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& Overseas Areas philately since
1975

Netherlands Philately

Magazine of the American Society for Netherlands Philately

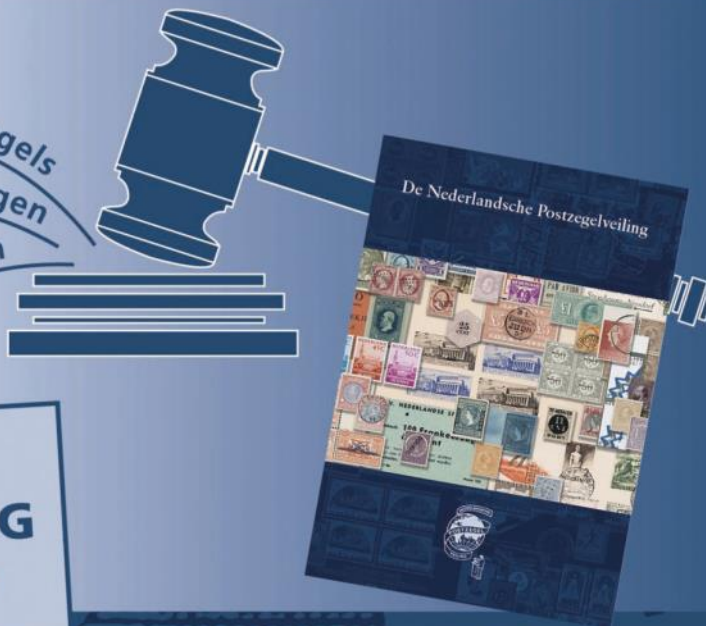
Volume 45/1



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Editor's Message

September, 2020

Dear Fellow Collectors,

The first issue of volume 45 contains the first part of a chapter written by Jos M.A.G. Stroom for the book 'In de ban of UV-licht, merktekens en codestreepjes,' a publication (in Dutch) by the Po&Po Group Postmechanization. The intend is to translate (most of) the chapters into a language more widely spoken than Dutch, and make this information available to the international collector. Given the size, well over 225 pages, it will take many issue of Netherlands Philately to complete the task. All of this is very attractive to your editor, as he now has an ample supply of copy! Of course, variety is the spice of life, so I will continue to rustle up additional copy with the help of our regular and occasional contributors.

Many philatelic exhibitions and bourses have been, and continue to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 virus. However, the American Philatelic Society collaborated with several other stamp organizations to put together a *virtual* stamp show August 17-22, including exhibits. I used this chance to put together a one-frame 'social philately' exhibit based on six articles I wrote for Netherlands Philately. One other ASNP member, Richard Bennink, has a six-frame exhibit on Dutch postal markings. I'll let you know next time how these exhibits were received.

All the best,

Ben

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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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Indonesian Dances on Stamps (1941-1945) .

by Johannes de Kruyf

(Netherlands and Colonial Philately (NCP) Vol. XX/4, October 1955)

From stamp collecting to dancing is not nearly as great a step as appears at first glance. A nation's culture is often shown in the design of the stamps it has issued, and the dance is just another, older and more vivid, expression of this same culture. The Indonesian archipelago is indeed very rich in culture, judging by the numerous native dances performed daily and shared, either as engrossed spectators or as active participants, by nearly the entire population of these magnificent islands.

The issuance of a series of stamps in 1941 by the Dutch East Indies government, was indeed a tribute to the artistic temperament of these sensitive people, who have made their dances into an expression of their innermost thoughts so that without spoken words a complete drama or ancient legend unfolds itself in all its fine nuances. The designer of the stamps, a young and promising artist by the name of J. F. Dickhoff did a marvelous job, thereby showing the world that even without the aid of the Netherlands, the Dutch Indies could produce works of art of this type to equal or surpass that of any country.

The printing, done by the firm of G. Kolff & Co. at Batavia, is another example of "necessity being the mother of invention". For years attempts had been made to print stamps in the Indies and from time to time "proofs of ability" had been produced, but since the firm of Enschede & Sons in Holland did such perfect work for so many countries, these plans never materialized until Holland was invaded by the Nazis and suddenly the need for stamps had to be filled.

The first stamp was produced by using the old design of the 1912 numeral type; the Topographic Service at Batavia hastily prepared a plate for the 5 cent and also did the offset printing. A proof of the 10 cent was made but the stamp was never issued. At the same time Kolff & Co., with the cooperation of the Topographic Service started work on a complete set of stamps in the design current in the Netherlands at the time of the invasion, i.e. the portrait of Queen Wilhelmina issue designed by W. A. van Konijnenburg. This was followed by a series of charity stamps for the Moehammadijah Society, also designed by Dickhoff, and finally the dancers series, the last two by rotogravure process.

Numerous proofs of all these stamp designs were made in both offset and rotogravure between 1940 and early 1942. Unfortunately not all the designs of the dancers set were issued, the Japanese invasion bringing a sudden stop to the production of Dutch East Indies stamps. Kolff & Co., however, was obliged to print several issues for their new (temporary) masters during the occupation.

The different designs of the dancers set, either issued or contemplated to be issued, are as follows:

Papuan dancer in war dress with bow and bundle of arrows - proof of 1 cent only.

Female menari dancer of Amboina - 2 cent stamp printed in 1942, issued in 1945;

3 cent stamp issued in 1948 (offset printing).

Male dancer of the island of Nias - 2 ½ cent stamp; 3 ½ cent proof.

Female legong dancer of Bali - 3 cent stamp (1941);

4 cent stamp (1948-offset).

Javanese dancers, one in background - 3 ½ cent proof;

5 cent proof.

Male wayang wong dancer of Java and musician - 4 cent stamp.

Pajoge dancer of southern Celebes - 5 cent stamp.

Male Dajak dancer of Borneo - 7 ½ cent stamp (1941);

7 ½ cent stamp (1948-offset).

THE PAPUAN DANCES OF NEW GUINEA

The native inhabitants of New Guinea are Papuans and are therefore completely different from all other nation's peoples of the former Netherlands East Indies, who are members of the Indonesian or Malay race. The natives of the Netherlands portion of New Guinea may roughly be divided into three large groups, and as a result the forms of dancing are manifold. Along the south coast men and women dance together in parallel rows or in circles with



Figure 1: Papuan dancer, proof.

the men innermost, while in the north east men and women dance together, with the women in a half circle facing the line of men. In the settlements along the southern rivers the women perform a sort of a charm dance at the arrival of visitors. In the western portion gallant, war, and round dances are performed. Among the most famous of Papuan dances is the masked dance of the Marindanim of southern New Guinea. These dances, celebrated at festival times, are dramatic representations of episodes from the legendary lives of mythological ancestors, or done. Huge and heavy contrivances are borne upon the head and shoulders; in the sago-dema dance, for example, the man representing the ancestral sago-palm, bears a replica thereof, while four girls, supposed to be the younger sisters of the dams, hold the trunk upright with ropes. (The sago palm produces the staple food of the Papuans, sago is better known to us as tapioca)

The male dancer in the areca-palm dema dance is likewise adorned with a representation of the palm in which the head of a crocodile appears. Music and singing accompany the dancers. Portrayed on the 1 cent value of the contemplated stamp is a male war dancer of the western section of New Guinea (Figure 1).

THE MENARI DANCER OF AMBOINA

The term used in the description is ambiguous for menari is the common word in Malay to designate the combination of music, song and dance, consequently the word is used wherever Malays are to be found throughout the archipelago. But since the people of Ambon, one of the major islands in the Moluccas, are particularly inclined to musical expression, perhaps the reference is correctly made to the dance of the unmarried maidens, the djoedja-roes, who greet each and every visitor to the community with dance and song. A male singer improvises tunes to describe what he considers the virtues of the visitor, and the singing chorus of dancers follow with modulations and refrains, often continuing for hours to pick up each new improvisation of the leader. The population of about 150 thousand is predominantly Christian in the south and Islamic in the north. The men wear a cotton jacket and a pair of trousers; the women a sarong and kabayah. The Amboinese men made good soldiers in the Dutch Indies army and have been extremely loyal to the Dutch, many selecting virtual exile to Holland rather than to stay in the Indonesian Republic. The 2 cent stamp shows a female dancer (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Menari dancer.

