

# 1936 Swedish-Icelandic Vatnajokull Expedition

Vatnajokull – means the glacier that gives water  
largest glacier in Iceland – covers 8 % of Iceland

Average thickness 600 – 800 meters

Several volcanos are located under the ice

Numerous rivers flow from the glacier & supply millions of gallons of  
water around Iceland





# Hand drawn postcard of Vatnajökull



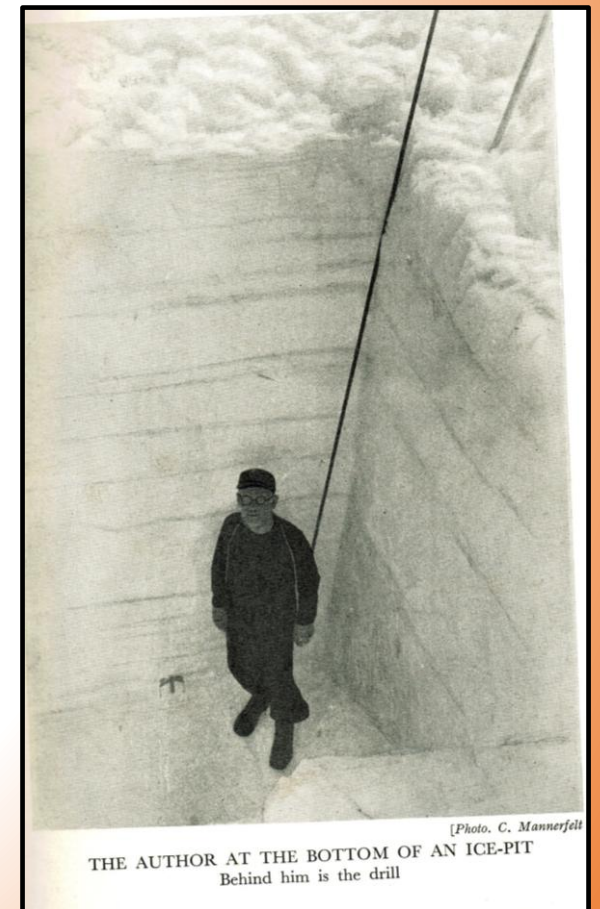
- The 1936 Swedish-Icelandic Vatnajökull Expedition was conceived by **Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann** (Swedish Scientist) and **Jon Eythorsson** (Icelandic Meteorologist) in 1925 while conducting a glacier study in the Jotunheim in Norway.
- **Expedition Mission:** - to study the life & nature of the glacier (i.e. the rate of accumulation; ablation and movement).





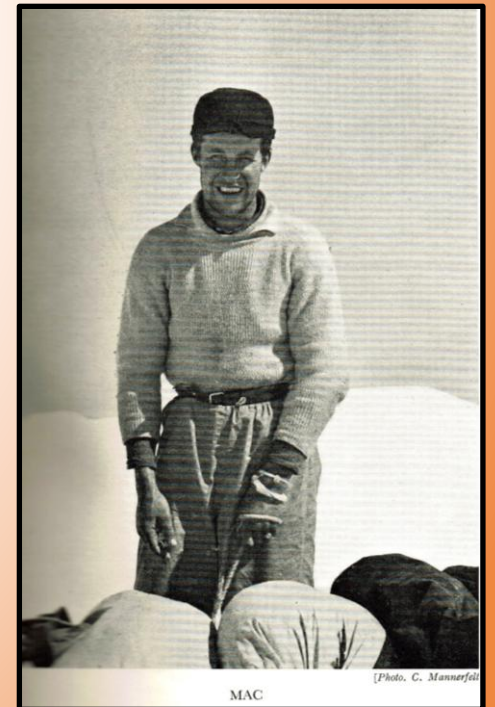
*The everyday challenges & obstacles of a glacier expedition under extreme weather conditions requires an enormous physical and psychological exertion.*

- The 1936 Vatnajökull expedition involved: **six men living in tents on the glacier for 8 weeks** (from late April to late June); **transporting their supplies on two pulkas** (sleds - one pulled by 4 sled dogs & the other by them) **while obtaining scientific measurements of the glacier's movement & an assessment of annual precipitation & melting** (the later by digging pits 4 to 8 meters deep into the ice); & at times **enduring below zero temperatures at times; howling winds, rain and snow storms.**



