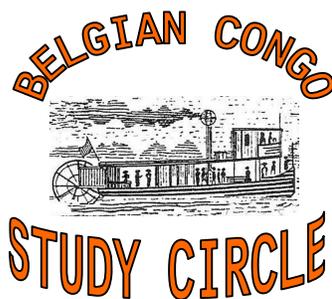


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**BULLETIN 147**

**July 2008**

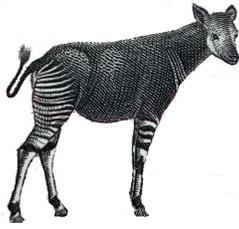
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**Our website address**  
[www.belgian-congo-study-circle.be](http://www.belgian-congo-study-circle.be)

## From the Editor



### The AGM in Bruxelles - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2008

There is a good selection of photographs recording the event including our social gatherings – but insufficient room here to illustrate them all. The sun shone and as usual, it was a very memorable occasion. We were again indebted to our President for chairing the meetings and to Emile Hoorens who made all the arrangements on our behalf.

Thanks too, to Johan Delbeke for preparing a summary report on the meeting.

#### Those attending – from left to right:

A.N.Other, Charles Henuzet, Thierry Frennet, Emile Hoorens, Thomas Lindekens, Ludo Achten, Bruce Lockhart, Walter Deijnckens, Stuart Smith, Vincent Schouberechts, Yves Winand, Philippe Lindekens, Joseph De Leeuw, Jean-Pierre Flamand, Luc Vander Marcken, Johan Delbeke, Marc Frevelshausen, Christian Vandebossche and Charles Stockmans.



**Apologies** - were received from Bernard Harris (U.K.), Roger Gallant and Leo Tavano (Belgium).

#### Minutes of the AGM 2007

The minutes of last years meeting were approved.

#### Hon. Treasurer:

Financial statements were tabled and received from the Stuart Smith, *Hon. Treasurer*; Charles Henuzet, *Belgian Packet Secretary* and Philippe Lindekens, *Auctioneer*.

The accounts for 2007 were approved. (*Account details along with ‘Auction Administration costs, etc.’ previously published in Bulletin #146 and in advance of this summary*)

Because of their importance and immediate implementation I am going to repeat the ‘*Auction administration costs, bids and payment details*’ statement.

1. To avoid any confusion with regard to ‘exchange rates’ and the payment for auction lots – **‘the price charged and due is calculated and based on the exchange rate in place on the day of the sale.’** (*This will be fairly obvious to those of us who regularly buy internationally, but needs confirming so as to avoid any future misunderstanding*).
2. Members are reminded that in addition to the purchase price, they are also required to pay all ‘add on’ postage and packing costs.
3. There is a considerable amount of time consuming work and administrative costs involved in describing and preparing the auction. It was unanimously agreed that the ‘auction sale’ benefits to members was great **but** the financial benefits to the Study Circle are extremely small and insufficient for investment in our future activities – typically new publications, etc. With effect from the next new auction ‘2008 (2)’ a 5% buyers premium will be added to the ‘Lot’ sale price.

Relevant to the above, the Treasurer expressed serious concern about the reducing Bank balance (International) largely attributed to auction administration costs and a lower than anticipated

contribution from that source to central funds. Hopefully the action now being introduced will resolve this shortfall.

Subscriptions for 2009 and are listed below.

U.K.	£8	
Belgium	10€	
Other European	10€	
U.S.A.	\$15	<b>(\$11 to those receiving the Bulletin, etc. by email)</b>
Rest of the World	£12	<b>(£8 to those receiving the Bulletin, etc. by email.)</b>

At the time of the AGM, membership of the Circle is 124, an increase of 6 in comparison with the same time last year. The distribution is shown below.

	2007	2008		2007	2008
Belgium	51	57	New Zealand	1	1
U.K.	22	21	Poland	1	1
U.S.A.	27	28	South Africa	1	0
Denmark	5	5	Spain	1	1
France	4	5	Sweden	2	2
Kenya	1	1	Zambia	1	1
Luxembourg	1	1			

### Auction Secretary

Philippe Lindekens was particularly concerned about the volume of work associated with the dual role of 'Describing' and 'Financial administration' of the Auction. The latter, involving collection of dues and payment to sellers was a particular burden and problem. He no longer felt able to continue and wished to be relieved of the 'financial management' aspect. Charles Stockmans offered to take on that responsibility and was thanked by the President.

Year 2007	2007 (1)	2007 (2)	2007 (3)	2007 (4)	Total	Due to BCSC
Total sales (€)	4,130.75	3,935.10	3,838.26	5,066.80	16,970.91	
Commission due to BCSC	158.25	191.09	190.71	210.45		750.50 €
No. of lots offered	427	535	376	349	1687	
No. of lots sold	245	296	239	277	<u>1057</u> (63%)	
No. of sellers	9	11	12	9		
No. buyers Belgium	19	17	23	12		
No. buyers U.K.	6	5	7	4		
No. buyers U.S.A.	3	4	3	6		
No. buyers 'Rest of World'*	5	6	3	7		

\* Luxembourg, France, Denmark, Spain, Sweden.

### Librarian

As reported previously a new 'Librarian' was appointed at the end of 2007.

Once again the President recorded his thanks for the service previously provided by Allan MacLaren and in his absence, also thanked Bernard Harris for taking on the position.

### Packet Secretaries

**Charles Henuzet** tabled a summary of activity associated with the distribution of the 'Belgian Packet' which had also made a small contribution to the BCSC accounts. Another is now ready for circulation. He was thanked for providing this facility to the Belgian membership.

**Hal Hoyte.** Whilst no 'Packet' had been circulated in the U.K., during 2007, it was reported that one was being prepared for the latter part of 2008. After that Packet completes its circuit, Hal will be resigning his position as Packet Secretary and will no longer be available for re-election.

### Expert Committee

Due to illness of the committee chairman no report had been submitted. However Charles Henuzet estimated that approximately 50-60 certificates had been issued during the last year.

The meeting extended its best wishes to Leo Tavano for a speedy recovery.

*Members attention is drawn to Leo Tavano's new address – Refer to 'Membership News'.*

### Outstanding - 'Other Business AGM 2007'

1. No progress had been made on the intended *Forgeries reference collection* based on material donated by the Keach family. It is in abeyance but will be reassessed at our next meeting in Bruxelles.
2. The proposed re-write of '*La Censure au Congo Belge, Guerre 1939-1945 – Civil et Militaire*' by A. *Jeukens* was overlooked. This matter too will have to be reconsidered at next year's Bruxelles meeting.

