

BELGIAN CONGO STUDY CIRCLE

Bulletin No. 17

February, 1965

Publication of this bulletin is becoming less and less frequent, due, to some extent, to the lack of energy of the Secretary, but more to the lack of articles and information to justify an issue.

During the last three years, activities of the Study Circle have been restricted to annual meetings and a solitary circulating packet. Attendance at meetings has varied; there were very few members present at the 1964 meeting.

NEW MEMBERS

Since the last issue of the Bulletin, the following new members have joined the Study Circle:-

Mrs. M. Wise, 76, Plane Street, Anlaby, Hull
Mr. M. Lake, 138, Norsey Road, Billericay, Essex
Mr. P.S. Foden, Johannesburg, South Africa
Mr. B.S. Katz, 94, Ava Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

FINANCE

The current balance in hand is 4/6d and this will be reduced to zero in posting the copies of the Bulletin.

THE FUTURE OF THE STUDY CIRCLE

The Study Circle is hardly virile and flourishing, maybe due to the inadequacy and natural idleness of the Secretary, and, at the present time, can be of little interest and value to its members.

When the Study Circle was founded in 1951, the quarterly meetings held in Mrs. Green's flat were well attended and of considerable interest to the group of Congo collectors. Early meetings covered the Mols issues, one value at a time, each subject being introduced by one or other of the members. In recent years, meetings have normally been of a general nature without any specific subject for study, although sometimes a member has given a short display on a facet that he has recently been studying. Present day meetings are a gathering of friends with a common interest and with the opportunity of chatting about stamps and of seeing parts of each other's collections.

If it is the wish of members, it should be possible to hold more informative meetings with a programme of successive subjects but such meetings would entail a good deal of preparatory work by the member presenting the subject and, if possible, some preliminary study by some other members attending.

The rare circulating packet is always well patronised but it is extremely difficult to obtain books for inclusion and contributions are usually received from only two or three members.

The Bulletin is the one link with country and overseas members and, as stated earlier, its appearance is so rare and irregular as to be of little value. Initially the periodical was interesting and informative (or so the Secretary/Editor thought) but in recent years the only contributions have been from the Secretary and he does not have the literary fluency to produce a succession of articles, especially when based on limited information.

It is clearly difficult to run a Study Circle satisfactorily when the membership is small, as ours must be, and when the members range from mad-keen one-country specialists to those for whom the country is simply a side-line collection or whose interest has waned.

We have to decide if we are serving a useful purpose for our members. If not, can we and by what means? If we can raise no enthusiasm, it would be better officially to end the life of the Study Circle rather than let it gradually fade away. Another Secretary and general factotum could be a tonic.

Members' views would be greatly welcomed for discussion at a meeting which we shall hope to hold in the Spring.

LA REVUE POSTALE

Will members who wish to receive this journal for 1965 please send to the Secretary stamps to the value of 3/- (2/- subscription plus 1/- postage).

ALPHONSE MAES

Belgian philately suffered a great loss with the death of Alphonse Maes in January, 1962. Students of the Mols issues will realise how much they owe to his early and detailed studies of these stamps.

ANDRE DE COCK

At the age of 84, Andre de Cock died in July, 1964. His famous work, "Le Congo Belge et ses Marques Postales" will ensure that his name is never forgotten by Congo collectors. Congo cancellations were only one of M. de Cock's many philatelic interests but in this field he was the leading student of his time.

CONGO - CINQUANTE ANS D'HISTOIRE POSTALE

General Du Four's book was published in 1962. Most members of the Study Circle have copies and all must agree that it is one of the great philatelic masterpieces. It has already won the most important prizes for literature in International Exhibitions.

The most valuable part of the book deals with the Mols issues; particularly helpful are the listing of the plates used and the repairs to the plates as seen in the wealth of re-entries and other varieties on the issued stamps. There is much new information on the various overprints on these stamps.

Other important sections include the early portrait issues with their varieties, postal stationery, cancellations of all kinds and First Flights.

The book deals with stamps up to 1922 and cancellations prior to 1936.