# Members of the Vatnajökull Expedition

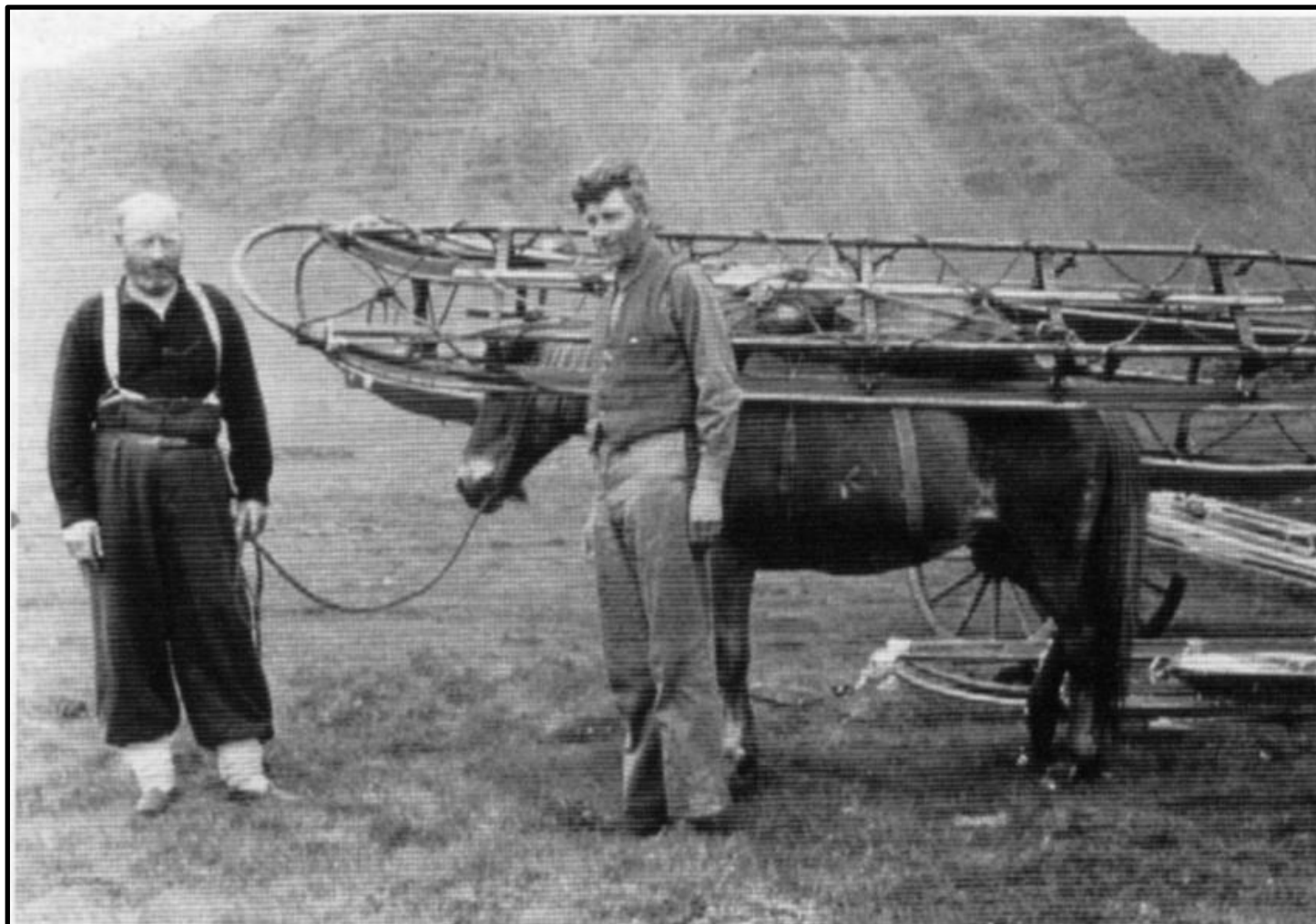
- **Jon Eythorsson** (Icelandic Meteorologist; Glacier Explorer)
- **Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann** (Swedish Scientist, Glacier Explorer)
- **Jon Jonsson (Jon from Laug)** would advance supplies to the campsites and carry the mail to & from the glacier. He had participated on the Alfred Wegner Greenland Polar Expeditions in 1930-31. He was a policeman & glima wrestler.
- **Mac Lilliehook** Expert skier & sled dog driver
- **Carl Mannerfelt (Calle)** Expedition cook; Nordic Ski Champion; Cartographer; student
- **Sigurdur Porarinsson** Expedition member; student



MAC

[Photo: C. Mannerfelt]

# Jon from Laug & Skar





# A view of the terrain – Hoffells Jókull



GENERAL VIEW OF HOFFELLS JÖKULL

[Photo. S. Thorarinnson]



