

BELGIAN CONGO



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EDITOR'S NOTE: We are deeply indebted to member Norman Clowes for his work in preparing the Index for the past two years of the Bulletin. Other members who have contributed to his issue are: R. H. Keach, E. A. Hirdler, P. S. Foden, Ronald E. Strawser, Regis Hoffman and Mrs. H. Jeidel. All of these contributions make the job of Editor a real pleasure.

NEWS AND VIEWSPaysage Issues in January Issue of The American Philatelist

True to promise, Peter Foden's article appeared in the January issue of The American Philatelist as the main feature and we also got the front cover in colour. We wish to thank the APS for this very nice boost! Peter has kindly donated his honorarium to the BCSC.

New Member - We wish to welcome Mr. H. R. Lancaster of Hereford, U.K. as our newest member.

The Red Surcharge - Variety 656a

Father Hulstaert writes regarding the variety 656a, the red surcharge for the first Congolese games on the first African games stamp. He says "I don't know if the status of the variety of colour of the surcharge is generally understood. The stamps with the surcharge in black were sold in Kinshasa; those with the surcharge in orange-red were sold in Mbandaka, where no copies with the black surcharge were ever available, and it appears that the reverse was true in Kinshasa. At the time, we did not know that, otherwise one could have found the means of acquiring a fair number of the orange-red variety. Most of these were genuinely used for postage abroad and so have disappeared; the mint copies appear to be rare."

On The Exhibition Front

Word has been received from Hilde Jeidel that her exhibit received a silver gilt medal during the "Johannesburge 100" last October. She rightfully questions the judges as her display was worthy of a Gold, considering it had a whole frame of Lado mail, not to mention other very good items. We as a group have got to do a better job of informing judges as to the nature of some of our best material!!

Your editor took a Vermeil Award at ARIPEX this past January. This year's show was held in Tucson, Arizona and one of our members - Ron Strawser - came over from Texas - to see this national show. The Congo display was the "Plating Study of the 10 Centimes Mols Issue of the Congo (1894-1923)" showing 8 frames (120 pages).

Early Airmail from Angola Routed Through the Belgian Congo - Mrs. Jeidel writes referring to the article in Bulletin 62 page 9 and suggests that the reason for this routing is that Angola had no airmail until the second half of the 1930's.

The following two pages are photocopies sent of four items - three north bound to Belgium and one south bound to South Africa. She adds that the Angola stamps were invalidated with a one-line violet rubber date stamp. It has not been possible to establish the origin of any of the letters.

OVERLAND FROM ANGOLA TO BELGIAN CONGO

AVION



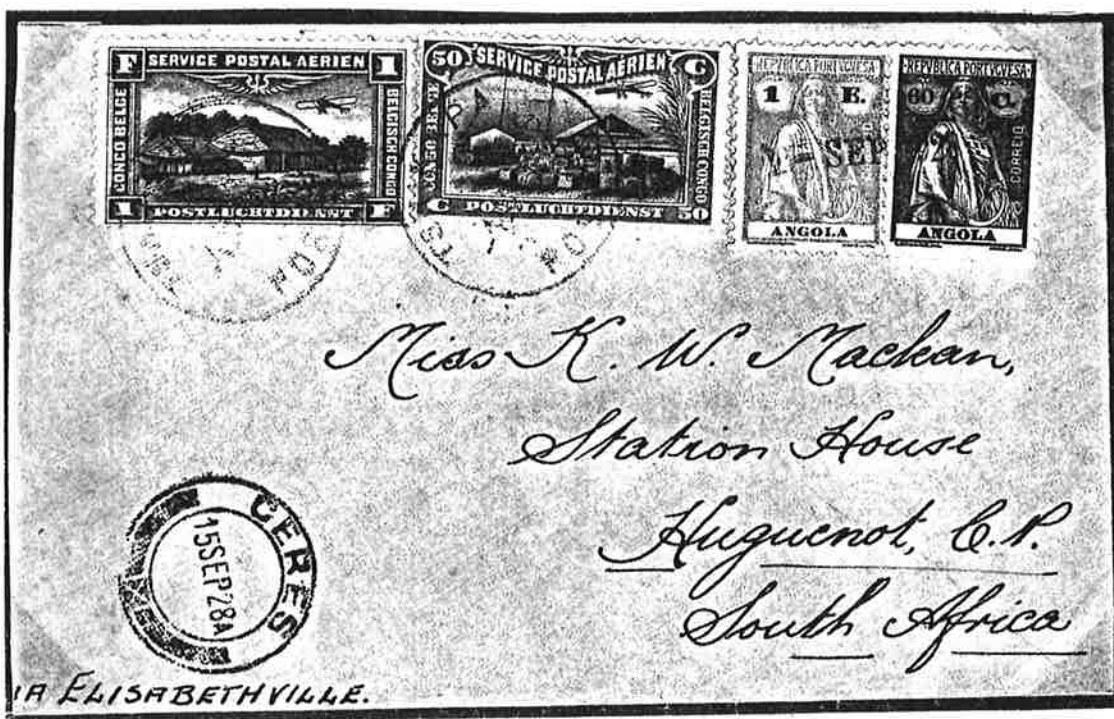
SOUTH BOUND  
 ON OBERSE -  
 ANGOLA 1 SEPT 1928  
 TSHIKAPA 1 9  
 CERES 15 SEPT  
 ON REVERSE -  
 TSHIKAPA 1 9  
 E'VILLE 6 9  
 MIXED FRANKING

Madame M. Pasquez de  
 Carvalho  
 Square Marguerite, 37  
 Bruxelles

AVION



FLOWN TSHIKAPA - ELISABETHVILLE - KINSHASA



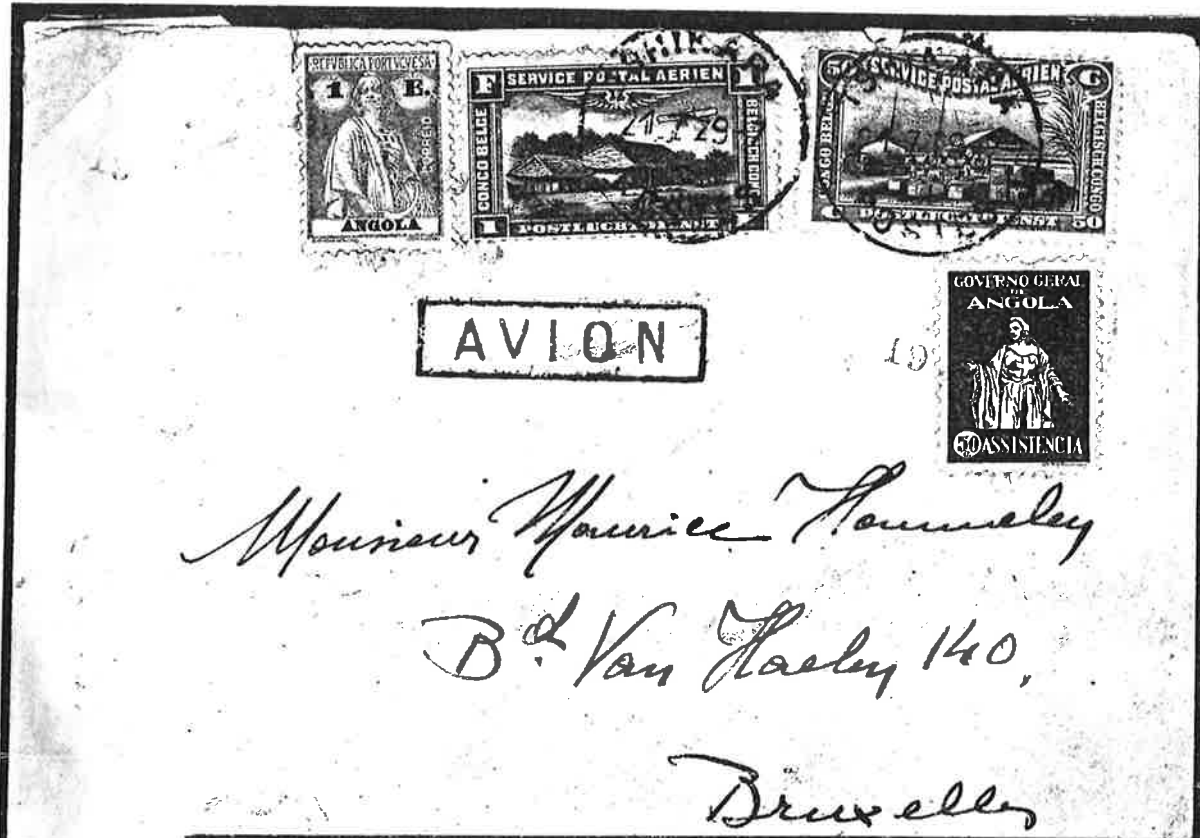
NORTH BOUND  
 ON OBERSE -  
 ANGOLA 3 OCT 1929  
 TSHIKAPA 3 10 1929

Miss K. W. Mackan,  
 Station House  
 Huguenot, C.P.  
 South Africa



IN ELISABETHVILLE.

