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LITTLE CORNER  
NEVER CONQUERED

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VAN SCHAICK

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The Story of the American Red Cross  
War Work for Belgium

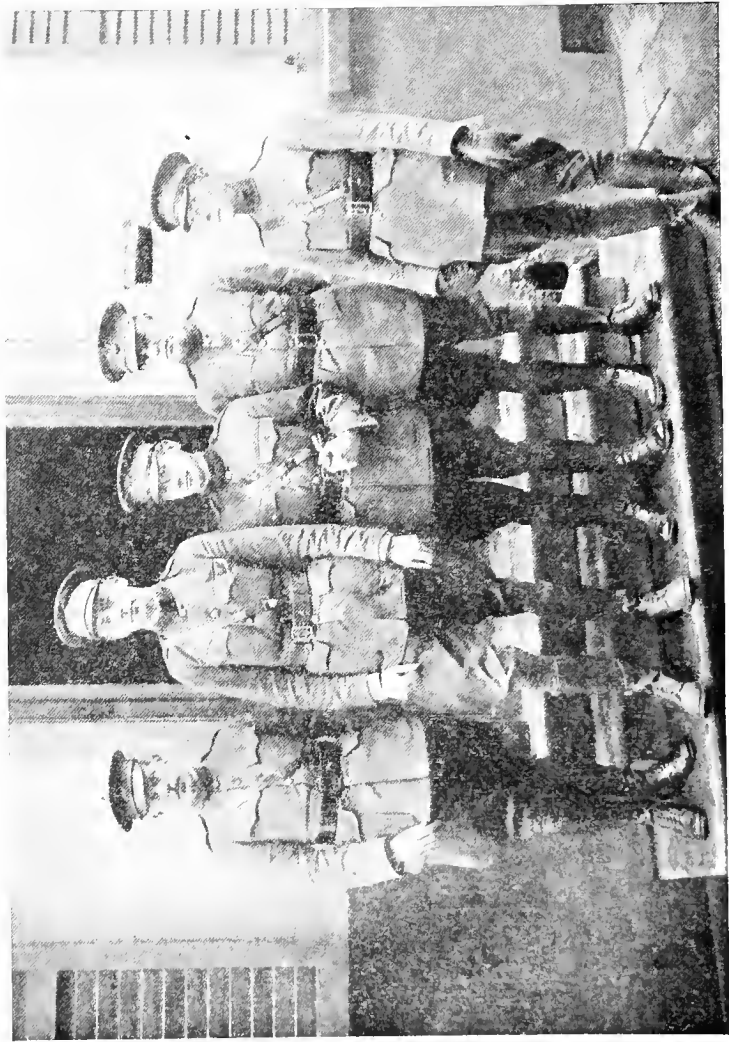


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**Red Cross Officers at Bruges.**

Left to Right: Leonard Chester Jones, John W. Gummere, Ernest W. Corn, J. W. Lee and John van Schatck, Jr.

(See page 47)

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The Story of the American Red Cross  
War Work for Belgium

*By*

**John van Schaick, Jr.**

Formerly Lieutenant Colonel U. S. Army (Assimilated Rank)

Formerly Commissioner to Belgium

A. R. C.

**New York**

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I dedicate this book to my wife,  
who went with me to Europe in  
1915 for work with the Rocke-  
feller Foundation War Relief  
Commission and again in 1917  
for work with the American  
Red Cross.



## PREFACE

Before I left Brussels in April, 1919, I agreed to write the story of the American Red Cross work for Belgium.

Other things prevented until March, 1921, when I got at it.

The lapse of time has been fortunate, as I am convinced that we are past the period when "people do not want to hear anything more about the war."

There are some indications of the beginning of a period bound to come when every detail of that stupendous struggle will be read with a deepening interest and a truer perspective.

The Commission for Belgium of the American Red Cross was small in comparison with many other Red Cross Commissions. It operated on somewhat different lines. It handled less than five million of the four hundred million dollars raised by the American people through the American Red Cross for war relief.

But this Commission was set down in one of the most dramatic and picturesque sections of Europe, where a brave people and a heroic King made a last stand to save their country, and where powerful armies of England and representative divisions of France and the United States fought through to a glorious end.

This book tells something of the story of war in Flanders, of life in that part of France which supported Flanders, and of the work of the American Red Cross in helping Belgian hospitals, cheering Belgian soldiers, saving Belgian children, and lifting the load of misery which settled down on both refugees and those who refused to fly.

I am putting the foreign agencies we used in the forefront of the story, because the policy of our Commissioner

## PREFACE

was to "put responsibility squarely up to the Belgians for their own job, and to hold ourselves to guiding, cheering and helping with the resources of the United States."

No ordinary words are adequate to express the deep respect and abiding admiration which I feel for the American men and women who worked with our British, French and Belgian colleagues in these great tasks.

The Americans showed courage, skill and sense. They promoted understanding and good will between different nations and races.

Because the toil was mainly their toil and the leadership mainly that of our first Commissioner, I feel free to say frankly that the work was work in which the American people will take increasing pride as they find out more about it, and that it will stand the test of the most rigid investigation.

In the Library of Congress and the National Headquarters of the American Red Cross in Washington, I have found constant help, without which I could not have done this work. Especially I am indebted to Mr. George B. Chadwick and to Mrs. M. S. Fergusson, of the American Red Cross, for valuable suggestions.

John van Schaick, Jr.

Washington, D. C.,  
July 17, 1921.

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War Work for Belgium



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## CHAPTER I

### The First Commission to Europe

WITH the approval of the United States Government, the War Council of the American Red Cross sent a Commission to Europe in June, 1917.

The head of the Commission was Grayson M. P. Murphy, a graduate of West Point, and a successful New York banker, who had shortly before been commissioned as Major in the United States Reserve Corps and placed on General Pershing's staff. He had a record for getting things done quickly in the business world and for making men like him. In war time there is need of getting things done quickly in the relief field, and of making men pull together. The choice of Major Murphy, therefore, was a happy one.

For the beginning of the Commission to Belgium, we must go back to the S. S. La Touraine of the *Compagnie Générale Transatlantique* on which the Commission sailed June 2, 1917. On board the project of relief work in Belgium was talked over and plans were made.

The War Council had defined a great task and then sent a Commission untrammelled by specific directions. "We are now in the war," they had said in substance. "It will be a year at least before the Government can strike a blow which will count in a military way. Meanwhile, in every other way possible, it is necessary for us to cheer our Allies, help their armies and civilian populations.

and prevent an adverse decision before we get there in force. The job of the American Red Cross is to get to Europe as fast as possible, establish relations with every Allied government, express American sympathy and good will, help lift the burden of war misery and, by sympathy and help, keep up morale."

The subsequent history of the Allies and Von Ludendorff's Memoirs furnish eloquent testimony as to the decisive part played by morale.

The conferences on shipboard made us acquainted with one another and with what we had in hand. Among those who sailed with us, not yet of our party, was the late beloved Ralph Preston. He had been in Paris since the outbreak of the war, had helped organize the American Relief Clearing House for French and Belgians, and now was quietly but effectively working to have the American Red Cross start by taking over the offices, staff and good will of this organization.

There were also Leeds and Scattergood, American Friends, destined to organize one of the most useful units affiliated with us in war relief work.

Among the members of our Commission was Ernest P. Bicknell, former National Director of the American Red Cross, who had been abroad the first year of the war as Director of the Rockefeller Foundation War Relief Commission. In one of the conferences on shipboard, Mr. Bicknell described his experiences with this Commission in 1914 and 1915, when he had visited England, Holland, Germany, Austria, Serbia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Switzerland, France, Italy and Belgium. He said that the first step taken by the American Red Cross in a disaster in any American city was to get into touch with the local authorities, Mayor and Common Council, and the local relief agencies, and to cooperate with them, so that in every disaster the relief agencies might be united. He said that the same principle underlay all successful relief work anywhere, and that our policy should be to work with gov-

ernments of the respective countries and to use existing relief agencies where we could.

Another thing Bicknell said to us as we walked the deck put the whole project in a nutshell:

“Every relief job has three sides. If you fail in any of them your whole job will be a failure: (1) Purchase of supplies, (2) Transportation, and (3) Distribution.”

In other words, “You have to get your wheat, carry it, and distribute it.”

“Each one of these phases of the job calls for an organization highly specialized. For the first you need people who can raise money, and go into the markets and spend it wisely. For the second you need trained transportation men and the cooperation of armies and governments. For the third you need men of unusual balance, speed, courage and tact to help people without harming and without offending.”

Every day Major Murphy said either to a group or to individual members of the party: “We are relief forces and not combat forces, but the first duty of the American Red Cross is to help win the war. We have to remember that these people over there are very tired and very sensitive. I want you to pocket your pride and not get into arguments.

“If a Red Cross man is high and mighty with a single hotel waiter, he will hurt the whole Red Cross.

“Remember that these people who have been doing relief work in Europe since the beginning of the war know a lot more about it than we do. Play the game with them.

“Any man who can't handle himself in French in three months enough to do business will be considered an undesirable member of this party.

“Any man who tries to pull off star plays at the expense of team work will soon draw his release.

“I don't know a thing about it. I've got to depend on you fellows to put it over.”

The members of the party in addition to those mentioned were as follows: James H. Perkins, afterward Commissioner to France and Commissioner to Europe; William Endicott, afterward Commissioner to Great Britain; Reverend Robert Davis, long afterward Commissioner to Austria; John van Schaick, Jr., afterward Commissioner to Belgium; Carl Taylor, afterward Commissioner to various countries; Reverend E. D. Miel; C. G. Osborne; R. J. Daly; A. W. Copp; Thomas H. Kenny; Paul Rainey; Frederick Hoppin; Frederick Hoffman; Ernest McCullough; F. R. King; and Philip Goodwin.

Mrs. John van Schaick, Jr., was permitted to go on condition that it should not be official, but once on shipboard, Major Murphy saw that her knowledge of French and long experience abroad would be of value, and set her to work at once.

So we went to Europe, with gymnastics every morning, French classes all over the ship, and hourly conferences about the big job ahead of us.

We learned for the first time by wireless that General Pershing was en route at the same time, headed for England, and heard that we were to be militarized and made a part of the American Expeditionary Forces.

Bicknell and I were given the Department of Social and Economic Conditions, he of course as chief and I as assistant chief. We were set to work to study and plan.

We went down along the Marne and saw the relief and reconstruction work of the English Quakers "War Victims Relief Committee."

A number of times we went up into the Somme and Aisne around Noyon, Ham, Nesle and Roye, and studied the section which had been evacuated by the Germans the preceding March, and which the Germans called the evacuated region, the French the reconquered region, and the Americans the devastated region.

We saw towns near the old trenches, unavoidably destroyed by shell fire, and places like Chauny knocked

down deliberately by the Germans with the battering ram, or explosives on the eve of their retirement.

We went up into the British Zone to Calais, Boulogne, St. Omer, Amiens, Peronne, Bapaume and Bray.

We motored to Le Havre to visit the Belgian Government and to La Panne to visit the Belgian front.

With all the destruction, we saw something of the relief work undertaken by the French and Belgian Governments, and of innumerable private committees. There were English committees for the French, for the Belgians, and for the French and Belgians combined. There were French committees working simply for the French, and Belgian committees working for the Belgians, and committees of both working for both. There were also many American organizations and many Americans associated with French organizations.

We discovered, of course, rivalry between different organizations and something of a frantic desire on the part of French military officials to get some of these relief people off their backs.

We were, however, cordially welcomed as representatives of the American Red Cross, and again and again asked to help promote cooperation among the many individuals and committees at work and anxious to work.

Meanwhile, in the Paris office of the American Red Cross, C. G. Osborne, of Chicago, had organized transportation; Carl Taylor, buying; and Smith, of the Paris Branch of the Guaranty Trust Company, accounting. These three departments, from the very beginning, were given to understand that they were not only to serve France but every other allied country as they had opportunity.

In these early days the entire Commission could meet in one room, and everybody helped and advised everybody else.

Every ship coming into Bordeaux brought new arrivals for the Red Cross work. Of those coming that first sum-

mer, Homer Folks and Livingston Farrand were to play very important parts in European relief. Mr. Folks took over Civil Affairs of the Commission for France, and Dr. Farrand organized the Commission for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in France, of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Dr. Farrand, however, from the beginning was a co-operating force in all the affairs of the Red Cross. He took offices with us and gave up Folks, who had come for Tuberculosis work with him, to our organization.

For organizing ability and all that makes great executives in the field of relief, Folks and Farrand made records unsurpassed.

The American Relief Clearing House, whose work we had taken over, had for some time sent supplies of food and clothing to individuals and committees dealing with Belgian refugees, and medical supplies to Belgian hospitals.

As we went on with our study in France, the Belgian problem began to emerge as a separate thing. Mr. Bicknell and I were somewhat familiar with the Belgian situation on the other side of the fighting lines. Over that impassable barrier lay the greater part of the little country and by far the greater number of the people. Both of us had cooperated more or less the first two years of the war in the work of Herbert Hoover, head of the Commission for Relief in Belgium. We knew Occupied Belgium with its seven and a half millions of people; its German guards at every turn; its masses of German troops in garrison and on the march; and its *Comité National*, made up of the best blood of little Belgium, working in the last and least little hamlet to feed and clothe the people. For us now, Occupied Belgium was something like Germany itself, shut in by an iron wall and known only vaguely through rumor, surmise, the isolated experiences of people who escaped, or the rare visits of Belgians who came out on mission.

But on our journeys that summer we discovered an-

other Belgium, "*Belgique Libre*," standing in mighty contrast to "*Belgique Occupée*." It was made up of two hundred and fifty thousand Belgian refugees in France; one hundred and eighty thousand in England; thirty thousand in Switzerland; eighty thousand in Holland; the Belgian Civil Government, which had been given asylum by the French at Ste. Adresse, Le Havre (*Seine Inférieure*); the King and Queen at La Panne; and the Belgian Army in their trenches on the Yser.

Installed in the Red Cross offices in Paris that first summer was a very intelligent old French gentleman, the Count de Moreuil, a friend of H. O. Beatty, Director General of the American Red Cross at that time, who tried, kindly and tactfully, to guide our first steps in a new country. Under date of August 9, he dictated a memorandum for the Department of Social and Economic Conditions, calling attention to the colonies of Belgian children in the Seine Inferieure, stating that on account of recent military operations in Flanders many hundred new évacués had been received, and that thousands more might come. He said that we should make ourselves familiar with the situation.

Immediately, Mr. Bicknell made arrangements to go to visit M. Berryer, the Belgian Minister of the Interior at Le Havre, and to study this situation at first hand. He knew what the rest of us discovered, that the way to get a clear vision was to go and see in person. No matter what imagination a man has, in the midst of a great war, the responsible executive authorities must be field men at least part of the time, if their judgment is to count for anything.

Mr. Bicknell, however, was held in Paris by other work and sent me on this first Belgian visit. I took with me Edward Eyre Hunt, for a long time of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, who had just come for work abroad with the Red Cross.

Out of Paris by the long Champs Elysées past St. Ger-

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main en Laye, then down the lovely winding valley of the Seine, a fast automobile reaches Rouen, seventy-five miles away, in between two and three hours, and the great port, Le Havre, fifty miles farther on, in two hours more.

But before Rouen is reached, there must be crossed the boundaries of ancient Normandy, part of which is in the modern French department, the Seine Inférieure. Here we found hundreds of Belgian children taken from the front by the Belgian Government. Three thousand we found had been put in colonies of from fifty to two hundred around Paris, and three thousand more in the Seine Inférieure and up along the coast between Le Havre and Calais.

At Yvetot, half way between Le Havre and Rouen, the Belgian Government had stationed a Commissioner, Mr. Olbrecht, in general charge. On Sunday, August 12, he took us to visit the colonies at Yvetot, Caudebec, Saus-say, Malaise and Ouville l'Abbaye. The children were all well clothed, apparently well nourished and were cared for by nuns of different religious orders, with a priest here and there as a teacher or chaplain for a group of colonies. We discovered that they had their hard problems, one of which was the difficulty of obtaining milk for younger children. Cows were selling around nine hundred francs and before a year, got up to fifteen and sixteen hundred francs.

Another serious thing was lack of clothing and cloth for clothing. At St. Illery, Olbrecht said they were trying to teach boys the fundamental principles of agriculture, gardening and care of stock. They needed chickens, cows, sheep, pigs and four draft horses. They wanted to raise for themselves what they ate and to furnish other colonies.

The food situation in general was better in the Seine Inférieure than around Paris and in less fertile parts of France. It was a country of orchards and grain fields, of gardens and pastures. We saw many French departments

in the ensuing months but nowhere did the country people bring in as much garden stuff as here. But here, as everywhere in the world, in peace or war, equalizing of supply depended upon transport, and transport was staggering under the burden of war.

These colonies were supported in two ways:

(1) By grant of the French Government;

(2) By funds of the Belgian Minister of the Interior.

The grant of the French Government was a grant made to all refugees driven from their homes by the movement of armies. It consisted of francs, 1.25 per day for adults and 50 centimes for children. With characteristic generosity the French Government extended the benefit of the law to Belgians on the same terms as to their own people.

The funds of the Minister of the Interior were not funds of the government but funds contributed by relief committees all over the world, but principally in England, for use of Belgian refugees.

That first Sunday of the distinctively Belgian work, we got into touch by long distance telephone with this Minister, M. Berryer, and arranged to meet him at the temporary Belgian capitol, Ste. Adresse, Le Havre.

We met three people at Le Havre on this first trip destined to be closely associated with our work: M. Berryer, Brand Whitlock and Madame Henry Carton de Wiart. M. Berryer, a lawyer of Liège, is a member of the Catholic party, a man of independent means and rather broad views. He told us that he needed our help, that the war had gone on and his funds were running down and he must not get entirely without money. He said the Belgian Government was living on borrowed money and he could not turn to the public treasury; that he had the responsibility for all the refugees, all the sick, infirm old people whether refugees or not, and all the children still at the front and in his colonies. He told us that the recent attack of the British with the counter battery work of the Germans had forced the evacuation

of many additional children, and that he might at any time have all the people left in Free Belgium as refugees on his hands.

With Mr. Brand Whitlock we began that day an association which lasted all through the war, in which he placed himself and all his experience freely at our service. Of this great American we shall write hereafter.

Madame Henry Carton de Wiart, wife of the Belgian Minister of Justice, had just been released from a German prison and sent around through Switzerland to rejoin her husband at Le Havre. In a beautiful chateau at Harfleur, outside Le Havre, under huge trees, surrounded by lovely flowers, with happy children, she talked of things hard to visualize in these surroundings: life under the iron German rule in Brussels, the spying and watching and waiting; the arrest, the trial and the months in Germany. In their fiercest moments the Germans never terrorized this bright-faced, keen-witted, charming, resourceful lady. Both she and Whitlock told us we were needed to help the Belgians.

M. Berryer insisted, after a brief interview with us, that we go to the front and see for ourselves. He got the frontier post at Ghyvelde, two hundred miles away, on the telephone, and arranged for us to pass the frontier line between France and Belgium without passes.

With little time at our disposal we pushed off late in the day on the two-hundred-mile trip from Le Havre to the Belgian front, following the coast up through Dieppe, Eu, Abbeville, Montreuil-sur-Mer, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Calais and Dunkirk to La Panne, where we arrived in the afternoon of the next day. In my diary of August fourteenth, I wrote:

"It is always a significant thing to pass a frontier, but in war time it is a line of destiny for thousands. It was a great experience today to cross the frontier and to be tonight on the water front surrounded by every conceivable spectacle of war, tens of thousands of English troops, and

to realize that it is Belgium, the little strip ten miles wide and thirty miles long, to which Albert and his troops have clung—with the German lines only six miles away; Ostend, where we used to cross the channel, just up the coast; Looten Hulle, where we used to visit our friends, the Hulins, only thirty miles from here, but under the Germans.”

Our business was to study the half destroyed villages back of the Belgian and British Armies, in which civilians were still living. We were conducted by M. Jean Steyaert, destined also to be one of our closest associates until the end of the war. M. Steyaert was *Commissaire d'Arrondissement de Furnes-Dixmude*, a position which corresponds to *Sous-Préfet* in France.

Belgium in peace time is divided into nine provinces, each of which has a Governor appointed by the Minister of the Interior. Under each Governor are Commissaires, and under the Commissaires, burgomasters of towns and cities. All that was left of Belgium was part of the province of West Flanders, under Governor Janssens van Bisthoven. Under the Governor in 1917 were M. Steyaert and M. Biebuyck, the *Commissaire* of Ypres.

On August fifteenth I forwarded a report to Red Cross headquarters, saying in substance this:

“La Panne, August 15, 1917.

“I arrived here last night from Dunkirk and am leaving for Paris late today.

“I came up because at Le Havre the Minister of the Interior said that there were fifty thousand people who might have to be evacuated at once and because he was most anxious to have Red Cross help.

“I have seen the villages where conditions are especially dangerous today, Alveringhem, Coxyde and Furnes, with the *Commissaire d'Arrondissement*, M. Jean Steyaert. In all three places there are left five thousand civilians of which twelve hundred are children. Alveringhem is eight

kilometers, Coxyde ten kilometers and Furnes ten and a half kilometers from the lines. All are shelled more or less and all exposed to gas attack. In Alveringhem the people have moved out on the dunes as it is considered safer.

"In Coxyde they live in the village. In Furnes they go out and pass the nights on the farms around about, and also in little shanties they have erected.

"If La Panne should have to be evacuated there would be four or five thousand people to be evacuated out of a total civil population of eleven thousand. The others, the *Commissaire* says, would not go unless things were very bad, and then they would go by themselves.

"Here is an important thing. The babies are still back of the lines. No children under three are evacuated. They take them now from three to fifteen years of age. But they want to hire another farm, put up some barracks and evacuate fifty babies at once.

"As for work in the rear around Le Havre and Rouen, I am convinced that it is well done.

"It is under Catholic sisters. In fact practically all the people are Catholics and the sisters are a fine lot.

"I am convinced that the Minister of the Interior handles the thing well. His man at Yvetot is a barrister and very able. Madame Henry Carton de Wiart represents the Minister and has exceptional ability also. The *Sous-Préfet* (French) at Abbeville, who has taken charge at Cayeux and Nouveau Brighton, has had long experience in this kind of work."

On August 17, 1917, supplementing this report, I recommended to Mr. Bicknell that we help start a baby farm colony near the front, put up two new colonies for children farther down the coast, establish a warehouse at Dunkirk or some other point well forward, and assemble emergency supplies. I suggested also that we put some games and toys in the colonies of Normandy.

That modest request for toys has often been referred to as the only request which the War Council in Washington refused to grant the Commission to Europe. It was believed that spending money for toys for famine stricken Europe would be misunderstood in the United States. The War Council, however, suggested another way and we got the money from another source.

On August 16, Major Murphy went to La Panne to see the King and Queen of the Belgians. He came back by Le Havre and conferred with the Ministers of the Belgian Government.

Major Murphy always moved with great speed. Under date of August 6 I had set down in my diary an impression of Major Murphy I never had to change:

"The wheels are turning fast. Murphy is putting drive into it. I am more cheered about the way the thing is going than I have been at any time. Some of our unofficial advisors, who, in themselves, are lovable fellows, take the attitude, 'Oh, that is very dangerous. We must be careful. The government must be handled right. The French nature is very peculiar.' Murphy's attitude is 'Damn the torpedoes. We have got to move.'"

On August 20 he directed that a department for Belgium be immediately organized with Mr. Bicknell as chief and with me as assistant chief—that we make our headquarters at Le Havre, and cooperate closely with the Belgian Government. He said emphatically to us: "I do not want you to attempt to build up great specialized services like transportation, accounting and purchase, but depend on Paris. We are getting over the best men in the United States to run these departments and we want to put them at the service of the Red Cross organizations throughout Europe."

Major Murphy said later, "I organized a department for Belgium and soon turned it into an independent Commission to Belgium for three reasons: First, I thought it a better way to do business, that it would spur up the

men on the separate commissions and give them more pride in their work. Second, I knew that it would please the different countries to have Commissions of their own and not deal simply with Paris. Third, I knew that decentralization was necessary with a thing as big as our work."

Three days after our appointment, two of the Belgian Ministers appeared upon Major Murphy's invitation for a conference with us: Vandevyvere, Minister of Finance, and Berryer, Minister of the Interior. Vandevyvere spoke almost faultless English. He had been several times in the United States and liked Americans. He acted in this interview as interpreter for Berryer, under whose department all of our civil work for Belgians would have to be done. Only three things were accomplished at this first interview, but they were vital. One was the beginning of an acquaintance and friendship with the heads of the Belgian Government. The second was an agreement that all our work would be undertaken with the knowledge of the government. The third was the distinct acceptance on both sides of the principle that the responsibility for the job was Belgian, and the American part, one of assistance and cooperation.

In the few remaining days in Paris we talked to everybody who knew Belgium. There was an American, Captain Colby, son of Admiral Colby, U.S.N., who had come over early in the war with a volunteer ambulance unit for Belgium, and had become a Captain of Artillery in the Belgian Army. "Watch your step," said he, "don't get mixed up in their politics. Work as much as you can through the Queen."

There was a former official of the American Relief Clearing House, who had helped Belgium. "Do what you can," said he, "for Belgium. Everybody praised them in the beginning. Everybody is beginning to damn them out now without rhyme or reason. It is not their fault that they can't go on and recapture their country. There

never was a region more terrible for soldiers than those lowlands of the Yser. See what has just happened to the British at Nieuport. Nor can the Belgians help it if the slum people of Antwerp make a bad impression as refugees in England. When all is said and done, the fact remains that they died by the thousands to stop Germany. They prevented a decision in her favor in 1914. They have fought our fight ever since."

They were words casually spoken, but with great earnestness; and we found them words of discrimination and truth.

Paris turned over to us one clerk, one automobile and one chauffeur in the last week of August. The chauffeur did not propose to get side-tracked with a little one-horse department, and struck. He flatly refused to go to Le Havre. Major Alexander Lambert dealt with his case for the transportation department and sent him back to New York. Not being willing to wait for a chauffeur, I drove the car. In a white painted Ford, known as the Lambert Ford, with Bicknell and the baggage in the back seat, and with my wife, newly appointed as interpreter and translator, seated beside me, the department for Belgium left Paris on Saturday, September 1, 1917, at exactly two-twenty P. M. with the cheers of some of the Red Cross pioneers ringing in our ears.

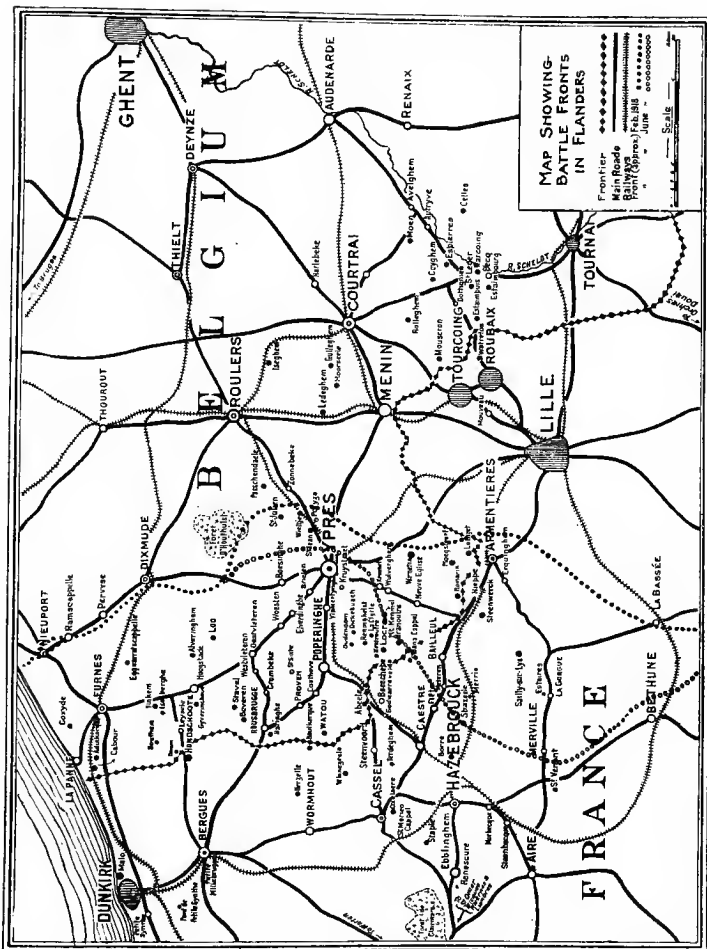
## CHAPTER II

### The Government at Le Havre

COMING from Paris by Yvetot, and reaching the top of the long hill above Harfleur, one gets a glorious view of the Seine, the port of Le Havre, and of the Atlantic Ocean beyond.

A yellow dirigible was moving gracefully about over the water. Two hydroplanes were going out to sea and two others were coming in. In the foreground an English camp stretched away to the right as far as we could see. There was a great volume of shipping in the harbor and on the Seine. That much we could be sure of at a glance. The blue sea, the curving coast line, a bold headland, the miles of roofs and a golden sunlight over everything made our first view memorable.

We went through Le Havre to Ste. Adresse, the temporary seat of the Belgian Government, a suburb to the northwest of the town, at the foot of the headland which guards the entrance to the harbor. Here Le Havre had tried to make another Nice without the sun and warmth of the Riviera, and had named it Nice-Havrais. But Dufayel, the promoter, had succeeded in building several hotels and many villas, and one huge office or apartment building on the steep ground sloping back from the harbor. One little hotel had been perched high up on the rocks far enough around so that it overlooked the surf of the ocean itself. It was called the *Hôtellerie*. Here the Belgian Ministers lived. Another larger hotel was built at the water's edge and named the *Hôtel des Régates* in honor of the frequent regattas of the yacht club. Here the Commission to Belgium installed itself.





Before any man or society can do effective work in any field he must know: First, what is to be done in that field, and, Second, who are already at work. The great stupidity often of relief work is duplication or competition. Our first great task therefore was to get acquainted.

There are three political parties in Belgium—the Catholic party, called the Clerical by its opponents, the Liberal, and the Socialist. The Catholic party is the party of the church. The Liberal party opposes Catholic control in the State, especially control of schools and government grants to religious institutions. It also opposes the Socialists in economic matters and is fully as much the party of property as the Catholic. Some Liberals are in the Catholic church but many of them have left all churches. A few are Protestant and a very few are Jews. The Socialists are against both other parties on economic questions. In spite of Catholic bitterness toward Socialists, Socialists curiously enough sometimes feel themselves more in sympathy with the Catholic attitude of interest in the masses than in what they call the aristocratic tendencies of Liberals.

When the war broke out, the Catholics had been in control for over thirty years. The King, however, summoned all parties to the service of the country. In a memorable session of Parliament he called Vandervelde, the Socialist leader, to the Cabinet, and Vandervelde, amid deafening cheers, shouted, "I accept." Soon after, Liberals were also called in and the Cabinet became "a sacred union for the war." The men in the Cabinet with whom we came to work intimately were Berryer, the Minister of the Interior, a Catholic; Vandervelde, Minister of Intendance, a Socialist; and General De Ceuninck, Minister of War, a Liberal.

The Belgian Government was situated at Le Havre, two hundred miles from the front, because there was no room for them any nearer. The first plan had been to give them Abbeville, a hundred miles north, but the British had

needed Abbeville as a forward railroad base. Those of us who saw Abbeville "straffed" by aviators in 1918 and completely evacuated, were glad that the Belgian Government had not been put there. Only two or three times was Le Havre visited by the German aviators. The trouble at Le Havre was congestion. The French city of ante bellum times had some one hundred and thirty thousand people; Le Havre of war time had one hundred thousand more. Practically no new buildings were erected during the war. There were twenty thousand Belgian refugees to be crowded in somewhere. In addition, the port had been turned over to the British as a base, and docks and warehouses were crowded with British supplies. Into this port there poured a steady line of British troops and out of it a steady stream of British wounded "bound for Blighty." Here also in 1918, as at Calais, St. Nazaire and Bordeaux, the Americans landed. French, Belgian and British hospitals found room where they could, and welfare workers of many kinds came here to meet the troops and help the wounded.

Into the midst of these important French and British activities, Belgian organizations were set down. Out at Gravelle there were Belgian munition plants employing fifteen thousand people. Up on the hill above Ste. Adresse there was another huge plant making and repairing auto trucks and other supplies. Twenty thousand Belgian soldiers were employed here and three thousand worked in the government departments.

Only one department stayed at the front. Against the wishes of his colleagues, General De Ceuninck, who succeeded Baron de Broqueville as Minister of War in 1917, established his headquarters in an old chateau just outside of Furnes, some six miles from the lines. His officers and clerks were in long wooden barracks behind the chateau. He was a brave old warrior who had commanded a division and he could not bear to be at the rear. As a result, however, of this insistence on living in the danger

zone, all his barracks were burned by German shells in 1918 and very important records were destroyed. There are always malicious people to criticize those who work at the rear in war time. This destruction of Belgian war records emphasized the importance of that courage which dares stay back when the best service demands it.

Besides Berryer and Vandervelde, we found here at Le Havre, the Baron de Broqueville, President of the Council of Ministers, a Catholic and a man of great personal charm. We knew him as the Minister who had stood up in the Chamber at Brussels at the beginning of the war, and in a speech of great power announced the fateful decision of the government to oppose the passage of German troops. We met also Pouillet, Minister of Science and Arts, another Catholic, who was elected President of the Chamber of Deputies in the reorganization after the armistice; Helleputte, Minister of Agriculture and Public Works, very firmly Catholic and Flemish, well versed in English, a man of very genial presence, especially kind to us, but who was disliked above his party associates by Liberals and Socialists for his unbending political views.

Paul Hymans, a Protestant, a great orator and interesting man, was the leader of the Liberal party in this Le Havre Cabinet. He was Minister of Foreign Affairs. We, of course, had little to do with him officially. His wife, however, a cultured, intelligent and generous Jewess of Brussels, became one of our best agents and partners. Their home on the Côte was a charming center socially, Paul Hymans in 1920 became the first President of the League of Nations.

Count Goblet d' Alviella, another Liberal, was *Ministre d'Etat* or Minister—without portfolio. He was an elderly man, a great scholar and a professor of comparative religions in the University of Brussels. He was the head of the Free Masons of Belgium and as such especially opposed to the rule of Catholics. Yet Count Goblet and

M. Helleputte, the Catholic, were the two Presidents of the *Comité Officiel Belge des Réfugiés*, and always had courteous relations. We quickly came into friendly association with the Goblets; the young Countess Hélène Goblet we soon discovered to be one of the fairest and finest of characters and one of the most devoted of workers for her country. Her service to the British, French, Belgian and American armies through the British Y. M. C. A. was one of the fine spiritual contributions of the war.

Jules Renkin, Minister of the Colonies, was regarded as a very able leader of the Catholic party. Earlier, like Henry Carton de Wiart, he had been called a Catholic-Democrat, but with the growth of democracy in the world, the party caught up with him near enough to insure his good standing and even his leadership.

Madame Renkin, a charming lady, was at the head of a work for Belgian soldiers *en repos*.

Henry Carton de Wiart was Minister of Justice in the government at Le Havre, retiring from the Cabinet upon the return to Brussels, to become Ambassador to Holland. Later he became President of the Council of Ministers, or Prime Minister. Courtly, polished, an orator, a writer of distinction, one always instinctively wanted to call him Count or Baron.\* His wife makes a strong impression upon Americans. They first think of her as a member of the American Prison Association, a subscriber to the Survey, and as the woman who introduced the Juvenile Court into Belgium. Then they find her the mother of four lovely girls whose names all begin with "G": Ghislaine, Georgette, Gudule, Guillemette,—and of two boys, the older a veteran of the World War while still in his teens. As they come to know her they find her very devout, her religion finding expression in all kinds of charitable activities. In Belgium, when Germans were the stranded ones, the first weeks of the war, she worked for Germans. When Belgium went under the German yoke, she stayed and took up the burden of her poor coun-

\*Recently created Count.

trymen. In Le Havre she was at the head of the *Vestiaire* of the American Red Cross and agent of the Minister of the Interior for children's colonies. But between Brussels and Le Havre, she served a term in a German prison. She passed the weary months of confinement in translating Whitlock's "Forty Years of It" into French. Whitlock, in his "Belgium," has told the dramatic story of her battle of wit and will with the Germans.

In those early days of getting acquainted, we often turned to Brand Whitlock for advice and sympathy. To his tea table, we took things obscure, and learned how much diplomats know which they can't publish. Of his help and friendship we shall speak hereafter.

Vandevyvere, Minister of Finance, had visited the United States several times, was often in England, and had a point of view and experience which made him of great service to us. "What I do not want," said he, "is to have Belgium held up in England and in the United States as a nation of beggars. I am grateful for appeals made for us by organizations like the American Red Cross, but we have suffered too much already by the wild talk of both frenzied Belgians and frenzied Americans. We take help now gratefully because we have to, both through you and through Hoover. But once give us back our country and help us get started, and we don't want any more talk about the poor Belgians. The relief must be cut off at the earliest possible moment."

Ségers, Minister of Railways, Hubert of Industry, and Liebaert and Cooreman, Ministers of State, completed the Havre Cabinet,—Cooreman becoming Prime Minister a little later and continuing to the end of the war.

Nearly all the Belgian Ministers and the members of their families were engaged in some form of relief work for their unhappy countrymen. To walk between them all and tread on no toes, to do the wise thing and not have it appear partisan or sectarian, would have been difficult had it not been for two things.

On their side, whatever their divisions, the Belgians wanted distress relieved and people saved, no matter what agency did it.

On our side, we tried to know all that was knowable about the rivalries of persons and institutions and then to walk as if they did not exist.

Underlying everything was the basic fact that these Belgians were likable human beings, no different in essentials from the people back home, and that we had a chief of our Belgian work who approached them with a dignity, a courtesy, and a good will which won their confidence and regard.

It was a little government without a country. It was separated from the King by a long, tiresome, all-day motor ride. It had to submit to more or less dictation from the big Allies who loaned it money,—and every reference to it out of Germany was couched in terms of the greatest contempt. But around it swirled all the currents of the war maelstrom. To it came the rumors, the gossip, and the authentic news. At it were directed two or three of Germany's most important peace efforts.

The Commission to Belgium of the American Red Cross was fortunate in establishing close relations with this government at Le Havre.

The Ministers knew the facts about their army, their hospitals, and their people wherever they were situated. They were able to tell us in a few words what relief measures had been undertaken, who were at work, what were the most pressing needs and the possibilities of future distress. They were never too busy to advise and help. They straightened out quickly questions of "circulation" or free movement of our personnel with British, French or their own military authorities. Their cooperation contributed largely to the success of Red Cross work for Belgium.

## CHAPTER III

### The Battle of the Yser

“NOW,” said the Germans to Brand Whitlock that tragic day in Brussels when Antwerp fell, “now watch us push the Belgian Government into the sea.” It was not that the Germans cared so much to punish the Belgians, Whitlock says, but that their great objective was Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Dieppe and the other channel ports which were the very life of the allied cause.

The “foolish, short-sighted Belgians” first of all had refused to drive a thrifty bargain and let the German armies through.

They had secondly at Liège put up a resistance which delayed the powerful forces destined to swing around and capture Paris. There would have been no battle of the Marne without Liège.

Finally, at Antwerp, they had defended the forts, some in bad condition, and consumed still more of the precious German time; they had disarranged the schedule until the High Command became both nervous and furious.\*

Then the King made a fateful decision to save his army from capture, extricated his forces, and gave up the place which every Belgian had regarded as a Gibraltar.

On Friday, October 9, 1914, the Germans entered Antwerp, and coming in to Whitlock’s house in Brussels, one of the higher officers exclaimed with glee, “Now watch us push the Belgians into the sea.”

The battle of the Yser with that of Ypres and Arras which followed, all a part of what Joffre calls “The Battle for Flanders,” had been reckoned throughout the war as

\**Belgium under the German Occupation.* Whitlock.

one of the decisive battles of the world. But only now are we beginning to get the story from the leaders:

Field Marshal Viscomte French of Ypres, the Sir John French of 1914, in his book "1914" describes the "stakes for which we were playing." He asks how it would have fared with the British Empire if from the end of October, 1914, up to the end of the war, the German right flank had been "established at Dieppe instead of at Nieuport." The enemy then would have had the whole of the department of the Pas de Calais, the ports of Dieppe, Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk, submarines would have closed the channel to British trade, England would have been starved out or invaded, "the horrors of air raids would have been multiplied a hundred fold," and long range artillery would have made effective practice across the channel at the English coast.

"The stakes for which we were playing," said he, "were nothing less than the safety, indeed, the very existence of the British Empire."

General von Falkenhayn, Chief of the German General Staff at the time, in "General Headquarters, 1914-16 and Its Critical Decisions," says:

"It seemed possible to bring the northern coast of France and therefore control of the English channel, into German hands. The prize to be won was worth the stake." It would make possible, "the drastic action against England and her sea traffic with submarines, aeroplanes and airships, which was being prepared as a reply to England's war of starvation." Each side was making desperate efforts to outflank the other. Success for either in the fall of 1914 might have meant speedy victory and the end of the war.

King Albert and the Belgians who were to play so decisive a part in the battle, during that second week of October, were marching west and south. They were in desperate condition. "The first of all to fight," they had been at it against heavy odds for over six weeks and were

about worn out. They had stood some terrible pounding, hoping daily for the Allies to come. Now they had lost nearly the whole country, but Foch for the French, and Sir John French for the English were sending urgent messages to them to save the coast. Where could they in their extremity make a stand against the new fresh armies constantly hurled at them?

Some sixty miles west of Antwerp is the fashionable seaside resort, Ostend, and ten miles down the coast toward the French frontier from Ostend is the mouth of the Yser River at Nieuport. Behind the Yser is a low-lying, marshy country, cut by canals and waterways feeding the Yser, which itself is here a canal 65 feet wide.

Like their forefathers in almost every century from Cæsar down, in their hour of peril, the Belgians made for the swamps and got ready to call on the water for help. They took their stand on the Yser and there for two weeks from October 15 on, they fought a battle which saved civilization, led by a King who already seems like a figure of mythology.

Said John Buchan in "Nelson's History of the War," "the forty miles between Lille and Nieuport suddenly became the Thermopylæ of the war."

This was the gateway to the coast, closed by the French on the south, the British at Ypres and the Belgians on the Yser. The battles of La Bassée, Arras, Ypres and the Yser are all a part of one struggle. Had the Germans won anywhere they would have won everywhere.

What made the Belgian end of it so dramatic was that everybody knew the Belgians had lost men and equipment, were short of ammunition and food, and were inexpressibly weary. "Little can be expected of the Belgians," said more than one allied despatch. "Their morale is shattered by continual retreat."

But they were men fighting for the last few square miles of their country. Only the King and Generals might know the great world issues. They knew that they were

fighting for their homes. And they were a stiff-necked, stubborn, unyielding folk.

From Nieuport-Bains where it entered the sea, the Yser was the front line for eleven miles, to Dixmude, where it makes a great bend south and southwest to its source in France.

Back of the Yser from one to one and a half miles and parallel all the way from Nieuport to Dixmude was a single track line of railway on a little embankment above the flatlands, which was destined to play a memorable part in the struggle.

The Belgians held the Yser to Dixmude and eleven miles of more solid land from Dixmude to Boesinghe, near Ypres. Subsequently their line was shortened to 15½ miles by French and British reinforcements. There were crossings of the Yser at St. George near Nieuport, at the Schoorbakke, Tervaele east of Pervyse, and at Dixmude.

The Belgians had from 60,000 to 80,000 men, 48,000 of whom were rifles. They had the help of 6,000 gallant French marines in Dixmude, two divisions of French territorials and another French division before the battle closed.

The Germans in front of the Belgians numbered 150,000 men—the army released by the fall of Antwerp and several new army corps under the Duke of Wurtemberg.

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, brother-in-law to the Queen of the Belgians, was one of the German High Command in Flanders during this struggle. Practically all through the war his presence on their front added a pathetic and dramatic touch to the situation.

For two weeks, Belgians and Germans were at close grips. The Germans coming down in force hurled the Belgians over the river and the Belgians fought their way back.\* Violent attempts were made to capture Dixmude—fifteen in one night, but Belgian artillery and

\**Nelson's History of the World War.*

French marines held it by an unending struggle. Not until November 10 did the Germans get into the town and then it was too late to do them any good.

Down the shore road against Nieuport itself, they made one powerful massed attack but at the crisis they were heavily shelled from the sea. British ships had crossed and were taking a hand where the Germans had not dreamed they would run the risk. But among other vessels, the British had three Brazilian craft built in England for patrol work on the Amazon River. They drew only four feet, seven inches of water. Heavily armored and converted into a kind of monitor, they could operate on the dangerous shoals where submarines could not attack them. With other old warships to help, they annoyed the Germans for five or six miles inland.\*

It was, says Buchan, like the Battles of the Dunes two hundred and fifty years before when Cromwell's fleet came to the help of the French and shelled the Spaniards from the sea.

In spite of all efforts, the battle seemed lost when the Germans at last fought their way over the Yser at the Schoorbakke and Tervaete, held their ground and kept crossing in force. But it was one thing to cross and another thing to spread out. There were dikes and canals everywhere, and then the railway bank, and Belgians behind everything. But the Germans were inexorable. For three days they slowly pushed on over the swampy ground. The men of Flanders however knew their waterways and the possibilities. There were no dykes to cut to let the ocean in but their faithful Yser was brimming full.\* At the most critical hour they completed a dam at Nieuport. Suddenly the Germans found puddles where none had been before, then pools, then their artillery was deep in mud, and then they were floundering in a foot of water. The river was spilling it over on to them. Even then they made a last effort. Under the eyes of the Kaiser himself,

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\**Nelson's History of the World War.*

picked volunteers charged through a foot of water and captured Ramscapele and a point on the railroad bank for the second time. But they could not advance. Wet, cold, miserable, they held it for the night, but on October 31 were driven out.

Finally, all the sluices of the feeders of the Yser were opened, the waters rose fast, drowning some of the Germans, and the battle was over.

The Belgians had lost 14,000 men killed and wounded.\* Their effective rifles were reduced to 32,000 men and half of the artillery was for the time put out of commission. But they had responded every time to the appeal of the King who begged for one day more—and another day more—through two horrible weeks.

They had established the lines of Free Belgium as they were to stand throughout the war. They had saved “the little corner never conquered” in which we of the American Red Cross were to see such stirring days and do so much of our work.

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\*Commander in Chief Belgian Army on “*The War of 1914*,” p. 85.

## CHAPTER IV

### “The Little Corner Never Conquered”

**D**URING the battle for Flanders two Commanders issued proclamations to their troops which have been preserved.

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, brother-in-law of King Albert and Queen Elisabeth of Belgium, on October 26, 1914, promulgated an army order commending several German corps and brigades, thanking the troops and closing with this appeal: “Soldiers, the eyes of the whole world are now directed upon you. You must not now lose your energy in the fight with our most hated foe, you must finally break his pride. He is already tired out. Already many officers and men have voluntarily surrendered. But the greatest and most decisive battle still remains before you. You must sustain it even to the end. The enemy must be crushed. You will persevere, you will not let him escape your fangs. We must conquer, we will conquer, we shall conquer.”

On October 28, King Albert addressed a proclamation to his officers, noncommissioned officers, corporals and soldiers. “For more than two months you have fought with marvelous courage and rare energy. You have been unable to guard the country from an odious invasion; but Belgium has not submitted, and the Belgian Army is not annihilated.

“Thanks to the wise retreat from Antwerp, considerable forces remain intact. . . . Together the Allies will retake, step by step, the territory soiled by the occupation of a powerful enemy who had premeditated the war, and brought formidable resources against us.

“Soldiers! our towns have been burnt, our fields ravaged, our hearths destroyed; mourning is universal in our dear country, which has been cruelly devastated by pitiless foes. Even greater misfortunes hang over our compatriots if you do not deliver them from infamous oppression. You have then an imperative duty which you will know how to perform when your leaders give the sign.

“A great King of France once wrote this letter in the day of defeat: ‘All is lost save honor.’ You have clothed your unfortunate country with honor and today you must cause it to rise from its ashes.

“Soldiers! There remains for you more than the glory of conquest. You have to rescue the country with the aid of our noble Allies.”

There is a marked difference in the tone of the two proclamations. The one is the appeal to pride and hate; the other is the appeal for home and loved ones, native land and honor. The reconquest of the country was not to come for over four years but the proclamation of the King nerved the little army for a long and terrible ordeal in the mud and cold of Flanders.

They already had gone through three terrible winters in the trenches when the American Red Cross came in the fall of 1917 to the little corner of Free Belgium never conquered by the Germans.

