



Province  
de Liège

Tourisme

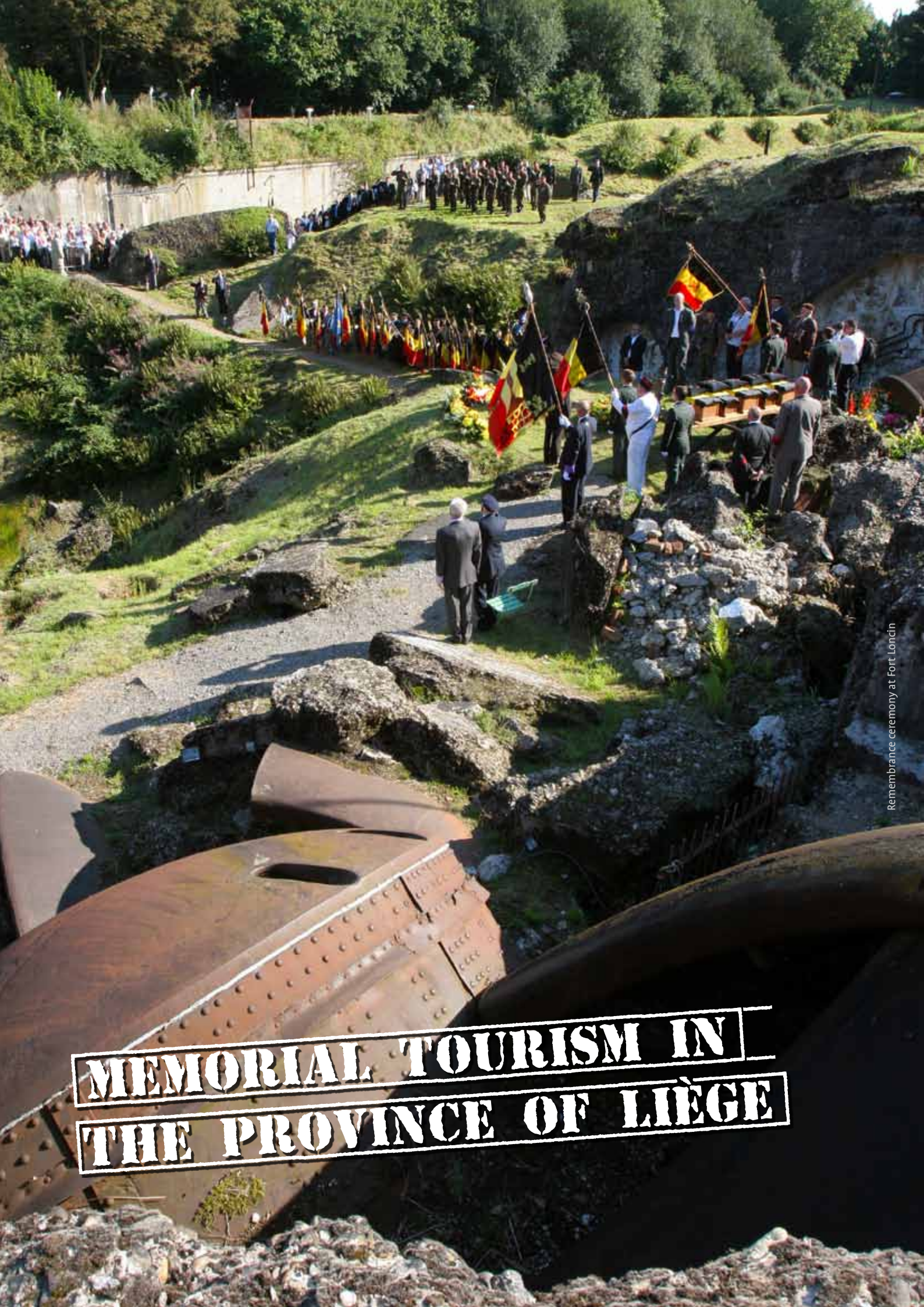


# Memorial Tourism in the Province of Liège

14-18  
&  
40-45







Remembrance ceremony at Fort Loncin

# MEMORIAL TOURISM IN THE PROVINCE OF LIÈGE

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL

## 1914 & 1940 Memorial Tourism

Twice in a quarter of a century the province of Liège had the tragic misfortune of being on the front line of major clashes that involved Belgium – and, beyond that, the whole of Western Europe and even some of the world – in a disastrous and furious war.

Constructed at the end of the 19th century, the “Fortified Position of Liège” had to sustain the assault of August 1914 and then, strengthened and rearmed, the attack of May 1940. By and large the forts are well preserved, even though some are no longer accessible.

No fewer than eleven fortresses, however, can still be visited. You will find them in this publication, along with other sites of remembrance such as the Citadel of Huy, the Cointe Allied Nations Memorial (Liège) and numerous sites linked with the tragic events of von Rundstedt’s counteroffensive in the winter of 1944-45, which deserve the same interest. The introductory, historical reminder will be quite useful, especially for the younger generation.

As the word “tourism” came up, may we stress that it truly does not stand in contradiction to “remembrance”? Quite the opposite! Visitors really have great reverence for the massacres committed at various sites; in Loncin or Chaudfontaine, for example, they respectfully tread on soil where dozens – no, hundreds – of bodies lie buried. “Memorial Tourism” is both an opportunity to remember past sufferings and a reminder of how lucky we are today to be living in peacetime Europe.

Director  
of the Tourism Federation

MPP in charge of Tourism  
Chairman of the Tourism Federation



Belgian soldier of the 12th Line Regiment, 1914





There where the first Belgian soldier gave  
his life, there where it all began...

14  
18



The Exhibition "L'Expo 14-18" is organized by the Province, the City of Liège and asbl Europa 50 on a double theme:  
- Museum of Walloon Life: Liège dans la tourmente (Liège in torment).  
- Guillemins-railway station: La Grande Guerre (the Great War).  
Tours to discover, sites, monuments, memorials and forts including museums, leisure stays and trips.



Find all information on the Remembrance tourism of Liège Province (Belgium) on [www.liegetourisme.be](http://www.liegetourisme.be). For your leisure stay, business travel or excursion you can get in touch with Candice Michot at phone number +32 (0)4 237 95 85 or [candice.michot@provincedeliege.be](mailto:candice.michot@provincedeliege.be)

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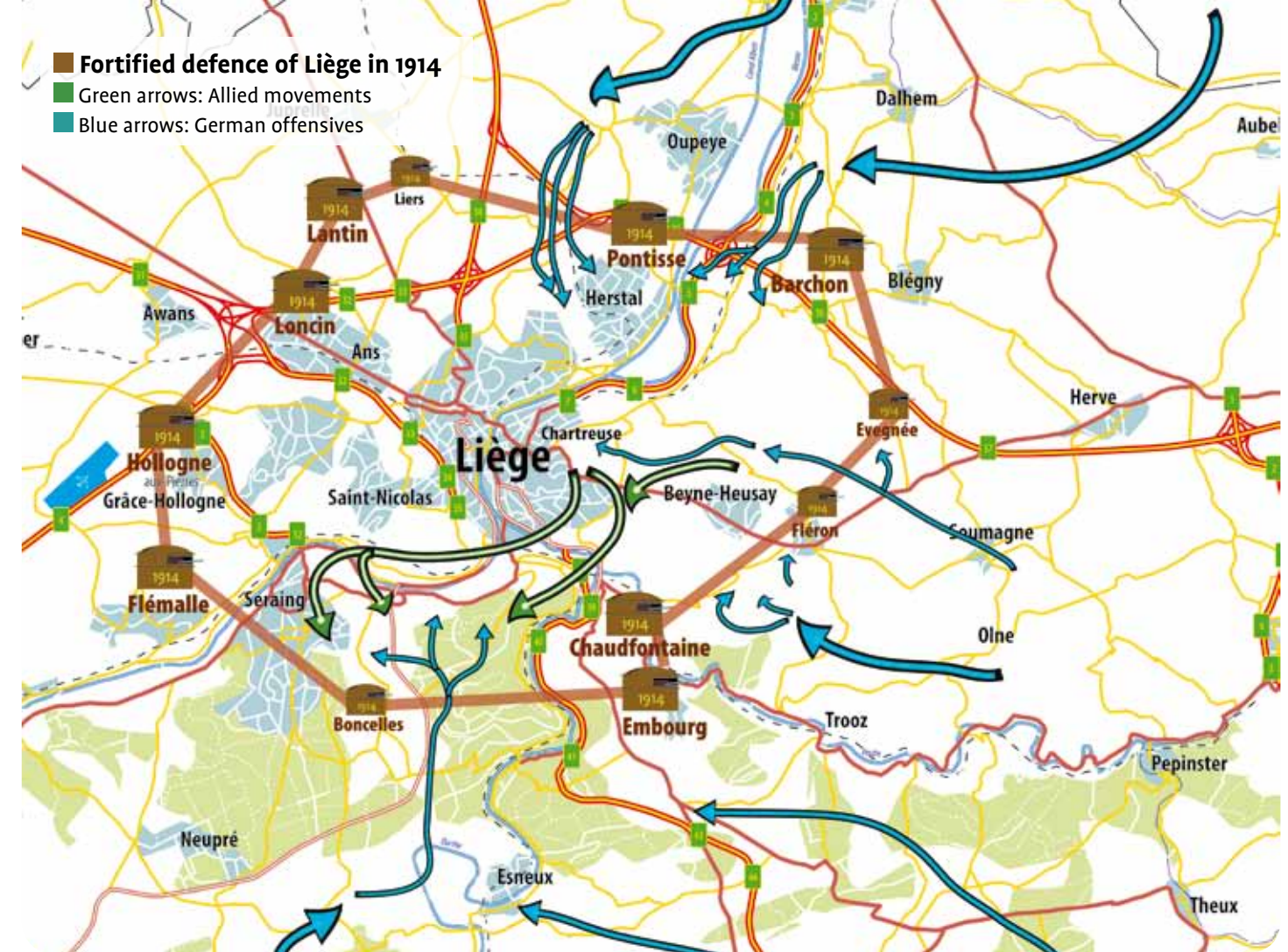
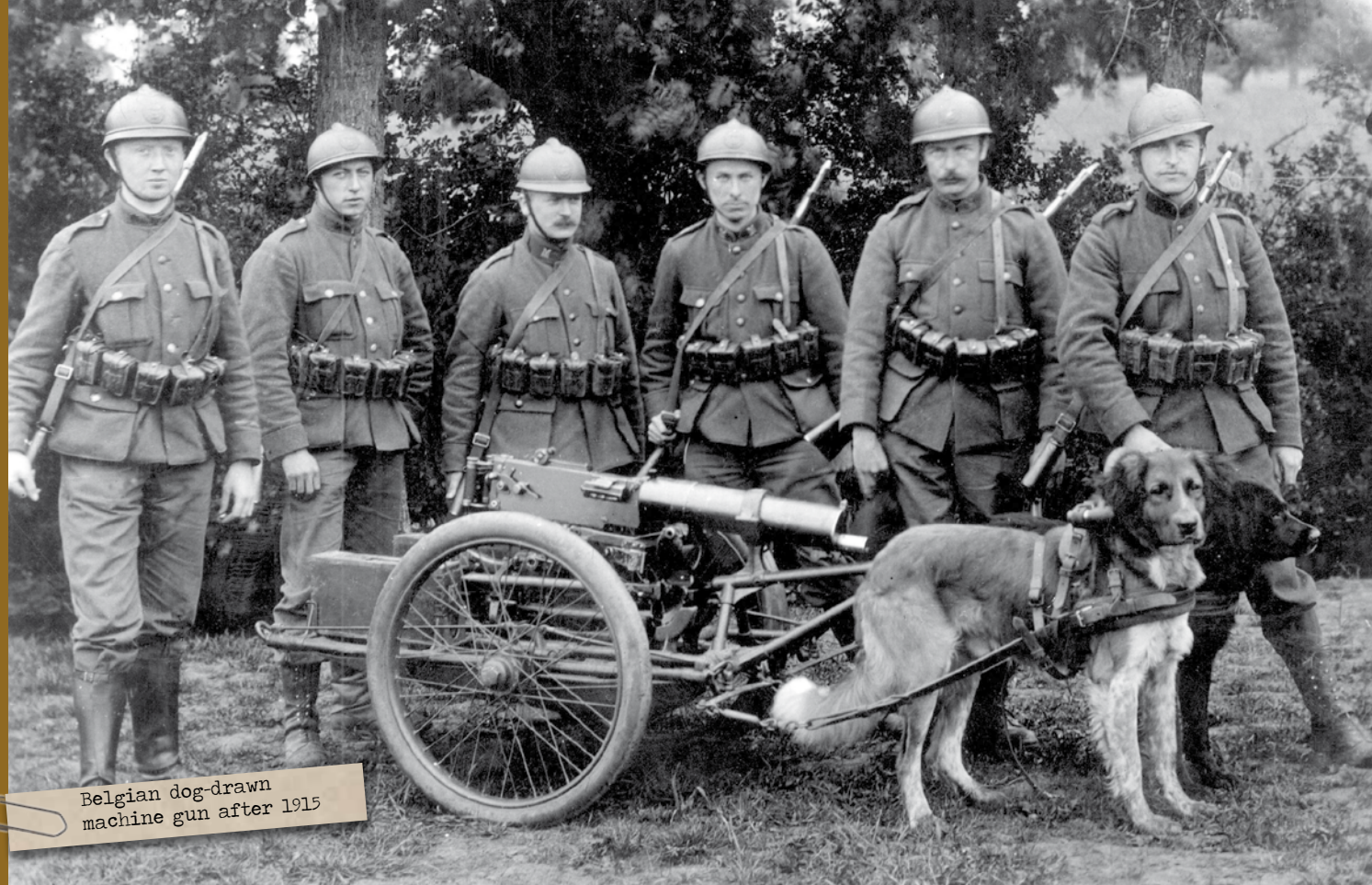
P56 Memorial Tourism package



this classification is given to tourist attractions by the CGT- Brussels (1 to 5 suns).







## 1914, saw heroic resistance

The strict neutrality imposed on Belgium at the time of its independence in 1830, and above all its powerful artillery, served it well in 1870, allowing Belgium to remain outside the Franco-German conflict that was taking place on its doorstep. So, at the very end of the 19th century, when Europe entered a new phase of tensions, the kingdom decided to be on military guard against both Germany and France (the memory of Waterloo was not yet wiped out).

### A huge undertaking briskly carried through

In December 1886, General Brialmont was called on by the Ministry of War to submit a military defence plan. From the following year onwards, the government unfroze the first funds needed to create a fortified position in Liège for sheltering from Germany, and in Namur for countering France. On July 1, 1888, Brialmont's plan for these two Fortified Positions was awarded to French builders. The first turf for this huge undertaking was cut on the following July 28: twelve fortresses were to be built around Liège and nine around Namur. These fortresses, in non-reinforced concrete, are generally triangular or square-shaped. Liège thus found itself encircled by six large fortresses (Barchon, Fléron, Boncelles, Flémalle, Loncin, Pontisse) and six smaller ones (Evegnée, Chaudfontaine, Embourg, Hollogne, Lantin, Liers). The perimeter of this ring of fortresses was 46 km, the average distance to the city 7-8 km and they were 3-4 km apart.

### An international chain of events

The international situation among the "great powers" of the time – Germany and Austria-Hungary on the one side, and France, England and Russia on the other – was so tense that the slightest event could spark off a major conflict. The spark was provided by the assassination in Sarajevo of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, on June 28, 1914. This casualty immediately set the "logic" of the alliances in motion: Russia, defending its Slavonic brothers in Serbia against the Austrian crackdown, drew France and Britain into war. Germany, convinced that Belgium had a mere "caricature of an army and cardboard fortresses", summoned the Belgian government to allow free passage to its troops on their way to waging an assault on France. King Albert I, Chief of the Belgian armed forces, refused. For the Prussian Kaiser, Wilhelm II, who had 3,800,000 soldiers available (Belgium could not even rely on 200,000 men!), this was a mere formality. In the early morning of August 4, 1914, German troops, supported by many cannons and howitzers, crossed the border and advanced towards Henri-Chapelle, Battice and Herve, before facing fierce resistance from the Belgian infantry (12th Line Regiment) as the 3rd Division of the Army defended Liège under Lieutenant-General Gérard Leman.

