

BELGIAN CONGO



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BULLETIN 83

MARCH 1992

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EDITORS NOTES

With this issue we begin a two part all encompassing survey of the Eastern Mail routes during the period 1890-1940 by A. J. Jeukens. We are all (and your Editor in particular) greatly indebted to Peter Foden who undertook the monumental task of editing the work and the English translation and, in at least one instance, identifying a most difficult mark. The June issue will contain the second half of the article including a full description of the routes of German East Africa, Zanzibar and Tanganyika territory with appropriate illustrative material.

The June Bulletin will also include a review of a forged set of "Die Proofs" of the 50c 1915 issue, some suggestions by Dr. Wilcke on the assembly and display of an award winning exhibit, a previously unreported-part perforation-with hand stamp overprint as well as our usual reports.

Special congratulations are due the following members:

Ron Strawser who took a GOLD award at the Arizona Philatelic Exposition '92 as well as the Blue Award from the United Postal Stationery Society for his showing of 150 pages of Belgian Congo postal stationery.

Ralph Jacquemin whose exhibit, at the same show, of 75 pages of material showing 68 post cards, all with the 5c of 1910 (Plates III₁ + B₄) for which he received a VERMEIL award as well as the award for having the best display by a member of the Phoenix Philatelic association.

Dr. Harry Wilcke whose exhibit of the "Mols" issues was shown at the Philadelphia National Stamp show for which he received a GOLD award. This exhibit covered in a general way, (with some notable "difficult" items scattered throughout) the Mols from 1894 to 1925.

Both of these shows are of the first rank as they are American Philatelic Society Qualifying shows. These members are to be commended for so ably demonstrating various facets of our special interest to the stamp collecting and general public.

Please note the availability of quantities of Mols, identified as to plate positions, from Mr. Keach, reported at the end of the auction list (page 34)

EASTERN ROUTES; MAIL DISPATCHED DURING THE PERIOD 1890-1940

ETAT INDEPENDANT DU CONGO; CONGO BELGE; RUANDA-URUNDI;
PORTUGESE EAST AFRICA; BRITISH EAST AFRICA; GERMAN EAST AFRICA;
ZANZIBAR; TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

The extent of the territory and the difficult, if not hostile, conditions of colonization and settlement met by the administration of the Congo Free State and, from its inception, the Belgian Congo, made postal connections long, difficult and sometimes dangerous. On the other hand, they were facilitated to some extent by the existence of many navigable waterways, which allowed access to almost all regions of the interior.

One can study the means of communication for each region with regard to its own characteristics. More simply, give the geographical position of Congo in the centre of Africa, and its natural internal means of communication, it seems obvious that its connections with the rest of the world can be looked at in terms of the four cardinal points of the compass as follows:-

- the western route, which served the largest part of the territory and that where colonization was progressing most rapidly. It started at the Congo estuary and by 1888 had been extended by a caravan route giving access to the navigable river basin above. It also encompassed the routes in the Angola and the Cabinda (Kabinda) Enclave adjacent to the Congo.
- the northern route, giving access to the French Colonies in the Congo basin, and to the Mediterranean via the River Nile through the Sudan and Egypt.
- the eastern route(s) reached the Indian Ocean via the settlements set up by Britain, Germany and Portugal in East Africa.
- the southern route, which crossed the Rhodesias and South Africa (and its earlier constituent parts) to Cape Town.

Particular routes came into, and fell out of, use according to the progress of internal navigation and the pace of construction of the railways; their importance later changed with the increased reliability and expansion of air transport.

The Postal service had to adapt to this progressive evolution: from 3 post offices opened in 1886-Banana, Boma and Vivi-there were almost 400 by 1960, when the Congo became independent, followed in 1962 by Ruanda -Urundi.

In the second half of the 19th century, the Indian Ocean ports were seen as the natural points of entry for the European explorers of East and Central Africa: Burton and Speke, Grant, Becker, Livingston, Stanley and others. Access was simplified by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Raised by the expansion of traffic with Arabia and the Indies facilities were readily available for recruitment of personnel as porters and as guards for caravans. Such advantages were not available in the west coast of Central Africa at that time.

In 1884, Britain and Germany agreed as to the location of the borders for their possessions in East Africa; British East Africa including Kenya, Uganda and the island of Zanzibar; -(German East Africa was later repartitioned in 1921 following the first World War under the auspices of Britain and Belgium and became Tanganyica (Tanganyika) Territory and Ruanda-Urundi)

In the case of Portugal, there had been settlements in East Africa since the 16th century; in the Zambezi basin and on the coast and Quelimane and Delagoa bay. However, there was no real interest in these colonies until the 1870's and even then access was difficult as Portugal lacked maritime transport. It was not until 1903 that a regular steamer service from Lisbon was established. Meanwhile, the Province was developed by the private chartered "Mozambique", "Nyassa" and "Zambezia" Companies. At the same time it gained, to some extent, through the development of the neighboring countries and soon the Province of Mozambique was to become the richest of the Portugese African Possessions.

Europe and Maritime Routes via Portugese East Africa

Until the railway to Cape Town became accessible to Congo mail and mining, commercial and administrative activities created a new center in Elizabethville from 1910, virtually all the post from and to the area had resulted from the activities of the Comite Special du Katanga and its agents. The headquarters of the Comite, situated at Lukonzolwa on the west bank of Lake Moero, depended for the forwarding and receipt of its mail on the sub-post office at Pweto, established in July, 1902 partly for this purpose and also to serve the mining centre at Lukafu, until its own post office opened in July, 1908. The route, Antwerp to Pweto via Matadi, Leopoldville and Lusambo took 3 months, almost a third of which was taken up by the use of relays of runners to carry the mail.

Another route from Pweto, known from the earliest explorations, was used regularly between 1892 and 1904, and occasionally later. Starting at Chinde, a port on the mouth of the Zambezi in Mozambique, it went up that river then the

Shire river and across Lake Nyassa as far as Karonga in the North, then followed the "Stephenson" route toward the southern end of Lake Tanganyika, from where it struck off west to Pweto. This route took almost as long as that via Matadi and was superseded by a more direct way via Fort Jamieson, leading to Kalungwisi on the east bank of Lake Moero.

In 1892 Portugal conceded the Chinde port area to Britain in order to facilitate movement to and from the colonies of British Central Africa (the initials "B.C.A." appeared on the Chinde date stamp). Between 1902 and 1906 the British also used a route from Beira which reached Broken Hill, in N. Rhodesia, via Salisbury and Bulawayo.

From this period, Portugese East Africa was normally served by the sea from Europe by Union Castle Line (London), Messageries Maritimes (Marseilles), Deutsch Ost. Afrika Line (Hamburg), and by two Portugese Companies, Mala Real Portugesa and Empreza Nacional de Navagacao (Lisbon) both via the Cape and via Suez.

(See letter Page 7 following)

Surface and Maritime Routes via British East Africa

Before official postal exchanges were organized, a frontier traffic by runners had already been developed between the Congo and Uganda, so that mail from the north-east of the Congo Free State could use the Uganda route to Mombasa, (the Indian Ocean port of British East Africa).

In November 1910, an office for the purpose was opened at Kuesi, not far from Fort Portal in neighboring Uganda. The Kuesi office operated until October, 1911, when its functions were transferred to Boga, further north--(a Kuesi date stamp remained in use at Boga until the end of 1912). The Boga office was itself superseded by Irumu, which became the Exchange Office from February, 1913.

