

BELGIAN CONGO STUDY CIRCLE

Bulletin No. 25

January, 1976

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

- W. Bekx, 71 Zwijndrechstraat, 2720 - Burcht, Belgium
- L. Debauche, 14 Dève des Trevières, 1300 - Wavre, Belgium
- Baron Henri de Moffarts, Chateau de Masogne, 5300 - Cinney, Belgium
- J. Doucet, 15 Pater Adonsstraat, 3500 - Hasselt, Belgium
- T. Sommerfeldt, Kongensgt 33, Oslo 1, Norway
- J. Snappe, 10 Rue de la Barre, 5980 - Grez-Doiceau, Belgium

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- G. Celis, BP 156, Mbandaka, Zaire
- A.H. Fitt, 9 Sherwood Avenue, Kenilworth 7700 South Africa
- A. Vindevoghel, Boite 4, 19A Avenue Marnix, 1050 - Brussels, Belgium

There was an error in the last list of members: Mr. Thrasher's address should be: 297 Brighton Road, Worthing, West Sussex.

COMMITTEE

The Study Circle Committee held its first meeting on 14th December, 1975, and decided that, for the future, the work previously performed by Mr. Keach would be divided as follows:

- R.H. Keach - all general secretarial functions and correspondence with members. In addition, Mr. Keach will continue to act as treasurer to the Study Circle.
- C.V. Spurgeon - exchange packets. Meantime members should continue to send returns on outstanding packets to Mr. Keach, and await new packets with specific instructions before making returns to Mr. Spurgeon. AS MR. SPURGEON DOES NOT HAVE THE VOLUME OF MATERIAL TO MAKE UP PACKETS SOLELY FROM HIS OWN DUPLICATES, ALL MEMBERS ARE URGENTLY REQUESTED TO FORWARD ANY PACKET MATERIAL TO HIM (SHOWING DESIRED PRICES) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
- P.S. Foden - bulletins. All contributions to future bulletins will be most welcome, particularly as we now hope to produce the bulletin at more regular intervals.

MEETINGS

- 8 November, 1975 - The topic at the last meeting was "FORGERIES OF BELGIAN CONGO STAMPS". A display was given by Mr. Keach on this subject, which those present found of great interest. It is quite astonishing to discover just how many Congo issues, many of them common enough stamps, have been the objects of the forgers' arts.

- 28 February, 1976 - The next Study Circle meeting will be held in Room A, Central Hall, Westminster, London. As this is the Saturday of STAMPEX, the venue has been selected so that members may attend both. We hope that a larger attendance than usual may be possible. The topic will be the "PRINCES ISSUE", presented by Mr. Keach. For the benefit of those members who wish to make some advance preparations for this meeting, a translation of M. l'Abbe Gudenkauf's comprehensive article on the issue is enclosed with this bulletin. The meeting will commence at 2.30 p.m.
- May, 1976 - Details of a meeting in May will be discussed at the February meeting.
- 2 October, 1976 - 25th Anniversary Meeting. This is the Saturday of B.P.E. and again we hope that this will induce as many members as possible to come to London to attend. The meeting will take the form of a lunch, followed by displays in the afternoon. In order to establish some idea of the number likely to attend, and whether there is a wish for the ladies to join us for lunch, Mr. Keach would like to be advised of provisional acceptances as soon as possible. The probable cost of lunch is £2 - £2.50 per head. Initial topics for displays are:

Proofs, Essays and Colour Trials
First Flights
Occupation of German East Africa
Mols Plating and Varieties
T.P.O. and Maritime Cancellations
Congo Belge Overprints of 1909

It is anticipated that, in order to have displays of a higher standard, one member will collate and present each display, but material will be required from all members willing to assist. Members willing to assist with material, or who would be interested in presenting one of the above displays, are asked to inform Mr. Keach.

EXPERT COMMITTEE

At the November meeting it was suggested that an expert committee should be set up within the Study Circle to give opinions on the genuineness or otherwise of material submitted by members. This could be done on an informal basis or could be extended, if there was a demand, to the issue of certificates with photographs. All members are therefore asked:

Approximately how many stamps would be submitted for an informal opinion with the only charge being return postage?

How many stamps would be submitted at a further cost of say 50p - £1 for an opinion backed by a certificate?

Which members would be willing to serve on such a committee?

Please reply to Mr. Keach in time for this subject to be discussed at the February meeting.

THE CANCELLATIONS OF THE NORMAL POST OFFICES

For members who have a copy of the preprint of the above, Addenda and Corrigenda No. 3 is enclosed.

POST OFFICES OF ZAIRE FROM 1964 TO 1975

Mr. Celis has done a great deal of research in rather difficult conditions and has now produced a comprehensive list of the post offices of Zaire. A copy of this is enclosed.

MEMBERS' WANTS LISTS

Wants Lists are welcomed and will be published in the bulletin as received. It should, however, be appreciated that such lists must be as specific as possible in order to elicit any response. In order to maintain anonymity of members, all items will merely be given a number in the bulletin, and members responding to wants lists are requested to do so via the editor.

Current items required are:

- 1) Est Africain Occupation Pictorial Postcard No. 1.
- 2) " " " " " No. 47.
- 3) Tombeur "RUANDA" overprint on 25 centimes.
- 4) Mols 1 fr. 1894, 1900, 1909 copies for plating.

Literature wanted to buy or on loan:

- 5) "The Belgian Campaign in the Cameroons and German East Africa" published by Causton in 1917.
- 6) "Les Campagnes Coloniales Belges" by Historical Section, Belgian Army, 1917 (particularly parts 2 & 3).
- 7) "Ephemerides des Campagnes Belges en Afrique 1914 - 1917" published by the Bureau de Documentaire, Le Havre.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

If members have specific collecting interests and specialities within the general field of the Congo, and wish these to be shown beside their names in future membership lists, they are invited to submit details to the editor.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Can any member throw some light on the following:

Large circular (3.3cm) cancellation, reading "Kaiserliche Marine Gericht der ????? Bataillon" with Eagle in the centre. Found on Belgian Congo card to Germany dated 5 December, 1914.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PERIODICALS

Stamp Collecting Weekly, Vol. 125, No. 14, 27 November, 1975 - WATCHMAN writes:

Belgian Congo. In 1949, eight one-stamp miniature sheets (which previously appeared as presentation items with Message magazine in 1944) were made available with marginal inscriptions marking the U.P.U. 75th Anniversary. Omitted from most catalogues, these are increasingly sought after by thematic collectors and command a very respectable price. Listed in the David Field minisheet catalogue at £80 the set, I feel this is still a fair price, so do not leave these any longer.

Pioneer Flights in the Congo - T. Pulinckx - Aerial Messenger (The annual publication of the Aero Philatelic Club)

After mentioning the earliest aviation in the Congo, including a Zeppelin in 1889, gives much detail of the internal LARA and SABENA flights and early flights to Europe, but makes no reference to postal cachets applied. Goes up to 1935.

La Revue Postale Nos. 93-4 and 95 - Nomenclature des "Varietes de Surcharge de la Republique du Congo" - P. Jacquemin (continuing)
Lists the very many varieties, inverted etc., of overprint on the stamps from 1960 to 1962, also a constant variety on the 11 July 1962 issue and perforation and impression varieties of the 1 July 1963 issue.

The Philatelic Society of Los Angeles Quarterly Journal - April 1975 -
The New Waterlow Plates of the Belgian Congo 1915 - Thos. A. Gunn Jr.
A general article on the Mols issues with special reference to the two 'types' of centres of some of the 1915 values.

Balasse Magazine Nos. 220 to 222 - Historique de l'Emploi des Marques de Censure pendant la Campagne de l'Afrique Orientale Allemande 1914-1918 - R. De Graeve (continuing)
Continues the series with further detail of the censors of the units, the manuscript censor marks and the special cachets employed.

Postal History International August 1975 - The Normal Post Office Cancellations of Belgian Congo 1886-1960 and Ruanda Urundi 1917-62 - A.I. Heim and R.H. Keach.

The first instalment of the series, the preprint of which has been made available to members of the Study Circle.

THE 25c 'MALINES' SURCHARGE

Mr. Keach's article in the previous Bulletin, No. 24, queried the information given in General Du Four's book about the 'Malines' surcharges, as to the overprinting blocks used, since the sheets of 25/40c recently inspected seemed to show variations in horizontal and vertical spacing which were not explained by the General.

Mr. Molander suggests a possible explanation for these variations:

Although General Du Four's book states that the Printing Blocks were made by casting and galvanoplastics (electro-typing), this is rather a costly method and, nowadays, even with improved methods, would hardly be an economic method to use for the short runs required in this case - a maximum of 5000 sheets of any value. I find it hard to believe that quality, particularly of a provisional issue, would have been so important in Belgium at the time to justify such expense.

If galvanoplastic was, in fact, the method used, let us consider the process -

In 1921, galvanoplastics meant preparing the printing forme carefully, rubbing it over with graphite powder and taking an impression, under pressure, in wax. After further preparation, the wax impression, in turn, had graphite powder brushed over the whole surface, a wire was connected to it, and the impression/matrix received a copper coating (0.2 - 0.5mm) in an electrolytic bath. The copper coating was then taken off, coated with tin on the inside, and used in a casting form for lead. A rather extensive make-ready process would follow, including planeing, trimming of edges, and mounting on a wooden base, before the tin-surfaced lead casting was ready for printing.

The repetition of this process to make a complete surcharge forme from 5, 10, or 25 stamp cliches must have been very costly.

