

Advertising and the Belgian Post Office, Part 1

By Mr Chris Howe

A visit to Albania in 1990 brought me back to philately after a 25-year break, not the easiest country to collect, as I soon found, but an encounter with a sad faced lion sculpture in the Upper Barracca suggested lions as a theme and a visit to the elderly dealer then in Old Bakery Street set me off on Belgian Lions. Starting with the Gibbon's catalogue I was intrigued by "Booklet pane No. 490x4 plus two labels", what were these labels? My first stamp fair back in the UK provided the answer, the labels were advertisements. This discovery opened a fascinating field of Belgian Philately, namely the role of advertising.

Stamp booklets were introduced in 1907 and were an immediate failure. Each booklet contained 4 panes of 5x5-centimes (5c) and 2 panes of 5x10c stamps and cost 2,05 francs (2,05F) for a face value of 2F. The difference of 5c was to cover the added cost of booklet production. The price was reduced to 2,02F and then to face value when, in 1911, a concession was given to an anti-tuberculosis charity to produce the booklet covers and to sell advertising on them. Advertisements were included on the covers and also on interleaving sheets in some, but not all, booklets. In 1912 booklets with 5 panes of 10 stamps, were introduced, price 2,50F for 50x5c stamps, this being the internal postcard rate, or 5F for 50x10c stamps, the internal letter rate. Early booklets held the 5c "Armoiries" stamp of 1907 or 10c "Grosse barbe" of 1905 and later ones the 5c "Lion debout" and 10c "Pellens" of 1912. These stamps all have the "bandelette", a small removable label, requesting that the item not be delivered on Sunday.



"Armoiries"



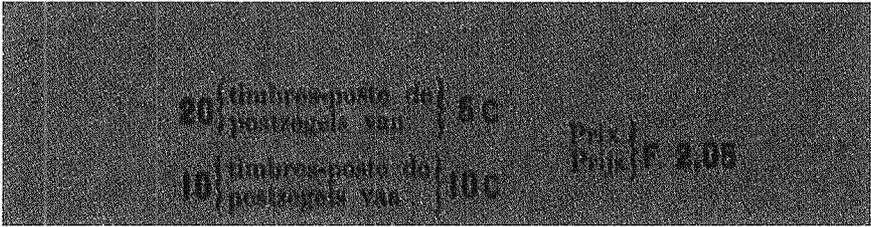
"Grosse barbe"



"Lion debout"

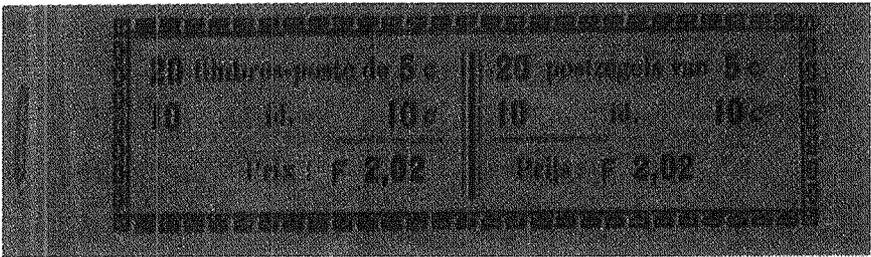


"Pellens"

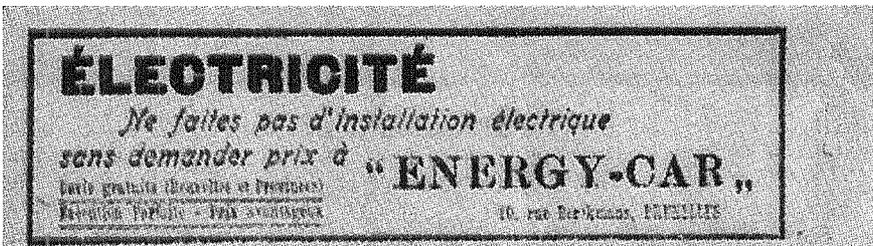
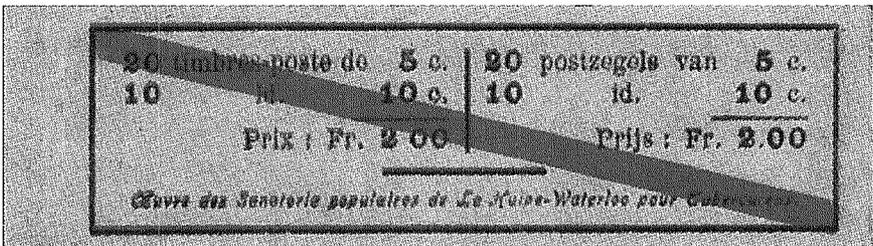


Front cover of the first booklet containing strips of 5 stamps.

