



# PRISONERS & ESCAPE

THOSE WHO WERE THERE

RACHEL BILTON

# **Prisoners and Escape**



# Prisoners and Escape

*Those Who Were There*

Edited by  
**Rachel Bilton**



Pen & Sword  
**MILITARY**

First published in Great Britain in 2017 by

**PEN & SWORD MILITARY**

an imprint of

Pen & Sword Books Ltd

47 Church Street

Barnsley

South Yorkshire

S70 2AS

Copyright © Rachel Bilton, 2017

ISBN 978-1-47386-709-3

The right of Rachel Bilton to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the Publisher in writing.

Typeset by Concept, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 5JL.

Printed and bound in England by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY.

Pen & Sword Books Ltd incorporates the imprints of Pen & Sword Archaeology, Atlas, Aviation, Battleground, Discovery, Family History, History, Maritime, Military, Naval, Politics, Railways, Select, Social History, Transport, True Crime, and Claymore Press, Frontline Books, Leo Cooper, Praetorian Press, Remember When, Seaforth Publishing and Wharncliffe.

For a complete list of Pen & Sword titles please contact

**PEN & SWORD BOOKS LIMITED**

47 Church Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 2AS, England

E-mail: [enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk)

Website: [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk)

# CONTENTS

List of Plates . . . . .	vii
The Authors . . . . .	ix
1. Trapped in Belgium <i>by Harry Beaumont</i> . . . . .	1
2 My first escape from Ruhleben <i>by Wallace Ellison</i> . . . . .	13
3 Wings of Wrath <i>by Duncan Grinnell-Milne</i> . . . . .	25
4 Exploits of the Escaping Club <i>by A.J. Evans</i> . . . . .	69
5 Hoodwinking the Germans <i>by Lieutenant Anselme Marchal</i> . . . . .	81
6 Escape at the first attempt <i>by H.G. Durnford</i> . . . . .	99
7 A Journey to Brussels <i>by Marthe McKenna</i> . . . . .	119
8 Secret Service days <i>by Edwin T. Woodhall</i> . . . . .	137
9 August 1914 <i>by Esmee Sartorius</i> . . . . .	153
10 The Last Stand of the Belgians <i>by Sir Philip Gibbs</i> . . . . .	159
11 How Trooper Potts won the VC on Burnt Hill <i>by Walter Wood</i> . . .	167
Index . . . . .	177



# LIST OF PLATES

Newly captured British troops headed by an officer are being escorted back from the fighting.

A group of prisoners with their unarmed guard who is obviously not expecting any problem from them.

An injured airman being helped from the crash site.

Prisoners watched by two guards and a group of onlookers leaving them little chance of escape.

Prisoners waiting to be processed behind the barbed wire of their new home.

Prisoners enter the inner camp through more gates and wire.

A perimeter watchtower.

Officers' quarters.

Guards patrolling the outer fence.

Other ranks' barracks.

These are the arms of Ruhleben Internment Camp in Berlin where most British male civilians were held.

A group of healthy and relatively young prisoners.

Officers' accommodation.

An officer's bedroom.

A failed escape tunnel that came to the surface too early.

A rope ladder down to the excavation of a tunnel hidden in a disused building.

Tools confiscated by guards.

Escapers all, recaptured officers in a room at Holzminden.

The escape tunnel at Holzminden after its discovery.

A compass discovered during an inspection of food parcels.



A parcel wrapped in a specific way.

The typical contents of a parcel.

A static guard is talking to a mounted guard who rode along the frontier.

The warning on the high tension wire between Belgium and Holland.

Officers looking at a Belgian who was electrocuted trying to get to Holland.

German guards using an insulated hook to remove a cat that touched the wire.

Harry Beaumont.

Hugh Durnford taken in 1918 at Stralsund Camp from where he escaped.

Duncan Grinnell-Milne.

A.J. Evans of the escaping club.

# THE AUTHORS

## **Harry Beaumont**

No biographical information available.

## **Wallace Ellison**

When the war was declared, Ellison was a lecturer in Economics at Frankfurt University. He was arrested in August 1914 and held at Sennelager Camp. Shortly after being released, he was imprisoned again, this time at Ruhleben, from November 1914. After attempting escape he was moved to Stadtvogtei Prison, where he attempted escape again and was consequently moved back to Ruhleben from where he successfully escaped to Holland in October 1917. Until the end of the war he operated as a secret agent on the German-Swiss border.

