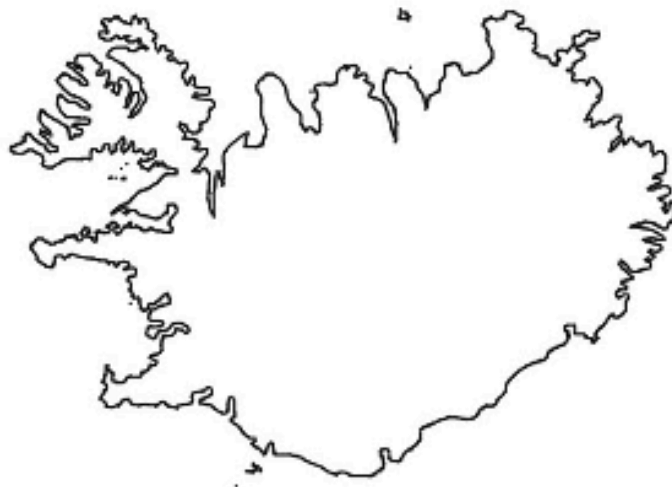
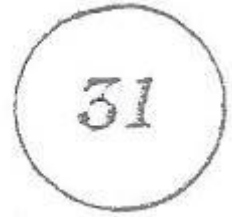


ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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Iceland Philatelic Magazine

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Former postal stations (4)

The fourth in this series of former postal stations, with pictures from Steinar Fridthorsson's 2023 trip.

Hesteyri in Norður Ísafjarðarsýsla



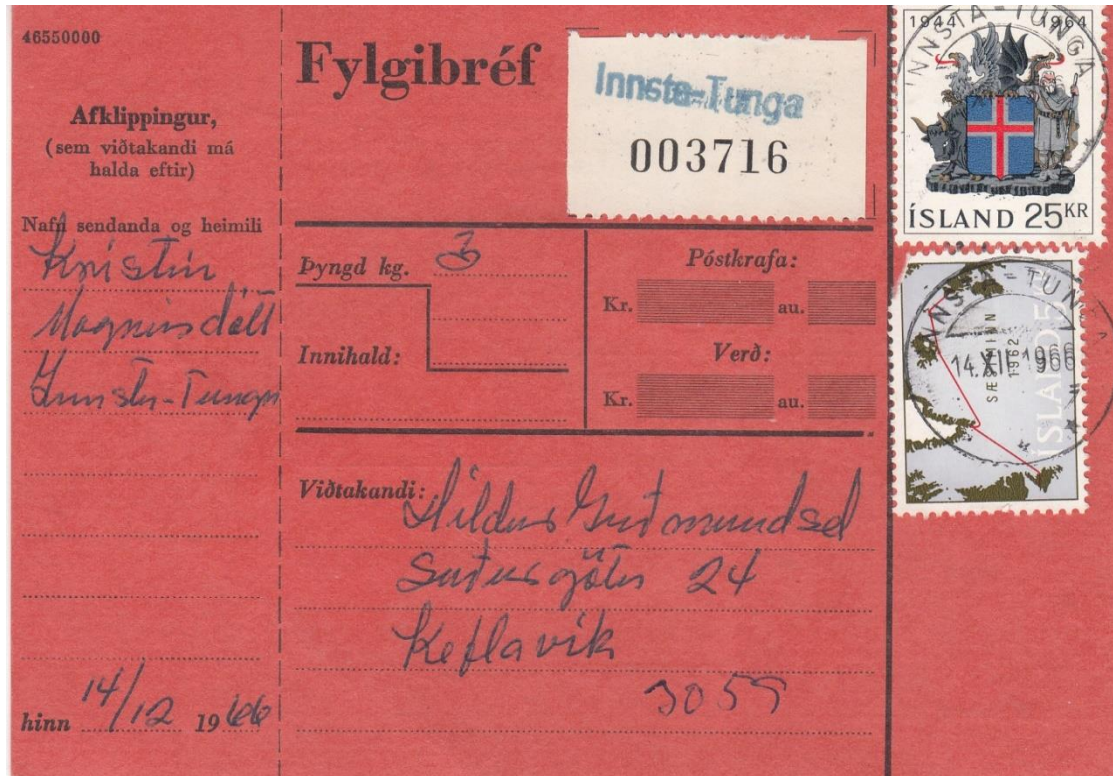
A collecting office opened on 1.1.1889 and remained there until 31.10.1952. It used a Hesteyri C1 crown cancel followed by Numeral N1a 110 and a B1a bridge cancel.



Innsta-Tunga in Vestur Barðastrandarsýsla



Innsta-Tunga farm lies just outside Sveinseyri (or Tálknafjörður). The name means “Innermost tongue of land”. The collecting office moved here from Tálknafjörður from 21.6.1961 and upgraded to post office from 1.10.1964 before returning to Tálknafjörður on 1.1.1968. I am not aware of any evidence that Innsta-Tunga used the Sveinseyri cancel although it must be possible. It received a type B8e cancel inscribed **INNSTA – TUNGA** which came on 18th August 1961



1966 3kg inland parcel - 10kr parcel fee plus 3 x 7kr per kg = 31kg. 1kr underpaid.

Iceland's First 10-aur Postal Card on its First Day of Issue

by *Ellis Glatt and Hálfdan Helgason*

Iceland's first postal card was introduced in mid-December 1879. The issue was a 5-aur card, the newly established rate at the time for inland use of the new postal stationery. For some reason, the Danish printing firm of Nielsen & Lydiche was chosen to design and produce the new card, despite the fact that another Danish firm, H. H. Thiele, had printed all of Iceland's postage stamps since their introduction in 1873.

Some months later, in mid-May 1880, two additional Icelandic postal cards were authorized for use beginning on 1 July 1880¹. One was an 8-aur card for use to Denmark and the Faroes, which was accompanied by a 10-aur card rated for UPU use. However, this time H. H. Thiele was selected to handle the production.



Figure 1a.

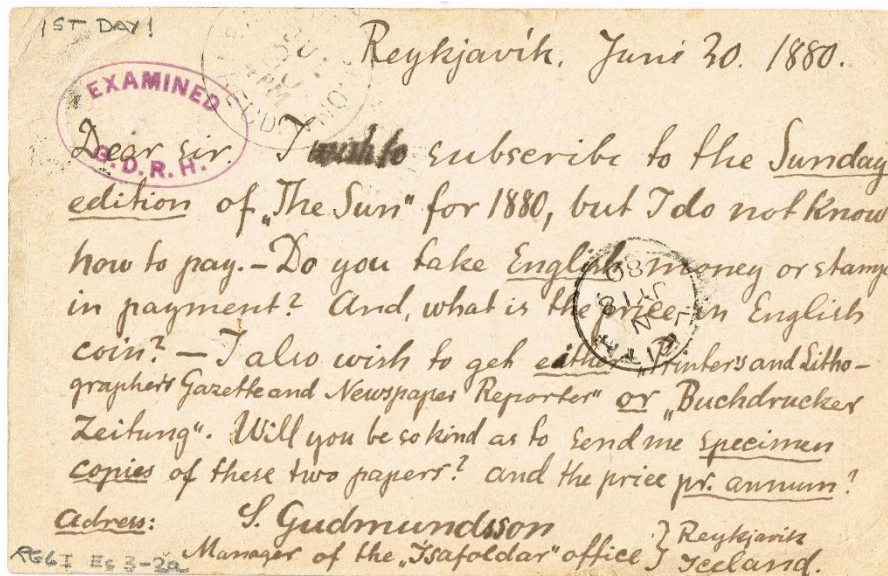


Figure 1b.

Both cards were delivered together from Denmark, arriving in Iceland sometime in June 1880¹. The 10-aur card pictured in Figures 1a and 1b was among the cards in that shipment. What makes this 10-aur card so special is that it exhibits a Reykjavik postmark applied on the card's official first day of issue, 1/7 (1880). Even more interesting is the message itself, written on the previous day and dated "Juni 30. 1880".

