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**BULLETIN 164**

**November 2013**

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**The Study Circle website**  
**[www.belgian-congo-study-circle.be](http://www.belgian-congo-study-circle.be)**

# From the Editor

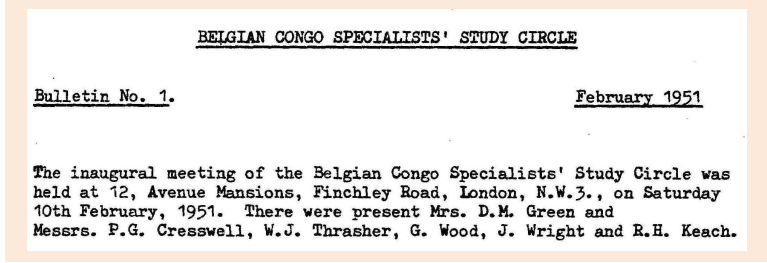


Again there has been a significant time lapse since publication of the last bulletin and once again you are asked to accept apologies for its lateness. A more detailed picture of the situation forms part of this editorial comment and all members are asked to give some consideration to the present and future of our Study Circle.

On this occasion I am particularly grateful to three new and first time contributors, without whose articles this issue would have been 'very thin' and further delayed.

## The Belgian Congo Study Circle

### In the beginning



The Study Circle was formed in February 1951 by a group of British members with a specific interest in:

1. The collection and distribution of knowledge of the stamps and postal history of the Belgian Congo.
2. The recording of this information.
3. The exchange and sale of surplus stamps and other material between members of the Circle

### Membership

It was agreed that membership should be confined to amateur bona fide collectors of Belgian Congo and that dealers should be excluded – even those who themselves are collectors of this country.

### Bulletin

It was agreed that a News Letter or Bulletin should be issued at intervals ..... and this was an important activity of the Circle as it formed the 'country members' main link with the Study Circle ..... and non-UK members were initially considered as unlikely to benefit –

Bulletin No. 4, October 1951 – already our first overseas member



*“Mr. Wright stated that General Jean du Four of Brussels had expressed his interest and enquired if he might join. The thought was again expressed that overseas members could get little advantage from being members. It was agreed however that overseas members should be welcomed and as far as practicable they should enjoy the advantages of membership.”*

Bulletin No. 5 January 1952

*“The Secretary (Ray Keach) reported that General Jean du Four had joined the Study Circle since the last meeting.”*

General Jean Du Four was the first of many who have not only contributed extensively to our knowledge and hopefully benefited from our collective knowledge, dissemination and regular exchange of information through the Study Circle Bulletin. The Bulletin was and has remained the official documentary and communication link with our world wide membership but also importantly as the established ‘*library reference*’ for other philatelists.

### **The Bulletin – formal document of the ‘Belgian Congo Study Circle’**

- **Some good news!**
- **Where are we now and where are we going?**

I have for some time wondered about the future of the Study Circle and whether we should abandon our former highly respected ‘Study Circle’ function and title, and perhaps re-brand ourselves more generally as the **Belgian Congo Philatelic Society** – collectively meeting occasionally and receiving the occasional bits and pieces of a newsletter.

We are now largely dependant both numerically and by way of practical contribution on our Belgian members. With **the exception of a few**, - and this issue is entirely dependent on ‘**a few**’ - it is rare that members from other nations provide articles for publication or actively contribute with news or reports of new findings.

It will have been obvious that for the second year in a row and largely due to a lack of available substantive publication material, the bulletin appears infrequently and that two other French language Belgian publications, ‘*Les Congolâtres*’ and ‘*Les Cahiers du Congo*’ created by members of our Study Circle, were effectively competing with and replacing our *raison d’être*. Many members none too fluent in French, and those still wishing to or dependant on receiving ‘English written’ hard copy, are deprived of what is available to the rest of us! Such a situation is unfair and not what the *Study Circle* is intended to offer to its wider membership.

However there is good news and I am very appreciative that the management team producing the research based and newsworthy ‘*Les Cahiers du Congo*’, have offered to provide ‘into English translated copy’ of appropriate articles, for inclusion in our bulletin. This will provide them with a wider readership and the ‘Belgian Congo Study Circle’ more information and what we need.

Historically the bulletin has provided the universal communicative link of new found knowledge and with this cooperative support, it will be able to continue.



