

BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

Secretary:

Stuart S. Smith
Lychgates, Pinfold Hill
Curbar-Calver
Hope Valley S32 3YL
England, UK

Bulletin Editor:

Ronald E. Strawser
4 Amlhurst Court
Midland, TX 79705
USA
e-mail: strawser5@home.com

BULLETIN 121

SEPTEMBER 2001

President:

Hal Hoyte
1 Braybrooke Road
Hastings
E. Sussex TN34 1TA
UK

Librarian:

A. J. D. MacLaren
Moray, 43 Millar St.,
Carnoustie DD7 7AT
Scotland

CONTENTS

Page(s)

The Editor's Ramblings	Ron Strawser	2-3
Raymond Harry Keach	Edwin Lavitt	3-4
Raymond Harry Keach	Anthony Keach	4-5
New Member		6
Dear Miss Miller	Joe Babicki	6-8
Perforation Curiosities - and Their Fakes	Ray Keach	9-19
Prices Realized - Auction 2001 (3)		19
My Favorite Cover	Ron Strawser	20
Postal Card Statistics	Emile Hoorens	21
Auction 2001 (4)		Supplemental pages

THE EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

As you can see, this issue like the last is also somewhat late. Although a result of several things, it is due in part to some sad news for our Study Circle. Ray Keach passed away on August 29th. Included in this Bulletin is an article on Ray by Edwin Lavitt and the remarks of Ray's son Anthony at Ray's funeral. Because their words will far better tell the story of Ray's life and his importance to the Belgian Congo Study Circle than I could, I will limit my comments to this. Ray Keach was a good friend and a gentleman. Ray, we'll miss you.

The past few months seem to have brought little but bad news and it has rightfully been difficult to focus on stamp collecting. We must however eventually return our lives to "normal", even though "normal" may be somewhat different than it's been before. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful hobby to help us through these times. It is hoped that this, and future Bulletins will help us in our return to normal.

I had also hoped to have some letters to the editor for this issue, but to date I have received none. I have some suggestions that I think will benefit the Study Circle over time. These suggestions will however be somewhat controversial and I would hope they will generate thoughts and letters. Historically, advertisements were never allowed in the Bulletin. This, I believe, was due to the idea of some (that I respect) that the Bulletin should remain a "pure" study Bulletin and should not be "commercialized". I feel that it would benefit both the society as a whole and its' individual members if both members and non-member professional philatelists could advertise in the Bulletin. I would propose that members be given one or more free classified ads each year to advertise what they were looking for, or what they wanted to sell or trade. This would allow members, especially those living outside of Europe who cannot receive the Study Circle sales circuits, the opportunity to buy, sell and trade with other members to the benefit of all. I feel that this is especially needed now that we no longer have Ray Keach to act as a "clearing house" for such sales. (This was yet one more service Ray provided to Circle members over the years to the benefit of all.) By allowing professional philatelists to advertise in the journal, we should be able to defray the costs of the Bulletin and thereby reduce the need to increase dues in the future. It too will help make members aware of new sources of material. At the Study Circle meeting at Belgica 2001 it was stated that these ideas would have to be brought to the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Study Circle. I do not consider that unreasonable. My next suggestion relates to the AGM and I fear it may be even more controversial. The membership of the Study Circle is around 100 members spread around the world, with most in England, Belgium, and the United States. Most, if not all of the AGM's have been held in England or Belgium, and I believe have normal attendance of 20 to 30 members. To my knowledge all Study Circle matters have been determined only by those in attendance at the AGM's. Thus, most overseas members as well as many Europeans who cannot get to these meetings do not have a voice in any matters presented at the AGM. I feel that all members of the Study Circle should have a vote in matters concerning the Circle. Thus, I would propose that matters to be voted on be presented to the membership ahead of time and every member be given the chance to vote if they so choose. This is the method used by other philatelic societies that have membership spread over large geographic areas. It will take some planning ahead, but other groups are able to do it and we should be able to also. There would of course be some things to consider. It could be necessary to require elected officers to be able to attend the meetings. While such a rule might keep some overseas members from holding officers this would seem reasonable. So, what do our members think about this. I will be glad to put any letters I get in the next Bulletin.

In the last Bulletin it appears that without knowing it I made a statement concerning articles in French that was counter to a vote taken at the last AGM. It was pointed out to me after the last Bulletin was published that it was decided at the last AGM that articles submitted in French should be published in French. I was unaware of this when I stated that such articles would be translated into English for the Bulletin. I wish to express my apologies to our French speaking members for this. I will gladly accept articles in French for the Bulletin. If the author of such an article wishes the article to appear in French, then it will. Only if I obtain the author's permission will I translate it to English for the Bulletin. For articles appearing in French, I will provide an English translation via e-mail or snail mail for those members who request it.

I will close once again by making a plea for articles from our members. With the passing of Ray Keach we have lost our most prolific authors (whose last article appears in this Bulletin). Some of our members have already stepped up and sent in articles on widely ranging topics. So please take some time and write up that discovery you've made, or the research you've been doing. After all it was because of people like Ray Keach who shared their knowledge so freely over the years that we know so much now. Let's provide the Congo collectors of the future an even greater base of knowledge.

Raymond Harry Keach

It is with profound regret that we record the death of Raymond Harry Keach on August 29, 2001. He would have been 89 years old on September 15th.

He was without question the father, and for all of the last 51 years, the life blood and moving force of this organization. In 1950 he, with the late Doris Green, decided to form a Belgian Congo Study Circle. In February of 1951, at Doris green's residence the society was formed.

In the following 25 years Ray served as the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Bulletin Editor (writing many of the articles therein), the Exchange Packet Secretary, the Librarian and the center of the Study Circle's activities. When others took over some of his duties - the Bulletin - the Packet - the treasurer, etc. he continued to work just as hard on Study Circle work. Until a few years ago he was our auctioneer, describing (with great accuracy) and listing hundreds of lots. After each auction he filled the task of mailing all the lots to the successful bidders and collected the proceeds for the sellers. He was also instrumental in the creation of our highly respected Expert Committee of which he was an active member until his death.

A Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society (London), he served as consultant to their expert committee on stamps of the Belgian Congo. The Royal honored him with its Society Medal for the years 1983-1984. His articles in various publications are legion. To name but a few - the Waterlow Society had the benefit, among others, of one on printing (which we reprinted), one on perforations; we published his catalogue of the known part perforation varieties, and this publication had his Vice Presidential column reporting new discoveries, and article after article, throughout all these 50 years. So much knowledge - so freely shared. He co-produced the Heim-Keach work on postmarks, gave many displays with erudite comments freely at the Royal, the Waterlow Society, his local stamp society and most importantly at our meetings. I know he was working on new research concerning the airmail sheetlets when he fell ill.

