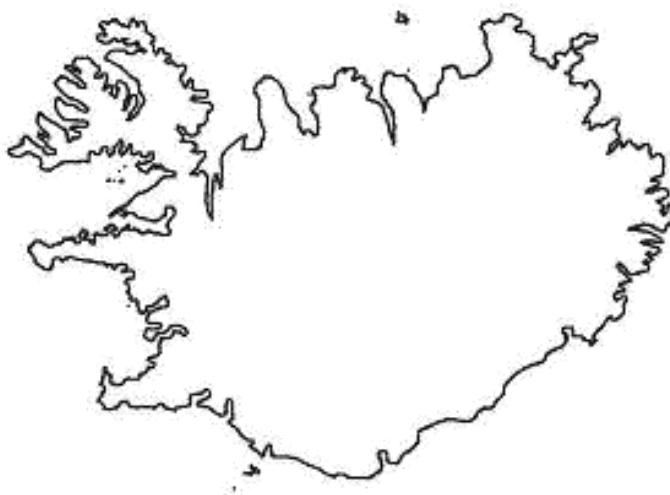
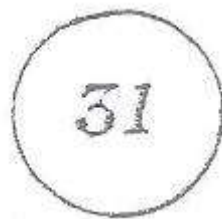


# ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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## Iceland Philatelic Magazine

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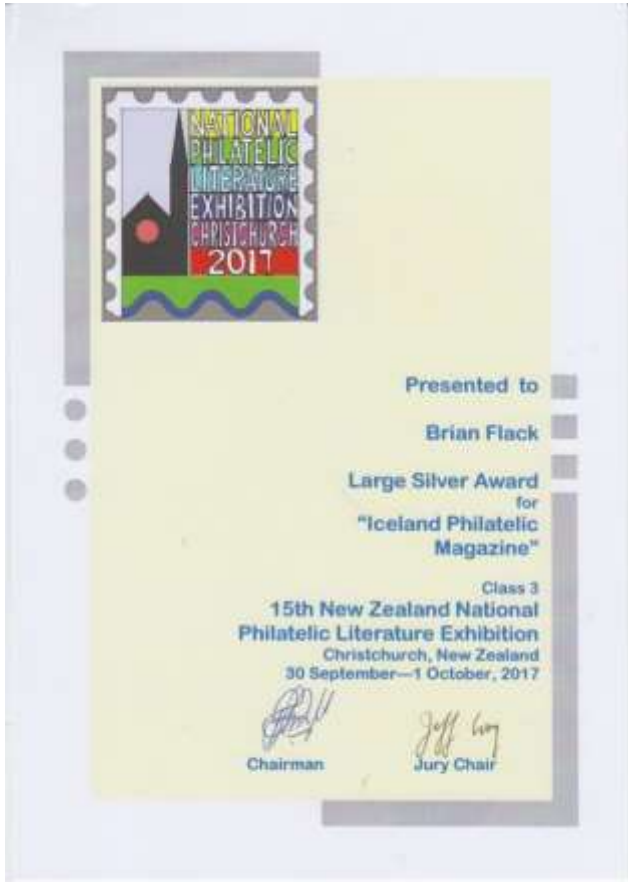
Please let me have your articles if you want them in the next issue which will be January. If you need help with translations let me know.

The editor will help with the English if necessary.

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## News/Comment

So here we are, 2 years and 24 issues old! There are currently 136 readers, and the national breakdown is as follows:- USA 33: Iceland 30: UK 19: Denmark 14: Sweden 7: Holland 7: Canada 6: Germany 5: Norway 4: France 3: 1 each from New Zealand, Czech Republic, China, Brazil, Hungary, Singapore, Spain and Italy. If you know of any Iceland collector who does not receive the magazine and might like to join the reader list, please put in touch with the editor.



Earlier this year, David Loe entered our magazine in the 15<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Philatelic Literature Exhibition held at Christchurch 30<sup>th</sup> September-1<sup>st</sup> October. The result was a Large Silver Award as can be seen on the certificate shown below. The word is spreading It would be nice if we can add a few collectors from the Southern Hemisphere as a result



Þór Þorsteins. August 5, 1932 – October 30, 2017

Þór Þorsteins died at Landakot Hospital at 85 years of age. Þór was one of the founders of Félags frímerkja-safnara which celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. He was awarded the gold stamp of the society in 1995 and was made an honorary member in 2007 for his great contribution to the society and to stamp collecting in the country. Þór exhibited his collections, both in Iceland and abroad, and received numerous awards. He authored many important pioneering studies covering a wide range of philatelic subjects. Some of these remain our standard references today. In later years he carried out much research into postal archives to the benefit of postal historians. We can all be extremely thankful to him for what he contributed to Icelandic philately. He will be badly missed.

## Jay Smith responds to some questions in Issue 23

Why a long cover in an advanced collection. (Page 9)

Question: Has anybody compiled a list of Icelandic stamps with the common postal rates extant at time of issue, for each stamp's denomination, with the dates in which that rate was in use? There is such a listing for Danish stamps and it is extremely revealing about stamps (such as the Icelandic stamp in this article) that had short rate-as-intended lives. It would be a great project for somebody with some time on their hands.

