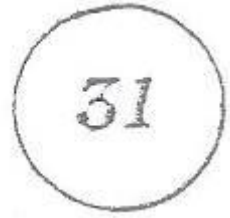


ICELAND PHILATELIC MAGAZINE

An independent journal for collectors of Iceland stamps and postal history



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Iceland Philatelic Magazine

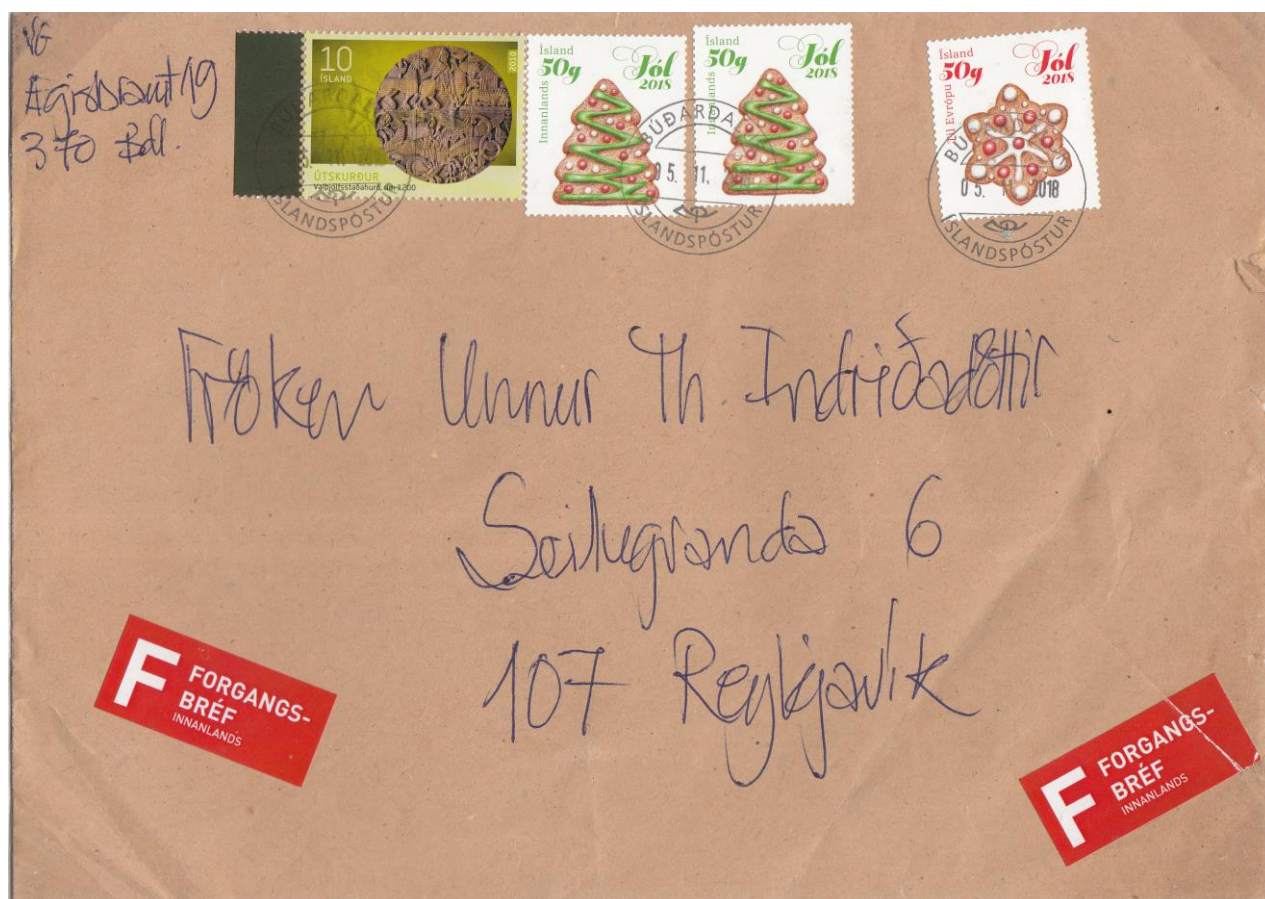
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Happily, the Scandinavia Philatelic Society in the UK has found a new editor for their “Contact” journal, and publication has resumed having missed an issue or two. I had to smile at an article in the new issue, which said that Swedish people refer to their NVI stamps as “everlasting value” (evigt värde”?) issues, as there is no limit to their period of validity. It reminded me of a discussion with an Iceland Post executive at the last Nordia in Iceland, who enthused about nvi stamps replacing the stamps with values, which he said often had to be scrapped whenever someone in government introduced new postal rates without consulting the post office first. Little did we then know that Iceland nvi stamps were not to be everlasting! I keep looking at the conversations on the Facebook site *Frímerkjaspjall* to detect any signs of civil unrest in Iceland against the abolition of the postage stamp, but so far, I have nothing to report.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Forgangs-Bréf

This is the fourth example of Forgangs-Bréf to appear in the magazine, but only the second showing genuine commercial use. Unfortunately, it is very large, 22.5cm x 16.5cm and perhaps not very attractive in the collecting sense. Posted at Búðardalur 05.11.2018 it is correctly franked as follows: - 2 x 50gm inland = 2 x 180kr: 1 x 50gm Europe stamp = 225kr, plus 10kr filler stamp. Total 595kr.



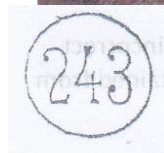
Can readers show more examples of this modern but short-lived priority letter service, which survived only 11 months in 2018?

From Sjónarhóll to Sogamýri



This magnificent postcard with N2 296 was sold in a Íslensk Frímerki auction for ISK 247.000. It brought back to mind the brilliant research performed by Þór Þorsteins into the early offices located in the Reykjavík area, which formed his article in Frímerkjablaðið Nr. 23 entitled “*Collecting offices and post offices on the four estates bought by the town of Reykjavík*”. Sjónarhóll and Sogamýri were two of those collecting offices; showing this 1957 postcard from Sogamýri will hopefully prompt readers to reveal material in their possession relating to the Reykjavík collecting offices.

A bréfhirðing opened on 1st June 1930 under the name Sjónarhóll at a house which stood at the junction of Sogavegur and Grensásvegur. The bréfhirðingarmaður was Páll Lárusson, the farmer at Sjónarhóll. The type N2 numeral **243** was allocated. I cannot show an example of this extremely rare numeral cancel. Can any of our readers give us that pleasure?



Sjónarhóll in 1933.



bréfhirðingarmaður. From 1938 until 31.12.1945 there was no collecting office in the area.

The building shown below is located in the area, but I cannot be certain that it shows the Ólafur Jóhannesson shop.



An office re-opened from 1st September 1945 with the name changed to SOGAMÝRI
A new numeral cancel was issued, N2 – 296.

