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BULLETIN 154

April 2010

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The Study Circle website
- particularly useful for viewing auction lots!
www.belgian-congo-study-circle.be

Annual General Meeting, 2010

Further details of the meeting held in Brussels on 20th March will be included in the next Bulletin. However, and of immediate relevance, mention must be made of Walter Deijnckens who after 7 years of dedication and commitment to the Study Circle, has retired as President. On a personal note I thank Walter for his 'on call' unstinting support to me as Hon. Secretary and as a major contributor to the Bulletin.

We all extend congratulations to Thierry Frennet as his successor and our new President.



Officers - Election

President	<i>T. Frennet</i>
International General Secretary	<i>S.S. Smith</i>
Honorary Treasurer	<i>C. Lloyd</i>
Regional Sec. – Belgium	<i>P. Maselis</i>
Regional Sec. – USA	<i>D. A. Schaubroeck</i>
Regional Sec. – UK + other	<i>S .S .Smith</i>
Bulletin Editor	<i>S. S. Smith</i>
Auction Secretaries	<i>Ph. Lindekens and C. Stockmans</i>
Auction Finance Officer	<i>L. Achten</i>
Librarian/Book sales	<i>B H. Harris</i>
Packet Sec. – Belgium	<i>C. Henuzet</i>
Packet Sec. – UK	<i>J.F. Kelland</i>
Expertisation: Chairman and committee	<i>C. Henuzet, G. Gudenkauf, L. Vander Maercken</i>
- Consultants	<i>L. Tavano and P. Lindekens</i>

Stuart smith

From the new President -



On behalf of all our members I extend a big thank you to Walter Deijnckens for the last seven years during which he was the President of our club.

It is with thanks to him, that the B.C.S.C. remains even more vibrant. The meetings in Bruxelles have encouraged greater membership attendance because the presentations have been so interesting. The five displays showed recently by Walter at Antwerp 2010 illustrate very well the diversity and depth of his knowledge. It was our good fortune to have him as our longest serving president and particularly so, to still have him active member.

I sincerely thank all those who were present to elect me as your new President. I will continue to support with great enthusiasm the activities of our club and hope to fulfil your expectations.

Thierry Frennet

Membership News

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to Lucien Janssens, Luc Ribbens, Bart Willekens and the return of Danny Van der Hauwaert to membership of the Study Circle. We extend a welcoming hand and hope they will enjoy and benefit from their association with us.

<i>Belgium.</i>	- Lucien Janssens	Clos Hof te Ophem, 14/19 1070 Bruxelles Email: janssens.lucien@skynet.be
	- Luc Ribbens	Heerwegg Zuid 41 9052 Gent Email: africamatters@telenet.be
	- Bart Willekens	St. Sebastiaansstraat 35/5 8800 Roeselare Email: bart@willekens.be
	- Danny Van der Hauwaert	Anne Frankplein 9 bus 3 3500 Hasselt Email: danny.vanderhauwaert@skynet.be

Residential and email address changes

<i>Belgium</i>	- Théo Hordies	Chaussée d'Alseberg 905 Boite 64 1180 Uccle
<i>Denmark</i>	- Johan Jantzen:	Gammel Østergade 3C, 2.5 DK-9400 Nørresundby Denmark



Roger Gallant

Due to health problems, Roger Gallant has resigned from the Study Circle of which he has been a member for very many years.

He began work in 1939 as a clerk with the Belgian Postal Administration, was a World War II veteran and returned to occupied Germany for military postal service. He left for the Belgian Congo in September 1946 and after many years service there, went on to work for the World Postal Union in Africa, Vietnam and Laos.

Five years ago and at the age of 85 he wrote a two volume book on the postal service in the Belgian Congo from 1886 until independence in 1960. This extensive and comprehensive work is a lasting testament to his own colonial career that ended after a period as 'Postal Province Manager'.

We wish Roger a happy and long lasting further retirement.

Walter Deijnckens.

ANTVERPIA 2010

We offer congratulations to our members who exhibited and competed at this years ANTVERPIA exhibition.

“Whilst personally unaware of our entry, the Bulletin also received recognition with a ‘Large Silver Medal’ Ed.”



Fepa Competition

Category

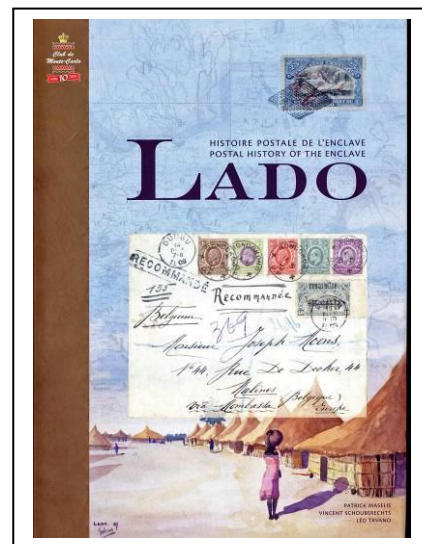
Traditional	97%	Patrick Maselis	‘Les médaillons 1849-1866’
Postal History	78%	Walter Deijnckens	‘Star cancellation in Belgian Congo 1921-1930’
Aero philately	81%	J-P Flamand’	‘Airmails of Belgian Congo, 1921-1945’
Literature	75%	B.C.S.C.	‘2008 Bulletins, 146-149’
	96%	Patrick Maselis	‘MonacoPhil 2009, Belgian philatelic exhibition catalogue’

National Competition

Traditional	85%	Walter Deijnckens	‘Belgian Congo National Parks issue’
	75%	Wim Lambrechts	100 jaar verbinding Oostende-Dover, 1846-1946’
Postal History	92%	Walter Deijnckens	‘From Tabora to Kisenyi’
	78%	Frans Danneels	‘De mechanische afstempelingen gebruikt in Belgie tijdens WO’
Postal Stationery	81%	Walter Deijnckens	‘Belgian Congo Postal Stationery, 1908-1960’

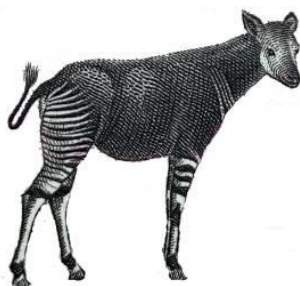
Addition to the library – ‘Postal history of the enclave Lado’

Patrick Maselis’ has donated to the library a copy of the Maselis, Schouberechts and Tavano jointly authored definitive publication on the postal history of the Lado. This work of art, *not too strong a commendation*, was published on the occasion of the “Collective exhibition dedicated to Belgian Philately” at MonacoPhil 2009.



