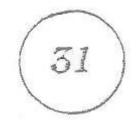
ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history











EDITOR
Brian Flack
E-mail address
flackbp@gmail.com

Issue 48/Jan 2022

Iceland Philatelic Magazine

Contents	Page
News	3
BH Hellissandur. Missing part of manuscript cancellation? Jørgen Steen Larsen.	3
American Forces in Iceland during World War II – V-Mail Service Ellis Glatt & David Los	e 4
Another Cold War Censor from Austria	18
11. Review of the series "Was this cancel used here? (Issues 10-26)	19
Looking for small varieties? (IPM 10, Sept 2016)	19
The postcard tells a story	20
Money letter from BH Strönd: R-vignet instead of V-vignet? Jørgen Steen Larsen	21
More on the 1938 collectors' covers of Peter Petersen (Issue 42/2021)	23
False Reykjavík cancel Jørgen Steen Larsen	24
The "Gamla Bio" covers from Iceland Rolf Dörnbach	25
Usages of N1a-116 and B1a Sandeyri during a difficult_period of time <i>Jørgen Steen Larsen</i>	n 26
Manuscript cancels to challenge you (Issue 47)	28
Húsavík. Landpóstur 1 and Landpóstur 2. <i>Jørgen Steen Larsen</i> .	29

GLÆÐILEG JÓL

Please let me have your articles if you want them in the next issue which will be March 2022. If you need help with translations let me know.

The editor will help with the English if necessary.

flackbp@gmail.com

NEWS



Armagan Ozdinc received a **Large Vermeil** in the *Philatelic Literature* category at CHICAGOPEX 2021 with his May 2020 IPM article titled "Inconsistent usage of 20 and 35 aurar denomination stamps on the Icelandic mail sent to Nordic countries in 1925 through 1939". CHICAGOPEX is one of the premier United States philatelic exhibitions, organized by the Chicago Philatelic Society, that takes a place in Chicago in every November.

XXXXXXX

BH Hellissandur. Missing part of manuscript cancellation? Jørgen Steen Larsen.

BH Hellissandur was opened 1.1.1902. As described in IPM issue 45, page 18 – 19, "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."





The cancel on the 3 * Facit 22 is part of A Stykkishólmur.

Facit 22 and 26 differs slightly from Facit 63 and 67, but when you study the way the individual letters are shaped it is obvious to me that it is the same person who has made the four manuscript cancellations.

In the strip with Facit 22 a stamp with the letters "..ssan.." is missing. Could any of IPM's readers show a stamp with these missing letters?





American Forces in Iceland during World War II – V-Mail Service

by Ellis Glatt & David Loe

Introduction

To reduce both the weight and bulk of mail to and from America's overseas armed forces during World War II, V-Mail (or Victory Mail, as it was sometimes called) was introduced by the Post Office Department. Its primary purpose was to save precious cargo space, vital to the war effort, with the added benefit of expediting mail delivery to and from the overseas troops.

Officially put into service on June 15, 1942, the system entailed the use of a standardized single-sheet V-Mail form with designated areas where the sender would write or type a message, his or her return address, and the addressee's name and address for delivery. Moreover, the form was designed for efficient processing and microfilming, with the added feature that, when properly folded and sealed, it also served as its own mailing envelope. Figures 1a and 1b show the front and back of the form, which was available free of charge (up to two sheets per day per person) at post offices. Consumers could purchase additional sheets at certain other authorized locations, as well. Originally, and for a very short time after its introduction, the form was printed in black. The less drab and more patriotic red version came on scene shortly thereafter, which helped in the sorting and processing, as well in speeding up V-Mail delivery.



Figure 1a – message side of V-Mail Form



Figure 1b – Back of V-Mail Form

Completed V-Mails inbound to American military personnel overseas could then be dropped in any mailbox in the States for forwarding to V-Mail processing centers, which were under military jurisdiction. There, the forms were sorted, opened, censored and microfilmed. The initial processing center was setup in New York City on June 22, 1942, followed by one in San Francisco on July 10, 1942. To further improve efficiency, a third processing center, this one in Chicago, was added on November 22, 1943. Outbound V-Mails from overseas service personnel were processed through Army post offices (APOs) or Navy post offices (NPOs) on location, at least those equipped with the necessary handling and microfilming setup. Unlike the more automated domestic processing stations, here the original V-Mail letters had to be opened manually prior to the censoring and microfilming steps.

According to the United States Postal Service and others, the overall V-Mail operation worked as follows: Letters were opened by machines at the domestic V-Mail stations, and then microfilmed mechanically (at a rate of 2,000 or more per hour, at least at the domestic processing stations). Approximately 1,500 to 1,800 letters could fit on a small 4-ounce roll of film, saving up to 98% on cargo weight and volume. In certain situations, the operators could opt to bypass the filming and dispatch the original V-Mail form instead. This was probably more often the case at overseas processing stations, where equipment downtime for servicing may have been a more frequent occurrence. There also were instances where the original V-Mail letter could not be safely handled by the equipment, perhaps having been damaged or crumpled in transit to the processing station. Again, in such cases, the original V-Mail form would be dispatched instead.

Upon the microfilm's arrival at the destination V-Mail facility, a roughly four-by-five inch reproduction of each letter was produced on photographic paper. If the letter was directed to the USA, it was forwarded to the addressee in a small specially-designed windowed War & Navy Department penalty envelope. The envelope used for that purpose at all three domestic V-Mail processing centers is pictured in Figure 2, although a white-paper version also came on the scene sometime after 1943. V-Mail to the troops stationed overseas was processed in a similar manner, but the photographic prints were distributed to the troops directly through the APOs or NPOs.

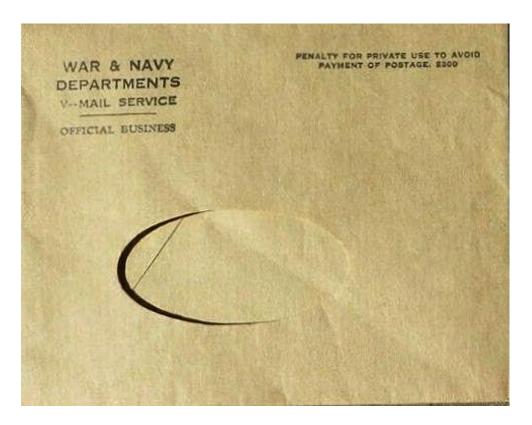


Figure 2 – V-Mail Envelope

Beginning in late March 1942, overseas service personnel could send personal letters, including V-Mail, at no cost by writing "Free" in the upper right corner of the envelope along with their name, rank or rating, military branch, and return address in the upper left corner. Civilians could send a V-Mail to any of the domestic processing stations either by surface mail for 3 cents or by airmail for 6 cents (later raised to 8 cents in March 1944).

By the time V-Mail service officially ended on November 1, 1945, more than a billion V-Mail letters had been delivered. However, until the V-Mail stationery ran out in March 1946, postal customers were permitted to use the sheets in their original form for sending letters.

