

THE COINAGE OF SOME REWA KANTHA STATES, GUJERAT, INDIA.

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There appears in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins and Paper Money*¹ on page 227, a section headed Rampur. The note prefacing this section states that Rampur was a tiny estate of four and a half square miles in the old Gujerat States Agency area and that it was a feudatory of Lunavada. Three copper coins are listed and illustrated but the compiler of the catalogue explains that these coins may be from Lunavada or from Rampur; so obviously their correct attribution is a matter of doubt. The original listing and the accompanying information has been carried forward in subsequent editions of the Krause Mishler *Standard Catalogue of World Coins*.

The purpose of this paper is to question whether the coins so listed are coins of Rampur and whether, in fact, this estate issued its own coins. The opportunity is also being taken to correct and up-date the information that exists on the coinage of some of the Rewa Kantha States.

The Rampur referred to in the South Asia Catalogue would appear to be a small estate called **Rampura**, which was only four and a half square miles in area. It was located in the former Rewa Kantha Agency of the Bombay Presidency and later in the Gujerat States Agency, under the control of the Deputy Political Agent.. The population in the early 1930's was 1,982 and the average annual revenue was only 11,000 rupees (roughly £687). In earlier times (c 1900), the chief of Rampura bore the title of *Thakur* and was of the Chauda Rajput clan, but later the estate appears to have been run by four shareholders.

This small estate should not be confused with another even smaller estate also called Rampura and which was in the Mahi Kantha Agency of the Bombay Presidency (later in the Western India States Agency) and comprised of only one village. It is, or was, such an insignificant place that it cannot be located on any map.

It will be noted that both of these small estates are called Rampura. There are, of course, other places in India with the name of either Rampur or Rampura. For instance, Rampur in the former N W Provinces, a remnant of the old Rohilla domain, Rampura in Pargana Mahdogarh, Jalaun, also in the former N W Provinces, Rampur, Darybad, Bera Banki in Awadh and Rampur Dharupur, Kalakankar, Pargana Rampur, Awadh.

In January 1870, the Acting Under Secretary to Government, Bombay, received from the various Political Agents and other officers in the Bombay Presidency particulars of the mints which were then being operated by the native chiefs in the territories under the Bombay Government and details of the products thereof.²

The following states were reported to be minting coin in 1869-70:

| Name as recorded | Alternative spelling |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Cutch | Kutch |
| Baroda | |
| Joonaghur | Junagarh |
| Nowanugger | Nawanagar |
| Barrea | Bariya, Baria |
| Chota Oodeypoor | Chhota Udaipur |
| Loonawara | Lunawara, Lunawada, Lunavada |
| Soonth | Sunth, Sant |
| Radhanpur | |
| Cambay | |
| Porebunder | Porbandar |

The coins of Kutch, Baroda, Junagarh, Nawanagar, Radhanpur, Cambay and Porbandar have all been properly published in various catalogues in the past and need not be commented upon further here.

As far as the Rewa Kantha district was concerned, the four states minting coins were Baria, Chhota Udaipur, Lunawada and Sunth. No mention of Rampura can be found in the report to the Government.

In respect of the four Rewa Kantha states, the report provided the following particulars:

BARIA

The mint there was worked with the tacit permission of the Political Agent. The coins produced were thick copper pieces, irregular in form. The denominations were the pice and half pice which were termed *Kuttaris*. The average annual turn out was to the value of 250 rupees. One Government rupee was worth 90-95 pice.

CHHOTA UDAIPUR

Mint established in 1859 by permission of the Political Agent. The coins produced were thick copper pieces, irregular in form, named *Oodeypoorie* (sic). They have *Maharawal Jeitsinjee* (sic) stamped on them. The average annual production was to the value of 400 rupees. One Government rupee was worth 64 *Oodeypoories*. No denomination stated.

LUNAWADA

Mint worked with the tacit permission of the Political Agent. Coins were thick copper pieces known as *Lunawaris* and bore the Rajah's name. The average annual production was to the value of 400 rupees. One Government rupee was worth 80-87 *Lunawaris*. No denominations given but pice and half pice are known.