Iceland airmail cover to Finland. (Page 10)

This cover looks legitimate (but very unusual) to me in the sense that I don't recognize the addressee as someone to whom I have seen philatelic mail. The Finnish receiving mark on reverse appears to be an "AVION" receiver applied at the Helsinki airport post office. If I am correct, that would indicate that it was carried by air. That the cover is under-franked for airmail is not a surprise -- I am instead surprised when non-standard Icelandic airmail covers from this era are correctly franked! Given the complexity of the airmail postal rates, it is quite unusual for the transit/receiving post offices (Swedish and Finnish, at a minimum) to either know or care if the rate was exactly correct. Additionally, I can't see the MALMÖ cancellations quite clearly enough, but I think I can make out an "... LBR" at the bottom which would indicate that it was removed by post office staff from a letter box. In the case of letterbox mail, and especially if there is no return address (I do not know if there is one on the reverse), it is impossible to get additional postage from the sender -- and even if the shortage was recognized (which I don't think it was), it was not "short enough" perhaps to worry about figuring out the exact amount of the shortage and doing the markings for international postage due mail. Sometimes, especially in the case of letterbox mail and/or ship mail, it is just more important to process 100% of the flow instead of one complicated letter holding it up and ending up holding up some percentage of the flow until the next day -- keep in mind that this (and other mail) had to get on an airplane that was going to leave at a scheduled time.

The letterbox (if that is an "... LBR" mark) in this case was probably on board a ship that was considered to be coming from Denmark, probably one of the ferries. So, then the question is why was an Icelandic-franked cover put into a letter box on a ferry coming from Denmark. In that case, I am guessing perhaps a traveler or tourist from (for transiting from) Iceland had not gotten around to mailing the letter in Iceland since it might be faster to just carry it by hand until arriving in Europe and then posting by airmail. I am doing lots of guessing and making assumptions, but I think it is not a "joke or fantasy".

Another ship-mail riddle. (Page 15)

The postmark is a very standard on-board ship's post office cancellation "SJP 7 GÖTEBORG - NEW YORK". It is illustrated in a number of places. I can't find my copy of the most recent book on such ship mail; however, it is in the 1955 Swedish cancellation handbook on page 283. The cancel is stated to have been used 1928-1940 and 1942-1952. There were full post offices, with postal (not only ship) staff, on board the GRIPSHOLM, KUNGSHOLM, and the STOCKHOLM. There is at least one book devoted to the subject of such cruise ship mail, but I can't find the title at this moment. This cancellation is quite common on typical Swedish-franked mail, but I can't recall having had an example (in 44 years) on Icelandic-franked mail.

Unusual "S" Mark. (Page 27)

I have seen this mark several times. It did not attract my attention so I don't recall if it was on Icelandic stamps or not, but my vague recollection is that it was on Icelandic stamps and it may have been quite a few of them. It may have also been on stamps of some other Scandinavian/Nordic country as well.

I cannot prove the origin of the mark, but I don't know why Mr. Bergman states that it is "inside the gum" (under the gum?) or why Mr. Bergman dismisses the possibility of it being an owner's/collector's mark. I am 99.5% sure that it is an owner's mark applied on top of the gum based on the examples I have seen.

Jay

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### Ahrenberg & Floten (Issue 23 p.25/26)

From Brian Stwalley

In response to Ron's inquiry I can report one example with the following information:

R label 378

Prepared by Hansen

Franked with 26.05kr

Addressee is Joseph Jaeger (New York City)

From Wilbur Jonsson

Somewhere I have a Swedish Ahrenberg cover from which the stamps floated off and were replaced by the stamps from another cover -- these were then tied to the cover by an arrival cancel.

Wilbur

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### F.F.S. publisher? *Mike Schumacher*



Can a reader of IPM answer this question?

Who is the publisher of Iceland covers issued by F.F.S?

Thank you!

Mike S.

## The Mossgreen (Australia) Hans von Strokirch sale

The prices achieved for the crown cancels on card/cover stand out amongst other spectacular results.  
All prices in Australian dollars



Lot 210 Skorrastaður Est. 300/2,640



Lot 244 Grindavík Est.1,000/10,200



Lot 246 Hvammur Est.500/5,760



Lot 248 Saurbær Est.1,000/12,000



Lot 249 Skinnastaður Est.300/3,840



Lot 250 Steinsstaðir Est.400/5,280



A remarkable manuscript cancel

Lot 205 Skinnastaður "Skst/Apr 93"

Est. 600/2,280

## Christian IX – early use *Ebbe Eldrup*

It is well known that the issue of new stamps with the portrait of King Christian 9th in Iceland was announced on October 9th 1902.

However, it is not easy to find usages of Christian IX stamps and postal stationery during 1902.

Below, I illustrate the earliest known date for a single stamp, for a cover and for a 10 aur single postcard.



Left: 4 aur cancelled

Reykjavík 10-10-1902

Middle: Pair with Þjónusta error Reykjavík 17-11-1902

Right: Þjónusta error

Leith Ship letter No 25 02

Registered UPU cover with 36 aur (should have been  $20+15 = 35$  aur)

Blönduós 14-10-1902

10 aur Brjefspjald via UK to Denmark.

Reykjavík 18-10-1902

Ship Letter Troon

Kjøbenhavn 26.10.02

Should anybody have earlier material from this issue I urge you to share this information:

ebbe.eldrup@gmail.com

## Unusual destinations ~ H and I

### Hawaii



Akureyri B2c dated 12.IV.50.

150aur UPU surface rate from 23.3.50 to 30.9.53

Contents QSL radio card.

