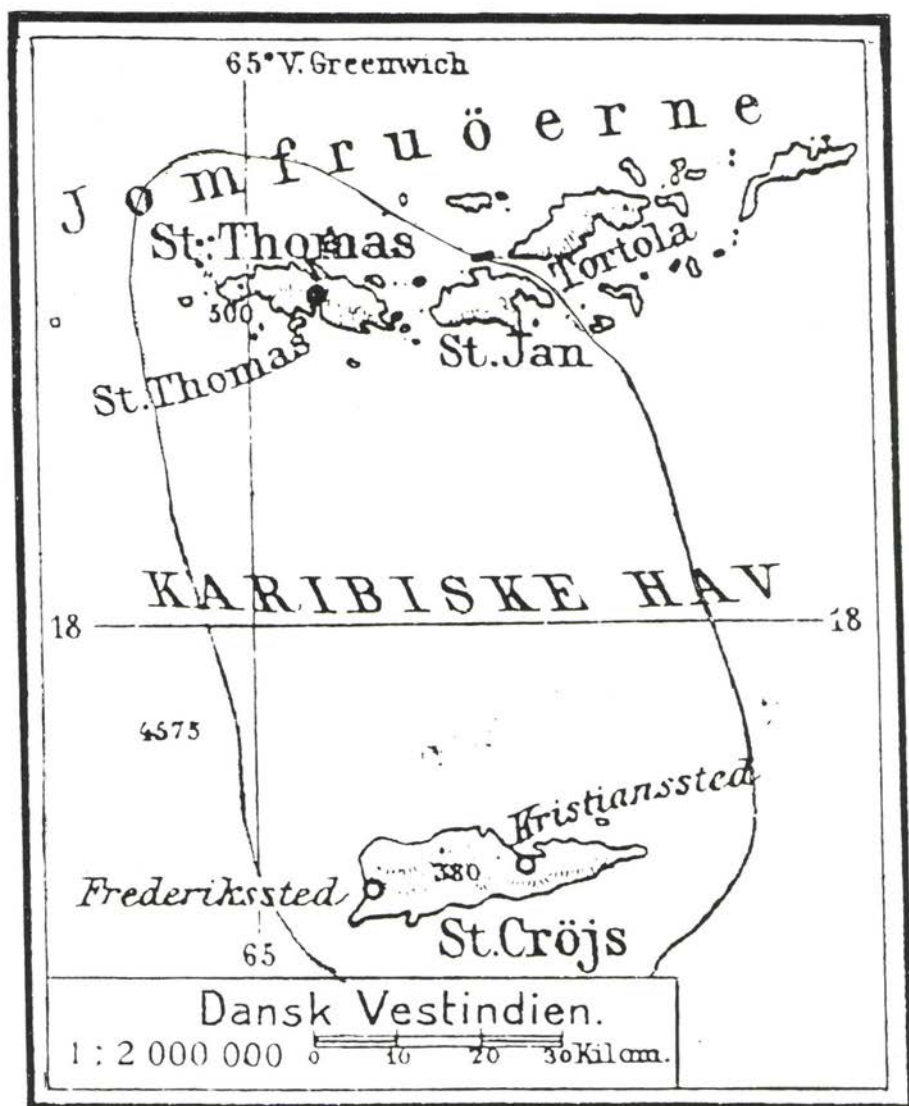


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**Danish West Indian Postal Rates
1856-1917**

By Henning Mathiesen





Many thanks to Dr. Dan Laursen for translating this article and for his many years of service to Danish philately. Also, thanks to Dr. Roger G. Schnell who has provided tireless service and promotion of Scandinavian philately and Danish West Indies philately in particular.

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Translated by Dr. Dan Laursen

Edited by Dr. Roger G. Schnell

From Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidsskrift, December 1981. We wish to thank Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidsskrift, the Kjøbenhavns Philatelist Klub, and Henning Mathiesen for the opportunity to make available this information in English to Scandinavian Collectors Club members.

St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, was the leading entrepôt port of the Caribbean during the 19th century. The tentacles of trade found the Danish West Indies an ideal intermediate station between Europe and the Caribbean, as well as North and South America. Strategically, physically and economically the DWI commanded the passages of the Caribbean. This led to fierce competition to transmit the mail by various carriers. As a consequence, the postal rates of the DWI during this time period are complicated and unclear. The three volume *DWI Mails* provided the English speaking collector with a good basis for these rates. However, since then, Henning Mathiesen has written the definitive work on DWI rates in the NFT.

In Danish, the article received little recognition in the English speaking philatelic world. Through the good offices of Dr. Dan Laursen, who translated the article and obtained permission to reprint it in the *Posthorn*, we can now bring this definitive work on DWI postal rates to all SCC members. On behalf of all SCC members, DWI collectors, and postal historians, to Dan we say "Thanks."

—Dr. Roger G. Schnell

Danish West Indian Postal Rates 1856-1917

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Introduction

Pursuant to the Danish Postal Regulations of March 11, 1851 a uniform letter rate of 6 skilling / 1 lod (1 skilling = 2 öre; 1 lod = 15.625 grams) was introduced. The prior rate had been based upon the distance the letter traveled. At the same time, stamps were introduced so one could frank letters without going to the post office and paying the postage in cash. The stamps were sold for 4 skillings, giving the stamp user a rebate of 2 skilling.

The law was welcomed by the Danish population and valid only for the kingdom of Denmark. The dependencies and colonies, including the Danish West Indies, were excluded. The Danish West Indies postal service was organized in a very special way.

The post offices were established at the custom-houses in 1781, and were able to dispatch mail between the islands or with one of the infrequent Danish ships bound for the homeland. However, a postal monopoly was out of the question because the population could mail its post through one of the numerous shipping agents on St. Thomas or through the British postal agency on the island: also it was possible to make an arrangement with the captain or one of the crew of a ship. The "Letter Offices" were to be regarded as an alternative post.

On July 10, 1855 the Danish postal regulations were expanded to include "The Danish West Indian Possessions," although in a modified form. The postage for the local letters was the monopoly of the Danish West Indies postal

service. The handling of external mail and parcel post was not changed. However, incoming Danish West Indies mail was to be passed on to the DWI P.O. for delivery and collection of the local charge.

It was intended that the new regulations should take effect four months after passage but the new regulations did not arrive in the Danish West Indies until November 16, 1855 via the ship *FLORA*. The new regulations were postponed until April 1, 1856, the first day of the new fiscal year.

