

ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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Contents	Page
News/Comment	3
Why do cancels show up in violet ink? <i>Ron Collin</i>	5
C2e Brjefhirðing Questions (Issue 44) <i>Rolf Dörnbach</i>	6
Can anyone identify this manuscript cancel? (Issue 44) <i>Páll Pálsson and Jørgen Steen Larsen</i>	6
Stamps in use in Iceland 1870-1902 <i>Indriði Pálsson</i> Part 2 of 2	7
From the Auctions	9
Iceland's Missing Í Gildi Overprint Varieties – the Good , the Bad , and the Ugly <i>Ellis Glatt</i>	10
Money letter – odd extra 10aur franking	15
7 Review of the series “Was this cancel used here? (Issues 10-26)- B1a Miklibær and B1a Mjóaból	16
Sogamýri numeral manuscript?	16
Unusual destinations - Letters V & W	17
Where could the five C2e Brjefhirðing cancels have been distributed to? <i>Jørgen Steen Larsen</i>	18
Í Gildi Business <i>Leif Fuglsig</i>	20
Unknown bridge cancels	21
Identification of editors on First Day Covers <i>Albert Pelsser</i>	22
A little Christmas spirit at Litli- Hvammur	22
A view from Iceland - on an Aerogramme	23
Odd cancel on odd 10aur yellow Official <i>Stan Rehm</i>	24
Miðkot – Þykkvibær	24
Mixed krónur and n.v.i. franking	25
Who needs stamps anyway? (If you have a mobile phone)	26
Sveinn Björnsson, First President of Iceland <i>David Loe</i>	28

News/Comment

I am grateful to Rolf Dörnbach for keeping track of the opening and closing of Iceland post offices during the past two years. There appear to have been no closures of main post offices since the beginning of 2019. Here is Rolf's complete list from the homepage of the Icelandic Postal Service („Pósturinn“ > „Pósthús“)

Iceland's Postal Facilities with circular date stamps (as per June 2021)

Status: PO = Post Office (póstafgreiðsla); Ag = postal agency (samstarfspósthús); BH = bréfhirðing; Other = Ot

PC	Location	Address	PO	Ag	BH	Ot	Agent	Remarks
102	Reykjavík 2	Stórhöfði 32				x		Post Terminal
107	Reykjavík 7	Hagatorg 1	x				reopened	first day 28.12.2018
108	Reykjavík 8	Síðumúli 3-5	x					
109	Reykjavík 9	Þönglabakki 4	x					
110	Reykjavík 10	Höfðabakki 9	x					
201	Kópavogur	Dalvegur 18	x					
210	Garðabær	Litlatún 3	x					
220	Hafnarfjörður	Fjarðargata 13-15	x					„Fjörðinn“
230	Reykjanesbær	Hafnargata 89	x					formerly „Keflavík“
240	Grindavík	Víkurbraut 56		x			Landsbankinn	
270	Mosfellsbær	Háholt 14	x					
300	Akranes	Smiðjuvellir 30	x					
310	Borgarnes	Brúartorg 4	x					
340	Stykkishólmur	Aðalgata 31	x					
350	Grundarfjörður	Grundargata 38		x			Kjörbúðin	Food shop
355	Ólafsvík	Bæjartún 5	x					
370	Búðardalur	Miðbraut 13	x					
400	Ísafjörður	Hafnarstræti 9-11	x					
401	Vígur (island)				x			under PO Ísafjörður
415	Bolungarvík	Aðalstræti 14		x			municipal administrat.	
420	Súðavík	Grundarstræti 3-5		x			municipal administrat.	
450	Patreksfjörður	Bjarkargata 4	x					
510	Hólmavík	Hafnarbraut 19		x			bank Strandamanna	
520	Dranganes	Borgargata 2		x			Kaupfélag Strandam.	shop
524	Árneshreppur *)	Norðurfjörður				x	Mobile PO	with CDS
530	Hvammstangi	Lækjargata 2	x					
540	Blönduós	Hnjúkabyggd 32	x					
545	Skagaströnd	Höfði		x			Landsbankinn	
550	Sauðárkrúkur	Ártorg 6	x					
580	Siglufjörður	Aðalgata 34	x					
*) until 31.12.2009 „524 Norðurfjörður“. plus bréfhirðings 522 kjörvogur and 523 Bær (no cds)								
600	Akureyri	Strandgata 3	x					
600	Akureyri	Norðurtangi 3	x					PO & Post Terminal
610	Grenivík	Túngata 3		x			„Jónsabúð“	shop
611	Grímsey (island)	Vallargata 9				x	Mobile PO	with CDS
620	Dalvík	Hafnarbraut 26	x					
625	Ólafsfjörður	Aðalgata 2-4		x			Kjörbúðin	food shop
640	Húsavík	Garðarsbraut 70	x					
650	Laugar	Kjarna		x			bank S. Þingeyinga	
660	Mývatn	Helluhraun 3		x			bank S.-Þingeyinga	formerly Reykjahlíð
670	Kópasker	Bakkagata 8-10		x			Landsbankinn	

675	Raufarhöfn	Aðalbraut 23		x			Sveitarfélag Norðurþing.	regional administr.
680	Þórshöfn	Fjarðarvegur 5		x			Landsbankinn	
690	Vopnafjörður	Kolbeinsgata 10		x			Landsbankinn	
700	Egilsstaðir	Kaupvangur 6	x					
710	Seyðisfjörður	Vesturvegi 1		x			Kjörbúðin	food shop
730	Reyðarfjörður	Búðareyri 35	x					
735	Eskifjörður	Strandgata 50		x			Kjörbúðin	food shop
740	Neskaupstaður	Miðstræti 26	x					
750	Fáskrúðsfjörður	Skólavegur 59		x			Kjörbúðin	food shop
760	Breiðdalsvík	Selnes 38		x			Landsbankinn	
765	Djúpivogur	Markarland 1		x			Landsbankinn	
780	Höfn í Hornafirði	Hafnarbraut 21	x					
800	Selfoss	Larsenstræti 1	x					
810	Hveragerði	Sunnumörk 2-4		x			Sunnumörk	Tourist Info. Bureau
830	Þorlákshöfn	Hafnarberg 1		x			Landsbankinn	
850	Hella	Þrúðvangur 10	x					
860	Hvolsvöllur	Austurvegur 4A	x					
870	Vík í Mýrdal	„Postpoint“				x	since 02.03.2015	mobile PO
880	Kirkjubæjarklaustur	„Postpoint“				x	since 03.03.2015	mobile PO
900	Vestmannaeyjar	Strandvegur 52	x					

Total: 32 22 1 5 = 60 (54 proper POs)

In the following places, POs were closed and replaced by **rural post offices** or **mobile POs** (no CDSs):

Post Code & Location	now via PO ...(datestamp)	mobile from	Remarks
190 Vogar	230 Reykjanesbær	01.09.2016	mobile PO
245 Sandgerði	230 Reykjanesbær	02.02.2015	mobile PO
250 Garður	230 Reykjanesbær	05.08.2014	mobile PO
320 Reykholt	310 Borgarnes	01.09.2008	mobile PO
345 Flatey	340 Stykkishólmur	01.06.2009	Mobile PO
360 Héllissandur	355 Olafsvík	16.10.2009	mobile PO
380 Króksfjarðarnes	370 Búðardalur	02.02.2009	Mobile PO
425 Flateyri	400 Ísafjörður	01.11.2012	mobile PO
430 Suðureyri	400 Ísafjörður	02.05.2014	mobile PO
460 Tálknafjörður	450 Patreksfjörður	04.05.2015	mobile PO
465 Bíldudalur	450 Patreksfjörður	01.11.2012	mobile PO
470 Þingeyri	400 Ísafjörður	02.05.2014	mobile PO
by ship 500 Staður	530 Hvammstangi	02.04.2007	Mobile PO
560 Varmahlið	550 Sauðárkrókur	01.12.2008	mobile PO
565 Hofsós	550 Sauðárkrókur	02.05.2011	mobile PO
630 Hrísey (Insel)	600 Akureyri	02.06.2014	mobile PO
685 Bakkafjörður	690 Vopnafjörður	02.01.2007	mobile PO
715 Mjóifjörður	700 Egilsstaðir (01.06.-30.09.) 740 Neskaupstaður (01.10.-31.05.)	01.08.2012	mobile PO, over land by ship
720 Borgarfjörður	700 Egilsstaðir	01.08.2005	mobile PO
755 Stöðvarfjörður	730 Reyðarfjörður	01.10.2010	mobile PO
785 Örafi	780 Höfn í Hornafirði	01.04.2011	mobile PO
820 Eyrarbakki	800 Selfoss	01.03.2007	mobile PO
825 Stokkseyri	800 Selfoss	02.05.2007	mobile PO
840 Laugarvatn	800 Selfoss	01.09.2012	mobile PO
845 Fluðir	800 Selfoss	14.07.2008	mobiles PO

