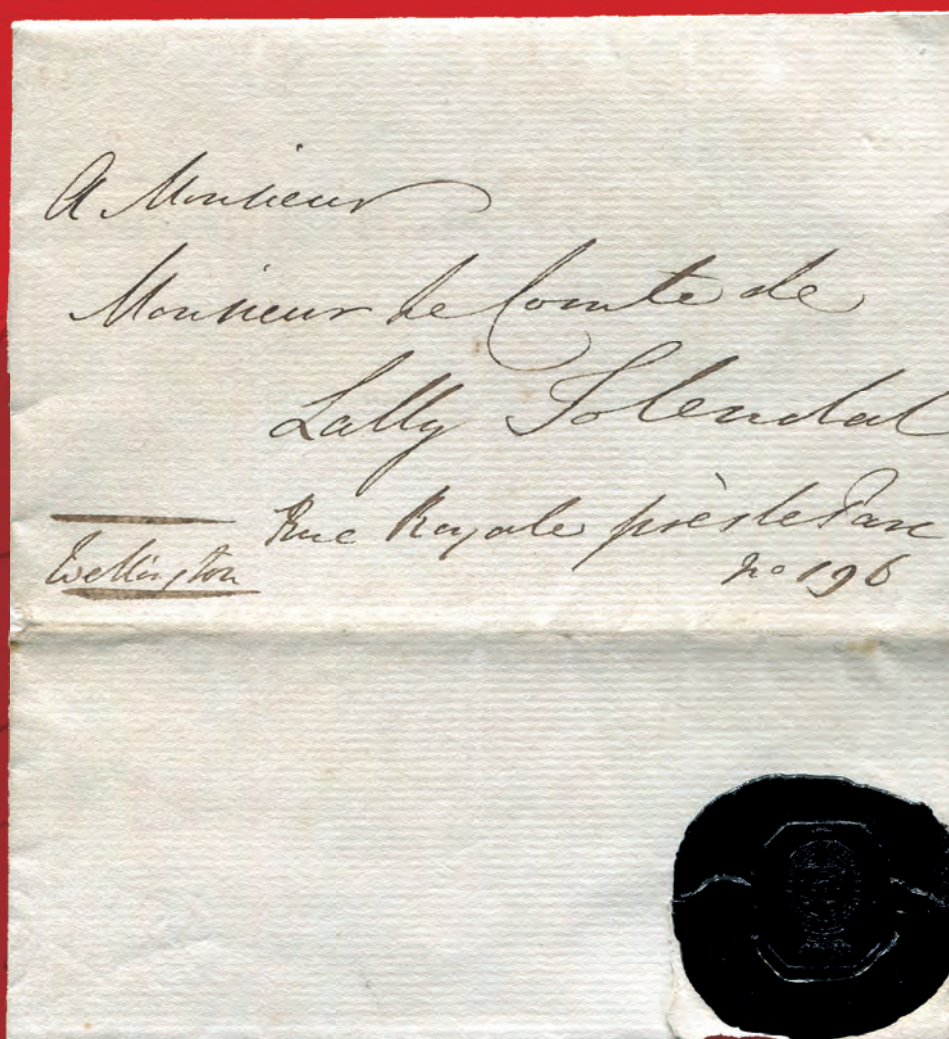


→ **Letter from Lord Wellington**
dated 7 June 1815, 11 days before
the Battle of Waterloo, from
Brussels for local delivery.



BELGIUM

The Royal Philatelic Society London
Patrick Maselis – President's display
8 February 2018





Introduction



Dear Fellows and Members of the RPSL,

All I can say is... **Thank You!**

Thank You for electing me as your President.

Thank You for your friendship and support.

Thank You for helping me every day.

Thank You for enriching my vocabulary.

Thank You for all the kind attention I get.

Thank You for tolerating my strong Belgian accent.

In a nutshell...

Thank You for being such a great Society!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Patrick Maselis'.

Patrick Maselis

8 February 2018

		PAGE
1	Iconic Items of Belgian Postal History	6
2-6	Earliest Fiscal Stamps	7
7-10	Neutral Moresnet, the Smallest Nation Ever (1816-1919)	8-9
11	Iconic Stamps	10-11
12	Iconic Full Sheets	12
13-22	The Medallion Issue	13
23-25	1915 Issue: Drawings and Proofs	14
26-29	Antwerp 1920 Olympic Games	15-16
30	Local Issues - Dequesne / Provisional Brussels-Dinant Service / Charleroi / Antwerp Distri-flash	17
31-35	Booklets	18
36-38	Coil Stamps	19
39-44	Railway Stamps	20
45-48	Air Mail	21
49-52	Postage Dues	22



Introduction

This display includes a selection from my collection of Belgian Philately running from traditional philately, through postal history and fiscal philately, air mails, and also back-of-the-book items which are often ignored by collectors. I collect almost everything from the earliest days until today.

