



ISLANDS *Kontakt*

SPECIAL # 1 - QUEENSTOWN 2019. v.3

This is a part of a series published online which summarizes, supplemented by recent discoveries, information published over the years in *IslandsKontakt* and elsewhere. We must all be grateful for the sustained efforts of all those who, over the years, as Editors or Authors have contributed to the gathering and dissemination of information relevant to the philately of Iceland.

This article is special no. 1.

It is about:

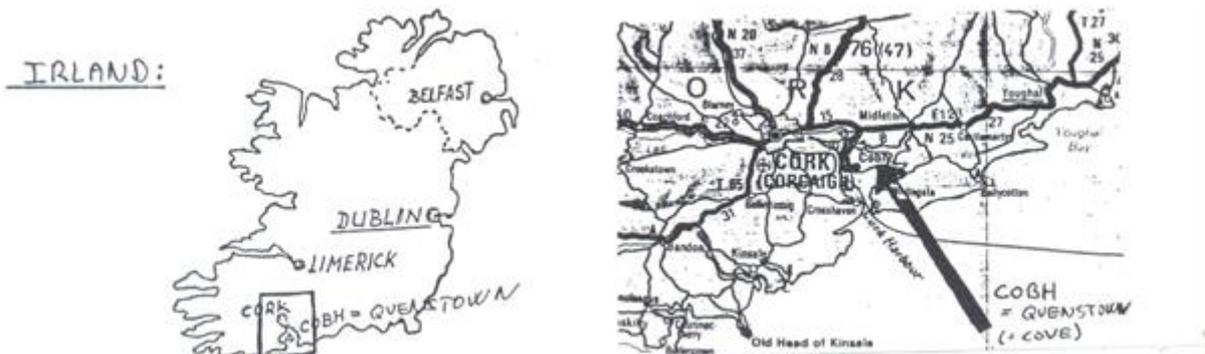
QUEENSTOWN

Mail indicating carried with S/S OCEANA – but carried with SMS FREYA – and transit cancellation QUEENSTOWN SHIP LETTER

See *Islandskontakt* 13, 14 og 61 page 26-27 and 85 page 11

The subject has primary nothing to do with the town QUEENSTOWN; but it ends up in QUEENSTOWN. It should have been the vessel OCEANA bringing mail from Iceland – but it ended up with SMS FREYA bringing the mail to QUEENSTOWN and being the reason for an isolated part of the history of Islandic ship mail - the QUEENSTOVN SHIP LETTERS.

Queenstown is a suburb to Cork. The name was originally Cove but in 1849, it was renamed Queenstown – but again in 1922 renamed - to Cobh.



I have until now - (May 2019) – **registered** the following use of QUEENSTOVN SHIP LETTER on mail from Iceland. There might be some "overlap", there are copies unknown to me and as it is based on copies – it is not accurate.

A. There are 2 Björnsson items:

A.1. Ebbe Eldrup mention in IslandsKontakt nr. 12 a briefspjald written 13.8.07 og cancelled Reykjavik 14.8.07 directed send med S/S Oceana to stud. polit O. Björnsson, (he is apparently a gentleman with a wide range of academically interesse. Send to Odensegade 5 II, Kopenhagen. Dänemark (The address in German but the text is in Icelandic).



A.2. Letter with 4x4 aur Chr. 9 to Stud mag O. Björnsson. 2015 Philea auction # 1963



B. Tre (four) Franz items:

B.1. Brjefspjald to Kiel, two kings 10 Aur. Written 13.8.1907 and it is mention that the trip will be over Queenstown. It is cancelled Reykjavik, 13.8.1907.



B.2. Brjefspjald written 16.8.07. Cancellation??? (Reykjavik I believe) 18.8.07? Sendt to Macha, Ratibor ob/? (Polen).