Paquebot and Shipmail website http://paquebot.info/?page_id=125 Steinar Fridthorsson

In case this has not come up before in the magazine this website is definitely worth recommending to Iceland collectors. It seems to have a search function for paquebot and ship mail cancellations:

Why do cancels show up in violet ink? *Ron Collin*

This is in reference to Michael Schumacher's article "Iceland's NIC 167 – A New Find!" which appeared in Issue #41 of Iceland Philatelic Magazine, from 5 November 2020. Mike brings up the subject of number cancels that are other than black ink.

That has been a question that I have wondered about for some time now. I am wondering, why do cancels show up in violet ink?

When the number cancelers were issued in 1903 to the smallest mail collecting places, were they issued ink pads/stamp pads as well? If so, what color ink was issued? Or were the people in charge of maintaining possession of the canceling device, supposed to obtain an ink pad on their own? What about replacement bottles of ink when they run out? Did the Main Post Office issue replacement ink?

This is the reason I ask. There appears fairly often, number cancels in violet ink, along with the more common black ink. Did the Iceland Post Office have a regulation about the color of ink to be used with cancels? Or did they not matter, as long as the cancels were always used on outgoing and transiting mail, and that the cancels were legible?

I decided to review the number cancels in my possession to see if I could notice any pattern of appearance of violet ink cancels. I decided to review NIC 50, for I had examples that involved many years, and various issues of stamps. For whatever reason, the canceler seemed to move back and forth, between KÓPASKER and BREKKA and back again, etc., as mentioned in Facit.

Here is a scan of a few examples of NIC 50.



After reviewing the sampling scan, I noticed the color ink used, changed, and then went back again. It went from black to violet, and then back to black. Then violet again, and then back to black again, based on the periods of issued postage stamps. This then, made me wonder if KÓPASKER had a stamp pad of one color ink, and BREKKA had a stamp pad of the other color ink? If so, why?

The 1st King Christian IX stamp has a black NIC 50 cancel.
The 2nd King Christian IX stamp has a violet NIC 50 cancel.
The 1907 issue of 2 Kings has a black NIC 50 cancel.
The 1912 issue of King Frederik has a black NIC 50 cancel.
The 1914 issue of 2 Kings has a violet NIC 50 cancel.
The 1925 Buildings issue has a black NIC 50 cancel.

I don't have any answers. Unfortunately, I only have questions. I am sure there must be a reason for the appearance of black and sometimes violet ink being used with many other NIC cancelers, as well as with NIC 50. Perhaps one of the readers of this fine magazine has some of the answers. If so, kindly forward your knowledge and help to the Editor of IPM, so that the information can be disseminated to the entire readership.

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C2e Brjefhirðing Questions (Issue 44) Rolf Dörnbach



In the latest issue (No. 44) of IPM you ask questions about the "BRJEFHIRÐING" (crown & posthorn) cancels which came into use towards the end of the 19th century and the places of use of which continue to remain a mystery. In the late 1970s when I intensified my Iceland collecting I used to subscribe to a periodical called *Iceland Philatelic Journal* which was edited and published by Bryan

R. R. Whipple of Graton, California (a railroad engineer who also ran a private vineyard at his place). The outward appearance of the Journal was fairly plain and looked as if concocted with a typewriter at the author's kitchen table, but much of its contents were quite instructive, so I kept the issues (Nos. 1-30, which appeared erratically in the period 1975-1980) tucked away in a remote corner of my home.

In issue No. 18 of November-December 1977, Whipple published a part of his translation of Max Nørgaard's article entitled -

Íslandske Poststempler (ex Nordisk Filatelistisk Tidsskrift, 1947) which contains the following passages on the cancels in question:

"Also, the canceller with text BRJEFHIRÐING (letter-collecting place) in Type 2 with antiqua letters could have been used at several contemporaneously-existing letter-collecting places. Nothing is known of this, as cover material from this period with such cancellations is virtually unknown." A few pages on, the author comes back to the subject, saying: *"In addition to the letter-collecting places treated in the summaries, there existed a few which were opened in the time span during which crown-and-posthorn cancellers were normally used at letter-collecting offices, and which perhaps can have had their cancellers. It is however possible, and indeed may be highly probable, that the aforementioned canceller with text "BRJEFHIRÐING" was used at several of these places, especially at those which had a briefer existence. This canceller seems to have been ambulant, so that, for example, perhaps it was used by the postal couriers at various letter-collecting offices along their tours from and back to their base post offices, under which the letter-collecting offices belonged."*

These passages, of course, don't answer your questions, but they give a very early opinion (1947) about the possible use of the cancels in question from a prominent philatelist and expert on the subject (Max Nørgaard). Let's hope that Jørgen Steen Larsen will eventually succeed in resolving the mystery!

Very best wishes from Hamburg, Rolf Dörnbach

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Can anyone identify this manuscript cancel? (Issue 44)



SkSt ?

Skinnastaður, Kær kveðja, Páll A. Pálsson

To me it looked like "Skst" and after I received the cancel and looked from the back there was no doubt – it is "Skst" with violet ink. Jørgen Steen Larsen

Stamps in use in Iceland 1870-1902 (by Indriði Pálsson), Part 2 of 2

Previously published in Frímerkjablaðið Issue 1 and reproduced with their permission. Translated from Icelandic by Steinar Fridthorsson

B

CANCELLATIONS OF THE ICELANDIC POSTAL AUTHORITIES

Icelandic skilding stamps

Icelandic skilding stamps were sold at post- and letter collecting offices around the country from early 1873 through July 31 1876. Those having remaining stocks of skilding stamps were allowed to use them until September 27 1877 after which time they were no longer considered valid and could not be used for the payment of postal services.

During the years 1878-1890 postal authorities sold a large part of their stock of invalid skilding stamps to various foreign stamp dealers. The remainder of the stock was then sold to a Reykjavik merchant, Ditlev Thomsen, in November 1890. During the next couple of years after his purchase, merchant Thomsen sold part of his holding to various (mostly foreign) dealers, then eventually selling most of his remaining holding to stamp dealer Olav Grilstad of Trondheim, Norway in 1892-1893. When Thomsen sold off the main part of his remaining holding it is likely that he will already have had a large part of the stamps cancelled at the Reykjavik post office with the two cancellations that saw most use at the time, i.e. G1a and G1b, of which neither existed during the time when skilding stamps were in use.

Post-cancellations / Forgeries

It's a known fact that over a period of several years Olav Grilstad had an employee at the Reykjavik post office cancel stamps for him that had been invalidated, both before and after his purchase from Thomsen.

Stamps that have been cancelled in this manner are post-cancelled (cancelled to order, favour cancelled) and therefore their collecting value is limited in my opinion.



