

BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

Secretary:

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

Bulletin Editor:

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

BULLETIN NO. 74

DECEMBER 1989

President: Mr. S. S. Smith
87 Park Road, Buxton,
Derbyshire SK17 6SN, 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.

CONTENTS

PAGES

News and Views	2
The Vice-Presidential Column	3 - 4
Covers from the Harry A. Eisenstein Collection	5 - 7
POSTAL HISTORY 1990	7
Important Dates for your Diary	8 - 9
Registered Wrapper from Dr. Paul J. Phillips Collection	10
The 'Malines Surcharges'	11 - 18
BELGICA 1990	18
Booklet Pane Stamps	19

Postal Auction Sale 1990 (1) - Postal History (3) Lots 1 through 336
with Notes regarding this sale.

NEWS AND VIEWSNEW MEMBERS

Our Secretary reports just one new member: F. E. A. Van der Haegen, Izegem, Belgium (an airmail specialist). Welcome to our Study Circle.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Almost a year ago Arthur Heim gave up his box number, but he is still having difficulties getting his mail. His correct address is:

Arthur I. Heim
24C Rosilia Lane
Fishkill, N.Y. 12524
U. S. A.

Please omit any reference to any post office box number.

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

With this issue we have two new contributors. Mr. Harry A. Eisenstein has very kindly sent your Editor photocopies of some most interesting covers from his collection. Included are covers with dual censorship, mixed franking and a beauty of a cover with two of the 100F Palms Issue affixed. Dr. Paul J. Phillips has sent in a photocopy of an early registered wrapper and poses a question to our Study Circle. Hopefully he will receive some interesting information on this gem.

DUES

Just a reminder - in case you haven't remitted your dues, please do so now. It will save on the efforts to send out individual reminder notices.

BCSC ANNUAL COMPETITION

22 January 1990 is not far off and that is the deadline for the Third Annual Competition, as outlined in the September, 1989 Bulletin No. 73. The rules remain very much the same governing the first two events. This time the subject matter is restricted to stamps (not covers etc unless there is a very strong reason for the occasional exception) from post-1923 issues.

Three photocopies of 12 pages each should be sent to Competition Secretary Norman Clowes, 20, Ogwen Drive, Lakeside, Cardiff CF2 6LL, Great Britain. We have had a fair response on the first two competitions, so let us all make an effort for a large number of entries. We are hopeful to have the results for the March 1990 Bulletin.

THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL COLUMN15c EAAOB IV1+C1

In Bulletin No. 67 we reported the discovery of the 1915 15c, with EST AFRICAINE overprint, in the new combination of plates IV1 + C1, without frame plate lay marks.

Mr. D. Van der Hauwaert has reported another sheet of IV1 + C1, again with EAAOB overprint but from a late overprinting with the very damaged L of BELGE on overprint No. 39 (stamp No. 18). The dozen sheets of IV1 + C1 I inspected were all from the early overprinting of L2 without the damaged letter.

1910 5F with Partly Doubled Perforation

Whereas Mols stamps with missing lines of perforation individually are rare, overall they are plentiful. Stamps with double perforations, except for the 1898 10F perf. 14, however, appear to me to be very rare and, except for double perforation in the selvedge, I have only one example, a pair of the 15c with local CONGO BELGE overprint with the centre perforation very clearly doubled.

A used copy of the 1910 5F has come my way with a curiously doubled perforation, as shown in the photocopy (view of the back of the stamp). Three adjacent perforation holes are doubled, then a gap and then, for a distance, alternate holes are doubled. The full line of perforation is well centered between the stamps and the part-line lies in the frame of the stamp. Examined closely, the face of the stamp shows blind perforations (circles made by the perforating pins that have not cut through the paper) extending the incomplete perforation.



How could this have happened? I suspect that the perforating machine operator stopped the machine when she (presumed) realized that the line of perforation would not be between the rows of stamps, but not soon enough. Some pins must have been longer than others and the longer pins had already perforated the sheets.

It would have been interesting to see the full sheet before it was broken up and sold by the Boma post office.

30c/10c EAAOB

This appears to be little difference in scarcity between the L1 and L2 EST AFRICAINE overprints on the 10c value but I had come to the conclusion that only L2 overprinted sheets received the 30c surcharge. Not so; I have recently found a surcharged copy with the L1 overprint and I suspect it to be uncommon and worth seeking.

R. H. Keach

CHARLES V. SPURGEON

It is with great regret that we have to record the death of Charles Spurgeon after a most miserable year undergoing treatment for cancer. He was, I think, 52 years old.

Not particularly interested in the stamps, Charles was a keen student of the postal history of the Belgian Congo and of the Dutch East Indies and he had very good collections of both countries.

Charles was a man of many talents. He ran an, apparently very successful, advertising agency; he was very knowledgeable in antique furniture and, with his wife, ran an antique shop in Tunbridge Wells; he was a very competent amateur artist producing what appeared to me very attractive pictures in both water colour and oils; he was a keen cricketer, for some years captain of the local team, and, although taking up the sport rather late in life, had a single-figure handicap at golf.

He and his wife kindly entertained us for BCSC meetings at their home on several occasions. We shall greatly miss him.

I wrote to his widow expressing our sympathy in her sad loss.

