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Volume Title: Business Annals

Volume Author/Editor: Willard Long Thorp

Volume Publisher: NBER

Volume ISBN: 0-87014-007-8

Volume URL: <http://www.nber.org/books/thor26-1>

Publication Date: 1926

Chapter Title: The Annals of Netherlands

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Chapter URL: <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c4645>

Chapter pages in book: (p. 255 - 264)

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ANNALS OF THE NETHERLANDS.

The Netherlands, sometimes called Holland, is one of the smallest European nations. It lies in the northwest of Europe, bounded on the south by Belgium and on the east by Germany, otherwise by the sea. Much of its territory is flat and lies below the sea-level, protected by dikes. The area is partially land once under water, redeemed from the sea by extraordinary effort. The coast is relatively long and much indented. The Zuider Zee is a large inland sea covering nearly 2,000 square miles. The Rhine, Meuse, and Scheldt empty into the ocean from Dutch territory.

The area of the Netherlands is continually changing due to the action of the sea. On January 1, 1924, it was 13,208 square miles.¹ The census records of population in recent times are as follows:

December 31,—	Population ^a	Persons per Square Mile ^b
1879	4,012,693	315
1889	4,511,415	359
1899	5,104,137	400
1909	5,858,175	465
1920	6,865,314	545

^a Source same as for area. Figures for "population customarily resident".

^b Computed by multiplying by 2.59, data given originally in persons per square kilometer. Based on land area, not including inland waterways.

In 1921, the rural population and that of the smaller towns amounted to 54.3 per cent of the total, while 45.7 per cent lived in cities and towns of more than 20,000 inhabitants. There has been very little emigration from the Netherlands in recent years.

The importance of different types of economic activity, and the trend of development, can be seen in the following table of the distribution of male and female workers:

¹ Computed by multiplying by 0.3861, data in square kilometers given in Netherlands Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, *Jaarcijfers voor Nederland, 1923-24*. 's-Gravenhage, 1925. Area is for land plus inland waterways.

Industry	Per Cent of Total Workers ^a	
	Dec. 31, 1899	Dec. 31, 1920
Agriculture	30.0	22.9
Manufacturing, Mining and Construction...	34.2	37.8
Commerce and Transportation ^b	17.5	21.3
Other ^c	18.3	18.0
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Netherlands Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, *Jaarcijfers voor Nederland, 1906 and 1923-24.* 's-Gravenhage.

^b Includes persons engaged in commerce, communications, credit and banking, and insurance.

^c Includes persons engaged in hunting and fishing, professions, public and domestic service, and other activities.

Although agriculture has apparently declined in importance during the period covered by the above figures, this decline is purely a relative matter. Agriculture has actually increased in the number of its workers, but not as rapidly as the other types of economic activity. Approximately three-fourths of the land area is under cultivation, and the increase in recent years has been slight. Although there has been practically no change in the forty to sixty distribution of land used for pasture and for crops in the last fifty years, there has been a definite change in the type of crops cultivated. The production of cereals has been steadily decreasing and specialized products such as bulbs, seeds, vegetables, fruits, and flowers are increasing. Leading crops according to acreage are rye, potatoes, oats, sugar beets, and wheat. Cattle and dairy products are also of considerable importance.

The manufacturing industries of the Netherlands work under the peculiar disadvantage of having neither coal nor iron supplies of adequate size in the country. During the war, some coal mining was undertaken, but the supply is chiefly anthracite and found in narrow seams, making the mining expensive. The leading manufactured products are ships, cotton textiles, machinery, and margarine. In cutting diamonds, the Dutch have long been leaders of the world.

The Netherlands is a very active maritime nation and conducts an extensive carrying trade among other nations. In foreign trade, its imports have for many years exceeded its exports. At present, the leading imports are oil seeds, coal, and wheat; leading exports are vegetables, sugar, and vegetable oils.

Transportation in the Netherlands is by no means confined to railroads. There were about 2,000 miles of canals, 3,000 miles of

roads, 1,810 miles of tramways, and 2,400 miles of railroad in 1924. Some indication of the importance of the inland waterways is obtained from the following table, indicating the per cent distribution of freight according to the routes taken in foreign trade:

Routes	Per Cent Distribution of Foreign Trade Movements ^a			
	1913		1923	
	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
By Sea	43	22	56	32
By River or Canal	39	65	25	29
By Land	18	13	19 ^b	39 ^b
Total	100	100	100	100

^a *Jaarcijfers*, noted above.

^b Includes small entries by air.

It may be that the elaborate system of canals explains somewhat the tardy development of railroads in the Netherlands. The following table gives the length of railroad within the limits of the kingdom at various dates:

December 31,—	Miles of Railroad ^a
1860	208
1880	1,147
1890	1,636
1900	1,725
1910	2,054
1920	2,116

^a Netherlands Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, *Statistiek van het vervoes op de spoorwegen, . . . 1920*. (Bijdragen no. 341) 's-Gravenhage, 1922. Computed by multiplying by 0.000,621,37 data in meters.