A total of 312 copies of the work have been printed and it is understood that very few remain unsold. The book is a "must" for all interested in Congo stamps. Second-hand copies will probably fetch a substantial premium when the present stock is exhausted.

MONOGRAPHIE DE LA POSTE AERIENNE TRANSPORTEE PAR SABENE 1951-61

M.E. Vandenbau lists all Sabena First Flights in this period and illustrates the various special cachets used. About two dozen flights from the Congo are included. The book is a very useful supplement to Godinas' catalogue.

GIBBONS' CATALOGUE, 1955, PART 2

The prices of Congo and Ruanda stamps show a generally upward trend, probably a third being increased; the prices are mainly in line with those of the Belgian "Catalog Officiel" at a rate of 120fr/£. Exceptions are post-war used definitives where Gibbons' prices are higher than the Belgian. The Elisabethville surcharges at 35/- each are very highly priced compared with the Belgian catalogue.

FEUILLETS DE LUXE

The Secretary has a miniature sheet, imperforate, consisting of one impression of each value of the December, 1954, Congo "Medal" issue on glazed paper, the sheet being about 8" by 6". The date and object of the issue is printed on the sheet in French and Flemish.

What is the purpose of these so-called "feuillets de luxe"? They are presumably propaganda to publicise the new issue and not simply to fleece the collector.

RUANDA 1924 POSTAGE DUES

The Secretary has a copy of the 15c value with the overprint inverted. The stamp is well authenticated by normally most reliable experts but the owner is convinced that the overprint is faked.

THE IDOLS ISSUES OF BELGIAN CONGO AND RUANDI URUNDI

Whereas it is not suggested that the stamps of these issues in any way compare in philatelic interest with those of the Mols and Van Engelen issues of 1894-1922, there is a good deal of interest in the Idols stamps and the writer has found his study of them well worth while.

During the period 8 December, 1947 - 14 April, 1948, the Belgian Congo issued, successively, the original values of the "Idols" series to replace the Waterlow-printed pictorials which appeared in 1942. Fortunately the Belgian authorities decided not to duplicate the series with inscriptions in both French and Flemish as in the war-time issue and the name of the colony was inscribed on each stamp in French and in Flemish. The corresponding Ruanda Urundi issue followed on 18 May, 1948.

With increases in postal rates the Congo issued additional values in 1949 and 1950; Ruanda issued only one new value but surcharged existing values to cover the new rates.

On 30 June, 1960 the Belgian colony of the Congo became an independent republic and the Idols issue, together with the later "Flowers" and "Animals" issues, without overprint, were officially demonetised but the remaining stocks in the post offices were sold normally and accepted for the payment of postage for at least twelve months afterwards. With the declaration of independence of the State of Katanga, four values of the Idols series were surcharged for the new state; unsurcharged stamps were, however, accepted for the payment of postage.

On 1 July, 1961 the Belgian mandated territory of Ruanda Urundi became two independent states, Rwanda and Burundi. The stamps then current, including the Idols issue, were demonetised; the writer has not seen the earlier issues used after independence but they probably were.

The central designs of the stamps are of native idols and masks; some, and presumably all, are authentic. The frames of the different values are virtually identical except for the value tablets and the names of the territories.

The dies were engraved and the stamps recess-printed, presumably from steel plates, by l'Institut de Gravure, Paris. The plates comprised fifty impressions, ten horizontally and five vertically. The top and bottom margins of the plates were filled with a pattern of wavy lines and the continuous letters "IDGED" upright above the top row of stamps and inverted under the bottom row. In the case of the bicoloured stamps the marginal designs were on the centre plates.

The stamps were printed on unwatermarked paper and were perforated 12 x 12½ by comb machine. Unlike the previous definitive issue and most subsequent issues, imperforate stamps have not, to the writer's knowledge, been allowed to leave the printing works. If any sheets were left imperforate, they have not found their way generally onto the philatelic market.

The centimes values of both Congo and Ruanda were printed from single plates but the bicoloured francs values required two plates. With a limited number of complete sheets, the writer has plated considerable numbers of used copies, has thereby recognised, in some values, the existence of second plates and has succeeded in reconstructing complete sheets of the second plates.