R. H. Keach

SALES DEPARTMENT

A member has sent me for sale his very large number of 1894-1922 Mols stamps. All who already reconstruct sheets of the stamps have been supplied with the positions that they needed but there still remain a large number of the commoner stamps. This is a golden opportunity for any other member who thinks that he might like to embark on some plate reconstruction. There are a relatively large number of the 1910 10, plates III+C1, and 25c II1+A3 and II1+A4, and the owner has agreed that these values may be sold as positioned copies at 1/5 Catalogue Officiel price instead of the usual 1/3.

Available at the moment are complete sheets of: 1910 10c, plates III3+C2, @ £ 12; 1910 15c III2+B1 @ £ 11; 1918 Red Cross 5c @ £ 3; 1922 5c/50c, matt surcharge, @ £ 8; 1916 EAAOB 5F, II1+A3 overprint L1, @ £ 18; 1918 A.O. 5c @ £ 2 and 1922 EAAOB 10c/5c, V3+#3 overprint L2, @ £ 5.50.

There is also quite a number of 1915 booklet panes at varying prices and details will be sent on request. Members who collect these panes and have sent me their wants lists have already been considered.

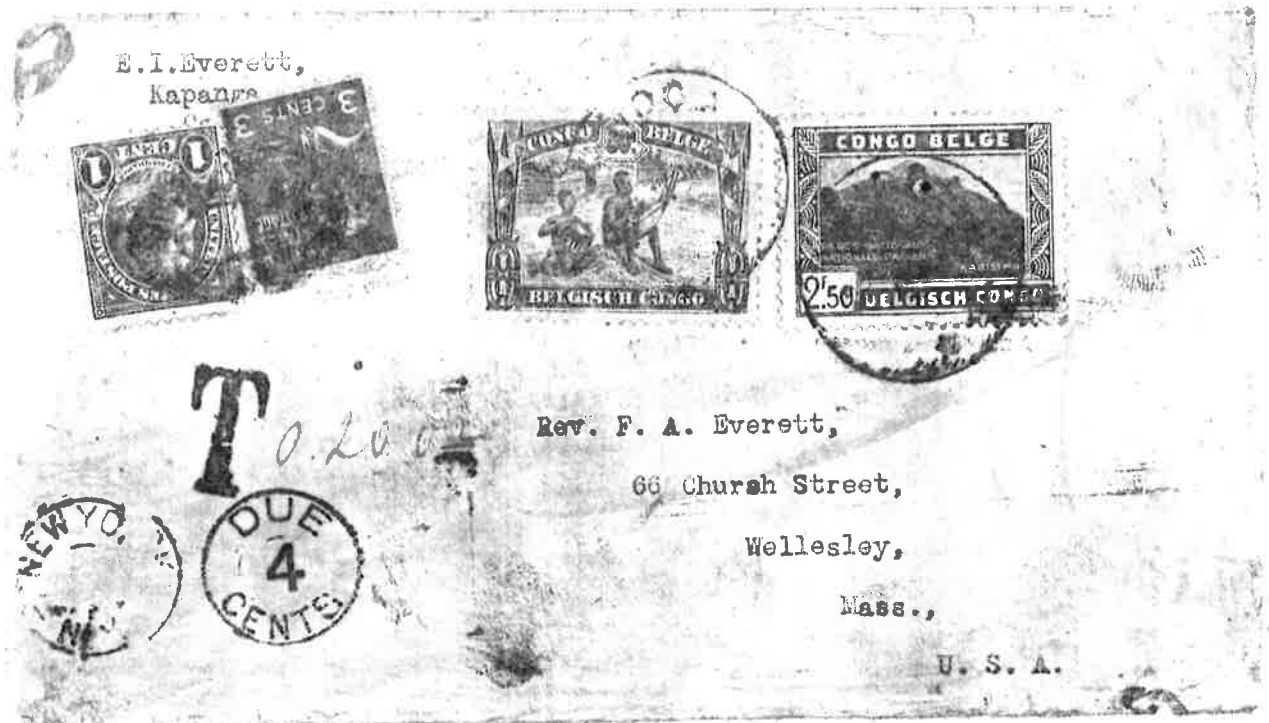
Postage is extra to the above prices.

R. H. Keach

Dual Censorship by Congo and Gold Coast on letter from Leopoldville to England.



Mixed franking - Congo stamps with U.S. stamps to cover postage due.



From the collection of Harry A. Eisenstein.

BELGIAN CONGO

JANUARY 1, 1943. PICTORIAL ISSUE INSCRIBED "BELGISCH CONGO BELGE"
ENGRAVED BY WATERLOW & SONS. PERFORATION 12½.



USED ON COVER.



ÉCRIT EN FRANÇAIS

PAR AVION

Pli n°6.



Monsieur Raymond NACCACHE

6, rue d'Alger, 6

TUNIS.

Tunisie.

Art. HOFMANS
B. P. 235
LEOPOLDVILLE.
(Congo Belge)

R

N° 855
LEOPOLDVILLE

CONGO BELGE

CONGO BELGE



From the collection of Harry A. Eisenstein.

POSTAL HISTORY 1990

For those of you planning to attend the International, this may be of interest to you. We quote from a letter sent to our Secretary: "The postal history Exhibition originally planned for 2-7 May 1990 at Central Hall, Westminster, WILL BE HELD. This is in addition to the Interpostal Exhibition which will take place on 30th April - 1st May.

"As you are no doubt aware Sunday 6th May is the actual anniversary of the first adhesive postage stamp and in order to fittingly commemorate the occasion we are also organising THE PHILATELIC EVENT OF THE CENTURY, namely a congress for eminent philatelists and dealers to be held at the adjoining Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in Parliament Square."

