

War in the North and West: Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France fall to the Nazi onslaught

Germany invaded Denmark and Norway on April 9, 1940. Copenhagen was captured on the first day, but Norway battled fiercely for a month before the government fled into exile on April 29 and 30. After securing Norway, Germany attacked to the West on May 10, quickly defeating the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Belgium. After Belgium surrendered, British and French troops evacuated Dunkirk by sea on May 30 and 31. Paris fell to the Germans on June 14, and France capitulated on June 22. German troops occupied the northern portion of France, and installed a puppet regime at Vichy in southern France with Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain as head of state.

A June 8, 1940, letter from Budapest, Hungary, to Chaumont, in the northern part of France that had been overrun by Germany in the first days after the invasion, was forwarded to a second address in Chaumont, and then to an address in southern France that had not yet fallen under German control. There it was rejected by the French military censor, marked "Inadmissible" and "Return to Sender."

