

Bricks from Belgium



European Industrial Heritage ?



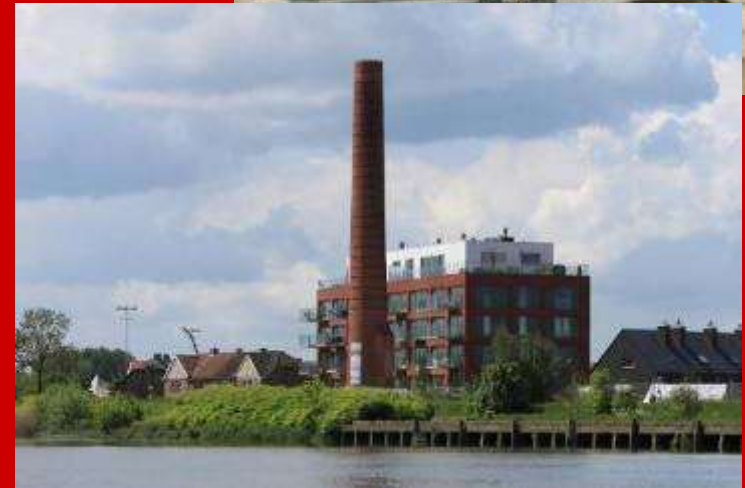
Harry van Royen
Drs. Hist.



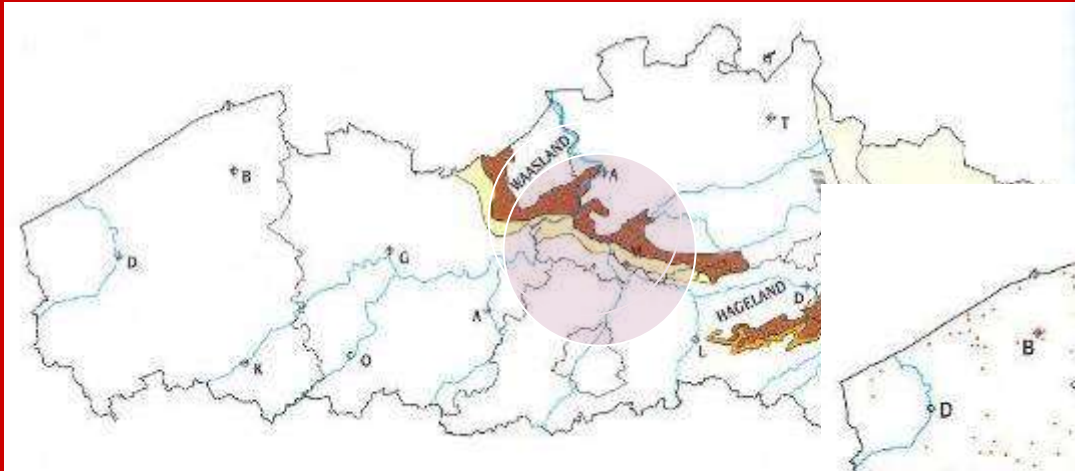
The Remains of the Industrial Landscape of the Rupel Region:
an Agent for Local, Regional, National & International
Understanding of the Heritage of Brick & Tile Making

Heritage under Stress:

