

Netherlands Mail in Times of Turmoil
Volume 3 1815–1839

The Post-Napoleonic Era and the Belgian Revolt



by Kees Adema RDP FRPSL
Published by The Stuart Rossiter Trust 2011
ISBN 978-0-9545207-8-6

The 272-page full colour third volume of the author's trilogy includes extensive historical background with never-before published illustrations.

In this, the third and final volume of the Times of Turmoil trilogy, the author has analysed the historical and philatelic consequences of the ill-fated union between the northern and southern low countries, The Netherlands and Belgium and the third partner, Luxembourg. The creation of the Kingdom of the United Netherlands was strongly endorsed by the victorious allies in the Vienna Congress. This early Benelux was seen as a northern buffer to thwart future expansionist ideas by France, which had seen a return of the Bourbon royals following the reign of Napoleon I.



King William I on a 3 guilder piece from 1817.

William of Orange-Nassau, oldest son of the exiled last stadholder William V, assumed the throne as King William I. Initially the merchant-king, as he was known, was quite popular but a series of unpopular measures resulted in a rift between north and south that eventually led to an armed uprising 15 years after the Kingdom had been created. It would take nine more years before William, by now embittered by his failure to preserve the union, would recognise Belgium.

Besides using material from his own collection the author has made grateful use of access provided to all major collections of letters related to the uprising and its aftermath including Dutch, Belgian and French military and other correspondence. The various collectors have been acknowledged in the book.

The lengthy political quagmire created a postal historian's paradise and this volume describes in detail the historical and philatelic aspects. Following the revolt in the summer of 1830, direct connections between north and south were severed yet soon the mail made it through anyway as Prussian forwarders created new postal routes. International connections too were quickly restored.



Map showing the various postal focus points.



Field post from the battle zone to Utrecht.

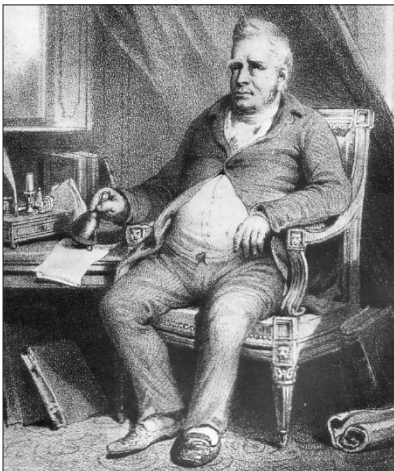
prized by collectors and various examples are shown. A compendium of these markings is included in the catalogue (Chapter 21).

Following intervention by French forces the Dutch retained only their Citadel stronghold near Antwerp but surrendered 23 December 1832 following a siege. Commandant Chassé and his force then spent some time in the prisoner of war camp St. Omer. Letters from this period include one from Chassé sent to Holland by gunboat over the Scheldt.



Army camp near Rijen.

Chapters 15 through 20 cover disinfected mail sent during the cholera epidemic of 1832, mail to and from Belgian-occupied 'Dutch' Limburg, the enclaves of Luxembourg and Maastricht, the resumption of direct mail services between Belgium and Holland and finally the return to normalcy following the London Peace Treaty of 1839.



Former King William I a few days before his death in 1843.

William's goal of ruling a united kingdom had evaporated due in large part to his stubborn nature and policies that had practically bankrupted the Dutch nation. Unfortunately history is replete with examples of rulers who squander their countries resources for reasons of misplaced pride, faulty ideals or vanity.

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