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**BULLETIN 125**

**September 2002**

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## **The Editor's Ramblings**

Well, once again the Bulletin is running late. Real late. I apologize for this. It is the fault of no one but me. Because anything I say will sound like excuses I will say nothing, but I will try to do better. Now, with that out of the way I will get down to some serious begging. Please send me some articles. Long, short, any kind will do just so it is related to Congo area philately. With this issue I've used up my supply of articles and I am out of material to print. Without your help the Bulletin will turn into nothing but auction listings and an annual AGM report. I will try to write some myself, but as you can see I'm hard pressed to get the Bulletin put together let alone write articles for it. So please take pity on a stressed out editor and send me something.

## **Members' Questions**

Xavier Verbeck writes:

I would like to try to put together an article on FAKE EXPERT MARKS. I have some materials, but need the help of our members to flesh things out. What I need are examples of:

- 1) KNOWN fake expert marks on KNOWN fake stamps.
- 2) Genuine expert marks (or presumed genuine) on KNOWN fake stamps.
- 3) Fake or dubious marks on genuine stamps.

I would need either to be allowed to see the stamps or to receive photocopies of the marks (enlarged if possible) and the stamps. Any members who can help Xavier should write to him at:  
6240 A1A South, #311, St. Augustine, FL 32080 or sendhim e-mail at : [xverbeck@earthlink.net](mailto:xverbeck@earthlink.net).

## **Members' Exhibiting Efforts**

Recently two of our American members have had some success in exhibiting Congo material. Clint Many's multi-frame exhibit "The Mols Etat Independent du Congo et Congo Belge - 1894-1925" won a vermeil medal at AIRPEX in Dayton, Ohio in September. Ron Strawser's one frame exhibit "The Belgian Congo Vloors Issue Ubangi Native Design" won a gold medal and the one frame grand award at the Omaha Stamp Show in Omaha, Nebraska in September. This one frame exhibit is shown in its' entirety in this issue. Hopefully selected pages from Clint's exhibit can be shown in a future Bulletin.

## **Advertisements**

Alan Morvay needs the following used view cards: 5 centime types 1 or 2, views ,11,13,14,17,18, 21,22,23,25,28,30,47,52,54,56,60,61,62,64,68,72; 5 centime type 3, views 2,4,7,8,11,14,18,19,21, 26,29,30,32,33,38,40,43,48,49,51,53,56,57,59,62,63,66,68; 10 centime types 1 or 2, views 3,11,21, 28,44,45,52,53,54,57,58,61,71,72; 10 centime type 3, views 2,5,7,8,9,10,13,14,15,16,17,19,20,23, 24,,27,31,32,33,34,36,39,40,41,43,47,48,49,50,51,52,55,56,57,59,60,62,63,69,72. Contact Alan Morvay, P.O. Box 48195, Los Angeles, CA 90048

## **Study Circle Library**

One of the services offered by the Study Circle is the use of its' library. All books and publications are available on loan from the librarian for a nominal fee & the cost of postage both ways. Contact librarian Allan MacLaren, Moray, 43 Miller St., Carnoustie DD7 7AT, Scotland. A list of the available books and publications starts on the next page.

Study Circle Library - August 2002

All books/publication are available on loan from the librarian.  
There is a nominal borrowing fee + postage both ways.

*Contact the librarian Allan MacLaren*

Adair/Mallet-Veale		The Belgian Congo - Various
Armstrong	1926	The Romance of The Air Post. An Introduction to Air Post Collecting
Baldwin	1932	The Airmails of British Africa 1924-1932
Baldwin	1950	Imperial Airways. A History and Priced Check List of the Empire Air Mails.
Burniat		Vade Mecum - Du Collectionneur de Timbres Poste de Belg & Colonies
Celis	1997	Deutsch Ostafrika R-U, Burundi & Rwanda.P.Os & Cancellations 1902-1996
Celis	1981	La Philatelie de Transition du Congo Belge au Congo du Ruanda-Urundi
Celis		Rwanda - Obliterations et Cachets de 1962 a 1994
Crustin		Etat Independant du Congo - Le Timbre a 5 Fr. de 1894
Crustin	1944	Etat Independant du Congo - Le Timbre 1 Fr. de 1894
Daugimont	1957	Apercu Historique de la Poste Airienne Jusqu'en 1935
de Cock	1931	Le Congo Belge et ses Marques Postales
Deneumostier	1981	Anvers-Congo ou la Grande Adventure
Deneumostier	1988	Documents de l'Histoire du Congo Prec.&Prem Emission 1883-1900
Deneumostier	1986	Etat Ind. du Congo. Les Premiers Valeurs Postales
Deneumostier	1986	Etat Independant du Congo - Emission Dite de 1887
Deneumostier	1980	Les Entiers Postaux Sous Le Regne De Leopold II Tome 2
Du Four		Balasse Mag.Extracts from Nos. 8,9,10,11&12. Issues 1894-1923
Frenay	1989	Etude du 5 Centimes Mols, 1894-1909
Frenay	1993	Etude du 10 Centimes Mols, 1894-1909
Frenay	1992	Etude du 15 Centimes Mols, 1896-1909
Frenay	1989	Etude du 40 Centimes Mols, 1898-1909
Frenay	1990	Etude du 50 Centimes Mols, 1894-1909
Frenay	1994	Etude du 1 Franc Mols, 1894-1909
Frenay	1988	Etude du 3.50 Francs Mols, 1898-1909
Frenay	1989	Etude du 5 Francs Mols, 1898-1909
Frenay	1990	Etude du 10 Francs Mols, 1898-1909
Frenay		Les Postes Civiles pendant la guerre de 1914 - 1918
Frenay		Les Timbres - Taxe du Congonde 1886-1960
Frenay	1991	Histoire Postale de l'Etat Independant du Congo.
Gailly	1925	Le Negro Guide
Gailly	1945	Le Negro Guide
Gallant/Huyghebaert		Histoire du Service Postal au Congo Belge (1886-1960)Tome II.
Grubben	1983	Catalogue Illustre Essais des Timbres de Belgique et Congo Belge
Gudenkauf	1974	Les Timbres Du Congo. Surcharges a Boma en 1922-1923
Gudenkauf	1982	Mailboat Services from Europe to the Belgian Congo 1879-1922
Gudenkauf	1985	Mailboat Steamers on Congo Rivers & Lakes (1896-1940)
Gudenkauf		Postal History of the Lado Enclave
Heim/Keach	1975	Cancellations of the Normal P.O.s of B.C. 1886-1960 and R.U.1917-1962
Heim/Keach	1992	Cancellations of The Normal Post Offices of B.C. 1886-1960. 2nd Edition.
Henin	1961	L'epopee de L'aire au Congo
Hoorens	1997	Histoire Postale de L'etat du Katanga
Ingles	1977	Les Surcharges Congo Belge 1909
Jeukens		La Censure au Congo Belge (Civil et Militaire) Guerre 1939 - 1945