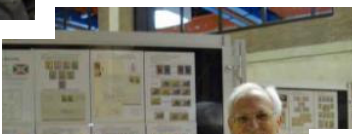
## Some exhibitors and some visitors



Thierry Frennet with  
Marc Oblin and his wife François



Marc Oblin  
and Charles Henuzet



Walter Deijnckens



Michel Hopperets



Léo Tavano

### The Awards

Hopperets, Michel	Congo belge – courrier vers la Belgique et les pays limitrophes	90% Gold
Lindekens, Thomas	La censure du Congo belge 1940-1945	90% Gold
Flamand, Jean-Pierre	Historique de la liaison aérienne SABENA Belgique / Congo belge et retour de 1925 à 1945	88% Large vermeil
Tavano, Léo	Afrique orientale Allemande, occupation belge 1916	88% Large vermeil
Lindekens, Philippe	Emission d'Albertville 1961/1962. Surcharge « CONGO » sur timbre katangais	87% Large vermeil
Lindekens, Thomas	La série Mols Croix-Rouge de 1918 du Congo belge et du Ruanda-Urundi	87% Large vermeil
Lindekens, Philippe	Congo-belge 1897-1914 cartes postales privées : Tarifs et affranchissements	85% Large vermeil
Deijnckens, Walter	Koninkrijk Burundi	82% Vermeil
Henuzet, Charles	Histoire postale du bureau de BOMA 1886-1960	82% Vermeil
Frennet, Thierry	Les cachets officiels sans date de l'E.I.C.	78% Large Silver



## Subscriptions 2014

Here is a reminder that subscriptions remain as last year and become due on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

U.K.	£12	(£10 for those receiving the Bulletin, etc. by email)
Belgium	12€	
Other European	12€	(10€ for those receiving the bulletin, etc. by email)
U.S.A.	\$22	(\$17 to those receiving the Bulletin, etc. by email)
Rest of the World	£15	(£10 to those receiving the Bulletin, etc. by email.)

### Annual Subscriptions – 2014

The following subscription rates approved at the March 2013 A.G.M. become effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013.

Region	Subscription	
UK	£12	(£10 for those who receive the Bulletin, etc by e-mail)
Belgium	12€	
All other European counties	12€	
USA	\$22	(\$17 for those who receive the Bulletin, etc by e-mail)
Rest of the World	£15	(£10 for those who receive the Bulletin, etc by e-mail)

**Payment due** - 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014.

#### How to pay

**Members living in or choosing to pay directly to the Hon. Treasurer in the UK:**

1. By a cheque in Pounds Sterling drawn on a UK bank in the name of:  
'Belgian Congo Study Account' (**Note:** do not write 'Study Circle Account') and sent by post to the Hon. Treasurer, Charles Lloyd at 18 Linefield Road, Carnoustie, Angus DD7 6DP, Scotland.
2. By electronic bank transfer to our account with the Carnoustie Branch of "TSB":  
Belgian Congo Study Account No: 78375760  
IBAN GB30 TSBS 8768 2378 3757 60  
BIC TSBSGB21013

When using this latter payment method, confirmation of your transfer is necessary. Send by e-mail to the Hon. Treasurer, Charles Lloyd [charles.lloyd@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:charles.lloyd@blueyonder.co.uk)

3. As has previously been the practice, overseas members can still send Pounds Sterling bank notes to the Hon. Treasurer, Charles Lloyd at the above postal address.

**Members living in Belgium and other countries that are members of the Euro currency zone:**

1. By direct payment into the Study Circle's bank account with the "BNP Paribas Fortis":  
IBAN BE51 0016 0051 5962  
BIC GEBABEBB
2. By PayPal :  
Email: [belgiancongostudycircle@hotmail.com](mailto:belgiancongostudycircle@hotmail.com)

**Members living in 'Rest of World'**

Use any of the methods listed above.

When doing so please also notify either the Hon. Treasurer Charles Lloyd as detailed above or the Belgian Treasurer, Ludo Achten by email: [ludoachten@hotmail.com](mailto:ludoachten@hotmail.com)

**Members living in the USA**

There is no change to the existing arrangement and payment should be made to David Schaubroeck

**Any queries should be directed to Hon. Treasurer.** [charles.lloyd@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:charles.lloyd@blueyonder.co.uk)

## The Annual General Meeting 2014

**Saturday 5th April 2014  
General Meeting and A.G.M.**

at

***Hotel ERASME,  
Route de Lennik 790 Lenniksebaan  
B-1070 Bruxelles  
Telephone: +32 (2) 523 62 82  
Fax: +32 (2) 523 62 83***

**0900 - Tea and Coffee will be served**

**0930 - AGM**

**10.30 approximately – Members presentations and displays**

**12.30 approximately - lunch in the hotel dining room**

**1400 approximately – Members presentations and displays**

**1600 - Close**

*This popular and convenient venue offers accommodation at attractive rates.  
The hotel is 300 metres from the 1B Erasme/Erasmus Metro terminus - a  
short rail link into the city.*

## **Presentations made at the *Study Circle* AGM 16<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

A review by Charles Lloyd, the Honorary Secretary

### **Censorship during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World War**

Stuart Smith

Stuart brought about 70 sheets from his collection and said it was about time that he contributed to this annual event and thought that many of us would have similar items in our own collections. However, that was not the case.