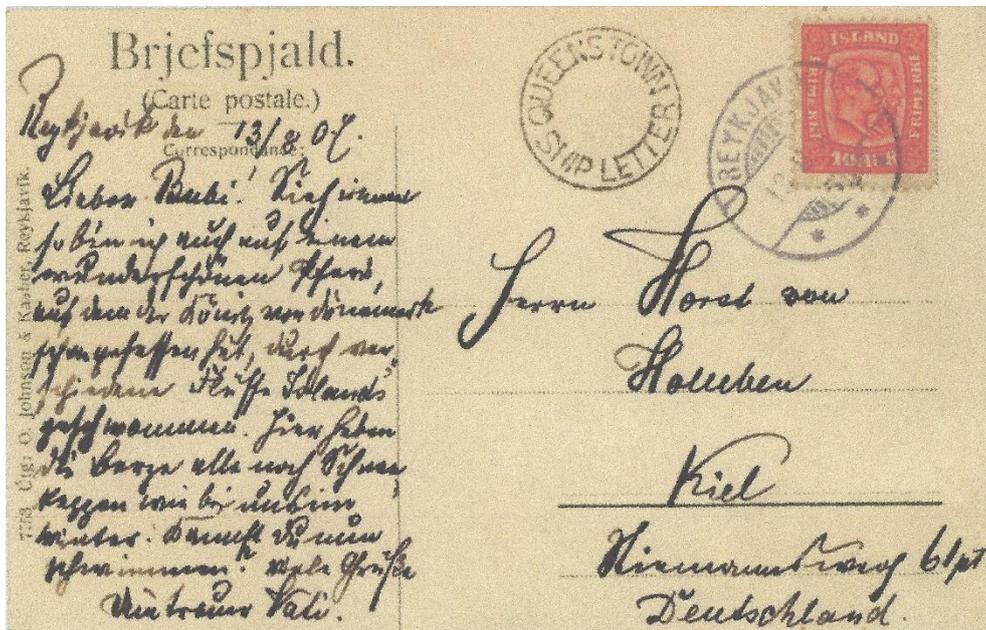


B.3. Franz has also sent a brjefspjald to Fräulein Schimakowski, on 16.8.07.



He has – at least on two of the postcards - a beautiful handwriting connecting him and the postcards.

B.4



The cards are written by Franz von Holleben (1863-1938 rose to the rank of Vice Admiral in the German Navy), one to his wife, the other to his son Horst.

