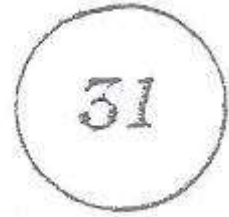


ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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Iceland Philatelic Magazine

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Please let me have your articles if you want them in the next issue.

If you need help with translations let me know. The editors will help with the English if necessary. flackbp@gmail.com

News/comment

Despite exotic editorial holidays on the rivers of East Germany and the beaches of Denmark, we have managed to maintain the monthly sequence with this September issue. New subscribers have continued to enlist; 121 at the time of writing, the most recent from Hungary, Republic of China and Brazil. The more the merrier, as the saying goes. If the subjects you are most interested in have not so far appeared in our ten issues, please let us know, and send something to stimulate interest amongst other readers. You do not have to be an “expert” or a “specialist”. If you have questions to ask about Icelandic stamps or postal history, this is the place to ask. If you are sitting on an article and would like it published, send it.

On September 1st., the Post-Office in 190 Vogar was closed. From that date the community is served by post vehicle i.e. a post office on wheels (Pósthús á hjólum). The post vehicle will come from the Post Office in 230 Reykjanesbær, which is also the case for the communities at 245 Sandgerði and 250 Garður which are also served by post vehicles. With this change at Vogar, a total of 16 communities in Iceland are being served by post vehicles.

I reported in the last issue that Iceland Post had increased the inland letter charges from June. Now they have announced substantial increases to the letter rates to Europe and beyond, which take effect from 1st September 2016. The new Europe minimum ‘A’ letter rate is 225kr, and I regret that I cannot find a single stamp issue of that value which could be used as a single. Of course if you try hard enough, there are 10kr and 5kr “filler” stamps which can be combined with others to make the 225kr rate. There are plenty of 200kr stamps which can be used for the new ‘B’ letter rate to Europe. The ‘A’ letter rate outside Europe is 285kr and again there is no previous stamp with that value. However, there are plenty of 250kr stamps which fit the new outside Europe ‘B’ letter rate. All this, of course, is aimed at diligent Icelandic readers with stocks of unused stamps and with nothing better to do. They could brighten the lives of a few collectors outside Iceland with a correctly franked cover using denominated stamps. Who knows, such rarities could even turn up at Postiljonen in 2031 described as, “*Superb 2016 cover, with adhesives, one of only 3 known with the correct 225kr rate.....*”

oo

Ever so slightly misdirected



The auctioneer’s description: - 1953 UNUSUAL MISDIRECTED COVER. 1953 (22 Apr) envelope addressed to the Postmaster "Pitcairn Island" from Krefeld, West Germany bearing 5pf + 5pf franking making the printed matter rate to Pitcairn. The German name for ‘ICELAND’ is ‘ISLAND’ and the cover was sent to Reykjavik with arrival (2 May) and dispatch (5 May) Reykjavik cds on reverse; on address side a "PITCAIRN ISLAND" receiver cds 18. July 1953. Very unusual. Est. £150-180

More on rare Flatey ink cancellation (Issue 9) *Ævar Petersen*

Dear Brian,

Reading the note on rare ink cancellation Flatey and Jørgen Steen Larsen’s comments, I will try and throw some light on this issue.

There is no doubt this card came from Flatey in Breiðafjörður. The question is if this card should be called postal or non-postal.

The card writer, Sigurður Jensson (signed Sig. Jensson), was the vicar on Flatey 1880-1921. Sigurður was born 1853 and died 1924. But he was also the postmaster on Flatey. According to a local history book (Eylenda, 1996) that was later than the date on the card (1901), or 1914-1921. As a matter of interest his house Klausturhólar still stands on Flatey, and being used as a summer house by his descendants. Sigurður was the son of Jens who was brother to Jón Sigurðsson; called "the President", Iceland’s freedom hero, see the 1944 stamp series.

Becoming postmaster in 1914 may not be correct because on the card Sigurður begins by saying (in translation) “After I had closed the post, I notice “Ceres” [the postal transport vessel at that time] does not manage Patreksfjörður but will only dock at Ísafjörður”. According to the 1901 ship schedule, Ceres was stopping over in Leith on 15th June, travelling north of Iceland, bound for Ísafjörður on the 26th June and Flatey the day after; but the card was dated on the 14th. Hence, at that time the ship was southbound, not northbound as one may think from reading the card. The card’s text is somewhat difficult to interpret unless knowing what Sigurður had written earlier to the card recipient (Pétur Ólafsson merchant at Patreksfjörður).

Sigurður’s sentence can be interpreted in at least two different ways.

One is that Sigurður had already become postmaster by 1901. And since the postal sack had been closed, presumably with a seal, Sigurður sent the card some other way, postal or non-postal.

Another interpretation can be put into his wording on the card, “póstinum”, meaning a letter he had written to the card recipient had been sealed, and the card sent somewhat later.

Either interpretation does not answer the question whether the card was postally used or not. Sigurður could easily have asked some traveller to carry the card, and then presumably this would not be considered postally used. The ink-cancellation does not however appear to be Sigurður’s, compared to his handwriting. This may actually be written at the receiving postal station.

I think more research is needed to arrive at a final conclusion if this is postally used or not, if at all possible.

Ævar Petersen

oo

Some answers to Mike Schumacher, (Issue 9. P.8) *Ólafur Elíasson*

I have two remarks on Mike Schumacher’s questions on page 8 of Issue 9 relating to King Christian X Silver Anniversary issue. According to the Postal authorities in Póst og símatíðindi, 1500 sheets were to be printed of each value. Where the catalogues got their numbers from I do not know. Also I have never seen in the postal papers any prohibition of using those stamps for customs purposes, i.e. TOLLUR usage. I conclude such usage is quite ok.

Ólafur

oo

Nearly, but not quite right?



