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BULLETIN 110

BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

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DECEMBER 1998

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BRIAN P HUDSON

It is with the greatest regret that we have to announce the sudden death of Brian Hudson on 8 December.

For the past five years he very bravely endured the effects and treatment of kidney failure. He had two transplants, the second of which appeared to be a complete success and he had every expectation of full recovery. When I last visited him, five days before his death, he was extremely cheerful, completely optimistic for his future and full of life.

He was a past President of the BCSC, our General Sales Secretary, our Auctioneer and a member of our Expert Committee. His death is a bitter blow to the study circle.

His great philatelic interests were the Mols stamps and the cancellations of the 1886-1960 Period. He was expert in both areas and was always very ready to share his knowledge with others.

He and his wife graciously extended their hospitality to us to hold study circle meetings in their home on several occasions and then entertained us royally.

We have written to Elisabeth, his widow, expressing our condolences to her and to their daughters.

RHK

PRESENT SALE and FUTURE SALES

Due to the sudden death of Brian Hudson, our General Sales Secretary and Auctioneer, we have had to substitute an Auctioneer for the sale set forth in this Bulletin. Please send bids to L. G. Green, 29 New Road, Esher, Surrey KT10 9PG, England, UK to arrive on or before February 28, 1999

A sale is planned for the March Bulletin. However those members who have, in the past, submitted stamps for sale are requested not to forward any material at this time. As soon as new officers are elected and a replacement for Brian Hudson has been named we will advise the membership

of the person, time and place to which material may be sent.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

A reminder that subscriptions are now due:

		Pay to:
Britain	£5.00	S. S. Smith
Belgium	300 FB	E. Hoorens
Rest of Europe	£6.00	S. S. Smith
USA	\$11.00	E. Lavitt
Rest of the World	£8.00	S. S. Smith

Addresses:

S. S. Smith *Lychgates, Pinfold Hill, Curbar Calver, Hope Valley S32 3YL England;*
E. Hoorens *Ave. Eugene Ysaye 105, Boite 1 1070 Brussels, Belgium;*
E. M. Lavitt *P O Box 900 Rockville CT 06066*

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Donald Landis	Spain
Christian Vandebossche	France
Terry Garcia	U. K.

PRESIDENT'S AND EDITORS NOTES

I regret the delay in the production of the December Bulletin.

The death of Brian Hudson had its effect on the publication and a bout of the flu (which still persists) literally rendered me "hors de combat".

In any event here it is, and thanks to the assistance of Mrs. Hudson, who found the auction lots and forwarded them to Mr. Keach, the auction is included.

I shall miss Brian. His understanding of his computer was awesome. As our auctioneer he was able, at the final date, to press a command and immediately produce a list of successful bidders and the amounts due. His knowledge as a "Plater" is well known to us all. His collection of cancellations was a pleasure to all who shared them. But also, importantly, I shall miss his subtle quiet humor, his great good spirit in the face of much physical adversity and his roaming, inquisitive mind. He will be sorely missed, not only as a philatelist but as a person.

EML

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THE GREEN CROSS CANCELLATION

The following is a reproduction of the response portion of a 1910 postal card. As is well known cards as well as stamps were overprinted CONGO BELGE in 1909. Then, in 1910, rates were reduced and cards were revalued by overprinting sometimes by handstamps and in other instances by typography.

Lurch in his work *Belgian Colonies Postal Stationery* fully describes the revaluation. He states, with respect to the card here shown, "the 10c reply (response) card (was) kept intact but the destination restriction was obliterated with a wavy line."

