



DISPLAY

# BELGIANS IN THE WORLD



The Royal Philatelic Society London

Patrick Maselis – 8 November 2018 ( 1 pm)

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## INTRODUCTION

Faraway lands and exotic places have always fascinated me, especially places where Belgian settlers or explorers have left their traces over the course of history.

Citizens of 'Little Belgium' have established settlements on or organised expeditions to just about every continent on earth. In my collection, however, I have only focused on Belgium's adventures outside Europe. This explains why Europe does not feature in these exhibits.

In two regions overseas, the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, Belgium went as far as to install a genuine colonial regime, including (how could it be any other way around?) the issue of postage stamps. So, most attention is focused on these two countries.

Besides their adventures in Central Africa, Belgians established settlements or organised expeditions in a dozen other regions outside Europe. For these areas, the few surviving letters provide us with an inestimable source of information. In addition to their purely historical value, they very often also offer plenty of interest for postal historians, for example in the form of unusual hand stamps, unlikely forwarding routes or most improbable destinations (e.g. Rio Nunez or Lado).

A great deal of attention is also lavished on the only set of non-Belgian postage stamps ever devoted to Belgian settlers: the "Walloon Huguenot Issue" released by the US Post Office in 1924.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who worked both on this exhibition and on the brochure, and Luc Vander Marcken, Vincent Schouberechts, Nick Martin and David Alford in particular.

I really hope that viewing my exhibits will generate as much enjoyment as they have given me in collecting them.

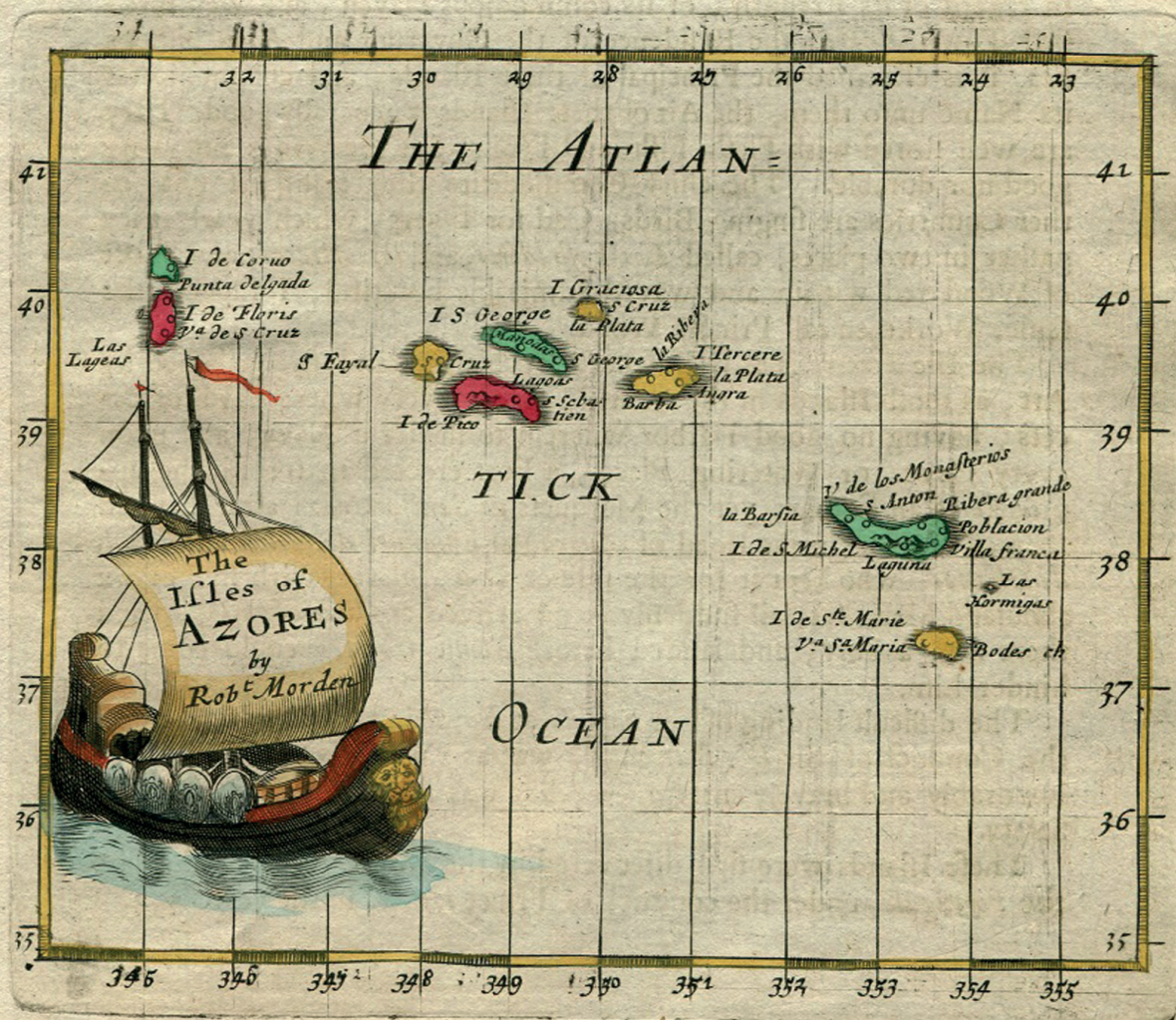
*Patrick Maselis*



## Of the AFRICAN Islands.

IN the Occidental or Atlantick Ocean, and not far from *Africa*, we find three different Bodies of Islands, and each very considerable, viz. the *Azores*, the *Canaries*, and *Cape Verde* Islands.

## The Isles of AZORES.



Map of the Azores by Robert Morden, 1688.



## 01.

## The Azores or “Flemish Islands”

1451–1910

Between 1430 and 1498, the Portuguese conquered the whole west coast of Africa and discovered the Azores in 1432. Portugal lacked the population to colonise all the newly acquired countries and had to look elsewhere to find colonists.

For the Azores, the Portuguese King decided to call upon Flemings from Bruges under the leadership of Jacob Van Brugge also known as

Jacomo de Bruges, who received the title of ‘Visconde’ (viscount) but was in fact a kind of viceroy of the Azores. His descendants continued to use the title until the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Several letters addressed to the ‘Visconde de Bruges’ are known. They are the only postal history items related to the Belgian colonisation of the Azores.

Text on the reverse of the map:

These Islands were first discovered by the Flemings, but subdued by the Portugals, under the conduct of Prince Henry, in the year 1414.



Letter sent from London on 4 September 1847 addressed to 'V. Conde de Bruges' in Terceira. On departure, the cover was marked 'PAID' and 1/10 which was the rate for Madeira of which 1/9 was for the Azores. The mark 'C. Est de N. (Cartas Estrangeiras de navios) means 'ship letters' in English. The '160' reis rate corresponds to 1/10d.

# 02.

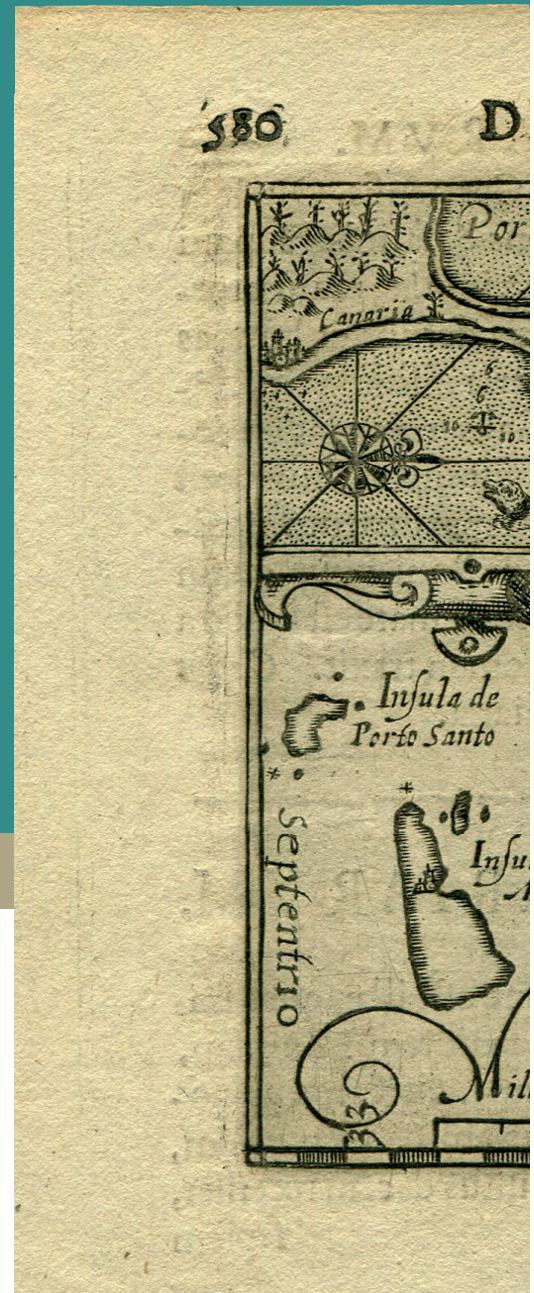
## The Canary Islands

Second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

The first European colonisers to land on the coast of the Canaries were the Spanish. Between 1342 and 1495, they captured the whole archipelago from the original inhabitants, the *Guanches*. To develop trade in the first place, Italians were engaged, mainly Genoese and Venetians (15<sup>th</sup> Century). They financed colonialization and laid the foundations of the sugar industry which was taken over by the Flemish<sup>1</sup> during the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. At that time, Antwerp was the main centre for this luxury product and the whole trade was in the hands of a few catholic families. Following the Religious Wars, however, the Catholics in Antwerp feared for their lives, and they decided to move their families to safer places, preferably regions where they could use their expertise. Eventually they bought the entire Island of La Palma in the Canary Islands. La Palma was almost entirely taken up with sugar plantations belonging to the Groenenberg (Monteverde), Van de Walle (Vendabel) and Van Dale (Van Dalle) families.

