

October 28th, 1914. Hôtel des Arcades, Dunkerque.- Another one-night stand.

We cleared out of Havre this morning over muddy, and slippery roads. It rained hard all night, and we made good time by way of Fécamp, Dieppe, Eu, Abbeville, Montreuil, Boulogne, Marquise, and Calais, getting to Dunkerque a little after four, just in time to smell the smoke of a couple of bombs dropped by an aeroplane across the street from the office of the Prime Minister, upon whom I called.

We began running into big bunches of troops at Abbeville---English, French and Belgian. I saw some of the Indian troops doing sentry duty and looking cold and uncomfortable, and did not blame them, for it was raw and cheerless. The Rolls-Royce is a beauty and sailed along all day like a gondola.

The Prime Minister had set up his office in the Mayor's room at the Hôtel de Ville, which I found in an uproar because of the bombs. The Prime Minister was said to be at Headquarters, at Furnes, across the Belgian frontier, and I was urged to go there to see him. We made twenty-one kilometers there, in time to find that little town in a great state of excitement, because three big shells had come from nobody knew where, and burst by the railroad station.

But the Prime Minister was not there, and it was dark, so we gathered up a guide and set off for la Panne, where the King and Queen are living. Neither of them was there; nobody but a gendarme on duty. The King was off with the troops and the Queen was looking after the wounded, who have overflowed all the hospitals. In the past week---just this one engagement---the Belgians have suffered 12,000 casualties.

The road from Furnes to la Panne and back lay close behind the lines, so that we could hear the steady roar of the fighting and see the bursting shells, particularly those from the British ships, which made a tremendous flash and roar.

We came on back to town, being stopped every minute by French outposts, and got to this hostelry at seven-thirty. While I was cleaning up, the Prime Minister came in and claimed me for dinner. He had his secretary, Count Lichtervelde, A. B., who is here looking after the wounded, and a couple of officers. And *then* we talked until the hands dropped off the clock and I was nearly dead for sleep. Then I took A. B. home to her hospital, through the streets darkened for the benefit of Count Zeppelin, and now I am ready for my rest.

I have plans for to-morrow, but shall see what happens to them when I see the Prime Minister in the morning.

GIBSON, Hugh (Secretary of the American Legation in Brussels, 1914) ; *A journal from our Legation in Belgium* ; New York ; Doubleday, Page & Company Garden City; 1917 :

<http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/memoir/Legation/GibsonTC.htm>

Footnotes.

It would be interesting compare with what **Roberto J. Payró** told about the same day in his *Diario de un testigo* (*La guerra vista desde Bruselas*) :

Original Spanish version :

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141027%20PAYRO%20DIARIO%20DE%20UN%20TESTIGO.pdf>

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141028%20PAYRO%20DIARIO%20DE%20UN%20TESTIGO.pdf>

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141022-1102%20PAYRO%20EN%20HOLANDA.pdf>

French version :

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141027%20PAYRO%20DIARIO%20DE%20UN%20TESTIGO%20FR.pdf>

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141028%20PAYRO%20DIARIO%20DE%20UN%20TESTIGO%20FR.pdf>

<http://www.idesetautres.be/upload/19141022-1102%20PAYRO%20EN%20HOLANDA%20FR.pdf>

It would be also interesting compare with what **Paul MAX** (cousin of the *bourgmestre Adolphe MAX*) told about the same day in his *Journal de guerre* (*Notes d'un Bruxellois pendant l'Occupation 1914-1918*) :

http://www.museedelavilledebruxelles.be/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/Fichier_PDF/Fonte/Journal_de%20guerre_de_Paul_Max_bdef.pdf