

POSTERIJEN – A Postmark Made For Collectors

By Ralph Van Heerden

In this 35th Anniversary Book of the NPofC, some articles revolve around the decades of the 1930's and 1940's. These treat the discontinuance of airmail service between Holland and the East Indies and the Legionnaire stamps and related affairs in Holland. But, in this same time period, a philatelic "new event" sprang up and it had to do with the canceling of stamps on mail!

How many times can you recall that when you have received mail with uncanceled stamps affixed that a postal clerk has crossed these out with an indelible pencil or with ink pen strokes? (An indelible marking becomes impossible to remove when subjected to moisture).

Those of you who have a passion for the early issues of Holland may have noted the premium now being paid to obtain an ink pen cancel on one of these stamps. For example, an 1852, 5 cent, and an 1869, ½ cent with a clear ink pen marking are probably worth keeping. However, later issues with a ballpoint pen marking usually are tossed into the duplicates box.



This unkindness by postal people apparently has been with us for the past 100 or more years. These devaluating markings so aggravated the sensibility of collectors in Holland that through pressure applied by philatelic organizations to the P.T.T. there resulted a special canceller sanctioned, approved and issued by the P.T.T. to all larger post offices. The requirement was to use the new marker instead of pen or pencil on uncanceled stamps on received mail.

In the March 1989 issue of *dePostzak*, Mr. L. Goldhoorn illustrated the P.T.T. Press and Propaganda Service decree, "A Postal Decree To Aid Philatelists" issued July 6, 1940, which authorized the issuance of the first POSTERIJEN cancel (Type A).

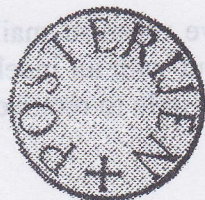
EEN POSTALE MAATREGEL TEN BATE DER PHILATELISTEN

Tot nogtoe maakte de Postdienst niet of niet voldoende afgestempelde postzegels op correspondentiestukken onbruikbaar, door het trekken van gekruiste lijnen met inkt of aniline-potlood over de zegels.

Naar aanleiding van binnengekomen klachten, dat aldus behandelde zegels hun philatelistische waarde verliezen, heeft de Bedrijfsleiding besloten de onbruikbaarmaking zooveel mogelijk door middel van een stempel te doen geschieden. Te dien einde zullen aan alle "grootere postkantoren" speciale

stempels worden toegezonden, welke het opschrift "Posterijen" dragen, met welke stempels de ongeldigmaking van zegels als bedoeld voortaan behoort te geschieden.

However, the proposed cancel, according to Goldhoorn, was unlike any of those actually found on covers. This was highlighted in the October 1940 issue of *Nederlandsch Maanblad Voor Philatelie* magazine. The observation was also made that the canceller finally issued by the PTT (Type B) had a 29mm. outer diameter and a 16mm. inner diameter ring.



Type A Cancel



Type B Cancel

After many years of searching Goldhoorn found a postcard with a Type A cancel (Figure 1.). The card was sent from Haarlem to Hilversum and is dated November 24, 1938. As the date stamp is some 19 months prior to the Dienst Order announcement, Goldhoorn speculates that Hilversum may have been a test location for the Type A cancel. As you can see the Haarlem machine cancel is skewed and misses the postage stamp, thus the need to nullify the stamp.