*Should I receive any update of news on either, it will be reported in the Bulletin. Ed.*

### Officers - Election

President	<i>W. Deijnckens</i>
International General Secretary	<i>J. Delbeke</i>
Regional Sec. – Belgium	<i>E.R. Hoorens</i>
Regional Sec. – USA	<i>D. A. Schaubroeck</i>
Regional Sec. – UK + other	<i>S.S. Smith</i>
Bulletin Editor	<i>S. S. Smith</i>
Auction Secretary - Describer	<i>Ph. Lindekens</i>
Auction Secretary - Treasurer	<i>C. Stockmans</i>
Librarian/Book sales	<i>B H. Harris</i>
Packet Sec. – Belgium	<i>C. Henuzet</i>
Packet Sec. – UK	**
Chairman Expert Comm.	<i>L. Tavano</i>

\*\* The former U.K. Packet Secretary Hal Hoyte has indicated that whilst he will prepare one for circulation during 2008, he no longer wishes to retain this office. The position is therefore vacant.

### Members displays

After the AGM we were again entertained by a number of fine and informative displays. The following is a brief résumé and acknowledgement of the contributors and topics presented.

#### **Walter Deijnckens** 1<sup>st</sup> World War Censorship

**HELP** On the back of the successful series of articles on 2<sup>nd</sup> World War censorship which appear in the Bulletin, Walter concluded his display with an appeal that we support his research on this 1<sup>st</sup> World War period, and let him have copies of any material we have from that period.

#### **Emile Hoorens** World War II 'Greek refugee correspondence.'

Those interested in the history and activities of the Greek refugees will find the following new book particularly fascinating – 'Pionniers Méconnues du Congo Belge' by George Antippas.

- Yves Winand**
1. 'Sona Gongo' – a recent find (refer Bulletin 146, pages 7-8)
  2. Telegrams and their 'Marks'

#### **Vincent Schouberechts**

and **Emile Hoorens** Items from Emile Hoorens and Patrick Maselis' 'Lado collection'

The display, presented successively by Vincent Schouberechts and Emile Hoorens, was of material originating from the 'Congo' (*Yei, Surrur, Redjaf, Mont Adras, Faradje*) and directed via the Lado to Europe.

*This was real detective work and it would be good to receive a formal article on the subject. Ed.*

#### **Philippe Lindekens** 'Special postage rate covers – internal use'

**Jean Pierre Flamand** Bruxelles-Stanleyville and return by *Marchetti*, October 1934

**Thomas Lindekens** The '1947 Masks' issue – used on cover.'

**Charles Henuzet** Perforations of the 1928 Stanley issue.

He was able to illustrate that the sheets did not have alternating rows of large and small stamps throughout! It is anticipated that a paper on the subject will appear in a future Bulletin.

*But it isn't all stamps, there was time off at 'Le Portugue*



The photographer, Christian Vandenbossche – earlier in the day!



Stuart and Chantal (Vandenbossche)



'Le Patron' looking after us all but still living in hope – Joan, Thomas, Chantal and Thierry (Frennet)

Thomas, Joan (Smith), Philippe and Emile.

X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X

### Future Events

- *The next Annual General Meeting will again be held at the Erasme Hotel, Brussels. Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2009, Brussels*

\*

**Luxphila**

25<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> September 2008



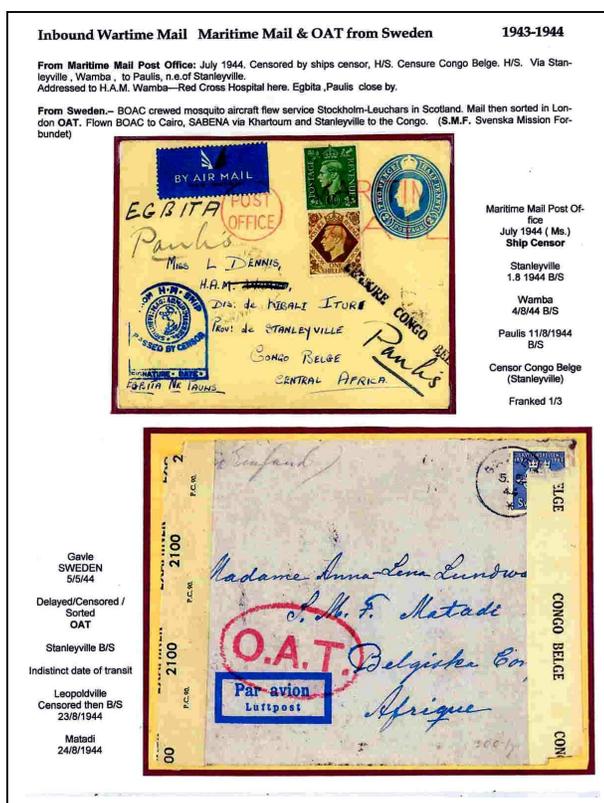
## Membership News

### Rick Oxenham.

Congratulations to Rick Oxenham, our only New Zealand member, whose 'Air Mail' exhibit continues to receive awards from regions of the world we only read about. He received a 'Vermeil' at Taipei.

He tells me "the entire exhibit now runs to 128 pages" and took the trouble to copy on to CD the 80 sheet exhibit as shown in Taipei.

I have had only a brief opportunity to study the content but it is something I look forward to searching through as it clearly contains some very interesting material - specifically relevant to my interests and Walter Deijnckens serialised articles on 'Overseas censorship marks'.



### New Members

We extend a warm welcome to Laurent Bierny and Justin Polkis who recently joined the Study Circle. As always we trust they will enjoy and benefit from their association with us:

**Belgium** - **Bierny, Laurent**; Rue Charles Catala, 37. 1460 Virginal Samme

**U.S.A.** - **Polkis, Justin**; 10202 Spinning Wheel Way, Richmond, Virginia 23233-2750  
e-mail: [jlpolkis@vcu.edu](mailto:jlpolkis@vcu.edu)

Residential and e-mail address changes

**Belgium** - **Tavano, Leo**; Rue de Joie, 17. 4000 Liege.  
- **Henuzet, Charles**; e-mail: [charleshenuzet@scarlet.be](mailto:charleshenuzet@scarlet.be)

**Poland** - **Pliszka, Alexander** ; Strytka 52, UP Izabelin, ul Tetmajera 1, 05-080 Izabelin

**U.K.** - **Hoyte, W. Hal**; e-mail: [haljeanhoyte@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:haljeanhoyte@tiscali.co.uk)

# Requests and notifications from members

Hal Hoyte – *U.K. Packet Secretary*

## The U.K. Exchange Packet

It's about time we had another Packet and as *Packet Secretary*, I do apologise for the over-long delay since the last one.