HOFFELLS JÖKULL

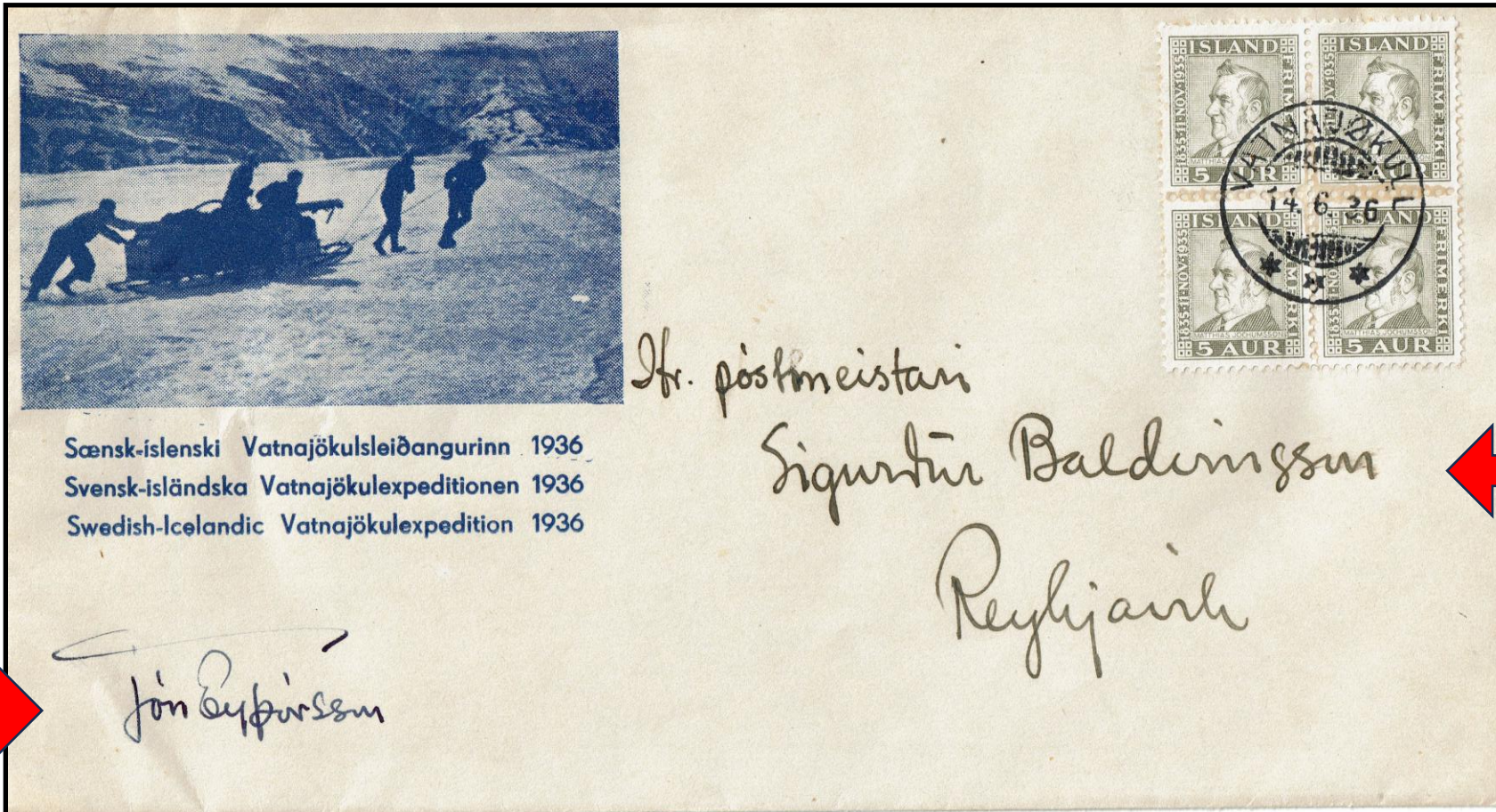
[Photo. C. Mannerfelt]

[facing p.]



