

BELGIUM ROYAL FLAGS SINCE INDEPENDENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Belgium was created following the 1830 Belgian Revolution, when the Southern Provinces of the Netherlands seceded. The people were mainly Roman Catholic Flemings (Dutch speakers in Flanders, Northern Belgium) and Walloons (French speakers in Wallonia, Southern Belgium), compared to the Protestant-dominated Dutch Reformed people of the north of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. A provisional government for Belgium was established and independence declared on 4 October 1830. The European Powers agreed to the formation of Belgium as a constitutional monarchy and on 7 February 1831 the Belgian Constitution was proclaimed. The search for a King then began. King William I of the Netherlands was not happy to have lost territory, and it was not until 1839 when the Treaty of London, signed by the European powers, recognised Belgium as an independent and neutral country and the border with Belgium was finally recognised by the Dutch.

KING LEOPOLD I (21 July 1831 – 10 December 1865)

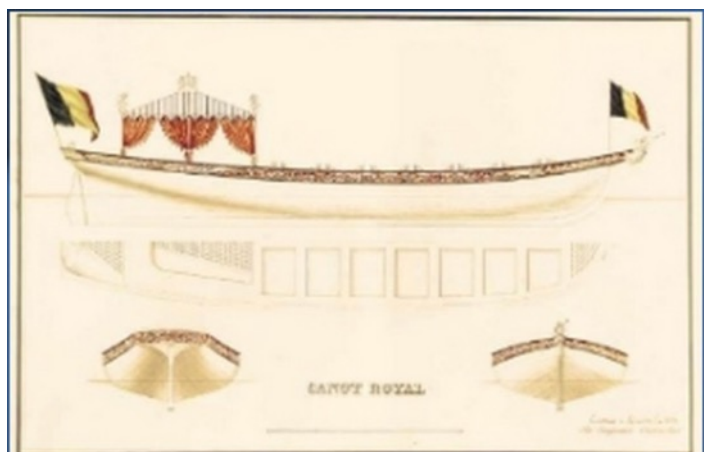
On 21 July 1831 Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was solemnly inaugurated in Brussels as King of the Belgians. Although of foreign origin, the new dynasty he established was rapidly and completely adjusted to Belgium and it adopted the same emblems as the country. The unity between nation and dynasty is clearly apparent by their sharing the same coat of arms – Sable a lion rampant Or, armed and langued Gules – i.e. the old Brabant lion, which is officially prescribed by Article 125¹ of the Belgian fundamental law, together with the red, yellow and black national colours.

1.1 The Royal Barge (1835)

During the 19th Century, when a head of state pays an official visit to a city which is a port, it is a custom and a tradition to invite him on board a ceremonial boat. Following the King's recommendation, the government decided to build such a boat by the Lecarpentier shipyard in Antwerp. That Royal Barge was 12m long, 3m wide and 1,6m depth². It was the property of the Marine's department, flying service, and was equipped with 14 frame rowers.

The Antwerp Newspaper dated 15 July 1835 describes the royal barge: "that boat is 12 m long, painted in white. The bow is decorated by a statue with unfurled wings in golden wood. The external edges are embellished with a garland of laurel leaves, and cornucopias in gold, on an amaranth background. At the stern, a magnificent tent in red silk decorated in the corners with golden bronze lions, the royal dome is doubled of red silk and the top is completed by a gold crown".

The Royal Barge was launched in July 1835. For the first time, the Royal couple get on board from Brussels to Antwerp, through the river Rupel, to pass in review our military flotilla. Later, Leopold I will use the royal barge during his visits to Antwerp, Ghent and Ostend.³ The flag hoisted on the Royal Barge (1) was the national tricolour flag because the royal flag was only adopted later in 1858.



(1)

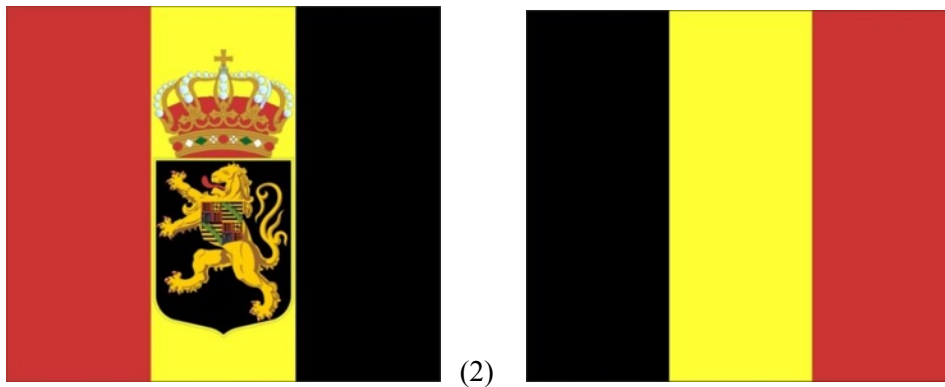
1.2 The flag of 1858.

The evolution of the Belgian royal arms, from the first months of the reign of Leopold I until the final modifications introduced after the First World War, has been explained elsewhere ⁴; but it should be noted here that the coat of arms used by Leopold I varied during the more than twenty - five years before it became subject to a legal text. It is worthwhile mentioning that this coat of arms was blazoned for the first time in a decree regarding a flag.

The first Belgian royal flag appeared in 1858. The Royal Decree of 15 June 1858 described it as follows: “*The Belgian royal flag is red, yellow and black like the national flag. The yellow stripe is charged across 15/16s of the width by a shield of arms, Sable a lion rampant Or armed and langued Gules, bearing on its shoulder an escutcheon quarterly of England and Saxony; the shield is surrounded by the royal crown*” ^{5 6} (2).

During the reign of Leopold I, the royal flag served twice on the Royal Sloop in the roadstead of Antwerp. It was hoisted in the front of the sloop, the national flag flying at the stern.

It is possible that Leopold II had the same flag hoisted when he went to England on board a Belgian steamer, but there is no evidence of it. ⁷.



In any case this royal flag was accidentally discovered in 1909 in the barracks of the Pontonier Engineers in Antwerp, when a warehouse keeper was cutting small silk handkerchiefs from it! At the present time this flag is preserved at the Royal Museum of the Army and Military History in Brussel (3) (3a), and is exhibited with other souvenirs of the first Belgian Royal Navy. Its poor state of conservation does not permit to be taken out of the glass case. ⁸ The Royal Arms are painted on a shield which is sewn only on the reverse of the flag.



(3)

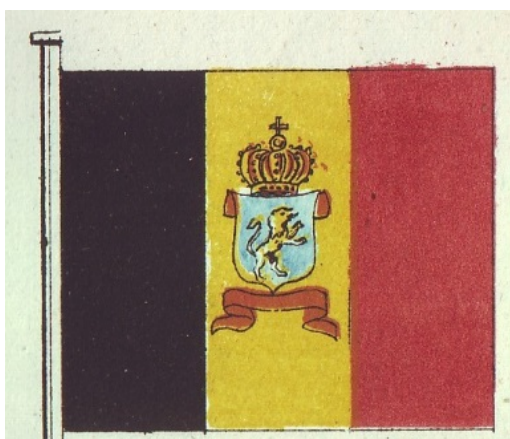
(3a) (left and right)

1.3 Different representations of a Royal flag 1844 to 1865

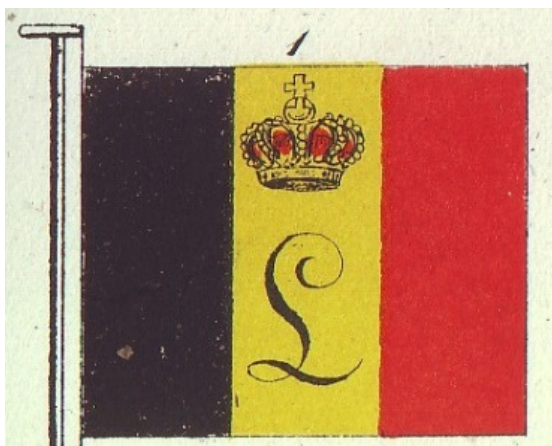
It is surprising that no reproduction of this flag could be found anywhere for many years. On the contrary, most flag books had meanwhile been encumbered by drawings of purely imaginary royal flags of Belgium or relied on unreliable sources.

1.3.1 Depperman & Ruschke 1844

While any Royal flag was not adopted before 1858, different books published a flag. Around 1844, Depperman & Ruschke ⁹ gave a tricolour royal flag “Königlich” bearing in its centre a crowned azure shield, the lion contourné Or, and a red scroll without motto (plate 2) (4). The same book gave another tricolour “Kriegsschiff” with a cipher “L”, in black, royally crowned in its centre (pl. 56) (5). Such a flag is probably a bad interpretation of the pennon of the “Corps de Partisans” of Captain Capiamont ¹⁰ (6), a flag actually used about 1832 and now preserved in the Museum of Army in Brussels; but this flag belonged to the cavalry not to the navy!



(4)



(5)



(6)

1.3.2 Norie & Hobbs 1848

In 1848, the *Illustration of the Maritime Flags of All Nations* by Norie and Hobbs ¹¹ published a Belgian royal flag, « Standard of Belgium » (7) this is a flag which did not exist at that time, but is apparently a version of the Dutch royal standard.



