First Detailed Account of How Liege Held Back the Onrush of the Germans

American, an Eyewitness of the Fighting, Tells a Vivid Story.

DESCRIBES BATTLE WITH GERMAN AIRMEN

Fled From Beleaguered City to Brussels Before Capture.

[The following account of the German attack upon the forts of Liege and of the sudden ruin of a prosperous district was written by an American who had lived in Liege for a year, and who went to Brussels just before the German avalanche swept over the Liegeois. It is the first authentic story from an eyewitness of those tragic scenes which has been published.

By DONALD DURAND.

It is difficult to write clearly, even safely, of the events leading to the fall of Liege. To some of us who saw a lovely land inhabited by the most amiable people on earth suddenly turned into a hell full of demons civilization seems to have collapsed. Where is God that such things are possible?

Would any one have dreamed that these charming, courteous Walloons, whose politenesses are a delight to the eye and ear, could have defended themselves so dreadfully and desperately? Would any one have dreamed they could be so cruelly assaulted?

We who were in Liege when Europe began to rumble had no doubts as to what the Germans would do if war came, for Liege was certain to be the first point of attack, since it was a first gateway toward France and the key to Brussels and Antwerp. We know now that the Government of Belgium was under no misconception as to the German attitude, and that the best preparations possible were made to resist.

The people of Belgium rose to a man behind their King. None was too old or too young to offer himself for service. Every possible sacrifice was made. Rich and poor offered their all to the country. For there is no land in the world where love of country is so strong as in Belgium. This explains the wonderful resistance offered to the German hordes.

Let no one underestimate the sacrifice Belgium made for the sake of civilization. The Belgians knew they must be crushed, that their smiling country would be wasted, their homes destroyed, their property seized. But there was no reluctance. They were ready to give their every earthly possession. Let me give one instance. Baron de Horn, a near neighbor of mine, lost one son on the frontier. Another was captured. Then the old General, himself of 70 years, volunteered and was among the bravest of the defenders.

City in State of Siege.

It was on Sunday evening, August 2, that we learned of the German invasion of Luxemburg. The next evening the walls of Liege were posted with bulletins announcing that the city was in a state of siege. Most of our troops had been sent to the border, but the twelve forts were manned and ready to fire upon the invaders. There was excitement in Liege but no panic. There was not a sign of cowardice. The people were resigned, but determined to make the Germans pay dearly. The very newsboys, whose pleasant greeting had helped one start the day right, were grim faced, implacable in their resentment. Never was there such a change in the attitude of a people.

There were many Germans in Liege. You might assume that they were badly treated. Nothing of the sort. They were watched closely, but there was not a single instance of ill usage.

On the afternoon of August 4 I went to the suburbs and observed preparations for defence. Houses had been razed so as to give full play to the great guns of the forts. Trenches were ready on every hand. Mines had been laid in ground over which German infantry was expected to deploy. Barbed wire had been entangled cunningly in the low grounds, in woods and near streams.

Peasants, fleeing before the German advance, were flocking toward Liege from the east. They were pitiful. Whole families, leaving their tiny plots of ground and their cottages to ruin, were sadly turning thir backs upon everything that made life worth while. From many of them I heard moving stores of the harshness of the invaders. They told me that they had been forced to set fire to their own houses. The roads were massed with these miserable people. One did not have to be a sentimentalist to feel the pity, the horror, of their situation.

Presently I was a spectator of possibly the first air battle of the war. High above Fort Chartreuse three aeroplanes were wheeling and circling, exactly like great birds of prey. At the moment I did not realize they were German fliers intent upon spying out the weakness of the Liege forts. I watched them interestedly, marking how the sun flashed upon their sides and wings. Suddenly, from the direction of Ans, there was another flash. A great monoplane, obviously Belgian, mounted into the air, darting, wheeling, turning, trying always to get above the three planes that were over Fort Chartreuse. Then I realized that the three were Germans.

Belgian Eager for Fight.

There was a hero at the steering wheel of the Belgian plane. He did his best to trade his life for a German's. Although the odds were three to one, he gave chase, evidently determined to get near enough to ram on, or more of the German spying planes, but they were too speedy for him. When he realized that he fired shot after shot at them from his pistol, and they replied with pistol shots. None of these took effect. Shortly thereafter the Germans flew off to their lines, and the Belgian aviator descended.

