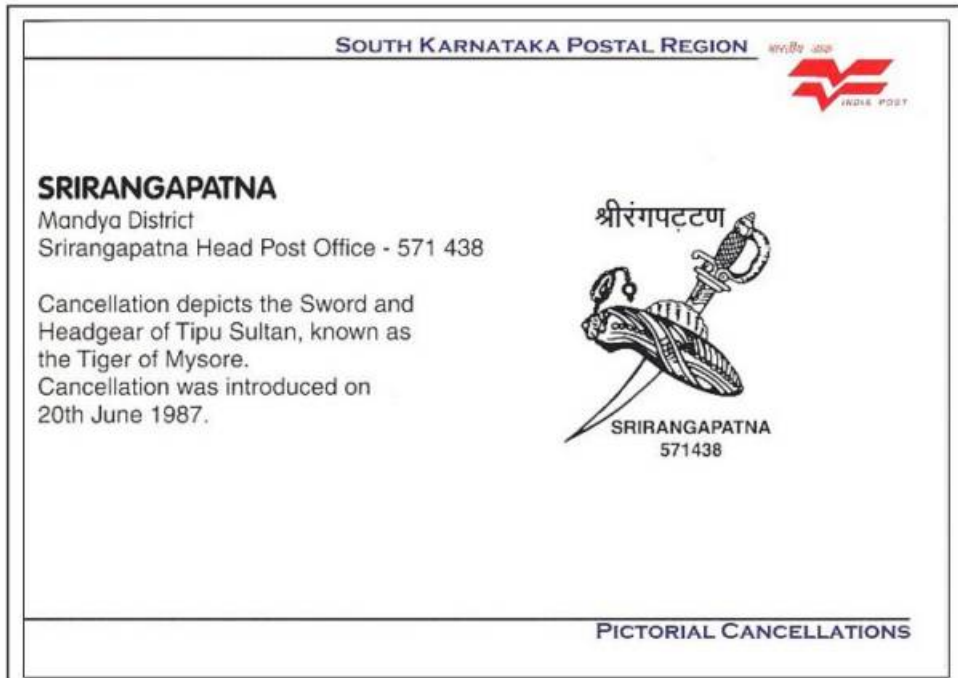


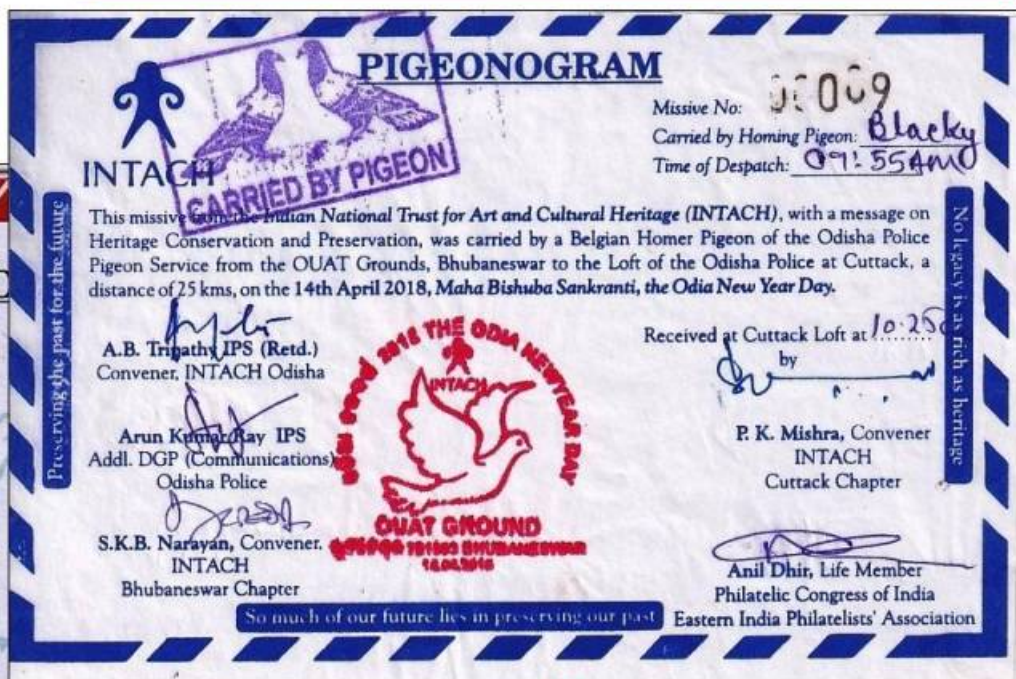
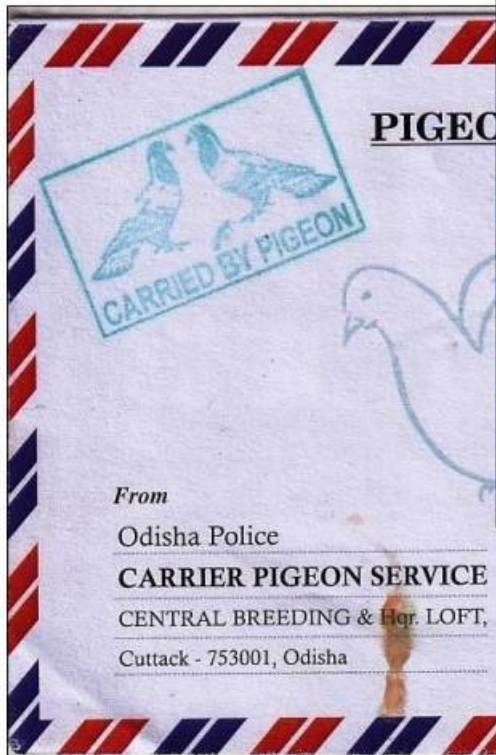
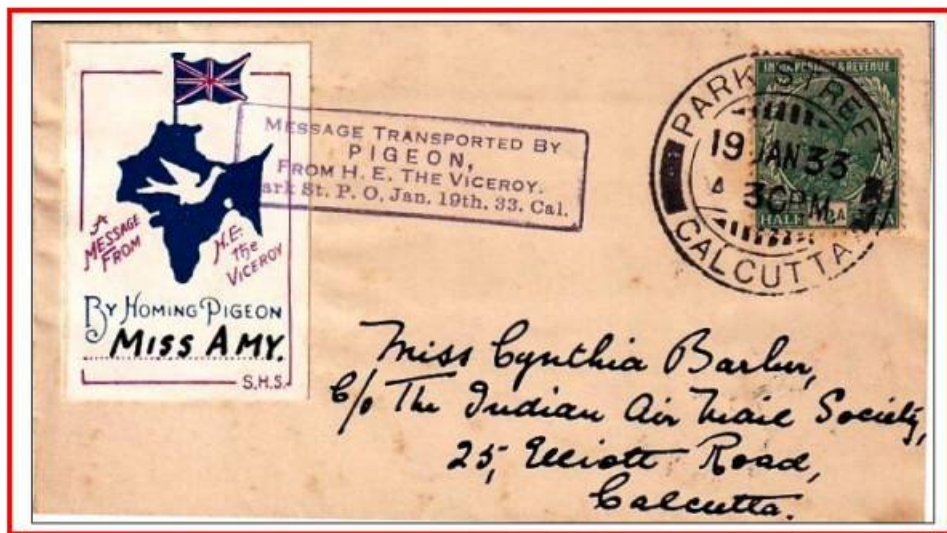
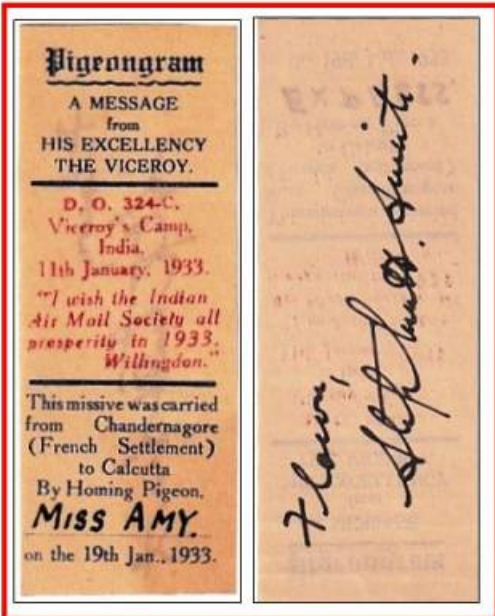
TIPU SULTAN (1782-1799)

He in 18th Century used carrier pigeons extensively, where the pigeons would return to Jamia Masjid (Mosque in Srirangapatnam) being his headquarters.