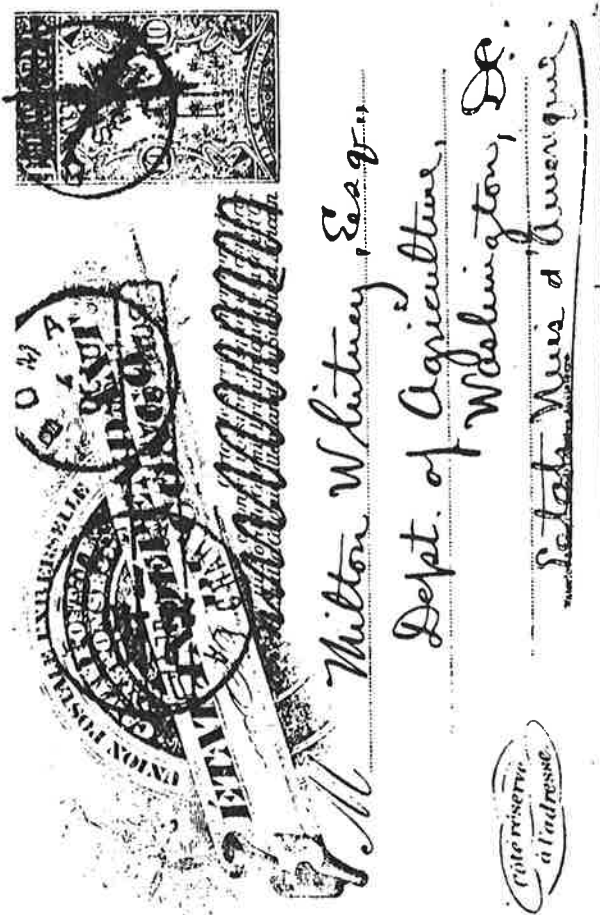
The overprint on this card is Local 6 and the obliteration is handstamped.

Further, as is well known, these response cards were frequently broken up, the handstamp "carte incomplete" (sometimes with the name of the town added as in "Boma Carte Incomplete" and the individual halves sold over the counter for regular postal use.)

Of particular note in the illustrated card is the cross cancellation (in green crayon) OVER the date cancellation BOMA 16 Sep 1911 (which appears on the "stamp") and a subsequent Boma cancellation of 4 Oct 1911.

Dated at the "American Consulate General Oct 3, 1911 BOMA KONGO", the sender has enlightened us (some 85 years later) by his message which reads: "My dear Mr. Whitney-Here is a crazy card for your curiosity collection. The local surcharge BOMA CARTE INCOMPLETE is inverted and the card was prematurely cancelled Sept 16, 1911. Then this cancellation was crossed out with a green pencil and the card sold over the counter today. Sincerely yours John W. Dye"

Mr. Keach reports that he has seen other cards with the green cross obliteration but they are certainly not common. Their mysterious use is now explained.



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EML

American Consulate General
OCT | 3 1911
 BOMA, KONGO.
BOMA CARTE INCOMPLETE

My dear Mr. Whitney,
 Here is a crazy card
 for your curiosity collection.
 The local surcharge
 BOMA CARTE INCOMPLETE
 is inverted and the card was
 prematurely cancelled Sept 16, 1911. Then
 this cancellation was crossed out
 with a green pencil and the card
 sold over the counter to-day.
 Sincerely yours
 John W. Dye

**IMPORTANT NOTICE IN RE:
PAST SALES AND SALE RECORDS**

I have been asked by Mrs. Hudson to sort out Brian's BCSC affairs and have written or will be writing individually to those members known to have submitted lots for the sale, Messrs. Barden, Deruyck, Hordies, Maulding, Morvay and Trahar.

Will all other members please inform me and give full details as to the following:

- 1) If they have sent stamps to Brian for sale, either directly or through our Auction Sales, or for any other reason;
- 2) If they have any stamps belonging to Brian or offered for sale through him and not paid for;
- 3) If they are owed money by Brian;
- 4) If they owe money to Brian;
- 5) If there are any other matters between them and Brian that need to be dealt with.

The matter is urgent. Please reply immediately to R. H. Keach, 25 Kingswood Rd., Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5EE, England UK.

RHK

LITERATURE

SERVICE DES POSTES DU CONGO BELGE ET DU RUANDA URUNDI - Rapports annuels 1908-1958 - C. Stockmans and R. Gallant - 152 A4 pages.