As I returned to the city, walking along the River Meuse, I saw one who, oblivious of war and its alarms, was dangling his legs over the water and peacefully fishing. The battle in the air, which he must have witnessed, had not moved him. The certainty that the Germans were only a few miles away had not concerned him. He smoked his pipe and placidly cast his line. It was soothing to overstrained nerves to see that chap, but it was only a few hours later that I learned a German spy had been arrested as he posed as a fisherman with a creel full of carrier pigeons.

When I reentered the city I found the walls had been plastered with warnings that the Germans were in the outskirts of Liege. The citizens were cautioned to remain calm and to receive the German troops with respect. As I looked around I realized for the first time what war had done to Liege. On the preceding days there had been at least a single sheet newspaper with some little information as to our own doings and the trend of events in the world without. Now there were no newspapers, no telephones, no telegraphs, no trains, no automobiles. Everything had been commandeered for purposes of defence. We were back in the Middle Ages at one stroke. It made one wonder what civilization was worth.

At 7 o'clock that evening I heard an alarming sound, the first concussions from the great guns of the forts. Need I say that the whole city shivered—not from fear, for Liege never knew fear, but from a sense of the dreadful things that were to come. My house overlooked the eastern part of the city. I went to a window in the roof and stayed there all night long. The moon was rising. The night was clear and beautiful. The very idea of war, of men butchering each other a few miles away, seemed insane, incredible.

Guns of Forts in Action.

I ——pt the horizon with binoculars, but the glasses were unnecessary. Hardly three kilometres away the guns of Fort Flaron, Fort d'Evegnee and Fort Chaudfontaine were going into action. They were firing slowly, but at steady intervals. I saw great, vivid flashes that abolished moonlight. I heard the vast concussions that made all Liege shake. I could see and hear the German infantry at work. The flashes from their rifle fire ran along the horizon like heat lightning, and the artillery of the forts was the crash of heavy thunder. When the heavy gun firing was terrific I knew that the Germans were charging, solid masses of men hurled forward in a determined effort to overrun the forts. When the big guns were still momentarily I knew without being told that whole companies of Germans had been annihilated, and that the temporary silence merely meant that other companies were forming.

At 2 o'clock in the morning the crash of the combat was terrific, ear splitting. The air was rent with continuous roaring. For two solid hours this frightful cannonading continued. At 4 A. M. it slackened and at 6 A. M. it seemed that the battle was over. I thought that the forts had been stormed and captured.

An hour later there was a rap at my door and a gendarme hurriedly informed me that the Germans were entering the city. I went to the centre of the town, but found that the information was wrong. As I stood there lanc rs came at a gallop along the Rue Cathedral, one of whom gaily waved a Prussian helmet at the point of his lance. They cried out that the Germans had been repulsed from the forts with great loss. It was great news for Liege, and the streets filled with cheering citizens.

It was raining then and the roads were rapidly becoming impassable. I visited the headquarters of the Red Cross on the Place St. Denis. I was just in time to see some of the excitement caused by the attempt of the Germans to assassinate Gen. Leman, the now famous defender of the city. An automobile, carrying five German officers dressed in the uniform of English officers, had dashed into the city. They attempted to get by an orderly at military headquarters. The orderly halted them and they shot him dead. The alarm was given and one German was killed. The others were captured. This was but one of many episodes which demonstrated the German policy of terrorizing the defenders. Demoralization through terror has been from the very outset one of the bases of German policy.

Attempt to Rush Forts Fails.

At military headquarters I was informed that the Germans had attempted during the night to rush the forts by massed attacks, and that they had squandered men in desperate but futile rushes. Toward morning a large detachment of Germans troops won a way between the forts and had penetrated the woods as close to the city as Bressean. Suddenly, on the banks of the Meuse they found themselves confronting machine guns that mowed them down in files. As they retreated to open ground mines were exploded under their feet and they were slaughtered by companies. The few that escaped machine guns and mines were obliterated by shrapnel from the forts. They were literally caught in a death trap and the ground was piled high with gray uniformed dead. They had been caught without a possible avenue of retreat and they could not even surrender. The first fighting at Liege demonstrated that there could be nothing more inhuman than civilized warfare.