To explain the variations in measurements as seen by Mr. Keach, the following might have occurred:

- (1) Suppose the 5 and 10 unit cliches originated from four or more blocks of 25 which, to the printers' anguish had to be cut up and used as loose pieces in the printing forme; a nuisance in setting-up which allows scope for the variations observed. This cutting up might have been due to an error in measuring the vertical distances: for example, perhaps one sheet of stamps was supplied to the composing room where, however, it shrank slightly: the forme was made from it, and the plates completed, only to find that when the remainder of the issue was released from the dry (?) strongroom for surcharging they did not fit. The plates would thus have to be cut up.
- (2) Alternatively, recess-printed stamps, with all the lines and dots of hardened ink, make an extremely harsh surface to print on unless the printers are satisfied merely to "kiss" the raised surface of the stamp with the letterpress forme. However, as is generally done on recess-printed stamps, the 1922 surcharges were applied under some pressure, with the aim of crushing the recessed lines of ink on the stamp and allowing the surcharge to be printed on a flat surface. This would wear down even a tin-coated printing surface rather rapidly. I will not venture any figures, but surcharging nearly 5000 sheets of the 5c, and nearly 3000 sheets of the 25c, might well have occasioned the replacement of one or more galvanoplastics, or even the complete forme at the same time, at least once during each run.

Further, the printing would probably have worn the top or bottom line of the surcharge more than the others, so that the top or bottom galvanoplastics had to be replaced more often. The ink rollers and printing cylinder - or in a platen press, a badly aligned platen - hit the top or bottom line first and wear it down to a greater extent (unless bearers are used on the ends of the printing forme, and none print in the sheet margins in this case).

Let us remember that the aim of the printers was to surcharge the stamps, not - luckily for us - to surcharge them all identically. Would the costly use of galvanoplastics really have been warranted for the small printing runs concerned? Could it be that the printers used a similar, but simpler and cheaper method - stereotyping - which would also provide a simpler explanation of the variations observed?

Again, let us consider the probable process - Suppose a paper matrix was used. This, in printing, consists of a sheet of special, suitable carton, about 1mm thick. When moistened, ideally to 20 - 23%, and pressed against a printing forme, the matrix takes up an impression. When it is dry, it can be used for casting a stereotype in lead.

Paper, card, etc. - matrix material - is made up of fibres which, in the manufacture process, become aligned in one main direction. Moistening the matrix makes the material expand more in one direction than the other as the swelling fibres expand much more in width than length. In this soft and swollen condition the matrix receives the impression from the forme, and when it dries it shrinks back to almost its original size. (In 1959, the earliest date for which I have information, it was stated that the difference in dimensions of a matrix, moistened to 20%, before and after moistening and subsequent shrinkage, were $3\frac{1}{2}$ - 4% across the grain and about half as much along the grain. The difference may have been larger with the materials and methods used in 1921). The forme must be composed with this in mind.

In this case, using stereotyping, the variations in spacing could occur in several different ways:

- 1) The best way of moistening a matrix is to condition it in controlled heat and humidity in a cabinet. A much poorer way is to wet the matrix unevenly with a rag or sponge and then put it under pressure. A hardly better method is to press it between wet sheets of newsprint. Depending on the method used, and the skill of the craftsmen, the matrix would be more or less true to the original forme, and several matrices taken from the same forme need not be identical.
- 2) Perhaps the forme was poorly fixed and could move a fraction under the pressure when the matrix impression was taken. The primitive method was to beat the matrix on the back with a special brush, and this could well have been done for the small matrices used in this case. (A full newspaper page requires the forme to be locked up into a chase, and a hydraulic press of up to 500 tons capacity).
- 3) Repeated castings from the same matrix would have dried it up and might have altered its dimensions in the process.
- 4) Before being assembled in a surcharge forme, the lead stereotypes were probably trimmed or cut square. How square? - and how far from parallel to the line of surcharges might the edges be.

As stated, the stereotype is cast in lead (with some tin and antimony added for extra hardness) and the printing surface is lead. I believe such a stereotype would wear down after 500 - 1000 impressions. The printers would thus have ordered a large number of stereotypes in blocks of 5, 10, and 25 (or perhaps all 25 and subsequently cut down to smaller blocks but this would entail unnecessary work). The stereotypers would then have run a number of castings off each matrix and, as the matrix would have dried and shrunk, particularly between the first few castings, these would be of slightly different dimensions. Possibly several matrices were made and perhaps the stereotypers cast from a number of these mounted next to each other, not necessarily all of the same denomination, and then cut to the required size of surcharging blocks.

Such a process could easily provide scope for the variations observed.

Mr. Wood, who is well-versed in the issues of the Malines Printing Works, adds the following:

It should be remembered that the printing works at Malines were in the process of re-establishment at that period (1921) and that plant and machinery were probably in short supply. I agree that stereotyping was probably used to make the overprinting medium as it would have been cheaper and quicker than electrotyping and, at the same time, it would also have been simple to make additional blocks of 25 as and when required. The vital fact observed by Mr. Keach appears to me to be that the alignment of horizontal rows is regular in each block of 25.

I would therefore suggest that the composition of the blocks of 25 would have been as follows -

- 1) A horizontal strip of 5 surcharges in printer's type was assembled in a composing stick.
- 2) As outlined by Mr. Molander, 5 papier mache moulds were taken from this strip of 5, and due to the irregular drying out process as explained above, the horizontal spacing of these subjects could differ although alignment would remain the same.
- 3) From this block of 25 a cast in type metal was made to form the printing base for a half sheet.
- 4) Similarly, other horizontal strips of 5 were set up and blocks of 25 derived from them. This would account for the other horizontal alignments.

Unfortunately, we do not know on what authority General Du Four stated that galvanoplastics (electrotyping) was used for these surcharges.

For those members also interested in the stamps of Belgium, Mr. Wood adds the following comment on the re-establishment of the Malines Printing Works:

As far as can be gathered, the first work to be undertaken was the overprinting of the 1915 Issue of Belgium "Allemagne Deutschland" in 1919; the first stamps to be printed were the 2nd. 1920 Issue of the Railway Stamps; and the first plates were for printing the 5 and 20c Type IV of the 1915 Issue of Belgium. In the light of the information presented by Messrs. Keach and Molander, it may be well worth while to re-examine the overprints done at Malines in the period 1919-1923 on the stamps of Belgium.

DIE PROOFS OF THE 1923-27 'VLOORS' ISSUE

The only listings of these die proofs that we have seen are in Grubben's 'Catalogue des Essais des Timbres de Belgique et Congo Belge' (1933) and in 'Essay Proof Journal' of January 1950. These are very incomplete and include, respectively only two and six items.

It so happens that two of our members, Messrs. McGarrity and Spurgeon have recently reported their possession of such proofs and it appears opportune to compile a composite list of what we know although it is felt that die proofs must exist of all values together with proofs of master dies before the figures of value were included. If that is so, there must be an impressive number of

them and it is probable that most have come onto the philatelic market, almost certainly in an irregular way as is usual with such proof material.

A prominent London dealer has stated that there were only three copies of each die proof but this seems to us to be highly unlikely, particularly as we know of the whereabouts of two of the 15 centimes.

The die proofs that we have actually seen are on card, approximately about 130 x 100mm. with the die itself about 80 x 75 mm.

The finished dies generally have serial numbers engraved above the impressions of the stamps, presumably the American Bank Note Co.'s die reference number although we note that a proof of the 20c olive is numbered 50538 with a letter and a proof of the 1,25 francs (same design but different value) is numbered A-50538 which suggests that the same number was used for all finished dies of the same design but that a prefix letter was added to dies which had the same design but different value.

In the following list, the source of the information is given (GRU - Grubben; EPJ - Essay Proof Journal; RBM - R.B. McGarrity; CVS - C.V. Spurgeon).

Master Dies Without figures of Value

The values given in brackets are of the types of the design.

- (5c) Orange-yellow, no serial number (CVS)
- (5c) Orange-red, no serial number (CVS)
- (40c) Orange-red, no serial number (CVS)
- (40c) Dull yellow, no serial number (EPJ)
- (40c) Olive-green, no serial number (GRU)
- (40c) Violet, no serial number (GRU)
- (75c) Sepia, no serial number (CVS)
- (5Fr) Dull yellow, no serial number (EPJ)

Completed Dies in Issued Colours

- 5c Orange-yellow, no serial number (RBM & EPJ)
- 10c Green, serial number C-1451 (CVS)
- 15c Sepia, C-1450 (CVS)
- 20c Olive-green, no serial number (RBM)
- 20c Olive-green, 50538 (CVS)
- 25c Brown, C-1452 (CVS)
- 75c Orange-brown, C-1462 (CVS)
- 1Fr Sepia, C-1453 (CVS)
- 1Fr Pale Blue, C-1453 (RBM & EPJ)
- 1,25Fr Grey-blue, A-50538 (RBM & EPJ)

Completed Die in Other than Issued Colours

- 20c Dull yellow, no serial number (EPJ) (Which design of 20C is unknown)

If other members have die proofs of this issue, perhaps they will be so good as to provide details so that the list may be extended.

AN 1883 CONGO COVER

A very interesting early cover has recently been sold by a British dealer.

Without adhesive stamps, it has a circular dispatch postmark 'CORREIO DE BANANA' without date and a circular arrival mark 'CORREIO DE LOANDA' dated 30 January 1883. It also bears a handstamp '25', apparently struck from two separate number stamps, presumably indicating either that postage of 25 reis had been paid or were due for payment by the recipient. The envelope is addressed to a Dr. Pinto(?) in Loanda.



25

Inside the envelope were two letters, the first written from Boma on 4 January 1883 and said to be concerned with the purchase of land at Banana, suggesting that the Portuguese at that time had taken possession of the area. The second letter, dated 1 January 1883, is from an official agent in Banana stating that parcels have not arrived from the State Printing Works in Lisbon. It could be that the parcels contained postage stamps of Angola for use by the agent in Banana.

Also in the envelope were three hand-drawn maps showing the mouth of the river and the environs of Banana and presumably associated with the letter concerned with the purchase of land.

General Du Four wrote in his book, 'Congo - Cinquante Ans d'Histoire Postale', of the Portuguese post in Banana in 1883-84, mentioned isolated Angola stamps with Banana date stamps and described two covers, the first franked with an Angola stamp cancelled Banana 12/11(1884) (presumably the cover illustrated in the 1947 edition of the Balasse catalogue) and the second, without adhesives, from Leopoldville and bearing the Banana datestamp 19/9/1884. These Banana datestamps are quite different from the cachet illustrated above. According to General Du Four, the earliest known use of the Banana datestamp is 18 June 1883.

