

The History of Denmark's Postal Stationery

Danmarks Helsagers Historie

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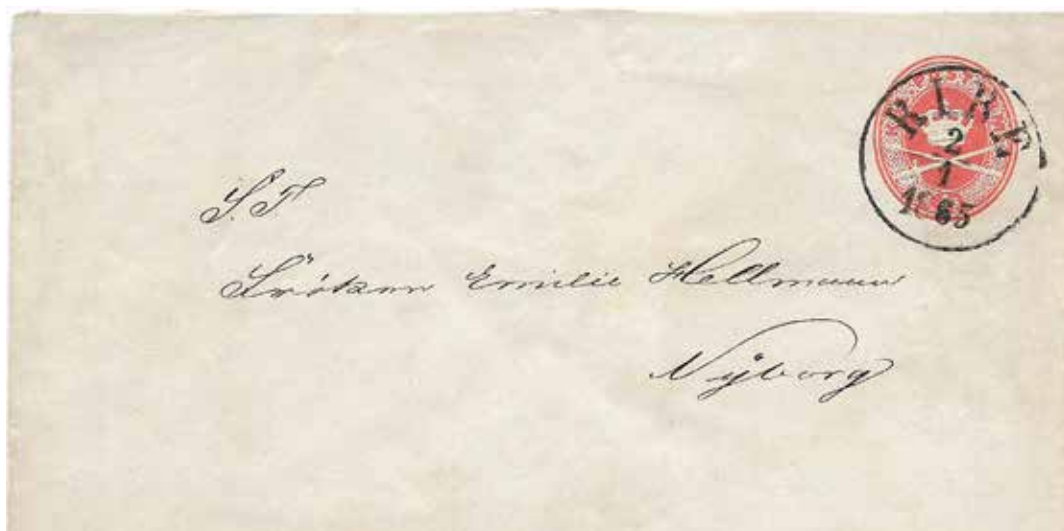
(Translated by Chris King)

Introduktionen af helsager

Helsager var i mange år en væsentlig del af den postale historie i Danmark – med op til 10% af den samlede postmængde, og derfor vil denne artikel fortælle om helsagernes udvikling fra deres introduktion i Danmark til deres udfasning. Helsager er hele forsendelser, som har værdimærket trykt på, så ved at købe helsager af Postvæsenet, sparede man udgiften til konvolut eller papir.

The introduction of postal stationery

For many years, postal stationery was an essential part of the history of the postal service in Denmark - accounting for up to 10% of the total volume of mail, so this article describes the development of postal stationery from its introduction in Denmark to its phasing out. Postal stationery is an entire postal item which has an imprinted stamp with a specific value, so buying postal stationery from the Post Office saved the cost of envelopes or paper.



Figur 1: 4 skilling helsagskuvert anvendt på udgivelsesdagen for de første danske helsager: 2. januar 1865

Figure 1: 4 Skilling postal stationery envelope used on the date of issue of the first Danish postal stationery: 2 January 1865.

New South Wales i Australien var de første i verden til i 1838 at indføre helsager, og i 1840 udkom i Storbritannien den såkaldte Mulready helsag, som er opkaldt efter dens designer, William Mulready (Huggins, 1986). Mulready-helsagen blev udgivet samtidig med verdens første frimærke: One Penny Black, så faktisk blev der udgivet helsager to år, før der blev udgivet frimærker. I

New South Wales in Australia was the first in the world to introduce postal stationery in 1838, and in 1840 the Mulready envelope and letter sheet, named after their designer, William Mulready, was introduced in the United Kingdom (Huggins, 1986). The Mulready postal stationery was issued at the same time as the world's first postage stamp: The Penny Black, so in fact, postal

Norden var Finland først med at udgive helsager allerede i 1845. Danmark fulgte godt med og introducerede kuverter, brevkort, dobbelte brevkort, korrespondancekort og korsbånd, mens mange lande derudover indførte endnu flere typer helsager end Danmark – fx postsparebøger, telegramformularer og postanvisningsformularer. Men Postvæsenet overvejede også andre typer helsager end de udgivne. Fra korrespondance på Postmuseet ved vi, at det blev overvejet at indføre brevark allerede i skiltingsperioden, men det blev ikke gennemført.

stationery existed two years before stamps were issued. In the Nordic countries, Finland was the first to issue postal stationery as early as 1845. Denmark followed suit and introduced envelopes, postal cards, reply cards, letter cards and newspaper wrappers, while many other countries introduced even more types of postal stationery - such as postal savings cards, telegram forms and postal order forms. But the Post Office also considered other types of postal stationery than those issued. From correspondence at the Danish Postal Museum, we know that the introduction of letter sheets was considered during the skillings period, but this was not implemented.



Figur 2: 2 skilling helsagskuvert anvendt på første dag efter overgangen til øre: 1. januar 1875

Figure 2: 2 skilling postal stationery envelope used on the first day after the currency change to øre: 1 January 1875.

Helsagskuverter

Den 2. januar 1865 udkom den første danske helsag: 4 skilling rød kuvert (figur 1). Påtrykket var et specielt fremstillet værdimærke med tydelig inspiration fra de samtidige krone-scepter-sværd frimærker. Det er ikke klart, hvorfor man ikke valgte at anvende klichéer fra de kurserende frimærker, men måske ønskede man den ovale form på værdimærket, som kunne ses på andre landes helsagskuverter. Mærke-billedet findes i flere varianter, og især den blå farve på 2 skilling helsagskuverten udvikler sig fra meget lys ultramarin til grøn-

Postal stationery envelopes

On 2 January 1865, the first Danish postal stationery was issued: the 4 skilling red envelope (Figure 1). The imprinted stamp was a specially produced design clearly inspired by the contemporary crown, sceptre and sword (large oval or arms) stamps. It is not clear why clichés from the current stamps were not chosen, but perhaps the oval shaped design which could be seen on other countries' postal stationery envelopes was preferred. There are several varieties of the design, and the blue colour of the 2 skilling postal stationery envelope in particular ranges from very light ultramarine to

blå svarende til farverne på de samtidige frimærker. Ligeledes er der vandmærke i bagklappen på kuverterne, og de skifter udformning, ligesom gummieringen på bagklappen også ændres over tid. Alle disse variationer er velbeskrevne i litteraturen (Pedersen & Bendix, 1999).

Ved overgangen fra skilling til øre i 1875 omregnedes 2 skilling til 4 øre og 4 skilling til 8 øre, og der ses derfor skillingshelsager anvendt i øre-perioden (figur 2) samt blandingsfrankeringer mellem skilling og øre.

I 1885 fremstillede Postvæsenet nytryk af de danske skillingskuverter – sandsynligvis fordi UPU bad om et antal frimærker og helsager af de kurserende udgivelser. En række af disse nytryk er senere kommet på markedet og bliver ofte forvekslet med de ægte kuverter.

Størrelsen på kuverten blev i 1902 øget til 150x120 mm, og der blev samtidig lavet et indvendigt tryk, så det ikke var muligt at læse den indlagte korrespondance. På grund af takstændringer findes kuverterne med en lang række forskellige værdier samt provisorier og tiltryk helt op til 1967, hvor salget af helsagskuverter i Danmark ophørte.

greenish blue, similar to the colours of the contemporary stamps. There are also watermarks in the back flap of the envelopes, and they change shape, just as the gumming on the back flap also changes over time. All these varieties are well described in the literature (Pedersen & Bendix, 1999).

In 1875, when the currency changed from skilling to øre, 2 skilling was converted to 4 øre and 4 skilling to 8 øre, which is why we see skilling postal stationery used during the øre period (Figure 2) as well as mixed frankings with skilling and øre values.

In 1885, the Danish Post Office produced reprints of the Danish skilling envelopes - probably because the UPU requested examples of stamps and postal stationery of the current issues. A number of these reprints were later released on to the market and are often mistaken for genuine envelopes. In 1902, the size of the envelope was increased to 150x120 mm, and at the same time the inside of the envelope was printed so that it was not possible to read the enclosed correspondence. Due to rate changes, the envelopes are available with a wide range of different values as well as provisionals and overprints, right up to 1967, when the sale of postal stationery envelopes in Denmark ceased.



