

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 2021. If you need help with translations let me know.

The editor will help with the English if necessary.

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News/Comment

If anyone would like an index for the previous years' issues, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, please let me know. We finish the year with a readership of 177, an increase of 14 in the last 12 months. The breakdown is as follows:- :- USA 43; Iceland 38; UK 20; Denmark 18; Sweden 16; Holland 7; Germany 7; Canada 7; Norway 5; Finland 5; France 3; and one each in Spain, Singapore, Hungary, China, Czech Rep., New Zealand, Brazil, and Italy.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I have nothing new to add to the previous updates on the development of any future relationship between the Iceland Post Office and collectors, potentially in a world without Iceland postage stamps. It would be interesting to hear soon from our Icelandic based readers to know their opinions on this matter.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

At the time of writing, discussions are continuing on how best to use the data collected in the crown cancel database of Facit scarcity ratings 5, RR and RRR. The evidence gathered will inevitably make necessary value changes to a future Facit Special. The total number of images of strikes in those scarcity ratings has reached 935, and it is not too late to send in more if you have not already done so.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Ib Krarup Rasmussen expresses disappointment that nobody offered answers to any of his questions in IPM 35/2019 page 17. I agree with him, and am repeating his questions below in the hope someone can respond.

Administration des postes d'Islande. (20100 - ISLAND) **B**

Tilkynning um afgreiðslu á símapó
Règles d'émission

Endurrit af símapóstávisun afgreiddri af pósthúsinu á }
Copi d'un mandat télégraphique déposé au bureau d' }
hinn } 14. 9. 29 til pósthússins á } Reykjavík
le } pour le bureau d' } Pays

Nafn sendanda Nom de l'expéditeur	Númer pósta- ávisunarinnar Nu-éro du mandat	Nafn viðtakanda, fornöfn, staða og bústaður Nom, prénoms, qualité et domicile du destinataire	Fjárhæð pósta- ávisunarinnar Montant du mandat
Jón Valdimarsson	894	Lipabýrgðarfeeli "Túle" A.V. Tulinus	Innborguð með pósta-vegi 16.93.04 Mjál afgreiðslu Mandat du pays d'origine

Pósthúsið á }
bureau de }
le } 14. 10. 19 29
Nafn póstmanns }
(Signature) }
Stimpill }
útgáfupósthússins }
Timbre du bureau d'origine

Stimpill }
ákvörðunar pósthússins }
Timbre du bureau de destination

Is it a copy of a telegraphic money order? The rate corresponds to the information in your book: 60 aur to 100 kr. So in fact it is not a normal money order but a copy of a money order already sent by telegraph.

How rare do you think it is? Ebbe Eldrup says that "normally" the postage stamps are on the reverse side?

It should be more expensive to send a telegraphic money order than a standard money order by ordinary mail? How is the extra charge paid?

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

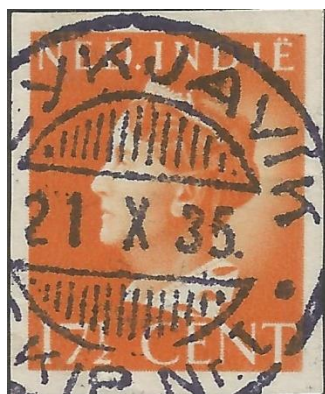
**KEEP THE ARTICLES COMING IN -
NEXT ISSUE IN JANUARY 2021**

As this is the last issue for 2020 -

GLÆÐILEG JÓL !

False Reykjavík Skip Nr.1 cancel *Henk Burgman*

A few months ago I was asked by a good Belgian philatelic friend whether I could classify an Icelandic cancel. He had a question about the "REYKJAVÍK SKIP No. I" stamp. Only one type of this cancel is known (type B3c) as stated in the Icelandic stamp handbook of ÞÓR ÞORSTEINS (2003). I know this stamp fairly well and I also knew a little about the background of this stamp. So I answered his question positively. On the scan that I received, I saw a print of the cancel that was placed on two imperforated stamps of the Dutch East Indies on the 17 ½ and 80 cents with Queen Wilhelmina in the Konijnburg type from 1941 (NVPH NI 276 and 284).



(Fig.1)

These imperforated, unfinished, stamps were, during the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies, stolen from the printing company, G. Kolff & Co. in Batavia, and later entered the philatelic market. Therefore they were never used on post and were subsequently never cancelled.

The stamps appeared to have been offered on E-bay but withdrawn by the sender when he was told that the stamps would be faked. I found out about the provider through my Belgian friend and emailed him. I explained to him about the background and he was willing to hand over the two stamps in question for a nice price to include them in my falsification and reference collection.

It is of course strange that unfinished stamps of an issue, which were issued in 1941, suddenly pop up with an Icelandic canceller and especially with this "SKIP Nr. I" canceller. And then, coincidentally, two stamps that appear at the same time. My first glance at the cancels confirmed my suspicions. In terms of lettering and shape, they did correspond pretty much to the original cancellers, but the thickness of the inked lines was far too thick. Upon closer examination and measurement of the letters, numbers and the different segments in the images of the canceller, I quickly came to the conclusion that this must be a print of a self-manufactured rubber cancel.

The Reykjavík cancel's date is clearly from 1935 with the date 21 X 35. This is therefore six years earlier than the date of issue of the stamps but within the period of use of the Skip Nr I cancel (9-5-1926 // 1-11-1938).

Let's take a closer look at the background of the SKIP Nr. I canceller from Reykjavík. The funny thing is that originally a "Reykjavík SKIP Nr. I" cancel was ordered. When it was delivered in Reykjavík the text turned out to be incorrect. The text on the cancel was set as "SKIB Nr. I". SKIB is the Danish spelling and SKIP is the Icelandic spelling for ship. At that time the cancels for Iceland were made in Denmark, hence the mistake. This had not been noticed in Denmark and it was only discovered upon receipt in Reykjavík.



E.s.Esja

Rangstafað við afgr.
sem SKIB. Óþekkt notkun/
Wrong spelling. Unknown use.



E.s. Esja

9.5.1926-1.11.1938

1926-1938

(RSKIP-1)

10

(Fig. 2)



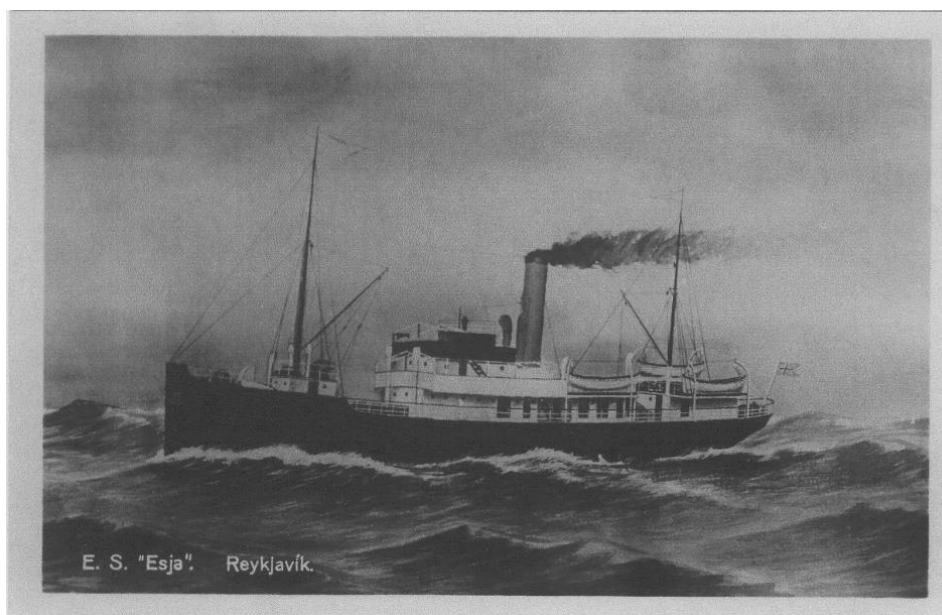
Fig 3

It must therefore be "Reykjavik SKIP Nr. I". It is not known whether a new canceller has been ordered and created in Denmark, or whether the stamp has been modified in Iceland, by cutting down a section of the B, resulting in a P. The canceller with spelling error was, as far as I know, never used. No prints of the SKIB stamp are known except the one in the manual. What happened with the SKIB canceller I don't know? Unfortunately I can no longer ask about it as Þór Þorsteins is no longer with us. Other inquiries in Iceland have yielded nothing so far.

The correct canceller was used on the ship "Esja" on domestic ship mail. It was the successor of the number stamp 215 that the "S / S Esja" had in use on the Steamship from 1925.

The Esja made a regular round trip around Iceland and took goods, mail and people with her.

(Fig. 4).



Let's take a look at the dimensions of the canceller used here: The size of the inside of the outer ring is the same as the original cancel. The size of the outside is a fraction larger. The height of the (date) bar is almost half a mm higher on the fake canceller. The length of the horizontal bridge lines are 1 mm longer on the rubber cancel than on the real cancel.

The A in Reykjavik is slightly different on one NEI stamp than on the other stamp. The Y has a foot at the downward line at the original cancel. With those on the NEI stamps it looks more as a ball. The upward slash in the K drops down at the end instead of that it runs straight.

Finally, I show you two more prints of the real ship's canceller. One is used on a letter that was really transported (Fig. 5 a and b) and one on, in my opinion, a philatelic letter (Fig. 6).