It would appear that the 'CORREIO DE BANANA' cachet was used prior to the receipt of the datestamp, which probably arrived with the supply of stamps for which the agent was waiting.

The writer has photo-copies of the cover, the letters and the maps. If any member can read Portuguese script and is prepared to provide a translation of the letters, that will be very helpful.

RHK

A BELGIAN CONGO STAMP LEGITIMATELY BISECTED?

When reading through old articles for information for the proposed bibliography, I read again the late Joseph Wright's article in the Stamp Lover, March, 1926. He wrote as follows:

"Neither have I said anything regarding the provisional created at Basankusu in 1922, whereby for two days a 25c. stamp was made by selling the halves of 50c. adhesives..."

In my search of the literature, I have found no other reference to this bisect and have no idea where Mr. Wright got his information, nor do I recall Mr. Wright having an example of the bisect in his collection.

However, memory persists and reference to a Belgian auction sale catalogue of October, 1962, when part of the collection of one of our members was sold, disclosed, as Lot No. 204, such a bisect on piece. The illustration shows a diagonally bisected 50c/25c 1921 'Recuperation' stamp cancelled Basankusu 25 VIII 22 but the month (VIII) is doubtful.

Any other reference to the bisected stamp will be welcomed, particularly information on the dates when its use was permitted. It would appear quite legitimate; there was, at the time, a general shortage of 25c. stamps awaiting the Floors issue. As we well know, there were through 1922 successive 25c. surcharges of the 40c. stamp in Boma, in late 1922 the use in Elisabethville of the PORT PAYE markings because of the absence of stamps of this value and, at the beginning of 1923, the Elisabethville handstamped surcharges.

THE 15c 1918 RED CROSS IMPERFORATE

Mr. Jacquemin has sent for inspection an imperforate pair, with sheet margin, of the 15c, value but with the frame in a bright deep blue colour instead of the usual deep green. The paper is very much 'toned', much more so than the normal imperforate stamps or the issued stamps on toned paper.

Unlike the normal imperforate proofs, if we can call them that, this pair is gummed and inspection of the edges of the paper gave the writer no indication that the pair had been illicitly gummed although the gum is striated as though applied in an amateur fashion.

I seem to remember having seen such an imperforate stamp previously but that copy cancelled, obviously either CTO or with a forged postmark. If this stamp is in the collection of a member, I shall be glad of the opportunity to inspect it and shall, in any case, be glad to hear of any other copies with blue, rather than green frames.

As we well know from our used copies of the 5c blue of 1894, green is easily changed by chemical treatment to blue and this could be the explanation for the pair under consideration but it could be a proof or colour trial, even an error...

SHIP CANCELLATIONS OF LA COMPAGNIE BELGE MARITIME DU CONGO

During the early days of the Congo Free State, mail to and from Europe was normally carried by packet boats of Great Britain and Portugal. Such ships did not have their own cancellations and mail posted on board had its stamps cancelled at the port of disembarkation, usually Liverpool or Lisbon.

Around the turn of the century, the traffic, in the main, was taken over by the French Line Les Chargeur Reunis, which ships were provided with cancellers used for mail posted on board and as transit marks. The cancellations were of the familiar octagonal type inscribed Loanda a Bordeaux, Matadi a Bordeaux or Bordeaux a Matadi but later replaced by, generally, larger cachets with the name of the ship inscribed thereon.

About 1910, La Compagnie Belge Maritime du Congo became the principal carrier of Congo mail and the object of this article is to give the types of canceller supplied to these ships, used to cancel the stamps of mail posted aboard.

Examples of cancels actually seen are illustrated apart from two that are not sufficiently clear or complete to be able to make a fair facsimile. Others, not seen by the writer, are described and illustrated by Andre de Cock in "CONGO BELGE ET SES MARQUES POSTALES" and General Du Four in "CONGO - CINQUANTE ANS D'HISTOIRE POSTALE". All seen and those recorded in these two reference works are included.

General Cachets

Both de Cock and Du Four report two straight-line marks COURRIER DE HAUTE MER, one in a single line and the second in two lines, the first two words forming the top line and the remaining two the lower line. According to Du Four, these marks have been seen on cover but complementary to the 'star' types provided to the individual ships.

S.S. Albertville

Du Four reports two straight-line cachets, both in 4mm. tall seriffed capital letters, ALBERTVILLE and VAPEUR "ALBERTVILLE" the former seen on a 1909 stamp and the latter on one of 1910.

The circular 'star' type of cancellation illustrated and which we will call Type 3, has been seen on post card dated 1920.

Fig. 1.

De Cock and Du Four describe the cancellation illustrated and called Type 4, a type which appears to be unique to this ship.

Fig. 2.

Type 8, illustrated, has been seen on cover, undated, but bearing Vloors stamps issued in 1925. The cachet was sometimes supplemented by a simple date stamp and such has been seen dated 1939.

Fig. 3.

Type 9, illustrated, was presumably intended for use when the ship was used for cruises. It has been seen on undated cover bearing 1928 Stanley stamps.

Fig. 4.

M.V. Albertville (presumably replacing S.S. Albertville)

Type 11, illustrated, has been seen on post card dated 1948.

Fig. 5.

M.V. Alex Van Opstal

Type 11 has been seen on a 1942 stamp, but not clear enough to copy. It is recorded on a 1949 cover by TPO Magazine.

S.S. Anversville

Several straight-line types of cachet have been reported. That illustrated and called Type 1A, PAQUEBOT "ANVERSVILLE" in $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm sans-serif capitals has been seen on a post card dated 1913.

Fig. 6.

That illustrated and called Type 1B, S/S ANVERSVILLE in $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm. sans-serif capitals, has been seen only on the picture side of a post card franked with Spanish stamps cancelled at Sant Cruz de Teneriffe in 1901; it is not known if the cachet was used for postal purposes.

Fig. 7.

Du Four records three other straight-line markings, S/S ANVERSVILLE in 3mm sans-serif capitals on a 1910 card, PAQUEBOT ANVERSVILLE in 4mm seriffed capitals on a 1910 stamp and ANVERSVILLE in 3mm seriffed letters on 1931 stamps.

Type 3 illustrated, with a central star, has been seen on post card dated 1914.

Fig. 8.

Type 5, illustrated and of a type apparently unique to this ship, has been seen on cover, undated but with Vloors stamps of 1923, also on stamps of the 1915 issue of Belgium.

Fig. 9.

Type 6, illustrated, has been seen on a post card dated 1926.

Fig. 10.

Type 8, illustrated, has been seen on undated cover bearing 1923 and 1928 stamps, also on isolated stamps of the 1931 issue.

Fig. 11.

Armand Grisar

Type 6, illustrated is reported in TPO Magazine on a 1950 cover.

Fig. 12.

S.S. Baudouinville

Type 6, illustrated, has been seen on a cover, undated but with 1931 stamps.

Fig. 13.

M.V. Baudouinville

Type 11, illustrated, has been seen on cover dated 1952.

Fig. 14.

S.S. Bruxellesville

The straight-line Type 1A in $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm seriffed capitals has been seen cancelling 1910 stamps.

Fig. 15.

De Cock reports the straight-line cachet PAQUEBOT BRUXELLESVILLE in 5mm seriffed letters; Du Four reports BRUXELLESVILLE in the same lettering and we wonder if they are not the same and perhaps General Du Four had seen only the second part of the cachet.

M.S. Copacabana

Type 11, illustrated, has been seen on a 1947 cover.

Fig. 16.

S.S. Elisabethville

De Cock reports a straight-line cancel PAQUEBOT ELISABETHVILLE in seriffed 4mm. capital letters whilst that illustrated in Du Four's book is in sans-serif $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm letters.

Type 3, illustrated, has been seen on a 1915 stamp and on a 1914 stamp of Senegal. There is an undoubted forgery of this cancellation with a much larger star and lettering 3 instead of 2mm. tall.

Fig. 17.

The S.S. Elisabethville which carried the Type 3 cancellation was sunk by enemy action in 1917.

Type 7, illustrated, has been seen on undated cover bearing 1923 Vloors stamps.

Fig. 18.

Type 8, illustrated, has been seen on a cover, undated, with 1927 Vloors stamps and on stamps of the 1931 issue with additional simple date stamp of June 1939.

Fig. 19.

M.V. Elisabethville

Type 11, too indistinct to make a fair copy, has been seen on a 1942 stamp.

M.S. Gouverneur Galopin

Type 11, illustrated, has been seen on a 1942 stamp.

Fig. 20.

S.S. Jadotville

Type 11, illustrated, is reported in TPO Magazine, used in 1956.

Fig. 21.

S.S. Leopoldville

Both De Cock and Du Four report the straight-line cancellation PAQUEBOT LEOPOLDVILLE in 4mm. seriffed capital letters. Du Four reports also S.S. LEOPOLDVILLE in 3mm seriffed capitals. We have seen the French Guinea stamp illustrated in which the individual words PAQUEBOT and LEOPOLDVILLE are similar to the illustration in Du Four's book (the second O of LEOPOLDVILLE is much narrower than that shown in de Cock's book but that may not be of consequence) but it appears that the two words were separate cachets. Without seeing further copies of the cachet, it is not possible to comment further. An undoubted forgery (it bears the Nysten 'authenticity' mark) has been seen and this resembles closely the de Cock illustration.

Fig. 22.

A circular date stamp, Type 2, is illustrated by Du Four and was apparently used in 1911. A very similar cancel but with seriffed letters has been seen (also dated 1911) but is presumed to be a forgery as it bears the Nysten 'authenticity' mark.

Fig. 23.

There are two Type 8 cancellations, both illustrated: the first with wider lettering (the O is circular and the U of HAUTE 2 mm wide) and a dot at the bottom has been seen on undated cover with 1928 stamps and on isolated stamps of issues ranging from 1927 to 1935;

Fig. 24.

