

BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

Secretary:

P. S. Foden,
5 Ascham Lane,
Whittlesford;
Cambs. CB2 4NT,
U.K.

Bulletin Editor:

R. E. Jacquemin,
4132 E. Minnezona,
Phoenix,
Arizona 85018,
U.S.A.

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President: Mrs. D. M. Green
Flat 16, Cedar Grange, 22
Lindsay Road, Branksome Park,
Poole, Dorset BH13 6BD, U.K.

Exchange Packet Secretary:
B. P. Hudson
92 Oakley Street, London
SW3, U.K.

Vice President and General Sales Secretary: R. H. Keach
25 Kingswood Road
Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5EE
U.K.

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Note from the Editor: 1983 has been a good year for the Belgian Congo Study Circle and for the Bulletin. Our membership has increased and there has been an excellent supply of material for our publication. In response for an indexer to the Bulletins, we have not one, but two volunteers - first Mr. Norman Clowes and this was followed by Mr. B. P. Hudson. When this gigantic effort has been completed for our first 50 issues, it will appear in a future Bulletin.

NEWS AND VIEWS

We are pleased to announce the following new members:

Comdt. P. Farry, Naval Base, Haulbowline, Co. Cork, Ireland

J. P. Leveugle, 6 F. Timmermans Laan, 1900 Overysel, Belgium

Resignations have been received from Mr. J. Fosbery and from Mr. T. Sommerfeldt, who is now restricting his collecting interests, but wrote the Secretary an extremely nice note expressing his appreciation for all the benefit he has had as a member of the Study Circle.

Copy Documentation - it has unfortunately been necessary to increase the price for all future photocopying, due to a substantial increase in costs. The new price to members will be 5p per page, plus postage. Non-members will be charged 50% more than members. By good fortune, the Secretary had made several photocopies of the Bibliography before the price increase and 4 of these remain. These will be available to the first four comers at the old price of 3p per page plus postage.

EDINBURGH MEETING. Several members and spouses attended the joint meeting with the Belgian Study Circle and all appeared to enjoy themselves, despite some typical Scottish weather, which somewhat restricted outdoor activities for those not involved in meetings.

Most members had brought along their material for the various subjects and the session dealing with the 1937 and 1938 National Parks miniature sheets effectively became a workshop. Messrs. Vindevoghel and Keach presented the 1909 Unilingual Mols issue in considerable detail, illustrated with many rare items, including covers from some of the smaller post offices. The recent Bulletin article on the 1928 Stanley issue was illustrated by Mr. Foden, using material from his own and Mr. Wood's collections. The subject of postage due issues and practices was covered in depth by Mr. Green, who displayed many unusual items and covers from his collection, supplemented by some belonging to Mr. Keach.

The joint meeting dealt with mail between Belgium and the Congo up to 1918. It was felt that this would permit those members who had compared their material with the Abbe Gudenkauf's recent book to show the way to others. Surprisingly, however, only Mr. Keach had brought a substantial amount of material to show and, as has often been the case at such joint meetings, it again proved to be the BCSC (the junior of the two societies) which led the display and discussion, both of which were extremely interesting.

Our thanks go, as usual, to Mr. Wood, who, as Secretary of the Belgian Study Circle, had made all the arrangements with his usual organising ability.

MEETING AT BEDFORD COLLEGE, LONDON - OCTOBER 15. Eight members were present at the meeting, together with our guest, Mr. Harry Green, accompanying our President, Mrs. Doris Green who, despite recent ill-health, had managed to make a most welcome appearance. The subject for the display was Postal History and, apart from the lead speaker,

50/3.

Mr. Spurgeon, further displays and talks were given by Mrs. Green and Mr. Keach. All in all, this was a most interesting meeting, with many rare items on show, as well as many more which, if not rare in the same sense, were certainly unusual and infrequently seen. Several of those present remarked on how many by-ways there were in Congo postal history other than the well-trodden paths.

CONGRESS MEDAL. The British Philatelic Federation annually awards its Congress Medal to an individual who has performed outstanding work to advance the interests of philately. On the proposal of our President, Mrs. Green, the members present at Edinburgh resolved to nominate Mr. R. H. Keach as a candidate for this award. It is unlikely that the nomination will be immediately successful, however, it remains current for 4 years and we hope that the BPF Awards Committee will share our high opinion of Mr. Keach's services to philately over a period of many years.

'MARITIME MAIL' CORRIGENDA

There were a few typographical errors in the article 'MARITIME MAIL' in Bulletin No. 49. Will you please make the following corrections:

Page 6, line 3. 'Kakar' should read 'Dakar'.

Page 6, line 10. '21 August' should read '31 August'.

SCARCITY OF THE 'SMALL CIRCLE' CONGO CANCELLATIONS CORRIGENDA

Please alter as follows:

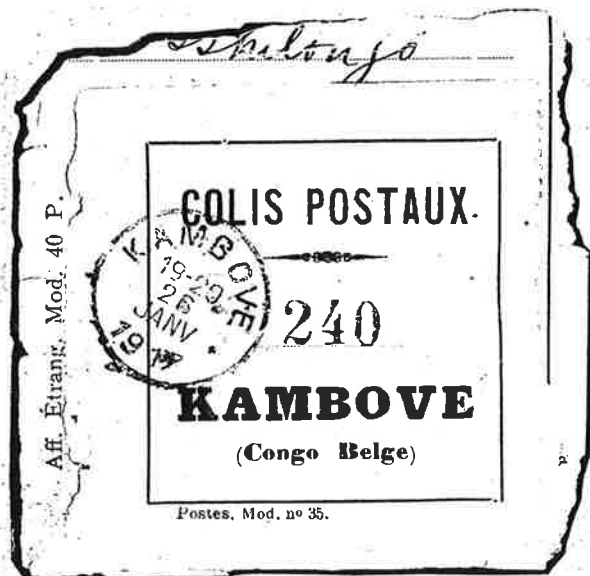
Page 29, Note (1), last line. '5 such pieces' should read '9 such pieces'.

Page 30. In the list 'BUMA 1.3' should read 'BUMBA 1.3'.

Page 31. In list 3. 'BATEAU-POSE' should read 'BATEAU-POSTE'.

Page 32. Line 2. 'TUMA-MANI' should read 'TUMBA-MANI'.

A PARCEL POST LABEL



Mrs. Green has the 'COLIS POSTAUX' label illustrated. Has anyone a similar label or does anyone know of its use? It could have been a label for sealing parcels with damaged wrappings and is rather similar to labels used for sealing damaged letters except for being numbered and having the name of a post office printed on it. Alternatively, it could be part of a 'lettre de voiture' accompanying a parcel from Kambove to, maybe, Tshilongo.

Any information or suggestions will be gratefully received. RH KEACH

POST OFFICES OF THE CONGO c1955

ITIMBIRI. Station on the Congo where the Itimbiri River joins it, making it $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide. The troublesome and warlike Budja people live in this Territory.

JADOTVILLE. Alt. 4166 ft. One of the three towns of the Congo. District and Terr. HQ. Eur. pop. 3,806. Nat. pop. 60,000. Telephone, telegraph, hospital, banks, chemists. Geological Museum. Boys college. Boarding school. Native schools. Catholic and Prot. Missions. Commercial and industrial centre. The industries of the Union Miniere du Haut-Katanga comprise:

At Jadotville-Shituru a leaching and electrolytic plant for the treatment of copper and cobalt, and the refineries. Ore mined at the mines of the West group are enriched in concentrator and then sent to Jadotville-Shituru where the copper content is dissolved in sulphuric acid (leaching). With the aid of electric current, the copper of these solutions is deposited on plates (cathodes). This process takes place in electrolytic vats. These cathodes are then smelted in refining furnaces and the copper which has now reached a high degree of purity is cast into commercial forms (wire or ingots). By a similar process cobalt is recovered in another section of the plant. The capacity of the works is 100,000 tons of copper and 5,000 tons of cobalt. There is also a small lead smelting plant.

At Jadotville-Panda is the electric cobalt foundry. Concentrates with the highest cobalt content are smelted in electric furnaces where the metals mix. Owing to a variation in density, the mixture divides into two alloys, one rich in copper and the other rich in cobalt (45%). The latter, known as white alloy is shipped to Europe to be refined. In this form about 4,000 tons are produced annually.

The factories of Sogechim at Jadotville-Shituru (Societe Generale Industrielle et Chimique du Katanga) are situated 500 yds north of the electrolytic plant of the UMHK. They consist of a sulphuric acid plant capable of producing 100,000 tons of acid a year, the greater part of which is used in the leaching plant of the UMHK. There is also a plant for the production of fatty acids by hydrogenation of palm oil. These acids are used in the concentrator. There is also a water sterilization plant supplying water to the town.

