

# THE POSTAL HISTORY OF THE FAROE ISLANDS 1751-1945

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The earliest recorded specific map of the Faroe Islands “The Islands of FERØ or FARRO by Jacobson Debes” first published in 1673, this version published in Herman Moll’s Atlas, produced in London in 1720.

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# I. INTRODUCTION TO THE FAROE ISLANDS

## ABSTRACT

The Faroe Islands (“Føroyar” in Faroese, “Færøerne” in Danish) is a group of 18 islands of volcanic origin in the northern part of the Atlantic Ocean, between Great Britain, Iceland and Norway. The land mass of the islands covers about 1,400 square kilometers which is roughly the size of Surrey or the Shetland Islands. But the Faroe Islands are spread over an area of 75x110 km.

The first settlement on the Faroe Islands took place when Irish monks settled around the year 625 and lived as hermits on the islands. They probably gave the islands their name. The actual population of the islands originates from a mixture of Celtic and Norwegian settlers. The Norwegian settlers settled on the islands after the year 850. Today, 17 of the 18 islands are inhabited.

The population is referred to as Faroese, and the total population is a little over 50,000, of which just under half live in Tórshavn municipality. The population density is 38 inhabitants per square km. The Faroese speak Faroese – a West Nordic language which is closely related to Icelandic and which, like Icelandic, derives from the old Nordic language, Norse. Faroese is the smallest national language among the Germanic languages. In addition to Faroese, Danish is also an official language, but it is not used by the Faroese as a daily spoken language.

The Faroe Islands are a partially self-governing part of the Danish Commonwealth according to the Faroe Islands 1948 Home Rule Act and the 2005 Takeover Act, and they exercise parliamentary self-government in one of the world's oldest parliaments, the Lagting. The islands elect two representatives to the Danish Parliament, and they have chosen not to join the EU. Administratively, the islands are divided into 29 municipalities. Administration of the old age service area was outsourced to the municipalities from January 2015. In eight areas, administrative cooperatives were established on behalf of various municipalities. The six old areas of cooperation are today still mostly used for statistical purposes, and for the distribution of whale catch and agriculture.

The islands' climate is characterized by their location in the Gulf Stream, which contributes to mild winters and cool summers. Cloud formations around the high mountains and fog are frequent.

Fishing and salmon farming are now the main income of the islanders, while sheep farming, which was the main occupation until the 1800's, now has little commercial importance but retains great cultural and social importance. Catching pods of pilot whales with the actual slaughtering taking place on especially approved beaches at fjords or coves in the islands, which are particularly suitable, is a Faroese specialty, but meets with a lot of opposition from whale activists from other countries. Tourism has seen great growth, but does not yet contribute significantly to the overall economy of the islands.

Because the general history of the Faroe Islands is not widely known, the following pages go into some detail to explain the effects of their isolation and status, from when they were first settled to modern times.





# GENERAL HISTORY

## Early History

Recent botanical studies and archaeological finds in the Faroe Islands testify that the Faroe Islands were populated somewhat earlier than traditionally assumed - namely in two successive periods, the first of which was from the third century to the fifth century, and the second between the end of the fifth century and the seventh century - both prior to the final settlement of the islands by Nordic Vikings in the eighth century. Little is known about these early settlements, but it is generally accepted that the islands were inhabited by Irish/Celtic monks and hermits before the Vikings arrived. These monks found no indigenous people to convert. They spent the time tending sheep and growing crops (among other things they grew oats). It is assumed that the Irish monks came around the year 625. The monks probably moved on to Iceland around the time the Norwegians arrived on the islands.

The Irish monk and geographer Dicuil wrote around the year 825 a geography book entitled *Liber de Mensura Orbis Terrae*. One of the sections describes a group of small islands that were close to each other: "Hermits had lived here a hundred years ago, but they are now empty of hermits and filled with sheep and sea birds because of the Vikings". This description is probably about the Faroe Islands. A Latin account of a voyage made by Saint Brendan, an Irish monk and saint who lived around 484–578, gives a description of "insulae" ("islands") which resemble the Faroe Islands.

Around the year 800, the islands were populated by Vikings from Norway, who allegedly brought Celtic women from Scotland, the Scottish Isles and Ireland. The language of the Norwegians has since evolved into today's Faroese language. The Faroe Islands are considered to have been subject to Norway from 1035, when the Viking Age in the Faroe Islands ended, but Norwegian law operated within the Faroe Islands until 1816.

Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands as well as the Orkney and Shetland Islands belonged to Norway, which from 1380 was part of Denmark-Norway. There was still a Norwegian council, however, and in the royal elections from 1380 to the reformation in 1536, in theory they could have chosen a different king from the one they had in Denmark. After this, the Norwegian Council of State was abolished, and the Danish Council of State's election of the king also applied to Norway. Although Norway effectively continued to function as a separate country with its own laws, the dissolution of the Council of State meant that the Faroe Islands were administered separately from Norway, and that new Norwegian laws did not apply to the Faroe Islands. When the monarchy was introduced in 1660, the Faroe Islands continued to be administered separately from Norway and from 1709 directly from Copenhagen.

## The Peace Treaty of Kiel 1814

At the Peace of Kiel in 1814, when Norway was ceded to Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland remained, despite the protests of the Swedish crown prince Karl Johan, part of the Danish kingdom, and in 1816 the Danish government decided that the Faroese Lagman office and the Lagting should be dissolved, with the Faroe Islands becoming a Danish county. By royal resolution of 6 July 1816, Faroe County was established as an independent county comprising the Faroe Islands led by a county commissioner. The old Lagting was abolished by proclamation of 18 May 1816, and the islands received their superior rights partly in the Danish City Court, and partly in the Supreme Court. The constitution of 1849 aligned the Faroe Islands more closely to Denmark, and Denmark's Constitution came into force in the Faroe Islands in 1851. As an equal part of the kingdom, the Faroe Islands sent representatives to the Danish Council of State, respectively one member to the Folketing and one to the Landsting.

Alongside the Danish effort to make the Faroe Islands an equal part of the Danish kingdom in all respects, a special national (Faroese) consciousness developed in the Faroe Islands, initially revealed by making Faroese a separate written language. V U Hammershaimb created an orthography for the Faroese written language in 1846, and this was adopted when Faroese newspapers began to be published.

In accordance with the 26 March 1852 constitution, the political constitution of the islands was further regulated, as under the law of 15 April 1854 the Lagting was restored, just as the municipal legislation was later regulated roughly in accordance with the



Old Tórshavn with the Lagting



Eiði with “Risin og Kellingin”

principles then current in the kingdom. On 1 January 1856, the trade monopoly was abolished. The Faroese now had the right to set up their own companies. The right to trade freely was of great importance for the transition from an economy in kind to a money based economy and the development of a modern fishing society. With the law, both natives and foreigners were allowed to sail to the islands and conduct trade there. From that time, trade and shipping on the islands grew strongly. Goods manufactured on the islands entered Denmark duty-free.

After a national revival at the Christmas meeting in 1888, a Faroese independence party *Sjálvstýrisflokkurin* was finally established in 1906 as a counter balance to the creation of the liberal, Danish-friendly

party *Sambandsflokkurin*, which intended to maintain the current constitutional position. The aim of the *Sjálvstýrisflokkurin* was that the Faroese themselves had greater influence on their own affairs.

This party, which also fought for independence from Denmark, won the majority in the Lagting for the first time in 1918. To begin with, these two parties fell out over the official status of the Faroese language, and this escalated when the Danish government enforced the infamous paragraph 7 of 1912, that the teaching language used in the Faroese primary schools should be Danish. Paragraph 7, however, was later to be deleted in 1938, when the language controversy in the islands subsided, although it was not yet considered to have finished. During the First World War, the Faroe Islands, like the rest of the Kingdom of Denmark, were neutral, and the archipelago was not severely affected by the war.

In 1925, as a result of a Danish initiative, *Javnadarflokkurin* (“Social Democrats”), was founded. Since the parliamentary elections in 1928, the Social Democrats have been represented in the Lagting.

## Second World War

World War II arrived in the Faroe Islands on 12 April 1940, when two British destroyers docked at Tórshavn. They demanded that the Faroes immediately prepared to receive British soldiers. Britain took over the areas where Denmark had previously provided support, and the islands became dependent on Great Britain to a considerable extent. The Faroe Islands began to participate in fish production, and Britain supplied the islands with important goods. The Faroese economy was strong during World War II, when the Faroese transported fish from Iceland to Scotland, thereby supplying the British with fish, and earning good money from it. Around 300 Faroese lives were lost; several ships were sunk by German bombers and submarines and the sea took its toll. The Faroese suffered more heavily than, for example, the Danes on a per capita basis during the Second World War.



Tórshavn harbour

The British fortified strategically important locations to improve the defence of the islands. Sounds and fjords were mined, and on Vágar Island British engineers constructed a military airbase, which later became the Faroe Islands' airport. Up to 8,000 British troops were stationed in the Faroe Islands, whose population then was 30,000 inhabitants. The Faroe Islands had to manage their political situation with no Danish assistance. The British recommended the Faroese fishing vessels to fly an identifiable flag, to ensure that the British recognised them as friendly. The Faroese flag, *Merkid*, was approved by the British authorities and it has been the official flag of the Faroe Islands since 25 April 1940. During World War II, the Faroese painted *Merkid* on their fishing vessels.



## The Post-War Period

After the war, it was clear that the Faroes did not want to revert to the pre-war county position. Since the Faroese negotiating delegation was unwilling to bow to the Danish delegates' demands, it was decided to hold a referendum in 1946, offering a choice between the Danish delegation's conditions or secession. There was a majority for independence, but barely 30% of the population voted for it, so the king now used his right to dissolve the parliament. After new negotiations, a Home Rule Act for the Faroe Islands was adopted in 1948. Since 1948, the Faroe Islands have gradually gained autonomy in a number of areas and deployed two representatives in the Danish Parliament. Defense and foreign affairs have so far not been covered by



View of Borðoy and Kunoy

the extended self-government, the Basic Law of 5 June 1953 gave the Faroe Islands two elected members of the Folketing. Collectively, the Basic Law and the Home Rule Act, with the 2005 Takeover Act, form the constitution of the Faroe Islands.

The Klaksvík dispute in 1955 showed once again how paradoxical Faroese politics can be. The Klaksvíkings, who are known as secessionists, fought for a Danish doctor because he had to be replaced by a Faroese colleague. Instead of being happy about getting a compatriot, they criticized that it was not their own choice but a dictate from Tórshavn. But before the big military confrontation (200 policemen were on their way, the Klaksvíkings were already under arms and mines were laid out in the harbour), a political settlement was found. Emotions, however, ran much deeper than this, with the sovereignty of the Faroe Islands at stake.

The 1960's was an important period for the development of the Faroese society. The fishing fleet underwent an extensive renewal. Old wooden ships were replaced with modern trawlers. The modernization of fishing methods enabled total fishery production to double between 1960 and 1970. It was the herring fishery in particular that underpinned this growth. Since 1970, the Faroe Islands have had their own representative in the Nordic Council, and in 1972 a unanimous Lagting decided that the Faroe Islands should not follow Denmark into the EC, as they themselves wanted to control their fishery, which generates the country's main income.

In 1989, the EC concluded a free trade agreement with the Faroe Islands, which experienced an economic crisis. In 1993 it emerged that the Faroese economy and banking system were close to bankruptcy. Bankruptcies in the fishing industry contributed to *Fossbankin* going bankrupt. Loans of DKK 2.7 billion were taken out in Denmark, and an agreement was made to repay the foreign debt. The two largest banks, *Føroya Banki* and *Sjóvinnubankin*, were merged in 1994 to create the new *Føroya Banki* to forestall imminent bankruptcy. *Den Danske Bank* then withdrew from the Faroese market. In March, Faroese negotiators accepted a plan that made the country's government the owner of *Føroya Banki*. In the period 1992–1993, wages in the Faroe Islands fell by 20%, and 4,200–4,500 Faroese (10% of the population) became unemployed. About 10% of the population emigrated, of which well over half to Denmark, some never returned. In 1995, the Danish government set up a commission of inquiry to investigate the Faroese banking. In 1998, the 2,500-page report on the Faroese banking investigation was published. The Faroe Islands then demanded DKK 1.5 billion in compensation from Denmark, but had to settle at DKK 900 million. The Faroe Islands were duly hit by an economic crisis.



Old Tórshavn

On 29 March 2005, the crisis between the Faroe Islands and Denmark reached a provisional solution, as Jóannes Eidesgaard with the Danish Foreign Minister in Fámjin signing the Fámjin Declaration. Through this joint agreement the Faroe Islands gained the right to participate in all international organizations as an associate member, and the right to set up its own representations at Danish embassies. On 31 August, the Faroe Islands entered into an agreement with Iceland on a joint trade agreement. On 2 September, all customs and trade restrictions between the two countries were lifted. In the same year, the Takeover Act was passed for future regulation of the Faroe Islands' self-government.

## II. POSTAL HISTORY 1751-1945

### ABSTRACT

Before 1856, trade with the Faroe Islands was a Danish Royal Monopoly, and mail delivery was part of that monopoly. Regular mail communications as such were not introduced until 1801, when a letter box was erected at the Royal Trade Store in Copenhagen. The public could put letters and parcels in the box, which would be brought to the Faroe Islands free of charge, but there was only a couple of mail deliveries per year. Most of the mail during this period was official correspondence.

From 1856 trade was free, and any ships could transport freight to and from the islands, but mail was still shipped under contract. In 1870 the first Post Office was opened in Tórshavn, and postal rates to, from and within the islands were introduced. Danish stamps were used in the islands until 1975.

Inland mail deliveries were carried out with the so called “Skyds” system, which not only carried mail, but also people. Each village had a “Skyds” team, often with boats, and they were responsible for the transport of the mail, and passengers, to the next village. The “Skyds” system was introduced in the 18th century and continued until 1922.

During the latter part of the 19th century, more Post Offices were opened, but it was not until the early part of the 20th century that the entire group of islands could be said to be served by Post Offices and a postal route system.

Due to the distance from Denmark, stamp emergencies have occurred. In January 1919 the inland postal rate was increased from 5 øre to 7 øre. With few 1 øre and 2 øre, and no 7 øre stamps available, but plenty of 4 øre and 5 øre stamps, bisected 4 øre stamps, or bisected 4 øre cut-outs from postal stationery wrappers, were used, followed by a provisional surcharge “2 ØRE” on 5 øre. In July 1940 the inland postal rate was increased from 15 øre to 20 øre. With insufficient quantities of 20 øre stamps available, and with Denmark under German occupation, whereas the Faroe Islands were occupied by Great Britain, low value stamps were surcharged to meet the need for higher denominations, 20 øre, 50 øre and 60 øre. Continued shortage of stamps also led to the introduction of “Franco Betalt” (Postage Paid) handstamps in May and June 1941, as well as the sale and use of 6 øre stamps, substituting as 5 øre stamps, between May and September 1941.

During the British occupation between 1940 and 1945, British Field Post Offices operated in the Faroe Islands, FPO 219 and FPO 695 in Tórshavn, and FPO 611 near Midvaag on Vaagø island. On Vaagø, the British also censored local civilian mail both inbound and outbound from that island.

Postmarks used in the islands were of the Danish types; first Numeral cancels (up to 1884) and Lapidar datestamps (up to 1899). Star cancels were widely introduced in 1903, and all the small Post Offices had these postmarks. All Star Cancels had their stars removed in 1929, by order from the Danish GPO. The Star Removed cancels were in use until 1953, when they were all withdrawn from service and returned to Denmark. Regular datestamps, Bridge cancels, although introduced in 1899, were only issued to Tórshavn and the three major sub-offices (Klaksvig, Trangisvaag and Vaag) before 1953.



