IN BOMB-SHATTERED LOUVAIN BRITAIN'S SOLDIERS AVOID THE NAZIS

Louvain, which suffered so cruelly during the last war, was the object of fierce Nazi attacks at the end of the second week in May. It was held by the B.E.F., and above is a British anti-tank gun in a sandbag emplacement in front of one of the houses that had been bombed by the enemy. The troops fought with the greatest bravery and, as General Ironside said of the men of Namtos, they were not driven out but ordered out. See also page 379.
Rage and Fury of the 'Battle of the Bulge'

The fate of our country and that of our Allies, the destinies of the world, depend on the battle now in progress." So began an Order of the Day issued by General Gamelin on Friday, May 17. "Any soldier who cannot advance," continued the Allied Generalissimo, "should allow himself to be killed rather than abandon that part of our national soil which has been entrusted to him. As always in grave hours of our history, the order today is 'Conquer or die.' We must conquer." Grave words, but not too grave for the crisis which in the course of a few short days had developed in the Western battle zone.

At the beginning of the week the German thrust seemed to be centred in Belgium, whose army, in touch with the Dutch remnant to the north, strongly supported by the British Expeditionary Force in the centre and closely linked with the French on the right, was slowly retreating on the line Antwerp-Brussels-Namur. Suddenly on Tuesday, May 14, a new and a far greater battle developed to the south in the Ardennes. "On the Meuse south of Namur," ran the French war communique issued at 10.30 on the night of that fateful day, "the Germans have attempted to cross the river at several points. They have launched counter-attacks and the fighting continues, more especially in the region of Sedan, where the enemy is making a momentous effort with furious obstinacy and at the expense of heavy casualties."

Onslaught on an Unprecedented Scale

Soon it was apparent that the French line from Montmédy, where the deep underground works of the Maginot Line terminate, to Maubeuge was cracking; indeed, at several points the line was actually pierced, and through the gap poured German armoured columns consisting of vast numbers of tanks, their way blasted open by a veritable armada of warplanes. For an onslaught on such an unprecedented scale the French defenders were unprepared; their ranks, apparently, had been depleted by the dispatch of their reserves to aid the threatened front in Belgium to the north. Despite the most desperate efforts to hold up the attack and to establish a fresh front, the German onrush continued with unabated fury. In a comparatively few hours General Corap's Ninth Army had met disaster, a 90-mile front had been overrun, and like a three-pronged fork the Germans plunged towards the very heart of France.

A French War Office spokesman described the onslaught as "a great hurricane." The French infantry, he declared, had resisted admirably, but, faced at certain points by an overwhelming mass of tank units, they had been obliged to give way. Once through the gap, the tanks spread out fanwise in all directions until the battle took on what one of the French war communiques described as "the aspect of a terrible mêlée." Here and there there was fierce hand-to-hand fighting, and for the first time in history there were battles on a grand scale between the tanks of the rival armies (see page 572).

By now, however, it was too late to effect real consolidation, and for several days more the French were compelled to fall back, abandoning town after town.

This map shows those areas of North-Eastern France and Belgium in which fighting was taking place in the middle of May. The continuous black line marks the Maginot Line, but it should be understood that the deep underground works at Montmédy and beyond that the Line consists only of a series of concrete defence works on the surface. The dotted line shows the Siegfried Line; the frontiers are indicated by a broken line.
Again They Fall Beneath the Heel of the Boche

Brussels, the great capital of a great little country, is here seen from the tower of the Hôtel de Ville. On August 29, 1914, the city fell to the Kaiser’s host. Twenty-five years later, on the night of May 16-17, 1940, the B.E.F. withdrew to positions west of Brussels and the Germans again entered the city.

But a little over twenty-five years ago these towns of Belgium and France heard the tramp of the Kaiser’s host, and today they resound to the rattle of Nazi tanks. In the last war Brussels escaped almost unscathed while Louvain suffered terribly, its greatest loss being the library, with its irreplaceable collection of early books and MSS, which was burnt by the Germans. This time Brussels has been bombed, and it was reported by an American war correspondent that the library of Louvain had once more suffered destruction.

Above, left, is the château of Sedan, the famous French town around which the Germans have made their fiercest thrusts. The town was in German hands from the beginning of the last war until just before the Armistice, when French and American troops drove the enemy out of it.

Right is a plan of Louvain, showing the River Dyle, the New University and the Library. In this area heavy street fighting between the British and Germans took place.

Arras, of which the Grand’ Place is seen left, was captured by the Germans on May 21, 1940 and recaptured by the French next day. Arras gave its name to the great battle in the spring of 1917, while St. Quentin, whose market square and Town Hall are shown right, also felt the weight of the great Nazi thrust towards the Somme. Both towns, too, carry poignant memories of the last war, in the square of St. Quentin British soldiers, exhausted in the retreat from Mons, slept on the cobble stones.
France's Line Pierced by the Enemy Thrust

he declared, "that the French people show what is in them." He announced that he had called to his side Marshal Pétain, the victor of Verdun; and on the following evening the world was electrified by the news that another of the triumphant figures of the Great War, General Weygand, had been appointed to the Supreme Command in place of General Gamelin. His appointment was widely hailed as an augury of victory, for Weygand was Foch's closest collaborator in 1918 when the German hordes thundering on the way to Paris were halted, and at length chased across the frontier.

But at that moment it needed faith and vision to talk or think of victory. When M. Reynaud faced the Senate on May 21 his first words were "the country is in danger," and he went on to tell how by a chain of "incredible mistakes" the bridges over the Meuse had not been destroyed, and when across these bridges there passed the German "Panzer" (iron-clad) divisions they encountered nothing but French units who were "scattered, ill-cadred, and badly trained." With the total disorganization of General Corap's Ninth Army the hinge of the French army had been broken. The Premier went on to tell how a huge breach had been opened in the front, and that already the Germans had penetrated as far as Arras and Amiens. "The truth is," he went on, "that our classic conception of the conduct of war has come up against a new conception"—one which combines the massive use of heavy armoured divisions in cooperation with aeroplanes and the creation of disorder in the rear by means of parachute raids.

As that black day dragged on there came news of still more disasters. General Giraud, newly-appointed commander of the French Ninth Army, was said to be taken prisoner by the Germans with the whole of his staff, and to the towns which had been reached by their advanced mechanized

This map shows successive stages of the Nazi thrust from May 13 to May 21-22. In the early days of the offensive the advance had at no point been stabilized and the positions indicated on each date must be taken as approximate, showing only the lines of the to-and-fro struggle.
Thousands in Flight from the Nazi Hordes

forces was added Abbeville, only 15 miles from the English Channel. Arras, where only a few days before had been Lord Gort's headquarters, was the scene of fierce street fighting, and Amiens was largely in flames. (Arras, indeed, was stated on the 22nd to have been recaptured, and so fluid was the situation that important fighting developed in the Cambrai-Vallenceunies area, 25 miles behind Arras itself.) In a huge area of northern France not a building of any description remained undamaged, as the invader systematically destroyed all that came within his path. The Channel ports on which the British Army was now withdrawing—in unbroken order and in good heart—were being heavily bombed.

It was worse than 1914, worse even than 1918. It was the hour of supreme crisis, the hour in which the tick of every second would have its echo through untold centuries.

The photograph above was published in an Italian paper with the title "Towards The Channel!" It shows an advance guard of the German Army crossing the border of Luxembourg on the morning of May 10. From here they advanced through Longwy to Sedan in France. Though mechanization has largely ousted cavalry, they are evidently still playing an important part.

Photos, Topical, Keystone and British Official: Crown Copyright

Amid the tangled wreckage and debris of what was once a Belgian hospital, troops search for casualties. Bombing of open towns must inevitably result in such catastrophies as this.

Every possible means of transport was pressed into the service of Belgian refugees fleeing from the advancing Nazi troops. Some civilians (top left) were removed in camouflaged lorries, but bicycles were by far the commonest form of transport, as seen above.
The War Illustrated

British Army's Great Stand at Louvain

May 16th, 1940

ONLY a few hours after Belgium's eastern frontier was crossed by the German hordes there began on the west another invasion. But the men of the British Expeditionary Force who clattered past the swiftly raised barriers came not as conquerors but as friends and allies in an hour of desperate need, and as such they were received with transports of joy, just as were their fathers a generation ago.