The writer of the card's commercial message was Sigurður Gudmundsson, who at the time was the head printer and manager of the *Ísafold* newspaper's Reykjavik office. His message was addressed to another newspaper located in the USA, which explains the English. Since the cards were already in Reykjavik some days prior to their 1 July official issue date, one could reasonably assume that a few samples might have been passed along in advance to a privileged few. These would have likely included the manager of a local newspaper, who would typically write about the upcoming availability of such new postal stationery.

A total of 20,000 of each of the 8-aur and 10-aur cards were included in the aforementioned Thiele delivery². Among the batches were several minor variations in each of the two groups, as might be expected due to minor print-type migration, wear, and inking issues during such large printing runs. The subject 10-aur card exhibits one of those minor variations. All are fully described and cataloged in a recent book entitled *Icelandic Postal Stationery*². The above pictured single-card variety is listed there as Es 3-2a.

As of this writing, and in addition to the subject 1880 10-aur find, an example of Iceland's first postal card, the 1879 5-aur, also is recorded posted on its first day of issue (pictured on the cover and fully described on page 16 of the aforementioned *Icelandic Postal Stationery* volume). However, still to be found is a first day of issue posting for the 1880 8-aur card. It could be out there somewhere, so happy hunting!

Endnotes:

¹Fuglsig, Leif: "Brevkorttakster mellem Island og Danmark", Islands Kontakt nr. 89 November 2012.

²*Icelandic Postal Stationery*, Hálfðan Helgason; Pub: Sigurður R. Pétursson, Reykjavik, Iceland 2019.

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Modern Iceland stamps

Although, to use a maritime expression, the prospect of modern stamp production seems to be "dead in the water", I could not resist reproducing this extract from the *Iceland Review* journal from August 2019. I was once a subscriber to that excellent magazine, but these days I confine myself to their monthly news summary on the web. I have underlined the key phrase which I find interesting.

I quote from the magazine:- "*Iceland Post's exclusive right to distribute letters is void at the end of 2019. The company is now working on finalizing a service agreement with Icelandic authorities. Directors at Iceland Post state they are willing to continue publishing stamps if authorities consider stamps culturally important. They state, however, that the state will have to cover costs if the publication is to continue.*"

The above is the most explicit reference I have seen regarding an agreement with the government to take over stamp production. The use of the word "finalizing" surely gives the impression that some progress must have been made? Does anyone know what progress was made and what stopped it?

Icelandic stamps from 1873 – 1900 with 3 ring cancellation 236

Morgens Moe

The 3 ring cancellation was used in Reykjavik 1870 – 1872 to cancel Danish stamps. The tool probably remained in Reykjavik as Icelandic stamps were introduced in 1873. A limited number of Icelandic stamps from the period 1873 - 1900 bear the cancellation 236, and the interesting question is, if this is a result of cancellation to order or of normal postal use.

I have a small collection of such stamps from that period. Below are shown some examples.



figures 1 – 5

Fig. 1. Ebbe Eldrup writes after having declared the stamp genuine: “No evidence exists that this postmark was used for postal matters from 1873 – 1900. Several copies of the postmark, however, are known from this period and some of them appear genuine.” I have seen a number of auction catalogues with Icelandic stamps, but no letters with the postmark 236. So far Ebbe has support.

Lasse Nielsen, who has expertized fig. 2, 4 and 5, did not enter into the discussion of cancellation to order or normal postal use. He considers that the postmark 236 to be genuine. The quality of the three stamps is very good.

Fig. 2. However, this is important for this discussion. It has a weak and worn but sufficiently clear postmark 236, and afterwards a postal delivery postmark from Copenhagen 20-10.83. A reasonable explanation is that it originates from a postcard or letter from Iceland.

Fig 3. Carl Aage Møller has expertized fig. 3. He considers the use of the postmark 236 to be normal but rare postal use. He has underlined this viewpoint in a mail of 13 November 2018 to me. He mentions that he has seen official letters with the postmark 236 on the 4 skilding stamp (Facit tj. 3) in an Icelandic museum.

Fig. 4 is a stamp that would have a much higher value as mint. Cancellation to order would be meaningless.

Fig. 5 is an official stamp where cancellation to order is not very common.

The impressions of the postmark 236 on fig. 1, 2, 4 and 5 are more or less worn and slanting. The same is the case with my other 14 example of 236-cancelled stamps.

The conclusion is that the material from my collection supports the view of Carl Aage Møller.

Burntisland Cancellations *Jakob S. Arrevad*

This is a part of a series published 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 Editors¹ or Authors have contributed to the gathering and dissemination of information relevant to the philately of Iceland.

Compilations of other British postmarks and other issues in the series “*IslandsKontakt Special*” can be accessed for free at <https://www.nfvskandinavie.com/artikelen-ijland.php>

Compiler: Jakob S. Arrevad: jsa@agadvokatfirma.dk

Wikipedia: Burntisland (/bɜːrntˈaɪlənd/ Scots: Bruntisland) is a royal burgh and parish in Fife, Scotland, on the northern shore of the Firth of Forth.

It is known locally for its award-winning sandy beach, the 15th-century Rossend Castle, as well as the traditional summer fair and Highland games day. To the north of the town a hill called The Binn is a landmark of the Fife coastline; a volcanic plug, it rises 193 m (632 ft) above sea level.

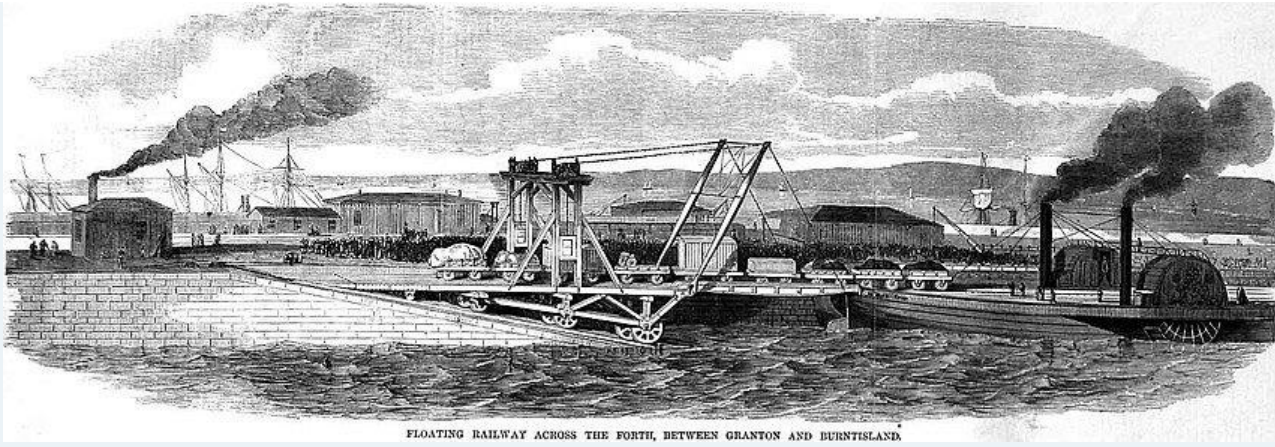
In *IslandsKontakt* # 66 there is an article from Ole Svinth and this colorful map:



Burntisland is to be seen right above “Edinburgh.”

¹ Among editors are highly reputable philatelists: Ebbe Eldrup, Jørgen Steen Larsen and Ole Svinth.

Apparently the site of the first Roll on Roll off Railway Ferry! (To **Granton** 1850-1890)



<https://www.burntisland.net/forth-pl.htm>

Cancellations from the 19th century:



SHIPLETTER - PAQUEBOT

Robertson under E.28:

BURNTISLAND

In Fifeshire (Scotland). 18 miles from Edinburgh. (By Ferry 9 miles.)

Burntisland lies on the north shore of the Firth of Forth directly opposite Granton, with which connection by ferry has existed for centuries. A port and harbour of no small importance, yet the only maritime postal history record in the possession of the author is part of a letter bearing the handstamp illustrated below; date unknown.

SHIP LETTER BURNTISLAND

S.1

S.1 — Both lines 47 mm. Letters 4 mm. Black.

In Robertson Revisited, Second Supplement by Colin Tabcart (2016) a stamp called P1:

Burntisland

PAQUEBOT

P1. 34x4 mm

Orig. No.	New No.	Colour	Old Dates	New Dates	Remarks
-	P1	Black	-	1992	Hosking 3

It is in Dovey & Morris - Hosking's 4th Edition no 271.

