

Dated Journal

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Netherlands Philately

Magazine of the American Society for Netherlands Philately

Volume 46/6



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NETHERLANDS PHILATELY

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Editor's Message

July, 2022

Dear Fellow Collectors,

As you will read later in this issue of Netherlands Philately, my wife and I visited England during the beginning of June.

While there, I received the news that Deo van Wijk, a long-term member of our Society, had passed away on 22 February 2022. Deo was a serious collector of the Netherlands and Colonies, with special emphasis on the first and third issues of the Netherlands and Curaçao. The picture shows Deo pointing out rarities of the Dutch Antilles he displayed at the Royal Philatelic Society in London in March of last year.



When making this issue printer-ready, more sad news arrived: John Hardjasudarma, winner of the Johannes de Kruyf Award in 2006, passed away on June 15. He had a vast collection of Dutch Indies and Indonesia postal history, most of which was auctioned in 2016.

Ben

Table of Contents

Editor's Message	121	Philately in the UK	133
Anglo-Boer War Prisoners		Membership Renewal	134
of War in Ceylon	122	On Board of the van Galen	135
Nippon Electric Company's		Censored Postcard Sent	
Culler-Facer-Canceler		October 1915	141
type NS-10	126	Recent Issues	143
GASS-Sacramento	132		

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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Anglo-Boer War Prisoners of War in Ceylon.

by Hans Kremer

When I came across the Dutch cover sent to a P.O.W in Ceylon in 1902 (Figure 1) I was curious about the history behind it. I knew that Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) was a Dutch colony (until being taken over by the British in 1796) so that also piqued my interest.

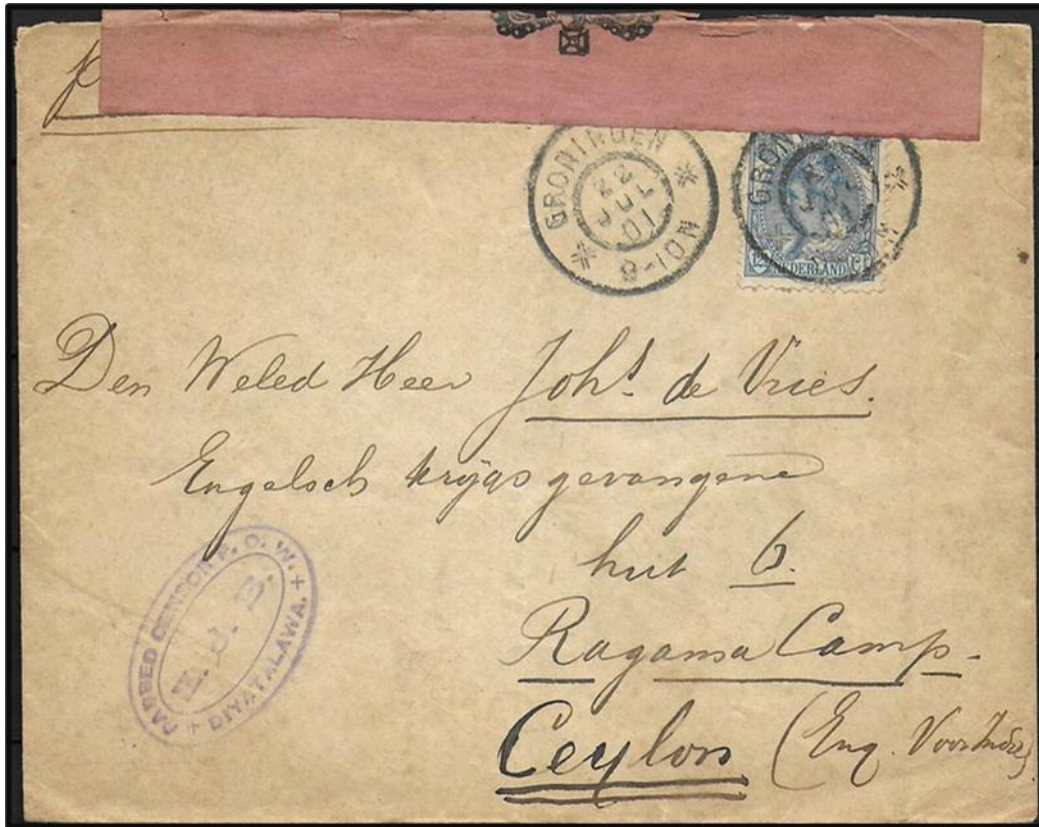


Figure 1: Letter sent July 22, 1901 from the Netherlands to the Ragama Camp in Ceylon, censored in Diyatalawa.

The letter, dated July 22, 1901 was addressed to:

*Den Weled Heer Johs. De Vries
Engelsch krijgsgevangene
hut 6
Ragama Camp
Ceylon (Eng. Voor Indie)*

The text “Engelsch krijgsgevangene” (English Prisoner of War) led me to the Anglo-Boer War.

After the First Boer War (1880-1881), tensions between the Boers (the descendants of the original Dutch settlers of southern Africa) and British persisted. When gold was found in 1885, it attracted many immigrants. Among these so-called uitlanders (foreigners) were many Anglophones and Britons. In the years 1895-1899 various incidents occurred between Boers and uitlanders. Furthermore, the British demanded the right to vote for the uitlanders who had settled in Transvaal.

On September 8, 1899, the United Kingdom dispatched a force of 10,000 soldiers to Natal, followed by a larger force of 47,000 a few weeks later. The Boers feared that they would become a minority in their own state of Transvaal. The Boers then issued an ultimatum to the British, who did not respond. When the ultimatum expired on October 12, 1899, the Boers chose to take up arms against the British. The Second Boer War, commonly called the Anglo-Boer War, had started.

The Boers launched successful attacks against British outposts in the opening stages of the war before being pushed back by imperial reinforcements. Though the British swiftly occupied the Boer republics, numerous Boers refused to accept defeat and engaged in guerrilla warfare.

While no other government actively supported the Boer cause, individuals from several countries volunteered and formed Foreign Volunteer Units. These primarily came from Europe, particularly the Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden-Norway.