(7) (8)



1.3.3 *Le Gras 1858*

The same pattern can be found in the *Album des Pavillons* by Le Gras¹² in 1858 (8). It is shown there on plate 9, together with a royal pennant (9) and a royal broad pennant (10)¹³. I have pointed out that the sea flag (“*pavillon*”) has three unequal stripes as on the French sea flag, which is unusual in Belgium.



(10)

Le Gras specifies explicitly the respective uses of these three flags, and the honours to be paid thereto. In this period, however, the Belgian Navy was very small and such honours are highly improbable.

Moreover, Le Gras speaks about the « *Prince d'Orange* » as heir of the Belgian throne, although everyone knows - and knew - that this prince was heir to the crown of the Netherlands. Therefore, it may be that Le Gras for want of something better, used for Belgium all the information he had received about Dutch flags and protocol¹⁴.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that Le Gras' album became a great success and was for many years imitated by later authors - even by the Belgian Marine Board itself - while the form of the real royal was ignored.

1.3.4 *Bromme 1862*

Bromme¹⁵ in his Atlas published in 1862, plate 1, N°2, shows a royal flag « *Köningsflagge* » (11) similar to the one published in the *Flaggen Almanach* by Depperman & Ruschke around 1844 but, with a larger shield. Bromme also publishes under N°1, a royal flag « *Belgien Standarte* » with the cipher of Leopold I (12), also taken back from Depperman & Ruschke but the cipher is only fimbriated in black.

The blue shield instead of black was perhaps a printer's mistake.



(11)



(12)

1.3.5 Steenbergen 1865

In his book dating from 1865, Steenbergen also gives the same flag and pennant as Le Gras; under n°.1195, he presents a navy flag strongly similar to the flag mentioned in the royal decree of 1858, although the quartered escutcheon on the shoulder of the lion is missing (13). He also publishes (N°1196) the same sea flag and pennant than Le Gras but with small differences in the drawing of the coat of arms (14).



(13)



(14)

2. King LEOPOLD II (17 December 1865 – 17 December 1909)

2.1 Belgian administration 1886.

In April 1886 the Belgian Marine Board decided to issue a booklet with the flags in use by Belgian ships ¹⁶, in order to satisfy the queries of foreign naval authorities.

As a flag for the King, the Queen, and the Princes, this booklet shows the same drawing as Le Gras, but with a little escutcheon of Britain and Saxony quarterly on the shoulder of the lion (15). This is rather curious because the Board - which, as we will see, was not ignorant of the royal decree of June 1858 - interpreted it erroneously; desiring a drawing of the correct royal flag it followed an unofficial pattern to be found in a contemporary foreign book of flags!



(15)



Until 1914, that booklet answered to all information needed by foreign legations or naval authorities and, the same mistake was repeated with an exception. By a note dated 30 May 1905, the Marine Board transmitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a certified copy of the royal decree of 15 June 1858 with a drawing. (16)



(16)

It shows the correct flag of Leopold I, but with an escutcheon of Saxony in accordance with the royal decree of 15 July 1880 concerning the arms of the Royal Family. Moreover, whereas the normal flag was 13:15 in proportion, it was here given as 2:3, the flag being divided vertically 30:33:37, which is quite unusual in Belgium¹⁷. There is no evidence that such a royal flag was ever manufactured or used.

This drawing of 1905 didn't put a stop to the supply of the 1886 plate by the Marine Board to foreign legations until 1914. Moreover, it was stipulated in 1889 (in an answer to the British Legation) and 1909 (answer to U.S. Minister) that no modification was to be made in this booklet. For its own part, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which is in charge of heraldic matters in Belgium) wrote to the Marine Board on 20 September 1912, "the Royal Decree of June 15th, 1858, is fallen into disuse for various reason, which are here of little importance". We may suppose that one reason was the modification of the Royal Arms in 1880/1910 or the access to the throne of King Albert. But for what reason was the drawing of 1886 still accepted in 1913 and 1914? No solution can be given to this problem, as the 1886 pattern has no legal basis.

2.2 Royal Yacht « Alberta »

King Leopold II likes to sail. For that, he rents different yachts. In 1898, he rents the yacht "Margarita" build in Scotland and gives it a surname "Albeta". He has always sailed under the British Ensign that gives him criticisms, but he answered saying the yacht was British because it was rented. His election as live member of the *Royal Yacht Squadron* gave him the privilege to fly the Royal Navy *White Ensign* (17) which had priority above outer ships.¹⁸

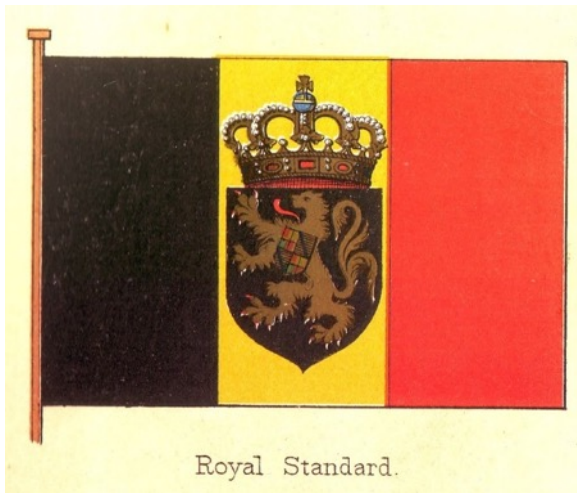


(17)

2.3 Different illustrations of a Royal flag from 1865 to 1909

2.3.1 *Flags of Maritime Nations USA - 1873/1876/1882*

It is curious to notice that the albums published by the American Navy « *Flags of Maritime Nations* » of 1873¹⁹, 1876²⁰ and 1882²¹ show the sea flag of Leopold I (18), which, to my knowledge was never accurately reproduced.



(18)



(19)

That same sea flag of Leopold I, badly drawn, is reprinted in an undated set of cards edited by « *Egyptienne Straights Cigarettes* ». ²² (19)

2.3.2. Hounsell 1874

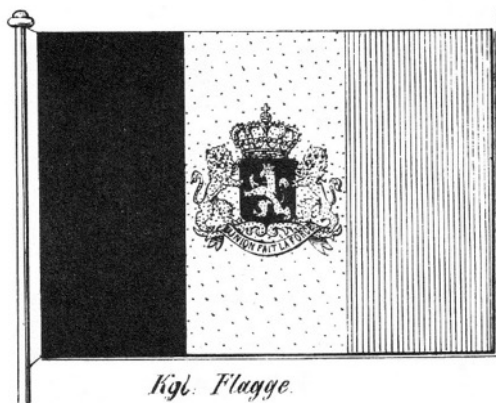
In 1874, Hounsell ²³ brings the Le Gras mistake forward again in the first Admiralty book of flags but he gives a black crown and his lion is facing to the fly. (20)



(20)

2.3.3 Siebmacher 1878

In the Siebmacher volume of 1878, Gritzner ²⁴ again presents the Le Gras type of flag (21) and same rules for protocol.



(21)



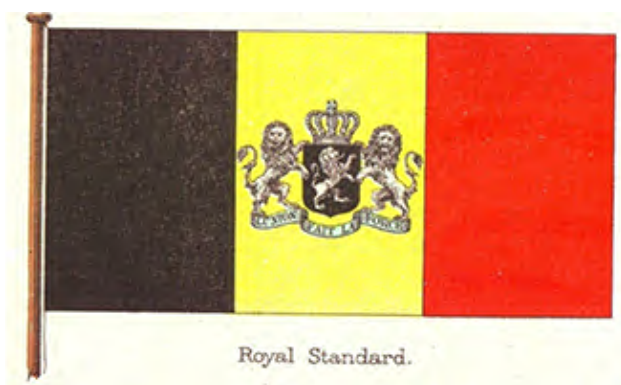
(22)

2.3.4 Ruhl 1885

Moritz Ruhl in the 3rd edition of his book on flags of the word gives another type of flag, he shows a royal tricolour with the lesser arms of the kingdom in its centre.²⁵ (22) The same pattern will appear in later editions.

2.3.5. HMSO 1889

The British Admiralty book ²⁶ does the same in the correction of the Hounsell book in 1889 but with another crown, and the lion still looking to the fly. (23)



(23)



(24)

2.3.6 Genard 1891

In his book about Belgian flags of various periods ²⁷, issued in 1891, Genard gives the drawing of Le Gras as the flag of Leopold I. Here the scroll is red and the flag is adorned by an unusual tricolour fringe (24), as in regimental flag.

2.3.7 Bjelow 1913

In the other hand, Bjelow gives in the 1913 issue of the Russian Admiralty flag book ²⁸ another tricolour bearing the royal grand arms, complete with royal mantle and banners, the lion of the shield charged with an escutcheon of Saxony. (25) This is amazing since the Russian legation in Brussels had received the correct information from the Belgian authorities.