The new regulations were disliked, especially at St. Thomas, where numerous protest meetings with collection of signatures took place. The population felt the new regulation was a new duty or tax.

Local Post

No immediate changes were made in the postal regulations which took effect on April 1, 1856. The rate for letters between the post offices on St. Thomas, St. Jan, and St. Croix (Christiansted, Frederiksted and Kingshill) was reduced from 5 styver (= 7 cents), to 4 cents, and, as in Denmark, the rate could be paid with a 3¢ stamp. This prepayment of the letter rate resulted in a 1 cent rebate.

For arriving mail the local 4 cent rate was also charged, except for mail addressed to St. Thomas and forwarded by the British postal agency on the island. This local postage charge could not be paid in advance with stamps.

Mail from St. Croix or St. Jan to overseas destinations via St. Thomas was charged 4 cents, or could be franked

with a 3 cent DWI stamp / 1 lod (15.625 grams). If the sender wanted to prepay the overseas postage a cash payment was sent with the letter to St. Thomas where it was given to the office in charge of forwarding.

On August 30, 1861 the local rate was changed to 4 cents for letters weighing 2 lod (31.25 gms) and 8 cents for heavier letters effective 1 October 1861. Also the weight limit for printed matter and newspapers was raised, the latter the only item mailed at a wrapper rate. In the fall of 1865 the postal regulations were changed locally to allow prepayment of external mail with stamps.

On September 1, 1877 the Danish West Indies became a member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and stamps were required as prepayment of the mails. One could now pay the registration fee with stamps, whereas in the past it was paid in cash. The rates for local mail between the post offices of the DWI remained unchanged until the new regulations of November 8, 1901. Postal cards were introduced in 1879.

In association with the Monetary Reform of 1905 the existing rates were converted to the following exchange rate: 1 dollar = 100 cents = 500 bits = 5 francs. The postal regulations of April 1, 1912 raised the weight limit for letters but in other respects the postage rates were unchanged until the islands were sold to the USA on March 31, 1917.

Denmark

As mentioned in the introduction, the 1855 law dealt with mail to Denmark, but only with a direct Danish ship, the rate being fixed at three times the local Danish West Indies rate for letters. The Danish postal regulation of April 1, 1871 reduced the postage to 4 cents for a letter weighing up to 250 gms. However, the letter was to be sent via direct Danish ship. This rate was

also valid for letters to the Faroes and to Iceland.

The majority of the mail to Denmark after 1856 was forwarded by the British postal agency in St. Thomas. The rates of that office will not be dealt with in this article, but here we can note that letters to Denmark in the time period 1855 — 1865 were 1 shilling 4-1/2d (34 cents), 1865 — 1873 1 shilling 3d (31 cents), 1873 — 1875 1 shilling 2d, (29 cents), and 1875 — 77 1 shilling 1-1/2d (28 cents). Mail sent from St. Croix or St. Jan added the local postage. The British rates were always slightly higher than the Danish, but in return there was departure to Europe twice a month, whereas it was several months between departures of Danish ships to the motherland.

From September 1865 the French shipping company "Compagnie Generale Transatlantique" started calling regularly at St. Thomas. This company transported mail to Denmark on a contractual fixed French rate of 1.60 franc for a letter weighing up to 7-1/2 gm (from 1866 10 gms, and from 1876 15 gms). The mail was handled by the Danish post office on St. Thomas but after 3 months the Presidency of St. Thomas made arrangements with the postmaster that deviated from the postal law by deciding that the local postage for mails from St. Thomas was not to be collected, so these rates will not be dealt with here. The French shipping company departures were once a month for Europe, and the postage could be paid in French stamps.

Six years later the two German shipping companies HAPAG (Hamburg Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actien Gesellschaft) and "Norddeutscher Lloyd" of Bremen also called at St. Thomas on outward and homeward passage to and from Colon (Panama). Both companies had a contract with the German postal service but when the Danish

authorities granted the companies rather large reductions in harbor charges the companies in return had to agree that mail collected by the Danish post offices on the island would be charged the local rate of 3 and 6 cents respectively. The post office then delivered the mail to the agents of the shipping companies who saw to it that the mail was delivered to the appropriate ships. The contract fixed German postage at 6 sgr. (silbergroschen) per 15 gm. letters and 1 sgr. per 40 gms wrapper mail (samples, documents and printed matter). These rates were collected, 15 cents plus 3 cents local postage — 1/2 cent of the latter was "market profit" to the Danish West Indies post office.

In the summer of 1872 a postal convention was convened between the Danish authorities in Copenhagen and the German postal department in Berlin regarding forwarding of mail from the West Indies to Europe. The mail to Europe now could be paid by means of Danish West Indies stamps and would be sent once a month via Cherbourg, Verviers and Cologne, with the mail to Denmark following the ship to the German harbor (in order to save French and Belgian transit charges), and from there without paying German transit charges to the Korsør-Kiel post office. The letter rate was fixed as low as 7 cents per 15 gms, including DWI and Danish transit charges. As of March 1875 mail could be sent to Denmark via Cherbourg at a slightly higher rate of 12 cents which included both French, Belgian and German transit charges. This routing reached the addressee 2-3 days faster. In October, mail via this routing was reduced to 10¢ to conform to a uniform European rate in connection with the entering of Germany into the UPU later that same year.

When DWI joined the UPU 1 September 1877 the British postal agency on St. Thomas was abandoned and all mail

thereafter was dispatched by the Danish post office. At this time a uniform rate was introduced for all membership countries. However, the special postage rates by direct Danish ship to Denmark or via German ship via Hamburg was not changed until 1 October 1888 for the latter and 1907 for the former. Postal regulations of 19 September 1888 contained a special rate for ordinary letters from non-commissioned officers to privates of the Danish Army serving in the DWI. The rate was 3 cents per 15 gms. This rate was not abandoned until 1907 when the army was replaced by a police corps.

Europe

Prior to 1865 mail to Europe was forwarded by private ship or sent via the British postal agency in St. Thomas. During the period 1865—1871 one could send mail franked with French stamps by "Compagnie Generale Transatlantique" and beginning in 1871 by the two German shipping companies, HAPAG, that called at St. Thomas outbound from Hamburg, and Norddeutscher Lloyd that took on mail when home bound.

In the beginning the mail was handled in a special way: the DWI P.O. collected the letters and the postage in accordance with its contract with the German Post Office. In addition, it collected the charge for local postage 3 and 6 cents respectively. Mail to the GPU (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Luxembourg) was sent unfranked and the charges settled with the shipping company's agent in St. Thomas, who then settled with the ship's purser.