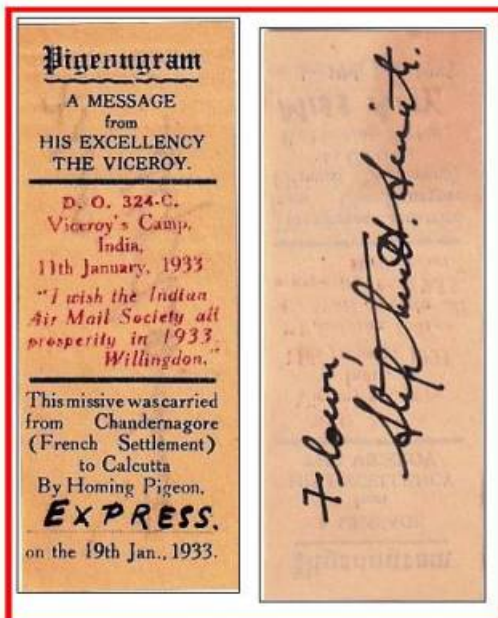
KING TIPU SULTAN - Issued on 15.07.1974 COLOR VARIETY LEFT TOP CORNER STAMP IS A DRY PRINT

PERMANENT CANCELLATION- SRIRANGAPATNA- BOOKLET PANE KARNATAKA CIRCLE



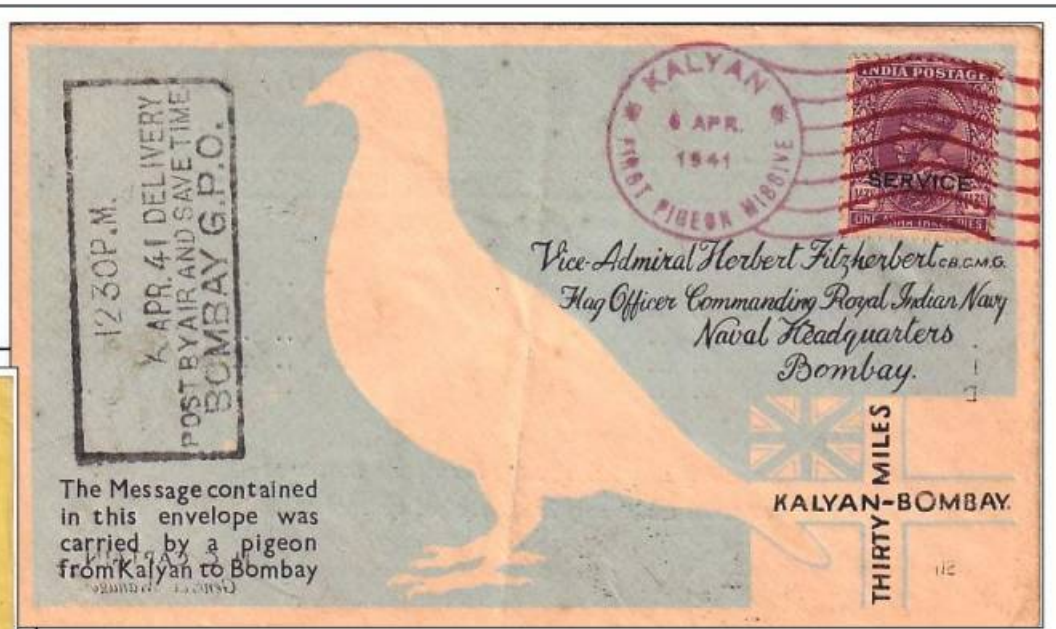


SPELLING ERROR  
MESSAGE BECOMES MASSAGE  
LABEL AFFIXED TO THIS  
COVER HAS THIS GRAVE  
MISTAKE



5. PIGEON POST contd.

FIRST PIGEON MISSIVE CARRIED, FROM KALYAN TO NAVAL HEAD QUARTERS, BOMBAY GPO WAS DELIVERED AT 1230pm ON 08.04.1941. THE COVER IS TIE WITH ONE ANNA 3 PIES KG V, OVPT SERVICE cd IN RED



