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BULLETIN 89

BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

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MAILBOAT SERVICES FROM EUROPE TO WEST AFRICA

The recent publication by the Royal Philatelic Society of the excellent reference book "The Postal Services of the British Nigeria Region" by Ince and Sacher opens up an interesting comparison with the Abbé Gudenkauf's study "The Mailboat Services from Europe to the Belgian Congo (1879-1922) published as Cockrill Series Booklet No. 41.

Appendix 26 of Ince and Sacher's work give details of the main shipping lines serving the West Coast of Africa up to 1914 and in the list of ships reference is made to ex -C.M.B. (Compagnie Maritime Belge) vessels purchased for the West African services. It is difficult to equate much of the information from both sources as can be seen from the details given below:-

Ince and Sacher's reference

Formerly LEOPOLDVILLE vessels

"BIAFRA" 3363T (Tonnes)
Built R. Dixon 1895
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1896
Sold 1910

"SECONDI" 3825T
Built R. Dixon 1897
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1901
Sold 1910

"LANDANA" 4376T
Built by R. Dixon 1904
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1908

It would appear reasonable to assume that the "SEKONDI" was originally the "LEOPOLDVILLE" (2), but it is not possible to establish any definite link between the 'BIAFRA' and the "LANDANA" with any particular "LEOPOLDVILLE".

Formerly "ALBERTVILLE" vessels

"JEBBA" 3812T
Built R. Dixon 1896
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1898
Lost 1907

"ARO" 3805T
Built by R. Dixon 1898
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1904
Sold 1914

Abbé Gudenkauf's reference

"LEOPOLDVILLE" (1) 2500T
In service 6.2.95 to 2.2.97

"LEOPOLDVILLE" (2) 3963T
6.2.97 to 5.3.01

"LEOPOLDVILLE" (3) 4152T
21.4.04 to 9.6.10

"LEOPOLDVILLE" (4) 6327T
20.08.10 to 6.1.13

"ALBERTVILLE" (1) 3953T
in service 7.7.96 to 6.8.98

"ALBERTVILLE" (2) 3805T
6.9.98 to 2.5.04 (Sold became
"YEBBE")

"ALBERTVILLE" (3) 4793T
9.8.06 to 7.3.11

"ALBERTVILLE" (4) 7745T

18.1.13 to Sept. 1923

Mailboat Services cont.

"ELMINA" 4792T
Built A. Stephen 1906
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1910
Sold 1928

One can assume that "ALBERTVILLE" (1) became "JEBBA" and "ALBERTVILLE" (2) became "ARO". The tonnages indicate a link between "ALBERTVILLE" (3) and "ELMINA" but the purchase date of 1910 confuses the issue.

.....
Formerly "ANVERSVILLE" Vessel

"DAKAR" 4081T
Built R. Dixon 1899
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1906
Lost 1915

"ANVERSVILLE" (1) 4100T
In service 18.5.99 to 16.4.06

Clearly "ANVERSVILLE" (1) was renamed "DAKAR" in 1906

.....
Formerly "PHILIPPEVILLE" vessel

"MANDINGO" 4091T
Built by R. Dixon 1899
Purchased by African Steamship Co. 1906
Sold 1914

"PHILIPPEVILLE" 4100T
In Service 12.10.99 to 29.7.06

It is evident that "PHILIPPEVILLE" was renamed "MANDINGO" in 1906

.....
Formerly "BRUXELLESVILLE" vessel

"ZUNGERU" 4075T
Built by R. Dixon 1904
Sailed as "BRUXELLESVILLE" 1906 to 1909
Sold 1910

"BRUXELLESVILLE" (1) 3900T
6.5.98 to 20.12.00
(Sold became SUNGERU)
"BRUXELLESVILLE" (2) 4075T
15.3.06 to 11.4.09

It is clear that it was "BRUXELLESVILLE" (2) not (1) that was renamed "ZUNGERU" in 1909.

Tonnages differ in many cases and this could be partly explained by the difference between English Tons and Metric Tonnes.

Although there are still loose ends to be tied it is hope that the foregoing study will go some way to updating the information on the Belgian Mailboats and the ultimate use of some of them on the West Africa service.

H. R. Lancaster

25c BLUE WITH RE-ENGRAVED FRAME

At the end of the 1950's among many other covers, I bought one with a blue 25c "Etat Indépendant du Congo"; the cover was put on a sheet, the sheet in an album, and in 1964, the album was taken in a trunk to the bank.

In 1991, I was back from Africa, and my friend Ph. Lindekens rapidly examined my collection; when he saw the cover, he gently asked me what I thought about it? I replied that it was an interesting one, because it was sent from Congo to Brazzaville (inter-african mail is never very common). When I bought it, more that 30 years ago, I was unable to plate the Mols stamps: in fact, this 25c belongs to the sheets with retouched top and bottom frame lines issued in 1908, just before the moment the Mols issue was to be overprinted "CONGO BELGE".

The stamp, herein reproduced, belongs to the last printing with the re-engraved frame. The cancellation is quite clear, although it is a blue one on a blue stamp, and it shows:

THYSVILLE
22
janv
16-17
1909

-there are two cancellations on the back of the cover, a transit one from Kinshasha and the other at the arrival:

KINSHASA
23
?
7-8
1909

and

BRAZZAVILLE
28
JANV
09
CONGO FRANCAIS

The cover also shows a private stamp on the back: "COMPAGNIE DU CHEMIN DE FER DU CONGO", Entrepôts, Siège social à BRUXELLES"

Georges R. Celis

This may very well be the only cover with the re-engraved 25c blue which has survived.

COMPAGNIE DU CHEMIN DE FER DU CONGO

(SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME)

Siège social : 48, rue de Namur, BRUXELLES.



Monsieur

le Docteur RINGENBACH

BRAZZAVILLE



EDITORS NOTES

We have had a request for a listing of the various post offices used by the Belgian Forces in their East African operations from a new member who has particular interest in the BPCVPK cancellations. By coincidence we have received a copy of a new, highly recommended, publication by André Vindevoghel reported elsewhere in this Bulletin which answers his request.

In the Bulletin of December 1991 we reported the efforts of our member M. E. Adams to obtain the listing of KATANGA in the Scott's catalogue. Our member, Joe Babicki, has sent us a photocopy of a page from the 1994 Scott's catalogue which now does list these stamps. It omits values for the first 40 stamps listed, as well as a number of others, but at least Scotts has responded to the requests and suggestions of Katanga collectors. Mr Adams and all the others who pressed Scotts on this matter should be congratulated on their success. An article on Katanga by G. Celis will appear in a later bulletin.

Thanks to the effort of members Smith and Ramsey and the Zaire Evangelistic Mission we have received an extensive list of additions to Peter Foden's recent article on Protestant Missions in the Belgian Congo which list will appear in a later Bulletin.

Ralph Jacquemin has sent a colored photocopy of a handsome registered cover from Dima to Bruxelles which is franked with 12 copies of Plate III₃+B 5c/50c of 1922 and a 15c of 1915 with the Registry Label 1e 1Da* in RED not in the usual lilac. For those interested in this find they might want to add the colour to the list which appeared in the Jeukens article Bulletin 86 at page 9.

LITERATURE

CHRONOLOGIE DES MOUVEMENTS DES TROUPES MILITAIRES BELGES DANS L'AFRIQUE ORIENTALE ALLEMANDE PENDANT LA GUERRE 1914-1918 André Vindevoghel 100pp

This extraordinary new book, in French, is a day-by-day diary of the activities and movements, not only of the Belgian but of the British and German armies during the whole of the campaign with very many maps.

Although a book of military rather than postal history it gives the dates and locations where the BPCVPK military cancellations were used and is an essential reference book for anyone interested in this element of postal history of the Congo. It is strongly recommended.

Copies are available from the author, A. Vindevoghel, Avenue Marnix 19A, Bte 4, 1050 Brussels or through R. H. Keach.

Prices, including postage are: to Belgium 560 Belgian Francs; elsewhere, via surface mail, 650 Belgian Francs; air mail 750 Belgian Francs.

RHK

FURTHER NOTES ON THE 10c 1915 WITH INVERTED CENTRE

Ralph Jacquemin has sent us a report that the Belgian dealer Soeteman offered a pair of the stamps in an auction held 19-26 June 1993. Although well illustrated in colour it was impossible from the catalogue printing to plate position the pair. The estimation was 800,000 BF with no report of the actual realization.