American Army and Navy Post Offices in Iceland from which V-Mails are Recorded

Between July 7, 1941 and May 1, 1943 a total of eight APOs began operations at American military bases in Iceland to service the troops stationed there. Of the eight, at least six are known to have had V-Mail processing capabilities based on the examples recorded to date. Of the remaining two, APO 810 (first to begin operations in Iceland) shutdown in May 1942, just prior to the start of V-Mail service. As to the other, APO 614, V-Mails from that facility have yet to be recorded.

A number of American NPOs also operated in Iceland during WWII, separate from the APOs. However, it appears that only a few of those were capable of fully processing V-Mails and such examples are relatively rare.

At the time of this writing, the authors had recorded fully-processed V-Mails from the Iceland APOs and NPOs listed below, with the exception of APO 614. Earliest and latest recorded dates on those V-Mails are also shown (dates with * are from the V-Mail envelope, not enclosed letter; N/A means only one V-Mail example surveyed).

APO	Location	Earliest Date	Latest Date
5	Baldurshagi	Mar. 26, 1943	June 27, 1943
610	Keflavík	Nov. 25, 1943	Dec. 3, 1944
611	Borgarnes/	Apr. 26, 1943	N/A
	Kaldaðarnes		
612	Akureyri	Feb. 27, 1943	June 9, 1943
613	Seyðisfjörður	Nov. 20, 1942	June 5, 1943
614	Búðareyri	None recorded	
860	Reykjavík	Aug. 16, 1943	Nov. 6, 1944
NPO	Location	Earliest Date	Latest Date
Navy No. 101 (NOB)	Reykjavík	Dec. 10, 1943*	N/A
Navy No. 25 (NOB)	Hvalfjörður	Dec. 16, 1943*	N/A
Navy No. 8150 (28 th NCB)	Keflavík/Hvalfjörður	Feb. 17, 1943	N/A
Navy, V.P. 84	Reykjavík	Mar. ?, 1943	N/A

As mentioned earlier, even when V-Mail processing capabilities existed at an APO or NPO facility, it was occasionally necessary to bypass the microfilming and send the letter out in its original V-Mail form. Although this appears to have been a more common occurrence at Iceland APOs, at least one example is known from an Iceland NPO, Navy No. 8150 (28th NCB). The example is presented later in this article in Figure 4b.

Various types of WWII postal history from Iceland, including V-Mails, are currently listed and priced in the Facit Special Classic catalog, with a recently expanded section in the latest 2022 edition. For V-Mails, the prices shown are for the reduced-sized letters as produced on photographic paper along with the accompanying small penalty envelope each was delivered in.

Collectors should be aware that the postmark on each of the delivery envelopes will correspond to the domestic V-Mail processing station that handled the incoming letter. Five different processing-center postmark designations were used between the start of V-Mail service on July 15, 1942 and when service ended on November 1, 1945. They are listed below along with the date or approximate date each came into use.

<u>Processing Center</u>	Postmark Designation	Date of Initial Use
New York City	NEW YORK, N.Y.	June 22, 1942
San Francisco	SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.	July 10, 1942
New York City	U.S. POSTAL SERVICE NO.1	ca Dec. 1943
San Francisco	U.S.POSTAL SERVICE NO.2	ca Nov. 1943
Chicago	U.S. POSTAL SERVICE NO.3	Nov. 22, 1943

Incoming V-Mail were generally routed to the domestic processing station nearest the addressee's location, at least in the case of coastal destinations and nearby states. However, perhaps due to sorting errors, some V-Mail occasionally ended up being sent to the processing station on the opposite coast. And, until the Chicago processing center became operational in late 1943, incoming V-Mail addressed to states in the middle of the country were directed to either one or the other coastal processing station with little consistency.

Examples of V-Mail envelopes exhibiting each of the five postmark types, along with the accompanying letter from the soldier or sailor stationed in Iceland, are presented on the following pages in Figures 3a through 3f. Transit times for these V-Mails from Iceland to their final processing stations in the USA ranged from as little of 7 days to as much as 26 days.

.....

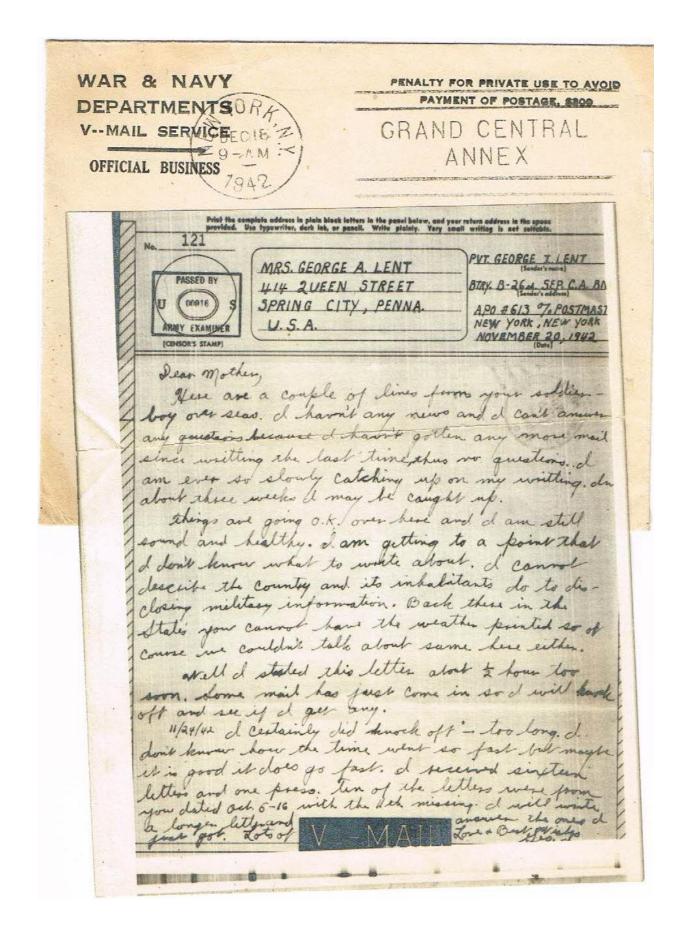


Figure 3a - APO 613 V-Mail dated November 20, 1942 exhibiting NEW YORK, N.Y. postmark.

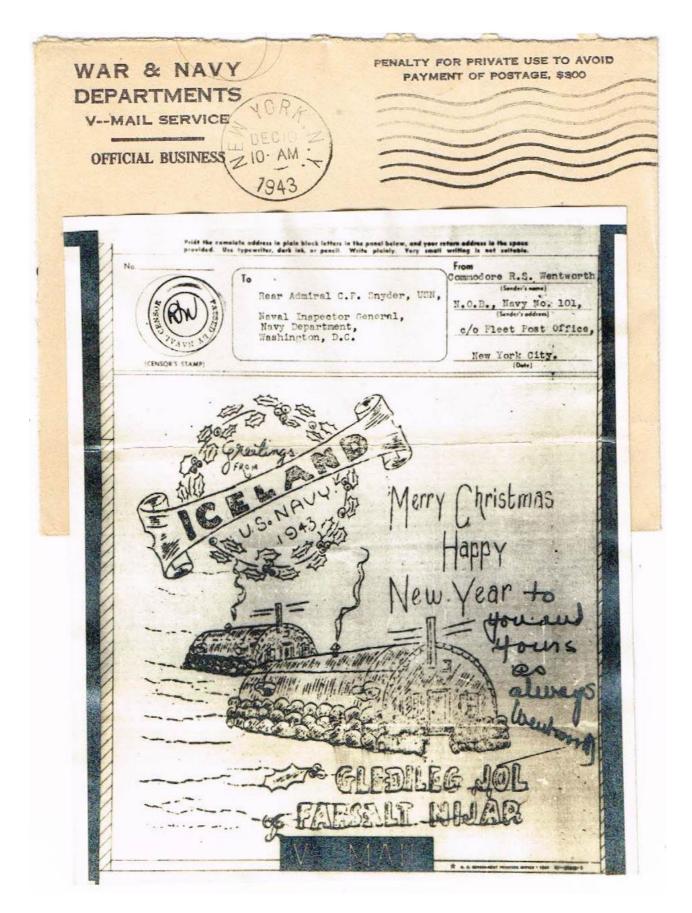


Figure 3b – Navy No. 101 V-Mail dated December 1943 exhibiting NEW YORK, N.Y. postmark.