This treatment of the stamps, the post-cancelling, was well known to the Norwegian buyer Olav Grilstad according to a sentence in a letter which he sent the well known philatelist Hans Hals in 1931: "Urigtigt stemplet (det som brugtes på den tid ca. 1890)". Post-cancellations done with this postmark on skilding stamps are well known by knowledgeable collectors. **See picture no. 5.**

Pic.5

Other known post-cancellations of skilding stamps are as follows:

Cancellation	Date	Known on these values
AKUREYRI	5/9	2 sk, 4 sk official, 3 & 16 sk perf. 12 1/2
AKUREYRI	2/6	3 sk
GRENJADARSTAÐUR	24/11	8 sk
HRAUNGERÐI	18/8	4 sk, 8 sk, 3 & 16 sk perf. 12 1/2
ÍSAFJÖRÐUR	18/11	2 sk, 8 sk, 3 sk perf 12 1/2
ÍSAFJÖRÐUR	20/11	8 sk, 3 & 16 sk perf 12 1/2

MIKLIBÆR	7/5	2 sk, 4 sk, 8 sk, 3 & 16 sk perf. 12 1/2 (forged ?)
MIKLIBÆR	5/7	4 sk official, 16 sk perf. 12 1/2
REYKJAVÍK A	29/11 20/10	4 sk, 8 sk, 16 sk perf. 12 1/2
COPENHAGEN	1	3 & 16 sk perf 12 1/2

B2 – Aurar stamps

Aurar stamps were sold at post offices and letter collecting offices and used on mail from August 1 1876 until October 9 1902 as well as after being overprinted with I Gildi until the end of the year 1903.

5 aur stamps were overprinted with the word ”þrír” and some with an additional digit ”3” in 1897. A variety of forged such overprints are known.

In 1902 and well into 1903 aurar stamps were overprinted with the words ”Í GILDI ’02-’03”. A large number of forgeries are known of such overprints.

One thing that these two aforementioned overprints have in common is that it can be difficult for the average collector to distinguish whether genuine or not. Stamps with either of these overprints saw very limited proper use on mail but are mostly seen cancelled to order or even post-cancelled. Distinguishing such cancellations from authentically used ones can often prove difficult especially in the case of loose stamps. Proper postally used covers exist with both of these issues but they are scarce.

Photocopies of 14 covers



As previously mentioned in part A of this article, the Danish cancellations **D1** and **D2** were used to post-cancel both skilding as well as aurar stamps, especially the lowest values 3 and 5 aur. **See picture no. 6**

Pic. 6

The following post-cancellations on aurar stamps are known:

Cancellation	Date	Known on these values
GRENJADARSTAÐUR	24/11	5 aur blue, 20 aur violet pr. II, 40 aur green

The author has in his possession photocopies of 14 post-cancelled covers franked with these stamps of which nearly all have incorrect rates and all are written in the same hand. Their original purpose is therefore clear.

HRAUNGERÐI	7/8 17/8	10 aur, forged cancel, other values known
ÍSAFJÖRÐUR	25/6	40 aur green, other dates & values known
SAUÐÁRKRÓKUR	18/?	20 aur violet pr. II
FLATEY	Crown cancel	40 aur green, 20 aur violet pr. II
REYKJAVÍK	26/6 1/11 7/11	Antique letters, Grotesk digits, forged cancel

It is the author's opinion that many more cancellations than those mentioned in this article have been used to post-cancel skilding and aurar stamps and it is important to keep in mind that the information herein is far from complete. It would be beneficial if other collectors that may know of post-cancellations not mentioned here were to make the information they possess available to other collectors.

It is my hope that these lines may contribute to helping collectors to avoid being fooled into buying or paying too much for post-cancelled skilding or aurar stamps.

Indriði Pálsson

Sources:

Íslensk Frímerki í Hundrað ár. Author: Jón Aðalsteinn Jónsson

Ib Krarup Rasmussen: Postskibsforbindelsen mellem Danmark og Island 1870-1879. NFT/1989.

Ebbe Eldrup: "Danska tímabilið" í póstsögu Íslands. Exhibition bulletin Nordia '91.

The authors research of various other sources.

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From the auctions

Description:- BÆR BARÐ extremely rare bridge cancel of type B1a on cover from 1932. Facit only marks this cancel with a star (no price) due to its rarity that applies to it on a single stamp. Possibly the only known copy of the cancel on cover.



Price realised ISK 141,518.00. or circa \$1,148

Iceland's "Missing Í" Í Gildi Overprint Varieties—the *Good*, the *Bad*, and the *Ugly*

By Ellis Glatt

Among the earliest major Í Gildi overprint varieties to surface not long after overprinting got underway in late 1902 were stamps that were missing the leading accented “Í” character in the top line of the overprint. When news of their existence began to surface in the philatelic press by April and May 1903, these “Missing Í” examples were aggressively sought after by collectors. And, as this researcher first uncovered and reported some 15 years ago, one or more Reykjavik printing-office insiders nefariously helped to satisfy some of that demand by intentionally manipulating a later state of the overprint plate for use in a “midnight” overprinting session. The manipulation took place in late May or early June 1903 and involved the Setting V overprint plate, just prior to its transition to the final Setting VI configuration. More about the “clandestine” productions from that illicit overprinting session later.

First, let's define the **Good**. Aside from two other special cases, these are the authentic varieties that arose inadvertently during a brief overprinting session that took place between late November and early December 1902 using a late state of the Setting I overprint plate (referred to as Setting IA). The anomaly developed in overprint plate position 6, when the subject piece of type became loose and failed to print. In most instances, the variety appears twice in each of the affected sheets (in position 6 and again in position 56). A number of regular and official-service stamps overprinted during that period are recorded with the variety, in some cases with the overprint inverted. All but one of the recorded “Missing Í” varieties from Setting IA are overprinted in black. The exception is the 5-aur regular postage overprinted in red (Facit 59), where the loosened-type problem in plate position 6 is believed to have initially developed.

Two examples of authentic “Missing Í” varieties from Setting IA are shown in Figures 1a (Facit Tj18bv4 in 4-strip with normal overprints) and 1b (Facit Tj22v9 paired with an adjoining inverted overprint). It should be noted that all genuine “Missing Í” varieties from Setting IA are easily identified by certain key attributes clearly visible in the overprints. They are the following:

- a) A thin-thin zero combination in '02-'03 on the second overprint line;
- b) Strong ink-fill in the lower portion of the “G”, usually accompanied by a least a trace of ink-fill in the upper portion of the “D” on the first line of the overprint;
- c) Strong ink-fill in the “2” on the second line of the overprint.



Figure 1a



Figure 1b

As to those two special cases not from Setting IA that also produced authentic “Missing Í” varieties, the first occurred very early on in Setting I during the overprinting of the top half of a group 20-aur sheets from Reykjavik G.P.O. stock. In this very first instance, it was the “Í” in overprint plate position 5 that became loose and failed to print. The problem must have been discovered and corrected in short order, since only the top half of a small number of 20-aur sheets was impacted. An example of this 20-aur “Missing Í” variety is shown in Figure 2 (Facit 61v3 in 3-strip with normal overprints).



Figure 2

The other special case that produced an authentic “Missing Í” variety occurred in early to mid-December 1902, soon after the Setting II overprint plate was placed into service (referred to as Setting IIA). This time, the overprinting involved the top half of a large group of 10-aur OS sheets, again from Reykjavik G.P.O. stock. In this instance, the type comprising the entire top line of the overprint in plate position 5 gradually became loose. Initially, only the leading “Í” on a small number of sheets failed to print, but the situation deteriorated quickly until only the “L” remained on the top line. An example of this “Missing Í” variety is shown in Figure 3 (Tj24v8 in 6-block with normal overprints). It should be noted that a series of intermediate-state varieties were also produced during the run, most exhibiting only the “IL” on the top line with various degrees of spacing between the two characters.



Figure 3

Note that both of these early Setting I and Setting IIA varieties also exhibit a thin-thin zero combination in the '02-'03, although none of the other Setting IA attributes. Nevertheless, for these two special cases, even the thin-thin zero attribute alone should be sufficient to weed out most fakes (although none has been recorded to date for either of the two, at least by this researcher).

For the most complete listing to date of genuine “Missing Í” varieties, refer to the new 2022 edition of the *Facit Classic Special* catalog. Keep in mind that the Facit prices shown, along with any notations re the number of recorded examples, all refer to authentic Setting IA examples and the two special early Setting I and Setting IIA examples detailed above. At least a few of those listed stamps are especially rare.

