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For the third time in six weeks, yours truly is composing an editorial. This is rather too much of a good thing; the good news is, however, that we are now on schedule again. And... your editor-pro-tem has now four weeks to goof off, before the April Newsletter calls. Paul van Reyen's domicile problems have not yet stabilized, and that means that for a while yet, you will have to make do with a temporary editor in the 'Journal' chair. Come to think of it, how did Paul manage to put out four Journals and eight Newsletters a year, for eight years? Including preparing the paste-ups for the printer and taking care of the distribution? And all that while holding a full time job for most of that period?

This issue contains an interesting article by Governor Cees Slofstra about the 12 ct overprint on the 10 ct Juliana-profile of 1958. It shows again that there is still lots of knowledge to be garnered, even about well-known and rather recent stamps.

The other article is the one I promised in the previous Journal issue. It is again about two recent stamps, issued at the inauguration of Beatrix in 1980-81. I am afraid that the article looks rather forbidding. To follow the story line, a pretty good knowledge about the production of stamps is essential. To be sure, these basic principles are explained, but there is so much of it, that the reader may well become discouraged. It is not the kind of article to read from begin to end in 40 minutes; you will likely have to back up many times. It is hoped, however, that with some determination, the article is readable. Most collectors have some vague notion that a stamp with selvedge is "worth" more. The present article explains how to make use of such selvedge and the information it contains. "Fly-speck" philately is another undervalued occupation; again the present paper incorporates several direct applications of knowing about these tiny printing flaws. If, at long last, you master this article, your reward is considerable; you may then join the author in the joy of knowing something about stamps that had been a dark corner before.

editor-pro-tem
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(who eagerly awaits your contribution)

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QUEEN BEATRIX INAUGURAL STAMPS OF THE NETHERLANDS; NVPH # 1200 AND 1215.

by Frans H.A. Rummens

Introduction

On January 1, 1980, the then Queen Juliana surprised the nation; in her New Year's message she announced, that she would abdicate that following April 30, her 71st birthday. That meant, that Beatrix would then automatically become Queen, on that very same moment. The surprise was complete, even to those close to Juliana; it left only 4 months to prepare for the ceremony, and it really sent officials scurrying. Among other things, one or more new stamps were called for. For the Bureau of Stamp Securities ("Dienst Zegelwaarden" in Dutch) and for the printers at "Enschede", it meant having to come up with at least one stamp, from idea to design to proofs, to production and to distribution, and all that in four months. "Enschede"'s printing agenda is always full, much longer than four months in advance, so extraordinary measures were required, to fit this new stamp into their schedule. This hurried time schedule certainly contributed to, if not caused, the use of two different printing presses and of four different perforators. Also, each printing run was kept short, presumably for the same reason, which in turn led to the need for **many** printing runs. The story repeated itself later in the year; the postage rates were to go up by January 7, 1981, and lots of new definitives were needed in a hurry. This included a modified inaugural stamp, which went from 60 to a 65 ct denomination. Again, many printings, two presses and four perforators were involved. Small wonder, therefore, that these two stamps form an exciting field of specialization for the collector-philatelist. The main challenge is to be able to place individual stamps or blocks of stamps into their appropriate printing. That this is now possible at all, is in large measure due to a veteran philatelist, Dr. Hille Ris Lambers, in close collaboration with the archivist and the master printer at "Enschede". (1, 2, 3, 4).

Haste was an omnipresent circumstance with this issue. For that reason it was decided, that the Bureau of Esthetic Design PTT would internally come up with a design. It did so by superimposing a portrait of Beatrix (originally photographed by Prince Claus) on a picture of the New Church in Amsterdam, where the inaugural ceremony would take place. Notwithstanding the haste, a very sympathetic stamp was the result. The smiling Beatrix in turtle neck sweater was immediately popular. Old time collectors though, pointed to the resemblance with Piet Zwart's photo montages of 1931-33 (NVPH 236, 237, L9), and murmured something about plagiarism, but then there are always spoil sports. The denomination was to be 60 ct, the first inland letter rate.

The Photogravure Printing Process

As in the old time steel engraving technique, photogravure makes an image, that is etched into the plate. The printing ink will sit in these shallow depressions; the ink on the top surface is scraped off by a wiper. In Dutch literature the term "rakeldiepdruk" is often used in this connection; "rakel" means scraper or wiper, and "diepdruk" indicates that the printing ("druk") arises from the deeper ("diep") areas. See figure 1. There are many differences, though, between (steel)engraving and photogravure. The "rakel" is already one; another is in the

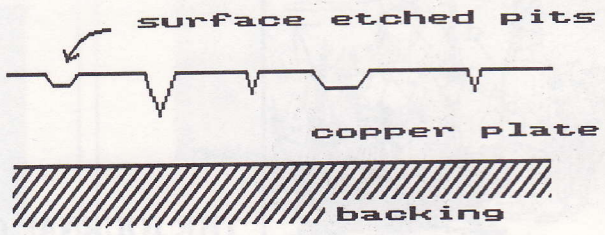

Figure 1: Cross section of a photogravure plate.

depth of the depressions. With engraving, the depth of a typical cut in the metal is around 50 micrometers (0.05 of a mm or two tenthousandths of an inch), whereas in photogravure this depth is typically in the 5-35 micrometer range. Because of this shallowness, the ink would be wiped off entirely from larger colored areas. To prevent that, the image is also screened. This means, that the ink sits in thousands of little pits, rather than in whole areas. Actually, this screening has two purposes; it obviously supports the wiper, but it also allows for half tones (deep to shallow pits) as well as for mixed colors. For example, red and yellow dots next to each other will produce an orange image to our eyes. The inauguration stamps were printed in photogravure with three printing colors: blue, yellow and red, all screened (screen size 120-125 lines per cm) and all three screens at an angle of 45 degrees to the base. See figure 2. With the naked eye this dot structure of the image is entirely indis-

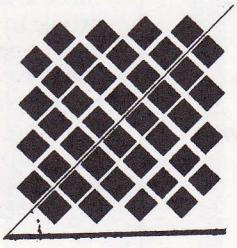

Figure 2: Screened image with a screening angle of 45 degrees.

cernible. However, upon 10x magnification, the dots become quite visible. We will return to this point later. Before one has these three printing cylinders, a lot of work has already preceded. The first step is the artist's work of preparing a model, that is the finished art work design, usually on a scale 4x the final stamp size. This model is photographed three times, through three different color filters: red, green and violet-blue. These negatives are also 4x the final size.