T F 5 T P									
THÓRHALLUR PÁLSSON Hafnarstræti 30, Akureyri, Iceland									
DATE	GMT TIME	STATION	BAND	SIGS	H	S	T		
12-IV-50	1805	KH6ES	1400	Q	5	7	9		
METH. <i>Somato</i>		REV. <i>Bc 343</i>		ANT. <i>Windom</i> <i>75 Kork-Palm</i>					
PSE. <i>1000 QSL</i>									

### Israel



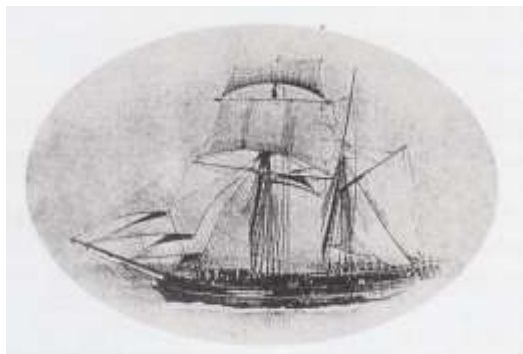
Reykjavík B1d dated 8.XII.1956, Jerusalem receiving cancel on reverse 15.12.56.

3kr25 all in airmail rate for 6-10gm from 1.10.53 to 30.6.58, plus 2kr registration plus 3kr Express. Total 8kr25

## French fishermen in Icelandic waters *Pór þorsteins*

Previously published in Frímerkjablaðið 19/2009 and reproduced with their permission

During more than 300 years until 1938, French fishermen pursued cod fishing near the Icelandic coast. Their fishing sailing-vessels arrived on the south coast of Iceland in early March and gradually moved west, or eastward to the east coast until August, when the fleet left for France. After 1918, trawlers resumed fishing and the last French sailing-vessel was known to be fishing near Iceland just before WW2, when the fishing was discontinued completely.



The fishing was only done with handtackle, and for a long time on two-masted schooners, so called goettes (1), most of which came from villages in Bretagne and Flandre in France; but in the latter part of the period, also on schooners of Dundi type (2). A cross sail on the foremast of a golette was specially designed to meet local conditions, and was found to be very suitable owing to the sudden changes in the weather around Iceland.

- 1) A golette characterized by a cross Section on the foremast.



The heyday of the schooner fishermen was from the middle of the 19th century until 1914; during some peak summers up to 6000 Frenchmen were fishing on about 300 schooners. During fishing, the fishermen were standing windward along the full length of the schooner. During those years, the sea took a heavy toll, and losses are recorded of near to 4000 fishermen, in addition to several schooners which sank or went aground off Iceland.

- (2) Departure of a Dundi schooner for Icelandic waters.



- (3) A farewell feast before a fishing tour to Iceland in PAMPOL

Many pictures exist on postcards which show the crowds bidding farewell before departure of the schooners, with a religious ceremony, and invocation for help from the Almighty (3). Many of the pictures also show clearly the bad conditions of the fishermen on board small sailing boats, living with lasting fatigue and dangerous work during the fishing.



- (4) 2004 stamp issue showing French Hospital and golette at Fáskrúðsfjörður

To the end of the 19th century, no news was available from the schooners until after their arrival in home harbour at the end of the fishing tours, which lasted around 6 months. From 1890, inspection ships started accepting mail from the fishermen, and the first deliveries were after the return of the inspection ships to France.

Shortly afterwards the hospital ships arrived, and the transport of mail became much better. It is believed the letters were put in mailbags without payment, and carried to France by transport vessels, which also fetched the catch. Also some Icelandic mail went to Europe (picture 5).



(5) A cover to France with 20 aur stamp printed 1894, cancelled with a crown & posthorn cancel Arnarfjörður arrival postmark ERQUY, Cotes du Nord 24th July 1894



(6) A French cover from 1868 to Grundarfjörður, cancelled reverse Kjöbenhavn. With Icelandic mail record number 72 & 93, and in ink stated unpaid local postage 6 skildings.

Only a few letters are known from this time, and therefore some doubt exists of this method. Mail from France intended for the schooners could be sent through Denmark to Iceland, and some covers are known transported inland, according to mail records dated before 1869, with the additional inland postage to be paid upon acceptance of the letters (picture 6). During 1870-1872, the postage had to be prepaid in Reykjavík before the letter was forwarded inland, and from those years covers are unknown. Some covers and cards are also known after establishment of the Icelandic postal service in 1873, and Iceland's enrollment in UPU in 1876 (picture 7).



(7) Cover posted and cancelled in Vestmannaeyjar 3rd April 1910, received an Icelandic T for short postage. On arrival in France it received a French postage due stamp which was cancelled at receiver's postoffice.



(8) The cancel of the Croiseur "La Voisier" at Station Navale d'Islande.

Many articles are found in French newspapers describing the difficult conditions of the fishermen, and to improve matters, the French government started to dispatch patrol or warships to follow the fleet, offering assistance if required and limited medical help. In the latter part of the century they also accepted letters and cards. They are found stamped with the name of the patrol ship (picture 8).

These ships usually went three times around Iceland during the summer and called at Dýrafjörður or Patreksfjörður on the west coast, and Fáskrúðsfjörður or Norðfjörður on the east coast of Iceland. French warships known to have served around Iceland are: Croiseur “La Voisier”, “La Nielly” and “La Manche”.

Late in summer, freighters arrived to transport the catch from the fleet. They also brought necessary supplies and mail to the crew and collected their mail. In French newspapers much was also written about the difficult work of the seamen and the many sea accidents. Because of this, the society “Oeuvres de Mer” was established in Paris in 1894. Its primary activity was to work for the welfare of French seamen by running hospital ships, and on them offer necessary medical help and nursing for the fishermen.



On behalf of the society, funds were collected to buy a hospital ship and pay for its running (picture 9).