From military headquarters I went to the railway station. Even imagination had not prepared me for what was there. The floor of the station and even the nearby streets were covered, with the dead and wounded. The casualties of the night had been so great that the medical corps was overwhelmed. Even the most urgent cases could not be hurried to the hospitals. If the defenders had suffered so terribly, what must have been the cost to the invaders? It was said here that 25,000 fell in the fighting at Liege. Personally I believe that is not an exaggeration. It is impossible to imagine what modern warfare is. It must be seen to be understood. The air was racked by groans and shrieks. Many who could have been saved under more fortunate circumstances must have perished from lack of attention. As long as I live that sight of battered, bleeding faces will haunt me.

As I crossed the Place du Theatre I heard a whizz overhead, and dropped to the ground. A shell exploded over me, sending shrapnel in many directions. I was stunned for a few minutes. Shells had been coming into the city all morning intermittently, and it was evident that the Germans were advancing their siege guns.

I went to Brussels and I shall never forget how the street scenes impressed me. Liege was like a city of the dead, save only for the roar of battle. There were no civilians on the streets. Doors were locked and windows were barred. The very air was of a sickly green hue. In Brussels the streets were crowded. Vast throngs cheered wounded soldiers. Bands were playing. The cafes were open.

Fleeing Peasants Crowd Roads.

As no trains were returning to Liege it was evident that the Germans had entered the city. The next morning I ventured part way toward Liege and found the roads crowded with peasants who were fleeing from the Uhlans. They were in a sad plight, those peasants. Most of them were afoot, their backs bent with household goods. Some brought dog carts. They were mostly women, old men and children, and they were hatless, breathless and trembling. They were exhausted by their exertions of fleeing before the dreaded German horsemen.

Returning to Brussels I found the citizens frantically chasing spies. The city was spy mad. I was accosted many times and my passport was demanded. Several times I heard at my back the click of a gunlock as a gruff voice demanded my papers. I saw groups of citizens running wildly after frightened foreigners. An officer warned me to leave, suggesting that I looked too much like a German to be quite safe in Belgium. He told me he had seen several foreigners shot merely on suspicion that they were German. He explained that extreme measures were necessary as Brussels was headquarters for an international spy system.

German business houses were broken into and sacked. The largest department store, the stock of which was German owned, was partly wrecked. As I prepared to leave I heard that the Germans started at 8 o'clock this morning to the southeastward, sending numerous patrols in every direction. Four hundred Uhlans went toward Dixmude, Furness and the French frontier and cut every telegraph and telephone line. They inflicted severe damage on the stations of the State railway, and traffic in this district has consequently been suspended.

In order to obviate a surprise from the north the Germans have also despatched patrols toward Routers along the river Mandel.

MANY LOUVAIN STREETS ARE LINED WITH RUINS

Hotel de Ville Is One of Few Notable Buildings Remaining Intact.

By Central News of London.

AMSTERDAM, Sept. 12.—It is now possible to give an approximate review of the destruction which the Germans wrought at Louvain. All the houses in the Rue de Bruxelles from No. 71 onward; in the Rue de Paris, Rue de Malines and the Rue Courte, the old market and the Table Ronde, opposite the Hotel de Ville, were completely destroyed.

The tower of the church of St. Pierre is standing, but the remainder of the church was sacked. The Hotel de Ville is intact and the General Staff is installed there. The houses in the Rue de Tirlemont were burned. In the Rue de la Station the Cafe des Brasseurs was burned. The Rue de Liege, Rue du Peuple and Rue Vital Decoster were completely ruined. The Place des Josephites was destroyed, but the college suffered little.

The statue of Justus Lipsius, the philologist, which stood in the Place de la Nation, was destroyed.

GERMANS BURN TERMONDE.

Burgomaster and Other Leading Citizens Are Prisoners.

ANTWERP, Sept. 12.—The Belgians are assuming the offensive all along the line, with King Albert at their head in personal command.

