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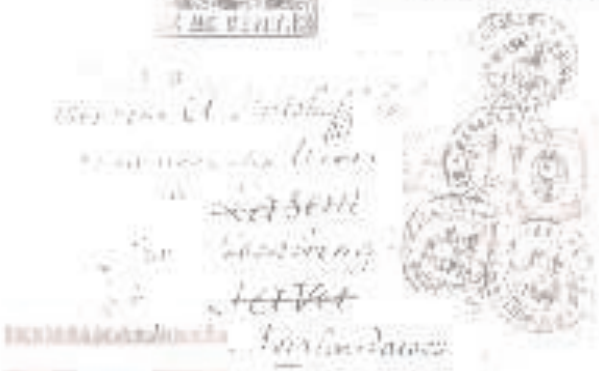

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Editor's message

In front of you is the last magazine of the season. Looking back on this season as editor, I realise we have had a our high and low moments. We lost one of our editorial committee members in the beginning of the season, but we managed to produce five wonderful magazines. Thanks to our members, who wrote some amazing articles covering a wide area of interest, these five magazines could be produced. This season we also saw our website expanding. Thanks to our previous editor, Hans Kremer, who took the time to scan all issues from season 1 all the way up to season 34, we can now enjoy the online archive of backissues in pdf-format. All together we have achieved something to be proud of as a specialised society outside the Netherlands!

For me as editor I'm going on a working holiday. Well I'm not sure if it is work or holiday what I'm going to do for the coming 6 weeks. As the last part of the temporary job I recently obtained, I'm going on a desert trip with a group of nature enthusiasts . I will fly up to Alice Springs and from there I will join the group and travel in old 4 x 4 army trucks through the West Australian desert to Kalgoorlie. From there we go via the south part of the desert back to Alice Springs. Looking at the weather forecasts we don't have to worry it will be hot. Actually it will be cold, very cold bbbrrrrr. –3 degrees Celcius has been recorded and the forecast is not promising anything better. At night I will sleep in a small tent without any luxury (including heating). For the rest it will be an experience never to forget, since this kind of trips became a dying art here in Australia as most people these days want luxurious hotelrooms with all amenities. After this it is looking for a new job for me and that will be a challenge in it self. For members who contact me, keep in mind that a response will take a while. I hope I won't be eaten by Dingo's, the Australian wild dogs.

A final thing to say in this message is: **Don't forget to renew your subscription!**

Alex

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Magazine Notes

Our Magazine is the business card of our society. With modern technology available, a full color magazine is warranted.

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Contact the Magazine editor in case of questions.

Secret Writing and Chemical Censoring of the mails by the German Postal Authority

by Franklin Ennik

The art of secret writing has been around for thousands of years and includes any means of written communication whereby the writer conceals the actual written text, whether it is encrypted or not. It is the craft of deception, subterfuge and espionage used by spies, mystery novelists, young lovers, etc. Whereas cryptic codes and ciphers conceal the meaning of a message, secret writing conceals the actual message. Secret writing involves the use of invisible inks, also known as covert ink, sympathetic ink and white ink.

One means of secret writing known to many young children from middle school science projects is invisible ink that can be "made" from ordinary substances commonly occurring in the environment or found in any household.

In the distant past, during periods of international conflict and intrigue, secret writing utilizing invisible inks was used by spies, intelligence agencies and civilians on all sides as a means of conveying data and hidden messages. At the same time the postal authorities of these entities and governments formed censoring agencies and a means to detect and expose hidden messages on postal cards, envelopes and their contents. During WW I and WW II, the Germans, as well as the Allies, not only opened and scanned correspondence for forbidden text and content, they also censored selected suspect pieces of mail by swiping them with various detection chemicals.

Chemical censoring of the mail is the subject of this article and will provide summary information on secret ink techniques and illustrate examples of postal cards and envelopes sent during WW II into and out of the Netherlands. The German postal authority examined all mail moving in their sphere of occupation. Many examples of chemically censored mail, examined by the various German postal censoring centers, exist for many, but not all, of the occupied countries.

Invisible Ink Types

The invisible ink sources discussed here are of two major types: those developed or made visible by heat and those developed or made visible by chemical reaction. The history of invisible inks, and those developed more recently by the modern chemical industry, has produced a vast array of possible formulas. The variety and range of possible types and formulas are by no means limited to the inks and pH indicators/ developers mentioned here.

The ink formulas listed here include substances that were likely commonly available in occupied Europe that did not require elaborate preparation, apparatus, or chemicals. Messages utilizing invisible inks are not in themselves "secure" but this can be balanced by the fact that it is effectively impossible for the censoring authorities to thoroughly examine every piece of correspondence in the mail stream.

Invisible writing revealed by heat:

The most basic invisible inks are liquids which are heat sensitive. Some organic substances oxidize when heated, which usually turns them brown. For this "heat-fixed" ink any weak acidic fluid will work. Inks are formulated by diluting the main ingredient, usually with water, just to the point when it becomes difficult to develop.

Using a wooden stylus or quill pen, the message can be written on a piece of paper, which will be invisible when dry. Some examples work more effectively than others. A few examples of heat sensitive inks include the following:

Milk	Lemon, apple or orange juice
Onion juice	Sweat
Diluted honey	Diluted carbonated water
White vinegar	White wine
Soap water	Urine
Diluted blood	Semen

The hidden writing is made visible by carefully exposing the paper to a *medium-high temperature heat* source below 204.4° C (400° F), such as a hot radiator, iron, oven, or heat from a high wattage light bulb.
CAUTION: Extreme care must be used with this technique since paper burns at 232.7° C (451° F).