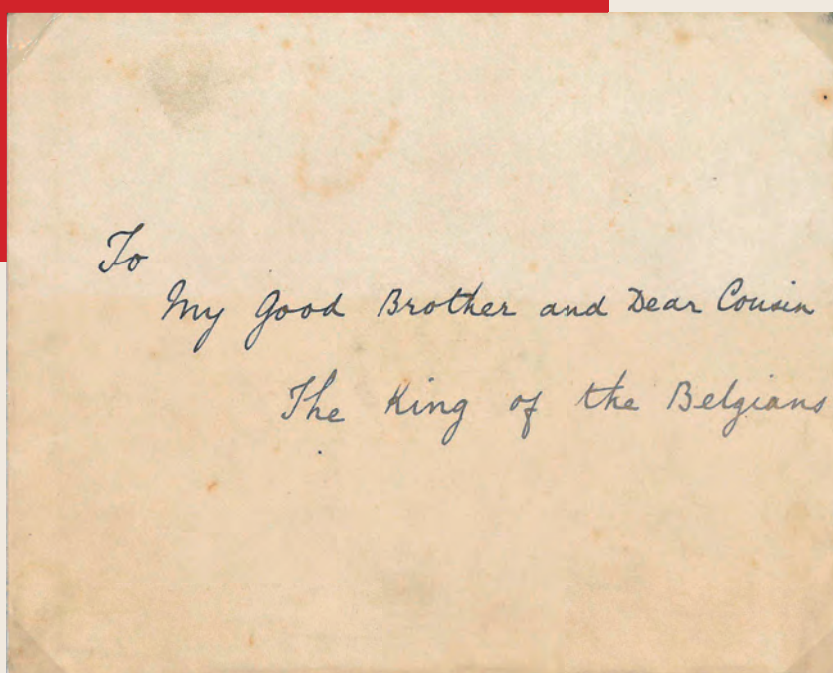


↑ Letter from my own grandfather
from the trenches in Flanders Fields –
World War I 28 Sept. 1918.

1

ICONIC ITEMS OF BELGIAN POSTAL HISTORY

The first frame shows particularly interesting documents from the beginning of organized post until 1918.



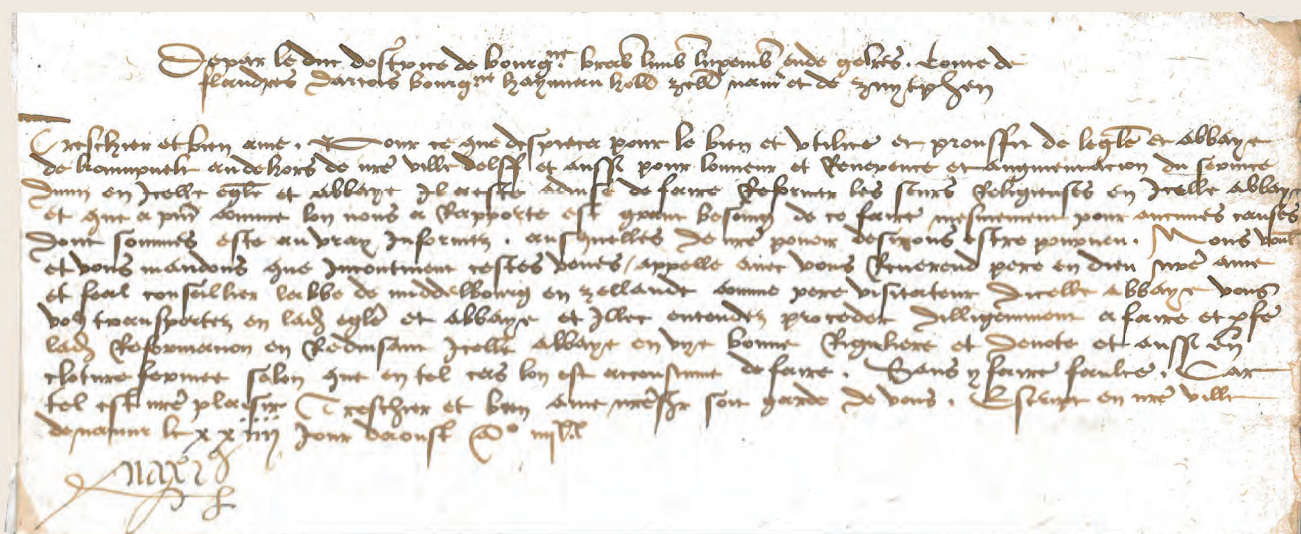
→ **Letter to King Leopold II from Queen Victoria**

Queen Victoria's seal on the reverse of the cover.



↓ **Letter from Maximilian I, Holy**

Roman Emperor, written in Namur and sent to Holland 24 August 1480.