The Message contained in this envelope was carried by a pigeon from Kalyan to Bombay

1981 STAMP WEEK PIGEON FLIGHT

This message was carried by

Pigeon No. *CFC 1324-80*

from the Philatelic Centre, 27 Worcester St., Christchurch, 29 August, 1981.



↑ PIGEON FLIGHT FROM PHILATELIC CENTRE, WORCESTER St CHRISTCHURCH

OCCURRED ON 29.08.1981

CARRIED A FLIMSY No. 576 BY THE HOMING PIGEON CODENAMED

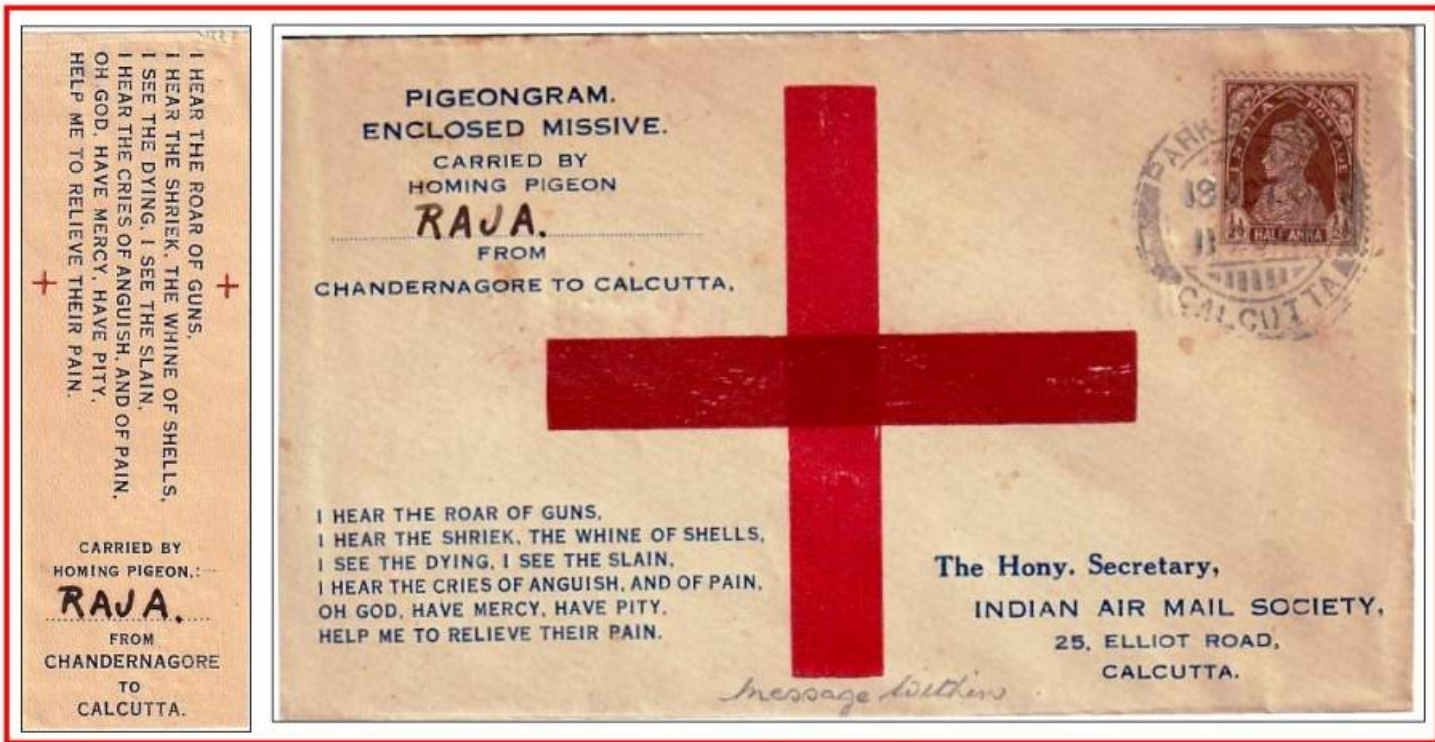
CFC 1324.80