<sup>1</sup>This term covers the inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands, both the Flemish and the French-speaking inhabitants of Hainaut, Liège and Brabant.

<sup>2</sup>Petrus Bertius (1565-1629) was born in Beveren-Waas (East Flanders) and died in Paris. He was a cartographer and professor at the University of Leiden (in the Netherlands) from 1614. He left Paris in 1620 and became Cosmographer to Louis XIII.



Map of the Canary Islands about 1600, engraved on copper by Petrus Bertius<sup>2</sup>.

The oldest letter known to date sent to La Palma Island to a descendant of the Van Dalle family.



# DESCRIPTIO INSS. CANARIARVM.



Al Don Philippe Manouel  
 Marieu de Vandalie Guarde Dios  
 m P  
 Palma en las canarias

Letter dated 15 April 1740 from London to Don Philippe Manouel Massieu de Vandale at (La) Palma, Canaries.



# 03.

## The Ostend Company

1722–1774



Emblem of the Ostend Company.

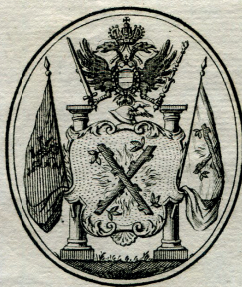
In 1713, the Spanish Period in the Southern Netherlands (now Belgium) came to an end and the land came under the rule of Emperor Charles VI of Austria. The blocking of the River Scheldt by the Dutch stopped all traffic to Antwerp and almost destroyed the economy. Fortunately some rich merchants, most of whom were from Antwerp, managed to extend the port of Ostend so that they could trade with Africa and India. After several highly successful trade missions and wanting to ensure the monopoly of trade for themselves, they asked the Emperor to grant them the monopoly over trade with India using a single company trading out of Ostend. The *Compagnie d'Ostende* (Ostend Company) was founded in December 1722 and by decree of the Emperor in 1723 received the monopoly over trade with India, the right to found colonies and to sign treaties in the name of the Emperor with local chiefs.

The high profits made by the Company, and the competition created in European markets, led to fierce opposition from the Dutch, English and French. They gave an ultimatum to Charles VI: stop the trade by the Ostend Company in India or be prepared for war with three countries. In 1727, the Ostend Company was suspended for seven years and in 1774 it was completely dissolved.



Location of the Colonies (in red) and the offices (in black) belonging to the Ostend Company.



N<sup>o</sup>. 2306.

De Directeurs van de generale Keijserlijke Indische compagnie.  
 ordonneren aen hunnen cassier joan Baptist Cogels junior, te ontfangen  
 Van *D'heer Melchior Kretzen d'antwerpen*  
 de Somme van tweehondert en vijftigh guldens Wissel gelt, voor  
 het eerste payement Synder actie vaneenduysent guldens in het  
 Capitael van de Selve compagnie, op de conditien in het Octroy  
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 Antwerpen derthien augusti seventhien hondert drij en  
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Ontfangen van *D'heer Melchior Kretzen* de  
 Somme van tweehondert vijftigh guldens  
 Wissel gelt voor het eerste payement  
 adij *6 Septemb. 1723*

*Solvit als boven het tweede payement  
 11 decemb. 1723*

*Solvit als boven de helft van het derde payement 25. octob. 1724*

*Solvit als boven de ander helft van het derde payement 3. decemb. 1725*

*Jacomo de laet*

*Joan Baptist Cogels junior*

*Liesje Krol*

*Joan Baptist Cogels junior*

*Joan Baptist Cogels junior*

Banquibazar, under the control of François de Schonamille from Ostend, kept going until 1744. Cabelon lasted even longer and was next occupied by the Portuguese and renamed Cavlam or Coulão.

A share certificate of the Ostend Company dated 13 August 1723.



# 04.

## Santa Catarina

## do Brasil

1842–1875

*Londres.*

In 1838 the Société commerciale de Bruges (Bruges Trading Company) was set up with the primary aim of developing trading links with other countries. The company employed Charles Van Lede to lead a trading mission to Brazil. In August 1842, he managed to secure 900 sq. km of land along the River Itajai, including mining rights. The purchase was bound by certain obligations including sending a hundred families to colonise the area and forbidding the ownership of slaves. When he returned to Belgium, the Société was dissolved. With Royal support, Van Lede founded a new company in 1844, the Compagnie Belge-Brésilienne de Colonisation (the Belgian-Brazilian Colonial Company), with its registered office in Antwerp. When he returned to Brazil, he found that the concession contract had not been agreed by the Brazilian Parliament and instead decided to buy lands in his own name. He bought 9,600 hectares of land, including the village of Morretes, near the River Itajai.



Location of the Colonies (in red) and the offices (in black) belonging to the Ostend Company.

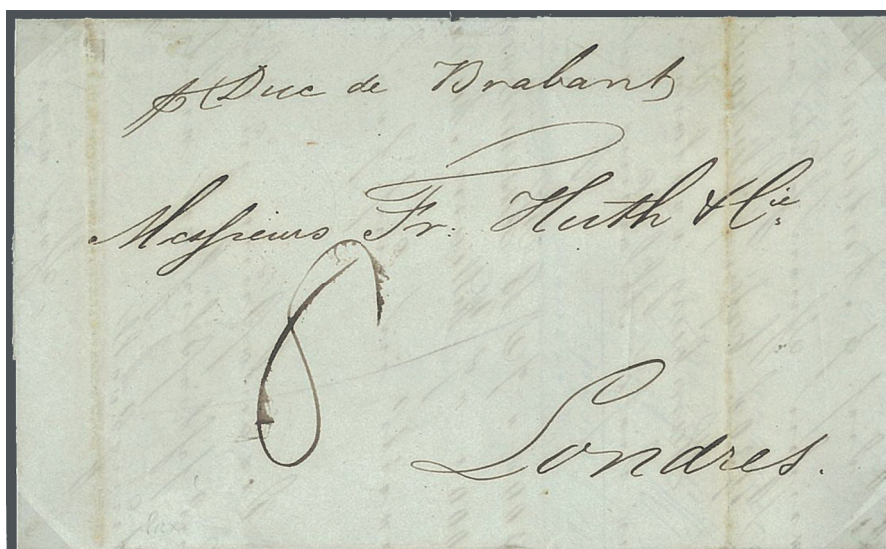
On 24 August 1844, the first 109 colonisers arrived in Santa Catarina from Ostend on board the brig Jan Van Eyck. They cleared untouched forest and built a trading post and 17 houses which became the village of Ilhota. In 1845, the Brazilian Parliament finally approved the concession contract, but removed mining rights, which destroyed all interest Van Lede had in the colony. The administration was next handed to Gustave Lebon, who tried in 1851 to support the colonisers by asking for the help of German colonisers who had established prosperous colonies in Joinville and Blumenau. The last director, Schutel, did nothing at all, and it is highly likely that he never even went to Ilhota. On the death of Van Lede in 1875, the Belgian Government sent out Count d'Ursel who found the colonisers well-settled. They had taken over Van Lede's lands and were farming them. They were completely integrated with the German-Brazilian communities in Ilhota, Blumenau and Joinville. The death of Charles Van Lede in 1875 ended Belgian colonial history in Brazil.

Very few letters from Belgian settlers have survived. The most interesting ones are those that were forwarded by the two Belgian naval ships (actually the Belgian Navy only had these two ships in those days): the 'Louise-Marie' and the 'Duc de Brabant'.

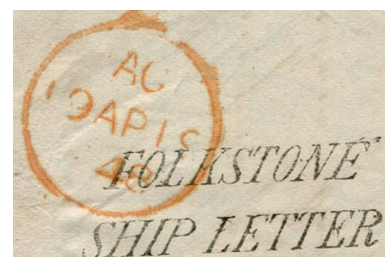


The brig 'Duc de Brabant' and the schooner 'Louise-Marie'.

The only letter known to date carried by the Louise-Marie from Montevideo, Uruguay, 25 February 1843 to Nestor Albert, a trader in Le Havre. The Louise-Marie sailed from Santa Catarina to Antwerp, via Montevideo and Le Havre. The letter was charged 2 décimes at Le Havre where the OUTRE-MER / 15 MAI 43 / LE HAVRE datestamp was applied.



Letter from Rio de Janeiro to London, carried on board the Duc de Brabant. Manuscript 8(d) to pay by the recipient. On the reverse, straight-line FOLKESTONE / SHIP LETTER and LONDON receiver 19 April 1848.





# 05.

## Villaguay (Argentina)

1880–to date



In 1880, President Roca of Argentina offered a free plot of land to every new immigrant.

The Belgian scientist Eugène Schepens, impressed by the offer, was convinced that well-planned emigration would be an excellent solution for many of his countrymen who were suffering from poverty and the other effects of overpopulation in his region.