The second has narrower lettering (the O is oval and the U of HAUTE is 1½mm wide) and a 'floral' ornament at the bottom and has been seen on cover with 1931 stamps, undated but said to have been posted in 1938.

Fig. 25.

M.S. Mar Del Plata

Type 11, illustrated, has been seen used in 1947.

Fig. 26.

S.S. Stanleyville

Straight-line cancels, PAQUEBOT STANLEYVILLE in seriffed 2½mm letters and S/S STANLEYVILLE in seriffed 3mm letters are reported by Du Four.

Type 10, illustrated, has been seen on isolated stamps of issues ranging from 1915 to 1928.

Fig. 27.

S.S. Thysville

Type 7, illustrated, has been seen on a post card dated 1924 and on stamps issued up to 1927.

Fig. 28.

Type 8, illustrated, has been seen on an undated cover with a 1935 stamp and on isolated stamps of issues ranging from 1926 to 1931.

Fig. 29.

Cargo Ships

According to Du Four, cargo ships of the same shipping line occasionally carried the mail and the straight-line cachets Astrida, Kabalo, Kasongo, Mateba, Moanda, Mobeka, Moero and Mokambo, sometimes in all-capitals and sometimes with only the initial letter in capitals, are said to have been seen but none on cover.

General

With little doubt, there are cancellations other than those described for the ships mentioned and it may very well be that, subsequent to 1945, there were other ships of La Compagnie Maritime du Congo which had cancellers for mail posted on board.

BELGIAN STUDY CIRCLE

The Belgian Study Circle at its meeting on Saturday 13 March in Room 45, Herringham Hall, Bedford College, Regents Park at 3 p.m. is discussing the SPECIMEN stamps of Belgium, led by Mr. Marcus Samuel, the national expert on Specimens. He is being asked to include Congo and any members are welcome to attend, taking with them any SPECIMENS they have. Will those going please let Mr. A.G. Wood know as far in advance as possible so that they may be included for tea.



FIG. 1
(TYPE 3)



FIG. 2
(TYPE 4)



FIG. 3
(TYPE 8)



FIG. 4
(TYPE 9)



FIG. 5
(TYPE 11)

PAQUEBOT "ANVERSVILLE"

PAQUEBOT ANVERSVILLE



FIG. 8
(TYPE 3)

FIG. 6
(TYPE 1A)

FIG. 7
(TYPE 1B)



FIG. 9
(TYPE 5)



FIG. 10
(TYPE 6)

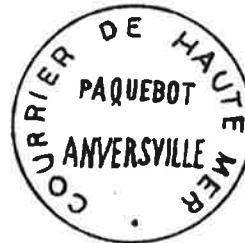


FIG. 11
(TYPE 8)



FIG. 12
(TYPE 6)



FIG. 13
(TYPE 6)



FIG. 14
(TYPE 11)

PAQUEBOT BRUXELLESVILLE

FIG. 15
(TYPE 1A)



FIG. 16
(TYPE 11)



FIG. 17
(TYPE 3)



FIG. 18
(TYPE 7)



FIG. 19
(TYPE 8)



FIG. 20
(TYPE 11)



FIG. 21
(TYPE 11)

PAQUEBOT
EOPOLDVILLE

FIG. 22
(TYPE 1)

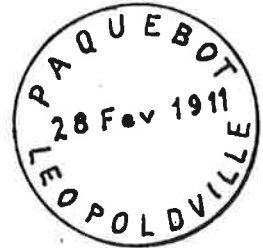


FIG. 23
(TYPE 2)



FIG. 24
(TYPE 8A)



FIG. 25
(TYPE 8B)



FIG. 26
(TYPE 11)



FIG. 27
(TYPE 10)



FIG. 28
(TYPE 7)



FIG. 29
(TYPE 8)

35

CONGO - NEW INFORMATION ON THE 'PRINCES' PRINTING - 1909

by Abbe G. Gudenkauf

(translated from Balasse Magazine Nos. 192 to 198)

Without doubt, this is the most interesting early issue of the Congo: the bright shades of the frames, the warm brownish black tone of the centres, as well as the rarity, giving a certain prestige to the stamps.

Let us not forget that in 1894, when the first Mols stamps appeared, this superb bi-coloured series was the first of its style to charm the eyes of the Belgian people, who were unanimous in their appreciation. Once again, Leopold III showed vision; these impressions of subjects, aflame with reality, propagated the desire to work in the Congo.

In the later printings, the inks used, with duller shades, were far from equalling the beauty of the first printings. Was this a reflection of English disapproval of the King's rule? We would not endeavour to say. In any case, once Belgian annexation was realised, without altering the colours required by the U.P.U., the Princes' Printing notably improved the appearance of the stamps which were current at the beginning of 1909.

We expect to show all the new data which sustained study now allows us to bring to light.

First we must make a point as to the origin of the issue, the birth of which, quite legitimate, passed almost unnoticed at that time. The quantities issued call for a slight correction.

Only the most spectacular varieties, unique to this issue, are dealt with here. In our opinion, a third of the 'Princes' are affected by this sort of constant variety, always visible under the magnifying glass. We shall describe them. Almost all affect the centres and persist in the subsequent issues, unilingual and bilingual. This has allowed identification of the 'Princes', an admittedly difficult task where they have no overprint and the colours have faded.

The great majority of the issue, sent to Boma at the end of March 1909, was distributed amongst the Congo post offices and used normally; the stamps had the typographed "CONGO BELGE" overprint. In total, this shipment was of about 45,000 stamps, approximately 4,500 examples of each value. This was few enough.

An English philatelist, Mr. Thrasher of the Belgian Congo Study Circle, commenced a detailed examination of these overprints in 1959; this entrancing study allows us to allocate stamps with certainty to this rare issue by plating the overprint even when the stamps' colours are faded, which is a frequent phenomenon after a voyage to and sojourn in Africa. Most of the clichés used to overprint the "Ordinary" issue in December 1908 were retained but their distribution in the plate was totally different for the new overprinting.

What postal use was made of these stamps and the accompanying postal stationery? Where and when were the different values available? These pertinent questions will be tackled.

Origin of the 'Princes' Printing

The stamps overprinted 'CONGO BELGE' (by hand and typographed) and available in the colonial post offices did not constitute an adequate stock. To supplement the provisional issues therefore, a new definitive series was ordered, soon replaced by the bilinguals as French was no longer the only official language of the Congo.

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Because of this, many stamps ended up in collectors' albums instead of being available for postal use in the Congo. This most affected the low values, those most used; dealers had bought those in quantity here and in the Congo which aggravated the shortage.

Experience confirms this; very few of the 5 and 10 centimes of the ordinary issue typographed were used for postal purposes. Most of those seen on letters are 'improved' by a forged overprint. The vast majority of 'used off cover' examples have received forged cancellations.

On a post card dated 26 July 1909, Major Alberic Bruneel, while advising Mr. Kuck of the dispatch of 1000 15 cent. stamps with machine overprints (as the typo overprints were then called), 100 10 cent. and 350 5 cent. handstamped stamps, added: "the 10 cent. and 5 cent. machine overprints (thus both ordinary and 'Princes') are becoming unobtainable here (Boma)". This although the ordinary stamps had reached the Congo capital at the end of January 1909 and the 'Princes' at the end of April.

The small printings of the overprinted issues were soon exhausted. The principal reason for the 'Princes' Printing - and the only reason for the typograph overprinted stamps which made up 92% of the total - was evidently in response to postal needs. The appearance at the same time of postal stationery in changed shades confirms this argument.

But why 5000 examples of each value? And the stamps left without overprint? And the stamps with Brussels handstamps?

Firstly let us remember that, contrary to the opinion expressed in 'Le Philateliste Belge' of 15 April 1923, the 'Princes' without the overprint were valid for postal use from their inception until the end of July 1909; those with the overprints remained current until 1916. When these stamps were issued, they could all be used on mail and some of them were, as is evidenced by the piece reproduced below which bears an indisputable 3,50 Fr 'Princes' stamp without the overprint.

The postal status of our issue does not require further discussion, the mistrust shown of the series by certain English catalogues is quite unjustified.

However, let us turn to the other origin of the issue: eminent personalities, one of whom was the Countess of Flanders, wished to obtain the Mols series with the Brussels handstamped overprints, a very rare set, which were on sale at the office of the new Colonial Ministry for only five days. The Mother of Crown Prince Albert wanted them for her grandchildren, Princes Leopold and Charles and Princess Marie-Jose (born in 1901, 1903 and 1906 respectively).

Why had the enthusiasts been caught short?

We seem to have found the true explanation in a missive dated 23 October 1912 to Mr. Kuck from a Theux philatelist and in a letter from Mr. Kuck himself dated 14 December 1909. Here are the texts:

"At this period (end of November 1908) stamps with the handstamps were purchased at the Colonial Ministry. Up to then it was thought that all the cachets would be sent to the Congo". This had led to the hope that examples would soon be readily available in Africa.

"When it was discovered that the cachets sent to Boma were all different from those used in Brussels, the demand for the latter became intense".

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Alas, the harassed Minister was empty-handed; all his stock of stamps had been transferred to the 'La Cote Libre' printing works to be overprinted typographically. This then was the second reason for ordering 100 sheets of each value from Waterlow's. The interested parties and far-sighted officials could dispose of the unoverprinted and Brussels handstamped examples; some sets ended up in the hands of specialist Congo dealers.

London used superior inks, a very regular perforation 14, a thinner paper and, for the 3,50 and 10 Fr., watermarked paper. The same shades re-appear in the cases of the 5, 10, 15 and 50 cent. in the unilingual series. Certain plates had suffered corrosion; was it considered to abandon them? We believe not, as far as concerns the centre plates, since the two London firms were assured of a long term contract; the Floors issue appeared only in 1923. Happily for philatelists, these differences and others, due to the cleaning of the plates and sometimes re-entry, allow recognition of the 'Princes' stamps.