From the three negatives (sometimes four, if black is a printing color) three collective positives are made, still on a 4x real stamp size. This means that a giant film sheet receives as many exposures, as there are to be stamps in the printing sheets. The machine that manages this considerable feat, is called a "step and repeat" machine for self-explanatory reasons. The next step is a copying step; from each collective positive, another positive is made, this time on light-sensitive gelatine paper. This copying is done through a screen; also, at

this point the image becomes real size. Each of the gelatine positives is tightly wrapped around a copper cylinder. The paper backing of the film can now be removed and the etching can start. This is done in yet another machine, where iron chloride solution permeates through the gelatine image. The thinner the gelatine, the faster the iron chloride gets to the copper, and the deeper the etched image will be. The copper cylinder plates, once approved, are then galvanically chromium plated. The latter is necessary because copper is too soft. The cylinders are now ready for the printing.

The Layout of the Printing Sheet, on the Regina Press.

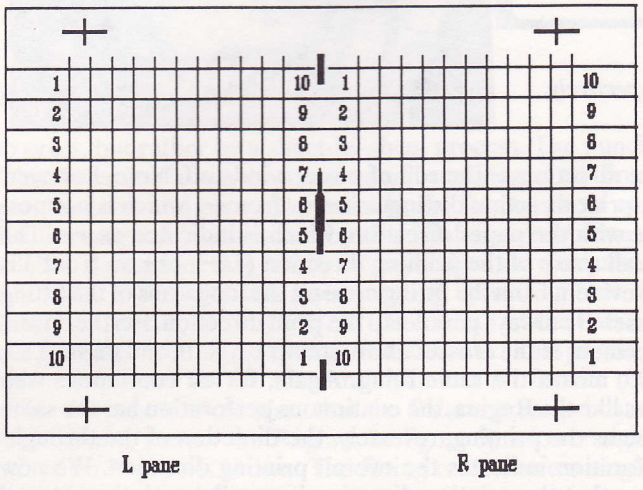

Figure 3: Layout of the Regina two-pane printing sheet.

On the Regina press the printing sheet looks as sketched in figure 3. The printing is in double sheets, a left "L" pane and a right "R" pane, each of 10 x 10 stamps. The width of the printing sheet equals the circumference of the cylinders; in actual fact, therefore, the two panes come out of the press one above the other. Above stamp #1 and under stamp #91 of the L pane, and equally above stamp #10 and under stamp #100 of the R pane one finds so-called fitting crosses. They look rather blackish to the naked eye, but under some magnification it turns out that there is usually a blue, a yellow and a red cross, almost perfectly on top of each other. The purpose is now clear; this gives the printing supervisor a quick way of checking that all three images are lined up properly. If one is a little off, he can immediately correct that by shifting the corresponding cylinder a small amount. See also figure 4. The fitting crosses are made during the stage of the production of the collective positive. Small cuts are made with a sharp thin knife along a steel ruler. By fitting two of these collective positives on top of each other, the fitting crosses for the second positive can be fitted exactly on top of those of the first positive. One would expect to see fitting crosses to be in all three printing colors. In the present case, all panes had blue fitting crosses, about half had also red crosses, while only a few had yellow crosses as well.

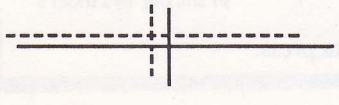

Figure 4: Improperly lined-up fitting crosses.

In panes from the Palatia press, the fitting crosses are in a somewhat different location, as will be discussed later.

The crucial point is, that when a new cylinder or plate is made (because the old one is worn), new crosses must be drawn. Although the cross point must be on exactly the same place, the lengths of the cross's arm will normally be different. These dimensions of the crosses then become the tool to determine the identity of the plate (cylinder) and its stamps. The above also explains why on some sheets, there are only blue crosses. Fitting the other two colors was easy with this particular design, even without the help of crosses, but replacing the quick-wearing blue cylinders needed to be done much more often and also with greater precision. Note also, that when a printing cylinder is given a new chromium plating, this does not involve new photographic intermediates and the crosses remain the same.

Printings #1 and 2 of the 60 ct Stamp.

Although we have not yet discussed all that is needed on printing techniques, we are far enough along now to discuss the first few printings of the 60 ct stamp. What started the game was, that right on issue date, philatelists who bought corner blocks, found two different sets of blue crosses (while yellow and red crosses, if present, stayed the same). Apparently, in the middle of the first printing, a new blue cylinder became necessary, which we shall call cylinder blue 2. How do we know that all these sheets came from one printing? Answer: the "history card" of the Bureau of Stamp Securities showed only one entry at that moment.

There are two other ways to determine the printing. Firstly, panes often show punch holes in the selvedge. However, with the first two printings of the 60 ct the panes did not have punch holes. This point will be belabored later, with the discussion of the Palatia press (vide infra).

