

Part 2: POST CARDS
Section PC-D: KGV CHINA Overprints

Webb # Sch. #	CHINA Issued	Value & Format	Early	Webb Early	Webb Late	Late	Notes
	1917						
P41 34		1c brown, Sch. 20 with "CHINA" overprint	23.12.19	---	---	10.5.20	ERD / LRD: 2 used examples recorded by Castiglione, but not seen. Reported used to Malcolm Hammersley, but not seen (HKPSJ, 12.2002)
P42 35		4c carmine, Sch. 21 with "CHINA" overprint	25.4.17	8.5.20		9.5.26	ERD: Ian Gibson-Smith ("G-S") online exhibit. LRD: LCS; from Wei-Hai-Wei.
P43 36		1c + 1c brown intact reply card, Sch. 22 with "CHINA" overprint	18.6.17	---	---		Only known intact used example: K.K. Ho collection. Most cards split and used as singles or surcharged 1-1/2c
NEW		A. Message Sch. 36 front half	23.2.18			28.7.19	ERD: Harmon Fine collection LRD: Ian G-S exhibit Only 2 known used examples
		B. "REPLY" Sch. 36 back half					Hammersley noted this as "REPLY" deleted. Not seen used.
	1918			16.10.18	24.6.21		
P44 37		1 ¹ / ₂ c surcharge on 1c brown (Sch. 34) Subcategories of Webb Type P44: a. 1 ¹ / ₂ c on P41	5.3.18			9.11.29	ERD: Gartner 12.2007, lot 4191; Tientsin to Calais. LRD: Bull, 2.2004, lot 1028; WHW to Shanghai. Subcategories a., b., and c. identified by Ian G-S (subtypes not listed by Schoenfeld).
NEW		b. P43 front half of reply paid card surcharged 1-1/2c	*				* Ian G-S notes one used message side of a split reply card certified by the B.P.A.
NEW		c. P43 reply half surcharged 1-1/2c					No used examples recorded by Ian G-S or others. Only 1 known unused example with "REPLY" deleted.
	1918						
P46 38		1-1/2c orange definitive	20.9.21	---	---	9.5.23	ERD: Wellsted – HKSC Bul. 236-19b LRD: Castiglione Only 2 used examples reported, but neither seen.
	1922						
P45 39		6c surcharge on 4c carmine (Sch. 35)	19.10.22	---	---	28.12.22	ERD: Ian G-S exhibit. Perrin - "courtesy" 30.11.22 Shanghai cds (ex-Scawin). LRD: Stribley reported to Perrin – from Liu Kung Tau. Only 4 known used examples.

Table PC-5. "CHINA" overprint post cards description and usage dates

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Although the initial set of “CHINA” overprint post cards was issued at the beginning of 1917, at the same time as the corresponding stamps were issued (1.1.17), Col. Webb recorded only one used example of the 4c carmine card on 8.5.20, and no used examples of the other two cards in the 1917 issue: the 1c brown (Sch. 34) and the 1c + 1c brown reply paid card (Sch. 36). Castiglione listed an ERD of 23.12.19 and an LRD of 10.5.20 for the 1c brown “CHINA” card, and an LRD of 9.5.23 for the 1919 1½ c orange “CHINA” definitive post card. However, no used examples of these 1c and 1½c PC were recorded by any of the other authors (notwithstanding the huge demand for the 1c card at the Treaty Ports documented in The Philatelic History of Hong Kong).

As noted above, Col. Webb recorded use of the KG V 4c “CHINA” overprint card only on 8.5.20. The 25.4.17 KG V 4c “CHINA” overprint card illustrated in Figure PC-8a-1 is part of a gold medal winning exhibit by Ian Gibson-Smith (abbreviated “G-S” in Table PC-5). It is the earliest known used 4c “CHINA” card, as well as the earliest used example seen of any of the “CHINA” cards. Two other 4c “CHINA” cards used in 1917 were offered at auctions. One was sent from Canton on 3.10.17 to a German POW on the Isle of Man, and it bears a violet oval “Aliens’ Detention Camp / Knockaloe IOM” censor mark (Spink, 1.2008, lot 1154). The other early 4c “CHINA” card was sent from Shanghai on 24.12.17 to Weltevreden, Dutch East Indies (D&O Trading Co., 6.1990, lot 501).