OVERLAND FROM ANGOLA TO BELGIAN CONGO



MIXED FRANKING  
INTERNALLY FLOWN  
ANGOLA 19 JUL 1929  
TSHIKAPA 21 7 1929

ANGOLA 22 NOV 1929  
REVERSE - TSHIKAPA  
2 12 1929



THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL COLUMNThe 1886 5 Francs, Perforated 14

The sight of another example of this rare stamp prompts me to write on it. It is a strange and curious stamp, ignored by most of us because we do not possess copies.

All other stamps of the 1886 and 1887 Portrait issues and the vast majority of the 1886 5 F were perforated 15 and, what is more important, were harrow-perforated; that is to say, had all perforations in a sheet of stamps punched at the same moment with a grid of pins. The stamp that we are considering was not only perforated 14 but this was effected by a comb-perforating machine.

The 1886 and 1887 issues were printed by the Belgian Government Printing works in Malines whose prime stamp activity was the printing of Belgian stamps. Early printings of the 1869 issue of Belgium were perforated 15 but, according to the Gibbons catalogue, the perforation was changed to 14 in 1880 and this latter perforation was used exclusively for the 1884 and later issues. Although usually helpful in such matters, the Gibbons catalogue does not specify how the perforation was made, line, comb or harrow. The Balasse catalogue is no more helpful. A telephone call to Geoffrey Wood elicited the fact that the initial 15 perforation of the Belgian 1869 issue was harrow and the later 14 perforation comb. The Government Printing Works used for the Congo stamps the harrow perforating machine which it had abandoned, presumably because it found it unsatisfactory for Belgian stamps.

There cannot have been more than one or two sheets of the 5 F perforated 14. According to General Du Four, in his book, one or two used examples are known but I have not seen a copy, nor have I seen one illustrated in the auction sale catalogues or elsewhere. Forged cancellations abound on early Congo stamps and some are very dangerous. Being a 'doubting Thomas' I believe that the 5 F perforated 14 does not exist with genuine cancellation. All unused examples of the stamp that I have seen have been without gum and also in the pale colour of faded examples of the normal perf. 15 stamp.

Does any member have a copy of this stamp a) used and with enough of the cancellation for an opinion on its authenticity to be formed b) unused with what is thought to be original gum or c) in the bright colour of fresh copies of the normal perf. 15 stamp? Until such a stamp is forthcoming I shall feel certain in my own mind that the stamp is a so-called 'proof', from printers' waste that should have been destroyed.

'Specialists'

When, many years ago, our Study Circle was founded we glorified ourselves with the description 'Belgian Congo Specialists Study Circle'

although only two of our early members, General Du Four and Joseph Wright could, by any stretch of the imagination, have been deemed to be 'specialists' in Belgian Congo philately. I do not recall - and as the then secretary I should if anyone can - remember our having deliberately demoted us to our modern appellation. The change appears to have been gradual as good sense began to prevail and we realised how very ignorant nearly all of us were.

'Specialist' is probably the most abused word in philately. I have heard people say "I specialize in the British Empire" or, perhaps slightly more modestly, "I specialize in Belgium" when they mean that they collect stamps of only those countries and usually know precious little about the subject.

What is a 'specialist'? It has to be someone who, over a long period, has learned all that has been published about a particular subject and has himself studied the stamps in the utmost detail, hopefully to discover things not previously known to others.

Many of us have not the wish, the time or the patience to become 'specialists' and that is a good thing because specialists, with their interest centred on one small subject, are usually unmitigated bores to those who do not share their interest. On the other hand, my experience is that an effort at specialization is the most rewarding facet of philately, providing a lifetime of fascinating study with not infrequent discoveries of new facts, generally minor but occasionally of significance within the range of the subject studied.

I have occasionally heard a collector say "I cannot afford to become a 'specialist'." This is complete nonsense. Obviously, to specialize in the 1886 5 francs or in the COLIS POSTAUX surcharges is entirely outside the scope of the pockets of almost anyone. In general, however, specialization is the least expensive way of collecting because the cheapest engraved stamps, produced in the greatest quantities, have the greatest variation and therefore the most interest.

There is still plenty of scope for study and unexpected discoveries in common Congo stamps; my personal choice is the 1910 15 c but there are others with similar interest. For cancellations there is, for example, the 'small circle' BOMA; we still do not know how many genuine cancellers were used and the forged cancellations are numerous and, so far, have received no one's detailed attention.

If you have an enquiring mind why not have a go at some detail in the wide range of Congo philately? The first thing to do is to study all that has been written on the subject - the Study Circle can help you there - and then you may well be on your own.

#### 1922 Local 10c/5c in Pairs, With and Without Surcharge

I have several vertical pairs of the 1915 5c of which only the upper stamps have the 1922 Local (Boma) 10c surcharge. Most are out-and-out

forgeries, one or two even surcharged on booklet stamps instead of the proper sheets of 50. One such pair came to me last year and I thought that it was another forgery. Mr. Hudson disagreed and I sent it to the Abbe Gudenkauf who agreed with Mr. Hudson. The piece is genuine already dishonest and certainly not legitimate. The surcharging of the stamps in Boma, although official and necessary at the time, suffered much from mal-practice by the printers. It appears that, on a number of occasions, the sheet of stamps was deliberately folded along one line of perforations before entering into the printing press so that part of the sheet received the surcharge and part was left without surcharge. Opening out the sheet provided pairs with and without the surcharge.

It is difficult to believe that these contrived 'errors' did not have the connivance of the post office authorities. If a post office had received such a sheet for sale over the counter it would have been debited 5 francs for a sheet and the sheet would certainly have been returned when it was found that some stamps in the sheet, those without the surcharge, had only half of the value for which the post office had been charged.

Without resolutely refusing to accept such contrived errors let us realise what they are before paying substantial sums of money for them.

#### Pen Cancellations

It is well known that the stamps added to gun licenses, usually the 10 F values of 1891 or 1898, were cancelled by a signature in ink. There is evidence that letters posted on board river steamers that did not have official BATEAU POSTE cancelling stamps had the stamps on such letters cancelled in manuscript, often a simple cross but sometimes 'Bateau Poste', 'BP' or the name of the vessel. Congo stamps used in the Lado enclave and travelling down the Nile were pen-cancelled at Lado or Kero and these too are well known.

I have 'modern' overseas Congo covers with the stamps cancelled only by manuscript crosses but it is impossible to say if the manuscript cancellation was applied in the Congo or in the country to which the letter was addressed.

One does however find other single stamps pen-cancelled with what appears to be a signature and I wonder what was the purpose.

In Great Britain until relatively recently a receipt for money had, in order to be valid, to bear a 1d or 2d stamp and the stamp was cancelled either by a company's cachet or by a pen cancellation. Were Congo postage stamps used for a similar fiscal purpose? Perhaps one of our members who has been resident in the Congo can enlighten me on the matter.

