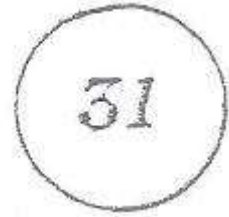


ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



EDITOR
Brian Flack
E-mail address
flackbp@gmail.com

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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. **Because of editorial holidays, Issue 8 will be distributed a little later than usual, probably in the first week of July.** If you need help with translations they will be provided.

The editor will help with the English if necessary.

flackbp@gmail.com

102 😊 In the April issue I reported that the number of subscribers had reached 56. I am pleased to say that we passed the 100 mark in early May.

Vilhjálmur Sigurðsson reports that the post office 740 Neskaupstaður has got a Colop R40d mail dater. The first day of use was April 28th 2016.

Staying with the Colops for the moment, in Issue 1 p.4 I mentioned that the new cancel devices at Húsavík and Þorlákshöfn had been damaged and replaced in May 2015. I have since seen a strike from the replacement canceller at Þorlákshöfn, and can confirm it is identical.

Apologies for the error on the contents page for the last Issue Nr. 6. The article “Boston postmark, Revisited” was on p.11 and not on p.17. The victim of a late edit!

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Underpaid – too early to be a local?

Seen at Frimærke: posted 31.12.1926; 15aur was the postcard inland rate so it was treated as 5aur underpaid. Hafnarfjörður applied 10aur Postage Due dated 2.1.27 and a T stamp.

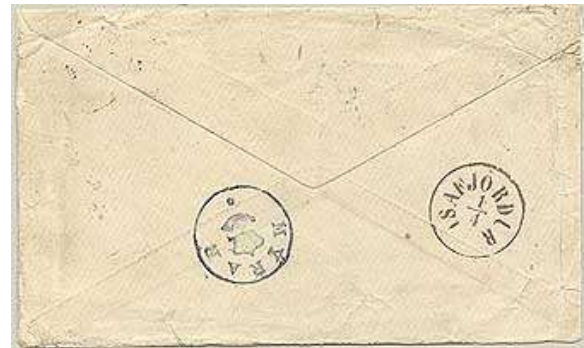


The Postal Law of 13th September 1901 set out the regulations to apply from 1st July 1902. This law extended the local post to the rest of the country. But when did the local post begin between Reykjavík and Hafnarfjörður? In other words, from what date were they treated as being in the same postal delivery district? In *Local Post in Iceland 1873-1970 Part 1*, by Ólafur Elíasson, published in Nordatlant Filateli No.1/1987, it is stated that the local post rates (from 1902) applied between Reykjavík and Hafnarfjörður. I have searched my sources and can find no reference to Hafnarfjörður, in respect of local postage other than in Nordatlant Filateli. It would be interesting to know the origin of this reference, possibly Póstblaðið? Can Ólafur help? If confirmed, then surely the above card was wrongly treated in 1926?

As it happened, the card would have passed without penalty if posted a few years later. Póstblaðið October 1930 announced that local postal rates would apply between offices throughout the whole Seltjarnarnes peninsular from western Eliðaár to northern Fossvogur. Hafnarfjörður fell within those boundaries.

Crown cancels on cover (Part 2)

In ICM Issue 5 I showed a few crown cancels on cover with some evidence of the routes taken. This was in response to Ron Collin's article in Issue 4 entitled *A Study of crown cancels and their routes*. Here are a few more, once again taken from the "mystery database" of forgotten origin.



Postal Stationery from Húsvík (1902) to Isafjörður rate 5aur. 18.12.1879-1917.
On front crown-cancel HÚSAVÍK. Transit postmark, AKUREYRI 20/10, from AKUREYRI 28/10.
Backstamped AKUREYRI 28/10 ISAFJÖRÐUR --/11.



Not really what Ron was after, but I could not resist showing these foreign destination examples.

A look at the auctions



sold \$77 Ebay



sold \$149 Ebay

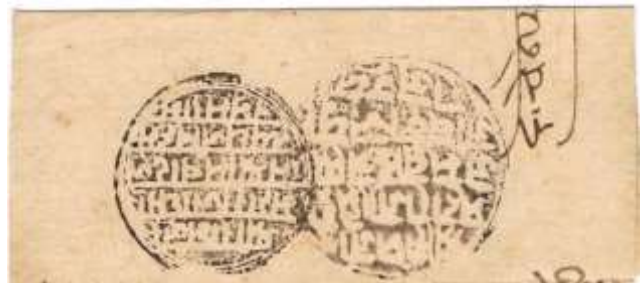


sold \$128.50 Ebay

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Postal History?? Ole Svinth

Some years ago I bought this old letter to Iceland. Obviously it was returned as name and address was unreadable. May be it never went to Iceland ☺. Anyway, can any of our readers help with the text?



