

# AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER

WILLIAM YORKE STEVENSON



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AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER





LIEUT. MARQUIS ROBERT DE KERSAUSON DE PENNENDREFF  
Commanding Section Sanitaire Américaine N<sup>o</sup>. 1

# AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER

BY

WILLIAM YORKE STEVENSON

*Section No. 1, American Ambulance*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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1917

## PREFACE

IN presenting the following diary to the public, a few words of introduction may not seem superfluous. The writer is a young American who usually is not given to self-expression, although a number of articles from his pen have been published in various magazines, and a book of early sporting experiences was published by Altemus, some years ago, under the title *Joys of Sports*. On March 1, 1916, he left his family and his position as financial editor on a Philadelphia newspaper, because he felt strongly this country's attitude with regard to the war, and wished to join the few volunteers who then sought, as far as in their power lay, to pay the debt of service which this nation owed to France. He kept a rough diary which, as the occasion offered, he forwarded to his people. It was written offhand, without the remotest idea of its publication. It is this that constitutes its value at this time.

Any one who has made it his business to read every book hitherto published by correspondents and others will realize how few there are in which can be found so many practical details of the things one wants to know, or which give so realistic a view of the war at close range, with its strange mixture of horrors, pleasures, and realities, divested of all literary effort or desire to impress.

These notes are here published almost as jotted down at odd times, here and there, where the man happened to be. Only a few entries felt to be unprintable have been omitted, and a few expletives which slipped in when under a fever of excitement in action.

Taken as a whole, the diary offers a glimpse of real life at the Front — quite different from the view obtained by the personally conducted visitor — as lived by the men who are doing duty. As such, it may be of use to our young men about to enter upon the great adventure. The reader will find in it no heroics, no attempt at a pose, no desire to magnify the work

or its dangers. It is but fair, therefore, to supplement the young man's simple statement of facts, by publishing, along with the diary, a letter written to a member of his family by Mr. John H. McFadden, Jr., who, in charge of the Department of Equipment of the American Ambulance Field Service, visited his Section in September last, at a time when the strain of work was probably not at its worst, and yet was described by him as follows: —

*September 9, 1916.*

*My dear Mrs. S.: —*

I have just returned from a visit to Section No. 1, where Yorke is, and although he probably has written to you describing his work, he also probably has omitted a good deal, owing to the fact of his being a member of the Section. After seeing the extraordinary work that those boys are doing up there, I felt that I would like to write to you and tell you all about it.

A good many of the Sections are now living under canvas and have often found difficulty in finding a suitable place to cook. So that we have had built a kitchen on two wheels which

is pulled along by a big two-ton White truck used for sitting cases, and the real reason of my visit was to leave one with Section No. 1. As it happens, they are situated at the present moment in a splendid château (the Château de Billefont) about four kilometers outside of Verdun. Up to a few weeks ago it was the headquarters of some French officers, but the Germans, having got hold of the fact, shelled them out, so that it has made an ideal place for our men.

The "poste de secours" to which they are attached is six kilometers the other side of Verdun; and since ten days before my arrival, and during my stay, the French have been doing incessant attacking and counter-attacking, and the work of carrying the wounded has been practically continuous night and day.

On going to the "poste de secours" from the château, you pass through Verdun and continue on a wide, level road for about one kilometer, and then you start up a very steep hill, which continues right to the "poste de secours," for five kilometers. This road is very narrow and sufficiently dangerous from a driving point of view apart from the fact that it is shelled continuously day and night. In fact, the duty of Townsend, Section Director, is to go out every morning at daybreak with a couple of men and fill up the holes which have

been made during the hours of darkness, so that our cars will not fall into them.

The "poste" itself is only one hundred and fifty yards from Fort St. Michel, which, of course, accounts for the attention which that part of the country gets from the German artillery. Besides this, the whole valley and hillsides are covered with French batteries, and the din at the top of the hill makes it impossible to talk in anything like an ordinary voice.

The day driving is comparatively nothing. The fact that every car has been hit has made no impression whatsoever on the men. I do not mean to say by this that they are in the least bit reckless or foolhardy — on the contrary, they take all possible precautions; but when there is anything to be done, it is carried out without question.

The part, however, for which they deserve all the praise that we can give them, is for their driving at night. Naturally, no lights are allowed, and I have never seen a country that can produce darker nights than that district. You can try and imagine starting from the top of that hill with a car full of wounded, driving down a narrow hillside road in a blackness impenetrable for more than a yard. If it were not for the light given by the firing of the guns and hand-grenades, the work would be well-nigh impossible.

What makes it more difficult still is, that it is at night that all the traffic starts and the ammunition is brought up to the various batteries, and continually you are finding a team of horses almost on the top of the car before you have any idea of their presence. The round trip from the "poste de secours" to the hospital takes from two hours and a half to three hours, which averages a speed of about ten kilometers an hour. This will give you an idea how slowly one has to go.

As I said in the beginning, this Section had been doing this work for ten days before I got there, and yet there was not the slightest sign of fatigue or impatience. I doubt if any man in the Section during that time had had five hours' consecutive sleep. But far from shirking what they had to do, they were each and every one of them attempting more than their share. One night, for example, the Médecin Chef who had charge of the "poste," received word to prepare for an unusual number of wounded on account of an expected attack, and fearing that Section No. 1 might not be able to handle the situation alone, he called out a French Section which was in Verdun as reserve. I can assure you that no deeper insult could have been offered to poor Townsend, and every man in the Section worked double time that night. Needless to say the

French Section stayed where it was — “In reserve.” The idea that any situation was too big for them to handle was something not to be thought of.

No matter how carefully a man drives at night, a number of accidents are bound to occur. In one night, there were six. Of course, these are minor accidents and the damage can be repaired in a fairly short time. For instance, the White Camion one night went into a ditch; two cars went head-on into each other in the darkness; two more cars went into ditches, and another fell into a shell hole.

Occasionally, of course, something occurs which will put a car out of commission for three or four days, and that means that the Section is that much short. If this sort of thing happens too often, the authorities get impatient and threaten to replace the incomplete Section by a complete one — which, of course, almost breaks the hearts of our fellows; and it occurs to me that it would be a splendid thing if we could have one or two cars in reserve for each Section, to prevent this contingency ever happening.

Just briefly, I have tried as nearly as possible to give you an exact picture of the work that Yorke and the rest of the fellows in Section No. 1 are doing. Without exaggeration, and without any idea of blood-curdling stories,

it really impressed me as so tremendously fine, that I did not feel that we were giving them all the praise they deserve.

I hope you have not found this letter too long and will not think that I am bothering you too much, but nothing that I can say can give you an idea of how splendid those boys are, and I cannot help feeling that nothing should be left untried to give them all the assistance in our power.

Hoping that you are well, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

JACK McFADDEN.

For service even more exposing than that described by Mr. McFadden, rendered on the 11th of July, 1916, on the occasion of the gas attack in the battle for Souville-Tavannes, the entire Section 1 had already been cited before the Division of the Second Army to which it was attached. A second citation was given the Section for the work referred to in Mr. McFadden's letter, which was the battle for Fleury, when again the entire Section so distinguished itself. This time, however, it was cited before the Army. Along with these official citations some wonder-

ful letters were addressed to Lieutenant de Kersauson de Pennendreff by the surgeons in charge of the "poste de secours" and those who were in charge of the Sanitary Service to which the Section was attached. Since then, the newspapers have reported a third citation for the Section; and recently, when Hon. A. Piatt Andrew, for his distinguished service to France, was awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honor, he chose to receive it with Section 1, because it is the oldest of the American Sections, and because he drove with it before he became the head of the American Ambulance Field Service.

General Ragueneau, of General Nivelle's Staff, performed the ceremony, which took place in the fine courtyard of a splendid sixteenth-century château, in which Section 1 was then quartered. Troops formed three sides of a square, and the "ambulanciers" the fourth. Fate was propitious, and the weather was the only sunny weather they had enjoyed since the winter had set in. The big guns were loudly booming, and German aviators

were dropping bombs on the village just outside the château, also in the river near their dining-tent: quite a glorious staging for a scene of this kind.