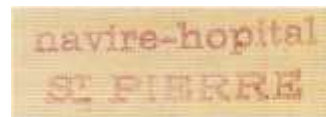
The hospital ship was to accompany the fishing schooners during the season. Doctors, nurses and Catholic priests worked on them. They could offer all necessary medical help and attendance for the seamen, which until then was badly lacking. They also rendered assistance to other foreign seamen who they met en route.

(9) A picture of the hospital ship “Saint-Francois-d’Assise” in harbour of Seyðisfjörður. The card also shows the cancel of “Société Des Oeuvres De Mer”.



(10) On reverse a blue cancel of the hospital ship „Navire Hopital Saint-Francois-D’Assise”.

They also carried mail, and some covers, postcards and cancels are known from the hospital ships, as can be seen here, f.inst. Navire Hopital, Saint Francois d’Assise (picture 10), and and Navire Hopital/Saint Pierre II, (picture 11).



(11) „Navire Hopital Saint-Francois-D’Assise”.



Most of the French hospital ships (picture 12) carried names of French saints and the following names are known: “Saint Paul” around Iceland 1879-99, but was wrecked on Iceland’s south coast, “Saint Pierre II” 1897-1904, “Saint Francois d’Assise” 1901-1913, “Notre Dame de la Mer” 1911-1914, “La France” 1913, “Saint Jeanne d’Arc” 1919-1934, “Saint Ives” 1935-1939.

(12) A picture of the hospital ship “Notre-Dame-De La Mer”.

Nowhere are found as many French relics as in the village of Fáskrúðsfjörður; there the French government built a hospital shed in 1897 (picture 13); also a Catholic chapel. In 1903 they built a new hospital, which was operated until 1914, and a house for the French consul and doctor in 1907. A French cemetery contains the graves of several French and Belgian seamen.



(13) The old hospital shed and the chapel in Fáskrúðsfjörður.

In Reykjavík, the society “La Societe des Hopitaux Francais d’Islande” bought some ground in Lindargata 51, and built “The French hospital” there. It was operated until end of 1929, when the municipality of Reykjavík bought the house. During the French period, in both hospitals full time doctors provided medical help, and in addition Catholic priests worked there. It is unknown if letters handed in at the hospitals were cancelled and how they were carried to France.

In Fáskrúðsfjörður, there is now to be found a museum “Frenchmen in Iceland” (picture 14), and in there the Frenchmen’s time in Icelandic waters and in Iceland is well illustrated in text and pictures. In it are found many good objects connected to Frenchmen and it is highly recommended to tourists to visit the museum.

Further, for those interested to know the story better, the book of Elín Pálmadóttir “Fransí biskví” is recommended. It was published both in French and Icelandic language by Almenna bókafélagið in 1989.

The author of this text wants to thank the following for invaluable help and loan of pictures Albert Eiríksson, David Loe, Johnny Pernerfors, Mike Tuttle, Roger Patridge, Saso Andonov and Sveinn Ingi Sveinsson.

# Undercover Mail *Brian Stwalley*

This is my attempt to sew together some communications I had with a collector in Florida earlier this year around undercover mail schemes. This is most definitely not an area of expertise for me so apologies if my editing leads to something that is already well known (or more likely incomprehensible).

It appears the English firm Thomas Cook and Son played a role in the transport of undercover mail from Iceland during WWII. Here is a copy of a PC 85 form used by British censors which would be unusual written in Icelandic. Instructions to use Thomas Cook are included within.

[illegible]

Here is a copy of a PC 85 form used by British censors which would be unusual written in Icelandic  
Instructions to use Thomas Cook are included within.

[illegible]

Here is an instruction sheet from Geir Zoega in Icelandic which also mentions Thomas Cook and Son



An instruction sheet in English as used in the UK for comparison to understand the method.

What role did the Zoega firm play in the undercover mail interests? Was he affiliated with Thomas Cook and Son?

One area of puzzlement is the availability and use of British postal orders. The Eliasson book, and other places, mentions two known postal orders involving the Thomas Cook Scheme, but I have only seen this one. (The Thomas Cook scheme asked for their use)

Is there anything more known about this, including the cancel location in Iceland? [Interesting part is the FPO 89 cancel which the exhibitor claims was located in R'Vk until the date of the cancellation oddly enough 21 Nov 1941. Facit claims the last date to be 2 Oct 1941, a month and a half earlier. So there's something to be clarified here at the very least.---BS] However, it is an open question why it is apparently a field post office cancel. Would one have had to go to that location to get a British postal order in order to use the Thomas Cook Scheme?

Would any covers to or from Zoega during WWII have contained Thomas Cook mail? Perhaps they do not include the envelope from Europe.





This Box 506 cover never went back to Ellen, which she confirmed while alive. There is a thought she likely used Geir Zoega. Was Ellen Sighvatsson related to Zoega in any way (sender noted on the covers below)?



Any thoughts about this topic from our group would be much appreciated!

## 1st Class Engraving -- Post Horn Label *Ole Svinth*

By coincidence I met the shown Posthorn. I was on the back of the shown registered letter from Frimerkjásalan. It has been in my collection for years (only showing front of course), but recently I received a cover showing the 2.30 kr. single on airmail letter to Denmark (postage 0-20 gr. was 2.30 kr.). Having removed letter from the page I saw the label. The label is cut from a roll. I thought I might be an official label. I am sure it is not attached by the recipient. I have not seen this label before, and my curiosity drove me to the computer, sending the question on to **Pór Þorsteins**.