The successful advance of the B.E.F. into Belgium in conjunction with the French forces," read a communiqué issued from British G.H.Q. on May 13, "is continuing as planned. Minor encounters between our cavalry and the enemy have ended to our advantage. Thus, within three days of entering Belgium, the British Army had taken up the positions allotted to it by the Allied High Command. The communiqué issued at 1 o'clock on the morning of May 17 by the British G.H.Q. announced that "the B.E.F. are in contact with the enemy and fighting is in progress. Attacks on Louvain have been repulsed." Within the preceding twenty-four hours there had been heavy fighting in the town itself as the Germans made violent attempts to dislodge the British. At one time they succeeded in seizing the railway station, but were driven out at the point of the bayonet. There was one famous Irish regiment which fought, the enemy from platform to platform while the broken glass crashed on their heads as the Germans threw grenades through the roof. Sniping in the suburbs went on all day and tanks and dive bombers delivered frequent assaults. All were repulsed.

But though the Germans could not more than dent the British front, a withdrawal soon became necessary as a result of the terrific German attack on the French line between Maubeuge and Sedan. With the French army falling back, the Allied High Command found it necessary to avoid the serious risk of being left in the air. So the withdrawal was effected under cover of night in good order. Brussels and Antwerp had to be abandoned, and a new line was established some 30 miles to the west of the Belgian capital. The German were able to do little to hinder the operation; indeed, so extensive were the demolitions carried out by the engineers that the Allied armies were able to break contact and to take up their new positions without loss.

The date—Friday, May 10—is one to be remembered. All through that day, the next and the next, the British advance continued, and the Belgian roads were packed with fast-moving convoys of lorries laden with troops, of tanks and armoured cars, of guns big and small. By the evening of the first day of the war some of our mechanized cavalry detachments had secured the bridges over the Dyle at Louvain, representing an advance of some 75 miles in little more than twelve hours.

At dawn the next morning they pushed on cautiously until, about ten miles east of the old town, they came into contact with units of the enemy. There was a certain amount of skirmishing by cavalry—by which word, in 1940, tanks are meant—and then the British retired to the line they had established near Louvain. It was not long before the Nazi airmen discovered their arrival, and their positions were heavily bombed from time to time. Meanwhile, the bulk of the British Army in Belgium was rushed up and took up its position behind the forward zone.
The Nazis' First Blow Fell on Little Luxemburg

When the German army marched into Luxemburg they found only empty streets. They had profess-
edly come there as "pro-
tectors," but uncertain of
t heir welcome they were
fully armed, lest the small
ation that they had over-
whelmed should put up some
resistance. These are the
first German photos of the
great offensive to be received
in London.

As Luxemburg had no de-
fences the Nazi invaders
were able to build pontoon
bridges across the river
which separates the Grand
Duchy from Germany
without hindrance. Below
is one of these bridges sup-
ported by rubber pontoons.
It could carry troops and all
light forms of transport.

The peaceful people of the Duchy knew little of the realities of war and when the first armoured units rumbled through the villages they saw modern armaments in action for the first time. But they had but primitive ideas of resistance, and along the roads on which the enemy advanced they put up such useless barriers as these centre. Above, heavy German anti-aircraft guns are crossing into Luxemburg over a wooden ramp.

Photos: Associated Press
So Began the Greatest Tank Battle in History

Several times of late the communiqués have reported "cavalry in action," but we must beware of thinking of 1940 in the terms of 1914. The cavalry which, as told below, crashed into action at Sedan on May 14, and brought the war into the very heart of France, charged not on horseback but in massive tanks.

Where France faces Germany she is protected by the massive bulwark of the Maginot Line. From near Longwy, however, where not far away across the frontier is the junction of Luxemburg, and Belgium, to Dunkirk on the English Channel, the French defences consist of a series of small concrete field works resembling the pill boxes with which the plain of Flanders was dotted in the last war, but much more numerous and in far greater depth. It was hardly surprising, then, that it was near here, between Montmédy and Sedan—name of ominous memory in French history—that the Germans for the third time in seventy years invaded French territory. In 1870 and in 1914 their onslaught was delivered by great masses of cavalry; in 1940 the way of their advance was blasted open by swarms of aeroplanes, in whose wake moved vast masses of iron cavalry—hundreds of tanks both large and small.

Like some phalanx of old, the German tanks thundered into France so closely packed that many of them were only six feet apart from their neighbours on either side, in front and behind. As they came on at a speed of between 20 and 30 miles an hour many of them were stopped by the anti-tank guns or blown to pieces by mines or shells. Such was their number and such their mass that they literally crashed their way through the French lines at three places and penetrated the forward zone until the front was disintegrated for ninety miles, from Sedan to Maubeuge. Then, spreading out fanwise in all directions, they caused a general mêlée of battle in the fortified zone behind.

The situation was critical, and could be retrieved only by a stroke of equal daring and of superior might. The French commander ordered one of his mechanized divisions to counter-attack.

Approaching from a flank, the French tanks crashed into the side of the German armoured column while it was still rumbling on at full speed. The clash between the two forces—accounts had it that between 1,000 and 2,000 tanks were actually engaged in the action—was described as appalling. A dispatch rider told Mr. George Millar, of the "Daily Express," that "it was a terrible sight, inhuman, incredible. I never imagined there could be such a fiendish noise."

"In the first charge," he said, "our men had the advantage of the hill. They came down at full throttle and they did not swerve for anything. Trees went cracking and flying. When they met the enemy they carried right on. I saw one tank rifles found a vital spot or a caterpillar drive was ripped off.

Behind and within their walls of armour the tank crews laboured and fought in conditions to describe which in adequate measure would tax the pen of a Dante. Half-cooked by the heat, half-poisoned by the fumes of their motors, deafened by the clang of machinery and by the roar of battle—to which their own machine-guns and three- and six-pounders made their contribution—they held on until, for the time being at least, the Germans were worsted and slowly withdrew on their main body. The battle over, the French tanks, hot and steaming, returned to their quarters in battered villages; and through the iron doors emerged smoke-blackened figures, result of cold calculation, which is prepared to see tanks sacrificed in masses to fill up pits and trenches so as to form a platform across which their fellows may crash their way to victory. Before the first week of the campaign in the Low Countries was over M. Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, revealed that at several points on the front which had been taken and re-taken there were literally great scrap heaps of destroyed tanks. But the German armoured masses moved on, and although the famous French seventy-fives firing over open sights at 100 yards range caused the columns to halt for a space or here and there to make a detour, within a short time the heart of France heard the rumble of their approach.
Machine Age Monsters Roar on to the Attack

In the "Battle of the Bulge" the German mechanized units were repeatedly slowed down by all possible means. The enemy's ever-lengthening communication lines provided a ready target for Allied bombers, which seriously menaced German supplies. The photographs in this page, received in London on May 31, were the first of the great battle to be released and were taken by the Cinema Section of the French army. Above a line of French tanks advance to the attack.

The German heavy tanks, aptly named "travelling fortresses," have played an all-important part in the Nazis' onslaught upon Northern France. Employed in enormous numbers, the "heavies" relied on swarms of dive bombers acting as an advance striking force. The planes blasted obstacles ahead in order to clear a way for the tanks. They were followed by heavier machines, and in their turn came the infantry and consolidating troops.

The desperate clashes between opposing forces of French and German tanks across the battlefields of Northern France, on a scale hitherto unknown, opened a new phase in modern warfare. Beyond the barricade of trees and branches piled across this village street in the photograph above is seen a German motorized column held up by a detachment of French tanks, one of which stands sentry in the foreground. Right centre, a medium French tank is going into action.
‘Day by Day Come Stories of Matchless Courage’

After long months of waiting the R.A.F., on the invasion of the Low Countries by the Nazis, was called on to play its vitally important part. Here are a few of what Air Ministry itself described as ‘stories of matchless courage’ in the bombing of enemy armoured columns, troops and communications in Holland, Belgium and France.