History: Before the arrival of the Europeans, the copper deposits of Kalabi near Luambo were worked by the natives. The Bia-Francqui expedition to which the geologist Cornet was attached was the first to examine the region thoroughly. They examined the sites of Kabali and Kambove (without finding any gold) and the site of Likasi (the old name for Jadotville) where the innumerable bare hills gave Cornet a presumption of the geological system of the Katanga.

This expedition also discovered the Lufira Falls at Mwadingusha, known as the Cornet Falls, which were destined to provide electrical power for the whole country. Major Bia who was exhausted, died at Tenke 30 miles as the crow flies to the S.S.W. of Jadotville. This place must not be confused with Tenke, the B.C.K. station.

The settlement of Likasi was founded in 1927 after the opening of the mine of that name. In 1921 the first concentrator was put into service at Panda and a large industrial area followed in 1928. It was not until 1931 that the settlement was called Jadotville. It is comprised of 6 districts:

- In the centre Likasi, the administrative and commercial area.
- In the south Panda, partly residential.
- In the south east Shituru, industrial area.
- In the east missions and houses of employees of UMHK & BCK.
- In the west the native township.
- In the south west Kakontwe, industrial and residential.

KABALLA. A port of call for the steamer on the Lualaba River. Trading centre.

KABALO. Terr. HQ. Telephone, telegraph, hospital. Is a station on the Kindu-Kongolo-Albertville line of the CFL railway. Trading and industrial centre.

KABAMBARE. Alt. 2821 ft. Terr. HQ. R/T station. Gov't rest house. Trading centre. Catholic mission of the White Fathers. Regarded as one of the oldest European settlements in the Congo. It was established by Dhanis in 1894. A fortified house is still to be seen there, which though not the oldest, it nevertheless is one of the oldest buildings dating back to that heroic period.

Kabambare was one of the strong points on the road used by Arab slave traders travelling from Lake Tanganyika to their bases in the Lualaba (Nyangwe and Kasongo). It was the command of Buana Nzige. The missionary and explorer David Livingstone - whom the natives called Baba Daud - rested there twice in 1869 and stayed there from July 1870 to Feb. 1871 in order to give the many sores on his feet a chance to heal before continuing his explorations. Cameron and Stanley also passed through. After Nyangwe and Kasongo had been taken by troops of the Congo Free State and after the engagements between the columns of Dhanis and the forces of the powerful Arab Chief Rumaliza, who hurried across from Ujiji to assist his co-religionists, Kabambare was taken on 24th Jan. 1894 by the Lothaire-Josue Henry column. During the preliminary skirmishes in which the detachments of Dhanis were engaged between the 14th and 18th January, Lieutenants Ponthier and Baron de Heusch as well as Sefu were killed. The Arab chief Rachid surrendered after the fall of Kabambare and was deported, while Chief M'Serera who had ordered the massacre of five Europeans of the Hodister expedition at Riba Riba (Lokandu) in 1892 was captured and executed.

In 1898 Batatela troops of the Dhanis expedition, who revolted during their march on Lado, turned southward, inflicted a defeat on government forces killing the Europeans Sterckx and Rahbeek, and occupied Kabambare, which was not retaken by Dhanis until the beginning of 1899.

There are excursions to Mount Dhanis (3773 ft) and to sulphurous springs $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles away which maintain 122 degrees F.

KABARE. See Costermansville, page 5, Sept. 1982.

OFFERS

- 1921 30/10c IV+DI carmine-lake, complete sheet, one stamp lightly creased £2.50
- 1947 100 fr Masques complete sheet (50) £25
- 1952 25c Flowers complete sheet (100) 80p
- 1959 Ruanda Urundi 40c Animals complete sheet
- 1962 1,50 fr Malaria (100) 80p (100) £1,25
- 1962 1,50 fr Malaria complete sheet (100) 80p
- 1962 6,50 fr Malaria complete sheet (100) £2.50
- 1949 Balasse Catalogue, Part III, Belgian Congo & Ruanda Urundi, good condition, £3.00
- 1952 U.P.U. presentation booklet without stamps (information on stamps included can be provided) £1.00 or offer.

CATALOGUE ILLUSTRE DES ESSAIS DES TIMBRES DE BELGIQUE ET CONGO
BELGE - WILLY GRUBBEN

Grubben's catalogue of proofs and essays, published in 1933, was an excellent work of reference and has remained the 'standard text book' to the present day although, to some extent, incorrect and incomplete even for the period that it covered.

It has now been reprinted in hard covers but the reprinting is simple duplication of the original book with 1933 prices. The Congo is covered by the last five pages.

It is a pity that the book has not been revised to incorporate modern knowledge and, if possible, to extend the list of proofs beyond 1931. The 1933 prices are of historical interest only.

Copies of the book may be obtained from Hector Raassens, St.-Katelijnevest 34, B-2000 Antwerp. The price is 480 Belgian francs.

R. H. KEACH

EXCHANGE PACKET

The exchange packet which started its rounds in the UK in September 1983 must be judged a reasonable success. There was an excellent response from vendors and 25 booklets from six members, containing nearly 4,000 stamps, were submitted. The booklets were priced to sell at a total of over £900, and at the time of writing more than half of this had been sold. The contents consisted mostly of Mols stamps and cancellations but there were also covers, postal stationery and post-Mols mint sets.

I had originally indicated that a packet would be put together every six months, so that the next packet would be in March 1984. On reflection, however, this is probably too soon after the current packet which will take the best part of three months to complete its

rounds. It is unlikely that there will be sufficient new material from vendors by next March to make up a packet of decent size.

The next packet will therefore be circulated in September 1984, and a request for material and recipients' names will be included in the June 1984 Bulletin.

B. P. HUDSON

FORGERIES OF THE 1921 25c SURCHARGE

I have recently found forgeries of the 1921 25c surcharge on the 1910 15c stamp, these including a block of four.

The forged surcharges are in a deeper carmine than the originals and the horizontal obliterating lines are, in their relative positions, all generally similar to the genuine in the fifth and tenth vertical columns (see B. P. Hudson' article in Bulletin No. 41, September, 1981).

The best means of identification of the forgeries is the lack of upper serifs on the horizontal bars of the figures 5.

The block of four seen is from plates III1+B2; a single is thought to be III2+B1 but it may be III2+B2.

R. H. KEACH

GREAT AFRICAN MYSTERIES by Lawrence G Green, Chapter XIV

Editor's Note: L. H. Lomax, our very fine contributing member, has written that he recently found a book on a second hand stall, part of which concerns the Congo. He assumed the book was written by one of our members, and on requesting permission to quote, he found the true author was a Mr. Lawrence G Green, not our Mr. Lawrence G Green, who had made the journey described in 1961. The book was written in 1937 and the chapter quoted describes the journey mainly of the mail steamer Prince Leopold. Because of its non-philatelic nature, we will be running the article in serialized form.

African travel is so easy these days that it is difficult to step beyond the influence of tourist agencies. The safari is giving way to motor cars. North Africa is fashionable. East Africa offers luxury "in the blue". Every corner of South Africa may be visited without hardship. Even the sinister West Coast and its hinterland may be explored in moderate comfort.

In my search for a route mysterious enough to be interesting I turned to the dark purple mass on the map of Africa - the Belgian Congo. Pretty folders describing the exotic charm of the country which Conrad called "Heart of Darkness" are not yet to be found in the offices of the travel agents. One famous agency warned me that a journey from Cape Town to the Congo mouth would be far from easy or comfortable. No ordinary tourist, as far as they knew, had ever gone that way. They could not help me beyond Stanleyville.

Letters from British vice-consuls in the Congo now began to reach me.

They advised me that with luck, I should be able to get through without long delay anywhere if I started before the rainy season. There was a promise of adventure - a country in which you may or may not get through must certainly lie far from the track of the "globe trotter". Late in June I boarded a train that leaves Cape Town twice a week on the longest railway journey in Africa.

For nearly three thousand miles this train carries you northwards. Through the vines and orchards of the Paarl. Across the brown wastes of the Karroo and Bechuanaland. Past grey clouds against a crawling line of fire - the "sounding smoke" of the Victoria Falls at dawn. Still northwards through the bush of Northern Rhodesia. Beyond the last British outpost at Ndola. On the fifth evening you reach the Belgian frontier station of Sakania, where you must leave the clean Rhodesian train and take your seat for dinner in the grimy saloon of the Chemin de Fer du Katanga. (It was clean enough when I travelled in it in 1944! - L.H.L.)

Compartments in the Belgian train were furnished richly with curtains and tapestried walls. The wash basins were so small that a ham-fisted man could not have washed both hands in it at once. Above my seat I found a notice in French and Flemish:-

"In this country the mosquito is the chief enemy. Have you taken your quinine today? If not, attend to it immediately. Beware of the tsetse fly."