What was there of it? There were eight miles north-easterly along the coast of the North Sea from the frontier of France near Dunkirk up through La Panne, St. Idesblade, Coxyde, Oost Dunkerke to Nieuport-Bains on the Yser; forty-five or fifty miles southeasterly in a great bend of front line trenches from Nieuport-Bains through Nieuport, Ramsappelle, Pervyse, Merkem, around Ypres and to a point on the frontier near Armentières where the trenches left Flanders and entered French territory; thirty-one or two miles northerly back along the French frontier to the point of beginning. This long narrow strip

of land was in most places eight to ten miles wide from the front line back to the French frontier. It narrowed to a width of a mile or two at the lower end and at times widened out over a vast destroyed No-Man's-Land in front of Ypres to a total width at that point of perhaps 20 miles. The area seldom got above 250 or 300 square miles and what was added to it by successful attack was not reckoned as much, for it was an abomination of desolation. All the towns mentioned except La Panne were of course destroyed by the time we arrived. Of this 250 square miles of Belgian territory, there were picturesque sand dunes along the coast, many of which were artillery posts; trenches above ground at the front, destroyed country from 2 miles to 10 miles back of it, and a rich, flat farming country in the rear, every foot of which was exposed to shell fire, but which in the main was unhurt except for an occasional shell hole, roofless farmhouse, dead peasant or cow. There were other Flemish villages like Houthem, the Belgian Great Headquarters, Leysele, Isenberge, Wulveringham, Vincken, Beveren, Hoogstade, Oostvleteren, Proven, Watou and Rousbrugge which were comparatively safe.

There were places like Ypres, Kemmel, Neuve-Eglise, Ploeg Steert, Dickebusch, Vlamertinghe, entirely wiped out and then other places like Furnes, of which one-fourth of the houses were wiped out, one-fourth badly hurt, one-fourth slightly touched and one-fourth undamaged, so dangerous at times that it was entirely evacuated and at other times reasonably safe.

In this little corner of West Flanders there were four armies operating in 1917, the British next the sea, the Belgians, the French, and then again a huge British Army around Ypres. The French forces were small and were soon after withdrawn except for some artillery near La Panne. The presence of the French, however, was one of the bits of color, and association with the officers one of the compensations for Flanders. General Rouquerol,

head of the French Mission to the Belgian Army, and Colonel Bonhomme, commanding the guns in the dunes back of La Panne, and their staffs were brave, upstanding, interesting, helpful men. I remember Colonel Bonhomme as the kindly officer who took me to have a drill with my gas mask at the French gas mask station—a thing I had neglected to do until he insisted upon it.

Back of the forces at the front, there stretched far into France the artillery, the reserves, the training camps, the hospitals, the aerodromes, and all services of supply. Where the Belgians could put a thing on their own soil they did so, and often took grave risks to stay in their own land.

For example, the bakery near Adinkerke, which furnished a train load of bread every day for the trenches, was destroyed in 1918. As I have said, the Minister of War lost most of his offices and records at Furnes. General Rucquoy had his children's colony at Boitshoucke shelled to pieces; the Ocean Hospital at La Panne was two or three times temporarily evacuated, and the *Hôpital Elisabeth* at Poperinghe was permanently evacuated and destroyed, and so something or other was always either getting hit or just escaping.

In among these great armies moving to and fro, there lived the civilian population which would not go away. Military commanders raged about it. Civil governments gave orders but generally the orders were revoked or not enforced. The peasants clung to the soil. It was the same with the Flemish or half Flemish population of northern France. They simply would not leave unless the Germans were at the doors. It was partly due, we must admit, to cupidity. They are a thrifty lot. They got high prices for all produce during the war. They made more money than they had ever made in their lives, even with the able-bodied men away. And their little homes and furniture and animals were dear to them. The old woman might have little more than a cow but she would

not leave her cow. But there was underlying it all a noble patriotism. In Belgium it meant going into another country. While thousands did go, other thousands whose homes were free, stayed, worked for the army, raised their crops, mended roads and performed all kinds of services.

When the American Red Cross reached Free Belgium in the early fall of 1917, there were 90,000 civilians still there.

## CHAPTER V

### The Spectacle of War in Flanders

OUR first morning at La Panne we were awakened by the rattle of machine guns, and jumping to the balcony of our hotel room overlooking the sea, we were just in time to see a German plane plunge into the sea. It made a terrific splash and then there was nothing to be seen but the Englishman hovering overhead.

Another afternoon, coming into town, Bicknell exclaimed suddenly, "There goes one"—and we saw a second German fall in narrowing spirals until he crashed into the canal not far away.

"The Germans will want to take some revenge for this," said Bicknell, "and maybe send a few shells over." Within an hour the first one came with a terrific screech directly past the little villa and landed in the sand. It was just before sunset. Soldiers and civilians were walking on the beach. Many were bathing. Such a scattering of people I never saw before. Then came another, exactly among them but nobody was hurt. One is safer on the sand than in a house. The area covered by the explosion in sand is small. The sand grips the jagged bits of metal and much of the force is lost. That night other shells fell near the hospital and Dr. Depage, whose guests we were, ordered everybody into shallow trenches on the beach, the wounded, nurses, doctors, orderlies and guests.

While we lay there, the Germans went over to Dunkirk down the coast and the whole sky that way was lighted up with the explosion of the barrage of defense.

This kind of thing was not uncommon, and unhappily almost always there were victims.

A bomb fell just outside our office—all our windows were smashed and two soldiers standing on the corner were blown to bits.

A shell came into the hotel next door and riddled the top story. Another shell from the sea came into the hotel on the corner, entering just over the door, but it was a little fellow and did no great damage.

We would be eating lunch sometimes and see shells fall on the beach. One Sunday, while at dinner, we saw a German submarine exchange shells with the coast—the whole thing a picturesque but a perfectly futile performance.

Night after night the planes of the Allies went up and came down the coast, and night after night the Germans passed over on the way to and from Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, or England. Occasionally they had a bomb or two left over for La Panne, and now and then we would be counted worthy of a real visit.

Some of the happenings were terribly tragic, but some were funny. One bomb hit a chicken house of a worthy citizen, destroyed his fowls, and a big piece of it flew into the open window of the bed chamber of this citizen asleep there and lodged under his bed without his even waking up. Such were some of the Flemish nerves.

One shell fell among a score of little children playing in the yard at the villa of the Queen and did no harm as it failed to explode. Another which fell on the *Bains Militaires* or Military Baths gave us 60 victims of whom 30 died.

Troops were always marching in or marching out. When the English held La Panne and Nieuport in the fall of 1917, every morning one could see hundreds of mounted men riding their horses out belly deep into the sea.

By day or night the great English monitors with their little patrols came drifting up and when they attacked the German lines, it was the heaviest firing of all. They often broke our windows.

We had grandstand seats for the dramatic night attacks on Ostend and Zeebrugge, the most spectacular naval operations of the war, though we didn't know it at the time. We simply knew that there were terrific explosions, that the night was lighted up, and that a few people came out of their houses at La Panne to inquire sleepily what was taking place.

On other nights German destroyers came out from Ostend and Zeebrugge and dashed down the coast, shelling as they went. The raids were futile as a rule and the shells that fell on La Panne were small and did little damage. But as spectacles, such raids also were magnificent.

Belgian Ministers were always coming or departing. Other visitors from all over the world had to be entertained, many of whom we had to take to the trenches.

Attached to some parties there was especial interest, like the Irish journalists coming to get material about what little Belgium was doing to spread it broadcast in Ireland.

Sometimes by day we saw a sausage balloon over the trenches go up in smoke and the occupant, if lucky, come down in his parachute.

At night there were always the flares of the trenches and the flashes of the guns.

Only a hair line separated life and death. We took visitors to the little hotel on the corner to lunch. A fine young Belgian aviator was sitting at the next table with his brother. He finished first, strolled out, got into his plane and was off.

Before we finished, Commandant Le Duc cried, "See that fellow doing stunts." But it was no stunt. Down he came, the same boy who finished his luncheon first, in a nose spin, faster and faster until he hit the sea. There was a great splash, wings of the plane floating an instant and all was gone. Nothing remained but men running wildly on the beach and the brother tugging desperately at

a huge fishing boat which twenty men could not move from the sand.

Down just back of Ypres and around Poperinghe, there were the last of the hopyards for which Flanders was famous. But the hopyards were screens for motor convoys and aerodromes. While men, women and little children were hop picking, English battle planes were going up beside them and German shells were searching always for roads and dumps and quarters or whatever else was there. And very often the shells found the men, women and children making hay, or picking hops or gathering the great broad beans of Flanders.

Everywhere on the beach, along the roads, in the hospitals, in the trenches, one met the King and Queen, those two who gave interest and thrill and glory to everything in Flanders. They might be with a visitor like King George of England, Poincaré or Clemenceau of France,—or the King might be on a bicycle or walking away from a peasant's burning house—one never saw them without sensing the intense pathos of the whole world struggle.

The American Red Cross workers were not out for spectacles, but no man who did not sense the great spectacle in Flanders was fit to work there, and no man could intelligently do the work of relief if he did not know something of the whole mighty struggle of which it was a part.

## CHAPTER VI

### The King and the Queen

**T**HE war in Flanders revolved around the King and the Queen. The relief work of the American Red Cross for Belgium was done with their closest cooperation and often directly through them.

From the time of the battle of the Yser, until the end of the war, the King and Queen lived in a villa on the beach at La Panne, or on a farm in what is called the Moeres, three miles away. The greater part of the winter of 1917-18 they were living in the Moeres as La Panne, it was said, was considered too dangerous. But they were in La Panne nearly every day, and on roads which were shelled, or in the trenches. Moreover, shells went over them in the Moeres constantly and bombs several times fell in the garden.

One of our men who went down to the farm just about nightfall to see the King and Queen reported that German shrapnel was bursting all the time that he was there, around a Belgian sausage balloon just above, but that the King sat smoking peacefully on the porch with General Jungblut, the little Princess Marie-José and the Countess Caramon de Chimay were sketching in the yard, and the Queen was walking up and down the road. The danger was less in some places than others, but there was no real safety.

Of all the great figures of the World War none have captured the popular imagination more than the King and the Queen of the Belgians. They represented a small kingdom against a powerful empire. With their people, they made a right choice in the beginning—that of oppos-



The King and Queen of the Belgians with Prince Leopold at Red Cross Headquarters  
Washington, October 29, 1919.

Left to Right: Prince Leopold, Her Majesty, Mr. Walling, The King and Dr. Farrand.



ing the passage of German troops at any cost. They were situated in an especially dramatic place, all they did had dramatic significance, and they lived up to their high and noble part all through.

During the war, Maeterlinck, the Belgian poet, made an address in France upon the King's birthday, and called him "The King of the Sand Ridge." "Every time," said he, "the bloody veil of the tempest which hides him from our eyes is raised or rent, we behold him in the same spot in the same ridge of sand which has become the most splendid throne in the world, quietly, almost secretly, doing his duty as a crowned soldier."

Already legends have begun to cluster around the names of this King and Queen. The tendency will be to see them through the mist. We were with them on the other side of the veil and saw them as they were. They lose nothing close up. We must resist the tendency to magnify them so that the outlines are blurred. History will be richer if we can keep their humanity distinct.

In subsequent chapters details of work done with the King and Queen will be found. It is important here to ask what kind of people they are.

"I have both French and German blood in my veins," said the King one night when the Germans were thundering all along the line.

We find the exact statement in the semi-official *Almanac de Bruxelles*:

"Albert I, Leopold-Clément-Marie-Meinrad, King of the Belgians, duc de Saxe, prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, sovereign of the independent state of the Congo, majesté, born at Brussels, April 8, 1875, son of Prince Philippe, Count of Flanders, and of Marie, Princess of Hohenzollern.

"He succeeded his uncle, the King Leopold II, December 23, 1909, and was married at Munich, October 2, 1900, to Elisabeth, Duchess of Bavaria, who was born in the Château of Possenhoven, July 25, 1875."

The same infallible authority states that his grandmother, the wife of King Leopold I, a German, was the Princess Louise Marie d'Orleans, daughter of King Louis Philippe of France.

The Belgians are fond of telling how he grew up with no idea of becoming King; how Elisabeth married him with no idea that she was to become Queen; and how Albert and Elisabeth used to walk out on the boulevards of Brussels with their children on Sunday afternoons, quite like the other householders of that city.

Nobody can understand King Albert who does not understand what it means to be a good citizen. He is essentially a good citizen, with civic pride and an intense desire for the common good, doing his work as a citizen through the hereditary job in which he finds himself.

He is not busy amassing a fortune, nor enlarging his own political power, nor taking pleasure, but he is studying and working and traveling to promote the general welfare. Said the King that last winter in La Panne to one of our men, "The first business of the King is to be the servant of all the people."

Unquestionably he is able to be the good citizen because he is first of all the good man. He is devoted to his wife and children. He is simple, unassuming, honest, honorable, patient, open-minded, seeking light, but unyielding. He has a fine sense of humor, not evident at first, but gradually revealing itself as you win his confidence and his shyness or bashfulness wears off.

By hard study of books, by interviews with people who are supposed to know, by going himself where things are being done, the King is all the time fitting himself to lead, to advise, to help his country. He has a native intellect which the Belgians say is "not brilliant like that of Leopold II," but which is sure and steady; and he is endowed with the surpassing gift of common sense. Most Belgians, however, who praise the genius of Leopold II

add something to the effect that King Albert has true nobility of soul.

He is a constitutional monarch working through his Ministers. During the war, as Commander in Chief of the army, he had great legal power, and likewise, because of the circumstances, he had unusual moral power.

That power he keeps. He brings it to bear on the warring elements of his country, on the race jealousies of Flemings and Walloons, on the political jealousies of Catholic, Liberal and Socialist, and on the personal jealousies of those who stayed in the country and those who were out of the country during the war. It is no exaggeration to say that this personal, unifying, harmonizing influence of the King has done much to hold things together and to enable Belgium to make rapid progress toward recovery.

King Albert is a big man, 6 feet, 3 or 4 inches tall, of powerful build, light golden hair and mustache, blue eyes, ruddy face, and of slow deliberate speech. Queen Elisabeth is a dainty little woman, much more beautiful than any of her photographs, with fair hair, also with blue eyes, low voiced but quicker in speech and in movement than the King. They have three children, Prince Leopold, Duke of Brabant, the heir to the throne, born November 3, 1901, Prince Charles, or "Charlie," Count of Flanders, born October 10, 1903, and the Princess Marie-José, born August 4, 1906. Their beautiful family life is indicated by the fact that the King speaks of the Queen as "my wife" and of his children as "my boys" or "my little girl." He said to one of our men when he was discussing education: "I like my boys to go to public school and play football. It is good for young princes to play with other boys and get their shins kicked." Once to his sister the King wrote testifying to the Queen's medical skill: "There is no use of my pretending to have a headache to escape from some stupid function for Elisabeth always doctors me up and sends me along."

The Queen has both German and Portuguese blood in her veins. She was born in Bavaria in a home devoted to science and music and filled with an unselfish spirit of service.

Her father, Duke Karl Theodore, was a famous oculist, having removed over 6,000 cataracts. He was a most generous man in his service to the poor and unfortunate. The little Elisabeth was trained as his nurse. She got her degree of Doctor of Medicine at Leipzig before her marriage and did active work in the hospital at Kreuth, Germany. She investigated especially tuberculosis, and the sleeping sickness which was so deadly in the Congo, and likewise made a study of methods of training nurses.

She has always made personal visits to people in trouble—back in the happy days in the old Germany, in the even happier days in Belgium before the war, and all through the great struggle. She has the Bavarian love of music and plays beautifully on the violin. It is a grim commentary on the changes of life that this gentle loving soul should ever have to say of the Germans as she has said: "Between them and me there has fallen a curtain of iron that will never again be lifted."

When the King and Queen were driven back to the Yser, they both made their second great decision of the war, a decision which gives them a mighty hold on the affections of their own people, and is one of the secrets of their popularity throughout the world. They put aside comfort and safety, chose to share the common lot of danger and hardship and buckled down to daily tasks of the hardest kind to help win the war.

The King led his men in the trenches and from headquarters. He worked with his Minister of War, his Chief of Staff, and the Allied chiefs. And he went to the worst places of the worst sectors to cheer the men holding the lines. He could talk Flemish to the simple farm boys and French to the university students from Brussels and Liège.

On October 28, during the battle of the Yser, the little Queen said to Hugh Gibson, Secretary of the American Legation at Brussels: "As long as there is one square foot of Belgium, free of the Germans, I will be on it." "She said it," said Gibson, "simply in answer to a question from me, but there was a big force of courage and determination behind it." She made her words good, and she did her part with extraordinary courage and ability.

Our Red Cross men would meet her sometimes in the mud of the trenches. One of them writing home in 1917, described such an encounter:

"The first time I ever saw the Queen was in the front trenches just before Christmas. Her eldest son, Leopold, Duke of Brabant, was with her in the uniform of a Belgian private. A daintily dressed little lady, with a sweet face and a winning smile, she made her way from dugout to dugout in the slime and mud, with chocolate and cigarettes and other gifts for the men. They idolize her not so much for the chocolate and cigarettes as because she is there to see for herself what they have to endure and to take her share of the danger. As one of them said to me, 'When we see the Queen, we feel that we are not forgotten, that the war will not last forever, that some day we will all be back in Brussels.' " \*

Her medical and surgical knowledge, her nursing ability, her experience in public health work, and her great store of human sympathy had full expression in the war. In "The Hospital of the Queen" and "The Works of Her Majesty, the Queen," that part of the story is set down.

Though the King and Queen walked on a great stage, nothing is as far from the mark as to think of them as theatrical.

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\*Her Majesty used flowers effectively to cheer wounded men. Expert horticulturists in the army, under direction of Dr. Depage, made a remarkable rose garden in the mud of Flanders which produced thousands of blossoms.

Though the King dropped down upon the Peace Conference from the sky, though the King and Queen both went to England for a royal wedding by aeroplane, though they make a tour of the United States, or Brazil, or Spain, it is done simply and for a definite purpose. They use the aeroplane because it is easier and quicker. They travel to learn and to promote good will. The non-theatrical side of the King was never better put than by Mark Sullivan when he said: "The King was at all times during the war merely the Chief Engineer, who happened to be responsible for the job when the dam broke." That means much to Americans at least. When I remember him coming away on foot from a fire in a peasant's cottage, or see again his long figure on a bicycle hurrying from one task to another, or recall him on a motor cycle, in a motor car or on horseback as occasion demands, I see a man intent on a great job who happens to be a monarch and who is presumably owner of a throne and a crown which perhaps are in storage.

Clemenceau went to visit the Belgian front during the last year of the war and the King went with him to Nieuport—almost always a dangerous place. Many a brave fellow had been killed there. As they left their cars and started to walk slowly up the gentle slope to the ruins, a German shell burst near them on the right. Then a second fell on the left. Another burst behind. They were in the center of a bombardment. Probably their arrival had been seen from the Great Dune or from a balloon. Aides and orderlies were greatly excited but the King and Clemenceau never altered their pace or never suspended their talk. They went along quietly until they reached a dugout under a wall when the King invited his guest in, much as he might ask him in out of a shower.

There is no sham or humbug or pretense about Albert and Elisabeth.

The King did not dash up slopes. He walked to the business in hand.

It made the Belgians anxious and sometimes angry to think of the chances he took but there was no other way. "My life is no more precious than that of my men," he told them. He knew that he had better be killed than give any suspicion that he was holding back. So he never held back.

When one saw the King and Queen come back into Brussels after four years on the Yser—four years of blood and death, of tragedy and loss—at the head of the troops and amid the shouts and tears of a freed people, one liked to remember what he said to the Belgian Parliament August 4, 1914: "I have faith in our destinies. A nation which defends itself commands the respect of all. Such a nation can not perish. God will be with us in a just cause."

## CHAPTER VII

### The Headquarters Organization

AT Le Havre, the new organization of the Commission to Belgium had quickly taken form. It always was small. It purposely was kept small. We made the Belgians work for themselves, a thing they delighted to do. We got together a small staff of inspectors, accountants and clerks and finally the doctors and nurses for children's work. If we could have had Major Moten of Tuskegee and a hundred of his men who know how to do real things or one hundred Hampton boys we would have taken them at any time. If we could have had more surgeons and nurses and nurse's aids for the time of activity on the front and more doctors and nurses for civil hospital work, we would have taken them also.

In Paris late in August, 1917, we saw some twenty accountants and bookkeepers arrive at the Hôtel Vouillemont, late at night, just off the ship, and one of them, Francis de Sales Mulvey, was assigned to us. Mulvey did stenography, typewriting, and general office work until we could get hold of an office force, and then took entire supervision of the accounts. Mulvey was one of the men who would work until midnight to finish papers and bring them to a five o'clock morning train for signature.

"It is bad business," so it is said, "to have the wife or members of the family of a chief about an office." But war makes new rules. In an emergency every available hand counts, and people of sense can fit in anywhere. Mrs. Bicknell and her daughters, Constance and Alberte, arriving late in September, speedily found work with us and stayed in Europe the greater part of three years.

Mrs. Bicknell became head of the Department of Research and Private Secretary of the Commissioner. The daughters did children's work at Le Glandier, the school of the Queen, and at Le Havre. All three were valuable assets.

By the end of October we had Captain Philip Horton Smith, a Boston architect, at the job of constructing warehouses at Adinkerke. In November, Captain Ernest W. Corn, a Christian clergyman, joined us and was made head of the Bureau of Refugee Service. He also did effective emergency work in charge of warehouses when we entered Bruges.

By January 1, 1918, we had hold of Dr. Park and Miss Wilcox for the baby saving work, and they were joined by Miss Damon, in March, an Hawaiian American, whose executive ability kept things moving at the Salle Franklin.

Doctor Leonard Chester Jones, of New York, had been in Switzerland and had taken his degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Geneva. He had been working in the Pass Bureau of the Paris office, but we got him free in March, 1918, and he was made First Aide to the Commissioner, and later office manager, proving himself a very valuable man. That summer of '18 he hurried to Switzerland and married a charming Swiss lady whose experience in the International Red Cross and whose knowledge of languages were very useful to us.

Major J. Wideman Lee, Jr., of New York City, a trained publicity man, now President of the George L. Dyer Company, was sent to us in July, 1918, to write up our work and make it easier for headquarters at Washington to raise the huge sums we required. He soon showed his long business training and great driving power, and in the absence of the Commissioners ran the office, as well as his own department of Public Information. He was made Deputy Commissioner in October, 1918, and when he left Belgium in 1918 received the Order of the Crown from the King. General Atterbury, who knew his ability,

offered him work with the S.O.S. of the army, and an army commission and salary, which he refused, because of his conviction that he was more needed with us. The Commissioner could not have remained so constantly at work in the field if he had not had a man of such loyalty and executive ability as Major Lee to leave sitting at the center of things.

John W. Gummere, of New York, was one of the theological students in the Episcopal Seminary who did not want any exemption from war service. He drove an ambulance in '16 and '17, and came to us in '17 as our representative at the Paris office, putting through our requisitions for goods and acting for us at headquarters. Later he was transferred to La Panne in Flanders, and put in charge of our warehouses. He next came to Le Havre as director of work for children, but soon went to the Balkans as Aide to Colonel Bicknell. He is now the Reverend John W. Gummere, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Bound Brook, New Jersey, a big, fine fellow, well fitted to "show faith by works."

So the machine was gradually built. From all over the earth, people of different temperaments and abilities and widely differing experiences were brought together. Here was a French clerk who had been all shot to pieces in the trenches. Here was a little girl of Polish parentage, a stenographer, whose home was Paris, and whose nationality was English, and who left us at last to marry an Australian. Here was a French stenographer who married a gallant young American officer she had met in Le Havre. Here was a square built Englishman, MacDonald, who came to audit the books, and who knew neither friend nor foe in his task.

For a year, the Havre office was in the *Hôtel des Régates*, with one of the loveliest of views over across the bay to Deauville and Trouville, and with the music of the waves on the beach. Then for six weeks we were at 123 rue d'Etretat, and things were happening at the front

which made it certain that this was only a provisional arrangement. From November 1 to 22, we were installed in Bruges, with all the refuse of the German soldiers to clear away, and with great German-built stoves to keep us warm. On November 22, we established our office at Brussels, where the Commissioner had been established two days before the Germans evacuated the city,—getting from the *Comité National* quarters at 54 rue des Colonies.

Headquarters life at Le Havre gave one a pleasant, but not a “soft” job by any means.

There was a constant stream of visitors to be dealt with.

Letters in French, Flemish and English were piled up every morning to be sorted and answered.

Applications for help came in every day from individuals, from societies or from the government.

Appropriations began to go through, hastened by prompt action in Paris, upon our recommendations and by close cable connection between Paris and Washington. The first money spent was upon children. Money for supplies and warehouses quickly followed. Then came the appropriations for refugees and military relief.

Every six months there was a budget to make for the next six months, and to make a budget for relief work in war time in a foreign land, one had to be both a relief worker and a mind reader.

There were reports to get off for the Commissioner to Europe and through him to the whole United States.

There were important people to receive and take about.

Le Havre was on one of the main routes between London and Paris, that via Southampton. It was a never ending source of delight to see the sorts and conditions of men who went through.

Red Cross people, like Major Stanley Field, were going to England to buy supplies. Paul Rainey, the great animal photographer and hunter, was going home. Chevriilon, Hoover’s agent in Paris, the talented Frenchman who helped the Red Cross get started in France was off for a

conference with his London office. Miss Mabel T. Boardman was coming to study Red Cross work in France, Belgium, Italy and England; Mrs. Whitelaw Reid was going back to London to "carry on" there throughout the war; English Quakers were taking the boat to go on leave. Edward T. Devine was coming for work with Major Folks in Paris. Paul Kellogg had finished a job for the Red Cross in Italy and was on his way back to New York. Major Byrne, Deputy Commissioner for Italy, was on a mission to London. Captain Twose, of the Red Cross Commission to Roumania, was headed for Boulogne; McLanahan or Pomeroy, of the Boulogne office, were down for a conference,—and so it went. Every one had a different experience and a different errand. Army people, navy people, relief people of all nations streamed back and forth through Le Havre and the Commissioner saw many of them.

No more heartening visits were made than those of our own national officers from Paris or Washington. Henry P. Davison was hurrying back and forth across the Atlantic, urging things forward everywhere. Ivy L. Lee came and made a speech which revealed for the first time to us how practically the whole United States had enlisted in the Red Cross, and it gave us new power.

Eliot Wadsworth of the War Council, and George Simons, Manager of the Southwestern Division, Perkins and Gibson, successive Commissioners for all Europe, cheered us on and helped us see more clearly the direction to take.

In the year and more that headquarters were at Le Havre, the city gradually took on a different aspect for Americans. The American Army came. An American base was established with General Coulter in command. Americans arriving and departing had to report there. The little Southampton boat began to come in loaded with American officers. At last American Army transports began to dock at Le Havre, and long lines of Ameri-

can troops began to march off to the rest camp. The Paris office of the American Red Cross put men at Le Havre to render service to these troops, and all our supplies and all our personnel were at the service of the Americans. No order for this had to be given. With every man, the American job was the first job.

The ladies of the Commission did not content themselves with translations and other office work, but established relations with the British, French and Belgian military soldiers in Le Havre, visiting the soldiers, carrying fruit, cigarettes and chocolate and other little gifts. A Committee of Belgian and American ladies took responsibility for this form of welfare work for the Belgian hospital in the rue Ancelot, and the Red Cross helped finance it. On this committee were Madame Paul Hymans, Madame Renkin, the Countess Goblet d'Alviella, Mademoiselle Hélène Goblet d'Alviella, Madame Bassompierre, Madame Jean de Mot, and Mrs. John van Schaick, Jr.

Another Committee of American ladies for hospital work was under the chairmanship of Mrs. John Ball Osborne, wife of the American Consul at Le Havre, who cooperated so faithfully with us. It consisted of Mrs. Ernest P. Bicknell, Mrs. William Mathews, Mrs. John de Mot, Mrs. Louis Orrell, Mrs. Bradford, and Mrs. van Schaick. Mrs. Whitlock, while not a member of this Committee, helped them and did herculean service by herself along the same line. These ladies, financed by the Commission for Belgium, carried fruit and comforts to the American soldiers in the hospitals of Le Havre, not forgetting the allied comrades who often lay by the side of the Americans.

In the great rush of wounded from the battles of July, 1918, these ladies were very busy. Mrs. van Schaick went into the French Military Hospital at the *Hôtel Frascati*, which was caring for wounded American soldiers, and worked as a nurse's aid for some weeks. The

hospitals did not have personnel to handle the patients. Doctors and nurses were overworked, doing only the most essential things. Besides, most of them did not speak English and our boys did not speak French. The number of little things a person entirely untrained can do as a nurse's aid at such a time is indicated by the following list kept at Frascati:

"Took down records of the wounded American soldiers, four papers for each. Collected patients' letters, took them to censor, who was a wounded officer on top floor. Translated a letter written in Italian into English, so censor could pass on it. Got the passes for the slightly wounded going out. Fed soldiers helpless through wounds in hands or arms, or very ill. Gave out newspapers, fruit, matches, cigarettes and writing paper. Handed out uniforms for men going out for the day and other clothing like socks and underwear. Washed feet. Prepared special soup on alcohol lamp. Bathed very ill men on head and hands with cologne. Put into English lists of surgical appliances and material the French surgeons were asking of the American Red Cross. Attended funerals of the boys who died and was the only woman at the grave of some of them. Got the wreaths for these funerals, tied them with our colors and put them on the casket. Brought back the American flag from the grave. Wrote to families of the dead boys. Prepared little boxes in which boys could keep bullets or pieces of shell taken out of them. Helped an American sergeant entertain his French sweetheart and her mother who had come to visit him. Telephoned. Sorted, counted and sent out dirty linen. Got men ready to take motor rides. Wrote letters for men. Interpreted for doctors, nurses and patients. Mended clothes. Picked up trash."

In this hospital Mrs. Barton and Mrs. Carstairs, two English ladies, had helped as nurse's aids for two years. Mrs. Barton, wife of a Colonel in the British Army, was an American, born in Princeton, New Jersey. She

had lived in India, Africa and England so long that, as she put it, "I believed I had lost all my Americanism. But when I saw the first American wounded, I knew that I could never lose my feeling for my native country."

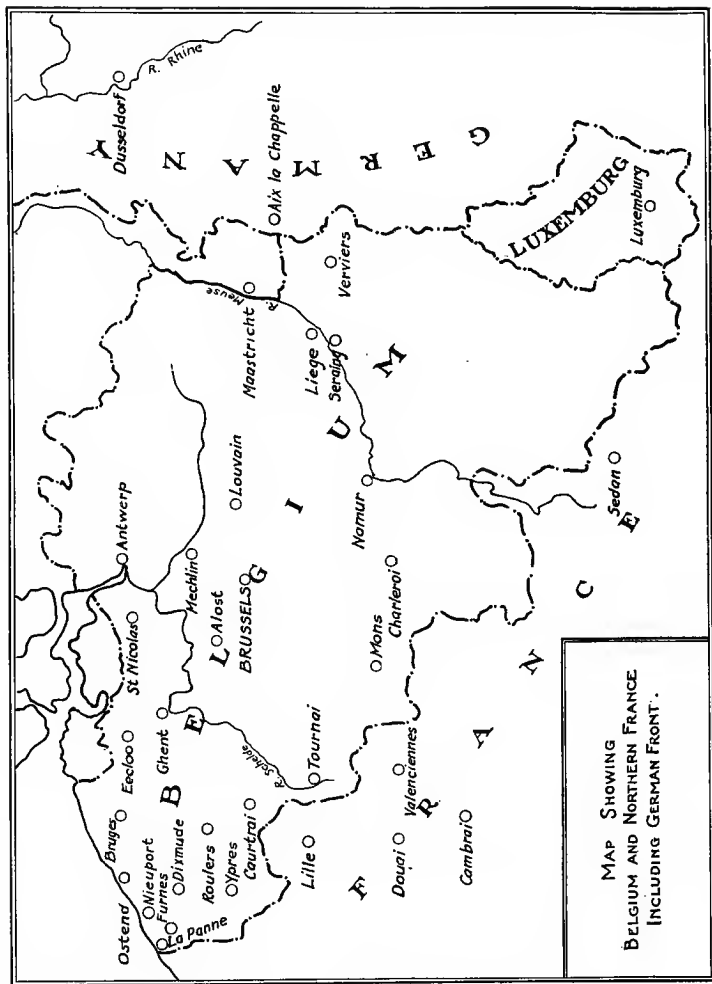
## CHAPTER VIII

### Getting Started in Flanders

**I**N all effective charity or relief work, it is accepted as a fundamental that nothing shall be done for a man which he can do for himself, that every effort shall be made to cheer and encourage those in distress, that the work done shall be adequate to the need, and carried on until the need is met, that neighbors and friends should be encouraged to take the lead in doing what is necessary, and that relief organizations and their workers should keep in the background.

The first Commissioner for Belgium, Colonel Bicknell, had had a greater experience in relief work at home and abroad than anyone else in the Red Cross organization. He believed that the fundamentals of relief do not change in war time or in the foreign field. From the beginning he was insisting: "Use the French and Belgian Committees and their Red Cross Societies. Cooperate with them. Strengthen them. Take advantage of their long experience in the war and their knowledge of their own people. Let us do our work largely through them, use our influence to effect mergers, get rid of competition, and bring about the highest efficiency. Then let us pour our money and supplies through their channels. If we do this, when we leave any country, we won't make a great gap which it will discourage the people to fill, but we will leave local organizations stronger than we found them and more able to do what we have to leave undone."

It is the opinion of his colleagues in the work that the principles which he laid down are sound principles



MAP SHOWING  
 BELGIUM AND NORTHERN FRANCE  
 INCLUDING GERMAN FRONT.



and that future Red Cross work in war and in peace—abroad and at home—must be based upon them.

“Work,” said he from the first day, “through the government, and the existing agencies. Keep personnel at a minimum. Don’t let us load up with a great number of people whom we can’t use. Get experienced workers. When our people get here, put them in alongside the foreign worker, first to learn, and then to help.”

But some tasks were obviously American almost exclusively, from the beginning.

In both France and Belgium, there was need of supplies of all kinds and of transport so as to place them where they were wanted. Finance, purchase and transport were distinctly American jobs to be done by American workers. The Paris office built up an able staff for finance, accounting, purchase and transportation and directed that these be at the service of Belgium, Italy and the other countries, as well as France.

There was a shortage in personnel along some lines from the moment we landed until the end of the war. There were never too many people, for example, able to repair automobiles. There were never too many nurses, especially those willing to nurse contagion among sick civilians as well as to care for soldiers. There was urgent need from the beginning of sending men in American uniform among the soldiers and civilians to let them know that “the Americans are here.”

To build up an organization able to do what the Belgians could not do and not to attempt to take their places in what they could do and ought to do was our problem.

At Havre, the Belgian Ministers talked things over with us and agreed with Colonel Bicknell that an important task would be to bring in supplies of food and clothing, drugs, dressings and bandages, and place these where they could be quickly made available in case of need.

We were faced with the choice every military commander had to make, whether to have things which we

needed back where they would be safe but inaccessible, or forward and more or less in danger of being captured or destroyed by the enemy.

The Belgian Minister of the Interior had placed stores at Conchil near Montreuil-sur-mer, fifty miles from the front. We decided to establish stores of clothing at Le Havre for the use of refugees but to place such food and hospital supplies as we could get, as well as part of the clothing, near the front. If the enemy moved forward and there was a rush of new refugees, or if the Allies moved forward and Belgian civilians were liberated, or if the Germans should separate the British and Belgian Armies from the French and cut us off from our stores at Paris and Le Havre—these stores at the front would be invaluable.

With the Ministers Berryer and Vandevyvere, we studied maps and could see only one place to locate storehouses for Belgium, and that was Dunkirk. It was the seaport nearest the trenches. It had plenty of empty warehouses and we were determined to rent if possible and not spend time and money in building, especially as we had neither carpenters, hardware nor lumber.

Dunkirk was near enough for one great purpose. What was passing in our minds may be seen by this remark of Colonel Bicknell to M. Vandevyvere, the Belgian Minister of Finance. "If we get done with trench war and the armies move, then is the time we will need these supplies. But just at that time the roads will be blocked by troops of all kinds, railroads will be overworked, and trucks simply will not be available to haul from Paris or Le Havre. If we expect to be of service, we have got to have our stuff where we can get it; we must take risks."

When we decided to put stores at the front and to go to pick out a spot, the government acted quickly. The Minister of War gave us a fast closed car with one of his best drivers. The Minister of the Interior called up the frontier guard at Ghyvelde, 200 miles away, to advise

them that we were coming without waiting for passes. At the same time he telegraphed to Monsieur Jean Maes to meet us in Dunkirk to help us. M. Maes, a member of the Belgian Parliament, living at Rousbrugge in Free Belgium, was acting as an officer of the Minister of the Interior in charge of food supplies for the civilian inhabitants of Free Belgium. We had reached Le Havre and opened headquarters Monday, September 3. On Tuesday, we had had our conference. By Wednesday at 7 P. M. we rolled into Dunkirk, 212 miles north. We were impressed at once with dark, silent streets and people seeking shelter in cellars. By 8:45 P. M. we understood why and also why the Belgian Ministers had appeared somewhat reluctant for us personally to stay in Dunkirk very long. The Germans came over with several planes and many bombs. We went down and foolishly stood in the big open door of the hotel quite alone. There I might easily have lost my chief as a machine gun bullet hit his shoe a glancing blow. Luckily, this was all that hit us. The battle raged between aviators and anti-air craft barrage with terrifying noise, houses were crashing, but clanging down the dark streets through it all came the ambulances of the Friends' Ambulance Unit, which we afterward were to know so well, "on a work of love in the midst of war."

The next night, Thursday, September 6, I made the following entry in my diary:

"More excitement tonight. Another *alerte* just after we got to bed. (One more by aviators and one by long range gun later in the night.) Dunkirk beats the world for sirens. Spent the whole day on that warehouse matter. It was a revelation to us to go down to the docks this morning and to find that the building we were after was a smoking ruin with huge chunks of masonry blown in every direction by a powerful bomb dropped by an aviator. Don't hardly know what to do. Maes said simply 'formi-

dable,' which seems to be French for terrific or unbelievable, or 'the limit.' "

The best advice we could get, British, French, Belgian, as well as that of our own Consular Agent was against putting stores in Dunkirk. Stores were coming into the port every week but people did not leave them around the docks or in the city longer than necessary. Dunkirk then, as throughout the war, was a city especially picked out for attack.

At La Panne, in Free Belgium, only seven miles from the trenches, we found conditions little better. My own record puts it as follows under date of September 7:

"Bicknell and I came into Belgium today after calling on Mordey, Adjutant of the Friends' Ambulance Unit. Went to the Ocean Hospital and found that it had just been shelled. My room was full of broken glass. Two men were killed. Two nurses hurt. They have had a shell in the storeroom and a bomb in the street back of the hospital."

There was no port at La Panne. Nothing but fishing boats landed on the beach.

We took up the matter of a location of the stores with the Belgian Chief of Staff. He assigned an Engineer Officer to help us.

Major Cobra and Commandant Vierset of the Headquarters Staff, Colonel Nolf, Director of the Belgian Military Hospital at Cabour, and Jean Steyaert, *Commissaire* of the *Arrondissement* of Furnes, walked many miles helping us study the various sites proposed. Commandant H. Dustin and Commandant Vierset, in charge of Belgian Army supplies, put what material they had available at our service, so that we would not be delayed too much getting started.

We decided to give up the idea of a seaport, to put our stores in Belgium instead of France, and in the open country instead of a town which was more likely to be attacked.

When we started looking for locations, we found the same kind of difficulties which one confronts in Washington, or New York, or anywhere else, when one wants to locate a municipal hospital or school for tubercular children. Each neighborhood wants another neighborhood chosen. "Don't put it near the children's colony or the hospital, for it will draw the German shells or the bombs of aviators." "Please don't take my field, kind gentlemen, as it is the only field I have for my cow." These were the kind of things we heard. One place was too dangerous—another place was too wet. A third place was too inaccessible, and so it went. At last we settled on both Adinkerke and Cabour, partly on the principle that it is best not to put "one's eggs all in a single basket," and partly on the principle that "Man proposes and God disposes," and there was no place at the front where the eggs could be absolutely safe.

The man who superintended the putting up of our warehouses at the front was Captain Philip Horton Smith, a Boston architect who in the latter part of the war was busy putting up hospitals and storehouses for the army. When I picked him up at Calais, October 19, 1917, and started with him up through the British Zone, and discovered that he had no passes, I was thoroughly irritated about it. When I saw later how people were delayed getting passes in Paris, I gave Smith a big credit mark for starting passes without them. It was a simple matter to fix him up when we got to Major Tinant, *Suret  Militaire Belge*.

The barracks came up by rail in sections, from the Construction Department of the American Red Cross in Paris and Smith had the cooperation and help of Major Emerson, head of that department, in this first job.

There were all kinds of delays but Smith showed grit and patience and in the next seven months got 9 barracks erected, each 100 ft. long and 20 ft. wide.

Smith himself wrote of the work as follows:

"We worked with the Belgian Army, which loaned us

a gang of soldiers under the able command of Lieutenant Roelandt of Gand. We were also greatly assisted in obtaining material by the Belgian Army authorities, who cooperated with us at every turn in the most gratifying manner.

"We encountered great difficulties, owing to our work being in the zone of activities and were very lucky in narrowly escaping the destruction of our barracks and hospitals on numerous occasions, notably in the great daylight raid of early November, 1917, when we were heavily bombed, one missile falling only a few yards from the work then going on.

"Personally, in spite of the discomforts and great difficulties of every sort which I encountered in carrying through my part of the work to a satisfactory conclusion, I look back on those months spent in Belgium with the greatest pleasure. I never got entangled in the miles of red tape that hampered other departments.

"I am grateful for having had the opportunity of coming in contact with the Belgians, a people whom I greatly admire. Seeing them as I did, in the midst of discomfort and terror, cut off from their homes and communication with their loved ones, enduring privation and often with a lack of proper appreciation and understanding from their Allies, I came to have a great affection based on respect and admiration for this fine, clean, sturdy, honest, and industrious people."

We put Lieutenant John Gummere in charge of filling the barracks. In the summer of 1918, shipments were stopped on account of the German advance. We made arrangements to blow up the barracks if the Germans came so fast that we could not get the stores away.

We refused, however, to accept the advice of some Belgians and a few Americans visiting this front to evacuate at once on account of the danger.

In this same summer of 1918, we began to draw on these stores to feed refugees.

At the same time we turned over two of the barracks nearest Cabour to the Minister of the Interior for a refugee clearing station which he operated in conjunction with the Friends' Ambulance Unit.

In the fall of 1918, when the army and hospitals moved forward, and Belgium from the North Sea to the Scheldt was liberated, these supplies were worth almost their weight in gold to us.

As we had foreseen, it was almost impossible to get things up from Paris at this time. As we fed refugees, supplied hospitals, and distributed condensed milk for children, we were thankful that our Commissioner, Colonel Bicknell, had been an old, experienced relief worker, that he had insisted on these stores far up at the front, that he had never listened to advice to move them back, or abandon the warehouses when things looked threatening. He had two remarks for such occasions:

"We've no business in this war if we are not willing to take chances," and "Things never are as bad as represented."

## CHAPTER IX

### The Hospital of the Queen

“THE Hospital of the Queen,” “The Hospital of Dr. Depage,” and the “Ocean Hospital” were names variously given to the main hospital of the Belgian Red Cross Society at La Panne.

Like so much in recent Belgian history, this hospital dates back to the Battle of the Yser, with its thousands of casualties and its utter lack of facilities for the care of the wounded.

Of the origin Dr. Depage writes as follows:

“Toward the end of November, 1914, after the battle of the Yser, I found myself in Calais. I had come to organize there the hospital ‘Jeanne d’Arc’ with the funds put at my disposal by the Belgian Red Cross.

“Queen Elisabeth in the course of a visit which she had made to our wounded, proposed to me that we establish at La Panne a new hospital which she desired to see created nearer the front and upon Belgian territory.

“At the moment, with the exception of the Belgian Field Hospital, which we owe to the generosity of the English and which was later transferred to Hoogstade, our only surgical hospital in the zone of the armies was at Furnes. It was served by religious sisters whose good will could not supply the lack of professional training. Her Majesty understood the great advantage that there would be in giving competent surgical attention to the severely wounded before an evacuation which meant a long journey by automobile or railway train.

“I accepted Her Majesty’s proposition with enthusiasm as I was sure that in realizing her ideals, we would be



COL. ERNEST P. BICKNELL  
First Commissioner of Belgium.



DR. ANTOINE DEPAGE  
"The Man Who Made the Famous Ocean Hospital."  
(See page 62.)



able to make a notable contribution to the care of our wounded.

“La Panne is on the border of the North Sea, ten kilometers to the southwest of Nieuport and about a dozen kilometers behind the trenches. It is the last village on the Belgian coast before the frontier of France.”

The Queen secured for their use the Ocean Hotel property on the beach.

By 1917, there had been added to the original hotel building at least forty pavilions or barracks, from butchery to chapel, contributed by various agencies. There were the *Pavillon de réception*, *Pavillon British*, *Pavillon Everyman*, *Pavillon Albert-Elisabeth*, *Pavillon Americain*.

There was the *Institut Marie Depage*, and on a lonely sand dune facing the ocean, there was the grave of Marie Depage who raised money for the hospital in America in 1915 and lost her life on the *Lusitania* coming home. Her body was washed ashore on the coast of Ireland, recovered by Dr. Depage, her husband, and buried at La Panne along the coast just above the hospital.

This lonely coast town made a deep impression on all who saw it for the first time and even many of those who lived there for months never got away entirely from a feeling of awe. Ugly brick and wooden buildings strung along the beach, and on streets at right angles to it, soldiers quartered in villas whose windows were often broken and boarded up, nearly everything in the village shabby or half destroyed—shells of houses here and there wrecked by aviators or guns, refugees crowded in between soldiers' barracks, little stores thriving when they could get anything to sell, two hotels carrying on though both had been hit, at one end of the beach the two modest villas of the King and Queen and their officers, and at the other end toward the trenches—the Ocean Hospital—yet this was the very heart and soul of Belgium,—the real capital of the country.

“I knocked tonight at Dr. Depage's door,” one of our

men wrote in 1917, "and for a time no one came. It was very dark except for the line of surf. I turned and watched the ocean rolling in and thought of all that had happened on this beach since the days of the early Northmen and of how many men had 'fought in Flanders.' Off to my left were England and France and home. Up the coast to my right, there were the Germans. Star shells and gun flashes lit up the night. Behind the Germans were Ostend and Ghent and our dear Belgian friends of other days—so near we could have motored over in an hour, and yet so far, with the trenches between, that we may never see them. Then the door opened and I went in to a man who may have sentiment but who never showed it, and who never for one instant seemed to get away from the tasks of the Belgian Red Cross Society."

Antoine Depage was physically and mentally a big man. He was of humble origin and seemed to have the strength of generations of Vikings behind him. He had a great frame and an iron will. He knew surgery and medicine and hospitals and he knew also what other countries had discovered and the men who were doing things.

He had fought his way to the front at Brussels in his profession before the war. Distinguished French, English and American doctors told us in 1917 what Dr. Carrel said after the war: "The Ocean Hospital is one of the greatest hospitals the war produced."

The secret of it was the secret of good work, able men and the best equipment money could buy.

Depage got doctors and nurses from England, France, Italy and the United States, as well as his own country. He had to start with what he could get, but he never let up until he strengthened weak spots. He had Levaditi, a great French Bacteriologist, De Baisier of the University of Louvain, Delray of the University of Liège, Vandevelde of the University of Ghent, Carl Janssen Dele, René Sand, Dustin and Zunz of the University of Brussels—all great specialists and all playing the game.

Depage is a Liberal and now after the war is a Senator in Parliament of the Liberal party, but he made a hospital where Catholics, Liberals and Socialists were equally free to work. The spirit was scientific, not limited by country, church or party. Depage proved that pure science is the best patriotism.

Though he had fought the good fight for trained nurses before the war, like a sensible man he took what he could get during the war—whether trained nurses from England, peasant girls from Flanders, or cultured ladies of Brussels. Given a person of good health, good will, and common sense, he knew he could make a nurse, and some of these so-called “fancy ladies” stood in the forefront of this exacting profession when the war ended. Madame de Brockdorf and Madame Jean de Mot, both of whom lost their husbands while serving here, Madame Carl Janssen Dele and Madame Maurice Hanssens did especially valuable work in executive positions.

Dr. Eugene Poole of New York, Dr. Yehtes, Dr. Lee, and Dr. Moody were among the American doctors who helped him, and Moody, stricken with disease, worked in the great push of 1918 until he was literally dying and only then consented to go away. These Belgian doctors speak very tenderly of the gallant doctor who now lies buried in the south of France.

Mrs. Larz Anderson of Washington, Miss White, Miss Denning, Mrs. Snowden of Greenwich, Mrs. Dewitt MacKenzie, and Miss Phylis Moore were among the helpful American ladies. When we first knew the hospital, Captain Charles Graux was business manager, and he was succeeded by Maurice Hanssens.

But here was a Red Cross Society with practically all its contributors and workers in occupied Belgium under the Germans. So there were two branches of the Society during the war:

In Brussels, the Countess Jean de Merode, President, held things together and was able to accomplish important

things for prisoners and for Belgian soldiers mutilated in the early fighting and left in the country.

But the Grand Protector—the King, and the Honorary President—the Queen, were with the army. They helped make a new organization for the war. General Melis, Inspector General of the *Service de Santé* of the Belgian Army was made President. Dr. Depage was made Director, Mr. G. Didier was elected Secretary, and he opened an office first at Calais and then in Paris, while an executive committee was formed of Dr. Depage, Baron Guffinet and General Melis.