For any member with interests in the Lado, this is a must. It is available on request from the library, however be aware that at in excess of 2 kilos, it is significantly heavy and postage costs are likely to be high.

From the Hon. Secretary



Since joining the Study Circle nearly 40 years ago and in falling in-line with what the majority of members have historically used - I confess that even as a British born and resident citizen it is the Belgian 'COB' catalogue to which I would previously have made a first referral for information. However, and because of the many disparities between one catalogue and another - I use it only as a guide to a stamps value. Stanley Gibbons was a natural first choice for everywhere else but my first 'Congo' catalogue even predates my Study Circle membership and was a 1951 '23rd edition Prinnet' - most definitely the best and most extensive Belgian Congo catalogue listing I have ever owned. Whilst in a fairly tatty state by now, it remains an invaluable and concise source of information. Whatever happened to this publication?

About a year ago one of our new British members wrote for clarification about a 'Mols' 10 franc CONGO BELGE typographed stamp in his collection, referring to it as from the 'Princes' issue. It wasn't, but this prompted attention to the confusing statement in Stanley Gibbons 'Benelux' catalogue under the heading of the 1909 typograph overprinted stamps which read and regrettably still reads:

'In March 1909 a new printing of all values was made. ... These stamps, known as the Princes' Printing are always perf 14..... The prices quoted for No. 55, [10 fr.] and also for Nos. 53a/b [3f.50] and 55a [10 fr. double overprint] which only exist from this printing, are for the Princes Printing, other prices are for the original printing.'

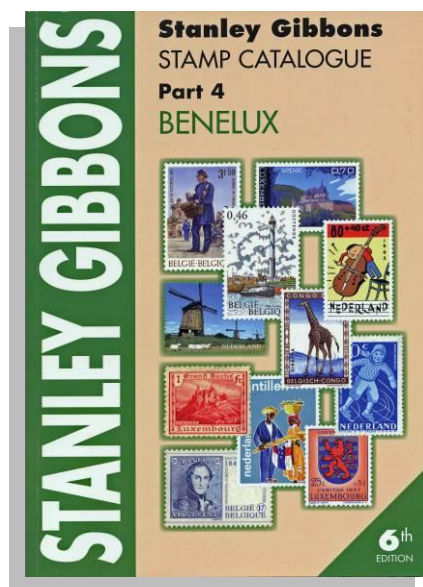
To my knowledge, this description has been in place for at least 20 years and clearly implies that both the 3fr.50 and 10 franc typograph overprinted stamps, only exist from the 'Princes' printing. This of course is undisputedly incorrect.

Consequently, I wrote to Stanley Gibbons drawing attention to the erroneous statement and also questioning the rationality of quoting prices for typo overprints of these two values as part of the 'Princes' printing, whilst all other stamps listed as typo, are from the previous non-Princes issues. I suggested to them that when the next catalogue was produced, they should address the error, consider their statement and rephrase.

Shortly after and in acknowledging my letter, they advised that the next '6th edition Part 4 Benelux Catalogue' was actually on the drawing board and extended an invitation to offer comments and any suggestions for improvement of the section relevant to the Belgian Congo. I felt privileged, did just that and now have pleasure of drawing attention to some of the more significant changes introduced in this January 2010 published edition which I commend to you. For those 'value' minded members - it will give you the opportunity to pick and choose between the *Catalogue Officiel de Timbre-Poste Belgique* and that of *Stanley Gibbons*. Whether buying or selling, have both under your arm as there are some significant variances.

It is no good me pretending to understand the rationale behind many 'price' decisions but it does appear that this Gibbons catalogue realistically reflects the scarcity of many commercially used 'Charity' as well as some of the difficult to find 'Commemorative' issues.

C.O.B. deals with the *CTO versus commercial* usage, in part, by including a separate listing for stamps on cover. If catalogue values are the determining factor, Belgium would be a preferred choice when buying many of the middle period [1923-1940] issues.



All illustrations now appear in colour and the following additional well known common plate combination varieties are identified and clearly reproduced for all to see:-

‘Mols’:1900, 5 centimes green - with and without the small engraved circle below the bottom right frame line.

1915, 40 centimes – Pirogue, with and without the hole in its shell.

50 centimes – Steam engine with clean and smoky emissions.

Both first printings of the Mols 5 and 10 centimes stamps have previously been erroneously described as ‘Blue’. Visual interpretation of colour is both genetic and subjective, but in the case of these two stamps was never blue. These have now been corrected and brought in line with Stanley Gibbons ‘Stamp Colour Key’ and more correctly described as Turquoise-blue.

Much attention has been paid in re-assessment of stamp values and the prices quoted identify and reflect the scarcer perf. 15 variant of the 1910 and 1915 issues, including those subsequently overprinted as the ‘Malines’ and ‘Recuperation issues.

The previously overvalued first printing of the 1915, 15 centimes type I - *Palm fond without spines, [palmier coupé]* - has been reassessed and now more closely reflects its relative scarcity rather than rarity!

Having drawn attention to the erroneous statement about the Princes typographed overprint of the 3fr. 50 and 10 franc stamps, one has to assume that its inclusion is an editorial oversight; but I am pleased to report that the equally erroneous statement referring to the 1915, 5 centimes design - *“The 5c. is from a retouched die”* has been removed. This stamp frame was a new design!

Whilst essentially confining this review to the earlier stamps from the Congo, I have noticed only one other howler. Should any member come across a duplicate S.G. 29d, [COB 29C] 10 franc with inverted centre, I will very happily pay ‘a multiple of catalogue’ and personally travel anywhere in the world to collect it. Investment recommendation is not something I would normally make, but without reservation this is a particularly good buy at full cat. - £325.00.