In Bulletin 88 E. A. Hirdler postulated a theory to account for the missing three panes of the stamp and attempted to show the plate positions of the known examples. This pair might well be 3-4 or 5-6.

He made certain assumptions as to the missing panes which must certainly have existed. It has long been rumored that they lie in some vault in Brussels. The current high prices would seem to lend credence to his theory or if the panes do lie in some vault the owners do not know the rarity of their possessions.

PARASITIC MARKINGS ON 1894 MOLS STAMPS

by Harry Wilcke, M.D.

For several years the so-called *Parasitic Markings* on some of the early stamps of the *Mols Issue* have fascinated me. However, other than the brief statements concerning their existence in *Balasse* and *Du Four*, information has been hard to find. Therefore, I decided to take a good look at these varieties and see if I could come up with some worthwhile conclusions.

In the *Balasse Catalog*, Volume III a large number of plate flaws are listed and given numbers with V prefixes. With a few of these, the description *parasitic strike* is mentioned. These occur on the 10c, 25c, 50c and 5 Fr. values of the Mols stamps of the Congo Free State. In the *Du Four Cinquante ans...* the varieties are illustrated and positioned.

Parasitic markings of this type are known on a few other stamp issues, but these are considered to be the clearest examples of this sort of plate making debacle.

Just to review the plate making process: the die is cut into the surface and so is a depressed design which is in reverse just as is the printing plate. Therefore it follows that the transfer roll is obverse and is raised above the surface of the roll. Not all of the lines are of the same height reflecting the different depths to which the die is cut.

The die is hardened and the transfer roll applied to it under pressure to put the image onto the roll. Then the roll is hardened and the image is rolled onto the plate in as many stamp images as needed.

In the case of the Mols stamps, plates were made up of 50 images in 5 columns of ten stamps each. The plates have the same configuration for horizontal as for vertical stamps but the positions are always numbered with the plate oriented so that the

stamps are upright. Thus, the horizontal stamps are numbered in ten rows of five whereas the vertical stamps are numbered in five rows of ten stamps each.

Some years ago, Maes made the discovery that these markings were due to the fact that each of the transfer rolls used in laying down the plates contained the images of two separate stamps of the series. Thus there are the two transferred images with clear areas in between around the circumference of the transfer roll.

And, in transferring the image of one stamp value to the plate, the roll was inadvertently turned beyond the clear area between the images onto the image area of the next stamp which caused a faint impression of the edge of the second image on the roll onto the image of the stamp which had been laid down before it. It is possible that this could also occur in reverse and the next stamp to be laid down could have a portion of the other image cut into it. This is much less likely as the marks could more easily be detected on a clear plate area.

It has been noted that the combinations of the stamps on the transfer rolls for the first six Mols values are:

- 10c with the 50c values
- 25c with the 5 Fr values
- 5c with the 1 Fr. values (probable)

The parasitic markings occur ONLY on stamps from the first two of these combination rolls and none are seen from a 5c/1 Fr transfer roll. These markings do not occur on all stamps of the pane and therefore this was a random occurrence and certainly not intentional.

The images are oriented on the roll with the long dimension stretched around the

roll. Therefore they have to be entered into the plate on the axis of the longer dimension. It is probable that the parasitic entries nearly always occurred on the stamp that had been previously entered and since they were located within the image of the stamp, they were not noticed when the roll was moved forward on the long axis to the next area.

Since these are just very light impressions, only the most protruding features of the transfer roll cut into the plate. And as pressure seems to have varied with each parasitic marking, the results also vary as to the amount of the image that is included, from just a few dots to a fairly well defined portion of the stamp border.

Transfer rolls are not uniform in size. Some contain the several images of a stamp or may even contain images of more than one stamp design as is the case with these Mols stamps under discussion..

THE 10c/50c TRANSFER ROLL

Measurements of the stamps and the position of the parasitic markings allow us to deduce the size of the transfer roll diameter:

Each stamp design area is 34 mm. in length.

The distances from the most distant part of the marking on one stamp to the stamp design of the next were measured on full panes of the stamps are as follows:

on the 10c = 29 mm

on the 50c = 33.5 mm

It is concluded that the total of these measurements represents the circumference of the roll:

$34 + 29 + 34 + 33.5 = 130.5$ and the diameter is then about 41.5 mm.

It should be noted that the two images are not spaced evenly on the roll. While this does not affect the laying down of the stamps onto the plate, it does cause the parasitic markings to occur farther from the

edge of the 10c stamp as opposed to the 50c value. As all parasitic markings on the 10c and 50c stamps are on the left end of the stamps, it is concluded that they were all over-rocked in the same direction.

THE 25c/5 Fr. TRANSFER ROLL

There is a peculiar finding in these two stamps in that there are markings from BOTH ends of the 25c stamp on different 5 Fr. stamps. More than that, both are at the BOTTOM of the 5 Fr. stamps. How can this be? It is concluded that these two transfer images are also not equidistant on the roll but the gap on one side is long enough so that the image can be over-rolled in either direction to deposit a parasitic marking at the bottom of another stamp.

A full pane of the 5 Fr. value was unavailable, but adequate measurements can be made with single stamps.

Each stamp design area is 34 mm. long

The distance from the marking to the stamp design on all stamps of BOTH the 25c and MOST stamps of 5 Fr. is 35 mm (slightly longer than the stamp image, but less than the combined stamp and space between stamps)..

The distance on the 5 Fr. with the second image is 45 mm. (considerably longer than the stamp image length plus the space between the stamps))

Therefore the total is

$34 + 35 + 34 + 45 = 148$ mm in circumference and therefore a diameter of roughly 47 mm.

It must be mentioned that if the parasitic image laid down over the longer gap comes onto the bottom of the second stamp from that being laid down. Since the gap is longer than the stamp design area plus two spaces between stamps, we discover the

reason that BOTH types of parasites appear at the BOTTOM of the 5 Fr. stamps.

CONCLUSION

Just why these occurred is not possible to say. It can be conjectured that the transfer press might have been unstable but this seems unlikely. The greater possibility seems to be that the technicians concerned were a bit careless. Probably, as they were entering the image they might have stopped to check the progress from time to time and turned clear portion of the roll back onto the pervious stamp image to inspect their work. In so doing, they carelessly went a bit to far and touched the next stamp area with the edge of the design of the stamp on the other side of the roll.

The parasitic images seem to have all been made from moving the transfer roll in the same direction with the one exception on the 5 Fr. stamps. The stamp involved is in the number 1 position on the plate and would

needed to have had the transfer roll passed in the direction opposite to the that which produced the rest of the parasitic markings on the 5 Fr. stamps. That is, when stamp position 21 was being laid down, the edge of the 10c image struck the bottom of position 1. It might have happened on a re-entry after position #1 had been laid down, otherwise it could have been noticed on the clear plate area.

It should be mentioned that since the distance of the parasitic images on the 25c and most of the 5 Fr stamps are the same, it is evident that they were rolled over the same distance on both and not as in the case of the 10c/50c where the distance is different for each. It seems probable that the 5 Fr image, being a vertical stamp was oriented on the transfer roll so that the roll had to be turned around to enter the 5 Fr. images. Thus the parasitic images on both stamps were rolled over the same distance.

CATALOG LISTINGS

Stamp Value	Balasse	Du Four
10c	V-8: Pos. 9,11 14, 37, 44, 49	Pos. 4, 9, 12, 14 19, 24, 37, 44, 49
50c	V-4, Pos 47 Upper only: Pos. 6, 12, 14, 19, 33	Pos. 47 *Upper only: Pos. 6, 12, 14, 16,19 31, 33, 34
*The numbering on the 50c in Du Four is faulty 25c	V-10, Pos. 18, 23	Pos 18, 23, 43
5 Fr	V-6 Pos. 1 V-12, Pos. 25, 29	Pos. 1 Pos. 14, 19, 25, 29

It should be noted that there is fairly good accord between the two works. with a few more examples listed by Du Four.

Thanks to Ray Keach and Ed Hirdler for their opinions and advice in this study.

Dr. Wilcke furnished a page of illustrations which, unfortunately, did not properly reproduce. The 25c, 50c and 5F 'marks' are clearly shown in the Frenay works to which those interested should refer. The 10c study is now in publication-information will appear in the next Bulletin.

