

# DANISH WEST INDIES STUDY UNIT

[www.dwistudygroup.com](http://www.dwistudygroup.com)

## SCANDINAVIAN COLLECTORS CLUB

[www.scc-online.org](http://www.scc-online.org)

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Newsletters will be posted on the Danish Wet Indies Study Unit web site

### Newsletter No. 30

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#### A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW EDITOR

Victor Engstrom formed this Study Group with his first letter in 1971 to 25 DWI specialists. He assumed the position of editor/compiler for "producing a complete handbook of the postal history and philately of the DWI". The result was three-volume set of the *Danish West Indies Mails 1754 - 1917*, the last volume being published in 1981. Volume 1 was revised and enlarged by John DuBois in 2001, with editors Jeremiah A. Farrington and Roger Schnell, M.D.

In 1988, the Study Unit, under the direction of Dr. Roger Schnell, became a forum for sharing information about covers, postal rates, stamps, questions, etc. with lots of illustrations. John DuBois continued this format as Editor-Coordinator in 1997, and it is an honor to follow their footsteps. The newsletter will continue showing submitted material for informational/educational purposes, and for inquiries.

The Study Unit should be an important resource to all DWI collectors, and membership is open to all DWI collectors. The continuance of this Study Unit will hopefully expand the knowledge of, and interest of, the DWI. There are no dues, no meetings and no set publishing schedule. The frequency of newsletters will to some extent depend upon the material submitted. The newsletters will be available in color on our website, the address is listed above, and it is hoped that most communications to group members can be via email. Please forward your email address for future use.

The Word format is preferred, and material can be sent via email, regular mail (Typed) or on CD or floppy disk. Images should ideally be JPEG at 300-800 dpi. Please indicate if your name (or initials) can be used with the material submitted.

#### WANTED: UPDATED ERP DATES AND NEW MAIL FORWARDER INFORMATION

It has been more than 25 years since the three DWI Mails volumes were issued, and more philatelic material is now available. It is therefore timely to use the combined knowledge of the members and add a second Study Unit purpose, namely updating existing information. There are many areas that can be revisited and have the data updated.

Two examples that immediately come to mind are ERP's and mail forwarders. Both of these will continuously change with time. ERP's (earliest reported postmarks) have been published in the *DWI Mails Volume 2*, the 1997 *DAKA Danish West Indies* catalogue, and in Lasse Nielsen's 2001 six-volume set on the *Bicoloured Stamps of Denmark and the DWI*. John DuBois published the second edition of the *DWI Mails Volume 2* in 2001, and it has the most current list of known and probable mail forwarders. That list includes the known dates of mail forwarding. I know of three (possibly four) new names for this list, so there must be others. Please help by checking your covers for new additions.

Please send your suggestions for other topics/areas that could benefit from updating. Small articles can also be submitted.

#### WANTED: AVIS DE RECEPTION DATA

The DWI post office used at least two different A.R. marks on covers, but this is a DWI philatelic area that appears to have been neglected. Are there any DWI publication that has discusses this post office marking? The DAKA catalog has an illustration, but otherwise it is an "invisible" topic, though *DWI Mails Volume 3* has a few pages describing "A.R." post office forms. Recently one dealer had a cover with the notation "Only 9 known A.R. mail covers known", but I have indexed twelve with date, destination, stamps used and reference to where located, and more must exist. I have also indexed five A.R. forms used at the D.W.I post office. The DWI post office used at least two different A.R. forms, so the sharing of data can provide the first compilation of known material. The 1856 DWI postal regulations make mention of a fee for persons wishing mail delivery confirmation, but it may be that the earliest covers are from the UPU era, and it may be that the total number of covers to record will be a few dozen at best.

**KINGSHILL “POST OFFICE”**. Covers with the Kingshill Post office cancel are rare, and the DWI reference material has minimal information about the post office operations. *The DWI Mails Volume 1* is a good English reference, but it lacks in depth information. The Danish *Nordisk Filatelisk Tidsskrift* journal has had several articles that include Kingshill information, but those articles are of little use to the non-Danish speaking members. The collective knowledge of Study Unit members may hold answers to the following:

1. There is one Kingshill cover canceled in 1863. Are there any other covers dated before 1900?
2. Kingshill stopped canceling mail sometime in the 1860's or 1870's. Can anyone provide an approximate date and perhaps a reason for it?
3. It resumed canceling mail about 1909. What is the earliest cancel date that can be established?
4. After it resumed canceling mail, it also started sending registered mail (1914-16?), but there are very few such covers known. Initially the registry marks were applied at Christiansted (and Fredriksted also?), so the addition of registry service represents a second change or upgrade of the Kingshill PO. Do any of you have such covers that can be illustrated in a future newsletter?
5. Does anyone have a cover mailed to Kingshill having an arrival postmark? Arrival marks are common at the three large PO's and St. Jan, but do they exist on Kingshill mail? (Perhaps on a registered letter addressed to Kingshill). Your editor has received a scan of two “bit” postage due stamps with partial Kingshill marks, so Kingshill must have had postage due stamps in stock.