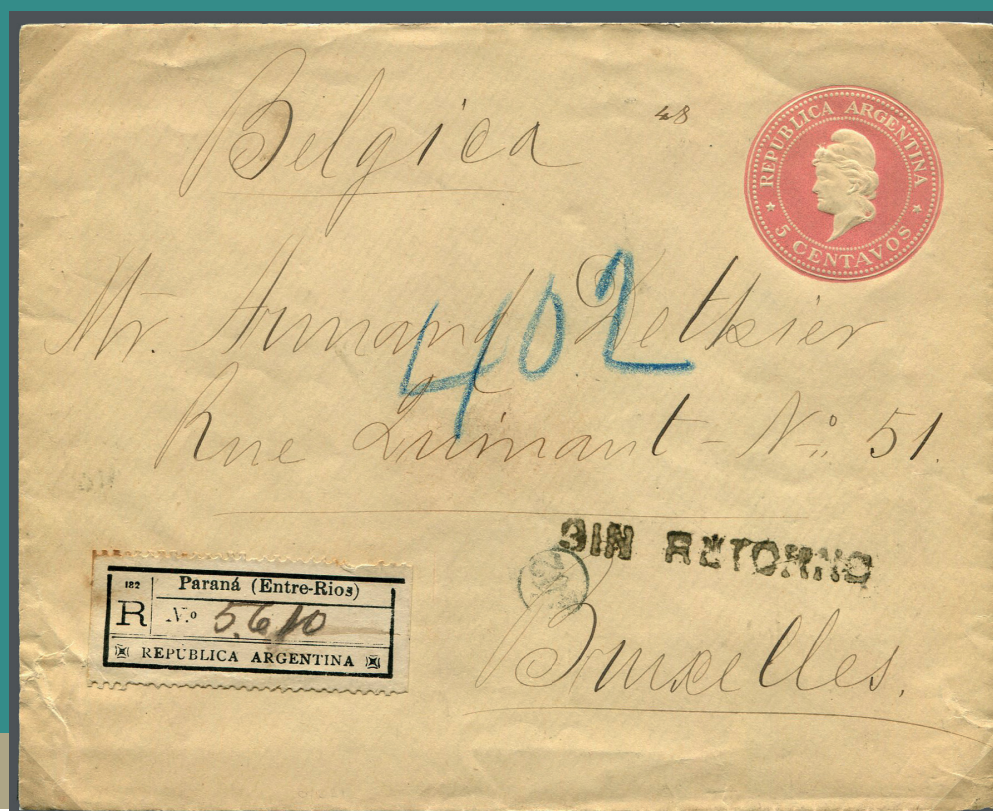
He invested a modest sum in an explorative mission in 1880 and especially visited Villaguay where the Argentine Government wanted to make him a gift of 1,600 hectares of land.

The area north of Buenos-Aires was called “Entre Ríos” and was located between the Parana and Uruguay rivers. On his return Schepens managed to persuade forty or so of his countrymen to emigrate, and on 1 November 1881 they left Antwerp as the first settlers. The land was cultivated and was highly productive. As a result, the settlers formed a powerful cooperative, and a distillery and flour-mill were added to the colony of Villaguay’s buildings.

The colony still exists and is the only place in the world which is still thought of as a “Belgian Colony” and which is still widely recognized as such. The Argentine Post Office even allocated the “Colonia Belga” its own postcode (3244).







5 Centavos registered postal stationery envelope from Panama (Entre Rios) to Brussels. Additional franking of 35 Centavos on the reverse (made up of one 5 Centavos and three 10 Centavos adhesives). PANAMA datestamp on departure 15 June 1899, BUENOS AIRES transit datestamp 17 June and BRUXELLES datestamp on arrival 11 July. On the reverse, SIN RETORNO indicating no need for a receipt on arrival.



Reverse of the cover.



# 06.

## Guatemala

1841–1858

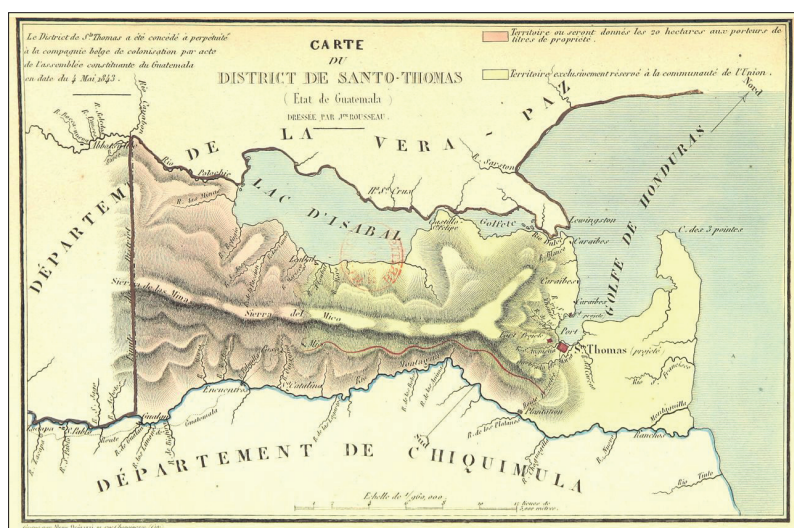
LA COMPAGNIE BELGE DE  
COLONISATION  
(THE BELGIAN COLONIAL  
COMPANY)



This illustration issued for propaganda purposes shows the “paradise on earth” which the colonists were to find when they arrived.

The company founded in 1841 with the backing of King Léopold I, bought a concession at Santo Tomas on the east coast of Guatemala. In March 1843, a ship with the first colonisers aboard left the port of Antwerp for the “paradise on earth” which Santo Tomas was alleged to be and encountered a “green hell” there instead. There was no housing and they had to sleep in the open, and the whole area was infested with mosquitoes. In addition,

there was insufficient food. Following the death of the *directeur général* and the desertion of the first secretary, no-one took over responsibility for the Colony. There was an obvious lack of any organization, no money, and a poor choice of planting areas had been made, all of which led to the demise of the colony and the termination of the Belgian concession in 1858 by the Government of Guatemala.







Letter from Antwerp to a Belgian colonizer in Amériqne Centrale ...Ysabal (Santo Tomas), 3 August 1845. ANVERS departure datestamp, 3 August 1845. PD in red (paid to destination) and SHIP LETTER LONDON AUG 4 1845. Manuscript 'Missent to St Thomas N.A. 13/9 45'.

Letter from Brussels, with the handstamp of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent to 'Monsieur Fleussu Agent Consulaire de Belgique à Santo Tomas de Guatemala pour faire parvenir à Monsieur Cloquet Consul de Belgique à Guatemala'. Handwritten 'Via de Belise British Honduras'. Departure handstamp BRUXELLES 8 SEPT. 1849, 'PD' stamp (paid to destination) and transit through London 'PAID 10 SE 1849'. 1/8d postage due to Great Britain.



Letter posted from Santo Tomas on 26 February 1861 to Guatemala City addressed to the Belgian Consul who was stationed there with the postage due charge of "2" reales in red payable on arrival.

First and only example of the handstamp 'VICE CONSULAT DE BELGIQUE A SANTO TOMAS/ GUATEMALA'.



# 07.

## Nova Belgica

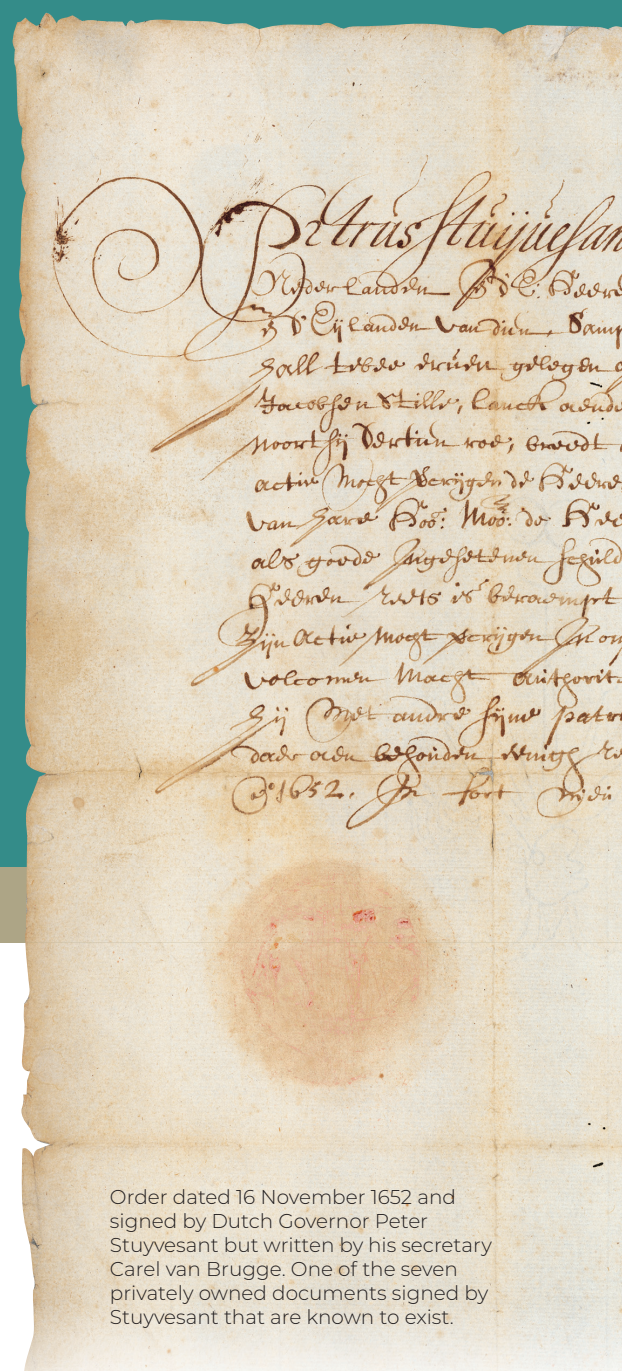
1624–1664

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the Belgian Willem Usselinckx founded the *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales Octroyée* (Dutch West Indies Company) which colonized “New Netherlands” or “Nova Belgica” (more or less today’s New York and Connecticut). The first colonisers consisting of thirty families left for America in 1624 on board the ship *Nieu Nederlandt*. Most of them were Belgians, Walloon Huguenots with a few Flemings.