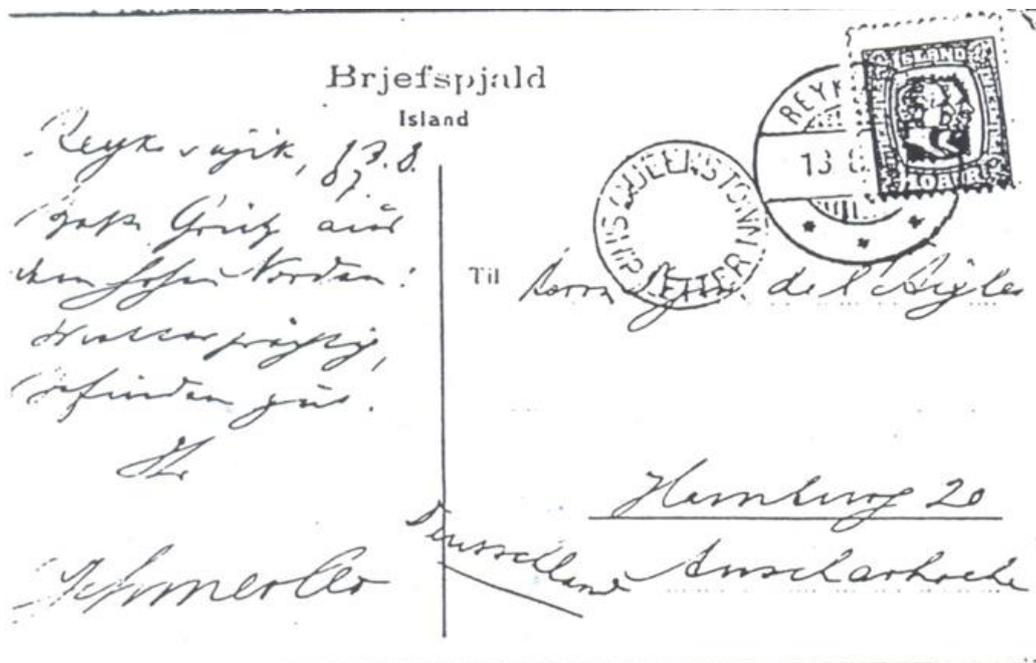
C. Søkadet (See cadet) Schneider

C.1 In IslandsKontakt # 14 Kurt Bliese communicate and show a Spjaldbrief written by "søkadet" Schneider on SMS Freya to his family in Frankfurt. It is cancelled 15. (or 18.8) 1907. Transit cancellation Queenstown with an ordinary handstamp, on the back 22.8.07 – it is the only example I know.

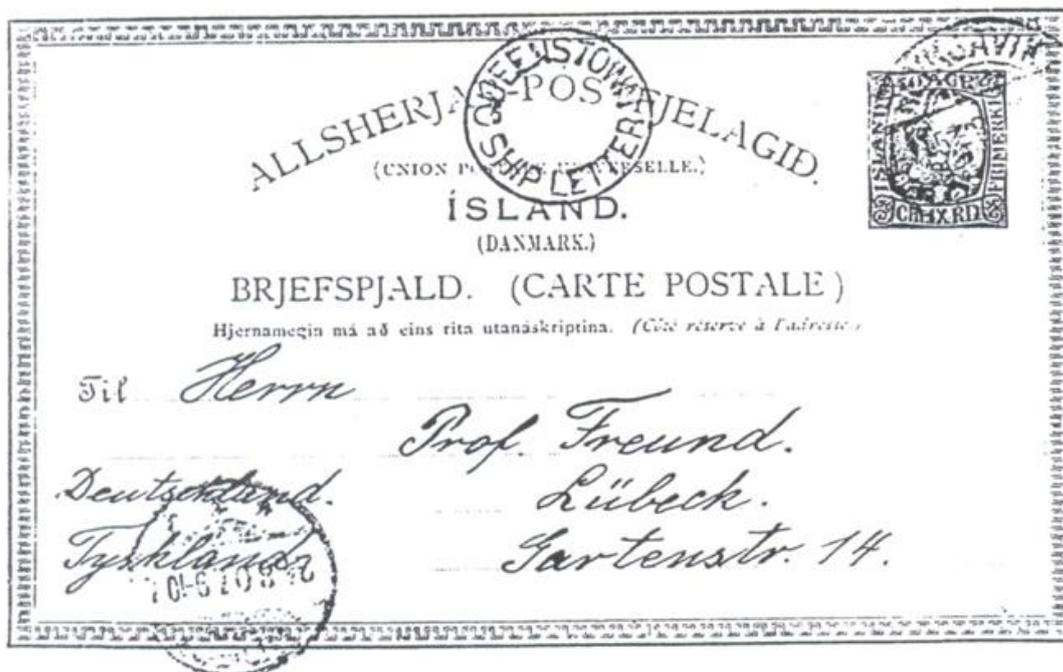


D. Different examples – send to Germany

D.1. Brjefspjald written 13.8.07, cancelled Reykjavik 13th or 18.08.07 to Hamburg.