Illustrated below are three stamps canceled with the “Large Dot” marks used at St. Jan and Kingshill. The stamp on the left is from the 1866 issue. There are obvious differences in the diameter of the center “dot”, and that begs the question: Can anyone tell where they were canceled? If so, that ought to be a new revelation for DWI specialists. The St. Jan PO should have used it continuously until the 1877 UPU entry, while the Kingshill mark may have been discontinued prior to that date. A recent auction had a bicolored stamp with the cancel identified as being the Kingshill cancel.

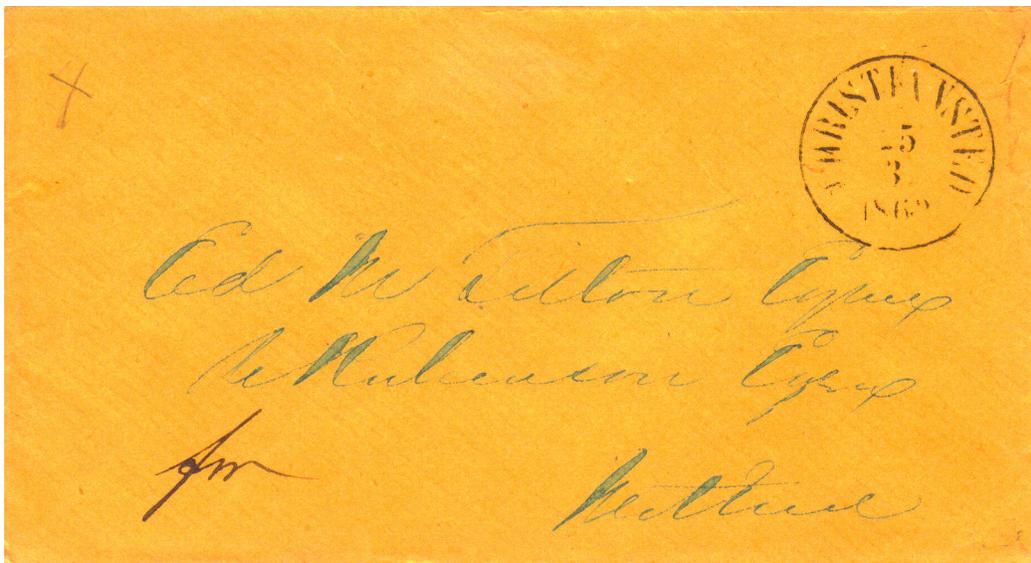
The DWI Mails call these cancels rare, and they are rarely seen in auction catalogues.

What other DWI stamps are known to have been canceled with these marks? There should be a few early printing Bi-colored denominations, but maybe it continued in use at St. Jan after the DWI entered the UPU.



All three were scanned as a single image, so there are no magnification differences.

It would also be interesting to index registered letters from St. Jan. St. Jan did not have its own registry marks, so letters were registry marked at St. Thomas.



