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Magazine of the American Society for Netherlands Philately

Volume 44/6



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Magazine Editor

Ben Jansen
1308 Pin Oak Drive
Dickinson, TX 77539-3400
asnpmagazine@gmail.com

President

HansPaul Hager
465 Potter Rd.
North Kingstown, RI 02852
hphager@aol.com

Vice President

Franklin Ennik
3168 Tice Creek Drive #3
Walnut Creek, CA 94595
ennik123@att.net

Treasurer

Hans Kremer
50 Rockport Ct.
Danville, CA 94526, U.S.A.
hkremer@usa.net

Secretary

Ben Jansen
1308 Pin Oak Drive
Dickinson, TX 77539-3400
bjansen@uh.edu

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Advertising Manager

Meindert Mossel
Lijsterlaan 21
1971 KT IJmuiden
The Netherlands
Mgry21@planet.nl

Librarian

Stuart Leven
stulev@ix.netcom.com

Auction Manager

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12739 W. Wilshire Drive
Avondale, AZ 85392-6563
hans@moesbergen.net

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tschrier@aol.com

Editor's Message

July, 2020

Dear Fellow Collectors,

This is the last issue of volume 44, which means that membership dues need to be remitted. The President of our Society, HansPaul Hager has some important news about the dues, as you can read on page 118.

Jan Verster was so inspired by the article by Marinus Quist about the NEI Military Air Letter Sheets, which appeared in the previous issue, that he wrote one based on the correspondence between his parents while his father was stationed in the Dutch Indies. This article provides information beyond what can be found in catalogs such as Geuzendam's. I do hope that other members will follow their (Jan and Marinus) example.

I was hoping that this issue could have another instalment of a translation of the book issued by the mail mechanization group of Po&Po, but some problems arose. Hopefully these will be resolved by the time issue 45/1 goes to the printer.

Ben

Table of Contents

Editor's Message	109	What had Gustav Briegleb and Ripolin Paint to do with Pablo Picasso?	121
The Military Air Letter Sheets – Examples from a Correspondence	110	A Story about a Reclaimed Cover	125
Message from the President	118	Recent Issues	131

Advice to Authors

Please submit your text in MS Word, and indicate where each illustration belongs. Submit illustrations as full color scans (at 300 dpi or better). Contact the Magazine Editor in case of questions.

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The Military Air Letter Sheets – Examples from a Correspondence.

by Jan Verster

The Military Air Letter Sheets (MALS) were ably described in an article by Marinus Quist in *Netherlands Philately*, volume 44, number 5.

In short, Dutch military personnel enjoyed free postage on letters by airmail (up to 20 grams) back home to the Netherlands. To try to reduce the volume sent, the post office introduced the MALS and starting from 1 November only these could be sent postage free by airmail. Ordinary letters could still be sent postage free by sea, but to go by air cost 10 cents per 20 grams postage plus 15 cents per 5 grams airmail. Thus a 20 gram letter would now cost 70 cents which was a fair bit for an ordinary soldier.

My father was drafted into the Dutch army and sent to the Netherlands Indies, leaving on 30 July 1947 (on the *ss Volendam*) and not returning until 12 January 1950 (on the *ss Asturias*). He left behind a recently married wife who was expecting their first child. During his time away, he wrote to his wife most every day which amounts to a huge correspondence. He also wrote to family and friends. There are a lot of letters and from 1 November 1947 he also used MALS. There are over 800 examples in this correspondence.

This article is a summary of his use of these MALS.

The first example (Figure 1) was written 31 October 1947, and postmarked 1 November. It is a type G2.

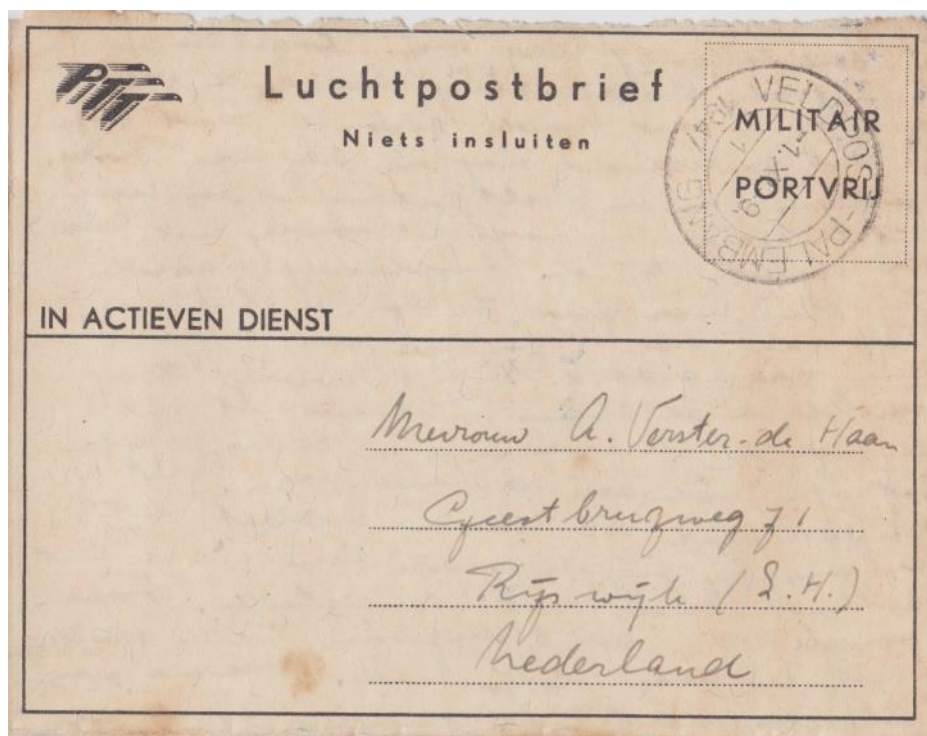


Figure 1: MALS G2, postmarked 1 November 1947.

He wrote on whatever type he had available, but not every possible type is represented. There are no examples of type G3, G5, G7, G10, or G13. For some types there are only a few examples, but there are 473 copies of type G11. The graph in figure 2 shows usage by date.