In India and elsewhere carried message or a "FLIMSY" is called "Missive"



5. PIGEON POST contd.



Displayed here are two of the Pigeongram, carried by homing Pigeons, named as RAJA (English meaning The King) and the RANI ( meaning The Queen), which flew at 11.20am from Chandernagore to Calcutta covering 47.7 km of distance and landed at 1.30pm on 18th Oct 1940.

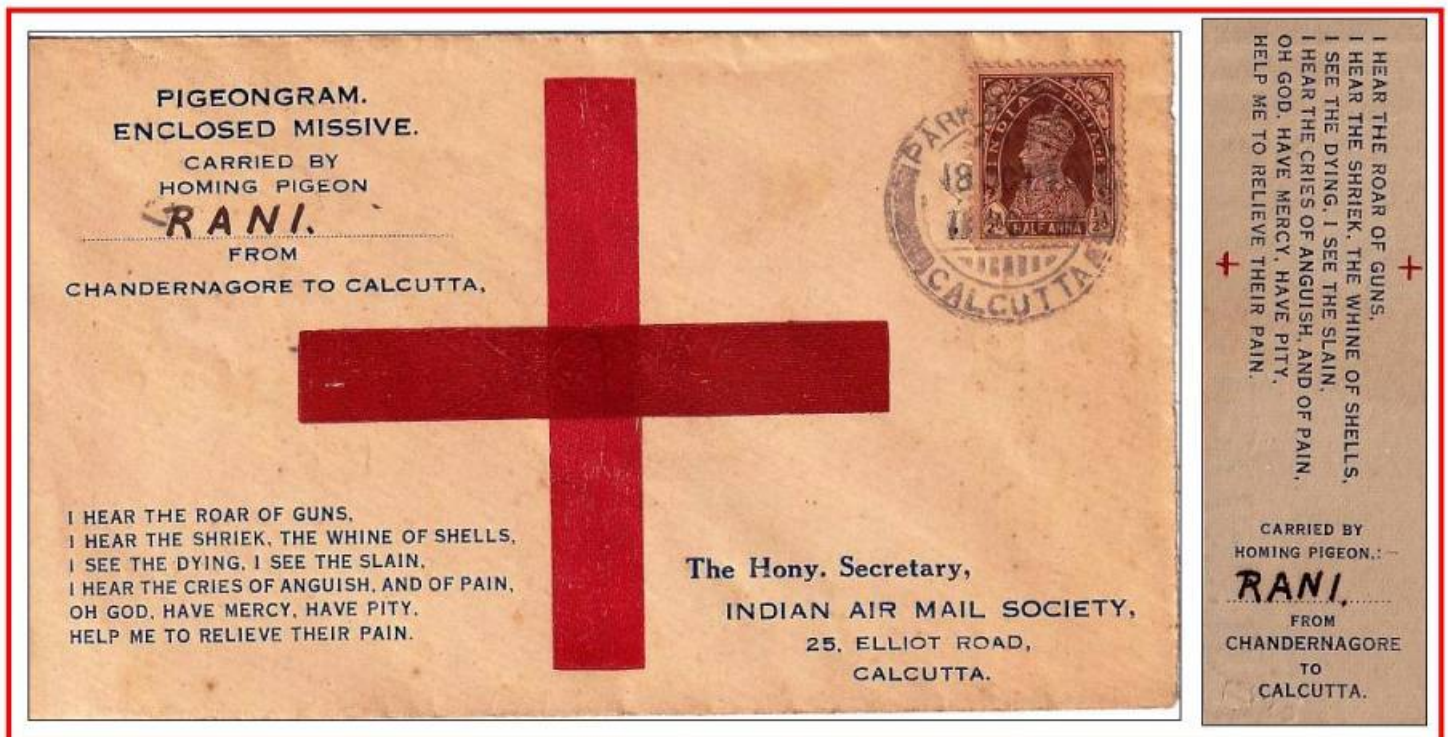


The Covers were autographed by Stephen Smith, a Rocket scientist and a pioneer of Rocket mail, in British India Era.