BELGIAN CONGO STUDY CIRCLE

POSTAL AUCTION SALE 1993(3) - PRICES REALIZED

Lot 1 - £31; 2 - £12.50; 3 - £30; 4 - £105; 5 - £65; 6 - £33; 7 - £17.50; 8 - £17.50; 9 - £26; 10 - £115; 11 - £80; 12 - NS; 13 - NS; 14 - £55; 15 - NS; 16 - £60; 17 - £90; 18 - £155; 19 - £165; 20 - £28; 21 - £125; 22 - £42; 23 - £42; 24 - £160; 25 - NS; 26 - £21; 27 - £13; 28 - £26; 29 - £36; 30 - £130; 31 - £26; 32 - £145; 33 - £145; 34 - £95; 35 - £76; 36 - £21; 37 - £80; 38 - £46; 39 - £19; 40 - £21; 41 - £115; 42 - £115; 43 - £37; 44 - £26; 45 - £36; 46 - £65; 47 - £25; 48 - £21; 49 - £21; 50 - £31; 51 - £21; 52 - £1.10; 53 - £6.60; 54 - £10.50; 55 - £10.50; 56 - £12; 57 - £6.20; 58 - £12; 59 - £12.50; 60 - £4.60; 61 - £6.40; 62 - NS; 63 - £2.80; 64 - £7.60; 65 - £8.60; 66 - NS; 67 - £9.20; 68 - NS; 69 - £17.50; 70 - NS; 71 - NS; 72 - NS; 73 - NS; 74 - £5.60; 75 - NO LOT; 76 - £26; 77 - £31; 78 - NS; 79 - £2.10; 80 - £4.20; 81 - NS; 82 - £4.20; 83 - £5.20; 84 - £5.20; 85 - £4.20; 86 - NS; 87 - NS; 88 - NS; 89 - NS; 90 - £4.10; 91 - NS; 92 - NS; 93 - NS; 94 - NS; 95 - NS; 96 - NS; 97 - £25; 98 - £41; 99 - NS; 100 - NS; 101 - £2; 102 - £1.30; 103 - £4; 104 - £11; 105 - £2.90; 106 - £3.80; 107 - £3.80; 108 - £2.10; 109 - £4.10; 110 - £4.10; 111 - £2.70; 112 - £1.10; 113 - £7.20; 114 - NS; 115 - £1.60; 116 - £2.60; 117 - £3.10; 118 - £1.60; 119 - £1.30; 120 - £4.60; 121 - £5.20; 122 - £2.10; 123 - £1.10; 124 - £6; 125 - £6.20; 126 NS; 127 - £1.70; 128 - £1.70; 129 - £1.70; 130 - £4.20; 131 - 80p; 132 - NS; 133 - £2.40; 134 - £1.90; 135 - £2.60; 136 - £4.10; 137 - £1.70; 138 - £1.30; 139 - 80p; 140 - £2.10; 141 - 90p; 142 - £2.10; 143 - £1.70; 144 - £1.80; 145 - £1.70; 146 - £3.10; 147 - NS; 148 - NS; 149 - £3.10; 150 - NS; 151 - £3.10; 152 - £3.10; 153 - £1.60; 154 - £1.80; 155 - £2.10; 156 - NS; 157 - NS; 158 - NS; 159 - NS; 160 - £55; 161 - NS; 162 - NS; 163 - £5.20; 164 - £7.60; 165 - NS; 166 - 85p; 167 - NS; 168 - £2.30; 169 - NS; 170 - £1.90; 171 - £1.30; 172 - NS; 173 - NS; 174 - £5; 175 - £12.50; 176 - £4.10; 177 - NS; 178 - 80p; 179 - £11; 180 - £1.60; 181 - £1.20; 182 - £3.30; 183 - £105; 184 - £8; 185 - NS; 186 - £8.70; 187 - £4.10; 188 - £15.50; 189 - £5.20; 190 - £7.20; 191 - £6.20; 192 - £1.50; 193 - £5.20

NS = UNSOLD AND AVAILABLE AT RESERVE PRICE OR AT 80% OF VALUATION. FOR LOTS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO VALUATION ANY REASONABLE OFFERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

SALES

Offered is a very nice unused copy of 1900 1F carmine, perforated 16, at £40.

Apart from items included in the current auction sale Peter Wright had a very good general collection of Belgian Congo and Ruanda Urundi with considerable duplication. There is also some unused postal stationery. It is hoped that as much as possible can be sold to members before placing the remainder in the hands of a public auctioneer.

Wants lists, specific or general, are solicited by R. H. Keach.

Also available are a few 1912 10c postal stationery cards, views Nos. 3, 14, 28, 36, 49, 56 & 62; also 5c view 18; all at £1.25 each.

There is constant demand from the 'platers' for 1894-1922 Mols stamps and members are requested to offer their duplicates, even of the commonest stamps of these issues. The 'going' price for most stamps is 1/3 of Catalogue Officiel prices and the BCSC takes 5% commission on sales

IMPORTANT NOTICE-STAMPS SUBMITTED FOR CERTIFICATES

Every reasonable care is taken of stamps and other items submitted for Certificates of Authenticity. When in my possession prior to and during processing they are kept in a locked cupboard. Outside doors of the house have approved safety locks; all opening windows have approved locks; there is secondary double glazing on the ground floor.

Moreover, the Study Circle has an insurance policy providing up to £10,000 to cover loss of stamps and other philatelic items submitted for certificate or sale when in my home or in that of another assessor or official of the Study Circle.

Registered post is invariably used when stamps are passed from one assessor to another and, unless the stamps are of small market value and have been sent by the owner without registration, items are always returned with their certificates by registered post. I have never known a registered package that has not reached its destination but it presumably can happen.

HOWEVER, NEITHER THE STUDY CIRCLE NOR ITS OFFICERS CAN ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR CERTIFICATES.

Most personal stamp insurance policies cover the owner's stamps while they are in process of certification and while in the post for that purpose but members are recommended to obtain confirmation from their insurers that there is such coverage in their policies.

R. H. Keach
Hon. Secretary, Expert Committee

PLATING MOLS STAMPS

by B.P. HUDSON

Part 7: 50 centimes

Introduction

Parts 1 to 6 of this series were issued with Bulletins 85, 87 and 88, part 1 providing a general introduction and parts 2 to 6 covering the 5 centimes to 40 centimes. Part 7 and future parts should be read in conjunction with part 1.

The 50 centimes is the fifth highest of the ten Mols values, and is the value found most frequently on letters. From 1886 to 1910 50 centimes was the postal rate for letters up to 15 grams sent to Belgium and other overseas countries; from 1924 to 1926 it was the rate for such letters up to 20 grams.

As with the other Mols values first issued in 1894, the design of the 50 centimes was based on one of the paintings in the diorama exhibited by the artists Robert Mols and Piet Van Engelen at the Anvers Exhibition of that year. The painting was in turn based on a photograph by Lieutenant Wyns showing the railway bridge crossing the river M'Poza in lower Congo. In both the photograph and the painting the bridge is empty; on the stamp, however, the designer placed a locomotive on the bridge sporting a fine plume of smoke.

Main issues

In the following table the number on the left is the Catalogue Officiel number. The right-hand column shows the number printed, excluding those that were subsequently overprinted or surcharged, as listed by General Du Four in 'Cinquante Ans D'Histoire Postale', and drawn from official and other sources. But as the General warns, these numbers have to be treated with caution and in many cases, as has now been confirmed by study of Waterlow's file copy sheets, understate the true figure. This is particularly true of the figures given for the unoverprinted 1910 and 1915 issues which are undoubtedly far too low.

Belgian Congo

24	Nov. 1894	50c green	État Indépendant	250,000
25	May 1900	50c olive	État Indépendant	594,000
35B	Jan. 1909	50c olive	Congo Belge Brussels	1,000
35L	Jan. 1909	50c olive	Congo Belge local	83,000
45	Jan. 1909	50c olive	Congo Belge typo	97,000



PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 7

45P	Mar. 1909	50c olive	Princes unoverprinted	100
45PB	Mar. 1909	50c olive	Princes Brussels	250
45PT	Mar. 1909	50c olive	Princes typo	4,650
53	June 1909	50c olive	Unilingual	175,000
59	Jan. 1910	50c olive	Bilingual	245,000
69	Nov. 1915	50c brown	Bilingual	95,000
77	May 1918	50c+50c brown	Red Cross	100,000
87	July 1921	15c/50c olive	Recuperation surcharge (on 59)	278,500
95	Jan. 1922	5c/50c brown	Malines surcharge (on 69)	52,000

Ruanda Urundi

14	July 1916	50c brown	Ruanda Tombeur (on 69)	2,750
21	July 1916	50c brown	Urundi Tombeur (on 69)	2,750
33	Nov. 1916	50c brown	Est Africain (on 69)	120,000
41	May 1918	50c+50c brown	A.O. on Red Cross	100,000
45	Jan. 1922	5c/50c brown	Malines on Est Africain (on 69)	77,500

Plate combinations

1894	I1+A1	Original frame and centre plates
1900	I1+A2	Centres re-entered
	I2+A2	Frame lay marks added
1909	II+A2	New frame plate
1910	III1+A3	New frame plate; centre lay marks added
	III2+A4	Frames re-entered and retouched; centres re-entered
1915	III3+A4	Frames retouched
	III4+A5	Frames partly retouched; centres re-entered
	III4+B	New centre plate
1918	III5+B	Frame lay marks added

There have been the following changes from the nomenclature first introduced by Du Four:

(1) Du Four designated centre plate A1 as A, A2 as B1 and so on. The discovery that B1 was a re-entered state of A rather than a new plate was reported in Bulletin 28.