After the ceremony, Major Andrew, as he is now called, presented the Section with a section flag of blue silk, edged with gold fringe, with the American eagle in the center. In the top corner is pinned the Croix de Guerre, with the two stars, which mean that the Section has been twice cited before the Army. As a fact, now, it should be three stars, as recently it has received a third citation, which, for the present, again places Section 1 at the head of all the American Sections, a proud position which it occupied last autumn with two citations. Later, however, Section 8 caught up to it. But to return to the flag bestowed upon it by Major Andrew: in the other corners are inscribed the names of the battles in which the Section has figured: Ypres, Dunkerque, Somme, Verdun, Argonne, Aisne, and so on: a proud record, to be sure.

After the customary ceremony, the Gen-

eral advanced toward the young drivers, who were introduced to him by name, and whose hands he shook. He afterwards invited some of the older men to join him and the Staff in a glass of wine. He made them a most complimentary speech, which ended a pleasant as well as most honorable experience.

Having come back to this country on furlough to spend Christmas at home, Mr. Stevenson returned to France on March 4, 1917, and upon arrival in Paris found that his Lieutenant, the Marquis Robert de Kersauson de Pennendreff, had kept his place for him in the Section; he at once, therefore, returned to Verdun to join his squad. Section 1 shortly afterwards was transferred to Champagne and the Aisne where the heaviest fighting of the war was then expected to take place. Since then that expectation bids fair to be realized.

Mr. McFadden recently returned to France after a most successful money-raising campaign in this country, through which the American "Ambulanciers," who

for nearly three years have been keeping up the honor of this country on the fighting line, will be provided with proper cars and equipment. They deserve it well. And Hon. A. Piatt Andrew, Henry D. Sleeper, of Boston, who represents the work in this country, and Mr. John H. McFadden, of Philadelphia, should be congratulated upon the splendid support which they have obtained for those remarkable American volunteer boys.

One can but regret that the now historic "Ambulance No. 10" will appear no more in the annals of the Field Service. It has done noble work, however, and should have a decent burial in some American War Museum. The celebrated "Flivver," or "Tin Lizzie," as our diarist calls her, should not be allowed to end on a scrap-heap. Who can estimate the number of lives she has helped to save? She is a veteran, and deserves an honorable ending. We should not be ungrateful to a thing which has served us so faithfully.

We, who for so long remained out of the conflict, should never forget the debt of

gratitude which we owe to these young fellows of our race, who from the first, with a keen sense of honor and splendid courage, unhesitatingly realized their duty to France and to the ideals which our Nation professed to uphold, and who went alone and served when we discussed and did nothing. To them, to our splendid aviators, and to those who enlisted in the Foreign Legion, be all honor and praise for representing, unbidden, the true spirit of the American Nation.

“Doing my part of the everyday care —  
Human and simple my lot and my share—  
I am aware of a marvelous thing:  
Voices that murmur and ethers that ring  
In the far stellar spaces where cherubim  
sing.”

Since the diary was written, the author has been placed in command of Section 1 and has been awarded the Croix de Guerre. The citation, signed by a general whose name is withheld for the present, reads as follows:—

“The Commandant Adjoint Stevenson, W. Yorke, American Sanitary Section

No. 1, enlisted volunteer since February, 1916.

“Commandant Adjoint of the American Sanitary Section No. 1, never hesitating to expose himself, has largely contributed to the organization and direction of the evacuations under enemy fire. Brave, devoted, and of a rare modesty.”

THE EDITOR.

August 1, 1917.

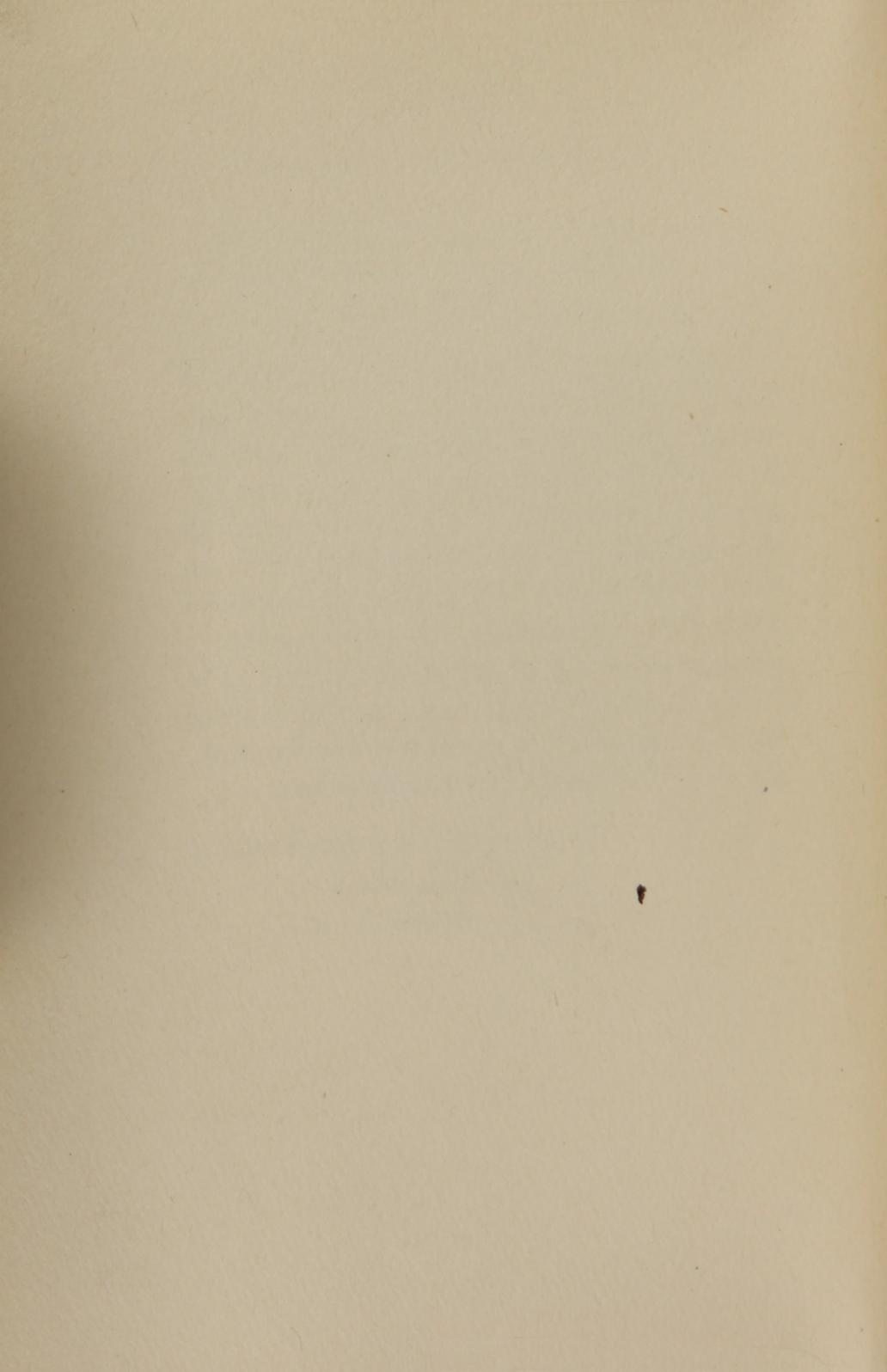
## NOTE

THIS is not a Treatise on the War. I know nothing about it. General Joffre never consulted me in developing his plans. It was rather careless on his part, but I'll try to forgive him. Nor did the German General Staff make any special effort to obtain my views. Of course, it has been their loss. Therefore, this little book is merely a record of what one driver of a "Tin Lizzie" happened to see during some nine months spent on the Somme, around Verdun and in the Argonne.

WILLIAM YORKE STEVENSON

*Ambulance Driver*

*Section No. 1*



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**AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER**



# AT THE FRONT IN A “FLIVVER”

## CHAPTER I

### EXPLANATORY

“ONT fait preuve du plus brillant courage et du plus complet dévouement.”<sup>1</sup>

The old General ceased reading from the Army Corps Citation and, stepping forward, said: —

“Gentlemen, as you carry no regimental standard, I have the honor of pinning the Croix de Guerre upon this car as representing the Section.”

