

MAXINE ELLIOTT

AMERICAN ACTRESS SERVES IN BELGIUM.

Captain William A. Clark, surgeon in charge of Ward C-8, and who was in Belgium for several months after Germany had started through that country on ruthless conquest for world power, writes of the service in those dark hours by Maxine Elliott, the American actress.

RECALLS EXPERIENCES.

The recent success of the Belgian Army in western Flanders recalls to mind the early days of the German invasion and the trench line on the Yser river where the Huns were definitely checked in October 1914. In the winter of 1916 when I was working in this neighborhood the line had not materially changed—nor had it changed during the long four years of the war until the advance of the Belgians to Roulers last month.

To one not calling this region his home it is an unattractive stretch of flat muddy terrain reaching inward from the rolling sand dunes of the North Sea coast, with winding canals, flanked by roads and almost flush with the ground level, creeping through from the sea and here and there a tower of an "hotel de ville" or sharp spire of an "eglise" conspicuously cleaving the dull horizon. Superimpose upon this the low hanging smoke from the trench line, the rumble of artillery, the hum of the menacing taubes, the dismal gray stream of supply trucks passing constantly up and down, the full and overflowing cemeteries and an occasional lonely grave in the dunes, the town of Dixmude to utter ruins, Pervyse and Ramsappelle shattered by shell, Nieuport destroyed, Furnes with scarcely a building left unstruck and the little seaside towns of Adingerke and La Panne constantly under threat of the Prussian guns, and one has a picture dismal and depressing.

It was amidst these surroundings that Maxine Elliott lived alone with her French maid on a barge in the canal near La Panne for eighteen months distributing clothing to the Belgian women and children refugees. We visited her one afternoon, taking with us a Flemish peasant who wished to get some clothing for his children. The barge was anchored to the bank on the road side of the canal between Adingerke and Furnes about two miles from our hospital and was approached by a landing gangway which lead from the bank to the deck.

ORDINARY BARGE.

It was an ordinary freight barge about a hundred feet long needing a coat of paint rather badly but its name still legible over the rudder and above the stern floated an American flag. The only entrance was the hatchway at the end of the gang plank. No bell or knocker was in sight so we entered without ceremony and at the foot of the stairs found ourselves in front of a cook stove surrounded by pots and pans, apparently we had entered the kitchen. The French maid appeared from behind some boxes and

we asked for Miss Elliott. At the same instant Miss Elliott came forward up a narrow aisle between packing boxes and shelves. Here was a practical business woman still with all the charm of the noted actress. She took the names, ages and sizes of the children for whom our Flemish friend came to get clothing, recording them in an order book. Later we saw a three-foot shelf full of these order books containing a record of all people supplied and clothing issued. She showed us all through her barge home. The forward half was the store room for clothing, everything for women and children to wear, even to maternity kits and layettes, bright colored dresses, aprons, hoods and stockings, all clean and new in boxes and on shelves classified in an orderly manner with narrow aisles winding around about them giving easy access to every article.

FROM MANY SOURCES.

This clothing came from many sources. Some of it Miss Elliott had purchased herself, some was sent by her personal friends, some came through various societies from Paris and from America. At about the center of the barge was the kitchen and that portion toward the stern was the living quarters. We were shown into her office—a sort of den in its furnishings, where Miss Elliott passed around her cigarettes and we all sat and smoked and talked of the peculiar situation and of her work there and what she had done. On the couch was a cover with her monogram M. E. reminding one of the curtain at her theatre. Over the desk were a pair of swords crossed, a German rifle, a German officer's helmet, some hand decorated shell cases of Belgium 75's, a few pieces of an airplane bomb that had fallen within a hundred yards of her barge and other souvenirs of the war.

She had come to Belgium soon after the beginning of the war and had been given this barge by the military authorities and aided and protected by them had carried on her useful work at the time and place where it was most keenly needed. She had been in the same place for more than a year although the barge was capable of being towed to any other point up or down the channel. Soon after this, at the request of the Queen, she moved to another town farther in from the coast where she continued her good work for some months longer and when she finally left Belgium she was decorated by the Queen with the Belgian Croix de Guerre.

As we were returning to La Panne our Flemish friend, whose English was as bad as our French, said: "She speak French partly well!"

By CAPTAIN WILLIAM ARTHUR CLARK.

What is the difference between an apple and a pretty girl? One you squeeze to get cider and the other you get 'sider to squeeze.

Why is the freight of a ship like a locomotive? Because it makes the cargo.

EAST END CANTEN

"By the Barracks"

Cigars, Cigarettes,
Candy.

Hot Lunches
Ice Cold Drinks
Novelties

We Serve YOU Right

Buy
Liberty
Bonds

Automobile Service Co.

Cor. First and Tryon Streets
Charlotte, N. C.

SPECIAL

Military Silk Pillow Tops
\$1.50

Service Pins, with insignia
35c or three for **\$1.00**

R. I. GRESHAM & CO.

Liberty Park

BUY BONDS
Your Last Day



GEORGE DAY