

On board W. P. Special
En route Paris to Rome - August 24, 1919.

Dear Folks:-

The days since I last wrote from Braxelly have been chock full of happenings. We had a day and a half free there, which enabled me to see the art museum, full of pictures by Rubens, Rembrandt, Van Dycke, etc. The Germans seem to have left them alone. I also went to the Botanical gardens and other points of interest. At night we went to the opera in the Royal Theatre, where King Albert has a box. That night the train took us to Ostend. In the morning a British Naval officer accompanied us on a truck ride to the German bases at Ostend and Zeebrugge. The Invincible and Intrepid, ships used by the British in bottling up these ports were still in position. A U-boat in dry dock, badly damaged by bombs dropped from an Allied aeroplane was also there. At Bruges, quite a ways inland, was the main German U-boat base where they had built huge docks on the canal, all roofed over and camouflaged. The Germans surely were clever. Everywhere I go I am more impressed by what they have done. And I have seen very little of the devastation in Belgium that I have read so much about. English propaganda?

From Ostend we went to Lille, so often mentioned in the papers during the war. It was held by the Germans and as the French would not allow the allies to shell it it escaped practically unharmed and was a great rest billet for the Germans. We made an auto trip from Lille, under guidance of a British general, to Paschendale Ridge, Ypres, Messines Ridge, Mt. Kemmel and Armentieres. The ground in the vicinity of Ypres is in a state of upheaval that is inconceivable unless it is seen. Tanks are lying about in all stages of destruction where they were mired. Ypres itself is non-existent. The next day we took another trip thru Lens, Vimy Ridge, Arras and Cambrai. It was easy to see the value of Vimy Ridge and the difficulty it gave the Canadians in capturing it. Under Arras is an enormous cave extending for miles, which the British used to bring whole divisions up to the front line without danger from shell-fire. The night was spent at Bohain and in the morning we made our last trip in the vicinity to St. Quentin, where the 27th and 30th American Divisions helped the British. Here we saw an underground canal 5 miles long, built by Napoleon. The Germans held it, put house boats in it and lived there peacefully only about half a mile from the front line. The Hindenburg line runs thru this district with thousands of pill boxes and 3 rows of barbed wire and trenches. Chinese laborers and German prisoners are clearing it up.

This ended the tour originally planned for us. But under the new schedule the train went to Paris for 4 days to re-stock. One day was lost to us thru mismanagement but we had 3 days free. I applied for leave to go to England and received it. The train left at 12 on the 21st, so I spent that morning trying to see parts of Paris I had missed on my former visit. The Louvre was closed, unfortunately, but I saw the outside and the Tuileries Gardens, then Notre Dame and St. Gervais, the church shelled by the Germans. So I have seen practically everything worth while in Paris now, except the Louvre, and I may get another day in Paris before sailing, in which to see that. At 12 we (about 6 of us) took the train for London by way of Boulogne and Folkestone. The trip took about 9 hours including $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours for crossing the channel. Much to my surprise no one was seasick. The trains were very comfortable and I was glad of a chance to ride in real European trains after spending a month in our hospital train. In London Bixby and I stayed at the Palace Hotel in Bloomsbury, which is under the direction of the American Y. M. C. A. The morning of the 22nd I went with a party of Am. officers on a walking trip with a Y. M. C. A. guide. He took us first to High Holborn and showed us some of the old houses, then into Channing Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields.

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We went thru some of the more modern law courts on to Fleet Street at Temple Bar. He showed us thru the very old law courts in the Temple where we saw Goldsmith's grave and the old Crusaders Church. A wigmaker's shop gave us an idea of the wigs worn by English lawyers. Finally we went to St. Paul's. It struck me as being the most wonderful cathedral I have yet seen. The graves of such men as Wellington, Nelson, Joshua Reynolds and Christopher Wren, the architect, were well worth seeing. We had lunch at the Chesire Cheese, a chop house built in 1667, where Sam Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and later Dickens used to spend much of their time. We had pigeon pie, jam pancakes and toasted cheese with a mug of ale. The place is just as it was in Dickens' time.

After that I went around on my own hook to see Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament and then the Tower. The best part of seeing London is to go thru places which figure so much in history and in Dickens. I felt quite at home in some of the old places. That night I saw a good English speaking show again. We left London at 8 the next morning and arrived in Paris at 6 P. M. The train was due to leave Paris at 10-30 P. M. or 22-30 as they say over here.

As I have been writing this letter a little at a time we have passed thru France, going thru the Frejns Tunnel, which is about 75 miles S. E. of dix-le-Bains, the great health resort. What we saw of the Alps was wonderful, the peacks covered with snow even at this time of year. I surely would like to spend a summer near here at Aix-le-Bains or Chamonix. We have just left Turin and are due to arrive at Rome the night of the 27th. We stay at Rome 2 days. I will make a schedule of our trip.

Aug. 27 - 29	Rome	
	29	Terin
29 - 30		Florence
30 - 31		Leghorn - It. Naval Academy
Sept. 1		Modena
2 - 3		Venice
	4	Udine (auto to Gorizian & battle fields)
	5	Treviso) auto
	6	Vicenza) "
6 - 7		Trento) "
	7	Verona) "
	8	Turin - It. Military Academy
	9	Genoa
10 - 12		to Brest by way of Marseilles and Lyon (maybe Paris)

I was sorry to hear about your auto accident, but mighty glad it was no worse. It's fine that Barbara is having such a fine time at camp and is doing so well. I hope Ernest is doing well. During my stay at Paris I received 4 letters from you at once, one dated July 28 and the latest one dated Aug. 7. So you see how irregular our mail is. I hope it won't be much worse while we are in Italy. Of course the extension of our trip will mean that we lose a good deal of time from our leave at home. But I ought to be home by the 20th. It only takes 26 hours from New York to Louisville so I shall have 10 days at home if required to report on the 1st of October. I won't forget Barbara's birthday and will be very glad to be at home then. I guess I've said my all now. We are fast approaching Genoa, from which we shall follow the coast to Rome arriving there tomorrow night, perhaps.

Love to all,
Maurice.

I am enclosing 10 of the best of the snapshots I have taken so far.

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August 24, 1919,

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Brussels have been chock full of
happenings. We had a day and
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68-48

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At 12 we (about 6 of us) took the train for London by way of Boulogne and Folkestone. The trip took about 9 hours including $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours for crossing the channel. Much to my surprise no one was seasick. The trains were very comfortable and I was glad of a chance to ride in real European trains after spending a month in our hospital train.

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houses then into Chancery Lane
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 academy
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 4 — Udine {auto to Gorizia
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 5 — Treviso | auto
 6 — Vicenza | auto
 6-7- Trento | auto
 7 — Verona | auto
 8 — Turin - It. military
 academy
 9 — Genoa
 10-12 to Brest by way of
 marseilles and Lyon
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