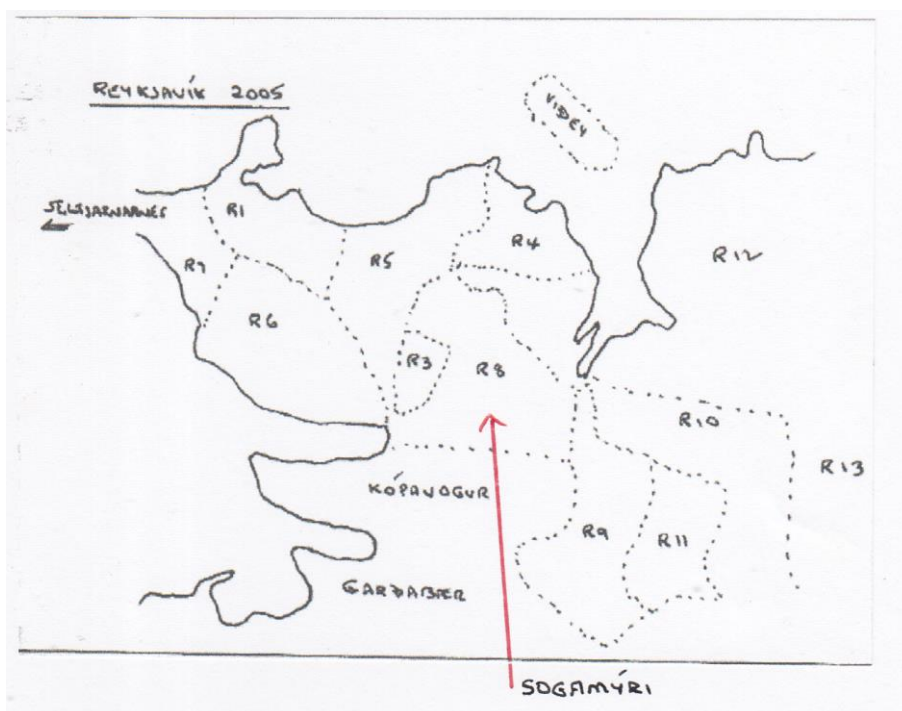


I have no idea if this manuscript 296 is genuine. Hopefully there may be other similar examples to help verify it.

From 1958 until closure on 31st December 1960 the office used a B8e bridge cancel inscribed SOGAMÝRI.



This is another rare cancel from this area, and I cannot show one. I am hopeful that in the next issue we will see examples from readers!



XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

The B8b1 cancels of Skagaströnd

From 20th December 1999 a new type cancel B8b1 was introduced for those offices with date cancellers which could not be used from the year 2000.



B8b1 Skagaströnd dated 14.3.2000 to Shanghai China

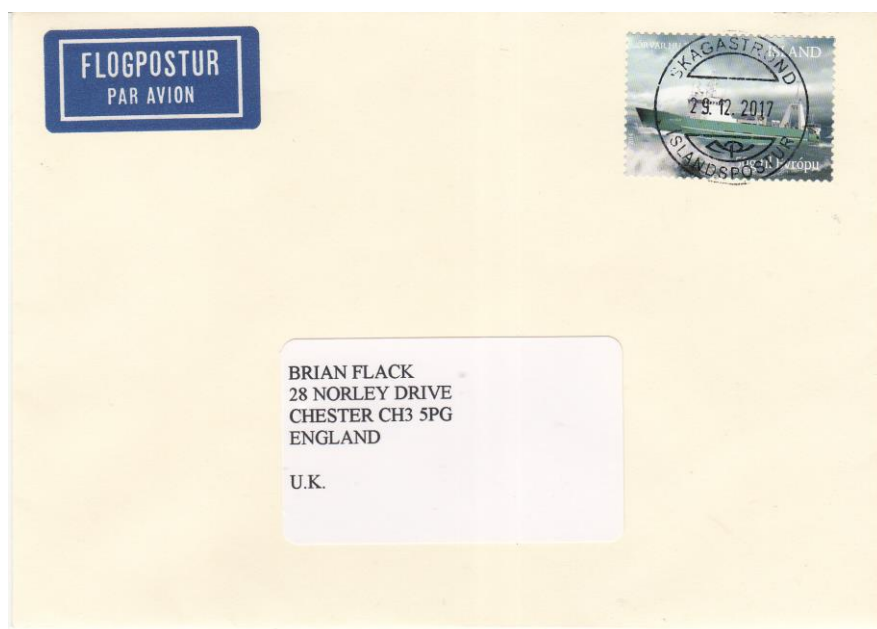
From March 2006 all offices were issued with a new type of B8b1 (D28c) from a German manufacturer. The months of January to September have only one digit instead of two. The previous B8b1 cancels were not withdrawn.



B8b1 Skagaströnd dated 17.9.2007

On varying dates commencing October 2014, a new variation of type B8b1 was issued on demand, only to offices who requested one. Called the Colop R40D, it was intended as a standby cancel to be used as and when the previous B8b1 cancels, issued between 1999 and 2006 became worn and needed to be sent away for repair. Unlike the earlier B8b1 cancels, these new cancels were made of rubber and were intended to provide a better impression. The new cancels are different in two ways. The most striking difference can be seen in the design of the date. Also the diameter is 28mm compared to the previous steel cancels which ranged between 29mm down to a more recent 27mm, depending on the date of manufacture. The change of size makes the positioning of the text look different on the new cancels.

The subject of this article, Skagaströnd, was not one of the offices which requested a Colop cancel, and it continued using the previous two B8b1 cancels. However, as late as week 52 of 2017, fifteen post offices including Skagaströnd, informed HQ that the year wheel on their date cancels could not be used from January 2018. Swift action was taken to have a local supplier make 15 Colop R40d rubber mail daters, and they were sent to the fifteen post offices, including Skagaströnd on 29.12.2017, just in time to avoid the 2018 problem.



New B8b1 Skagaströnd Colop cancelled on the date of delivery 29.12.2017

(Philatelic? Yes of course, but I was determined to obtain each of the new strikes from the 15 offices.)

I finish with yet another type of B8b1 Skagaströnd, one of those produced from cancel heads held at the Reykjavík philatelic bureau, each bearing the name of an existing post office. The bureau cancels available from March 2005 differ from the proper cancellers held at the post offices; the letters, although of the same size, are more spread out giving the impression of being larger.



Bureau strike dated
16.03.2006



B8b1 Bureau type cancel dated 14.12.2016?

The above Jól cover shows a Christmas 2016 strike of B8b1 Skagaströnd which I believe is clearly the Bureau 2005 type referred to above. Presumably the sender of the Christmas greetings went into the Bureau in Reykjavík on 14.12.2016, and had the cover cancelled with B8b1 Skagaströnd, and sent to the recipient in Kópavogur. I guess the above cover must prove the service was still operating 11 years after it was introduced at the philatelic bureau? I would be interested to know the views of readers.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

From the Auctions – a silhouette delight



Sold for \$215. Maybe the postmarks might have been clearer, but a most attractive cover, nevertheless. The 145aur mixed franking could be interpreted as correct for a 240gm registered letter when posted in 1912.

The United States Forces in Iceland in World War 11, *John Penrose*

In the special issue containing David Loe's article on "The Postal History of the United States Forces in Iceland in World War 11, page 43 refers to APO 611. In table 22 it shows the cancel H 5-1-2 as 1k dated Feb 8, 1943. I attach a scan of a cover I have dated 1 May 1943 which shows the same cancel with the piece missing from the outer ring. I would welcome any views on whether or not this can be considered a further example.



David Loe responded: -

Thank you very much for sending me that image of your cover. Firstly, well done for finding an example of 611 - very rare. On a simple level I will add your information to my database and also to the Facit listing when it is revised next year.

Here are my observations:

- H-5-1-2 now 2 known
- Yours becomes the latest known but very similar date to the other example seen so that is good.
- If you look at the H-5-3-2 example illustrated in Facit it also exhibits the same break in the outer frame, but H-5-4-2 doesn't show that. Perhaps there were 2 cancels? The trouble with this is that it is hard to draw conclusions as there are so few examples.

The inscription reads "Finance Detachment USAF". Do you know what the abbreviation stands for? The US Air Force wasn't created until 1947 and operations from Kaldadarnes were US Navy and US Army Hospital.

Looking forward to your reply,
Kind regards, David Loe

About ship mail in Iceland Þór Þorsteins

Translated from the Icelandic, originally published in Frímerkjablaðið Nr.3, and reproduced with their permission.

