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Magazine of the American Society for Netherlands Philately

Volume 45/2







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Dickinson, TX 77539-3400				
asnpmagazine@gmail.com	Dear Fellow Collectors,			
President				
HansPaul Hager 465 Potter Rd	I want to draw your atten	tion to page 45, regarding t	the special issue being	
North Kingstown, RI 02852	prepared by Alex Nuyten	on 150 years stamps of Cu	iraçao and Suriname.	
hphager@aol.com	I hope many of you will s	step up to the plate and con	tribute.	
Vice President		11111 / '	• 1 • •	
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Walnut Creek, CA 94595	group of authors to write	articles sharing a specific t	neme, let me know.	
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Jan Verster, Vancouver, Canada John Hornbeck, Washington D C	the Netherlands. But it ha	is resulted in more time to	work on my	
Benjamin Bump, Hampden, MA	collection and do long-de	layed chores around the ho	ouse. Yet, I hope there	
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The facer-cancelers of the Netherlands and the corresponding machine cancels (Part 2).

by Jos M.A.G. Stroom

The facer-canceler with optical detection in the District Post Office of Rotterdam, 1961 - 1966

Although the prospects for the Mark II of Pitney Bowes seemed very favorable, a new machine with an optical detection system was tested in Rotterdam from 1961 onwards. This was accompanied by a great deal of mystery, as evidenced by the screen behind which the machine was placed (Figure 20). The photo also shows a culling ma-

chine (in the background) of the same brand, with which too large and too thick mail items are separated from the rest, so that only machine-processable pieces remain.

The machine was built by Mix und Genest, a part of SEL (Standard-Elektrik Lorenz), with a canceling device made by Klüssendorf [12].

The optical detection system was very attractive from a financial point of view, since no additional costs had to be incurred in making the postage stamps suitable for this type of detection. Probably it was decided to purchase this machine to test the optical detection system once more with an European machine.

In 1996, I wrote an article about this machine in Ultra Violet, the magazine of the former Studiegroep voor Postmechanisatie, in which the various cancels are described and illustrated in detail [13]. Some knowledge is required to distinguish between these cancels and the ones of the type XV from the Flier canceler. A study of about 35 imprints yielded four variants in the postmark (Figure 21).



Figure 21: Part of figure 7 from the 1996 UV article [13a], with the Types I through IV postmarks (poles).



Figure 20: The facer-canceler machine of Mix und Genest (SEL) in Rotterdam, with the culler machine in the background, in March 1963. The screen on the left blocks prying eyes from seeing the machine.

Also, three different 'flags' (slogan cancels) were found (Figure 22). There may be two variants of flag 2 ('Minimum afmetingen') with very small differences.



Figure 22: On top examples of the three different slogan flags (1,2 and 3) that were used in the facer-canceler with optical detection from Mix & Genest. Older examples, with the same text, with postmarks Type XV from the manually-operated Flier cancelers (a,b,c and d), are shown in the bottom two rows [13b].

The imprints from the Mix und Genest machine are generally of significantly lesser quality than the Flier cancels, which is also clearly visible in Figure 22. Note that in all cases these are cancels with the town name Rotterdam CS.

Whether a cancel originates from the Flier machine or from the Mix & Genest can be determined in various ways. The less sharp print quality is often an indication. There are also (both in the town name and in the text of the flag) differences in the letters (for example, the O of Rotterdam is ovoid or more round) or in the fonts used. The date of the cancellation is of decisive importance. The relating slogan texts in the Flier machines no longer occur *after* 1960, the Mix & Genest cancels have been in use *from* 1961.

RMELD OI STUKKEN VO 2411113 6 POSTBUSHOUD 1961 1 TPOSTBUSNUMA Radio Holland N.Y. 56 2 Keisengracht. Junsterdam - C

Figure 23: Early letter, March 24, 1961, with a (still perfect) cancellation from the facer-canceler of Mix & Genest.

Incidentally, almost all imprints I know are from 1961 (Figure 23) and 1965. From 1964 and 1966 I only know one piece (Figure 24).



Figure 24: Cancellation of December 15, 1966, very worn.

As has also been reported by Van der Wart, cancellations without a year indication are known. Presumably these only occur on mailings (addressed parcels of advertising mail) from 1963 and 1964 (Figure 25).



Figure 25: Cancellation dated February 12 without year indication. The 5 cent franking was the rate for printed matter, from January 1 to July 12, 1964.

Optical detection problems

And yet... more problems with optical detection occurred than expected. Although less in the USA than in the Netherlands, because in the USA sender logos are normally placed at the top right corner of the mail items, while in the Netherlands they are often placed at the bottom left corner. And bottom left is the 'opposite' from top right, so logos - but also stickers and labels (Express, Registered, Airmail) - often competed with the stamp to be optically traced. This troublesome side effect had been insufficiently anticipated:

In the Netherlands, and also elsewhere in Europe, the use of auxiliary imprints on the postal items is more common. Many envelopes used by Dutch companies for their mail are true wonders of advertising technique. That would not be such a disaster in itself, if these auxiliary imprints were not placed at the bottom left corner of the mail item, while the stamp is at the top right position [13c].

