

BELGIAN CONGO SPECIALISTS' STUDY CIRCLE

Bulletin No. 9

January 1953

APOLOGY

The Secretary wishes to apologise for the lateness in the production of the current Bulletin but he has had many other things to do.

REPORT OF MEETING

The seventh meeting of the Study Circle was held on Saturday, November 29th, at 12, Avenue Mansions, Finchley Road, London, N.W.2., and there were present Mr. R.H. Keach (in the chair), Mrs. D.M. Green, and Messrs. O.C. Loader, E.R. Turner, A.G. Wood and J. Wright.

The Secretary announced with regret the death of Mr. J. Knight on Sunday, 23rd November. Mr. Knight was a founder member of the Study Circle and although his interest in stamps had declined in recent years he made valuable contributions to the section books and he was always interested in the activities of the Circle. Those members present who had known Mr. Knight personally expressed their appreciation of his kindness and goodwill and it was agreed that the Secretary should write expressing the Circle's sorrow and loss on Mr. Knight's death.

It was reported that the second Auction Lots had not yet finished their circulation but it was expected that the results of the sale would be known before the end of the year. As had been agreed at the previous meeting the circulating packet was making its last round.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. C.H. Compton, P.G. Cresswell, L.G. Green (who is abroad) and W.J. Thrasher.

Once again Major Corbisier de Meaultsart had sent a number of modern covers for distribution amongst members and these were available for those present. It was agreed that any not required by those present should be included in the circulating packet so that other members would have the opportunity of benefiting by this gift. The Secretary was instructed to write to Major Corbisier expressing our sincere appreciation of his continued kindness.

It was agreed that the 1 franc value of the Mols series should be considered at the next meeting and Mr. Wood volunteered to open the discussion. It was subsequently decided to hold the meeting at Mrs. Green's flat on Saturday, 7th February.

There being no other formal business, Mr. Keach opened the discussion on the 50 centimes value of the Mols series. He considered first the various issues from 1894 until 1922 and showed examples of most of the normal stamps including the more uncommon perforation varieties and a pair of the so-called colour trials of the 1894 issue, plate proofs of the 1915, 1918 Red Cross and A.O. issues together with the 1922 surcharge inverted. The second part of his talk was on the plate varieties and practically all the prominent ones were shown including a wide range of re-entries and "parasitic marks" on the 1894-1900 issue.

Other members then presented their material and this included complete sheets of nearly all issues and much interest was taken in these.

Of particular interest were two complete sheets of the 1900 issue one, a very early printing, without the diagonal scratch on No. 6 in the sheet and without

the smaller scratches above the big trees on No. 3 in the sheet.

SECOND POSTAL AUCTION

The following are the prices realized at the second Postal Auction. N.S. indicates that the lot was not sold.

Lot No. 1, 1/-d; 2, 3/6d; 3, 2/9d; 4, 4/6d; 5, N.S.; 6, 10/-d; 7, 10/6d; 8, N.S.; 9, N.S.; 10, £1. 4. 6d; 11, 15/-d; 12, 8/6d; 13, N.S.; 14, N.S.; 15, N.S.; 16, £1.16. Od; 17, N.S.; 18, 7/6d; 19, 2/3d; 20, 7/6d; 21, 8/-d; 22, 7/6d; 23, N.S.; 24, 2/3d; 25, N.S.; 26, N.S.; 27, 10/6d; 28, 2/3d; 29, £1. 9. Od; 30, 10/6d; 31, 3/6d; 32, 2/6d; 33 to 39 inclusive, N.S.; 40, 9/6d; 41, 9/6d; 42 to 47 inclusive, N.S.; 48, 4/-d; 49, N.S.; 50, 4/-d; 51, N.S.; 52, N.S.; 53, N.S.; 54, N.S.; 55, 12/6d.; 56, N.S.; 57, 2/-d, 58, 1/3d; 59, 9/-d; 60, 8d; 61, N.S.; 62, N.S.; 63, 1/9d; 64, 4/-d; 65, 4/6d; 66, 4/-d; 67, N.S.; 68, N.S.; 69, 10/-d; 70, 10/-d; 71, £1. 6. Od; 72, N.S. 73, N.S.; 74, £3. 7. 6d; 75, £2.12. 6d; 76, £1.6.Od; 77, £1. 6. Od; 78, N.S.; 79, N.S.; 80, 18/6d; 81, N.S.; 82, £4. 2. 6d; 83, £6. 5. Od; 84, £4.12. 6d.

