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Paris Faced The Sixth Siege In Her History When the German Drive Began

CITY WAS FIRST BESIEGED

BY JULIUS CAESAR IN 58 B. C.

At that Time it was Only a Cluster of Fishermen's Huts on one of the Little Islands in Seine—Five Centuries Later the Gauls and Romans United to Oppose the Huns Under Attila—Many Different Nations have Appeared Before the Gates of Paris.

Had the Kaiser's boast that he would march his troops up to the gates of Paris and invest the capital in that first winter of the great war been made good, or could Hindenburg's army have done so this year, it would have been the sixth siege to which the city had been subjected in its long history.

Between the first and the last of the sieges more than nineteen centuries elapsed. One of the investments took place before the beginning of the Christian era, two before the birth of Columbus. It is interesting to compare the war map of today with maps of hundreds of years ago, in which are shown the districts where battles were fought just preceding some of these sieges.

It was not Paris, strictly speaking, but its forerunner which fell before the attack of Labienus, lieutenant of Julius Caesar fifty-two years before the birth of Christ. Lutetia, so called by the Gauls, which founded it, was confined within one of the islands of the Seine—the Ile de la Cité, which modern tourists know best through their visits to Notre-Dame, that vast amphitheatre in stone, as Hugo described it, to the gloomy Conciergerie, from one of whose cells, after the custom of the night life of Paris in later days, Belleville, where tens of thousands of workers now find habitation, and to the south, Mont Ste. Genevieve, crowned by the great domed Pantheon, all were thickly wooded heights, untouched by the hand of man.

Crossing the Alps from Rome in the spring of 58 B. C., Caesar began his series of eight brilliant campaigns against the various tribes of Gaul, Germany and Britain. In Gaul he subjugated 300 tribes, captured 800 cities and slew a million inhabitants, one-third the entire population of the country.

At the approach of Labienus with four legions, Camulogene, whom the Parisians had chosen for their chief, burned Lutetia, after the custom of the Gauls, and taking his position on the banks of the Seine met the invader in a terrible combat. Camulogene was killed and victory rested with the Romans.

Attila Threatened Paris. In the latter half of the fifth century came Attila, the Scourge of God, at the head of his 700,000 Hun warriors, cross-ravaging that province and then traversing Italy with fire and sword. The grass never grew again where he passed—the hoof of Attila's horse had left a deep furrow in the earth, and the name of these marauders to describe humanity's foe in this twentieth century.

For a moment the old and new masters of the country, Gauls and Romans were united in the common interest of resistance. In a battle on the plains of

Chalons-sur-Marne Attila was defeated with a loss variously estimated at from 100,000 to 300,000 men. But before he was driven back across the Rhine he had penetrated to the walls of Paris—the city had long since taken the name it now bears—and struck terror into the hearts of its residents.

In the records of that time we find one of those strange interminglings of fact and legend which frequently appear to add fresh romance to the already romantic history of the French people and the races from which they sprang. At the approach of the barbarians a great number of the Parisians prepared to abandon their homes. But Genevieve, a young girl, surrounding herself with women as valiant as herself, restored their courage by assuring them that Attila would never attack the city. Strangely moved, the timorous residents abandoned their plans for flight.

So runs the story which has been handed down. The Hun chieftain did indeed pass Paris by and Genevieve herself was to be venerated as the city's patron saint. From the middle of the third to the beginning of the fifth century the history of the Western Empire presents an almost unbroken series of invasions by the Franks, who were destined to give a new name to the territory they coveted and making Belgium, now Belgium, the victim of repeated incursions.

The Roman power collapsed and so began the Merovingian dynasty, so named for Meroveus, grandfather of Clovis, the chief of the Franks, a dynasty which held sway for nearly three centuries.

In the records of the ninth and tenth centuries special mention is made of forty-seven incursions into France by Scandinavian pirates, under the name of Northmen. They pillaged and burned Tours, Rouen, Orleans, Meaux, Toul, Evreux, Nantes and Beauvais, among other cities. The monasteries and churches were their favorite targets, as with the invaders of today.

At the gates of Paris, long ere this expanded on both sides of the river, main-de-France and that of St. Denis. More than once they entered Paris itself and subjected several of its quarters to pillage.

Finally the Northmen united their forces in a determined attempt to gain complete possession of the capital. In November, 885, seven hundred barbed spears, more than 30,000 men, appeared in the Seine before the city. The Parisians in the forty years just preceding had suffered and learned to endure, but they had gained wisdom from their trying experiences and made extensive defensive preparations. The invading chieftains were astonished to find new fortifications about the place and towers crowning the bridges.