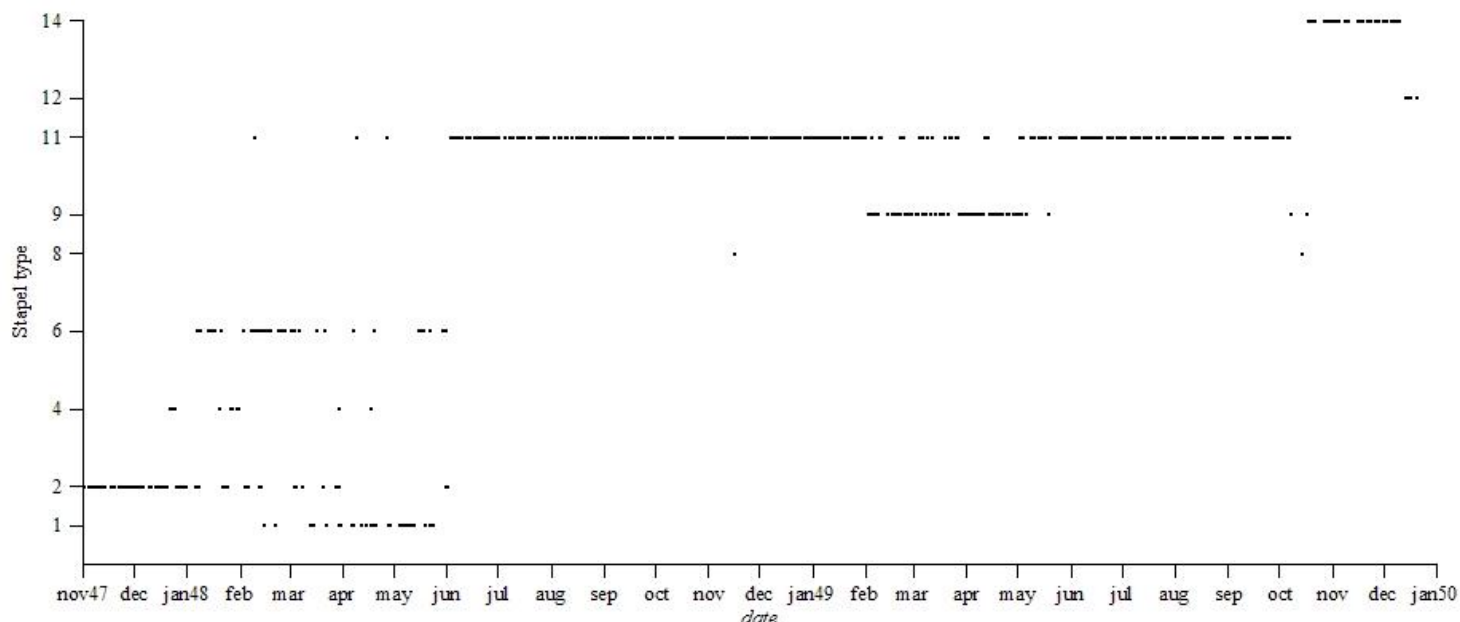


Figure 2: Usage of MALS by date and type.

He clearly did not like G11. Figure 2 shows that he used other types when he had them available. In the example shown in Figure 3, postmarked in Palembang on 8 February 1948 he wrote (translated):

Finally, here is a trial example of the new type of lettersheet. I hope that you can read some of this. Please reply and give suggestions as I have 500 of them. They appear to be nice for letters to bothersome persons, then I won't write on this part and don't have to write so much.

His writing refers to the blue network printed inside (part of) the G11 sheet, also shown in Figure 3.

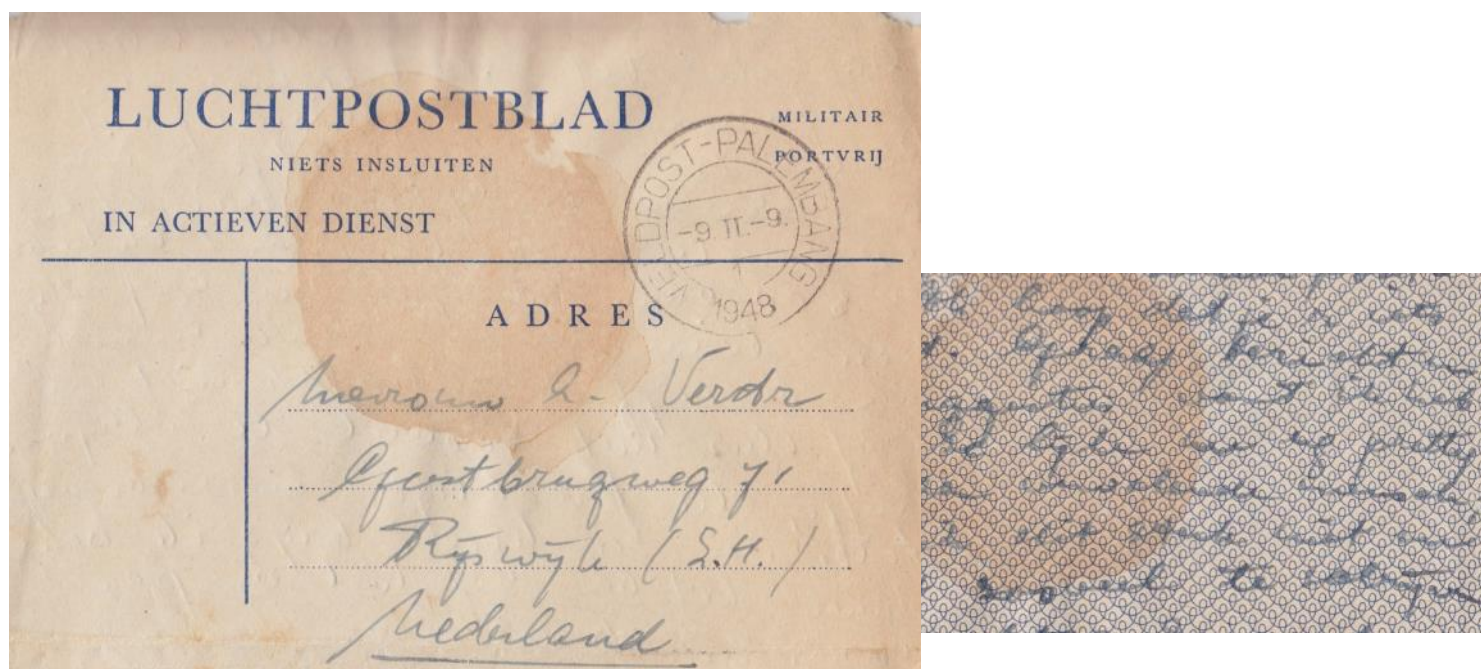


Figure 3: Left: First MALS G11 used by my father, postmarked 9 February 1948. Right: Inside of the air mail sheet.

By the way, Geuzendam claims that this type dates from January 1949, but the example shown in Figure 3 is clearly from February 1948.

He does mention the air letter sheets, but often this is the sort of complaining mentioned in the article by Marinus Quist.

Here are a couple of anecdotes:

16 December 1947: There prevails now a feverish industry in the making of Christmas cards from letter sheets. Very nice. I have ordered 10 [Regretfully there are no examples in the correspondence.]

21 February 1948 [In Padang Binjoe while on an inspection tour] After the service, the rest of the men came in. We then told stories and posed riddles. They had been without letter sheets for 10 days. The Minister and I had 12 between us, so we awarded them as prizes for very difficult riddles.

From a postal history viewpoint, the letter sheets are not very exciting. They only have a departure mark and no back marks. This makes it difficult to determine transit times, but five to 10 days seems normal.

The most common postmark is VELDPOST PALEMBANG (Fieldpost Palembang) comprising 768 of the 830 examples. There were two versions, numbered 1 and 2, respectively (Figure 4). Type 1 occurred 289 times and type 2 occurred 367 times, but in 112 cases the type could not be determined.

The only cases where there was a different postmark were from 6 November to 10 December 1948 when he was on leave to Tjoemboeloeit and after 2 December 1949 when he was finally on his way home. Examples include Muntok, Batavia Centrum and Veldpost Bandoeng (Figure 5).

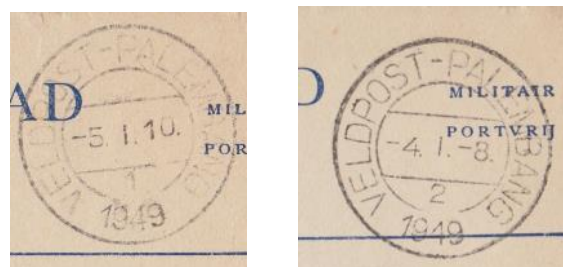


Figure 4: Two types of 'Veldpost Palembang' postmarks. Left: Number 1; Right: Number 2.



Figure 5: Postmarks from Muntok (left), Batavia Centrum (middle), and Veldpost-Bandoeng (right).

Appendix 1 gives a table of the air letter sheet types and dates used by my father.

But of course, it was just not him writing to his wife, but she also wrote back to him.

While those writing to an active soldier could not send their letters postage free (except in the case when the sender was also an active soldier), they did get a concession in that they were allowed to send a letter (up to 20 grams) by airmail to the Netherlands Indies for the domestic rate of 10

cents. This caused an enormous amount of mail to go by air. In September of 1948, the newspaper *Trouw* reported that the average number of letters sent per week was 600,000, with a weight of more than 6000 kilograms. In addition there were 39,000 newspapers weighing 1400 kilograms that also were being sent by airmail.