75aur for 60gm letter plus air mail supplement at 20aur per 20gm, (3 x 20) = 135aur. 1eyr underpaid.
Airmail rate was valid 1.3.37 to January 1941

Seen on German Ebay, this cover might be described as rather spectacular. It comes as second nature to check the franking to see if the sender might have made an attempt to get it right. The answer in this case is, I do not know. However it might be possible to imagine that the cover weighed 60gms or more, in which case it would be 1eyr underpaid. Of course, a cynic might suggest the writer just splashed a number of stamps on the envelope without any thought of the postal rate. Now, if there happened to be a 1 eyr stamp on the back, all doubt should be removed! I leave it to you to decide if the attractive appearance outweighs any doubt about the sender's intention.

oo

Information needed on Iceland postcards

Mike Schumacher would like to know more about Iceland postcards. He says:-

Looking for resources pertaining to Iceland postcards. Do you tend to have periods similar as in the USA? Early years (1898-1907), Golden Era (1907-1915), White Border Era (1915-1930), Linen Era (1930-1960), Photochromes to the present day.

Typically those that I have or have seen seem to have been printed in Iceland.

Thanks.

(Ed. I am not aware of particular periods by type, apart from the earliest undivided back cards. Many cards were German and French productions?)

Can anyone help Roger? Issue 9

Thanks to Vilhjálmur Sigurðsson and Magni Magnússon we now know that Sigurður Helgason, stamp dealer, is the same Sigurður Helgason who became Director of Loftleiðir now Icelandair. They pointed to Wikipedia for the following details.

Sigurður Helgason (July 20, 1921 – February 8, 2009) was an innovator in low-cost airlines. He is credited with pioneering Icelandair the "hippie airline" that made low-cost air travel to Europe possible for generations of Americans.

Born July 20, 1921, in Reykjavík, Sigurður Helgason came to the United States in his 20s and graduated with a business degree from Columbia University in New York in 1947. He then returned to Iceland, where he managed a cement company. In 1953, Helgason joined the board of what is now Icelandair, a small airline that had been formed by three pilots nine years earlier. At the time, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) controlled its members' fares. As a non-member, "Icelandic" (as the company was then known) was able to significantly undercut other transatlantic carriers' pricing, and it began service from New York to Luxembourg in 1955. According to Guðjón Arngrímsson, Icelandair's current Vice President for Corporate Communication, Helgason was a "very key player" in the strategy.

Helgason managed the American operations of the company from 1961 to 1973, at which point he returned to Reykjavík to become CEO of Icelandair. He stepped down as chief executive in 1984, assuming the position of chairman until retirement in 1991. He then lived in Iceland, Mustique (in the Grenadines), and New York. Helgason's main interest after retirement was fly fishing and the International House of New York*. He leased many rivers across Iceland including the Hofsa. As part of the International House of New York, he served on the board of directors, where he won the Harry Edmonds Award.

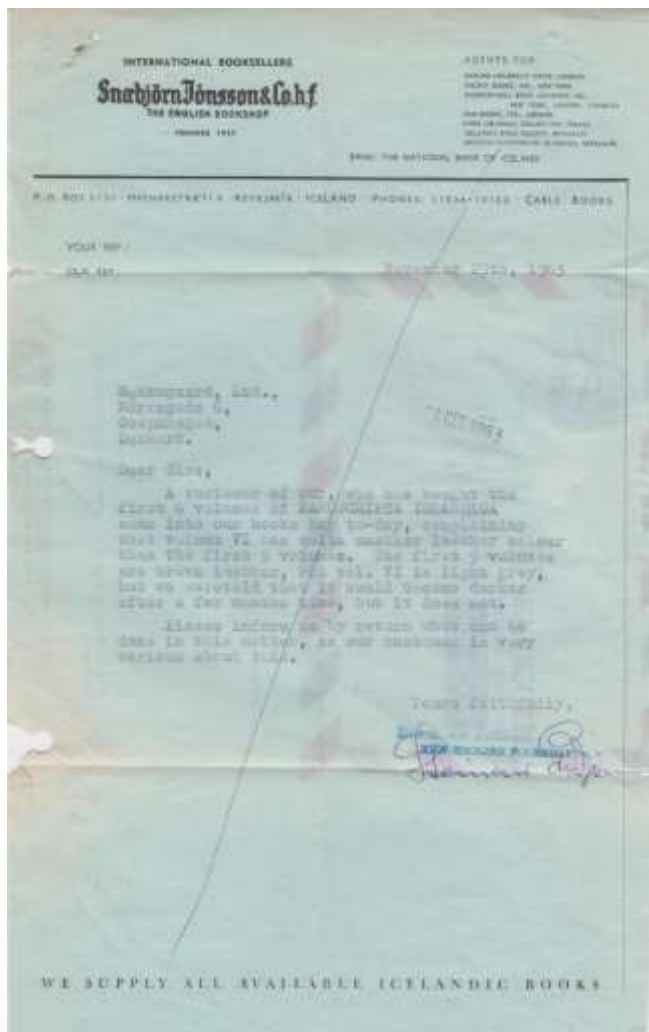
Helgason died aged 87 in Mustique, where he spent winters. Helgason was the first and only non-native to be buried on the island.

(Editor: His time as an exporter of Iceland stamps must have been at quite an early age and maybe only for a brief period, judging from the above description of his career. Roger's cover shown in Issue 9 is dated 1941).

* The International House of New York is a centre for graduate students that promotes mutual respect, friendship, and leadership skills across cultures and fields of study. Its hundreds of resident students come from over 100 countries.