The Bank of the Netherlands is a private bank with many agencies. It is the only bank given the right to issue bank notes in the Netherlands. There are also joint stock banks, which have formed special groups for concerted action.

The early years of the nineteenth century were years of extreme depression for the Netherlands, due to the maritime restrictions of Napoleon. In 1813, independence was recovered and union with Belgium established. This union was violently broken by Belgium in 1830. Interference by the large powers in 1831 brought apparent peace, but final settlement was not reached until 1839. Unrest and expensive armament during this period caused a long depression. About 1850, a period of prolonged prosperity, especially in agriculture, set in. The end of the Franco-Prussian War, the improving of ports,

and the opening of canals in the seventies proved a further aid to commerce. However, the rapid development of American competition in providing foodstuffs for Europe and a costly war with the Sultan of Acheen over the occupation of Sumatra, made themselves felt in the eighties. And the late years of the decade, which produced full prosperity in so many countries, developed it but mildly in the Netherlands.

- 1890 Mild prosperity.
Continued activity; increase in foreign trade.
Money tightens; severe financial strain, autumn.
Fair rye and oats, poor potato crop.
King William III dies, and Queen Emma becomes Regent, November.
- 1891 Recession.
Gradual decline in activity; much speculation; extension of merchant marine and further increase in foreign trade.
Money eases somewhat, first quarter.
Rye and potato crop failures, record oats yield.
- 1892 Depression.
Dullness and inactivity; severe depression in shipping and diamond industries; reduction in foreign trade.
Money eases.
Excellent crops.
- 1893 Depression.
Continued dullness; commodity speculation with sharp drop in prices of foodstuffs; some revival in foreign trade.
Money tightens severely to November.
Excellent potato, good rye, and poor oats crops.
- 1894 Depression.
Continued inactivity; further decline in price of foodstuffs; some increase in imports.
Money eases.
Good rye and oats, very poor potato crops; severe agricultural distress.
- 1895 Depression.
Dullness continued; labor troubles; further reduction in price of foodstuffs; decrease in imports, increase in exports.
Money very easy; South African gold mining speculation causes bourse crisis, November.
Good crops.

- 1896 **Revival.**
General improvement, especially in shipping; prices of foodstuffs reach lowest point; marked improvement in foreign trade.
Money tightens.
Excellent rye and oats, good potato crop.
- 1897 **Mild prosperity.**
Increased activity; commodity prices rise; foreign trade booms.
Tight money eases gradually.
Fair crops, good oats.
- 1898 **Prosperity.**
Continued activity and expansion; further slight rise in prices; some increase in foreign trade.
Money eases.
Excellent rye and oats, fair potato crop.
Queen Wilhelmina accedes to throne, August.
- 1899 **Prosperity.**
Continued activity, but lessened expansion; some advance in price of foodstuffs; further expansion of foreign trade.
Money very tight, especially late in year.
Good crops, record potato yield.
Peace Conference at the Hague, July; much excitement over the Boer War, autumn.
- 1900 **Prosperity.**
Continued activity; manufacturing progresses despite high costs; severe railroad strike, April; further increase in foreign trade.
Tight money eases slowly.
Excellent rye and oats, poor potato crop.
- 1901 **Recession; mild depression.**
Gradual decline to depression, especially shipping; raw material prices high; increase of foreign trade checked.
Money fairly easy.
Record crops.
- 1902 **Depression.**
Continued inactivity and dullness; prices of foodstuffs decline; revival in foreign trade.
Money easy.
Excellent crops, low prices.

- 1903 Depression.
Continued dullness in home trade; severe strikes early in year; further increase in foreign trade, especially exports.
Money tightens; wild speculation in American securities causes panic.
Excellent rye and oats, very poor potato crops.
- 1904 Revival; prosperity.
Marked improvement except shipping industry; sharp rise in price of foodstuffs; slight increase in imports.
Money eases.
Fair rye and oats crops, excellent potato yield.
- 1905 Prosperity.
Activity and expansion; shipping industry revives; marked increase in imports.
Money very easy and abundant.
Poor crops, especially oats.
- 1906 Prosperity.
Activity; industries flourish; commodity prices rise; increased failures; decreased imports, increased exports; merchant marine at peak registration.
Money tightens, autumn.
Excellent crops.
- 1907 Prosperity; recession.
Activity and expansion of commerce and industry yields in autumn to inactivity and dullness; many failures, spring and late in year; commodity prices rise; very active foreign trade.
Money tight, especially autumn; tremendous fall in security prices.
Excellent crops.
- 1908 Depression; revival.
Inactivity and dullness give way to rapid revival, autumn; continued rise in commodity prices; rapid recovery of foreign trade after slight check.
Money eases.
Excellent crops, especially rye.
Punitive expedition sent to Venezuela.
- 1909 Revival; prosperity.
Continued improvement to prosperity; building boom; commodity prices rise; marked increase in foreign trade.
Money easy.
Excellent rye, good potato, and fair oats crops.

