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BELGIAN CONGO



STUDY CIRCLE

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**BULLETIN 87**

**MARCH 1993**

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## V P COLUMN


### TEMPORARY CHANGING OF DELIVERY ADDRESS ON PACKETS

The Congo had an arrangement whereby if one was away from home temporarily one could arrange for any incoming mail to be delivered to another individual living locally or to have it held by the local postmaster. To make such an arrangement necessitated the completion of a special form and the payment, in 1916-1920 of 2 francs.

Two such forms, very similar and presumably successive printings, are included in the current auction sale.


Having previously no knowledge of the existence of such forms and presuming they are scarce items I think it a good thing to record them in the Bulletin.


2 francs of postage stamps were affixed to the form and then cancelled with the office's date stamp. It is not known to me-if, when the absent individual returned home and could again receive his mail, the form was returned to him or retained by the post office.

 ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES DU CONGO BELGE

Le soussigné Manquangi Nicolas Alex résidant  
à Yaoundé, autorise par les présentes le bureau de poste  
de Stä à délivrer à M Recepteur de postes  
résidant à Stä, les lettres et objets de correspondance quelconques  
recommandés et autres ainsi que les colis postaux qui arriveront à son adresse.

Appliquer ici des timbres poste  
pour une valeur de 2 francs.



Témoins :  
  
Bondeque

Yaoundé, le 14 octobre 1919.  
Manquangi Fils

Postes, Mod. n° 19. Brux. - Van Crompehout Frs et Sr.

Actual size 207 X 132 mm. There are eight 25c stamps affixed to the back.



Actual size 213 X 149mm

## SOME NOTES ON THE CHEMIN DE FER DU KATANGA - - O. COOREMANS

(M. Cooremans was responsible for the "rescue" of some of the BCK stamps-he was there--the Congo was not and is not, to him, some far off-unknown place ---his notes on his career and the BCK stamps follow)

"In 1928, 22 years old, as assistant stationmaster in Bruges I was ceded by the Belgian Railway to the Chemin de Fer du Katanga. There I went through all the different departments, including the post of station-master in several places including Sakania on the Northern Rhodesian border where my knowledge of the English language was of great use. That was my last post abroad. From there I was transferred to the Administration in Elisabethville (now Lumbashi) where I was in charge of the traffic department. Then the war broke out and I was called up to serve with the Belgian Congo army far away from my family.

After the war I returned to my job in E'ville where I stayed for the rest of my career till 1947 when the Belgian railway claimed me back. Here I was in charge of the administration of the Medical service of the railway in Brugge, till I was pensioned in 1966.

As for the stamps in use with the Katanga Railway. I was in charge of the archives where the waybills on which the stamps were applied were kept for several years before being destroyed. When I returned from the war, the stock of stamps had been exhausted and no others could have been ordered from Belgium, so the use of them had been stopped. When the rest of the waybills with stamps were to be destroyed I salvaged a few of them. Later it appeared I was the only one in possession of used stamps of that first issue. Later new stamps came in use which were smaller in size than the first issue.

continued

The railway stamps were used for "small" parcels limited in weight and size. Most of them were used in the important cities such as Elisabethville and Jadotville. On the line there was a weekly "distribution train" which stopped in every place on the railway to supply food to the railway men and deliver post and parcels to the people living in the bush. At the same time the trainmaster delivered tickets to the passengers and accepted parcels. These were accompanied with a waybill on which were applied the (BCK) stamps corresponding with the fare that had to be paid. At the destination the recipient had to sign the waybill for reception and received part of it. All the bills were later concentrated at the "Contrôle des Recettes" where the applied rate was verified and eventually corrected. Then they went to the archives for 2 or 3 years before being destroyed"

O. Cooremans

*The BCK stamps are now listed in Catalogue Officiel and were offered in our June 1992 Bulletin. An extensive article appears in Bulletin 36/17-20. It is thought only 160 stamps of the first series survived in used condition.*

## COMPUTERS AND PHILATELIC EXHIBITING

This past October 31-November 1, the Philatelic Society of Pittsburgh's annual stamp show had as its theme "Computers and Philatelic Exhibiting". The show featured seminars on using personal computers in philatelic exhibiting and 1200 pages of exhibits prepared with the aid of computers. To commemorate the event, and to disseminate the ideas which were presented, the club produced a 72 page "Computers and Philatelic Exhibiting Idea Book". The book contains ("Computers and Exhibiting"), (A Technician Looks at Exhibiting), and from our BCSC member, Regis Hoffman, (A Futurist looks at Exhibiting"), a list of all the exhibit with the hardware and soft ware used in their preparation, and a copy of each exhibit's title page and best page. The club is offering this book to interested collectors for \$6.00 which in-

cludes US Postage. Requests to Regis Hoffman, 2008 Rockfield Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243 USA with check payable to "Philatelic Society of Pittsburgh".

*An interesting treatise for the Computer aficionado--Ed.*

## EDITORS NOTES

The Study of the shade differences in the 'Palms' issue by H. R. Lancaster which appears in this issue opens the door to further examination of these stamps. In the same way that our members took the time and effort to identify the various shades in the Mols-(albeit there are far fewer "Palms" than Mols) it would seem that the "Palms" offer a challenge which could be most rewarding. Interested members could contact Mr. Lancaster at Green Briar, Ruckhall, Eaton Bishop, Hereford HR2 9QX England or your editor. We look forward to further articles on this subject.

Norman Clowes, to whom we are indebted for the Index to the Bulletin, is currently preparing an update. He has suggested that all Bulletin pages bear the volume number as well as the page number for ease of future reference. Accordingly your editor has assigned a volume number to all pages and, arbitrarily, a supplemental letter to the Hudson pages which appear here.

A note about the publications listed in the Secretary's report-each member who so desires is entitled to one copy of the 2nd Edition Cancellations Book and the price given is for that copy. Additional copies would carry an additional charge.

Future issues; will include a Study of the 10c carmine and black 1915 with inverted centre; a study of AIRGRAPHS; Protestant Missions in the Congo; a complete review of the TAXES cancellations; Belgian Congo Mail Routes-Southern Route; and the June issue will include the next installment of B. P. Hudson's monumental work on the plating of the Mols.

## REPORT OF HON TREASURER

### Income and Expenditure Account-Year to Dec. 1992

| <u>INCOME</u>   | <u>YEAR TO 31<br/>DEC 1992</u> | <u>YEAR TO<br/>DEC 1991</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Subscriptions received  | £649.67                        | £576.12                     |
| Commissions on sale of stamps   | 811.44                         | 826.63                      |
| Expert Committee Certificates   | 182.85                         | 292.90                      |
| Book and Documentation sales  | 143.60                         | 165.54                      |
| Interest received--net of tax   | <u>83.94</u>                   | <u>77.30</u>                |
|   | 1,871.50                       | 1,938.49                    |
| <br><u>EXPENDITURES</u>   |                                |                             |
| Bulletin  | 882.18                         | 794.92                      |
| Expert Committee  | 96.69                          | 158.20                      |
| Commission and Packet Sales   | 156.75                         | 98.80                       |
| Stationery  | 5.30                           | 33.23                       |
| Cost of Books and Copies for Sale<br>(including books for stock)                        | 43.52                          | 153.18                      |
| Postage   | 109.43                         | 97.47                       |
| 40th Annual General Meeting at Weybridge  |                                | 288.03                      |
| 41st Annual General Meeting at Cranbrook  | 72.50                          |                             |
| B.P.F. Membership   | 35.00                          | 20.00                       |
| Printing and Paper Costs of First <u>50 copies</u><br>of 2nd edition-Cancellations Book | <u>305.64</u>                  |                             |
|   | 1,707.01                       | 1,643.83                    |
| <br><u>SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD</u>   |                                |                             |
| Balances in Hand at start of period   | <u>2,207.44</u>                | <u>1,913.08</u>             |
| Total Funds   | £2,372.23                      | £2,207.74                   |

(s) Laurence G. Green Hon. Treas.

### Secretary's Notes

#### May 1993 Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the L. G. Green home, 29 New Road, Esher, Surrey (phone no 0372 463101) at 1200 hours SATURDAY 1ST MAY 1993. The Agenda will include:

1. Annual Accounts for the year to 31 Dec 1992 will be submitted for approval;
2. Reports from the Officers
3. Election of Officers
4. Peter Foden's 2 year tour of duty as Chairman expires 1st May 1993. A resolution will be submitted for the election of a new Chairman M. Jacques Du Four who has kindly agreed that his name be placed in nomination and he will be elected unless other names are received.

The Society membership remains virtually unchanged at 102.

#### New Members:

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| A. J. Fowler   | R. Gallant           |
| P O Box 438    | Kalenbhergstraat 105 |
| Brighton       | B 1700 Dilbeek       |
| Sussex BN1 6LX | Belgium              |

The funds of the Society are deposited in an INSTANT ACCESS account at the ALLIANCE and LEICESTER Building Society--the pass book will be available for inspection at the Annual General Meeting on 1st May 1993.

At the June 1992 meeting there was discussion about the growth of the Circle's Funds and various steps were agreed to modify this in the future. Members can see two effects in this years accounts--reduction in receipts for EXPERT COMMITTEE certificates and the cost of the first 50 copies of the Cancellations Books (10 additional copies were printed in 1993).

Despite this there has been a surplus for the year, and consideration has been given at the Annual General Meeting to other steps deemed necessary. It is anticipated the Commission on the sales of stamps in 1993 will decline but we have made that observation before. The current funds (23 Feb 1993) of the Circle stand at £2635 before paying the costs of the March Bulletin.

New Members continued

N. P. Overgaard  
Vingards Alle 29  
2900 Hellerup  
Denmark

E. W. Proud  
P O Box 74  
Heathfield  
E. Sussex TN21 8PY  
England

A. Ramsey  
355 Blackpool Road  
Preston  
Lancs PR2 3A B  
England

D. T. Swart  
P O Box 52431  
Saxonwold 2132  
South Africa

The following ceased to be members in the last twelve months:

A. Jeukens-Belgium-Deceased  
J. L. Kalp--England  
A. Maksad--USA  
W. Renaud--Canada

D. J. M. Kerr -Scotland  
J. R. Ryan--USA  
W. A. Weinberger--USA

Change of address  
Ron Strawser  
1010 Lamar Suite 1000  
Midland TX 77002 USA

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session will be devoted to a display by B. P. HUDSON on the subject of cancellations of the Mols Issues.