Only a few months ago, he and I spent 2 days at his breakfast room table plating the 1910 25 centime issue. (By coincidence it is the doubling of the natives on some of these stamps which led him into plating 50 years ago). We would look at a stamp - some scratch or dot would appear and

he would say "That is an old friend" – and name its' position. When he visited here we would bury our noses in the stamps for days at a time and his comments would pour forth until I begged for time to absorb it all.

I remember him as a delightful travelling companion. I see him standing, with my wife, in the cold wind and rain at Tintagel (in the southwest of England). I remember him crossing Belgium and Holland as we visited war sites, museums, cities and country side. I remember our quiet evenings both at Tadworth and here at my home, he with his ubiquitous pipe and I with my small libation, speaking of stamps, politics, World War II, the problems of the world, so many, many things. I remember his appreciation of the beauties of our fabulous New England fall colors and I remember him as one whose enthusiasm for the joy and pleasure of the study of the stamps of the Belgian Congo never flagged. He was above all, a fine gentleman – a privilege and pleasure to know. The Study Circle has lost a giant and I a mentor and friend. We shall miss him greatly.

We reproduce below the remarks of his son Anthony which were given at the funeral service in Tadworth. The Study Circle knew the philatelist – Anthony gives us the man.

Raymond Harry Keach

Born 15th September 1912 in Birmingham

Scholarship to King Edwards School Birmingham. Ray was a very clubable person maintaining contact with colleagues from school by attending "Old Ed" dinners

Went to Birmingham University to read Mining Engineering

Joined Foster Wheelers (An oil engineering company in London) where he met Joan Woodward who was to become his wife in August 1939. A very unceremonial wedding. He went to work in London on the day of the wedding and just managed to get to the church in the Strand before 6.00pm (the wedding could not have taken place after 6.00pm). Their honeymoon was to be to the West Country but after a few days war was declared so they came home. As a result of being in a reserved occupation he was not called up so his only military service was in the home guard in Ashted where they had made their home. His tales about the antics of the officers in the Ashted Home Guard make Captain Mannering seem quite normal. He joined the Distillers company at Great Burgh working as a Design and Development Engineer. He was not working for the Distillers Co on their drinks side, but one minor war time task which the engineers were given in their spare time was to devise a method of making the wire cages which cover Dimple Hague Whisky Bottles. Apparently prior to the war these cages had been hand-made by French prisoners.

A son Anthony was born in 1941 and in 1944 a second son Richard was born.

After the war he started becoming interested in the stamps of the Belgian Congo and this was the hobby which sustained him for over 50 years. As he explained to his non-philatelist son, he noticed that when looked at them under a magnifying glass, superficially identical stamps were in fact different. The small differences arising from imperfections in the printing plates meant that it was possible to look at a stamp and identify where on the sheet it would have been placed. One of his interests was therefore to build up sheets from individual stamps. Apologies to the philatelists present for any incorrect terminology.

In about 1956 he was offered the job of Engineering manager at a Distillers Company Chemical Plant in Hedon near Hull. They therefore moved to Beverley where they spent 6 years. It was at this time that Ray began wine making, experimenting with elderberry, elder flower and many other fruits and flowers which he and Joan used to pick when taking Bobs the miniature poodle on walks. After 6 years they came back to live in Tadworth at 25 Kingswood Road where they lived for the rest of their lives. The Distillers were taken over by BP, and the last years of his working life were spent commuting to London to work at the BP headquarters. Wine making then really took off because Ray met somebody on the train who had a brother with an orchard in Kent and Ray could have as many of the windfalls as he wanted for wine making. Production reached a 1000 bottles a year and the marvel is that somehow it managed to get drunk! Neither he nor Joan liked sweet wines so every ounce of sugar was converted into alcohol so it was not to everybody's taste.

He was a member of the Epsom and Ewell Stamp Club and was a member of the Belgian Congo Study Circle. He also made regular visits to the Royal Philatelic Society in London. The Belgian Congo Study Circle gave him a large group of great friends around the world and they were to prove a lifeline in the years to come.

Ray retired at 60 and devoted his leisure-time to Wine making, gardening and stamp collecting. By now he had two married sons and five grandchildren.

Ray was an old fashioned husband in so far as Joan did the cooking and he did the manly things however when Joan became ill he suddenly had to become domesticated and for some time he looked after her before she died in 1996. Ray was devastated by Joan's death and it was realised by the family that it was only his stamps which would keep him going. However a few weeks after Joan's death his whole collection was stolen. He had at this time been helping two widows whose husbands had been members of the Belgian Congo Circle. Their husbands had left collections of Belgian Congo stamps and to help the widows Ray catalogued and auctioned the stamps to members of the Belgian Congo Circle. Over a period of years he obtained for the widows much more money than would have been obtained from auctioning them as one lot at a public auction. Without his own stamps, organising the auctions became a virtually full time occupation, which helped the widows and also kept him in touch with all his friends around the world.

At over eighty he began to use a computer for all his correspondence but like many elderly people he was reluctant to spend money on a new one, since it might outlast him, so a second hand computer was obtained. Many a phone call was made to the "help line" at Welwyn to sort a computer problem. A modem was obtained to enable him to send Emails but regrettably neither his aged computer nor he were up to it.

Ray insisted on staying at Tadworth despite requests from his family to move closer to one or other. His desire was to live the rest of his life where he was. He cooked for himself and acquired a washing machine to do his washing and a microwave. To the horror of his two granddaughters, one of whom was a nurse and the other was a food hygienist he used to cook his favourite dish, ox tail, which he managed to obtain despite the beef on the bone ban. Unfortunately he made sufficient ox tail stew for several meals so it was reheated several times for subsequent meals. The same treatment was given to Cock a Leekie and spaghetti Bolognese. Despite the menu and the state of the kitchen he had many of his stamp friends staying, although one of the stipulations from Ray was that the guest did the cooking.

One of his problems was that he had a mouse in the kitchen, whose traces were cleared up periodically by visiting family. At least twice Ray humanely trapped the mouse and took it up to the top of Kingswood Road but he swears that the mouse got back to the house before he did. In fact the mouse eventually became a friend which he used to leave out food for.

He enjoyed going out to meals and one of his pleasures was taking out his two London based grand daughters either to restaurants in London, to which he used to take his wife Joan, or to the local restaurant in Tadworth. The only problem with going out with grandpa was that he was rather deaf and he also spoke rather loudly. As a result conversations which might be on controversial subjects such as premarital sex or homosexuality would be heard by everybody in the restaurant much to the embarrassment of the grand daughters.

In September last year the Philatelist fraternity had learnt of a large collection of Belgian Congo stamps which somebody wanted to sell. Its too long story to tell here but the outcome was that the stamps were eventually delivered to an auctioneer in Belgium and they were immediately recognised as Rays. I suppose that the give-away was that one of the albums was embossed with his initials, RHK. After 5 years Ray and Richard drove to Belgium and he was reunited with what turned out to be nearly the complete collection. Amidst much joy, Rays only regret was that over the last five years he had been auctioning stamps on behalf of other people and several of the stamps would have filled gaps in his own collection.

