

REPORT

together as if in the attitude of supplication. Two young women were lying in the back yard of the house. One had her breasts cut off, the other had been stabbed.

A young man had been backed with bayonet until his straits were reached. He also had his hands joined in the attitude of prayer.

In the garden of a house in the main street bodies of two women were discovered, and in another house the body of a boy of 16 with two bayonet wounds in the chest.

Houses Burned in Sempt. In Sempt a similar condition of affairs existed. One, two or three years old boys of them were the charred remains of civilians.

In a bicycle shop a witness saw the burned corpse of a man. Other witnesses speak to this incident.

Another civilian, unarmed, was shot as he was running away. As will be remembered, he was three or four years old, and was killed by the order of the burgo-master.

The corpse of a man with his legs cut off, who was being carried by another witness, who also saw a girl of seventeen dressed only in a chemise and in great distress.

A small farm burning close by formed a bonfire of human remains. The bodies were thrown into the flames from the bayonets. It is right to add that no commissioned officer was present at the time.

Eppehem—At Eppehem, on the twenty-fifth of August, a pregnant woman who had been wounded with a bayonet was discovered in a ditch. She was dying. On the road six dead bodies of laborers were seen.

Kiewitz—At Kiewitz a man's naked body was lying in a ditch. He was dead, and his corpse was mutilated in a manner too horrible to record.

Viilvode—At Viilvode corpses of civilians were also found. These villages are all on the line from Malines to Brussels.

Boort Meerbeek—At Boort Meerbeek a German soldier was seen to fire three times at a man who was being carried. Having failed to hit her, he subsequently bayoneted her. He was killed with the butt end of a rifle by a Belgian soldier who had committed this murder from a distance.

Woman and Child Mutilated. Herent—At Herent the charred body of a civilian was found in a butcher's shop, and in a hand cart twenty yards away was the body of a laborer.

Two eyewitnesses relate that a German soldier shot a civilian and stabbed him with a bayonet as he lay. He then made one of the other witnesses a prisoner, smelt the blood on the bayonet.

Haecht—At Haecht the bodies of ten civilians were lying in a row by a brewery wall.

In a laborer's house, which had been broken up, the mutilated corpse of a woman of 30 to 35 was discovered.

A child of three years of age was cut open by a bayonet was lying near a house.

Werchter—At Werchter the corpses of a man and woman and four young persons were found in a ditch. It is stated that they had been murdered because one of the latter, a girl, would not allow the Germans to outrage her.

This atrocity does not by any means represent the sum total of the depositions relating to this district laid before the committee. It is merely given merely as examples of acts which the evidence shows to have taken place in numbers that might have seemed scarcely credible.

In Aerschot the district, that is to say, Aerschot and the other villages from which the Germans had not been driven, the effect of the German iron, pillage and cruelty, which had to some extent died down after the 20th or 21st of August.

In Aerschot itself fresh prisoners seem to have been taken and added to those who were already in the church, since it would appear that prisoners were kept in some of the houses during the whole of the German occupation of Aerschot.

The second occasion on which large numbers of prisoners were taken during the battle of Malines, and it was then that the priest of Gerolde was brought to Aerschot church, treated abominably and finally murdered.

Fetters Execution Described. One witness describes the scene generally. The whole of the prisoners—men, women and children—were placed in the church. Nobody was allowed to go outside of the church had to be used for that purpose.

We were afterward allowed to go outside the church for that purpose, and then went to the square in front of the church, where trains would be waiting for us. When we got to the square seven or eight hundred prisoners were lined up in a single house in the place was standing.

A whole row of houses behind the station at Blauwput was burned. After that nothing was to be seen of the prisoners, who were taken to the soldiers on the head. We were pushed up against the wall of the church. He said in Flemish to be allured the place found corpses of civilians who must have been murdered in Aerschot itself, just as they found them in Sempt and the other villages on August 23.

Some of the bodies were found in the houses, and some had been burned alive in their houses.