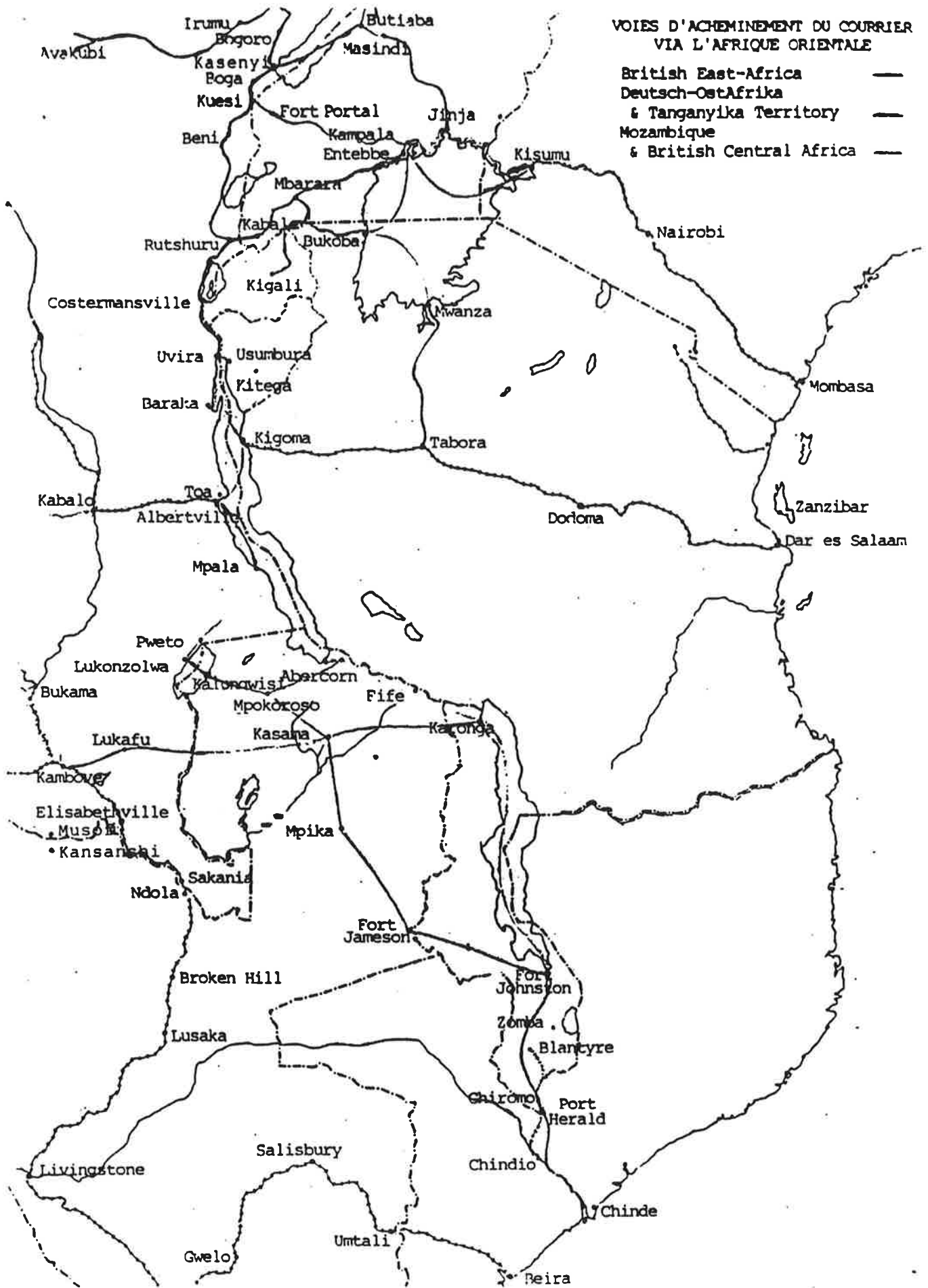
In November 1913, the Irumu office was transferred to Bogoro which operated as the exchange point until April 1917. Meantime, the war had led to a reorientation of postal connections in the eastern area, notably via Rutshuru.

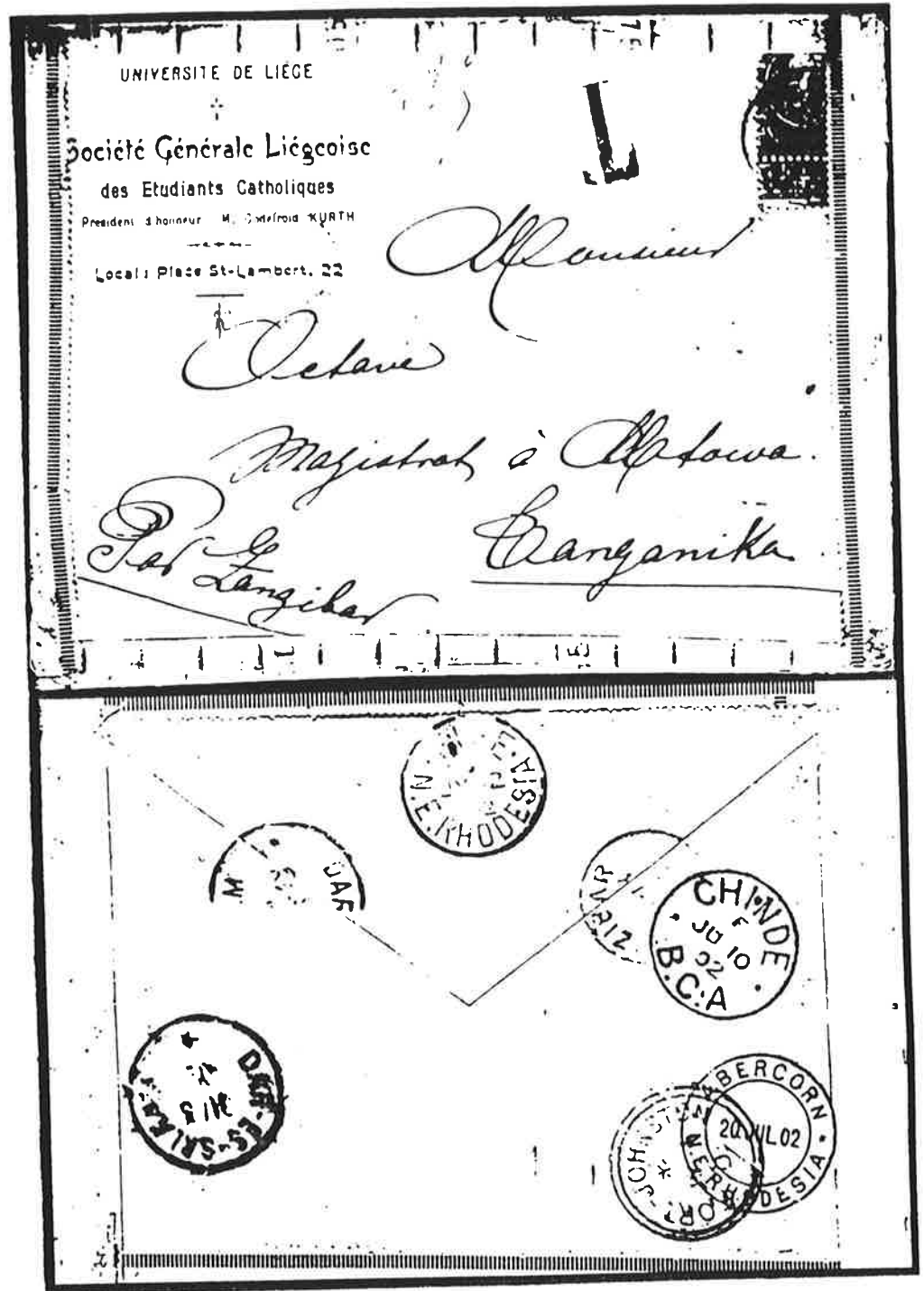
(Continued Page 8)

(The "Eastern" routes are shown on the map appearing at page 6)

VOIES D'ACHEMINEMENT DU COURRIER
VIA L'AFRIQUE ORIENTALE

- British East-Africa ———
- Deutsch-Ostafrika ———
- & Tanganyika Territory ———
- Mozambique ———
- & British Central Africa ———





Insufficiently franked letter sent from Belgium to M'Toa (Katanga) 6 May 1902.

Sea transport "via Zanzibar" requested and accomplished.-Zanzibar (30 May) Daresalaam (31 May)-Chinde (10 June) then via the river and lake route by relays of porters--Fort Johnston (1 July)-Fife (12 July)-Abercorn (20 July)

The route chosen for the final stretch to M'Toa cannot be ascertained (either by way of Lake Tanganyika via Kituta or by runner via Pweto)

The post offices of North Kivu came to connect with the route to Mombasa via Kabale-Mbarara-Jinja.

From June 1922, mail from the Ituri region addressed via Mombasa was sent to the exchange office at Kasenyi, a port at the south of Lake Albert, then across the Lake (SS Samuel Baker) to the Ugandan port of Butiaba at its north east. This service was interrupted from August 1923, to January 1924, by unexpected damage to the ship, and the Kasenyi mail for this period was sent on to Mahagi, a port at the north of the Lake not far from the Ugandan border.

The exchange office at Kasenyi served:

Kasenyi, Avakubi, Beni, Boga, Gogoro, Bunia, Irumu, Kasindi, Kilo, Mahagi, Nizi

From Europe, the exchange offices for the Mombasa route were at Brussels and Marseilles, as well as the "Marseille a La Reunion" and "La Reunion a Marseille" offices on the ships of the Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes which guaranteed a stop at Mombasa on its fortnightly service.