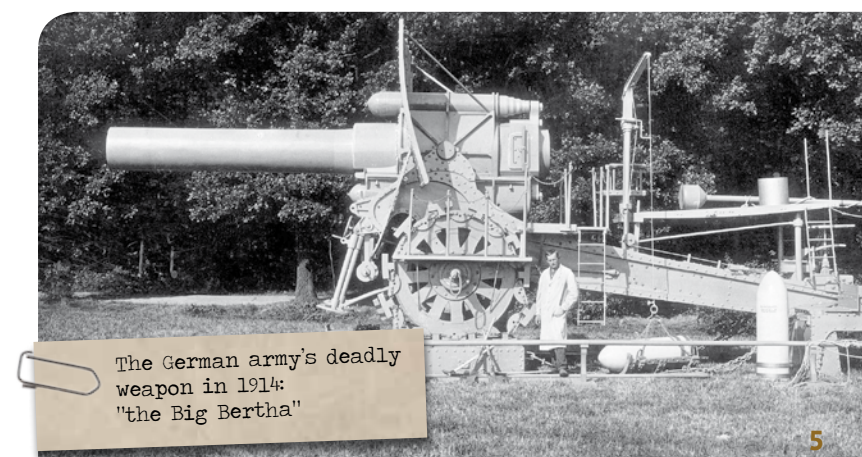
### Liège on the front line

It was in Thimister, near Battice, during one of the con-



frontations preceding the battle for the storming of Liège, that the first Belgian cavalryman, Fonck, fell; a former barracks in Liège is named after him. On August 5, the enemy infantry attacked the Barchon fortress in closed ranks. The fortress's guns blasted huge gaps in the enemy lines. The assault was averted, but the invader made sure not to make the same mistake again: its artillery went on to annihilate our fortresses. To the Germans' surprise, the Belgian army defended itself ferociously, even managing to push back the enemy in several places (Visé, Herstal, Rabozée, Sart-Tilman...) where five out of six assault brigades withdrew. This caused the violence of the aggression to escalate, and the German troops set fire to several villages.

The town of Visé was razed. The Germans then decided to bypass the line of fortresses on the right bank northwards by crossing the River Meuse at Lixhe, not far from the Dutch border. On August 7, some German brigades managed to infiltrate and create a breach in the belt of Liégeois fortresses, between Fléron and Evegnée, despite the valiant opposition of the Belgian defenders. Having taken Jupille, the German soldiers assailed the old Fort de la Chartreuse without bloodshed. On the Belle-flamme plateau, guns were set in place, shelling Liège for the first time. The Position's headquarters, on Rue Sainte-Foy, was attacked by the enemy, who was pushed back, and Lieutenant-General Leman moved his General Staff to the Loncin fortress. Following this attack, the panic-stricken central office of the P.T.T. (postal and telecommunications service) surrendered the premises where all the communications by the Fortified Position had passed through till then.







A genre much in demand among German troops: postcards of battles (in this case the storming of Liège).

From then on, things grew worse because the Fortified Position of Liège, already outdated technologically, went on to suffer attacks from the rear as well: they never expected the enemy could “shoot them in the back” from the centre of the city. So, under fire by the German artillery, the fortresses fell one by one.

### 420-mm guns

Indeed, as the storming of the Fortified Position took more time than expected, the enemy had mobilised a siege artillery of unprecedented proportions: battery no. 3 of Hauptmann Erdmann, made up of two 420-mm guns, had been installed in the village of Mortier and, on August 13, opened fire on the Pontisse fortress. Designed, like the other fortresses, to withstand calibres of not more than 210 mm, the Pontisse fortress, already shaken by numerous bombardments, was unable to hold up against these enormous shells and was quick to raise the white flag. On August 15, it was the turn of Loncin – whose aim it was to blockade the road and railway towards Brussels – to suffer bombardment from these monstrous howitzers. The two 420-mm guns had been brought to the manoeuvre ground from Bressoux and started their destructive shooting. At about 5.30 p.m., on that August 15, enemy observers saw an immense flame rise up above Loncin: the fortress had just exploded, burying part of the garrison under enormous blocks of concrete. General Leman himself had to be removed badly wounded from the debris. The next day, the two last fortresses that were holding out, Flémalle and Hollogne, capitulated. This brought the Battle of Liège to a close but, as we know, getting mired in the battles of the Yser and Marne, the war was to continue for four long years, until the Allies gained victory against the invader. Liège was the first city outside France to receive the

distinction of the French Legion of honour after the war in recognition of its determination to fight, enabling defence to be better organised beyond Wallonia.



### JOSEPH GORDINNE, BRAVEHEART

Joseph Gordinne, a printer, was contacted in September 1914 by Lieutenant Tits, who was in the military complex of Saint-Laurent at the time. The lieutenant informed him that the Germans wanted to burn the archives held at Saint-Laurent, pointing out that these vital archives were those of the fortifications of Liège. Joseph Gordinne, listening only to his own courageous and patriotic heart, presented himself to the German officer charged with burning the documents as a printer in need of raw material: paper. He proposed buying the entire six tonnes. After the deal, the value of these irreplaceable archives was recognised, and later they were moved three times during the four years of the war to conceal them from the Germans. Joseph Gordinne was awarded the First Class Civic medal for this act of bravery.



Fort Aubin-Neufchâteau in German hands - May 1940

## The bombshell of May 1940

Although, in our regions, the start of World War Two may seem to be a repeat of 1914 (same German onslaught towards France by violating Belgium's neutrality, same speed of execution, same tactical and geostrategic concepts), this was a completely different kind of war. First of all, it was not limited to a confrontation among States for the conquest or defence of national territories – it was also an ideological and racist war: Nazism was resolved to manifest the alleged superiority of the Aryan race over Europe, then the world. The conflict's opportunist and vengeful nature should not be underestimated. From the German point of view, the task was to “avenge the affront” of 1918.

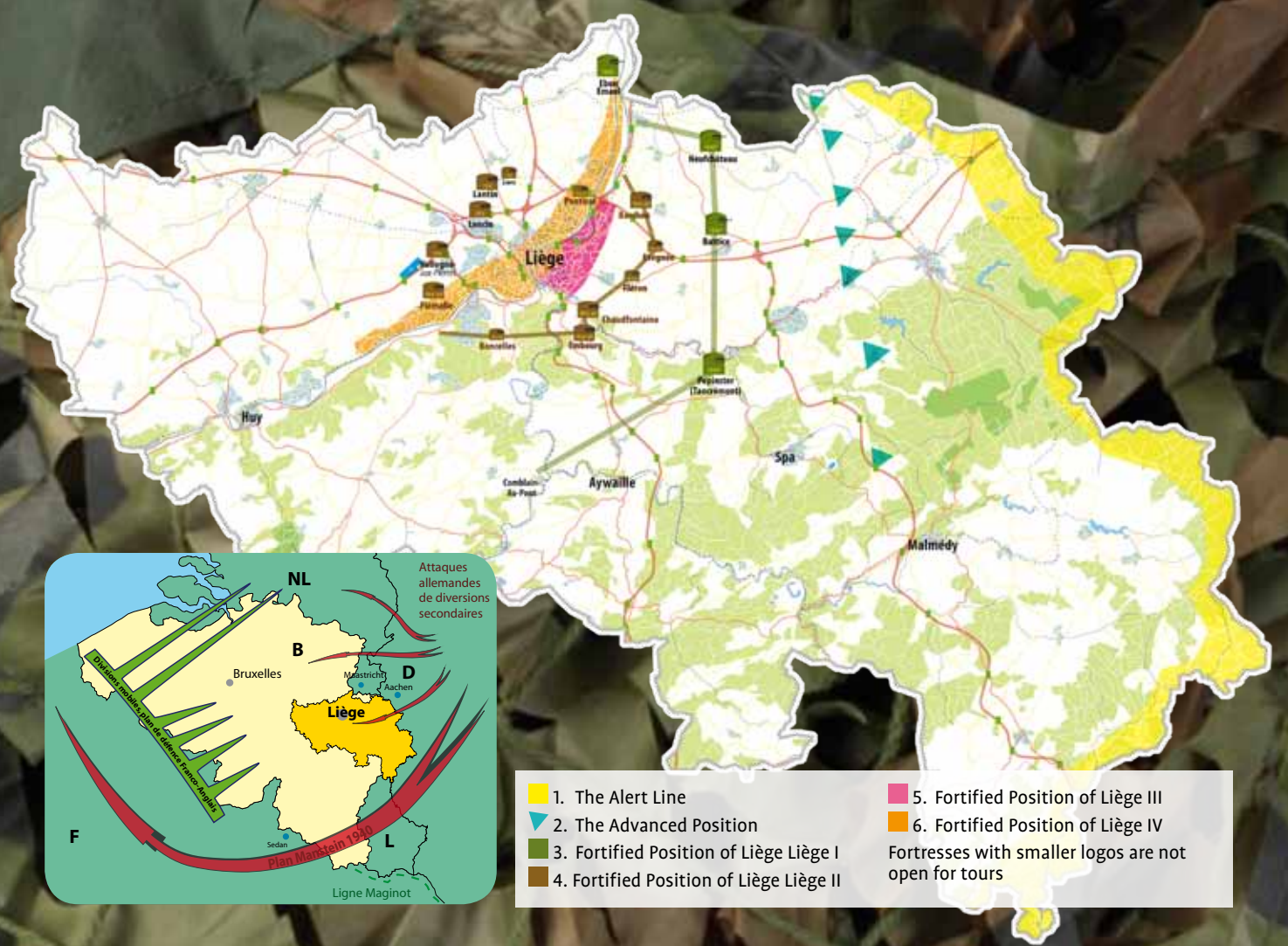
### A full-scale war

Secondly, the hostility between the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, Japan) and the Allies was also, as far as Western Europe was concerned, an unprecedented confrontation between expansionist dictatorships (known as “strong powers”) and democracies, which were held to be fragile. The fact that these democracies emerged victorious, having shown many flaws before 1940, is a formidable lesson to be learned from History. Thirdly, 39-45 was truly a global war. Fundamentally, the war of 1914 was a European conflict, which became a “world war” on account of the variety of troops that came to tear each other to pieces on the continent. The second conflict took on a global scale very quickly. Fighting was done first in Asia, then in Europe, in Africa and in the Central and South Pacific.



A Belgian border cyclist, whose role it was to sound the alert. On his right, an Ardenne hunter.





America was the only one to escape the fighting, but almost all countries in the New World went on to actively participate in the conflict. In the end this war became “full-scale”. The longer it went on, the more it consumed all the forces of the belligerent nations. In addition to the enormous technical, economic, industrial and moral investment, the inevitable toll paid in “human flesh” was to turn out heavier than it had ever been before. Civilians were to be even more affected than the military. There was no deliverance from the suffering even after the fighting came to a short-lived end, because after that came the time of the occupation, of prisoners of war, collaboration, denunciations, resistance, reprisals, forced labour, deportations, rationing and bombardments, etc...

### A reinforced defence



Belgian soldier in 1940

In the early 30's, with the aim of protecting Belgium from another German aggression, the Belgian Command assigned considerable means for the defence of Liège, the traditional point of entry for invasions coming from the East. Once the works were finished (on the eve of the war), the Fortified Position of Liège (P.F.L.) turned out to be a hefty size, structured along six successive lines.

**1. The Alert Line:** running along the German border line, it was made up of a vast number of look-out posts which had to sound the alert in the event of border line violation and trigger numerous destructions.

**2. The Advanced Position:** stretching from Beusdaal (Dutch border) to Stavelot (Amblève), it was made up of 65 shelters forming 9 fortified centres.

**3. Fortified Position of Liège I (P.F.L. I):** forming an arc connecting Visé and Comblain, it had 178 shelters and 3 new fortresses.

**4. Fortified Position of Liège II (P.F.L. II):** defending the right bank of the River Meuse along the line of the old 1914 fortresses, it was made up of 62 shelters, 6 rearmed fortresses and a continuous anti-tank barrier.

**5. Fortified Position of Liège III (P.F.L. III):** an anti-storm echelon between P.F.L. 2 and the River Meuse. Number of shelters: 41.

**6. Finally, Fortified Position of Liège IV (P.F.L. IV):** secured the defence of the River Meuse between Pontisse and Engis, and numbered 38 shelters and 2 rearmed fortresses. Also to be mentioned are several impenetrable areas (destructions and abatis), a buried telephone network with fortified exchanges, visiting rooms and commanding posts, and we get a picture of the broad military effort that was put into safeguarding Belgium from invasion.

### The Antwerp-Wavre-Namur line

In May 1940, Liège could therefore rely on 3 new fortresses, 8 old rearmed fortresses and 384 shelters, in addition to the fort of Eben-Emael, which belonged to another corps but also defended Liège. Two divisions, three cyclist regiments, one cavalry regiment and fortresses' troops ensured the Position's defence. Liège was the easternmost point of the Belgian army, which provided blanket coverage from Antwerp to Namur, following a gigantic arc resting against the Albert Canal and the River Meuse.

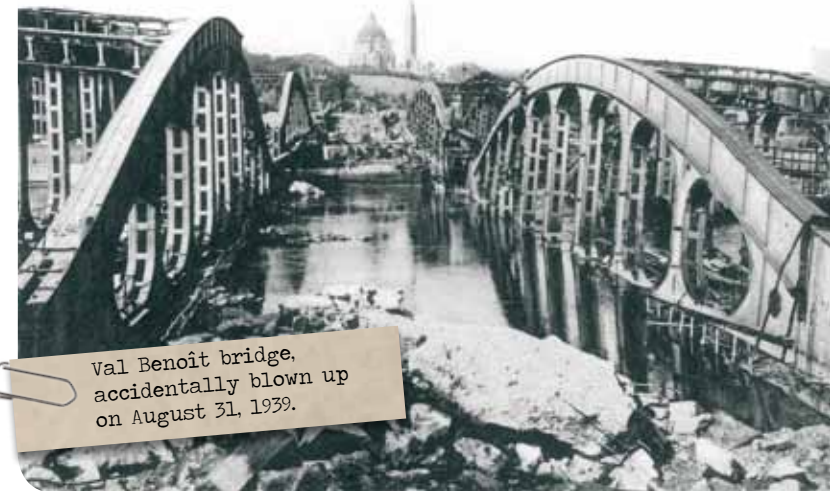
The Main Headquarters had long hoped that the French and British would be drawn to it, but, in winter 1939-40, they realised the allies would not accept hard combat beyond the Antwerp-Leuven-Namur line, which thus became the Major Resistance Line where armies had to regroup in order to engage in the decisive battle. In the event of combat, the role of Liège was therefore to hold out as long as possible (for at least four days) to cover the Allies' position and perhaps clear the way for their advance.

Bathroom in one of the fortresses of the Fortified Position of Liège: living conditions there were spartan.



### A quick defeat

The attack on May 10 was completely unexpected. Northwards from Liège, the invader took over two intact bridges on the Albert Canal (Veldwezelt and Vroenhoven). At the same time, German gliders dropped airborne troops on fort Eben-Emael, which defended the Maastricht gap. Taken by surprise and totally unprepared, the fort was neutralised using hollow shells, and surrendered the next day. This filled everybody with consternation because the fort was said to be unassailable. The 4th and 3rd Panzerdivisionen then rushed through the gap, threatening to encircle two army corps on the Albert Canal and the one defending Liège. From May 10 onwards, the Belgian covering device had to fall back gradually. Our troops escaped from capture in the nick of time but at what cost? The 4th Infantry Division lost its heavy equipment, while the 7th Division was annihilated at the Albert Canal. The 14th Division was sacrificed somewhat later in Lummen to cover the retreat. Only the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions held fast, although weakened by being on the move (on foot) under continuous bombardments.



Val Benoît bridge, accidentally blown up on August 31, 1939.

Moving with the German armoured vehicles prowling around was terrifying. In Rocourt, a Belgian battalion of the 3rd Infantry Division set an anti-tank trap on the Tongeren road.: Unluckily, as our 1st Lancer regiment withdrew without protecting its rear, it was caught in an ambush and suffered its first losses. The same day, in Liège, the announcement of the Germans' arrival brought back the memory of the atrocities committed in 1914 and panic set in. Paradoxically, when Hitler's first troops came down from the Citadel and reached Place Saint-Lambert around 5 p.m., they were given a round of applause by the inhabitants because they were mistaken for Dutch soldiers. Shortly after 6 p.m., these troops took possession of the town hall and flew the swastika there for four long years. Abandoned to their fate, the fortresses of Liège went on struggling individually. Bonnelles surrendered first, on May 16. Tancremont (Pepinster), on the other hand, withstood until May 29, that is one day after the capitulation of the field army.



Tancremont fortress

Without detracting from the heroism of the combatants of Tancremont in any way, it must be said that this fortress to the South of the device was not – unlike Eben-Emael to the North – considered crucial to the progress of the Germans, who somewhat bypassed it. This battle of the fortresses on the outskirts explains why Liège came through the fighting relatively unscathed. Except for a few bombardments in the Liège suburbs of Herstal, Ans, Alleur and Liers, the biggest damage in the end was caused by Belgian engineering, which blew up the bridges before withdrawing. Ferries were used for crossing the Meuse for several months before temporary footbridges were constructed.