The postmarks on back might give you a clue. It looks a little oriental. I hope we can show an explanation or translation in next issue.

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What about this rate?

The contents were a Danish letter, headed and presumably written at Hvalfjörður, dated 18.1.43, but cancelled I believe by an Akureyri, B1a. dated 5.2.43. (Actually I think the cancel year might be 1944!) The 80aur franking defies me. Can anyone suggest how the sender arrived at this postage? (Ed.)

Unusual treatment of a cover *Ole Svinth*

It is not common to see a registered cover without the postmark of the office to which it was handed over. Why it received the cancel of the "Upplysningen" department at Stockholm is not known. Could a reader help? Cover was offered at Fyn's Frimærke Service at 100 DKK.



Postage is correct. Airmail letter 0-20 gr 9,50 kr. Registration 12 kr.

I have contacted two Swedes, Johnny Pernerfors and Leif Nielson, to have their opinion. Leif showed the item at a meeting in Stockholm and here are their conclusions.

Johnny Pernerfors,

Hi Ole,

2 weeks ago I asked a good friend who has been working at the Post about this letter, but he had no reasonable answer. He regarded it as "mismatch". He himself had worked at the registration section at Göteborg and this kind of postmark was neither known to him nor to the section for failed addresses. (Translated from Swedish)

Leif Nielson,

Hi Ole,

The conclusion was, this is an office mark, that someone has used for fun. Letter is philatelic as receiver was a collector. (Translated from Swedish)

A crack in the Netherlands? *John Kuin*



Hello Mr. Flack,
Attached you will find a “strange” 10 aur Christian IX of Iceland with a long red line in the left margin of the stamp. It’s the exact color of the stamp, so it is some kind of mishap during printing. Did I find a “Cracked plate” of Iceland? 😊 I would appreciate it very much if you would ask the readers of your digital stamp magazine of Iceland if anyone has seen this before. I have been through quite a number of (Icelandic) stamps and have never seen one like this.

Many thanks for your time reading my e-mail.

Any reply is appreciated!

Kind regards,

John Kuin , Delft, NL

(Ed. I asked Páll Pálsson, who replied

Sæll Brian

Thanks for mail. Yes I have seen this red line before. I have it on cover and one single. And also I have the line on 4 and 5 aur. Again thanks. Palli

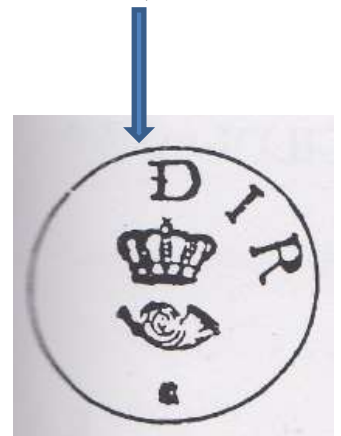
Any more opinions on this variety will be most welcome.

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A “Missing Town Name”



Just DIR (BÚDIR) I think. Rasmussen cannot really be blamed for their description which at a glance looks to be correct, except you can just see a tiny bit of the Đ. Priced at 250KR, The illustration in the Swedish handbook is very misleading as it shows the Đ as directly above the point of the crown, when in fact it is positioned to the right of the crown.



I hope nobody was taken in by it.

The collecting offices of the Langanes Peninsular

Iceland has plenty of remote locations which were once home to collecting offices, and it might be fun to explore some, and examine how hard it is to find cancellations. There are few locations more remote in Iceland than the Langanes peninsular at the top north-east tip of the country. Langanes literally means "long peak". It is 40 kilometres long from southwest to northeast, ending with the Fontun lighthouse.



The nearest overland postal route to this remote area was on the Þingeyjarsýsla Post branch route which went only as far as Sauðanes, north east of Þórshöfn. The four collecting offices we will be looking at all lie further east on the Langanes peninsula and were only reachable by a rough track. I begin with the opening of the first collecting office, at Læknisstaðir. This long abandoned farm was on the top coast near the top of the peninsula.



Læknisstaðir

The collecting office opened on 1st January 1915 and received the numeral cancel 58 which had been released by Þórshöfn when it was upgraded to a post office 3 years earlier.

Numeral 58 is easily found on CHIX and the 1907 Double Heads stamps issued during the period at Þórshöfn from 1903 until 1.1.1912. However, to find it used at Læknisstaðir, it needs to be on Double Heads with the crosses watermark or later issues. This is difficult, as is reflected in the Facit valuation of 1000SEK compared to 40SEK at the first office. In fact I have never seen an example, and the only evidence of such use I am aware of,

is in Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson's excellent book *Icelandic Numeral cancels 1903-1960*. This states that two copies are recorded on Two Kings issues from 1916/18. Unless other copies are known, then surely the Facit valuation is much understated? It would be interesting to know if any reader can show a numeral 58 used at Læknisstaðir.