# Postmaster Sigurdur Baldvinsson

## Jon Eyporsson Vatnajokull Postmaster



# Known cancel dates

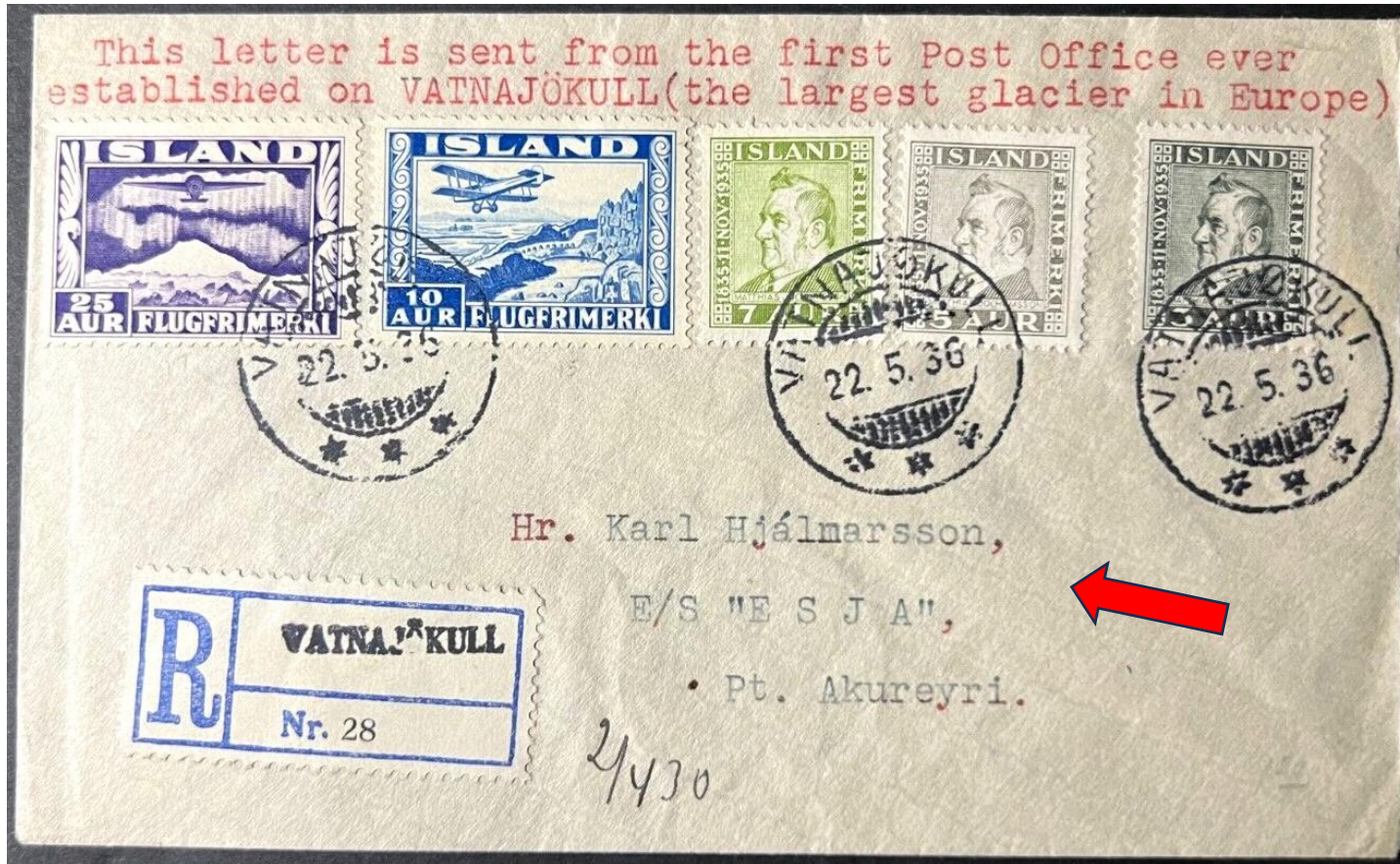
- **All known covers & cancelled stamps on piece have one of the following postmark dates:**
- **22.5.36** (on plain envelopes and earliest known usage)
- **1.6.36** (first date on cachet covers)
- **9.6.36** (date with fewest known covers)
- **14 6 36** (on cachet covers)



## Plain envelopes 22.5.36

- Hans Ahlmann in *Land of Fire and Ice* states: “There were over a hundred of them (that Eythorsson had stamped and sent off as registered mail) and when that was done, we only had about 150 of our special envelopes left.”
- The members of the expedition hastily had some cachet envelopes created showing themselves transporting their sled up Hoffells Jokull which they hoped to sell to philatelist to help with their increasing expedition expenses.

