

# Cancellations from Swedish steamship mail post offices from 1869 and up to 1951

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Steamship mail post office was a special type of post-office on-board steamships from 1869 and up to 1951. A contract between the shipping company and the Royal General Postal Board was written and described which route and landing-stages should be serviced.

The first post office was established in 1869 onboard the s/s Laxen, operating on Dalsland canal. The cancellation read the text of the route "DALSLANDS KANAL" in the 1869 and 1870.

All other post offices that were established from 1870 and there on, got a number from 1 and up to 188, in the same fashion, e.g., "ÅNGBÅTS PXP". That was more practical, since the stamp then could be placed anywhere in Sweden on other routes.

A few were used in traffic abroad, to Norway and Finland.

Three post offices were used onboard steamships that belongs to the Swedish Royal Navy. They was number 70 (3 of September to 22 of October 1910), number 184 and number 186.

Except the cancellation DALSLANDS KANAL all others contain a number from 1 and up to number 188. Text in these vary, and can be some of the following:

ÅNGBÅTS PXP  
ÅBXP  
ÅNGBs PXP No  
ÅBP  
ÅXP  
ÅBX

Cancellations from ship and shipping companies has no number, only the name of ship or shipping company e.g., G.BERLING, Å.A.K. VINGÄNG.

From 1882 up to July 1st, 1915, the post offices were divided in first class and second class. First class post offices were also allowed to handle insured letter.

The commander of the ship was responsible for the steamship mail post office onboard the ship and the mailbox placed onboard. He also sold stamps to be used on mail that he also cancelled. Mail from the box was delivered to a post office when the steamship tied up at a landing-stage.

The size of steamship vary greatly, from 11,28 x 2,53 meters (s/s Hedvig number 85) to 44,2 x 8,1 meters (s/s Norrtälje number 61).

This exhibition is built up after geographic area or county. After that comes the post office, which in this case is the steamship itself, and at last the route serviced.

An extract from my collection of cancellations from steamship mail post offices is here displayed.

1. **Dalsland/Värmland.**  
Dalsland canal.  
Lake Glafs fjorden.  
River Byälven.  
Fryken lakes.  
Lake Vänern.  
Ship and shipping companies' cancellations.
2. **Jämtland.**  
Lake Storsjön.  
Lake Nälidsjön.  
Lake Kallsjön.  
Lake Ströms Vattudal.
3. **Lappland.**  
Lake Storavan.  
Lake Vojmsjön.  
Lake Hornavan.
4. **Medelpad.**  
Routes from Sundvall.  
Lake Holmsjön.
5. **Norrbottnen.**  
Luleå district.  
Kalix district.
6. **Ångermanland.**  
Lake Helgumsjön.  
Routes from Härnösand.
7. **Northeast coast.**  
Routes from Stockholm.  
Routes from Gävle.  
Routes from Sundsvall.  
From Sundsvall to Wasa.
8. **Göta canal.**  
Routes from Stockholm to:  
-Göteborg.  
-Jönköping.  
-Linköping.
9. **Southeast coast.**  
Routes from Stockholm.  
Östergötland archipelago.  
Småland coast/Öland.  
Kalmar district.
10. **Södermanland.**  
Lake Båven.
11. **Dalarna.**  
Lake Siljan.
12. **Västergötland.**  
Lake Åsunden.
13. **Småland/Östergötland.**  
Routes from Linköping.  
Lake Sommen.
14. **Lake Vättern.**  
Routes to/from Jönköping.
15. **Göta river.**  
Routes from Göteborg.
16. **West coast.**  
Routes from:  
-Göteborg.  
-Sannäs.  
-Uddevalla.  
-Grebbe stad.
17. **Lake Mälaren.**  
Stockholm-Strömsholm canal.  
Stockholm-lake Hjälmaren.  
Stockholm district.  
Routes in lake Mälaren.
18. **Stockholm archipelago.**  
Stockholm district.  
Naval squadrons.  
Routes from Stockholm.

The grade of very rare objects in the exhibition depends on the ship, the route, the period or the type of object, that is known by me, is marked with:  
RRR=1 copy, RR= 2 copies, R=3-5 copies.

Sources:

My own studies and investigations since 1978.