THE NIAS DANCES OF SUMATRA

Nias is the largest of a chain of islands off the West Coast of Sumatra, it is roughly 80 miles long and 30 miles wide and has a population of about 200,000. The coast is rocky and it is often dangerous to land. The Niasese are pagans, wives are bought and at death wife and property pass to a man's brother. Houses are built on piles with entrance from underneath through the floor.



Figure 3: Nias dancer.

The dances are several in number and, with few exceptions, are performed by men. The war dance of south Nias, depicted on the stamp (Figure 3), is performed by dancers who are equipped with weapons of war and ends with a mimic combat between man and man, with speedy leaps executed to the left, right, front and back, in a thrilling spectacle. The customary dances of the men, molaja, accompanying every festivity, are two in number: the snake dance and the ring dance. In the former, men holding hands weave slowly over the village common, swaying all the while and beating the measure with their feet. In the latter, a ring of men holding hands step in time forward and backward, again accompanied by song, and end with a shrill cry and an upward leap. The dance of the women is performed in pairs, each holding at arms-length the ends of a slendang thrown about the neck of the partner, all the while moving hands about and keeping time with the feet. Other women beat gongs, occasionally uttering vibrant cries.

THE LEGONG DANCES OF BALI

Bali, with about a million inhabitants and an area of slightly more than 2000 square miles, is probably the best known East Indian island in this country.

The people are of Hindu-Javanese extraction with an original strain of Papuan blood, probably mixed with Polynesian. Nearly everyone is Hindu in religion, but offerings to household deities, at little home-shrines, show Polynesian religious influence. The temples are dedicated to Siva, Brahma and Vishnu.

The legong dance, chief of Balinese folk-dances, is perhaps the most familiar of East Indian dances in this country. Performed by two very young girls, to the accompaniment of the classic music of a gamelan orchestra, the dance is pantomime and the little girls, with traditional gestures, act out the story told by the dalang, or story teller, seated among the musicians. After an introductory dance in which the girls are presented with fans, the well-known story is performed in stylistic manner, realistic presentation being unnecessary for an audience quite familiar with the legendary tale. In earlier days legong dancers were under the care of the princes and performed the dance for them and their guests alone, but tourism has brought about public performances and more recently Balinese troupes of dancers and musicians have performed in this country and in Europe before capacity audiences.

A proof, in ultramarine, of the stamp is shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Ultramarine proof of Legong dancer.

JAVANESE DANCES

Java, with Madura, form the most densely populated area in the world, in a space of almost 51, 000 square miles live approximately 52 million people, predominantly Muslims, but with a strong Islamic background. Dances are numerous, almost all are accompanied by a gamelan orchestra, two of the best known are represented on the stamps.



Figure 5: Male Wayjang wong dancer.

The Wayjang wong is a dramatic dance derived from the wayang shadow plays and is relatively recent in origin. A male dancer is shown on the 4 cent stamp (Figure 5). The classical wayang was formerly given at the court of Jogja, but since the establishment of schools of the dance, under the leadership of P. A. Soerjadiningrat in 1918, these dramatic spectacles are performed by professional dancers, male and female, throughout the island. There are numerous stories portrayed, among which the combat between two or more persons plays a prominent role. The dance consists of rhythmic movements of the hands, arms and head, some almost unnoticeable to the untrained eye. The esthetic relation between the eurhythmic plastics and the accompanying gamelan has given this dance the highest position in Indonesian choreography.

The bedoyo dances at the courts of Jogja and Solo are ceremonial group dances, celebrated at special holidays and commemorations, performed by nine maidens, to represent the nymphs of the South Sea goddess, clad in bride's costumes, their bare arms and shoulders painted golden yellow. Figure 6 shows the 5 cent proof of the not-issued stamp. In Solo these dances are performed by young girls, or exceptionally boys in female dress, selected years earlier and carefully trained, whereas in Jogja the participants are members of noble families. The dance itself consists of stylistic, yet graceful movements of arms and hands, legs and feet, and indeed of the whole body, to accompanying classical melodies of the gamelan. The dancers utter no word, the whole dramatic performance being represented by motions alone.



Figure 6: Bedoyo dancer.

PAJOGE DANCES OF CELEBES



Figure 7: Pajoge dancer.

Celebes (now Sulawesi), one of the four great Sunda islands can be recognized immediately by its odd shape and lies between Borneo and the Molucas. The land area is almost 70,000 square miles and the population amounts to about 4 million, made up of at least six quite different native peoples - the Toala, Toraja, Buginese, Macassars, Minahasese and Gorontaloese. The languages and religions are almost as numerous, the majority being Islamic, but there are also many Christians and some Pagans. Each of course have their own dances, but the one shown on the 5 cent stamp (Figure 7) is the pajoge dance of southern Celebes. Professional female dancers perform the characteristic dance of the Buginese peoples of Makassar and surrounding regions. At the present day the dance is folk-acting, noteworthy for the extremely supple movements of the body, in rather slow tempo. Accompanied by the typical Buginese orchestra, whose music is quite sour to western ears, the pajoge dances do not seem as interesting as the more infrequent war dance of the men of the same tribe. But the pajoges are highly respected for their dancing ability, and it is considered a grievous insult for men to jump up between the dancers to interrupt the dance.

THE DAJAK DANCES OF BORNEO

Borneo, one of the largest islands in the world, has an area of almost 300,000 square miles, the largest and by far the most valuable portion belonging to the Indonesian Republic and the northern part more or less under British rule. The population of the Indonesian portion is estimated to be close to 2 million people with a great number of Chinese or Chinese descent, the natives being of a variety of races and different degrees of civilization. It is therefore not surprising that the dance takes many different forms, and we will confine ourselves to the one represented on the 7 ½ cent stamp (Figure 8), the dance of the Dajak, or to be more precise, the masked dance of the Kajan-Dajaks of central Borneo. During the sowing period a feast is held whose original religious significance is now only to be discovered in the dance of the spirits. In this the dance-leader is equipped with a long ornamental wooden hook to allure the rice spirits back to the community. The young men of the village, representing the spirits themselves, are adorned in terrifying manner. Huge banana leaves, leopard's teeth, immense artificial eyes and ears with bodies painted white. The dance itself, to the rhythm of a gong, consists of violent motions of arms and legs, twisting and shaking of the head, for hours with never-ceasing clang in the full heat of the burning tropical sun.



Figure 8: Dajak dancer.

Note. The writer has borrowed heavily from a description of the same subject and published in Vol. VIII of "Netherlands and Colonial Philately" by A. Arthur Schiller.

Those of you familiar with the excellent "Manual of the stamps of Netherlands, Netherlands Indies, Curaçao, and Surinam" by A. Arthur Schiller and Johannes de Kruyf know that it only goes through 1939. Fortunately for us the authors picked up where they left off, and starting in 1952, they published their findings in a series of articles in the Organ of the NCP. This is what they wrote in 1995 about the 1941-1945 D.E.I native dancers issue:

1941 - 1945 D.E.I Native Dancers Issue
Schiller and de Kruyf (NCP Vol.XX/3, July 1955)

Without watermark; Comb perforation 12 ½ x 12 ½; Rotogravure

| NVPH | Speciale Catalogus 2014 | | | |
|------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| | Estimates | | | |
| 298 | 2 cent | red | 8,000,000 | 8,410,000 |
| 299 | 2 ½ cent | red violet | 500,000 | 1,000,000 |
| 300 | 3 cent | green | 300,000 | 500,000 |
| 301 | 4 cent | olive green | 1,000,000 | 1,100,000 |
| 302 | 5 cent | ultramarine | 4,000,000 | 12,500,000 |
| 303 | 7 ½ cent | violet | | 3,000,000 |

Note. The numbers issued are estimates based on the numbers printed less the remainders existing after the liberation, subsequently overprinted by the Indonesian Republic. The above quantities should of course be further reduced by an undetermined number overprinted by the Japanese and by those lost or destroyed through war action. The 2 cent value was ready for distribution in 1942 and was found intact in 1945.

