

# VARIOUS

BEST STORIES OF THE  
1914 EUROPEAN WAR

Various

**Best Stories of the  
1914 European War**

«Public Domain»

## **Various**

Best Stories of the 1914 European War / Various — «Public Domain»,

## Содержание

WHERE MIGHTY BATTLE ROARS	5
WOULD HAVE DIED TO A MAN	6
PARIS, GRAVE AND GAY	7
WHY RUSSIA NEEDED AUTOS	8
WHEN THE CRUISER AMPHION WENT DOWN	9
SHELLS BURST IN WHEAT FIELDS	10
RIDERLESS HORSES IN LOUVAIN	11
GERMANS SHOT NONCOMBATANTS	12
SIX SHEEP FOR BELGIAN QUEEN	13
THE MARCH ON TO BRUSSELS	14
ODDS TEN TO ONE NEAR AERSCHOT	15
BAYONET CHARGE UP ALSACE HILLS	16
POLICE DOGS USED ON AMERICANS	17
MORASSES HOLLAND'S FRIEND	18
ENGLISH GIRL WOULD BE AIR SCOUT	19
THE BUSY AEROPLANES	20
OSTEND IN PANIC AS FOE CAME	21
AUSTRIAN CRUISER SHOT TO PIECES	22
BLEW UP FORT AND DIED A HERO	23
BRITISH "TOMMIES" COOL IN BATTLE	24
5,000 GUESTS IN SMALL TOWN	25
CHARLEROI A CITY OF DEAD	26
HANSI REBUKES HIS CAPTOR	27
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	28

# Various

## Best Stories of the 1914 European War

### WHERE MIGHTY BATTLE ROARS

The correspondent of the *Daily News and Leader* of London sends from Ostend this graphic story of the scenes where one of the greatest battles in the world's history took place:

“Taking advantage of the lull we got out of Namur early this morning, taking crossroads and lanes in front of the Belgian and French lines. The allied forces were pushing the Germans back under great guns placed along the northern line. The fields and low hills were alive with moving troops, columns of cavalry with light guns moving into position and long snakes of infantry.

“An officer warned us in a lane to wait there. He said: ‘We’ve run down some Uhlans in those woods.’ We waited half an hour. No movement in the sunny fields, nothing to be seen. Then suddenly out of a wood we saw four horsemen dash and we heard the snap of rifle shots on the far side of a field.

“The next instant there was a running fire of invisible muskets. Three of the horses fell. The fourth man fell from the saddle and was dragged through the stubble, his foot being caught in the stirrup. One of the others got up, leaving his horse and walking a few steps. He then fell.

“We were accompanied by a squad to Mazy. There we were blocked for two hours. Slowly through the village (no peasants or children showing now) defiled regiment after regiment of French cavalry, glorious fellows with their helmets covered with dust, their colored cuirasses dull with rust, dusty trappings and uneasy horses. It was not the glitter of a parade, but the infinitely more impressive savage, bronzed columns of war.

“A line of Belgian artillery, then light horse and lancers, and finally cyclists and a detachment of the Red Cross ambulances passed up the lanes out to the hills with a sort of rustling, intense silence. There was no drum nor music. This is war. For many of these grave and bronzed men, with here and there a fierce negroid African, we were the last link with the life of the towns. In a few days, perhaps in a few hours, they will be lying in long, nameless trenches in the fields.”

## WOULD HAVE DIED TO A MAN

A correspondent of the *Dernière Heure* sent back to Brussels from the front writes of the fighting he saw as follows:

“The fighting started at Geetbetz at dawn. At 3.30 A. M. a German aeroplane flew low over our front. Several volleys were fired and the aeroplane fell within the German lines. After several feints the attack developed about 6 o'clock. Strong forces of German cavalry and infantry, supported by artillery, including machine guns, poured down on the village and a furious battle was soon raging all along the seven-mile front.

“While the Belgian cavalry were acting as infantry behind the earthworks part of the German cavalry got behind them and shot the horses. Inch by inch the ground was fought. Hundreds of Germans were slain. In the relentless move forward the Belgian defenders suffered rather serious losses.