EUROPA-1971  
BRITISH POSTAL STRIKE  
OCCURRED DURING 1971  
THUS PARALYSING THE  
COMPLETE POSTAL NEWOK.

IMPERF MS ACTUALLY ISSUED BY  
DAVAR ISLANDS IN 1967 WERE  
OVERPRINTED BY DEFACING AND  
REISSUED AT 5p AND 20p  
DEPICTS THE PIGEON





L  
753002 12.03.2020  
3DE7 00303882



भारत INDIA  
POSTAGE  
Rs 5.00  
P671954



Commemor  
90 Year of Dar



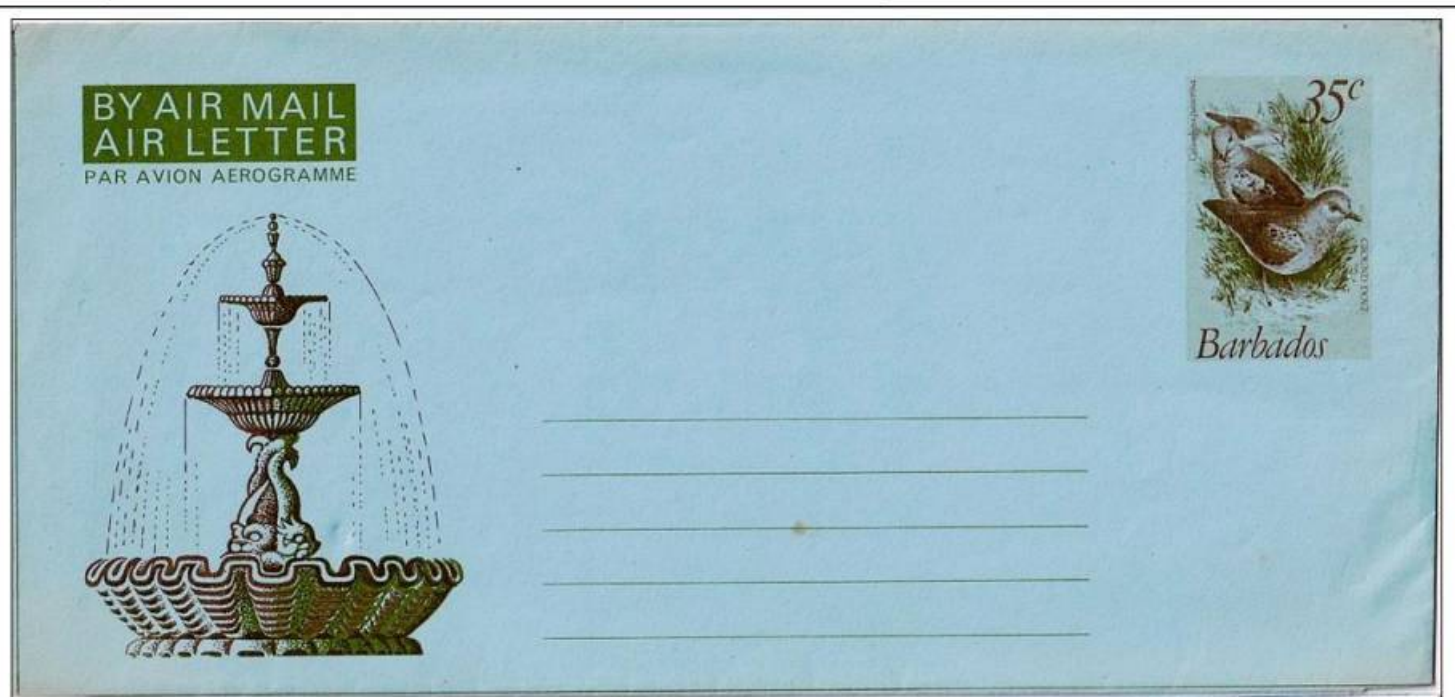
Composite Semi-Postal MS is-  
sued with stamps for every conti-  
nent, during Infamous British  
Postal Strike .