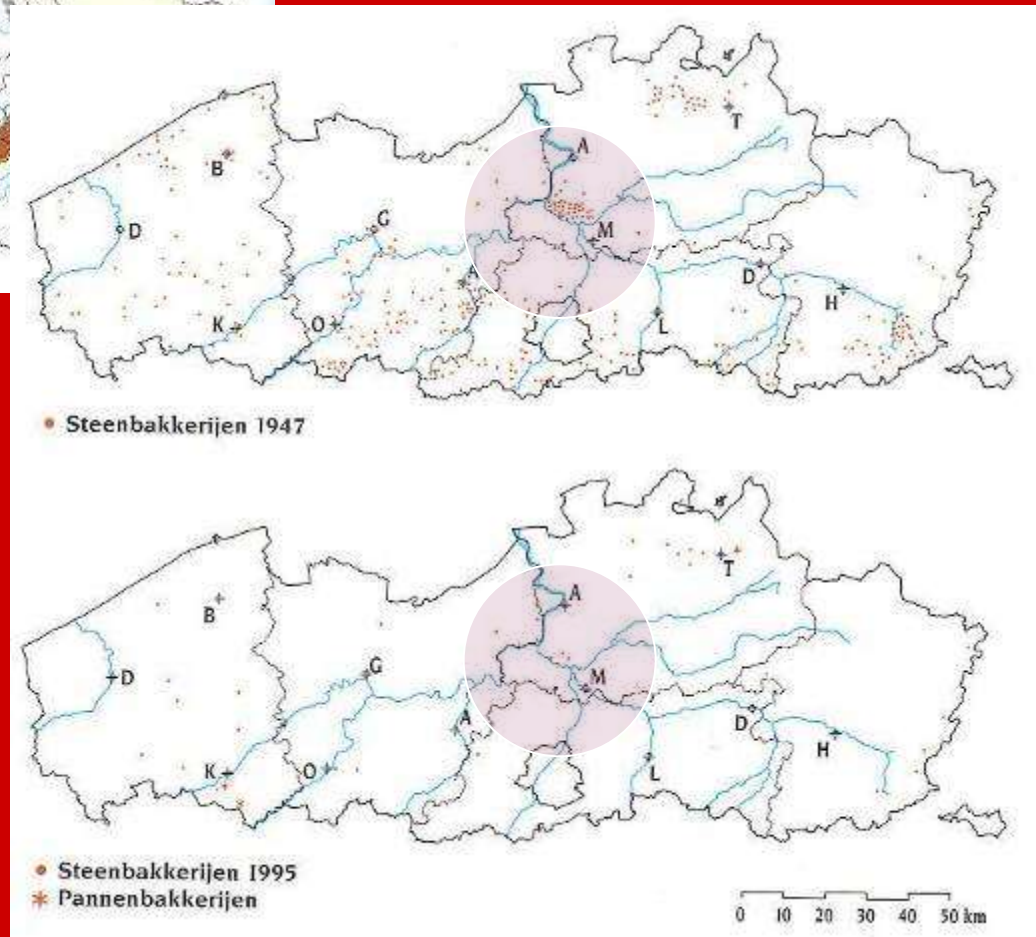
- Lack of funding...less visitors
- New approaches in learning objectives:
focus on S.T.E.M. (Science,
Technology, Engineering & Mathematics)
- Less attention for historical and geological
remains in school trips
- Focus on tourist valorisation – roundabout memorabilia
- Reconversion of brownfields & blackpoints
- Minimal re-use = minimal remaining relics
- New generations don't know their history,
can't *read* the scars in the landscape,
but they want to know more
- Last chance to SAVE IA Heritage



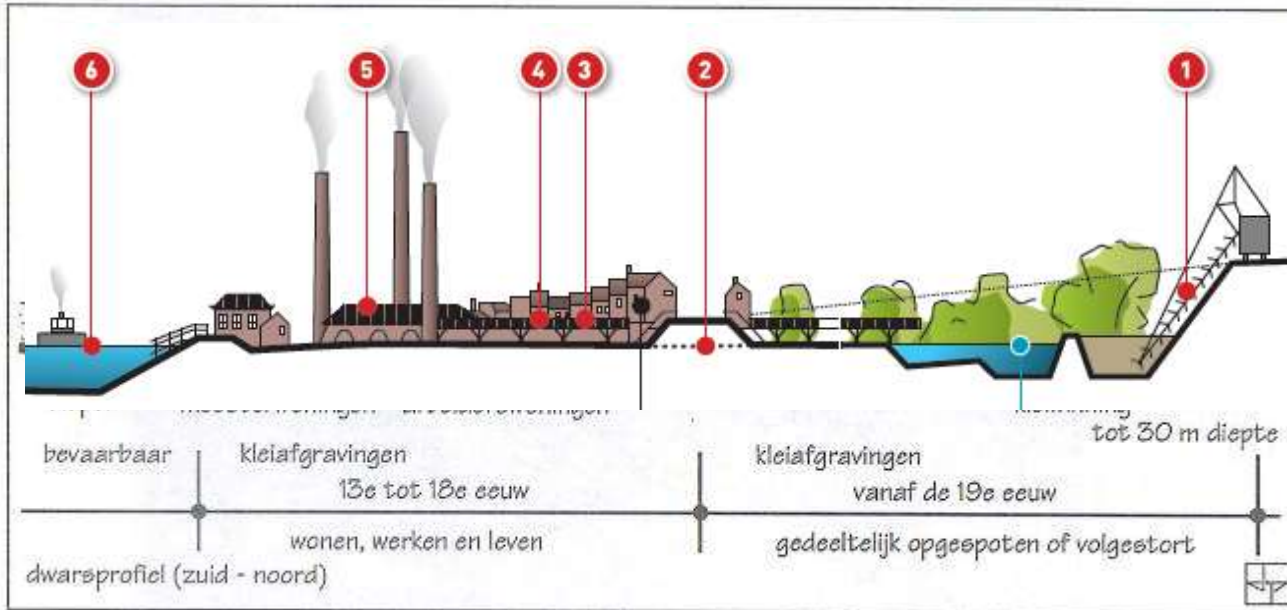
1. Geographical and Geological Setting



Area of Rupeliaan - Clay layers



Brick & Tile Works
1947 versus 1995



Digging up the Cuesta

From the River onwards

Instead of Digging Pits



2. Historical Setting

Rupel & Scheldt Area 13th – 21st C



Brick Production started:

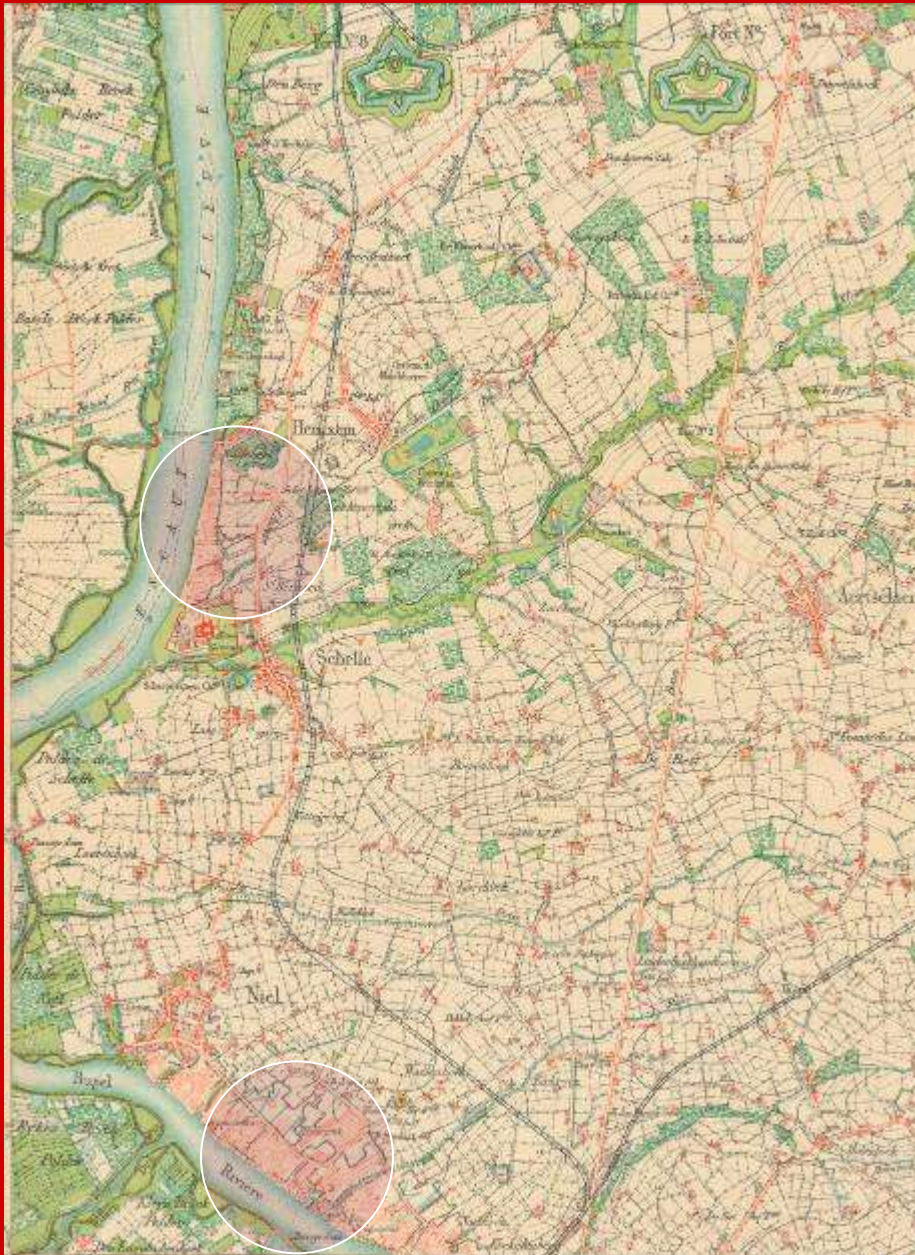
Mid 13th C, nearby and for building purposes Cistercian Abbey Hemiksem

Industrial and City Development Antwerp & Brussels in Continuous Demand for Bricks from 16th C