“At Bubingen the resistance was equally praiseworthy. In a trench where seven cavalymen were making a great fight, Lieut. Count Wolfgang Durel was struck by a bullet in the head. His companions pressed around him as he fell. ‘It’s all up with me,’ he said. ‘Leave me and do your duty.’ He breathed his last a few minutes later.

“At this point two Belgian squadrons, about 240 men, showed magnificent bravery. They held 2,000 Germans back. In spite of the superior numbers the enemy had no distinct advantage over this handful of determined fellows. They would have died to a man, but their mission of holding the enemy in check for a few hours terminated when the retreat was sounded.”

## PARIS, GRAVE AND GAY

War incidents which show how the French present a smiling front in the face of the war are related from Paris:

At the Gare de L'Est, the eastern railway station where troops by the thousand were leaving for the German frontier, wives, mothers, sisters and sweethearts met and wept in multitudes. But a French soldier turned the tragedy into comedy. On a large cardboard he imitated the signs announcing the destinations of trains in time of peace and hung it on the military special. It read:

“Holiday excursion to Berlin.”

Whereupon the women dried their tears and laughed.

A woman, her face very white, came out of one of the municipal offices at which official information is given of the death or injury of French soldiers. Four sons had left her a few days before to join the colors. Another woman came up to her and said:

“Have you good news of your sons? My Jean is safe.”

“Yes,” the first mother replied, “they are all safe. They are safe in the arms of the Father. I am proud to give all to the cause.”

## WHY RUSSIA NEEDED AUTOS

The Petrograd correspondent of the *Daily Mail* telegraphed:

“At the last interview which Prince Hohenlohe, the Austrian military attaché, had with the Russian military authorities before the war he expressed surprise that the Russians were requisitioning so many automobiles.

“Your roads are so bad,” he said.

“But yours are so good,” was the reply.

## WHEN THE CRUISER AMPHION WENT DOWN

Here are some additional details of the sinking of the British cruiser *Amphion* when she hit a mine laid by the Germans off Harwich:

“It was 6.30 o’clock when the *Amphion* struck the mine. A sheet of flame instantly engulfed the bridge. The captain was rendered insensible and he fell to the floor. As soon as the captain recovered consciousness he rang to the engineers to stop the engines, which were still going at revolutions for twenty knots. As all the forward part of the *Amphion* was on fire it was found impossible to reach the bridge or flood the fore magazine.

“The ship’s back appeared to be broken and she was already settling down by the bows. All efforts therefore were directed to placing the wounded in places of safety in case of an explosion and in getting the cruiser in tow by the stern.

“By the time the destroyers had closed in it was clearly time to abandon the ship. The men fell in for this purpose with the same composure that had marked their behavior throughout. All was done without hurry or confusion and twenty minutes after the cruiser struck the mine the men, the officers, and lastly the captain had left the ship.

“Three minutes after the captain had left another explosion occurred. This enveloped and blew up the entire fore part of the vessel. The effect of this showed that the *Amphion* must have struck the second mine, which exploded the fore magazine. Débris falling from a great height struck the rescue boats and the destroyers and one of the *Amphion*’s shells burst on the deck of one of the destroyers, killing two Englishmen and one German prisoner.”

## SHELLS BURST IN WHEAT FIELDS

The firing at Tirlemont and Louvain is described by the Ostend correspondent of the *London Express*, who witnessed it from a church tower at Tirlemont first and later proceeded to Louvain. He says:

“About 1 o’clock came the sound of the first German gun. The artillery had opened fire.

“From the church tower it was possible to see distinctly the position of German guns and the bursting of shells. The Belgians replied from east of Louvain. It was a striking sight to the accompaniment of the ceaseless thud, thud of bursting shells with their puffs of cotton-like smoke, tearing up peaceful wheat fields.

“Gradually working near, the shells began to strike the houses in Tirlemont. This was a signal for the populace to flee blindly. The scene was like the rushing of rats from a disturbed nest. The people fled in every direction except one.