Now for the **Bad**. These are the “clandestine” productions intentionally created by one or more Reykjavik printing office insiders in a “midnight” overprinting session using a doctored version of the Setting V overprint plate. The illicit process entailed the removal of the “Í” character from 18 plate positions, all situated on the right-hand-side of the overprint plate. Among the altered plate positions was position 50, which, at the time, had in place the yet uncorrected 02-'03 overprint error.

Fortunately, nearly all of the “clandestine” examples can be very easily identified. That is because 16 of the 18 manipulated plate positions all exhibit zero combinations other than thin-thin, which eliminates them from the *Good* category. Two such *Bad* examples are found in the pairs shown in Figures 4a and 4b.



Figure 4a



Figure 4b

Moreover, the two manipulated plate positions that do exhibit a thin-thin zero combination (positions 8 and 48) have Setting V overprint attributes that differ markedly from that seen in plate position 6 of Setting IA. (Note that “clandestine” productions do not exist for the two special early Setting I and Setting IIA

varieties). For comparison purposes, examples of Setting V overprints from plate positions 8 and 48 are provided in Figures 5a (stamp on the right) and 5b, respectively.



Figure 5a



Figure 5b

Clandestine “Missing Í” productions from Setting V are recorded to date for Facit No. 44, 51, 54, and Tj20 with normal overprints and Tj18b, Tj21b, and Tj22 both with normal and inverted overprints. Full sheets as well as partial sheets and reconstructed units are known to have been overprinted in the process. Note also that authentic Setting IA “Missing Í” examples have yet to be recorded for Facit No. 51v5 and Tj21bv7, although Facit still retains temporary placeholder spaces for both, at least for now.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, one of the altered Setting V plate positions included position 50 with the 02’-’03 overprint error. A couple of examples are shown in Figures 6a and 6b (inverted). Although the status of such stamps has been forever tainted as a result of the plate manipulation, the 02’-’03 portion of the overprints are indeed genuine. And, because there are only a few surviving Setting V sheets in private hands today, some of these “clandestine” Setting V examples (especially in pairs and larger multiples) remain useful reference material for researchers in this field. As to valuations, the new 2022 edition of Facit Special Classic includes a note about the “clandestine” Setting V productions, where it has them valued starting at 400 SEK for examples without the 02’-’03 error. Examples with the 02’-’03 error are rare and would generally be valued significantly higher.



Figure 6a



Figure 6b

As to the *Ugly*, here we are dealing with outright fakes and forgeries. Most of these are fairly easy to detect, especially when armed with the information presented in this article. For example, the majority of “Missing Í” fakes are made by removing the “Í” character from the overprint using some method of erasure, often involving the use of chemical solvents. One such example, in this case the left stamp of a 10-aur pair, is pictured in Figure 7. In this particular instance, the erasure was less than perfect, with very faint traces of ink still detectable on the left side of the red oval. However, even with a perfect job, this pair would have been rejected by any competent authority familiar with the Í Gildi overprints. For starters, the bogus

production exhibits a thick-thin zero combination, which rules out the *Good*. Moreover, the overprint's characteristics are totally inconsistent with Setting V. In fact, the pair plates to overprint positions 26 and 27 of Setting II, ruling out the *Bad* as well. And, of course, the “Missing Í” variety has not been previously recorded for the 10-aur red by Facit or any other credible source, which would have raised a red flag from the get-go.



Figure 7

“Missing Í” varieties with forged overprint are also in circulation, some easier to detect than others. A few of these are presented below and on the next page in Figures 8a through 8d. In most instances, detection starts with a visual inspection of the overprint's zero combination, usually followed by some form of plating analysis, especially in the more difficult cases. The good news is that the early forgers that produced most of these bogus examples were not aware of the importance of the zero-combination test in uncovering their deceptive work. In fact, nearly all of the forgeries encountered by this researcher over the years, including the four presented here, exhibit zero combinations other than the requisite thin-thin found on authentic specimens. So, we can rule out the *Good* at this point, but what about those *Bad* “clandestine” Setting V after-productions? That's where the plating usually comes in.



Figure 8a



Figure 8b

Looking at the four examples, one can quickly rule out 8a and 8b from the *Bad* category merely by their appearance, since these overprints exhibit characteristics not found in any Setting V plate position. However, the two examples shown on the next page in 8c and 8d are more dangerous fabrications that have already fooled some knowledgeable collectors and even an expert or two along the way. Both of these stamps exhibit overprints that are undoubtedly works of the same forger. The 20-aur OS (Figure 8c) first came on the market decades ago accompanied by a Grönlund certificate authenticating it as Facit Tj19III (now Tj19v4). The stamp was subsequently acquired by an advanced collector of the Í Gildi overprints who noted the thick-thick zero combination and reclassified the stamp in his collection as a “clandestine” product. Some years later, this researcher acquired the item for further analysis, whereby it was determined that the overprint did not originate in any of the known plate settings, including Setting V. The conclusion at the time, therefore, was that it was a forgery.



Figure 8c



Figure 8d

Unfortunately, the underlying 20-aur stamp did not offer any help in the analysis, as there was very little to go on for plating purposes. Recently, the 3-aur (Figure 8d) also surfaced. The stamp, which appeared in a recent auction in Iceland (where it was described as a possible “Sunday” print), exhibited an overprint identical to the one seen on the 20-aur example. The underlying 3-aur stamp was easily plated this time and found to be from either position 4 or 9 in a typical half sheet of Facit Tj10b. However, for the reasons stated earlier, the overprint itself is judged to be a forgery by this researcher.

So, when it comes to evaluating the authenticity of those “Missing Í” varieties, knowledge remains king. Hopefully, the information presented in the article will help collectors in their search for the *Good*, while avoiding the *Ugly*. And as for the *Bad*, consider it reference material best suited for further study and analysis.

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Money letter - odd extra 10aur franking



Value letters can usually be relied upon for correct franking. This inland example is cancelled B2a Breiðabólstaður 31.3.49 when that cancel was used at Keldunúpur. The value is 315kr. The correct franking from 1.10.47 to 14.11.49, assumes a 50aur letter, plus 150aur up to 300kr value, and 50aur for each additional 100kr = total 250aur. Why the extra 10 aur? If just a mistake, it is a strange one. Inside is a long letter in Icelandic.



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

The cancels reviewed here are **B1a Miklibær**, and **B1a Mjóaból** which featured in Issue 18 in May 2017.



The first proposition was that examples of the Miklibær B1a should exist used between the date of opening at Stóru-Akrar on 1.10.1954 and the arrival of the B8e cancel in 1966, a period of over 11 years. However, no examples were provided by our readers. On the other hand, the *ÞP* handbook and also *Póstblaðið* tell us that the Stóru-Akrar bréfhirðing opened as a consequence of the closure of two local offices at Miklibær and Réttarholt. According to the numeral handbook, both the Miklibær numeral **81** and the Réttarholt numeral **74** were used at Stóru-Akrar. I can show this numeral 74, but I do not have a numeral 81 on stamp issues of that time. I think it might be reasonable to question the inclusion of B1a Miklibær in the Stóru-Akrar listing in the *ÞP* bridge cancel handbook, and suggest that Miklibær B1a was not used at Stóru-Akrar. It might be a case of the natural preference of a bréfirðingarmaður to use a numeral cancel rather than a bridge cancel bearing the name of a different place.



A similar question was raised about B1a Mjóaból which was said to be at Smyrlahóll between 1.1.46 and closure on 31.12.1962. (*Póstblaðið* makes no mention of a collecting office opening at Smyrlahóll at or around 1.1.1946 ??)



Readers did not provide evidence of the use of B1a Mjóaból at Smyrlahóll between 1.1.46 and 31.12.1962, a period of 16 years.

The numeral 186 from Mjóaból was used at Smyrlahóll, although I cannot show one. Also we know that manuscript cancels exist; here are two examples. The unjoined pair

shows a date 17/12/1947,



This may be another example of a reluctance to use a bridge cancel bearing the name of another place. It is reasonable to doubt the *ÞP* handbook entry for B1a Mjóaból that it was ever used at Smyrlahóll.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Sogamýri numeral manuscript?



