

County School for Boys  
Mitcham



Summer Tour 1939  
Belgium

Bruges Ghent Brussels  
Dinant

PAGE 1.

MEMBERS OF THE PARTY

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PROGRAMME.

THURSDAY JULY 27th.

Leave London 10.30. Arrive Dover 1<sup>st</sup> noon.  
 Leave Dover 1 p.m., arrive Ostend 4.15. Leave  
 Ostend 5 p.m. Arrive Bruges 5.15. Stay at  
 HOTEL REGINA, ZILVERSTRAT, BRUGES.

FRIDAY JULY 28th. Conducted sightseeing tour  
 in Bruges, visiting Belfry, Hotel de Ville, Notre  
 Dame, Chapel of Holy Blood, City Gates, and a motor-  
 boat tour of the Canal.

SATURDAY JULY 29th. Leave Bruges in the morning  
 for Ghent. Visit Chateau des Comtes, Church of  
 St. Bavon, By Loke Museum etc. Proceed to Brussels  
 late afternoon. Stay at  
 HOTEL DELOBE, 204, AVENUE LOUISE, BRUSSELS.

SUNDAY JULY 30th. MORNING.- Motor Tour of  
 Brussels. Hotel de Ville, Courts of Justice,  
 Houses of Parliament, St. Cingentaire, Laeken.  
 AFTERNOON. - Motor Excursion to Tervueren  
 through Forest of Soignes to Battlefield of  
 Waterloo.

MONDAY JULY 31st. Morning free in Brussels.  
 Leave Brussels at 2 p.m. Arrive Dinant 3.30.  
 Stay at Hotel Herman, Dinant.

TUESDAY AUG. 1st. Programme to be arranged.  
 Possibilities of rambling, bathing, etc.

WEDNESDAY AUG. 2nd. Whole day excursion by  
 rail to Grottoes of Han.

THURSDAY AUG. 3rd. Programme to be arranged.  
 Rambles, etc.

FRIDAY AUG. 4th. Leave Dinant at 9.10.  
 Arrive Namur 9.40.-Short sightseeing tour of  
 Namur- Leave Namur at 12, arrive Ostend 3.30.  
 Leave Ostend 4.20. Arrive Dover 7.40.  
 Leave Dover 8.10. Arrive London 9.50.



## PAGE 3.

NOTES ON JOURNEY.LONDON TO BRUGES.

(a). London to Dover. (80 miles). A familiar journey by Southern Railway through the North part of the Weald and the Chalk Downs at Shakespeare Cliff, Dover. Here deep borings have revealed the existence of coal far below the chalk, and in recent years two coalmines have developed in this region. The coal is conveyed by overhead cable to the Port of Dover, where it loaded on to ships.

(b). Dover to Ostend. (70 miles). By Belgian State Steamboat. The English coast is usually followed to a point near the S. Foreland and then a direct line across the North Sea to Ostend is taken. Little except fishing vessels is seen from leaving the English coast to sighting the Belgian coast.

(c). Ostend to Bruges. (14 miles). The line follows the Bruges Canal crossing the Canal leading to Dunkirk. Oudenburg (4 1/2) with the ruins of a Benedictine Abbey and an old Church lies on the right, in the midst of productive gardens which supply Ostend with fruit and vegetables. Bruges is the junction of the line for Paris.

BRUGES TO BRUSSELS.

(a). Bruges to Ghent. (28 miles). The line crosses fertile garden countryside to the Gare du Sud of Ghent.

(b). Ghent to Brussels. (36 miles). From Ghent the line proceeds via Alost (16 miles) to Brussels. Alost is on the Dendre and has an important trade in Hops. After leaving Alost several small stations are passed, indicating the fertile agricultural characteristics of the district. At Laeken, 2 miles from Brussels, the Royal Chateau can be seen on the left. The train finally stops at Station du Nord of Brussels.

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Brussels to Dinant.

(a) Brussels to Namur. (55 miles). The route passes Boitsfort with its pretty lakes, Groenendael with its ruined convent. To the left near the village of Hoevlaert are hundreds of hot-houses where desert



grapes are grown for export. Just short of La Hulpe a glimpse is obtained to the right of the Chateau of A Argenteuil and of the Mound of the Lion on the distant field of Waterloo. Ottignies is a railway junction (Louvain and Charleroi). At Chastœe the province of Namur is entered. After Rhisnes the train passes through several cuttings in the blue limestone rocks and afford a striking view of Namur.