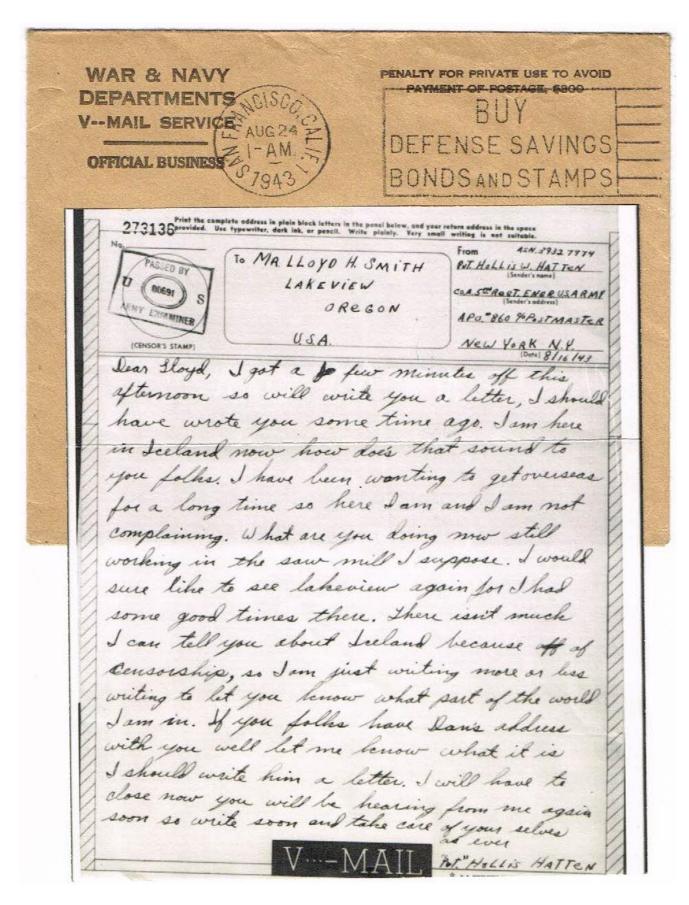


Figure 3c – APO 860 V-Mail dated August 16, 1943 exhibiting SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. postmark.

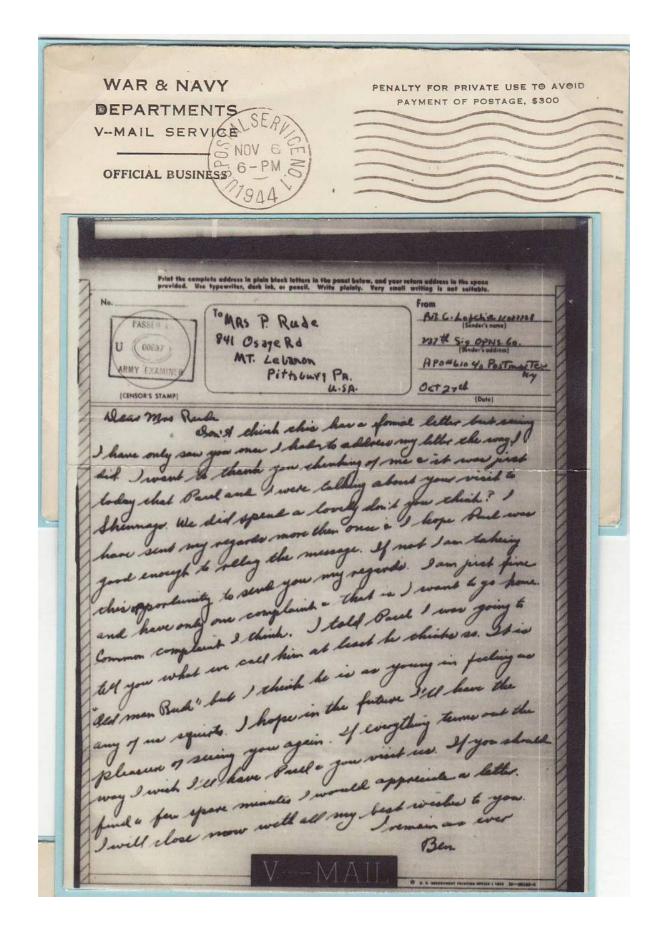


Figure 3d – APO 610 V-Mail dated October 27, 1944 exhibiting U.S. POSTAL SERVICE NO. 1 postmark.

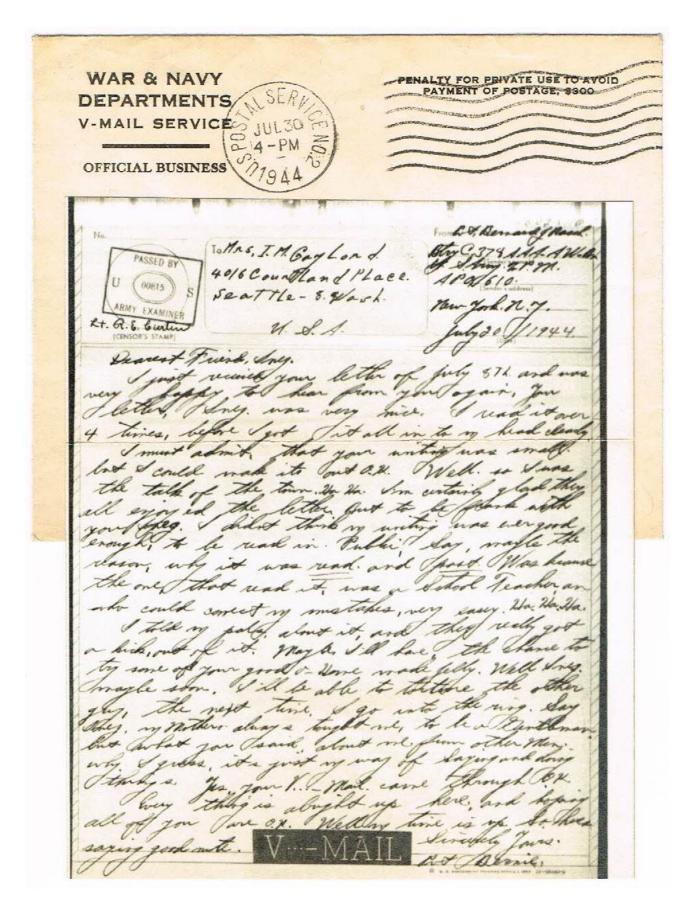


Figure 3e – APO 610 V-Mail dated July 20, 1944 exhibiting U.S. POSTAL SERVICE NO. 2 postmark.