The King settled in short order the question of the military status of Belgian Red Cross doctors. The entire Red Cross was taken into the military establishment, except the contributed funds which were left in charge of the executive committee.

The doctors were commissioned in the army. Dr. Depage became a Colonel. He wore the uniform, and he had the insignia, but he never thought of himself as anything but Head Surgeon, and this was his strength and his weakness. He paid scant attention to the spirit of orders which interfered—he never followed along the paths of army red tape, he made some of the military men almost froth at the mouth with rage, and yet he was too big and important and valuable to be taken out and shot at sunrise. When real tension resulted, there was the little Queen with some common sense solution, or the King with a suggestion which Depage, out of both love and loyalty, would be quick to accept. As the situation worked out, the Belgian Red Cross Society had practically a free hand. Scientific ideas controlled. The doctors were free. If they needed something, a way was found to get it. Of course the regular army establishment felt that Depage and the Ocean Hospital got the pick of everything, and they did.

The Belgian Red Cross Society with its freedom and its funds was continually getting new things and raising

standards. Instantly there was a demand all along the line for those same new things and one way or another they had to come.

By the time we got to La Panne in 1917, Depage was in trouble. He had to move his hospital, his funds were exhausted, and England, which had supported him so loyally, was unable to do more.

It was the time that the British were planning for their great push in Flanders to force the evacuation of Ostend and Zeebrugge, the bases of the menacing submarines. First they tried it along the coast, straight up from Nieuport. The Belgians moved out of La Panne and the sector along the coast and the British moved in. In a night old friendly sentinels were replaced by smart Tommies who stopped one and looked one all over. Old passes were no good. British Generals moved into the villas and thousands of British soldiers marched or played on the sand.

Foreseeing this in time, Dr. Depage had put all his money into a great new hospital some six miles inland at Vinckem or Wulveringhem, two little Flemish villages side by side. There he had built some forty or fifty new modern barracks and a few larger buildings of brick, well lighted, with central heat, and with corridors and passages so wide that it seemed wasteful. Depage explained that a second row of cots could be placed in these corridors and still leave room to pass. It seemed fanciful and far-fetched, but 1918, with its terrible rush of wounded, was to fully vindicate this so-called extravagant and wasteful man.

Depage had spent 2,500,000 francs—all he had—on his Vinckem hospital, and it was still unfinished. He hoped the British would buy his Ocean Hospital at La Panne. They said they wanted it but the price was too high and these negotiations fell through. What we had then to decide was whether we would recommend to the American Red Cross in Paris that they give the Belgian

Red Cross a million with which to finish the Vinckem hospital.

There was for it the support of the Queen who welcomed us at Vinckem on our first visit, the fact that the Belgians had to get out of La Panne, and our belief in Depage's theory that hospitals, like the fighting men, must take chances, and build up where they can get the wounded quickly, even if they run a chance of being destroyed. For it also was the judgment of Doctor Alexander Lambert of New York who said to us:

"Depage is a great man. Some of them hate him but they can't do without him. Back him up. He may be extravagant but he is extravagant to save life and he is able and honest."

So we recommended an appropriation of 500,000 francs, and got it. The American Red Cross finished the hospital at Vinckem. But the British met with a reverse at Nieuport. They instantly concentrated again at Ypres for the attack on the Passchendaele ridge. The Belgians moved back into the Nieuport-La Panne sector and the Belgian Red Cross now had two great establishments, both run under the name of *Ambulance de l'Ocean*.

During the winter of 1917-18, the hospital barracks at Vinckem were empty. At a little dinner at La Panne of Belgian and British officers, one of Depage's enemies made a great laugh by describing the famous hospital "run by three men and a dog and with transport service of one bicycle." By midsummer the laugh was on the other side.

## CHAPTER X

### Belgian Red Cross Activities

**I**N the early summer of 1918, the Belgium Red Cross Society had under its control five military hospitals serving the army: First Line: The Ocean Hospital at La Panne, and the new hospital at Vinckem to which we contributed 500,000 francs. Second Line: *Hôpital Virval* of 400 beds on the outskirts of Calais, and *Hôpital Petit Fort Philippe*—a mile from Gravelines—with 1,000 beds. Third Line: *Hôpital Mortain* in the department of Calvados south of Rouen with another 1,000 beds. From La Panne near the front line, it was 22 miles back to Gravelines and 250 miles back to Mortain.

These hospitals, as a part of the army establishment, drew rations and all personnel was paid by the army. So whether funds came in to the Belgian Red Cross or not these hospitals could exist, but they could not carry on the high grade work they had been doing.

Under date of May 8, 1918, I wrote Colonel Bicknell at Le Havre as follows:

“Mr. Hanssens, Business Manager of the Ocean Hospital, on Sunday told me the condition of things in the Belgian Red Cross Society and asked our help. When you and I talked about this before, they had a reserve of several hundred thousand francs. This has been spent and the Society finds itself without resources except occasional small gifts and the profits of the canteen at the Ocean Hospital, which amounts to only a few thousand a year.

“In the opinion of Mr. ‘X,’ and of Mr. ‘Y,’ an officer of the King, neither of whom want to be quoted in any

way, it is important to keep the Belgian Red Cross Society alive and independent but working in closest co-operation with the *Service de Santé*. Toward this co-operation 'Y' has been working for some months. Depage and Melis now pull together. If, however, the Belgian Red Cross goes out of business, the entire medical and surgical administration will become centered in the army. This will mean a certain amount of stagnation and red tape. Everybody seems to agree, even those who criticize Depage, that his influence has been powerful and uplifting in the army as well as in general. Everybody agrees that he is fearless, honest, intelligent and very progressive. If the Belgian Red Cross comes to depend entirely on the army, it is believed that Depage will be more or less hampered. Hanssens said 'If we need a new operating table for the Ocean Hospital, we ought to be free to get it and not have to wait three months.' In all matters of special equipment, experimentation, etc., they want liberty.

"If the American Red Cross can give the Belgian Red Cross a monthly subsidy, the freedom can be maintained. I believe we ought to help the Belgian Red Cross Society because it is a Red Cross Society of standing, because the first job of all Red Cross Societies is the military hospitals, and because the main man in the Society is Depage and Depage is a real leader.

"I recommend an appropriation of 25,000 francs per month on the condition that we are free at any time to withdraw from the undertaking."

Colonel Bicknell was so frequently at the front and knew Depage so well that argument with him was unnecessary. Conservative usually in granting funds, given to making conditions which would stimulate the recipient, here he went far beyond me. It was a critical moment for the Allies. Up on our part of the front, the Germans had taken Mt. Kemmel and were now behind us. They were massing around Hazebronck and there was grave danger of our having to give up the front line from Ypres to Nieu-

port and fall back toward Dunkirk. It was time for a real stroke to cheer and stiffen everybody. Bicknell found that the American Red Cross in Paris and in London had taken precisely that view of the situation. They had given 10,000,000 francs to the French Red Cross, 450,000 pounds to the British Red Cross and smaller gifts to the Italian and Swiss Red Cross Societies. Colonel Bicknell requested a million francs for the Belgian Red Cross Society and the Finance Committee granted it. Then he arranged for Colonel James H. Perkins, Commissioner to Europe, to go to La Panne and present the check to the Queen as Honorary President of the Belgian Red Cross Society. It was some weeks before Colonel Perkins could get to our front but the Belgian Red Cross had been advised of the grant and did not have to wait for the check to use it. The brave little Queen was happier even than Depage when she got the news. "Our brave men," she said. "It means so much for them." Her face fairly shone with joy.

Finally on August 17, Bicknell and I met Colonel Perkins at Boulogne-sur-mer, coming back from England. With him was Major Daniel T. Pierce and Major J. Wideman Lee.

They saw everything from Nieuport to Poperinghe,—front trenches, canteens, children's colonies, civil and military hospitals,—and on August 19, were received by both the King and Queen. The King was in a very happy mood, joked about living so long at La Panne, said he liked the sea view but was "fed up" with it, and in every way made the little ceremony much less stiff than these things are apt to be. Perkins got the check transferred to the King who promptly handed it to the Queen. Perkins did it in the simplest, friendliest kind of a way and the King and Queen both showed deep feeling in the way they thanked the American Red Cross and the people of the United States.

The money was used to equip the hospitals *Petit Fort*

*Philippe, Virval and Mortain*, and in improving conditions at Vinckem and La Panne.

The Belgian Red Cross farm, in the Moeres, was an oasis in the midst of a desert of war. Shells went over but here were peace and plenty. Destruction was in the air about, but here things were produced. Not having milk, eggs, vegetables, chickens for the wounded, the Belgian Red Cross Society raised them. Madame Joostens, wife of a great horse breeder and fancier, was in charge. Her husband commanded a battery at Nieuport. The farm was run on modern lines and any cow which did not give her 20 or 25 liters of milk per day had to go. The best cow gave 32 liters.

Long before the armistice, the Belgian Red Cross was looking forward to service in the occupied country. "As we move forward," said Madame Joostens, "we must prepare to deal with a population in which are many emaciated, many tubercular, and a great number of children in need of a diet of eggs and milk."

On September 28, the Belgian Army, held on the defensive so long, left their trenches and began the famous battle of the "Mountain of Flanders." In one day they captured Houthulst Forest at which they had looked for over four years. They were well astride the Passchendaele ridge now which the British had captured foot by foot in 1917 and had had to give up in the great German offensive of 1918. The British fighting with them said, "These Belgians are wonderful. They must have webbed feet to go over such ground."

The wounded came back by the thousand. Now every hospital facility was taxed to the uttermost. Vinckem, no longer run by "three men, a dog and a bicycle," was full and the expensive wide corridors, as Depage had foreseen, cared for long rows of cots which he had in reserve. American Red Cross money unquestionably saved many lives.

Under date of October 5, 1918, I wrote Colonel Bicknell from La Panne:

“Depage has risen to the emergency in great shape. The Ocean Hospital (which had been almost entirely evacuated under army orders) jumped from two doctors and six nurses and perhaps fifty beds, to 800, then 1,000, and now tonight 1,500. The hospital at Vinckem jumped from 400 to 1,600 beds.

“Depage’s judgment in building it has been vindicated. (It was a close question, however, whether Germans wouldn’t capture it.) The plan Depage drew with wide corridors has saved the day, for these corridors are wide enough for wards. Depage came up with a rush from Mortain on the 27 and the offensive started the 28. He took command of the hospital in person and spends his days at Vinckem and his nights at La Panne. The great lack was personnel. I gave my secretary. Civilian doctors were impressed. I sent Dr. Rothholz and her nurse from Leysele. Doctor Park came and jumped in to help for a day or two. A cable brought 25 nursing students from London, Belgian girls, household servants in La Panne, were taken over, and so it went. Nurses and doctors were hurried up from Mortain but this supply was limited as the wounded were evacuated in that direction.

“All in all, it has been handled well. Doctors have operated 20 hours on a stretch and nurses have worked 40 hours out of 48, but it is better now.

“The worst thing was that the jump was so quick and the ground so bad and the roads so few that the army got away from us and the wounded were not picked up quickly the first three days. There is no doubt but that a number were lost that way.

“There seem to be up to date 15,000 casualties, 8,000 of which are grave, 5,000 dead. The proportion of officers was very great, probably 1,000 casualties and I was told 800 dead.

“The Belgians fought fiercely, with an anger long pent up and very savage when they struck regiments like the one which shot up Dinant early in the war. They took

5,000 or 6,000 prisoners in the first two days. If they had had roads and reserves, or reserves without any more roads, they would have gone through to Bruges or Ghent.

"Another interesting thing: Seeing the lack in quick attention at the front line and the inability of regimental surgeons to cope with it, Depage is starting two advanced surgical stations—one at Poelcappelle on the south side of the Forest of Houthulst, and the other at Jonckershove near Houthulst village on the north side. Dr. Delporte is in charge of the first and has been operating these two days, and Dr. Neuman is in charge of the second which is placed today. These are installed in tents which the American Red Cross gave "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" for canteen purposes, but they are switched rapidly to this use because of the need and because of the good team work between Vandervelde and Depage.

"I'd like a hundred good American stretcher bearers, but we can't have them. We will come through without them."

The little Queen went up into all that tangle of Houthulst Forest, nursing in the advanced surgical stations, and was in places shelled repeatedly. The King was with the troops and once came back to find her, meeting her at one of the American Red Cross tents. Neither asked the other to go back where it was safer, though both were in grave danger. That was the greatest test of all.

"Thanks to the millions of members of the American Red Cross in the United States, we had hundreds of cases of bandages, dressings and hospital garments ready and our trucks were busy keeping hospitals supplied from our warehouses at Adinkerke. A. P. Rice, head of our supply service in Paris, wrote on November 8, 1918, that he had shipped us 660 cases in October alone—besides 1,000 pounds of ether and chloroform just sent and a truck load of ether and other drugs started over the road.

By October 19, we were in Bruges. The Belgian Red Cross, like the army hospitals moved with the army.

There was a hospital at Thourout one day and the next day in the *Ecole Normale* of Bruges. Then by November 5, Depage put an advanced surgical station in an old convent at Waerschoote, close up to Ghent.

“Our camions with food and blankets, as well as surgical supplies and dressings, kept up with the Belgian Red Cross as it moved.

“Waerschoote was the last stand before Brussels.”

Under date of October 25, 1918, I wrote Major Lee, our Acting Deputy Commissioner at Le Havre, from La Panne, as follows:

“The time element in this relief work sticks out at every turn. It is the instantaneous decision and the bulldog determination and the wild bull kind of rushes which succeed in a relief crisis like that which faces us now.

“I see why Depage is hated and why he succeeds. I said to him tonight as I left him at Bruges: ‘You are sometimes very difficult but also from time to time magnificent.’ This is one of the times when he shines out, when nothing stops him, and he gets the wounded in and operated upon and fed and covered with blankets and nursed. I see the enormous difficulties of making a new hospital. He changes his base as the army changes,—quick as lightning. He sacrifices any amount of labor already done to meet a new condition which has arisen, which was not in the situation before.

“The time element, as I say, sticks out. I like the way you realize this at Le Havre and act on it. 1,000 blankets when wounded men lie uncovered are more than 1,000,000 when they are in the hospital, warm and fed.

“Ten sacks of rice for a new hospital, swept clean by the Germans, means more than a shipload in some port 100 miles away. One hundred tubes of catgut two miles back from the front trenches or at some *post de secours* outweighs an order for 30,000 tubes just going in to Paris.

“It is this catgut, blankets, rice, beans, many-tailed

abdominal bandage kind of job that we have been doing since the great Belgian offensive.

"These are the things rushed forward from our stores accumulated a year ago for this kind of an emergency, placed far forward in an area under fire, while some laughed and others expostulated. It is sent up now by transport arranged months ago when, with this thing in mind, we placed camions in the front area to do evacuation work of the people and property in danger and to be quickly available for some great hour of need."

When the King reached Brussels, the war over, the American Red Cross did two further things for the Belgian Red Cross. It placed in the hands of the Queen 1,250,000 francs to use for the reeducation of the mutilés through the Red Cross, and appropriated 300,000 francs additional for the purchase of cows, the enlargement of the Red Cross farms, and the furnishing of milk and eggs to the tubercular.

## CHAPTER XI

### Belgian Army Hospitals

WATCHING the tumult and the shouting when our boys came home, a good lady turned to a lonely-looking soldier near her and said, "Are you one of the heroes, too?" "No, ma'am," was his reply; "I'm a regular."

It is the regular generally who has the heavy end to carry and small credit for carrying it.

Without the financial backing given to the Belgian Red Cross Society, the regular military hospitals of the Belgian Army held on through all the hard years and did good work.

When we first went to Belgium, General De Ceuninck, Minister of War, invited us to his chateau at Furnes to meet General Melis, Inspector General *Service de Santé* or Surgeon General of the Belgian Army, and both asked our help in the purchase of mobile surgical units or automobile operating rooms to move with the army as it moved. An appropriation of 170,000 francs was made for this purpose.

This led to a study of the entire hospital system. The three front hospitals were Beveren, Cabour and Hoogstade. For a second line, as finally organized, Beveren had a hospital at Calais, Cabour, also one at Calais, and Hoogstade, one at Bourbourg, a few miles from Calais. For the third line, Beveren evacuated to Villiers-le-see in Calvados, and Hoogstade to Le Havre. Cabour, which was exclusively medical, evacuated to a great many hospitals all over western France, for heart diseases, shell shock,

tuberculosis, kidney diseases, venereal diseases, and convalescents.

Dr. Derache, head of the Beveren system of hospitals, was a strong man and a brilliant surgeon. Dr. Willems, head of the Hoogstade line, another able man, did some new and remarkable things in the treatment of joints. Dr. Pierre Nolf, head of Cabour and of all the medical service, has become an international figure. He is one of the most scientific men Belgium has produced and is a trusted friend and advisor of the royal family. He dealt effectively during the war with two very bad epidemics, dysentery and grip, with brilliant results.

When the war broke out, Nolf was a professor of medicine at Liège, well known locally. He made his way to the army area and took charge of a little hospital for civilians at Coxyde, only four miles from the front line. Here he was discovered by the Queen who saw what remarkable things he was doing, and speedily brought him to the attention of General Melis who took him for the army. The Queen did effective nursing at Cabour as well as at La Panne, and visited regularly all the front hospitals.

General Melis, the Surgeon General, had visited the United States with King Albert when he was still Prince. He speaks English fluently. It would be hard to find a more agreeable, kindly companion. He was very conservative and frequently said, "I am a very economical man. We are a small country and poor. I want to keep you from throwing your money out of the window." So he was constantly giving us advice which we appreciated about how to make our money and supplies go as far as they would.

He was President of the Belgian Red Cross as well as Surgeon General but it was natural that he should think less of the great expensive Ocean Hospital with its adequate equipment, and more of the obscure surgeon of the regular army in some remote place who had little to work with.

All of us in the Commission for Belgium shared that feeling and we saw quite clearly that the one Red Cross job above all others we must do effectively was the charter obligation "to help the nations care for sick and wounded soldiers in time of war."

To the following military hospitals under General Melis we gave help—all of them were in France except Beveren, Hoogstade and Cabour.

To Beveren we furnished huge packing cases of bandages, dressings and hospital garments; to Cabour serum, drugs, dressings and on a few occasions supplies of food; to Angerville and Auberville near Le Havre, medical supplies, clothing and recreation equipment for the convalescents; to Bourbourg, an X-ray machine and new piano; to Cap Ferrat in the Alpes Maritimes, a barrack, dental instruments and 10,000 francs; to Château Giron, hospital supplies; to the Porte of Gravelines, at Calais, 2,000 blankets and medical supplies; Le Havre, a recreation hall costing 38,500 francs, fruit and candy, and other supplies; Le Mans, surgical instruments, food and clothing; Montpellier, hospital supplies; Paris, beds and garments; Rouen, operating table and pharmacy equipment; Soligny La Trappe, cinema; St. Lumaire, supplies.

When the great advance came in the fall of 1918, and hospitals, dressing stations and everything started forward, out of our reserve stocks of bandages, dressings and food at Adinkerke we helped the hospitals of the army as we had those of the Belgium Red Cross Society.

We supplied through "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers," two hundred surgical kits to regimental dressing stations, concerning which the Deputy Commissioner with the troops reported as follows:

"These kits were carried to the new lines on the other side of Houthulst Forest and created a tremendous sensation because of the great need which they met and because of the difficulty of delivery. No single act of the

American Red Cross more quickly showed results in saving life, than the delivery of these kits.”

Finally, for these regular army hospitals, back in their own country, we bought one thousand beds, twenty hundred dozen cups and twenty-five hundred dozen plates.

## CHAPTER XII

### The Refugee Problem

**D**URING the progress of the war, many thousands of people had to decide whether they would flee from an approaching enemy or stay at home.

There were arguments both ways: If they stayed they might get killed or be made prisoners. At all events, they would have to live under the jurisdiction of the enemy and would not be free to communicate with those who went away. On the other hand, if they left, they usually would have to go hurriedly, leave their property unprotected, risk death from fatigue or exposure, and perhaps live under difficult conditions among strangers.

If they were moved by unselfish rather than selfish considerations, they could find arguments both ways.

In the case of Belgium, everybody, except a few down in one corner of West Flanders, had that decision to make. Most Belgians decided not to flee. When we hear of the hundreds of thousands of Belgian refugees, we forget the seven million who stuck to their country, Germans or no Germans.

Some who went away went back afterward and looked after their little properties. Others who stayed in Belgium made their way out at risk of their lives to enlist in the army or to carry messages or to join members of their families.

Some who stayed might better have gone away and put on a uniform, and some who went away and lived at ease in England or on the Riviera might better have stayed in Occupied Belgium and shared the common lot. But the

great majority of Belgians did their duty as they saw it, and generally they saw straight.

Caught between two armies, it is about as safe to go one way as another, toward friend or foe, provided one keeps out in the open away from buildings or road intersections liable to be shelled.

The natural instinct is to flee from the enemy and to take shelter in buildings. Both tendencies may be wrong.

About the only sure thing the relief worker can hold to is that the status of the refugee is evil, that people ought not to be encouraged to become refugees and if they do, not to be encouraged to remain refugees.

Relief workers in Holland in 1915 saw thousands of men sitting smoking in close crowded barracks unable to work for fear of upsetting the Dutch industrial conditions; they saw women and children under far from ideal conditions, at the very best, and these relief workers said, "Why is it not the best thing for these people to be at home in Belgium, under the Germans? If they have gardens they can cultivate them. If they have little houses, they can keep them in repair. They at least can earn there a part of their support. They will be under their own priests and leaders. They will be surrounded by their own community standards and bad as conditions may be in Belgium, they won't rot morally there as fast as they will here."

So in spite of the fact that Germans might deport a few of them for enforced labor in Germany, thousands were encouraged to go back into Occupied Belgium, and thousands of others went who needed no encouragement but who said "Our duty is at home with our own people."

There is no question that at home they were far better off than the average refugee.

But those who stayed in Occupied Belgium or in the part of northern France where Hoover's men operated, were better off than those who stayed in those parts of Serbia, Poland, Roumania or Russia occupied by the

Germans, for the Commission for Relief in Belgium fed and clothed them throughout the war.

And yet, thousands who fled died of famine, pestilence, wounds or fatigue. One of the great tragedies of the war was the death of Serbian boys from 14 to 18 and under, sent away from the country when the Serbian Army retreated. They were lost in the Albanian mountains, frozen, starved and wasted with disease so that only 5,000 out of 35,000 survived.

As Homer Folks says: "This almost complete loss of its younger male population is perhaps the saddest in the many sad pages in the war history of Serbia."

Serbia would have been better off to have let those boys stay at home. Even the Germans felt the power of world opinion and probably would not have conscripted them. Some of them would have starved to death or died of disease even at home, but there would have been no loss of 30,000 or anything like it.

If people do run away, then the flight must be controlled at the earliest possible stage by the country to which they are running. An organization must be made to sort them. The military authorities must look for spies. The doctors must look for contagion. The directors of the work must send farm workers to farming regions and industrial workers to industrial regions. The army of refugees must be treated like an army and conscripted for service.

But they must also be treated like suffering human beings in need of sympathy and help.

The governments of France, Switzerland, Holland and England received many thousands of Belgian refugees. In 1917, there were probably 250,000 Belgians in France, 5,000 in Switzerland, 50,000 in Holland and 80,000 in England.

France at one time was spending \$14,000,000 per month in the care of refugees, her own and those of other nations.

The American Red Cross in France at one time was

spending \$1,400,000 a month helping France care for refugees.

The same reasons which impel us to clean up slums in peace time impel us to deal effectively with refugees in war time. Leaving aside all motives of brotherhood and humanity, though these can't be left aside in any true account of the war, refugees have to be cared for or they will get in the way of armies, block roads, create city slums, breed contagion which spreads to troops, and if maddened by hunger, start riots and take troops needed elsewhere to put them down. Worse than all this from the standpoint of winning a war, what Bakewell says in his "American Red Cross in Italy" is true for every fighting country:

"There are wounds besides those made by enemy guns that reach the entire civilian population. And every soldier at the front is linked by ties of affection to those at home, his mother, his wife, his children. Their wounds are his wounds. If they are neglected, his courage is sapped."

While the wives and children of the greater number of Belgian soldiers were left in Belgium, there were many thousands who were refugees in France. What kept up their courage, kept up the courage of their men in the line?

In work for Belgium, as in work for France, Italy and Serbia, this was one of the factors which impelled generous appropriations by the American Red Cross for refugee work.

## CHAPTER XIII

### Refugees in Flight

**T**HERE are refugees in flight and refugees settled more or less permanently in the country to which they have fled. The help needed is different in each case. No spectacle of war was sadder than that of refugees in flight.

There were always little trickles of the stream made up of the people who went in plenty of time. But when the enemy broke through and advanced rapidly or when he suddenly started shelling heavily a place heretofore immune, there came an overflowing stream. It filled the roads, and side paths, and spread out over fields. It was made up of men, women and children, old people and babies, burgomasters, bankers, priests, school teachers, and every kind of laborer. The man who had a factory fled with his workmen, and his wife, who was the great lady of the village, fled with her maids. Some were old or sick and didn't go. If the enemy halted and the lines were established near them, they were sent back the other way and were Belgian or French refugees in occupied Belgium or France. If the lines moved on far enough these people who stayed in their homes remained there, in thousands of cases throughout the war under the law of the invader.

Where those who fled could do so, they started on the railway. When they did not, the scheme was to direct them to a railway at what was called a rail head—the last point toward the enemy that the railway dared run.

Once on the railway, they came under the jurisdiction

of the department of the French Government which decided where they were to be sent.

If they had money, they could generally buy tickets on regular trains and shift for themselves. If not, they were allocated among the departments of France.

American Red Cross help began often in the villages or on the farm whence they fled. No conviction that the refugee status was evil ever stopped us in helping people who wanted to leave.

Our trucks carried people by the hundred to the rail head. Often they worked until Germans entered the village. Once one of our trucks, driven by a Quaker boy, got caught between the lines and riddled with bullets but nobody was hurt.

At the rail head, the problem was to furnish sheds, blankets, food and medical help for a day or more until trains could pick the people up.

On the trains the work consisted of supervision, cheer, medical help and emergency rations. The ideal was trucks enough for all the sick, aged, infirm or little children so that they would not have to walk, food and shelter for everybody, and medical or surgical help to those in need—whether on the train or truck or waiting at the rail head. That ideal was never realized in work for Belgium, nor do I believe it has ever been realized in a refugee rush in the history of the world.

The number of people, the variety of conditions, the amount of anguish, create a situation almost insupportable, and a problem nobody can ever be ready to solve completely and satisfactorily.

Children, the aged, and the invalids often died along the line of flight, and the well and strong also succumbed at times to wounds or hardships. And as every variety of age and condition was found among the refugees, every variety of experience was encountered.

They left because they heard rumors or because they saw retreating soldiers, or were warned by a burgomaster

or town major or Red Cross worker, or because shells fell around them or even because they saw the Germans coming. They went on foot, in dog or pony carts, or in huge farm wagons drawn by ox teams, splendid Flemish horses or even the family milk cows, and in motor cars. They took what they could, but often the selection was like that which excited people make in case of fire.

If they had time, they buried silver or money or heirlooms of one kind or another, and German soldiers installed long enough learned to dig for buried treasure.

In nearly every group were the family dogs, faithful in days of evil report as in days of good report, making often a lark out of the migration, and giving one touch of cheer to a terribly tragic picture.

There were cats, chickens, ducks, geese in the procession, as well as all the larger animals.

Great herds of cattle driven ahead of the refugees were bought by the government.

The refugees slept in barns, in their carts, in abandoned houses or on the ground.

There were exhibitions of selfishness and fear, but the prevailing spirit of a refugee rush was one of stoicism, courage and marvelous helpfulness. Neighbors helped neighbors, and a common disaster bound all sorts and conditions of people together.

"Nothing is more touching than the kindness of the poor for the poor," Jane Addams tells us.

And nothing is more touching in war time than the service of war victims by war victims.

There were great refugee flights in 1914 and 1915, but after conditions on the western front were stabilized and the long period of trench warfare began, refugee rushes were limited to a few hundred people at a time from newly shelled areas.

When the Germans made their great advance in the spring of 1918, we lived 1915 over again. For months the Germans had been preparing and both in the armies

and among the civilians there were rumors. Two sharp German attacks were made March 8 to the north and south of Ypres, but were repulsed. General Plummer, of the 2nd British Army, whom we had met in 1917, had disappeared in a night for Italy, and came back in a night. When the great attack was launched on March 21, it started along a front of 50 miles from Monchy to La Fere, but as it progressed and narrowed, it became a fight for Amiens.

Up in Flanders this meant that some of our roads to Paris were seized, that British and Belgian Armies might be cut off from the French, that the La Panne office of the American Red Cross might be cut off from the Paris and Le Havre offices. In Paris it meant a great refugee rush, for which some of our workers were temporarily detached. "In American Red Cross Work for France," by Fisher Ames, Jr., this story is clearly told. At the request of the Commissioner for France, the Commissioner for Belgium agreed to take over all American Red Cross work for France north of the Somme, putting it under the La Panne office. The Deputy Commissioner at La Panne got up all the supplies possible and constantly carried 40,000 to 50,000 francs about with him.

Stopped at Amiens and Montdidier, the German High Command turned to Flanders. On a line of Ypres—Armentières, they launched a second attack, April 9, against the British Army. Again it was a break through toward the north and behind us. As Conan Doyle says, "The whole front fell in south of Armentières." By night-fall, April 10, the Germans were in Merville where we looked down upon them from our quarters in the old Hôtel du Sauvage at Cassel.

Every day the attack grew in intensity, and every day the refugee flight increased.

These were the very darkest days of the war. Sir Douglas Haig, always calm and self-possessed, issued that order of the day which was unlike any other in history,

when he said "Every position must be held to the last man. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight to the end."

It made everybody feel that we might be pushed into the sea, but that every foot of ground would be fought for. The Germans were then only 40 miles from Calais. If they succeeded in covering as much ground as they did on the drive toward Amiens, they would reach the coast and more. There was no strong natural line to stop them. The French came to help, but on April 25, after bitter fighting, the Germans took Mt. Kemmel, a wooded hill rising 500 feet above the Flanders plain.

It looked as if all that was left of Free Belgium, as well as the whole of the French *Departments du Nord* and *Pas de Calais* were gone.

Then we saw preparation, the whole significance of which we understood only after the war. We knew that the French were preparing to inundate low ground around Dunkirk. We did not know that they were prepared to let the British pump sea water into the greater part of the rich and fruitful *Pas de Calais* to hamper the Germans. It meant giving up one of their richest departments for years. The harbors of Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne were to be wrecked, and blockaded. Railways, signaling systems, factories, supply depots were to be blown up, and dykes and locks were to be cut so that even the soil would be inundated and destroyed; this that Germany might not have new bases for submarines and for the invasion of England. Inundating around Dunkirk with fresh water had actually begun before the danger passed.

The Belgians likewise dug new trenches to make a last stand for a few feet of Belgian soil, but it looked as if it would be useless work. The German advance overlooked Ypres from the south, and the lines were up directly in front of Ypres to the north and east. The pincers had only to close. We put explosives under our warehouses at Cabour and Adinkerke ready to blow them up. But

the pincers never closed. The great advance was stopped on Kemmel and in the forest of Nieppe. The Germans turned south for the third great blow, which fell between Rheims and Soissons.

The Belgian towns of Loere, Drauoutre, Neuve-Eglise and other smaller hamlets had been denuded of civilians who had fled northward.

The American Red Cross trucks with the Friends' Ambulance Unit worked night and day to help the people away.

A jolly old priest of Westoutre who couldn't walk, was carried back with his faithful nurse to a safe place without even his pipe. But he had 50 old \$1.00 American bank notes, and one or two Canadian bank notes. These our agents put into francs for him, and at the same time supplied nightgowns, underclothes, tobacco and a pipe.

A rail head was established at Couthove near Poperinghe and when shelled moved to Rousbrugge. Over the French line others were made at Ebbinghem, and at Lumbres near St. Omer for the Hazebrouck area, and farther south at Anvin near Heuchin for the Béthune area.

Think for a moment of the authorities concerned in moving refugees. On the Belgian side of the frontier there were the Belgian civil authorities, the Belgian Military Mission attached to the British Army, and the British military authorities. On the French side of the frontier there were the French civil authorities, the French Military Mission attached to the British Army, and the British military authorities, as this was the British zone.

A refugee rush implies such an emergency that whoever may be theoretically in control, the strongest man in sight actually takes command, no matter what his nationality. Individual British officers, for example, showed great ability and rare tact in dealing with these emergencies.

The Friends' Ambulance Unit, a part of the British

Red Cross, backed up the army authorities as described elsewhere. The American Red Cross furnished supplies of food, clothing, bandages and drugs for the rail heads and the trains, trucks for the convoy work, and money to keep the Friends going. Our men were moving rapidly from rail head to rail head, seeing needs, and getting necessary cooperation from French, British or Belgian authorities. Along the line of railway in France, at Abbeville, at Rouen and other places to the south, American Red Cross canteens operated from Paris, did a memorable work ministering to the needs of the sick, weary, and often heartbroken refugees.

At the journey's end, perhaps way down in the Midi, American Red Cross workers met them.

In the closing months of the war, when the Allies were advancing, we got refugees from the occupied country.

On October 14, 1918, in Ypres, six bedraggled-looking men and a collie dog led by a string, came down the road from Winkel St. Eloi. They had hidden in a cellar when the fighting swept over them. When it got quiet, the Germans had gone and the Allies had passed over in pursuit. They were the first of the liberated thousands. Most liberated civilians stayed in their homes. But in areas of fighting, of course they fled. The Germans in retreat established a new line on the Scheldt River. From here they shelled vigorously the advancing Belgians, British, French and Americans. Many populous villages, which, for four years, had endured the Germans and never had seen a shell, all at once came under fire. As one of the Quakers said: "They were freed only to be ruined," and it happened in the last two weeks of the war.

For these refugees, a large *hospice* was opened at Poperinghe and villages which were not shelled received them. They were not sent into France. The end was in sight. At this period wounds and gas made the problem primarily one of hospitals and that story is told later.

Throughout the war, the British took the position that

refugee rushes should be foreseen and provided for by systematic evacuation of civilians from all the forward areas of the army. Both French and Belgians opposed this view.

In February, 1918, the British General Headquarters, aware of the impending German attack, again made representation to the French authorities on this subject, but got no attention.

The civilians in threatened areas did not want to go and the government was afraid a panic would be caused in other areas if they were made to go.

The British said that civilians blocked roads, harbored spys, spread disease and were a continual nuisance and impediment.

The French and Belgians admitted much of this but added that they tilled the soil, gathered crops, mended roads, ran laundries, and did many other services for the army.

After all, it wasn't what the authorities did or didn't do which decided the matter. It was the flat refusal of the peasants to go until they themselves decided that they had better go, and the reluctance of the government to force them. It was one of the few instances in the war where civilians held out against the military.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Refugees in Exile

**I**N the broad sense, the Ministers at Le Havre and their families, and all the well-to-do away from Belgium were refugees. The middle class people and laborers who got jobs and supported themselves out of the country were refugees. But in common usage, the word means those wholly or partly dependent. To them we confine our attention.

But both dependent and independent were bound together by a common anxiety and sorrow for their country, by a common sense of the humiliation of exile, and by a common hope of return.

The condition of most of the refugees in exile for long periods of time was bad. The status itself was bad. In France, where most of them stayed, they faced congestion in an aggravated form. Seven, eight or nine persons were often jammed into one little dark, insanitary room, and for the room they had to pay an exorbitant price. Food prices went soaring also and the quality of food went down. Sickness broke out among them, and many died. Many were separated from relatives. The man was in the trenches, or children and parents had been left in Belgium. While the French were at first kind, before the end the refugees were often made to feel that they were intruders, eating bread and taking places that belonged to the French. They were as a rule very clean people—proud of their housekeeping, and a refugee status was hard on them.

An intelligent executive who acted as Secretary for one of the Ministers, a Belgian who is himself a devoted

friend and admirer of the French people, explained why the French feeling cooled for the Belgians:

“First, because most Belgian refugees in France spoke Flemish and not French. The French could not understand them and called them ‘Boches,’ the worst word they could employ.

“Second, because the Belgians had large families and the French small.

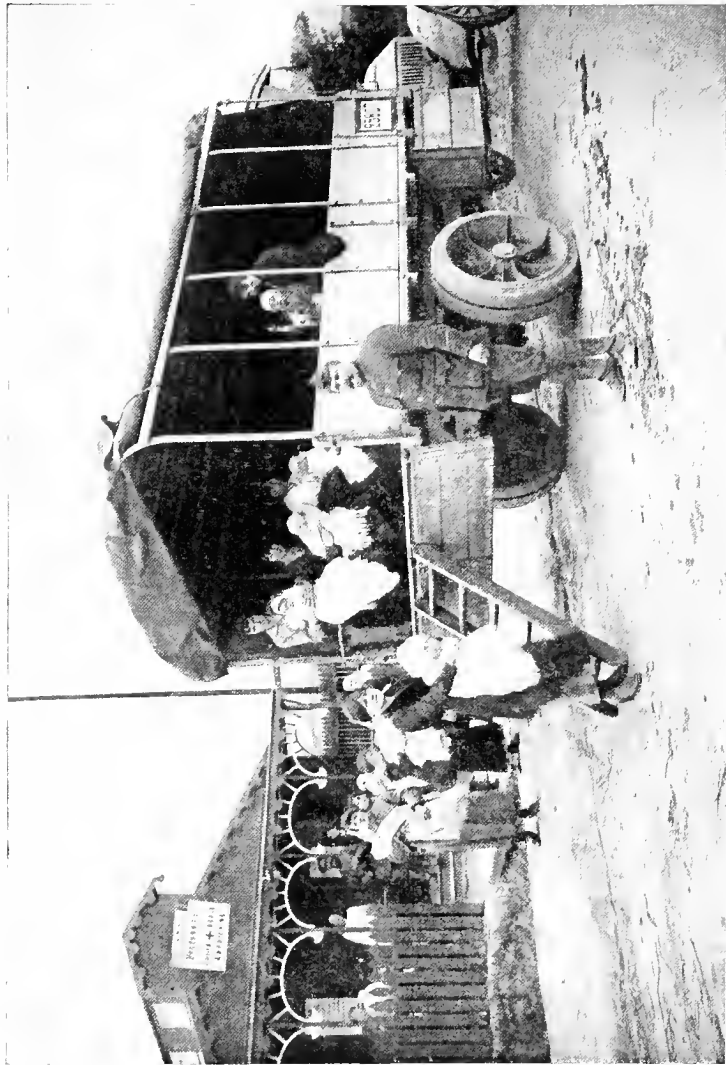
“Third, because the average Belgian workman did much more than the average French or British workman and was accused of spoiling the conditions of industry and changing standards of work. The British trade unions went so far as to ask manufacturers not to employ Belgians on this account.”

The Belgians were homesick—so homesick that the expressions which fell from their lips seemed to echo the words of the Jews in Babylon:

“How can we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget thee, oh Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.”

And French refugees, from northern France, nearly all more or less Flemish, felt much the same.

The French Government with great generosity treated Belgian refugees practically as they did French refugees. One and a half francs per day were allowed for an adult and one franc for a child under 16. They did not get the five francs extra per week which special cases of the French got for rent, but received a rent allowance of fifteen francs a month directly from their own government at Le Havre. The grants to Belgians cost the French Government practically 100,000,000 francs for the period of the war. Instead of making the Belgian Government repay this, the French Government canceled the debt. In return, the French had the benefit of the Belgian refugee labor at a time when both industry and agriculture were in great need of labor.



Refugee Mothers Who Made Munitions Taking Children Home from Red Cross Baby Shelter at Munition Factory. Mothers Made Munitions while the Red Cross Guarded the Babies.



The Minister of the Interior, French, and the Minister of the Interior, Belgian, cooperated in the care of Belgians in France. The French *Préfets*, *Sous-Préfets* and *Maires* bore the responsibility for the work, under their own Minister.

The official Belgian agency for dealing with refugees was the *Comité Officiel Belge pour Réfugiés*, organized in Antwerp, while the government was still there. It was nominally under M. Berryer, Minister of the Interior, but acted more or less independently of him, under the joint presidency of M. Helleputte, Minister of Public Works, and the Count Goblet d'Alviella, Minister of State, which in Belgium means Minister without portfolio. This Committee had branches in many departments of France to cooperate with French Committees and relieve them in part at least of special oversight of Belgians.

One of the most intelligent agents of the Committee was Ernest Claes, now a Professor at Louvain. Claes had fought bravely in the first part of the war, had been taken prisoner, had made his escape after almost incredible hardships, and in spite of shattered health served his government most effectively at Le Havre. With Captain Ernest W. Corn, Director of our Bureau of Refugee Service, Claes traveled through many departments of France to see how the refugees got on. He found most of them at work. "In Nimes," he said, "they get fifteen francs a day. Many are in bee culture for eight, nine or ten francs a day and two bottles of wine. Many have been put in the service of the electric tramways. The refugees at Cette work on the quai, in the factories of petroleum and chemical products and in the vineyards. At Toulouse, there is a great deal of war industry and salaries are large. At Lourdes they are in the munition works and at farming. At Bordeaux they are employed in munition factories, canneries, at the wharves, and in the works of the service of supply of the French Army. Even women at Bordeaux earn from five to six francs a day. In the Lot and Garonne, the

refugees work on farms and in a workroom maintained by the Committee on refugees to make clothing for distribution."

So it was all over the country. Able-bodied refugees had plenty of work.

There were the old, the sick, the wounded, the children who had to be looked after. There were the shiftless who had to be made to work.

Claes spoke frankly about the Belgian Committees. The American Red Cross agent at Marseilles said to him: "Edouard de Keyser, President of the Belgian Committee at Nimes, is very able and devoted. You can find out anything from him." He did find De Keyser petitioning the French Préfet to cut off the allocation from Belgian refugees who would not work. At Montpellier, he found the Chairman of the Belgian Committee so able and honest that the French had put him in charge of all refugee work in the department. "But at another place," said he, "the impression I had after my conversation at the *Consulat Belge* and after having seen the list of persons aided, was that relief is given rather easily. The money for refugees is received. Therefore it must be given to refugees whether they need it or not."

At X—— he found an utterly impossible Belgian representative. This representative believed that the whole refugee business was held up because he and other Belgian Committee Chairmen were not made Consuls and given authority. He wanted the Committee to address formal letters of thanks to all the *Préfets* and *Sous-Préfets* and obtain for them the Order of Leopold. "He distributes," said M. Claes, "the subsidies that he receives with wonderful impartiality. He does not make any distinction between the families who are really needy and those who are not needy at all. He gives the same subsidy to everybody. If he made any distinction, if he gave to one family one franc more than he gave to another, there would be a great discontent, complaints and M. X—— would

not like to have that. He thinks this affair of subsidies troublesome and so he asks the *Comité Officiel Belge* not to send him any more money. He prefers that the American Red Cross do not send him a stock of clothing as proposed by Captain Corn. He did not know anything about the 1,700 new refugees just arrived."

In every department of France, The Bureau of Refugees of the French Commission of the American Red Cross had put agents. These agents had built up an extensive organization, were spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, finding housing accommodations for refugees, supplying clothing, running workrooms, getting medical care, etc.

Colonel Bicknell knew all these things when he decided positively not to engage in any large way in refugee work among the refugees in France. He said that he didn't want any American agencies set up which the Belgians or French could set up for themselves, that he would not have any duplication of the work of the French Commission of the American Red Cross, and that he would not go into any welfare work for refugees however desirable it might be as a peace time proposition, which could not be clearly classed as war emergency work. He believed that the French had the refugee situation in France well enough in hand, and that there was work for everybody, that everybody should be made to work, and that we would probably find our greatest usefulness in care of children, medical work and housing. He believed that all the American Red Cross refugee workers could render by far a greater service as liaison officers among the different authorities, as inspectors to detect neglected conditions, as spurs to local agencies, as judges of the kind and quantity of supplies needed, and even perhaps eventually as experts who could make suggestions of new methods and better ways. But as far as Belgians were concerned, if furniture was to be sold, or clothing distributed, or farms operated, or sewing rooms organized, he wanted the Belgians to do it, and their

desire to do for themselves conserved and strengthened. So he laid down these principles:

"Do not organize American bureaus with American personnel except in exceptional cases.

"Do not help organize any committee for Belgian refugees except in communities where there is no French Committee.

"Help the *Comité Officiel Belge* to help special cases of distress throughout France, but don't take any special cases.

"Concentrate work on communities where conditions are clearly bad.

"Do the things they are not equipped to do and do them quickly when you find them."

Accordingly we gave several cash grants to the *Comité Officiel Belge* and its branches, amounting to 270,000 francs. Colonel Bicknell had arranged before his departure for other important grants, but these were canceled on account of the armistice.

In Le Havre, the *Comité Officiel Belge* had a local *vestiaire* for the city under Madame Louise Helleputte, wife of the Minister of Public Works. To this we gave clothing and several small cash appropriations. A branch of this *vestiaire* made layettes for new babies and distributed cradles, and we helped to the extent of some 60,000 francs.

For the rest of France, M. Berryer, the Minister of the Interior, organized a *vestiaire* under Madame Henry Carton de Wiart, wife of the Minister of Justice and the American Red Cross kept it supplied with clothing and paid the entire expense by a grant of 10,000 francs per month. Something over 2,000 francs in cash and just under 200,000 francs in clothing went to this very useful work.

The Minister of Intendance, or Supplies, M. Vanderelde, in 1918, organized a committee called *Famille du Soldat Belge* for work among the wives and children of

men in the Belgian Army. On the distinct understanding that there would be a careful exchange of records with the *Comité Officiel Belge* and no overlapping, we gave to his work a cash grant of 10,000 francs a month.

This action induced M. Berryer to propose to his colleague that *Famille du Soldat Belge* be merged with a work called *l'Assistance Temporaire* which he had organized in Paris under the Baronne Beyens, wife of the former Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and that a branch for western France be organized under the presidency of Madame Hymans, wife of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs. As Berryer was Catholic, Vandervelde, socialist, and Hymans, Liberal, the consummation of this arrangement showed a fine spirit and good team work.

*L'Assistance Temporaire* gave emergency assistance to hundreds of cases of Belgians whose resources were exhausted by the prolongation of the war or who had been overtaken by some unforeseen disaster. We gave *l'Assistance Temporaire* a cash grant of 202,000 francs, and nothing to the value of 50,000 more.

Work for the civilian population of Free Belgium, Occupied Belgium and Liberated Belgium is discussed elsewhere.

The long list of smaller refugee committees which were helped from time to time may be found in the Appendix.

What visitors to Le Havre wanted most to see was the American Red Cross Refugee Village. Of this Mrs. Dicknell wrote in 1919 as follows:

“In Havre the most desperate single condition probably as that of housing. To the overcrowded, insanitary, and dark lodgings which refugees were forced to occupy at a cost, exorbitant to them, of fifty francs a room a month, could be laid many of the evils of disease and family disintegration which all relief agencies were trying to avert. An organization known as the King Albert Fund (*Fonds du Roi Albert*) especially interested in the problem of future reconstruction in Belgium, conceived the

idea of putting up a model Belgian village outside Havre with barracks which later could be moved up into freed Belgium as a first shelter for the returning homeseekers.

"The King Albert Fund was created in September, 1916, by royal decree and to it the government made a grant of ten million francs, only to be apprised that its purposes of provisional rebuilding lay without the ends to which the money loaned to Belgium by the Allies could be devoted. A smaller appropriation was made to this work out of one of the small private revenues belonging to the government, but it was without the funds necessary to build this projected village and applied to the Red Cross for aid. Ground was loaned by the owners, and the Red Cross agreed to pay 500,000 francs of a projected total of 8,000,000 francs. Later this amount was increased to 600,000 francs. The building of the houses was entrusted to the King Albert Fund; they were managed by the Ministry of the Interior, and title to them vested in the Belgian Government.

"Three months after the work was started the first families had been installed in the village of Haut Graville. Each house was provided with a small vegetable garden, and was completely furnished; a rent of thirty francs per month was charged—where this could not be paid by the tenant the expense was met through some charitable source, but in no case was the family permitted to feel that it was receiving free lodging. By August, forty *Familles nombreuses*—large families—to whom preference was given because of their special difficulty in finding lodging in the city, were established in this attractive garden village. The conclusion of the war made unnecessary the extension of the village to the one hundred houses originally planned. The other fifty houses were shipped into Belgium direct."

The Commission to Belgium also dealt with Belgium refugees, children and interned soldiers in England, Switzerland and Holland as shown in the Appendix to this book.

No matter how rigidly it held itself down to the bedrock of absolute necessity, the Commission at no time was hard-hearted. Every day it realized what Bakewell in this account of the work in Italy called "the magnitude, the seriousness, the tragedy of the refugee situation," and it tried to make understanding, sympathy and friendship its greatest contribution.

## CHAPTER XV

### The Children's Colonies

**I**N spite of stories of Germans cutting off Belgian children's hands—a thing nobody could ever run down, in spite of children bombed, shelled, killed by disease, or slowly starved, so much good work was done for Belgium both inside and outside the country, that Belgium saved more of her children than many of the other fighting countries.