The first sizeable batch of Boer prisoners of war taken by the British consisted of those captured at the Battle of Elandslaagte on 21 October 1899. At first, many were put on ships, but as numbers grew, the British decided they did not want them kept locally. The capture of 400 POWs in February 1900 made the British realize they could not accommodate all POWs in South Africa. They feared that they could be freed by sympathetic locals. Moreover, they already had trouble supplying their own troops in South Africa, and did not want the added burden of sending supplies for the POWs. Britain therefore chose to send many POWs overseas.

The first overseas (off African mainland) camps were opened in Saint Helena, which ultimately received about 5,000 POWs. After running out of room at St. Helena, the Boers were interned in Ceylon. The first arrived there on August 9, 1900 and subsequently others followed until 5,089 prisoners had landed with the last on June 1, 1901. A large camp was set up at the hill station at Diyatalawa.

The Diyatalawa Camp was ringed by the deep trench and barbed wires, and came to be called Boer Town. It was divided into two settlements. The location was one of the healthiest in the island - about 4,000 ft above sea level, with rolling hills and veldts such as might remind the Boers of their homeland.

The Diyatalawa records show that Joh(annes) de Vries (age 26) had been captured at Sandriver on May 5, 1901 and that he came from Boom Street, Pretoria. The letter to Mr. de Vries received a censor cachet (Figure 2):

Passed Censor P.O.W

Diyatalawa

E.J.B (E.J. Baumann's censormark).

Dissidents and 'irreconcilables' who would not sign the oath of allegiance to the British Crown were either directly sent to or transferred to (which must have been the case with Joh. De Vries) the Ragama Camp which received its first P.O.Ws on January 8, 1901. Additional camps for prisoners on parole were opened at Urugasmanhandiya on September 11, 1901 and at Hambantota on September 19, 1901.

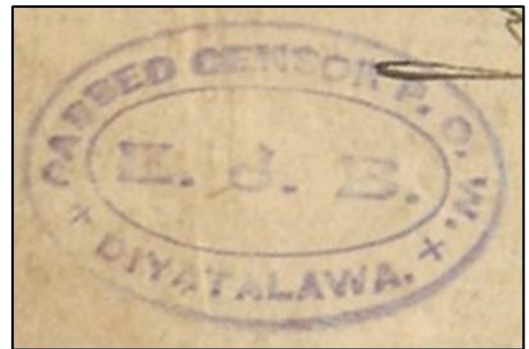


Figure 2: Censor cachet.

I found another Dutch Ragama cover, this one sent to "A van Haaften" (Figure 3).

According to the record Albert van Haaften (33) came from the town of Wadenoyen in the Netherlands, and was captured on June 21, 1900.



Figure 3: Letter sent from the Netherlands in 1902 to the Ragama Camp and forwarded to the Hambantota Camp on Ceylon.

On the 31st of May, 1902, terms of peace were finally signed at Pretoria. One month later general decisions regarding the disposal of the prisoners-of-war were duly announced: Burghers of the late South African Republic and the late Orange Free State were permitted to proceed to South Africa immediately at their own expense, or to await repatriation as soon as arrangements could be made for their transportation. Foreign prisoners-of-war, except those able to produce evidence that they were nationalized Burghers, were not allowed to return to South Africa. They were permitted instead to leave at once at their own expense if they wished to do so, or await repatriation by the Consuls of their respective Governments.

The Dutch consul in Colombo (Ceylon) took steps to restore the freedom of the Dutch prisoners of war as soon as possible. There were, however, several complications, not least of which was the provision that the prisoners of war should be released immediately only if they were able to return to their country at their own expense. The Dutch Government, contacted the shipping companies 'Nederland' and 'Rotterdamsche Lloyd', who declared their willingness to transport the prisoners to the Netherlands free of charge.

But there was a problem: it was the busiest part of the passenger traffic season, and most of the ships could not accommodate those extra people.

A solution was found by having the prisoners of war to be collected in Ceylon by the 'Salak' (Figure 4) of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd. It was on its way from Rotterdam to Batavia. The boat would then meet the 'Gedé' (Figure 5) of the same company in Padang (West Sumatra). The 'Gedé' would already be on its way from Batavia to Rotterdam.

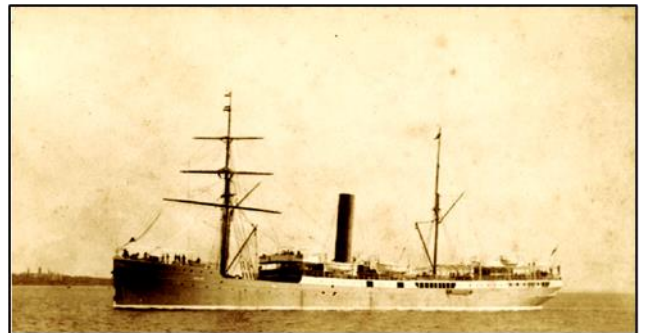


Figure 4: S.S. Salak.

The transfer in Padang took place on August 2, 1902. The 'Gedé' arrived in Rotterdam on September 4, 1902 where it was met by an enthusiastic welcoming committee. Mr. van Haaften had disembarked in Marseille, probably to get faster to the Netherlands by taking the train, this at his own expense most likely.

Figure 6 presents a card in memory of the return to the Netherlands on the 'Gedé', signed by both Mr. van Haaften and de Vries.

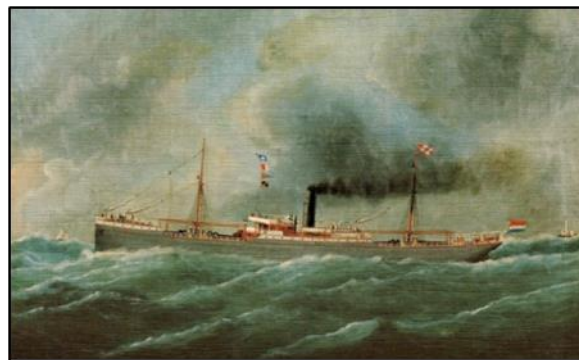


Figure 5: S.S. Gedé.