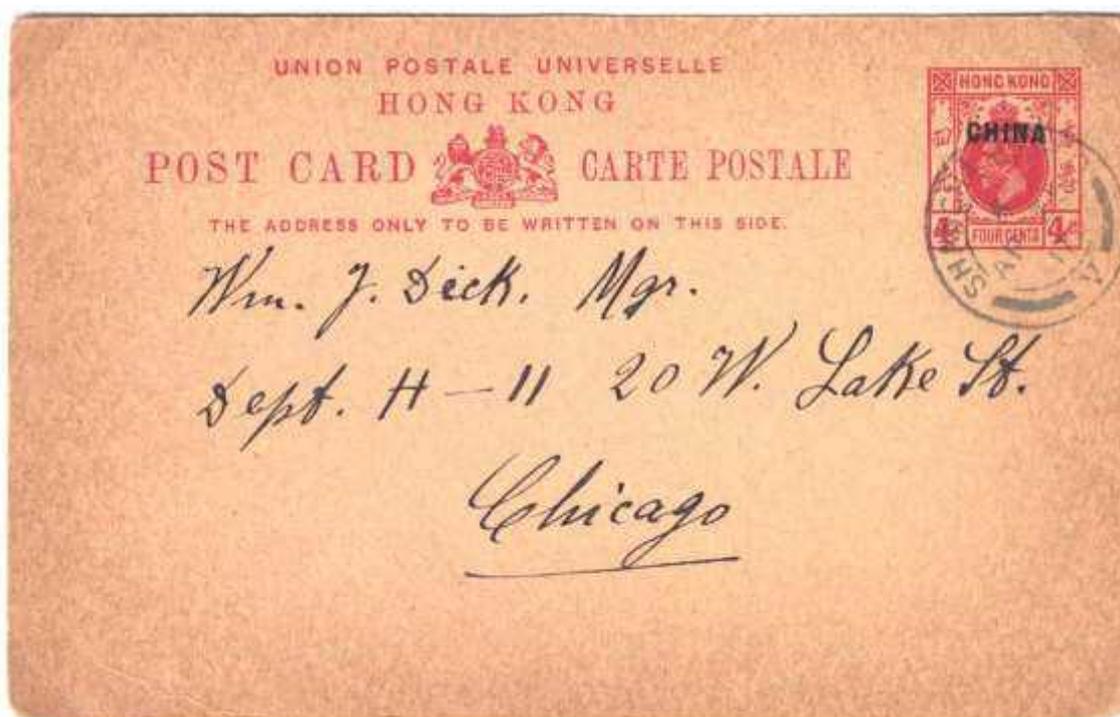


Figure PC-8a-1. 25.4.17 - Earliest known use of “CHINA” overprint post cards

Ian Gibson-Smith records 18 extant used KG V 4c “CHINA” overprint cards, including the five that are mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Harmon Fine has a 29.11.19 example from Foochow, which is an addition to Ian’s record. A 25.3.18 example, which is illustrated in Ian’s online display, was sent from Tientsin to Salonica, a very rare destination for mail from China.

The 22.10.18 4c CHINA PC illustrated in Figure PC-8a-2 was cancelled on 22.10.18 at Chefoo. The auction catalog states: ‘the “China” postal stationery cards are of immense rarity used from Chefoo’. Of 20 CHINA PCs illustrated by Ian Gibson-Smith, this is the only one from Chefoo.

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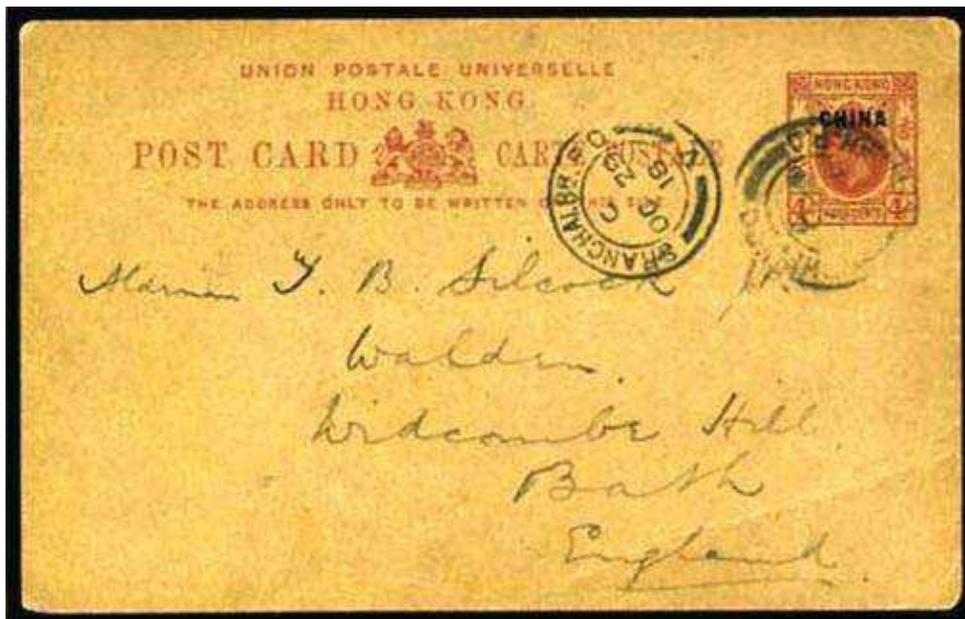