The prices quoted for Lots 54 to 84 inclusive are subject to the purchasers' approval of the quality of the lots.

ALBINO PRINTS

Mr. Wood has sent the following extract from Collins & Watts Handbook, on the Stamps of New Zealand, Part 2, Page 1.

The varieties in this issue (1936-1947 Pictorials) with the double print, one albino, are of particular interest. Apart from the fact that the uncoloured impression may be seen when the stamp is held with the light falling on it at a particular angle, in some of these varieties the coloured print has a blurred appearance, due probably, to the effect of the uncoloured impression. The Albino print is sometimes more easily noticed in the selvedge of the sheet.

Mr. Wood suggests that the above may have some bearing on the blurred impressions of the 5 centime Mols mentioned by Mr. Thrasher.

5 CENTIMES OF 1910

Mr. Wood has translated an article which appeared in the Balasse Magazine No.15, concerning the above stamp and a copy of the translation is attached.

VADE MECUM DU COLLECTIONNEUR DE TIMBRES-POSTE
DE BELGIQUE ET COLONIES

The Secretary, with the very considerable help of Mr. Loader, has translated the section of M.Y. Burniat's book dealing with the Congo and a copy of this translation is attached.

RECENT AUCTION REALISATIONS

Harmer, 3 November, 1952

"Homeward" label on grey-blue paper, thinned ... £13. 0. Od
"Inland" stamped in black on white unused envelope ... £14. 0. Od

NEW ISSUES

Mr. John C. Fisher of 62, Oxford Street, has kindly given the following dates of issue of the first three series of flowers; the first series 20th May, 1952, the second series 25th August, 1952, and the third series 3rd November, 1952.

EXTRACTS FROM PERIODICALS

PHILATELISTE BELGE NO. 62, NOV. - DEC. 1952

Les Timbres du Congo Belge - by Dr. Avidon

Dr. Avidon's series of articles continues with a description of the early postal history and in particular the use of the Inland & Homeward labels.

ADDITIONS TO BALASSE CATALOGUE

The Secretary has a horizontal pair of Ruanda No. 121 with the overprint "a cheval" horizontally.

The Secretary has inspected a copy of Congo No. 64 type III centre, perforated 15, and there is no doubt at all about its existence.

Balasse Magazine No. 84 lists the following additions to the Catalogue:-

- 29C6 (Perforated 12) with imperforate margin, used.
- 64C1 Imperf. between, unused.
- 78C1 Imperf. between, unused.
- R47C1 Imperf. between, unused.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Study Circle will be on Saturday, 7th February, and Mrs. Green is once again allowing us to use her flat. Mr. Wood will talk on the 1 fr. value of the Mols series and members are asked to bring their stamps of this value.

ADDITIONAL NOTES
ON THE STUDY OF THE MOLS & VAN ENGELEN 5 CENTIMES STAMP
OF THE 1910 ISSUE

Translation of Article by Mr. Maes in the Balasse Magazine No. 43.

Among the issues of the stamps of the Belgian Congo that of the year 1910 offers the greatest interest and diversity in the study of the varieties. The 5 centimes amongst the others has given rise to fruitful researches and to interesting discoveries in the combinations of the different plates of the frames and centres.