Joncker	1947	Les Dix Francs Verts du Congo
Keach	1976	A Philatelic Bibliography of Belgian Congo & Ruanda Urundi
Lowe		The Harrisons of Waterlows.
Mackay	1971	Airmails 1870-1970
Mallet-Veale	1928	The Stamps Of The Belgian Congo and Belgian East Africa
Muller	1933	Catalogue Des Etiquettes Aeropostales
Oth	1992	Le Congo Belge en 1940-45
Pennyquick	1967	The War in East Africa 1914-18
Robson Low	1968	Specimen Sample Stamps. Price List
Soeteman	1995	Reflents de la Philatelie en Belgique et au Congo Belge
Stibbe	1986	Les Entiers Postaux du Congo et Ruanda-Urundi Edition 1986
Stiedl/Billig	1937	Belgisch-Kongo. Lieferung No.41 with English translation
Stockmans/Gallant	1999	Mailboat Services Antwerp- Congo
Stockmans/Gallant	1999	Transport Postal Maritime - Anvers-Congo
Stockmans/Gallant	1997	Arretes et Ordonnances Concernant le Service Coils Postaux 1886-1962
Stockmans/Gallant	1997	Arretes et Ordonnances Concernant les Tarifs Postaux 1886 - 1962
Stockmans/Gallant	1999	Service des Postes du Ruanda - Urundi Rapports Annuels 1921 - 1960
Stockmans/Gallant	1998	Services des Postes - Rapports annuels 1908 - 1958
Studiegroep Vervalsingen		EIC Le 5 Centimes de 1886 - Authentique et Faux
Studiegroep Vervalsingen		EIC Les 10-25 & 50 Centimes de 1886 - Authentique et Faux
Tavano	1999	Congo et Congo Belge 1894 -1923 Etude du 10c - Stanley Falls
Tavano	2000	Etude du 5 Francs Chef Bangala et 5 Francs Ocre 1915
Vandenbauw	1982	Catalogue De L'Aerophilatelie Belge
Vanderveken	1996	Art Indigene du Congo B. du 8/12/47 et du Ruanda Urundi du 18/5/48
Waterlow & Sons Ltd	1950	The Printing of Value Papers
Various	1923	The Belgian Congo and Belgian East Africa
	1897	Traite de Geographie du Congo
	1920	La Telegraphique Sans Fil au Congo Belge
	1925	Catalogue Illustre des Timbres du Congo Belge
		Catalogue Illustre des Timbres Poste de la Belgique et du Congo Belge
		Catalogue - Album des Valeurs Postales Emises 1885-1962 Vol.2
		Congo Belge Legislation Postale 1948
	1955	Les Liaisons Aeriennes - Entre la Belgique et la Congo Belgique
	1957	Divisions Territoriales de la Colonie et liste des localities du Congo Belge
		Les Entiers Postaux de Belgique, Congo Belge et Luxembourg
	1960	Repertoire Des Villes et Principales Localites du Congo

### Notice to American Members

Members should note that any prospective American members should be referred to: David A. Schaubroeck, 36634 Winterset, Clinton Township, Michigan 48035. He can provide them the necessary information. Also American members are reminded that their dues payments for 2003 should also be sent to David.

Some Interesting Postcards

Some years ago I discovered a lot of six postcards (Editor - shown at the end of the article, all sent between 1904 and 1906 to a lady in Antwerp by two explorers, Mr. Mercier and Mr. Von Stockhausen. The postcards were written in small villages named Shambo, Camp of Shambo on Lake Albert and Bugonga on Lake Victoria. Who were these two gentlemen? With the help of the Abbe G. Gudenkauf, I have found some information.

Clement von Stockhausen, born in 1875, was a second lieutenant in the Belgian 12<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment. He left Belgium on July 4, 1900 and was designated as commander of the small town (or village?) of Uvira. In March of 1903 he was commissioned as a member of the international commission in charge of the delineation of the border between the Congo and British East Africa. Lieutenant Mercier was already a member of this commission. Von Stockhausen was in Belgium between May 1903 and May 7<sup>th</sup> 1904. On May 7<sup>th</sup> he left Belgium to return to the Congo via Rotterdam and Napoli, Italy, where Mercier and Bastien, another Belgian officer, board the ship. Mercier and Bastien were returning to the Congo via Mombasa, British East Africa Protectorate. They would travel by railway and the "caravans route" to Katwe, on Lake Edward, where they would arrive at the end of July 1904.

The 30<sup>th</sup> meridian, the provisional border between the two countries, was the main subject of the discussions of the commission. The situation is easy to reconstruct with a map. One has to only compare the actual borders with the 30<sup>th</sup> meridian.

All of these postcards were written in the Congo or on the way to the Congo before the definitive agreement was accepted. They were all posted in British East Africa and reached Belgium through the eastern route via Aden and the Mediterranean Sea. One of the cards was transported by a German ship. As one can see from the text of these cards the comments were not always very kind concerning the native Africans. With the help of these postcards, real history and postal history merge together!



CARTE POSTALE

Partie réservée à la correspondance

M. Adam de Spirlet  
28 rue du Prince  
Anvers  
Belgium

Via Mombasa

STAMBOUL 27 OCT 1905

FORT-PO

Camp de St. Hamba 25-1-05  
Lac Albert & Fouard

Voilà tout un  
Campement

Prochain de Fouard - Hamba

CARTE POSTALE

Partie réservée à la correspondance

Madame de Spirlet  
Rue du Prince 28  
Anvers  
Belgique

Via Mombasa

ANVERS 25 OCT 1905

ANTWERP 25 OCT 1905

Le 26 avril 1905  
Chère Madame!

Recevy tous mes remerciements pour votre bonne carte de janvier. Rien de bien extraordinaire à vous recevoir, ce n'est que depuis quatre mois nous sommes entrés dans une période intense de voyages et d'explorations. Il fallait bien regarder en arrière au regard de ce que nous avons fait, cela ne figure sur aucune carte - du moins les nouvelles sont connues. Le Compagnon M... se porte bien, il est même content! L'effort des plus vaillants n'est pas vain. Les résultats sont très respectables. Je vous envoie tout respectueusement.