EARLIEST FISCAL STAMPS

Fiscal stamps were introduced in the Spanish Netherlands in 1648. They were issued by the different provinces and always used on important documents in payment of a tax. The first fiscal stamps always include the coat of arms of the relevant province. The tax of 2, 4, 6 or 8 sols (stuyvers or patars) depended on the nature of the document.



↑ Fiscal stamp from Antwerp



← Fiscal stamp from Flanders
for 4 sols (stuyvers) on a deed dated 25 May 1709 certifying the authenticity of the arms of the de Villegas family.

→ **50 Pfennig orange Moresnet stamp**,
the local stamp issue for Moresnet.

→ **Fancy stamp** for Moresnet issued
by Moens.

↓ **1901 cover from Moresnet**
Registered cover from Dr Molly, the
mayor and "Head of State" of Moresnet.



NEUTRAL MORESNET, THE SMALLEST NATION EVER (1816–1919)

Neutral Moresnet existed from 1816 to 1919, and was one of the smallest sovereign territories ever. With the Congress of Vienna at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, neither Prussia nor the Netherlands was willing to start a war over this disputed territory of 3½ square kilometers with an important zinc mine. It was decided that it would remain a neutral zone, administered jointly by both Prussia and the Netherlands (by Belgium after 1830) using the Napoleonic Code as a legal system. In 1914, Germany invaded the territory, but it was assigned to Belgium in 1919.



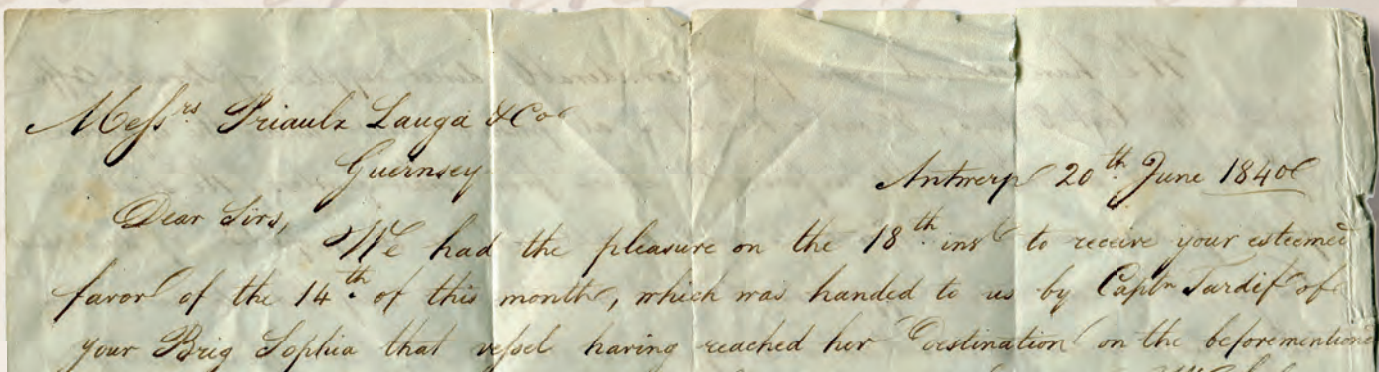
↑ Postcard of Moresnet

11

ICONIC STAMPS

There is no scientific definition of "iconic" stamps, but most collectors would agree that the 1d Black, the first issue of any country, inverted centres, and very rare proofs and overprints (or missing overprints), are iconic. This selection of items from Belgium fits within this definition.

→ **The first letter from Belgium with an adhesive,** sent from Antwerp to Guernsey on 20 June 1840. It was first carried by a private messenger (illegally) from Antwerp to Southampton. In Southampton it was franked with a Penny Black and put into the mail system.



→ Largest known unused multiple of the First Issue (Epaulettes)



↑ The unique pair of the inverted "Termonde"

12

ICONIC FULL SHEETS

Very few very rare stamps have survived in complete sheets. All those shown are presumed to be unique.

Timbres-Poste Série N° 26-130181 1878



→ **1869 Issue**

5 francs: the unique full pane of 50.

THE MEDALLION ISSUE

All is here: the designs and the proofs, reconstituted plates, shades and varieties, perforation and paper studies and last but not least usages on cover.



← Robinson proof

Proof with handwritten note
"one more line" by the engraver,
Robinson.

→ Proof in block of six with overprint



→ 40 centimes Burrus cover

The largest franking on cover
of the 40 centimes of the 1849
Issue.

23-25

1915 ISSUE: DRAWINGS AND PROOFS

The initial printing of this issue was done in London at Waterlow and Sons. Considerable emphasis was placed on the aesthetic designs which led to numerous essays and the enlarged designs of the frames.

These stamps were initially used at Le Havre (Sainte-Adresse), France, seat of the Belgian Government in exile. After the liberation in 1918, they were used in Belgium itself



↑ Proof Ypres

Proof of Ypres City Hall and enlarged design of the ornament .