In 1913 Frame Plate IV was extensively retouched mainly in the redrawing of the horizontal shading in the upper and lower frames of the stamps which had become worn. This work, which was badly done, gave rise to 50 varieties each easily distinguished.

The retouched Plate IV was used with three different centre plates: Plate C, well known because of the pronounced and numerous double strikes, particularly Nos. 8, 9 and 37; Plate F which from the discoveries which are the subject of this study can be classified as the second state of Plate C and Plate D which was carefully made and has a very few varieties which are described in Col. du Fours' detailed Article.

The author of that Article describes under the heading of Plate F a double strike of the boats which differs from those of Plate C. This variety as well as the other one equally unknown were both in a block which provided us with a starting point and thus enabled us to go into the matter and solve this problem. By means of a complete sheet of the stamps with the retouched frames and with the aid of the different retouches of the frames we were able to reconstruct almost the whole of Plate F and the following points were noticed.

The "burnishing off" of Plate C removed the light scratches, the blotches and the spots caused by the corrosion of the metal. The fresh set of impressions of the centre plate was clearly made and very detailed without altogether losing the double strikes of the first state of the plate; there are also new re-entries which we detail as far as we can in the incomplete reconstruction of the sheet.

The comparison of Plate F and Plate C was as follows. The doubling of the boats is less noticeable in No. 8, different in No. 42 and new for Nos. 2, 9, 10, 11, 23, 26, 40 and 41. The doubling of the palace has disappeared in Nos. 6, 19, and 42, is less noticeable in Nos. 8, 9 and 48, is different in No. 2 and is new in Nos. 1, 15, 33, 40 and 41. The doubling of the tree trunks has disappeared in No. 9. A fresh doubling occurs in the roof of the house on the right of the church in Nos. 7, 16 and 19. Finally the scratch above the mountains in No. 9 is less noticeable but a new scratch appears in that place in stamp No. 6 which is very distinct and a smaller one in No. 9. Slight traces of the balloon can still be seen in No. 34.

These three combinations of plates occur for the 1921 surcharges.

Distinguishing features between Plates F and D are that the boats in the latter are clearer and seem small, the trunks of the trees are generally more slender and the mountains in the background are formed of separate lines without joins or blotchiness.

Centre Plates. As a result of this article Plate F should be Plate D, Plate D should be Plate E and Plate E should be Plate F.

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"VADE MECUM DU COLLECTIONNEUR DE TIMBRES-POSTE
DE BELGIQUE ET COLONIES". BY Y. BURNIAT

TRANSLATION OF SECTION DEALING WITH BELGIAN CONGO

1886 and 1887 - 94

The first two series of the Independent State of the Congo have been in the fashion from time to time and now it is necessary first to put a little order into the acquired knowledge which is not done without shocks or friction. Mr. De Haene in his work (1926) on the "Faux Timbres d'Europe" indicated that one meets the stamps of 1886 on a paper different from that of the original stamps and a philatelic journal spoke, he said, of dangerous forgeries of Prinnet Nos. 1 to 13. He attributed these stamps to a private printing during the 1914 - 1918 war.

M.F. Serrane (1929) on the other hand declared without much of a basis that there existed clandestine reprints made from the original plates and made during the same war. Fourteen years afterwards the "Echo du Congo" has shown us the light. The Lenoir printings were made between 1924 and 1930. They consist of Types I to X of the plate. Lenoir has used the cliches of I to X, the plates being composed of five such cliches. It was necessary for great collectors like M. de Haene to speak of the paper. It was in effect the only guide that one had to distinguish the authentic from the reprints. Today the "Echo du Congo" speaks of the mercury lamp which gives various fluorescent effects and permits us without lens to determine the paper on which a print is made.

The originals (Prinnet Nos. 1 to 5) were printed on paper made from rag pulp whereas the Lenoir reprints were made on paper made from wood pulp (this was as noted by M. de Haene, but he was unable to be precise).

The paper made from wood pulp remains white under the mercury lamp whereas the paper made from rag pulp changes its colour under this particular light.