Following the price reduction the covers of the booklets were modified either by hand or blocking out the 2,05.

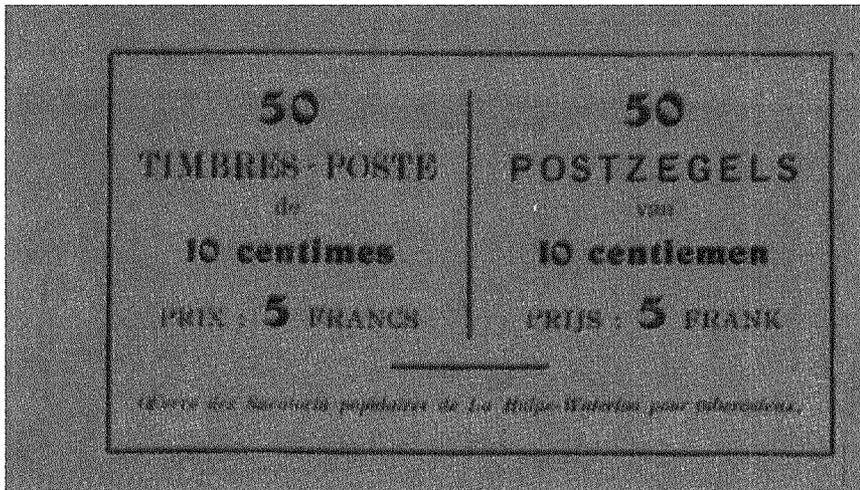


Front cover of the re-valued booklet.



Front and rear covers of one of the advertising booklets.

Note that the stamp contents are described in both French and Flemish but the advertisement is in French only.



Front and rear covers of one of the advertising booklets containing blocks of 10 stamps.

It was fairly easy to produce the strips and blocks for these booklets as the stamps themselves were printed in sheets of 300, each with 6 panes of 50 stamps (5x10)



Following the German invasion of 1914 the use of Belgian stamps, including booklets, was discontinued in the occupied areas.

After the armistice booklets were not reintroduced until 1927 when a limited number of designs were produced, each containing 5 panes of 6 stamps of the “Houyoux” type incorporating a portrait of King Albert I with advertisements on interleaving sheets. There were 2 designs of 9F booklets each containing 1 pane of 6x5c, 1 pane of 6x15c, 2 panes of 6x35c and 1 pane of 6x60c there were also 2 designs of 21F booklets each containing 1 pane of 6x5c, 2 panes of 6x35c, 1 pane of 6x1F and 1 pane of 6x1,75F.

In 1928 a special booklet selling for 12,30F was released for a limited period containing 5 panes of “anti-tuberculosis” stamps without interleaving sheets. The stamps were from a set issued on 1st December 1928 being valid only until 1st July 1929. The composition was 1 pane of 9x5c+5c, 1 pane of 9x25c+15c, 1 pane of 4x35c+10c and 2 panes of 4x60c+15c. All the stamps were intended for internal service, the 5c and 25c stamps for picture postcards, 35c for a postcard and 60c was the letter rate.

The post 1930s period is characterised by the introduction of publicity labels, known as “pubs”, within the pane of stamps, printed in the same colour as the stamp. This is the period of particular interest to stamp collectors as a wide variety of combinations of pubs and stamps exist including tête-bêche and interpanneaux. The existence of these combinations was initially accidental. In

order to produce the panes, panels were printed. Each panel contained pubs, stamps and selvedge arranged in such a way that panes of either 6 stamps (2x3), or 4 stamps and 2 pubs, each with a left hand selvedge edge could be torn from the panel. The panes were then collated with interleaving sheets and stapled through the selvedge.



Heraldic lion 5c tête-bêche pair se-tenant with stamp and Farrand label.



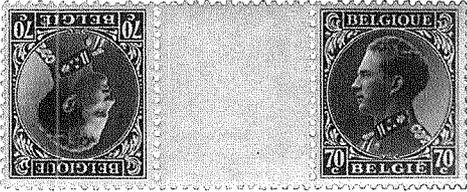
Heraldic lion 5c interpanneaux tête-bêche with stamp and Manceau label.



Heraldic lion 40c tête-bêche with Persil & Farrand labels.
Interpanneaux tête-bêche and label block.



King Albert I “Houyoux” 1F & label. “Small Kepi” 75c, tête-bêche pair.



