

XIII. The regional ship mail services

Hammerfest (Vadsø) - Hamburg line 1865 - 1896

The Norwegian government and the private steamship companies Det Bergenske Dampskibsselskap (BDS) and Det Nordenfjeldske Dampskibsselskab (NFDS) negotiated in 1865 to undertake the route between Trondheim and Hammerfest. An agreement was concluded on March 23, 1865, which awarded the companies a virtually uninterrupted, continuous route from Hammerfest to Hamburg, with six ships in weekly departures. New circular date-stamps with "HMRFST -HMBRG" (type 1) and litras from A to F were placed in use in autumn 1865. During the first months, the postal agents on board the three steamers "Finmarken", "Nordland" and "Nordstjernen" used the old "NORDLAND" date-stamps to cancel mail. The assignment of the six different handstamps were as follows: A to S/S Finmarken; B to S/S Jupiter; C to S/S Nordstjernen; D to S/S Håkon Jarl; E to S/S Nidelven; and F to S/S Nordland. Some allocations of the initial distribution of litras occurred during the sailings



"NORDLAND 18-7-1865" (type II) cancellation on 4 Sk Coat of Arms II (x 2) struck on board Finmarken" (5th southbound trip) before the ship had got its new Hammerfest-Hamburg (litra A) ship date-stamp (not registered in Gjelsvik 2005)



"HMRFST A.
HMBRG
25-11-1865"



"HMRFST B.
HMBRG
31-7-1867"



"HMRFST B.
HMBRG
1-6-1872"



"HMRFST C.
HMBRG
22-5-1867"



"HMRFST E.
HMBRG
14-8-1871"



Prepaid single-weight domestic letter of December 19, 1866, from Hammerfest to Tromsø; franked with 4 Sk Coat of Arms II cancelled with the "HMRFST F. HMBRG" ship date-stamp on board the steamer "Nordland" on departure from Hammerfest