It was comprehensive, with many scarce items. Amongst these were First World War covers from GEA, an early use of the OAT hand-stamp on a letter to Switzerland that passed through German censors, a most uncommon 1940 Albertville combination of markings and a possibly unique censor label on an item of correspondence from a Greek refugee camp. There was great diversity in a fascinating display.

### **Airmails to and from Ruanda**

Filip Vander Haegen

Filip focused on the first twenty years during which the non-African population grew significantly and technical advances in flight made the carriage of mail by air possible with the consequent time saving. He illustrated the development by dividing his covers into three sections, these being: LARA and SABENA and connections though the Belgian Congo.

Connections through Imperial Airways

International connections (Belgian Raids, Wilson Airways, Zeppelin Mail, Clipper Mail)

A great variety of materials exists and is available to the collector. Filip hoped that this display might encourage aero-philately within our membership.

As the internal air-route from Leopoldville to Stanleyville developed with onward transmission to Ruanda, the result was a fascinating array of covers. Of course crashes were inevitable and

external and internal wars caused disruptions. From 1931, the close proximity of the British Imperial Airways service from London to Capetown as it passed through Uganda offered a convenient link to Europe. We were shown attractive envelopes from the early period. After 1935 it is difficult to differentiate Imperial/Sabena/French flown letters because a unified 3Fr50 rate was introduced. Belgian *Raids* such as those of Vander Linden (1930) and Hanez (1934) with the rarely seen onward delivery to Ruanda were well represented.

The British East African 'Wilson Airways' developed a regional private hire company and in 1933 based two planes at Dar es Salaam. On 21<sup>st</sup> January 1934 one of these flew a single passenger to Usumburu and carried 88 items of correspondence. On the 25<sup>th</sup> January return flight only 10 were carried. It was a pleasure to see two of these rarities.

A variety of Zeppelin mail was shown. All but one of these envelopes had Ruanda-Urundi stamps for postage to Germany where German stamps were applied for the Zeppelin flight over distances as short as to Holland or as long as to Brazil. There was one cover that was a puzzle because it carried British stamps (cancelled at Norwich) and Ruanda-Urundi stamps (cancelled at Usumburu) to a destination in Brazil! It is an unusual combination, inviting speculation. The popular Clipper mail of the Second World War provided a suitable ending.

### **Postal Stationery of the Independent State**

Emile Hoorens

Emile treated us to a detailed study of the postal stationery of the Independent State from the first appearance of postcards with imprinted stamps (1886) to his last example posted in 1911. Members were particularly pleased to see the Vivi cancellation on a first issue card sent to Brussels via Lisbon and another used during the Lado expedition. As well as a comprehensive range of both used and unused postal stationery, Emile presented cards that were essays and others in un-issued colours.

### **The 1922 Boma Overprints**

Léo Tavano

It was a pleasure to see Léo at the meeting and as we have come to expect, he presented a very detailed piece of research. He used overhead projection to give the necessary magnification to show the audience the differences between the four plates (A and B from the March printing; C and D from the September printing) of the 25c / 40c 1922 Boma surcharge. After this he presented the plating of these stamps. The final sheets were of interest from the perspective of studying the overprint because this is a stamp of dubious status, the 25c / 5c (COB 102-Dr). It was not issued, yet is listed in COB.

### **An early Urundi Illustrated Postcard**

Marc Oblin

Marc brought a single card acquired recently for five Euros at a collector's fair held in Wallonia. He entertained us with the story of its purchase. Stopping at a postcard stand he picked up a packet of Belgian Congo cards and 99% of these were of little interest. Noticing that Marc was looking at both sides of each card, the dealer asked him if he was interested in stamps, admitting that he had little knowledge of such Marc said he would take this card even though it had a blemish on the picture.

It was a 1912 illustrated Belgian Congo card with the 1916 Tombeur overprint, URUNDI! It was cancelled with a straight line Kigoma hand-stamp on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 1916 and had an Albertville transit mark. It was sent by an officer in the Brigade du Nord to his son in England and presumably a refugee, describing his experiences in the campaign. A breath-taking find! We must all remember this lesson; visit postcard stands and act as cool as the best poker player.