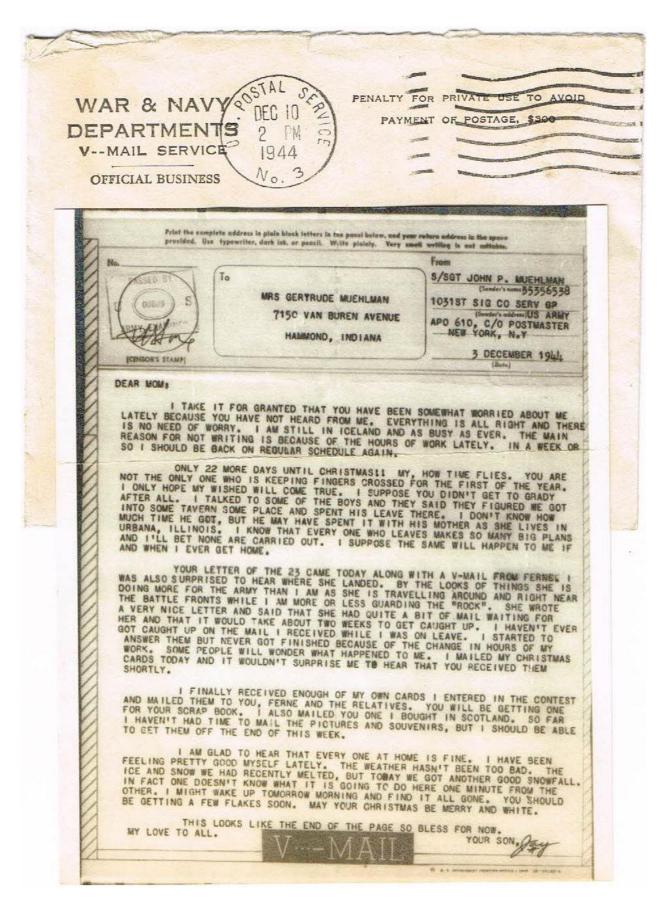


Figure 3f – APO 610 V-Mail dated December 3, 1944 exhibiting U.S. POSTAL SERVICE NO. 3 postmark.

As previously noted, on occasions when the V-Mail microfilming system at an APO or NPO facility was unavailable or could not be employed for one reason or another, the V-Mail letter was sent out in its original form. Two such examples posted from Iceland are shown in Figures 4a and 4b, one from an APO and the other from a NPO.

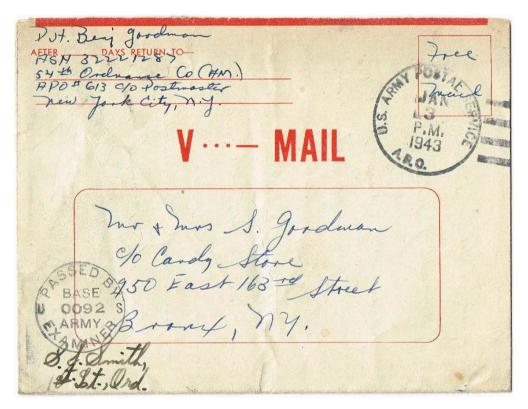


Figure 4a – Original-Form V-Mail from APO 613 dated January 3, 1943.



Figure 4b – Original-Form V-Mail from Navy No. 8150 (28th NCB) dated August 30, 1943.

Incoming V-Mail addressed to American forces based overseas were routed via the U.S. Postal Service to one of those three previously-listed domestic V-Mail processing stations. There, the posted V-Mail forms were opened, sorted, censored, and microfilmed prior to the film being dispatch by air to America's various overseas bases equipped to process it. The original forms were generally retained for backup purposes pending confirmation of the film's arrival at the intended destination. An example of one such incoming V-Mail form addressed to a soldier in Iceland is shown below in Figure 5.



Figure 5 – Incoming V-Mail Form to APO 860 dated April 29, 1943.

The partial arrival postmark visible on the back of the form would appear to indicate that the form was fully processed at the V-Mail processing center in New York, N.Y. upon arriving there on May 7th. Therefore, the V-Mail might not have made it all the way to Iceland in its original form.

Britain's Airgraph Mail Service - The Forerunner to America's V-Mail Service

Almost a year before America's V-Mail service went into operation, Britain, faced with loss of control of the direct sea routes it had previously relied on to deliver mail to and from its forces in the Middle East and Far East, pioneered its own microfilm-based mail system called Airgraph.

With the Axis in control of the Mediterranean Sea and large parts of North Africa by 1941, Britain would have otherwise been forced to use very time-consuming sea routes around the Cape of Africa for mail service to those Eastern forces. Airgraph solved that problem. As was the case with V-Mail, the Airgraph service reduced the weight of troop mail by more than 90%, thereby enabling quick delivery by air instead of sea. By August 1941, the Airgraph service was fully operational both to and from Britain and its Middle-East forces.

Although British Field Post Offices (FPOs) operating in Iceland had no direct access to Airgraph processing equipment, at least two examples of Airgraph letters apparently originating in Iceland are recorded. One is pictured below in Figure 6, but both exhibit the same XMAS graphics. The accompanying delivery envelopes apparently were not retained. However, postmarks found on Airgraph envelopes are generally generic and usually do not reference the Airgraph processing site. In any event, more information is needed to confirm exactly how the subject Airgraph got processed and delivered to the addressee in Australia.



Figure 6 – Airgraph dated November 30, 1944 exhibiting RAF 001 postmark and RAF Censor 288.

The most likely scenario is that Airgraph forms with the subject artwork already imprinted were readily available in Iceland. (This also was very common with America's V-Mails, based on the large number of recorded examples sharing identical graphics, usually conveying holiday greetings of one kind or another.) The sender would simply complete the form in Iceland, where it would be censored, postmark dated, and then sent on to the London processing center to be microfilmed. From there, the film would have likely worked its

way by air to Britain's Airgraph processing facility, probably in Melbourne, Australia, where the Airgraph letter would be generated and dispatched to the addressee.

References:

Facit Special Classic 2022, Facit Förlags AB, Malmö, Sweden, 2021.

United States Postal Service. (2008, July). V-Mail. https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/victory-mail

Smithsonian National Postal Museum. (March 6, 2008 – July 6, 2011). *Victory Mail*. https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/victory-mail

Senkus, William M. (July 24, 2020). A is for AIRGRAPH. https://alphabetilately.org/airgraph.html

IPM Reader Participation

The authors of this article encourage IPM readers to canvas their own collections for V-Mail examples sent either to or from Iceland with dates outside the range of those reported in this writing for the particular APO or NPO. Such feedback from fellow collectors and researchers will help us keep the list of earliest/latest recorded dates presented in this and future philatelic writings up to date. The assistance will be much appreciated.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX





In issues 5/2016 and 18/2017 we showed examples of Cold War censorship strikes applied in Russian occupied Austria. Here is another example seen on Ebay. Unlike the first two which read "Austrian Censor", this one reads "Allied Censor" number 8. This partial cover is cancelled 27.10.52. This is well within the period of censorship in Austria described by Rolf Dörnbach in IPM 5 as 1945-1953.