ANTWERP 1920 OLYMPIC GAMES

The 1920 Olympic Games were held in Antwerp. These Olympics were the first in which the Olympic Oath was sworn, the first in which doves were released to symbolize peace, and the first in which the Olympic Flag with the five iconic rings was flown.

On 20 May 1920, to mark the occasion the Belgian Post Office issued three stamps representing a discus thrower (5 centimes + 5 centimes), a four-horse chariot (10 centimes + 10 centimes) and a marathon runner (15 centimes + 15 centimes).

The money raised with the surcharge was put towards a fund to help disabled veterans of World War I. The issue was produced by the New York Banknote Company.

After the Games the remaining stock was overprinted.

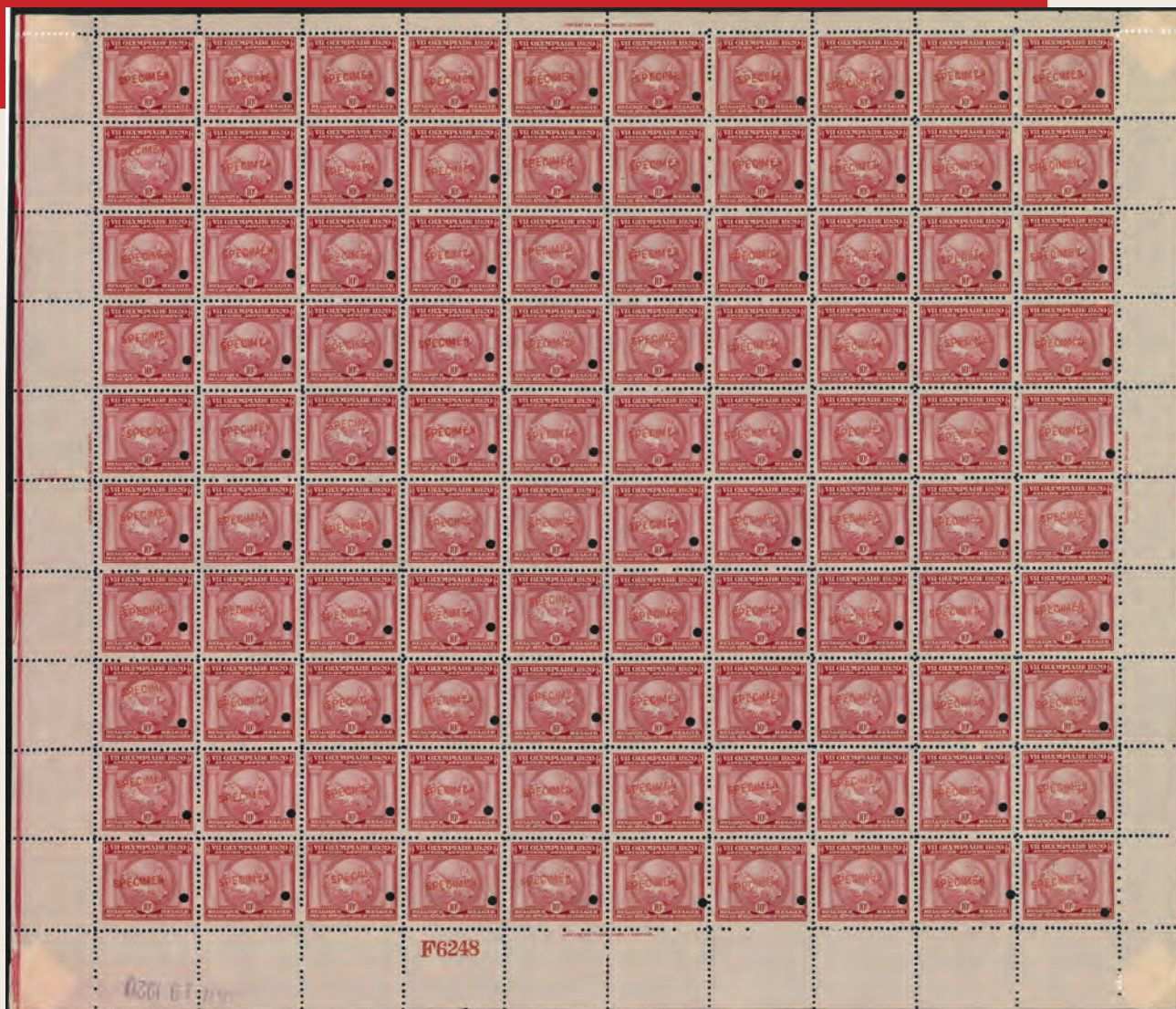


↑ Original dies in metal for the 5 centimes + 5 centimes and the 15 centimes + 15 centimes

These were subsequently punctured with holes to prevent their re-use. These proofs have numerous annotations in the margin by the engraver.