(2) He did not differentiate between A2 and A3, both of which he described as B1. The addition of lay marks to create A3 was reported in Bulletin 42.

(3) He described III3, III4 and III5 all as III2, being unaware of the retouching which created III3 (Bulletin 42) and III4 (Bulletin 72) and the lay marks on the Red Cross and AO sheets which created III5 (Bulletin 42).



PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 7

(4) Bulletin 72 also reported the discovery of a few specimens from two positions of the sheet - nos 40 and 50 - without the doubling in the sky which characterises A5, as well as being without some of the additional retouching of the frames which created III4. Accordingly the plate combination which Du Four described as III2+B3, and which subsequently was renamed III3+A5, had to be split into two: III3+A4 followed by III4+A5.

Identifying the plate combinations

1900. I1+A2 became I2+A2 through the addition of vertical lay marks between 11 and 12 and between 36 and 37. The 1900 stamps are found in two distinct shades, olive and yellow-olive; early and late printings were olive, and printings in between were yellow-olive. Yellow-olive stamps are always I2+A2; olive stamps may be either I1 or I2, unless the lay marks described above are visibly absent or present on them.

Princes printings, which are I2+A2, can be recognised by the shade of the centres which are brownish-black rather than grey-black as in the 1900 issue. Princes typo stamps can also be recognised by constant varieties in the overprinting plate - see page 10 of part 1.

1910. III1+A3 and III2+A4 are most easily distinguished by their shades. 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. Without the 1921 surcharge III2+A4 is uncommon unused and apparently unknown used.

When the shade is ambiguous, III2+A3 can often be distinguished by slight signs of doubling in the frames, particularly in the lower right corner, and by doubling or thickening of the centre plate, particularly in the lines of the sky.

1915. III3+A4 and III4+A5 cannot be told apart except by positioning the stamp. The former combination is very much less common than the latter, and appears to be found only in the lilac-brown shade. No sheets or multiples are known of III3+A4, and only a handful of single copies. In about one-third of the positions of the sheet A5 shows conspicuous doubling or thickening of the sky lines, a feature which is not present on A4. In most other positions the sky lines are slightly thickened in A5 but not in A4; in a few positions of A4 there is doubling between unthickened sky lines whereas in the corresponding A5 positions the lines are thickened but do not show doubling.

By contrast, centre plates A4/A5 and B can easily be told apart. The retouching of the die used to make B produced three noticeable changes: dots appear in the smoke emitting from the locomotive; the shading on the left bank of



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the river is continuous rather than dotted; and there is a 'sunrise' effect over the mountains.

Varieties

The following sections list the varieties of plate combination, shade, overprint and perforation known for each issue of the 50 centimes. The list covers 'normal' stamps only; errors and curiosities such as inverted overprints and imperforate pairs are excluded.

The list is based on my own collection and that of Ray Keach. If members have varieties which are not on the list I would be glad to hear of them so that the list can be updated and made as comprehensive as possible.

Shades are given only where shade varieties are considered to be significant, and are listed in what is thought to be the chronological order of printing. Of course, the impression of shades is highly subjective: other collectors may see them quite differently from the way I do. Shades are abbreviated thus:

bl=blue br=brown g=green li=lilac ol=olive r=red y=yellow

The middle column indicates the overprint or surcharge type. For handstamped Congo Belge overprints, B = Brussels, L = Local. For the Malines surcharge, m = matt and s = shiny. For Tombeur RUANDA and URUNDI overprints, K = Kigali, G = Grysolle and H = Havre. For the nomenclature of EAA overprints, see page 11 of part 1 and Bulletin 46.

For details of the perforation varieties, see page 13 of part 1. Each perforation variety is followed by a two-letter code in brackets. This code gives my (highly subjective) judgement of the relative scarcity of the variety in question. The first letter indicates the scarcity of unused copies of the stamp, the second the scarcity of postally used copies. Stamps cancelled by favour or with forged cancels are not taken into account in arriving at the scarcity factor for used stamps. The codes are as follows:

- A: Very common
- B: Common
- C: Fairly uncommon
- D: Scarce
- E: Rare
- X: Probably unknown



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1894 green

I1+A1 bl-g	p14(BB), p15(CC), p12-14(CC), p14½-15(BC)
I1+A1 y-g	p13½(DD), p14(AA), p15(BA), p16(CC), p12-14(CC), p14½-15(AA)

1900 olive

I1+A2 ol	p14(CA), p15(AA), p12-14(EE), p14½-15(CA)
I2+A2 ol	p14(CA), p14½-15(CA)
I2+A2 y-ol	p13½(CB), p14(CA), p15(CB), p16(DB), p12-14(EC), p14½-15(CA)
I2+A2 Princes	p14(EX)

1909 Congo Belge handstamp

I1+A2 ol	B1	p14(DE), p14½-15(DE)
I1+A2 ol	B2	p14(DE), p15(DE)
I1+A2 ol	B5	p14(CE)
I1+A2 ol	B6	p15(DE), p14½-15(DE)
I1+A2 ol	B7	p14(EE)
I2+A2 y-ol	B6	p14(DE)
I2+A2 y-ol	L1	p13½(DD)
I2+A2 y-ol	L2	p14(DD)
I2+A2 y-ol	L3	p13½(DD)
I2+A2 y-ol	L4	p13½(DD), p14(DD), p14½-15(DD)
I2+A2 y-ol	L5	p13½(DD), p14(DC), p12-14(EE), p14½-15(DD)
I2+A2 y-ol	L6	p13½(DD), p14(DD)
I2+A2 ol	L1	p14(BA)
I2+A2 ol	L2	p14(CC), p14½-15(DD)
I2+A2 ol	L3	p14(CC), p15(DD)
I2+A2 ol	L4	p14(CB), p15(DD), p14½-15(DD)
I2+A2 ol	L5	p14(BB), p14½-15(CC)
I2+A2 ol	L6	p14(CB), p15(DD)
I2+A2 ol	L7	p14(BB)
I2+A2 Princes	B2	p14(EX)
I2+A2 Princes	B5	p14(EX)

Frame plates I1 and I2 can be distinguished on only 4 positions of the sheet; it is assumed that olive stamps with Brussels overprint are all from I1+A2, but this has not been confirmed.

The following combinations were reported by Du Four but have not been



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confirmed by Ray Keach or myself:

I1+A2 ol B3 I2+A2 ol L8

Other combinations may well exist. Forged overprints are common: I have forgeries on I+A2 ol p14 and p15 and I2+A2 y-ol p14 and p14½-15.

1909 Congo Belge typo

I2+A2 ol p14(AA), p14½-15(CB)
I2+A2 Princes p14(DC)

Some forgeries are found, one of which is dangerously accurate. I have forgeries on I+A2 ol p15 and I2+A2 y-ol p13½, p14 and p14½-15.

1909 unilingual

II+A2 ol p14(AA)
II+A2 br-ol p13½(CB), p14(BA)

1910 bilingual

III1+A3 p14(AA), p15(ED), p14½-15(DE)
III2+A4 p14(CX)

1915 bilingual

III3+A4 li-br p14(ED), p15(ED)
III4+A5 li-br p14(BA), p15(DD)
III4+A5 r-br p14(DC), p15(DC)
III4+B li-br p14(BB), p15(EC)
III4+B r-br p14(AA), p15(DC)

1918 Red Cross

III5+B p14(AC), p15(CD)

1921 Recuperation

I2+A2 ol	Typo	p14(DX)
II+A2 ol		p14(DX)
III1+A3		p13½(CD), p14(AA), p14½-15(BC)
III2+A4		p14(AA)

1922 Malines

III4+A5 li-br	s	p14(EE)
III4+B r-br	m	p14(AA)
III4+B r-br	s	p14(AA), p15(EE)

1916 Tombeur (Ruanda and Urundi)

III4+A5 li-br	K	p14(EE)
III4+B r-br	G	p14(EX)

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III4+A5 li-br	H	p14(CX),p15(DX - Ruanda only)
III4+A5 r-br	H	p14(CX),p15(DX)

Forgeries abound.