<sup>1</sup> *General Order No. 189.*  
*Group D. E. Staff Headquarters, S. C. No. 6611.*  
*November 5th, 1916.*

The General Commanding the Group D. E., cites by the order of the Army Corps: Sanitary American Section No. 1, under the command of the Lieutenant Robert de Kersauson de Pennendreff and of the American Officer Herbert Townsend: In August and September, 1916, has assured the evacuation of the wounded of three Divisions successively in a section particularly

## 2 AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER

IT WAS A "FLIVVER"!!

Just a plain "flivver" with an ambulance body the after overhang of which gave the outfit the graceful aspect of an overfed June-bug.

The following pages were not written for the instruction of the United States Army General Staff, although one might think, from the astonishing questions one is asked on returning from the maelstrom, that an ordinary Ambulance driver had the intimate ear of Generals Joffre and Nivelle, and had been consulted by them prior to most of their major operations. Neither is this a treatise on "How to Run an Ambulance Corps" — A. Piatt Andrew and his able assistants can tell you all about that. This is merely the record of my intimate personal daily existence with the kindly "bunch" of twenty happy-go-lucky pirates, gathered from all

dangerous; has asked as a favor to retain this service, in which officers and conductors have given proof of the most brilliant courage and of the most complete devotion.

(Signed) *The General Commanding Group D. E.*

MANGIN.

parts of the United States, with whom I had the good fortune to be thrown for some ten months of the most interesting, and, I am almost tempted to say, the happiest, months of my life.

Judging from the letters received from home, the Field Ambulance Sections are supposed to spend their entire time breathing battle-smoke and gases; dodging shells and swabbing cars saturated with blood. As a matter of fact, some two thirds of the time is spent "en repos," where, apart from the few scheduled runs, the periodical washing of the cars, and the putting them in first-class repair, the drivers literally loaf.

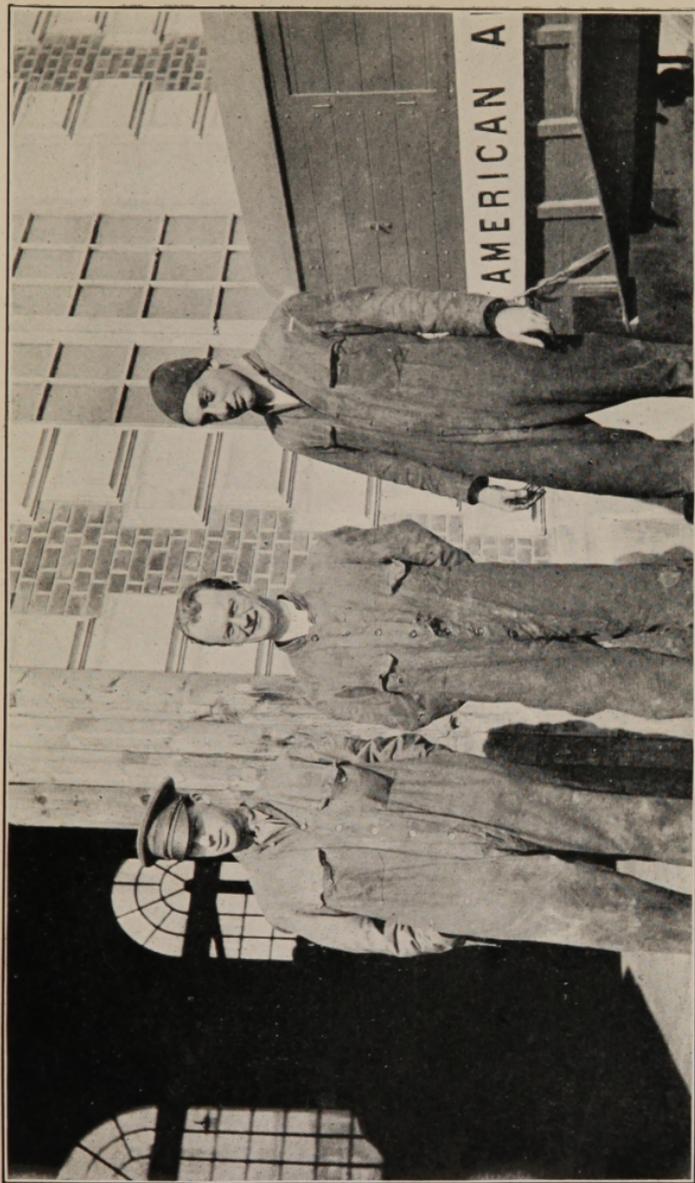
The remaining third, however, is more or less strenuous. But even then, this depends upon what portion of the battle line the Division to which the Section is attached happens to be placed. Generally speaking, each Division has an Ambulance Section, though lately the French have modified this system to a certain extent, and one becomes part of a "groupe-ment" which may include more than one

#### 4 AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER

Division. At Verdun we worked with four Divisions at various times, day and night, and at times under really intense fire. At other times, as on the Aisne, on the Somme, and in the Argonne, we worked even closer to the Boches than at Verdun, but there happened to be no really active fighting during those periods. Hence, when the front line is mentioned, it may often mean nothing of serious importance, and yet again it may mean the most appalling activity.

For instance, at the time of the unfortunate death of Richard Hall, of Section 3, and again on the occasion of the sad taking off of Kelly, of Section 4, these squads were working in what were thought for the moment to be quiet sectors. Yet Section 1, at Souville, and during the battle of Fleury, had nearly all of its cars hit, but not one man was even scratched. Such is the luck of the game!

When we four new recruits — Roche, who was Captain of the Princeton Crew in 1911, Mason, hurdles at Harvard, 1908, Crane, also Harvard, and myself — first



AT THE MACHINE-SHOP AT NEULLY  
William Dwight Crane, William Yorke Stevenson, and Robert T. Roche



made our appearance on the grounds of the big hospital at Neuilly, we were regarded with a certain amount of interest by the khaki-clad, swank-looking drivers who happened to be loafing about the yard at the time. The impression they made upon us was one of questioning doubt. One felt as though they were uncertain in their minds as to whether one had skipped the country with somebody's wad or his wife, or both.

As a matter of fact, I doubt if more than half the men go over to France from really altruistic motives, although later on France gets a sort of grip on you that is hard to explain, and one begins to want to stay and to "see it through." It is her wonderful steadfastness in the terrible vicissitudes through which she has passed. It is the unfailing cheerfulness of the people and the way they regard the War as a disagreeable duty to be performed. No heroics! No lamentations! They go about the bloody business as if it were part of the day's work.

All this does not get to one for a while,

but it gradually sinks in; and few of the returning men I have seen were going home willingly. It was because of affairs, family, financial, or collegiate; and nearly every one hoped to be able to come back and be in at the finish. Indeed, several did come back during my stay, and since my return to America I hear of more who have felt the strong call. Life seems so banal after one has been a part, however humble, of history in the making. As I write, I know that if I had my way, I should be back there washing my old "Tin Lizzie" in some muddy horsepond, right now.

Well, after proving we were white, fairly healthy, and not palpable fugitives from the law, we were permitted to purchase uniforms, various sundries, and to join the other new recruits burrowing their oily way into the vitals of more or less dilapidated heaps of junk which we were told were cars that had been brought back from the front to be overhauled.

The following pages I have left in diary form, just as they were jotted down at

irregular intervals. In reading them over, I can see the gradual development of the raw "freshman," in the presence of things that strike him as strange at first, until he reaches the more or less "fed-up" attitude of the average so-called veteran.

*March 5, 1916.* On board French Line S.S. Rochambeau. Carrying three bundles, a bag, a bunch of rugs, and A. B.'s luncheon taken at the Holland House, I boarded the Rochambeau with some effort yesterday just as the whistle sounded, while I kissed various people good-bye. For a week I have been doing nothing else. This teary sob-stuff gets on one's nerves, particularly when one is scared to death anyhow. It's the least kind thing one person can do to another, to call his attention to various things that may happen to him on a sea trip. I met a number of nice people, — a Frenchman, a priest, and a silk buyer; the latter wept most of the way out of New York Harbor, recalling "the wife" at home, and giving out a lot of maudlin stuff. I inquired how long he expected to

remain abroad and he said, "Ten days"! Since then I have disliked him intensely. He kicks about the food too! I have not, as yet, met the other Ambulance men. There are about six, but they keep to themselves.