Unfortunately, the top part of this cover is missing. The 70aur franking probably represents the 70aur airmail supplement added to the 20gm 175aur surface rate to Europe which applied from 1.10.1953, and was presumably applied to the missing piece.

11. Review of the series "Was this cancel used here? (Issues 10-26)

Two cancels are reviewed here: - B1a Húsatóftir in Árnessýsla, and B2a Litla Sandfell in Suður Múlasýsla, both of which featured in Issue 15/2017.



B1a Húsatóftir Árnessýsla Recorded use 1930 -31.7.1973 Borgarkot 1.8.1973 – 28.2.1975

No example of B1a Húsatóftir dated between 1.8.1973 – 28.2.1975 has been reported by readers. I searched in the 1973 and 1974 editions of Póst-og Símatiðindi and found no record of any Borgarkot collecting office. However, Póst-og Símatiðindi 01/09/1973 records the closure of Húsatóftir bréfhirðing, and the transfer of its telegraph and telephone functions to Ingibjörg Pálsdóttir at Borgarkot. Póst-og Símatiðindi 01/12/1975 records the closure of the telegraph and telephone facility at Borgarkot. PÞ's Pósthús og Bréfhirðingar á Íslandi 1870-2011 did not mention any collecting office at Borgarkot. However, his Íslenskir Stimplar book p.14 does show B1a at Borgarkot. I think it is reasonable to argue that those who collect the bridge cancels by office usage can confidently delete this one from their wants list.

B2a Litla Sandfell Suður Múlasýsla Recorded use 1930 – 31.12.1931 Arnhólsstaðir 1.1.1932 – 1951

Arnhólsstaðir reopened from 1.1.32 following the closure of the Litla Sandfell collecting office. Since the article appeared in Issue 15, there has been no report of any B2a Litla Sandfell cancel with a date during the nearly 20 year period Arnhólsstaðir was open. However, that office did have the N1a numeral 29, which according to Brynjólfur's book had some use in 1948/49. ÞÞ's handbook is vague about the date of the appearance of the B2c2 Arnhólsstaðir cancel and gives it as "1951". My only copy of B2c2 is on a 1958 stamp issue. Perhaps the N1a numeral 29 may have had more use than is shown in Brynjólfur's book, but there must be a possibility of a B2a Litla Sandfell cancel dated between 1932 and 1951, and such a cancel must be very scarce.

XXXXXXXXXXX

Looking for small varieties? (IPM 10, Sept 2016)

Hello Brian:

Regarding the above quoted article, please note the small white dot above and to the left part of the "5". Would this be a significant or one of those not very significant further varieties? The left stamp is attached without a variety. Please share with your readers if you wish to do so.

Fred Arnason



The postcard tells a story

Published in IslandsKontakt 75, translated from the Danish and reproduced with the editor's permission



Even if you think the front is interesting, it's the back I want to show you.

Those professionally interested will notice that the machine stamp looks brand new, even though it has been in use for 2 years. Spare parts have been replaced.

The "From Iceland" stamp on this shipment is replaced by the framed "Paquebot". The 2 stamps could rightly be used in all cases, but the old "From Iceland" was always the favorite on mail from the Atlantic Island. Printed matter card stamped 19 IX 26. Postage to the whole world was 7 aur.

ÍSLAND - ICELAND

Wholesale offert. - Händer-Angebot.

				-		-					
			S	ätze		Set	5.		10	100	
	1920	1 eyr. — 1	5 aur	a Chi	r. X	. (8)	Mk.	3.00	25.00	
		1 eyr. — 1							18.00	165.00	
	1920	1 eyr. — 5	kr.	d	0.	(16	6)		50.00		
	1922	5 aur. —	10 aur	a d	0.	(5)		2.20	20.00	
	1925	Provisorie	n			(2)	_	3.35	30.00	
	1925	Landschaf	m. Pi	ct. is	sue	(5)	_	5.00	40.00	
		Di	enstr	nark	en	_ (Off	icial			
	1920	3 aur. —						Mk.			
	1720	o dan.					,				
				"To	llu	r".					
	1920	5 kr. Chr	. X.					Mk.	3.50	30.00	
	1924	10 kr. / 1	kr.				•	_	10.00	80.00	
	1925	Landschaf	m. Pi	ct. iss	sue.	(5)	_	1.75	15.00	
	1926	2 kr. / 25	aur.					_	2.50	23.00	
	1926	10 kr. / 5	0 aur					_	10.00	80.00	
	1926	Ein krona	/ 40 8	aur.				_	1.50	13.00	
Paketen — Backets.											
	5 00	rsch. — di						Mk.	0.75	7.00	
	10		_						1.80		
	20		- :								
	25		- :						7.50	70.00	
	30		_ :						11.00	100.00	
	50							_	25.00	220.00	
		e in Reich	smark	. Kas	sa	vora	us	oder	Nachna	ahme.	

Prices in Reichsmark. Net cash with order or 1ma.

Hugo A. Proppé. - P. O. Box 702. Reykjavík, Iceland.

What you see is the back with a sales list sent to Turkey (probably to a stamp dealer) with a price list of various stamps.

I have been online several times, but have not been able to find an exchange rate from Reichsmark to Icelandic / Danish kroner in 1927.

Now we are at 1927, so you can try to count on how many stamps were issued until then. Or should I help?

Facit has 146 numbers in stamps and 52 service numbers.

The price of 50 different then seems to give a little profit. There are probably no skilling or Þrír stamps in the package.

Is it used or unused he sells? He probably should have stated that.

Does anyone know the exchange rate from that time?

References.

Money letter from BH Strönd: R-vignet instead of V-vignet? Jørgen Steen Larsen

Published in IslandsKontakt 75, translated from the Danish and reproduced with the editor's permission

The day before Stamps in Forum started, I visited Reynir Sverrison, who had come to Copenhagen with a large number of exciting letters. Among the many letters we can show here the following money letter in which - as it appears from the endorsement in the upper right corner - DKK 45.00 was entered. The letter was sent from the letter collection place Strönd in Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla on 17.4.1946.



On the back there are the following stamps: Reykjavík 23. IV. 46, Akureyri 27.4.46, Reykjavík 30.IV.46 and Akureyri 8.5.46. In addition, on the back there are several wax seals with the inscription Leiðvallahreppur, which is exactly the name of the area in southern Iceland where the farm Strönd is located.

The stamps on the back fit so that it appears on the front of the letter that it was first sent to Akureyri, then redirected to Reykjavík and finally sent back to Akureyri.

The postage for a domestic letter of up to 20 gm. in the period November 15, 1942 to September 30, 1947 was 50 aur. In addition, there is 50 aur for a money letter up to DKK 300. A total of DKK 2.00 - corresponding to the letter's franking.

However, the letter has an R vignette so that one could get the idea that the letter was also registered.

However, that would not match the franking, as at this time an additional postage of 60 aur was charged for a registered letter.