Serious fighting has occurred near Termonde and Grembergen. The Germans were defeated with very heavy losses at Termonde, but before retiring they pillaged and then burned the city. Only about 400 houses remain standing.

The Germans took the burgomaster and many of the leading citizens prisoners and have sent them to Germany.

All efforts to besiege Antwerp have now been abandoned by the invaders and the provinces of Antwerp and Limberg have been cleared of the Germans.

MUST STAY IN BELGIUM.

King Albert's Troops Can Pursue Germans Only to Frontier.

By T. M. KETTLE.

Special correspondent of THE SUN *and the London "Daily News."*

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN.

GHENT, Sept. 12.—There is a tendency here to exaggerate the importance of the withdrawal of the Germans from Belgium. They obviously have been recalled to strengthen the German right in France.

Seeing that the German programme in Belgium was not producing any military result, the significance of this withdrawal may well be interpreted above its value. Nevertheless it has released the Belgian field army for an offensive thrust, and this thrust may be expected almost immediately. The lesson told by the delay at Namur will not be forgotten. Whether the Belgians will strike at once for the recovery of their capital or pursue the Germans is doubtful. It is fairly certain that their advance will be controlled by purely military considerations.

The recapture of Louvain and Brussels would have great emotional and some political value, but both are open cities in an open country and their recapture might be disastrous. One element must not be forgotten—the Belgian army cannot operate outside Belgian soil, for to do so would compromise and corrupt at its source the very principle of Belgian neutrality on which the whole moral strength of the allies and Belgium is based.

If, then, they are pursuing the enemy and fail to overtake him before reaching the French frontier, they will have to wait there for his return.

GERMANS CUT WIRES.

Force Leaving Belgium Destroys Means of Communication.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN.

OSTEND, Sept. 12.—A German force of 10,000 spent last night in the neighborhood of Desselghem and Waereghem, between Ghent and Courtral. This force

Germans in Battle to Clear Way Through Belgium

Continued from First Page.

captured. They have been transferred to a captured German liner, which was anchored off the port.

Life in Antwerp is extraordinarily animated. There is plenty to do and every one is taking his share in the tremendous task of preparing to hold out against whatever odds. The smaller roads between vilages have been barricaded to check the murderous onslaught of the Uhlans, preceded by their armored motor cars. The forests have been stripped of their foliage and the trunks of trees, cut to a point four or five feet from the ground, have been cunningly interlaced with barbed wire, some of it electrified. After sunset not a light is to be seen except searchlights, which continually search the sky for airships.

The harvest has been gathered successfully. All cattle for miles around have been driven into Antwerp, so the food supply is almost unlimited. A more hopeful spirit seems to be growing day by day.

CUTTING GERMAN LINES.

Belgians Repulse the Enemy With Heavy Losses.

By THE SUN'S *and the London "Daily News's" War Service.*

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN.

OSTEND, Sept. 12 (Evening).—I have gone over a great part of the lines of the Belgians, who in the last two days have adopted a vigorous offensive. The Germans are in retreat everywhere, with heavy losses. The Belgians have completely cut their lines of communication toward the north and northeast. A German army corps has been decimated and many prisoners taken at Cortenbergh, between Brussels and Louvain. The railway to Liege is in the hands of the Belgians, who have blown up all the bridges to the west.

The Germans have evacuated Ninove and Alost. It is not yet known whether or not the Belgian objective is to occupy Brussels, but it seems to be a tactical movement to throw back the Germans to the southeast. The German troops are almost entirely reservists.

THREE PROVINCES CLEAR.

Belgian Troops Begin Offensive Movement Southward.

Special Cable Despatch to THE SUN.

LONDON, Sept. 12.—The Ostend correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* telegraphs:

"The provinces of Antwerp, Limburg and Flanders, north of the line between Brussels and Liege, have been entirely cleared of Germans. There is a strong offensive movement in the direction of the south by Belgian forces hitherto guarding Antwerp.

"The *Flandre Liberal* of Ghent says that it learns from excellent sources that the German army which intended to attack Antwerp has been cut off between Brussels and Louvain by the Belgian army."