Secondly, one might scour the panes for "plate flaws" and specifically those little fly specks, that occur on one printing only, not on a previous and neither on the next printing. Such a method requires the investigator to have (access to) a large number of complete panes of each printing plus such crucial information as when these panes were bought and where. Because of the complexity of such a "plating" method, it will only be discussed incidentally. This brings us to a well-known quandary: several facts indicate, that one is still dealing with one printing, but clearly there were two blue cylinders. We will distinguish the two printings by calling them printing 1A and 1B, while the cylinders will be called blue 1 and blue 2 (with yellow 1 and red 1).

Figure 5 shows the two different blue crosses, while at the same time confirming the assignment by an interesting plate flaw. Shown are two lower-right blocks of R panes; the block shown at left is from printing 1A, recognizable by the LR blue cross of 12.4 x 4.8 mm. The block at right is from printing 1B (i.e. with blue cylinder #2), since the blue cross measures 11.9 x 2.8 mm. The assignment is confirmed by a tiny blue scratch just above the right eyebrow of Beatrix, on position #100 of printing 1B, but not present on the corresponding position #100 of printing 1A.

Some time after the day of issue, blocks with a third set of

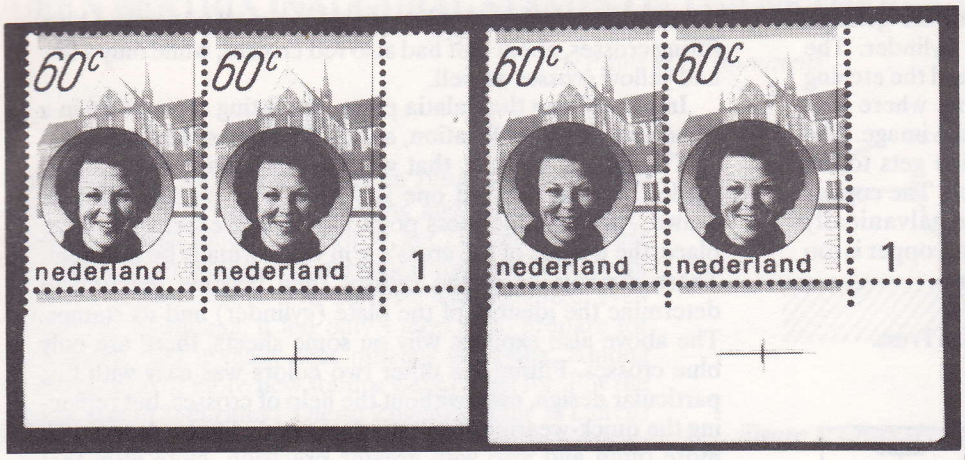

Figure 5: Two lower-right blocks of R panes, from printing 1A and 1B respectively. Note the eyebrow flaw of the 1B stamp on position 100.

blue crosses were found, still with yellow 1 and red 1. This third set of blue fitting crosses belonged evidently to a second printing, with blue cylinder 3. Thus far, all the stamps showed perforation 12 3/4 : 14, the normal G-comb perforation. Also, all the panes showed the same selvedge perforation, with two extra perforation holes at the top and at the bottom, while the other two selvedges are completely through-perforated. All of this is typical for the Regina press, where the printing and perforation is done on a continuous web.

Print Direction, Paper Direction and Perforation Direction.

Yet another characteristic of the first two printings is their printing direction. Where, say, the blue cylinder touches the paper for the first time, the edge will appear serrated (under at least 10x magnification). This is the result of the aforementioned screening under 45 degrees. The cylinder next pushes a wall of blue ink in front of it; therefore, where the blue image stops, a more or less solid edge appears.

In our present stamps there is a convenient vertical blue line, on the right hand side of the design. With the stamp held upside up, the line shows nicely the serration at left and the solid edge at the right (See figure 6). At the same time, with any of the horizontal ink edges, no difference could be seen between top and bottom edges. Therefore the printing direction was from left to right, indicated by an arrow → ,and symbolized by "R".

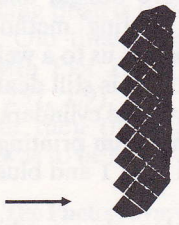

Figure 6: Effect of left to right screen printing on the edges of a vertical line.

If we look at the back of the stamp, we can see the paper direction. As the paper is manufactured between giant rolls, the paper fibers tend to line up in the direction the paper is made. These fiber orientations are best studied on the back, because the front of the paper is coated, which may obscure the fibers. Also, it is easiest, to study stamps that have no gum. On the Regina press, the paper direction becomes also the print direction as the roll of paper winds off. Note, however, that print direction distinguishes→ from←, which is not possible with the paper direction, which is indicated as ↔. The overall sense of the printing direction (i.e← or→ vs ↑ or↓) is also evident from the fitting crosses; the long arms of the fitting crosses are always parallel to the print direction. Furthermore, placement of the crosses **above** stamp L1, R10, and **under** L91, R100, means the same thing. Again, for an continuous web press like the Regina, the continuous perforation has the same sense as the printing; reversely, the direction of the through-perforation indicates the overall printing direction. We now know, that the printing direction is parallel with the top and the bottom of the stamp design. This confirms, what we already had seen in the serration of the blue vertical line. The latter gave the additional information, that the printing was from left to right and not from right to left. Figure 7 shows the interlocking of all directional information.

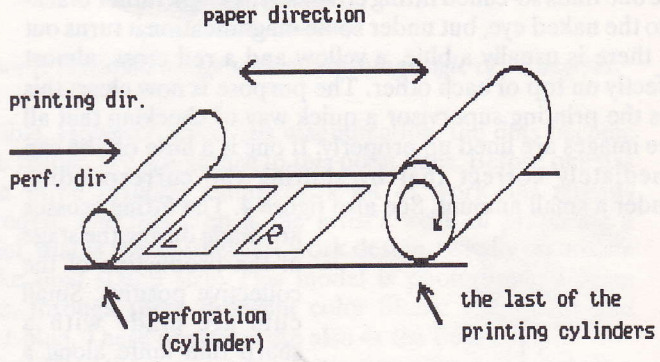

Figure 7: Directions on the Regina press.