Figur 3: Brevkort i lavt format – her med ringstempel Silkeborg J.B.

Figure 3: Postal card in small format - here with a ring canceller Silkeborg J.B.

Helsagsbrevkort

Da brevkort blev introduceret i Danmark i 1871, var det med tydelig inspiration fra de engelske brevkort fra 1870. Karton blev dog ikke produceret i Danmark og måtte derfor importeres fra Tyskland. Det specielle format på de tidligste danske helsager på 140x75 mm (figur 3) er en konsekvens af ønsket om at få så mange brevkort ud af de dyre stykker karton som muligt.

I 1878 standardiserede UPU-størrelsen på brevkort blandt medlemslandene til maksimalt 140x90 mm (figur 4) - så bundtning af brevkort blev lettere, og Danmark fulgte straks ændringen til den ny standardstørrelse. Brevkortene var også i Danmark en kæmpe succes – og blev brugt af både virksomheder og private.

Postal cards

When postal cards were introduced in Denmark in 1871, they were clearly inspired by the British postal cards of 1870. However, card stock was not produced in Denmark and had to be imported from Germany. The special 140x75 mm format of the earliest Danish postal stationery (Figure 3) is a consequence of the desire to get as many postal cards as possible out of the expensive card.

In 1878, the UPU standardised the size of postal cards among member countries to a maximum of 140x90 mm (Figure 4) - making it easier to bundle postal cards together, and Denmark immediately followed the change to the new standard size. The postal cards were a huge success in Denmark too - and were used by both businesses and individuals.



Figur 4: 3 øre brevkort opfrankeret med 16 øre og sendt som anbefalet lokalt brevkort.

Figure 4: 3 øre postal card franked with 16 øre and sent as a registered local postal card.

UPU havde yderligere indflydelse på udformningen af de danske helsager – både med hensyn til farve og tekst. I 1879 blev "Verdenspostforeningen" tilføjet til teksten på brevkortene (figur 5), og i 1882 skiftede Danmark til den internationale røde farve for brevkorttaksten til udlandet (som afløsning af den tidligere grønne farve).

The UPU further influenced the design of the Danish postal stationery - both in terms of colour and text. In 1879, "Verdenspostforeningen" was added to the text on the postal cards (Figure 5), and in 1882, Denmark switched to the universally agreed red colour for postage on international postal cards (replacing the previous green colour). The design of the postal cards evolved over



Figur 5: 10 øre brevkort - i rød farve og med "Verdenspostforeningen" - sendt underfrankeret til Dansk Vestindien.

Figure 5: 10 øre postal card – printed in red and with “Verdenspostforeningen” - sent underfranked to the Danish West Indies



Figur 6: 10 øre brevkort opfrankeret med 20 øre og sendt ekspres til Tyskland. Ekspresforsendelser skulle indleveres på et posthus, men er her lagt i en postkasse og derfor stemplet "Kassebrev".

Figure 6: 10 øre postal card franked with 20 øre and sent express to Germany. Express items had to be handed in at a post office, but here it was placed in a post box and was therefore hand-stamped "Kassebrev".

Udformningen af brevkortene udviklede sig over tid, og fra 1913 forsvandt den græske bort på forsiden, og vi ser samtidig de første brevkort med delt forside, hvor venstre side også kunne anvendes til korrespondance.

time, and from 1913 the Greek 'key' border on the front disappeared, and we also see the first postal cards with a divided front, where the left-hand side could be used for correspondence.

Der blev i 1918 indført produktionsnumre på helsagerne, og mange samlere forsøger at få samtlige produktionsnumre. I 1950 ændredes størrelsen på ny, så der herefter blev 148 x 105 mm at skrive på.

Helt fra introduktionen af brevkortene i 1871 skulle de sendes fuldt frankerede. Det skyldes, at brevkort er åbne forsendelser, og at man ville forhindre, at en modtager af et underfrankeret brevkort så meddelelsen, inden den manglende frankering var indkasseret, og derefter nægte at modtage kortet og dermed slippe for at betale den manglende porto.

Alle brevkort blev trykt med en værdi i værdimærket, som havde til formål at dække en specifik porto – lokal, indland, udland osv., men en anden udbredt anvendelse af brevkort i Danmark var som adressekort til at følge en pakke. Enhver pakke skulle have et medfølgende adressekort eller -brev, så postfunktionærerne under transporten havde let overblik over hvilke pakker, de medbragte. Det betyder, at vi i Danmark indtil 1888 (hvor der blev indført tvungen brug af fortrykte adressebreve uden påtrykte værdimærker) har meget flot opfrankerete brevkort anvendt som adressekort (figur 7).

In 1918, control numbers were introduced on postal stationery, and many collectors try to obtain all of them. In 1950, the size was changed again, leaving 148x105 mm to write on.

From their introduction in 1871, postal cards had to be sent fully franked. This was because they are open items and the idea was to prevent the recipient of an underfranked postal card from seeing the message before the postage due was collected and then refusing to accept the card, thus avoiding paying the missing postage.

All postal cards were made with a pre-printed imprinted stamp, with a value which was intended to cover a specific postage rate - local, domestic, international, etc. but another common use of postal cards in Denmark was as an address card to accompany a parcel. Every parcel had to have an accompanying address card or letter so that postal officials could easily keep track of which parcels they were carrying. This meant that until 1888 (when the compulsory use of pre-printed address letters without an imprinted stamp was introduced), Denmark had very nicely franked postal cards used as address cards (Figure 7).



Figur 7: 2 skilling brevkort sendt opfrankeret med 4 skilling som adressekort for lokal pakke.

Figure 7: 2 skilling postal card sent with 4 skilling postage as an address card for a local parcel.

Tjenestebrevkort

En speciel udgave af brevkortene er tjenestehelsagerne, som kunne bruges af myndigheder til at sende officiel post. Mærke-billedet på disse tjenestebrevkort svarer til de samtidige tjenestefrimærker.

Oprindelsen til tjenesteforsendelser i Danmark skal findes helt tilbage til Chr. IV's oprettelse af Postvæsenet. I "Forordningen for Post-Budde" omtales "Vore Breve" og "Andre Breve", hvor "Vore Breve" ikke alene er Kongens breve, men også breve som kongens ansatte sendte i embeds medfør. Disse breve fik betegnelsen "Kongelig Tjeneste", og i mange år kunne sådanne forsendelser sendes portofrit.

Postloven af 7. januar 1871 afskaffede porto friheden for tjenesteforsendelser og bestemte, at fra 1. april samme år skulle tjenstlige forsendelser frankeres med tjenestemærker. Samtidig hermed introduceredes tjenestebrevkort (helsagsbrevkort) med blå 2 skilling og røde 4 skilling værdimærker påtrykt.

De statsmyndigheder, der var berettiget til at bruge tjenestebrevkort, blev listet op i forbindelse med introduktionen i 1871, og til- og afgang fra listen blev løbende bragt i Postvæsenets Officielle Meddelelser. Blandt de myndigheder, som har kunnet anvende tjenestebrevkortene, var amtmænd, byfogeder, provster, sognepræster og statsskovridere, men definition af, hvem der kunne benytte tjenestehelsager, skifter over tid.

Tjenestebrevkort kunne bruges til almindelige og anbefalede forsendelser, pakkesager, postanvisninger og postopkrævninger, men ikke ekspresforsendelser. Desuden var det fra 1.4.1871 til 1.10.1906 ikke lovligt at bruge tjenestebrevkort til lokalforsendelser (som fra starten i 1871 kostede 2 skilling), og derfor ser man ikke 2 skilling brevkort sendt lokalt i købstæderne (herunder København). Til gengæld var det muligt at bruge brevkortene til distriktsforsendelser, der defineredes som forsendelser der "bliver

Official postal cards

A special usage of the postal cards was as official stationery which could be used by authorities to send official mail. The imprinted stamp on these official postal cards corresponds to the contemporary official stamps.

The origins of official mail in Denmark can be traced all the way back to the establishment of the postal service by Christian IV. The "Forordningen for Post-Budde" (Regulations for Postal Officials) refers to "Vore Breve" (Our letters) and "Andre Breve" (Other letters), where "Vore Breve" includes not only the King's letters, but also letters sent by the King's servants in their official capacity. These letters were labelled "Kongelig Tjeneste" (Royal Service), and for many years such items could be sent postage-free.