The book consists of reprints of the Congo Post Office's annual reports for the fifty year period. Most of the information is statistical; the numbers of different types of mail handled by the post office, the number of telegrams, postal orders and the like, even the numbers of vans, cycles and canoes operated by the post office, all provide fascinating reading but of relatively little importance to the stamp collector. However there are many things reported that are of greater relevance: the opening of new post offices and their changes in status, the opening of new air routes etc., even the reports of accidents to the mail. Thoroughly recommended- Price £20 or 1200 FB plus postage

CONGO BELGE - SERVICE DES POSTES - Instruction Generale - Premier Tome 1948 - 66 pages

The book is a reprint of the original instructions sent to post offices and is a typical civil service document with explicit instructions on post office duties and responsibilities, with the equipment with which the different grades of office have to be furnished, down to pens, pencils and inks, etc. etc. A list of the then post offices, each with its status, the principal office to which it was responsible and the offices which it supervised is included. This is not a book to be read from cover to cover but to enjoy in small doses. Price £10 or 600 FB plus postage.

ORGANISATION DE SERVICE DES POSTES AU 15 AOUT 1957

A large scale map (94X82cm) of the Congo positioning all post offices and the methods of communication, air, motor vehicle, bicycle, foot, steamer or canoe, between them in 1957, Of great help to the cancellation collector and postal historian and well worthy of framing and mounting on the stamp-room wall. Price £4.30 plus postage and packing (a cardboard cylinder unless requested to be folded).

Supplies of the above are expected early in 1999 and may be ordered in advance from R. H. Keach, 25 Kingswood Rd., Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5EE, England UK

Belgian members please obtain their copies from Roger Gallant.

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NOTES on the PRINTING of ENGRAVED STAMPS by WATERLOW & SONS Ltd.

R.H. Keach

(The following article first appeared in The JOURNAL of the WATERLOW STUDY CIRCLE in its December 1982 (WSC Journal Number 6) and again in July 1998. Your editor has found membership in that circle to be most instructive and worthwhile. For American BCSC members who are interested in furthering their study of the Waterlow issues they can contact BCSC member Mel Spinella 20695 Via Belarmino, Yorba Linda CA 92887 and for members in other countries they can contact Colin Hoffman, Treasurer W.S.C., 9 Oaker Ave, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2XH England for further information. The present annual subscription is £8.00 or \$12.00 US funds. Ed.)

I had the pleasure and privilege of a talk with Mr. Charles Lee, a retired Copperplate Printer, who, from 1937 to 1962, was employed by Waterlow & Sons Ltd. Mr. Lee gave me much interesting information on the printing of stamps and this needs to be recorded.

The Hand Operated Copperplate Press

Waterlow used an old type of hand operated printing press for die proofs and for some miniature sheets. This may be the press illustrated at page 180 of *Fundamentals of Philately* by L.N. & M. Williams."

The machine basically resembles an old fashioned washing mangle, but with two steel rollers (called 'cylinders'), intermeshed and turned by a large wheel or six-armed 'star-wheel', geared to the cylinders. Between the cylinders was nipped a plank of steel (or, with older machines, a plank of mahogany with steel inset), on which the die or small printing plate was laid so that, when the cylinders were turned, the plank moved backwards or forwards. Around the upper cylinder were wrapped five or six thicknesses of blanket to provide a soft, flexible pad behind the paper to force it into the crevices engraved in the die and collect the ink embedded therein. Downward pressure on the upper cylinder was exerted by a heavy bolt above the bearing at each end of the cylinder. Separating the bolt from each bearing were four or five steel blocks; and between the blocks there was a total of 20 to 40 thicknesses of card "to visiting card" thickness. When the bolts were tightened down hard, the thicknesses of card gave some small degree of resilience to the

cylinders. Spring loading of the upper cylinder was not used.