Front



Back



Answer from Þór Þorsteins arrived as follows,

From the last 50 years there are known to me different types of gluepaper and tapes usually to close with covers or parcels by the Post:

From	1959	gluepaper:	posthorn as you have a sample of	A
	?		posthorn and arrows big blue	B
	1966	tape	posthorn and arrows smaller	C
	1994		posthorn and arrows new design	D
	1999		posthorn red from Íslandspóstur.	E

We can also separate the logos into: The postmaster's time 1919-1929 A

Post and telephone 1930-1998 B - D - E

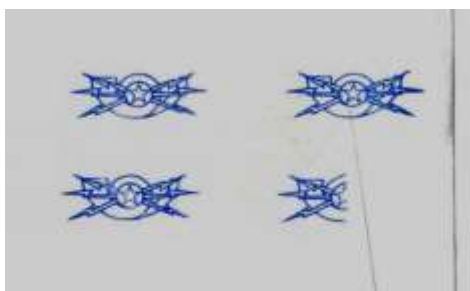
Íslandspóstur 1998 -

Kind regards, Þór Þorsteins

Here they are:



B (blue)



D (blue)



C (blue)



E (red)



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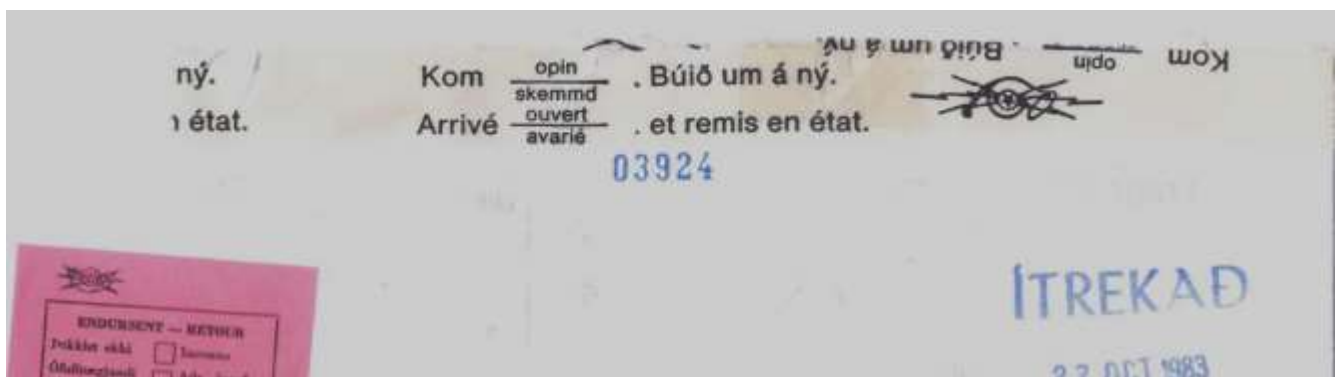
More from Þór. “Arrived open/damaged” label. In this case surely damaged. This is the oldest type of this label. Two more recent on following page.



Dated 14 7 72

Label now has posthorn new type.

Only part of cover shown, but you can see date stamp 22 Oct. 1983



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## The lack of crown cancels on service (official) stamps (Issues 22/23)

So far, 231 strikes have been recorded by a research group and are shown in the following table. It is hoped that eventually a full set of images will be available to eliminate the possibility of duplication. Details of the relevant stamp issues have also been recorded. Readers who have not so far been involved are invited to contact the editor and provide details of any additional examples which can be used to update the table. The subject is open for further development by anyone interested.

C1 Akranes	9	Kotströnd	6	C2 Arnarholt	7
Arnarfjörður	2	Lón	4	Bakki	1
Arnhólsstaðir	1	Miklibær	1	Brjefhirðing	4
Ás í Holtum	3	Mödruvellir	5	Erta	4
Blönduós	5	Mýrar ** **either office	3	Flateyri	1
Borðeyri	2	Ólafsvík	10	Grímsey	1
Borgarnes	5	Patreksfjörður	5	Holl	1
Brjámslækur	4	Rauðaberg	1	Hvammsfjörður	5
Búðareyri	3	Raufarhöfn	1	Keflavík	1
Eyrbakkí	1	Reykholt	1	Melgraseyri	2
Flatey	8	Reykjarfjörður	2	Ögur	2
Fossvöllur	1	Skagaströnd	9	Saurbær	7
Grýtubakki	3	Skinnaströnd	4	Stóri-núpur	4
Gufudalur	1	Skorrastaður	1	Vatnsfjörður	1
Hafnarfjörður	14	Staðarfell	1	Þórshöfn	2
Holt	6	Staðarhraun	3	Þingvellir	6
Húsavík	13	Stafafell	1	Ægissíða	9
Hvoll	1	Stakkahlíð	1		
Kálfnæs	1	Svalbarði	4		
Keflavík	1	Útskálar	2		
Kirkjubær	3	Valþjófsstaður	2		
Kirkjuvogur	1	Vík	8		
Kleifar í Gilsfirði	1			C3 Höfn	2
Kolfreyjustaðir	2				
Kollafjarðarnes	1				

An associated topic, namely the use of numeral cancels on officials, is under preliminary discussion by several readers, and they are invited to develop this further if so desired.

## Was this cancel ever used here? (14)



### B1a Sævarland Skagafjarðarsýsla

Recorded use Sævarland 1.7.1930 – 30.9.1934

Hvammur 1.10.1934 – 30.9.1935

Skiðastaðir 1.10.1935 – 1938?



1932 issue undated



14.12.34



Hvammur period

12.1.35

Skiðastaðir opened on 1.10.1935 and did not receive its own type B5a Skiðastaðir cancel until a few years later, circa.1938 according to Íslenskir Stimplar by ÞÞ. That leaves at least 2 years in which it could have used the B1a Sævarland cancel. Surely there must be examples of this? Skiðastaðir also had the numeral 86.