If pestilence started, it was checked. If actual starvation threatened, food in some way was secured. If people slept out a night or so, the condition was temporary. All that was hard or terrible or loathsome or cruel which ever happened anywhere, happened at some time to some Belgians, but very bad conditions never became general.

Nothing like that which Homer Folks describes for Serbia in "The Human Costs of War," happened to the Belgians. As Mr. Hoover said in 1917: "Belgians are not starving to death. It would be a severe reflection on American brains and efficiency, if after all our work, they were starving to death. But they are not starving to death because we are busy."

In France and in Free Belgium we found all kinds of *œuvres* or works going on for French and Belgian children. Among them were "Children of the Frontier," "Children of the Lys," "Children of the Yser," *Le Foyer Ecosais* of Miss Fyffe, and "Infant Consultations" of Madame Haden Guest. By far the greatest number of Belgian children outside of Occupied Belgium assisted during the war were under the Minister of the Interior or

under Her Majesty, the Queen. In the chapter on the works of the Queen, the latter will be described.

Early in 1915, the Minister had taken away from the fighting zone some 6,000 children, which he placed in institutions which he himself organized and called *Colonies Scolaires*.

There was no question raised of placing out such children in private families as we are coming to do in the United States, for in the first place the number was too great and then the time to prepare for them too limited; mass care was the only thing practicable. But further than this, Belgium is Catholic, the Minister was Catholic, and almost all the children were Catholic, and nobody thought of employing anything but the traditional Catholic method. Every school or closely related group of schools had a priest or *aumonier*, as he was called. Sometimes the director was a priest and always the greater part of the work was done by religious sisters.

There were three main groups of these colonies:

- a. In or around Paris to the number of 3,000 children under Senator Empain, a member of the Belgian Parliament;
- b. In Normandy, the region of Rouen and Le Havre, comprising some 3,000 more, under M. Olbrecht;
- c. In the region along the coast between Dieppe and Calais.

There were scattered groups here and there in France and many of the Paris colonies were sent to the south of France when it seemed as if the Germans were coming into the city in June, 1918. American Red Cross *camions* started to evacuate the children but while the evacuation was in progress, the tide turned at Château-Thierry and so about half the children stayed.

The Belgian system of decentralized government, strong in every little community, in contrast with the French centralized government depending wholly on the man above, showed results in these colonies. Each colony had

its own individuality and employed its own methods. The universal principle was illustrated over and over again that results are directly in proportion to leadership. If the Minister had the right person, man or woman, priest or layman, head or acting head in any colony, the colony did its work well. Great fussiness over forms of organization or mere names was whipped out of us by war, and the one question we came to ask was "Is there some one in this institution, whether in office or kitchen, who can and will run this job?"

The colonies comprised usually from 80 to 100 children each. Some were larger, some were smaller. The cost per capita of running the colonies was at first 70 centimes per child per day, but afterward, as prices went up, the cost became 1.25 francs per day. It was less in proportion, of course, in the larger colonies. To balance this, some of the Belgians asserted vigorously that if contagion broke out the virulence of the disease was greater in the large colonies. It was not simply that there were more cases but the cases were more severe. Dr. Rowland G. Freeman of New York says that this view is generally held among pediatricians of the United States.

The Liberals and Socialists of the government were always inclined to criticize the *Colonies Scolaires*, not that children were not fed, clothed and kindly treated, but that the educational methods were archaic. Said one intelligent woman at Le Havre: "Here are four years these children are out of regular schools and the time is wasted."

We have in the United States the teachers who "keep school" rather than teach school, and some of the hard worked sisters at these colonies, who had little schooling themselves, did not run very high grade schools. But the children were kept clean, were taught their religion, and seemed happy. In some of the schools very remarkable work was done in sewing and embroidery. In several, beautiful lace was made. All the children were drilled in singing and recitation and even gave little plays. No

American public schools could equal them along these lines. When the Minister or a Bishop or American Red Cross man came, there was almost always a reception where the children sang and where the visitor was presented with a "compliment." A little tot was pushed forward who read or recited an address of welcome beginning "*Digne Bienfaiteur,*" and expressed the thanks of the colony for the aid of the American people through the American Red Cross or whoever else it might be.

To find places in which to establish colonies was a difficulty. It was met by the loan of chateaux, by taking the abandoned buildings of religious orders driven out of France, by the French Government giving schools or other public buildings, and by hiring or borrowing great summer hotels along the coast.

One of the first things we did was to buy a number of cows to increase the milk supply of the colonies. We ordered expensive Normandy cows worth 900 or 1,000 francs each, but a purchasing agent in Paris found he could get Breton cows for 500 francs each and on the score of economy did so. The little wild animals ate heartily and gave practically no milk. They had to be resold at a loss and the beautiful big Normandy cows took their places.

We soon saw that some of the colonies needed to be waked up with organized play, and in the early days secured an initial appropriation of 2,000 francs for toys. With all of the Red Cross Commissions, toys did their part, as well as bread and meat. Footballs, baseballs, indoor games, and dolls helped educate the children and helped roll back the loneliness and misery which, in some colonies especially, always threatened.

The El Paso (Texas) Chapter of the Red Cross seemed to realize all this for in the fall of 1917 they sent \$500 to buy a Christmas treat for children. It came too late for Christmas, but purchased a New Year's treat of cakes and chocolate in 33 colonies in which were 3,810 children.

Far more extensive and important, of course, was the

distribution of thousands of dollars worth of clothing to these colonies. The nuns were famous needlewomen and taught the little girls to sew. Old garments were beautifully refitted and made over. And both to teach the children and to increase the ability of each colony to look after its own clothing problem, we bought sewing machines for between 20 and 30 colonies.

Just off the main road from Paris to Rouen at St. Illiers-les-Bois and some sixty miles from Paris, the Minister had a colony to teach agriculture and trades to the larger boys. We helped install electricity, the boys doing much of the work. This was used for lighting and for pumping water. We purchased sheep, pigs, cows, and horses, both to stock the farm which gave them their support, and to give opportunity for teaching husbandry, spending 21,000 francs at this colony.

At Cayeux-sur-mer up the coast between Dieppe and Boulogne, and near the mouth of the Somme, we installed three barracks 18 by 100 feet, at a cost of 30,000 francs to take care of new arrivals from the front.

There were many more or less independent colonies of children, nominally under the Minister, not counted, however, as *Colonies Scolaires*.

With two especially, our relations became especially close—Wisques and Wizernes—partly because they were near one of our main routes to the front, and partly because of our friendship for the interesting old man at the head.

The Abbé Delaere, since the war, Dean of the destroyed Cathedral at Ypres, was a faithful parish priest in Ypres before the war. He stayed through the first attack on Ypres in the fall of 1914 and was there during the second attack in March, 1915, when Ypres was destroyed. Thousands of civilians at first tried to stay through the bombardment, taking refuge in their cellars. Troops and even relief workers searching especially for them have sometimes been deceived into thinking everybody had gone

from a shelled town, when in fact, many of the cellars in some other part of the town have been full of them. Abbé Delaere stayed through the shelling and burning of Ypres, giving the last rites of the church to the dying, burying the dead, helping survivors get away. He did not go until ordered out in person by the Belgian Minister of War, and he is said to have been the last civilian to leave Ypres. Many tell yet of the tall spare old man with fine scholarly face, in long, black cassock, walking back and forth on the roof of his church, kicking off falling fire brands to save the structure, while German shells crashed around and the flames of the doomed city lit up the scene. He had a decoration from the King for his bravery. We found him in 1917 living in the old chateau of the Counts of Wisques, three miles from St. Omer, and some 30 miles back of Ypres, but always within sound of the guns which kept going at Ypres for over four years. Here he had established a refuge for the children of Ypres—the little girls in the chateau, and the little boys a mile away in some old buildings and under his assistant, the jolly Father Dilger and the good Mère Godeliève. He had over 600 in all. When we had visitors for the front, we sometimes took them to Ypres and then back to see the children of Ypres. No pen can do justice to the desolation of the old Flemish city, as it was in 1917 and 1918. For visitors the impression was deepened by British sentinels who stopped the car and ordered everybody to put on helmets and adjust gas masks. Almost always shells were falling in the city or going overhead. Several times visitors were killed in Ypres, but luckily none for whom we were responsible. It made the British very reluctant to give permits for the city. When we took into Ypres in the spring of 1918 a member of the United States Senate, Senator Thompson of Kansas, he had several very narrow escapes, both in the city, on the road down from Furnes, and on the road out by Vlamertinghe and Poperinghe. After the danger and universal destruction, the empty menac-

ing streets with pieces of shell all over the pavements, the anxiety as to where the next one would fall, the mad race down the shelled road, visitors were generally ready for anything farther back. What we showed them at Wisques was one of the loveliest of landscapes in France, trees dating back for centuries, lush meadows, rich gardens, birds, bees, flowers, children. They ate generally in the huge kitchen of the chateau by the great fireplace in which their dinner was cooked, thick stone walls around them, served by good sisters who knew how to cook, with appetites sharpened by long hours of travel and a "thank God" in their hearts that they had done it and had come out alive. And often for our visitors the good Abbé drew from a closet a bottle of the little store of wine he had brought out of Ypres when he came. The most rabid teetotaler could no more refuse it than he could refuse the wine of communion if he were a believer. It was about the highest mark of gratitude the Abbé could show. It was communion with the old Ypres, the cloth hall and cathedral, its happy people, all scattered and many dead, that we drank in the wine of Ypres. It was a rite—that drinking with the Abbé—the coldest blooded New York business men sensed it and were moved by it. And they drank with a determination that these things should never happen again.

If there were time, the children sang and recited for the visitors, or if it were the play hour, they took them into their big circle dancing around the courtyard. Every child had a history that was dramatic. Their lives had been saved almost by a miracle. One or both parents had been killed. We sometimes saw visiting her little one a mother who had only one arm in which to clasp the child. These little girls at Wisques showed less of the repression and more of the spontaneity and initiative which the apostles of progressive education are talking about. The older girls were little mothers for the younger. The good Abbé had a group of sisters here far above the average—one or

two with normal training—and the Mother Superior had both strength and charm.

The colonies of Wisques and Wizernes nominally under a work called the *Aide Civile Belge* actually were independent, but were helped by the Belgian Minister of the Interior. Their greatest friend and patron was a sober-looking English Quaker who was the Adjutant of the Friends' Ambulance Unit at Dunkirk, who advised and helped the Abbé, and won the hearts of the children as no other visitor of any country. He was and will be Vader Mordey in Flanders for many years. Wizernes eventually had to be evacuated to Jouey-les-Tours, south of Paris, as long range German shells and aerial bombs were falling around. We thought it a mistake and so did the brave Abbé, but those directly in charge of the little lives did not want to take chances.

All told, we helped Abbé Delaere over a period of many months to the extent of 115,000 francs. American shoes and clothing and food, a barrack for a trade school, money for tools, were all sent up in spite of enormous difficulties of transportation. And at the end all the children were taken back into Flanders and safely installed by the help the American Red Cross was able to give.

Less spectacular, but no less deadly, was the continual shelling of Flemish villages in 1917 and 1918, and the bombing of towns farther back.

We bought barracks and secured the Château of Recques near Montreuil-sur-mer for the Minister and made provision for five hundred additional children who were brought out in the spring of 1918. The first inmates of the new colony were children who had been evacuated once before from the villages behind the lines and placed in Calais. This was safe for a time but finally the aviators began to attack it. One night our Commissioner stayed in Calais when there was a severe bombing in which there were between 200 and 300 civilian casualties. A bomb fell in the yard of the children's colony, breaking glass, wound-

ing some of the huge trees and frightening everybody. Both the sisters and children begged the Commissioner to help take them away. Impervious to fear as seemed some of the little Flemish children others had been through experiences which told on them severely. These children at Calais knew the power of high explosives and lay awake trembling night after night as the Germans came over. The Commissioner took measures which resulted in these children being moved quickly to Recques where they had great woods and lovely fields in which to play. This colony was made ready late in the war but paid for its cost, 367,000 francs, ten times over. It was one of the colonies for which the Red Cross paid all the expenses. After the war, the barracks were given to the Belgian Government to use in the devastated areas.

Another project for children much debated and much criticized but fully justified by events was the construction of a colony in Free Belgium itself within range of enemy shell fire, at a little place next the French frontier called Leysele. Against the project was the danger of capture by the Germans if they broke through behind Flanders in one of their many attacks, or moved forward in front. Against it also was the danger of a shell falling on the colony. For it was the unanswerable argument of the peasants that the fields were big and the shells, even the greatest, small in comparison, and that there was plenty of room for shells to go over; further that many parents who lived in very dangerous places would not send their children into France but would send them to a place nearby in their own country. So with the energetic help of Jean Steyaert, *Commissaire d'Arrondissement* of Furnes, we got up ten barracks bought in Switzerland and shipped to Furnes by railway. We put some 150,000 francs into this project. The barracks sheltered children but not as we had planned. All at once in the spring of 1918, during a terrible shelling, over the fields from Furnes, Alveringhem and other places, came hundreds of adults and chil-

dren seeking shelter. The colony was used first as a refugee clearing station and then for some months as a refugee colony, housing 250 adults and 150 children. Nothing was more necessary in the relief field as well as in army headquarters than quick change of plans to meet changed conditions. We never made of Leyselle what we had planned, but we made something of it far better for the emergency which soon confronted us.

In this refugee colony we had an outbreak of typhoid in the summer of 1918, but it was quickly brought under control.

Nothing more picturesque in children's work could be found anywhere than a little children's colony in Boitschoucke among the camps of the soldiers and just back of the second line of trenches. General Rucquoy, commanding in that sector, found children who wouldn't go away, living in the farms, without schooling. He raised money among his officers, secured a couple of barracks from the army, an intelligent priest to take charge and opened a school which survived all of war's alarms until the shelling of March, 1918, when the children were quickly sent away. This school differed from the others in that the children went back to the farms to sleep at night. The old rule that the open country was the place of danger and the walled town the place of safety, was reversed in this war.

These little children at Boitschoucke did not seem nervous. They jeered at German aeroplanes when they passed over and at the shells high up headed for Dunkirk, and had a thoroughly happy time. The American Red Cross put up for them a new barrack for a refectory and assembly hall. The school made every visitor throw up his hands in amazement, made practically everybody object to the Red Cross endorsement of "so dangerous a project." But it was another illustration of doing the best possible under the circumstances, and not only did the children survive, but the Red Cross barrack came

through intact although there were shell holes and destroyed buildings all around it.

A Scotch lady, Miss Georgia Fyffe, lived at the Belgian front for two or three years evacuating children. She was brave as a lion, most intelligent, but not amenable to military discipline, and was sent out of the army area in 1918 by the British. She continued to look after a children's colony she had established at Neuilly and the American Red Cross helped her with two thousand francs a month and with clothing to the value of four thousand francs more.

All kinds of children's agencies demanded our help.

We did every conceivable kind of a thing for a child from building a little hospital and dugout for the brave Madame Rolin at La Panne, and a *crèche* for mothers making munitions at Gravelle, to great colonies like Recq and Le Glandier.

All told, we spent in children's work \$1,159,553.54.

Next to care of the men fighting the battle, comes care of the children.

They are peculiarly endangered by war. Birth rates go down, death rates go up, education is interrupted, moral standards are lowered. Saving the children for the rebuilding of their country must go hand in hand with helping soldiers save the country. There is no use of saving it if there is to be nobody to occupy it, as there is no joy in occupying it if it has not been saved.



Madame Rolin Hymans Coming Out of the Abri at La Panne into which the Babies of Her Hospital Were Carried Every Night.



## CHAPTER XVI

### Stories About Children Who Came to Know the American Red Cross

#### A Little Boy Who Lived in the English Trenches

GERARD VAN DEN BROCKE'S parents had died from the exposure and suffering of the first months of the war. Their home had been at Langemarck not far from Ypres. The father, Constant van den Brocke, was the village blacksmith. When the Germans approached, the whole village fled together. The van den Brocke family went to Ypres and then on to Reninghelst, a little village near the frontier of France. Here the mother fell sick and soon died. Within a month the father also died. Gerard was then only eight years of age. An aunt and a godfather cared for the little boy and he stayed two years at the front. The whole country was full of English soldiers who were good to the Flemish boy, taught him English, carried him about the country on motor lorries, and even to the trenches where he stayed whole days at a time. He said he liked the trenches and was not afraid of the shells.

Finally, the good *Commissaire d'Arrondissement* learned of the life the little boy was leading and sent him away to school at Crichtot, between Havre and Rouen. There were no Tommies at Crichtot, but he was in good hands. His bright, eager little face, his pride in his broken English, his quick comprehension of everything said to him explained why the Tommies had adopted him.

When the El Paso Chapter of the American Red Cross sent \$500 over for a Christmas treat for Belgian children,

about sixty centimes or eleven cents for each boy went to Crichtot. The treat was to supplement the regular meal. What the boys called for when this donation became known were pancakes and chocolate. Good Sister Regina was the head cook, a Flemish woman with one of those noble faces Frans Hals loved to paint. She stayed up until after midnight baking the cakes.

A short time later the American Red Cross Commissioner was introduced at the colony as the one who had given the treat. He was received with such cheers and so touched was he by the sight of the eighty little boys who had all come out of the horrors of war, that he cast around for a reason for another treat. Suddenly he remembered that it was March 4. Then and there \$10 of Red Cross money went into an extra treat. No more cakes made of wheat flour were possible, but chocolate and rice cakes were ordered to celebrate the day on which the United States inaugurates its Presidents. Neither the millionaire contributor in the United States nor the woman who earns her dollar over the washtubs to give to the American Red Cross, would have considered the expenditure foolish if they could have seen the faces of those boys, or heard them shout *Vive l'Amérique, Vive la Belgique, Vive la Croix Rouge Américaine.*

### The Story of Martha Comeyn

One of the older girls of Saussay was Martha Comeyn. Quiet, sweet and motherly in caring for the smaller girls, modest and self-possessed, it was hard to realize what she had gone through in the war. She told me that she was born at Reninghe, May 10, 1901, and it brought to my mind a night during the period of the fighting when I had dinner at Reninghe in a shed. There was not a whole building in the village and few half buildings.

Martha had a father, two older brothers and a younger sister. Her mother had died before the war. In August,

1914, the younger sister was in Antwerp on a visit. When I talked to Martha at Saussay, she told me that they had never had a line from this sister.

When Reninghe was attacked, the father went to Poperinghe where he continued his business of buying and selling horses. One brother entered the Belgian Army, the other went to work on the roads near Poperinghe for the English Army, until he should be called to the Belgian colors. Martha herself went to Dickebusch, not far away, to live with her grandmother.

One day in November, the little girl received terrible news. The brother who worked on the roads had been badly wounded at Vlamertinghe, between Ypres and Poperinghe. He wanted to see his sister and his father; so together they went to the wooden barrack near Poperinghe that was a hospital.

The brother had been accustomed, with the other men who worked on the road, to go once a week to get his money. As the men crowded around the little pay office, a big shell came without warning. It made a direct hit on the crowd, killing twenty-one. Both of the lad's legs were taken off near the body. He lived four days. Martha went to see him each day; he knew her and spoke to her until the last day, when he did not know any one. He was only nineteen.

After this it became very dangerous at Dickebusch and the father sent Martha away. For over two years she lived at Saussay, cared for by the White Sisters. With the other little girls she was taught to sew and embroider by the sisters who were famous needlewomen. Out of cloth given by the American Red Cross she made by hand many of her own clothes. Then one day a big wagon brought from Yvetot a wonderful sewing machine, also from the American Red Cross, and she was taught to operate it. The months at Saussay did much to make this little girl well and strong and to fit her for life in Belgium after the war.

## The Story of Julia de Braeck

At the *Colonie Scolaire* of Campeaux, we saw Julia de Braeck, twelve years of age, who had been in the colony since the death of her mother nearly two years before.

Her family, the father, mother and two children, had fled from Elverdinghe, a badly shelled town, and found refuge in Poperinghe, which was less shelled. But any shelling is dangerous. One day at Poperinghe, the youngest child, a little boy only two years old, ran out into the street. At that moment a big shell came screaming into Poperinghe and landed with the usual terrifying bang and crash. The mother ran out after her boy, when a second shell came. It caught her and she was instantly killed. But the boy was unharmed. The father was away at his work on the road for the English Army. Little Julia got her brother, put him in the house, and then knelt in the street by the mangled remains of her mother.

She smiled when we talked to her, but her face in repose was sad. The war leaves its mark on the children too.

She carried a little black bordered card, the kind the French and Belgian people use to announce the death of a member of the family. It said:

“Marie Irma Druelle,  
wife of Jerome de Braeck.  
Victim of an enemy's shell,  
21st April, 1916, 10 A. M.

Be ye also ready for ye know not the hour.”

One of the reasons why the American people kept the American Red Cross in Europe was to help just such motherless girls. The memories of suffering and bereavement, the little souvenirs cherished with such care, linked up the Belgian children to mothers of children everywhere. And so American garments, American food, American money went overseas with unstinted generosity to help

little girls like Julia come safely through the hard years of the war.

### The Bomb Which Killed Six at Furnes

Up at Furnes I had often seen the ruins of the house where one day in July, 1917, a mother and five of her children were killed instantly by a German bomb. I had seen the father, one of the *Garde Civile*, standing at his post, and had thought of his tragic home-coming just ten minutes after the pitiful thing happened. Many times I had pointed out the ruins to visitors. I had told the story as I had told the story of the house at Dunkirk where one bomb killed fifty people in a cellar, or of the strong house at Poperinghe destroyed in the same way, or of the thirty people asphyxiated at Calais. It had been to me just one of many horrors. But after a day at the *Colonie Scolaire* at Grosfys Château, France, the home of ninety little Belgian boys, where I heard the full details of this story that concerns Marcel Bedert and his little brother Odile, I could never think of that heap of bricks in Furnes again or that lonely policeman at his dangerous post without special emotion.

Marcel and Odile were the only children left of that family of Furnes—saved because they had previously been sent away to Grosfys Château. When I heard at Grosfys that there were there, I asked to see them, and two shy but attractive little Flemish boys soon came in to the Mother Superior's room where I was waiting.

As soon as Marcel, the older boy, understood that I had come from Furnes only the day before and knew his father and all about the "accident," as he called it, he was intensely interested. He tried to tell me how the letter came with the terrible news and just how it all happened.

A noble Belgian lady, the wife of the Minister of Justice, was with me at the time and translated what the boy was saying, although a child's Flemish is not unlike a child's English and I could understand many words.

Finally, Marcel fumbled in his pocket where boys keep their treasures and pulled out a little leather pocketbook. He unwrapped it, unfolded much tissue paper, and took out two little pictures. They were poor pitiful copies of family portraits. But they were his treasured remembrances. One was of his mother and three little brothers, and the other of his two sisters, a girl sixteen or eighteen and a child of two or three years. On the back of the picture of the two girls I read, "Pray for the souls of Julia and Gertrude Bedert, died July 10, 1917."

The noble Belgian lady drew the little boys to her and said to them in Flemish—and it needed no translation: "I will kiss you now for your mother. And for her I tell you to grow up brave and good men."

I took great comfort in the next half hour in every evidence I could see of the help the American Red Cross had given to the *Colonie* at Grosfys—the cows which furnished milk, the sewing machines which made clothes, the clothes themselves. And when I saw the ninety boys together, I asked them to think of any special treat they would like from the American Red Cross. I expected to hear "chocolate," but they all shouted "sausages." It seemed that there was a special sausage made nearby of which they were very fond. "But," said the good sister, "the sausages cost twenty centimes each (four cents); that would be eighteen francs." I said, "Make it thirty-six francs and give them each two sausages. And here is fifty francs (ten dollars), put the balance in figs"—for one little boy had shouted figs.

The last thing we heard as we left Grosfys Château was a glad shout for figs and sausages, for America and for the American Red Cross.

### The Story of a Boy Who Loved Animals

Georges van Neuville was born at Coxyde, a village which lay on the coast, in the little corner of Belgium which the Germans never conquered. His father was a

fisherman who before the war had made several voyages to the coast of Ireland. There were seven children in the family and they lived on a little farm. Georges especially loved the animals. They had a goat and chickens, but their greatest treasure was a cow. Coxyde was so near the German lines that the Belgian cannon were hidden about the village and on the farms. Every time a gun was fired, there was danger of retaliation from German shells, and on clear days, German aviators were overhead trying to locate the cannon. Often they dropped bombs.

None of the children were very much afraid and generally they did not run for shelter when they saw German aeroplanes.

One day as Georges was standing at the gate of the barnyard, a German aviator dropped a bomb which struck squarely in the middle of the yard. There was a terrifying crash. Big pieces of iron went flying in every direction. Georges cried out, "The goat and the chickens are killed." The father ran to his son who was bleeding; a fragment of the bomb had almost severed his arm. Yet the boy's first thought had been of the tragedy in the barnyard. Luckily, the father was able to get a French ambulance and a surgeon who bound up the terrible wound. They took Georges to a Belgian hospital which was located in an old Carthusian monastery at Montreuil. Here the boy stayed four months while a skillful surgeon cared for the arm and saved it. But he said that it would always be stiff and that Georges ought to be taught a trade for which he would not need both arms.

While at the hospital he was overjoyed to learn that his own family cow had not been hurt by the bomb which had so grievously wounded him.

At Montreuil also he learned how the American Red Cross was helping his country. He saw the new X-ray machine and the new electric lights which the Red Cross had installed there. He heard how the Red Cross had

bought animals of all kinds for the Belgian colony of older boys at St. Illiers farther back in France, and begged to be sent there "to learn all about animals." At last this was done. He turned out to be one of the best boys of the school. Though he had a withered arm, he had such love of all the dumb creatures and such understanding that he could do more with them than most boys who had two good arms.

All this time the father stayed at the front, exposed to the shells of the Germans. "Because of the cow," said the director of the school, "to which he is greatly attached and which he refuses to sell, he will not leave his farm."

It was a happy day for father and son and all the family scattered far and near when the armistice was signed, and when, with American Red Cross money, Georges and thousands of other little boys and girls were sent back to Belgium.

### The Story of Vincent Nare

Vincent Nare, a little boy of six, lived with his father and mother and sister at Ypres. The father was a *gendarme*. Standing at his post one day during an air raid, a piece of bomb struck him in the side. For four months he lay in Countess van den Steen's hospital at Poperinghe; then he died. The mother stayed on, living as best she could, doing washing for the troops, until the first day of the shelling of Ypres in April, 1915. During the height of the bombardment, just as she had taken little Vincent in her arms to comfort him, a great bomb came with a screech and bang and crash, smashing the house. It beheaded the mother, but left the child unhurt, drenched in his mother's blood.

English Quakers quickly came and took little Vincent away. They turned him over to the Abbé Delaere, whom the American Red Cross was helping at Wisques. There he found a second home.

Multiply this story ten thousand times, not always with

such gruesome details, but sometimes with more gruesome details, and you have the child problem of the firing line.

### The Story of the Little Girl Who Died of Fear

Sometimes the children jeered at enemy aeroplanes, but at other times sensitive children suffered agonies of fear.

Gertrude Decrock lived at Poperinghe just back of Ypres. Her father kept a small inn and a smithy. Her oldest sister Gabrielle, who was only eleven years of age when the war broke out, helped the mother care for Gertrude, her three brothers and the baby sister.

Back of the house was a large garden. A bomb from an aeroplane fell in this garden while the children were there at play. Gabrielle and the three boys fled to the kitchen. They did not at first see that the little baby sister had been wounded and that both of her eyes had been put out. Nor did they see Gertrude for some time. She was so frightened that she lay where she had fallen in a hole in the garden. They had to go and pull her out.

Then all the children except the baby were sent away into France—the boys to St. Obain, Gabrielle and Gertrude to the lovely old chateau of Saussay.

While Gabrielle grew strong, Gertrude steadily became weaker.

As the good Mother Superior said, "Gertrude was always sad and always afraid. If the door slammed, she came to me quivering with fear and clung to my robe. She was afraid to go out of the house, even with the nuns."

If the wind blew, or if it rained, she was terrified.

The Mother Superior put her into a little room adjoining her own, but often in the night she cried out: "J'ai peur." ("I am afraid.") She curled herself up in bed to make herself as small as possible. She ate less and less and after five or six months at Saussay, she died of fear. She was one of the martyrs of the war.

The American Red Cross helped save thousands. The

story of Gertrude Decrock is typical of the lives of other thousands no human power could save.

### The Story of a Little Girl Caught Between the Fighting Lines

On the coast in a little village called Petites Dalles, I made the acquaintance of a fourteen-year-old flaxen-haired Flemish girl, named Jeanne Beuneken. One day she told me her story. It showed how suddenly the war had come to the simple peasants who knew little of world politics, how much they endured, and how some of the children came through terrible experiences comparatively unscathed.

Jeanne lived with her parents and brothers and sisters in the village of Comines ten Brielen. Mounted German patrols, the Uhlans, appeared in the village one noon without warning. The children were in school and were sent home. Almost immediately Germans and English began fighting in the village and neighborhood. Bullets whistled through Jeanne's house and neighboring farmhouses began to burn. All ran to the cellar. There they stayed until darkness came.

As Jeanne told the story of that night, it was very dramatic: "The English came," she said, "to tell us that we had better fly toward Ypres. My mother took the baby Maria in her arms and started with us out of the door, but immediately she was hit by a bullet in her shoe. We went back to the cellar. My father and the servant were going all the time from one door to another to see if they were not burning our house. All at once father saw that they were trying to put fire on our neighbor's house, but that it would not burn. Then the Germans came to our house and in two or three minutes all was burning. The cattle were in the stable and we could not save them. We went away quickly, unable to take anything with us. Mother had baby Maria, father was holding my brother

Simone by the hand, the servant had my sister Yvonne, I was holding my little sister Blanche's hand. But mother and Blanche had on wooden shoes and Blanche kept losing them off. I was crying because I had to go back in the dark to find them; I was so afraid of the Germans. Then we lay down in the ditch to escape the bullets. Nobody could sleep. All the night we saw our house burning and were hearing everything—the birds and cows and pigs—shrieking while they were burning. It was so very sad to see and hear and very hard to bear.

“At midnight,” she said, “the bullets came from both sides and hit the wire near our feet, but we were not struck.”

In the morning they were so stiff and cold that they could hardly walk, yet they took the road toward Ypres. How they slept under hedges, and in barns, how good people took them in at Ypres, how there they got the sad news of the death of relatives, how Ypres was shelled and they had to flee again; how her parents at last found a refuge at Steenvoorde and how Jeanne with her little brother and sisters was sent to one of the *Colonies Scolaires*—all that she told so simply and naturally that day at Petites Dalles.

I said to the Mother Superior: “If soldiers should be decorated for crawling out into No-Man's-Land to get important news, or for rescuing wounded comrades under fire or for other feats of valor, so should a little girl be decorated who obeyed her mother's order and went back through the darkness, under fire, toward the enemy, to get her sister's wooden shoes, even though she cried with fear as she went.”

Said the good Mother Superior, “Only God knows the true story of heroism in this war.”

## CHAPTER XVII

### The Children's Own Stories

**B**EFORE the war ended, I asked some of the refugee children to write out the story of their experiences. These children were in colonies, taught by nuns, subject to school discipline and as witnesses exposed to direction and prompting not always intended as such. But children are keen observers and among the thousands we met we found many whose contributions show originality and are of value in giving flesh and blood to the bones of the history.

All of these children were in schools supported entirely by the American Red Cross or receiving something at our hands.

There were two main classes of children. There were those who fled before the Germans, sometimes even after they were in the village, and many of these children saw death in its most horrible form, parents or playmates killed and homes burned. Sometimes they were even caught between the lines of battle.

Then there were children who lived under the Germans in Occupied Belgium and who were brought out in 1917 and 1918 by the American Red Cross cooperating with the Queen or the Minister of the Interior, to be fed and taught in France.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

BY ANDRÉ BRAEM

I lived at Voormezele in western Flanders. My father, Aloise Braem, and my mother, Emma Beele, were butcher and coffeehouse keeper.

At the beginning of the war I saw German soldiers going everywhere to ask if there were any spies about—they also came to our house to have bread, meat and butter, as well as straw, hay and oats for their horses.

I heard that many people, mostly young men, had been taken and wounded or killed with bayonet thrusts. Others were obliged to work for our enemy until completely exhausted; many died of bad treatment. The Germans believed them to be spies, we were told.

I got so sad and afraid with the bombardments, that I fell ill and had to stay in bed six weeks; when I was better I had to take a refuge with my brothers and sisters in our cellar, for shells were falling everywhere. Finally, the danger was so great that with sorrow we had to leave our village and go a little farther to Dickebusch. Near our house two women who were coming back from their work were killed by the explosion of a shell and four other persons of our village lost their lives. Most of the houses have been burned or destroyed.

After a little time spent at my mother's sister's at Dickebusch we went to some friends of ours at Westoutre, but there again we were bombarded and were obliged to return to Dickebusch where it was less dangerous. There my poor father died of a grave illness.

I asked my mother to let me go to the children's colony of Bacqueville and I had been there a short time when very sad news came to me: my eldest brother who had worked for the English got hit by a shell as he was getting the money he had earned; he lost both legs and arms and died soon afterward.

Then my mother asked if I could be sent to a professional school, and here I am at St. Illiers-les-Bois.

My mother now keeps a little shop at Reininghelst.

(Signed) André Braem,

St. Illiers-les-Bois, Seine-et-Oise, March 7, 1918.

## STORY OF THE WAR (At the Front)

Translated from the Flemish by Madame Carton de Wiart.

I am A. Scheldeman, the son of H. Scheldeman, born at Dickebusch from workmen people. I have four brothers and five sisters. In October, 1914, thousands of Germans arrived at Dickebusch. They took all they could: horses, cows, pigs, hens, etc.

In March, 1915, I was walking out with a friend, and on our way we were playing together when suddenly a bomb fell and exploded near us. My little friend was at once killed. A bit of iron had touched him on the chest.

On a Sunday of the same month my mother and I were walking together when I was suddenly touched on the knee by bits of shrapnel.

Happily, I am now in a colony, where I go to school and learn reading, writing and arithmetic.

## HORRORS OF THE WAR, 1914

BY MARTHA BRIERS

Translated from the French by Madame Carton de Wiart.

The war. What a terrible calamity. How people suffered during those sad times. Germany declared war to France, to Belgium also it appears, but the people hope; everybody says: "Do not worry." One week or two and it is done. Some days after the sad news the people is moved, everybody is in the windows. . . .

What is it? It is the Belgian soldiers starting for the front. First there came the horses with their gallant riders—then the other soldiers walking behind them. What a charming sight. I remembered it long afterward.

One day we heard a big noise. What is it now? There are the Belgians, the famous defenders, who are blowing up a bridge on the Meuse. The Belgians do you ask? Yes the Belgians, but with a good intention, believe me. It is

because the Germans are after them and having passed to the other bank, they blew up the bridge.

However, the Germans by another bridge pass on to the other side of the river—they enter the town. How dreadful they look in comparison with our dear soldiers: ugly grey uniforms—hard faces! They occupy our soldiers' barracks and the Governor's palace and he can go where he likes. Some time later they began to shell the town. In the middle of the night we were obliged to take shelter in the cellars and the gardens.

Then they forbid selling liquors to their soldiers. They went to visit a tobacco factory and counted how much the workers were doing in a given time and nearly all was to be done for them and they bought it at a low price. In another factory they took away all the machinery and sent away the workmen but some days later took them back on condition that they would work for the Germans.

Now the price of bread is higher. They organize a rationing where the bread is less dear—they employ the town bakers but if the town bakers work for the rationing they cannot do it for the clients. Flour is scarce and we are more and more rationed as the Germans keep the flour for themselves, the misers. People grow hungry and it is impossible to get bread as the bakers have no flour, and other food is too dear. The Germans forbid the sale of potatoes. What are we to eat? After having well thought, people began to eat rice. We put it in the soup. We eat it with milk and sugar.

Big shopkeepers seeing that sugar was in demand, hid it to ask a high price for it and people were again reduced to hunger. The shopkeepers made believe that they had no more and were able to sell their goods at a very high price. Later on the Germans required everybody aged more than 15 years to have a card of identity and threatened with the most awful punishment people who went out without that card. When one was obliged for a serious case to go to a neighboring town, one was obliged to go and

ask a pass at the German Kommandatur when he had to wait for hours.

The Germans at first obliged children to go to school, but now forbid it as there is no coal to give, but they rob the children of their leather cases when they come from school and employ them to mend their soldiers' shoes. Now there is something more the Boches want. Do you guess? It is copper to make their bullets. To obtain it, they order by a decree to bring to the Kommandatur all the copper there is in the houses, but it does not please much the population and very few obey. They guess easily that there is more in the town than what is brought to them. Oh do people hope to deceive them? Well, they send soldiers in the houses to search and they take what they found. But learning that, the people went to work to hide it in the garrets and in the cellars and buried it in the gardens. But the Germans guess and search the houses more seriously, going from loft to cellars, opening chests of drawers and everything and taking away even the food.

I finish here, having nothing more to tell about the Germans. Those who will read this will have a very faint idea what they made us suffer.

### STORY BY LUCIEN LEFEBVRE

Translated from the Flemish by Madame Carton de Wiart.

We lived peaceably in the village of Ploegsteert and were dwelling in a coffeehouse. I had four brothers, two of them worked in a factory. Unhappily my father died quickly, when all at once the village bells announced the war.

That morning the village looked sad. There was nobody in the streets. One morning there arrived a small troop of eight Prussian Uhlans in the village who took possession and established themselves at every street corner, but the French were at Armentières very near our

village and some of them arrived, hiding themselves behind the houses, and then full of courage assailed the Germans who ran away on every side, sending some shots at random and hiding in the ditches or behind a small bridge over a ditch.

In that little skirmish there were two men killed, the French and the German officer. The French made a prisoner who surrendered. As we had been told of the German atrocities and as they had been fighting in our village we thought they will revenge themselves on us.

Our mother and we started towards Armentières, but as we could find nowhere to stay we came back the same night through the German troops who had taken the village. As our house was a coffeehouse, the German soldiers came to drink beer and liquor, but they did not pay. It lasted three days and three nights.

Then came our Allies, the English troops, better received than the former. There came first three bicyclists and then the others. When they came we cheered them and gave them sweets and beer. It is some days later that the famous bombardment began; at the beginning we ran away, but as it was going on we took refuge in our cellar, which was not very strong but good enough to preserve us from the bursting of the bombs. We stayed under that bombardment without any ill coming to us during nearly a year. But on a Sunday as we were seated to dinner bombs fell. We ran to the cellar with other people who were in the coffee room and three bombs fell at one or two meters from our house and killed some people, but none of us. We ran away through the village in the country and stretched ourselves on the ground. We heard the whizzing of the bombs which fell near us. My friend had his head cut and other people were seriously wounded. My little brother had his forehead wounded and I had my ear taken away. British soldiers took me to the hospital where I was nursed. When I was well again I went back home out at Pont de Nieppe.

While we were there we heard that children were taken to the colonies, so my brother and I joined them.

Now some months ago my mother came to Darnetal with my brother. My two eldest brothers are soldiers, one is a corporal. The one who is with my mother will have to go soon with the next class as he is 18 years of age. My little brother and I, we are at the *Colonie de St. Jacques sous Darnetal*.

## NARRATION OF THE WAR (At the Front)

BY MARCEL VICTOR

Translated from the Flemish by Madame Carton de Wiart.

When the war broke out our happy family counted five children, two sons and three daughters. We are still all alive in spite of all the misfortunes we had.

It was about the 30th of November, 1914, that the unexpected arrival of the Germans obliged us to leave our house. The shells were falling without interruption and some houses were already set on flames. We came back in our house in the evening as the danger had diminished. So we passed still a few days during which we saw many calamities around us, though were spared.

On the 7th of June it was a beautiful, warm day. We went, my brother, my eldest sister and myself, to Belle (hospital) to fetch some provisions.

When we came back we could see from far that our house was aimed at by the bombs which fell without ceasing. To keep from danger we waited afar off to see the shells falling when suddenly we saw with terror that a bomb had smashed the house. Frightened, not knowing what to do, we made up our minds to go quickly, at the thought that our parents and sisters were perhaps still there.

We found nobody in the house. Looking in the neighborhood we discovered them at last in a public house, but good heavens, in what an awful state. . . .

My mother, stained with blood, placed in an arm chair, was grievously wounded. My father, slightly wounded at the head, held inanimate my little sister in his arms. The energetic care of English doctors brought them all to life again, but it was not all. A few months after, my brother was severely wounded in the leg and he got better only after five months' hospital care. However, the poor boy will be lamed for the rest of his life.

Since that moment, our dear parents did all they could to spare us from that danger. On the 27th of May, 1916, my two eldest sisters and I were accepted in a Belgian colony in France. We are there since twenty months and are very happy. We will do our best to behave well so as to prove our gratefulness to those who have procured us such a good life.

## THE STORY OF MARGARET VAN CROMBEKE

Translated from the French by Mrs. John  
van Schaick, Jr.

I am a little Belgian girl, twelve years old, and I live with the White Sisters in the chateau of Saussay in France. Before the war, we lived on a little farm at Passchendaele in Belgium. I had a father, mother, one brother and five sisters. We all worked hard, but very happy together.

Then one day my father said that the Germans were coming and that we must go away. We took some bread and started on the road to Ypres. My father could not go with us as he wanted to do some work. He said he would come to Ypres the next day, but the Germans caught him and he never came.

We were very tired that night and we did not have any place to go. Everybody was running around in Ypres and many people were going away. After it got dark, a man told my mother we could stay in his barn. There was a little hay and we slept on that. The next day we went

to Reninghelst where my aunt lived. She was very kind to us and we lived with her for a year. My mother did washing for the soldiers and my sister found some work mending uniforms. My two little sisters, my brother Jan, and I went to school every day out a little way into the country. We often wrote to my father but never had any letter from him or never heard anything about him. We were quite happy here except for our worry about father until the awful accident happened to my little brother. Mother always told us not to come along the road if the Germans were shelling. She said we should go off in the fields and wait there. And so many times we were late coming home. I was afraid of the shells at first, but we got used to them. They did not come very often then. But one day I stayed at school and Jan started home with another little boy. They were just passing the little woods near the village when a big shell came. They didn't have any time to run. It struck by the side of the road near by. And my poor little brother was hit by a big piece in the neck so that his head was almost taken off. The other little boy was hit in the arm and ran home crying. Some men came and carried my brother home. When I came mother was sitting by him and she said, "Margaret you must go away. I won't lose you too."

Then the Mayor of Reninghelst came and said he would write to the *Commissaire d'Arrondissement*. The next week they took me to Adinkerke and put me on a train with twenty other little girls and brought me to the *Colonie Scolaire* here at Saussay. My mother came away the next week and brought my two little sisters with her. She is working at Lieuvillers and writes to me every week. She often says how happy we will be when we can all go back and find my father and be in Belgium once more.

(Note: Through the Minister of the Interior we made generous appropriations to take these children home soon after the armistice.)

WRITTEN BY MARIE GILISSEN, A GIRL WHO  
LIVED UNDER THE GERMANS

Translated from the French by Madame Carton de Wiart

Whilst this horrid war went on many families suffered from hunger. At the rationing we had 333 grams of black bread each and some soup. Sometimes we were given sugar, honey brickle, and seldom rice, cerealine and potatoes.

In the morning we had only two small slices of dry bread and had not even a little wet grease to put on it. At 12 o'clock we had rutabagas, beetroot or turnips, and at tea time we got nothing at all except sometimes a little soup given by the commons. In the evening we had rutabagas again and very often we went to bed without any supper.

About the month of October, 1917, we were obliged to go away to Switzerland. A week before starting somebody came to take our measures for cloth. On the Tuesday, October 9, we went to fetch a loaf of bread as we were told to take food for three days with us.

We were told to be at 2 o'clock at the Convent of the rue Cockerill. There they gave us two eggs and some sugar from the committee. When we had put on our armlets we left Seraing and went to the bridge to take the tramcar to go to the station to embark. Our parents came with us to the Guillemins. We entered the train at 4:30 and only went on from Liège at midnight. At Cologne they gave us soup with rutabagas, beetroot and stewed apples with honey—quite a German mess. The same night at midnight we stopped to eat again. It was better than at Cologne; we had soup that was not very good and a small piece of bread all black, but we had to eat it as we had not much food. At the frontier they searched us, thinking we had some addresses with us, but we had been cleverer than they thought and had learned

them by heart. There they gave us some slices of black bread with a bowl of coffee with milk. After two more hours we stopped down again, but we were well satisfied as it was to take the Swiss train. In that train we got two rolls of bread with ham and chocolate. On Friday, October 12, we arrived at Fribourg in Switzerland after seeing the Rhine falls and going through the St. Gothard.

We went to the Belgian soldiers' barracks and were received there as little princesses.

After two days at Fribourg we left after going to church and went to the station to take the train to Evian-les-bains, where we were well welcomed. After Evian we went to Paris; we had a good dinner: soup, potatoes, beefsteak and salad and grapes for dessert, and we went to the cinema. After Paris we went to Rouen; we arrived very late and had for our supper soup, bread, potatoes and egg, jam and cakes and we went to bed after.

The next day we started to Yvetot where we were well received too. On the Thursday, October 18, we came in a motor car to Valmont where we are still. The ladies and sisters are very good to us; we go to school as we did at home, but we are separated from our dear parents.

Long live the good ladies of the colony of Valmont.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### The Works of Her Majesty, the Queen

**T**O her work in the Belgian Red Cross Society with Dr. Depage, and in the field of preventive medicine with Dr. Nolf; to her constant visiting of all the front hospitals,\* and her dressing of wounds with her own skillful hands; to her patronage of all works of amusement and education for the soldiers and her frequent trips to the trenches; to all the miscellaneous tasks piled upon a Queen even in war time, Her Majesty added constant, intelligent and sympathetic work for children.

She was always going to and fro, in her little corner of Flanders; she was always hearing everything that went on, she knew as well as anybody what was the next important thing to do in relief.

As she would not be driven out of Flanders herself, she sympathized deeply with the other people who did not want to go away into some other country. So did the King. Both admitted all that the military strategists had to say about it, but both contended that there was a moral value to the cause of the Allies in having even a corner of Belgium unconquered. So some kind of civil administration was kept up all through the war, and the King and Queen went to their burgomasters as they did to their Generals with their encouragement and their thanks.

This did not prevent the Queen from starting early to send children into France. Whether her own agents picked

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\* In 1917, we established "the Queens Purse," a fund of ten thousand francs a month for fruit, flour, jellies, and extra comforts distributed personally by Her Majesty to wounded men.

them up or Miss Fyffe, the Scotch lady, or Steyaert, or Biebuyck, the *Commissaires*, the little Queen was at the station at Adinkerke to see to their comfort and to wave good-byes when they went off.

But early she faced what we faced later—the fact that the parents of many of the children would not let them go. She looked about to see if there were any place in Flanders where she herself could establish a colony, and make it a model of its kind. Queen though she was, she encountered the strongest kind of opposition, even from some of the officers of the King's household. They knew the range of artillery and the uncertainties of war, and they did not want the Queen put into a position where a shell on a barrack could cause a slaughter of children for which she would be held responsible. Her Majesty, for all her soft voice and gentle ways, has very positive views and a way of holding on to them. And as for shirking a duty because the thing might go badly and react on her, this is a thing unlikely to ever happen in her life. She is too true a woman. She held fast to the necessity of the action she proposed, and she raised the money. When it came to the almost awful question of just where to put it, of deciding where shells would not fall, she got the best advice she could and then acted. The site was in the open country, close to the frontier, and near Vinckem where Dr. Depage later built his big hospital. One of the barracks was contributed by citizens of Paterson, N. J., a thing the Queen always pointed out with pride.

In two little villages of wooden barracks, the Queen provided for 600 children—one group of children from 6 to 10, and the other from 11 to 16.

The barracks were well placed, on soil well drained, flat though it was, and around them bloomed the most beautiful flowers from early spring until late autumn. Between the two groups of barracks was a large vegetable garden which the older boys helped to work.

The barracks were light, well but simply furnished, and

everything about them showed that somebody of taste and culture was at the head.

The Queen was fortunate in having the pick of available personnel and this made other authorities growl occasionally, but the growls were low and not very deep. Certain it is that whether we ascribe it to her brains or luck, Her Majesty made there a real school. A beautiful little chapel stood among the other buildings. The instruction was modern. The children really learned something. And the whole atmosphere of the place unquestionably lifted most of them up to a plane they never would have reached had there been no war and no school of the Queen. Twice during the war, we tried to get over from America the most modern books on education for a present to the Queen out of other than relief funds, as we knew her great desire to have them, but the shipments had not come through when the war ended.

There is no question so bitterly fought over in Belgium as the education of the children. Both King and Queen have to keep themselves above party strife and to be the representatives of all the people, but few projects for the future interest them more than the raising of standards of Belgium schools of all kinds.

The Queen's schools at Vinckem were an object lesson. Towards them we contributed 101,000 francs.