They settled on the island of Manhattan and founded *Neuf Avesnes* (after a village in Belgium). Pierre Minuit, from Tournai in Belgium, became Governor of the Nova Belgica Colony and bought the Island of Manhattan for 60 Florins from the native Indians in 1626. Michel De Pauw, from Gent in Belgium, bought Staten Island in 1630, also from the Indians.

The Dutch re-named *Neuf Avesnes* “New Amsterdam”. In 1664, the English conquered New Amsterdam and renamed it “New York” in honour of the Duke of York, brother of King Charles II. As for Peter Stuyvesant to whom some attribute the main part in the founding of New York, he only landed in 1647, 24 years after the first colonisers. He was sent to Manhattan as Director General of the Dutch territories, which extended from Delaware to the Connecticut River. In Manhattan, he reorganised the colony and reinforced its defences by building a wall, which is now where Wall Street runs.

A set of three American stamps was issued in 1923 commemorating the arrival of the Walloon Huguenots in America.



Order dated 16 November 1652 and signed by Dutch Governor Peter Stuyvesant but written by his secretary Carel van Brugge. One of the seven privately owned documents signed by Stuyvesant that are known to exist.



First state of the drawing of the ship on the 1c stamp by the artist C.A. HUDSON.



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De heer van  
 de romantie van d. heer Directeur  
 Generaal in Radon van Nieuwreant  
 Carl van Brugge Secrets

This drawing was refused for the following reason: “the Huguenots were sailing to America, not away from America”. The name of the ship was not visible on the stamp since it was only visible on the stern of the ship!



Approved April 14, 1924.

April 14, 1924.  
*Harry S. New.*  
 Postmaster General.

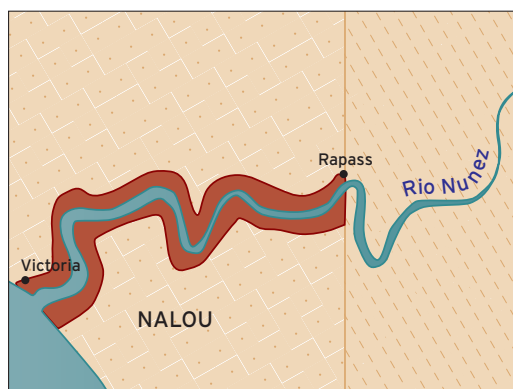
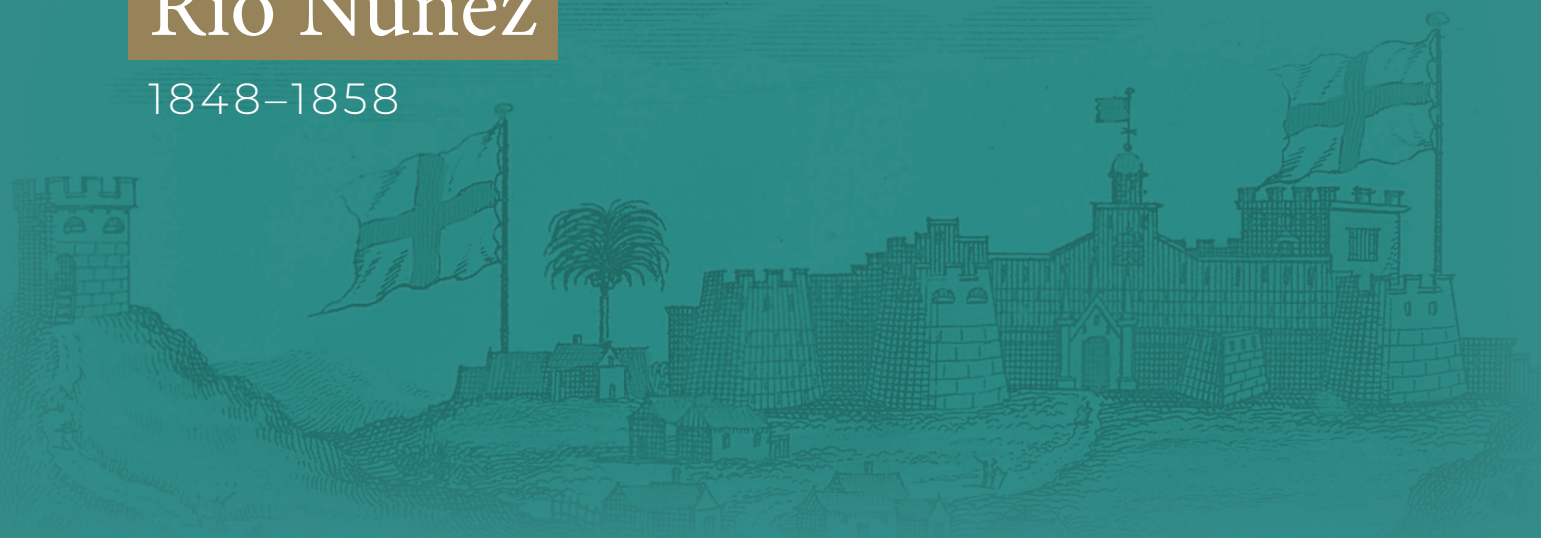
1 Cent "Arrival of the NEDERLANDT" die proof signed by the Postmaster General.



# 08.

## Rio Nunez

1848–1858



At insistent request of the Belgian commercial world, the Government undertook to send a mission to Guinea to set up a colony and trading stations. The mission, under the command of Lt Van Haverbeke, Captain of the schooner 'Louise-Marie' visited various locations in 1848. By chance, King Lamina, Chief of the Nalou tribe who lived at the estuary of the Rio Nunez, had risen up against the French. When he suddenly saw a Belgian ship arriving, he spontaneously offered part of his lands as a colony. It was in this way that Belgium came into the ownership of the two banks of the Rio Nunez but which did not include Boko.

A year later, having made a secret agreement, France and Britain refused to recognize Belgian legitimate rights in any form.

The establishment of colonisers and Belgian traders was very difficult, and most of the attempts were abandoned. The Belgian Consul, Bols, signed an agreement with the King of the Nalous on 23 April 1858 ending the Treaty of 1848, and thus the Belgian colony.





Canadian 1 Cent postal stationery card with a stamp removed, sent from St. Marys, Ontario on 29 December 1893 to Rio Nunez. This card was sent first to New York (31 Dec), then to Cayenne, Guyana (1 Feb 1894) instead of to French Guinea. It travelled later to Konakry, French Guinea (23 March 1894) and Victoria (4 April 1894).



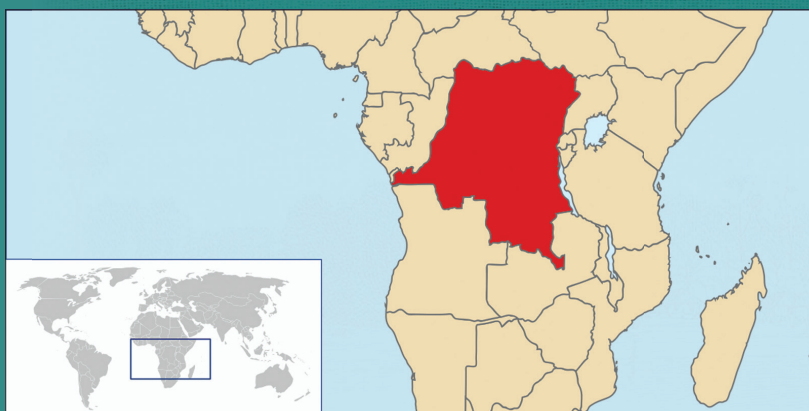
10 Öre postal stationery envelope franked with an additional 10 Öre stamp sent registered from Stockholm to Rio Nunez via London on 25 October 1891. REGISTERED/LONDON datestamp 28 October. Calais, Paris and Bordeaux transit markings. Delivered via Gorée, Senegal, Conakry, and Boke, arriving on 29 November.



# 09.

## Congo

1877–1960

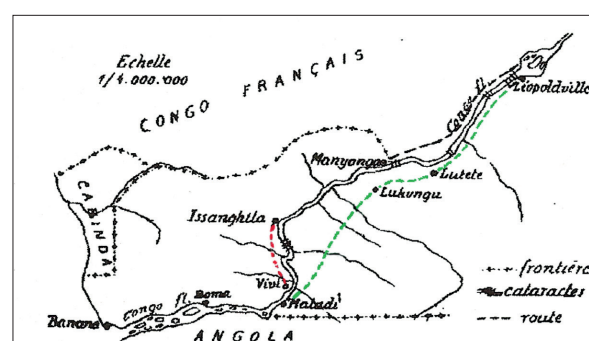


Source : Wikipedia.

The International Geographical Conference held in Brussels in 1876 at the Royal Palace was organized at the behest of King Léopold II, officially with the dual aims of fighting the slave-trade and encouraging the scientific exploration of unknown areas to encourage settlement. The Conference also marked the establishment of the *Association Internationale Africaine* which was to organize future exploration of central Africa. The Belgian Committee of the AIA (which would become the Association Internationale du Congo or A.I.C. soon after) was much more active and organized five expeditions to Tanganyika from the East African coast at Zanzibar between 1877 and 1882. During the same period, King Léopold II managed to persuade the journalist and explorer Henry Stanley to work for him and asked him to establish trading-stations along the River Congo from the west coast. During the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, large stretches of the River Congo basin were recognized as the Independent State of Congo with Léopold II as sovereign. The new Independent State, run from Brussels, endowed itself with a postal service and stamps with the effigy of the Sovereign as of 1 January 1886. Even the steamers on the river had their own datestamps to cancel stamps on mail handed over at landing places. Léopold II bequeathed the Congo to Belgium shortly before his death in 1908. Belgians in the Congo built the first railway line in central Africa

from Matadi to Léopoldville, established the first domestic air links with sea-planes, and several “experimental flights” between Belgium and the Congo. The *Force Publique*, consisting of Congolese soldiers trained by European officers, distinguished themselves during the course of the two World Wars.