In an effort to reduce this weight, on 14 April 1947, the post office introduced an airletter sheet (Figure 7) that weighed just under 5 grams or half the average weight of the letters being sent.



Figure 6: Thirtieth anniversary of the KLM.

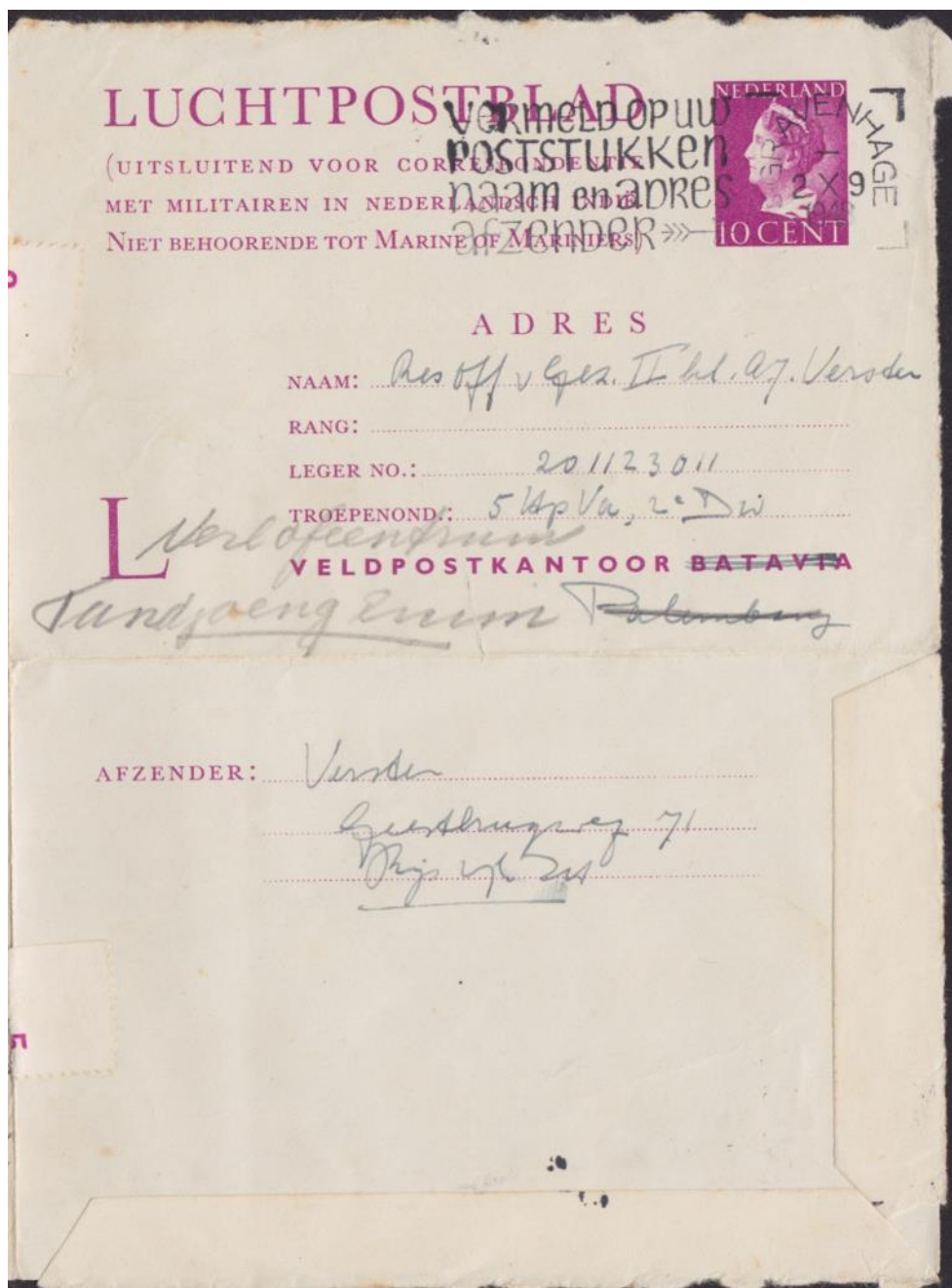


Figure 7: Air letter sheet G1.

The cost was 11 cents which included the postage of 10 cents where the stamp indicium shows Queen Wilhelmina in type Konijnenberg. They could only be used on letters to military personnel.

The example shown in Figure 7 is G1a listed under “Luchtpostbladen” in Geuzendam. The large ‘L’ refers to army and airforce (‘Landmacht’ and ‘Luchtmacht’ in Dutch). They have almost the same size as the MALS, and even have essentially the same security network printed on half of the inside as G11 (Figure 8). It was written on October 1, 1948 and post-marked on the second day. It is the first one his wife sent and the correspondence contains 27 examples.

October 1, 1948 was the first date that new rates came into effect. Only the airletter sheets could qualify for the 10 cent airmail rate. Ordinary letters would cost 30 cents per 10 grams, if sent by air, although they could still be sent by sea mail for 10 cents per 20 grams.



Figure 8: Security network inside Luchtpostblad G1 (shown in Figure 7).

I am not sure how many were used before this date because before October 1 you could send a longer letter for the same price and even include a photograph or newspaper clipping. The reduction of the amount of space for writing must have made them even less popular.

A second type of air letter sheet was issued with the portrait of Queen Wilhelmina by Hartz on 28 October 1948. (see Figure 9). Rather than a network, the inside of the type has a blue printing on the inside, which does not extend onto the flaps. This did give a larger area for correspondence.

