

if he is able and willing to compete with the domestic collectors on the Italian market and to pay the inflated prices asked for any rarer item, will he not end up in frustration. Naples is a very interesting and attractive field for the collector, but under the present conditions we can only advise to give up any idea to go "big" into it, except when one makes money like hay and is willing to spend it like a drunken sailor. Otherwise it seems advisable to wait until conditions will change. The philatelic student can also be admonished to stay away from the field because it has been so thoroughly investigated by able Italian students—with the exception of the pre-stamp period—that they would only earn disappointments for their ardor.

XXXV. NETHERLANDS

The Kingdom of the *Netherlands*—Nederland in the Dutch language of its inhabitants—, one of the smaller countries of Western Europe, occupies the coastal territory around the estuaries of the rivers Rhine, Maas and Schelde. The North Sea forms the western and northern borders of the country, with a number of large islands in the delta of the Rhine and Maas as well as a chain of smaller islands, the Frisian Islands, in the north. To the south, the Netherlands bordered on Belgium, to the east on the German Confederation, namely the Kingdom of Hanover in the northern part and the Kingdom of Prussia (Rhine Province and Province of Westphalia) in the southern part. In 1866, Hanover also became Prussian. The German Confederation was transformed into the North German Confederation in 1867 and into the German Empire in 1871. The area of the Netherlands was a little more than 12,500 square miles. It was divided into eleven provinces, namely—from north to south—Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe, Overijssel, Noord-Holland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Zuid-Holland, Zeeland, Noord-Brabant and Limburg. The population was about 3,200,000 in 1853 and 3,580,000 in 1869.—The capital, *The Hague* ('s Gravenhage) had in 1853 a population of over 80,000 and in 1869 of about 90,000. The largest city, Amsterdam, had 248,000 inhabitants in 1853 and 265,000 in 1869.

The *History* of the Netherlands is a long one. In early times, the territory was inhabited by German tribes, mainly the Bat-

avians and the Frisians. The recorded history starts with the Roman invasion of the territory, which began in 57 B. C. under Julius Caesar. The territory came under Roman governorship in 13 B. C., but was not incorporated into the Roman Empire, which considered the Batavians as allies. At the end of the third century, the Franks, a German group of tribes, started to occupy the territory. In the sixth century, they were in possession of the southern part, while the Frisians and Saxons, other Germanic tribes, held the northern part. The country was united as part of the domain of the Carolingian Kings and eventually by Charlemagne, who compelled the population to embrace Christianity. The treaty of Verdun (843) assigned the country to the central part of the Empire. It came under German overlordship and eventually formed the duchy of Lower Lorraine, which was soon broken up into small feudal states. This split-up became necessary because in the 9th and 10th century the territory was invaded by the Northmen, who had come from Scandinavia and became masters of the northern part. Only during the 11th century was this invasion terminated and the system of feudal states firmly established. During that period, the first large cities were founded and became powerful. In the 14th and 15th century, the territory came gradually under the dominion of the house of Burgundy, which led to the unification of the country. By way of marriages and inheritances, the Burgundian territory became part of the Habsburg empire, which at that time also included Spain, and the Netherlands were united in 1543 in this great empire, ruled by Charles V. But although it was originally popular, soon feeling against the Spanish rule became widespread, and under the leadership of Willem of Oranje, a fierce opposition was organized. This was met by a rule of military despotism by the Spanish, which was fought by Willem of Oranje with an army recruited in Germany. After several years of fighting, the provinces forming the later Netherlands gained their independence in 1579 and constituted themselves as a republic. The Union of Utrecht, by which the provinces were confederated, remained in force for more than two hundred years. A Council of State was the ruling body, but the federation was first a rather loose one. In 1581,