Thank Heaven, the bartender knows how to mix a dry martini. I've got a fine stateroom. The food is poor and scanty, but I expected that. The ship is short-handed and very deep in the water, — even carrying freight piled high on the after deck. Only one good-looker aboard and the Captain has already nailed her — curses! I've met a nice Englishman who is going back to his mother to die. He has lung trouble and prefers mother to his wife and family and Reading, Pennsylvania, as a place to finish off. His mother lives at Grenoble, in the Alps. One Frenchman ordered onion soup this morning for breakfast. Everybody left the table. I got a bully lot of farewell letters, gifts, and telegrams — some from quite unexpected sources. It's nice to find one has so many friends, but why do they all give one shaving kits?

*March 8.* Nothing doing yesterday. Met most of the Ambulance men, — nice fellows, — R. T. Roche, the aforesaid Captain of Princeton Crew in 1911, Austin B. Mason, of Boston and of hurdles fame at Harvard, 1908, and William Dwight Crane, of New York and Harvard. Cargo mostly ether and oil; also munitions. There is a heavy roll, — racks on table; many dishes broken; tramp steamer caused excitement, likewise hot air about possible German raider. The boys are trying to get up a concert with a “busted” piano and no one to sing. Just met an ex-American Ambulance man. Was in the Pont-à-Mousson Section and got Croix de Guerre. He used to do newspaper work. He is now with a “bunch” from Pittsburgh backed by a rich woman who wishes to drive her own car at the front. She’s got a swell chance! He is beginning to get weary of his crowd. They only have one car in “White” and they expect to operate as an Individual Unit!!!!

*March 9.* Still no news as to how the fight went at Verdun. Expected surely

some information from Eiffel Tower; but if the Captain has received any, he is keeping it dark. More German-raider scares, when passing several freighters. I have met a nice old Italian returning from America where he was buying horses for his government. One of his sons already has been killed in the battle of Trentino. Another son also is at the front. He does all kinds of sleight-of-hand tricks. The sea has calmed down again, and the weather is fine. Funny how people act in these raider rumors — women get excited, men pretend to be very calm and joke nervously about being marooned on a desert island *à la* Robinson Crusoe. The only one I'd like to be marooned with seems to have made a date with some one else. The old Italian has great respect for the Germans, says they are the best business men — not bright, but very efficient. He thinks that neither side has as yet been even moderately weakened and looks for the war to last at least two years more. Almost every one else thinks a year should end it.

*March 10.* At last news from Verdun.

French still holding. Also news of British and Russian gains. Several ships (Allies) sunk; and one German boat reported escaped from internment at Bordeaux. This aroused some uneasiness, as that is our destination. I have given all my books to the sick Englishman, as he says he can't get anything but French literature at Grenoble. Met a returning French officer — Comte de Portanier de la Rochette. He has been ten months in the trenches without so much as a scratch. Has been on an eight days' leave in the United States! Met a former Philadelphian, by name Josiah Williams, a doctor, who has been in the war since the start. He is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, class '88. Was in the battle of the Champagne tending first *poste de secours*. Very interesting. He thinks the French have them licked now. Knows Drs. "Billy" White, "Jim" Hutchinson, and used to know Dr. Pepper.

*March 11.* Quite rough. De la Rochette says that in the Champagne battle, when they captured German trenches, he, himself, found seven dead Germans chained

to their machine guns. Head winds and seas will make us a day late at least. The silk merchant is seasick, so we've had a respite on "the wife back in the States" stuff. I've met a young woman of uncertain vintage who is on her way to Monte Carlo. Spends her time knocking American efforts to help France; says the Ambulance men only go over for notoriety's sake. I let her rave on, and when she was all through, bid her good-night, remarking that I was doing that myself. I hope it taught her a lesson.

*March 12.* The Catholic priest and some of his friends announce that they will not attend the concert because little "blondy" collected the money. The ladies are rabid. One went to the priest and told him she understood that his job included being charitable to sinners as well as others. Priest very sheepish and presented a French novel for the auction! The little blonde, of course, is a professional; but she has done more than any one else in the way of getting up things for the wounded. The sea is so calm that several people I

had not seen before turned up on deck. Imagine being in an 8 x 10 hole for eight days. Passed several tramps. Boats have been swung out and most people expect to sleep for the next two nights more or less fully dressed. We are now in the War Zone. We hold the auction and concert to-night.

*March 14.* Anchored at the harbor mouth and came up late. After much red tape got off boat. They caught one suspect — a German Jew.

“Taisez-vous,  
Méfiez-vous,  
Les oreilles ennemies vous écoutent.”

This sign is everywhere posted, on trains, etc. Bordeaux little changed except for lack of autos. Women on all tram cars, and conductors on trains are women. There is quite a movement of troops, and trains are crowded. The reserves are all in the old red pants and caps, the new war pale blue being only used at the front. The new metal helmet is almost a replica of the old pikemen's casques, only enameled a pale dull blue-gray, and the comb is ap-

plied instead of being all of one piece. It is very light and of tough steel.

It is spring in the south. Cherry blossoms and buttercups, and everywhere the vineyards are being tended and the fields sown. Farther north it is still only ploughing time.

At Poitiers we saw the first train-load of German prisoners; most of them were thoroughly satisfied to be out of the war. I must admit, though, that the tales of their being starved were not borne out by these men. They looked quite healthy. We also saw a train of Red Cross cars carrying wounded to the south for recuperation. Only the slightly injured, however. It seemed almost like returning to one's home to see the familiar towns again, Tours, Blois, and the rest. The curious, hazy atmosphere of France, the tiny villages nestling about their castles like chickens around the mother hen, and, above all, the familiar poplars. Paris is very quiet and dark; but there are plenty of cabs and taxis, and food is as good as ever.

## CHAPTER II

PARIS — NEUILLY

1916

In the wax-works of Nature they strike  
Off each minute some face for life's hike,  
And of billions of mugs,  
On us, poor human bugs,  
There are no two exactly alike.

*Euwer*

PARIS, *March* 16. To-day I met A. Piatt Andrew — bully fellow — much younger than I expected. He's the "whole show" out at Neuilly. Other fellows are very nice too. Several start for the Front to-morrow, so the Equipment Department is very busy. I had to see half a dozen officials, French and American, to get viséd. We are to take our driver's exams. to-morrow, and I ordered clothes. At Maxim's for dinner, I sat next to a party of sad-rich American Jews who were lionizing a fat English Jew in uniform. It was pathetic. Just as they were ordering the proverbial "wine," a crippled French

aviator came in. The whole restaurant did him silent homage. The Aviation Corps of all the armies are by all odds the biggest heroes. The whole café, therefore, drank various toasts to him, and the fat Jews just faded from sight.

Just now the Neuilly Hospital is being cleared of its wounded as much as possible. It looks as if they expected a big Ally offensive as soon as the Verdun battle is over.<sup>1</sup> There are very few wounded in Paris at present. Most of the Ambulance men are at the Front. They have organized a new special fifteen-day corps for emergencies. It is now at Verdun. I hope I get a chance, although, of course, the turns go more or less by seniority. The food is fair at the hospital — all eat at long tables. There is an immense staff of nurses, doctors, and orderlies, and the place is much larger than I expected. Also it has a much higher standing with officialdom than I had been led to believe. For instance, in getting our residence permit, the moment we entered the court we were

<sup>1</sup> This has proved to be the case.

passed ahead of a large crowd who were awaiting their turns. The same thing occurred at the tailor's.

The first growl I've heard over war burdens was from a taxi-driver, who explained why his engine was "missing," by the fact that all the expert mechanics were at the Front and they sent him out these days with an unrepaired "sale comme ça! . . ." (meaning more besides). The only things that never change in Paris are the "cocottes" at Maxim's. They are ever the same.

*March 18.* Busy days, these. I am still "chasing" all around the city after various necessary papers. I passed auto exam. O.K. We are sleeping in a big barnlike room under the roof. They call it "the Zeppelin apartment." Only one cold shower. You have to warm your own shaving-water. Only one toilet for eighty men. Cots are nice, warm, and clean. It is hard to sleep, on account of the continual coming and going. I got called at 2 A.M. last night. A trainload of wounded arrived from the Vosges; one French

General among them. We were not taken along, as we have not yet received our uniforms and would not be allowed within the Station without them.