The Postal Act of 7 January 1871 abolished postage-free official mail and stipulated that from 1 April of the same year, official mail had to be franked with official stamps. At the same time, official postal cards were introduced with blue 2 skilling and red 4 skilling indicia pre-printed on them.

The government authorities authorised to use official postal cards were listed in connection with their introduction in 1871, and additions and deletions from the list were regularly published in the Postvæsenets Officielle Meddelelser (Post Office Official Announcements). Among the authorities that were able to use the official postal cards were amtmænd (county sheriffs), byfogeder (town or city magistrates), provster (deans - ecclesiastical), sognepræster (parish priests), and statsskovridere (state foresters), but the definition of who could use official postal cards changed over time.

Official postal cards could be used for ordinary and registered mail, parcels, postal orders, and cash-on-delivery, but not for express mail. Furthermore, from 1 April 1871 to 1 October 1906, it was not legal to use official postal cards for local mail (which from the beginning in 1871 cost 2 skilling),



Figur 8: 4 øre tjenestebrevkort opfrankeret med fire stk. 8 øre tjenestefrimærker og sendt til Sverige.

Figure 8: 4 øre official postal card uprated with four 8 øre official stamps and sent to Sweden..

befordret med Landpostbude og ikke hidrørte fra et andet Poststed” (dvs. postkontor, postekspedition eller brevsamlingssted). Distriktsforsendelserne kunne sendes til lokalporto, og derfor ses 2 skilling brevkortene brugt til dette formål.

Tjenestebrevkort måtte naturligvis ikke bruges til at sende private meddelelser. Men i særlige tilfælde måtte private alligevel anvende tjenestebrevkort. Det var dog kun i de tilfælde, hvor der skulle indsendes svar på forespørgsler fra offentlige instanser - en såkaldt ”befalet indberetning”. For at sikre, at det i sådan en situation var en lovlig anvendelse af tjenestebrevkortet, skulle der skrives ”befalet indberetning” på brevkortets forside. Tjenestebrevkort findes med en række af denne type påtegninger, som beskriver hvilken type tjenesteforsendelse, der er tale om – fx ”St. Hv.” (Statstjenstligt Hverv) og ”Afæsket Erklæring”.

Selvom kun de udvalgte offentlige myndigheder måtte anvende tjenestebrevkortene, så var det muligt for alle at købe dem på postkontorerne

which is why 2 skilling postal cards sent locally in towns (including Copenhagen) are not seen. On the other hand, it was possible to use the postal cards for district mail, which was defined as mail that was “carried by rural postmen and did not originate from another post office” (i.e. post office, mail dispatch or letter collection centre). District mail could be sent at local postage, which is why the 2 skilling postal cards are used for this purpose.

Of course, official postal cards could not be used to send private messages. However, in special cases, private individuals were still allowed to use official postal cards, for example where answers to enquiries from public authorities had to be sent - a so-called “mandatory response”. To ensure that in such a situation it was a legal use of the official postal card, the words “befalet indberetning” (requested notification) had to be written on the front of the card. Official postal cards are available with a number of these types of endorsements, which describe the type of official material in question - e.g. “St. Hv.” (Statstjenstligt Hverv - Government Service) and “Afæsket Erklæring” (Declaration Demanded).

Although only authorised public bodies were allowed to use official postal cards, it was possible for anyone to buy them at post offices.

Derfor findes der også forholdsvis mange ubrugte tjenestehelsager, mens nogle typer tjenestehelsager kan være svære at finde i brugt tilstand.

Fra begyndelsen i 1871 kunne tjenestebrevkort bruges til såvel indlands- som udlandsforsendelser, men fra 1. april 1879 kunne de ikke længere anvendes til udlandet. Det vil sige, at tjenestebrevkort (og – frimærker) kun kunne anvendes til udlandet i 8 år, og det er yderst sjældent at se tjenestebrevkort sendt til udlandet (figur 8).

Byposthelsager

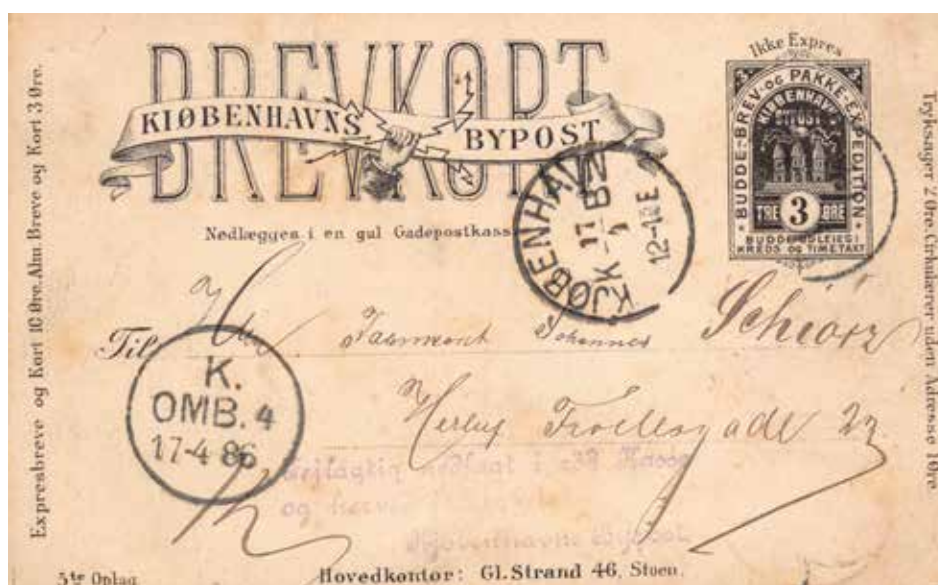
Det danske Postvæsen havde i perioden op til 1916 direkte konkurrence i en række byer, hvor lokale bypostselskaber også udbragte forsendelser.

As a result, there is a relatively large amount of unused official stationery, while some types can be difficult to find in used condition.

From the beginning in 1871, official postal cards could be used for both domestic and international mail, but from 1 April 1879 they could no longer be used for internationally, meaning that official postal cards (and stamps) could be used abroad for only 8 years, and it is extremely rare to see official postal cards sent to foreign destinations (Figure 8).

Local postal stationery

In the period up to 1916, the Danish postal service had direct competition in a number of cities where local postal companies also delivered items.



Figur 9: Bypost helsagsbrevkort sendt i København. Fejlagtigt lagt i en rød postkasse (Postvæsenets postkasser var røde, mens Bypostens var gule), og derfor har Byposten påstemplet "Fejlagtigt nedlagt i rød kasse, og herved forsinket".

Figure 9: City Post's postal card sent in Copenhagen. Mistakenly placed in a red mailbox (The Post Office's mailboxes were red, while the City Post's were yellow), and therefore the City Post has handstamped "Fejlagtigt nedlagt i rød kasse, og herved forsinket" (Mistakenly placed in a red box, and therefore delayed).

Begrebet "Bypost" skal forstås som postbesørgelse udført af et privat firma indenfor et lokalt område, og allerede fra 1869/70 kender vi bypost-frimærker udgivet af Holte Landpost.

The term "Bypost" (town or city post) refers to postal services provided by a private company within a local area, and we know of bypost stamps issued by Holte Landpost as early as 1869/70.

Men de første danske bypost-helsager blev udgivet i København: Københavns By- og Hustelegraf blev stiftet i 1878 af telegrafingeniør S. Lauritzen og telegrafist Th. Thaulow. Udover tilladelsen til at oprette stationer til afsendelse og modtagelse af telegrammer, fik man også tilladelse til at distribuere breve og pakker i byen. Efter en stille start fik Byposten hurtigt en stor andel af posten i byen, da man kunne spare penge ved at bruge byposten frem for Postvæsenet. Bypostens brevporto var på 3 øre mod Postvæsenets 4 øre og tilsvarende 2 øre for tryksager mod Postvæsenets 4 øre.