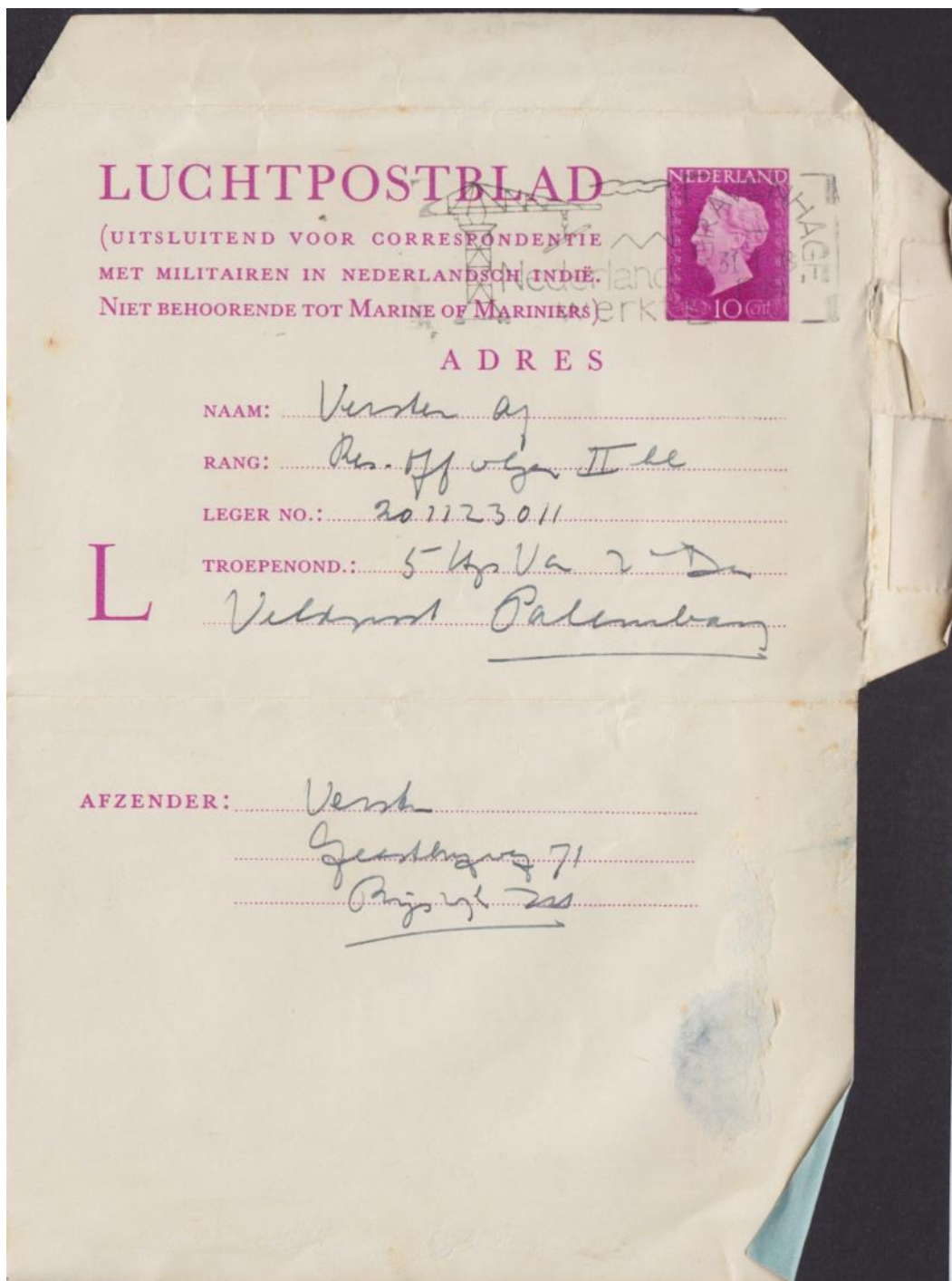


Figure 9: Air letter sheet G2.

The first example used was on 30 January 1949, and there are 47 examples in the correspondence.

As mentioned before, starting 1 October 1948, only the airletter sheets could qualify for the 10 cent airmail rate. There was a promise to introduce a new letter sheet with a larger writing area when current stocks were exhausted, but it would not have an indicium and would need to have a 10 cent stamp attached.

This sheet was issued 1 February 1949 and there is one example among the correspondence, written 6 June 1949 (see Figure 10). The sheet has the same format as MALS G12-14 and the diagonal printing is identical to that of G12, i.e., the repeated words 'militair luchtpostblad' placed on a diagonal. The only difference is the text layout, and that a stamp had to be attached (in this case NVPH 506).



Figure 10: Air letter sheet without indicium.

As with the MALS, the postmarks are not very exciting. For the most part, they are cancelled with an ordinary cancel, most often a machine cancel. There almost never is an arrival cancel, so it is difficult to know how long it took them to reach their destination, but the example shown in Figure 11 took 5 days.

There were two letter sheets, addressed to Palembang (South-Sumatra) and both written on 9 November and postmarked 10 November, that were both returned to sender (the letter was too long for a single sheet and was spread over two sheets).

My father was on leave in Tjioemboeloet (Ciumbuluit, near Bandung, West-Java) at the time, so both sheets were forwarded: p/a Kebon Sirih 45, Batavia (in pencil, later crossed out and covered by another marking). There is a VELDPOST PALEMBANG transit mark dated 15 November, and they arrived in Batavia the following day (back cancel). He could not be found there, so they were marked retour (in pencil), the address crossed out in green ink and Rijswijk added.



Figure 11: One of a pair of returned air letter sheet.

Each letter sheet has two additional marks in purple. One is a mark in a rectangular box with the text 'RETOUR AFZENDER // ONBEKEND' (return to sender // unknown).

The second, triangular one has what appears to be a script D in green ink, the text KART. O.B.K. / VELDPOST/ BATAVIA, and the date 19 November 1948 with a separate marking. I have no idea what KART. O.B.K. stands for. If anybody can help, please let me know.

I can only speculate why these were returned. The one previous to these two, postmarked November 2 and redirected by: p/a Mej. Huisman, Kebon Sirih 34, Batavia, did get through to him, as did the subsequent one postmarked 12 November and redirected in Palembang on 18 November to A.M.V.J. Tjioemboeloet Bandoeng. Perhaps the wrong forwarding address was used on the November 9 letter sheets.

Appendix 1: MALS Usage

The dates given are when the letter sheet was written. Generally the postmark was a day later. Of the 830 examples listed here, 714 were to his wife and most of the rest to his parents. A couple were to friends that were returned to him many years later. There is also one example from a colleague to him.

Catalogue	Total Number	From	To
1	47	1948-02-14	1948-05-23
2	76	1947-10-31	1948-05-31
4	15	1947-12-21	1948-04-16
6	57	1948-01-06	1948-05-30
8	3	1948-11-15	1949-10-13
9	107	1949-02-01	1949-10-16
11	473	1948-02-08	1949-10-16
12	5	1949-12-13	1949-12-19
14	47	1949-10-17	1949-12-09

Appendix 2: Use of Netherlands Air Letter Sheets

Catalogue	Total Number	From	To
1	27	1948-10-01	1949-01-28
2	47	1949-01-30	1949-07-05

Message from the President.

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are all doing well and staying healthy in this time of crisis.

It is time for the annual membership renewal, our membership year runs from September 1 through August 31, during which period we produce six issues of our Magazine. Well, this is issue 44-6 and it is time to renew your membership.

After much discussion the board decided that for the upcoming year September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021 we would *wave* the membership renewal fees for the members who receive our Magazine digitally.

In case we decide to make this experiment with free electronic membership permanent, we will reimburse those members who have paid their dues several years in advance. Of course these members may also decide to convert their advance into a donation to the ASNP.

For those of you who have requested hard copies of our Magazine to be mailed to you, the membership fees will remain the same.

We are printing 50 copies per issue, six issues per year. The cost of printing was $\$1,410.14 / 300 = \4.70 per copy each issue, or $\$28.20$ for the entire year. Average mailing cost per issue was $\$861.37 / 300 = \2.87 or $\$17.22$ for the entire year. Add mailing and postage and you get an average total Magazine cost of $\$45.42$ per year per member for hard copy distribution.

To sum up: if you would like to keep receiving a hard copy of the ASNP Magazine please send in your checks or money orders (please no cash) in the amount of \$25 for US and \$35 for rest-of-the-world (including Canada) to the Secretary = Ben H. Jansen, 1308 Pin Oak, Dickinson, TX 77539-3400, USA. You can use PayPal as well (jdlkremer@gmail.com) but please indicate that you make a payment to a 'Friend' to avoid a 5% fee charged to ASNP. If you use PayPal, send a separate e-mail to bjansen@uh.edu and indicate how much you paid. In all cases, attach a legible note with your name and, if you know, your membership number.

We will revisit the matter of membership fees again next year. The ASNP Board would always like to receive feedback on this and any other matter that is of concern to you.

My best wishes to you all, and please stay healthy,

H. P. Hager

President ASNP

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What had Gustav Briegleb and Ripolin Paint to do with Pablo Picasso?

by Hans Kremer

When I saw the 1871 letter shown in Figure 1 on Ebay there were two things that got my attention: the name “Briegleb” and a reference to the Bourse in Amsterdam.