# FORT AUBIN-NEUFCHATEAU



## Tests for the secret Röchling shells

The Aubin-Neufchâteau fortress was constructed between 1935 and 1940 and formed part of the Fortified Position of Liège I. It was built to protect the Aachen-Visé-Liège route and the surrounding valleys. It sealed off the north-eastern front of the Fortified Position.

Meant to be an artillery support on a defensive line of bunkers, the Aubin-Neufchâteau fortress operated, isolated from the field army. In May 1940, it fired no fewer than 15,000 projectiles in eleven days. With the help of neighbouring Fort Battice, it managed to slow down and hold back German forces which could have been needed on other fronts. In fact,

this resistance made the fights of the “Campagne des 18 jours” drag on, allowing both the rescue of British troops from the beaches of Dunkirk and the victory of the French in Gembloux. Once taken by the Germans, Fort Aubin-Neufchâteau was used as a site for experimenting on Hitler’s secret weapon (see text box).

The tour of the fort is continued by a visit to the museum, whose collections were added in 2012 by some fine items, including armoured vehicles from the Royal Army Museum (see photo next page). The fort was stormed by sheer force, its artillery destroyed and stripped of ammunition for close-range defence. The operation put more than two thousand assailants out of action outside its walls and claimed six fatalities and twenty casualties.

### THE RÖCHLING SHELL

The Röchling shell was designed by the Germans to perforate the fortresses’ blocks of reinforced concrete. A howitzer, set in place 5 miles away from the Aubin-Neufchâteau and the Battice fortresses, “experimentally” delivered the projectile upon these fortresses. The shells climbed very high and took a nosedive, penetrating deep and causing terrible damage. It is still possible to see the damage that was done to the very deepest of the underground galleries.



INFO

**Where?**  
Rue Colonel Dardenne  
B-4608 Neufchâteau (Dalhem).

**Contact:**  
Maison du Tourisme de la Basse-Meuse  
B-4600 Visé  
Tel. +32 (0)4 374 85 55  
fortaubinneufchateau@gmail.com  
www.fort-aubin-neufchateau.be

**How?**  
Starting from Visé, follow Aubel then drive towards Berneau. Then, follow arrows to “Fort de Neufchâteau”. Coming by the Henri-Chapelle-Visé road, turn left before driving down towards Warsage. Entry is gained via the access ramp to the monument, near the cemetery.

**When?**  
3rd Sunday of every month, from April to November at 2 p.m. Groups: other days, with booking.

**Tour:** ± 1.30 hrs. FR, NL, DE, EN.

**Prices:**  
see on  
<http://tarif.fort-aubin-neufchateau.be>

**Facilities:** parking for cars (50 spaces) and coaches (2 spaces). Photos allowed.

**Miscellaneous:** Wear sturdy shoes, warm clothes and bring a pocket torch.



Gps : 50°43'12.44" N  
5°47'10.13" E





## Extensively rearmed and reconcreted for 1940

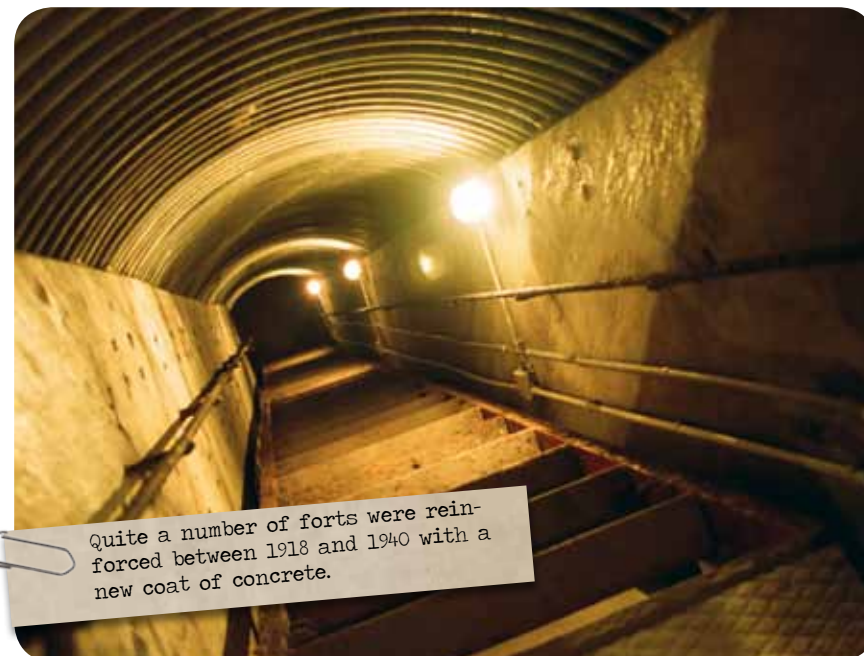
Built according to the Brialmont Plan in 1888 (see text box), Fort Barchon was situated northernmost, along with Pontisse. It was the first to surrender, on August 8, 1914, following command problems and the threat that the garrison would be asphyxiated after only 4 days of combat.



### GENERAL BRIALMONT

Born in 1821, the "Belgian Vauban" took a keen interest in fortifications from an early age, and developed his own designs. One of his assigned projects resulted in the creation of a large defence ring around Antwerp (1859-1864). A number of works followed, among which were the 21 Meuse fortresses: 12 in Liège and 9 in Namur between 1887 and 1891. Promoted Lieutenant-General, he enjoyed international repute and exported his projects to Europe and even beyond: he designed the fort at Shinkakasa, which defended the mouth of the river Congo, and, under a pseudonym, provided plans to Romania. He died in 1903, having prophesied to the very end: "You will shed tears of blood for not having built a fortress before Visé."

In 1940, its resistance was more solid. It did not surrender until May 18, once the commander had had everything that could be useful to the enemy destroyed. From May 10 to May 18, the fortress unrelentingly assailed the enemy, who retaliated with a sustained bombardment of artillery and Stuka planes. During the tour, two aspects are particularly fascinating at Barchon fort: first the advancement of military architecture since the end of the 19th century: you will be able to judge the why and how of the refits in the interwar period where, using the "old", the attempt was made to make some "new". Next, as in Battice, several paintings and wall decorations made by soldiers to adorn the rooms. Moreover, one of the peculiar features of this fort is that it still has an undamaged ventilation tower (see photo above): it is the only one that can be visited. This concludes the tour of the fort. An audio-visual presentation paves the way for the tour and reminds us that although these fortresses are likely to vanish, civilisation's great principles remain everlasting. The tour of the museum comes next.



## INFO

### Where?

Rue du Fort - B-4671 Barchon (Blegny)

**Contact:** Roger Weeckmans,  
tel. +32 (0)4 387 58 37  
+32 (0)474 90 95 75  
info@arc-services.be

### How?

E40 (sens Liège-Aachen) exit n° 36 (Blegny). At the exit, take the right (rue Champs de Tignée) towards the 1st roundabout (1st exit at 90°), cross the motorway bridge. At the 2nd roundabout, (2nd exit at 220°), continue to the 3rd roundabout (3rd exit at 260° into rue du Fort) and follow the signposting. In the other direction (Aachen-Liège motorway), exit n° 36, at the 1st roundabout (1st exit at 120°) and at the 2nd roundabout (3rd exit at 260° into rue du Fort) and follow the signposting.

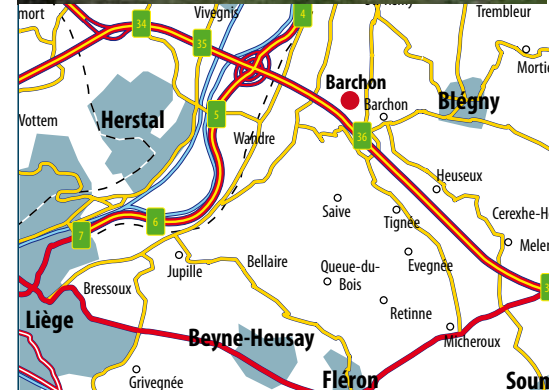
### When?

From April to November, on the 2nd Sunday of the month, at 2 p.m. Tour: ± 2 hrs 30. FR, NL, DE.

**Prices:** ad.: €3; child (8 to 12 years): €1.50.  
Groups (min. 15 pers.): ad.: €2.50; child: 1 €.

**Facilities:** cafeteria, WC, parking for cars (50 spaces) and coaches (2 spaces), photos allowed.

**Miscellaneous:** Wear woollen clothes and walking boots. Museum, audiovisual presentation.



Gps : 50°40'22.34" N  
5°41'27.66" E





Fresco on a chamber wall – Death of Siegfried

## Frescoes that speak a thousand words

Fort Battice is one of the four new fortresses built in the 30s, from 1934 to 1937. In May 1940, it sustained a twelve-day siege under the fire of heavy German artillery and aircraft. On May 21, during an air raid, one single bomb launched by a Stuka unhappily ricocheted and pierced the combat block, killing 26 of its occupants. The extent of the damage is still noticeable in the walk up to the small museum there.



### MOVING TRACES OF LIFE

There was a time when these huge fortresses of concrete were teeming with life, in particular during their construction. Fort Battice, for instance, is composed of 15 buildings on the surface, on a 45-hectare ground and is made of a network of chambers and galleries reaching 3.5 km, 30 m below the surface. Roughly 2,000 men had worked hard day and night for a period of three years, equipped with pneumatic drills, picks, shovels and barrows, to finish this giant of reinforced concrete. 700, most often young men who originated from the region, lived there in readiness at the outset, they then were scared and finally filled with terror. They have left marks here and there such as frescoes or this inscription saying "Be quiet! Your comrades are asleep".

The tour of the inner structure, 30 metres below ground, is not to be missed, despite the disappearance of equipment removed by a scrap iron merchant in the 60s. Visitors can see the dynamic demonstration of a 75-mm twin-cannon turret, and view some unusual frescoes in the underground barrack buildings, and also a generator in perfect condition. The museum contains a firing chamber for a 60 mm cannon and another with a gun carriage for two machine guns. Objects found in the fortress are on show in glass cases.



Aerial view of the fortress.



Block 1 with gun embrasures and remembrance plaque..

## INFO

### Where?

Route d'Aubel - B-4651 Battice (Herve).

### Contact:

Georges Meessen - tel. +32 (0)87 44 65 08  
René Coune - tel. +32 (0)4 367 70 71 or mob. +32 (0)497 20 77 82  
Chairman of the non-profit association "Fort de Battice"  
Postal address: rue Puits Sainte-Anne, 9 - B-4620 Fléron  
rene.coune@teledisnet.be

### How?

E42, Battice exit. At the roundabout drive towards "Aubel". The access road to the fortress is 500 metres away via the car park for "RAVEL 5".

### When?

Guided tours from March to November, on the last Saturday of the month at 1.30 p.m.

**Tours:** ± 3 hrs. FR, NL(1), DE(2), EN.

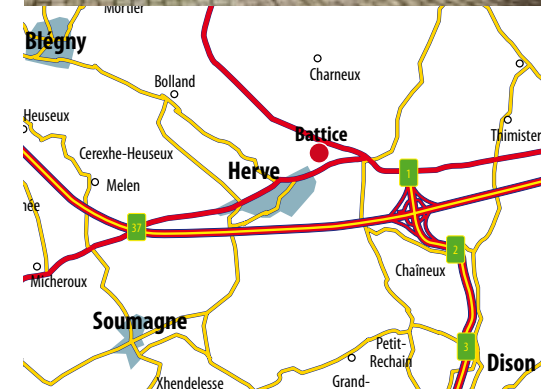
**Prices:** ad.: € 5; child (-12 years): € 3.

Throughout the year by appointment for groups of min. 12 pers. or fixed Prices of € 60 if fewer than 12 pers.

**Facilities:** parkings for cars (30 spaces) and coach (1 space).

**Miscellaneous:** by appointment, option to visit the museum only (± 1 hr).

(1) M. Dany Jammaer (B-Landen), tel. +32(0)11 88 42 22  
(2) M. Otmar Rogge (D-Aachen), tel. +49 (0)24 08 27 91



Gps : 50°38'57.06" N  
5°49'56.50" E





## One of the most powerful fortresses of Europe neutralised in no time!

In the heart of Saint Peter's Mountain, the vast triangle of Fort Eben-Emael is bordered by the Trench of Caster on the north-east. This impressive overhang, which shelters a real little underground city, was one of Europe's mightiest fortifications. It was built between 1932 and 1935

The lower level houses a living museum. Several rooms have been restored and equipped as they were originally: a machine room, showers, an infirmary, an officers' mess, barrack rooms for NCO's and troops, a commander's office, a mortuary, dungeons, a hairdresser's, etc. On the upper level, one can see the endless galleries along with the diverse artillery works and ammunition in their original state.

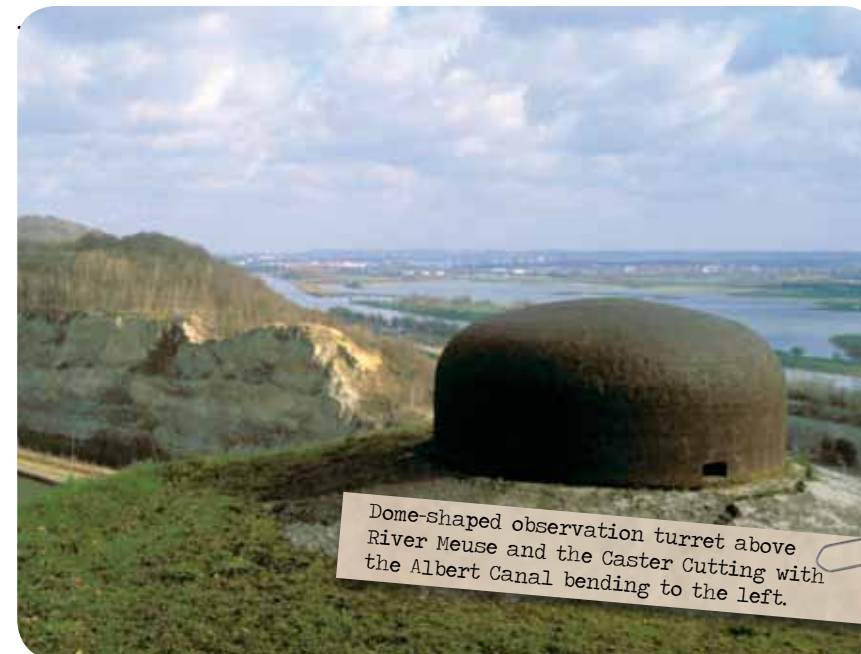
*Seul je ne suis que sable  
ensemble je deviens  
forteresse\**

### THE HOLLOW CHARGES

Although the principle of the hollow or shaped charge was discovered by an American physicist in 1888, it was not used as a combat weapon until May 10, 1940, during the airborne attack on the Albert Canal. Unlike a conventional charge which "hammers" the target, the hollow charge works like a "molten sting", melting the armour it impacts. This devastating effect allowed the neutralisation of Fort Eben-Emael's fighting guns in less than 15 minutes.

*\* On my own I'm just sand; together, I become a fortress*

Firing chambers in block 1 have been completely reconditioned, enabling visits to a combat machine in full action, down in the underground barracks. In May 1940, the fort of Eben-Emael was the most celebrated of fortresses and reputedly unassailable. Its task was to block and prevent any crossing of the River Meuse and the Albert Canal. And yet, some 15 minutes after an unforeseen attack was launched by German airborne troops transported by gliders using the fort's superstructure as a landing-strip, the fort was overpowered and surrendered on May 11, 1940 at 11.30 a.m. The superstructure of the fort offers an impression of how things may have looked when day dawned on that fateful 10th of May 1940, when the airborne assault group, spearhead of the German offensive, rushed the cupolas and observation turret in order to position the hollow charges (see text box), whose devastating effects can still be seen today. The tour of Eben-Emael fort has been supplemented by a presentation of uniforms of the German elite troops who took part in the attack on the fort and the Albert Canal. Placing the spotlight on the different aspects of this offensive, and on the various figures who played a determining role in it, by means of exhibitions and recreations makes history more vivid, easier to understand, perhaps.



## INFO

### Where?

Rue du Fort, B-4690 Eben-Emael.

### Contact:

Tel./fax +32 (0)4 286 28 61  
secretariat@fort-eben-emael.be  
www.fort-eben-emael.be  
The capture of Fort Eben-Emael (Youtube)

### How?

Motorway E 25 Liège-Maastricht, exit no.1 Fourons-Voeren. After crossing the Meuse and the Albert Canal, turn right towards Eben-Emael. At the roundabout, take the road to the fort (signposted).