My guess is therefore that the R-label has been used instead of a V-label, perhaps because the correct V-label was missing at the Strönd letter collecting office.

From Brian Flack we can add the following comment:

"The postal regulations at the time of this letter are clearly stated in the regular Gjaldskrá from which much of my postal rate data is derived. Only money letters sent to foreign countries must have a compulsory registration fee paid as well as the value letter rate and of course the normal postage letter rate.

So inland value letters did not need to be registered. The franking on your cover is correct for a 50aur letter and a value letter fee of 150aurar. A very nice cover indeed".

So why is there a registration label on the cover?

An educated guess is that the office at Strönd was not a very busy one (to put it mildly). The person responsible for the posts at Strönd may have been confused about whether a registration label should go on, but not confused enough to charge the sender for registration, which would be wrong. He or she got the postage charge right, and possibly stuck the label on and then realized he / she need not have done so. I do not think that very many money letters would have passed through Strönd! "

Ólafur Elíasson has the following comments on the letter:

"Postage on this letter is correct. It is also correct to rec. tax was not to be paid on domestic securities. Regarding rec. the label then I might add a small detail: In Póstblaðið March 1928 it is announced that a new type of value labels will be issued. The following instructions (in translation) follow: "The post offices that have not been sent red labels for securities must use the labels used on registered letters, however, so that for the label to be pasted on the security," R "must be cut or torn of."

This was 18 years before the letter was sent. I do not see that this instruction has been changed during that period. One must almost forgive the letter collector in Strönd that he has not complied with this old instruction in removing the "R".

I might add that I have a few money letters from small letter collection places in the 1930s where the "R" is conscientiously removed from rek. the label used as a value label. "

In addition to the above, the (ISK) editor allowed himself to show this money letter from Eiðar N1a 108 to Akureyri, arrival stamped 12.4.1921. Note that there is NOT a V label or a torn R label and therefore not a complete R label, but simply a value letter registration N83.



The postage 45 aur is correct for 1 weight rate (18 gr.) 15 aur + value charge, basic rate 0-100 kr, 30 aur.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

More on the 1938 collectors' covers of Peter Petersen (Issue 42/2021)

In early November all IPM readers should have received via 'WeTransfer' their free PDF copy of Brynjólfur's excellent book "The 1938 cinema covers of Peter Petersen". Responses have been coming in to IPM with examples from readers' collections to add to Brynjólfur's database

From David Loe

Following Eivind Kolstad's examples of Petersen covers shown in Issue 43, here are more contributions to add to Brynjólfur's database.







From Mike Schumacher.

RE: NIC 257

I have one on a King Christian X Silver Jubilee issue)



(with reference to the book) here is some follow up information:

RE: the three scans on page 205 with the Reykjavik cancels - the dates on those are as follows: green 10 aur April 29, 1938, brown 30 aur April 18, 1938, maroon 40 aur April 30, 1938 ref: the three scans on page 202 with the Ísafjörður cancels - green 10 aur November 2, 1937, brown 30 aur May 14, 1937, and maroon 40 aur May 14, 1937

Hopefully this information helps. Mike S.

(Ed.) I can offer 6 cancels as probable candidates for Petersen origin.



N1a 86 Sævarland



N1a 122 Tunga



N2 223 Daðastaðir



N2 241 Villingaholt



N2 256 Neðri-Lækjardalur



N2 280 Djúpavík

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

False Reykjavík cancel Jørgen Steen Larsen

This 25 aur Alþing stamp was offered on Ebay. The interesting thing is the cancel – which is false. It looks like B1d (18) but the date is centered in the middle - without the timeclock. I am sure that the seller did not know, and the value was low.



The "Gamla Bio" covers from Iceland Rolf Dörnbach

The original German-language version of this article appeared in the August 1997 edition (No. 98, pages Iceland 421-422) of "Philatelistische Nachrichten", Journal of Forschungsgemein-schaft "Nordische Staaten" (philatelic study group "Nordic Countries") in "Bund Deutscher Philatelisten" (Union of German Philatelists"). The English translation, done by the author himself specifically for IPM, might be of interest for the readers of this Magazine.

Philatelists interested in the postal history of rural settlements in Iceland will sooner or later come in touch with so-called "Gamla Bíó covers" which, under that name, have become a well-known phenomenon of Iceland's philately. Their name is derived from their recipient's address, which invariably is "Herra P. Petersen, Gamla Bíó, Box 173, Reykjavík, Ísland". Gamla Bíó stands for "old cinema" and refers to Iceland's first movie theatre which had been opened in 1906 in Reykjavík's Fjalaköttur street by merchant Warburg from Copenhagen.

After Warburg's death, the cinema was taken over by the Danish entrepreneur P. Petersen who lived in Reykjavík, too, and became henceforth known as "Bíó-Petersen". Petersen had a pompous building erected for the cinema in Ingólfsstræti by architect Einar Erlendson which also served as a concert & assembly hall. Much later, in 1981, the house was bought by the "Opera of Iceland" Society and, after considerable revamping, festively opened in early 1982 as Reykjavík's Opera House, retaining its traditional designation "Gamla Bíó" as a sub-name.

Bíó-Petersen also was a philatelist and traded in stamps and covers. Thus, in 1938, he systematically arranged for self-addressed covers to be returned to him as registered letters from almost all letter collecting stations (bréfhirðingar) existing in Iceland at the time. These bréfhirðingar were often installed at remote sheep farms or small country shops with a negligible postal traffic, rendering commercial covers from these places extremely rare.

The covers in question are imprinted with Peterson's address as cited above and franked with 4-6 (mostly 5) different stamps, always including values normally little-used, as for instance the 1 Eyrir definitive, the three airmail stamps of 1934, or the three Royal Jubilee stamps of 1937. The stamps are invariably distributed over the cover in such a way that each stamp had to be cancelled individually, with a full stroke. Several of the postmarks, as for instance that from Lón, are only known from Gamla Bió covers. Many of the covers are slightly overfranked. One cover underfranked by 2 aurar (but not penalized with "postage due") is also known. The postage for the lowest-weight category of a registered inland letter at the time (1938) was 50 aurar (20 aurar normal postage plus 30 aurar registration fee).

The lower left part of each cover bears the remark "Ábyrgðarbrjef"(by rubber mark) or (somewhat more modern) "Abyrgðarbréf"(imprinted), standing for "registered letter". The registration labels, as usual with bréfhirðings, mostly show the place name applied with a rubber stamp or by manuscript. The back of each cover normally shows an arrival datestamp of Reykjavík and often a transit datestamp of the post office in charge of the respective bréfhirðing.

Most of the bréfhirðings contacted by Petersen had their former numeral cancels (lacking date and place name) replaced by normal datestamps in 1930 (on the occasion of the Alþing Millenary), as evidenced by the Gamla Bíó covers. A few bréfhirðings, however, still were left with their old numeral cancels in 1938. In the rare cases where both types of handstamp were available (as in Ásar), the stamps were cancelled with the numeral cancel and the datestamp was used as a side mark. Manuscript registration occurred in exceptional cases, where a registration label was not available.