CARTE POSTALE

Partie réservée à la correspondance

M. Adam de Spirlet  
28 rue du Prince  
Anvers  
Belgium

Via Mombasa

MOMBASA 27 OCT 1905

Camp de St. Hamba - Lac Al. & Fouard  
24 Sept. 05

Merci pour votre bon souvenir qui m'a été très agréable. Je suis très heureux de vous avoir vu. Je vous envoie tout respectueusement.

CARTE POSTALE

Partie réservée à la correspondance

M. Adam de Spirlet  
Château d'Hoogboom, Anvers  
Capellen  
Anvers

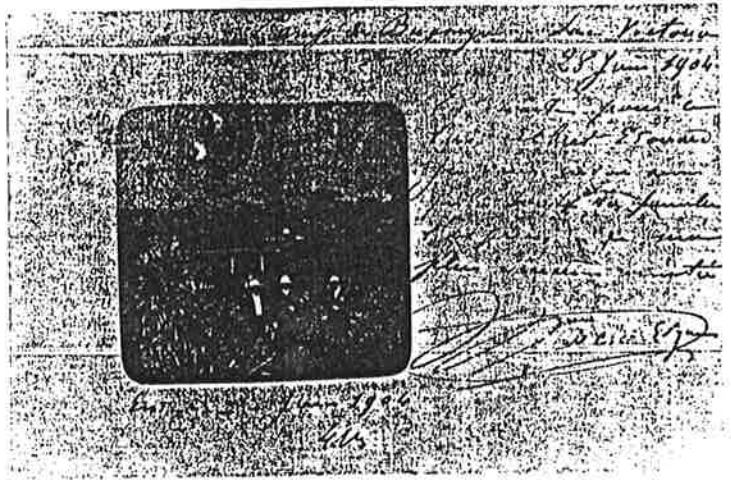
Via Mombasa

MOMBASA 27 OCT 1905

APPELLEN 27 OCT 1905

Camp de St. Hamba  
Lac Al. & Fouard

Voilà tout un  
Campement



**Jadotville and Jean Jadot**

In Bulletin 122 Roger Nailer asked who Jadotville was named after. Jadotville was named after Jean Jadot. Once again thanks to our member Charles Stockman and his excellent website (<http://users.skynet.be/chst/>), we can provide this information. This has been translated from the French by the editor and any errors are likely mine. This is what it has to say about Mr. Jadot.

Engineer of arts and manufacturing, civil engineering and mining. Governor of the General Company of Belgium. He was named, at the age of 23, engineer head engineer of the Secondary lines of the province of Luxembourg. In 1894, he directed the construction of a power station in Egypt and the installation of the Trams of Cairo, before working on the Railroads of lower Egypt. In 1898, he undertook the construction of the railway between Hankow and Peking, twelve hundred kilometers of rails, carried out in eight years, in spite of the revolt of the Boxers. In 1906, he was named the head of the department of the industry of the General Company. In a few weeks were created the mining Union, the Company of the railroad of Low-Congo in Katanga and the forest and mining international Company. In 1911, the first run of copper left the furnaces of Lubumbashi and the railroad of Low-Congo in Katanga was finished. He founded cities, hospitals, medical departments and schools intended for the natives. In 1912, he was named vice-governor and then in 1913 governor of the General Company.. In 1931, the area of Likasi-Panda accepted the name of Jadotville. Honorary doctor of the Universities of Brussels and Leuven. (Denoël Thierry, the new dictionary of the Belgians, the Cry 1992)

**History of the 10<sup>th</sup> B.C.C.C.S. During World War II 1940-1945**

What was the 10<sup>th</sup> B.C.C.C.S.? It was the 10<sup>th</sup> Belgian Congo Casualty Clearing Station, a field hospital that was created in Leopoldville in August 1940 to assist allied troops during different war operations. This was a mechanized unit that started in 1940 with 10 European officers and about 100 soldiers of the Belgian Congo "Force Publique". At the end of the war the unit was composed of 23 Europeans (7 doctors), 300 to 450 Congolese soldiers and sergeants, and about 70 trucks and other vehicles.

The first operations of this medical unit took place in British East Africa with the 25<sup>th</sup> East African Brigade which was fighting against Italian troops. After the surrender of the Italians, the unit was sent to Madagascar in support of the British troops fighting against the troops of the French "Vichy" government. After the surrender of the French, the unit took a short break in the Belgian Congo. Next, the unit left Stanleyville to go to Mombasa, and then by sea to Burma, where operations were still going on against the Japanese army. The Congolese unit arrived in Chittatong at the end of 1943. Until the end of the war in August 1945 the unit was involved in several operations in a very difficult environment. They left Ranchi, India on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1945 to return to the Belgian Congo.



Mail from this unit from the various countries in which they operated is not easy to find. Only the European officers were writing home. No mail sent by Congolese soldiers is known to date.

Mail from the 10<sup>th</sup> B.C.C.C.S. can be found from different countries and towns:

Abyssinia (Ethiopia)

Kenya : Nairobi

Eritrea: Asmara

Somalia : Kismayu and Mogadiscio

British Somalia: Hargeisa and Berbera

Madagascar: Tamatave, Diego Suarez and Majunga

Burma

India

All the covers found to date were censored by the British, and sometimes on arrival in the Belgian Congo.

Illustrated below are some covers from this period:

**CONGO BELGE**



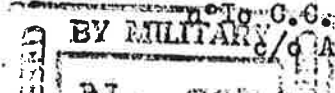
S.P.