More precise details as to time, cost etc. will be circulated when available. For those interested, they may contact Mrs. J. M. Young, Kirby House, Foxhunt Green, Waldron, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 0RU. Tel: 043 53 3257.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Two of next year's dates have already been set.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In Central London, on 5 May, 1990, the first Saturday of the Stampworld London 1990 International. It is hoped that several of our overseas members will be able to attend and, after the business meeting, which will be kept as short as possible, all those attending are asked to bring a small display, say up to 24 pages, of their own choice. Please let the Secretary know if you hope to attend, so that you can be advised of all detailed arrangements.

JOINT WEEKEND MEETING WITH BELGIAN STUDY CIRCLE

To be held in Buxton, Derbyshire, over 15/16 September, 1990. The full programme has not yet been determined, but will include the display of airmail material by Mr. N. Clowes which, planned for our meeting on 21 October, 1989, did not occur. Again, members who are interested in this meeting are requested to advise the Secretary as soon as possible, so that they can be advised of the detailed arrangements.

RECORD OF RECENT MEETINGS

Six of our members attended the recent joint weekend meeting with the Belgian Study Circle in Leamington Spa. The joint afternoon session consisted of inter-war postal history between Belgium and the Congo. As has come to be the norm at joint meetings (as Congo collectors are more likely to have relevant material - i.e. covers sent to the home country) the major displays were provided by our members, Messrs. R. H. Keach and P. S. Foden. In our own specialist sessions, we were treated to a most comprehensive display of the 1909 "CONGO BELGE" overprints by Mr. L. G. Green, an expert's view of the 1922 "Malines" surcharges by Mr. R. H. Keach, a fresh look at the Balasse plate varieties on the Mols issues by Mr. P. S. Foden, and a session of postal history highways and byways by all present. The entire weekend was greatly entertaining and improved by the excellent venue, for the arrangement of which we are most grateful to Mr. S. J. Andrews of the Belgian Study Circle.

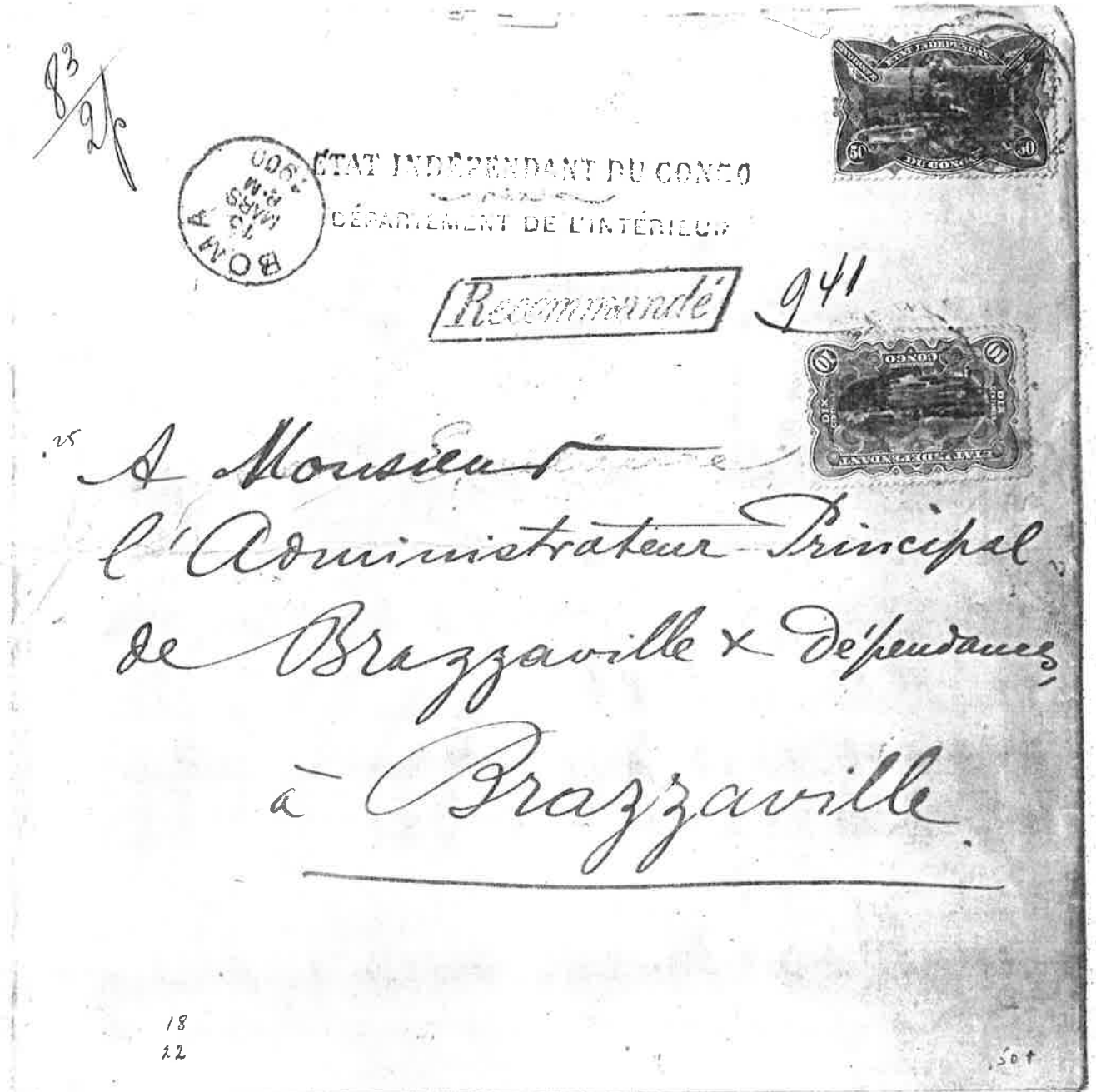
Unfortunately, the meeting planned for 21 October in Whittlesford had to be cancelled - only the second time in the Study Circle's history that this has happened. Three of the arranged attendees had to cancel at short notice. On top of that Mr. Clowes, who had been due to provide the display, had had an accident to his leg and was prevented from attending and, although back-up arrangements were in place for the