On almost all covers, a red number written (by Petersen himself?) in the lower left corner of each cover indicates the number of the (former) numeral cancel of the respective place. In addition, many (if not all) covers show a hand-written fraction-like number in the middle often on the address side, with a "1" as the numerator and a three-digit number as a denominator, whose meaning remains unknown.

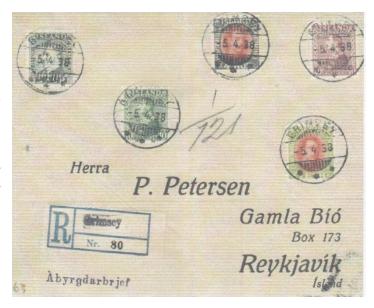
Today, Peterson's Gamla Bió covers are widely scattered and in the hands of many collectors. Because of their "philatelic" appearance (preprinted address, franking with varied and often seldom-used stamps, frequently overfranked) they tend to be looked upon as artificially fabricated and non-commercial, and hence are viewed askance by many collectors. It was by a mere coincidence that an American philatelist living in Iceland, Frank Mooney, discovered that the covers occasionally did convey a written message and not always contained nothing but a cardboard stiffener:

In a purchased bunch of 50 "Gamla Bíó covers, Mooney found a cover sent from bréfhirðing Skjöldólfsstaðir which contained a letter written by the postmaster confirming that he was returning Petersen's cover cancelled and registered as requested, but regretting that he could not enclose the particular stamps wanted, as these, meanwhile, had been sold out in the entire region. Apparently Petersen was in the habit of combining his Gamla Bíó cover project with inquiries at the bréfhirðings contacted for older stamps no longer available at the Reykjavík post office. In returning the covers, the respective postmasters used them for sending the requested stamps or explaining why they were unable to oblige. In this way, contrary to appearances, some of the covers did seem to serve a commercial purpose!

Be that as it may, in any case philately owes Peterson (who eventually returned to Copenhagen) a great number of important and fascinating postal history documents (including a few unique cancellations unknown from other correspondence) in the shape of his glorious "Gamla Bíó" covers.

Illustration:

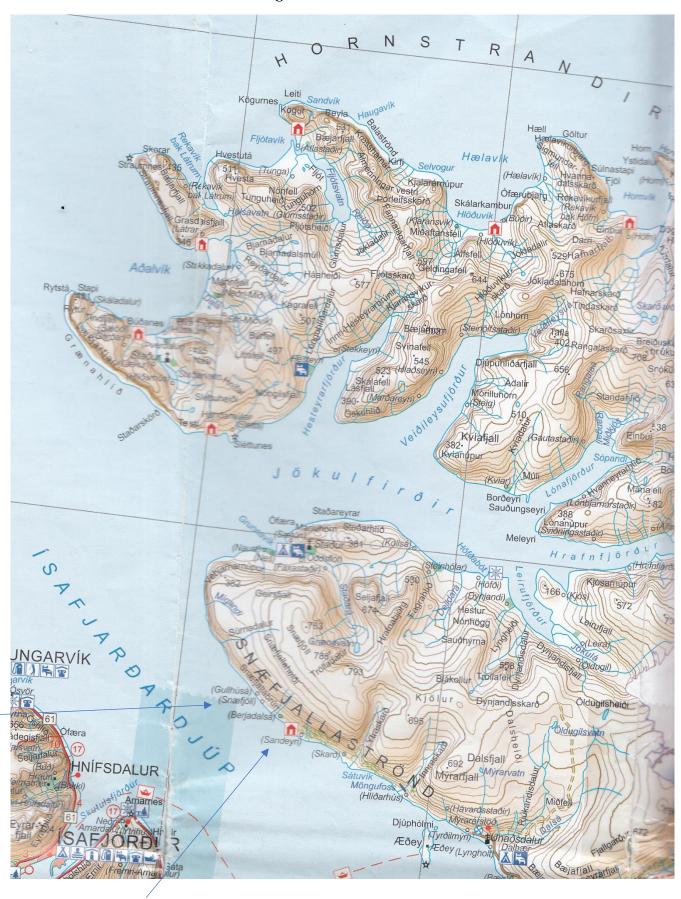
A typical "Gamla Bíó" cover from the bréfhirðing on the island of Grímsey, posted on 5 April 1938 as a registered letter. The cover is franked with altogether 58 aurar (5 stamps of 1, 3, 4, 10 and 40 Aurar, respectively, the last two from the rarely used Royal Anniversary series of 1937) and hence overfranked with 8 Aurar. The manuscript number "63" in the left lower corner refers to the former numeral cancel of the island.



Sources:

- Brandt, Don (1991) Exploring Iceland through its Stamps
- Brandt, Don (1995) Walking into Iceland's Postal History
- Martin, Dr. G. (1982) *Isländische Oper kaufte das Alte Kino* in "Island-Berichte" 1/1982, Gesellschaft der Freunde Islands
- Mooney, F. (1992) Ein versteckter Hinweis (in "Nordatlantik Philatelie" 1/92)
 (original title: Hidden Clue (in "The American Philatelist" April 1988)

Usages of N1a-116 and B1a Sandeyri during a difficult period of time. Jørgen Steen Larsen.



The two small farms Snæfjöll and Sandeyri were situated in Norður Ísafjarðarsýsla app. 15 km. north east of Ísafjörður on the coast of the northern side of Ísafjarðjúp. Snæfjöll was situated app. 2 km. northwest of Sandeyri. About half way between these two farms there is a mountain trail that lead up to Snæfjallaheiði, on to BH Staður Í Grunnavík and from there across Jökulfirði to BH Hesteyri. In 1930 only 7 small farms were serviced postally from BH Sandeyri.

BH Snæfjöll was opened 1.5.1892 and received C1 Snæfjöll around 1894/95.

On 20.10.1899 the BH was moved to the nearby farm Sandeyri where it stayed until 31.12.1902.

On 1.1.1903 the BH moved back to Snæfjöll and stayed here until 31.12.1911.

In the summer of 1903 Snæfjöll received N1a-116.

On 1.1.1912 the BH was moved to the farm Sandeyri where the BH was operating until it was closed on 31.12.1952. In the summer of 1930 Sandeyri received B1a Sandeyri.

Don Brandt has in his splendid handbook "Walking into Iceland's Postal History" in chapter 6 written about "Northwest Iceland – Reclaimed by Mother Nature". Here we can find interesting local information.

It seems as if some of the dates may be estimated but that is of little importance. The information below is based on Don Brandt's book from 1993. Buy it if you can!

¹ Around 1889 a sailing route was established from Ísafjörður to Snæfjöll, Staður and Hesteyri. During 1892 – 1902 a postman sailed either to Snæfjöll or Sandeyri, crossed Snæfjallaheiði to Staður and continued over Jökulsafirði by boat to Hesteyri. The route was resumed around 1915 with Sandeyri the starting place for man and horse, and two postmen carried the mail. The difficult part of the route, however, especially during winter was at the beginning and end: the ascent to and descent from 600m-high Snæfjallaheiði. On 22 December 1920 the second postman and his horse plunged to their death on the treacherous slope and the route was discontinued. The bay at Grunnavík just west of Staður, did not get a pier until 1940 so for 20 years the mail to Grunnavík was rowed out and taken aboard. Then a motorized post boat from Ísafjörður started calling at Grunnavík.

