

Royal History Commission

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Annual report 2010

Like every year, the Commission held four sessions last year, on 20 March, 26 June, 9 October and 18 December. The Office met on the same dates.

1. General introduction

The celebration of the Commission's 175th anniversary in 2009 continued to have repercussions in 2010. On Thursday, 4 February 2010 the Office and a few members of the Commission were received at the Royal Palace by H.M. Prince Philippe. A copy of the jubilee volume of the *Newsletter of the Royal History Commission* we mentioned in our previous annual report was given to him by President Jean-Marie Duvosquel. The Prince expressed much sympathy and interest in the activities of the RHC in the meeting that ensued. The anniversary of the Commission in 2009 also provided other benefits in 2010. The acts of the two international colloquia held on this occasion were published in the *Newsletter* in 2010, as mentioned here below.

2. Composition of the Commission in 2010

The composition of the Commission remained relatively unchanged in 2010. Only our colleague Ludo Milis expressed a desire to be given an honorary rank. In doing so, a spot opened up for an effective member. During the 18 December session, Professor Jeroen Deploige was elected a member. This excellent medievalist linked to the Ghent University was particularly dedicated to electronic publishing of medieval manuscripts of the former Netherlands (within the scope of the 'Narrative Sources' database that has often been mentioned in the annual reports of the RHC) these past years. His presence will indeed reinforce the actions of our commission in this field.

3. New publications

3.1 During the jubilee year 2009, the RHC deployed significant efforts in publishing monographs and reference works (see our previous annual report). In 2010 the Commission actually kept up its publishing pace, as several important works were published in 2010.

The much awaited publication of the rest of the charters of the Counts of Flanders arrived thanks to the work of our colleague Thérèse de HEMPTINNE and our late colleague Adriaan VERHULST (†), with the collaboration of Lieve DE MEY, *De oorkonden der graven van Vlaanderen ('The charters of the Counts of Flanders')(July 1128 – September 1191). II. Edition. Volume III. Regering van Filips van de Elzas ('Government of Philip I of Alsace') (Second part: 1178-1191)* (Brussels, 2009, CXXXI-457 p. in-4°). The third and last part of this impressive edition contains 324 charters promulgated by Count Philippe of Alsace (and his wives Elisabeth de Vermandois and Mathilde de Portugal) during the second part of his reign, the period from October 1178 (his return to Terre Sainte) to the announcement of his death in Flanders in the summer of 1191. These

termini are respectively linked to volumes I (1988) and II (2001) of the edition regarding Counts Thierry and Philippe of Alsace and the edition of charters of Baudouin VIII and Baudouin IX, Counts of Flanders by Walter Prevenier (1964). This way, the gap between 1071-1128 (edition by F. Vercauteren, 1938) and 1191-1206 (edition by W. Prevenier) has been entirely filled. The publication of *Part I: Introduction*, which among others deals with diplomatic aspects of the charters of counts during the period 1128-1191 and the alphabetic table of the two volumes related to the reign of Count Philippe is planned for 2012. This index is already finished and while waiting for the publication in book form, it has been made available to researchers on our website: http://www.crhistorie.be/en/biblioNumerique/electronInd_en.html.

A second work published the entire text of a remarkable document of the 17th century: Alain LOTTIN, *Chronique mémorial des choses mémorables par moy Pierre-Ignace Chavatte* ('*Memorial chronicals of memorable things by me, Pierre-Ignace Chavatte*') (1657-1693). *Le mémorial d'un humble tisserand lillois au grand siècle* ('*The memorial of a humble weaver from Lille in the splendid century*') (Brussels, 2010, xxxiii-512 p. in-8°). The author of this text tells us of his work, his existential problems, the influence of Catholicism in the city, popular entertainment and leisure, and climate. However, he also bears witness to great history, armed conflicts, and the passage of former provinces of the Spanish Netherlands to French sovereignty. He did not care for Louis XIV and his troops that impoverished Flemish and Hainaut peasants rather than helping Vienna besieged by the Turks. He was attentive to the facts and actions of the Prince of Orange in which he secretly had hopes. In other words, this work also provides a rather unique overview of the mental environment and world of an ordinary man in modern times.