1916 Est Africain

III4+B li-br	S	p14(CC)
III4+B li-br	L1(o)	p14(BE)
III4+B li-br	L1(t)	p14(CE)
III4+B r-br	L1(o)	p14(CE)
III4+B r-br	L1(i)	p14(DE)
III4+B r-br	L1(.)	p14(DD)
III4+B r-br	L2	p14(CA)

1918 Red Cross AO

III5+B		p14(AC),p15(CD)
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1922 EAA Malines

III4+B r-br	m	p14(AC)
III4+B r-br	s	p14(AC)

In total, 113 varieties of the 50c are listed above.

GUIDES TO POSITIONING

As with the positioning guides in the earlier parts, I assume that the reader has a complete sheet of the plate combination he wishes to reconstruct, and will make his own plating notes as he studies individual positions. The guides do not list all the constant plate varieties, but describe the more important ones, particularly the 'generic' varieties which appear in more than one position in the sheet, and also describe the more difficult positions in each sheet where the plater is most likely to experience problems.

II+A1

Because of the strong green colour of the frames, and the numerous re-entries (or strictly fresh entries) in the top left corner, many sheet positions of the 1894 issue are relatively easy to identify.

The first place to look is the 'CINQ' in the top left corner. Parasitic entries, consisting of one or more curved lines crossing the Q, are found in 6,12,14,16,19,31,33,34 and 47. In 47 there are also two curved lines crossing the lower left 50 (Balasse V4). In many positions there is doubling on or around the C of CINQ, with slight variations in each position. In 5,9,13,33,34 and 50 the doubling is inside and above the C. In 1 it is below the C, in 7 inside and below it, and in 25 inside it. Doubling is also visible on or around the C, but to a lesser extent, in 6,32,35,38 and 39. In 1,11,18,22,28,36,40 and 45 the upper left vertical inner frameline is doubled to varying degrees. In 1 - Balasse V3 - the doubling is prominent.

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The marks described above identify over half the positions in the sheet. The remaining positions can be rather more difficult. Among them, 10, 20, 21, 23, 26, 30, 42, 44 and 49 show a slight overlap between the outer frame and the sharp tip of the curved ornament on the outer edge of the frames just below left centre. Many positions show traces of a vertical guideline in the left margin; the guideline is most marked in the first column.

There are fewer centre plate varieties in I1+A1. In the course of the printing a strong diagonal black scratch appeared in the sky of 42 - Balasse V1. A short section of vertical black guideline is visible in the sky in the majority of positions. In several positions a similar guideline is also visible below the left of the rock in the river.

I classify the most difficult positions as the following. In 10 there is a short green dash in the top of the left margin, and (in later printings only) a long faint scratch crossing QUAN. In 15 there is a faint dot in the white line above the C of CINQ. 20 shows virtually no distinguishing marks apart from the pattern of the traces of green vertical guideline in the middle of the left margin. 23 has a small black dot between the river lines under the left end of the rightmost of the two larger rocks. In 24 the vertical black guideline in the sky crosses five of the continuous sky lines. In 27 there is a small slanting black scratch off the bottom left corner. In 30 the upper right vertical frameline is slightly doubled. In 37 the corner circle in the top right corner is faint. In 42 (difficult to identify before Balasse V1 appeared) there is a faint green horizontal scratch just under the bottom right corner. In 49 the corner circle in the top right corner is just doubled.

I1+A2 and I2+A2

In the olive stamps of 1900 the frame plate varieties of I1 are still present, though the paler shade of the stamps means that some of them are less prominent and others are nearly invisible. The parasitic entries and fresh entries around CINQ remain, however, the principal means of identifying about half the positions in the sheet.

In addition there are centre plate varieties - many more than in the 1894 issue - which aid the identification of these stamps. In 5, 18, 23, 24, 35, 42 and 46 there is a faint vertical black guideline to the right of the lower right part of the vignette, usually crossing or close to the lower right 5. In 43, 44 and 45 there is a transfer roller variety in the form of a small black arc of a circle at the top centre of the centre plate design. There is also a transfer roller flaw in 49 and 50, in the form of an irregular mark like a hook crossing the top of the trees to the right of centre. In 6 there is a diagonal scratch through the river (Balasse V2). A number of positions show extra black dots in the smoke of the locomotive - 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 26, 37 and 48. Generally speaking the centre plate is quite flawed with many positions showing scratches of various shapes and sizes in the margins of the stamp. Stamps in the first row show slight doubling of the horizontal hill lines on the left.

I classify the following positions as difficult. In 2 there is a horizontal frame plate scratch in the left part of the top margin, quite clear in the 1894 issue but almost invisible in the olive stamps. In 3 there is a black spot in the upper left part of the stamp, but it is found in later printings only and before its appearance the best identifying mark for this position is a faint horizontal black

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scratch to right of centre in the top margin. In 8 almost the only marks are two black dots close together, and diagonal to one another, in the middle of the right margin. In early printings of 10 a near-horizontal black scratch is just visible above the top left corner of the sky; in later printings there is a curved vertical scratch in the centre of the right margin. In 32 there is slight doubling in the C of CINQ, and two or three black dots in the left margin. In 44 the small arc referred to above is sometimes barely visible; the best distinguishing mark otherwise is a faint vertical black scratch in the top left corner.

Frame plate I1 was converted to I2 by the addition of vertical lay marks between 11 and 12 and between 36 and 37.

II+A2

The unilingual stamps have the same centre plate as the 1900 issue, and the flaws on it are the main guide to positioning them. In addition to those described above some prominent scratches appear for the first time with this issue, notably on 28 and 48 (top centre) and 49 (bottom centre).

There is less assistance from the frames of the unilingual stamps. The most helpful varieties are retouches of the horizontal sections of the outer framelines: on 13,14,16,17,27 and 38 (upper left); 2,7,18,19,23,24,34 and 37 (upper right); 1,2,9,21,28,29,38,39,43,44 and 45 (lower left); and 38,43,44,47 and 50 (lower right). In 45 and 50 there is clear doubling of the inner frame in the lower right corner.

The frame plate has vertical lay marks between 11 and 12 and between 36 and 37.

III1+A2

The first centre plate for the 1910 issue, A3, is the same as A2 except for the addition of lay marks: a somewhat uneven vertical line between 7 and 8, and a dot between 37 and 38. The centre plate flaws which identify sheet positions in the 1900 and 1909 issues remain therefore the main source of identification for the first plate combination of the 1910 issue.

There are also helpful frame plate varieties. Several positions show doubling around the upper left 50: above the 50 in 3,5,15 and 32; on it in 16,18,25 and 50; and below it in 4,21,30 and 45. There is a vertical guideline touching or close to the centre part of the left frame in 4,5,7,11,43,44,46 and 48, and a section of guideline in the bottom left corner only in 2,12,21 and 38. The bottom frame is doubled under the GI of BELGISCH in 33,34 and 35. There are no frame plate lay marks

I classify only two positions in this combination as difficult. 8 has few marks apart from the two dots in the right margin (described above for the 1900 issue), and 44 has a short horizontal guideline touching the top frame over the E of BEL, which helps identification if the black arc at the top of the sky is obscured.

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III2+A3

The second plate combination of the 1910, found only rarely without the 1921 surcharge, had both frame and centre plates re-entered. There are no lay marks: the centre plate marks present on III1+A2 appear to have been erased.

In the frames, the doubling in III1 above, on and below the top left 5 is still visible in III2 in the positions in question (see above). The lower right vertical outer frameline is doubled in 14,19,21,22,23,24,26,29,33 and 34. There is a vertical coloured guideline in the left margin in 11,43,46 and 48. In the centre plate the horizontal sky lines show doubling towards their left end in 1,2,6,7,9,13 and 14.

III2+A3 is generally a more difficult combination to position than III1+A2, because of the smaller number of flaws in the centre plate. The fact that most of these stamps have the 1921 surcharge, from the shape of which the row number can be narrowed to 2 or at most 4 rows (see page 10 of part 1), is a great help. The most difficult position in my view is 39, identifiable only by a few corrosion dots along the top of the sky and by a black dot on the L of BELGE.