display, the meeting was cancelled in view of the fact that only 3 members would have been present.

THE SECRETARY REGRETS.....

At least some members must be aware that the secretarial service of late is not quite up to my normal standards. This is for a variety of reasons, of which the main one is that I still have a full-time job which, occasionally at any rate, has to take precedence - indeed since September this year I have been away from home for roughly 2 weeks in every 3 and this situation will continue. At some point next year, probably around May, my job will be moving to Edinburgh and, not surprisingly, so shall I and my family. In the meantime, I shall have all the additional trauma of house moves, recruiting large numbers of staff, getting them trained, co-ordinating a smooth transfer of functions, etc. Please believe I am not seeking sympathy for this, I am simply explaining why, for some time both past and to come, members are not going to receive what I consider to be a proper level and speed of service, and I apologise profusely for this.

It has already manifested in the lateness of the distribution of the September 1989 Bulletin (which was partly caused by my being away for several successive weeks) and the resultant postponement of the final date for the current auction (TO 9 DECEMBER, 1989). I shall continue to deal with everything as and when I can, but I hope you will all be understanding and patient with me if there are delays in responding to correspondence and requests for photocopies, etc. It is, we hope, a temporary problem which should resolve itself at the Annual General Meeting next May.



Shown is a registered wrapper sent from Boma (cds 13 March 1900) via Leopoldville (cds 20 March 1900) to Brazzaville (arrival date unknown). It shows a stamp of the Etat Independant du Congo, Departement de L'Interieur. Is there any information available on this stamp? Is it unique or were other departments issued with similar marks? Information from collectors would be greatly appreciated.

Dr. Paul J. Phillips
505 Deep Hollow Lane,
Knoxville, TN 37923
U. S. A.

THE 'MALINES SURCHARGES'

These comprise five values of the 1915 issue and the same five values with EST AFRICAIN overprint, surcharged with new values in 1922.

Although traditionally called 'Malines surcharges', implying that the surcharges were applied at the Belgian Government Printing Works at Malines, this is almost certainly a misleading description because there is ample evidence that the surcharges were applied by Waterlow & Sons. A note has been found in a contemporary philatelic journal that the sheets were sent to London for surcharging, and not to Brussels. More convincing is that some sheets of each of the five Congo values (together with the unsurcharged 1915 15c) were broken up into blocks of 10, retaining only the left selvedge (top selvedge for the 15c), and were bound by stapling of the selvedge into rather crude booklets. The cover bears the same 'Waterlow & Sons Limited, Londres, Angleterre'. It is therefore certain that Waterlow prepared the booklets and it is inconceivable that the surcharges were applied at Malines and some of the sheets then sent to London for making up into booklets; almost any Belgian printer would have been competent to prepare the booklets.

At the time the surcharging was justified. On 1 March 1921 postal rates had been increased, overseas printed matter from 5c to 10c, overseas post card from 10c to 30c and overseas letter from 25c to 50c. The recommended U.P.U. colours of stamps for these three important rates were green, red and blue respectively and the Congo wished to abide by this recommendation. There were very substantial stocks of the 1915 stamps and it was thought proper to surcharge the 5c (green) with 10c, the 10c (red) with 30c and the 25c (blue) with 50c. That left the old 50c brown stamp superfluous and there was the need of a 5c stamp for making-up odd values and rates so the 50c was surcharged 5c. The 1915 40c had primarily been needed for registered letters used internally and to Belgium but after the increase in postal rates there was no specific use for the value; the 25c blue stamps had been surcharged and there was still the need for a 25c stamp for letters, internally and to Belgium; the 40c brown stamps were therefore surcharged 25c and all needs were met.

What follows is, in effect, the description of a display of the Malines issue presented to the Study Circle at the September 1989 meeting.

5 CENTIMES

The surcharge is found in both matt and shiny ink on both the Congo and EAAOB ('EST AFRICAIN') values and it is easy enough to distinguish the two inks by shining a light on them so that, if shiny, the light is reflected.

The 1915 50c stamps exists in two combinations of plates III3+A5 (with no shading of the smoke from the locomotive chimney) and III3+B (with the smoke shaded and with a 'sunrise' effect behind the mountain), the former being the scarcer but by no means uncommon. Normal Congo 'Malines' stamps are from plates III3+B but III3+A5 exists and is one of the really rare stamps of the Congo, all known copies probably attributable to a single sheet and only known unused. A single

and a block of four were shown. The stamps from plates III3+B are found in varying shades, notably purple-brown and red-brown and this is reflected in the surcharged stamps. Although perforation 14 is much more common, the 1915 50c is found also perforated 15 and this for both III3+A5 and III3+B and not uncommonly so. With the surcharged stamps there is a very different story. The Balasse Catalogue lists the 5c/50c III3+B perforated 15 but General Du Four, in his book, indicated that he had never seen this variety, and nor presumably had his many Congo collecting friends. Shown is an unused example which is thought to be genuine; it has a shiny surcharge.