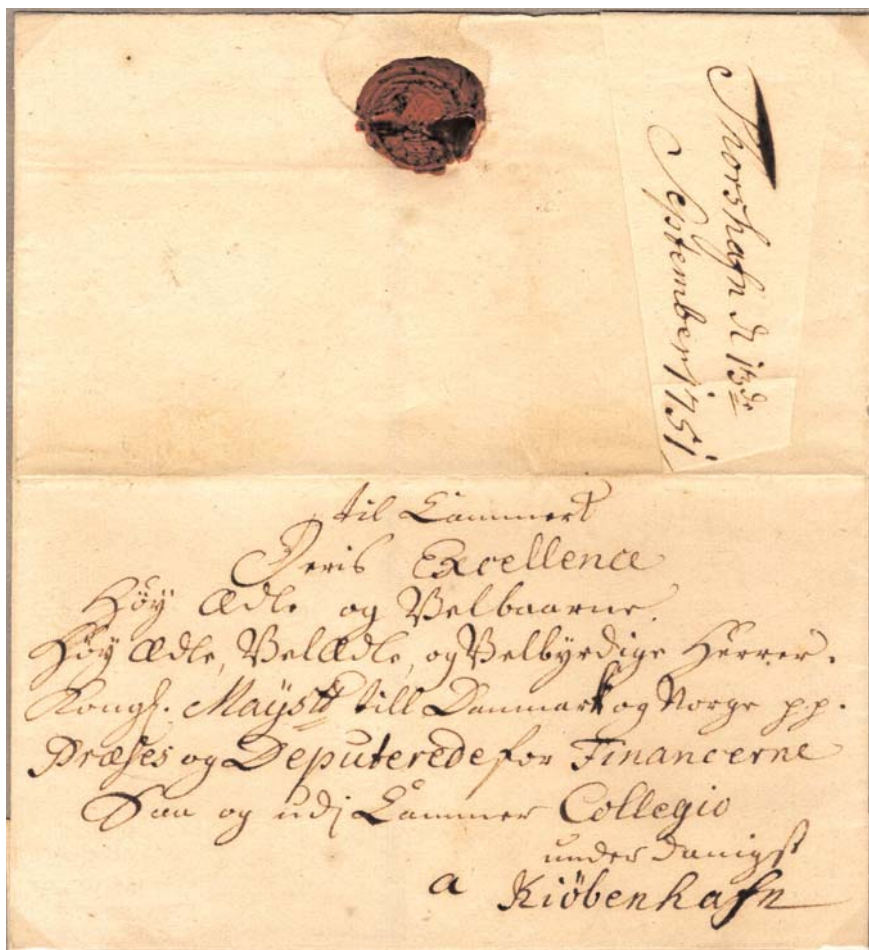
Thorshavn 1778



## 1. PRE-STAMP & STAMPLESS MAIL

### Mail to and from Denmark, Norway and Scotland (1751-1871)

Until 1870, Royal Trade Monopoly ships carried mail free of charge between Copenhagen and the Faroe Islands. In 1870, when the first Post Office was opened in Thorshavn, it became generally possible to prepay postage on mail. Early mail is quite rare - only a handful of 18th century letters from the Faroe Islands are known in private hands, and most of them are addressed to the Cammer-Collegio (part of the Ministry of Finance) in Copenhagen. The earliest known example is dated in Thorshavn on 13th September 1751, the letter shown below.

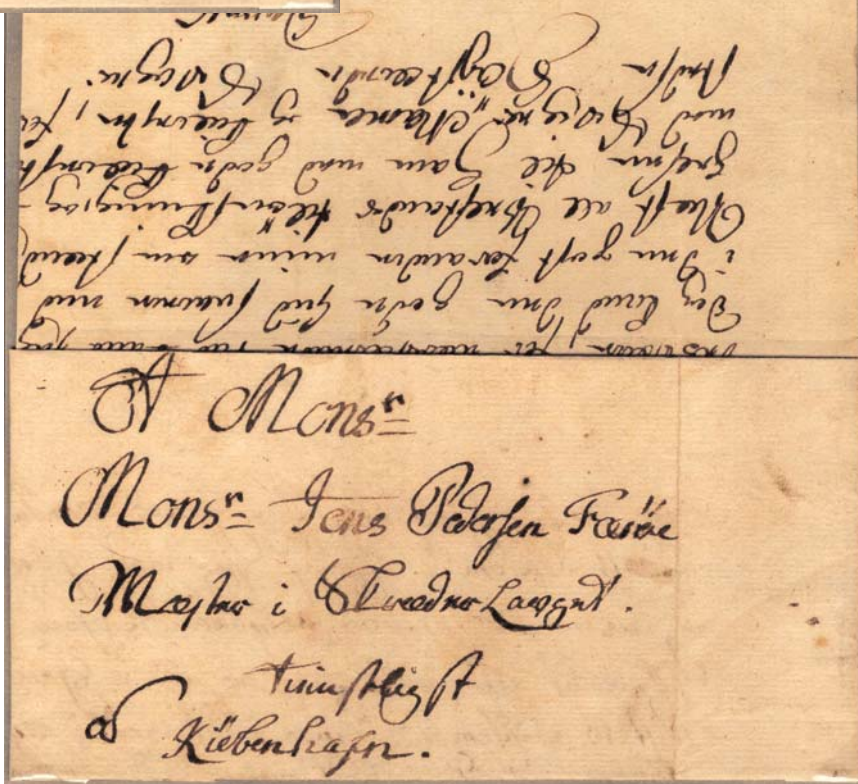


1751 (13 September) From Johann Michael Eberhardt, Thorshavn, to the Cammer-Collegio in Copenhagen, with seven lines of titles.  
Rate: Free, carried by a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly.  
Arrived Copenhagen 23/10.  
**The earliest known letter from the Faroe Islands.**

There is only one known 18th century private letter from the Faroe Islands and that is the letter shown to the right. It was sent by Antonius Haldarsen in Thorshavn on 6 October 1756, and it is addressed to his brother-in-law, Monsieur Jens Pedersen Færøe, Master Carver, in Copenhagen.

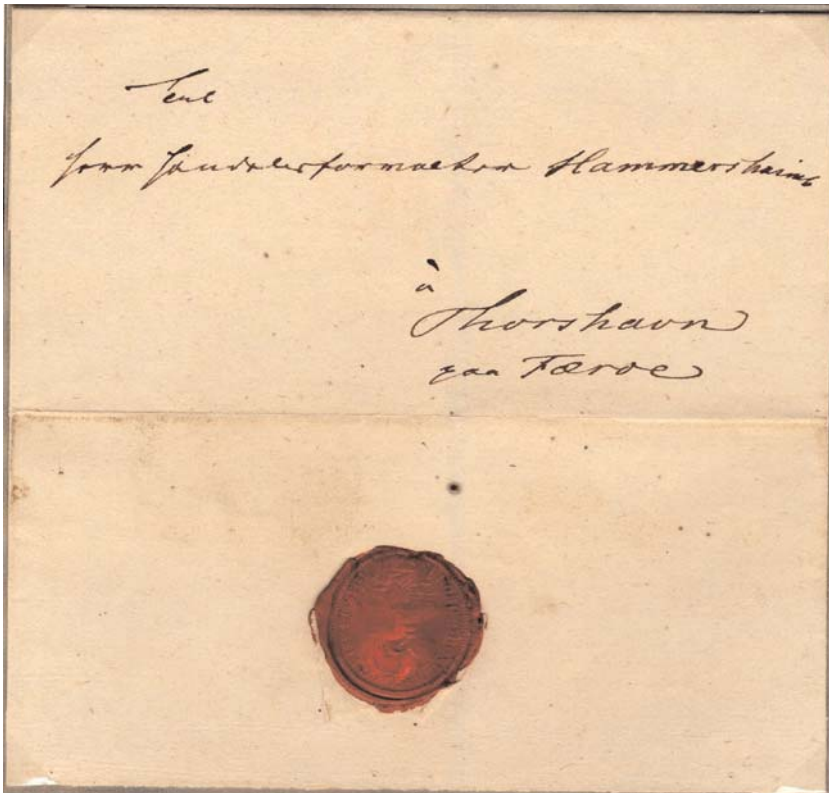
1756 (6 October) From Thorshavn to Monsieur Jens Pedersen Færøe in Copenhagen.  
Rate: Free, carried by a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly.

**The earliest known private letter, and the second earliest known letter from the Faroe Islands.**





**The earliest known mail into the Faroe Islands** in private hands is that addressed to Trade Manager Samuel Hammershaimb. He became Trade Manager in Thorshavn in 1774 and retired in 1796. The earliest known example of mail to him is dated the 8th April 1796, the letter shown below.

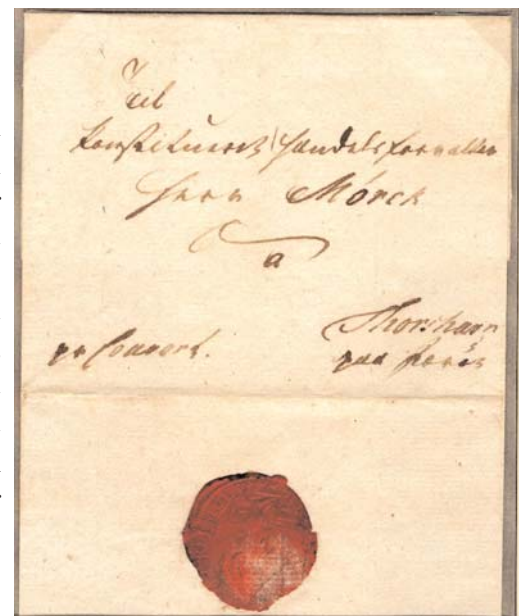


1796 (8 April) From Copenhagen (with Royal Trade Seal) to Trade Manager Hammershaimb, Thorshavn paa Færøe. Rate: Free, carried by *Charlotte Kirstine*, Captain Koefoed, a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly. Arrived Thorshavn 11/5.  
**The earliest known letter into the Faroe Islands.**

*Den ædelværdige Handelsmand Christian for den konge  
Guldsmide og sølvbeholder Jørgen den 8<sup>de</sup> April 1796.  
H. Kristian - Højmejerer*

**“Per Couvert”**: Sending mail under cover to avoid high postal charges was highly illegal in most countries and punished severely; but not so in Denmark. “Under Cover Mail” during the prestamp period is well known. A number of letters sent from one place addressed to a number of people in the destination town (or area) were sent in one package rather than as individual letters. By doing so, the savings in postage costs were considerable, and the recipient of the package arranged for the letters to be delivered. Mail from Copenhagen to the Faroe Islands was free, but the mail service was very infrequent. In this case the package was sent via a port in Norway, Christiansand, to catch a ship going to the Faroes. To avoid paying the individual postage for each cover from Copenhagen to the port of departure, all the covers were sent under cover “per Couvert”, thus paying only one postage for the package.

1807 (4 July) Endorsed “pr. Couvert” from Copenhagen (with Royal Trade Seal), via Christiansand, Norway, to Acting Trade Manager Mörck, Thorshavn, paa Færøe. Rate: None, carried under cover via Christiansand, Norway, to the Faroe Islands. Arrival note: “Received on 27th July with Sk(ipper) Toxværd over Christiansand”. Carried by the galeas *Anne Marie* from Christiansand to Thorshavn.  
**Unique, the sole known example on private hands.**



*Christian den 4. Juli 1807.  
Den ædelværdige Handelsmand Christian for den  
konge Guldsmide og sølvbeholder Jørgen  
H. Kristian - Højmejerer  
Modtaget 27<sup>de</sup> Juli med Sk. Toxværd  
over Christiansand*

**Mail from Scotland:** Before the abolishment of the Royal Trade Monopoly in 1856, trade was almost exclusively with Denmark. Therefore it is not surprising that there is virtually no mail known except to and from Denmark. Apart from this correspondence with Scotland, the only other destination known before 1856 is Norway.

Informant at Leith, June 1811.  
 Herr. Mads H. Morck & Farøe.  
 Leith, den 8<sup>de</sup> Juny 1811.  
 Med Frihed & Nøjadsen havde vi  
 i dag modtaget Deres ordre af 26 p. 100. og  
 med beklagende Weemad betalt, og fandt hu

L. T.  
 Herr Mads H. Morck  
 Farøe

1811 (8 June) From Leith, Scotland, to Herr Mads H Morck (Trade Manager), Faroes, sent by Corbett, Borthwick & Company in Dock Street, North Leith, one of the main suppliers of goods to Greenland, but also to the Faroes.

Rate: Free, carried by *Den Nye Jubelfest* Captain Bohnitz, a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly from Copenhagen to Thorshavn via Leith, Scotland.

Arrived Thorshavn 13/6.

**The earliest known letter into the Faroe Islands from anywhere other than Denmark.**

**Registered mail:** Before 1851 it was possible to endorse important letters with “NB”, Nota Bene (=Notice), and obtain receipts of posting for them. In 1818 a fee for this service was introduced, 8 skilling paid by the sender and 6 skilling by the recipient. Money and valuables were not accepted in these letters, and it was not until 1839 that compensation was introduced.

1812 (31 March) Endorsed “NB” in black and in red, from Copenhagen to Merchant M H Mörck, i Thorshavn.

Rate: Free, carried by *Den Nye Jubelfest* Captain Bohnitz, a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly.

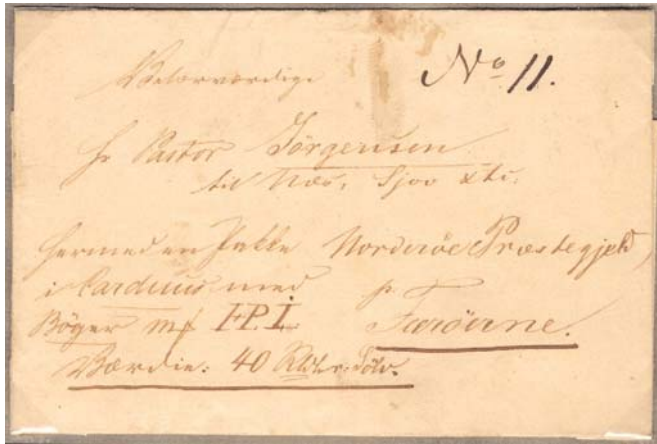
Arrived Thorshavn 10/5.

**The earliest known “Registered” letter in connection with the Faroe Islands.**

Ci  
 for Kjøbmand M H Mörck  
 i  
 Thorshavn.  
 NB  
 NB  
 København, og som vi i Cillel til Davao i ned-  
 ardel Kar og haljandske Salfindigst af Kuns  
 i Davao Gavnst. udfør, ill. ad melle. navn  
 forgiømt.  
 Kjøbenhavn den 31<sup>te</sup> Marti 1812  
 H. Christensen Martini. H. Jensen



**Parcel Post:** In the Danish postal system throughout the 19th century, parcels were always accompanied by a parcel letter. The wording on the parcel letter was “Hermed en Pakke...” (Herewith a Parcel...). The Royal Trade Ships carried parcels as well as letters free of charge between Copenhagen and the Faroe Islands until 1870. Parcel post from before 1870, to or from the Faroe Islands, is very scarce, only five parcel letters are recorded.



1849 (12 Juni) Insured Parcel letter from Copenhagen to Norderöe Præstegjeld, Færøerne, endorsed “Hermed en Pakke i Carduus med Bøger, m/t I + P.J., Wærdin 40 Rdr Sölv” (Herewith a Parcel in Paper with Books, marked I + P.J., Value 40 Rdr Silver). Rate: Free, carried by a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly.

**Mail via Great Britain:** Direct ships between the Faroes and Denmark were not frequent, so quite often urgent mail had to be sent via Great Britain, usually Leith, Scotland, or Lerwick, Shetland Islands, at considerable costs, since foreign rates at this time were quite high.

1850 (21 December) From Thorshavn to Copenhagen, via Lerwick, London and KDOPA Hamburg.  
Rate: Charged “6”d. British share = “7” Hamburg Schilling =  $22\frac{1}{2}$  Danish Skilling + Danish share  $22\frac{1}{2}$ sk = Total postage due 45sk.



**Mail to Schleswig:** Until 1864 Schleswig in southern Jutland was a Danish Duchy, but after the war of 1864 Schleswig became part of Prussia. In 1920 a referendum resulted in the northern parts of Schleswig being returned to Denmark. This item is from a well known family correspondence between the Faroe Islands and Schleswig.

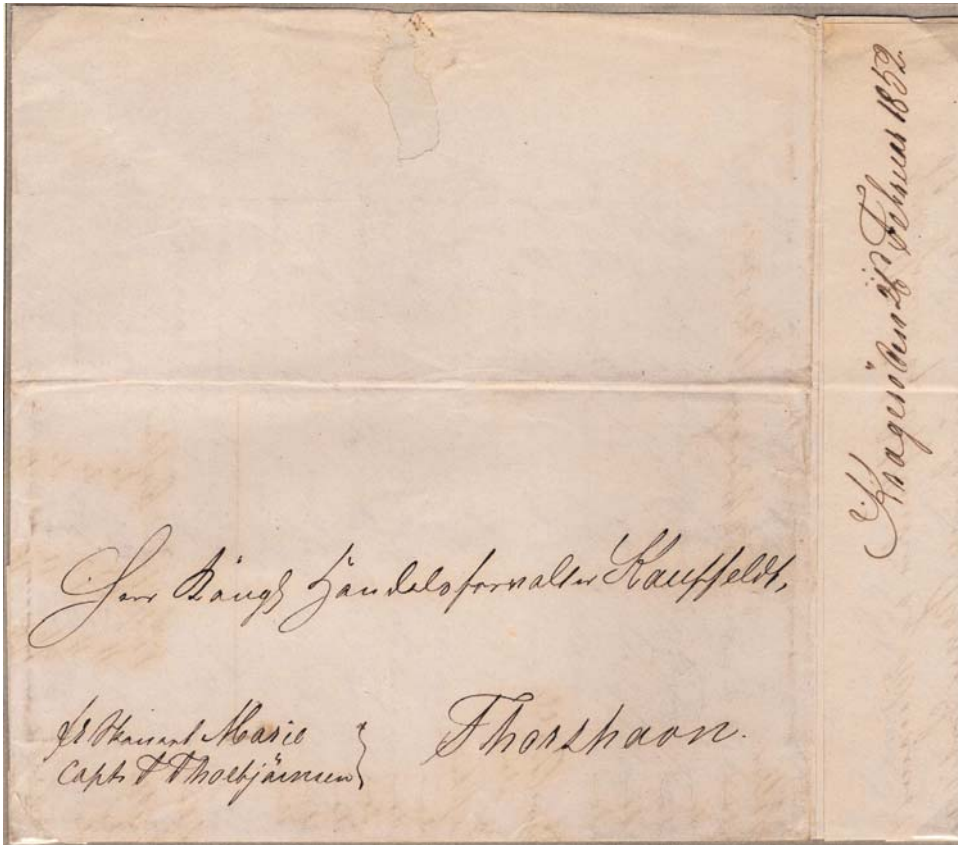


1853 From Thorshavn to Ærøskjøbing, Schleswig, via Lerwick MR.9.1853, London 21.MR.1853 and Hamburg Altona 26.3.53.  
Rate: Charged “6” d. British share = 7 Schilling Courant =  $22\frac{1}{2}$  Danish Skilling + Danish share  $22\frac{1}{2}$  Danish Skilling = Total postage due 45 Danish Skilling which equals “14” Schilling Courant.