# Plain envelopes 22.5.36





# Plain envelope

- **A long journey from Vatnajokull Post Office to the U.S.A. via Edinburgh & back to Iceland!**
- Depart Vatnajokull P.O. 22.5.36  
Arrive Reykjavik 29.5.36  
Via ship to Edinburgh NO2 30.00.36 (date error)





# Plain envelopes 22.5.36





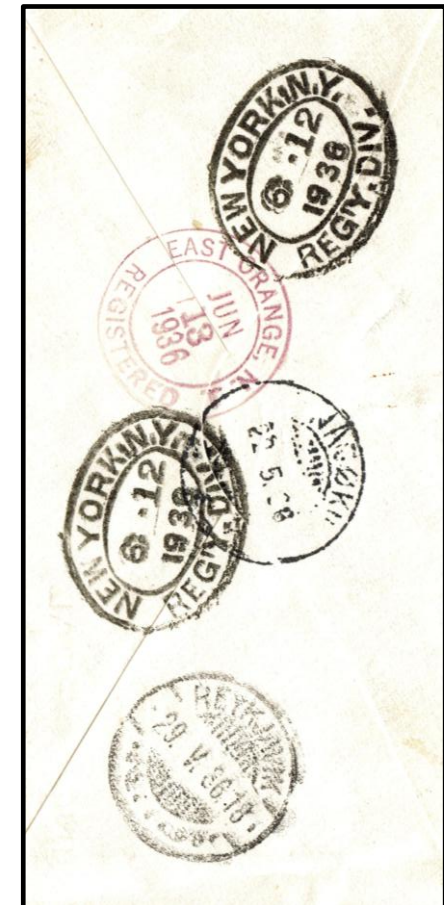
# Plain Envelopes



Ingi Ardal – Postman, Business man; stamp dealer



A.C. Roessler founding member Denver Stamp club; published  
Airmail Stamp News 1918-1938; Airmail Society

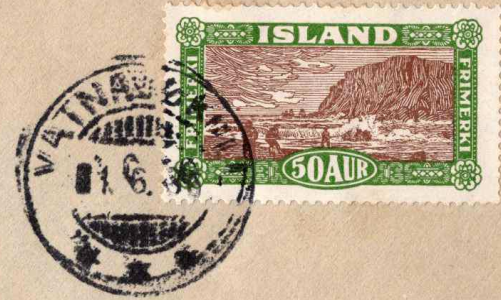




# Expedition Cachet covers 1.6.36



Sænsk-islenski Vatnajökulsleiðangurinn 1936  
Svensk-isländska Vatnajökulexpeditionen 1936  
Swedish-Icelandic Vatnajökulexpedition 1936

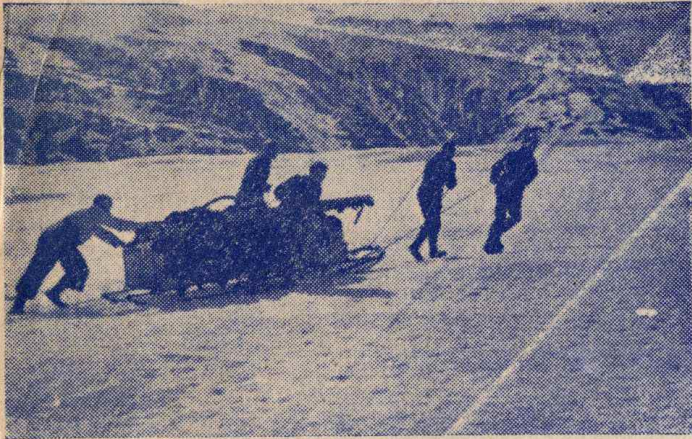


Hr. Karl Hjalmarsson

efs Esja  
Reykjavík



# Expedition Cachet cover 9.6.36



Sænsk-islenski Vatnajökulsleiðangurinn 1936  
Svensk-isländska Vatnajökulexpeditionen 1936  
Swedish-Icelandic Vatnajökulexpedition 1936