Within half an hour of the appeal by the Belgian and the Dutch Governments for help, early on May 10, British aircraft were taking part in the defence of the Netherlands. Immediate aid was given by the bombing of Dutch aerodromes that the Nazis had captured on or near the coast. One of the Bomber Command ‘planes, reconnoitring only 20 feet above the ground near Leiden, was attacked by a Ju 88, and put one of the enemy’s two engines out of action; a second British bomber came on the scene and joined in, with the result that the Junkers was sent down in flames.

Later that day our bombers with their escort of Blenheim fighters destroyed nine German troop-carrying aircraft on the Dutch coast, eight miles N. of The Hague. First our bombers hit and set on fire two of the troop carriers on the beach; then the Blenheims formed line astern and dived from 5,000 feet, riddling the enemy machines with 18,000 rounds from their machine-guns. One Blenheim made a forced landing on the sand, and the rest did not leave until they had made sure the pilot and crew were uninjured.

Twenty Nazi Machines Ablaze

Attacking the Rotterdam port at Waalhaven, in German hands, a strong force of British bombers began at 9 p.m. a series of raids that lasted nearly six hours. When in the early hours of May 11 the R.A.F. drew off, fires were raging on all parts of the aerodrome. Through the dense smoke that obscured the ruined hangars and bomb-pitted runways, no fewer than 20 four-engined aircraft could be seen ablaze.

Concurrently, other R.A.F. units harassed German columns and troop concentrations between the Rhine and the Meuse. On the night of the 10th strong enemy forces were seen advancing across the Rhine towards the Dutch frontier. Our aircraft bombed and hit the bridge over the Rhine at Wesel, and also attacked a troop column at the approaches. Important railway and road junctions and bridges were bombed.

Immediately following the German invasion the Advanced Air Striking Force in France began to play its important part. It was the occasion which they had been patiently awaiting for months, and they took the fullest advantage of it.

During the morning a mechanized column was located south of Luxemburg by an R.A.F. section of low-dive bombers. Despite intense fire from pom-poms and machine-guns, the troop column was bombed by this and a second section. Two other flights severely punished a German column of all arms which was about to cross the N.E. corner of the German-Luxemburg border. Later that day three of our Hurricanes encountered, near Vouziers, a formation of 30 Junkers bombers with escort of Messerschmitt 110 twin-engined cannon-gunned fighters. The three Hurricanes attacked, and for twenty minutes there was a hurly-burly ‘dog-fight’; three Messerschmitts had been shot down when our gallant trio was joined by other aircraft of their squadron. Two more German fighters were sent crashing down, and then the entire German formation turned tail and fled.

Throughout the following day the task went on. The captain of one R.A.F. machine that took part in the bombing of roads behind the German line said:

Our target was a cross-road that was being used by long columns of German reinforcements. . . Our actual target was covered by a sheet of broken cloud, but through the opening we could see a long line of transport on the move. We dropped our bombs, which burst right on the roads.

In spite of intense A.A. fire and fighter opposition the R.A.F. succeeded in destroying both the road bridges at Maas trioth, thus dislocating the communications of enemy mechanized forces advancing in Belgium and Luxemburg (see photo in page 581).

The Barrage Was Terrific

An account by a formation leader of an expedition of this sort states that enemy A.A. fire began when the bombers were 20 miles from their target.

"That didn’t worry us much," he continued. "but as we got nearer the target the Germans put up a terrific barrage of fire, the heaviest I have yet met. Black bursts of fire completely surrounded us. Below, the bridges could be seen standing out, quite clearly, in the sunlight, . . . and we got in some pretty good shots."

The heaviest air attack made by the R.A.F. was carried out on Wednesday night (May 15–16) east of the Rhine. Purely military objectives were singled out. Many tons of bombs were dropped, road and rail communications being attacked at many points. The damage was extensive and covered a wide area. Long-range heavy bombers of the Whitley, Wellington and Hampden types took part. No opposition was offered by enemy fighters, but the ground defences were very active. Only one of our aircraft failed to return.

Simultaneously the night operation was carried out by our bombers to assist the infantry in countering an enemy attack near Tarnhout and Dinant.

On the nights of May 17 and 18 Royal Air Force bombers hit back at the enemy over a wide area in Germany and German-
Allied Air Forces Hit Back Hard and True

Britain's latest fighter, the Boulton-Paul Defiant, went into action for the first time during operations against the Nazi invaders of Holland and proved itself against a Junkers 88. A novel feature is the power-operated gun turret.

This patrol of French pursuit aeroplanes is keeping watch over a section of the Western Front. Right, the crew of a Dornier aeroplane brought down in France were arrested by George Muir, a keeper of one of the British war cemeteries, here seen sitting on left of tail of German machine.

After long months of waiting, trained to the top notch of efficiency, the pilots and crews of the Advanced Air Striking Force were eager for the chance to hit back at the enemy, who had made a sudden swoop on the Low Countries, timed to coincide with his long-expected attack against the French and British along the Western Front.

In circle, the burning wreckage of a German Heinkel brought down in France by the Royal Air Force. In the foreground is part of the undercarriage. Simultaneously with their invasion of Holland and Belgium the Germans made a great thrust against Northern France. It found the R.A.F. ready. A sergeant pilot of a Hurricane, here being congratulated by his comrades of the squadron, brought down his first enemy machine at 7 a.m. and followed up this by bagging a Heinkel at midday.
Men of the R.A.F Saved France and England

occupied territory in France. For five hours on Friday night, May 17-18, Whitley bombers in relays dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs on the oil deports at Bremen. After a direct hit on a large petrol reserve, flames shot up to a height of nearly 2,000 feet, and in the words of a sergeant pilot, "it lit up the sky that was green at 10,000 feet one could have read the smallest print." That same night Hampden aircraft bombed oil depots at Hamburg, and the flames could be seen far away at Cuxhaven, almost 60 miles distant. On Saturday night our bombers raided Hanover and destroyed oil tanks there. Further damage to the oil tanks at Bremen and Hamburg was done by Hudson aircraft.

As was to be expected at places of such extreme importance to the enemy, an active and vigilant defence was encountered by our men, who had to run the gauntlet of massed searchlight and balloon barrages, besides highly organized anti-aircraft artillery. Only military objectives were attacked by the R.A.F., and when these were unable to be located the bombers withdrew without dropping their missiles. Sometimes pilots on reaching the target found it obscured by the haze and smoke from a previous bombing; on other occasions the weather conditions prevented location.

The leader of the Hamburg raiders said of the barrage: "It seemed to be just one continual stream... We could see the barrage breaking all around us, but we managed to keep a straight course at the right moment and to drop our bombs with accuracy. When we arrived over our objectives we saw an enormous flaring up. The flames were so brilliant that they lit up the sky and countryside for about 50 miles all round. When we left there were two more fires burning—right on the target."

Experiences varied, however, and another pilot got off more easily. "Most of the gunfire kept away from us," he said, "and so did the searchlights. I think the ground crews were too busy attending to other aircraft in our section to have any time for us. By the light of the moon we were able to get a clear view of our target. We did a run-up, took our time about it, dropped our bombs, and came home unmolested." When a Hampden bomber got over its objective, the pilot found it ablaze, so he flew around for some minutes "to be sure we had arrived at the right address." Then he aimed his bombs and watched small fires break out that finally coalesced into one huge conflagration.

While the Whitleys and Hampdens—which encountered a Messerschmitt and were engaged at cutting off enemy fuel 110 below him manoeuvred to bring the supplies at the source, Wellingtons and enemy into point-blank range. A burst from the rear gun of the Hampden hit one of the Messerschmitt's engines and the enemy went out of sight amid a shower of sparks. All the British machines returned.