King Leopold III, closed collar, facing left 70c interpanneaux tête-bêche pair
King Leopold III, open collar, facing right 70c tête-bêche pair



Ceres “Allegory” 10c and Faivre label.

King Leopold III, closed collar, facing left 70c and Loterie Coloniale label.
“Petit sceau de l’Etat” 10c and Saribo label.

In the early days the irregular release of a small number of panels led to a high collector demand for tête-bêche pairs and, to preclude speculation, the post office decided to sell complete panels on demand. The majority of panels purchased were cut up rendering complete sheets, especially those of the first issues, quite rare but making the general combinations available to collectors at reasonable prices. The arrangement of the “pubs” on the panels depended on the quantity of advertising sold to advertisers ensuring the scarcity of some advertisements. Similarly stamps of superseded designs, especially higher values, are less common. The booklets employ definitive stamps available during the period 1930-41. As a consequence all of those values and issues listed in the table below exist in both tête-bêche and interpanneaux tête-bêche

pairs. King Albert was tragically killed in a climbing accident on 10th March 1934, which limited the number of stamp/pub combinations available. This limitation also applied to the short-lived 2-design “Allegory” issue of which only the “Cérés” type was employed. The identification numbers in brackets are from the Belgian “Catalogue Officiel de Timbres-Poste”.

1930 King Albert I “Houyoux” 1F (256) & 1,75F (257).

1930-32 Heraldic lion 5c (279), 10c (280), 25c (282), 35c (283), 40c (284), 50c (285), 60c (286), 70c (287), 75c (288) violet and 75c (288A) brown.

1932 Cérés “Allegory” 10c (337) & 25c (339).

1932 King Albert I small “Kepi” 75c (341).

1936 King Leopold III, closed collar, facing left 70c (401).

1936-41 King Leopold III, open collar, facing right 70c (427), 75c (480), 1F (528).

1936-41 “Petit sceau de l’Etat” 10c (420), 25c (423), 35c (425).

All of the values employed represent a specific service viz:-

	1927	1930	1931-41
Internal Printed Paper	5c	10c	10c
Internal Picture Card	5c/25c	10c/25c	10c/25c
Internal Post Card	35c	40c	50c
Internal Letter	60c	70c	75c
International Picture Card	35c	35c	35c
International Post Card	1F	1F	1F
International Letter	1,75F	1,75F	1,75F

The 1F and 1,75F stamps also met Exprès and Registration fees over the period.

Booklets sold at 3F (10x5c & 10x25c), 3,50F (10x10c & 10x25c), 7F (20x35c), 8F (20x40c), 10F (20x50c), 12F (20x60c), 14F (20x70c), 14F (20x35c & 10x70c), 15F (20x75c), 23F (16x1F & 4x1,75F),

The advertisers for these first issues are listed below and the stamps that exist se-tenant with these stamps are tabulated.

Advertisers: Farrand, Percil, Manceau, Chevron, Faivre, Indanthren, Scott (enfants), Scott (croissance), Impercuir (semelle), Ostende-Dover, Cinescope, Impercuir (homme), Loterie Coloniale, Ostende-Dover, Telefunken.



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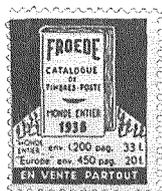
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There are two types of “Loterie Coloniale” labels. The label picturing a female native was used with the King Leopold III 70c (401) and “Petit sceau de l’Etat” 35c (425).

The booklets produced from the panes with advertising labels also had advertising on the booklet covers as well as on the interleaving sheets. The booklets measured 73 mm x 50 mm. and were quite colourful. All of the covers and listings of the advertisements on the interleaving sheets can be found in the Catalogue Officiel de Timbres-Poste.



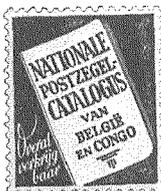
Advertisements associated with the “Petit sceau de l’Etat” issue are shown below. Two advertisements are the same as those used with the King Leopold III facing left 70c (401) - Loterie Coloniale (the female native) and with King Leopold III facing right 70c (427) – Telefunken.