26-29

ANTWERP 1920 OLYMPIC GAMES



↑ **Sheet of 100**
(file copy from the American
Banknote Company; punctured)

LOCAL ISSUES

DEQUESNE / COURRIER PROVISOIRE / CHARLEROI / DISTRI-FLASH

Despite the monopoly of the Belgian Post Office, on five occasions stamps were issued or mail was transported privately, mostly for local use.

1. In the "neutral" territory of Moresnet in 1886
2. During the opening days of World War I – the "Dequesne" Brussels to Dinant post
3. The Provisional Brussels post of October 1914
4. The local Charleroi post of 1914
5. The Antwerp "Distri-flash" post of 1969

LE COURRIER PROVISOIRE

Service de transport de dépêches et petits colis
pour Bruxelles et Faubourgs

Le Courrier Provisoire

MM.,

16.10.1914

Le bureau principal sera établi dans mes établissements, 48, Rue GAUCHERET. De plus, dans différents quartiers seront établis des dépôts de réception. — Momentanément, il y aura une levée et une distribution par jour. En cas d'utilité ce service sera immédiatement augmenté. — Au début, pour la simplification, mes porteurs circuleront tous les matins dans les rues et seront munis d'un cornet assez puissant qui annoncera leur passage.

Il est nécessaire pour l'activité du service de remettre le montant exact de la taxe, afin d'éviter les pertes de temps du change. — Il faut exiger en tous cas l'apposition du timbre; ne garantissant pas le service d'un envoi non revêtu de mon timbre spécial indiquant la taxe perçue. Les porteurs et les dépôts sont munis de timbres et ont pour mission de les apposer immédiatement sur l'envoi dès la réception de celui-ci. — Pour le cas où des personnes auraient pris des timbres à l'avance et que le service viendrait à cesser, ceux-ci leur seraient immédiatement remboursés, 48, rue Gaucheret.

Le tarif ci-dessous sera éventuellement réduit si l'importance du courrier le permet.

Je garantis un service rapide mais je ne donne aucune garantie pour des dépêches ou colis de valeur.

A. BERHAUT.

N.B. — Le bénéfice net de cette entreprise sera versé au Comité de l'Alimentation.

— TARIF —

Dépêche jusque 50 grammes	20 centimes
Colis de 50 à 1000 grammes	40 »
Dépêche réponse payée	40 »
Express: dépêche 60 centimes; colis 80 centimes.	
(Ce transport est effectué endéans les 6 heures maximum).	
Réponse payée: Les porteurs de dépêches R.P. demandent la réponse au destinataire, toutefois si le destinataire est absent, l'expéditeur sera avisé.	
Poids des colis: Les colis dépassant le poids prévu resteront en souffrance au bureau principal, 48, rue Gaucheret.	

PREMIÈRE LISTE DES DÉPÔTS:

Rue Gaucheret, 48	Rue Rogier, 87
Chaussée d'Anveis, 232	Rue de Brabant, 132
» » 71	Rue du Progrès, 349
Rue du Marché, 118	Place Liedts (kiosque)
Rue Jolly, 69	

Les personnes désireuses de tenir un dépôt sont priées de s'adresser, 48, rue Gaucheret (Conditions avantageuses)