## **A.J. Evans**

Evans joined Inns of Court OTC on 5 August 1914. He was transferred to the Intelligence Corps, crossed to France in late August 1914 as temporary 2nd lieutenant and took part in the retreat. In February 1915, he joined the Royal Flying Corps, serving as an observer in No. 3 Squadron until September 1915. During this time he was awarded the Military Cross for continuing to observe while being attacked by a German aeroplane at Loos. He was a pilot in No. 3 Squadron in spring 1916 and was taken prisoner on 16 July 1916, after a forced landing behind German lines. He managed to escape from Clausthal Camp, but was recaptured on the Dutch frontier. He later escaped into Switzerland after eighteen nights' walking. In February 1918, he was in command of No. 142 Squadron in Palestine where he was captured by the Turks. Evans returned to Egypt after the Armistice. He was awarded a bar to MC for his numerous attempts to escape. He is best known as the author of *The Escaping Club*.

## **Lieutenant Anselme Marchal**

Marchal was a French pilot in the First World War, remembered for his courageous flight over Berlin in June 1916. He tried to escape from prison three times, successfully escaping on 24 February 1918 with his friend Roland Garros. He was awarded the Légion d'honneur and the Croix de

Guerre for his efforts in the war. He is the author of the book *Après mon vol au-dessus de Berlin*, published in 1919.

### **Edwin T. Woodhall**

Woodhall was born in 1886 and, accomplishing his ambition, joined the London Metropolitan Police in 1906. He progressed through the ranks to the Special Political Branch, then to MI5, the Secret Intelligence Police and finally Protective Surveillance. Due to his exceptional skills in espionage he captured Percy Toplis (the ‘Monocled Mutineer’) without assistance in the First World War.

### **Esmee Sartorius**

On the outbreak of the war, Sartorius applied to the St John Ambulance. She was sent out to Brussels in Belgium. She was a dedicated and brave nurse, being awarded the 1914 Star. Sartorius returned to England and carried on working as a nurse for the Red Cross until 1918.

### **Sir Philip Gibbs**

Gibbs was born in Kensington, London, to a civil servant. He was home schooled and wished to become a writer. During the First World War, he worked as one of the five official British reporters. However, censorship was soon imposed; Gibbs refused to return and was shortly arrested and brought back home. During the war, he produced many newspaper articles and several books, and in 1920 was awarded a knighthood.

### **Duncan Grinnell-Milne**

Captain Grinnell-Milne, a pilot in the First and Second World Wars, was born in Bromley in London and educated at the University of Freiburg. He was originally enlisted in the 5th Battalion, Rifle Brigade, but was considered too young, at the age of 17, for active service, so was transferred to the 7th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. He transferred to the RFC in July 1915 and gained his wings. Engine trouble, while over enemy lines, caused him to be taken prisoner in the same year. His story opens in the spring of 1918, just after he had returned to England after two-and-a-half years in a German prison camp. He was awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Flying Cross and bar for his war efforts.

### **H.G. Durnford**

Durnford’s story is about the famous Holzminden Tunnel, by which twenty-nine English officers escaped from a German prison: the Great War’s ‘Great Escape’. Owing to the tunnel caving in, the remainder of the men were unable to get away. The author took part in this dramatic incident but did not make his escape. He was later removed to Stralsund

Prison in company with two other officers who had also failed in the Holzminden attempt.

### **Marthe McKenna**

Marthe McKenna, then Marthe Cnockaert, was a Belgian girl who witnessed too much of the looting, destruction, and wanton brutality of the German invasion in August 1914. She was generous enough to serve as a hospital nurse, and earned the high regard of the German medical authorities. However, what she had seen and the harsh discipline of the oppressor that she, her parents, and their neighbours were all experiencing, inspired her to undertake the audacious career of a spy. For two years Marthe was 'Laura' of the Anglo-Belgian Intelligence system. She was brave and ingenious, and but for one of those small, fatal slips, which have destroyed so many espionage careers, she might have continued her daring and invaluable 'side-line' until the Armistice. Unfortunately, she was detected, convicted, and condemned to death. Because of her splendid nursing record, and the tireless devotion she had shown hundreds of enemy wounded and sick, her sentence was commuted to imprisonment. And so this heroine, and she was surely that in two capacities, survived until the military prison door swung wide in Belgium. Afterwards, she married a British officer, and took up residence in Westrozebeke, where she composed her memoirs.