The die or small printing plate from which the print was to be taken was placed on a separate 'jot plate', normally kept warm (but not hot) by gas. When the die was warm enough to keep the ink fluid, the surface of the die was inked by a blanket-covered roller or dabber, ensuring that all the engraved crevices were filled with ink. The surface of the die was cleaned with pads of muslin, and the last traces of the greasy ink removed from the surface by a cloth dampened with a weak caustic potash solution. Hand wiping of the die was done only for special 'art work', and not for stamps or bank notes.

The die was moved to the plank of the press, and a lightly dampened sheet of paper, usually thicker than stamp printing paper, but sometimes of thin "India" paper with a thicker backing of French plate paper or vellum, placed on it. The wheel was turned, and the sandwich of blanket, paper, die and plank drawn between the cylinders. The paper was stripped off the die to give the finished print.

The Continuous Rotary Press

The continuously operated rotary printing press, used by Waterlow for very many years, operated on generally the same principle as the hand operated press.

The 'plate' (upper) cylinder, about 2' 3" overall diameter, had the curved printing plate fixed to it. The 'make ready' (lower cylinder) was pressed against the plate cylinder by long, heavy steel rods, the tension in which could be adjusted: the paper passed between the cylinders in order to extract the ink from the plate.

Forming an integral part of the make-ready cylinder was the 'gripper', a moveable bar, extending for the full length of the cylinder, recessed in it and mechanically operated to grip a sheet of paper at a particular moment in the cycle of the cylinder to ensure that the paper was precisely located on the printing plate. The area of the make-ready cylinder in contact with the sheet of paper was covered with two thicknesses of still card about 1 ½ mm thick, 20 to 40 thicknesses of calico and, on top, a layer of American cloth in contact with the paper; this, in place of the blanket used with the hand operated press, provided the necessary resilience to force the paper into the crevices in the plate.

The plate cylinder was heated by means of gas or electricity to keep the ink on the plate soft but not liquid.

In operation, the printing plate on the plate cylinder, after leaving the make-ready cylinder, met the ink roller, which was covered with felt, kept saturated with ink. After inking the plate passed successively under the two leather or plastic covered cleaning rollers which removed the surplus ink from the face of the plate. Each cleaning roller was itself kept clean continuously by a scraper, which wiped off the ink. Ink on the scrapers was removed periodically by the Machine Manager, using a 'push knife' (like a normal paint scraper with a 3" wide blade) and the ink was then returned to the ink duct feeding ink to the inking roller. The last vestiges of ink were removed by bands, almost of the same width as the length of cylinders. The calico bands were rather like roller towels, but not continuous, and ran from one elevated spool to another, the movement not being continuous but in jerks by adjustable ratchets. Two successive such bands passed under pads gently pressed against the printing plate; the pads had a slight reciprocating movement along the axis of the cylinder. There followed a third similar calico band but moistened with soda ash solution to give final cleaning of the surface of the plate, and then a final calico band to remove all moisture left by the soda ash band. With the printer's expertise, the surface of the printing plate was sometimes left moist after the soda ash band, to improve the quality of the printing. After this last calico band, the prepared printing plate again met the make-ready cylinder with a new sheet of paper between them.

The Printing Plate

According to Mr. Lee, all Waterlow engraved plates were copper and not steel as was used by some printers. The copper plates were chromium plated to make them more durable. Before chromium plating was an established commercial process the plates were iron plated (referred to as 'steel plating after plating') and Mr. Lee is convinced that steel plates were never used by Waterlow. This is at variance with information given in the book *GUATEMALA 2*, where it is stated that the Waterlow Guatemala plates, inspected before they were destroyed, were a mixture of copper and steel. This could be wrong: iron plated plates would look exactly like steel plates and only by cutting through the iron skin

would the underlying copper be seen. The early stamps of Guatemala, and of other 'Waterlow countries', may well all have been printed from copper plates, some iron plated, some not.