Very soon I discovered a danger greater than mosquito or tsetse. All trains in the Congo are driven by fearless black maniacs. They rattle through the forest, taking steep descents and rickety bridges in their stride without slackening speed. Rocket bursts of sparks from the wood burning locomotives send the monkeys gibbering back into the trees. When the line was first opened the drivers were white men. They drank so much that natives had to be found to take their places. I am not sure however, that whisky inspired Europeans would not be safer than the sober demons who now control the trains of Katanga. All night the nerve shattering scream of the whistle was heard. The vanity of a black driver is such that he will not pass the smallest cluster of huts without this manifestation of the high estate to which he has risen.

In the morning, to my surprise, we reached Elizabethville safely. Here is a young Johannesburg, a mining camp growing into a rich city. A few years before the war, untouched forest covered the plateau where Elizabethville now stands. Today, the rough tin shacks of the pioneers are seen next to modern cement business houses and pretty villas. It is a town of contrasts and extremes. Bitter, healthy cold of winter. Malaria and blackwater fever in sweltering summer. The death rate among white children is pitifully heavy. Until they are five years old, they are carried off by little ailments that would mean nothing in South Africa.

There is a bewildering Continental flavour about this Belgian settlement in the heart of Africa. At sundown, the basket chairs in the street outside my hotel were filled with people shouting "garçon" and demanding sirops, cocktails and beer. Magnificent Alsatians roamed amongst the drinkers. A Handley Page aeroplane, flying low, awoke the town with the droning of three engines. This beautiful

white machine had come from Boma with the European mails, thousands of miles, over the rivers of the half-explored Kasai.

Black convicts, chained lightly neck to neck, marched past the hotel with their warders. White people rode in their smart little cars or on bicycles. Here was a mother pedalling up the road with a baby in a basket on the handlebars. There was a young Belgian with a black and sinister beard, dressed like a hunter in enormous helmet and riding breeches. The military officers in their white tropical uniforms were sturdy fellows. They are training a black army, just as the French are doing further north. It may be unwise in the end, but there was no doubting the efficiency of the bare footed regiments which came tramping down the Avenue de l'Etoile in faultless column of route.

A diamond digger sat with me, talking of marvellous finds in the rivers of Angola. His hand trembled as he threw fifteen grains of quinine down his throat and chased the bitter tablets with whisky. Two Mauritian half castes and a Cape Coloured man were drinking wine. In the Congo, gentlemen of colour are equal to the white man and may sit at table with him.

Like many mining centres, Elizabethville has to live largely out of tins and bottles. Fruit and vegetables do not thrive. We were sated with tough meat at every meal, but beyond that there was little fresh food. So the grocers keep good stocks of delicacies pleasing to Belgian palates - such things as Russian caviar, tinned trout, paté de fois gras and petits pois. Greatest of all luxuries were iced oysters sent from Cape Town.

Every mansion and villa in Elizabethville has an immense ant heap in the garden. These grotesque red mounds are put to all kinds of strange uses. Telegraph poles and electric light standards are planted in them. Some people burrow into their ant heaps and make them into store rooms and garages. Others build summer houses on them. Ant heaps may be used as ovens. Sometimes the ants return. There is a story that a man lost most of his motor car that way. The ant is Africa's most voracious insect.

Elizabethville may be reached from Europe by a variety of routes. Cases of goods outside the stores bear the marks of Cape Town, Dar es Salaam and Beira. A new railway, one of the most important in Africa, has linked Elizabethville with Lobito Bay.. But I am taking the Congo route to Europe - four stretches of railway and three of river. Once more I am in the hands of the fearless negroes of the footplate, jolting over the Manhika tableland to Bukama. A night and half a day of this breathless travel, and the majestic that I have been picturing for weeks slides into view - the gleaming ribbon of the upper Congo. Here where the river moves slowly past the tin houses of Bukama it is called the Lualaba; but it is the same romantic river of Stanley, Burton, Livingstone and Conrad. My steamer, the stern wheeler Prince Leopold lay moored to the bank.

Three blasts of the siren brought me from my mosquito net at dawn. From Bukama the Lualaba runs almost due north through swamp and plain and palm forest for nearly four hundred miles to the rapids at Kongolo. I doubt whether there is another stretch of river in Africa so rich in life and colour. (To be continued in the next Bulletin.)

IDENTIFYING THE MOLS PLATE COMBINATIONS

My own and other articles in the Bulletin often refer to the plate combinations of the Mols issues, but I am conscious that many members lacking sheets or other reference material are unable to identify plate combinations in individual stamps. I hope that these brief notes will help them. To some extent they repeat information given in previous Bulletins, notably the articles by Ray Keach on the 1910 and 1915 issues published in November 1959 and November 1973 respectively, but I am sure that the original authors will forgive the repetition for the sake of members who do not have access to the Bulletin's earlier issues.

The basic convention for describing plate combinations is as follows: III1a+B4 (for example) means the first state of frame plate III, sub-state a, combined with the fourth state of centre plate B. Only deliberate changes such as re-entry or retouching create a new state of the plate, but accidental changes such as wear or corrosion can create a new sub-state. A full listing of the plate combinations for each of the ten values of the Mols issues was given in my article in Bulletin 42, and a listing of the shade, perforation and surcharge varieties in my article in Bulletin 47.

5 CENTIMES

1894-5. Only one plate combination - I1+A - was used for the 5c blue and brown, so in theory there is no problem in identifying it. In practice there is such a problem with the 5c blue, because of the large number of copies of this stamp (especially used) which are in fact faked copies of the 5c green of 1900. If the 5c green is I2+B2 the fakes can be easily detected by the small circle (see below); if I1+B1, detection is more difficult and depends on the shade of the frames (too pale a blue in the fakes) and of the centres (grey and fine in the 1894 stamps, black and heavy in the 1900 stamps). In some sheet positions of I1+B1 (and more so in I2+B2) there are black corrosion dots above the hills on the left which are not found on the genuine 5c blue.

1900. I1+B1 and I2+B2 can be easily told apart by the presence of a tiny green circle engraved on the die under the bottom frame line in the SE corner. But beware of a trap: for a reason which I can't explain, this circle does not appear in sheet position no. 30 of I2+B2. Instead this position can be identified under the magnifying glass by a short vertical green line in the right margin, 1/2mm outside the frameline and level with the top of the figure '5'. Whenever I have seen stamps with genuine local or typo overprints identified as being I1+B1, they have invariably turned out to be position 30 of I2+B2.

1910. The stamp passed through no less than 8 different plate combinations, but identifying them is not as daunting a task as it might first appear.

The first printings (III1+B3) show fine, clear centres and the horizontal shading lines in the top centre of the frame plate are thin but are also clear. The shade of the frames is bluish green

to green - in all the later combinations it is yellow green to deep yellow green.

III1+B4a was created by the engraving of holes in the centre plate between positions 42, 43 and 44. As far as we know this change of state coincided with the change of shade to yellow green. In other respects the stamps look the same as III1+B3, except that the top centre shading is becoming faint.

In III1+B4b the centre plate vignettes are liberally sprinkled with small black dots created by water corrosion on the steel plate. In most positions these dots are very numerous, but there are only a few of them on positions 11, 16, 21, 26, 31 and 45, and without actually positioning them these stamps are therefore more difficult to distinguish from III1+B4a.

For III1+B5 the centre plate was re-entered and all positions show marks of doubling, especially in the shading of the water. In places (eg Balasse varieties 9, 10 and 11) the doubling is extremely pronounced. The green horizontal shading at the top centre of the frames has become very worn and in many positions has virtually disappeared.

To rectify this, the shading was retouched by hand to make III2+B5. The retouching was done crudely and frame plate III2 is instantly recognisable as a result of it.

The centres were then again re-entered to make III2+B6. Some of the old doubling disappeared but much more was created and by now the plate was in a pretty sorry state. Without positioning the stamps, however, it is not normally possible to tell III2+B6 from III2+B5.

Waterlows finally gave up with plate B and made a new centre plate to create III2+C. This combination is easily recognised by the fine, clear centres combined with the crude retouching at the top of the frame plate.

For some reason this combination was also soon abandoned and new plates were made for both the frames and centres, giving IV+D1. These stamps give a very different impression from the earlier combinations: there is no doubling, the top horizontal shading of the frames is strong and clear, and the centres are also clear though darker and coarser than B3 and B4. In a number of positions there is a group of black corrosion dots in the place under the boats where there is a wide space between the lines of shading.

The centre plate was again re-entered to give the final combination IV+D2. The centres are noticeably heavier and coarser than in D1, and in some positions show doubling. The black dots in the water are still there but have become bigger and blacker.

1915. In V1+E (now renamed V1+E1) the frames are yellow-green and the centres are fine, clear and greyish-black. V2+E2 was created by re-entering the centre plate (which shows as slight doubling in a few positions) and by the addition of guide marks to the frame plate - vertical lines between positions 13, 14, 18 and 19, and between positions 33, 34, 38 and 39. The frame shade is unchanged but the centres are black and coarse, and this is the feature which makes it easy to distinguish E2 from E1.