Printings #3 and 4 of the 60 ct

Again, several months later, stamps began to show up with totally different characteristics. For example, all panes now showed a punch hole in their selvedge. This alone proves already that the printing was no longer done on a continuous

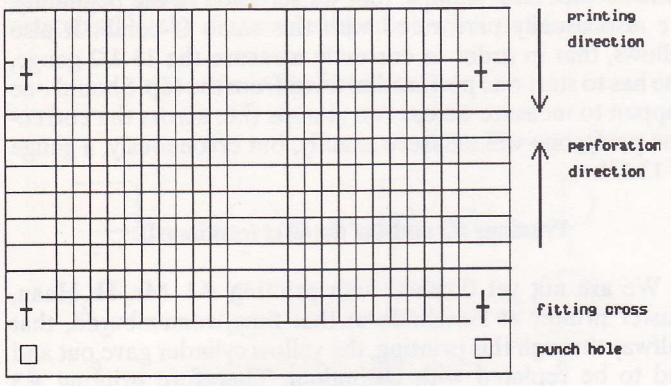

Figure 8: Layout of the Palatia printing sheets.

web press, but rather by a sheet-by-sheet process. The punch is "Zegelwaarden"'s way of counting and verifying of all those separate sheets and panes. Apparently, the Regina press was still fully occupied, but the sheet-by-sheet Palatia press became available. Because of this, totally new cylinders were required for all colors. We note this third printing by writing blue 4, yellow 2 and red 2 , or simply 4/2/2. The lay-out of the Palatia press printing sheet is given in figure 8. Thus the third printing employed cylinder #4 for blue and cylinders #2 for the red and for the yellow. Note also, that the Palatia press prints in double sheets, just as the Regina. In figure 9, a lower-right block of an R pane is shown. The fitting cross (here a single red cross) is off to the side of stamp #100 with the long arms of the cross in the vertical direction. These two characteristics both prove that the printing direction was vertical, relative to the stamp design. This can be verified by looking at the edges in the printed design. The vertical blue line that we looked at before, now looks the same at both edges. So, definitely not L or R printing direction. Looking at horizontal edges (mostly the tops of letters such as n, e, or d), it can be seen that the top edges are serrated, while the bottom edges are much smoother. Therefore, the printing direction is from top to bottom (↓). In Dutch literature this is designated as printing direction "O" (for "onder" = below). The red fitting cross has the dimensions of 16.6 x 4.1+ mm, which is perhaps the easiest "signature" for this printing #3.

Figure 9: Lower-right block of an R pane (Palatia) with "O" perforation and punch 2.

The Perforators.

The first thing one notices with blocks from printings 3 and 4 is, that there is complete through-perforation at the top, left and right sides, and that the bottom selvedge is entirely without perforation. This is related to the fact, that sheet-by-sheet printing implies also sheet-by-sheet perforation, usually by an independent perforating machine. The perforators in question consist of a single comb as indicated in figure 10.

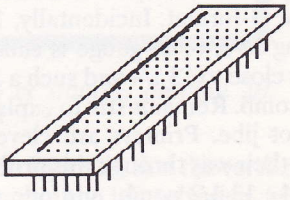

Figure 10: Sketch of a single perforation comb.

Looking again at the block of figure 9, we conclude from the absence of extra perforation holes in the bottom selvedge, that the perforation is from the bottom to the top of the sheet. This again makes sense, because press and perforator use the same kind of ridges or notches to ensure, that the sheet is exactly positioned. However, the press prints **towards** the ridges, while the perforator usually works **away** from these ridges. Therefore, with sheet-by-sheet production using notches, the perforating and printing directions are usually exactly opposite. Following this reasoning, since the perforating is done from bottom to the top, the printing direction would be from top to bottom. *)

Usually, the perforating is done one the printing sheets, that is before the separation into panes. In this way, two panes can be perforated in just eleven strokes. If the panes were first separated, 22 strikes would be required. By the same token, if the printing sheets were perforated from the side, again 22 strokes would be required.

The gauge of the perforation of panes of printing #3 and #4 was also a surprise. Not with the horizontal perfing; that gauge is again 12 3/4, just as with the Regina press.. However, in trying to measure the vertical perforation, considerable variation is encountered; the perforation seems to vary between 13 1/4 and 13 1/2 and even the same stamp not always measures the same. Some precautions are needed, such as

*) There exists an alternate method of lining up the sheets for the perforation, namely by providing 2 or 4 pinhols in the sheets, along with corresponding pins on the perforator bed. These pinholes are in the selvedge, where they are marked by half circles ◠ or by half squares ⌜. Such markings were totally absent from all the material discussed here.