Inks made visible by chemical reaction

The basic science behind most invisible ink reactions (except for those involving heat) is related to simple acid/base chemistry and requires a pH indicator or developer. The ink used in this case is a colorless liquid, with either acidic or basic pH, and remains on the paper. The next step in the process requires the recipient to apply an appropriate pH indicator solution to the paper to elucidate the hidden text. The indicator changes color when it comes in contact with either the acid or base ink and makes the text visible. After applying the developer to suspect mail, the censor clerk must examine the piece for the presence of secret messages right away. The visible effects of some ink/developer combinations are time limited. Some ink–pH indicator combinations can also be reversed. A few examples include the following:

Acid or Base Ink	pH indicator or developer	Visible color of print
Phenolphthalein	ammonia fumes or sodium carbonate	pink/reddish
Ammonia	red cabbage water	blue
Copper sulfate	ammonium hydroxide	blue
Iron sulfate	plant gall tannin	black
Iron sulfate	potassium ferricyanate spray	blue
Starch	iodine solution	dark blue
Lemon juice	iodine solution	white on light blue

It is very easy to list the many possible inks and their appropriate pH indicator. However, it is more difficult and an entirely different matter to determine the correct dilution formulas of the ink-pH indicator combination and the method of application. This requires both prior knowledge and training or repeated experimentation and both sender and intended recipient must get it right the first time to be effective. Some combinations require special apparatus to reveal the hidden messages, such as a fume/vapor chamber or white/UV/infrared lights.

The science and use of invisible ink to conceal secret messages has been known for thousands of years (see numerous website references). Literally thousands of chemical ink-pH indicator formulas were developed for the purpose of espionage up to the beginning of the 20th century. The office of military intelligence of nearly every major power was privy to this technology.

Postal authorities have always been on the lookout for forbidden items in the mail stream such as, contraband, explosives, leaking substances, etc., and items of undeclared value. Prior to 1939 the mail system in Germany was, for the most part, monitored for foreign exchange violations according to the German Foreign Exchange Regulations of 1932-1933 and in general these inspections were not concerned with the written contents of mail.

However, with the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939, that all changed. At first, German mobilization only called for the inspection of private letters and telegrams at the central Foreign Letter and Telegram Examining Stations in Berlin and Koenigsberg (in East Prussia) but this was soon found inadequate and additional censor offices were established throughout Germany and eventually in the occupied territories. These censor offices initially reported to the Chief of the Wehrmacht (SA). Although the Wehrmacht (OKW) still did the work, the Wehrmacht lost a power struggle to the Office of Military Intelligence (the dreaded **Abwehr**) in 1944 for direction of censoring offices.

The first *Directive on Communications Services* for the German nation was issued April 2, 1940. **(Note: O*nly selected sections are shown here*)**. This translation is excerpted from R.J. Houston, *Mail Surveillance under the Third Reich*, pg. 30. **Items subject to censoring included**:

Section 1

A. Postal Service
  (a) Letter mail (letters, postcards, printed matter commercial papers, commercial samples, mixed mail, newspapers, postal money orders, letters to and from the Postal Checking offices, packages)
  (b) Parcels
B. Telecommunications service (telephone, teletypewriter, telegraphy, radio, television, photo telegraphic service)
C. Goods and freight services
D. Carrier pigeon service
E. Every kind of communication with optical, acoustic and all other means of communication for the purpose of transmitting information are to be regarded as communications service.

On May 13, 1940, the *First Order of Execution* (there were also several others) for the Directive on Communications Service was issued which clarified and further restricted the free movement of mail. **(Note: *Only selected sections are shown here)***. This translation is excerpted from R.J. Houston, *Mail Surveillance under the Third Reich*, pg. 33.

Section 1
(Addition to Part I of the Directive)

Exception from the prohibition of direct and indirect communications traffic with hostile foreign countries will be allowed only in special cases.

Section 2
(Addition to Part II of the Directive)

A. Postal Service (In other words…..**Prohibited**)

1. *(a) The sending of picture* (photo) *postcards of all kinds, of photographs pasted on other objects, Braille materials, chess problems, crossword and other puzzles;*

(b) The use of secret inks, secret writing , artificial languages such as Esperanto and secret languages (with the exception of codes detailed under Letter B, No. 2) as well as Hebrew symbols;

(c) The use of shorthand of all systems;

(d) The use of lined envelopes;

(e) Posting of letters in letter boxes are prohibited in postal service to non-belligerent foreign countries.

2. *Postcards and letters to non-enemy foreign countries must be clear and easily readable, if possible typewritten. Commercial letters must be typewritten or printed..*

Letters of a non-commercial character may include, at most, four sheets …maximum size of pages 210 x 297 mm. (about 8¼ x 11¾ inches).

Printed matter, business papers, samples and mixed mail are only allowed in commercial traffic. Newspapers and magazines may only be sent by a publisher or by the printing firm commissioned with the production.

3. *Money orders and transmissions from a postal checking account may only contain such brief communications as refer to the reason of the payment on the sender's section.*

4. *All mail to non-enemy foreign countries must bear the complete address of the sender on the outside.*

5. *The affixing of postage stamps on mail by the sender is prohibited. Postal fees are to be paid in cash at the counter.*

6. *All letters to non-enemy foreign countries must be mailed at the post office counter. The sender must submit* (present) *an official identity card (with photograph).*

Take particular notice of restriction Number 5 above. Collectors of European philatelic history items of this occupation period will notice that some postal clerks applied stamps to envelopes in a rather haphazard manner.

As the German forces overran and occupied more territories, the number of censorship offices increased accordingly. Eventually a whole network of censorship offices was established to monitor both the German civilian mails and mails sent between the occupied countries.

Censor Office	Code Letter	Mail sent to and from
Koenigsberg	a	Baltic States, USSR
Berlin	b	Airmail transit – N. & S. America
Cologne*	**c**	**Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, N. France**
Munich	d	Italy, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Vatican
Frankfurt	e	S. France, Switzerland, N. & S. America
Hamburg	f	Scandinavia
Vienna	g	Balkans, Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece
Berlin	h	(special for P.O.W. mail in late 1944)
Copenhagen	k	Sweden, Norway, Finland
Lyon	l	S. France
Nancy	n	S. France, Spain, Portugal
Oslo	o	Sweden, Finland, Denmark
Trondheim, Norway	t	Norway to Sweden and Finland
Paris	x	Red Cross mail, France
Bordeaux	y	SW. France

*****All cross-border civilian mail ***sent to and from*** the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and northern France was forwarded to Cologne (or Brussels) for examination and stamped with a red, circular hand stamp, **Oberkommando der Wehrmacht** (OKW)**,** with the code letter **C** (assigned to Köln (=Cologne)) which later included the identification number of the censoring clerk. A branch office of Cologne which employed the same code letter was later established for this region in Brussels. Additional branch offices were established in Milan, Nancy, and Belgrade to assist other main censor offices.