III3+A4 and III4+A5

For many years it was thought that the 'die 1' (ie centre plate A) printings of the 1915 issue represented one plate combination only. It is now known (see above) that two were involved, the first (III3+A4) rather scarce and so far found only in the lilac-brown shade, and the second (III4+A5) much commoner and found with p14 and p15 and in both lilac-brown and red-brown shades. The first combination was formed by extensive retouching of the frames, the second by re-entry of the centres and further retouching of the frames in at least one position of the sheet. Neither combination shows lay marks.

In III3 and III4 the doubling around the upper left 5 is still visible: above the 5 in 3,5,15 and 32, on it in 16,18,25 and 50, and below it in 4,21,30 and 45. The doubling of the outer vertical frameline on the lower right is visible but less clear than in the earlier combinations: it now shows as clear doubling only in 19,24,26,29 and 34.

The main aid to identifying positions on III3 and III4 comes from the retouching, which in most positions of the sheet caused burin escapes in the form of straight or slightly curved scratches to appear in and around the curled ornaments at centre height on the left and right sides of the stamp. Most positions show these lines, which vary widely from position to position: it is beyond the scope of this work to enumerate them separately, but they make positioning easy if a reference sheet is available.

On centre sheet A4, as already noted, the sky lines are fairly clean (though thicker than in A3), with the exception of the doubling visible in the left of the sky in 1,2,6,7,9,13 and 14. In A5 the doubling in these positions disappears; in 10,11,13,16,33,35,36,38-42 and 47-50 new doubling or heavy thickening appears, in some cases quite markedly; while in the remaining positions the lines are noticeably coarser or thicker than in A4. None of the positions on these two plate combinations presents serious difficulty for the plater.

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III4+B

The new centre plate with the dots in the smoke shows few varieties. The frame plate varieties mentioned above for III4+A5 persist in III4+B. In addition, the frames of III4+B present a phenomenon which make positioning very easy indeed. Throughout the plate extensive corrosion has taken place, no doubt through it having been left in a damp condition, which shows in the form of numerous coloured dots. They show particularly in the top and bottom margins, on the two larger 50s, and on the lettering of CONGO BELGE and BELGISCH CONGO. The location and pattern of the dots varies from position to position and it is a simple matter to scan the sheet for the pattern of dots which matches the pattern on an individual stamp. For the beginner in sheet positioning, the 1915 50c III3+B - a common stamp despite its elevated catalogue price - is an ideal stamp to start with.

III5+B

III5+B, found only with the Red Cross and AO issues, is the same as III4+B except for the addition of lay marks in the form of vertical lines between 17 and 18 and between 32 and 33, and dots between 17 and 18 and between 27 and 28.

PLATING MOLS STAMPS

by B.P. HUDSON

Part 8: 1 franc

Introduction

The 1 franc is the fourth highest of the ten Mols values. It is found quite often on covers, particularly registered covers, between the Congo and Belgium or other overseas countries. The following are the weight ranges (in grams) in the period 1896 to 1924 for which the postal rate was exactly 1 franc:

	Belgium registered	Belgium unregistered	Other overseas registered	Other overseas unregistered
1894-1910	up to 15	15 to 30	up to 15	15 to 30
1910-1920	30 to 45	45 to 60	30 to 45	45 to 60
1920-1921	80 to 100	-	40 to 60	60 to 80
1921-1924	20 to 40	60 to 80	up to 20	20 to 40

Like the other values issued in 1894, the 1fr was based on one of the Mols and Van Engelen paintings exhibited in Anvers in that year. The painting showed an elephant waving its trunk in the air with, in the distance, further elephants and the tiny figures of natives. When this was converted into the stamp design a native was placed just in front of the elephant bravely brandishing his spear. The 1fr is a handsome stamp and many consider it to be the best of the Mols designs.

Main issues

In the following table the number on the left is the Catalogue Officiel number. The right-hand column shows the number printed, excluding those that were subsequently overprinted or surcharged, as listed by General Du Four in 'Cinquante Ans D'Histoire Postale', and drawn from official and other sources. But as the General warns, these numbers have to be treated with caution and in many cases, as has now been confirmed by study of Waterlow's file copy sheets, understate the true figure. This is particularly true of the figures given for the unoverprinted 1910 and 1915 issues which are undoubtedly far too low.

Belgian Congo

26A	Nov. 1894	1fr violet	État Indépendant	120,000)
26Aa		1fr lilac	État Indépendant	inc. lilac)



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26	(1900)	1fr carmine	État Indépendant	292,000
36B	Jan. 1909	1fr carmine	Congo Belge Brussels	1,000
36L	Jan. 1909	1fr carmine	Congo Belge local	39,100
46	Jan. 1909	1fr carmine	Congo Belge typo	72,900
46P	Mar. 1909	1fr carmine	Princes unoverprinted	100
46PB	Mar. 1909	1fr carmine	Princes Brussels	250
46PT	Mar. 1909	1fr carmine	Princes typo	4,650
60	Jan. 1910	1fr carmine	Bilingual	190,000
70	Nov. 1915	1fr olive	Bilingual	90,000
78	May 1918	1fr+1fr olive	Red Cross	50,000
91	July 1921	1fr carmine	Recuperation overprint (on 60)	162,000
101	Jan. 1922	10c/1fr olive	Boma surcharge (on 70)	112,500

Ruanda Urundi

15	July 1916	1fr olive	Ruanda Tombeur (on 70)	1,150
22	July 1916	1fr olive	Urundi Tombeur (on 70)	1,150
34	Nov. 1916	1fr olive	Est Africain (on 70)	170,000
42	May 1918	1fr+1fr olive	A.O. on Red Cross	50,000

Note: The 1fr violet, lilac and carmine of 1894 to 1900 were not separate issues in the sense of being the subject of separate decrees by the Postal Ministry, but rather were shade changes of the same issue. The changes were so marked that they have always been regarded as separate stamps.

Plate combinations

1894	I1+A1	Original frame and centre plates
1900	I2+A2	Frame lay marks added; centres re-entered
1910	III1+A3	New frame plate; centre lay marks added
	III1+A4	Centres re-entered
1915	III1+A4	
	II2+A5	Frames retouched; centres re-entered
	II3+A5	Frames re-entered (EAA overprint only)
	II4+A5	Frames re-entered
	II5+A5	Frames re-entered
	II6+A5	Frames re-entered
	II6+A6	Centres re-entered
	III+A7	New frame plate; centres re-entered

There have been the following changes from the nomenclature first introduced by Du Four:

- (1) For the 1894 violet, Du Four listed two states of frame plate I, the second



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(I2) caused when a scratch crossing nos 43 and 44 was partly burnished. It is now known that no burnishing took place (see Bulletin 35); even if it had, it would not now be regarded as creating a new state of the plate. Du Four's I1 and I2 have therefore been renamed I1, and his I3 (the frame plate of the 1900 carmine stamps) has been renamed I2.

(2) Du Four was not aware of the separate combinations II4+A5 and II6+A5 (see Bulletins 21 and 32), and described II5 as II4 and II6 as II5.

(3) He originally believed A7 to be a new plate rather than a re-entry of A6, and therefore described III+A7 as III+B, though this was corrected in the page of Errata which accompanied the published book.

Identifying the plate combinations

1900. Princes printings can be recognised by the brighter shade of the frames and by the centres which are brownish-black rather than grey-black as in the 1900 issue. Princes typo stamps can also be recognised by constant varieties in the overprinting plate - see page 10 of part 1.

1910. Since there are only slight differences between the two centre plates, the best way to differentiate III+A3 and III+A4 is by shade. Stamps from III+A3 are pale to deep carmine or carmine-red, while those from III+A4 are lake-carmine or carmine-lake. III+A4 is uncommon without the 1921 overprint.

1915. The 1fr olive of 1915 is a complicated stamp which went through 8 plate combinations. Identifying them is not, however, as difficult as might be supposed.

The first place to look is 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 III+A4. If they are continuous and thickened a little unevenly by retouching, it is II2+A5. If they or other parts of the top frameline show signs of doubling, the frame plate is II3, II4, II5 or II6. If the circle and scrolls are clear and neat the combination is III+A7, which is indicated also by fine, clear centres unlike the increasingly corroded centres of A4 to A6. If a stamp could be either III+A4 or III+A7, but shows sections of vertical guideline in the left margin, then it is definitely III+A4.