Monsieur l'Ordonnateur-Délégué, Trésorier en Chef

Commandement de la Force Publique

LEOPOLDVILLE  
=====

Exp.: Major-Médecin A. THOMAS  
no 10 C.C.S. (Belgian)  
BY MILITARY c/o Army Post Office  
Nairobi

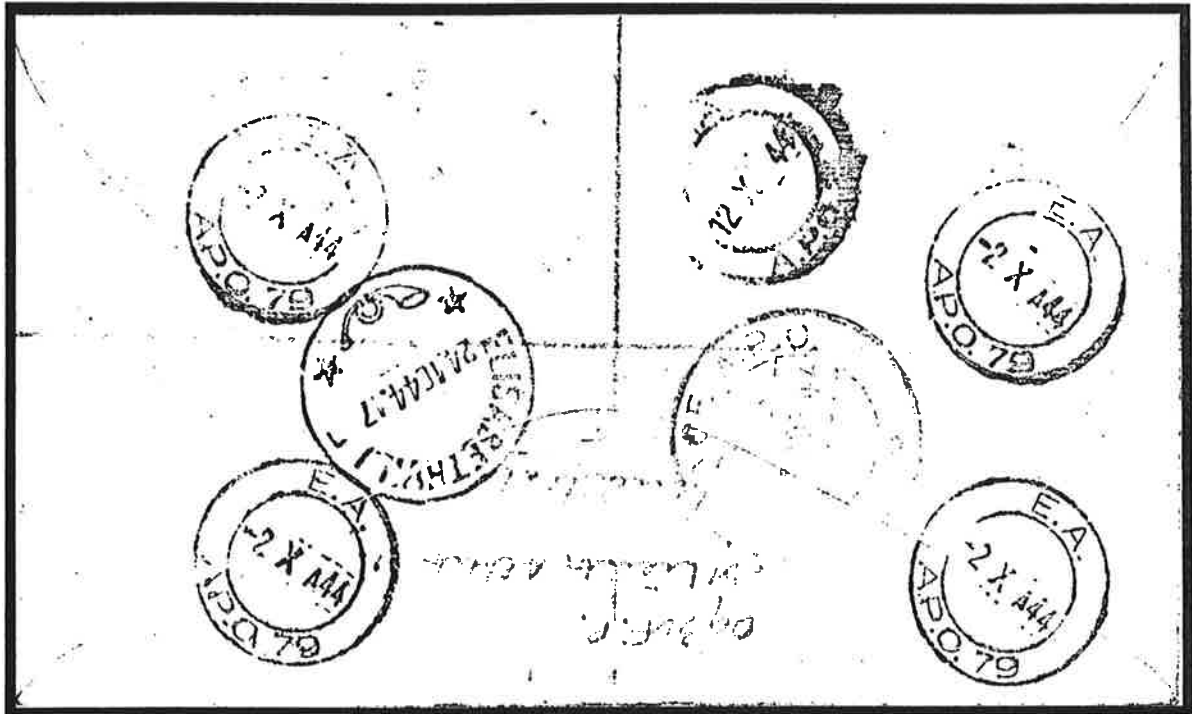
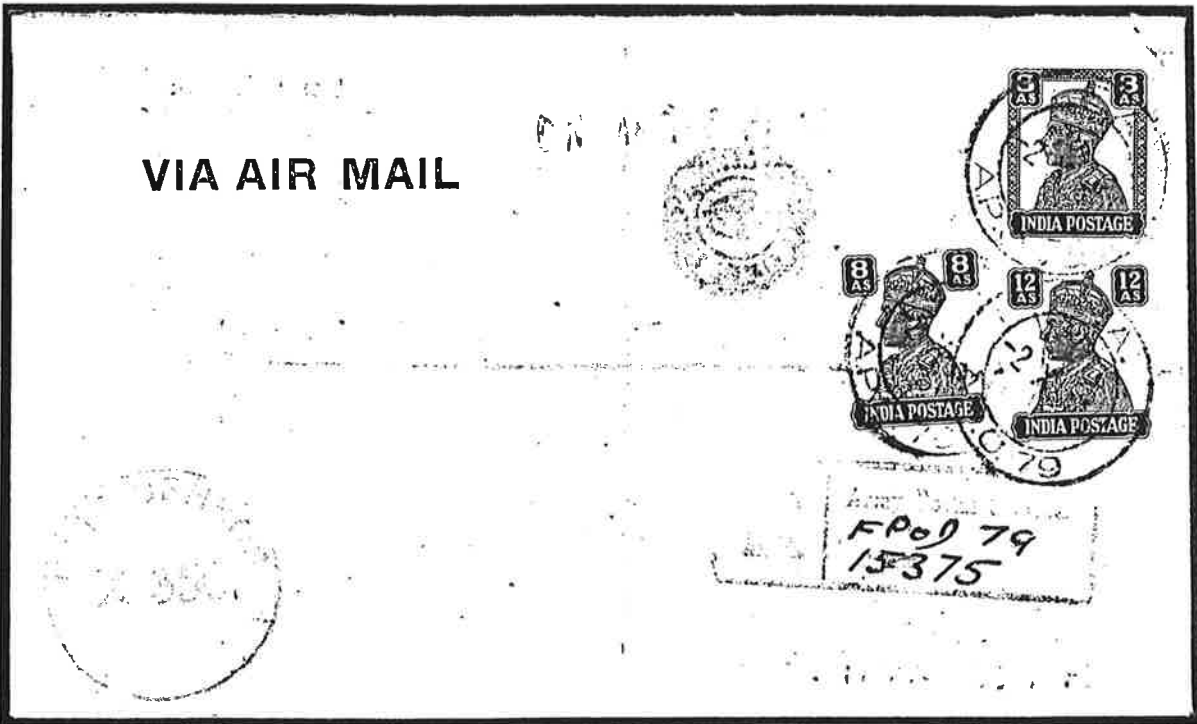