PAQUEBOT

271

Shilling have a drawing of a "twin-arc" stamp from 1912 with "FIFE" between the arches:

BURNTISLAND b/Edinburgh



Stempeltyp: Zweikreis-Handstempel

Außen-Ø : 26,5 mm

Innen-Ø : 17 mm

Ortsbuchstaben: 3 mm

Belegte Verwendung: 1911 - 14

Später kommt der gleiche Stempel mit Tag vor Monat vor.

and a "one-arc" stamp also with "FIFE" between the arches from 1921:



Stempeltyp: Zweikreis-Handstempel
Außen-Ø : ca. 25,5 mm
Innen-Ø : ca. 15,5 mm
Ortsbuchstaben: ca. 2,3 mm
Belegte Verwendung: 1921

Holz show two kings (dated 22.3.1911 when sold from the Flemming Østergaard collection, see below) and a drawing of a "twin-arc" stamp with stampers no 1 but without year.



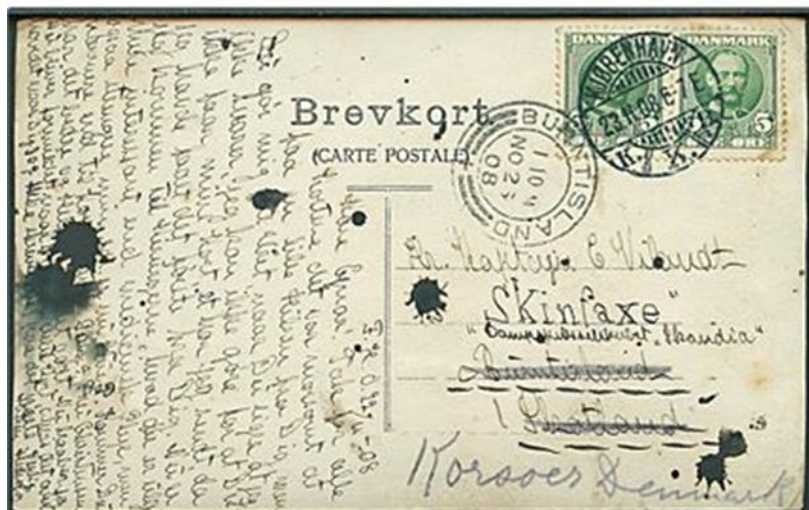
Mike Tuttle has a description in "Iceland: Foreign Port of Arrival & Transit marks" Part 2 June 1999 and 10 June 2001 – (Scandinavian Contact) (unfortunately I do not have a copy of part 2 and part 10 refer to part 2!)

Þór Þorsteins has compiled the following list of sailings paid for caring mail from Iceland. What comes out of that?

More or less nothing. There are not many cancellations on stamps from Burntisland:

SHIP	DEPART	FROM	ARRIVAL	TO	REMARKS
URANIA	05.02.1906	REYKJAVIK		BURNT-ISLAND	1KR.
URANIA	05.02.1907	REYKJAVIK		BURNT-ISLAND	1KR.

Also used on mail from Denmark:



Sent to the captain on SS SKINFAXE (Dampskibsselskabet "Scandia") but returned NO 26 08 to Denmark, Korsør.

HILDI	08.03.1909	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	6KR.
RAP	22.12.1909	REYKJAVIK		BURNT- ISLAND	2KR.
VIGSNÆS	15.03.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
VIGSNÆS	06.04.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	2,25KR.
EROS	22.04.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
TRYG	25.04.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
VIGSNÆS	30.04.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
GARIBALDI	09.08.1910	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
FRATHVANG	25.02.1911	REYKJAVIK		BURNT - ISLAND	1KR.
			22.03.1911	BURNT- ISLAND	



1912

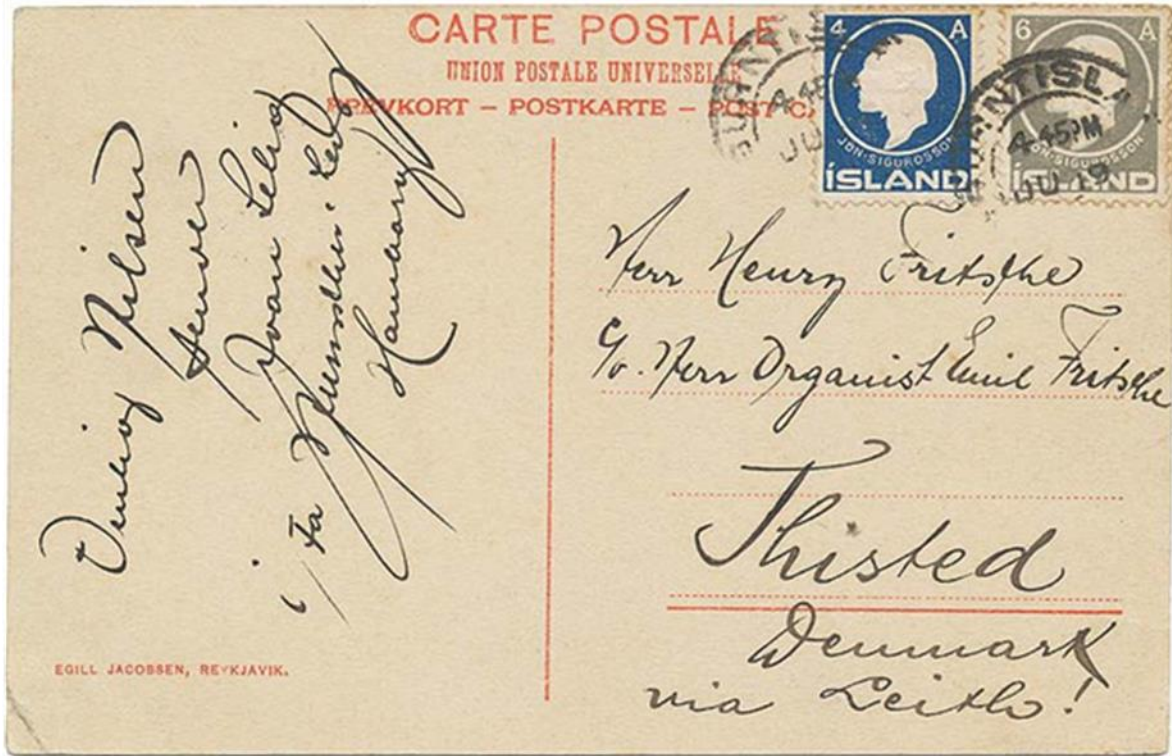
			03.05.1912	BURNT-ISLAND	
--	--	--	------------	--------------	--



			19.06.1912	BURNT-ISLAND	
--	--	--	------------	--------------	--

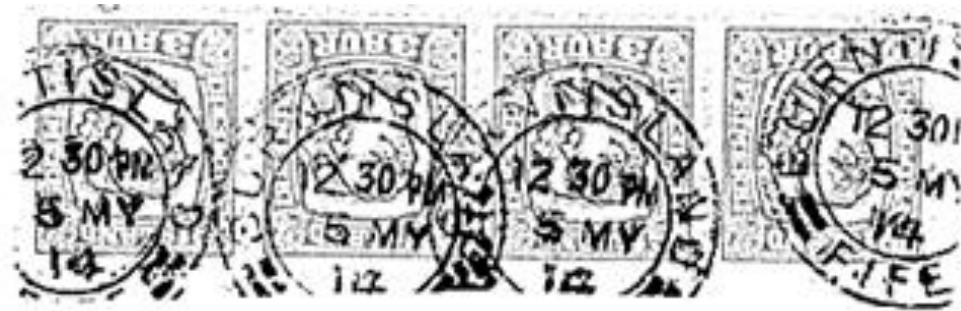


² From IslandsKontakt # 66



1914

	???.?.1914	REYKJAVIK	05.05.1914	BURNT-ISLAND	
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3



³ A copy from Mike Tuttle shown in IslandsKontakt # 69

In addition, Shilling show the following - also from 5 MY 1914:



A single copy from 1. NO 1914:



1921



IPM Readers. Is this all there is to be found ? Who can add further to the list?