Fig 5a



Fig.5b

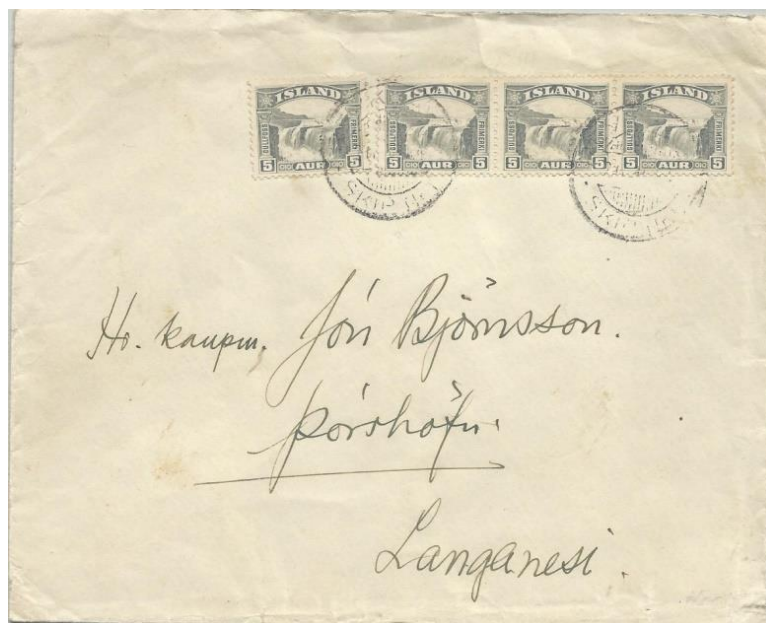
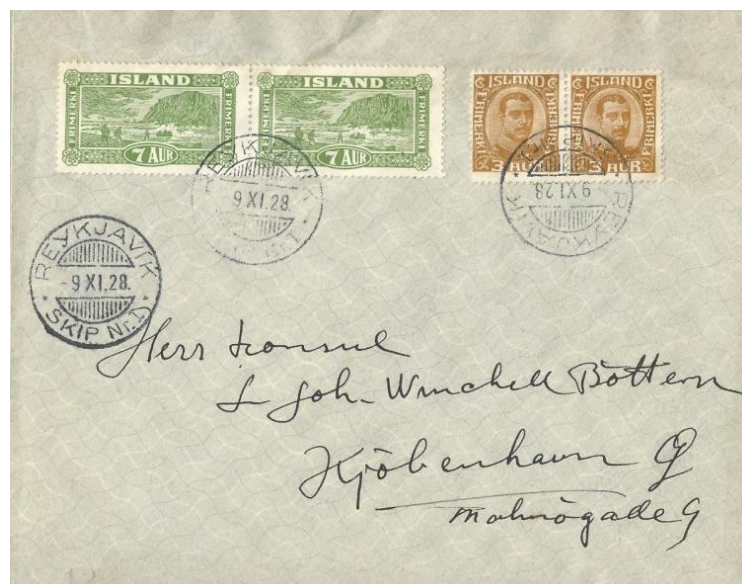


Fig 6



Martin Mörck: A Nordic designer and engraver of the stamps of Iceland

by *Armagan Ozdinc*

When one thinks about engraved stamps, the first person comes to mind among the living engravers of the world is Martin Mörck, a Norwegian-Swedish artist who was born to a Norwegian father and a Swedish mother in Gothenburg, Sweden in 1955. Both of his parents were artists.

His father, as a stamp collector, introduced Martin to engraved stamps in his childhood. Mörck started engraving his own artwork in copper at age 14. In 1975, Mörck joined Sweden Post as a stamp engraver apprentice. At age 21, he decided to continue his stamp engraving career as a freelancer. Since 1977, Mörck has engraved many stamps, banknotes and private artwork until this day. He has also been involved in many philatelic item designs, private illustrations and watercolor/acrylic painting.

Today, Mörck is the most productive living stamp designer and engraver in the world. As of now, he has collectively designed and/or engraved 942 unique stamp motifs on 1166 stamps, in addition to many souvenir sheets backgrounds, issued by 27 postal administrations. Of these 942 items, 789 were engraved.



Figure 1 – Mörck at work, hand engraving on a steel plate that he views under a hand-held magnifier. *Photo by Jon Nordstrom.*

Mörck has made majority of his stamp engravings using the hand engraving technique where the engraver carves an image in mirror reverse (negative) by way of lines, dashes and dots onto a soft steel plate using varieties of a special tool called *burin* under a magnifier as seen in Figure 1.

Up to 16 lines per 1/16 inch (10 lines per millimeter) are cut at various depths to give the effects of shadows, highlights and contours. Many lines, deeply carved and close together, produce heavily shaded areas on the final image. Lighter areas contain relatively few shallow lines. The engraver makes stage proofs by applying ink to the plate by hand during this process to ensure that the work is progressing according to plan. This is a traditional way of stamp engraving.

After the steel plate engraving is finished, the engraved image on the plate is transferred to printing cylinders in technically challenging labor-intensive steps for intaglio printing or combination of intaglio and offset printing.

Hand engraving is a laborious process to learn, requiring long apprenticeship, a highly developed artistic sense, a steady hand and patience. Hand engraving is now becoming a dying art form. Since hand engraving and its printing transfer is a time consuming and expensive process, the stamp industry started adapting the pen & ink engraving technique for the creation of engraved stamps or mostly switched to photographic offset printing processes which require none of the engraver traits. However, there is no doubt in the mind of this author that the offset-printed stamps never match the elegance and artistic beauty of engraved stamps (see Reference #2 for more detailed introduction of Mörck and other engraving techniques).

From their first stamp in 1873 until 1958, overwhelming majority of the stamps issued by Iceland Post were engraved. Starting 1958, they switched to printing majority of their stamps in offset and issued fairly limited engraved stamps. In 1975, they signed a contract with the French Post Telegraph & Telephone Printing

House and started issuing engraved stamps in large numbers again until 1986. The beautiful *Famous Icelanders* portrait stamps engraved by various French engravers fall into this period. Following the end of the French printing period, Iceland Post again switched back to printing majority of their stamps in offset until this day. During this post-French period, they issued very limited number of engraved stamps mostly created by Czeslaw Slania, late Polish artist, and Martin Mörck.

Year	Facit Number	Motif
1987-90	711,721,753.757	Guardian Spirits: Vulture
1987-90	712,722,740,754,758	Guardian Spirits: Dragon
1987-90	713,723,755.759	Guardian Spirits: Bull
1987-90	714,724,756,760	Guardian Spirits: Giant
1997	914	Overland Post: Riding Rural Postman
2000	980	Discovery of America: Þ. Karlsefni
2000	981	Discovery of America: Sailing Ship
2000	982	Discovery of America: Disembarking
2000	983	Discovery of America: L. Erikson
2000	999	Settlement of Icelanders in the West
2003	1065	NORDIA 2003: Flóki and Ravens
2004	1110	French Hospital
2007	1203	1907 Royal Visit of King Frederick VIII
2007	1209	Bicentennial Birth of J. Hallgrímsson
2011	1332 thru 1336 (5)	Harpa
2014	1455	Manuscripts: Valdimar's Zealand Law
2014	1456	Manuscripts: Saga of Burnt Njál

Between 1987 and 2014, Mörck engraved 19 unique stamps as part of nine different issues by Iceland Post. He also engraved two additional stamps issued jointly by Denmark and Iceland. All of the Mörck stamps for Iceland were hand engraved. He designed only one Icelandic stamp (Facit 914). The table on left lists the number of unique Icelandic stamp motifs designed and/or engraved by Mörck.

I am a great enthusiast of engraved art. In 1980s, I started my engraved artwork collection with the works of Czeslaw Slania and later continued with the works of Martin Mörck until this day. These two artists are undoubtedly the greatest stamp designers and engravers of my lifetime. Over the years, I have had the privilege of visiting Mörck's art studio in Sweden and observing him a number of times. During these occasions, I have personally witnessed his artistic skills, creativity and passion for art. He is a true artist always

working on new ways to excel and astound. In this article, I will briefly introduce the IPM readers to each of Mörck's beautiful Icelandic stamps and the stories behind these stamps. For more detailed descriptions of his stamps in the Icelandic language, refer to Reference #1.

"I have been so fascinated with the history of remote Nordic islands of Iceland, Greenland, Faroe Islands and Svalbard since my youth. My first artwork regarding Iceland was a series of pen and ink drawings about the history of Iceland made as part of my art school etching project at age 18. In this series, I depicted the time when Christianity arrived in Iceland at the end of 10th century and the struggles of the Icelanders who believed in the Norse gods. My favorite sketch from this series is a pagan man who is giving a speech about religious freedom in Þingvellir as seen in Figure 2. Ultimately, the dream became reality and I started engraving stamps for Iceland Post," says Mörck.

Mörck engraved his first stamps for Iceland as a set of four in 1987. The illustrations of these stamps depict the four guardian spirits of Iceland as shown in Figure 3: A dragon (top-right



Figure 2 – A preaching Norse pagan drawing by Mörck

stamp), a vulture (top-left stamp), a bull (bottom-left stamp) and a giant (bottom-right stamp) as included in Iceland's Coat of Arms. These guardian spirits are mentioned in *King Olaf Tryggvason's Saga* in *Heimskringla* – a collection of sagas concerning the various kings of Norway, from about the year 850 to 1177, written by the poet and historian Snorri Sturluson. According to this saga, King Harald tells a warlock to rush to Iceland in some altered shape and to see what he could learn about that land to tell him.

The warlock sets out his journey in the disguise of a whale. When he comes near to the land on the northeastern side of Iceland, he sees all the mountains and hills full of guardian spirits. He turns into Vopnafjord and intends to go on shore; but a huge dragon rushes down the dale against him with a train of vipers and lizards, that blows poison towards him.