The 4 RBS Ferslew stamp was affixed by the sender to pay the Danish inland postage from Copenhagen to Ærøskjøbing should the letter have been carried via Copenhagen, but this was not the case. The stamp was cancelled “80” in Ærøskjøbing upon arrival, but probably that amount was not credited.

Comment: This letter was originally also franked with a GB 1d. stamp to the left of the Danish stamp, intended to pay the British inland postage. That stamp was removed by the British agent when the letter was posted in Lerwick, because the British share of the postage was 6d. which could not be partially prepaid, so the 1d. stamp would have made no difference to the amount charged to the addressee. Therefore the agent removed the unused 1d. stamp to be used on another letter.

**Mail from Norway:** Only two examples of Norwegian prestamp mail to the Faroe Islands are known - they are from 1851 and 1852. During the early Norwegian stamp period, 1855-1870, three covers with stamps to the Faroe Islands are known.



1852 (26 February) Skipper's letter from Kragerö, Norway, to Trade Manager Kauffeldt, Thorshavn, endorsed "pr. Skonnert Marie, Capt. T Thorbjørnsen" (per Schooner "Marie", Captain T Thorbjørnsen). Rate: None, carried by captain Thorbjørnsen on the schooner *Marie*.

**Mail from the Faroe Islands posted in Norway:** Only two examples of prestamp mail are known sent from the Faroe Islands but entering the postal system in Norway for onward transmission. Both examples are postmarked Kragerö on 10 October 1854. They were carried by the schooner *Hector*, Captain H S Seistrup, which departed Thorshavn on 1 October 1854, bound for Norway, arriving in Kragerö on 9 October.

1854 (25 September) From Thorshavn to the Directors of the Royal Greenland & Faroe Islands Trade, Copenhagen, postmarked KRAGERÖ 10.10.1854, taxed "24" in red and marked "24" in black on the reverse. Rate: Charged "24"sk (rate from Norway to Denmark).





**Mail to Denmark with 4 RBS stamp:** Mail between the Faroe Islands and Copenhagen was carried free of charge on the Royal Trade Monopoly ships until 1870, but mail beyond Copenhagen had to pay the regular Danish inland rate of 4 RBS between 1851 and 1854, and 4 Skilling after that. **Only two covers are known from the Faroe Islands bearing a 4 RBS stamp prepaying the Danish inland rate.**



1854 (13 December) From Thorshavn to Faaborg (on the island of Fyn) via Copenhagen, with a 4 RBS Thiele stamp tied by numeral cancellation "1" (Copenhagen) and with the Copenhagen Compass postmark 9/4 1855. Rate: Free from the Faroe Islands to Copenhagen; 4 RBS from Copenhagen to Faaborg.

**Mail from Denmark with 4 RBS stamps:** In the same way as mail from the Faroe Islands, mail to the islands was carried free of charge from Copenhagen. Mail sent from anywhere else in Denmark had to pay the Danish inland rate to Copenhagen. **Only three such covers are known with 4 RBS stamps - two with a single stamp and one with two stamps.**

1854 (1 October) From Skanderborg (Jutland) to Thorshavn via Copenhagen, with a 4 RBS Thiele stamp tied by numeral cancellation "63" (Skanderborg) and SKANDERBORG 1.10.1854 cds, marked "To be forwarded to the Royal Trade Office in Copenhagen". Rate: 4 RBS from Skanderborg to Copenhagen, free from Copenhagen to Thorshavn.



1853 (15 August) From Faaborg (on the island of Fyn) to Bø, Faroe Islands, via Copenhagen, with two 4 RBS Thiele stamps (double rate) tied by numeral cancellation "15" (Faaborg) and FAABORG 15.8.1853 cds, marked "via Copenhagen, the Royal Faroese Trade". Rate: 8 RBS double inland rate from Faaborg to Copenhagen, free from Copenhagen to Thorshavn.

**Mail to Copenhagen with Foot Post delivery:** The local delivery service within Copenhagen was established in 1806 and it was called “Fodposten” (the Foot Post). The basic postage for a Foot Post letter was 2 skilling. Special “F P” postmarks were used. The Foot Post system was discontinued in 1876. Only six Foot Post letters from the Faroes are known.



1857 (1 August) From Thorshavn to Copenhagen, delivered locally by the Foot Post, with “F: P: 26.8.1857” postmark.  
Rate: Free from Thorshavn to Copenhagen, carried by a ship sailing for the Royal Trade Monopoly. Charged 2 skilling for local delivery.

**Poverty Mail** from Copenhagen to the Faroe Islands: Poverty mail was carried free of charge within the Danish Postal System until the 1st March 1870.

1867 (3 May) From Copenhagen Poverty Authority to Thorshavn  
Poverty Authority, Færøerne, endorsed “Fattig Sag”.  
Rate: Free, poverty mail, endorsed “Fattig Sag” (Poverty Matter).



**Mail from Denmark to the Faroe Islands via Forwarding Agents in Scotland:** There were few direct ships between Denmark and the Faroe Islands, especially during the winter months, so business mail was often sent via Scotland instead, sometimes using Forwarding Agents in Leith. Johan Mortensen in Tveraa, Suderø, was one of the main business men in the Faroe Islands, and he had a considerable correspondence with Denmark and other countries.



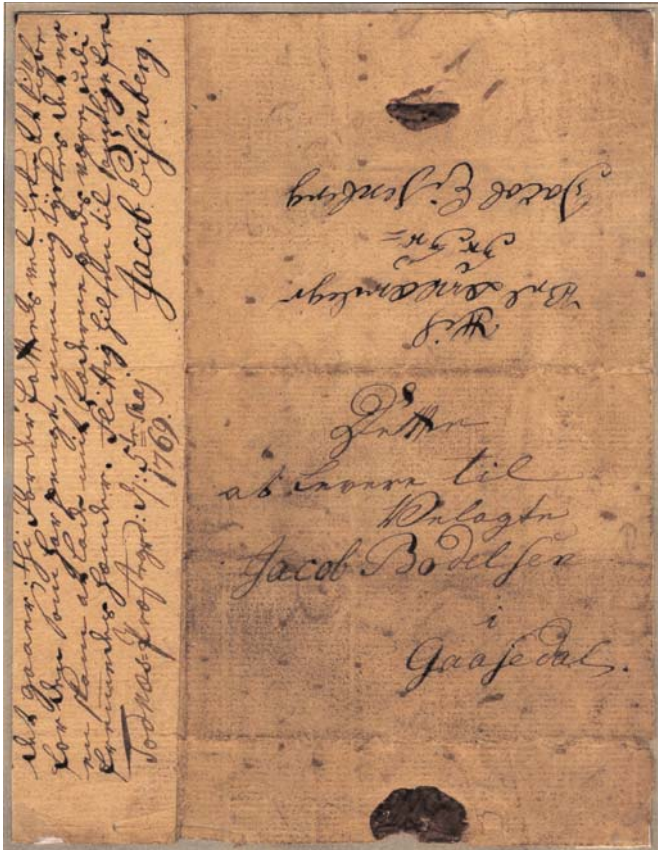
1869 (4 August) From Copenhagen to J Mortensen (Tveraa, Suderø) via Forwarding Agent Lacons, Leith, Scotland, with Denmark 1864 3sk(x2) + 8sk tied by numeral “1”, with København 4.8 and Edinb(urg) AU.7.69 datestamps.  
Rate: 14 Skilling to Great Britain (1865-1873). Forwarding Agent Lacons forwarded the letter by private ship to the Faroe Islands.



### Local mail including Skyds mail (1769-1907)

Local mail sent between villages was delivered via the “Skjutsur” (Skyds) system, under which villagers were assigned responsibility of escorting public officials and mail from one village to another. This often required a rowing boat with a crew of four to nine men. Before 1865, Government and Church mail was free of charge, with a distance based rate assessed for private mail. The earliest known *Skyds* letter is from 1769, and the latest one is from 1907, both shown below. Mail between the larger towns was often carried by commercial vessels, which sailed with goods and passengers.

Only one 18th century local letter sent within the Faroe Islands is known in private hands, the item shown below. It was sent from Todnæs Præstegaard (Todnæs Vicarage), close to Kollefjord (Strømø), to Gaasedal, a small isolated village on the north west corner of Vaagø. It would have been carried under the *Skyds* mail system.



1769 (5 May) From Jacob Eisenberg, Todnæs Præstegaard, to Jacob Bodelsen i Gaasedal.

Rate: Free, Church mail.

**The earliest known local letter within the Faroe Islands.**



Gaasedal (Gasadalur)

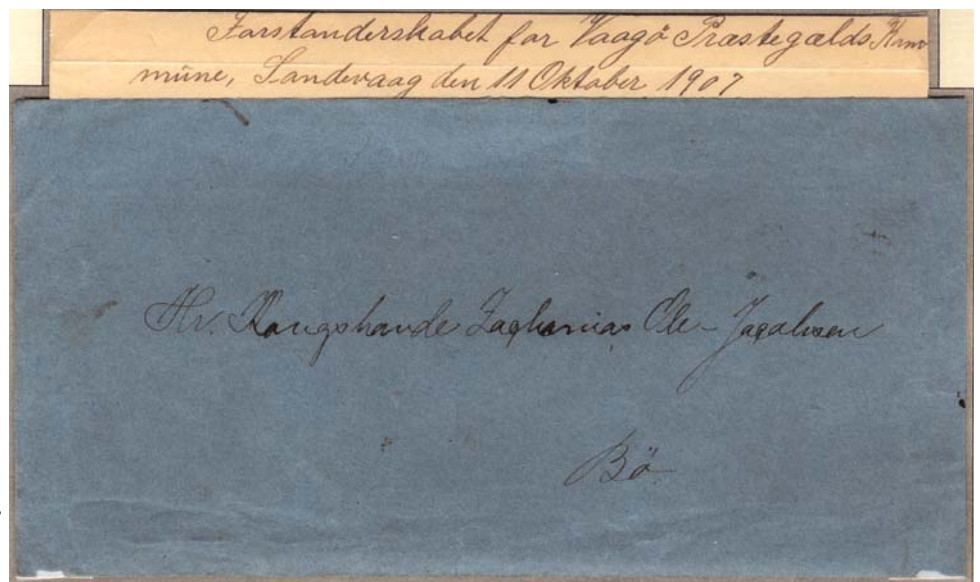


A typical *Skyds* boat

Although the Post Office in Thorshavn opened in 1870, and postal routes started to be established, *Skyds* mail continued to be used, and it survived until well into the 1920's. The latest known *Skyds* letter is from 1907.

1907 (11 October) Church *Skyds* letter from Vaagø Church, Sandevaag, to Bö.

**The latest known use of *Skyds* mail.**





**Local Official mail:** Official mail was marked “KT” (Kongelig Tjeneste = Royal Official) and such mail was always forwarded without any charges. Church mail was also considered to be a form of official mail, but from 1865 incurred a charge for Church mail.



1832 (6 March) Official cover marked “K.T.” within Thorshavn.  
Rate: Free, official mail.

**Local Express mail:** Unlike regular skyds mail, which was delayed until the arrival of a passenger who needed to be escorted, Express mail was prioritised regardless of any passenger or not. Express mail always has a notation such as “Haster” (Urgent) or “Befordras uopholdelig” (Forward without delay).

1835 (23 October) Official Express letter from Sandevaag to Thorshavn marked “Befordras uopholdelig” (Forward without delay).



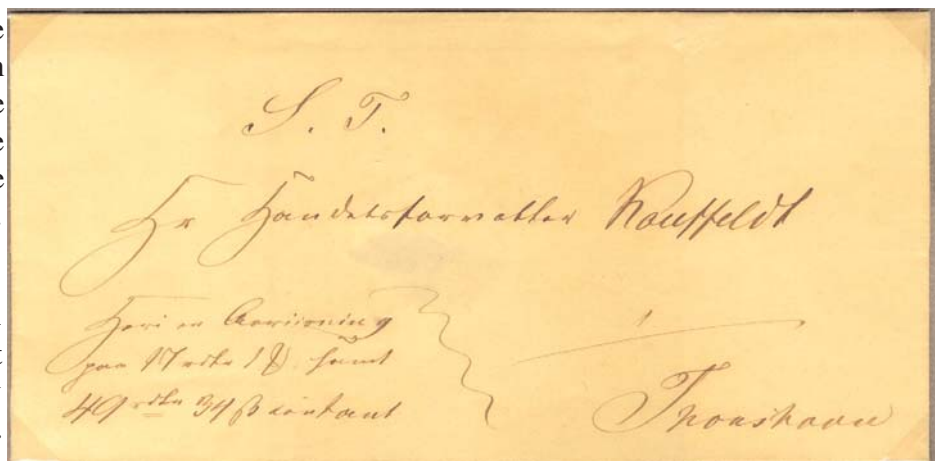
**Local Parcel Post:** Throughout the 19th century, parcels were always accompanied by a parcel letter. The wording on the parcel letter was “Hermed en Pakke...” (Herewith a Parcel...). Parcel post from the 19th century within the Faroe Islands is very scarce.

1848 (6 June) Parcel letter from Qviving to Thorshavn, “Hermed en Pakke” (Herewith a Parcel).

**The earliest of three known local parcel letters.**

**Local Money Orders:** Money orders were introduced in the Danish Postal System in 1851, but they had been available internationally for some time before that. The minimum charge for this service was 4 skilling for amounts up to 5 Rdr.

1855 (c) Money Order letter to Trade Manager Kauffeldt, Thorshavn, endorsed “Hæri en Anvisning paa 17 Rdr 1 sk samt 49 Rdr 34 sk contant” (Herewith a Money Order for 17 Rdr 1sk & 49 Rdr 34 sk in cash).  
**The only known prestamp example.**





## 2. THE FIRST POST OFFICES

### Thorshavn Post Office, early days (1870-1895)

The Thorshavn Post Office opened on 1 March 1870 and Danish postal rates now applied for all mail sent through the postal system. Between 1 March 1870 and 31 March 1871, the rate to and from Denmark was 8 skilling (up to 15g) or 16 skilling (up to 250g). Only five covers are known showing these rates!

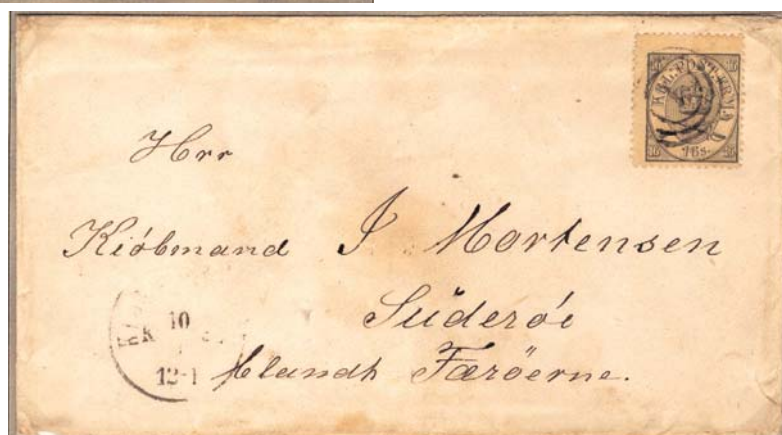


1870 (5 September) 4sk 1864 (x2) with “238” numeral postmark and THORSHAVN 11.9 cds, to Copenhagen. Rate: 8sk between the Faroe Islands and Denmark (1/3 1870-31/3 1871).

**Unique, the only known 8 skilling cover from the Faroe Islands.**

1870 (10 July) 16sk 1864 from Copenhagen to Suderoe, with THORSHAVN 17.7 transit cds. Rate: 16sk double rate to and from Denmark (1/3 1870-31/3 1871).

**Unique, the only known 16 skilling cover.**



**The Postmarks:** Two postmarks were assigned to the Thorshavn Post Office, the Thorshavn lapidar datestamp which remained in use until 1899, as well as the “238” numeral postmark which was used sparesly, and it was withdrawn in 1884. Skilling covers with these postmark are quite scarce.

1874 (18 November) 2sk 1870 with THORSHAVN 18.11 lapidar datestamp, from Thorshavn to Tveraa, Suderoe. Rate: 2sk inland (1870-74).

**Only four known 2 skilling lapidar covers.**

1872 (9 May) 4sk 1870 with “238” numeral postmark and THORSHAVN 9.5 cds, from Thorshavn to Copenhagen. Rate: 4sk to and from Denmark (1/4 1871-31/12 1874).

**Only five known “238” 4 skilling covers.**



**Incoming Ship Mail postmarked on arrival:** Mail to the Faroe Islands could be handed over to the captain of a departing ship, or posted on board, as long as the postage was paid. This mail would be postmarked in Thorshavn upon arrival. Skilling covers showing this are rare.