Froede
(Bonhomme)
French



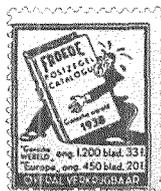
Froede
(Bonhomme)
Flemish



Catalogue
Nationale



Froede
(catalogue)
French



Froede
(catalogus)
Flemish



Saribo
French



Saribo
Flemish



Fromage
40%



Kaas 40%,



Ka-be
French



Ka-be
Flemish



Marbrite
Flemish



Marbrite
French



Nationale
catalogues



Schaubek
French



Schaubek
Flemish



Publibel
bureaux



Publibel
carnets

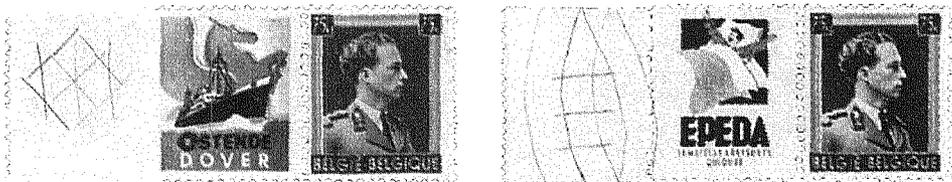


Volvet
French



Volvet
Dutch

In 1938 booklets containing 75c stamps depicting King Leopold III facing right were issued but these were assembled from panes removed from panels printed in a different format to that previously employed. Each panel contained 150 items (15 x 10) with 120 stamps and 30 labels. The booklets produced included 2 panes each of 6 stamps (2x3) or 4 stamps and 2 pubs. There are two types of label perforation and three types of selvedge. In the labels one type is perforated on all four sides whilst the other is imperforate on the left side. Selvedge exists plain or with a design of either straight lines in a sort of diamond pattern or vertical curved lines with intersecting horizontal lines. These differences arise from four printings in 1938, 1939 and two in 1940. The first printing has labels imperforate on the left side with plain selvedge. The second printing also has labels imperforate on the left side but the selvedge has both designs. The 1940 printings have fully perforated labels, both designs of selvedge with some of the selvedge perforated and some not.



Stamp/pub pairs showing both selvedge designs and both pub perforation types.

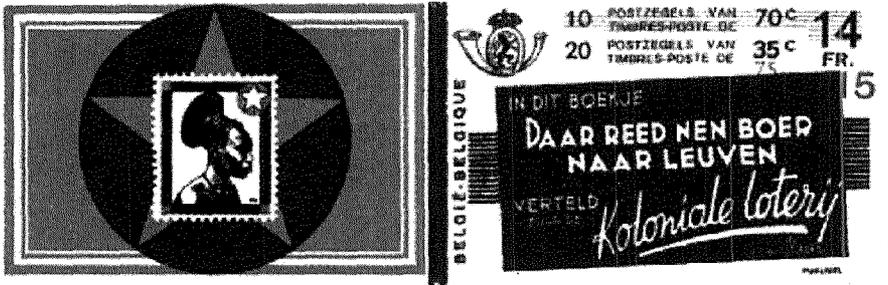
The booklet panes have either 6 stamps (2x3), or 4 stamps and 2 pubs, each with a left hand selvedge. There are ten types of label:-