The catalogue is priced at £39.95 and Stanley Gibbons offers Study Circle members a 5% discount off the new edition and 10% for bulk orders of 10 or more. The offer is only available to orders by telephone [not on the internet]. To take advantage of this offer, please contact Stuart Smith for a reference code..

Snippets of information

Bulletin 152 - *Have you seen this ‘dumb’ canceller before?*

By way of a reminder, here is a pair of stamps previously illustrated in Bulletin 152 enquiring if anyone could identify the cancellation and/or provide further information of its use.



Charles Henuzet responds as follows and effectively confirms the opinion previously proffered.

‘The cachet was used before 1900 as a ‘dumb’ canceller by the Independent State authorities on stamps which had slipped through the net and not been previously cancelled.

It had been designed and manufactured in Belgium for that specific purpose and essays were produced using both violet and red inks. The single star at its centre is intended as representative of that used on the original Independent State flag.’

Addenda

[1] 'The Cancellations of Normal Post Offices, etc. Heim & Keach.' *Shinkalobwe*, page 62.

Walter Deijnckens has sent the following new information, confirmed as illustrated here.

Type 8A1. Dates of use extended to 1st August 1961



[2] Bulletin 153 – '5c Mols Plate Combinations'

I am indebted to Leo Tavano for drawing my attention to the editorial omission of combination 'III2+C' under the heading of '1921 recuperation' overprinted stamps, which should be amended to read:

1921 *Recuperation*

III1+B3 blue-green

III1+B4b

III1+B6

III2+B7

III2+C

IV+D1

IV+D2

Furthermore I am prompted into drawing attention to the following additional helpful information which will also be incorporated into the final assembled publication on 'Identifying the Mols plate combinations' – refer Bulletin 153, Preface.

1. Princes Printing:

The frame length of 5 centimes 'Princes' printed stamps is shorter at marginally over 34 mm than those of the previous printings at 34½.

2. Plate 'VI'

The 'tiny green guide dot which appears in the left hand white vertical line, right of the torch', has been removed.

Platers

Danny Vander Hauwaert offers to help!

For many years as a 'Plater', I enjoyed and greatly benefited from the excellent service provided by Ray Keach who acted as the focal and assembly point for those exchanging and filling those elusive plating gaps. Since Ray sadly passed away, nobody has successfully filled this role but it is my intention to do so.



However, let it be clear that whilst I am offering to be that focal figure by assembling members *want* and *duplicate* lists of plated stamps, it is not my intention to offer to plate other member's stamps. First I need to establish the names of all those interested in such a service and invite members to let me know either by mail or email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Danny Van der Hauwaert
Anne Frankplein 9 bus 3
3500 Hasselt
Belgium

Email: danny.vanderhauwaert@skynet.be

A visit to the Beni Post Office in Kivu Province

Marc Parren

Preface

Rarely do we receive philatelically related communications from correspondents who are presently or have recently visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Marc Parren, a 'Program Team Leader' for the Tropenbos International Congo-basin Program and author of this article is one such person. Here he shares his findings on his visit to the Beni Post Office.

In April 2009 I paid my first visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo as a member of an exploratory mission to start a research project related to the Congo-Basin forests. After an introductory visit to meet the central government authorities in Kinshasa, I flew off to Kisangani in the heart of this vast country. I had to board a 'Hewa Bora Airways' supposedly direct flight to Kisangani, - the name of which made me think I might be going to support the Taliban. However, that was not the case and we headed for Goma enabling me to see this remarkable town on Lake Kivu. The runway, still partly covered by the 2002 lava flow, was short and did not make you feel at ease while landing! After less than an hour we took off again and landed safely in Kisangani, formerly Stanleyville - a town alongside the river Congo and the last to which the transport boats from Kinshasa can reach. Next, we drove in two days a stretch of some 700 km from Kisangani to Beni on a dirt road, recently upgraded by the Chinese.

Beni is a provincial town with some banks and commercial enterprises, but without electricity; I decided to visit the local post office which was located at the administrative quarter.

Figure 1. The Beni Post Office on 9th April 2009, still retained signs of its colonial past with the 'Express Mail Service' advertisement painted on the wall.



Figure 1.

Figure 2. I wanted to send a registered letter to my home in Cameroon and the postmaster Mr. Gabriel Lumika, proved to be very helpful. Here he is cancelling the registration slip but note the other canceller on the desk which was one of a number of bi-lingual instructional handstamps still in use and dating back to the colonial period.



Figure 2.

Figures 3 and 4. According to the registration slip, the postal fee was 2400 FC (Congolese Francs) but as can be seen, only six 350 FC stamps [a total of 2100FC], depicting President Joseph Kabila, were affixed.



Figure 3.

When all was ready, the registered letter ended up in the mail bag about to leave for the flight to Goma later that morning. To sum up, it was addressed to Yaoundé, registered, posted in Beni on 9 April 2009, and bears the transit marks of Goma 9 April, Kinshasa 22 April (in red ink), the rather indistinct mark of 'Yaoundé Tri' in Cameroon on 7 May - probably transported by 'Kenya Airways'. The final destination hand over was at 'Yaoundé - Nlongkak' on 12th May. It took over one month to reach its destination.