*Fil. And.  
Carl Mannerfeldt  
Jungfru. 23  
Stockholm*

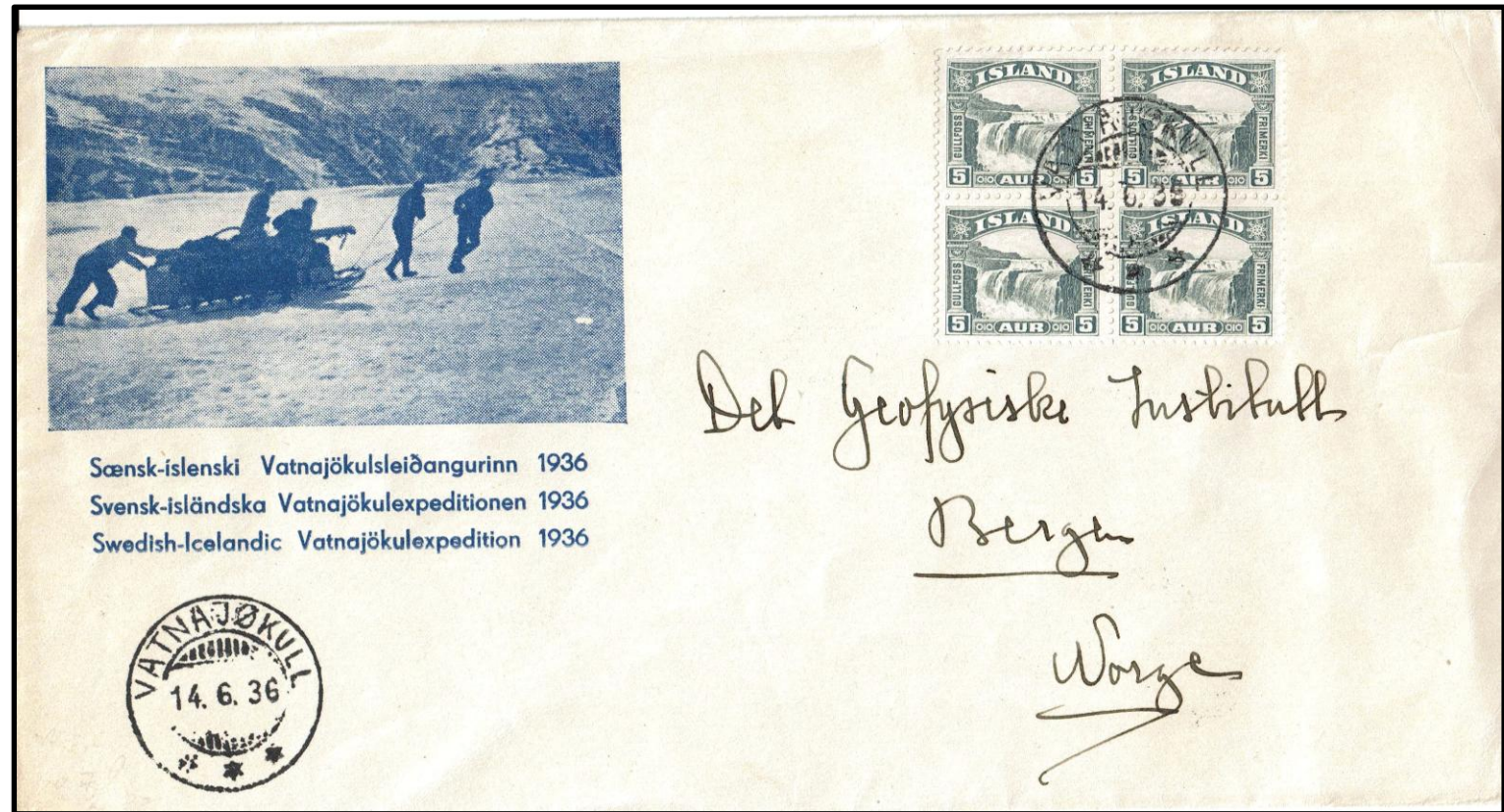
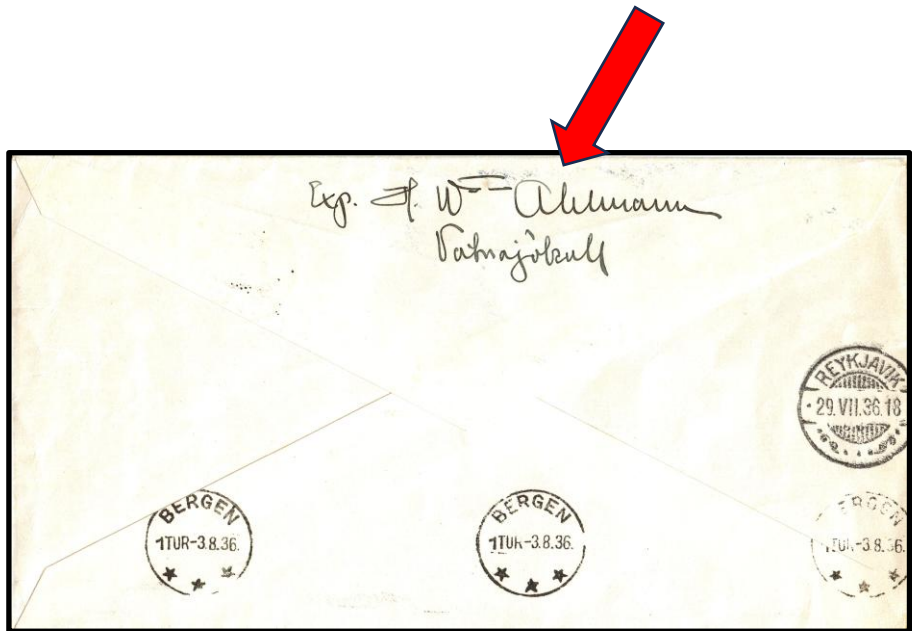
*Svipjót*