The collecting office moved on 4.10.1929 down the coast to Heiði roughly half way between Leiknisstaður and Sauðanes. Given that Heiði received a type B1a bridge cancel in the distribution of 1930, the possibility of finding a copy of numeral 58 used here is almost zero, and in my opinion the Facit valuation of 1000SEK is even more underrated. Brynjólfur does record a 58 numeral on a 1932 CHX which he reckons is probably from a Bíó cover. The Heiði collecting office moved to Efra-Lón at the end of 1955, and the farm was abandoned.

◀ B1a 16.8.38



◀Efra-Lón, which means “Higher Lagoon” is a few kms south of Heiði, and although it apparently took the B1a Heiði cancel it would be very difficult to find an example used here, as the office only lasted one year, closing on 31.12.1956. Facit does not recognize any use of the Heiði cancel at Efra-Lón.

Unlike the two previous farms, Efra-Lón has survived and is now the site of a tourist farm.

Finally we come to the fourth and most easterly collecting office, near the tip of the peninsular at Skálar.



◀Skálar 1920s/30s

Fortunately it has a more exciting cancellation history than the other offices, as can be seen on the following page. This is not surprising, because whereas the other three collecting offices remained mere farms, Skálar became a sizeable fishing community. Thanks to the inspiration of two fishermen, it grew, and by 1926 the population peaked at 117. The Depression and their reliance on rowing boats, reduced the catch, and by 1938 the population was only 47. WW2 brought a military presence with a radar station, a military camp, and then a minefield was laid off the coast. In 1942 after

three drifting mines exploded destroying houses in the village, the remaining people began to move away and the last 25 left in 1946.



A collecting office opened on 10th April 1919 and was allocated the numeral cancel 142 which had previously been used at Flatey in Austur-Barðastrandarsýsla up to the end of 1913. Although Skálar reported in 1932 it still had the numeral, there is no evidence of commercial use after 1930.

From 1st July 1930 Skálar had a type B1a bridge cancel inscribed SKÁLAR and used it until the office was closed on 31.12.1944.



10.4.31



15.9.35



The nearest habitation to Skálar was the Fontun lighthouse, seen here from the sea.



Bringing home the catch in happier times.

A Study of Iceland's King Christian X Silver Anniversary Stamps & Block
Part 1 *Mike Schumacher*
 Issued May 15, 1937



Christian X Silver Anniversary of the Reign 1912-1937



Anniversary Stamp Issue, designed by J. Britze, steel engraving recess, Copenhagen, perf. 13 x 13 C.



10 aur. (175.000)



30 aur. (160.000)



40 aur. (170.000)



Block issued May 15, 1937, Letterpress, Copenhagen, perf. 14 x 14.5 C, 55 000 made, half sold in advance in London.



FIRST DAY CANCELLATIONS 15.V.1937
Swiss type B1a cds. REYKJAVIK





TWO KNOWN FIRST DAYS OF ISSUE



First day cover with cds. Reykjavik sent to USA 14.V.1937, three receiving cancels on the back side. May 14 was the exact date of the beginning of the reign era but the official postal issue was May 15 so covers with date 14.V.37 were most likely favor made.

First day cover sent inside Iceland, cds. Reykjavik 15.V.37.



Block 1 - First Day of Issue 15.V.37 - cds. *HAFNARFIJORDUR & BOLUNGARVIK*



c.d.s. B2C2
„Hafnarfjörður“



c.d.s. B2C2
„Bolungarvík“



POSTALY TREATED, NON-FD CANCELLED STAMPS SERIE AND THE BLOCK



Blocks of 4 with Swiss type B1a cds. REYKJAVIK different dates including 40 aur. with date 30.4.38

– the *Last Day of Validity of the Stamps*



Block 1 cancelled with B1a Type of REYKJAVIK Cancel 24.V.37 on a piece from cover.

(Editor – In the next issue we shall see the stamps and the block with proper postal use, from Mike's fine display.)

When was the move from Múli bréfhirðing to Laugaból?

In IslandsKontakt 105, an article by Jørgen Steen Larsen called into question the date of the move from Múli collecting office to Laugaból, both in Norður Ísafjarðarsýsla. JSL concluded that on the evidence of strikes of the numeral 274 stamps and of a Laugaból B2c2 cancel dated .II.52, the dates in the reference books of Þór Þorsteins should be amended to show the move taking place about 01.01.1951. My question to a wider audience is, can anyone provide evidence of a strike of numeral 274 on a stamp later than Facit 286? Also provide a strike of B2c2 Laugaból during 1951? These are JSL's latest strikes taken from ISK 105.



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Early examples of Express ? David Loe

Here's a cover to Denmark that I think is express. I would love some other opinions.