“I moved down to Louvain, where everything seemed peaceful. The people sat in the cafés drinking their evening beer and smoking. Meanwhile the Belgian troops were retiring toward Louvain. By midnight the town was in the throes of a panic. Throngs of refugees had begun to arrive, followed later by soldiers. By 11 o’clock the Belgian rear guard was engaging the enemy at the entrance to the town.

“I remember watching a black-clad Belgian woman running straight down the middle of a road from the Germans. Behind her came the retiring Belgian troops, disheartened but valiant. This woman, clad in mourning, was the symbol of the Belgian populace. All about Tirlemont and Louvain the refugees continually interfered with the work of the troops.”

## **RIDERLESS HORSES IN LOUVAIN**

A Central News correspondent who saw the fighting near Louvain writes:

“The roar of cannon is still ringing in my ears. The Belgians had a strong position around Louvain. The Germans advanced by three different roads. The defenders held out until the Germans brought their heavy artillery into play. Then the Belgians evacuated to save the beautiful old place from destruction.

“Louvain to-day presented a wonderful if terrible spectacle. Bleeding, riderless horses galloped into town. With them came the Belgian advance guard who had been in action.

“Thirty Gardes Civiques, shut up behind a wooden barrier without arms, exclaimed passionately at their enforced peacefulness. Homeless crowds surged aimlessly about the streets. Now and then farmers cycled furiously into the town to complain of houses occupied or horses stolen. The Belgian outposts were twenty-seven miles away and the place undefended, so nothing could be done.

“The utter, hopeless agitation of a population unable to do anything for itself, forced to surrender home after home and forbidden to resist, was a very painful sight. It cannot occur often, even in this war.

“Undefended towns when abandoned by the soldiery generally have warning first. But these Uhlans seemed to have dropped out of the sky, and when the Belgian civilians looked about they found their own army gone.”

## GERMANS SHOT NONCOMBATANTS

A *Times* correspondent says that the laconic reports of the French Minister of War give little idea of the desperate struggle that occurred around the villages along the Lorraine border. Point after point was taken and retaken, he says.

He gives the following story of the fighting at the village of Badonviller in France, west of Schirmeck, as told by the villagers: “The village was occupied by a battalion of chasseurs as a covering force was prepared for defense by numerous trenches. The battle began on August 10. The Germans bombarded the village, compelling the chasseurs to evacuate it. The latter retired on Celles, and afterward took up a position on Donon Ridge.

“After nightfall the Germans increased the bombardment, and the inhabitants sought refuge in cellars, as a continuous rain of shells kept wrecking the houses and setting them afire. It was a terrible sight. Women fell on their knees and prayed, while children cried piteously.

“The chasseurs retired, defending every house, foot by foot, and making the Germans feel their fire. The sun rose on a village in ruins. It had been under bombardment fifteen hours. When the Germans entered, they fired first on all the windows and down loopholes into the cellars. No corner was spared.”

## SIX SHEEP FOR BELGIAN QUEEN

Wiring his experiences in Brussels, the correspondent of the London *Daily News* said:

“I was stopped by an enormous crowd of refugees flocking along the Brussels road, on foot and in vehicles and by Red Cross cars. The sight was pitiful. Of the people leaving their homes by far the greater number were women. Many of them had young children along whose fathers were at the front.

“Fear and ignorance have seized the mob. As I was going out a peasant fired his double-barreled gun at my motor, mistaking my fishing hat for a German helmet. The shot blew the tail lamp to pieces. To prevent far worse trouble for him, I stopped the car and got the gun from him and broke it across the breech, for undoubtedly a German soldier will retaliate on any civilians who use arms.

“Brussels is now curiously quiet. Big crowds are gathering round the stations to watch the wounded passing through. I do not think the panic will be great. A gendarme told me of one old woman who arrived at the barricades driving six sheep. She did not want the Germans to have them. She was willing the Belgian soldiers should have them if they would keep her safe.

“‘Perhaps,’ she added, ‘the Queen and princes might need some mutton.’

“Of the defenses at Antwerp it is not necessary to speak. They are as nearly impregnable as any can be. Details of fighting are of course difficult. One can get no soldier who knows what happens outside his own experience. The field guns seem to have done deadly work on the advancing infantry. The policy of shooting at officers was kept up as at Liège.