He suddenly turns around to go westward and reaches Eyjafjord

on the central north side of Iceland. As soon as he is in the fjord, a vulture flies against him, which is so big that its wings stretch over the mountains on both sides of the fjord. Then, he swims farther west and turns south towards Breidafjord. When he gets into the fjord, a large grey bull runs against him, wading into the sea, and bellowing fearfully. From that point, he turns towards south and goes to Reykjanes. He wants to land at Vikarsskeid, but there comes down a rock giant against him with an iron staff in his hands. The giant is a head higher than the mountains, and many other giants follow him. He then swims eastward along the south coast of the land and sees nothing, but sand and vast lands, high-breaking surf, and the ocean between the countries, which is so wide that a long-ship could not cross it. After all of this, he returns back to the King, not giving this land a good reputation.



Figure 3 – Four Guardian Spirits of Iceland: Vulture, Dragon, Giant and Bull (clockwise)

These four stamps were issued as blocks of four panes in three different booklets, in four different color and value combinations, and in three different years: 1987, 1988 and 1990. The stamp with the dragon motif was also issued as a high value single stamp in 1989. The stamps were printed in mono-color intaglio at the Sweden Post Printing House. The design of these stamps was done by þröstur Magnússon, the legendary Icelandic stamp designer, who had been a student of Mörcck's father at the Gothenburg Academy of Art.



Figure 4 – Riding rural postman

In 1997, Mörcck worked on his second Icelandic stamp (Figure 4). He did not only engrave this stamp, but also designed it. This was issued as a single stamp. The topic of this stamp is about the old overland postal system in Iceland. Ever since mail service started in 1782, Icelandic mail carriers either walked or rode horseback. There were four main routes: three from Reykjavik to Akureyri, Westfjords, and along the South coast, with the fourth route from Akureyri to East Iceland. At the beginning, three to four trips a year were made along these routes. These

trips were linked to the schedule of mail ships which came from Denmark in the fall and returned in March. At the turn of the century in 1900, there were 10 primary postal routes in the country with as many mail carriers. In 1931, the overland mail system ceased, with autos and coastal vessels replacing it.

The motif of this stamp depicts a mail carrier riding on a horse pulling a number of horses that carry mailboxes in rural Iceland. The motif is based on a photograph by Magnús Ólafsson shown in Figure 5.

Everything on this stamp including the country name and face value were engraved. It was printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset on a sheet of 50 by Canadian Bank Note Company.



Figure 5 – The *Riding Rural Postman* photo by Magnús Ólafsson

Mörck's third set of stamps for Iceland was issued in 2000 for the occasion of the millennial discovery of America by Nordic men (Figure 6). The set consisted of four stamps. The discovery of America is mentioned in two Icelandic sagas: *Erik the Red's Saga* and *The Saga of the Greenlanders*. Bjarni Herjolfsson and Leif Erikson, son of Erik the Red, are each said to have found three lands in North America around the year 1000, which were named: Vinland, Markland and Helluland. These lands were likely the Labrador

Peninsula and Baffin's Island in Newfoundland, Canada. Relics of settlement by Nordic people have been found on the northern tip of Newfoundland, at a place called L'Anse aux Meadows, and some feel that this is where Vinland was, but others claim the name of the land and its description in the sagas show that Vinland was farther south, in New Brunswick of Canada, or Maine or even possibly Massachusetts in the United States.

The motif of the 40 kr. stamp depicts the globe showing the maps of Iceland, Greenland and North America along with a bronze statue of Þorfinnur Karlsefni by Icelandic sculptor Einar Jónsson. There are two castings of this statue; one located in Reykjavik and the other one used to be located in Philadelphia, U.S., but vandalized and toppled into the Schuylkill River in 2018. Karlsefni was an Icelandic explorer who sailed to Vinland from Greenland with his wife and a large entourage and established one of the early settlements there around the year 1010. The motif of the 50 kr. stamp shows the sailing ship of Karlsefni while the motif of the 75 kr. stamp depicts the landing of Karlsefni and his entourage to Vinland. The motif of the 90 kr. stamp depicts the globe showing the maps of Iceland, Greenland and North America along with a statue of Leif Erikson by American sculptor Alexander Stirling Calder. This statue is located in front of the Church of Hallgrímur (Hallgrímskirkja) in Reykjavik. It was a gift from the United States to the people of Iceland.



Figure 6 – Millennial discovery of America by Nordic men

The motifs, the person name texts, the country name and the face values on these four millennial stamps were all hand engraved. The stamps were printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset on a

sheet of 25 for each stamp and also all four together on a souvenir sheet by Canadian Bank Note Company. The text on the top white part of the souvenir sheet was not engraved.



Figure 7 – Settlement of Icelanders in the West

in the New World and the promise of cheap land increased the appeal of emigrating to North America.

The motif of the souvenir sheet is based on a painting by Árni Sigurðsson (1884-1970), depicting over 200 Icelandic settlers landing at the western shore of Lake Winnipeg in the Manitoba province of Canada on 21 October 1875, where they founded “New Iceland”. Sigurðsson was born in Iceland and later migrated to Canada in 1905. Until his death, he lived in different locations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada.

The motif of the stamp on this souvenir sheet is a perforated part of overall painting used as the souvenir sheet background. Mörck illustrated and hand engraved the whole background by using a printed photo of the painting. In addition to the motif, he also engraved the country name, the face value and the Icelandic text on the painting. It was printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset by Canadian Bank Note Company.

In 2003, Mörck hand engraved another souvenir sheet containing a single stamp for the occasion of the Nordia 2003 Philatelic Exhibition that took a place in Reykjavík (Figure 8). The motif is based on the account in the *Book of Settlements of the Viking Flóki Vilgerðarson*. According to the account, Flóki discovered Iceland with the aid of his ravens. The Icelandic text on the souvenir sheet reads: “Flóki brought three ravens with him to sea and when he released the first one it flew back in the direction where they came from; the second flew up into the air and back to the ship, and the third flew right before the ship leading them to their destination.” According to the story, the Icelandic raven-stock is descended from the ravens of Flóki who gave the country its name and concluded that it was uninhabitable whereupon he returned to Norway. Ruins can be found at the farm Brjánslækur in western Iceland where, according to folklore, Flóki sojourned for the winter of the year 865.

In the same year of 2000, Mörck engraved another souvenir sheet, this time containing a single stamp (Figure 7). This miniature sheet commemorates 125 years of Icelandic settlement in the West. The population of Iceland increased dramatically during the 19th century, but without a concurrent blossoming of the nation's economy. Despite increases in fishing yields and progress in agriculture, young people desiring to begin farming had few choices. Population increase, however, was only one of several factors contributing to the westward migration from Iceland. Adverse climatic conditions during the 1860s and 1880s, the eruption of the volcano Askja in 1875, and successful campaigns by so-called American agents also played their role. The shortage of labor



Figure 8 – Discovery of Iceland by Flóki and his raven

The motif of the stamp on the souvenir sheet is a perforated part of the souvenir sheet background. In addition to the motif, the country name, the face value and the Icelandic text on the yellow background were all engraved. The text on the white parts of the souvenir sheet was not engraved. The sheet was printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset by the Austrian State Printing House.



Figure 9 – French Hospital

spacious, deep and not far from the fishing grounds. In 1897, the French built a small infirmary in Fáskrúðsfjörður and later a chapel. In 1904, they built a hospital. At first, the hospital was open all year round, but later when the number of French fishing vessels started decreasing, it stayed open only during the fishing season. The street names in the town are both in Icelandic and French. The hospital building has later been restored and now used as a hotel.

The motif of this stamp depicts the French Hospital building at the fjord. In the foreground of the motif, a fishing vessel is seen. The text on the stamp reads: “The French Hospital in Fáskrúðsfjörður was built in 1904”. Only the scene motif was engraved. The stamp was printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset on a sheet of 10 by the Austrian State Printing House. The black-and-white picture of a nurse and a patient on the stamp is just a photograph and printed in offset.

In 2007, Mörck engraved another souvenir sheet containing a single stamp to commemorate the centennial royal visit of Danish King Frederick VIII to Iceland (Figure 10). King Christian IX brought Iceland its first constitution in 1874. King Christian IX’s son took over the throne as Frederick VIII in 1906. He had held royal office for decades and was well acquainted with Icelandic affairs. He made his first official visit to Iceland in July 1907. Upon his arrival, the royal guests were invited on a seven-day grand tour of the south of Iceland. A celebration was held at Thingvellir with almost six thousand guests attending. The royal party then proceeded to Gullfoss and Geysir. On the edge of the mighty waterfall, it was toasted in champagne for “the future of Iceland as an industrial country”. Travelling back from

In 2004, Mörck hand engraved a single stamp for Iceland Post. This stamp was about the French Hospital located in Fáskrúðsfjörður in eastern Iceland (Figure 9). The early 19th century was the heavily concentrated time of the French fishermen in Iceland. In those years, there were probably up to 5,000 French fishermen in Icelandic waters annually. The last French fishing vessel left Icelandic waters just before World War II. French had been fishing in Icelandic waters for about 300 years. It is estimated that about 400 vessels perished over three centuries and between 4,000 and 5,000 French seamen never returned to their native land. The French chose Fáskrúðsfjörður as headquarters since the fjord was



Figure 10 – 1907 Royal Visit of King Frederick VIII

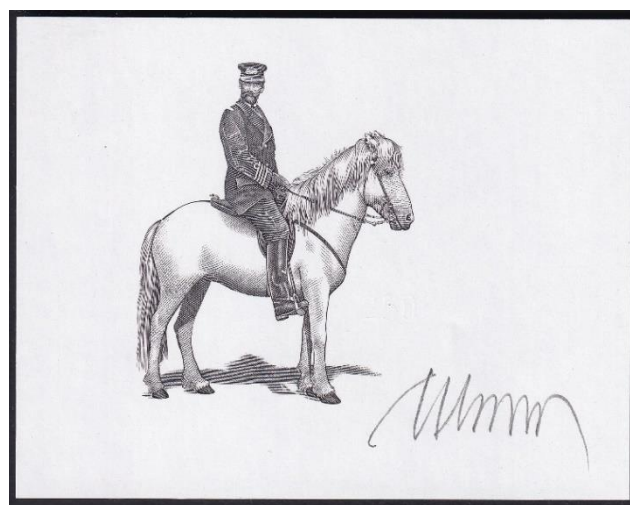


Figure 11 – Black color proof print of the engraved portion of the 1907 Royal Visit of King Frederick VIII souvenir sheet

Reykjavik, the King visited the towns of Ísafjörður, Akureyri and Seyðisfjörður.

