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Editor's Page

"June" 1988

An apology, and an explanation, are due our members, for the late appearance of this issue.

As Journal Staff Member Frans Rummens wrote in the last Newsletter, Journal Editor Paul van Reyen is in the process of relocating to Europe, and is currently seeking a suitable house in rural France.

It had been Editor van Reyen's intention to complete work on this issue before he left for Europe. However, things did not work out as planned, and Composer Jan Enthoven reports that he has only enough material for a shorter than normal issue. The additional material needed to publish a normal size Journal is unfortunately packed away in shipping boxes, inaccessible for weeks at best.

Rather than delay the publication of this issue any longer (already some three to four months late), it was decided by your Editorial Board that we proceed with the material on hand, even though unfortunately, it will make a slimmer issue than customary.

The major article this month, by ASNP member M. Hardjasudarma, covers a little-known aspect of postal operations during the Japanese occupation of the Indies. Several shorter articles by Dr Rummens, completes this shortened issue.

We are proceeding with plans to produce a larger issue for the next (September) Journal. Editor van Reyen assures us that his move into his new home will be completed by mid-October, and he will turn out the December issue as close to schedule as possible.

We do apologize for this delay, and hope you will bear with us during this period.

Table of contents

Usage of the Dai-Nippon-Kreisler Postcards on Java in 1943	70
Philatelic Curiosa	80
Book Reviews	83

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USAGE OF THE DAI NIPPON-KREISLER POSTCARD ON JAVA IN 1943:

REPORT ON A RECENT ACQUISITION

By M. Hardjasudarma

Although parts of the Netherlands Indies were still outside the control of invading Japanese forces on the day the government of that colony capitulated, 9 March 1942, the principal island of Java was by then in the hands of the Imperial Japanese Army. Meticulous planning and organization were hallmarks of Japanese military strategy, but strangely enough that was not the case with their postal administration of occupied territories. They came seemingly unprepared, and instituted a host of measures and regulations that varied regionally and in time. These were relatively conservative on Java and the smaller island of Madura, which together formed one postal administration unit, in that no overprints were allowed. All postal items continued to be in use, except for those bearing Queen Wilhelmina's likeness. Use of the postcard, always an economical favorite, now increased in proportion to letters. The 3 1/2 c rate for domestic postcards, in force since 1 May 1937 was maintained by the Japanese throughout 1942 and 1943. Initially, the original Netherlands Indies 3 1/2 c Kreisler postcard was used. Later in 1942, the words NED. INDIE in the stamp imprint were replaced by DAI NIPPON. And in 1943 the word BRIEFKAART (postcard) was replaced by its Japanese equivalent, thus erasing the last remnant of Dutch, except for the design which continued to be that of Kreisler, obviously used without his permission. A word about the designer, ir. A. R. M. Kreisler (ir. is an abbreviation of "ingenieur" which is an academic degree in engineering):

Born an Austrian in 1887, he moved to the Netherlands at an early age, and was sent on government service to the East Indies in 1920, where he worked and lived for 34 years, two and a half of it in a Japanese internment camp. Kreisler is credited with being the person

who broke the monotony of designs for Dutch colonial issues with his adoption of the hitherto neglected square shape and lively colors, which contrasted sharply with the more sedate and sometimes downright dull hues of earlier emissions. His large series of definitives (1933-39) consisted of two designs: Queen Wilhelmina facing left, and a farmer and a pair of water buffaloes plowing a rice field. The latter design was used for the 3 1/2 c postcard, in dark grey.

And now about my recent acquisition:

Last summer, a long time correspondent in Jakarta (or: Djakarta as it was spelled in 1943), Indonesia, informed me that a local firm was cleaning up its archives, and he thought there were some old letters among them. He also implied that the items were of inferior quality and best disposed of in a garbage bin. I wrote back asking that he send them to me anyway. They arrived several months later, stashed between Indonesian magazines and delicacies such as shrimp chips (that's kroepoek oedang Sidoardjo - old spelling - for you old Indies hands). At first glance, I had to agree, the postcards (which is what they were) looked awful. However, another couple of



Fig. 1 Type J8b postcard. Circular date and commemorative square post marks, both of 29 April. Censor initial in red (pencil). Initial in right lower corner is probably also of censor origin.

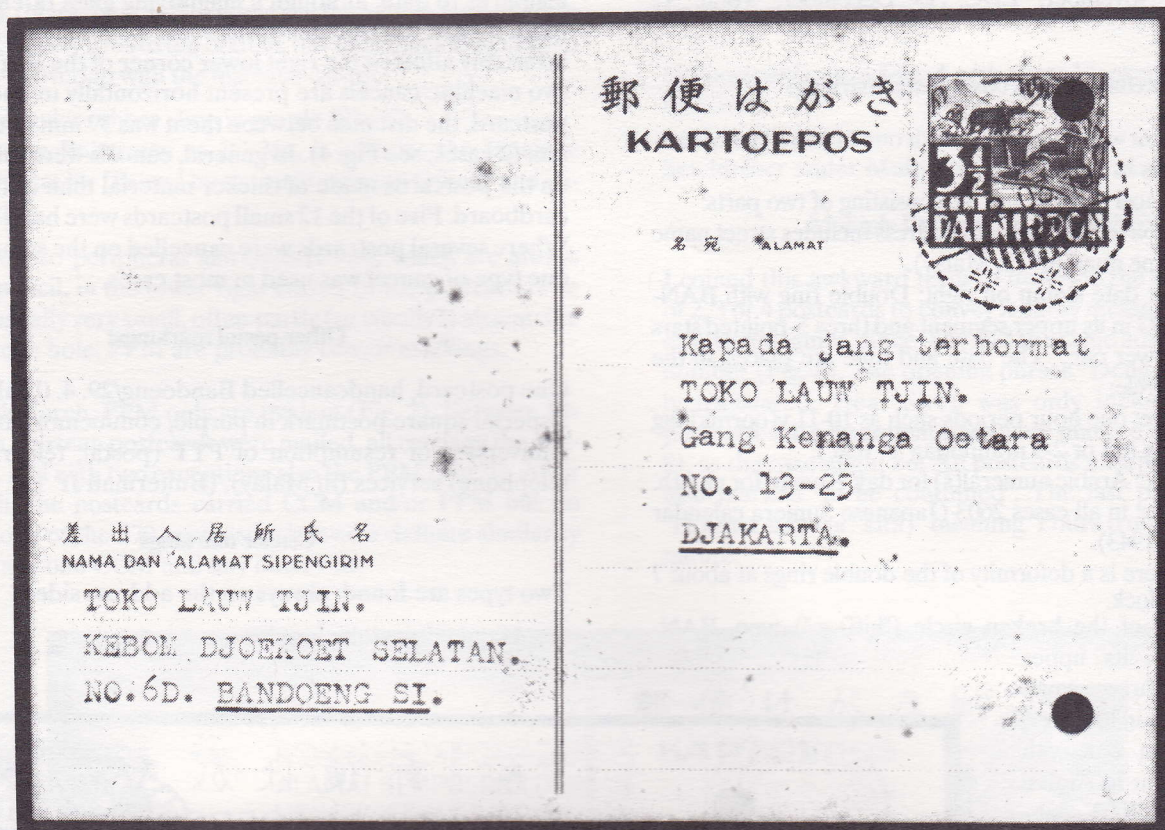


Fig. 2 Type J8b postcard. Hand cancel of the JL (ex LB5) type. No CCM, small PPM (see text).

months later, after perusing the piles time and again, I decided to write this article. You decide whether it's worth the paper it's printed on. A description of the postcards follows herewith:

Nature of correspondence

All postcards resulted from a business correspondence between the Bandoeng branch of a firm, and its head office in Djakarta, except for two pieces which were sent in the reverse direction. Correspondence was typewritten in a variant of Malay (as Indonesian was called then), commonly used by the Chinese segment of the population in those days, with the occasionally interspersed Dutch term suggesting that (some of) the writers were more at ease in that language. The messages formed an endless stream of information regarding supply, purchase, sale and transportation of household items such as soap, cosmetics and tomato ketchup, but also tricycles, liquor and "room cooling machines" (air conditioners?). One postcard mentioned the sale of 19 refrigerators for f 10464 to the "Imperial Dai Nippon Army", another informed that a truck was forbidden by authorities to leave Bandoeng. Still another was confidential, and marked as such at the top. The postcards were often sent in multiples, up to six a day, at intervals ranging up to 9 days (more commonly just a few days).