By the way, this problem was known to the Dutch PTT for some time. Already in 1954 the PTT obtained a patent (patent 74343 dated March 4, 1954) on so-called 'facing stamps.' This name already indicates that these postage stamps were intended as an aid for automatic facing of the mail. The objections associated with contact electrical and optical detection were already known. The invention of the 'facing stamps' addressed these issues:

Use is made of a luminescent material, by which the photoelectric device responds to the luminescence radiation emitted by the postage stamp.

Certain substances, almost invisible to the eye, which have the property of lighting up under ultraviolet irradiation, were added to the postage stamps.

If the lighting disappears immediately after the ultraviolet irradiation is turned off, one speaks of 'fluorescence.' If a certain short after-glow remains, the phenomenon is called 'phosphorescence'. Both phenomena together are called 'luminescence.'

So luminescent stamps are originally a Dutch invention! However at that time, hardly any experimentation was conducted with this principle.

LUMINESCENCE DETECTION

In the meantime in America, Pitney Bowes had good experiences with luminescence detection. Their facing machines had a 'dual system,' that means, they were suitable for phosphorescence and / or fluorescence detection.

In 1960 Pitney Bowes, together with Werkspoor NV, made a number of farreaching proposals to the Dutch PTT in the report 'Stamp Tagging' (Figure 26).

> Figure 26: Front cover of the 'Stamp Tagging' report with recommendations by Pitney Bowes and Werkspoor NV to the Dutch PTT. The signature at the top right corner indicates that this copy was owned by Mr. Frits van Marle.



In that report, it was recommended to switch to luminescence detection; this means that the stamp (or on stationery: the stamp image or indicium) had to be provided with a luminescent ('luminous') substance, which could be detected in the machine when irradiated by ultra violet light. The report included a number of (Dutch and American) stamps that had been tagged with a transparent phosphorescent ink (McD 144-II). This coating contained Helecon No. 3336, the trade name of the UV-phosphorescent compound zinc sulfide (ZnS) with a grain size of 1 to 2 microns.



Figure 27: Top: Three stamps of 25 cents, blue, Queen Juliana (NVPH 623). Below: Photos of the postage stamps taken under UV lighting so that the tagging lights up. Left: the stamp on normal paper. Middle: a stamp with 'all-over tagging' from the Pitney Bowes report. Right: a stamp with two phosphorescent bars, also from that report. (Photos: Mrs. M.J. Vrijaldenhoven).

The report shows examples of two types of tagged stamps: the coating covers the entire surface, or one or two 'bars' of this ink are applied (Figure 27).

The Mark II facer-canceler, which was delivered to PTT with the optical detection system in 1959, was converted to luminescence detection in the Postal Laboratory in Leidschendam. During one trial with this machine, postcards were used with an 'allover tagging' applied by Pitney Bowes, similar to the one shown on fragments of a postcard (Figure 28a) and an airmail letter in the report.

These postcards were cancelled with the same flag cancel as used during the optical detection tests in The Hague and are dated 28 IV 1960, 3 pm (Figure 28b).

It was only in 1962 that a real-life test with a Mark II machine with luminescence detection was performed in Gouda.





Figure 28:

28 a (left) Photo of a fragment of a Dutch 8ct postcard under UV lightning. The stamp image has an all-over tagging of the Pitney Bowes phosphorescent zinc sulfide ink. 28 b (right): Postcard with all-over tagging, used in a trial on April 28, 1960. The inset below shows a detail of

the card under UV exposure. (Photos: Mrs. M.J. Vrijaldenhoven).

Real-life test with the Mark II facer-canceler in Gouda, 1962-1963

The choice of Gouda as a test location for the Mark II facer-canceler with luminescence detection has already been extensively documented in the jubilee book 'Postmerken '86' (see note 2 in the first part of this article in Netherlands Philately 45-1). In the recent jubilee book 'In de ban van UV licht, merktekens en codestreepjes', Mr. Rien de Jong pays attention to the special stamps and postcards with luminescence that were produced for this real-life test [14].

The three special stamps issued in 1962 and sold at the counters in the postal district of Gouda for the luminescence tests with the Mark-II, were printed on German Lumogen UV (fluorescent) paper, without watermark

(Figure 29). The three values are: 4c as a rate for printed matter, 8c for postcards and 12c as a rate for single letter postage (NVPH 774-776).

Not the fluorescence, but the lack of a watermark is the reason why these three stamps have got a main number in the Dutch NVPH stamp catalog. As will be seen later, the Juliana stamps on phosphorescent paper do not have a main number, but only the additional letter 'b', because both versions are printed on watermarked paper.

Initially, a larger series of nine values had been produced for the trial in Gouda; but in order not to impose high costs on philatelists (f. 1.70), six of them (6, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 50c) have been destroyed [15].

In addition to the three stamps, an 8 cent postcard was also issued (Geuzendam postcard 329, Figure 30).