Willebroek – Brussels Canal,
Constructed 1500 – 1575

Ideal for Ec. Development of Boom

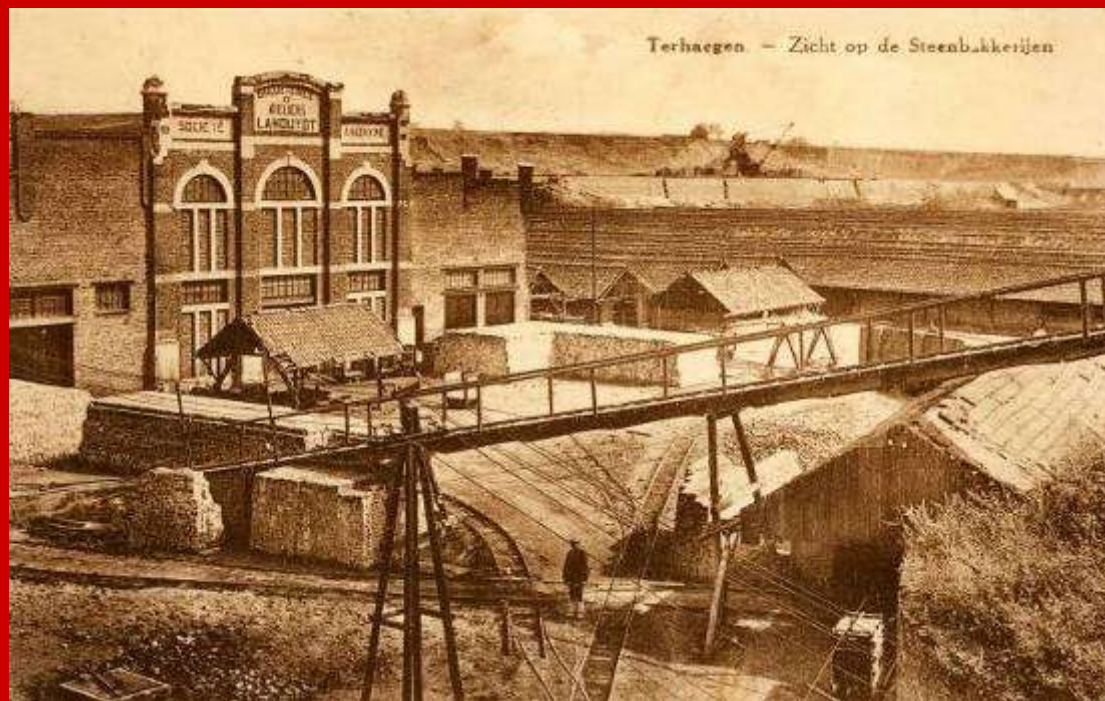


Good Brick
Strength Quality
For Public Works

Found at brick kilns
Working with Rupeliaan Clay

Wanted by Ministry of Works,
Defence...

Map 1864



Landuyt (1881)

an example of acquiring multiple brick works (from 1919 onwards)
bricks, floor tiles & roof tiles works (1930):

- Terhagen : 2 brick works
- Boom : 1 brick work
- Niel : 2 brick work
- Mornimont : 1 brick work (Jemeppe-sur-Sambre - Namur)
- Baudour : 2 brick works (Borinage - Canal Br-Ch - Hainaut)

further acquisition of other brickworks after 1945, outside Rupel area...
until bought by Austrian multinational Wienerberger



Brickworks Anverreeth
(1960's) – now venue
Tomorrowland (2010's)



Boom
seen from
the sky (1950s):

- Brick drying sheds
- Brick kilns
- Shipyards
- Workshops (Metal, Wood)
- Quays

Booming Business

Post War demand – 1919-1925 // 1945-1950



Verstrepens Root, Boom

Homes and roads destroyed,
excavated for clay extraction

Kapelstraat, Boom

National roads had
to be preserved



3. Decline and Protection



Mainly transport of bricks
by (inland) waterways

Belgium
Netherlands
Germany
Scandinavia
UK (England, Scotland, Wales)



Het lossen van een van de lichters van Van der Eb te Londen (Foto: circa 1933, Archief International Shipbrokers-Londen)

