

# ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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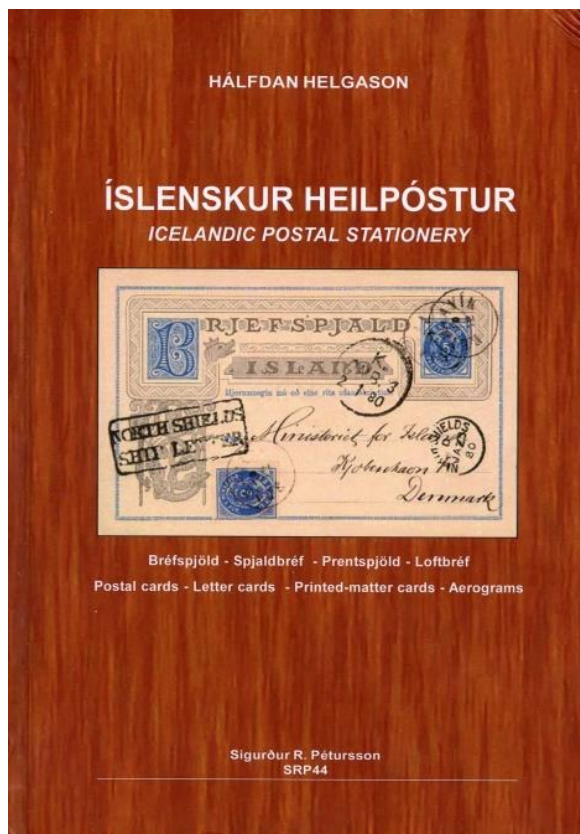
## Iceland Philatelic Magazine

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Please let me have your articles if you want them in the next issue which will be May 2020. If you need help with translations let me know.

The editor will help with the English if necessary.

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I am grateful to Alan Warren for his review of the new book by Hálfðan Helgason on postal stationery. This is a better introduction than my brief mention in Issue 36.

*Íslenstur heilpóstur* (Icelandic Postal Stationery) by Hálfðan Helgason. 248 pages, 6 by 8 ½ inches, hardbound, in Icelandic and English, Sigurður Pétursson, Reykjavík, 2019. ISBN 978-9935-24-625-7, approximately \$48 plus postage from [halfdan@halfdan.is](mailto:halfdan@halfdan.is).

Helgason has published previously on the international reply coupons of the world. Earlier works on Icelandic stationery such as Heinrich Schilling's *Island Ganzsachen 1879-1941* (1994) and S. Ringstrom's *Danmarks, Slesvigs, Dansk Vestindiens, Islands Helsager* (1985) were essentially brief overviews.

Helgason's new catalog will serve collectors of Iceland's postal stationery well although the author admits that due to space limitations he covers the major varieties of, for example, the two kings postal cards, but not all of the variants known. This is not a priced catalog but there are spaces provided for each entry where collectors can place a check mark if they own used and unused copies.

The catalog numbers begin with a 2-letter abbreviation for each category of stationery.

Es for Einfalt bréfspjald or single postal card

Ts for Tvöfalt bréfspjald or double postal card

Sb for Spjaldbréf or letter card

Ps for Prentspjöld or printed matter card

Lb for Loftbréf or aerogram

The section on single cards begins with documents concerning the establishment of the cards by the government, invoices from the cliché maker and printer, and a brief discussion of the sale and distribution of the cards in 1879. Proof prints are shown and varieties have enlarged drawings identifying the flaws.

Sub-sections within the postal cards are devoted to single and double aurar cards, single and double Í GILDI overprints, single and double King Christian IX, single and double Two-Kings, single and double King Christian X cards, and the 1919-1920 surcharges. Some sections begin with a brief discussion of the printer, paper, watermarks, and a table showing quantities printed and shipments from the printer in Copenhagen to Iceland. The postal cards issued from 1991 to 2011 have a section of their own.

The letter cards receive similar treatment and a separate discussion is given on differentiating and classifying the King Christian X letter cards. There were only half a dozen printed matter cards issued and their data and varieties are presented.

The final chapter focuses on aerograms that were introduced October 9, 1949. Types with and without printed indicia are listed. This section ends with a rate table in chronological order. Effective November 1, 1990 aerograms were no longer sold.

The bilingual aspect of this book will benefit a much wider audience. The Icelandic text is in black and the English in red throughout the book. The illustrations are quite good including those that highlight printing varieties. A brief bibliography concludes the book. A definitive catalog of the postal stationery of Iceland was long overdue and the need has now been satisfied with this wonderful catalog by Helgason.

## **Nederlandse Filatelisten Vereniging Skandinavie *Henk Burgman***

In cooperation with Jakob Arrevad and with permission of Ole Svinth, we have placed the last 20 issues of the Danish magazine "IslandsKontakt" on our site <http://www.nfvskandinavie.com>

We began this project somewhere in September. We started with the specials and in the near future we will place the older issues as well.

All issues are readable and it is possible to download them and print them out.

If collectors have corrections, additions or want to discuss any matters, especially in the Specials, they are free to contact Jakob Arrevad at: [jsa@agadvokatfirma.dk](mailto:jsa@agadvokatfirma.dk)

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## **News from Islandssamlarna *Steinar Fridthorsson***

Steinar Fridthorsson has just been elected new chairman for The Iceland collector's club of Gothenburg, Sweden. Steinar will take over from the late Johnny Pernerfors who died early last year. Steinar will also be heading the auction committee for the club auctions.

The club has announced that it will be holding a full scale auction in the autumn; the exact date is to be announced later. Should you have any interesting material to consign, you are welcome to contact Steinar at: [steinar.fridthorsson@gmail.com](mailto:steinar.fridthorsson@gmail.com)

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**2020 and beyond:** The clouds of pessimism are lifting a little. Iceland Post published a stamp issuing programme for 2020; 11 issues on 7<sup>th</sup> May and again on 29<sup>th</sup> October. Their website is [www.postur.is](http://www.postur.is). After the demise of Frímerkjasalan, and a suggestion of the possibility of no more stamp production, this is encouraging. The longer term future may or may not depend on the volume of stamp sales. There is little likelihood of a surge in the use of stamps for postal purposes within Iceland, which is a reflection of the situation elsewhere. On the other hand, I am reasonably confident that the governing powers, if not the independent post office, still see stamps as a valuable export of the image of Iceland world-wide, and that this will offset any doubts they may have about the economics of their production and their practical use.

On a different matter, I am hoping to establish a connection with the people at Póstphil, similar to the one we enjoyed for so long with Vilhjálmur Sigurðsson at Frímerkjasalan. He was our reliable source of information about changes in the post office organization; for example opening and closure of post offices, the introduction of new postal cancelling stamps, and of course postal rates. I have written to them, and hope for a favourable reply.

Should their reply not be as accommodating as I hope it will be, then I am open to suggestions, principally from Icelandic based readers, on how we can obtain the sort of information I have mentioned above. At the time this magazine was issued I am still waiting for their response.

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## ICELAND - The Earliest Franked Letter – Sent to Malmö, Sweden

*By Claes Arnrup FRPSL*

Originally published in the *London Philatelist*, Volume 127 Issue 1457 pp263-268 in July/August 2018

For natural reasons, stamps came into use quite late in Iceland, which at the time belonged to Denmark. Communications with the mother country, as well as with other countries, were irregular and infrequent. Before the release of the first stamps, outward bound letters were sent by various ships whenever they left Reykjavik, mostly via the British Isles.