There are seven different central designs for the total of 46 values; most of the central designs were used for both monocoloured and bicoloured stamps of both countries. For each centre design a master die was prepared and from this a roller die. From this transfer roll was produced a plate of 50 impressions, used for the centres of the bicoloured stamps, and also secondary dies on which were engraved frames to be used for the corresponding centimes values of the two countries.

Only one plate for each centimes value and only one frame plate for each francs value has been recognised and it can be said with reasonable confidence that second plates were not used. One plate only was used for the 1,20 fr. and 2,50 fr. centres, one for the 1,50fr., 3fr., 10fr. and 50fr. centres, one for the 2fr. centres, one for the 1,60fr. and 3,50fr. centres and one for the 6,50fr., 20fr. and 100fr. centres. Two plates were used for the 1fr., 2,40fr. and 5fr. centres and two for the 1,25fr., 6fr. and 8fr. centres but both plates were not used for every value with the particular centre design.

The first plate of the 1fr., 2,40fr. and 5fr. centres was used for 1fr. Congo, 1fr. Ruanda, 5fr. Congo and 5fr. Ruanda, the second for 1fr. Congo, 1fr. Ruanda, 2,40fr. Congo and 5fr. Ruanda.

The first plate of the 1,25fr. 6fr. and 8fr. centres was used for 1,25fr. Congo, 1,25fr. Ruanda, 6fr. Congo and 6fr. Ruanda, the second for 1,25fr. Congo and 8fr. Congo.

Plating of very many used copies has not revealed centres from plates other than those given above. Obviously, they may exist but, if so, they must be rare.

CONSTANT PLATE VARIETIES

Some values have all stamps in the sheet identifiable, usually by very minor varieties, dots, traces of guide lines, plate scratches and similar imperfections. Other values have some stamps in the sheet apparently free from constant imperfections; a particular example is the 50c. Congo where only a dozen or so of the fifty stamps in the sheet can be identified.

It is pointless in this article to describe the minor imperfections to permit plating of the stamps but imperfections of the dies and the more interesting plate varieties, re-entries, clear retouches and roller varieties are mentioned. It may be as well to amplify the term "roller variety". When the design in relief on the transfer roll is being impressed into the plate it sometimes happens, when the operator is careless, that a small piece of metal or other hard adventitious matter lodges between the roller and the plate. This presses into and produces a cavity in the plate; when the finished plate is inked to print the stamps, ink will enter the cavity and be transferred in due course to the paper, showing permanently as a dot on one stamp in the sheet. If the piece of metal sticks to the transfer roll while several impressions are being transferred to the plate, several successive stamps in the sheet will bear the same imperfection.

10c. Congo: No. 47 has the figure "10" and parts of the letters "CONGO BELGE" doubled towards the right.

10c. Ruanda: No interesting variety.

15c. Congo: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of engraving in the third triangle down in the extreme left frame is extended into the margin. The original die and, consequently, all impressions on the plate have an extra line of diagonal shading under the first E of "BELGE".

All stamps, except those of the bottom row, have a plate setting dot to the right of the bottom margin.

No. 48 has part of the cross-hatching in the left frame doubled into the left margin at the height of the pedestal on which the idol sits.

15c. Ruanda: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of engraving of the second triangle down in the extreme left frame is extended into the margin.

All stamps have a plate setting dot to the left of the top margin.

No. 25 has the bottom frame and the letters of "URUNDI" partly doubled upwards by 1.5mm.

Nos. 25, 35 and 45 have a roller variety, a blob of colour to the right of the value tablet; that on 45 is strongest, 25 weakest, indicating clearly that the impressions were entered in the sequence 45, 35, 25. Nos. 32 and 42 have a roller variety, a blob of colour to the left of the idol's right arm; the mark on No 42 is the stronger.

20c. Congo: No interesting variety

20c. Ruanda: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of cross-hatching is extended across the horizontal white line in the bottom frame, 3.5mm to the left of the right outer frame line.

