

# Postal History of Sweden's Engraved Oscar II Issue, 1891-1911



## Introduction

King Oscar II was the ruler of both Sweden and Norway from 1872 until 1905 although each country had their own government. In 1905 Norway was granted the independence that they had requested and chose their own king. King Oscar II died in 1907 and was succeeded by his son King Gustav V.

The first appearance of King Oscar II on a postage stamp was the typographed issue of 1886. In 1891 Sweden's first engraved issue was introduced featuring King Oscar II on a similar design. The series included single color stamps of denominations of 5, 8, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 50 öre and a bicolor 1 kronor stamp. (1 kronor = 100 öre). These stamps were used until 1911 when the King Gustav V issue was introduced.

This exhibit studies the postal history of the engraved Oscar II stamps, both domestic and international, with particular focus on the variety of postmarks found on this issue, a study of the rates (including numerous postal forms, and foreign destinations.)

**Throughout the exhibit I refer to the engraved Oscar issue as simply "the Oscars".**

## Exhibit Outline

The exhibit is organized into 6 sections. Each page has the major section at the top left and the minor section at the top right.

- **Oscar Introduction**
- **Domestic Postmarks**
  - Town Cancels
  - Military
  - Postal Services
  - Railroad
  - Rural Mail
  - Steamship
  - Temporary Stations (Expositions)
  - Warship Mail
- **Domestic Rates**
  - Letters
  - Post Cards
  - Printed Matter
  - Parcel Post
  - Money Order
  - Newspaper Forwarding
  - Complaint
- **Foreign Postmarks**
  - Denmark
  - Finland
  - Germany
  - Norway
- **Foreign Rates**
  - Letters
  - Postcards
  - Printed Matter
  - Parcel Post
  - Miscellaneous
- **Foreign Destinations**
  - Africa
  - Asia
  - Australia and Oceania
  - Europe
  - North America
  - South America
- **Oscar Replacement**

## Organization of the Exhibit:

A high level outline appears on the title page, detailed outlines start each major section.

Included in the exhibit are examples of single frankings for each of the stamps. The most difficult is the 1 kronor and there are two examples shown (parcel card, express foreign destination cover).

I do not pay any special attention to the two Oscar stamps issued on unwatermarked paper in 1911. Rather than start the story with first day covers (I don't own one and, except for the 8 öre, have never seen one available), I begin by showing mixed frankings with the prior issue.

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## Section Summary

The first section, **Oscar Introduction** shows mixed frankings with prior issues. Examples are shown of the engraved Oscars with both the typographed Oscars and the earlier ring stamps (issued 1872).

### Highlight:

- Postal stationary uprated with both a typographed and an engraved Oscar.
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**Swedish Postmarks** are explored in the next section. In addition to town cancels Sweden at the time had special cancels for military, railroads, rural mail, steamships and warships as well as postmarks for expositions.

### Highlights:

- Postally used imperf pair of the 10 öre Oscar,
  - Motagningsbevis postmarks (return receipt requested)
  - Temporary office postmarks (Expositions).
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**Domestic Rates** for letters, postcards, printed matter and postal services are the focus of the third section.

### Highlights:

- Registered letter mailed on a rural mail route,
  - Registered postcard,
  - Parcel Cards for all weight classes,
  - Telegram Money Order
  - Newspaper Forwarding form.
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International mail is examined next starting with **Foreign Postmarks** used to cancel the Oscars. This topic is presented alphabetically by country.

### Highlights:

- German Berlin-Sassnitz Bahnpost postmark
  - Norwegian exchange office postmark
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**Foreign Rates** are shown next.

### Highlights:

- COD Cover to Norway
  - Insured Cover to Norway
  - Express Cover to Hamburg, Germany
  - 1 kr single franking Express Cover
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**Foreign Destinations** are shown organized alphabetically first by continent (as listed in Facit) then by country.

### Highlights:

- German Southwest Africa
  - Algeria
  - Two covers (China and India) to Sven Hedin, (Sweden's 'Marco Polo')
  - Two covers (Argentina and Chile) to Prof. Skottsberg of Sweden's Magellanic Expedition
  - Luxembourg
  - Phillipines.
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The final section, **Oscar Replacement**, shows mixed usages with the Gustav V issue.

### Highlight:

- Oscar used to pay postage due.
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## References:

**Facit Postal 1993**, Facit Förlags AB, 1993, Parkgatan 12, 112 30 Stockholm, Sweden.

**Handbok över Svenska Post- and makuleringsstämplar 1685-1951**, Sveriges Filatelist-Förenings Riksorganisation, c 1952 (in Swedish).

**Posthorn**, the quarterly publication of the Scandinavian Collectors Society, in particular:

**Swedish Foreign parcel mail, 1821-1921**, Sören Andersson, May 2002.

**Bridging the Sound**, Stefan Danielski, November 2000.