(See letters and cards on pages following)

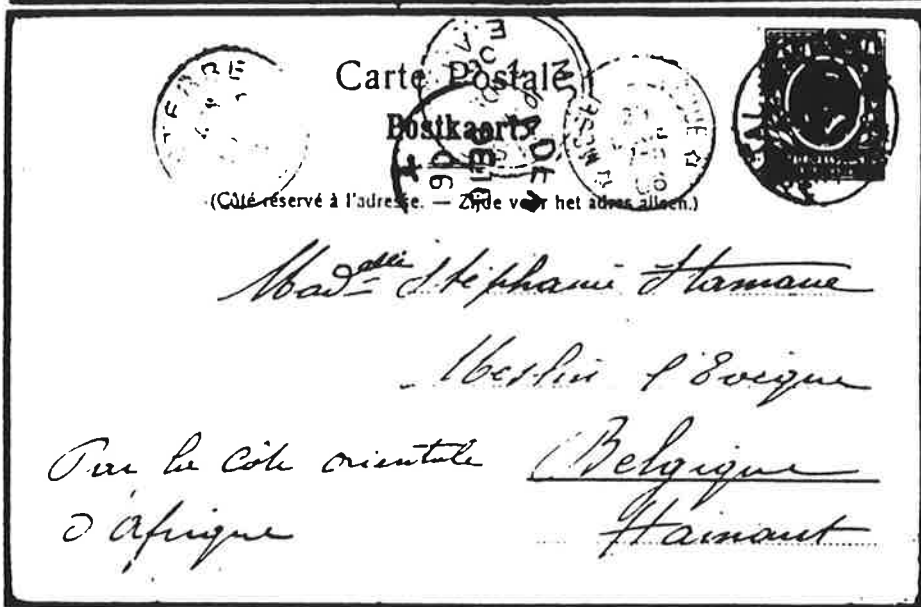
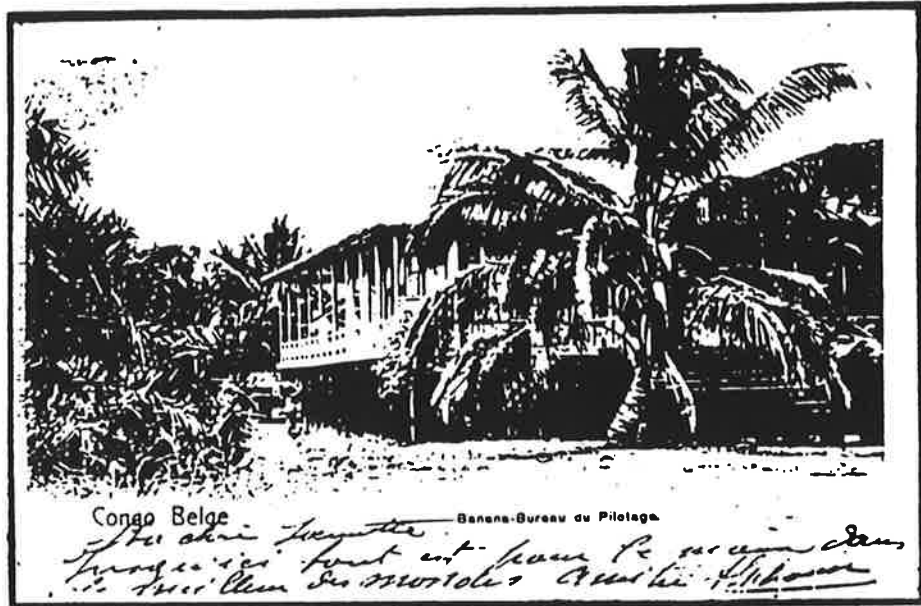
Air Services via British East Africa

In March 1931, Imperial Airways opened a service between London and Mwanza, via Bridisi and Cairo. This included a stop in Uganda, near Kampala, at Port Bell on the west bank of Lake Victoria.

Airmail from North Kivu and Ituri could get to Port Bell via Rutshuru and Kasenyi by using the routes Rutshuru-Kabale and Kasenyi-Butiaba to Kampala. Mail from Northern Ruanda also went via Rutshuru-Kabale.

In December 1931, following the extension of the air route to Cape Town, a further stop was set up at Kisumu in Kenya, on the north-east of Lake Victoria. Although access should also have been possible via Jinja, mail from the Congo appears not to have used this route, presumably because of the length of time required.

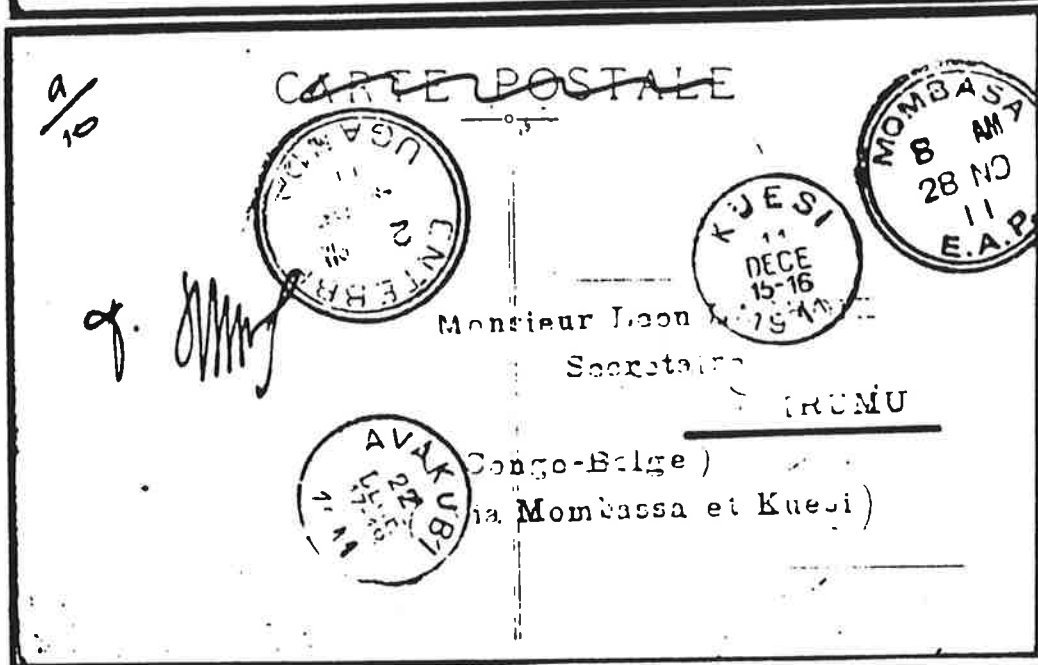
(Representative covers are reproduced on pages following)



Congo postcard addressed to Belgium (Meslin l'Eveque) but without any note of its origin:- posted in Uganda (Fort Portal) 15 November 1906. Note the request in French "Par la Côte Orientale d'Afrique" (via the east African coast). Presumably the card was written in the east of the Congo Free State and sent by runner to Fort Portal. Transit cancellations-Entebbe (22 November)-Mombasa (2 December)-Aden (16 December)-arrival Meslin l'Eveque (29 December 1906) The wording "Congo Belge" on the picture side of the card was purely anticipative.

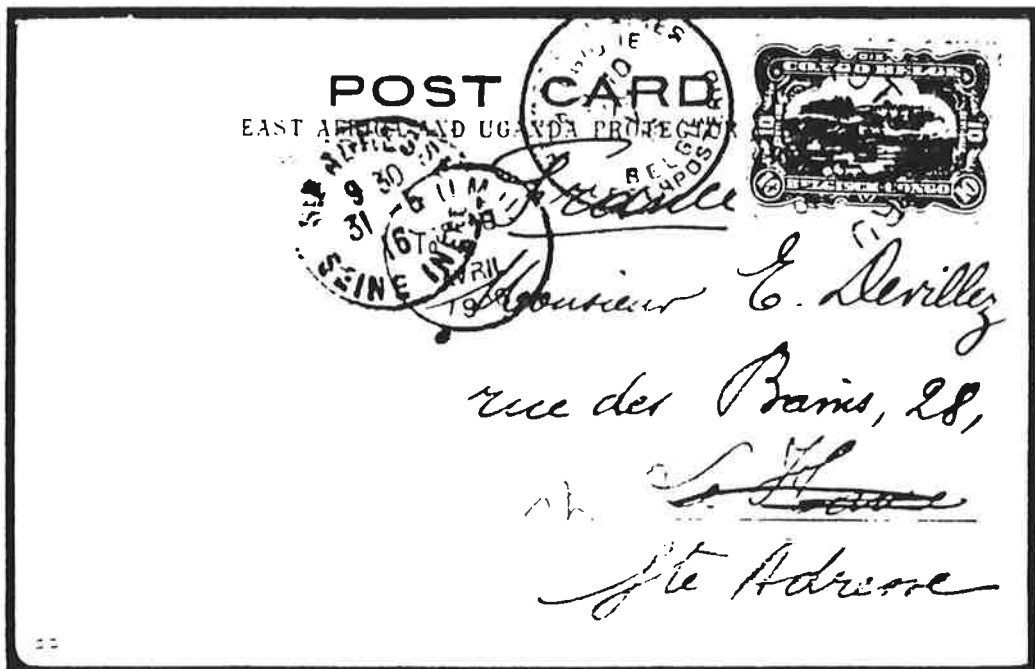
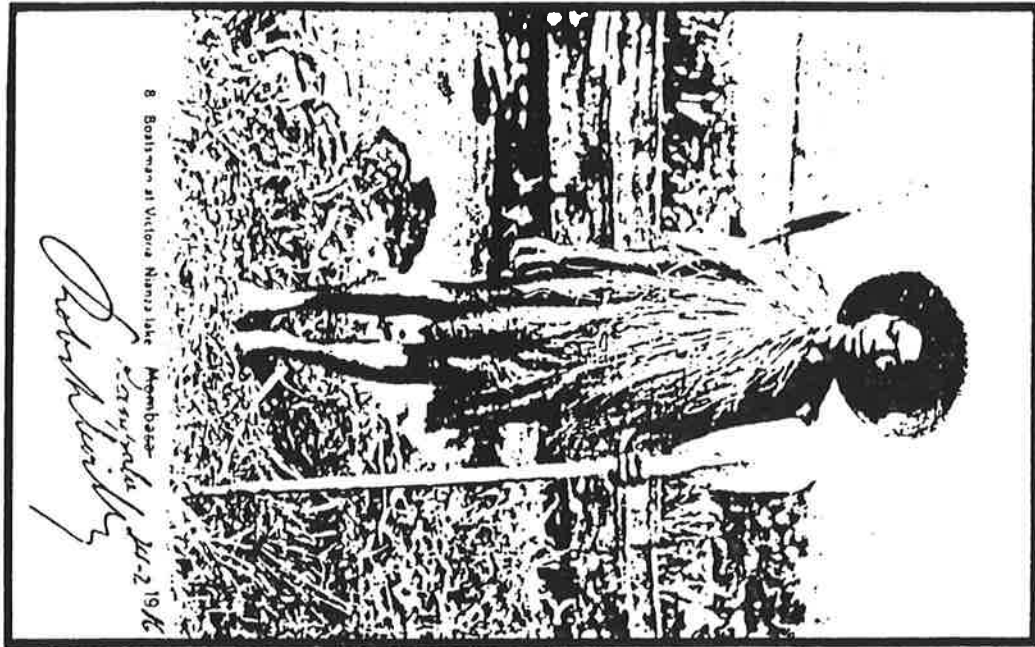