The entire battle zone was patrolled by our aircraft. For example, two Blenheims patrolling the Dutch coast encountered a formation of three Heinkel 111s and three Messerschmitt 110s. The Blenheims immediately attacked and shot down two of the Messerschmitts. Fighter patrols over France and Belgium scored remarkable successes on May 18. Thus, near Brussels, a patrol of five Hurricanes shot down at least three and probably six Heinkel 111s.

Eleven Hurricanes engaged 17 Messerschmitt 110s and destroyed six and damaged three more.

In a broadcast to the Empire on May 22, Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, said: "When the history of this battle comes to be written in calmer days, it will perhaps be recorded that the men of the R.A.F., men from far and wide in the British Commonwealth, saved France and England and all that we hold precious from the disaster of defeat."

Immortal Story of the R.A.F.

On Saturday, May 18, the King sent the following message to the R.A.F.:

"During my visits to the headquarters of the Bomber Command today I was able to hear more about the epic deeds of our bomber forces in recent weeks. Coupled with the arduous and unceasing duties of the Coastal Command and with the heroism of our fighter squadrons, it is an immortal story—a story that fills the whole Empire, whose sons are now fighting in all three branches, with gratitude and admiration."
Where Will They Lay Their Heads?

In Belgium and Holland, as in Poland, the terrorizing of the refugees fleeing from their homes appears to have been a systematic part of the German campaign. It produced such terribly pathetic scenes as that above. A Belgian refugee woman with two children, one in a perambulator, cowers behind a wall at the direction of a soldier, while a rain of Nazi bombs is dropping near by.

This refugee woman has just arrived at a London station after fleeing from Holland. Weeping and woebegone, she epitomizes the agony of the Dutch people during the Nazi invasion.

Among the most touching figures that have been seen at British ports and railway stations at which refugees have arrived are the small children, such as those centre left, clinging to their gas masks and dolls. Heartrending as an example of the horrors of war is the figure above—a blind man lost among the ruins of Namur.

Along the broad highways of Belgium thousands of refugees have tramped, salting what they could of their household goods. Left is one of the tragic little processions. Nuns and others are trudging wearily away from the oncoming invaders with a few personal possessions piled on a handcart.

*Photos, Planet News and Keystone*
Side by Side in France and Belgium the Allies Fought to Stem the Whole Force

During the fierce Nazi thrust across Belgium and into France, the B.E.F. in Belgium withdrew to new positions to the west of Brussels, to protect themselves against a flank attack. Above is seen a group of Royal Irish Fusiliers at work in the front line. Below is shown a machine-gun shielded by sandbags at the corner of a shattered Belgian street.
The Dutch Did All That Brave Men Could Do

Swift and complete as was the disaster that overtook Holland, the Dutch put up a resistance which was all the more remarkable because they must have realized from the very beginning that they were due to go down before the incomparably massive German onslaught. Only when overwhelmed by the storm of steel and bomb, when Nazi parachutists and the local Fifth Column had riddled their defences, did they surrender.

After one of the affrays which marked the first day's fighting in Holland the Dutch turned over the body of a German general slain in action and found in his pocket orders from which it was clear that the Germans expected to occupy The Hague by nightfall. As it was, however, they did not enter the Dutch capital until four days later.

On the frontier the Dutch army of some 400,000 men put up a most gallant and resolute resistance—one fully in accord with the traditional stubbornness and fighting spirit of the burgler race. But the war in the Low Countries soon developed a vein of fantasy which finds no place in the military textbooks. Above the heads of the soldiers lining the trenches and occupying the forts passed fleets of warplanes from which were dropped, here, there, and everywhere, hundreds, even thousands, of heavily-armed parachutists. As soon as they stumbled to earth these desperadoes hurried off on the missions of death and destruction to which they had been assigned—missions in which they were all too powerfully aided by numbers of the Nazi Fifth Column. Soon there was not one front but a thousand. Every town of any size, every important railway bridge, every vital road junction and lock was attacked by these walking arsenals who left behind them a train of havoc.

Treachery an Ever-Present Danger

Along the coast, too, thousands of Germans were landed from Nazi transports in the rear of the Dutch defences. Rotterdam was invaded by a Nazi host who for hours and days fought for the possession of the aerodrome at Waalhaven and even beleaguered the city itself. There was heavy fighting in some of the principal streets, and by the evening of Saturday, May 11, the whole of the Old Town was ablaze, together with much of the shipping in the harbour. Sniping was continuous, and the Dutch authorities had to employ light artillery to demolish houses in which Fifth Columnists—including some of Dutch race and nationality—were making their stand.

Treachery, indeed, was an ever-present danger to which the Dutch were exposed. According to report it was treachery which enabled the Germans to seize the bridge over an arm of the Rhine at Arnhem, thus opening the way for the Nazi motorized columns into the interior of Holland. An even greater disaster was the capture of the two Moerdijk bridges which form the principal link between northern and southern Holland. Here a group of Nazis, some of whom had descended by parachute and others had lain concealed in innocent-looking barges moored in the Hollandische Diep, approached the bridges. They were wearing Dutch uniforms, and chatted in most affable fashion with the Dutch guards. Suddenly they whipped out their guns and ordered the sentinels to surrender, while at the same time others of their band flung hand grenades into the guard-houses. In this way the Dutch were prevented from blowing up the bridges, and the German forces were enabled to advance against Dordrecht and Rotterdam from the south.

Yet another incident in the tale of mischance was the failure of the Belgians to destroy the bridges at Maastricht at the junction of the Dutch, Belgian, and German frontiers (see page 540). With these bridges in their hands the Germans were enabled to pour through the gap thus created in the Dutch-Belgian front, while the main Dutch army was still waiting a frontal attack.

But great as were the ignoble triumphs of the traitors, overwhelming as was the mass of armoured columns with which the Germans ploughed their way across the Dutch lowlands, the principal contribution towards the invaders' victory was made by their air force. "Our soldiers," said General Winkelmann, the Dutch Commander-in-Chief, in his "Cease fire" broadcast of May 14, "have been exposed to the destruction and bombardment of the overwhelmingly strong German Air Arm, and not only the soldiers but the civilian population, our
Parachutists Come to Earth—and a British Prison

women and children, have fallen victims to the German warplanes." Rotterdam, he went on to state, had "undergone the dire fate which total war brings to towns and cities," and Utrecht and other towns were threatened with the same fate. How terrible had been Rotterdam's ordeal was only revealed later; in a communiqué issued by the Dutch Legation in Paris it was stated that at least 100,000 people were killed and a third of the city destroyed in the course of the German bombardment. Two squadrons of German bombers flew over the city in close formation, dropping delayed action bombs which "ploughed a veritable furrow of destruction." Again and again the planes repeated the operation, until they had completed what was rightly described as "this monstrous work of destruction, horrifying as a nightmare and absolutely without precedent."

Not until all hope had gone did the Dutch resistance cease. In the course of the five days' fighting the Dutch army had lost a quarter of its total of 400,000 men; some regiments—for instance, the Grenadiers—had lost four-fifths of their strength. Holland's entire bombing force of some fifty machines was wiped out in the fighting; when only one plane was left the pilot, who had still four bombs in his rack, told his comrades: "I shall let the Germans have it!" He went up, dropped his bombs on Waalhaven aerodrome—and never returned. Even after the capitulation of May 14 a section of the Dutch army maintained their resistance in Zeeland, and most of the units of the Dutch navy escaped to join the Allied fleet.

As soon as they set foot to earth in the Low Countries many of the Nazi parachutists were seized and foiled in their attempts at sabotage. Those taken by British forces were brought to England for internment. Our photographs show Nazi parachutists and Luftwaffe officers in their blue-grey jackets and green-grey breeches, under escort at London Bridge Station.

Photos, Exclusive to The War Illustrated

This oblique aerial photograph of the Dutch town of Maastricht, on the Meeze, close to the Belgian frontier, shows the damage done by R.A.F. bombers to two of the bridges. In each case the farther end of the bridge has been blown up, seriously blocking the waterway and roadways. These bridges were vitally important to the Nazis in their push into Belgium, and their destruction is a credit to the accuracy of our bombers.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright
Our Navy to the Rescue of Holland in Distress

So swift was the Nazi onslaught on Holland that it was found impossible for the Allies to send any really effective military aid. The British Navy, however, was as usual on the spot, and, again as usual, proved its worth in a variety of ways, some of which are described below. French naval units also took a notable part.