avoiding the corner holes and the adjoining teeth. Next, work with a magnifying glass and make sure, that all the marking lines of the gauge are exactly in the centers of the holes. With certain stamps this condition simply does not exist; put these stamps aside for a minute. Working with the remainder, one now finds, that there are really two gauges, namely 13 1/4 and 13 1/2, and that therefore two combs were involved. This statement should draw incredulous faces, and the more knowledgeable reader may even have exclaimed: "this is impossible". Let us explain. The G-format stamps measure exactly 25.2 x 36.0 mm. The top and bottom have exactly 16 perforations (remember this is comb perforation) and therefore the horizontal gauge is 20 x 16 : 25.2 = 12.70, which is very close to the measured 12 3/4. On the vertical long side, however, there are either 25 or 24 "teeth" or "perfs". From that, the two possible gauges become 20 x 25 : 36.0 = 13.89 and 20 x 24 : 36.0 = 13.33. The point is that with comb perforation there has to be a **whole** number of teeth along that side. So, it would appear, that an extra, intermediate gauge of 13 1/2 cannot exist with the G-format. Incidentally, 13.89 is very close to 14; the resulting 12 3/4 : 14 gauge is called "G- comb". The gauge of 13.33 is close to 13 1/4 and such a 12 3/4 : 13 1/4 gauge is called the Y-comb. Remains still to explain the gauge of 13 1/2 ; it just does not jibe. Printers are clever people though, and they fudged their way through this problem. Suppose one **does** have a 12 3/4 : 13 1/2 comb, and one starts to perforate from the bottom up. Since 13 1/2 is more than 13 1/4, the perforation holes will be closer together, and will not quite reach the top of the bottom row of stamps. The initial error is very small, but if one were to continue with further strokes of the comb, the error would grow quickly, and before soon the perforation would cut into the design of the stamps itself. To maintain proper spacing between rows of perforation, the second stroke must start a little bit higher than would be indicated by the top perforation hole of the first stroke. In so doing, however, the top "tooth" or "bridge" of the first stroke will now be about 0.5 mm wider than normal. In actual fact, one does not always find these wide bridges, even if one is convinced that one is dealing with a true 13 1/2 gauge. For example, the top bridges of the bottom stroke in figure 9 do look perfectly normal, while between the second an the third stroke the wide correction tooth is very evident. This variability is in part due to the 12 3/4 : 13 1/2 comb being old and worn. Alternately, it could also be due to the sheet being not quite positioned against the notches at the first stroke.

There is more to be seen with this perforation of figure 9. Look down from the top perforation hole of the right-hand-side perforation track. Even with the naked eye it can be seen that the third hole from the top is off a little to the left, while the fourth hole is off to the right, and the 15th hole is very clearly off to the right again. This is a characteristic of this comb and can be found in every stroke made by this comb, thus providing an easy means of identifying this old comb. Yet another way, is to look at the perforation holes with at least 10 x magnification. It will be seen, that this O-comb (O = Old) produces rounded-off edges on the image side, the paper apparently being bent down and compacted, before the needle would begin to cut into the paper. At this magnification we also see other kinds of irregularities, such as loose paper fibers, and holes being out-of-round, best seen from the back. Compare this with the stamps with the 13 1/4 and 14 gauges, and the distinction becomes almost trivially easy. Of course, the "difficult-to-measure" stamps, that we set aside in the beginning, are also usually perforated with this same O-comb. It also follows, that in order to correctly measure the 13 1/2 gauge, one has to start one perforation away from the top. Should one happen to measure across two stamps (i.e. across the correction perf), one will measure exactly, but erroneously, a gauge of 13 1/4.

Printings #3 and 4 of the 60 ct (continued).

We are not yet finished with printing #3. Mr. H. Haan, master printer at Enschede at that time, remembered, that halfway through this printing, the yellow cylinder gave out and had to be replated with chromium. Therefore printing #3 really consists of printings 3A and 3B, with cylinders 4/2a/2 and 4/2b/2 respectively. Could this be detected on the stamps? By the yellow crosses, perhaps? No, because these sheets bear no yellow crosses at all. By the punch, then? No again, because "Zegelwaarden" did not even know about this short intermezzo, so that the entire printing #3 got punch 2, the triangle. In printing #3, perforation 13 1/2 was only used for 3B, while 13 1/4 was used for all of 3 and for some of 3B as well. Since our block (figure 9) had perforation 13 1/2 as well as punch 2, it is definitely printing 3B. Actually, there is a tiny plate flaw on the yellow cylinder, that only exists on the yellow of 2a and not at all on the 2b yellow cylinder. It is a small hair line that runs to the right from the period between "30" and the "IV" of the lettering. See figure 11.

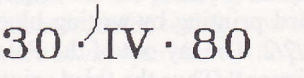

Figure 11: Plate flaw "30 . IV" of yellow plate 2a, position 10 R.

There was one final printing #4 of the 60 ct denomination, with a new blue cylinder #5 and a replated cylinder #2c for yellow, while still using cylinder #2 for red. The notation is therefore 5/2c/2. Again the Palatia press was used. The blue fitting crosses are different again, while the new yellow cylinder can be identified, because for the first time there is a yellow fitting cross at position 10 of the R pane. This printing #4 was perforated, partly with the O-comb (12 3/4 :13 1/2) and partly

Figure 12: Punch 5 of printing #4, L-pane, 60 ct.

with the Y- comb (12 3/4 : 13 1/4). This printing can also be recognized by the diamond-shaped punch 5. See figure 12.

The Punches.

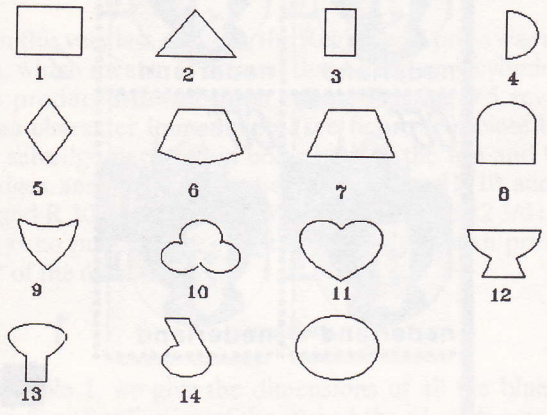

Figure 13: The shape of punches.

So far, we have encountered two punches, and it becomes necessary now, to provide some more detail. Figure 13 gives the punches as they have been used since their introduction in 1954. Punch "15" is not a punch at all, but a drill hole. Rather than the 10 or so panes that can be punched at once, the hollow bore drills through an entire pack of 500 panes. There are two varieties: bore 6 is 6 mm. in diameter, while bore 7 creates a bore hole of 7 mm. in diameter.

In 1984, the whole practice of clipping, punching and drilling individual panes was abandoned, mainly because sheet-by-sheet printing had become the exception, rather than the rule of old. Printing on the roll has its own security system.