This value was not overprinted by the Japanese, but was used by the Republic.

Designed by J. F. Dickhoff of Bandoeng, portraying the various dancers of the Indian Archipelago.

| | |
|----------|--|
| 2 cent | female Menari dancer of Amboina |
| 2 ½ cent | male dancer of the island of Nias, off the West coast of Sumatra |
| 3 cent | female Legong dancer of Bali |
| 4 cent | male Wayang wong dancer of Java |
| 5 cent | male Pajoge dancer of southern Celebes |
| 7 ½ cent | male Dajak dancer of Borneo |

Prepared and printed by G. Kolff & Co., Batavia

Proofs. Numerous proofs were made of the stamps issued as well as of those that were contemplated. They are all more or less like the stamps, but sometimes the background received more emphasis, sometimes the foreground. The following are known:

Rotogravure. (Note, there may be others).

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1 cent | Papuan in war dress with bow and bundle of arrows~ stamp not issued. plate proofs in violet, green, grey, grey-green, ultramarine |
| 2 cent | as issued stamp, plate proofs in <i>red</i> , red-violet, orange |
| 2 ½ cent | as stamp issued, plate proofs in <i>red-violet</i> , light brown |
| 3 cent | as issued stamp, plate proofs in <i>green</i> , violet, grey, grey-green, black, ultramarine, light brown |
| 3 ½ cent | same as 2 ½ cent value, plate proofs in violet, green, grey, grey-green, ultramarine - stamp not issued. |
| 3 ½ cent | Javanese dancer with another in the background and gongs between them - plate proofs in grey, ultramarine, black - stamp not issued. |
| 4 cent | as issued stamp, plate proof in <i>olive-green</i> |
| 5 cent | as issued stamp, plate proof in <i>ultramarine</i> , orange, red. |
| 5 cent | Javanese dancer etc. (same as 3 ½ cent), plate proofs in violet, green, grey, grey-green, ultramarine, black - stamp not issued. |
| 7 ½ cent | as issued stamp, plate proofs in <i>violet</i> , green, grey, grey-green, black, ultramarine, red violet (Figure 9 shows the grey, violet and ultramarine proofs). |



Figure 9: Proofs of the 7 ½ cent stamp in grey, violet and ultramarine.

Offset. (note. there may be more) plate proofs of the 2, 2 ½, 3, 4, 5, 7 ½ cent in selected colors of the respective stamps, imperforate.

Note. The proofs printed by rotogravure in the color of the stamps (italicized in the above listing) could be considered unfinished stamps, they were not issued by the postal authorities in this condition.

Sheets of 200, two blocks of 100 stamps with a white strip the width of a stamp between; issue letters on top and bottom margins, counting numbers on side margins and on the white strip, etching numbers: 2 cent - 38, 2 ½ cent - 39, 3 cent - 11, 4 cent - 10, 5 cent - 6, and 7 ½ cent - 25.

Date issued. Due to the war conditions, exact dates of distribution to the post offices have been lost. The dates of printing, however, give some idea of the distribution dates. These were as follows:

| | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 2 cent - | January 15, 1942 | 4 cent - | July 9, 1941 |
| 2 ½ cent - | October 24, 1941 | 5 cent - | October 1, 1941 |
| 3 cent - | November 13, 1941 | 7 ½ cent - | June 27, 1941 |

Demonetized. Withdrawn and overprinted by the Japanese, except the 2 cent value.

Not officially valid for postage after the liberation due to the fact that remainders fell into the hands of the Indonesian Republic forces and were used by the Republic with or without overprint.

Variety: 2 cent red: imperforate at top of sheet.

VELDPOST O.B.K.

by Hans Kremer



Figure 1: "KART. O.B.K. / VELDPOST / BATAVIA"

I have looked at a number of KART. O.B.K. pieces from my collection and am now convinced that the abbreviations O.K. and O.B.K. in the triangular stamps of the Kartotheek (=Card file) mail of Veldpost Batavia means "Onbekend" (=Unknown).

Both types are also in my collection. The same abbreviation (O.B.K.) is used in the field post of Veldpost Poerwokerto, but in Bandoeng there is a two-line text 'Kart. / Onbekend'.

Veldpost Semarang has a very large rectangular marker with three-line "Onbekend / Veldposts / Semarang" in box. (The plural "s" is probably a mistake.) By the way, a different multi-line adhesive label has also been used in Batavia, on which the text starts with "Onbekend Kartotheek / Veldpost Batavia...."

In Netherlands Philately Vol. 44/6, July 2020, Jan Verster showed a Dutch Airletter Sheet with a mysterious triangular marker with the text: "KART. O.B.K. / VELDPOST / BATAVIA" (Figure 1).

Jan asked if anybody knew what "KART. O.B.K." stood for. On eBay I noticed a similar marker, but with "KART. O. K." instead of "KART. O.B.K." (Figure 2).

I approached some philatelic friends in the Netherlands and Bert van Marrewijk wrote:



Figure 2: "KART. O.K. / VELDPOST / BATAVIA"

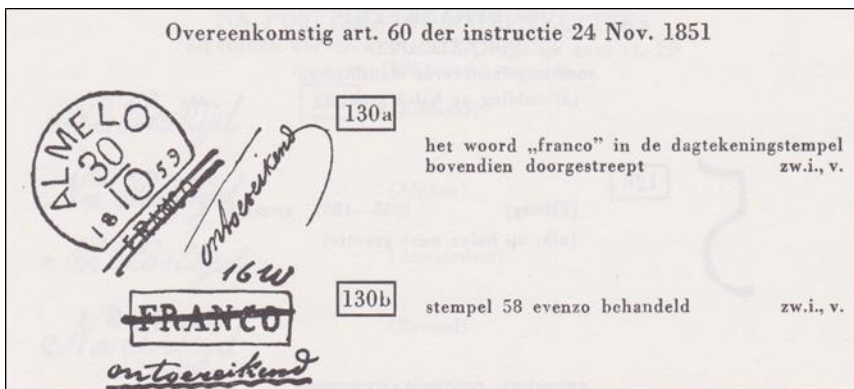
The Word “FRANCO” Crossed Out .

by Hans Kremer

One of the articles in *HERTOG POSTBODE*, Nr. 1, 2019 that got my attention was “Doorgehaald franco in omlijsting” (‘FRANCO in box’ crossed out) by Hans Caarls.

In a postal circular of November 24, 1851, sent to all postmasters in the Netherlands, it says that if a postal item had insufficient postage, for example because the letter was heavier than paid for or the distance the letter had to travel was further than paid for, the postage short had to be paid for by the recipient and the word FRANCO had to be crossed out. The word “*ontoereikend*” (insufficient) also had to be written on the cover. If the letter was overweight the actual weight had to be written on the letter. The amount of postage due too had to be indicated.

The recipient of a letter sent abroad with insufficient postage had to pay the total postage, not just the short amount.



Korteweg shows examples of a ‘crossed out’ semi circular marker and ‘FRANCO in box’ marker (Figure 1). The word “*ontoereikend*” and in the ‘FRANCO in box’ case the weight of the letter (16W(igtjes)) can also be seen.

Figure 1: Korteweg. page 216.