25c. Congo: All stamps in the three left vertical rows have a roller variety, a large blob of colour, under and to the right of the right mouth. Judging by the strength of the mark, the impressions were entered in the sequence: 43, 33, 23, 13, 3, 42, 32, 22, 12, 2, 41, 31, 21, 11, 1. Nos. 32 and 22 have a second roller variety, coloured dot under the left foot. Nos. 43, 33, 23, 13 and 3 have a second roller variety, a blob of colour under the G. of "BELGE".

25c. Ruanda: No. 9 has the upper parts of the letters of "URUNDI" partly doubled to the right. Nos. 3, 22, 23 and 24 have the shading to the left of the legs lightly doubled to the left. No. 25 has a fragment of one triangle in the right frame doubled into the right margin at the height of the C of 25c. Nos. 31, 32, 33 and 34 have parts of the letters of "URUNDI" doubled to the left. No. 41 has parts of the letters of "URUNDI" doubled downwards.

All stamps in the two right vertical rows have a roller variety, a dot in the white triangle in the right frame at the height of the feet.

40c. Congo: No interesting variety.

40c. Ruanda: No. 31 has parts of the letters "URUNDI" doubled downwards.

50c. Congo: All impressions have a dot in the margin under the H of "BELGISCH". This could be a plate setting dot but, from the constancy of its position, it may well have been on the original die.

50c. Ruanda: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of engraving of the eighth triangle up in the extreme right frame is extended into the margin.

70c. Congo: No interesting variety.

70c. Ruanda: No. 28 has a small reversed "10" near the top of the left margin.

75c. Congo: No. 36 has the lower left frame, the "75c" and the letters "BELGISCH CONGO" partly doubled to the right. No. 37 has a small part of the shading in the right frame doubled into the margin at shoulder height. No. 38 has light marks in the figures "75" and in some letters of "BELGISCH", probably signs of re-entry. No. 48 has the bottom frame line and parts of the letters B, E and H of "BELGISCH" doubled upwards by $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm.

Nos. 21, 11, 1, 42, 32, 22 and 12 have a roller variety, a coloured blob to the right of the feet, very prominent on No. 21 and gradually weakening so that it is barely visible on No. 12. The impressions, therefore, were entered onto the plate commencing at No. 41, thence vertically upwards to No. 1, No. 42 and thence upwards to No. 2 and so on. Nos. 32, 22 and 12 have a second roller variety, a dot to the right of the C of "75c". Nos. 30 and 20 have a roller variety, two dots to the left of the pot and legs.

75c. Ruanda: All impressions have a thickening of one of the lines of shading behind the head.

No. 34 has the 5 and C of "75c" and the lower end of the left frame partly doubled downwards.

1 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

1 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety.

1.20 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety noted in copies seen.

1.25 Fr. Congo Frame: No. 32 has the figures "1f.25" very lightly doubled upwards.

Nos. 38, 28, 18, 8, 47 and 37 have successively more damage to one of the diagonal lines of shading $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm above the G of the lower "CONGO". This part of the line on the transfer roll, where, of course, it was in relief, came loose and shows

as bowed and slightly out of position on Nos. 38, 28 and 18. Before No. 8 was rocked-in, one end of the "wire" came loose and on Nos. 8, 37 and 27 the short length of shading corresponding to the loose end of wire is at a successively increasing angle to the main line of shading. Before No. 27 was rocked-in, the loose short length of "wire" had either broken off completely or had been noticed and removed. On Nos. 8, 47 and 37 the gap in the line of shading was filled in by retouching. For the remainder of the impressions, Nos. 27, 17, 7 and the six vertical rows to the left, either a new transfer roll was used or the broken line of shading was completed by very careful retouching; as there is no obvious sign of retouching a new transfer roll is probable.

Nos. 32 and 22 have a roller variety, a blob of colour to the left of the chin.

1.25 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety.