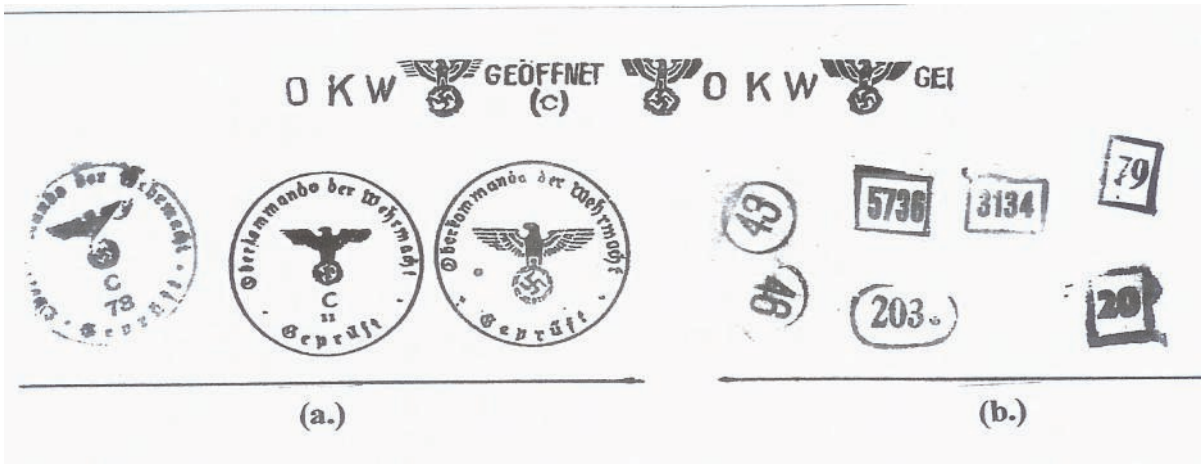

Fig. 1. *(a.) Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW) Cologne censor markers with and without censor clerk numbers. (b.) Various censor clerk identification numbers.*

Each censor office had its own distinct letter-code designation; the SS and Gestapo censoring offices had their own censor markings. The number of times a piece of mail has been examined is indicated by the number of different censor clerk identification markers stamped or written on the envelope or postal card.

***Fig. 2**. Type II **Arbeitsbuch** (employment history book) issued to one Anna Waldheisel, a chemical censor clerk employed by the Wehrmacht OKW censor office in Vienna, Austria.*

According to her work history, Frau Waldheisel became proficient in the Dutch and English languages working as an *au pair* for five years in the Netherlands starting in 1930 and in England for five years starting in 1935. She was employed as a translator and censor clerk in the Vienna office from November 1942 until February 1945. Vienna was 'liberated' by the Soviet Army on April 13, 1945.

Fig. 3. *A photo picture post card posted October 16, 1942 from 'sGravenhage to Brno, Czechoslovakia with a continuous machine Cologne censor marker and cancelled with the slogan:* ***W.H.N. Loterij 1942 / Uw Kans 1 Op 3*** *(W.H.N. Lottery 1942 / Your chance 1 in 3).*

It is curious whether the above photo postcard, illustrating the *Kortenaerkade met Gebouw Hoofdbestuur Post en Telegrafie* in Den Haag, actually got past the censors in Cologne. Photographic materials were usually returned or confiscated as required by the May 13, 1940 Directive as can be seen on the label below, issued by the Cologne office and found in a rejected letter posted in Dessau, Germany and addressed to the Netherlands. The label (shown in R.J. Houston) and my translation reads:

Der Versand von Foto-Postkarten, Bild-, Ansichts-, Glückwunsch-Karten, Heiligenbildern, Drucksachen im Privatverkehr, also auch Familiennachrichten wie Verlobungs-, Vermählungs-, Geburts- u. Todesanzeigen, Totenzettel ins Ausland ist nich' zulässig. Die Einlage mußte daher zurückgesandt bezw. entnommen werden.

Die Prüfstelle.

"The sending of photo postcards, view cards, holy pictures, greeting cards, private printed matter and family communications such as engagement, marriage, birth, death notices and death labels to foreign countries is not permissible. Contents must therefore be returned or even confiscated." The Censor Office.

Suspect and randomly selected postal cards and envelopes (and perhaps other classes of mail) were swiped with solutions of one or more different pH indicators or developers. Some pieces of mail were swiped multiple times or with what appears to be as many as four different chemical indicators. In this case these different chemicals were applied with a single stroke of attached or ganged brushes. The letter contents of envelopes were often tested as well.

