

# NEWSLETTER

No 89 - November 2023



## NEWS

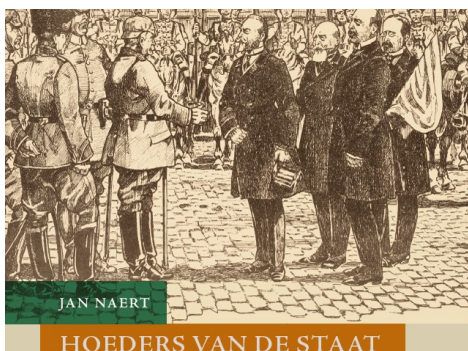
### BELGIUM WWII

Discover the latest additions to our website: articles on the Resistance, diplomats and air warfare in Belgium during World War II, as well as the first thematic entry dedicated to the history of the Resistance.

► Read more



## ON THE AGENDA



### MAYORS DURING WWI

On 13 December, Jan Naert will present his book (in Dutch) on the role of mayors during the 1st World War, followed by a debate with Sophie De Schaepdrijver and Luc Vandeweyer. Nico Wouters will lead this discussion.

► Read more

### CRIME SCENES

A conference (in French) followed by a debate on 20 December to



mark the publication of the book *'Scènes de Crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire'* with guests Laurence Druetz, Xavier Rousseaux and Police Commissioner Pierre Simon. The discussion will be led by Alain Colignon.

► Read more



## FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS



### SPIES AND SPYING IN CEGESOMA'S LIBRARY

Discover with our librarian the second part (Cold War) of a diptych dedicated to the richness of our collections on the subject.

► Read more & watch the video

### THE ARCHIVES OF ALAIN DE PRELLE DE LA NIEPPE

An important acquisition : the archives of a professional journalist and adventurer, who covered the Korean War, the struggle for Indonesian independence and the First Indochina War.

► Read more





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## Belgium WWII – Diplomacy, Bombing and Resistance.



As the year comes to its end, it's time to take a look at the newest entries on our [www.belgiumwwii.be](http://www.belgiumwwii.be) website. Discover the latest ones under three themes!



## Diplomacy

During the German occupation, a number of Belgian diplomats played an active role in various foreign capitals. We have already mentioned the case of Louis d'Ursel with his so-called « [Bern instructions](#) », and the decisive role played by [Emile de Cartier de Marchienne](#) in London. We now turn to the involvement of other diplomats. Through different profiles, the multiple aspects of their role are highlighted: the question of loyalty to the king or the government ([André de Kerchove de Denterghem](#), [Baudouin de Lichtervelde](#) and [André Motte](#) in Portugal or [Guy de Schoutheete de Tervarent](#) in Egypt), the question of supplies in occupied Belgium ([René Reding](#)) or links with Gaullism ([Jeanne de Schoutheete de Tervarent](#)). In addition to these biographical sketches, two other articles deal with the presence of Belgian communities in Portugal and Egypt.

## Resistance

We continue to add new entries on the history of the Resistance. An ever-increasing number of entries await visitors to our site, as you can see from the very first [thematic entry](#) (others will follow!) devoted to the history of the Resistance and which provides rapid access to about 150 entries devoted to the history of the Resistance: networks, movements, clandestine newspapers, key moments and biographical sketches. In addition to a brief definition of the theme - in this case, the Resistance - these thematic pages enable you to find all the entries on the site, in a variety of categories. A useful tool, given that the site now boasts over 900 entries.

Among the new contributions devoted to the history of the Resistance, we highlight the commitment of [Yvonne Nèvejean](#), [Arthur Haulot](#) and the singular figure of [Jean Cassart](#). There are also entries on [Belgian networks in Switzerland](#) and the figure of [Joseph Romainville](#).

## Bombing

World War II was also characterized by air warfare. In the Belgian context, we can roughly distinguish four phases of [air bombing](#): the German invasion, the Allied air raids from 1943 onwards, the V1 and V2 offensive in autumn 1944, and the destruction wrought by the Battle of the Bulge.

Over 80 years ago, [on September 7, 1943](#), the communes of Ixelles, Etterbeek and Evere were struck by Allied air raids. The target was not Ixelles, but the SABCA repair workshops for German fighters and bombers in Haren, near the Evere military airfield. The American bombers missed their target. Ixelles maneuvering ground, surrounded by a rail communications network, vast buildings, a nearby cemetery and a residential area : these were all unfortunate similarities with the area surrounding the Evere airfield. What's more, both sites were on the same axis. The fine but cloudy weather added to the blurred perception of the airmen. Although this bombing raid was not the deadliest, nor the last of those suffered by the Belgian population, its devastating impact still remains very present, if only in image. It was exploited by both the occupying forces and the collaborationist press, being also the last major reportage by German photographer Otto Kropf for the Propaganda Abteilung.