Almennir:

Skipsbrið

Reykjavík 1902–1913

Skipshrið

Reykjavík 1914–1954

Paquebot

Reykjavík 1918–1968

Aðkomuð

Aðkomuð

Rvk. 1936–38 og 1948–52

Frá Danmörku

Frá Finnlandi

Frá Noregi

Frá Svíþjóð

Reykjavík 1954–1965

Paquebot

Reykjavík 1971–1983

Paquebot

Reykjavík 1984–í notkun

PAQUEBOT

Reykjavík 14.2.2000
í notkun

As sailing increased in the nineteenth century, the possibility of transporting mail was increased. Mail will be discussed below transported by ship between domestic and international ports to Iceland, which was unstamped in a letterbox or delivered free of charge before departure. Postal transport and stamps of inland vessels are excluded, however, but there is still a lack of sufficient information on this aspect of postal transport.

Ever since the enactment of the "Postal Directive" on February 26, 1872, there has been an article in the Postal Act stating that every master of a ship was obliged to transport loose letters from the place where his ship left and to that port in Iceland or abroad as a ship's guidebook showed. The Post Act of 1901 also added an article that the Post Office was allowed to hang up a locked mailbox at the most suitable place where everyone could access them to put in letters on the ships that sailed between ports in Iceland. They would then be replaced later at the ships' ports of call. In addition, all coastal boats that received funding from the budget from the Alþingi had to carry mail. Similar obligations persisted in postal law until World War II.

An advertisement from September 26, 1872, states that letters placed in letterboxes of mail ships, with Icelandic or Danish stamps, shall be unused at the post office where the ship arrives. After this announcement, a mailbox is first mentioned in Landshöfðingjar's letter to Póstrneistara on 9 May 1896, which states that s / s Vesta, had received a temporary letterbox with a key which was paid for by the National Treasury. It is also known about the purchase of two ship mailboxes from Denmark on 8 February 1899, which were delivered to Iceland on 20 May this year. These boxes were intended for the coastal ships s / s Hólar and Skálholt, which sailed regular coastal trips around Iceland from April to October according to an agreement with the United Steamship Association in 1897. Such mailboxes have undoubtedly been installed in most coastal ships of that time, although I have not found sources about it. It was also permitted to transport general letters domestically by vessels other than mail vessels.

The rule was set at the very beginning of the postal service, to receive a shipment of unstamped stamps at a collecting office that did not have a stamp, it should be stamped at the next post office it passes through. With the increase in the number of postmen at ships' stops, stamps were soon added, but all unstamped mail, whether from land and ships, both domestic and foreign, had to be stamped. It is often difficult to determine whether it is a ship's letter if the letter is domestic, except by the contents of the letter, and a few date, crown or number stamps are known on such shipments from the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth. It is known that s / s Skálholt used a number stamp on mail and no doubt also s/s Hólar. Stamps with the names of various ships are also known, but this was probably done without the consent of the Postmaster.

It was possible to put a stamped letter in a mailbox, until the departure of a mail ship, while lying at berth. Upon departure, the box was taken on board and the letters did not go through the post office and stamps were unstamped. Therefore, the problem discussed in the letter from the post office in Vopnafjörður to the Postmaster in Reykjavík on June 20, 1897, soon arose, which reads: *"The letters with Bremnæs are delivered at the places where the ship comes to, unstamped and there is a risk that stamps will be used again and again. The only advice is to get a postmark in Bremnæs (a general issue stamp) and give it to Captain Hansen to stamp the letters before they are delivered."* The letter is written in Reykjavík with "processed" in ink, but nothing has been found about what was done. It is possible that here is another use of the general crown stamps "Bréfhirðing" on a route.

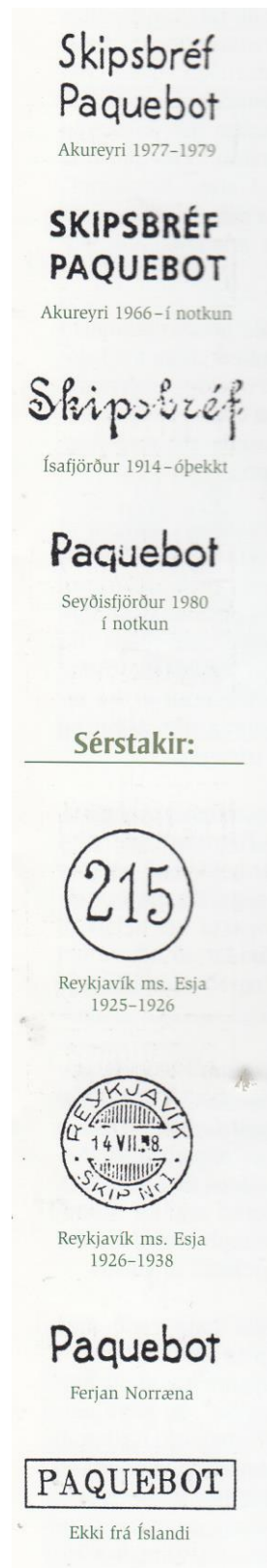
In agreements with the United Steamship Company, as well as other shipping companies that handled coastal shipping, it is always stated that if the amount of mail is so large that the postmaster considers it necessary to send it with a postman to take care of it and set up a temporary post office, he should receive a free ride with the ship. This raises the question of whether various mail vessels had number stamps or other stamps from the postal institution for use, or whether a postman who went on an individual trip brought a stamp with him and used it during the trip. No attempt is made here to rule on this point.

Iceland as part of the Danish Empire joined the UPU on October 9, 1874, and as a result its rules should also apply in Iceland. An agreement reached at the post office in Vienna in 1891 on a stamp with the word "Paquebot" or equivalent text, for stamping in the receiving port of unstamped ship mail, was first implemented in 1894. In Iceland, however, nothing happened until 1902 when a special stamp arrived at the post office in Reykjavík with the inscription "Skipsbrjef".

Until January 9, 1914, the Copenhagen Stamp Factory delivered two stamps to Reykjavík with the inscriptions "Skipsbrjef" and "Paquebot". Both stamps are made of metal with an inscription in the frame and then some rules on stamping can be found at the post office. Abroad, only the purchase of a rubber stamp at the post office in Ísafjörður on 21 September 1913 with the text "Skipsbréf" is known and it has been known in use until 1919. Due to the rarity of the stamp, it is not known whether it was used either on domestic letters and letters from abroad.

Stamps on foreign ship mail in recent years at Icelandic post offices has been largely in accordance with the rules of the International Postal Union, published after the London Post Congress in 1929, which agreed that items placed in a ship's mailbox at sea or received by postmen on ships may be stamped with stamps of the country in which the ship is registered or has it in its service. If this rule still applies today, if it is done outside the territorial waters and port, the letters after delivery at the post office shall be stamped with the day stamp of the post office that receives them for forwarding, even though they have foreign stamps. The words "paquebot" must also be written or stamped on the letters.

A coastal cruise ship, outside m / s Esja, which received a number stamp in 1925 and a special day stamp in 1926, does not seem to have had a stamp after 1914. This is no doubt due to letterboxes, but it was easier to deliver them to the post office at the nearest stop. It is known, however, that several boats in inland



navigation received number stamps for the cancellation of stamps, but there were many stops between post offices.

The Rules of Procedure for the Nordic Postal Trade Agreement of 1935 state that postage stamps found in letterboxes from one country to another are subject to the stamps of both countries. They shall be stamped with a special stamp showing the sending country. Despite this, many letters, especially from Denmark in the years 1936-38, are known with Danish stamps that were invalidated only with the usual Reykjavík day stamp. But the establishment of the Nordic Post Union in 1946 has undoubtedly led to the purchase of four stamps with inscriptions: from Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, but they were not widely used.

Two similar stamps with the inscription "Aðkomið" are known to be used in Reykjavík, first from 1936 to 1938 and then again from 1948 to 1952. There was a large increase in mail transport by car in the years after 1930 and it was common for senders to deliver stamped letters to long-distance drivers, they came to the post office in Reykjavík. The stamps are initially used on letter mail that was delivered unstamped by land to Reykjavík and therefore the letters can be distinguished as imported.