⁴ A copy of a copy in IslandsKontakt 66 form a copy received by Ole Svinth for A Carøe. The ship cancellation is SS Columbia probably belonging Anchor Line build 1902, 1914-1918 requisitioned as Armed Merchant Cruiser renamed HMS Columbella, 1919 returned to owners renamed Columbia. 1926 sold Byron Line renamed Moreas.

Late re-use of C1 Höskuldsstaður *Jørgen Steen Larsen*

The farm, Höskuldsstaður, (the cancel is misspelt staður) was situated in Sudur-Múlasýsla. Originally the Southern main postal route (aðalpóstur route) went from PA Djúpvogur north inlands to Höskuldsstaður and on to Arnhólstaður and PA Egilsstaður.

Höskuldsstaður became a BH 1.1.1875 and remained as such until 31.12.1949, when it closed. The BH received C1 Höskuldsstaður around 1894/1895 and N1a-34 in the summer of 1903.

I know reusages of C1 Höskuldsstaður on Two Kings perf 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ Facit 76, 78, 2*79 and have also seen Facit 80 and 81. I have never seen re-usages on other issues than Two Kings perf. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$. Based on this it is my guess that the re-usages are from around 1907 - 1910.

We do not know why the reusages were made, as N1a-34 seems to have been used regularly on Two Kings perf. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$.

Re-usages of C1 Höskuldsstaður are not unusual, so contributions from the readers would be welcome to try to find a more qualified estimate of the period of re-use – and perhaps a reason for this re-use.



The reusage of **C1 Kalfatjörn** will be reviewed in the next issue.

(Ed. I am sorry to say that late examples of this cancel were not forthcoming from our readers.)

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“Early use” of B2c1 Djúpvogur

When I saw this on Frímerkjaspjall, I could not resist asking Saso Andonov for his permission to reproduce it for readers to see. The item was seen for sale on an auction site along with a series of similar strikes on later high values, all carefully placed so the date is not visible.

To any serious Iceland collector, this is a laughable attempt to deceive, using the bridge cancel B2c1 Djúpvogur, which came into use in 1911, on a 5 aurar blue, line perf which saw use in 1876. To quote Saso, “c.35 years before the bridge cancel saw daylight”.



Earliest Known Usage – or Cancel Date Error *Mike Schumacher*

This cover either qualifies for the earliest known usage for all three stamps or a simple cancel date error at the Akureyri Post Office. As the Europa XIX Monumental Building stamp was issued May 2, 1978 and the two 50th Anniversary of Flight Service stamps were issued June 21, 1978. However, the cover received an Akureyri B8e type cancel on 24.VII 1972, nearly 6 years before the stamps were issued.



That would be one for the records book! However, further exploration of the reverse of the cover provides additional information. The receiving cancel on the reverse is from Godhavn, Greenland on 28.7.1978, which should lead to the conclusion that the Akureyri cancel on the front is a cancel date error and not usage of the stamps nearly six years before they were issued.

An interesting cover none-the-less.



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Keflavík C1 crown cancel – genuine and counterfeit. *Ron Collin*

Many years ago, in a Thomas Hoiland auction, there appeared a Crown and Posthorn cancel purported to be a legitimate C1 KEFLAVÍK. It seemed to be a decent looking example, even though it didn't look quite right. At that time I was not aware of any "problems" with C&P cancellations. Bidding at the time, was as if the item was legitimate, and I was the successful bidder. I'm still glad that I own it.

Subsequent to my acquiring that item, I was made aware of the existence of skeptical cancels.

The following appears in the *Islandssamlarna* book on Crown and Posthorn Cancels.

“Ink cancellations known on the aur stamps. (Keflavik). Counterfeits are known to have a smaller diameter than the original.”

Over these past many years, since that particular Hoiland auction, I have been looking to see if any other examples have been showing up either in auctions, dealer inventories, exhibits, etc. I wanted to see if these smaller Keflavik C&P cancels were to be as prevalent as the numerous Skilling forgeries that still plague the hobby. Here, for comparison, is a legitimate C&P cancel of Keflavik, along with my copy of the "skeptical" copy. The legitimate cancel measures 24 mm in diameter. The "skeptical" copy measures 21 mm in diameter.



I just wanted to write this up, so that the readership of this fine magazine, can see an example of the smaller Keflavik C&P cancel. I am not aware of any articles that may have been written about this smaller Keflavik example. To the best of my knowledge, I don't believe that any article may have shown a scan of the smaller Keflavik cancel.

There are certain chemicals that when used to remove excess ink that tends to accumulate on cancelers, causes the rubber of the canceler to swell in size, (Skinnastaður and Fagurhólmsmýri, 24 mm to 29 mm) come to mind. But I am not aware of any possible chemical reaction that could make the canceler smaller in size, possibly from 24 mm to 21 mm.

If any of the readers of IPM have any other examples of this "smaller" Keflavík Crown and Posthorn cancel, kindly send a scan(s) to the Editor.

(Ed.) I must confess that until I saw Ron's article, I had no recollection of seeing that reference to a smaller Keflavík C1 cancel in the *Islandssamlarna* book on Crown and Posthorn Cancels; nor do I recall any articles on the subject. I hastened to measure my own copy and it is 24mm! This should, I hope, provoke a reaction from our learned readers!

Late use of C2e Vatnsfjörður

Sveinn Ingi Sveinsson showed these images on the Frímerkjaspjall Facebook site and gave permission to for them to be shown to our readers.



The crown cancel handbook makes no reference to any late use of this crown cancel, and nor could I find any mention in all the articles I have collected down the years on crown cancels. However, Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson on page 143 of *Icelandic Numeral cancels 1903 – 1960* does make a passing reference to the C2e crown cancel being recorded at Vatnsfjörður on 1902 Christian IX and 1907 Two Kings. Below is his example on a pair of Two Kings 5 aurar Official issue.



The Numeral handbook gives no indication that the cancel N1a 121 used by Vatnsfjörður was damaged or unavailable at any time. It may simply be a case of the crown cancel being occasionally pulled out of the drawer and used during the period of the Two Kings issues. However, its re-appearance on 1930s issues is harder to explain with both the numeral and a B1a bridge cancel presumably available.

Come on crown cancel collectors! The editor would be pleased to hear from any reader who can show any examples of the C2e on post 1903 issues, and of course any opinions for the reasons for its extended use.

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B2a Valþjófsstaður used at Viðivellir Ytri

This is one of those elusive examples briefly used at a second office before the arrival of the “proper” named cancel. The B8e Viðivellir Ytri arrived sometime in 1967. The date on this example is 1.1.1967 and is probably philatelic, as many perfectly struck bridge cancels seem to be when found on a yellow Europa stamp of 1962. Nevertheless, it proves the B2a Valþjófsstaður was sent to Viðivellir Ytri. There must be more examples showing use before the arrival of the B8e. This was sold for ISK 7,500 on the December Safnari auction. Keep searching and let us see what you can find !



Mýrar C1 crown cancel on Official stamp *Steinar Fridthorsson*



MÝRAR C1 on a 10 aurar Christian IX Official stamp. According to the database by Brian Flack and IslandsKlubben, this is the only known copy on an official stamp and one of only four stamps/pairs from the Christian IX issue to bear such a cancel. Two crown cancelling devices of type C1 with the text MÝRAR were assigned, each to a different collecting station. After Wilbur Jónsson's thorough inspection of scans and other images of stamps and covers showing strikes of the two cancellations, around the year 2017, the consensus among those collectors that were consulted was that the two devices were identical. This, rather than what was previously believed, that there had been certain distinguishable differences between the two devices. :- Sold for 1985 SEK. Steinar provided the following for the benefit of our ever increasing number of Icelandic readers:-

MÝRAR C1 á 10 aura Kristjáns IX merki. Þjónustumerki. Skvt. gagnagrunni Brian Flack og Islandsklubben er hér um að ræða EINA ÞJÓNUSTUMERKIÐ og eitt af aðeins fjórum merkjum/pörum með mynd Kristjáns IX sem stimplað er MÝRAR. Tveimur stimplum af gerð C1 með textanum MÝRAR var útlutað, sínum á hvorn bæinn. Eftir nána skoðun sem Wilbur Jónsson gerði á þeim afstimplunum og því myndefni af slíku sem þekkt var í kringum árið 2017, voru þeir safnarar sem að verkefninu höfðu komið sammála um að stimplarnir hefðu verið eins að öllu leyti. Fram að þeim tíma hafði verið talið að ákveðinn greinanlegur hefði verið á stimplunum tveimur.



