

THE ROCKET MAILS OF INDIA (1934-1937)

Introduction :

-The transportation of mail by rocket represents one of the most fascinating experimental developments in postal history.

-**India occupies a most significant position in world rocket mail history through the pioneering work of Stephen Hector Taylor-Smith during the 1930s and 1940s.** His experiments demonstrated the possibility of carrying mail by rocket across rivers, difficult terrain, and remote locations.

-These experimental flights resulted in the creation of distinctive postal material including carried covers, missives, cards, cachets, labels, cancellations, hand stamps and documents.

-The surviving material today provides an important record of innovation in Indian rocket mail experiments.

Purpose & Scope :

The purpose of this exhibit is **to demonstrate and illustrate the historical importance, development and postal significance of rocket mail experiments conducted in India.** The exhibit covers -

- Background and origin of rocket mail experiments in India.
- Experimental rocket mail flights from 1934 onward.
- Development of rocket designs and methods of operation.
- Rocket mail cachets, labels, cancellations, and auxiliary markings.
- Important and special flights.
- Rare and unusual postal material.
- India's contribution to world rocket postal history.

Period Covered : 1934–1944

Treatment & Presentation :

-An attempt **to study and display most of the important and rare rocket mails of India, from first rocket mail experiments in 1934 to advanced rocket mail experiments upto 1944.**

-It includes flown examples of **Calcutta RMs, Special event RMs, Sikkim RMs, Telescopic RMs, Propaganda RMs, Coronation RMs, Rocket Train RMs, War Rocket Experiments etc..**

-Most of the covers, missives, cards etc. despatched from the nearest post office.

-For each rocket mail information is given on rocket no., date, place, flown covers, labels/vignettes, cachets, cancellation etc. to illustrate the progression and significance of these experimental flights.

-**The exhibit showcases most of the rare items and it is arranged chronologically** and by subject to illustrate the evolution and operation of Indian rocket mail experiments.

Plan of Exhibit :

- 1) Calcutta Rocket Experiments.
- 2) Special Event Rocket Experiments.
- 3) Telescopic Rocket Experiments.
- 4) Coronation Rocket Experiments.
- 5) Rocket Train Experiments.
- 6) Rocket Experiments of 1938.
- 7) War Rocket Experiments.
- 8) Sikkim Rocket Experiments.
- 9) Propaganda Rocket Experiments.

Bibliography/ References :

- 1) From the Diary of Stephen Smith : Compiled by D. N. Jatia.
- 2) Specialised Priced Catalogue of Indian Rocket Mails : Compiled by Jal Cooper.
- 3) Pioneer Rocket Mail and Space Mail : by Walter Michael Hopferwieser.
- 4) Rocket Mail Flights Of The World To 1986 : by Dr. Max Kronstein.
- 5) Billig's Philatelic HandBook (Volume 23) : by Fritz Billig.

INDIAN ROCKET MAILS

Rocket No. 1 – Date : 30th September, 1934

First Indian Rocket Mail

Ship to Shore off Saugor Island near Calcutta



The *First Indian Rocket Mail experiment* had taken place at sea, from *Ship to Shore*, off Saugor Island on 30th September, 1934. The rocket used was locally manufactured by the firm of The Orient Fireworks Co. of Calcutta. The fuse of the rocket was ignited by Mr. Charles Potten, the Captain of the Despatch vessel "Pancy", without success; as his second effort also failed, the Chief Officer of the ship, Mr. E. T. Day tried his hand at igniting the fuse, but he also failed, which led Mr. S. E. Woolman, the Chief Engineer to try, again with no success. Finally, the experimenter himself was successful in igniting the fuse of the Rocket, which rose and burst in mid-air. It carried 143 letters, which owing to the mid-air burst, scattered in many directions. 140 letters were saved and 3 were lost. The salvaged letters were handed over to Mr. W. Shenton, the Lighthouse Keeper of Saugor Island, who cancelled the letters with a postmark, "Saugor Island : 30 SE 34." The flown covers have a vignette in green and red affixed on them, and have a single line strike of "*First Firing. Ship to Shore*" cachet in violet.

Rocket No. 1 : Flown Covers (140)

(a): Vignette (green and red, 257)

Rocket No. 4 – Date : 30th September, 1934
First Rocket Firing on Land



The *first land rocket experiment* had taken place on the same day as the *sea* experiment, and the rocket was fired *across a small creek* by Mr. Walter Shenton, the keeper of the Lighthouse at Saugor Island. For this experiment the rocket used was manufactured by Messrs. James, Pain & Sons.

This rocket had carried 220 covers, which included 3 covers franked with 'Dutch Rocket Stamps' and 8 covers which had been carried in the first rocket experiment, "Ship to Shore." The flown covers are cancelled : "Saugor Island. 30 SE 34" and have a vignette in blue and red affixed on them. They also have a strike of "*First Indian Rocket Despatch*" cachet in red-purple.

Rocket No. 4 : Flown Covers (209)

(a) : Flown Cover with 'Dutch Rocket Stamp' (3)

(b) : No. 1 carried again (8)

(c) : Vignette (blue and red, 180)

Rocket No. 9 – Date : 3rd October 1934

First Shore to Ship Firing



The *first Shore to Ship rocket experiment* was made on 3rd October, 1934 from *Saugor Island* to the *Survey vessel, "Guide."* The task of firing the rocket was entrusted to the head Semaphore attendant of Saugor Island, Mr. Rashon Ali, and the rocket used was again supplied by James, Pain & Sons. The rocket did not reach its destination, the deck of the Survey vessel "Guide" and after travelling about thousand yards, plunged into the sea. The 135 letters carried by the rocket were salvaged by a boat kept ready for such an emergency and were handed over the next day at Muriganga post office, where they were cancelled by the postmaster, who applied a post mark of "Muriganga" B. O. 4th OCT. 34: 24 Pargs." (B.O. stands for Branch Office, Pargs. For Parganas.) The letters have the red and green vignette with date 3 OCT.1934 impressed by rubber-stamp in purple, and also have a black strike of "*FROM SAUGOR ISLAND*" cachet.

Rocket No. 9 : Flown Covers (135)

(a) : Vignette (red and green, 265)

(Note : a single-line rubber cachet, reading "First firing Shore to Ship" was to be applied on these covers, but after applying it on only one cover, the rubber letterings slipped off the wooden handle and therefore, this cachet was not applied on the other covers.)

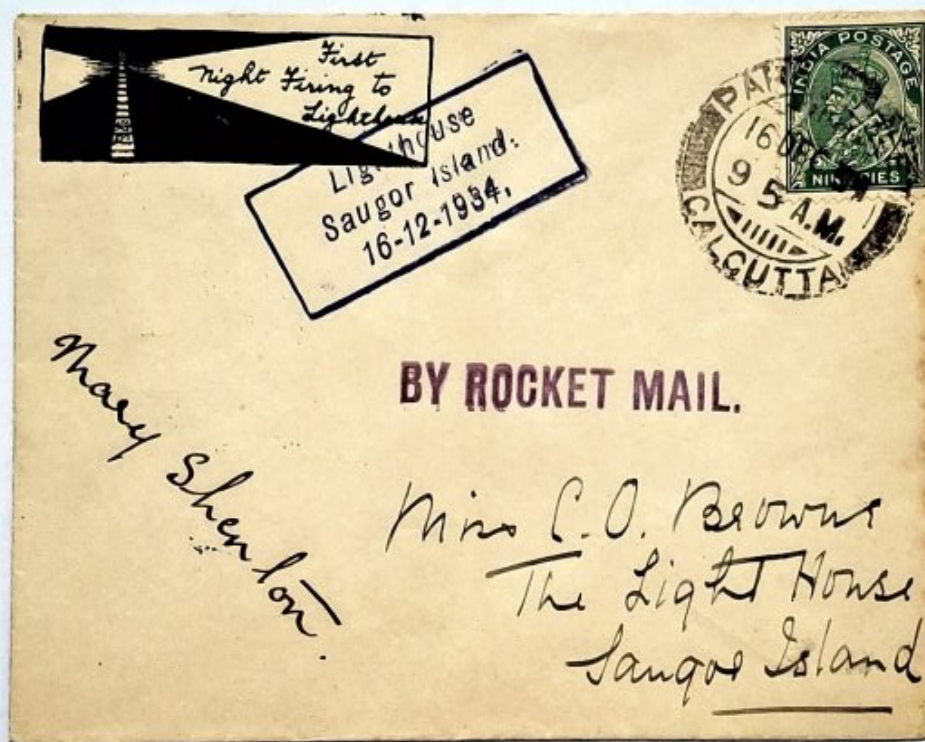
Rocket No. 11 – Date : 16th December, 1934
Ship to Shore Night Firing