In an advertisement in the "St. Thomas Tidende" dated 3 August 1872 and signed by postmaster V. Cramer it was announced that a postal convention had been made with Germany and at the same time it published the rates to Denmark, Germany, Norway and Sweden. The mail to Norway and Sweden went,

as did the Danish mail, in a closed mail bag to Germany, from where it was forwarded via Denmark; not paying the German transit charge. In the advertisement it was announced that the mail could be franked with German stamps. This was disclaimed several months later. In a corresponding advertisement in "St. Croix Avis" it was added that the local postage had to be paid for mail from St. Croix.

The postage to other European countries was also fixed. In the case of France, Russia, Switzerland, and Spain, countries outside the GPU, the rate was in two parts. The first from the DWI to the GPU, and the second from the GPU to the individual country. For example, a letter to France was 7 cent / 15 gms in German postage, and 4 cents / 10 gms in French postage. A letter weighing between 20 to 30 gms cost in German postage 2 x 7 cents, and in French postage 3 x 4 cents for a total of 26 cents. All rates covered prepayment all the way to the addressee, (P.D.). Additionally, letters could be sent registered.

In principle, the postage could be prepaid by means of DWI stamps but only one value, 3 cents, existed. Therefore, the Ministry of Finance was asked to issue stamps in a 7 cent value (letter rate to Denmark and Germany plus registered mail fee), 14 cents (letter rate to England where a lot of business letters were sent because the postage was lower than through the British postal agency: 1 shilling = 25 cents/15 gms plus 1 cent supplemental charge).

At first only one new value was issued: the 4 cent square issue. This arrived in the DWI March 1873. This value could be added to the 3 cent stamp to make 7 cents postage, 11 cents (postage to France, Norway and Sweden) plus 14 cents, the three most used rates. In January, 1874 the 1¢, 3¢, 4¢ and 14¢ bicolor stamps arrived, and in July of the same year the 7 cent bicolor issue

was available in the DWI.

In 1875, after Germany entered the UPU, a uniform postage rate for the European countries was established, and consequently a 10 cent stamp was needed. These were shipped from Copenhagen in October 1876 on the frigate *JYLLAND* which arrived December 1876. At the same time 5 cent stamps were sent for use as a supplementary value. When the DWI became a member of the UPU, September 1, 1877, most special rates were abandoned and were replaced by a uniform postage for all membership countries.

USA, Brazil

Beginning in October, 1865 the American company "United States and Brazil Mail Steamship Company" stopped at St. Thomas on the monthly route between the USA and Brazil. The company was subsidized by the American government and therefore had to carry mail. The letter postage rate was 10 cents/ 1/2 oz. Although the American government tried to get the DWI P.O. to include the DWI transit charge, the DWI authorities insisted there be a DWI local postage charge, which was 3 cents for letters up to 2 lod, and 6 cents for heavier letters. Furthermore, it was agreed that postal circulars could be prepaid by stamps. Additionally, the American postage could be paid by US stamps, allowing the possibility of mixed franking. A large part of this mail was solely franked with US stamps due to the fact that mail from other West-Indian islands was mailed via St. Thomas (in which case local postage was not paid), or West-Indian postage was paid in cash. In that case the postmaster in St. Thomas annulled a certain number of stamps or fiscally canceled stamps to a value equaling the DWI local rate.

Letters to the USA could be prepaid all the way to destination ("P.D."), whereas the postage to Brazil only cov-

ered the rate to the port of disembarkation ("P.P."). The inland postage was paid by the addressee.

South and Central America plus West Indies

Until May of 1870 the Dutch shipping company of J. A. Jesurun and Zoon called at the home island of Curacao plus Venezuela. Mail from these destinations was attended to by the Dutch consul at St. Thomas without assistance from the DWI P.O. The shipping company issued their own stamps for use on the mail between St. Thomas, La Guaira, Porto Cabello and Curacao. Because Jesurun supported the losing party in a Venezuelan coup d'etat during the spring of 1870, the shipping company had to stop calling on Venezuela. The Venezuelan government put on two schooners which both called at St. Thomas twice monthly. At the same time the Danish post office took over the dispatch of the mail to the South American republics. Several months later the DWI P.O. took over the dispatching of mail to Curacao as well. The postage to Venezuela and Curacao included the local postage but could not be prepaid by means of stamps. The rate, however, was valid all the way to the destination.

After Herrera Line's ("Empresa Vapores Espanoles de las Antillas") contract with the British P.O. ended January 1871, the DWI P.O. at St. Thomas took over the collection of mail from the company. "Spanish Mail," as this company was also called, forwarded mail to the Spanish colonies in the West Indies, namely Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The postage could be prepaid all the way to the addressee and included local postage (3 cents). The postage rate was paid in cash and could not be paid with stamps.

About the same time the DWI P.O. began to collect mail for transport with the Liverpool shipping company, "West Indian and Mexican Line," which sailed

on the Mexico, Haiti and Jamaica route. The company, contrary to the "Royal Mail Steam Packet Company," had no contract with the British P.O. in St. Thomas. The mail, therefore, was not forwarded by the British P.O. at St. Thomas. The postage, including the DWI local rate, was valid only to the port of disembarkation (P.P.). The inland rate was then paid by the addressee.

Beginning in September, 1873 the two German companies "Norddeutscher Lloyd" and HAPAG expanded their shipping routes from Columbia, Haiti and Puerto Rico to include other destinations — Trinidad, Venezuela, and Curacao. Their ships were now in St. Thomas two times per month. The mail from these destinations did not effect German postal conventions and did not go into the companies' contract with the German P.O. The shipping companies could collect and keep the postage themselves. The rates included DWI local postage and only covered the transport to the shipping companies' agent at the port. From May 1874, "Norddeutscher Lloyd" stopped service in the West Indies. HAPAG, however, continued until the beginning of WWI.

From May 2, 1875 HAPAG issued its own local stamp which could be used only on mail to and from West Indian destinations. These stamps were sold for 10 cents, of which the DWI P.O. kept 3 cents, and the rest settled with the shipping company agent in St. Thomas. The local stamps were canceled with the usual St. Thomas cancellation because they included the local postage. All these rates and services were discontinued on September 1, 1877. (A cover dated 8/11/79, however, is on record.)

