



The earliest Tibetan paper money was issued in 1714. At first, the notes were printed in the Potala Palace of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa. Later, printing was transferred to the Trab-shi (Thapchi), a building about two miles north of Lhasa, which housed army barracks, the arsenal and the government mint.

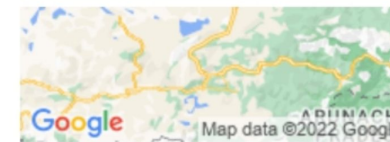
This note is decorated with symbols of good fortune. On the front of the note stand a pair of lions holding a tray full of precious objects, including jewels, elephant tusks, and the king's and queen's earrings. In the border framing the note are the eight lucky symbols of Buddhism: the knot of life (a symbol of longevity), a vase (a sacred reliquary), a lotus flower (fragrance and beauty), the Wheel of Doctrine (this was presented to Buddha to help him teach Buddhism), two golden fish (symbolising sight), a canopy (the victory of Buddhist teaching), a parasol (symbolising protection) and a conch shell (offered for receiving blessings).

On the back of the note are the six symbols of long life: the great saint, a pair of deer, two cranes, water, a rock and a tree. The great saint holds a rosary and pours water. To his side a small figure plays the cymbals. Two bats fly to the right and left of the tree.

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