Thanks to the mercury lamp another proof appears, dependent upon the composition of the ink.

In effect, after an interval of forty years, it would have been necessary by consistent chemical research to remake the composition of the original ink. In addition to the composition differing it gives a different fluorescent effect. The 50 centime, 5 francs, 25 francs and 50 francs (1887-1894) which originally were deep grey-black become greenish under the lamp whereas the Lenoir reprints remain inactive, being a vegetable black without fluorescence.

The originals are generally smaller by 1 mm. than the reprints. The perforation perf. 15 is perfectly regular for the originals but not for the reprints.

The following tabulation gives reactions under the mercury lamp of the originals and of the Lenoir reprints which in fact are more dangerous than the complete forgeries (see also "Echo du Congo" No. 46).

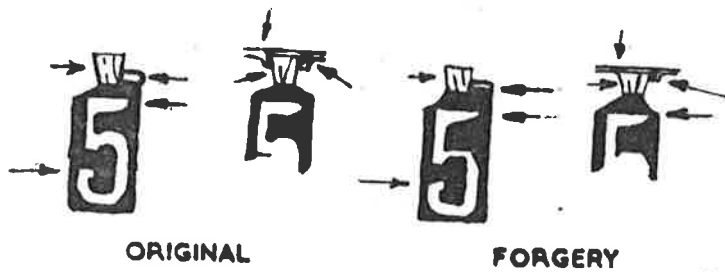


FIG 1.



FIG 2.



FIG 3.



FIG 4.

<u>Prinet No.</u>	<u>Detail</u>	<u>Original</u>	<u>Lenoir</u>
1	paper shade	pinkish bottle green	white green
2	paper shade	greyish very deep violet	white
3	paper shade	lilac greyish	carmine white
4	paper shade	blue-grey greyish	Prussian blue white
10, 12, 13a, 13b, 13c	paper shade	deep brown greyish	olive white
11	paper shade	greenish yellowish	black white
13	paper	bright lilac-violet yellowish-grey yellowish-brown	dull greyish violet very bright white greyish-yellow

Nos. 5 to 9 do not exist to our knowledge in the Lenoir reprinting.

In a public auction catalogue some years ago we noted the following forged cancellations:

MATADI 23 DEC. 11-M 1897 and
MATADI 23 OCT. 11-M 1897.

We have met the 10 franc Lenoir on piece with these cancellations.

A characteristic of the Lenoir printing is the poor finish and the dull shades.

As well as this multitude of private reprints to be considered as forgeries there are the forgeries of Prinet No. 5 (5 franc 1886) which does not exist as reprints.

About eight different types of forgery are known; we have only met four of them to date. A common characteristic of the forgeries is the form of the delta above the large pearl at the left and half way up the stamp (Fig. 4).

Forgery No. 1 (Fournier).

This stamp has a format 16½ x 20½ mm; it is therefore too small. It is characterised also by a white mark which underlines FR and CS of "Francs".

Forgery No. 2 (Fournier).

Format 17 x 21¼ mm; white dot between F and R situated at mid height of the R. Another white dot to the right at the top of A of Francs. The fork (below the A) in the hair is too long. The delta is as on the attached sketch Fig. 4. There is a point above the N of Congo.

Forgery No. 3. (Genes?)

Format 17 x 21¼mm. Very badly printed. White dots between F and R and at the top of A of Francs. Found perforated or imperforate; white paper. The delta is similar to sketch Fig. 4. The fork is shorter than in forgery No. 2 but is not exactly as the original.

Forgery No. 4

Format 17.2/5 x 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. Very well executed but there is only one dot (otherwise in the correct position) to the right of the F instead of the two obliquely. The example which we possess is cancelled Leopoldville 9 Dec. There are two forks in the hair which are joined by a crossline.

An important point to avoid confusion; the acute angle situated above the S of Francs is an indication of genuineness.

