

**Brussels, August 11, 1914.** --- Our halls have been filled with Germans and Americans., the latter in smaller numbers and the former in larger crowds than ever. They are gradually being got out of the country, however, and those who are going to remain are being induced to go to the right authorities, so that their troubles will soon be settled to a large extent, and they will not be coming here so much. We are getting off hundreds of telegrams about the whereabouts and welfare of Americans and others here and in other parts of Europe; this work alone is enough to keep a good-sized staff working, and we have them hard at it.

This afternoon I went over to the British Legation and saw Colonel Fairholme, the military attaché, for a few minutes. He was just back from a trip out into the wilds with a party of British officers and was so clearly rushed that I had not the heart to detain him, although I was bursting with curiosity about the news he evidently had concealed about him. He appreciates the lenient way I have treated him, and goes out of his way to let me have anything that he can.

While I was out we saw a German monoplane which sailed over the city not very high up. The newspapers have published a clear description of the various aeroplanes that are engaged in the present war, so that nobody will be foolish enough to fire at those of the allies when they come our way. This one was clearly German, and the Garde Civique and others were firing at it with their rifles, but without any success. Our Legation guard, which consists of about twenty-five men, banged away in a perfect fusillade, but the airman was far too high for them to have much chance of hitting him.

Yesterday afternoon when the German biplanes passed over the city, a Belgian officer gave chase in a monoplane, but could not catch them. Contests of this sort

are more exciting to the crowd than any fancy aviation stunts that are done at exhibitions, and the whole town turns out whenever an aeroplane is sighted.

This morning I presented myself at the German Legation with the imposing *laisser-passer* furnished me by the Military Governor of Brabant, but the guard on duty at the door had not received orders to let me in and turned me down politely but definitely. I took the matter up with the Foreign Office and said that I wanted it settled, so that I would not have any more fruitless trips over there. At five an officer from the *État-Major* of the Garde Civique came for me in a motor and took me over to the Legation, to give orders in my presence that whenever I appeared I was to be allowed to pass without argument. As I got into the motor I noticed that the soldier who was driving the car looked at me with a twinkle in his eye, but paid no attention to him. When I took a second look I saw that it was G. B., with whom I had played golf several times. I am constantly being greeted by people in uniform whom I had known at one time or another. It is hard to recognise them in uniform.



Belgian War  
Medals

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Medals

So far as operations in Belgium are concerned, we may not have anything big for some days to come; but, in the meantime, work of preparation is being pushed rapidly and supplies and reinforcements are being rushed to the front. Half the

shops in town are closed, and all the people are working either in the field or taking care of the wounded or prisoners. There are said to be some eight thousand German prisoners in Belgium, and it is some work to take care of them all.

In GIBSON, Hugh (Secretary of the American Legation in Brussels, 1914) ; *A journal from our Legation in Belgium* ; New York ; Doubleday, Page & Company Garden City; 1917 :

<http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/memoir/Legation/GibsonTC.htm>

### **Footnotes.**

It would be also 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%20Oguerre\\_de\\_Paul\\_Max\\_bdef.pdf](http://www.museedelavilledebruxelles.be/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/Fichier_PDF/Fonte/Journal_de%20Oguerre_de_Paul_Max_bdef.pdf)