Of the 1915 50c stamps only those from plates III3+B received the EAAOB overprint but that in both purple-brown and red-brown. Perforation 15 is not recorded and presumably unknown. Several of the many different EAAOB overprinting plates were used on the value; the short (S) and two of the long (LIT and L2) are recorded. All three overprints could legitimately have received the 5c surcharge but to date only L2 has been recorded; it is unlikely that the short overprint S exists with surcharge but LIT is worth seeking because it may well exist and would probably be a rarity. The surcharged stamp is listed in the Balasse Catalogue perforated 15. General Du Four never saw a copy and the possibility of its existence is remote, particularly as the stamp without surcharge is not known to exist perf. 15. If a genuine copy is found it will be a treasure.

Curiosities

The Congo stamp exists in horizontal pair imperf.-between (my recollection of the copy from the Joseph Knight collection that I saw many years ago is that it was a pair imperforate vertically so that there were at least three adjacent vertical lines of perforation omitted).

The surcharge exists inverted on both Congo and EAAOB stamps. Shown were Congo with shiny surcharge unused, used and used on a travelling cover; Congo with matt surcharge, unused; EAAOB with shiny surcharge unused.

Several examples of the Congo stamp with double surcharge were shown. One, with a faint oblique second surcharge is probably an offset or double-offset resulting from one sheet having been placed on top of another before the ink had dried. Others cannot be explained in that way. There was a vertical pair (rows 2 and 3, matt surcharge) with an additional row of surcharge at the top of the lower stamp and cutting the perforations. Also a vertical pair (rows 9 and 10, shiny surcharge) with the upper stamp strongly and clearly doubled. Also a block of four (rows 9 and 10, shiny surcharge) with the two upper stamps strongly and clearly doubled. It is doubtful if the second pair and the block of four are from the same sheet.

An interesting piece was a block comprising the bottom four rows of a sheet with shiny surcharge with the top two rows normal and with the bottom two rows having the surcharge very decidedly oblique.

Also shown was a block of four and a block of six making a reconstructed block of ten which comes from a proof sheet on which the printer has drawn lines to show faults in the lay (relative positions of the components) of the surcharge.

Such printer's markings are common enough on Waterlow's proof sheets of bi-coloured stamps.

Also shown were minor curiosities of the Congo stamp, smudged ink of the surcharge and extraneous blotches of surcharging ink.

10 CENTIMES

The surcharge is in a fairly constant shade of vermilion but there is some minor variation.

The 1915 5c stamp was printed from several combinations of plates, V1+E1, V2+E2, V3+E3, V3+F (all sheets receiving the EST AFRICAINE overprint) and VI+F, and, of course, from the booklet plates but no stamps from booklet panes legitimately received the Malines surcharge. Moreover the stamps from V3+E 3 were printed with both green (relatively uncommon) and blue-green frames. Perforations 13½, 14 and 15 exist but not for all combinations of plates. It is not simple to differentiate V1+E1 and V2+E2 in some positions but hopefully shown of the surcharged Congo stamps were V1+E1 (perf. 15), V2+E2 (perf. 14), V3+E3, green (perf. 14), V3+E3, blue-green (perf. 14 and 15) and VI+F (perf. 13½, 14 and 15).

Of the 1915 5c, stamps from combinations V2+E2, V3+E3 (green frames) and V3+F received the EAAOB overprint; V1+E1 is possible but has not, as far as I know, been confirmed. Of the many different EAAOB overprints the 5c value received the short (S) and several of the long (L1Gm K1(o), L2 and L2') but probably each on only one combination of plates. The overprint is also found in violet instead of the normal blue (exclusive to 5c value). The use of overprint L2' was restricted to the 5c value. Some of these variations are reflected in the surcharged stamps. Shown were V3+E3, green frames, with L2 overprint (perf. 14 and 15) and V3+F with L2' overprint (Perf. 14 and 15) and it is not known if others exist.

Curiosities

Of the Congo stamp two used copies with imperforate bottom margin were shown, these coming from plates V3+E3, blue-green, and some difference in the shade of the surcharge suggests that they may come from different sheets. Also shown was an unused copy from plates VI+F with imperforate right margin.

A copy from plates V3+E3, blue green, with double surcharge, used was shown.

25 CENTIMES

The surcharge was in two very different inks, vermilion and carmine but the vermilion varies in shade and one can reasonably say that the colours are vermilion, red, and carmine.

The 1915 40c stamp was printed from two combinations of plates, II+A2 (with the white dot in the prow of the canoe) and II+A3 (with the dot removed by retouching of the die). It was perforated 13½ (only II+A2), 14 and 15.

The usual 25c/40c Congo Malines stamps are from plates II+A3 and II+A2 is unusual but not rare. Shown were copies of II+A2 with vermilion surcharge per-

forated 13½ and 14, II+A2 with carmine surcharge perforated 14 and 15, II+A3 with vermilion surcharge perforated 14 and 15, II+A3 with red surcharge perforated 14 and 15 and II+A3 with carmine surcharge perforated 14 and 15.