The fellows got through at 7. Some of the new ones looked pretty sick from their first experience with the smell of gangrene and dysentery. All washed their teeth and one man had a cut treated. This is very necessary. Several of the internes have contracted gangrene and tetanus at intervals.

I talked to one man who had to be operated on seven times in the stomach. He had drains in him for weeks. Then hernia followed and he was operated on for that. He is an amusing bird. He walks about bent up like an old man. After telling me all the harrowing details, he added: "And they gave me a medal for it! I'd rather they'd given me a new stomach!"

The French Government has taken charge of the hospital now, and they say the rules are much more rigid, and the "étiquette militaire" much more pronounced. The old men "kick" when they

come back from the Front, where everything goes! They say the place no longer feels like the club it formerly was.

I saw to-day the stuff captured from the Germans, now at the Invalides. As I entered, a military funeral came out. It must have been some high official. Looking into the German cannon muzzles gave one a rather sinking feeling, as the same types of weapons will be firing at us shortly. The workmanship was very good in the guns, but rather coarse (as compared to the French) in the aeroplanes.

*March 19.* I had some fun to-day. I put on the uniform and, for a time, felt like an awful ass strutting about the streets in it, but it gets one a lot of privileges: half price at theaters, half price for such drinks as you are permitted, i.e., wines, beer, but no "hard" liquor, except between 11 A.M. and 2 P.M. and 5 and 9 P.M., and one must not be seen in uniform on the terraces of cafés. All drinks must be taken indoors. Also etiquette has it that if any sort of spree is contemplated one must dress in civilian clothes.

Incidentally, as the "cocottes" scorn any one not in uniform and are not permitted any alcoholic liquors whatever, the whole system works very well in keeping the men straight.

The fun referred to above was due to the fact that our uniform is almost identical with that of the English officers, unless one is close enough to note the Red Cross insignia on the cap and buttons. Hence you can strut along the Boulevard and be steadily saluted by all the raw "Tom-mies," of whom there are legions. At first it nearly took my breath away; but I managed to pull a solemn face and to salute stiffly back, although I started to use the *left* hand and I heard one of them remark about it. By the way, one of our drivers back from the Verdun battle tells me that the French, within a couple of days of the start on their big drive, had at least a million men massed there, and that the "Germs" had no more chance of getting through than the Republican Party at home has next fall.

Dr. Gros gave us a talk on general be-

havior. He said one must obliterate all one's personal desires, and work for the good of France and France alone; not for personal glory, dodging shells, and that sort of thing. One is supposed to take extreme care of one's self and of one's machine, and not to take it into dangerous places unless so ordered. For instance, there are definite rules in Paris as to Zeppelin raids. The moment the warning is given, each car, in the parking space at the hospital, must be placed at a hundred-foot interval from every other car, — more if possible, — so that not many will be injured. Men must then come indoors in order not to be hurt. When either civil or military calls come from the struck district of the city, cars must not proceed in caravan order, but must assume intervals not less than a hundred yards apart, so that not more than one car can be struck. No lights are to be used unless specifically permitted by French authorities. All dormitory lights must also be extinguished.

*March 20.* I worked all day in the gar-

age. At 7 P.M. we received notice that a train of "blessés" was due at La Chapelle at 4 A.M. I got more or less sleep and went out in the "padded cell"; and found more cars than were needed, but helped to fill them. The main trouble is that each ambulance and set of ambulances have different methods of holding the stretchers, which the new men must find out for themselves. It is a trifle hard on the wounded, as they get jostled about much more than if all the holders were alike. The American Ambulance men have been so careful in handling the wounded, that now everything waits until they arrive to carry them from the train to the various corps of ambulances. There is here, at present, a new Canadian Corps with some very good McFarland cars.

When we got through at 7 A.M. we were told that another train would arrive at 5 P.M. Therefore we worked in the garage for a while, then went to bed until 4.30. The first load of wounded were in good condition. They smelt very little, and were self-controlled. A reason why the Ameri-

can Ambulance men now carry most of the wounded is because two men already have been killed by the French *brancardiers* letting them fall; and many have been seriously injured in being bumped about the head by careless handling. The cause really lies in their lack of understanding of the different mechanical appliances to hold the stretchers. The average Frenchman left in this employ is very dull.<sup>1</sup>

I have been surprised at the average small stature of the French soldiers, but they say it is a good thing in the trench warfare. Fred Dawson turned up from the Vosges to-day.

*March 21.* We broke the record for speed last night. We got 129 men out of the cars in nineteen minutes. I happened to draw the officers' car, and being better fed, some of them were heavy to move, but they were clean and were free from odor. One had his back broken: the trench had caved in on him; but they expect to

<sup>1</sup> The reason is that all skillful men, not at the Front, are in the munition factories; only old or very young men are used for this purpose around Paris.

save him, as he is not paralyzed. We got through at 11 P.M. I drove with an ass of a Belgian who tried to tell me all about his Pierce-Arrow! How E. would laugh!

*March 23.* I met Miss Townsend, of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, to-day. She is a nurse here. She greeted me as a long-lost friend. Another squad arrived from the Front with three cars for us, poor "boobs," to take to pieces and put together again. They are all going back, worse luck, so no vacant places yet. Parsons is going into the Aviation Corps. There are quite a number now who have gone from our Corps. Two new men arrived to-day, so I don't feel quite such a "freshman." I was complimented by the head of the mechanical department on quick and accurate work and was put in charge of a lot of fellows disassembling a "flivver." So far so good.

*March 24.* Raining. A "bunch" from Section No. 1 came down and had to be entertained. Ewell, the machinery boss, asked me to a Sunday luncheon. He says his wife was a Philadelphian and would

enjoy talking about the old town. I went in with him and Fenton and had tea at Ciros with Mrs. Ewell and a Miss Elliott from Savannah, a very nice girl.

*March 25.* A man in the private ward next to us died last night. Most of his brains were shot away. Another is expected to die shortly.

One "blessé" had a curiously tragic experience. He saw a friend looking over the trench parapet with his arm drawn back, holding a bomb ready to throw. Thinking he wanted the fuse lit, he did so, expecting the fellow to throw the bomb. But the man, not knowing the fuse was lit, did n't throw it and was blown to atoms. The man who lit the fuse, of course, was injured; that is how he happens to be here. The poor fellow was terribly depressed by the tragic result of his blunder.

They expect a big drive soon. The men have been issued a new kind of knife. It is like a brass-knuckle with a blade about eight inches long sticking out from the middle. The regular equipment for charging now consists of two dynamite cart-

ridges, six bombs, a knife, and a revolver: no guns at all.

I met a rather nice little French girl last night. There is a young Englishman in one of the hospitals, she told me, who has no arms, no legs, is stone blind and stone deaf. He can only feel and talk, and all he does is to beg to be killed. She says a friend of hers who nursed a man, blind and without arms, is going to marry him because she thinks it is her duty, although she does not care for him. She is not pretty; but as the man is blind it will not matter, she says. Such cases are not rare.

*March 27.* We had a funny time yesterday. We were all "canned" for the day because so many were late for roll-call (8.30). Every one of us was up and about, but we didn't know Budd, the Squad Lieutenant, was ready to call the roll. So instead of being permitted the usual afternoon passes, we were all told that we'd have to remain in until 7.30. Some kicked like steers because they had luncheon and dinner engagements. I had both, but said nothing, and the result was that I made a

hit with Budd, who took me out to supper at the Bal Tabarin and introduced me to a lot of what he calls his "Paris Squadarettes." He is really a very decent chap. They tried to teach me pool, which was somewhat amusing!! I took revenge on Budd this morning. I pulled him out of bed at 7 A.M. and rolled him on the floor. The usual weekly switch occurred between Neuilly and Juilly to-day. Five Fords here, by the way, are gifts of Johnny Fell — Mrs. Alexander Van Rensselaer's son.