SUNTH

Mint worked with the tacit permission of the Political Agent. The coins were thick copper pieces known as *Rampurias*. No denominations stated. Average annual production to the value of 175 rupees. One Government rupee exchanged for 90-95 *Rampurias*.

That is the sum total of the information supplied to the Government on the four native mints then operating in the Rewa Kantha district. We propose to deal with the coinage of each of these states under the appropriate heading and in doing so clarify such information that already exists concerning them. We will also introduce some new types of coins that we have managed to identify.

CHHOTA UDAIPUR

This state was about 30 miles south of Baria and about 50 miles east of Baroda city. In area it was roughly 890 square miles and held a population of around 144,660 (1935), chiefly Bhils or other aboriginal tribes. The ruling family belonged to the Chauhan Rajput clan and the chief was entitled Maharawal. He was granted a nine gun salute and maintained a small military force. The annual revenue of the state was 1,310,000 rupees and a tribute was paid to the Gaikwar of Baroda.

| | | | |
|---------|---------------|------|--------|
| Rulers: | Rayasinghji | ? | - 1819 |
| | Prithirajji | 1819 | - 1822 |
| | Gumansinghji | 1822 | - 1851 |
| | Jitsinghji | 1851 | - 1881 |
| | Motisinghji | 1881 | - 1895 |
| | Fattehsinghji | 1895 | - 1923 |

The earliest known coins of Chhota Udaipur are large, roughly made coppers obviously struck from dies that were a great deal larger than the flans used. Therefore only a few letters appear on the coin and it is impossible to construct any meaningful legend.

Valentine³ mentioned these coins but did not publish any. The only place where two are illustrated is in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins*, page 154, but the dates given are obviously incorrect. The piece illustrated as KM.15 does not show a date at all and the one illustrated as Y.2 shows part of the date 19**. The only dates that we have read with any assurance is 1918 (Samvat) and another appears to be dated 1920 in Devanagari. If the mint was indeed established in 1859 the coins ought to bear dates after Samvat 1916 and the name of Jitsinghji. On most of these coins the word Udaipur, or part of it, can be made out.

The next type (Y.3) which is somewhat scarcer but almost as crude bears the name of the state, a sword and at least part of a date, which may or may not be Samvat 1919 or 1924.

The last coins issued by Chhota Udaipur consist of a half paisa, paisa and double paisa, all dated Samvat 1948 (1891). See Y.4 and 5. No silver coins of this state are known.



Nos. 1, 2 and 3 are undated



Nos. 4 and 5 are dated S.1918.



Nos. 6 dated S.1920 in Devanaagari

No. 7 dated S.1919 and 1924 ?

LUNAWADA

The state of Lunawada was situated about 65 miles east of Ahmadabad city and comprised an area of about 288 square miles. The population in 1935 was 95,162 when the annual revenue amounted to 558,000 rupees. The state was formerly tributary both to Baroda and Gwalior but the rights of the latter were transferred to the British Government in 1861. The ruling chief belonged to the Solanki clan of Rajputs and bore the title of Maharana. He maintained a small military force and was entitled to a nine gun salute.

| | | |
|---------|------------------|-------------|
| Rulers: | Fattehsinghji | 1818 - 1849 |
| | Dalpat Singhji | 1849 - 1851 |
| | Dalal Singhji | 1851 - 1867 |
| | Wakhat Singhji | 1867 - 1929 |
| | Virbhadrasinghji | 1930 - ? |

In the *Indian Museum Catalogue*, Valentine recorded ten specimens of the coins, of which eight appear to be paisa (average 7.73 grams) and two half paisa (average 4.02 grams). A number of pieces are illustrated in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins*. It would appear that the coins of Lunawada have not been studied in detail in the past.

In addition to those which have already been published we have identified other coins of Lunawada. No coins earlier than those of Dalal Singhji have been identified but of this chief we have been able to recognise five different types. They may be recognised by the name દાલ (Dalal) in Gujarati which appears with different devices on the obverse of the coin. Little notice may be taken of the reverses which consist of blundered portions of the باد شاھ غازی (bad shah ghazi) legend that was formerly used on Mughal type coins.