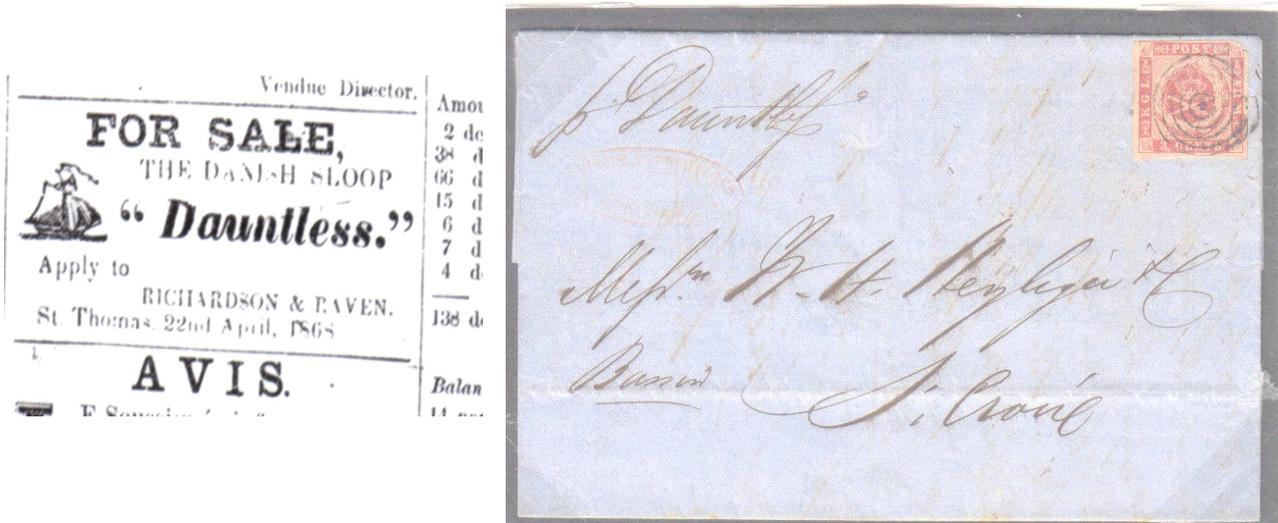
**FRANCO COVER, 186?** (Possibly 1862 or 1863) This is an interesting cover in that it is stampless without a postage due mark. The lower left "scribble" was a mystery until it was suggested by several parties that it was likely "frn", an abbreviation for "franco". Mail marked "franco" could not have stamps affixed. The only other alternative was to send it unpaid, in which case a four cent fee was collected from the recipient, and a postage due mark (PORTO) would have been used. The letter is addressed to the Frederiksted area (Westend) but passed through the Christiansted PO on its route. Can anyone shed light on how such letters had the 3 cents fee paid at a location and/or time where stamps could not be supplied? The DWI post office was modeled after the Danish PO operation, so the answer may lie there. Franco markings are also known on DWI covers to Europe that were sent prepaid via the British St. Thomas PO, (applied in Hamburg?) and also as a boxed rectangular mark on covers sent with US or French adhesive stamps (Both red and black), but this is a domestic cover. Are there any other known domestic manuscript "franco" covers? There is one known cover addressed to St. Jan having a circular "FRANCO" mark, and it may very well be an example of official mail that could be mailed postage free.

The upper left corner on the above cover has either an "X" or a "4" pencil mark, but it may have no bearing on when it was mailed, and may have been added at a later time.

**ST. THOMAS TO ST. CROIX BY THE SHIP "DAUNTLESS"**

The "Vigilant" mail ship carried a lot of mail (and passengers) between the two islands on its twice-weekly trips, and some covers may be found inscribed "per Vigilant". However, it was only one of many mail carrying ship though most attention has been paid to it due to its long illustrious history. The Cover below is one of the few sent via another identifiable ship. It is inscribed "p Dauntless", and it is possible this ship has not previously been identified. The letter was mailed August 12, 1868 (a Wednesday) by BRISCOE McDOUGLAS & CO (company cachet in red), and the only cancel is the 5-ring dot. This cancel was used at St. Thomas, Christiansted and Frederiksted, so there is no clue where it was canceled. There are other DWI covers with classic stamps that are without a PO name cancel, but most do have a PO name on either the front or the reverse side. Maybe it was mailed directly via the ship mail box without passing through the St. Thomas post office. It would be interesting to know why some mail is without date cancels.

Regarding the ship itself, a *St. Thomas Tidende* advertisement dated 22 April 1868 show the Danish sloop "Dauntless" to be for sale, so that establishes its legitimacy.



A large number of inter island mail ships have been identified, but the list is scattered among multiple publications. Three large lists can be found in the *DWI Mails Volume 1*, a *Nordisk Filatelisk Tidsskrift* article dated December 1983, (article name listed below), and in the proceedings of the Nordia 2001 Meeting in Tucson, AZ. They have some overlap, but collectively they add up to about 40 ships. There may be other lists in other publications.

Would anyone like to volunteer to compile a single list for a future newsletter? Your editor can provide Danish-to-to-English translation assistance if needed.

**THE THREE-RING CANCEL AND THE "C" AND "F" MARKS USED AT ST. THOMAS**

In 1983 Poul Hviid and Henning Hansen published "Postbefordringen Paa St. Croix Og De Dansk Vestindiske C og F Stempler" in the *Nordisk Filatelisk Tidsskrift*. The title translates "The Mail Delivery System At St. Croix And The Use Of The C and F Cancels". Since it is in Danish and 25 years old it may not have been available to all DWI specialists, so here is a translation from part of it. It may have some new information and explanation for some members.

"Mail that had not been canceled was frequently sent from St. Croix to St. Thomas from either Christiansted or Frederiksted. The St. Thomas post office would, at its arrival, use a four-ring target to cancel the stamp, and would strike the St. Thomas date cancel somewhere on the envelope away from the stamp.

"Mail from St. Croix canceled at St. Thomas (with the four-ring target cancel) is also frequently found to have a primitive "C" or "F". These cancels do not indicate the letters were mailed at either Christiansted or Frederiksted, only that they arrived at St. Thomas by ship from either Christiansted or Frederiksted. The "C" mark is common, and it is not impossible that the "F" cancel could also have been used on mail from Christiansted.

