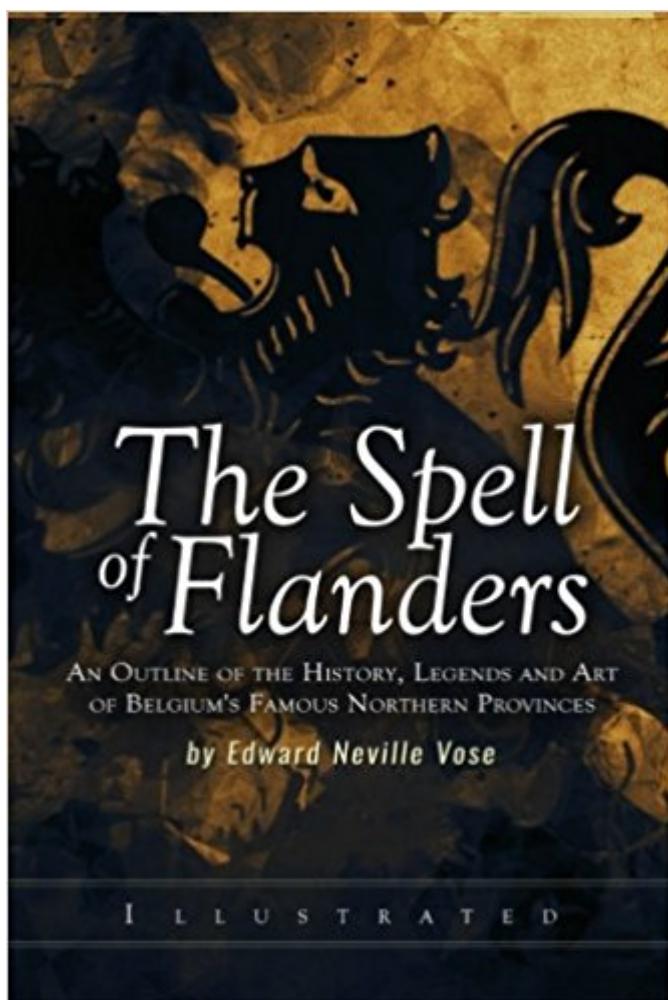


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The Spell Of Flanders: An Outline Of The History, Legends And Art Of Belgium's Famous Northern Provinces



Synopsis

Lord Beaconsfield once said: "Flanders has been trodden by the feet and watered by the blood of countless generations of British soldiers." This famous passage which has received a new confirmation to-day is typical of many references among English writers and statesmen to Flanders as a general term covering all of what is now known as Belgium. Among the citizens of that brave little Kingdom, however, and among most Continental writers, Flanders is recognised as being the name of only the northern part of Belgium. Small as that country is, it has for centuries been bi-lingual, the northern portion speaking Flemish, the southern French; and for centuries the history of the Flemish provinces was as distinct from that of the Walloon province to the southward as the early history of California or Texas was from that of New England. Although eventually united under one Government with the Walloons and with what is now Holland, it was during the long period of their semi-independence that the Flemings achieved many of the artistic and architectural monuments that have made Flanders for all time one of the most interesting regions in the world. While this book, therefore, does not attempt to describe the whole of Belgium, it does present a pen picture of the northern part of the country as it existed almost at the moment when the devastating scourge of the Great War swept across it.

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