Dated 19.6.1912 20gm letter to Denmark 10aur: Registration 15aur: Express letter fee 25aur.

(Editor) Before we discuss the postage paid on this interesting letter, it might be said that Express mail between Iceland and Denmark was first mentioned in the 1919 Postal Regulations and was valid from 1st January 1920.

Before then, express mail from Iceland to Denmark was not possible. A 25aur express rate did apply from 1.4.1886 to 31.3.1921 but only from Iceland to certain UPU countries by agreement, and it did not include Denmark. How then do we explain the 50aur franking? David found this contribution from Wilbur Jonsson back in 2013. *The word is the easiest part; (hojvelbaaren) is very likely the equivalent of the German hochwohlgeboren. This was used as a title of respect in addressing a letter to a noble or someone of high status and means something like "well born" and of high status. N. B. was used to indicate an express letter in various countries before labels were brought into use as was "cito". Sorry I cannot be of more help. Best wishes, Wilbur.*

Is it possible that the postal official, being aware of the 25aur express service to UPU countries, thought it applied to Denmark, and created a rare express forerunner?

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Following an article of mine on Express mail in Scandinavian Contact, March 2013, David showed this card along with his description, and asked for opinions concerning the significance of the word “Haster” (Danish for Urgent), and whether this card might be regarded as a forerunner of the express service. The postage is normal for an inland card. Sadly we have no recollection of any response from Contact readers. I hope the readers of this magazine are better informed and can help.

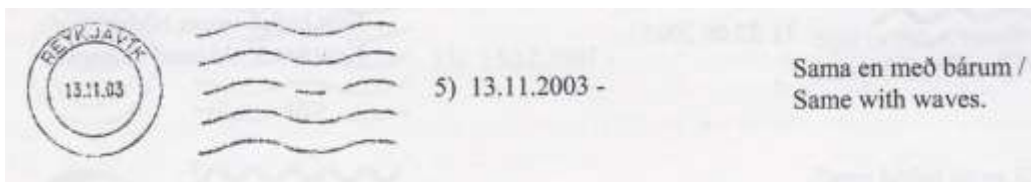
David continues - The card was sent from Reykjavík (18.5.1901) by seapost (s/s Ceres) to the postmaster in Djúpivogur. The Ceres must have been going clockwise round the country to call in at Seyðisfjörður (21.5.1901) first. This was the year before the introduction of the Express rates. An express service could not have improved the speed of delivery which only really applied getting the item to the addressee and not merely the receiving office.

Questions from Húsavík

There are plenty of examples of bridge cancels without a precise date of issue recorded. These usually belong to smaller postal stations, and probably from 1950s and earlier. Surely it is unusual to find an example of a very common modern cancel from a larger office, in this case Húsavík, where the literature does not offer an exact date of issue. I am referring to the B8e cancel, which according to Þór Þorsteins 2003 book, was issued in 1960. I am not aware that anyone has yet tried to provide a more exact date, so I am throwing this open to readers to see who can come up with the earliest dated B8e Húsavík postmark, presumably in 1960.



Staying with Húsavík and to a subject close to my own interest, am I the only one who thinks we may be losing our grip on the recording and classification of modern machine cancels? I give these two examples of a Húsavík machine cancel used in 2006 and 2011 and ask for your opinion, what type is this cancel?



← Is it this type M4 taken from the 2007 book by Gestur Baldursson and Þór Þorsteins?



OR



Is it a type M8, as this example from Frímerkjablaðið Nr.9/2004? (Both with the same illustration!!)

Whichever type is decided on, it is not mentioned at all in either the 2007 or the latest 2011 by Þór Þorsteins. I must say here, that I am always grateful to the writers past and present who keep us up to date with new cancels in the pages of Frímerkjablaðið. Without them this would be a worse problem than it is.

Finally on Húsavík; I have not seen this label on a cover before. The word means “home” but what is the purpose of it?



B8b1 dated 11.3.2001 865kr inland rate for up to 100gm registered item. Valid 1.1.2010 to 30.4.2011

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A postal rate query *David Loe*

Can anyone explain the rate on this cover dated 23.3.1918?



(Ed.) I can't explain the rate, but is it possible that a postal official incorrectly applied the Panic Period law (from 26.10.17) which only applied to inland mail, and thereby doubled the postage from 20aur to 40aur for a 21-125gm letter.gm? Can readers offer another explanation for the 40aur franking?

355 Bo'ness Ole Svinth



Many years ago I obtained this stamp. For many years I thought it was cancelled at Glenborrodale in (Argyle) in West Scotland. Glenborrodale had no harbour facilities, but what would I know. However lately I received this list of the postmarks of Great Britain ending at "55".