1871 (28 May) 2sk postcard written on a tram in Copenhagen, to Thorshavn, with additional 4sk stamp, postmarked on arrival with THORSHAVN 3.6 lapidar cds, with inverted date.  
Rate: 4sk postcards to and from Denmark (1/4 1871-31/12 1874).  
**Unique - the only known skilling postcard postmarked in the Faroe Islands.**

1874 (15 August) From Copenhagen to Thorshavn, 4sk stamp postmarked with "238" on arrival, and with THORSHAVN 23.8 cds.  
Rate: 4sk to and from Denmark (1/4 1871-31/12 1874).  
**Only two known incoming covers with "238" postmark.**



**Mail between Denmark and the Faroe Islands:** The letter rate was 4 skilling for 250 grams (which was also the maximum weight allowed) from the 1/4 1871.



1874 (18 July) 4sk postmarked on arrival with "1" (Copenhagen) and F:P: 2.8.74, from "Thorshavn" to Copenhagen, delivered by the Foot Post.  
Rate: 4sk to and from Denmark (1/4 1871-31/12 1874).

1874? (28 September) 4sk from Copenhagen to Suderö, with transit cds THORSHAVN 6.10.  
Rate: 4sk to and from Denmark (1/4 1871-31/12 1874).





**Incoming mail:** Trade with Great Britain was natural for the Faroe Islands; communication was easy and frequent and merchandise was readily available. This trade also generated mail; orders, invoices and payments were sent by mail. Trade with USA was less frequent - there are no known 19th century covers from the Faroes to USA, and only two items from USA to the Faroes.



1870 (10 October) From Liverpool to Tveraa with 6d., via London and Copenhagen, with transit cds THORSHAVN 13.11. Rate: 6d. ship rate (1858-75), marked "PD" and "3d.", rate divided equally between the UK and Denmark.

1878 (19 March) From New York to Suderø with 5c, via Copenhagen and Oslo, with transit cds THORSHAVN 17.4. Rate: 5 cents foreign GPU/UPU rate (from 1875). **Only two known pre 1900 covers from USA to the Faroe Islands.**



**Local mail:** From 1877, the Faroe Islands began to be divided into several postal districts, where mail within each district was forwarded at half the rate compared to mail forwarded to another district, just as in Denmark. This meant that the rate for local mail sent within a district was 4 øre, but mail sent to another district became 8 øre. By 1903 there were four districts.



1875 (22 August) 4øre (1st printing, November 1874) from Thorshavn to Tveraa, Suderø. Rate: 4øre inland (1875-76). Letter addressed to Johan Mortensen who died in 1879. **A very scarce rate only in use 1875-1876.**

1895 (13 August) 8øre from Thorshavn to Kirke, Fuglø (Klaksvig postal district), with KLAKSIVIG 14.8.1895 transit. Rate: 8øre inland (1877-1902).



**Parcel Post:** The parcel rate between Denmark and the Faroe Islands was 12 øre per parcel + 4 øre per pound between 1875 and 1888. Weight was declared in pounds, lod or kvint, 1 Pound = 32 lod = 100 kvint = 500g.



1876? (20 June) 16øre (3rd printing, 1875) on parcel letter from Thorshavn to Denmark, marked "Medfølger 1 Pk" (With 1 Package). Rate: 12øre+4øre up to 1 Pound. Actual weight: Marked "40 Qv" (40 kvint = 200g.).  
**The earliest known franked parcel letter from the Faroe Islands.**

1876? (1 March) 16øre (x6, one replaced) on parcel letter for three parcels from Copenhagen to Thorshavn. Rate: Three parcels x 12øre+5x4øre (1875-88). Actual weight: 3 x 5 pounds.  
The 16 øre stamps are from the 3rd printing, 1875.  
**A unique item.**



**Official stamps** were introduced in the Danish Postal System in 1871, but very few examples are known used in the Faroe Islands. Obviously, only a very small number of officials had the right to use Official stamps on their mail.

1876 (12 September) 8øre Official stamp from Thorshavn to Copenhagen, sent by Færø Amt (Færø County). Rate: 8øre to and from Denmark (1875-1902).  
**Only two known 19th century Official Stamp covers from the Faroe Islands.**

**Insured mail:** The insured rate between 1875 and 1888 consisted of a base rate of 16 øre + a value fee of 8 øre to 400kr, and 2 øre per additional 400kr.

1878? (21 August) 8øre (x3) on insured cover within Thorshavn, marked "Indlagt 60 Kroner" (enclosed 60 Kroner). Rate: 24øre, base rate 16øre + 8øre value fee up to 400kr (1875-88). The stamps are from the 11th printing, 1877.  
**Only two insured letters are known before 1888.**





For Steamer Records

Herr J. Mortensen

Geraa  
Haroe

**Only two double rate ship letters known.**

189  
No: Capel...  
S. ...  
Holm...  
Post restante.  
Paris.  
Nyodenharn K Thorshears

Til det

SHIP LETTER

**RODA'ske Apotheks**  
Forsendelses-Afdeling  
**Central-Depot**  
for samtlige Specialiteter fra den Chemisk-Pharmaceutiske Fabrik af  
**F. AD. RICHTER & Cie.,** k. k. Hofleverandører.

franko.

**Rudolstadt,**  
Thyringen.

  
 Monsieur le Dr.  
 Raymond Pilet  
 Conseil de France  
 Légation de France  
 Rijkswijk  
 France Rennes

19



Money orders between Iceland and the Faroe Islands were charged a rate of 20 øre/aur per 30 kroner between 1879 and 1907.

1879 (15 November) 4øre+16øre with numeral postmark “238”, on Money Order from Thorshavn to Reykjavik. The form is signed bottom right by the first Postmaster of the Faroe Islands, *H. C. Müller*. Rate: Money Orders to Iceland, 20øre per 30kr (1879-1907). Actual amount: 25kr. **The only known Money Order with the “238” postmark.**



H C Müller, the first Postmaster of the Faroe Islands.

1882 (6 December) 20aur (replaced) on Money Order from Reykjavik to Thorshavn, with THORSHAVN 11.12 arrival cds. Rate: 20aur up to 30 kr (1879-1907). Actual amount: 17 kroner 25 øre.

Cash-On-Delivery was introduced in the Danish postal system in 1871. The minimum fee was 6 sk, and 12 øre from 1875.

1894 (15 July) 12øre on “Postopkrævning” (COD) form for 3 kroner 63 øre from Thorshavn to Denmark, rejected and returned. Rate: 12øre COD fee up to 30kr (1888-1902). **The earliest known example from the Faroe Islands and the only example known pre 1900.**



### Trangisvaag & Klaksvig Post Offices (1877-1903)

The second Post Office in the Faroe Islands was opened in Trangisvaag, on Suderø (the Southern island), on 1 April 1877. The third Post Office opened in Klaksvig, on Bordø (one of the Eastern islands), on 1 May 1888.

**Trangisvaag:** This Post Office was assigned three postmarks, two of which were hardly ever used: Numeral “284” (two examples known, one of which is in the Postal Museum) and Star cancel “Trangisvaag” (arrival mark on a cover and a handful of stamps known).

**“284” Numeral postmark.  
In use March-April 1884.**



**Unique in private hands -  
only two examples are known of which  
one is in the Danish Postal Museum.**

**“TRANGISVAAG” Star cancel.  
In use 1877-1884.**

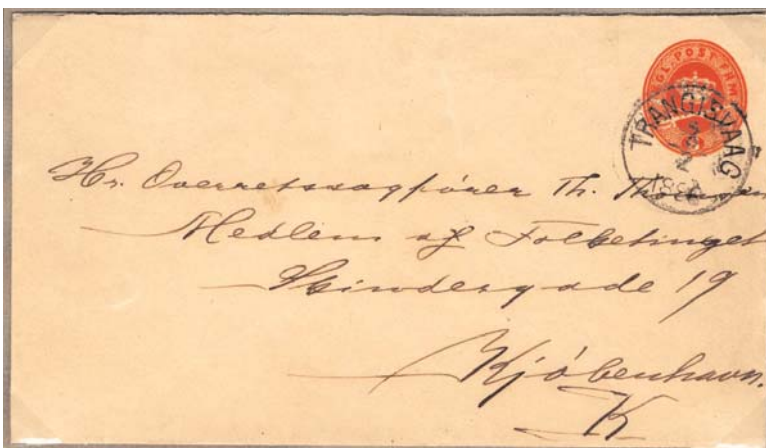


**Very rare -  
just a handful of copies are known  
this being the best example.**



1877 (14 May) “TRANGISVAAG” star cancel as arrival marking on parcel letter from Copenhagen to Tveraa, with 16øre(x2) postmarked “1” and Kiöbenhavn 15.5, endorsed “1 Pq Aviser” (1 Package Newspapers) and “Pr Diana”.

**Unique, the only known cover with this postmark.**



The Trangisvaag Post Office was also assigned a Lapidar datestamp “Trangisvaag”. This was in use between 1884 and 1899.

1896 (3 February) TRANGISVAAG lapidar on 8øre stationery envelope to Copenhagen, sent by the local Sysselmand (Magistrate).

Rate: 8øre to Denmark (1875-1902).

**Klaksvig:** This Post Office was only assigned one postmark: The Lapidar datestamp “Klaksvig” which remained in use until 1899. It was replaced with a bridge datestamp, which was used until 1933.



1892 (28 June) KLAKSVIG lapidar on 8øre, to Sorø, Denmark.

Rate: 8øre to Denmark (1875-1902).

1902 (13 February) KLAKSVIG bridge on 4øre + 8øre(x3) on insured “Talt” (counted content) cover, to Valby, Denmark. Rate: 28øre; 8øre to Denmark (1875-1902) + insurance fee 16øre for the first 200kr + 4øre for additional 200kr (1888-1902).

The Counting fee of 15øre was paid for with stamps on the receipt.

The only known use of the “Talt” marking.



### Steamship Post Offices - Smiril and Ruth (1896-1912)

Many ships and boats have carried mail amongst the different Faroe Islands, but only two of them have ever had Post Offices on board, *Smiril* between 1896 and 1903, and *Ruth* between 1908 and 1912. Each had its own Star cancellation, and whereas the *Smiril* marking is known on both stamps and covers, the *Ruth* marking is only known on a few stamps and one badly damaged cover.



“SMIRIL”  
Steamship  
Star cancel  
(1896-1903)



1897 (21 April) “Smiril” star cancellation on 20øre on ship letter to Copenhagen via Trangisvaag and Leith, Scotland.

Rate: 20øre to Denmark via GB (1875-1902).



“RUTH” Steamship  
Star cancellation (1908-12)  
on 1 øre 1905. Also small part of cds.



S/S Ruth



“RUTH” Steamship  
Star cancellation (1908-12)  
on 5 øre 1907.



### Mail inland, to Denmark and abroad (1889-1902)

Many new postal rates were introduced at the end of 1888. Most of these were valid until 1902. For letters, local mail was still 4 øre, inland mail and to Denmark 8 øre, foreign mail 20 øre. There were also some special rates in force.

**Registered mail:** Registration of mail was immediately possible from the day that the first Post Office opened in 1870. No registered covers before 1897 are recorded, and very few are known before 1919. A registration marking was introduced in the 1890's or earlier, and registration labels came into use around 1904. The registration fee was 16 øre between 1875 and 1902.

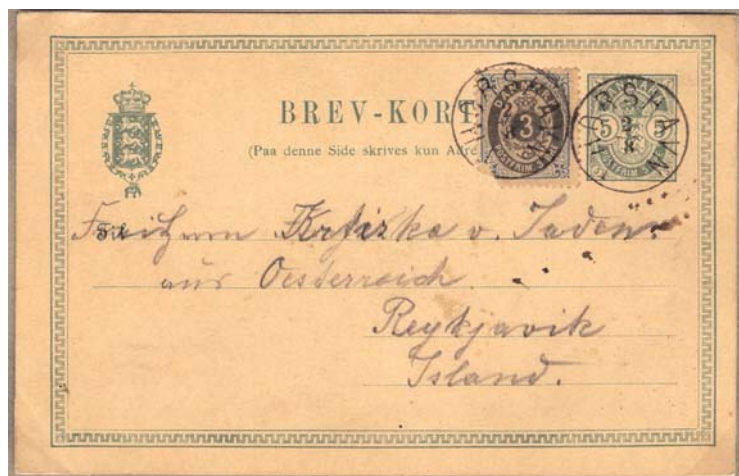
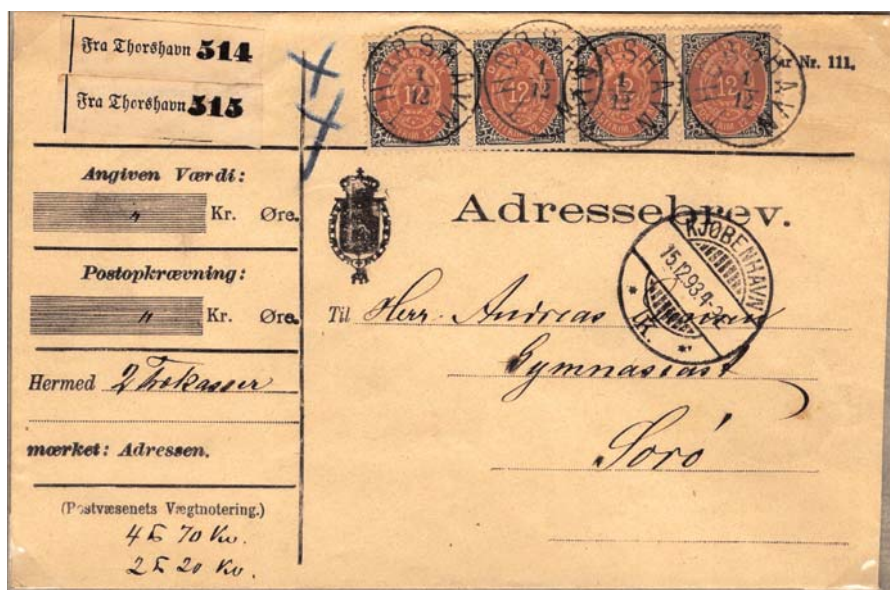


1897 (28 April) 16øre + 20øre(x2)  
on registered cover from Thorshavn  
to Copenhagen via Great Britain.  
Rate: 56øre; 40øre (2x20øre) double rate  
to Denmark via GB (1875-1902)  
+ 16 øre registration fee (1875-1902).  
**The earliest known franked registered  
cover from the Faroe Islands.**

**Parcel post** was also available immediately when the first Post Office opened in 1870, but very few parcel letters are recorded before 1910. Printed parcel letters and special parcel labels came into use in the 1890's or earlier. The parcel rate for 1 / 2½ / 5kg was 16 / 24 / 32 øre between 1875 and 1902.

1893 (1 December) 12øre (x4)  
on Parcel Letter for two parcels  
from Thorshavn to Copenhagen.

Rate: 2x24 øre for 2 x 2½kg  
(1875-1902). Actual weight:  
4 pounds + 70 kvint = 2.35kg  
+ 2 pounds + 20 kvint = 1.1kg.



**Special rates to Iceland:** These were different from rates to any other destination until 1920. Between 1875 and 1907 the single letter rate was 16 øre, and between 1888 and 1907 the double rate was 30 øre - only one example of each of these rates is known. The postcard rate was 8 øre between 1881 and 1907.

1897 (2 August) 3øre on 5øre postcard  
from Thorshavn to Reykjavik.  
Rate: 8øre postcards to Iceland (1881-1907).  
**The only known example pre 1900.**



### 3. MAIL AND RATES 1902-1919

#### Inland mail (1903-1918)

Many new postal rates were introduced in 1902. The local letter rate went from 4 øre to 5 øre; the letter rate inland and to Denmark from 8 øre to 10 øre; postcards inland and to Denmark from 8 øre to 5 øre; Registration fee from 16 øre to 15 øre. Most of these rates remained unchanged until 1919. Another change during this period was that from 1916 all of the Faroe Islands was unified into one local postal district.



**Registered mail:** Between 1902 and 1920 the registration fee was 15 øre.

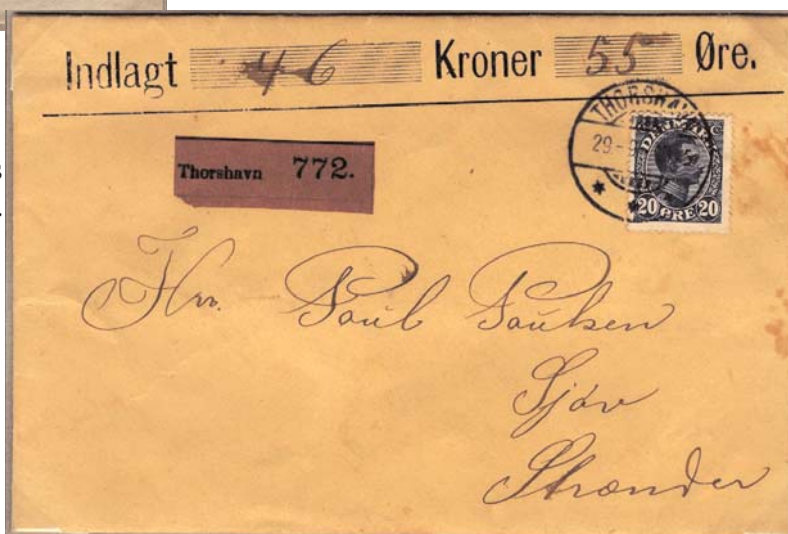
1911 (15 February) 5øre+20øre on Registered inland cover from Trangisvaag to Sand.

