

Posta Stamps

Faroe Islands

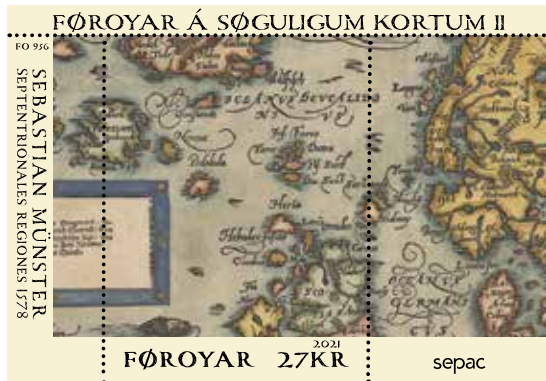
No. **47**

February 2021



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Posta 
FAROE ISLANDS



Test proof

Sepac 2021: The Faroes on Historical Maps II

Sebastian Münster's *Septentrionales regiones* 1678

The German scholar Sebastian Münster (1488-1552) was most important geographer of the sixteenth century. His *Cosmographia*, published in 1544, spread geographical knowledge wide over Europe. It was issued in nearly 40 editions and 6 languages. He published each known continent on a separate map. He died May 1552 in Basel of the Black Death.

On the Posta stamp we see the map called: "*Gemeine beschreibung aller Mittnächtigen Länder / Schweden / Gothen / Nordwegien / Deñmarck / rc*". Publication year 1578. The map was printed without change in German reprints of the book and in Latin editions with a title in that language, *Septentrionales regiones*.

Münster's *Cosmography* was improved by his stepson, Henri Petri. When Petri died in 1579 his son, also named Sebastian, took over. He believed it was about time the

maps in the book were renewed before being published again. They first appeared in the 1588 edition the *Cosmography*. The map had Ortelius' map of the Northern Countries as a model.

Maps and Geographic Knowledge

The great discoveries of Columbus, da Gama, Vespucci, Magellan, and others transformed the world maps of those days.

In *Cosmographia* we find a map of the Northern countries loosely based on Olaus' *Carta marina* from 1539.

Münster obtained original manuscript material for description of the countryside and of villages and towns, he worked mostly with printed materials as sources for his book.

Münster and Jakob Ziegler

Münster also build his work on Jacob Ziegler (c. 1470/71-1549) and his book about the Northern Countries from 1532. Ziegler's version of the Far North found its way into



Part of the iconic chart of sea monsters and beasts by Sebastian Münster, ca. 1570.

various Italian maps. Giacomo Gastaldi and Vincenzo Valgris's map from 1561 was also an inspiration for Münster's map.

Münster's monstrous North

In Münster's work we find an image of the North imagined, both as a place of darkness, death and the seat of evil, but also as a place of felicity with virtuous happy people.

Sebastian Münster is also famous for his iconic chart of sea monsters and beasts, both mythical creatures and real, it was also published in his *Cosmographia*. Münster's plate of mythical creatures includes abundant tusks, horns and twin-spouts. One vignette shows a galleon trying to outrun one monster by throwing their cargo overboard, while one sailor takes sight with a musket, Olaus Magnus has put this monster close to the Faroe Islands in his map, here in Münster's version.

It can be hard to understand the sheer number of ocean-dwelling creatures were once depicted as sea monsters. Perhaps it was to create even more mystique among the explorers of the time that Münster added all sorts of creatures to his work.

Later the geographer Adam Ortelius adapted many of the monsters for use on his map of Iceland in 1587.

The *Cosmographia* by Sebastian Münster was published until 1628, long after his death. It passed through 24 editions in 100 years, becoming an important book of geography, astronomy, history, and natural sciences, it remained authoritative and in demand until the end of the century, reflecting the general eagerness of the times for learning, especially geography.

Kim Simonsen, Ph.D. and MA



Test proof



Europa 2021: The Puffin

The Puffin – an Endangered Red List Species

The puffin with its large colourful beak and orange leg is an iconic bird of the Faroe Islands. Everyone travelling to the Faroe Islands in summer expects to be able to see it in large numbers, but many will be disappointed, for the stock has declined substantially in the last many decades.

In 2017, the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) added the puffin to the Red List of endangered bird species.

The decline in the Faroese puffin population began as early as 1768. At that time a Norwegian ship sailing from Trondheim to Ireland wrecked on the Scottish island of Lewis. The wreck subsequently drifted to Hvalba on Suðuroy. The wreck was crawling with the brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), considered as the most damaging and successful invasive species on the planet.