The above image shows an incredible strike of the MÝRAR cancel allocated to the farm in Dýrafjörður, it is on a cover from the collection of Indriði Pálsson.

Hraungerði 5/11 – cancelled to order! *Ebbe Eldrup*



Recently, this nice looking 3 skilling stamp was offered from Iceland on E-Bay. It was not sold.

Looking at the stamp I immediately remembered a similar postmark from Hraungerði also 5/11 used to cancel Þrír stamps perf. 14 to order. Examples of this are shown below. A block of four also used to exist, see below.



Block of four with small Þrír + 3 on the upper two stamps and large Þrír + 3 on the two lower stamps. Cancelled to order with Hraungerði 5/11.

Be aware of these and keep them out of your collection!



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Grýtubakki R3 in Facit ??? (Issue 60)

If I had thought this through properly in the first place, I would never have made that appeal in Issue 60 for readers to send images or report how many copies of C1 Grýtubakki they possessed. Of course, if the response had produced 40+ copies, it would have just confirmed the validity of the Facit R3 valuation. The fact that the response was more like 15 or 16 examples, proves nothing, because there is no way of knowing how many others are held which were not reported by readers. Sorry! Thank you for the few of you who did reply. I do not regret showing that 60,000ISK example sold by Safnari. I also regret omitting the accent over the 'y' in Issue 60! I will leave it at that.

Collecting Icelandic Philately has been a fun and interesting experience for more than thirty years. First it was a matter of collecting the stamps, cancels, covers and postcards and on and on it went. The journey seems to take a variety of turns along the way and there seems to be an endless amount to learn about Iceland and Icelandic Philately. And the people that I have met along the way have been wonderful! Sometimes the philatelic journey takes a turn that you don't even see coming until it's staring you in the face. This occurred to me unexpectedly in 2019 when I suddenly had to fill in for another person and go to Norway to attend the Nordia Stamp Exposition, as the SCC Commissioner. This trip introduced me to Iceland's "Color Proofs" by the Swiss Printer – Courvoisier. Until this time, I had not paid too much attention to who had printed Iceland's stamps except for the Thomas del Rue Company in England (who printed the 1972 Iceland World Chess Championship stamp for "The Match of the Century").

I came across the Courvoisier "color proofs" at one of the dealer booths (JF-Stamps DK) and was at first intrigued by the ones that would fit in and add something new and interesting to some of my current exhibits (so of course I had to purchase them). Kim had a number of these color proofs from Iceland stamps of the 1970s and even after the trip, I kept thinking about them and how they would make for any interesting exhibit, that would be quite different from my other exhibits and exhibits at stamp shows. So of course, this led to more research about Courvoisier Printers and what did I have in my collection of Icelandic covers that would supplement the color proofs to make a nice exhibit. With a purchase of about half of the color proofs that Kim had, I was able to put together a three-frame exhibit and now with a subsequent purchase of the additional color proofs, the exhibit should expand to a five-frame exhibit. This article is meant to provide information about Courvoisier Printers and show the color proofs and connect them with usage of the stamps and Icelandic philately.

The History of the Courvoisiers' (the short version) - The Courvoisier firm at La Chau-de-Funds issued its first newspaper (*L'Impartial*) on January 1, 1881. Prior to that for generations the Courvoisiers' had devoted themselves to fine watch and hat making. Philippe Courvoisier's (the hatter from Le Locle) ads appeared in some of the earliest editions of the *Feuille d' Avis des Montagnes* published by Balthasar Luthard working with the Girardet family of Le Locle (engravers). Philippe loved writing and went on to become a printer and journalist. The *Feuille* grew to include articles and other information in addition to merchant advertising. Philippe encouraged his son Eugene Courvoisier to train and learn the printing trade. Eugene apprenticed as a binder, caster and typesetter with the *Gazette de Lausanne*. In 1830, Eugene returned to Le Locle and worked as a binder and bookseller, as well as helping Philippe with the paper. In 1843, Eugene took over the paper from his father and soon replaced the lever-and-ball press with a mechanical cylinder type press. The format and appearance of the paper was improved. More articles and serial stories were introduced to the readers of the paper. The first such serial story in 1846 was Dumas's "*Count of Monte Christo*". These innovations brought increased readership, fame and prestige to the *Feuille d' Avis des Montagnes*. In 1862, Eugene's two sons, Paul and Alexandre succeeded him in the operation of the paper. They went on to open a branch in La Chau-de-Funds in France (the *L'Avante-Garde*). They weathered the political issues of the times and pushed forward with a strong and energetic belief in the freedom of the press. The years went by and a number of other family members carried out the business. In 1928, they purchased a photogravure press with the intention of printing postage stamps. They first began to print stamps for the Swiss Postal Authority in 1931. In 1940, Henri Courvoisier was succeeded by Guido Essig-Courvoisier who created the Heliogravure department. Since that time, they have printed stamps for more than 80 different countries.

The first Icelandic stamps printed by Courvoisier Printing was the September 19, 1960 Europa issues. The printing process used was “Halftone recess”. This process breaks up an image into a series of dots, so as to reproduce the full tone range of a photograph or artwork using screens inserted over the plate with a varying number of lines per inch depending on the application and desired quality.



During the 1970s, Courvoisier Printing printed seventy-two different Icelandic stamps. The following examples show some of those stamps, as well as examples of usage of the stamps. By highlighting the color proofs lends itself to introducing a variety of aspects of Icelandic philately (cachet makers, postal rates, stamp subjects, etc.). The color proofs shown in this article are only about a third of the Iceland stamps between 1970 – 1979 printed by Courvoisier Printing and it certainly provides an excellent opportunity to showcase Icelandic Philatelic material and information and makes for a very unique and colorful exhibit.

Without further ado, here are some of those color proofs and other Icelandic Philatelic material and information.

“Year of Conservation” stamps – issued 25.08.1970

Color proofs Purple Bracken Saxifrage Final Design
Stamp design by **Eypor Einarsson**

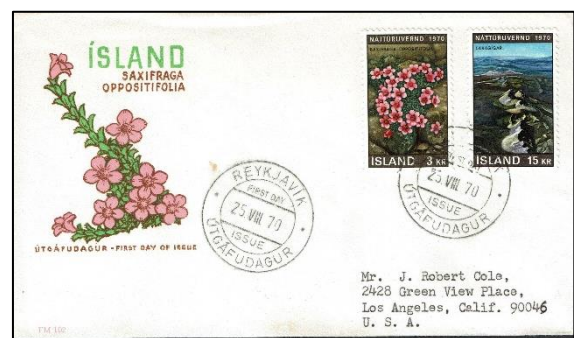


Lakagigar Crater Stamp design by **Sveinn Olafsson**



(Lakagigar – 25km long crater row in south-central Iceland)

FDC to U.S.A. cachet **FM 102** by Frimerkjamodin (Stamp Center)



Surface letter rate to countries outside Scandinavia (Jan. 1969 – June 1971) 1600aur to 40gm.

“25th Anniversary of the U.N.” stamp – issued 23.10.1970

Color Proofs
Stamp design by **Haukur Halldorsson**



Final Design



(Jubilee slogan – “FRIDUR OG FRAMFARIR” PEACE and PROGRESS)

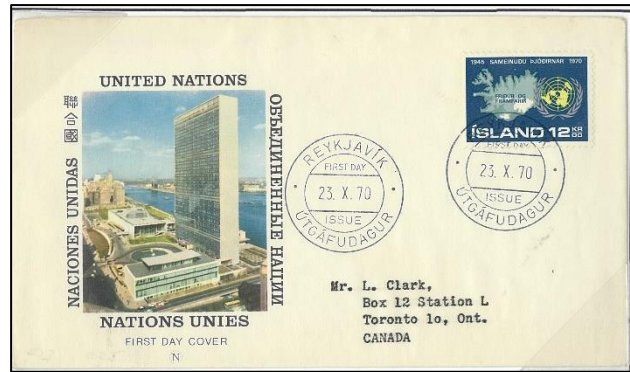
FDC Airmail cover to U.S.A.