Offices in Scotland	List of 1874;	List of 1887;	Lists of 1892 - 1906
55 Blackhillock	-----	Buchlyvie (Stirling)	"
155 Galashiels (Selkirk)	"	"	"
255 Midcalder (Midlothian)	"	"	"
355 Dalnacardoch (Perth)	-----	Bo'ness (Linlithgow)	"
455		Carron (Stirling)	-----
Additions after 1887			
555			Sauchie (Clackmannan)
655			Achluachrach (Inverness)
655 in 1906 allocated to	Glenborrodale (Argyle)		
755			1906 Canna (Isle of Canna)

It was then revealed, that Bo'ness has had a cancel 355.

Originally the number 355 was attached to Dalnacardoch (Perth). In the late 80's the cancel was removed to Bo'ness and was still here in 1906. The first cipher is not easy recognized, but when magnified the first cipher can only be 355 or 555 (255?). As #555 was placed in the Central Lowlands of Scotland it is an unlikely place for incoming letters from Iceland. Would you agree? "255" is Midcalder situated inland.



I also received a list of the English and Irish cancels. Except for the Irish, none of them fit in besides the Irish # 255.

As you can see from this quotation from Wikipedia, the Inver had a whale station.

Inver was an important whaling post in Ireland. There was a large whaling station and fleet in the Port of Inver which lies 2 km from Inver Village. Thomas Nesbitt was the head of this investment. He also increased productivity by inventing the harpoon gun. The ruins of the old whaling station still remain in the port but has eroded and deteriorated to rubble.

Bo'ness is however far the most likely origin of this postmark

A genuine cancel for comparison would help.

Offices in Ireland	List of 1874;	List of 1887;	Lists of 1892 - 1906
55 Ballyshannon (Co Donegal)	"	"	"
155 Cootehill (Co Cavan)	"	"	"
255 Innishannon (cork)	Island Bridge Dublin	"	1906 Inver (Donegal)
355 Newport (Co Mayo) only in list of 1857		-----	-----

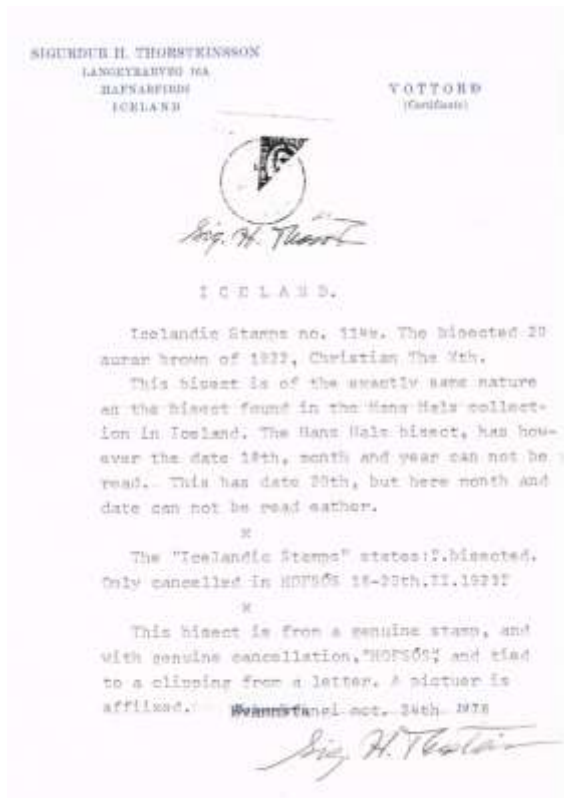
An unusual bisect *Ellis Glatt*



Hi Brian.

My usual contribution to Facit Special (as a contributing editor re Iceland) is to keep the sections on the Í Gildi, the underlying Aurar issue, and the postal stationery listings current, at least with respect to the latest recorded research in these areas. However, with respect to the upcoming 2017 edition, I am thinking about also recommending to Karl Norsten that a previously recorded and documented Christian X 20-aur bisect be added as well (as Facit 135v2).

This unusual, but previously authenticated, variety appears to have been documented early on by Sigurður Thorsteinsson in his “Icelandic Stamps” catalog, beginning sometime after the 1966 edition. A 1978 certificate issued by him for such an example on piece (now in my hands) states that the bisect was used in Hofsós between 18 and 20 February 1923. It also mentions the existence of a similar example housed in the Hans Hals collection (at the National Archives of Iceland). Scans of my example and the accompanying certificate are shown.



My guess is that, back in 1978, those two examples were the only ones recorded at the time. The 18-20 February 1923 time window, and Hofsós location mentioned in Thorsteinsson’s listing, may have been based solely on those examples; or, perhaps he found a reference of some sort in an archived accounting ledger for the Hofsós postal station from that period. If so, one possible explanation is that the postal station simply ran out of 10-aur (and other low-denomination) stamps for a brief period and, for convenience, opted to use bisected 20-aur stamps on inland prent mail. On the other hand, the bisects might have been employed purely for philatelic reasons.