In V3+E3 the centres are again re-entered and the horizontal shading

at the top of the frames is slightly retouched. Previously these lines were even and parallel; now they are uneven, particularly in the right panel immediately to the left of the small circle above the last E of BELGE. The centres are dark and coarse, with heavy corrosion in the first column; the frames are initially the same yellow-green as V2+E2, but for most V3+E3 stamps are a dull blue-green.

Towards the end new frame and centre plates were made to give VI+F, which is relatively uncommon without the Malines or Boma surcharges. This combination can be easily identified by the black spot, caused by a flaw on the transfer roll, near the top of the mountains. The centres are much lighter than V+E and the frames are green.

Finally there are the booklet stamps to consider. The first printing is yellow-green with clear grey-black or black centres. The second printing is deep blue-green with deep black centres showing a little corrosion. The third printing is a dull green with dull grey centres, and is distinguished from the others by being on a coarse grey rather than white paper. Towards the end of the first printing the centre plate was re-entered, showing doubling in some positions, but stamps from the first printing with re-entered centres are extremely rare.

Second and third printing booklet stamps can be distinguished by their shades, but how can the first printing be distinguished from V1+E1 and V2+E2? Fortunately there is at least a partial answer. In most positions of frame plate V there is a small green dot in the white vertical line between CENTIMES and the scrollwork on the left, usually about level with the top of the small rectangle in the middle of the scrollwork. In the booklet stamps the dot is not there. It is also absent in the first column of V+E (positions 1,6,11 etc) and is invisible in position 47 and barely visible in position 8; in these positions, therefore, yellow-green stamps can only be identified by positioning, unless they are from the first column of V3+E3 in which case they can be identified by the heavy corrosion dots on the centre plate.

10 CENTIMES

1894. Most copies of the 10c brown are from I1+A2. A few sheets were run off from I1+A1, the original state of the plate before position 46 was re-entered to give the pronounced doubling of the sky lines known as Balasse V1. Centre plate A1 generally gives a lighter impression than A2, but as far as I know it is only in position 46 that the two can be differentiated with certainty.

1895. Frame plate I1 became I2 through the addition of guide marks in the form of a dot between 8,9,13 and 14 and a vertical line between 38,39,43 and 44. Centre plate A2 became A3 as a result of the re-entry of position 28 to eliminate the long black scratch (Balasse V4) that appeared on the last printings of A2.

Thus in almost all positions differentiation between I1+A2 and I2+A3 of the 10c blue depends on shade. I1+A2 started as blue and then ranged from pale to dull to dark green-blue; I2+A3 ranged from blue-green to a pale green shade with hardly any blue in it.

1900. The three plate combinations of the carmine stamp are not

always easy to distinguish. In I2+B1 both frames and centres are clear and undoubled, and in particular there is always a space visible - albeit a very narrow one - between the leftmost canoe and the line of shading immediately underneath it. In I3+B2 both frames and centres were re-entered: the frames often show thickening or doubling in one or more of their curved corners, while in the centres the canoes or the lines under them are also often thickened or doubled. Only in positions 1-5, 10, 11 and 16 is the clear space still visible under the leftmost canoe.

Formally speaking the only difference between I3+B2 and I4+B2 is the removal from the latter of two of the guide marks - the vertical line between 13 and 14 and the dot between 38 and 39. However they can be differentiated quite easily by the lines of shading in the upper centre part of the sky, which look worn and patchy in I3+B2 and are heavier and more continuous in I4+B2. There is also a difference in the shade of the frames - I3+B2 tend to be rose-carmine while I4+B3 are reddish carmine - but it is a subtle difference which cannot be wholly relied upon.

1910. In III1+C1a both frames and centres are clear, and the centre plate sky lines in particular are fine and sharp. In III1+C1b these lines look worn and in many positions faint corrosion shows.

III2+C1b was created by the addition of guide marks to the frame plate: a dot between 8, 9, 13 and 14 and a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44. III2+C1b cannot be differentiated from III1+C1b except in the positions where these guide marks (or the absence of them) show on the stamp.

For III2+C2 the centre plate was re-entered and all positions show doubling or blotchiness in the sky lines. The top frame line (which was always weak) has become more so and in many places is worn away. In addition there is extensive corrosion in the form of small red dots in the first two columns of the frame plate.

In III3+C2 the top frame line has been retouched by hand to form a line that is continuous and in some places a little uneven.

New plates were then made to form IV+D1. These stamps look much better than the earlier printings: the top frame line is continuous and the whole of the centre plate design is strong and clear without flaws. The top of the sky, which was always patchy in centre plate C, is no longer so. Whereas the earlier printings were dull to bright carmine, stamps from IV+D1 are either carmine or a distinctive carmine-lake, although the latter shade is rare without the 1921 surcharge.

1915. V1+D2 cannot be distinguished from V2+D2 except in the positions where the guide marks of V2 (lines and dots between 8, 9, 13 and 14, and between 38, 39, 43 and 44) are visibly either present or absent.

V2+D3 was created by re-entry of the centre plate, giving a 'dirtier' impression of the sky with thickening or doubling of the sky lines in many (but not all) positions. A small black cross appears on the left in positions 7-9, 14, 18, 20, 38-40, 42-3, 45 and 47-50 of D3; in D2 it appears only in 37, 42, 47 and 50. In a few positions, particularly in the first column, D2 and D3 are difficult to tell apart.

V2+E and the booklet stamps can be distinguished easily from V+D by the use of a retouched die to make the centre plates, giving continuous shading in the top part of the sky where centre plate D left a large white gap. The booklet stamps can in turn be distinguished from V2+E by the fact that the red circle around the bottom left '10' is continuous whereas in V2+E it shows a short break at around 7 o'clock. (But beware of position 33: for some reason the break on this stamp was retouched and therefore does not show.)

The three printings of the booklets can be distinguished by shade. The first printing are dull to fairly deep carmine with brownish black centres; the second printing are deep carmine with deep black centres; and the third printing are dull carmine to carmine with grey, worn centres on grey as opposed to white paper.

In the course of the second printing of the booklets the centres were re-entered to give doubling of the canoes on several positions and some doubling of the sky on all positions in panes β and δ , and on most positions in pane γ .

15 CENTIMES

1896. In I+A1a the centres of the stamps are clear, especially in the earliest printings, and the frames vary from yellow-ochre to ochre to brown-ochre. Most mint stamps from the 1896 issue without overprint come from this plate combination.

In I+A1b the centres are badly corroded with scattered clouds of black spots. In most positions the corrosion is heavy but there is relatively little on nos 1,4-6,11-2,21,31,39 and 50. I+A1b can also be recognised by the colour of the frames which are a more orange shade of ochre than either I+A1a or I+A2.

I+A2 is relatively uncommon without the Congo Belge overprint. It was made by a re-entry of the centre plate which removed the corrosion dots of I+A1b and produced doubling in the roof of the little hut in about half of the fifty positions in the sheet. I+A2 can be identified by the yellow shade of the frames - more yellow than the most yellow-ochre of the shades of I+A1a.

1910. A whole book could be written about this difficult (and therefore most interesting) stamp which went through no less than ten different plate combinations. Unfortunately most of them can only be identified by positioning the stamp, and even then identification can sometimes be difficult.

Stamps from III1+A3a can be distinguished easily enough by the characteristic deep yellow frames and black centres which show little doubling. In III1+A3b the plates are the same but the frames are ochre-yellow with more or less yellow in them and the centres are dull brownish black.

The same shades are found in III1+A4,A5,A6,A7 and A8, which were produced by successive re-entries of the centre plate and which cannot normally be distinguished from one another without positioning the stamp. All show doubling of the hut, the standing figure or the sitting natives in some or many positions. Generally speaking the doubling becomes more extensive in the later combinations, and

corrosion dots around the edges (particularly the bottom edge) of the centre plate vignettes become heavier and more numerous.

With III2+B1 a new centre plate was introduced and can be recognised easily by its lack of blemishes - it is far clearer than any of the re-entered states of plate A. In addition the frame plate had been getting worn, particularly in the shading in the top right corner, and for III2 was retouched rather unevenly here in some (but by no means all) positions. The frames are still ochre or brownish yellow and the centres brownish black.

The frames were then re-entered, and the centres partially re-entered, to make III3+B2. The centres are still relatively clear (by comparison with plate A) but are coarser than B1 and in some positions show traces of doubling. The wear in the top right corner of the frames has disappeared, though some of the traces of retouching are visible, and the shading here is now strong and continuous. III3+B2 can also be identified by the yellow-orange shade of the frames, distinctly different from the shade of the previous printings.

A few stamps have been found with the intermediate combination III2+B2. Since there are many positions where B2 cannot easily be differentiated from B1, it may be that this combination is less rare than we believe it to be.