The accompanying sheets show the various devices that are on the obverse, the reverse inscriptions, the weight (average) of each type and any remarks that are appropriate to each type.

Coins of Dalal Singhji (Nos 1-5)

No 1 has a shield and spear with sword above and the name Dalal. It is possible that it is the earliest type as it is somewhat heavier than the others.

No 2 Katar - lower weight.

No 3 Chhatra (umbrella). Two distinct types with the same symbol.⁴

No 4 Jhar. Leaf sprays similar to that found on coins of Jaipur.

No 5 Two swords.

It has been noticed that none of these types show signs of having been struck on other coins. The flans are roughly square or oblong in the case of the half paisa.

| | <i>Obverse</i> | <i>Reverse</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | | | 9.2g. | |
| 2 | | | 8.5g. | Slight variation in obverse legend |
| 3 | | | 8.4g. | |
| 4 | | | 8.2g. | Half paisa known of this type. |
| 5 | | | 8.5g. | A.N.S. specimen |



Coins of Wakhat Singhji (Nos 1A to 4A)

We have not found more than four coin types of this ruler and the same have been previously dealt with by Valentine in the *Indian Museum Catalogue*, Volume IV, and are illustrated in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins* as KM 7, 8 and 9.

No 1A Flower (? lotus) with dot decoration around. Wakhat in Gujarati to one side. On some written as વાખત. Reverse: garbled Persian inscription as on the coins of Dalel Singhji; some with the ciphers 257 which appear to be meaningless.

No 2A Hand on pedestal. Ma Va Si above, probably the initials of Maharana Wakhat Singhji. The ciphers 3C (38) to the left of the hand and a star to the right. Fragmentary and garbled Persian letters on the reverse.

No 3A Hand as in 2A but enclosed in a square. Lu Na Va Da around square starting at the top and reading clockwise. Reverse: A very jumbled inscription in Gujarati and Nagari and a word in Persian. It contains the letters અ કુ M (aharana) V (akhat) and the figures 42 and 86. The first are 42 and the second 86. We suggest that the probable explanation of these figures is Samvat 1942 and the second 86 meaning AD 1886. The Samvat year 1942 =AD1885/86.⁵

No 4A Tiger or lion to the right, sword below. Lunavada above in Gujarati, Samvat date 1949 below. Reverse: In Gujarati - Ma Ra Sri Vakhat Singhji.

The majority of the coins of Wakhat Singhji are square in shape but some occur on round flans. The half paisa are oblong. A proportion of these coins are found to have been overstruck on earlier issues or on coins of some other state. No silver coins of this state are known.

| | <i>Obverse</i> | <i>Reverse</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|----|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1A | | | 7.55g. | Half paisa are known - 3.45g. Found overstruck on types 2 and 3 of Dalal Singhji and on paisa of Baroda Y.7, 7a and 16. Half paisa found overstruck on type 4 of Dalal Singhji |
| 2A | | | 7.95g. | Half paisa are known - 3.4g. Found overstruck on type 1A. Some specimens have 3c = 38 on obv. It may mean Samvat 1938 (1881AD) |
| 3A | | | 7.42g. | Half paisa are known - 3.4g. Many specimens are found overstruck on earlier coins |
| 4A | | | 7.47g. | Half paisa are known - 3.75g. Found overstruck on type 3A. |



SUNTH

This state was about fifteen miles east of Lunavada and consisted of an area of 394 square miles. The population about 1900 is given as 58,922. The annual revenue amounted to 117,700 rupees. It was ruled by a Maharana who was a member of the Pramara Rajput clan. The state had a small military force and the Maharana was entitled to a nine gun salute. The capital of the state and the seat of the Maharana was the town of Rampur.

The rulers of Sunth during the 19th century were:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Shivsinghji | 1774 - 1819 |
| Kalyan Singhji | 1819 - 1835 |
| Bhawan Singhji | 1835 - 1871 |
| Pratap Singhji | 1871 - 1896 |
| Jorawar Singhji | 1896 - ? |

A few of the coins of Sunth have been depicted, albeit incorrectly, in the past. Valentine thought they were from Banswara whilst the Krause Mishler catalogue included them under the heading of Rampur.