A few years before Denmark produced separate stamps for Iceland, which were first issued on the first of January of 1873, a small quantity of Danish stamps was delivered to Reykjavik to be used on mail sent to Denmark or other countries. There are a very small number of covers still preserved and they are all correctly sent outside of Iceland, mostly to Denmark. The majority, still just a handful, are franked with stamps only from the popular “Bicoloured Type”, which was issued in Denmark in 1870. However, two exceptional envelopes exist bearing stamps from the earlier “Large Oval Type” from 1864. It is the intriguing story behind these two letters that I will reveal.



The earliest “Mamsell letter”

### The earliest Icelandic letter with stamps

On 9th June 1871 a letter was written in Reykjavik addressed to Mamsell M. Lundquist in Malmö, Sweden. Obviously, this city was at that time not so large that this meagre information was enough for the letter to reach its addressee. However, on that day there was no ship leaving Reykjavik, so it was not postmarked until 15th June with a Reykjavik datestamp, and the stamps were cancelled with the Danish numeral canceller “236”, which had been delivered to Iceland to be used in Reykjavik. The franking consisted of 4 and 8 skilling from the Danish “Large Oval Type” of 1864 mixed with a 2 skilling “Bicoloured Type” from 1870. It is in reality a mixture of three issues as the 8 skilling is line perforated 12½, which was not issued until 1870. The stamps were later also cancelled on 26th June in transit in Copenhagen.

This envelope has been known among collectors for a very long time. It was the showpiece in the outstanding Iceland collection of the famous Swedish industrialist Holger Crafoord, which was awarded many Large Gold medals at international exhibitions all over the world, in the 1960s and 1970s, and which was the runner up for the FIP Grand Prix on several occasions. At the time it was the most extensive and prestigious collection of Iceland which had ever been assembled. However, in those days Iceland with its first issue dating “only” from 1873 was considered a “modern” area; otherwise I am sure that Mr. Crafoord



would have reached this highest level of philatelic award, which still remains to be achieved by an astute collector of Iceland.

It was considered the major item of Icelandic philately, at least until the find of the fantastic “Bible Cover” which has an amazing multiple franking of official skilling stamps. In any case it later became the highlight of the collection of the Icelandic businessman Indriði Pálsson, which did not include official stamps. At HAFNIA 2001 in Copenhagen his collection became the first, and so far, the only Iceland collection owned by an Icelandic to be awarded an International FIP Large Gold Medal.

With my roots in Malmö, and having listened to the legendary stories about the “Mamsell” covers for years with their various speculations and anecdotes, not always based on facts, I decided to try to find out more about the history of the two covers, not only from the philatelic point of view, but especially from the human side which seemed to everybody to have the savour of mystery and romance.

### The Merchant Georg Cronquist

Unfortunately, the contents, which could have given information about the addressee, as well as the sender, are missing. However, there are two things on the envelope that take us further. The Post in Malmö has fulfilled its duty and according to the rules, has put an arrival postmark on the back of the envelope, which determines the letter to have been sent in the year 1871. Then in the upper left corner there is a figure 2, which most certainly is not a postal notation.



The back of the first cover confirming the year 1871

Luckily, there is another envelope that also has survived, evidently written by the same hand shortly afterwards, and dated 19th June, but not cancelled by the Post until the 24th of the same month. This was written 10 days after the first one, in other words before there could have been any reply. Perhaps this was a reply to a letter coming in with the same ship that later carried the previous letter to Copenhagen? I will come back to that. Unfortunately, the contents of this letter are also missing, but the interesting and important thing about this envelope is the addition by the sender: “Address: Handlanden (The Merchant) G. Cronquist, Stortorget”. Furthermore, again in the upper left corner, is a non-postal notation, this time the figure 3!



Georg Theodor Cronquist was the son of the printing agent, Johan Cronquist. He became a partner in A. C. Cronquist & Son in 1862, a drapery trading company which was founded by his mother Anna Christina (maiden name Lundgren). The store was situated at Stortorget (The Main Square) in Malmö on the same spot where the elegant building of the Lejonet (The Lion) pharmacy was built at the end of the 1890s and which still exists today.

Georg Cronquist soon became a very important man in Malmö and by 1877 was a member of Malmö City Council and had many other significant interests in business and banking. It is fair to assume that his own business was booming. An interesting fact is that he later opened a book and stationery store at Södra Tullgatan 3, exactly the same address from which my company Postiljonen operated from for 35 years, and during this time where we auctioned the earliest of the Mamsell covers, prior to moving to another location.

*Picture of Georg Cronquist*

### Who was Mamsell Lundquist?

During these years a number of young unmarried women who would have been addressed with the title Mamsell, worked at the Cronquist drapery store. With the information I had it seemed as it would prove to be a simple case to find our particular Mamsell. To have that confirmed as well as to get more details I contacted my brother in law, Ulf Alpsten, who after a long career at IBM had become an advanced genealogist. He could quite quickly tell me that the household of Georg Cronquist in the Klaus Mårtensen quarter in the centre of Malmö, besides his wife and two children, also included three Mamsells and three maids.

Now the romantically minded immediately starts to fantasise about the young Icelandic gentleman, who during a visit in Malmö falls in love with one of these young ladies and overwhelms her with declarations of love by mail from Reykjavik.



The Cronquist family 1898, Georg at far left

## The plot thickens

To my great surprise and disappointment there was no Mamsell Lundquist in the household of Georg Cronquist during the period 1866-75 and no young lady with this name could be found anywhere in Malmö. However, after deeper “digging”, and allowing the search to include all ages, my brother in law came up with the following information. Georg’s mother, Anna Christina Cronquist, after becoming a widow moved from her son’s household to her brother, watchmaker Master Göran Tyke Lundgren. In his household two Mamsells lived since 1854, the sisters Sophie born 1811 and Ingrid Marie Lundquist born 1813. So finally, here we had found our Mamsell M. Lundquist! Further support to the close connection with the Cronquist family is that the sister, Mamsell Sophie Lundquist, was one of the witnesses at the baptism of George Cronquist in 1837.

Thus, Ingrid Marie was 58 years of age when she received these letters. It can also be established that her host Göran Lundgren’s wife died in 1862 and he never remarried. In 1869 he moved with Mamsell Ingrid Marie, one apprentice and one maid, to another house in the same quarter. In 1871, the same year the letters were sent, Göran, now with the title “Watch Manufacturer”, again moved. This time Ingrid Marie Lundquist moved to another address, where two other Mamsells already lived. In the same building lived also a Factory Accountant Lundeberg for whom they may have worked.

Mamsell Ingrid Marie Lundquist died of organic heart failure in March 1872, the year after she had moved. She still had the title Mamsell and was unmarried. At that time her sister was no longer alive, and it is not known to me if she had any other relatives.

Why did she, or maybe more correctly the sender, use this address for the correspondence? We can only guess. Perhaps it was after all a romantic story or something else that she wanted to keep secret in her private circle. The use of this address could of course simply be due to her moving and uncertainty about her private address at that time.

Another thing adding to the mystery is that in those days it was very unusual that people of limited means received mail, certainly from far away. The cost of sending such a letter corresponded to many day’s wages for “common people”.