As early as 1769, another but unknown ship, had brought rats to Thorshavn on Streymoy, spreading quickly to the two large neighbouring islands of Vágar and Eysturoy.

During the construction of a Norwegian whaling station around the year 1900, the rat invaded the three north-eastern islands

of Borðoy, Viðoy and Kunoy and today rats are found on 7 of the 18 islands that make up the Faroe Islands.

The brown rat has completely eradicated ground-breeding birds such as the Atlantic puffin (*Fratercula arctica grabae*), the manx shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) and the storm petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) on the seven largest islands. The rat is able to kill even the adult birds, which means that for them eggs and chicks are an easily accessible food.

The puffin has been an important food source for the Faroese population. In addition to its value as food, its feathers could be sold and exported in earlier times, making them one of the few items that could provide the islanders with ready money. Most puffins were caught with a pole-net, which is a triangular net on an approx. 3 meters long wooden pole. But until 1942, a number of breeding birds were also taken out of their nesting holes and killed, while others were shot.

No one really knows how large the Faroese breeding population is today. Although pole-nets used in the puffin colonies most often catch young and non-breeding birds, inten-



Puffin and puffin holes. Photo: Jens-Kjeld Jensen.

sive catch has probably decimated the stock over the years. In the late 1930s, about 350,000 puffins were caught annually.

The puffin, which lays only one egg, has experienced another major challenge in the last 25 years, namely a lack of food for the young. The small fat sand lance, or sand eel (*Ammodytes dubius*) is the puffin's main food source. Sand eel is not fished off the Faroe Islands, so fishing is not the reason for its absence. No one knows for certain how it all fits together, but higher sea temperatures and lack of plankton are probably the most obvious cause.

When the puffin does not lay eggs, or the young die, old puffins will fly in circles over the colonies and be captured which makes the whole situation even worse. Around the year 2000, 100,000 puffins were caught annually, and a large part of them were old breeding birds, thus contributing to the decline of the Faroese puffin population which is now close to a complete collapse.

The capture of puffins is not the main reason why there is only a fraction left of the original puffin population compared to 300 years ago, but it is unforgivable that now in 2021 the puffin is still not completely protected in the Faroe Islands.

It seems that climate change has a major impact on sand eel, which is the puffin's main food source. Other Faroese bird species such as the manx shearwater, the arctic tern (*Sterna Paradisaea*) and the kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) which are also completely dependent on the sand eel.

Today, it is estimated that there may be 200,000 pairs of puffins left in the Faroe Islands.

The puffin becomes relatively old which means that there will still be some puffins around for a number of years to come, even if the population continues to decline. The oldest known puffin became 41 years old.

Jens Kjeld Jensen



Test proof



Cattle farming in the Faroes

The Faroese Cow and the Stability of the Peasant Economy

Peasant communities spend a lot of work securing their short-term survival. Hunger must be kept away under all conditions. In the Faroese peasant household, the tradition was to keep a storage of food for one year if possible, but sometimes this presented challenges in the changeable Faroese climate. Much attention was therefore paid to the quantity and stability of food in the natural economy of the farming community before sea fishing and money economy became the basis of Faroese society. A 1999 study of food composition with figures from 1813 shows that cow's milk accounted for about 45% of daily energy intake. In addition, milk was the most stable food which places milk and thus the peasant's cow at the heart of the original Faroese economy.

The Cow and the Infield

The cow turns grass into dairy food. This

made grass the most important crop in the Faroese coastal farming community. In spring, summer and autumn the cow could graze in the field, but in the winter months it was kept in the stable. It was therefore necessary to keep enough hay on hand to keep the cow alive until spring. The cattle feed, denoting the amount of hay needed for one cow over the winter, therefore became essential. It was also a widely used as a unit of measurement for land acreage.

Around the village houses in the fenced-in infield lay the drained, cultivated and terrace-shaped topsoil offering possibilities of such vigorous grass growth that sufficient hay could be harvested for the cattle feed. But good grass growth requires soil cultivation, and more importantly the soil also needs ample fertilizer. Here, too, the cow proved indispensable, for stabling during winter made it possible to collect nutrient-rich cow manure and store it in the



Cattle in the outfield in Velbastaður. Photo: Jógvan Hansen.

dunghill until spring arrived. Mixed with supplementary fertilizer, for example seaweed, the peasant thus avoided exhausting his topsoil.