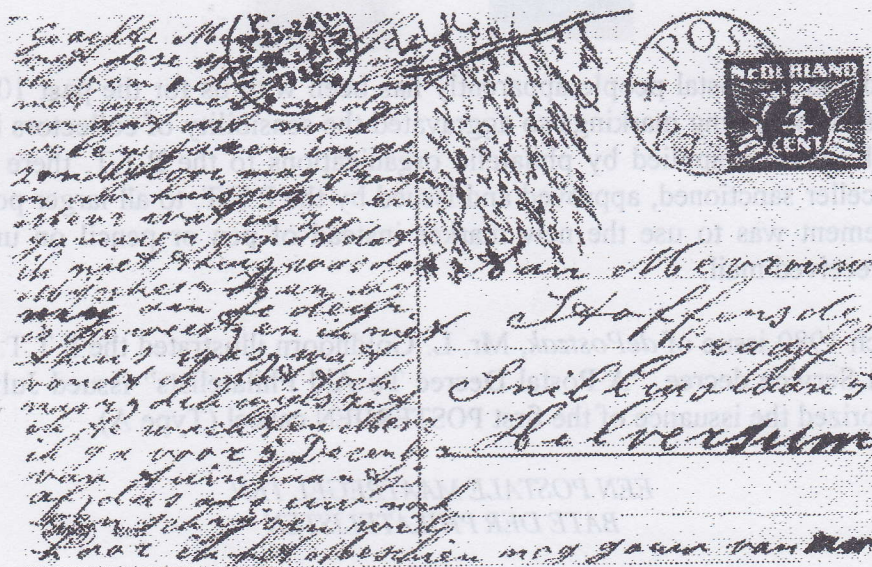


Figure 1. Postcard with trial POSTERIJEN cancel applied at Hilversum.

After delving into several other resources Goldhoorn found additional information on these posterijen cancels in a letter, dated February 8, 1939, from the Director-General of the P.T.T. and sent to the Royal Mint Master where he directs "the speedy manufacture of a metal canceller exactly like your sample but without the image of the lion" (Figure

2.) The intended size of the new canceller was to be the same as the other cancellers currently in use. This information appeared in the June 1996 issue of *Postzak*.



Figure 2. Proposed marker, which became modified to Type A.

Goldhoorn's assumption was correct, that Hilversum was the trial city. He found a letter directing the Hilversum Postmaster to discontinue his use of the trial Type A cancel. And, of course, the requested 250 new POSTERIJEN cancellers mentioned in the February 8, 1939 letter are what we know as Type B and were in use by P.T.T. offices for more than 40 years. Clerks in the Rotterdam office were still using their Type B canceller in 1990.

In my pursuit of collecting, when something different is found, I put it to one side. Perhaps you do also. I have in my collection some Type B markings on loose stamps found along the way, *but with a difference*. These have an extra inner ring, 7 mm in diameter, which I will call Type B-a (Figure 3.).



Figure 3. Type B-a cancel, same as Type B, but with extra 7 mm. inner ring.

Later, these markers evolved into a type of cancel that are a reminder of the elegant, old world, seriffed letter style. Shown in Figure 4 is a Type C canceller with + POST + POST, a style still retaining the handsome lettering features of the Type B canceller.



Figure 4. Example of Type C canceller.

The PTT/TPG Post authorities have continually made periodic changes in their postal equipment and products. Perhaps readers of this essay will find and report additional posterijen formats on stamps in their collections. There is perhaps a time gap until Type D cancel appears. This newer example of a posterijen obliterator is a circle in which “**ptt post**” is repeated four times. (Figure 5) For every 20th century collector these four cancel types would seem to be key varieties to embellish a comprehensive collection.

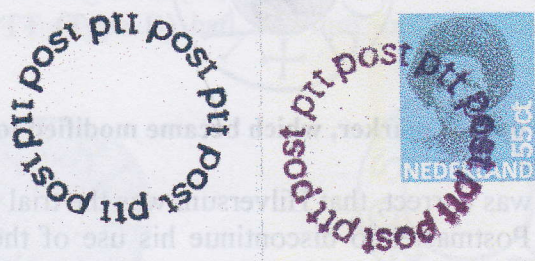


Figure 5. Example of Type D canceller with “ptt post” format.

References:

Anonymous. Nederland en Overzeesche Gewesten. (aantekening aan) ‘Een postale maatregel ten bate der philatelisten.’ *Nederlandsch Maandblad Voor Philatelie*. 15(7-8):131. 16 Augustus 1940.

Anonymous. Afstempelingen Nederland. (aantekening aan) ‘POSTERIJEN.’ *Nederlandsch Maandblad Voor Philatelie*. 15(10):182. 16 October 1940.

L. Goldhoorn. POSTERIJEN. *de Postzak* no.159. Nederlandse Vereniging van Poststukken-en Poststempelverzamelaars. pg. 22-24. Maart 1989.

L. Goldhoorn. Het posterijen mysterie bijna opgelost. *de Postzak* no. 182. Nederlandse Vereniging van Poststukken-en Poststempelverzamelaars. pg. 282-285. Juni 1996.