all allegiance to Spain was repudiated, and in the following years the country looked for help from France and England. An alliance was concluded with these two countries in 1596. A year earlier, the first Dutch voyage to the East Indies had started, which led to the foundation of the Dutch East India Company, one of the sources of the later wealth of the country. The country had to defend its independence during the following decades. From 1618 on, the Netherlands were involved in the Thirty Years' War. But commerce flourished, colonies in other continents were acquired, and the Netherlands became one of the leading naval powers of the time. During that period, marriages between the house of Oranje and English princesses brought the country under the influence of dynastic interests. There was continued rivalry with the British which led to various naval conflicts. In two wars with England (1652 and 1665), the Dutch lost many of their colonial possessions, among them the colony of New Netherlands with its capital New Amsterdam, which was re-named New York by the British. In 1672, the House of Oranje came again to full power when Willem III became the governor (captain-general) of the Union. The governorship was declared hereditary and basis for the monarchy established, but Willem III died childless and the republic was re-established in 1689. In various wars, the fortunes of the republic declined, which led to the loss of most colonies. In 1766, Willem V of Oranje became governor, but he could not stop the decline of the republic. During the Napoleonic Wars, the country was overrun by a French army in 1794, and Willem V fled to England. The Batavian Republic was established in 1795 after the French model and under French protectorate. In 1806, Napoleon installed his brother Louis as King of Holland, but in 1810 he forced him to abdicate, and the Netherlands became a province of the French Empire. First, the territory, including the southern part, was divided in three départements, namely 92 (Escaut), 93 (Deux Nèthes) and 95 (Meuse Inférieure). From January 1, 1811 on, there were nine départements, 118 (Zuyderzée), 119 (Bouches de la Meuse), 120 (Bouches de l'Yssel), 121 (Yssel Supérieure), 122 (Frise), 123 (Ems Occidental), 125 (Bouches de l'Escaut) and 126 (Bouches

du Rhin). The département 124 (Ems Oriental) at that time also belonged to the Netherlands; it came to Hanover in 1815. After the downfall of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna decided to establish a united state of the Netherlands, which included also the southern parts (Belgium and Luxembourg) which had been separated in 1579. The son of Willem V of Oranje became King of the Netherlands as Willem I. But the inclusion of the southern provinces did not prove to the advantage of the country. In 1830, they revolted, and the separate Kingdom of Belgium was created. Luxembourg was also made independent, but united by personal union with the Netherlands, which were again reduced to the territory of the ancient Dutch republic. Willem I abdicated in 1840 and was succeeded by Willem II; under his rule, democratic ideas became victorious, and a constitution greatly limited the powers of the king. After the death of Willem II in 1849, his son Willem III came to power; he ruled during the whole classic stamp period.

As for the *Postal History* of the Netherlands, already the Romans had organized a courier service, but it was only for government mail. Later, the nobles, the cities and monasteries had private messengers for their mail, but there was still no public mail service. Only in the 15th century did the first traces of such service become visible, after the Tassis family had organized the first transcontinental mail route, from Brussels to Vienna. It also carried only official mail at first, but early in the 16th century, after Francisco de Tassis had become Imperial General Postmaster, the service was not only extended to private mail, but the family of Tassis also organized feeder lines which carried mail to the main postal routes. In this way, around 1560, Tassis mail routes were established on the territory of the Netherlands, partly competing with the local mail services of the cities and merchants. Only in the 18th century did the government take the mail service in its own hands, by creating a General Post Office in 1749. But the Tassis post offices were continued until the Napoleonic period. The French, after they had occupied the Netherlands, reorganized the postal service and created a new postal organization after the model of the postal service in France. After the downfall of

Napoleon, the mail service was again taken over by the royal government and reorganized independently; the Tassis post offices were not permitted to reopen. Two kinds of postal establishments were created, Post Offices (*Postkantoor*) and Letter Collecting Agencies (*Hulpkantoor*), the latter providing only limited service. A complete new postal law became effective on September 1, 1850, being instrumental also in the issuance of the first postal stamps. A net of postal routes covered the country, and from 1839 on, when the first railroad was introduced, mail was also carried by the railroad trains. Travelling post offices were established only later, on the "Expeditie Moerdyk", carrying the ship mail from Antwerp to Rotterdam in 1855, on the "Nederlandsche Rhynspoorweg" from Amsterdam to the Prussian border (with several branch lines) in 1856, and on the "Hollandsche Spoorweg", from Rotterdam to Haarlem and Amsterdam in 1859. Until 1853, a ship line from Rotterdam to London carried the mail to England and most overseas countries, but from then on such mail was sent via Belgium (Antwerp). Telegraph service was introduced in 1852.

In 1854, there were 120 *Post Offices* and 407 *Letter Collecting Agencies* in operation; the length of the mail routes was 14,500 km. in 1852. In that year, almost 10 million domestic letters were mailed, which number had increased to more than 17½ million in 1864. During the same period, the number of letters to foreign countries expanded from more than 2½ million to over 4½ million.