We suggest that the coin types shown on the following sheet are coins of Sunth. The reasoning is as follows: the fact that the coins were known as *Rampurias*, the capital of the state was Rampur and the coins themselves bear the inscription *Sri Rampur* on one side tend to indicate that they are indeed coins of Sunth.

We have identified ten types of what we believe to be coins of Sunth, as shown.

1 The obverse is covered with a number of what have been described as "solar symbols" or "sunbursts". We suggest that they are neither but are more likely to be representations of the *agni-kunda*. This was the altar of the ancient Rajput Pramara clan on which was kindled the *agni* or sacred flame. As the Maharana of Sunth was of the Pramara clan it is possible that it was thought appropriate to put this symbol on the coins. The reverse consists of the words *Sri Rampur* the word following each and line upon line.

2 Is much the same type but the reverse inscription has been engraved in such large letters that only a fraction appears on the flan of the coin.

3 The obverse bears the same device as Type 1 of Dalal Singhji of Lunavada. The reverse inscription is of the normal size.

- 4 Scales or balances. Possibly inspired by the scales seen on the Bombay coins of the East India Company.
- 5 The obverse shows a number of hands. These probably have a legendary source in Hinduism.
- 6 Cannon barrels and sword.
- 7 Shield and sword.
- 8 Katars and spear.
- 9 Sword.
- 10 Katar between two shields.

The coins of Sunth are mostly square shaped. The reverses are much the same, with *Sri Rampur* being repeated continuously but with varying degrees of size, accuracy and style. Types 1 and 2 are most commonly found and are probably the latest, if not the last, emissions from this state. Dates have not been found on any coins of Sunth, and no silver coins are known.

| | <i>Obverse</i> | <i>Reverse</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | | | 7.65g. | Found struck on coins of Dalal Singhji of Lunawada and on coins of Baroda (Y.7a) |
| 2 | | | 7.65g. | Found struck on coins of Dalal Singhji of Lunawada and was also struck on coins of Sailana (Y.1, 2, 3, 4) |
| 3 | | | 8.48g. | |
| 4 | | | 8.03g. | |
| 5 | | | 4.6g. 7.7g. | This must be a half paisa. Small, thick coins with only <i>Ram</i> visible on reverse. Found overstruck on type 7. |
| 6 | | As no. 1. | 8.10g. | |
| 7 | | As no. 1. | 8.20g. | Struck on an unidentified coin. |
| 8 | | As no. 1. | 8.42g. | Struck on an unidentified coin. BM specimen. No photograph. |
| 9 | | As no. 1. | 8.24g. | |
| 10 | | As no. 1. | 8.27g. | Double struck reverse. |



BARIA

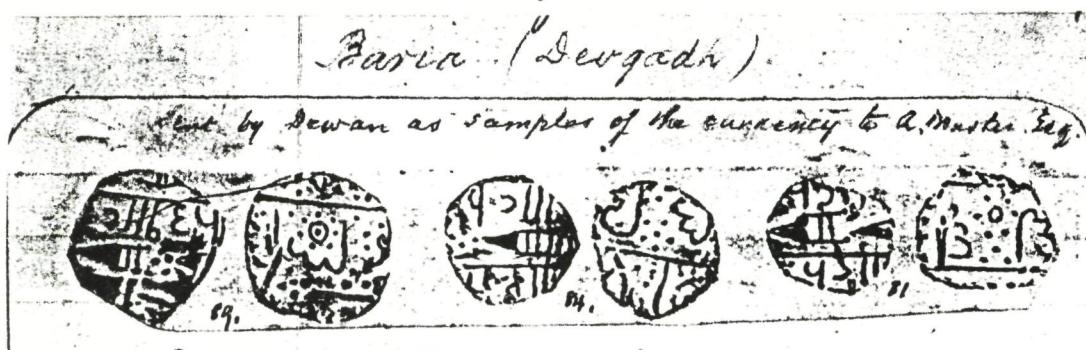
Baria, which is located about 33 miles south of Sunth and about the same distance north of Chhota Udaipur, had an area of about 813 square miles and a population of 110,668 at the turn of the century. The annual revenue amounted to 249,480 rupees. The ruler bore the title of Maharawal, maintained a small military force and was entitled to a nine gun salute. His residence was at Devgadh Baria. In terms of status and economy the state was on a par with Lunawada, Chhota Udaipur and Sunth.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|------|--------|
| The rulers of Baria were: | Jaswantsinghji | ? | - 1804 |
| | Gangdarji | 1804 | - 1819 |
| | Prithvirajji | 1819 | - 1864 |
| | Mansinghji | 1864 | - ? |