After the outbreak of World War II, in 1939, a temporary law was passed on October 20, 1939, banning the provision of information on the voyages or arrivals of ships sailing between Iceland and other countries. As a result, it was no longer possible to stamp ship mail with special ship letter stamps.

During the occupation of Iceland in May 1940, the use of ship mailboxes on ships sailing between countries was stopped. The reason was that soldiers tried to use them to send their letters without censorship. On 15 January 1941, the Post Office issued a warning to sailors and passengers sailing between Iceland and Britain or the Commonwealth that it was not permitted to take letters from British soldiers or to them, but that they should all go through post offices for postal inspection by the military government. This warning was then repeated in March 1943, and it was not until 1944 that special stamping was reintroduced. In the later period 1948-52, "Aðkomið" stamps replace the "Skipsbrjef" stamp and were then used on ship mail both domestically and abroad as well as car mail.

The use of a stamp in Reykjavík has been known since 1983 with the inscription "Kom með sjó-pósti" in a frame, but it is unknown when its use began or ended. It is known to be used for letters that were to be sent by airmail to Iceland but arrived by sea mail.

On the 14th of February came a new stamp for use at Frímerkjasölunni, Vesturgata 10a, Reykjavík with the inscription "PAQUEBOT". It is used for stamping foreign mail received from cruise ships in Reykjavík Harbor. If mail is received that is identified from a foreign ship, it is also stamped even though it has Icelandic stamps.

Foreign publications on Icelandic ship mail stamps mention a "Paquebot" stamp in a frame, which is said to have been used in Hafnarfjörður. No data is found about his existence or anyone here in his home knows him. It is the author's opinion that this is a misunderstanding and that the stamp is not from Iceland.

The ferry Norræna, the ship of the Smiril shipping company, has used a "paquebot" stamp on board to stamp passengers' mail before it was delivered to the post office in Seyðisfjörður. It is first known since 1976 and is still on board the ship. The stamp is very similar to the Seyðisfjörður stamp except that the letters are slightly to the left.

It does not appear to have been customary to stamp with ship's letter stamps. At first only a ship letter stamp was used without a day stamp, later it was used on the stamp and a day stamp on the side and finally a day stamp on the mark but a ship letter or paquebot on the side, but this is not universal. In later years, according to the rules, a day stamp must be placed on the stamp and the other side.

Many collectors, both foreign and domestic, have assisted in compiling this article. I thank them very much.

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

It was good that helpful readers provided evidence of cancels used at the second offices shown in IPM Issues 11 and 12. Therefore we now move to the very first set of questions asked in IPM Issue 10 for which no evidence has been provided by readers of examples used at the second office allocations. They are as follows: -



B1a Árnes Strandasýsla

Recorded used 30.10.30 to 31.12.46

Finnbogastaðir 1947 to 1952 ?????

Árnes closed on 31.12.46 and moved to Finnbogastaðir which did not receive its own B2b cancel until an unspecified date in 1952. It is remarkable that nobody has provided an example of B1a Árnes presumably used at Finnbogastaðir during a period of 5 years. Please take another look! One must surely exist.



B2a Breiðabólstaður Hún Vestur-Húnavatn

Recorded use 1.7.30 to 31.7.60

Harastaðir 1.8.60 to 1961

Breiðabólstaður closed on 31.7.60 and moved to Harastaðir. Again, no example has been offered by readers of B2a Breiðabólstaður Hún used there. It must be likely that Harastaðir B8e became available soon after opening. In this respect it may be useful to know what is your earliest example of Harastaðir B8e?



B2a Bjarnastaðir Árnessýsla

Recorded use 1.7.30 – 25.3.54

Nes 26.3.54 to 1.10.56

Torfabær 2.10.56 to 20.11.62

I finish with B2a Bjarnastaðir, which according to Þór's book was used at two subsequent offices after the closure of Bjarnastaðir. However, no examples were provided by readers of its use at Nes or Torfabær, covering a period of 8 years. Once again, please look. You might find a rarity.

Jørgen adds a further comment to the reference in Issue 51 to the following cancels:-



No usages of B2c2 Látur (2) in Eyri (4) from 1.1.1977 and up to 22.12.1978.

And

No usages of B7b Heydalur in Eyri (4) from 15.7.1987.



In the November issue, I intend to close this long series of articles, by summarizing the cancellations which have not been identified in IPM readers' collections and yet are recorded in the handbook as having been used at second or subsequent offices. I intend to annotate my handbook accordingly.

Royal Air Force Postal Operations in Iceland in WWII

David Loe

Author's notes

This article on the RAF forms part of my postal history of the Allied forces in Iceland in WWII that is nearing completion. I have previously written on the American Forces and RAF PO 003 and I refer the reader to those. It is my intention to pull these articles together into one publication in the future, as soon as I have completed chapters on the British Army, the Royal Navy, Norwegian Forces, British Field Security, Blockade Runners amongst others.

Reference material and an index are therefore not used in this article.

A brief history of the RAF in Iceland

RAF Coastal Command first arrived in Iceland in late August 1940, when the first half of a squadron of Battles finally managed the journey from Scotland, having had to wait several weeks for favourable weather conditions. The main role of the RAF was to protect shipping from air and submarine attack; there was also a regular ice patrol over the Denmark Strait to monitor the extent and movement of the pack ice. Conditions for servicemen in Iceland could be grim, as highlighted in a 1942 Air Ministry account of the part played by Coastal Command in the "Battle of the Seas":

"Aerodromes have been built in the lava swamps on which the Battles landed in August 1940 and elsewhere. The runways have been made of concrete and lava dust laid on a bed of stones. The aircraft are protected from the fierce and sudden winds by 'breaks' fifteen feet high built in the Icelandic fashion of lava faced with sods of turf. The crews and ground staff live in Nissen huts, their chief enemy in autumn and winter being mud, in summer lava dust which spreads over everything, causes sore throats, and severely shortens the life of clothing and boots. The roads, of the consistency of a hard tennis court after heavy rain, are vile. ... Above all there are the winds. These can reach gale force in a matter of minutes ... a Nissen hut took off at 10.00 hours [it was reported] and reached an estimated height of sixty feet before crash-landing on an adjacent runway."

RAF and RCAF Squadrons Based in Iceland (miscellaneous others not listed e.g., repair and maintenance, runway construction etc.). Simplified listing.

Squadron	Period	Base	Duty	Aircraft
53	September 1944 – June 1945	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine patrols	Consolidated Liberator
86	March-July 1944	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine patrols	Consolidated Liberator
98	27 July 1940 – 15 July 1941	Kaldaðarnes	Coastal patrols	Fairey Battle I & Hawker Hurricane (from June '41)
120 (Detachment)	September 1942 – April 1943	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine patrols	Consolidated Liberator
120 (Full Squadron)	13 April 1943 – March 1944	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine patrols	Consolidated Liberator
204	April – July	Reykjavík	Anti-	Hort

	1941		submarine patrols	Sunderland I
209	August – October 1941	Reykjavík	Reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare	Consolidated Catalina
221	September – December 1941	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine patrols	Vickers Wellington IC
251	August 1944 – October 1945	Reykjavík	Air-sea rescue and meteorological	Anson, Hudson, Boeing Fortress
269 (Detachment)	April – May 1941	Kaldaðarnes	Medium range anti-submarine patrols, helping to fill the mid-Atlantic gap, as well as protecting the Russian convoys	Lockheed Hudson
269 Squadron	May 1941 – March 1943	Kaldaðarnes		Lockheed Hudson
269 Squadron	March 1943 – January 1944	Reykjavík		Lockheed Hudson
280 (Detachment)	1945-46	Reykjavík	Air-sea rescue	Vickers Warwick I
330	April 1941 – January 1943	Reykjavík	Anti-submarine warfare	Northrop N-3PB, Consolidated Catalina III
330 (Detachment)	July 1941 – December 1942	Akureyri	Anti-submarine warfare	
330 (Detachment)	September 1941 – May 1943	Buðareyri	Anti-submarine warfare	
612 (County of Aberdeen)	December 1941 – August 1942	Reykjavík	anti-submarine patrols over the mid-Atlantic	Armstrong Whitworth Whitley
162 RCAF	January 1944 to June 1945	Skerjafjörður (Reykjavík)	Anti-submarine warfare	Consolidated Canso

Not mentioned in this list are two US Navy Squadrons VP-73 and VP-84 that came under RAF Command. The squadrons flew Consolidated Catalinas from Reykjavík (F). Their mail was processed by the US Navy and is studied in Part 2.