### When?

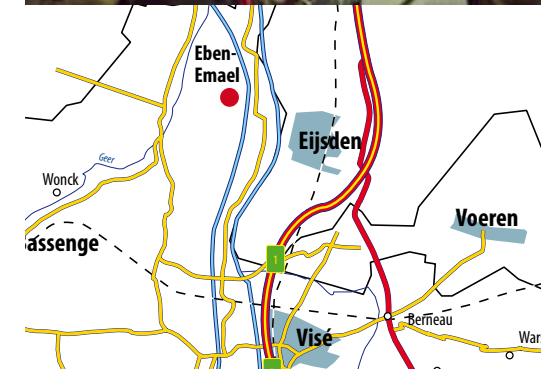
Without booking: open to the public one weekend per month (except winter, obtain information). With booking in writing (min. 15 days in advance): throughout the year, except end of December, beginning of January and public holidays (obtain information).

**Tours:** guided, indoors (outdoors by individual request). 2 to 3 hrs: FR, NL, DE, EN

**Prices:** ad.: 6 € ; senior/student: 5 € ; child : € 3; guided tours: same Prices (groups: min.15 pers.).

**Facilities:** cafeteria during open weekends, parking for cars (400 spaces) and coaches (10 spaces). Museum and underground barracks with disabled access.

**Miscellaneous:** Bring sturdy shoes and warm clothing.



Gps : 50°47'47.48" N  
5°40'22.02" E





## Stormed twice under devastating fire by the enemy artillery

Built under the Brialmont Plan (see text box p.12), Fort Embourg's special feature is its trapezoidal shape and its relatively small size, as it had a garrison of some 350 men. The scene of skirmishes between August 6 and 12 1914, it was heavily and successively pelted from August 12, 1 p.m. until August 13, 8 p.m., when it surrendered. The entry postern was destroyed, the keep seriously damaged and nearly all the armament under cupola wiped out. However, it was the threat of gas asphyxiation through the ventilation system which actually provoked its surrender.



Murderous fights also took place in May 1940. From the 14th onwards, the fort was completely surrounded and on May 15, it had to suffer both the vertiginous nosedive attacks from the German aircraft and the shower of artillery. On the 16th, Embourg fort lost three of its cupolas, which put it out of operation. The enemy went on the assault; bombs rained down, the whole fort shook violently. After five days and five nights of resistance, the commander decided to lay down arms in order to save his men. The museum recently acquired a collection of costumes and equipment of all the armies that took part in the battles of 1914 and 1940.



German soldiers standing in front of the fort's main entrance after surrender.

## INFO

### Where?

Rue du Fort, 6 - B-4053 Embourg.

### Contact:

Jean-Marc Lebrun,  
mob. +32 (0)497 20 35 70  
fortdembourg@yahoo.fr

### How?

Ardennes motorway from Liège, Embourg exit. Drive up the road towards Embourg; at the roundabout, turn right. Entrance near the Patton tank.

### When?

4th Sunday of every month from 2 p.m.  
Groups: by request (booking mandatory. - min. 5 pers.)

**Tour:** ± 1.30 hr. FR, NL, DE, EN.

**Prices:** ad.: 4 €; young person (15-18 years): €3; child : free. Guided tours for groups min. 5 pers.: € 3 / pers..

**Facilities:** parking for cars (20 spaces). Partially with disabled access. Photos allowed.



Gps : 50°47'47.48" N  
5°40'22.02" E



# FORT FLEMALLE



## There's no escaping half-tonne bombs!

A large quadrangular fort in the Fortified Position of Liège. Flémalle was one of the twelve defenders of Liège designed by Brialmont in 1888. Because of its commanding strategic position above the River Meuse and the Liège-Namur road, it was the scene of harsh combats in 1914. It had to hold out against the German Stuka aircraft attacks in May 1940.

The Flémalle fort surrendered on August 16, 1914, a few minutes before Hologne. The surrender of these forts marked the definitive fall of the PFL. Rearmed during the interwar period with a relatively deep quadrilateral level, it reveals to visitors its wounds which have never really

healed, scars left by the violence of the enemy bombardments in 1940. Colonel Modart decided to move his staff in there in order to command the defence. He had failed to notice the power of the enemy airforce and its terrifying 500kg bombs, which rearranged the topography of the fort's summits forever. The ventilation tower received its fair share of damage, due this time to the enemy cannons (some of which were 88mm-calibre!)

So, there you have a brief summary of what the guides will show you during an indoor tour, which will last about 2 hours. The inner tour will be rounded off by a 3D recreation of the whole fort, with its weapons, etc. – a virtual tour that makes it easier to see what life was like within these damp walls... The museum's collection, which is one of a kind, amply represents Belgian equipment from the two wars, which is however fairly rare: weapons (from the Hotchkiss machine gun to the DBT mortar), hospital equipment (dental room, operating theatre, etc.), documents, but also a good dozen uniforms from the First World War, and even more from the second one. A must-see!



## INFO

### Where?

Avenue du Fort - B-4400 Flémalle.

### Contact:

G. Bovy: mob. +32 (0)494 59 27 91  
J. Pire: mob. +32 (0)499 46 90 13  
J.-Cl. Martin: tel. +32 (0)4 234 62 42  
fortdeflemalle@live.be  
www.facebook.com/musee.fortdeflemalle

### How?

E42 Liège-Namur, exit no. 4 Flémalle. Drive towards Flémalle up until the large roundabout. From there, follow the arrows to the left towards Mons-lez-Liège. Continue on the main road for 3 km. At the post crossroads, keep going straight ahead towards place des Ecoles. Take the road on the right down to the nuclear plant. Drive around the square on the right and continue straight ahead (avenue du Fort). Turn right at the ventilation tower crossroads (steep slope). Arriving via the River Meuse, take avenue Gonda, towards Liège-Namur motorway. After about 5 km, turn right towards Mons-lez-Liège at the roundabout, then see above.

### When?

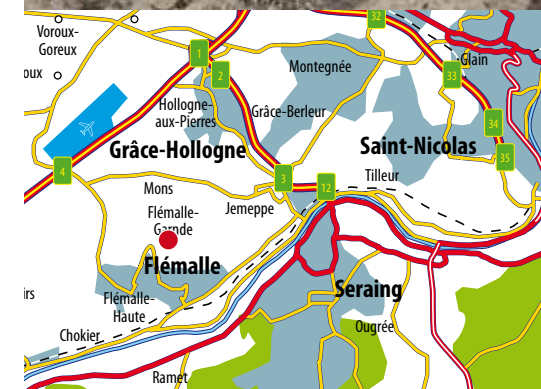
Every first Saturday of the month. Tours at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Tour by appointment for groups (20 pers. min.)

**Tour:** ± 2 hrs. FR, NL, DE.

**Prices:** 5 €, free entry for children under 12 years.

**Facilities:** parking for cars (30 spaces) and coaches (3 spaces). Photos allowed.

**Miscellaneous:** bring sturdy shoes and warm clothing.



Gps : 50°36'29.24" N  
5°27'59.24" E



# FORT HOLLOGNE



## A small fortress from 1914

Hologne is one of the six small fortresses which, with six other large structures, made up the Fortified Position of Liège. It is an equilateral triangular-shaped fortress whose essential part is a keep made of concrete, comprising the major elements of defence (plotting rooms, armoury, engine room, etc.). The cupolas, holding wide-range and close-defence guns, emerged from it. The close defence was provided by three partial cupolas located on the battlements. A dry ditch surrounded the fortified part. Various rooms were situated at the rear of the fort (scarp and counterscarp), the so-called gorge front.



### WHEN HOWITZER CALIBRES ROSE BY 100%

All the fortresses surrounding Liège designed by General Brialmont in the late 19th century (see text box p.12) met the required standards at the time, when the power of guns did not exceed 210 mm in calibre. The resistance of concrete had been calculated according to such weapons. It really hit the Belgian Army like a thunderbolt, when the Germans conveyed the huge "Bertha" on the railway. The howitzer was capable of launching shells of 420 mm! Loncin and the other assailed forts did not withstand that terrible firepower.

In 1914 Hologne made up the 12th battery and was integrated into the 3rd Fortress Battalion which also included Flémalle and Loncin. The garrison comprised 350 men (120 artillerymen and 230 infantrymen). The fortress resisted the invader from August 4 onwards. However, having seen its immediate neighbour, the Loncin fort, explode (on August 15), the Hologne garrison laid down its arms on the morning of August 16, having suffered the bombardment of the German artillery. It was the final structure of the Fortified Position of Liège to fall. After its surrender, the Hologne fort was occupied by the German troops, who made minor changes there – thus making very little impact on its original structure. The fort was not rearmed during the interwar period, and was used as a depot for ammunition and telephone lines. It approached the events of May 1940 without playing the least offensive or defensive role within the Fortified Position of Liège. Despite this, it was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe's Stukas during the first days of the conflict. The fortress was again occupied by the Germans, who used it as a depot. Subsequently, the occupying forces wanted to

use it as a command post for the V2 launch base that was being installed in the Hologne-aux-Pierres tunnel, on the Fexhe-le-Haut-Clocher – Kinkempois railway line; the arrival of American troops put a stop to this project and no V2 was ever launched from the tunnel or the surrounding areas.

During the winter of 1944-45, when the Battle of the Bulge was fought, the Hologne fortress went on to serve as a field hospital for the American wounded who were subsequently evacuated to Great Britain from the Awans-Bierset aerodrome.

After the end of the Second World War, the fortress served as a depot once again for the Belgian Army. In the middle of the Cold War, the Belgian Air Force used it as a command post, occupying it until 1992. These days, the structure has become a haven of peace again, with flora and fauna flourishing there entirely undisturbed.



## INFO

### Where?

On the site of Liège-Airport.  
B-4460 Grâce-Hologne

**Contact:** [www.fortdehologneliege.be](http://www.fortdehologneliege.be)  
[csfhfortdehologneliege@hotmail.be](mailto:csfhfortdehologneliege@hotmail.be)

### How?

Liège Airport, to the right of the terminal and after the Park Inn hotel. The fortress's access road is indicated by "Fort de Hologne" signs.

### When?

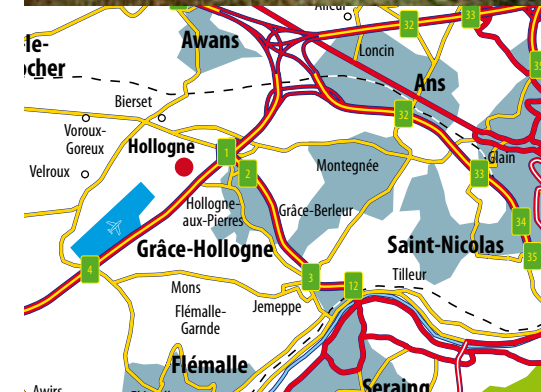
On the 3rd Saturday of the month, from March to October, at 2 p.m. Guided tour days in April, July and September (see dates on the Internet site). By appointment (send your request via the fortress's e-mail address).

**Tours:** ± 2.30 hrs, FR, NL, DE.

**Prices:** ad.: €4; children (0-10 years): free; others: see the fortress's Internet site.

**Facilities:** parking for cars and for one coach.

**Miscellaneous:** for safety reasons, bring sturdy walking shoes, a pocket torch and warm clothing; do not lose sight of the guide.



**Gps:** 50°38'46.00" N  
5°27'56.60" E





The central keep.



Chamber with scale model of the fort.

## An exploratory show trail: life in a fort

Hidden in a tree-covered setting in the Hesbaye countryside, three kilometres from its neighbour at Loncin, the small Lantin fortress is the only one of the Fortified Position of Liège to have remained unchanged since 1914. It is one of the last well-preserved remanants of military architecture from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



### TOILETS OUT OF REACH

Who would have imagined attacks coming from inside the belt when the Fortified Position of Liège was constructed? In August 1914, contrary to all expectations, the Germans managed to infiltrate the city centre, where they installed their batteries and took the forts from the rear. Some parts of the structure thus became unusable, in particular the toilets situated at the back. They could only be reached by crossing a dangerously exposed ditch! The bad atmosphere resulting from the excrement definitely added to the garrison's discouragement.

Assailed by the Germans on August 12, 1914, Fort Lantin surrendered on Saturday, August 15. Like many other fortresses, its garrison was on the verge of asphyxiation. In May 1940, Lantin served as an ammunition depot and was the headquarters for the 3rd Infantry Division of the Belgian Army. A show trail now brings life to the Lantin fort – in about ten steps, it allows visitors to apprehend what it really meant to live in a fort. Following an introductory video on the Battle of Liège and, more generally, on the 1914-18 War, you will immerse yourself successively in the atmosphere of an assembly and a plotting room before entering the engine room.

The oppression during the bombardments can be well felt too... You will then walk through an underground gallery leading to the outside and discover two recreated scenes: one at the “head coffer” (defence of the ditch in case of invasion from the inside), the other on the keep (with description of the visible cupolas). Coming back inside, you will have a look at the model fort where a barrack room has been reproduced, as well as the scene of the fort’s surrender.

## INFO

### Where?

Rue de Villers, 1 - B-4450 Lantin (Juprelle).

### Contact:

Tel. +32 (0)4 246 55 44 or +32 (0)4 263 34 48  
(Denis Deuse - deusedenis@voo.be).  
lesamisdufortdelantin@edpnet.be  
www.fortdelantin.be

### How?

E 40, exit 33, Rocourt. Turn right towards Tongeren-Tongres. The fortress is about 2 km along on the left (arrows).

### When?

From the 1st weekend of April to the last weekend of September, from Thursday to Sunday and public holidays, from 12.30 to 4.30 p.m. (last tour).

**Tour:** 1.30hrs. FR, NL, DE, EN (audioguide).

**Prices:** ad.: 5 € ; sen. : €4; student: €4; child (6 to -14 years): 3,50 €. Groups (min. 20 pers.) : ad.: €4.50; sen. : €3.50; student €3.50; child : 3 €.

**Facilities:** parking for cars (20 spaces), parking for one coach and cafeteria.

**Miscellaneous:** bring warm clothing and a pocket torch.



Gps : 50°41'57.42" N  
5°34'55.36" E

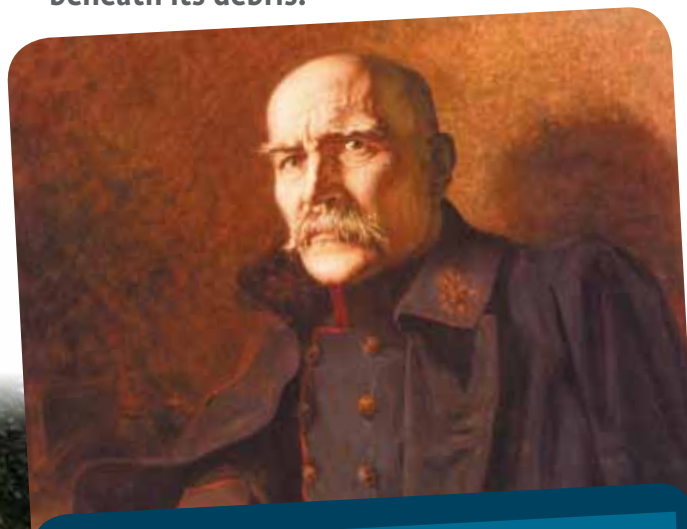




## FORT LONCIN

### A necropolis for eternity...

The Loncin fortress is the most famous of the Brialmont forts. On August 15, 1914, under fire from the “Big Berthas”, one of its two powder magazines exploded, crushing 350 of its defenders beneath its debris.



#### GERARD-MATHIEU LEMAN

After a career as a mathematician of international renown, this stern, cold Liégeois man, recalled as peremptory and even unable to smile, became the chief of the Fortified Position in 1914. On August 6, in the wake of the attack on his general staff, he sent the 3DA to join the field army and moved into Loncin in order to try and co-ordinate the defence of the fortresses of the Fortified Position of Liège (PFL). He was taken into captivity by the Germans. His state of health and age meant that he was released and then interned in Switzerland, thus preventing him - shortly before the end of the war - from joining King Albert on the Yser river and returning to service. He was surprised by death in 1920.

The Loncin fortress is also the only fort to have retained its armament from 1914. Besides the tour of the fortress, which offers a stunning view of the explosion crater and a moving tour of the crypt, the adjoining museum effectively combines models and items from collections, some of which are unique. The fortress features an illustrated trail that enables visitors to re-live the garrison's final moments and the fortress's explosion.



Flame of Remembrance.

## INFO

### Where?

Rue des Héros, 15 bis - B-4431 Loncin (Ans).