The third book published in 2010 comes from Jean-Louis VAN BELLE, *Deux livres d'expéditions de marbres d'un marchand de Beaumont-Rance en Hainaut* ('*Two books on marble expeditions from a merchant of Beaumont-Rance in Hainaut*') (1769-1784) (Brussels, 2010, lxii-275 p. in-8°). The conservation of these types of documents today is considered extremely rare for the era. For the marble industry of this period, they are the only documents. The examination of these expedition books of the significant marble company of Pierre-Joseph Thomas associated for some time to Jean-Joseph Boutée, his brother-in-law, provides a fruitful harvest of data on the Hainaut marble industry and its international commerce, especially to France. Rich indications related to the transport conditions of marble and its costs, to the types of production (tables, altars, chimneys, slabs, etc.), to the clientele (individuals, abbeys) are revealed in the pages of these manuscripts, constituting a welcome contribution to the economic history of modern times.

- 3.2** As mentioned above, the activities within the scope of the 175th anniversary of the Commission still have repercussions on the publishing programme of the RHC in 2010. The first part of the Bulletin of the Royal History Commission of 2010 (vol. 176) contains the acts of the international colloquium 'Digital Edition of Sources in Europe: Achievements, Problems and Prospects' held in Brussels in April 2009 (p. 55-166). Besides the introductory texts of our colleagues Karel Velle (who also spoke as general archivist and host of this colloquium) and Ludo Milis, this volume contains six contributions from Belgians, French, British, Dutch and Austrian researchers who have shared their results on the digital edition of sources (mainly medieval ones). The titles of these contributions and the names of their authors have already been mentioned in the previous annual report. These texts – a summary of which is also available on the RHC website – show that new information technology can provide a particular stimulation to

scientific publishing methods of historical sources, as regards content analysis, treatment possibilities, and of course, consultation availability.

Volume 2010 of the Bulletin also contains a contribution from Jelle HAEMERS, *Geletterd verzet. Diplomatiek, politiek en herinneringscultuur van opstandelingen in de laatmiddeleeuwse en vroegmoderne stad* ('Literate resistance. Diplomacy, politics and memorial culture of the insurgents in the late Middle Ages and early modern city')(case: Ghent and Bruges) (p. 5-54). Three documents of the last quarter of the 15th century, written by Ghent and Bruges insurgents, are published in it, shedding new light on the characteristics of their revolt and on the corporate thought that encouraged them.

The other scientific colloquium that was held in 2009 on "Royal chanceries and scriptoria in the Low Countries 10th-15th centuries", was very rich content-wise, which is why the Commission decided to dedicate an entire second issue of the Bulletin (176, 2010, 2) to the publishing of articles that were presented during this much appreciated symposium. Since the meeting only took place at the end of last year, the definite versions were only perfected and ready to be printed in 2010, meaning that the publication of this issue of our newsletter will be published with a slight delay in 2011. In order to optimise the distribution of these contributions, the Commission has also planned to produce a simultaneous issue in book form.

4. Projects of publications in progress

Several articles evaluated by the Commission during 2010 are now ready to be published; they will be published as articles in the next issue (177, 2011) of the Commission's *Bulletin*. It specifically regards texts by Claude BRUNEEL, *La pratique du théâtre à Lessines et dans les campagnes du Hainaut. L'interdiction des autorités en 1786-1788* ('The practice of theatre in Lessines and the Hainaut countryside. The banning of authorities in 1786-1788), by Bert VERWERFT, *Een blauwdruk van het Bourgondische beleid in het graafschap Vlaanderen : de regentschapsinstructie van 1387* ('A blueprint of the Burgundian policy in the county of Flanders: the reign instructions of 1387'), by Véronique FLAMMANG and Marie VAN EEKENRODE, *Le jardin de Hainaut ou la mise en scène d'un comté. Essai de typologie et clés d'interprétation* ('The small garden of Hainaut or the setting up of a county. Essay on typology and keys for interpretation') and finally by Florence CLOSE, *La charte de Richer de Liège du 16 novembre 932. Une copie historique à réhabiliter* ('The chart of Richer of Liège dated 16 November 932. A historical copy to be rehabilitated').

Two voluminous works that have already been announced in the previous *Bulletin* have unfortunately been delayed and will therefore only be published sometime next year. The very intensive correction of the first proofs of the work by the late Maurits VAN DURME, *Inventaire détaillé des copies Gachard et Morel-Fatio prises sur les documents de Simancas et conservées aux Archives générales du Royaume à Bruxelles* ('Detailed inventory of the Gachard et Morel-Fatio copies taken from the documents of Simancas and conserved at the National Archives in Brussels'), done by our colleague Gustaaf Janssens was finished in 2010. We now await the second proof. The other project we talked about previously by Mr Jean-Pol WEBER was preparing for publication the thesis on taxation in Luxembourg between 1360 and 1565, by the late Roger PETIT, which is well underway. The index is ready, the translations from German have been reviewed and the text will be submitted in early 2011 for a final revision to the three members of the

Commission and an external specialist, Professor Isabelle Devos of Ghent University. Publishing this volume in 2011 is therefore a realistic goal.