And here is more from Magni:- Dear Brian. In the last issue of your wonderful magazine, Roger asked about Sigurður Helgason. I knew the late Sigurður Helgason well. Before the war 1939, he was selling stamps, and he kept record of all his ads in stamps magazines, and that book, he presented to me about 20 years ago. He had to stop selling stamps during the war, as mail was difficult to send. During the war, he and his brother Gunnar, went to USA, to learn to be pilots. This Sigurður became the director and biggest owner in LOFTLEIDIR, who had flights between USA and Luxemburg, after the war. In 1947, when the Icelandic air mail set came out, Pan American, flew via Iceland, and he got delivery of this issue brand new, and being the only, and first stamp dealer to get these in NY, he sold well, down in Nassau Street, and the end of Wall Street. He was a very active man; he had some big companies here in Iceland, and he was chairman of Loftleiðir, and they built a Hotel here in Reykjavík, and started a stop-over plan, for tourists flying between Europe and USA. It was known as the lowest air fare airline, and became very successful. Bill Clinton said that when he was a student, he flew with Loftleidir. I knew Sigurður well. When he had stopped dealing in stamps, and I happened to be on the same flight, he made arrangements, so we could sit together and talk of stamps. It is funny, but my dear friend, late Indriði Pálsson, was also on the board of Loftleiðir. I hope this gives some information for Roger.

Interesting messages on aerogrammes



Reykjavík type B1c dated 29.XI.63. The illustrated 175aur aerogramme was the last of its type to be printed. From October 1963 it was replaced by another design without a value imprint. However the older types were not demonetized and this example was uprated with an adhesive stamp to meet the 500aur aerogramme rate which applied 1.10.63 to 31.12.65. Probably the 330aur stamp was the nearest available value, as it made for a 5aur over franking.

The reverse shows the commercial letter heading for the Icelandic bookseller Snæbjörn Jónsson. He is reporting a complaint from a customer who bought an expensive leather bound set of MANUSCRIPTA ISLANDICA that the colour of the leather binding on volume 6 was not identical to the colour of the first 5 volumes. Jónsson asks the publisher what can be done to resolve the matter as the customer was very serious about his complaint.

I wonder what was the result of the complaint? Presumably volume 6 spoilt the look of his bookshelf.

Harbour excursion with "LAGARFOSS" in 1946 ??¹ No – but!

Received from **Jakob Arrevad**,



In Iceland Philatelic Magazine issue 6 page 29 the above letter was accompanied by the text:

"Here we have a ship marking from a commercial ship. The strange thing is that the letter never left Stockholm.

Why on earth has it an Icelandic ship marking?

I really don't think that this ship has ever visited Stockholm. Anyway not on January 24th 1946 as the postmark says."

It is true that Lagarfoss was not in Stockholm in January 1946 – but it was in Gothenburg. It left Copenhagen January 12th came to Gothenburg on the 15th and came to Reykjavik on the 21th.²

Is not clear how the letter came from Gothenburg to Stockholm and why it took so many days³, but the letter is a part of the open world after WW2 and a short period, when the ships from Iceland visited Sweden on the round trip over Scotland/England, Denmark and Norway.

PS: It all started in 1945 just after WW2 and it might be possible to find similar letters with the ship name "Esja", "Reykjafoss" and "Anne".

No doubt the letter was posted at Stockholm with the local letter rate 15 öre, which was obviously accepted as sufficient postage. Swedish stamps were not valid postage from Iceland (if so it was under franked). Any way it is still possible that we have a personally transported letter from Iceland to Stockholm. Ole

¹ The question was also asked in IslandsKontakt # 76 page 13

² 11. janúar 1946 Morgunblaðið and Visir: Lagarfoss fer frá Kaupmannahöfn á morgun til Gautaborgar.

15. janúar 1946 Þjóðviljinn: Lagarfoss er í .Gautaborg.

22. janúar 1946 Morgunblaðið: Lagarfoss kom um kl. 6 í gærkveldi frá Gautaborg.

³ It must be a challenge for our Swedish collector friends.

Vilhjalmur Stefansson *Ron Collin*

I recently acquired this cover on eBay. I usually pick up postal history items because of either the franking or the cancellations. This cover was different. I wanted this cover because of the addressee, Vilhjalmur Stefansson.



Vilhjalmur Stefansson (November 3, 1879-August 26, 1962) became an anthropologist. But he also was an explorer, a book collector, writer, and he was an authority on the Polar Regions. He was born in the Icelandic Canadian settlement of Arnes on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg. That area is now part of Manitoba. That area was then a self-governing ethnic territory known as "New Iceland." His parents were Jóhann Stefánsson and Ingibjörg Jóhannesdóttir.

He was a brilliant student and accepted a scholarship at Harvard in order to study religion as a branch of anthropology. As a graduate student he transferred in 1904 to the Peabody Museum, at Harvard University. In 1906 Harvard recommended him as anthropologist to the Anglo-American Polar Expedition. During World War II, Stefansson set up an Arctic study center for the U.S. military, consulted on the Alaska Highway and the supply of Canadian oil to Alaska, he surveyed weather stations in Quebec and Labrador, wrote a book on Arctic navigation, trained personnel for winter and mountain conditions, and went on a fact-finding tour of Air Force operations in the Aleutian Islands.

Stefansson had in earlier years, suffered two serious strokes. He died in 1962. In 1998 the Stefansson Arctic Institute was established in Akureyri, Iceland.



In 1986 the United States honored Vilhjalmur Stefansson with a stamp as part of the Polar Explorers set.

Icelandic postal history collecting can lead to some interesting "discoveries".

Ron

Crown cancels on cover (part 4)

More extracts from the “anonymous database”.



Laekjamot CP cancel to Hafnarfjörður with Reykjavík transit 1.9.97



Reykjavík 16.7.1907 to Birtingaholt (Árnessýsla)
Via Hraungerði to Reykir bréfhirðing (CP cancel)

Reykjarfjörður via Blönduós and by SS Vestra
to Kjøbenhavn



Newcastle upon Tyne 4.8.04 to Hjalli via Leith and Edinburgh to Reykjavík, Hraungerði and Reykir CP cancel

Looking for small varieties?

Two of the most recognizable varieties in this 50 aur are the two copies shown. In each case the figure “5” is involved.



Stamp no. 15 in sheet has a white spot below the upper line of “5”



Stamp 16 in sheet has two white spots on upper left part of “5”.