Airmail letter rate countries outside Europe (Jan. 1969 – June 1971) 4000aur to 40gm

FDC cover to Canada

Cachet by "N" (Fritz Neve – Danish stamp dealer)



Letter rate countries outside Europe (Jan. 1969 – June 1971) 1000aur to 20gm

1971 "The Post Giro Service" stamps – issued 22.06.1971

Color Proofs Final Design
Stamp design by **Margret Arnadottir**



FDC to U.S.A.

Surface letter rate countries outside Europe (Jan. 1969 – June 1970)
1600aur to 40gm



Inland letter Siglufjordur to Kopavogur

Inland Printed Matter rate (July 1973 – Mar. 1974) 10kr to 20gm



Post Giro service began in Austria in 1883.

Legislative authority in Iceland for the introduction of the Post Giro Service began in the 1940's, but the service didn't become operational until April 30, 1971.

In other Scandinavian countries the Post Giro service began:
Denmark 1920 Sweden 1925 Finland 1940 Norway 1943

1971 "Fishing Industry" stamps – issued 18.11.1971

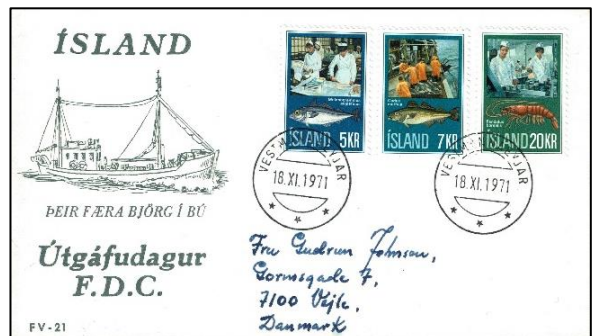
Color Proofs (set of 3 stamps) Final Design



Surface letter rate to Nordic countries
(July 1971 – Mar. 1972) 30kr to 500gm >>>

FDC to Denmark

Cachet **F.V. 21** by Frimerkjshusid (Stamp House)



1972 "Hothouse Plants" Stamps – issued 23.08.1972

(Greenhouse gardening utilizing geothermal heating)

Color Proofs

(set of 3 stamps)

Final Design

Stamp design by Haukur Halldorsson



Airmail cover to Sweden Postmarked Keflavik FLUGVOLLUR

Airmail letter rate to Nordic Countries (May 1972-June 1973) 24kr to 40gm



Registered FDC to Canada

Cachet F.F. 63 by Iceland Stamp Company



Registered FDC to U.S.A.

Cachet FM 124 by Frimerkjamoðstodin



Surface Registered letter rate countries outside Scandinavia (July 1971 – June 1973) 24kr to 100gm + 16kr reg. fee

Receiving cancel on reverse: Toronto, Ont. Aug. 27, 1972

Receiving cancel on reverse: Edmonds, WA Aug 28, 1972

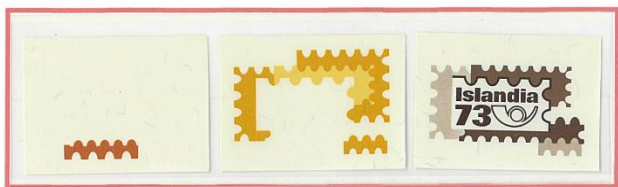
Islandia 73 stamps – issued 31.08.1973

(Islandi 73 - ten day stamp exhibition to commemorate 100th Anniversary of Iceland’s first stamps)

Color Proofs

Stamp design by **Edda Sigurdardottir**

Final Design



Islandia Postcard depicting Iceland’s first stamps, Islandia stamps and Art Gallery building & special Islandia 73 postmark

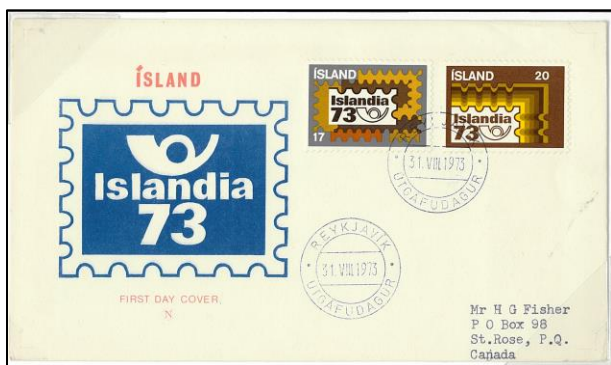


FDC to Canada

Islandia 73 Cachet by “N” Fritz Neve

Inland FDC Cachet by **Icelandic Post Office**

Icelandic Coat of Arms (Guardian Spirits) cachet



“Centenary of World Meteorological Organization” stamp – issued 14.11.1973

Color Proof

Stamp design by Hilmar Sigurdsson

Final Design



Registered FDC to U.S.A.

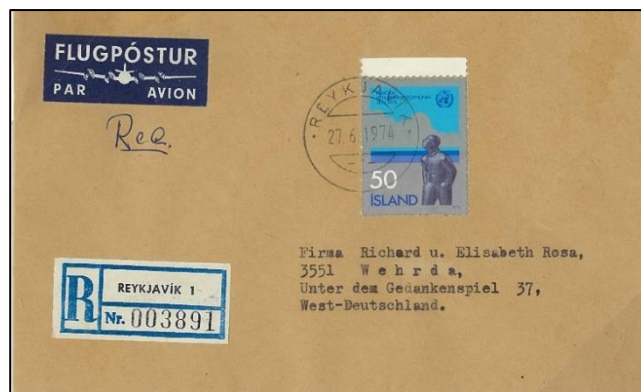
Weather map of the world cachet by "N" Fritz Neve



Surface registered letter rate outside Nordic countries (July 1973 – Mar. 1974) 15kr to 20gm + 25kr reg fee

Registered Airmail cover to West-Germany

Airmail reg. letter rate to Germany (27.06.1974)



Registered Airmail rate outside Nordi Countries (April 1974 to Dec. 1974) 20kr to 20gm + 30kr reg fee

"1100th Anniversary of Settlement" stamps – issued 12.04.1974

Color Proofs

(set off 11 stamps)

Final Designs

Designs chosen for each stamp were works of art symbolizing a significant event from that era. The 39kr stamp design is a drawing by artist Nina Tryggvadottir symbolizing Iceland's conversion to Christianity. The 100kr stamp design depicts a 15th century alter cloth from the church at Stafafell meant to symbolize women in society.



Hand-made Leather envelope by Porsteinn Sigvaldason with full set of stamps and special postmark.



Porsteinn Sigvaldason created these leather covers for first day stamp issue for about a 20 year period.

Color Proofs

1100th Anniversary of Settlement

Final Design



Stamp design symbolizes foundation of Parliament – painting by **J. Johannesson** depicting the arrival of Grimur Geitskor at the Althing (site of Parliament). Grimur was one of the founding members of the Parliament.