### **Walter Wood**

Wood, from Blackburn, Lancashire, served as a private in the 1st/7th Lancashire Fusiliers. As part of the operations in Gallipoli, it was decided to bombard and attack a very strongly fortified Turkish position near Suvla Bay. The frontal attack was a desperate enterprise, as the Turks had dug themselves in, in two lines of trenches of exceptional strength. The attack was made on the afternoon of 21 August 1915, after a bombardment by battleships and heavy land batteries. It was in the course of this advance that the teller of this story, Trooper Frederick William Owen Potts, of the 1/1st Berkshire Yeomanry (Territorial Force), was struck down, and later performed the unparalleled act for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross. For nearly fifty hours Trooper Potts remained under the Turkish trenches with a severely wounded and helpless comrade, 'although he could himself have returned to safety', says the official record. Finally the trooper, in the extraordinary manner which he now describes, saved his comrade's life. Trooper Potts was only 22 years old at the time, and was the first Yeoman to win the most coveted of all distinctions.



## CHAPTER ONE

# TRAPPED IN BELGIUM

*By Harry Beaumont*

On the morning of 24 August, 1914, the first day of the Retreat from Mons, I have a very hazy recollection of being put out of action by the combination of a German shell and a brick wall. I was picked up about twenty-four hours later and taken to a hospital by Belgian civilians. I was put to bed there suffering from a slight wound in the groin, and concussion from which I recovered in a week.

The hospital was at the pit head of a colliery in the village of Wasmes, about 7 miles south-west of Mons, and the staff consisted of one nurse, two doctors (both very old) and a few voluntary workers of both sexes. The leader of this little band was named D'Capiaux, a young Belgian engineer, who had been educated in England, and spoke very good English.

There were about forty British patients, most of whom were officers and NCOs, and there was also one German patient, a Prussian. Things were very disorganised just then, and it was some days before the Germans noticed our hospital. They were too busy elsewhere; but they soon took over control, and we British automatically became 'Prisoners of War'. They made the Belgians responsible for supplying us with food and medical comforts, but there was very little of either available. Most of the patients were in a pretty bad way, and six out of eight amputation cases died of tetanus. A German doctor used to come visiting, and after one of these visits a few men were transferred to prison camps in Germany; but I always managed to be absent when he came round, so I stayed on.

The hospital was unguarded, as every man was supposed to be incapable of escape, and the responsibility for our safe custody was placed upon the Belgians.

The hospital authorities gave me the job of nursing one of the British officers. He was totally paralysed, and the Belgians could do very little for him. I nursed him until he died about three weeks later.

## 2 *Prisoners and Escape*

Doing this kind of work made me helpful to the Belgians, and they used to give me the tip whenever the German officer came visiting. He always commenced at the officers' building, and by the time he arrived at our end my bed was rolled up and stowed away in the storeroom, and I was well hidden in the scrap-iron yard.

I went on dodging this fellow up to about the second or third week in October; then, one day, he checked the roll and suddenly discovered there was one man in that hospital that he had never seen. He was in a terrible rage and ordered the Belgians to search the colliery and produce me. They knew, of course, where to find me, and I was taken before him. He glared at me, and in very good English said: 'Why have you been absent from this hospital every time I've visited it?' I made the first excuse that came into my head: 'I didn't know you were coming. I'm fond of fresh air and spend most of my time in the grounds.' He said: 'Fresh air! Fresh air! You'll get all the fresh air you want very soon! I shall send you to Stettin-on-Oder!' I said: 'Thank you,' and returned to my ward with something to think about.

I made up my mind then and there that I was not going to Stettin, but I had not the slightest idea what to do about it. Next day the answer came without my seeking. Lance-Corporal Arthur Heath, of my regiment – who was one of the patients – had got very friendly with a Belgian and his wife by the name of Neusy, who used to visit the hospital. Heath took me into his confidence. He told me that if he could get to the Neusys' house they were going to look after him, and get him out of the country when he was well enough.

He was shot through the thigh and could not walk. Someone therefore would have to carry him from the hospital to the Neusys' house, and I was the man he chose to do the job. I said I would do it, but would the Neusys look after me, too? Heath said he did not know, but thought it would be all right. We then started getting ready. Heath practised walking up and down the ward with a couple of sticks, and I looked round for a civilian suit.