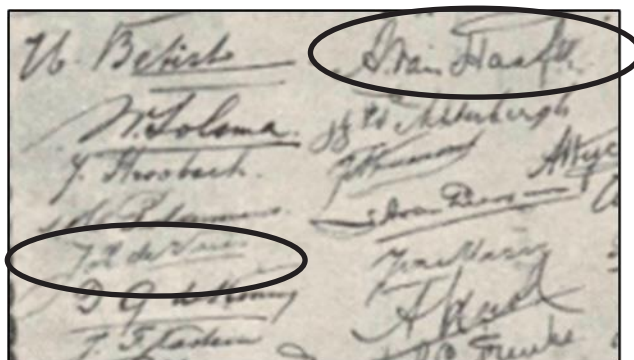


Figure 6: Left: Card memorizing the return voyage to the Netherlands on the 'Gedé' carrying the signatures of van Haaften and de Vries (encircled at right).

References

- Broehler, R. L. The Boer Prisoner-Of-War Ceylon (1900-1902), Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon, Vol. XXXVI, No.3, January 1947.
 Delpher.nl, Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad, September 5, 1902.
 Studiegroep ZWP.

Nippon Electric Company's Culler-Facer-Canceler type NS-10, Part 2.

by Eddie IJspeerd

Multiple NEC NS-10 CFCs have been installed in each Sorting Center.

Initially it was impossible to recognize from the machine print which CFC in a particular Sorting Center had processed the mail piece (Figure 9).

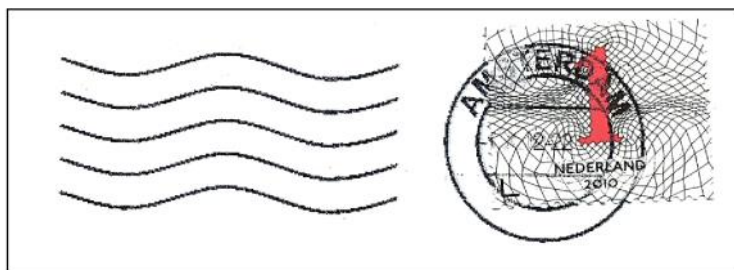


Figure 9: Machine print of a NEC NS-10 CFC from Amsterdam without machine number.

For technical control purposes, in 2012 the inkjet software was modified and a machine number was introduced in the date section of the machine print (Figure 10). The number distribution among the 18 NEC NS-10 CFCs in that year was as follows:

Amsterdam	101 - 102 - 103 [3]
The Hague	201 - 202
's-Hertogenbosch	301 - 302 - 303
Nieuwegein	401 - 402 - 403
Rotterdam	501 - 502 - 503
Zwolle	601 - 602 - 603 - 604

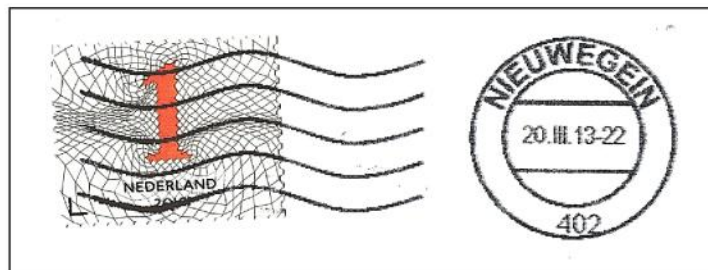


Figure 10: Machine print of a NEC NS-10 CFC from Nieuwegein with machine number 402.

Larger and/or heavier mail items require multiple stamps for the correct tariff. In such cases, stamps may have been affixed one below another. In practice it turned out that the 'small round machine print could not devalue all stamps in practice. Therefore, at the end of March 2013, the circle of the date section was enlarged (Figure 11). The 'large round machine prints use the same Sosma machine numbers as in the 'small round' machine prints.

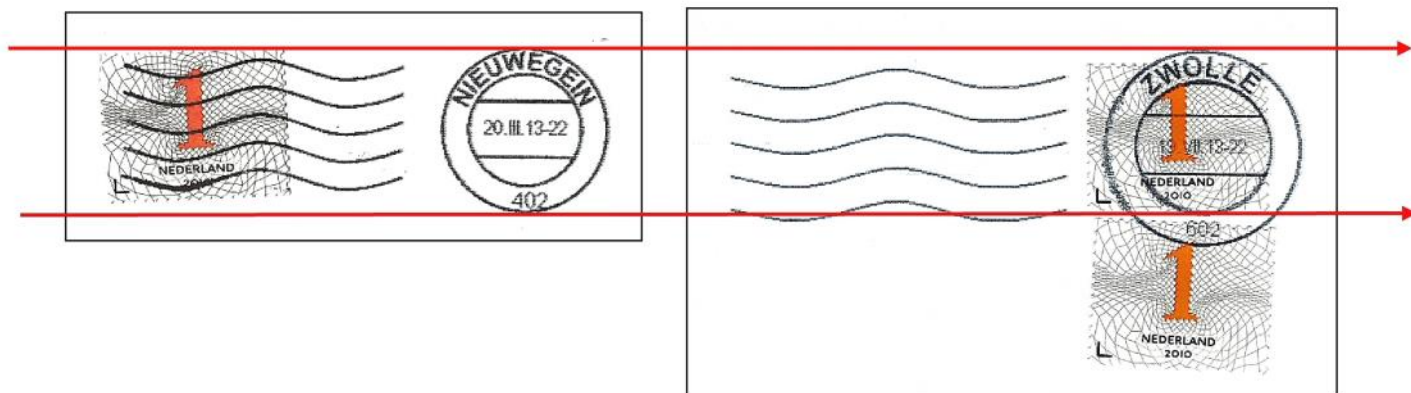


Figure 11: The circle and date section of the machine print have been enlarged to allow stamps attached one below the other to be devalued simultaneously.

Figure 12 shows one example from each Sorting Center of a NEC NS-10 machine print with a 'large-round' date section and a machine number.