D.2. Brjefspjald written 14.8.07, cancelled Reykjavik 15.8.07 and send to professor Freund in Lübeck. In IslandsKontakt # 14 is mentioned, that it appears from the text, that it is written on board SMS Freya



D.3 Brjefspjald with unreadable date. Queenstown mentioned in the text. (Kurt Bliese in IslandsKontakt # 14)



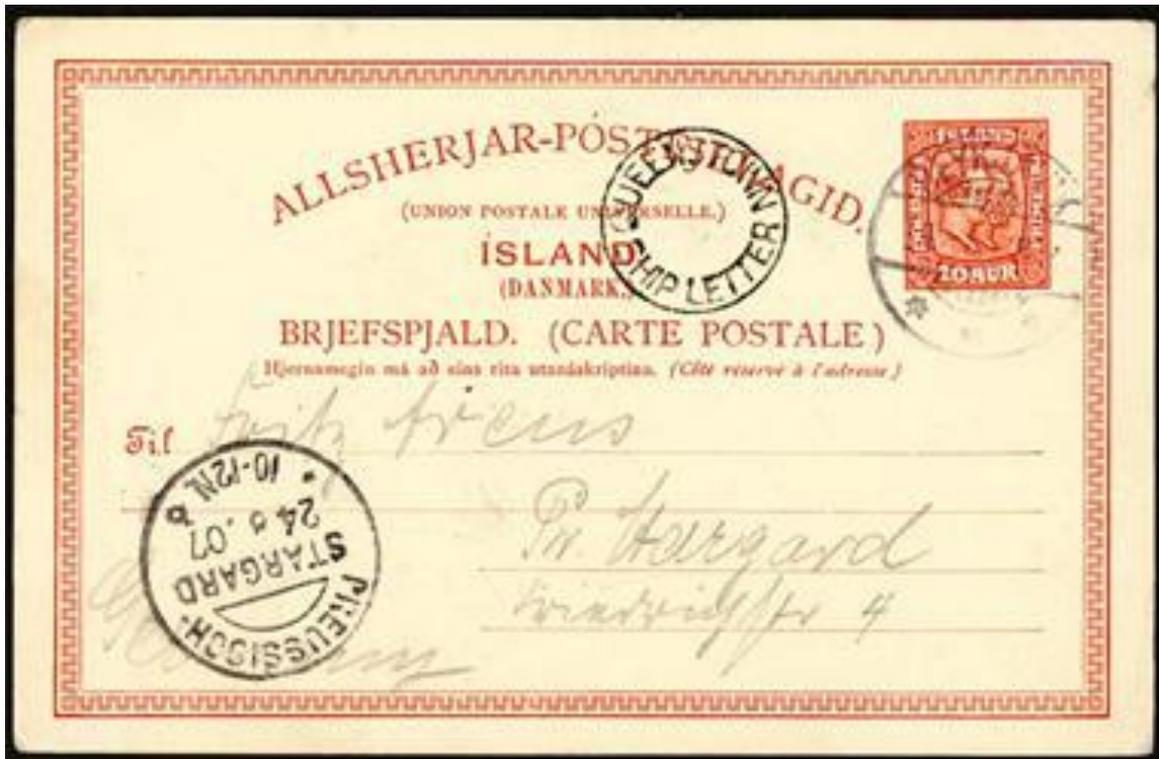
D.4. Brjefspjald written on the 12th or 13.8.07 to Berlin. Shown in IslandsKontakt # 14 by Stig Østerberg).