MACHINE FRANKED MAIL - TWO COMMERCIALY USED COVERS  
DEPICT DIFFERENT FORMATS USED FOR MACHINE FRANKING AND A  
PIGEON IN FLIGHT  
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF MAHATMA, AN APOSTLE OF PEACE  
COVERS WERE POSTED ON 30th JANUARY 2020  
COVERS ALSO CARRY A QR CODE



AIRMAIL LETTER / AEROGRAMME  
DEPICTING COMMON GROUND DOVE  
ISSUED ON 07.08.1979



## 7. AN ICON & SYMBOL OF PEACE contd...

In Christian and Jewish symbolism pigeon that is manifestation of Holy Spirit in New Testament is symbol of purity, simplicity and even when carries olive branch into Noah ship is symbol of peace.



A SPECIMEN Se-tenant pair to commemorate Intl Solidarity with Palestinian People. Issued 1980

↑ Year 1971 saw a Birth of a new Nation called Bangladesh. Fighting soldiers with Peace dove and an Olive Branch. Color Variety and a near blind Dove in upper MS.



1997. Finland. Stamps Booklet Stamps valid for Class I, postage.



2000. CANADA New Millennium A Holographic Self adhesive Stamp to commemorate New Millennia, depicts doves released for world peace.



Rotary International retained Dove with an olive branch as their insignia. Imperf Proof.



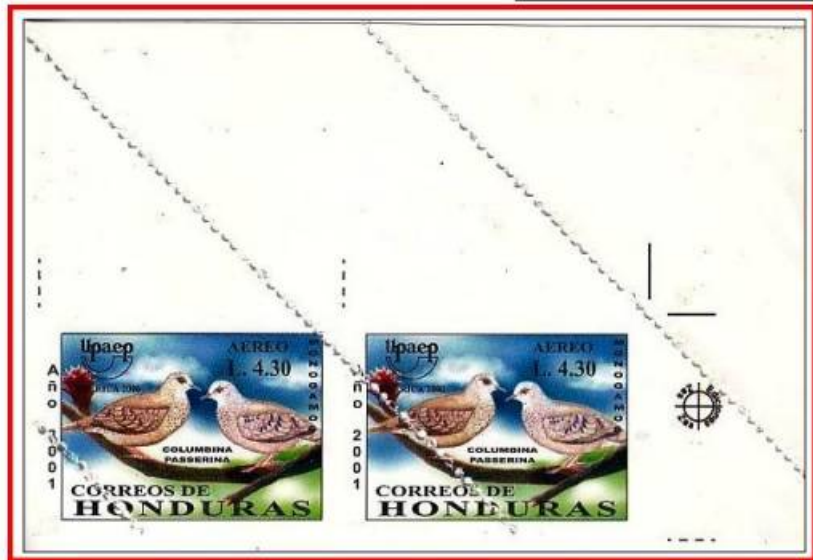
# 7. AN ICON & SYMBOL OF PEACE



**PRINTER'S WASTE**  
It is an imperfect or experimental postal or other official stamps that are supposed to be destroyed by the printer.

2001.  
Plate proof with dramatic shift of perforation depicting common dove

1999. Fruit Dove a \$40 Revenue Stamp, though a British colony, issued it in US Currency.



Intervention of Diambars in Audi Arabia. A deluxe Card depicting Dove, as a symbol of peace with a Senegalese National Flag.  
Issued 1992



A CROSS GUTTER PAIR IMPERF. DEPICTS COMMON GROUND DOVE ALONG WITH HARPY EAGLE, A BIRD OF PREY, ISSUED ON 16.02.2001



Since its domestication many thousands of years ago, the pigeon has been revered by many religions, including Hindu, Islam, Christian and Sikh. Although Neolithic man (circa 8500 BC onwards) undoubtedly domesticated the rock dove, there is little indication that the bird was used for anything but food.