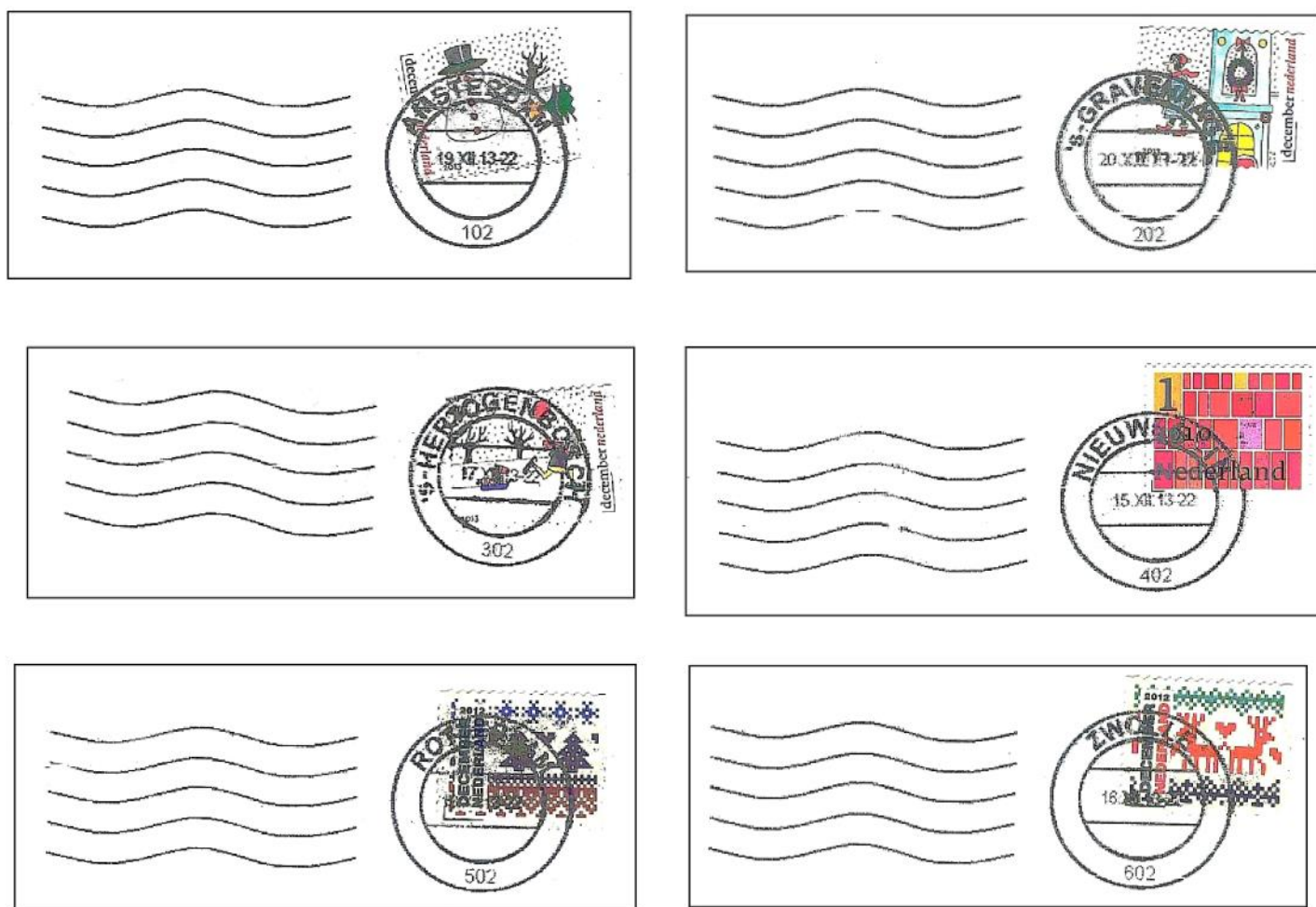


Figure 12: 'Large-round' NEC NS-10 machine prints with a machine number. One random example per Sorting Center.

At the turn of 2017/2018, the Sorting Center 's-Gravenhage was disbanded. The two NEC NS-10 CFCs were distributed between the Rotterdam and Amsterdam Sorting Center. As a result, the CFC machine prints with machine numbers 201 and 202 disappeared. By a happy coincidence it can be determined which CFC went from The Hague to Rotterdam and Amsterdam, respectively.

The machine print 's-Gravenhage 202 has Roman month numerals with serifs. The new machine print Rotterdam 504 also has month numerals with serifs (Figure 13). It is likely that this is the printer of the 's-Gravenhage CFC.

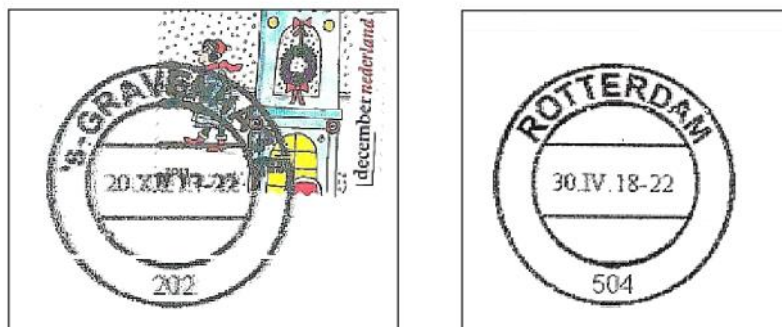


Figure 13: Machine print 's-Gravenhage 202 and Rotterdam 504 both have Roman month numerals with serifs.

CFC 201 from The Hague went to Amsterdam and got number 104, so the new machine numbers are: Amsterdam 104 and Rotterdam 504 (Figure 14) [3].

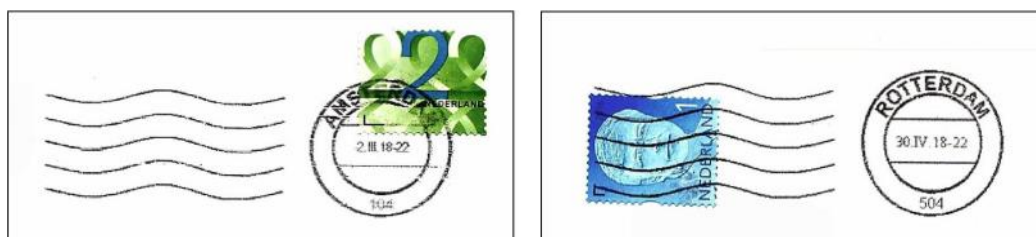


Figure 14: The two new NEC NS-10 CFCs machine numbers: Amsterdam 104 and Rotterdam 504 [4].