Også i andre større byer i Danmark skød bypostselskaber op. I løbet af 1880'erne fik Aalborg, Aarhus, Fredericia, Horsens, Kolding, Odense, Randers, Svendborg, Vejle og Viborg deres egne bypostselskaber. Disse selskaber udgav også helsager – både brevkort og kuverter, men også helsagstyper, som Postvæsenet ikke udgav, fx postoprævningsblanketter og pakkebrevkort (figur 10).

But the first Danish local postal stationery was issued in Copenhagen: Københavns By- og Hustelegraf was founded in 1878 by telegraph engineer S. Lauritzen and telegraphist Th. Thaulow. In addition to the licence to set up stations for sending and receiving telegrams, they were also granted permission to distribute letters and parcels in the city. After a slow start, the local post quickly gained a large share of the city's mail, as it was possible to save money by using the City Post instead of the Post Office. The City Post's letter postage was 3 øre compared to the Post Office's 4 øre, and 2 øre for printed matter compared to the Post Office's 4 øre.

Private postal companies also sprang up in other major cities in Denmark. During the 1880s, Aalborg, Aarhus, Fredericia, Horsens, Kolding, Odense, Randers, Svendborg, Vejle and Viborg had their own local posts. These companies also issued postal stationery - both postal cards and envelopes, but also types of stationery that the Post Office did not issue, such as cash on delivery forms and parcel postal cards (Figure 10).



Figur 10: Pakkehelsagsbrevkort, der beder Byposten om at hente en pakke hos afsenderen og samtidig angiver, hvor pakken skal leveres.

Figure 10: Parcel postal stationery card asking the local post to collect a parcel from the sender and also showing where the parcel should be delivered.

Bypostselskaberne blev en så stor succes, at de blev en seriøs konkurrent til Postvæsenet, og i Postloven af 5. april 1888 blev der indført et forbud mod oprettelse af nye byposter, samt mod yderligere ekspansion af de bestående. Samtidig satte Postvæsenet taksten på lokale brevkort ned fra 4 øre til 3 øre og udgav samtidig 4 øre korrespondancekort til lokalt brug. Dette blev begyndelsen til enden for bypost i Danmark.

Byposten i København blev nedlagt i 1889, efter man var blevet enig om en passende erstatning: 100 kr. pr. postkasse, der blev taget ned (der var 121 bypost postkasser i 1888). Indenfor en årrække lukkede de øvrige byposter, og dermed ophørte udgivelsen og anvendelsen af bypost helsager i Danmark.

En senere kobling mellem bypost og helsager er anvendelsen af private firmaers frimærker på Postvæsenets helsager. Således har bude fra firmaet "Københavns Telefon Kiosker" (1896-1980) været brugt til at få forsendelser hurtigt frem fra afsenderen i København til togstationen, hvor forsendelsen er afleveret til først afgående tog mod destinationsbyen for forsendelsen. Således eksisterer der helsager (Postvæsenets), der er opfrankeret med et såkaldt "Telefonkioskmærke".

Frikorrespondancekort

En afart af helsagerne er de såkaldte "frikorrespondancekort", som er ufrankerede brevkort, som kunne anvendes til bestilling af fx kul, koks og dagligvarer hos private forretninger. Forretningerne delte kortene ud gratis, og kunderne kunne komme frikorrespondancekortet med deres bestilling ufrankeret i en postkasse. Først ved modtagelsen af brevkortene skulle forretningerne betale Postvæsenet for porto, ligesom de senere forsendelser med "postbesørger ufrankeret". Både Postvæsenet og Byposten udgav frikorrespondancekort, og det er nemt at se forskel på Postvæsenets og Bypostens frikorrespondancekort. Teksten på de af Postvæsenet udgivne kort er "Kan nedlægges i Postvæsenets røde

The city post companies were so successful that they became a serious competitor to the Post Office, and the Postal Act of 5 April 1888 introduced a ban on the establishment of new city posts and on further expansion of those existing. At the same time, the Post Office reduced the price of local postal cards from 4 øre to 3 øre and issued 4 øre lettercards for local use. This was the beginning of the end for the local post in Denmark.

The city post office in Copenhagen was closed in 1889 after appropriate compensation was agreed: DKK 100 per mailbox that was removed (there were 121 city post office mailboxes in 1888). Within a number of years, the other local postal services closed and the issue and use of local postal stationery in Denmark ceased.

A later link between the city post and postal stationery is the use of private companies' stamps on Post Office postal stationery. Messengers from "Københavns Telefon Kiosker" (1896-1980) were used to get mail quickly from the sender in Copenhagen to the main railway station, where it was handed over to catch the first train departing to the destination. Thus, there is Post Office postal stationery that is also franked with a so-called "Telephone kiosk stamp".

Free correspondence cards

A variation of the postal stationery is the so-called "free correspondence cards", which are unfranked postcards that could be used to order coal, coke, and groceries from private businesses. Businesses handed out the cards free of charge and customers could put the freepost card with their order in a letterbox, unfranked.

Businesses had only to pay the Post Office for the postage when they received the postcard, just like later "postage unpaid" deliveries. Both the Post Office and the City Post issued free correspondence cards, and it is easy to see the difference between the Post Office's and the City Post's. The text on the Post Office cards is "Kan



Figur 11: Frikorrespondancekort med et værdimærke-lignende tryk, der ikke havde værdi. Forretningen har ved afhentning af kortet på posthuset betalt 4 øre i form af et frimærke, som så er annulleret.

Figure 11: Free correspondence card with a 'stamp' impression with no value. The business has paid 4 øre by way of a stamp when picking up the card at the post office, which is then cancelled.

Brevkasser til gratis besørgelse”, mens der på Bypostens kort står: ”Kan nedlægges i Bypostens gule Gadepostkasser til gratis Besørgelse”. Der eksisterer visse variationer i formuleringen af teksten, og umiddelbart før nedlæggelsen af Byposten i 1889 blev der lavet frikorrespondancekort som kunne lægges i såvel postvæsenets som i bypostens brevkasser.

For firmaerne var det en stor fordel at anvende frikorrespondancekortene til bestillinger. Alternative kommunikationsformer var telefon, men i 1880'erne var det meget få, der havde telefon. En anden mulighed var at anvende helsager med påtrykt værdimærke, og udlevere disse til kunderne. Men frankeringen på disse helsager skulle forudbetales, og hvis firmaet uddelte kortet gratis til kunderne, ville man risikere, at kunderne klippede værdimærkerne af helsagerne og brugte dem til private forsendelser. Anderledes var det med frikorrespondancekortene: Kortene har intet værdimærke med en angiven værdi, så der var intet at klippe ud, og firmaet skulle kun betale for porto for de brevkort, de modtog. Dette er sandsynligvis en væsentlig årsag til, at vi meget sjældent

nedlægges i Postvæsenets røde Brevkasser til gratis besørgelse” (Can be deposited in the Post Office’s red letterboxes for free delivery), while the City Post card reads: “Kan nedlægges i Bypostens gule Gadepostkasser til gratis Besørgelse” (Can be deposited in the City Post Office’s yellow street letterboxes for free delivery). There are some variations in the wording of the text, and just before the closure of the City Post Office in 1889, free correspondence cards were made that could be placed in both the Post Office and the City Post letterboxes.

For companies, it was a great advantage to use the free correspondence cards for orders. An alternative form of communication was the telephone, but in the 1880s very few people had them. Another option was to use postal stationery with a printed value indicator and hand these out to customers. However, the postage on these had to be paid in advance, and if the company handed out cards to customers, there was a risk that customers would cut the stamps off the postal stationery and use them for private postage. It was different with the free correspondence cards: the cards have no stated value, so there was nothing to cut out and

ser kommercielt anvendte dobbelte helsagsbrevkort sendt lokalt: Firmaerne i København anvendte frikorrespondancekort i stedet, da det var billigere.

Der findes mange forskellige udformninger af frikorrespondancekortene: De fleste frikorrespondancekort har en form for mærke trykt i øverste højre hjørne – ofte med inskriptionen "fri-correspondance" i ovalen. Andre frikorrespondancekort har intet mærke, mens andre igen har firmaets logo placeret dér hvor værdimærket normalt er placeret. Men der står som nævnt aldrig en specifik værdi angivet på et frikorrespondancekort. Teksten på selve kortet varierer meget: Der kan bl.a. stå: "Post-Brev-Kort", "Brev-Kort", "Fri-Correspondance-Kort", "Bestillingskort", eller "Fri Rekvisitions-kort".

