



E. J. BRILL — PUBLISHERS — LEIDEN

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON
PRICE HISTORY

INQUIRY INTO THE HISTORY OF PRICES IN HOLLAND

BY

N. W. POSTHUMUS

Professor in Economic History at the University of Amsterdam

VOL. I

WHOLESALE PRICES AT THE EXCHANGE OF
AMSTERDAM 1585-1914

RATES OF EXCHANGE AT AMSTERDAM 1609-1914

1946. cxxii, 32, 660 p. 4to.

In buckram Dutch Gld. 50.—

The History of Prices in the Netherlands by Professor N. W. Posthumus of the University of Amsterdam is one of a series of works on this subject, published by the International Scientific Committee on Price History under the direction of Lord Beveridge.

Professor Posthumus' treatise concerns the wholesale prices of 223 goods, negotiated at the Amsterdam Exchange of Merchandises between 1585-1914.

During the 17th and 18th centuries the Amsterdam Exchange was of primary importance for the international trade of Europe, and the prices were widely quoted.

The remarkable features of this book are firstly, that the prices are throughout derived from one and the same source, the regular "price-currants", of which Professor Posthumus, starting with two copies, collected more than 3000, spread over the whole world between Amsterdam, Stockholm, Sevilla, Vienna and Batavia.

Secondly all the prices are monthly ones, which is quite unique for so many data during such a long period. This material should be most valuable for research workers in economics or in history as well as for the elucidation of business cycles.

Finally the book contains the monthly rates of exchange between Amsterdam and several important commercial centers for about the same period (1609-1914).

In the introduction Professor Posthumus gives an extensive survey of various aspects of the collected data.

Publication of this unusually well presented book was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. A Dutch edition appeared during the war in occupied Holland.

"... Professor Posthumus hoped to provide a basis for the refinement and extension of our historical knowledge of Dutch economic life. This he has done in an admirable fashion. The price data reflect the economic greatness of Holland, and they cover a large part of the chief staples of international commerce. The continuous monthly wholesale prices for extremely sensitive commodities in 1764-1803 are unsurpassed for the historical study of business cycles. ... Posthumus probably has the most continuous and complete prices for an extensive list of metals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ever assembled for any country. The foreign-exchange rates at Amsterdam on the other leading centers of international finance are also unexcelled. No one can foresee all the uses that may be made of this material".

Prof. Earl J. Hamilton (Northwestern University, U.S.A.)
in the *Journal of Economic History*, May 1946.

MEDE VERKRIJGBAAR DOOR BEMIDDELING VAN DE BOEKHANDEL