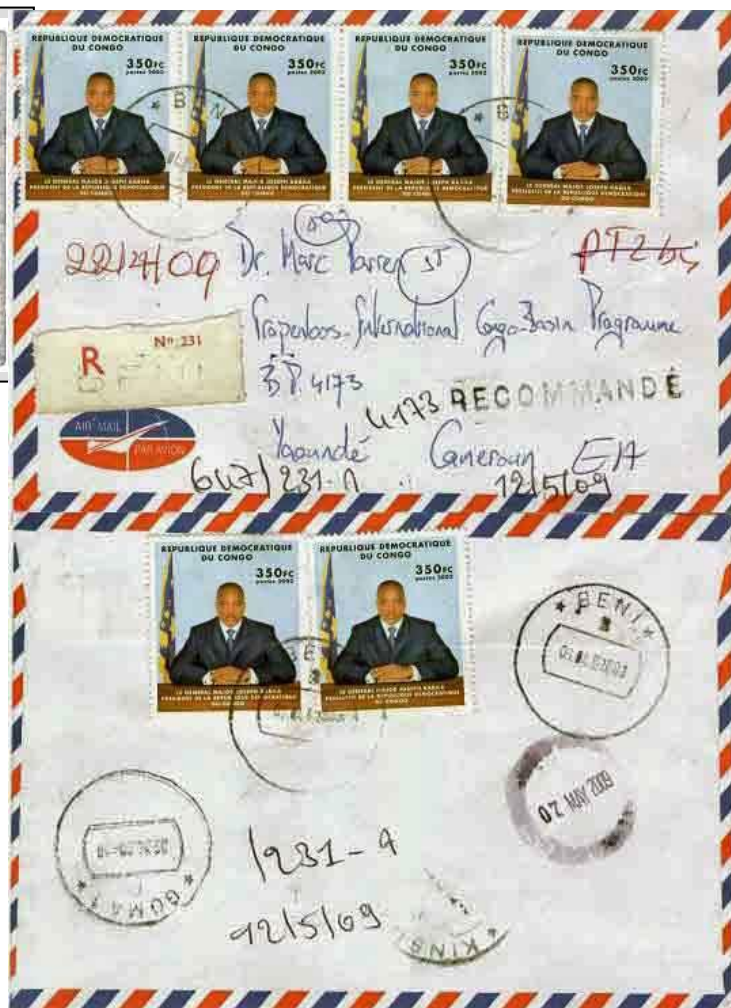


Figure 4.

**Beni Post Office – ‘EMS postmark with Code 21’
and ‘Postbag label’**

Figure 5. The Beni post office also operates as an agent of Express Mail Service, ‘EMS’ and is listed nationally as number 21.



Figure 5.

Figure 6. In common with its earlier history, it appears that the office is in some way linked or under the jurisdiction of Goma. A post bag label of 15th February indicates that transportation was by ‘Compagnie Africaine d’Aviation’. This flight connects Goma with Kisangani, with stopovers at Beni and Bunia.



Figure 6.

X-X

Letter to the Editor

Since Marc Parren wrote the above article, I have received the following further communication from him, which I am sure will be of great interest to all.

9th February 2010

“I was visiting the Province Orientale in Democratic Republic of the Congo on the philatelic front I posted three letters at the Kisangani post office, of which one was registered and they charged me US \$20! At first the lady did not even affix any postage or meter stamps and when I questioned this they each finally got a meter stamp. I am still to see whether they will arrive at their destinations!

I also had a letter posted in Bunia which is a relatively large town, but had no time to visit the post office and so handed it over to someone we collaborate with. He told me that the post office did not accept letters but I asked him to give it a try. Two days later he called confirming that none were accepted but that he would arrange for it to be posted in Beni, where it would be accepted.

It is interesting to find that some of the former colonial post offices still retain their personnel but do not handle letters themselves as they lack the materials, albeit the post office ‘boxes’ are still operational.

As an example I visited Mambasa and an NGO gave me their local PO Box number. Any letters addressed to that box will be transported to the Bunia post office. The Bunia office then hands over that correspondence to anyone travelling to Mambasa - to be handed to the local postmaster. He then calls the addressee to announce their/its arrival.

I am of the opinion that for the Province Orientale, only the Kisangani office is still operational.

Marc Parren

Captain Manduau's 'Hand stamps' 1884

Patrick Maselis

Preface

This is the second of a two part article, previously published in the November 2009 edition of 'London Philatelist' and which has been awarded the RPSL Society 'Tapling Medal'. In 'Part I' the author dealt with the Hertwig postmarks used on the 'North-South route' and in conclusion we have here the 'Hand stamps' created by Captain Manduau for the 'Southern route'.



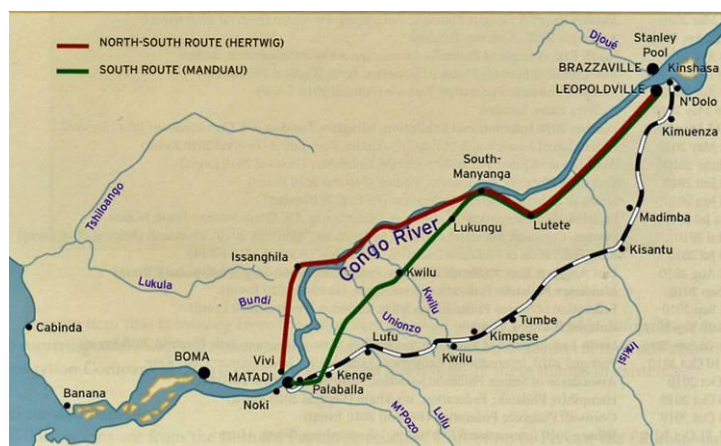
Mr. Manduau in the Congo
Courtesy of Royal Museum for Central Africa
Tervuren, Belgium

Supply routes to and from Leopoldville

During the period from December 1883 to January 1885, two routes were used: the North-South route: Issanghila-South Manyanga-Leopoldville and the Southern route: Vivi-South Manyanga-Leopoldville.

Southern route: Vivi-South Manyanga-Leopoldville

Commander Vetch undertook the construction of a causeway following an existing track which ran from South Manyanga to Vivi without going by river. Work commenced in March 1884 and was finished that summer. All the Manduau mail went via this route.



Edouard Manduau was hired by the AIC as a clerk on 1 April 1884 for a three year term but returned to Europe at his own request on 18 March 1885.

Like Hertwig, he also took it upon himself to make a personal contribution to the improvement of the embryonic postal services of the Congo at that time. In Manduau's case this initiative took the form of applying a one- or two-line handstamp to outgoing mail bound for Europe, for which four different types have been found, illustrated here in figure 1, as Types a, b, c and d.