At the time of the outbreak of World War II, the RAF in the UK and elsewhere relied on the army post office for mail services. However, the growing volume of mail rendered these arrangements inadequate, and the RAF Postal Service was established as an emergency measure in the autumn of 1942. This, in turn, opened the door for the establishment of RAF-run services in the various overseas theatres.

From the start of the Iceland occupation up until January 1943, military postal services in Iceland were conducted by the Army Post Office stationed at Reykjavík and serving the network of FPOs, with a sub-post office at RAF Kaldaðanes, near Selfoss. The Army conducted a brief experiment in October 1940 to operate flights to the UK, and a few covers are known of this "Alabaster Air Mail" (named after "Operation Alabaster", the code name for the Iceland occupation), mailed from Reykjavík via Akureyri on 22 October and via Seyðisljúfur on 24 October. This arrangement, however, apparently came to nothing and mail, both military and civilian, continued to travel by surface, taking an average of 11- 15 days. By January 1943, the British Army had largely left Iceland, their place being taken by US forces, and consequently responsibility for the British military mails was transferred to the Royal Navy. John A Smith noted in his monograph "The History of the RAF Postal Service Overseas, 1942-1957" - that the RAF provided seven airmen for the portage of bagged mail and assistance with general sorting duties. "This arrangement does not appear to have worked satisfactorily as far as the RAF was concerned, with difficulties experienced arising from differing procedures between the two services. Therefore, arrangements were made in March 1943 for the withdrawal of RAF personnel working in the Fleet Mail offices and the establishment of a central post office at RAF Station Reykjavík (RAF PO 001) controlled by the RAF Postal Service. In addition, a Receipt & Dispatching Office for all mail was set up in Reykjavík. Besides the existing office at Kaldaðanes (allocated RAF PO 003), two further post offices were opened at Camp Geck (002) and, later in mid-1944, Camp Cook (005).

Mail from both these latter is scarce, 005 is particularly rare. Though established as a postal office from the outset of the occupation, RAF mail from Kaldaðanes being the 003 datestamp is virtually non-existent. Prior to the allocation of the 003 stamp, such mail would, of course, have gone through the Army PO in Reykjavík. Neither John A Smith nor David Cornelius, who published a survey "British FPOs in Scandinavia, 1940-45", gained sight of a 003. (See more detail on Kaldaðanes below)

As a postscript, forces mail was transported by air from March 1944 and at the very end of the occupation period the RAF began flying civilian mail to Iceland by air, the first such service on 16th August 1945.

However, by this time the civilian airlines were beginning to establish themselves with for example Flugfélag Islands commencing direct flights to Prestwick from 10th July 1945. Meanwhile RAF personnel had quit Iceland by the end of July 1946, and the RAF Postal Service, set up as a temporary emergency measure, was discontinued during 1947, control of the mails reverting to the army.

Summary of Cancellations with Rarity Grade

RAF PO#	Earliest date	Latest date	Army Censor	RAF Censor	Navy Censor	Registered	Number known
001	6.4.43	16.7.46	3k RR	R1	1K RRR	R	-
002	20.4.43	18.5.45		R			13
003	12.4.43	14.9.43		*			3
005	11.8.44	13.7.45		RR		RRR	9
RAF Privilege envelopes (2 types) R							10
R.A.F. POST OFFICE/ 001 large boxed two line cachet RR							3
single line unboxed RAFP002 RRR							1

RAF 001

Opened 6.4.43

Closed 16.7.46

Note that the cancel varies in terms of the order m/d, y, *

Location: Reykjavík airfield (Camp Winston)

Army privilege envelope known

Registration known

RAF Privilege known

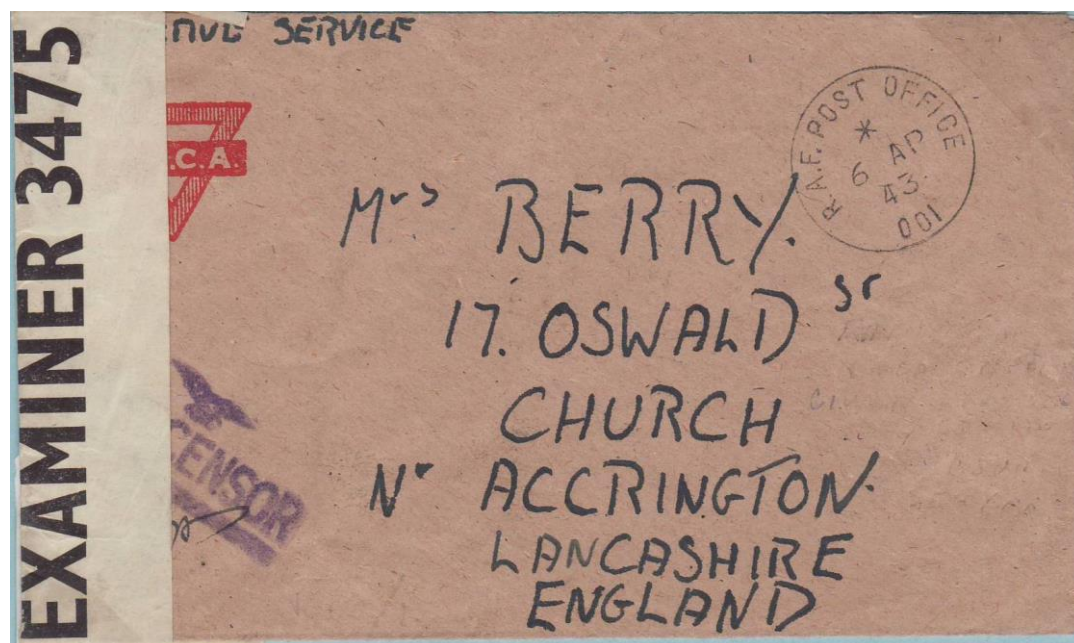
RAF Censor R6-30, 33, 38, 57, 62, 114, 117, 172, 185, 204, 230, 234, 288, 290, 299