The Numbers Issued

The collection of Mr. Van Bleyenbergh, recently sold, contained 'Princes' stamps with the Brussels handstamps from corners of the sheet which displayed the number 8. From other sources we know of unoverprinted stamps from sheets 1 and 2.

Instead of the 250 complete series with Brussels handstamps assumed traditionally, there were thus 300, being six sheets numbered 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Consequently the number of examples of 'Princes' with typographed overprint is reduced to 4600 series.

The 'Princes' Issue without Overprint

Originally there were 100 complete sets. We only know of about 10. What has happened to the rest?

Let us bear in mind the unobtrusive collections sleeping in their safe deposits. Many of these sets, however, have come back into dealers' hands and Mr. de Cock aptly related, General Jean Du Four told me, that experienced philatelists like himself had acquired incomplete sets, often stopping at the 1 Fr., the higher values then representing a considerable outlay.

These last have been found several times on letters, but carrying a forged inverted overprint, like that shown opposite oddly dated 31 July 1909, the last day the unoverprinted Mols stamps were valid! Philatelic crime! But what a blunder!

The 'Princes' Issue Handstamped at Brussels

All values can be found with the Type 2 cachet. The low values can also be found with Type 5. This latter is however much more rare on the 10 cent. and exceptional on the 1 Fr. The Van Bleyenbergh collection displayed the sole example with Type 6, on 3,50 Fr. 'Princes' with a variety unique to that issue: vermilion dots in the left margin at the bottom, opposite the scroll containing the value in words.

A strange fact: no letter has been seen franked by these stamps; they were all carefully preserved. In fact, the complete series is as rare as the ordinary series with Brussels handstamp.

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The Engraving Varieties which Commenced with the 'Princes' Issue

We have pursued this fascinating study thanks to General Du Four and Baron Henri de Moffarts who have given us access to their collections. We have also had the well-informed assistance of Mr R.H. Keach, secretary of the Belgian Congo Study Circle in England, who has contributed greatly to the discoveries. Our cordial thanks to all these gentlemen.

For twenty years, the specialist catalogues have included four of these varieties, amongst the most obvious. General Du Four's excellent book lists about thirty. We believe that we have discovered 170 varieties in a total of 500 plate positions.

Thus at least one 'Princes' stamp in three shows one or other mark arising from the special issue. Recently, an auctioneer has offered multiples of 10 Fr. Mols on greyish paper; the presence of certain typical flaws enables us to ascribe these essays to the 'Princes' issue.

Let us recall in passing that each of the 500 positions is represented by 100 examples, : two without overprint, six with Brussels handstamped overprint and ninety-two with typographed 'CONGO BELGE' overprint.

A drop of water placed under the microscope reveals a wholly unsuspected world of various tiny creatures and suspended matter. It is the same for a sheet of engraved stamps examined under magnification. It is astonishing to find all the flaws and specks, apart from the recognised varieties. In this regard, the Mols issues before 1915 offer an unsurpassed interest. We believe it is possible - though not without difficulty on occasion - to plate them all.

Here our problem is to sniff out the constant varieties among all the marks; they can be found in the same place on the sheet throughout the issue and most of them beyond, to subsequent issues. In effect, they consist of flaws, scratches and black specks emanating from the centre plates; these centre plates were preserved and re-used for printing the unilingual stamps in April 1909, also for the first printings of the bilingual issue.

How do we proceed?

We start with sheets of the unilingual stamps for the 5, 10, 15 and 50 cent.; for the other values we similarly use sheets of the first state of the 1910 bilingual stamps.

We then compare these stamps with the corresponding 'Princes' stamps and note any anomalies of printing common to both issues.

It remains necessary to verify that the variety did not already exist in the final state of the ordinary Mols 'ETAT INDEPENDANT DU CONGO' issue.

To simplify reading of the following lists, we have adopted certain rules for all values:

- a) If nothing is specified to the contrary, varieties are always of the centre, and re-appear in the later issue (unilingual or bilingual). Their permanence is thus established.
- b) Varieties of the frame are so expressly stated; obviously they do not appear in a later issue.
- c) Varieties of the centre which do not occur in a later issue are so noted.

For these last two categories, as far as possible we have kept to marks confirmed by two or more examples of the same plate position in the 'Princes' issue.

N.B. The precise position of a variety depends on that of the centre relative to the frame.

Varieties Starting with the 5 centimes 'Princes'

- No. 6 Small almost horizontal scratch under the bottom right corner.
- 7 Small dot in oval frame under last N of "INDEPENDANT".
- 16 Fine oblique scratch under ES of "CENTIMES", (Appears during the course of the issue).
- 17 Extension of the scratch on No. 16, ending at the bottom of the left torch-shaped ornament.
- 26 Small curved scratch in the bottom margin under N of "CENTIMES"
- 27 Small fine vertical scratch in the C of "CINQ" and in the lower frame.
- 30 Two small dots set obliquely in the frame under the N of "CINQ".
- 32 Light almost vertical scratch in the left frame opposite E of "ETAT".
- 33 Two thick dots in dagger-blade shaped ornament at left.
- 35 Almost horizontal scratch in letters DU and C of "DU CONGO".
- 36 Thick scratch half-way up in the left margin or left frame and a vertical scratch through the first E of "CENTIMES".
- 38 Short rough scratch just above the top left corner.
- 41 Scratch between the boats and long horizontal scratch from the left margin to the second boat.
- 42 Three large dots under the point of the dagger-blade at left.
- 43 Fine oblique scratch across the entire bottom right corner. (Appeared during the course of the issue).
- 44 Four fine, almost vertical, scratches under the letters T and I of "ETAT INDEPENDANT".
- 47 Fine ascending scratch from the bottom margin, under the letters CENT of "CENTIMES" and crossing the upper part of the torch at the right.
- 48 Extension of the scratch on No. 47 crossing the upper left corner of the frame.

Varieties Starting with the 10 centimes 'Princes'

- No. 23 Dot in the bottom frame, south-west of the 'wheel' to the right of the word "CONGO".
- 29 Two dots set obliquely in the right frame opposite X of "DIX".

Varieties Starting with the 15 centimes 'Princes'

- No. 1 Short oblique scratch in the left margin opposite E of "ETAT" and a fine curved scratch across I of "INDEPENDANT".
- 2 Two dots in or under letter Q of "QUINZE".

- 25
- No.
- 4 Almost horizontal scratch above and to the right of last O of "CONGO" and prolonged into the right margin.
 - 11 Sprinkling of light spots under the word "CENTIMES" at the foot of the design and to the right of the "15" at the right.
 - 12 Sprinkling of light spots in the left margin and under the "15" at the left also two short parallel scratches under or in C of "CENTIMES"
 - 25 Short horizontal scratch in the left margin opposite E of "ETAT"
 - 31 Three curved scratches above "15" at left and one to the south-west of the same "15".
 - 33 Three small dots, set in a triangle, in the frame at the bottom left corner and an almost horizontal scratch across TIME of "CENTIMES".
 - 42 Short horizontal 'hyphen' in right frame at the height of the bottom of the centre design.
 - 43 Three light oblique scratches above the letters T and I of "ETAT INDEPENDANT".

Varieties Starting with the 25 centimes 'Princes'

NOTE: The following varieties do not re-appear in the first combination of plates of the 1910 bilingual stamp, the centres of which were re-entered.

- No.
- 11 Small almost vertical scratch in top margin above Q of "CINQ".
 - 21 Small spot in the centre, north-north-east of the point of the spear.
 - 31 Fine horizontal scratch in the top margin.
 - 35 Fine, almost vertical, scratches in the right margin.
 - 40 Fine vertical scratches in the right margin.
 - 41 Small oblique line above I of "CENTIMES" in the top frame. (Appeared during the course of the issue).
 - 46 Fine, almost vertical, scratch across the top frame, to the left of right figures "25".

Varieties Starting with the 40 centimes 'Princes'

NOTE: In the 40 centimes 'Princes' and 1910 bilingual issues there is a spectacular collection of numerous scratches, sometimes of considerable length, but almost all had appeared near the end of the ordinary 'ETAT INDEPENDANT' issue. We know overprinted sheets which belong to these last printings. The most spectacular variety is the rough scratch which ascends from No. 31 to No. 26. The presence of vertical or horizontal scratches is thus a favourable indication but not conclusive proof that any 40 centimes stamp belongs to the 'Princes' printing.

- No.
- 2 Fine vertical scratch in right margin.
 - 3 Very fine horizontal scratch half way up and across the right of the centre.
 - 17 Fine vertical scratches in right margin.
 - 40 Dot in first A of "QUARANTE".
 - 45 Vertical scratch across right end of canoe.

Varieties Starting with the 50 centimes 'Princes'

25

- No.
- 3 Parallel, almost vertical scratches in the letters PEND of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 4 Fine short rough scratch in the bottom right corner, at the base of the frame.
 - 11 (The scratch across the bottom left corner, in the ordinary issue, has disappeared).
 - 16 (The oblique scratch in the top margin at the left has disappeared)
 - 18 Spot in left margin opposite second N of "CINQUANTE".
 - 21 (Disappearance of vertical scratch from the left margin).
 - 22 Small vertical line in first O of "CONGO".
 - 23 Vertical scratch in U of "DU"; curved scratch across N of "CONGO" and in the bottom margin.
 - 24 Short vertical scratch under left "50" in bottom frame.
 - 27 Almost horizontal scratch in the bottom of the letters IN of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 28 Vertical scratch across I of "INDEPENDANT" and oblique scratch in the top margin ending at first E of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 29 Oblique scratch north-west of top left 'rosette' in top margin.
 - 33 Vertical scratch across right part of G of "CONGO".
 - 34 Dot in N of "CENTIMES"
 - 37 Large dot in water of River Inkissi in the lower left centre.
 - 41 (Disappearance of vertical scratches in the right part of the stamp).
 - 45 Two dots in river, right under extreme left rock.
 - 48 Horizontal scratch above letters NDAN of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 49 Oblique scratch across first O of "CONGO" and in bottom margin.