The prisoners related by the Belgian army from the church were almost starved. At Haecht several children had been found near the door of a farmhouse by its harlot and feet, a crime which seems almost incredible by the evidence for which we feel bound to account. The body of a girl, who had been shot in the forehead.

Capelle-au-Bols—At Capelle-au-Bols the children were taken to the church and their corpses were seen by many witnesses at different stages of the cart's journey.

Eppehem—At Eppehem the dead body of a child of two was seen pinned to the ground with a German lance. Same witness saw a mutilated woman alive near Weerde on the same day.

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servants went to bed at half past nine. After I got to my bedroom I saw out of my room flames from some burning house near by. I looked out my window and his son. As they came down the stairs they were seized by German soldiers and both were tied up and led out of the house. They were dragged outside. I did not actually see what happened outside, but heard shouting and shot, and that his son was shot. I heard shots from the kitchen where I was, and was present at the burial of my master and his son fifteen or later. German soldiers came back into the house and poured some inflammable liquid over the floor and set fire to it. I was taken to a room where my master and his son had been kept. I then ran away with a married woman named X— (whose maiden name was A—), aged 28, who belonged to Aerschot, and who was captured by the Germans. She was shot by the side of me and I saw her fall. Several other people were shot at the same time. I again ran away. My flight was in vain, falling out of the window. I do not know whether they were shot or whether they fell from their mothers' arms in the great panic which ensued. I, however, saw children bleeding.

Another witness, who was taken from Aerschot, also describes the occurrence. "I was afterward taken with a large number of other civilians and placed in the church at Louvain. Then we were taken to Station street, Louvain. There were about 1,500 of us. In consequence of his failure to return. The prisoners were afterward taken to a factory and searched for weapons. They were subsequently provided with passports enabling them to go anywhere in the town but not outside. The witness in question managed to effect his escape by swimming across the river.

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began with the houses of rich people and afterward the houses of the poorer classes were treated in the same manner. German soldiers had previously told this witness that if the Burgo-master of Termonde, who was out of town, did not return by 12 o'clock that day the town would be set on fire. In consequence of his failure to return. The prisoners were afterward taken to a factory and searched for weapons. They were subsequently provided with passports enabling them to go anywhere in the town but not outside. The witness in question managed to effect his escape by swimming across the river.

Another witness describes how the tower of the church of Termonde St. Gilles was utilized by the Belgian troops for offensive purposes. They began in fact to bombard the town with their guns. This witness was subsequently taken prisoner in a cellar in Termonde in which he had taken refuge with other people. All the men were taken from the cellar, and the women were left behind. About seventy prisoners in all were taken; one, a brewer, who could not walk fast enough, was left behind. He was taken down and was compelled to get up and follow the soldiers. The prisoners had to hold up their hands, and if they dropped their hands or their rifles were taken, but the butt ends of rifles. They were taken to Lebbeke, where there were in all 300 prisoners, and there they were locked up in the church.

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had also shot. Two civilians were shot at once." We may now sum up and endeavor to explain the character and significance of the wonderful acts done by the German army in Belgium.

If a line is drawn on a map from the Belgian frontier to Cologne and continued to Charleroi, and a second line drawn from Liège to Malines, a sort of figure resembling an irregular oval is formed. It is also a line to that of the systematic (as opposed to isolated) outrages were committed. If the period from August 4 to August 10 is taken it will be found that the German army organized outrages. Termonde and Alost, extend, it is true, beyond the Y lines and they belong to the month of September.

Another witness describes how the tower of the church of Termonde St. Gilles was utilized by the Belgian troops for offensive purposes. They began in fact to bombard the town with their guns. This witness was subsequently taken prisoner in a cellar in Termonde in which he had taken refuge with other people. All the men were taken from the cellar, and the women were left behind. About seventy prisoners in all were taken; one, a brewer, who could not walk fast enough, was left behind. He was taken down and was compelled to get up and follow the soldiers. The prisoners had to hold up their hands, and if they dropped their hands or their rifles were taken, but the butt ends of rifles. They were taken to Lebbeke, where there were in all 300 prisoners, and there they were locked up in the church.

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