## “The Mamsell Covers”

Even if some question marks have been removed, it is unfortunately necessary to conclude that from the cultural and historical point of view it is impossible to get further. To find the reason behind the correspondence is not realistically possible, as the contents of the letters are since long lost. The only minimal chance would be if someone, while browsing in an old attic in Iceland, was to find the covers written by the Mamsell with the contents still preserved, however it is hard to believe that this will ever happen.

However, from the philatelic historical point of view, there are some interesting facts and hypotheses regarding these two envelopes which have survived from this small correspondence. There could be various simple explanations as to why the covers were addressed to the shop of Mr. Cronquist. The most obvious would be that Ingrid Marie Lundquist had one or another duty in the shop. In any case she clearly had a close relation to the family.





The second “Mamsell letter. This was earlier one of the corner stones in the American pastor, Dr. Gene Scott’s, Large Gold Medal collection of Iceland. It is now one of the main attractions in Douglas Storckenfeldt’s unparalleled collection. This has so far been awarded 14 international Large Gold Medals and one European Grand Prix in Rome at Italia 2009

The numbers “2” and “3” in the upper left corners did not have any postal function, and could have been written by either the sender or by the receiver. My belief is the latter. It is more common to number documents when you put them away for saving than at the moment you write or send them.

Oh! – Then an even earlier letter with stamps exists? That this would still exist is not very probable, nor many later ones as Mamsell Lundquist passed away shortly after this time, so this correspondence could not have continued for very long. Supposedly someone has saved these two envelopes after her death just because they had stamps on them. In the 1870s stamp collecting was already rather popular. It was not unusual that the contents were removed for reasons of discretion and, as there seem not to have been any close relatives, the contents have not been saved for nostalgic reasons.

Most surely there was once an earlier cover with a nicely written “1” in the upper left corner, but probably without stamps, which was usual for letters posted from Iceland at the beginning of the 1870s (or perhaps the stamps were taken off). So, without stamps this “document” was considered uninteresting and most likely thrown away after her death. We philatelists should be especially happy that the stamps were not washed off from these two envelopes, which most often was the case when these types of “treasures” were found. Unfortunately, we must accept that this is as far as we can go, and the reason behind this legendary and mysterious correspondence will remain a well-hidden secret.

### Philatelic and postal history information

It is strange that these two envelopes, postmarked only 9 days apart, were rated differently. The first one bearing 14 skilling and the second one 12 skilling. From the fact that so very few letters have survived, including stampless items from Iceland sent abroad outside Denmark from this period, we can be sure that this happened only very occasionally, and it is doubtful if the post office in Reykjavik had clear instructions on the rates. I have always heard from knowledgeable collectors that the correct rate was 14 skilling. One of these, the late astute philatelist, Mr. Indriði Pálsson, held this opinion very strongly and as he was very particular with what he included in his collection, he waited patiently to get the cover with, what was in his opinion, the correct rate.



This opinion is supported in the certificate made in the year 2000 by Carl Aage Møller, as well as in the anniversary book by Jón Aðalsteinn Jónsson "One Hundred Years of Icelandic Stamps 1873 - 1973", where it states on page 33 that the rate to Denmark was 8 skilling, and to England 14 skilling. This was considered unfair as the distance was shorter to England, and thus the rate to England was reduced to 10 skilling, however not until 1875. In an article in Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidskrift No. 3 of 2010, Ib Krarup Rasmussen refers to information sent in 1870 by the "Generaldirektorat" (General Post Directorate in Denmark), to various countries advising them on the rates to and from Iceland via Copenhagen, and where it states that 10 skilling is the rate for Sweden. We can ask ourselves if these instructions also reached Reykjavík?

The Danish postal authorities independently opened a route by steamer to Iceland and the Faroe Islands via the British ports in Lerwick, Leith or Granton in 1870. The main reason to make a stop in Britain was to load coal as this was not available on Iceland. The ships were scheduled to arrive in Reykjavík seven times a year from March to November, more or less once a month, which at the time was the only possibility to send letters to Denmark and the rest of the world.

PÓSTSKIPSFERÐIRNAR 1871,				
eptir því, sem þær eru nú af nýu niðr- lagðar og ákveðnar í «prentaðri» Farplan póstmalastjórnarinnar.				
Á leið frá Khöfn til Íslands.				
Burtfarar- dagur frá Khöfn.	Fyrsti burtfarardagur frá Leith Færeyum      Lerwick (Grant.)      (Þórshöfn).			Áætlaðr komud. til Reykjavíkr.
1. Marz.	4. Marz.	6. Marz.	13. Marz.	
16. Apríl.	19. Apríl.	21. Apríl.	28. Apríl.	
28. Maí.	31. Maí.	3. Júní.	8. Júní.	
5. Júlí.	8. Júlí.	11. Júlí.	16. Júlí.	
12. Ágúst.	15. Ágúst.	18. Ágúst.	23. Ágúst.	
22. Sept.	25. Sept.	27. Sept.	5. Okt.	
7. Növ.	10. Növ.	12. Növ.	20. Növ.	
Á leið frá Íslandi til Khafnar.				
Burtfarar- dagur frá Reykjavík.	Fyrsti burtfarardagur frá Færeyum      Leith      Lerwick. (Þórshöfn.)      (Grant.)			Áætlaðr komud. til Khafnar.
24. Marz.	27. Marz.	28. Marz.	5. Apríl.	
7. Maí.	10. Maí.	11. Maí.	20. Maí.	
16. Júní.	19. Júní.	21. Júní.	27. Júní.	
24. Júlí.	27. Júlí.	29. Júlí.	4. Ágúst.	
1. Sept.	4. Sept.	6. Sept.	12. Sept.	
15. Okt.	18. Okt.	20. Okt.	28. Okt.	
29. Növ.	2. Des.	5. Des.	14. Des.	
Athugas. Burtfarardagurinn frá Reykjavík og Kaup- mannahöfn er fast-ákveðinn; frá hinum eðr millipóststöðv- unum er hér sá burtfarardagur ákveðinn, sem fyrstr getr orðið.				

Time table for the steam ships in 1871, Copenhagen - Reykjavík & Reykjavík – Copenhagen. As you can see the schedules in June and July fit with the dates of the postmarks on the two envelopes.

## The sender of these two letters

A hypothesis that came to me after finishing this article and considering all the facts known combined with the various strange and mysterious circumstances is that the sender was perhaps a Danish or Swedish person travelling to Iceland. When looking at the different stamps used on these two envelopes, not only from different issues, but also different printings. The first envelope has the 8 skilling line perforated and the 2 skilling bicoloured type. These two stamps were not available until 1870 and the third stamp, the 4 skilling is in the 10th printing from May 1869. Also, the second envelope has stamps from late printings, the 2 skilling from the 5th printing in January 1870 and the 8 skilling from the 2nd printing in July 1870. This fits well with the theory that stamps were first delivered to Iceland in 1870.

However, it is strange that the post office in Reykjavik would use these various printings during this short time span. Was there more than one delivery of stamps before the summer of 1871 even if the demand seemed to be very small? Perhaps the sender travelled to Iceland in 1871 and brought some stamps with him, and in that case carried the first letter to the post office already franked with 14 skilling, which was the rate to most foreign countries.