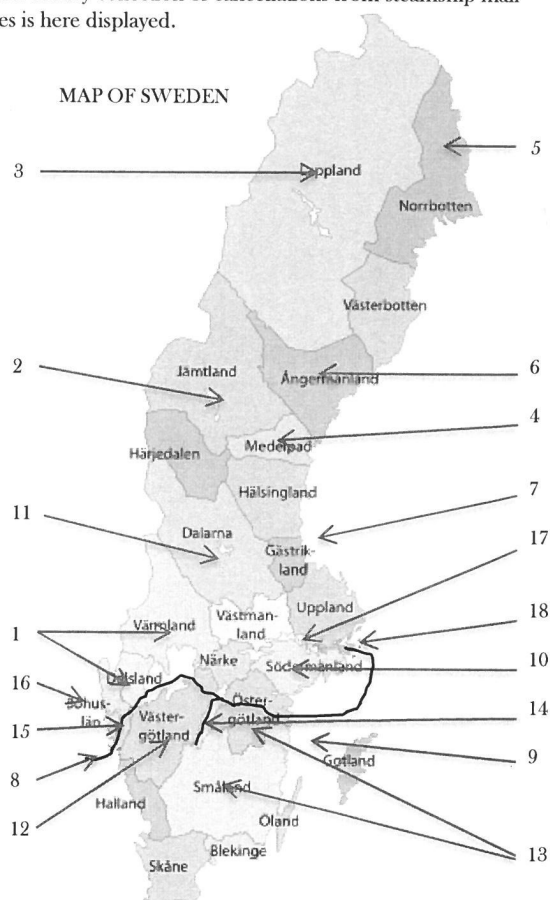
The Royal Swedish Post archive.

SFF handbook #22, "Post ombord" by Armand Månsson (Lennart Kron and Gunnar Lithén).

"Skärgårdsbåten" #4 1990 - #4 1991, articles by Lennart Kron.

SSPD "Aktuellt om posthistoria" #9 2006, page 56-59, article by Lennart Kron.

"Posten i Jönköpings kommun" ISBN91-631-5983-X.



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### Synopsis to the exhibit

*Cancellations from Swedish steamship mail post offices from 1869 and up to 1951.*

### Description of the exhibit

Steamship mail post office was a special type of post office aboard on steamships from 1869 and up to 1951. A contract between the shipping company and the Royal General Postal Board was written and described which route and landing stages should be serviced. The first post office was established in 1869 aboard the S/S Laxen, operating on the Dalsland Canal. The cancellation read the text of the route "DALSLANDS KANAL" in 1869 and 1870.

In 1871 this one was changed to "ÅNGBÅTS PXP No 20". All other post offices that were established from 1870 and there on, got a number from 1-188, in the same fashion, e.g. "ÅNGBÅTS PXP". That was more practically, because the stamp could be placed anywhere in Sweden. A few were used in traffic abroad, to Norway and Finland. Three post offices were used aboard steamships that belong to the Swedish Royal Navy: number 70 (3 of September-22 of October 1910), number 184 and 186.

In some cases ship- and shipping company cancellations has been used instead of the stamp delivered from the Royal General Post Board. Cancellations during the Coat of Arm stamps type II, are rare and on letters they are very rare. A couple of them are only known in one copy. 1908 saw the peak of the steamboat post offices era with 171 active offices. During World War I and World War II, cancellations are rarer. From 1920 and up to 1951, the use was more sporadic. The routes around Gothenburg and Stockholm were most populated and also had the most operating steamship mail post offices.

Except the cancellation DALSLANDS KANAL all others contain a number from 1 and up to number 188. Text in these vary, and can be some of the following: ÅNGBÅTS PXP, ÅBXP, ÅNGBs PXP No, ÅBP, ÅXP or ÅBX.

Cancellations from ship and shipping companies has no number, only the name of ship or shipping company e.g. G.BERLING, Å.A.K. VINGÅNG.

The quality of the cancellations from steamship mail post offices are usually not too good, depending on the small spaces allotted to the post office, and the primary work for the commander, or the chief mate, was to navigate the steamship after all. There was no special educating how to cancel letter or post card.

These post offices were very important for people that lived far away from stationary post offices with lakes and rivers between. It is a very import part of the Swedish postal history.

From 1882 up to July 1st 1915, the post offices were divided

in first and second class.

First class post offices were also allowed to handle insured letters. The captain of the ship was responsible for cancellation of mail put in a mailbox aboard or given to him directly.

This exhibition is an extract from my large collection that include the rarest objects from collections by Armand Månsson, Lennart Kron and Eric Ericson. My exhibit also contains objects from collections by Donald MacFie, Kurt Hajj, Folke Löfström, Nils Gudmundsson, Sven-Olof Karlsson and Fred Arnell. All of them belongs to the most famous collector of Swedish steam mail post offices and Coat-of-Arms type II, öre.

Together with objects collected by me during a time period of 40 years, this is the best and most comprehensive collection of Swedish Steamship Mail Post offices.

This exhibition is build up after the geographic area or the county. After that comes the post office which in this case is the steamship itself and at last the route serviced.

The "red thread" starts on page 2 displaying a first day cancellation from beginning of the epoch 1869 and ends on page 128 displaying an late cancellation from the end of epoch 1951.

Both single stamps and letters are displayed. From the county Värmland, the lake Vojmsjön and the Göta Canal shows also cancellations from steamship and shipping companies. The correct use of these and use as temporary Steamship Mail cancellations is shown too.