Madagascar - Groupe de Salomon



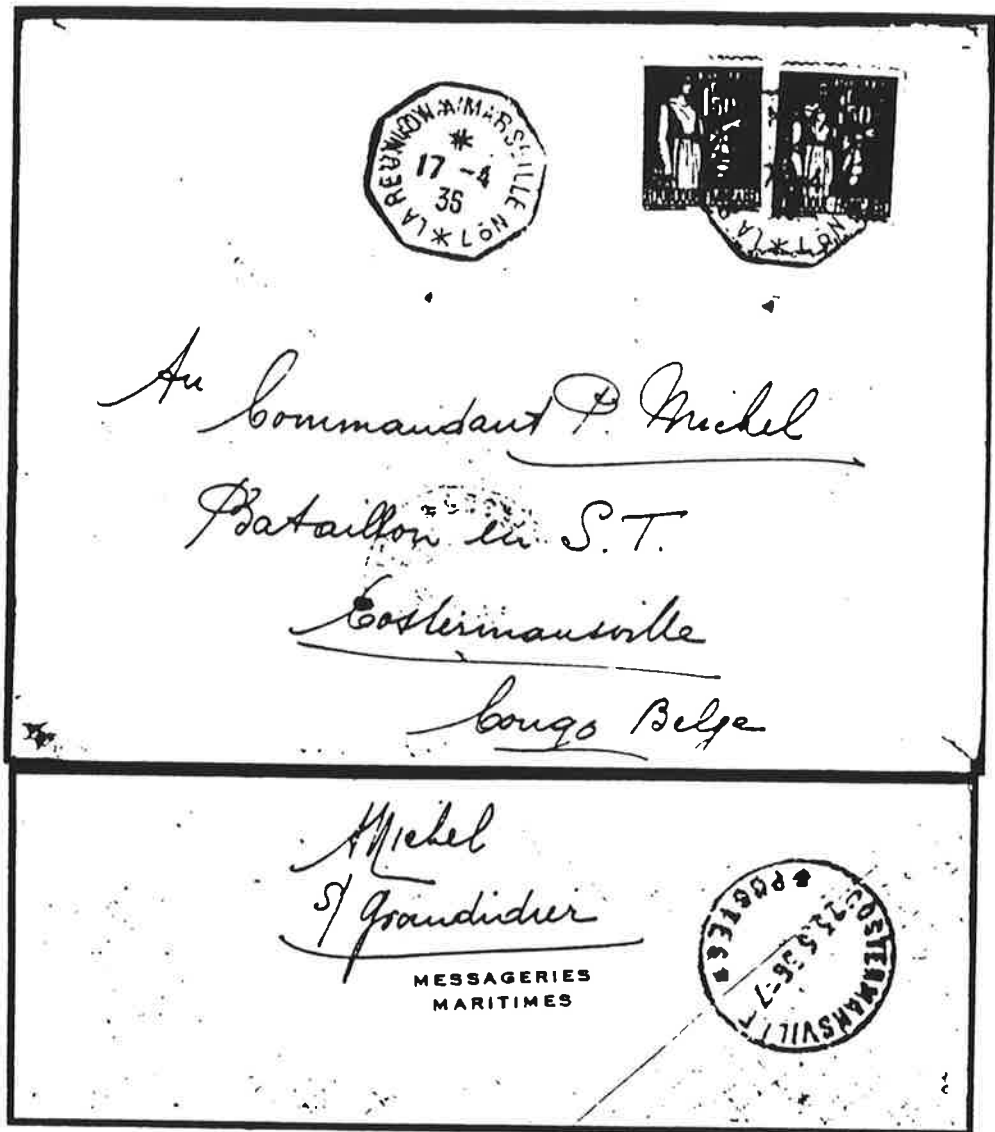
Postcard from Madagascar (Tananarive) to Irumu-13 November 1911.
 Sent via Mombasa (East African Protectorate)-28 November and Entebbe
 (Uganda) -4 December- arrival Boga *(but cancelled "Kuesi")-11 December 1911
 Card sent on to Avakubi-arrival 22 December 1911

*The Kuesi date stamp was used at Boga from October 1911 to December 1912



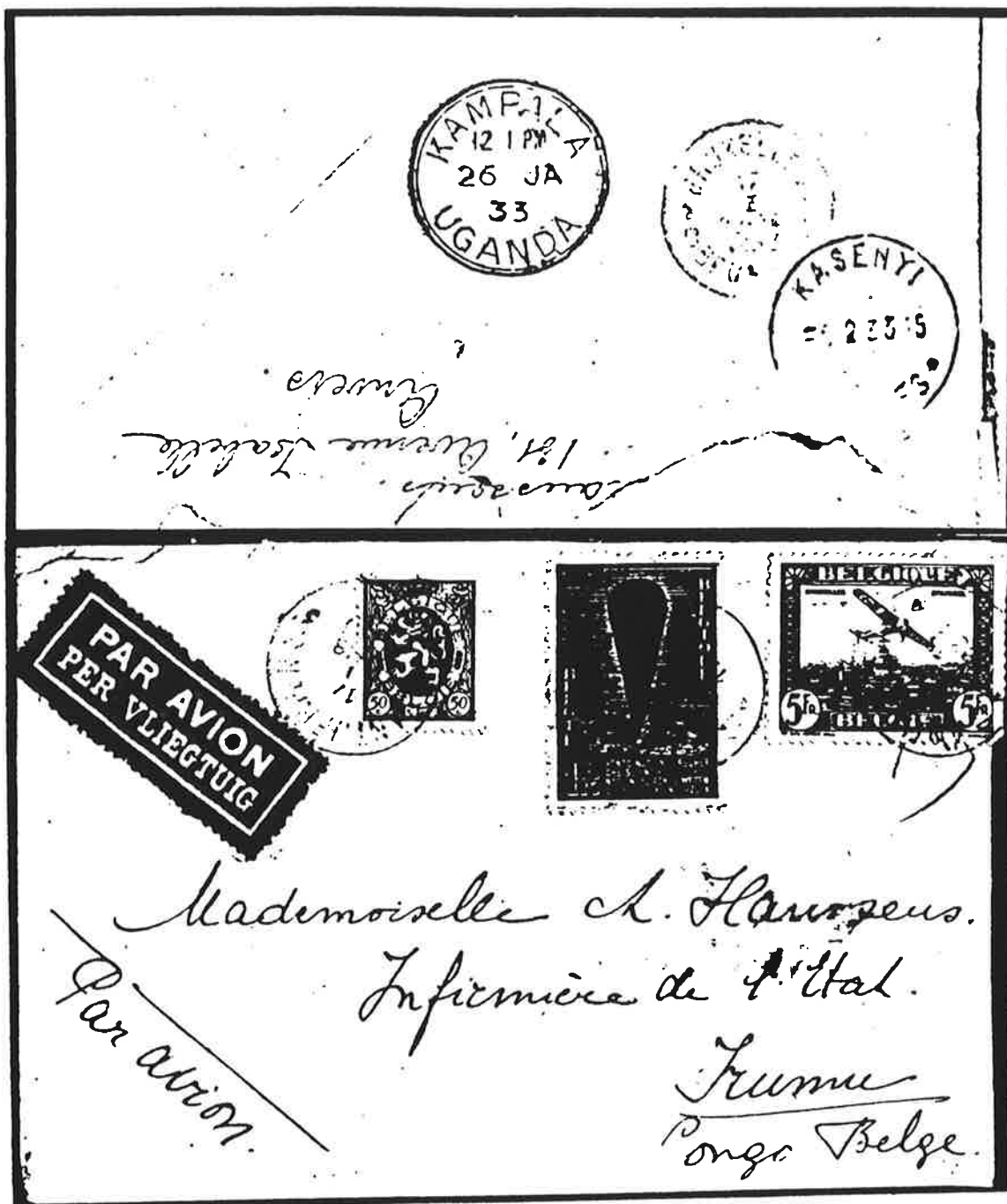
Postcard written at Kampala (Uganda) and addressed to France (Le Harve) 24 February 1916.