Varieties Starting with the 1 Franc 'Princes'

Let us state in passing that hunting elephants with spears is a speciality of the Azandes (Niam-Niam) tribes of the Uele and Bomu basins.

This beautiful design also recalls Commandant Laplume; after his glorious campaigns in the upper Uele and the Lado, he amused himself by training young elephants at Api Station. Finally, it recalls also the first rich harvests of the Congo in the form of ivory tusks which, during these years, made Antwerp the world centre for ivory.

- No.
- 3 Fine short horizontal scratch above P of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 6 Fine short horizontal scratch below first E of "ETAT".
 - 11 (Frame variety); carmine spots just above and to the right of the left figure "1".
 - 18* Oblique scratch across bottom right corner.
 - 19* Almost horizontal scratch across entire bottom frame.
 - 20* Oblique scratch crossing base of stamp and descending to right.
 - 21 Vertical scratch across N of "UN" at the left.

No.

25

- 22* Oblique scratch rising from base of stamp to the right.
- 23* Oblique scratch rising from left margin across to top of stamp.
- 24 Dot under D of "DU".
- 25* In top right margin, continuation of scratch from No. 20.
- 26* Fine oblique scratch rising from the top of the design up to the right.
- 27* Fine oblique scratch across top left part of stamp.
- 41 Thick short oblique line south-west of left figure "1".

* This is a single extensive scratch running up through No. 26 through Nos. 27, 22, 23, 18, 19, 20 and back down through No. 25, probably due to cleaning of the plate. It did not re-appear in the 1910 issue.

Varieties Starting with the 3,50 Francs 'Princes'

Corrosion of both plates resulted in 9 varieties in vermilion (frame plate) and several black spots (centre plate).

No.

- 3 (Frame) Vermilion spot in centre of E of "ETAT".
- 4 (Frame) Vermilion spot in second T of "ETAT". (Centre) Large dot above second palm tree from left.
- 5 Short horizontal line in right frame opposite to hut floor.
- 8 (Frame) Sprinkling of vermilion dots in left angle of value scroll.
- 9 Oblique scratches across C of "FRANCS".
- 10 Thick vertical scratch across right end of value scroll.
- 11 Inverted comma to left of right figure "3".
- 15 Blurred spot above the two right banana trees.
- 16 Very blurred spot above CIN of "CINQUANTE".
- 17 Fine, almost horizontal, scratch above O of "TROIS".
- 18 Short vertical line above first N of "INDEPENDANT".
- 19 Fine vertical scratch under IM of "CENTIMES".
- 20 Small horizontal line in frame, above second T of "ETAT".
- 21 Curved scratch in bottom margin, under TIM of "CENTIMES".
- 22 The well-known extra palm leaf in the centre to the right of the two left palm trees.
- 24 (Frame) Vermilion spots in left figures "3,50",
(Centre) Thick horizontal scratch in right margin, below "3,50".
- 25 (Frame) Vermilion spot in top margin, at the left, and another in the first T of "ETAT".
- 26 Spot to left of E of "ETAT".
- 27 'Spider, suspended by its web' in top of centre. Light scratch above second T of "ETAT". Spots at bottom of centre design at the right.
- 28 Short thick oblique line, opposite hut roof, in right frame.

- 25
- No.
- 29 (Frame) Vermilion spots in O of left "3,50".
(Centre) Short horizontal scratches above and in left "3,50".
 - 30 Large dot to the right of the right hut but still in the centre design.
 - 31 Dot above second palm tree on the left (Appeared during the course of the issue).
 - 32 Oblique scratch under NT of "CINQUANTE".
 - 33 Fine vertical scratch across first T of "ETAT".
 - 34 Very fine oblique scratch descending across "ETAT".
 - 37 (Frame) Small vermilion spot in top frame, above A of "ETAT".
 - 38 (Frame) Vermilion spots in and under A of "ETAT" and vermilion spots in "3,50" at right.
(Centre) Fine vertical scratch through entire stamp at first T of "ETAT".
 - 39 Horizontal scratch in MES of "CENTIMES".
 - 40 Large dot at foot of last banana tree on right. Oblique scratch in bottom left corner which normally runs into Nos. 39 and 45 (the last not in 1910).
 - 41 Fine oblique scratches descending across left "3,50".
 - 42 Large spot under OI of "TROIS". (Appeared during the course of the issue).
Thick star-shaped spot at right of the top of the two palm trees at left.
 - 43 Vertical scratch across first T of "ETAT" and prolonged downwards.
(Appeared during the course of the issue). Vertical scratch above the right group of banana trees.
 - 44 Horizontal scratch across ENDANT of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 45 (Frame) Vermilion spots in the left margin opposite the value scroll.
(Centre) Horizontal scratch across E of "ETAT".
 - 48 Spot in right frame, above and to right of "3,50".
 - 50 (Frame) Sprinkling of vermilion spots all over the bottom left corner.

Varieties Starting with the 5 Francs 'Princes'

We know that the centre plate was modified for this issue: Chief Bangala's machette was retouched on the roller itself; and the subsequent re-entry caused many double impressions, notably in the tall vegetation at the right (more rarely at the left) and, above all, at the point of the spear; these last display an astonishing diversity; each is recognisable where it exists and permits plating of the stamp.

For brevity, we will call the first type of double impression DFH (double frappe de l'herbage) and the others DFL (double frappe de la lance). If the abbreviation is in brackets, this means that the double is hardly visible; if the abbreviation is underlined, the variety is very evident. We will also describe the other varieties.

- No.
- 1 DFL + DFH + Large dot above AN of "FRANCS".
 - 2 DFL & DFH + Oblique lines descending above the chief's head.
 - 3 DFL (not in 1910) + Parallel oblique scratches descending from first N of "INDEPENDANT".

- 25
- No.
- 4 (DFL) + Spots in left frame opposite Chief's shoulder and large dot under first O of "CONGO" at the top of the centre design.
 - 5 Fine vertical scratch in bottom margin to the right of the left figure "5" and horizontal scratch in top margin.
 - 6 DFL + Fine horizontal scratch in second D of "INDEPENDANT" and fine horizontal scratch in top left figure "5" and vertical scratch in left margin.
 - 7 Vertical scratch in bottom right figure "5". (Not in 1910).
 - 8 DFL + Most spectacular variety - two almost horizontal parallel lines across centre of stamp on either side of the chief.
 - 9 (DFL).
 - 10 DFH + Light vertical scratch in bottom left figure "5" (the scratches above the chief's head have disappeared).
 - 11 DFH + Two short oblique lines under T of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 12 DFL + DFH + Small oblique scratch above and to the right of the chief's head.
 - 13 Fine vertical scratch to the right of the top left figure "5" (the vertical scratch across the Q of "CINQ" has disappeared).
 - 14 DFL + DFH + Fine vertical scratches in the top right figure "5".
 - 15 DFL + DFH + Short oblique line in the centre under N of "CONGO".
 - 16 (DFL) + DFH (The scratches running down to the chief's head have almost disappeared).
 - 17 DFL + Fine vertical scratch in the top right figure "5".
 - 18 DFH + Fine vertical scratches at the top of the left margin.
 - 19 (DFL) + Black dot under NQ of "CINQ" in bottom margin.
 - 20 (DFL) + inverted comma half-way up at right of centre design.
 - 21 DFH + Large curved scratch above extreme left palm tree.
 - 22 DFH + Rough, almost vertical, scratch in top left corner.
 - 23 Short oblique scratch to right of bottom right figure "5".
 - 24 DFH
 - 25 (DFL) + Small parallel oblique scratches above chief's head and short vertical line to the right of T of "INDEPENDANT".
 - 26 Small oblique line to right of spear point.
 - 27 DFL.
 - 28 Oblique line in centre above chief's head.
 - 29 DFL + Fine vertical scratch below and to the right of the bottom left figure "5" in the bottom margin.
 - 30 Thin, almost vertical, scratch across right frame, half-way up.
 - 31 (DFL) + DFH.
 - 32 DFL + DFH + Numerous fine scratches in the top left figure "5".
 - 33 (DFL) + DFH + Light horizontal scratches in the bottom margin at the left.
 - 34 (DFL) + DFH.
 - 35 (DFL) + Dot south-west of top left figure "5".

- No.
- 36 Two large dots in the space between the native woman and the bottom left figure "5" + two dots in the top left figure "5".
- 37 (DFL) + Fine vertical scratches across bottom left figure "5" (Not in 1910).
- 38 DFL.
- 39 DFH + Dot 1 mm. above spear point.
- 40 Dot above chief's forehead.
- 41 Short vertical line to left of chief's forehead in his line of sight.
- 42 DFL + DFH + Large dot above A of "FRANCS"
- 43 DFL + DFH
- 44 DFL + DFH + Inverted comma to right of T of "INDEPENDANT".
- 45 DFL + (DFH).
- 46 DFL + DFH + Small arc like a reversed comma, at the right of the base of the spear head + horizontal scratches in bottom margin.
- 47 DFH + Horizontal scratches across bottom left figure "5" (faint in 1910).
- 48 DFL + DFH + Horizontal scratches in bottom margin to the right of and in the right figure "5".
- 49 (DFL) + Horizontal scratches in bottom margin and left figure "5".
- 50 Dot in top margin, right in the middle.

Varieties Starting with the 10 Francs 'Princes'

- No.
- 1 Fine vertical scratches in the left margin. (Appeared during the course of the issue).
- 2 (Frame) Two parallel oblique scratches under N of "CONGO" in the frame.
- 6 Fine vertical scratches in the left and right margins.
- 11 (Frame) Oblique green line in right margin half-way up O of "10" (not in 1910).
- 18 Large dot under bottom right corner (sometimes in the frame). (Appeared during the course of this issue).
- 21 Large dot to the left of E of "ETAT", often in the margin.
- 22 Fine curved scratch, concave to the left, just to the right of the centre above the hill-tops.
- 23 Almost vertical scratch above the top right corner.
- 24 Short oblique scratch below first O of "CONGO" at the edge of the frame.
- 28 Rough oblique scratch, a third of the way up the left margin.
- 29 Marked oblique scratch in the centre rising towards the paddle-wheel of the boat.
- 30 (Frame) Horizontal green scratch in centre above the flag.
- 33 Black dot in the water under left group of passengers.
- 42 Large dot under the smoke to the left of the funnel. (Appeared during the course of the issue).
- 44 (Frame) Large green dot in right frame at the side of the right figure "10".