Can readers show an example similar to this, which appears to be a crayon pencil manuscript numeral 296 on a 1957 Glaciers issue? The collecting office was formerly at Sjónarhóll until 1937 and re-opened on 1.9.1945 under the name of Sogamýri until closure on 31.12.1960.

The N2 numeral 296 was presumably issued at Sogamýri in 1945. Another example of a manuscript 296 might reinforce a theory that the numeral cancel was mislaid or unavailable around 1957.

I am assuming the manuscript is genuine.



Unusual destinations ~ Letters V and W

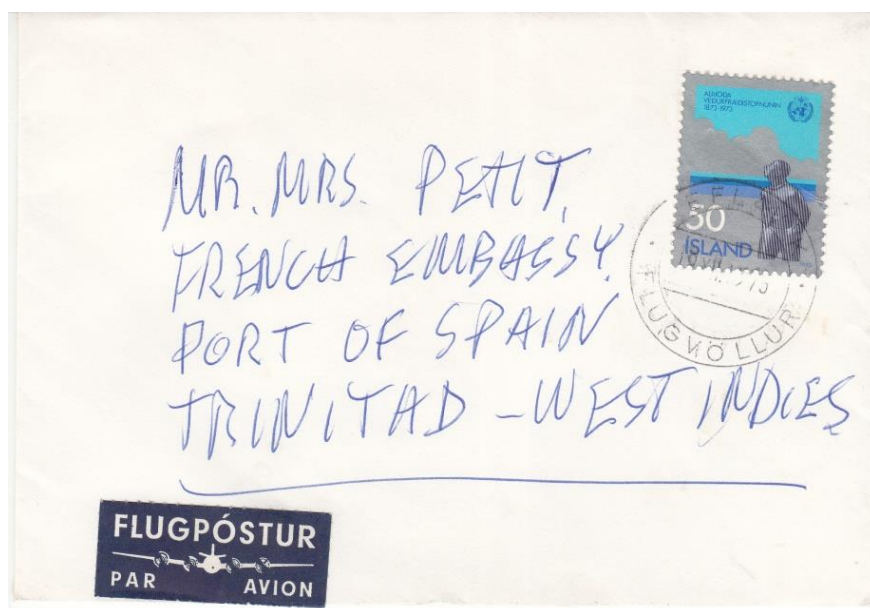
I struggle to find suitably exotic destinations beginning with the letter W. Some years ago I failed to bid high enough to obtain a cover to the Wallis and Fortuna Islands! In desperation, I have extracted one cover from the Trinidad page, and offer it as 'West Indies' which the sender obligingly includes in the address.

VENEZUELA



Reykjavík B1c dated 1.III.71. 10kr aerogramme rate from 1.1.69 to 31.12.72

WEST INDIES



Keflavík Flugvöllur B6d dated 19.XII.1975. 50kr airmail rate 1.10.75 to 30.4.76

Where could the five C2e Brjefhirðing cancels have been distributed to?

Jørgen Steen Larsen.

The 5 C2e Brjefhirðing cancels were ordered on 30.4.1900 and the invoice for the cancels is dated 26.11.1900. No letters or postcards with C2e Brjefhirðing are known.

Information from ÞÞ's handbook Pósthús og Bréfhirðingar, 2011, about the distribution of these 5 cancels.

Place of use	Period
Erta	1899-1900
Gröf (1)	1917 (Seems misleading. The C2e cancel was distributed already 1900/1901 but may still have been here as late as 1917.)
Haukadalur (1)	1901
Hellissandur	1911 (Seems misleading. The C2e cancel was distributed already 1900/1901 but may still have been here as late as 1911.)
Hvammur (3)	1901
Selárdalur	1900

Additional information from ÞÞ.

Erta	Received both C2e Brjefhirðing and C2e Erta from the delivery with invoice 26.11.1900. C2e Brjefhirðing cancel returned from Erta to Reykjavík 12.3.1901.
Gröf (1)	Opened as BH 1.7.1900. Fire in Gröf 1917.
Haukadalur (1)	Received C2e Haukadalur from invoice 1.11.1899 and C2e Brjefhirðing from invoice 26.11.1900. Opened 1.1.1901.
Hellissandur	Fire in Hellissandur January 1911.
Hjaltastaður	ÞÞ lists C1 (Hjaltastaður). This must be a typing mistake. I believe that it was ÞÞ's intention to list C2e Brjefhirðing. Hjaltastaður reopened as BH 1.1.1898.
Hvammur (1)	ÞÞ lists C2e Brjefhirðing both from Hvammur (1) and Hvammur (3). It seems to me that Hvammur (1) is a mistake. Reopened 1.1.1907.
Hvammur (3)	Opened as BH 1.1.1901.
Selárdalur	Opened as BH 1.1.1896.

In the Swedish Crown cancel handbook, Erta, Gröf (1) and Haukadalur are mentioned as BH that received a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel. I have personally suggested Hjaltastaður to ÞÞ. The rest of the BH that ÞÞ mentions must be based on ÞÞ's own studies in the Icelandic postal archives.

Comments.

Erta.

The period 1899 – 1900 seems to me to be wrong as C2e Erta and C2e Brjefhirðing both were delivered around 1900/1901. The C2e Brjefhirðing cancel was already returned 12.3.1901 and probably redistributed to another BH.

Haukadalur (1).

A C2e Haukadalur cancel had been delivered in the first delivery of C2e cancels with invoice dated 1.11.1899. BH Haukadalur was not opened until 1.1.1901 and no fee was paid for 1900 so the C2e Haukadalur cancel still seems to have been in Reykjavík at the end of 1900 where the C2e Brjefhirðing cancels were delivered. It seems very strange that two C2e cancels should have been sent to Haukadalur at the same time. If a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel was sent to Haukadalur, it was in my opinion returned almost immediately and redistributed to another BH.

Due to the information above from ÞÞ and my comments, that leaves us with the following 5 places for a possible more permanent usage of a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel:

Gröf (1), Hellissandur, Hjaltastaður, Hvammur (3), Selárdalur.

Below we will take a closer look at these 5 places.

BH Gröf (1).

In Hnappadalssýsla PA Miklaholt was closed 30.6.1900 and a new BH was opened 1.7.1900 at Gröf (1). We know of a letter with A Miklaholt used 25.3.1900. Gröf (1) received N1a-144 in the summer of 1903. We know of a Brjefspjald with N1a-144 from 22.9.1903.

Gröf (1) as BH should not use an antiqua cancel, so it seems likely, that Gröf (1) received a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel when it was opened.

Gröf (1) had a fire in 1917. According to ÞÞ, N1a-96 was sent from Reykjavík 9.10.1917 as a reserve cancel. I have never seen C2e Brjefhirðing re-used on TK perf. 14, which were the stamps in use at that period of time.

In my opinion this means, that the period of use of C2e in Gröf (1) could only be from 1.7.1900 to the summer of 1903.

BH Hellissandur.

BH Hellissandur was opened as BH 1.1.1902. It is known to have used a manuscript cancellation before N1a-145 was received in the summer of 1903. Although we know of manuscript cancellations as late as on Chr. IX ("Helli (..)" and "Hellissand(..)") it seems likely that BH Hellissandur received a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel around 1.1.1902 and used this in parallel with the use of manuscript cancellations until N1a-145 was taken into use in mid-1903.

There was a fire in Hellissandur in January 1911 when N1a-145 was destroyed.

According to ÞÞ, N1a-196 was sent from Reykjavík on 24.2.1911 as a reserve cancel.



We know this C2e Brjefhirðing with black ink on a pair with 4 aur TK perf. 12 3/4 and have seen one more similar pair, also on TK perf. 12 3/4.

C2e Brjefhirðing on TK.

In a short period until N1a-196 was taken into use it seems as if C2e Brjefhirðing was reused together with the manuscript cancel "Sandu".

BH Hjaltastaður.

At least one third of the C2e Brjefhirðing cancels we know of are with deep violet ink. This means that there must have been a fairly large number of BH that used deep violet ink, and from where we do not know of a crown cancel, and which received a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel in 1900/1901. To me there is only one such BH – Hjaltastaður – which was opened 1.1.1898. From here all known usages of N1a-32 are with deep violet ink.

