

Posta Stamps

Faroe Islands

No. 38

November 2018



- Faroe Islands on Historical Maps
- Lake Leynar and Lake Eiði
- Sepac 2018: Old Residential Houses

Posta 
FAROE ISLANDS



Test proof



Faroe Islands on Historical Maps

Maps relate to a part of the Earth's surface, they are representations of space in two dimensions. One way to study maps is to look at them as cultural historical sources to our past. Historical maps tell us how the North, the North Atlantic and the Faroe Islands have been represented throughout western history.

At the beginning of the 16th century, the Northern countries were an unknown region. The information about the North was based on the descriptions written in Antiquity and in medieval times. The cartographic representation of the North was, however, quite faulty and far from reality. The North was imagined both as a place of darkness, death and the seat of evil from European antiquity to the time of the nineteenth century, but also as a place of felicity with virtuous happy people. Pytheas of Massilia (350-285 BC) wrote about the people of the North and the people of Ultima Thule as the 'Hyppoder' (or, as they are called in other texts, the Hyperboreans). A standard reference in most maps is *Ptolemy's Geography* (Ptolemy or Claudius Ptole-

maeus c. 100c.-170 BC). It is the only book on cartography to have survived from the classical period. Written in the second century AD. For more than fifteen centuries, it was the most detailed reference on how to draw maps.

For a long stretch in history, we will find the imaginary country of Thule. The concept of Thule or Ultima Thule is as famous as the myths of Avalon, Atlantis and El Dorado, it has lived on in the imagination of Europeans and we find it in old maps next to the Faroe Islands. Pytheas of Massalia was one of the first to go looking for Ultima Thule, in the third century BC.

Maps did not become well known in many areas of the world until the European Renaissance. Maps have been made by governments and their concerns with the national unity and even sometimes dreams of empires. It is easy to see that older maps can constitute a specialized graphic language and an instrument of communication that we might have forgotten.



Olaus Magnus Carta marina from 1539. Magnus had travelled widely in Sweden and visited Norway and thus was well informed about this region, more so than his predecessors, as is proved by the superiority of his map.

In this series of stamps, POSTA wants to commemorate historical maps of the Faroe Islands.

Olaus Magnus Carta marina 1539

The year 1539 is an important one in the cartographic history of Scandinavia and the Faroe Islands. Olaus Magnus (1490-1557), a Swedish ecclesiastic, published his large map (125x170 cm) of the Northern Countries, *Carta marina*. Magnus was appointed archbishop in Uppsala by the Pope in 1544. His activities in the political life of the Reformation made him spend most of his life abroad, where he also wrote his works.

The *Carta marina* is regarded as one of the most beautiful maps filled with colourful illustrations, where the ocean is provided with number of whales, monsters and ships, where we on inlands find pictures from national life and nature. There are all types of people as well as many place names and historical references in the drawings. A closer look at the map reveals people, moose, birds, and even sea ser-

pents gorging passing ships in the Sea of Scotland.

Magnus' version of the Faroe Islands contains seven islands. In his 1555 *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (History of the Scandinavian People), he wrote about the dangerous rock formation in the southern part of the Faroe Islands called *Munkurin* (the Monk), which is also to be found on the map. Magnus saw the Faroe Islands as '*ön Färö*' (that is, as a singular island named Faroe), which together with *Munkurin* constituted both a haven for sailors and a deadly place. He also mentioned the many dangerous monsters (whales and sea monsters) and demons. The killing of fish or whales (whales were fish at the time) is also depicted. The Faroes were even then relatively well known among scholars and cartographers throughout Europe. Magnus' map is evidence of a pre-Enlightenment image of the Faroes.

Kim Simonsen
Ph.d.



Test proof



Faroese Lakes III: Leynavatn & Eiðisvatn

Lake Leynar

Lake Leynar (*Leynavatn*), the Faroe Islands sixth largest lake, lies at the bottom of the Kollafjørður Valley, a long stretch of land surrounded by steep mountain cliffs south and west. The lake area is 0.18 square kilometers and approximately 63 meters above sea level. Along the northeastern coast there is a long, low beach of rough sand, gravel and rocks. Lake Leynar's water supply from the east comes from a short river running from two adjacent lakes, both of which are called *Mjáuvøtn*. From the north, *Dalá* river flows down into the lake from the long valley towards Vestmanna. The drainage takes place through the so-called *Leynará* through the passage to the small village of *Leynar*, from which the lake takes its name.