One of the places occupied was the Hook of Holland, where a force of Marines, later reinforced by a small body of British military and a French contingent, was landed from the destroyers. Here it was, on Monday, May 13, that the senior officer of the British destroyers alongside the quay was informed that Queen Wilhelmina had just arrived. Hurrying to greet her and to offer his assistance he found her perfectly calm, despite the din of the bombardment in the neighbourhood and the leaping flames of innumerable fires. She walked up the gangway, and her first words were: "I want to go to Flushing, please. Do you know where it is?" On receiving an affirmative reply, the Queen asked: "Do you know the minefields?" The captain replied that he knew the position of the British and Nazi mines, but was not quite sure of the position of those laid by the Dutch. On this information being given him, he placed one of his destroyers at Queen Wilhelmina's service and soon she was on the way to safety.

A short time before, Princess Juliana and her family had similarly taken refuge on a British warship; but for this timely assistance she would inevitably have been captured by the Nazis, or as likely as not killed by one of the bombs which were dropped close by. As it was, a magnetic mine was dropped only a hundred yards in front of the ship which was taking her to England; fortunately it exploded immediately on hitting the water and the destroyer passed on its way unscathed.

A Dutch soldier, who, after an attempt to escape, was found drifting out at sea on a fragile life-saving raft, is here being rescued by a British destroyer. Photo, Keystone

Refugees were everywhere. Some arrived in motor-coaches and we humped them into ships and sent them to England.

Towards the end of the day he was requested by the Dutch authorities to undertake the work of demolition. "The bombs were coming down now," he said, "but my lads tottered around nonchalantly with loads of explosives under their arms. I sent off an able seaman and two youngsters with their pockets full of explosives, and soon there were explosions everywhere."

In the course of their brief occupation of the Hook the British sailors, soldiers, and marines arranged the embarkation of many thousands of evacuees. At 2 p.m. on May 13 the marines embarked in destroyers, the last to leave. Just as the
Gallantry and Resource in a Fantastic War

heaviest air attack of all was being delivered by 13 large bombers, dropping both bombs and magnetic mines.

A second naval force was dispatched to IJmuiden, the North Sea port of Amsterdam. On landing, the men at once went into action against parachutists, and then gave invaluable assistance to the Dutch authorities in destroying everything that might be of value to the fast-approaching enemy. First, the oil stores at Amsterdam were set ablaze; then the canals were blocked with sunken vessels, the quaysides wrecked. They would have blown up the lock-gates but for the fact that the released water would have flooded all the poorer quarter of Amsterdam; as it was, they contented themselves with destroying all the machinery and blowing up the power-houses. All this activity was crammed into less than twelve hours, and during those twelve hours air attacks were constant.

It was from IJmuiden, too, that a British naval expeditionary force consisting of a number of motor torpedo-boats set out across country via the canals and Amsterdam to the Zuyder Zee. There they guarded the shore against the German attack that was threatening from the farther shore, and maintained their patrol until the huge pall of smoke that lay above Amsterdam showed them that the work of demolition was nearing completion. Despite frequent bombardment from the air none of the M.T.B.s was hit, but they had the great satisfaction, just as they left IJmuiden for their homeward journey across the North Sea, of shooting down a Nazi plane which had been machine-gunning the crowds of refugees. Twelve hours later the glare of Amsterdam's burning oil dumps could be seen fifty miles out at sea, and it was plain that from Amsterdam—and probably from Rotterdam, too—the Germans did not succeed in obtaining a drop of oil.

Many other spectacular feats were carried out by the Navy in those concluding hours of Dutch independence. Never was the versatility of Britain's seamen and marines better displayed, or their natural good humour combined so excellently with dogged courage. Well did they deserve what was said of them by the officer in command at the Hook. "I have been very deeply impressed," he wrote in his report, "by the cheerful, calm and confident bearing and conduct of the personnel, both naval and military, which was indeed beyond praise."
The Allies Have More Ships Than Before the War

Here in this survey by Peter Duff of the war on shipping for the month of April we have demonstrated that, with the failure or quiescence of U-boat and mine attack, the Allies' shipbuilding strength is steadily increasing. When the ships from Scandinavia and the Low Countries are added the result is as described in the heading to this page.

The German invasion of Denmark and Norway had a profound effect on the shipping position. First, the fine Norwegian Mercantile Marine, in itself larger than the entire German Merchant Navy, became available to the Allies; secondly, the entire Danish mercantile fleet became technically an enemy fleet and therefore liable to seizure by the Allies; thirdly, the cargoes of Danish ships at sea became complete contraband and a serious leak in the North Sea blockade of Germany became effectively sealed; and, fourthly, the Germans suffered far greater losses at sea than all the Allies together.

The figures in the tables in this page have a remarkable story to tell. First, there are no entries against four categories—passenger liners, cargo liners, tankers, and coasters. The figure for cargo vessels includes five ships, totalling 26,292 tons gross, which were sunk in the operations at Narvik. Every merchant ship at Narvik was sunk, and it is estimated that they numbered about forty, mostly neutral. Details of these neutral losses at Narvik are not available, but they must greatly exceed those of the British, for most of the British ships in Norway were able to get away in time. Having deducted these Narvik losses, therefore, we are left with four British cargo vessels of 17,795 tons gross, the lowest monthly figure in that category since the war began. It is now clear that the German concentration on the operations in Scandinavia relieved the pressure on Allied and neutral shipping in other areas.

Early in April the Minister of Shipping announced that he had at his disposal more than 99 per cent of the total British merchant shipping at the beginning of the war. The losses, amounting to about 725,000 tons gross, through enemy action had been replaced by new ships built in British yards, by ships captured from the enemy by the Royal Navy, and by ships purchased from abroad (mainly, it may be revealed, from the United States). Since that time Hitler has presented the Allies with millions of tons of fine, modern Scandinavian shipping.

Norway's was the third largest merchant fleet in the world, excluding the British Empire's, amounting to about 5,000,000 tons gross. Denmark owned an additional one million tons. Like all Scandinavian shipping, this tonnage was almost always plying in overseas waters under charter to other countries, and therefore only a small percentage could have been captured by the Germans in home ports. In any event, Norway's fleet was to a large extent already under charter to the Allies, but not all Norwegian ships, including 2,000,000 tons of tankers, came into the service of the Allies, and not at the rates of hire extorted by neutrals.

Invasion of Holland and Belgium brought two more merchant fleets into Allied service. About 90 per cent of the Dutch Mercantile Marine of 3,000,000 tons gross escaped seizure, as well as the majority of Belgium's small but efficient fleet of 400,000 tons. Furthermore, 25 German ships of 145,565 tons gross were captured in the Netherlands West and East Indies during May.
Yugoslavia's Army is Powerful to Defend

Situated in the heart of the proverbially uneasy Balkans and flanked on either side by "dissatisfied" powers, Yugoslavia has had to equip an army as large and as well-equipped as her resources permit. Some details are given below.

For some months past soldiers of the Yugoslav army have been busy constructing new defences in the valleys of the rivers Mur and Drava, adjoining the frontier with former Austria. These defences, which utilize the natural advantages of undulating terrain, intersected at times by the outliers of the chalky Styrian Alps, preclude the possibility of a lightning invasion on the Polish model by mechanized Nazi forces.

The brunt of an attack from Germany would be borne by the Fourth Army, consisting of three infantry divisions and one division of cavalry. The cavalry and one division of infantry (the Save Division) are stationed at Zagreb. In order to deal with the less likely possibility of an invasion over the formidable Karawanken mountains, which cover the Sarajevo, and the Third Army, with H.Q. at Skopje. The Second Army, comprising the Bosnia, Adria, Zeta and Vrbas divisions, has sub-command at Banjoluka, Cetinje and Mostar; while the Third Army has divisional commands also at Ishtip, Pristina and Bitolj.