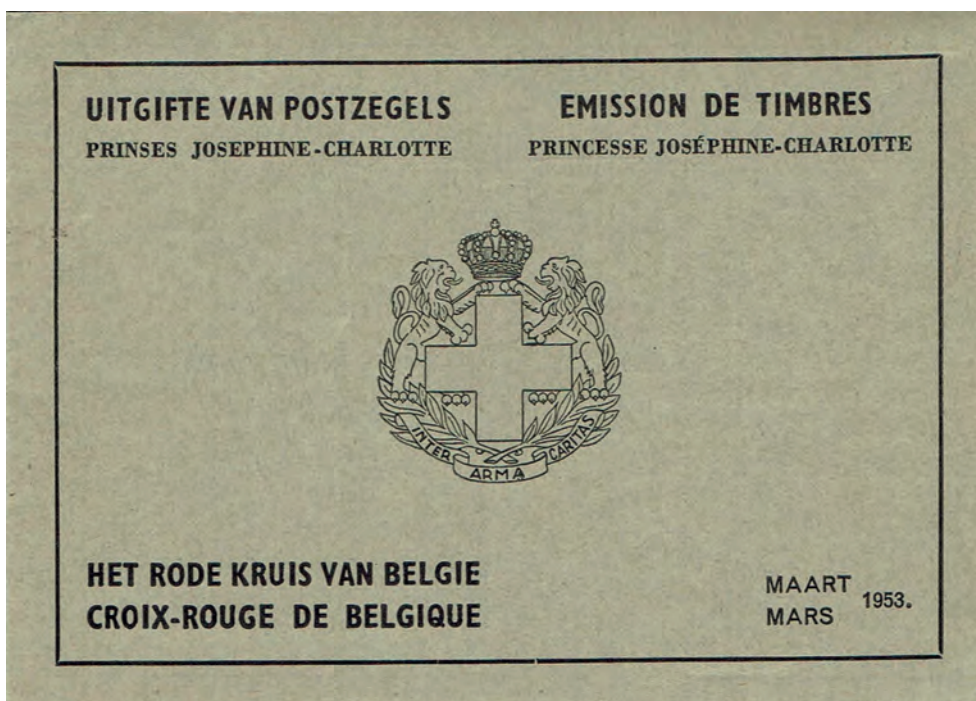
BRUX. — IMP. J. MULLER, CH. D'ANVERS, 71. — A. 1914

→ **Poster** for the provisional Brussels mail with an example of the stamp for this private mail system dated 16 October 1914.

31-35

BOOKLETS

In October 1907, the Belgian Post Office introduced and sold stamp booklets for the first time following the example of other countries such as Luxembourg (1895) and Sweden (1898), and followed by Britain in 1904. These booklets did not appeal greatly to the public, probably because the cost of buying the booklets was higher than the value of the stamps enclosed. Gradually the price of the booklets was reduced from 2,05 francs to 2,02 francs and eventually to 2 francs, the value of the stamps in the booklet.



↑ **Booklet proof**

Proof of booklet issued in 1931.

← **Dutch language dominant**

booklet issued in March 1953 with the red cross missing.

↓ **The normal Red Cross** with the red colour.



COIL STAMPS

The first coil stamps are believed to have been issued in 1912. For a very long time, there was no real proof until the discovery of three complete coils of stamps from the 1912 "Pellens" Issue which are in the collection. Until the 1970s, collectors paid little attention to coil stamps, making the earlier issues very rare.

→ **Almost complete coil** of the 2 francs Marchand issue of King Baudouin.

↓ **Coil stamp cover**

Postcard franked with two Heraldic Lion stamps miscut by a machine issuing stamps from coils.

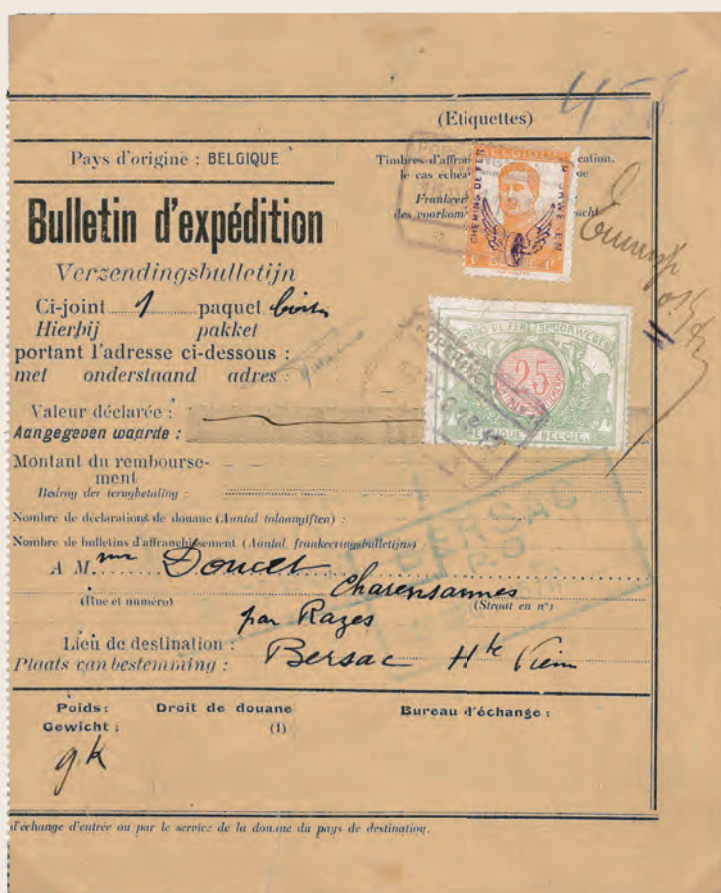


RAILWAY STAMPS

Belgium was the first country on the continent to have a railway system (1835) and it was also the first continental country using trains for mail (1840), first between Brussels and Malines and later extended to Antwerp. This travelling post office (TPO) was responsible for collecting, sorting, and delivering mail to different stations along the route. It was started as a trial on the route between Brussels and Antwerp from 15 September 1840. A Royal Decree dated 20 January 1850 announced that the existing trial TPO system was to be extended to the other state railway lines.

The trial period is exemplified by the use of green ink. On 1 September 1850, green ink was officially replaced with black ink.

From 1879, Belgium issued stamps specifically intended for the payment for parcels sent by railway. The selection includes the most attractive issues as well as the rarest.