He remained active until his death. Despite having had two cataract operations, he used to drive regularly to see his family in Welwyn and Salisbury. Last year he went to America to see a stamp colleague and only in June he went to Brussels. At the age of 86 he thought that his ancient Maestro was not going to pass its MOT so he said quite seriously that he would get another small car, a Mini Cooper. Perhaps fortunately for the other road users this did not become necessary.

Three weeks ago one of his friends phoned up and found that he was not well. He was driven to Welwyn and soon was admitted to hospital with Bronchial Pneumonia. Despite apparently rallying, after two weeks, his condition suddenly deteriorated and he died at 1.00am on the 29th of August.

A comment from many of the people on learning of his death was that Ray was an old fashioned gentleman. Perhaps this was typified by the fact that if he went out with his daughters in law or his grand daughters and they offered to buy him a drink his response was "I have never let a lady buy a drink for me and I am not going to start now".

New Member

The newest member of the BCSC is Mr. Bill Holabird of Denver, Colorado. Bill is rejoining the Study Circle after having been a member about 20 years ago.

Dear Miss Miller

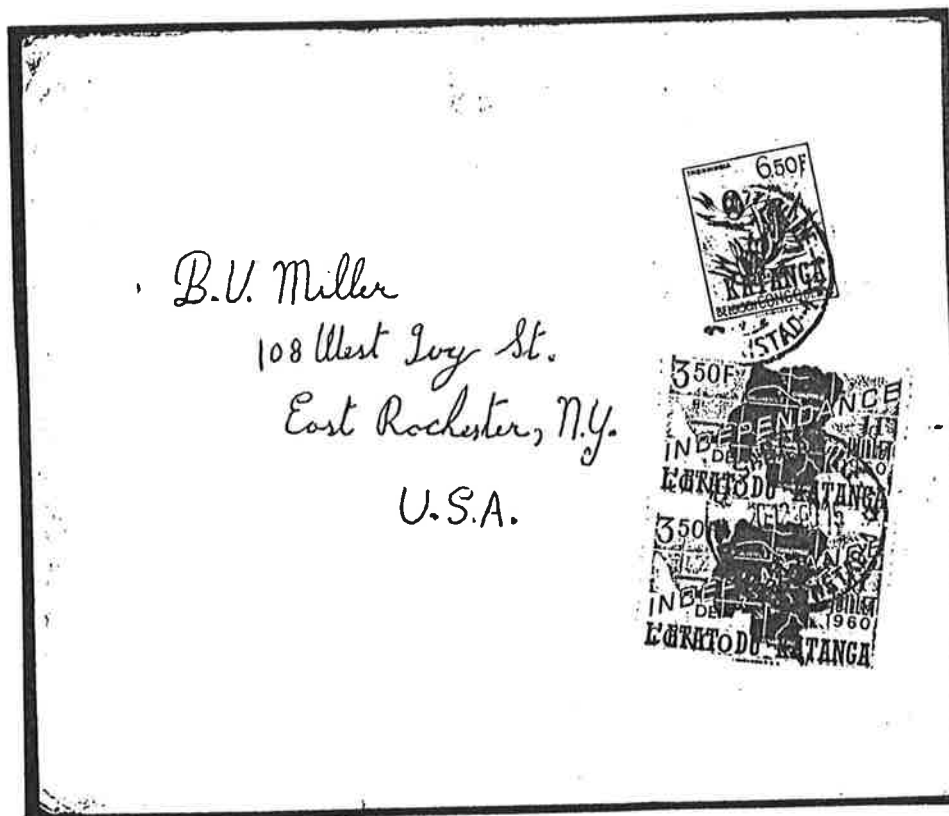
I think every American collector of Katanga covers has examples addressed to Montgomery Ward Export Dept., the DeLaurence Company and Miss Betty V. Miller. Montgomery Ward needs no introduction. The DeLaurence Company is a mail-order company in Chicago, IL for occult books and supplies. This article is about Betty Miller and her Katanga covers.

During the 1960's Betty Miller collected United Nations covers and that included the ONUC in Congo. In the 1970's I purchased my first Miller covers from a war covers dealer and a few years later began a brief correspondence with Miss Miller to learn more about the origin of the covers addressed to her. Her acquisition method was to find out soldiers' and officers' names and units and then write directly to them. She never told them that she was a stamp collector or she would not have received responses. She would write a friendly girlish letter expressing appreciation for what they were doing and offering to send books and magazines. Letters to Miss Miller show that her offers were at least occasionally accepted. When she got an acceptance she would send a few mystery and western paperback novels and back issues of Life, Look, Saga, Cavalier, etc. Then she would receive "thank you" letters. She never asked questions about mail and was grateful just to get a reply. She found out through trial and error that using "Miss Betty V Miller" was most likely to get a response. She never told them her age as she was in her early forties at the time. According to Miss Miller all of the covers addressed to her were from ONUC personnel and most were from the Irish contingent.

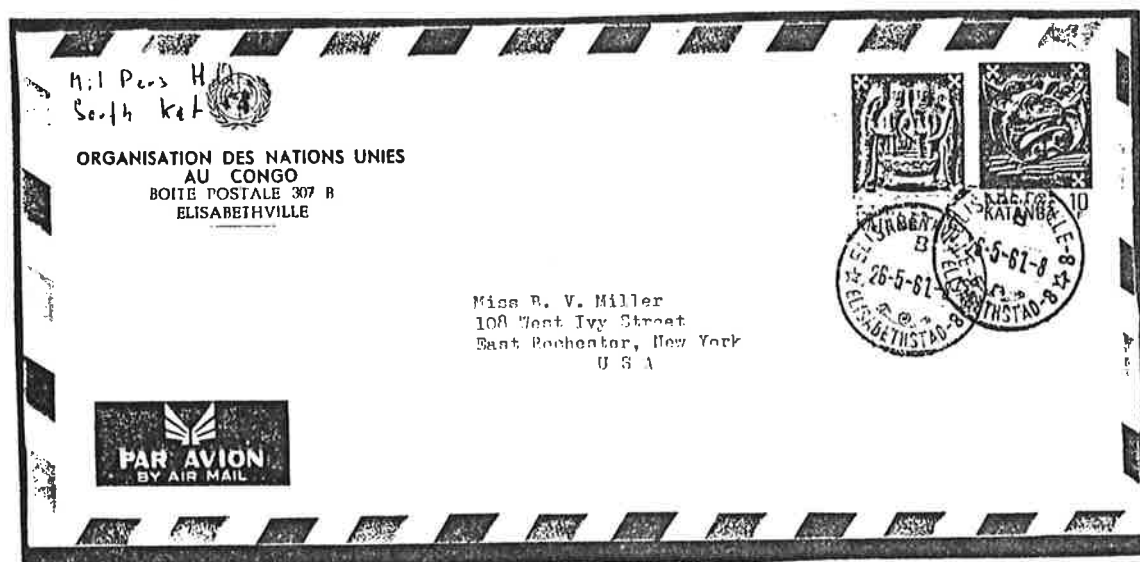
The earliest Miller cover in my collection is postmarked Elisabethville 26 September 1960. The cover is franked with a 2F Congo, and an 8F Katanga stamp, both overprints of the Belgian Congo animals set. Together they correctly paid the minimum airmail rate to the United States. Belgian Congo, Congo and Belgian Congo overprinted stamps were valid in Katanga through 30 June 1961 but it is possible to find genuine covers with demonetized stamps. I have several from Mokambo as well as other post offices.