Brugte frikorrespondancekort er sjældne. Nogle brugte kort er annulleret med et stempel på kortet (typisk et kassebrevstempel) og har et ombæringsstempel samt en markering "4" i blåkriddt, der indikerer betalingen for porto. Andre er ligeledes annulleret, men ovenpå (eller ved siden af) er der sat et 4 øre frimærke, som er annulleret med ombæringsstemplet. Der har således været forskellige måder for modtageren at betale porto på – også afhængig af hvor mange kort virksomheden modtog.

Men er et frikorrespondancekort overhovedet en helsag? De har flere gange været medtaget i kataloger over helsager, og mange regner dem sikkert som værende helsager. Porto betales, efter kortet er sendt, og dermed er der reelt ikke tale om helsager. Ellers ville de senere "Det cyklende postbud"-kuverter med "Porto Betalt" også kunne regnes som helsager. Frikorrespondancekortene opfatter jeg som forløbere for "Modtager betaler porto"-forsendelser.

the company only had to pay for the postage for the postcards they received. This is probably a major reason why we very rarely see commercially used reply cards sent locally: the companies in Copenhagen used free correspondence cards instead, as it was cheaper.

There are many different designs of free correspondence cards: Most have some kind of 'stamp' printed in the top right corner - often with the inscription "fri-correspondance" in the oval. Other free correspondence cards have no 'stamp', while others have the company logo placed where the value indicator is normally placed. However, as previously mentioned, there is never a specific value on a free correspondence card.

The text on the card itself varies greatly: It can read, among other things: "Post-Brev-Kort", "Brev-Kort", "Fri- Correspondance-Kort", "Bestillingskort" or "Fri Rekvisitionskort".

Used free correspondence cards are rare. Some used cards are cancelled with a handstamp on the card (typically a cashier's stamp) and have an ombæringsstempel (delivery circular date stamp) and a "4" marked in blue crayon indicating payment for postage. Others are also cancelled, but on top of (or next to) them is a 4 øre stamp, which is cancelled with a postmark. Thus, there have been different ways for the recipient to pay the postage – which is also dependent on how many cards the company received.

But is a free correspondence card even a postal stationery? They have been included in catalogues of postal stationery several times, and many people probably consider them to be postal stationery. Postage is paid after the card is sent, so they are not actually postal stationery. Otherwise, the later (1963-1986) "Det cyklende postbud" (Cycling Postman) envelopes with "Porto Betalt" (Postage Paid) would also be considered postal stationery. I see the free correspondence cards as precursors to the "Modtager betaler porto" (Recipient pays postage) mailings.

Soldaterbrevkort

I forbindelse med 1. verdenskrig mobiliseredes i 1914 værnepligtige til den danske sikringsstyrke, så den samlede styrke nåede 58.000 mand. Størstedelen af dette mandskab var placeret i det Storkøbenhavnske område.

Hver soldat fik ugentligt udleveret et korrespondancekort og et brevkort, som var tiltrykt "Soldater-" over "Brevkort" og S B (for soldaterbrevkort) på værdimærket. Dette blev senere ændret til, at hver mand fik udleveret et 5 øres og et 10 øres soldaterfrimærke.

Da S B overtrykket var håndsats af H.H. Thieles Bogtrykkeri, finder vi forskellige varianter i overtrykket – bl.a. én variant hvor "S" er omvendt og en anden, hvor S og B er byttet om til B S.

Soldiers' postal cards

In connection with World War I, conscripts were mobilised for the Danish security force in 1914, bringing the total strength to 58,000 men. Most of these men were located in the Greater Copenhagen area.

Each soldier received a weekly lettercard and a postal card, which was overprinted "Soldater-" above "Brevkort" and S B (for "soldaterbrevkort") on the imprinted stamp. This was later changed so that each man was issued a 5 øre and a 10 øre soldier's stamp.

As the S B overprint was hand-printed by H.H. Thieles Bogtrykkeri, we find different varieties in the overprint - including one where the "S" is reversed and another where the S and B are reversed as B S.



Figur 12: Soldaterbrevkort med sjælden variant, hvor S og B er byttet om i trykket på mærket.

Figure 12: Soldier's postal card with a rare variety where S and B are reversed in the overprint on the stamp.



Figur 13: Dobbelt brevkort: Sammenhængende afsender- og svarbrevkort.

Figure 13: Reply card: Combined sender and reply card.



Figur 14: Dansk svarbrevkort returneret til Danmark fra Island.

Figure 14: Danish reply card returned to Denmark from Iceland.

Dobbelte brevkort

I 1883 indførte Danmark dobbelte brevkort, hvor to brevkort er sammenhængende, idet det ene bruges af afsenderen, mens det andet bruges af modtageren til at svare. Inspirationen kom fra Holland, Sverige og Württemberg, som allerede fra 1872 begyndte at udgive dobbelte brevkort.

I 1886 besluttede UPU, at alle medlemslande dels skulle udgive, dels skulle returnere svardelen fra dobbelte brevkort. Men først fra 1899 kunne dobbelte brevkort sendes til alle lande, som dermed accepterede det andet lands frankering på svarkortet. Herhjemme blev oplaget af de dobbelte helsagsbrevkort aldrig specielt stort, og derfor er anvendte dobbelte brevkort ganske sjældne, ligesom man også kan finde spændende udenlandske stempler på de danske svarkort (figur 14). Som samler skal man være opmærksom på, at der tidligt var filatelister, som muntrede sig med at producere forsendelser – ofte dobbelte brevkort, der fx blev sendt poste restante til eksotiske lande og returneret. De mest kendte af disse filatelister er brødrene Hviid, som faktisk endte med en politianmeldelse fra Postvæsenet.

Reply cards

In 1883, Denmark introduced reply cards, where two postal cards are combined, one used by the sender and the other used by the recipient to reply. Inspiration came from the Netherlands, Sweden, and Württemberg, which started issuing reply cards as early as 1872.

In 1886, the UPU decided that all member countries should both issue and return the reply portion of reply cards. However, it wasn't until 1899 that reply cards could be sent to all countries that accepted the sender country's franking on the reply card. In Denmark, the usage of the double postal stationery cards was never particularly large, which is why used reply cards are quite rare, and interesting foreign cancellations on Danish reply cards can also be found (Figure 14).

Collectors should be aware that early philatelists enjoyed 'manufacturing' items - often reply cards that, for example, were sent poste restante to exotic countries and returned. The most well-known of these philatelists were the Hviid brothers, who ended up being reported to the police by the Post Office.



Figur 15: 4 øre korsbånd omkring en tryksag.

Figure 15: 4 øre newspaper wrapper enclosing an item of printed matter.

Korsbånd

Helsagskorsbånd er et aflangt stykke papir med påtrykt værdimærke og plads til at skrive adressen. Korsbåndet foldes og fastgøres omkring tryksager (figur 15), idet tryksager skulle sendes som åbne forsendelser, så det kunne sikres, at indholdet opfyldte kravene til de reducerede tryksagstakster.

Fra udgivelsen af korsbånd i 1872 og indtil 1888 blev de danske korsbånd solgt ark af 6 stk. på posthusene. Det var således muligt at sende korsbånd i parstykker (figur 16).

Tryksagstaksterne til udlandet var UPU takster, og når et land blev optaget som medlem af UPU blev disse generelle takster anvendt. Indtil oprettelsen af UPU – eller indtil landet blev optaget i UPU – var de såkaldte præ-UPU-takster gældende (figur 17).

En anden speciel anvendelse af korsbånd er de diagonalt halverede 4 øre korsbåndsudklip, som det i en kort periode i 1919 var tilladt at bruge som frankering på Færøerne, da øerne ikke havde fået leveret 2 øre frimærker før takstændringen til 7 øre.

Som alle andre danske helsager blev de danske korsbånd fra starten trykt af trykkeriet H.H. Thiele indtil 1936, hvorefter J. Jørgensen & Co.'s Bogtrykkeri overtog fremstillingen. Salget af helsagskorsbånd ophørte allerede i 1946.