RAF Base censor Nos 4, 34 known

Army censors: A5-3113



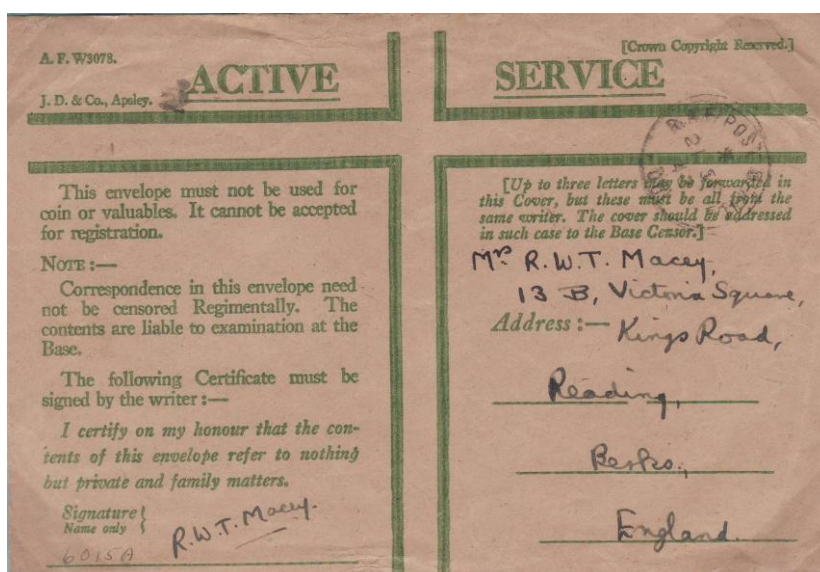
Boxed cachet RAF 001 known (3)



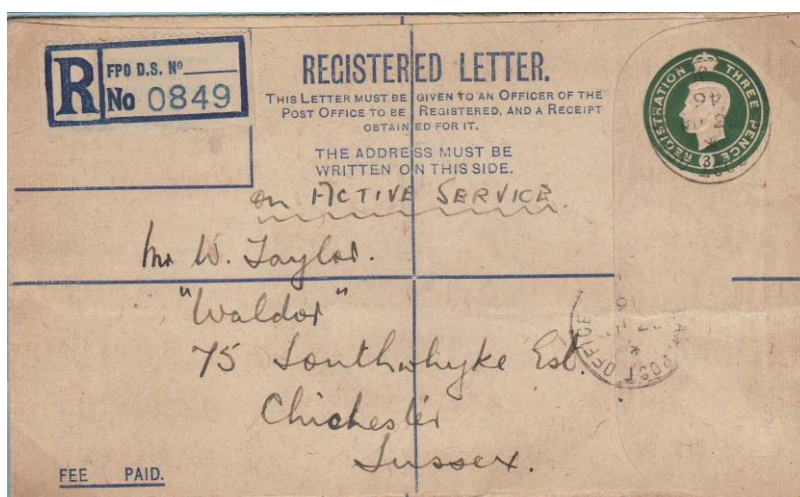
**A First Day Cover for the RAF postal service in Iceland dated 6.4.43 on YMCA stationery with RAF censor.
Unusual with a civilian resealing strip applied in the UK**



An item of RAF 001 mail with an army censor A5-3112 dated 13.6.44. Note that it has a civilian censor PC90 resealing strip applied in the UK. A manuscript date 22.6.44 has been added, presumably the day it arrived in Cornwall.



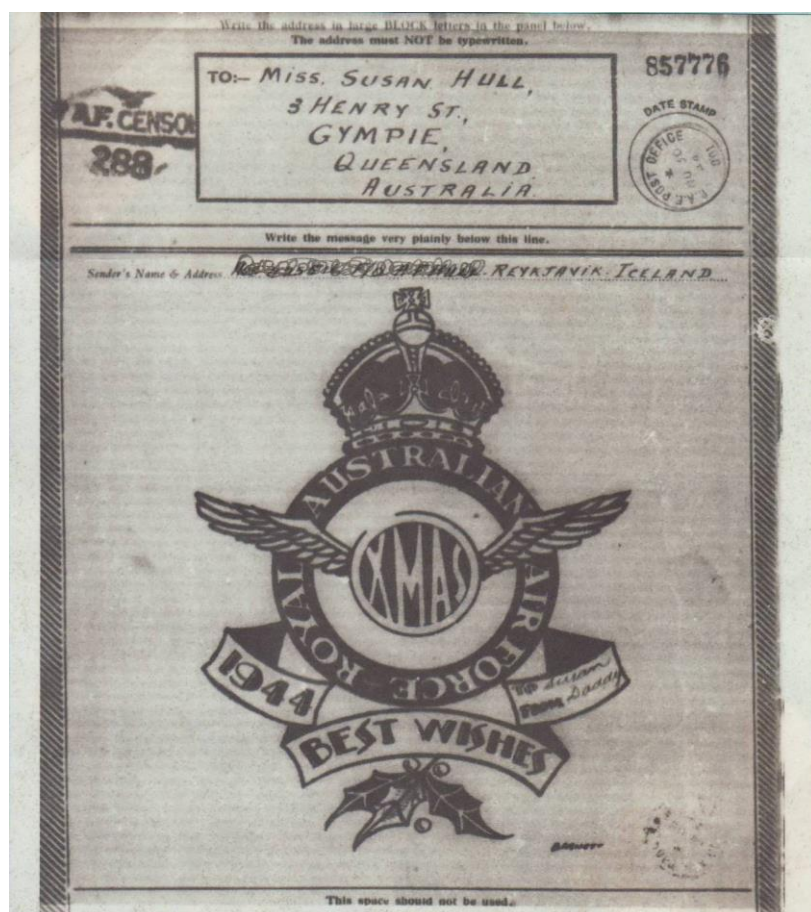
An army honour envelope used at RAF PO 001 21.9.1943



Late use of RAF 001 from 23.1.1946 on a registered envelope after the end of hostilities when censorship had ceased.



Dated 5.7.1943 this cover has been cancelled by the Royal Navy in the UK as mail arriving from a ship. One of three examples known on mail from non-RN origin, the other 2 being FPO 526.



RAAF Christmas airgraph postmarked 30.11.1944 P.O. AF Hull to his daughter in Queensland. Note the sender's name has been deleted by the censor. There is one other example of an airgraph from Iceland and that is a copy of this one. It is a bit of a mystery how this has been sent as there were no airgraph facilities in Iceland and there is no forwarding envelope used in Australia. I believe it to be processed through a V-Mail machine and sent to Australia via the Americans but that is guesswork on my part.

RAF 002

Opened 20.4.43

Closed 18.5.45

Location: Keflavík airfield (Camp Geck)

Censor R6-28, 189, 230

Base Censor No4 9.12.44

Rarity: 13 copies known in total



A 'regular' example of RAF 002 with RAF censor R6-28



Latest known date of use – 18.5.1945. Used by a Canadian airman serving with the RAF. Correct postage rate to the US – note the airmail etiquette – an airmail service had started.

RAF 003

Opened 12.4.1943

Closed 30.10.1943

Location: Kaldaðarnes airfield

Censors: None seen

My account of RAF PO 003 has been previously published in IPM and is not repeated here

RAF 005

Opened 28.6.44 (earliest I have seen is the registration cover refer below)

Closed 13.7.45 (latest I have is 28.11.44)