Grain was also grown in the infield. This took place in rotational operations, where grain was sown in some areas, while in others hay was produced. The topsoil, however, only needed processing and fertilizing prior to the grain production. The soil was worked thoroughly manually with the traditional shovel. First, workers carried the cow dung on their backs out onto the field and sprinkled it on top of the terrace-shaped lawns. A narrow strip of soil was cut from the lower edge of the terrace and laid out in an inch-thick layer on top of the manure. It was then finely divided and the seed sprinkled evenly on the soil. Then the soil layer was thumped together with a plate fitted on a shaft. After the grain harvest, the soil was suffi-

ciently fertilized for the production of grass and hay to last for the next 5-6 years. The infield soil was thus worked and fertilized in a cycle where the cow became an essential production link, enabling fertilization and food security at the same time in a relatively stable economy.

The stamp shows the head of a cow and the infield cycle in the background surrounded by fertilizer and the yield of grain, hay and milk.

The Cow in the Outfield

Domestic cattle (*Bos taurus*) are common farm animals all over the world. The original Faroese species was small and short-legged, but it is now extinct. The cattle were robust and accustomed to grazing on steep slopes, coping well up in the mountains in changeable weather conditions. Often, due to shortage of winter fodder, the cows were gaunt



Milkmaids milking the cows in the outfield. Photo: Faroe Islands National Museum, SNR:3350-2662.

and lacking in strength in spring. But they recovered quickly in the rich grassy fields and were in excellent shape come autumn.

In summer, and as long as the cold, wind and rain allowed, the cows grazed in the fields, in mountain slopes or close to the village. This meant that during summer milkmaids had to walk outside the village fences twice a day, locate the cows, milk them and carry the milk home.

The stamp shows a typical Faroese cow and bull in the field as they would have been seen in the late 1800s, when they gradually mixed with foreign breeds.

The Cow in the Stable

Cows in stable during winter had to be watered, fed and milked, and the manure had to be mucked out to the dunghill. Ordinarily, all this stable work had to be done

by the women on the farm. The men, however, usually took over when the cow was to be mounted by the bull. Calving was preferably planned for spring when good grazing became available. The calves that were not to be used for domestic purposes were soon slaughtered. The new born calf's fourth stomach was then hung to dry and stored as it contains rennet which was used to separate milk into solid curds for cheesemaking. Until the 1970s, many Faroese families had a cow in the basement of their houses. Often one could estimate the children's state of health when the family's cow had calved and fresh milk was again available in the household.

The stamp shows the classic motif: a woman milking the cow in the stable.

Ole Wich



Test proof



Royal visit in the Faroes in 1921

King Christian IX was the first reigning Danish monarch to visit the Faroes; his only visit was in 1874 when the Danish Navy's wooden frigate *Jylland* became a temporary Royal Yacht to convey the King to Iceland, calling in at the Faroes on route. Like his father **King Frederik VIII** made only one visit to the islands, this was in 1907.

Unlike his grandfather and father, **King Christian X** visited the Faroes on more than one occasion. The first of these was in 1921 when, on June 17th, the King accompanied by Queen Alexandrine and their sons Crown Prince Frederik and Prince Knud left Copenhagen on route for the Faroes. Although a purpose built Royal Yacht, the *Dannebrog*, was available, it was thought that a side-wheel paddle steam yacht was perhaps not necessarily the best conveyance for the conditions that could be encountered in the North Atlantic, even in summer. So the King and Queen were aboard the *Valkyrien*, a Danish Navy vessel and the Crown Prince on board the cruiser *Heimdal*; the cruiser *Fylla* also formed part of the Royal flotilla.

Bad weather forced an unscheduled stop at Skagen but it was in more calm and pleasant conditions that they arrived at Vágur on Suðuroy on the morning of June 21st. This was not the planned first landfall and there was no official welcoming party to greet the Royal party.