Her Majesty had kept in touch with conditions in Occupied Belgium as much as was possible. She could look over from where she lived or from the tower at Furnes, or from observation points on the line, and see beyond the German trenches the towers at Bruges or Ostend. And word came out this way or that. When we first met her in 1917, she had become convinced that she ought to try to get out the most undernourished children and feed them up in France or Switzerland. The Hoover Commission was keeping people going and the baby work in Brussels was so good that infant mortality rates were being lowered below pre-war rates; reports from Liège and other

industrial districts were not so good. But it was more than a question of food. She considered it demoralizing to have the children so long under the hard conditions of German occupation. Once more she had in mind the future citizens of Belgium.

So under her patronage and in cooperation with her, we established early in 1918 a colony for children at Le Glandier, in Correze, France.

Her Majesty chose Captain Charles Graux to be her director and here the one man indispensable to a project was found. Captain Graux was the son of a former Prime Minister of Belgium, an engineer, a manufacturer, and a cultured gentleman. From his English mother he had got full command of the English language.

Arrangements with the Germans had to be made for the children to come out through Switzerland, arrangements with the Swiss for their passage, arrangements with the French for their entry; the buildings of the old monastery had to be made ready, furniture secured, a staff assembled, commissary arrangements made. Then schools had to be organized which would measure up to the high ideals of the Queen. Captain Graux overcame all difficulties and got the results expected.

Some 650 children were brought out.

Medical examination showed that while the children looked to be in fairly good condition, their resistance was below normal. The older ones had grown tall and lanky and could not stand much fatigue. The short ration, the scarcity of milk, and the fatless food had been even harder on the younger children. Plans were under way to bring out other convoys but the tide of battle set so strongly against the Germans that the end seemed to be in sight and new projects were given up.

To meet a difficulty in furnishing shoes, Captain Graux established a work shop at Limoges where 80 pairs of shoes were produced per week. The surplus was sent to other children's colonies.

The total cost of Le Glandier was 1,745,625 francs.

By the time this colony was organized, Belgian personnel was very scarce. Dr. Neelemans, medical director, was Belgian as were most of the teachers. We sent down a squad of Quakers, English and American, among whom were Henry Streeter, Zavitz, and Frank Morton, to help organize Boy Scout activities, a throat specialist, Dr. Wiggin, a medical assistant, Dr. Arnett, a dentist, Dr. La Bonte, and two American nurses, Martha Hower and Sarah Boyle, all of whom did good work. The two daughters of the Commissioner, Miss Constance and Miss Alberte Bicknell also did effective work at Le Glandier at a time when they were most needed.

Under the joint patronage of Her Majesty and of the Minister of the Interior, Mrs. Haden Guest, an English lady, held baby consultations or clinics in Flanders and for them we shipped condensed milk and clothing to the value of nearly forty thousand francs.

At the joint request of Her Majesty and the Minister, we sent up Dr. Park and Dr. Alma Rothholtz to go over the field and extend the usefulness of these consultations. Both did valuable work. Dr. Rothholtz stayed some weeks in the summer of 1918, but the great Belgian attack early in the fall changed the situation, and she turned at once to helping with the wounded, and it seemed best not to attempt further medical work for babies in Flanders.

## CHAPTER XIX

### For Those Who Held the Line

**T**HE main work of the Red Cross in the World War was to help the nations care for sick and wounded soldiers. By 1917, however, it was evident that the war was a contest not merely of armies against armies but of entire populations against entire populations. Constructively everybody was a combatant and actually thousands of civilians were killed or wounded. There was no question as to the necessity or legality of civilian welfare work.

The misery of the fighting men who were not wounded was also evident. What they endured was almost more than flesh and blood could stand. The mud and cold, the stench and slime of many sectors of the front, made life there unspeakable, even in quiet times; the bombardments only added to the danger and misery; to all else was added the loneliness of long separations from home. What the war correspondents described so often as the set lips, the high stern look, the grim determination of men marching to the front was true but it was not the whole truth. In billets there was quite another story. What the soldiers' letters published of the mirth and the jollity of the men was also true—but there was another side to this also. The worst things were never written down. Even a welfare worker never writes them down. The long continued strain, the snapping of tense nerves, the shell shock, the men who went crazy, the desertions, the executions,—all these make a chapter also. And a great body of war phenomena is now classified as medical which before the Great War was never so classified. Whether a man in the trenches, clothes soaked or caked with mud, exhausted in

a mud hole, with brain reeling and nerves quivering from sights and sounds which the human being was never intended to experience, technically is or is not a medical problem, no Red Cross man worth his salt would hesitate about dealing with such a case.

Whatever our individual theories, our orders were specific: "Go to Europe at once. It will be a year before we can get fighting men over in any force. Express American sympathy and cheer. Help lift the burden of war misery, civil and military, in all the allied countries. By your sympathy and aid, keep up the morale and prevent a German victory before our fighting forces come."

So far as the American forces went, the American Red Cross divided the field of soldier welfare work with the Y. M. C. A., Knights of Columbus, Jewish Welfare Board, and similar organizations. In work for Belgium we made no such division until after the armistice, and we had got back to Brussels.

Within the first three weeks of our arrival at Le Havre, Emile Vandervelde sought an interview with us and asked if in principle we were free to do something to improve the condition of the Belgian fighting troops—adding that he would like to go into details of needs if we were free to act at all.

M. Vandervelde was the leader of the Socialist party in Belgium, active in the International Socialist organization, but he was engaged as Minister of Intendance in furnishing supplies to the Belgian Army. After the war he became Minister of Justice. No man rendered more loyal service during the war. Few men in Belgium are his equal in sheer mental ability. Our own Red Cross men testified that he seemed absolutely devoid of fear and would lead them into advanced posts without any apparent thought of danger. His enemies said that he was too deaf to hear the noise going on about him.

We informed M. Vandervelde that we would study the

needs of fighting men precisely as we would those of refugees, of children or the wounded.

He then asked us to put up a building in connection with the new Ocean Hospital at Wulveringham-Vinckem to use as a canteen, a center of recreation and as a library, for convalescent soldiers of the hospital and for the use of the thousands of other Belgian soldiers camped near that point.

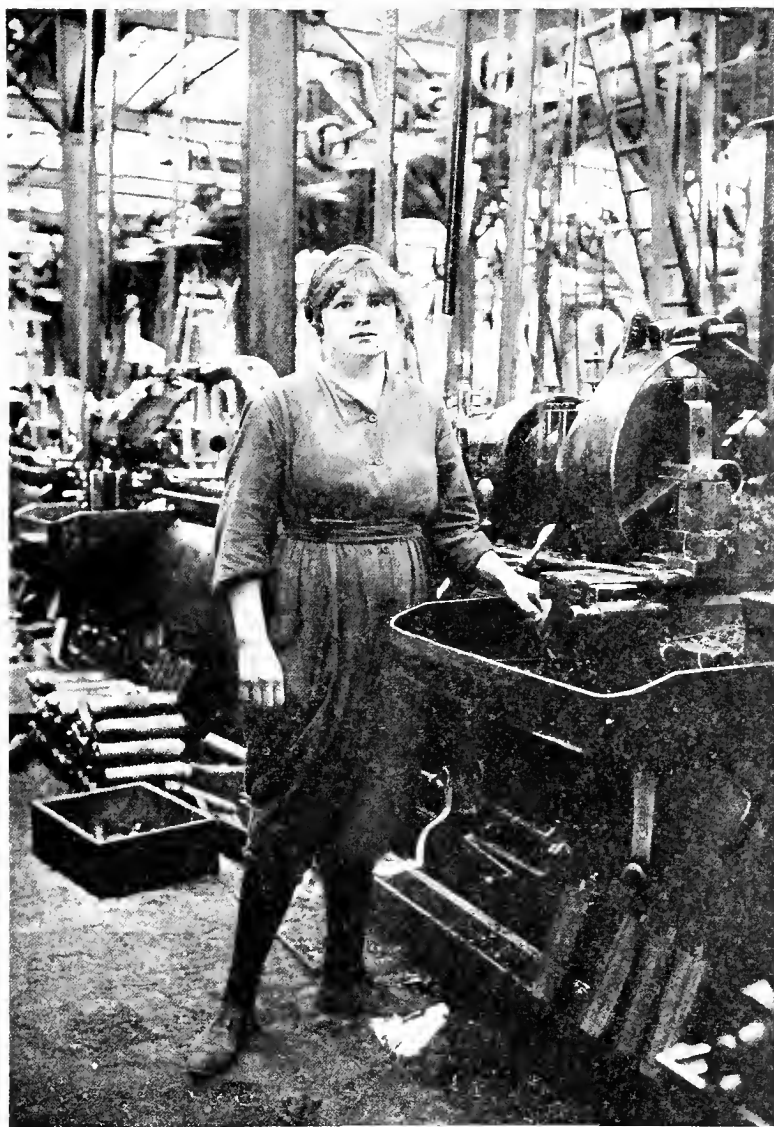
Investigation showed the need of this canteen and our first appropriation for military relief, 40,000 francs, went to this project, which was called the Home du Soldat. It stood out from all other projects of the kind because of the beautiful mural decorations painted by Allard l'Olivier, a famous Belgian artist, who was a common soldier in the trenches and who did this labor of love when *en repos*.

M. Vandervelde, in our first interview, outlined the miserable condition of 13,000 soldiers working at Le Havre making munitions and doing automobile repair work. Their pay had been fixed in the theory that they were alone, but in fact many had been joined by their refugee families. "Frequently, through illness, the condition of these families is desperate," said he. "If you will furnish a sum of money for actual relief, I will furnish the personnel to do the work and the oversight. Admit the principle and I will do the details."

Again we admitted the principle, stating that relief of this kind was exactly what we were there for and that all we wanted to know was first that it was a real need, second that there was nobody else who could supply it, and third, that it would not overlap the work of other organizations.

Of the work of *Famille du Soldat Belge* which grew out of this interview, we have spoken in the chapter on "Refugees"; of the *crèche* for munition workers, in the chapter on children.

For the soldiers themselves at Le Havre, at Rouen, at Calais, and at other places in the rear and on lines of



A Belgian Munition Worker at Le Havre.



communication, we helped equip canteens, and reading rooms. Soldiers who previously had eaten meals while seated on the edge of a bunk now sat at a clean table. Those who had slept on a tick filled with straw on the floor, now had plain spring mattresses for beds.

In addition, shower baths were installed in some centers, a cooperative restaurant for those boarding themselves, and recreation halls with books and games.

All of our projects had to go before the Finance Committee in Paris and to the War Council in Washington. This does not mean that freedom of action was limited in particular projects. It meant that if we needed ten million francs for a six months' period, we had to say why we needed it.

What one of us wrote from the front in the winter of 1917-1918 tells clearly why we asked for money to help the men at the front and just as clearly why Paris and Washington granted it as fast as the cables could operate.

"The shelters are, roughly, dugouts and abris on the first line; abris and half ruined buildings on the second line; farm buildings, old wooden barracks and new brick barracks in the rear, that is, seven or eight miles back from the trenches where the soldiers go for fifteen to thirty days after spending four days in the trenches, four days on piquet and eight days on semi-repos.

"Life in the abris and dugouts was the usual thing. They were low, crowded and dark, but warm. There was one continuous line of graves along the board walk of the Pervyse sector where the trenches consist of an embankment—back of the old Nieuport-Dixmude railroad. The soldiers in their dugouts lay within three or four feet of their comrades in their graves.

"I visited the terrain recovered recently by the French, now held by the Belgians, adjoining the Ypres salient, around Merckem and Bixschoote and running up to the edge of the forest of Houthulst. Here trench lines are obliterated. The entire front is a No-Man's-Land of shell

holes, presenting an almost continuous series of craters and furrows. It is either a sea of mud or frozen wilderness. Last Wednesday the snow of the night was over everything but it lost some of its beauty when a Major of Engineers complained bitterly that there had been such delay in getting white clothing for his men that he lost an unnecessarily large number every day. Before we left the sector two more of his men, who had talked with us, were killed while cutting ice to let water drain away. The defenses are not infantry lines at all. They are advance posts, machine gun emplacements and batteries.

"Life on the Merckem and Bixschoote sectors is life in abris above ground; most of them German pill boxes. These sectors are especially bad, because of gas shelling. Shrapnel fire is almost continuous. And yet I heard men say: 'I'd rather be here than back in the barns.'

"The life of the soldier on the farms and in half-destroyed villages is the problem of the long, dark winter nights without light or fire.

"I found near Gyverinchove 240 men sleeping in two barns. Fires in other places had compelled a strict order against any stoves in these sleeping quarters. Petrol had given out and there were no lamps. Candles were impossible. The village was a mile or two away and the intervening roads were almost knee deep in mud. The barn buildings were old, with wide cracks in the siding through which the wind whistled. After four o'clock what was there for the soldier to do? When he did not wade to the village for a little fire and light in the *estaminet*, he crawled into his blankets on the soggy straw or hard boards to keep warm. And sometimes on the bitter nights, the men in these two barns had not slept at all, but were running up and down all night to keep warm. As I heard a soldier sing as he went along with a bucket of water, an officer said: 'That is the spirit of the men almost all the time. They keep their spirits up.'

"At Reninghe, less than four miles from the German

guns, I found a company of engineers billeted in farm buildings and abris. We had a dinner in a shed, and I spent some time in a pig pen where four men slept, the only part of a barn that was intact. These men had a fire. I was told repeatedly of places where there would be one stove for four barracks and where men would be moved from one barrack to the other to give all a chance at the fire.

“All this would present a strong indictment against the Belgian Government and the Allies if there were not the other side. Fully half the army is now in the new brick barracks the government has been struggling for, against obstacles presented by scarcity of building materials and lack of money. These barracks are in groups of four, each accommodating fifty men, and each with a fifth barrack used for a dining hall, place of recreation, kitchen and canteen, but there are thousands of soldiers for whom no such quarters have been provided.”

Those who fought in Flanders speak as much of the hardships of the long winter nights, of the mud, the drenching rain, the piercing cold, as they do of terrible bombardments.

An Antwerp boy who served some of us in Holland in 1915 as a stenographer and who now was attached to a battery said, “We can stand the German shells. What we mind is the cold and nowhere to go.”

The country was so low that along much of the Belgian front, trenches were above ground. Not only did enemy shells hit them, but the waters which kept back the enemy undermined them and they fell down. Said one of the private Belgian soldiers: “The labor of the night was indescribable where under bullets and shells the men made their defensive works, always nibbled at by the water and opened up by the shells—always falling down—always having to be rebuilt.”

Several times that winter of 1917-1918, as well as the hard winter before, sentinels were found at their post dead of exposure and fatigue.

Adhering again to our determination to work through existing agencies, we did practically all our soldier welfare work through "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" and its allied organizations, all under general supervision of the Minister Vandervelde; the *Appui Belge* of Paris under the direction of Mademoiselle Glaezer, a talented French girl, a granddaughter of the late Frederic R. Coudert of New York; "Centres of Recreation" under Madame Paul Hyman, wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, one of the best of our Belgian workers; the *Foyer du Soldat Belge* and related authorities, under the Minister Brunet, who, since the war, has been made President of the Chamber of Deputies; and a number of smaller organizations.

Few Belgian soldiers had a chance to go home on leave and their pay was so small that they could not afford to go into France. We found men who had had no leave in over three years of war.

To meet this need, the Minister Monsieur Brunet created an organization called the *Foyer du Soldat Belge* which had six homes and a restaurant in Paris where Belgian soldiers could stay for a nominal fee. General De Ceuninck strongly endorsed this work and asked us to extend it. In December, 1917, the Red Cross made a grant of 99,000 francs to help open two new homes and maintain them for a year, and later the Red Cross helped open additional homes at Mareil and Pontoise. Through M. Blero and the Baron de Broqueville we helped open a similar home at Petite Couronne near Elbeuf. In a single year over 100,000 men were received for a period of 9 days each.

*Congé du Soldat Belge*, a similar work in Paris, was interesting from the fact that no wealthy or powerful people contributed to its support. It was maintained by trades unions of Italy, France and Belgium, and took care of the soldiers in public restaurants and lodging houses on the theory that the men got enough of military life at the front, and that the vacation should be made as non-military

as possible. But the men were met by comrades who acted as guides and friends throughout their stay. The Red Cross helped this society increase its soldier guests from forty to one hundred and fifty per month.

Miss Glaenger in Paris secured from us in the fall of 1917 a grant of 10,000 francs a month for the *Appui Belge* which sent packages of food and clothing to prisoners and opened and furnished canteens and recreation rooms for soldiers. This society worked in close cooperation with "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" and systematically divided the field.

The British were the first to come to the help of the Belgian soldiers, and under M. Vandervelde, a society was organized in London called "British Gifts for Belgian Soldiers," which did valuable work sending small packages of clothing, tobacco, chocolate and other little gifts to thousands of individual Belgian soldiers.

When M. Vandervelde went to Le Havre as Minister of Supplies, he organized a branch of this society called "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" to establish canteens, libraries, reading rooms, and to organize sports, concerts and cinemas and theatrical performances for the soldiers.

It could no longer be financed in Europe as everybody was exhausted. We gave an initial credit to M. Vandervelde of 1,000,000 francs to finance his work on a much larger scale, followed it up with a second million when we saw the results and spent in all through his various works, 2,231,000 francs.

Unable to get wood to build canteen barracks, he secured tents in England. A double tent, well lighted, with a wooden floor, and a good hot stove, is a warm cheerful place even on a winter night. Some small canteen tents were placed behind sand dunes or ruined buildings up close to the front trenches. Large ones were installed eight or ten miles back. In these tents the soldier could get hot chocolate, cigars, cigarettes, razors, pocket knives and similar small articles, candy, and sometimes beer. The larger

ones had adequate space for games and even in the smaller ones just behind the front line, there were cards, checkers, etc.

In La Panne alone more than 20,000 soldiers visited the canteen on the Place du Marché. Another canteen in this same Yser front served every day between 4 and 7:30 P. M. an average of 1,520 cups of chocolate and from 900 to 1,000 pancakes. In addition, biscuits, cakes, coffee, tea and lemonade were sold. Among the Belgians the real test of the effectiveness of a canteen was not whether it had beer, although beer was enjoyed, but whether it had hot chocolate, sweets and hot pancakes. "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" quickly pushed forward when the Belgian Army advanced, and under Corporal Stoeffs did a remarkable work in the frightful country around Houthulst Forest in the days when the army was waiting for its transport to catch up over the destroyed roads. Then when the soldiers reached the Rhine country, and the joy of victory subsided and they were face to face with the fact that the war was over, and everybody else was going home but themselves, the hot chocolate and hot pancakes were there to quiet the grumbling.

No single feature of soldier welfare work brought more satisfactory results than the use of books. As Henry van Dyke told our own "Library Service" in the war: "Victory does not depend solely upon big battalions, but upon large and strong and brave hearts and minds in the battalion. Nothing is more important in keeping up morale than a supply of really good reading matter for the men in hours of enforced inactivity. Human fellowship, good books and music are three of the best medicines and tonics in the world."

The subcommittee of the "Gifts" in charge of reading matter was called *Livre du Soldat Belge*. We gave a grant to purchase company libraries of eighty books and to have made strong cases in which to ship and keep them. The *Livre du Soldat Belge* organized the service so that within

the regiment each case was different and could be circulated from company to company. Books were furnished in French, Flemish, and English. A special service gave books for industrial, mechanical and professional training. It was extraordinary to find how many young college men there were in the Belgian Army. And just as extraordinary was it to see how the enforced separation from studies and contact with practical life gave value in their eyes to learning. The war itself as waged by engineers and chemists and mechanics of one kind or another. Every shell fired meant intricate calculations and computations. Artificial things had been stripped from life and they were immersed in reality. The schoolboys' blasé indifference to books and the typical school attitude of contempt for the "grind" and admiration for the man of the world were all knocked to pieces in the deadly reality of war. They saw that knowledge was power, and power was life and victory. They wanted to keep up with their studies so that they would not be too far behind when the war ended. So we got the books and we followed the books up. Some we found in pill boxes and some were torn and some were soaked with blood, but they did their job. Like the dead horses and blinded horses and wounded dogs and broken automobiles, the wounded books helped hold the line. For amusement, for medicine, for instruction, for moral training, they were among our most effective agents. They were a part of the preparedness for peace begun in war. And by keeping up morale they helped with the war.

Madame Paul Hymans placed her *Centres of Recreation* in the forward areas of the army and did admirable work in furnishing moving pictures and other entertainments. After the armistice, her work was much enlarged for the soldiers holding the Rhine. She secured the help of two especially effective men: Conrad Verhaeghe de Naeyer and Charles de Smeth of Brussels. They had taken their lives in their hands and made their

escape from Brussels in 1918. They had lain all one night in the cold, wet bushes 300 yards from the frontier of Holland before they found a chance to make the desperate run, cut the electric wire and crawl under. When they reached the Rhineland they saw clearly that conditions of life for the soldiers were bound to be difficult. "No Belgian or French newspaper arrives," they wrote under date of December 27, 1918. "The revictualing is infrequent and insufficient. Railway wagons are robbed en route. It is not possible to depend on the inhabitants for food for they have nothing to give. All the soldiers deplore their isolation and their lack of quick communication with their families."

A report from a Red Cross man at the same time said: "The Belgians occupy a very flat country—a rich farming country sept bare by war—stretching from Düsseldorf north to where the Rhine enters Holland. It is a God-forsaken kind of a job to do garrison duty now that the war is over, and I believe the appropriations made for canteen work will do great good." To Madame Hymans' work in Germany we gave cash and supplies of the value of 200,000 francs. Madame de Hemptinne, whom we had helped in soldier welfare work also moved up to Crefeld, Germany, and established useful canteens. Lieutenant Duclot of the Belgian Army was detailed to install the cinema apparatus. "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers" purchased a considerable number and showed good team work by installing them in the *Centres* of Madame Hymans and Madame de Hemptinne's as well as in the cauteens and military clubs of their own.

## CHAPTER XX

### What Civil Hospitals Did

**T**HE story of the civil hospital in the war is full of interest and significance. What civil hospitals did was what civilian doctors did in every allied country, viz: bear enormous responsibility and a crushing burden of work. To begin with the great majority of effective doctors and surgeons in Europe were called to the colors leaving double, treble and quadruple duty for the older men at home. Even in the United States the burden on doctors left behind was very heavy.

In European countries many civil hospitals were taken over for military purposes, leaving the institution to make such provisional arrangements elsewhere as were possible.

All the hospitals of Belgium were captured by the Germans except a few behind the British and Belgian lines like Ypres and Furnes, which were soon knocked to pieces by shells. Many of the hospitals of northern France which the Commission to Belgium had to look after, likewise were captured or destroyed.

Among those that had to be evacuated were Hazebrouck, Béthune and Arras. This threw a heavy load on the hospitals that remained. From a military standpoint the civil hospitals were important for two reasons. If they did not function, the military hospitals had to do their work and this additional call generally came in times of military activity when they were the busiest. No military hospital would refuse shelled or bombed civilians if they had nowhere else to go. The great Belgian Ocean

Hospital at La Panne repeatedly took in civilians to tide over an emergency.

On the purely medical side also, civil hospitals were important from a military standpoint to deal with contagious disease which, if once started, spread from civilians to soldiers.

From the standpoint of the civilian population, the civil hospitals had an importance ten fold greater than in time of peace. Whether in forward areas of the army or in the interior, life was abnormal. People were exposed to shells or the bombs of aviators. If free from such dangers, they had others more stealthy. Their food did not feed them, or their houses were overcrowded, or their work was under hard conditions and the family doctor had gone to the war. There might be only one practitioner left for a score of little villages, and his only method of getting about might be one of the old high two-wheeled gigs drawn by a horse too old and decrepit for military use. If he prescribed, the drug stores might be empty, or at best be like the little drug store down along the Marne carrying on bravely with "nothing but liver pills and almanacs."

Little boys continued to fall out of apple trees and break their arms as they had before the war. The old grandfather cut his leg with the axe as he split the wood. The old woman got bronchitis. The young mother had her baby to bring forth. If tuberculosis had a foothold anywhere, it flamed up under the hardships. Wells were polluted, water mains were broken, reservoirs were captured by the enemy and typhoid took a deadly toll.

All such conditions were felt especially where refugees crowded together, and to all else was added the mental suffering of peasants who had to be treated by strangers whose language they did not understand, and whose ways were strange to them.

When one came to deal with the civil hospital situation, one found a further complication. Both doctors and

nurses wanted to do military work rather than civilian. It was the same with the volunteers. There was a glamor about the one thing entirely lacking in the other. Every red-blooded man or woman on earth wanted to prove his courage—to show that he was not a shirker—to serve in the advanced surgical post exposed to gas and shells rather than 40 miles in the rear. It was difficult to get personnel for civil hospital work.

When once it was understood, when the whole mass of loathesome, repulsive, dangerous disease was seen, when the deep human need with its appeal was realized, some of the finest men and women volunteered for this service.

To their everlasting credit let it be said that they knew that they cut themselves off from mention in despatches, from honors and decorations, and perhaps even from any real understanding of their service by their fellows.

What we did along civil hospital lines may be summarized as follows:

a. We equipped a small civil hospital in the Doortje, near Leysele, West Flanders eight miles from the front line for the use of the *Service de Santé* of the Minister of the Interior, and furnished supplies for it, amounting to seventy thousand francs.

b. We furnished clothing, dressings and other supplies for the Belgian Maternity Hospital at Rousbrugge, West Flanders. When Rousbrugge was shelled we helped evacuate this hospital to Leysele and when Leysele was bombed we helped evacuate again to a part of the civil hospital in the Doortje.

c. We supplied the Hôpital Elisabeth, of the Countess Van den Steen at Couthove, near Poperinghe, also close to the front and always in danger, with a large quantity of drugs, bandages and dressings, installed electricity for it and gave it financial help. This hospital did an important civilian work but took some soldiers and also Belgian gendarmes who were militarized.

d. We gave money and supplies to the Hôpital Alex-

andra of the Friends' Ambulance Unit at Dunkirk as described in the following chapter, and took the entire support of the little hospitals which they pushed forward at the time of the allied advance in the fall of 1918 at Courtrai, Roulers, Poperinghe, Lille, and Roubaix.

e. We helped the hospital of Madame de Liouville at Ebblingham, and with the French Préfet of Calais, the Friends' Ambulance Unit, the British P. M. O. (medical officer of the area) and Madame de Liouville, wife of a French officer of note, we formed an alliance to establish a new hospital for Madame de Liouville at Lumbres west of St. Omer when it seemed likely that the Germans would sweep over Ebblingham.

f. We bought the Château of Job in the Auvergne for 150,000 francs as an additional tuberculosis sanatorium under the Minister of the Interior and gave an X-ray machine and other supplies to the existing sanatorium at Chanay.

It is interesting to note that the Belgians who paid 350,000 francs for Chanay sold off enough farm land to pay for the institution and all its furnishing and that both institutions have been kept since the war as they give an elevation and a climate which can not be found anywhere in Belgium.

g. We put a little barrack up four miles back of Ypres for Dr. Louf, the one civil doctor who remained in this dangerous sector and who was not only physician and surgeon, but burgomaster, townclerk, and banker for the peasants who stayed.

h. We gave another barrack at a cost of 9,000 francs for a little Belgian maternity hospital in Calais.

i. We helped the overtaxed French civil hospitals at St. Omer, Montreuil-sur-mer, Henchin, Hesdin, and Arras with both money and garments.

j. We installed electricity at La Chartreuse, a most picturesque Belgian civil hospital in a huge monastery of the Carthusian monks near British General Headquarters

at Montreuil. We got an X-ray machine for them, and furnished other supplies.

k. We organized and supported a Belgium civil hospital at Le Havre for refugees which had to be turned for a time into a military hospital to take care of a great influx of wounded.

l. Most important of all, we organized with the Minister of Interior at Le Havre a hospital, a clinic, a *crèche*, and a *pouponnière* for children in which Dr. Park did his great work, and from which sprang Dr. Ramsey's important work at Rouen.

The civil hospital work in both France and Belgium would have had a sorry time of it if it had not been for various orders of Catholic sisters. The Belgian Red Cross took the position that most of them were not trained in the modern way, that nursing is a profession as much as doctoring, and standards should be set high and maintained. But they also recognized that if a man is off in the wilderness and a tree falls on him—he may well be grateful even for a simple untrained woodsman who can bind up his wounds and give him a chance to live.

Over considerable areas and at some periods of the war there was nobody else to do the work of civil hospitals but religious sisters. They did heroic work. They carried water long distances in pails. They scrubbed floors. They washed dirty linen. They did the cooking. They bathed and clothed and fed all kinds of patients afflicted with all kinds of diseases. They put up with every kind of building and housekeeping inconvenience when they had to and made earnest appeals for changes needed when they saw a chance.

Some were illiterate peasants and some were cultured ladies. They had their little jealousies. But for sheer endurance, for fidelity in times apt to shake anybody, and for devotion to human beings as God's children, nobody in the war surpassed them. There were white sisters and brown sisters and black sisters so far as garb was con-

cerned, and sometimes necessity made the authorities mix different kinds of sisters in one institution.

The much-tried head of one great hospital, himself a devout Catholic, said one day: "The trouble is not serious but there is always a little friction when you mix them up. And there are three reasons for it: First, they belong to different countries; second, they have different customs in their different orders; third, they are all women."

The Commission to Belgium could have used five hundred strong mature American women at any time as nurses, who had no training whatever as nurses but who had health, common sense, ability to obey orders and to fit into the lives of foreigners with different ideas and standards. The civil hospitals of Belgium and northern France were undermanned in every way.

The American Red Cross did much to make up for the lack, and to cheer on the overtaxed workers by sympathy, advice, friendliness and gifts of everything needed from drugs, blankets and dressings down to money, and in several cases gave that which in this field Belgians and French could not supply for themselves—additional trained help.

## CHAPTER XXI

### Quaker Foundations for Our Work

**I**N the pursuit of Eliza, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Phineas, the Quaker, met Simon Legree, the slave-catcher, as he jumped a chasm, and pushing out his long arms sent Simon crashing down on the rocks, saying, "Friend, thee hast gone far enough." Then, the danger over, he went down and rescued Simon, bore him to his own house, cared for him and made him a new man.

Since Quakers first "saw the light," there has been this everlasting conflict between the duty to meet force with force and the ideal of nonresistance.

The Quakers, as I have seen them, have a high average of intelligence, unselfishness and practical efficiency.

It was to the Quakers of England, as well as the non-Quakers, that the war summons came in 1914. According to their interpretation of the religion of Christ, they could not use military force even to meet Germany. They were commanded by the "inner light" to use other ways. To some this is foolishness, and yet a foolishness which has back of it a sublime wisdom and a prophecy of a more perfect age.

At any rate, there was nothing in their religion which made them soft, shirking or cowardly. They quoted in their meetings the command "Take your share of hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." They had a history of service in other wars. So when "The Great War" came to England, the young Quakers began to move spontaneously to see what they could do.

"The War Victims Relief Committee" and the "Friends'

Ambulance Unit" were the two main channels of Quaker war work.

The first of these organizations held itself more rigidly to non-military work. The second carried wounded soldiers as well as civilians throughout the war.

We came into touch with the "War Victims Relief Committee" soon after we reached Paris in 1917. Henry Scattergood and Morris Leeds, Philadelphia Quakers, who came over on the ship with the original commission of the American Red Cross, were determined that Colonel Bicknell and I should visit "the relief work of the English Quakers down along the Marne," before we did anything else. Nobody could resist Scattergood. He put the whole thing through, got the orders and the passes while we were still unorganized, had a big Renault limousine turned over to us, and then went off with Leeds by rail to meet us there.

Colonel Bicknell, Major Ernest McCullough of the army, at that time a part of the Red Cross Construction Department, and I, with R. C. Toms, an American ambulance boy with a fine record, drove out along the rue Lafayette toward the northeast on a trip which will always stand out vividly in our minds.

Within an hour we were out around Meaux where the high tide of the German advance had penetrated in 1914. Then far off we heard the rumble of the guns coming closer and closer.

Those were days of keen and vivid impression for us. We saw the observation balloons on the lines. We passed the French troops going up and coming back from the trenches and all the services of supply. We saw destroyed villages, little places like Sermaize quite wiped out in 1914 by the armies of the Crown Prince.

Then for four days in this lovely Marne country we studied the work of these English Friends spread out from Châlons-sur-Marne to Bar le-duc, and from Bar le-duc to Troyes.

Their work dealt with French civilians—the sick who had no place to go, the children orphaned by war, the refugees living in congested cities and towns, the inhabitants of the region who were trying to rebuild their homes, and the peasant families whose places were intact but who were struggling to cultivate and harvest with a country stripped of its best man power.

There was a little civil hospital at Châlons with Dr. Hilda Clark, a granddaughter of John Bright, in charge. She had such strong native intelligence and fine scientific training, and she had been out in France so long that she was not merely the head doctor of a little civilian hospital but a competent public health advisor for the entire region.

The ambulances stationed here had been going regularly into Rheims, always more or less under shell fire, and had been bringing out the old people, the sick and the children.

We saw another civil hospital near Sermaize and an orphanage with the happiest lot of children to be found anywhere at Bettancourt.

The Friends themselves had found refuge and a headquarters for their work in an abandoned hotel to which was attached a bath establishment at Sermaize. The healing waters bubbled up peacefully and sparkled in the sun although over toward the north, the guns kept going all night and at daybreak made a great thundering.

At the head of the *équipe* or unit at Sermaize was Marjorie Fry, on leave from her work in the Woman's Department of Birmingham University, and now in 1921 standing for Parliament. In the relief field she was the type which thinks and moves with great speed. She had a fine mind, long contact with the problems we were facing, a bubbling, effervescent, fun-loving personality, side by side with her deep human sympathy.

Among the more sober Quakers about the fire the first night of our visit we found other unusual types, lawyers,

doctors, engineers, clerks, all of them well read, most of them philosophers and every one of them out there to actually do things and not to supervise some one else. The young men climbed on to mowing machines and helped get in the crops. They took hammers and nails and saws and built houses for people to live in. The girls baked and stewed and washed and visited the people in their homes. Everybody took his place and went to the kitchen stove to get his own breakfast. These ruddy-faced men and women were there for business, and one of the things they settled in the beginning was that overworked France should not have to work for them.

Strange comment is all this on our fussing and theorizing about nations getting together. Here was every reason why the English Quakers should not understand the French, and the French not understand the Quakers. There is nothing in a Frenchman to respond to the idea of nonresistance, or in a Frenchwoman to respond to Quaker bonnets. France and England have an inheritance of ancient wars. Yet here we saw the French peasants turning to these sober gray-clad men and women with the most touching devotion. Plain, old-fashioned neighborly kindness broke down every barrier of race or creed or garb or language.

Those Quakers are still there in this year of our Lord 1921, sought by the *Préfets* and *Sous-Préfets* to help them in the arduous work of reconstruction.

We walked through Sermaize and other little villages where all the shelters were the wooden shelters the Friends put up and all the live stock, the rabbits and chickens which they supplied.

We saw French and German graves scattered over the fields and along the roads. Just out of the village of Sermaize was the grave of the German officer who gave the order to burn the town and it was carefully tended like the rest.

We stopped by one of the temporary wooden houses the

Friends had put up and talked to the woman who stood on her side porch. Her main support was her garden and we noticed how much space in the garden was taken up by two German graves of soldiers who three years before had burned her home with the others. Covering the graves was a wealth of nasturtiums in full bloom. We were inexpressibly touched by her care of the graves and her reply to our questions: "The German women would do the same by our dead."

We visited sewing rooms in larger places where refugee women were at work for themselves and their countrymen. We saw how the Friends, just as Hoover did in Occupied Belgium, sold to those who could pay and gave to those who could not. We saw houses they had rented, cleaned up and subrented at reasonable rates to refugee families.

As we drove back to Paris, Sunday, July 1, 1917, Bicknell said, "That is the real thing. There is no humbug about that relief work. They are on sound lines. We must tie up with them, help them to expand, and take advantage of their experience."

All through July and August, Bicknell and I were working with the Commission for France as a Department of Social and Economic Conditions, studying and planning. We got into touch with the English Friends' Committee in Paris of which Wilfred Shewell was secretary and Ralph Elliott treasurer.

Ted Harvey, member of Parliament, and Chairman of the Friends work for France, often came into our conferences, back on his bicycle from the Marne or Somme, or just over from England on one of his many trips. Dr. Hilda Clark and Marjorie Fry sat up late at night helping us plan civilian work.

We asked them to show what they could do with more money. Leeds and Scattergood asked them how English and American Friends could work together.

Under Bicknell's wise direction, I worked steadily with

them at plans of cooperation. Homer Folks came and took charge of all American Red Cross civilian work in France and saw immediately the possibilities.

On August 25, I recorded in my diary:

"Finance Committee (of the Red Cross) put through today, the English Friends' estimate of 533,000 francs for the next three months' work. Had tea at 'Vouillemont' with Ted Harvey, Miss Pye, Miss Frye, Mr. Scattergood and Shewell. Folks has come up to the mark quickly and splendidly on this Friends business. Bicknell has been strong for it. Left me to handle it the last week while he was in Switzerland. I'm glad it is settled the right way. Henry Allen of Kansas and William Allen White to dinner with me tonight and were keenly interested in all this Quaker business with which I was bubbling over."

Davison back in Washington, and Grayson Murphy had the vision to see the possibilities and they had acted with that confidence, speed, and precision which won our devoted allegiance.

When the American Friends' first unit arrived in Paris, Henry Scattergood got them together and said this to them:

"We are here because we feel that we must do something, not expecting an easier life than the millions of men who are following their light in other ways, and we are ready to do the hardest and lowliest kind of work. It is not that our blood is any less red or our patriotism any less real, it is that we are conscious that we are servants of a King who is above all nations—the King of Love, and that we must live out his gospel of love."

In "American Red Cross Work Among the French People" by Fisher Ames, and in "A Service of Love in War Time" by Rufus M. Jones, a professor of Haverford College and head of the American Friends' Service Committee, the story of this unit is told.

Mr. Jones tells, for example, about sawing boards, or

putting in window sashes, or hanging doors, for destitute peasants in destroyed villages along the Marne and in the Somme, but the Quaker boy who nails and hammers writes:

“Oh, patient master workman of the world,  
 Shaper of all this home of human kind!  
 Teach me the truer trade of making doors and windows  
 for men’s souls:  
 Windows for letting in love’s widening dawn,  
 Doors swinging outward freely on Truth’s pleasant  
 ways.”

In France the work was divided into six departments: medical, building, works, manufacturing, agriculture, relief. Three other services had to be added: transport, maintenance, equipment. No organization in Europe surpassed the Quakers in quick adaptability and hard common sense. They did the thing needed and did it with unusual intelligence. And they all fell to with their hands and well as their heads.

In all 600 men served in France in the American Friends’ Unit and to their work the American Red Cross gave \$621,699.22.

Their leaders, Henry Scattergood, Charles Evans, Dr. James A. Babbitt, and Charles J. Rhoads, set high standards of forceful wise administration.

Their service of love in war time was this: They went into the Jura mountains, felled trees, sawed lumber, manufactured portable houses, rebuilt burned villages, evacuated refugees, operated maternity hospitals, cared for the tubercular, fought contagion, picked up the wounded, helped in schools for the mutilés, worked at making artificial limbs, conducted children’s colonies, ran tractors, plows, reapers, etc., to help peasants get in their crops, and did it so as to make the French love them.

For Quakers to keep out of war, however, is an impossibility, no matter how much they may think they do.

There is nobility but no logic in conscientious objection. In war time whoever raises wheat or corn or cotton makes war, and that in no Pickwickian sense.

We won the last war not simply because Foch and Pershing and Sir Douglas were better generals than Ludendorff and the old Marshal Hindenburg, but because we had more iron, wheat flour, cloth and hog fat.

Whoever helps keep society going in war time helps keep the army going. If it's wrong to drive an ammunition wagon, it is wrong to drive an ambulance and wrong even to drive the mail truck or farm wagon back home.

The Quakers were gloriously illogical. These American Quakers in France and their backers here at home helped defeat Germany by keeping up the morale of civilians in France. Strong, tender Quaker hands helped carry our wounded boys coming back from Château-Thierry and Soissons. It was magnificent, but it was war.

But, logical or illogical, they drew the line at killing and even at hating. They say, "We will do any hard, dangerous, dirty, necessary job no one else wants to do; we will work patiently where no one sees us, no one praises us; we will stand hatred and injustice even, but we won't violate our consciences by standing up and killing our fellow men."

No outgrowth of the war along relief lines is more significant than the movement described in a closing paragraph of Dr. Jones:

"The Service Committee is calling upon young Friends throughout the country to look toward volunteering for at least one year of service for others before entering upon their life career in business vocations. Many types of community service are being proposed for their consideration, while the Service Committee stands ready to open the door for each specific line of activity and to provide financial assistance for the experiment. It is hoped of course that many qualified persons will thus be turned permanently into avenues of public and community service."

## CHAPTER XXII

### Quakers in Action at the Front

WHEN we got to work in Flanders, we found Quakers in uniform. Up in the last corner of France at Dunkirk, we came on to the Friends' Ambulance Unit. What Colonel Bicknell had said down on the Marne—"Tie up to these Quakers"—he repeated with even greater emphasis at Dunkirk. "If we are to use existing agencies, here is the real thing."

The Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, C. B. E., C. B., M. V. O., Chairman of the British Red Cross Society and of the Order of St. John, put it this way: "All interested in adventure, loyalty, endurance, skill, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice, should read the story of the Friends' Ambulance Unit."

When we came to know General Forwood, Provost Master General of the British Army, he said: "We don't accept their principles, but they have kept their word, played the game, and showed real courage."

The story of the beginning of their work is full of romance. Early in the war, while the Friends were seeking ways to help, Philip Baker, who had been one of their most famous athletes at Cambridge, talked over with Sir George Newman and others the organization of an Ambulance Unit, got their approval and issued an appeal in "The Friend" of August 21, 1914, for volunteers.

They organized almost immediately, formed a training camp, but nobody had anything for them to do. They even talked of going to Serbia, but the way was blocked.

Then things happened suddenly as they generally happen in war. They got their chance because they had a

man on the spot who saw it. That is how chances come in war.

Geoffrey Young, a Friend, was a war correspondent, and got over to the continent.

The little Belgian Army had been fighting their heroic battle on the Yser and saving the channel ports. But they had paid heavily and their hospitals had not been organized to meet the strain. Geoffrey Young saw the congestion of wounded and hurried to London. With Philip Baker, he went to Sir Arthur Stanley, head of the British Red Cross Society, with an offer to go at once to help the Belgians, which was accepted.

The unit got together several tons of medical and other supplies, eight ambulances and forty-three men, of whom three were doctors and six dressers of wounds, and sailed from Dover, August 30.

What we found all through the war, they found the first night at Dover,—information absolutely misleading. They were told that the Belgians had been withdrawn from the line and that there was no need for them “over there.” But they stuck to their purpose and crossed in the morning.

The need met them just out of sight of land when their convoy darted off at high speed and they themselves soon came up to a great English cruiser, the “Hermes,” torpedoed and “sinking slowly in the tumbling waters.” Some of the men went overboard to help sailors who were sinking, others helped man boats, still others got up supplies, hot food, medicines, and made beds for the rescued. So they had their first illustration of need and their baptism of service. They put out again in the afternoon after their vessel had landed the survivors, and in Dunkirk after dark they had their second illustration. News came on board where they had settled down for the night, of wounded men lying around the railroad station uncared for. They landed on the dark wharves, sorted surgical

stores by the light of lamps and made their way to the station.

The Quakers are not given to lurid description but this is what they record themselves:

“A terrible sight met their eyes. In the half-darkness of these bare sheds lay hundreds upon hundreds of wounded men stretched on the straw-covered floor, Frenchmen, Belgians, and here and there a few British and Germans. They had been there, many of them, for three full days and nights, practically unattended, mostly even unfed, the living, the dying and the dead side by side, long rows of figures in every attitude of slow suffering or acute pain, of utter fatigue or dulled apathy, of appeal or despair. Out of the cool night air, one passed through these high doors into an atmosphere that was insufferably revolting. It required a great effort of will to face the sight and stench of the countless gangrenous limbs that lay there helpless among the foul straw.” \*

In this Dunkirk where they had been so suddenly set down they established themselves. It was one of the most terribly “proved” or “tried” towns which, in spite of all, held together. Both the English and French have decorated it. It was the nearest port to the trenches, within reach of the long range guns behind the German lines, shelled by fast little German destroyers on their raids and bombed horribly up to the very end. Other places were shelled worse but were evacuated. Dunkirk held together although a population of 40,000 went down to 3,000.

Nobody can well exaggerate the heroism of those who kept this port open, the railroads and trolley lines running, manufacturing and commerce going on under the conditions which these people faced.

“And why,” wrote Anna Milo Upjohn, after a visit, “does one stay in so precarious an outpost on the verge of

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\*“*The Friends’ Ambulance Unit, 1914-1919.*” *Tatham and Milcs*, p. 7.

the fighting line? Some perhaps because to set forth alone or with a brood of children into an unknown world already trampled by countless refugees, seems an equally perilous outlook. Others because their maintenance still depends on the docks and shipyards, though the 6,000 longshoremen usually employed about the piers have disappeared.

"Then there are those whose interests are bound up in a shop or other investment in the town and business is brisk in Dunkirk owing to the presence of two armies. A few there are who are not only of Dunkirk, but who are Dunkirk itself, upon whose presence depends the prosperity of the town and its usefulness to the state."

Such a one was M. Morel, United States Consular Agent, and President of the Chamber of Commerce of Dunkirk. His father before him had served France and the United States for a lifetime and he had intense pride in not being driven out. His office was open to the sky as a shell had taken off the corner of the room, but he never left.

The Friends' Ambulance Unit from this center did civil relief work for the French and Belgians, established little hospitals both military and civilian, sent convoys of ambulances to work in the forward areas of the French Army, manned British hospital trains, and hospital ships, and did a variety of services for the British, French and Belgian Armies, and the French and Belgian civil governments, which cannot be catalogued and hardly understood by those not there.

Their motto was "Find the thing which needs to be done. Do it. Regularize it afterwards if you can."

Sir George Newman, K. C. B., of London, Chairman of the Committee of Friends which made the work possible, gave in March, 1919, a concise statement of the work done.

"You began," said he, addressing the unit, "with 43 men. You finish with 1,800. You began with a dona-

tion of a hundred pounds; you finish having received 140,000 pounds. You began never having served a wounded man; you finish having served an innumerable host of many races. . . . You began not knowing whither you went; you finish having proved to the hilt your capacity to undertake the responsibility of hospitals, dressing stations, huts, sanitation, relief work, ambulance convoys, ambulance trains, ambulance ships, all in a voluntary unit, unenlisted, unarmed and unpaid.

"The unit was responsible for more than a dozen hospitals which it established and managed at Dunkirk, Ypres, Poperinghe, Courtrai, Hazebrouck, and other places in the war zone, and at York, Birmingham, London and Richmond in England. At the Queen Alexandra Hospital, 28,000 persons were inoculated against typhoid; 14,000 Belgian refugees were fed and a vast quantity of clothing distributed; lace centers, temporary schools, and orphanages, milk distribution and water purification were undertaken in Belgium; tens of thousands of soldiers were received at the three recreation huts in Dunkirk; the two hospital ships transported 24,000 cases; the ambulance convoys ran three million kilometres and carried 245,000 sick and wounded soldiers; and the four ambulance trains conveyed 520,000 cases." \*

In the fall of 1917 we found the Friends' Ambulance Unit located in the Hotel Pyl, a four-story structure built on the beach at Malo-les-Bains just outside the walls of Dunkirk. In buildings near by were two garages and a storehouse of food and clothing. Just down the street were a number of wooden barracks in which they had their Hospital Alexandra, civil, military, army, navy, British, French, Belgian, American, Portuguese—in fact "all things to all men" from a sailor who fell down a hatchway on his ship in the harbor to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Athlone, brother of the Queen of England, and

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\* *The Friend*, London, March, 1919.

a General in the British Army. Theoretically they kept 80 beds for the British Army and 40 beds for the British Navy. Actually they had every kind of a patient,—the American Red Cross Commissioner at one time counted sixteen nationalities among the patients—British, French, Belgians, Chinese, Egyptians, West Indians, Americans, Russians, Serbians, Hindoos, Germans, and others. We found them with a noble record of civilian evacuations from Ypres and all the country around, from 1914 down, and with long experiences in civil hospital work which went even so far as organized “search party” work to go from house to house in both French Flanders and Belgian Flanders to run down contagion before it got started.

We saw the medical authorities of the British Army both at General Headquarters and at the headquarters of their different armies in the field, who urged us to help the Friends, and said that “no more intelligent and valuable relief work” was being done anywhere, but that they were having a hard time now to raise their big budget in England.

All these requests from our Allies were powerful reinforced by our inspection of the work and by coming to know the men in charge.

Captain Leslie Maxwell and Captain Meaburn Tatham, both commissioned in the British Army, the two commanding officers of the unit, with whom we worked, W. Mordey, Adjutant of the unit, to whom our War Department gave a commission as Major before we got through, Harold Watts in charge of hospital trains, L. J. Cadbury in charge of transportation, Brian T. Mennell in charge of Stores, Dr. Humphrey Nockolds, Principal Medical Officer of the hospital and Doctor Manning were able men and fine comrades.