Korsbåndene findes med forskellige opfrankinger til højere vægtklasser, ligesom de findes sendt rekommanderet. Men der er relativt få korsbånd bevaret, da de jo i sig selv ikke indeholder en besked, der er værd at gemme, så de er ofte blevet revet over og smidt ud. Fx er der kun registreret lige over 25 bevarede brugte eksemplarer af det første 2 skilling korsbånd ud af en samlet produktion på ca. 200.000.

Newspaper wrappers

The postal newspaper wrapper is a rectangular piece of paper with a printed imprinted stamp and space to write the address. It is wrapped and secured around an item of printed matter (Figure 15), as printed matter had to be sent open to ensure that the content met the requirements for the reduced rates.

From the issue of newspaper wrappers in 1872 until 1888, Danish newspaper wrappers were sold in sheets of 6 at post offices. It was thus possible to send wrappers in pairs (Figure 16).

The rates for printed matter sent abroad were the UPU rates, and when a country was admitted as a member of the UPU, these general rates were applied. Until the creation of the UPU - or until the country joined the UPU - pre-UPU tariffs applied (Figure 17).

Another special use of newspaper wrappers was the diagonally bisected 4 øre newspaper wrapper cut outs, which for a short period in 1919 were allowed to be used as franking on the Faroe Islands, as the islands had not been supplied with 2 øre stamps before the local letter rate was changed to 7 øre.

Like all other Danish postal stationery, Danish newspaper wrappers were initially printed by H.H. Thiele's printing company until 1936, after which J. Jørgensen & Co.'s Bogtrykkeri took over production. The sale of postal stationery newspaper wrappers was discontinued in 1946.

Newspaper wrappers are available with different frankings for higher weight classes, and they were also sent registered. However, relatively few wrappers have been preserved as they have no contents worth saving, so they have often been torn off and thrown away. For example, only just over 25 used copies of the first 2 Skilling wrapper have been registered out of a total production of around 200,000.



Figur 16: Parstykke af 5 øre korsbånd opfrankeret med 10 frimærker og sendt anbefalet til Tyskland.

Figure 16: Pair of 5 øre newspaper wrappers franked with 10 bicoloured postage stamps and sent registered to Germany.

Herudover er afstemplerne af korsbåndene ikke altid kønne, når der blev stemplet ovenpå indholdet, som fx kunne være en tyk, blød avis. Så udover at korsbåndene er relativt sjældnere end andre helsagstyper, så er det også sværere at finde flotte afstempler af dem.

In addition, the cancellations on the wrappers are not always attractive when struck on top of the contents, which could be a thick, soft newspaper, for example. So, in addition to the fact that wrappers are relatively more rare than other types of postal stationery, it's also harder to find them with nice cancellations.



Figur 17: Præ-UPU tryksagstakst på 12 øre til Kapkolonien sendt, inden kolonien blev medlem af UPU i 1895.

Figure 17: Pre-UPU printed matter rate of 12 øre sent to Cape Colony before the colony joined the UPU in 1895.



Figur 18: 5 øre korrespondancekort med tiltrykte reklamer på inder- og bagside.

Figure 18: 5 øre lettercard with overprinted advertisements on the inside and back.

Korrespondancekort

Korrespondancekort er et stykke karton i dobbelt brevkortstørrelse, som er foldet på midten og randene er forsynet med lim samt en perforering, så den sammenlimede kant let kan aftages, når kortet skal åbnes. Det første korrespondancekort udkom i Belgien i 1882, og Danmark udgav sit første korrespondancekort i 1888. Dog havde Københavns Bypost allerede i 1883 udgivet korrespondancekort til brug i København.

Disse lukkede kort blev ofte brugt til de typer af budskaber, som postbuddet ikke skulle læse (!) – og derfor ser vi fx mange kærestebreve og rykkere for manglende betaling sendt som korrespondancekort. Nogle private firmaer benyttede også korrespondancekortene til at trykke reklamer for forskellige virksomheder på (figur 18). Disse reklamer betalte firmaerne for, og publikum kunne så købe disse korrespondancekort med påtrykte reklamer for en reduceret pris i forhold til det påtrykte værdimærke.

Korrespondancekortene er yderst samlerverdige – ikke mindst fordi de tidligste findes med en række forskellige perforeringer og tekster på randen, og ligesom brevkortene blev der i 1918 indført fabriksnumre på korrespondancekortene.

Det er naturligt, at et brugt korrespondancekort har fået revet randen af (som der står på kortet, at man skal) men allerede tidligt var filatelister meget opsatte på at samle brugte korrespondancekort, hvor randen ikke var revet af. Derfor ser vi korrespondancekort, som er åbnet ved at en nål er brugt til at lirke gummieringen fra hinanden, så samleren kunne få et brugt kort med fuld rand.

Der er også en tendens til, at mange korrespondancekort er sendt underfrankeret. Det skyldes, at de fejlagtigt er sendt til brevkorttakst, men da der er tale om et lukket brev, skulle de frankeres til den højere brevtakst. Desuden kunne korrespondancekort ikke sendes som tryksager, men dette ser vi også – uden at det er blevet bemærket af Postvæsenet.

Letter cards

A letter card is a piece of card twice the size of a postal card, folded in half, with gummed edges and a perforation so that the gummed edge can be easily removed when the card is opened. The first letter card was issued in Belgium in 1882, and Denmark issued its first letter card in 1888. However, the Copenhagen City Post had already issued letter cards for use in Copenhagen in 1883.

These closed cards were often used for the types of messages that the postman was not supposed to read (!) - which is why we see many love letters and reminders for non-payment sent as letter cards. Some private companies also used the letter cards to print advertisements for various companies (Figure 18). The companies paid for these advertisements and the public could then buy these letter cards with printed advertisements for a reduced price compared to the printed imprinted stamp.

Letter cards are highly collectible - not least because the earliest ones have a variety of perforations and texts on the edge, and like postal cards, control numbers were introduced on letter cards in 1918.

It's normal for a used letter card to have the selvage torn off (as the text on the card says to do), but even early on philatelists were keen to collect used letter cards where the selvage had not been torn off. Therefore, we see letter cards that have been opened by using a pin to separate the gummed edges so that the collector could get a used card with a full selvage.

There was also a tendency for many letter cards to be sent underpaid. This is because they were mistakenly sent at the postcard rate, but as it is a sealed letter, they should be franked at the higher letter rate. In addition, letter cards could not be sent as printed matter, but we see this too - without it being detected by the Post Office.



Figur 19: Fejlperforeret korrespondancekort: 10 øre bølgelinjetype fabrikation 70.

Figure 19: Misperforated letter card: 10 øre wavy line type control number 70.

Aerogrammer

Et aerogram er et brevark beregnet til transport på fly, og det er derfor fremstillet på meget tyndt papir for at holde vægten nede, og dermed for at holde omkostningerne til flytransport så lave som muligt. Det var derfor ligeledes ikke tilladt at lægge noget ind i aerogrammet, og det var også kun tilladt at opfrankere med ét frimærke – igen for at sikre den lave vægt.

I 1920'erne og 1930'erne blev flyruter etableret over hele verden, og ved at sende breve med fly fremfor over land og sø, blev transporttiden drastisk reduceret.

Det første aerogram blev udgivet af Irak i 1933. Anden verdenskrig betød et voldsomt behov for transport af post til og fra soldater over store afstande – og det førte til en naturlig vækst i anvendelsen af aerogrammer.

Aerogrammes

An aerogramme is a letter sheet intended for transport by air and is therefore produced on very thin paper to keep the weight down and thus to keep the cost of transmission as low as possible. It was therefore also not allowed to add anything to the aerogramme and it was mandatory to be franked with a single stamp - again to ensure low weight.

In the 1920s and 1930s, air routes were established all over the world, and by sending letters by air rather than by land and sea, transportation time was dramatically reduced.

The first aerogramme was issued by Iraq in 1933. World War II meant a huge need to transport mail to and from soldiers over long distances - and this led to a natural growth in the use of aerogrammes.

Det første danske aerogram udkom den 9. oktober 1949 – på 75 årsdagen for UPU's stiftelse (figur 20), og de sidste blev udgivet i 1985.