Before I go any further with the proposed Facit listing, I would like to get some further feedback from some others who might have more insight on the subject. I know Ólafur Elíasson wrote a short article on the topic of Icelandic bisects back in 2009 in *Frímerkjablaðið*.

A few afterthoughts on the subject. If both the subject example and the Hals example had cancels with the month and year indiscernible, as Thorsteinsson states, how did he come up with February 1923? There must have been a related reference somewhere else—either a note in the Hals collection, a ledger

reference found in old postal records, or another example. It seems to me that if another example with a completely discernible cancel date was also known to him, he would have mentioned it in his certificate.

As always, thanks for your assistance. Best, Ellis

(Editor) Ólafur Elíasson said:-

Hello Brian.

As far as I know the Icelandic postal authorities have never permitted use of bisects nor have they forbidden such usage. The bisects I know of are all philatelically inspired except possibly this one.

At present I know of three examples.

1) The example in Hans Hals collection. I have only got an unclear picture from a newspaper but it is the left part of the stamp, cut between the NW and SA corners. The dateline is unreadable.

2) Mr. Glatt's bisect.

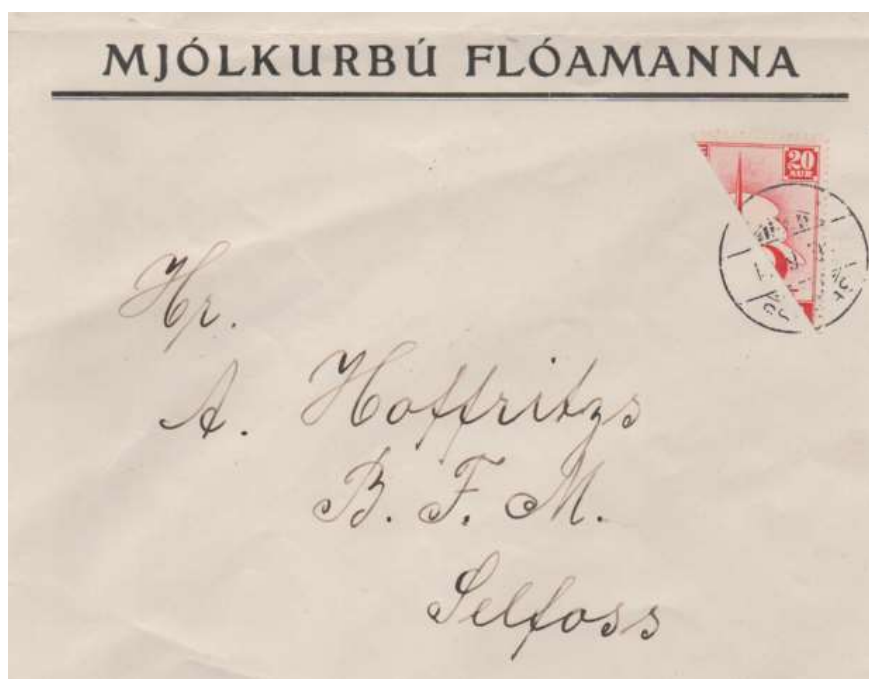
3) An example was in a collection I sold on behalf of a client at Postiljonen auction #201, lot 602. The stamp is cut vertically, dateline clear 18.II.23.



The earliest mention of the bisect in "Íslensk frímerki" is in the 1967 issue.

Acc. to postal regulations the post offices were obliged to stock a supply of stamps, stationaries etc. for sale to customers and to supply the letter collecting stations (bréfhirðingar) belonging to them. It is hard, if not impossible, to believe that the post office at Hofsóss had completely run out of stock of low value stamps (1-3-4-5-6-8-10 aur) those days in Feb. 1923. However, three examples of this bisect do exist and they look perfectly good to me. There might even be more somewhere out there. Judging from the way the known examples are cut one has to assume that at least three more existed some 83 years ago. In my opinion this variety warrants a mention in Facit.

Regards, Ólafur



And again from Ólafur who says:-

Here is a nice local letter, Selfoss 16.6.41. Philatelic of course.

(Editor) Following up Ellis's reference to the Ólafur Elíasson article in Frímerkjablaðið, I found this piece in a subsequent Frímerkjablaðið issue 21. p.8.



*“In Frímerkjablaðið no. 20 * p.16, Ólafur Elíasson's article mentions half stamps. He brings up two cases of bisects that are known and concludes that there is philatelic activity involved. There is no reason to challenge the finding. In a foreign auction in March, appears yet another example of half a postage stamp, this time on a clipping and it is quite noticeable that when examined closely, the same date on the cancel on this clipping matches with the letter card that accompanied the article by Ólafur, i.e. 25.VII.1912. Seems almost certain that the same person has clearly been involved in these two cases.”*

*I have corrected the original, which erroneously said “no. 19.”