We look forward to your comments, criticism and encouragement. And please spread the word about this site, both to your friends and on social networks!

## Other news

[The archives of star reporter Alain de Puelle de la Nieppe at CegeSoma](#)

[Job vacancy](#)

[New inventory!](#)

[1943 in occupied Belgium: a turning point?](#)

[Belgium's corporate history](#)

[CegeSoma inventory operation, October 2 - 6, 2023](#)

[Latest news on the FED-tWIN BELCOWAR project](#)

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[Occupation and everyday life: a new resource portal on World War II](#)

[New publication 'Provinciebestuur Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog' \(The provincial government of Limburg during World War II\)](#)

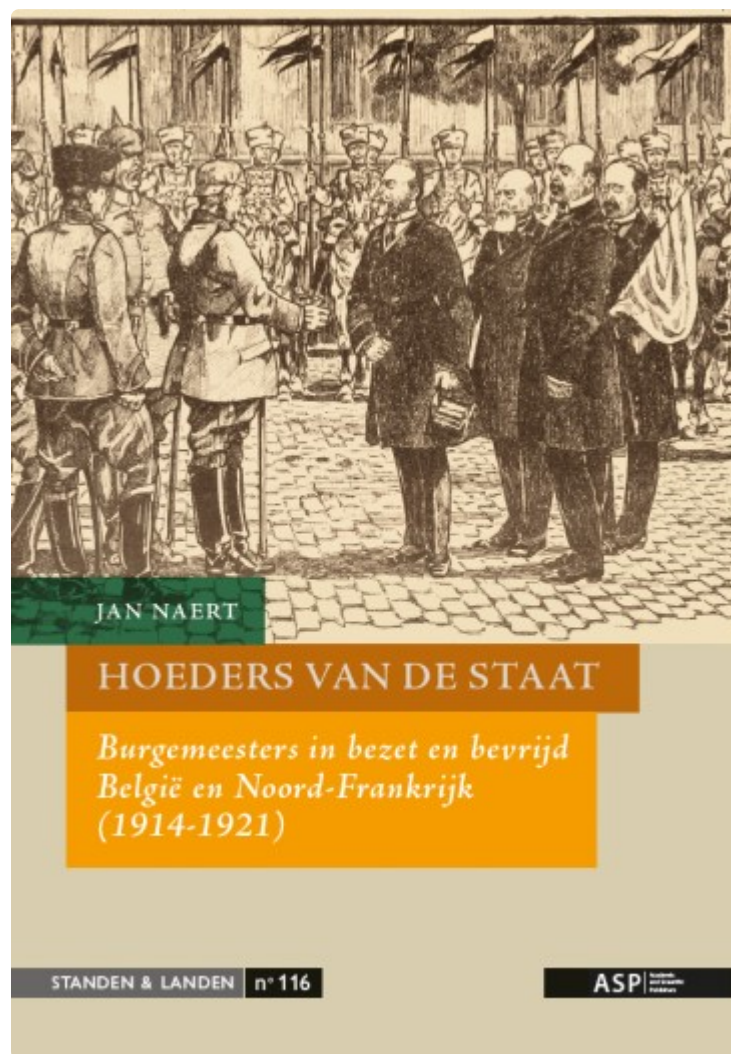
[The Horizon 2020 funded project EHRI PP comes to an end](#)

[Kunst voor das Reich.](#)

[Home](#) » [Event](#) » Hoeders van de Staat. Burgemeesters in bezet en bevrijd België en Noord-Frankrijk (1914-1921). (Guardians of the State. Mayors in occupied and liberated Belgium and northern France (1914-1921)).

## Hoeders van de Staat. Burgemeesters in bezet en bevrijd België en Noord-Frankrijk (1914-1921). (Guardians of the State. Mayors in occupied and liberated Belgium and northern France (1914-1921)).