(25)



2.3.8. US Navy Book 1899

The US Navy book 1899 ²⁹ gives a royal flag which is a mix of the flag of Leopold I and of the type from the Belgian administration of 1886, the Belgian lion loaded with a shield quarterly Great-Britain and Saxony. (26) The British arms wear a label with three pendants. Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, widow of Princess Charlotte of Great-Britain, was granted arms from the Regent of the United Kingdom with the right to quarter his own arms, of Prince of Saxony, with the British arms provided with a distinctive mark, a label with five pendants, the central charged with a rose.

That picture is the only one which shows, on a flag, the coat of arms of Leopold I with the label unfortunately erroneous and incomplete. (27)



Royal Standard.

(26)



(27)



Royal Standard.

(28)

2.3.9 HMSO 1907 and 1915

In 1905 in its *Flaggenbuch*,³⁰ the German *Reichsmarineamt* shows the same drawing of Le Gras; so, does the British Admiralty in its flag books 1907³¹ and 1915/1916 (28), the flag being 1:2 in proportion and the lion facing the hoist at last.

3. King ALBERT I (23 December 1909 – 17 February 1934)

3.1 Yacht Flag of Prince Albert

Prince Albert used a yachting flag. That flag appears for the first time in the Belgian Royal Yacht Club (R.Y.C.B.) year book of 1906 for "His Royal Highness Albert, Prince of Belgium" as co-owner of the sloop "*Flandria*". The same flag will be reproduced in all yearbooks until 1914 and, from 1910 under the name "His Majesty Albert, King of the Belgians". A handwritten note of 1907 tells the Prince had only 1/10 in the sloop property which "will be registered in 1910 under the name 'Syndicate *Flandria*'. Regard the secretary to the R.Y.C.B. This yacht had participated, at least twice in the Kiel regatta."

That owner flag remembers strangely the Bavarian flag, swelled white and blue with, in the centre, the Belgian lion. (29) In fact, it is not exactly the Bavarian flag. It is obviousness that the flag remembers the union between Prince Albert and Princess Elisabeth, Duchess in Bavaria, the official Bavarian white and blue fusils, was changed knowingly or inadvertently?



3.2 Different illustrations of a Royal flag from 1909 to 1921

The accession to the throne of King Albert does not put an end to the publication of fanciful royal flags.

3.2.1 *Flags of the British Empire 1911*

In 1911, a royal flag for Belgium is published in the book « *Flags of the British Empire allies* »³². The coat of arms wears two small Belgian flags. (30)

3.2.2 *Ottoman Empire Navy book, 1912*

The Album of Flags edited by the Ottoman Empire Navy³³(31) publishes a royal Belgian flag similar to the one published in German *Flaggenbuch (RMA)* and the British Admiralty books. It is also the flag of 1886 but without the Saxony escutcheon.



3.2.3 *US Navy 1914*

The Album of the *United States Navy Department*, in its edition 1914³⁴ (32), repeat the HMSO 1907, flag. It is the same in the *National Geographic Magazine* of 1917 dedicated to *Flags of the World*³⁵, under n°.734.



(32)



(33)

3.2.4 *World Wide Atlas 1916*

The *World Wide Atlas* published in 1916³⁶ a royal flag with a coat of arms like the lesser Belgian State arms but with the collar of the Leopold Order. (33)

3.3 The second royal sea flag of 1921

After the end of World War I, Belgian sovereigns took state visits in foreign countries and received other heads of state in Belgium. This created problems for the trip overseas. In those years, there existed in Belgium a small naval corps called “*Corps des torpilleurs et marins*” but there were no warships. The king thus went on board a foreign vessel or warship, on which a distinctive royal flag would be hoisted; but which royal flag? The royal flag of 1858 had for some time already fallen into disuse.

As a first step, the national flag was used as the royal flag abroad. Thus, for the royal visit to the United States in September and October 1919, the national flag was hoisted on board the *George Washington*.

For the occasion of the royal trip to Brazil, the question of a new royal flag was raised by the ministry. Of three proposed designs, now lost, one was approved on 10 July 1920. Nevertheless, it seems this was not followed up since the battleship *São Paulo* simply flew the national flag of Belgium as a distinguished sign when King Albert and Queen Elisabeth were on board in September 1920.

On 12 February 1921, the painter of the heraldic Council supplied a new drawing. We may assume that the first drawing, approved in July 1920, showed the Belgian lion charged with an escutcheon of Saxony expressing the German origin of the Belgian dynasty. This is probably the reason that this design was rejected by the King or the Household Department. The problem had not been solved when the sovereigns made their visit to Britain from 4 to 8 July 1921. Again, only the national flag of Belgium was hoisted to the foremast when King Albert and Queen Elisabeth went on board the British royal yacht *Alexandra*.

The royal decree confirming a new royal flag was signed 21 July 1921 and published in the Belgian official gazette (*Moniteur belge*) dated 15-16-17 August 1921. While the decree in its preamble referred to the royal decree of June 1858, it abrogated it only implicitly.

Art. 1st – The Belgian royal flag is poppy-coloured and bears a shield of arms sable, a lion Or armed and langued gules. The shield being surrounded by a royal crown and cantoned in each corner of the flag by the initial letter “A” also surmounted by the royal crown.

Art. 2nd – For Our beloved Wife, Her Majesty the Queen, the initial « A » will be replaced by the initial letter « E »; for our beloved sons, Their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Flanders, by the initial letters “L” and “C”, these always surmounted by the royal crown.

Art. 3rd – (Fulfilment formula)

In passing, it should be noticed that this decree of July 1921 is the only official text concerning the relinquishment of the escutcheon of Saxony from the Belgian royal arms as they had existed since 1880.

Neither the Marine Board’s records, nor the record of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Nobility Office), nor those of the Royal Palace provide details about the sources of inspiration for the new royal flag. This flag is completely different from the 1858 pattern. The poppy-coloured ground may refer to the colour of the ribbon

of the Order of Leopold, the first Belgian order of chivalry created in 1832. That poppy colour is so difficult to reproduce that from 1921 until now in 2015, a lot of varieties will appear just as well regard to manufactured flags than drawings published in books.

The official pattern of King Albert's flag was printed in full colour in the new *Plate of the Official Flags Used on Board Belgian Ships*, issued by the Central Marine Board in Brussels in May 1923³⁷ (34)



(34)

That plate does not represent the ciphers "E", "L" and "C". They will be shown for the first time in the German *Flaggenbuch* of 1939.

4. Queen consort ELISABETH

She is born, Duchess in Bavaria, at Possenhofen Castle on 25 July 1876 and died 23 November 1965. On 2 October 1900, she married in München, Albert of Belgium, heir of the throne. She was the third Queen of the Belgians from 1909 to 1934.

The Queen's flag³⁸ was created by the 1921 royal decree, re-confirmed by the royal decree of 1934 and by the regulation of 1936. The drawing is reconstructed from the cipher published in the German *Flaggenbuch* 1939. (35) I have not found any illustration of the cipher before the one of 1939. I have never seen a photo of the car flag used by the Queen; it is possible she has never use one.



(35)



(36)

5 King LEOPOLD III (23 February 1934 – 16 July 1951)

5.1 Flag of Prince Léopold used during his trip to Belgian Congo

During his trip to Belgian Congo in 1925, Prince Leopold, Duke of Brabant, had used a flag of poppy colour, with a crown in the centre and four ciphers “L” in the corners. (36) The crown and the monograms are embroidered in gold and the flag is surrounded by a gold fringe. That flag is different from the flag described in the Royal decree of 1921. I have not found any information about that flag especially about its use. The flag is attached with some rings to a high wood flag pole. For practicable reason the pole, was cut later. The flag followed the moving of furniture from the Palace of Laeken to the Castle of Argenteuil, new residence of former King Leopold III, in 1960. The flag was given by H.R.H. Princess Lilian, widow of King Leopold III, to the African Museum in Namur where it is exhibited ³⁹.

5.2 Sea flag of King Leopold III

When Leopold III became king, a royal decree dated 2 May 1934 prescribed that the King’s flag should bear the cipher « L », (37) The substitutions were for Queen Astrid an « A », for Crown Prince Baudouin, a “B”, Queen Elisabeth and Prince Charles continuing with their “E” and “C” respectively. It seems that Queen Astrid did not use her own flag during her too short reign.



(37)

I have discovered an original flag ⁴⁰ in the archives of Museum Belvue, Museum of National History in Brussels. (38)



obverse



reverse

In 1936 all the royal flags were described in the third article of the Regulations ⁴¹ relating to Flags , Honours and Visits for Use of the Belgian Sea Services, approved by a royal decree dated 28 October 1936:

Marks of the King, the Queen and the members of the Royal Family

1) *The mark of the King is a square poppy-coloured flag bearing a shield of arms sable, a lion Or armed and langued gules, the shield being surmounted by the royal crown and cantoned in each corner of the flag by the initial letter "L" also surmounted by the royal crown.*

2) *The marks of the Queen, of Queen Elisabeth, and of the Princes of the Royal Family are flags similar to the flag mentioned under 1) above, the initial letter being replaced by their initial letter also surmounted by the royal crown.*

3) *Marks of the King, of the Queen, of Queen Elisabeth and of the Princes of the Royal Family are only hoisted when the Sovereign or one of the above mentioned members of the Royal Family is on board. These flags are hoisted at the mainmast, instead of the national commission pennant.*

Neither the texts of 1921, 1934, nor 1936 mentioned the princesses of Belgium. The regulations of 1936 restricted the use of a royal flag only for the enumerated members of the royal family. Therefore, the princesses of Belgium, so born or by marriage, have no right to fly a distinguished naval mark.