A special feature of the Yugoslav army is the high proportion of machine-guns. Thus, there is one machine-gun company to each two or three rifle companies, and no army division is without its mountain and field-artillery regiments. Bren guns and French 75s are much favoured, but of the 180 heavy guns, all but 29 are horse-drawn.

It is estimated that Yugoslavia, with a population of 16,000,000, has 2,000,000 trained reserves, and in an emergency could put 1,500,000 men in the field immediately. The Serb is a capable shot and fighter at an age far beyond that accepted as militarily useful in more industrialized countries. Yugoslavia would need all these men and more in the event of a simultaneous attack from more than one quarter. She has the longest frontiers of any Balkan State. Against Italy alone she has a land frontier, including Albania, of 475 miles, with a coastline of 435 miles. With Germany she has a frontier of 200 miles, and with Hungary one of 390 miles; while Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece account for a further 845 miles.

It would be indeed almost impossible, as the Yugoslav High Command well realizes, to maintain a stand at the frontiers against a major aggressor for any considerable time. In the event of a Nazi attack through Hungary, for instance, it is extremely probable that the fertile Dunavka Province would be largely abandoned and a stand made on the Danube. Elsewhere, the High Command would hope to retain command of those fortified points and passes in the mountains which have so often served as a rallying point for Serb resistance.

Especially with regard to Italy is Yugoslavia's strategic position a sensitive one. The confined, fortified harbours of her Dalmatian coast—Kotor, Sibenik, Gjennovish and Tivat—would be dominated by Italy's air fleets. Further, from Durazzo in Albania runs Yugoslavia's most famous transversal highway, which cuts across the narrowest part of Yugoslavia, and therefore across her communications with Salonika. If the Adriatic were closed to Yugoslavia and her route to the Aegean were barred, she would indeed be in a perilous position.

In the Great War Serbia was able to hold off for a year the huge Austrian armies. But in those days the air weapon did not play a large role, and it is precisely in the air that Yugoslavia is weakest. Her Air Force consists of some 1,000 machines, chiefly Bienheims (short-nosed types), Dornier 17s and Italian Savoia-Marchetts. Her fighters are Hurricanes, Fryies and Messerschmitt 109s. The pilots do not exceed 2,000.

As regards aeroplane manufacture, it was only two years ago that Yugoslavia, a great producer of bauxite, began to manufacture her own aluminium; many aeroplane parts, and all jigs and tools, are still imported.

The Serbs are brave and expert in guerrilla warfare. Alone, it is improbable that Yugoslavia could hold out for long against a major aggressor, but if speedy help (especially in the air) were given, she would prove a valuable ally.
War Writes Another Terrible Chapter for Namur

The Germans repeatedly bombed Namur, the picturesque old Belgian town at the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse. Furiously tank attacks were launched by the Nazis some ten miles from the city in a desperate thrust across the Ardennes. These horses, lying in a deserted Namur street, are the victims of German aerial bombardment.

The havoc wrought in Namur by intensive German air attacks is vividly seen (circle) after an incendiary bomb had exploded in the town; while incendiary bombs are responsible for the building blazing fiercely, bottom right.

Namur has withstood many sieges and has been the scene of bitter fighting during its long, momentous history. In 1914 the Germans bombarded three of Namur's forts and penetrated part of the town. The imposing Citadel stands high above ancient streets and quaysides.

Photo: Press News, Burton Leach, Associated Press
I Saw Horror and Desolation in Louvain

The historic city of Louvain, which suffered so terribly from German bombardment in 1914, had to endure air-bombing as well as shell-fire when war came to Belgium in 1940. The "Daily Mail" correspondent, Paul Bewsher, here paints a poignant picture of the scenes of havoc and distress he witnessed there.

When I walked into Louvain this afternoon (May 16), from a hilltop under fairly heavy shell-fire, I was amazed to find women and children still trudging out. They were only a quarter of a mile from the front line.

As gunfire roared and crashed all round I saw a middle-aged woman pushing a baby in a perambulator down the roadway littered with broken glass and masonry.

Across it drooped the overhead tramway cables, torn down by bomb and shell explosions.

Behind her came a young girl pushing a bicycle, followed by a man with a handcart in which sat a white-faced old lady with a weary, hopeless look.

Beside a bridge was a hastily erected barricade of brand-new wardrobes and cupboards brought from a furnishing shop a few yards away.

Their shining brown doors swung to and fro in the wind, and in the deathly silence between the shell-bursts you could hear the rustle of paper blown along the pavements.

A quarter of a mile from the railway station front line, where machine-guns rattled continually, a grey-haired man came to me wringing his hands and begging for transport to remove his wife, who was ill in bed.

A French liaison officer at once set to work to help him. On my journey home I saw a great fleet of twenty-nine German bombers and fighters flying overhead.

A few minutes later a series of terrific explosions sounded from the town in front.

When I reached it I found a scene of such horror and desolation as I could never imagine. In the main street three buildings were in flames from top to bottom.

Men called me to help, and I dashed into a large department store. In the floor was a huge hole filled with flaming debris.

From this smoke and flame came the faint, wailing voice of a child calling, "Au secours, au secours." ("Help, help"). While people frantically threw buckets of water on the fire and tried to smash open the floor beside the hole, a Belgian gendarme, a British officer,
and a civilian went down to the cellar from a small door above the pavement.

Ten minutes later they brought out a woman whose face was covered by a blood-stained mat of grey hair. Whether she still lived I could not tell.

Then, gently, they carried out a little boy of six with blood-stained face and hands who nodded his head and said

"Merci" politely as he was laid on the table. Eight other civilians lay dead in the cellar, I was told.

The Belgian gendarme collapsed after bringing out the woman, but after water had been flung over him he jumped up and went straight into the cellar for more rescue work.

A very gallant man.

I Was One of the Last To Leave Brussels

Brussels, the fall of which was announced by the Germans on May 17, had been for a week a city of rumour and foreboding. A vivid account of how Brussels capital heard of the German advance is given here by the \textit{Daily Express} correspondent, Geoffrey Cox, who was among the last to leave the city.

On Thursday (May 9) I drove to Antwerp, and round the Albert Canal area there was an atmosphere of peace. Troops were weeding the flower beds around their barracks and sun-bathing on the canal banks.

To them and to most of the people in Brussels that night we were just in for another dose of Hitler's war of nerves. The restaurants were crowded with diplomats and high officials dining.

At midnight the 'phone beside my bed rang. A Belgian newspaper editor, a friend, asked me to come round to his office. There I found him standing-by with his staff. The Belgian High Command had word that the Germans were on the march and that Holland would be attacked that night.

At 3 a.m. police cars were tearing madly through the streets rousing A.R.P. workers. A policeman rushed into my hotel and roused three officers. All this time Brussels slept.

At 5 a.m. it came: anti-aircraft fire and bombing of the outskirts. Saturday passed without any exceptional alarm. British troops, bronzed, confident, magnificently equipped, swung through the outskirts of the city in lorries and on foot, moving towards Louvain.

They were loaded down with the lilac that the Belgians flung at them.

Out on the Louvain road the columns moved up through fields of young corn.

Then suddenly I saw six dark specks above Louvain and watched one dive, its engine screaming, towards the city's towers, and saw black specks which I knew were bombs. I thought they were bombing our communications. Later I realized that the front was already only a little distance beyond Louvain.

By Sunday the first panic wave hit Brussels. From the broken front near Maastricht men were back in the capital, telling the crowds on the boulevards a nightmare story of a sky black and roaring with bombs, of tanks that came on in thousands. At midday Spak, the Foreign Minister, his plump, intelligent face lined and weary, called in the Press and urged it to fight rumour.

Everyone was seeing paratroops everywhere. Squads of motor-cyclists were roaring round and round a block of houses in mid-Brussels that evening when I went to the Censorship. Troops with rifles and machine-guns were watching from the pavements and the houses beyond.

"Paratroopers. Three have just come down," one passer-by told me.

Air-raid sirens wailed almost continuously all day and night. Most of the few people took any notice of them, for there was no bombing of the centre of the city.