Waterlow 'Specimen' Overprints on Postal Stationery

Dr. Stibbe, on page 69 of his recently published postal stationery catalogue, illustrates a card with Waterlow SPECIMEN overprint. There is a second type of this overprint, illustrated below and which I have only on card No. 15. Both this overprint and that illustrated in the catalogue are engraved. I suspect that these overprinted cards were not intended for the U.P.U. but for publicity purposes as were the adhesive stamps with 'WATERLOW & SONS LTD SPECIMEN' overprint.

'Sales Department'

A good deal - approaching £ 7000 - of the Barstow Smith collection has already been sold but a great many stamps still remain. There are a few imperfect copies of the early COLIS POSTAUX stamps; any member lacking them, but finding the present high prices for perfect copies outside the range of his pocket may be interested in them. The owner was one of the first to reconstruct sheets of the Mols stamps. Existing 'platers' have, as far as possible, had their blank spaces filled but large numbers of these stamps remain. Any member who thinks he might care to begin this fascinating activity with some of the commoner Mols stamps has an excellent opportunity to start now.

Having been busy with the normal stamps I have not yet got to the TAXES marks. I have some wants lists of these stamps but if any member is interested to acquire the different types of the marks on individual stamps he should have preferential treatment; enquiries are solicited. Nor have I yet touched the postal stationery or cancellations but I hope to start on these items shortly.

From another source are several complete sheets of 50 of each of Congo 1947 Masques 15c, 1,25 F (2nd centre plate), 1,60 F and 2,40 F @ 1/5 of Catalogue Officiel prices. Because of the small commission involved purchasers are asked to pay the necessary postage.

R. H. KEACH

Tribe Inquiry

A thematic collector in Australia would be most grateful if any member could identify the trip represented by the potter on the Vloors 1 franc stamp, or provide any further information about the design and its subject. Any reply should be sent to the Secretary.



MOLS 1915 USED IN CONGO PRIOR TO REPORTED NOV. 1915 DATE ISSUED

The illustrated cover bears the correct 50c postage for 15-30gm overseas in 1915, comprising a 40c Etat Typo 1 and a 10c of 1915 with the sky not retouched, combination plates V1+D2 or V2+D2 (Editor's note: In B. P. Hudson's Revised Listing of the Mols Plate Combinations, he writes: "Similarly Du Four described both V1 and V2 as 'V' although he mentions in his text that frame GMs were added after the first printings. Unless the GMs are visibly present or absent, there is no way in practice of distinguishing V1 from V2." The subject stamp is position number 45 - hence GMs not available.) from the printing represented by Waterlow file copy dated either 20 Apr 1915 or 20 Aug 1915. The stamps are cancelled Banana 1.5 tDMY 7-8 7 OCTO 1915, and the in-transit cds verifies the year as 1915. There are no backstamps. CO, Gibbons and Balasse all say Nov. 1915 as date issued (mise en cours).

We do not know the date the 8 values of the 1915 issue were available for use in the Congo, but Waterlow file copies show all 8 with a 20 Apr. 1915 date (including 300,000 of the 10c V1+D2) and the lowest 5 values had a second printing with a file copy 20 Aug. 1915 date (including 300,000 of the 10c V2+D2). The existence of this cover suggests that others may be in members' collections with the significance of an early date not noted.

E. A. HIRDLER



THE STICKNEY MACHINE ISSUES OF THE BELGIAN CONGOTHE RUANDA-URUNDI DEFINITIVE ISSUE 1931-1938

Greatly similar to the "Paysage" issue of the Belgian Congo, the larger part of the Ruanda-Urundi series actually appeared some three weeks earlier. Due to the similarities in the reasons for, and methods of, production, this article will deal with information specific to the Ruanda-Urundi stamps, without unnecessary repetition of information contained in the previous article (Bulletin No. 58).

The dates of issue and numbers printed are given respectively in the 1949 Balasse Catalogue and 1946/47 Philatic Catalogue as follows:-

	<u>Issued</u>	<u>Printed</u>
5 centimes	1938 (1)	910,725
10 "	25 August 1931	829,575
15 "	" " "	212,025
25 "	" " "	430,875
40 "	" " "	213,750
50 "	" " "	472,350
60 "	" " "	204,225
75 "	" " "	220,800
1,00 franc	" " "	422,550
1,25 francs	" " "	506,175
1,50 "	5 November 1937	310,275
2,00 "	25 August 1931	277,500
2,50 "	5 November 1937	480,675
3,25 "	25 August 1931	112,275
4,00 "	" " "	114,675
5,00 "	" " "	109,200
10,00 "	" " "	113,175
20,00 "	" " "	60,000

Note :- (1) The date of issue of the 5 centimes is given by Gibbons as 25 August 1938.

As usual, the numbers printed as shown above may not show the complete picture. As an instance, catalogue prices for the 40 centimes value indicate that it is much less common than the 15 centimes; nor do the comparative prices of the 2,50 francs and 3,25 francs values bear any resemblance to a variation in numbers printed of more than 4:1.

### Designs

As for the Congo series, two basic frame designs exist, one for the horizontal format stamps and one for the vertical format stamps. Unlike the Congo series, however, the panels at the sides and bottom of the frames were left blank, as shown on the "progress proofs" noted by Mr Keach in Bulletin No. 55. For convenience, an illustration of the horizontal format proof is shown hereunder.



In fact, these proofs are probably the completed master proofs of the frames, which would have been duplicated, 8 times for the vertical stamps and 10 times for the horizontal stamps, prior to the addition of the figures of value, central designs and the detail of the surrounding panels to produce a composite die for each stamp. It may well be that the detail of the panels was engraved together with the central design in each case as, in the three designs which are repeated, 5c/60c, 1,50 fr/2,00 fr and 2,50 fr/3,25 fr, the panels are similar, whereas, with this exception, the panels vary for each value, although all are derived from native textile or beadwork designs; one probable source of these designs is the bandoliers worn by the Watusi dancers as part of their costume.

As for the Belgian Congo issue, the source of the central designs is likely to have been photographs provided by the Colonial Ministry. In this case, the descriptions of the designs given in the Balasse and Gibbons catalogues are in close agreement and are as follows:-

5c	Native porter (Bahutu)
10c	Mountain scenery
15c	Warrior (Watusi)
25c	Chieftain's kraal
40c	Cowherds (Bahutu)
50c	Head of buffalo
60c	As 5c
75c	Native women greeting (Bahutu)
1 fr	Wives of Urundi chiefs (Watusi)
1,25 frs	Young mother and child (Bahutu)
1,50 frs	Native artisan hollowing out a wooden pot (Bahutu)
2,00 frs	As 1,50 frs
2,50 frs	Workers beating out ficus bark to make tissues (Bahutu)
3,25 frs	As 2,50 frs
4,00 frs	Seller of wooden pots (Bahutu)
5,00 frs	N'tori dancer of Ruandu (Watusi)
10,00 frs	Watusi warriors
20,00 frs	Native prince of Urundi (Watusi)

Again, as for the Congo issue, the central design of each value includes the "I.G." monogram, indicating that the engraving was done at L'Institut de Gravure, Paris. In the present case, the Type A monogram appears on the 15c, 25c, 50c and 10 fr values.

If, as can be expected, more than a single engraver was responsible for the central designs, then features of the engraving would suggest four unequal groupings, as follows:-

10c, 40c, 1,25 fr, 5 fr, 10 fr and 20 fr.  
 50c, 75c, 1,50 fr (and 2,00 fr), 2,50 fr (and 3,25 fr) and 4 fr.  
 5c (and 60c), 15c and 25c  
 1fr.

but, failing evidence to indicate such a division of labour, this is purest speculation; however, it is virtually certain that a single engraver produced all the frame panel designs.