UPU

The DWI, as mentioned earlier, became a member of the UPU September 1, 1877. This meant that the DWI P.O. obtained the monopoly on mailing ser-

vices. Consequently, the British postal agency in St. Thomas was abandoned. Furthermore, joining the UPU meant that DWI stamps could be used on mail to all membership countries. At this time the regulations stated that general mail which was forwarded unfranked was to pay a 50% higher rate at the destination than if the sender had prepaid the postage.

The rates to foreign countries were based on rates adopted at the foundation meeting of the UPU in Bern, 1874. The letter postage to member countries should consist of a basic rate of 25 centimes with a maximum additional rate charge of 32 centimes. In the DWI, the maximum postage was 12 cents per 15 gms, and in this connection the DWI P.O. issued a new stamp of the same color as the old 14 cent stamp. It also became possible to send postal cards at half the postage of a letter. A special postal stationery card was issued November, 1877.

The postage to non-member countries was fixed, but because the various shipping companies collected various amounts for the transport of the mail to these countries, the postage rate to one country could be three different amounts, depending on the nationality of the ship carrying the mail. The rates to the non-member countries lasted until the country in question became a member of the UPU. In the accompanying tables that date is shown in parenthesis. In the case of non-member countries the postage had to be prepaid, whereas with UPU members the addressee could pay the unpaid postage.

In the ensuing seven months following the DWI UPU membership the rates for mail to non-member countries continued to fall. The postage of printed matter was reduced to 2 cents per 50 gms, and an envelope was issued with a printed 2 cent value stamp imprint for

printed matter usage. A second envelope with a 3 cent value stamp imprint was issued for use as local letter mail. The 2 cent envelope was not gummed.

At the postal congress in Paris in 1878 it was decided to keep the basic letter rate of 25 centimes but only to allow a maximum additional charge of 100%. Thus the DWI letter rate was reduced to 10 cents per 15 gms, effective April 1, 1879. That spelled a farewell to the 12 cent bicolor issue but did not necessitate a new issue, since the 10 cent stamp already existed. In addition to the letter rate, the post card rate was reduced to 10 centimes, with an additional maximum charge of 50% allowed. Furthermore, a uniform dimension of postal cards was established. For the DWI this meant a reduction of the postage to 3 cents per postal card for external usage, and 2 cents for domestic use. Reply cards were also printed. The answer card could be returned from any member country to the DWI. Thus, reply cards are found with foreign cancels. The first reply cards were issued by DWI in 1883.

Favored Island Rate

In 1879 a special rate was introduced to destinations which were situated within 300 nautical miles of the DWI. In effect the rate was only valid to Guadeloupe, Puerto Rico and Viequez. In 1899 the measurement was changed to mean a radius of 300 miles, which now covered Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, Saba, St. Eustacius, St. Kitts, Santa Domingo and Tortola. The rate was basis postage or 25 centimes = five cents for a letter, and two cents for a post card.

Postal Rates

The postal rates of 1879 were valid for nearly 23 years and consequently few new stamps were issued. In the fall of 1879, however, a 50 cent stamp in the bicolor design was issued. This value

was meant for heavier letters (5th weight class - over 60 gms) plus parcel post mail. The stamp was not used very much and in 1895 a portion of the stamps were overprinted to 10 cents. Another rarely used stamp, the 7 cent, was overprinted to 1 cent in 1887.

In 1897 the UPU Congress in Washington, D.C. agreed to reduce the additional charge for letters to maximum 50% of the basic rate and completely abandon the additional charge for postal cards. It was also decided to issue stamps in standardized colors: green for wrappers, red for inland postage and blue for postage to foreign countries (basic rate). These colors are still used in Denmark. These rates became effective in the DWI January 1, 1902. However, the Danish Post Office preempted the ruling and in 1900 issued a 1 cent and 5 cent coat-of-arms design for the DWI in the UPU colors.

Monetary Revision

In April, 1905 the DWI replaced the American dollar/cent standard with the French franc/bit standard. The exchange rate of 1 dollar = 5 francs was adopted. This meant that all rates had to be altered accordingly, and that all stamps were replaced by new ones with a silhouette of King Christian IX. No new values were used for the letter postage because most of the values available (1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10 cents) were recalculated to the new coinage (5, 10, 20, 25, 40 and 50 bit). However, three new stamps in a larger denomination and with a ship design were issued in the values of 1, 2 and 5 francs — primarily for use on parcel post mail. In June, 1905 a number of cents stamps (4 cent bicolor, 5 and 8 cent coat-of-arms issues) were overprinted with "5 bit."

Additional Rate Changes

In 1897, during the UPU Washington Congress, it was agreed that member countries could extend the existing

300 nautical mile limit to all destinations within a radius of 1500 nautical miles. However, DWI "forgot" this change but after a reminder from the UPU the rate (25 centimes) became effective from August 15, 1905. Thus the "favored rate" was now valid for Barbados, Canada, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Grenada (with the Grenadines), Guiana (British, French and Dutch), Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad, USA and Venezuela.

During the UPU Congress in Rome (1906) the extension of the 300 mile nautical limit was abandoned. Furthermore, Denmark, in connection with Switzerland and the four countries in the old GPU (Germany, Austria, Hungary and Luxembourg), offered a proposal to raise the weight limit for letters from 15 gms to 20 gms and introduce an additional postage of 15 centimes for each additional weight rate of 20 gms instead of the previous 25 centimes per 15 gms. This was passed by a slim margin and became effective in the DWI 1 October, 1909. In the case of Denmark and the USA it was effective October 1, 1907.

After the death of King Christian IX in 1906 a new series of stamps with the portrait of the new King, Frederick VIII, was issued 1907-08. The values were the same as in 1905, except for the additional values 15 and 30 bit. The 15 bit could be used as supplementary value to the 25 bit to pay for the second weight class, whereas the 30 bit could be used for the third weight supplement. The issuing of the 30 bit was questionable since very few letters of the 3rd weight class were sent. Consequently, this stamp is infrequently seen on letter mail. Frederick VIII died in 1912 and was succeeded by Christian X, who in 1915-16 was the last Danish King portrayed on a DWI stamp issue. The values were

the same as the prior emission.

Parcel Post

Parcels were never a monopoly of the DWI P.O. It was possible to forward parcel post via private messenger, via shipping agent or in any other possible way. The 1855 regulations stated that postage for mail between the post stations on the islands and by direct ship to Denmark was set, as other rates are, by the DWI postal administration. Until 1905 the postage was glued on the parcel proper or on an accompanying address letter. After 1905 a special printed address card was used.