The coins of Baria have not been published before but they were previously known. Fortunately there are authentic representations of four Baria copper coins in an unpublished manuscript by W H Valentine in the library of the ANS. A note on the manuscript states that they were sent by the Dewan (Prime Minister) as samples of the currency to A Master, Esq.⁶

The coins are illustrated below by drawings from the rubbings in Valentine's manuscript. It will be noted that the coins have a katar (dagger) on them and this tends to confirm the statement in the report that they were called *kuttaris* (Kataris). They appear to be poorly made coins, probably struck on other coins. There appear to be some Devanagari letters on the same side as the *katars* but they do not form any readable inscription. There is no information as to when the coins of Baria were in circulation but Mr A Master was an official of the Bombay Government from about 1890 to 1915.



Extract from unpublished note-book of W. H. Valentine.

UNCERTAIN ISSUES

We have found a number of copper coins which, although we cannot be positive, are probably from the Rewa Kantha area. The details concerning them and illustrations of what appears on the obverse and reverse are given on the following sheet.

Nos 1 to 6 and No 9 are all of similar fabric and approximately of the same weight. Most are squarish or irregular in shape.

No 9 is depicted in the *South Asia Catalogue* as KM.2 under Rampur. As the reverse inscription is रामपुर (Rampur) the same that occurs on the coins of Sunth, it is logical to assume that Nos 1 to 6 are probably from the same state. However, we have not examined the coin illustrated in the *South Asia Catalogue* and we are assuming that the photograph is correct. It will be noted that Nos 1 to 6 have on the reverse what appears to be a Persian sin س (s) which may represent the first letter of Sunth.

No 7 is a round coin with a device on the obverse similar to certain coins of Sunth and Lunawada. The reverse has parts of the usual Mughal title of *badshah*. No 8 is another more conventional type of paisa with a sword and shield device upon it. The date is probably AH1230 and the regnal year 8 (in the Roman figure) conforms to the regnal year of Muhammad Akbar II.

| | Obverse | Reverse | Weight | Remarks |
|---|-----------|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| 1 | ↑↑ | ↓↓ | 2.91g. | Weight of half paisa. |
| 2 | As no. 1. | ↑↓ | 3.8g. | Weight of half paisa. |
| 3 | ↑↑↑ | ↓↓↓ | 4.47g. | Weight of half paisa. |
| 4 | ↑↓ | ↓↑ | 3.95g. | Weight of half paisa. |
| 5 | ↑A | ↓B | 4.34g. | Weight of half paisa. |