These varieties are easily found in a mint sheet. It is definitely harder to find them used or on cover. I happened to find this letter showing no. 16 as 3rd stamp from left in the upper row. The two stamps to the left are not attached and no. 15 was unfortunately not on the cover. There are further very small varieties in this issue, but they are not very significant. When dark hours of winter come, go look for these two if you feel for these things.



Letter to Denmark cancelled Reykjavik 9 XII 61. Postage 0-20 gr. 3,50 kr. Air mail 1,50 kr 0-20 gr. In all 5.00 kr. Marked stamp no. 16 in sheet.

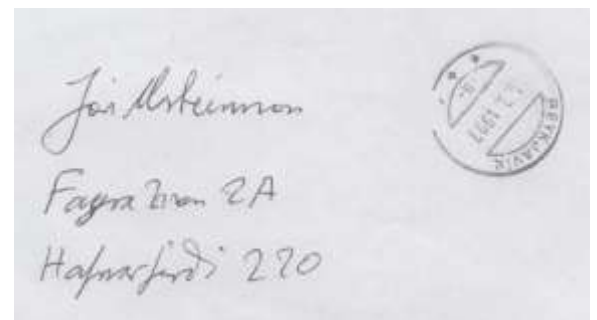
Avis de Réception

In recent years there have been many examples in the Iceland section of Ebay of postally used covers sent from remote countries with little history of postal connection with Iceland. The country of origin on the first cover shown below is Luxembourg, which is hardly remote, but the cover is very unusual in another respect. It is a fine example of the Avis de Réception postal service, not just with the AR stamp but also with a cachet which reads ????? *demandé avec Avis de réception*. I cannot decipher the first word.



I have no idea of Luxembourg postal rates and therefore cannot say if the postage paid included an AR fee. If not, then the fee would have been paid on an AR Reklamation form attached to the cover at the time of sending.

Below is my only example of an Iceland AR cover, showing a crude "AR" in ink. Unfortunately the cover is 5kr over franked.



Hafnarfjörður B8b dated 9.7.1997. 35kr inland letter rate from 1.6.96 – 31.12.99, plus 210kr registration fee valid from 1.5.97. The AR fee was 50kr. Reykjavík 5 receiving cancel of 11.7.97, or maybe the date the receipt was posted back to sender?

There are three examples of AR covers illustrated on pages 236/7 of "Iceland Postal Rates 1873-2009". It would be good to see if readers can show any other examples of AR covers?

Origin of the white ring in shield

Many years ago I bought a bunch of this block from stamp dealer Kvaran. Some years later, by chance I went through the bunch and found the white ring in the last 20 blocks. The ring was not seen in the first part of the bunch. After a normal block there was one with a white spot as if a small piece of paper had blocked the colour. And all the later ones showed the white ring. I show all 3 steps in the “evolution”. I have sold some of them some years ago, but have still some left.



Step one



Usual block



Step two



Something had interfered (paper?)



Step three



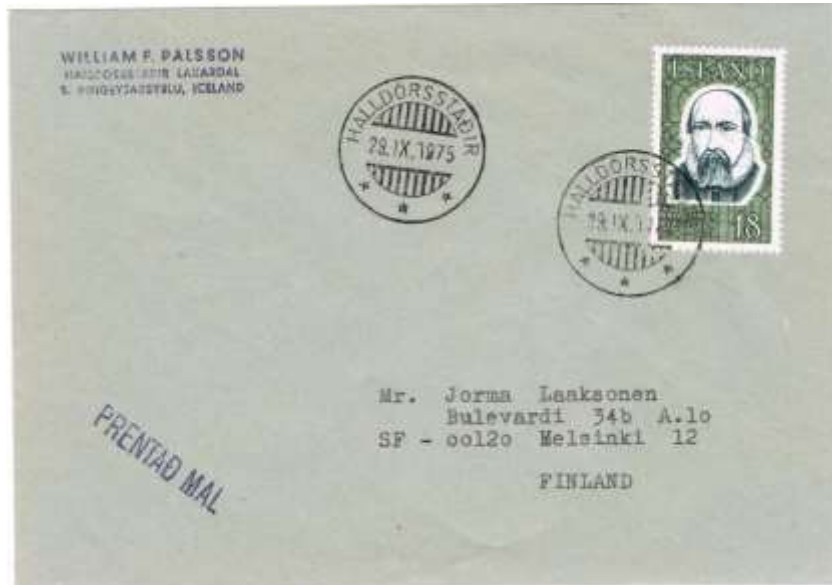
The “something” remained on the printing machine and consequently created the white ring on the following blocks.

Rarities?

The famous Icelanders were issued **September 18th 1975**. The two lower values were intended for printed matter and inland (Nordic) letter. The two higher values were supplementary values.

On October 1st new rates were introduced and consequently the 18 kr. stamp was made invalid as single franking after two weeks. The 23 kr. was now only valid for printed matter. Use as letter postage was only possible for the same two weeks.

Postal rate printed matter	January 1 st 1975 – September 30 th 1975	18 kr.
Postal rate printed matter	October 1 st 1975 – April 30 th 1976	23 kr.



Printed matter to Finland cancelled Halldorstaðir 29 IX 1975. Printed matter rate 18 kr.

Postal rate letter	January 1 st 1975 – September 30 th 1975	23 kr.
Postal rate letter	October 1 st 1975 – April 30 th 1976	27 kr.



Local cover in Reykjavik cancelled Reykjavik 26 9 1975. Letter rate 23 kr.
(Local rates were invalidated 1. 1. 1970)

Was this cancel ever used here?

Readers may be familiar with the recent purge of numeral cancels in Facit which removed many apparently non-existent locations for numerals. The result is a much slimmer list of cancels for collectors to search for. In a similar fashion, it might be useful to investigate the validity of many bridge cancels, which are recorded in *Íslenskir Stimplar brúar-, rúllu og vélstimplar 1894-2003* by Þór Þorsteins, as having been used at an office subsequent to the original location. I am sure many bridge cancel collectors use that excellent book as their reference. I think there might be some collectors out there who share my frustration at failing to find, even quite modern cancels, despite searching for years. Here are three to begin with; I hope to show more in future issues.