“As I went to Antwerp early in the morning a great German monoplane with curved wings and fan-shaped tail followed the railway, keeping exact pace with the express train from Brussels till we were halfway to Antwerp. The movement of vast bodies of troops in secret is now impossible with these military eyes everywhere in the skies.”

## THE MARCH ON TO BRUSSELS

Alfred Stead, correspondent of the London *Daily Express*, sends from Ostend this narrative of two press photographers who saw some of the German advance on Brussels:

“At Louvain, where our automobile arrived at 7 o’clock in the evening, everything was as quiet as usual, with the residents sitting drinking their bocks at a café in the square. Then some German prisoners were brought in and the suffering fellows were jolting and bobbing about in ordinary wagons, enduring agonies. Firing was heard in the distance, and from Tirlemont the troops came in, retiring in good order. The troops were in good spirits.

“All the way to Louvain the photographers’ automobile passed a human stream. In the town, what a change! It was deserted, the only sign of life being the last of the refugees who were leaving for Brussels.

“Toward the Tirlemont road there was some rifle firing which drew nearer,” said the photographers, continuing their narrative. “Shells began to fall among the houses, many of which took fire. The Germans were almost in Louvain at midday. The rear guard of the Belgians defending the railway bridge was engaged in firing heavily on the enemy. Riderless horses came along, both German and Belgian. These were caught and mounted by civilians. A barricade was seen in the dust of the road as in a fog.

“Then there was more heavy rifle firing, some of which seemed to come from houses. Reports that the Germans were not taking prisoners and the knowledge of what had happened in other Belgian towns made it seem probable that house firing was going on.

“At some barricades on the roads German troops and refugees arrived simultaneously, making a defense impossible. On the road to Brussels was an endless procession, fed as they went by inhabitants of the villages and countryside.

“At the cross roads there passed toward Mechlin a procession of artillery, cavalry and infantry, with dog mitrailleuses, fit but tired and dusty. Only the dogs of the mitrailleuses looked fresh now. Along the roadsides were refugees resting.

“Three men of the 9th Regiment had come from Aerschot, where the town was burning. They had lost their regiment and asked to be taken to Brussels. These men, of the famous shooting regiment which so distinguished itself at Liége, gave to us a very different idea of the shooting of Germans. They said the rifle shooting of the Germans was bad. Nearly all killed by the Germans were shot in the head or the upper part of the body. Their own officer was shot through the nose.

“In Brussels at 3 o’clock on Tuesday afternoon there was absolute quiet. A big crowd was before the Gare du Nord awaiting news, but there was no excitement. Belgian aeroplanes passed, flying toward the Mechlin and Louvain line. Firing was soon heard, but it was difficult to say from what direction. But the inhabitants of Brussels could not leave their city.”

## ODDS TEN TO ONE NEAR AERSCHOT

Describing the fight at Louvain and Aerschot, where a handful of troops kept the Germans at bay while the main Belgian army reformed, the correspondent of the London *Daily News* writes:

“Dawn on Wednesday morning saw the Germans hotly attacking the trenches that had been filled up during the night with fresh men. Part of them were of the famous Liège field force that had decimated the Germans who approached the trenches before the Liège forts. They had begged to be sent back to Liège to meet the enemy there. This could not be done, but they had their opportunity now – a desperate one, it was true, for each of these men knew that he was marked down to be sacrificed if necessary in the interest of the general plan of defense.

“Two German aeroplanes flying audaciously low swept over the trenches to see how they were held. Then almost immediately afterward the German artillery got the range of the trenches and commenced bursting shrapnel over them. The infantry machine guns were quickly at work, and the little band of defenders settled down to keep the enemy’s masses of troops at bay as long as possible.

“By 6 o’clock the attack was general along the whole line, but particularly violent in front of Aerschot, a pitiless, determined onslaught in which the German commanders showed the same disregard for the loss of their men as elsewhere.

“Two of the heroic regiments from Liège bore the brunt of the attack in positions north and east of the town. They were outnumbered ten to one, but stuck to their positions with the courage of desperation and inflicted tremendous losses on the Germans. Their own losses were terrible. These trenches were bought and held with blood.”