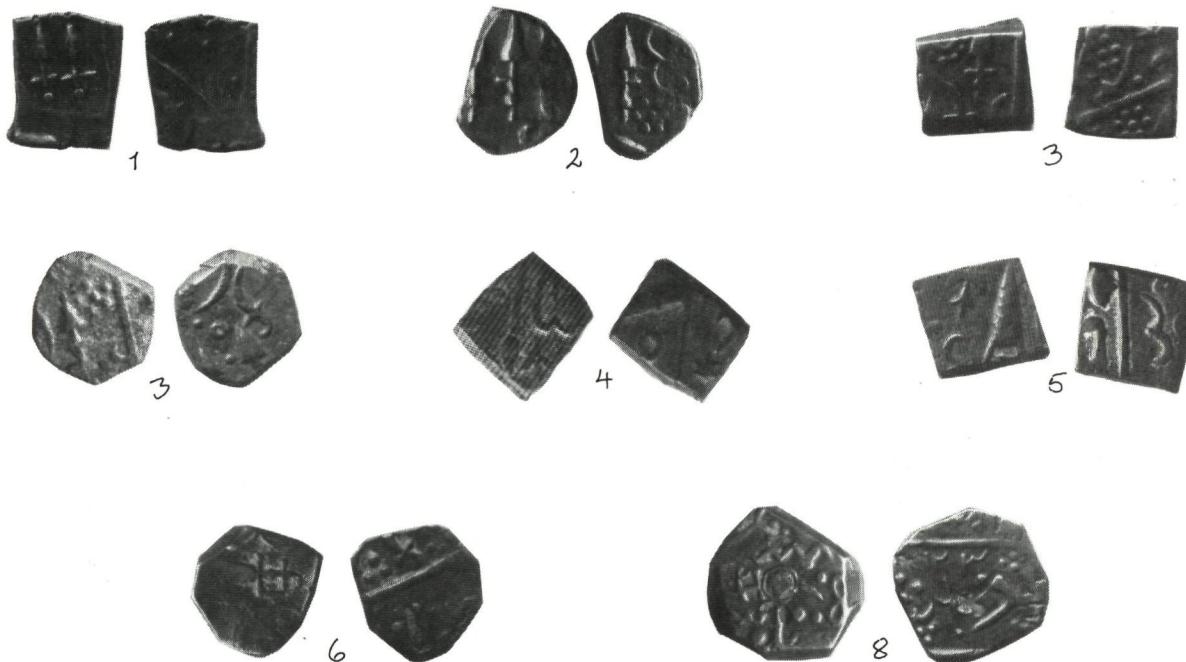
| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |

5.18g. Somewhat heavier than the above. A.N.S. specimen.

8.03g. Weight of a paisa. On round flan.

9.33g. Weight of a paisa. Irregular round flan.

not known KM2 in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins & Paper Money*



In conclusion, it is maintained that the small estate of Rampura in the erstwhile Rewa Kantha Agency never issued coins. Its small population, low economy and humble status would not have made it a viable proposition. Furthermore, there is no mention in the Government report of 1870 of coins being struck there. The four states of which details were given in the Government report were all sizeable territories, with reasonably large populations and fairly high revenues.

It might be permissible here to offer re-attributions for the coins illustrated in the *Standard Guide to South Asian Coins*, 1st edition, 1977, under Rampur, as follows:

KM 1 Paisa. Possibly a coin of Sunth with two obverses shown.

KM 2 Paisa. Possibly a coin of Sunth. The reverse has the Rampur inscription. Actual coin not seen by us.

KM 3 Paisa. A coin of Sunth.

Those illustrated in the *Standard Catalogue of World Coins*, 1996 edition, as Rampur, are as follows:

KM 3 Coin of Sunth.

KM 4 Unknown (as KM 1 above).