The motif of this souvenir sheet depicts the King riding horse nearby Geysir. Mörck hand engraved only the King, the horse, shadows on the ground and the face value. The sheet was printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset by the Post Denmark Printing House. A black color proof print of the engraved motif portion of the sheet is shown in Figure 11. Over the years, I identified the prints of this souvenir sheet with three different shades of brown background color. Two color variations in addition to the one shown in Figure 10 are shown in Figure 12. These variations are not listed by any major stamp catalog to my knowledge.



Figure 12 –Two color variations of the 1907 Royal Visit of King Edward VIII souvenir sheet with different shades of brown background colour in addition to the one shown in Figure 10.

In 2007, Mörck did another stamp engraving for Iceland Post. This was a single stamp to commemorate the bicentennial birth of Jónas Hallgrímsson, one of Iceland's best-beloved poets (Figure 13). He was born in 1807 at a farm in northern Iceland. Hallgrímsson went to the Latin School at Bessastaðir. The influential magazine Fjölfnir was established in March 1834 by Hallgrímsson and two of his literary friends. The first issue of Fjölfnir appeared in the spring of 1835 and published his first big poem "Iceland". He soon became very productive as a writer of short-stories and poetry. He was a naturalist and travelled widely in Iceland. By publishing many of his great poems and stories in Fjölfnir, he became one of the *Romantic Movement* pioneers in Iceland.

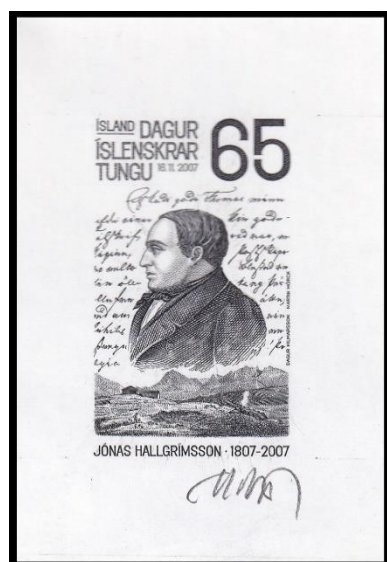


Figure 14 – A progressive stage proof of Hallgrímsson



Figure 13 – 200th birth year of Jónas Hallgrímsson

The motif of the stamp depicts the portrait of Hallgrímsson, view of his birthplace, and one of his poems in his handwriting. Every element on this stamp is hand engraved by Mörck. A progressive stage proof of this stamp is shown in Figure 14. The Icelandic text on the top-left corner of the stamp reads "Icelandic Language Day." The stamp was printed in a combination of intaglio and mono-color offset on a sheet of 10 by the Post Denmark Printing House.

In 2011, Mörck created his Icelandic philatelic artwork masterpiece. This was a large souvenir sheet issued to commemorate the opening of *Harpa* (Figure 15). Harpa is a concert hall and conference center located in

the harbor of Reykjavík. Its construction started in 2007, but was halted for about a year due to the 2008 financial crisis. It was finished in 2011 and opened on the day of May 4th. It is home to the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and Icelandic Opera. The building is equipped with technologically advanced sound, staging and presentation systems that allows for a mix of large conventions, receptions, concerts, exhibitions and public programs. The architecture of the building is the state of the art. The south side of the building features a distinctive geometric glass facade inspired by pillow basalt landscape of Iceland. The spectacular facade was designed by the renowned Danish-Icelandic artist Ólafur Elíasson. The façade is made of panes of clear and sparsely distributed color-coated glass surrounding a steel framework of a twelve-sided space-filling geometric modular system called the 'quasi brick'. The building appears a kaleidoscopic play of colours reflected in more than 1000 quasi bricks composing the façade.



Figure 15 – The southern façade of Harpa

Elíasson teamed with Mörck to design the Harpa souvenir sheet which is full of artistic creativity. The façade of the building was used as the motif of this commemorative issue. The souvenir sheet shows a section of the structure at an angle obliquely from below so you can see the sky in upper right corner when you look up. Because of the relatively large size of the souvenir sheet, only the five odd-shaped stamps representing five color-coated glasses in the middle of the sheet were hand engraved and printed in combination of intaglio and offset as self-adhesive stamps by the Post Denmark Printing House. The rest of

the motif was printed in offset. This philatelic artwork masterpiece definitely warrants a dedicated article to describe what was involved in its design and development. I plan to publish a separate article about the Harpa souvenir sheet in future.

The last philatelic engraving for Iceland Post by Mörck was a set of two stamps jointly issued with Post Denmark in 2014 (Figure 16). These stamps feature manuscripts from the Arnamagnæan Collection preserved by the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies and Nordisk Forskningsinstitut in Copenhagen. The manuscripts are *The Book of Kálfalækur* including the Saga of Burnt Njál and a Danish manuscript which contains legal statutes for Zealand. Magnússon built the most extensive collection of medieval Icelandic and Norwegian manuscripts known at the time. A part of this library was lost in the great Copenhagen fire in October 1728. The loss of the manuscripts devastated Magnússon who passed away a year later in sorrow at the age of 66. In 1961, Iceland and Denmark negotiated the division of the collection and the first manuscripts were shipped to Iceland ten years later. In 2009, the Arnamagnæan Manuscript Collection was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

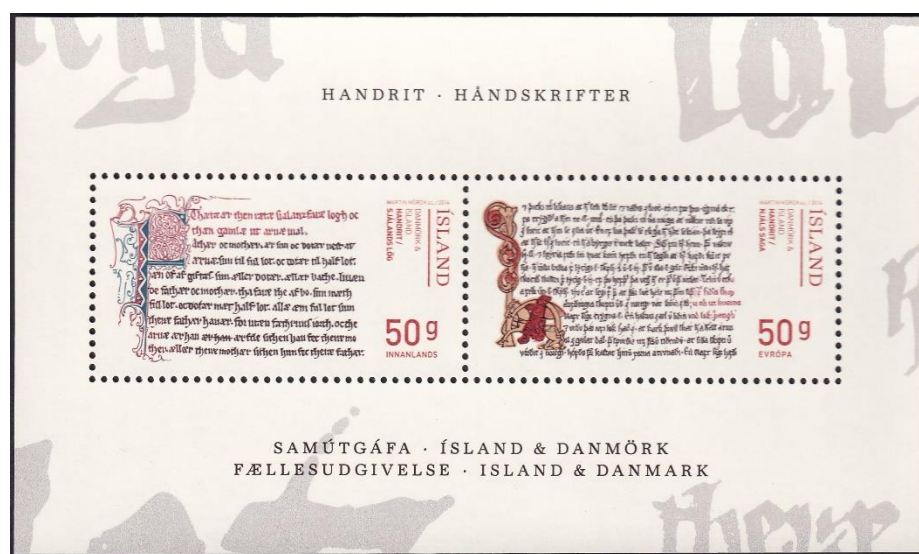


Figure 16 – Manuscripts from the Arnamagnæan Collection

These two stamps were issued as singles and also together on a souvenir sheet. Only the manuscript motifs were hand engraved. The motif of the stamp on the left-side of the souvenir sheet features Valdimar's Zealand Law. The motif of the stamp on the right-side features the Saga of Burnt Njál. The stamps were printed in a combination of intaglio and multi-color offset on both a sheet of 10 self-adhesive and also on a souvenir sheet by the PostNord Sweden Printing House.

After 28 years, Mörck's Icelandic stamp engraving commission ended in 2014. "My most favorite stamp that I engraved for Iceland is surely the Harpa souvenir sheet because of its complexity and its unique place in modern philately. My second favorite one is the King Frederick VIII souvenir sheet. It is a classic piece, but beautiful and very romantic. I wish I had more opportunities to engrave stamps for Iceland. Unfortunately, they decided not to issue engraved stamps anymore after 2014 as part of their cost reduction effort. Recently, we all sadly found out that Iceland Post will entirely cease issuing stamps at the end of 2020. This is heart-breaking! It is hard to grasp and understand how the postal administration of a country decides not to issue stamps which are kind of a national symbol and carry the image and free advertisement of the country around the world. After all, the biggest revenue of Iceland is tourism - it was at least before the pandemic started," says Mörck.

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1. Íslandspóstur (Iceland Post), *Frímerki íslenska lýðveldisins (Stamps of the Republic of Iceland)*, Volumes I and II, 2016, Reykjavik, Iceland (published in Icelandic).
2. Ozdinc, Armagan, *Martin Mörck: Designing and engraving stamps for the world*, Linn's Stamp News, Volume 93, Issue 4777, pp. 56-65, 18 May 2020, Amos Media, Ohio, U.S.A.

5 - Review of the series “Was this cancel used here?” (IPM Issues 10 to 26)

The cancels reviewed here are B1a Sveinseyri and B2a Staðastaður which featured in Issue 23 in November 2017.