World War I [Conference](#)



**Conference (in Dutch) with as guests  
Jan Naert, Sophie De Schaepdrijver and Luc Vandeweyer.  
A discussion moderated by Nico Wouters.**

During World War I, at a time when Belgium and northern France were under particularly harsh occupation and in the absence of a national political level, mayors and town councils were given crucial responsibility for the organization of daily life. As ultimate representatives of Belgian and French state authority, they remain in post. For four years, they try to represent the interests of the population. The challenges are enormous: maintaining food supplies, managing public life, maintaining order but also participating in German occupation politics. Mayors must constantly navigate between the interests of the local population and the demands of the occupying forces. This applies to the large and densely populated city centers such as Antwerp, Lille, Brussels or Ghent, medium-sized industrial cities such as Aalst but also the small rural village communities. Difficult choices must be made everywhere.

Within the framework of the Public History Meetings, CegeSoma and the non-profit organization "Friends of CegeSoma" invite you to come and discover Jan Naert's doctoral research on this topic on Wednesday, 13 December 2023.

Jan Naert will introduce his book followed by a conversation with WWI experts Sophie De Schaepdrijver and Luc Vandeweyer. This discussion moderated by Nico Wouters, will focus on the importance of local power in times of occupation and the current state of WWI research after the big wave of publications during the centennial commemoration. It will also address the question of which major challenges remain and where WWI research is heading.

*'Hoeders van de Staat. Burgemeesters in bezet en bevrijd België en Noord-Frankrijk (1914-1921)'*, published in the series 'Standen en Landen (ASP)', will be for sale after the conference.

- **Jan Naert** holds a doctorate in history. His book *'Hoeders van de Staat. Burgemeesters in bezet en bevrijd België en Noord-Frankrijk (1914-1921)'* is the published version of his doctoral dissertation which he defended at Ghent University in early 2020 (promoters Prof. Antoon Vrints and Prof. Nico Wouters). He then spent two years at the *FelixArchief* (Antwerp City Archives) where he focused his research on Second World War victims. Since May 2022, he has been working as an archivist at the General State Archives 2 (Depot Cuvelier). There, he mainly focuses on the study and the opening up of the sources from the military justice.
- **Sophie De Schaepdrijver** is Professor of Contemporary European History at Pennsylvania State University (USA). She specializes in the social and cultural history of the First World War. Her latest work is a biography and memorial study on spy Gabrielle Petit. She is currently working on a collective research project on occupation regimes and the experience of occupation in Europe during WWI.
- **Luc Vandeweyer** is a historian (*KULeuven*) and archivist (State Archives) in retirement since 2021. He is a specialist of the history of the Flemish Movement and of both World Wars.
- **Nico Wouters** is head of CegeSoma, and a specialist in the history of World War II and the politics of remembrance. He co-promoted Jan Naert's doctorate.





13/12/2023 - 12:30 to 14:30

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

**Where?** CegeSoma conference room, Aviation Square 29 - 1070 Brussels.

**When?** Wednesday, 13 December 2023 (12:30 p.m. - 14:30 p.m.).

**Registration required:** [isabelle.ponteville@arch.be](mailto:isabelle.ponteville@arch.be) or 02.556.92.11.

**If you wish, you can purchase the book on site at €49.00.**

Jan Naert, *Hoeders van de Staat. Burgemeesters in bezet en bevrijd België en Noord-Frankrijk (1914-1921)*, Brussels, ASP Editions, 2023, 412 pp.

Please bring any other interested parties!

### Main language

Dutch

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[Home](#) » [Event](#) » Scènes de Crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire. (Crime Scenes Police photography, a witness to the judicial investigation)

## Scènes de Crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire. (Crime Scenes Police photography, a witness to the judicial investigation)

CegeSoma Public History Meeting (2023-10)

[World War I](#)   [World War II](#)   [Cold War](#)   [Conference](#)





**Conference-debate (in French) with guests,  
Laurence Druez, Xavier Rousseaux and Police Commissioner Pierre Simon  
A discussion led by Alain Colignon**

On 1 April 2019, a major part of the photographic collection of the Liège Judicial Police Laboratory was transferred to the State Archives in Liège. Running since 1923 and covering the territory of the Liège Court of Appeal, this exceptional collection includes over 100,000 shots and handwritten directories updated by the laboratory in the course of its work.

These include portraits of suspects or victims of violent death, photos of judicial agents or magistrates, crime scenes showing domestic, public or industrial interiors and urban and rural landscapes, as well as re-enactment photos. Other subjects include exhibits, stolen or misused objects, weapons, clothing, sketches, etc.

The collection also includes photographic essays depicting the laboratory and its offices over the years, with their equipment and everyday objects: a true immersion in the atmosphere of a profession and an era.