Figure PC-8a-2. “Rare” usage of CHINA overprint PC from Chefoo

The latest known 4c “CHINA” card exhibited in Figure PC-8a-3 bears a 9.5.26 Wei-Hai-Wei rubber date stamp of the rare (only 3 examples recorded) bluish ink type (ex. LCS). Mr. Perrin recorded 17.6.22 and 25.8.25 examples (page 36), so the 9.5.26 example is the latest of these three datestamps, as well as the latest known 4c CHINA PC. The 17.6.22 c.d.s. is on a 1½c / 1c post card indicia, and the 25.8.25 is on a 4c adhesive. It is assumed that these are a full PC and a full cover, although this is not made explicit. Mr. Jean-Paul Beck has done an important scientific analysis (HKSCJ 361/12) of Perrin’s “new” c.d.s. contrasted with Webb’s Types G and H, resulting in clear, precise illustrations of Type G, and what he now terms Types I and J to avoid confusion with the preceding inaccurate descriptions and line drawings. Beck states that he has copies of Type I, equivalent to Perrin’s “new” type, dating from 5.7.18 to 30.9.30.

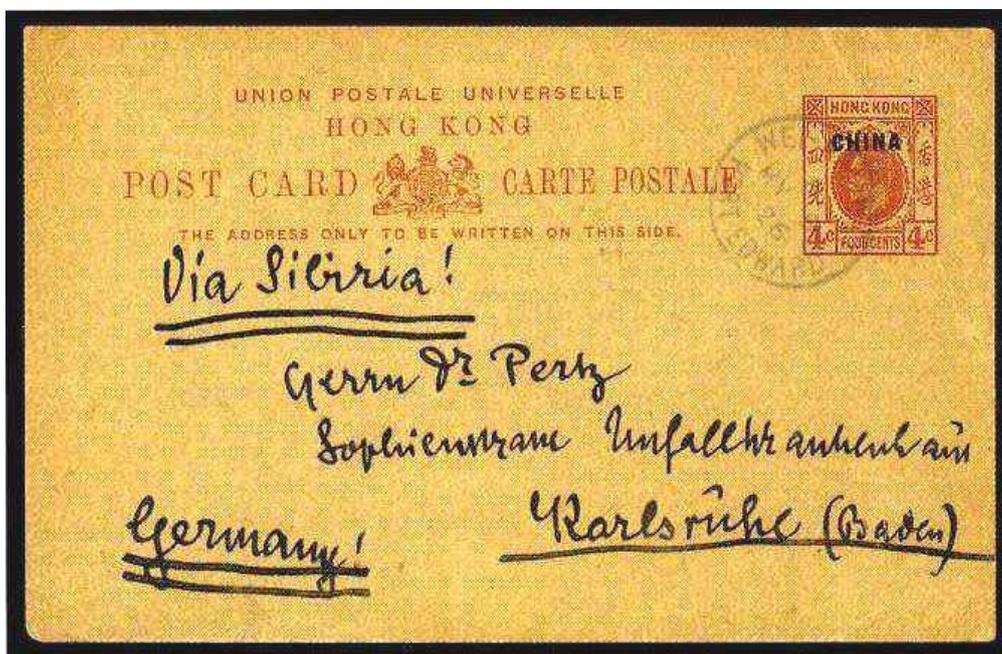


Figure PC-8a-3. Latest known: 1) 4c CHINA PC; 2) “new” Wei-Hai-Wei cds on entire

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The HKPO also issued the 1c + 1c brown reply paid card with “CHINA” overprint in 1917, only 1140 of which were delivered, according to Perrin, in his section on the “CHINA” overprint postal stationery. He quoted the Hong Kong Postmaster General (PMG) to wit: “as there was absolutely no demand for 1c (or 4c) Reply Paid postcards at the Agencies, I have caused such as were in stock to be split into single cards in order to get rid of them.” Perrin noted that these split cards were issued beginning in 1918. The PMG’s statement that there was no demand for the 1c + 1c cards raises the question: Why then were they produced? If the “(or 4c)” in the PMG’s quote was part of his actual statement, it seems to imply that there at least had been some official consideration of producing a “CHINA” overprinted 4c reply paid card. If the “(or 4c)” was added by Perrin, his intention is not clear, since there is no record of a 4c + 4c “CHINA” overprinted card.