Two variants of this card exist: with a fluorescent bar (Geuzendam 329a, glowing yellow) and with a phosphorescent bar (Geuzendam 329b, glowing pink). Copies of 329a are known with a fully or partially shifted bar; copies of the 'pink variant' exist with a double-printed bar.



Figure 30: Postcard of 8 cents with hand stamp Gouda 8, as a philatelic document with the three attached fluorescent stamps cancelled on the day of issue, August 27, 1962.

Of the 503,000 postcards delivered to the 'Controle Postwaarden PTT' (PTT Control bureau of Postal Emissions), approximately 100,000 cards were printed with the phosphorescent ink. As it is not known how many copies of each type were ultimately destroyed, the relationship between the two variants put into circulation cannot be properly established.

The discovery of 'first edition' cards - with a phosphorescent bar – occurred relatively late. The first report concerned a card with a hand stamp of January 8, 1963. Later, cards with the pink bar variant were found with the first-day machine cancel of November 8, 1962 from the Mark II facer-canceler (Figure 32).



Figure 29: The stamp series, issued on August 27, 1962 for the test with the Mark-II facer-canceler in Gouda. With the etching numbers (L/R 47, L/R 6 and L/R 26) and some cut marks.

In the philatelic literature there is mention of yellow (= fluor) and gray (= phosphor) bars. That naming is based on the 'color' of the bars at daylight.

Initially, a phosphorescent ink (McD 133-III) supplied by Pitney Bowes was used to apply the luminescent bar to the postcards. However, this ink differed from the McD-144-II ink used for the Pitney Bowes proofs. Problems occurred when printing the bar because the new ink did not adhere well. Part of this first edition was processed again in a second print run, resulting in a double print of the phosphor bar (Figure 31). Later it was decided to print

the bars with the fluorescent ink, which had already yielded satisfactory results in an earlier test phase.



Figure 31: Fragment of an unused postcard G 329b, the pink version, with the phosphorescent bar printed twice.

	BRIEFKAART
	BRIEFKAARE BRIEFKAARE SECOND Delley Leustonthi
ArZ	Bu Kag

Figure 32: The two postcards with a luminescent bar under UV lightning: Top: pink glowing (and after glowing) phosphorescent bar. Bottom: yellow glowing fluorescent bar. Both cards have a facer cancellation of November 8, 1962. The canceling at 5 pm on this first day of use was done at the request of the well-known philatelists Van Westendorp and Manuskowski .

Therefore, the Mark II facer-canceler came into operation not earlier than November 8, 1962, by which time the sale of the stamps and postcard in Gouda and surrounding municipalities - which, from a postal point of view, was a fairly closed area – had been well underway.

Figure 33 shows Ir. Van Marle and a colleague explaining the operation of the Mark II facer-canceler.

On this first day of use of the machine, mail was cancelled in three shifts, namely at 1 pm, 5 pm and 6 pm (Figure 34, 32 and 35, respectively).



Figure 33: Explanation of the operation of the Mark II facercanceler to interested spectators in Gouda in 1962. On the far left we see ir. Frits van Marle, the 'founder' of this Dutch facer initially equipped with a contact-electric detection system. In 1962, he was the technical director of Marchand-Andriessen.

Alen N. V. Teep fa traken 1/4 de Heas en van Beero afdeling Speer kanden. apeldoorn. DE V GOUDA-Tel. 4265

Figure 34: A 'real' letter (business post), cancelled on the first day of use at 1 p.m. In the postmark the day (8) is indicated on the first line, the hour and the month (13 and XI) on the second line, the year on the third line.



Figure 35: Fragment of a postcard dated November 8, 1962, cancelled during the third shift at 6 pm.

ember m. o'clock (5 pm), but due to the strange arrangement of the date lines, it looked as if the items were cancelled on November 17 at 8 am. However, since those items had already been received following the mail delivery on November 9, there can be no uncertainty about the meaning of the day and hour sequence. Later cancellations had a correct date setting (Figure 36). We then speak of postmark type 2.

The date lines in the Mark II postmark were not correctly set to November 8. The first known postal items were cancelled at 17

However, it would take until November 28 before the machine - now with postmark type 2 - was used again.

Postmark type 2 has a different date format: day and month are on the first line, year on line two and the hour indication on line three. The lines on the top, bottom and right side are also designed thinner.

These postmark variants are not mentioned in the Van der Wart catalog (Section PE VIII of Chapter B: Electric Machines). Moreover, only the year 1962 is mentioned, while canceling also took place on January 8 and 15, 1963.

In the period from November 28, 1962 to January 15, 1963, the Mark-II cancelled mail on 13 different days, in some cases at several hours. The last machine cancellation dates from January 15, 1963 at 6 pm (Figure 37).



Figure 37: Mark II facer cancellation on a fragment of the last day of use: January 15, 1963, 6 pm.



Figure 36: Cover of the 2nd weight class, 20-50 grams, rate 24 cents, cancelled in the Mark II facer on December 13, 1962. Postmark type 2.