It turns out that the ink from the inkjet printer adheres poorly to the material of some phosphorescent L-shaped bars. As a result, parts of the date print are completely missing (Figure 15).

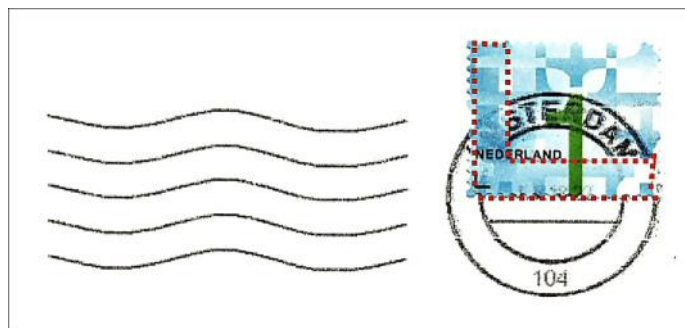


Figure 15: In this machine print from Sosma 104, 'AM' and the entire date line are missing because the ink does not adhere to the material of the L-shaped phosphorescent bar.

During the 2018/2019 Christmas and New Year period, to everyone's surprise, instead of machine prints with the obligatory five wavy lines, all 18 NEC NS-10 CFCs machine printed a Christmas tree motif (Figure 16). This was done only on mail pieces franked with a December stamp and not on mail pieces with a regular stamp.



Figure 16: December stamp, devalued with a 'Christmas tree' machine print from CFC 503 in Rotterdam.

How does this dichotomy work technically? In other words, how is a December stamp distinguished from a regular stamp?

As we saw earlier, a December stamp can be recognized by the special hook for that stamp type. If such a hook is recognized by the software, a signal may have been given to the inkjet printer to apply a Christmas tree print.

However, the hook turns out not to be the detection criterion. Christmas tree prints also occur on older December stamps without such a hook (figures 17a/b).



Figures 17a/b: December stamps without a hook also feature inkjet prints with a Christmas tree motif.

The second possibility for recognition is the orange-yellow color of the phosphorescent bar on the December stamps. That color is created by the exposure of the mail piece with UV light during the facing process, as explained above in the section Phosphorescence Detectors.

PostNL has programmed the phosphorescence detection system during the Christmas and New Year period 2018-2019 in such a way that upon recognition of an orange-yellow glowing bar on a December stamp, the inkjet printer receives a signal to spray a Christmas tree print on it.

If a phosphorescent green color of a regular stamp is recognized under UV illumination, a wavy line print follows. No Christmas tree print has been found on a regular stamp during the 2018-2019 Christmas/ New Year period so far.

Hopefully PostNL now has a taste for it and we will see more of these kinds of motif inkjet machine prints on our daily mail in the future. A pleasant prospect, both for the collector interested in postal automation and the motif collector!

Output stackers

In addition to facing and devaluation, the NEC NS-10 CFC also has sorting functions like its predecessors. But now it is much more comprehensive. There are 24 output stackers available, each for a particular category of mail or for a particular mail processing purpose (Figure 18).



Figure 18: The 24 output stackers of an NEC NS-10 CFCs at Sorting Center Nieuwegein.

Mail pieces that do not need to be devaluated, such as pieces with a Front Identification Mark (FIM), Postage Paid pieces and pieces with a franking machine imprint, are removed from the mail stream before they reach the inkjet printer and enter separate output stackers.

Correctly franked mail pieces are divided according to their dimensions after devaluation of the stamp, so that they can go as separate bundles to a ‘Sorteermachine-klein’ (SMK, sorting machine for small-format mail) (Figure 19) or a ‘Sorteermachine-groot’ (SMG, sorting machine for large-format mail) (Figure 20).



Figure 19: Mail pieces for further processing in a 'Sorteermachine-klein' (SMK) are collected in output stacker 13.



Figure 20: Mail pieces for further processing in a 'Sorteermachine-groot' (SMG) are collected in output stacker 20.

In the NEC NS-10 CFC, the determination of a postage deficiency is made during the normal mail processing run. Postage taxable mail pieces are divided into two categories based on size and weight:

- A) Output stacker 4: Small-format (less than 235 x 330 mm) mail items up to 110 grams (Figure 21).
- B) Output stacker 17: C4-sized items (235 x 330 mm) up to 110 grams (Figure 22).



Figure 21: Output stacker 4 for postage taxable small-format mail items (character K = klein, small).



Figure 22: Output stacker 17 for postage taxable large-format mail items (character G = groot, large).

The postage taxable mail items from all the CFCs present in a particular Sorting Center are collected and undergo a special run in a CFC referred to as 'PIMmen' (postal jargon, derived from processing postage taxable mail items by the former stand-alone PortenInnenMachine (PIM) in Nieuwegein).

‘PIMmen’ and the subsequent postage charging process will be described in a future article in *Netherlands Philately*.

Notes

3. In the Dutch Jubilee book, an error has occurred: CFC 103 from Amsterdam was not mentioned in the review of the CFCs. In this article the error has been corrected. Figure 14 has also been adjusted.
4. Rien de Jong, *Luminescentiekleuren bij postmechanisatie*. In *de ban van UV licht* (...), 175-193. (To appear in a future issue of *Netherlands Philately*).

[This is the second part of the fifth chapter of ‘In de ban van UV-licht, merktekens en codestreepjes.’ Future issues of *Netherlands Philately* will have subsequent (parts of other) chapters of this book issued upon the 50-year jubilee of the Post Mechanization Group of Po & Po.]

Great American Stamp Show—Sacramento



As you may know, the Great American Stamp Show will this year take place in Sacramento, California in the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center, from August 25-28, 2022. [The Great American Stamp Show](#) is the largest annual stamp show held in the USA.