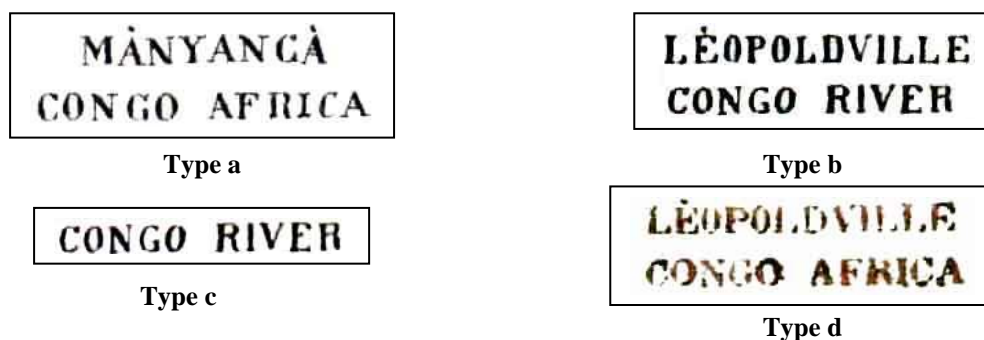


Figure 1.

These postmarks of origin are known on mail despatched between June 1884 and June 1885 and are found in both red and black.

Figure 2.

The earliest recorded Manduau cover is a letter from Manyanga on 26th June 1884 with the two-line type 'a' 'MANYANGA/CONGO AFRICA' handstamp in red. It bears the endorsements 'stamps not procurable' and 'By Portuguese Mail' together with a manuscript '8', indicating the postage due which was applied on arrival in London.



Figure 2. Courtesy of Danny Swart, South Africa

Figure 3 illustrates a second and official cover from the 'Association Internationale Africaine' with their heading printed on the envelope. It was dispatched in June 1884 and addressed to the director of the Institut Cartographique, with the 'MANYANGA/CONGO AFRICA' Manduau mark in red. It bears the Brussels arrival stamp, dated 25 August 1884 and a '5' indicating the postage due in décimes.



Figure 3.

Figure 4. This third letter was quite heavy (18 grams = 2 rates) and bears the two-line type 'd' 'LEOPLDVILLE/CONGO AFRICA' Manduau mark in red. It also bears the extremely rare transit stamp of the Angolan post office in Banana applied on 19 September 1884. A Lisbon transit mark is dated 19 October 1884 and a '10' indicating the postage due in décimes, was applied on arrival in Brussels on 22 October 1884. This is the only Manduau cover, and one of only six known, that bears the circular date stamp of the Angolan post office in Banana.

Figure 5. The type 'b' mark LEOPLDVILLE/CONGO RIVER is known on a 100 reis (double UPU rate) franked letter, posted 25 September 1884. This Manduau mark of origin is in red. The Angolan stamp was tied by a Lisbon transit circular date stamp of 15 November 1884 and there is a Brussels arrival stamp on the back, dated 20 November 1884.

Figure 6. The letter is franked with two 50 reis stamps making a double rate, dispatched 29 September 1884 and also addressed to Brussels. It bears the Manduau type 'c' mark of origin, 'CONGO RIVER'. The Angolan stamps were tied by the Lisbon circular date stamp on 15 January 1885. On arrival at its destination it received the Brussels receiving office stamp on its back, dated 18 January 1885.



Figure 4.
Courtesy of Paolo Bianchi



Figure 5.



Figure 6.

Figure 7. The last recorded letter is franked with a Portuguese 50 reis postage stamp. It is dated 12 March 1885 and addressed to Brussels. It bears the Manduau *type 'c'* 'CONGO RIVER' mark of origin. The Portuguese stamp was tied by the Funchal ellipsoid date stamp, on arrival and in transit at Funchal on 18 March 1885. Apparently in Madeira, the cover was transferred from a Portuguese to a British mail boat. For the Congo, this is the only cover known having travelled on ships from two different countries and is very unusual.



Figure 7.

The cover bears the Liverpool transit mark dated 21 March 1885 and the Brussels arrival stamp dated 23 March 1885 on the back.

Figure 8. Edouard Manduau also created a design for a very rudimentary postage stamp showing an elephant and a shining sun in the background. The denomination is given in *mitacos*, the local currency in use at this time, consisting of two small bars of copper soldered together in the form of a cross of which an example is shown here. It was later used as an emblem of the flag of Katanga from 1960 to 1963 and appears on Katanga stamps of that period.



Figure 8.

All the labels found so far have been over-struck in black with the 'CONGO' handstamp. The typeface used is clearly identical to that found on the handstamps Manduau used to apply his office of origin postmark, but merely without the word 'RIVER'.

It goes without saying that as this was a private initiative without any official sanction; it has to be considered as a rejected design.

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5. De Clerq Leo, *Communication du Land van Waas*, info 25-26

Identifying the Mols plate combinations

Stuart Smith

Much of that which follows has been extracted from B.P. Hudson's original work previously published in the Bulletin, and that source is acknowledged. However, Brian's original article included few if any, useful illustrations so I have incorporated examples from my own collection in an attempt to complement the text and assist identification.

Since publication of Brian Hudson's original articles, Léo Tavano has provided additional updates, proof read my text and made suggestions for improvement which are incorporated. Amongst these, he has stressed the usefulness of dates of issue, as a further aid in identification/confirmation of used stamps with postmarks that can be read. The dates stated are prefixed 'F.C.' being those from file copies and therefore only a guide to actual dates of availability issue - which at best will be several weeks later. The precise dates of availability at post offices will also vary depending on their individual locations – where known to me, the printing dates are provided and may be helpful.