➤ Railway cover Antwerp 1840

Letter sent by rail from Antwerp to Paris, 31 October 1840, showing the origin mark of ANVERS (Antwerp) in green.

➔ Railway document Winged Wheel

Waybill sent from Poperinghe to Bersac in France on 16 December 1915, franked with a 1 franc "Winged Wheel" overprint of 1915 (Belgium's rarest railway stamps) and a 25 centimes of the 1902 railway stamp issue. This mixed franking is the only one known.

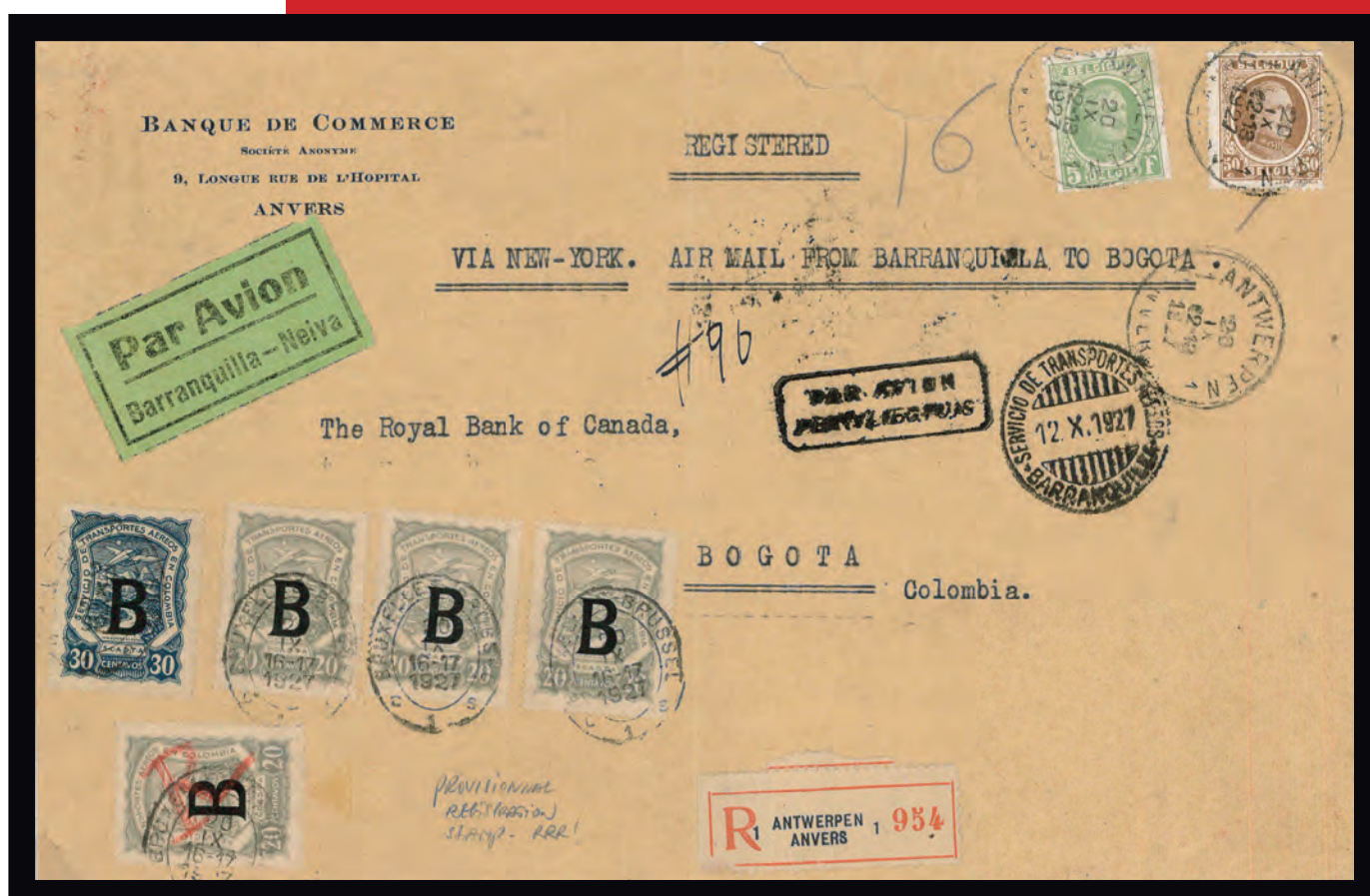
AIR MAIL

Belgium was one of the first countries to organize flights and this included the carriage of mail by air.

Special cancellations were used from 1909, and in 1913 internal flights were organized during the Gent Universal Exhibition.

A story well known amongst collectors is that of the SCADTA air mail in Columbia between 1920 and 1931, including the use of Columbian stamps overprinted with the letter B for "Belgium".