The first rates for parcel post were set in the 1855 regulations effective 1 April 1856. The rate was made up of three different components: the basic rate, plus weight or volume rates, and a value rate. The basic rate was a fixed fee per parcel, whereas parcels with a volume below one Danish cubic foot (0.03 cubic meter) had to be taxed additionally according to weight. Larger parcels were taxed according to volume. Finally, postage was calculated based on the value of the parcel. The parcel post rates were contingent upon a direct mailing between two post offices. If the mailing was not direct, but via a combined route which involved unloading, the weight — or volume — rates were calculated separately.

There were regular ships connecting St. Thomas and St. Jan and between St. Thomas and St. Croix (Christiansted or Frederiksted). On St. Croix there was a stage coach connection between Christiansted, Kingshill and Frederiksted. A parcel from St. Jan to Kingshill with a volume below 1 cubic foot and a weight of little less than 7 pounds should, as a rule, first be sent by ship to St. Thomas. From there it was sent by another ship to one of the ports of St. Croix, and from there by stage coach to the destination. The sender

had to pay 3 times the weight rate for such a parcel.

Basic rate	4 cents
Weight rate (Vol. below 1 cubic foot)	
7 pounds, 3 x 8 cents	24 cents
Value rate — no declared value = 50¢/	
pound, 50¢ x 7 = \$3.50	<u>4 cents</u>
Total	32 cents

The post office "closed" the receiving of qualified mail 2 hours before dispatch. However, it was possible to mail ordinary letters with the later 2 hour time frame, and this was also true for parcels. For parcels, however, there was an additional charge of 1-1/2 times the normal weight or volume tariff. In the above example, one would add 1.5 x 24 or 36 cents.

Pursuant to the law, small parcels of a weight up to 8 lod and with no declared value could be sent at a reduced rate. Documents, bonds and other printed matter fell into this category. 1 January 1902 these rates were replaced by uniform postage which in 1905 was recalculated in accordance with the monetary reform.

Parcel Post to Denmark

Parcel post to Denmark is mentioned in the postal regulations of July 10, 1855 section 13, the same section that deals with letters to the motherland. The postage is calculated like this: "For parcel post mail a basic rate of 4 cents or 6 skilling, whereas the weight or volume postage is a sea rate which is fixed by the postal administration and which is added to the inland and the West Indian weight and value postage which are determined by the routes by which the mailing has gone to the motherland and in the West Indian possessions in order to reach the destination." This means the rate is obtained by adding the basic rate as for local parcels, plus weight or volume postage calculated as for local parcels, sea postage and Danish value rate, which is calcu-

lated depending on weight and distance from port of disembarkation to destination. Determining the correct rate was difficult.

The Danish Postal Regulation of 1 April, 1871 simplified the rates. The basic rate was fixed at 6 cents per parcel, the sea postage inclusive was set at 2 cents per pound; covering both the DWI and Danish postage. The rate was changed in September, 1888. There were now two different rates: One for parcels transported via Danish ship (maximum weight 100 kg.) and one by German ship with a maximum total weight of 10 pounds (5 kg) per parcel. Parcels sent to non-Danish territories were also limited to 10 pounds. The rate was calculated as follows:

DWI postage up to 10 pounds	10 cents
Sea post to the shipping co. ...	20 cents
Danish postage up to 10 pounds	<u>10 cents</u>
Total	40 cents

The German rates were a little higher. The reason for this was a higher sea transport charge and the German transit fee. The German postage was calculated as follows:

DWI postage	10 cents
Sea post to shipping co.	40 cents
German transit charge	10 cents
Danish postage	<u>10 cents</u>
Total	70 cents

The postage rates were recalculated in 1905 to franc and bit and were valid until 1910 when the German postal administration reduced the sea postage to 20 cents — the same postage as by Danish ship. (Probably in consequence of the close cooperation between HAPAG and ØK — East Asiatic Company.)

Foreign Countries

The parcel post rates to foreign countries will be mentioned briefly. The postal rates to the USA were documented by Torben Geill in "Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidsskrift" 1977 No. 3

pages 54-55. According to that article, the rate from November 4, 1890 was as follows:

Under 2 pounds (906 gms)	25 cents
Each additional pound	12 cents

Maximum rate to all foreign countries was 10 pounds.

Parcel post to Europe was rated the same way as far as Denmark was concerned. The postage consisted of a DWI charge of 10 cents (50 bit), a sea postage which for Danish ships amounted to 20 cents (1 franc), and for others (English, French and German ships) 40 cents or two francs. To this may be added any transit postage, usually 10 cents or 50 bit per parcel per country, plus a comparable charge for postage to the destination. By 1900 most countries had converted to the metric system. In the English speaking countries the English pound was still used. In 1907 the English parcel postage amounted to:

up to 3 lbs. (1,365 gms)	0.50 franc
3-7 lbs. (1,365-3,185 gm) ...	1.00 franc
7-11 lbs. (3,185-5,000 gm) .	1.50 franc

Add the DWI postage (0.50 franc per parcel) plus sea postage 1 franc per parcel via ØK. This means of transport was very important at the beginning of the 20th century.

Translated by Dr. Dan Laursen
 Edited by Roger G. Schnell, MD
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The Tables

These tables come from the NFT article. The dates have been changed to conform to standard American practise, that is — the month comes first and then the day.

Local Letter Mail

Local Rate

		4/1 1856	Oct. 1861	9/1 1877	4/2 1878	4/2 1879	1/1 1902	4/1 1905	4/1 1912
per	cents	cents	cents	cents	cents	cents	cents	bit	bit
Letters									
unfranked	15g	4	4						
franked	15g	3	3	3	3	3	2	10	
	20g								10
Wrappers/Printed Matter									
unfranked	0-60g	4							
	60-125g	8							
	0-250g		4						
	250-500g		8						
franked	0-60g	3							
	60-125g	6							
	0-250g		3						
	250-500g		6						
	50g			2	1	1	1	5	5
Post Cards									
single						2	1	5	5
double/reply						4	2	10	10
Registration									
		7	7	7	7	7	5	25	25
Return Receipt									
		4	4	3	3	3	3	15	15

Letter Mail to Denmark

By Direct Danish Ship

		4/1 1856 cents	Oct. 1861 cents	4/1 1871 cents	10/1 1888 cents	4/1 1905 bit
Letters						
Unfranked	15g	12	12			
franked	15g	9	9		7	35
	max. 250g			4		
Wrappers						
Unfranked	0-60g	12				
	60-125g	24				
	0-250g		12			
	250-500g		24			
Franked	0-60g	9				
	60-125g	18				
	0-250g		9			
	250-500g		18			
	max. 250g			2		
	50g				3	15
Military Letters						
	15g				3	15
Registration						
		7	7	4	7	
Return Receipt						
		4	4	4	3	15