Types of postcards and periods of usage

- (1) private cards, franked with 3 1/2 c Kreisler (NVPH #190; Scott #168).
Earliest date of cancellation (EDC): 4 January
Latest date of cancellation (LDC): 13 January.
Total: 10 postcards.
- (2) 3 1/2 c Dai Nippon-Kreisler postcard with BRIEFKAART replaced by Japanese characters, on thick white paper (or thin cardboard?).
(Bulterman J8a.) (Figures 2 and 5).
EDC: 21 January. LDC: 26 March. Total: 56 postcards.
- (3) As (2) but the postcards consist of two layers of paper: beige and somewhat rough for the fronts, white and smooth for the backs.
(Bulterman J8b.) (Figures 1,4 and 7).
EDC: 24 March. LDC: 26 November. Total: 274 postcards.
- (3a) As (3) but paper types for fronts and backs are switched, and inscribed "Postcard with prepaid reply" in Japanese and Malay.
(Bulterman J9bI) (Fig. 6)
EDC: 19 November. LDC: 1 December. Total: 10 postcards.
- (3b) As (3) but inscribed "Reply postcard" in two languages. (Bulterman J9bII) (Fig. 6)
EDC: 19 November. LDC: 30 November. Total: 8 postcards.

- (4) As (2) but smaller size. (Bulterman J10) (Fig. 3)
EDC: 26 November. LDC: 15 December. Total: 12 postcards.

Cancellations and other postal markings

The stamp imprint was obliterated with one of two types of cancellations, always in black:

- (1) Machine cancel (Figs. 4 and 6), consisting of two parts:
- Slogan on left: "Complete address includes street name and home number" (in Malay).
 - Circular date stamp on right: Double ring with BANDOENG in its upper segment and three 5-pointed stars in its lower one. The date and time are placed in the inner circle:
 - time: one hour periods such as 10-11 v(oormiddag = a.m.) or 2-3 n(amiddag = p.m.).
 - date: Arabic numeral(s) for day, Roman for month.
 - year: in all cases 2603 (Japanese Sumera calendar = 1943).
 There is a deformity of the double rings at about 7 o'clock.

- (2) Handcancel of the broken circle ("biffage") type. BANDOENG in its upper segment, three small open crosses in its lower, long median bar with date and hour in Arabic numerals (2603 abbreviated to 03), hour indicated by single or double digits. According to Bulterman this is type JL, based on LB 6 with either widely (Fig. 3) or narrowly spaced (Fig. 5) numerals, or in three cases based on LB 5.(Fig. 2)

The machine cancel obliterated 290 stamp imprints, the hand cancel 79 which included two Djakarta handcancels, both based on type LB 5. The 79 handcancels included a few that were applied where the machine cancel had not done the job properly (Figs. 3 and 4). In these cases the cancels were always of the same date, although not necessarily the same hourly indication. One postcard mailed from Bandoeng bore no cancellation, but displayed a clearly visible circular depression over the

stamp imprint. With very few exceptions the cancels were all legible as to date, although a magnifying glass often had to be used. Where the machine cancel was insufficiently inked, this invariably affected the right lower corner of the slogan. Where two machine cancels are present horizontally in one row on a postcard, the distance between them was 39 mm (1 case) or 40 mm (2 cases; see Fig. 4). In general, cancels were more legible on the postcards made of thicker material than of the thinner cardboard. Five of the 12 small postcards were hand cancelled. Where several postcards were cancelled on the same day, only one type of cancel was used in most cases.

Other postal markings:

One postcard, handcancelled Bandoeng/29. 4. 03 also carried a special square postmark in purple, commemorating the first anniversary of resumption of PTT (postal, telegraphic and telephone) services (in Malay). (Bulterman JP 13). (Fig. 1).

Censor markings

Two types are found, always on the address side:

- Handwritten initials only.

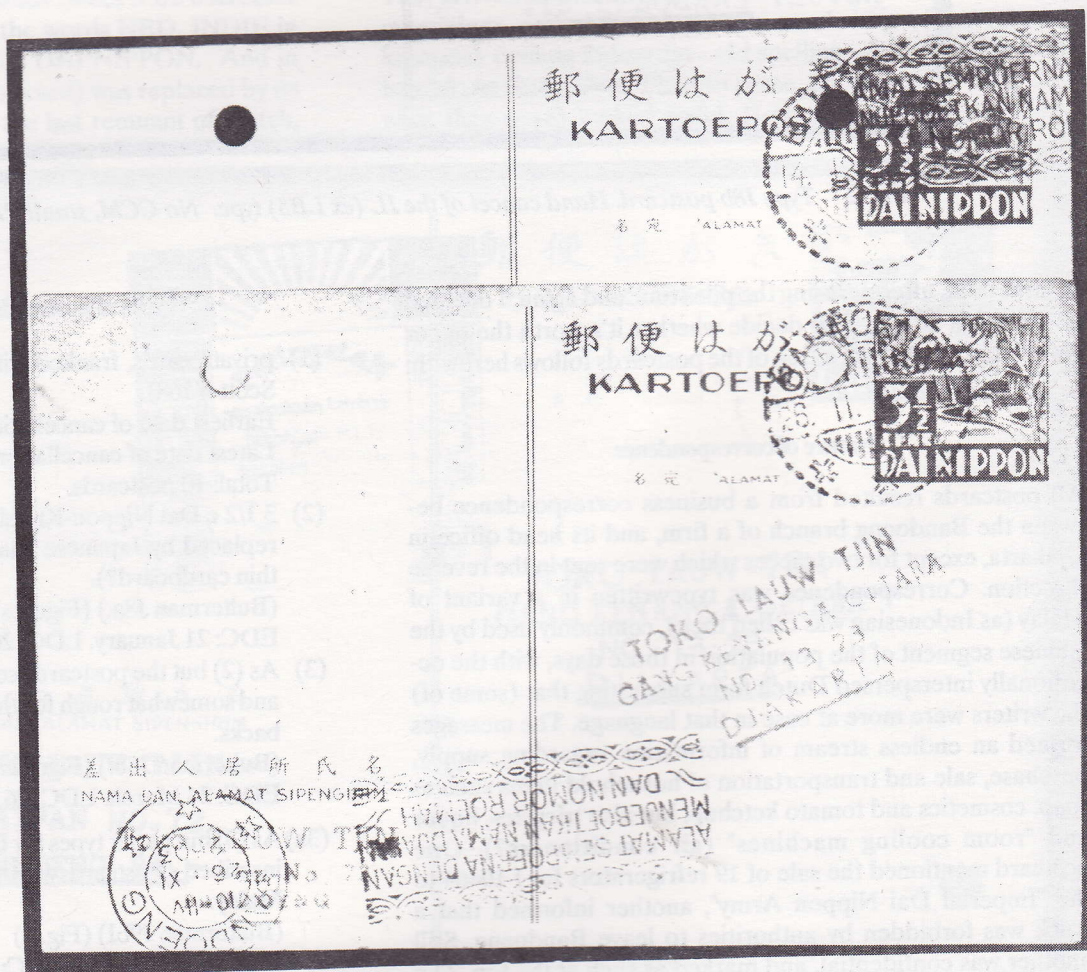


Fig. 3 Postcards of the J10 type with misregistered machine cancels corrected by handcancels type JL ex LB 6, wide spacing.