This was the *first experiment carried out from Ship to Shore at night* when two rockets, manufactured by the Orient Fireworks Co. of Calcutta, each carrying a miniature page of Calcutta's leading daily, '*The Statesman*', in specially printed covers, were fired. Both the rockets had safely landed on Saugor Island and were retrieved from the jungles by the Keeper of the Lighthouse on the island. The letters carried were 220 and they were all franked with a black and white vignette, showing a night scene of two bats flying in mid-air and a rocket with the words Ship to Shore, flying towards a full moon. They were also impressed by the date stamp Semaphore Station of Saugor Island and a single-line cachet, "**BY ROCKET MAIL**" in deep purple. The postmark reads : Park Street, Calcutta 16 DEC. 34 9-5 A.M.

Rocket No. 11 : Flown Covers (220)
(a) : Vignette in black (280)

Rocket No. 14 – Date : 16th December, 1934
First Night Firing on Land



On the same night, two more rockets each containing 125 X'mas Greetings from the First Battalion of the Devonshire Regiments, were fired by Miss Mary Shenton, the daughter of Keeper of the Lighthouse, from *Semaphor Station on Saugor Island to the Lighthouse*. The rockets used were supplied by the same company as in No. 5. Both the rockets failed to land on the Lighthouse and they landed at a distance of 300 and 500 yards respectively from the firing rack.

All the letters have an *imprinted* vignette in black showing a lighthouse by night and the words : "*First Night Firing to Lighthouse.*" They bear a purple-blue cachet, reading "Lighthouse Saugor Island, 16-12-1934" and a second cachet "*BY ROCKET MAIL*" in deep purple. The postmark reads : "Park Street, Calcutta 16 DEC. 34 9-5 A.M."

Rocket No. 21 & 22 – Date : 17th December, 1934
First Night Firing From Shore to Ship



As Ship to Shore *night rocket firings* (No. 5) were successful, it was decided to experiment a similar firing, this time from *Shore to Ship*. This was done on 17th December, 1934 and two rockets supplied by the Orient Fireworks Co., were fired by Mar. Walter Shenton, Keeper of the Lighthouse at Saugor Island, *from shore to S. S. Kutsang*. As the steamer was very far away from the rocket firing site, both the rockets fell into the sea and after being salvaged were sent to Calcutta by "Sir Fredrick Dumayne," a survey vessel of the Calcutta marine service.

The two rockets had carried 260 letters: 110 of this contained miniature newspaper-sheets of the *Evening Chronicle*, *#News of the World**, *Punch* and the *Times of India*. All covers have a red vignette showing a rocket fired from shore to ship and bearing the words: "Shore to Ship By Rocket." This vignette is tied with a purple cachet of Semaphore Station, Saugor Island. The covers also bear a second cachet in deep purple: "**BY ROCKET MAIL.**" The postmark reads: "Park Street, Calcutta 18 DEC. 34 3-45 P.M."

Rocket No. 21 & 22 : Flown Covers (150)

- (a) : #Flown Cover* with miniature newspaper-sheet (110)
- (b) : Complete copies of miniature newspapers (3)
- (c) : Vignette (in red) (240)

Rocket No. 27 & 28 – Date : 23rd March, 1935 Royal Silver Jubilee Firing

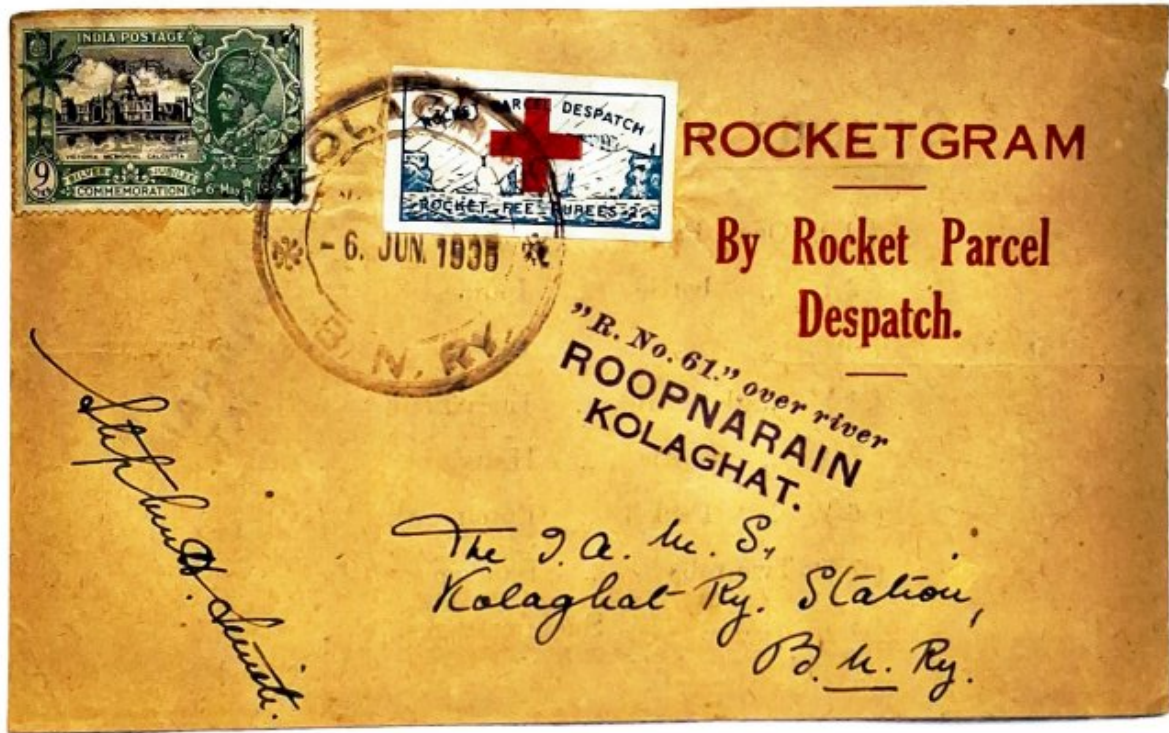


The *Silver Jubilee of King George V's* reign was celebrated throughout the British Empire and India was no exception. The Orient Fireworks Co. presented two rockets to Mr. Stephen Smith on this occasion and he fired them on 23rd March, 1935 *from a ship in Diamond Harbour to the shore*. Each rocket carried 100 letters franked with a special 2 rupee stamp, in blue and yellow colours, and the sale proceeds of these stamps and covers were handed over by Mr. Smith to the Royal Silver Jubilee Fund. The stamp was tied to the cover by a **diamond shaped cachet**, reading "Royal Silver Jubilee 1910-1935 and the word Rocketgram between two crowns." Though 1500 of these rocket stamps were printed, 700 of them had to be destroyed owing to faulty printing. Later on 31 of these stamps were found printed *double*, 11 unused and 20 used on covers. Some of the flown covers have been signed by Mr. D. C. King, the Customs Officer of Diamond Harbour. The postmark reads : "Diamond Harbour, 23 MAR. 35."