### Dies

The appearance of the die proofs of the frames (Specimen No. 1232 horizontal, No. 1233 vertical) provides additional evidence that the dies were prepared by the Institut de Gravure. It may well be that similar proofs of the centres and, indeed, of other Belgian Congo stamps, also still exist and will come to light eventually. The existence of these proofs underlines the publicity nature of the die proofs produced at Malines with the authorisation of the Belgian Postal Administration. These proofs exist for the original 15-value series - ie excluding the 5c, 1,50 fr and 2,50 fr values - both in black and in the issued colours. An example taken from a series in issued colours, is illustrated below. In all cases known, the sets of proofs are numbered; it is believed that No. 5 was presented to the well-known Belgian philatelist, Caroly. Each proof of the series has a large embossed circular stamp (53 mm diameter) in the lower left corner. Containing a coat of arms in the centre, the inscription, in two concentric circles near the edge, reads "MINISTERE DES POSTES, TELEGRAPHES ET TELEPHONES/MINISTERIE VAN POSTERIJEN TELEGRAFEN EN TELEFONEN". The 1949 Balasse catalogue lists the proofs at 40,000 fr for the series in black and 50,000 fr for that in issued colours.

### Colours

The colours of the stamps are as follows:-

5c	Claret
10c	Grey
15c	Vermilion
25c	Purple
40c	Green
50c	Violet
60c	Claret
75c	Grey-black
1,00 fr	Bright carmine
1,25 fr	Red-brown
1,50 fr	Brownish-purple
2,00 fr	Blue
2,50 fr	Blue
3,25 fr	Brownish-purple
4,00 fr	Carmine-rose
5,00 fr	Grey
10,00 fr	Purple
20,00 fr	Brown

Ruanda-Urundi

5



Although there must have been more than one printing of at least some values, no significant shades are known. Balasse mentions a 5c on rose paper, but this is merely a result of ink suffusion when the paper was over-damp during part of a printing run. The 50c value does exist in reddish-lilac, quite unlike the usual pale violet shade and this is ascribed by Balasse to a second printing; again there is evidence of ink suffusion, but this alone should not produce such a totally different shade. It has to be borne in mind, however, that violet is a notoriously difficult colour of ink to control, even during a single print run.

Colour changelings no doubt also exist, but those in the writer's collection are limited to used copies of the 1,25 fr and 20, fr values which have turned yellowish brown.

#### Sheet Layout

Balasse gives the date of demonitisation of the stamps as 1 September 1942 and it is to be assumed that, in common with the Belgian Congo series, the remaining stocks were destroyed, leaving only comparatively few complete sheets in the hands of dealers. If so, the survival rate since then has been considerable, as the following information is based on a sample consisting of:-

	<u>Plate No.</u>	<u>Sheet No.</u>		
5c	1	065	Depot 1939	Gum 6
	1	201	Depot 1939	Gum 6
	2	292	Depot 1939	Gum 6
10c	1	217		
	1	213		(Photocopy)
15c	1	000 047	Depot 1937	(Photocopy)
25c	1	000 109	Depot 1937	(Photocopy)
40c	1	246		(Photocopy)
60c	2	237		
	1	396		
	2	397		
1.00 fr	1	080	Depot 1940	
	2	107	Depot 1940	
	2	380	Depot 1940	
1,25 fr	1	031		
	1	185		
	2	186		
1,50 fr	1	000 331	Depot 1937	
	1	000 332	Depot 1937	
	2	000 336	Depot 1937	
2,00 fr	2	266		
2,50 fr	1	048	Depot 1941	
	1	000 201	Depot 1937	
	1	000 388	Depot 1937	
	2	000 037	Depot 1937	
10,00 fr	1	173		
	1	195		

Imprint blocks of all values of 1931 series - ie excluding 5c, 1,50 fr, 2,50 fr. Strip of 5 x 5c Nos. 11-15, Plate 2, Sheet 315, Depot 1938.

5/40c	block of 25 (11 - 75)	Sheet No. 058	
60/50c	block of 25 ( 1 - 25)	Sheet No. 339	Depot 1938
2,50/1,50 fr	block of 25 (51 - 75)	Plate 1	
3,25/2,00 fr	block of 25 ( 1 - 25)	Plate 1	Sheet No. 266

The layout of the sheets is similar to that for the Congo Paysage series and the accompanying diagram is for ease of reference. On none of the sheets available for inspection is there any trace of additional layout marks such as were found on the sheets of several values of the Congo series and marked as (A), (B), and (C) in the illustration of the layout for that issue.

#### Sheet Numbers

While generally similar to those on the Congo stamps, it is interesting to note that certain of the R-U sheets have 6-digit numbers (of which the first 3 are invariably zeros). All of these are found in association with the 1937 Depot mark, which may mean:-

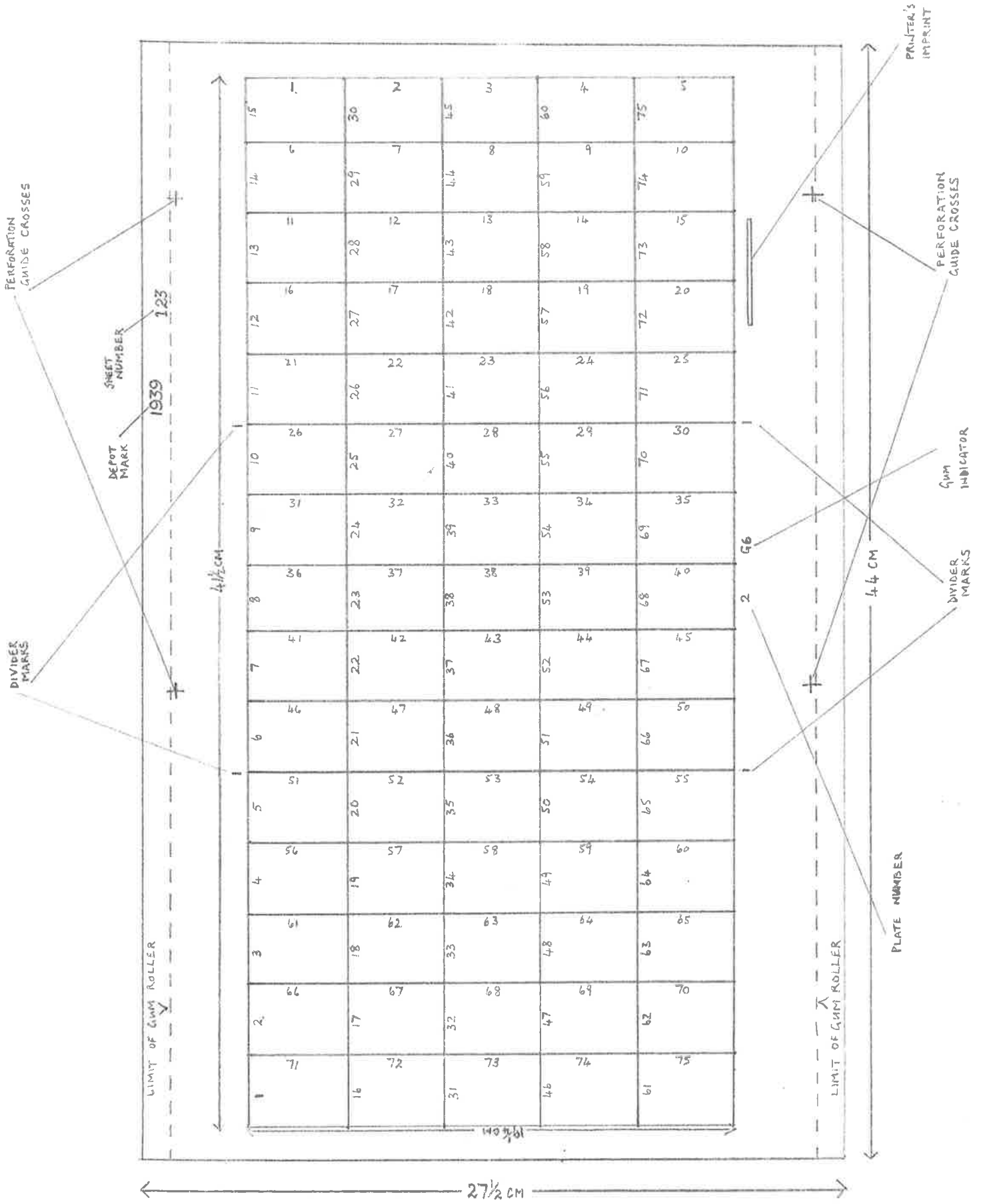
- 1 that for a period in 1937 the Stickney machine numbering element was changed for one having 6 digits - possibly one normally used for the longer runs of Belgian stamps, or
- 2 that the numbering machine was inoperative for a time and the numbers were added to the sheets in a separate exercise.