From May 1882 to May 1884, a northern route was used for the mail. An official of the ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DU CONGO, Mr. HERTWIG, made private origin postmarks for ISSANGHILA and MANYANGA in 1883.

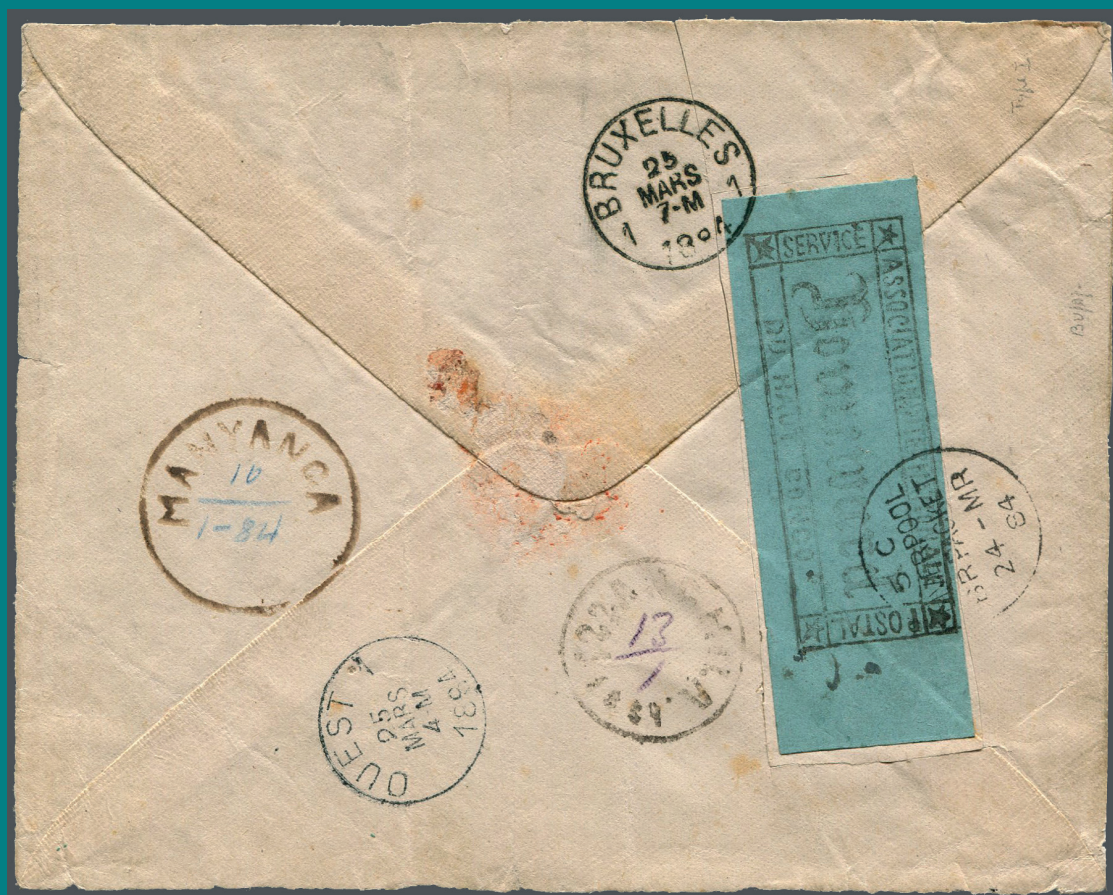
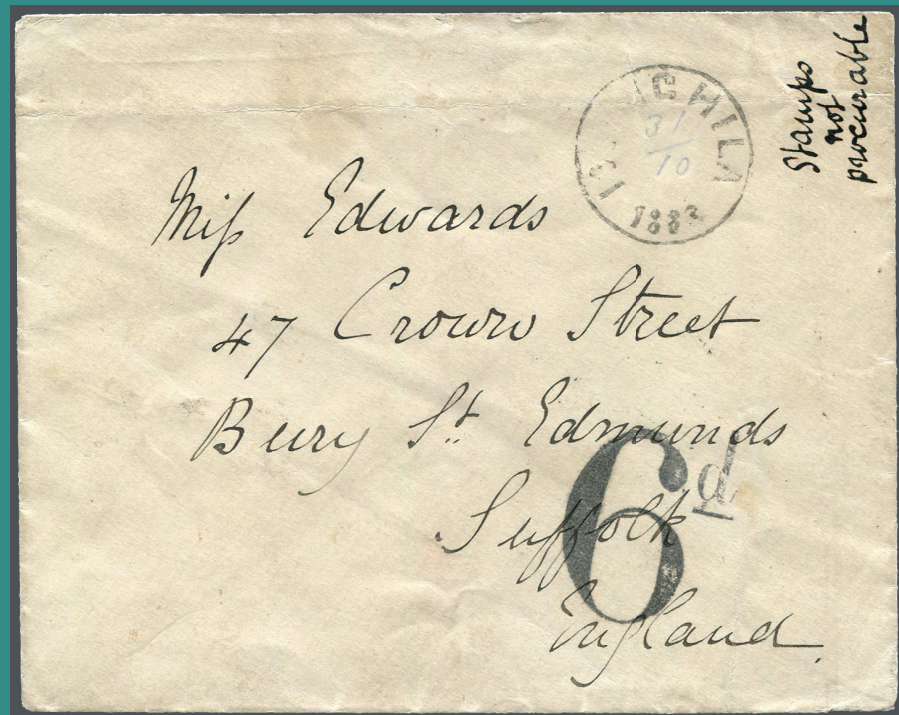


Northern route in red.

In early 1884 the same official used a HOMEWARD label used on mail posted to overseas territories. The only known “Homeward” labels on documents that actually travelled are blue-green in colour (probably from the first print run).

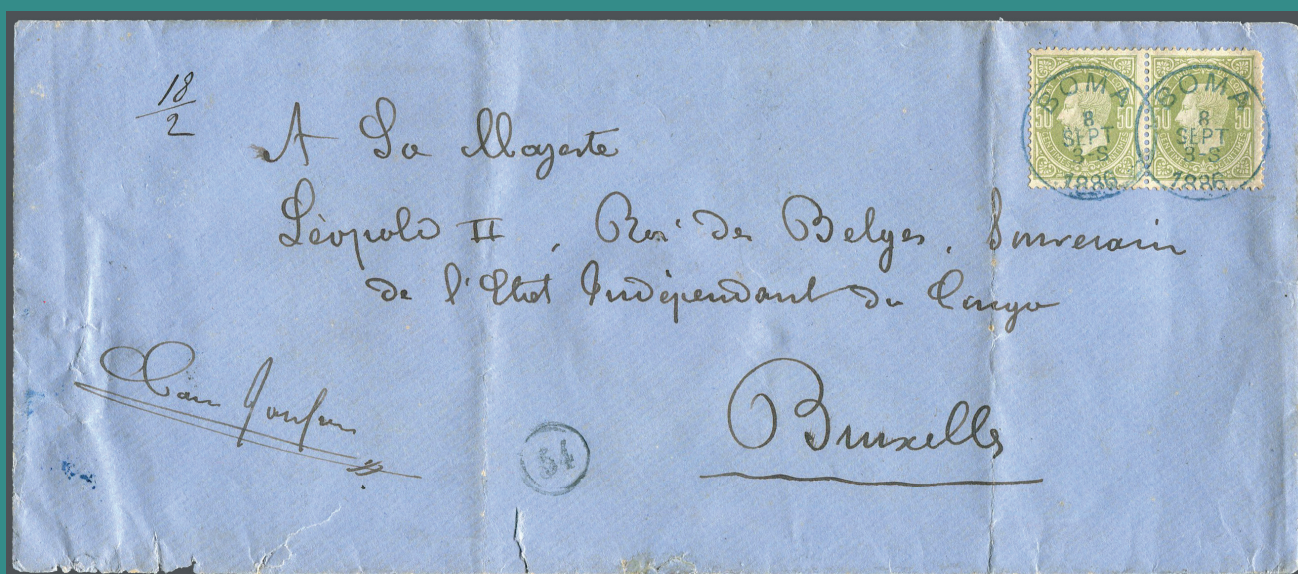


Letter sent from Issanghila on 31 October 1883 to Bury St Edmunds in the UK. Manuscript 'Stamps not procurable'. Normal rate of 6d for a letter sent from Central Africa to England. On the reverse, 5C/ LIVERPOOL/BR PACKET/29 DE/83 and arrival on 31 December 1883.



"Homeward du Haut-Congo label" on the reverse of a letter posted to Brussels via Manyanga on 10 January 1884 and Issanghila on 13 January, transported by British steamer to Liverpool, transit mark on 24 March and then to Brussels on Ligne OUEST 1 (westward train Line 1) on 25 March 1884, arriving on the same day.





Letter from the first governor of the Congo, Camille Janssens, addressed to 'His Royal Highness King Leopold II, King of the Belgians, Sovereign of the Congo Free State'. Heavy letter (18 grams therefore double rate) sent from Boma on 8 September 1886 franked with a pair of the 50 Centimes from the First Issue. The Governor-General's signature appears on the bottom left.



The very scarce VIVI cancellation (the office opened on 1 January 1886 but was closed on 18 May of the same year). As a result, the VIVI cancellation is extremely rare, and is shown here used on the first day of issue.



Heavy letter (37 grams or 3 weight steps) sent from Boma to Zurich on 13 August 1886. The four first values from the First Issue were used.

Very soon the need was felt for a 3,50 francs stamp for parcels and packets up to 5 kilos from the Congo to Belgium. The 3,50 francs denomination was created by overprinting the 5 francs stamp. Some scarce curiosities of this overprint are known.



09.

Congo

1877–1960



Strip of three with the middle stamp without overprint.