1.50 Fr. Congo Frame: No. 41 exhibits damage to the transfer roll; three diagonal lines of shading to the left of the value tablet give clear evidence that, at these points, the raised impression on the transfer roll became partly detached as on the 1,25 Congo frame. There is no evidence of similar damage on stamps in other positions in the sheet and it is presumed that a second transfer roll was used for impressions transferred subsequently.

1,50 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety observed.

This plate appears to have been particularly susceptible to wear. Although little used compared with the plates of more popular Congo values, the worn plate is clearly evident with missing lines of shading on many stamps.

1,60 fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

2 Fr. Congo Frame: A constant variety is a large dot in the fourth white triangle up in the left frame, clearly due to a flaw in the die or to a piece of metal firmly embedded in the transfer roll.

2 Fr. Ruanda Frame: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of cross-hatching is extended into the right leg of the R of "URUNDI".

Nos. 17, 7, 46, 36, 26, 16 and 6 have a roller variety, a large coloured dot in the figure 2, most prominent on No. 17 and weakest on No. 6.

2,40 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

2,50 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

2,50 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety noted on copies seen.

3 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

3,50 Fr. Congo Frame: Nos. 18 and 8 have a roller variety, two blobs of colour behind the buttocks of the idol. Nos. 19, 9 and 48 have a roller variety, a blob of colour in front of the idol's nose; on Nos. 9 and 48 the number of blobs has become two.

3,50 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety observed.

5 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

5 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety

6 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

6 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety.

6,50 Fr. Congo Frame: All impressions have an imperfection from the original die; one of the lines of cross-hatching is extended into the second white triangle down in the right frame.

8 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

10 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

10 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety observed.

20 Fr. Congo Frame: No. 12 has slight evidence of doubling of the letters GO of the lower "CONGO".

20 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No. 43 has the two left vertical frames doubled to the left. Other impressions and, for that matter, some frames of other values have short, quick thick, lines outside and parallel to the vertical frame lines; these are probably evidence of re-entry but this is by no means certain.

50 Fr. Congo Frame: No interesting variety.

50 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety noted on copies seen.

100 Fr. Congo Frame: Nos. 12, 13, 21 and 22 have coloured marks in the figure "100" which are very probably the result of re-entry.

100 Fr. Ruanda Frame: No interesting variety noted on copies seen.

1 Fr. 2, 40 Fr. and 5 Fr. Centres - First Plate: No interesting variety.

- Second Plate: No. 35 has the hats on both heads doubled upwards by $\frac{3}{4}$ mm.

1, 20 Fr. and 2, 50 Fr. Centres: All impressions have a dot to the right of the idol's left ear, possibly a guide dot for laying out the plate but more probably an imperfection on the original die.

1, 25 Fr. 6 Fr. and 8 Fr. Centres - First Plate: Nos. 17, 27, 37 and 47 have a very strong and persistent nearly vertical scratch through the mask.

- Second Plate: No interesting variety.

1, 50 Fr., 3 Fr., 10 Fr. and 50 Fr. Centres: Several impressions have a large spot of colour, about 0.2mm. diameter, No. 4 in the lower left margin, No. 23 above the left part of the hat, No. 41 above the left part of the hat, and No. 44 to the right of the value tablet. It seems that there was, when the plate was being prepared, a "floating" piece of metal which, on four occasions, was pressed into the plate by the transfer roll.

1, 60 Fr. and 3, 50 Fr. Centres: No. 10 has the upper lip of the idol and the bottom right part of the bonnet doubled downwards by nearly 1 mm.

2 Fr. Centres: No interesting variety.

6, 50 Fr., 20 Fr. and 100 Fr. Centres: No. 48 has the right bottom part of the beard partly doubled 0.7mm to the right.

Plate Varieties in the Marginal Designs

As stated previously, above each stamp in the top row and under each stamp in the bottom row is a design of curved lines and letters. This design was entered onto the plate by means of transfer rolls of which there were apparently two, identified as follows:

(a) Two dots inside and near the top of the third letter "D" and a very small dot just under the top curve of the first letter "D".

(b) Dots to left and right of the vertical stroke of the first letter "D" and two dots in the lower half of the second letter "E".