B1a Sveinseyri: Since issue 23, no evidence has been provided by readers to show an example of B1a Sveinseyri used at Innsta Tunga in the brief 2 month period from 21.6.1961 and 17.8.1961. Such a strike must be extremely rare or may not exist at all.



B1a Sveinseyri Vestur- Barðastrandarsýsla

Recorded use 1.7.1930 – 20.6.1961

Innsta-Tunga 21.6.1961 – 17.8.1961 ??

B2a Staðastaður: Similarly, no evidence has been provided by readers to show an example of B2a Staðastaður used at Traðir in the 8 months from 1.1.1944 and 31.8.1944. Such a strike must be extremely rare.



B2a Staðastaður Snæfellsnes & Hnappadalssýsla

Recorded use 1.7.1930 – 31.12.1943

Traðir 1.1.1944 – 31.8.1944 ??

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Spectacular franking on Jaeger cover



Spectacular price \$962 on Ebay

RAF PO 003 Kaldaðarnes *David Loe*

Introduction

If you refer to the RAF Post Office listings for Iceland in the Facit Special catalogue, the reader will see a paragraph headed “The vexing problem of RAF PO 003”. This is written by Wilbur Jonsson, a long-time friend and correspondent. It is accepted that RAF PO 003 was based at RAF Olfus, Kaldaðarnes, near Selfoss.

I would like to reopen the debate as to whether we accept the three known examples of this cancel as being genuine; indeed, do we accept that a post office with this cancel was ever in operation?

A brief history of the airfield.

When the British first occupied Iceland in May 1940, Kaldaðarnes and Sandskeið (SE of Reykjavík) were identified as the only two possible makeshift landing sites in Southland, along with Melgerði (near Akureyri) in the north...as the airfield at Reykjavik had a long and troubled history with wet ground and bogs and would need considerable development.

Sandskeið never seems to have been used during the war, but the other three sites certainly were. Kaldaðarnes had never been an airfield prior to 1940 but it did offer a big expanse of bare gravel and this was pressed into service.

Work started on an operational base here on the 1st of August 1940 when No. 30 Wing arrived to administer a landplane force at the airfield under construction at Kaldaðarnes. 9 Fairey Battles of 93 Squadron, Bomber Command, escorted by two Sunderland Flying boats landed on 27th August 1940, with the rest of the squadron landing on 14th September. (1)

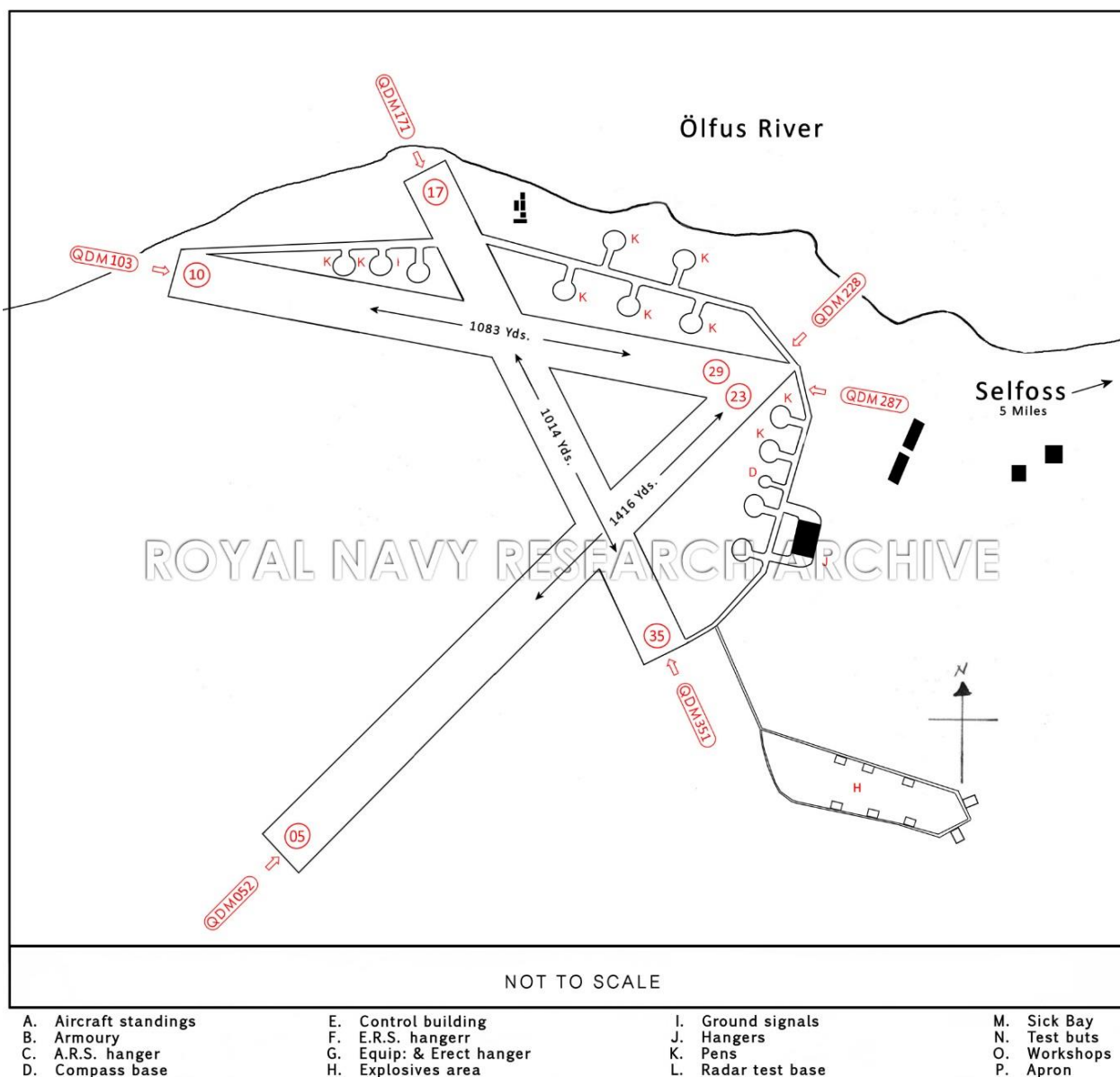
They were later joined by a Tiger Moth communication aircraft and some Hurricane 1As and started operations that consisted largely of U Boat patrols and convoy escort duty.

By April 1941, a report to the Air Ministry stated that only one runway had been completed. But that was better than Reykjavík, where bogged planes were a constant problem, and it was decided to transfer 296 Squadron from there to Kaldaðarnes. On the 13th of May 1941, a detachment from No 807 Road Construction Coy., Royal Engineers arrived at Kaldaðarnes "to complete laying of concrete on runways".



Figure 3 Lockheed-Hudson bomber pictured on the ground at Kaldaðarnes (RAF Coastal Command)

Work was still not progressing fast enough with local resources at Kaldaðarnes; on the 29th of May, No 231 Coy. Pioneer Corps started further construction work on Kaldaðarnes airfield. Two days later the move of No. 269's Hudsons and squadron personnel to Kaldaðarnes was complete, and HQ, RAF Kaldaðarnes was established on the 5th of June 1941; Wg Cdr RH Carter was appointed as first Station Commander, the field having previously simply been under the command of the OC No. 98 Sqn.



Composite plan produced by the Royal Navy Research Archive

Figure 4 A plan of the completed facilities at Kaldaðarnes

On 31st July 1941 the Detachment Commander No 231 Coy. reported all three runways at Kaldaðarnes complete and operational. Over 800 RAF personnel were based at Camp Ölfus.

U-BOAT
 No. *2* *Canadian* *ANZACS CALLING HOME* RECORDED: *3/8/42* BROADCAST:
 No. *R100668* Rank *Lt. A. B.* Name *Watson, M. H. (Merry)*
 Service Address *RAF Station (B.) Kaldadarnes Iceland (P.) Force*
 Name (Christian or nick-name or initials, and surname) *(Mother) Mrs. A. B. Watson*
~~Australian~~ *Canadian* address *120 Hedding St. Toronto, Canada*
 MESSAGE (about 60 words)
Hello Mother and Dad! Hello June! I would rather leave my voice here and crawl out of your radio in person but I'm afraid it's against regulations. Everything is fine here. My health is good and mail is arriving regularly; especially your letters June, and I needn't tell you how much they mean to me. I hope everything is well at home and just remember: I'll be seeing you!
 HEC/P/503/D
 15-2-2

Figure 5 This British Broadcasting Corporation form was originally entitled "ANZACS Calling home" and was meant for Australian and New Zealand personnel, but has been altered for Canadian forces personnel. It clearly shows that Canadian airmen were serving with the RAF at Kaldadarnes in August 1942.

Then there followed a period of some stability for some 19 months until 6th March 1943 when the River Ölfusá burst its banks and flooded the base to a depth of 2 feet (600mm). Whilst under evacuation the flood waters got worse on the 10th and it was decided to temporarily evacuate everyone.