Neither Webb, Schoenfeld, nor Perrin record the 1c + 1c reply card used. Hammersley also stated that neither the outward half nor the “REPLY” deleted half were recorded used (HKPSJ, 12.2002). However, Mr. K.K. Ho noted three used examples of this reply post card, including his intact card exhibited in Figure PC-8b-1 and 8b-2. This card originated at Wenchow, as shown by the message in Figure PC-8b-2, entered the British postal service at Ningpo on 18.6.17, and was dated 19.6 in transit at Shanghai to the US. The Ningpo c.d.s. is Proud Type D6: 1908 – 22. Thus, it is apparent that very few of these cards were sold prior to the PMG’s decision to split and use them as singles.

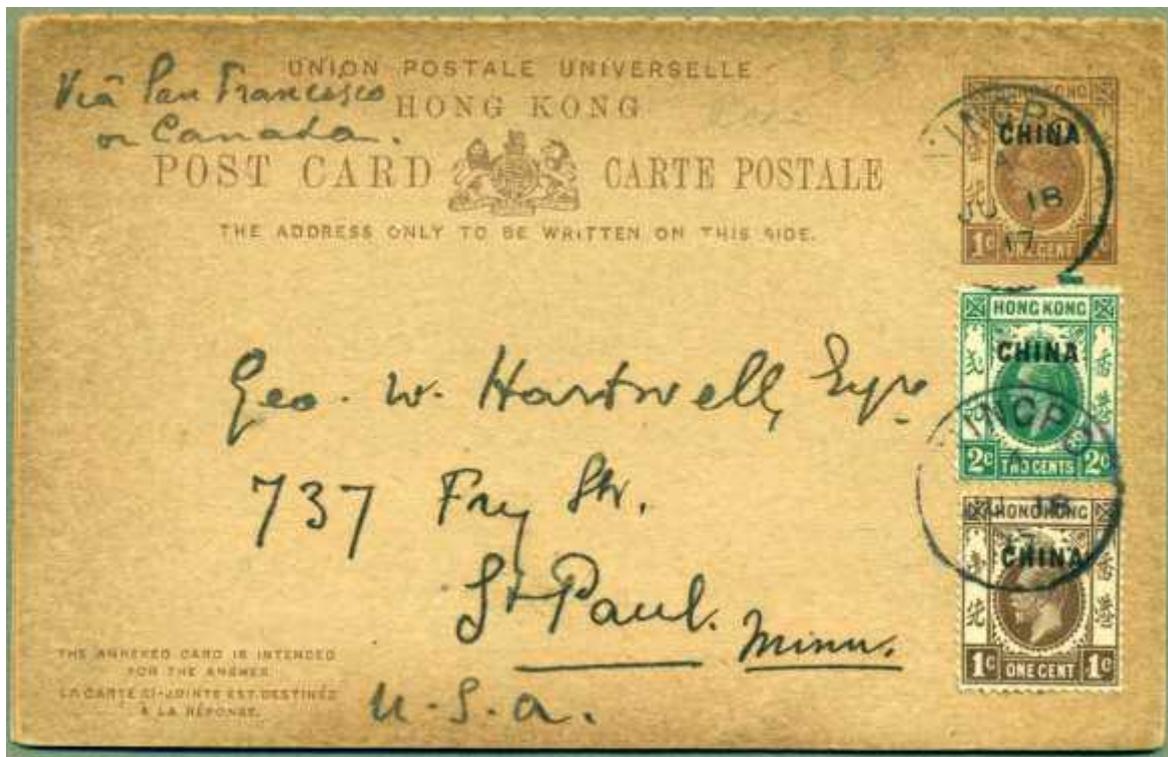


Figure PC-8b-1. 18.6.17 – Earliest of 3 1c + 1c “CHINA” reply cards; only 1 intact of 3