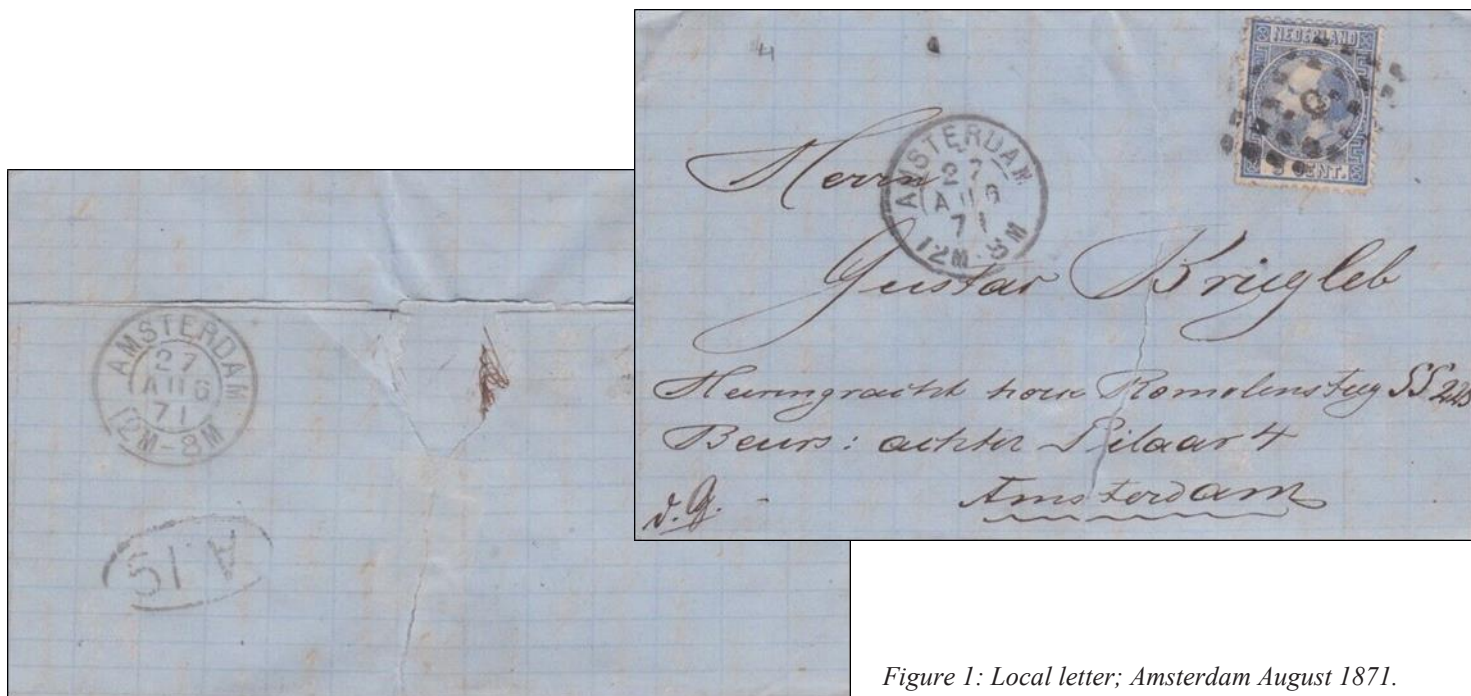


Figure 1: Local letter; Amsterdam August 1871.

The letter was addressed to:

*Herrn Gustav Briegleb,
Heerengracht hoek Romolensteeg SS 225
Beurs: achter Pilaar 4
Amsterdam*

The word ‘hoek’ is corner in English, and the third line translates as ‘Bourse: behind pillar 4.’ Briegleb is not a typical Dutch name so I went to Google, which lead me to Ripolin paint and then ‘the rest of the story.’

The Gustav Briegleb company was founded in 1870 by Otto Wilhelm Gustav Briegleb (1842-1929). Briegleb, from the Nuremberg area, had his first trade training in Nuremberg. According to a patent letter from 1867, Briegleb was already active in Amsterdam before 1870. From the remark ‘Bourse: behind Pillar 4’ on the letter we can conclude that, at least in 1871, Gustav was active at the Bourse, especially trading tropical products. The Bourse referred to in the letter was known as the ‘Zocher Bourse’ in Amsterdam. The Zocher Bourse was completed in 1845 based on a design by architect [Jan David Zocher](#) to replace the Hendrick de Keyser Bourse.

The Zocher Bourse had open floors, surrounded by galleries that were supported by numbered pillars. What pillar # 4 (referred to on the front of the cover) would have looked like one can see in Figure 2. Securities trading took place as well as commodity trading.

The Zocher Bourse was torn down in 1903 upon the completion of the Berlage Bourse next door. The location of the old Zocher Bourse is currently occupied by the Bijenkorf department store, in the center of Amsterdam.

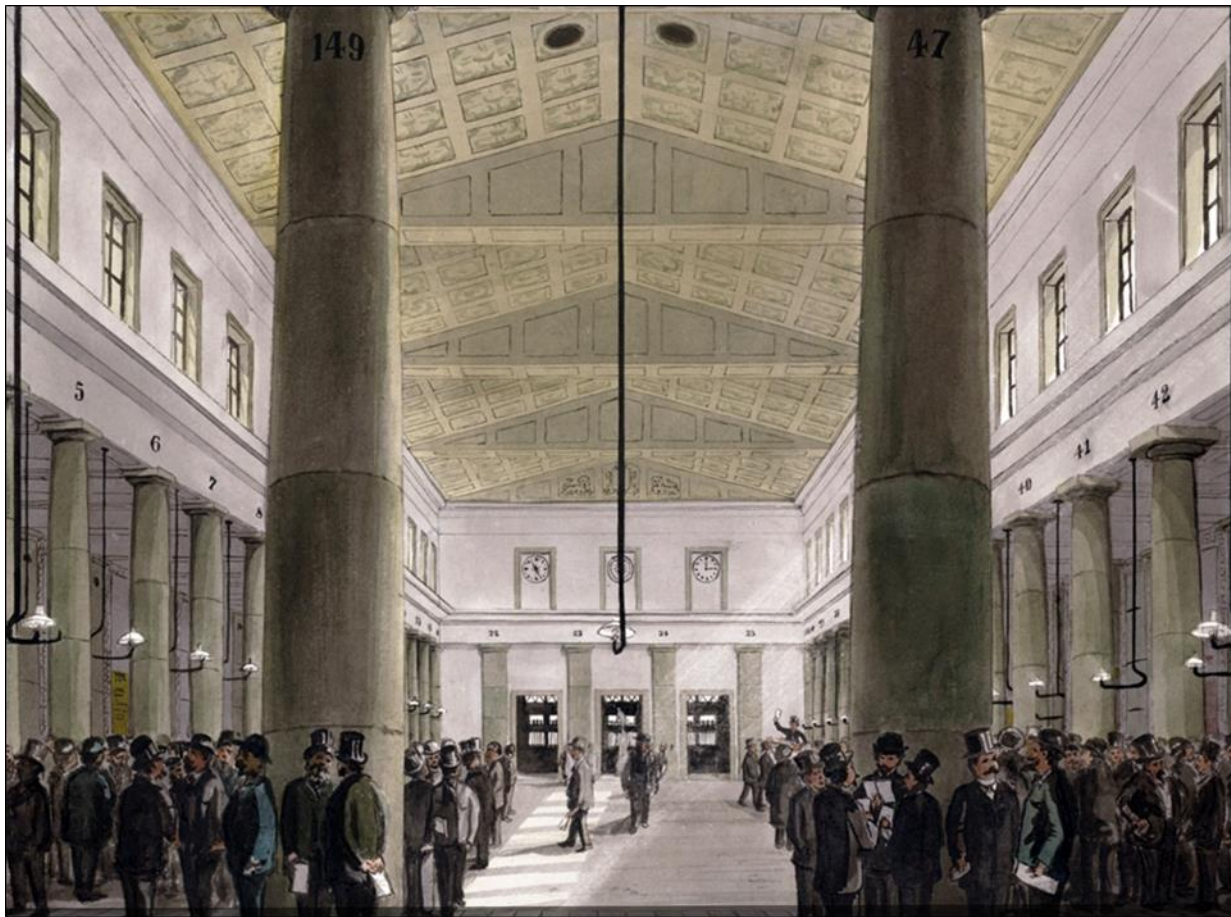


Figure 2: Zocher Bourse in Amsterdam; notice the numbered pillars.