Inland letter

with special 1100th Anniversary of Settlements cancel from Hella

Inland printed matter rate (April 1974 – December 1974) 13kr to 20gm

Letter to Germany

with special Selfoss Stamp show cancel

Surface Printed matter rate to Germany (Apr. 1974 – Dec. 1974) 13kr to 20gm



“Europa XV Sculptures” stamps – issued 29.04.1974

Color Proofs

Final Design

Stamp designer Asgrimur Sveinsson

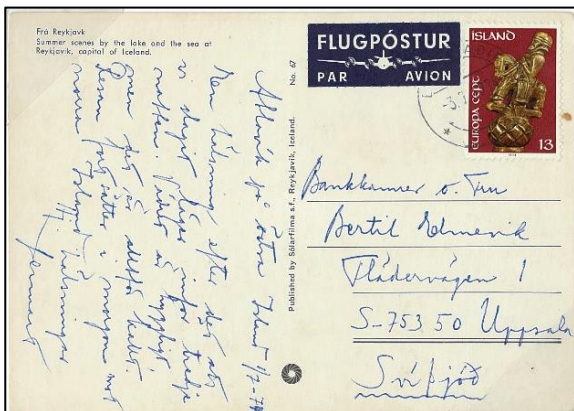


Stamp Design depicts – 18th century wood sculpture Horse and Rider

Commercial Inland Letter

Inland registered letter rate (Oct. 1975 – Apr. 1976)

81kr to 250gm + 60kr reg. fee



<<< Postcard to Sweden

Reykjavik Scenes postcard by Solarfilma

Postcard rate to Sweden (Apr.-1974-Dec. 1974) 13kr

“Europa XV Sculpture” stamps – issued 29.04.1974

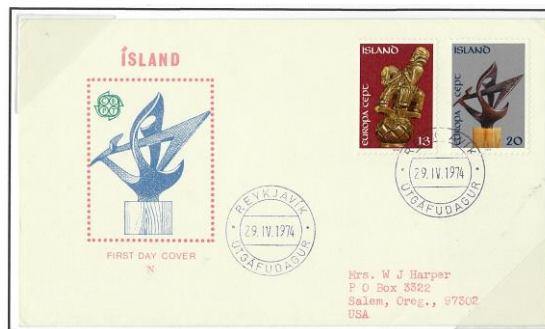
Color Proofs Stamp designer **Asgrimur Sveinsson** Final Design



Stamp depicts bronze statue by Asmundur Sveinsson titled *“Through the Sound Barrier”* Asmundur Sveinsson (20.05.1893 – 09.12.1982) Born in Kolstadir (remote West Fjords area) Icelandic sculptor who studied in Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and France under various sculptors. He is known for his abstract figurative works of men and women at work.

FDC cover to U.S.A.

Cachet by **“N” Fritz Neve**
Surface letter rate Non-Nordic countries
(Apr. 1974 – Dec. 1974) 20kr to 20gm



“Europa XVI “Malarkonst” (The Painter’s Art) stamps – issued 12.03.1975

Color proofs

Final Design



Stamp design is a painting by Porvaldur Skulason titled *Haustfugl* (Autum Bird) Another of his paintings *The Age of Sturlungscan* be found on the 17kr stamp in the 1100th Anniversary of the Settlements set of stamps. (See leather envelope on page 7)

Ship cover Seydesfjordur to Reykjavik via Tornshaven, Faroe Islands



Ship cover – boxed *Fra Island* indicates cover postmarked on board ship *“MV SMYRIL”*. Transit cancel in Torshaven, Faroe Islands and on reverse Reykjavik receiving cancel.

Color Proofs

Final Design



Stamp design is a painting by artist **Johannes S. Karval** titled *“The Passage Between Two Worlds”*. Kjarval was a prolific cubist and abstract landscape painter. He was born in poverty and worked as a fisherman, spending his spare time drawing. He is depicted on the Icelandic 2000kr banknote.

FDC cachet by “N” Fritz Neve



“International Women’s Year” stamp – issued 15.10.1975

Color Proofs

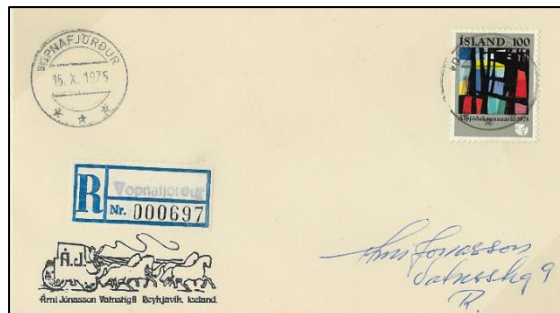
Final Design



Stamp design is an abstract painting by Nina Tryggvadottir. Another of Nina Tryggvadottir’s paintings can be found on the 30kr stamp from the 1100th Anniversary of Settlements stamp set. (See leather envelope on page 67)

Inland Registered cover Vopnafjordur to Reykjavik

Cachet design is business logo of Arni Jonasson



Inland registered letter rate (Oct. 1975 – April 1976) 27kr to 20gm + 60kr registration fee

Vopnafjordur – fishing village in Northeast Iceland Receiving office 1.1.1873 to 31.3.1888; Post office since 1888 Vopnafjordur location of my great-grand parents farm & Einar Olafsson (great grand father) delivered the mail between Vopnafjordur and Porshofn.

“Skogsbruk” (Forestry) stamp – issued 19.11.1975

Color Proofs

Final Design

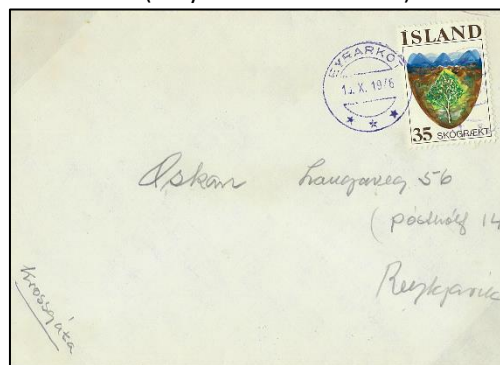
Inland Letter Eyrarkot to Reykjavik

Inland letter rate (May 1976 to Dec. 1976) 35kr to 20gm



Re-forestation stamp design by artist Fridricka Geirsdottir (she designed a total of six different stamps)

Icelandic settlement years – forests covered 25% - 40% of Iceland, but the forests were cleared to the point that less than 1% remained until efforts to re-grow the forest were undertaken. Forest now covers about 5% of Iceland.



Eyrarkot (farm) – was a receiving office 1.1.1962 to 31.12.1975 & a Post Office 1.1.1976 to 11.1.1983

“50th Anniversary of the Red Cross” stamp – issued 15.10.1975

Color Proofs

Stamp design by Hilmar Sigurdursson

Final Design

Inland Cover

Neskaupstadur to Neskaupstadur

Inland Printed matter rate (Oct. 1975 – Apr. 1976) 23kr to 20gm Canceled Oct. 15, 1975 - two weeks into new rate period



Icelandic Red Cross was founded on December 10th 1924. It’s main emphasis is on providing emergency response assistance where it is needed. The first Chairman of the Icelandic Red Cross was Sveinn Bjornsson, who later became Iceland’s first President.



President Bjornsson set of stamps issued 01.09.1952. Stamp designer: S. Gudmundsson Printing type: Steel engraving recess 4 different colors & denominations



FDC to U.S.A.

Cachet **FM 171** by Frimerkjamodstodin
 Surface Printed Matter rate non-Nordic countries
 1 Oct. 1975 – 30 Apr. 1976) 23kr to 20gm
 Stamp issued two weeks into new postal rate



Inland letter Vestmannaeyjar to Reykjavik

Inland Printed Matter rate (1 Oct. 1975 – 30 Apr. 1976) 23kr to 20gm
 Canceled 23.04 1976 – 1 week before end of rate period



Vestmannaeyjar – group of island off the south-central coast of Iceland only the island of Heimaey is populated (approx.. 4400)
 Vestmannaeyjar Post Office 1.1.1873 to 23.01.1973 when volcano erupted and the island had to be evacuated. Post Office reopened 18.8.1973

“Maining Painting” (Husafell woods) stamp - issued 18.03.1976 (seven different color proofs for one stamp)
Color Proofs Stamp design artwork by **Asgrimur Jonsson** Final Design

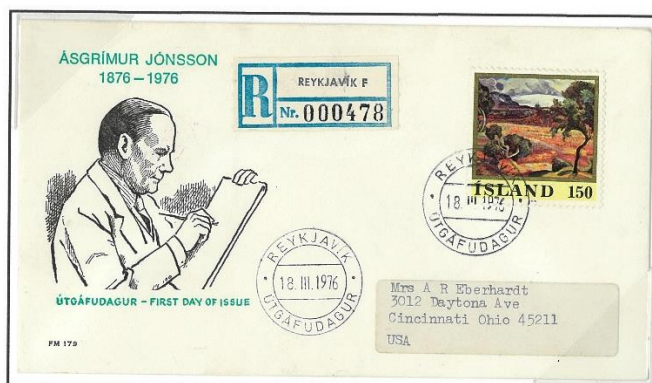


FDC “Island Coat of Arms” Cachet (Design depicts a shield with Icelandic Flag surrounded by the four Guardian spirits, dragon, bird, bull & a giant.
 Cachet designer – unknown



Registered FDC to U.S.A.