The words of the 1936 *Regulations* allow doing without a new royal decree at the change of a reign. They described a flag for the Queen, although Queen Astrid was already dead for more than one year. Since the accession of King Baudouin to the throne, the flag with four "B", has become the King's mark.

The booklet attached to the 1936 Regulations bears the official pattern of King Leopold's flag. A difference with the 1921-1923 flag of King Albert appears: the pattern of the initial letters is clearly not the same. The "A" of 1923 were more embellished and adorned with (painted) pearls. The "L" of 1936 are not so adorned and manifestly imitated the cipher of Leopold I as embroidered in the above-mentioned pennant of Capiaumont.

No official pattern existed for the initial letters of the 1936 type - neither for Queen Elisabeth nor for the princes - and no flag existed until 1940 for these members of the royal family, we believe. Nevertheless, the German *Flaggenbuch* of 1939⁴² gives models of an "E", a "B" and a "C" (for Queen Elisabeth, the Duke of Brabant, and the Count of Flanders, respectively). (39)



(39)

Dr Neubecker who had participated, at that time, to the elaboration of that album, has told the initial letters were communicated by the Belgian Legation in Berlin.⁴³ We have found no trace at present time. It may be supposed that these initial letters were invented in Berlin by graphic designers of the German Navy, finding their inspiration in the 1936 style of the "L".

A royal flag with four "B" appears in 1950.

5.3 Car flag of King Leopold III

All the decrees, regulations, and directions so far mentioned concern only sea flags but, since 1950 at last, following a common custom, the royal household has used car pennants similar to the royal flag. At the Royal Palace of Brussels, a car pennant of King Leopold III is reserved, similar to his royal flag but amaranth coloured. It is 27 cm square. As no evidence exists of the use of such pennant before 1940, it may be supposed that this car pennant was manufactured in 1950 when King Leopold III came back to Belgium from exile.

I have taken photos of different versions of that flag which differs by the shade of colour. The flag (40) has been photographed in the archives of Belvue museum (former Dynasty museum)⁴⁴, its colour is the same to the one of the sea flags (38) preserved at the same place.

The photo (41) has been taken during a visit to the Royal Palace in Brussels,⁴⁵ while the flag (42) was given by HRH Princess Esmeralda of Belgium, after the death of her father, King Leopold III, to the Museum of Waterloo. The flag is exhibited on the desk of her father.⁴⁶



(40)



(41)



(42)



6 Queen consort ASTRID

She was born, a Princess of Sweden, on 17 November 1905 in Stockholm. On 10 November 1926 she gets married to Prince Leopold, Duke of Brabant, Crown Prince. She becomes the fourth Queen of the Belgians on 23 February 1934. Her reign will be very short. She died in a car accident on 29 August 1935 in Küssnacht am Rigi (Switzerland).

As her reign was too short, it seems she did not use her personal flag.⁴⁷(43)



(43)



(44)

7. Prince CHARLES (Regent of the Kingdom) (20 September 1944 - 20 July 1950)

A sea flag (44) was created by the Royal Decree of 1921, but was probably never used.

Meanwhile, during the regency period from 1944 to 1950, Prince Charles, the Regent, seems occasionally to have used a car pennant⁴⁸ with four “C”. He also used - being the only one to do so - an airplane flag. This flag was hoisted on board the airplane of the Regent during his state visit in the United States and Canada in 1948. It was preserved at the time in the Air Section of the Royal Museum in Brussels, but it was stolen. The air flag is rectangular, approximately 40 x 80 cm in size, of purple bunting, and shows the personal coat of arms of the prince (i.e. Belgium within a bordure Or) in its centre and in each corner a double “C” surmounted by a royal crown, all in applied felt. (45)



(45)

8. King BAUDOUIN (17 July 1951 – 31 July 1993)

8.1 Sea flag of the Prince Royal, later King Baudouin

At the accession of King Leopold III, a Royal Decree of 2 May 1936 specified that Prince Baudouin, new Duke of Brabant and heir of the throne, would use the cipher « B » on his sea flag.⁴⁹ (46) Because he was young at that time, and due to the Second World War and exile from 1944 to 1950, it is probable that the sea flag was never manufactured.



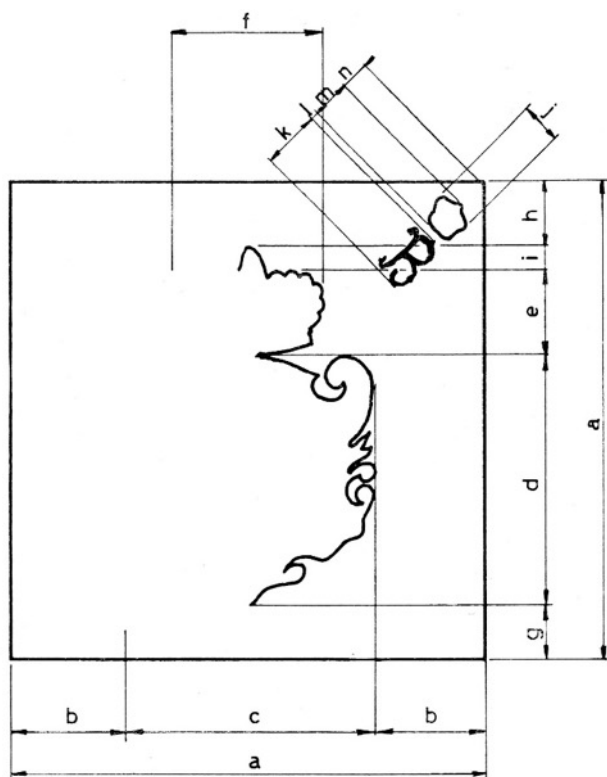
(46)

A royal flag with four “B” appears in 1950, when Prince Baudouin exercised the constitutional powers of the King under the title of prince royal. In the rare photos existing, it is impossible to recognize the type of letter used then. It seems to be neither the same as in the German *Flaggenbuch* 1939, nor like the “B” that

(47)



can be found in the “*Album des pavillons, flammes et marques en usage à bord des bâtiments de la Marine militaire belge*”⁵⁰ of August 1959, which are gothic. It seems it was the first illustration of the royal sea flag. Its size is square, 1m x 1m. (47) It is also reproduced in the 1963 edition⁵¹ (a square flag of 1m or 75 cm or 50cm), in the Instruction on the Ceremonial of 1969⁵² and in the up-to-date edition of Album in 1973⁵³ (48), (a square flag of 1,50 m or 75 cm) . The flag is made in poppy-red bunting, the coat of arms and crowned initial letters are painted thereon. (48)



(48)

Afmetingen Dimensions	Type	
	V	XV
	CDE	FGHI
a	150	75
b	36	18
c	78	39
d	78	39
e	27	13,5
f	45	22,5
g	16,5	8,25
h	21	10,5
i	7,5	3,75
j	15	7,5
k	18	9
l	3	1,5
m	12	6
n	12	6

In Belgium it is a tradition to hoist the Royal sea flag when the King is on board of a ship of the Belgian Navy. A photo shows that flag hoisted on board of the “*Zinnia A 961*”, Command and Logistic Support ship, when King Baudouin visited it during a call at La Rochelle (France) in June 1972 (49) but it is not possible to distinguish the model of the ciphers.⁵⁴



(49)

There are various versions of King Baudouin's sea flag.

I have received the photo (50) from the Royal Palace in 1982. We can see that the central shield is smaller than the official type published by the Belgian Navy.



(50)



(51)

These letters are slightly different from those of the 1963 Regulations and it may be said that they are better designed than the official « B ». Although these regulations specify that the royal flag is 1.5m. square - which agrees with the photos of 1950 - the real flag is only 1m. square approximately. The relative proportions between coat of arms, initials, and crowns are different from those of the official pattern (48) and all figures are fimbriated by a solid black line. The sea flag, type (51), looks like the car flag with printed letters and a straighter shield.⁵⁵ It could date from 1989.

According to the official texts, the Queen and the Princes may fly flags with their own distinguishing marks, but in fact only the King's flag was really in use at that time. The *Directions about Etiquette*, issued in 1969 by the General Staff of the Belgian Armed Forces, uses practically the same words as the Regulations of 1936. These directions state that the flag of a prince is not hoisted when he is embarked as a naval officer of the Belgian Naval Force. The honours to be paid when the King, the Queen, or a royal prince boards a Belgian commissioned warship are also specified.

8.2 The car flags of King Baudouin

All the decrees, regulations, and directions so far mentioned concern only sea flags but, since 1950 at last, following a common custom, the royal household has used car pennants similar to the royal flag.