By German Ship

		Sept. 1871 cents	Aug. 1872 cents	July 1873 cents	Mar. 1875 cents	Oct. 1875 cents	4/1 1905 bit
via Hamburg							
Letters	15g	18	7	7	7	7	35
Wrappers	40g	3	3				
	50g			3	3	3	15
Registration							
		7	7	7	7	7	
via Cherbourg							
Letters	15g				12	10	
Wrappers	50g				5	4	
Registration					7	7	

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Norway

		8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	3/1874 cents
per				
Letters	15g	11	11	10
Wrappers	40g	5		
	50g		5	4
Registration		7	7	7

The German Postal Union

		8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents
per			
Letters	15g	7	7
Wrappers	40g	3	
	50g		3
Registration		7	7

Belgium

		8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents
per			
Letters	15g	10	10
Wrappers	40g	4	
	50g		4
Registration		7	7

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

England, Ireland

	per	9/1871 cents	8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	10/1875 cents
Letters	15g	26	14	14	10
Printed Matter					
German postage	40g		3		
	50g			3	
British postage					
0-1/2lb.			1	1	
1/2-1lb.			14	14	
1- 1+1/2lb.			24	24	
1+1/2 -2lb.			31	31	
2-3lb.			48	48	
Samples					
German postage	40g		3		
	50g			3	
British postage	15g		1	1	
Wrappers	50g				4
(printed matter/samples)					
Registration			7	7	7

France

	per	8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	1/1876 cents
Letters				
German postage	15g	7	7	
French postage	10g	4	4	
Uniform	15g			10
Printed Matter				
German postage	40g	3		
	50g		3	
French postage	50g	1	1	
Samples				
German postage	40g	3		
	50g		3	
French postage	under 50g	4	4	
	over 50g	1	1	
Wrappers				
Printed matter/samples	50g			4
Registration		12	12	12

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Greece

		8/1872	7/1873	10/1875
per		cents	cents	cents
Letters	15g	14	14	10
Wrappers	40g	4		
	50g		4	4
Registration		7	7	7

Heligoland

		8/1872	7/1873	10/1875
per		cents	cents	cents
Letters	15g	11	11	10
Wrappers	40g	4		
	50g		4	4
Registration		7	7	7

Italy (including the Papal State)

		8/1872	7/1873	10/1875
per		cents	cents	cents
Letters	15g	11	11	11
Wrappers	40g	4		
	50g		4	4
Registration		7	7	7

Malta

		8/1872	7/1873	10/1875
per		cents	cents	cents
Letter	15g	15	15	10
Wrapper	40g	5		
	50g		5	4
Registration		13	13	7

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

The Netherlands

		8/1872	7/1873
per		cents	cents
Letters	15g	10	10
Wrappers	40g	4	
	50g		4
Registration		7	7

Portugal

		8/1872	7/1873	10/1875
per		cents	cents	cents
Letters				
German postage	15g	7	7	
Poruguese postage	10g	5	5	
Uniform	15g			10
Wrappers	40g	4		
	50g		4	4
Registration		7	7	7

Rumania

		8/1872	7/1873
per		cents	cents
Letters	15g	10	10
Wrappers	40g	4	
	50g		4
Registration		7	7

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Russia (including Finland and Poland)

	per	8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	10/1875 cents
Letters	15g	11	11	10
Wrappers				
German postage	40g	3		
	50g		3	
Russian postage	50g	1	1	
Uniform	50g			4
Registration		7	7	7

Switzerland

	per	8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	10/1875 cents
Letters				
German rate	15g	7	7	
Swiss rate	0-15g	3	3	
	15-250g	5	5	
Uniform	15g			10
Printed Matter				
German rate	40g	4		
	50g		4	
Swiss rate	50g	1	1	
Samples	40g	4		
	50g		4	
Wrappers				
(Printed matter/samples)	50g			4
Registration		7	7	7

Spain

	per	8/1872 cents	7/1873 cents	10/1875 cents
Letters	15g	12	12	10
Wrappers				
German rate	40g	3		
	50g		3	
Spanish rate	50g	1	1	
Uniform	50g			4
Registration		7	7	7

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

North America

USA

		November 1865 cents
per		
Letters		
American rate	15g	10
DWI rate	0-30g	3
	30-500	6
Newspapers		2
Wrappers	125g	4

Latin America

Brazil

		October 1865 cents
per		
Bahaia, Para, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro		
Letters		
American rate	15g	10
DWI rate	0-30g	3
	30-500g	6
Newspapers		2
Wrappers	125g	4

Columbia

		September 1871 cents
per		
by German ship, Colon, Savanilla		
Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	40g	2

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Mexico

	per	1871	cents
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by *West Indian & Mexican Line*, Vera Cruz

Letters	15g	10	
Wrappers	60g	2	

Venezuela

	per	May	1870	cents
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by Venezuelan schooner

Letters	15g	25	
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	per	September	1873	cents
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by German ship, Cumana, La Guaira, Porto Cabello

Letters	15g	10	
Wrappers	40g	2	

West Indies

Cuba

	per	January	1871	cents	1874	cents
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by Herrera Line

Letters	15g	25	18
Wrappers	60g		2

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Jamaica

	per	1871 cents
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by West Indian & Mexican Line, Kingston

Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	60g	2

Curacao

	per	1870 cents
--	-----	---------------

by J.A. Jesurun & Zoon

Letters	15g	25
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September
1873
cents

by German ship

Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	40g	2

Dominican Republic

	per	January 1871 cents	1874 cents
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By Herrera Line

Letters	15g	25	18
Wrappers	60g		2

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries Before September, 1877

Haiti

	per	September 1871 cents
by German ship, Cape Haiti Port-au-Prince		
Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	40g	2
1871 cents		
by West Indian & Mexican Line, Port-au-Prince		
Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	60g	2

Puerto Rico

	per	January 1871 cents	1874 cents
by Herrera Line			
Letters	15g	25	18
Wrappers	60g		2
September 1871 cents			
by German ship			
Letters	15g		10
Wrappers	40g		2