### Contact:

M. Moxhet, mob. +32 (0)498 38 76 93  
www.fortdeloncin.be

### How?

Liège-Saint-Trond national road.: Coming from Ans, cross the bridge over the motorway and take the first perpendicular on the right (rue des Héros). The fortress is 200 m along on the left. Starting from the E 40 (Hognoul exit), follow the Liège-Ans road up until rue des Héros.

### When?

Individuals: The fortress is open from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. (last tour departs at 4.30 p.m.); Every Saturday and Sunday in April, May, June, September and October; every day, except Monday, in July and August; the 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month from November to March.

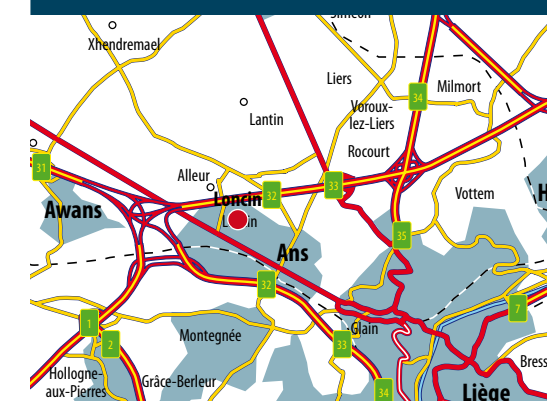
With an audioguide (FR, NL, DE, EN), but regular tours take place in all these languages on every above-mentioned Sunday, at 2 p.m. precisely.

Groups: Every day of the year with prior booking, tours with a guide (FR, NL, DE, EN). Call the following telephone numbers to book: Mr. Moxhet : mob. +32 (0)498 38 76 93  
Fernand.moxhet@skynet.be

**Tour:** ± 2 hrs. Option to take a tour with a guide, or using an audioguide. Audioguides in FR, NL, DE, EN.

**Prices:** ad.: €7; groups: ad./stud./sen. €5; 6-12 years: €3, school groups €2.

**Falicities:** parking for cars (30 spaces). Partially with disabled access. Photos allowed.



Gps : 50°40'29" N  
5°29'32" E



# FORT PONTISSE

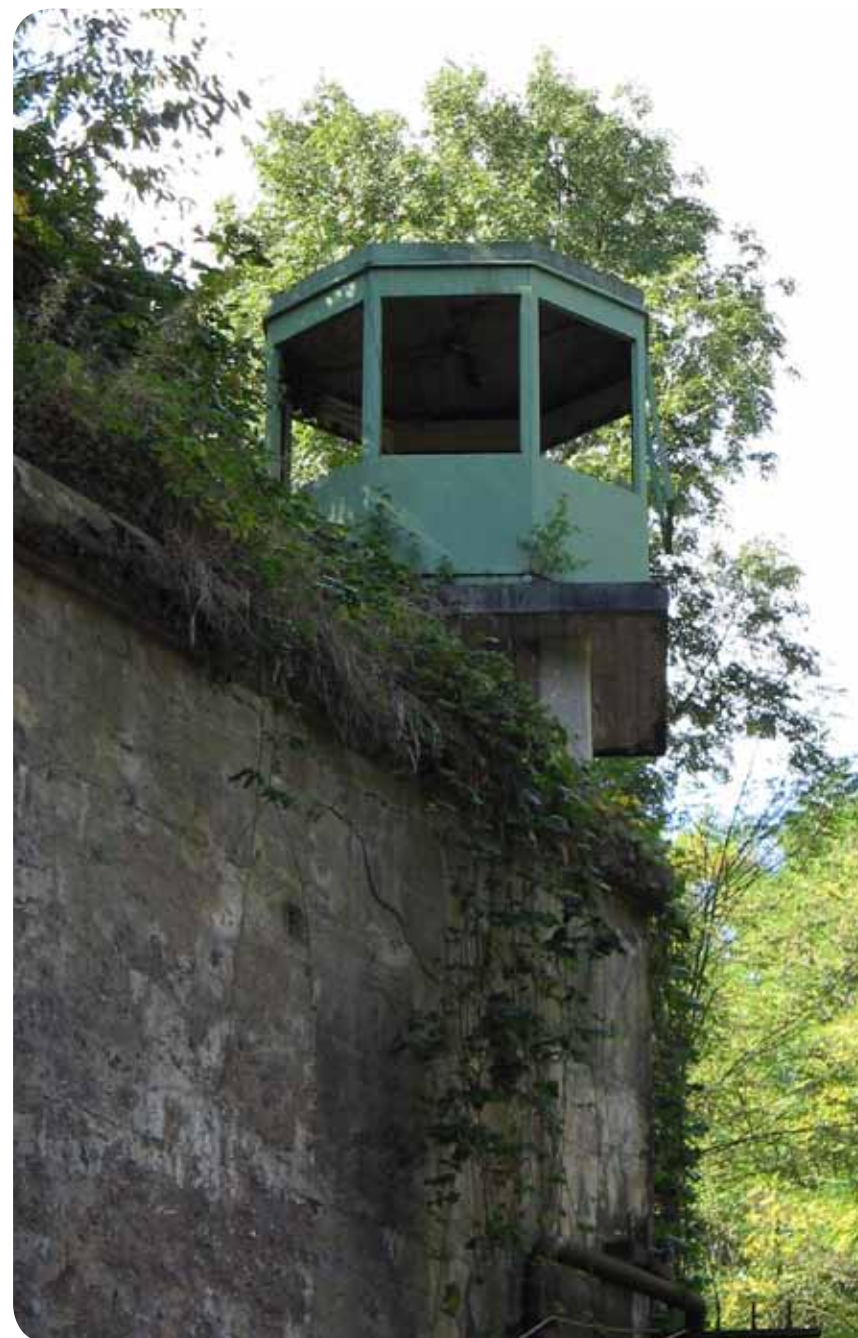


## The first to take a heavy pounding from Big Bertha

Now standing on a surface of some 3 ha, the fortress was built between 1888 and 1892. It took some 100,000 m³ of concrete and a taskforce amounting to 500 men or more to complete the work. In 1914, its garrison stood at 250 artillery- and 120 infantrymen. This fort was the first to undergo “Big Bertha” gun-shelling (420 mm Krupp howitzer!), which the German army aimed to use on French forts.

Rearmed during the interwar period in order to defend the various access routes leading inland, after 1945 it went on to be used by the Belgian Army as an ammunition depot. In 1949, the fortress, initially let, was then sold to the “National Factory” (FN) for storing powders intended for its cartridge making. In an episode that had little respect for

its past, the Pontisse fort was used for illegal dumping of waste in 1990. The non-profit association Fort de Pontisse was created in 2003, buying the site in order to make sure that it was preserved. Anim’ânerie, a society for the protection of animals, now occupies former military quarters that have been converted into stables.



## INFO

### Where?

Rue de la Ceinture - B-4040 Herstal

### Contact:

Tel. +32 (0)498 16 48 34  
 michaelfacchinetti@gmail.com  
 www.fortdepontisse.net

### How?

Motorway E40-E42 - ‘Hauts-Sarts’ exit, then towards Hermée. Bus 76, bus stop at “deuxième avenue”, + 10 min walking

### When?

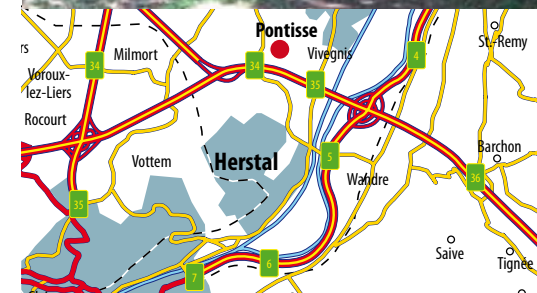
From May to September on the 1st Sunday of the month at 2 p.m. (one single tour). On 21 July at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In case of participation to the heritage Days, the tour of the 1st Sunday of September will be cancelled (see official programme of the Heritage Days). Closed from October to April (to protect bats in hibernation). Further tours are possible for groups on request.

**Tour:** limited number of participants per tour (max. 12 per guide), reservation strongly recommended. Short tour (90 min MOL): visit of the fort of 1888, of a wing converted for 1940 and tour of the Caponier.

Long tour (150 min MOL): same as above + tour of the new underground fortress of 1940, 22 metres below ground.

**Prices:** ad.: € 5 (long) - € 4 (short) - child. (3 - 12 years), stud., sen. € 4 (long) - € 3 (short). Large families (max. 6 pers.) € 20 (long)

**Miscellaneous:** visitors are advised to wear sturdy walking shoes, carry a pocket torch and wear warm clothing. Follow the guides’ directions. Never venture onto the site alone or wander away from the group.



Gps : 50°38'42.0" N  
 5°39'0" E





# FORT TANCREMONT

## The last stand

Inaugurated - although unfinished - on August 8, 1937, the Tancrémont fortress was one of the new structures in the Fortified Position of Liège. In May 1940, the garrison's 500 men, under the command of Captain Devos, withstood until the 29th, the day after the Belgian capitulation, thus doing honour to their motto: "It's worth more to die with outright determination than see one's nation deprived of liberty".



81-mm mortar  
under a pillbox.

The keep - which extended across a little more than 3 hectares - held the fortress's major armament (4 cannons under 2 cupolas, a mortar and a machine-gun block). 30 metres underneath, the other elements (commanding post, radio, telephone exchange, diesel generator, barracks, etc.) were shielded from enemy attacks. These different chambers are connected by a network of galleries extending over 2 km. The fort's singularity is that it possesses the complete original armament and the electromagnetic installations. A small museum is laid out on the premises.

### THE LAST MEN STANDING

A truly amazing fate! The last Belgian fort to yield was actually not in a condition to fight on May 10, 1940. It was ripped from end to end because of unfinished work, and this prevented it from maintaining the necessary overpressure to evacuate gun gas. Rather than joining the Field Army again, the Commander and his garrison set to work and filled the "holes" with equipment (machinery, wagons, rails) and hundreds of cement bags found on the premises. On May 10 at noon, the "fort which did not want to yield" was ready... to enter history.



Intact cupola.



Close-defence  
machine gun.

## INFO

### Where?

Route de Pepinster - B-4860 Tancrémont (Pepinster).

### Contact:

M. Louis: tel. +32 (0) 87 31 55 32  
A. Lekeu: mob. +32 (0) 486 76 69 27  
C. Hendrick: mob. +32 (0) 495 45 08 79  
[www.fort-de-tancremont.be](http://www.fort-de-tancremont.be)

### How?

Access via the E 25/A 26, Sprimont exit, towards Banneux-Tancrémont-Pepinster. By the E 42, Verviers-Ensival exit, towards Pepinster-Banneux. The fortress is at the top of the Tancrémont slope, on the left.

### When?

1st Sunday of the month, from May to October, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Open on July 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with cannon firing from cupola II. Groups by booking via the fortress's Internet site.

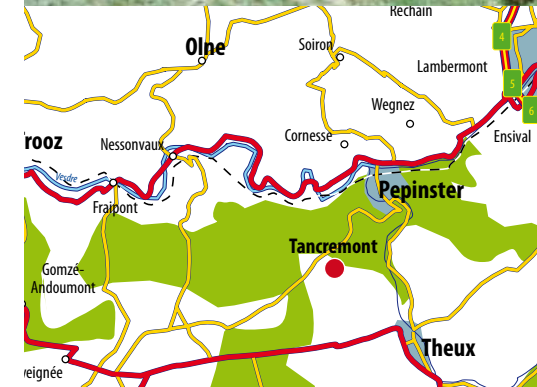
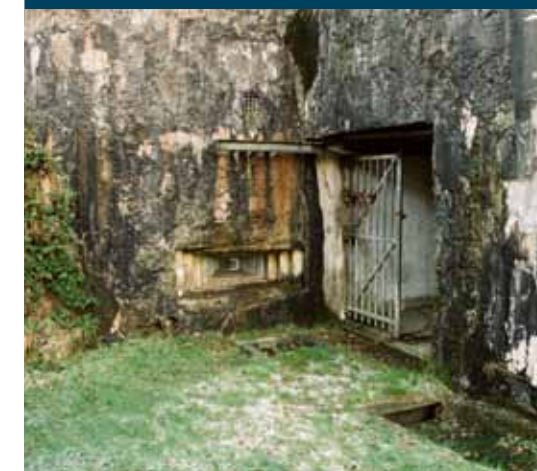
**Tour:** ± 1.30 hrs

**Languages:** FR, NL, DE, EN (with booking)

**Prices:** ad.: €5; child. 6 to 12 years: €3;  
child. under 6 years: free

**Facilities:** ample free parking. Partially with disabled access.

**Miscellaneous:** wear warm clothes and bring a pocket torch. Photos allowed.



**Gps :** 50°33'11.55" N  
5°47'20.15" E



# HUY FORTRESS AND MEMORIAL



## A prison for hostages, communists and resistance fighters

Apart from the forts of the Fortified Position of Liège, another large-scale defensive structure can be visited in the province: the Huy fortress. This impressive testimony to military architecture occupies a favoured position on the banks of the Meuse, the strategic interest of which was put to good use right from the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Remarkably situated on a rocky spur overlooking the town and the river Meuse, the fort of Huy, as it appears today, was built on the initiative of the Dutch government between 1818 and 1823, replacing and on the site of the former castle, which was the scene of many combats in the 17th century and was finally razed at the start of the 18th century. Erected right after the Battle of Waterloo, this fortress became part of the “Belgian barrier”, a chain of twenty-three strongholds and citadels built on the Belgian territory after 1815 and designed to protect the Kingdom of the Netherlands against a new invasion coming from France. The Huy fortress never played any military role, either in 1830, or during the wars of 1914 and 1940. In 1914-18, the German army set up a disciplinary camp there for its own troops: conscientious objectors and

deserters were detained there. From May 1940 to September 5, 1940, the Germans transformed the fortress into a detention camp guarded by the Wehrmacht (German army) and inspected by the Geheime Feldpolizei (secret military police). More than 7,000 prisoners of several nationalities were incarcerated there. Today, the fortress has become a site of remembrance dedicated to the Second World War. With its sinister dungeons, interrogation room, rudimentary washing facilities and detention chambers, it is an unaltered testimony to the Nazi concentration system. The museum space tells visitors about prisoners’ living conditions in the fortress and about the population’s daily life during the Second World War. A video room completes the tour.



Museum for Resistance and Concentration Camps.



Memorial to the victims of the concentration camps.

## INFO

### Where?

Chaussée Napoléon - B-4500 Huy

### Contact:

Tel. +32 (0)85 21 29 15  
(Town of Huy Tourist Office).  
[www.paysdehuy.be](http://www.paysdehuy.be)

### How?

In the centre of Huy. Access via the Tourist Office, to the right of the collegiate church, at the foot of the fortress.

### When?

(Individuals): April, May, June and September: during the week, from 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weekends and public holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. July and August, daily, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Last tour 1 hour before closing (guided tours: booking mandatory min. 10 days in advance).  
Groups: March and October: with booking.

**Tour:** ± 1 hr30. FR, NL.

**Prices:** ad.: 4 € - child. (6-12 years): €3.50.  
Groups (min. 20 pers.): ad.: €3.50; child. €3.  
Free for school groups and youth clubs.

**Facilities:** parking for cars (50 spaces) and coaches (4 spaces).

**Miscellaneous:** photos allowed.



**Gps :** 50°31'03.13" N  
5°14'13.81" E





Tower of Fort  
Bonnelles.



## Forts not open to tours

Out of the twelve Brialmont-built fortresses which made up the Fortified Position of Liège in 1914, nine received a mention in military dispatches (the exceptions being Barchon, which – according to General Leman – had yielded too soon, and Flémalle and Hollogne which, left to their own devices, abandoned their futile resistance on August 16). For the campaign of May 1940, we have on record the open radio message broadcast from the headquarters of King Léopold III: “Soldiers of the forts of Liège, I am proud of you.”

### BONCELLES



Standing by itself between the Meuse and Ourthe rivers during the two wars, Bonnelles had its moment of glory in May 1940 thanks to its heroic commander Numa Charlier, who was killed in action. Since 2010, the Bonnelles

fortress has housed an educational site dedicated to armoured vehicles. Its collections are constantly updated. A tourist interpretation centre, telling a large part of the fortress's history, has reached partial completion.

**Info :** Sergei Alexandroff - asbl LA TOURD'AIR  
Rue du Commandant Charlier 89/90 - B-4100 Bonnelles  
mob. +32 (0)474 40 70 11 - [www.latourdairbonnelles.be](http://www.latourdairbonnelles.be) -  
[asblatourdair@skynet.be](mailto:asblatourdair@skynet.be)

### EVEGNEE

Repurchased in 1971, the Evignée fortress is presently used by the Forges de Zeebruges company for storing its explosives. The company occupies two production halls and several secure testing rooms.