For a start I do have a good basis for the next Packet, material that has accumulated, plus some books I've been working on, but there is a need for more of the right sort with wider spread and appeal.

To summarise - I have a good selection of postmarks of the middle and later Colonial period and post Independence, including some later Telegraphic marks which are seldom seen (except for KOLWEZI TELEGR.) I also have some stamps of 'breakaway' territories, including the seldom offered Albertville overprints.

There is the usual shortage of Mols and if you have anything else in the way of good covers and postal stationery please let me know. *Without wishing to sound too brusque - "It had better be good"!*

In the past, the BCSC Packet has enjoyed a good success rate with sales over 50%, which should encourage those with interesting material.

I shall be contacting those who were on the last Packet circulation list, but will those UK members who have joined BCSC since then and wish to receive the Packet, please get in touch with me at

104 Willow Street, Oswestry, Shropshire. SY11 1AL  
Telephone 01691 661647,  
E-mail: [haljeanhoyte@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:haljeanhoyte@tiscali.co.uk)

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Hal Hoyte

Hon. Packet Secretary

**Roger Gallant** reminds us that the French language version of his books '*Histoire du Service Postal au Congo Belge – Tome I et II*' is still available from him as are the same books in Dutch.

*An English translation was started by Ray Keach and despite being asked to make the completion, I have never found the time. If anyone would be prepared to undertake the task, your help would be appreciated and you should make your offer known to the editor.*

**Charles Stockmans** – Bulletin 146, pages 7-8 '**SONA CONGO**' ?

My attention has been drawn to the spelling error in the short article on Yves Winand's recent acquisition. The editor incorrectly used the above title which should have read '**SONA GONGO**'. Reference: 'Rail au Congo Belge', map page 26 and 169.

**Philippe Lindekens** – Bulletins available on a CD-rom

Philippe is presently at an advanced stage of copying all back issues of the Bulletin onto CD. When complete, each Bulletin will be able to be sent by e-mail or all made available on CD – the latter '*at a price to be determined by the Study Circle*'.

# Questions, Answers and can you Help?

**Question** – *Bulletin 146, p.6-7*

*Why the mixed franking?*

The answer from Hal Hoyte  
*- and it is all there in the Bulletin<sup>1</sup>*



The cover illustrated above and in the last Bulletin with mixed franking of Angola and Congo stamps originated from Dundo, a diamond mine in northeast Angola near the Congo border and not far from Tshikapa.



An arrangement was apparently made whereby mail from Dundo franked with the appropriate overseas rate in Angolan stamps was accepted at Tshikapa provided it was additionally franked with the correct airmail surcharge in Congo airmail stamps.

The Angolan stamps were cancelled with a serifed date stamp and it is likely that Dundo was at the time only a postal agency and probably became a post office some time later.

The registered cover illustrated above shows a REGISTO No. / DUNDO handstamp with manuscript 'R' and was originally in the Keach collection.

I also have airmail covers from Dundo, post WW2 cancelled with a standard type cds, with Tshikapa transit marks, so the air route via Tshikapa was still preferred.

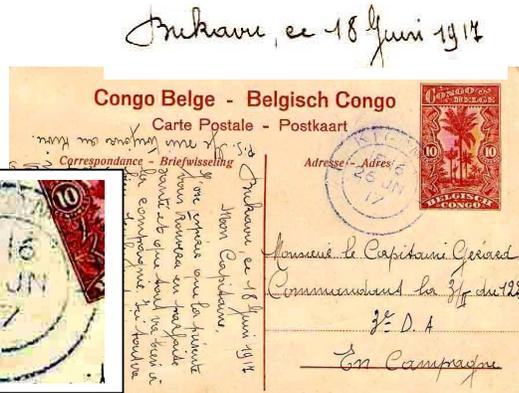
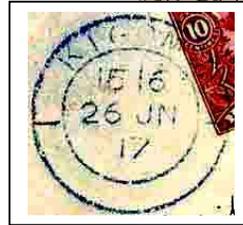
**Hal Hoyte**

**1. Refer BCSC Bulletins 58/22, 62/9, 63/2, 65/21 and the fullest coverage by Norman Clowes in 75/8.**

**'The Belgian Occupation of German East Africa' by Walter Deijnckens.**

In the section 'Belgian Marks and Cancellations', we are now able to illustrate an earlier date of the KIGOMA '15-16' time stamp.

It should also be noted that the mark is in a bluish violet shade.



**Book Shelf and publications**

**'Stamp Magazine' in Belgium**

Our Belgian members will be interested to know that as from 14<sup>th</sup> August the monthly publication 'STAMP MAGAZINE' will be available in Belgium at 5.95€..

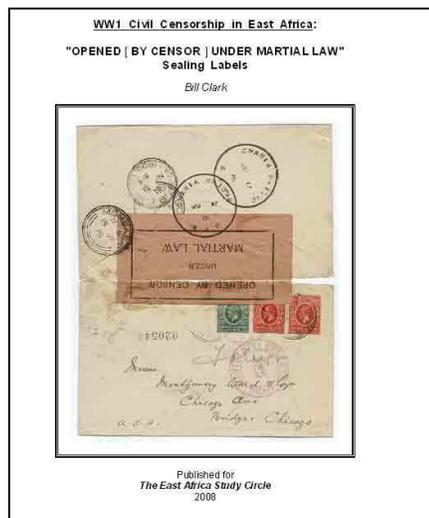
Members will recall that it was this magazine which featured an article on Thomas Lindekens' collecting interests and it occurs to me that this launch may encourage their editors to seek more Belgian-related topics.

As a reader I will simply add that it is very well presented and always has something for everyone. Give it a try!

Ed.



**'WWI Civil Censorship in East Africa'**



**New Publication now available**

**"OPENED [BY CENSOR] UNDER MARTIAL LAW"**

The inspiration for this publication was the apparent lack of published information on these attractive labels .....

Only a finite number of different recurring label types seem to exist .....

The author has included some historical background in relation to censorship, etc.

The soft cover book is printed throughout on high quality surface sealed paper and contains 32 pages, A4 in size.

Most of the label types and subtypes identified have been reproduced full-size in colour.