Rocket No. 27 : Flown Covers (180)

- (a) : Flown Cover with stamp printed *double* (20)
- (b) : Unused stamp (589)
- (c) : Unused stamp, printed *double* (11)

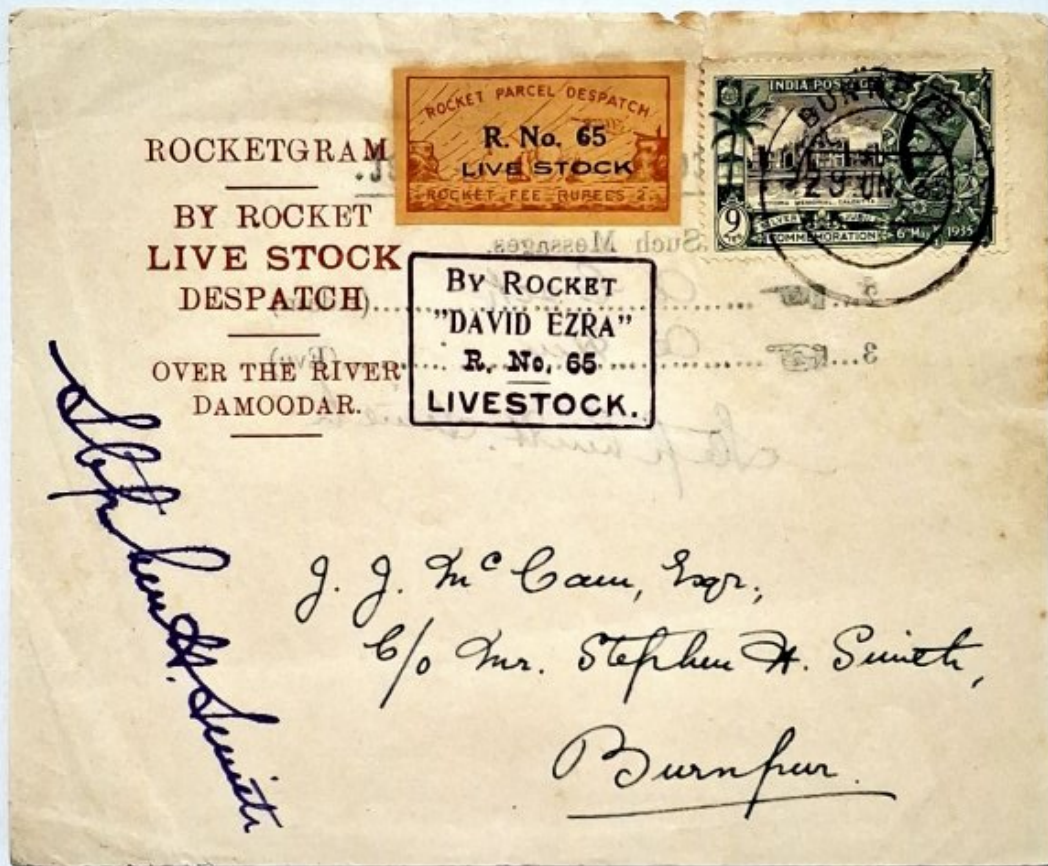
Rocket No. 61 – Date : 6th June, 1935
Red Cross Rocket



Rocket No. 61 was tested immediately on the same day and from same place across river as No. 60. It carried besides 110 *orange* missives, various articles like small bottles of Haliverol, Iodex, Iodine, Lucaspirin, Rolls of bandages and packets of Lint and Epsom salt ! Again 750 special 2 rupee stamps were issued in blue with a 'Red Cross' in the centre, and affixed to all the flown missives. The stamp is tied with the Kolaghat Station Master's date cachet and second cachet, reading "*R. No. 61. over river Roopnarain, Kolaghat*" was also applied to all the missives. The cells proceeds in this case were also handed over to the **Red Cross Relief Fund**.

Rocket No. 61 : Flown Missives (110)
(a) : Stamps (600)

Rocket No. 65 – Date : 29th June, 1935
Live Stock Despatch



India made history when Mr. Stephen Smith conveyed safely in a rocket for the *first time in the world, - a live cock and a hen ! Rocket No. 65, named "David Ezra"* after the millionaire business magnate of Calcutta was fired from the Damoodar Bank *over the river Damoodar* to the Ramkanali Bank on the opposite side, carrying these two live birds and 189 specially printed *white* missives. A special *orange* stamp of the 2 rupee value, overprinted "*R. No. 65, Live Stock*" in 2 lines was affixed to each missive and 400 of these stamps were printed. After the experiment, the cock and hen were presented to Sir David Ezra at Calcutta.

All the missives have a four line cachet, reading "By Rocket "David Ezra" R. No. 65 "LIVE STOCK" The postmark reads : "Burnpur, 29 JUN. 35."

Rocket No. 65 : Flown Missives (189)
(a) : Stamps (211)

Rocket No. 17 – Date : 21st September, 1936
John Winterton



On 21st September, 1936 a second successful test under flood condition was made by *Rocket No. 127*, named "*John Winterton*", which carried 106 covers, an apple and a live snake ! The rocket was fired in the flooded area from Chingripota to Malikpur. All the covers were affixed with a deep-purple vignette which was tied to the cover with a black cachet, as illustrated. The postmark reads : "Sonarpur, 21 SEP. 36, 2 P. M."

Rocket No. 17 : Flown Covers (106)
(a): Vignette (200)

Rocket No. 141 – Date : 12th May, 1937

Coronation Rocket



Immediately after Pilot Rocket No. IX was successfully fired, the second rocket, named “**Coronation Rocket No. 141**” was fired, carrying 400 similar printed cards as carried by the Pilot Rocket. 350 of these cards were posted franked with postage stamps : as the post offices were closed for the Coronation Day, the balance of 50 cards could not be posted, as Mr. Stephen Smith had run short of the postage stamps. The cards bear one of the two stamps printed and all have a small cachet, as illustrated, with the same dated postmark as in No. 24.

Rocket No. 141 : Flown Cards (350)

- (a) : Flown Cards *without postmark* (50)
- (b) : Stamp (Blue and red, 1,500)
- (c) : Stamp (Purple and red, 1,500)
- (d) : Stamp, *printed double* (2)

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- (c) : Stamp (Purple and red, 1,500)
- (d) : Stamp, *printed double* (2)

Rocket – Date : 18th May, 1937

CORONATION ROCKET



1937, *Coronation Rocketgram* card, with a *special vignette tied with special cachets of the Japanese Goodwill Coronation, Return Flight, 'Divine Wind', 18-5-37, Calcutta to Rangoon and Consulate General Calcutta seal, franked with KGV. 2a. on back with printed message.*

Stephen Smith commemorated the British Coronation internationally. On 19th May 1937, he visited the Japanese Consulate and acquired a special cachet for 54 cards numbered 1 to 54.

Rocket No. 24 : Cards (54)

(a): Vignette (maroon, 54)

Rocket - Date : 22nd September, 1937
Rocket Train Eric-Cyn



On this date two "Rocket Train" experiments were carried out at Behala, a suburb of Calcutta. On this day also, the first experiment was done by a pilot rocket train named, "ERIC-CYN" having three compartments. It carried 287 specially printed cards. On the obverse side of the cards, the contents of each compartment have been entered in ink manuscript. These cards were affixed with a special blue and red stamp, tied with four-line cachet, as illustrated. Though 1,000 of this stamp were printed, 500 of them were destroyed later on. On the stamp, the overprint reads "SYN" instead of "CYN". The postmark reads : "Park Street, Calcutta, 22 SEP. 37 7.20 A.M"

Rocket : Flown Cards (287)

- (a) : Flown Card with stamp showing over-print "Eric-Cyn" double (3)
- (b) : Stamp overprinted "Eric-Syn" (500)
- (c) : Stamp with overprint "Eric-Cyn" double (2)
- (d) : 10 flown cards had been found used with the Rocket Train stamp of "Herbert E. Barber" without the overprint "Eric-Syn".

