

1938/1939 LIFE IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



November 1938



February 1939

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CONTEXT: Agnes' stepmother, Flora Bornstein, was already in Brussels when the Feigl's fled there from Vienna in 1938. Peter remembered that the family felt safe in Brussels and was happy that they had moved even though Peter had to learn new languages in school: French and Flemish. There was a large war museum on Peter's school route, and he spent hours in the museum looking at the equipment from WW I, particularly the tanks and airplanes. His life-long love of airplanes and movies were both strengthened after he saw *Test Pilot*, an American movie featuring the famous actor, Clark Gable.

The featured images, taken with Peter's small camera, show (left) the Feigl's' corner apartment at 21 *Place Jambline de Meux* and (right) Peter leaning in the doorway with his overcoat on and holding a small cap pistol. Peter remembered that his father Ernst took the image of him while standing across the street.

When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, marking the beginning of WW II, the Feigl's still felt fairly safe. In fact, Ernst was in Switzerland on business when the war began and --much to Agnes' consternation--smuggled himself back in a coal tender to Brussels several days later dirty and bedraggled but smiling.

Images courtesy of Peter Feigl; context from Peter Feigl's USC Shoah Foundation's oral history testimony recorded April 18, 1997.