The EAAOB overprint was applied only to stamps from the combination of plates II+A3 and of the overprints there are known only L1 (several minor varieties of it but not the major different overprints L1T, L1G and L2I) and L2. Both are found in the Malines surcharges. For this stamp only vermilion and carmine and not red surcharges appear to exist. Shown were copies with overprint L1 and vermilion surcharge perforated 14, with overprint L1 and carmine surcharge perforated 14, with overprint L2 and vermilion surcharge perforated 14 and with overprint L2 and carmine surcharge perforated 14 and 15. Other combinations of overprint and surcharge may also exist perforated 15.

Curiosities

The congo stamp was shown with double vermilion surcharge also a curious example where it is clear that the surcharge had been doubled and an effort had been made to erase the one surcharge; it is impossible to believe that the erasure can have been done by anyone other than Waterlow. Also shown was a used example with imperforate right margin.

The EAAOB stamp was shown in a vertical pair imperforate horizontally. There must have been a sheet with several rows of horizontal perforation omitted, maybe completely imperforate horizontally because this particular curiosity is not rare.

30 CENTIMES

The 1915 10c stamp exists in plate combinations V1+D2, V2+D2, V2+D3 and V2+E and it was perforated 13½ (only from plates V2+E), 14 and 15. V2+D2 differs from V1+D2 only by the addition of lay marks visible on only a few positions in the sheet.

Unlike the 5c, the 30c surcharge is always in shiny black ink.

The Congo stamp was shown from plates V2+D2 perforated 14 and 15, V2+D3 perforated 14 and 15 and V2+E perforated 13½, 14 and 15. Surcharged stamps from plates V1+D2 may exist but have not been identified as such.

The EAAOB overprint was applied only to sheets of the 10c from plates V2+D2 and of the different overprints the short (S) is excessively rare on this value but L1(o) and L2 are common enough; L1G, L1T and L1I are not known. With the 30c surcharge the L2 overprint is normal, L1(o) rare and S almost certainly non-existent. Shown were examples with L1(o) overprint perforated 14 and with L2 overprint perforated 14 and 15.

Curiosities

Double surcharges on this Congo value appear to be relatively common and two singles and a horizontal pair, V2+E were shown. Of more interest was a block of four, V2+E, (from the eighth and ninth rows) with the upper pair of surcharges normal and the lower pair grossly oblique. Other curiosities were a

stamp from the top row of a sheet which had at least part of the top selvedge folded over when it was surcharged so that the surcharge is not on the stamp but on the gummed side of the selvedge and a bottom left corner copy where the corner of the sheet must have been folded over before perforating so that the stamp is of a most peculiar shape. The stamp is recorded with inverted surcharge but only a forged example was shown.

It appears that two sheets of the 10c value received inverted EST AFRICAIN overprints (L2) and both of these received the 30c surcharge and these surcharges again were inverted relative to the basic stamp and normal relative to the overprint. A single copy and a block of four were shown. More interesting was a block of eight (2 wide by four high) from the bottom left corner of the sheet on which the EST AFRICAIN is normal, the 30c surcharge normal on the top two rows but inverted on the bottom two rows. There was also an example with the surcharge doubled.

50 CENTIMES

The 1915 25c stamp was printed from combinations of plates III1+B, III1+C, III2+C, III2+D and III3+D but it appears that all sheets from III3+D received the Malines surcharge. Early printings from III2+C can be distinguished from III1+C only by the addition of lay marks and these visible on only a very few positions in the sheet. The sheets were perforated $13\frac{1}{2}$ (only III2+D and maybe III3+D), 14 and 15 (maybe not III1+C and III3+D).

The 50c surcharge was applied to sheets from all these combinations of plates with the possible exception of III1+C and in three shades, vermilion-red, carmine-red and carmine-rose, the last from a thin, as opposed to dense, ink but it is very doubtful indeed if all combinations of plates, perforations and colours of surcharge exist. Shown were III1+B stamps with vermilion-red and carmine-red surcharges perforated 14; III1+C or early III2+C stamps with vermilion-red, carmine-red and carmine-rose surcharges perforated 14 and with carmine-rose surcharge perforated 15; late III2+C stamps with vermilion-red surcharge perforated 14 and with carmine-red and carmine-rose surcharges perforated 14 and 15; III2+D or III3+D with carmine-red and carmine-rose surcharges, both perforated $13\frac{1}{2}$, 14 and 15. Other combinations of plates, shades of surcharge and perforations are likely to exist.

The stamps with EAAOB overprint are not so complicated, only sheets from III1+B and III1+C having been overprinted, the former with short (S) and long (L1T and L1G) and the latter with the long (L1(o) and L2) overprints. The 50c surcharge was applied to the EAAOB stamps in vermilion and carmine but, as far as is known, no sheets with the short EAAOB overprint were surcharged. Shown were examples of stamps from plates III1+B with L1T EAAOB overprint and both vermilion and carmine surcharges, perforated 14, and from plates III1+C with L1(o) EAAOB overprint and carmine surcharge and with L2 overprint and vermilion surcharge perforated 15 and with carmine surcharge perforated 14 and 15. These are probably not the only combinations of plates, overprints, surcharges and perforations that exist.