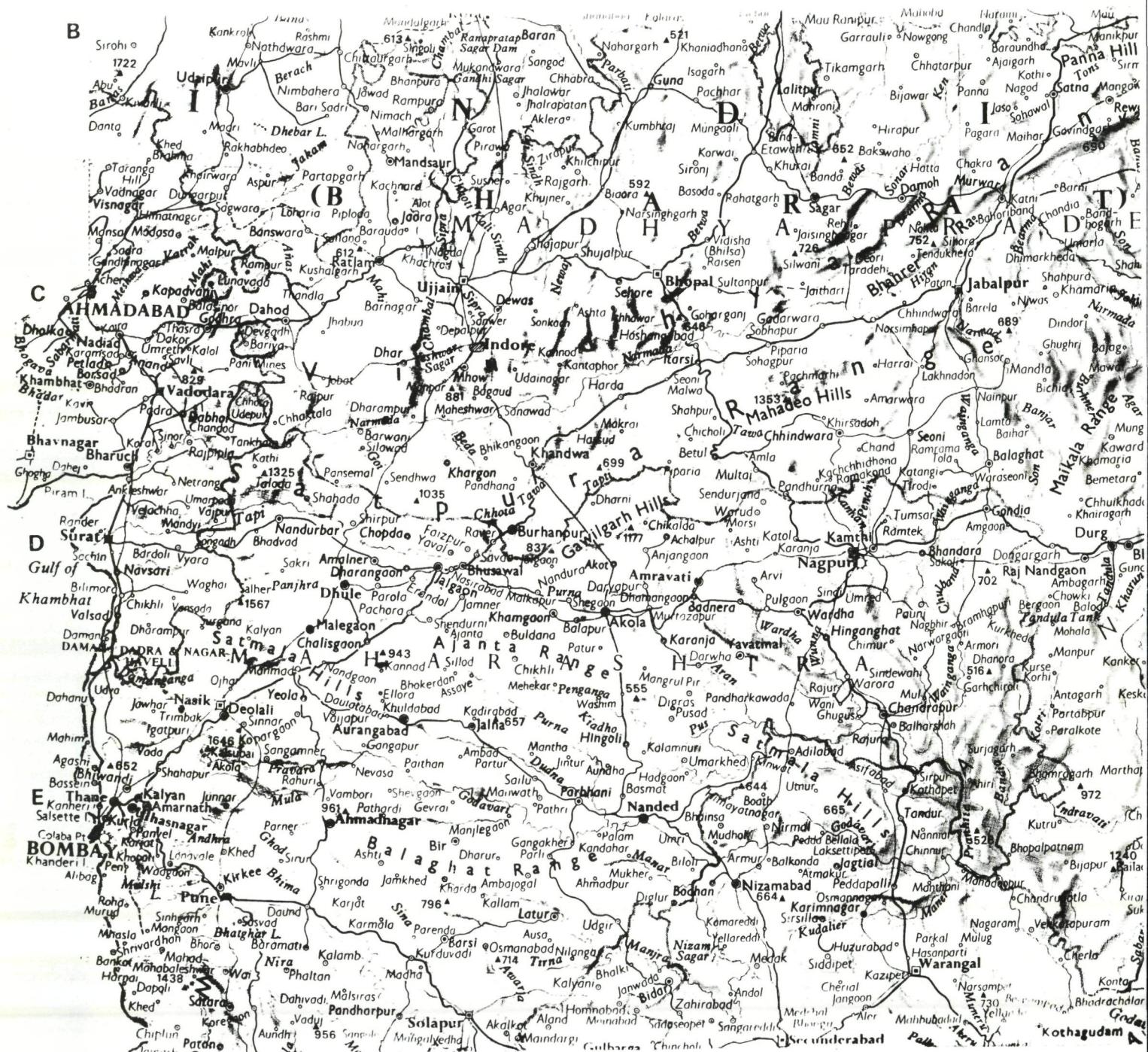
KM 5 As KM 2 above.

KM 6 Coin of Sunth.

KM 7 Coin of Sunth.

KM 8 Unknown. Possibly Sunth.

Mention may be made here of instances of over-striking. Coins of Sunth can be found overstruck on coins of Lunawada and Baria and specimens are known struck on an early paisa of Jaora and a paisa of Baroda. Coins of Lunawada are frequently found overstruck on their earlier types and we have encountered a few struck on coins of Sunth.



Map of North-West Maharashtra showing the location of the former states of Lunawada, Sunth, Baria and Chhota Udaipur.

References:

- 1 *The Standard Guide to South Asian Coins and Paper Money*, 1st edition, 1981, Iola, USA.
- 2 *Financial Department Proceedings*, January, 1876. Government of India.
- 3 *Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta*. Vol IV, Native States. Editor: J Allan. Oxford, 1928.
- 4 Due to the frequency (27%) of which this issue is found overstruck by No 1A of Wakhat Singhji, it is possible that this type was the last to be issued by Dalel Singhji.
- 5 Mike Culver has partially reconstructed one of the reverses of this type and it is shown here.
- 6 We are indebted to Mr Frank Campbell, Librarian, ANS for kindly providing copies of the relevant manuscript of W H Valentine via Mr Ken MacKenzie.

Other works consulted:

- Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Oxford, 1907
Bombay Gazetteer, Gujarat, Vols I & II, 1896
Lethbridge, Sir R. *The Golden Book of India*, London, 1900
Bingley, A H. *Hand-book on Rajputs*, Reprint, New Delhi, 1986.
Memoranda on the Indian States, 1935. Published by the Government of India.