(b) Namur to Dinant (17½ miles). The valley of the Meuse above Namur, enclosed by wooded hills and frowning cliffs with many castles and chateaux is highly picturesque. The banks are enlivened with villages and country houses. Immediately after leaving the station, the train crosses the Meuse, remaining on the right bank until Dinant is nearly reached. Several tunnels are passed through to Yvoir where the train crosses to the left bank of the Meuse to Bouvignes now a mere village, but once the rival of Dinant and so to the town of Dinant itself.

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#### NOTES ON BELGIUM.

##### HISTORY.

The territory now known as Belgium originally formed only part of that known to Caesar as the territory of the Belgae. After the decline of the Roman Empire it became the kingdom of Clovis. After his death and the break up of the Empire of Charlemagne, the kingdom was contended for by the Kings of France and Emperors of Germany (Luxembourg, Namur, Hainault & Liege sided with France, Brabant, Holland & Flanders with Germany) In 1384, Flanders and Artois fell to the House of Burgundy which in less than a Century acquired the whole of the Netherlands. In 1477 the country became a possession by the marriage of the Austrian Habsburgs, and thereafter a Spanish possession. Under Spanish rule the country suffered severely and the districts revolted, the North succeeded and became independent Holland, but Belgium remained under Spanish rule. In 1714 the country became known as the Austrian Netherlands, they revolted were reconquered by Austria only to be conquered by the revolutionary French armies. In 1815 Holland and Belgium were reunited. The 1830 revolt resulted in Belgium's independence and a period of prosperity under Leopold I, then followed the Great War.



## GEOGRAPHY.

- Belgium consists of four main divisions
- (1). The Ardennes composed of slate, old red sandstone and limestone, therefore shallow stony soils and much forested.
  - (2). The coalfield stretching into France forms an industrial area along the Sambre valley.
  - (3). Central Belgium, with the exception of the sandy Campine is intensely cultivated being of the nature of garden rather than field culture.
  - (4). The Dunes and Coast with small seaside resorts. Ostend forms the only important opening in the dunes.

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## NOTES ON BRUGES.

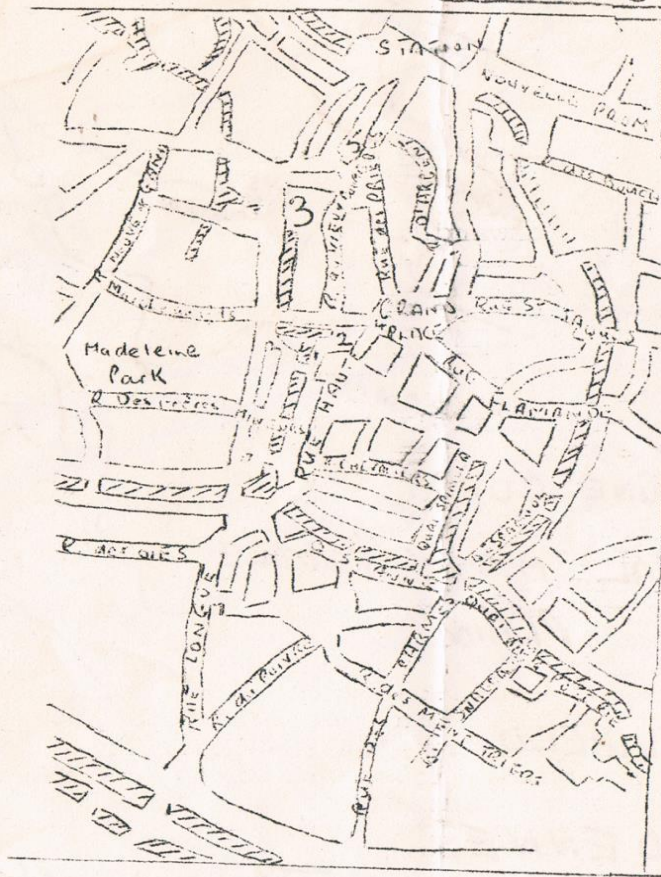
BRUGES. The chief town of W. Flanders is situated nine miles on the Reie at the junction of the ship canal which connects it with its foreport of Zeebrugge and of smaller canals leading to Ostend, Ghent and Sluis. It is renowned for the wealth of its arts and art treasures. It is mentioned in the 9th. Cent. Baldwin I built a castle here in 865. In the 13th. Cent. Bruges connected to the North Sea ranked with Ypres and Venice as one of the great commercial centres of Europe. After its enlargement in 1297 the population is said to have been 200,000 today it is 50,000 because the gradual silting up of the harbour on the adjacent coast began to undermine the prosperity of the town from the 16th. Cent. onwards.