There were no Netherlands *post offices* on foreign soil during the classic stamp period. Of course, the Netherlands maintained post offices in their overseas colonies, but they are outside the scope of this monograph. There were three *Prussian postal agencies* on Netherlands territory, all in border towns, namely *Enschede* in Overijssel province, as well as *Roermond* and *Venlo*, both in Limburg province. Only on the postal agency at Venlo are more detailed data available. It already operated during the pre-stamp period and was closed on March 31, 1851. It was reopened on August 1, 1853, became a postal agency of the North German Confederation on January 1, 1868 and of the German Empire in 1871. It remained in operation until April 30, 1879. It was a so-called border exchange agency

which handled letter mail in transit but did not accept such mail. But because the Netherlands at that time had no government monopoly for parcel post, the Venlo postal agency accepted parcel post and money letters to Prussia. Of the postal agency at Enschede, it is known only that it was closed on December 17, 1850; no opening or closing dates seem to be available for the Roermond postal agency, but it must be assumed that it functioned during the classic stamp period.

For the purposes of this monograph, the *classic stamp period* ended in the Netherlands in 1869. It was necessary to fix this early date because the later issues were partly used to a period which cannot be considered "classic" any more. Therefore, this monograph deals only with the early engraved postage stamps of the Netherlands.

The *Currency* of the Netherlands was the Guilder (g), divided into 100 Cents (c).—The metric system was used for *distances* and *weights*, but the special old Dutch names for the units were kept. The kilometer was called "mijl", the kilogram (1000 grams) was equivalent to the "pond", which was divided into 10 "oncen", each equivalent to 100 grams. The "once" again was divided into 10 "looden", each equivalent to a dekagram (10 grams). The "lood" consisted of 10 "wigtjes", of which each was equivalent to one gram.

The Netherlands issued their first *Postage Stamps* on *January 1, 1852*. No other postal adhesives and no postal stationery were issued during the classic stamp period.

At the *Prussian Postal Agencies* in the Netherlands, postage stamps, possibly also postal envelopes, were used, but we have no information when they were introduced. From the available material, there is evidence that postage stamps of Prussia were used at Roermond and Venlo; from the latter postal agency, the use of the stamps of the North German Confederation, 1868 to 1870 issues, and of the German Empire, 1872 to 1874 issues, is also recorded. As the rates were partly high and often amounted to odd figures, low and high values were necessary, so that ¼g as well as 30g stamps are known used at the Venlo postal agency. When used for postage on money letters, the stamps were affixed to them. They were not pasted on parcels, but

on the letters which had to accompany each parcel and were handed with the parcel to the addressee. Simultaneously with the introduction of the 1875 issue of the German Empire, this procedure was changed; now parcel cards were used on which the postage stamps were affixed. These parcel cards were not delivered to the addressee but remained in the hands of the postal service. They were usually destroyed after several years. This seems to be the reason that the 1875 issue of the German Empire is not known cancelled at Venlo, although in all probability it was in use there until the postal agency was closed on April 30, 1879.

When postage stamps were introduced, the *Postal Rates* were based on a postal law which had become effective on September 1, 1850. The domestic rates were based on distance and weight. Letters of 15 grams weight paid 5c up to 30km., 10c from 30 to 100km. and 15c over 100km. Letters of double weight (30 grams) paid double, from 30 grams to 50 grams triple, from 50 grams to 100 grams four times the basic postage; heavier letters paid the basic rate for each additional 50 grams. On September 1, 1855, the third rate zone was abolished, and the basic rate for all letters travelling a distance of 30km. or more was now 10c. Printed Matter paid 2c for each 10 grams. Registration fee was 10c, and the fee for return receipts also 10c.—The rates to foreign countries varied very much, they were partly high, especially to overseas countries, but they were constantly reduced during the classic stamp period. To the neighbor countries, reduced letter fees were in use for border mail, to Belgium starting with 10c, to Hanover and Prussia even with 5c. Regular mail to Belgium and Luxembourg paid 20c for 15 grams, to Germany between 10c and 30c, depending on the distance. To France and England, the basic postage was originally 60c and 70c, but from 1854 on only 30c and 40c. The high rates for overseas countries often reached several guilders.

The *Prussian postal agencies* on Netherlands territory accepted parcels and money letters to Prussia only and charged the domestic Prussian rates for them.

Prepayment of the postal fees was not obligatory for letter mail, except for the registration fee. Printed matter was accepted only paid. As there was no surtax for

unpaid letters, a very large percentage of letters was sent unpaid; in 1852, only 15½% of the domestic letters and 20% of the letters to foreign countries were sent paid. In 1864, these percentages had increased to 25% and 65% respectively, so that three quarters of the domestic letters were still sent unpaid and postage paid by the addressee.