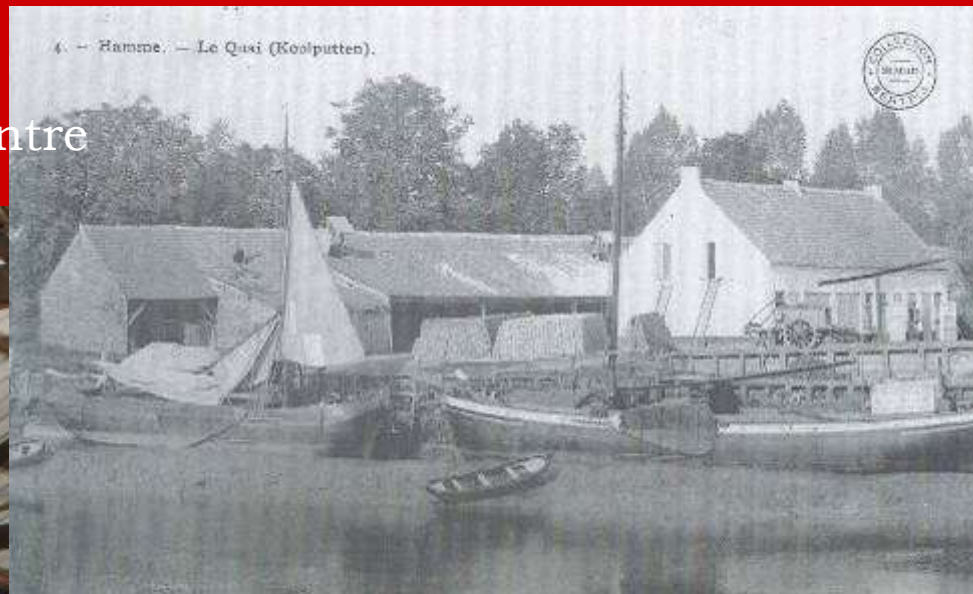
13th – 20th C

Lorries from 1945 onwards

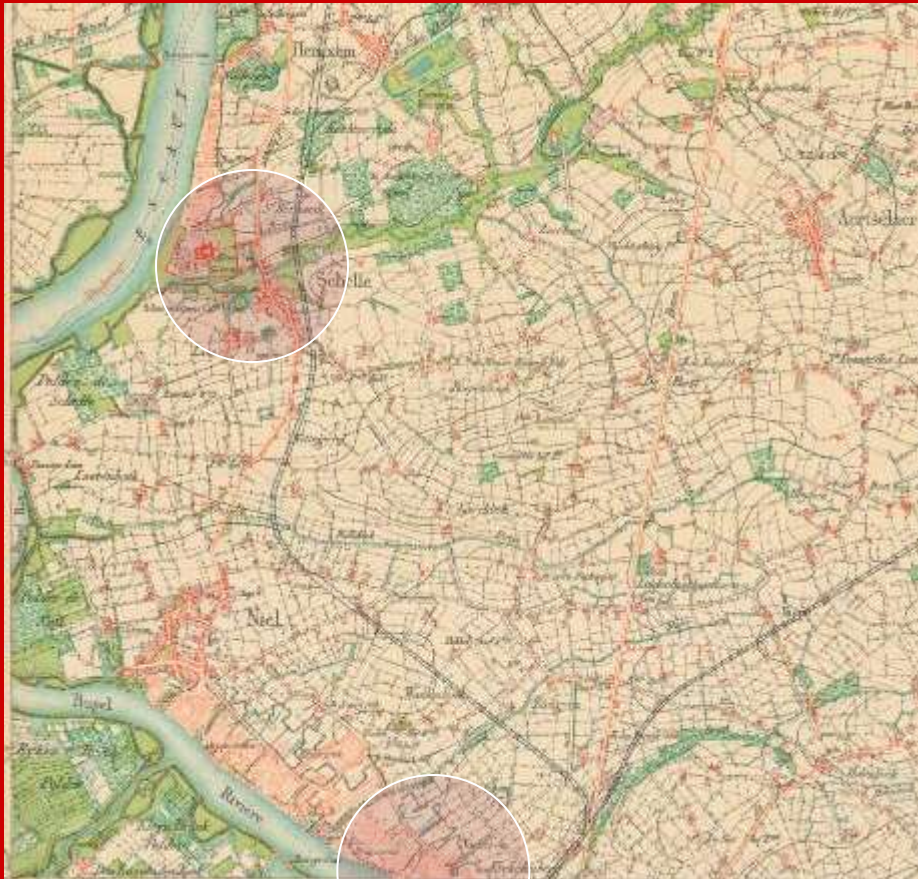
Back by inland waterways
From 2015

Steenschuit – Stone Brick
A-B-C routing – Nautical Visitor Centre

Antwerp – Brussels – Charleroi
Circle transport of bricks and coal



The (Inter)National Storyline



Hemiksem

From Bricks to Glazed Tiles 20th C

Boom, Noeveren

Brick Technology 13th – 20th C



Boom, Noeveren

A global history of brick making technology

Protected : numerous buildings as Monument, the hamlet as a Site



ERIH Object



A. Site Lauwers

Tells the story of brick making and social life/child labour 1800-1914

C. Site Peeters – Van Mechelen

Tells the story of the technological evolution post 1950 : better drying



Evolution of Brick Works in the Rupel Region

Year	Brick Works	Employment
<u>1870</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>6000</u>
1960	33	4700
1993	6	724
<u>2016</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>70</u>