No.

- 47 Small oblique line under C of "FRANCS" in bottom margin against the frame.
49 Thick rough oblique line high in the right margin.

The 'Princes' Stamps with Typographed 'CONGO BELGE' Overprint

Let us examine this part of the issue, surely the most important (92% of the total issue) and of the greatest interest since it served a postal use in the colony. Except for a few sheets of each value, the stamps were distributed among most of the post offices.

In fact, the complete series in mint condition is as rare as that with Brussels handstamped overprint.

Mr. Kuck was not ignorant of the addition of the typographed overprint by La Cote Libre in March 1909 on 4600 series; he saw these sheets and noted only one difference with regard to the 10 Francs: one printing curiosity appeared frequently, the paddle-wheel touching the left frame (we find this curiosity on 40% of the 10 Francs 'Princes'). He alerted his friend and correspondent in Boma about this and also mentioned the return to the old perforation (the previous perforation up to 1907 was $14\frac{1}{4}$; that of the 'Princes' is always 14). All that followed proves that he had not recognised a special issue in Brussels; he did not buy these stamps. Later he made a search in Africa to obtain mint examples.

In fact the issue would have passed unnoticed at the time if a sharp-eyed philatelist had not been in Boma by a happy coincidence at the critical time. It was Major Alberic Bruneel, a very distinguished officer with wide interests, who was beginning his third stay in Africa; he was extremely interested in botany and several Congo plants, studied with care, now bear his name.

The Discovery of the Typographed 'Princes'

When did the Major first disclose the details which revealed a special issue? Was it to Mr. Dethier as tradition has it? It is based on an article appearing in 'L'Annonce Timbrologique' of 1909 where a letter from Mr. Bruneel dated 15 April 1909 is reproduced.

On examination, this date proves to be unacceptable.

The files and bibliographies all show the appointment of the Commandant of the Police Force of Boma and his departure from Antwerp on 1 April 1909. And it is not a hoax that the 'Mouvement Geographique' of 28 March announces: "Leaving on board S.S. Leopoldville sailing from Antwerp on 1 April 1909 Mr. Bruneel, State Inspector ..."

How long would it have taken him to reach Boma? 'La Tribune Congolaise' of 15 April 1909 anticipated the arrival of the ship towards the 21st; the average duration of the journey was 19 days. On 15 April 1909, the Major was somewhere on the Atlantic Ocean.

One could argue: the stamps in question travelled with the Major, on the same ship; he could have studied them on board! And, in fact, since the overprinting had been done in March and, as, on the other hand, the first 'Princes' typographed stamp known on cover is datestamped Boma 3 May 1909, it is reasonable to suppose that S.S. Leopoldville did carry to the Congo both the special issue and its 'discoverer'. The following will prove that they did not meet at sea (see the photograph of this First Day Cover on the previous page).

The left stamp is a 5 cent. 'Princes' typo (No. 16 in the sheet). The other is a 10 cent. with local handstamp Type 4.

The letter sent to Mr. Dethier alludes to the 15 cent. and 50 cent. stamps of the 'definitive' issue (meaning the unilinguals) which the Major had compared with the 'Princes'. These stamps were not available until 15 June 1909. The letter must therefore be subsequent to this.

Actually it is of 15 August 1909; its contents are identical with those of a similar letter sent to Mr. Kuck the same day. Here is the heading of this latter message and you can see for yourself; the mis-read date is the source of the error:

Boma, le 15 aout 1909

Ma cher Monsieur Kuck

Mr Bruneel first mentioned the 'Princes' type in the text of a post card sent from Boma on 26 July 1909: "As to the 4638, not 5000, sets overprinted by machine, there are no more here, all have been sent up-country. However I keep looking and think I will be able to find some. By chance I arrived here recently and obtained a sheet of 15 cent.; the shade is more brown than orange".

Taking over his new functions, the Major had other worries and it is on 15 August, his rest day, that he wrote of the results of his quest to Mr. Kuck and to Mr. Dethier. He had managed to get a sheet of each value except the 25 cent. He detailed the shades, so different from those of the previous issues, the uniform regular perforation 14 etc... He had obtained a sheet of the 3,50 Francs imperforate except for the left side of the first vertical column. Finally, he had received an internal rate post card in the red-brown shade. "I do not know", he concluded, "whether the 15 cent. card and the double cards also exist in different shades".

Let us note in passing that all the post cards, except the inner 'reponse' sections of the double cards, appeared in brighter shades. They form part of the 'Princes' issue and were put into circulation from 1 May 1909. On the 1 April 1910 they were surcharged, in view of the reduced postal rates.

In his letters of such major philatelic interest, Mr. Bruneel gave many details of the other current stamps: Mols handstamped locally; Mols (ordinary issue) with typographed overprint: Mols unilingual.

These stamps could all be mixed for franking mail of course, but examples of this are rare. One is shown in the photograph at the bottom of the previous page:

The 40 cent at the left and the 5 cent. are 'Princes' type.

The other 40 cent. is handstamped Local 3.

The 15 cent. (Mols ordinary), which has the 'hairy-back' variety, has a typo overprint.

The parallelogram cachet 'RECOMMANDE' of Boma is damaged, showing a break in the base near the right corner, due to an accident suffered in February 1909, between the 6th and 23rd.

If we compare the writing on this cover with that of the preceding photograph - particularly the capital B's of Boma and Brussels - we recognise this as a letter sent by Major Bruneel to the great Belgian philatelist Mr. de Smeth.

Up to April 1910, Mr. Bruneel picked up some further blocks of mint 'Princes' typo stamps and post cards which he sent to Mr. Kuck.

The Postal Use of the 'Princes' Typo

After consideration of a sample - about fifteen covers and nearly 600 used stamps seen in various collections - we can arrive at some conclusions. Remember that, at this period, there were some 3000 Europeans in the Congo, 60% of whom were Belgians. Half the whites were concentrated in the Bas Congo; the rise of Katanga dates from the beginning of 1910.

In our opinion, out of a total of 46,000 stamps, about 43,000 were used. The low values turn up less often; they could easily have been discarded whereas people would keep copies of the 1, 3,50, 5 and 10 Francs. Further, these latter were less frequently used and remained in use up to 1913 and sometimes even 1914. We know of covers for all values except the 3,50 and 10 Francs. In all fairness, the low values deserve a clearly higher price.

a) Situation in the Post Offices Functioning in April 1909.

(The post offices then open were: Avakubi, Banana, Basankusu, Basaka, Boma, Bumba, Buta, Coquilhatville, Dima, Dungu, Inongo, Irebu, Kasongo or Nyangwe, Kinshasa, Leopoldville, Libenge, Lisala, Luali, Lukafu, Lusambo, Matadi, Musofi, Nouvelle-Anvers, Pania-Mutombo, Popokabaka, Pweto, Stanleyville, Thysville, Toa and Uvira).

Half of the stamps seen in our sample were cancelled at Boma or Matadi; this was done using the 23 mm. diameter cachets with the hours running from 1 to 24 (we have only seen cachets with the hours accompanied by the letters 'M' or 'S' for Nouvelle-Anvers, Lisala, Leopoldville and Popokabaka. From 1911, in Katanga the hours were often set above the date. Matadi followed in 1913, the others later). In one hour of a single day in June 1909, three complete sheets of the 10 cent, stamp were cancelled at Matadi (of the total of 92 sheets that existed). Telegraphic cancellations can also be found on the high values. (The telegraph offices that were functioning in May, 1909 were: Boma, Coquilhatville, Irebu, Kwamouth, Leopoldville, Luki, Lukolela, Lukula, Matadi, Mopolenge and Thysville. We have not seen the telegraphic cachets of Kwamouth, Luki, Lukula and Mopolenge.

Almost all of the other post offices that were open received some values of the issue, including Libenge, on the Ubangi, Buta, in the central Uele zone, Avakubi, to the east of Stanleyville, and Pania-Mutombo, on the border of Katanga, near Lusambo.

The following offices are exceptions: Luali, in the north of Mayumbe, Inongo on Lake Leopold II, Nyangwe or Kasongo, Dungu on the upper Uele, near the Lado Enclave, and Toa, on Lake Tanganyika. We have not seen, even isolated, stamps bearing these cancellations. How do we explain this exception?

For Inongo and Luali, where sales were sparse (Inongo was transferred to Mushie on 1 January 1911 for this reason), it is quite probable that they were not included in the distribution of the stamps. After all, fewer than 90 sheets had to be divided among thirty different post offices according to the importance and requirements of each; the smallest, which did not require them, would be omitted.

The same applies to Dungu, where the mail from the Lado Enclave and from the upper Uele was assembled. Three years earlier, don't forget, the Lado Enclave had been promised to be returned to England, effective on the death of King Leopold II; for this reason, it had been abandoned to enthusiasts and safaris.

There remained only five places, none of which had more than about ten white inhabitants, in a territory larger than Belgium. The mail through Boma became rarer as people preferred the Nile route via the Sudan which was cheaper and three times faster.

Nyangwe or Kasongo? Officially, the post office was not transferred from one to the other until the end of July 1910.

In the case of these two places, so celebrated in Congo history ("All the roads in Central Africa lead to Nyangwe", someone said in the slaving days. This great Arab town was taken by Dhanis on 4 March 1893. A post card from Captain Charles de Wouters took more than six months via Leopoldville to announce this victory to an artillery comrade in Antwerp. Shortly after, the town was burnt down. Lippens and De Bruyne, those faithful heroes, were the agents of the Independent State of the Congo at Masongo at that time, neighbours of Sultan Sefu), let us go back a little. A post office had been created at Nyangwe in 1896, but this was on a new site some kilometres from the old town, where, little by little, life was returning to normal after the campaign against the Arabs. From the beginning of 1897, the return of the waves of rebellion by the Batetelas against the Dhanis forces rendered communications very precarious and this situation, it would seem, lasted for years. Actually, some documents and stamps are known with a genuine Nyangwe cachet; they date from 1899 to 1903.