(52)

After his accession to the throne, King Baudouin - and, since 1961, Queen Fabiola - have used their own square car pennants. The pattern of the king's pennant is more modern than the one of the royal sea flags. The shield is more classical, the crown above is smaller. The initial letters "B" and "F" are voided vertical Roman letters and are therefore quite different from those of the sea flag. These pennants are of poppy colour (*rouge ponceau*) (52) or amaranth (53) double-sided silk and the motifs are printed in the same way as on the royal sea flag.⁵⁶



(53)

In 1955, during his trip to Belgian Congo, King Baudouin used his car flag. You can see here, some photos ⁵⁷: in Léopoldville ⁵⁸ on 17 May 1955 (54), in Usumbura ⁵⁹ (55), in Urundi, in Ruanda (56), and in Belgium (57), in particular in Charleroi ⁶⁰ (58).



(54)



(55)



(56)



(57)



(58)

Other variations were used later (59) ⁶¹, (60) ⁶², (61) ⁶³ et (62) ⁶⁴. This last amaranth flag is a square of 30 x30 cm.



(59)



(61)



(60)



(62)



8.3 Royal Wedding 1960

On 15 December 1960 King Baudouin married Doña Fabiola de Mora y Aragón who became the fifth Queen of the Belgians. To celebrate the wedding, different flags were printed. The type (63) ⁶⁵ is in paper, on the obverse the Sovereigns' faces and the date of the wedding; on the reverse, the Spanish flag to pay homage to the country of the new Queen and the name of the factory which has sponsored the flag.

I also have discovered a triangular commemorative flag with the Royal couple in a white crowned shield and the wedding's date. (64) ⁶⁶



(63)



(64)

8.4 Commemoration 40-60

A national homage called "*Fêtes 40-60*", was organized to celebrate the 60th birthday of the Sovereign and the 40th anniversary of his reign. The festivities took place from 7 September 1960 (birthday of the King) until 21 July 1991 (Belgian National Day). For these animations, the Sovereign wanted to give importance to his favourite themes, the youth and the dialogue between the citizen of the Communities and Regions.⁶⁷

On that occasion a special logo was adopted and used on a white square flag. (65)⁶⁸



(65)

8.5 Royal Train of Leopold III and Baudouin I

The Royal Train was built at the central railway factory in Malines from 1938 to 1939. It was mainly used after the Second World War until 1976. At present time, it is a part of the *Société nationale des chemins de fer belges* (SNCB)⁶⁹. It was formed by three carriages: a sitting room car, a dining room car and a sleeping car.⁷⁰

On 20 September 2002 there was an exhibition of the Royal Train in the railway station of Namur.⁷¹ On the front of the locomotive there is a large shield which is the same that the royal car flag (66). A similar shield is displayed on the carriage (67).



(66)



(67)

8.6. The Royal Yacht *Avila*

Avila is the motorized yacht of King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola. It was built in Bilbao (Spain) and it was launched on 28 March 1964. It was named from a Spanish city where St Teresa of Avila was born. It was laid up in 1993 and in 1996 was given by Queen Fabiola to the Royal Army and Military History Museum in Brussels.⁷² The photo (68) shows the yacht *Avila* with the Belgian jack.



(68)

On board of the yacht King Baudouin (69) and Queen (70) used their own personal sea flag.⁷³



(69)



(70)

You can see the difference of background colour between the two flags, more reddish for the King, more amaranth for the Queen. The letters of the ciphers and the central shield are different.

8.7 Funeral of King Baudouin

King Baudouin died on 31 July 1993 from a heart attack. He was on summer holidays with Queen Fabiola in their Spanish residence at Motril.

During the funerals His coffin was covered by the National Flag.⁷⁴ (71)



(71)

9 Queen Consort FABIOLA

She was born in Madrid (Spain) on 11 June 1928 and became the fifth Queen of the Belgians on 15 December 1960, the day of her wedding with King Baudouin.

9.1 Car flag of the Queen

At the beginning of 1961 she used a car flag for the first time during a trip to Germany.⁷⁵ (72) It is similar with the tradition established by King Albert I in 1921 but with the cipher 'F'.



(72)

The flag (73)⁷⁶ has a colour even darker and the cipher « F » is reversed on the obverse. (72)



(73)

9.2 Funeral of Queen Fabiola

Queen Fabiola died on 5 December 2014 at Stuyvenberg Castle in Laeken (Brussels). During her funeral on 12 December, her coffin was covered with the Belgian flag.⁷⁷ (74)



(74)

10. King ALBERT II (9 August 1933 – 21 July 2013)

10.1 Prince Albert, prince of Liège, Crown Prince 1951-1993

He was born on 6 June 1934 and was granted the title of Prince of *Liège*. Following the abdication of his father King Lepold III on 16 July 1951, he becomes Crown Prince on 17 July 1951 at the accession to the throne of his elder brother, King Baudouin. At that time King Baudouin was not married and later as King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola having no children, he wore the title until 9 August 1993. He came back to Belgium in 1950 after an exile of five years in Switzerland. He began his military career in the Belgian Navy. He was promoted officer cadet in 1953, sub-lieutenant in 1954, lieutenant commander in 1957, commander in 1959, captain in 1964 and commodore in 1971.

As Crown Prince he used a sea flag.⁷⁸ (75) That flag was in use until his accession to the throne in August 1993.

According to the official texts, the Queen and the princes may fly flags with their own distinguishing marks, but in fact only the King's flag is use at present time. The *Directions about Etiquette*, issued in 1969 by the General Staff of the Belgian Armed Forces, uses practically the same words as the Regulations of 1963. These

directions state that the flag of a prince is not hoisted when he is embarked as a naval officer of the Belgian Naval Force. The honours to be paid when the King, the Queen, or a royal prince boards a Belgian commissioned warship are also specified.

On 2 July 1959, in Brussels, he married Paola Ruffo di Calabria, an Italian Princess. They settle in Belvédère Castle. As King Baudouin and Queen Paola have no children, the children of the couple, Philippe⁷⁹ (born 15 April 1960), Astrid (born 5 June 1962) and Laurent (born 19 October 1963) become the future of the dynasty.



(75)

10.2 Car flag of Prince Albert

His car flag with his cipher⁸⁰ was not often used. The flag is embroidered and put in a plastic preservation. (76) The flag was seen in Liège, during a visit of the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh on 11 May 1961.⁸¹

The different ornaments of the pennant are embroidered, leading the author to believe that the pennants of the King and Queen must originally also have been embroidered before being replaced by painting pennants when the originals had become faded.

When the Prince enhances by his presence Belgian commercial missions abroad he uses more often the simple Belgian tricolour flag with a golden fringe similar to photo. (77)



(76)





(77)

10.3 Sea flag of King Albert II

King Albert II took the oath in front of the Parliament on 9 August 1993 and will abdicate on 21 July 2013.

A first proposal for a sea flag⁸² was not agreed by the Palace, the colour was too orange and the cipher, too simplified. (78)



(78)



His sea flag⁸³ was used for the first time during the Navy parade between Middelkerque and Ostend on 20 July 1996. (79) The flag is square, its size is 90 x 90 cm.

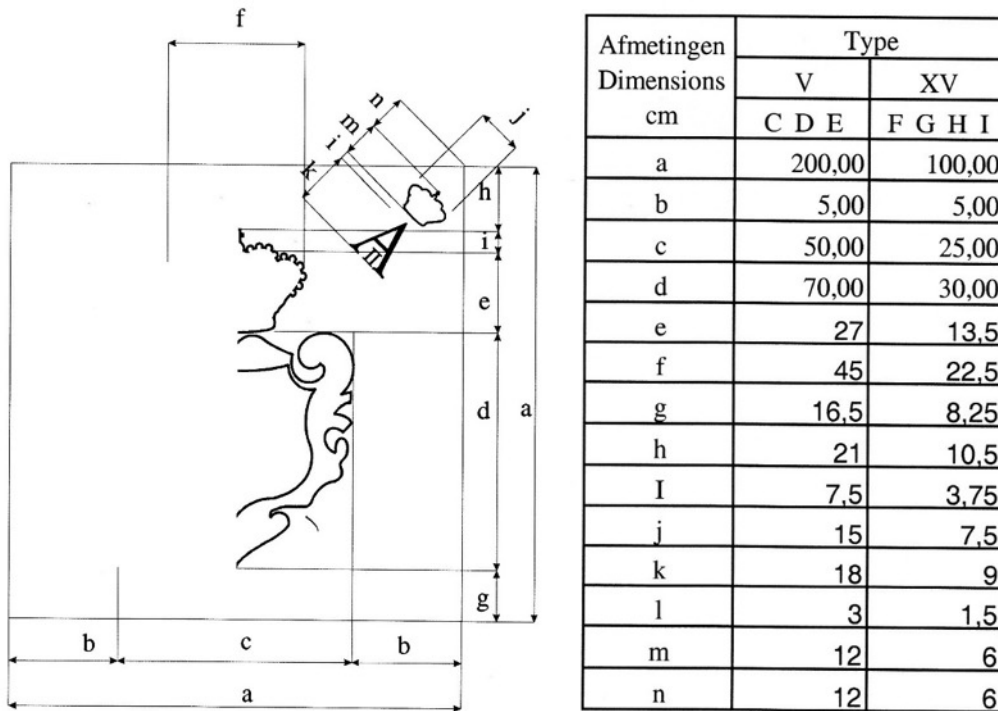
The General Staff of the Defence, Marine section has published in the 1990s an *Album des pavillons*⁸⁴ with a different representation of the royal arms. (80) The shield with the Belgian lion is larger. A drawing for the construction of the emblem and ciphers is added with the size. (81) The sea flag is square with a size 2 x 2 m or 1 x 1m.