For the reasons mentioned above, the volume 2010-2 of the *Bulletin* containing the acts of the colloquium will be published with some delay in 2011.

The RHC has also requested an ISBN number for the monographs published in 2010. This number is important for the traceability and evaluation systems of scientific works (see also under 9, 'Miscellaneous'). An ISSN number for the regular publication of the *Bulletin* will be requested for the same reasons.

5. International and national partnerships

5.1 'Porta Historica', the international network of active organisations in publishing sources, has been mentioned several times in previous annual reports. This year, the founding members were invited on 16 and 17 September 2010 at École des Chartes in Paris to attend a symposium on the ADEEL project ('Album de diplomatique européenne en ligne'). During this workshop, the possibilities of electronic publishing of medieval documents (specifically charters) were commented in detail using practical demonstrations. Mainly the possible exploitation of these digital documents in the field of teaching and within the scope of palaeography courses was presented. This meeting was open to researchers who are not part of Porta Historica, while the second day was reserved for a network meeting. At this meeting, the problems of mutual exchange of information were addressed, as well as the expansion of the partnership to new participating organisations. The composition of the Bureau of Porta Historica was also modified, among others by the appointment of a new president: our colleague Andrea Rzhacek (Austria) will succeed Peter Sigmond (president a.i., the Netherlands). The delegation of the RHC in Porta Historica will be also somewhat different in the future: the secretary-treasurer Guy Vanthemsche succeeded our colleague Thérèse de Hemptinne as permanent representative of the Commission within this partnership.

5.2 In Belgium, the RHC has made major steps forward in its partnership with Ghent University (Medieval teaching and research unit). Both partners have jointly introduced with a few other partners (among others the State Archives) a grant request from the Hercules Foundation of the Flemish community, destined to finance expensive equipment for scientific research. This database can actually be accessed online (www.narrative-sources.be). It was also decided within the scope of this project to integrate 'Diplomata Belgica' into this file. It regards a project that has preoccupied the RHC for several years already: the digital publication of all acts, which have been produced in our regions before 1250. A researcher paid by the Commission, Mr Philippe Demonty, has been charged with this crucial work instrument for several years (see here below and also the previous annual reports). The Commission and Mr Philippe Demonty will now collaborate intensively with the 'Narrative Sources' team in order to integrate the data of 'Diplomata Belgica' into the new database. A unique work instrument for Belgian and foreign medievalists will see the light of day.

For some time already there has been an agreement with the State Archives to index the diplomatic correspondence between Vienna and Brussels (1740/48-1790). This work yielded concrete results at the start of 2010 through the publication of the first part of this index. In order to allow for the finalisation of the group, the contract with the State Archives has been extended for the last time in 2010 to allow the collaborator to finalize this major project (see also point 8 here below).

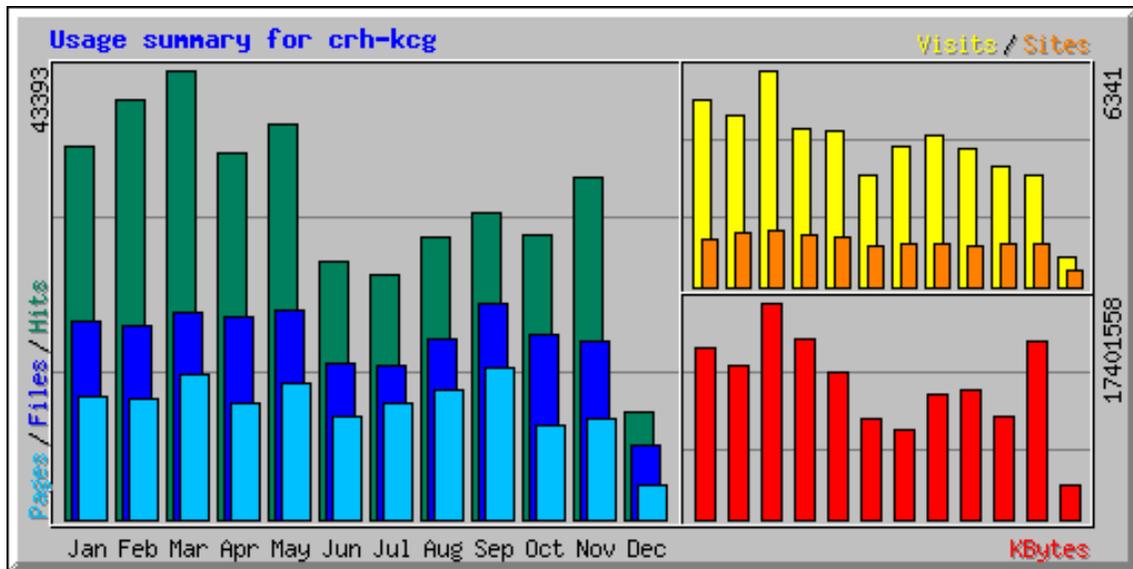
The agreement concluded with the Université libre de Bruxelles in view of editing the Charters of the Dukes of Brabant by Professor Alain Dierkens and Dr David Guillardian (see also previous annual reports) is still in progress. The finalisation of this project, previously announced for 2010, will finally take place some time in 2011.