The occupation of Belgium from May 1940 onwards is documented by photographs of bombed or burned buildings, portraits of Belgian collaborators, shots illustrating various forms of criminality, views of casemates and military installations for assembling the V1s...

To give an overview of this collection and produce the book *Scènes de crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire*, fifteen contributors were all involved. Specialists in a wide range of disciplines - the history of justice, of course, but also social history, the history of urban planning, the history of art and photography, World War II and forensic medicine - they each bring their own particular perspective to this collection, which is of interest far beyond the world of crime.

On Wednesday, 20 December 2023, CegeSoma and the non-profit organization "Les Amis du CegeSoma" will be pleased to welcome Laurence Druez, Xavier Rousseaux and Police Superintendent Pierre Simon, who will be interviewed by Alain Colignon.

The book '*Scènes de Crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire*' is published by Éditions Racine, edited by Laurence Druez and Xavier Rousseaux. In it, Police Commissioner Pierre Simon takes a very lively look at the work of his predecessors, while Alain Colignon writes about the climate in August 1943.

You are all welcome to discover this extremely interesting collection, which provides a wealth of new sources for the study of judicial history, the evolution of crime, as well as police work and investigators' methods of inquiry.

- **Laurence Druez** has a doctorate in history from *ULiège*. Head of the Liège State Archives, she is in charge of the Liège Technical and Scientific Police photographic collection.
- **Xavier Rousseaux** holds a doctorate in history and sociology from *UCLouvain*. He is Honorary Research Director at the *FRS-FNRS* and Visiting Professor at *UCLouvain*, where he heads the *Centre d'Histoire du Droit et de la Justice*. He specializes in the history of crime and justice.
- **Pierre Simon** is First Commissioner of Judicial Police, Head of the Technical and Scientific Police Department of the Liège Federal Judicial Police.
- **Alain Colignon** is a historian at *ULiège*. Librarian at CegeSoma/State Archives, he is also scientific advisor to the *Musée de la Vie wallonne*.



**20/12/2023 - 12:30 to 14:00**

## **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

**Where:** CegeSoma conference room, Aviation Square 29 - 1070 Brussels

**When:** Wednesday, 20 December 2023 (12:30 - 14:00)

**Registration required:** [isabelle.ponteville@arch.be](mailto:isabelle.ponteville@arch.be) or 02.556.92.11

Book will be on sale after the conference for €34.95.

Laurence Druez & Xavier Rousseaux (eds.), '*Scènes de Crimes. La photographie policière, témoin de l'enquête judiciaire*', Brussels, Racine, 2023, 302 pp.

Please feel free to bring someone with you!

## **Main language**

French





## Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (2) : the Cold War.

"Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (2) : the Cold War". Under this title, we invite you to discover the sixteenth theme of our series 'The Librarian's Talks'. Each theme will be an opportunity to dive into our collections and will be illustrated by a video and a text complementing the information found there.

**Watch the sixteenth video 'The Librarian's Talks: 16. Spies and espionage in the CegeSoma Library (2) : the Cold War'.**

## Espions et espionnage (2e partie : Guerre Froide) - Spionne...



The Second World War, even more than the First, is undeniably one of the great moments in the history of the intelligence services. It is during this period that they reach full maturity and blossom to their full potential, even gaining a form of recognition from the "educated public at large", who until then regarded them as somewhat ambiguous agencies, smacking of "dirty tricks" and sinister tactics. But the return to peace in May-August 1945 doesn't consign them to the darkness outside the concerns of political decision-makers. Quite the contrary, in fact. At the cost of yet another geopolitical shift, for a good generation and a half, the ally of the day before - the Soviet Union - is to become (once again) for an enlarged West, this time in a North Atlantic configuration, the enemy to destroy. And veterans of the "secret war" on both sides will have to get back on track.



This time, it is within the framework of a "Cold War" as devious as it is hushed, opening up even more to all the "sensitive" aspects of human activities. In addition to the search for information relating to political security or "militaria" in the strict sense of the term, there are soon to be activities aimed at infiltrating forces deemed subversive, the manipulation of the media and cultural or para-cultural organizations, and the frenetic quest for information in the industrial field or in nuclear research. Not to mention the more or less successful influence and corruption of antagonistic elites. In the meantime, a number of agents who earned their spurs in the last world war, and who still harbor nostalgia for those heroic days, tiptoe back into the discreet fight. In many West European countries, they weave "Stay Behind" networks, eagerly awaiting the great red tidal wave with the occasional encouragement of certain governments or military organizations. Then all hell suddenly breaks loose at the turn of the century in the '80s and '90s, with the collapse of the "Eastern Bloc" and the Soviet Union.