And more:- I am grateful to both Ronald Collin and to Steinar Fridthorsson who pointed out these two examples of bisects on a recent Edgar Mohrmann (Hamburg) auction. The top one was unsold, and the other sold for 210 euro (hammer price).

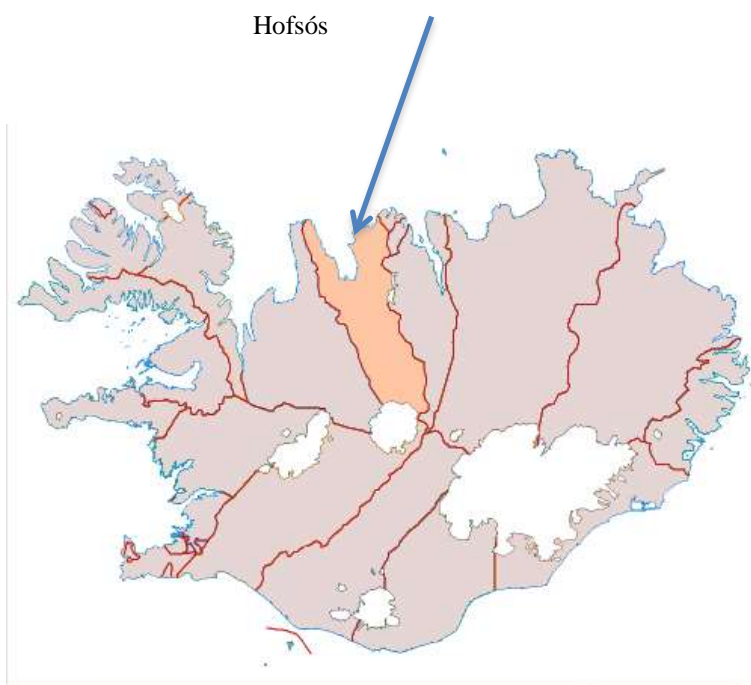


1912, postal stationery card with 3 Aur. kings uprated with right half of 20 Aur. Frederik VIII blue sent from REYKJAVÍK to Heidelberg, Germany. Facit 116.



1912, postal stationery card with 5 Aur. kings uprated with right half of 20 Aur. kings blue sent from REYKJAVÍK to Heidelberg, Germany. Facit 84

I am sure this topic has some distance to run yet. Here is Ebbe Eldrup’s contribution to this fascinating subject.



This bisected 20 aur brown Christian X stamp was cancelled with Hofsós B2C1 cancel dated 18 x x but apparently without readable month or year. However from another copy in the Hans Hals collection, it seems that the month is February and year 1923. This is stated in the accompanying Thorsteinsson certificate.

Hofsós in Skagafjarðarsýsla was a very small town/trading station (kaupþún) in 1923. Bæjatal á Íslandi 1930 states that Hofsós itself at this time had 149 inhabitants. Even the surrounding farms maybe added another 150-200 people. The number of people using this Póstafgreiðsla was very limited.

Christian X stamps were issued from February 1920 and values of 1 eyr, 3 aur, 5 aur, 8 aur, 10 aur were available as well as higher values. We assume from known usages that low values in particular were distributed to all post stations.

Since 1920 and up to 1923 inland rates were 15 aur and then 20 aur, while inland & Nordic & UPU postcard rate in approx. 1½ year was 10 aur and then inland, Nordic & UPU printed matter rate was raised from 5 to 10 aur. No other 10 aur rate of general use existed. Consequently, it seems highly unlikely that the Póstafgreiðsla in Hofsós ran out of all small values already in February 1923.

I am not aware of any cover with bisected 20 aur Chr X stamps from Hofsós, but some values of the Two Kings issue are known bisected on cover and they are all considered philatelic usages.

Neither the fact that there is one such copy in the Hans Hals collection, nor the certificate from Thorsteinsson, provide any evidence that this bisected stamp on a piece is a "bone fide" non-philatelic use.

In general I advise all collectors against Thorsteinsson certificates.

I regard this bisected stamp a philatelic use. It may have been cancelled already in 1923 and with a genuine Hofsós B2C1 cancel but until further evidence is provided, this item must be considered philatelic, as are all other bisected stamps from Iceland. It could be included in the Facit catalogue, but with a warning against philatelic usage and certainly not as a variety.