I worked in the garage this A.M. and lunched with Ewell and his wife at their apartment. I met an Englishman named Vaughn; he is very rich, and has given himself and his car to the War Department. He is a sort of officer's chauffeur. He says they have already got the submarine that sank the Sussex. It seems that "subs" have learned how to cut the Channel net; so Havre, Boulogne, and Calais are closed. The "Germs" have invented a method of seeing under water, some of them no longer employ periscopes, but

the English, he says, are capturing them rapidly. The latest method, after sinking or netting a "sub," is to raise and repair it, and then operate it under its own number and colors. In this way many German "subs" have caught their own boats!! Also several German warships. Fears are being expressed by the Allies that America will get into the war over this latest Sussex outrage. What they hope is that we will break off diplomatic relations, thus enabling the English blockade to become really effective.

*March 28.* I had to go out in No. 42 to Juilly with Fenton<sup>1</sup> to fit a front axle on an old 74 (Daimler). Mac got a "skid" while carrying a hundred litres of gasoline out there, and bent the steering-gear. Parsons, an old hand, then took the wheel and tried to run her into Juilly. The gear locked when they got going fast and the car was ditched. Mac was thrown thirty feet and landed on his nose. A Frenchman

<sup>1</sup> Powel Fenton, Section No. 3. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Son of Dr. Thomas H. Fenton, president of the Art Club of that city. Fenton, later, served at Saloniki in Section No. 10.

landed on the roof of the car, but was n't hurt and neither was Parsons. We made the fifty-kilometer trip through Paris to Juilly in an hour and a quarter in the Ford, including a blow-out which we fixed in fifteen minutes. The return trip in the dark we did in one hour, although we had to relight the oil lamps four times — not being allowed to use the acetylenes. But we broke a spreader, hitting an island on the Boulevard! Two new men were taken out by Eno, whose job is to test out the raw recruits. Some job! Van was driving, tried to take a curve sharply, never having handled a Ford, and capsized completely. One man was shot clear, but Eno and Van remained under the car, which continued to run upside down for a couple of minutes. Neither man was hurt, but Eno said he thought the motor would never stop. He knew it was bound to catch fire, and he said he never spent such a rotten five minutes. We fixed the car, righted it, and it ran all right, except for a smashed dashboard and a dished hind wheel.

Some of the men here have had most

interesting careers. Budd was in the United States Army, then auto salesman, cowpuncher, and, when the war started, had to work as a waiter in a café until he could cash an American check. Aten is an explorer. Has been with Dr. Hiller, of the University of Pennsylvania, to Borneo; and also in the Arctic. Mason and Crane leave for the Front to-morrow. They happened to be the first men on the list of those who arrived on the same day I did.

*March 29.* A call came for La Chapelle for 1 A.M. We did a little diplomatic social stunt by inviting the Canadian Ambulance to 11 o'clock supper. It worked very nicely.

One hundred and forty-four wounded arrived from the Bois-des-Corbeaux in front of Verdun; mostly badly injured, many from liquid fire. I got back at 6 A.M.

I was told this morning that I might have the choice of joining the famous No. 2 Section — the so-called “Pont-à-Mousson” — but that they were now in retreat away back of the lines; or I might go with Roche to No. 1, formerly the Dunkerque Section, but which is now north of Amiens

at the junction of the British and French lines. This, they think, will be the "big bet" when the English offensive begins. So I took a chance on that. Andrew said he thought I had chosen wisely, even though, so far, this Section has not been particularly in the limelight. They say No. 1 and No. 4 (north of Toul) are likely to see the most action; but, of course, it's any one's guess. We leave on April 1st, according to present arrangements. I got a finger infected yesterday from working in the garage and getting a cut, and then carrying wounded; but they will fix me up in time to leave, they say. All bandaged now, hence "bum" writing. Oddly enough, Mrs. Hunter Scarlett (Miss Edith Townsend of Philadelphia, that was) fixed the bandages for me beautifully.

Ferguson<sup>1</sup> came back from Verdun to-day with his head all bandaged. He acquired some sort of skin affection from sleeping in some dirty place. They all call him the "grand blessé," and he gets all sorts of attention on the street!

<sup>1</sup> Danforth B. Ferguson, of Brooklyn, New York.

## CHAPTER III

### AT THE FRONT AT LAST

"They have oozed with the rest into a road and a river of mud, where the food and munition convoys get through three times in five. . . .

Where the pelting of steel is as impatient and persistent as the pelt of the sleet and as pitiless."

*John Curtis Underwood*

*April 1. CAPPY.* The last twenty-four hours have been more full of kaleidoscopic changes than any I have ever spent. Sitting here at Cappy within a mile of the front lines, with the incessant rumbling of the guns, the barking of the mitrailleuses and the shriek of the great shells in my ears, the world seems unreal.

It is a beautiful warm sunny day. An old lady in a little shop here has just sold me a couple of perfect *brioches* and some chocolate. We are waiting for a couple of men to carry back to Méricourt where we have our barracks. The railroad trip to Amiens was interesting, inasmuch as we saw such enormous movements of supplies, guns, and troops, including the most

remarkably colored armored trains with big six- and eight-inch cannon and aeroplane guns. They look about the same as the figured walnut stock of a fine shot-gun, the theory being that the mixed coloring is imperceptible in the fog or semi-darkness. We also passed many troop-trains, English, South African, and Australian.

At Amiens, which is the British Headquarters at present, we were met by three Section 1 men and lunched with them. Then we proceeded to Méricourt-sur-Somme, which is at the junction of the British and French lines. We saw two observation balloons and hundreds of camions along the road. Guns everywhere, soldiers everywhere, and long lines of tents on the hills. Met the "bunch"; all good sorts; and we were shown our bunks in an old tumble-down farmhouse. We sleep on straw on which we place our blankets. The place is said to be clean, although one of the men was down with "gale," a sort of mange, and left to-day for Amiens for treatment. We go to a pump for washing; but though it is cold now it will be warm



canal on one side has nothing to keep one from skidding into it. The road is full of shell holes and newly blown down or pierced trees. Men are killed there constantly, but the Germans only shell it when they know of an important movement. Individuals, or even individual autos, are not considered worth bothering with. It was about 4 P.M. on a bright afternoon, and the Germans could see us plainly as we went along. There was a terrific blast and discharge right out of a clump of bushes across the canal, and we found it was a huge eight-inch English naval gun which had been previously concealed. She fired right out over our heads; but I was not particularly startled, as I was so busy driving and watching the road. Then a German aeroplane came by, and all along the line the antiplane guns began to pop, studding the sky with puffs of fleecy white. It was a beautiful sight, although there is always some danger from the bits of falling shrapnel. The French Lieutenant at the advance post at Éclusier ordered me to take the car around

a corner of the wood out of sight, and to walk back, which I did. He then let me pick up a few relics such as "75" empty cases, and the men sold me a couple of German "77" obus noses (time fuses). I came back after collecting the "tin Derby" of the Médecin Chef who had been killed on the day before, because he exposed himself above the trench in order to bring back a dead soldier. He was criticized for doing it. In fact, anything foolhardy of that character, instead of being eulogized, is rather considered as reflecting on the intelligence of the man who does it.

I carried a few sick (not wounded) back to the hospital at Villers-Bretonneux. One had pneumonia, another syphilis. The doctors say that the latter has increased forty per cent since the passage of the Germans through Northern France in the first big advance to Paris.

The night brought a heavy bombardment, the heaviest since the Section has been here (three weeks). We climbed the hill after dinner to watch it — a wonderful sight — mixture of a thunderstorm

and Fourth of July; the incessant rumble of the guns with the great flashes lighting up the sky for miles, coupled with the beautiful blue-and-white flare bombs which hung in the heavens for half a minute or more at a time, making everything bright as day; then the range rockets from the observation forts indicating by colored lights whether the batteries were shooting too high or low or too much to right or left.

And above shone the calm stars looking down on a world gone mad.

*April 2.* We expected to be called out during the night, but when we reached the first lines this morning, we found that the expenditure of thousands of dollars' worth of shells by both sides had resulted, in our Sector of about six miles or more of line, in only two or three carloads of wounded — eight or twelve men! This was out of all proportion, it seems to me, to the effort made. Of course, there were a few dead, and there may have been a larger proportion of losses by the Germans, as it was they who made the attack.