Meanwhile, Carl Julius Ferdinand Riep (doctor of chemistry, born in Küstrin in Prussia in 1835) experimented in Ouder Amstel with the manufacture of “ready-to-paint varnish paint”, that is to say: paint that was sold ready-made in tins and in which the varnish was already added. That was quite revolutionary at the time, because painters were now relieved of the time-consuming mixing. Moreover, the painters were now assured of a constant quality, because the paint was produced “in large batches.” In 1887 Mr. Riep moved the company to Hilversum where he built a small factory.

In 1890, that factory was taken over by Gustav Briegleb, who rapidly expanded the factory. In 1897, when Briegleb associated himself with one Lefranc in Paris, the company officially became “Le Ripolin, Société Anonyme Française de Peintures, Laques et d’Enduits-Sous-Marins, Procédés Lefranc et Briegleb Reunis”, a mouthful referring to paints, lacquers and underwater coatings. The name Ripolin has been used since 1890 as a generic name for ready-to-paint paint. Presumably it was Briegleb who came up with the name, probably in honor of Carl Riep, whose discovery had contributed to the success of the company. By adding ‘lin’ (from the French ‘huile de lin’ or linseed oil) the brand name got a French accent. But another explanation could be that the name Ripolin originated from combining the name Riep and ‘Lina,’ the nickname for Carl Riep’s wife Caroline.

“Ripolin” would become a household name in the paint world. Ripolin (Figure 3) was also sold in the U.S as can be seen from the 1923 ad (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Can of Ripolin paint.

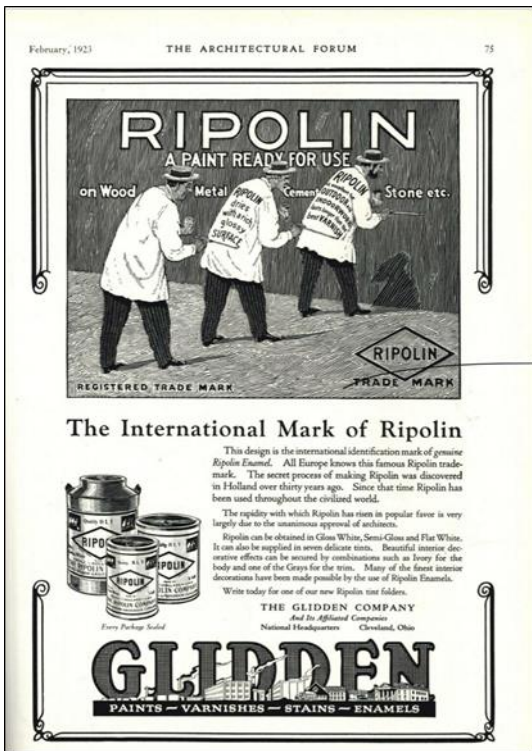


Figure 4: 1923 Ripolin advertisement.

ings, scientists were able to learn that the chemical makeup of paint used by Picasso to paint 'Red Armchair' (Figure 5) matched the chemical makeup of the first commercial house paint, Ripolin. ... Many art conservators and historians have tried over the years to use traditional optical and electron microscopes to determine whether Picasso or one of his contemporaries was the first to break with the cultural tradition of professional painters using expensive paints designed specifically for their craft. Those art world detectives all failed, because traditional tools wouldn't let them see deeply enough into the layers of paint or with enough resolution to distinguish between store-bought enamel paint and techniques designed to mimic its appearance."

In preparation for an exhibition of his work at the Galleries Georges Petit in 1931, Picasso began a series of large paintings of Marie-Thérèse Walter, of which The Red Armchair was the first. Here he mixed Ripolin with oil to produce a wide range of surface effects—from the crisp brush marks in the yellow background to the thick but leveled look of the white face and the smooth black outlines of the figure.

Figure 5: 'Red Armchair' painted by Pablo Picasso in 1931, presently in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago.



The ad reads: "This design is the international identification mark of genuine Ripolin Enamel. All Europe knows this famous Ripolin trademark. The secret process of making Ripolin was discovered in Holland over thirty years ago. Since that time Ripolin has been used throughout the civilized world."

Ripolin is still available in France and Italy.

Ripolin is also the connection with Pablo Picasso.

A February 6, 2013 press release from the Argonne National Laboratory notes the following:

"The Art Institute of Chicago teamed up with Argonne National Laboratory to help unravel a decades-long debate among art scholars about what kind of paint Picasso used to create his masterpieces ... The key to decoding this long-standing mystery was the development of a unique high-energy X-ray instrument, called the hard X-ray nanoprobe, at the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Photon Source (APS) X-ray facility and the Center for Nanoscale Materials, both housed at Argonne. The nanoprobe is designed to advance the development of high-performance materials and sustainable energies by giving scientists a close-up view of the type and arrangement of chemical elements in material ... By comparing decades-old paint samples collected through eBay purchases with samples from Picasso paint-

During my research into the background of Gustav Briegleb I came across more interesting information.

In 1905 a group of Amsterdam teachers took the initiative to spend a day outside the city with 2,000 primary school children. Children from Amsterdam who did not go on holiday because their parents did not have the means, were eligible for this. The teachers organized themselves in the Vakantie Kinder Feest (VKF, or Holiday Children's Festival) foundation.

From 1925 on the foundation also organized the three-day Holiday Children's Festival. Students in 6th grade (11 and 12 years old) from all schools, public and special, could stay with their own teacher in one of several houses. This included the "Gustav Brieglebhuis" in Valkeveen near Naarden, when it was completed in 1930.

The "Gustav Briegleb House" was donated by Gustav Briegleb and his wife, who were childless. Because of their bequest this house could be built (Figure 6). The original Children's Holiday Home has since been adapted to the requirements of our time, while preserving the traditional atmosphere.



Figure 6: Gustav Briegleb House (above) and a tableau in the house with portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Briegleb (left).

References

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- <http://www.kindervakantiehuis.nl/historie-vkf.html>

A Story about a Reclaimed Cover.

by Ben H. Jansen

An interesting story can be told about the cover shown in Figures 1a and 1b.



Figure 1a: Cover mailed from Arnhem to Buenos Aires (Argentina) on September 8, 1890.



Figure 1b: Back of cover.

The circular postmark (center right) shows that the cover was mailed from Arnhem, on 8 September 1890, also attested by the number 8 dot cancel on the stamp signifies that the cover was mailed from Arnhem, and the circular postmark (center right) provides the date, 8 September 1890, and time, between 12 and 1 afternoon, of mailing.

The cover was addressed to Mrs. J. Dates ten Kate, 'Calle 62 entre 6 y 7' [street 62 between 6 and 7], La Plata 'by' [near] Buenos Aires, 'Zuid Amerika' [South America]. Note that house number and proper country name (Argentina) are lacking.

La Plata is the capital of the Buenos Aires province and lies just south-east of Buenos Aires. The city is shaped like a square with a central park and two main diagonal avenues, north to south and east to west. In addition, there are numerous other shorter diagonal streets.

There is no indication who the sender was, other than the written street and house number 'Velperweg 106a'. However, having grown-up in Arnhem, I know that this refers to a street in Arnhem (in fact, my High School was on this street).

A handwritten (lower-left front) note urges sending 'per eerste gelegenheid' (at the earliest opportunity). The cover arrived in Paris on 19 September 1890 (postmark to the left of the Arnhem postmark), and in Buenos Aires on 16 October 1890 (circular postmark top right back of cover). A very weak La Plata postmark of 16 October 1890 can be seen on the reverse (bottom left of center).