A further point also has to be considered; in every case, the sheet number is aligned with, and a consistent distance from, the Depot year number - ie it appears that the sheet number and year were printed simultaneously. On inspecting the other sheets with Depot marks, this consistency is also found, although the actual distance varies slightly for each year, and it thus appears that, for all the sheets found with Depot marks, the sheet number and Depot year mark may have been printed in the same operation. (This has been checked back and is found to be true of the Congo sheets with Depot marks). However the actual numerals of the two marks are totally different in shape and dimensions. Is there some other explanation?

This discovery is extremely interesting and it may be that the concept of the Depot marks requires revision, at least during this later period. Could these marks have been applied during the printing process, by the use of a more sophisticated numbering device than was originally used? In other words, the dates could be a guide to printings and a clear confirmation of some of the many print runs necessary of certain values.

Again, anomalies of the actual numbering sequence are to be found, sheet No. 266 appearing as Plate 2 for the 2,00 fr value, but as Plate 1 for the 3,25/2,00 fr, and Plate 1 of the 1,50 fr repeating as sheet Nos. 000331 and 000 332. It would be extremely interesting to find any sheets from which numbers have been omitted entirely

Other details of the sheet layout, Perforation Guide Crosses (except for (A)), Divider Marks, Plate Numbers, Gum Indicators, Printer's Imprints, Dimensions of Stamp, etc are similar to those for the Congo series, except that there is no Printer's Imprint on either plate of the 5 centimes, the sheets of 1,50 fr and 2,50 fr show only two perforation guide crosses, in the top right and bottom





left positions, and none of the sheets of the 3 later printed values have the "divider marks".

Considering the dimensions of the stamps, however, an interesting point throws some light on the effect of curving the plates, after rolling-in the impressions, to form semi-cylinders. Comparing the available die proofs with the printed stamps it can be seen that although the long sides of the design are almost precisely the same length, the short sides of the printed stamps are almost  $\frac{1}{2}$  mm longer than those on the die proofs. Thus, the operation of curving the plates must have added some 8-10 mm to their longer dimension.

#### Plate Varieties

As with the Congo series, there are numerous small scratches and other marks which could assist in the identification of some 10% of the individual stamps provided sheets are available to establish their positions. Of interest, however, are the following:-

	<u>Plate No.</u>	
60c	1	Nos 10, 25, 40, 55 and 70; slight vertical doubling of lower right foreground - ie one complete vertical row of stamps.
60c	2	No. 52                    slight vertical doubling of lower right foreground and feet of native porter.  No. 67                    slight vertical doubling of lower foreground and bottom frame panel.
10 fr	1	Final 2 mm at right of printer's imprint completely doubled above imprint.

There are, in addition, numerous partial doublings of the outside triple frame lines, notably at the short sides, on all values. It is easy to appreciate how this would occur during the rocking-in process with three heavy straight lines in such close proximity at the edge of each impression squeezing and distorting the metal of the plate. This is also evidence that the impression on the transfer roller lay lengthwise, although such additional evidence is hardly necessary - logic would assume this arrangement. While numerous these doublings are not of sufficient interest to be listed individually. The writer will be pleased to hear of any additional plate varieties discovered by others.

#### Perforation

The perforation appear to be the same in all respects as that of the Congo issue:-

Comb,  $11\frac{1}{2}$  running from right to left, with 111 pins in the base of the comb and 15 in each of the legs.

Again, there is a high proportion of poorly centred stamps.

Overprints

Four values of the series were surcharged with new values during the war. The necessary order was made by the Governor General and the stamps issued on 28 March 1941. The surcharges, all in black ink, were surface printed at the Government Printing Works at Usumburu and the issue is known as "Meulemans" from the name of the Usumburu head postmaster who requested the authorisation for the surcharges.

The values surcharged and numbers produced were:-

5/40c	12,000
60/50c	12,000
2,50/1,50 fr	18,000
3,25/2,00 fr	9,000

Clearly, from the blocks examined, the surcharging plates were at least 5 x 5, and, almost certainly, they were 15 x 5 or 5 x 15 - ie sufficiently large to overprint a complete sheet of 75 stamps at one impression.

Several surcharge varieties can be found, as follows:-

5/40c	"5c" varies between 22 mm and 23 mm above top bar. Vertical Alignment of "5", "C" and full stop varies. No. 14 lower bar $\frac{1}{2}$ mm shorter than top bar (more or less centred under it) No. 43 " " " " " " " " " No. 60 notch in outside curve near top of "C" No. 73 large full stop (Balasse 122 S1)
60/50c	Lower bar broken and misplaced (Balasse 123 S1) - not in block seen. No. 4 third "O" broken at base. No. 5 second "O" larger. No. 6 fourth "O" broken at top. No. 9 first "O" pinched at top. No. 16 fourth "O" pinched at top and broken at bottom. No. 17 fourth "O" broken at top left. No. 18 first "O" thin at lower left, second "6" broken at base. No. 21 bottom bar extends $\frac{1}{2}$ mm further to left than top bar. No. 23 first "O" broken at top and base.
2,50/1,50 fr	No. 53 second "O" broken at top. No. 54 second "5" broken at base. No. 55 first "2" broken at top. No. 63 second "O" broken at top. No. 70 break in diagonal of second "2". No. 71 shortened tail on second "5". No. 74 flat tail on second "5" (normally curved upwards).

3,25/2,00 fr	No. 1	second "5" broken at base.
	No. 16	break in diagonal of second "2".
	No. 21	bottom bar extends $\frac{1}{2}$ mm further to left than top bar.
	No. 22	top of curve of first "5" broken.

It must, however, be remembered that these "varieties" are not confirmed, with the exception of the large full stop on No. 73 of the 5/40c - ie they have been noted only on a single block of 25 stamps of each value. They may therefore not be constant. Any independent confirmation from other positioned pieces would be most welcome.

These surcharged stamps were demonetised on 1 September 1942 as were the unsurcharged stamps.

#### Postal Use

The information already given on the Congo series also covers the Ruanda-Urundi series, with the exception of the surcharged stamps. The 2,50/1,50 fr value presents no problem, as 2,50 fr was the basic letter rate, Internal, Belgian and African Postal Union at the time. The other three values require more careful consideration, as it can be assumed that, during war time in particular, there must have been a real requirement for stamps of these values.

5/40c with the change in the overseas printed matter rate to 50c in 1934, there would have been very little use for the 40c value. It was thus logical to use remaining stocks of this value for surcharging and a 5 centimes value would have been in constant demand for making up rates.

60/50c there is no single rate which 60c appears to meet; however, it was the combined internal air mail printed matter rate. It is possible that R-U exhausted any supply of 50c air mail stamps even earlier than the Congo and it must be remembered that only a year later the Congo authorities found it necessary to create an additional supply of 50c air mail stamps by surcharging the 1,50 fr value.

3,25/2,00 fr if additional supplies of any value were necessary, it was entirely logical to use up any remainders of the 2,00 fr value, which had not paid a main postal rate since 1933. The surprise is that a 3,25 fr value was considered necessary. One possibility is that this paid for registered printed matter (50c + 2,75 fr registration fee). It would be extremely helpful if any confirmation by way of covers could be found to establish this and the 60c rate. Needless to say, Meulemans stamps on commercial covers are not common, but the rates can be established even if these particular stamps are not in evidence on the cover.