Rate: 10øre inland (1902-16)  
+ 15øre registration fee (1902-20).

**Insured mail:** The minimum insurance fee was 10 øre from 1902, but increased to 15 øre in 1908.

1915 (29 September) 20øre on Insured local cover from Thorshavn to Strønder, within the same postal district.

Rate: 5øre local (1902-18)  
+ 15øre insurance fee (1908-18).



**Parcel Post:** Like other mail categories, parcel post had a distinction between local rates (within one postal district), and inland rates (from one postal district to another), but from 1 October 1916, the local rates applied all over the islands.

1912 (4 April) 3øre + 20øre on local "Forsigtig" (Fragile) Parcel Letter from Thorshavn to Bö, within the same postal district.

Rate: 15øre up to 2½kg (1908-1917) + Fragile fee 8øre. Actual weight: 2 pounds = 1kg.



## Mail to Denmark and abroad (1902-1919)

The rates to Denmark were 5 øre for postcards (1888-1918) with 10 øre for letters (1902-1919), and the general foreign rates were 10 øre for postcards (1875-1920) with 20 øre for letters (1875-1920). The rates to the other Scandinavian countries were a little different. The registration fee was 15 øre (1902-1920).

**Multiple parcels:** If several parcels were sent to the same addressee at the same time, one Parcel Letter/Card could be used for up to three parcels. If more than three parcels were sent at the same time, several Parcel Letters/Cards had to be used.

1915 (29 September) 5Kr+20øre+35øre on Parcel Letter for three parcels from Thorshavn to Copenhagen.  
Rate: 190øre for 19kg +165øre for 16½kg + 200øre for 20kg (1902-17).  
Actual weight: 19kg + 16½kg + 20kg.

**Money Orders:** The rates were basically 8 øre per 30 kroner between 1875 and 1902. From 1902 the minimum rate was 10 øre up to 25 kroner, 20 øre up to 50 kr, 25 øre up to 100 kr, 30 øre up to 200 kr, and 35 øre up to 360 kr.

1916 Money Order "Postanvisning" for 5 kroner with 10øre tied by SAND star cancel, to Copenhagen.  
Rate: 10øre for 25 kroner (1902-1919).

**Very few Money Order forms are known from the Faroe Islands.**

**Newspaper stamps** were introduced on 1 October 1907 in the Danish Postal system. They were used by Newspaper publishers for the payment of postage for newspapers. They were not affixed to the newspapers but to the application and accounting forms ("Avisanmeldelse").

1909 (7 April) Special Notification "Avisanmeldelse" with 7øre Newspaper stamp tied by THORSHAVN 7.4.1909 cds, paying for three months of the Faroese weekly magazine "Tingakrossur".

Rate: 1 copy per week, 13 weeks, weight 14g per copy and the cost per copy was ½øre up to 35g (1907-14); 1x13x½øre=6½øre, rounded up to 7øre.

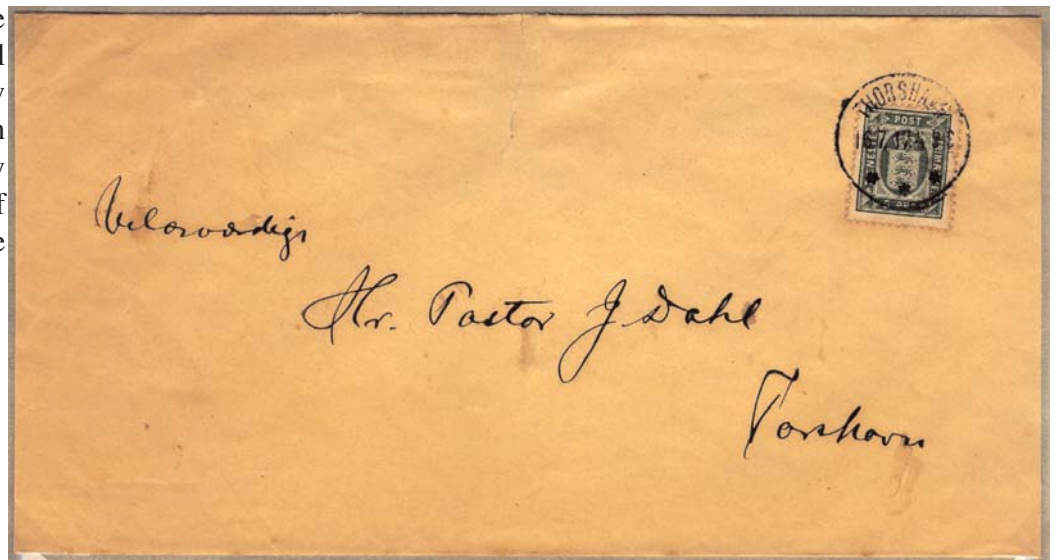
**Unique - the only known "Avisanmeldelse" from the Faroe Islands.**



**Official stamps** were introduced in the Danish Postal System in 1871, but very few examples are known used in the Faroe Islands. Clearly, only a very small number of officials had the right to use Official stamps on their mail.

1917 (16 July) 5øre Official stamp on cover sent locally within Thorshavn by the Dean of the Faroe Islands.

Rate: 5øre local letters (1902-31/12 1918).



**Soldier's stamps:** In 1917 regular 5 øre and 10 øre stamps were overprinted "S F" (Soldater Frimærker = Soldiers Stamps) and these were used by the conscripts of the Danish Security Force. Use of these stamps from the Faroe Islands is very rare.

1918 (14 April) 5øre Soldiers Stamp sent from Thorshavn to Denmark, postmarked Kjøbenhavn 23.4.18 and "Fra Færøerne", sent by a sailor on a patrol ship going to Iceland.

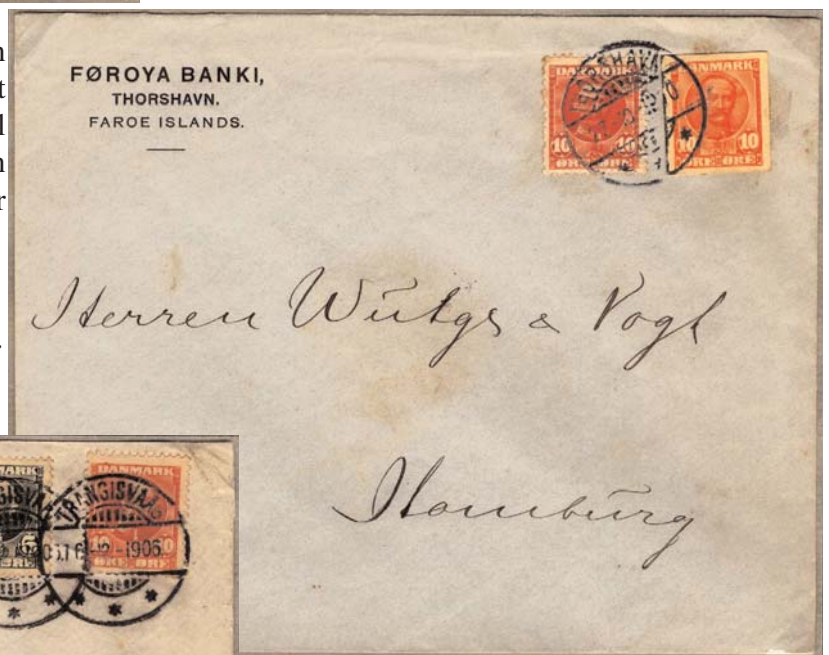
Rate: 5øre postcards to Denmark (1888-1918).

**The only known example with "Fra Færøerne" marking.**

**Postal Stationery cut-outs:** The Danish Postal Administration was one of very few that officially allowed cut-outs from postal stationery to substitute for stamps on mail. In the Faroe Islands this method was hardly ever used and very few examples are recorded.

1910 (27 October) 10øre stationery cut-out + 10øre from Thorshavn to Germany, via Norway.

Rate: 20øre foreign (1875-1920).



**Rates to Iceland** were different from any other destination until 1920. Between 1875 and 1907 the single letter rate was 16 øre.

1906 (16 December) 1øre+5øre+10øre from Trangisvaag to Reykjavik.

Rate: 16øre to Iceland (1875-1907).

**The only known example.**





## 4. 1919 PROVISIONALS AND THE AFTERMATH

### 4 øre bisected stamps (1919)

On 1 January 1919 the local letter rate was increased from 5 øre to 7 øre. With no 7 øre stamps available yet, the stock of 1 øre and 2 øre stamps was soon exhausted, so bisecting of 4 øre stamps, using each half as 2 øre, was authorized from Copenhagen. Some 11-12 sheets of 4 øre stamps were bisected, thus creating 2,200-2,400 bisects.



**Normal use:** 1919 (25 January) Bisect + 5 øre from SKAALE (Star cancel) to Thorshavn.  
Rate: 7 øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).

**Postcard:** 1919 (14 January) Bisect on 3 øre postcard within Thorshavn.

Rate: 5 øre local postcards (1/1-14/10 1919).

**The only known example of this combination.**



**Registered mail:** The registration fee remained unchanged at 15 øre during this period, so the postage for a registered local letter became 22 øre, which also required a bisect.

1919 (20 January) Bisect + 10 øre on 10 øre envelope registered from Trangisvaag to Thorshavn.

Rate: 7 øre local (1/1-14/10 1919) + 15 øre registration fee (1902-20).

#### 4 øre bisected wrapper cut-outs (1919)

The small stock of normal 4 øre stamps was not sufficient, so the bisecting of 4 øre cut-outs from postal stationery wrappers was authorized from Copenhagen on 5 January. A total stock of 1,850 wrappers was used, thus creating 3,700 wrapper bisects.



**Normal use:** 1919 (13 January) Wrapper  
Bisect + 5øre within Thorshavn.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).

#### Printed matter: 1919 (10 January) Wrapper

Bisect on underpaid printed matter within Thorshavn, taxed "6"øre, twice the deficiency.  
Rate: 5øre local printed matters (1/1 1919-30/6 1920). Underpaid by 3øre and taxed "6"øre.



Insured mail: The insurance fee became 20 øre for 1,000kr + 5 øre for every additional 1,000kr, thus the minimum rate was 27 øre.

1919 (19 January) Wrapper Bisect  
+ 5øre + 20øre on insured cover  
from Fugleffjord to Thorshavn.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919)  
+ 20øre insurance fee  
(1/1 1919-31/6 1920).



### Unauthorized bisects (1919)

Several unauthorized bisects were accepted by collecting offices as a result of local shortages. Bisected 5 øre stamps were used as 2 øre stamps, and bisected 10 øre stamps were used as 5 øre stamps. In addition a few examples of the 1875 type of 4 øre wrappers duly cut out, bisected and used as 2 øre stamps.



A few examples of the 1875 type of 4 øre wrappers were held in stock at the Kvalbo Post Office. They were cut out, bisected, and then used as 2 øre stamps in the same way as other bisected 4 øre stamps and cut-outs. **The 1875 type is very rare.**

1919 (23 January) Bisected 1875 4øre Wrapper cut-out + 5øre postmarked KVALBO Star cancel, via TRANGISVAAG 23.1.1919, to Thorshavn with arrival cds of 24.1.19.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).

Bisected 5 øre stamps were treated as 2 øre stamps in Haldersvig, Kirka, Klaksvig, Midvaag and Thorshavn, and bisected 10 øre stamps as 5 øre stamps in Lervig (but postmarked in Fuglefjord). **All are very rare.**

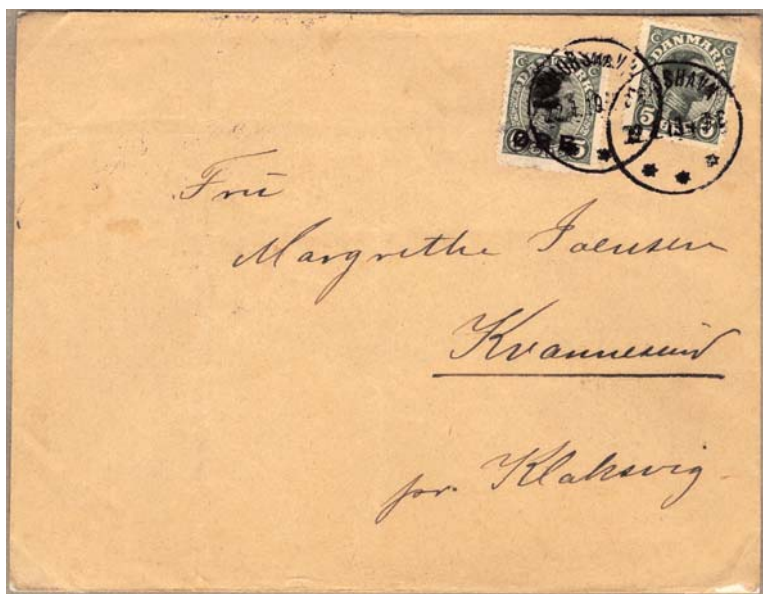
1919 (5 February) Bisected 5øre (used as 2øre) + 5øre from HALDERSVIG (Star cancel) to Thorshavn, with arrival cds 5.2.19.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).



1919 (January) Bisected 10øre (used as 5øre) + 2 ØRE on 5øre from Lervig, postmarked FUGLEFJORD (Star cancel), to Sydregöte.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).

## 2 ØRE on 5 øre surcharge (1919)

With stocks of bisects running low, permission was given from Copenhagen to surcharge the current 5 øre stamp with a new value "2 ØRE". A total of 155 sheets were surcharged, thus providing 15,500 provisional 2 øre stamps.



**Normal use:** 1919 (22 January) 2 ØRE  
Surcharge + 5øre from Thorshavn  
to Kvannesund per Klaksvig.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).

**Registered mail:** 1919 (23 January) 2 ØRE  
Surcharge (x6) + 5øre(x2) registered within Thorshavn.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919)  
+ 15øre registration fee (1902-20).  
**Unique - the largest number of  
2 ØRE Surcharges on cover.**



**Parcel Post:** 1919 (17 January) 2 ØRE  
Surcharge (x2) + 5øre(x3) + 1øre  
on parcel letter within Thorshavn.  
Rate: 20øre for 1kg (1/1-14/10 1919),  
actual weight ½kg.  
**The only known example on parcel letter.**

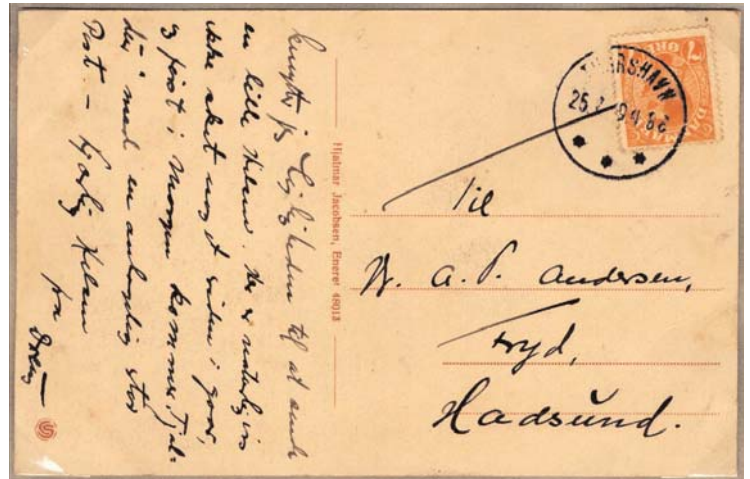


### The aftermath, new stamps arrive (1919)

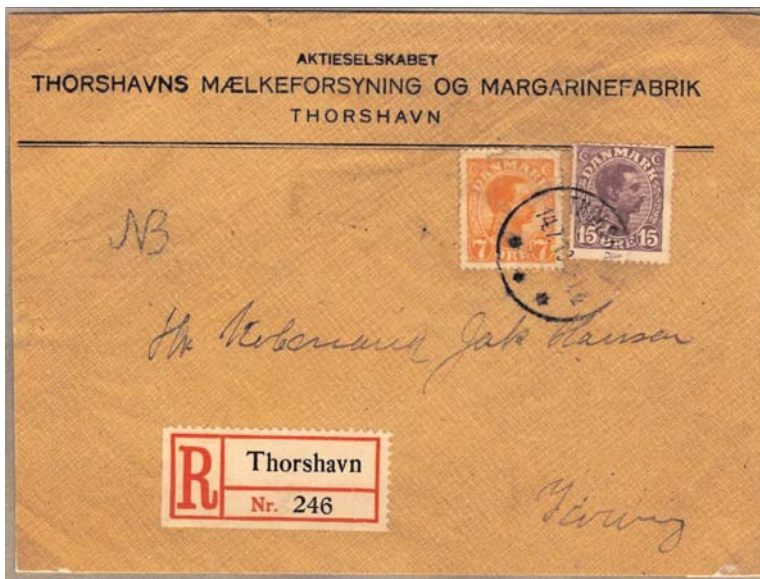
A new stock of stamps, including 2 øre and 7 øre values, arrived from Denmark in the evening of the 23 January. So from the 24 January it was no longer necessary to use any of the provisional bisects or surcharges.



**2 øre:** 1919 (27 February) 2øre on 5øre letter card from Viderejde to Svinö.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919).



**7 øre:** 1919 (25 February) 7øre from Thorshavn to Hadsund, Denmark.  
Rate: 7øre postcards to and from Denmark (1/1-14/10 1919).