Future Meetings

No meeting with the Belgian Study Circle is planned for 1993, but we hope to arrange a meeting to commemorate the centenary of the issue of the Mols probably in OSTEND Belgium early in October 1994

PUBLICATIONS

Members are reminded that the following publications are available:

Order from L G Green

Prices  
postage extra

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. MAILBOAT SERVICES FROM EUROPE TO THE BELGIAN CONGO (1879-1922)     | £4 |
| ABBÉ G. GUDENKAUF   |    |
| 2. POSTAL HISTORY OF THE LADO ENCLAVE (1897-1910)- ABBÉ GUDENKAUF     | £9 |
| 3. MAILBOAT STEAMERS ON CONGO RIVERS AND LAKES (1897-1910)- GUDENKAUF | £4 |
| 4. ETUDE DU 5 FRANCS MOLS -ETAT INDEPENDANT-J. M. FRENAY              | £7 |
| 5. E.I.C.-LE 5 FRANCS DE 1886   |    |
| E. DENEUMOSTIER   | £4 |

6. COPIES OF THE PREVIOUS 86 BULLETINS CAN BE REPRODUCED FOR 8d PER PAGE

Order from R. H. Keach

7. SECOND EDITION OF THE CANCELLATIONS OF BELGIAN CONGO 1886-1960 AND RUANDA URUNDI 1917-1962, INCLUDING THE TELEGRAPHIC CANCELLATIONS 285 BF

8. ETUDE DU 50c, 1F, 3,50F AND 10F MOLS ETAT INDEPENDANT--J. M. FRENAY £7 each

**SHADES IN THE PALMS ISSUE OF 1942**

The following shade differences in the Palms issue-which are not identified in catalogues and which cannot be attributed to the effects of tropicalization have been identified:

| <u>Value</u> |                  | <u>Shades</u>             |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| 5c           | Red              | Scarlet vermilion         |
| 10c          | Olive green      | Grey olive                |
| 15c          | Brown-red        | Lake-brown                |
| 20c          | Deep blue        | Deep grey-blue            |
| 25c          | Deep reddish     | Deep reddish purple lilac |
| 30c          | Dull blue        | Deep dull blue            |
| 50c          | Green            | Deep green                |
| 60c          | Brown            | Orange brown              |
| 75c          | Violet           | Dull violet               |
| 1F           | Deep brown       | Chocolate brown           |
| 2,50F        | Carmine          | Scarlet                   |
| 3,50F        | Deep olive       | Bronze-green              |
| 6F           | Dull ultramarine | Ultramarine               |
| 7F           | Black            | Slate-black               |
| 10F          | Deep brown       | Sepia                     |

(colours given follow as near as possible the Stanley Gibbons Colour Key)

The shades could well be the result of slight changes in ink and/or a variety of tones in the paper and printing under war time conditions.

Keach identified variations in the perforations in Bulletin No. 78. Members are invited to give their findings and views on the subject of shade varieties to be found in this issue.

H. R. LANCASTER

## PLATING MOLS STAMPS

by B.P. HUDSON

### Part 3: 10 centimes

#### Introduction

Parts 1 and 2 of this series were issued with Bulletin 85, part 1 providing a general introduction and part 2 covering the 5 centimes. Part 3 and future parts should be read in conjunction with part 1.

The 10 centimes is the second lowest of the ten Mols values, and is the value found most frequently on postcards. From 1889 to 1910 10 centimes was the postal rate for postcards sent internally in the Congo, and from 1910 to 1921 it was the rate for postcards sent to Belgium and other overseas countries.

As with all the Mols values, the design of the 10 centimes was based on one of the paintings in the diorama exhibited by the artists Robert Mols and Piet Van Engelen at the Anvers Exhibition of 1894. It shows an important incident in Congo history, when a force led by Commandant Tobback, supported by Commandant Chaltin in the gunboat "La Ville de Bruxelles", captured the village of Stanley-Falls from a larger and well-armed Arab force. The vignette shows the village on the right, part of it already set ablaze by canon fire, with the Belgian force approaching in the gunboat and smaller craft on the left, and the cataracts of Stanley-Falls in the background. The battle left 800 Arabs dead, with numerous taken prisoner, and freed 1100 black slaves.

#### Main issues

In the following table the number on the left is the Catalogue Officiel number. The right-hand column shows the number printed, excluding those that were subsequently overprinted or surcharged, as listed by General Du Four in 'Cinquante Ans D'Histoire Postale', and drawn from official and other sources. But as the General warns, these numbers have to be treated with caution and in many cases, as has now been confirmed by study of Waterlow's file copy sheets, understate the true figure. This is particularly true of the figures given for the unoverprinted 1910 and 1915 issues which are undoubtedly far too low.

#### Belgian Congo

|    |           |           |                  |         |
|----|-----------|-----------|------------------|---------|
| 17 | Nov. 1894 | 10c brown | État Indépendant | 30,000  |
| 18 | Jan. 1895 | 10c blue  | État Indépendant | 250,000 |



PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 3

|      |           |                 |                                  |         |
|------|-----------|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| 19   | May 1900  | 10c carmine     | État Indépendant                 | 704,000 |
| 31B  | Jan. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Congo Belge Brussels             | 3,000   |
| 31L  | Jan. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Congo Belge local                | 126,100 |
| 41   | Jan. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Congo Belge typo                 | 16,900  |
| 41P  | Mar. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Princes unoverprinted            | 100     |
| 41PB | Mar. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Princes Brussels                 | 250     |
| 41PT | Mar. 1909 | 10c carmine     | Princes typo                     | 4,650   |
| 51   | June 1909 | 10c carmine     | Unilingual                       | 200,000 |
| 55   | Jan. 1910 | 10c carmine     | Bilingual                        | 375,000 |
| 65   | Nov. 1915 | 10c carmine     | Bilingual with 'dix'             | 210,000 |
| 73   | May 1918  | 10c+15c carmine | Red Cross                        | 250,000 |
| 89   | July 1921 | 30c/10c carmine | Recuperation surcharge (on 55)   | 364,000 |
| 98   | Jan. 1922 | 30c/10c carmine | Malines surcharge (on 65)        | 493,250 |
| 104  | Jan. 1923 | 25c/30c/10c     | Elisabethville surcharge (on 89) | 10,000  |
| 105  | Jan. 1923 | 25c/30c/10c     | Elisabethville surcharge (on 98) | 10,000  |

Ruanda Urundi

|    |           |                 |                                 |         |
|----|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| 10 | July 1916 | 10c carmine     | Ruanda Tombeur (on 65)          | 2,750   |
| 17 | July 1916 | 10c carmine     | Urundi Tombeur (on 65)          | 2,750   |
| 29 | Nov. 1916 | 10c carmine     | Est Africain (on 65)            | 295,000 |
| 37 | May 1918  | 10c+15c carmine | A.O. on Red Cross               | 250,000 |
| 48 | Jan. 1922 | 30c/10c carmine | Malines on Est Africain (on 65) | 176,250 |

Plate combinations

|        |          |  |
|--------|----------|--|
| 1894   | I1+A1    | Original frame and centre plates                       |
| 1894-5 | I1+A2    | Centres partly re-entered                              |
| 1895   | I2+A2    | Lay marks added to frame plate                         |
|        | I2+A3    | Centres partly re-entered                              |
| 1900   | I2+A4    | Centres re-entered                                     |
|        | I3+A5    | Extra frame lay marks; frames and centres re-entered   |
|        | I4+A5    | Extra frame lay marks removed                          |
| 1909   | II+A5    | New frame plate  |
| 1910   | III1+A6a | New frame plate; centres re-entered and fine and clear |
|        | III1+A6b | Centres worn and blurred                               |
|        | III2+A6b | Frame lay marks added                                  |
|        | III2+A7  | Centres re-entered                                     |
|        | III3+A7  | Frames retouched                                       |
|        | IV1+B1   | New frame and centre plates                            |
|        | IV2+B1   | Frame lay marks added                                  |
| 1915   | V1+B2    | New frame plate; centres re-entered                    |
|        | V2+B2    | Frame lay marks added                                  |





### PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 3

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| V2+B3        | Centres re-entered                        |
| V2+C         | New centre plate                          |
| Booklets (1) | Frame and centre plates for booklet panes |
| Booklets (2) | Centres re-entered                        |

There have been the following changes from the nomenclature first introduced by Du Four:

(1) Du Four overlooked the partial re-entry, visible only in position 28, which converted centre plate A2 to A3 in the 1895 issue. He therefore described both I2+A2 and I2+A3 as I2+A2.

(2) Until recently, A4 was considered to be a new centre plate B and A6 a new centre plate C, so that A4 and A5 were described as B1 and B2, A6 and A7 as C1 and C2, B1 to 3 as D1 to 3 and C as E. The discoveries which showed that B and C were re-entered states of A rather than new plates were described in Bulletin 83.

(3) Du Four considered the centre plate which went with frame plates I4 and II as being a new state which he called B3, because in these combinations a spot in the top selvedge of B2 appeared to have been burnished out. Whether or not this burnishing took place, the disappearance of the spot is not now considered as creating a new state of the plate (see part 1 page 12).

(4) Du Four did not allow for the addition of lay marks to frame plate III1 to create III2. Thus he described III2 and III3 as III1 and III2 respectively.

(5) Similarly he did not allow for the addition of lay marks to IV1 to create IV2 (a change discovered only recently - see Bulletin 76), or for the addition of lay marks to V1 to form V2. He therefore described IV1 and IV2 as IV, and V1 and V2 as V.

#### Identifying the plate combinations

1894. For reasons unknown, shortly after printing of the 10c brown started, at least two positions of the centre plate - nos 24 and 46 - were re-entered, forming conspicuous doubling of the sky lines where previously there was none. This re-entry turned centre plate A1 into A2. Differences between the two centre plates are not clearly detectable in other positions of the sheet, except that the upper sky lines tend to be fainter in A1 than A2. While complete sheets of A1 are known, it appears that the great majority of 10c browns are from A2 rather than A1.



### PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 3

1895. Frame plate I2 was created by the engraving of lay marks in the form of a dot between positions 8,9,13 and 14, and a vertical line between 38,39,43 and 44. In all positions of the sheet, however, frame plates I1 and I2 can be distinguished by the shade of the stamp. Stamps from I1+A2 are blue (described in the catalogues as 'sky blue') in the earliest printings, and in later printings are greenish blue ranging from dark to pale. Stamps from I2+A3 are pale blue-green, and in some cases pale green with virtually no blue in them.

The only difference between centre plate A2 and A3 is that in the latter, position no. 28 was re-entered to form doubling of the sky lines. It appears that the re-entry was performed to remove the long scratch which had recently appeared in this position (Balasse variety V4) - see Bulletin 46, page 16. A file copy sheet of I2+A2 as well as individual examples of position 28 are known; their shade is pale greenish-blue.

1900. Lay marks in the form of a dot between positions 8,9,13 and 14 and a vertical line between 38,39,43 and 44 are present in all three plate combinations of the 10c carmine of 1900. In I3 a vertical line was added between 13 and 14 and a dot between 38 and 39, and in I4 these additional lay marks were removed.

It is not hard to distinguish the plate combinations of the 1900 issue. In I2+A4 frames and centres are generally clear and undoubled (except for doubling in the top left of the frames - Balasse V7), and there is always a space visible, albeit a narrow one, between the leftmost boat and the line of shading immediately underneath it. In A5 this space is visible only on positions 1-5,10,11 and 16; in all other positions thickening or doubling of the boat closes the space up. In I3 the outer lines of the frames, particularly at the corners, are thickened or doubled in many positions, including those positions where I3+A5 cannot be distinguished from I2+A4 by the thickening of the leftmost boat.

I3+A5 and I4+A5 can be distinguished by looking at the upper central part of the sky. In I3+A5 it is worn and patchy while in I4+A5 the sky lines are heavier and more continuous. It has been suggested that the centre plate was re-entered at the same time as I3 changed to I4, but no firm evidence has been found for this. There is also a difference in the shade of the frames: I3+A5 tend to be rose-carmine while I4+A5 are reddish carmine.

Princes printings, which are I4+A5, can be recognised by the brighter shade of the frames and by the centres which are brownish-black rather than grey-black as in the 1900 issue. The shades of Princes stamps are close to those of the unilingual issue printed three months later, and they are always p14. Princes



### PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 3

typo stamps can also be recognised by constant varieties in the typo overprint - see page 10 of part 1.

1910. In III1+A6a both frames and centres are clear, and the centre plate sky lines in particular are fine and sharp. In A6b these lines look worn and in many positions faint corrosion shows.