## The Belgian Congo mask with horns

Bryan Button

While recently visiting the Central Africa Museum in Brussels I took a photograph of the mask with horns. This iconic mask was one of the three designs used for three of the eleven masks of the 'Masks and Carvings' stamp series. The series issued in 1947 and used until Independence in 1960, includes fifteen carved statues of four different designs which.



The stamps were printed by the Institut de Gravure of Paris, perf. 12.25 x 12.5 using photogravure comprising 50 stamps (10 x 5) per sheet. They were inscribed 'BELGISCH CONGO & CONGO BELGE' or 'CONGO BELGE & BELGISCH CONGO' and it is known that some that appeared on the market were from printer's waste.



Nothing is known of the masks provenance, iconography or use, nor how it was found at Tabora in 1899. All that is left is to speculate and hypothesize about its meaning.

### *Can you solve the puzzle of this magnificent enigmatic Luba mask?*

Two keys to understanding the mask are its horns and the bird on the back of its head. The latter has been broken off and dissociated from the mask for so many years now that most people familiar with it are not aware of this significant feature. One educated guess is that the bird is a drongo, striking for its jet black plumage, which is associated with the clan of Mbidi Kiluwe, where **black** is a powerful symbol of the clan. Another guess is that the mask's bird might be an oxpecker which might explain the positioning of the bird on the back of the neck of the mask, head down, as though searching for ticks on the neck of a buffalo.

Is the mask a representation of a ram or a buffalo? Both animals are associated with the Mbidi Kiluwe. Luba and neighboring peoples consider a giant, black winged ram named Nkuba, to be the origin of thunder and lightning. The butting of heads when rams are in rut probably gives rise to the analogy with thunder. The buffalo is the emblem of the Mbidi. Red and black buffalo lived together in the forested savanna that was the Belgian Congo. Often the bulls are almost coal black and mostly nocturnal, active at dawn and dusk. Although enormous animals they are able to virtually disappear during the daylight in thickets. People fear their apparent invisibility and so they are doubly dangerous. Buffalos are black or red, docile or aggressive, visible or invisible, in water or in mud, active at dawn and at dusk. They have been the basis for suggesting a metaphorical bridge between buffalo and human beings.

**Acknowledgement.** The article is based on information given in the museum.

## Congo stamps and the Swedish connection

Rolf Öhrneman

Sweden was involved in the early Congo development. In September 1876 King Leopold II took the initiative in establishing the 'Association International Africaine' along with representatives from a number of countries that were interested in the exploration of Africa. One will recognise that Sweden was involved when you look at the emblem of 'Congo Veteranerna 1876-1908.'

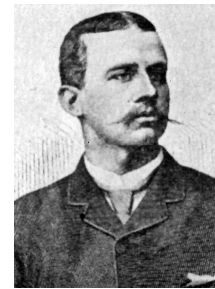


More than 1000 Scandinavians were active in the Congo between 1878 and 1908. Among them were about 600 Swedes of whom more than 340 were seamen. The remainder was made up of Missionaries and the militia, the latter enrolled into the Force Publique.

What is more – the Congo nation and several of the Congo stamps have a Swedish related connection!

### Peter Möller

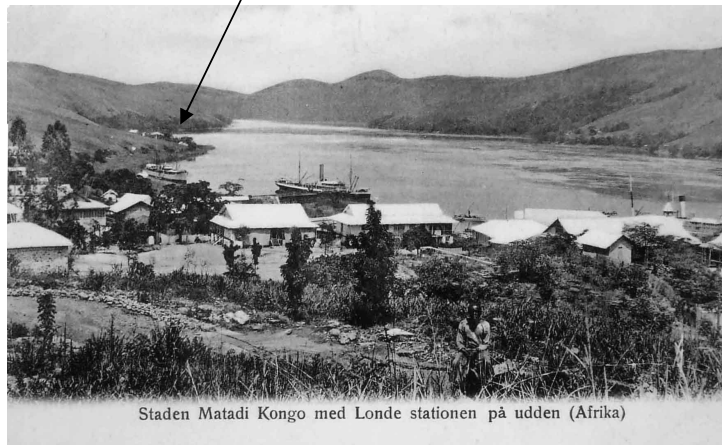
The first example is the Mols 5c depicting Matadi which was printed in three different colours. On order by Stanley, the Swedish lieutenant Peter Möller established in 1885 a new station in the village Matadi.



Londe Mission station

P. Möller

On the northern side of the river Congo, Stanley had previously established a station in the village Vivi. However, there was a problem in that the river bank on that side was totally unsuitable for the building of a harbour. The Matadi bank was much better and also a better starting point for the future railway section to Leopoldville.