Siegfried, leader of the Northmen, hesitating to attack, sought an interview with the Bishop Gossuin, who, with

Five Times Has the City been Beleaguered During the Past Nineteen Centuries—People Have Been Brought to the Verge of Starvation on Several Occasions, but Have Always Fought Well.

THE SUPREME HYPOCRISY.

—By Webster.



The Kaiser picked some violets on a blood-stained field near St. Quentin and sent them home to the Kaiserin.

Eudes, Count of Paris, was directing the defence. His proposal was singularly like that with which William II. was to seek to seduce the Belgians more than a thousand years later.

"Take pity on thyself and thy flock," said Siegfried. "Let us but pass through this city. We will do no wise touch the town. We will do our best to preserve for thee and Count Eudes all thy possessions. But if thou yield not to our prayers, so soon as the sun shall commence his course our armies will launch upon thee their poisoned arrows, and when the sun shall end his course they will give thee over to all the horrors of famine. And this will they do from year to year."

The Bishop's answer was identified with that of King Albert in our own time. He showed fight. The poisoned arrows of the Northmen were spent uselessly against the city's walls. Then began a siege which was to last thirteen months. In repulsing the assaults made upon their city the defenders gave frequent exhibitions of brilliant daring. The Bishop Gossuin died before the end of the siege.

In November, 888, the Emperor, Charles the Fat, appeared with an army on the heights of Montmartre. He treated with the Northmen and purchased their retreat for 800 liores. Some months later Count Eudes, the gallant defender of Paris, was elected King at Compiègne and was crowned by the Archbishop of Sens.

The third siege of Paris, taking place in 1439, was by none other than Jeanne d'Arc, Maid of Orleans. Her siege of Paris was one of the shortest on record.

It was after the relief of Orleans that Jeanne counselled the King to take Paris, as the political centre of the realm in which Rheims was the religious. Charles hesitated, and in the months that intervened 5,000 men crossed from England and settled in the capital. As an insult to the girl warrior, one division of their army carried a white standard bearing the challenge, "Now, fair one, come!"

On August 23 with the Duke d'Alencon and a small company she occupied St. Denis, four and a half miles from the city. Then she pitched her camp at La Chapelle and started a vigorous attack on Paris. The assault was delivered September 8, the day of the nativity of the Virgin. Jeanne was severely wounded but refused to retire until some knights came up, set her on her horse and turned her back toward La Chapelle.

Even then she would not abandon the attempt. With the Duke d'Alencon she had caused a flying bridge to be thrown across the Seine opposite St. Denis, and two days after her involuntary retreat she sent her vanguard in that direction, intending to return to the siege. But by the King's order the bridge had been cut as it drifted, so that approach to the city was now impos-

sible. Before leaving Jeanne placed on the tomb of St. Denis her complete suit of armor and a sword she had taken as a trophy of war at the St. Honoré gate of Paris.

On the death of Henry III., August 2, 1589, Henry IV., then at Meudon, was saluted by the Protestants as King of France. By gradual stages Henry moved toward the capital and on the last day of May began an investment of the city. One after another the King reduced the cluster of towns surrounding the city.

He shut off all means of taking provisions into the city, and by burning the windmills which stood on the heights robbed the besieged population of its last resource for obtaining flour. The batteries of cannon placed on the hills by the Parisians were of little service, for the projectiles were powerless to reach beyond the outskirts.

The famine soon became acute. When the residents had eaten all the horses and mules obtainable they fed on dogs and cats. They went so far indeed as to boil the bones of the dead and make an imitation bread with this substance, giving it the name of paine de Mme. de Montpensier because the Duchess, a rabid leaguer, recommended it.

There was much illness and the mortality was frightful. Yet, desperate as conditions were, one is forced to believe that they would have been far worse had William II. been directing

GERMANS IN 1870 PROVED MOST CRUEL ENEMIES

In the Franco-Prussian War the People of Paris after Having Eaten all the Horses in the City were Reduced Even to the Use of Rats—Compelled to Surrender After Four and a Half Months, When Two Million People were Dying of Starvation.

The siege. Henry IV. was not utterly lacking in magnanimity. He permitted the exit of numbers of women, children and old men, for "Paris," he said, "must not be a cemetery. I do not wish to reign over the dead."

Moreover, the city obstinately refused to yield, and on August 30 the siege was lifted. Henry retreated, the war continued with other towns as the battle ground, and it was nearly four years later that the King finally entered the city, his sovereignty now universally recognized.

This chapter in French history deals with events only a hundred years after the discovery of America. Pass forward now two centuries and a quarter to the year 1814. Napoleon Bonaparte, after his disastrous campaign in Russia and the destruction of the Grand Army, proposed to attempt a last blow in Germany, but the funds at his command had given out, and his troops were exhausted and disheartened. The enemy entered France, and on March 30 Paris saw the allied armies of Russia and Austria at its gates.