Trinidad

	per	September 1873 cents
by German ship		
Letters	15g	10
Wrappers	40g	2

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries After September, 1877

The UPU Countries

		9/1 1877	4/2 1878	4/1 1879	1/1 1902	4/1 1905	10/1 1909
per		cents	cents	cents	cents	bit	bit
Letters	15g	12	12	10	8	40	
	0-20g						25
	add. 20g						15
Post Card, single		6	6	3	2	10	10
	double/reply			6	4	20	20
Wrappers, (printed matter,							
business mail, samples — 1879 printed matter only)							
	50g	4	2	2	1	5	5
Business Mail	0-50g			6			
	50-100g			7			
	100-150			8			
	150-200g			9			
	200-250g			10			
	250-300			12			
	add. 50g			2			
Samples	0-50g			3			
	50-100g			4			
	100-150g			6			
	add. 50g			2			
Registration		7	7	7	5	25	25
Return Receipt		3	3	3	3	15	15

UPU Countries within 300 Nautical Miles (from Aug. 15, 1905 1500 Naut. Miles)

		4/1 1879	1/1 1902	4/1 1905
per		cents	cents	bit
Letters	15g		5	5
				25*
Post Card, single			2	1
				5
Post Card, double/reply			4	2
				10
Wrappers	50g		1	1
				5
Registration			7	5
				25
Return Receipt			3	3
				15

*The letter rate to the US became 25 bit for the first 20g October 1, 1907 and 15 bit for each additional 20g.

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries After September, 1877

Countries outside the UPU

Africa

per	4/2 1878 cents	4/1 1879 cents
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Ascension (10/1/1896)*

via England

Letters	15g	16	15
Newspapers	max 100g	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4

Capetown (1/1/1895)

via England

Letters	15g	16	15
Newspapers	max 100g	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4
Registration		11	9
Return Receipt			3

St. Helena (10/1/1896)

via England

Letters, by ship**	15g	12	
by packet	15g	27	26
Newspapers	max 100g	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4
Registration		11	9
Return Receipt			3

Gambia (1/1/1879), Gold Coast (1/1/1879), Lagos (1/1/1879), Liberia (4/1/1879), Sierra Leone (1/1/1879)

via England

Letters	15g	16	15
Newspapers	max 100g	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4
Registration		11	

* Dates in parenthesis indicate when the country joined the UPU. After that date refer to the tables on page 22.

** Packet service was contractual, "regular," service. Ship mail was not (and subject to a captain's fee).

Asia

per	4/2/1878 cents	4/1/1879 cents
Afghanistan (4/1/1879)		
As to UPU member countries (postage only to the India border)		
China (3/1/1914)		
via England and Southampton		
Letters 15g	16	
Newspapers max 100g	2	
Other Wrappers 50g	5	
Registration	11	
via England and Brindisi		
Letters 50g	19	
Newspapers 0-50g	2	
51-100g	4	
Other Wrappers 50g	7	
Registration	11	
via France		
As to other member countries		
Anam, Burma (non-British), Bangkok, Siam (Thailand) (7/1/1885)		
to Mandalay (via England or France)		
As to other member countries		
via France (English or French Ship)		
Letters 15g	21	20
Wrappers 50g	4	4
via France and Brindisi		
Letters 15g	23	22
Wrappers 50g	5	5
via England and Southampton		
Letters 15g		15
Newspapers max 100g		2
Other Wrappers 50g		4
via England and Brindisi		
Letters 15g		19
Newspapers 0-50g		2
51-100		4
Other Wrappers 50g		6

North America

		9/1 1877	4/2 1878	4/1 1879
	per	cents	cents	cents

Canada (6/1/1878), Newfoundland (4/1/1879)

Letters	15g	20	14	
Wrappers	max 100g	4	2	
Registration		7	7	

Mexico (4/1/1879)

by French packet				
Letters	15g	23	17	
Wrappers	50g	4	4	
by English packet				
Letters	15g	32	14	
Newspapers		4	2	
Other Wrappers	50g	4	2	
by other ships				
Letters	15g	17	12	
Wrappers	50g	3	3	

Central America

		9/1 1877	10/4 1877	4/2 1878	4/1 1879
	per	cents	cents	cents	cents

British Honduras (1/1/1879)

by English packet					
Letters	15g	32	20	14	
Newspapers		4	4	2	
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4	2	
by French packet					
Letters	15g	23	23	17	
Wrappers	50g	4	4	4	
By other ships					
Letters	15g	17	17	12	
Wrappers	50g	3	3	3	

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries After September, 1877

Non-UPU Countries

	per	9/1 1877 cents	10/4 1877 cents	4/2 1878 cents	4/1 1879 cents
Costa Rica (1/1/1883), El Salvador (4/1/1879), Guatemala (8/1/1881), Nicaragua (5/1/1882)					
by English packet with card (shipped in closed sacks with list of contents on a card)					
Letters	15g	32	20	14	13
Newspapers		4	4	2	2
Other Wrappers	0-50g	4	4	2	1
	51-100g	4	4	2	2
	per		9/1 1877 cents	4/2 1878 cents	4/1 1879 cents
by French packet					
Letters	15g		23	17	16
Wrappers	50g		4	4	3
by French packet via Panama					
Letters	15g		33	27	20
Wrappers	50g		6	6	5
by other ships					
Letters	15g		17	12	10
Wrappers	50g		3	3	3

West Indies

	per	9/1/1877 cents	4/2/1878 cents	4/1/1879 cents
Antigua (7/1/1879), Bahamas (7/1/1880) Barbados (9/1/1881), Dominica (7/1/1879) Montserrat (7/1/1879), Nevis (7/1/1879), St. Kitts (7/1/1879) St. Vincent (9/1/1881), Tobago (2/1/1881) Tortola (7/1/1879), Turks Islands (2/1/1881)				
Direct "card"				
Letters	15g	13	12	10
Newspapers		4	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	2	1
	51-100g	4	2	2
Registration		7	7	7
Return Receipt				3
by French packet				
Letters	15g	17	17	16
Wrappers	50g	4	4	3

	per	9/1/1877 cents	4/2/1878 cents	4/1/1879 cents
Grenada, St. Lucia (2/1/1881)				
Direct "card"				
Letters	15g	13	12	10
Newspapers		4	2	2
Other Wrappers	0-50g	4	2	1
	51-100g	4	2	2
Registration		7	7	7
Return Receipt				3
by French packet				
Letters	15g	21	21	20
Wrappers	50g	3	3	2
Registration	0-15g	7	7	7
	add. 15g	15	15	15
Return Receipt				3