III2+A6b was created by the addition of lay marks to the frame plate: a dot between 8,9,13 and 14 and a vertical line between 38,39,43 and 44. (Centre plate A6 had lay marks from the beginning, in these same positions, reflecting an experiment by Waterlows in 1910 - soon afterwards abandoned - whereby the centres were printed before the frames rather than the other way round.) III2+A6b can be distinguished from III1+A6b only in the positions where the frame plate lay marks, or the absence of them, show on the stamp.

For III2+A7 the centre plate was re-entered and all positions show doubling or blotchiness of the sky lines. The top frame line, which was always weak, has become more so and in several places, particularly in the second 'valley' between the bumps, is worn away. In addition there is extensive corrosion in the form of small red dots round the outer frame lines in the first two columns of the plate. Stamps from centre plate A7 have a characteristic carmine shade which is darker than those from A6.

In III3+A7 the top frame line has been retouched by hand to form a line that is continuous and in places thick and uneven; the sections of this line which were worn away in III2 have been filled in.

New plates were made to form IV1+B1. These stamps look much better than the earlier combinations: the top frame line is continuous and the whole of the centre plate design is strong and clear without flaws or corrosion. Whereas stamps from the earlier combinations were dull to bright carmine, those from IV1+B are either a strong carmine or a distinctive carmine-lake. IV1+B is common with the 1921 surcharge but rare without it.

IV2+B1 was formed by the addition of frame plate lay marks: dots between 18 and 19 and between 33 and 34, and vertical lines between 13,14,18 and 19 and between 33,34,38 and 39. IV1 and IV2 can be distinguished only in these positions. IV2 appears to be relatively scarce, and has not been found at all on stamps without the 1921 surcharge.

1915. V1+B2 became V2+B2 with the addition of lay marks in the form of dots and vertical lines between positions 8,9,13 and 14 and 38,39,43 and 44. V1 and V2 can be distinguished from each other only in positions where these marks are



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visibly either absent or present.

V2+B3 was created by re-entry of the centre plate, giving a 'dirtier' impression of the sky with thickening or doubling of the sky lines in many (but not all) positions. A small black cross appears on the left in positions 7-9, 14, 18, 20, 38-40, 42-3, 45 and 47-50 of B3; in B2 it appears only in 37, 42, 47 and 50. In a few positions, particularly in the first column, B2 and B3 are difficult to tell apart - the distinction can be made with confidence only if reference sheets of both combinations are available. Differences tend to be most visible in the lower sky lines on the far left or far right of the centre plate vignettes. In addition, stamps from V+B2 are a more reddish and less pink shade than V2+B3.

V2+C and booklet stamps can be distinguished easily from V+B by the use of a retouched die to make the centre plate, giving continuous shading in the top part of the sky whereas centre plate B shows a large white gap. Booklet stamps can in turn be distinguished from V2+C by the fact that the red circle around the bottom left 10 is continuous whereas in V2+C it shows a short break at around 7 o'clock. (The only exception to this is position 33 of V2+C, where the break was retouched and does not show.)

The three printings of the booklet stamps can be distinguished by shade (though the distinctions are easier to make with mint than with used stamps). Stamps from the first printing are dull to fairly deep carmine with clear, brownish-black centres. Those from the second printing are deep carmine with deep black centres showing a little corrosion. Those from the third printing are dull carmine to carmine with grey, worn centres on grey rather than white paper.

In the course of the second printing the centre plate was re-entered to give doubling of the boats on several positions and some doubling of the sky on all positions in panes  $\beta$  and  $\delta$  and in most positions in pane  $\gamma$ . Second printing stamps without re-entered centres are scarce.

#### Varieties

The following sections list the varieties of plate combination, shade, overprint and perforation known for each issue of the 10 centimes. The list covers 'normal' stamps only; errors and curiosities such as inverted overprints and imperforations between pairs are excluded. Mention is however made of some of the better known curiosities.

The list is based on my own collection and that of Ray Keach. If members have varieties which are not on the list I would be glad to hear of them so that the list can be updated and made as comprehensive as possible.



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Shades are given only where shade varieties are considered to be significant, and are listed in what is thought to be the chronological order of printing. Shades are abbreviated thus:

bl=blue ca=carmine gr=green la=lake

The middle column indicates the overprint or surcharge type. For handstamped Congo Belge overprints, B = Brussels, L = Local. The two Elisabethville surcharges are denominated A and B, A with the 2 below the O and the 5 and with the comma relatively low, and B with the three figures in alignment and the comma relatively high (see Bulletin 34, page 27). For Tombeur RUANDA and URUNDI overprints, K = Kigali, G = Grysolle and H = Havre. For the nomenclature of EAA overprints, see page 11 of part 1 and Bulletin 46.

For details of the perforation varieties, see page 13 of part 1. Each perforation variety is followed by a two-letter code in brackets. This code gives my judgement of the relative scarcity of the variety in question. The first letter indicates the scarcity of unused copies of the stamp, the second the scarcity of postally used copies. I have split the codes in this way because there are some stamps which are more common used than unused, and others which are more common unused than used - indeed some that are almost unknown genuinely used. This is because some batches of sheets from the printers were all or mostly sent to the Congo for distribution to post offices, while others were all or mostly retained in Brussels for sale to dealers. Stamps cancelled by favour or with forged cancels are not taken into account in arriving at the scarcity factor for used stamps.

The scarcity codes shown are highly subjective and should not be taken too seriously, but readers may nevertheless find it interesting to compare them with their own experience. The codes are as follows:

- A: Very common
- B: Common
- C: Fairly uncommon
- D: Scarce
- E: Rare
- X: Probably unknown

#### 1894 10c brown

|       |                      |
|-------|----------------------|
| I1+A1 | p14½-15(EX)          |
| I1+A2 | p15(BD), p14½-15(BD) |

Most used copies of the 10c brown have forged cancels; genuine cancels are scarce.

#### 1895 10c blue

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| I1+A2 gr-bl | p14(AA), p15(AA), p12-14(CC), p14½-15(AB)                       |
| I2+A2 bl-gr | p14½-15(DD)   |
| I2+A3 bl-gr | p13½(EE), p14(AC), p15(AA), p16(CB), p12-14(DD),<br>p14½-15(DC) |

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I1+A2 p14, p15 and p12-14 are found with inverted centres. By positioning known copies it has been calculated that three sheets were printed with inverted centres: two sheets p12-14 in the first column and p14 in the other four columns, most copies from which are unused, and one sheet p15, most of which were postally used.

#### 1900 10c carmine

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| I2+A4         | p13½(DD), p14(BA), p15(AA), p16(EE), p12-14(DD), p14½-15(BB) |
| I3+A5         | p13½(DB), p14(CA), p14½-15(CB)                               |
| I4+A5         | p13½(ED), p14(CB), p14½-15(DD)                               |
| I4+A5 Princes | p14(EX)  |

#### 1909 Congo Belge handstamp

|               |    |   |
|---------------|----|---|
| I2+A4         | B2 | p15(DE)                                 |
| I2+A4         | B6 | p13½(DE)                                |
| I2+A4         | L2 | p15(EE)                                 |
| I2+A4         | L4 | p13½(EE), p14(EE), p14½-15(EE), p15(EE) |
| I2+A4         | L5 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I3+A5         | B5 | p14½-15(EE)                             |
| I3+A5         | B6 | p14½-15(DE)                             |
| I3+A5         | L1 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I3+A5         | L2 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I3+A5         | L3 | p14½-15(EE)                             |
| I3+A5         | L4 | p13½(EE), p14(EE)                       |
| I3+A5         | L5 | p14(EE), p14½-15(DE)                    |
| I3+A5         | L7 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I4+A5         | B1 | p14½-15(DE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B2 | p14½-15(CE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B4 | p14½-15(DE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B5 | p14½-15(DE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B6 | p14½-15(DE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B7 | p14½-15(EE)                             |
| I4+A5         | B8 | p14½-15(EE)                             |
| I4+A5         | L1 | p14(AA)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L2 | p14(AA)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L3 | p14(BB)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L4 | p14(AA)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L5 | p13½(DE), p14(AA)                       |
| I4+A5         | L6 | p14(BB)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L7 | p14(BB)                                 |
| I4+A5         | L8 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I4+A5 Princes | B2 | p14(EX)                                 |
| I4+A5 Princes | B5 | p14(EX)                                 |

Other combinations may well exist. Forged overprints are common: I have forgeries on I2+A4 p15 and I4+A5 p14 and p14½-15.

#### 1909 Congo Belge typo

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| I4+A5         | p14½-15(AD) |
| I4+A5 Princes | p14(DC)     |

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Some forgeries are found, one of which is dangerously accurate. I have forgeries on I2+A4 p15 and p12-14 and I3+A5 p14.

1909 unilingual

II+A5 p14(AA)

1910 bilingual

III1+A6a p13½(EC), p14(AA), p15(DD), p14½-15(DB)  
 III1+A6b p14(DD)  
 III2+A6b p13½(DB), p14(AA), p15(DC)  
 III2+A7 p14(AA), p15(AA)  
 III3+A7 p13½(DC), p14(CA)  
 IV1+B1 ca p13½(EE), p14(DD)  
 IV1+B1 ca-la p14(EE)

1915 bilingual

V1+B2 p13½(DC), p14(AA), p15(BB)  
 V2+B2 p14(AA), p15(BB)  
 V2+B3 p14(AA), p15(DB)  
 V2+C p13½(DD), p14(CB), p15(DD)  
 1st booklet p14(AA)  
 2nd(1) booklet p14(DD)  
 2nd(2) booklet p14(AA)  
 3rd booklet p13½(DD), p14(AA), p15(CC), p14x15(DD)

3rd booklet stamps are known with inverted centres. Only ten such stamps are known, namely the ten positions of pane β. The three other panes from the same sheet presumably also had inverted centres, but have not been found (or their existence has not been disclosed).

1918 Red Cross

V2+B3 p14(AC), p15(BD)

1921 Recuperation

III1+A6a p14(EE)  
 III2+A6b p14(DD)  
 III2+A7 p14(CB), p15(DD)  
 III3+A7 p13½(CC), p14(AA)  
 IV1+B1 ca p13½(BC), p14(AA), p15(BB)  
 IV1+B1 ca-la p13½(DD), p14(AB), p15(EE)  
 IV2+B1 ca p14(DD)  
 IV2+B1 ca-la p14(DD)

The surcharge is found, erroneously, on the 1915 10c V2+B3 p14.

1922 Malines

V2+B2 p13½(EE), p14(BA), p15(DD)  
 V2+B3 p14(AA), p15(DC)

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V2+C p13½(CC), p14(AA), p15(CC)

Forgeries of the surcharge are known; I have an example on V2+C p14.

1923 Elisabethville

|              |   |                   |
|--------------|---|-------------------|
| III1+A6a     | B | p14(DD)           |
| III2+A7      | A | p14(DD)           |
| III2+A7      | B | p14(DD), p15(DD)  |
| III3+A7      | A | p13½(DD), p14(DD) |
| III3+A7      | B | p14(DD)           |
| IV1+B1 ca    | A | p14(CC)           |
| IV1+B1 ca    | B | p14(CC)           |
| IV1+B1 ca-la | A | p13½(DD), p14(DD) |
| IV1+B1 ca-la | B | p13½(DD), p14(DD) |
| V2+C         | A | p13½(DD), p14(DD) |
| V2+C         | B | p13½(DD), p14(DD) |

Forgeries abound, and given the crudeness of the handstamp with which the '0,25' surcharge was applied, it can be difficult to distinguish the forged from the genuine. The above list should therefore be treated with caution. It is based on the items in my and Ray Keach's collections where the surcharge appears identical to authenticated examples.