ETAT INDÉPENDANT DU CONGO.

PERMIS DE PORT D'ARMES

N° 482.

(1) M. *Happemuth Axel Vasser*  
(2) *Agent de l'Etat*

est autorisé à porter les armes renseignées ci-dessous dans le territoire de l'État Indépendant du Congo pendant un terme de cinq années consécutives à dater du présent permis.

NOMBRE (en toutes lettres)	DÉSIGNATION ET DESCRIPTION	LETTRE ET NUMÉROS
<i>Un</i>	<i>Revolver " Bull dog "</i>	<i>13 9 39</i>

**BOMA**, le 8 Février 1896.

Le fonctionnaire délégué par le Gouverneur Général,

*J. Rousseau*

(1) Nom et prénoms. — (2) Qualité.

Pair of 10 francs yellow-ochre used on a gun permit dated 8 February 1896 and cancelled by a civil servant's signature, showing unframed "BOMA" handstamp in blue and a DISTRICT DE BOMA circular flag handstamp.



# 10.

## The Lado Enclave

1897–1910



Government Inspector Louis Napoleon Chaltin.

The Lado Enclave to the north-east of the Congo in the south of the Sudan was occupied by Belgian troops from 1897 to 1910. At the beginning of the occupation mail from the Enclave was carried through the Congo to the mouth of the Congo River to be put on boats at Matadi or Boma. Mail took three months to reach recipients in Europe. From 1900 onwards, when the White Nile was unblocked of vegetation which had prevented navigation, mail from the Enclave was sent along the Nile route. This route allowed mail to reach Europe in three weeks. Mail from the Enclave was not cancelled at source, there never having been a Belgian post office within the Enclave. In the South of the Enclave, the Nile was not navigable and the fastest way to forward mail was via Uganda. The so called 'Ugandan Route' is the scarcest one with only a handful covers known to exist. This is due to the very small number of Belgians serving in the South of the Enclave. The Ugandan route was not in operation for the entire period, for reasons which are still unknown it was often closed.



The three routes for the Lado mail.



Lado (Kil) le 12 Novembre 1898.  
 Cher Monsieur Bourgeois,

## CONGO ROUTE

10 Centimes postcard written in Lado on 12 November 1898 addressed to Tongres, tied by the IBEMBO circular date stamp dated 15 January 1899.

The 50 Centimes postage stamp was cancelled in Leopoldville and paid for registration fee. It also bears a Boma transit mark of 19 February, 'Anvers' (Antwerp) and 'Anvers / valeurs' (Antwerp/securities) marks dated 18 March and a postmark applied on arrival at its destination on the same day.



## NILE ROUTE

Letter written by Chaltin, senior officer of the Belgian expedition from Kero (Lado), 20 October 1900, franked at 25 Centimes with a Congo adhesive cancelled by the WHITE NILE TRAVELLING POST on the same day.

## UGANDAN ROUTE

The very small amount of mail sent by the Ugandan route that we have been able to find was handled by different Ugandan post offices.

Ugandan two Annas and one Rupee stamps on a letter addressed to Brussels which was very probably sent from Mont Wati in September 1905, with the handwritten endorsement 'via Mombassa par Wadelai'. The normal rate for a letter was 2½ Annas, but here the franking is the equivalent of 5 weight-steps! The reason for this completely excessive rate is that the sender Baillien had previously had three letters returned to him by the postal officer in Hoima, apparently because they were insufficiently franked. He was told that he would have to put 12½ annas on his letters if he wanted them to go via the Ugandan route.





# 11.

## Ruanda-Urundi

1916–1962



Starting in April 1916, Belgian troops divided into two brigades invaded German East Africa. Kigali was taken on 6 May 1916, Nyansa on 19 May. The south of Lake Victoria was under Belgian control by the end of August, the objective being Tabora.

A second brigade came from the West following the railway and took Usumbura at the beginning of June and Kigoma at the end of July. Tabora was taken on 19 September 1916.

Before overprinted stamps were available, the word RUANDA was added by typewriter on a handful of stamps only.

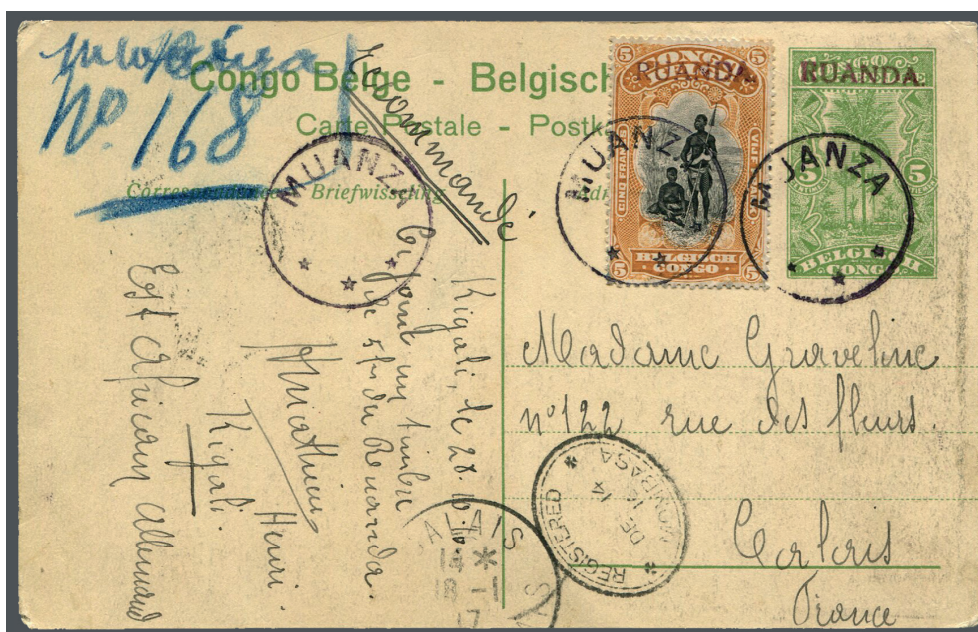




Letter written by Henrion, a war correspondent on a special mission, and attached to the main headquarters in Namirembe (Lake Victoria), posted to Sainte-Adresse in France. Manuscript censorship mark: "Vu pour censure militaire: (signé) Trentels" and large circular double handstamp with emblem CONGO BELGE \* CT. DES TROUPES DE L'EST\* printed in violet-grey. The double overprinted stamp with RUANDA added by typewriter was cancelled when it passed through Entebbe, 20 July 1916. On the reverse, transit postmark: Mombasa 24 JY 16 and arrival postmark: Sainte-Adresse 29 8 16.



General Tombeur ordered the overprinting of stamps of the Belgian Congo and their use in the newly occupied territory.



Registered postal stationery card, stamps overprinted RUANDA with additional 5Fr postage written in Kigali by Second Lieutenant Mathieu on 28 October 1916.

Undated Muanza cancellations and Mombasa registered datestamp, 14 December. Arrival datestamp of Calais, 18 January 1917.

In the text: "Please find attached a 5 Fr. stamp from Rwanda."



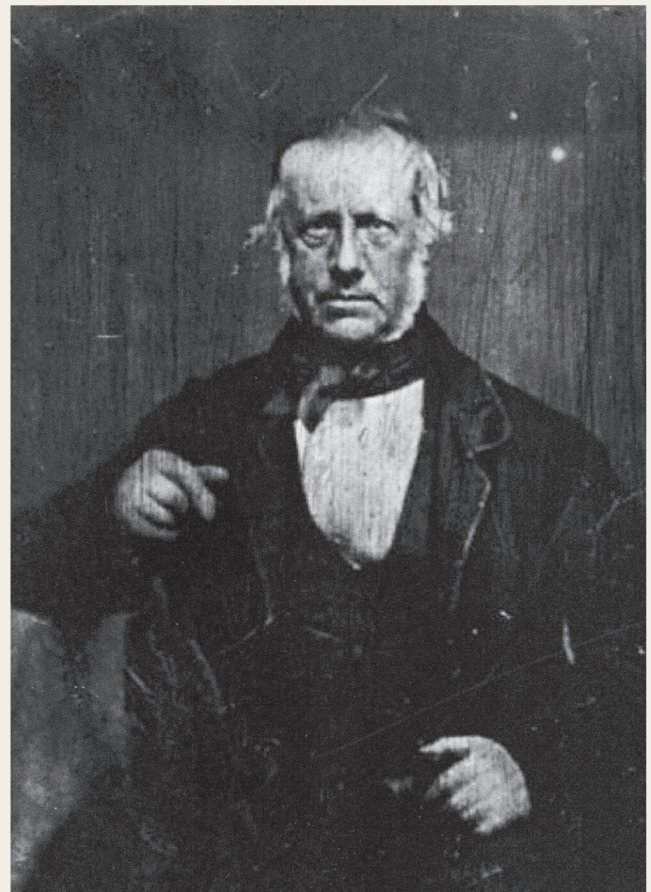
# 12.

## New Zealand

1822–1840

BARON CHARLES PHILIPPE  
HIPPOLYTE DE THIERRY AND  
THE HISTORY OF 'THIERRYAN  
TERRITORY' 1822–1840

Baron de Thierry.



Baron de Thierry was born in Brabant in Belgium. During his studies at Cambridge University he became friendly with two Maori chieftains. He managed to persuade them to sell him a 16,000-hectare estate with SOVEREIGN RIGHTS at Hokianga. He had the contract officially registered in London in 1822, after which he styled himself King of the “Thierryan Territory”. His pretensions to royalty lost him any credibility he might have had with potential investors.

In 1835, when de Thierry decided to establish himself as “Sovereign Chief of New Zealand” he found out that thirty-five Maori tribal chiefs had signed a declaration of independence, declaring New Zealand a sovereign state.