The machine could also be used with the detection system turned off. There exist imprints on unstamped (service) mail, comparable with those of Figure 18 (see part 1 of this article in Netherlands Philately 45/1) during the optical detection period, and on postal items stamped with 'postage stamps' of plain (non-luminescent) paper.

All reports and accounts described the real-life test in Gouda as very successful. The fluorescent stamp paper was expected to be the fu-

ture, even though the cancellation was not always successful: mediocre or unclear imprints were common. Normally letters with such imprints are greatly undervalued by collectors, while I find them - from a postal historical perspective - particularly valuable (Figure 38a and b).

Despite these technical imperfections, it was expected that the fluorescent stamps and stationery would make it in the future.

The issuance of phosphorescent stamps

Starting early February 1967, postage stamps with the image of Queen Juliana (in profile) in the values of 12, 15, 20 and 45 cents (NVPH 618b, 619b, 621b and 628b) were sold in the postal districts of Rotterdam and The Hague. A phosphorescent coating (a 'tagging') was applied to these stamps, which is visible on the stamps as a glossy layer (Figure 39).

28.11 HH2 19 19 Notestand	IT XIL20 1962
E. Versluis	Centrale Dienst voor In- en Uitvoer
Kastanjesbraat 21	van Stolkweg 14
Riphen 'a Reyn.	GRAVENHAGE

Figure 38:

a (left): Cover of November 28, 1962, the first day of canceling with postmark type 2. The stamps had been insufficiently cancelled and were obliterated once again on arrival in Alphen a / d Rijn with the hand stamp 'POSTERIJEN' [16] b (right): After a bad cancellation in the Mark II facer, on December 11, 1962 the cover was cancelled again in a manually operated Universal canceling-machine in Gouda.

These stamps were intended for the large-scale experiment later that year - with a facer-canceler from the German company Standard- Elektrik Lorenz (SEL).

In contrast to the special stamps that were issued in 1962 for the Gouda experiment, the NVPH Special Catalog did not assign a main number to these phosphorescent Juliana stamps. Instead, a 'b' was added to the catalog number of the stamps issued in 1953 and 1954 on plain paper, because both variants were printed on paper with horizontal watermark rings.

The NVPH Special Catalog 2006-2011 mentions February 3, 1967 as the date of issue. The stamps were only sold in the postal districts of Rotterdam and The Hague. In other towns they were available at the philatelic counters. Since it was not an 'official new issue, it cannot be ruled out that the first sales day could differ locally. First-day envelopes are known with three different dates: 3, 6 and 7 February 1967 (Figure 40a, b, c and d).

A 15 cent postcard and a 45 cent airmail sheet were also issued, both with a phosphorescent bar to the left of the stamp image.



Figure 39: Press release of January 3, 1967 about the issue of phosphorescent stamps and the reason for this: the commissioning of a facer-canceler.

To prevent that the sale (from May 2, 1967) and use of Europa stamps on plain paper would disturb the test, these two stamps were also issued on phosphorescent paper and sold at the counters in the postal districts of Rotterdam and The Hague. These two Europe stamps do have their own main number (NVPH 884 and 885), because the phosphorescent values are printed on paper WITH a watermark, in contrast to the regular stamps which were printed on paper without a watermark (NVPH 882 and 883).



Figure 40:

A: First Day Cover (W9), The Hague, February 3, 1967. B: First Day Cover, Amsterdam-Overtoom, February 3, 1967. C: First Day Cover, The Hague, February 6, 1967. D: Private First Day Cover, Rotterdam, February 7, 1967.

The attentive reader will have noticed that - despite the positive results reported with the fluorescent stamps at Gouda – the choice was still made for stamps on phosphorescent paper and ditto 'bars' on the mentioned postal stationery.

A possible explanation can be found in a note from the Dr. Neher Laboratory issued on March 31, 1965, mentioning an operational test to be started at the end of 1965 (!) using a SEL facer-canceler, configured for phosphorescence detection.

The SEL facer-canceler

This facer-canceler, type F-8400 / III, had four sensors (detectors) with photoelectric cells and four Klüssendorf cancel heads.

There was an automatic supply of letters from the culler, which removed too large and too thick pieces from the mail flow. If no stamp was found after passing the first two detectors (left and right) - because the stamp was located at the top of the mail piece - such a letter was automatically rotated 180 degrees in the machine and sent along a second series of detectors and stamp heads (Figures 41 and 42).



Figure 41: The SEL facer-canceler in Rotterdam, with the supply stacker in front.

In the strict sense of the word, the SEL was the *first* 'full-fledged' facer-canceler in the Netherlands. The device came into use on November 8, 1967 (Figure 43).

1	BRIEFKAART
	81 ISC NEDERLAND
AFZ	JH & Westerderp
	Moorchecht CHHJ



Figure 42: The SEL facer-canceler machine seen from the other side.

Figure 43: Cancellation of November 8, 1967, the first day the SEL machine was in operation, on a postcard of 15 cents with a phosphorescent bar to the left of the stamp image. The card was cancelled at the request of a collector.