The post card shows Matadi in the early 1900 and also the Swedish missionary station Londe on the tongue of land beyond the harbour.

### Karl Eriksson

On his Congo River expedition, Stanley had heard the pygmy people tell about a large animal with 'zebra like stripes', which was probably not a horse. In 1899 Sir Harry Johnston became governor of Uganda and just before he left for Africa had met Stanley and promised to investigate the mysterious animal in the Ituri forest.

On his first expedition, Johnston met the Swedish non-commissioned officer Karl Eriksson who told him that on several occasions he had eaten meat from an animal which the natives called okapi.



Eriksson became interested and organized his own expedition in search of the animal. Before long he got the skull and hide of the animal and the following day an okapi was actually found in a trap hole where it just had been killed by a leopard. The almost undamaged hide and skeleton were sent to Johnston who in turn forwarded the remnants to the British Museum. In 1901 the animal was given the scientific name *Okapi Johnstoni* and whilst Eriksson was the first non-African to see an okapi, it was Johnston who was credited with the honour!

The okapi is pictured in two denominations of the 1931 pictorial definitive series. In the 1942 'Palm' series it is also portrayed in the 20 franc value.



In this latter case, it is noteworthy that the stamp artist has put the animal in a completely wrong environment as it is a dense forest animal and not a savannah animal.



We also find the okapi in the emblem of the International Congress of African Tourism 1955 issue.

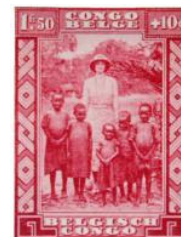


In the 'Wild animals' series of 1959 the okapi is found in its true forest setting and finally the beautiful 1984 Zairian set illustrated below is totally dedicated to this fascinating animal.



### Crown Princess Astrid

Swedish Princess Astrida and her husband Crown Prince Leopold of Belgium visited the Congo in 1933. When the couple arrived in Matadi they visited the Swedish Missionary Station where my parents were their host and hostess. The occasion was filmed and I sent a copy to King Albert II some years ago.



In 1936, the now Queen Astrid is illustrated in the three value set for her involvement and commitment to the *Fund for Congo* children.



### Dag Hammarskjöld

The United Nations General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld perished in an air crash in 1961. The Republic of the Congo paid homage to him in 1962 with a series of 8 denominations and a souvenir sheet.





## Cyprus to Brazzaville and return In transit through the Belgian Congo

*Can anyone suggest the return routing gaps?*

At a recent display by Christopher Podger of Colchester to the Scottish Dundee Philatelic Society, he showed an interesting overland mail cover originating from the Cyprus 'Supreme Court' to Monsieur P. Laurent in Brazzaville, French Congo.



It was posted 26<sup>th</sup> February 1944 opened by the Cypriot censor [label M/47] in Nicosia and can easily be identified as passing via Egypt, Watsa on 5 April and Leopoldville 1<sup>st</sup> May before arrival at its destination a day later, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1944.



Presumably because it was not deliverable, it was subsequently returned to the sender and opened again by the Nicosia censor in December [1944?] as confirmed by the M47 label. But what is not clear is whether the just perceptible French Equatorial censor label was applied on the outward or return journey, the origin of the applied '2623' nor as far as I can tell, is there any identifiable routing of the return journey other than possibly the remnants of a fourth label whose origin I don't recognise, just covering the right hand edge of the two Cyprus postage stamps.

It is a fascinating cover and it would be appreciated if those members, more familiar than me with how it might have got itself back to Nicosia, would let the editor know and I will arrange for the information to be published in a future bulletin and passed on.

Stuart Smith

**‘Recuperation overprint’ 1921**  
**30c on 10c, combination III3+A7 – a new stage**

Jozef Deruyck



**Introduction**

During the course of overprinting the stock of the previously withdrawn 1910 issued stamps, referred to as the ‘Recuperation issue’, the overprinting/surcharge plate deteriorated. This deterioration is identified by the loss of certain characteristics in different positions of the sheet, typically in this case, the dot under the letter ‘c’.



On page 263 of General Du Four’s book ‘Cinquante Ans d’Histoire Postale’ he identifies the several stages of deterioration of the overprinting plate during its use.

1<sup>st</sup> stage: In a complete sheet, all dots under the right “c” are present.