B1a Árnes Strandasýsla

Recorded used 30.10.30 to 31.12.46

Finnbogastaðir 1947 to 1952 ?????



B1a Árnes dated 13.7.31. 20aur inland rate.

Árnes closed on 31.12.46 and moved to Finnbogastaðir which did not receive its own B2b cancel until an unspecified date in 1952. Presumably B1a Árnes was used here for over 5 years. Can anyone show a strike dated between 1947 and 1952?



B2a Breiðabólstaður Hún Vestur-Húnavatn
 Recorded use 1.7.30 to 31.7.60
 Harastaðir 1.8.60 to c.1962 ?????



23.8.38



B2a dated 13.10.30. 20aur inland rate

Breiðabólstaður closed on 31.7.60 and moved to Harastaðir. That office received its own B8e cancel either from opening, or at some later date. Is there any evidence that the Breiðabólstaður Hún cancel was ever used at Harastaðir in the period 1.8.60 up to the arrival of the B8e cancel which is known from 1962?



B2a Bjarnastaðir Árnessýsla
 Recorded use 1.7.30 – 25.3.54
 Nes 26.3.54 to 1.10.56 ??????
 Torfabær 2.10.56 to 20.11.62 ??????????



8.3.40



2.3.51

Bjarnastaðir closed on 25.3.54 and moved to Nes, presumably taking the cancel with it. Nes office remained open from 26.3.54 to 1.10.56, and did not receive a cancel of its own. Can anyone show a Bjarnastaðir cancel dated at Nes? It would be extraordinary if anyone has a strike dated between 2.10.56 and 30.11.62 at Torfabær where the cancel is supposed to have moved to after Nes.

BORGARFJARÐARSÝSLA

Smaller than the combined area of Gullbringusýsla and Kjósarsýsla, Borgarfjarðarsýsla has about half of its area inhabited with another 10% desert and the rest upland grazing. By far the largest town in the county is Akranes which only had a population of about 800 at the turn of the century but by 1960 had over 4000 and 6600 in 2012. The town was served by ferry with Reykjavík until 1998 when the tunnel under Hvalfjörður was opened. It was incorporated as a township in 1941. 1860 the population of the county was 2251, by 1901 the numbers were 2520 and by 1940 the number was 3208.



AKRANES Kaupstaður

Created kaupstaður in 1941

[Akranes](#) is a busy fishing port and town on Faxaflói opposite Reykjavík, industries include a large cement factory supplying the needs of all Iceland. A collecting office was opened there 12.4.1890 and used a single ring crown canceller, later number 154 till 01.01.1912 when the office was made into a post office. It has subsequently used many types of Swiss bridge cancels B2c1, B8e, B7b, B8b, B8b1, R8a, M3, M7 and M8.



3.1 HVALFJARÐARHREPPUR

[Saurbær \(1\)](#) was an original collecting office in 1873 for the northern and eastern post and was closed 31.12.1930 and moved to Kalastaðakot. In that time Saurbær used a crown cancel (three ring), later number 168 (1903-1930) and finally Swiss type B2a inscribed SAURBÆR BORG. Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614 - 1674), poet and hymnist is buried at Saurbær Church. [Kalastaðakot](#) used 168 and later the old Swiss bridge cancel of Saurbær (1) before being closed 31.12.1934 and moved to Vestra-Miðfell or Miðfell. The collecting office at [Miðfell](#) used numbers 168 (1935-1939) and 288 up to closure 31.12.1949. Hvalfjarðarhreppur is on the northern shores of Hvalfjörður.



A collecting office opened at [Hrafneyri](#) 1.4.1932 and used number 265 until 31.12.1934 when the office was moved to [Hrafnabjörg](#) (2). 265 was used here until 31.12.1949 when the office was again moved, this time to [Hvalfjörður](#). Hvalfjörður was also variously known as [Miðsandur](#) and [Olústöðin](#). Number 265 was used here also, presumably until the arrival of the Swiss type B3e

inscribed [Olústöðin](#) in 1955. The office was closed 1.1.1977. Hrafneyri and Hrafnabjörg are midway between Saurbær and Miðsandur, which is near the head of Hvalfjörður. Miðsandur is a village that relied mostly on trade from the main road, that is, until the new tunnel opened.

3.2 SKILMANNAHREPPUR



[Stóri-Lambhagi](#) (also referred to as [Lambhagi](#)) opened 1.4.1958 as a collecting office having been moved from [Vogatunga](#) (see 3.4 below) and may have used the [Vogatunga B1a](#) before the [Stóri-Lambhagi B8e](#) until closure 1.1.1977.

3.3 INNRI-AKRANESHREPPUR

On the northern shores of the entrance to Hvalfjörður there is a church and farm called [Innri- Hólmur](#) (otherwise known as [Hólmur](#) (2)) where a collecting office was opened 1.1.1913 and used number 112 before the office was moved to [Kúludalsá](#), an adjacent farm on 1.1.1919. Here the office remained until closure 31.12.1945 using firstly number 112 and then Swiss bridge cancel type B1a.



3.4 LEIRÁR- OG MELARHREPPUR



Just across the Laxá River from [Lambhagi](#) is the farm of [Vogatunga](#) where a collecting office was opened 1.1.1896. Although unrecorded, the office probably used a crown cancel and then from 1903 number 171, finally Swiss bridge cancel type B1a before being moved to [Stóri-Lambhagi](#) on 01.04.1958 (see 3.2 above). A little further up the road to [Borgarnes](#) is [Fiskilækur](#) where a collecting office was open between 1.1.1948 and 31.12.1976 using Swiss bridge type B8e.

