

BELGIAN TOMBSTONE LIONS

by GREG BALAGIAN

Two types of lions appear in Belgian Post's 2020 miniature sheet of five stamps showing remarkable tombstones in the country.

The first lion is a beautiful sculpture by the Belgian sculptor Frans Joris (1851-1914) on the tombstone of acclaimed writer Hendrick Consience (1812-1883); it is located in Schoon- Selhof cemetery in Antwerp.

Consience was a pioneer of Dutch language literature in Flanders, writing at a time when Belgium was dominated by the French language favored by the upper classes.

Consience published over 100 historical and rural novels and novellas. He was a masterful storyteller and a true writer of the people.

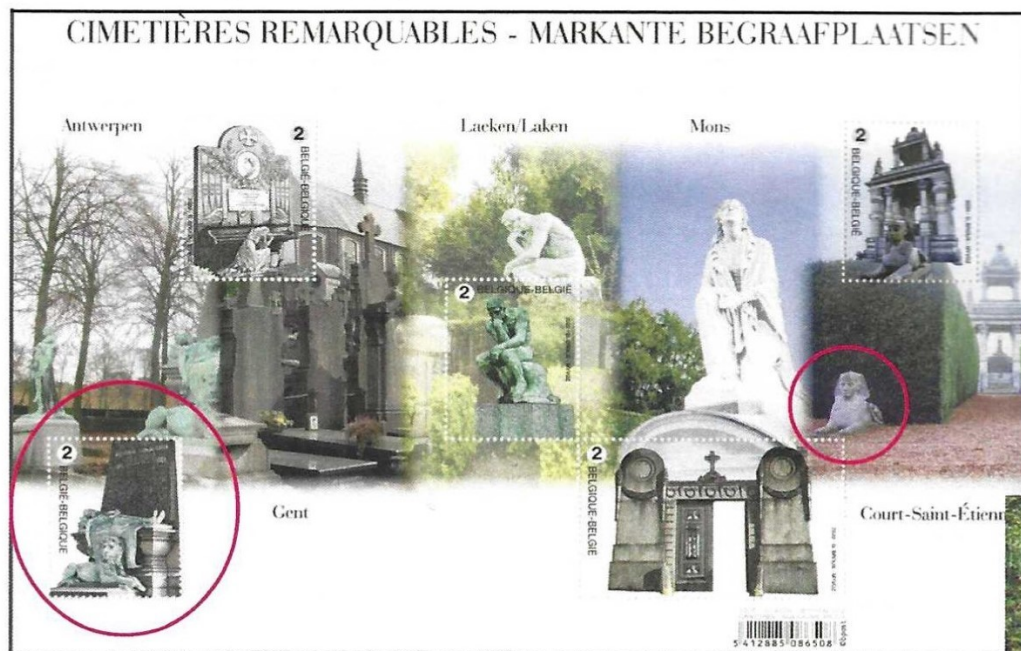
In 1838 he published his most famous and popular masterpiece, the historical romance called, *The Lion of Flanders*. The choice of the Flemish lion on his tomb was primarily based on this novel.

Found in the selvage, the second lion is the composite sphinx with a human head and lion's body. The mausoleum of Count Eugene Goblet d'Alviella (1846-1925) is in the cemetery of Court-Saint-Etienne in Walloon Brabant. D'Alviella was a lawyer, senator, professor of the history of religions, and rector of the Free University of Brussels.

The mausoleum is guarded by two pairs of sphinxes in bluestone, a blue-gray shade of limestone. 🐾



Lion of Flanders on the tombstone of Hendrick Consience



Belgium's Remarkable Cemeteries (Scott 2935a-e) sheet includes two feline sculptures: the Flemish Lion (2935d) and one of four sphinxes in the selvage. *The Mew Listing is on page 39.*