1916 Tombeur

|       |   |                                |
|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| V1+B2 | K | p14(EE)                        |
| V1+B2 | G | p14(EX)                        |
| V1+B2 | H | p14(CX), p15(EX - Ruanda only) |

1916 Est Africain

|       |       |                  |
|-------|-------|------------------|
| V2+B2 | S     | p14(EE)          |
| V2+B2 | L1(o) | p14(AB), p15(BC) |
| V2+B2 | L2    | p14(BA), p15(CB) |

1918 Red Cross AO

V2+B3 p14(AC), p15(DE)

1922 EAA Malines

|       |       |                  |
|-------|-------|------------------|
| V2+B2 | L1(o) | p14(DE)          |
| V2+B2 | L2    | p14(AB), p15(CE) |

In total, 156 varieties of the 10c are listed above, and no doubt there are more to be discovered.

GUIDES TO POSITIONING

As with the positioning guides in part 2, I assume that the reader has a complete sheet of the plate combination he wishes to reconstruct, and will make his own plating notes as he studies individual positions. The guides do not list



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all the constant plate varieties, but describe the more important ones, particularly the 'generic' varieties which appear in more than one position in the sheet, and also describe the more difficult positions in each sheet where the plater is most likely to experience problems.

#### I1+A1 to I2+A3

The 10c brown of 1894 and 10c blue of 1895 are generally not hard to position. There are relatively few centre plate varieties, except in the later printings of the 10c blue when a number of scratches appeared, but there are many varieties of the frame plate which are visible through all the printings.

Two conspicuous groups of varieties were illustrated by Balasse. Balasse V7 is a horizontal re-entry of the top left vertical frame line. The re-entry appears outside the framelines in position 50, between them in 25,31 and 45, and inside them in 5,22,38,39 and 40. There are several other positions where a re-entry inside the inner frameline can be detected, albeit more faintly.

Balasse V8 is the well-known parasitic entry where a small part of the die of the 50c value was impressed on the 10c design. It takes the form of a short vertical line and several dots on the É of ÉTAT, together with one or more short slanting lines crossing the frame immediately above. It is visible on positions 4,9,12,14,19,24,37,44 and 49, taking a slightly different form in each location which makes it easy to identify the position of each stamp which shows this variety.

There are other generic varieties which are less conspicuous but equally useful. There is a small line touching the top frameline, either above the NT of ANT or to the right of the T, on 7-10 and 12-15. There is a tiny dot on the frameline in the same place on 11 and 16-20. There is a dot in the right margin, ½mm SE of the lower 'acorn', on 1-3,6-10 and 15. There is a blob-like spot between the outer framelines right of the lower right 10 on 21,26 and 28-30. Faint vertical lines cross the top left frame on 8,28,33 and 36. A longer vertical guideline is visible in the upper left margin, close to the frame, in 4,12,17 and 40.

Centre plate varieties worth mentioning are vertical doubling in the sky (A2 and A3 only) on 46 (Balasse V1) and 24, and slight vertical doubling of the hulls of the boats on 35; and a pair of short black horizontal marks, just to the left of the X of the left DIX, on 2,3 and 5, with a trace of the marks showing on 4. On later printing of I2+A3, with the blue-green frames, a number of scratches appeared on the centre plate in various positions, typically 2 to 3 mms in length, the most conspicuous being the diagonal line crossing the right part of the river in 18 (Balasse V2), the curly 'paraphe' in the left part of the bottom margin (Balasse V3), and the long, near-vertical scratch through the boats on the beach (Balasse V4). This last variety is rare, being found only briefly on the final printings of A2.

The more difficult positions are as follows (frame plate varieties unless otherwise stated). 6 has a faint short vertical line in the A of ÉTAT. 17 has a small horizontal dash between the framelines above the T of ÉTAT, and a faint vertical line above the A of ANT. 18 has a black spot under the AN of ANT. 20 has a tiny dot just outside the left frameline at its widest point. 26 has a near-horizontal line in the X of the left DIX. 27 has a faint horizontal line crossing the left framelines ½mm above the centre, and a faint dot just in the right margin

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2mms below the centre. 34 has a near-horizontal line crossing the framelines under the left 10. This line is hardly visible in the 1895 stamps, which instead show three black spots in the left part of the sky. 38 has two short vertical lines crossing the white line under the right of the É and A of ÉTAT. 48 has two dots, one above the other, 1mm NW of the NW frameline.

#### I2+A4

Stamps from the first combination of the 1900 issue can mostly be positioned from the frame plate varieties described for the 10c brown and 10 blue, which show up well because of the strong carmine colour of the frames. The centre plate is clean and shows few flaws. The main ones which survive from A3 are the black spot on 24 with a short horizontal line extending to the left, on the lower frameline about 8mm right of centre, and the doubling of the hulls of the boats on 35.

#### I3+A5 and I4+A5

The more conspicuous frame plate varieties of I2, including V7 and V8, are still visible to a greater or lesser extent on I3 and I4. But most of the other frame plate flaws have disappeared, and for both I3+A5 and I4+A5 the main clues to position come from the centre plate rather than the frame plate.

It is best to start by looking at the leftmost boat. As already mentioned, the narrow space between this boat and the line of shading immediately below it, present in all positions of A4, is closed up in A5 by a thickening or doubling of the boat in every position except 1-5, 10, 11 and 16. In 26, 34, 36-38, 42, 46, 47, 49 and 50 the boat is partly doubled; in 27, 39-41 and 43-45 it is wholly doubled; and in other positions it is thickened without evidence of doubling. The next step is to examine the lines of shading in the river beneath the boats. These are thickened in 6 and 24, slightly doubled in 7, 12, 13, 17, 25, 30, 32, 33, 39, 45, 46 and 48, and noticeably doubled in 22, 26, 31, 36, 38, 41-3, 49 and 50. The doubling varies in each location, which helps to identify the position. Other centre plate varieties are: in 49 and 50, a short black near-vertical line at the right end of the rightmost boat (Balasse V5); in 41 and 44-6, a short curved mark in the upper right part of the sky (though much less visible in I3+A5 than I4+A5); and in 7, 8, 9, 11-20, 24 and 25 a small black dot in the river shading 0.6mm NE of the prow of the rightmost boat (this dot is rather more visible in I3+A5 than I4+A5).

Turning to the frame plate, a number of positions, particularly in the first column, showing thickening or doubling of the outer frameline. In I3+A5 there are several positions which show conspicuous red dots or spots in the outer margin which are not found in I4+A5.

The more difficult positions are the following. 18 has a short vertical black scratch crossing the IM of the right CENTIMES, and (in I3+A5 only) one or two tiny faint red dots in the left margin. In I3+A5, 30 has a red dot in the white line under the D of DANT, but this dot is not present in I4+A5, which can be identified only by two tiny black dots just to the right of the figure sitting in the bow of the rightmost boat. In 35 the doubling of the boats has disappeared, and the faint vertical line through the T of ANT is visible in I3+A5 but not I4+A5. In I4+A5 this is a hard position to identify, the best clue being the slight doubling of the SE frameline.

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### II+A5

The unilingual issue has the same centre plate as the combinations, so positioning is largely by reference to the thickening of the leftmost boat and the doubling of the lines of shading underneath it. In addition there are the following generic frame plate varieties: quite conspicuous doubling of the outer left frameline in 13, 18, 23 and 25, and a faint vertical guideline in the left margin in 13, 18, 33, 34 and 42.

### III1+A6a to III2+A6b

Some positions in these plate combinations are quite hard, but others are easy because of marked doublings or fresh entries of parts of the left frameline which appear either close to the frameline or some distance from it, in the border between the stamp and its left-hand neighbour. In a few cases there is trebling or even quadrupling of the left frameline. It is not known why this doubling took place or why the displacements involved, up to several millimetres in the most pronounced cases, are so large.

There is doubling between the upper left framelines in positions 13, 34 and 50. In 29 a doubling mark shows well to the right, on the C of Congo. The doubling is just outside the left frameline on 10 (Balasse V10) and 29. It is well outside the left frameline on 11, 12, 14, 19, 26, 29, 32 and 45. It shows in the right margin on 4, 13, 18, 28, 31 and 44. Two short parallel red lines, strongly marked and sloping from NE to SW, appear in the left margin, level with the lower left 10, in 11 (between the framelines), 14 and 19 (well outside them), 26 (just outside them), 32 (shorter lines a little outside) and 45 (crossing the frameline). The right frameline is noticeably thickened in all positions in the fifth column.

The positions which do not show these unusual doubling marks are generally more difficult. Good guidance is provided by faint vertical guidelines running up from the top left corner or down from the bottom right corner. The exact length and placing of these guidelines vary from position to position. Only in positions 1, 20, 21, 28, 30, 36-9 and 43 are no such guidelines visible. In addition there are faint red horizontal or near-horizontal scratches in the top margin in many positions, eg over the second last 'bump' from the right on 13, 14, 23, 27, 28, 40, 45 and 48-50.

The centre plate also shows a number of varieties and, from A6b onwards, corrosion dots in the sky in many positions. There is a vertical guideline through the stern of the steamer in 7 and 8 (Balasse V6) and, less noticeably, in 1, 45-8 and 50. The sky lines on the far right are doubled in 9, 33, 39-41 and 46. The leftmost boat is doubled in 39-41, 44 and 45.

The most difficult positions are the following. 39 has a faint red dash off the SE corner and one doubled line in the sky left of top centre. 43 has a faint red dot just off the SE corner and, in early printings, three short black dashes, one above the other, on the centre right frameline. 48 has sections of a faint red vertical guideline just showing in the NW corner and a small red dot in the E of BELGISCH.

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### III2+A7 and III3+A7

Centre plate A7 is characterised by doubling or blotching of the sky lines in all positions. The identifying marks for positioning purposes are the same as for III+A6, with the further aid of the doubling marks and other imperfections in the sky. In addition, all positions in the first two columns have frame plate corrosion in the form of clouds of small red dots round the outer frames of the stamps. Examining the patterns of these dots makes positioning in these columns a straightforward matter.

For III3+A7, the top frameline was heavily retouched. Burin escapes on the frameline are visible in 6,18,21,31 and 46.

### IV1+B1 and IV2+B1

These are less easy combinations to position, because the centre plate is clean and relatively free of flaws. Most of the constant plate varieties are found in the frame plate, particularly along and above the top frameline where sections of horizontal guideline appear and where some positions show evidence of retouching.

Doubling of the vertical top left frameline shows just outside the inner frameline in 26 and 49, and inside it in 2,7,9,15,18 and 28. There is retouching, showing usually as a burin escape close to the top frameline, in the top left corner in 5-8, 16,21,28,42 and 48, and in the top right corner in 2,6,11,12,15,18,24 and 47. There is a red smudge between the lower right vertical framelines in 3,4,8,13,19,22-4,27,32,39,47 and 48. In 11 and 12 there is a short vertical red dash between the left framelines just above the centre. In 39 and 40 there is a red mark under and touching the bottom frameline, just to the left of the right 'acorn'. In 50 there is a pronounced red mark like an '=' sign crossing the right frames a little above the centre - Balasse V9.

Of the relatively few centre plate varieties, it is worth mentioning the horizontal guideline crossing the middle of the waterfall in 42 and 43.

No positions are classified as particularly difficult, since in the absence of other flaws virtually all positions can be identified by the short sections of horizontal red guideline close to or crossing the top frameline.