Based on this information it is not a surprise for me that it has been extremely difficult to find N1a-116 especially from Sandeyri.

Due to Brynjólfur Sigurjónsson's handbook about Icelandic numeral cancels, N1a-116 is from 1912 onwards only known used at Sandeyri, on a stamp issued in 1913 and one more issued in 1925. In addition to this Brynjólfur show a Bio P. letter from 1938 – but that is another matter.

In my collection I have a pair of TK 5 aur perf 14 and 20 aur Museum both with N1a-116, probably the two copies that Brynjólfur reports.

It has also been difficult to find usages of B1a Sandeyri. Þór Þorsteins reported that this cancel is only known in the period 1931 - 1934.

In my collection I have B1a Sandeyri on 20 aur Museum from 1931, a piece with 4*10 aur Dynjandi from 1936, 10 aur Dynjandi and 20 aur Gullfoss from 1939 and two Fish stamps + 2 commercial letters from the 1940s. This means that PÞ's period of known use can be prolonged.

To me the usage on 20 aur Museum is the one that is most interesting as it is from the period where the postal route through Sandeyri was discontinued.

Below you can see the usages of N1a-116 and B1a Sandeyri on 20 aur Museum.



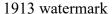


Please report back to the editor if you have usages of N1a-116 from Sandeyri from 1912 and onwards or usages of B1a Sandeyri from the beginning of the 1930s.

1 Direct quote from Don Brandt "Walking into Iceland's Postal History Chapter 6."

(Ed.) I can show these examples of N1a-116 and B1a Sandeyri from my collection.







B1a 4.5.36



B1a ?.3.37

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Manuscript cancels to challenge you (Issue 47)



From Hallur Þorsteinsson:-

Many thanks for your outstanding Issue once again.

Just my opinion about your question about "Bail" manuscript. This is Búðir for sure. "B" is clear then "u" with dot near K in Reykjavik, then very open "d" and "ir" in the end. Pretty clear to me.

Best wishes from Iceland.

From Jørgen Steen Larsen:-

Excellent as editor to have different opinions. That brings life to IPM.

I still believe that it is "Bailir" but of cause I may be wrong. You ask which Búðir it might be – if it is "Búðir".

Búðir (1) was a BH from 30.1.1894 to 31.12.1938 and received C1 Búðir around 1894/95.

Before 30.1.1894 the BH was situated in Vatnsholt.

A "Búðir" manuscript cancellation from Búðir (1) should be from the short period 30.1.1894 to sometime around the end of 1894.

Búðir (2) was the name for the later PA Fáskrúðsfjörður in the period 1.6.1897 to 31.12.1901.

During this period C1 Kolfreyjustaður was used, so there does not seem to be a need for a manuscript cancellation here.

If it is "Búðir" and not "Bailir", I believe that it was made in Búðir (1).

Best regards, Jørgen

(Ed.) Any more opinions on this? Is it from Fáskrúðsfjörður known as Búðir from 1.6.1897 to 31.12.1901, or from Búðir (1) in Snæfell? We may never know, unless someone has another manuscript like it. I have searched all my records of manuscripts, and this one, assuming it is Búðir may be unique.

Húsavík. Landpóstur 1 and Landpóstur 2. Jørgen Steen Larsen.

In 1975/1976 Póstafgreiðsla 640 Húsavík in Suður Þingeyjarsýsla serviced the following collecting offices.BH:

Collecting offices with closure dates

Arnarvatn	Brún	Grímsstaðir	Halldórsstaðir	Lindahlíð	Skútustaðir
31.3.1978	31.3.1980	31.7.1975	31.3.1980	15.11.1975	31.12.1989

Þóroddsstaður Moved to Rangá 1.4.1976. Closed 31.12.1984.

Other nearby post offices with closure dates

650 Laugar 641 Staðarhóll 31.7.1978 28.2.1985

645 Fosshóll PA to BH 17.4.1989. Closed 31.10.1997.

660 Reykjahlið moved to Mývatn 31.7.1998 and closed 1.10.2001

As collecting offices and post offices were gradually closed, the district for Póstafgreiðsla Húsavík became larger, and the distance from the office to the individual farms often became much longer. This is probably the reason that new postal routes from Húsavík to the individual farms were established.



Notification "PÓSTUR OG SÍMI 19 OCT 1982 HÚSAVÍK" cancel.

The destination Hallbjarnarstaðir is app. 12 km. north of Húsavík.

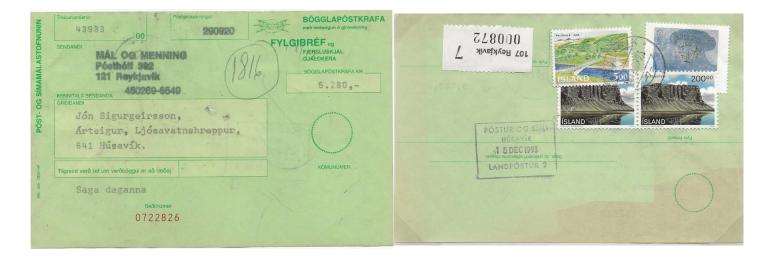
Below:

Fylgibréf to the farm Klambraseli, Adaldælahreppur, with "PÓSTUR OG SÍMI HÚSAVÍK 15 DEC 1995 LANDPÓSTUR 1".

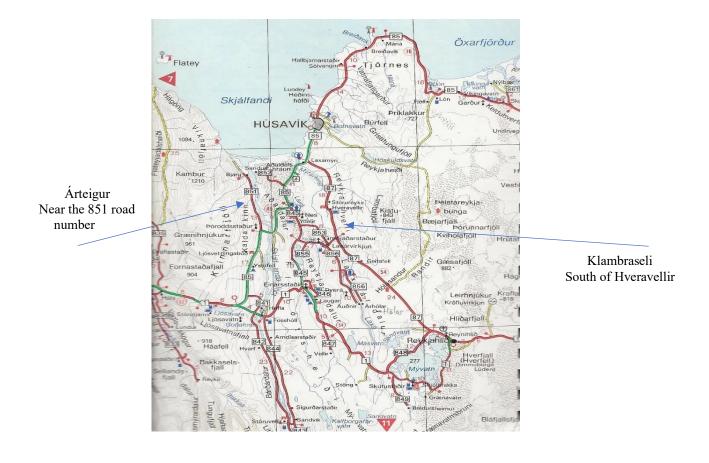
The farm Klambraseli is situated app. 25 km. southwest of Húsavík in the direction towards Reykjahlið. Follow road 85 for app. 9 km. to the south to former BH Laxamýri, then turn to road 87 and follow that road to the south for app. 18 km. I also have another Fylgibréf from December 1995 with the Húsavík LANDPÓSTUR 1 cancel, sent to the farm Brunahlið - which is the neighboring farm to Klambraseli.







Fylgibréf to the farm Árteigur, Ljósavatnshreppur, with "PÓSTUR OG SÍMI HÚSAVÍK 15 DEC 1993 LANDPÓSTUR 2".



In order to get a better picture of the postal routes from Húsavík it would be of great interest to me if you would send the editor information about farms that received a Fylgibréf or other formulas with Húsavík LANDPÓSTUR 1 and 2 cancels.