As mentioned before, the SEL machine had a Klüssendorf cancel head (Van der Wart Type XVI). A type which had already been in use from the end of 1964 in the manually-operated Klüssendorf canceling machines (Figure 44).



Figure 44: Service letter with a Klüssendorf cancellation from Enschede of December 1964. The postmark, with month indication '12' in Arabic figures, is Type XVIB.

Manually-operated Klüssendorf canceling machines had been put into operation in various towns in the Netherlands between 1964 and 1967. Initially all with postmark type XVIB (Arabic month characters), but for the first time postmarks also appeared with the month displayed in Roman characters (Type XVIA) by the end of 1967.

The SEL machine in Rotterdam had the postmark type Type XVIB (Figure 45). So it is not surprising that Van der Wart did not give the Rotterdam SEL postmark from 1967 its own type number, since it is indistinguishable from the imprints of the manually-operated Klüssendorf canceling machines.

Figure 46 shows test mail with several SEL cancellations on a piece of blank phosphorescent stamp paper.



Figure 45: Airmail letter to Canada, franked with two 45 cent Europe stamps with watermark on phosphorescent paper, cancelled on February 6, 1968 in the SEL facer-canceler in Rotterdam with postmark type XVIB.

Applying a piece of blank phosphorescent stamp paper could 'fool' the machine. Such a piece of paper from a stamp booklet with phosphorescent stamps has been attached to the letter shown in Figure 47, while the letter was also correctly franked (letter rate of 25 cents) with postage stamps on plain paper. The stamps on this letter were obviously not cancelled by the SEL, while the piece of phosphorescent paper was struck twice by the Klüssendorf cancel.

Figure 46: Test envelope, franked with a dummy postage stamp 'Postman', from a demonstration during the Firato exhibition in Rotterdam in September 1968. This cover has been processed several times by the SEL machine. A sheet of blank phosphorescent paper was pasted over the dummy stamp to which the machine responded. A black-matrix place name code has also been applied, with which experiments were carried out in Rotterdam between 1962 and 1965. This coding system subsequently remained in use until 1981.

Poststmaat 125

MAACSLUIS

In the facer-canceler, giro envelopes initially ended up in the 'zero stacker', because they had no phosphorescent postage stamps or bars. They had to be faced and sorted manually.



Figure 47: Stamps on plain paper that have not been cancelled, and a cancelled blank phosphorescent fragment from a booklet, jokingly invented by a member of the Ultraviolet Study Group in 1969.



Figure 48: Giro envelope with a SEL cancellation from July 1976. Giro envelopes had two phosphorescent bars. The destination office was encoded by varying the distance between the two bars. The two phosphorescent bars are barely visible to the naked eye.

Around 1972 it was decided to provide the giro covers with a detection mark in the form of two phosphorescent bars. The distance between the two bars for the giro office Arnhem was about 70 mm and for The Hague about 105 mm (Figure 48).

The Dr. Neher laboratory developed a special detection unit that recognized the giro envelopes by measuring the distance between the two bars. After passing the canceling mechanism (no cancellation was applied!), they ended up in separate giro stackers. Picture postcards were also recognized by measuring the difference in reflection between the front and the back. These too were transported to their own stacker (Figure 49). By the way, giro enve-



Figure 49: Final setup of the SEL facer-canceler with the three attached stackers: two for giro envelopes (Arnhem and 's-Gravenhage) and one for picture postcards.

dorf in 1986.

lopes destined for Amsterdam came into circulation after the SEL experiment had been completed, thus a fourth stacker was not required.

The SEL facer-canceler at the Expedition Department of the Rotterdam District Post Office was replaced in March 1978 by two machines of the Japanese brand Toshiba (with postmark type XVII), more about these machines later. The SEL facer-canceler was moved to another floor and used for the local mail [17].

Notes

 Van der Wart calls this canceling machine a 'Klüssendorf machine' (in: Sect ion B, Electrical machines, no. PE IX). This brand name could be related to the canceling device, but the machine it self was from Mix & Genest, part of SEL (Standard-Electric Lorenz), as is obvious from the correspondence with Klüssen-

 Jos M.A.G. Stroom, De stempelafdrukken van de Rotterdamse Opzetstempelmachine voor optische detectie (1961-1965) in: Ultra Violet nr. 114, Februari 1996, pages NL/M 299 to 308. After publication, imprints from 1966 have also been found. 13a. ibid. page 307, Fig. 7.

- 13b. ibid. page 303, Fig. 5.
- 13c. Quotation from: Automatiseringsproblemen der Posterijen, Werkspoor Courant, 1963, page 212.
- 14. Rien de Jong, Luminescentiekleuren bij postmechanisatie, in: Jubilee book 'In de ban van UV-licht, merktekens en codestreepjes', Po & Po 2019, pp 175-195.
- 15. Of all nine values, only one sheet has been preserved, see: Jos M.A.G. Stroom, 'Nooit uitgegeven fluores cerende postzegels 'herontdekt' (Never issued fluorescent stamps 'rediscoverd'), in: Novioposta, No. 21, October 1988, pp. 24-33. (Also mentioned in: 'Cees Janssen als schatgraver,' in: Liber Amicorum, Nederl andse Academie voor Philatelie, 2017, pp. 58-59.)
- 16. Service Order No 303 of July 3, 1940 stipulates that the hand stamp 'Posterijen' must be used to devalue postage stamps on incoming mail that has not been cancelled or cancelled insufficiently. The hand stamp on the letter of figure 38a is therefore placed on arrival in Alphen aan de Rijn.
- 17. Source: M.J. Vrijaldenhoven, Postmechanisatie Nederland, in: Jubilee issue '75 jaar Nederlandse Bond van Filatelisten Verenigingen', October 1983, page 144.