### V1+B2 to V2+B3

Frame plate varieties, particularly around the edges of the stamps, make the many issues which used these plate combinations relatively easy to position. The best technique is to find the sheet position first, and then by comparison with the reference sheets determine whether the centre plate is B2 or B3.

The procedure I use is as follows. I start in the top left corner and go anticlockwise round the edge of the stamp. If there is a dot between the top left horizontal framelines the position is no.1. If the outer frameline in the SW corner is doubled it is 2,5 or 31. If there is a dot against the outer frameline, in the middle of the near-vertical section under the I of BELGISCH, it is 48. If there is a short vertical guideline, leading down from the outer frameline under the C of BELGISCH, it is 33,37-40 or 42-5; on earlier printings the line also shows

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faintly on 32, 34 and 35. If there is a dot between the bottom framelines under the ON of CONGO, it is 10. If the outer frameline is doubled, but with a break in the doubling, to the right of the right O of CONGO, it is 41. If there is a dot off the SE corner, it is 6 or 9. If there is a dot off the right frameline a little below centre, it is 11 or 15, or 14 if a little above centre and against the frameline. If there is a dot and dash off the NE corner it is 7, 12 or 26. If the top frameline is thickened or doubled it is 28, 29 or 30. In addition, many positions show characteristic sections of horizontal red guideline crossing parts of the top frameline.

I then look for the more conspicuous centre plate varieties, namely doubling or thickening of the boats (4 and 47 respectively), an angled 'S' in the top right sky (25), a black sloping dash under the leftmost boat (22), a black spot between the third and fifth boat from the left (23), and a black dot just over the horizon on the far right (27).

This brief tour of the stamp deals with many of the positions in the sheet. Other positions have constant varieties which I will leave the reader to discover for himself. The following positions are relatively difficult. In 16 there is a small extra dot at the far right of the sky 1mm above the horizon. In 17 there is a characteristic pattern of faint black dots in the upper part of the left margin. In 19 a vertical red guideline is faintly visible between the framelines to the right of the lower right 10. In 24 there is a red mark, not always very visible, in the middle of the stamp half way between the G of the upper CONGO and the G of BELGISCH, and a small black dot just behind the head of the figure in the stern of the rightmost boat. In 34, a difficult position without any red guidelines, there are two tiny red dots close together in the sky 1mm under the B of BELGE. In 49 there are two small red dots, the right higher than the left, above the third 'bump' from the left on the top frameline.

Having established the position in the sheet, B3 can be distinguished from B2 by the shade of the stamp, by thickening or doubling of the sky lines and by the presence or absence of a black cross in the middle of the left margin (see page 4 above). B3 centres tend to be coarser and more worn than B2, though the differences in this respect are only slight in the first column.

#### V2+C

This combination is more difficult to position because the centre plate vignettes are completely free of flaws. The frame plate varieties described above for V1+B2 to V2+B3 are still visible, but where positioning depended not on these but on a centre plate variety, V2+C seems to present a real problem.

Fortunately the problem is helped by the presence of faint vertical black guidelines in the spaces between each stamp. These lines appear in most positions and vary considerably: some are long and pronounced, others short and barely visible. However by careful examination and comparison with a reference sheet they are usually enough to identify all those positions without visible frame plate varieties.

#### Booklet stamps

In the booklet stamps, the more helpful plate varieties are in the frame plate rather than the centre plate. There is a red guide dot 1½mm off the SW corner in

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$\alpha 3, \alpha 5, \alpha 7, \gamma 3, 5$  and  $7$ , and a similar dot off the SE corner in  $\beta 4, \beta 6, \delta 4, \delta 6$  and  $\delta 8$ , and rather faintly in  $\beta 8$ . There are signs of doubling or re-entry on the 0 of the lower left 10 in  $\alpha 2, \alpha 4, \alpha 10, \beta 3, \gamma 2$  and  $9$ , and in the centre left 10 in  $\alpha 8$  and  $\beta 1$ . Many positions show sections of horizontal red guideline in the bottom margin, and these guidelines are often the most reliable guide to identification. Some positions also show sections of vertical guideline in the left or right margin.

Useful centre plate varieties include black vertical guidelines in the left margin or short horizontal guidelines crossing the centre left or right 10.

Early in the second printing the centres were re-entered. This produced doubling of the boats in  $\beta 10, \delta 5, \delta 6$  and  $\delta 8$ , and doubling or thickening of the sky lines on all positions except those of pane  $\alpha$  and  $\gamma 1, 3, 4$  and  $5$ . The doubling of the sky is particularly marked in  $\beta 1-4, \beta 8-10$  and  $\delta 1-8$ .

While the booklet stamps are generally less easy to position than those of frame plate V, the presence of guidelines in most positions means that none are classified as particularly difficult.

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## PLATING MOLS STAMPS

by B.P.HUDSON

### Part 4: 15 centimes

#### Introduction

The 15 centimes is the third lowest of the ten Mols values, and is frequently found on mail, particularly postcards. It was the rate for an internal postcard between 1886 and 1889 and between 1921 and 1924; for an overseas postcard between 1886 and 1910; for an internal letter under 15 grams between 1896 and 1921; and for a letter to Belgium under 20 grams between 1920 and 1921.

The 15c was not issued in 1894 with the first five Mols values, but two years later in 1896. Unlike those five values, therefore, its design was not based on one of the Mols and Van Engelen paintings exhibited in Anvers in 1894. Instead it was based on a photograph which appeared in the magazine 'La Belgique Coloniale' in May 1896, showing a native climbing a palm tree to harvest its fruits, with a white settler standing at the foot of the tree.

#### Main issues

In the following table the number on the left is the Catalogue Officiel number. The right-hand column shows the number printed, excluding those that were subsequently overprinted or surcharged, as listed by General Du Four in 'Cinquante Ans D'Histoire Postale', and drawn from official and other sources. But as the General warns, these numbers have to be treated with caution and in many cases, as has now been confirmed by study of Waterlow's file copy sheets, understate the true figure. This is particularly true of the figures given for the unoverprinted 1910 and 1915 issues which are undoubtedly far too low.

#### Belgian Congo

|      |           |           |                       |         |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|
| 20   | Nov. 1896 | 15c ochre | État Indépendant      | 944,000 |
| 32B  | Jan. 1909 | 15c ochre | Congo Belge Brussels  | 2,000   |
| 32L  | Jan. 1909 | 15c ochre | Congo Belge local     | 114,100 |
| 42   | Jan. 1909 | 15c ochre | Congo Belge typo      | 74,900  |
| 42P  | Mar. 1909 | 15c ochre | Princes unoverprinted | 100     |
| 42PB | Mar. 1909 | 15c ochre | Princes Brussels      | 250     |



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|      |           |               |                                |         |
|------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 42PT | Mar. 1909 | 15c ochre     | Princes typo                   | 4,650   |
| 52   | June 1909 | 15c ochre     | Unilingual                     | 100,000 |
| 56   | Jan. 1910 | 15c ochre     | Bilingual                      | 305,000 |
| 66   | Nov. 1915 | 15c green     | Bilingual                      | 190,000 |
| 74   | May 1918  | 15c+20c green | Red Cross                      | 200,000 |
| 88   | July 1921 | 25c/15c ochre | Recuperation surcharge (on 56) | 318,650 |

Ruanda Urundi

|    |           |               |                        |         |
|----|-----------|---------------|------------------------|---------|
| 11 | July 1916 | 15c green     | Ruanda Tombeur (on 66) | 2,750   |
| 18 | July 1916 | 15c green     | Urundi Tombeur (on 66) | 2,750   |
| 30 | Nov. 1916 | 15c green     | Est Africain (on 66)   | 304,500 |
| 38 | May 1918  | 15c+20c green | A.O. on Red Cross      | 200,000 |

Plate combinations

|      |         |                                     |
|------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 1896 | I+A1a   | Original frame and centre plates    |
|      | I+A1b   | Centre plate corroded               |
|      | I+A2    | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | I+A3    | Centres partly re-entered           |
| 1909 | II+A3   | New frame plate                     |
| 1910 | III1+A4 | New frame plate; centres re-entered |
|      | III1+A5 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III1+A6 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III1+A7 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III1+A8 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III1+A9 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III2+B1 | Frames retouched; new centre plate  |
|      | III2+B2 | Centres re-entered                  |
|      | III3+B2 | Frames re-entered                   |
|      | III3+B3 | Centres re-entered                  |
| 1915 | III4+B3 | Frames re-entered                   |
|      | III4+B4 | Centres partly re-entered           |
|      | III5+B4 | Hole drilled between 41 and 42      |
|      | III6+C1 | Frames retouched; new centre plate  |
|      | IV1+C1  | New frame plate                     |
|      | IV2+C1  | Frame lay marks added               |
|      | IV3+C1  | Frames partly re-entered            |
|      | V+C1    | New frame plate                     |





## PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 4

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| V+C2         | Centres re-entered                        |
| Booklets (1) | Frame and centre plates for booklet panes |
| Booklets (2) | Frames retouched                          |

Of all the Mols values, the 15c shows the most numerous plate combinations, some discovered only recently, and there have been many changes from the nomenclature first introduced by Du Four:

(1) Du Four did not recognise the re-entry which created centre plate A3 (see Bulletin 67), nor those which created A5, A8 and A9 (Bulletins 32, 37, 42 and 68). The combinations now known as III1+A5 to III1+A9 were described by him as III1+A4 and III1+A5.

(2) He was not aware of the relatively scarce combinations III2+B2 (see Bulletin 42), III3+B3 (Bulletin 37) and III4+B3 (Bulletins 72 and 73).

(3) The drilling of the hole in frame plate III4, which turned it into III5, was not recognised by him as creating a new state of the plate. It is now recognised as such because it was a deliberate modification of the plate (see Bulletin 73). III6+C1 was therefore described by Du Four as III5+C.

(4) Bulletin 67 reported the discovery of EAA stamps from frame plate IV without any lay marks. The plate from which these stamps came was therefore labelled IV1, and what previously were known as IV1 and IV2 became IV2 and IV3 respectively.

(5) Du Four described centre plate C2 as a new centre plate D; Bulletin 29 reported the discovery that it was a re-entered form of centre plate C.

### Identifying the plate combinations

1896. In I+A1a the centres of the stamps are clear, especially in the earlier printings, and the frames vary from yellow-ochre to ochre to brown-ochre. Most mint stamps from the 1896 issue without overprint come from this combination.

In I+A1b the centres are corroded with scattered clouds of black spots. In most positions the corrosion is heavy but there is relatively little on nos 1, 4-6, 11, 12, 21, 31, 39 and 50. I+A1b can also be recognised by the colour of the frames



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which are a distinctive orange shade of ochre which is not found in the other combinations of the 1896 stamp.

I+A2 is less common than I+A1 without the Congo Belge overprint. The centre plate re-entry which made it removed most of the corrosion dots of I+A1b and produced doubling of the roof of the hut in about half of the fifty positions in the sheet. I+A2 can be identified by this doubling where it occurs, and in all positions by the pale yellow shade of the frames, which is more yellow than the most yellow-ochre of the shades of I+A1a.

I+A3, which is found both with and without the Congo Belge overprint, is hard to distinguish from I+A2. It has the same yellow shade of the frames, and in most positions of the centre plate there are no visible differences in terms of doubling marks etc. My article in Bulletin 67 described sixteen positions where centre plate differences can be detected. Most of these are rather inconspicuous; the most visible, which led to the discovery of this plate combination, is an oblong black rolling mark made by the transfer roller which appears above the left end of the hut in positions 2 and 12 of I+A3. Clearly, A3 cannot be distinguished from A2 without positioning the stamp.