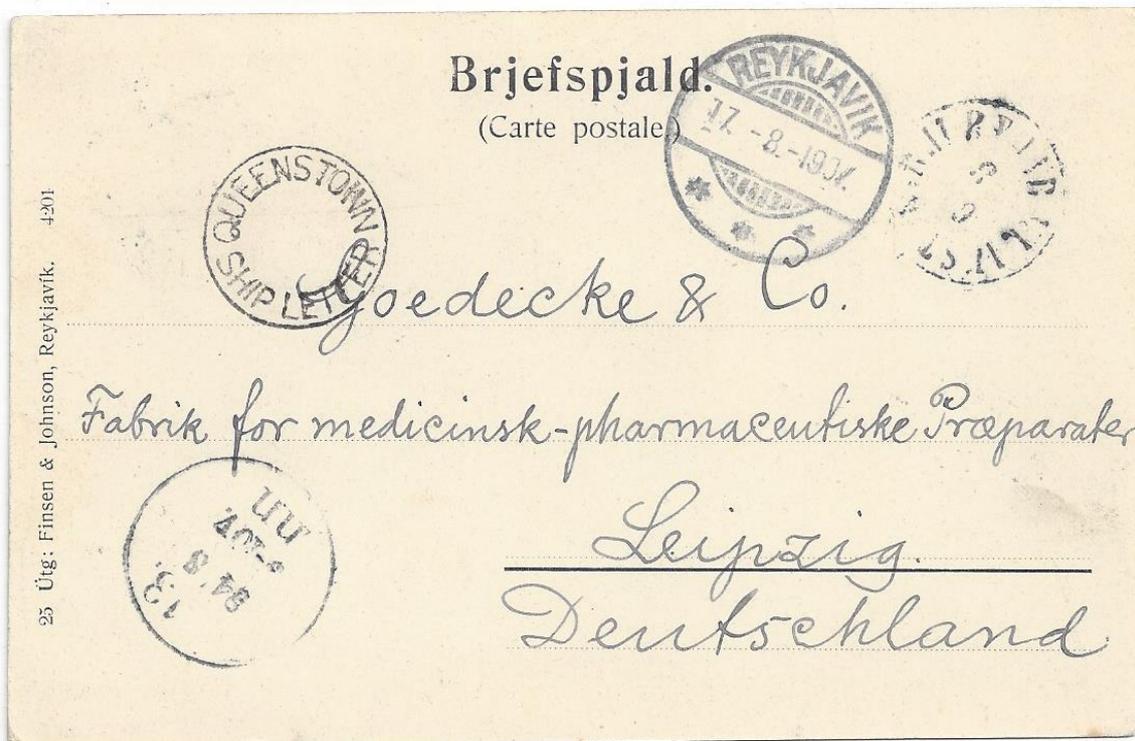
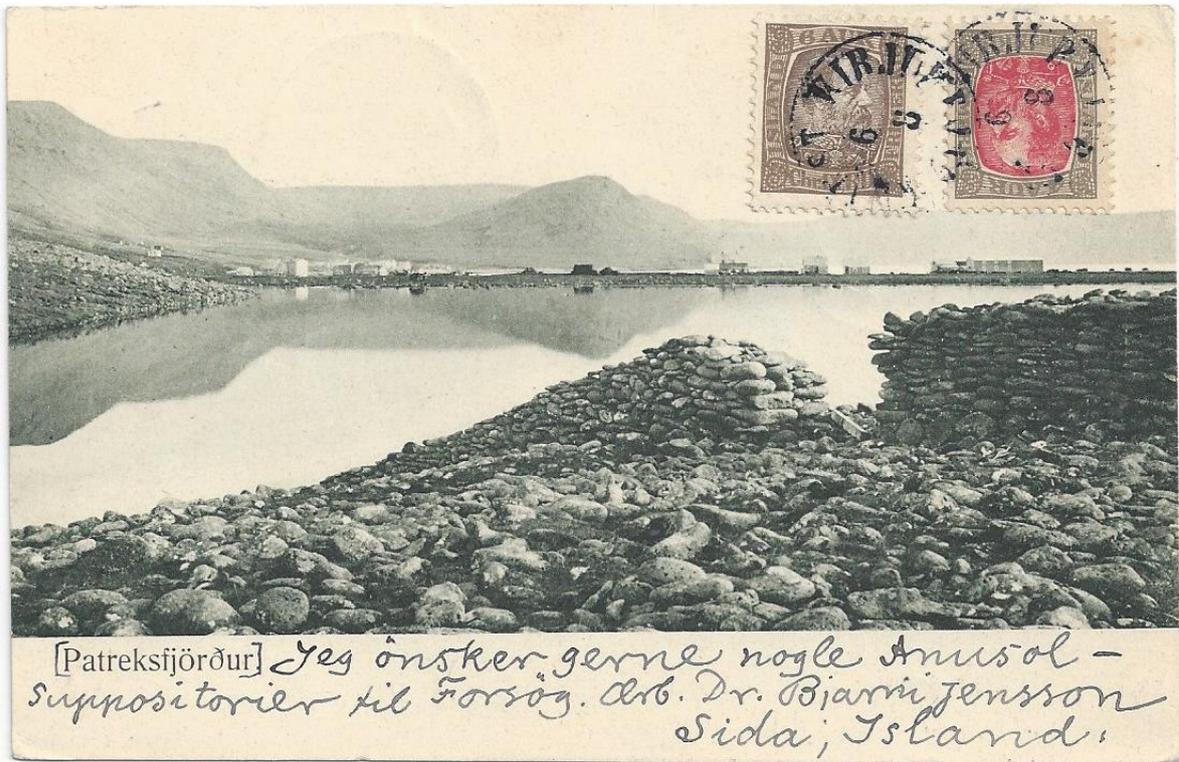
D.5. Auktionshuset.com offered for sale in 2015 a Brjefspjald: Christian IX, 5 Aur green and two kings, 10 aur red Brjefspjald send from REYKJAVIK 16.8.1907 via QUEENSTOWN to Germany.