Rocket – Date : 22nd September, 1937
Saturn Express Herbert E. Barber



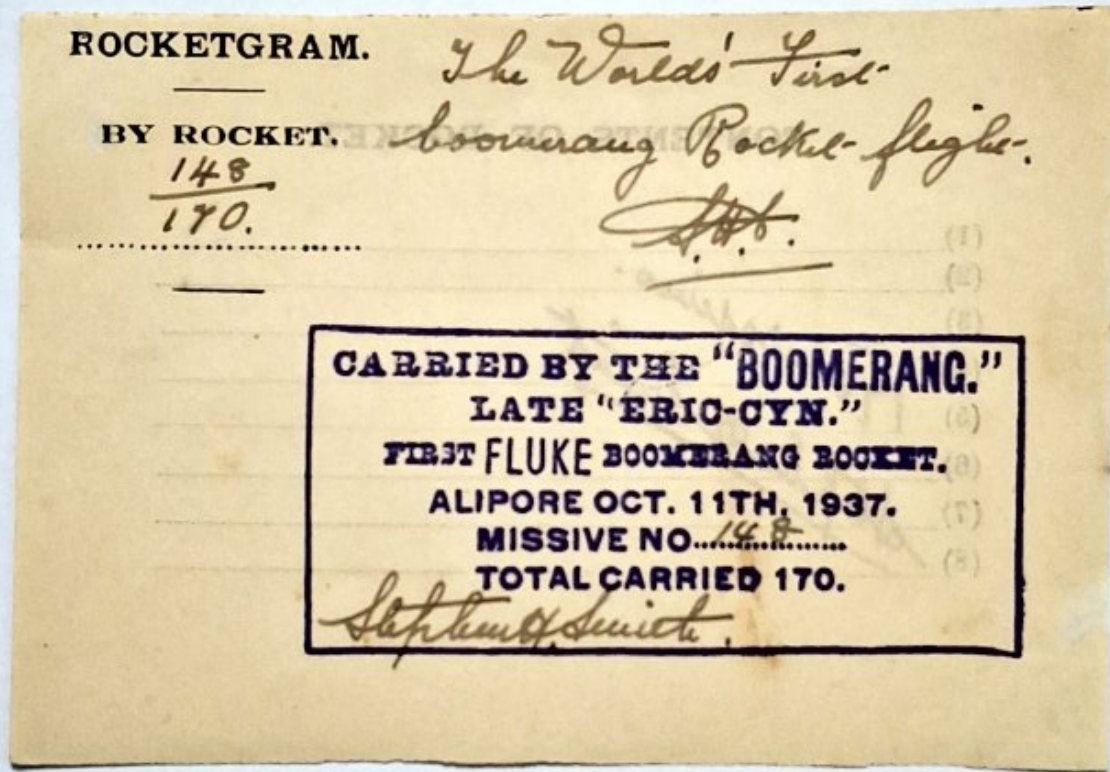
The second firing on this date was of a rocket train, named, “**The Saturn Express, Herbert E. Barber.**” The rocket train comprised of four compartments : the first was used for control and as parcel cabin, **carrying 100 cards** and a **small sample bottle of whisky**; the second compartment carried to **white mice** and a **small bottle of brandy**; the third was used as a dining car and carried **cheese, sugar and tea** in a small packets; the fourth was a mail van and carried 300 cards.

This rocket train was fired by Mr. J. L. Winterton, the then President of the Indian Air Mail Society. All the cards bear a special stamp, tied with a large circular cachet, as illustrated. Though 2,000 of this stamp were printed, 1,000 of them were destroyed later on.

The postmark is the same as in No. 26.

Rocket : Flown Cards (300)
(a): Stamp (1000)

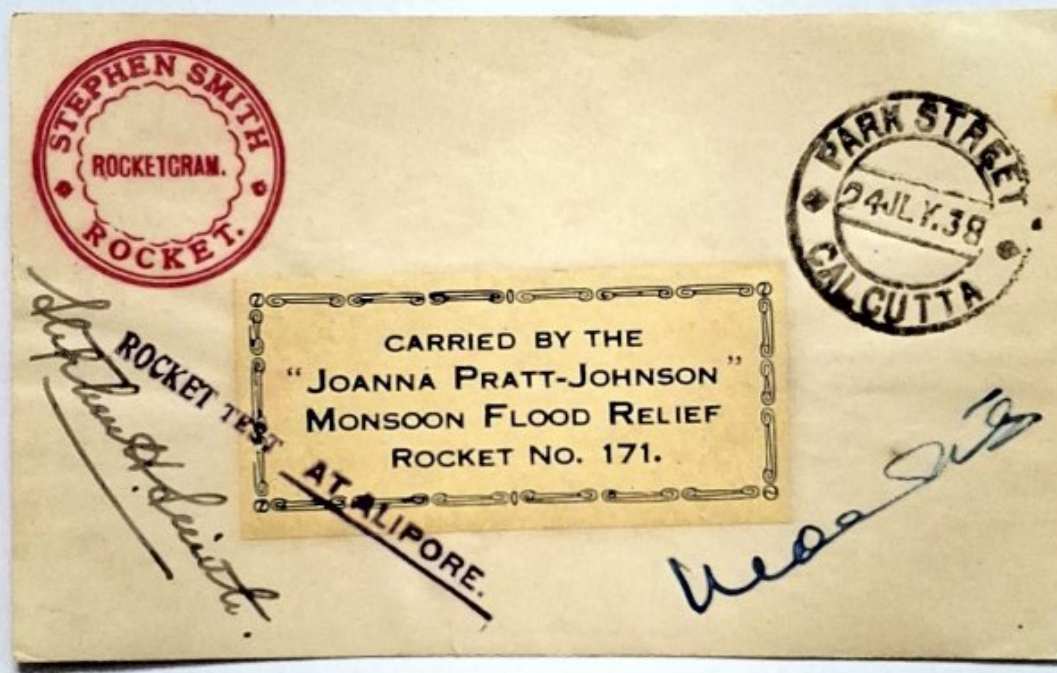
Rocket – Date : 11th October, 1937
Boomerang Rocket



The rocket train "Eric-Cyn" after dismantling two of its compartments was re-named "Boomerang" and was fired again on 11th October, 1937 at Alipore, another suburb of Calcutta. It carried 170 missives, which are impressed with a large cachet in violet, as illustrated. Each missive was numbered, and carried manuscript inscription in black ink reading : "The World's First Boomerang Rocket Flight" and was initialled by Mr. Stephen Smith.