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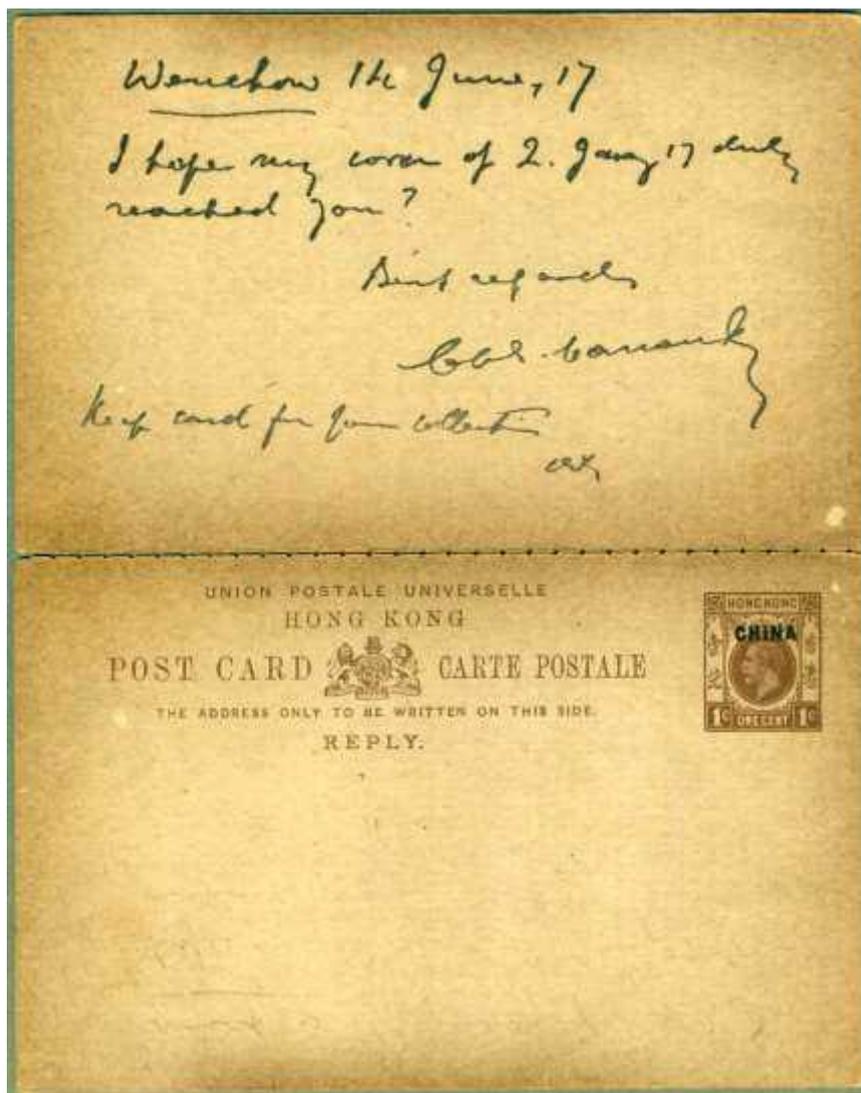


Figure PC-8b-2. Only known used intact 1c + 1c "CHINA" card; "REPLY" part unused

Perrin recorded only one intact example of the 1c + 1c brown reply paid card bearing a "CHINA" overprint, but he did not note if it was used or unused. An unused example is part of Ian Gibson-Smith's "CHINA" exhibit. Schoenfeld did not catalog the message and reply halves of this 1c + 1c "CHINA" post card as separate subtypes, as he had done for all of the other reply paid cards, but these subtypes are listed separately herein, since the following examples are now known.

Harmon Fine recently acquired the **earliest of only two** known used examples of the message half of the "CHINA" overprint 1c + 1c reply paid post card, which is illustrated in Figure PC-8c. This card bears additional 1c and 2c stamps comprising the correct 4c international postal card rate.

The stamps are cancelled with the 25 mm. "Wei-Hai-Wei / Port Edward", which is Proud Type D2: 1907 – 1921. It bears a non-philatelic message on the back, and a 27.2.18 Shanghai transit c.d.s.

Ian Gibson-Smith's exhibit includes the only other known used example of the 1c + 1c brown reply paid card with "CHINA" overprint. It is dated 28.7.19, the LRD, and bears an additional one cent "CHINA" adhesive stamp, overpaying the 1½ cent rate from British Treaty Ports to other parts of China, that was in effect from 1918 until the end of 1922. This card also bears the 25 mm. "Wei-Hai-Wei / Port Edward" c.d.s. canceling the stamps (Proud Type D2).