## **BAYONET CHARGE UP ALSACE HILLS**

Details of a terrific battle in Upper Alsace have been received by the London *Daily Chronicle* in special messages from Basel.

“The battle was attended by great loss of life on both sides. The fortunes of battle varied during two days. At first all seemed to go well with the French, and on the second day the tide turned in favor of the Germans, who had about one hundred guns on the hills, some eight miles from Basel. They wrought havoc among the French infantry, who made brilliant bayonet charges in their efforts to carry the hills.

“The French batteries at Altkirch vainly strove to silence the German guns. The slaughter was very heavy. The French fought desperately to frustrate the Germans’ attempt to cut them off from communication with Belfort and succeeded in their effort to reach a frontier village.

“On the third day the French forces, summoning all their energies in incomparable general assaults at the point of the bayonet, drove the Germans from all their advanced positions, and ten minutes after the last Bavarian battalion had beaten a retreat a brigade of French Lancers, with several companies of Colonial Turcos, re-entered Muelhausen singing the ‘Marseillaise.’ The French army, intrenching itself, occupied a strong front, to which it dragged a large number of cannon and stores and ammunition from Belfort.”

## **POLICE DOGS USED ON AMERICANS**

William J. Chalmers, of Chicago, describes his trip with his wife and maid and some friends from Carlsbad to Buchs in Switzerland:

At Budweis they were arrested and their passports examined. Five miles further on the road was blockaded by fallen telegraph poles and twenty gendarmes commanded by a boy stepped out and placed cocked pistols and rifles to the Americans' bodies and ordered them to surrender. The gendarmes had heard that French spies were crossing to Russia with \$25,000,000 in motor cars.

At Freistadt Count von Sedlitz ignored the passports and ordered the party searched to the skins, including the women. He examined their clothing, took their baggage away, ransacked it for papers, took off the automobile tires, examined the inner tubes, then brought in the police dogs to get their scent, acting with the utmost insolence.

Mr. Chalmers demanded to be allowed to telegraph to the Mayor of Carlsbad. This was permitted and the party released the next morning.

At Salzburg the party was detained five hours, but treated with kindness and a military pass was given by an archduke and a general.

At Landeck a civil official ignored the military pass, but yielded when the threat was made to appeal to the archduke.

The party was forced to carry a civilian to Feldkirk. On an appeal to the military there the civilian was sharply reprimanded and made to walk back.

Afterward the party arrived safely at Buchs.

## MORASSES HOLLAND'S FRIEND

That Holland is determined and prepared to defend its neutrality is evidenced by the statement from the pen of a Rotterdam correspondent of the London *Standard*. "Holland," he says, "has a trusty friend in the water behind its dikes.

"Holland is well prepared against an invasion of its frontier on the German border, about 200 miles long, and the northern portions could easily be defended by the filling with water of numerous morasses and bogs.

"The coast along the North Sea, owing to the want of harbors, is practically inaccessible and the Zuyder Zee being shallow is capable of being closed by fortified works outside of Heider. Forty miles of the eastern front is now defended by the fortresses Muiden and Naarden in the center of the Utrecht region, and eighteen forts aid the batteries toward the south of Gorkum.

"Then there is a closed canal system arranged in such a manner that the whole region of Muiden and Gorkum may be flooded for miles. This is easy, as the greater portion of the land in the area to be flooded is below the sea level. The Dutch, however, are not satisfied with these precautions, as the water courses might freeze as in the past. Therefore behind the Muiden-Gorkum line seven block forts or fortifications have been erected at intervals of two miles, and there are also fortifications at Nieuwerhus.

"Behind the water line of defense there are more block forts at intervals of two or three miles strengthened with batteries.

"A block fort is a redoubt intended only for quick-firing guns of light caliber and is not constructed with the idea of resisting heavy projectiles, which, owing to the broad stretches of water, could only with difficulty be used.

"The fighting forts are protected by concrete roofs and iron cupolas from the fire of howitzers and mortars.

"They are also supplied with artillery capable of resisting siege guns.

"In a similar manner the Dutch are protected equally along the southern frontier from Gorkum to Brielle.