A UNIQUE MS, BAR CODED, A LIMITED ISSUE, DEPICTS CUISINE MADE OUT OF PIGEON MEAT.

MS IS PERFORATED IN THE SHAPE OF A PIGEON.



## 7. AN ICON & SYMBOL OF PEACE contd...

Since its domestication many thousands of years ago, the pigeon has been revered by many religions, including Hindu, Islam, Christian and Sikh. It has been the retained as the only bird symbolizing peace Universally.



INDIA FOR WORLD PEACE  
 SAY NO TO NUCLEAR WARS  
 COLOR VARIETY STAMP ON LEFT IS NORMAL ISSUED - 1991

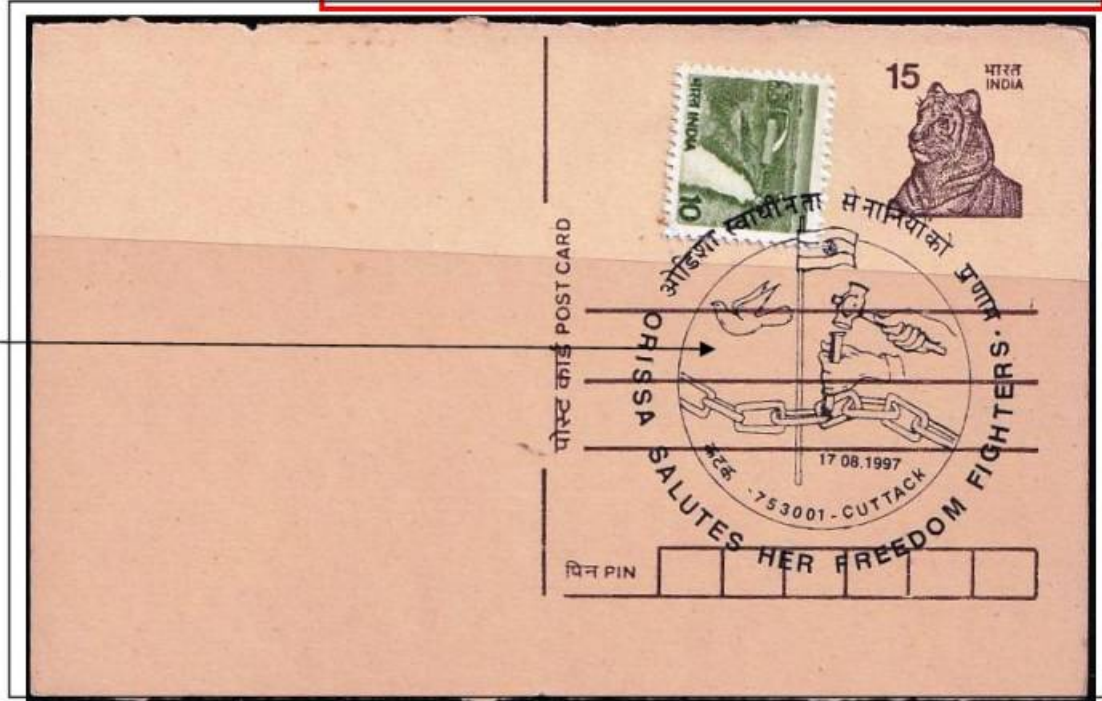


NUCLERA HOLOCAUST SPECIMEN



Peace Freedom Flag Pictorial cancel on post card Up rated from 15p to 25p Tied with 10p definitive

ABOLISH SLAVERY SPECIMEN



*'You have to accept the fact that sometimes you are the pigeon, and sometimes you are the statue.'*  
 Claude Chabrol



All Russian Central Executive Committee for Game Preserves and Central Bureau for Bird Ringing. Registered, used cover dated 09.08.1971. (Bird ringing is normally done for Homing pigeons and Tracking Migration of birds)