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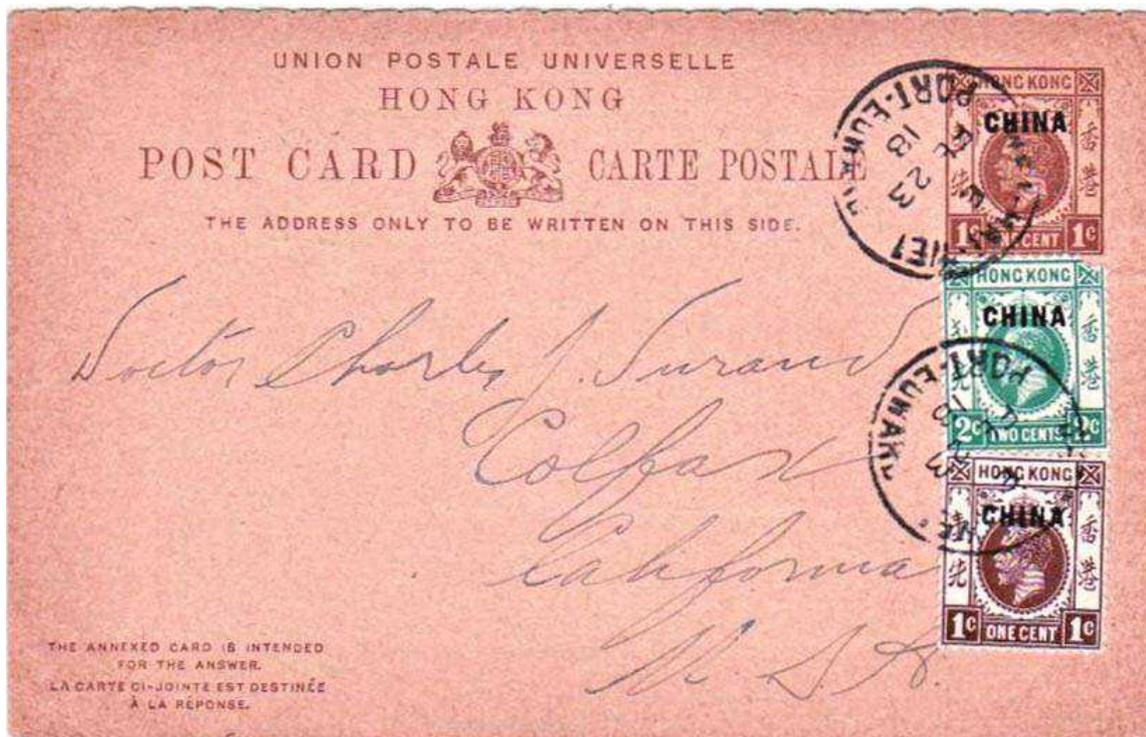


Figure PC-8c. 23.2.18: Earliest of 2 used message halves of “CHINA” 1c + 1c cards

Col. Webb listed 16.10.18 ERD and 24.6.21 LRD usages of the “CHINA” overprint with the 1½c surcharge on 1c post card (Sch. 37). Mr. Hammersley recorded less than 10 used examples of this card in 2002. The 5.3.18 1½c / 1c “CHINA” card illustrated in Figure PC-8d, which was offered by Chris Gaertner as lot 4191 in his 12.2007 auction, is the earliest known used example. This PC, which was sent from Tientsin to Calais, bears additional 1c and 2c “CHINA” overprint stamps to make up the 4c international post card rate (half cent overpaid).