The annual fee was 40 kr. which show that there was a reasonable volume of letters.



C2e Brjefhirðing + N1a-32 all with deep violet ink.

Here we should add that BH Haukadalur is known to have used blue ink on early usages of N1a-123 on Chr. IX and TK perf 12 3/4, but not as deep violet as on N1a-32 from Hjaltastaður; also Haukadalur is such a small BH that it could not explain the many deep violet usages of the C2e Brjefhirðing cancel.

The period of use for a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel could be from 1900/1901 until the summer of 1903.

BH Hvammur (3)

BH Hvammur was opened 1.1.1901 - at the same time as the C2e Brjefhirðing cancels were received. The period of use for a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel could be from 1900/1901 until the summer of 1903 when N1a-135 took over.

BH Selárdalur.

BH Selárdalur was opened 1.1.1896 and did not receive a crown cancel then. The period of use for a C2e Brjefhirðing cancel could be from circa. 1.1.1901 until the summer of 1903 when N1a-130 took over.

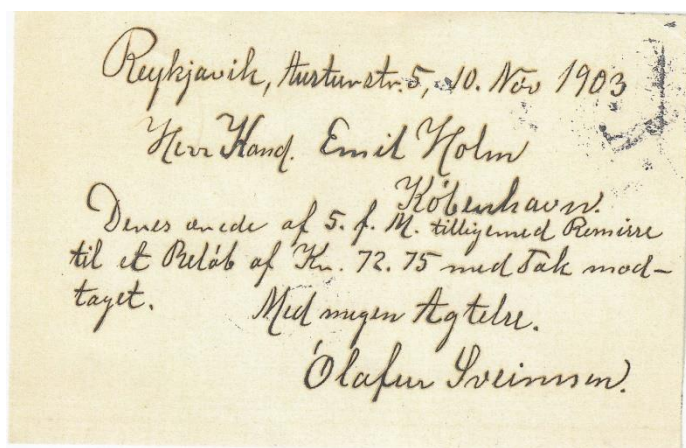
Conclusion.

The 5 C2e Brjefhirðing cancels seem to have been distributed to:

BH	Sýsla	Opened as BH	Period of use	Comment
Erta	Árn	1.1.1894	Returned almost immediately.	Opened 8.4.1892 in Vogsósar.
Haukadalur (1)	V Ísa	1.1.1901	Returned almost immediately.	
Gröf (1)	Hnapp	1.7.1900	1.7.1900 – mid 1903.	
Hellissandur	Snæf	1.1.1902	1.1.1902 – mid 1903 + Jan 1911 to end Febr. 1911.	Deep violet inc.
Hjaltastaður	N Múl	1.1.1898	1900/1901 – mid 1903.	
Hvammur (3)	Dala	1.1.1901	1.1.1901 – mid 1903.	Reopening of BH
Selárdalur	VBard	1.1.1896	1900/1901 – mid 1903.	

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Í GILDI Business *Leif Fuglsig*



This brjefspjald sent from Reykjavík 12-11-1903, when the Í GILDI period was near its ending, is an acceptance and thanks for an order and payment of kr. 72,75. The sender is Ólafur Sveinsson, who is known as one of the group of big speculators in Í GILDI stamps (according to Lundgaard Sveinsson bought 2871 sheets). Only wealthy people could at that time afford to buy stamps for that amount. In today's money it would be over 5000kr. As to who the addressee was, we can't be absolutely sure. My guess is that it was Emil Holm (1867-1950), a bass opera singer with an international career. He later (1925-37) became leader of the Danish radio broadcastings (Statsradiofonien) later called Danmarks Radio.

Unknown bridge cancels

Following the 2011 appearance of the excellent publication *Pósthús og Bréfhirðingar á Íslandi* by Þór Þorsteins, some leading bridge cancel collectors took part in a discussion about the doubtful existence of a number of bridge cancels illustrated in that handbook. Þór himself, having made the huge effort to produce the book, declined to be involved any further research, and expressed his content for collectors to make their own analyses in due course.

The following nine cancels were identified as those for which no examples of postal use are known.

ÁLFTANES B1a, HESTUR ÍS B1a, HÓLL B2c2, LUNDAR B8e, MELBREIÐ B2c2, MIÐEY B8e, REYKIR SKAG B2a, SAURBÆR EYJAF B2a and FROSTASTAÐIR B2a.

In spite of the absence of any evidence of postal use, these cancels are still listed with a * rating in Facit Special 2022. If they did exist, were they ever issued to the offices bearing the name?

Rapport 122 in 2001 included an article by the well-known collector Sigurður Þórmar, in which he responded to a previous article by Eivind Kolstad about the sighting of a B8e LUNDAR cancel. Sigurður gave his opinion that LUNDAR B8e (and also ÁLFTANES B1a) never existed. Then, in a later article in 2002 published in *Rapport* 125, Sigurður referred to the fact of the existence of strikes of rare cancels on printed paper provided by the post office. I quote from his response here.

Thank you for the article about Álfanes and for the copy of the impression dated 15.1.40 which you had. It is indeed the same copy which is found in the book Íslenskir Stimplar..... This print originates, I expect from Folmer Østergaard, who was a good friend of mine. He got prints from the Icelandic post office of the rare postmarks he needed put on white paper. Þór Þorsteins also got prints on white paper from the post office to use in his handbook. Later, Østergaard got a print of MELANES although a bréfhirðing never opened there..... Østergaard drove far and wide in Iceland on his motor cycle in the years before 1940, in order to collect postmarks from the small collecting offices. Why not then from Álfanes, which was not so far from Reykjavík? The answer perhaps is that he did not find a bridge cancel there, only a numeral stamp 179.

My original intention was to suggest that all of the nine unknown cancels listed above should be removed from the next bridge cancel revision in Facit Special. On reflection, perhaps a more acceptable solution might be for each of those cancels to remain in Facit, but have the additional notation *ökand i bruk* (unknown in use). I welcome views from readers.



Identification of editors on First Day Covers. *Albert Pelsser*

I am a philatelic collector of ICAO related stamps and covers. My web site named *The Postal History* is hosted at the following link: <https://applications.icao.int/postalhistory/>

The acronym ICAO stands for the International Civil Aviation Organization, with headquarters in Montreal. Recently I got the illustrated first day cover of Iceland marking the 50th anniversary of ICAO. I noticed this cover bears some sort of acronym of the editor of this cover: FV.



As you may notice from my website at:

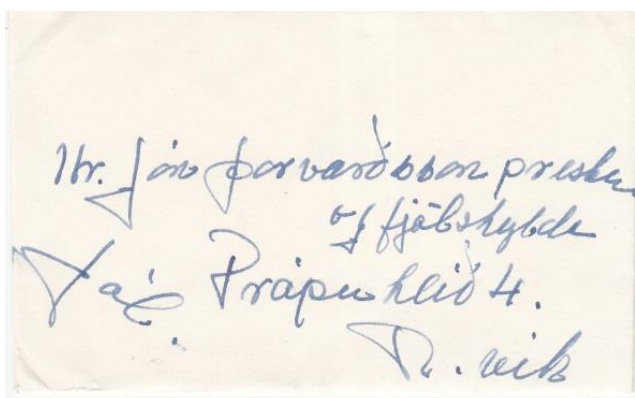
https://applications.icao.int/postalhistory/iceland_1994_50th_anniversary_of_icao.htm, I already have some details about such a lettering system. I am wondering whether you could assist in providing additional information about this and specially the letters FV seen on the attached cover and any other editor: FF, N, etc. Many thanks for your kind assistance.

Best regards Albert Pelsser, Montreal, Canada

(Ed. A glance at the second link illustrates acronyms of other editors of different issues of the same FDC. I hope our readers can provide Albert with the identity of FV on this particular illustrated cover, and any other acronyms that exist during a particular period on this and other Icelandic FDCs.)

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A little Christmas spirit at Litli-Hvammur



Type B8e dated ? XII.1965.