The shades of the frames can sometimes give a little help. III+A4 are greenish olive, the later combinations range from pale to yellow olive, and III+A7 are a constant olive. II5+A5 tends to be a slightly yellower shade than II6+A5, while II4+A5 is more olive, ie closer to III+A4.



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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 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.

It therefore remains to distinguish II3+A5 to II6+A5. II3+A5 is easy, because it is found only with the EAA overprint and shows some doubling of the horizontal framelines on all positions, unlike the other combination found with this overprint, namely II2+A5. To distinguish II4, II5 and II6, shade can be a guide, but to be certain of identification the stamp has to be positioned (which is quite easy given the amount of centre plate corrosion) and then compared with the corresponding position on reference sheets. Each of the three frame plate states shows different degrees of doubling or thickening, particularly in the vertical framelines, with the later states tending to show more doubling. The differences on some positions - particularly between II5 and II6 - can however be very slight.

Those with complete sheets which show doubling 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 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 plate is II6.

Varieties

The following sections list the varieties of plate combination, shade, overprint and perforation known for each issue of the 1 franc. The list covers 'normal' stamps only; errors and curiosities such as inverted overprints and imperf-between pairs are excluded.

The list is based on my own collection and that of Ray Keach. If members have varieties which are not on the list I would be glad to hear of them so that the list can be updated and made as comprehensive as possible.

Shades of stamps or surcharges are given only where shade varieties are considered to be significant, and are abbreviated thus:

ca=carmine li=lilac vi=violet

The middle column indicates the overprint or surcharge type. For handstamped Congo Belge overprints, B = Brussels, L = Local. For Tombeur RUANDA and URUNDI overprints, K = Kigali, G = Grysolle and H = Havre. For



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the nomenclature of EAA overprints, see page 11 of part 1 and Bulletin 46.

For details of the perforation varieties, see page 13 of part 1. Each perforation variety is followed by a two-letter code in brackets. This code gives my judgement of the relative scarcity of the variety in question. The first letter indicates the scarcity of unused copies of the stamp, the second the scarcity of postally used copies. Stamps cancelled by favour or with forged cancels are not taken into account in arriving at the scarcity factor for used stamps. The codes are as follows:

A: Very common
 B: Common
 C: Fairly uncommon
 D: Scarce
 E: Rare
 X: Probably unknown

1894 violet

I1+A1 p14(BB), p15(BB), p12-14(DD), p14½-15(BC)

1894 lilac

I1+A1 li p15(DB)
 I1+A1 ca-li p14(DB), p15(ED), p12-14(ED)

1900 carmine

I2+A2 p13½(DA), p14(DB), p15(DB), p16(DB), p12-14(EC)
 I2+A2 Princes p14(EX)

1909 Congo Belge handstamp

I1+A1 vi	B2	p14½-15(DX)
I1+A1 vi	B6	p14½-15(EX)
I1+A1 vi	L1	p14½-15(DX)
I1+A1 vi	L2	p14½-15(DX)
I1+A1 ca-li	B1	p14(EX)
I2+A2	B1	p15(DE)
I2+A2	B2	p14(DE), p15(DE), p16(CE)
I2+A2	B5	p13½(DE), p15(DE), p16(CE)
I2+A2	B6	p13½(DE), p16(DE)
I2+A2	B7	p13½(DE)



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I2+A2	L1	p13½(CA), p16(CC)
I2+A2	L2	p13½(DC), p16(DD)
I2+A2	L3	p13½(DD), p15(DD)
I2+A2	L4	p13½(CB), p16(DD)
I2+A2	L5	p13½(CB), p15(ED), p16(DD)
I2+A2	L6	p13½(DD), p16(DD)
I2+A2	L7	p13½(CB), p16(DD)
I2+A2 Princes	B2	p14(EX)
I2+A2 Princes	B5	p14(EX)

Forged overprints are common. The following combinations were reported by Du Four but have not been confirmed by Ray Keach or myself:

I1+A1 vi	B4, L4	I1+A1 li	B6, L1, L5, L7
I2+A2	L8		

1909 Congo Belge typo

I2+A2	p13½(BA), p15(DD), p16(CE)
I2+A2 Princes	p14(DC)

1910 bilingual

III+A3	p14(AA), p15(CB)
III+A4	p14(CX)

1915 bilingual

III+A4	p13½(DD), p14(BA), p15(CB)
II2+A5	p14(BA)
II4+A5	p14(EC)
II5+A5	p13½(DD), p14(BA), p15(EE)
II6+A5	p14(CC)
II6+A6	p14(CC)
III+A7	p14(CB), p15(DD)

1918 Red Cross

III+A7	p14(AC)
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1921 Recuperation

I2+A2	Typo	p13½(DX)
I2+A2 Princes	Typo	p14(EX)
III+A3		p14(AA), p15(BB)
III+A4		p14(BA), p15(CB)

1922 Boma

II4+A5	p14(DE)
II5+A5	p14(AC)
II6+A5	p14(CC)

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Forged surcharges are common: I have examples on III1+A4, II2+A5, II5+A5, II6+A5 and II6+A6 (all p14).

1916 Tombeur (Ruanda and Urundi)

III+A4	K	p15(EE)
II2+A5	G	p14(EX)
III+A4	H	p14(CX)

There are many forgeries.

1916 Est Africain

II2+A5	S	p14(DE)
II2+A5	L1(.)	p14(BE)
II2+A5	L1(o)	p14(AB)
II3+A5	L1(o)	p14(DE)
II3+A5	L2	p14(BB)

1918 Red Cross AO

III+A7	p14(AC)
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This gives a total of 87 varieties of the 1fr.

GUIDES TO POSITIONING

The following pages assume that the reader has a complete sheet of the plate combination he wishes to reconstruct, and will make his own plating notes as he studies individual positions. The guides do not list all the constant plate varieties, but describe the more important ones, particularly the 'generic' varieties which appear in more than one position in the sheet. They also describe the more difficult positions in each sheet where the plater is most likely to experience problems.

I1+A1 and I2+A2

I will take these two combinations together, since the great majority of plate varieties are in the frames rather than the centres, and frame plates I1 and I2 are the same apart from the addition of lay marks in I2 in the form of a vertical line between 38,39,43 and 44, and a dot between 8,9,13 and 14.

A number of 'generic' varieties (ie varieties found in more than one position) make these stamps quite easy to position. There is prominent vertical doubling of both left and right column bases in 6 and 41 (6 is Balasse V6), and of the right base only in 7,11 and 42. There is slight doubling of the right base in 3,5,9,10,12,13,16,17,21,23,27 and 36. The leftmost vertical line in the left base is doubled in 6,7,11,12 and 29. The right vertical frame is doubled in 3,9,14,37,47 and 49 (49 is Balasse V8). The centre top framelines are markedly doubled in 35 (Balasse V7); the inner of them is partly doubled in 5. The horizontal lines to the left or right of ETAT are doubled in 4,23 and 36. The ANT of INDEPENDANT is doubled horizontally in the bottom row, positions 46 to 50. In numerous positions

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there are signs of doubling in the circle round the upper right 1. Doubling is visible inside the upper left 1 in 4, 20 and 34.

Of the centre plate varieties, the best known is the doubling of the native's spear in position 1 (Balasse V1), present in both A1 and A2. In 30, 31 and 32 of A2 there is a transfer roller flaw in the form of a black spot near the top of the mountain above the middle of the elephant's back. In A1 several positions show one or two black dots under the tip of the elephant's trunk, and others show faint vertical guidelines usually towards the left of the centre plate vignette.

The following positions are relatively difficult. In 15 there is doubling of the whorl under NGO and of the upper right circle, both of these features being found also in other positions; in addition, in A2, there are faint near-vertical black scratches in the right margin close to the frame. In 24 there is slight doubling of the vertical line to the right of the right FRANC, and (in A1 only) a vertical black guideline rising from the middle of the elephant's tail. In 25 there is a faint coloured horizontal line above the upper left corner, in A1 dots under the trunk and a short vertical black guideline through the left UN, and in A2 a black near-vertical scratch towards the bottom of the right margin. In 26 there is doubling of the upper right circle and the whorl under NGO, and doubling (most visible at the right end) under the upper but not the lower flange of the right column base. In 40 there is a horizontal coloured guideline in the right margin, joined to the frameline just above the top of the 'shell'; this line is hardly visible in I1+A1, which can be distinguished instead by the triangle of black dots above the left of the two trees under the trunk.

III+A3 and III+A4

The frame plate has lay marks in the form of a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44 and a dot between 8, 9, 13 and 14. Centre plate A3 has a vertical line in the same position and a dot between 13 and 14; in A4 the dot is still present but the line appears to have been erased.