Central censor markings (CCM) (Figs, 1, 4 and 6): in pencil or ink (black, blue, red or green), in the middle portion of the card, usually toward the bottom, but sometimes much higher so as to overlap with the machine cancel.

2. Rectangular rubber chop in purple (Fig. 5): Listed in Bulterman as JC 35a, it contains the Japanese characters for "Passed by censor/Bandoeng Office," and initialed.

There are also peripheral markings (PPM) which are always in black pencil, in the lower right corner of the postcard. The initial is usually very small, often partly (or wholly?) absent due to the punch hole. PPM are probably censor markings.

Before 14 March, PPM only are evident (Fig. 2). Between 14-28 March, thirteen postcards were mailed, all carrying the censor chop, and with two exceptions also the PPM (Fig. 5). After 18 March, the postcards carried CCM and/or PPM but no chops. None of the 370 postcards showed a definite similarity between any one CCM and any one PPM.

Of unknown significance, one postcard had a red "3" rubber stamped next to the CCM.

No postcards were found with parts blacked out or removed by censor.

See further under Multiple Postcard Messages.

Multiple Postcard Messages (MPCM)

I coined this awkward term to describe the simultaneous use of 2, 3 or 4 postcards to convey lengthy messages. MPCM were easy to recognize, since they had the same administrative serial number (Fig. 8). The opening phrase "Dengan hormat" (freely translated: Dear Sirs), was only included on the first postcard. All subsequent ones were marked part 2, 3 or 4 (Fig. 8), as the case might be. All postcards except for the last were also marked "to be continued". The last postcard only had "Hormat saia (or: kita)" meaning Yours truly, and the full signature.



Fig. 4 J8b type postcards with misplaced machine cancels.



Fig. 5 Three part message using type J8a postcards, all typed 13.3.2603 and cancelled the next day. Similar censor chops, but three different initials. Hand cancels with narrow spacing of numerals.

There were 70 MPCM, with the following characteristics:

Number of postcards in MPCM:	Number of MPCM by postcard type:	Number of MPCM:	Number of postcards:
2	private = 3. J8a = 6. J8b = 36. J10 = 2.	47	94
3	J8a = 6. J8a&b = 1. J8b = 12. J9bI&J9bII = 1.	20	60
4	J8a = 2. J8b = 1.	3	12
Total number of postcards			166

With one exception only, all postcards of any given MPCM were cancelled on the same day, usually with either the machine or the hand cancel. In a few cases, two types of hand-cancels were used simultaneously. Three MPCM had both machine and hand cancels which showed no time difference in one, one hour in another, and unknown in the third because of illegibility. Where only one type of cancel was used, there was usually no time difference at all, occasionally 1-3 hours, and in one case 5 hours. The one notable exception is a two part MPCM mailed on 11 August. One postcard was received by 13 August, the other was cancelled 28 December and received the next day. In the meantime, a copy of the tardy postcard had been mailed on 20 August and received by 23 August.

Dissimilar central (CCM) or peripheral (PPM) markings on MPCM:

Presence on postcard of:	Number of MPCM:	Dissimilar:	Percentage:
CCM & PPM together	46	CCM = 13	28.3
CCM & PPM together	46	PPM = 15 *	32.6
CCM only	4	CCM = 0	0.0
PPM only	20	PPM = 10	50.0

*could be more than 15, since several PPM appeared to have been punched out.

Transit Times

Twenty MPCM were cancelled the same day they were written, 47 MPCM received next day's cancel. Two MPCM were cancelled 2 and 3 days later, respectively. The non-MPCM postcards showed the same trend. Except for the two Djakarta postcards, all others bear a handwritten "B" and a date, on the message side (Fig. 8). The "B" likely stands for "Behandeld" or "Beantwoord" (Dutch), meaning processed or replied. Although the "B" date may therefore be later than the actual receipt at the Djakarta office, 57 of the 70 MPCM carried "B" dates differing only 4 days or less from the date they were written. In many cases, it must have only taken one or two days for a postcard to be delivered at the Djakarta address. Again, the non-MPCM postcards showed a similar trend.

Condition

The J10 postcards have had two holes punched in their top margins, as they were previously stored in a ring binder. All

others have the holes on the right side. In the latter cases, the top hole is right through the stamp imprint, and the lower one has often done away with part or conceivably all of the PPM (Fig. 1). All postcards are "tropical," a term used in Indonesia and some other countries, to describe discolorations, usually yellow, brown, or gray, and actual disintegration of the paper. The

J8a and J10 postcards were least affected. The postcards made of two different layers of paper, generally showed the smooth white side to be less affected than the beige. The postcards showed no trace of doodles, or willful destruction or neglect.

CONCLUSIONS

The postcards allow a glimpse into life under Japanese occupation. It certainly was restrictive, witness the case of the tight supervision on transportation by truck. The firm had telephones at either end; the number of the Bandoeng office was actually included on the rubber stamp used on many of the earlier postcards (Fig. 7). They obviously could not use this convenient means of communication. All correspondence had to be in Malay or Japanese; Dutch was prohibited. On the other hand, the Japanese encouraged continuation of business. This was not surprising, since a relatively stable economy could only help them in their war efforts. They even paid what appears to be a reasonable price for their refrigerators, instead of just confiscating these appliances.

Why were so many different types of postcards used in a period of less than a year?

Most likely because of shortages brought on by the war, notably that of paper. When the postcards are arranged by type and period of usage, an interesting picture emerges. Within each specific period, only one type of postcard is used, with little or no overlap with pre- and succeeding types. I postulate that this phenomenon is caused by two reasons, the first one very likely, the second possible. The Chinese business people, always very frugal, would never buy large stocks of postcards when at the whim of authorities new regulations could be issued in those troubled days, that would cause them to get stuck with worthless piles of paper. Secondly, the post office may have only allowed small purchases of the postcards, due to limited supplies. Thus it is likely that the different types of postcards and their periods of usage closely mirrored the actual availability at the post office. This becomes even more important when one recalls that the headquarters of the postal services was in Bandoeng. To some degree then, the same situation may have prevailed in the rest of Java, and Madura, although I caution that local and temporal variables must be