Postage, until 1-1-1871, was based on a combination of two things: distance and weight.

| Sept. 1, 1850 | 0-15 gram | 15-30 gram | 30-50 gram | 50-100 gram |
|---------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Up to 30 Km. | 5 cent | 10 cent | 15 cent | 20 cent |
| 30 to 100 Km. | 10 cent | 20 cent | 30 cent | 40 cent |
| Over 100 Km. | 15 cent | 30 cent | 45 cent | 60 cent |

| Sept. 1, 1855 | 0-15 gram | 15-50 gram | 50-100 gram |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Up to 30 Km. | 5 cent | 10 cent | 15 cent |
| Over 30 Km. | 10 cent | 20 cent | 30 cent |

After 1-1-1871 postal rates are based on weight only.

Although covers with the FRANCO crossed out semi-circular markers are somewhat rare the ‘FRANCO in box’ crossed out markers are very rare. Snoeren (see Refs.) in 2016 even claimed that these are unknown. Hans Caarl’s article shows a couple of examples where the word “FRANCO” has been struck through, not only for the semi-circular marker but also for the ‘FRANCO in box’ marker, contradicting Mr. Snoeren’s comment.

Two examples of ‘FRANCO crossed out’ letters.

Figure 2: Tiel to The Hague (80 km), weighing (17 w(igtjes) (grams)); second weight class (15-50 grams). This required 20 cent postage. Only a 10 cent stamp was applied, so 10 cent short as indicated by the hand written “10” on the cover. “FRANCO” at the bottom of the semi-circular stamp has been crossed out and the word “*ontoereikend*” was added.



Figure 2a: Tiel to The Hague, "FRANCO" crossed out.

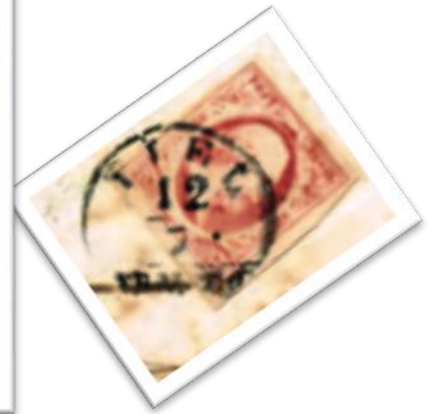


Figure 2b: Details of Figure 2a.

Figure 3: The second cover (0-15 grams) was sent (1866?) from Tiel to Boxtel (33 km.), 3 km over 30. Correct rate would be 10 cent, but only one 5 cent stamp was applied. Therefore charged with an extra 5 cents. "FRANCO" was crossed out and the hand written words "ontoereikend" and "5" were added.



Figure 3: 1866 (?) Tiel to Boxtel. "FRANCO" crossed out.

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- Caarls, Hans, *Doorgehaald franco in omlijsting*, HERTOG POSTBODE - Nr. 1, 2019
 Korteweg, P.C., *300 Jaar Postmerken van Nederland, 1570-1870*, NBFV, Herdruk 1985
 Snoeren, Marc, *Een filatelistische moord*, Maandblad voor Filatelie, June 2016, pages 412-413



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The Facer-Cancelers of the Netherlands and the Corresponding Machine Cancels (Part 1).

by Jos M.A.G. Stroom

INTRODUCTION

Machines that automatically face postal items and detect and cancel the stamp are called 'facer-canceler', often simply called 'facer'. It is a point of contention if all machines that are referred to in the literature as facer-cancelers actually deserve that name as will be seen later on.

The cancels from those machines are known as 'impact machine cancels'. They are created by direct contact between the inked cancel head and the mail item and consist of a flag and a postmark.

The favorite Dutch catalogue of machine cancels written by F.W. van der Wart [1] does not always give undivided attention to the cancels from the impact machines. Some of them have not been catalogued. Sometimes that choice can be explained, but there are also real omissions.

In the present generation NEC NS-10 facer-cancelers, the flag and the postmark are SPRAYED on the cover. There is no contact between the inkjet nozzle and the envelope. In this case we speak of 'inkjet machine prints'. This new obliteration technology will be described in a later issue of Netherlands Philately.

After the explanation of the main concepts and the technologies of facing, stamp detection and machine canceling, all (and proven) facer-cancelers used in the Netherlands are reviewed, even if they only have been of significance to the history of the development of these machines and (unfortunately) no real postal items or test letters can be collected.

CONCEPTS

Facing

Facing arranges the mail items such that they are all facing in the same direction (hence the use of the term 'facing' for this operation). For many years facing had to be done manually piece-by-piece before feeding the mail items to a canceler for obliteration. In the canceler, obliteration is done by the cancel head. The cancel head is not mobile or flexible, it is positioned at a fixed place in the machine. When the mail item passes along that spot, it receives a machine cancel imprint. The cancel however, is meant to 'destroy' the stamp (or the stamp image –the indicium- on stationery). This is only possible if the letter passes the canceler in such position that the stamp can be reached by the cancel head. This requires that the mail items are fed to the machine in an UP-SIDE DOWN position. Only then all stamps are (almost) at the same height from the bottom of the covers, regardless the size of the item. Because the mail is transported and cancelled up-side down, the cancel head must also be mounted up-side down. In that way, all mail items receive a cancel in the upper-right corner. This is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

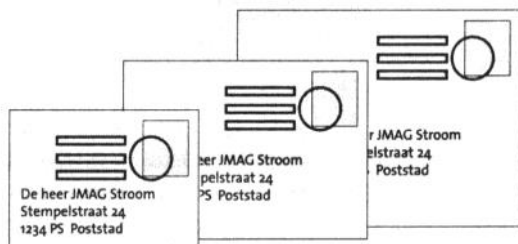


Figure 1: A number of postmarked letters in various formats that are machine-cancelled. The way in which the pieces are arranged in this picture shows that the postmark has been applied at different heights. How is that possible?

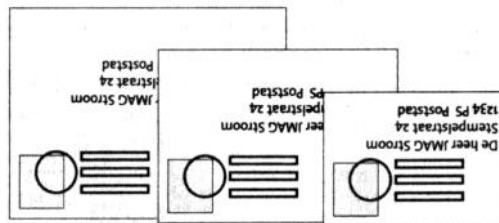


Figure 2: If the pieces are faced, the postage stamp (or the imprint) to be cancelled is in all cases at the same height and this is how they are fed along the cancelling die, which must then also be mounted 'upside down'.

In the older machines (but also in the later used Klüssendorf machines) there is only one cancel head present and therefore the mail items must also be fed with the franked address side on the front (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Photograph of machine-based postmarking of faced mail in the first half of the last century. All the covers are in the same – upside down - position, and with the address side facing the postal worker.

The consequence of this mechanical form of canceling is that every passing mail item receives a machine cancel, even if no stamp is present or not placed in the upper-right corner. In order to persuade the public to affix the stamp to the upper-right corner, slogan cancels with the stimulating text “Postzegels-rechts boven in de hoek! Vlugger verzending” (Postage stamps-in the upper-right corner! Faster mailing) were used in the Netherlands since 1926 (Figure 4). This slogan - in various variants - was frequently used in the period between 1926 and 1976.



Figure 4a (left): Stamp flag “Stamp in the top right corner! Faster mailing” from 1932. Because the stamp was not affixed to the top right corner, it had to be faced differently (on its short side) in order to strike the stamp in full.

Figure 4b (top): Enlarged flag cancel.

On the business letter of Figure 4 we see a - for that time – not unusual graphically-decorated top of the envelope. The postage stamp affixed below the graphics made it necessary to manually face the mail item on its short side.

Clearly manual facing is a very labor-intensive job.

Detection of the stamp

In order to make mail processing more efficient - and to replace manual facing by machine operations - from the late 1940s onward, research was done in the Netherlands to design machines that were capable of doing so. This led to the development of facer-cancelers. These machines do not place a machine cancel on every letter that passes by but only if a postage stamp or stamp image on it is detected.

STAMP DETECTION METHODS

Three different detection methods have been tried in the Netherlands:

- Contact-electric detection: with postage stamps made of paper incorporating a thin metal foil.
- Optical (or contrast) detection: detection based on black and white or light-dark recognition;
- Luminescence detection: using ultra-violet light to detect the postage stamp made of luminescent paper or on which a luminescent layer (a tagging) has been applied. Luminescence is the collective noun of fluorescence and phosphorescence.