De i alt 15 takstforhøjelser fra 1949 til 1985 betød lige så mange udgivelser af nye værdier på aerogrammerne, og fra 1964 skiftede værdimærket fra kongemærker til en illustration fra H.C. Andersens eventyr "Den flyvende kuffert".

The first Danish aerogramme was issued on 9 October 1949 - on the 75th anniversary of the UPU's foundation (Figure 20), and the last were issued in 1985. The total of 15 rate increases from 1949 to 1985 meant an equal number of new values on the aerogrammes, and from 1964 the imprinted stamp changed from the King's head to an illustration from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale "The Flying Trunk".



Figur 20: 40 øre aerogram fabrikation 1 sendt på aerogrammernes udgivelsesdag 9. oktober 1949.

Figure 20: 40 øre aerogramme control number 1 sent on the day of issue of aerogrammes, 9 October 1949.

Svarkuponer

Da svarkuponer ikke er hele forsendelser, så er de teknisk set ikke defineret som helsager, men da svarkuponer kan medtages i udstillingssamlinger i helsagsklassen, medtages de i denne artikel.

En svarkupon er et værdibevis, som man kan medsende i en forsendelse, hvis man ønsker at betale for modtagerens svarfrankering. Ved at aflevere en svarkupon fra et hvilket som helst land, vil man på posthuset modtage frimærker svarende til den internationale takst for et første vægtklassebrev, som kan påsættes forsendelsen med ens svar. Til forskel fra alle de danske

International reply coupons

As international reply coupons are not entire postal items, they are technically not defined as postal stationery, but as they can be included in exhibition collections in the postal stationery class, they are included in this article.

An international reply coupon is a voucher that can be included with an item of mail if the sender wishes to pay for the recipient's postage when replying. By handing in an international reply coupon from any country, stamps corresponding to the international rate for a first weight class letter, can be received at the post office, which can be



Figur 21: Fireblok svarkupon 50 øre i type "London" – opkaldt efter UPU kongressen i London i 1929.

Figure 21: Block of four 50 øre reply coupons in the "London" type - named after the UPU Congress in London in 1929.

helsager – som alle blev trykt i Danmark – bliver svarkuponer til alle lande trykt af UPU, hvorfor grundtrykket på alle svarkuponer er ens i alle lande.

Svarkuponer blev udgivet fra 1907, og fulgte efter en debat mellem medlemslandene, som gik helt tilbage til 1874 om at lave et verdenspostfrimærke, som kunne bruges i alle lande. Den danske postkontrollør Holstein fra Århus var én af dem, der kom med forslag til Verdenspostforeningen om svarkuponerne.

affixed to the item in reply. Unlike Danish postal stationery - which was all printed in Denmark - international reply coupons for every country are printed by the UPU, so the basic printing on all reply coupons is the same in all countries.

International reply coupons were issued from 1907, following a debate between member countries dating back to 1874 concerning the creation of a world postage stamp that could be used in all countries. Danish postal inspector Holstein from Aarhus was one of those who made suggestions to the Universal Postal Union about reply coupons.

Da svarkuponer kan sammenlignes med checks (med små beløb), har det naturligvis givet anledning til forskellige økonomiske overvejelser. Ikke mindst er der blevet spekuleret i at udnytte forskellene i taksterne og valutakurserne landene imellem. Hvis man skulle betale mindre for en svarkupon i ét land, end man kunne sælge den til i et andet, ville der jo være en simpel måde at lave en god fortjeneste på! Netop denne tankegang var baggrund for et stort fupnummer i USA, hvor Charles Ponzi i 1920 fik lokket 10 millioner dollars ud af folk med løfter om 50% forrentning på 45 dage. Ponzi ville angiveligt investere i svarkuponers forskellige værdi, men det var et svindelnummer, og pengene var tabt.

Da svarkuponerne som nævnt ikke er indenfor den tekniske definition af helsager, er de heller ikke medtaget i de danske helsagskataloger, men der findes specialkataloger over svarkuponer.

Bestilte helsager

Postvæsenet fremstillede også helsager på bestilling – fra både private virksomheder og offentlige myndigheder. Det var helt fra de tidlige brevkort i 1871 normalt for mange virksomheder at købe helsager på posthuset og derefter få lavet tiltryk med information om fx sagsbesøg eller mulighed for skibstransport.

I 1921 gav Postvæsenet tilladelse til, at man kunne indlevere konvolutter, som derefter blev tiltrykt med værdimærke. Dermed var man ikke tvunget til at anvende helsagskonvolutter i den udformning, som Postvæsenet udgav, men man kunne indlevere konvolutter i nøjagtig den udformning, man havde brug for, og få tiltrykt et værdimærke.

De bestilte helsager har således aldrig været til salg for offentligheden, men blev anvendt af først statsinstitutioner og senere hen private virksomheder. I nogle tilfælde har Postvæsenet udelukkende tiltrykt værdimærke, og i andre tilfælde har Postvæsenet ligeledes trykt teksten.

As international reply coupons can be compared to cheques (with small values), they have naturally given rise to various financial considerations. Not least, there has been speculation about capitalising on the differences in tariffs and exchange rates between countries. If you had to pay less for a reply coupon in one country than you could sell it for in another, there would be a simple way to make a good profit! This was the thinking behind a major fraud in the USA in 1920, when Charles Ponzi tricked 10 million dollars out of people with promises of a 50% return in 45 days. Ponzi was supposedly going to invest in discounted international reply coupons and redeem them in the United States, but it was fraudulent and the money was lost.

As international reply coupons are not within the technical definition of postal stationery, they are not included in the Danish postal stationery catalogues, but there are special catalogues of reply coupons.

Printed to order postal stationery

The postal service also produced postal stationery to order - from both private companies and public authorities. From the early postal cards in 1871, it was normal for many companies to buy postal stationery at the post office and then have it printed with information about sales visits or shipping options, for example.

In 1921, the Post Office authorised the handing in of envelopes, which were then added an imprinted stamp. This meant that you were not obliged to use postal envelopes of the design issued by the Post Office, but you could hand in envelopes made exactly to the design required and have an imprinted stamp on them.

Printed to order postal stationery was never for sale to the general public, but was used first by state institutions and later by private companies. In some cases, the Post Office only printed the imprinted stamp, and in other cases they also printed the text.

Disse bestilte helsager benævnes ofte "privatfremstillede", "bestillingshelsager", "institutionshelsager", "firmahelsager" eller "x-helsager". Når man anvender udtrykket "privatfremstillede", er det fordi de ikke er fremstillet på Postvæsenets initiativ, men til "private" (hvilket skal forstås som både offentlige institutioner og private firmaer). Udtrykket "x-helsager" kommer fra kontrolnummeret på de bestilte helsager, som oftest var efterfulgt af et "X", så det var tydeligt, at det var en særligt fremstillet helsag.

Den første organisation, der benyttede sig af muligheden for at få fremstillet helsager på denne måde var Statstelegrafene, som i 1922 tog aflange konvolutter med røde i brug. Senere fulgte en lang række andre statsinstitutioner, bl.a. Finansministeriet, Statens Serum Institut og Sundhedsstyrelsen.

Sundhedsstyrelsen fik bl.a. fremstillet helsager, som blev brugt til fødselsanmeldelser. De er let genkendelige, da der på adressesiden er trykt

"**Til Sognepræsten i ...**" (figur 22). Det var Sognepræsten, som skulle have information om nyfødte, og det var blot sognets navn, som skulle tilføjes adressen. Undtagelsen var dog Sønderjylland, hvor det ikke var sognepræsten, men personregisterføreren, der skulle have tilsendt fødselsanmeldelser. Derfor findes også helsager med trykket

"**Til Personregisterføreren i ...**" samt

"**Til Sognepræsten/Personregisterføreren i ...**".

These printed to order items are often referred to as "privately produced", "printed to order stationery", "institutional stationery", "company stationery" or "x-stationery". The term "privately produced" is used because they were not produced on the initiative of the Postal Service, but for "private individuals" (which is understood to mean both public institutions and private companies). The term "x-stationery" comes from the control number on printed to order postal items, which was often followed by an "x" to indicate that it was specially produced.