Congo Belge

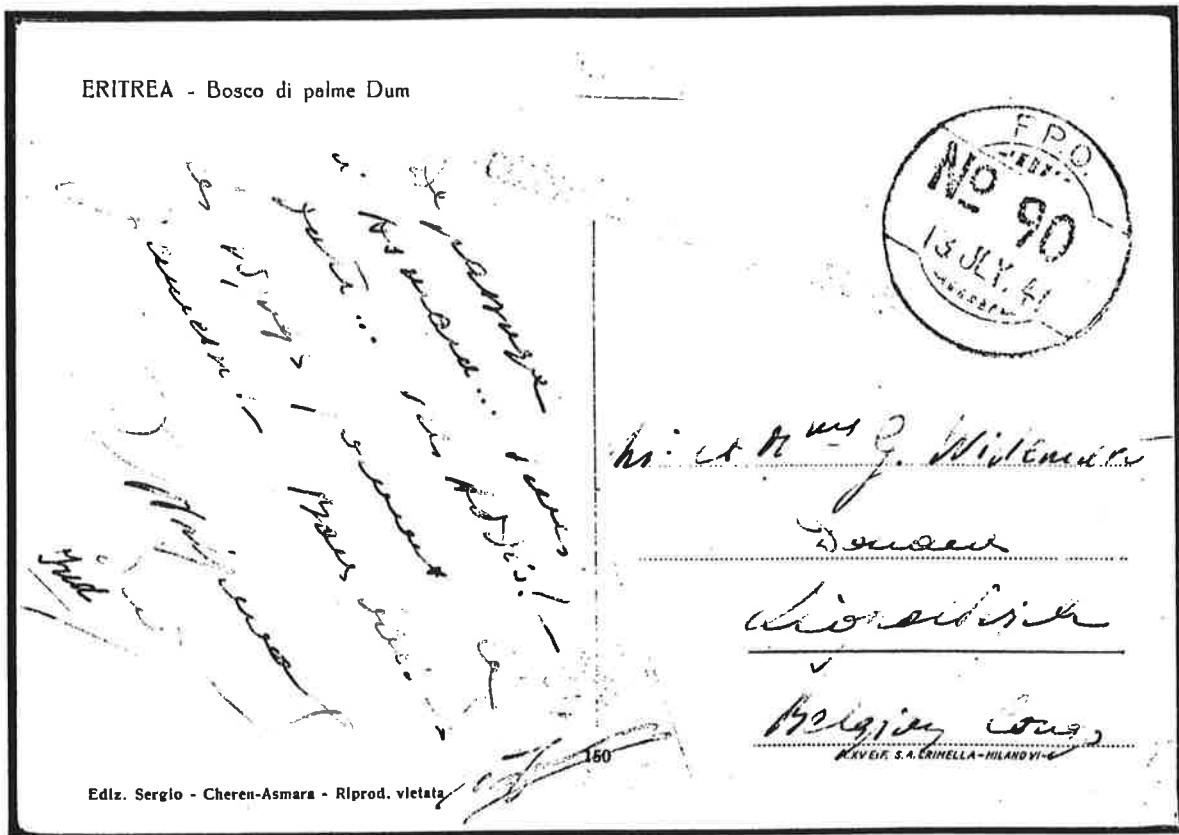
Cover sent January 20, 1941 by Surgeon Major Thomas (commanding officer) to Leopoldville. Censorship marking "PASSED BY MILITARY CENSOR NO. 337" and cancellation A.P.O. 2 - Military Post Kenya.







Registered airmail cover dated October 2, 1944 from Burma to Elisabethville. Cancelled E.A. A.P.O. 79 with the same X 350 censorship marking. To date all known covers from Burma have the same A.P.O. 79 cancellation.



Postcard cancelled July 13, 1941 by F.P.O. 90 in Asmara, Eritrea. Triangular British military censorship marking "Passed by Censor 2383) and linear "CENSURE CONGO BELGE" (editor's note the censorship markings are very faint).

If anyone has similar covers in their collections the author would be very interested in receiving a photocopy. Please send them to Emile Hoorens, Ave Eugene Ysaye 105/1, 1070 Bruxelles, Belgium

**E-mail address changes - inform the Hon. Secretary**

I am periodically advised of changes to e-mail addresses. These come from various sources but rarely from the person concerned. As Secretary to the entire Study Circle membership I am responsible as such for keeping records on everything from annual subscriptions to full membership details. **With this in mind will all members please advise me of any changes in address, telephone number and e-mail addresses.**

Stuart Smith

**A One Frame Floors Exhibit**

This exhibit which has been shown successfully here in the States is an example of a one frame exhibit. This type of exhibit is becoming popular here and many of our national shows allow such exhibits. The challenge is to pick a subject narrow enough that its' story can be told in 16 pages. This can be a challenge. Please note it was necessary to reduce two of the pages of the exhibit which are oversized pages. The exhibitor (The Bulletin editor) would like to hear any comments from members concerning this exhibit, especially if you find an error.

# THE BELGIAN CONGO VLOORS ISSUE UBANGI NATIVE DESIGN



*Handwritten signature or initials, possibly 'Vloors'.*

*Handwritten signature or initials, possibly 'Vloors'.*

Early essay (23x23 millimeters). American Bank Note Company March 22, 1921 date stamp on reverse.

These line engraved issues take their name from the designer of the stamps, Emile Vloors. These stamps, which show primarily various natives of the Belgian Congo, were printed by the American Bank Note Company. Although the first of the Vloors issues appeared February 1, 1923, the first of the Vloors issues showing the Ubangi native was issued on May 24, 1924. Various values showing this design were issued through 1931, as postal rate changes required new denominations. In addition to their use in the Belgian Congo, these issues were also overprinted for use in Ruanda-Urundi.

This is a traditional exhibit that presents the development of these issues. Essays, proofs, specimens, stamps, and usages of these issues are shown. The issues are presented chronologically showing both the Belgian Congo issues and those overprinted for use in Ruanda-Urundi.

The highlights in this exhibit are the two essays and four proofs for which it is estimated that there exists only one to five of each.

ESSAY

**20 CENTIME ISSUE OF MAY 1924**

Issued May 15, 1924 as a rate makeup stamp.



50586



Die proof (26x26 millimeters) with American Bank Note Company die number.

5122

Early essay (23x23 millimeters) in deep carmine red.

20 CENTIME ISSUE OF MAY 1924



Specimens from the American Bank Note Company archives. The specimens were likely from different printings as evidenced by the different sizes of the punch holes.

Unused block.



Pair used with 1925 Leys issue 60 centime stamp paying the 1 franc foreign letter rate in effect from October 1, 1925 to July 31, 1926.

RUANDA-URUNDI 20 CENTIME ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1924



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.

F 6685 STATE OF CONGO BELGE



The marginal markings on this strip were common to most of the Floors issues. There are two types of overprint as shown on this strip. Most overprints on this value have the R of RUANDA to the left of the U of URUNDI. The second stamp shows the R directly over the U.



Usage with four other Floors overprint issues on cover to China paying the 75 centime foreign letter rate in effect from May 1, 1924 to September 30, 1925.



**40 CENTIME ISSUE OF JANUARY 1925**

Issued January 19, 1925 as a rate makeup stamp.

-A- 50588



Die proof with die number mounted on card.



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.