As indicated earlier, the plate was curved to a radius of about 13" to match the plate cylinder. A half-inch of the leading edge of the plate was turned over at an angle of 90 degrees, and this 'flange' fitted into a slot in a 'chuck', a thick steel or brass plate that fitted snugly onto the surface of the plate cylinder. The flange was secured within the slot by a long bar filling the remaining space in the slot. The trailing edge of the plate was secured to the chuck by countersunk head screws. The chuck was clamped securely to the plate cylinder. When a plate was required to be repaired by retouching or re-entry, the chromium (or iron) plating was removed chemically, the plate flattened and the repairs effected. The plate was then recurved and replated.

Operating the Rotary Press

In addition to the printer, two assistants, a 'layer-on' and a 'taker-off', were required to operate the rotary press. As the name indicates, the 'layer-on' fed the sheets of paper to the press. The 'taker-off' removed the sheets one by one when printed, very briefly inspected them to make sure that the machine was printing properly, added an interleaving sheet to prevent off-set of the design from the sheet beneath and laid them aside to dry.

The 'layer-on' had two most important functions:

(a) to ensure that there was always a sheet of paper between the printing plate and the make-ready cylinder, otherwise ink would be transferred to the cylinder and much time would be wasted in cleaning the machine before restarting; and ...

(b) to ensure that each sheet of paper was in precisely the right position to be held by the make-ready cylinder.

It was customary for the 'layer-on' to have two piles of paper - one on which the stamps were to be printed, and the other of waste paper: waste paper was fed to the machine when it was getting into operation and when there was any hitch in its operation: it was not possible to trip the machine and stop it suddenly.

The 'layer-on' took a sheet of paper from the pile and placed it on the 'lay-board', a wooden table sloping downwards towards the jaws of the cylinders of the press.

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For printing monochrome stamps, or the first colour of bi-coloured stamps, 'plain lay' was used: three stops were bolted onto the lay board, perhaps two at the back and one at the side, and these served to position precisely the sheet of paper for the 'gripper' to draw it onto the printing plate.

For the second printing of bi-coloured stamps with good registration of the two colours essential, great care was necessary in positioning the paper, on which the first colour had already been printed, on the lay board. Across the lay board was a 'lay-bar', adjustable in position on slides running along each side of the lay-board. On the lay-bar were 'lay-points', pointers bolted to the lay-bar, and adjustable in both position and height above the lay-board. The sheet of paper was positioned by the 'layer-on' on the lay board, under the lay-bar and with the lay-points immediately above predetermined points on the partly printed sheet of stamps such that the sheet was in precisely the correct position when automatically gripped by the 'gripper', and for the second colour to be properly registered relative to the first colour. The edges and corners of the frames of the stamps (if they were printed first) were used for locating under the lay-points, but it was found to be more satisfactory to engrave, on the first-printed plate, marks, usually a dot and a line, spaced well apart, and to use these for positioning the sheet under the lay-points.

These 'lay marks' are what we have previously called 'registration guide marks'. *(Examples of these marks may be seen on most of the Mols issues. A dot between positions 8, 9, 13 and 14 as well as a vertical line between 38, 39, 43 and 44 which may be seen in all three of the plate combinations of the 1900 10c carmine, are illustrative of this point. Lay marks are most helpful to the 'plater'. editor)*

The 'layer-on' positioned the partly printed sheet on the lay-board with one lay-point immediately above the lay-mark dot, the second lay-point above the lay-mark line, and held the sheet lightly until the paper was gripped by the 'gripper' and drawn into the press.

If the stamps were to be printed on watermarked paper and if the position of the watermark relative to the stamp was important (as for example in the case of the Great Britain 1939 high values with single GviR watermark), 'shadow-lay' was used. Into the lay-board was

inset a pane of glass, and under that a lamp, so that, with the paper on the lay-board, the watermark was clearly visible to the operator. The 'layer-on' could position the watermark accurately relative to the pre-set lay-points, and the watermarks then appeared in the middle of the stamps as required.