One other possibility is that postal rates in Ruanda-Urundi differed in some respects from those in the Congo, but this is inconceivable and is, in any case, disproved by the general correspondence in the values of stamps issued by both countries.

On this occasion, thanks are due particularly to Messrs A Vindevoghel and E A Hirdler for their assistance in finding material for study purposes.

P S FODEN

References:- Balasse Catalogue, 1949  
Philatco Catalogue, 1946-47  
Catalogue des Essais de Timbre de Belgique et Congo Belge -  
W. Grubben  
SG Catalogue Overseas 4 - Second Edition

A CROSS-INDEX OF  
BELGIAN CONGO POSTAL STATIONERY  
CATALOG NUMBERS

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Catalogs:

Stibbe- Les Entiers Postaux Du Congo Et Du Ruanda-  
Urundi

H&G- Higgins & Gage Priced Catalogue of Postal  
Stationery of the World

Davo- Les Entier Postaux De Belgique, Congo Belge  
Et Luxembourg

Catalog numbers are listed and cross-indexed for all varieties listed or mentioned in the above three catalogs. Because this list is merely a cross-index and not a catalog, no description of the listed cards has been given. Due to the different nature of the three catalogs the cross-indexing of them was not a simple, straight forward task. It is quite likely that others would have approached certain aspects of this cross-index differently. Thus this cross-index represents the author's approach to this work and is admittedly far from perfect. It is hoped however that it will be found useful by others in this form.

Note: Underlined numbers under the Stibbe heading (6a, 6b, etc.) represents various types of usage of the cards as listed by Stibbe. An E indicates an essay except when underlined, (E) where it indicates an error. An S indicates a specimen card.

<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>	<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>
1	1	1	3E8		3Ef
1E		1E			3Eb
1S					3Ed
2	2	2	3S		3S
2E		2E	4	4	4
3	3	3	<u>4a</u>	4	4
3a	*	3C	<u>4b</u>	4	4
3b	*	3C	4Ia		4VaI
3c			4Ib		4VbI
3E1		3Ea	4IIa		4VaI
3E2		3Ec	4IIb		4VbI
3E3			4IIIa		4VaII
3E4		3S	4IIIb		4VbII
3E5		3Ee	4E1		4E
3E6		3S	4E2		4E
3E7		3Eg	4S		

<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>	<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>
5	5	5	10	10	10
5a		5Va	<u>10a</u>	10	10
5b		5vb	<u>10b</u>	10	10
5E1		5E			10VIIIa
5E2		5E	10I		10VIIIb
5S			10II		10VIa
6	6	6			10VIb
<u>6a</u>	6	6			10VIc
<u>6b</u>	6	6	10III		10VIIa
<u>6c</u>	6	6	10S		10S
<u>6d</u>	6	6	11	11	11
<u>6e</u>	6	6	11I		11Va
<u>6f</u>	6	6	11II		11Va
6I		6Va/6Vb	11III		11Vb
6II		6Va	11S		
6III		6Va	12	12	12
6S			<u>12a</u>	12	12
7	7	7	<u>12b</u>	12	12
<u>7a</u>	7	7	<u>12c</u>	12	12
<u>7b</u>	7	7	<u>12d</u>	12	12
<u>7c</u>	7	7	<u>12e</u>	12	12
<u>7d</u>	7	7	<u>12f</u>	12	12
<u>7e</u>	7	7	12S		
7I		7Va/7Vb	<u>12E</u>	14	<u>12E</u>
7II		7Va	13	13	13
7III		7Va	<u>13a</u>	13	13
7S			<u>13b</u>	13	13
8	8	8	<u>13c</u>	13	13
<u>8a</u>	8	8	<u>13d</u>	13	13
<u>8b</u>	8	8	<u>13e</u>	13	13
8a		8Va	13S		
8b		8Vb	<u>13E</u>	15	<u>13E</u>
9	9	9	14	16	14
9a		9Va	<u>14a</u>	16	14
9b		9Vb	<u>14b</u>	16	14

<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>	<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>
14S					
15	17	15	21T	24	21T
15A			21TA		
15B			21TB		
15C			21TC		
15S			21P		21P
16	18	16	21TS		
<u>16a</u>	18	16	22	25	22
<u>16b</u>	18	16	22L	25	22L
<u>16c</u>	18	16	23	27	23
<u>16d</u>	18	16	23L	27a	23L
<u>16e</u>	18	16	23T	27	23T
<u>16f</u>	18	16	23P		23P
<u>16g</u>	18	16	23TS		
17	19	17	24	23	24
<u>17a</u>	19	17	24L	23a	24L
<u>17b</u>	19	17	24LA		
<u>17c</u>	19	17	24LB		
<u>17d</u>	19	17	24LC		
17S			24T	23	24T
18	20	18	24TA		
<u>18a</u>	20	18	24TB		
<u>18b</u>	20	18	24TC		
18A			24P		24P
18B			24TS		
18C			25	26	25
19	21	19	25L	26a	25L
<u>19a</u>	21	19	25T	26	25T
20	22	20	25P		25P
20L	22	20L	26	28	26
21	24	21	27	29	27
21L	24a	21L	28	29B	28
21LA			29	29A	29
21LB			29L		29LL
21LC			29La		

<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>	<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>
29T		29LT	33TS		
29P		29P	34	34	34
29E			34L		34L
30	30	30	34LA		
30L		30LL	34LB		
31	31	31	34T		34T
31L	31a		34LS		
31LL		31LL	35	35	35
31LLA			35L		35L
31LLB			35La		
31LT		31LT	35T		35T
31LTA			35LS		
31LTB			36	36	36
31P		31P	36S		
31PB		31P	37	37	37
31TT		31TT	37S		
31TE			38	38	38
31TTS			38a	38a	38a
32	32	32	38S		
32L	32a	32LL	39	40	39
32LA			40	39	40
32LB			40a	39a	40a
32T	32		40S		
32TBB			41	41	41
32TCA		32LT	41a	41a	41a
32TCB		32LT/32TT	41b	41b	41b
32P		32P	42	43	42
32PB			42E		
32E			43	44	43
33	33	33	43E		
33LL	33a	33L	44	45	44
33LLa			45	46	45
33LT		33LT	45a	46a	45a
33P		33P	46	47	46
33TT	33	33TT	47	48	47
33E			48	49	48



<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>	<u>Stibbe</u>	<u>H&amp;G</u>	<u>Davo</u>
48a	50	48a	78	81	78
49	52	49	79	82	79
	52a	49a	80	83	80
50	51	50	81	84	
51	53	51	82	85	
51a	53a	51a	83	86	
52	54	52	84	87	
53	55	53	85	88	
54	56	54	86	89	
55	57	55			
56	58	56		Letter Card	
56a	58a	56a	1	1	
57	59	57			
57a	59a	57a		Aerogrammes	
58	60	58	1	1	
59	61	59	2	2	
60	62	60	3	3	
61	63	61			
62	64	62			
	65				
63	66	63			
64	67	64			
65	68	65			
66	69	66			
66a		66a			
67	70	67			
68	71	68			
69	72	69			
70	73	70			
71	74	71			
72	75	72			
73	76	73			
74	77	74			
75	78	75			
76	79	76			
77	80	77			

RONALD E. STRAWSER

## The "Mission Gatti" Covers

by

Regis Hoffman

A curious cancel reading "Mission Gatti" is occasionally found on Belgian Congo covers of the late 1930's (Figure 2). This article explores the origin of this mark and presents some historical background.

The "Mission Gatti" was a scientific expedition through the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi during 1938 and 1939 (see Figure 1). It was headed by Commander Attilio Gatti, a World War I Italian cavalry officer. This was Gatti's tenth African expedition, and was partly a scientific endeavour, and partly a public relations and media event, with expedition films, pictures, and magazine articles. A quote from one of Gatti's articles sets the tone of this trip<sup>1</sup>:

"Our trek into the equatorial jungle began where Stanley stopped, halted by impassable Stanley Falls. Instead of poisoned arrows, we were met at Stanleyville by welcoming cries of natives, jubilant at the prospect of earning a few francs by unloading our seven vehicles and 15 tons of supplies.