Our ward was opposite the gas retorts, and the stoker used to come in about 8 o'clock every night, change into overalls, and hang his suit up near the door. He worked until about 3 o'clock in the morning, and would then fall asleep until it was time to go home; so that suit was mine for the taking. On 26 October we were suddenly ordered to be in readiness to proceed to Germany at 10 o'clock on the following day, so there was now no time to be lost, and we fixed 4 o'clock in the morning as the time for our escape. We arranged that as I was to do all the hard work I should go

to bed and Heath would keep awake and rouse me about ten minutes to four.

I have already told you that one of the patients in the hospital was a Prussian, and this Prussian was in our ward. He was badly wounded, and seldom went to sleep, and I was very much afraid that he would see us going and give the alarm. But a funny thing happened. That night he beckoned me to his bedside to help him turn over, which I had often done before. As soon as I had made him comfortable, to my surprise he gripped me by the hand and placed his finger on his lips. This was his way of telling me that he knew what was going on and would keep silent. It was decent of him; we were just brothers in distress.

At ten minutes to four I was roused by Heath, who quietly left the ward on his crutches. I saw him clear and then went to the stokehold and bagged the stoker's suit. I emptied everything out of the pockets and tied them up in a bundle in the old chap's red handkerchief and left it on the hook beside him. I did not want to rob him of more than I could help. He was still dreaming about the end of the war when I crept away.

I joined Heath at the gate. He had discarded his crutches for his sticks, which had been put there for him overnight.

The Neusys' house was about 4 miles away, and we had a rough sketch of the road to it on a sheet of ordinary notepaper. I carried Heath on my back; but it was no fun for him either, as he was in great pain. At every turn of the road we struck a match and consulted our map. I well remember those matches; they were the old-fashioned twinklers of the 'wait a minute' kind. After two hours we reached our destination, which was the second house with iron railings in the Rue Calvary in the village of Petite Wasmes. We hadn't been able to warn the Neusys that we were coming, and we found the outer gate was locked. So I scaled the wall and threw some gravel at the bedroom window. After two or three throws Neusy put out his head, and in a few moments we were inside.

Emil Neusy was a heavily-built man with a fresh complexion and a jolly disposition. His wife Marie was a slim little woman with the heart of a lion. They seemed pleased to have us, and soon made us comfortable; but the difficulty was conversation. They knew no English, and we knew no French, so we had to talk to one another with our hands, which was a very slow job. However, we were not allowed to rest for long. At about 9 o'clock a Belgian from the hospital arrived in a very excited state, and the Neusys at once hid us behind some thick curtains. They then invited him into the room, and after a long and apparently heated conversation he left the house again. Neusy went out soon after and came back with a cab and took Heath away. I followed almost immediately, led by Neusy's son, a



boy of thirteen, who took me to some woods and told me to stay there until he came back for me. After dark that night I was collected and taken to a café on the outskirts of the wood, where I found Heath, who had also spent the day in the woods.

We spent several days together in the woods, returning to the café at night for food and shelter. Heath still suffered great pain from his wound and found it very difficult to move about.

By this time German patrols and the Belgian police had got tired of searching the district for us, so we moved by easy stages to the village of Paturage, where we were put up for a time by a Madame Godart, a friend of the Neusys. We returned to the Neusys' house at the end of November.

By this time the food shortage was acute. Everyone was rationed – except us, of course – but we had many friends by now, and never went short.

We were already beginning to pick up a certain amount of French, which eased our position considerably, and Heath had been attended by a doctor and his wound was now on the mend.

One day Neusy showed me a British rifle and several rounds of ammunition which he had souvenired from the battlefields. I did not think it was a wise souvenir, and said so, and advised him to get rid of it. I told him that if the house was searched it would be his death warrant and possibly that of others as well, and although he would not take this seriously at first I never let the subject drop until the rifle was eventually cemented into the wall under the window-sill of the front bedroom. The room was then repapered to remove any traces of tampering with the walls.

Just before Christmas, 1914, the Germans began to realise that there were a good many British soldiers being hidden by the Belgians in occupied territory, so they issued a warning through the Local Authorities that any British soldier who gave himself up before a certain date would be treated as a prisoner of war; but that if he failed to surrender and was caught he would be shot as a spy whether in uniform or not. It also warned the inhabitants that the penalty for harbouring the enemy was death. I never saw this order, but it was discussed by the Neusys, and they decided to take the risk. So we sat tight.