Princes printings, which are always I+A3, can be recognised by the brighter shade of the frames and by the centres which are brownish-black. Princes typo stamps can also be recognised by constant varieties in the typo overprint - see page 10 of part 1.

1910. A book could be written about this difficult (and therefore interesting) stamp which went through no less than ten different plate combinations, several of them uncommon and only discovered in recent years. Unfortunately many of them can be identified in single copies only by positioning the stamp, and even then identification can sometimes be difficult. Where a complete sheet is available, it can be allocated to the correct combination by means of Ray Keach's guide in Bulletin 68.

Stamps from III1+A4 show little doubling but in most positions have some black corrosion dots round the edges of the vignette. The early printings can be distinguished easily enough by the characteristic deep yellow frames and deep black centres, quite unlike any subsequent plate combinations. The later printings of III1+A4 are ochre-yellow with more or less yellow in them, and the centres are brownish or grey-black.

Similar shades are found in III1+A4 to III1+A9, which were produced by successive re-entries of the centre plate. All show doubling of the hut, the standing figure or the sitting natives in some or many positions. The differences between A4 and A5 are generally rather slight. In many positions of A6, which have characteristic pale yellow frames, there are fine corrosion dots at the left and right ends of the horizontal sky lines; in several positions there are little clusters of short near-vertical black lines under the climbing native. This latter feature is also found, though less clearly, in A7, where the frames tend to be a 'biscuit' shade. In A8 and A9, which in many positions are similar to one another, there is generally more doubling and the centre plate presents a more worn and corroded impression, with the heaviest corrosion along the bottom of the vignette. Stamps from A9 are a characteristic brownish shade of ochre, which is often the easiest way of distinguishing them from A8.

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With III2+B1 a new centre plate was introduced and can be recognised easily by its lack of blemishes - it is far clearer than any of the re-entered states of plate A. In addition the frame plate had been getting worn, particularly in the shading in the top right corner, and for III2 was retouched here in a few positions. The frames are still ochre or brownish yellow and the centres are brownish black.

B1 was re-entered to make B2, but whether this was a complete or partial re-entry is hard to say, because in many positions, particularly in the right half of the sheet, differences are difficult to detect. In the left half differences can usually be seen in the doubling of the roof lines of the hut, or in the curly shading lines at the bottom right of the vignette which are sometimes doubled in B2 but not in B1. Stamps from III2+B2 are the same shade as III2+B1.

III3+B2 can be identified quite easily. The centres are still clearer and less doubled than the various versions of centre plate A, though coarser than III2+B1 and III2+B2. The wear in the top right corner of the frames has disappeared, though some traces of the retouching are still visible, and the shading here is now strong and continuous. III3+B2 can also be recognised by the yellow-orange shade of the frames, quite different from the shades associated with previous combinations.

Finally a few stamps have been found with III3+B3, ie with the re-entered centres previously associated only with the first printing of the 1915 issue. They have the same shade and frame plate features as III3+B2, but the centres show additional doubling, particularly of the horizontal sky lines.

1915. The 1915 stamp went through nearly as many different plate combinations as the 1910 stamp, but fortunately they are much easier to tell apart.

The first thing to look for is the third palm frond from the left in the big tree. If it has no central spine ('palmier coupé' in the Officiel catalogue), the centre plate was made with the unretouched die and the plate combination is therefore III4+B3, III4+B4 or III5+B4. In all probability, it is one of the latter two combinations; very few examples of III4+B3 have been found, so far only from positions 10 and 45, so it is not known how many positions of the sheet were re-entered when B3 became B4. The two centre plates are differentiated by comparing doubling marks in the settler, ground lines and sky lines with a reference sheet.

The only difference between III4 and III5 is the hole drilled near the bottom margin between positions 41 and 42 to stop the spreading of the crack known as Balasse V10. Obviously, III4 and III5 can be differentiated only in these two positions.

If the third palm frond has a central spine, the next step is to look at the curved line in the 'stool' of the G in BELGE. If it is a strong, unbroken line the plate combination is III6+C1; if it is faint and broken - the result of a damaged transfer roller - the stamp comes from a later frame plate, ie IV, V or a booklet.

If the stool of the G is broken, one then looks for tiny green circles engraved in the left and right margins of the stamp, just outside the frames and about 1mm

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from the top on each side. If these circles are present the frame plate is V; otherwise it is IV or a booklet stamp.

If the frame plate is V, V+C1 and V+C2 can be distinguished by shade. V+C1 are blue-green, much the same shade as IV+C1 and first printing booklet stamps, while V+C2 are a distinctive dark yellow-green shade which is not found with any other plate combination.

IV+C1 and booklet stamps from the first printing are hard to tell apart. The former tend to have a more bluish shade of the frames and fuzzier centres - the first booklet centres tend to be hard and clear - but this is not always a reliable guide. Another indication is that if there is a faint vertical guideline by the outer right frame, the stamp is likely to be IV+C1; if there is a horizontal guideline close to the outer bottom frame, it is likely to be from the booklets. However the only certain method of identification is by positioning the stamp.

IV1+C1 was turned into IV2+C1 by the addition of frame plate lay marks in the form of short horizontal lines between 12,13,22 and 23 and between 18,19,28 and 29, and large dots between 14 and 24 and between 17 and 27. The two combinations can therefore be distinguished only in these positions where the lay marks are visibly either absent or present. IV1+C1 has so far been found mainly with the EAA overprint; only one unoverprinted example has been recognised.

IV3+C1, a scarce combination, was formed by the re-entry of the five positions in the fifth column, ie 5,15,25,35 and 45, and shows as pronounced doubling of the top right corners of the frames. Stamps from IV3+C1 appear to be a brighter blue-green shade than those from IV2+C1, but otherwise IV2 and IV3 cannot be told apart in the positions that were not re-entered.

As with the other low values, there were three printings of the booklet stamps, and they are not hard to differentiate. Stamps from the first printing are dull blue-green (much like IV+C1, as has already been noted); those from the second printing are bright blue-green (sometimes called 'peacock blue') with deep black centres; while those from the third printing are dull green with grey centres, on grey as opposed to white paper.

Between the first and the second printings the frames were retouched, which shows in all positions in the form of burin escapes in various places in the cross-hatching of the upper panel. As well as assisting the positioning of the stamps, these irregularities help to distinguish second and third printing stamps from those of the first printing.

### Varieties

The following sections list the varieties of plate combination, shade, overprint and perforation known for each issue of the 15 centimes. The list covers 'normal' stamps only; errors and curiosities such as inverted overprints and imperfect-between pairs are excluded.

The list is based on my own collection and that of Ray Keach. If members have varieties which are not on the list I would be glad to hear of them so that the list can be updated and made as comprehensive as possible.

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Shades are given only where shade varieties are considered to be significant, and are listed in what is thought to be the chronological order of printing. Shades are abbreviated thus:

br=brown dp=deep oc=ochre y=yellow

The middle column indicates the overprint or surcharge type. For handstamped Congo Belge overprints, B = Brussels, L = Local. For Tombeur RUANDA and URUNDI overprints, K = Kigali, G = Grysolle and H = Havre. For the nomenclature of EAA overprints, see page 11 of part 1 and Bulletin 46.

For details of the perforation varieties, see page 13 of part 1. Each perforation variety is followed by a two-letter code in brackets. This code gives my judgement of the relative scarcity of the variety in question. The first letter indicates the scarcity of unused copies of the stamp, the second the scarcity of postally used copies. Stamps cancelled by favour or with forged cancels are not taken into account in arriving at the scarcity factor for used stamps. The codes are as follows:

A: Very common  
 B: Common  
 C: Fairly uncommon  
 D: Scarce  
 E: Rare  
 X: Probably unknown

### 1896

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| I+A1a        | p12½(DD), p14(AA), p15(AA), p16(BB), p12-14(CC), p14½-15(BB) |
| I+A1b        | p13½(CA), p14(BA), p15(CB), p12-14(EE), p14½-15(CB)          |
| I+A2         | p14(DB)  |
| I+A3         | p13½(DC), p14(DB), p14½-15(DD)                               |
| I+A3 Princes | p14(EX)  |

### 1909 Congo Belge handstamp

|         |    |   |
|---------|----|---|
| I+A1b   | B1 | p14(EE)                                 |
| I+A1b   | B2 | p13½(DE), p14(DE), p12-14(DE)           |
| I+A1b   | B3 | p14(DE)                                 |
| I+A1b   | B4 | p14(DE)                                 |
| I+A1b   | B5 | p14(DE)                                 |
| I+A1b   | B6 | p13½(DE), p14½-15(DE)                   |
| I+A1b   | L2 | p14(DD), p14½-15(DD)                    |
| I+A1b   | L3 | p14(DD)                                 |
| I+A1b   | L4 | p14(DD), p14½-15(DD)                    |
| I+A1b   | L5 | p13½(DD), p14(DD), p15(DD), p14½-15(DD) |
| I+A1b   | L7 | p14(DC)                                 |
| I+A2/A3 | L1 | p13½(DD), p14(AA)                       |
| I+A2/A3 | L2 | p14(BB)                                 |
| I+A2/A3 | L3 | p14(DD)                                 |
| I+A2/A3 | L4 | p13½(DD), p14(BB)                       |
| I+A2/A3 | L5 | p13½(DD), p14(CC), p14½-15(DD)          |
| I+A2/A3 | L6 | p14(CC)                                 |

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|              |    |                                |
|--------------|----|--------------------------------|
| I+A2/A3      | L7 | p13½(DD), p14(CC), p14½-15(DD) |
| I+A2/A3      | L8 | p?(EE)                         |
| I+A3 Princes | B2 | p14(EX)                        |
| I+A3 Princes | B5 | p14(EX)                        |

Because of the difficulty of differentiating A2 from A3, the above list does not distinguish between them. However the following have been confirmed: I+A2 p14 L1, L2, L4, L5, L6 and p13½ L5; I+A3 p14 L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L7 and p14½-15 L7.

Forged overprints are common; I have forgeries on I+A1a p14, p15 and p12-14 and I+A1b p14.

1909 Congo Belge typo

|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| I+A1b        | p14½-15(EE)          |
| I+A2         | p14(CC), p14½-15(BB) |
| I+A3         | p14(BB), p14½-15(CC) |
| I+A3 Princes | p14(DD)              |

Some forgeries are found, one of which is dangerously accurate. I have forgeries on I+A1a p15, I+A1b p13½ and 15 and I+A2 p13½.