Up at the Canyon

Dalá river, which runs into Lake Leynar from the north, has for millennia formed a smaller delta-like plain to the north. In 1815, the farmer and blacksmith Jacob Poulsen

(1758-1829) and his wife, Lisbeth Pedersdatter (1773-1850), settled in this place and built a house slightly up the mountain side in a place called *Frammi við Gjónna* (Up at the Canyon). Jacob Poulsen and his descendants cultivated the soil along the river and it is still green and lush. The last inhabitants of *Frammi við Gjónna* moved from the farm in the 1960s, but the house still stands there. The house was then bought by a Faroese bank and restored, now standing as a beautiful cultural monument over 19th century Faroese building traditions. Today, the house is being used by the Faroese Michelin-starred restaurant KOKS, whose experiments with Faroese raw materials and fermented meat and fish attract visitors from home and abroad.

Fish

Of all the lakes in the Faroes, Lake Leynar is the most popular among anglers. The lake has a natural stocking of arctic char (*Salvelinus alpinus*), in addition to the ordinary river



Lake Leynar - Leynavatn. Photo: Olaf Olsen

trout (*Salmo trutta fario*). Via the *Leynará* drainage, Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and sea trout (*Salmo trutta trutta*) swim up into the lake. *Leynará* river has recently been fitted with salmon ladders, making it easier for fish to find their way into the lake. Lake *Leynar* is also one of three Faroese lakes where the Atlantic salmon occurs. The Lake *Leynar* stamp motif is a photograph taken on the eastern shore of the lake with the sea stacks *Drangarnir* in the background. To the left of these pillars, the lake bends towards the drainage into *Leynará*. On the right is the northern valley where *Dalsá* river flows into Lake *Leynar*. I can add that one of the rivers running down the mountain behind the valley is also called *Argisá* river, just like the one at Lake *Eiði*, indicating that there at some point was a pasture in the valley.

Eiðisvatn – Lake Eiði

On high plains at the base of *Slættaratindur*, the highest mountain in the Faroes, just south of the lower-lying village *Eiði*, we

find Lake *Eiði*, the Faroe Islands' fifth largest lake. It is really the second largest lake with a surface area of 1.14 square kilometers, but the inconsistency can be explained by a dam that was built by the Faroes' inter-municipal power producer SEV, supplying the *Eiði 2* Hydroelectric Power Plant in order to operate its two powerful water turbines. Before the dam was built the lake's surface area was 0.48 km². Lake *Eiði* goes back to glacial times. It was shaped by violent interference of ancient ice ages in the Faroese landscape, originally hedged in from the sea by a natural boulder barrier. The natural water supply of the lake is the river *Argisá*, which drains off the two adjoining mountains, *Slættaratindur* and *Vaðhorn*. The natural drainage of the lake is the river *Breiðá*, which has a fall of 130 meters over 700 meters down to the sea.

Flora

Argisá river winds its way through the plain and has in the course of time deposited



Lake Eiði - Eiðisvatn. Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen.

considerable amounts of sediment from the mountains, which in turn provide fertile soil for robust vegetation consisting of various species of grass, dwarf bushes, like the perennial shrub (*Calluna vulgaris*) and crowberries (*Empetrum*), as well as more herbaceous plants such as tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and matgrass (*Nadus stricta*).

Fish

The lake itself is quite nutrient-poor with subaqueous vegetation down to the depth of 4.2 meters. Nevertheless, Lake Eiði has a fairly good stock of brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), which spawns especially in the lower part of *Argisá*. The lake is a favourite spot for anglers with traces of former time pole fishing in the form of stone walls out in the lake.

Bird life

Lake Eiði is regularly visited by seabirds like kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) and various gulls that come to bask in freshwater. A number of ducklings and waders also use the lake as a resting place. There are reportedly nine breeding bird species in the area.