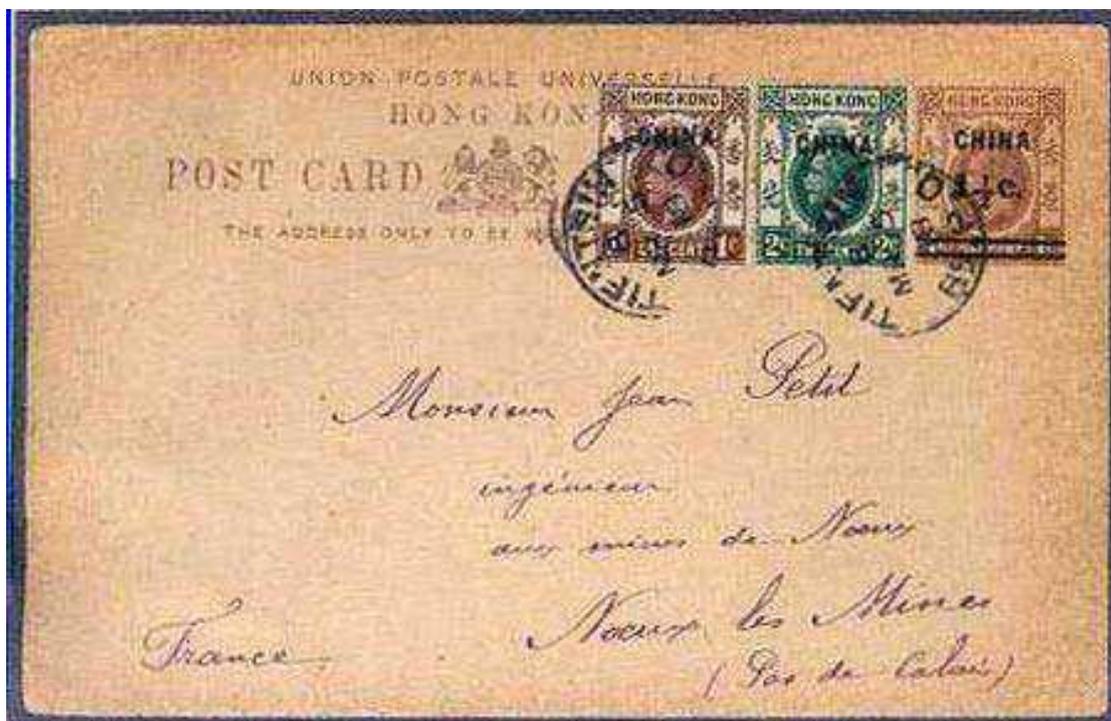


Figure PC-8d. 5.3.18 - Earliest known use of 1½c on 1c “CHINA” post card

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The latest known use of the 1½c surcharge on 1c “CHINA” overprint post card during the Treaty Port era is a philatelic card cancelled at Shanghai on 30.11.22, the closing day of the Treaty Port POs. The overall latest known usage of the 1½c surcharge on 1c “CHINA” overprint card is on 9.11.29. It was sent from Wei-Hai-Wei to Shanghai, an underpaid usage of the Chinese 2c post card rate applicable to Wei-Hai-Wei (1922 - 30). Two more examples of this card are recorded: 29.6.21 by Perrin (from Wei-Hai-Wei), and 31.8.21 by Goldsmith. Two additional examples of these 1½c on 1c cards were offered by Spink (11.2000): 3.8.20 (lot 1521) and 25.1.22 (lot 1522). These two 1½c post cards were sent at the prevailing 1½c rate to other British Treaty Ports. The 25.1.22 PC, which is the latest non-philatelic usage of this card during the Treaty Port era, was first reported in 1984 in HKSC Bulletin 249-24 b). Ian Gibson-Smith records a total of 12 used 1½c on 1c “CHINA” post cards, including those that are detailed above.

An unused 1½c on 1c “CHINA” PC with the “REPLY” deleted was recently sold on line for over US \$1,000. Thanks to Harmon Fine for spotting this rare item (110809861775, Ebay, 22.1.2012), which can be seen in Ian Gibson-Smith’s online “CHINA” PC display. It has occurred to me that the “REPLY” could quite easily be deleted by unscrupulous individuals to “enhance the value” of such prepaid reply PCs, since the authentic process was a manual one. Careful scrutiny under high power magnification might disclose such subterfuges. As usual, “caveat emptor”.

Mr. Perrin stated that the 1½c orange definitive post cards with “CHINA” overprint should have reached the agencies about 1.19. However, neither Col. Webb nor Dr. Schoenfeld recorded a used example of this card. The earliest of only two used examples of this card was reported by Mr. Wellsted in the March – April 1982 HKSC Bulletin, but unfortunately without any illustration. However, Mr. Wellsted’s philatelic stature is such that his report can be taken as an accurate one. Mr. J. J. Castiglione listed the only other used 1½c definitive “CHINA” PC in his Hong Kong Postal Stationery catalog, but neither this nor Wellsted’s card have been seen.

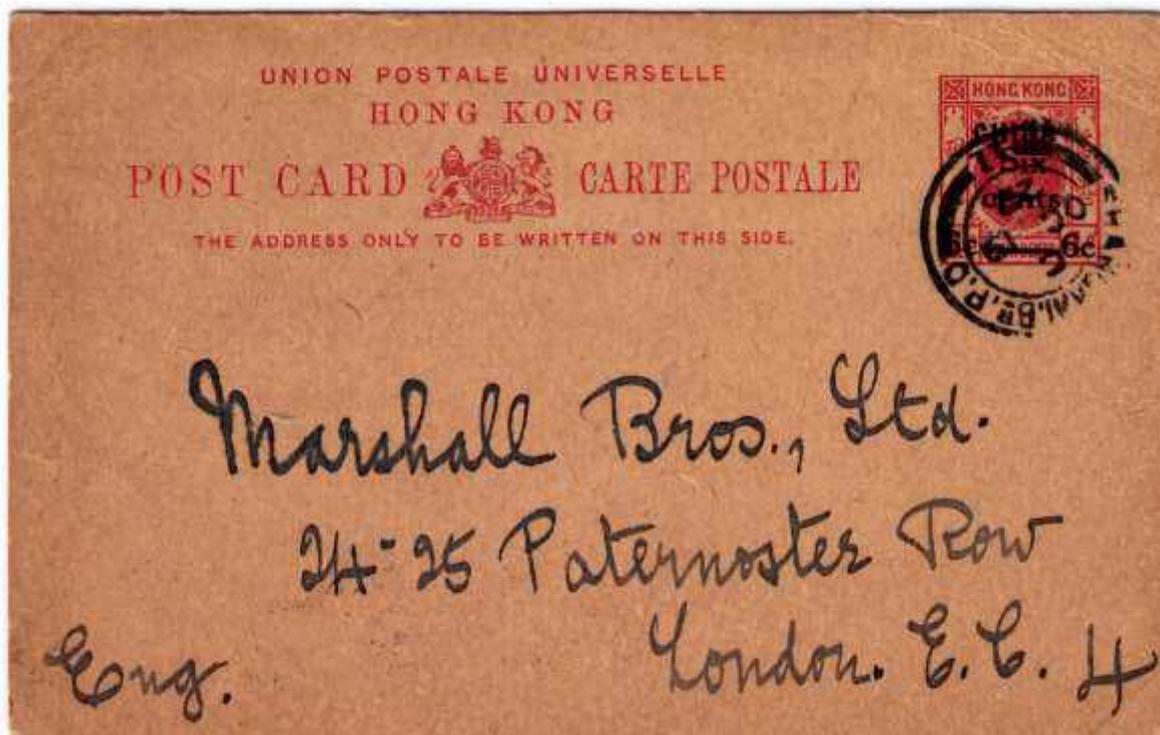


Figure PC-8e. 19.10.22 - Earliest of only 4 recorded uses of 6c on 4c “CHINA” card