I have previously shown examples where Christmas goodwill seemed to take precedent over postal regulations when applied to mailings during that festive season. Here, maybe a kind and generous bréfhirðing man has allowed the item to go at the 150aur local printed matter rate to Reykjavík, although Litli-Hvammur, located in Vestur Skaftafell, was definitely not within the local post area of Reykjavík. Perhaps he resisted the temptation to squeeze another 50aur on this tiny 9½ cm x 6cm envelope to make the correct 200aur inland printed matter rate from 1.10.63 to 31.12.65.

A view from Iceland – on an Aerogramme

In a couple of the earlier issues I showed interesting messages written on aerogrammes which gave an illustration of life in Iceland in the 1940s-1960s. I always intended to resume this theme, and here is one posted in Hveragerði in 1962, in which the writer, apart from describing his experiences in Iceland, mentions the advantages of holding a supply of aerogrammes when postage stamps or open post offices were not readily available. The message was typed and covered nearly all the available space on the form.



Hveragerði B5a 27.4.62 - 400aur rate from 1/9/61 to 31/12/62

"I received your first letter today about dinner time. When they arrive at Reykjavik they are sorted and then sent to a small town near here. Then they are sorted again and delivered. One has to go into the town to get them. Hence the delay, plus the Easter hold-up. I have not been able to get letters off to you because I have not had stamps and when we go out into the town the office is closed, and when we come from the mountains or somewhere like that, the office is closed. Now however, I have some forms like this and I should be able to get going. It seems that it takes five days to get letters, so I shall not write after Sunday; in fact this will probably be the last (and almost first) letter. It is a very good country. I have enjoyed the food and the hospitality. I have enjoyed their lamb and their fish, especially their dried fish which I asked you to see if the cats liked. It tastes like a sweet sugary confection, and is good with butter on. The housewives keep a lot of cake in stock, so that no matter who comes there is something to offer. We had a trip up the mountains to the place where the first parliament was held in 900. It is immense and terrific. Imagine a skyscraper of thick rock, the length of a street, and you will have some conception of the place. Below is a narrow natural "street" and then a flat expanse and you can see the remains of the rings of boiling lava still without anything growing on it. Then there is another big drop, and you see the plains where the people camped during the lawgiving. The lawgiver stood on the centre piece, faced the "wall" and spoke in a loud voice to the people. The acoustics of the place were such that his voice resounded across the whole valley. Further along there was a large inland lake which had such lovely shades of blue. It was like a dream world. Today is preparation day and we are cooking and I have written lots of postcards. In fact I have only two more to do. The value of British money is about one third the value in England. For instance a jar of honey costing 2/6, costs 8/4 here. Postcards of the cheapest quality cost 8d and a bit more. A lady's coat costs £20. British money is almost not worth spending. Imagine spending 1/- for an orange. The only thing which is comparable and a little cheaper is sugar, yet the sweets are dear. Cakes are cheap, and I am trying to get some Danish pastries to take home with me. There are some German lentils and I shall endeavour to get some of these. I should like to get a sheepskin cushion cover or two, for the Siamese would like one. Thank you for letting me have this lovely holiday which I am enjoying all the time, and I hope there will be time to tell you all about it."

Odd Iceland cancel on odd 10aur yellow Official *Stan Rehm*

Greetings from Madison Wisconsin – Here are scans of the front and back of an oddity - but I have no idea what it is. The "stamp" is too poorly executed to be an attempt at forgery, since there were no yellow 10a officials, and the "cancel" is so crude. There are "perforations" drawn on the "stamp" inside the actual punched perforations. But it is perforated and gummed, which makes me wonder if it is some sort of cinderella. I have found no relevant information in my Facit. I didn't see any relevant titles in the 2019 index of Iceland Philately Journal articles. I would be happy to mail it to you if you know of someone who would be interested in having it.



(Ed. I may have seen this before somewhere, but I have no idea where. Perhaps one of our readers can tell us).

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MÍÐKOT – ÞYKKVIBÆR

The records show that a collecting office opened here at Miðkot farm on 1st January 1941 following the closure of the Nýibær office located a very short distance away. As was common practice, it took over the Bla Nýibær cancel. However it was fully 23 years before a new cancel was allocated, by which time the growing community had adopted the name Þykkvibær, and a new postmark was allocated with that name.

It must be unusual that there appears to have been no attempt to provide a Miðkot cancel over such a long period of time, and they were content to let the Nýibær name continue to be used for postal purposes. There must have been some temptation at the Miðkot office to use manuscript cancels, but I am not aware of any.



Miðkot farm 1940s/1950s



Mixed krónur and n.v.i. Franking

There has been no response to my appeal for examples of mixed krónur and nvi stamp franking. I have shown a few examples previously, and I am following up with three more commercial covers all from the Ólafsvík post office covering a period of 7 months in 2014. These three were probably due to the inspiration of the resident postmaster at Ólafsvík. Back in 2014, I wrote to the Iceland Post Office to seek their official view of the practice of mixing nvi and krónur stamps. Their reply was *"We did not deem it necessary to issue rules, it is just an accepted practice. From our point of view, all these nvi stamps have a value according to the current price list and how they are combined on a letter, a registered letter or even a parcel is entirely up to the sender. It is a mistake however if the postal employee does not come up with the correct rate in stamps because we do have 5kr and 10kr stamps available in order to complete for each correct rate."*



B8b1 dated 07.2.2014. Red registration label for the delivery of a letter to the addressee or a proxy at the post office. 675kr rate up to 100gm from 4.1.2013. 2 x 100gm *til evrópu* stamps which at that time sold at 300kr Europe rate x 2 = 600 plus 75kr in stamps.



B8b1 dated 16.5.2014. Red registration label for the delivery of a letter to the addressee or a proxy at the post office. 695kr rate up to 100gm from 1.5.2014. 2 x 50gm *utan evrópu* stamps which at that time sold at 240kr Europe rate x 2 = 480kr plus 50gm inland stamp at 130kr plus 85kr in stamps.



B8b1 dated 25.9.2014. Red registration label for the delivery of a letter to the addressee or a proxy at the post office. 695kr rate up to 100gm from 1.5.2014. 2 x 50gm utan evrópu stamps which at that time sold at 240kr foreign rate x 2 =480 plus 215kr in stamps.

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Who needs stamps anyway? (If you have a mobile phone)

The title has no connection with the current post office policy of no stamp production. I was browsing through my collection in the hope of finding an inspiration for an article when I came across the cover shown below. It bears a copy of the Hvollsvöllur B8b1 Colop R40D dated 18.12.2014, and of course no postage stamp. My album description of the cover was frankly rubbish, and so I decided to search through my records to try to find the real answer for the absence of any postage stamp, and for the strange manuscript number. My search finally ended with Frímerkjablaðið Nr. 25 of 2012 in which there is a short article by Kjartan J. Kárason entitled “Postage paid by mobile phone”. Below is my best effort at a translation of his article from the Icelandic.



