

Switzerland's Domestic and International Postage Due Charges During 1862-1907

Introduction to Postal History Exhibit

On July 1, 1862, the Swiss postal administration introduced **domestic penalties** for unpaid and underpaid internal mail. Two factors have determined how its post offices calculated postage due charges since then: changes in postage rates and changes in postage due penalty formulas.

On July 1, 1875, the Universal Postal Union introduced the first **international penalty** for underpaid letters between member countries, replacing the various charges negotiated between individual countries.

Not until July 1, 1878, did Switzerland introduce its first series of **postage due stamps**. It issued the same design in different blue, blue-green, green and olive-green colors through 35 printings until 1910. To show postage due charges before the stamps were available, it used manuscript figures and handstamps on domestic mail and manuscript figures and yellow paper etiquettes on international mail.

A **detailed analysis** accompanies each cover in this exhibit, explaining the reason for and the amount of postage due. These analyses take into account many postal history factors, among them prepaid postage rates, currency exchange rates, penalty formulas, postage due handstamp meanings, forwarded and returned mail rules, card dimensions, private picture postcards, printed matter regulations, postage stamp validity periods, minimum postage due charges, and postal clerks' mistakes. Included are more than a dozen reasons for domestic postage due and as many for international postage due.

The **exhibit ends** when international rates changed on October 1, 1907, to reflect reduced postage for heavier international letters; and well before Switzerland introduced a new penalty formula for underpaid domestic mail on July 1, 1925

Within each of the following periods the domestic mail is generally arranged with letters first, then cards and printed matter. The international mail is arranged in the same order within continental areas of origin.

Three Frames of Domestic Mail

July 1, 1862	Introduction of postage due penalties	2-12
September 1, 1871	Extension of penalties to local letters	13-16
September 1, 1876	New penalty formulas for unpaid & underpaid mail	17-36
December 1, 1891	New penalty formula for underpaid mail	37-48

Seven Frames of International Mail

Pre-UPU rates	Postage due charges based on individual treaties	49-54
July 1, 1875	UPU's first postage due formulas	55-60
April 1, 1879	UPU's second postage due formulas	61-160

Highlights Matted on Red