Rocket : Flown Missives (170)

Rocket No. 171 – Date : 24th July, 1938
Joanna Pratt-Johnson

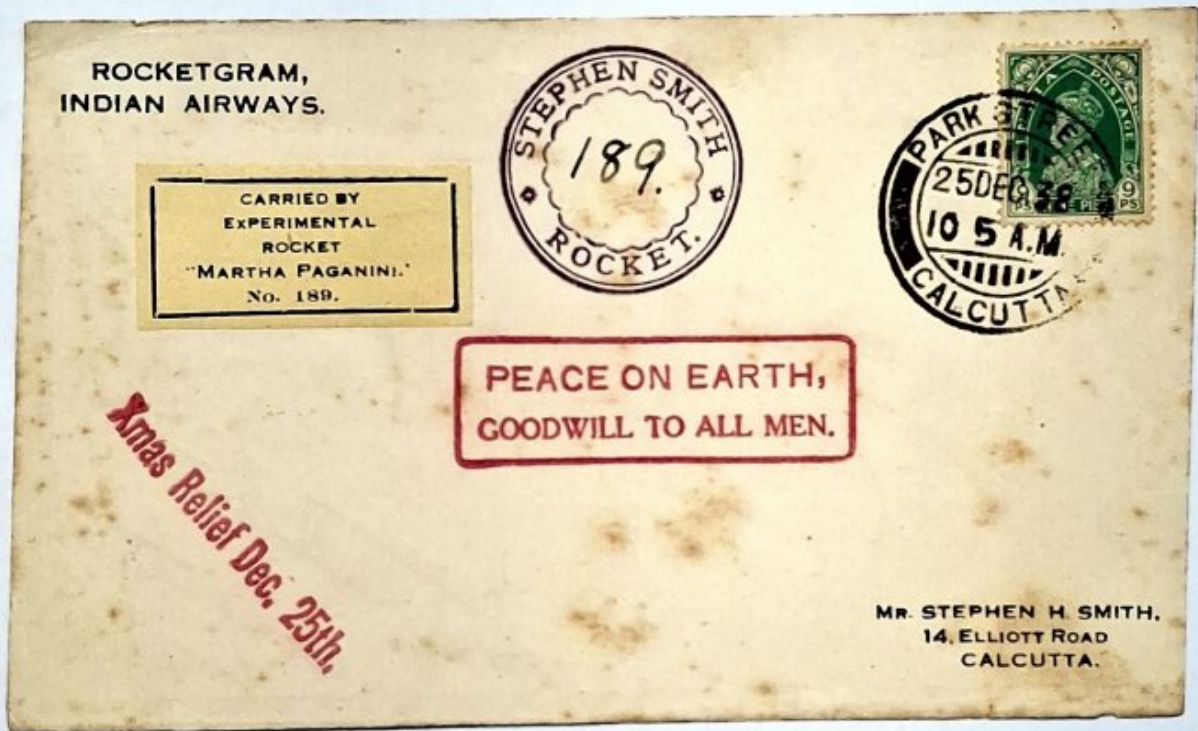


On 24th July, 1938 one more series of three rocket trials was conducted at Alipore, Calcutta. Two of the rockets, No. 171, named "Joanna Pratt-Johnson" and No. 172, called "Rowland Hill" were fired by Mr. J. H. E. Cook, the Post-Master-General of Bengal.

Rocket "Joanna Pratt-Johnson" carried 202 missives, and each bore a yellow label, tied with a single-lined cachet, "Rocket Test At Alipore." The missives also bear same circular cachet in red, as applied to Nos.32-34, and have a post-mark, "Park Street, Calcutta, 24 JLY 38."

Rocket No. 171 : Flown Missives (202)
(a) : Yellow Label (1,000)

Rocket No. 189 – Date : 25th December, 1938
Martha Paganini



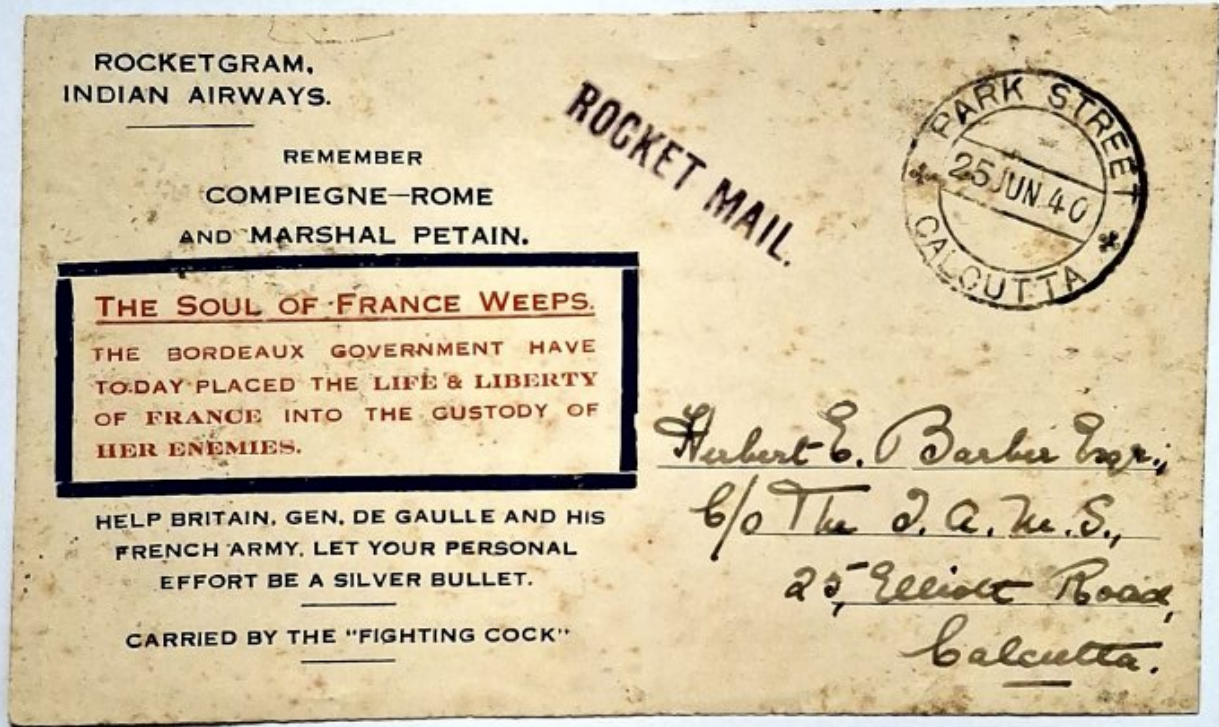
Rocket No. 189, named "**Martha Paganini**" was fired at Alipore, Calcutta on 25th December, 1938 by Mr. Stephen Smith with a view to donate the proceeds from the sale of the missives carried by it to the local Christmas Relief Fund. The rocket carried 150 missives and bore a yellow label tied with a rectangular red cachet, reading "Peace on earth, Goodwill to all men" in two lines. Two other cachets were also applied, viz., (1) a single-line cachet, "Xmas Relief Dec. 25th" in red and (2) a circular cachet, "Stephen Smith Rocket" around the circle and No. 189 in the centre. The postmark reads: "Park Street, Calcutta, 25 DEC. 38 10.5 A.M."

Rocket No. 189 : Flown Missives (150)
(a) : Yellow Label (500)

WAR ROCKETS

Rocket No. 228 – Date : 25th June, 1940

Fighting Cock



Rocket No. 228, named the "Fighting Cock" was fired on 25th June, 1940 in the suburbs of Calcutta and it carried 53 missives. The missives are printed in black and red, as illustrated, and have a single-line cachet, "ROCKET MAIL" impressed on them in purple. The postmark reads : "Park Street, Calcutta 25 JUN 40."

Rocket No. 228 : Flown Missives (53)

SIKKIM DURBAR ROCKET EXPERIMENTS

Stephen Smith's rocket flights in Sikkim, a Federal State in India, located in the north-east Himalayan Mountains between Nepal, China and Bhutan. The Maharajah of the then British Protectorate, *Tashi Namgyal*, allowed Stephen Smith to perform official rocket flights. The Durbar, the court of the Maharajah, gave approval of the vignettes produced for the rocket firings in Sikkim. Here he carried out **20 successful rocket experiments** and achieved the first rocket parcel mail. The *Oriental Fireworks Company* supplied Smith with 16 rockets between 23 March 1935 and 29 June 1935.