3.5 ANDAKILSHREPPUR

The parish of [Andakilshreppur](#) meets the shore of [Borgarfjörður](#) and is an important farming area. A few kilometres into the county lies the farm of [Hestur](#) (1), opened as a collecting office in 1873 and used a three ring crown cancel from 1894 until 1903 when number 158 was used and later Swiss bridge cancel type B2a inscribed HESTUR BORG. The office closed 31.5.1944 and was moved to [Varmalækur](#) on the main road from [Akranes](#) to [Reykholt](#). A collecting office was opened here 01.06.1944 until 31.12.1971 using Swiss bridge cancel type B2c2 incorrectly spelt [Varmilækur](#). There is now no evidence of numeral 158 having been used here.



By the lowest bridge over the Hvítá River on the Borgarfjarðarsýsla side lies [Hvítárvellir](#) where a collecting office was opened 1.7.1929, closed 31.12.1952 and in that time used numeral 234 and Swiss bridge cancel type B2a.

Finally, an office was open at [Skeljabrekka](#) from 1.6.1944 to 30.6.1952. No cancellations have been found for this office.

3.6 SKORRADALSHREPPUR

At the western end of Skorradalsvatn is the farm of [Grund \(1\)](#) where on 1.1.1951 a collecting office was opened, closed 31.12.1979 and in that time used Swiss type B8e. The current (2011) population of this municipality is 57. Just upstream at the other end of Skorradalsvatn lies [Hvítárbakki](#), known as Bakkakot during its first year. It was open 1.1.1906 to 31.12.1931. Cancels used here were N1a 180, N1c 180, 198 and 200 and Swiss type B2a. It should be noted that the reason for so many numeral cancels was that the N1a 180 was broken or destroyed around 22.3.1910 and the temporary cancels 198 and 200 were used until N1c 180 was delivered 6.5.1911.

3.7 LUNDARREYKJADALSHREPPUR

Two farms on opposite sides of the River Grímsá had offices, [Lundur \(1\)](#) on the north side also having the parish church. It was here that the collecting office was opened 1.1.1896, closed 30.6.1937 when it was moved to [Skarð \(4\)](#). In that time it used number cancel 166 (from 1903) and possibly a crown cancel but none has been found. Swiss type B1a was used concurrently from 1.7.1930. When the office moved to [Skarð \(4\)](#), the cancels used there were numbers 166 (1937-9), 287 (1937-1965) and then later Swiss bridge cancels type B1a LUNDUR and SKARÐ. The office closed 30.9.1979. The volume of mail from this out-of-the-way area was very small.



3.8 REYKHOLTSHREPPUR

[Reykholt](#) was the home in the 13th century of the great historian and saga writer Snorri Sturluson and today a large boarding school is situated here. The collecting office at Reykholt was opened 23.4.1892 and used a single ring crown cancel until 1903 when number 152 was introduced. Later Swiss bridge cancels types B1a, B8b, two types of B8b1 were used. The office changed status to a post office 01.01.1970, became a postal agency at the Esso petrol station from Jan 2006 and 7.2.2007 when the station changed to a Shell. This closed as an agency 29.8.2008.

A few kilometres west of Reykholt on the main road is [Deildartunga](#), opened as a collecting office 1.1.1915. Until it was closed 31.12.1951 it used number 46 and later Swiss bridge cancel type B2a. The office was moved to its neighbouring farm [Kleppjárnsreykir](#) and used number 46, the old Swiss bridge cancel of Deildartunga, and its own B3e until 30.4.1966. It was reopened briefly 01.05.1967 to 31.12.1968.



[Brúsholt](#) office was opened 1.1.1916 and is an isolated farm in Flókadalur, the next valley to the south of Reykholtsdalur. It used number 198 and later Swiss bridge type B1a until 31.3.1957 when the office was closed.

Mixed Franking?

The answer is no. Although we have both Faroe and Icelandic stamps on the cover, I must admit that in this case it is a re-use of a cover.

This was caused by a “technical” mistake. In Denmark and the Faroes we have special unions for unskilled labourers (Arbeismanna Felag) and workers (Arbeiðara Felag). Cover was opened and the mistake caused the cover with content to be re-addressed and re-posted locally to the correct receiver.



Letter cancelled Reykjavik 12 III 80 to Faroes. Letter rate 120 kr. 0-20 gr.

Re-used Thorshavn March 19th 1980. Letter rate 150 öre

+++++

Edinburgh at bottom



This stamp was seen in a lot on an internet auction. It might be a little confusing to find an Edinburgh postmark with town name at the bottom. It is very unusual to find this mark on stamps as it was normally used as back stamp on registered covers. Stamps on registered covers were (always?) cancelled at the sending office. In this case the postmark was either used by mistake or the supposed registered letter didn't have the stamps cancelled in Iceland.

This old type of “REGISTERED EDINBURGH” was found with numbers (1-5) on both side of the cancel. Here number 2.



This special type of postmark for registered mail was used from 1881 and occurs in different shapes/types through the years. The ordinary postmark with Edinburgh on top we normally find is shown for comparison.



Leiti in Austur-Skaftafell

Elsewhere in this issue, I mentioned the search for evidence of the use of bridge cancels, at places where they were moved after the closure of their original office. Leiti may well feature in that category because of the move to Leiti of the B1a cancel from Kálfafell. However, in this case, I want to look at Leiti's own B8b cancel, which according to the literature was used from June 1973 until the office closed on 31st December 1978. This came back to my attention, when recently reading through back numbers of IslandsKontakt. I found a piece by Jørgen Steen Larsen (ISK 98), showing an Østergaard philatelic cover with the B8b Leiti cancel. He asked for any evidence at all of the non-philatelic use of the Leiti B8b.