I will be presenting my seven-frame exhibit on correctly-addressed but undeliverable Dutch mail and I will be there in person. Those of you who plan to attend, please let me know, and perhaps we can organize an informal get-together.

Ben Jansen
jansenbenh@gmail.com

Philately in the United Kingdom.

by Ben Jansen

As I mentioned in my editorial column, my wife and I visited England during the first two weeks of June when the United Kingdom was celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. On a trip to Dartmoor National Park, we had lunch in Moretonhampstead where we encountered the decorated mail box shown here. The knitted bonnet, in the colors of the British flag is topped with a crown and a miniature Queen leaning against it. We were told that this was not the first bonnet, but that earlier versions had been stolen!



While in London, a visit to the British Library revealed that it also houses a large stamp and postal history collection, containing more than a million items, that can be studied in the Philatelic Reading room upon request. However, the Tapling collection, consisting of over a hundred of slide-out frames, each with twelve pages back and front with early stamps from almost all nations around the world can be perused by the casual visitor in the entrance lobby.

More evidence that philately is alive in the UK was found when I had lunch in an English pub in London. Its columns and some walls were covered with stamps.



Membership Renewal

Those of you receiving a hard-copy version of *Netherlands Philately*:

ASNP MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE.

Renewals must be received before the September issue of *Netherlands Philately* goes to the printer (middle of August 2022). Renewal amounts are unchanged from last year, and are \$ 25 per year for members living in the USA, and \$ 35 for the rest of the world. Electronic-only membership is free.

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Realize that electronic membership is free (!) and provides you with a full-color version of *Netherlands Philately*, rather than the black and white hardcopy version. Therefore, you are encouraged to give-up your hardcopy membership. Especially those of you receiving both, consider saving yourself some money and bookshelf space, plus avoiding the destructions of forests, by switching to electronic only. Also, since the membership dues do not cover the printing and mailing costs, the ASNP is in effect sponsoring hardcopy memberships. Thus, for the benefit of the environment, the Society and the sanity of your publisher/editor/secretary: *SWITCH*.

On Board of the H. M. “van Galen.”

by Ben H. Jansen

It appears that a lot of postal history items have survived because they were either received or mailed by a philatelist. That is certainly the case with the postcard shown in Figure 1, as the reverse of the card (Figure 2) makes clear.



Figure 1: Card postmarked Zwolle on October 5, 1945.

The message was written by a father, on behalf of his son, to a nephew, to mail stamps. The complete –translated– text reads:

Zwolle October 1, 1945

Dear Fred,

Dolf requested me to write to you to send stamps, preferably by airmail. Stamps of the Dutch Indies are preferred. You might be in the position. Maarten's address is not known to us, otherwise we would have written to him as well. Here all is well. We also received good messages from London. Dearest greetings, also from Aunt Rina and Dolf.

Your Uncle Jurri

The card was written on October 1, 1945 and postmarked October 5, 1945, in Zwolle.

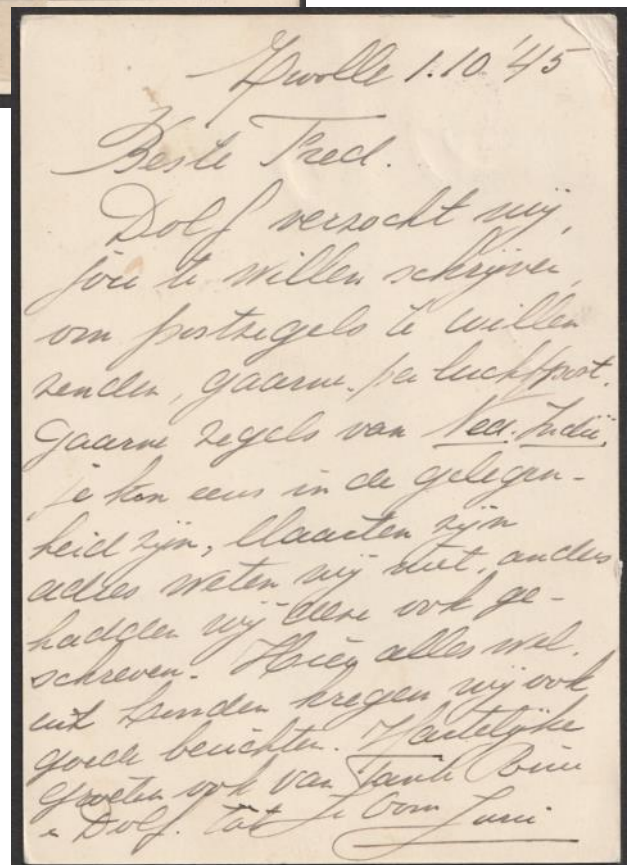


Figure 2: Message side of the postcard shown in Figure 1.

The sender was J.O. Buisman and the card was addressed to F.H. Knottenbelt, “aboard the H.M. van Galen.” The ‘Back to sender / mail connections / not possible for the time being’ obscures the text “on its way to the Dutch Indies.” This label was applied because when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, Indonesia declared independence. Dutch East Indies post offices were occupied by Indonesian revolutionaries, forcing the DEI mail administration to operate from inadequate facilities. Limited connections with Batavia became available medio November 1945.

The card was intended to be delivered by air mail, but the 7.5 cents stamp was not sufficient to cover the required postal rate in effect then. The tariff in effect from September 23, 1945 required 5 cents regular (sea mail) fare plus 10 cents airmail surcharge. Consequently, 10 cents postage due was assessed (red T10 marking).

Historical Context

When the postcard was written on October 1, 1945, the Netherlands had been liberated for five months. On 15 August 1945, the Japanese occupiers of the Dutch Indies surrendered to the Allies. Two days later, on August 17, Sukarno and Hatta declared independence at Sukarno's house in Jakarta.

The Japanese, while awaiting repatriation, were still in charge in the Western part of Indonesia which had not been retaken by the Allies. The Japanese forces had received specific orders to maintain the status quo until Allied forces arrived on Java and Sumatra.

It took weeks before British and British-Indian troops were stationed on Java to maintain order.