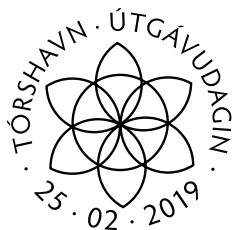
Shielings

As the place names *Argisá* and *Argisbrekka* (brekka: long hillside) suggest, shielings have been built on the plateau. *Argi* refers to Old Norse "ærgi", reflecting pastoral economy based on sheepherding. In connection with the construction of the current dam, archaeological excavations were made in the area during the eighties, where at least 17 smaller buildings and folds were discovered, the oldest of which date back to the Viking Age and the early Middle Ages.

Peat Cutting

Millennium old heather and dwarf bush vegetation created a peaty soil in the area suited for harvesting. Through the centuries, people from Eiði have cut and dried peat on the hillsides, using it for house heating. The number of old peat quarries and shelters testify to the fact that peat harvesting has been quite extensive. We also know that some peat was transported by boat over the lake, facilitating the transport home to the village.

Anker Eli Petersen



Sepac 2019: Old Residential Houses

The Farmhouse in Kirkjubøur

It's a strange feeling. Almost like an echo from the multifarious passage of time - myriad voices from times gone by and shadows in the outermost corners of the eyes hurrying by on assignments accomplished ages ago. Here in the courtyard of history you cannot help but thinking about those people who once attended to their daily routines in between the houses - events in which real persons took part and of which only fragmentary knowledge remains today, passed down in legends and scattered written sources. You automatically glance at the iconic Cathedral ruins, *Múrurin* (the Wall) as it is commonly called. It is a monument to spiritual aspirations and power. In school we learned that the Cathedral was never completed, well-nigh causing a civil war in the Faroe Islands because the inhabitants, especially in the southern part of the country, did not want contribute to the pompous construction. It is now believed that the Cathedral was actually completed and

served as a church for a while, but was later abandoned for reasons historical sources decline to reveal. Well, it's not the Cathedral ruins we have come to see. Right next to the ruins we find an iconic building, black with red windows and the characteristic Faroese turf roof. The beautiful farmhouse in *Kirkjubøur* is the Faroe Islands' oldest inhabited log house - so old that its origins disappear in the fog of medieval history.

The Old Episcopal Residence

You can quickly confirm that the present house was not the first building erected on this spot. The house does not entirely fit the basement foundation, which originally supported a larger building. This was the medieval seat of the Episcopal residence - and archaeological studies have concluded that the original facilities consisted of two parallel stone houses. The larger of these houses may have been two storeys high - and it is on the foundation of this building that the current farmhouse rests.



The Cathedral Ruins, the farmhouse and St. Olav's Church, built before 1250 and the oldest church in the Faroe Islands.

Landslide, Hurricane and Decay

What exactly happened to the original stone houses of the Episcopal residence is not known, but we know that already in the Middle Ages a great landslide destroyed a part of the stone buildings. This happened again in 1772. We know, however, that the log houses date back to an older period. On the whole, history has been quite unkind to Kirkjubøur. In addition to the aforementioned landslide a hurricane hit the settlement in the 1500s, destroying a substantial part of the houses. This could be the reason why *Jens Riber*, the Faroe Islands' only Protestant bishop appointed by the King in 1540 in the wake of the Reformation, found the Episcopal residence in great decline. Riber must have ordered materials from Norway to restore the farm, but it is doubtful that any restoration work took place. Riber himself left the Faroe Islands in 1556 and after him no other bishops were appointed to the islands. After the Reformation, all land belonging to the Catholic Church was

seized by the Danish king and leased to the so-called "*King's yeomen*". This also happened with the farm in Kirkjubøur, the largest in the country, after Riber left his position. The present King's yeoman is a 17th generation family member on the farm. In 1673, more than a century after Riber had left, pastor Lucas Debes wrote thus about the former magnificent Episcopal residence: *"... formerly so many large stone houses were built which have now been destroyed, and now there only remains a stone house with a large log-room built according to old customs."*

The House of the King's Yeoman

There is no doubt that the log-house Debes refers to is the current residential building in Kirkjubøur, or at least a part of it. The oldest parts of the building are two log houses and the so-called "*roykstova*" (the old designation for a kitchen and family rooms in one). While the log houses have over time



Roykstovan, inside the oldest part of the building.

been renovated on the inside, "roykstovan" remains unchanged as it has been for centuries.