The three detection principles will be discussed in detail in a following chapter.

THE BASIC OPERATION OF A CANCELING MACHINE WITH AUTOMATIC STAMP DETECTION

A facer-canceller is able to detect the postage stamp on a postal item by *itself*. Only when the stamp has been detected, the machine will subsequently obliterate the postage stamp with a machine cancel. To explain the operation of such a machine, a drawing of the Pitney Bowes Mark II facer-canceller [2] is presented in Figure 5. The accompanying explanation presented below provides the reader insight into the stamp detection process.

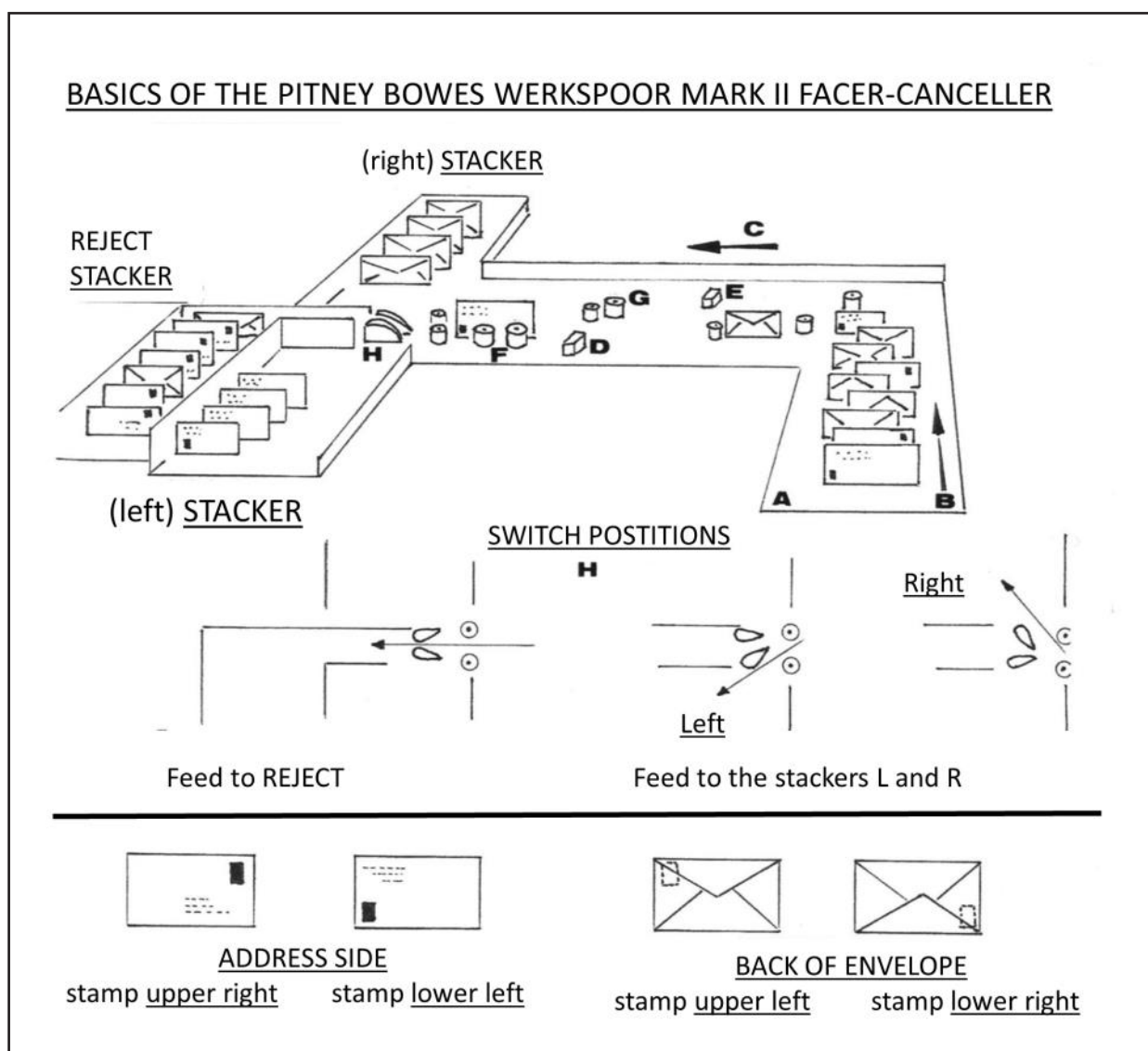


Figure 5: Schematic representation of the operation of the Mark II facer-canceller machine. Above: route through the machine, from the supply stacker A to the three end stackers. Middle: the three possible alternate positions at H. Bottom: the four different ways in which a mail item can be placed in the initial stacker.

Explanation of figure 5

The stamp detection process starts (in the upper-part of the drawing) on the right side at A: the feeding stacker. The arrows B and C indicate the transport direction of the mail. The covers are put in an unordered position on the feeding stacker with the stamps on the front or back of the covers and on the bottom or on top. The four different stamp positions are shown in the lower part of the drawing.

The scanners (detection units) are positioned at D and E. These can be made of different systems: contact electric, optical or luminescence detection.

F is the lead cancel head, G is the tail cancel head, and they are coupled to the scanners D and E, respectively. The tail cancel head G is located at the rear of the conveyor belt. The covers that will be cancelled there have almost completely passed G when the postage stamp arrives: the stamp is located at the 'tail' of the envelope. At the lead cancel head, the stamp passes first, after which the rest of the letter follows. Now the stamp is located at the 'head' of the envelope.

Only the postal items with the postage stamp located at the bottom are recognized and cancelled. At switch H, the covers cancelled by F go to the stacker on the left. The covers cancelled by G go to the stacker on the right. Switch H provides the correct route. The three possible positions of H are drawn separately.

Mail with the postage stamp on top is not recognized by the detection systems and goes to the reject stacker without being cancelled. Mail in the reject stacker only has to be picked up and put back on the feeding stacker after being rotated by 180 degrees. Then these covers will also go to the left or right stacker when stamp detection has taken place. The mail items on which no detectable stamp was found after the two passages will again end up in the reject stacker and must be obliterated manually.

The big advantage of this process is that the mail items (which had to comply with maximum size and thickness requirements) do not have to be manually faced before feeding them to the facer-canceler. The only thing the post clerk has to do is to place the mail on its long side on the feeding stacker, rotate the rejected mail and feed it once more to the machine.

One can argue that this MARK II machine does not FACE the mail by itself. After all, it only cancels those pieces, which are placed on the feeding stacker with a detectable stamp at the bottom. However, the process is labor-saving, because rotating of the un-cancelled mail from the reject stacker is a simple operation. Some philatelists are of the opinion that these machines therefore do not deserve the name of 'facer-canceler'. However, I follow the current name in the philatelic literature and - as mentioned before - count them among the 'facers'.

In the later machines, facing the un-cancelled mail for a second time was done by the machine itself by rotating the mail by 180 degrees by means of a conveyer belt system and letting the pieces pass the detection units and canceling devices for a second time.

From the USA a tandem arrangement is known, where the mail pieces from the reject stacker were turned using a similar type of conveyer belt system and then processed by a second identical machine (Figure 6).

The end result in both cases is faced and cancelled mail, facilitating the manual sorting task as the addresses can now be read easily.

Now that the reader is somewhat familiar with the phenomenon of a facer-canceler and how it works, we go to the different machines and their detection systems.

Figure 6: Tandem arrangement of two Mark II facers, allowing all mail to be faced and cancelled. Pitney Bowes, 1960.



CONTACT ELECTRIC DETECTION

The first generation of facing machines worked on the basis of contact electric detection. In order for the machine to react to a stamp, it was necessary that the stamp contained an element that could be recognized by the machine. For this purpose, 'laminated' stamps were made, in which a thin metal foil was incorporated in the paper. As early as 1948/1949, at the request of the Dutch post administration PTT, Frits van Marle developed a machine with this kind of detection. As an engineer he was employed at Marchand-Andriessen, the inventor/developer of the Transorma sorting machine [3].