First Rocket Despatch

Rocket No. 42 – Date : 7th April, 1935

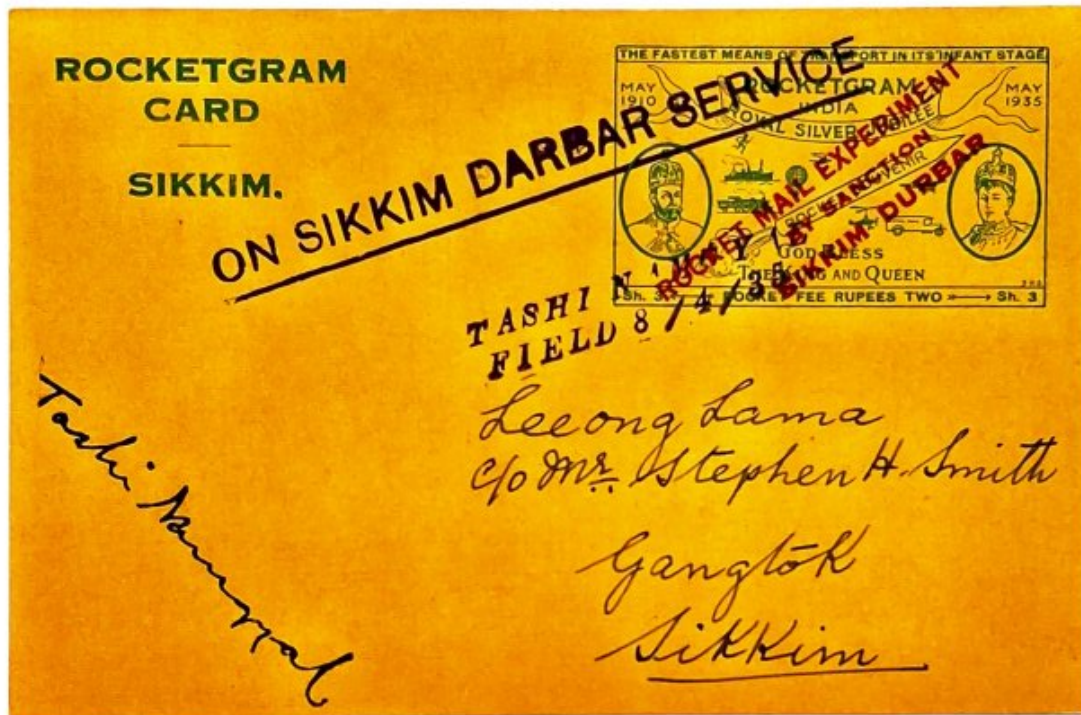


On 7th April, 1935, a rocket containing 200 covers was fired by Mr. Stephen Smith from the compound of the Gangtok Post Office to the Durbar High School. The covers were franked with the special two rupees rocket stamp in *blue and yellow*, which was tied to the cover by an ornamental cachet, as illustrated. The letters were then posted and have a postmark, reading : "Gangtok 7 APR 35."

Rocket No. 42 : Flown Covers (200)

(a) : Stamp, *blue and yellow type overprinted (1800)*

Rocket No. 49 - Date : 8th April, 1935
Third Rocket Despatch



The second rocket experiment was carried out on 8th April, 1935 from Sir Tashi Namgyal Field to the Post Office compound. This rocket was fired by His Highness the Maharajah himself and carried 388 specially printed **orange - gold cards**, as illustrated. It was a test for vertical firing high into the sky.

The cards have two cachets : (1) "ON SIKKIM DARBAR SERVICE" and (2) "Tashi Namgyal Field 8/4/35" in two lines. As the cards were not posted later on, they do not have any postmark.

Rocket No. 49 : Flown Cards (388)

(Note : The Maharajah had autographed 2 of these cards and also gave permission to Mr. Smith to have a cut made of his signature and impress it on all the other cards.)

Rocket No. 50 – Date : 9th April, 1935
Fourth Rocket Despatch



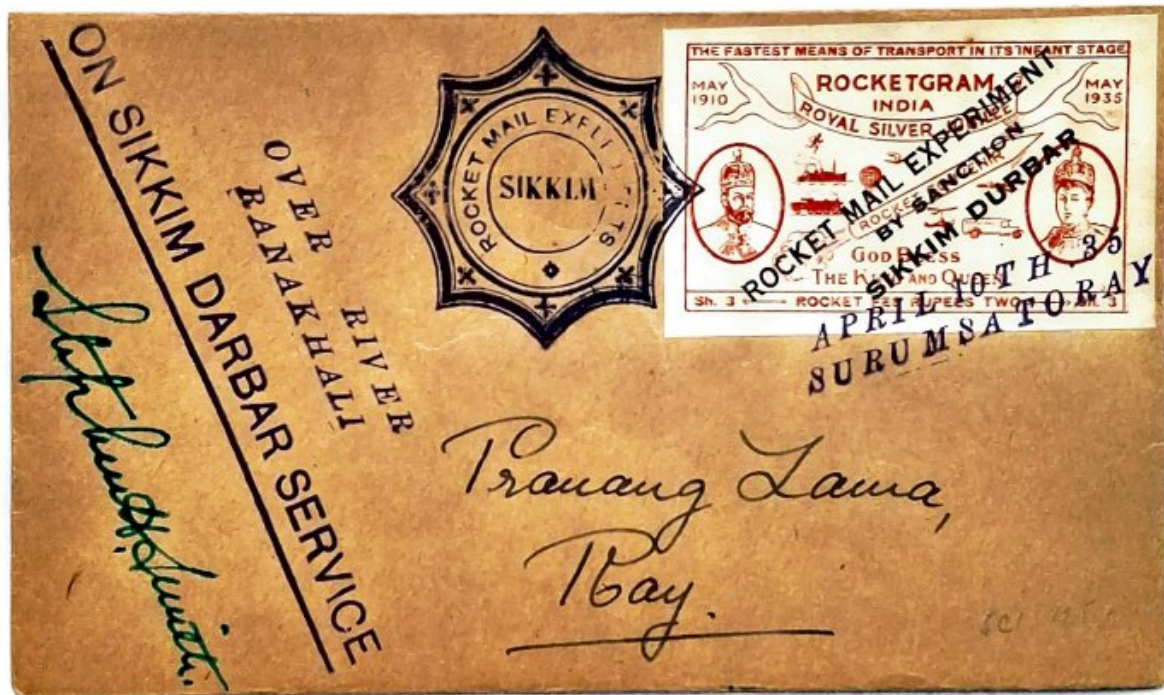
On 9th April, 1935, the fourth rocket experiment in Sikkim State was carried out from the Dak Bungalow grounds to the Post Office compound in Gangtok. The rocket was fired by Mr. F. Williamson, the British Political Officer in Sikkim State and carried 175 covers. All the letters were franked with a two-rupee *green* stamp, tied with an ornamental cachet, as illustrated and have a postmark, reading : "Gangtok 9 APR 35."

Rocket No. 50 : Flown Covers (175)

(a) : Stamp, *green with overprint (1869)*

(b) : *Without black overprint, in pair with normal (6)*

Rocket No. 51 – Date : 10th April, 1935
Fifth Rocket Despatch



A rocket containing 158 covers, franked with a special two-rupee *red* rocket stamp was fired by Mr. C. E. Dudley, the General Secretary to the Maharajah of Sikkim on 10th April, 1935, **from Surumsa to Ray over the river Ranakhali**. The stamp is tied with the ornamental cachet as before and there are three other cachets : (1) "ON SIKKIM DURBAR SERVICE"; (2) "Over River Ranakhali" in two lines and (3) "April 10th 35 Surumsa To Ray", in two lines. The covers do not bear any postmarks.