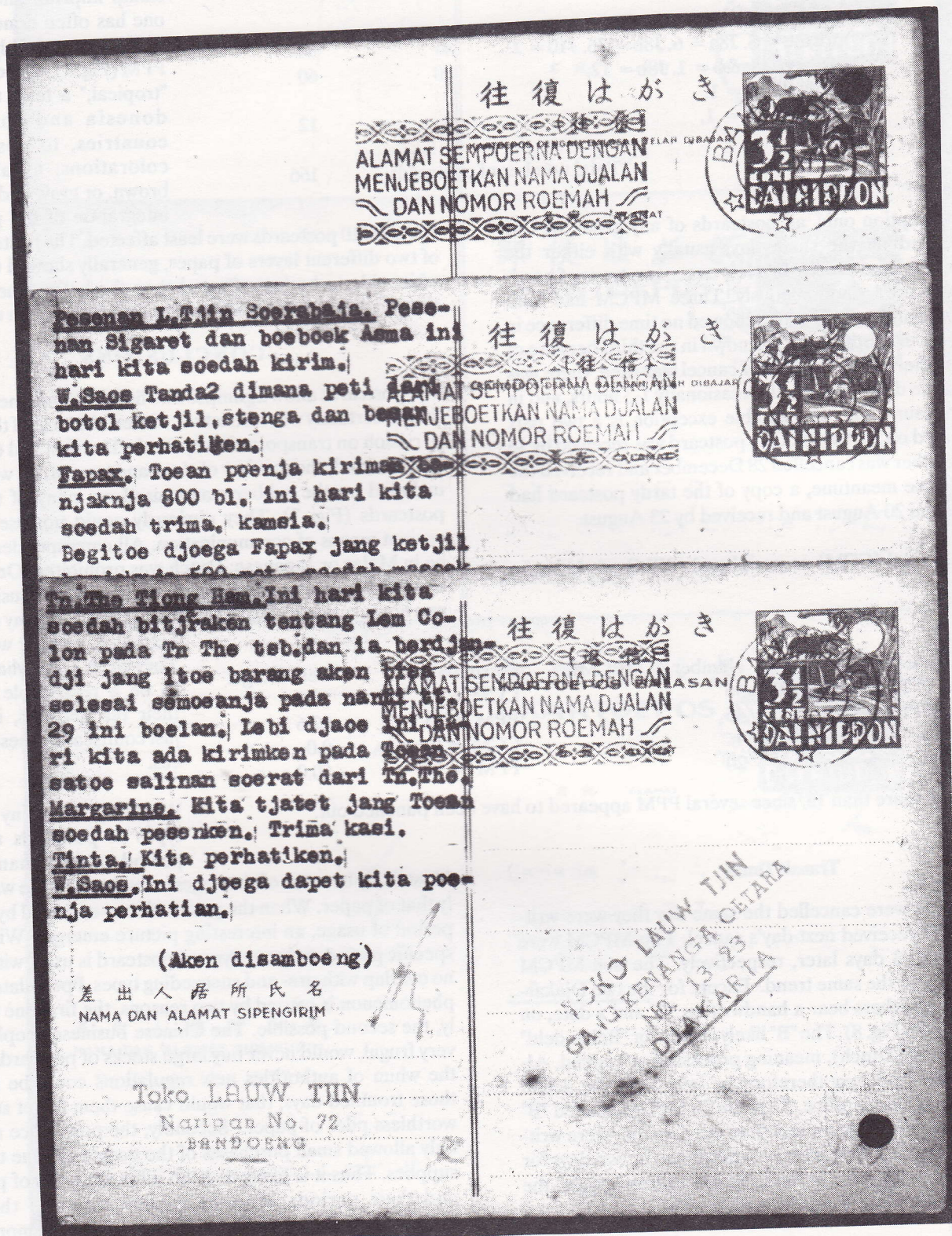


Fig. 6 Three part message using reply cards as ordinary postcards. Two are type J9bI, one J9bII. All typed and cancelled the same day.

taken into account. Consequently, the earliest dates of cancellation (EDC) become quite important, since they may represent first days of issue, or some dates very close to them. Bulterman gives January and December (1943) as months of issue of the J8a and J10 types, respectively, but offers no dates. I found EDC's of 21 January and 26 November for these two types.

In January 1943, and perhaps as early as late 1942 there may have existed a shortage of postcards which prompted the usage of the franked, private cards, or the firm may have simply wanted to use up this supply. Then the type J8a was used, but only for two months, to be replaced by J8b. Since there was no hiatus, this may explain why type J9a which is the Prepaid reply/Reply variant of J8a, is absent from this correspondence. In late November, a temporary shortage of type J8b necessitated usage of J9bI and J9bII as ordinary postcards rather

than for the purpose they were originally issued for. An MPCM consisting of 2 x J9bI and 1 x J9bII, all dated 22 November and cancelled that same day, attests to this (Fig. 6). At almost the same time, type J10 appeared on the scene, and knowing the firm's penchant for long messages, one can imagine that they weren't too thrilled with this small postcard.

We are also allowed to follow the journey of an average postcard with a surprising degree of clarity. It is likely that most if not all postcards were mailed at the main post office, and may have actually been handed to a postal clerk, to expedite the trip. The censor officials wasted very little time, and most postcards were then cancelled either on the same day, or the next. The postal clerks meticulously cancelled every single piece, except for one, sometimes with two cancels when one did not suffice (Figs. 3 and 4).

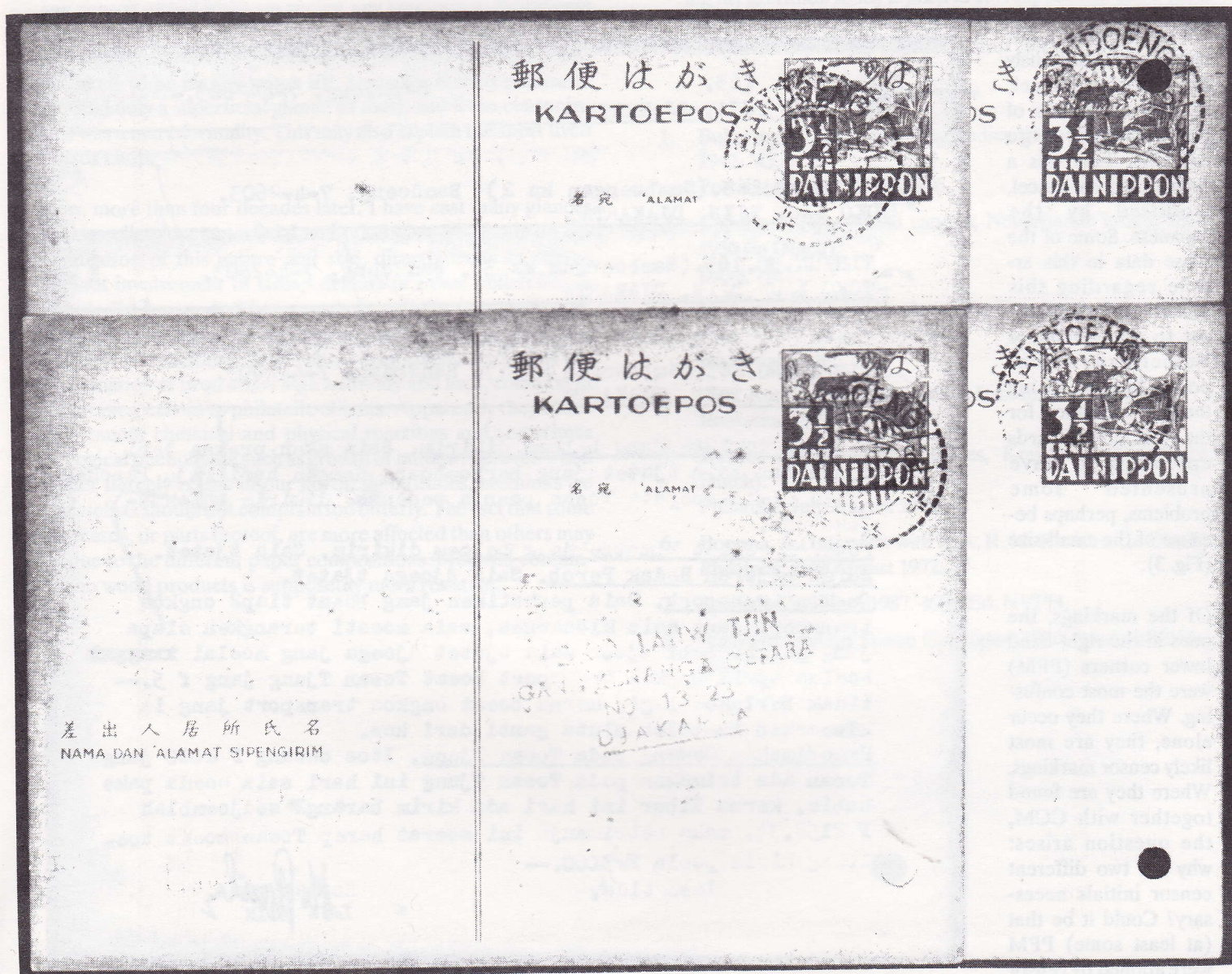


Fig. 7 Four part message using type J8b postcards. All typed 7.4.2603, cancelled 8.4.2603. Note phone number in return address.