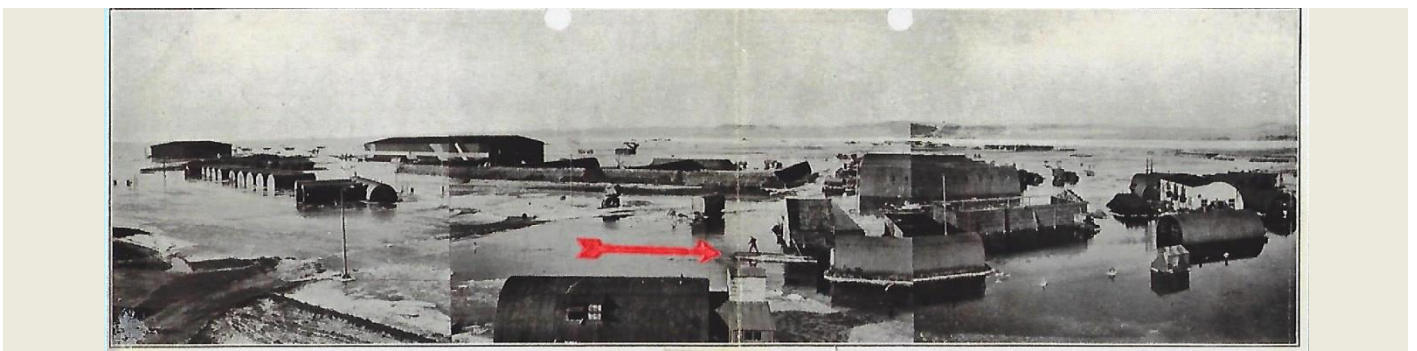


Figure 6 A contemporary newspaper clipping of the flooded airfield

There was a period of comings and goings and then in May the river changed course and took out one of the runways that had obvious impacts on the operational competence of the base.

Remember that by 1943 the Iceland Defence Force had been under the administration of the Americans for 2 years and on 24th March 1943 the new American Air Base at Keflavík was opened, known as Meeks Field. This meant that the American flyers could now operate from Meeks and by 20th April they had been joined by the RAF units evacuated from Kaldaðarnes. All this sounded the death knell for the airfield and orders were made to dismantle the facilities.

From May to September 1943 the Royal Navy Air Section used the base for reserve aircraft for its carrier fleet. They had up to approximately 100 personnel on site, but lack of use meant that the facility was no longer needed.

On the 30th of November 1943 - RAF Kaldaðarnes was officially closed, leaving behind the detachment of No 5021 Airfield Construction Squadron.

The use of RAF PO 003 Postmark

No examples of the 003 cancel had been found until recent times. In 2010 the illustrated cover had been found and in 2014 two examples of the RAF PO 003 postmark came to light. They are illustrated here. Note that they are all from the period April-September 1943, the period when the base was in decline.

The cancel itself is unlike the other RAF Iceland cancels and is rather crude in nature. As Wilbur Jonsson has noted, the RAF cover is uncensored and this is not normal and has led to this author to doubt its authenticity. It is unfortunate that none of the examples have anything that ties them to use at RAF Kaldaðarnes. One question I have asked myself is that perhaps the cancel was never officially put into use but was manipulated somehow when someone got their hands on it. That would suggest all the examples would be CTO but that is not the case for the use on the air letter.

So far, this is mere supposition.



Figure 7



Figure 8 piece from an air letter (front and back)

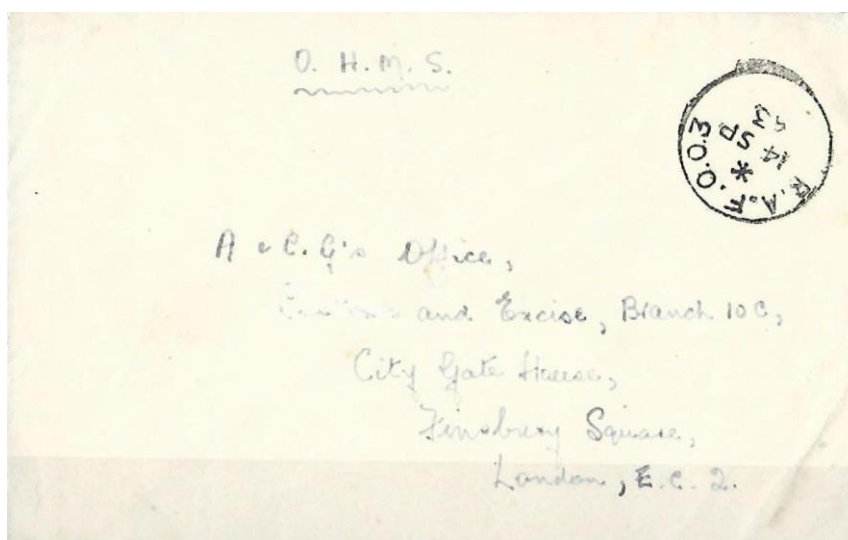


Figure 9 The only cover known, lacking a censor

When did the RAF start their postal operations in Iceland?

From the start of the Iceland occupation up until January 1943, Allied military postal services in Iceland were conducted by the Army Post Office stationed at Reykjavík and serving the network of FPOs, with a sub-post office at RAF Kaldaðarnes. That is why we see Army FPO's on covers sent by RN and RAF personnel with accompanying RN and RAF censors. In this period, a letter sent from a RAF serving person in Kaldaðarnes would have a RAF censor and then be dispatched to FPO 306 in Reykjavík for sorting and dispatch to the UK. Incoming mail would have the same route in reverse.

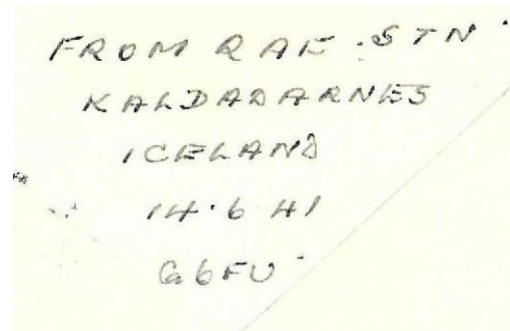
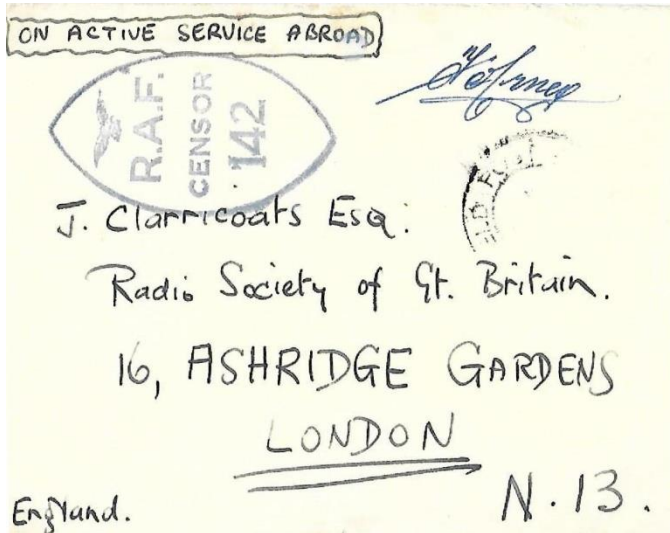


Figure 7 Outgoing mail with RAF censor (seen used at Army FPO 307, unreadable FPO marking but also with receiver's endorsement as having come from Kaldaðarnes

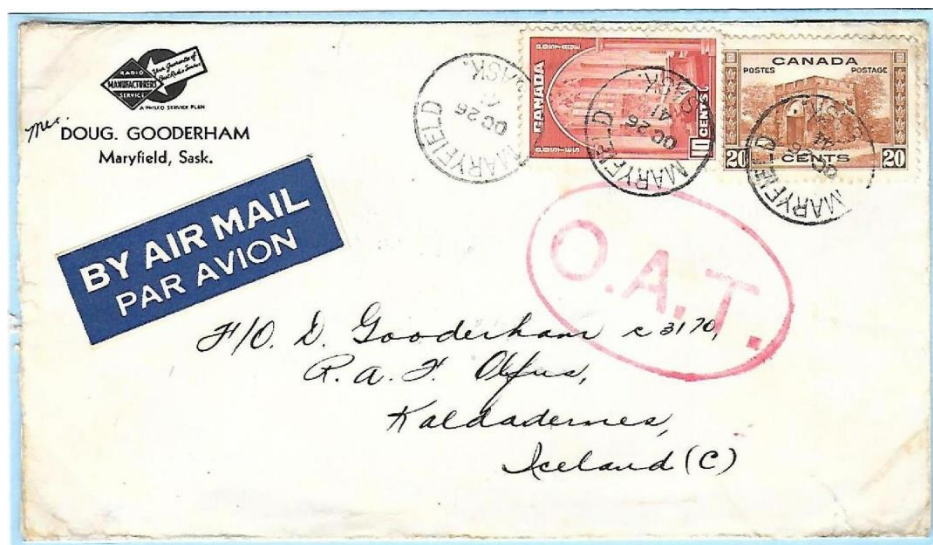


Figure 8 incoming mail but no markings in Iceland 26.10.1941

By January 1943 most of the British Army garrison had departed and were replaced by US forces. Consequently, responsibility for the British military mails was transferred to the Royal Navy. Large numbers of RAF and Navy personnel remained, and the RAF provided seven airmen for the portage of bagged mail and assistance with general sorting duties. This arrangement does not appear to have worked satisfactorily as far as the RAF was concerned, with difficulties experienced arising from differing procedures between the two services.

Therefore, arrangements were made in March 1943 for the withdrawal of RAF personnel working in the Fleet Mail offices and the establishment of a central post office at RAF Station Reykjavík (RAF PO 001),

controlled by the RAF Postal Service. In addition, a Receipt & Dispatching Office for all mail was set up in Reykjavík. Besides the existing office at Kaldaðarnes (allocated RAF PO 003), two further post offices were opened at Keflavík, Camp Geck (002) and, later in mid-1944, Camp Cook (005).

Mail from both these latter is scarce, 005 is particularly so. But none scarcer than the 3 examples of 003 shown above. It is important to note that the earliest known date of RAF 001 is 6th April 1943 and RAF 002 20th April 1943, in line with the establishment of the RAF postal system. So the 12th April for the first example of RAF 003 fits with the establishment of the office.

American Forces Mail Service at Kaldaðarnes

I think it is also worthwhile understanding the presence of American Forces at Kaldaðarnes.