Haiti (7/1/1881), Santo Domingo (10/1/1880)
St. Bartholomé (sold to Guadeloupe 8/10/1877)

by French packet				
Letters	15g	17	17	16
Wrappers	50g	4	4	3
by other ships				
Letters	15g	13	12	10
Wrappers	50g	3	3	3

South America

Argentina (4/1/1879)

via England				
Letters	15g	33	27	
Newspapers		4	2	
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4	

Bolivia (4/1/1886), Chile (4/1/1881)
Ecuador (7/1/1880), Peru (4/1/1879)

by English packet, "card" to Panama				
Letters	15g	30	26	25
Newspapers	50g	4	2	1
	item	4	4	4
Other Wrappers	0-50g	4	2	1
	51-100g	6	6	6
by French packet				
Letters	15g	27	27	20
Wrappers	50g	6	6	5
By other ships				
Letters	15g	13	12	10
Wrappers	50g	3	3	3

		9/1 1877 cents	4/2 1878 cents	4/1 1879 cents
Columbia (7/1/1881)				
by English packet, "card" to Panama				
Letters	15g	20	14	13
Newspapers		4	2	2
Other Wrappers	0-50g	4	2	1
	51-100g	4	2	2
by French packet, "card" to Panama				
Letters	15g	23	17	16
Wrappers	50g	4	4	3
by French packet via Panama				
Letters	15g	33	27	20
Wrappers	50g	6	6	5
by other ships				
Letters	15g	13	12	10
Wrappers	50g	3	3	3
Falkland Islands (1/1/1879)				
via England				
Letters	15g	22	16	
Newspapers	max 100g	4	2	
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4	
Registration		11	11	
Paraguay (7/1/1881)				
via England				
Letters	15g	33	27	16
Newspapers	0-50g	4	2	2
	51-100g	4	2	5
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4	4
via France				
Letters	15g	29	21	20
Wrappers	50g	4	4	4
Uruguay (7/1/1880)				
via England				
Letters	15g	33	27	26
Newspapers		4	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	4	4	4
via France				
Letters	15g	29	21	20
Wrappers	50g	4	4	4

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries After September, 1877 Non-UPU Countries Continued

	per	9/1 1877 cents	4/2 1878 cents	4/1 1879 cents
Venezuela (7/1/1880)				
by English packet				
Letters	15g	32	14	13
Newspapers	item			2
	50g	4	2	
Other Wrappers	0-50g	4	2	1
	51-100g	4	2	2
by French packet				
Letters	15g	27	17	16
Wrappers	50g	4	4	3
by other ships				
Letters	15g	17	12	12
Wrappers	15g	3	3	3

Australia

	per	9/1/1877 cents	4/2/1878 cents	4/1/1879 cents
Australia, New Zealand (10/1/1891)				
via England and Southampton				
Letters	15g	22	16	15
Newspapers	max 100g	4	2	2
Other Wrappers	50g	6	5	4
Registration		11	11	9
Return Receipt				3
via England and Brindisi				
Letters	15g	25	19	19
Newspapers	50g	4	2	
	0-50g			2
	51-100g			4
Other Wrappers	50g	8	7	6
Registration		11	11	16
Return Receipt				3
via France and Brindisi				
Letters	15g	29	23	22
Wrappers	50g	5	5	5
Registration	letter	7	7	
	50g	17	17	
	item			17

Letter Mail to Foreign Countries After September, 1877 Non-UPU Countries Continued

per	9/1/1877 cents	4/2/1878 cents	4/1/1879 cents
Tasmania (10/1/1891)			
via England and Southampton			
Letters 15g	22	16	15
Newspapers max 100g	4	2	2
Other Wrappers 50g	6	5	4
Registration	11	11	9
Return Receipt			3
via England and Brindisi			
Letters 15g	25	19	19
Newspapers 50g	4	2	
			2
			4
Other Wrappers 50g	8	7	6
Registration		11	
via France and Brindisi			
Letters 15g	29	23	22
Wrappers 50g	5	5	5
Registration			17
Hawaii (1/1/1882)			
via USA			
Letters 15g	13	12	10
Newspapers 50g	3	3	3
Other Wrappers 0-50g	2	2	2
	4	4	4
			4
The Rest of "Australia" (10/1/1907)			
via USA to Fiji			
Letters 15g	13	12	
Newspapers max 100g	2	2	
Other Wrappers 0-50g	2	2	
	4	4	
via France (rate to Sydney)			
Letters 15g	22	16	22
Wrappers 50g	4	4	5

Local Parcel Post

Local Rates

4/1/1856

Basic rate	+ Weight or Volume	+ Value
4 cents	under 1 cubic foot 0-1 pound 2 cents each add. pound 1 cent	value not indicated: 50 cents per pound
4 cents	over 1 cubic foot 1 cubic foot 10 cents add. cubic foot 7 cents	value not indicated: 5 dollars pr cub. foot

Indicated value	
0-2.50 dollars	2 cents
2.50-5.00 dollars	4 cents
5-25 dollars	8 cents
25-50 dollars	12 cents
50-100 dollars	16 cents
each add. 100 dollars	12 cents

Small packets without value, with or without address letter
up to 125g 6 cents

Documents, bonds and other printed matter	
0-15g	3 cents
15-30g	6 cents
30-60g	9 cents
60-125g	12 cents

Uniform Rate

	1/1 1902 cents	4/1 1905 bit
0-5 pounds	5	25
5-10 pounds	10	50
add. pound	1	5

Parcel Post to Denmark

By direct Danish Ship

4/1/1871	Basic rate per packet	6 cents
	+ Weight (per pound)	2 cents
	Declared value (insurance) per 100 Rixdollar (ca. 56 dollar)	2 cents
10/1/1888	up to 10 pounds	40 cents
	over 10 pounds (max 100kg)	(sea rate) 20 cents
	voluminous: +50%	+local rate + Danish rate
4/1/1905	up to 10 pounds	2.00 francs
	over 10 pounds (max 100kg)	(sea rate) 1.00 franc
	voluminous: + 50%	+ local rate + Danish rate
10/1/1907	under 1 kg	.60 francs
	1-2.5kg	.85 francs
	2.5-5kg	1.60 francs
	over 5kg (max 50kg)	per 1/2 kg .20 francs
	voluminous + 50%	

By German Ship via Hamburg

10/1/1888	up to 10 pounds	70 cents
	voluminous + 50%	
4/1/1905	up to 10 pounds	3.50 francs
	voluminous + 50%	
ca. 1910	up to 10 pounds	2.50 francs
	voluminous + 50%	