- 1910 Prosperity.
Continued activity, stimulated by rubber and oil booms; more rapid rise in prices; further increase in foreign trade.
Easy money tightens, spring; financial strain.
Fair crops.
- 1911 Prosperity.
Continued activity and expansion; further rise in prices; lessened increase in foreign trade.
Money tight, with ease in summer.
Excellent crops.
- 1912 Prosperity.
Continued activity; rapid rise in commodity prices; foreign trade booms.
Money tight.
Fair crops; record potato yield and oats failure.
- 1913 Prosperity; recession.
Continued activity with signs of slackening; severe decline in commodity prices; increased imports, but exports unchanged.
Money tighter, July.
Good crops except poor potato yield.
- 1914 Recession; panic; depression.
Continued decline to war; complete interruption of business; rapid rise of commodity prices; severe restriction of foreign trade.
Money tight; panic with war; foreign exchange goes to a slight premium; stock exchange closed; export of gold prohibited.
Good crops, except complete failure of rye; prices fair.
Neutrality declared.
- 1915 Revival; uneven prosperity.
Gradual readjustment; prosperity and extreme activity in war industries and necessities; severe unemployment relieved somewhat, last quarter; commodity prices boom; further decline in foreign trade, due to navigation difficulties.
Money easy; exchange depreciates to below par, February, but improves rapidly, last four months; stock exchange reopened, February.
Excellent crops, especially oats and potatoes.
Diplomatic difficulties concerning sinking of Dutch ships by submarines.

- 1916 Moderate prosperity.
Continued activity, curtailed by shortage of raw materials and restriction of foreign trade; fuller employment; large war profits; continued boom in commodity prices.
Money easy; foreign exchange at premium, but gradually declining.
Very poor crops.
Flood with breaking of Zuider Zee dike, January; war scare, March; government given full power for intervention in industry and trade, August; food rationing adopted, October.
- 1917 Recession.
Activity severely hampered by coal shortage, lack of raw materials, and blockade; England prohibits coal export to Holland, March; extensive unemployment; further rise in prices; very small foreign trade.
Money fairly easy; exchange falls nearly to par, first quarter, and then advances gradually.
Poor crops, except fair potato yield.
Distress.
- 1918 Depression.
Industry and trade inactive; commodity prices rise to peak; many failures; foreign trade completely stopped, some revival with Armistice.
Money rates steady; exchange rises to record premium, but falls rapidly after August.
Some improvement in crops, except rye.
Riots and much distress; war scare, April; Allies seize Dutch ships.
- 1919 Revival; prosperity.
Boom in trade and industry; severe labor troubles; commodity prices lower; very active foreign trade.
Money rates steady; gradual decline in exchange, passing par, June.
Good rye and potato crops, fair oats yield.
- 1920 Prosperity; recession; depression.
Continued activity gives way to depression in autumn; severe strikes, May; some improvement in commodity prices to July, with sharp decline, last quarter; unemployment late in year; very active foreign trade.
Money easy and abundant; rapid depreciation of exchange to minimum point, November.
Fair rye and potato crops, excellent oats yield.

1921 Depression.

Trade and industry at a standstill; continued rapid decline of prices checked, May; labor troubles, especially strike in metal industries, last quarter; unemployment; foreign trade activity continues.

Money tight; after period of recovery, foreign exchange depreciates further, summer, but improves late in year.

Excellent rye, good oats, and very poor potato yields.

1922 Depression.

Severe depression; acute unemployment and many failures; further decline in commodity prices; increased volume of foreign trade, decreased value.

Money eases; exchange gradually rises, nearly reaching par at end of year; two serious bank failures.

Good rye, poor oats, and enormous potato crops.

1923 Depression.

Continued dullness; shipping and industry inactive; extensive unemployment; further decline in prices to low point, August; fishing improves; larger foreign trade, especially exports.

Easy money tightens severely; Hanze Bank failure; stock market dull with slight revival, end of year; slight decline in foreign exchange, especially last quarter.

Good oats, poor rye and potato crops.

1924 Revival.

Steady improvement becomes marked, autumn; diminished unemployment; labor troubles; increased number of failures; sharp rise in commodity prices, late autumn; improvement in foreign trade, with marked expansion of import trade.

Money market eases somewhat, with temporary tightness, summer; stock market dull except at the beginning and end of year; foreign exchange gradually improves, exceeding parity at end of year.

Fair rye and potato crops, poor oats.

Import duties increased.

1925 Mild prosperity.

Quiet activity; continued though declining unemployment; marked improvement in textile industries; fewer failures; commodity prices decline rapidly, first quarter, but then stabilize; increased foreign trade, profiting from tin and rubber booms.

Money easy, official discount rate being twice reduced; gold standard resumed, April, and gold currency put into circulation, November; marked rise in security prices, last half-year, bonds reaching peak, October, and stocks, December.

Good crops, lower prices.

Internal political difficulties.