

1947 P&T SOUVENIR FOLDER

by Ashish Talwar

In my continuing quest for Indian Independence philatelic material, I recently acquired a souvenir folder, which after considerable inquiry of several months, seems to be a new discovery.

The front of this slightly damaged discovery (Figure 1) has a trio of postmen saluting the Indian National Flag with the title, 'Indian P. and T. Souvenir'. There is nothing written inside or at the back of the folder. I have seen another folder with a similar design but the inside of that Folder had a printed message to the entire post and telegraph department from the then director general.

When I first saw the Souvenir Folder, its colouring and design of the artwork seemed from a familiar style and then I saw the artist's name - C. Biswas. I recollected and found that the official Jai Hind Folder issued for the 1947 commemorative issues (Figure 2) was also designed by the same artist and similarly bears his signature in the same yellow colour. Even the dimensions of both folders are almost the same.



While nothing is printed inside, this Souvenir Folder did have a cover kept inside - a Jai Hind 15 August 1947 cancelled cover (Figure 3). The inside facing page of this Souvenir Folder and the back of the cover have gum marks which could lead to the conclusion that the cover was once mounted inside the Folder. Also, the cover does have service stamps on it and is cancelled from the New Delhi Post Office on the day of Independence. Such a cancellation with service stamps on an unaddressed cover could not have been created by a layman. Only government officials could have obtained this cancellation on service stamps.

To conclude, this Souvenir Folder with the cover mounted inside was presented to VIPs and senior officials of the post and telegraph department to commemorate 15th August 1947.