By 1pm the flotilla had moved on to Tvøroyri where many people were on the shoreline and came out on to the fjord in Faroese boats in order to welcome it. A postcard published by J. Chr. Olsen depicting the King and Queen being rowed ashore is the subject of the first of the stamps being issued. On the quayside local businessman Peter Mortensen welcomed the King and Queen. They then proceeded to the *Klubbín* (a local members club) where Peter's brother Niels Juel Mortensen gave a speech and toasts were drunk in champagne. Another postcard in the series issued by J. Chr. Olsen is illustrated in Fig. 1. It depicts the Royal couple descending *Miðbrekkan* in Tvøroyri, presumably after their visit to the club. (Although the card was incorrectly captioned by the

publisher to suggest that the photograph was taken in Tórshavn, examination of the image reveals the hillside in the distance is *Ravnagjógv* – ravens cliff - above Tvøroyri.) The Royal party then visited the church (FO 504) which had been consecrated the year following King Frederik's visit and this was the topic for another postcard published by Olsen. Visits were also made to the school and hospital. Later that afternoon the King held a reception on board *Valkyrien*, and in the evening the Royal visitors were back on shore to see a Faroe ringdance.

The next morning the Royal visitors moved on to Tórshavn where they were welcomed on their landfall by the Amtmand, Elias Olrik. A postcard depicting this, and also published by Olsen, is the illustration used for the second stamp in this issue. Anton Degn, the Mayor of Tórshavn gave a speech of welcome on the quayside. Visits were made to the *Løgtinghús*, the monument commemorating the visit of King Christian IX in 1874 and the church *Havnar Kirkja*. A dinner was held at the High School that evening with speeches, music and songs written by Hans Andrias Djurhus (FR 096). Later a dance was held at the Tórshavn Klubbin.

Early next morning, the 23rd, the King and his ships sailed north to Klaksvík where he was welcomed on the quayside by the leader of the local council, O F Joensen. Subsequently visits were paid to the school and the church. The King then watched some swimming contests (in the sea) and rowing races and awarded medals to the winners and runners up.

By about noon the Royal party went back to Tórshavn and after taking some refreshments at the Amtmand's residence they proceeded to the site where the new hospital was to be built. There the King laid the foundation stone, after which Johan Hendrik Poulsen, a Løgting member from Sandoy, gave a speech in which he requested permission to name the new hospital after the Queen. This request was granted so, on its completion in 1924, it became known as Dronning Alexandrines Hospital. Later that day the Royal flotilla commenced the next leg of its journey in the North Atlantic, leaving for Iceland.

For return visits in both 1926 and 1930 another naval vessel, the *Niels Juel*, was employed to convey the King to the islands. However a new version of the Royal Yacht, the *Dannebrog*, had come into commission in May 1932 and, as this was deemed suitable for service in the North Atlantic, it was used for King Christian's fourth and final visit to the Faroes in 1936. On this visit the King was accompanied again by the Queen together with Prince Knud and his wife Princess Caroline-Mathilde. First landfall was at Vágur on Saturday June 13th and later that day they moved on to Tvøroyri. The next day they were in Tórshavn where the King visited the *Tuberculosis Sanatorium* at Hoydalar (FO 624) whilst the Queen visited a new rest home for women, *Naina*. Later the King and Queen together toured the hospital which now bore the Queen's name. In the evening they attended entertainments at *Sjónleikarhúsið* which continued until the early hours of the following day.



Fig. 1. The Royal couple descending Miðbrekkan in Tórshavn. A picture postcard issued by J. Chr. Olsen.

its final port of call in the Faroes, bound for Iceland.

Although this was the King Christian's only visit to the Faroes aboard the *Dannebrog*, the vessel has been seen many times subsequently in Faroese waters. It was used by **King Frederick IX** on his five visits and on numerous occasions since by **Queen Margrethe II** and other members of the Royal family. The vessel featured as part of the design of the miniature sheet (FR 302) issued in 1997 to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

Álvur Danielsen & Brian Hague

The *Dannebrog* departed Tórshavn at 14:00 on the Monday bound for Vestmanna where it dropped anchor at 16:30. On the quayside the King was welcomed not only by speeches from politicians and officials but also local school-children who sang "*Kong Christian stod*" (the Danish Royal anthem) and "*Tú alfagra land mitt*" (the Faroese National anthem). The King returned to the *Dannebrog* at 18:30 where he later hosted an on board reception for local dignitaries. At 22:00 that evening the *Dannebrog* departed



Logo of the Faroe Islands Study Circle

Faroe Islands Study Circle 30th Anniversary

CONGRATULATIONS to the Faroe Islands Study Circle which celebrates its 30th anniversary in April 2021. Several other philatelic societies in the world include the Faroes in their areas of interest, but the Study Circle is thought to be the only society which studies the stamps and postal history only of the Faroe Islands.