During this period, the new Kasongo, built some 15 kilometres from the old town, assumed the prime position in Maniema; its market became the busiest; the place had a garrison, including artillery, and enjoyed telegraphic contact with Lake Tanganyika.

And what happened from a postal point of view? The 'Mouvement Geographique', always well informed, gave a list of Congo post offices authorised to deal with registered mail in 1905. Kasongo appears there; there is no Nyangwe. Furthermore, at the end of 1907, the 'Bulletin Officiel' of the Congo Free State published a list of Congo post offices; Nyangwe is not in it but Kasongo certainly is.

All these factors well justify the extreme rarity of genuine Nyangwe cancellations. We also believe that Kasongo, replacing Nyangwe, was not sent any 'Princes' typo.

Toa, a tiny creek, was to give way to Albertville, founded in January 1892 by Captain Jacques, destroyed in 1896, and rebuilt from its own ashes. We shall speak of it again for we have found from there post cards and stamps of the 'Princes' typo.

b) Use of 'Princes' typo stamps in post offices opened after April 1909

Except for one or two stamps cancelled by favour at Madimba (opened in August 1911) or used in Boga (post office for trade with Uganda and opened in October 1911), we find mainly the cancellations from Katanga, evidence of the development of the province: Sakania from the end of May 1910 (between 1 March 1910, the official opening date of the Sakania post office, and 24 May 1910, the Musofi cachet was used there); Elisabethville appeared only in March 1911 (between 1 April 1910 and March 1911, the new post office at Elisabethville used a Lukafu datestamp. The earliest date for an Elisabethville cancel is 18 March 1911. Can anyone inform us of earlier dates?); Kambove, Etoile du Congo.

An amusing detail regarding Albertville: the post office was not officially re-opened until 18 January 1910, but from January 1909 we find a new canceller; here is an example on 1 Franc lilac.

Still more curious: from the end of 1910 and during the 1914-18 War, the old Albertville canceller (that of 1896) re-appeared after someone had filed off part of the 8 to adapt the date stamp for the new century; shown here on 1 Franc 'Princes'.

From Katanga, we find, particularly, the high value stamps, so seldom used, and of which some remaining sheets were sent to the mining centres.

The Typographed Overprint 'CONGO BELGE' on the 'Princes' Issue

In December 1908, the printing works of La Cote Libre had overprinted the ordinary Mols sheets.

When, three months later, they were involved in overprinting the 92 'Princes' sheets of each value, the overprinting plates had been broken up into the individual cliches.

In which sequence did they overprint the sheets?

We know that they needed three different settings: one for the 'vertical' stamps and two for the 'horizontal' stamps; the 3,50 and 10 Francs values are slightly larger than the other values and the 'CONGO BELGE' cliches would have to be more widely spaced for them.

It appears clear that the 15 cent. and 5 Francs were overprinted first. The letter G of "BELGE" on the 21st vertical stamp shows a little piece flaking off towards the left from the foot of the vertical stem of the G.

This letter, similarly deformed, is found on the 3,50 and 10 Francs but now at position No. 12. On all the other stamps of horizontal design, the piece has flaked off and is completely absent, leaving the stem of the letter very narrowed at the foot.

When the ordinary issues were overprinted, the cliches were transferred from one setting (for the vertical stamps) to another (for the horizontal stamps) in a logical and unbroken sequence. For the 'Princes' that was the case only to begin with.

Here is the order of the cliches on the two sheets, as far as we have been able to reconstruct them since certain of the cliches are extremely similar and cannot be distinguished:

Overprints on Vertical Stamps

1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	<u>17</u>	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	<u>50</u>

N.B. The large overprints (Type 2) are underlined; they occupy positions 2, 23 and 43 in the sheets of horizontal stamps

Overprints on Horizontal Stamps

1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
10	9	8	7	6
?	21	35	19	?
18	20	15	?	16
33	26	<u>17</u>	?	11
46	?	?	25	?
?	?	?	?	42
38	36	?	47	34
40	41	<u>50</u>	49	?
48	45	43	?	31

Thus, after transferring the first ten cliches, all order is lost: perhaps the others fell on the floor and became mixed up?

We know that the letters of the typographed overprint are generally thinner on the 'Princes' issue than on the ordinary issue; this test is not decisive - it results from a more or less fluid ink and from the pressure exerted during printing.

Only the study of the varieties of the typographed overprint allows stamps to be ascribed definitely to the 'Princes' Printing.

As Mr. Thrasher, of the English Belgian Congo Study Circle, did in 1959, we start by studying the types, groups of overprints where the same letter is broken in a similar way:

Type a: the C of "CONGO" is affected at the foot of the vertical leg; it may be broken, pinched in or notched at the left.

Type b: the B of "BELGE" is open or notched to the right in the bottom loop.

Type c: there is a notch to the top left of the first E of "BELGE"

Type d: the same E shows a shortened bottom bar.

Further, we show by a + the long overprints (emanating from an early casting, these are shorter than the Brussels Type 5 overprint but longer than the later clichés where the shrinkage had reached its maximum).

Finally, we will call the specific varieties of overprint on the stamps V1, V5 etc... based on their plate positions in the sheets of vertical stamps (15 cent. and 5 Fr.). These varieties are described below:

Specific Varieties:

- V1: this is the variety described as 'CUNGO' in the older catalogues. In fact, the tops of all letters are reduced to a slight trace.
- V6: the right vertical leg of the N does not extend to the full height.
- V7: notch at the left at the foot of the G of 'CONGO'.
- V10: the last E of "BELGE" is broken at the foot of the vertical stroke.
- V11: has a notch at the right at the foot of the vertical leg of the G of "BELGE".
- V15: is a very thick overprint with the right vertical stroke of the N bent backwards.

Tableau des varietes de la surcharge "CONGO BELGE" sur 'Princes' verticaux:

V1	+			b	c	b	a		V10
V11	d	d	d	c	a	+	d		V20
V21			d	a	a				
				b	d				
b	d	a	c	d	b		d	d	c
		b					V38		
c	c		d	c	b		a		c
		V43		V45		V47	b	V49	+

Tableau des varietes de la surcharge "CONGO BELGE" sur 'Princes' horizontaux:

V1	+			b
V10			a	c
			V7	V6
		c	d	
		d		
d			c	a
V18	V20		V15	b
a	a		+	
b	d		d	V11
	V26		V17	
b			d	a
				b
d	d		d	d
				c
d	b		d	c
V38				V47
c	c		+	d
			c	
			V49	
a	c			b
b	V45		V43	

- V17: has the letters C. O. N. G and O all broken at different heights.
- V18: has the bottom of the C of "CONGO" shifted to the right (termed 'deformed C' by General Du Four).
- V20: has the bottom bar of the last E of "BELGE" oblique upwards.
- V21: has the G of "BELGE" with the flake coming off at the left (as described above) on the 15 cent, 5 Fr., 3,50 Fr., and 10 Fr., or thinned due to the disappearance of this flake on the other values.
- V26: has the C of "CONGO" broken in three places.
- V38: has a notch in the last E of "BELGE" at the right, just above the centre bar.
- V43: has a notch at the top of the bottom bar of the first E of "BELGE".
- V45: has a cut at the bottom right of the G of "BELGE".
- V47: has the C of "CONGO" thinned at its top curve.
- V49: has a small hole half-way up the left vertical stroke of the N of "CONGO".

We have, of course, confined ourselves to the constant varieties, most of which already existed on the ordinary issue but in different plate positions. We can recognise only four cliches which were exclusive to the 'Princes' issue: Nos. V1, V15, V17 and V49: on the sheets of horizontal format stamps, these are positioned respectively as Nos. 1, 18, 23 and 44.

Curiosities of Perforation:

Rather oddly, these all affect the same value, the 3,50 Francs. As we have seen above, at least one sheet existed entirely imperforate; another was perforated only down the left-hand side of the sheet, thus giving rise to 40 imperforate stamps. This gives a total of 90. We have also seen the block of ten shown below, imperforate along the top margin.

The 'Princes' Typo Overprinted 1921

Among the rarities of the 1921 'Recuperation' series was a single sheet (50 stamps) of 1 Franc 'Princes' typo which was overprinted "1921" at the bottom.

Let us hope that the Catalogue Officiel will soon reserve a place for this, beside the ordinary 1 Franc typo, with the price it obviously deserves - the highest of the series.

Like the other stamps of this series classed A and B, it has never, to our knowledge, been found on cover or postally used.

Conclusion

It was necessary to wait until 1935 for the first unique variety of the 'Princes' issue, which was revealed by Dr. Magonette; we have shown a picture of this at the beginning of this article (the 5 Francs, No. 8 in the sheet).

Our target has been to carry the study of this special issue as far as possible. The most interesting and major portion, 92% of the issue, had the typographed overprint "CONGO BELGE" and was basically intended for postal use. Had it not been for Major Bruneel, who rescued so much of it, would it still exist?

In different collections - and here we would like to thank Dr. Montellier - we have seen about fifteen letters or cards franked with 'Princes' stamps and about the same number of 'Princes' post cards which have travelled through the mail. We know of neither the 3,50 Francs nor the 10 Francs typo on cover.

All the Congo mail of this period deserves attention when we remember, in contrast with the size of the country, the very small number of whites living in the Congo in 1909: about 3000 of whom 1750 were Belgian.

In another respect, the 'Princes' typo are of more interest: the plating of both the stamp and the overprint always give mutual confirmation of the plate position. This is not the case with the other smaller portions of the issue.

To close, we show a photograph of a 'Princes' post card, additionally franked by a 'princes' typo stamp - presumably a unique piece.

(it is regretted that it has not been possible to reproduce the illustrations and reference has to be made to the original article in Balasse Magazine).