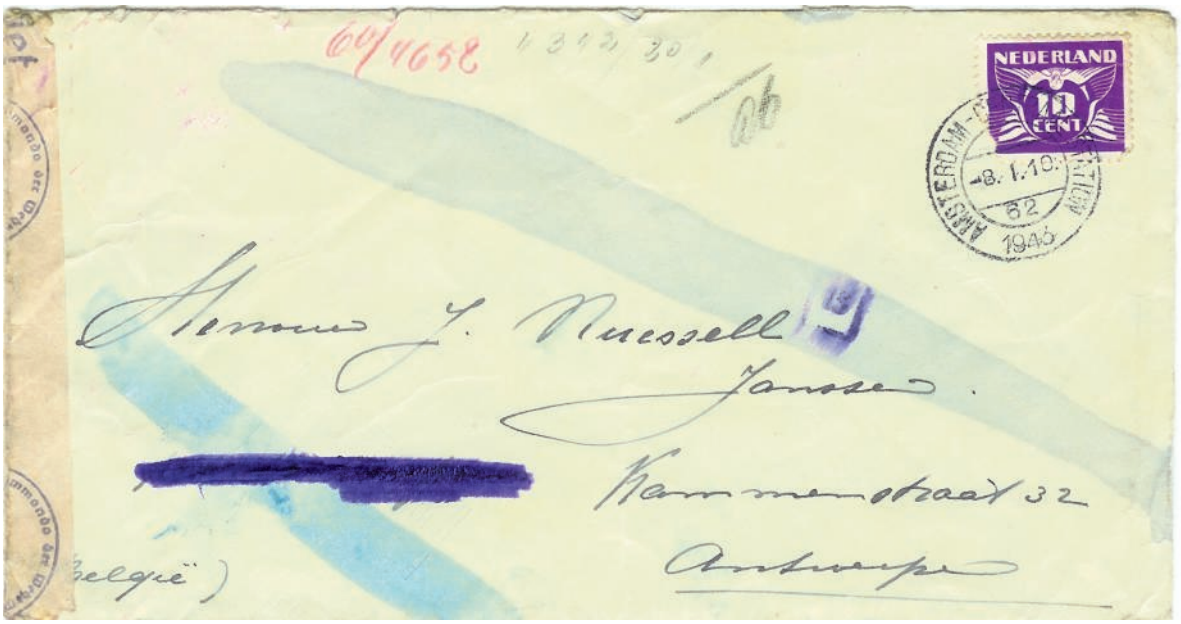

Fig. 4. *Cover addressed to Antwerp, Belgium from Amsterdam Central Station January 8, 1943 with a continuous machine Cologne censor marker on the reverse. The envelope has been swiped with two different pH indicators on the front and reverse. The aniline pencil marking covering part of the address was likely applied by the censor.*

Fig. 5*. Typewritten cover addressed from Amsterdam C.S. to Berlin January 11, 1943 and cancelled with the slogan :* ***Afvalstoffen Bewaren Is / Grondstoffen Sparen*** *(Keeping waste products is saving raw materials).*
The cover has been chemically tested with two different pH indicators both front and reverse and stamped with a Cologne OKW censor clerk number 73 marker on the reverse.

The indicator chemicals most often used by the German censors were *copper sulfate*, which shows up as various shades of grayish-blue; *tincture of iodine*, which shows up as brown or beige; and *green vitriol (heptahydrate of ferrous sulphate*) which shows up as dark, greenish-black.

Fig. 6. *This letter, posted February 8, 1944, from Monster (ZH.), was likely sent by family to a Netherlands Legion soldier stationed in the Oberpfaffenhoven airdrome near Wessling, Germany. The letter is swiped with two chemical pH indicators both front and reverse and is sealed with a Cologne OKW censor tape. There is indication on the reverse that the letter is written in* ***Nederlandsche Taal****.*

Several colorless indicators, such as *ammonium hydroxide* and *sodium carbonate*, were used to expose the secret ink under slanted light. The often difficult to see applications of colorless chemical indicators on mail are observed by slight discoloration of the paper and by smearing of the ink of the written text or address.

So far there are no contemporary references explaining what the censors were looking for or what visual criteria alerts the first censor clerk to suspect that a particular piece of mail needed to be forwarded to the chemical censor clerk for further examination.

Some individuals, commercial firms and organizations may have been targeted for scrutiny by the censoring offices based upon their business, political, and social affiliations. However, a casual examination of the chemically censored covers and postcards seems to suggest that it was a random process, *i.e.*, every piece of mail could be considered suspect.

The International Red Cross office based in Geneva, Switzerland received an extra amount of attention from the chemical censors due to the high volume of mail and packages sent to and through the organization to and from POW camps.

Feldpost sent by the Wehrmacht (SA) soldiers, as well as the many "foreign" Waffen SS Legion units, was routinely monitored by the OKW and was sometimes subject to chemical censoring. The mail of Nazi sympathizers was also not exempt from scrutiny. Indication of the written language of correspondence other than German was often required on envelopes and postal cards.

Fig. 7. *A handwritten envelope posted from Breda to the International Red Cross office in Geneva, Switzerland on February 10, 1944. The cover was censored in Munich (d) since its destination was Geneva. Beginning in 1944 a new censor tape machine was introduced that applied both censor location marker and envelope sealing label, as in this case:*

Fig. 8. *This letter, sent February 28, 1944 from Zwolle Station to Verviers, Belgium, was tested front and reverse with several chemical pH indicators. It was examined by censor clerk number 4, probably in Brussels (a branch censor office of Cologne). The letter content was written in French (**Fransche Taa**l).*

It is not precisely known when the WW II German Postal Authority began scrutiny of the mails utilizing chemical censoring. Examples of these covers, for sale on the Internet and in my collection, indicate this practice was in use at least between September 1941 and February 1945.

***Fig. 9**. This Express cover posted September 14, 1942 from Rijswijk (Z.H.) to Wurtemberg, Germany is swiped with two chemical pH indicators front and back, one of which is clear. Hand written on the reverse is **Nederlandsche taal**.*

Every censor office was equipped with apparatus and a stock of various indicator chemicals necessary to detect covert ink. Examples of such mail chemically censored by the Germans during WW I also periodically appear for sale at auction and on the Internet.

Properties of an "ideal" invisible ink

Chemists employed by the various intelligence agencies have worked diligently to discover and perfect the perfect universal ink and its unique pH developer. The following from the WW II SOE training manual gives an indication.

> *……World War II SOE agents were trained not to risk their lives through reliance on insecure inks, most of which were inks of World War I vintage. The SOE training manual identified the following properties of the "ideal" invisible ink:*

1. *Very water soluble, i.e. non greasy.*
2. *Non-volatile, i.e. no pronounced smell.*
3. *Not depositing crystals on paper, i.e. not easily seen in glancing light.*
4. *Invisible under ultraviolet light.*
5. *Does not decompose or discolor the paper e.g. not silver nitrate.*
6. *Unreactive with iodine, or with any of the other usual developers.*
7. *Potential developers for the ink should be as few as possible.*
8. *Should not develop under heat.*
9. *Easily obtainable and has at least one plausible innocent use by the holder.*
10. *Not a compound of several chemicals, as this would contradict no. 7.*

In practice, no. 6 and no. 9 are usually incompatible. The SOE was known to supply special inks to their field agents, rather than depend on improvisation from obtainable everyday chemicals.

