

Stampless mail to other European countries, 1850s – 1860s

1861, Manila to Stockholm, Sweden

In addition to the routes via London or Marseille (each shown previously), it was possible to send mail from Southeast Asia to Europe via Trieste from 1848. This route was mainly used for destinations in Northern and Central Europe. This route was comparatively faster but was also subject to higher postal charges.

Mail routed "via Trieste" was put in a closed bag in Hong Kong or Singapore and carried by the British P&O system to Alexandria. Because of that procedure it was necessary to pre-pay the British packet rate.



Cover, dated January 18, 1861, sent by the Swedish and Norwegian consulate at Manila to Stockholm. It was forwarded from Manila to Hong Kong by Russell, Sturgis and Company as documented with frontside red forwarding agent handstamp.

After being privately carried to Hong Kong the cover was given to the British post office on January 30, 1861. On this day a red date stamp was applied on the front, which also shows the cover as "Paid". It was carried via British ship via Suez. In Alexandria it was handed over to the Austrian Post Office. From there, it was carried by a steamer of the Österreichischer Lloyd line up the Adriatic Sea to Trieste, Austrian Empire.

From Trieste the cover was sent by rail to Berlin, Prussia. The cover arrived in Berlin at Anhalter train station on March 15, as documented by a postmark on reverse. The following day, March 16, the cover was postmarked at the Prussian post office in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. The cover was handed over to the royal Swedish post office in Hamburg, as documented by a box cancel on the reverse at the same day "HAMBURG / K.S.P.A.(D) / 16-3. 1861". Thereafter the cover was transported from Hamburg to Stockholm by the Swedish post.

The cover was prepaid in Hong Kong with 4 Shillings, as marked in red "4/", for transport of a cover between 1 and 2 ounces till Alexandria. This British packet rate has been adjusted only a few days before and was effective from January 9, 1861.

The fee for the transport to Trieste was 6 Silbergroschen for the 2nd weight progression. For further transport within the German-Austrian Postal Union to Hamburg, another 6 Silbergroschen were due. For the conveyance from Alexandria to Hamburg it was therefore charged with "12" Silbergroschen. This postage rate was applied between November 1, 1858 and January 23, 1867.

Since the addressee was a governmental body, the postage due amount was included in the quarterly statement to the general post office at Stockholm and not marked on the cover.