# Cut pieces 14.6.36



# Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann – Swedish Scientist



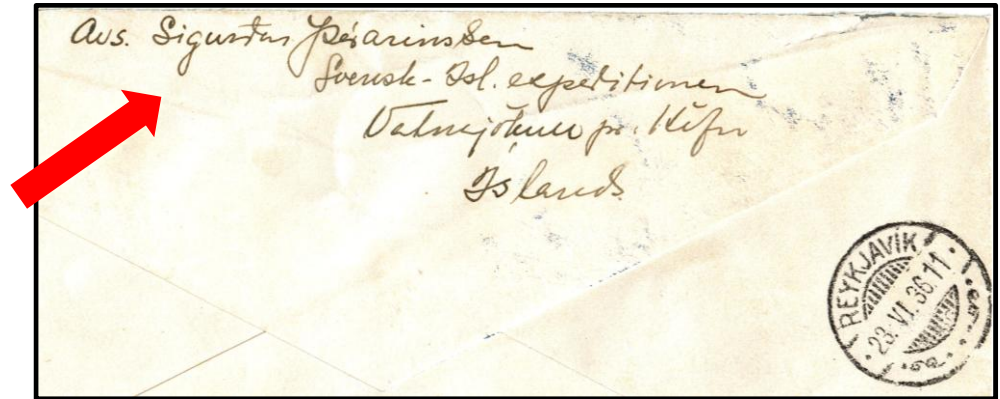


# Expedition Cachet cover



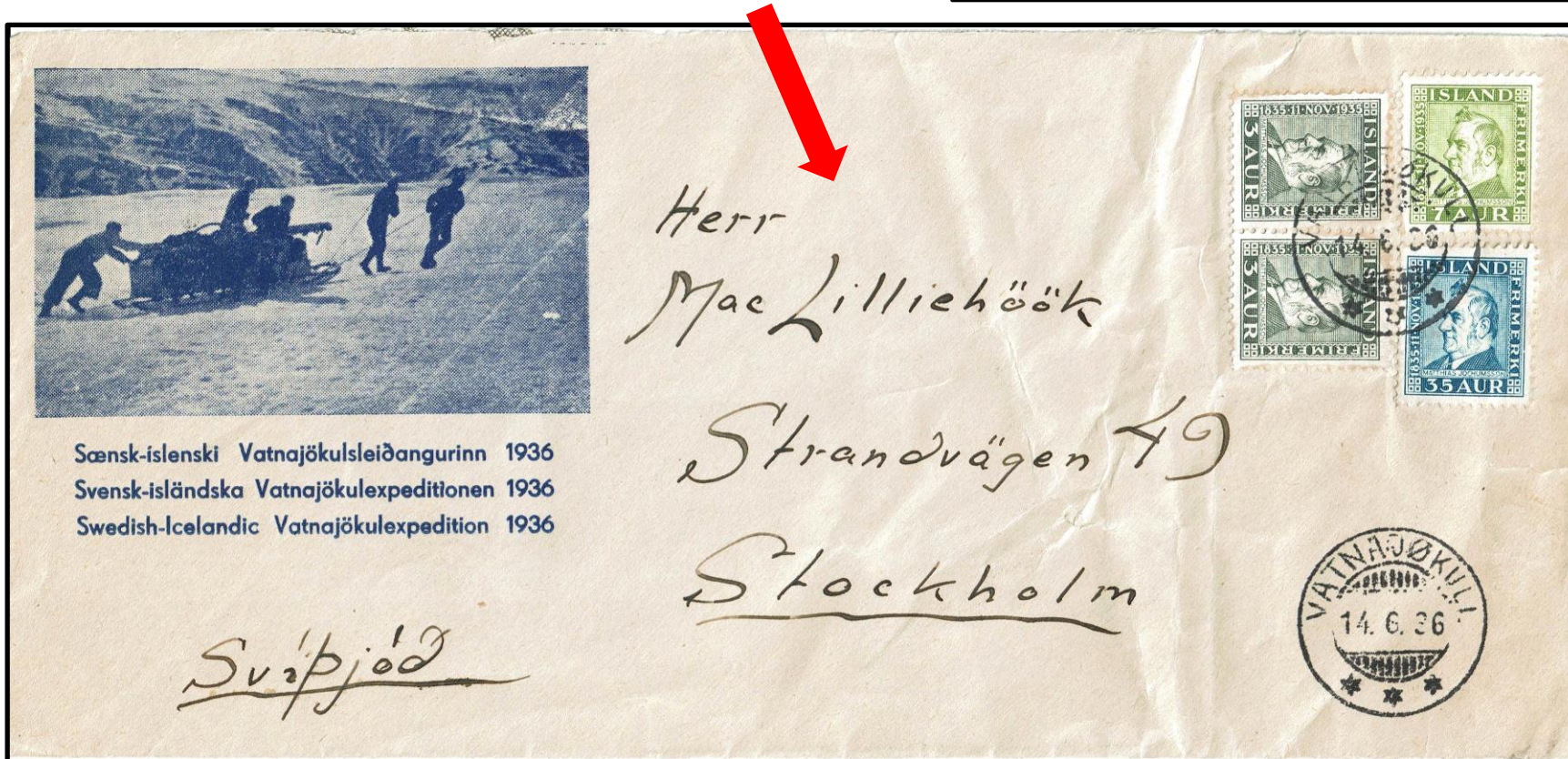
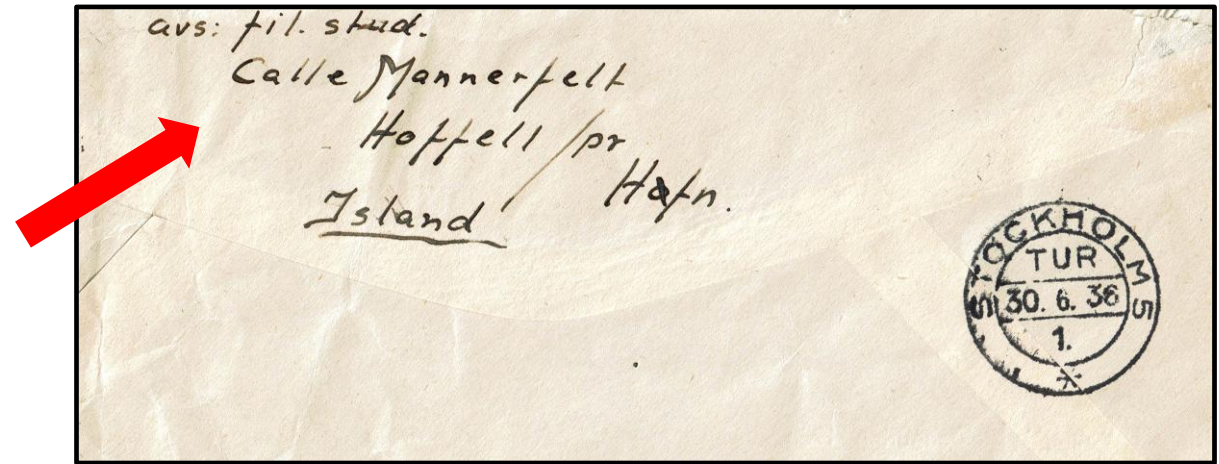


# Sigurtur to school





# Calle to Mac



- **Jon Eythorsson** (Icelandic Meteorologist; Glacier Explorer; Expedition Postmaster) **founder Iceland's State Broadcasting Corp; President of Icelandic Glaciological Society; Editor & Pub. Of Jokull Journal; author of numerous papers on climate change.**
- **Hans Wilhelmsson Ahlmann** (Swedish Scientist, Glacier Explorer) **Prof. Geography; several glacier expeditions; Ambassador to Norway; President International Geographical Union; authored numerous articles on "man's relation to the environment."**
- **Jon Jonsson (Jon from Laug)** would advance supplies to the campsites and carry the mail to & from the glacier. He had participated on the Alfred Wegner Greenland Polar Expeditions in 1930-31. Policeman & glima wrestler.
- **Mac Lilliehook** Expert skier & sled dog driver (frostbite)
- **Carl Mannerfelt (Calle)** Expedition cook; Nordic Ski Champion; Cartographer; student **Ph.D. Geography, Asst Prof. Stockholm Univ.; President of Swedish Cartography Society** (their highest award named after him).
- **Sigurdur Porarinsson** Expedition member; student **Ph.D. Geography, Volcanology, & Glaciology; Prof. Univ. Iceland; published < 200 scientific papers; pioneer in field of Tephrochronolgy; lyricist (author of Icelandic songs); International Glaciological society; International Assoc. of Volcanology & Chemistry of Earth's Interior** (their highest award named after him).