***Fig. 10**. This registered letter sent February 18, 1944 from Stuttgart to Den Haag is chemically censored front and back with two pH indicators, one of which is clear.*

At this time, the science and secrecy of invisible ink formulas ***is still considered*** serious business with the US Central Intelligence Agency. Although the technology of ink formulas and their accompanying pH indicators were well known, with few exceptions, by the entire body of the world's intelligence agencies by the beginning of the 20th Century (and certainly by 1940), the CIA still adamantly maintains that invisible ink/pH indicator recipes are a matter of vital US national security.

Mark Zaid, a Washington, D.C. attorney and head of the *James Madison Project (JMP)*, filed suit in federal court in fall 1998 to look into the U.S. government's veil of secrecy surrounding the release and declassification of this 80 year old information. Zaid's court briefs can be viewed on-line. These proceedings were widely aired in the U.S. news media in 1999. So far the CIA has prevailed in court proceedings and has refused to declassify this information even after repeated court filings by the JMP.

Fig. 11. *This photo picture postcard of Wanneperveen (Ov.) posted October 13, 1942 to Spa, Belgium received two chemical swipes.. The card was probably censored in Brussels, a branch office of Cologne, by censor clerk no. 52.*

Despite such governmental informational restrictions, there subsequently have been quantum leaps in the improvement of these covert espionage techniques, although some will likely remain in use. International covert operations are now well beyond the use of improved covert inks, UV fluorescent inks, microdots, micro-encapsulated inks, cryptic photography, miniaturization, etc, etc…of the Cold War period……..we are now into the digital/internet/satellite age.

What once was considered state of the art technology in secrecy and espionage, beginning in the 14th Century Renaissance period up to the latter half of the 19th Century, is now relegated to mere child's play and middle school science projects.

Added in proof:

A recent comprehensive summary article explaining the known actions and reactions of these censorship chemicals appeared in the *German Postal Specialist*, October 2009, pages 415-419. Since the various security agencies are keeping mum about this technology, public knowledge of these chemical reactions will be slow in coming.

Further, C.J. van der Horst, in a personal correspondence, provided additional comments on several important points of information.

> Pg. 125. The decree published on May 13, 1940 did not apply to the Netherlands. This meant that the Dutch had more opportunities in the postal traffic with foreign countries than the Germans themselves. There were only a few restricting rules in effect in the Netherlands. A decision similar to the one in effect in Germany was instituted in the Netherlands on March 15, 1943.
>
> Pg. 127. Not all mail to and from the Netherlands went through the ABP Cologne. Only mail to and from Germany and a few other countries went through the ABP Cologne office.
>
> Pg. 129. The observation that it is strange that the picture post card has been sent on, is not correct because it was permitted until March 1943 to send picture post cards to greater Germany (therefore also to occupied Czechoslovakia).

Acknowledgements: I thank the staff of the Netherlands Philatelic Library NBFV in Baarn, Netherlands and the American Philatelic Society Reference Library in Bellefonte, PA for their assistance in finding pertinent references.

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http://www.jamesmadisonproject.org/files/Complaint6-6-01.doc http://www.fas.org/sgp/news/jmpoldest.html
http://www.jamesmadisonproject.org/litigation.php?litigation_id=10 http://www.taxcalendars.com/discovery2.html
http://www.jamesmadisonproject.org/news.php?news_id=5

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The Portuguese Specimen Overprints on the Netherlands and Overseas Territories' Stamp and Postal Stationery

by Hans Kremer & Alex Nuijten

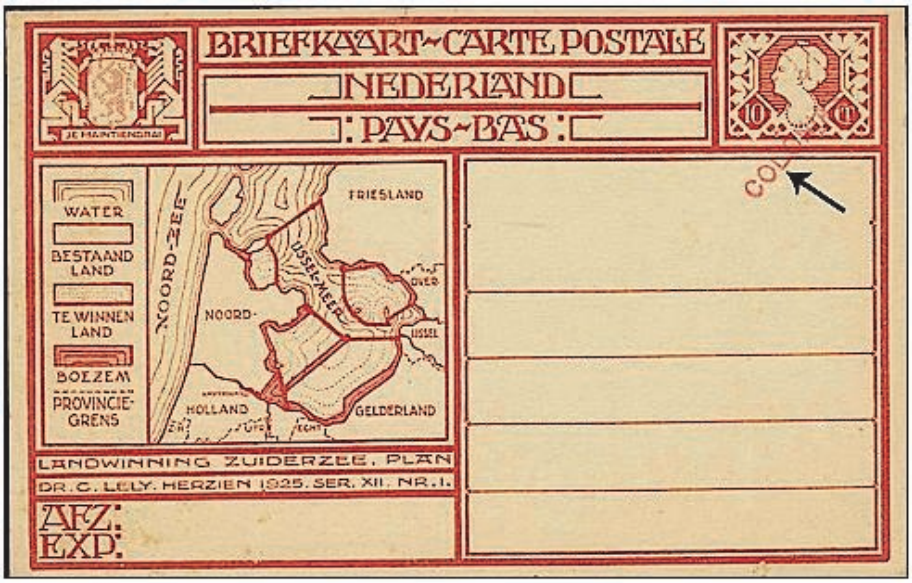
Generally in philately, most specimen overprints were applied for security purposes either by countries submitting "specimen" stamps/postal stationery to the Universal Postal Union (UPU) or the overprint was applied by the UPU-member country that received stamps/postal stationery and that had not yet been overprinted.

The UPU distributed the stamps/postal stationery of all members, to all members, so that postal administrations around the world could recognize what was (and potentially what was not) a valid postage stamp and valid postal stationery of another country.

When Portugal joined the UPU in 1880, they too received reference copies of stamps as well as postal stationery from all other UPU members.