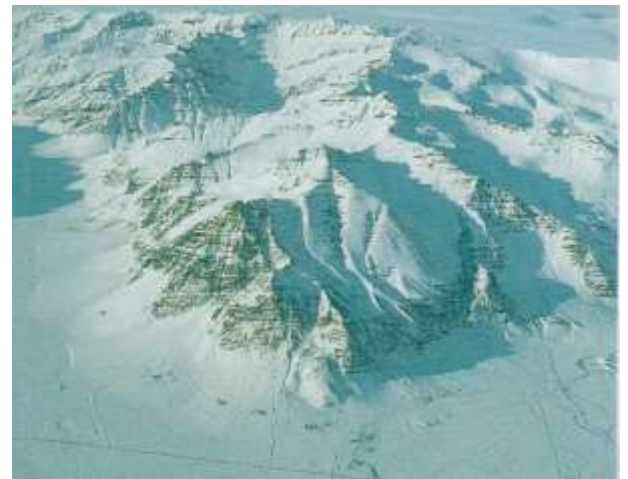


I know I did not reply to Jørgen, because here is my copy of the cancel addressed to a rather familiar person!



I cannot remember seeing any evidence of a reply to Jørgen which would confirm non-philatelic use of B8b Leiti. Perhaps Jørgen will tell us? In the meantime, can anyone amongst IPM readers show evidence of the non-philatelic use of this cancel?

Examples must surely exist from a period of over five years, and yet still must be quite rare?



Neighbouring farms Kálfafell and Leiti located at the foot of the headland in summer and winter.

The word 'Leiti' means "Hill or rising ground"; very appropriate, judging by the pictures!

Rate puzzle on 1945 airmail cover



Reykjavík B1d dated 31.VIII.45. Danish military censor and 110aur franking

The German occupation of Denmark was over by the time this cover was posted to Copenhagen in July 1945. After the end of the European war in May 1945, the Icelandic government notice, *Póst og Símatíðindi*, headed 4-8, for April/August 1945, announced the resumption of airmail services from Iceland to the Nordic countries, initially via Sweden, once weekly in both directions. It also announced new all-in airmail rates to UK and Nordic countries via Sweden. The Nordic rate was 180aur per 20gm, which clearly did not apply to this cover, which is franked at 110aur.

What other options are there? Well, if it went via the UK, then the new all-in rate was 120aur up to 20gm and the cover was 10aur underpaid.

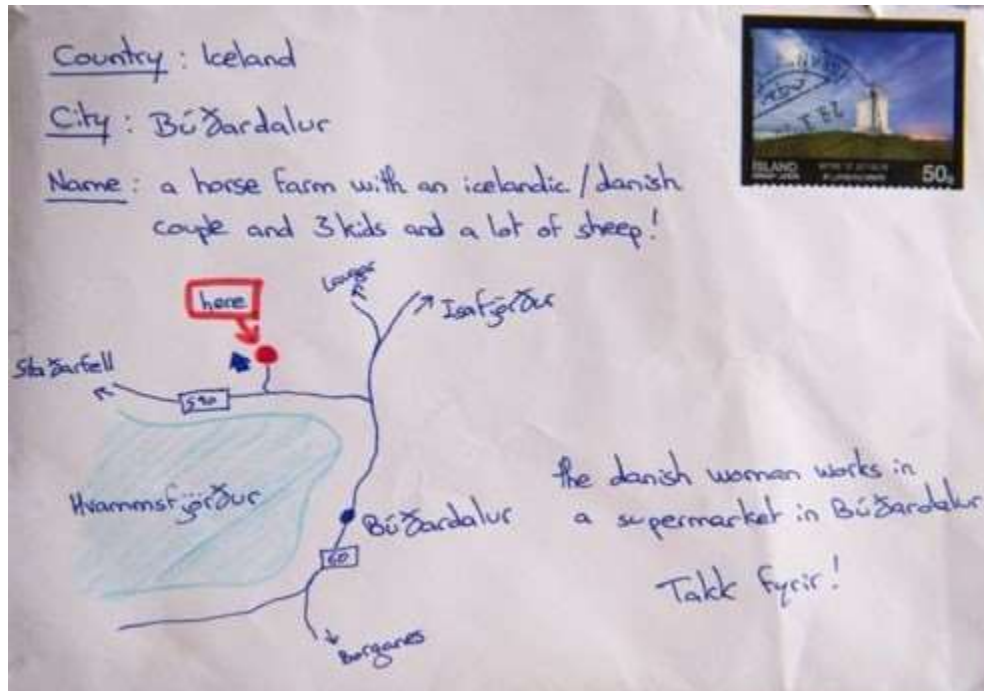
The application of the new postal rates was declared from an indeterminate date, given as 'August/September 1945', and this cover was posted on the last day of August. Judging by the mixed franking, it is not unreasonable to surmise that the postal official discovered and applied a 110aur rate from some source, but where?

Here is my theory. Although the Nordic postal agreement had been suspended during the war, covers are certainly known where the 50aur Nordic surface rate was applied. Perhaps our official was still using the current, but soon to be obsolete 1943 airmail rates tables? In which case the Nordic surface rate when added to the 1943 20aur Denmark airmail supplement on a 15gm letter would be $50\text{aur} + 20\text{aur} \times 3 = 110\text{aur}$.

Maybe not for the first time I am "clutching at straws"? Opinions would be most welcome, as always.

In Iceland this is still possible.

That great source of modern (and historical) postal information Vilhjálmur Sigurðsson, from the very heart of Íslands Póst, sent us this link to a BBC News Blog entitled “Letter gets there by hand-drawn map” going on to state “Icelandic Postal Service becomes viral hit after correctly delivering a letter using a map scrawled on an envelope! Rolf Doernbach and Oyvind Gulliksen quickly followed up and suggested that IPM readers should know that “In Iceland this is still possible”. To quote Oyvind “, I am so nostalgic for that sort of service, communication, experience”.



I am not a social media, blogging person and have never blogged in my life, but this is what I extracted from the blog.

There are many stories of messages in bottles travelling thousands of miles before being picked up and read, and letters arriving decades after they were posted. But here is a different twist.

