

CABLE ADDRESS: "WINDREAL".



THE WINDSOR HOTEL.

Montreal, 1st August 1914

Saturday Evening

10 P. M.

Dearest Love,

War has been declared by Germany against Russia + France! The blow fell today, + at about 6 o'clock this afternoon the cables brought the news. England has at once announced that she will stand by her ally - France, and therefore a declaration of war between England + Germany is expected at any moment. - The excitement here is something truly dreadful. I have never witnessed anything like it in all my life. Immense crowds pack the streets + watch the bulletins + buy up the

newspaper extras ² by the thousands,
as they appear ^{at} every short interval.
One hears nothing but the shouts
of the boys yelling out the latest
extras + latest war news. — after
school today there was nothing but war
talk. Tonight was the Eve of Tishabek
+ after service in school we all walked
down to St. Catherine Street to watch
the news coming in + the yelling
crowds of people. I have just come
into the Windsor Hotel for a few
minutes to let you know the news
by sending you these few lines in
case the newspapers are slow in
reaching St. Patrice — as you are
out of the reach of news there. —
When I left the corner of Peel Street
+ St. Catherine Street a few minutes
ago, the whole thoroughfare was
blocked by a huge grim looking

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crowd, intensely roused by the news, & recognizing that possibly the very existence of our Empire is at stake in this war. The gravity of the situation cannot be exaggerated. The hope is that the British fleet will be able to defeat the German fleet, and that England will prove to be still the mistress of the sea. Almost everything depends on that. It is also hoped that Italy ~~is~~ will keep out of the war, as in that case it is hoped France & Russia with England will prove a match on land for Germany & Austria.

In any case it is a dreadful condition of affairs. Business is already

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threatened with paralysis throughout the world by it, and the misery which such a gigantic war will cause is something awful to contemplate.

Everybody here blames the Emperor William for the whole trouble. It is felt that he could have prevented war if he had wished to have done so, by simply warning Austria that he would not join her if she went to war. - You will remember I told you long long ago that I believed it was only a question of time when Germany would strike & plunge the world in war. and now the hour has come. Let us hope that England will come out victorious and that the British Empire will emerge from the struggle stronger than ever.

Melodora was down watching the bullets & extras too, of course, and has cabled Katie & Louisa to of course not risk crossing until further notice. Violet will be in a bad fix if the Germans are defeated & Berlin besieged, but I hardly think that even if the Germans

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are defeated there will be much chance for a Russian, French or English army to penetrate as far as Berlin. But - it will be very uncomfortable + anxious for her there.

I saw Fanny Joseph after school today. Of course she + Rachel will have to stay here until the war is over. Tell Annette + Monte she asked about them. + St. Patrice and she thinks of going down there.

Kenneth was also in school today + I told him all the St. Patrice news.

I also saw Marguerite Mendes in school this morning. The first time I have seen her since her arrival. She is now staying at Sarah Matilda's.

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She asked after you & all the children.
I told her you would not return
till the end of August.

Love + kisses to Raphael, Jessica
Gabriel + Esther. Ask Esther if
she misses not being able to pull
Repo's whiskers. - I suppose
Raphael will want to read the
war news. - I kept a diary of
the Franco-Prussian War when I
was his age.

With love + dix millions

Your devoted
Clarence.

I shall try & send the trunk by
Tuesday's boat. - I received your
Post-card written Friday morning
this afternoon. - I cannot say yet
when I shall be able to return to St. Patrie
as the selling of that coal + discharge of ship
have been badly delayed by the war crisis.