Five men of the unit were mentioned in despatches by British Commanders, one man twice; one received the British Distinguished Service Order, two the Order of the British Empire, three nurses the military medal, and

eleven nurses the Royal Red Cross medal, while the French gave the *Croix de Guerre* to eighty-six of these brave fellows. In addition the Belgians made eleven men *Chevaliers de l'Ordre de la Couronne*. A number of other French and Italian decorations were given.

As they were sensible enough to put on uniforms in order to get their opportunity to work in the forward areas, they were sensible enough not to make themselves obnoxious by refusing decorations. But nevertheless they were true to Quaker ideals of simplicity and modesty. It need not be said that they were not in the very considerable group that sought decorations and generally got them.

We had intended to organize our own transportation service at the front but with Paris to call on and with the Friends doing precisely what we proposed, we made them our transportation agents and turned over to them nine heavy trucks, a Ford, and several motor cycles. We planned transport mainly for taking supplies forward to starving people who might be suddenly liberated and to bring people in danger back to the rail heads. The motor cycles were to keep in touch all over our vast area of northern France and Free Belgium.

In all the demands upon the Friends' Ambulance Unit after 1917 and the sudden expansion of their work, due especially to the fighting of 1918—what they did, they themselves assert—was only possible because of the co-operation which we were able to give.

In addition to the motors, we gave cash to the extent of 488,443 francs and materials and supplies of the value of 77,585.20 francs or a total of 566,028.93 francs.

In "The Friends Ambulance Unit 1914-1919" by Meaburn Tatham and James E. Miles, recognition of this service is made in the following way:

"Colonel Bicknell, the Commissioner to Belgium of the American Red Cross and his associates, in the course of their investigations made during 1917, discovered that, though civilian needs were not at that time great, the

Friends' Ambulance Unit had the largest existing organization and the necessary experience for undertaking any work that might arise. They decided to assist where assistance was most wanted and when the call came in the spring of 1918, they liberally placed large resources at the unit's disposal. It is no exaggeration to say that the unit could not otherwise have undertaken one-quarter of the work it actually performed from then down to the end. It was relieved of all financial anxiety at a time when the raising of additional funds for emergency work was becoming increasingly difficult and it received the valuable loan of a small fleet of heavy lorries indispensable for revitaillement, evacuation and salvage work. The unit had but to ask for clothing and food supplies for relief work and the American Red Cross stores were at its disposal. And what was more, it received also the benefit of their counsel and sympathy, always wise and always appreciated. In another way the connection with the American Red Cross was a close one because during 1918 several members of that body were attached for service with the unit, some of them later taking a prominent part in Belgian relief work after the armistice. The unit perhaps received no greater compliment than the confidence thus placed in it." \*

One striking feature of our cooperation was the removal of the Hospital Alexandra. The Commissioner spent a night there when both shelling and bombing were going on. He saw the patients taken hurriedly from their beds and carried from the utter darkness of the hospital to the dim light of the underground retreat which the Quakers had built themselves. No matter how tenderly they were lifted, it was bad business, both physically and psychically. Sometimes they were taken down two or three times a night. A long range shell had already fallen on the hospital but it hit a spot where a barrack had burned.

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\*PP. 65, 66.

Splinters from bombs and bullets from air craft had already punctured the roofs. Though no patients had been wounded, the Commissioner took up vigorously the finding of a new place less dangerous. These conditions had to be met. It had to be in the Dunkirk area as the unit would never consent to leave this area so peculiarly in need of their service. It had to be less dangerous or there would be no object in going. It had to be within their financial means.

At Petite Synthe out two miles on the other side of Dunkirk toward Calais, a sanatorium was found that met the first two conditions and the American Red Cross took over the responsibility for the rent and the entire expense of removal.

The labor gang of the unit was set to work quickly to make things ready at Petite Synthe but in the night of March 24, 1918, under very heavy bombardment the evacuation was ordered at 2 A. M. and completed by daylight without waiting for the alterations or repairs projected.

When a week or so later one of the portable barracks used as a ward was moved, a huge shell fell on the exact spot from which the patients had been taken away. The hospital had gone just in the nick of time.

Another chance for especial sympathy and help came August 11, 1918, when the Hotel Pyl was completely destroyed by a heavy bomb. Alfred G. Vail, one of the men of the American Friends' Unit, whom we had placed here as an additional helper, was carried down four stories with the falling walls and floors, but was unhurt. Two others, fine English lads, Proctor and Kitching, were killed. Mordey was imprisoned under wreckage for some hours but was saved by a beam wedged across a solid oak chest. The loss of life would have been heavy had not Captain Tatham sent most of the men into the large dug-outs.

"Thanks to the generosity of the American Red Cross," wrote Captain Tatham, "all losses both of the unit and of

individual members were made good by that body, giving further proof by this friendship in need that they were friends in deed."

When the Germans made their great drive in the spring of 1918 at Armentières and almost up to Hazebrouck, hundreds of Belgian and French refugees were carried to the rail heads, and thousands of dollars worth of property were salvaged.

Of all the joint operations carried on by the Friends' Ambulance Unit and American Red Cross, no more gratifying example of quick action based on preparations long made can be found than in the work of October and November, 1918, in the liberated areas. The Germans had retreated, all Belgium west of Ghent was liberated, the unbelievable had happened, the people at last were free, when all at once the Germans turned at bay on the Scheldt and fought back with great fierceness so that they might maintain an orderly retreat.

All of this Belgium west of Ghent was badly isolated in two ways: The retreating German Armies establishing new fighting lines on the Scheldt made it impossible for the Commission for Relief in Belgium to send food for the inhabitants in that area as they had done throughout the war. And likewise the destruction of roads and bridges by the Germans as they retreated to delay pursuit, added to the difficulty of passing over the belt of destroyed country where the fighting had gone on for four years—left thousands of people for a short time without food. At this time the Allied Armies, the Belgian Minister of the Interior, the Friends and the American Red Cross all helped save the day. The warehouses at Adinkerke proved to be the support and stay in this hour of need for which they had been built months before. The Quaker boys drove our heavy trucks forward against almost insuperable obstacles.

A movement of civilians out of the liberated areas, over the destroyed country to Ypres, Poperinghe, Furnes

and La Panne was begun. At Poperinghe, especially, conditions were very bad and the unit opened a hospital October 27, under the American Red Cross doctor, which took care of 34 patients the first week. But this movement down over the almost impassable No-Man's-Land was soon stopped.

Tragic things were happening up in the little villages just liberated back of the new front. The Germans shelled with gas shells and there were hundreds of new civilian casualties. Pneumonia and influenza broke out among the poorly nourished people just freed. At Courtrai, a beautiful old Flemish city of some 32,000 people, the relief forces waged one of the last great battles of the war. The existing Belgian hospitals, overcrowded, undermanned, almost bare of necessary equipment, did what they could. But the Friends and the American Red Cross together here put a little hospital in the *Ambulance du Fort*, where there had been a military hospital of the Germans.

The staff and equipment from the hospital at Hazebrouck had been moved up to Tourcoing October 22. It stayed there only five days as the French doctors could cope with the situation and when word came of conditions at Courtrai, it was sent quickly to the *Ambulance du Fort*. Conditions became fully as tragic as in the first months of the war. "A really terrible situation," the sober Friends called it. The civilians in this region, untrained like their brethren back of the Allies, to the ways of shelling, had run to their cellars and lain there all night in the gas. The lorries brought load after load of these victims to the little hospital. Every bed was filled. Stretchers lay about on the floor. Scores kept coming, some more lightly gassed, walking with pitiable appeals for help. The courtyard was crowded with relatives of the victims. Doctor Manning, the Chief, got army doctors and orderlies to help and the Belgian Sisters of Charity worked without rest. "Old men, women and little children lay there

tortured, scorched, choking, their blinded eyes bandaged up, their lungs torn by the pitiless fumes."

Though the deaths in ten days reached a total of 178, many were saved who would have died without this help.

If it be a noble thing to put an end to dreadful torture, and to give people another chance for life, then we can call this little rude provisional hospital in Courtrai one of the noblest institutions of the war.

When the Friends' Ambulance Unit was demobilized early in 1919, we took over William Mordey and some thirty of his men into the direct service of the American Red Cross to take the supervision of our warehouses for the destroyed areas of Belgium. When the Commission to Belgium closed its work April 15, 1919, these men remained for another year of service of reconstruction under direction of our Paris office.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### Dr. Park's Great Experiment

**WOODS HUTCHINSON** says in "The Doctor in War" that war is full of contradictions, that while waged solely between armed men, its heaviest slaughter has always been among women and children, and that while it aims at the destruction of enemy life by its own legitimate and special weapons, it actually destroys and loses five times as many soldiers by disease as in battle, that while the soldier who enlists thinks of getting killed by shot or shell, until this war he stood in far greater danger of dying from typhoid or summer cholera or pneumonia.

All this is familiar reading to those who have paid any attention to such important phases of the history of the World War. The doctor as well as the surgeon will be given high honor in the public mind when we begin to measure his work in terms of the dear friends we still have about us who in any other war would have been sacrificed.

"By wiping out epidemics," said Dr. Hutchinson, "the doctor has actually kept the death rate among the civil populations of the Allied countries as low as, and in some cases lower than it was before the war. By redoubling the care and protection of young children almost as many additional young lives have been saved as adult ones have been lost on the field of battle."

The American Red Cross in France and in Free Belgium, and the doctors of the Hoover Commission in Occupied Belgium and France, set before themselves first of all to save as many little lives as they possibly could,

but secondly, in so doing, to arouse that general interest in the process which if once aroused stops the dreadful waste of a nation's most valuable and precious asset.

That is what Dr. W. P. Lucas and Dr. J. H. Mason Knox did for the Commission to France of the American Red Cross, and Dr. Knox, Dr. Park and Dr. Ramsey did for the Commission to Belgium.

We were lucky enough to have Dr. Knox assigned to us as Chief Medical Advisor and he at once secured Dr. Park as the man to do our job.

Dr. Park, now Professor of Pediatrics at the Yale University Medical School, was at that time an Assistant Professor of the John Hopkins University Medical School at Baltimore.

We concentrated medical work in France at Le Havre and Rouen, first, because thousands of Belgians crowded those cities; second, because our headquarters and the headquarters of the Belgian Government were at Le Havre, and third, because the Commission in France had more than it could do and wanted us to take over the work for French as well as Belgians in these important cities.

Napoleon called Le Havre and Rouen "one great city of which the Seine is the main street."

It is no reflection on the French authorities to say that in the fall of 1917, we found conditions dreadful among the Belgian refugees in Le Havre and especially among mothers and babies. All French civilian agencies were undermanned and overworked. Nor was the disease and death incident to overcrowding and other hardships limited to the Belgians. French babies of whom they could ill spare one, were dying fast. We proposed a Children's Health Center to the Minister of the Interior, M. Berryer. Catholic though he was, keenly aware of how jealously some of his associates insisted on "hands off the children," M. Berryer put first and foremost the saving of the lives that were being sacrificed. At the same time, he pointed out clearly the steps to be taken to carry along

with us all varieties of Belgian public sentiment and to make sure that the mothers would use our health center if we got it. He wished also that the French should have the right to use the center on equal terms with the Belgians, saying that "The most we can do is little enough to repay what the French have done for us."

It looked for a time as if inability to find a place in which to house the project would prevent fulfillment of the plans. Nothing less than the power of a Cabinet officer would have accomplished it. The only place available was the *Salle Franklin* or Hall Franklin, a brick building 110 feet long, 58 feet wide and 3 stories high, situated on a small park in a very crowded part of Le Havre. It was occupied by a group of devoted patriotic French ladies who were running a French military hospital, not needed at the time, but who were so interested in it that they could not see the larger need of the babies. It was hard on them but a word to the French Government was enough. Repairs were made, the building painted and cleaned throughout. Dr. Park and Miss Wilcox, an American nurse from Hawaii, arrived January 15. They got a Belgian nurse speaking French, Flemish and English March 29 and began house to house visiting. They moved into the *Salle Franklin* April 12.

It was an Allied undertaking. Under Belgian doctors and nurses exclusively there were:

1. A maternity hospital and a maternity consultation. Up to December 31, 1918, 224 births took place in the institution. Instruction in home care was given.

2. *La Pouponnière* as the Belgians called it—a temporary shelter for little children up to four years of age whose mothers were working or in hospital or in other ways too disabled to care for the children. Especially was it a great service and joy to mothers awaiting confinement under the same roof. It had from 20 to 35 inmates per month.

Under Dr. Park there were carried on:

1. Beginning April 12, 1918, a dispensary to which mothers brought sick babies and young children.

2. Beginning August 10, 1918, a campaign against infant mortality in the thickly populated section of Le Havre known as the *Quartier St. François*.

3. Opening on September 28, 1918, a barrack hospital of 20 beds for children.

4. The taking over of infant consultations run by the French in four different quarters of the city in the fall of 1918.

5. A consultation for normal infants.

6. A training school for nurses' aids.

A thing which struck both French and Belgians and which the Minister of the Interior spoke of in his final report was the organization of the work so that poor mothers and babies did not have to wait long hours to receive attention as is often the case on the Continent but had each a definite time assigned.

Another thing the Minister said was: "The devotion of the American staff was greatly appreciated by the working people both French and Belgian, who have come to see in America, more and more, a kind and generous nation—the protector of the unfortunate."

Scientific, accurate, precise, careful to a degree though he is, nobody could enter an institution run by Dr. Park without feeling a deep genuine and all pervading human sympathy. The humblest, saddest person felt this at the *Salle Franklin*.

Though the French and Belgians had given food to expectant mothers and mother and babies, they now were to see food prescribed like medicine; and where prescriptions could not be filled, the American Red Cross stepped in and did it. Most baby ills like most adult ills are ills of feeding. Dr. Rowland G. Freeman, of New York, former President of the American Pediatric Association, said one day, "Nature made us nearly automatic. Breathing is automatic. The heart is automatic. She left one



In the American Red Cross Crèche for Belgian Babies at Graville, France. (See page 112.)



job to us—feeding, and we bungle that terribly.” If we sin against the light practically every day of our lives in the rich United States, what about the chances of right feeding for a mother in the slums of Le Havre, in the fourth year of the war and with most foods substitutes.

Dr. Park disseminated an entirely new idea to many of these people that food is medicine, or that all the medicine needed is food, in most cases, of the correct kinds and in correct quantities and at the right times.

On his staff, Dr. Park had a social service visitor to follow up cases in their homes, seeing what the best hospitals everywhere are coming to see, that there is no use to order something done at a consultation, if the effect of it is to be completely neutralized by something undisclosed in the home.

These visitors of the *Salle Franklin* secured the removal of families to better quarters, made it possible to send children sometimes into the country, and saw to it that the mothers followed instructions about feeding. Their work led gradually to the forming of a French committee made up of various social agencies to work together for the rehabilitation of families, victims in one way or another of the war.

There were two outgrowths of the work which were more important even than the great work actually done at the time. Both mean saving many lives. The first is the detailed report of Dr. Park. The report as a whole was never published. A description of the dispensary was published in *Archives de médecine des Enfants*, 1919, XXII, No. 8, p. 393 and in another article in the *Modern Hospital*, August, 1919, III, No. 2. A report of a certain phase of the work was published at the expense of the American Red Cross in a pamphlet form in French.

The second lies in the fact that the French took over the work and now are carrying it on. There were local jealousies and divisions on the way. There was lack of money. But the *Salle Franklin* had so demonstrated it-

self that general interest was aroused in Le Havre. French doctors who had proclaimed the message of baby-saving for years with no result, suddenly found themselves in a movement which was popular.

Dr. Park worked cautiously, with untiring patience, and at last presented to the Commissioner his plan. It was to close February 10, 1919, to turn over the barrack hospital and equipment to the Belgians to be transported to Belgium, to turn over all other work to the French, to pay all bills and leave two American doctors to help until May 1, 1919, during what was called a "transition period"—and on May 1, 1919, to put the whole burden on a new French organization, partly municipal and partly private, called *L'Union des Oeuvres de L'Enfance du Havre*, leaving at that time a subsidy of 25,000 francs, a trained nurse and a trained social worker.

In all, Dr. Park and his staff saw 8,426 old patients, 2,520 new patients, made 2,750 house visits, vaccinated 1,463 cases for smallpox, took in 195 hospital patients, making in all 15,354 helpful human contacts with patients alone.

The American Red Cross gave a total of 403,436.07 francs in cash and supplies for this work. Dr. Park was decorated.

Better than most decorations though are these words of Dr. Gilbert, the great French public health leader of Le Havre to Dr. Park:

"By your enterprising spirit, your method and your deep faith in the good to be done, you have created an institution which, I can assure you, will survive your departure from Le Havre. The idea of this work, which has long been in the minds of the physicians, the public health workers and the philanthropists of Le Havre, has hitherto, for lack of cooperation, of funds and of support from the authorities, failed of realization.

"You, a foreigner, with the powerful American Red Cross behind you, overcame the first obstacles, and al-

though in the beginning somewhat skeptical, we soon joined you enthusiastically in the project which assured the fulfillment of all our wishes. Of this, the essential points are the permanent establishment at the dispensary of detailed, careful and repeated examinations to be supplemented with house visits by your public health nurses, who enter firmly, but tactfully, the very heart of the city's misery, the *Quartier St. François*, which has been until now an unexplored field of the charitable organizations of Le Havre. You have succeeded completely and in a very short time, in spite of the considerable difficulties which were bound to obstruct your path as they had ours. We have your example before us. And like you, we are determined no longer to be checked in our work and in our progress."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### Against Tuberculosis

**T**HROUGH three agencies the American Red Cross helped the Belgians deal with the great scourge tuberculosis—the Minister of the Interior, for refugee civilians, the Surgeon General of the Army, for soldiers and the Queen for the liberated regions.

The Belgians did not have to be urged to take measures against tuberculosis. They were fully alive to recent discoveries in the fight against this plague and to the possibility of doing away with it altogether. The thing was constantly on their minds and often came up in conversation at Le Havre—not so much because of the ravages of the disease in the trenches, for that was less than reported, or even because of the real menace from it among refugees, but because they were always thinking of the seven and a half million people in Occupied Belgium and they knew that underfeeding and worry and fear and an abnormal life generally were bound to show in a spread of this disease.

Moreover, the government at Le Havre was profoundly impressed by the work done by Dr. Livingston Farrand and his Rockefeller Foundation Commission for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in France and by the work of the Tuberculosis Bureau of the American Red Cross for France cooperating with it. It was a striking demonstration of what could be done by modern methods. We did not attempt to form a Tuberculosis Bureau but we speedily found out what the government was doing.

The Minister of the Interior had bought a chateau with surrounding farms at Chanay in the Auvergne, France,

and established there a sanatorium of 75 beds and a hospital of 20 beds. This institution was on high ground in the Jura mountains overlooking the lovely Rhone valley. Nowhere in Belgium itself, not even in the Ardennes country could such a place be found. To this place, the Minister sent the poor unfortunates among Belgian refugees stricken with the disease, accomplishing two things: protection of the family and neighbors against contagion and giving the victim himself a chance for life. We found the sanatorium overtaxed and many people waiting for a chance to go. At the request of the Minister we bought the Château of Job near Vichy for an auxiliary sanatorium providing 150 additional beds, paying 150,000 francs for a property which originally had cost a million francs. After the armistice the government decided to keep both of these institutions as government sanatoria. Wise management made this possible. Enough land was sold off around Chanay to pay both the original cost of the property, 178,000 francs, and furnishings and alterations costing 200,000 francs more.

The tuberculosis experts of the Commission to France of the Red Cross called our attention to the condition of the Belgian military hospital for tubercular soldiers at Montpellier in France. The water supply was inadequate, bathing facilities were practically nonexistent, there were 360 patients and sixty more expected. Early in September of 1918 we gave 63,500 francs to put through a new installation for water supply and baths. We increased this to 80,500 francs when it was found inadequate, but the war moved faster than the Surgeon General and nothing was done before the armistice. Early in January, 1919, the Commissioner authorized the spending of this money for a tuberculosis sanatorium in connection with the camp of Beverloo in Belgium.

In Brussels, on August 1, 1918, a preliminary meeting had been held to organize a "National Cooperative Society against Tuberculosis," and on October 17, the per-

manent organization was formed. This was brought about by the Belgian National Committee under M. Emile Francqui which had done the work of feeding Belgium in cooperation with Mr. Hoover's Commission for Relief in Belgium. The Belgian National Committee had taken the task of keeping the Belgian population alive and vigorous. All their work they found endangered by the rapid spread of tuberculosis. As M. Ernest Solvay said, "Not only has the number of deaths due to tuberculosis doubled in certain regions, but the cases of pre-tuberculosis are becoming legion."

The National Committee tried to deal with the situation by subsidizing the already existing "National Belgian League against Tuberculosis." As Mr. Francqui said: "The National Committee enabled the League to increase its dispensaries from 25 to 100. In 1914 they had 5,000 patients. In 1918, 50,000. Before the National Committee intervened the budget did not come up to 100,000 francs. It is now well over 10,000,000 francs." The new project united all parties and all existing organizations in one great cooperative movement and started off with subscriptions of between eight and nine million francs.

At about the same time on the other side of the fighting lines in Free Belgium, Her Majesty, the Queen, had presented the matter to us. She could not know precisely what was happening in Brussels but she kept reasonably well informed. She did know that tuberculosis was one of the great dangers to her country—doubly so because of the hardships of war. We took no definite action until we reached Brussels, when at the suggestion of Her Majesty we had a conference with Dr. Bordet, director of the Pasteur Institute of Brabant, the great Belgian scientist who since the armistice has been given the Nobel prize. We got detailed figures and charts from him showing two striking things: first, that tuberculosis had doubled and trebled in the greater part of Belgium, and second, that the death rate for children from zero to one year had gone

down during the war owing to the activity of baby saving organizations and "canteens maternal" which gave aid on condition that mothers would nurse their own babies.

The Belgian Government was very anxious to get Dr. Farrand to Brussels in the hope that he could undertake for Belgium what he had done so successfully for France. This was impossible as the work of the Rockefeller Foundation for France, while a war relief measure, was also considered a demonstration for others to follow if they would, while the Foundation went on to do other things.

Dr. Farrand, now the President of Cornell University, had just agreed to take the chairmanship of the Central Committee of the American Red Cross and could not give himself to one country as he had to France during the war. We, therefore, made an appropriation to her Majesty, the Queen, of 1,250,000 francs to use in this fight asking her to choose the agency but stipulating that the principles laid down by the Rockefeller Foundation for such a campaign should be followed as far as possible.

- (1) Educational propaganda.
- (2) Dispensaries as centers of diagnosis and for proper distribution of cases. Examination of all children exposed. Treatment of pre-disposed.
- (3) Visiting nurses, including training in one year course of girls of the country.
- (4) Hospital for advanced cases to prevent infection.
- (5) Sanitoria for favorable cases.
- (6) Other institutions for bone and joint cases.

Eventually the Queen chose the new cooperative society organized by the National Committee as the agency to use this appropriation.

Finally, we supplied one thousand beds with mattresses, sheets, pillows and blankets, secured from American Army hospitals which were closing, and put them in a large sanatorium in Belgium under the Minister of Justice for returned tubercular prisoners.

The last official trip of the Commissioner to Belgium

was to Cannes, France, the first week in April, 1919, to attend the medical conference of the Committee of Red Cross Societies, which grew into the League of Red Cross Societies.

The conclusion reached by this conference was that it was "a natural and most desirable evolution of the Red Cross to extend its functions of relief during war to that of promoting public health during peace." This view was concurred in by the delegates of all the countries represented, American, British, Italian, French and Japanese. Sections were organized on Preventive Medicine, Tuberculosis, Malaria, Venereal Diseases, Nursing and Publications. On tuberculosis a report was adopted, drafted by Dr. Calmette of France and of which Dr. Biggs said: "I regard it as a concise summary of all the accumulated experience on tuberculosis." This report is as follows:

REPORT ADOPTED AND PRESENTED TO THE CONFERENCE BY  
THE SECTION ON TUBERCULOSIS

"Recognizing the wide prevalence of tuberculosis, its incidence at all ages, and its importance as a cause of excessive mortality, disability, distress and economic laws, we recommend that special attention be given to the fight against this disease in the plan of an organization having in view common action on the part of Red Cross Societies.

We believe that in any organized campaign against tuberculosis the following factors are fundamental and indispensable:

1. Dispensaries on an adequate scale, furnished with laboratories and appropriate equipment and affording provision for early diagnosis, including the examination of contacts by expert physicians; and with especially trained visiting nurses, who will carry into the homes of patients the necessary care, instruction and advice, who will especially consider the needs of children, and who will direct the patient to appropriate agencies for this purpose.

2. Provision for the careful, regular inspection of school children with a view to the early detection of tuberculosis.

3. Hospital treatment, on an adequate scale, of acute, advanced and hopeless cases of tuberculosis, separated from other cases not infected with tuberculosis.

4. Sanatorium facilities for all suitable cases of tuberculosis.

5. Continuous popular education regarding tuberculosis, its causes and prevention, by all suitable means and agencies.

It is evident that tuberculosis is inextricably associated with the general living and working conditions of the people; and we therefore recommend the encouragement of all legitimate efforts directed toward the improvement of these conditions. We regard as of particular importance in this connection the care of children and the problems of housing, of cleaning, of nutrition and of alcoholism.

We recommend the institution of appropriate measures to prevent the transmission of tuberculosis through infected milk.

We approve the establishment of open air schools for accommodation of children already infected by, or suspected of, tuberculosis; and measures should be taken to protect children against contagion in the household, by placing them with healthy families in the country or in special asylums when it is not practicable to remove the infected patient from his family.

We call attention to the importance of the extension of the open air principle to all institutions and places where many individuals are housed together, such as barracks, orphanages, workhouses, penitentiaries, and the like.

Experience has shown us the importance of careful supervision of the tuberculosis patient during the entire period of his illness. We therefore urge the need for close cooperation between the several institutional factors (dispensaries, hospitals, sanatoria, etc.), and the

more extended development of skilled social service under medical direction.

We think that attention should be drawn to the great risk to which tuberculosis patients are exposed through the exploitation of alleged cures without scientific authority.

Inasmuch as a problem of particular difficulty is that of providing suitable occupations for those patients with tuberculosis, able to perform a certain amount of work under favorable conditions, we recommend the encouragement of efforts for the establishment of agricultural colonies and the organization of suitable industries which should be linked with the dispensaries and sanatoria under medical supervision.

Recognizing that accurate knowledge of the distribution of tuberculosis is an essential preliminary to its control by public authorities in any community, we approve the principle of compulsory notification of tuberculosis to the health authorities under appropriate regulations.

We call special attention to the capital importance of scientific research in the field of tuberculosis and the collection of information as to all factors bearing upon the prevalence and distribution of the disease."

The Commission took this report to Belgium for Her Majesty and her advisors with a suggestion that it would bankrupt Belgium to attempt to build sanatoria and hospitals for all the cases needing treatment and that an effective campaign could be waged along these other lines. The Belgians, because they were up to date in these matters, welcomed suggestions of this kind. At the same time with Her Majesty, General Melis, Dr. Depage and others, we took up the question of participation by the Belgian Red Cross Society in the great campaign for public health launched at Cannes by the League of Red Cross Societies.

There was a long controversy between those who would hold the Red Cross strictly to "work for sick and wounded soldiers in time of war" and those who wanted Belgium

to take her place with the other great Red Cross Societies of the world. The decision of little Belgium was for the big preventive constructive program. Dr. Depage now represents Belgium in the League of Red Cross Societies.

## CHAPTER XXV

### For the Mutilés

**T**HE war both destroyed lives and completely altered lives. It hurled men up and down the social scale. It made all kinds of cataclysmic changes, but no changes were greater than where well, normal men, who could see, who could walk, who could use their arms, suddenly lost members on which their old ways of life absolutely depended. The mechanic lost his arm or fingers, the plowman a foot and often both, some lost limbs at the ankle, others at the knee, others at the hip. Once in a while a man lost legs, arms and eyes and still lived on for a time, but nature is merciful and ordains that a torso in such a condition is not apt to stand the shock. Some lost their faces and refused to let their family see the horrible result. All these form the great company of the mutilated or mutilés as they are known in Belgium and France.

In the midst of the sadness of it, the pain and the tragedy of it, this shining fact emerges, that the people of this world, war-ridden, suspicious, jealous, hateful to one another, still have reached a stage of development when every civilized nation declares that these mutilated are not waste human products but potential assets, and that they must be made real assets.

It wasn't so many years ago that the mutilated in war sat down and sold shoe strings or lived out helpless, hopeless, unhappy lives, with their families or in institutions.

Now the schools for the reeducation of the mutilated transform these hopeless cripples into useful creative lives

and even blaze the trail for other schools where men are not crippled.

The Belgians started more quickly than anybody else connected with the World War to deal scientifically with the mutilated.

They declared that no mutilated man should be discharged from the army, even if it was clear that he would never serve again, but should stay in uniform and under orders until he was both healed and trained.

There was some conflict in the beginning between the surgeons and the educators, one asserting that the problem at root was medical and surgical and that the training should begin while the man was still on his cot or limping about the hospital. The other just as vehemently declared that only men who knew education could work out a scheme of education for men whether they were whole men or mutilated men.

Compromises were made, and in the first year of the war the Belgians organized the institution which set the example to both Europe and America, at Le Havre, at Rouen, at Mortain and at Port Villez, the two latter soon being combined at Port Villez, some forty miles down the Seine from Paris.

When the United States went into the war, our War Department had translated the report of the first year at these institutions by Leon de Paeuw, first issued in France in 1916, and retranslated and republished by Princeton University under the title "The Vocational Reeducation of Maimed Soldiers" with a preface by Madame Henry Carton de Wiart.

The claims of this work are fully justified: "that Belgium despite its devastated and crippled condition was the first nation to establish an efficient system of caring for her disabled soldiers," and that this system of vocational education did three things—restored to a maimed man his confidence in himself and "zest for life," his activity and his usefulness.

The mental and moral factors were fully as great as the physical. The changes for most men were so sudden and so paralyzing in their completeness that for a time they were overwhelmed.

In the trenches they had said, "I'm willing to go if I have to, but I don't want to be made helpless," and behold they were blind or without arms or legs or paralyzed from the hips down.

The Belgians had one advantage in being exiles. The wounded men could not be sent to their families, for their families were behind the German lines. There was not the resistance of short-sighted men and short-sighted relatives to treatment and training which was such an obstacle with the French.

At Ste. Adresse we found the Minister Helleputte carrying on the work at the *Dépôt des Invalides*, begun by his brother-in-law, the Minister Schollaert, who had died suddenly the year before. Both of these ministers had great human sympathy and cheered the men by frequent visits and genuine interest. Through their influence the government furnished this private school with subsidies and with raw material and with an officer to exercise military control. The men sold many toys and plaster work, baskets and shoes.

We gave the school the sum of 50,000 francs in the summer of 1918 for a new building, but upon the change in the military situation we held up work on the building. When the armistice came we doubled the appropriation and directed it to moving the school back to Louvain, where it became a part of the University of Louvain.

We found Port Villez an inspiring sight. Twelve or fourteen hundred men were being recreated.

Speaking of Port Villez—Madame Henry Carton de Wiart quoted Emerson—"The only mortal malady is incapacity to improve."

Here we found some men, prevented from following an old vocation they had entered by chance, discovering their

real bent and making an even greater success than they had before they were wounded. One man who had been a common laborer showed positive genius at artistic lettering.

All kinds of startling changes took place: A circus clown became a decorative painter; a street paver became a pastry cook, excelling in puff paste and *frangipane*; a shepherd who had lost a leg became a harness maker.

The man who had just arrived was examined by the surgical staff to see what was physically possible, by the school staff to see what was mentally possible and was then taken slowly about and allowed to see forty-eight trades in operation and his old comrades happily at work at them. This helped him to a choice and supplied the moral stimulus.

There was everything from expert accounting to blacksmithing. In the carpenter shop, he saw men making doors and window frames, benches, desks, chests, cupboards, and men not strong making saw handles, and planes.

In the machine shop he saw men operating delicate machinery, with artificial arms and iron fingers, which grasped the tools almost as well as if they were of flesh and blood.

In the electrical department, perhaps, he met mutilated men just back from Rouen, where with only one director they had installed electricity for a hospital of 1,200 beds; or he saw three great modern bakeries, with electric kneading troughs and masonry ovens built by his mutilated comrades; or he came in contact with men at work on a large building for the "School of Construction and Design" moved up from Mortain, or at work on a new water mill to grind wheat.

Some of his comrades were teaching. Two fishermen from Blankenburghe, in the harness department, were teaching men how to make fly nets.

Out on the farms, created from stump lots, he found a

chance to learn agriculture, horticulture, care of animals, breeding of poultry and fish.

In leather, in metal, in wood, in concrete, on desks and easels, or out on the land, he saw more kinds of things being done than he had ever seen in one place in his life and almost always he made a choice with enthusiasm.

"Experience has taught us," says De Paeuw, "that when a man is unable to take up his former trade his choice generally falls upon one in some way connected with the old occupation. A mason or carpenter will choose the vocation of draughtsman or architect's clerk. A stone cutter wishes to be a stone dresser. A smith aspires to be a designer of artistic iron work. A moulder who can no longer lift the heavy moulds will try to become a modeler. A house painter who can not now climb on scaffolding naturally turns to the painting of signs and advertisements in a work shop or to the decoration of china. A hair dresser who can not endure standing becomes a wig maker. Farmhands or cow herds who have lost their legs become market gardeners, and farriers turn to lathes."

We found need of a barrack for the blind and quickly supplied it at a cost of 17,500 francs and 5,000 francs for furnishings. We would have done more had there been need.

With some men it was of course simply a question of restoring movement and not a question of reeducation. The *Bon Secour* at Rouen, under Doctor Lemaire, did important work. We gave *Bon Secour* an operating table and other supplies to the value of 5,924 francs. Likewise the Belgian front hospitals directed all their surgery to the end of helping the mutilés earn their living. The surgeons of the Belgian Red Cross did new and startling things with amputations, insisting that men must not remain in bed until they lose balance and flexibility of muscles. They had men walking on peg legs eight days after amputation.

In 1917, Dr. Depage and his associates aided by our sub-

sidies did work at La Panne, both for the reeducation of the mutilés and for the manufacture of a new light artificial leg much needed. Dustin in neurology, Neuman in restorative surgery, Van Neck in orthopedic surgery, Martin in prosthesis or fitting appliances and René Sand in vocational adaptation, made important studies.

About this same time, Her Majesty, the Queen, took up with Dr. Depage the question of the civilian mutilés to which nobody else seemed to have paid any attention. Inhabitants of cities bombed by aviators and peasants living near the lines often were mangled as badly as soldiers.

Her Majesty said that the state owed a duty to these war victims as well as to the soldiers, that they would be assets or liabilities after the war exactly the same as soldiers, and that for its own protection Belgium must do something about it. Dr. Depage at once opened his hospital at Mortain to this class of unfortunates.

Her Majesty brought the matter to our attention. After the armistice we turned over to her, as President of the Belgian Red Cross Society, the sum of 1,000,000 francs to use as a lever to bring together the different agencies dealing with the mutilés.

Through the influence of a very important person, a committee was appointed of which the Commissioner to Belgium was a member, by whom a plan was worked out to put small schools for the mutilés, civil and military, in each province where the men could be trained near their homes—all under the direction of the Minister of War. This plan is now in operation.

At California House, London, England, was another, a home for the reeducation of Belgian mutilés, supported entirely for three years by gifts from America, and more particularly California. It was managed by Miss Julia Heyneman. Its funds ran short in the summer of 1918 and it appealed to the American Red Cross for aid. It maintained in connection with the school a club called "Kitchener House," which furnished tea and lunch to the

soldiers as well as amusements and classes. The character of the work was excellent and the standing high. The Commission to Belgium "helped out" on two occasions to the total amount of 32,180 francs. The work was wound up after the armistice. Five hundred men underwent treatment during three years and were trained for industrial and other pursuits.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### Some Great Days Toward the End

**I**T was the night of September 30, 1918. The day before the Belgian Army had made a great attack and the dark threatening forest of Houthulst, toward which the Belgians and British had looked for four years, was theirs. They had taken some four thousand German prisoners and made a four-mile advance along the mountain of Flanders. The Commissioner was dining in his little third floor apartment at La Panne with Vandevyvere, Minister of Finance, and Vandervelde, Minister of Supplies, as his guests. All at once Paul Hymans, Minister of Foreign Affairs, burst in, having come up from Le Havre for a conference with the King. He told us that Bulgaria had accepted the Allied terms. To all these men who knew international politics so well it was news so momentous and so joyful that they were almost stunned for a moment. Said Vandervelde, "It is more important than taking any city or position on the line. Cambrai or St. Quentin, or even Lille couldn't compare with it." Said Vandevyvere, "It is the beginning of the end." And so we had a very happy dinner in celebration.

Days of intense activity followed, getting up supplies and people and helping the hospitals carry the great load that had come upon them.

The common people of Flanders and the private soldiers were astir over impending events but apparently did not dare let themselves hope that the end was near.

Saturday, October 12, the Commissioner recorded in his journal at La Panne: "A driving wind and rain but a whirlwind of thoughts and emotions for everybody. The

Minister Berryer just told us that the Germans had accepted all the terms of peace and had sent a note to Wilson yesterday; that Austria had threatened a separate peace unless Germany made peace at once. What of the poor boys killed today who have lived through the war up till now? We are wild with expectancy and anxious to get confirmation."

Sunday, October 13.—"A day of intense joy with a reaction. This morning we got the text of the German note accepting Wilson's terms. There was great excitement in the streets. At every corner I was stopped. A soldier or nurse would come running with the question, 'Mon Colonel, is it true? Is it over?' Lunch with the Ministers Berryer and Poulet. Great joy. We are going to be in the villa of the Minister Poulet at Westend next Sunday. We are going to be in Brussels in a week. Then tonight, reaction, dinner with Depage at the hospital and news of a new Belgian and British attack to be made tomorrow. The deadly toll we are paying is forced to the front again. I dined in the midst of 2,000 wounded and then telegraphed Colonel Gibson in Paris for surgeons and nurses but fear they can't be spared."

Monday, October 14.—"The great guns of the monitors just shook things at daybreak. The attack was on. Up early and away to Cassel, St. Omer, Lumbres, and back to Hazebrouck, Steenvoorde, Poperinghe and Ypres. Ordered supplies into refugee clearing station at Lumbres, inspected civilian casualty clearing stations of the Friends' Ambulance Unit at Poperinghe and Ypres for which we are paying, and got to Ypres to welcome the first liberated civilians. Our camions are bringing down wounded soldiers as well as civilians today. Hospitals are overtaxed. Ypres was shelled heavily today on account of traffic. Glorious news tonight—we have taken Courtrai. These may be the last days of this terrible war."

Tuesday, October 15.—"I am very sad today, thinking of Colonel Bremer killed yesterday. He was one of the

finest officers in the Belgian Army and one of the bravest men I ever knew. He knew on Saturday that he was going to attack near Zonnebeke on Monday, and he said, "I wish I could have lived through; I'd like to see what kind of a world it will be after the war, but it is not to be." He was badly hit and my friend, Dr. Foucher, rushed to him and was bending over him when a shell fell on them both."

Wednesday, October 16.—"A close squeak tonight. Was coming from the villa of the King when a great shell came in without much of any scream, dropping almost straight down and "did in" the tribunal which I was passing—two houses together—hurling rubbish and men down together in the street. Got up quickly unhurt and helped a wounded man to the hospital. Went back and found the Judge dead and another man, and five other people whom we couldn't get from under the tons of stuff. The gendarmes and soldiers will dig all night if need be. They got a baby out unhurt.

"Cooreman, the Prime Minister, is here in the apartment with me. Was in his car just ahead of me when the shell fell. A few seconds' delay and he would have been under it. Close escape also for the King and Queen as the shells tonight are 380's or 420's and they blow everything to pieces. They are coming in faster than I've ever known them in La Panne. The Minister Poulet says the battery shelling us tonight is a big one just beyond Ostend. Everybody in the house is in the cellar except the Minister and myself, but it is too dangerous down there for us. We'd rather go down with the house than have the house come down on us. I have no faith in any abri in La Panne except the one we built for Madame Rolin's babies. But it must be near the end."

Thursday, October 17.—"Got up supplies today for new first aid stations. A busy day at many things. Down at hospital of Countess Van den Steen at Couthove, and found her overtaxed like everybody. Promised additional sup-

plies at once. Strange sensations here these days. Germans evacuating the coast. Ostend free. Came through Nieuport this afternoon. Impossible to think of it as safe but it is. Under cover of the heavy shelling last night, and leaving lights in their trenches, the Germans started away. As I woke up, I heard a noise in the street, went down and Colonel Joostens dashed around the corner and said, 'The Germans got out in the night. I am on my way to Ostend. My battery starts today. We will be there tomorrow.' It means unutterable things to La Panne which for four years has been always in danger. As I dashed for the hospital with the news, I saw a body come ashore—a fine young British naval officer. He had been in the water only a little while. It is that way always here—tragedy gripping us in our happiest moments. Got the text of the President's message today. The King's Secretary was with me and said, 'He is one of the greatest men in history. He becomes a law giver for mankind. What a thing is a sense of justice.' "

Friday, October 18.—"I had my baggage in the car to start for Le Havre to see about moving the office up here, when Dr. Janssen (Ocean Hospital) came bounding up the steps and asked me to go to Ostend with him to see if we could be of any help. We little knew what we would face in roads, although we were told the Germans blew up all the bridges and road intersections. We got to Pervyse and found a division of the Belgian Army waiting to cross the Yser. We walked to the famous Schoorbakke and got there at 3 P. M. to see the last plank placed on the new bridge and to see the first vehicle over. It was too late to make Ostend and get Dr. Janssen to the hospital that night, so we came back. German trenches were still warm. It was mighty interesting to see how they left them, but everybody was afraid of hidden mines and traps."

Saturday, October 19.—"Today I went with the Minister Vandervyvere to Roulers and Iseghem, just liberated, both in the district he represents in Parliament. It

was a notable experience. We went up by Poelcappelle through an indescribable No-Man's-Land of death and destruction over roads the worst I ever attempted. We lunched in the home of M. Carpentier, burgomaster of Iseghem, President of the *Comité National*, and an old friend of my companion. It was almost like breaking communion bread. Carpentier was a very rich man before the war. For four years they have lived under the Germans and in a zone of military operations where it was almost impossible to get passes to 'Circulate.' For the past two days and nights he and his wife have been in the cellar suffering the bombardment of both sides. His brewery near the house was burned. Today with perfect hospitality they set out a luncheon for us. A dish of soup, meat we had brought, some nuts gathered in the country nearby, one beautiful pear and one apple, and most marvelous of all, a loaf of wonderful white bread. A Belgian officer had given the burgomaster one loaf. These people who had been living upon the black German war bread and who looked upon this white loaf as almost sacred, cut it for us. They set forth their choicest gift for the first guests of the liberation. And from the depths of the cellar came one bottle of Bordeaux wine which had been concealed and saved for a great occasion. The burgomaster could hardly speak he was so affected by the rapid turn of events. Tuesday night they went to bed with German soldiers still around them. Wednesday morning the Belgians were with them. I find conditions in general good. There is no great emergency distress—no great amount of sickness—no famine—food stocks for some days—but we shall have to get food coming up fast from our way as the Hoover food can't come now the other way through the German lines. There is a great scarcity of clothing. The lines are moving forward farther south also. Yesterday our camions rushed a lot of food up to Tourcoing, Lille and Roubaix from the Adinkerke warehouses. Other camions supplied little villages around Roulers. We

find 11,000 of 15,000 inhabitants still at Iseghem. Roulers had only 1,100 civilians out of 25,000. Roulers was just enough nearer the old German front lines to make it uninhabitable.

"We had with us today Baron Gilles de Pelichy of one of the old rich Flemish families. He has been working for the government at Le Havre for three years. His father and mother stayed in their beautiful chateau between Iseghem and Ingelmunster. We took him home. It was a thrilling trip for him and we shared his excitement. We passed old familiar landmarks he had not seen for years. As we got within half a dozen miles of home, he began to see peasants whom he knew and his excitement was almost uncontrollable. Horny-handed old fellows came running up to the car, dropping their pipes in their emotion, to greet "*Mijn herr den Baron.*" When we reached the chateau we found the great park filled with the wooden barracks of a German Army headquarters. I never saw so many wires going into one building anywhere. (An American Army headquarters was established here a week or so later.) An old *concierge* leaned out of an upper window overwhelmed with astonishment and the Baron called, 'Is father here?' and he said, 'Yes,' misunderstanding the question. Then joy was uncontrolled but was doomed quickly to bitter disappointment when we found that the old father and mother had been forced to go to Brussels two weeks before by the German authorities. The chateau was not burned but was more or less spoiled. The great circular drawing-room was split up by concrete partitions into offices. Stove pipe holes were cut through walls in every direction. The best of the furniture had been carried away. A litter of papers and broken glass and office debris was piled in heaps showing that the *concierge* already was struggling with the problem of cleaning and restoring. Fully half of the noble trees in the park around the chateau were killed by shell fire. It was a sad sight but not as bad as

it might have been. The father and mother were alive and the place was there.

“We had with us the schoolmaster of Roulers, van Rolleghe. When the war broke out, he buried all his little fortune, the accumulation of a lifetime of saving, in the garden of his house in Roulers. He was on the front seat of our car with the driver wondering if he were a poor man in his old age or whether he had enough to live on comfortably for the rest of his life. He had not slept for eight days in his excitement. Money isn’t important compared with life but still I sympathized with his emotion. He found his house burned, his garden plowed up with shells, and no trace whatever of his money. He was very courageous and said: ‘I will start over.’ But it was a tough experience for him.”

Sunday, October 20, Bruges, Flanders.—“The Germans left Bruges yesterday. We are here this afternoon in time to see the first enthusiasm of the crowds. The Ministers Berryer, Vandevyvere, Helleputte, Pouillet and I came up together. The crowds lined streets as we drove in about 4 P. M. and crowded about the cars cheering. Thousands of flags which had been hidden were hung out. Everybody spoke to us. Everybody wanted to do something for us. The people were just starved for the outside world. I am tonight at the fine old home of the burgomaster, Count Visart. For dinner we had soup, roast beef, at 12 or 14 francs a kilo, potatoes, a hashed meat, a pudding and four or five wines. The dinner was a surprise, especially to find that the Germans had left any wine. The morale of the population is in the main good. Hoover has done great work inside Belgium.”

Monday, October 21, Midnight.—“Bruges to Ostend and back to La Panne. Left the Ministers and went on to Ostend. Found the road that was open by following car of the new town commander. Impressed by size of town. Found 20,000 people of the population of 42,000. Not much like the gay summer resort I used to know. Prom-

ised a quick supply of condensed milk for children. Conditions generally good. British have done their bombing at Ostend with discrimination. Made a horrible mess of railroad stations and docks but town itself only hurt here and there. The King and Queen visited Bruges today after I left but I have arranged to be there for their formal entry next week. Came by the new Belgian Army headquarters at Thourout, picking up the Minister Vandervelde and Dr. Depage on the road and looked over the Depage hospital, which our money made possible."

Tuesday, October 22.—"La Panne to Montreuil-sur-mer and back. Down half way to Le Havre to meet Major Lee and Captain Corn—to get in touch—and then back for dinner with General Melis tonight at Dunkirk. Completed arrangements with Lee to get quickly to Bruges and take charge of office I am opening there. Will move everything from Le Havre as the Belgian Government is coming up at once."

Bruges, Wednesday, October 23.—"La Panne to Bruges—General Melis wanted our help with his hospitals at Ostend and Bruges. Got off with Melis after lunch. Made quick trip up over new good shore road. Visited all his proposed hospitals and then the Depage hospital already functioning in the Normal School Building. Considerable fighting between here and Ghent. Good dinner at a little restaurant. Then walked out in the great square by the tower, saw the north star, heard the guns and thought it all over."

Thursday, October 24, La Panne.—"Visited proposed hospitals of General Melis at Ostend. Got back to see Ingenbleck (Secretary to King). Told me that one of the first things the King wanted to do in liberated Belgium was to show his gratitude to the American Red Cross by decorating Henry P. Davison (Chairman of the War Council). Wanted me to bring Davison to see the King at Bruges tomorrow, the day of the great entry. Got Davison on telephone in Paris. He could not start up until Sunday. Had all this to change with the King. Thank God the

King is a King. I believe he cares as much for my convenience and my time and that of every other busy man as he does for his own."

On Friday, October 25, the Commissioner wrote from La Panne to Major Lee at Le Havre a description of the entry of the King and Queen into Bruges:

"The famous old bell tower of Bruges looked down upon a scene today of which men will think and speak a thousand years from now. Like a King and Queen of the Middle Ages, at the head of their troops, King Albert and Queen Elizabeth, with the Crown Prince Leopold, rode on horseback into Bruges, while 50,000 people in mingled French and Flemish shouted: 'Long live the King.'

"Wheeling about the great square in a graceful curve, their Majesties took up a position in the center, attended by a staff of Belgian, French and British officers, while their troops marched past. Most of these soldiers were the simple Flemish boys of the country. Every now and then an excited cry would come from the sidewalk of some one who recognized a son, a brother, or a sweetheart.