The A, B and C imprints of Rotterdam.

by Ben H. Jansen

[This article has appeared, in shortened form, in De Postzak, 226:58-59, 2020.]

Michael Brekelmans writes in his post-history study [1, page 245] that "according to the postmark books of the Rijksmunt (now the Royal Dutch Mint) three markers with the characters A, B, and C in an eight-cornered frame were delivered to the Central Office of the postal service on June 1, 1926. The usage of the A and C markers is known on mail arriving in Hoek van Holland from England" (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Photograph of the postmark book of the Mint, with impressions of the A, B and C markers that were delivered to the Central Office on June 1, 1926 (Collection 'De Nederlandse Bank')..

The A and C markers are known to have been used by the Rotterdam post office from 1927 to at least 1936. The 'Nederlandsch Maandblad voor Philately' of December 1930 contains an article by E.J. Lunenberg showing a cover mailed from London to Rotterdam on May 16, 1930 which has a large A on front. When Lunenberg asked the Department of Arrival of the post office Rotterdam how the marker was used, they responded that the A and C markers can occur only on letters or postcards from England and they are used only in Rotterdam. Because there were frequent complaints about the delayed arrival of English mail, all pieces received in the morning via Harwich-Hoek van Holland were marked with the A, and those arriving in the evening via Harwich-Vlissingen with the C marker. In this way, the recipient of the mail was able to determine if the mail was delayed or not.

The intended purpose of the B stamp remains unknown. While it shows a great deal of similarity with the B stamp delivered to the post office 's-Gravenhage in 1927, it is a bit different as can be seen from Figure 2.



1931

's-Gravenhage (left) and the one shown in the imprint book (right).

The 's-Gravenhage B stamp was used on express mail, but imprints of the Rotterdam B on express mail are not known according to Brekelmans [1].

According to Brekelmans [1], the only known imprint of the Rotterdam B stamp is on a non-deliverable postcard mailed from Slikkerveer to Rotterdam in 1951 (Figure 3), no less than 25 years after the stamp was issued!



Figure 3: Picture postcard from Slikkerveer to Rotterdam mailed on February 21, 1951. It is marked 'STREETNAME IN // ROTTERDAM UNKNOWN' and 'BACK SENDER' (in frame) plus the B imprint (shown in [1], with permission).

To my surprise, I discovered a cover in my collection with an eight-cornered framed B, and I e-mailed a scan to Michael, who confirmed that it is a Rotterdam B imprint.

Figure 4 shows the front of the cover, which is service mail originating from the Commonwealth of Australia, Postmaster-General's Department, Dead Letter Office, Sydney, N.S.W. The red circular postmark (there is another one on the back, see Figure 5) is badly worn out but has the text 'G.O.P. SYDNEY N.S.W. AUST.' The one on the back appears to have the letter 'DLO' as well (see Figure 5). Unfortunately, the date is unreadable, but the purple mark on the cover's back indicates that the cover was processed by the Dept. Delivery Letter Post. According to Goldhoorn [2] this particular mark was in use not earlier than from March 2, 1953 or later than 1955.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE RETURNED LETTER The enclosed letter, not having been delivered for the reason assigned thereon, is now returned to the Sender. To facilitate the return of undelivered letters, withou their being opened, business people and others concerned their being opened, business people and others concludie endorse the covers of all correspondence py them with a special request for its return in vent of its remaining undelivered at the expiration pecified period, which must not be less than seven a each case the name and full address of the should be appended to the request. an Boom 19 kg Wartenal COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, DEAD LETTER OFFICE, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

Figure 4: Front of the cover from the 'Dead Letter Office' in Sydney, New South Wales, Australië, with an imprint of the B marker, scratched through 'Retour' and hand-written 'Zie Weesp'.



Figure 5: Back of cover (cropped) shown in Figure 4, with the marker of the 'Bureel Rebuten' from 's-Graven-hage.

There are no markings that explain the letter's route, but the mail likely traveled by ship from Australia to Rotterdam. Upon arrival in Rotterdam the mail sorter noticed that the town name was missing. Possibly, the B mark was applied then to indicate that additional handling was required. Subsequently, the bilingual black-framed 'onvolledig adres/adresse insuffisante' (incomplete address) mark, plus the large 'Retour' mark were applied. However, at some point in time a post office worker must have observed that the mail concerned a letter originally from The Netherlands, but returned due to undeliverability. Therefore it would not be helpful to mail the letter back to Australia. Instead, the 'Retour' imprint was scratched through and the letter was forwarded to the 'Bureel Rebuten' (office of undeliverable mail) in 's-Gravenhage instead to find out in which town the 'Wartenalaan' was located. The department found a Wartenalaan in Weesp, and the town name was written with red ink on the front of the cover, preceded by 'See'. Small advertisements appearing in 1953 and 1954 in the Dutch newspaper 'De Telegraaf' confirm that the addressee J(an) Boom lived at that address indeed (Figure 6).