6. Bryce and Mary Lyon Award 2010

After attributing the Henri Pirenne Prize in 2009 (see previous *Bulletin*) for the first time, the other biannual prize awarded by the Commission was honoured this year. The Bryce and Mary Lyon Award was started on the initiative of American medievalist the late B. Lyon and his wife who had closely collaborated with the Commission in the past. The prize is attributed to the youngest authors (aged no more than 30) who have published under the vintage year of the two previous years an article in the *Bulletin* or a monograph in one of the collections of the Commission. This young author is therefore encouraged to continue down the road of scientific publication of historical texts. This year, the honour was bestowed on a French medievalist, Mr Jean-Charles Bédague who wrote the following study: *Archives, archivage et archivistique à la collégiale de Saint-Omer à la fin du Moyen Âge à la lumière d'un inventaire de 1480* ('Archives, archiving and archival science at the collegial church of Saint-Omer at the end of the Middle Ages at the light of an inventory of 1480') (published in the volume 2010-2 of the *Bulletin*). He is studying the significant amount of archives of the collegial church of Saint-Omer, which constitutes an exceptional source for studying medieval and modern archivist practice. Among its 3,700 articles one can find a number of important original charters, but also several archive inventories. The first of them, dating from 1480, deserve special attention. Compared to many other inventories of the same era, it has the advantage of being able to be placed in context and show several particularities, such as being organised according to potential adversaries of the church, in an almost uniquely defensive logic. It is especially the confrontation of notices of the inventory with the original documents that helps raise the veil on classification and archiving practices at the collegial church of Saint-Omer at the end of the Middle Ages.

7. Website

It is increasingly obvious that the website constitutes an important tool to increase the Commission's popularity. According to the usage figures of the website, there were 43,313 visits, 104,651 page views and a total of 64,63 GB of data transferred (between the start of February and end of December 2009). This year (from January to December 2010 included), these figures were clearly superior: 49,503 visits, 132,752 page views and 124,51 GB of data transmitted. Following the lack of data for January 2009, an exact comparison between these data is unfortunately not possible, but one can observe that it is mainly the volume of data transmitted that has considerably increased.



This increase is perhaps due to the enrichment of the content of our site. As mentioned in the previous annual report, the tables of contents and a few expired publications (as a PDF) have been made available online; moreover, an access to the digital version of the minutes of the Belgian Labour Party (1894-1940) has been established. As well, this year we add the index of *The charters of the Counts of Flanders* (see here above). The first part of the edition index of the city of Bruges accounts (1280-1319), published by the late Carlos Wyffels and done by Ms Katrien Vandewoude-Vandermaesen, will be also soon put on the website in order to facilitate the viewing already published volumes. The State Archives have promised, through the of word our colleague Karel Velle, national archivist, to collaborate on digitising other works of the RHC actually out of stock.

8. Scientific collaborators

The collaboration of Mr Philippe DEMONTY has already been addressed in the 'National partnerships' section. This external paid collaborator has been working for several years already in the (electronic) publishing of charters of our regions between the years 1200 to 1250 (an extension of the 'Diplomata Belgica' work instrument). It was agreed with the collaborators of the 'Narrative Sources' database of Ghent University that he would now collaborate with them intensively to integrate his data into the database (see point 5.2). The contract that binds Mr Demonty to the Commission will be adapted to show this at the start of 2011; the new version of this contract (to be signed at the start of March 2011 at the latest) will extend until 2013.