D.6. I have from Shilling receiver a copy of a Brjefspjald cancelled 17.8.1907 in Reykjavik. Send to Germany where it arrives 24.8.1907.



D.12 Brjefspald accepted at Kirkjubæjarklaustur on 6 August 1907, arriving in Reykjavík on 17 August 1907.



Described in detail by Wilbur Jónsson in London Philatelist vol 124 number 1431 pages 478/9 December 2015.

D.13 Brjefspjald offered at 361. Heinrich Köhler Auktion, 21.9.2015, as Lot # 183



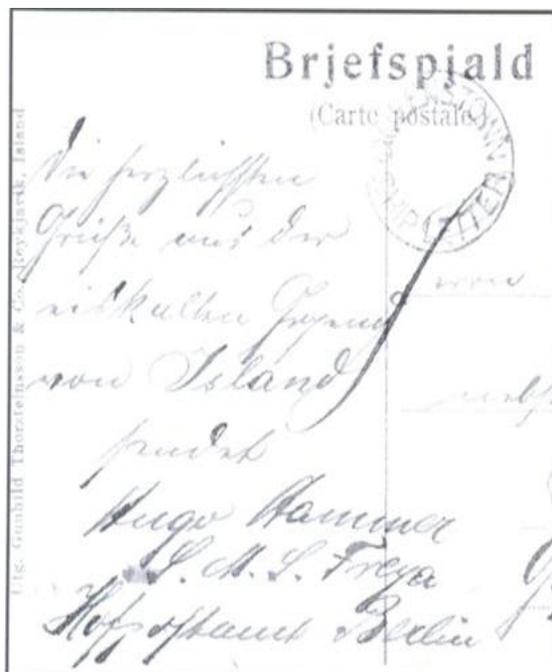
D.14



D.15



D.16



On the shown postcard the writing says (in German) "Most hearty greetings from an ice-cold part of Iceland sends Hugo Hammer, SMS Freya, Hofpostamt, Berlin".

I now know of about 30 items from the tour to Queenstown. In the future probably more will come forward. The crew of "Freya" did send a good deal of mail home and to other ships.