**7 øre:** 1919 (14 July) 7øre + 15øre on registered cover from Thorshavn to Kvivig.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919) + 15øre registration fee (1902-20).

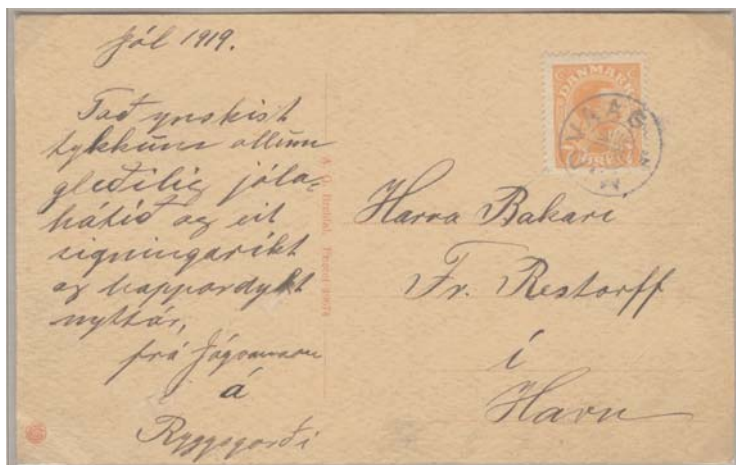


**27 øre:** 1919 (9 May) 27øre on insured cover from Thorshavn to Kvivig.  
Rate: 7øre local (1/1-14/10 1919) + insurance fee 20øre for 1000kr (1/1 1919-1/7 1920).

## 5. MAIL AND RATES 1919-1944

### Postal rate changes (1919-1920)

During the second half of 1919 there were further rate changes. On 15 October the local postcard rate was increased to 7 øre, and the local letter rate to 10 øre. Parcel rates were also increased on 1 October. In 1920 there were further increases, and on 1 July 1920 the separation between local and inland rates was re-introduced in the islands.



**Local postcards:** 1919 (December) 7øre from Midvaag (Star cancel) to Thorshavn. Rate: 7øre local postcards (15/10 1919-30/6 1920).

**Local COD letters:** 1919 (10 December) 10øre+35øre on COD from Thorshavn to Klaksvig. Rate: 10øre local (15/10 1919-30/6 1920) + 35øre COD fee for 25-100kr (1/10 1919-30/6 1920).



**Local COD Parcel Post:** 1919 (7 March) 25øre+1Kr on COD Parcel Letter from Thorshavn to Bö. Rate: 40øre for 5kg + 20øre per extra kg (1/1-30/9 1919) + COD fee 20øre (1/1-30/9 1919). Actual weight: 8kg.



### Use of Postage Due and Gebyr stamps (1921-1941)

Danish Postage Due stamps were first issued in 1921, and they were also used in the Faroe Islands on unpaid and underpaid mail. Gebyr (Special Fee) stamps were introduced in the Danish Postal system in 1923, and they were used to pay the fees for special services carried out by the Post Offices. These stamps were also used in the Faroe Islands.



1921 (10 Dec)  
10øre+20øre+  
50øre(x5)  
Postage Due  
stamps, on  
Parcel Card  
coupon from  
Denmark to  
Thorshavn.  
Rate: 270øre for  
11kg (1920-22)  
+ 10øre extra fee.

1922 (11 Aug)  
50øre(x4)  
Postage Due  
stamps, on  
Parcel Card  
coupon from  
Germany to  
Thorshavn,  
taxed "200" øre.



1936 (10 December) 15øre(x2) Postage Due  
stamps on unfranked cover from EJDE.  
Rate: 15øre inland (1927-40). Unpaid  
so double rate and taxed "30" øre.

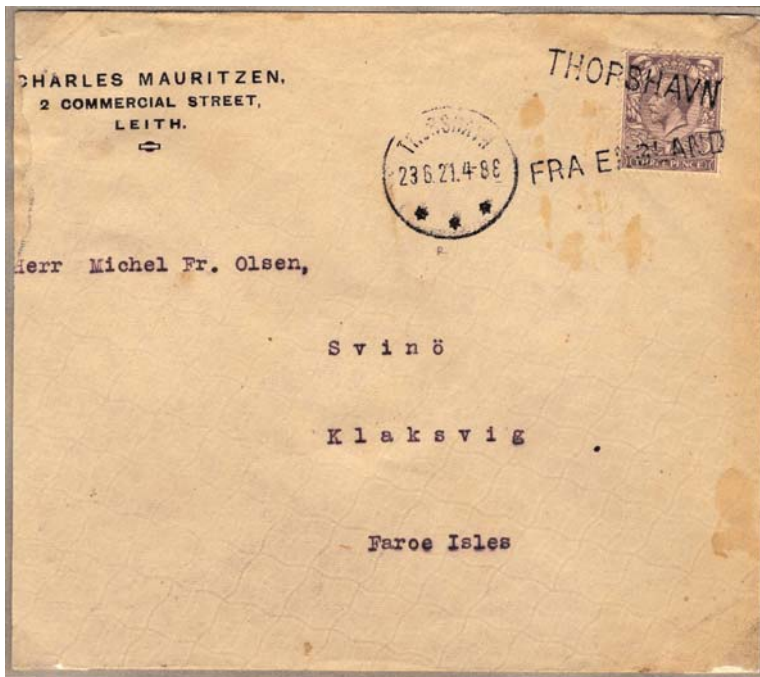
**Gebyr stamps** were used to pay the fees for special services carried out by the Post Offices, for example 10 øre for the issue of a certificate of posting or assistance in filling out a parcel form, 5 øre for string or wrapping for a parcel or other small service.

1925 (1 May) 10øre Gebyr stamp and 25øre(x2) on  
parcel card from HALDERSVIG (Star Cancel) to Øre.  
Rate: 10øre Gebyr for small service +  
50øre for 1kg (1922-26). Actual weight: 1kg.



### Instructional markings (1921-1935)

Instructional markings were applied on mail to indicate the country of origin, or special routings for outgoing mail.



1921 (23 June) “FRA ENGLAND”  
and THORSHAVN on GB 3d.,  
from Leith to Klaksvig.  
Rate: 3d. GB foreign rate (1921-23).

In the 1930's two routing marks were used for mail sent via Leith. The most well known is “Via Leith med S/S Sleipner” (1933-35), but there was also a second one, “Via Leith med s/s Island” (1934-35), of which only a few examples are known.

1934 (2 May) “Via Leith med S/S Sleipner”,  
“PAQUEBOT” and Edinburgh cds  
on 15øre, to Copenhagen.  
Rate: 15øre to Denmark (1927-40).



1935 (30 March) “Via Leith med s/s Island”,  
“PAQUEBOT” and Edinburgh cds  
on 15øre, to Copenhagen.  
Rate: 15øre to Denmark (1927-40).



## Other services including Telegrams & Freight (1923-1944)

This section shows a number of different postal and other services including mail for the blind, perfins, christmas and charity labels, telegrams, and freight letters both with and without freight stamps.

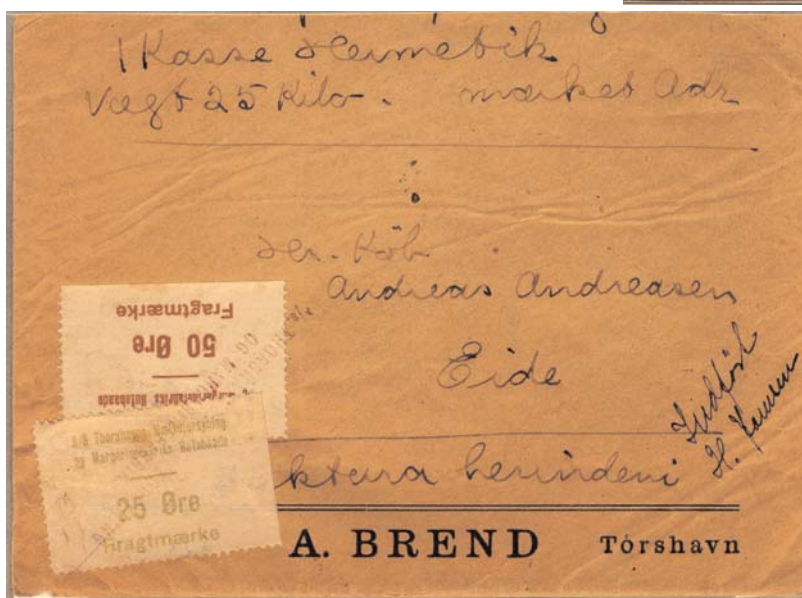
**Blind rate:** Before 1927, documents with embossed letters or Braille characters (consisting of a number of raised dots), to assist blind people, could be sent as printed matters. Between 1927 and 1954 there was a separate blind rate for such documents, initially 5 øre per 500g, but this was raised to 5 øre per kg in 1928. In 1934 the rate was reduced to 4 øre per kg, and free from 1954.



1937 (30 August) 1øre(x4) from Vaag to Kalundborg Blind Institute, Denmark, endorsed "Blindeskrift" (Blind text). Rate: 4øre blind rate to Denmark (1927-53).  
**Unique, the only known example from the Faroe Islands.**

**Perfins** are security punctures designed to prevent theft of stamp stocks within companies. In the Faroe Islands this was rarely applied. "D.D.P.A." (Det Danske Petroleum Aktieselskab - The Danish Petroleum Company Ltd) used perfins in 1925; these are rare on cover. "VL." (Valdemar Lützen) was the main user of stamps with perfins, in use from the 1930's onwards.

1925 (20 March) "D.D.P.A." perfin on 20øre, from Thorshavn to Kvivig.  
Rate: 20øre inland (1920-26).



**Freight stamps:** Thorshavns Mælkeforsyning (later A/S Thorshavns Mælkeforsyning og Margarinefabrik - Thorshavn's Milk & Margarine factory) was the only company to issue freight stamps. The first ones in 1915 and the last ones in 1943.

1932 (6 May) 25øre + 50øre (1929) on freight cover per M/S Dugvan, one box 25kg from Thorshavn to Eide.

## 6. WORLD WAR II MAIL

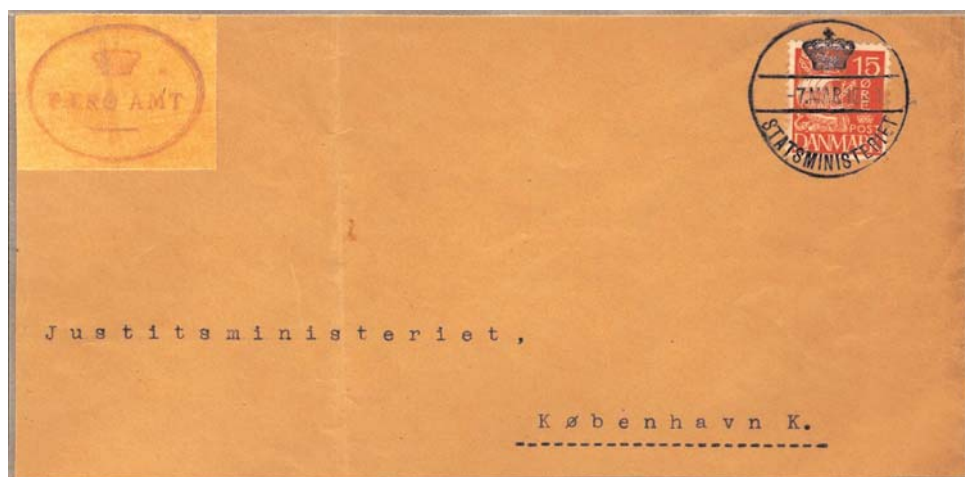
Great Britain occupied the Faroe Islands on 13 April 1940, four days after Denmark and Norway were invaded by Germany, and direct connections between the Faroes and Denmark were cut off or subject to delay for the duration of the war. This led to provisional stamps and other emergencies, since supplies from Denmark were delayed or failed to get through.

### TIMELINE

- February-April 1940: Statsministeriet courier service between the Faroe Islands and Denmark.
- April 1940: Regular mail service suspended, mail returned to senders.
- 3 May 1940: British Field Post Offices commenced. In operation until September 1945.
- 27 May 1940: Red Cross mail service commenced. In use until the end of 1945.
- Nov 1940-June 1941: Postal rates increased on 10 July 1940 and lead to locally surcharged stamps.
- February-May 1941: Faroe Islands to Denmark airmail routed via London/New York/Lisbon/München.
- 16 April-31 May 1941: Direct mail route between Denmark and the Faroe Islands temporarily re-opened.
- 10 May-10 June 1941: Franco Betalt handstamps used during continuing shortage of stamps.
- 26 May-Sept 1941: Shortage of 5 øre stamps. 6 øre stamps sold for and used as 5 øre.
- July 1942-1944: British censorship of civilian mail on Vaagø island, where British troops were stationed.
- August 1943: US Army censorship of election envelopes, sent by Faroese fishermen in Icelandic waters.
- 1945-1948: British registration and parcel labels used when the Danish supplies were exhausted.

### Interrupted mail (1940)

**Statsministeriet Courier Service:** The last regular postal delivery by “Islands Falk” from Denmark to the Faroe Islands arrived on 23 February 1940, and the last mail out from the Faroes departed on 12 March. Because of the



irregular mail service, a special courier service was introduced by the Danish Government, and this was cancelled with the STATS MINISTERIET postmark.

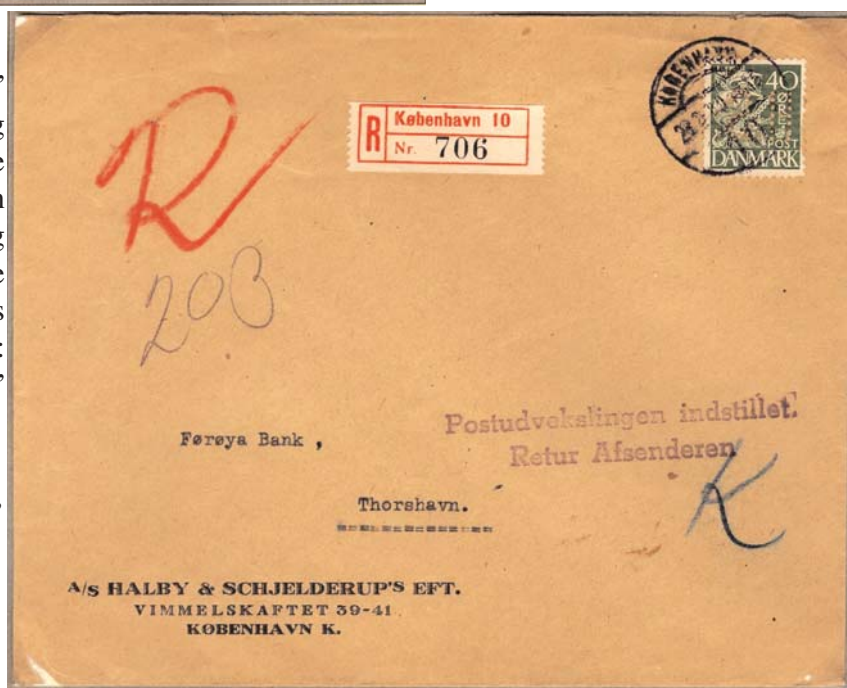
1940 (7 March)

STATS MINISTERIET on 15øre from FÆRØ AMT to Copenhagen.  
Rate: 15øre inland (1927-40).

**Mail service suspended:** The ship “Islands Falk” sailed from Copenhagen on 8 April 1940 carrying mail, accumulated over several weeks, for the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. When German forces invaded Denmark the following day, the ship was recalled to Copenhagen, and the mail was off-loaded and returned to the senders with the addition of a two-line cachet: “Postudvekslingen indstillet, Retur Afsenderen” (Mail exchange suspended, Return to Sender).

1940 (28 February) “Postudvekslingen indstillet, Retur Afsenderen” cachet, registered from Denmark to Thorshavn, returned “14 APR 40”.

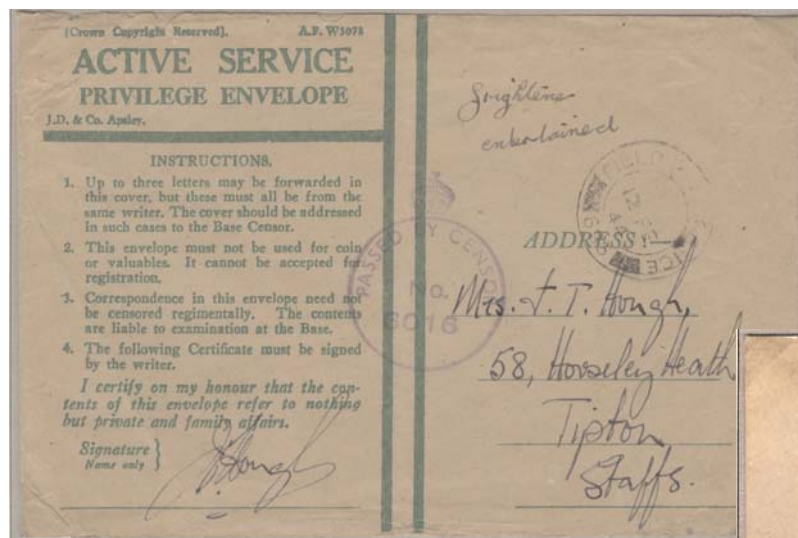
Rate: 15øre inland (1927-40)  
+ 25øre registration fee (1926-40).