### B2a Valþjófsstaður Norður-Múlasýsla

Recorded use July 1930 – 31.12.1968

Viðivellir-Ytri 1.1.1967 – 26.9.1967



Viðivellir-Ytri used its own B8e cancel from 27.9.1967, which allows a window of 9 months in which the B2a Valþjófsstaður could have been used. There must be a good probability of such a cancel.



B2a Valþjófsstaður dated 3.6.65

600aur Europe airmail rate to Sweden

## PART 16 – SUÐUR-ÞINGEYJARSÝSLA

A county of contrasts, Suður-Þingeyjarsýsla is a mixture of fertile farming land of the Laxárdalur and Bárðardalur, to the vast uninhabited lands of Flateyjarðalsheiði and Tjörnes. The story was rather different at the turn of the century, when the population of some 3,800 was spread out around the numerous farms. Today the figure has dropped to 2,900 of which some 2,300 live in Húsavík.



### 16.1 SVALBARÐSSTRANDARHREPPUR.

The only office in this parish bordering Eyjafjörður opposite Akureyri is situated at [Svalbarðseyri](#). Here a collecting office was opened 1.1.1913 and it also operated under the name of Svalbarð (2). For many years the office operated from the village store Sparisjóð but from 1977 changed to Sparisjóð. This was moved on 1.6.1979 to Samvinnubankann and again in 1991 to Landsbankann. The office finally closed 30.5.1999. From 1912 to 1930 numeral cancel no. 2 was used and then Swiss type B2a followed by B8e.

The little port was important in the days of the settlement of Iceland and again in the early years of this century when it was developed by the Norwegians as a herring port. By 1935 the population had dropped to 35 but by 1967 it was up to 67, some figures that are easy to remember!

### 16.2 GRÝTUBAKKAHREPPUR.

Moving north up the side of the fjord the next office we meet was situated at the farm of [Grýtubakki](#) between 01.04.1888 and 31.12.1897 and used a single ring crown and posthorn cancel. The office was moved to [Grenivík](#), a small fishing



village of some 170 people, in 1898 and used the Grýtubakki crown cancel until 1903 when number 62 was issued. This was in turn superseded by Swiss type B1a in about 1930 and again in 1967 by type B8e then B8b1 and B8b1a. The office was demoted to postal agency 15.6.2000 and moved into the offices of the Savings Bank Sparisjóð Höfðhverfinga till 31.1.2005. From 1.2.2005 the service has been provided from Jónsabúð, a fast-food outlet.



[Þönglabakki](#) is also in the parish of Grýtubakkahreppur but is many kilometres away on the north coast of now-uninhabited Flateyjarðalsheiði. The office was opened at the old turf farmhouse of Þönglabakki in 23.4.1892. It used a single ring crown cancel very sparingly until 31.12.1902 when the office was moved to Garður, Hálshreppur (16.4).

## 16.3 FLATEYJARHREPPUR.

The parish is named after the island off the north coast of this now deserted and very large area. A collecting office was opened at the turf farm of [Brettingsstaðir](#) 1.1.1909 and used number 67 and Swiss type B2a to 31.12.1953 when the area became completely depopulated. Number 67 had previously been used at Illugastaðir in adjoining Hálshreppur.

From the very first days of the Icelandic postal service the outlying islands were badly served by regular postal trips. Only the larger islands such as Vestmannæyjar and Flatey í Breiðafjörður had regular visits by the normal mail boats and the smaller islands had to make do with the irregular visits of fishing boats. This was in spite of the requirement that captains of Icelandic vessels were supposed to notify the local postmaster of their movements so that mails could be arranged (3). [Flatey](#) (2) is one such example and this small island had no office before the beginning of 1889 when coastal steamers began to call regularly. The office used a very rare triple ring crown cancel until 1903 when it was superseded by number 61. In about 1930 this was replaced by a Swiss bridge cancel type B1a (inscribed FLATEY. ÞING) which remained in use until 31.12.1967 when the office was closed. Today the island is only inhabited in the summer months.



## 16.4 HÁLSHREPPUR.



From the north coast we now move down to the area of the only low road crossing from west to east across the county. The first office was opened at the rectory at [Háls](#) (1) 1.1.1873 and was a collecting office on the Northern and Eastern Post. The office was closed 31.12.1873 but reopened 1.2.1894. It used a triple ring crown cancel and then number 65 and finally Swiss type B1a. The office was closed 30.09.1936 and moved across the river to the farm of [Skógar](#) (3). Here the numeral cancel 65 was used for a short time before number 246, Swiss types B1a (of Háls) and B2b. The office closed 30.9.1984.

Where the old track from Brettingsstaðir meets the road from Grenivík is the deserted farm of [Garður](#) (3). A collecting office was opened here 1.1.1903 (having moved from Þönglabakki) and until 31.12.1960 when the office closed used the old crown cancel from Þönglabakki (till about 1908), number 73 and Swiss type B2a inscribed 'GARÐUR ÞING.A'. There were two types of no. 73 - one with a flat topped '3' (N1a) and one with a rounded '3' (N1c). 73 type N1c is considered for philatelic CTO cancels only.

The last office in the parish at Illugastaðir (1) was opened 1.1.1908 and was closed 31.12.1911 but reopened 1918 to 1920. The office initially used number 67 but when Brettingsstaðir (16.3) was opened in 1909 the cancel was transferred there. The office then received number 53 when it reopened. The farm - cum - rectory is nearly at the end of the road going south in Fnjóskadalur.