### FLERON

The outstanding defence put up by the fortress during the course of the two wars – the effectiveness of its firing in 1914 would be remembered in particular – was not enough to save it from dismantlement when homes were built at the Cité du Fort. Only a few traces, which are not open to the public, remain of it today.

### CHAUDFONTAINE

This quadrangular fortress, protecting the Vesdre valley, was shelled from August 14, 1940 onwards and met a similar fate to the fortress at Loncin. At 7:30 am on the morning of August 13, an explosion in the powder magazine killed 97 of its defenders and fatally wounded 30 more, bringing about the surrender of what was now no more than a pile of rubble.

Currently, the site is operated by FORT ADVENTURE SPRL, offering a range of obstacle courses and play trails.



Sprl Fort Adventure

**Info :** Rue du 13 août, 42 - B-4050 Chaudfontaine  
tel. +32 (0)4 361 08 20 ou 40 - [info@fortadventure.be](mailto:info@fortadventure.be)

### LIERS

Having withstood the bombardments up until August 14, 1914, this fortress was used after the Liberation as an execution site for those sentenced to death by the Belgian military courts. The company Techspace Aero presently uses it for its reaction engines, and it is not open to the public.



**Where?**

Rue Saint-Maur, 93 - B-4000 Liège.

**Contact:** O. Hamal,

mob. +32 (0)475 360 917 - +32 (0)475 36 09 17  
or Province of Liège Maison du Tourisme,  
tel. +32 (0)4 237 92 92

**How?**

E 40 - A 3 Bruxelles-Liège, Liège-Guillemins  
exit. Turn left into avenue de l'Observatoire  
until place du Batty and then rue du Chéra.  
Then first on the left, rue des Hirondelles.

**When?**

Only on Whit Weekend, on July 21 and on  
Heritage Days, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. (or by  
request for groups). Tour: 30 min. to 1 hr. FR,  
NL, DE, EN.

**Prices:** free entry; there is a charge for the  
guided tour.

**Facilities:** parking for cars

**Miscellaneous:** photographs allowed.

# ALLIED NATIONS MEMORIAL, COINTE

## Dedicated to the fighters of 1914

Overlooking the city of Liège, on the slope of the Cointe hill, the Allied Nations Memorial is an impressive architectural site. It comprises a civil monument, the votive tower with a large esplanade at its base, and a religious edifice, the church frequently referred to as the “basilica” (a canonical title which, actually, remained unconferrd).

As Liège was the very first city to effectively resist the invader, the International War Veterans of 1914-18 selected it in 1925 as the location for building an Allied Nations monument that would be funded via public subscriptions paid by the populations of the Allied Nations. Its design was entrusted to Joseph Smolderen from Antwerp and construction, which commenced in September 1928, was interrupted and left unfinished in 1935. The church was blessed and consecrated to the Sacred Heart (Sacré-Coeur) in 1936; as for the civil monument, this was inaugurated on July 20, 1937, in the presence of King Leopold III.

Severely affected by the aerial bombardments of World War Two, in 1949 the site became the property of the Belgian state, which had restoration works carried out in 1962. These works were completed in 1968. King Baudouin attended the re-inauguration on November 20 that year. The tower and the church have been open to the public, on certain occasions, since 1985. The the Neo-Byzantine church, still unfinished today, with its façade of a circumference of 84 metres and at a height of 54 metres overall, is crowned by a central lantern dome covered with laminated copper leaves whose colour has permanently turned to a light jade green. This church houses the statues of two saints: Saint Maur and Saint Mort; the second is truly the locally venerated saint but is traditionally confused with the first. A gallery situated

in the ambulatory at the base of the dome, 42 metres up, offers an attractive panorama of Liège. However, it is from the upper lantern that one can enjoy an impressive view outwards and an astounding view inwards at the same time. As for the Allied National Civil Memorial, it is made up of a vast esplanade (the Pylon hall) designed for open-air events and a monumental semi-circular staircase leading to the main element, a tower 75 metres high and 135 metres above the level of the Meuse. From its impressive summit, visitors discover an absolutely exceptional panorama at all four points of the compass. Within its walls, this civil memorial's architectural ensemble includes a series of monuments donated to Liège by the Allied Nations. Seven countries are currently represented: Italy, France, Romania, Greece, the United Kingdom, Poland and Russia. Some of these monuments are located outside (on the esplanade), others inside the votive tower (in the crypt and lower and upper halls), in particular the monument built by Spain, which remained neutral in 1914-18, to commemorate the humanitarian aid it gave to Belgium. It should be noted that as for Poland, despite the tardy inauguration of its monument in 1996, the country had already donated a chapel dedicated to the “Black Virgin of Czestochowa” to the adjoining church in 1938. The site of Cointe is a unique symbol of the collective homage all the Allies of 1914-18 paid to our country and to Liège.


**Gps :** 50°37'11.16" N  
5°34'09.64" E



**Where?**  
Quartier Militaire Saint-Laurent  
Rue Saint-Laurent, 79 - B-4000 Liège

**Contact:** Mme Degandt  
tel. +32 (0)4 246 33 76  
8, rue Blanche d'Ans - B-4340 Awans

**How?**  
Located in the centre of Liège. Several bus stops close by.

**When?**  
The museum is open to the public on July 21, on Heritage Days and by appointment

**Tour:** ± 1 h - FR. Leaflets in FR, NL, DE, EN.

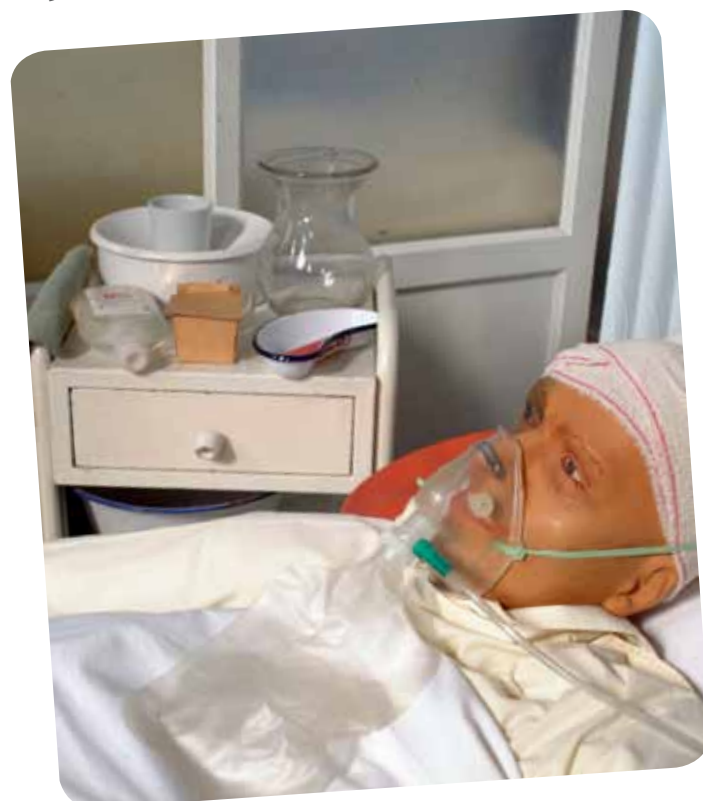
**Prices:** free

**Miscellaneous:** with disabled access (tour at street level).

# SAINT-LAURENT MILITARY HOSPITAL

## In care of the injured and the sick since 1831

The wonderful Abbey of Saint-Laurent housed the military hospital of Liège for over 150 years. In 1940, the staff having withdrawn in accordance with the command issued on May 11, the Red Cross managed the hospital under the German occupation, looking after injured soldiers, prisoners of war who had been returned home hospitalized, victims of bombardment and other casualties. In September 1944, when Liège was liberated, the Americans installed the "15th General Hospital" of the US Army at Saint-Laurent: this hospital went on to suffer very heavy losses when it was struck by a V1.



Under Dutch rule, Saint-Laurent was an infantry barracks and, after 1830 and until 1914, a barracks of the Belgian artillery. From 1831, the wounded men from the French expeditionary force which had been dispatched to assist in maintaining Belgian independence were tended there. In 1839, Augustine nuns from l'Hôtel-Dieu in Paris came to serve there. These nursing sisters displayed heroic devotion to duty during the cholera epidemic of 1848. The order remained at the Saint-Laurent military hospital until the end of the 1970s.

Since the end of the 1990s, the buildings of the Abbey of Saint-Laurent have been fully restored. They no longer house a military hospital, but the 3rd Regional Centre of the Infrastructure of the Department of Defence (3CRI) and the Military Command of the Province of Liège. The convent chapel is now a museum devoted to the hospital's history.







# THE TERRITOIRES DE LA MÉMOIRE

## The future confronts the past

In the heart of the “ardent city”, the non-profit association Territoires de la Mémoire (“Territories of Remembrance”) presents a symbolic visitors’ trail that is devoted to Deportation under the Nazi regime. This journey into the past sustains the memory of the victims of this barbarity. It is also an aid to educating younger generations on the themes of tolerance and citizenship.

Visitors are guided by sound, light and pictures. Every stage of this criminal enterprise is recreated as the audio-visual testimonies of former deportees are shown, one by one.

And the first stage is the street, with the violence and the hate, at a time when the Nazis were still merely on the opposing side. From their arrival to power to the first sound of their jackboots, the process escalated. Opponents were put on file and neutralized; it was not long before Jews were being forced to wear the yellow star. Sadly, there are all too many reminders of what happened next: war, deportation and, for millions of people, systematic execution on orders from above...

Visitors will also be shown the lighting of the “camp constellation” and so become aware of the extent of this methodical killing madness. This trail concludes with a message of hope and tolerance symbolically handed down from the concentration camp survivors to the young people who will be in charge of our future world. Precisely this is one of the main aims of the Territoires de la Mémoire association, a Centre for Tolerance and Resistance Education. The tour of the symbolic trail is accompanied by a film projection uniting the ties between past and present. The tour is subject to reservations and activities can be organized on request for groups. The Multimedia Documentation Centre enables anybody to deepen their understanding through books and media relating to the Second World War, racism or the extreme right.



**THE RED TRIANGLES**  
At the coming to power of the Nazis, Jews had to wear a yellow star on their clothes. This practice was imposed in the concentration and extermination camps and extended to the different categories of prisoners in these camps. One very widespread category was the Red Triangle. A letter sewn within the red triangle of fabric indicated the nationality of these political prisoners who had dared to defy Nazi barbarism. Other triangles identified other types of prisoners, “enemies of the Reich”: pink, brown or green, depending on whether they were homosexuals, gypsies or common right prisoners.



INFO

Where?

Boulevard d'Avroy, 86 - B-4000 Liège. From April 2014, place Xavier Neujean - B-4000 Liège

Contact:

Tel.+32(0)4 232 70 60 - fax +32 (0)4 232 70 65  
www.territoires-memoire.be  
accueil@territoires-memoire.be

How?

In the centre of Liège. At the E40 - E25 intersection, follow A602 (Liège), Avroy exit. The Territoires de la Mémoire are on your left at the end of the motorway exit on boulevard d'Avroy, but you have to drive around the boulevard to find us (follow signposting to the “centre”); between the Lycée de Waha and the Couvent des Bénédictines.

When?

By booking only. From Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Wednesday until 6 p.m. and the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month, from 12 to 3 p.m. Closed on Sundays and public holidays.

Tour:

1 hr 30 (trail : 45 min., film : 30 min., possible activity).

Prices:

ad.: € 3; student. € 2.50. Prices includes € 0.75 SPE discount. Combined rates with the ULg University Aquarium (+ guided tours). Please ask for tour and activity possibilities by phone.

Miscellaneous:

in 2014, buildings will be transferred to Cité Miroir, place Xavier Neujean (next to the Sauvenière cinema). Until the end of March 2014, large public parking area immediately opposite, in the middle of boulevard d'Avroy. Guillemins railway station, shopping centre and numerous bus stops close by.

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## Memorial and Museum of the 12th Prince Léopold Line Regiment – 13th Line

The museum's collections are laid out over a space covering some 500 m<sup>2</sup> square metres. Following a chronological trail, it retraces the history of a most glorious elite regiment, from the Belgian revolution of 1830 – which produced it – to the present day. Arms, equipment, uniforms, flags and decorations, symbolic objects, photographs, maps and sketches, archive documents, press clippings, royal testimonies, and testimonies from national and international authorities tell the story of more

than 175 years of dedication to serving the Country, Peace and the Defence of Human Rights, as well as the regiment's current missions in former Yugoslavia, Africa, Lebanon and Afghanistan. However, in addition to the facts of weapons and illustrious battles, the entire history of Belgium is also presented here, evoked by the museum's lively and educational trail.

## Regional museum of Archaeology and History

Since 1990, this museum has been housed in the former convent of the Sepulcrines (1616); a cultural centre has occupied this building since 1989. It is managed by the Royal Society of Archaeological History of Visé and region (1921). The heritage protection association organizes exhibitions, activities, conferences and guided tours there and produces both scientific and popular publications.

Apart from the death on patrol of cavalryman Fonck of the 2nd Lancers, the first real battles of the Great War in Belgium took place at the bridge of Visé, on Tuesday, August 4, 1914. These battles led, on the same day, to the death of the first two infantrymen belonging to the 12th Line (Mr. Maulus and Mr. Van Gastel) and of the first two gendarmes (Mr. Bouko and Mr. Thill). After these events, the Germans set about attacking Visé's heritage by burning down St. Martin church, on Monday, August 10. On Saturday, August 15 at 9 p.m., their troops reduced 580 houses to ashes (two-thirds of the town), among them the town hall, the middle school and the historical centre of the city on the Meuse,

making the town the first to fall in 1914. Adding to the catastrophe, on Sunday, August 16, more than 600 Visé residents were deported to Germany in successive groups. The human toll paid by the Visé citizens during this tragic fortnight in August 1914 was 42 deaths. Once these events were over, the Office of the Devastated Regions set about rebuilding the town with new town planning favouring wider streets, more spacious houses, and the proposed creation of a public square. No fewer than 231 huts housed the disaster-struck population. A historical society, made up of prominent names, was set up in March 1921, with the aim of preserving the testimonies to the history of the Basse-Meuse region.



### Where?

Avenue du 12e Régiment de Ligne Prince Léopold, 1 - B-4900 Spa

**Info:** tel. +32 (0)87 79 29 07 -

Fax: +32 (0)87 79 28 99- Tours by booking only. Service ISC ; Amicale 12/13Li;

NB: Closed on public holidays, 15 April, 15 November

## INFO

### Where?

Rue du Collège, 31 - B-4600 Visé

**Info:** tel. +32(0)4 374 85 63 -

mob. +32 (0)495 49 63 91 or 379 79 03 -

museedevise@skynet.be -

www.museedevise.be

Postal address: rue de Berneau, 1 - B-4600 Visé



## Museum 40-45 Memories

This small, private museum exhibits its own collections of objects found and acquired over the years and comprising military equipment, including American apparatus and objects and German propaganda items (badges, weapons, photographs and cards). It also recalls civil life during the Second World War (period products) and displays uniforms

of the warring countries (army and resistance). The museum's owner describes his museum and privately-owned objects with enthusiasm. The museum is open



## Truschbaum Museum

The Truschbaum Museum is located in the heart of the Elsenborn Camp. It retraces the Camp's history through numerous documents, slide shows and videos. A member of the Camp's staff will be on hand to accompany you and answer your questions. The meadow of Elsenborn Camp boasts biotopes teeming with species. You will get a glimpse of this from the

exhibition that is housed in the museum's basements



## WWII Memory Museum

This is a museum dedicated to the history of the Second World War through the uniforms and equipment used by the two warring sides. It features 11 miniature scenes containing, in total, more than 70 fully equipped mannequins in very realistic settings, which plunge visitors back into this historical period. Each scene tells the story of a specific

event of the war. Some notable examples include the battles at Losheim, a scene in besieged Bastogne and the tragic "Market Garden" operation.

## Baugnez 44 Historical Center

Opened in 2007, this museum is already considered one of the best museums dedicated to the Battle of the Ardennes. It features detailed explanations of the various major operations, 16 recreated scenes and 120 display cases. Several one-of-a-kind items, some of which relate to the massacre, are also on display. Visitors can also watch a 25-minute never-released compilation of archived footage.

The museum's two sound and light areas plunge visitors back into the winter of 1944. A unique and unforgettable experience that's not to be missed! !



## INFO

### Where?

Route des Ardennes, 54 - B-4920 Aywaille

**Info:** tel. +32 (0)4 384 54 31

aqualia.winkin@skynet.be

**Open:** on Sunday afternoons from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., by appointment. Please remember to telephone the owner in advance to make sure that he is available.