The only authentic cancellations known on Nos. 1 to 5 are Boma, Banana and occasionally Vivi.

We attach (Fig. 1) the reproduction of the small trapesium found above the value. This trapesium always contains two lines, relative to the figure 5, as much to the left as to the right, but its disposition varies.

Often, however, the two lines in the trapesium to the right form a fork as in the case of the genuine stamps.

Forgery No. 1.

The trapesium at the right barely exists.

Forgery No. 2

The trapesium to the right contains a fork of which the lines are curved towards the outside.

Forgery No. 3

The trapesium at the left has its second line, that at the right, discontinuous.

Forgery No. 4

The trapesium at the right contains a fork of which the lines are curved towards the right.

SECOND ISSUE (Prinet Nos. 6 to 13c).Forgeries, 5 francs violet and grey (Nos. 11 and 12).

Perforation often irregular, sometimes met imperforate. The shade of the forgeries never agrees with the original but approaches to it. Paper made from wood pulp is always used for the forgeries.

The white space below the beard above the C of Francs carries four lines from bottom to top on the originals, whereas the forgeries have only two or three blended together.

The centre of the left eye is often, if not always, round instead of being oval as on the originals; this character, giving a hard look, is very characteristic of the forgeries.

10 francs - deep yellow (No. 13).

We would say that the types of forgery of the 5 francs are found for the 10 francs. One noticeable forgery and of which we do not know the equivalent on the 5 francs value has the characteristics shown on Figs. 2 and 3.

Imperforates

There do not exist authentic imperforate stamps of Prinnet Nos. 1 to 13c. If they are met they are Lenoir reprints.

Fakes

No. 13 served as a fiscal stamp and in that case received a pen cancellation. After washing off the cancellation and with or without regumming the stamp is offered as unused. Needless to say the paper retains traces of iron from the pen and sulphur from the chemical treatment.

1894 - 1900

No. 18. 10c. Bluish Green. Inverted Centre

The forgers have worked in the same way as for the 65 "Termode" of Belgium. We recommend a searching examination of the rare pieces; only guaranteed copies should be purchased.

No. 29. 10 francs. GreenFakes

This stamp had fiscal use (payment of hunting permits) and was pen-cancelled for this use.

We shall not return to this point but it was the same with the other 10 francs values of later issues.

The eradication of the pen cancellation is not done easily and leaves visible traces. A careful examination makes separation of the cleaned stamps easy.

Inverted Centre

Is sometimes met forged by the usual well known methods. See previous remarks.

Chemical Forgery

A transformation of No. 16 (perf. 15 x 15) to No. 14 (perf. 12½ x 14 or 15) and from No. 19 to No. 17. These forgeries are in circulation but chlorine water attacks the paper which becomes spongy. The alteration to the perforation which has been forgotten is another valuable indication.

CONGO BELGE SURCHARGES1908

The typographed overprint of No. 47 has been played about with in order to give it the appearance of the local overprint (handstamp). Sometimes one exaggerates either the lower or the upper downstrokes in such a way as to make appear an artificial pressure. Examination under a lens will show quickly the differences in the inks and the brilliance of the China ink will quickly prevent deception.

The typographed overprint shows a very pronounced impression which it is not possible to eliminate and the characters are clean and regular.

PRINCES PRINTING

The perforation is 14 instead of 14 - 15.

The 5 centimes, 3, 50 francs and 10 francs have a different size.

The centre is brownish black instead of the usual metallic black.

The shades of the frames are brighter.

In the light of the mercury lamp the centres become rosy-violet and the frames change their shade.

1921 OVERPRINTSRecovery Issue

The overprints have been applied to the stock of stamps of 1910 but also on all values which the administration had from 1908 to 1910.

There are known the 5 centimes surcharge on 40 centimes typographed and the 15 centimes surcharge on 50 centimes unilingual; "1921" on the 1 franc typographed "Congo Belge", and on the 5 francs and 10 francs with typographed overprint and with handstamped overprint.