The cancels were mostly well inked and legible. Even the one postcard they missed showed an "albino" imprint, indicating the clerk unwittingly took two postcards, assumed he held only one, and hand cancelled the top one.

Many postcards were delivered in 1 or 2 days, and when one considers that Djakarta is 180 km (120 miles) northwest of Bandoeng, up and down the mountain passes of Priangan (old spelling: Preanger), one has to admit that these are rather remarkable feats, not normally duplicated by present day Canadian and U.S. postal services. Of course these two services can take solace in the fact that even the Japanese can occasionally mess up badly, as with the August postcard that got delivered 4 months later. Mail transportation was overland, presumably mainly by rail, which took about 4 hours. Before the war there were air connections, but I sincerely doubt that these were used for other than military purposes.

About the cancels: the favorite was obviously the machine cancel, because of its ease of operation and large capacity. This was a prewar Dutch cancel, modified by the Japanese. Some of the loose data in this article regarding this cancel may be of interest to specialists of Netherlands Indies postal history. Using the machine cancel for the type J10 postcards appeared to have presented some problems, perhaps because of the small size (Fig. 3).

Of the markings, the ones in the right-hand lower corners (PPM) were the most confusing. Where they occur alone, they are most likely censor markings. Where they are found together with CCM, the question arises: why are two different censor initials necessary? Could it be that (at least some) PPM were applied by censor on arrival in Djakarta? Or by the Djakarta of-

fice of the firm, before filing the postcards in the 2-ring binder? And in either case, for what purpose?

An exciting discovery in this collection was the multiple postcard message (MPCM). Boekema has stated that the postcard was sometimes the only vehicle allowed for correspondence. I suppose this was because postcards are faster and easier to censor than letters for which envelopes have to be cut open and resealed. It is also a fact that covers of this period are relatively scarce and most if not all originate from the government or government-controlled institutions such as banks and sugar factories. Bulterman mentions specifically that between the end of 1942 and the end of 1943 only postcards were allowed for public use on Java; letters (covers) were strictly prohibited. He further admits to the lack of specific data, and whether the regulation affected the Dutch only. Well, I believe the MPCM abundantly prove that it affected the non-

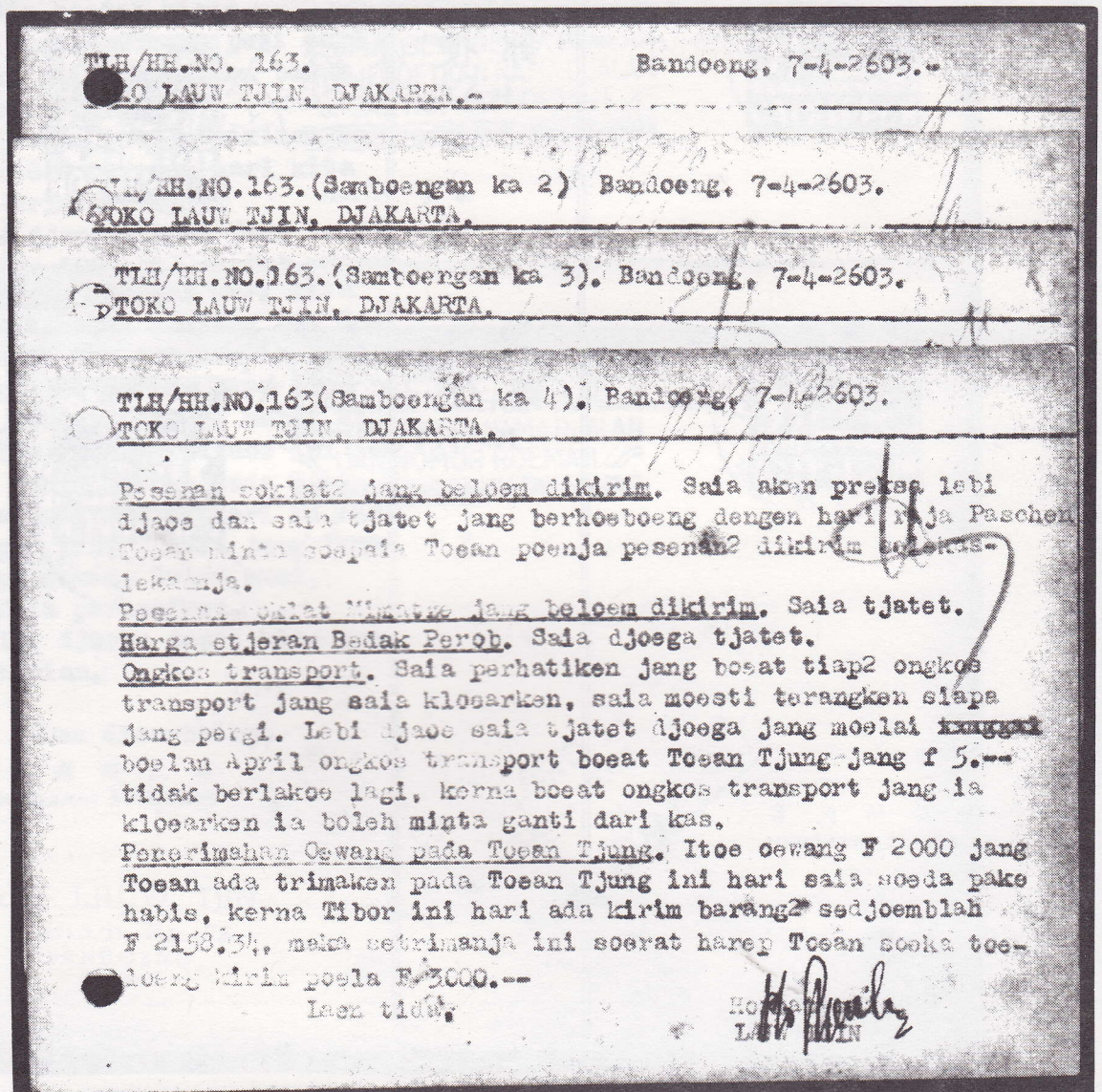


Fig. 8 Message side of postcards in fig. 7. Three lower copies have "sam boengan ka 2/3/4" meaning part 2, 3, and 4.

Dutch populace as well. After all, why would the firm send three- or four part MPCM when the letter rate was only 10c per 20 gr.? Also, some postcards were highly confidential, and when sent as multiples I am sure they sometimes did not arrive all at the same time. MPCM were therefore a matter of necessity, not free choice, and confirm the assertions made by Boekema and Bulterman. What puzzles me is that in my admittedly limited experience as a Japanese Occupation postal history collector, I have hitherto never seen or heard about them. Yet they must be plentiful in business correspondences. This collection alone counts 166 of 370 postcards (45%) as forming MPCM. Do you know of any yourself?