The first organisation to take advantage of the possibility of having postal stationery produced in this way was Statstelegrafene (the State Telegraph), which in 1922 started using rectangular envelopes with a window. This was followed by a large number of other government institutions, including Finansministeriet (The Ministry of Finance), Statens Serum Institut (The Institute for control of infectious diseases, and more), and Sundhedsstyrelsen (The National Board of Health).

Among other things, Sundhedsstyrelsen had entire envelopes produced that were used for the registration of births. They are easily recognisable as the address side is printed "**Til Sognepræsten i...**" (Figure 22). It was the parish priest who needed information about new born children, and it was only the name of the parish that needed to be added to the address. The exception was in Southern Jutland, where it was not the parish priest, but personregisterføreren (the registrar of births, marriages, and deaths) who had to be sent notifications of birth. This is why postal stationery can be found with the imprint:

"**Til Personregisterføreren i...**" samt

"**Til Sognepræsten/Personregisterføreren i...**"



Figur 22: Helsagsbrevark – fabrikation 65x – og den eneste udgivelse af brevark i Danmark – bestilt af Sundhedsstyrelsen og anvendt som fødselsanmeldelse fra jordemoderen til sognepræsten. Her annulleret med Silkeborg rutebilstationsstempel.

Figure 22: Postal stationery letter sheet – control number 65x - and the only issue of letter sheets in Denmark - ordered by Sundhedsstyrelsen and used as a notification of birth from the midwife to the parish priest. Here cancelled with the Silkeborg coach station postmark.

Også brevkort blev udgivet som bestilte helsager. De Danske Statsbaner brugte således flittigt brevkort som information til modtagere af gods, at dette gods var ankommet til stationen, og skulle afhentes. Faktisk kendes helsager helt tilbage til 1870'erne med denne type besked, og helt op til midten af 1940'erne påtrykte DSB selv almindelige helsager, hvorefter de bestilte helsager med x-numre (figur 23) samt med fortrykt værdimærke og tekst.

Det er også i de bestilte helsager, at vi ser brevkort med perforering. Normalt var det kun korrespondancekort, der var perforerede i tre sider, men bl.a. firmaerne Hvalsøe & Erlandsen samt S. Seidelin udsendte fra 1950'erne mapper med 10 stk. brevkort til deres kunder. Brevkortene var hæftet og perforeret i deres højre side, så de kunne rives ud af mappen og anvendes af kunden til at bestille varer.

Postal cards were also issued as printed to order postal stationery. The Danish State Railways (DSB) frequently used postal cards to advise recipients of goods that these goods had arrived at the station and had to be collected. In fact, postal stationery with this type of message dates back to the 1870s, and up until the mid-1940s DSB printed ordinary postal stationery themselves, after which they ordered postal stationery with x-numbers (Figure 23) and with pre-printed indicia and text.

It is also in printed to order postal stationery that letter cards with perforation can be seen. Normally, letter cards were only perforated on three sides, but companies such as Hvalsøe & Erlandsen and S. Seidelin sent out folders from the 1950s with 10 postal cards to their customers. The postal cards were stapled and perforated on the right-hand side so they could be torn out of the folder and used by the customer to order goods.



Figur 23: Prøvetryk uden værdimærke af en bestilt helsag – fabrikation 75x - til de Danske Statsbaner.

Figure 23: Proof copy of a printed to order postal stationery card without an imprinted stamp - control number 75x - for the Danish State Railways.



Figur 24: Fejltrykt bestilt tryksagsbrevkort til Københavns Kommunebiblioteker med firedobbelt tryk

Figure 24: Misprinted printed to order card for the Copenhagen Public Libraries with quadruple printing..



Figur 25: Mapper med ordrekort fremstillet for virksomhederne S. Seidelin og A/S Hvalsø & Erlandsen.

Figure 25: Folders with order cards produced for the companies S. Seidelin and A/S Hvalsø & Erlandsen.



Figur 26: For- og bagside af to sammenhængende brevkort, som i anledning af Postvæsenets 375-års jubilæum i 1999 blev husstandsomdelt gratis.

Figure 26: Front and back of two conjoined postal cards which were distributed free of charge to households on the occasion of the Post Office's 375th anniversary in 1999.



Figur 27: For- og bagside af brevkort med påtrykt svarporto udgivet af Postvæsenet i 2000.

Figure 27: Front and back of a postal card with printed reply postage issued by the Post Office in 2000.



Figur 28: Hedsagskuvert udsendt i 2013 til Postvæsenets abonnenter på nyudgivne frimærker.

Figure 28: Postal stationery envelope sent out in 2013 to Postal Service subscribers for newly issued stamps.

I dag er der specialsamlere af de privatfremstillede helsager, som samler de forskellige variationer af påtryk og de forskellige fabriktionsnumre. Men de privatfremstillede helsager er også populære blandt motivsamlere, da der fx findes illustrationer af færger, den lille havfrue, kort, biler og fugle som illustrationer på disse helsager.

Helsagernes svanesang

I slutningen af 1970'erne og i 1980'erne havde brevkortene Dronning Margrethes portræt på værdimærket. På dette tidspunkt var salget af helsager dalet kraftigt, og fra 1989 blev der ikke længere udgivet helsager med dagligmærker i Danmark.

Postvæsenet prøvede fra 1990 at udgive helsagsbrevkort med flotte og farverige bagsideillustrationer med relation til frimærkemotivet. Men på trods af anstrengelserne lykkedes det ikke at skabe en efterspørgsel, og disse udgivelser stoppede igen. Ud over disse forsøg med flot illustrerede brevkort er der senere kun få udgivelser af helsager i Danmark. Nogle få helsagskuverter blev i de første år af dette årtusinde forsøgt solgt på posthusene i små pakker, og Postvæsenet har desuden enkelte gange fremstillet helsager til deres eget brug (figur 26, 27 og 28).

Interessen for at samle helsager er stødt stigende, ikke mindst fordi helsager er et langt mere uopdyrket område end frimærker. Der er fx mange danske helsagsudgaver, hvor varianterne endnu ikke er beskrevet. Desuden er helsager også et område, som økonomisk er til at komme til, da priserne på selv de sjældneste helsager kun er en brøkdel af prisen på sjældne frimærker.

Today, there are specialised collectors of privately produced postal stationery who collect the different variations of imprints and different control numbers. However, privately made postal stationery is also popular among thematic collectors, as there are illustrations of ferries, the Little Mermaid, maps, cars, and birds on them.

Postal stationery's swan song

In the late 1970s and 1980s, postal cards had Queen Margrethe's portrait on the imprinted stamp. By this time, sales of postal stationery had fallen sharply, and from 1989 postal stationery with definitive stamps was no longer issued in Denmark.

From 1990, the postal service tried to issue postal stationery with beautiful and colourful illustrations on the reverse related to the design of the stamp.

However, despite their efforts, they did not succeed in creating a demand and these issues ended. Apart from these experiments with attractively illustrated postal cards, there are only a few later issues of postal stationery in Denmark. In the early years of this millennium, there were attempts to sell a few postal stationery envelopes at post offices in small packets, and the Danish Post Office also produced a few postal stationery items for their own use (Figures 26, 27 and 28).

Interest in collecting postal stationery is steadily increasing, not least because postal stationery is far less researched than stamps. For example, there are many Danish postal stationery issues whose varieties have not yet been described. Furthermore, postal stationery is also an area that is financially accessible, as the prices of even the rarest postal stationery items are only a fraction of the price of rare stamps.

Mange samlere af posthistorie og frimærker starter derfor en ekstra samling af helsager fra det område, de i forvejen samler på. Heldigvis er vi i Danmark godt hjulpet af gode helsagskataloger – både Pedersen & Bendix fra 1999 og Ringström fra 1985 er på hver deres måde rigtig gode. Så der er mange gode argumenter for at starte en samling af helsager. God fornøjelse!

Many collectors of postal history and stamps therefore start an additional collection of postal stationery from the area they already collect. Fortunately, we in Denmark are well supported by good postal stationery catalogues - both Pedersen & Bendix from 1999 and Ringström from 1985 are very good in their different ways. So, there are many good arguments in favour of starting a collection of postal stationery. Have a great time!

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