By Sunday night the real truth of the break-through at Maastricht was known. The Belgian troops, told to stand-by at midnight, went into their trenches and pill-boxes, believing this was just one more "alert," but at dawn four hundred bombers came over in relays and began one of the most terrible bombardments ever known.

It was as if the very sky fell on us, the commander of the sector stated. The moment the bombardment lifted the German tanks were racing over the two bridges which were not blown up, and clouds of paratroops were descending on two key villages.

On Monday and Tuesday I drove out again on the Louvain road, now soaked with cavalcades of refugees. British troops were surveying gun positions ready to hold the Louvain-Antwerp-Namur line, which was the Belgian second line.

The Sky Over My Hotel Was Full of 'Planes

An astonishing account of the method of German parachutists was given by an English business man who was in The Hague during a continuous 24-hour raid. Here is the story in his own words.

"I arrived at The Hague on business on Thursday afternoon (May 9). My hotel was empty, and when I asked for news they said: 'We're waiting for them. They are coming over.'"

"I went to my top-floor room, but decided not to sleep. At 3 a.m. just as dawn was breaking, hundreds of aeroplanes came over the city, and bombs were falling everywhere. I went out to the balcony and saw that the sky seemed filled with 'planes, and parachute troops were being dropped in large numbers on several parts of the city."

"Meanwhile, the bombers concentrated their efforts on the important buildings, including the barracks. When the smoke and dust had subsided, I saw that many buildings had been entirely destroyed. Bombers, accompanied by fighters, came over in waves of 200, flying sometimes as low as 800 feet. While I watched, Dutch anti-aircraft guns bagged six large machines. One, a 40-seater troop-carrier, burst into flames, struck another, and brought both down. They destroyed three houses, and I saw 40 or 50 bodies in the streets."
"At the same time seaplanes with detachable rubber pontoons, each containing 40 men, settled on the shallow water near the shore. Five hundred men were landed on the beach in this way, wading ashore from the pontoons [see illustration page 54].

"I was told that the parachute troops had orders to make their way to the principal buildings. They took two of these, Dutch machine-guns approached. Later they drove them out with grenades.

"The presence of members of the Fifth Column was shown by the way parachute troops approaching main buildings were given directions by residents, including women, in houses near. These people clapped their hands to attract the attention of the parachutists.

"Some were caught in an interesting way. On the night before orders were issued that every Dutch soldier must carry a revolver. The German parachute troops, although dressed in Dutch uniforms, had no revolvers. They were challenged and arrested. Two were shot out of hand by the Dutch sergeant.

"Many of these parachute troops were dressed in all kinds of costumes. Some wore the typical clothes of butchers and bakers' lads, with baskets filled with grenades and other ammunition over their arms covered with white cloth.

"Each parachute party numbered about 40, in charge of a sergeant. These men took the town hall, museum and library near the square. A civilian defence corps, armed only with butchers' knives, was formed immediately to counteract the parachutists. They wore the words 'anti-parachute corps' on their arms."—("Daily Telegraph")

We Bluffed Our Way Through The Nazis

Two British airmen, forced to land in Nazi-occupied territory some thirty miles from Antwerp, managed to elude the enemy and to make their way back to England. This story of imperturbable coolness and daring is told below by the leader.

Pilot-Officer Alexander McLeod and his gunner, Leading Aircraftman Cox, were on patrol when they joined in a dog-fight with Messerschmitts and were forced to land near a farm in German-occupied territory. Belgium.

"While keeping a look-out from a window," said McLeod, "we saw an armoured car approaching. We rushed down to a cellar and kept very quiet. We heard the car stop outside, the trampling of heavy feet and guttural voices.

"This is the end," we thought, as we heard the door flung open and some of the Germans march in. But they didn't find us.

"When they had gone, we decided to make a bolt for it. We had only gone a short way along the road when an armoured car came along. We dropped into a ditch, waited until it had passed, then crawled into a barn. We eventually reached a river and walked along its bank.

"Germans guarding a bridge spotted us when we were 300 yards away, and shouted to us, but we paid no attention. We thought the best thing to do was to sit on the bank and eat sandwiches."

We Fled From Nazi Bombing In Belgium

A shipload of refugees from Belgium, who arrived in London on May 17, had many thrilling stories of escape from death, a selection from which are given below.

After her first night's sleep for eight days, Mrs. Ella Bain, Belgian wife of a seaman living in Antwerp, said that one day three parachutists came down in Antwerp. One was immediately caught; the others got away and were loose in the city.

"Three houses were bombed near her home, so she decided to leave. She paid a taxi driver 1,000 francs to take her to Ostend.

"We were at the port for two days, and had nothing to eat during that time until three Belgian soldiers found us coffee and rolls.

"While we were hiding in a cellar during a raid I allowed a man to sit on my case. He was shivering from head to foot. He said that he was not frightened, but that he had been wounded in the last war.

"But I think it was fright, for a little later he and another man were discovered to be spies. They were seized and taken off. They had been seen signalling with torches from a wood."
Miss Jane Elizabeth Seldon, who is nearly seventy, and has been an English teacher in the Sacred Heart Convent, Brussels, for twenty-one years, told how she saw the little brother of one of her pupils standing on a balcony watching the German ‘planes.

"Then the bombs came down," she said. "One went through the balcony and the boy was killed."

An English-born manager of a drug store in Brussels brought over his wife and four children. He determined to leave when they had had as many as fifteen air bombardments in one day.

"One of many dramatic incidents was the landing of one parachutist near the railway station," he said.

"Despite the short machine-gun which the German carried, a man rushed at him before he could bring it into use, seized him by the ears and banged his head on the ground until he was dead."—("Evening News.")

**I Filmed the British Troops in Norway**

An American newsreel cameraman, Mr. Bonney M. Powell, was with the British troops at Namsos, was machine-gunned by German bombers, and saw the sinking of the "Afridi" and the "Bittern."

Here is his own story of the adventures in Norway.

Mr. Powell was originally assigned to film the war in Finland and spent three months there before the invasion of Norway.

"I then got instructions to go on to Norway," he said. "I was aiming for Namsos. When I arrived there the whole town was in ruins. There was not a chimney-pot standing."

"I had filmed most of this and sent my results down to the quay. I learned afterwards that this film had been put on board the 'Bittern.' I was on top of a hill when the 'Bittern' was attacked by enemy aircraft. One aeroplane dived to within about 100 ft. of the British vessel and scored a hit, and I watched my film go to the bottom."

Mr. Powell made his way from Namsos towards Steinkjer to take pictures of the withdrawal of the British troops.

"The journey was one incessant attack from the air by German bombers," he said. "I was machine-gunned 14 times on the journey. They dived so close to our car that I could look into the eyes of the pilot as the 'plane flew overhead."

"We had a close shave when one bomb dropped only a few feet in front of our car. It did not burst but bounced away from the road. The Nazi airmen came from behind the mountains and were on top of us in a second."

"I got to within six miles of Steinkjer and watched the British troops withdrawing. Their movements were watched by wave after wave of German bombers, who flew just above the tree-tops, forcing them under cover. The troops had no backing from British fighters to keep the bombers off, and were helpless."

"Wherever the British were they were not only bombed and machine-gunned mercilessly, but their positions were raided to German ships lying in the fjords, who were able to shell them at the given range. But the withdrawal tactics were wonderful."

"The heroism of a captain in charge of a company of one regiment was remarkable. He brought out his company of 200 men through the German lines under continuous bombing attacks, and managed to cover 47 miles through snow across two valleys and mostly at night without a single casualty."

"These men eventually had to abandon their steel helmets to avoid detection. A man belonging to this company who acted as a runner crawled through snow under continuous machine-gun and rifle fire to bring news to his company when the road was clear."

"The pier was the last structure left in Namsos to be bombed," concluded Mr. Powell. "I was only a few hundred yards away when a German bomber came over, went into a vertical dive and scored a direct hit with a 500 lb. bomb. There were a lot of stores on the pier at the time. The lot went up. It almost destroyed the pier, but we managed to make our way along what was left to embark for Britain."