10 Centimes 'Stanley Falls'

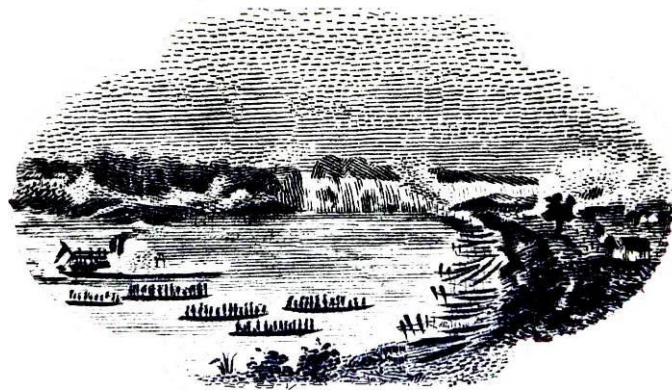


Plate combinations

COB	SG	Date of issue		
17	19	1894	I1+A1	Original frame and centre plates
17-18	19-25	1894-5	I1+A2	Centres partly re-entered
18	25	1896	I2+A2	Lay marks added to frame plate
			I2+A3	Centres partly re-entered
19	31	1900	I2+A4	Centres re-entered
			I3+A5	Extra frame lay marks; frames and centres re-entered
			I4+A5	Extra frame lay marks removed
51	57	1909	II+A5	New frame plate
55	61	1910	III1+A6a	New frame plate; centres re-entered and fine and clear
			III1+A6b	Centres worn and blurred
			III2+A6b	Frame lay marks added
			III2+A7	Centres re-entered
			III3+A7	Frames retouched
			IV1+B1	New frame and centre plates
			IV2+B1	Frame lay marks added
65	71	1915	V1+B2	New frame plate and centres re-entered
			V2+B2	Frame lay marks added
			V2+B3	centres re-entered
65a	71b		V2+C	New centre plate
			Booklets (1)	Frame and centre plates for booklet panes
			Booklets (2)	Centres re-entered

Identification

1894-1895. Brown *I1+A1 and I1+A2*.

[I1+A2 – F.C. 2 Nov. 1894]

Shortly after printing of the 10c brown started, at least two positions of the centre plate - #24 and #46 were re-entered, forming conspicuous doubling of the sky lines where previously there was none. This re-entry turned centre plate 'A1' into 'A2'.



Centre 'A2' – doubling of sky and river lines, #46

Differences between the two centre plates are not clearly detectable in other positions of the sheet except that the upper sky lines tend to be fainter in 'A1' than 'A2'. While complete sheets of 'A1' are known, it appears that the great majority of the 10c brown are from 'A2' rather than 'A1'.

Turquoise Blue ^[1] *I1+A2*. [F.C. 13 December 1895].

1896. *I2+A2* [F.C. 16 March 1896]

Frame plate 'I2' in various shades was created by the engraving of lay marks in the form of a dot between positions 8, 9, 13 and 14, (often taken out by the perforation holes) and a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44.

However, frame plates 'I1' and 'I2' can be distinguished from each other by their shade. The first printing of 'I1+A2' was in 'turquoise blue'^[1] and subsequent printings are in greenish-blue shades ranging from dark to pale.



Frame 'I2' lay mark between #38/44

I2+A3 [F.C. 16 Mar. 1898] have virtually no blue in them and are best described as a *pale* S.G. 'light green'. The only difference between centre plate 'A2' and 'A3' is that in the latter, position #28 was re-entered with a doubling of the skylines. It appears that the re-entry was performed to remove a long scratch which had recently appeared in this position.

1900 Carmine *I2+A4*. [F.C. 5 Mar. 1900], *I3+A5* [F.C. 14 June 1904] and *I4+A5* [Nov. 1907]

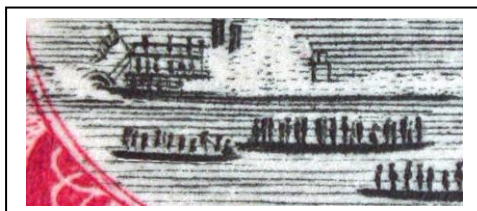
The lay marks in the form of a dot between positions 8, 9, 13 and 14 as well as a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44, are present in all three plate combinations.

'I3' – a vertical line was added between positions 13 and 14 and a dot between 38 and 39.

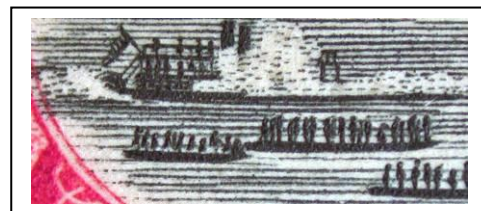
'I4' – the additional 'I3' lay marks were removed.

From the above, it might be thought that in most positions, identification of a stamp's plate combination may be difficult. That is not the case and these 1900 printings can usually be allocated.

In *I2+A4*, the frames and centres are generally clear and undoubled. There is always a space visible, albeit a very narrow one, between the left most boat [not the steamer] and the line of shading immediately underneath it. In 'I3+A5 and I4+A5' this space is only visible on positions 1-5, 10, 11 and 16; in all other positions a doubling of the boat closes the space up.

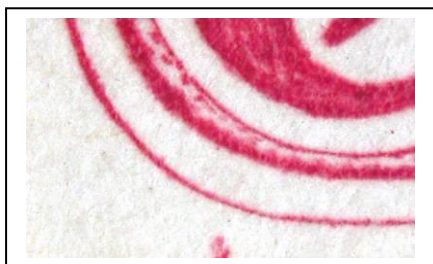


Centre plate 'A4' (#12)

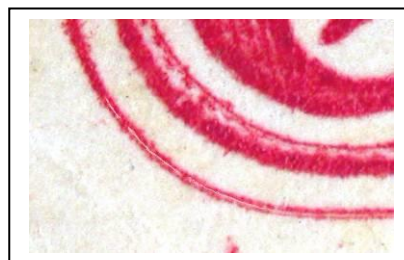


Centre plate 'A5' (#12)

In 'I3' the outer lines of the frames, particularly at the corners, are thickened or doubled in many positions including those where 'I3+A5' cannot be distinguished from 'I2+A4' by the thickening of the left most boat.