The country is zigzagged with second-

ary and tertiary trenches and bristles with barbed-wire entanglements, but all around and in every direction the peasants are tilling the fields and the crops are growing. As I sit here now, in our garden at Méricourt, two old women are planting radishes and other early vegetables. Dandelions and violets are in blossom and above my head are the white buds of an apple tree. Yet an observation balloon is in the sky, aeroplanes buzz to and fro, and dominating even the twitter of the birds and the buzz of the insects is the steady rumble of the never-ceasing guns.

We had a physical inspection this afternoon; one man got sent back for treatment, and two for the mange, the same as the first man who had to go to the hospital. It is not really the mange, but a sort of thing akin to it. It looks like hives and is contracted in the trenches. The cure is scrubbing with stiff-bristled brushes until the skin bleeds and then washing with sulphur, which hurts like fire; but one is cured in about five days — until one catches it again.

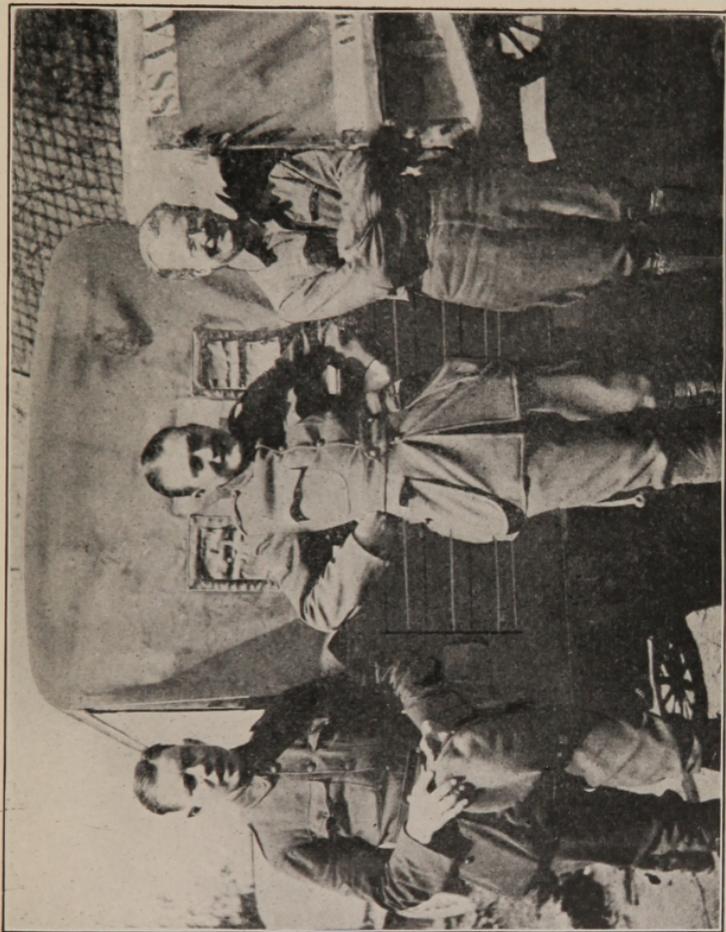
*April 3.* I spent the night at our advanced post at Cappy. The town is in ruins. There was no call for the trenches, the night was too clear. I awoke about 4 A.M., thinking it was late because I heard the birds chirping; and found it was only the rats squeaking. The place is full of them. They walk over you at night, but nobody cares. We sleep on the stretchers, which are quite comfortable. The town is shelled every day at intervals. The "Germs" threw a few shrapnel into it this morning, but it did no damage. We ducked around the corner when one whistled close overhead, but it fell in a field beyond. We came back here to Méricourt for breakfast. The country is full of quail and hares, but no one bothers them and they are very tame. There is considerable aeroplane shelling; but the "Germs" are so high up it is almost impossible to hit them. All the soldiers with whom I talk are keen for the war to cease, and every one hopes it will be over before another winter. I hear that we may move away from here, and go into

“repos” with the Sixth Army for about a month, prior to the big attack in the Champagne, but, of course it is only a rumor.

*April 5.* I watched the twenty-first “Suicide Club” practicing hand-grenade throwing this morning. Magoun<sup>1</sup> and I noted where the things were thrown, with the idea of picking up a few “fusées” afterwards. The grenades are pear-shaped, with a little sort of trigger and a ribbon with a button. The button is placed between the third and little fingers exactly as one would spin a top; then you throw, and as the missile leaves the hand, the pull of the ribbon and button relieves the spring which in turn relieves the contact point, so that when the grenade lands it explodes. Now and then they don’t land right, so Magoun later picked up a couple of unexploded ones and offered me one. I declined and told him he had better let them alone.

Just as we were arguing, up came a file

<sup>1</sup> Francis P. Magoun, Harvard; Cambridge, Massachusetts.



SAMUEL H. PAUL      L. BROOKE EDWARDS      W. YORKE STEVENSON  
THREE PHILADELPHIANS AT MERICOURT-CAPPY



of men with shovels to bury the unfired grenades. When they saw Magoun with two in his hands they nearly had a fit; said he was crazy, and to prove it they told us to get in a near-by trench and they'd show us. We all crawled in, and an expert then recocked the little spring and threw the grenade. She went off with a bang that shook the trench!

Oddly enough, that evening we got a call to carry two "blessés" just as we were sitting down to dinner. It was my turn to go, so I trailed down to the "poste de secours," minus dinner. Found one man with his face blown off and another one with his feet blown off. They told me he had been injured "fishing" in the canal. It appears that they threw hand-grenades in and collected the dead fish which floated up to the surface: a nice, sporting thing to do! I must say I could n't feel very sorry for them. The same night we heard a heavy explosion close to our farm and supposed it was an incoming obus. Shortly after, a call came and we collected three more poor fools hurt, and three dead,

from fiddling with hand-grenades. It occurred in the back room of the café in which we eat. I made it a point to rub it into Magoun, who is a kid just out of college. That day, in our Sector, the French lost more men through their own carelessness than from Boche activity.

I have been put in charge of the gasoline, oil, and tire supplies. Not a particularly cheerful job, as it cuts me out of a good deal of motoring. I must be at the Store between 7.30 and 9 A.M. and between 5 and 7 P.M. The "Germs" made a little coup last night, capturing about sixty French and a small outpost trench. The regiment which suffered the loss is now expected to retaliate in kind.

*April 7.* Collecting war trophies seems to be the chief recreation. It reminds me somewhat of the old marble days when one traded a clouded agate for two glass ones. A German "77" aluminum "fusée" is more prized than one made entirely of brass. The "105's" and "150's" are still rarer, and the Austrian "360's" are the best of all. Then, they trade hand-gren-

ades and swap all sorts of other odds and ends. They also make various little trinkets, like inkstands, match-cases, vases, out of the "75's." If the men worked as hard on keeping their cars tuned up as they do making souvenirs, this would be the best Section ever.

I have been switched on to Victor White's car. He is an artist, and quite a good one, and they let him off for a week or so occasionally to paint war pictures. With true artistic temperament, he leaves his car in a rather sketchy condition, and I spent most of yesterday on my back under it cleaning the gasoline line. His brake does not hold, nor does the high gear, so chasing "blessés" with it is no merry jest.

*April 9.* Being "Chow" yesterday I spent the day fixing White's car. ("Chow" means the man who sets the table and waits for the day. Each takes it by turns, but as we eat everything out of the same plate with the same fork and knife, there is no great strain upon the "Admirable Crichton" on duty). April 7th was a busy

day. After I started this diary I was called out at 4 P.M. for four "couchés" at the front lines, Barraquette-Faucaucourt. The Médecin Chef there lives in what used to be a drain under the main road, between Brussels and Amiens. The "Germs" are within eight hundred yards and a battery of "75's" keeps going steadily on the left side of the road. On the right are some big mortars which fire occasionally. The place is pockmarked with shell-holes. I got four "assis" the first time. I got back just before dinner, and was called again to the aeroplane section at Moreuil. Missed dinner, but ate with one of the "brancardiers" at Villers-Bretonneux. He is a funny little guy. I meet him all the time carrying wounded. He has the Croix de Guerre with a star.