The 65 ct Stamp.

As mentioned before, new postal rates were to come into effect Jan 7, 1961. That meant not only a new Inauguration stamp, but also that this stamp had to be produced while Enschede was extremely busy. This in turn led once more to a kaleidoscopic multitude of cylinders and printings.

Is the 65 ct stamp simply a modified 60 ct stamp, or is it a new stamp all by itself? That question is simple and logical, but the answer is not easy. We will recount the differences and then the reader may make up his/her own mind on that question. Most evident is the change in color; the blue is shifted slightly towards the violet and the red has gone from an orange-reddish hue to a deeper cherry red. However, from a production point of view, such color changes are quite trivial; they can be achieved simply by choosing different hues of printing ink. This now forces us now to state our question a bit more sharply. The question may be rephrased as follows: "were new cylinders (for blue, yellow and red) prepared for the first printing of the 65 ct stamp, or were any of the cylinders, used for the 60 ct stamp, used again for the 65 ct stamp?

For the blue cylinder this is easy to answer. The change from a "0" into a "5" in the design meant that the whole process from design to printing cylinder had to be repeated. It is at the design/model phase, that it is easy to cut out the "0" and replace it by a "5". There is more evidence, however. It may already have been noticed, that on the panes, the design is carried over a bit into the left selvedge. This is done, so that all the stamps of the sheet will remain identical, even if any of the colors might

Figure 14: Block of 65 ct stamps, printing 2B, punch 1, blue cylinder 3.

have shifted a bit. We see now in figure 14, that the vertical blue line in the design is now printed in the left selvedge, whereas with all the 60 ct printings, this vertical line was simply not present on the selvedge.

The yellow of the 65 ct stamp also shows something new. With the 60 ct stamp the background yellow was screened (125 per cm) under 45 degrees. At first sight the yellow background of the 65 ct stamp looks as if it were screened by a very coarse screen, like 25 per cm. Actually, this is not a screen at all, but a change in the design. Alternating squares of yellow and white were drawn in, stacked like a chess board, that is with the sides of the squares parallel to the horizontal and vertical sides of the stamp. A printer will never position a screen in this way. Again there is more proof; under 30x magnification it is easy to see, that each of these squares of 0.4 x 0.4 mm by itself is screened, under 45 degrees, by a 125 screen (as in figure 2).

For the red there is a slight plate flaw, that is going to help us out. Look at the spire that rises up from the roof of the church, in the top-right corner of the design. From a point on the right-hand-side of this spire, practically at its footing in the roof, there is a very thin red line running to the top-right corner, under an angle of almost 45 degrees. See figure 15. Almost all the 65 ct stamps have this little flaw for all the 200 positions in the printing sheet, although it may take 30x magnification to find some of them. Inversely, this flaw is not present on any of the positions of the 60 ct sheets.

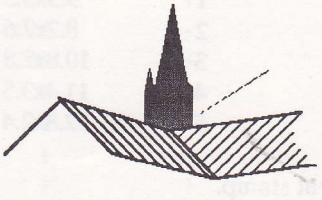

Figure 15: Sketched enlarged portion of a 65 ct stamp showing red hair line.

The conclusion is clear. The blue, yellow and red cylinders of even the first printing of the 65 ct stamps were newly produced from the master model onwards,

having nothing in common with the cylinders of the 60 ct stamps. It is therefore reasonable to speak of a new stamp. For this reason we will start counting from "1" again, with the numbering of the cylinders and of the printings.

Printing Parameters of the 65 ct Stamp.

There were 5 printings in all, of which several were subdivided. All but the very last printing were done on the Palatia press. For these first 4 printings, only one yellow and one red cylinder were used. On the other hand, the blue plate was often renewed, sometimes in the middle of a printing run. So, there are printings 1A and 1B, 2A and 2B and even 3A, 3B and 3C, which only differ amongst themselves in the blue plates. Some curious situations occurred, however. Cylinder blue 1 was used for printings 1A and 2A. Cylinder 2 was used in printing 1B, but cylinder 3 was used for printings 2B and 3A. The latter two printings can only be differentiated by their punch holes.

With the 65 ct stamp, we do encounter some new punches, such as punch 7 (1A, 1B), punch 1 (2A, 2B), punch 8 (3A, 3B, 3C) and finally bore 6 (4). Printings 3C and 4 differ only by their punch and the printing date.

The Palatia press characteristics of printings #1 through 4 of the 65 ct stamp, show up again in the printing direction (from top to bottom) and in the placings of the fitting crosses (to the sides of positions L1, L91, R10 and R100). There are some peculiarities, though. In figure 16 we show a lower/right block of an R pane. It has punch 1 (square hole), so it must be printing 2A or 2B. Measurement of the one blue fitting cross (9.6 x 3.4 mm) shows that it is from the blue cylinder #3, therefore it is printing 2B. One would expect these panes to have been perforated via the "ridge" method, i.e. from the bottom up. However, these panes were perforated from left to right. How do we know this? It was noted, that an unperforated right hand side selvedge occurred only on R panes. That proves that the perforating was done on the double sheets from right to left. However, in that case one would have expected the bottom selvedge to be perforated. Since this is not the case, one concludes, that a number of perforating needles must have been removed. Fortunately, this comb is known from other, earlier stamp issues, otherwise we would have been stuck with a very thorny problem. The comb in question we have not encountered before in this study. Its gauge is 12 3/4 : 14, nominally the same as the perforation on the Regina press, but a totally different comb nevertheless. We also note that in these Palatia printings with the above G-comb sheets, the perforation direction is perpendicular to the printing direction, which

Figure 16: Lower-right block of an R-pane, printing #2B of 65 ct stamp, cylinder blue 3, cross 9.6 x 3.4 mm., punch 1, perforation 12 3/4 : 14, Palatia press.