Price: £15  
 P&P. UK-£2; Europe -£3; Rest of World -£4  
 Payment options: Sterling cheque (drawn on UK bank) or Paypal

Available directly from the author  
**BILL CLARK**  
 1 Finnockbog Drive, Inverkip, Greenock, Renfrewshire PA16 0DQ

## Reproductions from publications and news items seen in the Press



UNIVERSAL  
POSTAL UNION

Berne, 13 October 2003  
International Bureau Circular  
Rwanda – Illegal postage stamp issues

**354**

Dear Sir/Madam

The postal administration of **RWANDA** asks me to inform you of the following:

"This is to apprise Universal Postal Union member countries and the World Association for the Development of Philately of the piracy that is again being perpetrated against Rwanda Post through the issue and sale of illegal postage stamps bearing the word 'Rwanda'.

"Unidentified, unscrupulous individuals are seeking to discredit our country by circulating postage stamps which they claim have been issued by Rwanda.

"This situation is even more reprehensible since it reflects badly on Rwanda's moral and economic integrity.

"As the only body authorized to issue and disseminate postage stamps under Rwandan law, the National Post Office deplores this usurpation of its rights and condemns these shameful actions which undermine the reputation and tarnish the image of Rwandan philatelic products.

"We therefore ask the postal administrations of Union member countries and all their partners to support the efforts being made by the Rwandan postal administration to tackle this phenomenon which has a disastrous effect on our sector of activity.

/ "A non-exhaustive list of illegal postage stamps is annexed.

"We would like to take this opportunity to point out that philatelists wishing to receive information on Rwandan philatelic products should contact the National Post Office at the following address:

2

National Post Office  
P.O. Box 4  
KIGALI  
RWANDA  
Fax: (250) 514091  
Tel: (250) 82703  
(250) 516075  
E-mail: [ipost@rwanda1.com](mailto:ipost@rwanda1.com)

The Rwandan Post does not have a philatelic representative outside its territory."

Yours faithfully,  
  
K J S McKEOWN  
Director of Markets

### Notifications and disclaimer issued by the Universal postal Union

Annex 1

**Illegal postage stamp issues produced in the name of Rwanda**

*19 October 2003: Beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

Souvenir sheet of 2 postage stamps featuring an image of Pope Jean-Paul II on the stamp on the left, an image of Mother Teresa of Calcutta on the stamp on the right, and the effigy of Mother Teresa of Calcutta between the two stamps. The values shown are 500 F. The first day of issue is shown as 01.04.2003.

*Fauna*

One miniature sheet of 1 stamp featuring a snake. The value shown is 500 F. The first day of issue is shown as 01.04.2003. The species name is shown on the stamp. The sheet features the words "THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS" and a matching logo.

A souvenir sheet of 6 stamps featuring snakes. The name of each species is featured on each stamp. The first day of issue is shown as 01.04.2003. The values shown are 100 F for the stamps on the left and 200 F for the stamps on the right. The sheet features the words "THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS Protect Mother Earth".

### UNAMIR

#### *United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda*

On the 4th August 1993 a treaty was signed at Arusha (Tanzania) between the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Rwanda Government. The purpose of this treaty was to combine the two armies into one and to elect an official Parliament.

The UNO secretary-general, UNO Boutros-Boutros Ghali, proposed a military aid of 2500 UN soldiers. The Belgian government decided to participate with 450 soldiers and started the operation on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1993.

The UNAMIR operation was under the command of Brigadier-General Dallaire of Canada.

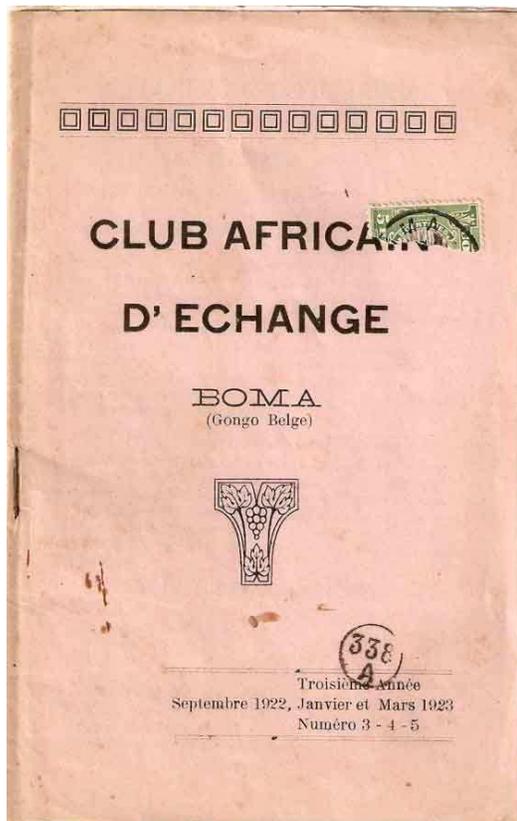
Two sectors were chosen for protection. Kigali and an area of 15 to 20 km. around Kigali as well as a demilitarised zone with a head office at Byumba.

406 soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Diest Para. Battalion were patrolling under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Leroy in and around Kigali. They stayed until March 1994 and were released by the Flawinne 2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Battalion. 10 of these soldiers were killed on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April whilst protecting the 1st minister, Mrs. Agathe Umilingiyimana.

Illustrated are two picture cards with the UNAMIR cancellations of 1<sup>st</sup> Para. Battalion Para of Diest, illustrating the 'free mail' cancel of UNAMIR and boxed straight line 'OPERATIE UNAMIR' - dated 25.2.94 and 11.3.94.



## CLUB AFRICAIN D'ECHANGE BOMA



If there are such people as 'Stamp Club Historians' my recent find of a 3<sup>rd</sup> year 'Club Africain d'échange' magazine will be of interest. The fact that former well known philatelists are listed as members should be of some interest to everyone.