(79)



(80)



(81)

The flag I have seen in the naval base of Zeebrugge (82) in 1999 is violet. ⁸⁵



(82)

10.4 Royal Yacht

King Albert likes to sail and has owned different yachts. The last one is named “Alpha IV”, a word which is a contraction of the first names of King Albert and Queen Paola and “IV” because it is the fourth yacht in his life. It was built in 2008 in the Italian Rizzardi shipyard. ⁸⁶

For security reasons the royal yacht displays the Belgian Ensign. (83) Since 1 January 2013 the yacht is registered in the official list of Belgian ships as « royal yacht » by the *SPF*⁸⁷ *Mobilité et Transports*. As Head of State, King Albert II also was Head of the Army. Same when he was on holidays outside Belgium, he was always the King. For that reason, security precautions continue after his abdication.



(83)



10.5. Car flag of King Albert II

It was used for the first time on 9 September 1993 during the State visit paid by Empress and Emperor of Japan to Belgium. The car flag is different from the sea flag, the shield is smaller and there are no numeral “II” within the letters in the ciphers.

A first proposal⁸⁸ was not agreed by the Palace. It is a square amaranth flag 32 x 32 cm, but with a white heading of 3,5 cm. (84) The symbols are very uncentred.



(84)



The adopted flag (85) is more reddish colour and has no white heading.⁸⁹



(85)



10.6. Air flag of King Albert II

I have discovered that photo (86) showing a royal (car) flag hoisted on a helicopter.⁹⁰



(86)

11. Queen consort PAOLA

Paola Ruffo di Calabria, a Princess from Italian family, was born on 11 September 1937 in Forte dei Marmi (Italia). On 2 July 1959, she married, in Brussels, Crown Prince Albert. On 9 August 1993, she became the sixth Queen of the Belgians until the abdication of her husband, King Albert II, on 21 July 2013.

11.1 Sea flag of the Queen

The sea flag (87) I have seen, in Zeebrugge during my visit in 1999 is violet with the Queen's cipher in the four corners.⁹¹



(87).

11.2 Car flag of the Queen

A first proposal⁹² was not agreed by the Palace. It is a square amaranth flag 32 x 32 cm, but with a white heading of 3,5 cm. (88) The symbols are very not centred.



(88)

The flag adopted on 9 September 1993 (89) is more reddish colour and has no white heading.⁹³



(89)



11.3 Car flags of the King and the Queen

On 21 July of each year, Belgian National Day, there is a tradition to sing a *Te Deum* in the cathedral of Saints Michel-et-Gudule in Brussels. The ceremony is honoured by the King and the Queen. They arrive in a closed car escorted by the Royal Escort on horseback. The Royal car bears the car flags of the King and of the Queen. (90)⁹⁴ (91)⁹⁵ (92)⁹⁶

In the afternoon there is a military parade. When the weather is sunny, the sovereigns arrive in a convertible car (93)⁹⁷ and stand in the Royal platform in front of the Royal Palace; the car also bears the two royal flags.



(90)



(91)



(92)





(93)

12. King PHILIPPE / FILIP (21 July 2013 -)

He is born on 15 April 1960 at Belvédère Castle in Brussels. He is the eldest son of King Albert II and of Queen Paola. He became Duke of Brabant⁹⁹ when his father succeeded to the throne on 9 August 1993. He took the oath as seventh King of the Belgian, on 21 July 2013 at 12h12, following the abdication of his father.

12.1 Sea flag of Prince Philippe

The sea flag¹⁰⁰ I have seen in Zeebrugge is violet, the Prince's cipher in the four corners. (94) I have not found any official document about that flag. It is amazing to notice that the flag wears the cipher "F" from *Filip*, in Dutch language and not the bilingual (Dutch/French) cipher « FP » (*Filip/Philippe*) while the Marine is national.



(94)

The Prince never used a personal car flag.

12.2. Princely Wedding

On 4 December 1999, Prince Philippe married Mathilde d'Udekem d'Acoz who became Princesse de Belgique and Duchesse de Brabant.

To celebrate the royal event, paper flags were printed (95) bearing the princes' effigy.¹⁰⁷



(95)

12.2. Car flag of King Philippe

The new royal car flag with the cipher « FP » (*Filip//Philippe*) was used for the first time on 21 July 2013, the day when he was sworn in. (96) (97) Its colour is amaranth. ¹⁰²



(96)



(97)



(98)

12.3 Sea flag of King Philippe

A new sea flag with his cipher has been adopted, it is square with a size of 0,75 x 0,75m.¹⁰³ or 1,50m. x 1,50m.; it depends of the kind of ship. (98)

13. Queen consort MATHILDE

She becomes the seventh Queen of the Belgian on 21 July 2013 following the accession to the throne of her husband, King Philippe.

13.1 Car flag of the Queen

She uses a car flag since 21 July 2013.¹⁰⁴ (99)



(99)

13.2 Sea flag of the Queen

A sea flag has been adopted. It exists two versions.¹⁰⁵ The first version, refused by the Palace (100), shows a cipher with a more flared « M ». A second version, will be adopted mid-2015 (101), it uses the same cipher as in the car flag.



(100)



(101)

14 Crown Princess ELISABETH

King Philippe and Queen Mathilde are the parents of four children: Princess Elisabeth, born 25 October 2001, Prince Gabriel, born 20 August 2003, Prince Emmanuel, born 4 October 2005 and Princess Eléonore, born 16 April 2008. In Belgium the Salic law is in force since the accession to the throne of King Leopold I.

The 1831 Constitution specifies that the succession to the throne is reserved to the descendants of Leopold I by order of primogeniture with the perpetual exclusion of women.

The title "Queen" is not written in the Constitution and is only given to the King's wife as an honorific title.

Following the social evolution which assures the sex equality, the Salic law was abrogated on 21 June 1991 for the descendants of King Albert II. The eldest child of the royal couple becomes the heir apparent. Princess Elisabeth, the new Duchess of Brabant,¹⁰⁶ will be the first Queen of the Belgians, Head of the State.

She is too young to possess a personal flag.

15. Coronation flags (July 2013)

King Philippe took the oath in front of the members of the Parliament on 21 July 2013. To celebrate the event, different private "special" flags were produced. The Belgian Alliance Movement designed a flag made of the Belgian tricolour with the profiles of Albert and Philippe, in red and yellow, respectively, in the black stripe. In the middle of the yellow stripe is placed a red shield surmounted with the Belgian crown and inscribed with "ALBERT II" / "FILIP", in white letters, separated by a thin yellow horizontal line, and, in base, the date of the event, "21-07-2013" in yellow numerals. (102)¹⁰⁷



(102)



(103)

As soon as the abdication of King Albert was announced, six people from the firm *Wollux*, flagmaker in Mouscron, worked to draft six proposals.¹⁰⁸ Two special serigraphed flags were produced for the event. The first flag is a tricolour with the heads of the two kings (103)¹⁰⁹, the second, only King Philippe. (104)¹¹⁰



(104)



(105)

A third flag was only a proposal, it shows the Belgian colours, the royal crown, names of the two kings and the date of the event. (105)

16. Royal Joyeuses-Entrées

In Belgium it is a tradition that the new sovereigns pay a one-day visit, called *Joyeuse-Entrée*, to the capital of the provinces and Communities. During their visit to Eupen, capital of the German Community, the population waved particular and original paper flags. (106) (107) On the obverse, the Belgian flag, on the reverse, the symbols of the Belgian Communities and Regions: a black lion for the Flemish, an iris for Brussels, a crowned shield for the German and a cock for the Walloons; in the centre, the national coat of arms with the motto in German.¹¹¹ (108)



(106)



(107)



(108)

17 Royal Palace

Compared to other monarchies which raise the Royal Standard on the Royal Palace, in Belgium, only the national flag is hoisted on the Royal Palace of Brussels and the Palace of Laeken, the King's residence.

For aesthetic reasons and due to the angle to the flag which is seen from below, the flag has a special size, different from the official one (13:15). The size is 4m x 3m on the Royal Palace at Brussels (109) and 3,20m. x 2,40m. on the Palace of Laeken.¹¹² When the national flag flies on the Royal Palaces it means that the King is present on the Belgian territory.¹¹³

At the time of the death of Queen Fabiola on 5 December 2014, the flag flew half-mast on the two royal palaces¹¹⁴ until 12 December 2014, the date of the funeral. (110)



(109)



(110)

18 King's Command Colours

Aside from the royal flag and the car pennant, a third royal emblem exists, with a special purpose: this is the King's command colours. Following Article 167 § art.1^{er} of the Belgian fundamental law ¹¹⁵, the King is the commander in chief of the armed forces and it is a custom that such a high commander should use a special distinguishing mark. ¹¹⁶ On the other hand, while regulations specify the command pennants of generals and high officers of the army, navy, and air force, no text states the mark of the Belgian commander in chief. The royal standard plays this part in other monarchies, but when a command flag was introduced for the King of the Belgians, a royal standard or flag did not exist yet in Belgium.