2<sup>nd</sup> stage: Dot missing under the right “c” in position 36

3<sup>rd</sup> stage: Dot missing under the right “c” in positions 36 and 39

4<sup>th</sup> stage: Dot missing under the right “c” in positions 19, 36, 37 and 39

The combinations known to have been overprinted are:

III1+A6a, III2+A6b, III2+A7, III3+A7, IV1+B1 ca, IV1+B1 ca-la, IV2+B1 ca and IV2+B1 ca-la

However, I possess a sheet combination III3+A7, perforation 14 on which the dot is missing in positions 19, 36 and 39 whilst the dot in position 37 is still present.

Therefore, I now suggest that it is necessary to update Du Four’s original classification and include a fifth stage as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> stage: All dots present

2<sup>nd</sup> stage; Dot missing in position 36

3<sup>rd</sup> stage: Dot missing in positions 36 and 39

4<sup>th</sup> stage: Dot missing in positions 19, 36 and 39

5<sup>th</sup> phase: Dot missing in positions 19, 36, 37 and 39

It wouldn’t be surprising if the newly allocated 4<sup>th</sup> stage with missing dots on positions 19, 36 and 39 only, could also be present on one of the other plate combinations.

I hope to hear more from other Mols-collectors.

**References:**

Jean Du Four. *Congo. Cinquante Ans d’Histoire Postale*. page 260.

*I juli 1921. De “Recuperatie” uitgave* (Cat N°. 85-94).

R. Parent. *Studiegroep Belgisch-Kongo*, n°. 51, July-August-September 2004, page 11.

## Shipping lines servicing the Congo

### Introduction

We previously published a three part article by Philippe Lindekens in bulletins 156-158 on 'Belgian and French Congo Postal Relationships'. Because of a common interest, this was subsequently reproduced in the France and Colonies Philatelic Society journal which has prompted the following interesting contribution from John Mayne, one of their members.

Over the years we have had many fine articles relating to this topic and whilst much of what follows will be common knowledge to many of us, it does answer a question raised and some of our newer members may find the following interesting and perhaps stimulate a further line of study.

Ed.

X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X

### BCSC Bulletin #157, page 11

Here we have a Belgium originating card addressed to Matadi and unusually directed via Bordeaux. It was sent from Bassins, Antwerp on 29 June 1893 to Matadi but didn't arrive until 19 August – nearly 7 weeks!

Why it was directed via Bordeaux is anyone's guess. It was then conveyed using the Bordeaux à Loango' line and unloaded at Libreville on 14 August 1893 prior to onward local shipment to Matadi.



John Mayne writes as follows.

I re-read part two of the article September 2012 in the F & CPS Journal by Philippe Lindekens on mail from the Belgian Congo, an area I came close to collecting and the item illustrated figure 17 [BCSC Bulletin 157, figure 16] caught my eye.

My knowledge of Belgian shipping is infinitesimal, gleaned from handbooks published by the late Philip Cockerill, booklet 41 covers 'Mailboat services from Europe to the Belgian Congo, 1879-1922' by Abbe G. Gudenkauf of the Belgian Congo Study Circle 1982 <sup>[1]</sup>.

I was surprised at the countries whose ships served the Congo in 1893 and departure ports. Of particular interest I read 'Compagnie Gantoise de Navigation' provided a service from Antwerp employing three ships from 1886 until their demise in 1888. There was no regular Belgian service from 1888 to January 1895 and consequently the item illustrated posted Anvers 1893 had to find an alternative route. The Belgian route from 1895 was operated by 'Compagnie Maritime Belge', and here Cockerill refers to 'Anvers-Congo ou la grande aventure' by E. and M. Deneumostier.



A major route via Lisbon operated by the Portuguese line 'Empreze Nacional' provided the most regular service between Europe and West Africa, schedules listed by Cockerill show fortnightly sailings in 1895.

Of more significance were the routes operated by 'Woermann' mail-boats out of Hamburg, eight monthly by 1902. Cockerill noted mail from European countries other than Germany had to be marked with the ship's name before it could be carried by the company. I note the schedules provided by Cockerill, which he reported as incomplete, imply that German boats commenced their voyage from Belgian ports. However, reference to Czimmek - 'Seepost Hambourg-Westafrika' - lists Antwerp as the first port of call after Hamburg, I am confident Woermann ships did not operate out of Belgium and being authorised German mail-boats receiving government subsidy, it is questionable if they would have been permitted to do so. The 'Woermann' line was so dominant, calling at all major ports supporting German traders along the coast, that British shipping out of Liverpool felt obliged to invite the company to join what was known as 'The Conference'.

French representation was the joint service operated by 'Fraissient' of Marseille and 'Chargeurs Réunis' of Bordeaux, the former withdrew 1<sup>st</sup> October 1908 when sailings became monthly. Dutch ships of 'Nieuwe Amsterdamsche Handelsvennootschap' provided a service between Rotterdam and Matadi, Cockerill states the service was irregular and more details were requested.