## The chain of owners

There is of course no information available as to what happened to the envelopes after the death of Mamsell Ingrid Marie Lundquist. However, it is believed that early in the 20th century the two envelopes were in the possession of the Danish Postal Museum. Probably originally chosen for the donation as the covers were bearing Danish stamps, and Iceland was still a part of Denmark. According to unconfirmed information, the latter cover with figure “3” was sold by the museum with the excuse that it was enough for them to own the first one. The name of the buyer is not known to me, neither is its whereabouts until it came into the collection of Dr. Gene Scott in 1981 from a collection named “Hekla” which was a pseudonym for the Swedish collector Ingvar Pettersson. Now it is one of the highlights in the collection of Douglas Storckenfeldt.

The earliest cover with figure “2” was also, according to unconfirmed information, exchanged for other stamps with the famous Danish Iceland collector Folmer Østergaard and afterwards found its way to the collection of Holger Crafoord through the Iceland expert Bernhard Beskow.

In the Icelandic newspaper “Visir” there was an article about the second letter with figure “3” on 7th September 1973 in connection with an exhibition in Reykjavik. It refers to the famous Icelandic collector Hans Hals who had put a label on a photo of the letter “3” saying that it was owned by the Danish Postal Museum. The head of the museum since 1948, H. Jensen was present, and had no knowledge of the cover. This should date its sale to have been prior to that year. In his exhibit Gene Scott claimed that the ownership of the Postal Museum went back to the 1920s, however I have not found any other documentation confirming this.

I have not been able to find any other information or proof that the earliest cover was owned by the museum or when it was sold or exchanged. There are several mysteries still hidden in this story and perhaps this article will help to resolve some of them.

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1. Swedish Parish Records.
2. Malmö Stads Krönikebok II Edition A. U. Isberg 1911.
3. Ship time-table 1871 Copenhagen - Reykjavik – Copenhagen.
4. One Hundred Years of Icelandic Stamps 1873 – 1973 by Jón Aðalsteinn Jónsson 1973.
5. Visir 7.9 1973, article in daily Icelandic newspaper, signed –ÓH.
6. Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidskrift No. 3, 2010 article by Ib Krarup Rasmussen.
7. Facit Special Classic 2018.

## Certificates, frankings & cancellations

The earliest cover is expertized by Bernhard Beskow 8.11 1985 and by Carl Aage Møller 2.3 2000.

### Franking:

#### Large Oval Type

4 skilling 10th printing perf. 13 x 12½ (May 1869)

8 skilling 3rd printing line perf. 12½ (October 1870)

#### Bicoloured Type

2 skilling 1st printing perf. 14 x 13½ (February 1871)

### Cancellations:

Numeral "236" & "REYKJAVIK 15.6", departure

"KJØBENHAVN 25.6", transit arrival

"KJØBENHAVN 26.6", transit departure

"MALMÖ 26.6 1871" arrival

The second cover is certified by Carl Aage Møller 5.10 1999.

### Franking:

Large Oval Type perf. 13 x 12½

2 skilling 5th printing, two copies (January 1870)

8 skilling 2nd printing (July 1869)

### Cancellations

Numeral "236" & "REYKJAVIK 24.7", departure

"KJØBENHAVN 3.8", transit

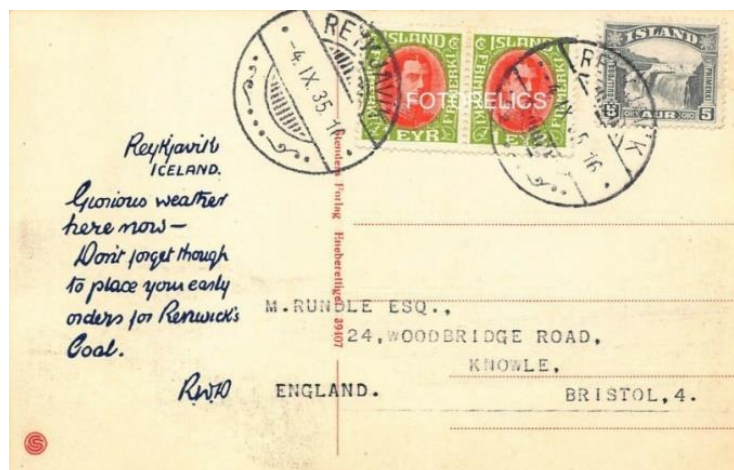
"Malmö 3.8 1871", arrival

### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Ulf Alpsten, Steinar Fridthorsson, Chris King and Douglas Storckenfeldt for their support and assistance.

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## Advertisement for coal on Iceland postcard



The use of preprinted advertisements on Icelandic postcards is well known. But this advert for coal in 1935 is a new one to me. Can anyone provide any background information about this particular example?

View of Reykjavík on the picture side.



## **Some Guidance and Feedback re Expert Opinions for Iceland Í GILDI Overprints** *by Ellis Glatt*

In response to Ole Svinth's dilemma regarding who to believe when it comes to differing expert opinions (as shared with IPM readers in the January 2020 edition), well it depends. If we are talking about philatelic items where the essential reference material is plentiful and widely available, any competent authority will probably suffice. On the other hand, when the subject is the Iceland Í GILDI overprints, especially the rare and expensive items, the collector needs to be especially careful when seeking an expert opinion. Here's why.

The Í GILDI overprints is probably the most complex field of Icelandic philately. Due to the lax manner in which the overprinting took place, including allowing the public to submit sheets (and eventually half sheets and reconstructed units) for overprinting, a number of rare overprint errors and varieties were produced. Moreover, as a result of the creative antics of a few stamp merchants and collectors, who accounted for most of the reconstructed submissions, some equally rare perforation and overprint-color variants also emerged.

With demand for these varieties by dealers and collectors far exceeding supply, it was not long before philatelic fakers moved in. Over the years, and equipped with ever improving graphics and print technology, modern-day fakers continue to operate in this lucrative field. The most expensive Í GILDI rarities are especially vulnerable. Unfortunately, a number of those Í GILDI fakes, some dating back to the early 1900s, still remain in circulation today. To further complicate matters, some of the more dangerous examples are signed or come with certificates of authenticity from noted experts and expert committees, past and present.

Having spent a considerable number of years researching and studying all aspects of the Í GILDI overprints, including the numerous varieties associated with the issue, I am left with two important takeaways. The first is that mastering the subject to the level of "expert" requires a significant investment of time and other resources. Without understanding the manner and sequence in which each of the numerous varieties came about, one can easily overlook important red-flag overprint characteristics that are inconsistent with the specific overprint-plate setting or settings in which the authentic examples arose. But even more important and, in fact, essential to the process of authenticating Í GILDI rarities is access to mission-critical reference material. Unfortunately, much of what is needed to generate meaningful and consistently reliable opinions is not readily available to most experts and expert committees that cover Icelandic philately.

In most cases, relying primarily on a handful of common sheets overprinted in Setting I and II for authenticating rare Í GILDI specimens is virtually useless, since nearly all of them came about in the later plate settings. (On a few occasions, though, they were helpful in uncovering some dangerous cut-and-paste fabrications derived from these common settings, which recently turned up at auction.) Unfortunately, the few surviving sheets from the later settings (III, IV, V, and VI) are exceedingly rare and reside either in postal museums or in a few private hands. Speaking from experience, acquiring what's needed for the task requires not only decades of patience, but a healthy budget as well.