THE GRAND' PLACE. is the heart of the city. In the centre stands a colossal monument to the leaders of the popular insurrection of 1302. The South side is occupied by the Halles. THE BELFRY IN THE MIDDLE AGES a symbol of civic power, summoning the burghers to arms in defence of their liberties, is the finest structure of its kind it leans slightly to the S.E. The Belfry, 350ft above the square, may be ascended by a staircase of 400 steps with an entrance to the right in the courtyard. In clear weather the Passchendaele Ridge may be discerned. The Hotel de Ville is the oldest town hall in Belgium. The façade only 36ft wide is adorned by three octagonal turrets, the niches between the windows are occupied by statues of the counts and countesses of Flanders. The Hotel de Ville adjoins the CHAPEL OF THE HOLY BLOOD. Its name refers to some drops of the blood of CHRIST, presented to Theodore Count of Flanders in 1147 by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The GRUUTHUUS MANSION is a very beautiful mansion the interior of which is of great architectural interest, It is now public property, and contains a museum of domestic and industrial art. Adjoining it is the early Gothic church of NOTRE DAME with its lofty brick tower. It is rich in works of art and all the paintings are inscribed with the painter's name.



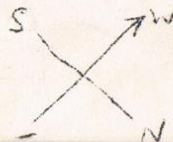
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A PLAN OF BRUGES



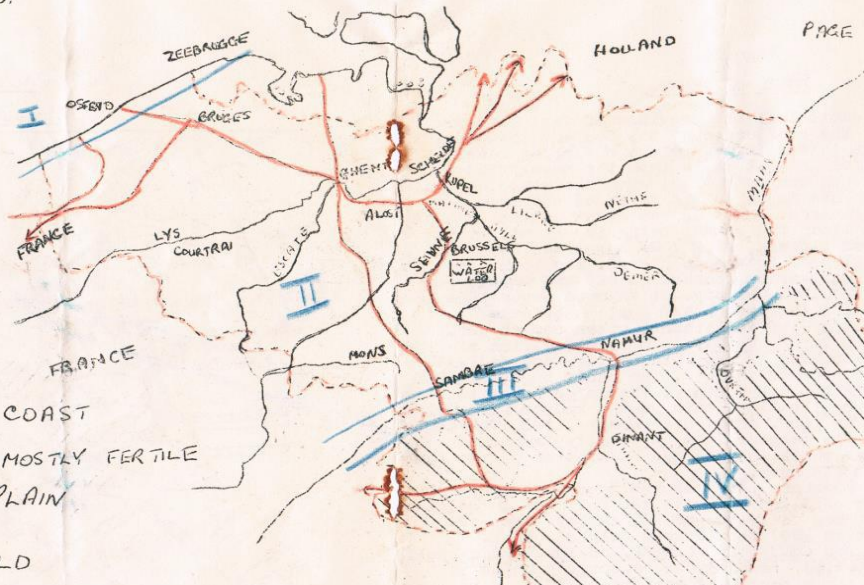
- 1 HOTEL DE VILLE
- 2 ST. SANG.
- 3. BROU THOUS MANSION
- 4. HALLES
- 5. CATHEDRAL

1/4 miles



RIVERS & CANALS


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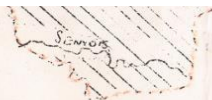


- I SAND DUNE COAST
- II CENTRAL MOSTLY FERTILE PLAIN
- III COALFIELD



IV ARDENNES

 Land over 600'



9?  
10

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NOTES ON GHENT.