On each plate one transfer roll was used for the inscriptions in the top margin and the other for the inscriptions in the bottom margin. On some plates (a) is at the top and on others (b).

Many very clear re-entries are visible in the marginal designs, mostly affecting the letters. They are listed below:

10c. Congo: Above No. 1, the bottom curve of the third "D".

10c. Ruanda: Above No. 1, most letters in the left half. Under No. 41, the bottom curve of the fourth letter "D".

15c. Congo: Under No. 43, the top curve of the second letter "I".

15c. Ruanda: Above No. 1, several letters including the lower left vertical curve of the second letter "D". Under No. 41, the vertical curves of the second letters "G" and "E" and the bottom curves of the third and fourth letters "D".

20c. Congo: Above No. 1, the first letter "I" and the ornamental designs above and below (doubled downward by 1 mm). Above No. 3, the central curve of the second letter "D". Under No. 41, the bottom curves of the third and fourth letters "D" are trebled.

20c. Ruanda: Above No. 1, the bottom curves of the second and third letters "D". Under No. 41, the top of the second letter "I".

25c. Congo: Above No. 1, the bottom curves of the second and third letters "D".

25c. Ruanda: Above No. 10, most letters in the left half. Under No. 50, most letters, the bottom curve of the fourth letter "D" being quadrupled.

40c. Congo: Above No. 1, the vertical stroke of first letter "I" and the top left curve of the second letter "D".

40c. Ruanda: Above No. 1, the top left curve of the first letter "D" and vertical stroke of the first letter "I". Under No. 41, the bottom curve of the third letter "D".

50c. Congo: Above No. 1, the vertical strokes of the first letter "I" and of the second and fourth letters "D". Under No. 41, the bottom curves of the third and fourth letters "D".

50c. Ruanda: Above No. 9, the lower left curve of the first letter "E". Under No. 41, the top left and bottom curves of the fourth letter "D". Under No. 47, the vertical stroke of the second "I".

70c. Congo: Above No. 1, the bottom curves of the second and third letters "D".

70c. Ruanda: Above No. 1, the tops and bottoms of most letters. No. 41, the tops of most letters and bottom curves of last four letters "D".

75c. Congo: No. 1, bottom curves of third and fourth letters "D". No. 41, vertical stroke of first letter "I".

75c. Ruanda: No sheet with selvedge available for inspection.

1 Fr. etc Centres - First Plate: No. 50, bottom curves of second, third and fourth letters "D".

1 Fr. etc. Centres - Second Plate: No. 10, most letters, including bottom curves of all five letters "D". No. 50, upper left curve of first letter "D".

1,20 Fr and 2,50 Fr Centres: No. 10, bottom curves of first four letters "D". No. 50, bottom curves of third and fourth letters "D".

1,25 Fr etc. Centres - First Plate: No clear re-entries.

1,25 Fr. etc. Centres - Second Plate: No clear re-entries.

3 Fr. etc. Centres: Nos, 5,6, and 7, light doubling including top left curve of fourth letter "D". No. 8, bottom left curve of first letter "I". No. 10, vertical strokes of most letters and bottom curves of first four letters "D". No. 46, bottom curve of first letter "D" and top curve of third letter "G". No. 50, vertical strokes of most letters.

1,60 Fr and 3,50 Fr Centres: No. 10 bottom curves of first three letters "D". No. 50, vertical strokes of both letters "I" and of third letter "G".

2 Fr Centre: No clear re-entries.

6,50 Fr etc. Centres: No. 10, lower left curves of second and third letters "E" and bottom curves of last three letters "D". No. 50, vertical stroke of first letter "I".

As will be noted, the marginal designs above stamps Nos. 1 and 10 and below Nos. 41 and 50 were particularly susceptible to these imperfections. It is curious that, while the stamps are so relatively free from major flaws, the marginal markings should have been entered on the plate with so little care. In many cases there is doubling of letters in various parts of the design and this could hardly have been caused by an initial touch of the roller die on the plate.

Guide Lines

Many stamps of various values have traces of guide lines, some very pronounced, but these are of little interest except for the identification of the position in the sheet of a particular stamp.