Finally a few stamps have also been found with III3+B3, ie with the centres re-entered again to form the centre plate that was used for the first printings of the 1915 stamp. B3 is characterised by slight doubling of the sky lines in many of the positions, but III3+B3 like III2+B2 cannot normally be identified without positioning the stamp.

For those with complete sheets, the various combinations can be recognised as follows. If the top left corner of no. 4 is doubled, the frame plate is III3. If the bottom frame line of 41 is doubled, particularly at the left end, the frame plate is III2 (also true of III3). If the settler and sitting natives in 20 and 45 are conspicuously doubled, the centre plate is B3. If there is doubling between the horizontal lines above the leftmost tree in no. 9, the centre plate is B2. If all centres are clear the plate is B1. If the sky shading in the top right corner is doubled in no. 50 the centre plate is A8. If on no. 36 there is a black circle 1mm in diameter between the large tree and its neighbour to the right, the centre plate is A7. If the sitting natives on no. 11 are doubled the plate is A6 (also true of A7 and A8). If the natives and the settler on no. 42 are doubled the plate is A5 (also true of A6-8). If the natives but not the settler in this position are doubled the plate is A4. If the sheet shows none of the above features it is III1+A3.

1915. This stamp also went through quite a few plate combinations, but they are much easier to tell apart from one another than the 1910 stamp.

The first thing to look for is the third palm frond from the left in the big tree. If it has no central spine, the centre plate was made with the unretouched die and the plate combination is therefore III4+B3.

Secondly one should look at the 'stool' of the G in BELGE. If it has in

it a strong, unbroken line the frame plate is III4 or III5; in plates IV and V and in the booklet stamps the stool is faint and broken as a result of a damaged transfer roll. Thus a central spine in the frond and an undamaged line in the stool of the G indicate plate combination III5+C1.

Thirdly one should look for tiny green circles engraved in the left and right margins of the stamp, just outside the frames and 1mm from the top on each side. If these circles are present the frame plate is V; otherwise it is IV or the stamps are from the booklets.

Apart from these distinguishing marks identification of the plate combinations is by the shade of the frames. III4+B3 are green, III5+C1 and IV+C1 are blue-green, V+C1 are also blue-green but V+C2 are a distinctive dark yellow-green. The first printing of the booklet stamps are blue-green, the second printing a bright blue-green (sometimes called 'peacock blue') and the third printing a dull green on grey as opposed to white paper. Between the first and second printings the shading in the top panel of the frames was extensively retouched, and the resulting irregularities in the shading, which show on all positions, are a good guide to second and third booklet stamps if they cannot be identified by their shades.

The only difficulty lies in distinguishing IV1+C1, IV2+C1 and the first printing of the booklets. There are no reliable shade differences between these combinations and they can be identified only by positioning the stamp. Plates IV1 and IV2 are identical except for the re-entry, shown by doubling of the top right corners of the frames, of the 5 positions in the fifth column, ie nos 5,15,25,35 and 45.

25 CENTIMES

1900. An easy one: I2+A2 has weak top frame lines, while in I3+A2 these lines have been retouched and are strong and thick. I3+A2 without the Congo Belge overprint is a well known rarity.

1910. There is little difficulty in telling apart the four combinations of this stamp. In II1+A3 there is little sign of doubling in the centres and the frames are a characteristic pale green blue. In II1+A4 there is extensive doubling, particularly of the trees, the natives and the rocks in the waterfall; the frames are blue, sometimes slightly greenish blue; and the horizontal shading in the bottom and right hand panels of the frames is becoming weak. In II2+A4 this shading is crudely retouched by hand, showing many irregularities, and the frames are a uniform dark blue, darker than the shade of II1+A4.

As with the 1910 5c Waterlows eventually gave up the unequal struggle and made new plates for both frames and centres, II3+B. The frames are a deep blue and the centres are strong, clear and unblemished, quite unlike the previous combinations.

1915. The first plate combination, III1+B, can be recognised (as with the 1915 10c and 15c) by the use of an unretouched die for the centre plate. In this value it is characterised by a white space between the large rock in the foreground third from the right and the dotted shading in the lower part of the waterfall. In

centre plates C and D and in the booklets this space is filled with further dots.

III1+Cb can be distinguished from III1+Ca by the corrosion of the horizontal lines in the sky, which become a series of dots and dashes instead of straight lines. III1+Cb became III2+Cb through the addition of guide marks on the frame plate in the form of lines between nos 17 and 18 and between 32 and 33, and dots between 17 and 18 and between 27 and 28. A new centre plate was introduced with III2+D, which in turn became III3+D with the addition of a further guidemark line between 14,15,19 and 20, and dot between 39,40,44 and 45. III3+D appears to be found only with the Malines surcharge.

The booklet stamps can be distinguished from one another by their shades. The first printing are blue, sometimes with a greenish tinge, with brownish black centres. The second printing have deep or bright deep blue frames and deep blue centres. The third printing are dull blue with grey-black centres on grey as opposed to white paper. In the course of the second printing the frames were retouched and show little retouch marks in various places. From the beginning of the second printing onwards there is heavy, fine corrosion in all centre plate positions of panes β and δ but not in panes α and γ .

Distinguishing III1+Ca, III2+D and the first booklet stamps is far from easy. If the frames appear slightly blurred, have a greenish tinge and show faint blue corrosion dots round their edges, then the combination is likely to be III2+D. If the frames are sharp and clear they are III1+Ca or the first printing; if the shade is greenish blue rather than blue, then III1+Ca can be ruled out. Another characteristic of the booklet stamps is that the horizontal lines at the bottom of the frames are sometimes thickened or doubled, which is never true of III+C or III+D.

If in doubt, the answer as always is to take up plating and sheet reconstruction so that all single copies can be identified and positioned without ambiguity.

40 CENTIMES

1915. The difference between II+A2 and II+A3 is again the result of re-entering the centre plate with a retouched die. In A2 there is a white spot on the side of the boat under the second group of natives; in A3 this spot has disappeared. Another difference is that the horizontal lines making up the reflection of the prow of the boat are shorter in A2 than in A3.

50 CENTIMES

1900. I1+A2 became I2+A2 through the addition of vertical guide-mark lines between 11 and 12 and between 36 and 37. Stamps which are yellow-olive can be taken to be from I2+A2; olive stamps can be either I1 or I2, unless the guide-marks already described are visibly present or absent on them.

1910. III1+A3 and III2+A4 are usually best distinguished by their

shade. Stamps from III1+A3 range from grey-olive to olive to yellow-olive; those from III2+A4 range from greenish yellow-olive to a distinctive olive-green. III2+A4 is uncommon without the 1921 surcharge.

III2+A4 was created by re-entry and retouching of the frame plate and by re-entry of the centres. In several positions the frames show slight signs of doubling, particularly in the lower right corner, which are not present on III1, and the lines of the centres are generally coarser and thicker than in A3. These features can be helpful in differentiating the two combinations when the shade is ambiguous.

1915. III3+A5 and III3+B are easily told apart by the presence in the latter of (i) dots in the smoke coming from the locomotive, and (ii) continuous rather than dotted shading on the left bank of the river. As in the lower values, both features are due to the use of a retouched die in making centre plate B.

1 FRANC

1910. II1+A3 and II1+A4 are not altogether easy to distinguish. A4 was created by the re-entry of centre plate A3, but in many positions the re-entry did not create obvious differences. The best way to differentiate between the two combinations is by the shade: stamps from II1+A3 are pale to deep carmine or carmine-red, while those from II1+A4 are lake-carmine or carmine-lake. II1+A4 is uncommon without the 1921 overprint.

1915. Another complicated stamp - nearly, but not quite as bad as the 1910 15c. It went through 7 plate combinations.

To identify them one needs to concentrate on the small circle and surrounding scrollwork at the centre of the top frameline. If the top lines of the circle and scrolls are weak or worn away, the plate combination is II1+A4. If they are continuous and thickened a little unevenly by retouching, it is II2+A4. If they or other parts of the top frameline shows signs of doubling, the combination is II3+A5, II4+A5, II5+A5 (the common one), II5+A5 or II6+A6. If the circle and scrolls are clear and neat this indicates the new plates III+A7. III+A7 is also indicated by fine, clear centres, unlike the increasingly corroded centres of A4 to A6, and by the thickening of a horizontal line of shading to the right of the N of FRANK in positions 1-15, 36 and 41-50.

The shades of the frames are not much help. II1+A4 are greenish olive, the later combinations range from pale olive to yellow olive, and III+A7 are a constant olive.

Centre plates A5 and A6 can be differentiated by looking at the small triangular area on the hillside immediately above the elephant's back to the right of his left ear (the right ear as we look at it). In the later printings of A5 this area is worn and almost white; in A6 it is crossed by four faint but clear diagonal lines of shading.