This postcard had stamps removed

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¹ From IslandsKontakt # 61 – September 2007 – and the number is still around 30

D19



From Reykjavik 16.8.1907

E. To USA

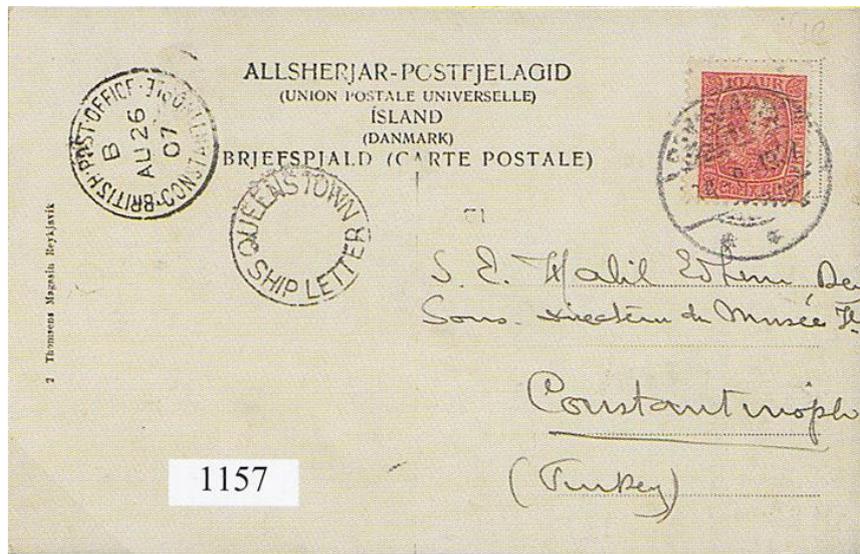
In Swanson's collection, there was an example.

E.1. Brjefspjald cancelled 14.8.07 in Reykjavik to USA.



F. To Turkey

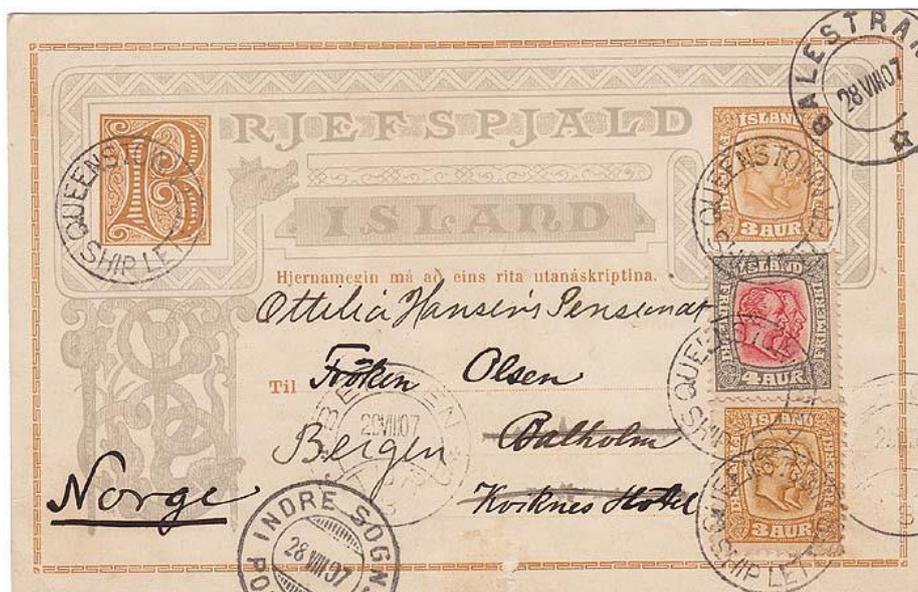
F.1 On Cavendish April 2009:



QUEENSTOWN - VERY RARE "SHIP LETTER". UDC ON 10aur-RATE POSTCARD TO TURKEY. Fine 14 Aug. 1902 PPC (lively street scene of Reykjavik). Amazingly addressed to "Constantinople, Turkey" franked by King Christian 10a Red tied by a fine "REYKJAVIK" 'Bridge' c.d.s. Having a very fine strike of the very rare small undated circular "QUEENSTOWN/SHIP LETTER" mark (Rob.S2a; recorded 1904-07 only) nicely placed on the front beside an equally very fine "BRITISH POST OFFICE/CONSTANTINOPLE" arrival c.d.s. (26 Aug.). Exceptional Ship Letter mark and an exceptional destination. Exhibition Quality."