Ebbe Eldrup, Rungsted Kyst Denmark

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Colop problems

Previous issues, have touched on the damage to the rubber Colop cancels, caused by the use of the wrong ink by postal officials at two offices, Húsavík and Þorlákshöfn, where the devices had to be replaced. A short while ago, I was intrigued to hear from Jarle Reiersen that he had found a Stykkishólmur Colop cancel considerably larger than the original. He sent me the cover which is shown below, and sure enough the diameter is 3.1cm instead of 2.8cm and the letters and numerals are 1mm longer. When I asked our good friend Vilhjálmur Sigurðsson at Iceland Post why Stykkishólmur is using a larger canceller, I received this response:



"We have only supplied one Colop R40d cancel to Stykkishólmur. Thank you for pointing out to me that this Colop cancel/mail dater in Stykkishólmur is destroyed and useless. What has happened is that they have put oil ink in the Colop ink pad (which sorry to say, happens too often by the staff of Iceland Post in spite of constant admonitions)but if that is done, the rubber cliché swells or puffs up and thereby the rubber cliché is no good and must be replaced. I had not realised that this swelling could be 3 mm"

(Expect to see a replacement canceller here, and maybe elsewhere? Ed.)

Below is the example of the enlarged strike of B8b1 Skykkishólmur dated 16.12.2015



50 aur value of the Two Kings Issue *Ron Collin*

I have always liked the 50 aur value of the Two Kings issue of Iceland from 1907. The quantity printed of this value was 200,000 copies.



One of the stamp clichés has a noticeable flaw. This scan will show you the line that appears in the L of Iceland. This recurring flaw is not mentioned in Facit. It is mentioned in my copy of the 1997 AFA Specialized Iceland catalog. However, AFA erroneously identifies it as position 15 in the sheet. I have included here, a cropped scan from my full sheet of Facit #87. You can see from this scan that the error actually appears in position 62 of the sheet.



In May of 1928, copies of the red 10 aur value of the Chr X issue from 1920, Facit #131, were taken from postal inventory (200,000 copies according to Facit, 199,900 copies according to AFA and according to the Jonsson 100 year book). These were overprinted with an image of an airplane. This overprinting created the stamp represented by Facit #160, Iceland's first airmail stamp.

Here is an image of that overprint. The airplane overprint clichés were set up in a rack of 50 (5 rows of 10 clichés per row). The overprinting was then done in two passes, printing the top half of the sheet, separately from printing the bottom half





This can be verified here, by this cropped scan of my sheet of Facit #160. You will note the position of the overprint appears to cover the King's eyes on the top half of the sheet, whereas when the second pass was done, the overprint seems to cover the King's chin. This confirms the overprint being applied in two separate passes through the printing press. It is more noticeable when you look at row 5 and row 6 of the sheet. NOTE: The two passes of the overprint, becomes more important later in this article.

In 1929 50,000 copies (500 sheets) of the basic 50 aur Two Kings stamp were taken from postal inventory, and were overprinted with the same 50 airplane clichés. (Again there is disagreement between Facit, AFA and the Jonsson book on exact quantity). This created Facit #161. I have been unable to find any research saying whether the rack of 50 clichés are in the same positioning as they were for the overprinting of Facit #160, but I doubt that was the case.

Somewhere along the way however, in dealing with the 50 aur value of the Two Kings stamps, one of the overprint clichés became damaged. It resulted in what we collectors refer to as the "broken tail" variety.



Here is a scan of an example of this variety. Since we don't know when the damage took place; it could have happened when the rack of 50 airplane clichés were being put together for Facit #161, or it could have happened sometime during the overprinting process. The damage to this "broken tail" seems to have gotten worse during the overprinting process, and you may even find such examples.



Not being content just in knowing that the variety exists, I wanted to know what position in the sheet the "broken tail" variety appeared in. It was a few years later when the answer to this mystery appeared in front of my eyes.

That is when I acquired this copy of Facit #161. As you can see, this copy has both the line in the L variety as well as the "broken tail" variety. Because of how the stamps received the airplane overprint, as I explained earlier, if you have a "broken tail" variety of Facit #161, it can only be from sheet position #12 or sheet position #62. Because of the two passes of the overprint rack, through the press, this error appears in these two sheet positions. Position #12 does not have the line in the L, and as explained above, position #62 has both the "broken tail" and the line in the L.



For this stamp issue, there are also examples of under inking, when applying the overprint.



But I would not imagine this to be very common.



Furthermore, in 1936 another 50,000 copies (500 sheets) of the basic 50 aur Two Kings stamp were taken from postal inventory and were overprinted "Pjónusta". This resulted in the creation of Facit #Tj 58.

After searching for many years through collections and dealer's stock books, I was finally able to acquire a copy of sheet position #62 of Facit #Tj 58.

As you can see, the 50 aur value of the Two Kings issue was a very versatile stamp.

Now that these sheet positions have been identified, I am hoping that both Facit Specialized and AFA will make note of the flaws AND their respective sheet positions.

Going forward, I hope you have as much fun searching for these items as I have had.