The collaboration with Ms Catherine Thomas, charged with realising the digitised indexation of the diplomatic correspondence between Vienna and Brussels (1740/48-1790) in collaboration with the State Archives has also already been addressed here above (see point 5.2). The work already supplied (Dirk LEYDER & Catherine THOMAS, *La correspondance ministérielle entre Vienne et Bruxelles (1749-1789). Index raisonné 17 août 1753-15 juin 1770* ('Ministerial correspondence between Vienna and Brussels (1749-1789). Reasoned index 17 August 1753-15 June 1770'), Brussels, AGR, 2010, 3 vol., 2064 pp.) has been enthusiastically welcomed by the Commission. In all probability this project will be successfully finished some time next year.

Mrs Katrien Vandewoude-Vandermaesen is continuing the indexation of the publication of the city of Bruges accounts (1280-1319) published by the late Carlos Wyffels, member

of the Commission. The first part of the index is now finished and will consequently be made available to researchers on the RHC website (see point 7) during 2011.

9. Miscellaneous

It arose from the discussions held during the colloquium '*Royal chanceries and scriptoria in the Low Countries 10th-15th centuries*' in which many young researchers participated that pressure to publish is always greater on the new generation of scientists. The scientific 'yield' today is also measured by bibliometric techniques in the scope of which different periodicals are attributed a different classification (and therefore a different weighting in the evaluation). Young researchers might risk moving away from publishing historical sources: an occupation that takes much time and work and that is not always appreciated at its true worth in current classification systems. It is therefore important that regular publications like our *Bulletin* are not forgotten or badly treated within the scope of establishing classification. Consequently, the Commission decided to send a letter to those responsible for FWO Flanders, FNRS, CIUF and VLIR in order to attract their attention to this problem and ask them to give scientific text publishing a respectable place in the evaluation mechanisms of young historians.

Finally, let us mention that this year the Commission has asked graphic designer Wouter Soudan to create a logo. This acknowledgement will undoubtedly reinforce the visual presentation of the RHC on posters, printed material, etc. Much considering of options was done prior to creating this logo, as the text below shows, written by the author of this graphical work, Dr Wouter Soudan:

"The Royal Historical Commission has asked the typographical design firm Rhythmus.be to create a logo. The new logo is to give a face to the oldest historical organisation of the country and be used on all publications of the Commission. The bilingual character of the history and historiography of Belgium also has to be underlined. Rhythmus searched for an appropriate symbol for every aspect of the declaration of the mission and activities of the Commission, brought together in a new emblem.

The notion of passing time is essential for our historical conscience, which is why the form of the base of the logo is the well-known symbol of time: the hourglass. The curves shaped as an eight, the lemniscate, symbolise the cyclic rhythm of the centuries. This well-known symbol was modernised by merging it into a single image with another historical icon. The muse of history is Clio: she is the 'Proclaimer'. She is depicted with a tablet and pen or parchment. In fact humanity keeps the memory of its past thanks to the written form. Two pen marks form the symbol of the hourglass: the historical conscience and the historiography are therefore combined into a single image. The form is that of a ball pen: a reference to the royal title of the Commission. The two penholders express the bilingual character of the Commission. Historians collaborate from the North and South of the country to the memory of our regions; they write by going beyond the limits of language and by doing so, coming closer to one another.

The meeting of national languages forms the neck of the hourglass. The pen points of the communities therefore form the common historical conscience.

This symbolism was combined with a contemporary note. The emblem is represented in the background by a visualisation screen: the symbol of new media. Today we write, study, read, explore and classify using the computer. In the mean time, history has become familiar with the screen, going from microfilm to touch screen. The digitisation of sources of archives, the technology of databases and information belong to the modern arsenal of historians.

The acronyms 'CRH' and 'KCG' have also been included in the logo. In order to increase visibility, also in a small size, lower case letters were chosen. Since the French acronym 'CRH' does not have a letter with a tail, it was an obvious choice to place it above. The stem of the 'k' in the Dutch acronym 'kcg' offers support to the 'c'. The symmetry of the 'h' and

'g' make for a very tight letter. The limits of graphical design have therefore nicely been integrated into the logo.

The colours (orange, dark green and pale green) have already previously been used by the Commission and will from that point on be applied coherently to the new logo as house colours in the refreshed version.”