During the 1914-1918 war, it became usual that King Albert I was escorted by a warrant officer who raised his command colour. The same colour was used on the occasion of the King's triumphal entries into liberated cities of Belgium in 1918. On 21 February 1921, the King's command colour was entrusted to the Royal Museum of the Army in Brussels. It was taken out of the museum for the annual military review and parade in April (111). When the flag became faded a new flag was manufactured and remained unchanged during the reign of Leopold III, until 1939 (112). The flag is adorned with a ribbon in the national colours.

Later a new flag was made up for King Leopold III and used during his funerals on 1 October 1983 (113). It is preserved in the Royal and Military History Museum in Brussels.¹¹⁷



(111)



(113)



(112)



In 1951, after King Baudouin's accession to the throne, a copy of the colour of Albert I, was made, the original being too tarnished. The new emblem is now called the *fanion du roi* (king's pennant). It is also kept in the Royal Museum of the Army and is taken out each year on 21 July (Belgian National Day) for the annual military review and parade. The King's pennant (114) looks like a regimental infantry colour, being of black-yellow-red silk, surrounded by a golden fringe, and affixed to a black ash staff having as its finial the Belgian lion in bronze; a tricolour streamer with golden fringe replaces the usual golden cord and tassels.

The *fanion du roi* is raised by a warrant officer of one of the branches of the armed forces, alternatively the army, air force, and navy. Never has a text or distinctive stated the use of this emblem of the King.



(114)



The « *fanion du roi* » is square 80 x 80 cm and does not wear inscriptions. The pole has a special finial : a gold bronze lion on a base. On the two large sides the national motto is written, on one side in French: « *L'Union fait la Force* », on the other side in Dutch: « *Eendracht maakt Macht* ». On the small sides appear the cipher of the reigning monarch. The photograph shows the cipher « B » for King Baudouin (115).



(115)



(116)

In 1995, the cipher was changed to a « A II » for King Albert II. Worn with the time, a new King's Command flag was manufactured in 2004 at CCMP¹¹⁸ in Ypres for King Albert II¹¹⁹ (116). The lion is made with gold resin¹²⁰ (117) and wears on the small side the royal cipher, A II» (118).



(117)





(118)



(119)

With regard to the tradition, the King's Command flag, follows the King during his arrival at the parade of 21 July. It is worn by a Warrant Officer designed, each year, by the Belgian Defense Forces. The usual car is a jeep.¹²¹ (119) During the parade, he stands in front of the Royal Gallery.

19 Royal Escort

Since Leopold I, a cavalry unit escorts the King during his official travels. After the mechanization of the Army, that mission was given to the Gendarmerie. The Royal Escort was created on 6 August 1938.

In 1998, Gendarmerie and local Police were mixed into a new service, the Federal Police. The present 132 cavalymen of the escort come from the Cavalry Service of the Federal Police. The parade uniform was drawn by artist - painter James Thiriart who was inspired by the grand uniform of the Gendarmerie before 1918. There are a few differences between officers, cavalymen and bugles. The hat is a black hair bear cap.¹²² (120)



(120)



(121)

The armament is composed by the right riding sabre for the officers and, the spear with a swallow tailed pennant, for the cavalrymen. The pennant is a national tricolour, red, yellow, black.¹²³ (121) During royal funerals, a black ribbon is added to the top.¹²⁴ (122)



(122)

The unit ensures the escort of the King during official parades and of the Ambassadors presenting their credentials to the King (in this case only 56 cavalrymen).¹²⁵

The Standard of the Royal Escort is a square Belgian tricolour flag with gold fringe and tassels. On the obverse it wears the embroidered inscriptions in French « CAMPAGNE 1914-1918 1940-1945 » and on the reverse in Dutch, « VELDTOCHT 1914-1918 1940-1945 »¹²⁶ (123), (124)¹²⁷, (125)¹²⁸



(123)



(124)



(125)



(126)

(127)

The Royal Escort also uses its own flag fimbriated black with the yellow scripts: *Escorte Royale* (in French) and *Koninklijk Escorte* (in Dutch). In the centre the Royal Escort emblem, in red, both sides of the flag are the same. At the top of the pole, a tricolour pennant similar to the pennant attached to the spears.¹²⁹ (126) (127)¹³⁰



(127)

(126)

The tapestry under the saddle wears the royal cipher of the reigning monarch¹³¹, successively, Leopold III (128), Baudouin I (129), Albert II (130) (131) (132) and Philippe I (133).



(128)



(129)



(130)



(131)¹³²

(132)¹³³



(133)

END NOTES:

- 1 Constitution of 7 February 1831. Article 193 of the Belgian Constitution of 17 February 1994 repeats the same text : « *La Nation belge adopte les couleurs rouge, jaune et noire, et pour armes du Royaume le Lion Belgique avec la légende : l'UNION FAIT LA FORCE* ».
- 2 Drawing of the sloop made in Indian pink. Archives of the Royal Palace, Brussels. www.marine.mra.klm.be
- 3 The Royal Sloop existed in 1910, in the pontoniers building in Antwerp.
- 4 Harmignies, Roger : « *Héraldique de la Maison royale de Belgique, in Recueil V de l'Office généalogique et héraldique de Belgique, Bruxelles, 1956, pp. 81-102.*
- 5 The royal flag of Leopold I thus consisted of the national tricolour of silk with the personal arms of the King, as used since 1839, painted in the centre. Here the Belgian lion is charged on the shoulder with an escutcheon of Great Britain (not England) and Saxony quarterly. Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, widower of Princess Charlotte of Great Britain had been granted a new coat of arms by the Regent of the United Kingdom in 1818. This consisted of his own Saxon coat of arms quartered with the arms of Great Britain, differenced by a label of five points argent, the central pendant charged with a rose gules. This mark of cadency, however, was never used in Belgium.
- 6 Drawing by Martin Laurenson Grieve, September 2014.
- 7 A manuscript note in the records of the Office of the Nobility in Brussels, which may be dated from 1912, specifies that « *when the king (Leopold II) went to England in a Belgian steamer, he had hoisted the national flag with the arms of the Kingdom* ». This note is probably based on the official booklet of 1886 issued by the Marine Board or that « *the national flag with the arms of the Kingdom* » in question may have been the royal flag of Leopold I.
- 8 Royal Museum of the Army and Military History, Brussels, photo Michel Lupant, 21 Nov. 2010 (reverse).
- 9 Depperman & Ruschke, *Flaggen Almanach (Flaggen mit Guidons, Cornetten und Wimpeln in alphabetischer Ordnung)*, Hamburg, c.1844, pp. 1 and 56.
- 10 Communication Jean-Marie Geldhof, *Musée de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire*, Brussels, 4 February 2015.
- 11 Norie, J.W. & Hobbs, J.S. – *Illustration of the Maritime Flags of all Nations*, 1848, image 154, pl. XIII. Reprinted in 1971 by *Chronik der Seefahrt, Verlag E.Heineman*, under the title *Flaggen aller seefahrenden Nationen*.
- 12 Le Gras, M.A. : « *Album des Pavillons, guidons, flammes de toutes les Puissances maritimes* », Paris ,1858.
- 13 Reconstruction Hervé Calvarin, Le Perreux, France
- 14 Klaes Sierksma, *Netherlands Sources for M.A. le Gras and his 1858 "Album of Flags"* (lecture given at the 9th International Congress of Vexillology, Ottawa, 1981; not yet published);
- 15 Bromme, *Flaggen Atlas, Verlag von Kraiss & Hoffmann*, Stuttgart, circa 1862, Table.1, n°1 and 2.
- 16 « *Belgique-Tableau des pavillons en usage dans la Marine, édité par le Ministère des Chemins de fer, Postes et Télégraphe* ». *Administration de la Marine, Bruxelles, avril 1886. (Archives générales du Royaume, Bruxelles, fonds « Marine » dossier 2808).*
- 17 Drawing by Martin Laurenson Grieve.
- 18 Archives *Belgique*, internet.
- 19 “Flags of Maritime Nations”, United States Secretary of the Navy , Third edition, Washington 1873 plate VI.
- 20 “Flags of Maritime Nations”, United States Secretary of the Navy , Fourth edition, Washington 1876 plate VI.
- 21 “Flags of Maritime Nations from the most authentic sources, US Bureau of Navigation, 5th ed., Washington, 1882, plate VI.
- 22 Author’s collection.
- 23 Hounsell, G.C. « *Flags and Signals of All Nations, Hounsell Brothers Flag Manufacturers “, printed and edited by Field and Tuer, London (by order of the Lords Commissioners of the British Admiralty), 1874, n°98.*
- 24 Gritzner, M.A. : « *Flaggen und Banner Landesfarben aller zivilisierten Staaten der Erde, in J. Siebmacher Grosses Wappenbuch, Ed.,6.Abt.,Tabl.59, Nuremberg , 1878.*
- 25 *Die Flaggen der Kriegs-und Handels-Marinern aller Staaten der Erde“ . Dritte Auflage, Verlag Moritz Ruhl , Leipzig 1885*
- 26 “Drawings of the Flags in Use at the Present Time by Various Nations”, British Admiralty, August 1889, HMSO, London, p. 38.