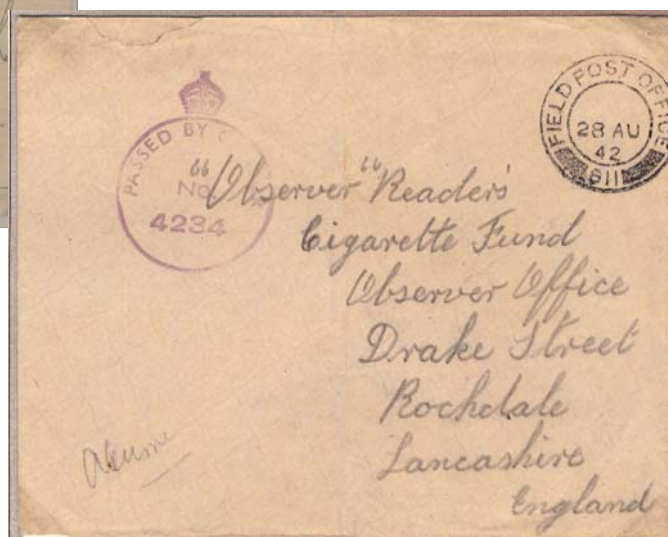


## FPO & Red Cross mail (1941-1944)

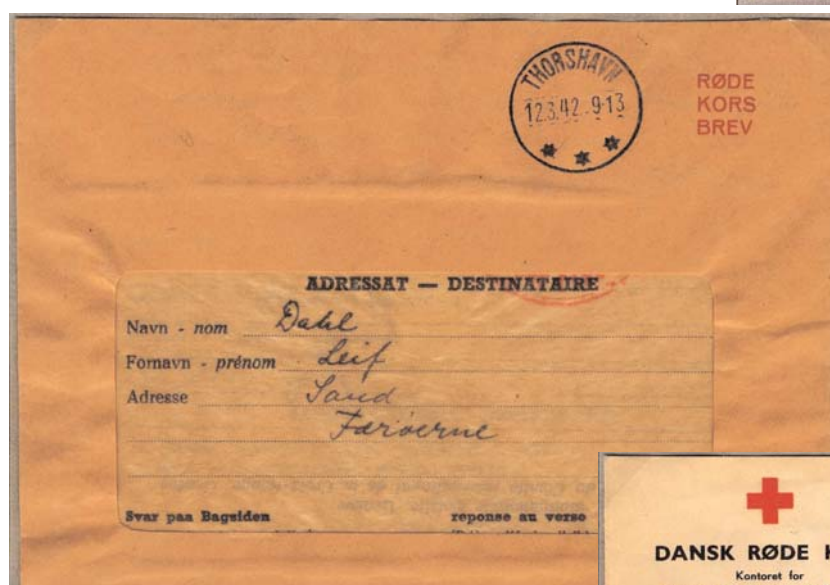
British troops established their main garrison in Thorshavn, and a Field Post Office was opened on 3 May 1940, with FPO numbered 219. In 1943 the FPO number was changed to 695. In 1942 the Royal Engineers began to construct an airfield on Vaagø island, and with more than 2,000 troops there, a further Field Post Office was opened with FPO number 611.



1944 (12 February) FPO 695 (Thorshavn) and Passed by Censor, on Honour envelope (usually uncensored), to England.



1942 (28 August) FPO 611 blank (type 2) (Vaagø) and Passed by Censor, to England.



The Red Cross provided a postal message service that allowed short letters to be sent to and from occupied countries, using special Red Cross forms and envelopes. The service started on 27 May 1940 and lasted until the end of the war. In total 14,703 forms were sent from the Faroe Islands, and 7,657 were received from Denmark.

1942 (12 March) RØDE KORS BREV with message from Denmark, from Thorshavn to Sand, Faroe Islands.



1944 (8 November) DANSKE RØDE KORS, with message from the Faroe Islands to Denmark.



### 1940 postal rate change and Provisional surcharges (1940-1941)

Because the Faroe Islands and Denmark were occupied until May 1945 by opposing forces, the supply of stamps to the Faroes became problematic. Increased postal rates took effect on 10 July 1940, and since new denominations had not yet reached the islands, provisional surcharges were overprinted from November 1940 when regular stamps ran out.



In Denmark, the inland letter rate changed from 15 øre to 20 øre on 1 July 1940, but in the Faroes this change did not take place until the 10 July. Letters sent at the 15 øre rate during these 9 days are very scarce, and so are letters showing the 20 øre rate between the 10 July and early November, when the provisional surcharges were introduced.

1940 (1 July) 15øre from TOFTE (Star removed cancel), to Thorshavn, **sent at the old 15 øre rate.**  
Rate: 15øre inland (1927-9/7 1940).

1 øre, 5 øre and 15 øre stamps were surcharged "20" øre, which was the basic letter rate (inland and to Denmark/Scandinavia), 5 øre stamps were surcharged "50" øre (basic registered letter rate, and parcel rate to 1kg), and 6 øre stamps were surcharged "60" øre (basic insured local letter rate, and parcel rate for 1-3kg).



1941 (30 April) Provisional surcharge "20" on 5øre, from Thorshavn to Copenhagen, via direct route.  
Rate: 20øre to Denmark (1940-50).

1941 (31 May) 6øre used as 5øre  
+ "60" on 6øre + "20" on 1øre  
+ "20" on 15øre, from  
Thorshavn to Denmark.  
Rate: 20øre to Denmark (1940-50)  
+ 85øre airmail fee via Great  
Britain and USA (1940-42).



1941 (9 January) "50" on 5øre (x2),  
from Ejde to Thorshavn.  
Rate: 20øre inland rate (1940-50)  
+ 80øre insurance fee (1940-51).



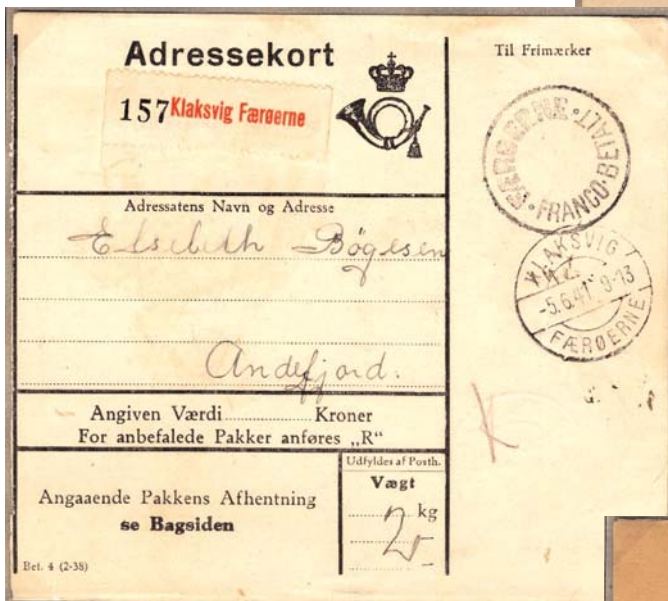
## FRANCO BETALT handstamps

In a further attempt to overcome the shortage of stamps, the Postal Authorities produced four sets (5 øre, 10 øre and 20 øre) FRANCO BETALT (Postage Paid) handstamps, with the intention of providing one set for each of the Post Offices in Thorshavn, Klaksvig, Trangisvaag and Vaag. They had a short life between 10 May and 10 June 1941.



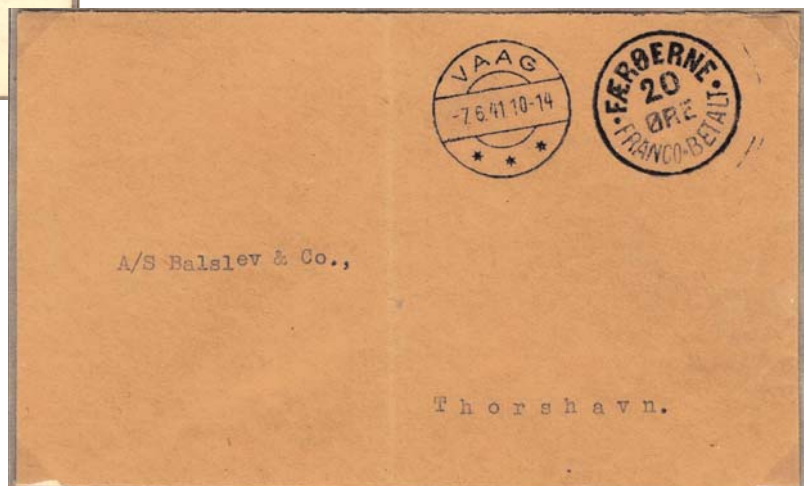
1941 (29 May) 5 ØRE FRANCO BETALT  
+ 10 ØRE FRANCO BETALT  
used as 15øre, on local double rate  
cover within Thorshavn.  
Rate: 15øre double local rate (1921-46).  
**Only three known.**

1941 (7 June) 20 ØRE FRANCO BETALT (x2)  
paying 40øre local registered rate within Thorshavn.  
Rate: 10øre local (1919-46) +  
30øre registration fee (1940-51).  
**Only two known.**



The FRANCO BETALT handstamps were supposed to have been used in the Post Offices in Thorshavn, Klaksvig, Trangisvaag and Vaag, but Thorshavn was the main user. There was limited use at Klaksvig, and minimal use at Vaag, and no use at all in Trangisvaag. Therefore examples used in Klaksvig and Vaag are rare.

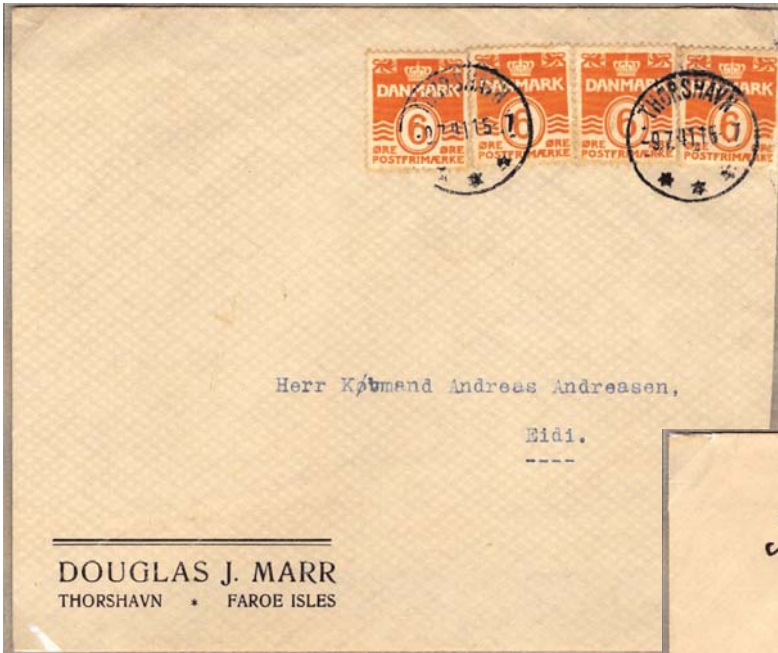
1941 (5 June) FRANCO BETALT non-denominated  
on parcel card from KLAKSVIG to Andefjord.  
Rate: 60øre for 3kg (1940-46). Actual weight: 2kg.  
**Used in Klaksvig, only three known.**



1941 (7 June) 20 ØRE FRANCO BETALT  
from VAAG to Thorshavn.  
Rate: 20øre inland (1940-50).  
**Used in Vaag, only two known.**

### Other provisionals and Censor mail

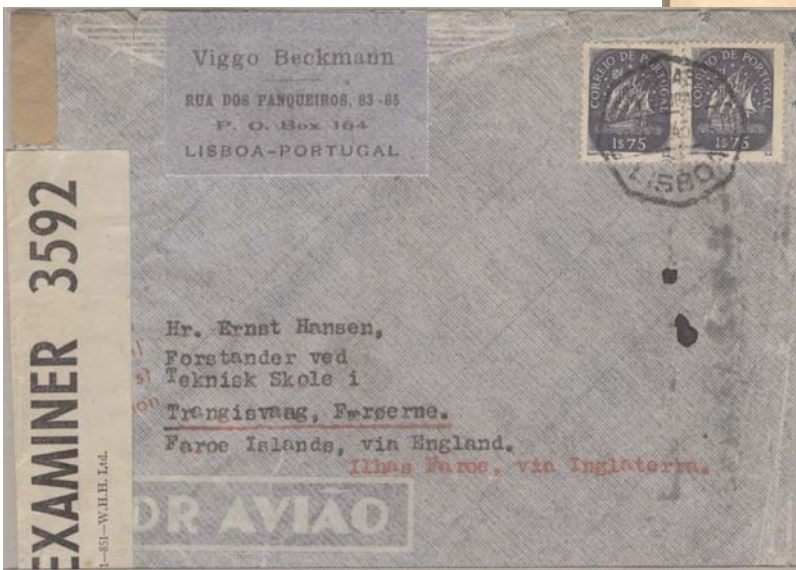
Between May and September 1941, the Post Office suffered a total shortage of 5 øre stamps. 1,800 6 øre stamps were used as, and sold for, 5 øre each. In 1943 a franking machine was imported from England in order to prevent further stamp shortages. British registration and parcel labels were used at the end of the war. During the War, mail was censored, both on the islands and elsewhere.



1941 (9 July) 6øre used as 5øre (x4, one with repaired corner), from Thorshavn to Eidi.  
Rate: 20øre inland (1940-50).



1945 (30 December) British “KLAKSVIG” registration label, with 5øre(x2) + 20øre(x2), to Thorshavn.  
Rate: 20øre inland (1940-50) + 30øre registration fee (1940-51).



**Undercover mail:** Because Portugal was neutral, mail between the Faroe Islands and Denmark was sent undercover via Lisbon, either through P O Box 506 (Thomas Cook) or P O Box 164 (Viggo Beckmann). **All such mail is rare.**

1943 Undercover mail from Denmark via Viggo Beckmann, P O Box 164, Lisbon, to Trangisvaag, Faroe Islands.

**Local censorship** of inland and overseas mail was established in 1940 and most of it was supervised or even carried out by the British Military Authorities in the islands. Especially mail sent directly to Iceland was censored locally.

1941 (14 March) From Thorshavn to Iceland, opened and censored with BRITISH CONSULATE, THORSHAVN 17.MAR.41 cachet.  
Rate: 20øre Nordic (1940-50).

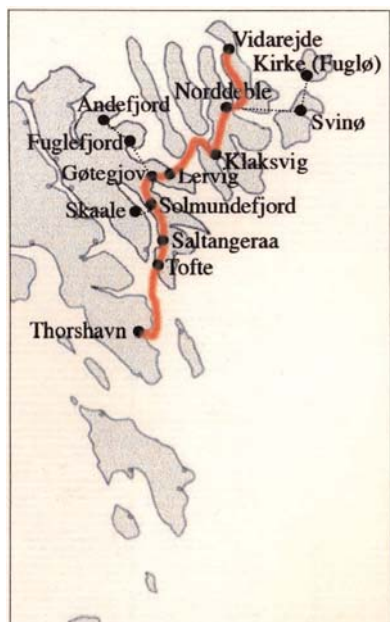




## 7. POSTAL ROUTES

Towards the end of the 19th century, more Post Offices were opened, but it was not until the early part of the 20th century that the entire group of islands could be said to have been connected with Post Offices and a postal route system. There were four different routes, all originating in Thorshavn, roughly serving villages to the East, North, West and South. The first routes started in the 1870's and then they were only served seven times a year. In 1903 the last route was added (North), and by then most villages had a weekly mail service.

**Eastern Route:** Thorshavn - Tofte - Saltangeraa - Solmundefjord (dropping mail for Skaale) - Gøtegjov (dropping mail for Fuglefjord & Andefjord) - Lervig - Klaksvig - Norddeble (dropping mail for Svinø & Kirke/Fuglø) - Viderejde.



### SALTANGERAA

Star cancel,  
parcel card to  
Sweden 1923.



GØTEGJOV Star-removed cancel,  
postcard to Thorshavn 1945.



NORDDEBLE Star-removed cancel,  
to Copenhagen 1939.



VIDEREJDE Star-removed cancel, to Svinø 1932.





**Northern Route:** Thorshavn - Strender - Selletræ - Kvalvig - Haldersvig - Ejde (dropping mail for Funding & Gjov).



SELLETRÆ  
Star-removed  
cancel, to  
Copenhagen  
1951.



EJDE Star-removed cancel, postcard to Lejnum 1934.



FUNDING Star-removed cancel, to Thorshavn 1940.



GJOV Star-removed cancel, to Thorshavn 1945.



**Western Route:** Thorshavn - Kollefjord - Kvivig - Vestmanhavn - Sandevaag - Midvaag - Sørvaag (dropping mail for Myggenæs).