Frame plate 'I2' (#10)
- frame lines 'are clear and undoubled'

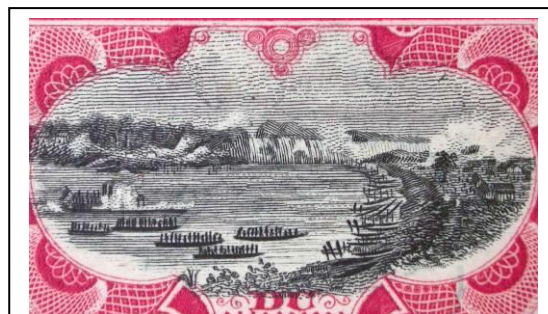


Frame plate 'I3' (#10)
- frame lines 'often thickened or doubled'

'I3+A5' and 'I4+A5' can be distinguished from each other by looking at the upper central part of the sky. In 'I3+A5' it is worn and patchy while in 'I4+A5' the centre plate sky lines are heavier and more continuous. This difference is attributed to the application of greater pressure on the centre plate when printing of 'I4+A5'. There is also a difference in the shade of the frames: 'I3+A5' tend to be rose-carmine while 'I4+A5' are reddish.



I3+A5 (#45)



I4+A5 (#45)
Centre plate with greater pressure

'Princes' printings, were issued in March 1909 and are from the 'I4+A5' combination. They can be recognised by the brighter shade of the frames and by the centres which are brownish-black rather than grey-black - as in the 1900 issue. The shades of the 'Princes' stamps are close to those of the unilingual issue, printed only three months later and are always perf.14.

1909. II+A5

Identification of this newly designed 'Unilingual format' frame plate is self evident.

1910. IIII+A6a

In IIII+A6a both frames and centres are clear and the centre plate sky lines in particular are fine and sharp.

IIII+A6b

The sky lines are worn and in many positions faint corrosion shows.

IIII2+A6b. [F.C. 13 Dec. 1911]

The new frame plate was created by the addition of lay marks to the frame plate: a dot between positions 8, 9, 13 and 14 and a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44.

(From the beginning, centre plate A6 had already got lay marks in these same positions, reflecting an experiment by Waterlow in 1910 and soon after abandoned – whereby the centres were printed before the frames rather than the other way round.)

IIII2+A6b can be distinguished from IIII+A6b only in the positions where the frame plate 'lay marks', or the absence of them, show on the stamp.

III2+A7.

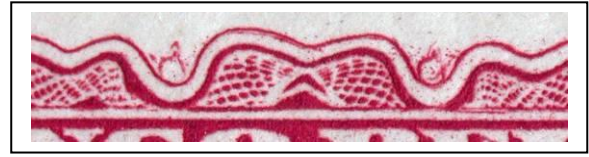
The centre plate was re-entered and all positions show doubling or blotchiness of the sky lines. The top frame line, which was always weak, has become more so and in several places is worn away, - particularly in the second 'valley' between the bumps. Additionally there is extensive corrosion in the form of small red dots round the outer frame lines in the first two columns of the plate. Stamps from centre plate 'A7' have a characteristic carmine shade which is darker than those from 'A6'.

III3+A7.

Except in eleven positions, the top frame line has been retouched by hand to form a line that is continuous and in some places thick and uneven; the sections of this line which were worn away in 'III2' have been filled in.



Frame III2. #2



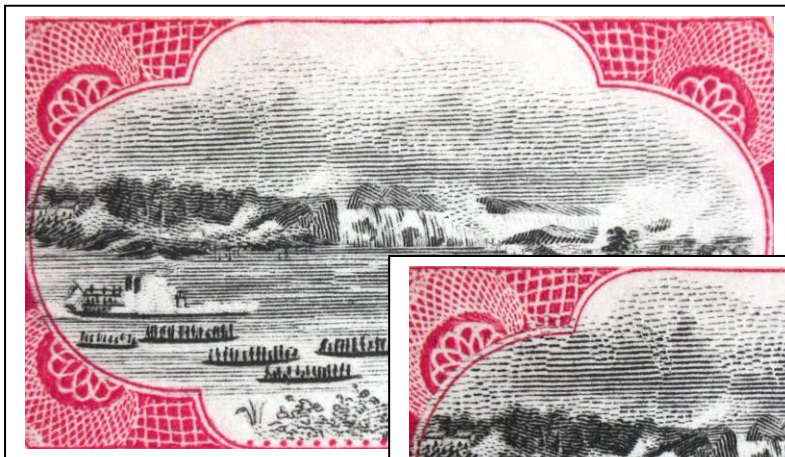
Frame III3. #2

IV1+B1 [F.C. 10 Oct. 1913]

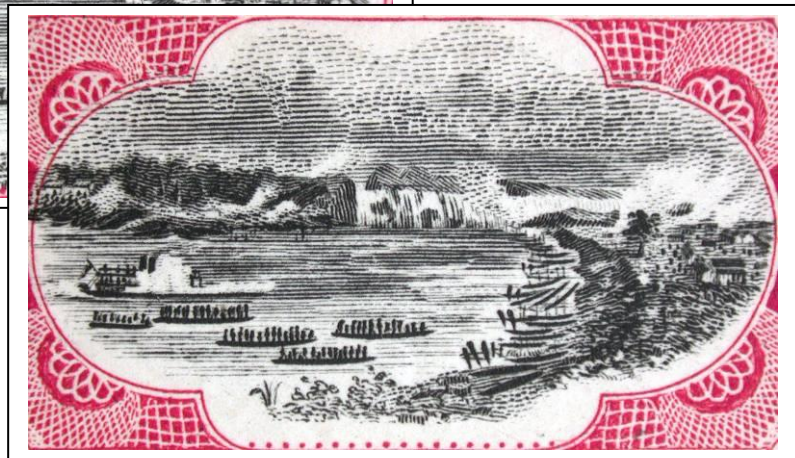
New plates were made to form IV1+B1. These stamps look much better than the earlier combinations: the top frame line is continuous and the whole of the centre plate design is strong and clear without flaws or corrosion. Whereas stamps from the earlier combinations were dull to bright carmine, those from IV1+B are either strong carmine or a distinctive carmine-lake. IV1+B is common with the 1921 'recuperation' surcharge but rare without it.

IV2+B1.