## 16.5 LJÓSAVATNSHREPPUR.

The first office was opened at the parish rectory with the introduction of the Northern and Eastern Post 1.1.1873. [Ljósavatn](#) used a single ring crown cancel from about 1893 to 1903 when it was given number 69 and this remained in use until 30.06.1930 when the office was closed and moved to [Fosshóll](#). Literally 'the hill by the waterfall', Fosshóll is immediately adjacent to Goðafoss and is therefore something of a tourist attraction. If I remember correctly from my visit, there is a shop combined with the post office - it was promoted 1.1. 1941. The post office closed 16.4.1989 and became a collecting office again to finally close 31.10.1997. From the numeral 69 used initially, Swiss type B1a was used to 1954 and since then types B2b and B8b.



Further north but in the same parish is the rectory of [Póroddsstaðir \(2\)](#) where a collecting office was opened 1.1.1901. Numeral cancel 72 was used from 1903 to about 1930 when Swiss type B2a was introduced misspelt [ÞÓRODDSSSTAÐUR](#). The office was closed 31.3.1976 and moved to [Rangá](#), a newly built farm just south of Póroddsstaðir. Here the old Swiss cancel was used from 01.04.1976 to 05.07.1976 when the collecting office got its own cancel, Swiss type B8b. The office closed 31.12.1984.

## 16.6 BÁRÐÆLAHREPPUR.

Moving further south into Bárðardalur we come to the old farm of [Halldórsstaðir \(1\)](#) where on 1.1.1896 a collecting office was opened. Though no crown cancel is known from here it is probable that one was issued. The office was closed 31.12.1902 and moved to [Stóru-Vellir](#).



The office remained here for the years 1903 and 1904 before moving to [Lundarbrekka](#) and in that time used number 64. Stóru-Vellir (also known as Vellir) reopened 1.1.1929 (moved back from Lundarbrekka ). Number 225 was issued this time, followed by a Swiss type B2a inscribed [STÓRUVELLIR](#). The office closed 31.12.1933 and was moved to [Sandvík](#) further north up the valley. Here it remained till closure 31.12.1959 using number 225 and the B2a Stóruvellir cancel.

The office at the rectory at nearby Lundarbrekka was a collecting office from 1.1.1905 to 31.12.1933 using numeral cancel 64 and Swiss type B2a from about 1930.

## 16.7 SKÚTUSTAÐAHREPPUR.

On the northern shore of Mývatn is the hamlet of [Reykjahlíð](#) where an office was opened 1.1.1873. In the hamlet, there is what used to be the turf farm of [Reynihlíð](#) and the office was switched between the two premises though in practice they may be treated as one. Officially the office was called Reykjahlíð from 1873 to 1953 and 1974 to 1998 and Reynihlíð from 1954 to 1974. The office was made up to post office 1.7.1974 and closed 31.7.1998. It was renamed [Mývatn](#) and opened as a postal agency at Sparisjóð Suður Þingeyinga on 1.8.1998 and since then has used Swiss types Bb1, B8b1a, B8b and the old machine cancel inscribed Reykjahlíð.



1893 - 1903 Reykjavíð - single ring crown cancel.

1903 – ca 1912 number 55

Ca. 1912 – ca 1922 number 54

Ca. 1922 – 1964 number 52

Ca. 1930 - ? Reykjavíð - Swiss type B1a

1951-30.6.1956 Reykjavíð Swiss type B1a

1.9.1956-30.6.1974 Reynihlíð - Swiss type B3e.

01.07.74 – 31.7.1998 Reykjavíð - Swiss type B8b.

7.1988 - ? Reykjavíð machine cancel M3

An office was opened at [Arnarvatn](#) on the Laxár river 1.1.1948. The collecting office remained here until 01.01.1978 using Swiss type B2c2. Finally at [Skútustaðir](#), the parish rectory, a collecting office was opened 1.1.1896. No crown cancel has been found, but number 54 was used from 1903 to about 1912 and then 55 from 1912 to 1964. Two Swiss cancels have been used, type B2a from about 1930 to 1969 and type B8e, from 1969 till closure 31.12.1989. Skútustaðir is on the south side of Mývatn.

## 16.8 REYKDÆLAHREPPUR.



Centred on Reykjadalur is a small farming community whose parish church is at [Einarssstaðir](#) where a collecting office was opened 1.1.1901. The office used number 60 from 1903 to 1927 when the office was made up to post office (01.03.27). Swiss cancel type B3c (inscribed 'REYKJADALUR') was then used until 1938 when a Swiss type B2a was introduced this time inscribed 'EINARSSTAÐIR'. The office was closed 30.06.1971.

Einarssstaðir has in recent years become a popular stopping place as it has a restaurant.

Halfway between Einarssstaðir and Arnarvatn is the farm of [Hólar](#) (4) where a collecting office was opened in 30.12.1926. From 1927 to about 1950 it used number 213 and then Swiss type B1a. The office was closed 31.3.1980. Also within the same month was a collecting office at the now-deserted farm of [Halldórsstaðir](#) (2) east of [Hólar](#) (4) on the banks of the Laxár. Number 217 was used here from 26.1.1927 to 31.12.1950 when the office was closed and moved to [Halldórsstaðir](#) (2) east of

Einarsstaðir. The office used number 217 until September 1955 when Swiss type B3e was given to Halldórsstaðir. The office was closed 31.03.1980.