II3+A5 is found only with the EAA overprint, and all positions show some signs of doubling of the horizontal framelines. It can therefore easily be distinguished from the other combination found with

the EAA overprint, namely II2+A5. However II4+A5 (rare without Boma surcharge), II5+A5 and II6+A5 cannot be differentiated without positioning the stamp. The successive re-entries which created these combinations led to more and more doubling or even trebling of the horizontal framelines, and in some case even when the sheet position is known it is difficult to differentiate confidently between II5 and II6.

Those with complete sheets which show doubling of the top frameline can identify them as follows. If the bottom right column base on 32 is not doubled, the frame plate is II3. If the right column base is doubled on 32 but not on 31, the plate is II4. If the left vertical framelines on nos 16 and 41 are doubled the plate is II5 or II6. If the right frameline of 41 is doubled and the left column base of 48 is trebled, the frame plate is II6.

3 FRANCS

1910. The horizontal shading in the top frame panels of II1+A is rather weak, and II2+A was created by retouching some of these lines by hand. In some positions the retouching is obvious, with burin escapes between the lines, while in others it is much less clear.

5 FRANCS

1915. Stamps from the first combination, II1+A3, are in yellow-brown or in a wide range of ochre shades. Those with the re-entered centres A4a are found in the ochre shades only. They are not easy to distinguish from A3 or even, for that matter, to position in the sheet. The best guide is that the A3 centres always show clear, sharp horizontal lines in the sky above and to the right of the standing native's head, while in A4a these lines are thickened or doubled.

II2+A4a was created by the addition to II1+A4a of guide-marks in the form of a horizontal line plus a dot between 13,14,23 and 24, and between 17,18,27 and 28. Apart from these positions II1+A4a and II2+A4a cannot be differentiated.

In II2+A4b the sky in the centre design has become noticeably worn and blurred. Stamps from this combination show a characteristic brownish ochre shade.

10 FRANCS

1910. Stamps with yellowish green frames are always II+A1, while those that are bluish green may be II+A1 or II+A2. A2 was created by retouching the missing lines of water shading on positions 10 and 35 (Balasse V1, or V2 following retouching); there were also minor retouches on positions 15, 18 and 27. On other positions II+A1 and II+A2 cannot be differentiated.

BELGIAN CONGO POSTAGE RATES1 January 1886 - 30 June 1960

As my own collection expanded and I began to acquire covers and postcards as well as stamps, I also developed an interest in the basic postal history of the Congo - in particular in the routes travelled by covers and the applicable rates of postage. As far as the former subject is concerned, the story is highly complex and has not, so far, been drawn together as a whole, although some aspects are well known. In the case of the postage rates, however, it did appear that it ought to be possible, at least in a simplified form, to draw up some form of table which could be referred to as a basis for checking.

I have thus drawn up the attached tables. The first shows the surface postage rates for letters and postcards and also, where known, the charge for the second and subsequent additional weight element applied to letters; it also shows the registration fee which, at most times, was equal to the standard overseas letter rate. The second table shows the air mail surtax, which was always additional to the surface rate, for the period 1 April 1936 to 30 June 1960. The air mail surtax for a postcard was normally the same as for a letter up to 5 gms weight; presumably it would be possible for a postcard to exceed 5 gms in weight and thus to bear an additional surtax, but I have not seen any such.

As with all such tables, lacking total formal documentary evidence, possibilities of errors and incorrect assumptions exist and I put them forward with some trepidation as being more a base to work from and build upon than as a finished article. Numerous grey areas exist and large parts of the tables are simply a result of logical deductions from covers seen and other known facts.

In particular, a number of points should be remembered when the tables are used:-

1. Hard Evidence - Apart from the earliest period, 1 January 1886 to 1 November 1924, for which I have relied heavily on Mr. Keach's earlier work, only two dates are absolute, these being 1 January 1950 and 1 January 1955, both of which come from substantial guide books to the

Congo. In addition, Postal Calendars for 1957, 1959, and 1960 were available; although these do not quote a finite date, it has been assumed that the information given was valid throughout each of the years covered.

2. Postage Stamps - For a large part of the period covered, the Congo adhered to U.P.U. guidelines in respect of the colours of stamps paying prime overseas postage rates, as follows:-

Green - basic overseas printed matter rate
 Red - basic overseas postcard rate
 Blue - basic overseas letter rate

Thus the issue of stamps in these colours in new and increased values, particularly during inflationary periods - i.e., 1921 - 1926 - provides considerable evidence, as does the issue of provisional stamps which were later replaced by stamps in these colours. It must be noted, however, from evidence provided by actual covers, that in many many cases the change of rate occurred before the new stamps could be issued.

3. Actual Covers - As the Mols period had already been relatively well documented, I concentrated on recording covers (including postcards) from 1921 onwards and some 2,000 have been listed. This is not a particularly large sample for a 40-year period and, of course, some periods are much better represented than others. Further, for those who wish to check their own covers against the tables, the following problems will be encountered:-

- (a) In many cases, stamps have been removed and this is not always immediately apparent.
- (b) Sometimes covers bear additional stamps on the reverse. Usually these do form part of the rate, but on some occasions this is not the case.
- (c) First flight, commemorative, first day and any other special covers - e.g., those bearing a number of different stamps or stamps with a charity premium - are frequently franked with imaginary rates.

(d) Minor over- (and occasionally under-) franking is quite common, either because senders used stamps which they happened to be carrying or because post offices, particularly in the more rural areas, just could not provide the correct stamps to make up particular rates.

(e) Some covers contained printed matter, invoices, Christmas or New Year cards, etc. Special rates applied to seasonal cards, including special air mail surtaxes and the subject of printed matter (as shown in Bulletin No. 47 in respect of the rates at 1 January 1955) is very complex, which is why I have provided no table for it at this stage. It is not always apparent on the face of a cover that it travelled at a special rate.

4. Dates - The dates given can only be treated as approximate at present. They are consistent with the evidence seen so far but can only be further refined as additional covers are recorded.
5. Blanks - These have been left where there is no evidence on which to base any assumption.
6. Registration Fee - As stated, this was normally equal to the overseas surface rate. There is, however, no firm evidence of the fee between 1 March 1921 and 30 November 1930. Further, during the Second World War, there was supposed to be an international agreement for all U.P.U. countries that the fee was regulated at the pre-war rate - i.e., 2,50 fr. - but, from most of the covers seen, this was not adhered to and the 3,50 fr. fee is common. No registered cover for the 1 October 1940 to 31 December 1941 period has been seen, so the bracketed 2,75 fr. fee may well be fictional.
7. African Postal Union - The African Postal Union was formed on 1 April 1936 with the intention of providing a cheaper rate for all classes of mail, except parcels, between signatories. Founder members were:-

Angola, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Belgian Congo, Kenya, Mocambique, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Ruanda-Urundi, South Africa, South-West Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Swaziland, Tanganyika, and Uganda.

In 1942, membership was extended to French Cameroons and French Equatorial Africa.

8. Near East - From about 1949, several countries in the near east were listed for a separate, lower, air mail surtax than that used for Asia generally. The list of countries changed from time to time and the following are the known lists:-

<u>01.01.1950</u>	<u>01.01.1955</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1959 & 1960</u>
Aden	Aden	Cyprus	Cyprus
Cyprus	Cyprus	Iraq	Iraq
Iraq	Iraq	Iran	Israel
Iran	Iran	Israel	Jordan
Lebanon	Israel	Jordan	Lebanon
Palestine	Jordan	Lebanon	Syria
Saudi Arabia	Lebanon	Syria	Turkey
Syria	Muscat	Turkey	
Transjordan	Saudi Arabia		
Yemen	Syria		
	Turkey		
	Yemen		

9. Luxemburg - Covers to Luxemburg are slightly anomalous as, at some periods, Luxemburg was rated as Belgium and, at others, as overseas. Also, at some times it was rated as Belgium for surface postage, but as Other Europe for air mail surtax. As covers to Luxemburg are relatively uncommon, and a complete table is not possible at present, no separate columns for Luxemburg are shown, although they perhaps should be.
10. Air Mail - the table shown is substantially correct in the information given, but must be viewed with even more caution than that for surface rates and many dates are still in need of refinement. The main points to bear in mind are:-
- (a) Flown covers prior to 1931, the start of Imperial Airways service to Africa, do not appear in great numbers and many of those which exist

are philatelic. It was also possible to post letters from Belgium to the Congo and affix a Congo air mail stamp for internal air service within the Congo, but I have never seen a commercial cover of this type.

