



The battered entrance to the fort at Chaudfontain



The WW I battle  
for this fort  
ended when a  
shell penetrated  
the roof and  
exploded inside,  
killing most of the  
defenders



Outside  
Eben-Emael,  
the greatest  
of the new  
generation of  
forts, Saint  
Barbara,  
patron of  
miners, keeps  
watch



Note  
her  
standing  
on a  
gun  
turret



The fort is dug into the bluffs, high above the Albert Canal, protecting the Meuse beyond

Numerous small guns guard the approaches







On top of the fort,  
amid fields now  
farmed, sit the great  
guns...



...with massive steel domes to deflect any shell





Impervious to artillery, protected from infantry, the guns were invincible



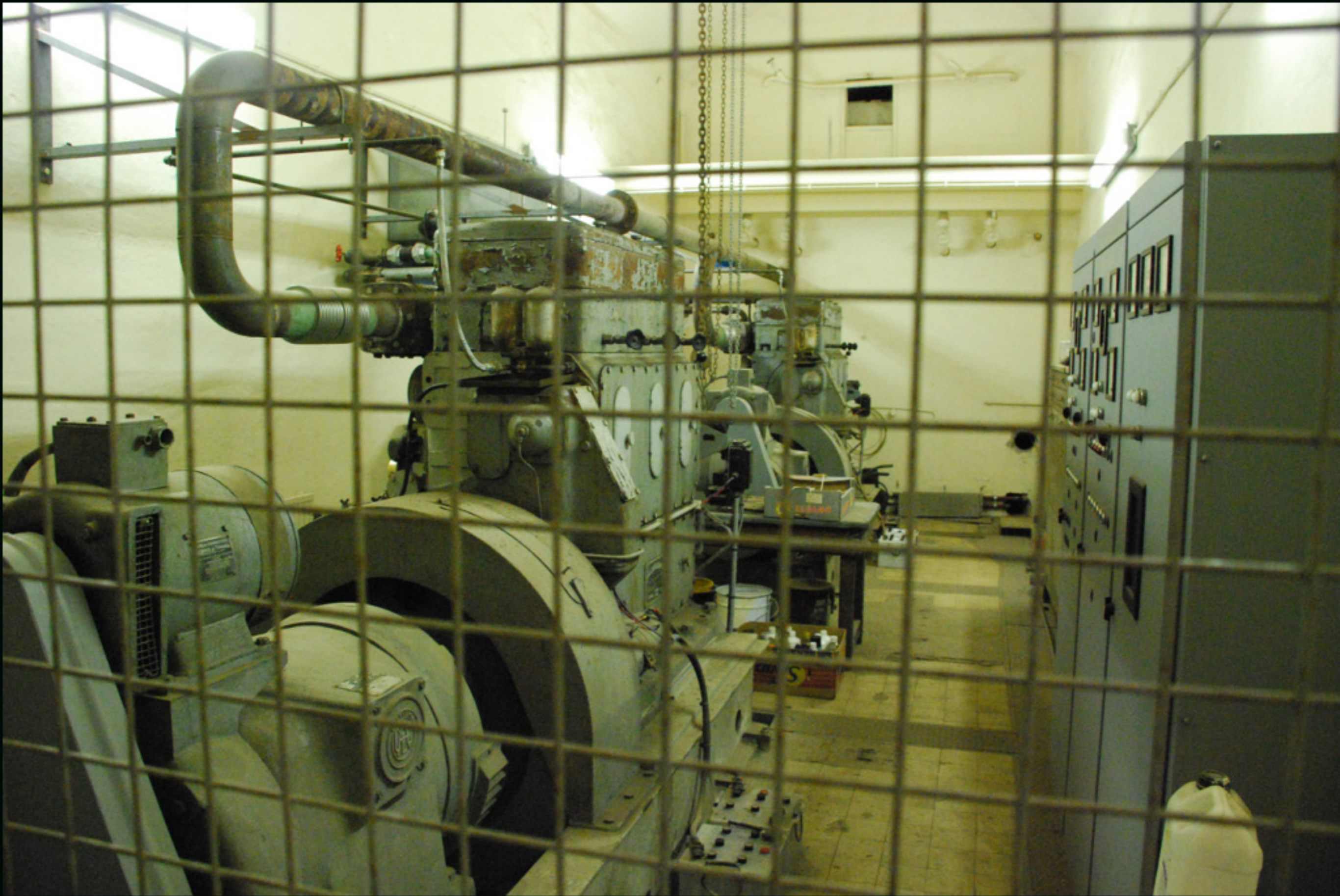
Our tour took us into the tunnels deep underground