With expert operators and the printing press operating at top speed, about 5,000 sheets a day of monochrome stamps could be printed. For bi-coloured stamps, with the second colour positioned by 'pointing', the number would be reduced to about 2,300 sheets,

Paper

In the early days the paper had to be damped before printing, and then dried before gumming. In the past fifty years improved techniques have made it possible to print on to dry, ready-gummed paper, and this is now the normal procedure.

General

The calico rolls used for wiping ink from the printing plate were washed in Waterlow's own laundry and re-used.

For each printing press there were the two operators and the printer or Machine Manager. The printer was fully occupied with the one machine, making sure that the stamps were being properly printed, adjusting the speed of the press to the maximum possible for the ability of the operators, ensuring the supply of ink to the ink duct, removing surplus ink from the cleaning roller scraper, maintaining the correct temperature of the plate cylinder and adjusting the ratchets to provide a reasonably constant rate of feed of the various calico bands for cleaning the surface of the plate.

In printing the second colour of bi-coloured stamps, the pressure and heat of the printing plate produced some 'flattening' of the first impression. In Mr. Lee's time at Waterlow, printing of the vignettes (centres) first was preferred, but when the vignette was a head, the casements (frames) were printed first so that the lines of the head were as clear and sharp as possible.

RHK

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE BCK STAMPS

"Catalogue Officiel" lists four issues of these stamps (CP18 through CP49). We can expand on these listings as follows:

SECOND ISSUE:

The perforations are reported as 10; but I know of or have seen the following (and - of course - others probably exist):

Value		Perforations		
1 F		11	11,5	(1)
2 F	10,5	11		
3 F		11	11,5	(1)
4 F		11		(1)
5 F		11		(1)
10 F	10,5			
20 F	10	11		(1)
25 F		11		
50 F	10,5			(1)
100 F				
300 F	10,5			

(1) Colours may vary.

THIRD ISSUE:

Two values (at least) sometimes appear with a "KDL" overprint in a frame (in violet):

2K/2F
50K/50F



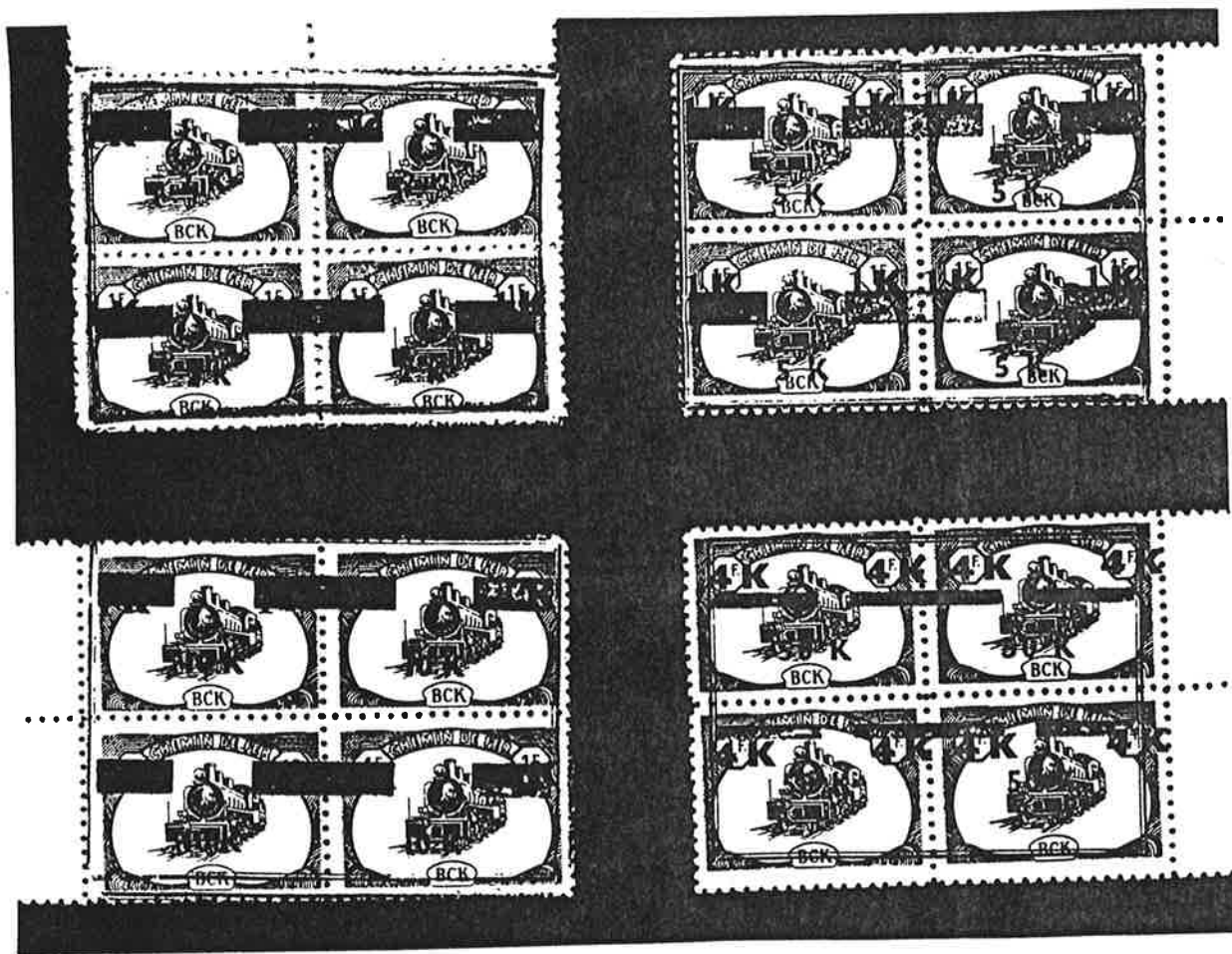
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FOURTH ISSUE:

The device used in overprinting these stamps was made by hand. It was of sufficient size to overprint 4 stamps at a time and the entire overprint was framed. The dimensions of the frames are:

Value	Length (in mm)	Height (in mm)
2K/1K	60	45 on the left, 42.5 on the right
5K/1K	62	45
5K/3K	62	45
5K/4K	62	45
10K/1K	62	45
10K/3K	62	45
50K/4K	58	42 (with thin bars)

Ergo: the seven stamps of this issue uses only four different overprints



Georges Celis

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B.C.K. receipt:

Compagnie du Chemin de fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga R. C. 919 Eville		N° du colis		P. C. N° 971 R. 99	
N° Wagon		BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION D'UN PETIT COLIS			
DESTINATAIRE: BANZA MIZIBU BP 1655 LUBUMBASHI					
STATION D'EXPÉDITION KABONGO				CODE CODE 0299	
STATION DE DESTINATION LUBUMBASHI				0019	
Marques N°	Emballage	Contenu	Poids Réel	Poids Taxé	
AD	jute	Haricot	43	50	
Distances			Taxes		
BCK	RE	BCK	RE	Total	
800	—	132	—	132	
Nom et adresse de l'expéditeur: BANZA MIZIBU KINE A KABONGO					
<i>J'exonère les Compagnies de transport des responsabilités</i>					
résultant de: Acc de remploi					
L'Expéditeur: (s) <i>[Signature]</i>					
Je déclare connaître et accepter sans réserve les cahiers des charges, règlements des transports et tarifs des organismes transporteurs et manutentionnaires qui interviennent dans l'acheminement de cette expédition jusqu'à destination:					
L'Expéditeur: (s) <i>[Signature]</i>					

1 stamp of 2k (CP n°36) with K.D.L. overprint, 6 stamps of 20 k (CP n°41), 1 stamp of 10k (CP n°47). Bag of beans (43 kg) sent from KABONGO to LUBUMBASHI. The cancellation reads "KABONGO KDL" (on 2 lines); the date seems to be 10.3.75; the bottom of the cancellation is illegible.

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