Curiosities

Incomplete 50c surcharges on the Congo stamp appear to be relatively common and

several examples with part, even the whole, of a figure or the letter c missing were shown. There were shown two vertical strips of three, both from the 8th, 9th and bottom rows in the sheet, and presumably from the same sheet, with double surcharges of the middle and bottom stamp. There was also a vertical strip of three, again of the same three bottom rows in the sheet, with the lower two stamps with surcharge askew. Most curious of all were two horizontal strips of five with the left four stamps normal but with the right stamp in one case having the surcharge lower, in the middle of the stamp, and in the other having the surcharge inverted and at the bottom of the stamp. There was also a full sheet with the third vertical row of perforation omitted and a strip of three from another sheet with the same missing row of perforation.

There were no curiosities of the 50c/25c EAAOB.

APPLICATION OF THE SURCHARGES

The way that the surcharges were applied to the sheets of stamps is of some considerable interest and it is necessary to study complete sheets or large blocks and to a) measure the horizontal distances between adjacent surcharges and b) place a straight-edge horizontally along a row of the five surcharges noting that they are not all at precisely the same level and with one or more higher or lower than the others.

It is found that there were two different ways in which the surcharging plates were assembled.

1) The 25c vermilion or red surcharges on the Congo stamp is unique and different from the carmine surcharge on the same stamp, the 25c surcharges on the EAAOB stamp and from the other values. Studying in detail a sheet of the 25c/40c Congo with vermilion or red surcharge it is found that the top five rows of surcharges are identical in position and spacing and that the bottom five rows are identical but different from the top five rows. How can this have happened? It appears that the printer started with a single 'die' assembled either from existing components, 2, 5, c and two dots, or maybe from a special carving in wood; five copper electrotype copies were then taken from this die and these were assembled in a horizontal line making a cliché of five surcharges. Five further electrotypes were then taken from this strip of five. The five strips of five were then assembled into a block of twenty-five. This process was repeated, again starting from the die and, with the five single electrotypes not in precisely the same positions as before, five more electrotypes of the new strip of five were made and assembled into another block of twenty-five. This procedure was followed a further twice producing four blocks of twenty-five, each different in exact alignment and spacing of the individual surcharges. In surcharging a sheet of 50 stamps two of these blocks were fixed together, inked and applied to the sheet. Sometimes a particular block surcharged the upper half of the sheet, sometimes the lower half, and sometimes was not used at all.

2) With all the other values, including the 25c applied in carmine to the Congo stamp and applied in both vermilion and carmine to the EAAOB stamp, there was another procedure. From the original surcharging die ten copper electrotypes were made and these were assembled into a block of ten, five

wide by two high. From this block of ten, five further electrotypes were made and these five electrotypes, clamped together to make a surcharging block of 50 to surcharge the sheet of stamps. As a result of this, if you study carefully a sheet of stamps you will find that alternate horizontal rows of surcharges are identical in position, spacing and alignment. For each value there were several different surcharging plates, each made starting with five individual electrotypes.

The above is the 'traditional' explanation of the means by which the surcharges were applied but, for all except the 25c (vermilion on Congo), is it true? I very much doubt it because of the difficulty in explaining some of the curiosities described earlier in this paper, particularly of doubled surcharges in some rows and not others and of some rows oblique to those above.

My own belief is, as I believe is also true of the short and long (types L1) EAAOB overprints, that the surcharges on all except the 25c (vermilion on Congo) were applied from a plate of only ten electrotypes and this five times on each sheet. A machine for doing this is quite feasible with the sheet moved forward automatically two heights of a stamp for the next impression just as happens in a double-comb perforating machine.

Neither conventional explanation nor my own belief of how the surcharges were applied adequately explains the strips of five of the 50c/25c, one with one surcharge inverted and the other with one surcharge misplaced, and they remain something of a mystery.

FORGERIES

Forgeries of the 30c surcharge, double and inverted, certainly exist and were shown in the display and forgeries of all other abnormal surcharges probably exist but, curiously, there are forgeries of at least some of the surcharges applied normal to 1915 stamps. Forgeries of the 10c and 50c surcharges on Congo stamps were shown, some on booklet stamps which, as stated earlier, were never officially surcharged; such forgeries sometimes have forged cancellations and are doubtless all 'philatelic' to defraud the collector and not postal to defraud the post office. It is unlikely that forgeries of the 5c and 25c normal surcharges exist because the stamp would thereby be so much reduced in market value.

BOOKLETS

As stated above, the surcharged Congo stamps were, in part, made into booklets. The normal sheets from which these booklets were assembled were 5c/50c III3+B with shiny surcharge, 10c/5c blue-green V3+E3, 1915 15c V+C2, 25c/40c II+A3 with vermilion surcharge, 30c/10c V2+D3 and 50c/25c III2+D or III3+D with carmine-red surcharge. Panes or part panes of 25c/40c II+A2 with vermilion surcharge and 50c/25c III1+B with carmine-red surcharge are known and were shown in the display.

GENERAL

The object of this paper has not primarily been to display the owner's treasures

but to try to show the absorbing interest that can be found in the issue. The curiosities are nice to have but, in the main, are rare and expensive to buy, but they are not important. An interesting and substantial collection can be made of these ordinary and all cheap stamps but some of the combinations of plates, surcharges and perforations described are not common and some are very rare but they are not recognized by the dealer and are there to be found by the diligent and patient collector.