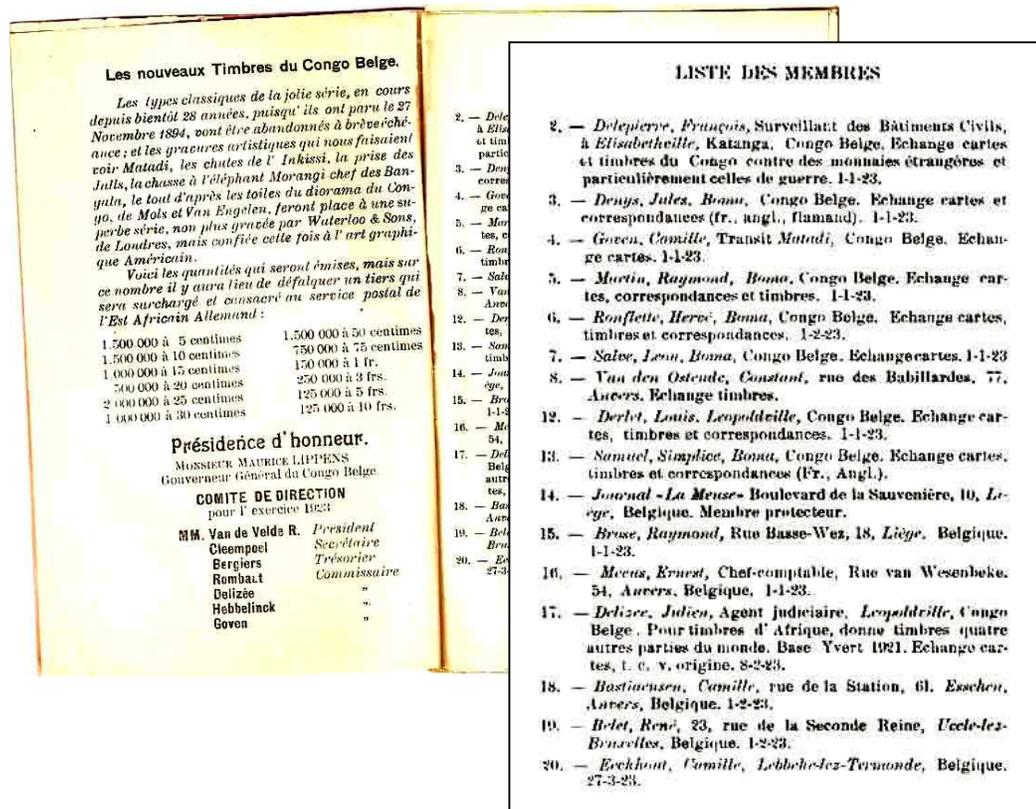
As can be seen, the Club was in its third year and this is an assembly of issues 3, 4 and 5 of their magazine - published in September 1922, January and March 1923.

There is a list of 106 members and of note are two who lived in the Congo and are familiar to many of us - Julien Delizée in Leopoldville and André de Cock in Boma.

In total there were 46 members resident in the Congo, 25 in Belgium and 8 in France. Others came from Japan (2), Egypt, Chile, USA, Turkey, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Tunis, Korea, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and even Eritrea. **This was an international membership that even the BCSC can not match!**

Apart from publicising the *stamp exchange offers* from members, it includes only a very short article of the *Vloors* new issue with numbers printed.

*Walter Deijnckens*



# Post office applied 'Pen annotations' Part II

By – Philippe Lindekens

## Carte Incomplète !

The framed straight line BOMA CARTE INCOMPLETE mark indicating that the 'Reply Paid Card' of the two part postal stationery item had been detached is well known and documented. However, prior to that handstamp being introduced by the postal authority, the declaration was frequently applied as a *Red penned annotation*, authenticated by the official's initials. Such a note simply indicated that the 'Post Office' did not accept responsibility for the missing half of an original 'two-part' card.

*Interestingly, the third illustration was applied in Leopoldville in black ink. One wonders whether they had no red ink available at the time and by way of legitimising the use of black ink – they verified the annotation by applying the town's straight line handstamp. Ed.*



**'Parvenu Boma sans réponse'**  
'Arrived at Boma without reply'

The 'Outward only' card used from Leopoldville (16<sup>th</sup> November 1897) to Holland with a Boma transit and final destination receiving office mark.

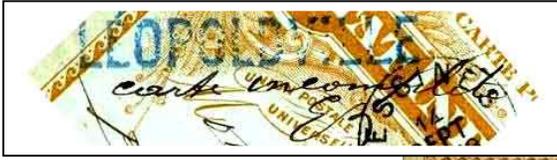


**'Parvenu Boma sans formulaire réponse'**

'Arrived Boma without a means of response'

The 'Reply' part being used (legitimately!) as the formal 'Outward' card. Leopoldville → Rotterdam (August 1898) with transits at Boma and Anvers.





**LEOPOLDVILLE**  
*'Carte incomplète'*

Official Leopoldville straight line mark with 'black' manuscript 'incomplete card'. Perhaps they had no red ink?

The 'Reply' part, used from Leopoldville to Lessines (Belgium) with Boma transit and Lessines arrival marks.



**Trouve dans dépêche égarée**  
 – *found out of course ( in stray bag !)*



It is not very uncommon for an item of correspondence to be left behind in a post bag and turn up later -sometimes very much later! In this instance only a little later that year.



Illustrated is the card which was sent from Kindu (8<sup>th</sup> July 1916) to Kinshasa. When eventually found a few months later, and in the absence of a suitable handstamp, it was duly scribed "Trouve dans dépêche égarée".

(‘Literally’ doesn’t translate easily and the best I can do. Ed.)

## Foreign Censor Marks – continued

*This is the concluding article in the series based on information provided to the editor by the author. With the vast volume of material, variously studied and documented, it is inevitable that some items will have been overlooked. It has been a massive task in trying to present the information in a relatively orderly manner and your editor apologises for any such omission. A few unidentified marks remain un-commented on and other additional material has been reported to us during the course of this series. Rather than refer to such updates on an ad hoc basis, it is hoped to prepare another article to include such additions.*

### Other African countries – Gambia and Morocco

By – Walter Deijnckens

#### Morocco

Figure 1 shows a **CONTROLE** label used to reseal an airmail cover en route from Buta to Le Socle, Switzerland in November 1944.

The correspondence, which had previously been censored before leaving the Congo, was opened in Rabat and the label tied by the typically French colonial oval handstamp.

The letters **YB** were those allocated to and used by the Rabat censorship authority.

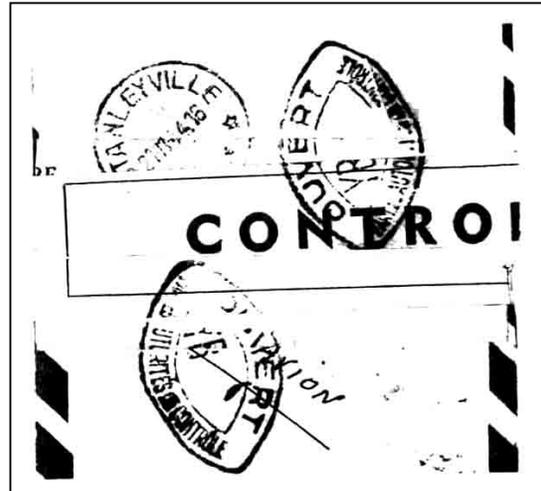


Figure 1.

#### Gambia

We are able to report and illustrate only two labels and no specifically identifiable censorship marks.