Medical Department of the US Army

The first military hospital to be established at Kaldaðarnes was the 11th Station Hospital that was moved here in June 1942 from previous site in Reykjavík. This was a 250 bed unit. The 72nd Station Hospital was added in late January 1943. This was a 50 bed unit. The Americans adopted a general rule that the number of beds was roughly 5% of the number of men that the hospital served. This would mean that approximately 6000 men were based at Kaldaðarnes! In June 1943, when the American Army hospital bed strength was at its maximum, there were 10,145 beds or 5.8% of the contingent.

In addition to the cover illustrated below, in the Sickels collection there is a V Mail from APO611 with the same inscription of 72nd St. Hosp dated April 26th 1943.

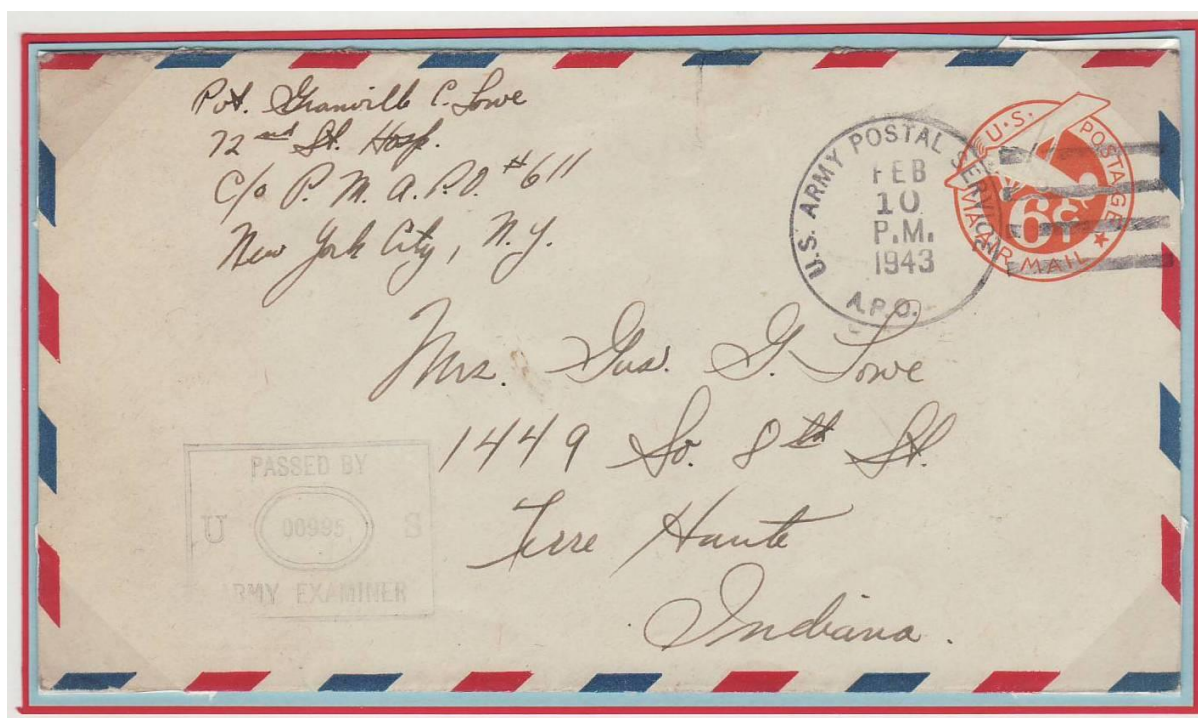


Figure 9 A very rare APO611 cover inscribed 72nd Station Hospital at the time it was at Kaldaðarnes

As the number of men declined at Kaldaðarnes, so the hospitals were moved away. The 11th Station Hospital moved in the first few days of August back to Reykjavík to be followed by the 72nd on 19th August 1943.

I should note here that the British never had a hospital at Kaldaðarnes but did use the American facilities once established. Prior to June '42 all hospital cases were transferred to the British hospital in Reykjavík.

Conclusions

Genuineness of the cancellation

The cancel on the air letter suggests to me that the cancel has been used on mail that has been through the post and is therefore probably genuine. Previously my view was that it was a fabrication as it is not like the other RAF cancels used in Iceland. But why was a stamp used unless it was a registered item?

The cover has its problems also as there is no censor's signature and accompanying mark.

Was the cancel used at Kaldaðarnes?

With a sample of just three examples it is very difficult to say that it was. But the dates of use do match the possible period that an office could have been open. However, we have no way of saying this, the cancel could have been evacuated with the personnel and used elsewhere.

Summary

This is an interesting story of an RAF base where nature won the battle of the elements.

After a fair amount of research, there is a probability of the RAF 003 cancel being used at Kaldaðarnes but until there are more examples and importantly, a cover or letter proving use here, all I will say it is probable but not certain.

References

- (1) Dr. AD Kindley collection Cavendish Philatelic Auction March 10th 2016 Lot 1422
- (2) "Construction of Kaldaðarnes airfield" This is an apolitical forum for discussions on the Axis nations and related topics hosted by the Axis History Factbook in cooperation with Christian Ankerstjerne's *Panzerworld* and Christoph Awender's *WW2 Day by Day*.
- (3) History of 269 Squadron RAF, Old Comrades Association
- (4) Mike Edwards; Iceland Cover Story No 1, Contact, March 2000, Scandinavia Philatelic Society
- (5) <http://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwii/medsvcsinmedtrnmnrthtrs/chapter1.htm>
- (6) Iceland: The RAF Postal Service. David Atkins, Letters to the Editor, March 2004 Scandinavia Contact
- (7) Tryggvi Blumenstein – Supply of photos (not used here) and BBC Calling Home Cards

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Henk Burgman's mystery mark. (Issue 38 and 40)



Hello Brian. I suggest this is the NE-corner of the old Danish R (registry) mark with the country name (Danmark) removed. Compare it with the R mark on the cover page 30, issue 40.

Best regards

Ólafur

Iceland Coils *Jay Smith*

Source: Reproduced by permission of the author, Jay Smith of Jay Smith & Associates, from his "Behind the Scenes" commentary in his July 16, 2020 *Philatelic E-News* email newsletter. Jay's e-mail publication is free to all interested collectors who supply their name, email address, and full postal address. Contact js@JaySmith.com.

A client recently asked an intriguing question: Are there any Tollur (customs duty, revenue, tax) cancellations on the Icelandic coil stamps? His question was mostly in reference to the Gullfoss (Golden Waterfalls) stamp issue because the Fish stamps mostly came after the end of the use of Tollur cancellations. As usual, that question started a thought process.

My immediate answer to that question was "I don't know for sure, but I don't remember ever having seen any." The Icelandic coil stamps were machine-vended; thus, I can't imagine a customs agent going to the location of a machine, buying some stamps, and using them on a mail recipient's customs documents. However, I suppose that a postal patron might obtain their own stamps from a machine and give them to the customs agent to use. A more likely scenario, if coils were used at all, is that toward the end of the life of the stamp issue, remainders may have been supplied to the customs agents to use up; this was in fact done with other types of (mostly overprinted) stamp issues.

If you have any Icelandic coil stamps bearing Tollur cancellations, I would like to see them!

Did you know that Iceland had coil stamps back in the 1930s-1940s? Some of the Gullfoss (Golden Waterfalls) 5, 20, and 35 aur stamps, and Fish 5 aur, 25 aur red, and 25 aur red-brown stamps, were made (by the post office, for sale in postal vending machines) into coils by gluing sheets together and then slicing them into strips. Those that I know about, and which started to appear in the specialized catalogs only in the last 20-30 years, were issued in the 1930s and 1940s.

The stamps were machine-sliced into strips and thus have straight-cut perforations on two sides. (Straight-cuts on all four sides indicate that the stamp was vended one at a time and cut by the vending machine as it was dispensed.) Many of these stamps were discarded by collectors and dealers over the years because they were thought to be damaged (the straight-cut perforations). However, they are NOT damaged – they are scarce stamps!

According to the *Facit Catalog*, the Gullfoss stamps (*Scott* 170-5) offer five different coil stamps, even though the coils were only of three denominations. Many people are not aware that the Gullfoss stamps have a total of four different perforation types / measurements, though not all types were used for all the stamps (see *Facit*). In the case of the coils, two of the 5 aur perforations were coiled, two of the 20 aur, but only one of the 35 aur.

Facit's listings for the Fish issues are not as well developed (I will talk to them about that). However, the coils exist for all perforation types (again, see *Facit* – there is much more than is listed by *Scott*) of the 5 aur, the 25 aur red, and the 25 aur red-brown. That is 4, 3, and 2 different types, respectively.

Interestingly, *Facit's* catalog values for the Gullfoss stamps are much higher than their values for the Fish stamps... BUT in my experience, the Fish stamps are MUCH scarcer! I am only guessing, but I attribute the scarcity of the (used) Fish stamps to them being discarded by collectors and dealers back when they were issued. The Fish stamps were much more common ("penny" stamps) and thus anything that "looked defective" (straight-cut perforations) would be thrown out. Collectors back then simply did not know that coil stamps were in use by Iceland!

Of the Gullfoss stamps, mint and used examples can be found of all three values, though the 5 and 20 aur mint stamps are a lot scarcer than the 35 aur. I believe that at least one partial roll of the 35 aur stamps survived to modern times, making them more available. One finds mint 35 aur coils in collections that were assembled as far back as the early 1960s, thus at least one dealer was feeding them into the market as a cheap alternative (so people thought at the time) to a more neatly perforated sheet stamp. Little did they know that they were selling and buying a scarce variety. Used examples are available of all three values. I am sure that there is a scarcity difference between the coils of the two different perforation types of the 5 and 20 aur stamps, but I have not recorded enough detail to be sure of the relative scarcity. *Facit* does have value differences for the two 5 aur coil stamps.