Sent via Belgian Congo-transit cancellations Rutshuru (23 March) and Irumu (9 April), then Bureau des Postes Militaires Belges (19 May) and redirected to Ste-Adresse (arrival 31 May 1916)

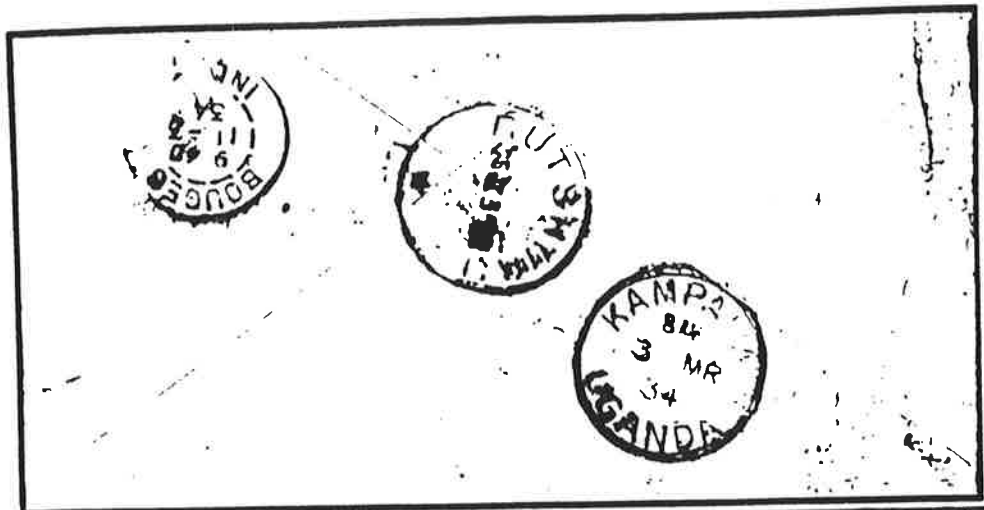


Posted at sea addressed to Costermanville- 17 April 1936-on board s/s Grandidier des Messageries Maritimes.
Octagonal cachet of shipping line "La Reunion a Marseille No. 7"
Arrival at Costermanville-25 May 1936

There follows on the next page a Registered air letter from Costermanville to Belgium (Jette) -9 December 1932 sent by road from Costermanville to Kampala and then by Imperial Airways to Brindisi.
Transit cancellations of registered mail offices at Kampala (17 Dec.) and Brindisi (22 Dec.) with cachet "ANNULATED" in black (only "ANN" visible) denoting cessation of air mail service at Brindisi, then travelling post office cancellation Pescara/Milano (22 Dec 1932). Arrival date stamp Brussels (date illegible)



Air letter from Belgium to Irumu via Imperial Airways - 17 January 1933
 Cancelled at Kampala (Uganda) 26 January and Kasenyi- 5 February 1933

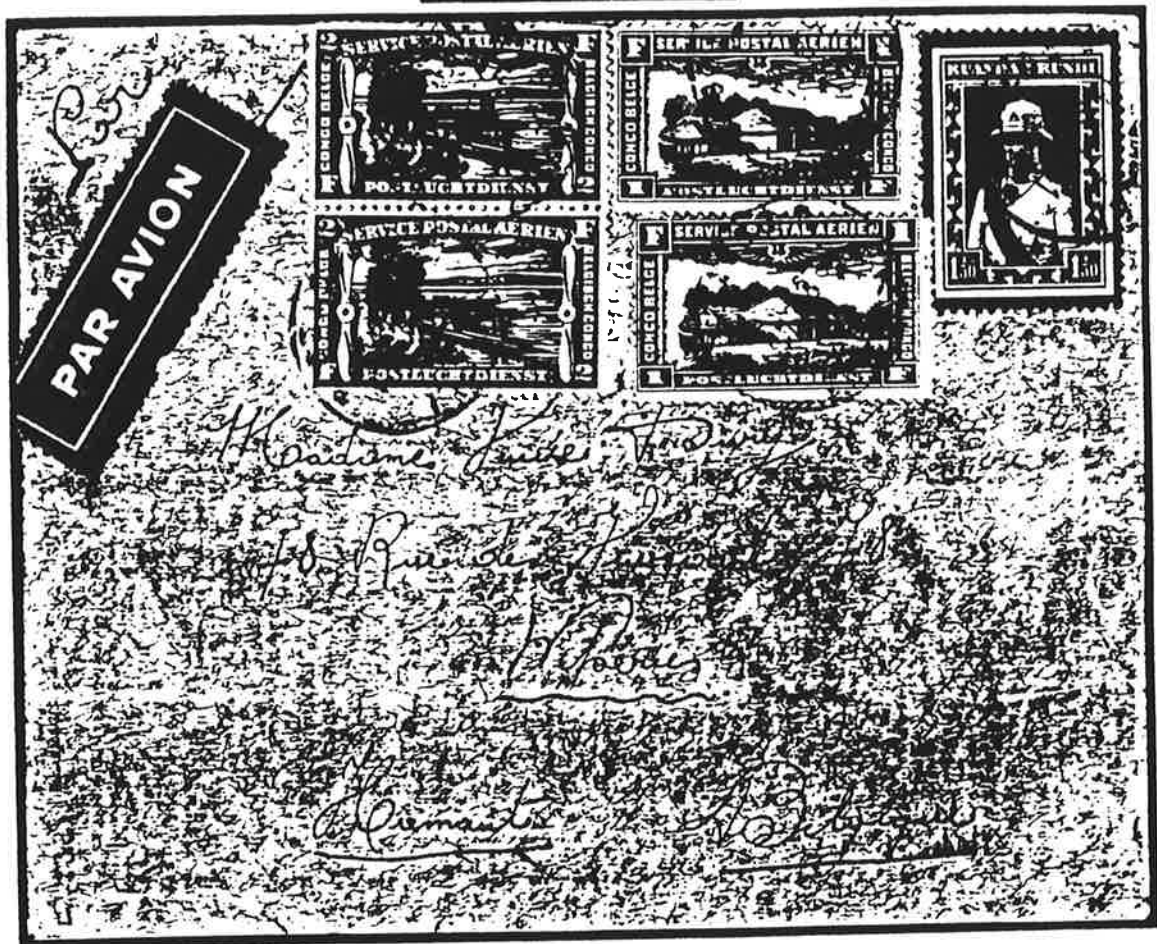
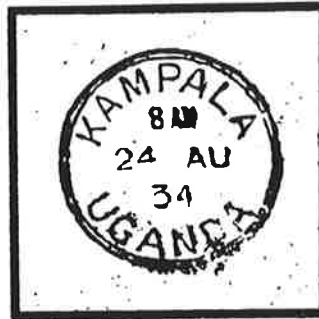


Air letter from Costermansville to France (Bouges)-20 February 1934
Imperial Airways route requested.