Many of the stamps not being in large enough numbers were not issued to post offices and they should be considered according to some authorities as "not issued".

There exist many false overprints; it is necessary to possess copies of irrefutable authenticity in order to make comparison.

1923 ElisabethvilleNos. 104 and 105

The printing was only of 10,000 copies but there are more than double that number of forgeries. The false overprints have been very well executed making them difficult to expertise. Here are several characteristics of the original surcharges:

The 25 on 30 on 10 (No. 89) Carmine (Prinet No. 104) have a deep grey black surcharge. The 0 is oblique, thin at its top and bottom extremities, the tail of the 5 short and oblique.

The 25 on 30 on 10 (No. 98) Prinet No. 105 - the ink is blacker and brighter appearing more in relief than that on No. 104. The authentic surcharge is 7 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ mm; some forgeries are 10 x 5 mm. A forged postmark is BOMA 4-V1-23.

FANTASY 1945

There was sold in Liege a series said to have been issued by the American troops in the Congo. These stamps incorporate an error in the word "Detachement", the second "T" being unnecessary.

POSTAGE DUEPrinet - Nos. 9 to 14

All those which are on the market with overprint inverted are forgeries and were never issued at a post office.

PARCEL POST STAMPS1887Forgeries - Unframed overprint (rubber stamp)

What has been said of the 1886 5 francs applies also to Prinet No. 1 of the parcel post stamps; it is necessary to examine the design minutely for, as we have remarked, there only exist forgeries and not Lenoir reprints of this stamp. For No. 2 as for No. 11 postage, we can only advise use of the mercury lamp, as also for Nos. 3, 4, & 5.

Genuine stamps have never been used to our knowledge for forged overprinting.

This consideration prevents any uneasiness about the overprint which is very variable even on the genuine stamps, however, let us bear in mind that the "S" of Colis has the shape of an 8 on the original.

1889 - 1894Forgeries - Framed Overprint (Cachet Engraved on Copper).

The use of the mercury lamp again settles the question by the fluorescence of the paper and of the shades of the print (see postage stamps).

However, we give the following characteristics for the original overprint.
1. The base of the "P" of Postaux is thick at the left. 2. "I" and "T" of Colis Postaux are straight. 3. The frame is rounded or broken at the corners and does not, therefore, show the right-angles. 4. The second leg of the "U" of Postaux is badly made and appears very thin scarcely existing at all and at a distance one reads Postacx, the "U" having the form of a "C".

This characteristic does not ensure that the overprint is genuine, we possess a forgery which has this shape.

RUANDA - URUNDI1916

There are two printings of the overprints "Ruanda" and "Urundi", one from the Congo and one from Le Havre.

Here the means of identifying the origin of the overprints according to M.U. Williams.

Local Printing

1. Irregular appearance, upright or curved. 2. Clean print. 3. The ink used is black with a touch of red. 4. The strokes of the letters are joined.

Havre Printing

1. Regular appearance. 2. Printing not so clean. 3. Ink lilac black or lilac grey. 4. Letters strongly welded together at the base.

Forgeries

Numerous forged overprints are in circulation but the correct shade of the overprint has never been copied accurately. On the other hand one is concerned

with the forged overprints imitating the local overprint. They are, however, very dangerous and demand much more skill to distinguish them.

Another point which is important; Nos. 2, 10 and 17 should have the open sky: 3, 11 and 18 should be type 1, without central spine.

Reprints

The overprints Urundi and Ruanda points out M.A. De Haene have been reprinted but were not issued thus.

The original cachets made at Nairobi (British East Africa) had been returned to the Government by order on the arrival of the Congo stamps carrying the bilingual surcharge on four lines. These cachets had served for the execution of an official reprint made to a limited number of examples. These specimens were intended to be offered to Government Authorities and others. The reprinted overprint is violet-black.