GHENT, the capital of the province of East Flanders is situated at the confluence of the Lys and the Scheldt on the numerous islets formed by the branching rivers. A canal excavated in 1226 falls into the Scheldt at Terneuzen and thus connects Ghent with the sea. The Basin du Commerce and new docks to the north of the town have considerable commerce. Ghent is the great cotton town of Belgium; lace, linen and canvas being important. It is also the city of flowers, with 7000 nurseries devoted to the cultivation of hot-house plants. The town grew up around two monasteries founded in 629 and was larger than Paris in the 13th Century. It enjoyed several periods of prosperity with the French and English but the turbulent spirit of its inhabitants often caused war.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. BAVON. a massive edifice of plain exterior founded in the 10th Century and dedicated to St. John was renamed in 1540. The choir begun in 1228 was completed in the 14th Century. The large crypt beneath dates partly from the 11th Century. The knaves and aisles were completed in 1559, and the transepts 1548. The tower is 280ft high. The Cathedral is especially famous for its works of art which include the "Adoration of the Lamb" by the brothers Van Eyck.

THE BELFRY; a square tower of the 14th Century is 280ft high. The carillon tower is the only one in Belgium with a lift. It has fifty-two bells, thirty-seven of which were cast in 1660 the largest weighs 6 tons.

THE CHATEAU DES COMTES DE FLANDRE. an interesting relic of the feudal period, founded 9th Century, rebuilt in 1180, subsequently altered and restored.

THE BYLOKE MUSEUM is on the south side of the rue Kluykens in the S.W. of the town.