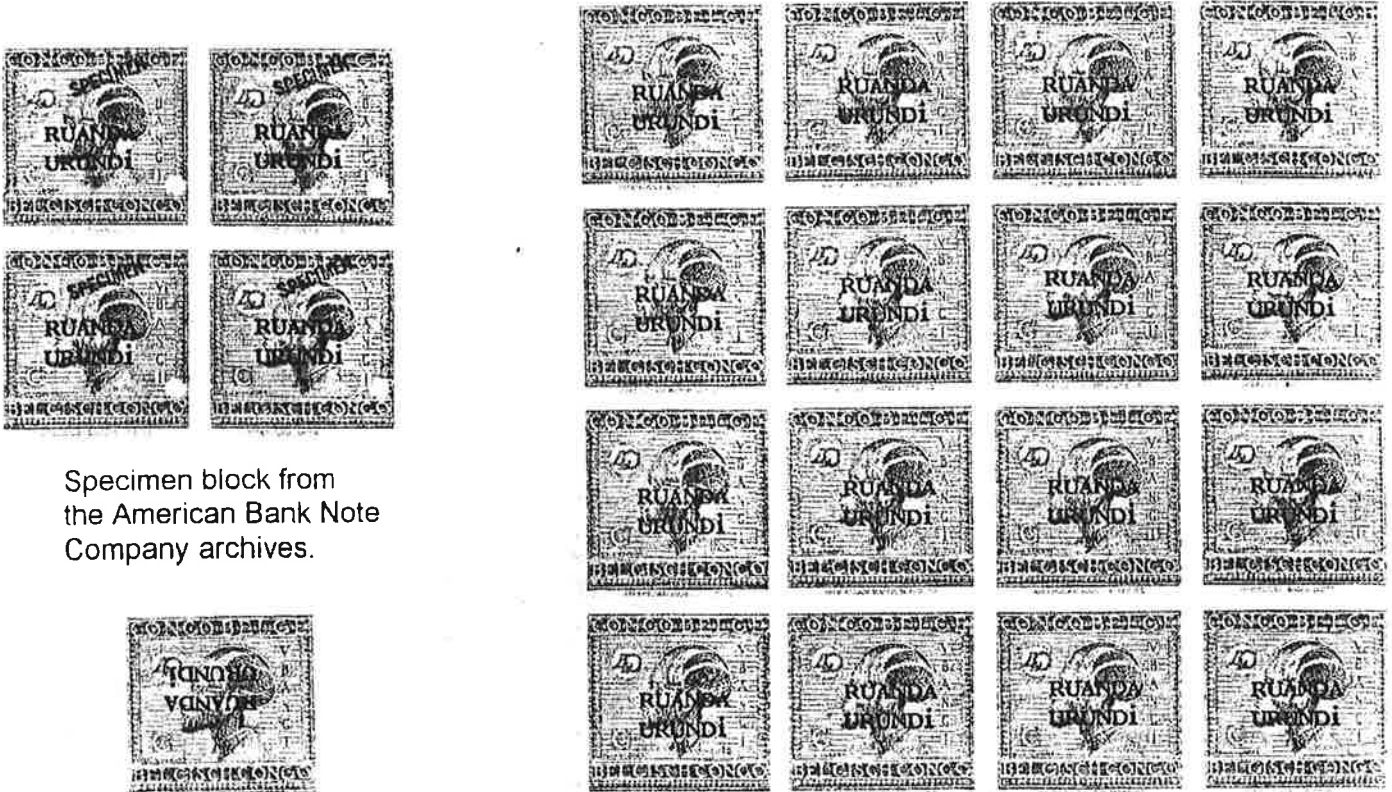
Unused block.



Usage with 5 centime Vloors issue paying the 45 centime post card rate to Belgium in effect from October 1, 1926 to April 30, 1927.

**RUANDA-URUNDI 40 CENTIME ISSUE OF JANUARY 1925**

Issued January 19, 1925 as a rate makeup stamp.



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.

Inverted overprint.

Block with Ruanda overprint shifted to left on stamp position 73.



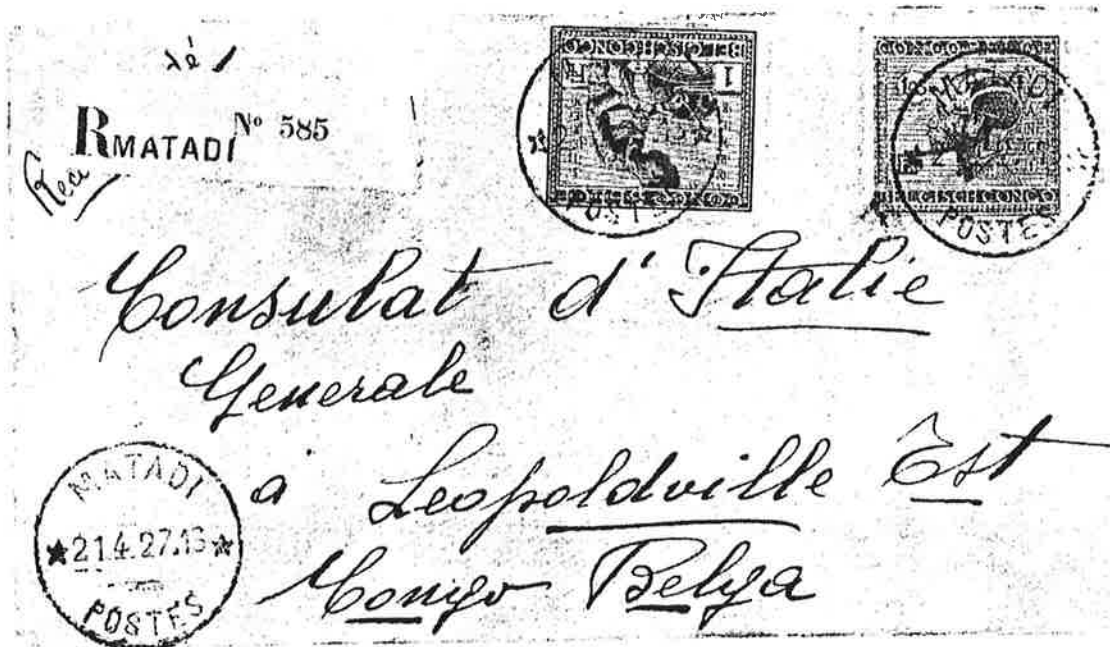
Usage with 10 centime Vloors and 1 franc Mols overprint issues paying the 50 centime letter rate to Belgium and the 1 franc registration rate.

### 1.25 FRANC ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1926

Issued December 20, 1926 to pay the double weight domestic letter rate and the foreign letter rate then in effect.



Unused stamp.



Usage with 1 franc Vloors issue paying the 75 centime domestic letter rate and the 1.50 franc registration fee.

### RUANDA-URUNDI 1.25 FRANC ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1926



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.

Unused block.

**1.50 FRANC ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1926**

Issued December 20, 1926 to pay the foreign letter rate effective on January 1, 1927.