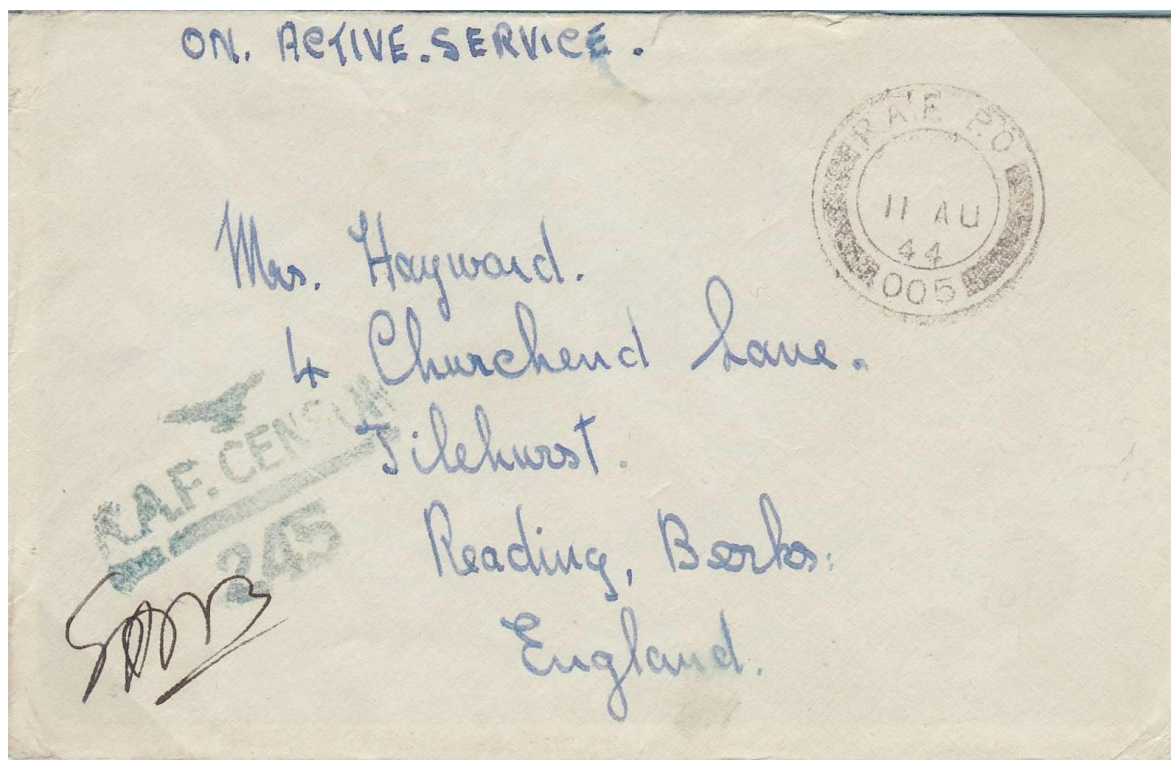
Location: Reykjavík (Camp Cook)

Censor R6- 123, 245

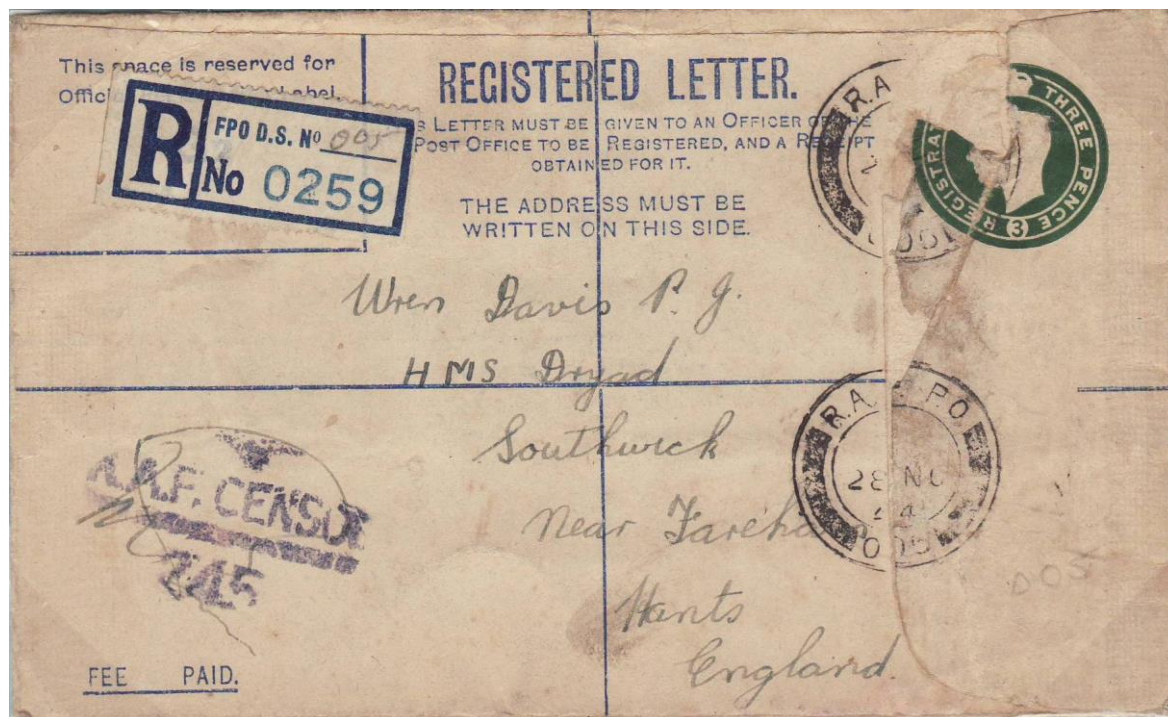
Registration known 28.11.44, 29.6.44 (see Hopballe & Elíasson fig 275)

Nine copies known

Note that there were other units spread around the Reykjavík area that did not have postal facilities: Fossvogur (Camp Corbett), Geithals. There were also significant RAF personnel based at other runways, notably Akureyri. These also did not have their own postal facilities.



11.8.1944, R6-245 censor



The unique registered item from RAF 005 dated 28.11.1944 censored R6-245
Customs handstamp on the reverse, hence damage opening the registered envelope.



H 3844

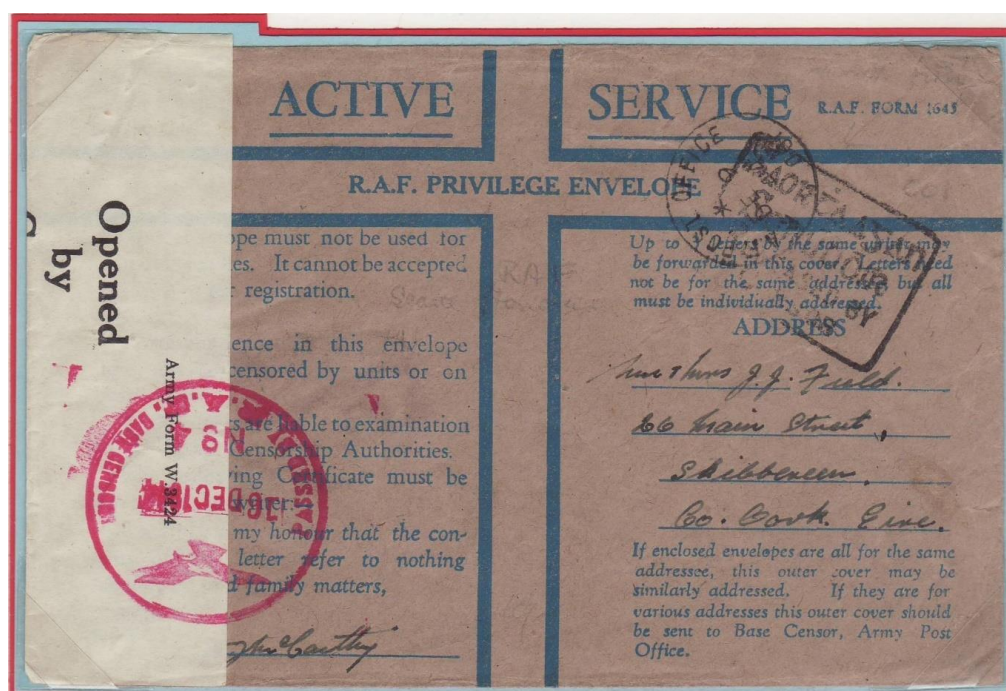
IWM

A Walrus seaplane at Akureyri 1940 (Imperial War Museum)
These aircraft were used by the Royal Navy on aircraft carriers

Use of RAF Privilege Envelopes in Iceland



Daynes type RE5C envelope (ex-David Kindley)



Use of a RAF Privilege envelope from RAF PO 001 (10 known used from Iceland)

This example from Dec 1944 opened by the Base Censor in N Ireland and then further censored by Irish authorities. Daynes type RE4 envelope



Daynes type RE3 privilege envelope with 3 tt's in letter
Used FPO 526 with RAF censor

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Haukadalur Vestur Ísa and Guðlaugsvík/Brú (Issue 51)

From Jørgen Steen Larsen

Page 21.