The cover could not be delivered, and a heavy small circular 'Expedicion' mark was placed on the back, partially covering the La Plata postmark. Unfortunately, the date is not readable. Also unclear is the meaning of the circular 'EN LISTA' (in list) marking. The cover made its way back to England, where it received the bilingual marking 'Returned to England without a reason for non-delivery'. From there it arrived in The Hague at the Office of 'Rebuten' (undeliverable mail) on July 17, 1891 as shown by the boxed mark top center on the cover's front. Probably because of the street name on the back of the cover, a 'reclaimed rebut' mark was also placed on the front. According to Vellinga, both of these marks were used between 1868 and 1892. Mail man 23 returned the cover to sender during his second delivery round.

The meaning of the handwritten purple 48 and blue capital D on the cover's front are not clear to me. The same is true for the blue 137 over the mark placed in England and the blue 15297 below it, but they may refer to identification numbers placed by 'The Hague'. The cursive handwriting on the back is unreadable.

The cover is franked with a 25 ct violet Koning Willem III (King William III), with comb perforation 12½ with large holes, issued between 1888 and 1891 (NVPH 26L). Between April 1, 1879 and March 31, 1892 the rate for a letter abroad weighing less than 15 grams was 12½ ct with 12½ ct surcharge for mailing by sea. Thus the postage stamp covers the proper rate.

The portrait of Willem III was designed by Herman Frederik Carel ten Kate (born 16 February 1822 in The Hague, died 26 March 1891 in Scheveningen), a Dutch artist renowned for his historical genre watercolors and



Figure 2: Portrait of H.F.C. ten Kate.

paintings with emphasis on military figures (Figure 2). He married Madelon Sophia Elisabeth Thooft on 30 December 1852 in Zaltbommel and three children were born; two daughters and one son. (He also married C.H.C. Pierson, possibly after the death of his first wife.) The children placed an announcement (Figure 3) in the newspaper, to thank for the many demonstrations of sympathy in response to the death of their father.

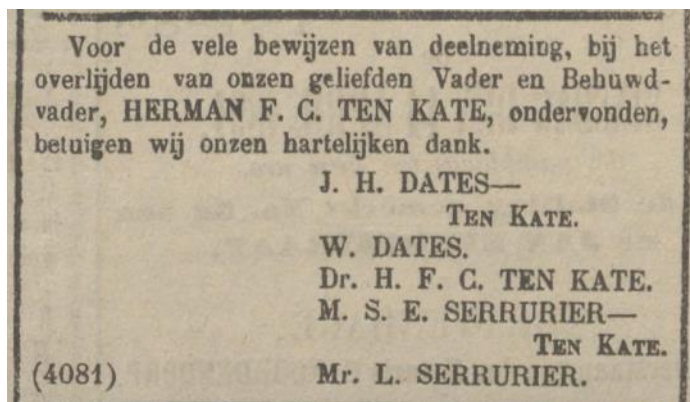


Figure 3: Announcement of death of H.F.C. ten Kate.

Among these is J.H. Dates-Ten Kate. Could she be the addressee of the cover shown in Figure 1? Also listed is Dr. H.F.C. Ten Kate (7 February 1858 – 3 February 1931), a Dutch anthropologist. He travelled extensively, and in 1893, he crossed the Chilean Andes to Argentina where he worked as curator of the Anthropological Section at the Museo de La Plata until 1897. Yes, the same La Plata as in the address of the cover in Figure 1! However, the cover was mailed three years before his arrival there.

A search through the civil registers proved beyond doubt that J.H. Dates-Ten Kate was indeed the addressee; the archive in The Hague has a marriage certificate, issued on 15 January 1880 between Johanna Henriette Ten Kate, age 26, to Willem Hendrik Johannes Dates, age 28. The bride's father is listed as H.F.C. Ten Kate, and the mother as M.S.E. Thooft. An announcement of their marriage appeared in the newspapers (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Marriage announcement.

The groom's parents are listed as Jan Dates and Maria Geertruida Wagener. Jan's profession is 'conciërge.' The birth certificate of their (only) son Willem shows that he was born in Vlissingen on 8 May 1851, while his father Jan was 'adjutant onderofficier vaandeldrager bij het vijfde regiment infanterie' (adjutant non-commissioned officer standard-bearer in the fifth regiment of infantry). Most likely he had retired from the army by the time Willem married Johanna.

Jan Dates died on 4 December 1891. According to the newspaper announcement (Figure 5), Jan was a recipient of the 'Metalen Kruis' (Metal Cross). This is a Dutch medal given to those who had participated in the 'Tiendaagse Veldtocht' (Ten-Day Campaign) in August 1831 and related military actions while in the Army of Royal Marine, in 1830 and 1831.

The Metal Cross (Figure 6) is also known as the Hasselt cross, because the bronze used to make the medal came from several cannons that were captured during the Battle for Hasselt, won by the Dutch on August 8, 1831.



Figure 6: Front (left) and back (right) of the Metal Cross.

According to the death certificate of Jan Dates, he lived in Arnhem during his time of death. The death announcement shown in Figure 5 also shows this. Furthermore, it shows that Willem and Johan lived in Ensenada (a port near La Plata), Argentina in December 1891. Thus, it is likely that the cover of Figure 1 was mailed by him or, more likely, his wife.



Figure 5: Death announcement of J. Dates.

Let us now find out how Willem and Johanna ended up in Argentina.

Willem attended the Polytechnic School (now Technical University) in Delft and passed the final exam for civil engineer (Ir. Degree) in July 1873 according to a newspaper article. Other contemporary newspaper accounts inform us that in April 1875 he was appointed as adjunct engineer with the 'Staats Spoorwegen' (National Railway) in Java, while working in a similar position for the 'Rijnspoorweg Maatschappij' (pre-decessor to the National Railway of the Netherlands). He arrives in Batavia on board of the *s.s. Prins Hendrik* on 21 June 1875. He is honorably discharged 31 August 1878 and returns to the Netherlands via Marseille, where he arrives on 2 December 1878 with the mail steamer *Irrawaddy*.



Figure 7: Advertisement of 23 September 1881 asking for a kitchen maid.

I do not know where and if he was employed upon his return to the Netherlands, but following his marriage to Johanna, they must have settled in The Hague as attested by the advertisement asking for a 'dapper kitchen maid, not younger than 23 years' (Figure 7). Two sons are born in The Hague; one in January 1881 and the second, Jan Willem, on 27 January 1882, respectively.

The first annual report of the Deli Railway Company, concerning the year 1883-1884 mentions that 'The gentlemen Dates and Hillen, civil engineers, were appointed, and ar-

rived in Medan-Deli on March 24, 1882.'

It turns out that Willem Dates was involved in the design and construction of a railroad to facilitate the transport of the tobacco grown on Sumatra. This 55.5 km railroad ran from the river port Labuhan-Deli to Medan and on to Deli-Tua. A side arm connected Medan with Timbang-Langkat. The construction costs were estimated to be 45,000 guilders per kilometer, and the total expenses came to 2.6 million guilders.

It is not clear if Johanna came along with Willem in March or joined him later given that their second child was born only a few months earlier. However, another son was born in Medan in August 1885. Various newspapers also reported on 25 June 1885 that Mrs. Dates – ten Kate, from Medan (Deli, Sumatra) had given the Ethnographic Museum in Leiden a 'iron pair of scissors for pinang nuts, hinge shaped in the form of a bird's head, both levers decorated with engraving, used by the Ktingalese' (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Newspaper report of 25 June 1885 regarding a gift to the Ethnographic Museum in Leiden by Mrs. Dates-Ten Kate.

Newspapers report early August 1886 that Willem Dates has resigned his function of administrator of the Deli Railroad Company. He departs for Europe later that month arriving in Marseille in October 1886. His family had probably returned earlier to The Hague, as a daughter was born there on 17 September 1886.

Again, it is unclear if and where he worked for the next few years, but they must have had sufficient resources to spend the summer of 1887 at Villa Mount Pleasant on the Trompenberg near Hilversum (Figure 9). They may even have moved there permanently, as a son was born in Hilversum in January 1889.