Interestingly, many MPCM bear different censor initials on their individual postcards, as illustrated in Figure 5. (I am referring to the central or "true" censor markings, although the finding is almost identical for the PPM.) One presumes that any censor would insist on seeing any message in its entirety for examination, but this was often not the case. Not that it mattered. The firm was old and well known, even in 1943. It was not likely to be on any watch list. I wonder if most postcards merited only a superficial glance (if that), and if the censor initial was a mere formality. This may also explain the short lived censor chop.

Now, more than four decades later, I have cast many glances at this collection, superficial and otherwise. To obtain an accumulation of this nature and size, directly from its source without involvement of stamp dealers or other philatelists is decidedly unusual. The postcards, albeit very common, provided a wealth of information, some useful, some not, and raised many questions. It was also a grim reminder of what the combination of protracted high humidity and heat, common in the tropics, can do to philatelic objects. Apparently they cause or promote chemical and physical reactions and sometimes biological phenomena such as growth of mildew. So, even when winter fiercely reigns in our northerly latitudes, methinks we philatelists should not complain too bitterly. The fact that some postcards, or parts thereof, are more affected than others may be due to the different paper compositions. Material containing no wood products is supposedly more resistant.

POSTSCRIPT

If there are any lessons to be learned from the aforementioned, they are:

- investigate all postal history. The results may not be spectacular, but one usually learns in the process, and the thrill of the hunt is always there.
- never tire to tell your relatives and friends (and complete strangers, if you feel your hunch is correct) that you collect whole envelopes and postcards. That is, if you collect postal history. This can be greeted by embarrassed silence, for after all, who would want to give anybody anything that amounts to, as any sane person knows, garbage? No matter, because when they come through, they may do so in a big way. And on this note I must end, but not before expressing my gratitude to my Djakarta correspondent. So, Dad, if you again hear about old files being thrown out (and to my mother, thanks for the shrimp chips!).

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PHILATELIC CURIOSA

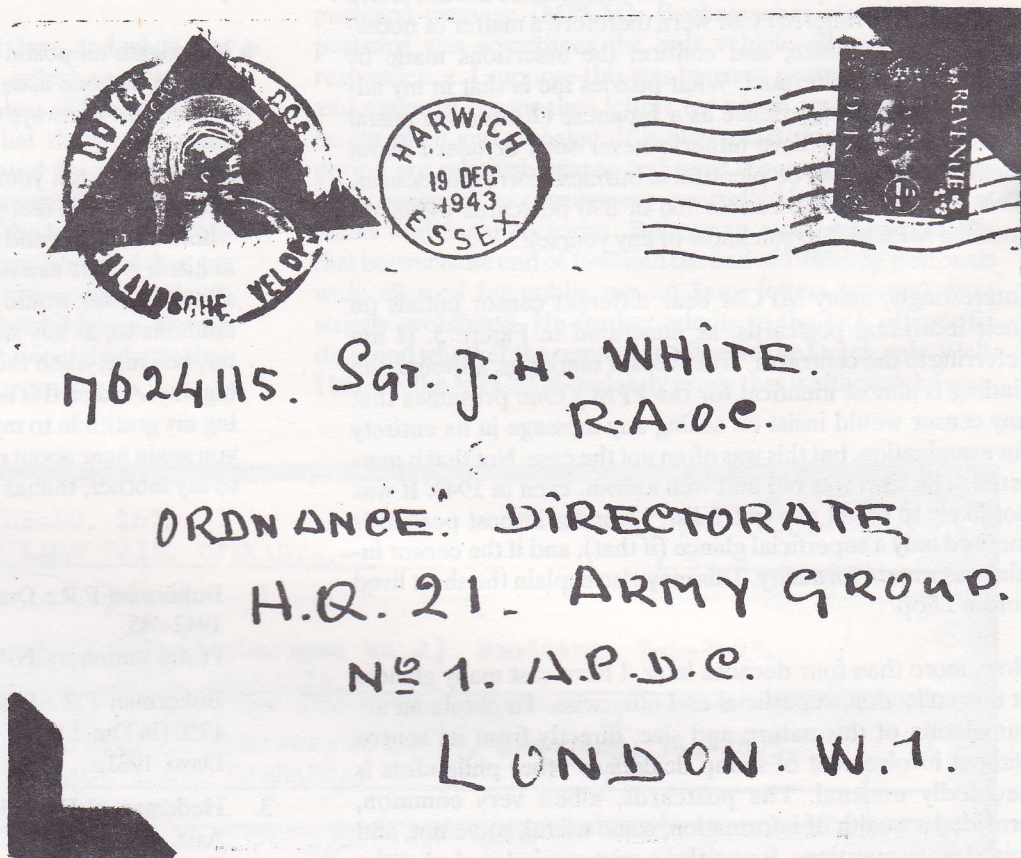
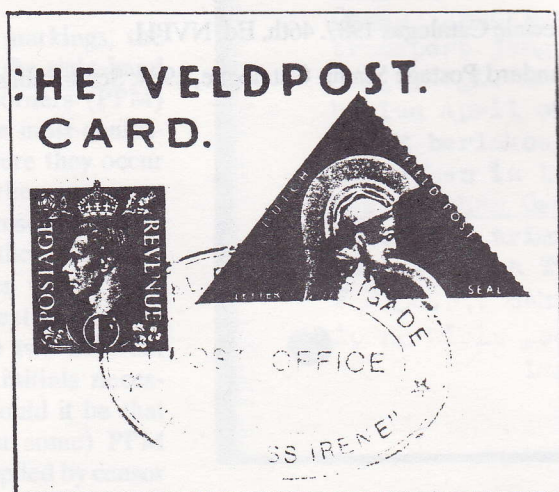
by: Frans H. A. Rummens

THE CASE OF PALLAS ATHENE

We all know the triangular Dutch stamps, issued on the occasion of the tricentennial of the University of Utrecht, in 1936. (NVPH #287-8.) But when we saw the two pieces, reproduced hereby, we received an electric shock: Pallas was in light blue, against a blazing orange background, quite different from the bordeaux red of stamp #287!

War cover specialist Lincoln Kieffer explains that these orange/blue stamps are not really postage stamps, but letter seals, to be used by the Dutch military forces in WW II. Of course, letter seals belong on the cover's back, but clearly, the temptation was sometimes just too strong. As long as they were away from the far-right corner, such as on the complete cover shown, there is no real problem, but the cut square shows a usage that is obviously against regulation!

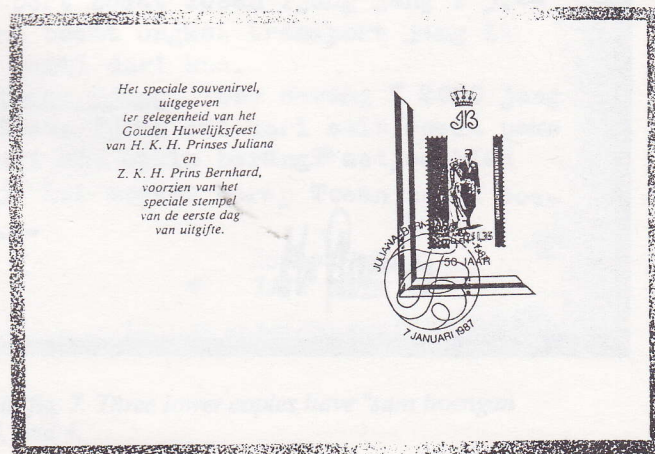
There appear to be at least two varieties of this seal. The one shown on the entire, reads "Nederlandsche Veldpost", whereas the one on the cut-out says "Dutch Field Post".