"Their years of use are not fully known. The DWI post offices was divided into two districts, and it was important to know if a letter was mailed from ether the St. Thomas/St. Jan district, or from the St. Croix district. If the St. Croix district had income generated from the sale of the stamps, a debit was to be applied for a transit fee that was the responsibility the sending post office. It was the St. Thomas Post Office that was responsible for calculating all UPU transit fees, and to make sure that St. Croix paid its share."

"There are two known "C" types and a single known "F" type.

	Earliest recorded use	Last recorded use	
<b>C</b> type 1:	30 December 1879	7 May 1912	
<b>C</b> type 2:	8 November 1910	13 December 1916	Very uncommon!
<b>F</b> :	25 December 1899	24 October 1911"	Six known letters (as of 1983)

(End of translation)

Two additional four-ring cancel comments are in order: First, the four-ring cancel was only used at St. Thomas, and second, mail that arrived from foreign countries without having had the stamp canceled would be treated the same way: The stamp was canceled with the four-ring cancel, and the St. Thomas date cancel was applied somewhere on the front or back. Your editor has a 1913 letter from Haiti treated this way, and Henrik Mouritzen's website shows another cover. The cancel is also supposed to have been used for extended period after the 1917 transfer to the USA, but such statements invariably make reference to the same author without providing proof in the form of a cover.

Do any of you have a cover proving its use in the 1920-30s? The DWI four-ring cancel is approximately 18.5 mm diameter, and the US used a similar cancel in many locales, but its diameter is less though it may appear similar in illustrations.

The four-ring cancel is quite common, and it has been the subject of multiple NFT articles the last couple of decades. Mail delivered very late to the Frederiksted and Christiansted post offices would be brought to the mail ship without a cancel. Each DWI registered mail ship also had a locked mail box that was used by the public, so their mail could be expedited and not have to wait a day or two for the next mail boat departure. And finally, there are St. Jan covers canceled with the four-ring mark, but they are hard to identify.

**ENGSTROM 2 CENTS TYPE PC-4 A4 POSTAL CARD.**

This Engstrom type is known for the blurs at the top of the "NSPOS" letters. Here is what looks to be a card printed very early. Instead of blurs it has extra thin lines above the letters that follows the curvature of the letters. The bottom card has partial blurs as though ink is filling into the spaces.

It seems reasonable to speculate that ink would fill in the spaces within a short time, and therefore the great majority of the printing would have a constant blur. It would be interesting to learn how this could have happened, and if has occurred on any Danish or Icelandic postal material.

NOTE: As this newsletter is being completed it turns out this was previously described by M. Hunewell in the *Posthorn* May 1992 issue on a 1 CENT 1902 provisional.



**PRINTED MATTER TO A NON-UPU COUNTRY, ULTRAMARINE POSTAL ENVELOPE**



Haiti was one of the many countries that did not join the UPU immediately, and these countries had special postage rates. The rate to Haiti was 3 cents until it joined the UPU 1 September 1881.

The 2 cents postal envelope was issued without gum on the flap, and its intended usage was printed matter to foreign destinations at the 2 cents UPU rate. The earliest envelopes have the ultramarine color, and less than ten used covers have been recorded. This may be the only ultramarine cover up-rated to the 3 cents rate to non-UPU countries. Interestingly, had the cover been sent by a French packet, the rate would have been 4 cents. It may also be only the second recorded printed matter mail to a non-UPU country.

The ERP for the ultramarine printing is 28 February 1879 (and 20 May 1880 for the blue color). Check your collections for earlier dates.

**SMALL DIAMETER DOUBLE CIRCLE CANCEL ERP.** I am very close to completing an article about the use of the 1855 British PO cancel that was used without the day and month slugs after a fire at the British Post Office. This is a rather scarce cancel, and I have only indexed four examples. As part of the research I am looking for the ERP for the 25 mm diameter double ring replacement cancel. So far the ERP is June 14, 1855, with an earlier June date likely, and a May cancel date possible.

Does anyone have a cover dated earlier than June 14, 1855?

**DANISH BICOLORED STAMPS WEBSITE:** The Danish Website <http://www.tofarvet.dk/forside.htm> has a number of interesting varieties and positions discussed. Inga and Hans Mortensen posted a picture of a 1 cent print VII stamp (inverted frame) with the 10 CENTS 1895 surcharge on June 4, 2007. There were a number of interesting comments entered as to whether it was a forgery or not (many comments in English). The issue was settled by Lasse Nielsen with a June 16, 2007 certificate declaring it to be a forgery. This is considered a proof stamp and is only known with the normal frame on print VIII stamps.

This stamp is known to have two different sizes of the "10", and if any of you have both sizes they could be displayed in a future newsletter.