The second cover is postmarked 20 December 1960 from Elisabethville #1. The enclosure is an ONUC greeting card reading "VOEUX DU CONGO - GREETINGS FROM THE CONGO" on the outside and a personal handwritten message inside. Like the first cover there is no return address.

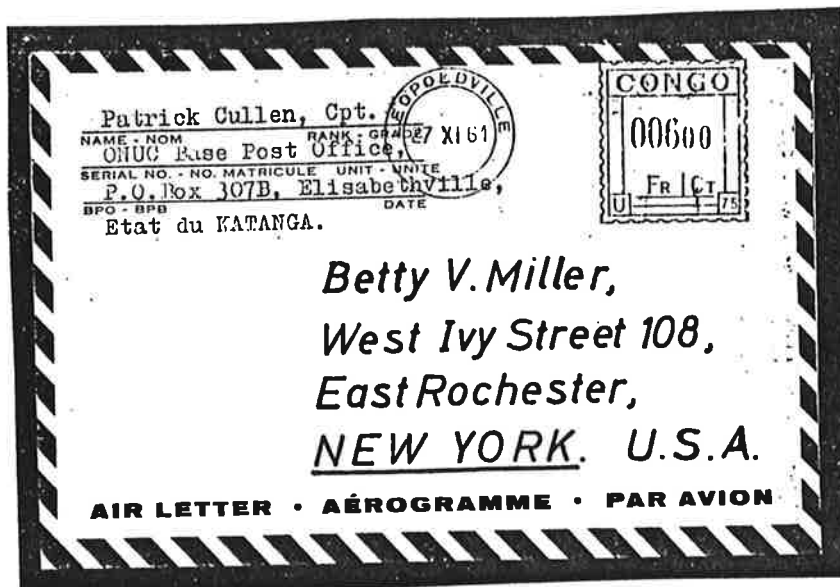


The third cover is from the Colonel commanding the Swedish Battalion. It is postmarked Elisabethville #8 26 May 1961. It has an ONUC return address and is franked with two of Katanga's "arts" issue correctly paying the 15F rate. To me it is very strange for an occupying force to use the postal system of its victim.

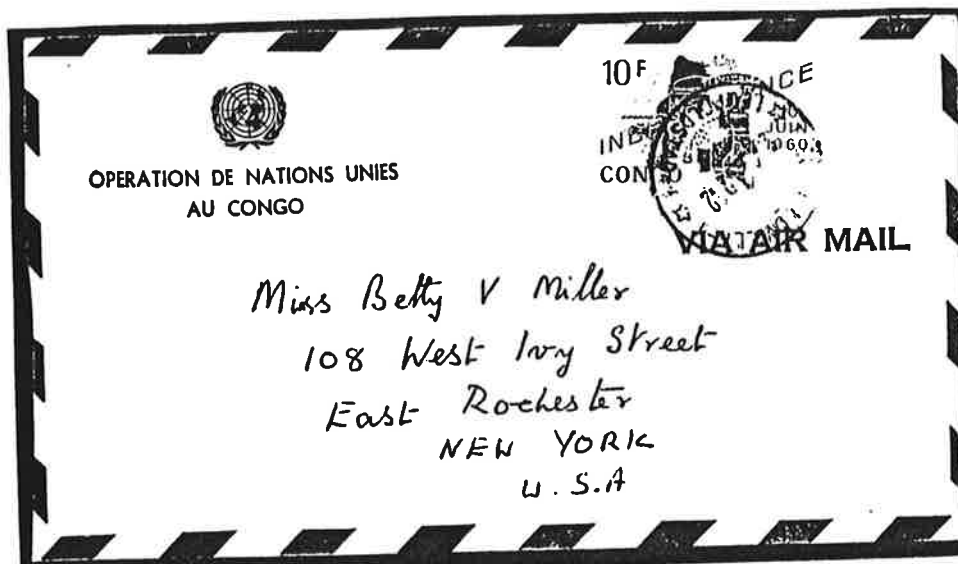


In between the posting of my third and fourth covers something happened. My remaining two Miller covers did not use Katanga's postal system. Miss Miller told me that almost all of her early ONUC Katanga covers used Katanga postage, but the later ones did not. The time in transit for mail using the Katanga postal system was less than for mail using the UN, Congo, or Irish military postal systems.

The fourth cover has the ONUC Elisabethville return address but is franked by Leopold ville postage meter dated 27 November 1961.



The final cover is franked with a Congo stamp cancelled Leopoldville December 1962 (the date is not legible). The letter inside, dated 25 December 1962, is from an Indian army Major who used Elisabethville Congo as his return address.



At times I have had the opportunity to acquire more "Betty Miller" covers, but all that I have seen are either franked with Katanga's "arts" issues or the overprinted Congo "independence" issue, or they are "twins" of either the fourth or fifth covers.

PERFORATION CURIOSITIES - AND THEIR FAKES

Stamps with abnormal perforations are a subject of considerable interest to the specialist collector. Some abnormalities are obvious, such curiosities fetching greatly enhanced prices, but other and less obvious curiosities, just as uncommon, may be found by the discerning collector and be bought at 'normal' prices. But the faker has played his part, mutilating stamps in order to deceive the buyer. Care has to be exercised in buying stamps with abnormal perforations.

COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

A stamp with compound perforation is defined as one not having the same measured perforation on each of the four sides.

They are common with comb-perforated stamps such as the Masques and the 1943 postage dues perforated $14 \times 14\frac{1}{2}$, the spacing of the perforating pins being arranged to fit the size of the stamps and their spacing; both horizontal and vertical perforations were added at the same time.