Figure 2 was used to reseal an Airmail cover originating from Leopoldville to Winnetka, Illinois with the 1<sup>st</sup> Flight etiquette mark **CONGO BELGE / ETAT-UNIS D'AMERIQUE** and **'Delayed'**. The cover bears a Bathurst '2 FE 42' transit mark from which we can deduce that it missed the 1<sup>st</sup> Flight.

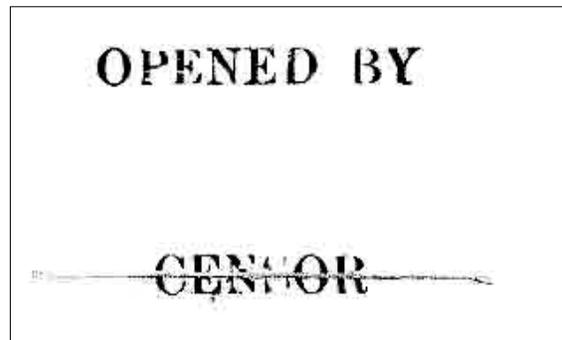


Figure 2.

Figure 3 illustrates a similar very plain label without an identifiable reference. This was opened in Bathurst on correspondence from Leopoldville and secured to the cover with a canceller dated 14 November 1941.



Figure 3.

The following table is a reminder and may prove helpful to those trying to identify the many *French Colonial* censorship locations, some of which have not been seen or recorded in this study

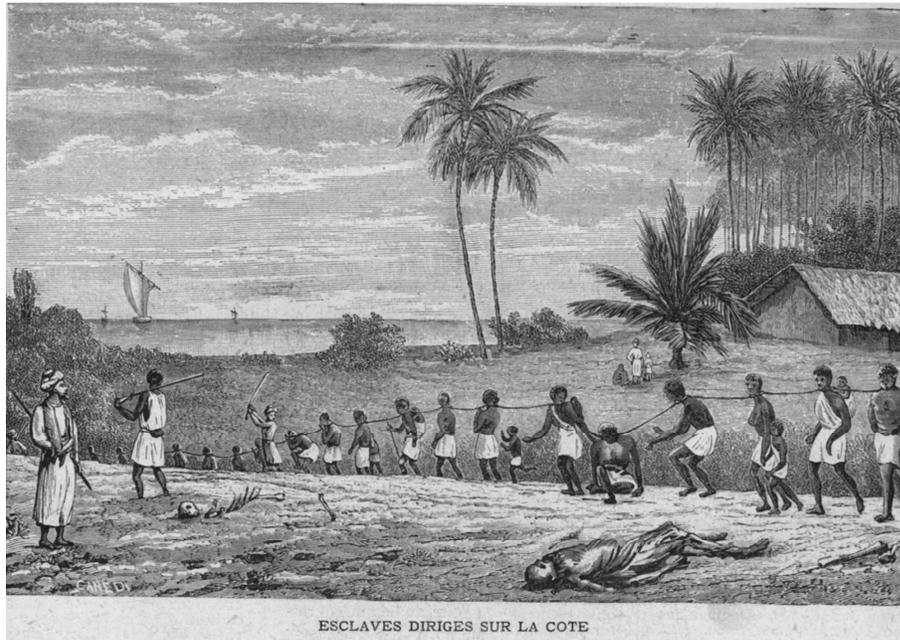
Country	Place	Code letter
Congo - French Equatorial	Brazzaville	A
	Pointe Noire	B
	Bangui	E
Gabon	Libreville	C
	Port Gentil	D
Tchad	Fort Archambaultt	F
	Fort Lamy	G
Cameroon	Douala	A
	Yaounde	B
	Ebolawa	No code letter
	Lolodorf	No code letter
Dahomey	Cotonou	G
Equatorial Guinea	Conarky	C
Ivory Coast	Abidjan	D
	Bobo	E
	Port-Etienne	I
Mauritania	Niamey	H
	Zinder	K
	Dakar	A and DR
Niger	Saint Louis	B
	Kaolack	P
	Ziguinchor	Q
	Thiès	T
	Bamako	F
French Sudan	Kayes	L
	Lome	No code letter
	Djibouti	No code letter
Madagascar	Diego-Suarez	A
	Fianarantsoa	B
	Fort Dauphin	C
	Majunga	D
	Morandava	E
	Tamatave	F
	Tananarive	G
	Tulear	H
	??	I
	Saint Denis	No code letter
	Reunion	Alger
Oran		ALC
Morocco	Casablanca	YA
	Rabat	YB
	Fès	YC
	Taza	YD
	Mèknes	YE
	Marrakech	YF
	Agadir	YG

*In preparing the article the author acknowledges the information and assistance provided by Alan Morvay, Stuart Smith and Michael Wright.*

# A Postal History of Slavery at the Congo coast

By – Patrick Maselis

## Part I



### Preface

*Studying the postal history of slavery in the Congo area is very rewarding, not only because of the scarcity and rarity of covers, but principally because of the challenge, interpretation and complexity of so many different postal systems. Correspondence to and from the Congo travelled on ships from at least 6 different nations (UK, USA, Portugal, France, Holland and Belgium).*

### Introduction

It is our intention to place on record and comment on all known covers related to slavery at the Congo coast. Included are covers from Portuguese Congo (Cabinda), French Congo (Congo-Brazzaville) and the Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo).

The 'Slave trade' at the Congo coast had flourished from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was virtually unchallenged until the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when, both the UK and USA launched anti-slavery campaigns.

The 'Royal Navy Anti Slavery Patrol' was founded in 1808 and its American equivalent, the 'Navy's Slave Trade Patrol' in 1820. Military naval vessels were sent to all parts of the globe to seize slavery ships and free the slaves. At the coast and mouth of the Congo was one area in which they were very active.



Map 1.

Slavery was the first truly global trade. It was a triangular business between three continents: Europe, Africa and America. Slave traders left from Europe with merchandise such as brandy, weapons and metal tools. These were exchanged for slaves in Africa. From there, the ships sailed to America, where the slaves were sold for such commodities as sugar or silver. Loaded with precious sugar and silver, the ships returned to Europe.

Typically, a few hundred slaves were needed to fill a ship, and this process could last for several months. During this period the ships would anchor just off the coast or in a safe natural harbour and send a few crew members ashore. There they would rent a house from the local ruler and buy slaves from him.