My exhibition has been rewarded with:  
Vermeil (71p) at HOLMEX 08 (2008)  
Large Silver (74p) at NORRPHIL 2009  
Vermeil (80p) at NORDIA 2010  
Large Vermeil (87p) at NORDIA 2012.  
Large Vermeil (86p) at AUSTRALIA 2013.  
Gold (90p) at THAILAND 2013.  
Gold (90p) at BRASILIANA 2013.  
Large Vermeil (88p) at Salon Planète Timbres-Paris 2014.  
Gold (91p+special price) at NORDIA 2015.  
Gold (92p) at World stamp show NY 2016.  
Gold (91p) at PHILATAIPEI 2016.  
Gold (90p) at FINLANDIA 2017.  
Gold (90p) at BANDUNG 2017.  
Gold (92p) at BRASILIA 2017.  
Gold (92p) at THAILAND 2018.  
Gold (90p) at STOCKHOLMIA 2019.

### Speech and demonstration of steamship mail post offices by me:

1982, Karlstad philatelic association, exhibited at Karlstad Library.

1999, Postal historical day held by SSPD (Society for the Swedish post-historical documentation).

2009, Monthly meeting with SSPD (Society for the Swedish post-historical documentation) together with RHF (Swedish Local Postal History and Philatelic Club).

2010, Monthly meeting at SFS (Stockholm Philatelic Society).

2011->, 1-2 per year at different philatelic associations

### Selection of 38 rare objects:

Letter cancelled DALSLANDS KANAL 1869-09-01 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 2.

Stamp cancelled with freight cancellation "BETALD..." on 15 öre King Gustaf V, left profile. Page 5.

Letter cancelled DALSLANDS KANAL 1870-06-14 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 6.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 20 1872-07-04 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 6.

Red sealing wax with text "Ångbåtspostexpedition N:r 20. Page 8.

Postcard 5 öre, cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 153 1891-08-01. Page 11.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 66 1879-06-04 on 12 öre Circle type Perf. 13. Page 13.

Registered letter cancelled Ångaren Vojmsjön 1918 13 Jun on 4 single stamps 10 öre Gustaf V medallion. Page 26.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 95 1882-06-16 on 12 öre Circle type Perf. 13. Page 30.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 180 1898-07-04 on Oscar II 10 öre. Page 31.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 40 1872-06-10 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 34.

Postcard 10 öre sent to Finland cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 117 1885-10-04. Page 34.

Postcard 5 öre, cancelled onboard Finnish steamship with Swedish Ångbåts pxp No 142 1888-09-03. Page 35.

Postcard 10 öre sent to USA, cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 126 1948-08-21. Page 36.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 3 1872-07-21 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 40.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 30 1872-08-11 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 43.

Postcard 5 öre, cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 161 1886-08-04. Page 47.

Postcard 6 öre cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 91 1881-05-27. Page 53.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 28 1872-07-13 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 54.

REK-label from Åbpx. 6. Page 56.

Domestic money order cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 160 1893-12-16. Page 66.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 15 1870-07-06 on 2x12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 73.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 70 1878-10-27 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 75.

Norwegian postcard 5 öre cancelled with Swedish Ångbåts pxp no 70 1880-09-04 with one added single stamp post horn type 1 öre. Page 75.

Letter to Holland with pair 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II and pair 3 öre type lying lion cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 13 1872-07-08. Page 87.

Letter sent to N.S.W. double rate. Page 89.

Postcard cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 23 1912-08-01 on Gustaf V medallion 5 öre. Page 99.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 25 1871-08-01 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 103.

Domestic letter with postage due stamps, cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 11 1880-07-01. Page 112.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 11 1870-08-13 on 12 öre Coat-of-Arms type II. Page 113.

Domestic letter with "landstorm II" stamp. Page 116.

Letter cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 29 1872-08-08 on 12 öre stamped letter. Page 116.

Stamp cancelled Ångbåts pxp 16 1871-06-24 on 17 öre grey type lying lion. Page 118.

Domestic letter cancelled with ink manuscript, ÅBPE 12 26/9 1871. Page 118.

Letter to Scotland 30 öre cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 29 1950-05-27. Page 123.

Letter to USA 50 öre cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 32 1943-09-01. Page 125.

Domestic letter with postage due stamps, cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 67 1888-08-02. Page 126.

Postcard cancelled Ångbåts pxp no 6 1951-07-23. Page 128.

### Articles/books published by me:

Article in the book "Post och järnvägar i Östergötland" number 21 of SFF handbook series, published in 1985.

Article in the book "Handbok över Värmländska makuleringsstämplar" published in 1985.

Parts of my investigation regarding Steamship Mail Post-offices, started in 1978, is involved in the book "Post ombord" number 22 of SFF handbook series, published in 1989. A small group consisted of Armand Månsson, Lennart Kron and myself, was studying these cancellations, steamships and routes in the middle of 1980-century. The result is described in the book.

The book "Ångbåtspostexpeditionerna på Dalslands Kanal", published in 2009, written by myself.

Article in "Filatelisten" number 7 2011, regarding Ångaren Vojmsjön with steamship mail post office number 15.

Article in "Filatelisten" number 8 2011, regarding newly discovered letter, cancelled Dalslands kanal 1870.

I am responsible for the Steamship mail chapter in the Swedish price catalogue FACIT Postal X.