Despatches received here from Amsterdam to-day say that the offensive movement of the Belgians has met with such brilliant success that the provinces of Antwerp and Limburg are entirely cleared of Germans and the province of East Flanders is almost cleared.

The despatches say that there has been heavy fighting, but that the Germans have been driven back everywhere with heavy losses. The work of the Belgian artillery is reported to have played a prominent part in the Belgian successes.

Trains of the wounded, including many Germans, are arriving in Antwerp.

The city of Ghent has been reoccupied by Belgian troops and is preparing for defence, according to despatches received from there to-day.

The Central News correspondent at Amsterdam says:

"According to a Ghent despatch the Belgian Government, having opposed the delivery of the army necessaries requisitioned by the Germans, a Belgian force has again occupied Ghent. The necessaries, which had already been prepared, were not delivered."

The *Daily Chronicle* has the following despatch from its correspondent at Ghent:

"The German army is in dire straits for lack of food. Ghent has been unable to furnish the supply of foodstuffs demanded by the Germans, who are now pushing a column of from 40,000 to 60,000 men toward Courtral, in West Flanders.

"Evidently the Germans expect to find food in the region of Oudenarde, where the harvest has been exceptionally good."

A renewal of the fighting near Malines is reported in a despatch from Antwerp to the *Daily Telegraph*. The correspondent says:

"A courier brings news of fighting at Hofstade, near Malines. King Albert motored out and participated in the general engagement, which apparently is going well.

"The German artillery figured considerably, but the Belgian infantry, well supported by guns, gradually forced the Germans back."

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Formosa Oolong No. 3	.28	.50
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India and Ceylon, choice	.23	.40

SUPERIOR COFFEES per lb.

Maracaibo, the best grade	.24
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P. & T. Best Coffee, strong	.44

These prices are for roasted ground coffee and the roasted beans.

SUGAR

	Per 100 lbs.	Per 7 lbs.
Granulated	7.75	.56
Powdered	7.80	.57
Cut Sugar	8.60	.63
Cube	7.95	.58

FLOUR

Pillsbury, per barrel	7.75
Pillsbury, half barrel	4.05
Pillsbury, 24½ lb. bags	1.00

BUTTER

No cold storage Butter sold.

P. & T. Best, 1 lb. cartons	.40
Creamery Butter, per lb. cut	.36

EGGS

No cold storage Eggs sold.

	Doz.
Fresh Selected	.41
Extra Fresh	.51

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	Pkge.	Doz.
Avena (Rolled B'fast Oats) 7 lbs.	.35	
Cream of Wheat, packages	.14	1.60
Force (2 packages for 25 c.)	.13	
Grape Nuts, packages	.13	1.52
H. O. packages	.14	1.60
Quaker Oats, packages	.10	1.12

SOAPS and SOAP POWDERS

Babbitt's Best 7 cakes for	.25
Kirkman's Borax 7 cakes for	.25
Ivory, large cakes, .07, small cakes	.04
Gold Dust, 4 lb. carton	.18
Gold Dust, small packages	.04
Pearline 1 lb. papers	.08
1776 Soap Powder, large cans	.07
Babbitt's Cleanser, large cans	.08

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Brooms, No. 6 size	.48
Brooms, No. 7 size	.50
Brooms, No. 8 size	.52
Brooms, No. 9 size	.55

(All of these are of the best corn stock, with four wirings.)

Scrubs, Tampico White No. 1	.15
Scrubs, Tampico White No. 2	.20
Scrub Brushes, Bristle No. 3	.45
Navy Palmetto Scrubs	.25
Root Scrubs	.25
Sink Whisks and Heather Scrubs	.05

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	Bot.
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24½ bottles	10.00	.45
St. Estephe, 12 bottles	9.50	.90
24½ bottles	10.50	.50
St. Julien, 12 bottles	9.50	.90
24½ bottles	10.50	.50
Pontet Canet, 12 bottles	14.50	1.30
24½ bottles	15.50	.70

CALIFORNIA WINES

Zinfandel P. & T. bottling:	Case	Bot.
Case 12 bottles	3.50	.30
Case 24½ bottles	4.25	.20
Angelica P. & T. bottling: Case 12 bottles	3.75	.40
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