"I embarked in the early hours of May 3 and in several hours we were bombed by 79 aeroplanes. The 'Afridi' was attacked by two German 'planes. They missed and then a third swooped from out of the sun and got her. Other warships went to her rescue. That was the last we saw of any German 'planes."
Tuesday, May 14, 1940

GENERAL WINKELMAN, Commander-in-Chief of the Dutch Forces, in a broadcast statement:

Netherlands—I want to give you personally an account of the very serious decision which you have just heard over the wireless. We have had to lay down our arms because we must. We had decided to defend our Fatherland to the very limit. Today we have reached that limit.

Our soldiers have fought with the courage which will always be beyond compare. In face of the inevitability of the end of the defense of the Netherlands, the Dutch and Allied air forces were so reduced that they could no longer support the army. We could not fight against the German superiority in the air.

Rotterdam has undergone the sad experience of total war. Utrecht and other cities were threatened in the same way. Practically all radio stations were shut down, except by our own forces, we could not see our way to go on fighting. These facts have led me to this very serious decision. We have given up the hope. We know how much the world will be shocked by this news. Our Government, I know, has not had a chance, nor has it had the right, to take a decision in the interests of the country.

The war was completely one-sided. To have gone on would only have meant that still more innocents would have been hit; I cannot tell you how deeply I feel the responsibility for taking this decision. It was impossible to go on.

We must put our confidence in the indestructible powers which always distinguish our nation. The decision must be carried with courage and determination. We must have confidence in the future. We must show this in our behaviour. We must set ourselves to reconstruct the country. Long live His Majesty the Queen! Long live the Fatherland!

Wednesday, May 15

QUEEN WILHELMINA, in a broadcast to the peoples of Great Britain and the British Empire:

I and my people have always hoped that it would be possible to limit the extent of the European conflict, and that a reasonable basis for an ending could be found. Now this seems to have been hit by sheer brutality of force. But morally we can never be conquered. Our spirit will remain unbroken because our conscience is clear.

After a heroic struggle my nation, that has attempted everything to maintain peace, is being overwhelmed by sheer superiority of force. But morally we can never be conquered. Our spirit will remain unbroken because our conscience is clear.

Notwithstanding the great distress that my people now feel, the present moment of the battle can bring about the conclusion of the war here. The world under which they will live until the country will be free again, I am convinced, will give them hope in the cause of freedom and justice.

I pray God that our allied cause be blessed, and that the dawn of the day when freedom will be restored to the Netherlands and to all other victims of German aggression be near.
**Our Diary of the War**

**Tuesday, May 14, 1940**

By order of Netherlands High Command, Dutch Army on mainland surrendered, large numbers of enemy troops having crossed the border and taken up positions around Rotterdam. Fighting continued in island-province of Zeeland.

**Battle of the Meuse** continued along razee line front. German columns, which had broken through defences at Maastricht, spread fanwise behind them. South-east of Maas, railway bridge and armoured columns held up enemy tanks.

South of Liége attacks of great severity were made in sector between Namur and Givet, in that of Sedan, and also between Longwy and Montmédy. Sedan had been evacuated.

**Dutch Government** removed to London. War Office announced that Allied forces had made successful landing at Bjerzik, 7 miles north of Narvik.

French commando paratroop defence force initiated in Britain.

**Wednesday, May 15**

After hard fighting B.E.F. successfully held and repulsed attacks. Londoners in British sector, now evacuated and being subjected to heavy shelling.

**Battle of the Meuse** raged furiously. Belgian and Dutch forces engaged. South of river crossed at several points. Near Sedan they drove a salient into French lines during night of May 14-15.

**The Hague** by R.A.F. and French aircraft on advancing German columns held up enemy's advance while French with mechanized forces held defensive positions, which are continuation of Maas Line.

French announced successful counter-attack in region of Gembloux, on Brussels-Namur road.

The Hague, Amsterdam and other Dutch cities occupied by Germany.

Dutch Foreign Minister stated that Dutch Army had lost one quarter of its total of 400,000 men.

Admiralty announced that H.M. destroyer "Valentine" had been damaged by air attack off Dutch coast and beached.

**Thursday, May 16**

Biggest R.A.F. offensive of war took place over Paris on May 15-16, with bombers raiding enemy roads, railway and military encampments east of Rhine.

**Heavy fighting** same night between Gembloux and Namur in sector south-east of Brussels, enemy attacking with mechanized forces and aeroplanes.

Fighting in progress during day on British front in Belgium. French War Office stated that day was comparatively calm, with much regrouping of units on both sides. Great air battle above Sedan.

**Belgian Government** moved to Ostend. Germans attempting to crush resistance in region of Flushing being ultimate objective.

Five air attacks made on Nancy during night. B.E.F. aircraft shot down near Paris.

Allied forces converging on Narvik occupied two villages to north on opposite side of fjord. Naval aircraft attacked fuel supplies in Bergen area.

**Friday, May 17**

War Office announced that B.E.F. had withdrawn to positions west of Brussels. More aircraft and aeroplanes captured after capturing Louvain and Malines.

Massive German attack developed in salient between the Sambre and Meuse, heavy tank divisions being engaged. Heavy fighting on front from Sedan to Rethel.

**Saturday, May 18**

British front was held firmly in face of strong enemy pressure.

Fighting continued in region of Avesnes and in Vervins area, chiefly round Guise and Landrecies. French brought up thousands of "Z" field-guns.

Enemy attacks also repulsed south of Sedan and in Montmédy sector.

Formations of R.A.F. bombers carried out intensive operations against Aachen, and France, harassing German lines of communication.

Continuous night watch kept on military traffic over wide area in Western Front. Oil tanks at Aachen were bombed. Daylight attacks made on enemy troops and focal points in Northern France.

Meeting of Cabinet recommended that Reynaud remain Premier, and also took over Defence Ministry. M. Daladier became Foreign Minister and Marshal Pétain Vice-Premier.

Navy transports attempting to relieve Narvik reported sunk.

**Sunday, May 19**

Main fighting took place in region north-east of St. Quentin, where French troops on steep hillbran resistance fierce. Violent attacks were also repulsed in region of Montmédy.

**General Weygand** appointed Chief of Staff, and Marshal Gamelin, and Commander-in-Chief of all theatres of operation.

**Dieppe** bombarded during night of May 18-19. French night fighter planes, this time, again successfully attacked oil refineries in north-west Germany. South of Brussels they bombed railway stations and bridges. Troop concentrations of tanks were attacked in Aisne sector.

German aeroplane at Vaernes, north of Trondheim, succeeded in attacking.

Stated that at least 100,000 people were killed and a third of the city destroyed when Germans bombed Rotterdam.

Revealed that French forces cleared all road and other crossings over Rhine-Rhône canal, and also direct communication between France and Switzerland via Basle.

**Monday, May 20**

German pressure continued in region of St. Quentin towards Channel ports. French airmen heavily bombarding east of Cambrai and successful counter-attacks near Péronne.

Germans captured Laon.

Enemy units which had crossed the Aisne near Noyon were driven back. Violent attacks near Montmédy were also repulsed.

B.E.F. Command stated that repeated attacks by German mechanized formations in area south of River Scarpe and against the Sedelb position were beaten off.

R.A.F. carried out successful attacks on armoured vehicles in Arras-Cambrai-Bapaume area, and other parts of the fighting fronts. In a night raid Rotterdam oil tanks were set on fire.

Admiralty announced that H.M. destroyer "Whitley" had been damaged by bombs and subsequently beached.

**Tuesday, May 21**

Situation on Western Front between Cambrai and the Somme very confused.

In their drive towards Channel ports, advance enemy forces reached Amiens. They were still in Abbeville and have defeated the French Ninth Army and captured its commander, General Giraud.

R.A.F. and fighter aircraft constantly engaged in operations over fronts in Belgium and Northern France.

Admiralty announced that H.M. cruiser "Effingham" had been lost after striking uncharted rock off Norway. Also that H.M. minelayer "Princess Victoria" had been sunk by enemy mine.