- 27 Genard, P.P. : » *Les drapeaux belges aux différentes époques* , in *L'Armoriste belge recueil héraldique*, Anvers, 1891, pl. XV. *De Belgische Wapenkenner. Heraldische Verzameling samengesteld & getekend door P.P. Genard. Gedrukt & uitgegeven door C.t'Felt, Antwerpen 1891*, pl. XV...
- 28 Bjelow, M. : *Al'bom Standartov, Flagov i Vympelv Rossijskoi Imperii i Inostrannykh Gosudarstov, Glavnoe Gudrograficheskoe Upravlenie, St Petersburg*, 1898, p. 25.
- 29 "Flags of Maritime Nations", Bureau of Equipment, Department of the Navy, Washington, 1899, pl. 9...
- 30 *Flaggenbuch... Reichsmarineamt, Berlin 1905, Verlag Moritz Ruhl, Leipzig, II. Teil, p.11.*
- 31 "Drawings of the flags in use at the present time by various nations". London: H.M. stationary 1907. Ib. 1915/1916.
- 32 *Flags of The British Empire allies, painting book "* (London – 1911). Communication with Rudi Longueville.
- 33 *Devlet-I Aliyye-I Osmaniye Sancaklariyla Düvel-I Ecnebiye Bandiralarini Havi Abümdür Sancak ve Bandiralara Mahsus Album. Istanbul, Matbaa-I Bahriye 1328* (1912).
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- 35 *The National Geographic Magazine Flag Number, Vol. XXXII, n°4, Washington, October 1917.*
- 36 *World-wide Atlas of Modern Geography, introduction by J.Scott Keltie, eight edition, W.& A. K.Johnston Limited, Edinburgh and London 1916*, picture 15.
- 37 *Belgique : Tableau des Pavillons officiels en usage à bord des navires de mer Belges. Mai 1923 Nr.6/ België: Lijst der officieele vlaggen in gebruik aan boord van Belgische zeeschepen. Mei 1923 Nr.6.*
- 38 Reconstruction by Martin Laurenson-Grieve. The cipher's crowns must be more elaborated.
- 39 Letter to the author from Mr Guy Weber, *Lieutenant- Colonel e.r., Aide de Camp honoraire* of King Roi Leopold III, dated 19 October 2000. Photo Michel Lupant, *Musée Africain* in Namur, 11 October 2000.
- 40 Archives Palais Belvue, Brussels, photo Michel Lupant, 07 December 2006.
- 41 *België : Vlaggen, standaarden en wimpels in gebruik aan boord van zeeschepen / Belgique: Pavillons, guidons et flammes en usage à bord des navires de mer.*
- 42 *Flaggenbuch.... Bearbeitet und herausgegeben vom Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine, 1^{er} déc.1939, Druck und Verlag der Reichsdruckere, Berlin*, p. 20.
- 43 There is a letter of the Assistant-Chief of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade dated 20 July 1935 sent to the Minister of Transports with a copy to the Marine's Administration in which the German Legation asks the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to communicate them the official drawings of the royal ciphers L, E and C used on the personal flags of the Belgian Royal House. I have not found any answer from the Minister and no trace about the drawings. Communication by Roger Harmignies.
- 44 Photo by Michel Lupant, archives of *Museum Belvue*, Brussels, 25 February 2005.
- 45 Photo by Michel Lupant, *Royal Palace*, Brussels, March 1979.
- 46 Photo by Michel Lupant, *Museum of Waterloo*, 10 April 2005.
- 47 Reconstruction by Martin Laurenson-Grieve . The four small crowns must be more elaborated.
- 48 & 49 Reconstruction by Martin Laurenson-Grieve, the cipher reproduced is based in *Flaggenbuch 1939*. The four small crowns must be more elaborated.
- 50 « *Album des pavillons, flammes et marques en usage à bord des bâtiments de la Marine militaire belge. 1^{ère} édition, août 1959. Royaume de Belgique, Ministère de la Défense nationale, Force Navale. Album der vlaggen, wimpels, en merken in gebruik aan boord der zeebodems van de Belgische Militaire Marine. 1^{ste} uitgave, augustus 1959. Koninkrijk België, Ministerie van Landsverdediging. Zeemacht.*
- 51 "*Vlaggen, merken en wimpels in gebruik bij de Belgische Zeemacht /Pavillons marques et flammes en usage à la Force Navale belge*". NR ZGN 5/ NO ZGN 5: 005, *Ministerie van Landsverdediging, Generale Staf - Zeemacht. Hoge Directie Verbindingen Ministère de la Défense nationale, Etat-Major Général - Force Navale, Direction supérieure des Communications*. No date, year 1963 ?
- 52 « *Instruction sur le Cérémonial, livre IV . IF /140A. Forces Armées, services de l'Etat-Major Général, Service de l'historique, section du Protocole. / Instructie betreffende het Ceremonieel, boek IV. Krijgsmacht, diensten van de Generale Staf, dienst Geschiedenis*”, *Sectie Protocole*. 1969.
- 53 « *Vlaggen en wimpels in gebruik bij de Zeemacht /Pavillons marques , triangles et flammes en usage à la Force Navale. ZDTr 005, Krijgsmacht, General Staf, Staf van de Zeemacht, Sectie Transmissies / Forces Armées, Etat-Major général, Etat-Major de la Force navale, Section Transmissions* », 1973.

- 54 Photo Georges Deverd, June 1972, www.belgian-navy.be
- 55 Communication from the *Grand Maréchal de la Cour*, Royal Palace Brussels 1 February 1994.
- 56 Post cards published by *Institut belge d'Information et de Documentation (INBEL)* at the beginning of 1950s, in Author's collection.
- 57 <http://images.forum-auto.com/mesimages/186848/BelgianRoyalCadillac6.jpg>
- 58 Now Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- 59 Capital of Ruanda-Urundi, a Belgian Mandate of UNO. Now Bujumbura, capital of Burundi
- 60 <http://images.forum-auto.com/mesimages/186848/Le Roi a CHARLEROI- 1958>.
- 61 Royal Palace, Brussels. Photo by Michel Lupant, March 1979.
- 62 Brussels, Belgian National Day. Photo Michel Lupant, 20 July 1991.
- 63 Communication from *Grand Maréchal de la Cour* 1994.
- 64 Author's collection 1998.
- 65 & 66 Author's collection.
- 67 Users.skynet.be/retour..aux..sources/baudoin.htm
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- 69 Belgian Railway.
- 70 SNCB fact-sheet on the Royal Train
- 71 Photos by Michel Lupant.
- 72 « *Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire* », Brussels. www.marine.mra.klm.be
- 73 *Force navale (now Marine), Etat-Major général, Quartier Reine Elisabeth, Evere*. Photos by Michel Lupant, 25 June 1999.
- 74 Photo : *Noblesse et Royautés*, 7 August 2008.
- 75 Royal Palace in Brussels, in March 1979. Photo by Michel Lupant.
- 76 Communication from the *Grand Maréchal de la Cour*, dated 1 February 1994.
- 77 Flandre info.be, 12/12/2014
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- 79 Now King Philippe since 21 July 2013.
- 80 *Belvédère* Palace, 1985. Photo by Michel Lupant.
- 81 Roger Harmignies : *Vexilla Belgica*, N° 8 (1984), p.7.
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- 88 Author's collection 1994.
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- 93 Communication from the *Grand Maréchal de la Cour*, 1 February 1994. Protocol of the la Defense, 15 July 2004. Photos by Michel Lupant.
- 94, 95, 96 & 97 Brussels, 21 July 2004. Photos by Michel Lupant
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- 100 Belgian Marine Base, Zeebrugge et Oostende. Photo by Michel Lupant, 24 September 1999
- 101 Author's collection.
- 102 Photo Internet Sud Info.be 21 July 2013 and communication of *Lieutenant-colonel d'Aviation Breveté d'État-major* Alain Gerardy, Assisant Chief of Protocol to the Royal House, 31 July 2013.
- 103 Belgian Marine Base, Zeebrugge, photo Michel Lupant, 17 April 2014
- 104 Communication from *Lieutenant-colonel d'Aviation Breveté d'État-major* Alain Gerardy, Assistant Chief of Protocol to the Royal House, 31 July 2013.
- 105 Letter de Peter Degraer, *Capitaine de frégate Breveté, Conseiller à la Maison de Sa Majesté le Roi*, Palace of Brussels, 16 December 2014
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- 107 Photo publiée sur Internet et FOTW. Party website shop 22 July 2013
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- 119 Communication Jean-Marie Geldhof, Army Museum, Brussels, 17 February 2015.
- 120 Army Museum, Brussels. Photo by Michel Lupant, 17 February 2015.
- 121 Brussels, 20 July 1991. Photo by Michel Lupant.
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- 129 Communication from Marc Thone, *Bur Dir Sécurité Publique, Police fédérale*, 29 January 2015.
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- 132 National Day, Brussels. Photo by Michel Lupant, 21 July 2004.
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