The first facer-canceler

Little is known about the first Dutch machine with contact-electric detection. I only know one report about the cancels of this facer-canceler, written by P. van Koevorden in the Dutch *Maandblad voor Philatelie* of May 1952:

As for the canceling, we can report that the cancel is a wonderfully small date cancel, without any further details; so no flag or other slogan additions [4].

Unfortunately the author does not indicate where (location) and when (date) he saw the described cancel imprint. According to Mr. Wim van der Kooij, a first demonstration took place on Ascension Day 1950, at the office of the Marchand-Andriessen company on the Prins Hendrikplein at The Hague [5]. Mail items or cancel imprints of this event are not known.

However, a number of laminated test stamps have been preserved. These include the laminated stamps after a design by F. van Marle (his initials F-M are present in the small crown).

These stamps were printed in sheets of 25 by a private printer at The Hague. A very thin layer of metal foil, to which the electric sensor reacted, was mounted between two layers of paper. The edition was 500 stamps (Figure 7a and b).



Figure 7a (left): Laminated test stamps from 1949, designed by Dipl. Ing. F. van Marle (F-M in the small crown) in a sheet of 25. A total of 500 stamps were produced.

Figure 7b (top): Detail of the top left corner of the sheet, where the metal foil between the two layers of paper has been revealed by burning away the paper on both sides.

From 1950, Swedish test stamps printed by Postverkets Tryckeri-Stockholm according to the model of engraver Ewert have also been preserved. The edition was 1000 stamps (Figure 8) [6].



Figure 8: Partial sheet with 14 laminated test stamps printed in Sweden in 1950. The right-hand row of two stamps has been folded forward, making the metal foil visible on the back.

The machine on the E55 exhibition at Rotterdam

The contact-electric facer-canceler from Van Marle was also demonstrated at the E55 exhibition held in Rotterdam in 1955. For that purpose, Joh. Enschede & Zn in Haarlem printed blue test stamps with a white Andreas cross on Neparofa- laminated paper, in an edition of 68 sheets with 100 stamps each (Figure 9). These stamps are not known to me on covers and / or cancelled.

The tests with this machine did not lead to the desired result. The high production costs of the specially prepared stamps exceeded the savings in the costs of facing the mail. PTT was not interested in the machine any more and it was stored in the former Postmuseum in The Hague.

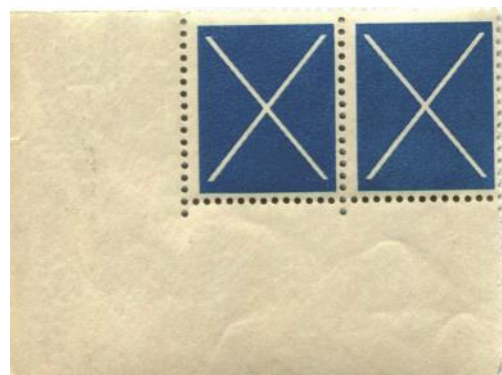


Figure 9: Two blue test stamps with a white Andreas cross by Joh. Enschede & Zn, printed on Neparofa laminated paper from 1955.

OPTICAL DETECTION

With optical detection, the stamps on a cover are recognized by means of photocells which react to the difference in contrast between the postage stamp and the envelope [7]. This system is also known as 'light / dark recognition'.

No specially-prepared stamps are required for optical detection. However, this system does impose certain requirements on the design of the stamps. There must be a clear transition between the stamp and the postal item on which it is located. The stamps should therefore preferably have a clear white border around the stamp image. Not all colors are suitable for optical detection due to insufficient contrast difference with the carrier.

Rome 1956

Amazingly fast after the demonstration at the E55 in Rotterdam, a second prototype of a new model facer-canceler was shown at the First International Postal Administration and Mechanization Exhibition in Rome at the end of 1956. This facer-canceler, shown in full operation in Rome, was intended for Rotterdam.

This prototype (Figure 10a) worked according to the principle of optical detection; the scanner responded to color and intensity difference between the stamp and the paper of the mail item. The optical and electrical part was designed by Ir. J. Mulder (PTT) and the machine was built by Marchand-Andriessen NV and Werkspoor, after a design by Frits van Marle, in cooperation with the Dr. Neher Laboratory (DNL) of PTT.

After stamp detection, the cover was turned mechanically in such a way that the stamp was guided along the canceling device (Figure 10b). Little is known about this second prototype, except for a few photos. The device looks impressive, but the photos do not reveal exactly how the detection and canceling system worked. However, one can see two letter transport units, with letters in various positions.

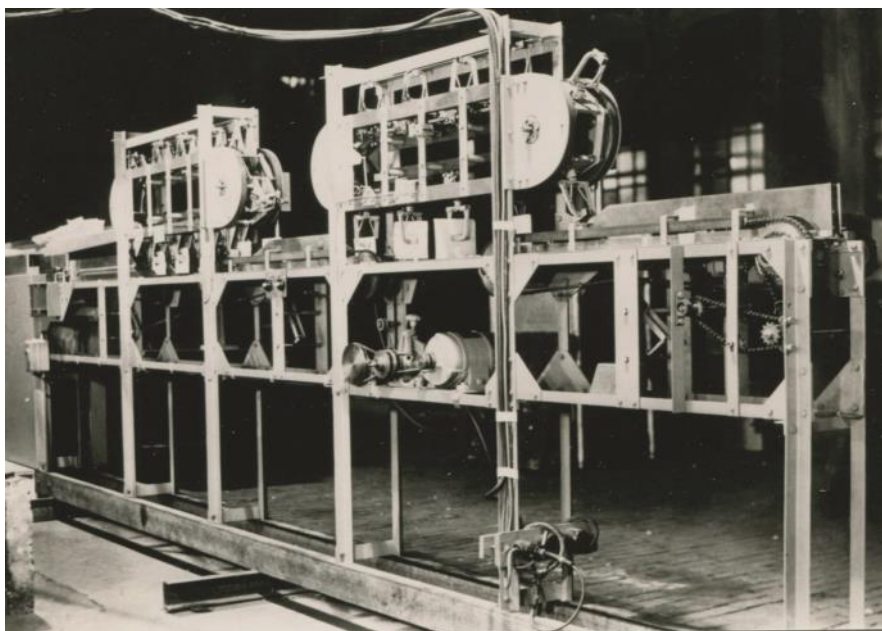


Figure 10a: Laboratory setup of the second prototype facing machine, as exhibited at the 1st Mechanization Exhibition in Rome in 1956.



Figure 10b: This detail of the center of Figure 10a illustrates the gripping and rotating mechanism by which the letters were fed in the correct position along a stamp head.

Thirty years later, Mrs. M.J. Vrijaldenhoven edited a booklet [8], based on a report by Ir. J. Mulder and illuminated with photos of the entries from all participating countries. These were the six ECSC countries (European Coal and Steel Community) France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, expanded with Great Britain and Switzerland (Figure 11).

The Dutch entry at Rome also consisted of a bundling machine and a Transorma keyboard. A model of a (future) Transorma super machine to be placed at Rotterdam was also on display. Mobile Post Office nr. 2 was also in operation in Rome (Figure 12) [9]. However, the facer-canceler was the center piece of the Dutch entry.

After this major exhibition at Rome, interest in facer-cancelers and related devices really started to take off. Worldwide, industrial companies started building machines that could automatically face and cancel letters using 'normal' stamps.

Figure 11: Cover of the booklet by Mrs. Vrijaldenhoven about ROME 1956 from 1986.