Rocket No. 51 : Flown Covers (158)

(a) : Stamp, *red with overprint* (1842)

Rocket No. 53 – Date : 10th April, 1935
Seventh Rocket Despatch



A third rocket was tested on the same date, viz., 10th April, 1935 but this time from the opposite direction, **Ray to Surumsa over the river Ranakhali**. This rocket was fired by Tashi Dadul Densapa, the Private Secretary to the Maharajah and carried 186 covers franked with the special two rupee *blue* rocket stamp. The covers have four cachets : (1) the usual ornamental one; (2) "ON SIKKIM DARBAR SERVICE"; (3) "Over River Ranakhali" and (4) From "Ray to Surumsa 10-4-35." As the covers were not posted, they do not have any postmarks.

Rocket No. 53 : Flown Covers (186)

(a) : Stamp, *blue* (1800)

(b) : *Without black overprint* in pair with normal (1)

Rocket No. 56 – Date : 13th April, 1935 Eighth Rocket Despatch



The previous successful experiments emboldened Mr. Smith to increase the firing range of his rockets, and therefore, he carried out further experiments at a new site at Singtam in Western Sikkim **over the river Singtam**. The rocket carried 118 covers franked with the special *blue and yellow* two rupee rocket stamp, tied with the ornamental cachet to the cover. A two-line cachet, "Over River Singtam" was applied to all the covers and they have two postmarks : (1)"Singtam, B.O., Western Sikkim 13 APR. 35" and (2) "Gangtok, P.O., Western Sikkim 13 APR. 35."

Rocket No. 56 : Flown Covers (118)

Rocket No. 57 – Date : 13th April, 1935
Ninth Rocket Despatch



On the same date, the last of the rocket in the first series of rocket experiments carried out in Sikkim State was fired by Mr. Stephen Smith over the river Rungpo and carried 100 covers. All the covers have a two-line cachet, "Over River Rungpo" and are postmarked, "Rangpo, 13 APR. 35", as illustrated.

Rocket No. 57 : Flown Covers (100)

Rocket No. 83 – Date : 27th September, 1935
My-Ona



A second series of seven rocket experiments, (Nos. S10 to S16) was conducted by Mr. Stephen Smith in Sikkim State from 27th September, 1935 to 4th October, 1935. The first rocket in this series was fired in the afternoon (4 P.M.) of 27th September, 1935 and was named, "MY-ONA., R. 83". It carried a parcel of miscellaneous items like tooth-paste, box of matches, a cake of soap, liver pills etc. and 190 missives. Once again special rocket stamps of the two rupee value were allowed to be printed and *officially* used for this second series of experiments. The "MY-ONA" missives were franked with this special stamp in *purple* overprinted "PARCEL" in *red* and tied with a mountain cachet, as illustrated. The missives also have two other cachets ; (1) "Sir Tashi Namgyal Field To Gangtok Post Office" in two lines and (2) "MY-ONA., R. 83" in one line. They also have the postmark reading: "Gangtok 27 SEP. 35".

Rocket No. 83 : Flown Missives (190)

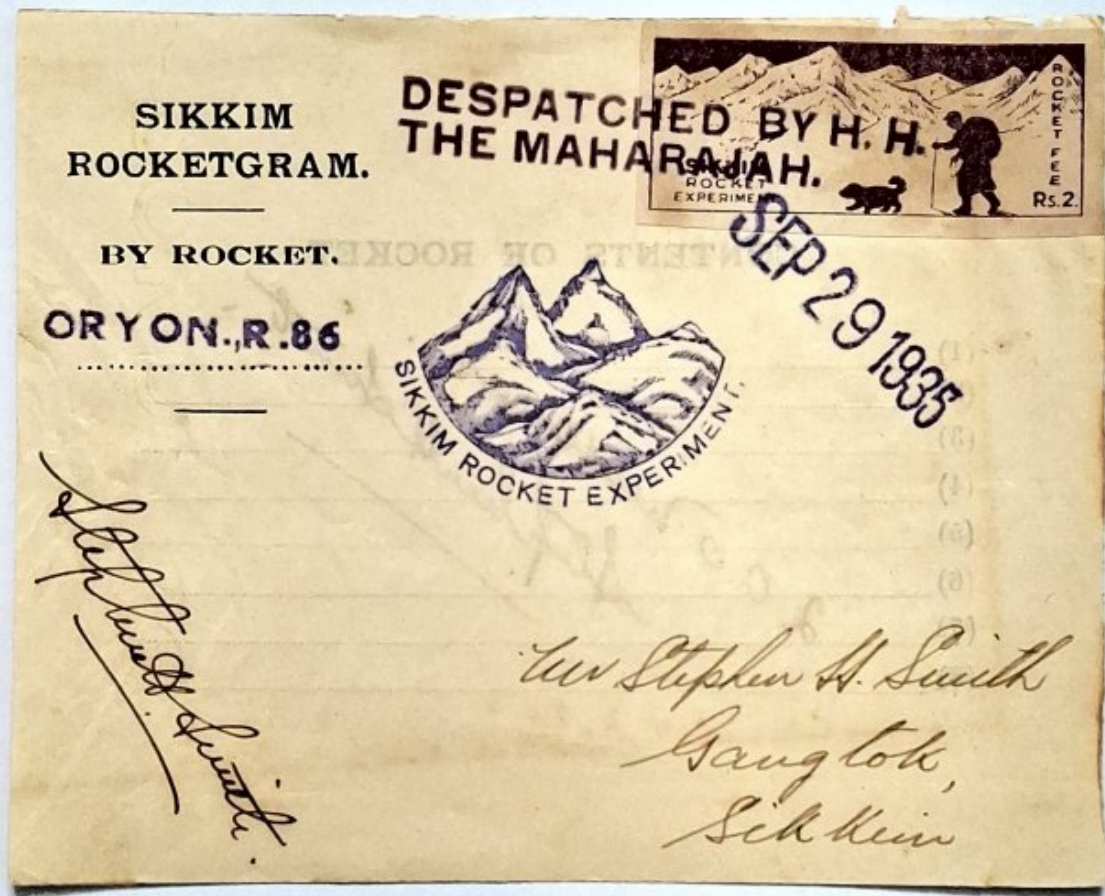
Rocket No. 84 – Date : 28th September, 1935
SIKKIM



The second experiment of the second series took place at 11 a.m. on 28th September 1935. This rocket, named "SIKKIM., R. 84" was fired by Mr. C. E. Dudley from the compound of Gangtok Telegraph Office with 155 missives and it also carried one live cock bird. The special *blue* stamp used on the missives was overprinted "LIVESTOCK" in *red*. The stamp was tied to the missive with a purple mountain cachet and the missives have two more cachets : (1) "FROM TELEGRAPH OFFICE" and (2) "SIKKIM., R. 84". The postmark reads : "Gangtok 28 SEP. 35."

Rocket No. 84 : Flown Missives (155)