The Dutch, although weakened by WWII, were intent on re-establishing their authority and two warships were sent to Batavia: the Jacob van Heemskerck and the Jan van Galen. The cruiser Hr. Ms. Jacob Heemskerck was the first Dutch warship to arrive in Amsterdam after liberation day on 26 July 1945. After repairs, it left Amsterdam on 3 September 1945 for Chatham, where it remained for additional repairs until September 15. Then the van Heemskerck, together with the Hr. Ms. Jan van Galen, a destroyer, left urgently for the DEI departed from Portsmouth on arriving in the DEI 19 days later.

The Jan van Galen (Figure 3) was the second war ship with that name, the first having been destroyed in Rotterdam during the German invasion in May 1940. It was built as the British destroyer HMS Noble (G84), but was commissioned into the Royal Netherlands Navy shortly before completion on 20 February 1942. Funds for its purchase were collected through the ‘Prins Bernhard Fonds’ and the ship was presented as a national gift to Queen Wilhelmina on her birthday in 1941.



Figure 3: Hr. Ms. Jan van Galen in Rotterdam.

Contemporary newspapers report that both had medicines and medical instruments on board and a ‘very important contingent Indonesian mariners’ (Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4: *De Luistervink* of 28 September 1945 reports that the Jan van Galen and Jacob Heemskerk have departed for the East with medicines.



Figure 5: *De Tijd* of 12 October 1945 reports that the Jan van Galen and Jacob Heemskerk have arrived in the Dutch Indies after a 19 day journey with an important contingent Indonesian mariners.

Also, the ‘Alcantara’ with 2,000 troops left Liverpool around October 11, 1945 with destination Batavia. However, this ship was not allowed to land on Java and after disembarking the troops in Singapore, returned to Southampton on February 6, arriving 2 March 1946 with 2461 evacuees from Java and Sumatra who had been staying in Singapore.

The People Involved

The card was mailed by J.O. Buisman to F.H. Knottenbelt. Both surnames are rare enough that it was possible to find out more about these persons.

Jurri Otto Buisman (1891-1969) was married to Hendrina (‘Rina’) Arendina ten Doesschate (born in Goor, Overijssel, in 1897) and they had one child, Geert Adolph (‘Dolph’), born in 1930 and passing away in 2015.

Rina was the daughter of Femius Hermanus ten Doesschate and Gesina ten Doesschate, who were cousins once removed. Interestingly Rina and Jurri had the same great-great-grand parents.

In case you are wondering, J.O. Buisman was not related to the well-known maker of coffee aroma. Instead, he ran the company started by his wife’s grandfather, Jurriaan ten Doesschate. This company did business as Firma J. Ten Doesschate and included a pharmacy, wholesaler of spices and chemicals, the production and sales of paint, and trade in cod liver oil. In the late sixties, Dolph succeeded his father as president of the company.

Rina had one older sister, Helena (‘Lena’) Johanna, born in 1895. This sister married Fredrik Hendrik Knottenbelt (1884-1943) in 1918 and lived with him in Batavia. They had four children together: Gesiena (‘Ina’) Suzanna (1916-1963), Frederik (‘Freddy’) Hendrik (1918-1972), Maarten (‘Martin’) Jan (born 1920) and Helena Johanna (born 1925). Figure 6 shows the Knottenbelt family on the steps of their house in London.

The family connections between Jurry Buisman and Fred Knottenbelt are thus clear.



Figure 6: The Knottenbelt family in London. From left to right: Maarten, Rina, Frederik, Gesiena, Fred, and Helena. The picture was taken by Karel Dahmen, who had escaped to England with a small sloop, on 18 August, 1940.

The role of the Knottenbelts during WWII

Early August 1940, all Dutchmen between the ages of 19 and 36 and living in Great Britain, Canada and the USA became subject to conscription in the military. They had to get registered, and if they passed a medical test could be called into service. The recruits from the various drafts formed the 'Nederlands Legioen' (Dutch Legion). On 11 January 1941 this became the "Koninklijke Nederlandse Brigade 'Prinses Irene Brigade'," named after the second daughter of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard.

Both of the Knottenbelt brothers were within the age range subject to conscription.

Not a lot is known about the activities of Freddy. He was a sub lieutenant with the Royal Netherlands Navy Reserve, serving as paymaster with the shore staff of the Dutch motor torpedo boats stationed in Dover. It is not known how and why he was part of the crew of the Jan van Galen, but perhaps the fact that he was born in Weltevreden on Java may have played a role.

Much more is known about Maarten.

When WWII broke out, Maarten was a student at Oriel College, Oxford. He was called for active duty and became a member of the 'Prinses Irene Brigade' on 20 August 1940. He followed officer training and became Reserve Second Lieutenant with the Infantry on 24 July 1941. He was among the first 48 volunteers that started training in March 1942 at four different British commando training centers. The 25 who completed the course successfully received the 'green beret' and came together in May 1942 in Achnacarry (Scotland) where they followed basic commando training. On 29 June 1942 they departed for Troon, on the west coast of Scotland, where the No. 2 (Dutch) Troop was formally established. The troop was situated in Porthmadog in North Wales between July 1942 and May 1943. Figure 7 shows Maarten, with the rank of Lieutenant, meeting with Prince Bernhard in Porthmadog.



Figure 7: Prince Bernhard (left), Lt Maarten Jan Knottenbelt (second from left), and others at Portmadog.

On Sunday the 17th of September 1944, the major part of the troop came in to action during operation Market Garden. Maarten and twelve other commandos were assigned to the British 1st Airborne Division as a liaison with the Dutch population and to check the credibility of the civilians offering assistance. They landed in a glider near the psychiatric clinic in Wolfheze early afternoon September 17. Maarten and commando van Barneveld swam across the Rhine several times during the battle to make contact with the Polish 1st Independent Airborne Brigade, which had landed near Driel. When the Germans continued their advance, Maarten took command of a group of about 25 British soldiers to defend a group of houses in Oosterbeek. He got injured, swam across the Rhine and managed to return to London.