Belgium also experience this phenomenon, and the CegeSoma library is quick to include it in its collections. One last point, however. Doubtless a legacy of the past, this particular kind of struggle, tinged with mystery and shadow, has long attracted the greedy gaze of investigative journalists in search of sensationalism, or of slightly exalted spirits, quick to flirt with conspiracy: in their eyes, the "secret war" is a superior key to explaining the defeat of armies, or even the fall of empires. And the

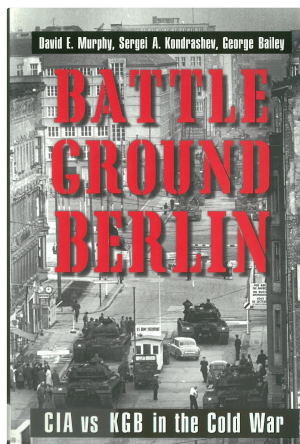
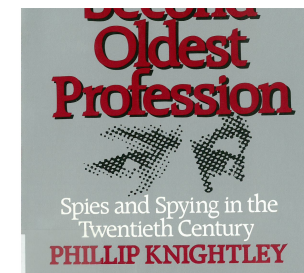
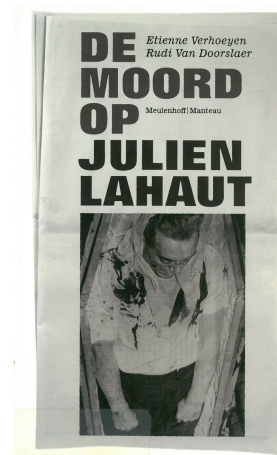
"If Reagan, Gorbachev, Thatcher and Mitterand only manage one book this year, they could do a lot worse than pick up Philip Knightley's and discover what imbecilities are committed in the hallowed name of intelligence."  
—John le Carré

**The  
Second**

scientific approach to the phenomenon suffered as a result. It's only in recent decades that a more objective approach has emerged and asserted itself, without succeeding in erasing conspiratorial history.



In the various operational modes mentioned, CegeSoma has naturally managed to collect a few "must-haves". With regard to the "Stay behind" networks, we must of course draw attention to two long-standing books: W. DE BOCK, J. CAPPELLE, E. LEGROS, S. DUMONT and M. GRAINDORGE, *Extrem-rechts en de Staat* (1981) and *Gladio* (edited by Jan WILLEMS). Having benefited from a bilingual edition, they are rather "left-wing" oriented, but if carefully analysed, they still prove to be a rich source of information for the layman. But they obviously need to be supplemented by more "objective" productions, such as: Etienne VERHOEYEN-Rudi VAN DOORSLAER, *De moord op Lahaut* (2010), Daniel GANSER, *Nato's Secret Armies. Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe* (2005) or Anne-Sophie GIJS, *Le pouvoir de l'absent. Les avatars de l'anticommunisme au Congo* (2016-2 vol.). We should point out that, in this "secret war" history of the first Cold War, it may be useful for Belgium to turn to Fernand STRUBBE's, *Geheime oorlog 40/45* (1992), a valuable work translated to French in 1997 under the title *Services secrets belges 1940-1945*. In fact, some of the agents featured in this book are eager to be reactivated in the immediate post-war period - and more than one will succeed...



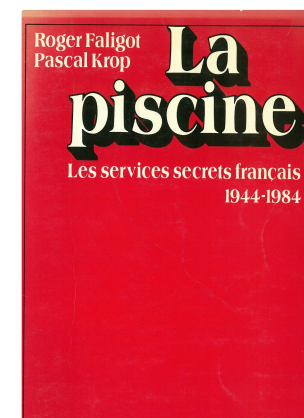
On the international stage, in what has been somewhat simplistically presented as a struggle between the "CIA" and the "KGB" ( in this genre, see, for example, David E. MURPHY and Sergei A. KONDRASHEV, *Battleground Berlin. CIA vs KGB in the Coldwar* (1997), or Christopher ANDREW & Vassili MITROKHIN, *The Mitrokhin Archives. The KGB in Europe and the West* (1999), we should of course mention a few classic but solidly constructed works of synthesis, such as Jeffrey RICHARDSON, *A century of Spies. Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (1995) or *United States Intelligence. An Encyclopedia* (1990).