To understand why so few sheets from these last four settings exist today, simply do the math. Of the approximately 30,000 sheets of aur stamps that were overprints between October 1902 and July 1903, over 28,000 were processed with the Setting I and II overprint plates (including intermediate states IA and IIA). But less than 1,800 sheets in total are estimated to have been overprinted in Settings III through VI, with most of these in Setting IV. Only about 200 or so sheets in each of Setting III, V, and VI were overprinted and nearly all were broken up in the process of extracting their contained varieties. The handful of sheets and large blocks that still remain intact are either housed at Iceland's National Archives or in the hands of a few Í GILDI researchers and/or specialists, such as myself.



Evaluating the authenticity of the rare Í GILDI stamps extracted from reconstructed units overprinted in those later settings invariably involves plating of the overprint. This is especially important re the rare perf 14x13 ½ specimens, which, for the most part, exhibit otherwise normal overprints. Plating of the underlying aur stamp in these cases is seldom helpful, since the plate position of the overprint and sheet position of the underlying aur stamp rarely align in the reconstructed units that account for most of these. Again, without access to this mission-critical reference material, costly mistakes will inevitably arise. In fact, A.I.E.P. (International Association of Philatelic Experts) requires that candidates nominated for admission demonstrate that they possess sufficient and meaningful reference material relative to their areas of specialization, which are often relatively narrow.

Now, as to Ole's unused 16-aur OS example with inverted overprint shown on page 13 of last month's IPM, it remains the opinion of this Í GILDI researcher and expert that the overprint is a cleaver forgery. True, the overprint clearly exhibits certain characteristics typical of those found in various plate positions in all six settings-- a thick-thin zero combination with normal apostrophes along with a large final "I" in GILDI.

Those overprint characteristics, in addition to appearing in plate positions 22 and 27 in all six settings, are also found in position 17 in Settings IV through VI and in position 40 in Setting VI. However, the overprint seen on the subject stamp (which I evaluated from a high-resolution scan and which is pictured below) does not plate consistently with any of those plate positions in those six settings.



But even before getting into plating, the Í GILDI expert looks at the various character elements that make up the overprint. This is because the individual type pieces used in all six settings came from the same type pool and exhibited some common characteristics, notwithstanding the thin and thick zeros, thick and thin apostrophes, and small and large "I"s. However, the overprint seen on Ole's stamp includes some character features that appear inconsistent with the type pieces used in the various plate setups (among these are the bottom serif of the "G", which jogs out to the right instead of pointing down and also the base of the "2", which is not compressed enough at the left, resulting in an indent to the right of the serif that is too small compared with that found on authentic type). Thus, any way I look at it, the stamp does not checkout.

In the case of this particular 16-aur OS variety, there was still one more avenue to consider—the unauthorized Post Setting assembled and used briefly in late 1903 by printing-office insiders, apparently to churn out a few additional varieties before year end (the last day Í GILDI stamps remained valid for postal use). As mentioned in my Facit Special 2013 article on the subject, the rare 25-aur variant with black overprint emanated from that Post-Setting plate. However, that "midnight" overprinting session also produced some inverted overprints, primarily among a few of the official stamps, including the 16-aur OS.

Although there is not enough information currently available to fully reconstruct the Post-Setting plate, we do know that it also was made up from the very same type pool used for Settings I through VI. So, with that, I see nothing that changes my opinion re the status of Ole's 16-aur OS invert.

Finally, re Ole's underlying question about who to believe when faced with conflicting "expert" opinions regarding the authenticity of a philatelic item, I come back to those two requisite ingredients for meaningful and consistently reliable opinions, especially involving challenging material. The first one, an in-depth or specialized knowledge of the underlying subject, can be readily demonstrated by an expert's past research and publications on the topic. But, if you are truly interested in protecting your wallet and avoiding, or at least minimizing, disappointments down the road, be sure the expert or experts you are relying on (whether it be yourself or an outside specialist or expert committee) has access to the right kind of reference material to render a meaningful opinion. This definitely applies when it come to the Iceland Í GILDI

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

### Why three different FDCs for the 1956 Swans? *Roger Santala*

I have a collection of the 1956 Swans. As I looked at the Icelandic FDC's, I noticed three distinct cancellers. Is that true of other Iceland FDC's? Any explanation? Sweden, Denmark, and Finland each got by with one. Norway did not have first day cancels from 1945 to about 1960. Thanks.  
Regards, Roger Santala



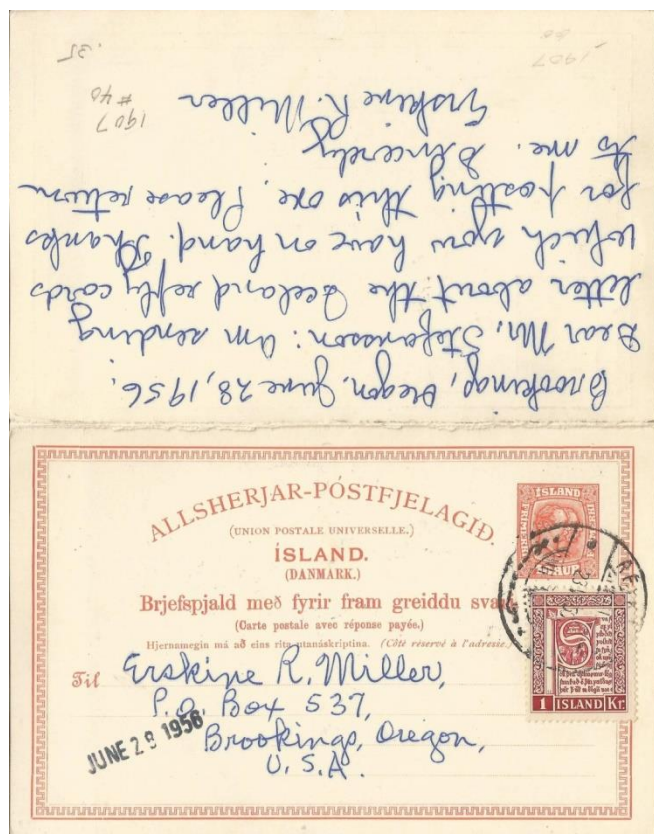
Comparisons of the size of the font of "First Day", with the third example being smaller; the bracketing dots with the second cover are in line with the date and are distinctive. The cancel on the second cover is 30 mm, the others are 32 mm. I will make a count, but the frequency looks to be about even. Thanks for your help.

## Used reply cards *Henk Burgman*

In reaction to the small article about the use of obsolete postal stationery cards ( IPM 35) I send you some that I have. It took a while to find them as I had stashed them away, seeing it as a curiosity.

Card 1a+b: a not divided double - reply card (10 AUR two Kings) was send from RVK 23-VI-1956 to Mr. Erskine R. Miller in Brookings, Oregon U.S.A. and returned to Mr. Magnus Stefansson in RVK june-28-1956.

On both cards a 1 Krone stamp was affixed. On the return side a message was written.



Then I have six (6) other double reply cards. (10 Aur oval - 10 Aur oval Í Gildi - 10 Aur Chr. IX - 8 Aur Chr. X - 15 Aur Chr. X and last but not least 20 Aur buildings).

All cards were sent on 12-VII-1956 with as addressee: Mail Dispatcher U.N. Postal Administration United Nations New York, U.S.A.