1909 unilingual

|             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| II+A3 oc    | p14(AA) |
| II+A3 oc-br | p14(CC) |

1910 bilingual

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| III1+A4 dp y | p13½(DC), p14(AA), p15(BC), p14½-15(CB) |
| III1+A4 oc-y | p13½(DC), p14(AA), p14½-15(DD)          |
| III1+A5      | p14(DD)                                 |
| III1+A6      | p14(DB), p15(EE)                        |
| III1+A7      | p13½(ED), p14(CB), p15(DC)              |
| III1+A8      | p14(BA), p15(BB)                        |
| III1+A9      | p14(CB)                                 |
| III2+B1      | p13½(DC), p14(AA), p15(CB)              |
| III2+B2      | p13½(DD), p14(DC)                       |
| III3+B2      | p14(AA)                                 |
| III3+B3      | p14(ED)                                 |

1915 bilingual

|             |                            |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| III4+B3     | p14(DD)                    |
| III4+B4     | p14(BA), p15(DC)           |
| III5+B4     | p13½(DB), p14(BA), p15(DC) |
| III6+C1     | p14(AA), p15(CB)           |
| IV1+C1      | p15(EE)                    |
| IV2+C1      | p14(AA), p15(CB)           |
| IV3+C1      | p14(DD)                    |
| V+C1        | p14(DB), p15(EE)           |
| V+C2        | p13½(CB), p14(AA), p15(BB) |
| 1st booklet | p14(AA)                    |
| 2nd booklet | p14(AA)                    |

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|                          |  |                          |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 3rd booklet              |  | p14(AA),p15(CC)          |
| <u>1918 Red Cross</u>    |  |                          |
| V+C1                     |  | p14(AC),p15(BD)          |
| <u>1921 Recuperation</u> |  |                          |
| III1+A4 dp y             |  | p14(CC),p14½-15(EE)      |
| III1+A4 oc-y             |  | p13½(DD),p14(DD)         |
| III1+A5                  |  | p14(EE)                  |
| III1+A6                  |  | p14(DD)                  |
| III1+A7                  |  | p14(EE)                  |
| III1+A8                  |  | p14(AA),p15(DD)          |
| III1+A9                  |  | p14(CC)                  |
| III2+B1                  |  | p13½(ED),p14(CB),p15(DD) |
| III2+B2                  |  | p13½(EE),p14(DD)         |
| III3+B2                  |  | p14(AA),p15(EE)          |
| III3+B3                  |  | p14(ED)                  |

I have found the stamp with forged surcharge, on III1+A7, III1+A8 and III2+B1 (all p14).

1916 Tombeur (Ruanda and Urundi)

|         |   |                  |
|---------|---|------------------|
| III4+B4 | K | p14(EE)          |
| III4+B4 | G | p14(EX)          |
| III4+B4 | H | p13½(DX),p14(CX) |
| III5+B4 | H | p13½(DX),p14(CX) |

There are many forgeries.

1916 Est Africain

|         |       |                 |
|---------|-------|-----------------|
| III6+C1 | S     | p14(BB)         |
| III6+C1 | L1(g) | p14(AC),p15(CD) |
| III6+C1 | L1(t) | p14(BD)         |
| IV1+C1  | L2    | p14(CD),p15(DE) |
| IV2+C1  | L1(i) | p14(CD)         |
| IV2+C1  | L2    | p14(AA),p15(CC) |

1918 Red Cross AO

|      |  |                 |
|------|--|-----------------|
| V+C1 |  | p14(AC),p15(BD) |
|------|--|-----------------|

This gives a total of 150 varieties of the 15c.

GUIDES TO POSITIONING

The following pages assume that the reader has a complete sheet of the plate combination he wishes to reconstruct, and will make his own plating notes as he studies individual positions. The guides do not list all the constant plate varieties, but describe the more important ones, particularly the 'generic'

## PLATING MOLS STAMPS PART 4

varieties which appear in more than one position in the sheet. They also describe the more difficult positions in each sheet where the plater is most likely to experience problems.

### I+A1

Distinctive plate varieties are found on both the frame and centre plates of I+A1, making many positions easy to identify, but there are also some difficult positions, especially on I+A1a before the centre plate was corroded and became I+A1b.

There are frame plate lay marks in the form of a dot between 12,13,22 and 23 and a horizontal line between 18,19,28 and 29. The top frame is clearly doubled up into the top margin over part of its length in 22,27 and 40; there is similar but less pronounced doubling in 42,44,46 and 48. One or more of the letters of INDÉPENDANT show internal doubling in 8,15,22,23,27,28,43-6,48 and 50. The lower part of the right vertical frame is conspicuously doubled in 47 and 50 (Balasse V8) and slightly doubled in 5,12,18,20,25,28,35,40 and 46. The bottom horizontal frame is thickly doubled in 5 and 42-9, and the middle part of this frame is lightly doubled internally in 1,11 and 21 (in 21 this feature is hardly noticeable).

Turning to the centre plate, there is a black spot by the settler on 33 (Balasse V1). A number of positions show, to varying degrees, near-horizontal black scratches on the middle letters of CENTIMES, eg 26,34 and 36. In 4,17,19 and 38 there are traces of a vertical black line to the left of the small tree to the right of the big one. In 21 and 31 the shading lines in the bottom left corner of the vignette are slightly doubled.

I find that the most difficult positions in I+A1a are the following. In 2 there is a faint horizontal black scratch crossing the lower part of ANT. In 3 there is a black vertical line through the right 5. In 14 there is a horizontal black scratch crossing the left frame 3mm from the bottom. In 17 there is a tiny dot just to the right of the middle of the trunk of the tree to the right of the main one. In 19 the bottom frameline is thin from the left corner to the Q, then thicker. In 29 there is a near-horizontal black line under CE. In 37 there is a small black dot between the skylines two lines under the lower left frond of the leftmost tree. In 39 there is a short black vertical line crossing the shading 1mm to the left of the heads of the sitting natives.

The frame plate varieties in I+A1a are still clear in I+A1b, but many of the minor centre plate varieties are no longer detectable. However positioning of stamps from I+A1b is made easy by the black corrosion dots in most positions, which vary from position to position. There are few such dots on 1,4-6,11,12,21,31,39,42 and 50, but one or two small ones can be found on each of these positions, which anyway can be identified as A1b from the orange shade of the frames.

### I+A2 and I+A3

The frame plate varieties of I+A1 are present in I+A2 and I+A3 and give a good guide to many of the positions. In addition, numerous conspicuous centre plate varieties appeared with A2. In 4,5 and 27 the climbing native has a 'hairy back' (Balasse V3). 15 shows a long vertical scratch down the right hand side (Balasse



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V2). Many other positions show scratches in various positions. The hatching of the hut roof is doubled in 9, 10, 15, 16, 18-20, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-3, 36, 38, 41-3, 45, 46 and 48, a feature not found on centre plate A1. None of the positions of A2 are difficult to identify.

Distinguishing A2 from A3 is another matter. On the majority of positions I have not been able to find any differences. Minor differences in positions 1, 2, 4, 5, 11-3, 15, 21, 31, 34, 35, 39-41 and 49 were described in my article in Bulletin 67.

#### II+A3

The unilingual issue is again easy to position, because of the centre plate varieties which appeared in A2 and again without change in A3. Of the frame plate varieties, it is worth mentioning the doubling of the GO of CONGO in position 13 (Balasse V9), and the doubling of the bottom left corner in 21, 31, 46 and 48. The lay marks are in the same positions as in frame plate I: a dot between 12, 13, 22 and 23 and a horizontal line between 18, 19, 28 and 29. No positions of II+A3 are classified as difficult.

#### III1+A4 to III1+A9

As noted above, early printings of III1+A4 can be identified by their shades, and the same is true (though with less certainty) of III1+A9. Stamps from later printings of III1+A4 can be identified by the relative lack of doubling in the settler, sitting natives and hut roof, and with practice, stamps from III1+A8 (and A9) by their worn, corroded appearance with much doubling. For the other plate combinations, identifying the combination almost always means positioning the stamp first, and a complete identification of both combination and position is hard without a good range of reference sheets or at least comprehensive notes based on a study of such sheets.

It is beyond the scope of the present work to give plating notes in such detail, but the reader might be helped by the following guidelines which concentrate on features which are common to all or most of this series of combinations, and which therefore help to identify the position if not the plate combination.

As with frame plates I and II, plate III has lay marks in the form of a dot between 12, 13, 22 and 23 and a horizontal line between 18, 19, 28 and 29. Centre plates A4 to A9 also have lay marks in these same positions, the result of Waterlow's experiment (soon abandoned) in 1910 to print the centres before the frames.

The following frame plate varieties are visible in all combinations from A4 to A9, though sometimes only barely so because of the pale colour of the frames. They divide into two groups, the first on or just above the top frameline, the second elsewhere in the stamp. In 1, 39 and 50 there is a small dot just NE of the top right corner. In 9 there is a dot resting on the top frame just in from that corner. In 11 the lower top frame is extended horizontally to the right. In 19 there is a dot between the top framelines over the left curl of the 'curlicue' above ON. In 24 the top right corner is doubled. In 28 there are two dots, one above the other, in the top margin over the G of GO, and a third dot close to the top frameline over the right curlicue. In 35 there are two dots close together, the second above and to the right of the first, in the top margin 2mm from the right

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corner. In 36 there are two dots just above the top frame, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm apart, above the C. In 37 there is a dot just to the left of the top left corner.

Frame plate varieties elsewhere in the stamp, and common to III1+A4 to III1+A9, are as follows. 1: dot just to left of left frame 1mm below upper left 'T-junction'. 4: dot to left of climbing native. 10: spot above curved frame just over G of LGI. 18: bottom frame thickened under BEL. 27: small dot above 'bubble' under first E of BELGE. 32: faint diagonal line in upper left T-junction. 33: dot in top of S of GIS. 38: lower left vertical frameline weak in places. 40: short vertical line between framelines in bottom left corner. 41: diagonal line resting against left vertical frameline,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ mm from bottom. 43: dot in left 1. 47: ring between two trees on right, and dots in bottom margin under C, O and NG.

I have listed a number of frame plate varieties, but in fact clearer guides to positioning are provided by the centre plate, because of its darker colour and the extensive corrosion, doubling or scratches which are present in most locations of all plate combinations. Firm identification of a stamp from this issue is usually achieved by matching up the pattern of corrosion dots with a position on the reference sheet. Most of the centre plate varieties vary from A4 to A9, but this is not true of all of them.

The following Balasse centre plate varieties are present in III1+A4. V2: long near-vertical black scratch to right of palm (15). V3: 'hairy back' on climbing native (4,5,27). V4: parallel black diagonal lines over rightmost tree (10,18). V2 is visible in A5 and A6 but not in later combinations. V3 disappeared after A4. V4 is visible throughout the series, but only just so in A8 and A9.

Because of the amount of centre plate doubling and corrosion, I do not classify any of the positions of III1+A4 to A9 as difficult, since once the position is found it is usually not hard to confirm it, though finding the position can be far from easy with so many combinations to consider.

#### III2+B1 and III2+B2

Easily recognisable by the clear centres, it is not difficult to identify stamps from these combinations or to find the sheet position. To differentiate B1 from B2 it is however necessary to position the stamps and compare the centres carefully with a reference sheet, looking for small differences in doubling particularly in the hut roof and in the wavy lines at the bottom of the vignette.

Frame lay marks are the same as before: a dot between 12,13,22 and 23, and a horizontal line between 18,19, 28 and 29. The cross-hatching in the top right corner is visibly worn throughout the sheet and is retouched in positions 21,27-9 and 50 (Balasse V11). Slight retouching is also detectable in 1,2 and 7, and (in the top left corner) in 3. The hatching is doubled, sometimes only slightly, in 11,12,21 and 32. The top right vertical frames are doubled in 11 and 21. A number of frame plate varieties survive from III1, such as the small dot off the top right corner in 1,39 and 50.

It is the centre plate however which provides the best guide to position. There is little doubling, but scratch marks and a few corrosion dots appear in a number of positions, particularly at the top or bottom of the vignettes. A useful recurrent mark is a horizontal guideline, typically 2mm long, which appears a little above the left or right 15, or both. It appears on the left in 16,22,24,27,41

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and 45; on the right in 1, 3, 8, 11, 18, 23, 31, 39; and on both left and right in 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12-5, 17, 19, 26 and 28.