"As it is estimated that every kilometer requires for its defense 1,000 men, about 120,000 men are required for this region. This is the precise strength of the present Dutch army, which should be able to defend this portion of Holland against forces double its strength."

## ENGLISH GIRL WOULD BE AIR SCOUT

Writing in the *Petit Parisien*, a correspondent from Dijon tells of the alarm caused recently by a mysterious aeroplane apparently pursuing a group of six other aeroplanes on the way to Dijon from the southern center. Soon after their arrival at Dijon the stranger landed near the military aerodrome. The mysterious pilot, on being interrogated, proved not to be a spy, but a young English girl, who had donned a uniform in the hope that she might aid France. She is now being detained, pending the arrival of her parents.

## THE BUSY AEROPLANES

A paragraph in the *Excelsior* gives details of a 160-mile raid along the frontier by Pegoud in a standard unarmored eighty-horsepower Bleriot-Gnome monoplane with M. Monternier as a fighting passenger. Starting at dawn last Tuesday, they made many valuable observations and destroyed two important convoys with incendiary bombs and 100-pound shells. They flew low, from 1,300 to 1,500 meters, owing to their heavy load of nearly 800 pounds of explosives, enough oil and gasoline for four hours, two carbines and ammunition. They returned to Paris simply to obtain another machine, their own having ninety-seven bullet holes in the wings and having been struck twice by fragments of shells, once on the stabilizer and once under the steering wheel.

## OSTEND IN PANIC AS FOE CAME

“Gay Ostend is utterly transformed by the shadow of war,” writes the correspondent of the London *Standard*. “It is crowded from end to end with refugees of all nationalities, who are clamoring for an opportunity to escape seaward. Never have the streets been so thronged, and one might have thought it a fête day but for the strained and anxious faces of the crowds.

“All the large hotels in Ostend are ready on the receipt of instructions to open their doors as hospitals and all necessary arrangements have been made to receive the wounded. Early this morning a number of wounded Belgian soldiers were taken by boat to an unknown destination in order to prevent them from being made prisoners by the Germans.

“Many hundreds of refugees have taken shelter in the bathing machines on the beach, while others are encamped on the race course which adjoins the dike. The King’s summer palace, which looks out over the sea, has also been turned into a hospital. Side by side with all these scenes of war it is a striking contrast to watch the crowds of children paddling and playing war games on the sand.

“At 9 o’clock this morning all the men of the Civil Guard were disarmed, and the Burgomaster issued a proclamation to the inhabitants urging them to be calm and offer no resistance to the invading Germans.

“The Maritime Railway station was held by Belgian soldiers this morning, but they will be removed by boat if the Germans enter the town. The station was full of boxes of coin and banknotes, which were being guarded by the soldiers, pending their transfer to steamers for Folkestone. I am told that all the bankers in Ghent, Bruges and Ostend have sent all their treasure to England for safety.

“In a conversation with a wounded Belgian officer I heard some stirring stories of the bravery of the Belgian troops who were engaged in resisting the advance of the Germans beyond Louvain. He related how, when the order for retreat was given, he and his fellow officers had great difficulty in persuading their men to obey the command. The bugles were sounding the retreat, but the soldiers would not leave the trenches and continued firing on a much larger force of Germans, who were attacking them. This officer ran along the lines shouting to the men that they must obey orders and retreat; but with violent oaths against the detested Germans they continued to fight, with the result that all at this particular spot were killed. The officer himself was wounded just after his last effort to withdraw his men.”

## AUSTRIAN CRUISER SHOT TO PIECES

Describing the naval engagement in the Adriatic in which the cruiser *Zenta* was sunk, a writer in the *Corriere d'Italia* says:

“A flotilla of Anglo-French torpedo boats was steaming out to sea after recoaling and revictualling on the Piræan coast when it met other warships of the Allies with their decks already cleared for action coming from Malta. The combined fleet proceeded toward the entrance to Cataro Harbor.

“When they were approaching it the British torpedo destroyers which headed the flotilla sighted the Austrian protected cruiser *Zenta* and three smaller war vessels doing blockade duty. Before they were discovered the allied flotilla opened fire upon the enemy’s cruiser, which, being taken wholly by surprise, was slow in replying. When at last the *Zenta* began to return the fire it did so at long intervals, with its shots very wide of the mark.