## INFO

### Where?

Lager Elsenborn Camp, 1 B-4750 Bütgenbach

**Info:** tel. +32 (0)80 44 21 06 or

+32 (0)80 44 21 05

**Open:** Open: From Monday to Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 12 and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (preferably by appointment). Last entry: at 11 a.m. or 3 p.m. The museum may be closed from time to time (closing days at [www.mil.be/elsenborn/subject/index.asp?LAN=fr&ID=1120](http://www.mil.be/elsenborn/subject/index.asp?LAN=fr&ID=1120)). Entry free of charge. [campelsenborn-em-s5-offr@mil.be](mailto:campelsenborn-em-s5-offr@mil.be)

## INFO

### Where?

Rue de Maastricht, 29  
B-4607 Berneau (Dalhem)

**Info:** mob. +32 (0)479 82 98 12

[www.wwii-memory-museum.com](http://www.wwii-memory-museum.com)



## INFO

### Where?

Baugnez 44 Historical Center - Route de Luxembourg 10 - B-4960 Malmedy

**Info:** tel. +32 (0) 80 44 04 82

[info@baugnez44.be](mailto:info@baugnez44.be) - [www.baugnez44.be](http://www.baugnez44.be)

**Open:** Wed. – Sun.: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Mon. and Tue. open: Belgian school holidays & public holidays). Last entry: 5.25 p.m. – Closed on 25/12 and 01/01. In January (except school holidays), open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Annual closure: please see our website.



## December 44 Historical Museum

The December 1944 Historical Museum is the result of the shared passion of two history enthusiasts: Philippe Gillain and Gérard Grégoire. The former collects military equipment and uniforms abandoned by the Waffen SS. The latter, a native of La Gleize, witnessed the battles of 1944, and has always been driven to sustain the memory of the battle of La Gleize, to educate upcoming generations on the causes and effects of the war through a historical heritage highlighted by lively and historically reliable scene-setting, and to sustain the memory of those who gave their

lives to overcome a totalitarian regime. New life was breathed into the museum in 2013, when it doubled its exhibiting area by incorporating the former presbytery. New items have also been added to the collection, thanks in particular to a partnership with the Baugez 44 Historical Center (Le Centre Historique de la Bataille des Ardennes) and the "Centre Historique des Parachutistes du Jour J" (<http://www.paratrooper-museum.org/>) and the involvement of the two respective directors: Mathieu Steffens and Michel de Trez.



### INFO

#### Where?

Rue de l'église, 7b  
B-4987 La Gleize (Stoumont)

#### Info:

tel. +32 (0)80 78 51 91  
info@december44.com -  
www.december44.com

**Open:** Wed.-Sun.: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Mon. & Tue. open: Belgian school holidays & public holidays) Last entry: 5:30 p.m. Closed on 25/12, 31/12 and 01/01. In January (apart from school holidays), open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Annual closure: please see our website.

## Remember Museum 39-45

A fascinating museum that is one of the most interesting of its kind, the Remember Museum opened its doors on June 12, 1994 and was inaugurated by Bennie Zuskin, veteran of the 1st American Infantry Division. This could have been a trivial and anecdotal fact had it not symbolized the extraordinary human touch given by this one-of-a-kind journey, which is evocatively narrated by Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz, the project's originators. In fact, no tour is undertaken without one of them, because every

miniature scene (more than 70 mannequins), every flag, item of clothing and object is linked to true stories and people whose names, faces and stories can be discovered. More than 500 "before & after" photo frames, where young men dressed in military uniform are juxtaposed with their present-day grandpa image, are on show. The Schmetz's are also in touch with hundreds of American families, who regularly enrich the museum with items that are always laden with history...



### INFO

#### Where?

Les Béolles, 4  
B-4890 Clermont (Thimister-Clermont)

**Info:** tel./fax +32 (0)87 44 61 81 (Marcel and Mathilde Schmetz)  
www.rememberrmuseum.com

## Ensival Historical Museum

The Ensival Historical Museum is a private museum that is designed for everybody. Its aim is to ensure that we never forget the suffering and the lives lost for the freedom of all of us during the 1940-45 war.

Around 50 mannequins, representing the occupation and liberation of the Verviers region, are on public display. Numerous supporting media such as photos and documents are on view, as well as an Archaeological Centre. Part of



the museum is entirely dedicated to the veterans of the "314 TCG 50 SQ" - US Air Force. You will be accompanied on your tour by an enthusiastic and passionate curator.

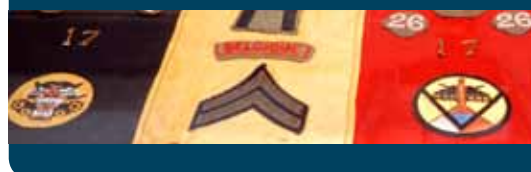
### INFO

#### Where?

Rue de la Saunerie, 30  
B-4800 Ensival (Verviers)

**Info:** tel. +32 (0)87 33 93 88

**Open:** on the last Sunday of every month (except December), from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and by appointment for groups and schools.



## THE MARTYRED CITIES

### LIÈGE



La Chartreuse in Liège.

During the First World War, violence towards civilians in the province of Liège was essentially felt during the invasion. Several villages were devastated and the centre of Visé was entirely destroyed. The civilian population, holed up in caves, went through hell for a long month. Numerous monuments in these communities sustain the memory of these tragedies today. In 1940, in an attempt to placate the local populations and erase the bad memories of 1914, the occupier avoided direct brutalities against civilians. In the winter of 1944-1945, however, during the von Rundstedt counter-offensive, violent fighting took place in the Ardennes, devastating not only Bastogne but also Saint-Vith, Eupen, Malmedy, Waimes, Elsenborn and many more...

## La Chartreuse

The Chartreuse fort was built during Dutch rule and, together with Huy and the Citadel of Liège, formed part of the Dutch fortified barrier against France. The fort was decommissioned in 1892. Its original buildings and others added in the 1930s housed a garrison until 1983. During the 1914-1918 war, la Chartreuse was used as a prison for patriots, 40 of whom were executed there by firing squad.: From 1940 to 1944, le fort was used as a garrison by the German army and, from 1944-1945, an American field hospital was established there.



## La Citadelle



A vast fortress erected by the Prince-Bishops of the Principality of Liège, the Citadel of Liège was rebuilt by the Dutch in 1817 (during the anti-French measures "post-Waterloo"). Decommissioned in 1892, it then served as a barracks until 1940. A detention centre during the Second World War, 412 patriots were executed here by firing squad. The monument of the "Allée de l'Absent", with the courtyard of the firing squad victims, "l'enclos des Fusillés", remain moving places of pilgrimage, even though today only vestiges of the ramparts remain; a modern hospital now stands on this hill, which offers a superb view of Liège.





## American Cemetery and Memorial of Henri-Chapelle

This cemetery, where 7992 American soldiers are laid to rest, is located in Hombourg (Plombières commune). It occupies an area of 23 hectares. The Memorial has a chapel and a museum, which is also the reception room for visitors. These two buildings are

connected by an impressive colonnade adorned with the seal of the States and Territories of the Union. The columns of the colonnade bear the names of 450 disappeared men whose remains were never found or who could not be identified.



### INFO

Rue du Mémorial Américain, 159  
B-4852 Hombourg  
**Info:** tel. +32 (0)87 68 71 73  
Open: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., throughout the year.  
[www.abmc.gov/cemeteries](http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries)

HOMBURG

## American Cemetery and Memorial of Neuville-en-Condroz

Occupying 37 hectares, forming a great Greek cross: here lie the graves of 5328 American servicemen killed in Belgium and in Germany around Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) and at the time of the breakthrough of the Siegfried line. The memorial encloses a non-denominational chapel and three huge mosaic maps showing

in detail the military operations in Western Europe, from the landings on June 6, 1944 to the capitulation of Germany on May 8, 1945. The southern face bears a great American eagle. The entrance portico is adorned with three figures symbolizing Justice, Liberty and Truth.



### INFO

Route du Condroz, 164 - B-4120 Neupré  
**Info:** tel. +32(0)4 371 42 87  
Free entry, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., throughout the year.  
<http://us.army.39.45.xooit.com/t3094-Le-cimetiere-de-Neuville-en-Condroz.htm>  
[www.abmc.gov/cemeteries](http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries)

NEUVILLE-EN-CONDROZ

## The "Ehrenfriedhof"

The "Ehrenfriedhof" cemetery in Eupen comprises a memorial cemetery where, among others, the military victims of the period 1914-18 and 1940-45 are laid to rest. It is the final resting place of numerous citizens from the East of Belgium originating from places such as Eupen and its surroundings, who were recruited by force to fight alongside the German Wehrmacht. The cemetery is located in the direct vicinity of the town hall, between Simarstraße and Herbesthaler Straße. The

"Ehrenfriedhof" proper is situated in the upper part of the cemetery and visually separated by a hedge. The graves are classified according to whether they are the resting places of victims of the First or the Second World War. In the centre, the monument by the Antwerp sculptor Raoul Lambeau (1905-1974), 1.80 metres high, was put up in 1931. Nearby, visitors will also find a memorial stone in honour of those persecuted by Nazism who came from the Eastern Cantons.



### INFO

Simarstraße - B-4700 Eupen  
**Info:** free entry  
[www.worldwartours.be/ehrenfriedhof\\_eupen.html](http://www.worldwartours.be/ehrenfriedhof_eupen.html) (German speaking site with Google translation)

EUPEN



Many monuments are dotted along the roads of the province, reminding passers-by of the sacrifice made by numerous civilians and servicemen during the course of the two wars.



Monument to cavalryman Fonck in Thimister

Among the most extraordinary, from 1914-18, are:

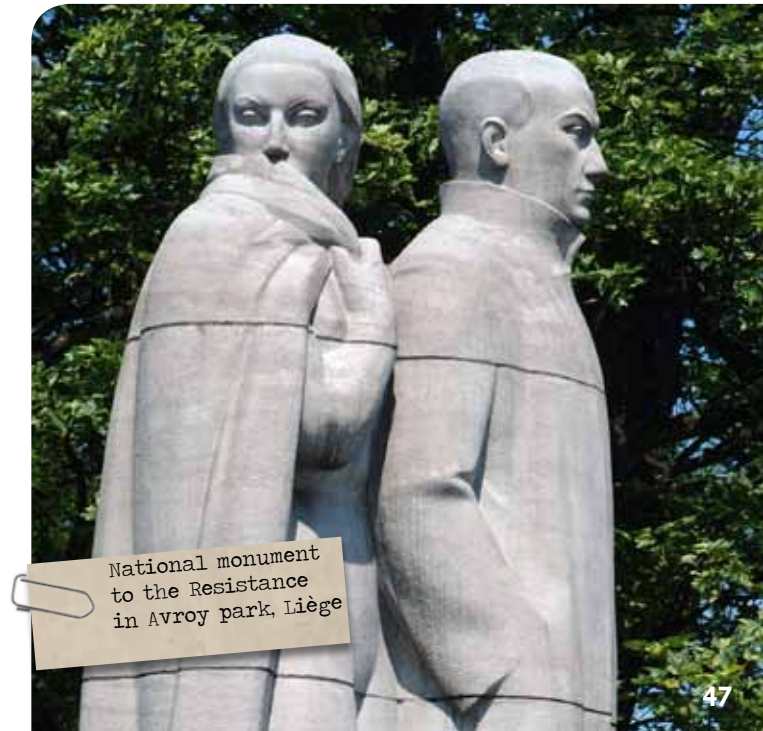
- **At Thimister** (Battise to Henry-Chapelle road), the monument to cavalryman Fonck, the first Belgian soldier to fall
- **At Strivay** (Neupré commune), the monument to commander Camille de Menten de Horne, the first Belgian officer to die for his country.
- **At Rabosée and at Sart-Tilman, at Rhée and at Romsée** (Fléron) Here, the infantry units responsible for defending the gaps between fortresses heroically resisted the attacks by six German brigades charged with the Handstreich (surprise attack) on Liège, on the night of August 5 to 6, 1914 by forcing five of these brigades into retreat.
- **At Sippenaeken** (Plombières) In memory of all those who tried to get to the front via Holland, and lost their lives getting through the electrified barbed wire (monument to the electrified wire).
- **At Liège**, on the Atlas Bridge, a bas-relief recalls the feat of the tugboat "Atlas V" which got through the Dutch border carrying 105 passengers trying to get to the Belgian front.
- **On the boulevards** surrounding the former citadel, now a regional hospital centre (CHR), two monuments have been erected in honour of two recruited regiments, mainly of Liège origin, who stood out in 1914-18 and May 1940: the 12th and the 14th Line Regiments.
- **In Avroy park** and on the Droixhe meadow, a series of chains mark out the spaces in which the heavy German cannons that fired in August 1914 on the last fortresses of the left bank of the Meuse were located.

In 1940-44, the Resistance paid a terrible price, honoured by:

- **The national monument to the Resistance in Avroy park** in Liège ;
- **The unknown Maquisard** at La Reid ;
- **Monuments in Forêt, at Vyle-Tharoul** (château de Bagatelle), **Spa-Bronromme** (site of parachute landings), **Amay** (Saint-Lambert farm), etc.

The Battle of the Bulge, in the winter of 1944-45, also took a bitter toll with a long roll-call of Belgian and American victims. Their memory is honoured at the following places:

- **At Baugnez** (Malmedy), site of the massacre, on December 17, 1944, of 71 American prisoners of war ;
- **At Burg-Reuland**, Büllingen or Ligneuville 8 American prisoners murdered by the S.S. ;
- **At Sankt-Vith** (mausoleum of the 106th US Division, monument to the 2nd US Division, monument to the numerous civilian victims) ;
- **The Ardennes battlefield** is delimited by the 26 markers of the Touring Club of Belgium "The invader was stopped here". The first of these markers was inaugurated on May 8, 1949 in Stoumont.



National monument to the Resistance in Avroy park, Liège

FURTHER SITES OF REMEMBRANCE



# ANECDOTES ON THE BATTLE OF LIÈGE

FIRST WORLD WAR 1914-18



## The Mystery Flag



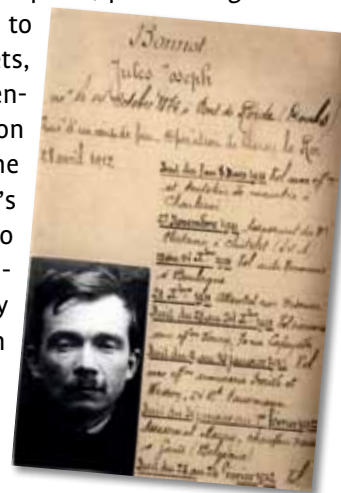
The Second Battalion of the 12th Line, commanded by Major BEM Collyns, had already taken part in the defence of the Visé Bridge on August 4, when General Leman gave them a dual mission: to deny the use of the Wandre Bridge to the enemy and to block all access routes coming from north of Herstal. The battalion had a strength of only 450 men (including elements from the 12th Fortress garrison) and had positioned themselves on all vantage points in order to better defend the terrain.

Around 1 a.m on the night of August 5/6, the Belgians were overwhelmed by a strong column that pierced the gap between the Pontisse and Liers forts and hurtled down the Hermée slopes. Major Collyns left the column to engage deep into the town before opening up with a devastating firepower. On several occasions, German frontal attacks or attempts to overrun the gardens were repulsed with heavy losses. The commander of the Third Battalion of the 89th Regiment of Mecklenburgian Grenadiers, Major von Arnim, many other officers and Sergeant Möller, the flag-bearer, were among the dead. The Belgian lineman Lange, of the 4th Company, 3rd Bn, 12th Line Regiment (4/III/12), took possession of the flag and its harness from the German spoils. This was the first flag captured in battle on any front in the Great War. The precious trophy was immediately sent to the headquarters of General Leman, on the Sainte-Foy road. After the attack on this HQ, Leman established himself at Fort Loncin on the following morning of August 6, bringing with him the flag captured from the enemy. He presented it to the garrison and installed it in his office at the fort. After the explosion following the bombardment at Fort Loncin on August 15, the flag would be found intact in the rubble, according to the German version, and was returned to the 89th Grenadiers during a ceremonial gathering chaired by the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin on August 20. Apparently it was a replica because the Germans came to the Army Museum in June 1940 to get the flag back. As for the flag harness, it had been hidden during the Occupation in the municipal administration of Herstal. In 1931, it was offered to the regiment's 12th Line to mark the centenary of its establishment. It is now preserved at the Royal Army Museum in Brussels.