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PLAN of GHENT



11



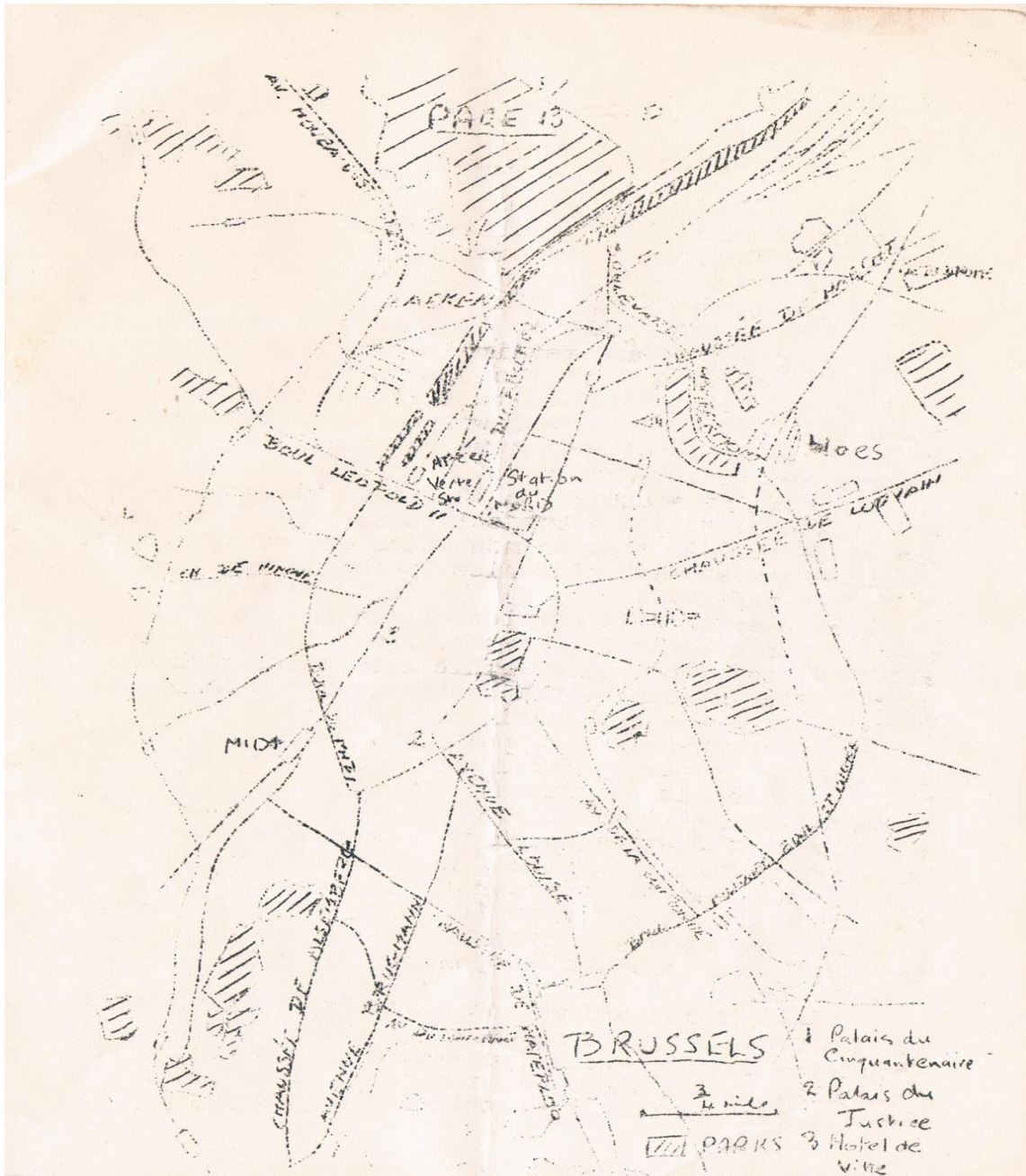




contains amongst other places the King's Palace and the Palace of Justice which is a magnificent new building ranking among the finest in Europe. In the Eastern part of the town is the Palais du Cinquanteenaire. It was built in 1879 for the exhibition, a finishing touch was given in 1905 when a huge triumphal arch with three openings was erected by Leopold II.

LAEKEN is reached by the Allee Verte to the North of the town, has been since the 19th Century a favourite holiday excursion resort of the people of Brussels. It was the usual residence of Leopold I & II, both of whom died there. The Forest of Soignes

13



14

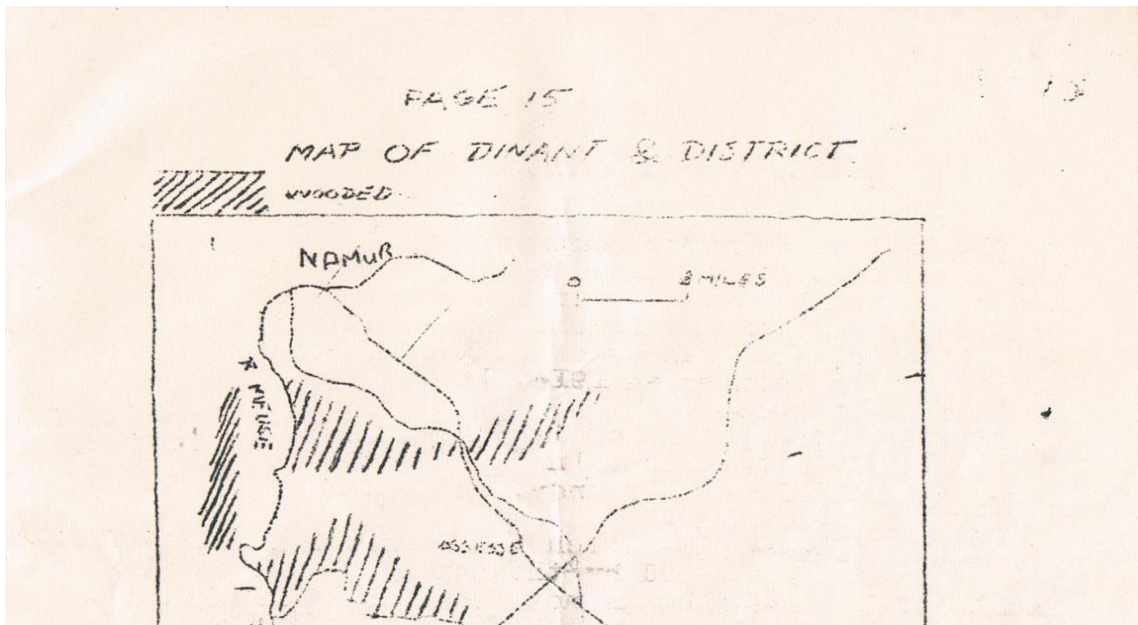


NOTES ON DINANT AND DISTRICT.