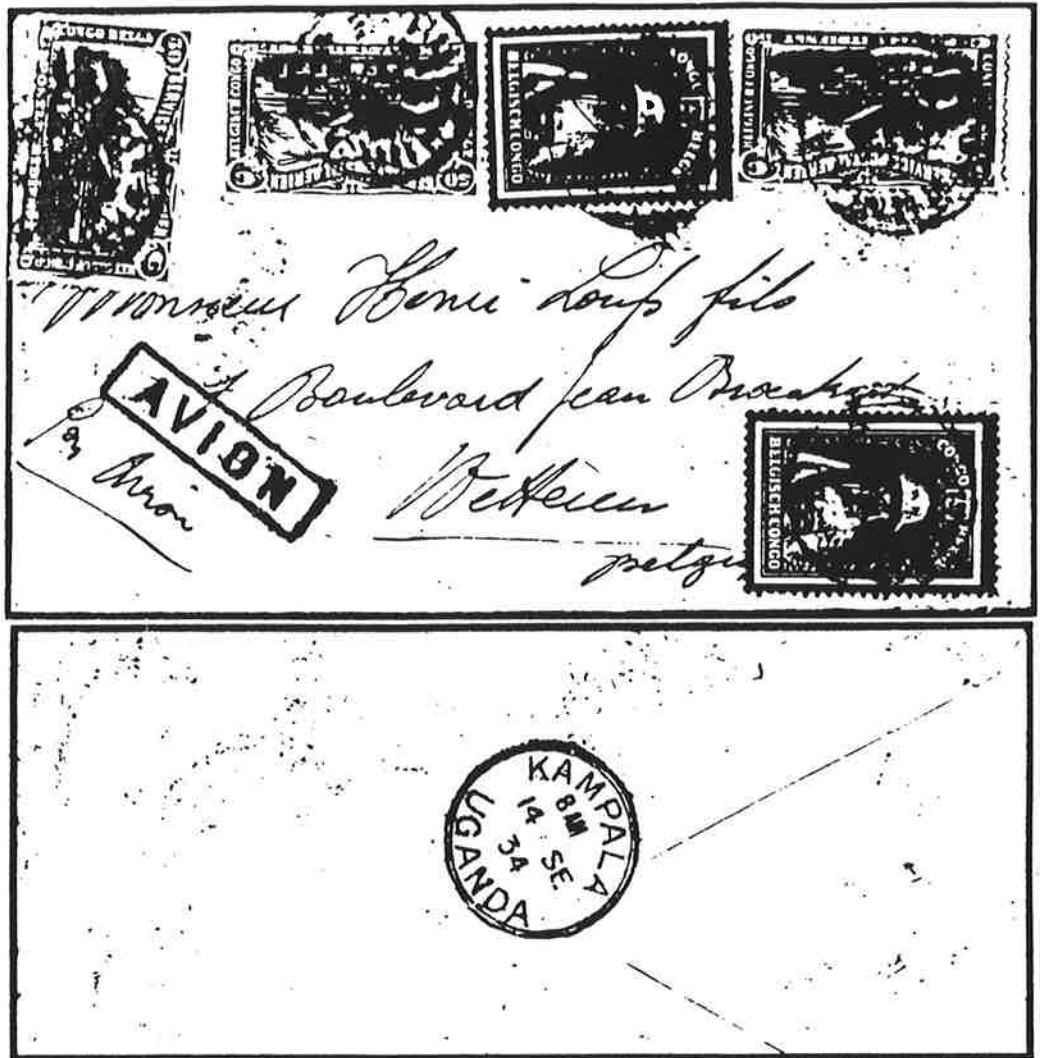
Sent by road from Costermansville to Kampala (Uganda)

Transit cancellations Rutshuru (28 February) and Kampala (3 March) to await the Imperial Airways Cape Town/London flight.

Arrival at Bouges (11 March 1934)



Air letter from Kigali to Belgium (Wiheries) 13 August 1934 sent by road to Kampala (Uganda)-24 August to await Imperial Airways Cape Town/London flight.

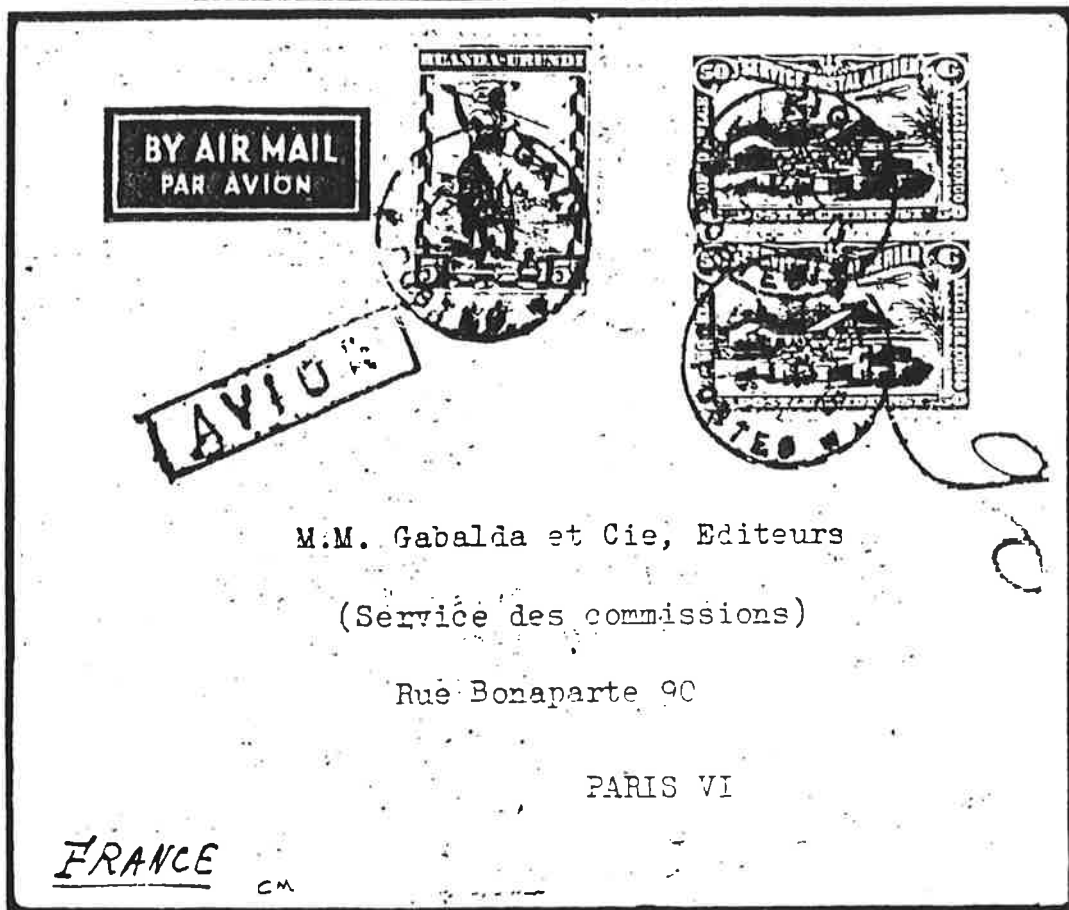
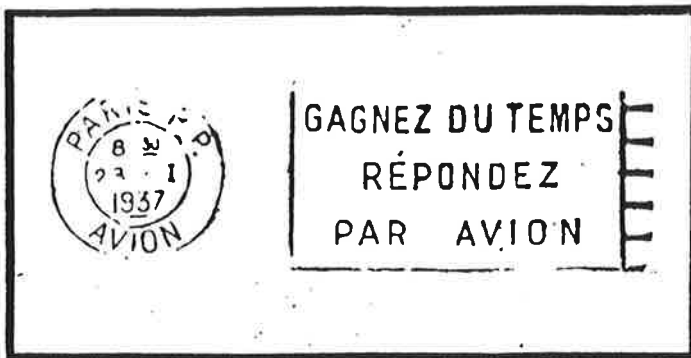


Air letter from Rutshuru to Belgium (Wetteren) 2 September 1934 sent by road to Kampala (Uganda)-14 September 1934 to await Imperial Airways Cape Town/London flight