There must have been a large volume of correspondence *from* slave traders, because letters were the only formal means of communication between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further more all letters were copied 3 or 4 times, and sent through different channels, in the hope that at least one would reach its destination. Because of the anti-slavery campaigns, and growing public indignation towards this ignoble activity, most companies that were linked to this trade, destroyed their archives. That is why only a handful of these covers have survived. In addition, letters *to* slave traders were very uncommon, since ships moved between the three continents in areas with no postal service at all.

### Postal History – documents can be classified in seven categories:

#### 1. 'Official letters' relating to slavery at the Coast.

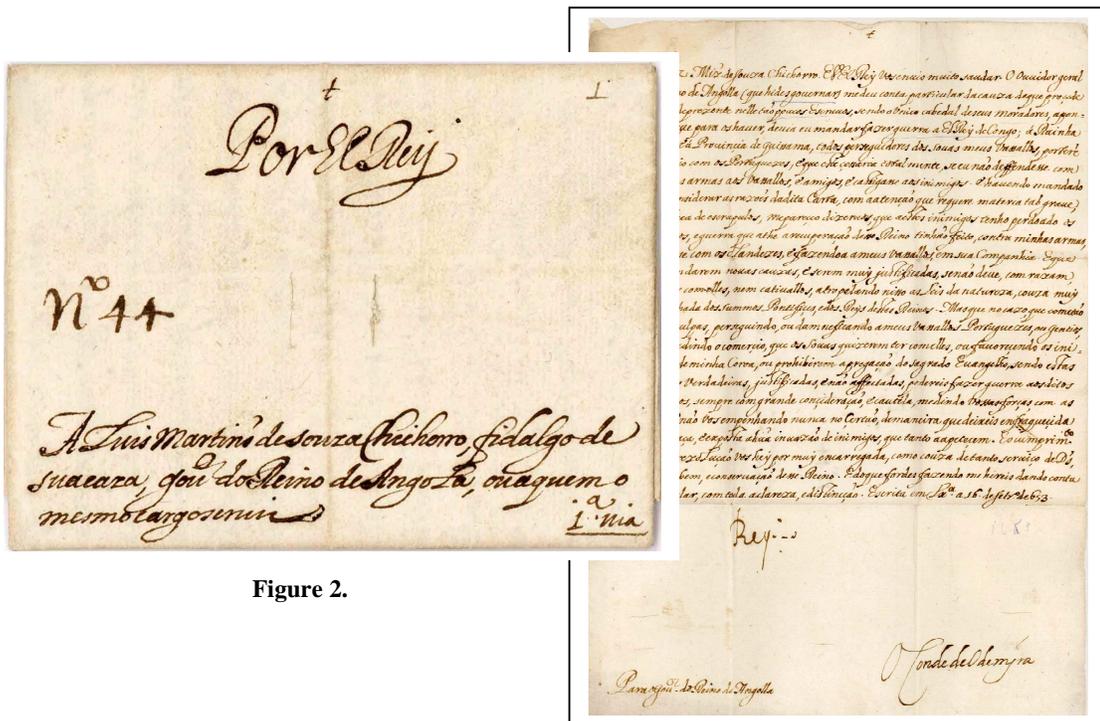


Figure 2.

#### Figure 2 - Cover 1.

This is the only privately owned and 'Official letter' known, that refers to slavery in the Congo area. It is from Lisbon, dated February 16<sup>th</sup> 1653 and was written by the Earl of Odemira, signed by the King of Portugal and sent to Mr. Luis Martin de Sousa Chichorro, the Governor General of Angola. In it, the King of Portugal instructs the Governor General to declare war on the King of Congo, because he hadn't delivered the required number of slaves".

## 2. Letters written by Slave Traders

For the reasons mentioned in the introduction, we know of only three covers written by slave traders operating in the Congo area.



Figure 3

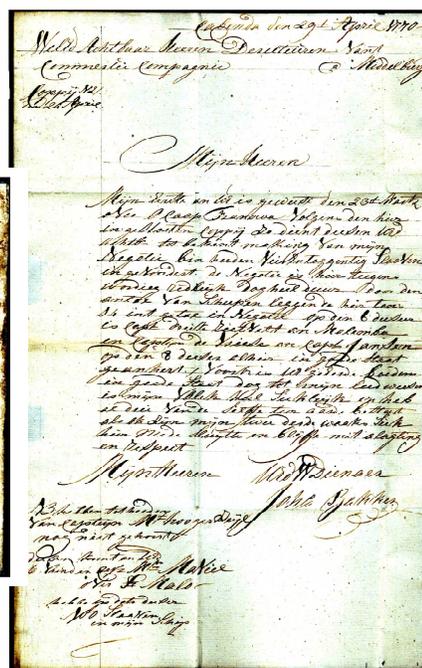


Figure 3 - Cover 2.

The oldest known cover and letter in private hands was written in Cabinda, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1770. It was addressed to the writer's superiors 'De weledelachtbare Heren Directeuren der Commercie Compagnie van Middelburg, Zeeland' – which when translated reads: “*The honourable Gentlemen Directors of the Trade Company of Middelburg, Zeeland.*” (Zeeland still is a province of the Netherlands!).

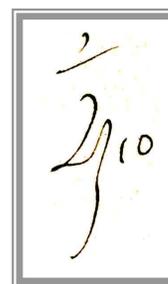
It was written in Dutch by a Dutch slave trader and mentions the purchase of many slaves.

He wrote – ‘P. Vrind & Masil / over St. Malo’, which means “*with a friend & Masil (?) / via St. Malo*”. Apparently, he entrusted his letter to a friend who travelled to St. Malo. However, the correspondence ended up in ‘Le Havre’, where the cover was stamped with the arrival mark ‘Col.

Françoise/Par/Le Havre’, (Salles type N° 2, in use between 1763 and 1787.)

From there it was forwarded to Middelburg in Holland, where the rate to be paid was written on the cover as ‘1 / 2 10’. This means 1 Groot and 2 Schelling 10 groten.

1 Groot was to be paid to Holland, for the distribution of the letter and the remainder, 2 Schelling 10 Groten, was the amount due to France. (This was equivalent to 34 French Sols.)



We assume it was 20 Sols for incoming ship letters into France and 14 sols for the overland rate from Le Havre to Middelburg. This assumption is based on the fact that the oldest printed source (1783) mentions 20 sols for incoming ship letters. The 14 sols from Le Havre to Middelburg also seems plausible because it is in line with known rates, such as the tariff from Le Havre to Paris (7 sols) and the tariff from Paris to Antwerp (9 sols).



Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Cover 3

Letter written by a slave trader from Loango Bay in French Congo, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1807 and addressed to Falkirk in Scotland.