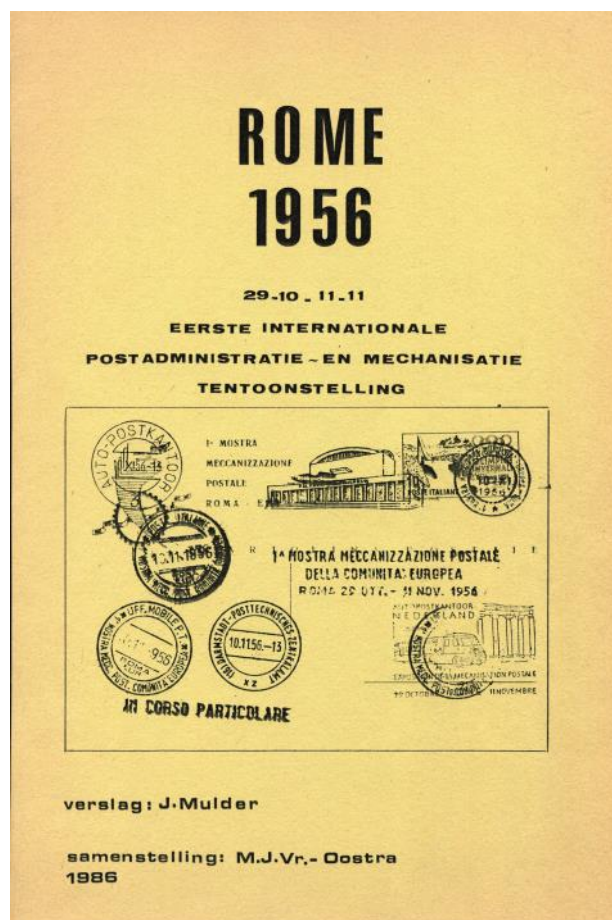




Figure 12: 'I Mostra Meccanizzazione Postale Roma - Eur' card, cancelled at the mobile post office on October 29, 1956 with the special flag 'Autopostkantoor Nederland Exposition de la Mécanisation Postale'.

Pitney Bowes' Mark II with optical detection

The Dutch PTT failed to participate, however. Instead, the American firm Pitney Bowes, licensee of Marchand-Andriessen, requested that the first prototype, stored in the Postmuseum, be transferred to the United States through the intermediary of Werkspoor NV. That did indeed happen and subsequently the machine was converted by Pitney Bowes in the USA and made suitable for optical stamp detection.

With this converted machine successful demonstrations were given in the United States and a number of copies of this model were produced by Pitney Bowes. The US Post Office ordered 25 machines.

The device was not only successful in America; the Dutch PTT regretted its inactivity and renewed its interest. When a Dutch PTT delegation saw the 25 new machines under construction in 1957/1958, a 26th copy was ordered on a trial basis. That machine came to the Netherlands in 1959. This Mark II machine with optical detection was tested in The Hague in 1959, which is discussed in detail below.

The original machine, converted in the United States for optical detection, was also brought back to the Netherlands and donated by the manufacturers to the Dutch Postmuseum in 1959 [10].

The history of the facer-cancelers, as described up to now, is purely of post-historic importance in the sense that there is still nothing to be obtained for the machine cancel collector. Only the test and trial stamp lovers can enjoy to their heart's content.

This changed significantly when the Mark-II machine with optical detection was demonstrated in The Hague in 1959 and was also tested with actual mail.

Use of the Mark II machine with postmark 's-Gravenhage

On March 13, 1959, during the Réunion Européenne des Postes et Telecommunication held in the Kurhaus in Scheveningen [11], demonstrations were given in the Dutch Postmuseum in The Hague (Figure 13). Various test stamps were used during these demonstrations (Figure 14-16) and they were also obliterated with a machine cancel.

The machine cancels from the Mark II machine are characterized by the small dashes on the left in the square postmark. These cancels are listed in the Van der Wart machine stamps catalogue, in section B, electrical machines, no. PE VIII.



Figure 13: Demonstration of the Mark II facing machine with optical detection, on March 13, 1959 in the Dutch Postal Museum in The Hague. The fourth person from the left is Frits van Marle, technical director of Marchand-Andriessen NV and designer of the first prototype of this machine. On the far left, with a black bow tie: Jean Joseph Martin Lambert Marchand, former director of Marchand-Andriessen NV. He died a few months later, on 24 May 1959 at the age of 80.

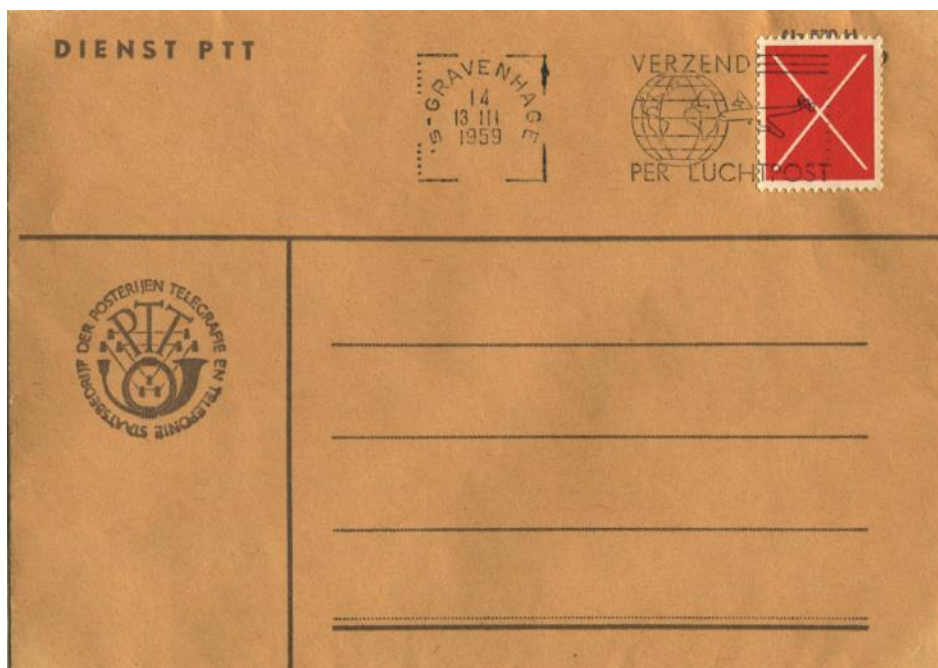


Figure 14: Blank PTT envelope with a red test postage stamp with the white St. Andrew's Cross, cancelled during the demonstration with the Mark II facer with optical detection in the Dutch Postal Museum in The Hague on March 13, 1959 at 14:00.



Figure 15 and 16: Blue test stamp with the white St. Andrew's Cross and the brown 'Shirley Temple' stamp were also used during the demonstration.

After the demonstration on March 13, the machine was also used for tests with daily mail at the Central Expedition Office located at the Rijswijkseweg in The Hague (Figure 17). Known dates of these tests are: April 14, 15, 17 and 22, May 15, October 30 and November 3, 1959. In all cases, the hour indication is placed in the top line of the postmark, day and month are on line two and the year is on the bottom line.



Figure 17: Postcard with the Mark II facer cancel, used in The Hague in April 1959.

It is noteworthy to mention that this facer-canceler was also used in 1960 to cancel mail without using the optical detection technique, namely on unfranked green civil service envelopes of the 'Rijkspostspaarbank' in Amsterdam (Figure 18).

Presumably, all civil servants received this green envelope containing a brochure from the Rijkspostspaarbank about the civil servants' savings scheme, the day after it was published in the evening newspapers of February 22, 1960. No date was used in the postmark, because the mailing had been prepared for distribution some time earlier (Figure 19).

This cancel without date is mentioned by Van der Wart. However, he mentions the year 1959, but that must be 1960. Use after February 1960 is not known to me.