With single-line perforated stamps such as the Mols it is a different matter, compound perforation necessitating the use of two different perforating machines - to be more precise, two different perforating heads (rows of pins and matching holes). There are only a few examples of these in the Congo's stamps:

- 1) 1898 3,50fr and 10fr perforated 11×14 , 12×14 and 14×12
- 2) 1915 10c and 25c from the third printing of the booklets perforated 14×15
- 3) 1942 'Palms' 50c (COB 234) and 1,25fr (COB 238) and the last with 1944 Red Cross surcharge (COB 271) perforated $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ instead of the usual $12\frac{1}{2}$.

There is however a different kind of compound perforation, more interesting and decidedly rare, that can be found on the Mols stamps.

When sheets of stamps had been printed, gummed, perforated and sheared to size, they were inspected, sometimes carelessly, to ensure that they were suitable for dispatch to the customer. As we well know, sheets with missing lines of perforation were sometimes missed by the inspector and we have our stamps imperf.-between and with imperforate selvedge. When such imperfect sheets were noticed they would have been returned to the perforating room for correction. If passed to the operator using the same machine as that used originally for the sheet of stamps there is no way of knowing that the sheet had been corrected but if passed to a machine with a different gauge the sheet would contain some stamps with compound perforation. Examples of such stamps are illustrated below: 1896 40c perf. $14 \times 15 \times 15 \times 15$ (figure 1), 1899 1fr lilac perf. $15 \times 15 \times 13\frac{1}{2} \times 15$ (fig. 2), 1900 25c perf. $14 \times 15 \times 15 \times 15$ (fig. 3), 1900 50c perf. $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2} \times 15 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ (fig. 4), 1909 1fr CB Brussels 2 perf. $16 \times 16 \times 13\frac{1}{2} \times 16$ (fig. 5) and 1922 50c/25c perf. $15 \times 14 \times 15 \times 15$ (fig. 6) How rare they are is difficult to say but the writer has recognised only a dozen or so in many years of searching and they must be at least uncommon.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

The above could of course be fakes with forged single lines of perforation but I would think it unlikely that all are. There certainly are fakes; the 1909 15c CB typo (fig. 7) perforated 14x14x11x14 and the 1909 50c Unilingual (fig. 8) 14x15½x14x14 have to be because neither 11 nor 15½ was a perforation gauge used by Waterlow & Sons, at least not on Congo stamps.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

A word of warning: Waterlow & Sons' irregular 12-14 perforating head, in use for Congo stamps between 1894 and about 1900, comprised a row of pins gauging 14 but with an unknown length of 13½ at one end and a length of about 40mm of 12/12½ in the middle. The great majority of the stamps in a sheet perforated with this machine gauge 14 on all four sides but there can be included single stamps perforated 13½ all round, 12/12½ all round and, more commonly, different combinations of these perforations and these can easily be confusing on single stamps and give the wrong impression that two different perforating machines were used on the stamp.

IMPERFORATE STAMPS

The only Congo stamps known to have been supplied imperforate in error to the customer are 1) the Princes' 3.50fr. a sheet having only a single line of perforation - the left vertical line - and this sheet subsequently received the typographed CONGO BELGE overprint (fig. 9), 2) (probably) the 1886 5fr and 3) the 1941 Albert Monument issue. Regarding the last the Catalogue Officiel Belge states that these imperforate stamps were supplied to and sold by the post offices: if that was so one would expect to find such copies properly used; the only 'used' completely imperforate examples that I have seen have been very much CTO, usually with all eleven values stuck onto a sheet of paper and cancelled. If any member has imperforate copies on a travelled 'commercial' cover I shall be very glad to hear of it.



Fig. 9

Other imperforate stamps are loosely described as 'plate proofs', properly defined as sheets of stamps printed before the actual printing of the stamps in order that the printer may check that the plates are satisfactory for printing. The Waterlow & Sons imperforate stamps of the Leys and Palms issues with demonetising holes are true plate proofs, checked by an engraver, with faults marked in ink and signed in the selvedge by him. Other imperforate 'plate proofs' are much more dubious.

Imperforate copies of the 1898 3.50fr and 10fr were almost certainly printer's waste or illicitly printed and smuggled out of the printing works. An imperforate sheet of the 3.50fr value broken up and sold a few years ago by Robson Lowe came from the archives of Harrison, the Waterlow Bros. & Layton engraver, who probably engraved the stamp himself and kept the sheet as a souvenir.

The reason for the imperforate 1915 stamps is unknown. They were certainly not prepared for submission to the customer for his approval because, as judged by the printing plates used for them, they were not printed until after the 1915 stamps were issued in the colony. The reason for these imperforate stamps - and indeed for the perforated black 'proofs', which were a special printing ordered by the Belgian post office - remains a mystery.

The imperforate 1918 Red Cross and A.O. stamps were certainly a special printing and probably intended for sale for the benefit of the Red Cross.

The imperforate Palms stamps without the demonetising holes were a special printing sold to collectors and dealers by the Belgian government in exile in London in aid of the war effort. King George VI, who was no collector of Belgian Congo, bought complete sheets of them and these were sold a few years ago; let us hope that it was considered a good investment!

Imperforate stamps of the 1935 and later issues were almost certainly printed so that copies could be presented to those in authority and the remainder found their way onto the stamp market.

However, you not infrequently find imperforate copies of other stamps, particularly the Mols stamps and no-one can say with certainty that an imperforate stamp is not authentic because a complete imperforate sheet could inadvertently have been sent to the customer, finally ended up in a post office and a zealous clerk could have taken a pair of scissors, perhaps snipped off the selvedge and cut the sheet into individual stamps for normal sale. Some supposed imperforate stamps, because of their relatively wide margins, give the impression of being honest but in sheets of stamps that are single-line perforated - perforated one line at a time with the sheet positioned in the machine by the operator for each line of perforation - the spacing of successive lines of perforation varies and you can find large and small stamps - large and small as measured between the lines of perforation, not of the printed stamps - and resulting 'large' stamps have tempted the faker to remove the perforations. The following are imperforate stamps that have to be accepted as fakes: 1909 25c CB handstamp (fig. 10), 1909 10fr CB typo (fig. 11), 1910 40c (fig. 12), 1910 3fr (fig. 13), 1910 10fr (fig 13) and 1922 'Malines' 30c/10c (fig 14).



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

Even imperforate stamps with selvedge need to be treated with suspicion. The following apparently imperforate 1915 15c (Fig. 16) is almost certainly a sadly mutilated imperforate-margin copy, a great rarity ruined by some clown who thought it more valuable if the three lines of perforation were removed. The two 1915 10c are both from the first printing of the booklets. Fig. 17 with imperforate top selvedge is position no. 2 of pane γ ; Fig. 18 is an apparently completely imperforate no. 1 of pane δ . It is very probable, even virtually certain that the imperforate stamp was originally as Fig. 17, simply with imperforate margin, probable that the two stamps came from the same printed sheet of four panes and that only four copies of the 10c. first booklet stamp with imperforate top margin ever existed and, very misguidedly, some crazed miscreant mutilated one copy thinking to increase its market value.



Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig. 18

The following example of an imperforate 1909 CB type 3,50fr with wide left margin, Fig. 19, looks honest but compare it with the other but perforated copy of the same stamp, Fig. 20, and it is obvious that the latter could be trimmed and appear very similar to Fig. 19.



Fig. 19



Fig. 20

Great care has to be exercised in accepting as genuine a single copy of an imperforate stamp that is normally single-line perforated. With comb perforated stamps where horizontal and vertical perforations are effected in a single operation it is a different matter and the spacing of the lines of perforation cannot be varied by the operator of the machine. Except in the case of double perforations (see later) 'large' and 'small' stamps cannot exist.

Even pairs of imperforate stamps cannot necessarily be accepted as authentic. The following pair of 1896 15c (Fig. 21) looks honest enough but I fear that it is a precious imperforate-between pair, such as shown as Fig. 22, ruined by removal of the perforations.



Fig. 21



Fig. 22

DOUBLE PERFORATIONS

Although not common double perforating of the comb-perforated 1887 'Grossebarbe' stamps happened, probably because the sheet of stamps was put through the perforating machine twice so that all perforations of the sheet are doubled. Fig. 23 is a 50c grey with the doubling perforations shifted horizontally by only about 1/4mm but apparent in the horizontal lines of 'saw tooth' perforation. Fig. 24 is a 50c brown with the doubling perforations shifted horizontally by exactly the spacing of adjacent holes so that the doubling of the perforations is apparent only because of 1) the presence of the vertical strip at the right and 2) the reduction in the width (between vertical lines of perforation) of the stamp. Fig. 25 is a 3,50fr/5fr grey with the perforations doubled as in Fig. 24 but without the vertical strip and to be judged only by the width of the stamp. However, one has to be careful in accepting such perforation curiosities as genuine; Fig. 26 is a narrow 50c brown but in this case the left vertical line of perforation is forged and the stamp thereby faked.



Fig. 23



Fig. 24



Fig. 25



Fig. 26

With single-line perforated stamps double perforations are understandable. If the operator of the perforating machine did not concentrate sufficiently on the job - it must be a very tedious occupation - and move the sheet of stamps one row or column forward into the machine the correct distance a misplaced line of perforation resulted which, if corrected, produced double perforation. It is perhaps strange that it did not happen more frequently with the Mols stamps but below are illustrations of such stamps. a pair of 1909 15c CB handstamps with the centre line of perforation very clearly doubled (fig. 27) and a 1909 40c CB typo with the right marginal perforation doubled obliquely (fig. 28). Fig. 29 is a 1910 5fr with the right vertical line of perforation doubled in a most peculiar way, three holes towards the top and, lower, five alternate holes.



Fig. 27



Fig. 28



Fig. 29

Double perforation which is not so obvious can be found: the 1898 10fr (fig. 30) has the bottom line of perforation doubled with the doubling perforation shifted sideways by about 0.7mm so that the perforation gauges 28 instead of the normal 14; the second 1898 10fr (fig. 31) has both top and bottom perforations doubled with a sideways shift of only about 0.3mm so that the holes are oval instead of circular and we have 'saw tooth' perforations; the top line of perforation of the 1915 1fr (fig. 32) is also doubled but with a shift of only about 0.1mm and the doubling is apparent only by close inspection.



Fig 30



Fig. 31



Fig. 32

The South African company that single-line perforated the 1941 Albert Memorial stamps clearly had no previous experience of perforating stamps - maybe only toilet paper! - and did a very poor job including missing, misplaced and double lines of perforation. I had a horizontal pair of the 2,75fr with RUANDA URUNDI overprint and with very neatly doubled perforation between the two stamps

MISSING LINES OF PERFORATION

Missing lines of perforation on comb-perforated stamps can occur only when the 'closing' line of perforation at one end is omitted.

Much more common but still individually rare are such curiosities with single-line perforated stamps. There are many examples in the Mols stamps but a few also in the American Bank Note Co.'s 1923 Vloors and Waterlow & Sons' 1942 Palms issues.

The missing line of perforation was sometimes that in one of the margins and examples are illustrated below: 1895 10c (fig. 33), 1894 50c (fig. 34) and 1910 15c (fig. 35) and, separately, on the File Copy sheet of the 1915 40c (fig. 49).



Fig. 33



Fig. 34



Fig. 35

If the missing line was other than peripheral it produced imperf.-between pairs of which examples are shown below: 1896 10c (fig 36), 1915 1fr (fig 37) and 1895 25c (fig 38) and, separately, on the sheet of 1922 'Malines' 50c/25c (fig.50).



Fig. 36



Fig. 37



Fig. 38

Occasionally on a single sheet more than one line of perforation was omitted. Illustrated below are a 1915c 25c from the third booklets with right and bottom perforations missing (fig. 39), a strip of 1915 25c with two adjacent lines lacking (fig. 40) and a similar strip of the 1918 5c (fig. 41), also, separately, a sheet of 1922 Boma 10c/5c lacking three of the top four lines of perforation (fig. 51).



Fig. 39



Fig. 40



Fig. 41

Fakes of these curiosities almost certainly exist. Illustrated below is a block of the 1918 10c Red Cross imperforate horizontally (fig. 42). If sheets of this stamp lacking all or several successive horizontal lines of perforation existed there would, when the sheet was broken up, have been quite a number of similar blocks or pairs and none to date have been reported or, to the writer's knowledge, appeared in the auction sales. It is very probable that this was a block of the relatively common imperforate stamps faked by the addition of the vertical lines of perforation but who can say with certainty?



Fig. 42

The following single copies of the 1900 10c imperforate horizontally (fig. 43) and 1895 5c (fig. 44) and 1900 10c (fig. 45) imperforate vertically have to be considered with extreme caution although the presence of the genuine cancellation tying the 5c to a fragment of a postal stationery card provides some encouragement to think that it may be authentic and not to have had the vertical perforations deliberately removed.



Fig. 43



Fig. 44



Fig. 45

Probably more common are fakes of stamps with imperforate margin using stamps with misplaced marginal lines of perforation. Illustrated below are an obviously suspect pair of the 1909 40c CB handstamp (fig. 46) - finding a copy of the stamp with very wide left selvedge would reduce the suspicion - and an 1896 15c (fig. 47). Either may be authentic but have to be considered fakes.



Fig. 46



Fig. 47

EXTENDED PERFORATIONS

The 1937 booklet panes were comb-perforated with imperforate selvedge on all four sides but panes of the 75c value exist with the horizontal perforations continued through the left and right margins (Fig. 48). This curiosity must have resulted from malfunctioning or maloperation of the perforating machine and appears to be rare - it could have happened on only a single sheet of six panes. The same error has not been reported on panes of other values.