The earlier issues are handstamped "ULTRAMAR". Also the text "No Ultramar" exist. The Portuguese word "Ultramar" means overseas. The earliest dates recorded for the Ultramar overprints on Dutch and colonies stamps and postal stationery are around 1900. These are most frequently seen on the stamps of Curaçao (NVPH# 26-28) and Suriname (NVPH# 34-36). The stamps of the Dutch East Indies that were issued between 1908-1911 that are overprinted with "Ultramar" also have the cancel "Correios E Telegrafos Angola".
These stamps are NVPH # 63-98, D1-D27.

At least two types of the overprint “Colonias” are recorded and they are known in the colors violet and red.



Based on observations the following sequence of overprints for Portugal was deduced:

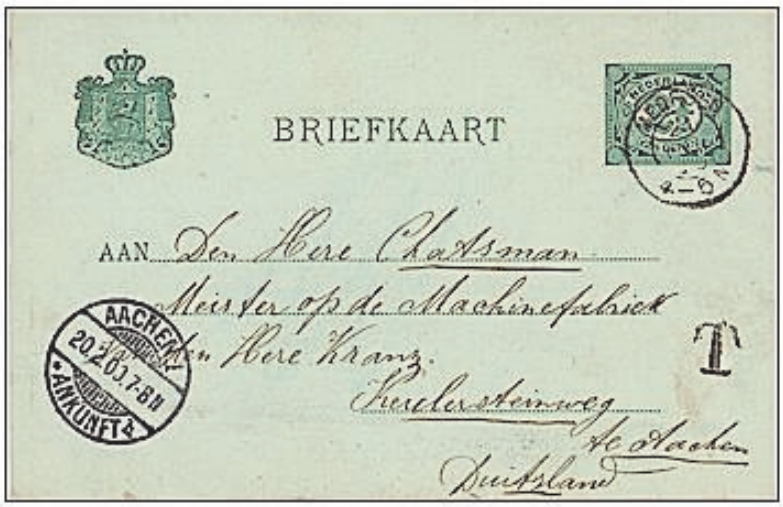
1900-1910 "ULTRAMAR" (with exceptionally late uses in the years 1921 and 1923)
1911-1925 "COLONIAS" (except 1921 and 1923)
1926-1931 "Especimen"
1932 "SPECIMEN" 18 mm length
1933-1934 "SPECIMEN" 13 mm length
1935-1937 "SPECIMEN" 18 mm length resumed
1938? "AMOSTRA" (Amostra means sample or specimen)

Refs: Various Websites

Regulations of Postage Due to Foreign Countries around 1900

by Hans Kremer

The June 2012 issue of the Netherlands Philatelists of California (www.npofc.org) showed an interesting postcard sent in February 1900 from Meerssen in the Netherlands to Aachen, Germany.



The postcard had a 2 ½ cent stamp on it, but the correct 'foreign' rate at that time was 5 cent, so it was 2 ½ cent short-paid. How to handle such an item?

The U.P.U. regulations at that time read as follows:

Unpaid or insufficiently paid correspondence shall be impressed with the postmark "T" (tax to be paid), the application of which shall be the responsibility of the office of the country of origin.

Every postal item which does not bear the "T" postmark shall be considered as paid to destination and treated accordingly, unless there be an obvious error.

In case of insufficient prepayment, correspondence of every kind is liable for a charge equal to double the amount of the deficiency, to be paid by the addressee.

When an article is insufficiently prepaid by means of postage stamps, the dispatching office indicates in black figures, placed by the side of the postage stamp(s), the amount of the deficiency, expressing it in francs and centimes.

Accordingly to this indication, the office of exchange of the country of destination taxes the article with double the deficiency ascertained.

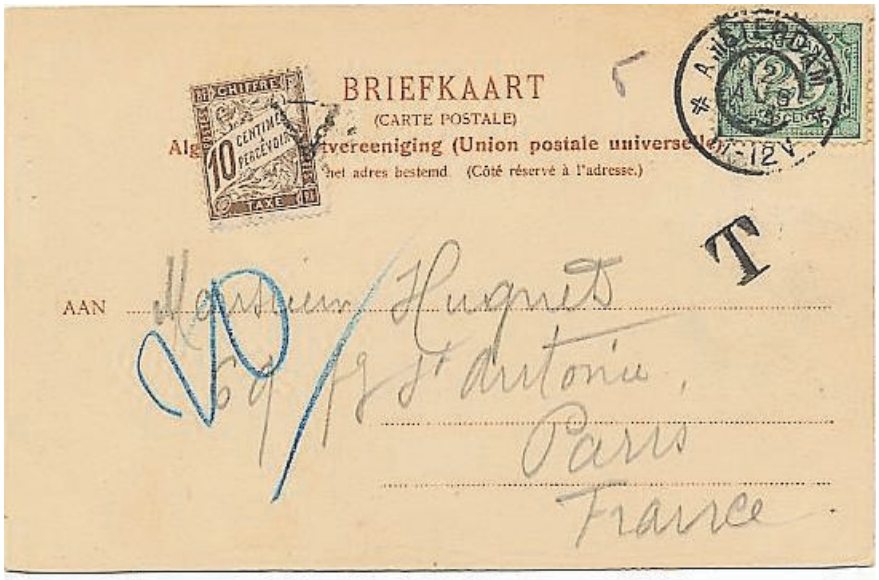
The Dutch postal employee applied a "T" postmark, indicating that extra postage was due, but failed to follow the rest of the procedures. So when the card arrived in Germany the postal employee possibly did not know (and maybe did not want to find out) how much extra postage to charge the addressee.

Another possibility is that the German postal employee thought that since this card came from Meerssen (less then 30 km from Aachen) the reduced border rate would apply. This however is not the case since the reduced border rate pertained only to letters. The reduced border rate for postcards did not come into effect as per March 1, 1921.

Whatever his thinking was, he let it pass and the card was delivered without collecting the postage due.

Next let's look at an example where the procedures were followed correctly.

Shown is a postcard sent April 1903 from Amsterdam to Paris. Again, only one 2 ½ cent stamp was attached, where two of them were needed to pay for the correct 5 cent postage.



As we read in the 'rules' the amount to be shown next to the stamp would be the short-paid amount (2 ½ cent), but converted to centimes.