There is one oddity to the Gullfoss coils. All of the 5 and 35 aur coils that I have seen have the straight-cuts on the top and bottom. However, on the 20 aur, every example I have seen has the straight-cuts on the sides. This has been consistent over the years and with stamps coming from dozens of different sources. Though they are few and far between, I have seen used pairs and strips of three of Gullfoss coils, thus apparently not all were chopped individually when they were dispensed (or else they were manually removed from the coil roll).

For the 20 aur Gullfoss, my theory is that when the coils were made (at least some, those that I have seen), the strips were TORN apart (top and bottom of the stamp) instead of being sliced apart like all the other (that I have seen, but some others may have been torn as well). Then when they were dispensed (endwise), the dispenser chopped them off stamp by stamp, across the narrow measurement (i.e., the left and right sides of this horizontal format stamp). The cut marks on the side of examples coming from many different sources all show the same slight angle of cutting on the sides.

It is a lot more difficult for me to discuss the Fish coils as I have seen only a small fraction of them. I do recall years ago having a cover bearing several 5 aur Fish stamps which were all individually chopped when they were dispensed. Perhaps by that time they were dispensed only as individual stamps, not in strips?

Lastly, I strongly urge Iceland collectors to take a close look at their collections of these stamps. You may find you actually have some coils! Watch for mint stamps with a "tab" on the backside, which would be half the sheet join (narrow bit of margin from the next sheet). If you are really lucky, you will find a pair or larger unit with a sheet join – that is a special item! It is unlikely that you will find loose used stamps with sheet join "tabs" still affixed; they would have floated off when the stamps were soaked.

Especially look at stamps on covers; you may want to use a magnifying glass to better check for the straight-cut perforations. PRO TIP: If a cover has several singles on it, that may be a clue that they were individually dispensed coils; so be sure to check them! Another PRO TIP: Spliced multiples (sheet joins) are almost impossible to find used (and they are scarce mint), but your best chance to find them is hiding in plain sight on a cover – look for that little bit of extra stamp paper thickness (joining tab) on one or the other side of each join in a multiple.

I welcome pointers to any articles about the Fish coils (or Gullfoss coils).

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1956 Skálholt Issue *Oyvind Gulliksen*

I am wondering about the Icelandic stamps from 1956, the series of three stamps to celebrate Skálholt. In my Facit catalog. (Scandinavia) it says that "this set is blacklisted by the FIP. Must not be exhibited".

What does that mean?

What is FIP?

Why is the price for these stamps on envelopes so high?

Why are these fine stamps blacklisted?

Is that still the case? Why?



(ED. I sent Oyvind a description of FIP and its function, and Ole Svinth mentioned a possible problem with the charity surplus? but I have struggled to find an answer to his other questions. I hope readers will be able to assist?) ☺

Iceland's NIC 167 – A New Find! *Michael Schumacher*

Having collected Iceland stamps for nearly 30 years, one area of Iceland philately that I find interesting is Iceland's NICs (Number-in-circle) cancelers, as they were primarily used at remote mail collecting stations beginning in 1903. Over the course of their use – **300 numbers were used on a total of 310 cancelers, at 538 locations – 487 farm/church sites; 17 boats/ships; 31 small villages and 6 islands.** Needless to say collecting a complete set of NICs is quite a challenge and research on the subject continues to be updated.

The best resource on this topic that I am aware of, is the two volume set of books *"Icelandic numeral cancels 1903-1960 by Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson.* It provides information regarding rarity, both as to on stamps and on covers, location and time period of usage, color of ink used, etc.

According to this resource NIC 167 is known in black ink only, thus the 20 aur King Christian IX stamp (pictured below) is of significant interest, in that it appears to be signed and more importantly bears a NIC 167 Iceland cancel in blue ink. That would make it the **first known NIC 167 cancel in blue ink.**

The 6 aur King Christian X stamp bears a black ink cancel.



NIC 167 was used at:	Neðri-Hals	1903 – 11.10.1921
	Reynivellir	12.10.1921 – 1930
	Neðri-Hals	1950 – 1961
	Eyrarkot	1962 -1964

The rarity of the cancel on stamps is a 3 and on cover 5.

This discovery was made as I was putting together my Iceland NICs exhibit after collecting Iceland philately for nearly 30 years. The exhibit contains just over 200 of the different NICs, primarily on stamps. It's a reasonably good start, but by far the best Iceland NICs exhibit that I know of by Sveinn I. Sveinsson, I had the good fortune to see in Iceland at the 2013 and 2018 Nordia Exhibition.

Thanks to all of those that I have had the opportunity to learn about Icelandic philately and this new find is a way for me to contribute to the knowledge base.

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Crown Cancels on Covers and cards

As mentioned on page 3, the census of crown cancels rated: 5, RR or RRR has progressed well since it began in November 2018. Encouraged by this, a new census has commenced, this time of crown cancels on covers and cards. Clearly these are relatively few in number and generally all fetch high prices at auction. A census of this area of collecting has never previously been attempted, and should be illuminating and interesting. One benefit such a census would give is to allow exhibitors to state, for example, *"one of three known covers"* etc. We would like to appeal to our fellow collectors to be kind enough to share with us images of crown cancels on covers and cards. The identities of those submitting, or owners will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to the data analyser Brian Flack, to whom scans/pictures should be submitted in jpeg format by email: flackbp@gmail.com. Already over 200 images have been traced.

Same variety on stamps and stationery Páll Pálsson



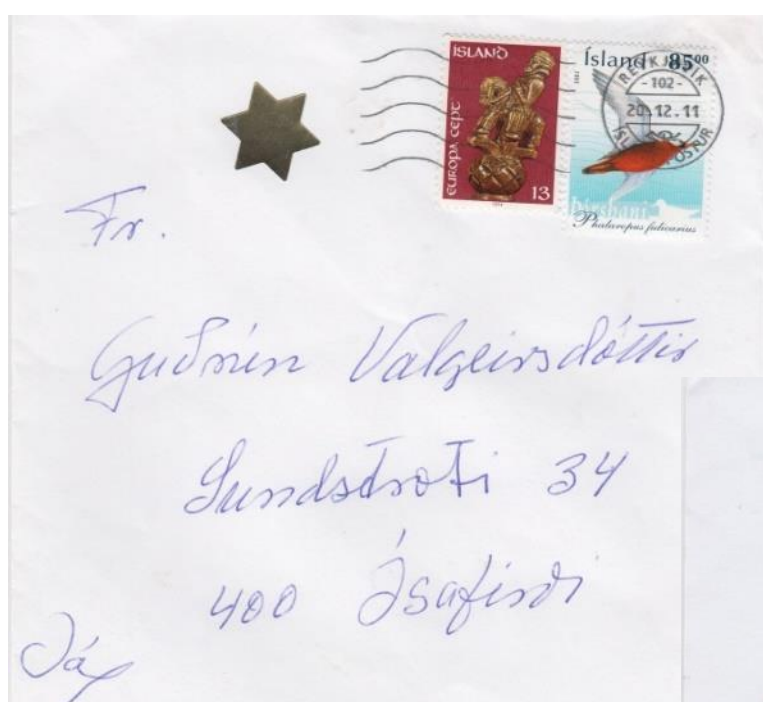
During my hunt for varieties on the King Christian IX issue of 1902-04, I have been fortunate to find one on the 10aur value of 1902. This particular variety is a white vertical line in the frame below the NW ornament in sheet position 34. What I find most remarkable about this find, is that it is actually also to be found on the inquiry part of the 10 aur double stationery card no. 22 in the newly published book “Icelandic Postal Stationery” by Hálfðan Helgason. The book is a **must read** for every serious collector of Icelandic stamps. The discovery shows that the same cliché (or a copy of it) has been used to print both this particular position in the sheet of stamps as well as the card, which I admit came as a surprise. Should you have a similar discovery of your own regarding the Christian IX issue I would be very grateful if you would be willing to share it with me. Please email me at palli@palli.is.

Christmas Games

Previous articles described the practice of combining krónur stamps with the new n.v.i. stamps to arrive at correct postal rates. Although it might well have irritated the post office, the practice was perfectly valid, and produced fascinating combinations on covers, examples of which were illustrated. It is to be regretted that only a few of these covers seem to be around.

In 2011, a dilemma presented itself to those holding stocks of unused still valid krónur stamps. A rather odd basic inland rate of 97kr was introduced which could not be met with any combination of existing krónur values. Naturally, the authorities anticipated that the 50gm n.v.i. stamps would be used. Later, the rate became 120kr, again presenting a difficulty for holders of krónur stamps. Perhaps the following two covers are examples of confusion by the senders, rather than deliberate attempts to fool the post office. They are Christmas greetings for 2011 and 2012, and in both cases, invalid stamps were added to krónur values to give the appearance of adequate franking to meet the 97kr and 120kr inland rates.

The first shows an invalid 13kr Europa stamp from 1974, which has been added to a valid 85kr stamp to make up "98kr", the closest the sender could get to the current 97kr inland rate. It passed through without interference.



Reykjavík 102 dated 20.12.11 with an 85kr plus an invalid 13kr. The letter rate was 97kr.

By 2012, the inland rate had increased to 120kr. No problem; the cover below dated 18.12.2012 has an invalid 1978 Europa 80kr added to a 55kr, which it might be argued covered the 120kr rate nicely.



Egilsstaðir B8b1 dated 18.12.2012. 55kr plus an invalid 80kr. The letter rate was 120kr.

No doubt the Christmas post rush explains the lack of attention by the authorities.