About the middle of February, 1915, Marie received a visit from the mayor of the district. He said that it had come to his knowledge that two English soldiers were hiding in her house, and that as he was responsible for his district being clear they must go. He said he did not care where they went so long as they left the district. The same night I left for Paturage to live with Madame Godart again. Heath preferred to stay where he was.

A fortnight later a neighbour of the Neusys came round to me there and between fits of weeping told me that the Germans had taken Heath. This was very bad news, and as soon as it got dark that night I moved to a place called La Bouverie, about 5 miles distant, to the house of Madame Godart's mother. This old lady was eighty years of age. At dawn the next morning there was a terrific banging at the front door. I naturally thought the Germans had come for me, and was half-way out of the window when I heard the voices of Heath and Emil Neusy.

Heath had not been caught after all, and this is what had happened at the Neusys' house. At 9 o'clock the previous morning, two German detectives had entered by the back gate. They had given the correct secret signal, which was the opening of the gate three times, which automatically gave three peals on the bell in the kitchen. They had then walked straight into the house, covered Marie Neusy with an automatic, and said: 'You've got English in your house.' Marie had denied this at once, although Heath was in bed in the room above. However, the detectives had wasted no time in argument; one remained with Marie and the other started searching the house. Luckily for Heath he began from the cellar. Heath had heard their conversation and knew he was in a hole. He had no time to put on his clothes, so in only his shirt and socks he climbed out of the landing window and dropped on to the roof of the scullery, which jutted out from the kitchen. Unfortunately the slates of the roof gave way with a fearful crash, and Heath nearly came through into the scullery. The German in the kitchen at once rushed to the back door. So did Marie. She got there first, turned the key in the lock and put her back to the door. There was a brief struggle and then the German pushed her aside and opened the door. Unfortunately – or fortunately – this was the moment chosen by Heath to jump off the roof. He jumped on top of the detective and they fell to the ground. Heath was up first and raced down the garden, zig-zagging from side to side, his shirt flapping in the wind. The German who was still on the ground fired four shots at him, but never got a hit. Heath jumped a low wall into the neighbour's garden, at the top of which was another wall – a high one with glass on top. He leapt at this, but missed his hold.

By this time the German was after him and had reached the bottom of Neusy's garden, only a few feet away. He covered Heath with his automatic and said: 'Hands up!' Heath took no notice. He decided not to be an Englishman at any price. The German gave the order again, this time in French and up went Heath's hands.

Meanwhile the German inside the house had reached the landing window and saw what was happening outside. He at once started to shout orders to the one in the garden, who turned round to reply. This gave

Heath another chance. He made one more leap at the wall, gained a hold and was over the top. The German in the garden turned round just in time to see his last leg disappearing. He had one more shot, but was far too late.

Heath had then done a record sprint across a ploughed field, down a lane, and through a forge, until he came to a cottage. The back door stood invitingly open, so in he went and locked the door behind him. The good lady of the house came down from upstairs and had a bit of a shock to find a stranger with no trousers on seated in her kitchen. However, he explained his position, and she soon fixed him up with one of her husband's suits. Heath had left the house at dark and gone to Madame Godart's, where he found Neusy. They had remained there until next morning, when they came to me.

Marie Neusy was arrested and taken to Mons, where she was committed for trial. The Germans ripped her house to pieces and took away several hundred francs. They didn't, however, find that rifle, and for all I know it's there still. They left word with the maid that if Emil Neusy came to Mons for his money he could have it. He went next day and they arrested him, too.

After a few days at La Bouverie we returned to Madame Godart, where we anxiously awaited the result of the trial. Marie smuggled a letter to us from her prison concealed in a piece of bread, in which she said we were not to worry about her, for what she had done was for her country and not for us. These were brave words from a woman who was expecting her death.

But when the trial eventually came off, the first witness, who was Marie's maid, a girl of only twelve, stated with great presence of mind that the man who had escaped was a Belgian, and that he was the lover of Madame Neusy, and stayed in the house when the master was away on business. As soon as Neusy heard this he jumped up in court and demanded a divorce and acted the part of the wronged husband so well that as the Germans had no evidence to the contrary they had to accept the story. Marie was sentenced to one month's imprisonment for obstructing the police, and Neusy was charged the costs of the trial.