"At the close of the procession the King dismounted with the Queen and Prince, and attended by the staff, entered the historic old Government House of the Provincial Government of West Flanders. Here they were received by the Governor, Burgomaster, the Secretary, the Aldermen and other officials. Governor Janssens van Bisthoven and the Burgomaster Visart, in good Flemish, welcomed their Majesties to Bruges. Count Visart said that for four years they had thought about the army, the hardships which it was enduring in the trenches on the Yser and the fortitude which the men showed under suffering and danger. 'But,' said he, 'we have also thought of your Majesties and especially Her Majesty, the Queen, who has chosen to face just as great dangers in a wonderful work of relief. Long live the King and long live the Queen!' In reply the King said that the historic old city

of Bruges had nobly performed its duty during the war. It had borne with dignity and courage the presence of the enemy. He was glad to come to Bruges with the members of the government; and thanked the citizens for their warm welcome and for the hospitality of the city.

"I was impressed with the fact that our decision to move to Bruges was a very wise one. For example: I saw Brown, the Holland representative of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, one of the Secretaries of our Legation at The Hague, and Mr. Jean van den Branden, a very dear friend who represents Belgium at the Rotterdam office of the Commission for Relief in Belgium. They had crossed the frontier from Holland this morning. I saw all the men with whom I have been doing business at La Panne. There will be opportunity still for work at La Panne in connection with the base hospitals this side of the Yser and in connection with the other work which we have been helping as well as at our barracks at Adinkerke, which have assumed very great importance. I must have a good man stay here at La Panne for a time at least and perhaps become the District Delegate in this section, if we have such a title.

"Captain Graux went along with me and we talked over many things about Le Glandier. I found an urgent situation up here about certain surgical supplies like ether and chloroform, and have wired to Titcomb to meet me at the Hôtel Vouillemont in Paris tomorrow night.

"The Minister of War, whom I saw on my way back, said he was moving this week. There will be a farewell to friends on Wednesday, at Le Havre. Thursday and Friday the ministers will be moving to Bruges. They have rented the *Hôtel du Commerce* for living quarters.

"I found the new office just rented, a sorry looking sight with the debris of occupation by German private soldiers. I made arrangements to have the burgomaster send men to clean it up and put it in order and get furniture which will be loaned to us for the short time we are

apt to be there. I think it is large enough to give offices to the Friends' Ambulance Unit with us. They seem to think it would be advisable to be close to us and I feel very sure about it."

On October 28, Henry P. Davison, accompanied by Colonel Harvey Gibson, Major Fosburg, Lieutenant Davison, and others, came to inspect our work, visiting first the Belgian Hospital at La Chartreuse, the Red Cross Children's Colony at Recques and then proceeding rapidly to Bruges.

Just outside the city in the Château of Laaken, His Majesty had established himself, and there received Mr. Davison, his son, an officer of the American Naval Aviation, Colonel Gibson, and the Commissioner. He thanked Mr. Davison for the work of the American Red Cross and decorated him with the highest Belgian order, the Order of Leopold, himself pinning on the decoration and making Mr. Davison a Commander of the Order, the highest rank.

In reply to the King, Mr. Davison said, among other things, that he accepted it as the head of the Red Cross and not with any sense of personal vanity.

That was his attitude throughout all his great war work. He gave himself, his health and strength, and his commanding abilities without any reward as a representative of the American people.

Americans have a prejudice against decorations. It showed itself in a constitutional provision forbidding any officer of the United States accepting a title, office or gift of any kind from a King or Prince without the consent of Congress. An amendment was pending for years, lacking only one vote to pass, forbidding any citizen even to accept such recognition.

But Americans now begin to see that it is as foolish to refuse decorations as it is to seek them. Unsought they carry a message of good will and gratitude.

The last point which Mr. Davison visited was La Panne

where we stood on the beach and looked at the line of buildings along the waterfront, the villa of the King at one end and the Ocean Hospital at the other end.

Directly in front of us were the *Bains Militaires* or Military Baths.

I told Mr. Davison how a shell came in one day, and gave us many casualties there among refugees washing and mending clothing, of whom some thirty died, and of a frail little hunchback dressmaker who had both legs cut off near the hips but who, when her old mother came crying to the hospital, said, "Don't cry, mother, I can sit in a chair and sew, and I will take care of you."

Mr. Davison pulled a generous banknote from his pocket and said, "This is not official, but I personally will count it an honor to help that little dressmaker."

The great sense of human brotherhood which was felt so deeply amid these horrors of war, binding all classes together, may yet rule in days of peace.

Red Cross work means at least one step that way.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### The King Comes Home

ON the morning of November 11, 1918, at 5 o'clock, the armistice was signed, to go into effect at eleven A. M. I heard about it at 7 A. M. from the Minister Vendervelde, in Bruges, with whom I had an engagement to go to Roulers to inspect the condition of the liberated people. "Let us go to Ghent instead," I said, "*Chez les Boches?*" He replied, "All right, we will try it." In his beautiful Rolls Royce car we were soon under way, stopping to call out the first news of the armistice to the little villages we passed. At Lederghem twelve men and a dog made a circle and danced about us rejoicing, the dog on his hind legs barking loudly, but it was a joyful bark.

We passed the Belgian outposts at the river and then had to clear branches and wires from our path. The bridges were down into Ghent, and we circled the city to the left, soon meeting peasants coming out who said that the bridge over which the Germans marched out eastward at seven A. M. was intact. We got around to this bridge and soon were in Ghent. We were the first civilians and the first automobile to enter, although Belgian soldiers had begun to filter in an hour before. The streets were crowded and some were impassable, while people shouted, cheered, laughed, wept and fought to get to the car and seize our hands. A squad of gendarmes soon cleared a way and escorted us to the Governor's residence on the square. Here we were literally lifted up the outside steps and swept into the great entrance hall. The old Governor met us half way up the grand staircase, embraced us, and wept with joy.

Soon we were taken to the top of the outer stairs overlooking the balcony, where thousands awaited us. Vandervelde spoke in French, a Dutch Senator who came in with us, in Flemish and I, in mingled English and French. It was an hour when a universal language replaced our different tongues. Rich and poor, noble and beggar, soldiers and civilians, listened and wept and cheered, knowing that we all said in one way or another: "The great hour has come. God be praised. The heroic old city of Ghent is liberated. Your fortitude, your long endurance, your fidelity have had their reward. The world will never forget what you have endured and how you have endured it. 'Long live Belgium.' 'Long live the King.' 'Long live the Allies.' 'Long live Ghent.' And then with a thunder sound from the crowds, 'Long live America.'"

I spoke to the crowd at eleven, the hour the war ended, and as I was speaking the Germans across the water fired one farewell volley into the town, killing a single civilian, a lame old shoemaker.

To deal promptly with the problem of revictualing we had an investigation made at once of the condition of the canals toward Holland, from whence the Hoover food had to come, as everything was blocked toward Bruges. We found that very little work was necessary to clear the main route south from Sas van Ghent. The burgomaster of Ghent asked us for malted milk and condensed milk for children, and I got a shipment in to him by truck the next day. I called on Professor George Hulin de Loo of the University of Ghent, whom we had visited before the war, and his astonishment left him utterly speechless. With him I paid my respects to the Bishop just across the street.

That night we made our way back to Bruges and then learned that those of us in the military establishment were forbidden under the terms of the armistice from approaching within a fixed number of kilometers of the retreating Germans. I went to Brussels while the Germans were still there, once by accident, but the second time not quite as

accidentally, but after conference with responsible officials.

On Wednesday, November 13, the Minister Vanderelde told me in Ostend that he was going to Brussels to help steer things, that a revolution had broken out among the German soldiers—they were stripping insignia and decorations from their officers, and that he felt he was needed.

On Friday, November 15, in Ghent, I met Topping, former Secretary to the American Legation at Brussels, now with the Associated Press, and Colonel . . . . . of the American Army, who asked me to drive them as near Brussels as I could, to see if the Germans were out, but not to go into the German lines, as it meant court-martial for the Colonel. We started, went very fast, and before we knew it went by the German outposts at 40 miles an hour. The sentinels seemed uncertain, moved out into the road, lifted their guns, and stepped back. All we could do was to go on in, turn around in a quiet place, drop Topping, who wanted to stay, and get the Colonel out. We passed marching Germans, German lorries, German troops off duty, and Germans packing up, but were unmolested. We went out at the same high speed.

We had heard the explosions of dumps being blown up, and I heard rumors of wounded civilians. Early the next morning I started back from Bruges to go in to Brussels if possible and stay. It was the experience of the day before all over again. The sentinels were cowed and uncertain. I drove up through the main streets, but the attention I attracted appeared dangerous. A crowd assembled as we stopped to ask directions, shouting and cheering, and this might easily have started rioting with drunken soldiers out of control. We drove hastily to the residence of Paul de Mot, son of the former burgomaster, and father of Madame Janssen, wife of Doctor Janssen, our friend at La Panne. The servants quickly obeyed my Flemish chauffeur, the doors swung open and we were off the street and in the courtyard.

I had with me M. Gregoire, a civilian, and a young Belgian aviator, so keen to find his people that he was willing to take any chances. He waited until dark, and then went home by back streets. This was unnecessary, for I walked out that night to the home of M. Hanssens, the lawyer, where I was to dine, and I passed many German soldiers who stared at me curiously, but without demonstration, except in the case of three fellows merry with wine, who made some joking passes with their bayonets. To all, the war was over. The end had come. The jig was up.

Sunday morning, November 17, I saw them go out. There may come some more momentous and interesting parades in my life but I doubt it.

I had seen them in 1915, marching in Berlin, in Brussels, in Cologne, and in Aix-la-Chapelle, in the height of their power and glory—with new uniforms, shining equipment and apparently irresistible *esprit*.

They went out of Brussels in old uniforms, with battered equipment, their auto trucks equipped with iron tires instead of rubber, and officers accompanying them in a kind of command, but only by permission of the workmen and soldiers' representatives who had become the real German power.

The night before I could have bought machine guns from them for ten francs and all other kinds of equipment in proportion. Some thrifty Belgians made huge profits in the days following from souvenirs bought in these last hours of German occupation.

At 11 o'clock Sunday morning the liberation was proclaimed from the City Hall Tower by trumpeters, while a dense crowd cheered. "We are half mad today," said my brave little gray-haired hostess. "Don't mind us."

At 2 o'clock Burgomaster Max, just back from a German prison, was received at the Hôtel de Ville, Faultlessly dressed, suave, smiling, polished, undisturbed, he was the same Max as when he went out to meet the invading Germany Army on the outskirts of Brussels in August,

1914; no different than when he politely refused to take the German General's hand, and no different than when he nailed up on the bill boards of Brussels his denial of German lies for all the population to read, and faced the consequences.

It was the day of most intense emotion in Brussels, as it was the first day of freedom, but the day of great spectacle, of impressive pageant, and almost equal feeling was at hand.

Said the Americans in Belgium in 1914, "We would wait here five years if need be to be here when the King comes home."

Said some of the refugees in Holland, "We would crawl on hands and knees to be there when the King enters Brussels."

The relief workers had left in 1917 and were scattered, only a few were near enough to be there, and not many of the refugees were back. But the government moved up en masse from Le Havre excepting a few unhappy officials and members of their families who could not get on the special trains. The diplomatic corps reappeared from Paris, Le Havre and other points near and far. Detachments of Allied troops came as an escort for the King with Pershing, Foch and Prince Albert of England in command. People straggled in on foot and packed in lorries and on farm carts. By hook or by crook, they got there from Paris, from Havre, from Calais, from La Panne, Bruges and Ghent.

John Gummere, left behind at our office in Bruges, flew in at the last minute with a Belgian aviator.

Then amid indescribable scenes, the King and Queen, the Princes Leopold and Charlie, and the little Princess Marie-José formally and officially entered the city, on horseback, welcomed by Max, welcomed by Parliament, and welcomed by shouting thousands.

In the same Parliament house where he had taken his stand for fidelity to the treaty obligations, the King re-

ceived the homage of the government and spoke simply and devoutly, his words of thanks.

Joy was unconfined. Hope filled the air. The happiest of reunions took place. But it seemed as if the King and the Queen never forgot for an instant what the country had been through, the many graves they had left in Flanders, and the many people that glad day in Brussels who could not have their boys back.

Very soon the King was hard at work, bearing the almost insupportable burdens of peace, and the little Queen had gone back to her wounded soldiers at La Panne.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### With Those Who Stayed Under the Germans

**T**HE Belgians who remained in the country had it hard enough but not in the way most Americans imagine. The majority of them lived in their own homes and followed their own pursuits. Lawyers kept their offices, doctors saw their patients, priests went about their parishes. Laboring men by the hundreds of thousands were thrown out of work when the mills closed, but some mills essential to the economic life of the country did not close. Farmers tilled the soil and got abnormally high prices. And a great business of food runners was developed like whiskey running in the United States. These smugglers brought in things from Holland and made huge profits in which sometimes German sentinels shared.

People walked the streets, sat in the cafés, rode on street cars, and visited their friends much as usual, and if they were not in the zone of active operations they could get passes to go to other towns. Their own officials did business in the city hall or town hall, their own teachers taught school, their own policemen kept order, and directed traffic. But this does not mean that they were free. It means that they were not "suffering atrocities" all the time as some people seem to imagine.

The German military authorities were the real power. Not even the German Civil Government in Belgium amounted to much in comparison with the military authorities. All manner of petty irksome restrictions were imposed. Numbers of people who could easily have obtained passes to the next town would never bow the head enough to ask for them, and so they stayed in their own

communities. German sentinels guarded all important points. Some streets were entirely closed. Many buildings were taken over. German functionaries, German spies, German camp followers swarmed everywhere. However much the Belgian civil officials might go through the motions of government, they had no real power. And railway stations as perhaps no other single buildings emphasized the change. They were closed to the general public—guarded by soldiers, used almost exclusively by the military authorities and when troop trains were not going west or trains of wounded coming east, they were great, empty, hollow-sounding structures in the cities and forlorn little places in the country where suspicion and fear and restraint seemed raised to their highest point.

With intercourse outside the country stopped, with their own industries paralyzed and their agriculture unable to feed them, the big question in Occupied Belgium was food and clothing. The Commission for Relief in Belgium under the leadership of Herbert Hoover kept these people alive. This Commissioner handled the stupendous questions of finance, purchase, transport and governmental permissions. The Belgian National Committee under Emile Francqui, organized in every commune of the country, did the great work of distribution. This unofficial committee had real power. As one Belgian put it, "Francqui was King."

The American Red Cross, from its position on the other side of the fighting lines, sent small sums into Occupied Belgium during the latter part of the war to help the Commission for Relief in Belgium do special things. To help needy Belgian journalists, an association was organized called *Association de la Presse Belge*. Some 320 men representing 68 daily papers, refused to have anything to do with journals appearing under German censorship. A number of these men with their families suffered severely. The King contributed from his own purse 10,000 francs a month to a relief fund for them, the Minister of

the Interior 5,000 francs and the American Red Cross 10,000 francs a month. In July, 1918, the Germans forbade this aid, but the contributions were then made through Edmond Patris, the moving spirit of the organization at Le Havre, and he sent the money in through a secret channel.

In 1916 Mr. Hoover endorsed the establishment in London of a special fund for the "Doctors and Pharmacists of Belgium" who were greatly needed in the country but who would not accept help through regular channels. For the last four months of 1918 we gave some 5,000 francs a month to this fund.

To help others of the "unfortunate and proud," the Baroness de Woot had organized a committee in Brussels called *Secours aux Infortunés* which rendered valuable service.

Likewise the *Assistance Discrète* in which Madame Haps was an active force, took hold in even a larger way of this same problem.

Madame Baetens, wife of one of the officers of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, held all these organizations together and administered through them and through other channels a special fund of the Commission for Relief in Belgium for special needy cases. We helped all these organizations during the latter part of the war, sending in through the Commission for Relief in Belgium 100,000 francs a month for Madame Baetens' work, 10,000 francs a month for the *Assistance Discrète*, and 2,500 francs monthly for the work of the Baroness de Woot. After the armistice we had a chance to study this work at first hand, and found it directed with great public spirit and intelligence. Through the difficult weeks following the armistice, and especially in the hard winter of 1918-19, we made it possible for these committees to continue, giving our help regularly until the office closed in the spring of 1919.

A useful thing was done by Madame Haps in taking

over *Le Repos de Ste. Elisabeth* at La Panne where aged refugees lived so long and turning it into a sanitarium for working girls of liberated Belgium of the type the *Assistance Discrète* had been helping throughout the war. To the installation and maintenance of this project the American Red Cross gave 100,000 francs.

In Brussels and the other great cities of the occupied region we found strong, active committees at work in every conceivable kind of an undertaking to help human misery. We could not help a quarter or a tenth of the groups needing and asking our help, but in the five months we stayed after the occupation, we used the balance of our appropriations in the best ways open.

Countess Jean d' Outremont had struggled throughout the war to keep going an institution called *Le Calvaire*, for cancer patients. It was a Calvary up which these poor people walked, but the Countess and her colleagues were like Ste. Veronica wiping away a little of the bloody sweat. We gave them 5,000 francs.

In the first rush of the Germans in 1914, Termonde had been burned and three of the inhabitants had lost their lives. While we could not "rebuild Belgium," we found such serious suffering and congestion at Termonde in the winter of 1918-19 that we gave 50,000 francs through the Senator Emile Tibbaut for the purchase of wood and the hiring of labor to construct 50 two-room houses, specifying that the work must be done under the King Albert Fund.

The Minister Vandevyvere called our attention to the importance of the Civil Hospital at Thielt and we visited it promptly and found it much damaged by shell fire and by removal of its furniture. We gave 25,000 francs toward rebuilding the hospital.

To the Civil Hospital at Bruges we shipped a carload of supplies as soon as the city was liberated and the first rails laid across the trenches, which was done in an amazingly short time. We gave, through M. Coppieters 't Wallant, *Commissaire d' Arrondissement* of Bruges, 5,000

francs for the hospital and 10,000 francs for refugees in Bruges.

An American lady, married into one of the oldest families of the country, was the Vicomtesse de Beughem. She concentrated her help upon the lace makers of Flanders, especially those in danger of breaking down with tuberculosis. Her work was called *Secours Urgent* and one of her most active supporters was Mrs. Brand Whitlock. Mrs. Vernon Kellog has told in "Bobbins of Flanders" the story of this wonderful home industry of lace making.

The Queen, the Countess de Beughem, Countess Van den Steen, Madame Hangouart, Countess Louise d'Ursel and others worked hard throughout the war to keep these bobbins busy, first of all as a livelihood for thousands employed. But they also sought to abolish the low rates of pay and the swarm of middlemen preying upon the industry and to raise the level of the work in artistic ways, substituting beautiful for ugly designs. We had taken this matter up through M. Ingenbleck, Secretary to the Queen, and had given 5,000 francs to the *Comité Dentellier Franco-Belge-Américain* to promote the industry among the Flemish refugees in northern France. At Brussels we gave 20,000 francs to this work as directed by the Countess de Beughem.

The Countess Louise d'Ursel, who had been at the Belgian front the first part of the war, went back to Brussels in 1916, and devoted herself to saving babies. We helped the *Asile pour les tous Petit* in Brussels, giving 50,000 francs. Seeing the work of social reconstruction stretching ahead in Belgium for years, and the need of modern methods, the Countess came to the United States soon after the armistice and took a course in Columbia University and at the New York School of Philanthropy.

The brave Father Libert ran his institution for the blind and for deaf mutes all through the war at Woluwe St. Lambert, a suburb of Brussels. The Red Cross helped

Father Libert through the trying days of reconstruction with an appropriation of 60,000 francs. No educational work in Belgium seemed more full of promise than the work of these consecrated and progressive priests in saving and training what would otherwise be waste human products. Several children blinded by the war were sent to Woluwe and trained to useful trades.

In the summer of 1918, Baden-Powell of England wrote, urging a drive in the United States for the Boy Scouts of Serbia, Belgium and France. It was no time to put on more drives and the Red Cross had agreed to deal with urgent war misery everywhere. The inability of the Belgian Boy Scouts to get uniforms after the armistice, the prohibitive cost of cloth in Belgium, the great importance of the organization and the keenness and patriotism of the boys made us appropriate 100,000 francs through Pierre Graux for this purpose. At the same time, we attempted a union of the three branches of the Boy Scouts in the country, two Catholic and one Liberal; this since has been accomplished in part through the union of the Liberal and one of the Catholic groups.

For four years German Boy Scouts, imported into the country as messengers, tramped the lovely woods about Brussels, while the Belgian boys were forbidden to go out. Now, as the Belgians say, it is *une autre chose*.

The universal desire to give personal service throughout the war, as well as money, showed itself in a group of young ladies of Belgium, led by the Countess Jacqueline de Liedekerke, calling themselves *Les Petites Roses de la Reine*, who did a work of house to house visitation in the poorer quarters of the cities under supervision of the National Committee, giving clothing and supplementing the diet for the sick and badly nourished. Their budget grew from 5,000 francs per year in 1914 to 60,000 in 1918. Their accounts and records were admirably kept. We gave them 5,000 francs to go on through the difficult winter days after the armistice. There were many such con-

secrated groups, the largest and best known being *Les Petites Abeilles*, or "Little Bees."

Work on a much larger scale was done by *Le Foyer des Orphelins* which had colonies of children in Brussels, Liege, Mons and other cities. Emanuel Janssen, an officer of the National Committee, Captain Graux, Secretary of the Queen, and Emile Vandervelde, Minister of Justice, joined in urging prompt help for this work. We were able to appropriate 400,000 francs.

Mademoiselle Jeanne de Ponthière, niece of the Minister Berryer, was at the head of a committee working for children in the industrial districts of Liège. The Red Cross helped this committee with 10,000 francs.

Another group working among children of laboring men in Brussels was called *Les Enfants du Peuple*, largely Socialist, just as Mlle. de Ponthière and her associates were all Catholic, but curiously enough, Liberals not friendly to either Catholics or Socialists, urged both of these works upon us. We gave this work 5,000 francs.

And so it went: *Les Enfants Martyrs*, established 26 years before for children starved or beaten at home, had its property taken over by the Germans for a hospital, its furniture carried away, its subscriptions stopped. We helped reestablish the 350 boys and girls in their home at a cost of 40,000 francs, working in this matter largely through M. Eugène Le Docte.

The Judge of the Juvenile Court, Monsieur Wets, came to us for his *Le Berçail*, dealing with children whose parents were at work, some of them perforce in Germany, and supplying to the children care, recreation and instruction from 4 P. M. when school closed to 7 P. M. when the mother got home. We gave *Le Berçail* 5,000 francs.

To the *Crèche Belge* of the Countess Van de Steen in Brussels, we gave 10,000 francs for a new laundry, to the *Crèche Nord-Est*, in charge of Madame Gabrielle Vandervelde, wife of Dr. Vandervelde, 5,000 francs for maintenance, to Sœur Marie Josephine at Furnes, 5,000 francs to

rebuild and refurnish her schoolroom in which many of the children of the Red Cross Colony of Recques are now being taught. Through Dr. Holemans, Inspector General of the *Service de Santé Belge*, we gave 2,000 francs for the *Ligue Provinciale pour la Protection de la Première Enfance* in Ghent. But this was only a beginning in that great city. M. Anseele, a member of the new Belgian Cabinet, formed at the Château of Laaken just after the armistice, sought our help for the children of Ghent, many hundreds of whom he was taking out of the city to recuperate at the seashore. We gave his committee 200,000 francs.

To the Children's Fund of the *Croix Rouge de Belgique* we gave 100,000 francs for work especially among debilitated children of Brussels.

If it be true, as we were told, that the child question in Belgium and France is full of dynamite, then we did not step on that dynamite. The political parties of Belgium are more alive to the importance of saving and directing the children than in most countries. Each party makes every effort to get the children under its own direction and to make Catholics or Liberals or Socialists of them. But it was evident that the best men and women in all parties wanted the children saved, no matter who saved them or who profited by their being saved.

All three parties wanted to make strong, efficient men and women out of these children for the sake of Belgium.

If we had been afraid of the dynamite in the children's question we would never have got anywhere. If we had tried to apologize to one party for what we had done through the agency of another party, we would have utterly failed. If we had ignored any important group, we would have lost control of the situation.

We tried to be absolutely nonpartisan, independent and friendly with everybody. So far as we had the money and the supplies, so far as need could be demonstrated and so



In a Home for War Orphans in Brussels.



far as the agency could prove itself intelligent and co-operative, we helped and did it without fear or favor.

In so doing, it is only fair to say that the American Red Cross in Belgium won the confidence, the gratitude and even the affection of all groups.

There was equally important follow-up work for soldiers after the armistice. Her Majesty, the Queen, took the lead in this and we continued our appropriations for the Queen's Purse into the new year.

Madame John de Mot, a brave American lady, was married to one of the most gallant of Belgian gentlemen, a private soldier, killed just at the very end of the war. Madame De Mot, who had been nursing at the front, threw in her lot with her husband's country, reopened her home in Brussels and organized a committee to visit sick and wounded soldiers in the hospitals, to which work we appropriated 10,000 francs.

What we did in Germany for the men of the Army of Occupation has already been described in the chapter "For Those Who Held the Line."

The Nursing Home in Brussels to which Edith Cavell had been attached, had been named after her. It had not only trained nurses but given help to wounded soldiers within the country. We appropriated 10,000 francs to help this institution.

Madame Hymans' *Famille de l'Infirmière*, which we had helped at Dieppe in France, wanted to move back to Brussels and carry on work for nurses of the war, many of whom were still at the task of caring for the wounded. We appropriated 85,000 francs for the new installation.

Madame Hymans, wife of the Minister, Madame Dardenne, who had served with us at Le Havre, and Mademoiselle Carter, head of one of the public schools of Brussels during the occupation, took up the condition of public school teachers. On small pay and in a period of fantastic prices, these public servants had worked during the war, never getting adequate nourishment. Many of them

took their noon day meal at the public soup kitchens. They cooperated loyally with the Hoover-Francqui feeding, rendering valuable assistance. After the war many were broken down, enfeebled and predisposed to tuberculosis.

With our appropriation of 23,000 francs, these ladies organized a rest home for school teachers, which caught the attention of the public, has been well supported, and has done important work.

Belgium had some 10,000 political prisoners besides the 40,000 soldier prisoners.

On April 7, 1919, the Secretary General in charge of Prisoners of War, reported that all of these had returned except ten not transportable.

At the same time, the 2,000 or 3,000 deported for labor, were liberated. It was as if a great magician had waved a wand so suddenly did they appear. With them came Russians, French, British, Italians, Americans and others, streaming into Belgium, moving officially in box cars and unofficially on foot. We sent supplies to all the military canteens between Brussels and the Rhine for these wandering, wondering thousands, some of whom moved as in a dream, "saw men as trees walking," and traveled on the homing instinct which guides the dog and pigeon and which man has, at least in embryo.

M. Masson, a prominent lawyer of Brussels, started home from Germany when the doors of his prison opened. A train took him to Holland, but he could not cross the frontier. Back around by Aix-la-Chapelle he made his way again, and at last on foot, came to the Belgian border. He asked for Belgian soldiers, found his way to a company nearby, humbly asked permission of the Lieutenant to telephone to Brussels to tell his friends and ask help, when an officer passed who recognized him and saluted him as *M. le Ministre*. "Minister," said Masson, "what Minister?" "Why, don't you know," said his friend, "I saw it in the morning paper. The King has made you Minister of War in the new Cabinet." There was one

refugee at least to whom soldiers presented arms, whom officers attended in person, and for whom the fastest military car was supplied.

Mr. Alfred Goldschmidt, of Brussels, for two years a prisoner in Germany, on liberation, became Treasurer of the *Fédération Nationale des Prisonniers Politiques de la Guerre*. He wrote us as follows:

"I call your attention to the unhappy condition of Belgian political prisoners returning to their country. Some are entirely broken in health, others have lost their business and have nothing with which to begin life again. They have suffered for their loyalty to the cause of the Allies. They have been confined for spreading information or assisting boys to escape to join the army, or for helping in other ways to maintain the spirit of Belgian independence against German aggressors."

We appropriated 60,000 francs to help these unfortunates.

The Belgians worked hard, and worked in unison to relieve the misery and repair the ravages of the war.

The American Red Cross was with them helping in the first trying months of liberation. To such good purpose did all pull together that when we left a shrewd observer said that which subsequent events have proved true: "The Belgians are coming strong and coming fast, and will be on their feet first of all."

## CHAPTER XXIX

### The Reopening of the Universities

THE universities stayed perforce under the Germans. Faculties were divided. Some professors got away and some had to stay. But the students were gone. Down on the Yser were these boys of Louvain, Brussels, Liège and Ghent. With them were some of the professors, nearly all in khaki, too.

Louvain is Catholic, Brussels is "free" or Liberal, while Liège and Ghent are state universities, but for over 30 years that has meant Catholic also. American sympathy went out especially to the Belgian universities. Professors here united to invite over to the United States Belgian professors among the refugees and to find them work.

The burning of the library of Louvain, the loss of its priceless treasures, and the fact that the university is under Cardinal Mercier, aroused American sympathy for this institution, and citizens of the United States contributed some 2,000,000 francs toward the fund for rebuilding.

The University of Brussels has aroused interest also in the United States because of its freedom from political or sectarian control, and also because the brave burgomaster of Brussels, M. Max, is at the head of the Board of Control.

In January, 1919, this university opened its doors after being closed four and one half years. With accommodations for 1,200, it enrolled 2,500. Among the students were many in khaki whom the government did not dare demobilize as yet, but whom it stationed at Brussels so that they might resume their studies. At the opening

exercises before a crowded hall, Burgomaster Max, recently back from prison, presided and the speaker was the venerable and beloved Rector, Dr. Paul Heger, who had watched over the university during the occupation and who now welcomed the faculty and students back. "The interest and enthusiasm of students," said Dr. Heger, "is the most touching of post-war phenomena. It seems as if these young men were trying to make up for time lost in war."

On the wall, back of the speakers' platform, had been placed the names of the students of the university who had enlisted in the Belgian Army and who had died for their country. Some of these boys, caught in the country by the German occupation, had made their way out with enormous danger, running the frontier, passing over or under the electric barriers which to touch was death, taking the long journey to Holland, England, France and so up to the army on the Yser. The names of the dead were read out by departments, those in law, in medicine, in science, in engineering, amid scenes of indescribable solemnity and pathos. "These were the boys," said an old man, "who will never fight disease, plead causes, dam rivers or drain swamps, but they made it possible for these living boys to do all those things."

The message of the dead to the living had been inscribed on the wall above their names: "Brothers so live that we shall not have died in vain."

We made an appropriation of 100,000 francs to the University of Brussels to purchase material and equipment for laboratories and to help it get started.

During the summer of 1921, the Rockefeller Foundation made a contract with the University of Brussels by which it appropriates 40,000,000 francs, with a possibility of even more for medical education in Belgium through this institution. That the university itself wants the high standards the Foundation requires and that the Foundation has the vision, the power and the disposition

to render such service throughout the world, is one of the most cheering facts in modern life.

We appropriated also 20,000 francs for the medical clinics and 20,000 francs for the surgical clinics of the University of Liège. The Germans had cut the water and gas pipes, had removed electric fixtures and belts from machinery and had damaged some instruments and carried others away. As Liège is a State institution, repair and support were tasks of the State, which we did not desire to undertake. We did simply a few urgent things which enabled the professors to start work while governmental machinery was getting ready to function.

Dr. Louis Delrez, head of the surgical clinic of Liège, had been with us on the Yser. We had seen his work. He had taken a patella from a dead soldier and grafted it on to a living soldier. He had taken tendons also from the dead and given them to men whose tendons had been destroyed by shells. In one case a piece of tendon four inches long inserted in the hand of a pianist had restored normal control of the fingers at the instrument and given the man back his livelihood. His patients walked on artificial legs seven or eight days after amputation. Belgium needed this teacher back at work and the help of the American Red Cross made it possible.

Professor Beco, head of the medical clinic, had been kept in the country. He was greatly needed and did valuable work.

Professor Jacques Roskam, his assistant, had fought contagion and other civilian illness in Free Belgium and was given the American Red Cross medal for distinguished service. And we likewise knew of Liège and its needs through Dr. Pierre Nolf, one of the most famous of all the medical men of Belgium, to whom the Red Cross medal was also given, with the citation printed in an Appendix of this book.

The teachers and students of Belgium have had stern discipline in the school of the soldier. They have been

shaken out of routine and put into contact with the huge elemental forces which broke up the old world. They are now at the task of rebuilding the new. Those of us who saw them "tried in the furnace," are full of hope for the future.

## CHAPTER XXX

### Cardinal Mercier

**T**HROUGH the long years that the King was on the Yser, Cardinal Mercier was in his Episcopal palace at Malines, the Archbishop of Malines, and the spiritual leader of all Belgium. He was the incarnation of the spirit of wise and courageous resistance to German domination.

A clergyman would not have been expected to know how to deal with difficult affairs of state. A great scholar, a professor of philosophy, a specialist in the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, would especially have been considered too far removed from the swirling movements of world politics to play a great part.

And as for doing it in war time, it was unthinkable.

But it was this scholar, this ascetic, this classroom teacher, this churchman of churchmen, who stepped forward in a great crisis and played his part with a skill, a courage, a profound wisdom that baffled the Germans and made him one of the great figures of history.

Cardinal Mercier could perhaps have led the masses into futile riot and made Occupied Belgium a shambles.

Or he could have counseled hopeless submission so that the heroic King and his soldiers would have found little left when they came back. But he helped hold Occupied Belgium to a pathway of calmness, of dignity, of submission to the German ruler while at the same time they never acknowledged or accepted him.

“Let us not mistake bravado for bravery,” he said, “nor tumult for courage. Let us conduct ourselves with all needful forbearance.

“You owe to the enemy neither esteem nor affection, nor confidence; we owe external obedience as long as it is not against our conscience.”

But over and over he predicted victory for the Belgians and exhorted the people to stand firm.

Once even (in 1916) he dared say in the old church of Ste. Gudule in Brussels, on the 86th Anniversary of Belgian independence. “Fourteen years from today our restored cathedrals and our rebuilt churches will be thrown widely open; the crowds will surge in; our King Albert, standing upon his throne, will bow his unconquered head before the King of Kings; the Queen and royal princes will surround him. . . . Throughout the whole country under the vaulted arches of our churches, Belgians hand in hand will renew their vows to their God, their sovereign and their liberty. Today the hymn of joy dies on our lips. The hour of deliverance approaches but it has not yet struck. Let us be patient. Let us not suffer our courage to waver.”

Though the Germans went up against him time after time, set guards about his palace, refused him permission to use his car, kept him from moving freely throughout his diocese, they never really dared to make him a prisoner. A German officer would come to him raging over an utterance and demand an explanation, and the Cardinal would leave him while he said mass in the church. The officer would demand an immediate reply and the Cardinal would leave him waiting all day while he composed an answer for the Governor General, which that official did not know how to handle. There were too many Catholics in Germany for German Governors and Generals to go too far.

And so we found him at Malines when Belgium was liberated. There was no disillusionment in meeting him and studying his work. He had a great multitude of poor in his own parish to whom he was ministering. Almost immediately he had the additional burden of returning

refugees. With him and with a most able and charming Dominican priest, Père Rutten, we went into the needs of his work and made an appropriation for it of 100,000 francs.

We made our appropriation to him as a great relief worker whose knowledge of the field and whose ability to administer was unsurpassed. He was not always busy opposing Germans. He was caring for his flock and his flock included nearly everybody in that region.

We felt confidence in his sagacity and his methods, as well as in his kindness of heart.

The more one meets and studies and investigates Cardinal Mercier, the more one respects him.

What the Cardinal preached he practiced. He is no jolly red-faced monk eating capons and drinking rich wine, while his people have black bread. He is abstemious at the table—simple in all his ways—both cordial and dignified, and one recognizes him in the first moment of an interview as a man of God.

“And for you, ladies,” he said, during the war to a great congregation, “were you to make a show of abundance at a time when your sisters have only clogs and threadbare garments, be sure that you would offend God, your country, and the dignity of the poor. Make the substance of your sacrifice out of your personal sufferings and your national sufferings, as well as out of all the actions of your lives.”

That which gave power to Albert and Elizabeth gave power to Cardinal Mercier—he shared the sufferings and dangers of his people. Than that there is no greater secret of leadership.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### The Great Ambassador

**T**O the Belgians who lived under the German rule, Brand Whitlock was a rock of defense. He symbolized America, in the background, watching, helping, ready to leap at the Germans if they went too far. When others could not communicate, his couriers went out into that great unknown world from which they were cut off. His car went through the country. His flag was hung out in Brussels. He himself could be seen every day going about his work.

In moments of unusual stress or fear, the Belgians knew that Whitlock was working for them, protesting to the German authorities, cabling his own government, and conferring with his close friend, the gallant and able Spanish Minister, Villalobar.

His own book, "Belgium Under the German Occupation," tells the tragic, romantic story so that we almost live there ourselves under the Germans, mock with street gamins, slink about with spys, tremble over passports, work with Hoover and his men, plan secretly to circumvent the Germans, laugh over their rage and weep for the victims of their fury.

There will be the Whitlock of legend for long years in Belgium.

He didn't do half the things which the common people whispered that he had done, but what they whispered was true nevertheless. It illustrated what he did do and what he was to them.

When the United States went into the war, Mr. Whitlock stayed in Brussels for two months after the rupture of

diplomatic relations with Germany. He refused to go until he could take with him the Consuls and members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium. When he gets ready to tell the story of those months and the difficulties he had, it will be worth reading. But when he went, his car was the last in the special train, the Americans were in the cars ahead, and the arrangements had been completed with Dutch and Spanish neutrals to look after the huge task of feeding which had to go on.

When the long trip through Germany, Switzerland, and France was over and they reached Havre with Mrs. Whitlock, he went to La Panne to pay his respects to the King.

They were received in the little villa on the seashore by their Majesties and had luncheon with them. Then Mr. Whitlock was closeted for an hour or more with the King. Nobody ever knew what was said during that hour. There is a seal of confidence upon interviews with royalty. But some day that seal ought to be broken for the sake of history. The King gave him the Grand Order of the Crown of Leopold, the highest distinction that can be awarded.

During this visit, Mr. Whitlock took Mrs. Whitlock to the front, and Mrs. Whitlock was one of the few American women under fire in the trenches.

A touching incident occurred at Houthem, the Belgian General Headquarters. Mr. Whitlock was presented to General Rucquoy, who was then Chief of the General Staff and commanding the Belgian Army. When he heard his name, the General burst into tears. His wife and children were inside Belgium under the Germans, and somehow or other he had got word out, of what Whitlock had done for them and for all the other people, and the whole memory was too much for him.

The life at Le Havre was totally different for the Minister. At Brussels, he was Minister to a country without a government. At Le Havre, he was Minister to a government without much of its country. In the one place he

was an Envoy Extraordinary to the people and in the other place, to a Cabinet.

But he had the chance to render service while he waited for the glad summons back to Brussels eighteen or nineteen months away.

Every now and then he was at the front to see the King or with De Broqueville of the cabinet, at his old chateau at Steen.

The house at Le Havre became a meeting place for Belgians, Americans and British. General Nicholson, Commander of the British Base, General Coulter, Commander of the American Base, members of the Belgian Cabinet and their families all liked to come. There they were apt to find Americans passing through who wanted to see "Brand Whitlock who really faced the Germans," or to meet Red Cross or Y. M. C. A. workers, or young officers attached to our base.

Various celebrations were organized by the Belgians at Le Havre in honor of the United States and in salute of our flag, and Whitlock was always there to receive the salute.

One of the things they all like to recall is the banquet they gave him at the *Hôtellerie* where the Ministers lived. Whitlock not only replied to the tributes in faultless French, but toward the end he dropped into the Belgian vernacular and even used a little Brussels slang which brought thunderous applause.

When the great day of liberation came, the first thing the Brussels authorities did was to send Mr. Whitlock a telegram at Le Havre signed by Burgomaster Max. With incredible difficulty he got to Brussels for the entry of the King and Queen, bringing the British Minister through the old No-Man's Land, where his car had failed him. Within the next few months, Mr. Whitlock was made a burgher of the cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Liège and Ghent, with imposing ceremonies; a Doctor of Laws of the University of Brussels; a member of the Royal Acad-

emy, and was received in solemn session by the two houses of Parliament, to receive the thanks of the Belgian Government. A medallion was struck in his honor, and his bust by Rombeaux, greatest of Belgian sculptors, was placed in the halls of Parliament.

All that a grateful people could do they did to show undying gratitude.

The reception by the joint session of Parliament was a brilliant scene. Said a Belgium writer, "In the body of the chamber were gathered the Ministers of State, the Senators and Deputies, and on the platform were the President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber, and the Minister, with the other protecting Ministers. The tribunes were filled with a distinguished gathering, including the members of the diplomatic corps and their wives, the members of the *Comité National*, the directors of the *Société Générale* and the *Banque Nationale*, officers of the Allied Armies, and many well known representatives from public and private life. The President of the Senate made the opening address and he was followed by the Prime Minister, who was in turn followed by the President of the Chamber. The Minister (Mr. Whitlock) responded in French and his speech was frequently interrupted by the enthusiastic demonstration of the whole assembly."

He spoke of Hoover, of Solvay and Francqui, who had worked with Hoover, of President Wilson, of the indomitable spirit of the population led by the burgomasters and fired by the flame of patriotism, held aloft in the pious hands of the Great Cardinal, and of the King who had established his kingdom in the heart of every man who knows the word honor. He called up the figures of the young men who had died for their country, who had tried to cross the electric barricade of the frontier, who had fallen on the Yser and all the victims of war shot in the prisons by the Germans, and then set up the ideal of making the world worthy of them.

What had been a tribute to himself, he turned into a solemn and impressive tribute to others.

It was characteristic of Brand Whitlock to make that kind of a speech and through his command of French, his gift of real eloquence and the circumstances of his service, he could do it as could few other men.

When, after the armistice, the Commissioner to Belgium was asked by Washington to make at once his recommendations of names to receive American Red Cross medals, he wrote this of Brand Whitlock:

“Brand Whitlock, American Minister to Belgium, received the Commission to Belgium at Le Havre, then the seat of the Belgian Government. He presented us to the President of the Council (Prime Minister), other officials and people important for us to know. He placed himself, his office and all his influence at our disposal. Refusing to let his name be printed officially as a member of the Commission, he became such in fact. Both at Le Havre and upon our return to Brussels, he put all he knew about men and events freely at our service. By his unchanging confidence he strengthened our morale. By his clear vision he helped us to find the path of real service. The Commission to Belgium recommends to the War Council that he be granted the American Red Cross Silver Medal for distinguished service in the war.”

This award was promptly made and Mr. Whitlock was notified. When, however, a committee on awards at Washington took up the whole subject, they decided promptly to award no medals to Americans because of the fact that in Europe thousands, and in the United States millions had rendered consecrated service. Learning of this wise decision, Mr. Whitlock wrote at once asking that the award to him be withdrawn and that he stand with his countrymen undistinguished in this way.

Said a prominent member of the Belgian Government on a visit to Washington in 1921, “Why should the United States ever withdraw Brand Whitlock as Ambassador to

Belgium as long as he is willing to stay? He can have anything we can give him. He can say practically anything he chooses. His influence in Belgium is enormous. He stayed with us under the Germans and was our rock of defense. The people never will forget him."

## CHAPTER XXXII

### The Americans Come to Flanders

FOR a year after we went over, there were no American combat troops in Flanders. At Le Havre we began to see them come in, first slowly and then with a great rush. The Paris office had charge of welfare work for American soldiers undertaken by the American Red Cross and all that we of the Belgian Commission could do was to cooperate and supplement. Up at the Flanders front, there were a few doctors and nurses coming and going at La Panne, serving and studying at the great Ocean Hospital. There was the American Military Mission to the Belgian Army, with Captain Wm. Penn Cresson in charge and finally young Lieutenant Pendleton as assistant. Pendleton went out one night with a raiding party of Belgians, fought like a young demon, and got scratched by a piece of shell on the cheek. The next morning the tall figure of the King came down the ward of the hospital at Vinckem with the Belgian *Croix de Guerre* in his hand which he pinned on Pendleton's breast himself as a tribute to his courage and to the fact that he was the first American to be wounded on the Belgian front. Later that day the Queen also called to see him, bringing him some of her roses and showing the deepest interest in his exploit. Meanwhile the Red Cross was getting off cables to his people that he was all right.

An American seaplane base was established at Dunkirk and a second one a little later on the Calais road a little further back. We began to see our flyers doing their best with clumsy, old, outgrown French machines, but suffering many accidents. A boy burned up in Dunkirk streets

as we came driving in one day. The engine failed, and he crashed first on a roof and then into the street. Another boy, Lasher, a Union College student, fell out at sea, broke his leg, lost his front observer, and nearly drowned, being held up by his rear observer until another seaplane could take him in. A second plane lay out in the channel some 20 miles from Dunkirk until a pigeon released with a message, brought help.

We began to hear other thrilling tales born of sea and flight and war. A plane was down and needed help. A launch with a crew of seven men went out from the base at Dunkirk. By wireless it learned that some one else had the plane and started back. It was a perfect Sunday afternoon, sun shining, sea blue, little white caps dancing on the water as the launch came in. At last the officer in command said, "There is Bourbourg," but it wasn't. It was Nieuport. And they said, "There is Dunkirk and the base," but it was Ostend and the Germans. And they steered straight toward the German guns until they were trapped. They were directly off Nieuport-Bains where the trenches reached the North Sea. Shells fell all around and they jumped. It was just in time for there was a direct hit on the launch. A French plane came down and got one of the seven. Two were drowned. Two, one of them the big powerful doctor in command, got to the German lines safely. Two others swam toward the Belgian-British lines and made it, one being brought in safely by an English doctor who swam out to get him.

We gave some 2,000 or 3,000 francs for the recreation fund at this base. They had no need of more. We took a sick man out for them by motor to Paris. A finer body of officers and men it would be hard to find anywhere.

Then up came the Lafayette Escadrille, just back of Dunkirk, and we began to see their planes. We saw something of Major Charles J. Biddle of Philadelphia when he fell near Ypres, and lay for weeks in the Ocean Hospital.

General Harts came up from his post as head of the

American Military Mission to the British Army, and said, "I have studied Nieuport and the water defenses of the Yser. I think the Belgians show technical and engineering skill of the highest kind in their water defenses. And they are much better soldiers than we have realized."

All these were forerunners. In 1918, the whole appearance of the country between Le Havre or Paris and La Panne changed. Where there had been Belgian or British camps, we found Americans. Where there had been French sentries or smart Tommies, we found a new lot of American military police just starting in. And then all at once, without warning, the Americans reached the British sector of Flanders. The 27th Division of New York troops came under Major General John F. O'Ryan and we began to run into them at little villages like Oudezele and at the hotel in Cassel. The 30th Division of North Carolina troops came up under Brigadier General Samson L. Faison, who soon gave over command to Major General Edward M. Lewis; we found some of them at Watou and other villages nearby. Both divisions were brigaded with troops of the second British Army "in the Dickebusch Lake and Sherpenberg and canal sectors, southwest of Ypres, July 9 to August 23, 1918." These were horrible sectors as the Germans on Kemmel were shooting down into them constantly. On August 18, one division and on August 23, the other division went into the line. From August 31, to September 2, 1918, both were in the fight with the British which resulted in retaking Mount Kemmel. To all Americans in Flanders it was a proud day when the American troops fighting with dash and steady strength helped retake the high point which for so many weeks had menaced Belgium in the rear. Both the 27th and 30th won their great distinction the last of September and the first of October, 1918, in what was called breaking the Hindenburg line north of St. Quentin. The desperate work which these boys of New York and North Carolina

did may be read in the figures of casualties. The 27th lost 8,986 men. The 30th lost 8,954 men.

The Commission to Belgium had nothing to do officially with these troops. Men like Captain Bobo of the American Red Cross in Paris were on the job and doing it well. But all our work depended on the issue of the battles these soldiers fought. Wainwright, now Assistant Secretary of War, and Kincaid, now Adjutant General of New York, got their baptism of fire in front of Kemmel.

Just before the end, two other American divisions came up with a rush. One was the 37th, made up largely of Ohio National Guard troops, and the other the 91st, made up of drafted men from California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Alaska. They were attached to French Armies, a part of the group of armies operating under the King of the Belgians. Major General Charles S. Farnsworth commanded the 37th and Major General William H. Johnston the 91st. The Germans were moving eastward, making a stand first on the river Lys and then on the river Scheldt. Both divisions were in action repeatedly, the 37th among other things, effecting a crossing of the Scheldt under heavy fire and the 91st capturing Audenarde. Those were the days things changed so rapidly that no one knew just where the lines ran. We tried to go into Audenarde one night, but found the Germans still there. Coming back in the dark, the road for miles was filled with American boys of the 91st moving up to go into action. The 37th had 5,243 casualties and the 91st 5,778 casualties, but part of these were incurred in important operations in France as well as in the service in Flanders.

The armistice found both divisions on the Scheldt ready to go on. A detachment of the 37th participated in the entry of King Albert into Brussels.

American Ambulance Units served the French troops in King Albert's group of armies, and first our Bruges and later our Brussels office furnished these units with

food and other supplies. And as Americans came straggling through Brussels later, on leave or on missions, there were many happy meetings and many chances to serve the boys from home. They were chances which every American relief worker, whatever his specific task, regarded as his first responsibility, and his most precious privilege.