**VESTMANHAVN**  
Star cancel,  
postcard to  
Thorshavn 1918.



**SANDEVAAG** Star-removed cancel, to Thorshavn 1941.



**MIDVAAG** Star cancel, parcel letter to Bø 1905.

**MYGGENÆS** Star-removed cancel, to Thorshavn 1940.





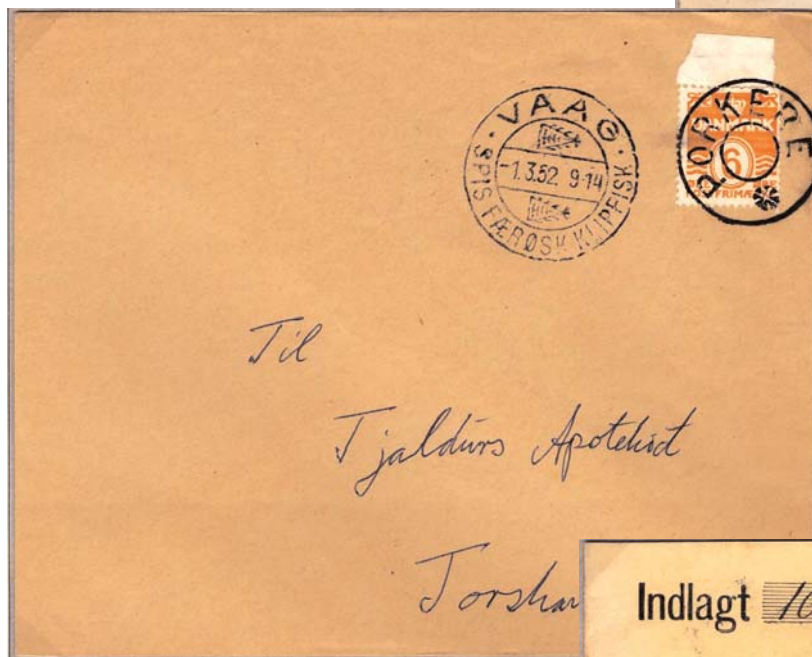
**Southern Route:** Thorshavn - Skopen - Sand (dropping mail for Skaalevig & Husevig) - Skuø - Kvalbo - Trangisvaag - Vaag (dropping mail for Sumbø & Porkere) - Nolsø - Thorshavn.



SAND Star-removed cancel, to Klaksvig 1936.



SKUØ Star-removed cancel, to Copenhagen 1945.



PORKERE Star-removed cancel, printed matter to Thorshavn 1952.



NOLSØ Star-removed cancel, insured to Kalsø 1933.



# III. POSTMARKS AND POST OFFICES 1870-1975; POSTAL RATES

## 1. POSTMARKS

The first postmarks were introduced in 1870 when the first Post Office was opened in Thorshavn, with Numeral and Lapidar cancellations. In 1877 the first Star cancel came into use, and in 1899 Bridge cancels were introduced. In 1929 the Star cancels had their stars removed and they were all withdrawn in 1953. Below are all the different types used in the Faroe Islands up to 1975.

1870-1884 Numeral cancel – Num



1870-1899 Lapidar cancel – Lap



1877-1929 Star cancel – Stj



1929-1953 Star-removed cancel – Uds



1899-1962 Bridge cancel – Bro (Danish spelling)



1962-1988 Bridge cancel – Bro (Faroese spelling)



1954-> Machine cancel – Ems, Tms



1935-> Special datestamps – Sær

1963-> Roller cancel – Rul



## 2. POST OFFICES

The first Post Office was opened in Thorshavn in 1870. This was followed by Trangisvaag in 1877 and Klaksvig in 1888. By 1975 there have been 50 Post Offices in the Faroe Islands.

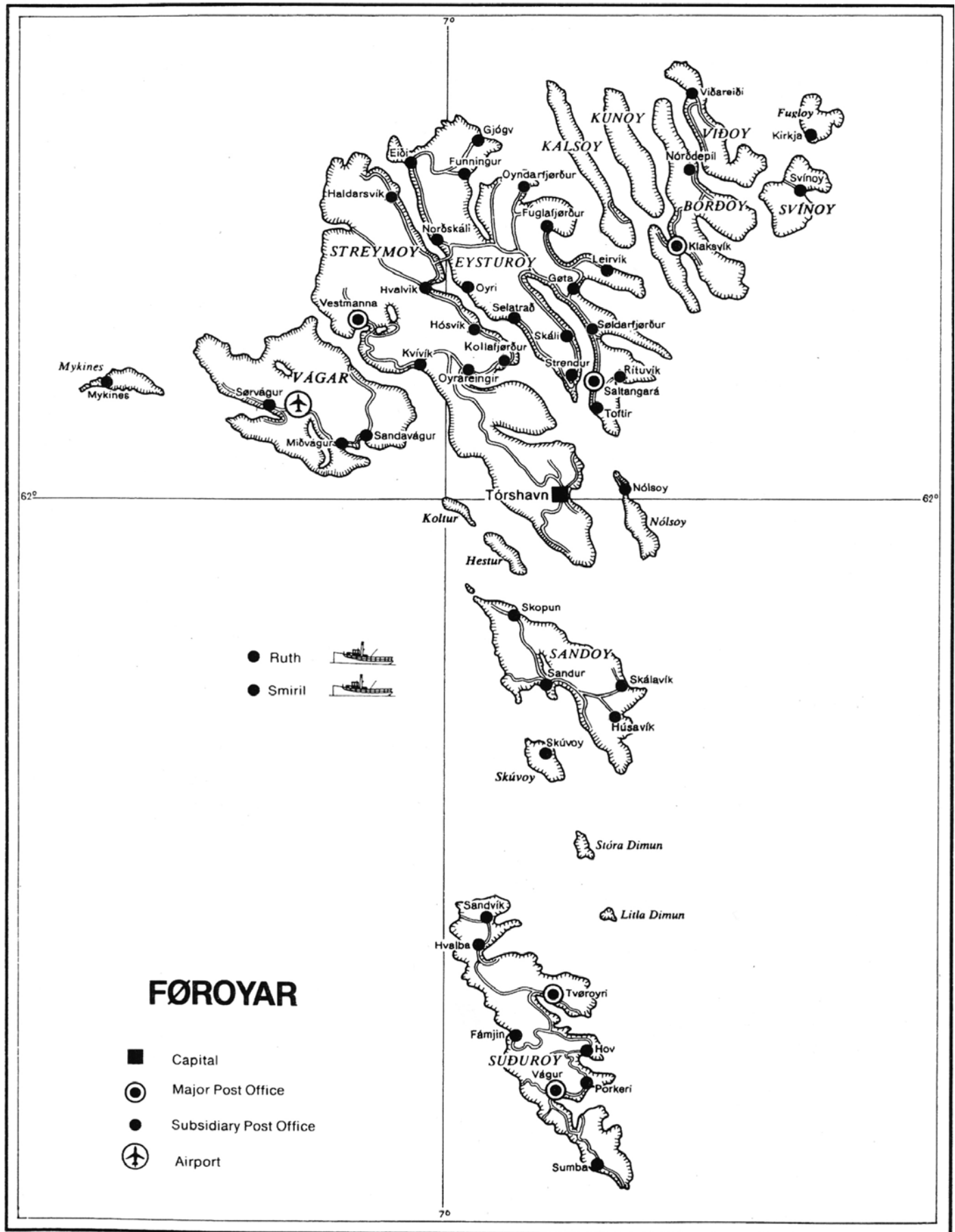
The offices are numbered in chronological order according to openings dates.

Faroese spelling is used throughout.

Year	No.	Office	Danish Name
1870	01	Tórshavn	Thorshavn
1877	02	Tvøroyri	Trangisvaag
1888	03	Klaksvík	Klaksvig
1895	04	Smiril	Smiril
1903	05	Eiði	Ejde
	06	Fuglafjørður	Fuglefjord
	07	Hvalba	Kvalbo
	08	Miðvágur	Midvaag
	09	Sandur	Sand
	10	Strendur	Strender
	11	Vestmanna	Vestmanhavn
	12	Vágur	Vaag
1908	13	Kollafjørður	Kollefjord
	14	Søldarfjørður	Solmundefjord
	15	Skopun	Skopen
	16	Ruth	Ruth
1914	17	Norðdepil	Norddeble
	18	Viðareiði	Vidarejde
1916	19	Sørvágur	Sørvaag
1918	20	Haldarsvík	Haldersvig
	21	Kirkja	Kirke (Fuglø)
	22	Hvalvík	Kvalvig
	23	Kvívík	Kvivig

	24	Leirvík	Lervig
	25	Nólsoy	Nolso
	26	Sandavágur	Sandevaag
	27	Saltangará	Saltangeraa
	28	Selatrað	Selletræ
	29	Skálavík	Skaalevig
	30	Skáli	Skaale
	31	Strendur	Strænder
	32	Svínoy	Svinø
	33	Toftir	Tofte
1920	34	Funningur	Funding
	35	Gjógv	Gjov
	36	Mykines	Myggenæs
	37	Oyndarfjørður	Andefjord
	38	Skúvoy	Skue
	39	Sumba	Sumbø
1925	40	Húsavík	Husevig
1927	41	Gøta	Gøtegjov
1951	42	Porkeri	Porkere
1964	43	Fámjin	
	44	Hósvík	
	45	Hov	
	46	Norðskáli	
	47	Oyrareingir	
	48	Oyri	
	49	Rituvík	
	50	Sandvík	

Map showing the location of all the 50 Post Offices in the Faroe Islands between 1870 and 1975.



The display shows examples of every postmark used in all the 50 different Post Offices as well as details of the periods of use of all postmarks. In addition there is a map showing the exact location of each Post Office and a photograph taken locally. All this is shown on a total of 80 pages.



### 3. POSTAL RATES

The postal rates of the Faroe Islands were generally the same as the rates in Denmark. There were a few exceptions, in particular affecting the dates of their introduction. It is also important to understand the difference between a local rate and an inland rate. This is a little complicated when considering the Faroe Islands because the regulations changed several times.

1870 to 1878: All of the Faroe Islands counted as one local area.

1878 to 1916: Local rates applied to mail sent within a Post Office or sub office area. As more offices opened, four different local rate areas were established in this period: Thorshavn, Trangisvaag, Klaksvig, Vaag.

1916 to 1920: All of the Faroe Islands constituted one local post area.

1920 to 1962: Local rates were valid for mail sent within the jurisdiction of a Post Office or sub office, which was one Danish mil (about 7.5 km or just under five English miles) in any direction. So in this period there were between 36 and 39 local post areas in the Faroe Islands.

Below is a summary of the more important rates between 1870 and 1945 (only single rates are stated). All inland rates were also valid for mail to Denmark:

DATE	LETTERS				POSTCARDS				REGISTRATION
	Local	Inland	Nordic	Foreign	Local	Inland	Nordic	Foreign	
1/3/1870	2sk	8sk							8sk
1/4/1871		4sk			2sk	4sk			
1/1/1875	4øre	8øre	12øre	20øre	4øre	8øre	6øre	10øre	16øre
1/4/1885							5øre		
1/10/1888					3øre				20øre
1/10/1902	5øre	10øre				5øre			
1/6/1918							7øre		
1/1/1919	7øre				5øre	7øre			30øre
1/7/1919			15øre				10øre		
15/10/1919	10øre	15øre			7øre	10øre			
1/7/1920		20øre	20øre		8øre	15øre			50øre
1/1/1921				40øre				25øre	
1/6/1922							15øre		
1/10/1923									40øre
1/4/1926				30øre	7øre	12øre	12øre	20øre	
1/1/1927		15øre	15øre	25øre		10øre	10øre	15øre	
1/1/1934				30øre				20øre	
10/7/1940		20øre	20øre	40øre		15øre	15øre	25øre	

#### PARCEL POST: Local and Inland (including Denmark):

DATE	LOCAL	INLAND
1/3/1870		8sk
1/1/1875		16øre
1/10/1902	10øre	15øre
1/6/1908	15øre	20øre
1/11/1917	20øre	25øre
1/1/1919		30øre
15/10/1919		40øre
1/7/1920	n/a	50øre
1/3/1921	n/a	60øre
1/4/1922	n/a	50øre
1/4/1926	n/a	40øre
1/6/1933	40øre (5kg)	40øre (1kg)
10/7/1940	40øre (3kg)	50øre

# IV. REFERENCES

## SOCIETIES

**Faroe Islands Study Circle (FISC)**, c/o N Hudson, 40 Queen's Rd, Vicar's Cross CH3 5HB  
**F G Nordische Staaten**, c/o M Hapke, Lindenhof 2A, D-16845 Rohrlack, Germany



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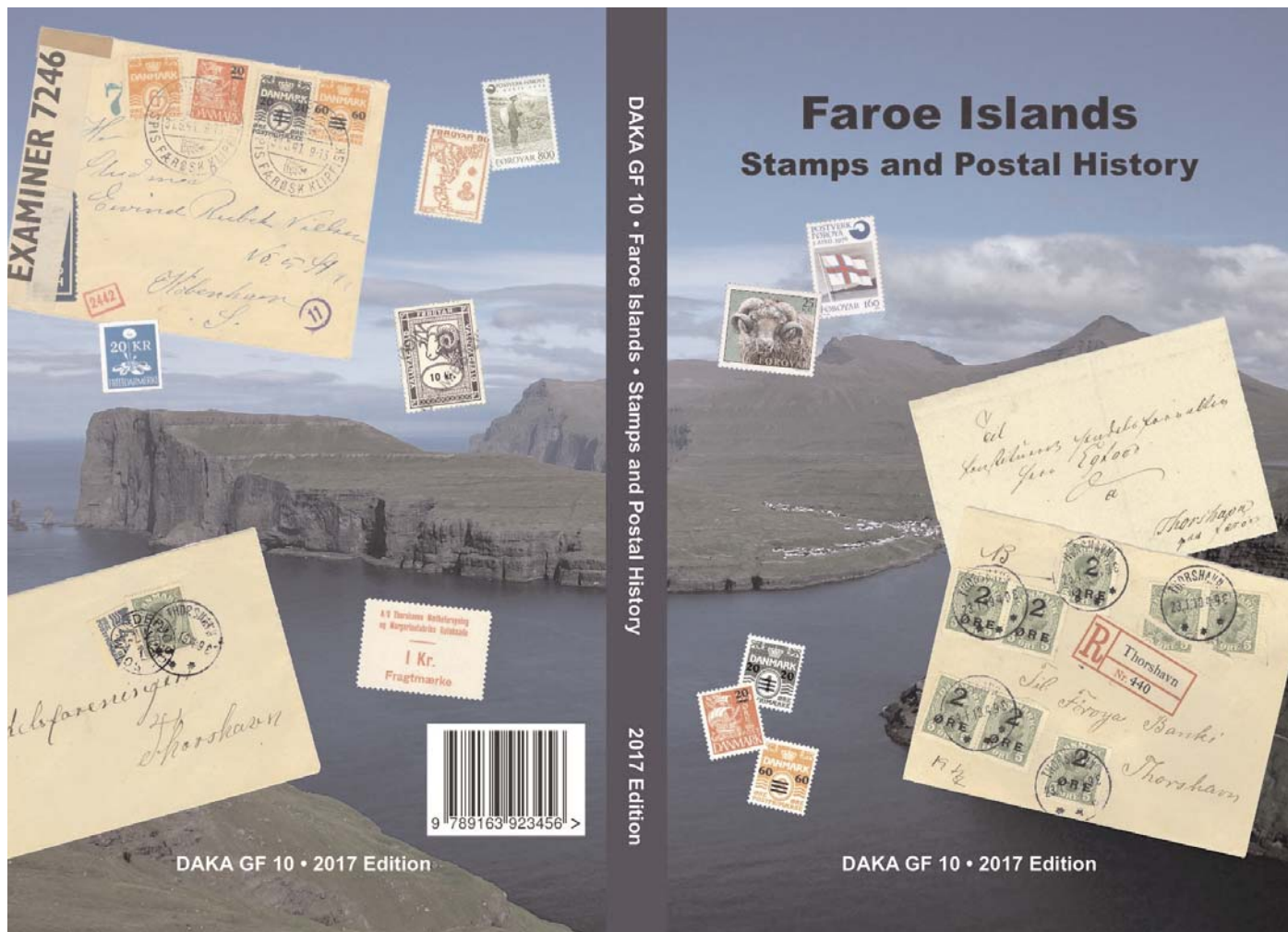
First of all I would like to thank the generosity of Postiljonen AB in Malmö, Sweden, in sponsoring this publication. I also wish to express my gratitude to my proof readers, especially Hugh Osborne FRPSL who has helped me to make the written English as correct as possible. Thanks are also due to all my fellow Faroe Islands collectors of the Faroe Islands Study Circle and F G Nordische Staaten who have generously helped me with information included in my display and in this publication. In the Faroe Islands I would particularly like to thank Ingolf Nielsen, who has unearthed valuable information from the local archives about arriving and departing ships during the 18th and 19th centuries. Finally, I am eternally grateful to the staff and archivists of the Danish National Archives in Copenhagen (*Rigsarkivet*) who over some seven years and five visits have directed me to the right archive boxes which contain fascinating documents and early letters from the Faroe Islands, which have increased my knowledge about the early postal history of the islands.

## PICTURE CREDITS

All illustrations in this publication are from the author's collection and archives, with the following exceptions:  
Page 5: Landsbókasavnið, Tórshavn.  
Page 13 (*Skyds* boat); page 20 (H C Müller); page 22 (*Smiril & Ruth*): Postur i Føroyum, Postverk Føroya, Tórshavn.  
Page 45 and 46 (postmarks, post office list, map): DAKA/GF10 catalogue.



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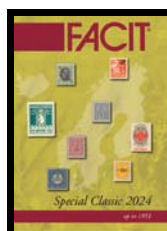
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