In 1840, the British Parliament drew up the Treaty of Waitangi which required that the Maori chiefs revoke all their earlier contracts, including both sales of land and the Declaration of Independence. The treaty further stated that the

chiefs had voluntarily ceded all their lands to the British crown, which also put an immediate end to Belgium’s colony in Hokianga.





Letter, sent from Hokianga during the Belgian period, carried by the barque 'Vigilant' which left Hokianga for the United Kingdom with a cargo of timber. It has been handstamped with the boxed step type 'SHIP LETTER DOVER', over-cancelled with the boxed 'DOVER INDIA LETTER'.

UK Ship Letter rate, 4d. Mileage rate Dover – London (80 miles), 8d, total to be collected: 1/-.



Letter written by Baron de Thierry himself. It was written after the 'Thierryan Territory period' when Baron de Thierry tried to take part in the gold rush in California. However, on his way from New Zealand to the U.S. he got stuck in Pitcairn Island and, shortly after, in Honolulu. He would never reach California.



Letter written by Baron de Thierry on Pitcairn Island and addressed to his sons, dated 12 April 1850. This letter was probably entrusted to the captain of a ship passing by Pitcairn Island.

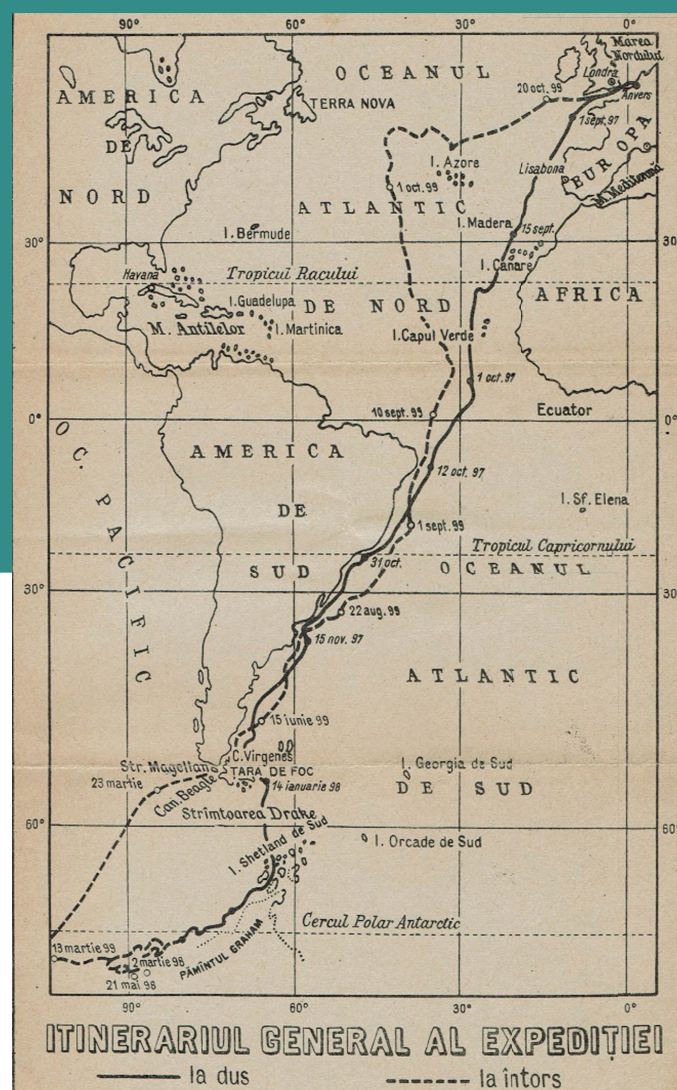


# 13.

## South Pole

1897–to date

The 1897-99 Belgian Antarctic Expedition left Antwerp on 16 August 1897 on board the 'Belgica' and led a renaissance in major Antarctic expeditions that would continue into WWI. With its multi-national, though mostly Belgian, staff and largely Belgian government sponsorship, it reached the Antarctic Peninsula in early 1898 by way of Madeira, Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo. On 22 January 1898 the expedition suffered its first of two losses when Norwegian sailor Carl August Wiencke was accidentally washed overboard. Belgian Army officer and expedition geophysical observer Émile Danco died from a heart condition on 5 June 1898. They were to remain ice-locked for a year until the crew cut their way out not without great exertion. The expedition had to endure over-wintering with inadequate food and without suitable clothing, becoming the first expedition to winter south of the Antarctic Circle. The expedition returned to Antwerp on 5 November 1899 to a heroes' welcome. Despite rampant scurvy,

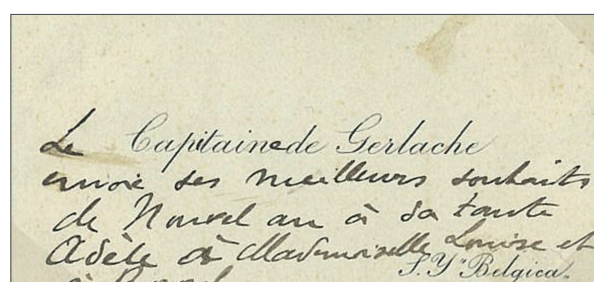


among the expedition's achievements was a full year of continuous meteorological observations and considerable charting and sightings.

The 'Belgica' arrived at Punta Arenas on 1 December 1897 and left on the 14<sup>th</sup> for the South Pole.



Small envelope and visiting card written by Adrien de Gerlache and franked with a Chilean 10 Centavos stamp cancelled at Magallanes on 11 December 1897 and forwarded to Ambères (Antwerp). On the enclosed card there was a correction of the word "Captain" to "Capitaine" made by de Gerlache. The text reads: "Capitaine de Gerlache sends his best wishes for the New Year to his Aunt Adèle, to Miss Louise and to Raoul. S.Y. Belgica".







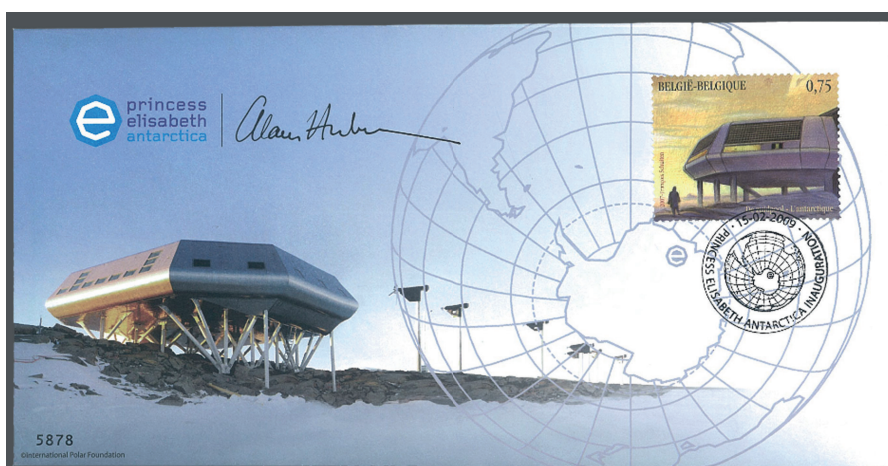
The famous illustrator Hergé designed this greetings card for the expedition. This example was sent by Baron Gaston de Gerlache on 1 January 1958 and enclosed in the illustrated expedition envelope.

### THE 'ROI BAUDOUIN' BASE

The International Geophysical Year (1957-58) was an opportunity for Belgium to showcase its place in Antarctica. An expedition led by Baron Gaston de Gerlache, the son of Adrian, left Antwerp on 12 November 1957. From the outset, the base had its own proper post office and used a special cancellation. The post office was officially opened on 5 January 1958.

### THE 'PRINCESSE ELISABETH' BASE

It was not until 2004 that the Belgian Government decided during a ministerial meeting to build a new base in Antarctica. The base was given the name Princess Elisabeth and was built during the International Polar Year 2007/08.



Commemorative postcard with the cancellation on the first day of the opening of the Princess Elisabeth Base on 15 February 2009, signed by the expedition leader, Alain Hubert.