Then all cards were returned to Mr. Erskin R. Miller C/O Iceland Stamp service - Túngata 22 - RVK, Iceland. All cards bear a slogan machine cancel reading: UNITED NATIONS N.Y. - PEACE - JUSTICE - SECURITY FOR ALL JY 24 1PM 1956. (See card 2a+b)

Every card has the same hand written message and the US address was crossed out. Then the RVK address was crossed out as well and a little new address sticker was placed reading P.O. Box 537 - BROOKINGS, OREGON, U. S. A. After that the cards were again sent to the U.S.A. and probably arrived there on the 4th of September 1956.

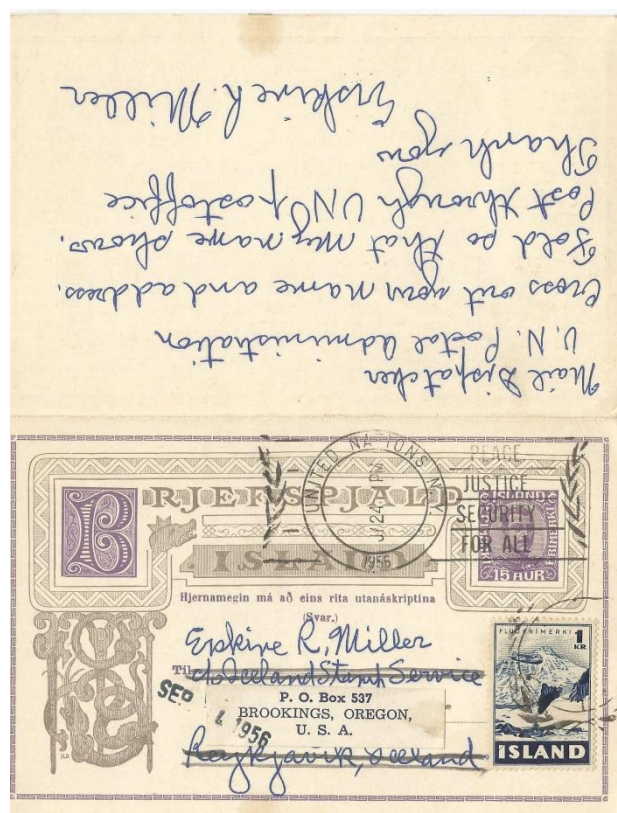
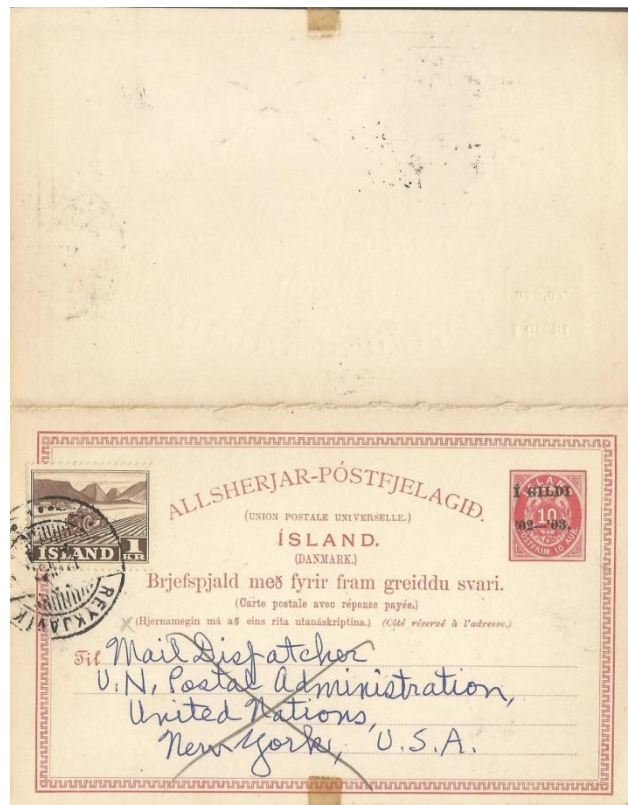
To me it seems a lot of work to get used reply cards, but I think you would not find other cards treated like this.

Does anybody know who were Mr. Stefansson and/or Mr. E. R. Miller?  
Are there more cards like this somewhere out there?

As stated before I see this as a curiosity and I wanted to share this with the readers of IPM.



(Ed. Here are a few more of Henk's cards on a variety of postal stationery. I have never seen their like before.)



## Philatelic cards and covers: Stamp dealer Otto Bickel, Germany

*Jakob Arrevad & Ebbe Eldrup.*

Many have seen “exotic” letters like this one offered for sale to a rather high price:



Who was Otto Bickel? – translated from German (<http://www.e-archiv.li/print/31000.pdf>):

Bickel Otto, German stamp dealer 1862-1946

\* November 4, 1862 in Eppingen (Baden), † July 5, 1946 in Munich. ∞ 1892 Leonie Berger, a son. In 1890 he opened the first stamp shop in Munich. Author of numerous articles on philately. His specialties were Albania, **Iceland**, Crete, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro and San Marino. Repeated changes of residence, numerous trips with stamps business.

From 1903 definitely living in Munich. 1911-1920 repeated visits to Liechtenstein. His business survived both World wars, but things didn't go as smoothly after 1920. In 1946 he died in poor conditions.

Mail to Mr. Bickel and another well-known person Paul Kiderlen, whom we will return to in a later article, are discussed by present FIP President Mr. Bernie Beston back in 2005 in *POSTAL STATIONERY COLLECTOR* Volume 11 No 2 & 3: Issue No 42 & 43 August and November 2005 - “*MESSRS. KIDERLEN & BICKEL - FRIENDS OR FOE.*”

From this article we quote and show illustrations below:

*“Otto Bickel ..... erroneously referred to as “Bichel”, the anglicized version of Bickel. He was born in Effingen, Baden on 4 November 1862. In 1892 following his marriage he moved to San Marino where he commenced to deal in postage stamps. It is probable that he had been a stamp dealer in Baden also. He issued press releases to collectors around the world and franked his mail with the stamps of San Marino.*



künnen die 3 von Mammoproteinen  $\beta_{\text{H}}$ , Braun,  $\beta_{\text{M}}$  Hön,  $\gamma_{\text{H}}$  und zum Ausscheidung Prote vom M<sub>r</sub> 50.000 Enzyme schwachend enthalten (die Marke 10, 20 oder bei Nr. 1 bekanntlich als Protein verwechsel, aus mit dem obigen 3 Proteinen nicht gesehen wird). Oft ist nur überdurchschnittliche gilt.

[illegible]

## Tausch!

**Kapuváry Márton,**  
Budapest V, Solymos utca 22.

**Briefmarken** kauft, sammelt und ver-  
kauft Carl Münder,  
Lepsohagen, Pöchlitz  
straße

**Ganzsachen,**  
relig., philosoph., unbekannt und un-  
gelesen!; ganz that everything was  
dark. Ansohn.

**Otto Bickel.**  
 Catania, March 1900.

de desințențelor în relațiile d'exchange  
cu celelalte țări ale lumii. Efecte în schimb  
des fâșierii societății noastre, în special  
afacerea. Corespondența: București, martie  
1938.