Thick doors  
sealed each  
corridor





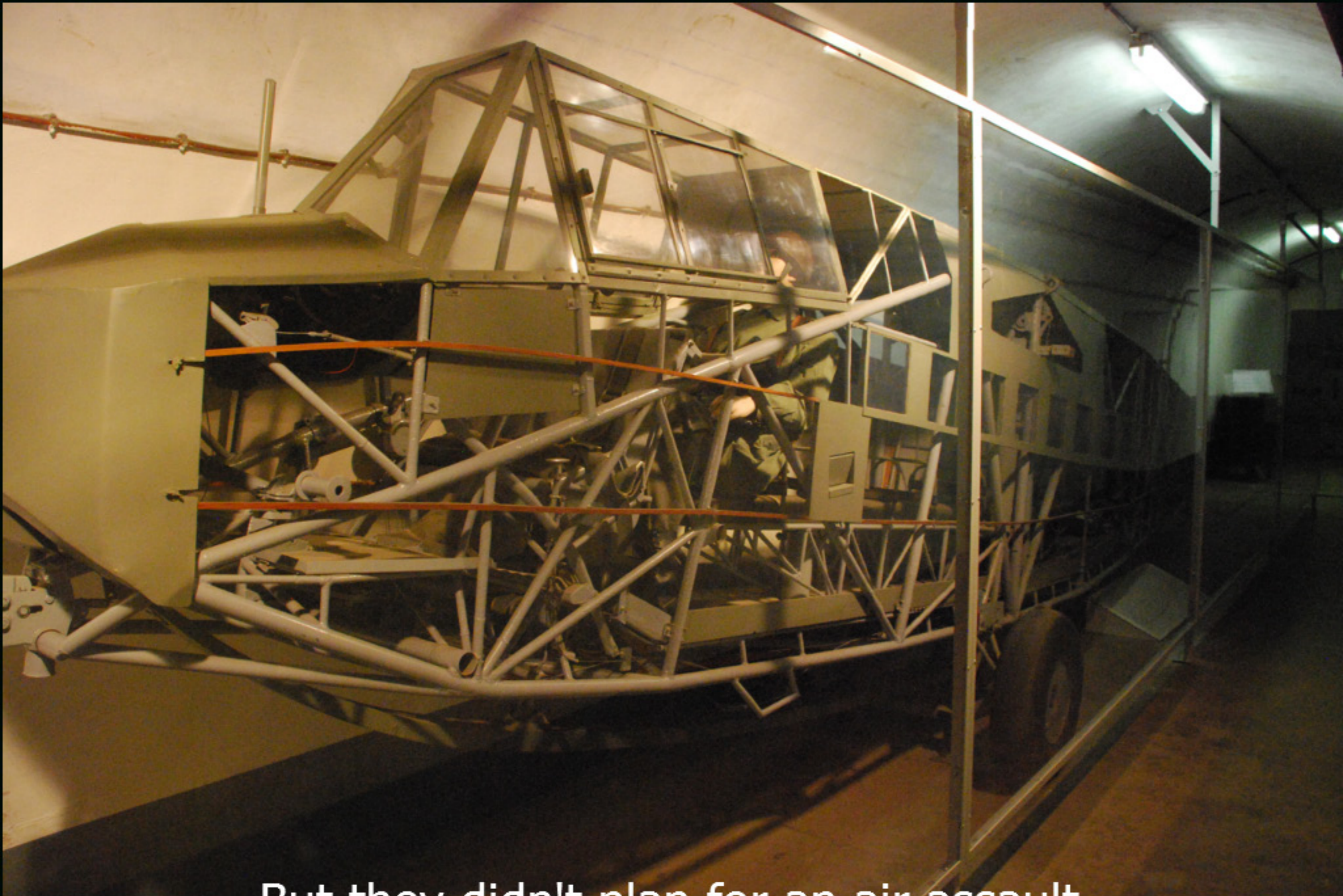


The fort was designed to be self-sufficient for months



They planned for every possibility; these canisters of charcoal were in case of gas attack





But they didn't plan for an air assault,  
with gliders

75 men with small shaped-charge explosives...





...punched holes in all the turrets....

Within an hour, the fort  
was neutralized







The Germans soon  
broke into the fort  
itself...

...more charges destroyed the other guns...





...and in less than a day, the mighty  
"Fortissimus" was swept aside