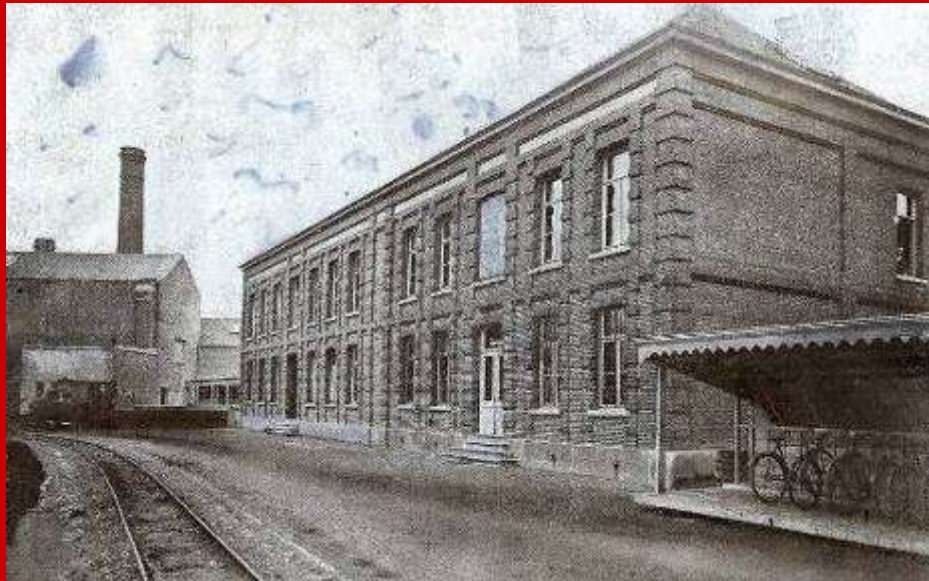


Wienerberger (°1819) (Austria)

2016:
active in 30 countries worldwide
with 221 plants

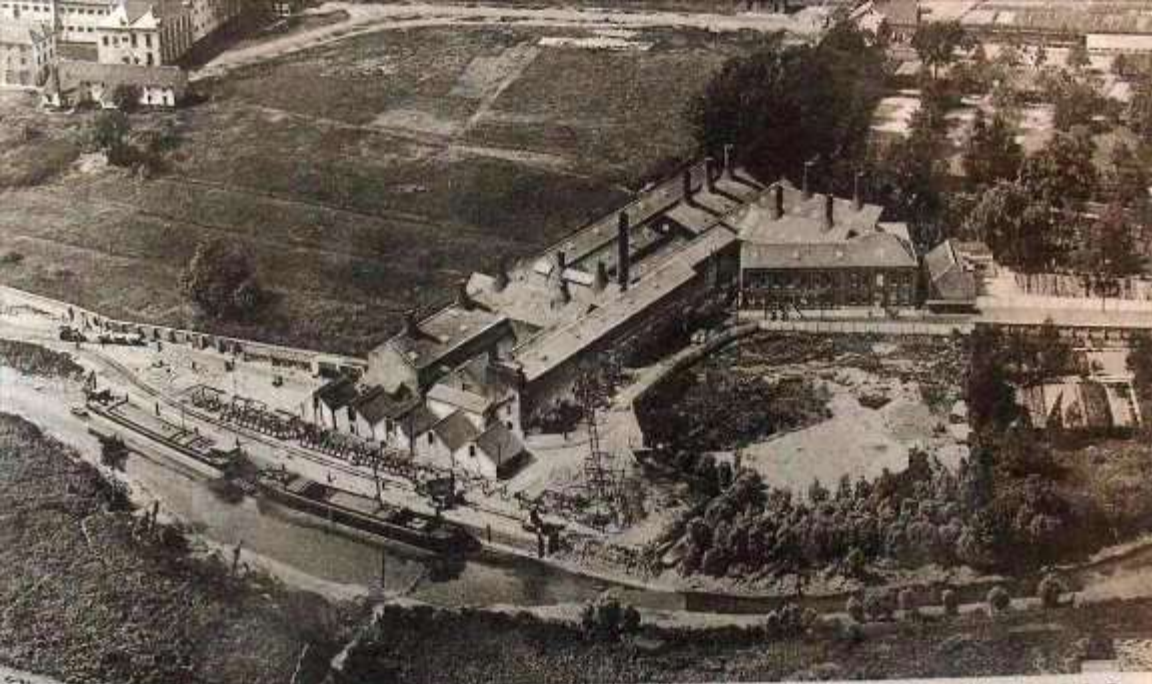
Still one Brick plant - Rupel
Wienerberger Rumst Division