From 1883 British ships out of Liverpool operated by 'Hatton and Cookson' ran a service until the end of the century and in 1891 the 'British Africa Steamship Company' and 'Woermann' line combined to provide a service out of Antwerp on the 6th of each month..

There was a choice of routes for mail to pass from Belgium to its African colony and with sailings far from daily it was often expedient for mail to commence its journey by train for collection at a port closer to Africa.

In spite of the excellent service by Woermann whose frequency increased over time, I have mail from Togo by British ship via Liverpool, French ship via Marseille and as the cover originally illustrated in Lindekens article, directed via Bordeaux. Mail also reached Togo via Gold Coast and Lagos.

**I cannot think I will find mail to or from Togo carried by Belgian, Dutch or Portuguese companies, all of which by passed the Benin Bight sailing direct from Liberia to Banana; but one never knows as mail changed hands in various ports along the route, in particular Madeira, Dakar and Monrovia. If any member has such an item, it would be interesting if they would share it with us.**

*John Mayne*  
France and Colonies P.S.

1. Available for purchase from the Hon. Sec and Treasurer.

## Postal stationery overprints Stibbe 32T and 31P - unrecorded varieties

Philippe Lindekens

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1910, the Postal authority made a reassessment of the postal rates, the first since the Congo Free State was established in 1886. For postcards and accordingly postal stationery, the international rate was reduced from 15c to 10c and that for internal correspondence from 10c to 5c.

Postal stationery was used extensively and stock items held by the post office were overprinted with the new rates and some, no longer relevant, texts were erased by wavy lines.

The two items illustrated are very unusual and perhaps might be considered as proofs.



Figure 1.

Let's look and consider their peculiarities.

### Figure 1. Stibbe #32T

This card was originally that issued as 'Stibbe #18C' before typo overprinting 'CONGO BELGE' as the interim card Stibbe #24T. It was valid for internal use as well as to the nearby British Gold Coast colony and German of South West Africa.

It has several curiosities:

1. Cancelled at Banana, 1 April 1910 - the first day of the introduction of the new rate.
2. Overprinted by hand with a weak strike of the inverted wavy lines and misplaced (not uncommon) but doubled oblique '5'.
3. Complete traces of the rectangular *hand stamp block* [compositor] which is clearly visible and with a near vertical strike through the postage stamp.
4. Additional 5c 'Unilingual issue' stamp validating the card for the new international rate.
5. Two curious un-inked notches, perhaps related to the *hand stamp block*.

(Faint/hardly detectable on the illustrated card. Ed)

Stibbe #29-33. We already know of several overprint varieties, typically inverted, misplaced, doubled and combinations of each but until now I have only seen one inverted surcharge on the 'Princes' issue.

**Figure 2.** Stibbe #31P. Illustrated are both the ‘Reponse Payée’ and ‘Réponse’ cards – 5/15c blue + 5/15c brown, and both with inverted surcharge.