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The earliest of only four known used 6c on 4c “CHINA” post cards (Ian Gibson-Smith collection), which is dated 19.10.22, is illustrated in Figure PC-8e. Addressed to a business in London, it appears to be a non-philatelic commercial use. The next earliest known is one day later: 20.10.22, to Hankow (Spink, 11.2001, lot 2234). The earliest of the original two 6c / 4c “CHINA” post cards, that were recorded by Perrin, is a purely philatelic, unaddressed, “courtesy” card, which was cancelled to order on 30.11.22, the last day that the British Treaty Port post offices in China were open (except for Wei-Hai-Wei).

Although also philatelic, the LRD 6c / 4c card at least traveled through the mails from Liu Kung Tau to England. Mr. Perrin recorded it as having been sent on 28.12.22 in his “The Hong Kong China Overprints” booklet, but it was listed as sent on 28.11.22 in HKSC Bulletin 179, Appendix IV. The illustration of lot 1523 in the 11.2000 Spink auction bears a 28.12.22 Liu Kung Tau c.d.s., thus substantiating Mr. Perrin’s record.

Webb, Proud, and HKSCJ 301 all state that the 4c international post card rate from the Treaty Ports was increased to 6c at the same time as the 1c local rate, and the various China rates went up to 1½c on 15.2.18. However, it had previously been noted in HKSCB 234 that the 1½c / 1c card was not included with the 1½c definitive and 6c / 4c provisional PC proofs in the GB National Postal Museum. The implication deduced from this was that the rate increase from 4c to 6c occurred later than the increase from 1c to 1½c. The 23.2.18 and 5.3.18 usages of the 4c post card rate, which are illustrated in Figure PC-8c and PC-8d, are further proof that the 6c international post card rate from the Treaty Ports did not go into effect, along with the 1½c rates, on 15.2.18, as had previously been recorded. Conclusive proof is provided by Ian Gibson-Smith’s census of 14 4c “CHINA” cards used from 25.3.18 to 18.2.22.

Mr. Perrin concluded, based on extant examples, that the international post card rate from the Treaty Ports was increased from 4c to 6c between 15.5.21 and 18.2.22. Perrin stated, based on various evidence, that “There thus seems no doubt that the 6c on 4c surcharge was first issued some time in 1922,” and his conclusion concerning the issue date of the 6c / 4c card (Sch. 39) is echoed in The Philatelic History of Hong Kong. Sieh and Blackburn recorded that the Chinese international post card rate was increased from 4c to 6c effective 1.1.22. Given the precedent of Chinese postal rate changes triggering reciprocal British Treaty Port rate changes, it seems highly likely that the 4c to 6c post card rate increase went into effect at the Treaty Ports between 1.1.22 and 18.2.22. Ian Gibson-Smith’s record of 16.1.22 and 18.2.22 usages of the 4c “CHINA” cards demonstrates that the 4c to 6c rate change occurred no earlier than 18 or 19.2.22.

This conclusion is further confirmed by the fact that the 1918 Hong Kong Postmaster’s annual report noted that the post card rate to China increased to 1½c, but an increase in the international rate to 6c was not mentioned. The Hong Kong Postmaster’s report also showed 19,000 of the 1½c cards sold in 1918, but did not include the 6c / 4c card in the list of stamps and cards sold that year, or in any subsequent year through 1923.

A half dozen or so examples of private post cards bearing 6c in stamps, or in one case a 4.3.27 KGV 1c imprinted card bearing an additional five cents in adhesive stamps, have been seen. All were sent from, to, or via the British Treaty Ports, or former Treaty Ports, beginning in 1922 (see previous discussion of Harmon Fine’s 6c franked private post card). Since the Treaty Ports were closed on 30.11.22, it is surprising that even the four recorded used 6c / 4c “CHINA” post cards are extant. Both the 30.11.22 ERD and 28.12.22 LRD recorded by Mr. Perrin were offered in the 11.2000 Spink auction as lots 1524 and 1523, respectively.

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The next section is PC-E King George VI Post Cards. To access this section or other parts of the monograph, return to the HKSC website/Papers. <http://www.hongkongstudycircle.com/papers.html>