Iceland Unofficial FDC Town Cancels

Purpose: to present Icelandic First Day Covers (FDCs) from towns that did not have the official First Day cancel

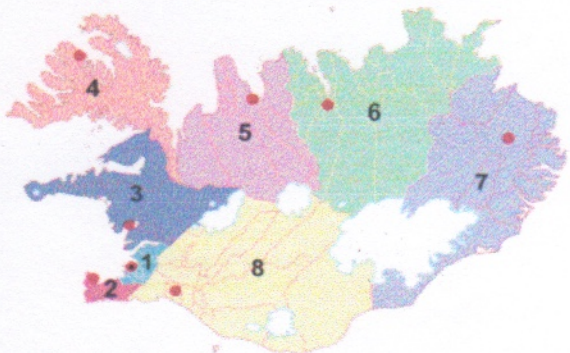
Scope: from 1947 (the second issue) to 1976 after which interest in Icelandic FDCs waned greatly (see graph below)

Plan: Towns are presented first by the region of the country where they are and second alphabetically.

Background: Iceland gained independence in 1944 and issued six stamps for the celebration. All FDCS were canceled at this celebration. A second issue of stamps was issued in 1947 and a third in 1948. Official First Day covers were prepared in the capital Reykjavik. Regular cancels were used, and covers were hand-stamped "Utgafudagar," First Day in Icelandic. In 1949 and after, a circular date cancel with utgafadagur was used. However, Icelandic stamps were sold throughout the country on the day of issue, thus giving rise to this exhibit.

Official cover first use utgafudagar cancel

regions of Iceland



1 Capital (Reykjavik)
2 Southern Peninsula
3 Western
4 West Fjords
5 Northwestern
6 Northeastern
7 Eastern
8 Southern

white - glaciers

Philatelic study: The exhibitor has collected these covers for over 25 years. Data has been obtained from this collection and from what's been available from the internet. This data indicates that in several towns one individual or one group regularly produced FDCs over a definable period of time. It is assumed that many are uncounted in collections in Iceland.

Challenge: These covers are estimated to be about 1% of Iceland FDCs. They must be searched out, since few sellers list them apart from general Icelandic FDCs.

Importance: Data shows excitement in Iceland after independence for their stamps -- excitement that stayed steady for 25 years. As in other countries, interest in FDCs fell. Only 12 of 333 tabulated xcovers are after 1976.

Note: During period of the exhibit Capital Region had about 50% of the population. Thus FDCs from the remainder of the country are from very small towns.