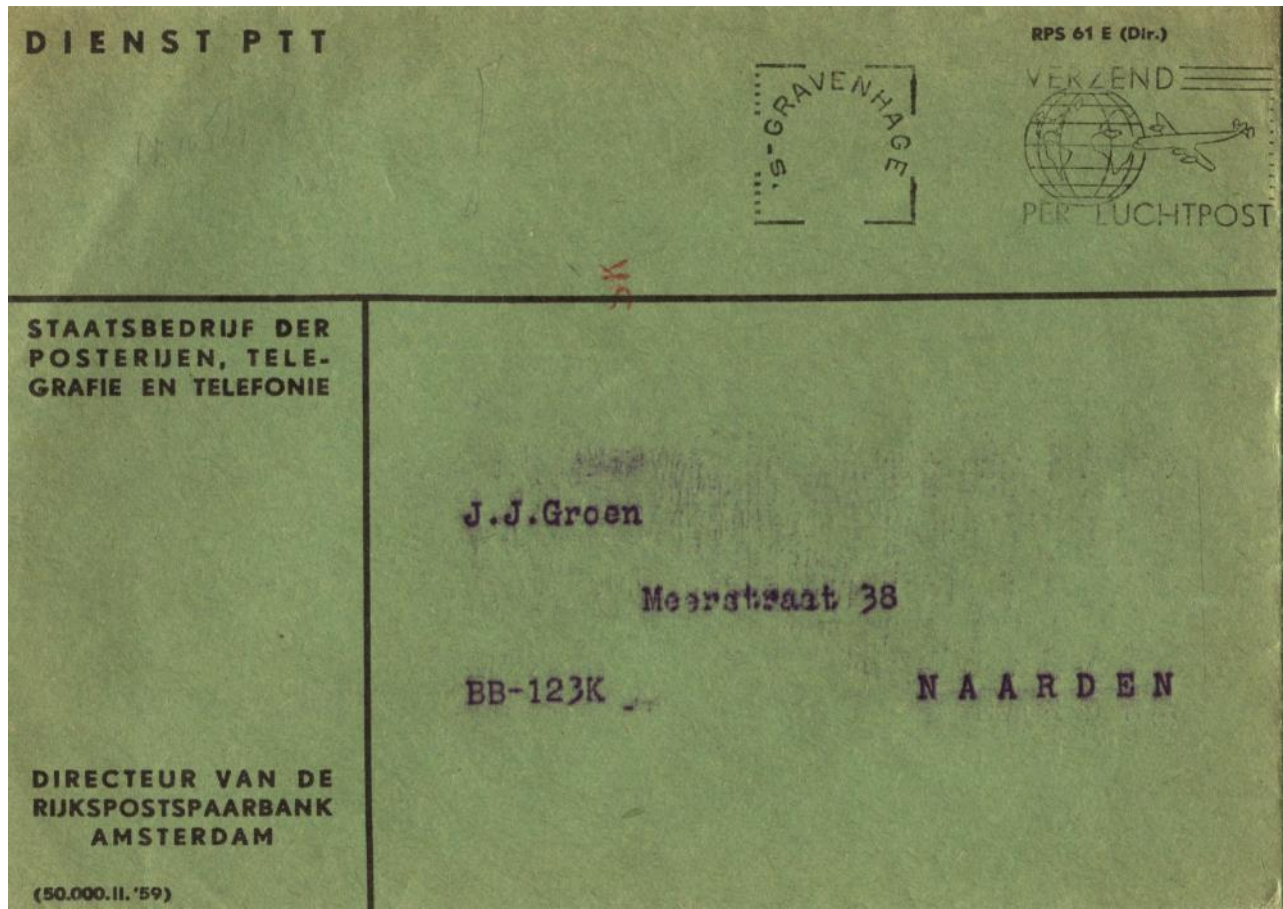


Figure 18: Facer cancel of the Mark II, undated, used for a mailing about the civil servant's savings scheme in February 1960.

Machinestempels
 Prompt na de bekendmaking der ambtenaren-spaarregeling in de avondbladen van 22 februari j.l. hebben vermoedelijk alle ambtenaren op 23 februari een folder van de Rijkspostspaarbank in een — te 's-Gravenhage afgestempelde — groene spaarbankenvelophe ontvangen, waarvan de verzending blijkbaar reeds enige tijd tevoren was voorbereid. Deze enveloppen waren n.l. wel machinaal gestempeld, maar in de stempels kwam geen datum voor. Wij danken de heer J. Danhof te Groningen voor de toezending van een enveloppe, gestempeld met de z.g. „facing-machine” (zie Mbl. juni 1959, pag. 180), geheel zonder datumvermelding, terwijl wij voorts zagen op een ander couvert een afdruk van een normale stempelmachine met stempelvlag „Vermeld op uw poststukken naam en adres afzender”, waarbij het datumstempel alleen de maand en het jaar: II 1960 bevatte. Zijn er bij de lezers wellicht nog andere afdrukken bekend?

Figure 19: Notice in the Dutch monthly magazine for Philately, March 1960, p. 72. It explains that all civil servants received a green envelope containing a brochure from the Rijkspostspaarbank about the civil servants' savings scheme, the day after it was published in the evening newspapers of February 22, 1960. No date was used in the postmark, because the mailing had been prepared for distribution some time earlier.

Notes

1. F.W. van der Wart, *Catalogus Machinestempels, Po & Po* 1991.
2. Parts of the text and pictures have been copied from: Jos M.A.G. Stroom, *De Proefnemingen met de Mark II opzetstempelmaschine*, in: *Postmerken '86*, Ned. Vereniging van Poststukken- en Poststempelverzamelaars, Assen 1986, pages 203-243.
3. More can be found about the role of Dipl. Ing. Frits van Marle in Part 3 of the Transorma-series, *Po & Po*, in preparation.
4. P. van Koevorden, *De post, de postzegel en de techniek*, in *Nederlands Maandblad voor Philatelie*, May 1952, pages 98-100.
5. W.G. van der Kooij, *De Rotterdamse plaatsnaamcode, als onderdeel van de postmechanisatie in Nederland*; Studiegroep voor Postmechanisatie, 1994, page 11.
6. Not laminated postage stamps with an identical image have been used for many years as experimental- and test-stamps and are known in various colors and formats.
7. This and subsequent paragraphs contain citations and information taken from the publication by W.G. van der Kooij, mentioned in remark 5.
8. J. Mulder, *ROME 1956, verslag van de Eerste Internationale Postadministratie- en Mechanisatie Tentoonstelling*, 29 oktober-11 november 1956. Edited by Mrs. M.J. Vrijaldenhoven-Oostra and published privately in 1986.
9. From: *De Nederlandse autopostkantoren 1939-1994, Aanvullingen*, Jos M.A.G. Stroom in: *De Postzak* nr. 195, *Po & Po* December 2002, page, 354.
10. Annual Report 1959 of the Dutch Postmuseum, pages 7-8.
11. From 2 to 7 March 1959 a meeting of the PTT administrations of the six member countries of the EEC was held at the Kurhaus in Scheveningen, and from 9 to 25 March a meeting of the Commission Consultative des Etudes Postales and of the Contact Committee of the IATA-UPU.

New Members (and a reminder to pay your dues)

We welcome four (!) new members. The first is Jeffery Francis from Kochi in the state of Kerala in India. His collection interests are the Netherlands Indies, including the Japanese occupation, field post, proofs, stationery, franking labels and the Red Cross. Jeffery is now the only ASNP member living in India!

The second member we welcome is William Taylor, from Tucson, Arizona. He focusses on the Netherlands and cancellations.

Next is Erik Th. Matzinger from Breda, The Netherlands, who collects Netherlands and its (former) territories, plate faults, cancellations, EO philately and ship's letters.

Last but not least is Todo Dwi Putranto from Tangerang (near Jakarta), Indonesia. Todo is a FIP juror and collects Netherlands Indies' airmail, postal stationery, cancellations and pre-stamp mail.

Welcome to all!

For those of you who have not yet paid their dues but wish to continue receiving a hardcopy of the magazine, please do so immediately, or I will be forced to convert your membership to an electronic one (or worse, purge you from the mailing list). Remember, only hardcopy memberships need to be paid for; electronic-only memberships are free!



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