Air-conditioned, electrified 'jungle yachts', comfortable steel trailers housing our expedition and its radio station, photographic laboratory and workshop, were to carry us into a wilderness impenetrable a half century ago.

Before the dark curtain of Africa drops on us, come join the party in fancy. The Tenth Gatti Expedition needs one more member. Adventure, thrills, danger will be your lot, along with unique landscapes, pestiferous insects, the scorching equatorial sun and tropical hurricanes. And don't forget, plenty of work. We must shoot educational movies, capture weird animals; investigate ancient secret societies like the Baboon-Men; learn about the Mangbettus who deform their heads like pears; the copper-colored pygmies who barely reach your belt buckle; Giant Watusi princes who look down on you from eight feet of height and with graceful ease jump a couple of feet higher than your head"

Philatelically, interesting souvenir covers were prepared (Figures 2, 3, 4). They bear a circular date stamp inscribed "Mission Gatti - Congo Belge". One cover I have additionally has a cachet reading (Figure 3):

**Certified Sent from the Base Camp  
of the Tenth Gatti African Expedition  
in the Equatorial Forest**

(Note the mis-spelling of the word "Equatorial"). The cover in Figure 3 also has been autographed by Gatti. Although philatelic in nature, the covers in Figures 3 and 4 did pass through the post office.

To answer the question of why these covers were issued, one should also examine the record of a subsequent Gatti expedition to East Africa in 1948<sup>2</sup>. This voyage was sponsored by the Hallicrafters Company of Chicago (USA), a manufacturer of radio equipment. To promote the strides in science and technology Hallicrafters was making, the company produced commemorative covers (Figure 5) which were sent to their distributors (the recipient of this cover, Cameradio, was a local electronics firm). I suspect that Gatti employed similar public relations techniques for the Congo expedition. The cover in Figure 2 has a return address of Ziff-Davis, a major magazine publisher. The other two Congo covers are addressed to sales or advertising departments of New York companies. Perhaps the contents of these envelopes reported the progress of the expedition.

It is not known how many covers were produced during the course of the expedition. I suspect that few of these covers survive, as these were distributed mainly to companies, and not produced exclusively for philatelists (this applies to both the tenth and eleventh expeditions). I know of five covers from the tenth expedition, and three from the eleventh. All the covers known were dispatched from the Belgian Congo - none are known sent from Ruanda-Urundi. Perhaps other members can provide additional examples or information.

## Bibliography

1. Attilio Gatti, "Trailer Blazing Through the African Jungles",  
*Popular Mechanics*, June 1941, pp.34-40.

2. "Science on Safari",  
*Science Illustrated*, February 1947, pp. 15-19.

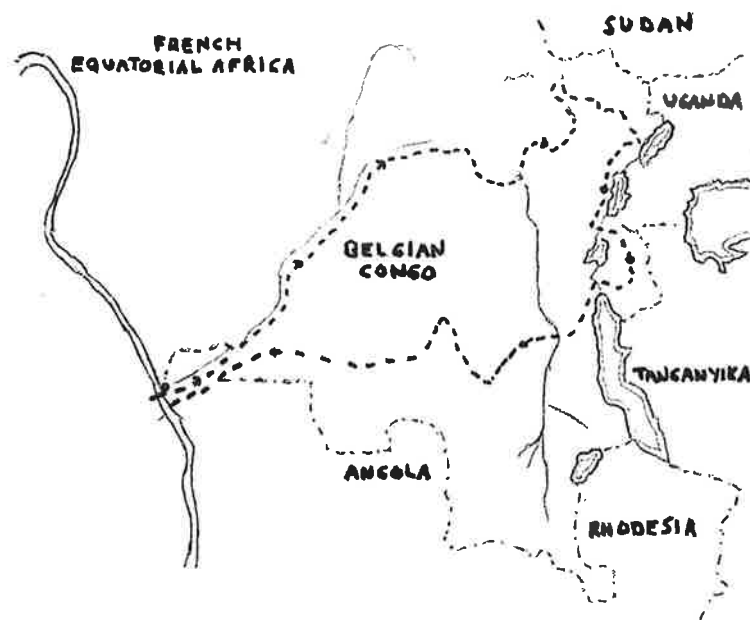


Figure 1: Route Taken by the Expedition

**ZIFF - DAVIS**  
 PUBLISHING  
 COMPANY

608 S. DEARBORN STREET  
 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



Mr. Simone Combes  
 150 - 19 - 17 Road  
 Whitestone, N.Y.  
 U.S.A.