Once he had recuperated, he volunteered for special missions. While he was assigned to be parachuted into the occupied Netherlands, and completed a parachute jumping course, he was instead sent to the liberated Netherlands to recruit volunteers for No. 2 Dutch Troop.

In the night of 3 to 4 April 1945, Maarten and a British officer and a radio operator were dropped near Appel, north of Barneveld. Maarten took command of a group of untrained 'Binnenlandse Strijdkrachten' (Dutch Interior Forces) which were able to twice ambush Germans, inflicting heavy losses. This enabled Canadian troops to cross the Apeldoorn canal near Oene on 20 April 1945.

On August 30, 1948, Maarten received the 'Militaire Willemsorde' (Military Order of William) for his actions. The MWO is the oldest and highest honor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Its motto is 'Voor Moed, Beleid en Trouw' (For Bravery, Leadership and Loyalty) and is extremely rarely awarded, and only for exceptional bravery in battle.

Maarten was honorably discharged October 1, 1960, having obtained the rank of major in the 'Koninklijke Landmacht' and became a dedicated pacifist.

The elder Knottenbelt was a tea trader. He chaired the Netherlands Emergency Committee, which organized the collection and distribution of donated clothes to Dutch refugees in Great Britain. He also assisted 'Engelandvaarders' (England Travellers), i.e., Dutchmen escaping from the Netherlands by sailing small boats across the North Sea.

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Censored Postcard Sent October 1915 from N.E. Belgium to Roermond in the Netherlands .

by Hans Kramer

The postcard shown in Figure 1 was sent October 20, 1915 from Bocholt-Loozen (N.E. Belgium), to Ruremonde (Roermond) in the Netherlands.



Figure 1: Front and back of postcard sent October 20, 1915.

Bocholt-Loozen is located just across the Dutch border. The sender had been asked to come to notary Strens's office in Roermond to talk about the settlement of the estate of his father in law. He replied that he could not come because his request for a passport was denied. He suggested that maybe the notary could try to get him a passport through the German authorities.

The postcard first went from Bocholt-Loozen to Cologne (Aachen) in Germany, where it passed the German censorship and from there to Roermond, where it was subjected to the Dutch censorship. The indirect route from Bocholt via Aachen to Roermond was more than 100 km long. Bocholt straight to Roermond would have been only 27 (!) km.

The cover, apart from the Belgium stamps overprinted "Belgien 5 centimes", has a couple of markings: a German circular "Auslandstelle Freigegeben Aachen" (Foreign Office Approved Cologne) and an oval "Mil. Censuur" (applied in Roermond). The German occupiers required that correspondence between the occupied parts of Belgium and the Netherlands passed through Cologne (Aachen) and that either the French or German language was used. The text on the postcard shown here was in French, although Bocholt-Loozen was in the Dutch speaking part of Belgium.

The Dutch had declared neutrality when WWI broke out. This not only meant that they could not favor any of the warring parties but also that the border had to be closed and that a passport was needed in order to be let into the country legally. For those parts of the country that were closest to the border a state of emergency was declared. These were the parts that saw a big increase in money laundering and also possible espionage. This was the reason a number of mail censor offices were opened, one of which was located in Roermond. Each censor office had a 'black list,' containing the names of individuals and businesses who were suspected of illegal activity.

Although Notary Stress to which the postcard was addressed, received an unusual large amount of mail, his name did not show up on the black list.

The censor offices were run by the Dutch military and, for practical purposes, were situated in the local post offices. Each censor office had its own set of censor markers.

Roermond had two such censor markers, which at first glance look quite similar (Figure 2). The main difference is the heavy lettering and rougher and heavier appearance of the oval ellipse of type 2.

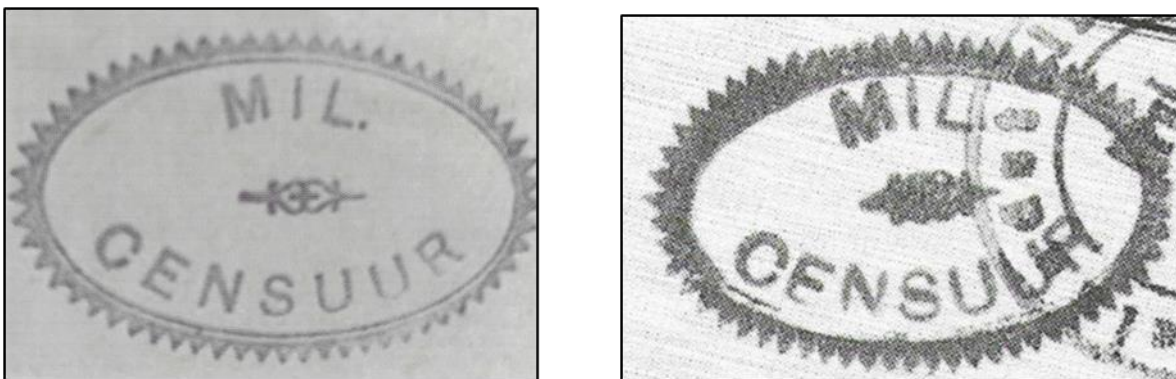


Figure 2: Roermond Censor markers type 1 (left) and type 2 (right).

Type 1 is known from August 1915 through December 1915, while type 2 has been seen from September 1915 through April 1916. The cover shown in Figure 1 appears to be type 2, while type 1 can be seen on the cover presented in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Roermond December 1915, Censor marker type 1.

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Recent Issues



Typically Dutch — Sailing May 9, 2022

The sheet with 6 identical stamps is dedicated to sailing, a sport in which the Dutch excel. The design is by Claire Bedon and Edwin van Praet who are with Total Design from Amsterdam.

Europ Stamps — The Lady of Stavoren May 9, 2022

The sheet of six stamps in two design relates the legend of the Lady of Stavoren. This tale concerns a wealthy merchant's wife who, in a rage, orders grain to be thrown overboard in the harbor of Stavoren. When onlookers express their dismay, she swings a valuable ring in the waves and declares that she will show regret only when the sea returns her ring. When she finds her ring in the belly of a fish, her fortune changes: the woman loses all her money, the harbor silts up and the prosperity of Stavoren ends.



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

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