Nu het zomerseizoen nadert, en de stedelingen hunne buitenverblijven of appartementen weder komen betrekken, beginnen wij weder met de gewone lijst van hier ter plaatse aangekomen familiën. Voor nauwkeurige opgaven ter voortzetting en completering dezer lijst houden wij ons, als vroeger, aanbevolen.			
De Heer J. G. Vogel en fam.	's Hage.	Villa Arti, Torenlaan.	
" C. Rusche en fam.	Amsterdam.	Vaartweg 92.	
" G. J. de Clercq en fam.	"	Villa Santa Rosa, Trompenberg.	
" W. H. F. Dates—Ten Kate.	's Hage.	" Mount Pleasant, "	

Figure 9: The Gooi en Eemlander reporting in 1887 on the 'town folks' arriving at their summerhouses.

In April 1889, the 'Ingenieur' reports that '... the civil engineer W.H.J. Dates from Hilversum will depart for Buenos Aires in early April. It appears that it has been decided to construct important new works at the mouth of the La Plata river.' He arrives there on 25 April 1889 on board the *Duchessa di Genova*, to continue the works at the port of Ensenada. These works had been started by the Dutch engineer Johan Abel Adriaan Waldorp, who was married to an aunt of Johanna Dates-Ten Kate.

Subsequent newspaper reports list the many accomplishment of Dutch engineers in South America, and especially by the firm of Dirks, Dates and van Hattem. P.J. Dirks was also an engineer and M.C. van Hattem was a contractor.



Figure 10: Dirks, Dates & van Hattem construction company,

ing his engineering studies in Heidelberg (Germany). He is shown sitting at the dining room table, perhaps with his father and other principals and colleagues in Figure 11. The photo was taken during the construction of Puerto Militar now Puerto General Belgrano, the most important navy base in Argentina.

In 2016, an exposition of photographs taken during engineering works by Dirks, Dates and van Hattem in 1899 was held in the Historical Museum and Archive of Bahia Blanco. Descendants of the Dates family attended this show. Figure 12 shows Sebastián Dates (second from right) standing between the Honorary Consul of The Netherlands (with crutch) and the curator. Willem and Johanna were the great great grand parents of Sebastián. His wife and two daughters are on the left.

A poster of the show can be seen in the background in Figure 13. Also the photograph shown in Figure 11 can be seen hanging on far end of the left wall.

The firm was involved in the construction of harbors in La Plata, Santa Fe, and Bahia Blanca, and the naval port in Puerto Belgrano (Figure 10). The firm also executed dredging operations in the Martin Garcia canal and several rivers and harbors. In the early 1900's they were involved in the construction of a 555 km railroad in the Buenos Aires province. In many cases, Dutch-made equipment was used (and imported) for these works.

All three principals of the engineering and construction firm were named Officers in the Order of Oranje-Nassau in 1906.

Willem's mother died in Hilversum in 1903, Willem passed away in 1912, and Johanna on 20 January 1917 (in Buenos Aires).

Jan Willem Dates, the second son of Willem and Johanna, became also active in the firm after complet-



Figure 11: Dirks Dates and van Hattem in the dining room. At right Jan Willem Dates.



Figure 12: Sebastián Dates (second from right) during the opening of the photography show.



Figure 13: Poster of the show's tiles can be seen in the background.

As I was finishing up this article, I checked LinkedIn to see if I could find a Sebastián Dates in Argentina, and yes there was one, and he confirmed his relationship to Willem and Johanna.

Upon making contact he provided me with more data on the Dates family in Argentina, and wrote that the photograph collection in the museum show was donated by him. Sebastián also supplied the photographs of his great great grandparents shown in Figure 14.

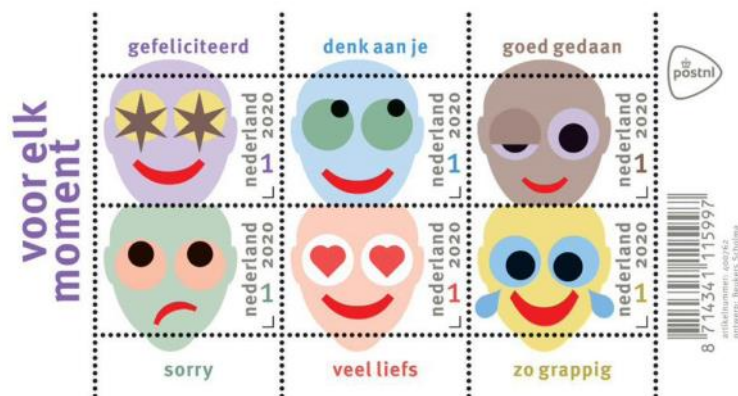


Figure 14: Willem Hendrik Johannes Dates (left), and Johanna Henriette Dates - ten Kate (right).

Sources

Delpher.nl for newspaper reports
 Wikipedia for general information
 Archieven.nl for civil records
 Facebook.com for pictures of the photography show in Bahia Blanco
<http://www.histarmar.com.ar> for the Figure 11.
 Personal Correspondence with Sebastián Dates through LinkedIn.

Recent Issues



For All Moments May 11, 2020

The six stamps on this sheet attempt to cheer up a letter or postcard through a simple image and supporting text.

See also <https://www.postzegelblog.nl/>

Ancient Postal Routes

May 11, 2020

The sheet contains six stamps in two different designs. The first stamp shows a mail man on a galloping horse with a horn to his mouth. The picture is based on an etch by Jan Mulder (1786 – 1817). The second stamp, based on a print by an anonymous artists, shows two mail men on the coach box of a stage coach, pulled by two horses. The original image has four horses but no more than two could be depicted on the stamp. The right side of both stamps show a vertical cut-out from the oil painting 'Het Bonte Paard' (The Variegated Horse) by Jan Wouwerman (1629 – 1666).

OUDE POSTROUTES

SNEL, SNEL, SNEL, SUPERSNEL!



VON THURN UND TAXIS

In 1489 gaf Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk aan de Lombardische koopmansfamilie Taxis, later von Thurn und Taxis genaamd, de opdracht een uitlopend postnetwerk op te zetten. Ook in en naar de Nederlanden. Onder Philips de Schone en Karelv, zoon en kleinzoon van Maximiliaan, breidde het netwerk zich verder over het Habtsburgse Rijk uit. De post werd eerst met paard en ruiters, later door de postkoetsen zo snel mogelijk van A naar B gebracht. Koetsen waren weliswaar minder snel dan paarden, maar namen veel meer post mee. Ook betalende passagiers leverden extra verdiensten op.

Het familiebedrijf von Thurn und Taxis hanteerde een estafette-systeem om de post zo snel en efficiënt mogelijk te bezorgen. Langs de routes waren er voldoende wisselstations voor de postkoetsen om uit te rusten, verse paarden te krijgen en post af te geven en mee te nemen. Snel, snel, snel, supersnel – zo luidde het devies. Alles stond in het teken om nieuws met zo min mogelijk tijdsverlies naar alle hoeken van Europa te verspreiden. De familie von Thurn und Taxis domineerde op die manier het Europese postwezen van de zestiende tot de negentiende eeuw.

8 714341 117373

ARTIKELNUMMER 40061
ONTWERP: STUONDER



Experience Nature: Coastal Birds

June 15, 2020

The sheet with six stamps depict bird species that are experiencing extreme difficulties. By far most of the birds are on the Red List of breeding birds in The Netherlands, or on the Red List of migratory birds or those that spend the winter in The Netherlands.

Typically Dutch: Bitterballen

June 15, 2020

The sheet of six identical stamps presents the 'bitterbal.' This pub snack is made from fried minced meat and is typically served with mustard.



Ontwerp: Total Design, Edwin van Proel
Artikelnummer: 400681

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