

December 18, 1918.—This afternoon a visit from the Comtesse de Mont Blanc and the Comtesse Jeanne de Belleville, who was condemned to death with Miss Cavell. She was at the services yesterday, and I had met them, but only for an instant. Sitting in my office this afternoon. She was a thin, intelligent-looking woman, with pale face, rather weary eyes (yet something of humour in them, too). . . .

Comtesse de Belleville began by saying that she had been presented to the King of England, somewhere, I don't know where, and that he had begun by asking her whether the American Legation at Brussels had been informed by the Germans of their intention to shoot Miss Cavell. I looked at her in stupefaction and then realized that the King . . . doubtless had never understood the case in the least. I told her that he had only to read the Legation's reports given to the Foreign Office and published in the *Times*.

She told me much of the Cavell story. She, the Countess, had been

drawn into the business by the fact that she had a nephew whom she wished to get out, and came to Brussels to learn the way. She found out and later on told the Princess de Cröy, who wished to send out some English. Then ultimately the underground was established: Mlle. Thuliez sent the men from Lille to Montigny, the Countess of Belleville thence passed them on to Brussels, and thence Miss Cavell passed them to Holland. The Princess de Cröy, she said, aided in and knew all about the matter. The countess said that her movements were watched by the Germans from the 15th of January that year to the day of her arrest, and that at her instruction they told her in detail everything that she had done, every step that she had taken from the 15th of January. She told me of an adventure with her spy, whom she eluded one day in Brussels only by leaping from a train.

Miss Cavell's detective was a man named Schmidt, who had been for thirty years in the English Army! She said one day to the Countess that she had trusted him, thought him English, but perhaps had said a word "*de trop*." In the van on the day of their condemnation Miss Cavell even shook hands with him.

The Countess asked me if Miss Cavell had received a visit that night of her condemnation. She said that at 10:30 they, the countess and Mlle. Thuliez, had heard her cell door open, and she had spoken. "Is Miss Cavell suffering?" they asked each other. I told her that it was doubtless Gahan leaving.