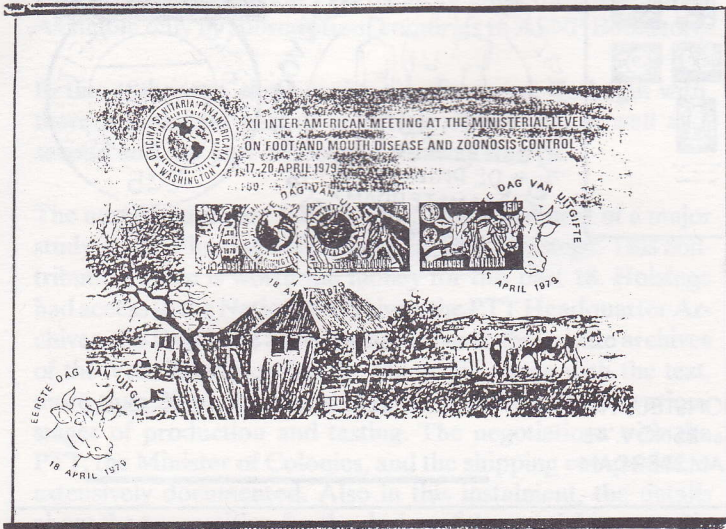
"Curiosa" they certainly are, but it is the "philatelic" that is in some doubt. Of course, they would certainly fit into a specialized collection of, say, "the Dutch Armed Forces during WW II".

THE SOUVENIR CARNETS OF THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES.

A few years ago, in 1985, a small brochure, issued by the Philatelic Service on the Dutch Antilles, reached me. The write-up told of a special "carnet" or album that was going to



commemorate the 50th wedding anniversary of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard. The price was rather steep: NA fl. 30.00, or roughly US\$20.00. However, being a "Journal" staffer has its obligations, like finding the "news" wherever it may



be found. So, we ordered one and lo and behold, some eight months later the album arrived. It measures about 9" wide and 6 1/2" high, luxuriously bound in a leatherette cover. Page one has a message and a portrait of Mr. Hernandez, the Accredited Minister of the Netherlands Antilles. Pages two and three contain photographs of the Royal Wedding in 1937, and of the 25th Anniversary in 1962, respectively. Pages four and five show a copy of the special stamp from the pane and of the special sheetlet, respectively (see also figure 1). The next page has a photo of the Royal Visit to Curacao, in 1965, followed by a color photograph of the Royal Couple, during a recent Speech from the Throne in the Hague. The last page stated that this was carnet 749 out of an issue of 1000 printed. The whole thing is certainly an interesting souvenir, especially for those who have a fond feeling for Orange and the Royal Family. The philatelic value is very limited and certainly not worth the \$20.00.

This all came back, recently, when at an auction in the Netherlands, we purchased a similar carnet or album, also issued by the Netherlands Antilles Philatelic Service, but this one on the

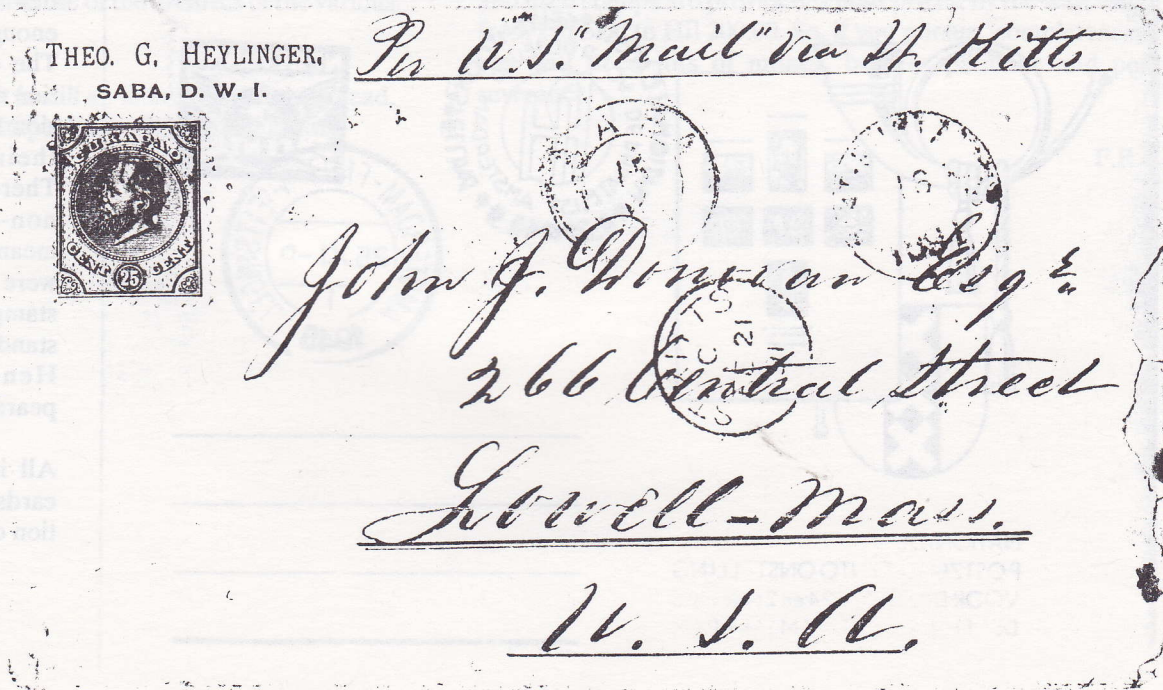
occasion of the Twelfth Congress of the Pan American Health Organization held in Curacao, in April, 1979. Again it is luxuriously produced, with a photo of Willemstad, a Ministerial Message, the PAHO set (NVPH 618-20) and the special PAHO sheetlet (NVPH 624). Figure 2 shows the montage of the latter sheetlet.

The same comments apply as given above; nice souvenir, but little philatelic value. Incidentally, this older carnet, including auction and postage costs came to less than \$10.00!

The remaining question is: "Are there any more of these carnets of the Netherlands Antilles or Surinam?" The Netherlands certainly don't have any, and of the Netherlands Indies we remember only one, the so-called Stockholm carnet, issued on the occasion of the 8th World UPU Congress, held in Stockholm, in 1924 (see also the note in the NVPH catalogue). That carnet is highly sought after and will cost you about \$1000.00 or slightly more, on the rare occasions that one turns up in an auction.

A RARE SABA FIND.

Dr. Jeffrey P. Vadheim is a collector. What sets him apart from most other collectors, who may collect stamps, coins, cow bells, books, butterflies or beer bottle labels, is that what Dr. Vadheim collects is virtually never for sale, not even by Sotheby's. Dr. Vadheim collects SMALL ISLANDS! Little specks on the map like Tristan da Cunha, St. Helena, Ascension, Pitcairn, and, of course, the Netherlands Antilles, with a special fondness of the tiniest one, the island of Saba. These islands you cannot take home with you, but you may visit them, meet their inhabitants, take pictures, read books about them and, yes, collect their postal history. And that is where Dr. Vadheim's sphere of interest intersects with ours. He was therefore well aware of "A Postal History of Curacao" by Frank Julsen and



Bertus Benders. So he did a double take when, at a Phoenix stamp show, earlier this year, a dealer showed him the Saba cover, as pictured below. There, in full glory, is a small double circle postmark SABA, in purple ink, dated 15.2.1891. Until now, only one such complete postmark was known (see the photograph on page 113 of said book). The stamp (a 25ct Willem III in the 12:12 1/2 perforation) is cancelled with a numerical cancel "209", also in purple. We may presume that this cancel was applied on the same day as the postmark. It is also known that in that time Saba was a sub post office with a thrice monthly connection with St. Eustatius by sloop, hence the single small circle postmark in black of SINT-EUSTATIUS, dated 16.2.1881. In addition, there was a thrice monthly mail vessel, connecting St. Eustatius and St. Maarten to St. Kitts, where the mail connected with the British packet boats. Our present cover has a black ST KITTS transit postmark in black, dated 21.2.91.