Table 1.

Dimensions of the Blue Fitting Crosses (in mm.)

A. The 60 cent stamp

Printing	Blue cylinder	Upper left	Lower left	Upper right	Lower Right
1A	1	9.5x3.5	11.3x3.7	11.2x3.3	12.4x4.9
1B	2	8.2x2.6	12.3x1.8	9.2x2.8	11.9x2.7
2	3	10.8x2.8	10.7x3.2	12.0x3.7	10.6X3.9
3	4	11.4x3.5	10.2x2.3	12.2x2.2	no cross
4	5	12.8x2.4	12.7x2.1	9.9x3.1	12.3x4.7

B. The 65 cent stamp.

Printing	Blue cylinder	Upper left	Lower left	Upper right	Lower right
1A,2A	1	12.8x1.3	12.5x2.6	11.5x2.9	12.6x2.5
1B	2	12.1x2.6	13.1x2.3	10.7x2.7	13.5x2.4
2B,3A	3	12.9x2.9	11.4x2.2	10.8x3.0	9.7x3.4
3B	4	10.9x3.0	14.1x2.6	11.0x2.3	12.6x4.1
3C,4	5	7.0x3.9	7.0x3.8	6.1x4.2	12.6x3.7
5	6	11.3x3.9	10.3x2.9	12.2x3.7	10.5x2.8

surely is an oddity.

Other perforators used for the first four printings of the 65 ct stamp were again the 12 3/4 : 13 1/2 O-comb and the 12 3/4: 13 1/4 Y-comb. The irregular O-comb was only used for printings 1 and 2.

Printing #5 of the 65 ct Stamp.

For this very last printing, the Regina web press was utilized again, which meant, of course, that totally new cylinders had to be produced for all three colors. Printing #5 reveals its Regina character immediately (see figure 17). Note the two extra selvedge perforation holes both in the top and bottom selvedges, and the fitting crosses above L 1 and R 10, and under L 91 and R 100. Again, the perforation gauge is 12 3/4 : 14 and there is no punch hole, everything exactly as with printings 1 and 2 of the 60 ct stamp.

Summary.

In Table 1, we give the dimensions of all the blue fitting crosses for all cylinders of the 60 and the 65 ct stamps. These numbers are a composite of our own data, those of another cross fanatic, Mr. H. Huberts of Breda (5), and finally some as published by Dr Hille Ris Lambers (4).

In Table 2, the printings are tabulated with the appropriate cylinder numbers for the blue, yellow and red, their punches and, finally, their perforations. This Table 2 is a virtual copy of the one published by Dr. Hille Ris Lambers (4).

References.

1. Dr. Hille Ris Lambers, Maandblad voor Philatelie, Feb. 1981, pp 105-7.
2. ibid; April 1981, pp 293-5
3. ibid; April 1981, pp 296-8
4. ibid; March 1982, pp 206-210
5. H. Huberts, private communication.

Acknowledgements.

In addition to the above, we like to express our gratitude to the many stamp friends in the Netherlands who for years kept sending me every Inaugural corner block they could lay their hands on. Their faith that one day this would lead to a publication is finally rewarded. We also thank the "Maandblad voor Philatelie" for permission to reprint the published data of Tables 1 and 2 by Dr. Hille Ris Lambers. Dilia Rummens composed the computer graphics.

Table 2.

Characteristics by Printing.

A The 60 cent stamp.

Printing	Cylinders			Press	Printing	Perforation 12 3/4:			Punch
	blue	yellow	red		direction	14	13 1/4	13 1/2	
1A	1	1	1	Regina	R	+	-	-	-
1B	2	1	1	Regina	R	+	-	-	-
2	3	1	1	Regina	R	+	-	-	-
3A	4	2a	2	Palatia	O	-	+	-	2
3B	4	2b	2	Palatia	O	-	+	+	2
4	5	2c	2	Palatia	O	-	+	+	5

B The 65 cent stamp.

Printing	Cylinders			Press	Printing	Perforation 12 3/4:			Punch
	blue	yellow	red		direction	14	13 1/4	13 1/2	
1A	1	1	1	Palatia	O	-	+	+	7
1B	2	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	+	7
2A	1	1	1	Palatia	O	+	-	+	1
2B	3	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	+	1
3A	3	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	-	8
3B	4	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	-	8
3C	5	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	-	8
4	5	1	1	Palatia	O	+	+	-	bore 6
5	6	2	2	Regina	R	+	-	-	-

THE LAST OVERPRINTS OF THE NETHERLANDS; NVPH # 712.

by Cees Slofstra

Postal rates in the Netherlands changed on November 1st, 1957. An inland letter of up to 20 gram was henceforth to be franked with 12 ct, rather than the 10 ct that was required before. Under the prevailing condition this meant, that the red-brown 10 ct stamp with Juliana "en profile" was replaced by the green-blue 12 ct stamp of the same design. These stamps had been designed by S. Hartz, with J. van Krimpen doing the graphics. (See figure 1) In the Netherlands it is customary (if

Figure 1: The design Hartz stamps of 10 and 12 ct.

not regulation) that the lowest denomination carrying the Royal portrait, corresponds with the first inland letter rate. Lower denominations of stamps have numeral designs; these are used, amongst others, for the franking of printing matter. Because of the rate change, the 10 ct Juliana-profile stamp had no proper usage anymore. This principle still exists today. When on July 1, 1986, the first inland letter rate went from 70 ct to 75 ct, the 70 ct Beatrix stamp was withdrawn from all wickets. After the rate change of November 1957, it turned out that there was still a considerable supply of the Juliana 10 ct stamps, both at the post offices and at the Bureau for Stamp Securities in Haarlem. Because of this, a service order (# H254-bis, May 16, 1958) stipulated the following:

1. A number of surplus franking stamps of 10 ct denomination has been overprinted with "12 C" in silver color. These stamps will be sold off for 12 ct.