IV2+B1 was formed by the addition of frame plate lay marks: dots between 18 and 19 and between 33 and 34. There are also vertical lines between 13, 14, 18 and 19 and between 33, 34, 38 and 39. 'IV1' and 'IV2' can be distinguished only in these positions. 'IV2' appears to be relatively scarce and has not been found on stamps without the 1921, 30 centimes 'Recuperation' surcharge.



V1 and V2+B2



V2+B3

1915 VI+B2 [F.C. 20 April 1915]

V1+B2. Identification of this newly designed frame plate incorporating the word 'DIX' in the heading is self evident. Another and important characteristic is the short break in the circle surrounding '10' at 7 o'clock, which is present in all positions except #33.

For information, though of no specific value in identifying this combination - the *centre plate alignment* 'black cross' illustrated below was introduced on this combination and appears in positions: 20, 37, 42, 47 and 50.



V2+B2. [F.C. 20 August 1915 and 28 November 1916]

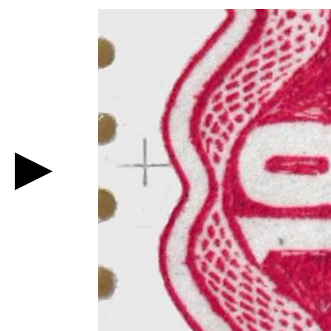
V2+B2 was created by the addition of lay marks in the form of dots and vertical lines between positions 8, 9, 13 and 14 and 38, 39, 43 and 44. 'V1' and 'V2' can be distinguished from each other only in the positions where these marks are visibly either absent or present.

V2+B3

V2+B3 was created by re-entry of the centre plate, giving a 'dirtier' impression of the sky with thickening or doubling of the sky lines in many, but not all, positions.

Additional small *alignment* black crosses adjacent to the left hand figure '10' have been added to positions: 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 29, 30, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 48 and 49.

Position 20 - there appears only the horizontal bar of the cross on examples in my collection.



'B2' and 'B3' are difficult to tell apart – the distinction can be made with confidence only if reference sheets of both combinations are available. Differences tend to be most visible in the lower sky lines on the far left or far right of the centre plate vignettes. The stamps from V2+B2 are a more reddish and less pink shade than V2+B3.

This combination was also used for the 1918 Red Cross issue.

V2+C [F.C. 22 January 1920] and '**Booklet**' stamps.

V2+C and 'Booklet' stamps incorporate the new centre plate which is readily distinguishable from V+B combinations, by the use of a retouched die giving continuous shading in the top part of the sky. Booklet stamps can in turn be distinguished from V2+C by the fact that the red circle around the bottom left '10' is continuous whereas in V2+C it shows a short break around 7 o'clock. (As previously stated - the only exception to this is position #33 of V2+C, where the break had already been retouched and does not show.)

A further characteristic of the booklet stamps is the tiny red dot in the vertical arm of 'D'.



Short break

Continuous circle from booklets

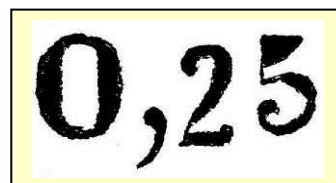
The three printings of the booklet stamps can be distinguished by shade – easier with mint stamps rather than used! Stamps from the first printing [February 1917] are dull to fairly deep carmine with clear brownish-black centres. Those from the second printing [1918] are deep carmine with deep black centres and showing a little corrosion. Those from the third printing [1920] are dull carmine to carmine with grey, worn centres on grey rather than white paper.

During the course of the second printing the centre plate was re-entered to give doubling of the boats on several positions and some doubling of the sky on all positions in panes β and δ and in most positions in pane γ . Second printing stamps without re-entered centres are scarce.

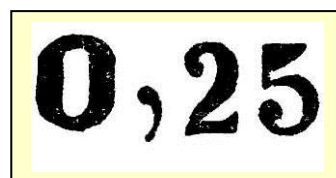
Combinations recorded on surcharged/overprinted ‘Belgian Congo’ stamps.

<p>1921 Recuperation</p> <p>III1+A6a III2+A6b III2+A7 III3+A7 IV1+B1 carmine IV1+B1 carmine-lake IV2+B1 carmine IV2+B1 carmine-lake</p>	<p>1922 Malines</p> <p>V2+B2 V2+B3 V2+C</p> <p>1922 EAA Malines</p> <p>V2+B2</p>	<p>Est Africain</p> <p>V2+B2</p> <p>1916 Tombeur</p> <p>V1+B2 *</p> <p>* Kigali, Grysolle and Havre</p>	<p>1918 Red Cross AO</p> <p>V2+B3</p>
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1923 Elisabethville	
Surcharge type *	
III1+A6a	B only
III2+A7	A and B
III3+A7	A and B
IV1+B1	A and B
IV1+B1	A and B
V2+C	A and B
* Surcharge	
Type ‘A’ = 2 below the O and the 5 with the comma relatively low.	
Type ‘B’ = The three figures in alignment and the comma relatively high	
It should always be remembered that these surcharges were extensively forged and authentication is difficult!	



Type ‘A’



Type ‘B’

1. In the author’s opinion, description by C.O.B. of both the first issue 5 and 10 centimes Mols stamp as ‘Blue’ is incorrect and misleading. By comparison, C.O.B. 3 and S.G. 3 of the King Leopold series are correctly identified as ‘blue’ but there is no similarity in shade between this and that of the first printing of the 5 and 10 centimes Mols issue.

Stanley Gibbons, and no doubt other publishers, have for many years made available ‘Colour dictionaries and reference charts’ and any reference to the S.G. ‘Stamp Colour Key’ will support my view. As a consequence I recently put my head on the block and suggested to Stanley Gibbons that their ‘colour’ description of the first printings of both S.G. 18 and 25 be reconsidered and bring them in line with each other. I am pleased to report that they have been amended accordingly in their latest ‘6th edition Part 4 Benelux Catalogue’, such that both the 5 and 10 centimes are now described as ‘Turquoise Blue’. It is recognised that other variants in tone and shade, subsequently occurred.