The *use of stamps* was obligatory on all paid letter mail. On such letters, which were posted at the post office against payment in cash, the postal clerk had to affix the stamps for the amount of cash he had received. Until December 31, 1867, the registration fee was to be paid in cash and not with stamps, but exceptions are known, although they were against the regulations. Payment of the postal fees for printed matter and newspapers was to be made in cash, and no stamps were used on them in the domestic service; there were no low denominations of postage stamps until January 1, 1869, when the denominations necessary for this kind of mail were introduced.

The *denominations* issued by the Netherlands corresponded with the rates for single-weight domestic letters. Therefore, only three denominations were issued on January 1, 1852, namely 5c, 10c and 15c. Although on September 1, 1855 the 15c letter rate was abolished, the stamp was nevertheless continued for use on heavier letters and for mail to foreign countries. For more than fifteen years, the three denominations were considered sufficient; only on October 1, 1867 were three additional ones introduced, namely 20c, 25c and 50c, as a convenience for the franking of heavier letters and foreign mail.

The classic stamps of the Netherlands were *not withdrawn* when a new issue was introduced, but *used up*. The denominations of the new issue were put on sale only after the stocks of the corresponding denomination of the previous issue were exhausted. According to contemporary reports, the 1864 issue was put on sale on May 12, 1864 (10c), early in July 1864 (5c) and on January 1, 1865 (15c). Of the 1867 issue, the 5c was reportedly issued in December 1867, the 10c in January 1868 and the 15c in July 1868. At first, the old stamps were not *demonetized* either, and all classic Netherlands stamps lost their validity for postage only on October 31, 1879.

The *designs* of the three classic stamp issues of the Netherlands all feature the head of King Willem III, on the 1852 and 1864 issues facing to the right, on the 1867 issue to the left. The 1852 issue shows the head in a kind of antique picture frame, the 1864 issue in an oval laurel wreath. Both issues have simple frames, which contain only the inscription POST-ZEGEL, meaning "postal label", and the value indication, "5 C", "10 C" or "15 C". The 1867 issue broke with this tradition; its design is less original, leaning heavily on those of various stamps of other countries. The head is in a circle of oval pearls, placed in a rectangular frame, formed on the sides by meander ornaments and by crossed circles in the corners. For the first time, the country's name, NEDERLAND, appears on the stamps, being in addition to the value indication the only inscription. Both inscriptions are in double-lined sans-serif type. The value indications read "5 CENT.", "10 CENT.", "15 CENT.", "20 CENT.", "25 CENT." and "50 CENT.". The designs of the 1852 and 1864 issues were the work of J. W. Kaiser of Amsterdam; of the 1867 issue, the center was designed by H. Nusser, the frame by J. Vürtheim.

The *dies* of all three issues were engraved without figure of value. Of the 1852 and 1864 issues the dies were of steel, of the 1867 issue of copper. The engraver of the two former was J. W. Kaiser, of the last H. Nusser.

To obtain the *printing material* for recess-printing, in which all classic Netherlands stamps were executed, first electrotyping produced working dies in which the figures of value were engraved, creating the dies for each denomination. Then the plates were made with the help of these dies. Two different methods were used. The first one, for the 1852 and 1864 issues, which produced steel plates, was the transfer roll process, as used for the early engraved issues of Great Britain and Belgium, which was described in Volume II, page 201, and in Volume IV, page 34. The other method, used for the manufacture of the plates of the 1867 issue, which were made of copper, used electrotyping, by taking a sufficient number of electrotypes from the die and soldering them to a plate of the desired size. This plate was then used as a mother



Fig. 142

plate, from which, again by electrotyping, the printing plates were obtained. For the 1852 issue, the plates consisted of 100 designs, in four panes of 25 (5x5), without any margin print. The spacing between the stamps was 2 to 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ mm., the gutters, horizontal as well as vertical, were 10mm. wide (Fig. 142). There were six printing plates of the 5c, ten of the 10c and only one of the 15c. After each plate was manufactured, the transfer roll was slightly retouched, especially some lines deepened, so that the various plates can be partly distinguished by characteristics of the design. A transfer roll of the 10c suffered damage early in 1861, which is characterized by a small horizontal flaw on the king's forehead. This flaw, the so-called "horn" type, shows on all stamps of Plate VII, which came into use in June 1861. The flaw was then removed on the transfer roll, but the retouch is visible and shows on all stamps of Plate VIII, which was first used in July 1861. A new transfer roll was then made, so that Plate IX and X do not show any traces of the "horn". As the transfer process sometimes produced incomplete or only faintly defined parts of the designs, numerous retouches were made on the printing plates before they were put to print. But most of these retouches are so carefully executed that they are unnoticeable or almost unnoticeable, and none of them is conspicuous. For the 1864 and 1867 issues, the plates consisted of 200 designs, in 10 rows of 20. Of the 1864 issue, there were two plates each of the 5c and 10c, but the second plate of the 10c was never put to use; of the 15c, only one plate was made. Small inconspicuous retouches as on the plates of the 1852 issue can be found also on the plates of the 1864 issue. The plates again had no margin print. On the 1867 issue, plate numbers were applied for the first time. They are Roman figures, which were used to number the plates of all denominations in order of their manu-