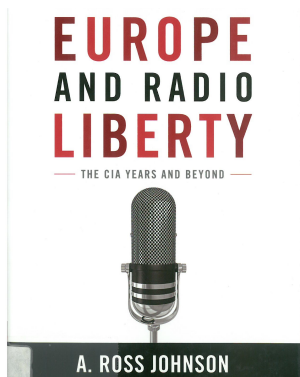
This done, we can now get down to the nitty-gritty of things, even using the works of investigative journalists with a gift for synthesis, analysis and a well-stocked "address book" such as Roger FALIGOT and Pascal KROP, *La piscine : les services secrets français, 1944-1984*. (1985) or, more recently, Bernard LECOMTE, *KGB. La vraie histoire des services secrets soviétiques* (2020). Needless to say, in the small world of investigative journalist-historians, it's best to proceed with caution, because while Roger Faligot is often well-informed and well-documented, there are also plenty of fabulists and cranks. The case of Jacques Bergier (*L'actuelle guerre secrète-1967*, *Secret Armies-1975*, etc,

etc) is exemplary in this respect.

RADIO FREE

Do you wish to go beyond the search for "sensitive" information stricto sensu? Then you'll find useful research in our





library, such as A. ROSS JOHNSON, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. The CIA Years and Beyond* (2010), Benjamin TROMLY, *Cold War Exiles and the CIA. Plotting to Free Russia* (2019) or Roselyne CHENU, *En lutte contre les dictatures. Les congrès pour la liberté de la culture (1950-1976)* (2018). Here again, it's worth pointing out that these few titles are a drop in the bucket, or almost. Now, let's face it: our collections have some weak points: we still have very little on Cold War intelligence services in literature or film. Or, more broadly, on collective representations of the spy in « The Second Twentieth Century » . But let us console ourselves. Such works will undoubtedly find their way onto our shelves one day, "if only some bright young researcher...".

And to usefully end this little text, we must also acknowledge the interesting contributions in this field made by our former colleague and still friend Emmanuel Debruyne, who is very active in history magazines specializing in "various and sundry" spies and espionage.

But our quest for new works in this field is far from over.



## The archives of star reporter Alain de Prelle de la Nieppe at CegeSoma



The archives of journalist and professional adventurer Alain de Prelle de la Nieppe were donated to CegeSoma by his son in May 2022 and June 2023. A unique acquisition!

Born into a noble family, Alain de Prelle de la Nieppe (1922-1955) was already an adventurous child. During World War II, he managed to escape to England via France, Spain and Gibraltar, and served in the Royal Navy from 1941. After the Liberation, de Prelle traveled throughout postwar Europe and got his start in journalism. Once married, he worked for a time for his parents-in-law's mattress company in Herentals. However, de Prelle quickly and passionately threw himself into the career of independent journalist. From the end of the 1940s, he visited many of the geopolitical flashpoints of the moment: for example, he was UNO war correspondent in Korea, reported on the Indonesian independence struggle and the conflict in French Indochina, visited the Indian state of Hyderabad. De Prelle's work appeared in numerous Belgian and foreign periodicals but in particular his articles in the weekly magazine Moustique (and its Dutch-language counterpart Humoradio) established his reputation as adventurer-reporter. The challenge set to de Prelle by Charles Dupuis, director of éditions Dupuis, to go round the world on a derisory one thousand Belgian franc banknote particularly excited the imagination of the general public : the resulting book "*Le Tour du Monde sur un billet de mille*" (1953) was a success. Then, in the same style, appeared "*Cent mille kilomètres en système D*" (1954), "*Plus riche que Lavarède*" (1955) and "*Fiancé à l'aventure*" (1956). In 1955, de Prelle was in Morocco to report on the anti-French riots. Severely injured in a traffic accident around Khouribga, he died at the age of thirty-two.

The archives of the Prelle de la Nieppe cover some four linear meters and date largely from the immediate postwar period (c. 1944-1955). They primarily contain items related to his journalistic career: scores of handwritten and typed articles (by his wife), hundreds of photographs intended as illustrations, as well as correspondence, notes and travel documents. The archives also include the manuscripts and typescripts of his books and earlier commercial work (such as promotional texts for airlines). Lectures given by de Prelle to the home front are documented, among other things, by some 40 posters.

The two donations have since been repackaged and provisionally described. A final, full-fledged inventory is planned for mid-2024.

#### Other news

[Belgium WWII – Diplomacy, Bombing and Resistance.](#)

[Job vacancy](#)

[New inventory!](#)

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