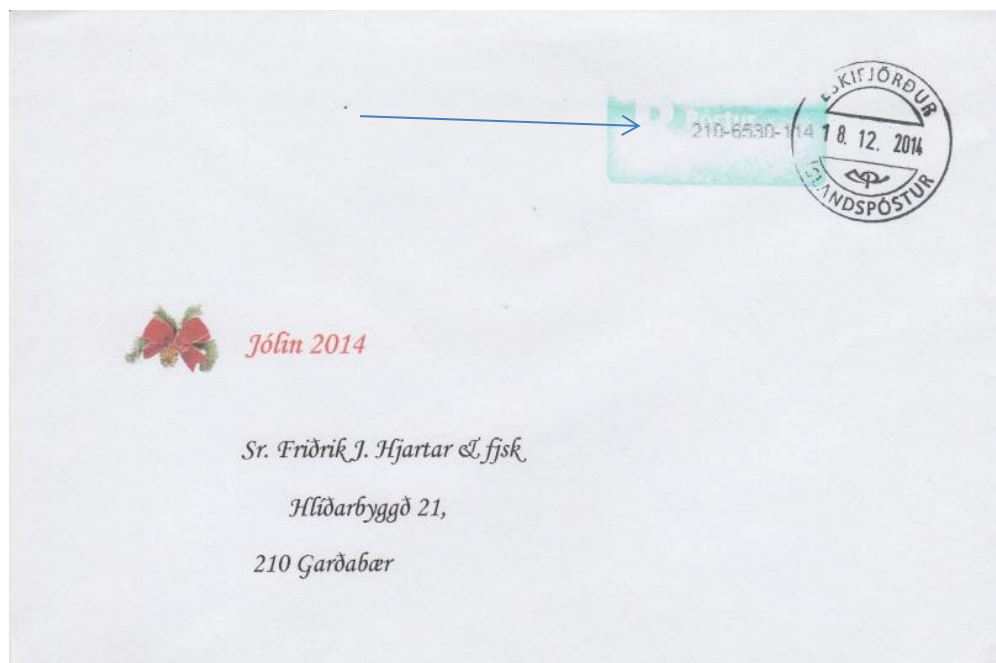
Last December, Íslandspóstur began offering customers to pay postage by mobile phone. This method is called SMS stamps, something that stamp collectors will soon recommend, as this reduces the amount of stamps in circulation. The service is undoubtedly useful for people who need to send letters in the mail but do not have a stamp available or can get to the post office:

Postage can only be paid for 50 gr. domestic shipments up to a maximum of 50 shipments each time. This is done by sending an SMS message from the mobile phone to the number 1900. The message must state F and then the number of consignments that you intend to pay for, for example, F 2 for two transmissions. The sender receives a 5-digit number which he writes in the top right corner of each envelope instead of a stamp. The price for each shipment is the same as for a stamp, but the 5-digit number is only valid for seven days from the time it was purchased. The amount is charged to the phone number from which the SMS return message was sent.

Now some misguided people might think that they can buy 5 digit numbers and use them for years to come. This is not the case at Íslandpost, shipments with numbers are classified separately and checked whether the number sequence has been purchased and is still active. A letter with an inactive number is treated as an unstamped letter. If the 5 digit number is valid, the letter will be treated the same as other letters.

Maybe the SMS "stamps" will tempt someone, especially if you consider a postal letter with a 5-digit number. it could be unique or a maximum of one of 50 letters.

So 14232 entitled the sender to at least one, possibly more postings. I think the green ink stamp is a guide to the post officials that it is 2nd class non-priority. Is the system still in operation? They seem to be uncommon.

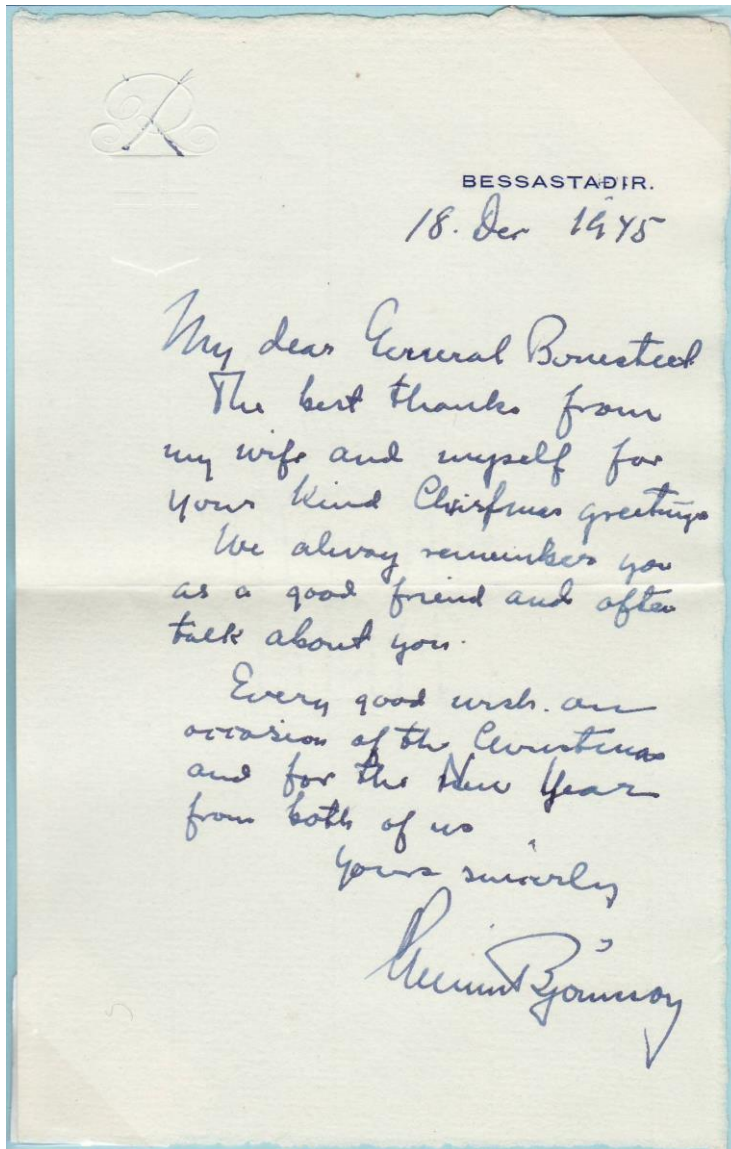


The second cover from Eskifjörður in 2014 may not be appropriate for the above title, but it shares the absence of a postage stamp, so why not ask a question here? I have given up looking for any article on how this came to be posted without a stamp. I think I should know the answer, and suspect it can be found somewhere in my past email correspondence. The typed number looks like a Garðabær postcode. I hope our Icelandic readers can explain what it is and how the system worked. Is it still in operation?

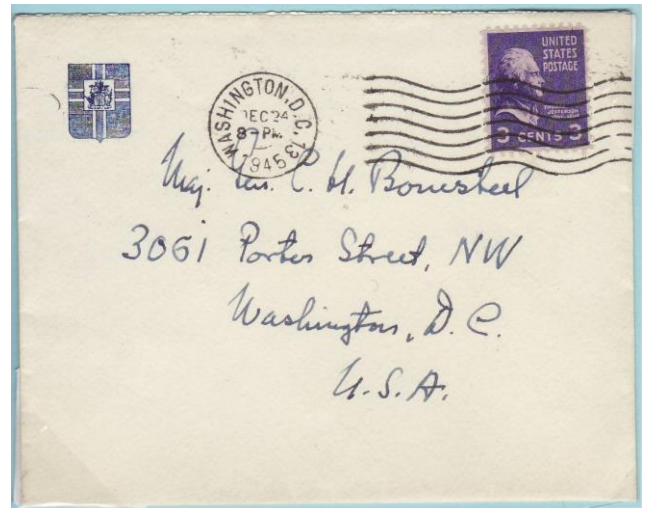
Sveinn Björnsson, First President of Iceland *David Loe*

In a recent auction, one of the items not described in full was this letter sent from Bessastaðir at Christmas 1945. It is probably a lot more interesting from an historical point of view than it is for its postal history. For us collectors, this item sent by the President was put in the Diplomat pouch for the Icelandic Embassy in Washington and then mailed from there to Major General Bonesteel. Enough said!

The letter itself is written by hand by Sveinn Björnsson and signed as such. It is on the notepaper of the President with an embossed coat of arms and is headed "BESSASTAÐIR".



Major General Bonesteel and the President had a very personable relationship and the tone of the letter reflects this. I think it noteworthy that the two exchanged pleasantries even though Bonesteel had left Iceland and his Iceland Base Command in 1943. At that time Björnsson was Regent – he was voted in as President by the Alþing in 1944 at the formation of the Republic and re-elected in by popular vote in 1945. Major General Bonesteel had arrived in Iceland on 16th September 1941. His headquarters, 2 miles east of Reykjavík was at Camp Pershing, renamed from the British Camp Tadcaster. The British headquarters were nearby at Camp Alabaster. He left Iceland in June 1943, and everywhere I have read that his tour of duty was a success although I appreciate this was not an easy time for Icelanders.



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Please let me have your articles if you want them in the next issue which will be September 2021. If you need help with translations let me know.
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