Artist Asgrimur Jonsson cachet **FM 179**
 Reg. letter rate to non-Nordic countries
 . 1975 to Apr. 1976) 80kr to 100gm + 60kr reg. fee

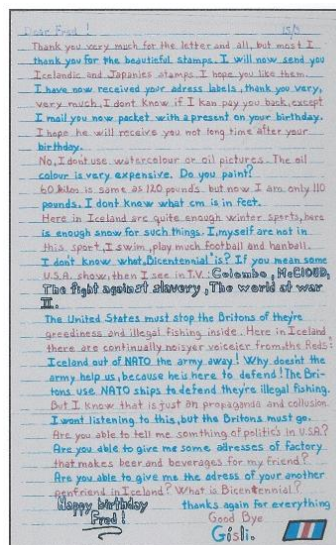
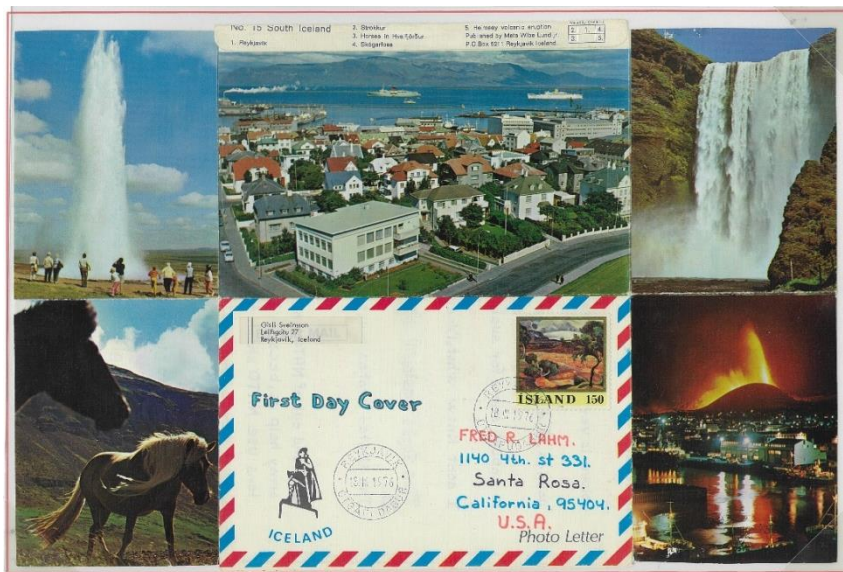


A most unusual folded FDC Airmail letter to U.S.A.

One sheet of paper that folds to the airmail letter size envelope.

Airmail letter rate to countries outside of Scandinavia (1 Oct. 1975 – 30 Apr. 1976) 150kr to 100gm

Reverse side of letter reduced



Additional items were included in the envelope including the Post Office announcement about the stamp.

“Europa XVIII (Landscape) stamps – issued 02.03.1977

Color Proofs Ofaerufuss (waterfall) Final Design

Stamp design - photograph by Rafn Hafnfjord



Stamp design photograph of Kirkjufell mountain by Gunnar Hannesson. Stamps designed by Thorstur Magnusson

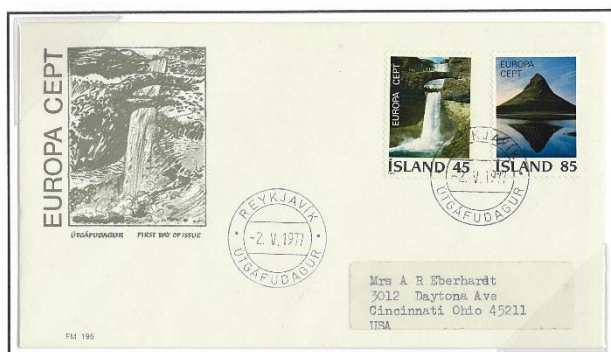


Additional photo shows Kirkjufell by Grundarfjordur.

FDC to U.S.A.

Cachet FM 195 by Frimerkjamoðstodin (Stamp Center)

Letter rate to non-Nordic countries (Jan. 1977 – Jan. 1978) 85kr to 20gm



Commercial Express Mail cover to Sweden

Express mail rate to Nordic countries (Mar. 1979 – May 1979) (only a 3 month period) 90kr to 20gm + 440kr Express fee

Inaugural Flight cover to France

Airmail Printed matter rate to Europe (Jan. 1977 -Jan. 1978) 45kr to 20gm



“Hekla Lava Landscape” stamp issued 02.03.1978

Color Proofs

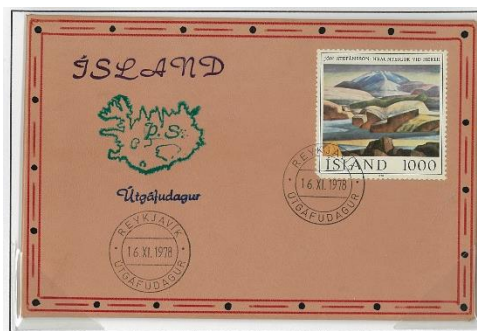


Final Design



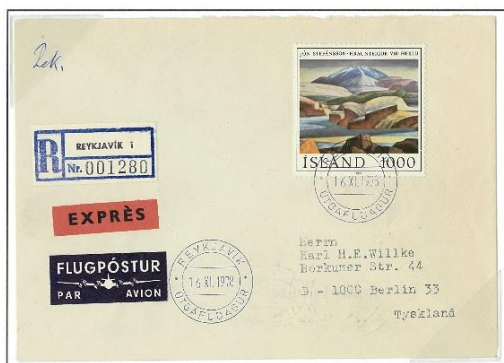
Stamp design is a painting titled *Hraunteigur vid Heklaby* by Jon Stefansson, Iceland’s first modern landscape artist - focus on showing the grandeur of nature. Jon studied art under Matisse in the early 1900’s.

FDC Leather envelope by Porsteinn Sigvaldason



Registered Express Airmail FDC to Germany

Reg. Express airmail rate to Europe (May 1978 – Dec. 1978) 430kr to 100gm + 170kr reg. fee + 340kr Express fee



Berlin 1 & Berlin 33 transit and arrival cancels on reverse

Commercial Registered Inland COD – Postkrafa cover

Inland reg. Postkrafa ltr rate (1 Feb. 1981 – 30 May 1981) 180kr to 20gm + 790aur COD fee (for amount up to 10,000kr) + 410kr reg. fee Reykjavik to Bilduladalur (20.02.1981 cancel)



In 1981, the Kroner was re-valued – 100 old Kr to 1 new Kr

“Europa XX” (History of Posts and Telecommunications) stamps – issued 30.04.1979

Color Proofs Mailbag & Posthorn



Final Design



CONCLUSION:

From this rare look at “color proofs” of modern Icelandic stamps, coupled with the stamps usage it is apparent that:

1. The printing process and color proofs are an important aspect of creating quality stamps,
2. Courvoisier printers of Switzerland printed more than 70 different Icelandic stamps between 1970-1979,
3. Icelandic nature, art and history are a significant component of Icelandic philately,
4. A numerous cachet makers created a plethora of cachets (for example: FM created more than 90 different designs during this ten-year period),
5. The Icelandic Postal rate system is very complex and the rates changed frequently (for example: Inland rates changed a dozen times during this period, and some rate periods were for only three or six months; additionally there were separate rates for mail to Scandinavian countries and Non-Scandinavian countries,
6. A wide variety of special postmarks and cachets were created for various special events, and
7. There are many interesting remote postal locations that contribute to making the study of Icelandic philately a fun and worthwhile endeavor.

How Does One Explain This? *Mike Schumacher*

A cover from the Icelandic Consulate in Florida? But why would it have a KÓPAVOGUR registration label? If anyone can help explain it for me that would be greatly appreciated.