Drifting on the Ocean

According to legend, the timber drifted ashore 1000 years ago, completely cut to size and labelled for set up. Since the material was already old, the legend goes that it originated from an old Norwegian chieftain's residence and was lost while being transported by ship. This story should be taken with reservations, the architectural style of the Viking Era being quite different from that of later times. But there may be some truth to the story - it is quite possible that the timber comes from an older building that was later transferred to the Faroe Islands. In any case, the old "roykstova" dates back several centuries.

The Present House

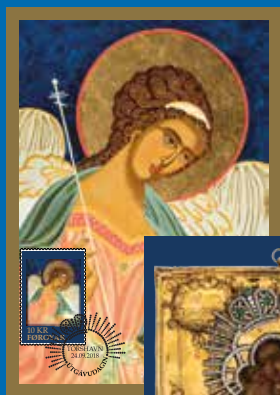
The rooms today function as some sort of a museum of ancient architecture and decor

- and the house is preserved. Roykstovan is a popular tourist attraction - there is a kind of café on site and it is also being used for gatherings of different kinds. At the same time, the house also serves as a residence for the present King's yeoman, including his more private chambers. A beautiful house - quite large by Faroese standards - and a magnificent example of old Faroese architecture.

Anker Eli Petersen



Poster



Set Maximum Cards

Religious Icons - Poster and Cards

The beautiful stamps with religious icons are now also available as postcards and maximum cards.

These product can be ordered on our website www.stamps.fo or by completing the order form in the middle of this bulletin.

They illustrate the ancient Russian icon from 1786 and the beautiful icon from 2016 painted by the famous Faroese artist, Astrid Andreassen. The latter is also sold as a poster and double Christmas card.

The beautiful poster with a golden border has a size of 24 x 30 cm and is printed on quality paper.

The postcards are 12 x 17 cm as is the double Christmas card, which is sold together with an envelope.



Double Christmas Card

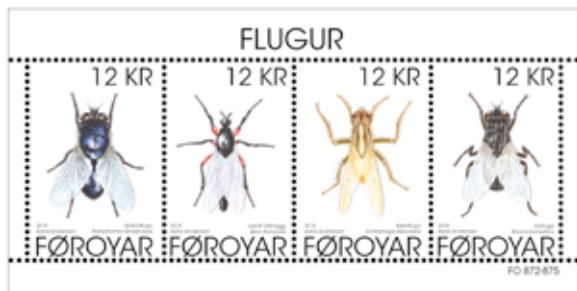
Stamp Programme 2019

- 11 January** **Provisional Stamps 1919-2019** - 2-stamp mini-sheet. FO 898-899.
Design: Kári við Rættará
- 25 February** **The Faroe Islands on Historical Maps** - 3-stamp mini-sheet. Olaus Magnus Carta Marina from 1539. Design: Kim Simonsen. FO 900-902.
Faroese Lakes III: Leynavatn & Eiðisvatn - two stamps and a self-adhesive booklet (6 stamps). Leynavatn on Streymoy and Eiðisvatn on Eysturoy. Photos: Olaf Olsen and Saviour Mifsud. FO 903-904.
SEPAC 2019: Old Residential Houses - one stamp. The farmhouse of Kirkjubøur dates back to the 11th century. Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen. FO 905.
- 29 April** **V.U. Hammershaimb 200 years** - 3-stamp mini-sheet. Born on March 25th 1819. Design: Ole Wich and Kim Simonsen.
The Moon Landing 1969-2019 - one stamp. 50 years since the first manned lunar landing. Design: Edward Fuglø.
EUROPA 2019: Black Guillemot - two stamps and a self-adhesive booklet (6 stamps). Drawings: Astrid Andreasen.
Old Watermills - two stamps. Sandágerði and Froðba - drawings by Daniel Bruun from 1896. Engraving: Martin Mörck.
- 3 June** **Reproduction of charity seals in connection with the 100th anniversary of the publication of the Faroese flag.** – mini-sheet. Design: Kári við Rættará.
- 11 June** **Wuhan Franking Labels** - four different motifs: pigs. For the International Stamp Exhibition in Wuhan, China. Design: Martin Mörck.
- 23 September** **Art: Elinborg Lützen 100 years** - two stamps.
Christmas Stamps: Chasubles - two stamps and a self-adhesive booklet (6 stamps). Photos: Fotostudio.
- 1 October** **Franking labels 2019** - four different motifs: Fishing. Artist: Suffia Nón.
- 4 November** **Yearbook, Year Pack and Christmas Seals**

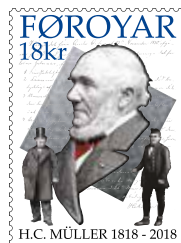
NB! Reservations are subject to changes in the annual program and layout.