Just south of Einarsstaðir is the hamlet of [Laugar](#). A collecting office was opened at the boarding school 1.1.1947 (Laugarskóli) but in 1949 it was moved to a separate building. On 1.6.1968 the office was made up to post office that was closed 31.7.1998 and moved to the postal agency at Sparisjóð Suður Þingeyinga. Number 60 was used for a short time and then Swiss types B2b, B7b, B8b1 and B8b1a. Laugar has also been referred to as Litlu-Laugar.

The last place to list is [Helgastaðir](#) where the district post office was located temporarily between 1.1.1874 and 31.12.1875. It had previously been located at Grenjaðarstaður (16.9) and moved to Múli (1) (also 16.9) on closure. It used the provincial post office cancel of Grenjaðarstaður.

### 16.9 AÐALDÆLAHREPPUR.

The post office at [Grenjaðarstaður](#) was opened at the old turf farm, now a folk museum, adjoining the parish church in the first days of the Northern and Eastern Post. It was initially only open 12 months - 01.01.1873 to 31.12.1873, before being moved to HELGASTAÐIR (16.8), a farm to the south-west. Here the office remained until 01.01.1876 when it was moved to [Múli \(1\)](#), another turf farm next door to the original location. The post office was on the move again 31.12.1881, moving back to Grenjaðarstaður, and for all this time used the 'Grenjaðarstaður' provincial date stamp. In 1896 a new postmark was issued, inscribed 'ÞINGEYJARSÝSLA'



and the old postmark was withdrawn for a time. The probable reason for this change was the frequent place changes – the new cancel was valid anywhere in the county. In 1906 the Þingeyjarsýsla postmark was moved to Húsavík when a post office opened there, and the old postmark came out of retirement and used again at Grenjaðarstaður. This was used until the end of 1928 though it can be found on issues up to 1935 that suggests favour cancels. On 1928 the post office was closed and replaced with a collecting office using number 259. In 1941 this was replaced by Swiss type B5a which was used until 21.09.1953 when the office was moved to [Staðarhóll \(1\)](#), a farm across the road from Grenjaðarstaður. Number 259 was used there also, and then superseded by Swiss Type B3d and in 1980 by type B2b. The office was made up to post office 01.01.1972 and was closed

28.2.1985.

Just west of Grenjaðarstaður is the farm of [Syðra-Fjall](#) (otherwise known as Fjall) where there was a collecting office between 1.1.1929 and 31.12.1947. In that period the office used number 227 and then Swiss type B1a (inscribed Syðrafjall). The office was moved to [Lindahlíð](#) and initially used the old Syðra-Fjall cancel with the place name struck out in conjunction with a straight-line cancel inscribed LINDAHLÍÐ. In 1953 the office was issued with a new cancel type B2c2, which was used until 15.11 1975 when the office was finally closed.

Further north is a small hamlet called [Garður \(4\)](#). A collecting office was opened at the home of Benedikt Baldvinsson near the school 26.01.1927 and remained here to 31.12.1957. In that time it used number 216 and from about 1930 a Swiss cancel type B2a inscribed 'GARÐUR ÞING EIN' to distinguish it from Garður (3) (16.4) in Hálshreppur. For the year of 1958 the office was moved to nearby [Hjarðarból](#) and the old cancel was taken with it.



### 16.10 REYKJAHREPPUR.

There have been two offices in the parish, which is situated to the north-east of the area we have been looking at so far. On the main road to Húsavík is the farm of [LAXAMÝRI](#) where a collecting office was opened 1.1.1921.

Open until 31.12.1967 the office has used number 44 which was previously used at Borgarfjörður and then Swiss type B1a.

Further south at [HVERAVELLIR](#) a collecting office was opened 1.1.1925 and used number 201. Later Swiss type B2a replaced the numeral cancel and this was used until 1.1.1957 when the office was closed.

## HÚSAVÍK

Created kaupstaður in 1949

As I said in my introduction, the town of Húsavík is by far the largest in the county with a current population of some 2300. This has risen from only 300 at the turn of the century when there was little more than a busy little fishing village on the east coast of Skjálfandi. The first visitor and founder of Húsavík was Gardar Svavarsson who wintered there in the mid-9th century before Iceland was settled. Húsavík became important when its port was developed and it exported sulphur from Mývatn in the 16th century. The first co-operative society in Iceland was founded in Húsavík in 1882, and this was commemorated with a stamp in 1982. Húsavík church appeared on the 1978 Europa 120 Kr. stamp. Today the town derives its fortune from the fishing fleet, the herring oil factory and freezing plants that are associated with the industry.



Turning to philatelic matters, a collecting office was opened here in 1873. It used a single ring crown cancel from 1893 to 1903 and then numeral 49. The office was up rated to post office 01.01.1906 and it used the Þingeyjarsýsla provincial post-mark from 1906 to 1910.

Then followed a series of Swiss cancels:-

B2c1	1911 ca 1930
B3c	ca 1930 - 1960
B8e	1960 - 10.03.78
Machine cancel	from 24.06.75
B7b Large type	from 10.03.78
B7b Small type	from 04.82
B8b1	From 2000

## 16.11 TJÖRNESHREPPUR.

Lastly, I shall deal with the bleak moors of Tjörnes where one collecting office was opened for forty years between 1.1.1918 and 31.12.1957. Situated at [Hallbjarnarstaðir](#) on the only road and about 20 km. north of Húsavík, the office was operated by father and then son and used number 134, previously used at Búðardalur, and then Swiss type B2a from about 1930.

[illegible]

## Modern machine cancels (Issue 17. p5)

The illustrated cover extends the period of use of this Egilsstaðir machine cancel to an earlier date of 19.12.03. So now we have 19.12.03-14-12-2010.



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