G. To Norway

G.1. This example is a bit special; it is from the same august period, but it does not have an Icelandic cancellation. It is sent to a pension in Norway – north of Sognefjorden, and it has been over Bergen.



G.2 Reykjavik 16.8.1907 to Christiania, Norway



H. Switzerland



² Cavenishd sale March 7 2002 as lot 1456

I. Only on stamps

H.1. 3 aur perf. 14-13½ (1897 print)



H.2. 4x4 aur Chr. IX – Reykjavik 17.08.07 (I do not have a copy)

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J. Conclusion after reading the press:

The German ship **S/S OCEANA** arrived in Iceland on July 13, 1907 and entered again on August 13. It left and sailed west around Iceland for Spitsbergen and Norway (see Olafur Eliason in IslandsKontakt # 14) – It did not carry any mail.

From the first trip there is a copy of a double Brjefspjald cancelled 13.7 in Akureyri. The only text on the replay card is "Til Herrn Rentier C. Rutloff in Akureyri on Boor der "Oceana"".



The German warship **SMS Freya** (5800 BRT and a crew of 430 men) left Reykjavik on August 18, 1907 and there was paid 6 kr. for carrying mail.

SMS Freya was a protected cruiser of the Victoria Louise class, built for the German Imperial Navy (Kaiserliche Marine) in the 1890s, along with her sister ships Victoria Louise, Hertha, Vineta, and Hansa. Freya was laid down at the Imperial Dockyard in Danzig in 1895. Launched in April 1897 and commissioned into the Navy in October 1898. The ship was armed with a battery of two 21 cm guns and eight 15 cm guns and had a top speed of 19 knots (35 km/h; 22 mph).



The mail might have been for S/S Oceana – but went with SMS Freya.

SMS Freya arrived in QUEENSTOWN around August 22, 1907 and sailed according to Kurt Bliese in IslandsKontakt # 14 from there to Madeira, Las Palmas and was back in Germany, Brunsbüttelkoog on March 10 1908.

Mike Tuttle in his article “Mail from Iceland with a Queenstown Ship Letter Mark” in Scandinavian Contact Vol. 22 No.1 pp 30-32 states:

"Most of the 30 (or so) Iceland covers known with this mark come from the crew of the German Battle Cruiser SMS Freya which left Kiel on 19th July 1907 on a training cruise, calling at Christiania (now Oslo), Balestrand (both in Norway), then Reykjavík on or about the 12th August. The vessel left on the 16th or 17th, because the captain was paid six Icelandic Kroner by the Icelandic Post Office to convey mail to the next port of call. This mail was cancelled Reykjavík 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th August, but some of the marks are faint. The next port was Queenstown."

The cancellations can be difficult to see – but 17th has to be included as cancellation day, as clearly can be seen on D.12.

If there are "30 (or so) Iceland covers known" – we have recorded a majority until now!

K. REFERENCES:

Mike Tuttle “Mail from Iceland with a Queenstown Ship Letter Mark” in Scandinavian Contact Vol. 22 No.1 pp 30-32.

Kurt Bliese in IslandsKontakt # 14

Kurt Bliese – "Queenstown Ship Letter" – Philatelistische Nachrichten vol 80 (1992) page 284

Wilbur Jónsson "Iceland Postcard - Kirkjubæjarklaustur, Breiðabólstaður Á Síðu and Queenstown" in London Philatelist vol 124 number 1431 pages 478/9 December 2015

www.paquebot.info

Daebel in IslandsKontakt # 61 September 2007