Paris was not then, as formerly, surrounded by ramparts, with fortified towers on its walls. It was an open city, depending for defence on the remnants of the imperial army and a national guard of 25,000 men recruited from its inhabitants, courageous and eager enough but no match for a thoroughly organized, carefully trained, well armed and seasoned foe.

The invaders attacked on March 30 and the city was obliged the very next day to capitulate to the allies, led by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. Soon there appeared the abdication of Napoleon and proclaiming Louis XVIII., of the old Bourbon line, King of France.

Bonaparte, back from the East, was in a carriage hurrying toward Paris and he passed Villeneuve d'Archevêque, seventy-nine miles from the capital, when he learned of the capitulation. It was past midnight.

"Where is the enemy?" he asked. "At the gates of Paris?"

"And who holds Paris?" "Nobody. It is evacuated."

"We must go at once. My carriage!" cried Napoleon, who had stepped out at the approach of the messenger. But his officers threw themselves before him. "It is impossible, sire. It is too late."

Bonaparte sank by the roadside and hid his face in his hands. "On that solitary road, at the dead of night, the great empire, founded and sustained for fifteen years by the incomparable genius and commanding will of one man alone, crumbled to pieces."

Yet Napoleon did not entirely abandon confidence in his cause. When he was sent to Elba he cherished the hope of returning and during his exile he occupied himself in forming a small body of troops. The Congress of Vienna was in session readjusting the map of Europe, restoring despots and ignoring peoples—when news came that the man of destiny had escaped from the little Mediterranean island.

The former Emperor was indeed back in France. He aroused the country with one of his stirring addresses, regiment after regiment deserted the Bourbons and enlisted under his flag, Louis XVIII., abandoned by his troops, fled from his throne, and early in March, 1815, Bonaparte reentered Paris.

But his ascendancy was short lived. The allies again leagued their armies against him and a million foreign soldiers poured over the frontiers into France. On June 18 came Waterloo, to be followed by the Emperor's second abdication and—St. Helena.

These stirring events of 1814 and 1815 play such a vital part in the history of France and its capital that without a mention of them here the story would be far from complete. But if the capitulation of Paris in these two years cannot properly be said to have followed siege, the siege of 1870-71 was the fifth to which the city was subjected.

It is the one with which we of the present day are most familiar, the one in which the suffering inflicted was the most terrible and the one most interesting for present consideration because the beleaguering host was Prussian.

The investment began September 18 and continued till January 28, the Germans starving a civilian population of more than two millions into surrender. By October 8, 1870, less than three weeks after the start of the siege reports in the London Times showed the daily consumption of horse flesh to have risen enormously.

By November 20 no more beef or mutton was obtainable. On December 6 the Times correspondent said that "rat hunting is now vigorously carried on to meet the demands of the restaurants."

December 15 saw the Parisian population put on a ration of horse flesh. The allowance was 30 grammes, or about an ounce. The bread ration was reduced on January 15 from 500 to 300 grammes, less than 10 ounces, for adults, and to half that amount for children.

This bread was a black and indigestible compound of rice, barley, buckwheat, oats and even hay. Long lines of women and children gathered before dawn at the bakeries in the rain, the cold and the snow of a winter in which the temperature sank to 21 degrees.

When an armistice was granted a London committee took provisions to the stricken city. "Some of the persons assisted were barely able," said one of the relief workers, "to walk to the place of distribution, and when the provisions were handed them they were unable to carry them home."

And the children, how did they fare? The French did their best for them. To the very end 3,000 cows were served to give milk for the sick and new born infants, but the supply was altogether insufficient. By the second week in January the children were dying of like rotten sheep.

Did the Germans regret the sufferings they caused? Let their idolized Bismarck answer for them.

When Jules Favre went to the Iron Chancellor to arrange for the armistice the Prussian statesman observed that within a few weeks the French representative had grown much grayer, "also stouter, probably on horse flesh." Favre told Bismarck that pretty children were still to be seen in the streets.

"I am surprised at that," came the reply. "I wonder you have not eaten them."

A report made to Bismarck in January by one of his agents recorded that "the death rate among the children last week amounted to about 5,000." For the last week in December it had been 3,280, and for the week before 2,728.

"The mortality," continued the German representative, "was especially heavy among children up to 2 years of age. Coffins of these tiny French citizens were to be seen in all directions."

A SAD SLIP.
She—What is the correct translation of the motto of that lovely ring you gave me?
He—Faithful to the last.
She—The last? How horrid! And you always told me before that I was the very first!

Bringing Up Father