- (b) Between 1931 and 1935 there is little consistency in the air mail surtaxes seen on covers although work on this period is continuing. As the main service at the time was Imperial Airways, it occurred to me that variations in exchange rates could also affect the surtax and thanks to Mr. N. Clowes I now have some information on these which may assist in clearing up some of the problems.
- (c) The war period saw the cessation or disruption of many air services and the commencement of alternatives, some of which were very short-lived. Much work remains to be done on this period, but those interested are referred to Mr. I. M. Warn's two previous articles in our Bulletin.
- (d) For a short time after the war, as services were becoming re-established, the Congo had a plethora of air mail rates to different countries or groups of countries (15 February 1949 onwards). I believe that this was a short-term expedient and may well not have lasted as long as is assumed in the table (30 April 1953). The normal pattern was much less complicated; before, and probably during, the war, there were four main rates:-

Internal
Belgium
African Postal Union
Other

These were joined by America when the Pan American trans-Atlantic service commenced. Up till then, air mail covers to America were flown only to Europe, then travelled by sea. (The PAA service actually commenced to Europe in May 1939, but I have seen no covers flown-all-the-way until the December 1940 direct clipper service to West Africa.)

When services had fully settled down again after the war (assumed 1 May 1953 but possibly earlier), there were nine main rates:-

Internal (all internal mail travelled by air where possible
but there was no surtax)

African Postal Union

Other Africa

Near East

Other Asia

Belgium

Other Europe

Oceania

America

- (e) Until the cessation of direct services to Belgium owing to the war, there were two rates: one, via Bangui, being cheaper and intended to promote the use of the Sabena service and route (shared with Air France); the higher rate applied mainly to the Imperial Airways route which nevertheless continued to be extensively used for mail originating in the eastern part of the Congo.

I hope that, despite all the above notes and provisos, the tables will be of some use to others than myself. I shall, of course, be delighted to receive any information which will extend them, fill in any of the blanks, or refine the various dates. I should also like to thank those members who have already helped by lending, copying, or recording their own covers, thus enabling me to get this far.

P. S. Foden

April 1983

BELGIAN CONGO and RUANDA-URUNDI

MAJOR POSTAGE RATES : 1 JANUARY 1886 - 30 JUNE 1960

LETTERS AND POSTCARDS - SURFACE MAIL

(all prices Francs)

DATES		INTERNAL MAIL		TO BELGIUM		AFRICAN POSTAL UNION		OTHER COUNTRIES		REGISTRATION FEE	
From	To	Postcard	Letter	Postcard	Letter	Postcard	Letter	Postcard	Letter	Internal	Other
01.01.1886 - 28.02.1889		0,15	0,25 per 15 gm	0,15	0,50 per 15 gm			0,15	0,50 per 15 gm	0,25	0,50
01.03.1889 - 31.03.1896		0,10	0,25 per 15 gm	0,15	0,50 per 15 gm			0,15	0,50 per 15 gm	0,25	0,50
01.04.1896 - 31.03.1910		0,10	0,15 per 15 gm	0,15	0,50 per 15 gm			0,15	0,50 per 15 gm	0,25	0,50
01.04.1910 - 31.03.1920		0,05	0,15 per 15 gm	0,10	0,25 per 15 gm			0,10	0,25 per 15 gm	0,25	0,25
01.04.1920 - 28.02.1921		0,10	0,15 per 20 gm	0,10	0,15 per 20 gm			0,10	0,25 per 20 gm	0,25	0,25
01.03.1921 - 31.10.1924		0,15	0,25 per 20 gm	0,15	0,25 per 20 gm			0,30	0,50 per 20 gm	0,50	0,50
01.11.1924 - 31.03.1926		0,30	0,50 1st 20 gm	0,30	0,50 1st 20 gm			0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm	0,75	0,75
01.04.1926 - 30.09.1926		0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm	0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm			0,60	1,00 1st 20 gm	1,00	1,00
01.10.1926 - 31.03.1927		0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm	0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm			0,60	1,25 1st 20 gm	1,25	1,25
01.04.1927 - 30.06.1927		0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm	0,45	0,75 1st 20 gm			0,60	1,50 1st 20 gm	1,50	1,50
01.07.1927 - 30.11.1930		0,45	1,00 1st 20 gm	0,45	1,00 1st 20 gm			1,00	1,75 1st 20 gm	1,75	1,75
01.12.1930 - 31.12.1933		0,60	1,25 1st 20 gm + 0,75 each addnl 20 gm	0,60	1,25 1st 20 gm + 0,75 each addnl 20 gm			1,25	2,00 1st 20 gm + 1,25 each addnl 20 gm	2,00	2,00
01.01.1934 - 31.03.1936		0,60	1,25 1st 20 gm + 0,75 each addnl 20 gm	0,60	1,50 1st 20 gm + 0,90 each addnl 20 gm			1,25	2,50 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,50	2,50
01.04.1936 - 15.07.1936		0,60	1,25 1st 20 gm + 0,75 each addnl 20 gm	0,60	1,50 1st 20 gm + 0,90 each addnl 20 gm	0,60	1,50 1st 20 gm + 0,90 each addnl 20 gm	1,25	2,50 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,50	2,50
16.07.1936 - 30.09.1940		0,75	1,25 1st 20 gm + 0,75 each addnl 20 gm	0,75	1,50 1st 20 gm + 0,90 each addnl 20 gm	0,75	1,50 1st 20 gm + 0,90 each addnl 20 gm	1,50	2,50 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,50	2,50
01.10.1940 - 31.12.1941		0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	1,50	2,75 1st 20 gm	(2,75)	(2,75)
01.01.1942 - 12.03.1942		0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	0,75	2,50 1st 20 gm	1,50	3,50 1st 20 gm + 2,00 each addnl 20 gm	3,50	3,50
13.03.1942 - 31.08.1949		1,00	2,50 1st 20 gm	1,00	2,50 1st 20 gm	1,00	2,50 1st 20 gm	2,00	3,50 1st 20 gm + 2,00 each addnl 20 gm	3,50	3,50
01.09.1949 - 31.08.1951		1,20	3,00 1st 10 gm + 1,00 each addnl 10 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,40	4,00 1st 20 gm + 2,40 each addnl 20 gm	4,00	4,00
01.09.1951 - 31.08.1953		1,20	3,00 1st 10 gm + 1,00 each addnl 10 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,50	4,00 1st 20 gm + 2,40 each addnl 20 gm	4,00	4,00
01.09.1953 - 31.12.1957		1,20	3,00 1st 10 gm + 1,00 each addnl 10 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	1,20	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	2,50	4,50 1st 20 gm + 2,50 each addnl 20 gm	* 4,00	6,00
01.01.1958 - 30.06.1960		1,50	3,00 1st 10 gm + 1,00 each addnl 10 gm	1,50	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	1,50	3,00 1st 20 gm + 1,50 each addnl 20 gm	3,00	5,00 1st 20 gm + 3,00 each addnl 20 gm	6,00	6,00

* AND BELGIUM

BELGIAN CONGO and RWANDA-URUNDI

MAJOR POSTAGE RATES : 1 APRIL 1936 - 30 JUNE 1960

LETTERS AND POSTCARDS - AIR MAIL SURCHARGE

(all prices Francs)

One: Africa

DATES		INTERNAL	AFRICAN POSTAL UNION	ANGOLA	FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA	SOUTH AFRICA	CAMEROON	FRENCH WEST AFRICA	OTHER AFRICA
From	To			ANGOLA	FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA	SOUTH AFRICA	GOLD COAST	FRENCH WEST AFRICA	OTHER AFRICA
				N. RHODESIA S. RHODESIA	N. RHODESIA S. RHODESIA	BASUTOLAND BECHUANALAND SWAZILAND	KENYA UGANDA TANGANYIKA NYASALAND SUDAN	EGYPT MOCAMBIQUE NIGERIA TRIPOLITANIA	
01.04.1936	- 30.09.1940	1,00	3,00						
01.10.1940	- 30.11.1940		2,25						
01.12.1940	- 31.12.1940		2,25						
01.01.1941	- 30.06.1941		2,25						
01.07.1941	- 08.12.1941		2,25						
09.12.1941	- 31.12.1941		2,25						
01.01.1942	- 30.06.1944		2,25						
01.07.1944	- 30.11.1944								
01.12.1944	- 31.12.1946								
01.01.1947	- 30.09.1947	00							
01.10.1947	- 14.02.1949	00							
15.02.1949	- 30.04.1953	00		0,50		1,50	1,00	2,00	3,00
01.05.1953	- circa 1957	00	0,75						1,00
01.01.1958	- 1959	00	1,00						1,50
1959	- 30.06.1960	00	1,00						1,50

NOTE:- all rates are per 5 gm, or part thereof, except where otherwise stated

BELGIAN CONGO and RWANDA-URUNDI

MAJOR POSTAGE RATES : 1 APRIL 1936 - 30 JUNE 1960

LETTERS AND POSTCARDS - AIR MAIL SURCHARGE

To: Asia, Europe, Oceania, and America

(all prices Francs)