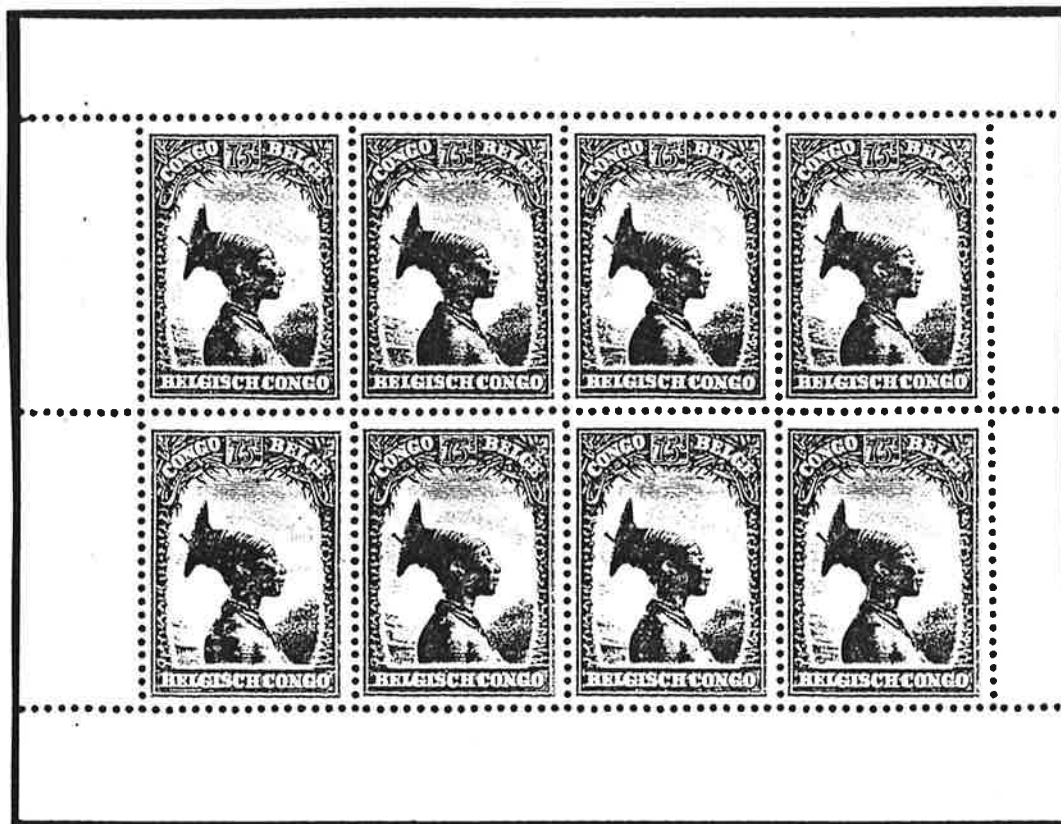


Fig. 48

200.000

Yala Lottery

28.11.16

74005

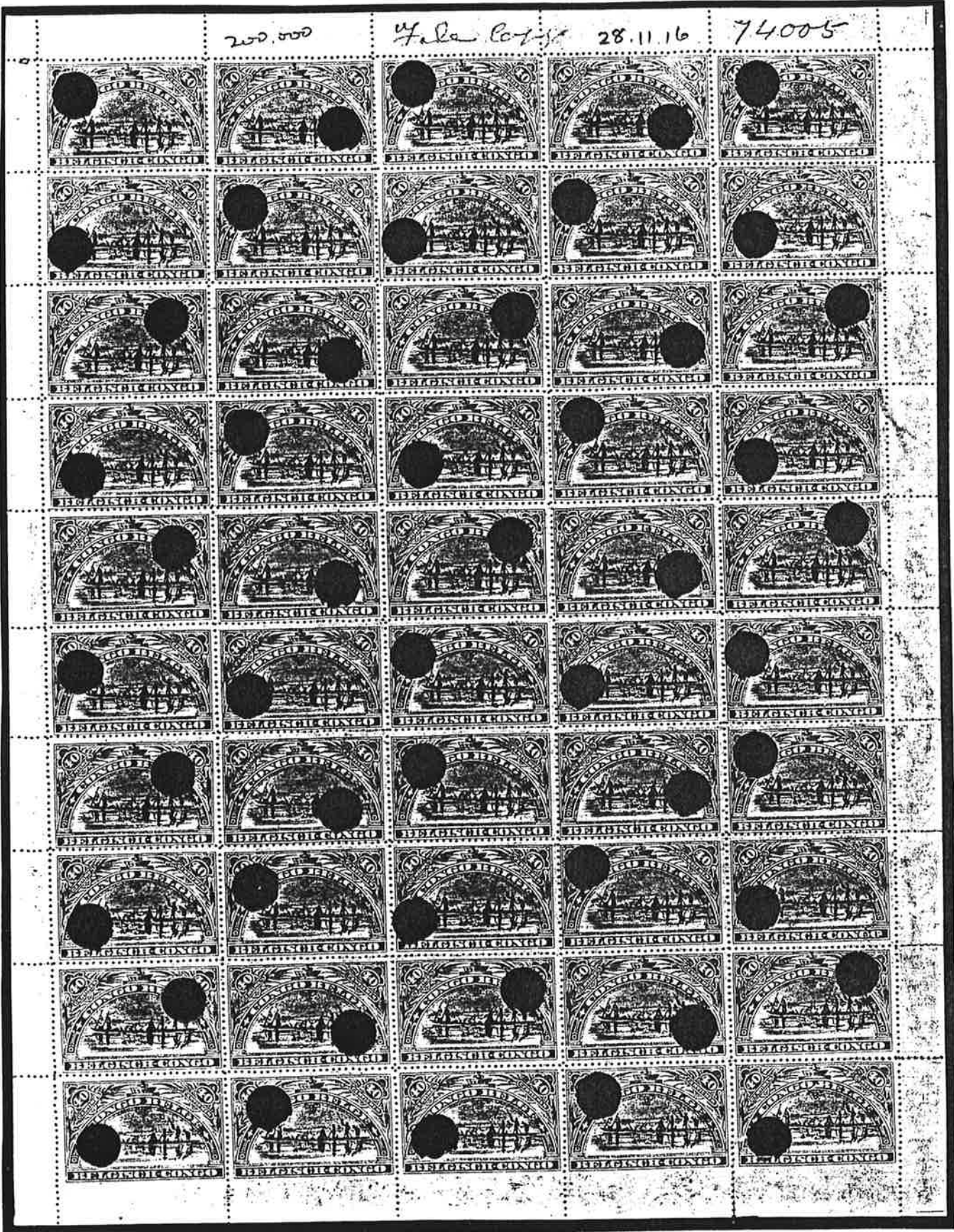


Fig. 49

121:16



Fig. 50



Fig. 51

121:18

'BLIND' PERFORATIONS

'Blind' perforations are defined as perforations where the pins have indented but not pierced the paper and probably resulted from the operator not having pressed the treadle hard enough for the pins to pierce the paper or for having put too great a thickness of sheets into the machine for it to be able pierce all.