Vote for Stamp of the Year 2018

and join the draw to win a woollen blanket



FO 872-875



FO 876



FO 883



FO 877



FO 878



FO 884



FO 885



FO 886



FO 879



FO 880



FO 889-892



FO 881-882



FO 887



FO 888



FO 893



FO 896



FO 897



FO 894



FO 895

1st prize:

A woollen blanket designed
by Faroese VIMA



2nd prize:

The Yearbook 2018



3rd prize:

Wooden trivet designed by
Faroese Shisa Brand



Cut out the coupon and send it to us or you can vote on www.stamps.fo.
The deadline for voting is 15th March 2019!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code/ _____

Town: _____

Client no.: _____

Stamp of the year 2018:

FO

☒ Yes, please. I would like to register for the e-newsletter from Posta Stamps.

E-mail: _____

End sale of the year

Please note that 31st December 2018 is the last date of sale for the stamps and articles presented on these pages. This is your last opportunity to purchase the stamps at nominal value. Send us the order coupon or order on our webshop www.stamps.fo.



FO 604-606



FO 716-717



FO 808-809



FO 802-803



FO 808-809



Vagar Airport, booklet with 8 stamps.
PPN000215



FO 800



FO 801



FO 810-811



FO 810-811



FO 817



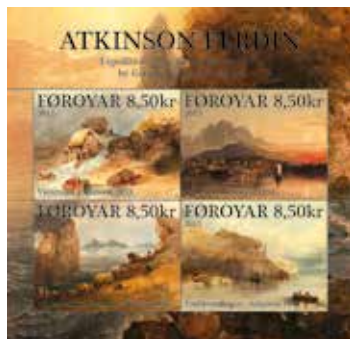
FO 820-821



The Christmas Gospel III, booklet with 8 stamps
PPN000915



FO 814-816



FO 804-807



Solar Eclipse 2015, 17 KR. Self adhesive booklet with 4 stamps.
PPN000808



Solar Eclipse 2015, 19 KR. Self adhesive booklet with 4 stamps.
PPN000809



FO 818-819



FO 712-713



FO 549-551

Booklet folder 2014



Yearbook 2014



Year Pack 2014



FDC Folder 2014



New Issues: 11 January and 25 February 2019



New stamp issue: **Provisional Stamps 1919-2019**
 Date of issue: 11.01.2019
 Value: 2 x 11,00 DKK
 Numbers: FO 898-899
 Stamp, size: 21 x 28 mm og 63 x 28 mm
 Sheet, size: 105 x 70 mm
 Artist: Kári við Rættará
 Printing technique: Offset
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
 Postal use: Small inland letters, 0-50 g



New stamp issue: **Historical Maps**
 Date of issue: 25.02.2019
 Value: 11,00, 17,00 and 27,00 DKK
 Numbers: FO 900-902
 Stamp, size: 22,5 x 40,0 mm
 Sheet, size: 100 x 70 mm
 Artist: Kim Simonsen
 Printing technique: Offset
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
 Postal use: Small inland letters, 0-50 g, and medium inland letters, 51-100 g and 101-250 g



Test proof



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Lake Leynar & Lake Eiði**
 Date of issue: 25.02.2019
 Value: 19,00 and 19,00 DKK
 Numbers: FO 903-904
 Stamp, size: 56 x 21 mm
 Photos: Olaf Olsen and Saviour Mifsud
 Printing technique: Offset
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
 Postal use: Small letters to Europe and other countries, 0-50 g

+ Self-adhesive booklet with 6 stamps



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Sepac 2019: Old Residential Houses**
 Date of issue: 25.02.2019
 Value: 19,00 DKK
 Numbers: FO 905
 Stamp, size: 48,2 x 28,0 mm
 Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen
 Printing technique: Offset and soft touch varnish
 Printer: La Poste, France
 Postal use: Small letters to Europe and other countries, 0-50 g

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ISSN 1603-0036