**Adolf Broese,**  
Senesl. Allentown.

100 seltene Seifenmarken	
1. Nivea	2. Nivea
3. Nivea	4. Nivea
5. Nivea	6. Nivea
7. Nivea	8. Nivea
9. Nivea	10. Nivea
11. Nivea	12. Nivea
13. Nivea	14. Nivea
15. Nivea	16. Nivea
17. Nivea	18. Nivea
19. Nivea	20. Nivea
21. Nivea	22. Nivea
23. Nivea	24. Nivea
25. Nivea	26. Nivea
27. Nivea	28. Nivea
29. Nivea	30. Nivea
31. Nivea	32. Nivea
33. Nivea	34. Nivea
35. Nivea	36. Nivea
37. Nivea	38. Nivea
39. Nivea	40. Nivea
41. Nivea	42. Nivea
43. Nivea	44. Nivea
45. Nivea	46. Nivea
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67. Nivea	68. Nivea
69. Nivea	70. Nivea
71. Nivea	72. Nivea
73. Nivea	74. Nivea
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83. Nivea	84. Nivea
85. Nivea	86. Nivea
87. Nivea	88. Nivea
89. Nivea	90. Nivea
91. Nivea	92. Nivea
93. Nivea	94. Nivea
95. Nivea	96. Nivea
97. Nivea	98. Nivea
99. Nivea	100. Nivea

## Timbres en Caoutchouc

**Ch. Guissart**  
Rue Cuvier 15, Reims, France.

Herbertul este 1 fr. 70 cm. înaltul  
poartă el două strobile terminale de  
semințe care sunt de obicei cu barba  
nădădă, sau pufoasă - adesea.

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### Auswahlsendungen,

**Otto Bickel,**  
Rome, San Marino, Italy.

Schwarze Tafel.  
Table noire.

A. Hallford, A. van Thien, Marseille.  
Flor. Bannux, Barcelon-Groch.  
J. H. Reid, stamp dealer, Marseille,  
Rue. Loubet, Marseille.

## No. 3, 1894. III. Jahrgang



*He commenced a philatelic journal immediately upon his arrival in San Marino titled "The San Marino Philatelist" which sold for Fr2. for 12 issues ..... It ran only to 4 pages and consisted mostly of advertisements for Bickel and other stamp dealers. Bickel advertised from both his San Marino address and his Montenegrin address. There were three Volumes of the Journal, with Number 1 beginning in January 1892. It was printed on very poor-quality paper in French, English and German. The known surviving copies are literally falling apart. No wonder it was promoted as "The cheapest newspaper in the world". It changed its name to the "San Marino Postal" in 1894, and it is probable that it is in this year that Bickel moved to Montenegro, not 1893 that is the year recorded in published German magazines. His advertisements continued even after his removal to Cetinje Montenegro. He was later to advertise in the German Stamp Magazine "Der Briefmarkenhandler" in 1902 and 1903. This Journal had only commenced in 1898 and survived through to 1933.*



*Bickel was honored by San Marino in 1997 with a stamp as a part of the set of 4 stamps for the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first San Marino Stamp (S.G.1618-21).*

*Bickel's dealings were similar to those of Kiderlen and equally proficient. It is probable that his modus operandi was identical to that of Kiderlen<sup>1</sup> except that hand-written addresses were the norm for Bickel"*

Otto Bickel moved around as mentioned but in his “Icelandic period” which from covers known to us seems to have commenced around 1900 and at this time he lived in Wolfratshausen near Munich:



Registered cover to Mr. Otto Bickel.  
Reykjavik 12-2-1900.

Heavily over franked with 100 aur stamp more than covering the postage 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> or maybe even 3<sup>rd</sup> class letter (up to 60 grams), 20, 40 or 60 aur, + reg. fee 16 aur.

There are not many Otto Bickel covers/cars with Icelandic stamps from before 1902.

Also most covers from Iceland were preprinted

There are many examples from Iceland from 1902-03 and later – here from our copy-collections – and then to his new address near Berlin:



These 3 covers are like the first cover shown above in the introduction posted the same day and cancelled Reykjavik 5-12-1902.

The postage is 50 aur, 45 aur, 150 aur and 56 aur, respectively.

With Reg. fee 15 aur and 20, 40, 60, 80, or 100 aur for letters up to 20, 40, 60, 80 or 100 grams, the correct franking would be 35, 55, 75, 95 or 115 aur.

Clearly, all these covers are made to receive high values in used condition. They are all philatelic.

Bernie Beston's purpose and argument in his article are relevant for collectors of Iceland too:

*"The question for postal stationery collectors is whether such material as produced by these and other dealers are so scarce that without it, usage in the Exhibit is deficient? Or are other commercially used examples of the item in question on the market, and available? Perhaps when using such items the exhibitor should record just how many commercially used examples are recorded. For those collectors who have passed up Kiderlen or Bickel covers, waiting for items of real postal use, just stop and think before you pass up the next card or envelope. There may be no genuine commercial use known today. Or only one or two, and they are locked up in other collections"*

Above may be true regarding some countries, but we believe Bernie Beston's arguments should be considered in the case of Icelandic postal items to Otto Bickel and Paul Kiderlen. Our recommendation is to avoid such items in your collection or at least know that they are considered philatelic before you invest too much money in such items. It is possible although difficult and expensive to get commercially used covers with high values from Iceland.

## Vertrauliches Korrespondenz-Blatt

### filatelistischer Vereine.

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XII. Jahrgang.      Leitung:      1902.  
 Verein für Briefmarkenkunde Kiel.

Vorstand:  
 Dr. med. H. Hühner, prakt. Arzt, Kiel, Ziegelstr. 7.

**Ämtliches Organ des Bundes Deutscher und Oesterr. Philatelisten-Vereine,  
 der Deutschen Philatelisten-Tage und der Deutschen Sammler-Tage.**

Inhalt: Amtliches und Berichte des Bundes, anderer Verbände, Kongresse, Ausstellungen, etc., und der betheiligten 200 Glatelistischen Vereine mit 11000 Mitgliedern. Ausführliche Warnungen vor Fälschungen (1890/1900 501), unregelmäßig Philatelisten (1890/1900 1441). Ca. 200 Adressen zur Prüfung und Besorgung von Postwertzeichen. Literaturübersicht und Allgemeines. Bezug nur für Mitglieder 3 Mk., Ausland 3.50 Mk.

Anzeigen	1	1/2	1/3	1/10	Seite
	20	12	5		3 Mk.

Wiederholungen 3, 6, 9, 12 mal, 10, 15, 25, 33 1/3, Nachlass.  
 Kleine Anzeigen 1 Mk. — Prospekte postfrei.



## Ich kaufe gegen Kasse

### Briefmarken-Sammlungen

jeder Gattung. In erster Linie liegt mir natürlich daran, möglichst hochwertige Objekte zu erwerben.

Jedoch kaufe ich auch, wenn preiswert,

**Mischungen**

von 1000, 5000, 10000 und mehr Verschiedenheiten.

Diese Mischungen dürfen aber **nur** aus

### sauber erhaltenen, guten Marken

bestehen. — Neudrucke, Stempelmarken, Ausschnitte u. s. w. sind **ausgeschlossen**.

Auf preiswerte Angebote kaufe ich grössere Posten.

## Philipp Kosack, Berlin C.

### Burg-Strasse 8.

Mitglied des Internationalen Postwertzeichenhändler-Vereins.

## Island.

Provisorien 1902  
 Königsmarken ..  
 Mauritius ..