Some of the Franc values are, however, very peculiar, in the appearance and disappearance of very strong vertical lines on the centre plates, invariably passing, at least in part, through the central design. The lines are so vertical that they cannot be normal scratches caused by careless handling of the plate. There are apparently clear examples of the appearance of such lines after the early printings and, when the lines have appeared, there is no evidence of re-entry on the stamps so affected.

Registration of Frame and Centre Plates

The registration of the two plates on the francs values is far from consistent and occasionally very poor centring is found. The writer has a copy of the 20 Fr. Congo with the top of the Idol's head at the top of the frame and a copy of the 1,25 Fr. Congo with part of the head well into the right frame, off-centre by 4 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm respectively.

Constant centring was not possible. With some pairs of plates the impressions of the centres were, apparently, more widely spaced than those of the frames, resulting in a difference in horizontal spacing of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. between extreme left and right stamps in the sheet. This could have been due to paper shrinkage after printing of the frames and before printing of the centres but such shrinkage would have had to amount to 0.65%.

Shades

Most values are found in only one shade, or in one shade each of centre and frame, but a few exist in two quite distinct shades, apart from colour changelings resulting from climatic conditions.

The 20c. values are occasionally found in a most attractive shade of grey instead of the normal greenish-blue; this is entirely due to the effect of the sun. The effect of light on other values appears to be only a bleaching of the colour.

The 40c. Congo appeared in two shades, violet and red-violet; other shades, including blue-violet are thought to be colour changelings of a fugitive ink.

In the 1 Fr. Congo, change of inks coincided with change of the centre plate. With the first centre plate, the frame is in bright orange and the centre in bright purple. Stamps from the second centre plate have dull orange frames and dull brown-purple centres. There are not the same substantial changes of shades in the 1 Fr. Ruanda but stamps from the second centre plate have duller centres than those from the first.

1,25 Fr. Congo stamps printed from the first centre plate have blue-green or deep blue-green frames, and centres varying between carmine and purple-red. Stamps from the second centre plate are consistently deep carmine and blue-green.

There are two very distinct shades of the frame of the 2 FR. Ruanda, dull vermilion and shiny orange-red, the latter being less common. Judging from the dates of cancellations, the scarcer shade is a late printing.

5 fr. Ruanda stamps from the first centre plate have dull greenish bistre frames whereas those from the second plate have shiny pale greenish-yellow frames.

Early printings of the 6 FR. Congo have the frames in brown-orange, about the same shade as the 6 Fr. Ruanda. In later printings of the Congo stamp the colour of the frame changed to bistre-brown.

The frame of the 50 Fr. Congo stamp varies from orange-brown to almost red-brown.

Quality of Printing

The quality of the printing varies a good deal, particularly in the quantity or quality of the ink used, resulting in great variation in the clarity of the lines of engraving. The centres of the bicoloured stamps are, however, almost invariably very clear.

The shading within the rectangle around the figures of value consists of diagonal lines. On many stamps this diagonal shading is quite invisible and the panel appears as a uniform colour, presumably due to the ink being much too fluid. The visibility of this diagonal shading is used as a measure of the clarity of the printing.

All the centimes values and the frames of the francs values first issued after 1948, i.e. 1,20, 1,50, 1,60, 2,40, 3Fr., 6,50 and 8Fr., are normally very clearly printed, as are frames of the stamps printed from the second centre plates of the 1Fr. Congo and Ruanda, 1,25 Fr. Congo and 5 Fr. Ruanda.

The frames of the 1,25, 3,50 and 20 Fr. Ruanda and 100 Fr. Congo always have blurred frames.

Other values are found with frames clearly printed or blurred. It appears that early printings of the francs values had blurred frames and later printings had clearly printed frames. This contention is supported by the sequence of centre plates and the sequence of shades.

Basis of Observations

The material, the study of which formed the basis of the study, comprised: (CS - complete sheet, CRS - complete reconstructed sheet, PRS - partly reconstructed sheet).