Fig. 143



Fig. 144

facture. They were engraved on the bottom margin of the plate, below an arrow marking the center of the sheet (Fig. 143). A corresponding arrow was engraved on the upper margin (Fig. 144). There were two dies of all denominations. The first dies were found unsatisfactory and replaced by new dies, by engraving the figures of value in new working dies. These new dies (Type II) therefore differ from the old dies (Type I) in the shape of the figures of value. Plates I to XXIV were in Type I, plates XXV to LXXII in Type II; there were no plates consisting of both types, therefore they cannot come set-tenant. The plates of the 1852 and 1864 issues were made by the Royal Mint (Rijks Munt) of Utrecht, those of the 1867 issue by J. M. van Kempen en Zonen of Voorschoten.

The printing was done rather carefully, and no major printing varieties are recorded. All three classic issues were recess-printed on hand presses, on wetted paper. The wiping of the plates was thorough only for the earliest printings of the 1852 issue, which are on white or almost white paper. For later printings as well as those of the other two issues, the wiping was less carefully done, which resulted in a more or less distinct tinting of the paper in the color of the design. Frequently there are also more or less conspicuous smudges of color in the spaces between the stamps. So-called "double prints" which are known of all three issues, actually are only more or less pronounced "shifts", caused by slight shifting of the paper during the printing process. Until September 30, 1866, all stamps were printed by the Royal Mint (Rijks Munt) of Utrecht. From October 1, 1866 on, the printing was entrusted to Joh. Emschedé en Zonen

of Haarlem. The 1864 issue therefore was first printed at Utrecht and then at Haarlem. The Haarlem printings were first issued in March 1867 (5c), April 1867 (10c) and November 1867 (15c); they can be distinguished by the shades and other details.

(To be continued)

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

● The next issue of the *MERCURY STAMP JOURNAL* is scheduled for September 1962.

● *The Schedule for this Year's European Trip of our Editor* is the following: Departure from New York (one the "France") on May 25; London, May 30 to June 7 (Hotel Westbury, Bond St. at Conduit St., W.1); Geneva, June 7 to 10 (Hotel du Rhône); Basel, June 10 to 14 (Drachen Hotel); Wien, June 14 to 29 (Hotel Royal, I., Singerstrasse 3); München, June 29 to 30 (Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten, Maximilianstr. 4); Wiesbaden, June 30 to July 2 (Hotel Schwarzer Bock); Hannover, July 2 to 4 (Hotel Luisenhof, Luisenstr. 2/3); Hamburg, July 4 to 8 (Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten, Neuer Jungfernstieg 9-14); Stockholm, July 8 to 12 (Grand Hotel); Copenhagen, July 12 to 16 (Hotel Europa, V, H. C. Andersens Blvd. 50); London, July 16 to 20 (Hotel Westbury, Bond St. at Conduit St., W.1); Paris, July 20 to 27 (Hotel Scribe, 1 Rue Scribe) and Den Haag, July 27 to 31 (Grand Hotel Central, Lange Poten 6). Return to New York on August 8 (on the "Nieuw Amsterdam"). Mail should be sent to the above addresses well in advance, marked "Hold for arrival."

● *Herbert J. Bloch*, member of the Friedl Expert Committee and partner of the Mercury Stamp Company, will travel to Europe about the middle of July. He intends to visit two International Philatelic Exhibitions, the PRAGA 1962 at Prague, which is held from August 18 to September 2, and the LUPOSTA 1962 at West Berlin, scheduled for September 12 to 16. He will also visit France, Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland, possibly also some other countries. Return to New York is expected during the second half of September. As Mr. Bloch's definite schedule will be ready only about June 1, collectors and dealers who want to meet him should write after that date to the office of the Mercury