

BELGIUM UNDER THE GERMAN OCCUPATION. (1916)

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE 2

Brand WHITLOCK

Chapter XXXIII. The press-gangs : Tournai.

Nor was this all ; all the communes under the Kommandantur of the *Etape* of Tournai were notified that they were to be held responsible for the preservation in good condition of the railways within their territory ; if any damage were done, and the guilty not denounced to the German military authorities within twenty-four hours, the Mayor of the commune and three prominent citizens would be arrested, joined to a band of workmen or taken to Germany ; and at all events, whether the guilty were discovered or not, a fine would be collected from the commune and the inhabitants be held responsible for its payment in kind from their properties.

Brand WITHLOCK

Translation :

NOTICE

Subject : Railroads.

Etappenkommandantur, Tournai,
October 17, 1916.

To all communes :

The communes are made responsible for the safeguarding of the railroads in their territories. The head of the commune must call the particular attention of the inhabitants to the fact that it is to their own best interest to protect the railroad and that any damage done will bring about most serious consequences.

In the case of any such damage being committed, and of the person who commits it not being handed over to the proper military authorities within twenty-four hours, the Mayor and three well-known people of the commune in whose territory the act shall have been committed will be arrested. They will be placed with a group of workmen or sent to Germany. If the Mayor should be convicted of negligence or complicity the most severe punishment will be inflicted immediately. The author will be judged according to military law.

In any case, whether the author be discovered or not, a fine will be inflicted on the commune and the inhabitants will be responsible for the payment of the fine from their properties.

HOPFFER, General-major und
Etappenkommandant.

Footnotes.

Belgium under the German Occupation : A Personal Narrative ; London ; William HEINEMANN ; 1919, 2 volumes. See chapter (« The Press-gangs», sometimes with title « *Documents in evidence* » in other editions), volume 2, pages 268-344 (**76** pages), especially page 281. (**Very partial**) French translation : «*Les enlèvements*» in WHITLOCK, Brand ; chapitre XXVI (1916) in ***La Belgique sous l'occupation allemande : mémoires du ministre d'Amérique à Bruxelles*** ; (Paris ; Berger-Levrault ; 1922) pages 383-391 especially pages 389-390.

It would also be interesting compare with what [Louis GILLE](#), [Alphonse OOMS](#) et [Paul DELANDSHEERE](#) told about the same days in ***50 mois d'occupation allemande*** (Volume 2 : 1916) :

<http://www.idesetautres.be/?p=ides&mod=iea&smod=ieaFictions&part=belgique100>

It would also be interesting compare with what Charles TYTGAT told about the same days in ***Journal d'un journaliste. Bruxelles sous la botte allemande*** :

<http://www.idesetautres.be/?p=ides&mod=iea&smod=ieaFictions&part=belgique100>

It would be interesting compare with what **Paul MAX** (cousin of the *bourgmestre Adolphe MAX*) told about the same day in his ***Journal de guerre*** (*Notes d'un Bruxellois pendant l'Occupation 1914-1918*) :

http://www.museedelavilledebruxelles.be/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/Fichier_PDF/Fonte/Journal_de%20guerre_de_Paul_Max_bdef.pdf