## The "Bonnot Gang"



This consisted of a group of scouts formed on August 6 by Corporal Henry Polain, 14th Fortress, with five comrades from the Fort Loncin garrison. They had commandeered a car, "driven" by its owner, the French national Aimé. Originally responsible for maintaining contact and liaison with the neighbouring forts on the left bank (Pontisse, Liers and Lantin on one hand, Hologne and Flémalle on the other), the small group soon dedicated itself to daring nightly raids on the German outposts, penetrating even into Liège itself and returning to Loncin with weapons, helmets, and horses taken from the enemy and even a prisoner. Upon seeing the spoils, Dr. Bossy, the fort doctor exclaimed: "But it's the Bonnot Gang!", alluding to the famous "car bandit" anarchists who had been widely talked about in the French court reports in 1912. The nickname stuck. Fortunately, the men from Polain were outside the fort on a mission when it exploded on August 15 and, after many adventures, they managed to rejoin the Belgian lines. It is also noteworthy to mention the exploits of a small group of intelligence officers in civilian clothes and with bicycles, organized in Loncin by Brigadier Buyl, a champion cyclist in civilian life. After several missions, even in the heart of occupied Liège, it was Buyl who, at the request of General Leman, was successful in bringing up to Loncin a car and armed guards who were charged with safeguarding the "war chest" of the Liège Fortified Position: eleven million gold francs!



## The Feldgendarme of Jupille

As the brigades of the Belgian Gendarmerie had joined the field army, a certain amount of insecurity prevailed in numerous communes from August 1914 onwards. On 11 August, Dr. Ponson, burgomaster of Jupille, found himself faced with a German gendarme in a gleaming uniform who assured him the Kommandatur had put the Jupille police under his charge and that he would be joined by six subordinates in a little while. The next day, declaring himself thrilled with the commune's orderliness and peacefulness, he declared that he had no need for this reinforcement and that he would maintain order by himself from now on. This highly decorous character, who was allegedly called Kettermann, now had free rein, putting an end to burglary and theft but above all decreeing a continuous stream of police, hygiene, traffic regulations, accompanied by cheeky fines that ultimately ended up in his pockets. As he had a certain sense of "Ruhe und Ordnung" and of the public good, the inhabitants had to admit that Jupille had never been so clean and quiet... The little game went on for five weeks, until, after a dispute, the Kommandatur of Liège realised that this was a fake gendarme, and had him arrested and sentenced to two years in prison. A copycat had set himself up as a German gendarme alongside this in Bellaire and Queue-du-Bois, in order to fleece the population in the same way. Not having the cunning and nous of Kettermann, he was soon an inconvenience to the burgomaster of Queue-du-Bois, J. J. Lejeune, who gave him a thrashing then raised a complaint with the Kommandatur, which put an end to these delightful swindles.



## Did you know...



★ General Leman, who had served his whole career in general staffs and military intelligence, had been placed by King Albert at the head of the Military School in order to correct the erratic discipline there. The turnaround was so spectacular that Leman, who surveyed everything from the bull's eye window overlooking the great courtyard ("le bocal" in the school's jargon), earned the nickname of "agité du bocal" – "bull's eye maniac" – among the students. His military talents then got him earmarked for Liège, whose garrison was reputed to be particularly rebellious at the start of 1914. The mistake was to make him wear two hats: as the commander of the Fortified Position of Liège, and as the commander of the 3rd Army Division and even, at the start of August 1914, a third one – after the state of siege was declared in the province – with his nomination as Governor, concentrating all civil and military powers in his hands.

★ The budget's parsimony had allocated to Leman as his general staff headquarters a fairly modest bourgeois house in rue Sainte-Foy, backing onto the Fonderie des Canons. This became the scene of the well-known attack on the HQ by a company of German Jäger which had wormed its way into the Belgian positions at Thier-à-Liège and been welcomed by the North district residents, who took them to be English! Foreseeing a long siege and bombardments, Captain de Lannoy, an intelligence officer, had already begun to fit out the railway tunnel at the Palais station as an armoured command post. The works could not succeed until the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division withdrew and Leman moved in at Loncin – luckily, as the general staff would have been caught in a trap there by two handfuls of infantrymen at either end of the tunnel and a bombardment would probably have pulverised the Prince-Bishops' Palace.



## Liège decorated with the Cross of the Legion of honour in August 7, 1914



Germany, deliberately violating Belgium's neutrality despite its recognition through treaties, lost no time in invading the Belgian territory in 1914. Despite the obsolete design of the fortresses, which were built from non-reinforced concrete, and the extremely heavy artillery of the enemy, boasting guns of up to 420 mm calibre and unknown at the time, despite its exposed lines of communication, firing positions that were easy to spot (in bell towers, on slag heaps, etc.), ineffective ventilation and evacuation of fortress gases and their vulnerability from the rear, the courage of Belgium's soldiers, the precision of their firing and their excellent close-range defence managed to hit home and hold in check, in a battle that was as unequal as it was heroic, the fearsome German war machine for 10 long days. By forcing the Germans to reveal the formidable power of their artillery sooner than planned, the fortresses of Liège enabled France and Britain to complete their mobilization in order to succeed in stopping the German armies for good on the Marne.

In a way, the resistance of the Liège fortresses in 1914 enabled the Marne victory and, as a result, the final victory in 1918.

Due to this heroic resistance, its exemplary courage and the sacrifice of its numerous freedom fighters, the city of Liège was the only city to have been awarded the Cross of the Legion of honour by France. Various fortresses in the Fortified Position of Liège can still be visited today, all year round, by groups and individuals; especially on the traditional day of the fortresses and national holiday, July 21.



## The Liège Holdup

The resistance shown by the Belgian army to the German invasion of 1914 has sometimes been referred to as the "Liège Holdup". To everyone's surprise, the small Belgian army managed, for 10 days in the fortified region of Liège, to hold up the incoming stream of the German invasion, thus causing a first serious hitch in the smooth running of the Schlieffen plan. After the storming of Liège, the Belgian army, under the guidance of King Albert I, withdrew in an orderly fashion to the entrenched camp at Antwerp, considered to be unassailable. The siege of Antwerp continued until October 1914, when it became necessary to abandon the city. The survivors of the Belgian army – a little fewer than 60,000 men – beat the retreat to the Yser line where, shoulder to shoulder with the French and British troops, they succeeded in stabilizing the front. The Belgian army held this section of the front until the end of the conflict. Albert I, anxious to safeguard his soldiers' lives, conducted a strictly defensive strategy on his frontline. It was not until the end of September 1918 that the Belgian soldiers emerged from their trenches to take part in their country's liberation.



## The Liège holdup meant no celebratory bubbly for Wilhelm in Champagne



A number of satirical French postcards used the image of the cork to illustrate this resistance (playing on the word "bouchon", metaphorically referring to "the Holdup of Liège" – "le Bouchon de Liège" – as well as the cork – "bouchon de liège" – in a champagne bottle). One of them, in black and white, is divided into two: on the left, a map of Belgium can be seen, plus a bottle and a glass of Liège champagne, along with a cork to the left of a border-post that divides the postcard from top to bottom. To this post are attached, on the Belgian side, two signs on which can be read, respectively: Strength in Unity, and Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Attached to the right-hand side of the post, Deutschland Nieder Alles (Germany Below All), as opposed to the maxim Deutschland Über Alles (Germany Above All), which was intended to mean, at that time, Germany must dominate all.

On the right is a caricature of Kaiser Wilhelm II wearing the Prussian helmet, his mouth open. In this right-hand section is the text: "How the Bouchon de Liège meant no celebratory bubbly for Wilhelm in Champagne". The whole clever trick lay in placing one's nose on the cross marked on the base of the post in order to see an optical illusion making the cork on the left travel into the throat of Wilhelm II.

On another postcard, Wilhelm can be seen in uniform, still with his helmet on and in spurred boots, fleeing from a piece of artillery whose cannon is replaced by a bottle of champagne, firing a bouchon de liège cork right into the orifice of his bare behind. A little Belgian infantryman is seated on the bottle's neck. The following text appears on it: "Destiny – if you can't have Champagne!!! Take this bouchon de Liège!"



The postcard photos have entered the public domain since their copyright has expired after 70 years as defined by law. By courtesy of <http://cartespostales1914.over-blog.com>

## Café liégeois (formerly viennois) – a story of bravery

Contrary to what its name might lead you to believe, café liégeois is not a speciality of the city of Liège. This label goes back to the 1914-1918 war with the battle of the Liège forts, conducted in Belgium – a neutral nation since 1914 – by the German empire during the First World War. The siege began on August 5, 1914 with the attack on the forts located to the east of the city, between which the Belgian land army was manoeuvring, and ended on August 16, 1914 when the last fort was taken.

Nevertheless, Liège's resistance made it possible to slow down the German army by about one week, thus allowing the French army to gain precious time. From then on, Liège drew lively interest from France, which rewarded it from August 7, 1914 with the Legion of honour (returned to it on July 27, 1919). During the same period, Paris changed the name of café viennois (as it evoked the enemy) to café liégeois (following the example of other dishes).

This café liégeois is a hot drink, made up of a single or double espresso, generally quite light, with a rather clear roasted coffee, topped with frothy milk and whipped cream, then sprinkled with powdered chocolate or chocolate shavings as embellishments.

However, café liégeois also denotes a cold preparation, consumed in that case as a dessert; it is prepared with lightly sweetened coffee, coffee-flavoured ice cream and Chantilly cream.



## Ingredients

- ★ 1/2 litre coffee ice cream
- ★ Chantilly cream
- ★ Cold sweetened espresso
- ★ Chocolate coffee beans to decorate

## Preparation

- ★ Place 2 scoops of ice cream in a tall glass
- ★ Top these scoops of ice cream with cold coffee
- ★ Complete with a lovely swirl of lightly sweetened Chantilly cream prepared in a whipping siphon
- ★ Sprinkle this ice cream cup with a few chocolate coffee beans

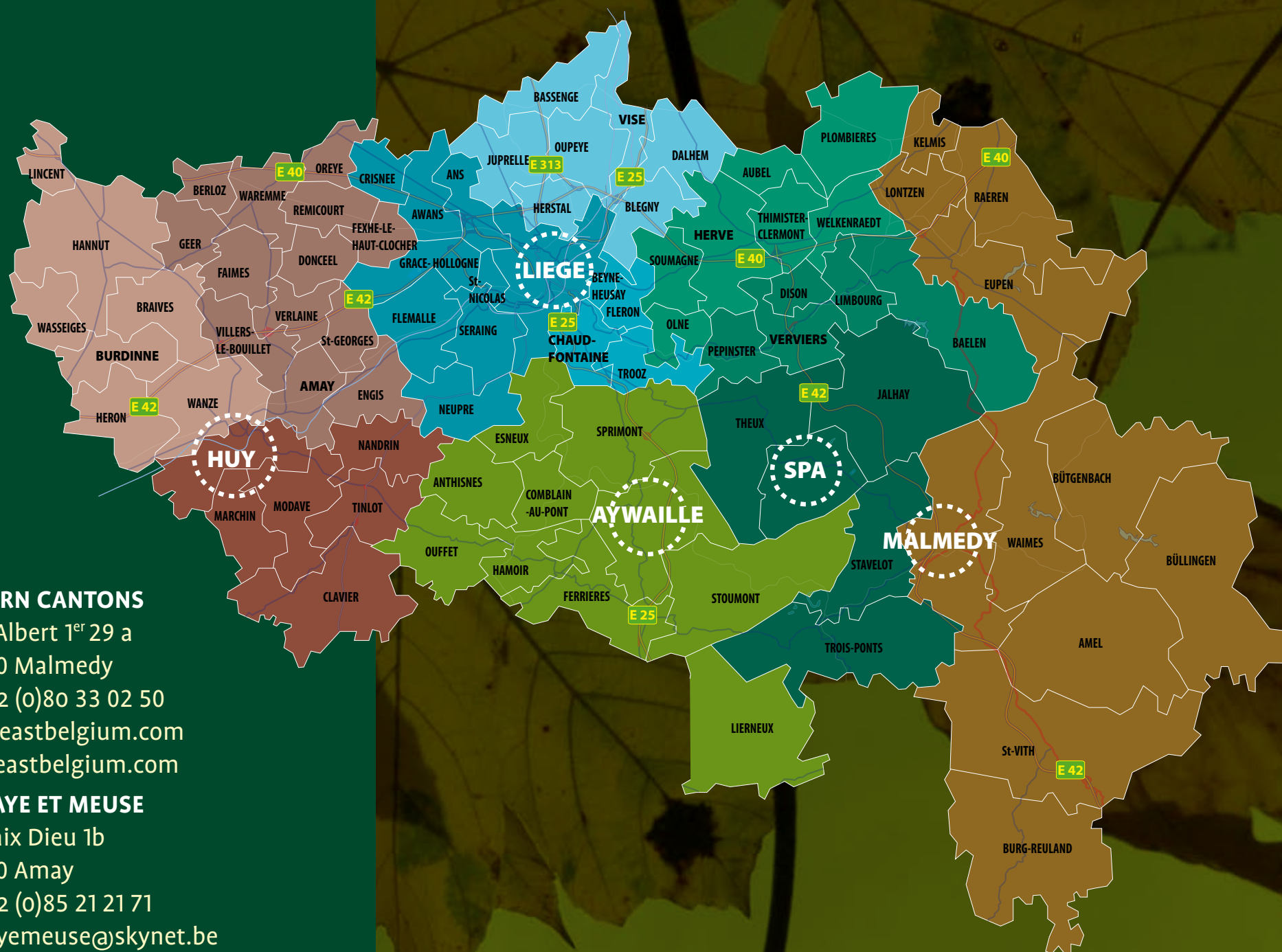




# THE LIÈGE FORTRESSES AND A FEW MEMORIALS







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# PACKAGE MEMORIAL TOURISM



## An overnight stay in a real 1914 fort

From 2014, the province of Liège will have its own receptive tourism department within its Tourism Federation. This new department will act as your one-stop contact for stays and excursions. Working alongside private and institutional players, our multilingual team is here to provide a personalised, high-quality service. As part of the WW1 commemorations, we will be offering a range of unique products designed for groups to ensure that you enjoy a truly memorable and unique experience.

### Sample programme:

- ★ **Fort visits** (Lantin, Loncin, Eben-Emael, Flémalle)  
Lantin Fort: show trail with audio-guide.  
Loncin Fort: a necropolis of the Great War, the soldiers inside the fort swore a terrible oath: “We will never surrender... We swear...” And this oath was kept.  
Eben-Emael Fort “A giant among forts”: On 10 May 1940, a small unit of German parachutists took control of the fort’s artillery in less than 15 minutes.  
Flémalle Fort: built by Brialmont in 1888, this fort was the scene of resistance against the invaders during the First World War.

- ★ **Visit of the Liège exhibition “L’Expo 14-18” on two venues:** Museum of Walloon Life: Liège dans la tourmente (Liège in torment) Liège-Guillemins TGV-railway station: La Grande Guerre (The Great War).

- ★ **Guided walking tours of the cities of Liège and Visé**  
Visé was the scene of a tragedy in August 1914: 600 houses and all public buildings were annihilated by the flames. Liège was the first city outside France to receive the distinction of the French Legion of honour in recognition of its determination to fight.

- ★ **Visit to the Boncelles Touristic Interpretation Centre** with outdoor educational trail and history museum.

- ★ **Overnight stay inside a fort** in genuine army beds or option to stay at a 3 or 4-star hotel.
- ★ **Tour of the American Cemetery at Neuville-en-Condroz**  
This is one of the fourteen permanent American cemeteries from the Second World War established outside the United States.
- ★ **Visit to the Cointe Interallied Memorial**  
The veterans of the First World War chose the heights of Liège for a memorial site in 1925.

### INFO

Prices and booking: Fédération du Tourisme de la Province de Liège - Candice Michot  
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## What the forts endured...

... The third phase of the bombardment began at 5 o'clock in the morning of the 15th, firing being kept up without a break until two in the afternoon. A grenade wrecked the arcade under which the general staff were sheltering. A light was extinguished by the force of the explosion, and the officers ran the risk of asphyxiation by the horrible gases emitted from the shell. When firing ceased, I ventured out on a tour of inspection on the external slopes, which I found had been reduced to a rubble heap.

A few minutes later, the bombardment was resumed. It seemed as though all the German batteries were together firing salvoes. Nobody will ever be able to form any adequate idea of what the reality was like. I have only learned since that when the big siege mortars entered into action they hurled against us shells weighing 1,000 kilos, the explosive force of which surpasses anything known hitherto. Their approach was to be heard in an acute buzzing; and they burst with a thunderous roar, raising clouds of missiles, stones and dust...

*Diary from General Leman's prison at Magdeburg.*

*Source Records of the Great War, Vol. II, ed. Charles F. Horne, National Alumni 1923*

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