Rebecca Catherine Kaadu Ostenfeld was reportedly surprised when a letter was delivered to the horse farm where she lives with her husband and three children near Búðardalur in the west of Iceland. Instead of a postal address or a recipient's name, the sender had drawn a map of where they believed the farm to be, together with the following, in English: "Country: Iceland. City: Búðardalur. Name: A horse farm with an Icelandic/Danish couple and three kids and a lot of sheep!" The sender had also added a further clue to the intended recipient: "the Danish woman works in a supermarket in Búðardalur."

*The letter had been written and sent from the Icelandic capital Reykjavík by a tourist who had stayed at the farm but who obviously did not know the address, and, extraordinarily, it arrived at the right place. This astonishing delivery took place in March and was then not reported until May, when it came to attention of local Icelandic news website, Skessuhorn which noted "anything is possible in Iceland". The story has now, belatedly, gone viral on social media after a photo of the envelope was posted on *Reddit. The picture has prompted readers to share other miraculous postal stories; such as the tale of the Christmas card sent from Germany, which somehow arrived at the right place despite only being addressed to "England".*

(Ed: Apparently 'Reddit' is a social media and social news service).

CONDEMNED and RELEASED Iceland Cover Alan Warren

The first issue of Iceland as a Republic in 1944 was the Jón Sigurðsson set of six values. Here is a first day cover (June 17) of that set sent to a Captain Harry Pegg, Member of the Order of the British Empire, in Cleethorpes, England. It was sent registered and bears a general purpose boxed cachet with wording in Icelandic and English that it is a first day cover.



Even with the registry fee the cover appears to be grossly overpaid, a typical result when an entire set of stamps is used on FDC. There is no sender's name and address on the back of the cover. It was apparently opened and resealed twice—once with a P.C. 90 tape and once with kraft paper tape. The letter was detained in England—typical handling of suspected philatelic mail where no name or address is stated on the envelope.

Such mail was first handstamped CONDEMNED. Later the CONDEMNED marking was obliterated using a 3-wavy-line marking with RELEASED immediately below the lines. There is no transit or arrival datestamp to indicate when it was released, and there are no contents. The CONDEMNED marking is Type 8A (Morenweiser) and the wavy-line RELEASED mark is 14A.

It is believed that only three examples of the CONDEMNED marking are known on Iceland covers. If any reader has additional details, we would love to hear from you.

Reference

Morenweiser, Konrad. *British Empire Civil Censorship Devices World War II, Section 2 United Kingdom, Volume 1: Censorship Handstamps, Censorship Wax Seals, Resealing Labels*, 2nd edition, Civil Censorship Study Group, 2011.

Hopballe, Kristian and Ólafur Elíasson. *Island postalt set i perioden 1939-1945*, Forlaget 5F, Odense, Denmark, 1991.

Unusual X-mas seal

In fact X-mas seals are non-philatelic. However they are closely connected to cards and letters circulated every year around X-mas. Most collectors prefer these seals tied to the greetings with a postmark. These seals make the card/letter more colourful. Illustrated is a more unusual X-mas seal issued by the Rotary Club of Sauðárkrókur. The seal might be added after X-mas, but in this case I find it “genuine used”.

Well, this cover is perhaps only of interest to Rotary members. This seal has no year printed, and it could have been in use for a sequence of years. Who knows?



Letter to Reykjavik cancelled Sauðárkrókur 20 12 1973. Inland rate was 13 kr. 0-20 gr.

oo

Is this the only known Seljaland?

The sale of Part 2 of the Indriði Pálsson classic Iceland collection takes place at Postiljonon on 1st October 2016. I have no doubt there will be plenty to report in these pages following the sale. In the meantime, Ron Collin has raised a question regarding one particular item, Lot 2234, a Seljaland crown cancel on 3aur yellow, and I would like to share it with you. Ron says, - *I also noted that the catalog states that SELJALAND is the only copy in existence. I was not aware of that, and I never noticed that message in print before; not even in the Islandssamlarna Crown Book. Were you aware of that?* My answer to Ron is; “Perhaps I should have been aware of it, but until now, I failed to notice that the same cancel is shown in the crown cancel database, used in past issues of IPM to illustrate crown cancels on cover. There are three images therein, two of the crown cancel



as shown here, and a third image, presumably of the album page where the stamp was once mounted. From this page I quote the heading, “*Seljaland in Eyjafjöllum. This is the only stamp known to exist with this cancel.*” Apart from anything else, this possibly throws light for the first time on the identity of a contributor of at least some of the contents of this database.

Can anyone provide evidence of any other Seljaland cancel?

“Combined postmarks”

These two blocks were seen in an auction. Personally I would have removed the bridge type postmarks ☺.



I imagine these postmarks were made after 1902-03, when the cancels were kept at Reykjavik. I am no expert and would like to have an opinion on these cancellations.

I turn to **Jørgen Steen Larsen**, who has these comments,

The A postmark Sveinstaðir was delivered to the post office at Sveinstaðir in 1873. The post office was moved to Blönduós 1.7.1899 and received the bridge postmark B1b Blönduós. From this moment Sveinstaðir was downgraded to letter collecting office. The A postmark Sveinstaðir seems to have been kept at Sveinstaðir for a period after 1. 7. 1899.

As Sveinstaðir became a collecting office in the summer of 1903, it had a numeral postmark 105 delivered; the ordinary use of A Sveinstaðir seems to have stopped.

On the copy is seen B1b used in combination with the A postmark. The B1b postmark shows 18 3 1903, and the A postmark has no date. According to the "kronestempelhåndbogen", late cancellations with the A postmark on Í GILDI are known without a date. It looks as if the A postmark at this time has been returned from the collecting office to the post office at Blönduós.

In my opinion, this combined use of A postmark without date, and the B1b postmark, are philatelic cancels made at Blönduós post office.

Best regards Jørgen

From Ebay



Tjörn í Vatnsnesi
\$300
Facit SEK4000



Leirvogstunga
\$315
SEK4000



Sveinseyri
\$91
SEK800



Starmýri
\$63.80
SEK4000



Num. 49 \$455



Num. 65 \$265



\$589



\$272



\$282