The Study Circle was formed in the United Kingdom in 1991. Its aim, then and now, is to bring together collectors of Faroe Islands' postage stamps, postmarks, postal history and postcards. Its members share information and knowledge about these collecting interests. Most Study Circle members also have a more general interest in the Faroe Islands - including their geography, history, culture, flora & fauna, transportation - and so the society also tries to provide for these wider interests.

Although still based in the United Kingdom, the Study Circle now has a worldwide membership. There are currently members in 16 countries outside the United Kingdom.

The Study Circle is an English-language organisation. It publishes an award-winning journal, called "238" after the number shown on the first postmark issued to Tórshavn when the Faroes' first post office opened in March 1870. The journal is sent to members twice a year. In between, members receive a more informal newsletter, also twice a year. Members may choose to receive the journal and newsletter as printed copies by post or by e-mail.

Currently, the Study Circle has two successful postal auctions each year, in which members can buy and sell Faroe-related philatelic items. It has published a popular series of picture postcards, all with postal-related



Members of the Faroe Islands Study Circle visited Posta's Head Office in Tórshavn in July 2018.

Left to right: Roger Tozer (Chairman 2016-20), John Smith (Treasurer since 1998), Marianna Nattestad (Posta), Sheila Denholm (committee member), Ingun Olsen (Posta), Norman Hudson (Journal Editor since 1995 and Secretary since 1998).

subjects. The society's first organised visit to the Faroes was in 1993 during which many longstanding friendships were created.

Over its 30 years, the Study Circle has always been an informal and friendly society. It has an organising committee, with all committee members elected by the membership and serving for two-year periods, but the Study Circle's driving force has always been members' personal friendships.

Membership costs 12GBP per year for receiving publications electronically or between 18 and 30GBP for printed copies by post (depending on the member's country of residence).

For further details, contact the Secretary, Norman Hudson, Faroe Islands Study Circle, 40 Queen's Road, Vicar's Cross, Chester, CH3 5HB, GB (e-mail: jntropics@hotmail.com) or see the Study Circle's website: www.faroeislandssc.org

*Norman Hudson,
Journal Editor and Secretary.*

End Sale of
these stamps

End sale

Please note that 7th July 2021 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.



PPS000517



PPS000217



PPA010217



PPA020415



PPA020217

*Lakes: Sørvágsvatn / Leitisvatn. 17,00 and 19,00 DKK, booklet with six self-adhesive stamps. PPN00217.



PPA010517

*Europa 2017: 9,50 and 17,00 DKK, booklet with six self-adhesive stamps. PPN00517.



PPA001017

*National Costumes II. 9,50 and 17,00 DKK, booklet with six self-adhesive stamps. PPN000917.



PPA000857



PPA020517



PPS021017



PPA000869



* Lighthouses: 14,50, 15,50 and 17,00 DKK. Booklet with six self-adhesive stamps. PPN00414.



PPA020414



PPS000917



PPA010917

Yearbook 2016



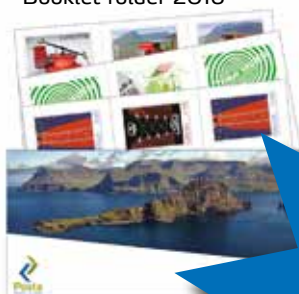
FDC Folder 2016



Year Pack 2016



Booklet folder 2016



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New Issues on 26 April 2021



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Sepac 2021: Historical Maps II**
Date of issue: 26.04.2021
Value: 27,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 956
Stamp, size: 35 x 36 mm
Mini-sheet, size: 72 x 50 mm
Design: Kim Simonsen
Printing technique: Offset
Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
Postal use: Letters abroad, 0-100 g



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Europa 2021: The Puffin**
Date of issue: 26.04.2021
Value: 17,00 and 27,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 957-958
Stamp, size: 30 x 40 mm
Photos: Thomas Vikre and Jógvan Hansen
Printing technique: Offset
Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
Postal use: Letters inland and abroad, 0-100 g. + selfadhesive booklet with 6 stamps



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Cattle Farming in the Faroe Islands**
Date of issue: 26.04.2021
Value: 7,00, 10,00 and 17,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 959-961
Artist: Ole Wich
Printing technique: Offset
Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
Postal use: Additional postage and inland letters, 0-100 g.



Test proof



New stamp issue: **Royal Visit in 1921**
Date of issue: 26.04.2021
Value: 17,00 and 27,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 962-963
Stamp, size: 40 x 26 mm
Photos: Old postcards
Printing technique: Offset
Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France
Postal use: Letters inland and abroad, 0-100 g.

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