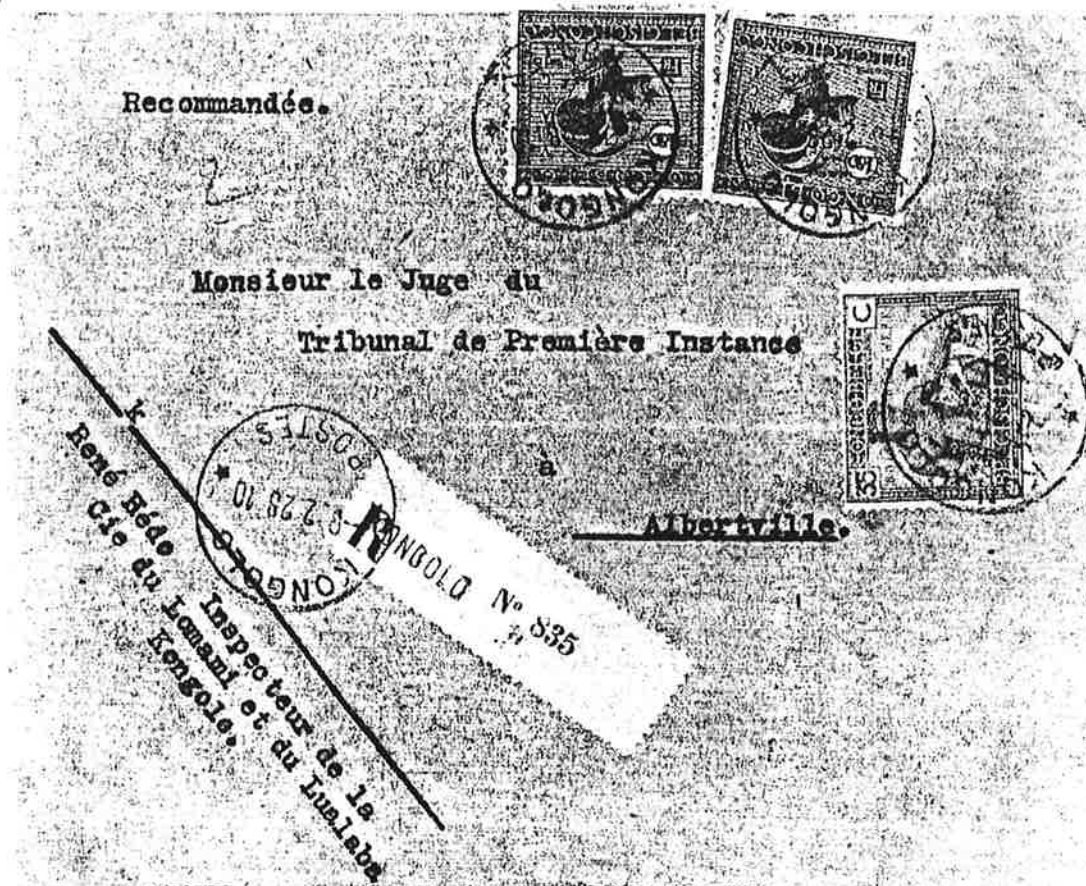
A-50588



Unused stamp.

Large die proof with die number.

Usage with 35 centime Vloors issue paying the the 1.60 franc double weight domestic letter rate and the 1.75 franc registration fee.



RUANDA-URUNDI 1.50 FRANC ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1926



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.



Unused stamp.

IMPORTATION

EXPORTATION

**ALBERT CHRISTY**  
NÉGOCIANT  
**USUMBURA (RUANDA-URUNDI)**



Messieurs G E R B E R & C O S . A .



T H O U N E .  
- : - : - : - : - : - : -

Suisse.

Usage with 25 centime Vloors overprint issue paying the 1.75 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect May 1, 1927.

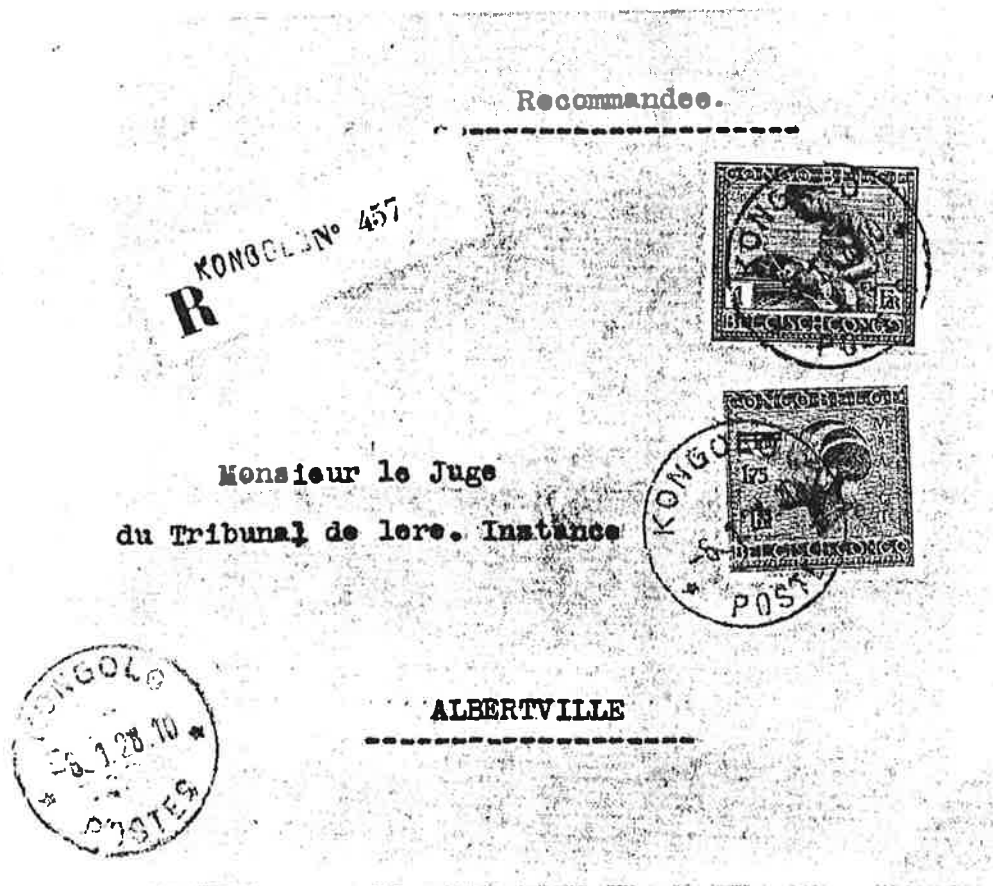


# 1.75 ON 1.50 FRANC SURCHARGE ISSUE OF JUNE 1927

Issued June 14, 1927 to pay the 1.75 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect May 1, 1927



The stamps were surcharged by the American Banknote Company.