“In the meantime the gunners of the Anglo-French fleet were tearing ugly rents in the *Zenta*’s flank and within four minutes had flooded her engine rooms. The other three Austro-Hungarian vessels – torpedo boats – then began racing away with many dead aboard.

“Seeing that the *Zenta* was foundering rapidly while its crew was intent on seeking a way of escape, the largest of the English torpedo boats went alongside and rescued 200 marines who were on the point of drowning.

“Fifty of these men subsequently succumbed to injuries received in the battle. Besides these 200 were wounded by lively rifle fire.”

### AEROPLANES GUIDED UHLANS

From the *Daily Telegraph*’s Dunkirk correspondent: “The Germans seem to be directing their march on three points. In the north they have pushed across to Antwerp, under the shelter of the guns of which the Belgian army which has retreated from Malines has retired. A second body approached the vicinity of Ghent, riding close up to the city. The Uhlans were preceded by two German aeroplanes, which were in quest of the whereabouts of any armed Belgian force. The appearance of the Uhlans practically at the gates of Ghent created something very nearly approaching a panic among those inside the city.

“Those who had no pressing business in the city commandeered every kind of vehicle, from automobiles to carts drawn by dogs. Here were military officers in automobiles, citizens rich and poor, influential and humble, town councillors – everybody bent on making his escape as fast as possible toward Bruges.

“I interviewed several of the officers, and they told me that, while the city was still free, the Uhlans had come in from the south, and a larger force was hourly expected. They believed that the occupation of the city by the Germans was a question of only a few hours.”

## **BLEW UP FORT AND DIED A HERO**

The Paris Ministry of War issued the following communique concerning the holding out of the Liège forts:

“The Chaufontaine fort at Liège was the scene of an act of heroism which brilliantly affirms once more the valor of the Belgian army.

“Major Nameche commanded the fort which controls the railway from Aix-la-Chapelle to Liège via the Verviers and Chaufontaine tunnel. The fort was bombarded continuously and very violently by the Germans. When it was only a heap of débris and the commander judged that resistance was impossible he blockaded the tunnel by producing collisions between several locomotives which had been sent into it. Then he set fire to the fuses of mines in the tunnel.

“His task thus done, Major Nameche did not wish to see the German flag float ever over the ruins of his fort. He therefore exploded all the remaining powder and blew up everything, including himself. Such an act of heroism is beyond all comment.”

## **BRITISH “TOMMIES” COOL IN BATTLE**

The coolness and nerve of the British soldier on the firing line is the subject of a cable message to the Central News of London:

“The shooting of the British infantrymen on the firing line was wonderful. Every time a German’s head showed above a trench and every time the German infantry attempted to rush a position there came a steady, withering rifle fire from the khaki-clad men lying in extended formation along the wide battle front. Their firing was not the firing of nervous men shooting without aiming; rather it was the calm and careful marksmanship of men one sees on English rifle ranges firing with all the artificial aids permitted to the most expert.

“When quick action was necessary the men showed no nervousness; they showed the cool, methodical efficiency for which the British army is noted.

“If the British lost heavily, the Germans must have lost terribly. One of the German prisoners said: ‘We never expected anything like it; it was staggering.’

“The British troops went to their positions silently but happily. There was no singing, because it was forbidden, but as the men deployed to the trenches there were various sallies of humor in the dialects of the various English, Irish and Scotch counties. The cockney was there with quips about ‘Uncle Bill,’ and every Irishman who went into the firing line wished he had money to buy a little Irish horse, so that he might ‘take a slap at the Uhlans.’

“As for the cavalry, the officers declare, their charges against the Germans were superb. They charged as Berserks might have done. They gave the Uhlans the surprise of their lives.”