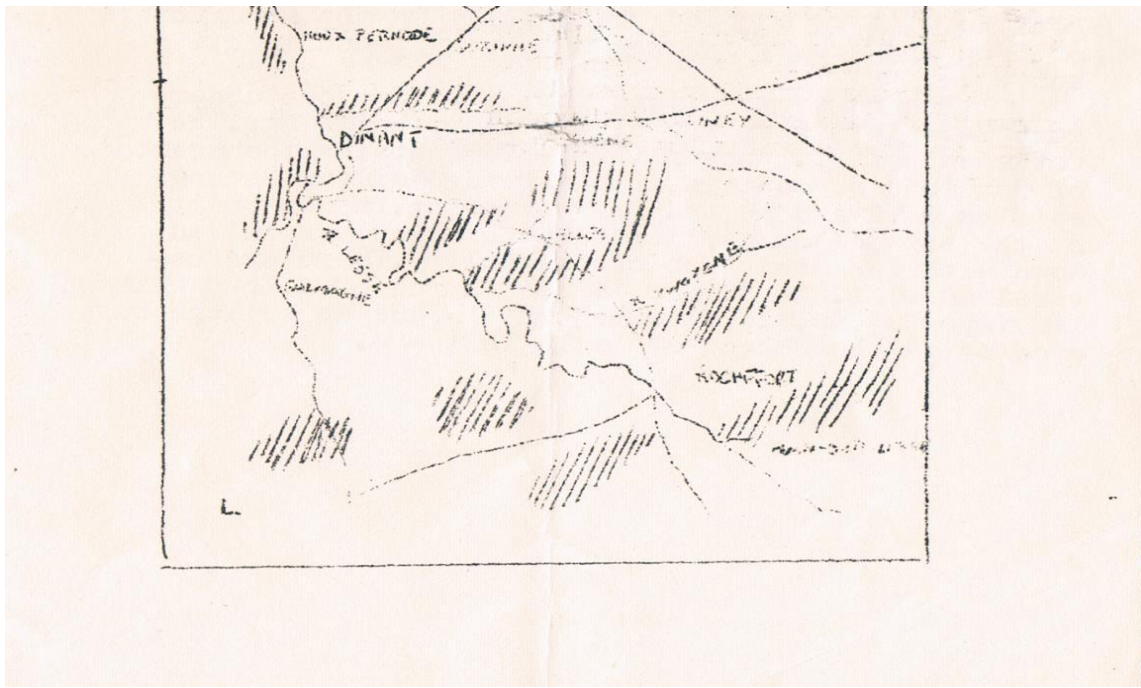
DINANT lies 14 miles south of Namur. It is Picturesquely and strongly situated on the right bank of the Meuse, at the base of barren limestone cliffs which are crowned by a ruined fortress. The town house was once the Palace of the Princes of Liege. The town was destroyed by the Germans in 1914. It has a population of about 8,000 people.

It was at the height of its prosperity in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Centuries. In 1456 it was besieged and taken by the Duke of Burgundy, but taken by the French in 1554 and again in 1675.

THE GROTTÉ DE HAN, which has been known since 1771 and is annually visited by thousands, has a total length of 3 miles (though not accessible throughout). The river Lesse flows through it. The Cavern consists of a series of chambers, the western portion of which is inaccessible when the river is high. The Lesse becomes visible near the Place d'Armes. Visitors emerge at the other end through the Trou de Han in a boat to the sound of a cannon-shot echoing among the rocks.









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NOTES ON NAMUR

Namur was the capital of a Burgundy in 1420. It has been 1559. It was invested by the F and by William III (195), and forts (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles) distant) 350 in 1888 as a link in the Meuse in Aug. 1914 by the Germans un

With a population of 31,00 picturesquely at the junction Meuse. The former river which crossed by several stone brid coalfield it is engaged princ of iron and steel, and was on knives.

The numerous sieges th



gone have left very few of the  
Cathedral of St. Aubain (1751)  
of Don John of Austria. It is a  
edifice, with a dome and fine  
on the site of an earlier edi-  
fice, down with the exception of its  
several museums. The former Jesuit  
its imposing façade, situated  
erected in the Basque style in





































6.

MUR.

countship that fell to  
an episcopal see since  
rench under Vauban (1692)

a circle of nine detached  
was constructed by Brialmont  
e defences. It was attacked  
der Bulow.

o, it is situated very  
of the Sambre and the  
is here canalised, is  
ges. Situated in the Meuse  
ipally in the manufacture  
ce very famous for its

at the town has under-



older buildings. The  
-67) contains the heart  
handsome Renaissance  
exterior. It was built  
face which was pulled  
s belfry. There are se-  
it church of St. Loup with  
in the Rue de College was  
n 1621 -53.