Stamps in the first row, positions 1 to 5, can be identified by a transfer roller flaw on the outer right frameline. It takes the form of two flat 'bubbles' on the frame, one level with the FR and the other with the AN of FRANK. Interestingly, there are similar flaws in the bottom row, positions 46 to 50, but here the lower bubble has broken open and (in 46 to 49) forms a short line leaving the frame at an angle opposite the L of FRANK. It seems that part of the right frameline, in relief on the transfer roller, came adrift at these points, and that row 10 was impressed immediately after or immediately before row 1 - probably the latter, because slight traces of the flaw can still be seen on positions 6 to 9.

Row 10 of the frame plate also contains three notable varieties in the form of horizontal lines 2 to 3mm long scored in the bottom margin under the BEL of BELGISCH. There is one line under 48 (Balasse V9), two under 46 (Balasse V10) and three under 50 (Balasse V11). The lines seem to have been engraved deliberately, but it is not known why. There is a similar line, but vertical rather than horizontal, in the left margin of position 1.

For the other positions of the sheet, there are numerous frame plate varieties to assist positioning. In 6, 16, 25, 38, 39, 40 and 49 there is doubling of the upper left corner which takes the form of dots or short dashes just outside the corner. There is doubling in the left of the circle round the upper left 1 in 6, 24, 25, 38, 39,

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40 and 49. There is doubling in the left 'shell' in 6, 16, 26, 29, 35, 38 and 39. There are dots or other marks around the little circle to the left of the upper left 1 in 9, 14 (A4 only), 21 and 35. In addition, numerous positions show sections of frame plate guideline, sometimes doubled, in the top or left margins. The most useful of the latter are the short sections of vertical lines at varying distances from the left column base.

41 shows doubling of the left column base. This is the only position on III (and II2) which shows such doubling, and it is important for the plater to be aware of it since otherwise it could lead him to believe that the stamp comes from II3 to II6 where doubling like this is present on almost all positions.

Centre plate varieties are less numerous than those of the frame plate. Balasse V1, the doubled spear, is till partly visible in position 1. In 46 there are three horizontal lines above the head of the elephant (Balasse V2), prominent in A3 but barely visible in A4. In 6 there is a curved black line 2½mm above the head (Balasse V3), but only in late printings of A3. In 43, 44 and 45 of A4 there is a roller flaw in the form of a black spot against the left of the trunk a little above the tusks (Balasse V4); a similar spot, but fainter, is visible in 41. In 30, 31 and 32 the spot on the mountain described above for A2 is still visible, though only faintly in position 30 of A4.

I classify two positions in these combinations as difficult. In 12 there is a coloured dot in the E of LGE. In 17 there is a black dot, quite faint in A4, in the triangular space between the elephant's trunk and his ear, a little to the left of the centre of this space.

II2+A5

Frame plate II2 was formed by retouching of the outer lines of the top central ornament. There was no re-entry of the plate, so that all the frame plate varieties described above for III1 are still present (though the guidelines are somewhat fainter), and are the main aid to positioning single stamps.

In the re-entered centre plate A5, Balasse V4 (the spot against the trunk) is still visible, and Balasse V1 can just be detected in the form of a dot adjacent to the bottom end of the spear. A new transfer roller variety, an elongated vertical spot towards to bottom of the left margin, appears in positions 5 to 9. The centre plate does not show signs of doubling but shows numerous flaws in the form of dots and scratches which were not present on A4. The centre plate lay mark in the form of a dot between 13 and 14 is still present on A5.

The more difficult positions of II2+A5 are the following. In 17 there are four or five black dots above the trees under the trunk. In 19 there is one such dot. In 22 there is one such dot, a faint vertical guideline against the left 'shell', and slight doubling of the curved line to the left of the top central circle. In 28 there are two dots placed diagonally under the trunk, and black corrosion in the bottom margin under BELGISCH.

II3+A5

This combination, found only with the EAA overprint, shows many of the frame and centre plate varieties found in II2+A5. In particular it shows Balasse V4 and V9 to 11, the numerous doubling marks around the upper left corner, and

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the centre plate roller flaw on positions 5 to 9. However it does not show the frame plate roller flaws on the right frameline in rows 1 and 10.

In addition II3 shows extensive doubling of the column bases (Balasse V12). The left base is doubled in 1, 2, 3, 20, 21, 26, 32, 36, 41, 43 and 48, and the right base in 8, 9, 10, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 25, 28, 29, 30, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 47 and 48. Both bases are trebled in 46 - Balasse V13.

Apart from the Balasse varieties already mentioned, there is not much to note about the centre plate: the extensive corrosion to the left of the trunk which is present in II4+A5 to II6+A6 has not yet made its appearance.

I classify only one position as difficult - 28, which as in II2+A5 is characterised by two dots under the trunk and scattered dots in the bottom margin under BELGISCH.

II4+A5 to II6+A6

These combinations still show Balasse V4 and V9 to 11, but much more faintly. The frame plate lay marks are present as is the centre plate dot between 13 and 14.

Apart from additional doubling of the framelines, the main change from II3+A5 is the development of black corrosion dots, dense on many positions, less so on others, in the area around the end of the trunk and the two palm trees on the left. Caused no doubt by the plate becoming wet, a clear boundary to the corrosion indicates that in many positions it was burnished out, but not in the immediate vicinity of the palms and trunk since that would have risked burnishing out part of the design itself.

This corrosion is the key to plating and positioning individual stamps, since it enables the position to be found quite quickly, and once the position is known the plate combination can be determined by comparing the doubling or thickening of the framelines with the corresponding position on reference sheets. As noted above in the section on identifying plate combinations, in some positions the differences between II5 and II6 are rather slight. The best places to look are the left vertical frameline, which tends to be thicker in A6, and the vertical lines in the left column base and bottom central ornament, which can be doubled in A6 but not in A5 (or sometimes vice versa). To distinguish II5 from II6 it is essential to have reference sheets of both available; if the stamp's position is known, but its frameline doubling does not match either II5 or II6, then by deduction it can be assumed to be II4+A5, a combination which is rather scarcer than the others.

Because frameline doubling is so extensive in these stamps, it does not usually help much in finding a stamp's sheet position, though it is useful for confirming the position and identifying the plate combination. But it is worth noting the positions where the frames show trebling (Balasse V13). The left base is trebled in 47 and the right base in 29, 30 and 46. In II6 but not II5 there is also trebling of the left base in 48.

Identifying stamps from II4+A5 to II6+A6 can be a long haul, but the extent of frame plate doubling and centre plate corrosion means that no positions is classified as difficult.

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III+A7

Although centre plate A7 was a re-entry of A6 rather than a new plate, most of the flaws in A6, including Balasse V4 and the corrosion round the palm trees, have completely disappeared, and the plate presents a clean appearance. The lay mark dot between 13 and 14 is still present. The new frame plate III has lay marks in the same places as before: a line between 38,39,43 and 44, and a dot between 8,9,13 and 14.

The cleanness of the plates means that these stamps - and particularly the 1915 issue as opposed to the Red Cross and AO issues - can be difficult to position. Of great assistance however is a frame plate roller flaw which affects nearly half the positions of the sheet. This is a thickening of a line of horizontal shading in the right vertical panel, level with the top of the N of FRANK. If this line is thickened, the stamp comes from rows 1,2,3,9 or 10, or from position 36. This is another indication that for some reason the transfer roller did not go down the sheet from top to bottom, but impressed the bottom rows first and then moved to the top rows starting with row 1.

There are not many frame plate varieties. The right ends of the flanges (particularly the upper flange) of the right column base are thickened in 2,3,4,6,7,10,36,37,41 and 47 and doubled in 1. The flanges of the left column base are thickened in 16,17,36 and 41. There is a horizontal line - possibly a doubling mark - crossing the right side of the middle of the right base in 8.

In the Red Cross and AO stamps, but not the 1915 stamps, there is faint but discernible corrosion in most positions, in various places in the margins outside the framelines. These dots make characteristic patterns and are the reason why Red Cross and AO stamps are easier to position.

On the centre plate there are fine horizontal lines above the elephant's head in 1,2,4 and 5 (1 and 5 being classified as Balasse V5). In many positions there are one or dots between the trunk and the two trees, sometimes a useful aid to positioning. Otherwise centre plate flaws are few and far between.

The most difficult position in III+A7 is 29, identifiable by two tiny dots just above the left of the two trees under the trunk.