Belgium first issued stamps specially for air mail in 1930, similar to the stamps which already existed in China. They featured a Fokker FVII over-flying various Belgian towns.



↑ SCADTA cover

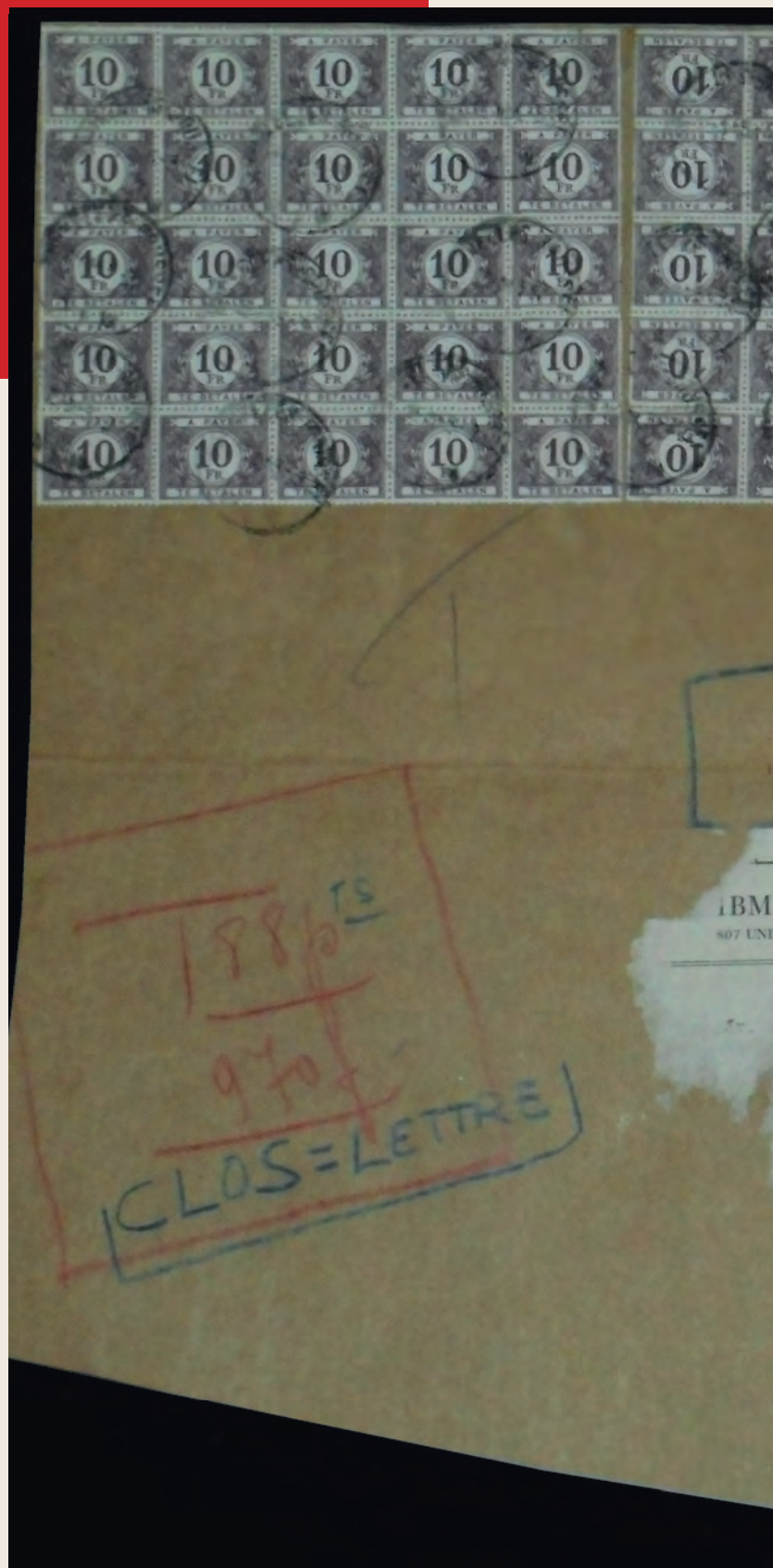
Letter from Antwerp via New York to Bogota dated 20 September 1927. It was flown on the SCADTA airline from Baranquilla to Neiva on 12 October, and then went by train to Bogota.

49-52

POSTAGE DUES

Postage dues have always been neglected in Belgian philately, and although their story is little known, it is without doubt an interesting topic to study.

The first two issues are shown complete. Later issues are also represented with, amongst others, a cover charged 970 francs. This is the largest known franking with Belgian postage due stamps.



→ **Cover with 970 francs postage due**

Letter sent from New York and charged 970 francs on arrival in Belgium.



Thank You!



↑ Cover with a Penny Black, the world's first adhesive postage stamp, sent to Sir Rowland Hill, the inventor of the adhesive postage stamp.