	<u>Congo</u>	<u>Ruanda</u>
10c	CS & PRS of 48	CS & PRS of 13
15c	CS & PRS of 46	CS & PRS of 5
20c	CS & CRS	CS & PRS of 4
25c	CS & PRS of 47	CS & PRS of 23
40c	CS	CS
50c	CS & PRS of 24	CS & PRS of 27
70c	CS	CS & PRS of 14
75c	CS & CRS	CS & PRS of 31
1fr (1st centre pl)	CS & PRS of 49	CS & PRS of 41
1fr (2nd centre pl)	CRS	CRS
1,20	Odd unprinted copies	-
1,25 (1st centre pl)	CS & PRS of 26	CS & PRS of 40
1,25 (2nd centre pl)	CS & PRS of 40	-
1,50	PRS of 44	PRS of 45
1,60	CS	-
2fr (early printing)	CS & CRS	PRS of 48
2fr (late printing)	-	PRS of 30
2,40	CS & PRS of 41	-
2,50	CS	Odd unprinted copies
3fr	CS & CRS	-
3,50	CS & PRS of 49	PRS of 20
5fr (1st centre pl)	CS & CRS	PRS of 45
5fr (2nd centre pl)	-	PRS of 18
6fr (early printing)	PRS of 49	CS & CRS
6 fr (late printing)	CRS	-
6,50	CS & PRS of 47	-
8fr	CRS	-
10fr	CRS	PRS of 45
20fr	PRS of 47	PRS of 16
50fr	CS & CRS	PRS of 7
100fr	CS & PRS of 49	PRS of 4

The object of including the above list is to justify comments in the text on the unlikelihood of more plates than those quoted. The laws of probability show that to assemble a completely reconstructed sheet of 50 from single copies requires study of, on the average, 225 perfect stamps. Because of the large numbers of stamps plated, it can be stated with almost complete certainty that no other plates were used.

The list also shows the incompleteness of the information given on the frames of the Ruanda high values.

R.H.K.

EXTRACTS FROM PERIODICALS

La Revue Postale No. 45 - La Navigation Anterieure au Congo

General Du Four concludes his series of articles with a list of the river boats and their cancellations.

Ibid. Nos. 45,47 and 49 - Le Congo Vu Un An Apres l'Independance

M. Jean Van Weddingen completes the series with details of the postal services of the Belgian army and of the various postal cachets used; also cancellations and cachets of the Swedish, Indian and Canadian contingents of the United Nations forces.

Ibid. No. 49 - La Poste Militaire Coloniale Belge 1940-45 - Colonel Michel

Details of the military post offices and their cancellations are given.

Ibid. No. 50 - Les Obliterations des Contingents Swedois a l'Etranger -
Jean Van Weddingen

Included are illustrations of six different cancellations used in the Congo campaign.

Ibid. Nos. 51,52 and 55 - Faux "Katanga"

Illustrations of various "Katanga" overprints on Congo postage dues are included and their authenticity discussed.

Ibid. Nos. 54 and 55 - Congo, le Tirage des Princes - Rene Goffin

Gives details of the plates, sheets, overprints and printings of the stamps and brief details of the postal stationery.

Ibid. No. 54 - Le Rwanda et le Burundi - Jean Van Weddingen

Mentions briefly the 1916-18 issues of Belgian-occupied East Africa and gives details of military cancellations used in 1960-61.

Ibid. Nos. 56,58 and 59/60 - Congo, les Vignettes Publicitaires
- Baron Henri de Moffarts

Lists the Waterlow stamps, printed in colours different from those of the issued stamps, used as samples of the company's products.

Ibid. No. 61 - La Premiere Liaison Officielle Belgique-Congo-
Dr Jacques Stibbe

Gives extracts from the original official documents concerning the postal arrangements for the Independent State of the Congo.

Balasse Magazine No. 156 - Les Surcharges "Congo" sur l'Emission "Flore" du
Congo Belge du 10 Mai, 1952 - J.L.A. Ludwig

Lists the many varieties of the stamps bearing this overprint (see earlier in this Bulletin).