R. H. Keach

BELGICA 1990

Our Secretary has received a letter from D. F. Long & Co. (Travel) Ltd., 66, Brunswick Centre, London WC1N 1AE Tel: 01-837 4632/3 and we quote:

"We are in the course of preparation of travel arrangements for the members of the Philatelic Traders Society taking stands at BELGICA (June 2 to 10, 1990) and we thought of many of your members may wish to visit Brussels to view the exhibition.

"Undoubtedly there will be a great wealth of material on display relating to Belgium and colonies to see, and no doubt some of your members will themselves be exhibiting.

"While working on PTS tour we could simultaneously make arrangements for a short duration visit for your members, either a day day (2 nights' away) or two days' (one night away). To obtain the lowest air fare the group would have to spend Saturday night in Brussels hence departure on the 8th or 9th of June would be most suitable.

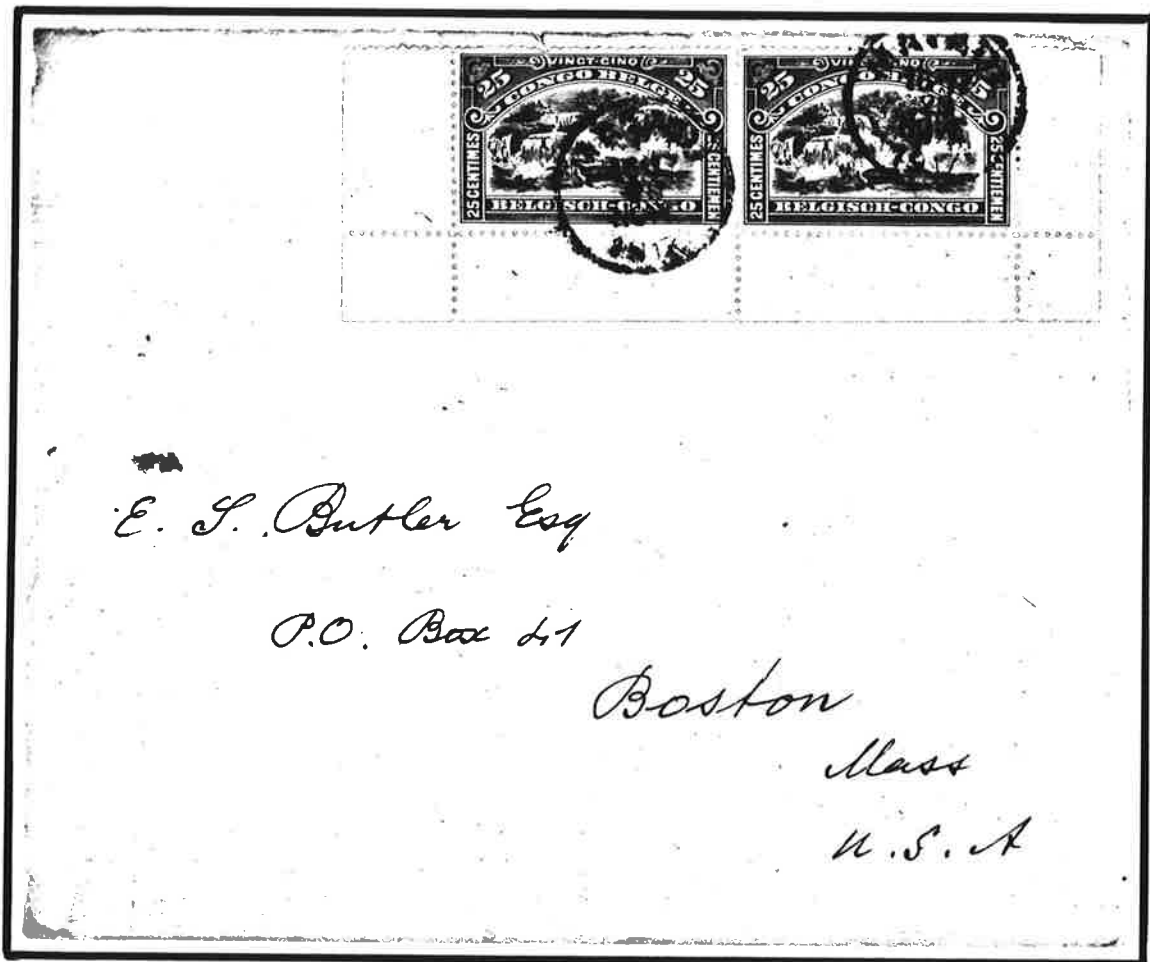
"As an example a three day tour with 2 nights' in Brussels at 3 star hotel sharing double room with private facilities on bed and continental breakfast basis inclusive of taxes, rail tickets Brussels Airport, Midi Rail Station, airport departure tax, with flights by Sabena or British Airways would cost approx £ 190 or £ 210 at a 4 star hotel."

Our Secretary needs to know, pretty urgently, who is interested and will liaise with The Belgian Study Circle to set it up.

BOOKLET PANE STAMPS

PERF. 14

POSTAL USAGE



FIRST PRINTING - PANEL C - POSITION NOS. 9 AND 10

Many Congo collectors may have individual stamps with selvedge showing, or better yet to have these on cover. Fewer still will have stamps showing corner selvedge either as individual stamps or on cover.

The above cover came as a gift from our member E. A. Hirdler to your editor a few years back and clearly shows the selvedge on three sides - thereby proving the stamps came from a booklet pane. Now the question is - do any of our members have a similar showing, and if so how many? Your editor would appreciate a response and, if possible, photocopies of such covers.