1 of 13 Wienerberger Belgian plants



Hemiksem

From Bricks to Glazed Tiles

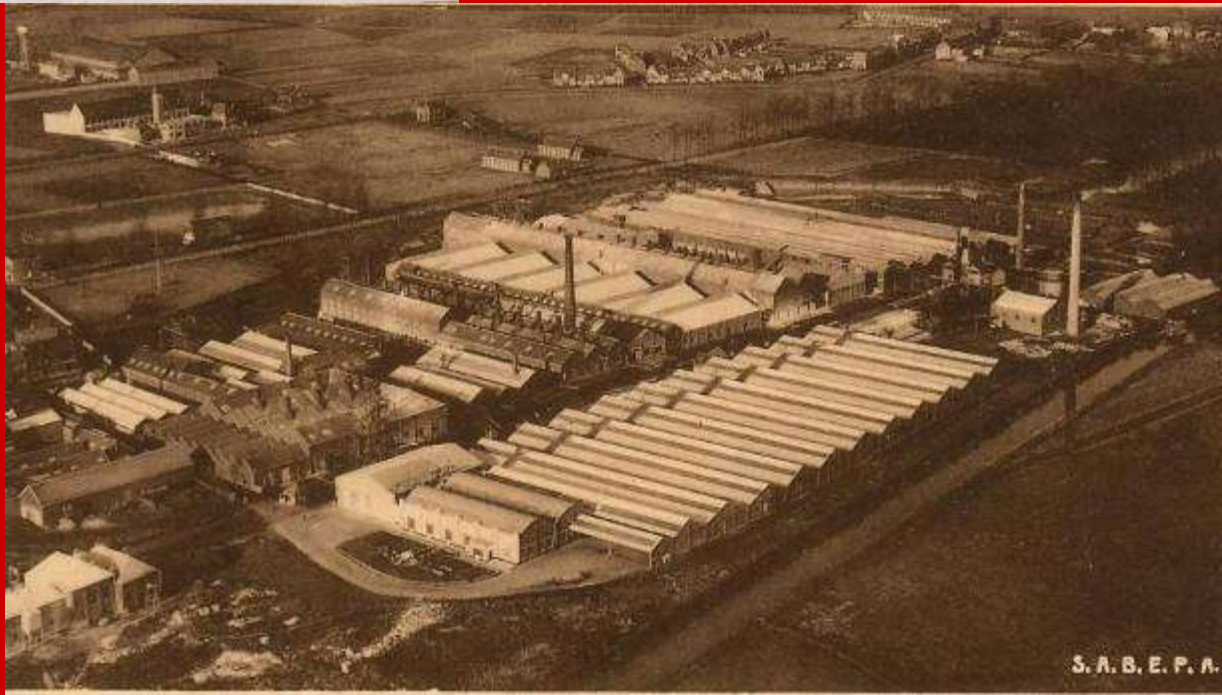


" Manufactures Céramiques d'Hemixem, GILLIOT et Cie, Sté Ame " Cliché C. A. B.
" Bureaux et Quais ".