A few days later we were visited by D'Capiaux, the engineer from the hospital, and I learnt what happened there when we escaped. He said the Germans were furious, and fined everyone connected with the hospital, and removed all the prisoners into Germany. He then told us that he had made arrangements to get us away. He took our photographs, and presented us next day with a certificate of identity, which changed our nationality to Belgian. This certificate was an absolute forgery, but complete in

every detail, even to the police stamp. He had even gone so far as to append our signatures without ever having seen our handwriting.

In a few days a guide came for us and we left for Brussels, where we were taken to a hospital. The matron in charge of this hospital was Nurse Edith Cavell. I'm afraid I can't tell you much about Nurse Cavell. She was very busy all the time, and so we didn't see very much of her, but she seemed a very homely woman with a smile and a cheery word for everyone.

Brussels was teeming with Germans, and here under their noses were at least a score of helpless British Tommies waiting to be smuggled across the frontier.

We were in the hospital for only three days, and then there was a sudden alarm, and we were all cleared out in twos and threes, and conducted to the homes of various Belgians, who were all members of the same wonderful organisation. This organisation was linked up from Northern France, right across Belgium to the Dutch frontier, and existed solely for the purpose of helping British, French and Belgians out of the country.

In this sudden move I was separated from Heath, and left the hospital accompanied by Michael Carey, of the Munster Fusiliers. The Munsters were cut off during the Retreat from Mons, and many of them had remained at large until picked up by the organisation.

A week later we left our house in the Avenue de Longchamps with a guide and made an attempt to reach the frontier. On the way we picked up four more Irishmen, which made our party seven, and we soon left Brussels behind and reached the open country. The order of march was for the guide to go ahead and the remainder to follow in pairs at intervals of 200 yards.

We passed through Louvain and Aerschot, and in the late afternoon arrived at the Monastery of Averabode, where we received food and shelter for the night. There were over 200 monks in this monastery and only two could speak English.

The next morning our party was joined by a young Belgian who also wanted to get out of the country. We set off at daybreak, left the main road, and made our way across country. Our destination was Turnout, a town near the Dutch frontier. At about mid-day we came to a railway crossing, where a sentry examined our forged identity cards. He just compared the face with the photograph, and allowed us to pass.

The two Belgians, the three Irishmen, and myself got through without a hitch; but one of the Irishmen of the last pair could not for the moment find his identity card, and while he was fumbling in his pockets, he

accidentally dropped a 5-franc note. No sooner had it reached the ground than the sentry promptly put his foot on it, looked round at the guard-house behind to see that no one was watching, and passed the Irishman on with a movement of the hand. That was accidental bribery.

Two hours later we struck the main road again, and here our guide gave instructions to the other Belgian and left us. Soon afterwards we entered Turnout, which was packed with Germans.

We at once proceeded to the address which had been given us of the man who was the next link in the chain of the organisation. But when we got there we found, to our dismay, that the house was full of German soldiers. It had been taken over as a billet. This floored us; our guide had gone and we had no other addresses, so we retired to a café in a quiet part of the town to discuss the situation.

The Belgian made enquiries as to the possibility of our crossing the frontier by ourselves, but he was told that we should have to swim a canal and pass two chains of sentries, which was considered an impossibility without an experienced guide.

It was very dangerous to remain in Turnout, so the only thing to do was to return to Brussels. We were all footsore and weary after our two days' march, but we found an old woman with a horse and cart, and she agreed to take the risk and give us a lift back to the monastery of Averabode for the sum of 12 francs 50 cents per head.

As soon as it was dark we set off, and got along all right until we were halted by a mounted patrol at about 1 o'clock. I was on the front seat, and the officer in charge of the patrol walked up to me with an electric torch and a revolver, both of which he pointed at me. He questioned me in Flemish, which I didn't understand, so I kept my mouth shut. The old woman and the Belgian butted in, with explanations, and we were ordered off the cart and lined up by the roadside, where our identity cards were examined. The officer seemed satisfied with these, and allowed us to pass on our way.

It was a narrow shave, for there were three things we should have been caught out on. Only two of the party had spoken at all; we were on the road during prohibited hours without a special permit; and we were many miles from the place of our registration.

We arrived at the monastery four hours later, and when we had had some food turned in for a well needed rest. That evening the Belgian left us to return to Brussels, and promised to report our position to Nurse Cavell.

We were well treated by the monks. We slept in the laundry at night, and retired to a room at the top of the building by day, where we passed