## 5,000 GUESTS IN SMALL TOWN

This story of a thrilling trip by a party of American tourists in Finland is told by one of them after their safe arrival in Stockholm:

“Our party left Stockholm on July 31 on a steamer for St. Petersburg but was stopped by a Russian warship and compelled to return to Hango, where we were lodged in a hotel. The steamer was taken in charge by a Russian warship and blown up in the harbor channel. At the same time several cranes and other harbor works were dynamited to block the channel to the Finnish harbor. The explosions made a spectacular sight for the Americans.

“Our party was unable to leave until August 3 because the roundhouse and other buildings near the railway station were in flames.

“Starting for Stockholm by train, we traveled in cars already overcrowded with refugees. Arriving at Hyvinge we found at least 3,000 persons waiting for the next train north. The town was already filled and people were sleeping on the staircases of the overflowing hotels and in the parks. We finally found lodging in a sanitarium outside of the town. The next day we continued our trip in a train loaded with Germans who had been expelled from the country.

“We next arrived at Seinajoki, a hamlet near Tammerfors, which boasts of only one hotel but was trying to entertain 5,000 strangers. Every private house was filled to its capacity, and we would have been compelled to spend the night in the streets had it not occurred to the manager of the hotel to suggest that we proceed to Nicolaisadt, a seaport fifty miles to the west.

“We took this good advice and found comfortable lodgings in that place. We also had the good fortune to discover an American freight steamer, on which we were permitted to sail on August 5. The voyage was dangerous, as all the beacon lights had been removed from the passage outward, which is narrow and made hazardous by shoals.

“Two other steamers left port at the same time. The first was commanded by a Russian pilot. It ran aground and was wrecked. The other vessel narrowly escaped the same fate. Our steamer, however, got safely clear and we arrived without accident at Hernosand, Sweden.”

## CHARLEROI A CITY OF DEAD

Describing the entry of the French into the unhappy town of Charleroi, whence, after previous fighting, they drove the Germans across the Sambre, a *Times* correspondent writes:

“Outside an inn was to be seen the dead figure of a German officer with his head bowed over a basin and soap lather dry upon his face, where he had been shot in the act of washing.

“There was another who lay across a table, while a cup of coffee which he had been in the act of raising to his lips at the moment when death found him lay broken on the ground.

“In every part of the city houses were smouldering or in flames. Every cellar was occupied by the terror-stricken inhabitants. This is the account given of the struggle for Charleroi by the French troops which took part in the operations.

“After listening to these accounts the correspondent heard the town was surrounded by German troops. Anxious to ascertain the truth of this report, he started in the direction of Namur. A few miles out of Philippeville he met a Belgian officer and the paymaster-general of Namur, who told him that the town of Namur was occupied by Germans. It had been subjected to a furious bombardment, and the fire of the enemy had been so well regulated that the first few shots had silenced two of the forts.”

## HANSI REBUKES HIS CAPTOR

Hansi, the Alsatian caricaturist who was arrested by the Germans some months ago because of his pro-French sentiments, escaped and fled to France to avoid imprisonment. He is now in a French regiment acting as an interpreter. The German officer who had caused his arrest was the first prisoner brought before him. The officer complained of the treatment he had received and Hansi replied:

“It was certainly better than you gave me at Colmar.”

“GAVE GERMANS WHAT FOR”

Philip Gibbs, the London *Daily Chronicle* correspondent, describing his railway journey from Paris to Boulogne, says:

“On the way we fell into many surprising and significant scenes. One of these was when we suddenly heard a shout of command in English and saw a body of men in khaki with Red Cross armlets suddenly run along the platform to an incoming train from the north with stretchers and drinking bottles. A party of English wounded had arrived from the scene of action between Mons and Charleroi.

“We were kept back by French soldiers with fixed bayonets, but through the hedges of steel we had the painful experience of seeing a number of British soldiers with bandaged heads and limbs descending from the troop train. They looked spent with fatigue and pain after the journey, but some of them were sufficiently high spirited to laugh at their sufferings and give a hearty cheer to the comrades who came to relieve them with medical care.

“I had a few words with one of them and questioned him about the action, but like all British soldiers he was very vague in his descriptions, and the most arresting sentence in his narrative was the reiterated assertion that ‘we got it in the neck.’

“I understood from him, however, that the British troops had stood their ground well under terrific fire and that the Germans had been given ‘what for.’

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.