COURANTEN-ARCHIEF vanaf Wie helpt langdurig ZIEKE Ī 1939 tot heden / 150 -; ± 300 aan verrekijker of toneelkijker Sat. Ev. Post en Life v. / 50 ---I 1 ev. kl. vergoeding. J. Boom. Wartenalaan 19 U Boom, Wartenalaan 19. Weesp. Weesp. Ċ Cm18-32871 Cm18

Figure 6: Advertisements in the newspaper 'De Telegraaf' of March 3, 1953 (left) and April 27, 1954 (right).

Just as with the piece described by Brekelmans, my cover has addressing issues too. In case of the Slikkerveer cover, 'streetname in Rotterdam unknown' and 'back to sender' markings were applied, while the cover shown here, 'incomplete address' and 'Retour' markings were added. Therefore, it may be possible that the B imprint was used to indicate that additional processing was needed. It is unlikely that the B mark signified forwarding to the Rebuts Office, as the Slikkerveer card was not forwarded to Rebuts but returned to the sender directly. In my opinion, the more likely hypothesis is that the B was used to indicate that the processing at the destination post office was to be considered complete, in other words, that is could be 'besteld' (delivered), which also starts with a B, even if that meant that the piece had to be forwarded to the Rebuts Office or returned to sender.

Comparing the B impressions in Figures 3 and 4 with the pristine impression shown in Figure 1 (see Figure 7), it becomes clear that the left-bottom part of the marker has sustained considerable wear. This suggests that the mark was used relatively frequently since it was delivered by the 'Rijksmunt.' Whether that usage was primarily in the 1950s remains an unresolved matter.



Figure 7: The B mark used in Rotterdam. Left, as shown in the 'Rijksmunt' book, and as used on the Slikkerveer card (center) and on the Australian cover (right).

Sources

- [1] M. Brekelmans, Een bijzonder stempel met letters en cijfers. Posthistorische Studies 33, Po&Po 2017.
- [2] L. Goldhoorn, De onbestelbare brief. Posthistorische Studies 19, Po&Po 1998.
- [3] delpher.nl

Balikpapan to Bandjermasin via Tarakan; a delayed flight.

by Hans Kremer

When I saw the Dutch East Indies airmail cover shown in Figure 1 on Ebay, there were two things that caught my eye. First, it had a total of nine(!) circular markers on it and second, there was a text "FRANKEERZEGELS GELDIG/Ingevolge machtiging H.B. P.T.T." in a rectangular box.

Balikna · Baudilruna LUCHTPOS PER PAR FRANKEERZEGELS GELDI lagevolge machtiging H.B. P assin Willende Twygerlaan 38 Carlem Figure 1: Front and back of Dutch East Indies airmail cover. 1 31.4-51

Five of the markers have dates in them. In chronological order they are:

Balikpapan12.11.3615 (2x)Tarakan-9.1.37.4-5NTarakan11.1.37.3-4VBandjermasin11.1.37.11

From this we can conclude that the letter went from Balikpapan, north to Tarakan (see map of Figure 2) and from there south to Bandjermasin. But why did it take close to two months to get from Balikpapan to Tarakan?



Figure 2: Borneo map.

A Dutch newspaper of November 12, 1936 stated that the connection by air from Batavia to Balikpapan most likely would not be extended to Tarakan during that year. Letters to be flown on this openings flight to Tarakan would be held back until the extension would be completed.

And indeed it was not until January 9, 1937 that a short note in the *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad* stated that that morning at 9.17 a Douglas airplane had left Soerabaija on its way to Bandjermasin, Balik-Papan and Tarakan. The flight carried 2216 letters, 107 postal cards and 245 other pieces of mail. The mail arrived at the Tarakan post office between 4 and 5 the same afternoon (January 9, 1937).

Due to a shortage of personnel in Tarakan it took two days to handle all the mail before it went back on January 11, 1937 on its way to Bandjermasin and from there via Soerabaja to Batavia.

In Bandjermasin, Balikpapan, Tarakan and Soerabaja violet circular handmarkers "1e Postvlucht / Balikpapan – Tarakan" were applied

(Figure 3).

On November 11, 1936 when the letter shown here was first put into the mail stream, the correct postal rate was 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent for the regular inland D.E.I rate plus a 10 cent airmail surcharge. A 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent 'Water Buffalo' stamp and an airmail stamp of 20 cent were attached, totaling the required 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent.

Everything looks fine here until we find out that the 20 cent airmail stamp was demonetized on December 31, 1936. This would mean that on January 9, 1937 postage due should have been charged.