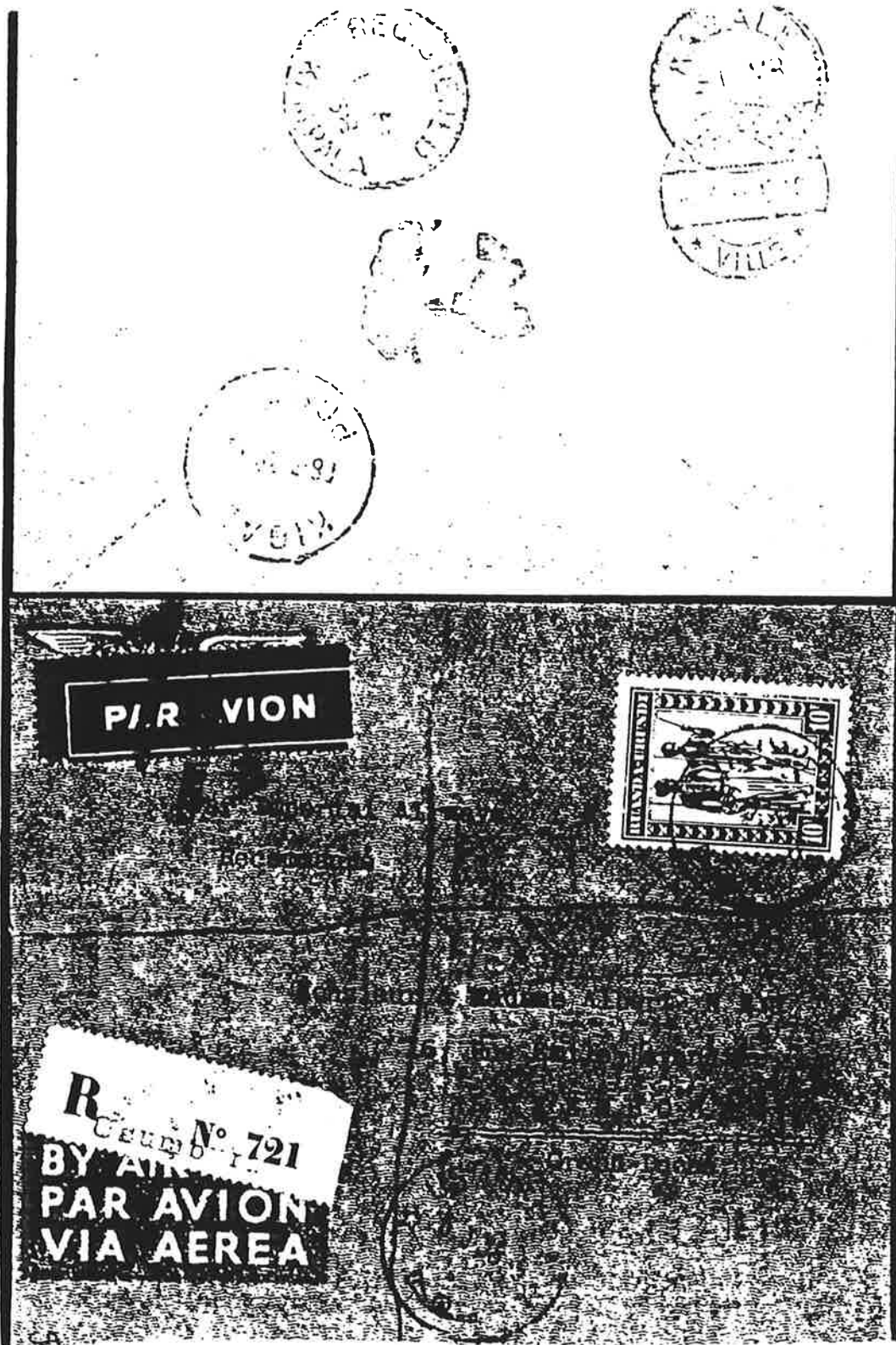


Air letter from Belgium to the Congo (Rutshuru) 4 December 1936
Imperial Airways service requested and routed via Kampala. Arrived Rutshuru 23 December 1936.

A regular Sabena service had flown between Belgium and the Congo since 1935 and came to serve the eastern part of the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi via Stanleyville. However the connecting airmail service, Stanleyville-Irumu-Costermansville, was not in place until November 1939.



Air letter from Kigali to France (Paris)-17 January 1937, arriving Paris-23 January 1937
A regular Sabena service had flown between Belgium and the Congo since 1935 and came to serve the eastern part of the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi via Stanleyville. However the connecting airmail service, Stanleyville-Irumu-Costermansville, was not in place until November 1939.



Registered air letter from Usumbura to Luxembourg-26 March 1938
Imperial Airways service requested.
Sent by road to Kampala via Kigali (28 March) and Kabale (31 March).
Transit registered cancellations at Kampala (1 April)
Arrival at Luxembourg 8 April 1938

Air mail service etiquette cancelled en route in France (presumably Paris, although a similar handstamp is known for Marseilles) .20.

THE MOLS 10 CENTIMES CENTRE PLATES

Ever since General Du Four studied the printing plates of the Mols stamps, and published the results of his studies in his book "Congo-Cinquante Ans d'Histoire Postale", we have believed that, for the 10c value, one centre plate, A, was used for the 1894 brown and 1895 blue stamps. We know that it was twice repaired by re-entry during that period and a second centre plate B, was prepared for the 1900 carmine stamps and this continued in use, with re-entry during its life, through to the 1909 Unilingual issue and that a third plate, C, was introduced for the 1910 issue.

About a year ago Mr. Van der Hauwaert wrote to me commenting on the fact that there was very similar partial doubling of the right canoe on No. 35 in the sheet in the cases of the last printing of the blue stamps (with centre plate A3) and of the first printing of the carmine stamps (centre plate B1). Did I think this just a coincidence or could it mean that plate B was actually plate A after further repairs?

Looking at my sheets, although my eyes are not as good as they once were, I could see exactly what Mr. Van der Hauwaert meant. I passed this information on to Abbe Gudenkauf and asked him, because his eyes are so much sharper than mine, to study his sheets of these two stamps and see if he could find additional common imperfections in sheets of the 1895 and 1900 stamps.

He found the following:

On stamp No. 4: a very thin vertical scratch in the shading of the water and normally above the second O of the word CONGO;

On stamp No. 9: a similar scratch above the N of CONGO;

On stamp No. 10: a very similar scratch in the shading of the water but normally above the C of CONGO;

On stamp No. 15: another similar scratch but normally above the CO of CONGO;

On stamp No. 19: another similar scratch but normally above the NG of CONGO

Very much more obvious than these small, but important, scratches is a large black dot with a short thin horizontal line to the left of it on stamp No. 24, normally between the bottom frame lines and about 8mm to the left of the right extremity of the stamp. This conspicuous dot persisted from the birth of Centre Plate A with the brown stamp through the 1895, 1900, Princes' Printing, 1909 Unilingual right into the first printings of the 1910 stamp when the supposed third centre plate C was in use. In other words, Plates B and C were both Plate A after successive repair by re-entry.

It is, therefore, necessary that we make major changes to the nomenclature of the 10 centimes plates. These are detailed in the following tabulation:

<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>DU FOUR NOMENCLATURE</u>	<u>PREVIOUS BCSC NOMENCLATURE *</u>	<u>NEW BCSC NOMENCLATURE</u>
1894 (brown)	$I_1 + A_1$	$I_1 + A_1$	$I_1 + A_1$
	$I_1 + A_2$	$I_1 + A_2$	$I_1 + A_2$
1895 (blue)	$I_1 + A_2$	$I_1 + A_2$	$I_1 + A_2$
	$I_2 + A_2$	$I_2 + A_2$ $I_2 + A_3$	$I_2 + A_2$ $I_2 + A_3$
1900 (carmine)	$I_2 + B_1$	$I_2 + B_1$	$I_2 + A_4$
	$I_3 + B_2$	$I_3 + B_2$	$I_3 + A_5$
	$I_4 + B_2$	$I_4 + B_2$	$I_4 + A_5$
1909 Princes	$I_4 + B_3$	$I_4 + B_2$	$I_4 + A_5$
1909 Unilingual	$II + B_3$	$II + B_2$	$II + A_5$
1910 Bilingual	$III_1 + C_1$	$III_1 + C_1$	$III_1 + A_6$
		$III_2 + C_1$	$III_2 + A_6$
	$III_1 + C_2$	$III_2 + C_2$	$III_2 + A_7$
	$III_2 + C_2$	$III_3 + C_2$	$III_3 + A_7$
	$IV + D_1$	$IV_1 + D_1$ $IV_2 + D_1$	$IV_1 + B_1$ $IV_2 + B_1$
1915 Bilingual		$V_1 + D_2$	$V_1 + B_2$
	$V + D_2$	$V_2 + D_2$	$V_2 + B_2$
	$V + D_3$	$V_2 + D_3$	$V_2 + B_3$
	$V + E$	$V_2 + E$	$V_2 + C$
1918 Red Cross	$V + D_3$	$V_2 + D_3$	$V_2 + B_3$

*As Bulletin No. 69, page 22, amended in Bulletin No. 76, page 3.

For the nomenclature of combinations of plates known for overprinted and surcharged stamps, please refer to Bulletins Nos. 69 and 76. These frequent changes to the designations of combinations of plates, thanks to the discoveries of those who study the subject are a confounded nuisance to those who write-up their collections accordingly and no-one who studies the Mols stamps would be rash enough to suggest that this is the end and that no more major discoveries are to be made. All that we can do is continue our studies, publish what we discover and know that gradually we are approaching full knowledge of these wonderful stamps.

R. H. Keach

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Variety of the EST AFRICAIN Overprint L2a

Mrs. Green's collection contained a copy of the 25c with EST AFRICAIN overprint in which the word OOST reads COST and she indicated it as a variety which was new to me. The overprint is L2a and the position of the stamp No. 22, easily recognized in the 25c with centre plates C and D by the mass of blue dots in the white curl vertically above the word CENTIMES on the left. However I find that I too have a copy of the 25c No. 22 with the same COST variety and it is also present on those sheets having also the damaged L in BELGE in overprint No. 39. I have also a copy of the 40c No. 22 of L2a, with COST instead of OOST and, as far as I know, the 40c does not exist with the damaged L in BELGE.

It appears, therefore, that the damage to the first O in OOST preceded the damage to the L of BELGE.

Neither variety is common and is well worth seeking.

A Roller Variety on the Mols 50c Centre Plate B

Mr Foden has drawn my attention to a roller variety on centre Plate B, that with the shaded smoke emitting from the chimney of the locomotive, used for late printings of the 1915 50c and for the same value of the Red Cross stamps. It is a large black dot immediately above the crest of the hills in the background and 43mm to the left of the peak of the high mountain. In the first printings from this new centre plate the dot is present on each of stamps Nos. 1 to 10-- the top two rows of the sheet. In a later sheet, still printed with the purple-brown frame, the dot is still prominent on No. 6, is weak on Nos. 7 and 10 and completely absent on other positions of the top two rows. In a still later sheet, also with purple-brown frame, the dot on No. 10 has disappeared. On a sheet with the frame printed in red-brown and on sheets of the Red Cross stamps only the dot on No. 6 persists.

It is clear that when the centre plate was being prepared and immediately before position No. 6 was to be entered a small fragment of metal, or other hard substance, adhered to the roller die.