Apart from the difficulty of distinguishing B1 from B2, no positions in these combinations are classified as difficult.

### III3+B2 and III3+B3

These combinations with their distinctive yellow-orange frames are again easy to position. The frame lay marks are in the same location as before. The weakness of the cross-hatching in the upper right corner has been corrected by re-entry throughout the sheet, but the retouching (V11) is still visible in 29. Another Balasse variety, the famous 'lézarde' or crack crossing the lower right vertical frame (V10), makes its appearance in position 41 of III3+B2.

Other frame plate varieties to note are the doubling of the upper left vertical frames in 11, 15, 19 and 35, and the doubling to the left of the upper left corner in 4, 12, 14 and 21. The small dot off the upper right corner is still visible in 1, 39 and 50.

The best guide to position comes once again from the centre plate. In most positions there is a cluster of small black dots above the tip of the central frond of the big tree - sometimes only two or three, sometimes many more. These could have been made by the engraving tool, or by the transfer roller being dropped onto the plate during re-entry; whatever the explanation, the pattern of dots varies from location to location and provides an easy means of positioning.

Once the position of a stamp is found, it is not hard to determine whether the centre is B2 or B3, provided a reference sheet of B2 is available. B2 centres, although coarser than B1, are generally clear and free of doubling. B3 are thickened and often doubled, particularly in the shading of the sky. Almost all 1910 and 1921 stamps with III3 are B2 and the plater who finds III3+B3 has discovered a significant rarity.

### III4+B3 to III5+B4

The 'palmier coupé' issue of 1915 (which incidentally is much commoner than its enhanced catalogue price suggests) presents no great difficulty to the plater. Whereas in previous plate combinations more assistance is given by the centre plate than by the frame plate, with III4 onwards the reverse is true, due partly to the change of colour to green, but also to the presence of retouching and other varieties and (from IV onwards) to the vertical and horizontal guidelines which do not seem to have been used for frame plates I to III.

In III4 and III5 frame lay marks are in the same positions as before: a dot between 12, 13, 22 and 23, and a horizontal line between 18, 19, 28 and 29. Most positions can be identified from the frame plate by looking at the upper left corner, the mid-point of the left frame by the 15, the lower left corner and the upper right corner. The upper left corner is partly doubled by re-entry or retouching in 4, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 40, 43, 45, 47, 48 and 50, with the characteristics of the doubling different in each location. The mid-point of the left vertical frame shows thickening in many positions, but with a gap between the thickened portion and the outer edge of the cartouche round CENTIMES in 6, 22, 23, 33 and 45. The outer bottom left vertical frame is doubled or thickened in

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1, 4, 16, 24-7, 29, 30, 41, 44 and 45; in 11, 21 and 31 the doubling is found here on the inner frame. The top right corner is thickened or doubled in 1, 11, 20, 21, 26, 29, 31, 32, 39, 40, 46, 49 and 50. Once again a small dot appears off the upper right corner in 1, 39 and 50. A number of positions show green dots in one or more of the letters of BELGISCH CONGO.

With one important exception, there are few centre plate varieties. The exception is Balasse V5, the horizontal doubling of the settler and the sitting natives, which is found on centre plate B4 in 20 and 44. Slight doubling of the settler alone is found in 3, 10, 15, 22, 30, 34, 35, 45, 49 and 50.

Little is known about the differences between B3 and B4, since as noted above no complete sheets are known of either III3+B3 (the 1910 stamp) or III4+B3 (the 1915 stamp), and only few single copies. So far only two positions of III4+B3 - 10 and 45 - have been confirmed; both lack the doubling of the settler which is found on III4+B4.

As already noted, the only difference between III4 and III5 is the drilling of the hole between 41 and 42 to stop the spreading of the crack known as Balasse V10.

The difficult positions in these plate combinations are the following. In 36 there is a green dot in the upper right margin 1mm outside the frame and 2mm below the top corner, and black dots on the first E of BELGE; in addition, the inner frameline above the C of the left CENTIMES slightly overlaps the cartouche surrounding CENTIMES. In 37 there is a slight trace of doubling in the upper left vertical frameline, and some black dots on the right ME. 38 also shows slight doubling in the upper left frameline, and a faint black vertical line in the upper left margin.

### III6+C1

Although III5 was re-entered to make III6, in practice there are few differences between the two, and the frame plate varieties noted above for III4 and III5 survive and are the main guide for positioning stamps from III6. Obviously the centre plate varieties of III4+B4 are no longer present, and C1 presents a clean plate with few flaws. The main centre plate variety worth mentioning is the short vertical guideline which appears in many positions above the top of the big tree, usually on top of the first E of BELGE.

The difficult positions in III6+C1 are again 36 to 38. As well as the frame plate varieties noted above, 36 shows a short near-vertical black scratch in the upper right margin. 37 shows slight doubling of the right frame just below the central cartouche - one of the signs of the re-entry that produced III6. 38 shows a faint horizontal black line in the upper left margin, level with the T-junction.

### IV1+C1 to IV3+C1

Generally these are more difficult plate combinations to position, with few centre plate flaws and fewer frame varieties than III4 and III5. Fortunately, however, there are horizontal and vertical guidelines on the frame plate which appear not to have been used in earlier combinations of the 15c, and which are of great assistance to the plater.

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There are no lay marks on IV1. On IV2 and IV3 they take the form of horizontal lines between 12,13,22 and 23 and between 18,19,28 and 29, and dots between 14 and 24 and between 17 and 27. The only difference between IV2 and IV3 is that in the latter, there is conspicuous doubling of the right frames near the top in 5,15,25,35 and 45.

The first step in positioning stamps from IV+C1 is to look at the right framelines. If there are stretches of vertical guideline between these framelines, especially in the lower half or on either side of the middle, the position is 2,5,11,12,15,16,21,23,25,29,31,32,39 or 49. If the lower of the top two framelines is extended to the right in the top right corner, it is 3,4,6,13,22,33 or 44-6. In 27 and 50 there is downward doubling of this frameline into the cross-hatching, for a length of about 7mm from the right end. In 9,23-7,42-4,46,48 and 49 a faint horizontal guideline is visible just over the top left corner. In 27,37 and 47 there is a green dot in the bottom margin under the left leg of the N of CONGO.

Several positions are difficult to identify. In 10 there is green dot in the top margin 3mm from the right corner, but this dot is often off the edge of the stamp, in which case the only indicators are two tiny green dots at 1 o'clock and 3 o'clock in the white circle round the left 15. 14 has a green dot in the left margin a little above the level of the head of the climbing native. 20 has a black dot just under the lower right corner. 38 has a small faint green dash in the left margin level with the base of the tree, and a cluster of black dots usually a little to the right of the left 5.

### V+C1

V+C1 is another difficult combination where, but for the presence of guidelines, the plater's task would be virtually impossible.

Frame plate lay marks are in the same positions as in IV: horizontal lines between 12,13,22 and 23 and between 18,19,28 and 29, and dots between 14 and 24 and between 17 and 27. The lower top frame is extended to the right in the top right corner, in the same way as in a number of positions of IV+C1: here the positions are 6,22 and 49, and (with a only a slight extension) 38 and 41. Apart from the guidelines, there are few other important frame plate varieties; minor varieties consist mainly of small dots in the left or right margins.

There is a vertical guideline in the lower part of the right margin, just outside the frameline, in 1-4,13,18,19,23-5,28,29,31,33-5,39,45 and 49. In the ninth column the space between the guideline and the right margin is rather wider than in the other positions. In 1,4,11,13,14,18,25,35 and 39 the guideline also appears in the upper part of the right margin, running up to the dot off the upper right frame. The guideline stops dead at the bottom frameline in 13,23,31 and 33; in the other positions it extends beyond it.

There is a guideline in line with the right frame, and appearing above it, in 2,3,5,7,12,15,21,26,36,48 and 50; a short guideline appears in the same position above the top right corner, but right of the line of the frame, in 4,13,14,18,25,34,35 and 39. Short sections of both horizontal and vertical guideline appear off the upper right corner, forming an 'L' shape, in 7,15,21,25 and 26. There is a horizontal guideline between the framelines in the top left corner in 1 (faintly),8,22,23,32 and 42. A similar line appears just above the top left corner in 10 and

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46 and above the top right corner in 3,18 and 26. No guidelines are visible at all in 6,9,11,17,20,27,30,37-8,40-1,43-4 and 47.

The exact position of a stamp can be determined by comparing the guidelines, which vary slightly in their length and distance from the frameline, with a reference sheet. In many positions, a short stretch of guideline is visible crossing the end of the cartouche containing CENTIEMEN; its lateral displacement is also a guide to position.

There are no major centre plate varieties on V+C1 worth mentioning. I find that the most difficult positions in this combination are 20,27 and 37. 20 has a small green mark in the left of the H of BELGISCH, close to the bar. 27 has a dot in the left upright of the H. 37 has a faint dot in the right margin level with the centre of the 'star', and a slight overhang of the upper right corner.

### V+C2

After V+C1, V+C2 comes as something of a relief for two reasons. Almost all positions have a few green corrosion dots on the design, mostly in the top or bottom tablets, and the re-entered centre place shows doubling in nearly half the positions. At the same time the guidelines mentioned above are still visible. These features make positioning straightforward.

I will not list all the frame plate corrosion dots, but the places to look for them are in the letters of CONGO BELGE and (to a lesser extent) of BELGISCH CONGO. On the centre plate, the trunks of the right trees are doubled in 6,16,25 and 47 (Balasse V6), while the settlers and sitting natives, and the tree trunks behind them, are doubled in 1-3,5,12,13,22-4,26,32,33 and 42-4 (Balasse V7). The spine of the third frond from the left in the big tree is doubled in 47 and 48.

No position is classified as difficult.

### Booklet stamps

Although sometimes difficult to distinguish from IV+C1, stamps from the first printing of the booklets are not hard to position. Most positions show noticeable varieties. There is a green guide dot just above the top left corner in  $\gamma$ 2,3 and 4 and  $\delta$ 2,3 and 4. There are similar but smaller dots under the bottom left corner in  $\alpha$ 8 and 9 and  $\beta$ 8. There is a horizontal guideline between the bottom framelines on the left in  $\alpha$ 1,2, $\beta$ 6,9, $\gamma$ 1,5 and  $\delta$ 1,2 and 5, and a guideline just under the bottom frameline in  $\gamma$ 7 and  $\delta$ 6. Many positions show guideline extensions, both horizontal and vertical, in line with the framelines in this corner. Many positions also show horizontal and vertical guidelines at the top left corner. There are few significant centre plate varieties in the booklet stamps.

Second and third booklet stamps are easy to position because as well as the varieties described for the first booklets, there are numerous burin retouches which are visible in the cross-hatching of the upper panel, and which vary from location to location. Every position has them. In  $\alpha$ 2,4, $\beta$ 6,8, $\gamma$ 4,5,9, and 10 the retouches include a line crossing the left end of the curlicue above LG. In  $\alpha$ 5 and  $\delta$ 4 a line crosses the top right corner of the L, in  $\alpha$ 10 and  $\gamma$ 10 the upper left curve of the C, in  $\beta$ 4 the top of the C, in  $\beta$ 5 the lower left of the C, in  $\gamma$ 4 the right end of the right curlicue, and in  $\delta$ 6 the upper part of the C. There are small green

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corrosion dots around the top framelines in all positions of pane  $\beta$ , particularly noticeable in  $\beta 1$  to 3.

None of the booklet stamp positions are classified as difficult.

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