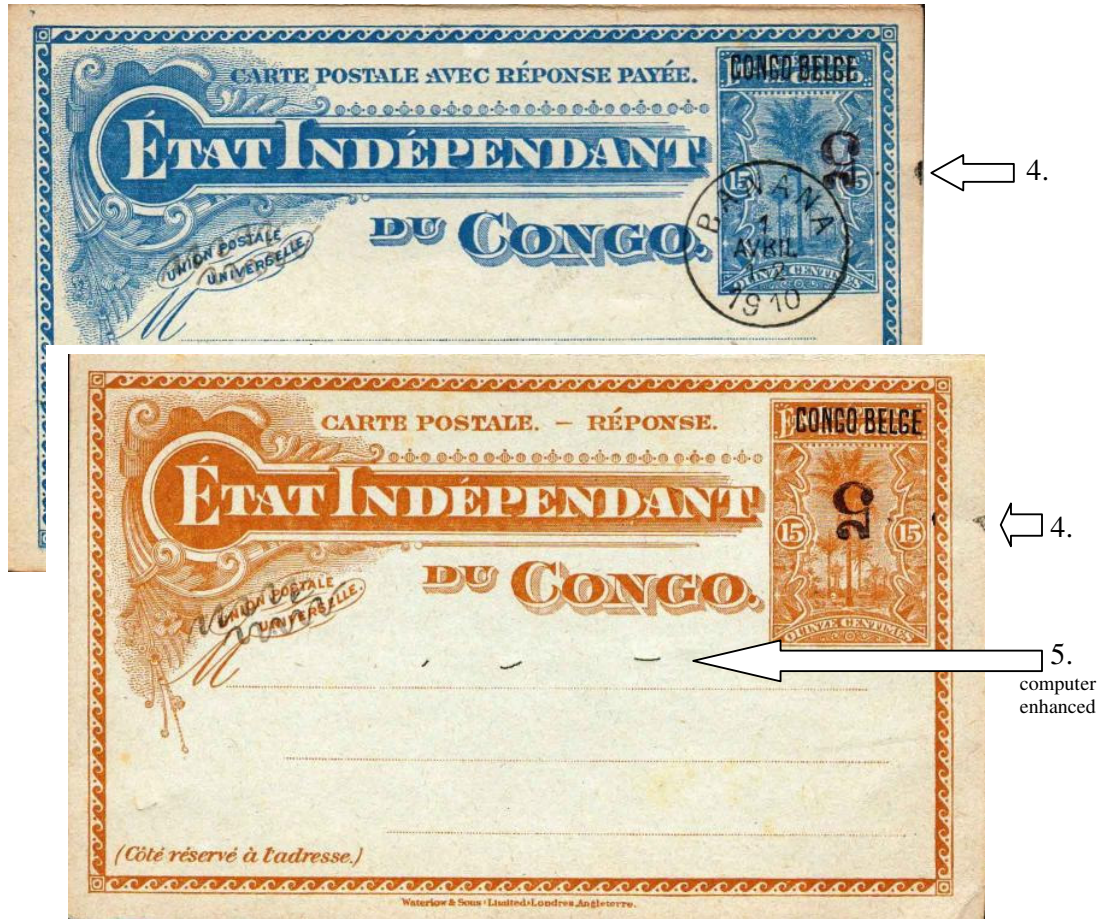


Figure 2

This card has many peculiarities – some the same as those described and illustrated in figure 1.

1. Réponse Payée - cancelled at Banana 1<sup>st</sup> April 1910, the first day of the new rate and also the first day of issue of this card.
2. Hand overprinted inverted wavy lines with weak inking
3. Inverted overprint “5” which is misplaced to the right on the Réponse Payée card.
4. Very slight traces of the *hand stamp block* on the border of both cards.
5. Two curious un-inked notches, perhaps related to the *hand stamp block*.  
(Faint/hardly detectable on the original illustrated cards. Significantly computer enhanced above. Ed)

Both cards shown seem to have been overprinted at the same time in Banana and are particularly interesting in relation to the traces of the *hand stamp block* provide us with a good idea of the physical dimensions of the ‘hand stamp’.

It is possible that the Banana cancellation was applied as demonetization mark for archiving the cards in the post-office files.

As referred to in my previous article on Brussels hand overprinted stamps <sup>[1]</sup> we know of some items cancelled at Boma on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1909 for the first day of CONGO BELGE overprints; but these rarely occur on ‘Local’ overprints and even more so on postal stationery. As of now, I have never seen any other postal stationery cards surcharged “5” or “10” cancelled 1<sup>st</sup> April 1910.

1. Ibid. Bulletin #163, May 2013





  
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**5-7 DECEMBER 2013**

**LATEST NEWS**

We are delighted to inform you that one of the world's rarest stamps - the 3 Skilling Banco yellow - will be on display at the exhibition devoted to **SWEDEN**, which will be held at the Top Cars Collection Museum at the Terrasses de Fontvieille in Monaco. Without any shadow of doubt, this will be a major event for the European philatelist. This stamp now is part of a Swedish collection again, after being owned by several of the most famous philatelists (see below).



^ Georg Wilhelm Backman

*Georg Wilhelm Backman*  
*Heinrich Lichtenstein*  
*Philippe de Ferrari*  
*Baron Eric Leijonhufvud*  
*Claes A. Tamm*  
*Johan Ramberg*  
*King Carol of Romania*  
*René Berlingin*  
*Count Gustaf Douglas*

In 1887, the young Georg Wilhelm Backman found a number of franked letters in his grandfather's papers and hastened to remove the stamps. The latter included a 3 Skilling from the first issue, which was yellow instead of green. The error was caused by a faulty stereotype of the yellow 8 Skilling plate, which was accidentally replaced with a 3 Skilling stereotype. Last May, by private treaty in London, the Swedish collector Gustaf Douglas became the proud owner of this item, which returned to its country of origin after many decades. The list of the stamp's previous owners is telling, in that it shows the extent, to which the greatest collectors have coveted this unique stamp.



The yellow 3 Skilling Banco will be exhibited with other exceptional items from the Swedish Postal Museum and the best contemporary Swedish collections. This is yet another reason to come and admire all the "gems" on display at MonacoPhil 2013!



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