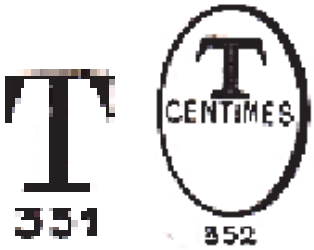
In 1903 one gold franc (100 centimes) was equal to 48 Dutch cents, or in slightly rounded numbers, each Dutch cent was equal to 2 centimes. The equivalence of the 2 ½ Dutch cent shortage then was 5 centimes, and that indeed is the handwritten number shown. next to the stamp.

Once the postcard arrived in Paris the French postal clerk had to double the amount of the shortage, which would be 2 x 5 = 10 centimes.
He attached a 10 centimes postage due stamp and then had to try to collect that from the receiver prior to handing over the postcard. We assume he was successful, since there is no sign that the card was refused.

One more example; a letter sent March 1889 from Den Helder, The Netherlands to Maagdenburg, Germany.

Postage of 5 cent was applied. Correct (letter) rate: 12 ½ cent; short 7 ½ cent, which in centimes was 15 centimes, as the hand written mark of "15" verifies. Postage due was twice the short amount which would be 2 x 15 = 30 centimes. This had to be converted in this case into German currency (pfennigs). U.P.U (1885) listed 25 centimes equal to 20 pfennig so 30 centimes would equal 24 pfennig, rounded up to 25 pfennig, which appears to be the amount handwritten in blue on the cover.

Vellinga mentions the use of two types of "T" postmarks used in the Netherlands, where V#351 is the more common one :
As per October 1, 1907 there was a small change in the procedures. Instead of handwriting **one** time the short amount, from then on **two** times the short amount had to be marked (which would directly reflect the amount of postage due (in centimes)).



The card on the next page was sent in 1910 from Amsterdam to Albany, NY.
Again, 2 ½ cent short-paid, which would mean postage due of 2 x 2 ½ = 5 cent.
This would equate to 10 centimes, as is noted with the V#352 type of "T" cancel.
The 10 centimes was then correctly converted to two U.S cents upon arrival in the U.S.

In order to 'solve' these postage due amounts, it is crucial to know the monetary relations between the various currencies. The U.P.U published detailed listings of these ratios and with a bit of work one can find them on the internet.

Here is a limited comparison listing showing the correct postage rate for letters (per 15 gram or half ounce) sent to the U.S.A in 1900. The second number is the postcard rate.
5 centimes French currency is the equivalent of 1 cent United States currency

Australia 2 ½/1 pence, Austria 10/5 kreuzer, Belgium 25/10 centimes, Brazil 200/75 reis, Canada 5/1 cents, Denmark 20/10 øre, France 25/10 centimes, Germany 20/10 pfennig, Great Britain 2 ½/1 pence, Dutch Guiana 25/ 7 1/2 cents Dutch, Italy 25/10 centesimi, Japan 5/2 sen, Luxemburg 25/10 centimes, Mexico 5/2 centavos, Netherlands 12 ½/ 5 cent, Netherlands East Indies 25/ 7 1/2 Dutch cents, Netherlands West Indies 12 ½ / 5 Dutch cents, Norway 20/10 øre, Portugal 50/20 reis, Russia 10/4 kopeks, Spain 25/10 centimos, Sweden 20/10 øre, Switzerland 25/10 centimes, Turkey 40/16 paras, Uruguay 10/3 centavos.

From this listing you can deduce the ratios of the various currencies mentioned, and explain the postage dues as marked on postal items, as can be seen from the following example:

Postcard sent from Canada to Italy in 1906. The Canadian postcard rate was 1 cent, but no postage was paid for. Short-paid: 1 cent, Comparative **letter** rates show 5 Canadian cents to be equal to 25 French centimes, so 1 cent would be equal to 5 centimes, which indeed is the handwritten amount on the card.
A Canadian "T" postmark was also applied, as per U.P.U regulations. Postage due was twice the short-paid amount: 2x 5 = 10 centimes. This had to be converted into Italian centesimi, which also is 25, since the Italian letter rate of 25 centesimi was equal to 25 French centimes, as can be read from the listing above.

Look at some of these international postage due numbers when you run across them; it is a challenge but also lots of fun to sort them out.

Refs:

E. Keith Parker, International Postage Due and the U.P.U, The Netherlands Philatelist, Vol. XV/4, July 1985
Drs. L. Goldhoorn, Van een halve cent tot één gulden vijf en zeventig. Een overzicht van de Nederlandse portzegels, Posthistorische Studies VI, PO&PO, 1979
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United States official Postal Guide, Geo. F. Lasher, printer, 1900

Recent Issues

The Netherlands in the Bosatlas

18 June 2012

The maps in De Grote Bosatlas have familiarized many people in the Netherlands with their country's topography. The atlas is used in most Dutch schools. In close collaboration with the Bosatlas publishers, Noordhoff Uitgevers, PostNL has produced a single stamp sheet showing how the Dutch landscape and this atlas have evolved over time.

The Netherlands in the Bosatlas stamp sheet is being issued to celebrate the latest edition of De Grote Bosatlas, the most popular atlas in Dutch classrooms. The new edition – number 54 – will go on sale around 18 June, the day the stamp sheet The Netherlands in the Bosatlas sheet is issued.

In addition to the stamp sheet featuring ten different stamps, two stamp booklets, a prestige booklet and two first day covers will also be available.