It is reasonable to assume that it was probably given to the captain of a ship that was about to leave, arriving 9 months later in Liverpool – confirmed by the indistinct Liverpool ‘Crowned Ship letter Liverpool’ mark. From there it continued its journey to Falkirk via Edinburgh, where a transit stamp was applied on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1808.

The letter travelled for nine months, because from Africa ships first went to America before returning to Europe (refer ‘Introduction’). At the top left, the tariff is written as  $1/4$  (1shilling and 4pence = 16pence), which is 8d ship letter rate and another 8d for the overland journey from Liverpool to Falkirk. The content of the letter is a complaint about the British government who were badly hindering the slave trade.

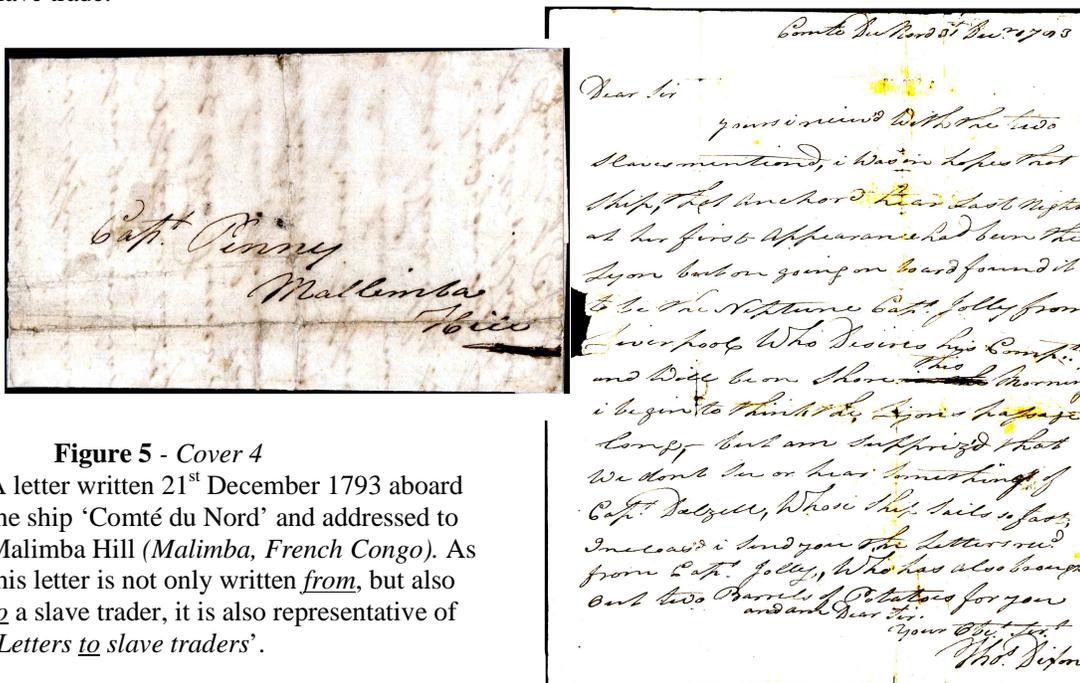


Figure 5 - Cover 4

A letter written 21<sup>st</sup> December 1793 aboard the ship ‘Comté du Nord’ and addressed to Malimba Hill (Malimba, French Congo). As this letter is not only written from, but also to a slave trader, it is also representative of ‘Letters to slave traders’.

### 3. Letters written to 'Slave traders'.

As stated in the introduction, it was almost to impossible to write letters to slave traders, because no one knew their whereabouts - they could be in Africa or America and regular postal services to both were almost nonexistent. The only letter and cover known is that referred to above - from the captain of the 'Comté du Nord' to another captain on shore at 'Malimba Hill'.

In the introduction, we have already explained why some crew members had to stay on shore for several months whilst buying slaves. This letter is written to such an 'on shore' crew member, by a captain who stayed behind - somewhere in a safe harbour in the Congo area. It was delivered by a messenger and obviously bears no postal marks. We don't know where the letter was written, Belgian, French or Portuguese Congo or even... elsewhere? - but we do know with certainty that it was addressed to the French Congo. Since we cannot classify it with certainty as a letter **from** the Congo, it was decided to classify it as a 'Category 3' cover - a cover **to** a slave trader in the Congo.

It is the only 18<sup>th</sup> century correspondence written to the Congo which is known to us, and the only 'domestic' Congolese cover known from before 1882. From the content we learn that it is a correspondence between slave traders:

*Yours received with the two  
slaves mentioned, I was in hopes that  
"Yours received with the two slaves mentioned".*

**To be continued.**

X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X-X



#### **Belgian Rarities Exhibited at Monacophil 2009**

As part of the international exhibition 'Monacophil 2009' and in conjunction with the traditional exhibition of '100 timbres et documents philatéliques parmi les plus rares du Monde' (100 of the world's rarest stamps and philatelic documents).

The Club de Monte-Carlo,

will be turning the spotlight on Belgian philately within a collective exhibition.

The watchwords will be the same as the previous edition, namely 'discovery' and 'academic philately'. Monacophil 2009 will reveal aspects of Belgian philately which, hitherto, have been largely unexplored or hardly touched upon.

The following themes will be dealt with:

- Belgian maritime covers: transatlantic, across Channel and Antwerp-Congo, by C. Delbeke (a theme never before studied).
- The so-called 'Roue Ailée - Winged Wheel' issue of 1915 by H. Slabbinck (the first complete publication of this extremely rare issue).
- Letters to foreign destinations despatched during the reign of Leopold I: issues of 1849-1864, so-called 'Epaulettes' and 'Medallions' and the issue of 1865 by J. Huys and P. Kaiser (the first attempt ever made to bring together ALL known foreign destinations).
- Proofs and essays of Belgian stamps (1894-2000) by J. Stes (the last publication on this topic dates from 1933).
- The green 1c, also known as the 'Green Medallion' (1861-1865): an in depth study by L. Van Pamel (this will be the very first study dedicated to this classic Belgian stamp).
- The postal history of the LADO enclave (1851-1910) by Leo Tavano and P. Maselis (the last publication on this topic dates from 1986).

This event, due to be held in the Principality from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> December 2009, will also witness the publication of a fully illustrated anthology written in several languages. This work, a veritable touchstone for this theme, will highlight Belgium's best material in terms of historical interest, rarity and quality.

Several items, awarded major international prizes, will be exhibited by the most renowned collectors and experts in the sector. It is hoped that the 'Anthology' referred to above will be as exhaustive as possible, therefore, should you have a collection or material that may be of interest to this exhibition, please contact Mr. Patrick MASELIS at the following address:

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