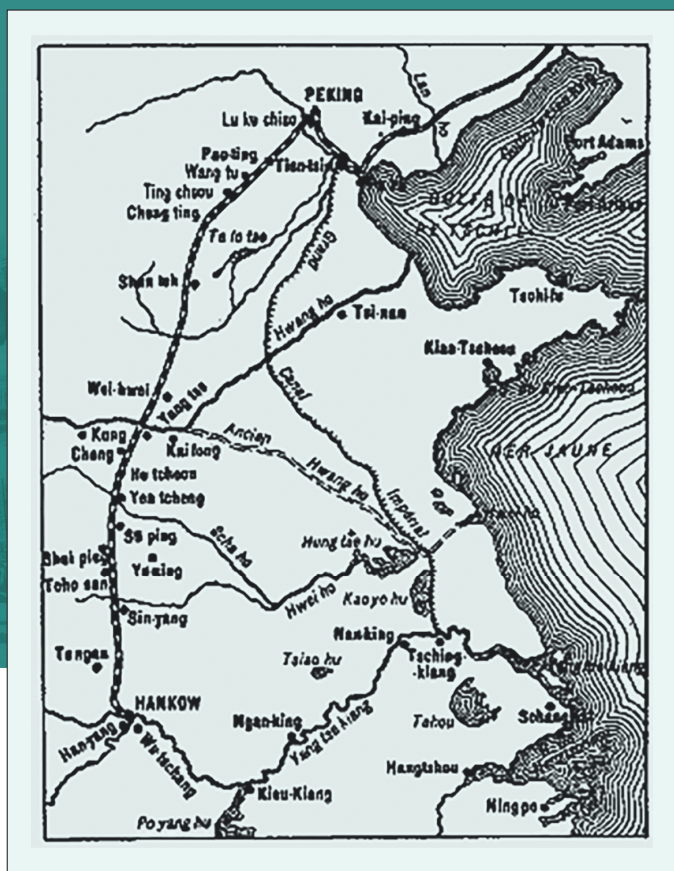


# 14.

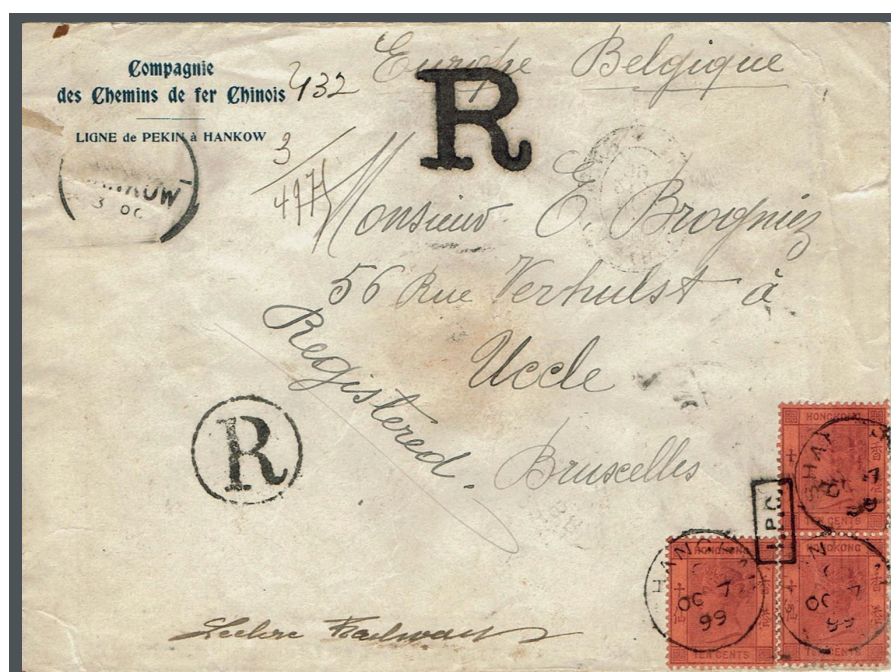
## China

1897–1929

Leopold II made several attempts to colonise parts of China. Even before he had actually acceded to the throne, he had suggested in 1859 that a Belgian expeditionary corps should be attached to the French and British forces on their punitive campaign against China. The plan had been to demand an island in the estuary of the Yangtze River in exchange. The Belgian Government did not follow this up. Several years later, the King tried to use the Congo Free State, which we must remember was his own private fiefdom, as an intermediary in another unsuccessful attempt to establish representation in Peking.



From a commercial point of view, the success of the Société d'Etudes des Chemins de Fer en Chine (The Society for the Study of Railways in China) was evident and the Belgians successfully won the concession for the Hankow to Peking railway line. Belgian engineers under the leadership of Jean Jadot built this important line, and a selection of mail from the Belgians there is displayed.



Registered letter from Hankow to Uccle (Ukkel) via Shanghai, 3 October 1899, franked at Shanghai with three 10c Hong Kong stamps cancelled in the British Post Office in Shanghai and also with a boxed I.P.O. (Imperial Post Office) cachet tying the stamps to the cover to avoid postage due in the event of the stamps falling off or being removed. The letter went via Hong Kong, Brindisi, and Brussels, arriving on 12 November in Uccle.



Registered letter from the Consulat de Belgique à Tientsin to the "Legation de France" in Peking, 9 February 1898. The letter is franked with a 5c cancelled "R" and a 10c cancelled with a Pakua cancellation of Tientsin. Tientsin "Dollar" cancellation on the front and Peking Dollar cancellation on the reverse on arrival.



After the Boxer Uprising of 1899 to 1901, Belgium financed an expeditionary force to China. In exchange, Belgium was given a concession of 46 hectares in the port of Tientsin which was to last until 1929. Again, the Belgians there sent mail through the various foreign post offices which were available to them in the city.

The Belgian Government had intended opening a post office in the Chinese concessions. Trial overprints were printed in 1907, but following German complaints, the project was abandoned, although a few rare examples of the overprinted stamps have survived.



**TYPE I**  
9 mm overprint, no modification of the value and 'SPECIMEN' overprint.



**TYPE II**  
11 mm overprint with new value added and 'Specimen' overprint.



**TYPE III**  
10 mm overprint with new value added and 'SPECIMEN' overprint missing on this example. The only known copy to date without a 'SPECIMEN' overprint.

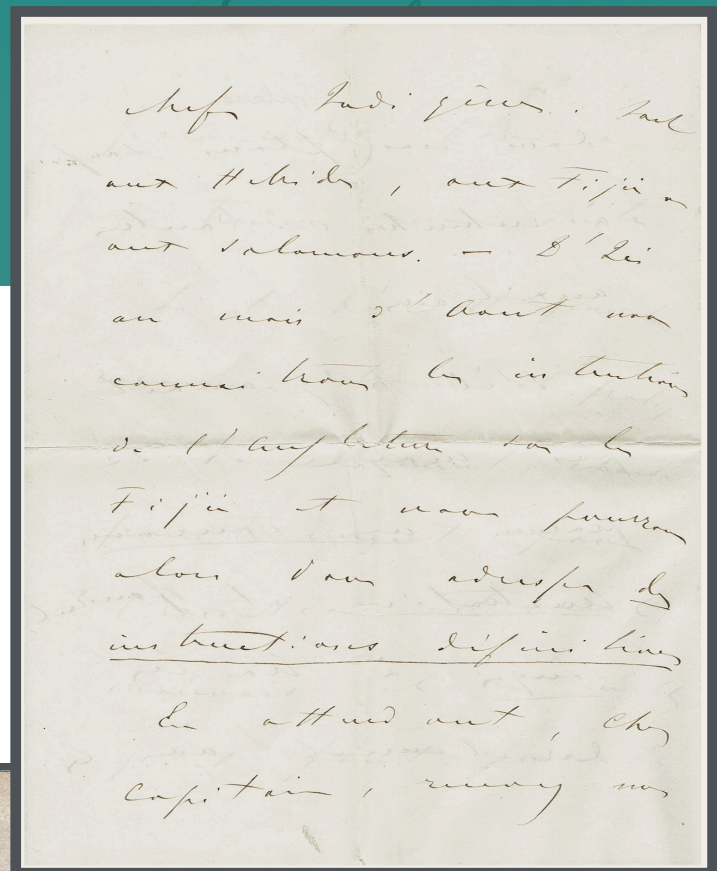


15.

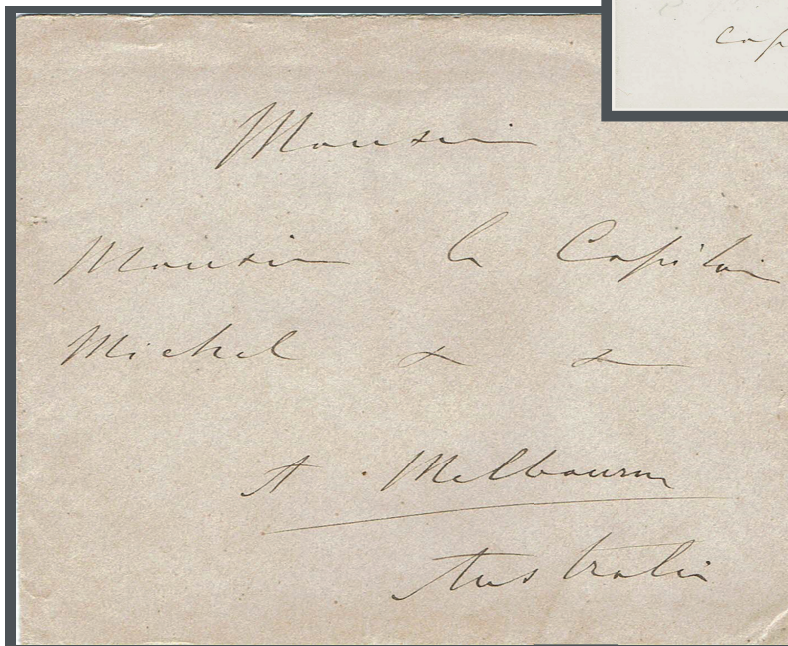
Monsieur A. Van Etvelde

## Failed Attempts at Colonisation

Leopold II had several personal advisors whom he sent all over the world throughout his reign to unearth new territories which it might be worthwhile colonising. Although several of these attempts are well-documented, there are a number of instances where few historical documents or items of postal history have survived. Sometimes, we only have as little as a single letter which can reveal something about an episode from its contents, and a few such examples are shown.



Letter written by the Duc de Brabant dated 21 July 1861 in which he writes of his disappointment at the lack of progress and insists on other solutions being found "by using local chiefs in the Hebrides as well as in Fiji and the Solomons ...."





A deputation of two Belgians was sent to the New Hebrides, to Fiji, Vanuatu and to the Solomon Islands in 1861 to prospect on behalf of the Duc de Brabant, the future King Leopold II. Poorly prepared, and with a contact who appeared not to be up to the task, the mission was a failure. One of the rare pieces of evidence of this mission is a letter written by Leopold II to one of the two members of the mission.

Consul Edmond van Eetvelde, who was close to Leopold II, was entrusted with searching in Thailand for a suitable opportunity for colonisation.



Letter headed CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL DE BELGIQUE DANS L'INDE BRITANNIQUE (Belgian Consulate in British India) written by Ed. Van Eetvelde and sent to his parents in Belgium. Sent from Calcutta in November 1878 and postmarked with the duplex cancellation CALCUTTA/NOV 22. The letter went via Brindisi and arrived in Moll, Belgium, on 15 December 1878.