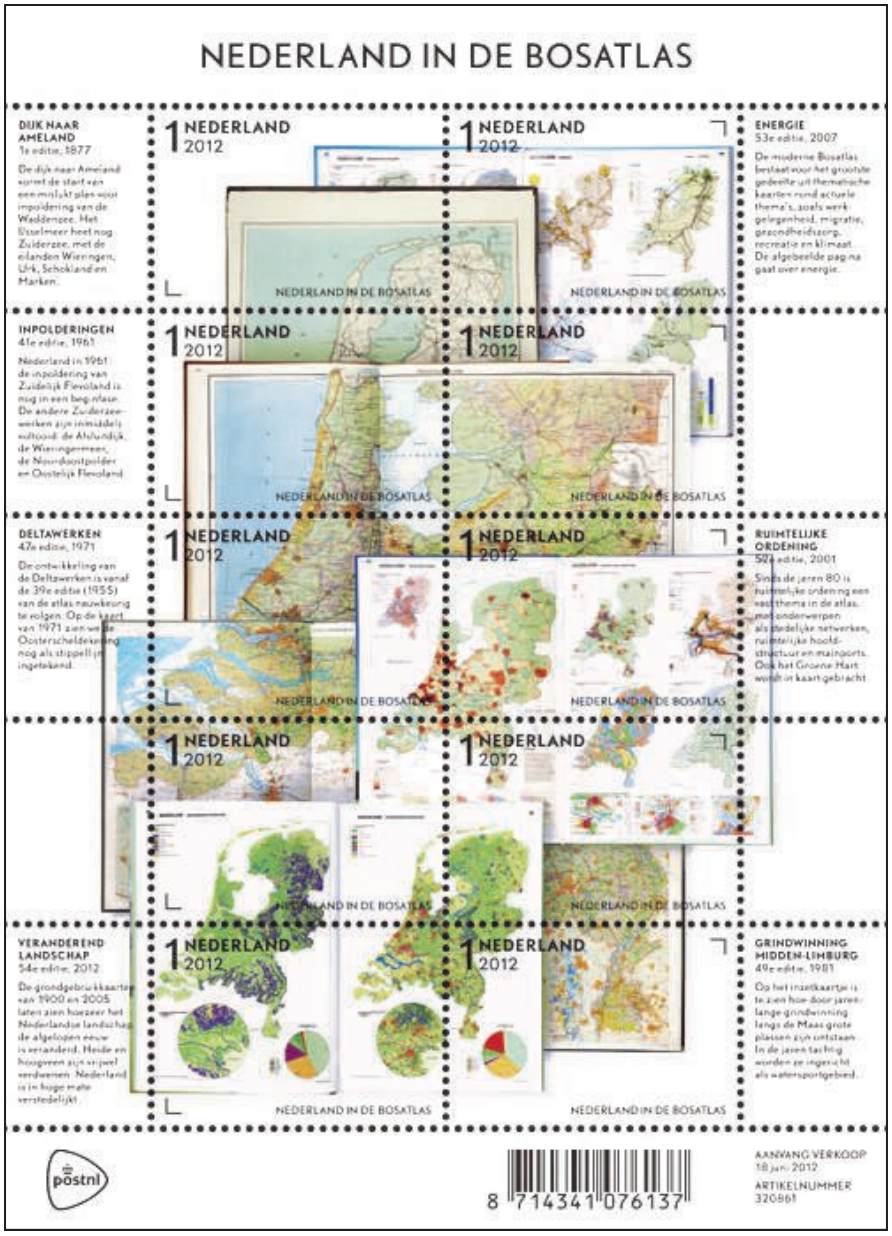
The Netherlands in the Bosatlas stamp sheet features ten different stamps with the non-value indicator "1" and the designation "Nederland 2012". The sheet depicts the inside pages of seven editions of the Bosatlas – the first one published in 1877, those from 1961, 1971, 1981, 2001 and 2007, and the very latest edition from 2012.

The open books reveal topographical overview maps as well as themed maps. These double leaves have been arranged to form the outline of the Netherlands.

The sheet margin contains seven pieces of text explaining the contents of the pages: dyke construction, land reclamation, Delta Works water control, urbanisation, energy, spatial planning and raw material extraction. The font used is Nobel, a san serif typeface designed in the 1930s by Sjoerd Hendrik de Roos and Dick Dooijes and used in all editions of the Bosatlas since 2004.

The Bosatlas, which forms the foundation of geography teaching in the Netherlands, has shaped how many generations of Dutch people view the world. The first Bosatlas was created in 1877 by Groningen teacher P.R. Bos and was entitled Bos' Schoolatlas der geheele aarde (Bos's School Atlas of the Whole Earth). Many editions of the atlas have since been issued, with each new one summarising changes in the world, society and education. The first edition featured just 29 maps on 75 pages, growing to more than 1,000 maps on over 300 pages in the 54th edition. Most of these maps are themed. Since 1877, sales of De Grote Bostatlas have topped 3.5 million copies.

The first atlas, engraved by hand on lithographic stones, was issued by Groningen publisher Wolters, which was renamed Wolters Noordhoff in 1968 and Noordhoff Uitgevers in 2008. Noordhoff Uitgevers has since published a whole series of Bosatlases for primary and secondary schools, consumers and businesses, including The Basic Bosatlas, the Junior Bosatlas, The Bosatlas of the Netherlands, The Bosatlas of Dutch History and The Climate Bosatlas (all in Dutch).



Images on the stamps

- The dyke to Ameland, Bosatlas 1st edition, 1877
- Energy, Bosatlas 53rd edition, 2007
- Land reclamation, 41st edition, 1961, North Holland
- Land reclamation, 41st edition, 1961, Overijssel and Gelderland
- Delta Works, 47th edition, 1971
- Spatial planning, 52nd edition, 2001
- Image compilation
- Urbanisation, 52nd edition, 2011
- Changing landscape, 54th edition, 2012
- Gravel extraction in Central Limburg, 49th edition, 1981

Technical Details

Stamp size:	36 x 25mm
Perforation:	14 ½ : 14 ½
Paper:	normal with phosphor tagging
Gum:	synthetic
Print process:	offset
Print run:	240,000 sheetlets
Printer:	Joh. Enschedé Security Print, The Netherlands
Stamp type:	sheetlet with 10 different stamps
Print colors:	yellow, magenta, cyan and black
Product code:	320861
Prestige booklet product code :	320811

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☐ Netherlands Indies	☐ Color variations	☐ Rep. of Surinam
☐ Netherlands New Guinea	☐ Stationery and covers	☐ Fieldpost
☐ Surinam	☐ Revenues and railroads	☐ EO-Philately
☐ Japanese Occupation N.I.	☐ Booklets or combinations	☐ Localmail
☐ UNTEA	☐ Coils	☐ Other (please specify):
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