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## **Edgar S. Gorrell Collection - What! No Airplanes, E.S. Gorrell, undated**

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different from American practice. The Allies in some cases could not, and in other cases would not, give us the information that would permit of our immediately starting the adopted aircraft progress, it became essential to send a mission to Europe to ascertain the required information.

A further complication of the situation abroad was the fact that manufacturers in France and England were customarily charging each other royalties on all types of aircraft, aircraft engines, and accessories. In the spring of 1917, their sales agents streamed into Washington attempting to sell the United States Government, on a royalty basis, the European ideas pertaining to the construction of war materials. As Howard E. Coffin of the Council of National Defense said at the time, "to ask America to pay to the Allies a royalty on the construction of allied war materials, was to ask us to pay an entrance fee to the war in order to help the Allies toward victory".

A mission was sent to Europe. It consisted of two Army aeronautical engineers, two officers of the Navy, a number of civilian industrial experts, and 93 skilled mechanics and factory experts. We planned to place the latter in allied factories for the purpose of securing, at first hand, practical information regarding methods of manufacture which could not be readily embodied in written plans and specifications. This mission was headed by Raynel Cawthorne Bolling. It was fortunate that the Army officer, who would have normally headed the mission, had intelligence enough to realize that he was not only too immature to act as the mission's leader, but also lacked the requisite training in international business negotiations. He realized, with the complicated questions pertaining to royalties, etc., that it would be necessary to secure a qualified civilian to act as a business leader. Thus, Bolling was chosen to head the mission. He had not only had experience as the commander of the First Aero Squadron, New York National Guard, but he was also one of the senior attorneys in the United States Steel Corporation. It was mainly because of this latter training that he was chosen. He not only had aviation training, but also he had sufficient business experience to handle the necessary negotiations in Europe.

Upon the declaration of war, the leaders of our small Army Air Service realized they had not as yet sufficient knowledge to start immediately to build the small size, highly maneuverable types of airplanes necessary for fighting on the western front. However, they felt, even as early as April, 1917, that America could build a type of large night bomber if we only could obtain the

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