The roller die being much harder than the plate, the fragment was pressed into the plate and made a small indentation in it. The sequence of entry on the plate must have been 6,7,8,9,10,1,2,3,4 and 5; the fragment must have been crushed or flattened when No. 6 was being re-entered so that its effect on later subjects was less pronounced and indentations in the plate shallower.

During the hammering that the plate received during the printing process the indentations on positions Nos. 1 to 5 and 7 to 10 gradually and successively disappeared and only the deepest, that on No. 6 persisted to the end of the 1915 stamps and, later, those of 1918.

The 1921 10c/5c Value

Mr. Foden has sent me for study two copies of this common stamp and most interesting they are.

It is perhaps as well, for those who are not familiar with the details of these surcharges, to tell how the surcharging plates were made. From individual 1's, O's, c's, dots, short lines and spacers a vertical strip of five cliches were prepared in a frame, the spacings being as on the surcharged stamps. From this unit, probably with a single electrotype as an intermediate stage, ten copies were made by electrolytic stereotyping. The ten copies were then mounted in a large frame to produce the plate of 50 subjects.

There were minor faults in the original five subjects, notably in the short lines which obliterated the '5c' and these faults were reproduced in the electrotyped copies. As a result, all 5 stamps of the top row and the 6th horizontal row of surcharges have the same fault; this is true of the 2nd and 7th rows of the 3rd and 8th rows, of the 4th and 9th rows and of the 5th and bottom row. A single copy of the stamp can, by study of the surcharge, be allocated to one of ten positions in the sheet of 50 and this can be of great help in positioning a stamp in the sheet.

Mr Foden's two copies are, by minor varieties, seen to be, without doubt, Nos. 26 and 27 in the sheet. But No. 26 has the surcharge from either the 5th or bottom row of the surcharges and No. 27 has the surcharge to be expected in the 3rd or 8th row. All three members of the 'Expert Committee' have studied the stamps and have no doubt of the authenticity of the surcharges.

How can one account for these curiosities? There are two possibilities:

a) the sheets may have been very badly positioned in the surcharging press so that some rows of stamps did not receive the surcharge and one would presume that this would have been immediately realized and surcharges applied to those stamps that lacked the surcharge in the second operation of the press.
b) part sheets of the stamps were sent for surcharging and there was no point in the printer ensuring that each row of stamps received the surcharge originally intended for it.

With these two particular stamps there are further interesting features. They both have the same forged BOMA cancellation and forged, although of different types, TAXES marks and it seems extremely likely that they came from the same batch of sheets mistreated by the forger. The stamps, Nos. 26 and 27 are from adjacent positions in the sheet and, to my eyes, the perforations, both horizontal and vertical, match precisely and, these stamps having been single-line perforated, one immediately jumps to the conclusion that the two were originally joined and from the same sheet of stamps. Alternatively, and this has to be the accepted solution, the stamps came from successively printed sheets that were perforated together in the same operation of the perforating machine and therefor had identical positions of the perforations. This is all highly unlikely but I can think of no other explanation to fit the facts.

We have reported in these columns stamps with typographed CONGO BELGE overprints not proper to the position of the stamp in the sheet and this would appear to apply also to at least one of the 1921 surcharges. For the keen student of the overprints similar curiosities are to be sought but they must at be at least uncommon.

Mr. Foden's 10/5c stamps were from combination of plates IV + D2.

A Forged A. O. Curiosity

The Expert Committee has had submitted for certificate a horizontal pair from the top left corner of the sheet of the 40c A. O. with the A. O. missing from the left stamp (No. 1 in the sheet)/ The presence of the Nysten 'authenticity' mark was not encouraging but Walter Nysten was a stamp dealer as well as a faker and he did add his mark to some genuine stamps.

If the curiosity is genuine it may have occurred in one of several ways. If it happened because the top left stamp in the sheet or the whole of the left column of stamps was masked in some way or if the left column of stamps had been folded along the line of perforations so that the left column was behind the second column then the A. O. overprint on the right stamp of our pair would have been that intended to be applied to the No. 2 in the sheet, and therefor on its correct stamp.

Alternatively the sheet may have been put into the overprinting press one stamp width to the right of its correct position so that the left column of stamps received no overprint and the right column of A.O.'s would have been on the right selvedge or beyond; in this case the A. O. on our right stamp would have been that intended for No. 1 in the sheet.

With the subject pair we had to study closely the A.O. overprint on the right stamp and compare it with those on both Nos. 1 and 2 in the sheet. Casually glancing at a sheet of A.O. stamps suggests that all the overprints are as like as two peas in a pod but detailed study indicates that this is not entirely true and there are minor faults to be found which are unique to certain positions in the sheet.

In the case of No. there is a complication: at the beginning of the printing the square dot after the 'A' was perfect enough but a piece must have been snipped off it during the printing so that it became a vertical rectangle with a 'tail' to the right at the bottom. Although the difference is too small for us to measure with such instruments as we had, it appeared to our eyes that, in the cases of the genuine overprints on Nos. 1 and 2, the square dot following the 'A' is slightly smaller than the dot following the 'O' - not true of many positions in the sheet - whereas the two dots on the pair we were studying were of the same size.

On this trivial evidence, and perhaps influenced by the Nysten mark and of the unlikelihood of such a curiosity coming from the Waterlow workshops, we decided that the pair was faked with the single A.O. overprint forged.

It is inconceivable that Nysten, with a near perfect A.O. overprinting stamp, would have made only this one example and it would be most interesting to learn of similar curiosities on the A.O. stamps which could well occur on stamps other than the 40c. If you have such a pair please tell me.

R. H. Keach

REPORT OF HON. TREASURER

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year to 31 December 1991

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>YEAR TO</u> <u>31 DEC '91</u>	<u>9 MONTHS</u> <u>TO 31/12/90</u>
Subscriptions received	£ 576.12	291.37
Commissions on sales of stamps	826.63	507.75
Expert Committee Certificates	292.90	182.20
Book and Documentation Sales	165.54	80.59
Donations and Sundries		17.05
Interest received-net of tax	<u>77.30</u>	<u>83.01</u>
	£1,938.49	£1,161.97
 <u>EXPENDITURES</u>		
Bulletin	794.92	722.48
Expert Committee	158.20	85.79
Commission and Packet Sales	98.80	53.64
Stationery and Bank Charges	33.23	29.56
Costs of Books and copies for sale (including books for stock)	153.18	80.11
Postage	97.47	108.51
Room hire for meeting at Regent's Coll.		65.00
40th Annual Meeting at Weybridge		
Hiring meeting room for two days	200.00	
Sherry party (91.66) less profit on teas	88.03	
Membership of B.P.F.	<u>20.00</u>	
	£1643.83	£1145.09
Surplus for the period	294.66	16.88
Balances in hand at start of period	<u>1913.08</u>	<u>1896.20</u>
	£2207.74	£1913.08
Made up of--cash in bank	98.29	71.05
Alliance & Leicester Building Soc.	<u>2109.45</u>	<u>1842.03</u>
	£2207.74	£ 1913.08

SECRETARY'S NOTES

A REMINDER THAT 1992 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE:

For members in the U.S. and Canada \$11 US payable to E. M. Lavitt, PO Box 900 Rockville CT 06066.

In the UK: £7 payable to L. G. Green, 29 New Road, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9PG or to R. H. Keach, 25 Kingswood Rd., Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 5EE England;

In Europe-400 Belgian Francs payable either to Abbe G. Gudenkauf, 130 Rue De Savoie, 1060 Bruxelles, Belgium or to R. H. Keach (address above);

Other parts of the world: £8 payable to L. G. Green or R. H. Keach

May 1992 Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the home of R. H. Keach, 25 Kingswood Road, Tadworth, Surrey Saturday the 16th day of May at 2 PM. The agenda will include: 1. Annual accounts for the year to 31 Dec 1991 will be submitted for approval; 2. Reports from the officers of the Circle; 3. Election of officers for the balance of the year (not including the Chairman whose election last year was for a term of two years).

Joint Meeting with the Belgian Study Circle

The joint residential meeting with the Belgian Study Circle will be held Saturday/Sunday the 5th and 6th of September 1992 at WILSLEY POUND HOTEL-CRANBROOK-KENT. (Cranbrook is in Kent, south of London, near Royal Tunbridge Wells) Further details will appear in the June Bulletin and booking forms will be sent out at a later date.

NEW YORK AUCTION REPORT

At the recent "IVY" sale (in New York) the 10c carmine inverted centre fetched a total of \$6050.00 (including 10% buyers fee). However of greater interest to your Editor was the sale of the 1886 5F lilac lower right block of four perf 14 which was sold in Christie's Brabant sale "with much crackly gum (some has lightly soaked through...between the perms.." for 2700 swiss francs. Correctly described in the Ivy sale as....."unused, regummed, fresh color.."etc (emphasis added) was sold for \$385.00 including the 10% fee. It is your Editors contention that if one is asked to pay a premium (as we are in the US) for " never hinged", collectors should treat regummed stamps as NO GUM and reperfed stamps as if they were partially defective (and honorable dealers who have purchased such stamps at auction should disclose these matters to their customers.) Views on this matter would be welcome for further discussion in the Bulletin.