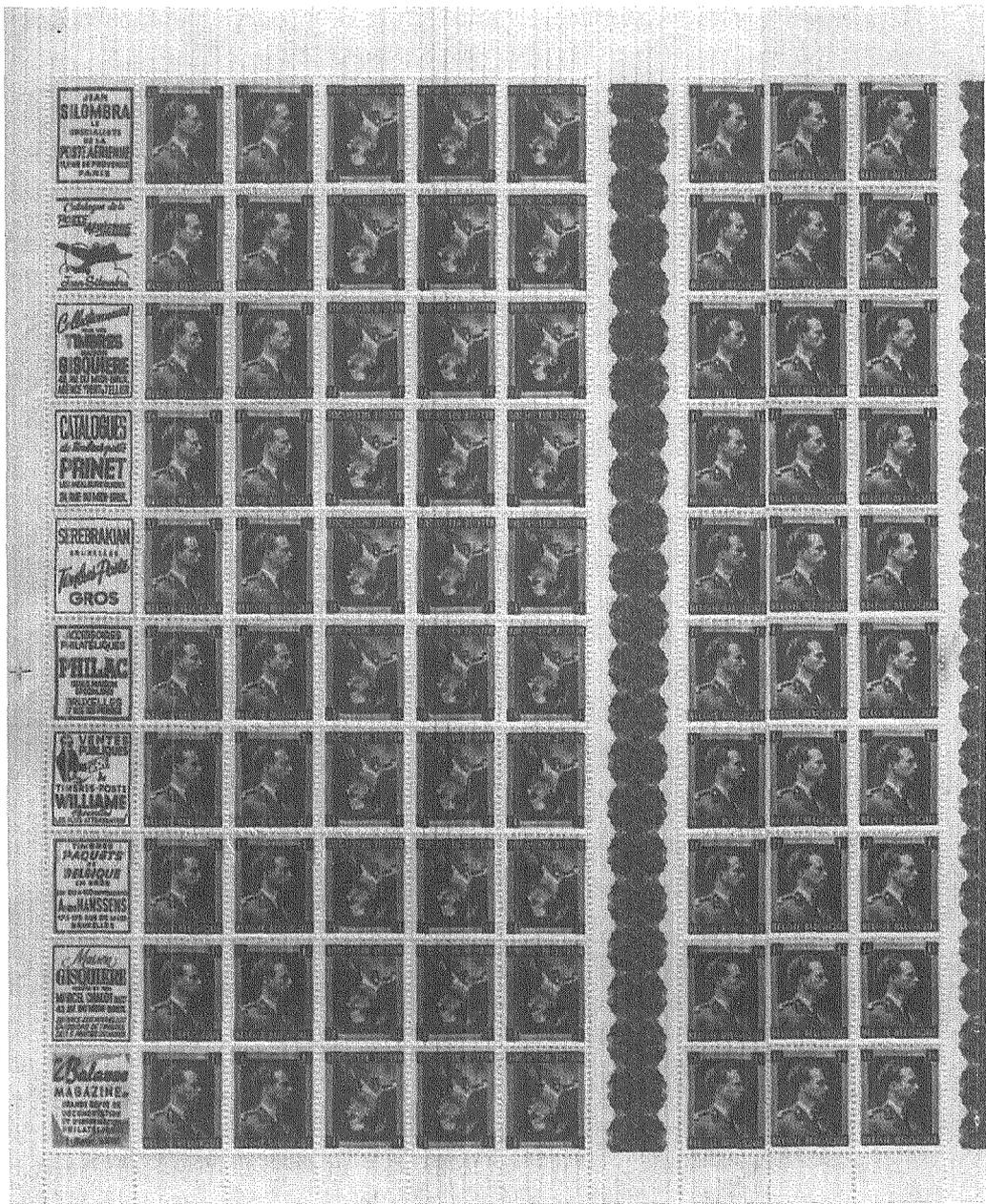
Similar design but in French

Unifil Timbres-Poste, Charm postzegels, Koloniale Loterij, Loterie Colonale, Charm Dugniolle, Charm Timbres-Poste, Philatéliste Unifil, Telefunken, Ostende-Dover, Epeda.

All of these 15F booklet covers advertise the colonial lottery being modified by overprinting covers previously used for the 14F booklets.



On 1st August 1941 the internal letter rate was increased to 1F. and a new booklet containing twenty 1F stamps depicting King Leopold III was introduced. The 2-page illustration shows the panel arrangement used to make up the new booklet My assumption is that the interpanneaux selvedge was cut separately. As with previous types the booklet panes produced have either 6 stamps (2x3), or 4 stamps and 2 pubs. Four panes plus interleaving sheets made up the booklets.



King Leopold 3rd, open collar, facing right 1F.



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143 Balasse magazine, 144 Balasse V.P., 145 Catalogue Silombra,
146 Galerie Reding, 147 Gelli-Tani timbres-poste,
148 Gelli-Tani timbres rares, 149 Gisquière Chalot, 150 Gisquière timbres,
151 Louis Guelte, Ange Hanssens paquets, 153 Ange Hanssens timbres,
154 Philac (French), 155 Philac (Dutch), 156 Philatelux,
157 Pilules rouges (man), 158 Pilules rouges (woman),
159 Pilules rouges (child), 160 Prinnet, 161 Romain Dury,
162 Roode pillen (man), 163 Roode pillen (woman),
164 Roode pillen (child), 166 Serebrakian, 166 Silombra spécialiste,
167 Van Bierbeek, 168 Waroquiers (French), 169 Waroquiers (Dutch),
170 Willame catalogue, 171 Willame V.P..

The use of booklets was discontinued until after the war. Two booklets were produced in support of the Red Cross in 1953 and another in 1963. The stamps were printed in panes of 8 with perforated selvedge all round with a single word sentiment. In the 1953 booklet these were “solidarity”, “peace”, “health” or “be ready” in either French or Flemish. In 1963 “solidarity”, “peace” or “year” in both French and Flemish. These hardly constitute advertisements. Booklets of ordinary postage stamps were reintroduced in 1969 without advertising although some panes were made up to 6 stamps with a label illustrating the post office logo. Later booklets followed this pattern with any advertisements being related to postal matters or services “use post codes” “postogram” and “taxipost”.

The next part of this article will consider advertising postal stationery.