Toward the end of the war the King sent for us and said that he had under his control at St. Germain-en-laye near Paris the old chateau of Henry IV, furnished completely, some eighty tons of coal, food supplies and personnel, all of which he would like to turn over to the American Red Cross as a rest home for officers of the American Army, and the Red Cross. He said that he could not express in any adequate way the gratitude of his country for the work of the American Red Cross and for the divisions of the American Army which had been fighting on Belgian soil, but that he would like to do a little to show what he and all Belgians felt. We accepted the offer and turned the property over to the Commission to France which made use of it for some months.

Situated on the heights west of the city, commanding a far view over the river valley and the great gray metropolis, with memories of Louis XIV, who was born there and of other notable events in French history, it now for the American Red Cross will be associated always with memories of King Albert and of the brave American soldiers who won his undying gratitude.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### Closing Up

**M**R. HENRY P. DAVISON, Chairman of the War Council of the American Red Cross, and Colonel H. D. Gibson, Commissioner for Europe, when they visited Belgium just before the armistice, made clear to us the policy to be followed. It was to finish up the work we were in and to close up just as quickly after the war as possible. They did not attempt to fix arbitrarily a date for closing up the work in Belgium but said that they would be happy if it could be done without hardship well within six months after an armistice.

When we met the representatives of Mr. Hoover in Brussels in November, 1918, Poland, Brown, Kittredge, Robinson-Smith and the other able men Hoover had about him, they said that they were withdrawing from Belgium just as quickly as the government could take charge of the food problem.

At Le Havre we had talked frankly upon this subject with the different Belgian Ministers long before the end came and had reached a clear understanding. Summarized, their convictions were these: "For the sake of our own people and for our good name outside the country, we must make ourselves independent of foreign help just as quickly as possible. We are grateful for the American aid given. We could not have lived without it. It is our duty to show our gratitude by giving up further help."

The Commissioner to Belgium on April 9, 1919, made a report to Colonel Robert E. Olds, Commissioner to Europe at that time in which he stated the situation as follows:

“We have so done our work that we can get out now. Having left responsibility to the Belgians, having worked always through their committees, their shoulders are squared to their jobs. There is no period of confusion to follow by our suddenly throwing a new load upon them.

“Belgium needs the things which we cannot give: indemnity from Germany, loans from the Allies, priority in raw materials, machinery and ships.

“For reclaiming the destroyed areas, the government has its own machinery. That machinery is moving slowly and with some difficulty, but it is moving. The first of the refugees, reentering the destroyed areas, are meeting with great hardships. The evils of congestion are very grave in the cities and villages of Flanders nearest the old fighting lines. But we have provided warehouses filled with food and clothing for use in these regions and these will be put under the Paris Bureau of the Red Cross in charge of this work for the devastated regions of France.

“The Belgians are a competent people with men used to taking responsibility in every little town.

“They have a King and Queen with enormous moral power and they use it steadily for right things.

“Belgium can get along without us and it is our duty to leave.”

The closing weeks were marked by manifestations of gratitude on the part of Belgians of all classes from the King and Queen down to people in humble walks.

On March 8, 1919, in closing the Ocean Hospital at La Panne as a war hospital, Dr. Depage called together his staff and stated to them the facts about the help given by the American Red Cross to the Belgian Red Cross during the war, closing with the words: “The American Red Cross deserves in the highest degree the gratitude of all Belgians.”

The Ministers associated with our work wrote a letter, summarizing what had been done and expressing gratitude,

and these letters are a part of the permanent records of the American Red Cross.

Helleputte said, "As head of the official Belgian committee for refugees in France, I was in a position to know and appreciate your effective work. Belgian refugees in France learned to bless the name of the American Red Cross."

Berryer said, "What your work meant, I, as Minister of the Interior, was in a position to clearly understand, and with full heart I express the gratitude of my countrymen."

General De Ceuninck, Minister of War, M. Emile Brunet, Minister of State, M. Paul Heger of the University of Brussels, and the heads of a large number of charitable organizations wrote with equal frankness and appreciation.

In the letter of Emile Vandervelde there were two or three sentences of especial significance: "I am not able to put into words what I feel about the vastness of the work done by the American Red Cross for Belgium. The untiring activity of the organization in very dark hours strengthened the morale of the army and of our people in exile, permitted us to sustain the struggle with more vigor, and to bring back to the country on our return a greater faith in the destiny of the Belgian people.

"Your organization has revealed every day, even to the most humble of our people, the nobility of heart, the righteousness of thought, the versatility and frankness of the spirit of the Americans. We have found in the American Red Cross an image of the American people."

Letters of appreciation still follow us across the ocean. Now, two years later, there comes a letter from a private soldier of the Belgian Army, asking nothing, wanting nothing, but simply saying, "I would not be alive today if it had not been for the American Red Cross, and once in a while I cannot help writing to tell you so."

The Commission closed its office on April 19, 1919, and the Commissioner and staff left the country at once.

APPENDIX I  
AMERICAN RED CROSS  
COMMISSION TO BELGIUM.

Commissioner:

Ernest P. Bicknell,  
September 1917 to October 1918.

Acting Commissioner:

John van Schaick, Jr.,  
November 15, 1917—February 1, 1918,  
September 1, 1918—October 15, 1918.

Commissioner:

John van Schaick, Jr.,  
October 1918,  
April 1919.

Deputy Commissioner:

John van Schaick, Jr.,  
September 1, 1917—October 1918.  
J. W. Lee, Jr.,  
October 1, 1919.

Departments:

Public Information:

J. W. Lee, Jr.

Medical Service:

Dr. Edwards A. Park

Refugee Service:

Ernest W. Corn

Work for Children:

John W. Gummere

Aide to Commissioner:

Leonard Chester Jones

Paris Bureau:

William C. Titcomb  
Albert H. Garrigues

Auditor:

William MacDonald

Accountant:

Francis de Sales Mulvey

Secretary to Commissioner:

Grace V. Bicknell

Translators:

Mrs. Julia R. van Schaick and Mrs. Leonard Chester Jones

## Personnel:

Mme. Cecille Amchin	Mr. James Wideman Lee
Mlle. Marguerite d'Arbour	Dr. Lienart
Miss Elizabeth Ashe	Miss Grace Lucas
Mlle. Melanie Avery	Mr. W. A. MacDonald
C. C. Balderston	Mlle. Edith Le Manchec
Miss Alberte Bicknell	Mme. Melanie Le Manchec
Mrs. Ernest P. Bicknell	Mlle. Marie Melis
Miss Helen Binsted	Mlle. Suzanne Menu
Mlle. Germaine Blais	Mlle. Frieda Mortelmans
Mr. Paul Briche	Mr. F. D. Mulvey
Mme. Nora Brule	Mlle. Lucie Nique
Mr. August Bruneel	Mrs. Francis J. O'Reilly
Miss Lucy Le Carou	Dr. Edwards A. Park
Dr. Dorothy Child	Mr. Ernest B. Parsons
Dr. Florence Child	Mr. Jacques Pierloot
Mlle. Laura de Coninck	Dr. L. Pilleboue
Mr. Remy Cordier	Miss Laura Praet
Mr. Ernest W. Corn	Miss Helen de Puydt
Miss Katherine Cox	Dr. Walter R. Ramsey
Miss Charlotte Crawford	Mlle. Germaine Randexhe
Dr. Rena Crawford	Mr. J. Forrest Reilly
Miss Ethel M. Damon	S. E. Richardson
Miss Jeanne Dardenne	Mme. Alix Rollin
Miss Frances Goldie Dees	Dr. Alma Rotholz
Mlle. Rosa Delforge	Miss Helen Sheridan
Leon Deneubourg	Miss Bertha Smith
Mlle. Julia Deprez	Mr. A. L. Stafford
Mlle. Despert	Miss Helen C. Sutherland
M. Antoine Dognes	Mr. Wm. Caldwell Titcomb
Miss Elizabeth Durand	Miss S. G. Turner
Mlle. Anne Duron	Mr. A. C. Vail
Miss Florence Fisher	Katherine A. Vallse
Mlle. Simonne Fisq	Mr. Joseph van den Broeck
Mlle. Clemence Fontaine	M. Van den Kerkhoven
Mme. Langeais Fontenelle	Miss Philo Vandervelde
Dr. Rose Friedman	Mr. Henri Joseph van Nevel
M. Albert G. Garrigues	Mrs. John van Schaick, Jr.
Mr. John W. Gummere	Mrs. Constance B. Vaughan
Dr. Ruth Aline Guy	Miss Mariette Vermeersch
Dr. Royal Storre Haynes	Mr. Camille Victoor
Miss Maud Heath	M. Remy Vincent
Dr. Leonard Chester Jones	Miss Christoval S. Waldron
Miss Henriette Kaczka	Miss Ruth W. Washburn
Mlle. Cecile L. Kievits	Miss Mabel Wilcox
Dr. J. H. Mason Knox	Jonathan A. Williams
Mrs. Marcel Landrieu	

## APPENDIX II

## EXPENDITURES FOR RELIEF WORK IN BELGIUM

June 12, 1917—June 30, 1919.

The Belgian relief of the American Red Cross was first conducted by the Department for Belgium of the American Red Cross Commission for France, and since January 1, 1918, by the American Red Cross Commission for Belgium. This work was not confined to the soil of Belgium, but extended to France and other places where there were Belgian soldiers or refugees. Most of the work of the Belgian Commission was accomplished through well-established Belgian relief organizations.

The following expenditures cover the Belgian Relief of the American Red Cross from July 1, 1917 to June 30, 1919:

<i>MILITARY RELIEF ACTIVITIES</i> .....	\$1,189,679.48
Establishment, equipment and maintenance of hospitals, canteens, and centers of recreation; provision of rest areas for Belgian nurses; supplies for hospitals and canteens; gifts and extra comforts for soldiers; and cash donations to hospital, canteen and recreational organizations.	
<i>CIVIL HOSPITALS</i> .....	\$ 364,626.68
Establishment and maintenance of Belgian typhoid and other civil hospitals, including supplies and equipment; provision for removal of hospital patients; and cash donations to other organizations, including the Belgian Red Cross.	
<i>RELIEF OF CHILDREN</i> .....	\$1,159,553.54
Removal of Belgian children from dangerous or congested areas; establishment and equipment of schools, colonies, pavilions and hospitals for children, and of maternity hospitals; care of children, including provision of food, supplies and medical service; return to Belgium of children's colonies; and cash donations to children's relief organizations.	
<i>RELIEF OF REFUGEES</i> .....	\$1,520,194.50
Removal of refugees from dangerous or congested areas; provision of housing, relief supplies and medical service; improvement of living conditions; clothing for discharged Belgian soldiers; assistance to returning refugees; and contributions to other organizations and to the Belgian Government for relief activities.	

GENERAL SUPERVISION.....	\$ 93,035.54
Operation of headquarters relief, supply and management bureaus, including storage, transportation and distribution of supplies.	
Total for relief work in Belgium.....	\$4,327,089.74

## APPENDIX III

VITAL STATISTICS FOR BELGIUM FURNISHED  
 BY DR. RÉNÉ SAND OF THE  
 BELGIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY  
 AND OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF BRUSSELS

October 1920.

*For all of Belgium.*

	Births (per 1,000 inhabitants)	Deaths
1913 .....	21.6	13.8
1914 .....	20.2	14.1
1915 .....	16.0	12.9
1916 .....	12.8	13.2
1917 .....	11.3	16.4
1918 .....	11.4	21.0
1919 .....	16.9	15.0
1920		

*For Brussels.*

	Birth rate (on 1,000 inhabitants)	Death rate (on 1,000 inhabitants)	Tuberculosis mortality (on 1,000 inhabitants)	Infant mortality (on 1,000 living births)
1914 .....	16.4	14.9	1.7	151.2
1915 .....	15.8	13.3	1.7	121.4
1916 .....	10.7	14.7	2.2	119.9
1917 .....	9.2	18.3	3.5	124.8
1918 .....	7.5	21.0	3.5	124.2
1919 .....	11.9	13.1	1.9	82.7
1920				

## APPENDIX IV

CITATIONS FOR MEDALS AWARDED BY THE  
AMERICAN RED CROSS UPON  
RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSION TO BELGIUM.  
SILVER MEDALS.

HER MAJESTY, ELIZABETH, Queen of the Belgians—

As Honorary President of the Croix Rouge de Belgique, her Majesty labored constantly to promote close cooperation with the American Red Cross. She directed the organization of the Children's Colony at Le Glandier, Correze, France, maintained by the Red Cross. She visited canteens and hospitals at the front, in which American Red Cross work was carried on, inspiring and assisting by her coolness, her skill, her sympathy and courage. She assisted our work throughout the entire period of the existence of the Commission from September 1917 to April 1919.

MONSIEUR PAUL BERRYER, throughout the war and until the armistice, Minister of the Interior in the Belgian Government at Le Havre; from November 11, 1918, High Commissioner of Belgium for the return of Belgian Refugees from France—

To his constant friendship and assistance the American Red Cross owes its opportunity for service to Belgian civilians—children, refugees, and civilian sick. He placed himself and his motors at the service of the Commission, made long journeys with the American Red Cross officers and rendered distinguished service to the organization, throughout the entire period of the operations of the Commission for Belgium, from September 1917 to April 1919.

DOCTOR ANTOINE DEPAGE, Colonel in the Medical Service of the Belgian Army, Field Director of the Croix Rouge de Belgique and founder of the Ocean Hospital at La Panne—

Doctor Depage cooperated constantly with the officers of the American Red Cross stationed on this front. He furnished lodgings for workers, German prisoners for labor, and gave wise advice to the members of the Commission. He accepted surgeons and nurses of the American Red Cross, both for the help they could give and to enable them to get the experience they desired. He gave to the American Red Cross its largest opportunity to serve the hospitals and surgical posts at the Belgian front, his services extending throughout the entire period of our operations from September 1917, to April 1919.

MADAME THÉRÈSE HYMANS, wife of Monsieur Paul Hymans, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Belgian Government at Le Havre—

By virtue of her official position, and conspicuous ability, Madame Hymans rendered distinguished service to the American Red Cross during the entire period of its work in Belgium from

September 1917 to April 1919. As President of the Society of "Centers of Recreation at the Belgian Front" she opened the way for important work by the American Red Cross for a great section of the Belgian Army at the front. Upon the entry of the Belgian Army into Germany she placed her trained workers at the service of the American Red Cross and made possible the establishment of canteens and rest huts for the men holding the Rhine.

GENERAL L. MELIS, Inspector General of the Service de Santé, of the Belgian Army—

By virtue of his position at the head of the medical and surgical work of the Belgian Army, and as active President of the Croix Rouge de Belgique, he promoted close cooperation with the American Red Cross, during all of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919.

Upon liberation of occupied Belgium, he rendered distinguished service to the officers of the American Red Cross, guiding them personally into the unknown regions, and enabling them to get the information on which to base prompt and intelligent service to both wounded soldiers and civilians.

CARDINAL MERCIER, Archhishop of Malines, Soldier of the Cross, brave leader of the Belgian people in their refusal to accept German rule—

He became the friend and adviser of the officers of the American Red Cross upon the reentry of the Belgian Army in November 1918, and rendered distinguished service personally and through his priests and people in directing help of the American Red Cross for the liberated areas, until the close of the activities of the American Red Cross Commission for Belgium in April 1919.

MONSIEUR EMILE VANDERVELDE, Minister of Intendance of the Belgian Government at Le Havre, until November 11, 1918, and since that date Minister of Justice—

To this intrepid minister, the American Red Cross owes many opportunities for service to the fighting men of the Belgian Army, both in the trenches and in work centers at the rear. Through his personal guidance, the officers of the American Red Cross were enabled to see the most dangerous and difficult situations confronting the soldiers, and relieve their sufferings. President of the Society of "Gifts for Belgian Soldiers," he placed all the resources of his society at the service of the American Red Cross, and made a working agreement with the American Red Cross which enormously extended the usefulness of our organization, during the whole period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919.

MADAME JULIETTE CARTON DE WIART, wife of Henry Carton de Wiart, Belgian Minister of Justice until November 11, 1919—

Resident of Brussels under the Germans, and for many months after the occupation, a prisoner in Germany, Madame de Wiart

reached Le Havre just before the arrival of the American Red Cross in September 1917.

Master of the English language, deeply sympathetic with the United States and a student of our institutions, she placed herself and her wide experience unreservedly at the service of the American Red Cross, to the close of our activities in April 1919. In work for refugees and children, in distribution of clothing, in organization of children's colonies, she rendered distinguished service.

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### BRONZE MEDALS.

**CORPORAL ALBERT**, Soldier of the Belgian Army—

Canteen worker of the "Society of Gifts for Belgian Soldiers," this man rendered valuable service in the canteens established by the American Red Cross at La Panne, at Vincken and after the armistice in the occupied part of Germany. At all times during the period of our operations in Belgium from September 1917 to April 1919 he showed courage and devotion to the work.

**MADAME FERNAND BAETENS**, of Brussels, representative of the American Red Cross for the occupied territory—

By virtue of her position as the wife of one of the officers of the Commission for Relief in Belgium and because of her rare judgment in questions of civilian relief, her courage and cooperative spirit, Madame Baetens rendered conspicuous service to the American Red Cross, to the close of our activities in April 1919, disbursing special funds very effectively and keeping records of permanent value. She was chairman of a committee for special cases under the Committee for Relief in Belgium throughout the period of the German occupation and thereafter, and through her the American Red Cross was enabled to reach hundreds of cases of civilian distress in the occupied territories. She showed rare judgment and genuine heroism in this work.

**MONSIEUR J. BRAEKERS**, of Belgium—

A brave artilleryman in the ranks of the Belgium Army the first half of the war, a faithful and efficient private secretary of the Minister of the Interior of the Belgian Government the last two years of the war, he was the best informed man in the Belgian Government upon both governmental and private agencies at work in the field of relief. Charged by the Minister especially with the duty of aiding the American Red Cross, he rendered very valuable and meritorious service during all of our work in Belgium from September 1917 to April 1919 in giving information, establishing relationships and securing permits through which much of the best work of the American Red Cross for Belgium was done.

MR. L. J. CADBURY, British Red Cross Society and head of the Transportation Department of the Friends' Ambulance Unit—

An unusually gallant and forceful man, he rendered especially meritorious service in directing the lorries of the American Red Cross and the Friends' Ambulance Unit in their work of evacuating civilians from points of danger and saving valuable stores from the Germans. Cited twice by the French military authorities for gallantry under fire, given the Croix de Guerre, a man of wide experience at the front, he cooperated loyally and efficiently with the American Red Cross during all of its operations, often visiting our headquarters at La Panne and furnishing intelligence of great value.

MONSIEUR ERNEST CLAES, of Belgium—

Veteran of the Battle of the Yser, four times wounded, prisoner of war, reformé, this man found his way at last to Le Havre where he was made a secretary of the Official Belgium Committee in charge of refugees in France. He rendered very meritorious service to the Bureau of Refugee Service of the American Red Cross from September 1917 to April 1919, traveling constantly with agents of the American Red Cross showing sound judgment and conspicuous devotion in American Red Cross work for his countrymen—especially in the early part of the work, saving us both time and money.

MADAME GABRIELLE D'ETEREN, Director of the Society of Gifts for Belgian Soldiers, Agent of the American Red Cross in work for the fighting men—

Madame D'eteren showed organizing ability of a high order throughout the first part of the war. She traveled between Brussels and the Belgian Army on the Yser carrying thousands of letters, assisting the secret service, exposing herself to constant danger in the long journey across the barred frontier to Holland, and then to England, France and Free Belgium. This intimate knowledge of conditions on both sides of the lines gave her great prestige and influence with the soldiers. All this she used to make the American Red Cross known and effective during the entire period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919, in distributing gifts, establishing canteens and increasing the courage of the fighting men.

LIEUTENANT DUCLOT, (Belgian), an engineer officer of the Belgian Army, assigned to the Society of "Centers of Recreation at the Belgian Front."

He cooperated in a most intelligent and loyal way with the American Red Cross, erecting tents and barracks for recreation, superintending the installation of cinemas and the organization of this work. His services were extremely valuable to the Commission for Belgium and extended over the entire period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919.

**CAPTAIN CHARLES GRAUX**, of the Belgian Army—

As successively business manager of the Ocean Hospital at La Panne; director of the Colony of the Queen at Le Glandier and Private Secretary to Her Majesty, Captain Graux was in close touch with the work of the American Red Cross for Belgium from the beginning in September 1917 to the end in April 1919. Conspicuous for his intelligence, his patience, his sympathy, his courage and his gifts of organization he placed them all at the service of the American Red Cross. He overcame the international difficulties in the way of bringing over six hundred anæmic children from Occupied Belgium and the other difficulties incident to the organization and maintenance of a school for them in France entirely directed and supported by the American Red Cross.

**MONSIEUR GEORGES HELLEPUTTE**, until September 11, Minister of Public Works in the Belgian Government at Le Havre and Member of the Chamber of Deputies—

As President of the Official Belgian Committee for Refugees in France, M. Helleputte cooperated fully with the American Red Cross from the opening of our operations in September 1917 to their close in April 1919, lending his trained inspectors to go with American Red Cross workers to different refugee centers and placing himself personally at the service of the Bureau of Refugee Service. He furnished without charge attractive offices for the Commission for Belgium in the Ministry of Public Works at Le Havre at a time when Le Havre was so congested that our work was seriously handicapped by lack of space. He personally conducted American Red Cross workers to Ostend, Bruges and other places in Flanders, immediately upon the liberation rendering valuable service by his intimate knowledge of the Flemish language and people.

**MADAME ROLIN HYMANS** (Belgian) Wife of Captain Rolin Hymans of the Belgian Army, sister of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Belgian Government—

Both by position and ability, Madame Hymans was enabled to render valuable service to the American Red Cross during the entire period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919. Her devotion, great courage and common sense were conspicuous throughout the war. As head of the American Red Cross Crèche at La Panne, as Director of the American Red Cross Nurses Home at Etretat, as constant friend and advisor of the Commission for Belgium, her work was meritorious to a high degree.

**DOCTOR JONLET**, Director of the Belgian Civil and Military Hospital at La Chartreuse and of the American Red Cross Children's Colony at Recq—

Through Doctor Jonlet, the American Red Cross had many opportunities during the whole period of its operations from Sep-

tember 1917 to April 1919, to serve both soldiers and civilians. La Chartreuse, fifty miles from the fighting lines, was so situated that it could be quickly reached from the front and yet was itself comparatively safe. It contained 1100 beds, was used as a children's colony, a hospital for the aged, a hospital for sick civilians and a convalescent home for wounded soldiers. All its resources were placed at the service of the American Red Cross for shelter of personnel, storage of supplies and repair of trucks. By the intelligent cooperation of Doctor Jonlet, the American Red Cross was able to help both Belgian and French civilians in the zone of the British Army. By his help, the American Red Cross purchased barracks for 500 children in a time of great emergency, leased the Château of Recq and established a children's colony under his supervision, the entire support and direction of which was taken by the American Red Cross. He showed sound judgment and great resourcefulness and rendered service to the American Red Cross of great merit.

MR. W. MORDEY (British) Adjutant of the Friends' Ambulance Unit until February 1919 and Major of the American Red Cross in charge of work in the destroyed villages of Belgium—

He was a business man of ability who had been in Northern France and Belgium from the fall of 1914, and as a result of his familiarity with conditions in Belgium Major Mordey was of great value to the American Red Cross from the beginning to the end of our work. He was distinguished for calm, cool judgment under the most difficult and dangerous conditions. His friendship for the United States and his loyalty to the American Red Cross, joined to his great ability, made his service one of conspicuous merit and worth.

COLONEL PIERRE NOLF, Head of the Medical Service of the Belgian Army, Director of the Belgian Military Hospital at Cabour, physician to the Royal Family and confidential advisor to Her Majesty, the Queen—

Doctor Nolf rendered meritorious service to the American Red Cross in facilitating the organization of work in cooperation with their Majesties and in giving constant and intelligent advice upon all hospital work undertaken. His services were a distinct contribution to the success of our efforts from September 1917 when we entered Belgium to April 1919 when our activities ceased.

PRIVATE POUPAERT (Belgian) Soldier of the Belgian Army and Director of the office force of the Society of Gifts for Belgian Soldiers—

This society became an effective agency of the American Red Cross in canteen and recreation work at the Belgian front. Private Poupaert showed resourcefulness and force in times of emergency and real ability at all times. He cooperated loyally and effectively with the American Red Cross during our entire operations from September 1917 to April 1919.

DOCTOR JACQUES ROSKAM, Director of the Belgian Civil Hospital at St. Idesbalde, Leysele and the Dorntje—

Detailed by the army for civilian work, living at the Belgian front and often in danger, Doctor Roskam dealt with the problems of contagious disease and other civilian sickness in Free Belgium. He placed his experience at the service of the doctors and nurses of the American Red Cross during the entire period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919 and cooperated with them closely and faithfully in improving health conditions in Flanders. He assisted workers of the American Red Cross in evacuating civilian sick from points of danger, rendering service of great merit.

MONSIEUR JEAN STEYAERT, Commissaire d'Arrondissement de Furnes,—Dixmude; Representative of the Civil Government of Belgium in the forward areas of the army—

It was his duty to superintend the evacuation of civilians and relieve special cases of distress. He took charge of the reception of the stores and erection of barracks for the American Red Cross. In time of bombardment, he assisted in the removal of valuable property of the American Red Cross from Furnes. He placed himself and all the resources of his office at the disposal of the officers of the American Red Cross during the entire period of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919, rendering highly meritorious service. He was regarded by all in Belgium as one of the bravest and most intelligent civil officials, and by the American Red Cross authorities as among the bravest of our agents.

CORPORAL ANTOINE STOEFS, (Belgian Soldier of the Belgian Army)—

Professor of the Normal School of Brussels, a man of organizing ability, he rendered meritorious service to the American Red Cross through the Society of Gifts for Belgian Soldiers during all of our operations from September 1917 to April 1919. He was directly in charge of the "Cercles Militaires" or Clubs for Soldiers at the front. Especially at the time of the advance of the Belgian Army in October 1918, he showed great ability and fine courage in getting supplies over the destroyed areas to the new fighting front. His supplies reached the vanguard of the army before any other except small stores dropped from aeroplanes. He did as much as anyone to make the name of the American Red Cross known and loved by the private soldiers.

CAPTAIN MEABURN TATHAM, of the British Army and British Red Cross Society, and Commander of the English Friends' Ambulance Unit at Dunkirk—

The Friends' Ambulance Unit was the transportation agency of the Commission and the relationship of the two organizations became a close partnership. Captain Tatham rendered the American Red Cross service conspicuous for courage, intelligence and un-

selfishness during the entire period of our operations in Belgium from September 1917 to April 1919, took our officers frequently to British General Headquarters, and different army headquarters to make us acquainted. At the time of the great German advance of 1918, the Commission for Belgium was put in charge of all American Red Cross agencies in the British zone. Our success in dealing with the refugee situation was due in large measure to this devoted officer.

REMY VINCENT (Belgian) Private Soldier of the Belgian Army, chauffeur for the American Red Cross from the fall of 1917—

He was known as the most skilful and daring chauffeur of the Minister of War—a great driver, a skilful mechanic and a loyal, honest man. By his knowledge of roads and conditions at the front, and his unerring judgment and great skill under shell fire, he unquestionably saved the lives of many of our personnel. By his keen intelligence and quick decision, he rendered service of great value in problems of relief both civil and military. By his ability to work long periods without rest, he saved valuable time for his superior officers.

#### APPENDIX V

##### LIST OF PLACES WHICH RECEIVED AID FROM THE BELGIAN COMMISSION OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS.

A total of 274 activities in 169 places.

##### *BELGIUM.*

In Belgium 72 activities in 35 places.

Adinkerke:	<i>Nine warehouses</i> Food and supplies distributed.
Antwerp:	<i>Civil Hospital</i> Two carloads of supplies given.
Alveringhem:	<i>Cinema</i> For Belgian soldiers.
Audenarde:	<i>Supplies for civilians</i> After German retreat.
Belgian Front:	<i>Cinema (Abbé Raepsaet)</i> <i>L'Enseignement des Soldats</i> (Minister Poulet) 15,000 francs. <i>Lighting of Cantonments</i> 50,000 francs. <i>Mobile Surgical and Autoradiological Carriage</i> 170,000 francs.
Beveren Hospital:	<i>Medical and Surgical Supplies</i>

- Boitshoucke: *For school children within the lines  
Belgian Army,—One barrack at General  
Rucquoy's request.*
- Bruges: *Advance Surgical Post in Normal School  
Supplies.  
Civil Hospital  
Carload of supplies and 5000 francs.  
Hôpital Saint André  
Refugees Relief Committee  
Food and clothing.  
Warehouse of Red Cross  
Distributing center for supplies.*
- Brussels: *Assistance Discrète  
10,000 francs monthly from  
August 1918 to February 1919.  
Belgian Red Cross  
1,000,000 francs for work for the mutilat-  
ed; 300,000 francs for cows; 1,000,000  
francs for maintenance of hospitals.  
Le Berçail  
5,000 francs.  
Boy Scouts  
100,000 francs.  
Children's work  
To the Queen 1,250,000 francs.  
Commission for Relief in Belgium  
For their Relief Committee at their Brus-  
sels' office—100,000 francs per month from  
September 1918 to April 1919.  
Crèche of Madame Vandervelde, 10,000 francs.  
Enfants Martyrs  
40,000 francs.  
Edith Cavell Nursing Home  
10,000 francs.  
Foyer des Orphelins  
400,000 francs.  
Gifts for Belgian Soldiers  
Formerly at Ste. Adresse.  
About 2,000,000 francs for its various  
activities.  
Hospital Work, Madame John de Mot  
10,000 francs.  
Infirmaries de Sainte Camille  
10,000 francs.  
Journalists, Relief of Belgian  
10,000 francs per month from April 1918  
to February 1919.*

## APPENDIX

- Les Enfants du Peuple*  
5,000 francs.
- Œuvre of Recreation for Soldiers*  
(Madame Hymans)  
245,000 francs.
- Petites Roses de la Reine*  
60,000 francs.
- Poupponnière Baby Work of Countess d'Ursell*  
50,000 francs.
- Prisoners Returned*  
60,000 francs.
- Queen's Purse*  
50,000 francs given to Queen to buy comforts for men in hospitals.
- Relief of Pauvres Honteux*—Baroness de Woot  
2,500 francs per month for four months beginning August 31, 1918.
- Secours Urgent*—Countess de Beughem  
20,000 francs.
- Tuberculosis Work*  
To the Queen, 1,200,000 francs.
- Tuberculosis Hospital*  
1000 beds and furnishings. (Above salvage from evacuated American hospitals.)
- University of Brussels*  
100,000 francs.
- Cabour: *Military Hospital near Adinkerke*  
Serum, food, medical supplies, dressings.
- Conthove: *Hôpital Civilian (Elizabeth)*  
Medical supplies, dressings, two ambulances.
- Courtrai: *Civilian Hospital under Friends' Ambulance Unit*—Red Cross Warehouse Distributing center for supplies. Supplies, transportation and 17,477 francs.
- Coxyde: *Cinema.*
- Ebblinghem: *Children's Colony*, afterward removed to Sablon St. Livrade and Tomebouc.  
Condensed milk, clothing and 14,600 francs for repairs.  
To St. Livrade and Tomebouc, sent food, bedding and 1000 yards of sheeting.  
*Hospital in barracks* left by Colony, also a tent hospital in connection with refugee camp close by.  
Supplies and financial aid.

- Elverdinghe: *To Dr. Louf*, a barrack for small civil hospital, also medical supplies.
- Furnes: *Refugee relief*  
Food and clothing.
- Ghent: *To Mayor*  
200,000 francs for relief of refugees and children.  
*To Inspector Service de Santé*  
3,000 francs.  
*Warehouse*  
Red Cross distributing center for supplies.
- La Panue: *Canteen*  
Barrack given by Red Cross. Aided in furnishings and support.  
*Cinema*  
Through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers.  
*Convalescent Home for Working Girls*  
100,000 francs.  
*Crèche of Mme. Rolin Hymans*—  
Barrack and financial aid.  
*Belgische Standard Educational Work*  
15,000 francs.  
*Library*  
Aided through gifts for Belgian soldiers.  
*Ocean Hospital (Military)*  
Medical supplies, dressings, comforts.  
*Ouvroir*  
Laundry and repair shop in connection with the Bains Militaires.  
9,000 francs given to aid families of killed and wounded when laundry was bombed.  
*Phonograph and Disc Repair Shop*  
Financial Aid.  
*Repos de Sainte Elizabeth*  
Clothing.  
*Vestiaire*  
Supported entirely by American Red Cross.
- Leysele: *Children's Colony*—never occupied as such, but turned into Refugee Clearing House—12 barracks, brick bathhouse and kitchen; American Red Cross supported this entirely.  
*Civilian Hospital*  
Furnishings and part of cost of erection of barracks paid for by American Red Cross.

- Cinema*  
Given by American Red Cross through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers.
- Maternity Hospital*, formerly at Rousbrugge. Layingettes and quarters furnished at Leysele in the barracks at colony.
- Liège: *Children's Work* of Mademoiselle Pontiere  
10,000 francs.  
*Civil Hospital*  
Two carloads of supplies.  
*Playwork of American Friends for Children*  
3,000 francs per month, for three months to get work started.  
*University of Liège*  
40,000 francs.
- Malines: *Cardinal Mercier*  
100,000 francs for civilian relief.
- Mons: *Hospital*  
Medical supplies, financial aid.
- Ostend: *Supplies for civilians* after German retreat.
- Poperinghe: *Hôpital Elizabeth*  
Same as Couthove
- Somergem: *Supplies* after retreat of Germans.
- St. Idesbalde: *Civilian Hospital*  
Same as Civil Hospital at Leysele.  
*Foyer Ecossais*  
See Foyer Ecossais at Neuilley, France.
- Termonde: *Fifty houses* rebuilt.
- Thielt: *Civilian Hospital* reconstructed
- Tournai: 25,000 francs.  
*Friends' Ambulance Hospital*  
Supplies, camions.
- Vinckem: *Cinema*  
Through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers.  
*Emergency canteen*  
Through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers.  
*Military Hospital*  
500,000 francs on expense of building.  
*Queen's School*  
100,000 francs for a building.  
1,000 francs for toys.
- Waereghem: *Supplies for civilians* after German retreat.
- Waeschoote: *Supplies for civilians* after German retreat.
- Wyenburgh: *Emergency canteen*  
Through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers.

## FRANCE.

In France, 181 activities, 125 places.

Albi (Tarn) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> 500 francs.
Ancey :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Games.
Arromanches (Calvados) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Angerville (near Havre) :	<i>Military Hospital</i> Medical supplies, clothing, recreation equipment.
Auberville (near Havre) :	<i>Military Hospital</i> Medical supplies, clothing, recreation equipment.
Auvours :	<i>Training Center</i> Games, comforts, phonographs.
Bacqueville (S. I.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Ballainvilliers (S. & O.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Bayonne (Basses Pyrenees) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Beau-Marais (near Calais) :	Aviation Field Building for canteen Cinema Repairs 27,259.80 francs.
Bonnières sur Seine (S. & O.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Bordeaux :	<i>Committee for Refugees</i> Clothing and financial aid. <i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Bougival (S. & O.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Boulogne :	<i>Fleet Patrol</i> Clothing—2000 francs. <i>Refugees relief</i> through Sous-Préfet.
Bourbourg (Nord) :	<i>Military Hospital</i> X-Ray Machine Piano Canvass, paint, etc.
Caestre (Nord) :	<i>Crèche and Baby Hospital</i> Supplies—2000 francs.

- Calais: *Children's Colony* -  
Clothing.  
*Emergency Hospital* (Mme. De Hemptinne)  
Supplies.  
*Home du Permissionnaire*  
Clothing, crutches, cigarettes.  
*Refugee Relief*  
Through American Consul.  
See *Gravelines* for Hospital Porte of  
Gravelines.
- Campeaux (S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
Clothing.
- Cap Ferrat (Alpes  
Maritimes): *Military Hospital*  
Barrack and dental instruments.  
10,000 francs.
- Caudebec en Caux  
(S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
Clothing.
- Cayeux-sur-mer: *Children's Colony*  
Clothing.
- Chateaugiron  
(near Rennes): *Military Hospital*  
Supplies.
- Chanay: Sanatorium Elizabeth for Tuberculosis.  
X-Ray Machine.  
Clothing amounting to 2,162 francs.
- Cette: *Refugee Relief Committee*  
Clothing.
- Chevilly (Seine): *Children's Colony*  
Convent des Pères  
Couvent des Sœurs
- Clermont-Ferrand: *Refugee Relief*  
Clothing.
- Criquetot-sous-Ouville (S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
Clothing and sewing machine.
- Dunkirk: *Alexandra Hospital*  
Supplies and Ambulances.  
*Barge Annex* to Alexandra Hospital  
10,000 francs.  
*Œuvre des Mariniers et des Orphelins de la  
Guerre*  
10,000 francs.
- Elbeuf (S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
Clothing.  
*Union Belge*  
Refugee relief.

Etretat (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Food supplies and 1,000 francs. <i>Home de Convalescence for Belgian Nurses</i> Supported.
Eu:	<i>Training Center</i> Games, comforts, phonograph.
Fontenay aux Roses (Seine):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Repairs and furnishings, about 20,000 francs.
Frethun (near Calais):	<i>Maternity Hospital</i> 9000 francs for barrack.
Garches (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Gommerville (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Grandes Dalles (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, sewing machine.
Grandes Ventes (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Gravelines (near Calais):	<i>Military Hospital</i> Medical supplies, 2000 blankets.
Graville:	<i>Soldiers' Club</i> Supplies.
Graville Ste. Honorine:	<i>Crèche</i> Supported.
Grignon-Orly (Seine):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Grosfys (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Guemps (Pas de Calais):	<i>Through Gifts for Belgian Soldiers</i> Comforts.
Houffleur:	<i>Training Center</i> Games, comforts, phonograph.
Job (Auvergne):	<i>Villa Job Tuberculosis Sanatorium</i> 150,000 francs.
Jouey-les-Tours:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing and some furnishings. 10,000 francs.
La Celle St. Cloud (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.

- La Chartreuse  
(near Montreuil): *Children's Colony*  
Clothing supplies.  
*Hospital for Children*  
Clothing supplies.  
*Refuge for Old People*  
Supplies, electric lighting, laundry.
- Landes: *Children's Colony*  
Shower baths, clothing, games,  
sewing machine.
- L'Argentiere: *Children's Colony*  
Clothing.
- Le Glandier  
(Correze): *Children's Colony*  
700 children, entire support.
- Le Havre: *Assistance Temporaire*  
17,000 francs per month.  
*Belgian Village*  
600,000 francs.  
*Canteen for Dock Laborers*  
Financial aid, barrack.  
*Civilian Hospital*  
Entire support.  
*Comité Officiel Belge*  
Financial aid, clothing for Vestiaire.  
*La Famille de l'Infirmière*  
Entire support.  
*Maison de l'Enfance*, including, Dispensary,  
Baby Hospital, Baby Temporary Home,  
and a Maternity Hospital. Entire support.  
*Military Hospital No. 8*  
Recreation barracks—Frs. 38,500  
Special treat of candy and fruit—Frs. 1000.  
Supplies—Frs. 2,254.65.  
*Œuvre Havraise des Crèches*  
Francs 65,000, linens.  
*School Children's Belgian Recreation Fund*  
6,000 francs.  
*Symphonie Militaire Belge*  
1,000 francs.  
*Syndicat des Travailleuses de l'Aiguille*  
(Crokaert ouvrir)  
Financial aid.  
*Vêtements du Soldat Reformé*  
Monthly grant.  
*Invalides, Les*  
An institution for reeducation of Belgian  
crippled soldiers.  
For removal to Louvaine, 100,000 francs.

Le Mans:	<i>Military Hospital</i> Food and clothing amounting to Frs. 2,218.60. Surgical instruments.
Le Treport (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Le Vesinet (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Limoges:	<i>Workshop</i> employing refugees to make clothing and shoes for children's colonies. Entire support.
Lisieux (Calvados):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Livarot (Calvados):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Loiret:	<i>Refugee Relief</i>
Lourdes:	<i>Canteen</i> —aided financially. <i>Relief to Refugees.</i>
Loudun:	<i>Children's Colony</i> (Abbé Delforge) Clothing and condensed milk. Also 500 francs.
Lumbres:	<i>British Army Zone Civilian Hospital</i> (Mme. Lionville) Supplies and financial aid.
Malo-les-Bains:	<i>Moving Pictures</i>
Malaise (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, cow, sewing machine.
Mareil-en-France (S. & O.):	<i>Agricultural Home</i> for convalescent soldiers. Supported.
Mauleon (Basses Pyrenees):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Supported.
Merlimont (Pas de Calais):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Mers-les-Bains (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Montpellier:	<i>Military Hospital</i> Medical supplies. <i>Refugee Committee</i> Financial aid.
Monsoult (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Montreuil:	<i>Civil Hospital</i> Clothing. <i>Financial Relief to Refugees</i> through Sous-Préfet.

Morteaux-Coulibœuf (Calvados):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Neuilly (Seine):	<i>Foyer Ecossais</i> Francs—10,000 Clothing Food.
Nîmes:	<i>Refugee Committee</i> Clothing.
Ouville-Abbaye:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, sewing machine.
Parigne l'Éveque (S. I.):	<i>Training Center</i> Games, comforts, phonograph.
Paris:	<i>Appui Belge</i> 10,000 francs per month. <i>Canteen at Gare du Nord</i> Financial aid. <i>Two Children's Colonies</i> 67 Rue de la Santé 8 Rue de Vouilli Clothing. <i>Comite Franco-Belge</i> Clothing—5557 francs. <i>Congé du Soldat Belge</i> 2,000 francs in 1917 9,000 francs monthly in 1918. <i>Foyer du Soldat Belge</i> 8 homes for soldiers and 2 restaurants. All financially aided by Red Cross. <i>Hospital du Roi Albert</i> Supplies. <i>Livre du Soldat Belge</i> 90,000 francs. <i>Roi Albert—Hôpital Militaire</i> 36 beds. <i>Foyer—Albert—Elizabcth</i> Neuilly, 1000 francs, clothing. <i>Canteen Gare du Nord</i> 10,000 francs.
Petit Couronne (S. I.):	<i>Home du Soldat Belge</i> Supported.
Petite Synthe (near Dunkirk):	<i>Hospital Queen Alexandra</i> Supplies, financial aid.
Petites Dalles (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, sewing machine.

Port Villez, Gare Vernon (Eure) :	<i>Institut Militaire des Invalides et Orphelins de la Guerre</i> Building—17,500 francs Furnishings—5,000 francs.
Porrville-les- Dieppe (S. I.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, sewing machine.
Preaux (S. I.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing, gifts.
Puy (Pas de Calais) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Quimper :	<i>Relief supplies</i> after German retreat.
Recques (Pas de Calais) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Barracks, clothing, electric lights. All expenses.
Rinxent-Hydequent (P. de C.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Rouen (S. I.) :	<i>Belgian Military Hospital Bonsecours</i> Operating table, articles for Pharmacy. <i>Dispensaire pour Enfants</i> Supported. <i>Fonds du Soldat Belge</i> Monthly subsidy 2,000 francs from Sep- tember, October, November and December 1918. <i>Union Amicale des Refugees Belges</i> 2,000 francs.
Rueil (S. & O.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Soligny La Trappe (Orme) :	<i>Military Hospital</i> for soldiers with mental disorders. Cinema 2,500 francs.
Ste. Adresse (Le Havre) :	<i>Gifts for Belgian Soldiers</i> Supported.
St. Germain en Laye (S. & O.) :	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Illiers-les- Bois :	<i>Boys' Agricultural Colony</i> Clothing, shower baths.
St. Jacques sous Darnetal	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Jean (Hesdin) (Pas de Calais) :	<i>Supplies</i>
St. Lo :	<i>Training Center</i> Games, comforts, phonograph.

St. Louis de la Mulotiere (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Lunaire (Ille et Vilaine):	<i>Military Hospital</i> Supplies.
St. Ouen (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Paer (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Pol:	<i>Refugee Relief</i> Sous-Préfet.
St. Prix:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Vallier (Drome):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
St. Valery-en- Caux (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Ste. Aubin Bran- ville (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Ste. Aubin Epinay (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Ste. Livrade:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Ste. Marguerite Varenge (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Hôtel des Sapins Hôtel de la Terrasse Lavoliere
Sablon-St. Livrade & Tomebouc:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Food supplies and clothing.
Sarcelles (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Sassetot:	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Saussay (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Sevres (S. & O.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Test-Milon, par Lain (Yonne):	<i>Civilian Hospital</i> Supplies.
Val Briand (Drome):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.
Valmont (S. I.):	<i>Children's Colony</i> Clothing.

- Varengueville: *Clothing, sewing machine.*
- Versailles (S. & O.): *Children's Colony*  
*Clothing.*
- Veulettes (S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
*Clothing, sewing machine.*
- Villiers-le-Sec: *Military Hospital*  
*Medical supplies, games.*
- Viroflay-le-Pecq  
(S. & O.): *Children's Colony*  
*Clothing.*
- Wisques (P. de C.): *Children's Colony*  
*Food, clothing, and financial aid.*
- Wizernes (P. de C.): *Children's Colony*  
*Monthly subsidy 1000 francs for Wisques*  
*and Wizernes.*  
*Money for removal of barracks and col-*  
*onies.*
- Wormhout (Nord): *Children's Colony*  
*Clothing.*
- Yvetot (S. I.): *Children's Colony*  
*Clothing.*

## ENGLAND.

- London: *Atelier de Tailleur, which made clothing for*  
*Belgian Reformés—200 pounds.*  
*California House, 82 Lancaster Gate, Recrea-*  
*tional and Study Center for Soldiers,*  
*managed by Miss Julia Heyneman, 1000*  
*pounds (27,180 francs) and later 5000*  
*francs.*  
*Clothing for Belgian Destitute Civilians*  
*Edmond Carton de Wiart, treasurer,*  
*200 pounds September, 1918.*  
*Comité Belge du Travail à Domicile*  
*27,000 francs for sewing machines,*  
*January 1918.*  
*Comité des Visites aux Blessés Belges*  
*5000 francs, March 1918.*  
*Doctors' and Pharmacists' Fund (Belgian)*  
*200 pounds per month for four months*  
*beginning September 1918.*  
*Relief for Belgians, Prisoners in Germany*  
*5000 francs, December 1918.*  
*Volksbureau Belgische—Abbé*  
*Christophe de Keyser, manager*  
*200 pounds July 1918.*  
*Volkhuis (Belgian) Abbé R. Ingelbeen,*  
*manager, 100 pounds March 1918.*

## HOLLAND.

- Katwijk-sur-mer: *Phalanstere*  
Cares for Tuberculosis, Belgian Reformés in their homes  
10,000 francs May 1918.
- Maastricht: *Croix Mauve* (Supervision of Belgian children  
Teteringen: in homes)—10,000 francs, June 1918.
- Waspik: Tehuis voor Weezen Verlatene Belgische Kin-  
Goirle: deren. Work for abandoned children,  
5000 francs June 1918.
- The Hague: *Belgian Soldiers Interned in Holland*  
given 1000 pounds monthly from August  
1918 to January 1, 1919, through Belgian  
Central Bureau Prisoners of War at Ste.  
Adresse, France.  
*Ecole Belge d'Art Domestique*  
2500 francs May 1918.  
*Home des Petits Orphelins de la Guerre*  
2000 florins. Also 2000 florins to be for-  
warded to Antwerp for "Lait pour les  
Petits" September 1918.  
*Ruche, La*—To give employment to refugee  
women—5000 francs, May 1918.  
*Santé à l'Enfance*  
Brought anæmic children from Belgium  
for vacation, 25,000 francs, June 1918.

## SWITZERLAND

*Children's Colonies.*

- Fribourg: Villa Guinzet  
The New Villa  
Villars les Jones  
Financial aid.
- Leysin: Colony for tubercular children,  
Financial aid.
- Vaulruz: Industrial School  
Financial aid.
- Lausanne: Committee Central Suisse for Refugees  
15,000 francs.

## APPENDIX VI

Decorations and Honors given by the King and Queen of the Belgians and Belgian Institutions to the personnel of The American Red Cross.

*Order of Leopold.*

Commander—Henry P. Davison  
Officer— John van Schaick, Jr.

*Order of the Crown.*

Commander—Ernest P. Bicknell  
Officer— H. R. Fairclough  
Chevalier— Ernest W. Corn  
Leonard Chester Jones  
Ivy L. Lee  
J. Wideman Lee  
Edwards A. Park.

*Order of Leopold II.*

Alfred Worcester.

*Medal of Queen Elizabeth.*

Mrs. Larz Anderson  
Alberte Bicknell  
Constance Bicknell  
Mrs. Ernest P. Bicknell  
Sarah Boyle  
Katharine Cox  
Ethel Damon  
Martha Hoover  
Dr. Alma Rotholz  
Mrs. John van Schaick, Jr.  
Miss Mabel Wilcox

*Medal of the University of Brussels.*

John van Schaick, Jr.

*Honorary Degree, Doctor of Medicine,  
University of Liège.*

John van Schaick, Jr.



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