Provisorien

und sonst alle besseren Neuheiten und ungebraucht laut Januar-Eingangs-Liste.

Sie schädigen sich, wenn Sie selbige nicht studiren!

## Otto Bickel, Zehlendorf bei Berlin.

If one does not know the story about Otto Bickel the following stationary cards look ok at a glance and they might be ok. However, a look at the back if no text (we do not have a copy of the text side) could change our mind. The identical handwriting and the recipient in itself are not proof of philatelic usages as also stamp dealers of course received mail for business purposes. Furthermore, these cards are at least from different dates.





The following cards, all stamped Reykjavik 19-02-1906 are philatelic usages. They are correctly franked with UPU postcard postage 10 aur (2 x 5 aur Christian IX) as the I GILDI overprinted stamp on the postal stationery counted zero (these cards were invalid in terms of postage from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1904 but could be used as ordinary postcards with no value as shown here).



References: Above and photos from e-bay, IslandsKontakt, Rapport and auction catalogues.

This is the first part of a series of articles on philatelic covers and card from Iceland. Next article will be on Paul Kiderlen.

## Late Silfurtún cancel *Eivind Kolstad*

Brian, thanks for another great magazine! Attached find a separated pair with B2c2 Silfurtún. No date, but it must be cancelled 1960 or later. That is a very late usage of this one. According to Thór, the place with many names got its B8e Ásgarður-Garð in 1958, replacing the B2c2 Silfurtún. Any comments?  
Eivind



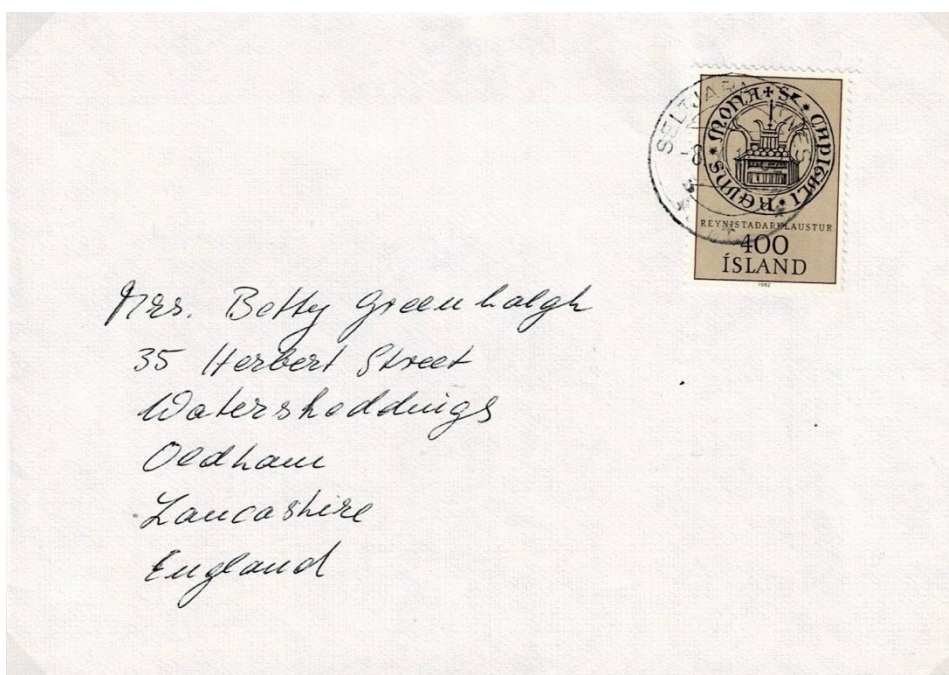
(Ed.) Silfurtún was an early settlement south of Reykjavík and appeared on the postal scene in 1951 with a collecting office using B2c2 cancel SILFURTÚN. In þþ's book, he gives no exact date for the end of the B2c2 cancel except to say that, when the place name changed to Ásgarður Garð, it received a cancel of that name from 1.11.1958.

Now we have Eivind's discovery of a late use of the Silfurtún cancel on a 1960 issue. Can readers supply examples of late use of Silfurtún and also early uses of Ásgarður Garð?

I can do no better than a 1952 Silfurtún and a 1965 Ásgarður Garð.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

## Another "rare" franking *Ole Svinth*



Dated Seltjarnarnes 8 X 82. Postage 400aur for a very short period and "rare" franking. Taken off the Nordia '84 miniature sheet, issued 7.10.1982. The 400aur Europe surface rate ended on 30.11.1982.



## Issue 36 - brief comments *Wilbur Jonsson*



Page16: no one seems to have noticed that this philatelic cover serves a purpose i.e. to get the variety in the middle on cover in a strip of three. Nothing to do with trying for a postal rate!

(Ed. Now why would I not realise that? (☺) I spend too much time dreaming of postal rates and rare postmarks).

It is the standard variety þjónusta instead of Frímerki on the right hand side (FACIT 69 v), because a cliché from the service stamps was used by mistake. The variety was noticed by the post office and they excised blocks and strips for sale to the collectors and the trade. I believe some sheets must have been sent to post offices outside the country before the variety was noticed as I have had a single on cover.

The variety occurs twice per sheet, positions 2 and 52 according to the catalogue.



Another comment, this time re Peter Sondhelm's card: The card is readdressed to Brumby bei Kalbo a/Saale. I had trouble finding this place on a map partly because of a name change (Kalbo now Calbe) and the Australian use of Brumby for a wild horse. But the place is in what is now Sachsen-Anhalt on the river Saale.

Best wishes, Wilbur

## Unusual Destinations ~ Q

I know that the next sequential letter in this series is “S”, and this is planned to appear in the next issue in May. However, a cover recently came my way addressed to Qatar. In the first series “*Exotic Destinations*” published in IslandsKontakt magazine, I cheated when it came to the letter “Q” and showed QSL cards instead. Here is the real thing at last. The Qatari postal official managed to stick his label firmly over the address so we cannot see it. Readers do not have the benefit of holding this cover up to the light in order to read the address, but you can take my word that the address is *MONALY RAY, c/o MR. S.K. RAY, DOHA, QATAR*.

Question: given that the (opened) envelope was returned to Iceland, and there is no sender address on the back, how did the card get back to the sender? Perhaps it never did, and the Reykjavík (or Hafnarfjörður) post office saw to it that it duly arrived in safe hands. (Which it surely has ☺)



Hafnarfjörður type B8e dated 19.I.1995. 55kr foreign rate to Qatar.

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

### Another 15.7 KLAKSVIG cancel *John Kuin*



In Peter Sondhelm’s article in Issue 36 “*A missing stamp on Iceland Brjefspjald*”, he expressed the hope that someone might find the missing stamp from the brjefspjald which arrived from Iceland at Klaksvig in the Faroes on 15.7.1891. John Kuin from the Netherlands sent this image of a beautiful strike of Klaksvig, dated 15.7, but unfortunately 1897 and not 1891, which he had discovered in a collection. Perhaps it was carried on the same ship although 6 years apart?



## Í Gildi - explanation please! *Leif Fugslig*



I found this piece of printer's waste, one of two similar lots on an online auction. The position is 49,50, the right stamp shows margin Wm OS.

How the printer managed to create this "masterpiece" I have no idea. Maybe a reader with graphic knowledge can explain it?

**Next Issue early May 2020. Articles please!**