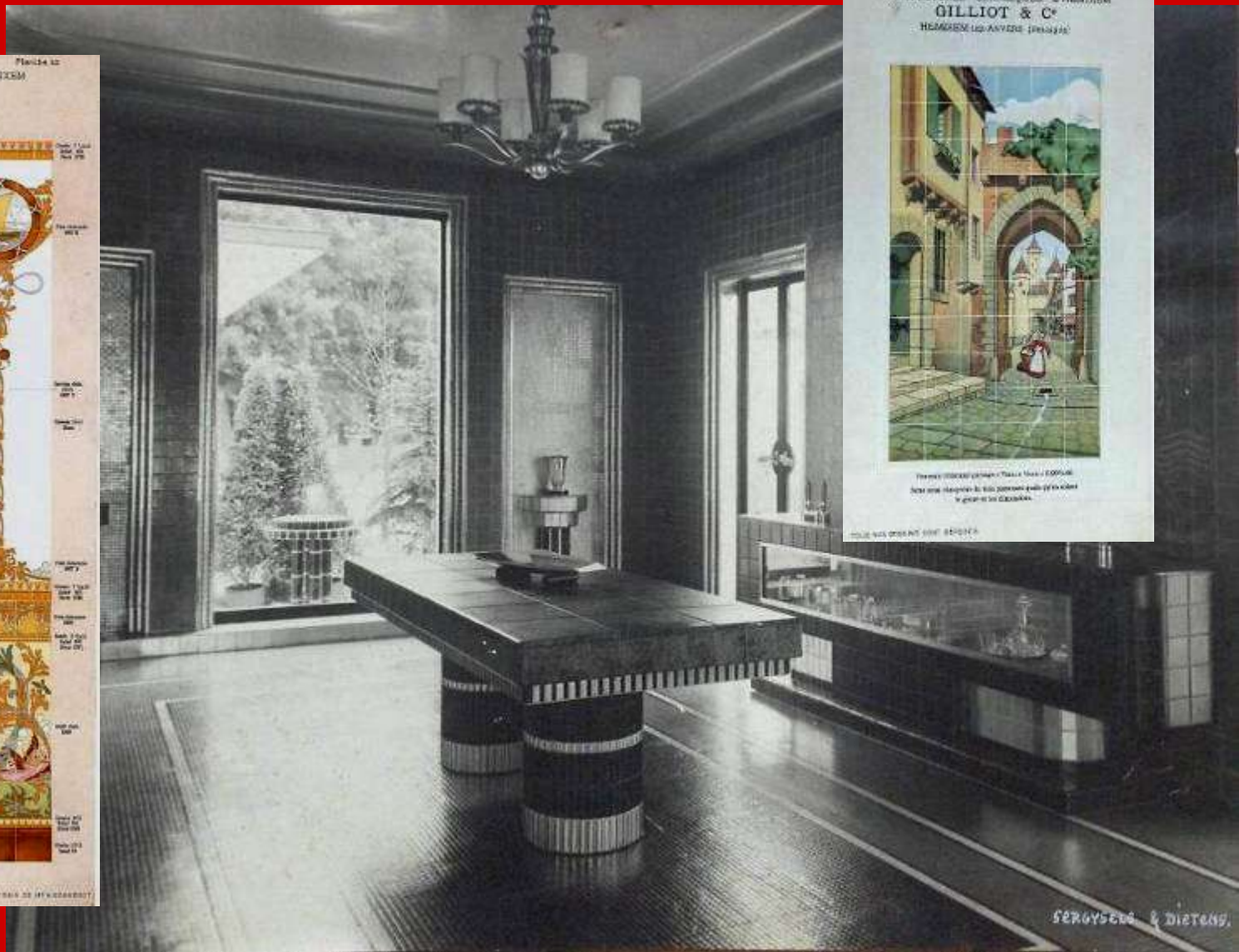
1897-1978 –

1985-1993

From Bricks to
Glazed Bricks towards
Glazed Wall & Floor Tiles



Great Variety in Tiles, Decorated and Plain



Glazed Tiles : development thx John Salt,
former employee of ceramics factory Jules Vieillard & Cie - Bordeaux

**IMALSO Tunnels 1933 (one foot, one car)
In association with Philips Eindhoven**



1968: majority shares N.V. Koninklijke Sphinx Maastricht

**1974: new owner of N.V. Sphinx-Hemiksem,
British concern Reed International**

1985 : closing all production – sales

1993 : final end



Gilliot & Roelants
Tile Museum

1986

Abbey St Bernard

10th Oct 2016

Collection R. Pozzo
10.000 tiles added

Public Presentation : June 2017



Tourist Interpretation

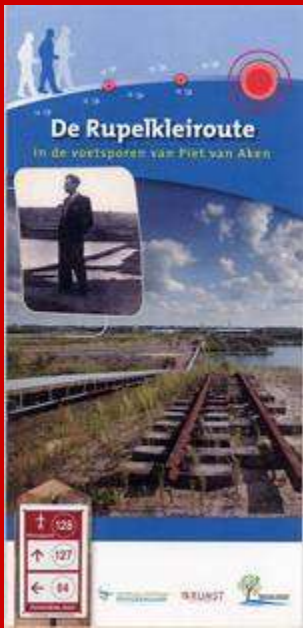
Old school

Leaflets

Books

Information Panels

Walking Routes



Tourist Interpretation



New school



Pinterest

<https://nl.pinterest.com/erfrupel/>



Mobile Guides with 3 D presentations

<http://ontdek-rupelenschelde.hoppr.eu>

www.brickland.be (all in Dutch)

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Certainly, European Industrial Heritage !