Figure 3: First-flight handstamp.

The Dutch East Indies postal authorities felt that that wouldn't be right, so they had a special marker (Figure 4) made up with the text:

"FRANKEERZEGELS GELDIG/Ingevolge machtiging H.B. P.T.T." "STAMPS ARE VALID / According to H.B.P.T.T authorization".

H.B.P.T.T stands for Hoofd Bureau P.T.T (P.T.T Main Office).

FRANKEERZEGELS GELDIG Ingevolge machtiging H.B.P.T.T.

Figure 4: Special purpose handstamp.

On December 1, 1936 a set of five stamps was issued in the D.E.I to benefit the Salvation Army. On the occasion of the Inaugural flight from Batavia to Tarakan a number of commemorative postal cards with these stamps on it were sold to also benefit the Salvation Army. One such card is shown in Figure 5.

References

Nederlandsch Maandblad voor Philatelie, 15e Jaargang # 12, December 1936, page 238 Nederlandsch Maandblad voor Philatelie, 16e Jaargang # 1, January 1937, page 30



Figure 5: Commemorative postcard on the occasion of the inaugural flight Batavia-Tarakan.

ASNP Donation to the Western Philatelic Library.

Early August, the ASNP has made a donation, on the members' behalf, in the amount of \$500 to the Western Philatelic Library The donation is to be used for their operating fund.

As you may know, the Western Philatelic Library operates the finest philatelic library on the West Coast. Over the years many philatelic clubs and societies have donated their libraries to the WPL. The ASNP some years ago also decided to place our library in trust with the WPL. They have done a great service to us, by keeping our material accessible to our members and by making mail and in person loans of our holdings available to our members.

The ASNP cash balance at this point amounts to \$12000. So even though \$500 is a substantial amount of money, it only amounts to about 4% of our capital. The donation's size was approved by the Board of Governors.

Call for Papers: 150 years stamps of Curaçao and Suriname.

In 2023 it will be 150 years since the first postage stamps were issued in Curaçao and Suriname.

To commemorate these events the ASNP intends to issue a special themed edition of Netherlands Philately in May 2023. You may recall, we successfully did so in 2014 with the Netherlands East Indies. In fact, we ended up with *two* such issues!

Just like with the regular magazines, the special issue cannot be produced without the help of our members. The 2014 Netherlands East Indies special issue included articles by members who had not written before, and some have been writing ever since. Let us see if we can repeat that this time.



I have agreed to be the Guest Editor for the special issue (or more if warranted by the number of article submissions). You can reach me by e-mail on stampculture@gmail.com and I will gladly answer all your questions and assist with writing if needed.

Articles should submitted no later than January 31, 2023. Please submit your text in MS Word, and indicate where each illustration belongs. Submit illustrations as full color scans (at 300 dpi or better). Please indicate in the subject line if the article deals with Curaçao or Suriname 150th anniversary. Use separate e-mails if you submit more than article.

Topics include Curaçao (till 1949), Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao (from 2010), Aruba, Sint Maarten, Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire-Saba-St. Eustatius), Suriname (Colony period till 1975), and Republic of Suriname (from 1975 onwards).

It would be helpful for planning purposes if you dropped me a short note indicating your intent to submit and article, its topic, and anticipated length (pages).

I would like to see as many members contributing to the special issue as possible.

Best wishes,

Alex Nuijten

[Note from the Editor: I really appreciate the initiative displayed by Alex, and I would encourage all of you with collecting interests in Curaçao and Suriname to contribute. If you need help, let me know; I am available.]

Recent Issues

Bicycle stamps

August 17, 2020

The sheet with 6 stamps shows fragments of six bicycle parts depicted at actual size. The parts are a reflector, bicycle frame, hand bar, bicycle bell, tire, and inner tube. The designa is by Studio Sander Plug from Amsterdam.





Kaleidoscope September 14, 2020

The sheet with 6 stamps for international mail has been filled completely with colorful, symmetric patterns as can be viewed through a kaleidoscope. The sheet has been designed by Hansje van Halum, from Amsterdam, winner of the Dutch Design Award for Communication.

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



Experience Nature—Forest and Heather Birds September 14, 2020

The sheet of ten stamps depicts birds that are in great trouble. Most of the birds shown are on the Red List of Dutch breeding birds or on the Red List of birds migrating/wintering in the Netherlands.



Children's Welfare Stamps October 5, 2020

The sheet with four normal-sized stamps and one large format stamp celebrate the 65th anniversary (which used to be the retirement age) of 'Nijntje.' Nijntje is short for 'konijntje' (small rabbit), a character designed by Dick Bruno, and is depicted on the large stamp. The smaller stamps show her guests.

Netherlands Philately, Vol. 45, No. 2

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Membership in the <u>American Society for Netherlands Philately</u> (ASNP), affiliate # 60 of the American Philately Society, will give you the following benefits: An illustrated **MAGAZINE** (containing philatelic articles as well as news items) published six times a year and access to the ASNP LIBRARY through borrowing privileges.

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