Usages of one of the C2e BRJÉFHIRDING cancels in Haukadalur might be with light violet ink, as I have an early usage of N1a-123 with this color of the ink.

As we know, another of the C2e BRJÉFHIRDING cancels was used in BH Hjaltastaðir – here with deep violet ink.

Readers with early usages of N1a-123 could help with this idea by sending information of color of the ink on usages of N1a-123 on Chr IX to the editor.

I have not seen ink cancels like “Hauk” and “Haukadalur”.

I have a Folmer Østergaard letter with the B8e HAUKADALUR V-ÍS cancel which is shown on page 21 of Issue 51.

(Ed. My only example of N1a-123 is on a one eyr Double Head and the ink colour is black. Can readers answer Jørgen with examples on Christian IX?)

Page 23.

I agree with your reply to Eivind.

From the period around December 1966, I have B2a Gudlaugsvík on a piece X1.6.65 and on a commercial letter 20.12.68.

False or not false? Reykjavík B5c *Eivind Kolstad*

Brian, here we go again! To be false or not to be false, that's the question.

Yes, I know that all experts decide that this is a false one, but I am not convinced. It is difficult to explain in English, but why is a forgery so perfect, and what was the intention with this? We all know other false cancels, and they are just ridiculous, made by real amateurs. I have not seen the story of this cancel, but I heard that Steinar Fridthorsson was told that the cancel was in Sweden for a long time. Well, maybe big experts are annoyed about this, but I find it interesting! Heyrumst!



(Ed. I am offering no opinion on this. An earlier article appeared in 44/2021 about “false” B5c cancels, and probably elsewhere. Views by experts, big or otherwise, are most welcome!)

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Haverford West on 1920 Sigurðsson

I am too old now to be changing my collecting habits, but I still regret not starting a collection of GB postmarks on Iceland stamps. This magnificent example was in a recent auction and perhaps will attract comment from those who are experts in the subject. Can the name of the ship which landed this item be identified?

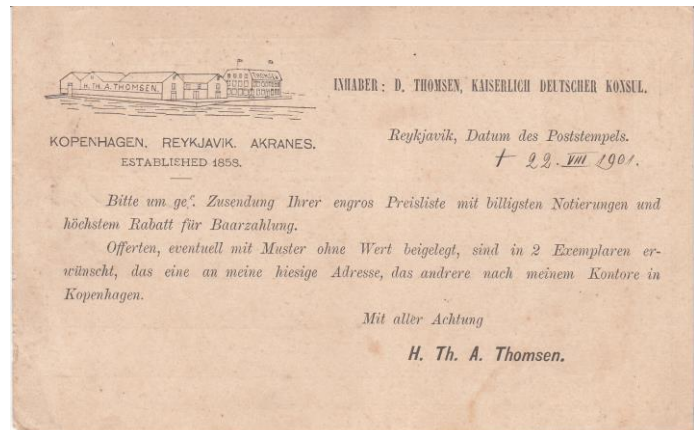


H. Th. A Thomsen card



I think this is a Facit 5 (Scherer Pc12a) 5aur sent as printed matter rate to Germany with Drucksache entered by the sender. Reykjavík B1b dated 9.8.1901, with Württemberg receiving cancel 20 Aug 01.

I am showing the front image sideways in order to make several lines of very stylish handwriting more readable on the screen. Can anyone offer a clue what the intention of the writer may have been?



XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Vík crown cancel with partial crown or no crown (Issue 51)

Brian Stwalley

Thinking about the Vík crown cancels—

I don't have any examples up through the two kings first issue without a crown. The handbook compares this to the Hafnarfjörður cancel so wonder if this was something that might have occurred later associated with CTO use?

I share Jorgen's experience with the scarcity of early NIC 21. I have more examples of the crown cancel on Chr IX and TK than the numeral which actually makes me wonder if it was used there at all? The NIC 21 was moved to Brekka in 1910 when Vík was promoted to full post office status. The Chr IX and TK stamps would still have validity at that time and for several years afterwards. I had heard (please don't ask me to remember where) of occasions where there was a preference for the crown cancels since they had the name of the location instead of a rather impersonal number. Perhaps the office at Vík just persisted in the use of their crown cancel until they received a bridge cancel with their name on it and the use of the numeral 21 was restricted to its time at Brekka (or Múli much later)?

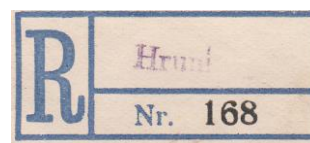
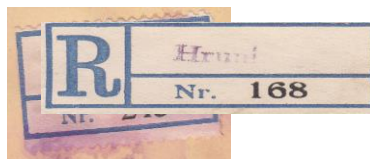
Jørgen Steen Larsen

I have never seen C1 VÍK without the crown.

My latest usages of this cancel are on Facit 67b, 81 in a pair, 84 on a piece – all with full crown, and probably all from before B1c VÍK was distributed.

It would be interesting to see more usages of C1 VÍK from after B1c VÍK was distributed in 1910.

Rubber stamps used on registration labels



I received a request for help from a member of the South Africa Collectors Society, who happens also to have an interest in Icelandic registration labels! For the time being at least, he has no other interest in Iceland. By the time I had finished sending him articles and information on the registration labels, I realised how little I knew about those registration labels with the office name stamped on them. I found two sources of information; an article in IslandsKontakt Nr.55 by Jørgen Steen Larsen, “*Gummistempler indkøbt 1930-31 til brug på bl.a. anbefalet vignetter*”, and an article by Þór Þorsteins in Frimerkjablaðið Nr. 12 on registration labels in general. In this last article, Þór stated that “In the year 1930 all collecting offices then operating, altogether 276, received a line rubber stamp for use on the labels”.

According to the handbook Pósthús og Bréfhirðingar á Íslandi 1870-2011, there were only 238 collecting offices open in 1930. Where Þór got his figure of 276 from is not clear to me. The title of Jørgen’s article in IslandsKontakt extends the period of label purchasing to 1931. If you include the 15 collecting offices opened in that year, we are still well short of the number in Þór’s article. The Bæjatal 1930 shows 231 open collecting offices at the date of publication.

Examples of covers with type 1930/31 registration labels with rubber name stamps must be relatively scarce, and some may be unknown. Over many years of collecting, I have acquired just twenty-eight registered covers with the stamped labels of offices listed as open in 1930/31. I am curious to know how many are known to our readers. Perhaps when you have nothing better to do you might let me know the names on your labels and we could form a list. You don’t have to confine your search to those used in the 1930s, of which I only have three; the rest of mine were used at offices over a period into the 1980s. Steinar Fridthorsson has kindly provided a list from his collection and in the next issue I will show them all, along with any our readers can send in the meantime.

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Earlier Reyðarfjörður bridge cancels (Issue 51)

From Jørgen Steen Larsen,



I have a Fylgibréf with B2c1 Reyðarfjörður used “? V.5X” + B2c1 Reykjavík (R-27) “2? V.50”.

This is my latest usage of the cancel.

I have B2b Reyðarfjörður on a Fylgibréf 8.3.1958 and on a piece with 1,50 kr. Nordic swans 13.2.19??

These are my earliest usages of this cancel.



I guess that B2c1 was used regularly up to 1954 and that B2b was used regularly from 1956.

The usage of B2c1 in 1969 mentioned by TT might be a single philatelic one? Perhaps on a Sigurður Thormar letter? For me the interesting period is from 1954 to 1956 – after the B2b cancel was delivered. Were B2c1 and / or B2b used in Reyðarfjörður in this period? (Ed. Readers?)