The writer has found several Mols stamps with these blind perforations doubling a completed line of perforation and one with blind perforations both vertically and horizontally. The blind perforations are not visible on photocopies so they is no point in trying to illustrate them.

Perforations are certainly not one of the more glamorous of the many facets of stamp collecting but perforating is an essential part of modern stamp production and its study can be absorbing and produce unexpected, and indeed exciting discoveries.

R. H. Keach

AUCTION SALE BCSC 2001-3
REALISED PRICES

LOTS	PRICE	LOTS	PRICE	LOTS	PRICE	LOTS	PRICE	LOTS	PRICE	LOTS	PRICE
1	700	51	100	101	370	151	0	201	0	251	16100
2	800	52	75	102	750	152	850	202	420	252	0
3	420	53	420	103	400	153	3000	203	600	253	80
4	3100	54	75	104	750	154	0	204	400	254	300
5	1450	55	150	105	0	155	300	205	440	255	120
6	2100	56	50	106	0	156	0	206	200	256	0
7	1500	57	160	107	200	157	50	207	500	257	0
8	5600	58	400	108	420	158	1000	208	380	258	0
9	0	59	750	109	500	159	0	209	100	259	0
10	0	60	200	110	1750	160	60	210	150	260	0
11	1000	61	8100	111	340	161	320	211	160	261	0
12	550	62	900	112	270	162	0	212	120		
13	0	63	6000	113	100	163	0	213	0		
14	0	64	0	114	0	164	2300	214	180		
15	24100	65	6000	115	0	165	3100	215	240		
16	2100	66	10000	116	240	166	1100	216	150		
17	460	67	11700	117	850	167	0	217	350		
18	0	68	240	118	0	168	6100	218	320		
19	600	69	420	119	7100	169	3000	219	300		
20	650	70	350	120	0	170	3000	220	280		
21	800	71	550	121	0	171	5100	221	300		
22	1150	72	470	122	900	172	8100	222	100		
23	270	73	1350	123	1500	173	2000	223	350		
24	90	74	0	124	250	174	5000	224	340		
25	170	75	0	125	0	175	1150	225	40		
26	130	76	350	126	500	176	0	226	240		
27	100	77	0	127	400	177	610	227	1600		
28	220	78	4100	128	0	178	750	228	1200		
29	270	79	220	129	0	179	7700	229	130		
30	380	80	220	130	2800	180	1000	230	0		
31	350	81	320	131	1500	181	700	231	0		
32	1050	82	470	132	40	182	550	232	0		
33	340	83	470	133	0	183	0	233	600		
34	90	84	700	134	30	184	2300	234	0		
35	240	85	950	135	110	185	0	235	1650		
36	270	86	900	136	1500	186	0	236	750		
37	160	87	420	137	70	187	1500	237	280		
38	90	88	400	138	2500	188	0	238	280		
39	480	89	110	139	120	189	1000	239	0		
40	300	90	3200	140	370	190	900	240	50		
41	1050	91	1950	141	0	191	200	241	30		
42	1050	92	60	142	220	192	0	242	30		
43	800	93	36100	143	1250	193	110	243	30		
44	480	94	8100	144	900	194	420	244	0		
45	10100	95	3500	145	0	195	600	245	600		
46	9700	96	1500	146	200	196	0	246	0		
47	400	97	2500	147	7000	197	400	247	4800		
48	5100	98	500	148	0	198	0	248	0		
49	800	99	0	149	0	199	0	249	0		
50	5000	100	0	150	3000	200	0	250	15100		

My Favorite Cover

While I cannot say the postal card shown below is my most favorite "cover" it is without a doubt one of my favorites. It is always difficult to find examples of reply cards properly used abroad returning to the Congo. This card is not only such a usage but is even rarer due to its' Lado Enclave destination. This is one of two such cards known to the editor.



Postal Card Statistics

The table on the following page shows lists the number of postal cards used in the Congo free State from 1886-1909 along with some other interesting statistics. This list of data from the Official Journal of Belgian Congo came from the archives of Dr. Jacques Stibbe.

The first column indicates the number of non-African people in the Congo and the second column indicates the number of Belgians in the Congo. The third column indicates the number of single cards used and the fourth column the number of double cards used. The last column indicates the number of double cards used as a percentage of the total.

Statistiques concernant les ENTIERS POSTAUX

de l'Etat Indépendant du CONGO (1886-1908)

(source : le "Bulletin officiel")

<u>Année</u>	<u>Etrangers</u> (blancs) <u>recensés</u> <u>au Congo</u>	<u>Belges</u> <u>recensés</u> <u>au Congo</u>	<u>Cartes simples</u> <u>expédiées en</u> <u>Belgique</u>	<u>Cartes RP</u> <u>expédiées</u> <u>en Belgique</u>	<u>% des</u> <u>CRP/CS.</u>
1886	-	-	180	-	-
1887	218	80 ?	480	-	-
1888	-	-	1148	-	-
1889	430	175	1600	116 (1)	7
1890	-	-	2532	48	1,9
1891	744	338	2256	60	2,6
1892	950 (2)	445	3804	128	3,3
1893	-	-	4328	404	9,3
1894	-	-	4272	384	9
1895	1076	691	7412	568	7,6
1896	1325	839	7362	468	6,3
1897	1474	882	7992	402/ (3)	5
1898	1678 (5)	1060	8767	522 (4)	5,9
1899	1630	960	8734	436	5
1900	2000	1200	22146	534	2,4
1901	2200	1320	14900	355	2,3
1902	2346	1465	16900 (6)	324	1,9
1903	2365	1417	33744	656	1,9
1904	2483	1442	58758	306	0,5
1905	2511	1 410	58216	478	0,8
1906	2635	1500	54582	408	0,75
1907	2761	1587	59420	473	0,75
1908	2943	1713	73507	601	0,8
1909	2938	1722			

(1): Année où furent créées au Congo les cartes avec réponse payée

(2): Début de la ligne de chemin de fer Matadi - Léopoldville.

(3): Changement du tarif des cartes avec réponse payée en 1897 ;

5+10 pour l'intérieur devient 10+10 ; pour l'ext.: 15+10 devient 15+15

(4): Apparition des CARTES INCOMPLETES.

(5): Fin des travaux du chemin de fer Matadi-Léopoldville.

(6): A partir du 1er mai 1902, admission des cartes privées avec vues dans l'usage postal. En 1912, dix ans plus tard, le Congo belge sortira ses premières cartes postales officielles avec vues.