DATES	ASIA		EUROPE					OCEANIA	AMERICA	
	Near East	Afghanistan West Pakistan	Other Asia	Belgium	Greece	France Great Britain Italy Netherlands Luxemburg Portugal Switzerland	Other Europe	Brazil	Other America	
From - To										
01.04.1936 - 30.09.1940				3,00 3,50	via Bangui other routes		3,50			
01.10.1940 - 30.11.1940							5,00			
01.12.1940 - 31.12.1940							5,00		21,00	
01.01.1941 - 30.06.1941							5,00		* via Hong Kong	
01.07.1941 - 08.12.1941							5,00		* via Hong Kong	
09.12.1941 - 31.12.1941							5,00		* via New Zealand	
01.01.1942 - 30.06.1944							5,00		15,50 Transatlantic (PAA)	
01.07.1944 - 30.11.1944				6,75			6,75		15,50 ditto	
01.12.1944 - 31.12.1946				6,00			6,00		15,50 ditto	
01.01.1947 - 30.09.1947				3,50			5,50		12,50 ditto	
01.10.1947 - 14.02.1949				3,50			4,50		7,50 ditto	
15.02.1949 - 30.04.1953	3,50	5,00	6,00	3,50	3,50	4,00	4,50	8,00	7,00	
01.05.1953 - circa 1957	2,00	-	5,50	3,50 + 2,50	1st 10 gm each addnl 5 gm	-	3,00	7,00	5,00	
01.01.1958 - 1959	3,00	-	6,00	3,50 + 2,50	1st 10 gm each addnl 5 gm	-	3,00	7,00	5,00	
1959 - 30.06.1960	3,00	-	6,00	3,50 + 2,50	1st 10 gm each addnl 5 gm	-	3,00	7,00	5,00	

* These three rates are represented by only four covers in all and must therefore be treated with caution.

NOTE:- all rates are per 5 gm, or part thereof, except where otherwise stated

MOLS PERFORATIONS - ADDENDUM

Since my articles in Bulletins 39 and 47 a few new perforation varieties have come to light, and a considerable amount of research into the subject of the perforations has been conducted by other Study Circle members and communicated to me.

First, the new varieties. The following should be added to the listing in Bulletin 47, in all cases rarity 'D' unless otherwise stated:

<u>1894</u>	10c	I1+A2	perf 14
<u>1895-8</u>	5c	I1+A brown	" 16
	15c	I+A1a	" 12½
<u>1900</u>	10c	I2+B1	" 16
<u>Local</u>	15c	I+A2	" 14½-15
	5fr	I+A1 rose-carmine	" 12-14
<u>1910</u>	5c	III1+B4a y-green	" 14½-15
	50c	III1+A3	" 15
<u>1915</u>	1fr	II1+A4	" 13½
<u>1921</u>	5/40c	I2+A1 typo	" 12-14, 14½-15
	5fr	I+A1 typo	" 12-14 (rarity E)

On the perforation gauges themselves, the findings of further research by myself and others are best summarised gauge by gauge, starting with the 'regular' gauges.

Perf 12½

This appears to be the scarcest gauge - I have seen fewer than ten single copies and no blocks or sheets. The pin spacing is very constant in the range 12.6 to 12.7, and I am satisfied that this is a distinct gauge rather than a throw-off from the irregular perf 12-14, complete sheets of which have been studied with some care. Perf 12½ has been found on the 1896 40c (including with typo overprint) and 15c, and on the 1900 25c; it appears therefore that it was in use for only a short period around the turn of the century.

Perf 13½

Never common, but in use for at least 20 years from 1900 onwards, this gauge should more accurately be described as 'perf 13¾'. From a study of several hundred single stamps Ed Hirdler found the following frequency distribution of gauges on each side:

- 13.6-1% 13.65-5% 13.7-47% 13.75-34% 13.8-11% 13.85-2%

The spacing is therefore very regular with an average of just under 13¾.

Perf 14

From 1900 onwards this became by far the most common of the gauges, and it almost certainly represents several different perforating machines. There is quite a lot more that can now be said about this gauge as a result of further research.

Most important is the discovery, by several different members

who wrote to me, that from about 1912 onwards stamps which I classified as perf 14 in fact fall into two groups - those which measure mostly between 14.0 and 14.1, and those which measure between 14.25 and 14.35. The latter are strictly perf 14½ rather than 14, and are quite distinct from the irregular 14-14½ gauge which was in use in the 1890s and which shows considerable unevenness in the spacing of the pins unlike the regular spacing of the later gauge.

My original studies overlooked the 14½ gauge because I measured the later Mols issues, which I assumed were all perf 13½, 14 or 15, with much less care than the more complicated early issues. Whether perf 14 and 14½ can always be distinguished from one another is open to doubt: usually the difference is clear, but inevitably there are a few stamps which average say 14.15 and which can therefore be one or the other.

By reference to complete sheets, 14½ does not seem to be found before the later printings of the 1910 issue (eg 30/10c IV+D1). From 1915 onwards however it is more common than perf 14 and accounts for something like two-thirds of the stamps. The following table by Ed Hirdler illustrates this well:

	<u>14.00</u>	<u>14.05</u>	<u>14.10</u>	<u>14.15</u>	<u>14.20</u>	<u>14.25</u>	<u>14.30</u>	<u>14.35</u>	<u>14.40</u>	
1909 set	20%	41%	38%	1%	-	-	-	-	-	=100%
1910 set	5%	38%	35%	5%	7%	10%	-	-	-	=100%
1915 set	3%	10%	23%	5%	10%	45%	3%	1%	-	=100%

The 'double hump' in the 1915 figures is particularly significant, showing as it does how the stamps in the sample (which was a large one) divide between the two groups perf 14 and 14½. Generally speaking, Ed Hirdler calculates that 95% of the sides of perf 14 stamps from all periods fall in the range 14.0 to 14.1, while 85% of the sides of perf 14½ stamps are between 14.2 and 14.25.

My earlier articles explained that there is a considerable overlap between perf 14 and the irregular perfs 12-14 and 14-14½, in the sense that the two irregular gauges produced many single stamps which measure a regular 14 on each side. Given this overlap, it is likely that some of the stamps shown in my table in Bulletin 47 as being found 'perf 14' were not in fact perforated by a regular perf 14 gauge but by one or both of the irregular gauges also shown in the table for the stamp in question. I consider that this is likely to be true of the 5c blue, the 10c brown, the 25c orange, the 5fr rose carmine of 1894 (the 5fr deep carmine is not found perf 14 at all), the 5c brown-red (as opposed to red-brown) of 1895, the 10c I2+A3 blue green, the 15c I+A2 and the 40c pale green (as opposed to the blue-green) of 1896. However the discovery of sheets or large blocks of one or more of these stamps, regular perf 14, may prove me wrong.

Finally there is the question of how many different perf 14 machines were used, leaving aside the irregular gauges and the perf 14½ machine (or machines) of the later issues. One will never know the answer, but Ray Keach showed me evidence which suggests that there were at least three perf 14 machines which may be distinguishable from each other. The evidence took the form of three blocks of four, all from the 1895-1900 period, with the same regular

gauge but with one showing rather large holes, the second small holes, and the third very small holes which tore badly leaving a rough, rather flat edge on the side of the stamp instead of the usual neat teeth. This last phenomenon is found particularly on 40c stamps with local overprint. It may be that different hole sizes reflect not different machines but different ways of applying the same machine, but I consider this unlikely.

Perf 15

Little to add here apart from Ed Hirdler's frequency statistics:

14.9-2% 14.95-4% 15.0-37% 15.05-30% 15.1-23% 15.15-3% 15.2-1%

Thus the perforator can be seen to be a regular one producing in 90% of cases a measurement between 15.0 and 15.1.

Perf 16

I described this one as 15.6 to 15.8, but the frequency statistics (admittedly based on a small sample of 100 'sides' or 25 stamps) show the following:

15.65-2% 15.7-5% 15.75-8% 15.8-60% 15.85-7% 15.9-16% 15.95-2%

Perhaps '15.7 to 15.9' would have been a better description.

Perf 12-14

Nothing to add.

Perf 14-14½

A number of blocks of four of this gauge are known, but no larger blocks or sheets. It is not yet possible therefore to describe in full the variations of the gauge. It appears to have been used only in the period 1895-99, but I suspect that while it was used it was more common than I have given it credit for. For example stamps of this period (particularly the 5c brown) are often found with perforations in the range 14.0 to 14.2, and with discernible irregularities in the pin spacing, and I suspect that these come from the 14-14½ perforator rather than regular perf 14 as I have classified them.

Perf 14½-15

A common perforator which was in use between 1894 and 1911 and of which many examples in sheets are known. Study of these shows that a more accurate description would be 14.5/14.9 rather than 14.4/14.9 as stated in my previous article. The two gauges alternate in stretches of about 6 cms each, in such a way that in each sheet about 6 stamps read as being regular 14.9 all round, six are regular 14.4 all round, and the remaining stamps show compound or varying gauges.

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My warm thanks to Ed Hirdler and the other Study Circle members - more than a dozen of them - who took the trouble to write to me on this subject or show me material following the appearance of my previous articles.