Usage with 1 franc Vloors issue paying the 1 franc domestic letter rate and the 1.75 franc registration fee.

**1.75 FRANC ISSUE OF AUGUST 1927**

Issued August 25, 1927 to pay the foreign letter rate that was effective May 1, 1927.

**1.75 FRANC ISSUE OF AUGUST 1927**

R. F. Cleveland  
A. P. C. ...  
Luebo, Congo Bolgo, Africa.



A-50588-A



Mr. W. A. Ramsey,  
San Antonio National Bank,  
Commerce Street,  
San Antonio,  
Texas

Etats Unis d'Amerique

Texas

Solo usage to the United States.

Large die proof with die number.

**RUANDA-URUNDI ISSUE OF AUGUST 1927**



Unused block.

Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.

Unused block.



Usage paying the 1.75 franc foreign letter rate and the 1.75 franc registration fee.



**RUANDA-URUNDI 1.75 ON 1.50 FRANC SURCHARGE ISSUE OF JUNE 1927**

Issued June 14, 1927 to pay the 1.75 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect May 1, 1927



Surcharged by the American  
Bank Note Company.

Specimen block from the American  
Bank Note Company archives.

Pays-Bas.  
via Suez.



Den Weded. Gestr. Heer E. Willemse.

"De Enk"  
Wipstrikkerallee 45.

Zwolle.  
(Holland)

Solo usage on single weight letter to Holland.

**2 ON 1.75 FRANC SURCHARGE ISSUE OF JANUARY 1931**

Issued January 15, 1931 to pay the 2 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect January 1, 1931



The stamps were surcharged by L'Atelier du Timbre in Malines, Belgium.



Solo usage on single weight letter to the United States.

# RUANDA-URUNDI 2 ON 1.75 FRANC SURCHARGE ISSUE OF JANUARY 1931

Issued January 15, 1931 to pay the 2 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect January 1, 1931.



Specimen block from the American Bank Note Company archives.



Although previously reported as surcharged by l'Atelier du Timbre, the existence of the specimens suggest that American Bank Note Company did the surcharging.



Secretary, Mrs Ruth Haughey  
Alumni Association C. M. E.  
312 North Boyle Avenue  
Los Angeles, California  
United States of America.

Usage with overprinted 50 centime Vloors issue paying the 2.50 franc foreign letter rate that went into effect February 1, 1934.

## A Favourite Cover – one from the top ten!

Letter addressed to “*August Persyn, Capitaine Commandant a Bord Le S.S.Heron ... Dans la Rivière du Congo*”. You don’t need to speak French to fully understand to whom and where it is addressed.

It was posted in Ostende 22nd February 1883 and charged at the standard letter rate of 75 centimes (refer Du Four, ‘Congo Cinquante ans d’histoire Postale, p.366). Not until January 1886 was this reduced to 25c. It carries a faint French ‘ÉTRANGER’ transit mark, is directed ‘*Via Lisbonne*’ and, on the reverse, carries its second transit mark - ‘CORREIO [28 Fev 83] LISBOA’. Bearing in mind this precedes the establishment of a formal postal system in the Congo, it isn’t surprising that there is no arrival mark, though I wish there was! That it did arrive is surely beyond question but whether ‘*De L’Afrique-Australe*’ had any influence is not known.

What do we know about the ‘route’ it took, the ‘Heron’ and ‘August Persyn’?

### **Route**

Just before his death I let Ray Keach have site of the cover and in one of his last letters to me he expressed the view that the ‘Etranger’ transit mark was “surely French and probably applied in Paris en route from Antwerp to Lisbon.” According to Abbé Gudenkauf’s book the French mailboats did not extend their West Africa journeys to Banana until 1898 and therefore the letter probably travelled by either a British or Portuguese mailboat starting or picking up the mail in Lisbon.

### **S.S.Heron**

The S.S.Heron (300T) was an ocean sailing steamer and the property of the ‘Association Internationale du Congo’. It became permanently based in the Congo during 1882 after having twice sailed from Antwerp earlier that year.

Whilst we now know that August Persyn was its Commandant we also know that her mechanics, in order of seniority, were a Mr.Wensel and a Mr.Hill. Having settled in the Congo, the ship is recorded as being used between Banana and Nkongolo/Ikungula (down stream from Vivi and opposite Nokki). To meet the demands of the time, these bounds were often extended.

In Stanley’s ‘The Congo and the Founding of its Free State’ there is reference in his diary of 15<sup>th</sup> July of joining the steamer Heron at Mussuko and being conveyed to St. Paul de Loanda to catch the Portuguese mail boat steamer to Europe. The journey from Mussuko took 4 days and having just missed the connection, he spent and records his next 4 weeks in Loanda followed by a detailed report on his delayed journey aboard the mail steamer *China* that left on 17<sup>th</sup> August. That is fascinating reading but has no relevance here.

A second reference by Stanley 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1883, says that the Heron was put at the disposal of Lt.Van de Velde to convey his men and stores - sailing on 5<sup>th</sup> February for the Kwilu. Van de Velde arrived 9<sup>th</sup> February to negotiate for ground and station etc. etc., which he named Rudolfstadt.

A month later on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1883 Van de Velde “*by means of his boats rendered efficient service to Capitaine Cordier of the Saggitaire, (a French naval vessel) by which means that officer was enabled to enter the river, and partake of the hospitalities of the young Lieutenant*”. Whether the Heron was still at his disposal and assisted, is not clear.

Mail to the Congo from Europe took approximately 3 weeks and it would be during the second half of March that this letter was finally delivered.

The same little ship is also recorded by Stanley in 1887 as "having brought up the remainder of the cargo left on board the Madura" which had brought him back to the Congo in 1887 in search of the Emin Pasha. She continued in service to the State into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is illustrated here.

**August Persyn**

We do not know a great detail about Lt. August Persyn other than he was a marine who entered service with the Association International du Congo in 1881. It is said he left Belgium 30<sup>th</sup> December and served for about 18 months in the lower Congo before his death from a seizure 24<sup>th</sup> July 1883 – no doubt still a very young man.

Interestingly the S.S.Heron is recorded as departing Antwerp on its first journey to the Congo on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1882 and conjecture suggests that as both the ship and the Lieutenant were in the service of the Association - isn't it likely that this was the ship on which Lt.Persyn came to the Congo?

I am indebted to Abbé Gudenkauf for providing some useful snippets of information. Stuart Smith