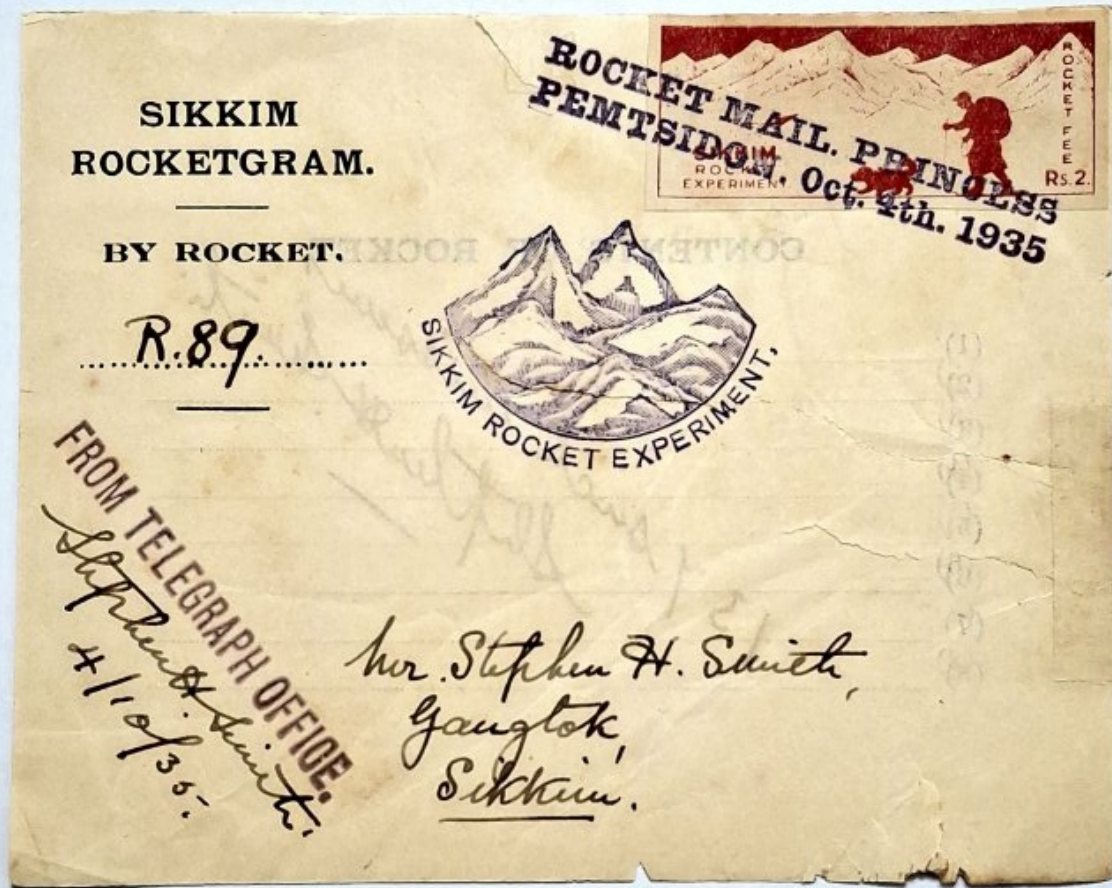
Rocket No. 86 – Date : 29th September, 1935
ORYON



The rocket "ORYON., R. 86" had carried 200 missives franked with the special two rupee rocket stamp in *purple*, which was tied to the missive by two cachets : (1) "DESPATCHED BY H. H. THE MAHARAJAH" in two lines and (2) "SEP. 29 1935" in a single line. They also have two more cachets : (1) the usual mountain cachet and (2) "ORYON., R. 86" but have no postmarks.

Rocket No. 86 : Flown Missives (200)

**Rocket No. 89 – Date : 4th October, 1935
Princess Pemtsidon**



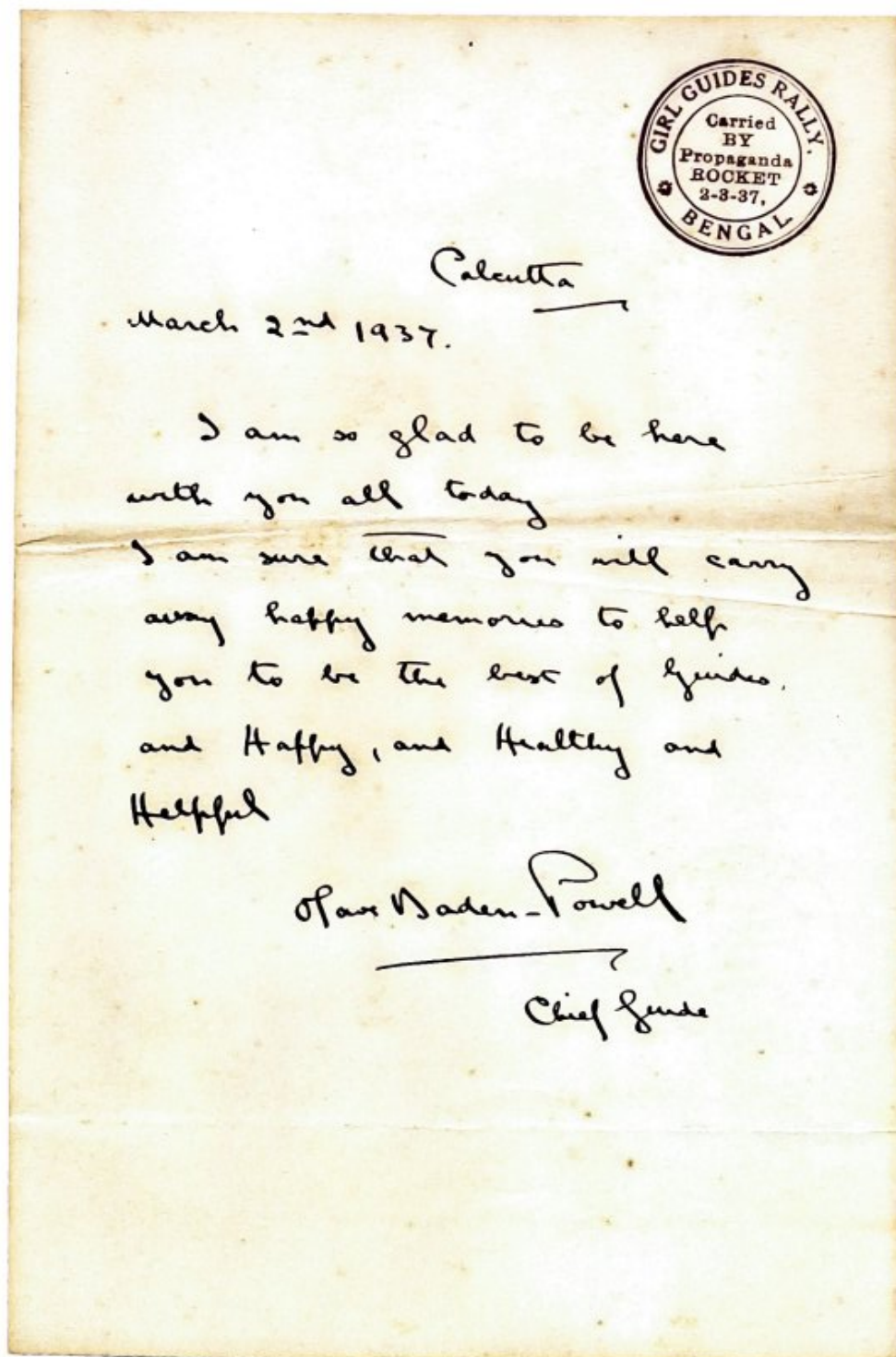
The seventh and the last experiment of the second series in Sikkim was carried out at 8.30 P.M. at night on 4th October, 1935. The rocket, "R. 89" carried 137 missives and was fired from the compound of the Gangtok Telegraph office by the daughter of His Highness the Maharajah of Sikkim. Princess Pemtsidon. The missives were franked with the special two rupee *red* rocket stamp which is tied to the missive by a two lined cachet, reading : "ROCKET MAIL. PRINCESS PEMTSIDON. Oct. 4th. 1935." They also have two more cachets : (1) "FROM TELEGRAPH OFFICE" in single line and (2) the mountain cachet. The missives do not have any postmarks.

Rocket No. 89 : Flown Missives (137)

Propaganda Rocket No. 7 – Date : 2 Mar 1937

The use of rocket despatches in large public meetings was on 2 March, 1937, when Lady Baden-Powell, the Chief Guide of the World, was received by Lady Dorothy Arther, the Provincial Guide Commissioner of Bengal at the rally of 1,400 Girls Guides. Lady Baden-Powell herself fired the first of two special rockets, listed as 'Propaganda Rocket No. 7' carrying 1,000 messages of welcome from her to the girls.

Each of these messages had a circular cachet 'Girl Guides Rally/Bengal/ Carried by Propaganda Rocket/ 2-3-37.'



Girls Guides Rally at Bengal. Leaflet flown with above Propaganda Rockets.