Figure 2: Philatelic Gatti Cover



Figure 3: Cacheted Gatti Cover

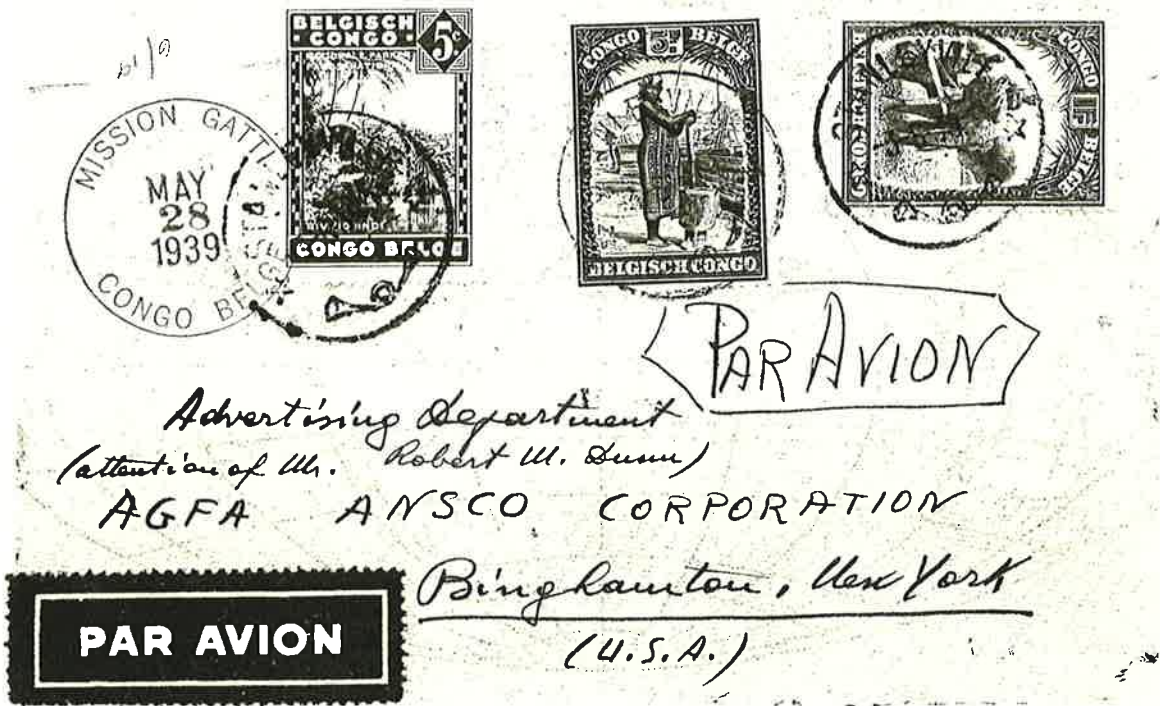


Figure 4: Commercially Used Cover

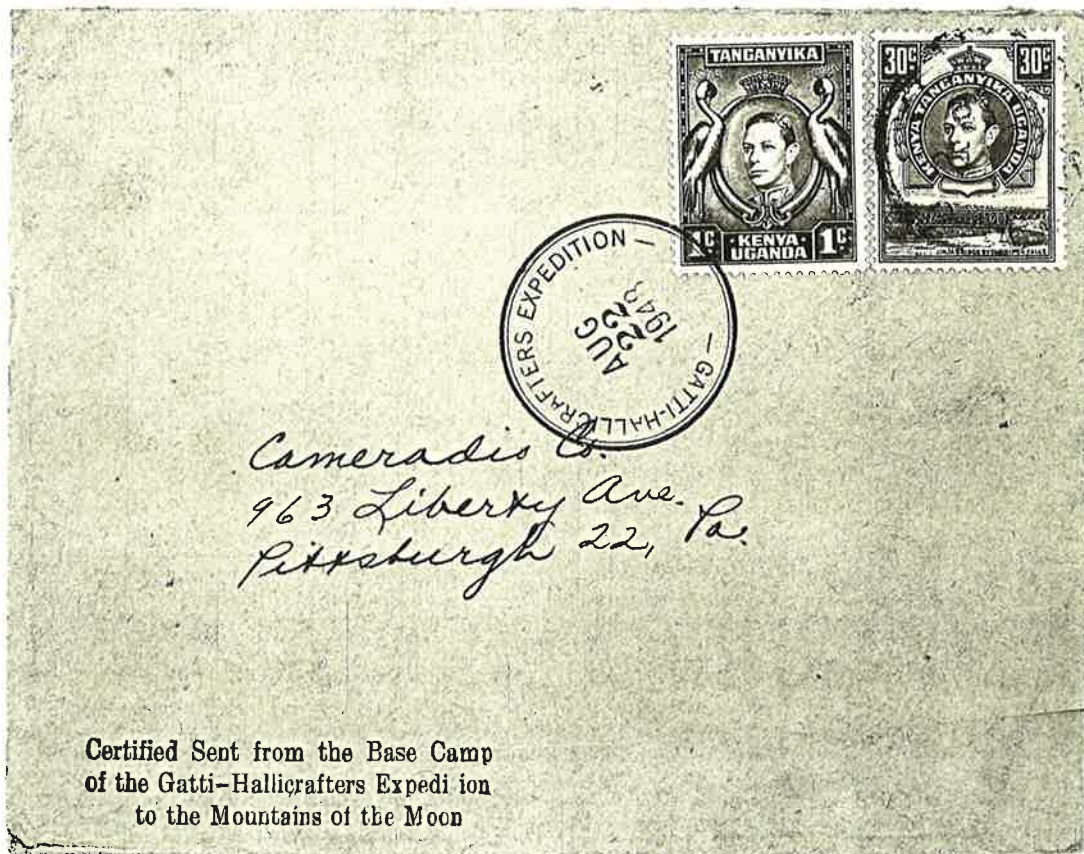
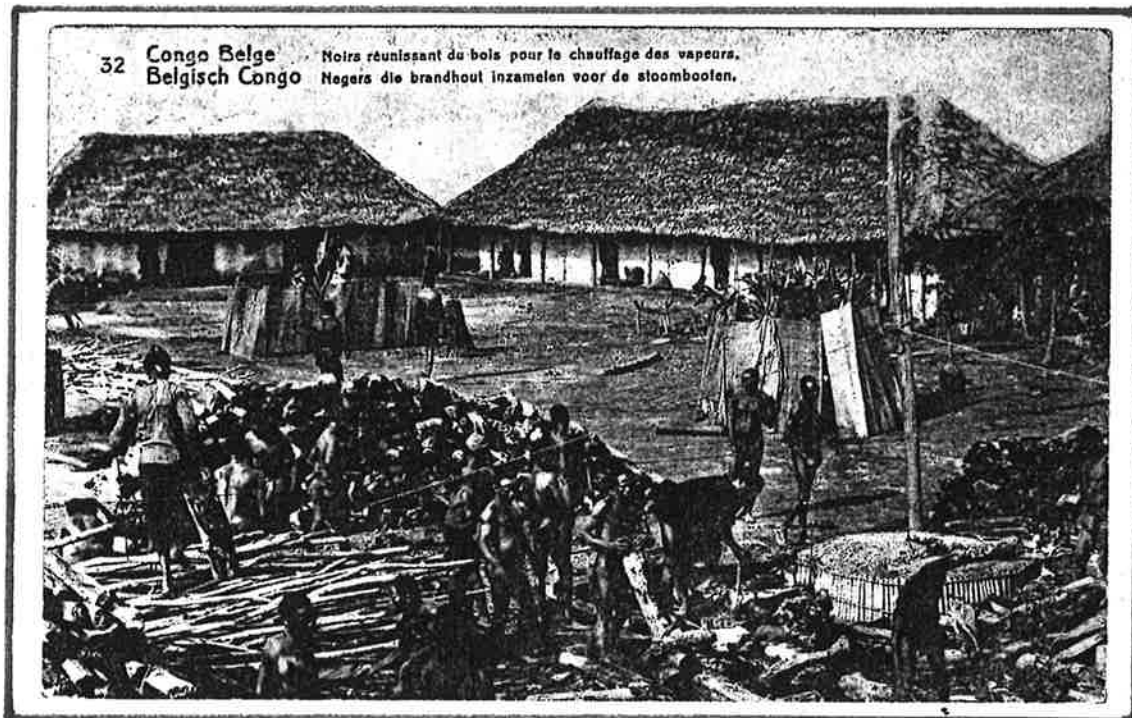
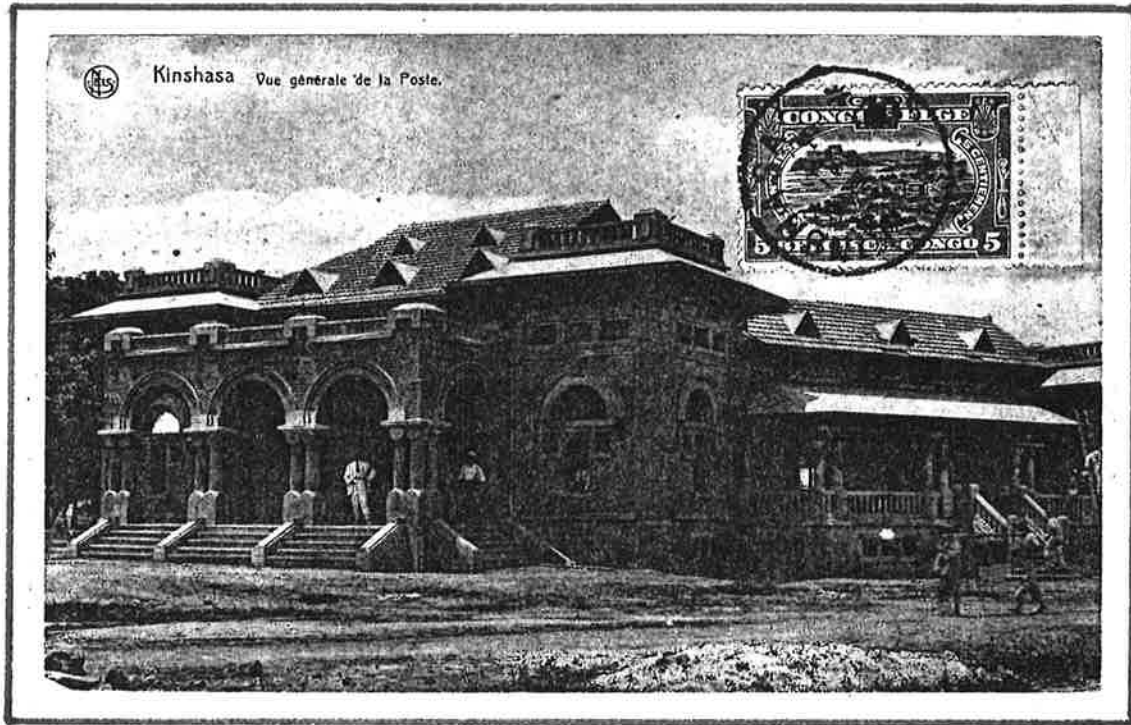


Figure 5: 11th Gatti Expedition Cover

## THIS OLD HOUSE IN THE CONGO



FROM THE COLLECTION OF HILDE JEIDEL