The cover is backstamped with three more postmarks "New York MAR 10.91 PAID ALL A" and "Lowell Mass. MAR 11.91 9 A.M.". Although these arrival postmarks are less interesting for the "Netherlandics" collector, it is noteworthy, that it took only 24 days to deliver this letter. That is not slower than any present-day mail from the Antilles, even by so-called air mail.

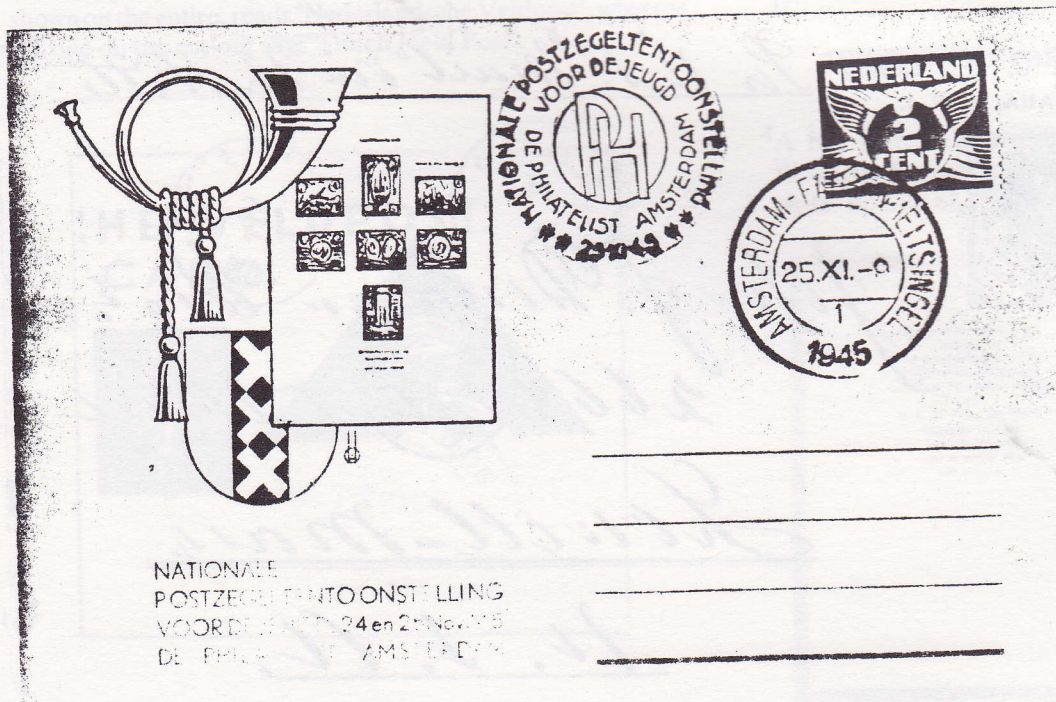


UNKNOWN SPECIAL CANCELS OF 1945?

A while ago, the two post cards, reproduced herewith, came into my hands (courtesy of Lincoln Kieffer). These cards were apparently made up for a youth philatelic exhibition in Amsterdam on November 24-25, 1945. This in itself is a very telling date; barely six months after the cruel starvation winter of 1944-45, life was apparently close enough to pre-war standards to have a stamp exhibition!

However, what really struck me, was that I could not find the two special cancels in Van der Wart's specialized catalogue for such cancels. Was it possible that he had missed these two? To find out, we wrote to Mr. Van der Wart, and he was kind enough to explain the matter. The organizers of this exhibition asked the PTT for permission for these two cancels, but their request was denied! Therefore, these cancels are non-official, which in turn meant that these special cancels were not allowed to touch the stamps at all. Hence also the standard cancels on the stamps. Hence also their non-appearance in the catalogue.

All in all, though, these two cards still warrant the description of "philatelic curiosa".



BOOK REVIEWS

Filatelie Informatief Part 18. Samsom Uitgeverij, May 1988. Available only by subscription; enquiries to ASNP Bookstore.

In this 18th issue, three topics are discussed. To begin with, there is a second part of an article on perfins, as well as a second and last part on Belgian Railway stamps.

The next 35 pages are taken up by a first instalment of a major study on the Floating Safe stamps by Gert Holstege. This contribution alone is worth the money for this part 18. Holstege had access to the National Archives, the PTT Headquarter Archives, the Enschede archives, as well as to the private archives of the Van Blaaderen family. There are, along with the text, more than 20 photographs of these floating safes, in various stages of production and testing. The negotiations with the PTT, the Minister of Colonies, and the shipping companies, is extensively documented. Also in this instalment, the details about the competition for the design of the special stamps. Six color pages show the various stamp designs, as well as the color proofs of the three accepted designs.

"De Spoorwegbriefkaarten van Nederland." (The Railway Post Cards of the Netherlands), by C. Stapel. Published by PO & PO as Post Historical Study No XII, 100 pages, illustrated, 1988. ASNP price \$13.00, code number 88-5.

Those of you who know Ten Geuzendam's catalogue "Particuliere en particulier bedrukte postwaardestukken", know that the Dutch Railways frequently exercised the option of having their "Notice of Arrival" cards issued in the form of postal stationery. The present new study by C. Stapel expands on Geuzendam's work, and in particular provides much historic detail, as a result of extensive use of the archives of the various Railway Companies.

While super-specialized, it is still an interesting study to read. As he has shown before, Stapel knows how to tell a story.

"Simplified Catalogue of the Postage Stamps of the Netherlands Indies under Japanese Occupation 1942-1945", edited by Dr. W. Bruijnesteijn. Published by "Dai Nippon". English text, 48 pages, illustrated. ASNP code number 87-12, ASNP price \$8.00.

The Dutch study group "Dai Nippon" has already on earlier occasions shown that it is quite competent in the publishing field. About 13 years ago, they published a catalogue of the Japanese Occupation of the Dutch East Indies, which was a hand book at the same time. As it says in the preface of the present smaller catalogue: "this frustrated the common collector, since he can hardly hope to obtain even a minor part of all the listed stamps". How delightfully Dutch: too much knowledge disturbs the orderliness, apparently! All jokes aside, the present simplified catalogue most definitely is a well-worked, handsome booklet that will prove popular. We also hasten to say, that the English text is quite good, a welcome reprieve from the "coolie" English we signalled in several other English language books produced in the Netherlands.

But, what then is the place of this simplified catalogue next to Tom Bleeker's booklet on the same topic? Bleeker's booklet, which appeared in the Cockrill series as No. 27, counts 60 pages, costs £5.00 (ASNP price \$10.00, code number 82-6, reviewed Journal June 1982), and at first sight looks quite similar to the Dai Nippon booklet. For a marginally higher price one has with Bleeker's booklet better quality paper, better type, better figures. In general, Bleeker also gives lots more sub types, so that it actually stands in between the two Dai Nippon publications. On the other hand, the simplified Dai Nippon catalogue is also a price list, in that prices for both mint and used stamps are provided. These prices, by the way, range from Hfl 5.00 to Hfl 200.00. So, if you pursue "completeness", you will need lots of money, besides patience and perseverance.

F.R.

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