2. The Head of the Bureau of Stamp Securities in Haarlem will soon supply the post offices with these stamps. A number of these have to be stocked for collectors in post offices with a philatelic wicket.

Figure 2: A pair of overprints; type I at left, type II at right.

The number of overprinted stamps exceeded 24 million. In spite of this large number, and in spite of the special attention given to the philatelic wickets, it is very difficult to find complete panes of these stamps, or even large blocks. It is remarkable, but already in the "Maandblad" of June 1959 (p 184) the poor availability of complete panes was mentioned. The Postal Museum Netherlands (presently called the PTT Museum) in the Hague, has three complete panes, a number of blocks of four, and a few special specimen.

In addition, we had to our disposition several blocks and singles from our own collection, as well as several larger blocks from other philatelists. The original panes of the 10 ct stamps have 200 stamps in 20 rows of ten. The overprint printing form was adapted to that format; it consisted of 200 separate types brought together in a 200 subject printing form. The overprint was carried out in typography with a silvery color. With a procedure as sketched above, variations in the overprint are bound to happen. The best known varieties have been catalogued as NVPH # 712a and 712b, depending on the numeral "2" in the overprint. In type I (712a) the base of the "2" is about 2.0 mm, whereas in type II (712b) this base is larger at about 2.5 mm. (See figure 2) The earliest report of these two types was in the "Maandblad" of November 1958. In that early report, the presence of type II is already reported to occur on positions 1, 106, 107, 116, 117, 126, 127, 136, 137, and 146 in a pane with etching number L26. The report also stated that the R26 panes did not possess any type II overprints.

Figure 3: A scarce block of 10 stamps, 9 of which are type II. This block is from positions 106, 107, 116, 117, 126, 127, 136, 137, 146, and 147. Only position 147 has type I.

The latter is contrary to recent observations, however. The PTT Museum has a complete pane of overprints with etching R26. Indeed position 1 has type I, but on the other 9 positions (106, 107.....146) show clearly type II overprints. In this case, therefore, 9 type II and 191 type I overprints.

After the discovery of the two types of overprint, the editor of the "Maandblad" immediately made some inquiries at the Bureau of Stamp Securities in Haarlem. In his reply, this PTT

Figure 4: The most interesting block of four from the pane: type II is on position 1 only. On position 11, the distance between bars and "C" is short while that same distance is larger than normal on position 12.

Figure 5: A block of eight stamps of type I from the upper half of a pane, with etching number L26.

Figure 6: Two stamps of the type I. At left a normal distance between "1" and "2"; with the stamp at right this distance is shorter.

	L/R										
1	2*										20
2	A	B									19
3											18
4											17
5											16
6											15
7				B							14
8					A		A				13
9				A							12
10											11
11		F				2	2				10
12						2	2				9
13						2	2				8
14						2	2				7
15	B					2	2*				6
16											5
17											4
18				S							3
19				S							2
20					S						1

Figure 7: Overall scheme of overprint varieties in a 200 stamp pane.
2 = type II
2 = sometimes type II, sometimes type I*
F = spotted and filled in flag at the top of the "1"
A = short distance (0.1-0.3 mm) between bars and letter "C"
B = long distance (0.8 mm) between bars and letter "C"
S = shorter distance between "1" and "2".

officer writes 'that again proof was given how closely philatelists study their stamps', and further on 'that initially all numerals "2" were identical, since they were made from the same master. However, during the printing process, which lasted several weeks, the printing form required repairs several times because of worn or broken type.'

It remains remarkable, however, that the wear was mostly concentrated in a rectangular area somewhere near the center of the form.

However, provided we believe everybody's word, there are the following overprint combinations:

a. One pane of 200, entirely type I. This was reported at the time by the editor-in-chief of the "Maandblad"; this was a pane with etching number R26.

b. Panes with nine type II overprints on the positions "106-146" (and type I overprints on the remaining 191 positions). Two such panes may be found in the PTT Museum; they have etching numbers R26 and R27.

c. One pane, with type II on position 1, as well as on the nine positions in the rectangle "106-146". This pane has 190 types I. This pane is also in the PTT Museum; it carries etching number L26.

d. In the June 1959 "Maandblad" it is reported that Mr. Koopman (well-known for his postmark catalogues) showed a pane to the editor-in-chief with type I in position 1, but ten types II in the complete rectangle 106-107...146-147. Compared with the pane mentioned under c., this pane differs in having one type II moved from position 1 to position 147.

Figure 8: Double- and inverted overprint, respectively.

Of the five panes mentioned above, only three were studied; the sheets under a. and d. could not be tracked down. It is possible, that further research in the archives of Enschede and Sons might lead to positive results. It remains peculiar that the 'wear' as mentioned by the Head Bureau Stamp Securities would be limited to the narrow rectangle of positions 106-107...146-147, in the middle of the print form. What was established is that – without a doubt – only one printing form existed; at least this is the observation from three complete panes and eight different partial panes. It is also clear, that this one printing form underwent several minor and major repairs.

Other constant varieties are:

a. The overprint on position 102 (row 11, second stamp) shows a spotty and filled up flag at the top of the "1".

b. In positions 174, 184, and 195, the distance between "1" and "2" is shorter than normal; the distance is 0.5 mm rather that .75 mm. (See figure 6)

c. Stamps in positions 11, 75, 77, and 84, are characterised by a distance between the bars and the "C", that is shorter than normal (0.1-0.3 mm, rather than 0.5 mm)

d. In stamps of positions 12, 64, and 141, the distance between the bars and the letter "C" is larger than normal (about 0.8 mm).

Figure 7 provides an overview of all varieties.

Two very special variants, a double overprint and an inverted overprint probably originated from theft at the printer's. (See figure 8)