I got back at 10.30 P.M. The car was stalled four times! Pitch black: gasoline tank full of dirt. I could n't take it down in the dark, so simply disconnected pipe to carburetor and pumped air through it with tire pumps. Had to do it several times, as dirt kept accumulating and I

did not dare keep wounded waiting. Winsor<sup>1</sup> had one die on him the same night. I got back to bed about 11 P.M. and was just going to sleep when a call came from Barraquette again. The wretched car would hardly run and it was brutally cold, but, of course, it had to be done. After passing Proyant, lights are ordered out. The "Germs" make a point of shelling any moving light on the chance of catching a convoy or reinforcements. I got through all right by aid of the star shells, although challenged by the sentry. I had forgotten to get the password, but he looked me over and said it was O.K.

Upon reaching Barraquette I found one contagious "couché." There was heavy shelling. I got to Villers-Bretonneux at 12.30, with engine running badly. A half-hour of red tape before they would take in my man. The Médecin Chef was out, and the concierge had to chase all over the village to find him. Then he wanted me to take him to Amiens; but I told him the

<sup>1</sup> Charles P. Winsor, Harvard; Concord, Massachusetts.

car could n't make it; so he took him in finally.

Coming home alone was poor fun. Two more stops to blow the dirt out. I got here at 3 A.M., and had to be up at 6.30 to set the table, being "Chow." It's a great life, though; I would n't miss it for worlds. We have a lot of fun on the side; play baseball and a funny sort of adaptation of tennis with a hoop. At night we play roulette for centime stakes, and occasionally we fish for pike with a sort of trident made out of old Ford brake rods. We swim now and then when it's warm.

Old Rapp, the mechanic in charge of the shop, is a regular character and an awfully good fellow. We have lots of fun with him. We teach him every possible sort of fantastic English swear words as English, and he repeats them like a parrot. We tell him some of the most fearful things are words of greeting, and now and then he springs them on an Englishman or a new recruit, and the effect naturally is rather startling to the uninitiated. I gave some essence and cigarettes to one of the

26th to-day and in return he fixed my legging. He turned out to be an expert saddle-maker!

*Sunday, April 10.* I went the round (Barraquette) but found no wounded, and came back and took a walk with Edwards<sup>1</sup> and Underhill.<sup>2</sup> Saw a very interesting lot of English canal-boat hospitals up the river. I stopped in to ask after A. B.'s brother, but he is not with that Section. I witnessed a rather impressive religious service on one of the gun-boats on the canal. The pulpit, flanked by machine guns, and the altar, lighted by an automobile headlight, looked quite dramatic. The priests' army uniforms are the best-looking of any. Black, with red edgings cut in regular cavalry or artillery style, with black and red fatigue caps and gold insignia. The first time I saw one I thought he must be General Joffre at the very least.

In the afternoon Woolverton<sup>3</sup> had a funny experience. He was asked by an

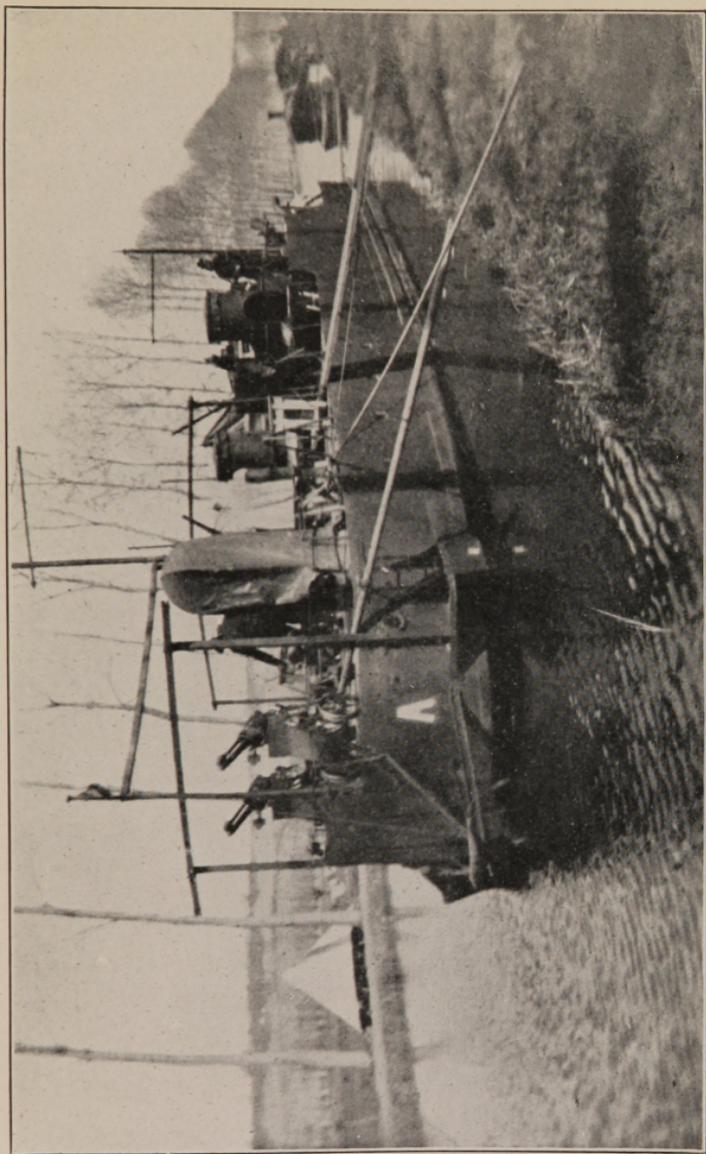
<sup>1</sup> L. Brooke Edwards, Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> John G. Underhill, Williams College; Flushing, New York.

<sup>3</sup> William H. Woolverton, Yale; New York City.

officer at Chuignes to take him and his orderly to Villers-Bretonneux. On the way they passed some quail, so the officer ordered the car stopped and they got out with army rifles (! !) to shoot at them. If they had hit one there would have been no bird left. Incidentally it was Sunday and out of season as well; thus they were breaking about a dozen laws and Ambulance rules. Meantime some English motor-lorrees came along and all stopped to watch the shooting. In fact, the war ceased to exist for about an hour! Woolverton thought the story too good to keep and told it at dinner, and got severely called down, of course, by the lieutenant. We now call him the Big Game Hunter.

A German aeroplane was brought down by the English to-day amid cheers from the onlookers. New French aeroplane sheds have been erected between here and Villers-Bretonneux. A lot of big English guns turned up to-day and are now along the line back of Chuignes to Barraquette. A big army of Russians also is said to be here, as well as Serbians and Italians.



A GUNBOAT ON THE SOMME



Two "Germ" prisoners were captured at Cappy. The way they catch them is to creep out at night with an automatic pistol and hold up the observation posts. Any "poilu" who "pulls the stunt" gets ten days' holiday and the Croix. One man has fifty days' leave coming to him already. The first-line trenches are practically deserted except for sentinels.

The French have succeeded in placing, in addition to the machine guns, a number of "75's" right in the first line! — only two hundred yards from the "Germs" in spots. The General Staff has moved to Villers-Bretonneux. Huge amounts of supplies are coming in and numbers of large ambulances (French army). The Fourth English Army across the canal is also being heavily munitioned, and the Second French Army has come up to back up the Junction of the Fourth English and our Sixth. It looks as if something were in the wind. The new French canal-boat ironclads are about finished, too. They are right back of our quarters here at Méricourt. They carry machine guns,

anti-aero guns, and one big six- or seven-inch naval gun in a turret. They are only about a hundred feet long, very low free-board, and draw about three feet of water. The "Germs" have a hard time spotting them, as they keep moving up and down the canal.

*April 11.* We had a busy night last night. French aeroplanes raided Péronne. Boche shrapnel made wonderful fireworks; but nothing was hit. Then a Zeppelin tried to drop bombs on Villers-Bretonneux, but got spotted by the search-lights and retired. Then the "Germs" shelled Cappy. Woolverton and Bowman<sup>1</sup> were stationed there for the night, and a shell ("77") fell through the roof. They and the "brancardiers" beat it for the cellar. No one was hurt.

Raining to-day. The roads are awfully slippery. Some of the "brancardiers" at Cappy pulled a joke on the Médecin Chef; they hung one of the men across the pole with which they bring in the dead and marched solemnly into the "poste de

<sup>1</sup> Robert Bowman, Yale; Lake Forest, Illinois.

secours." There the corpse came to life and asked for coffee!

*April 14.* I spent last night at the advance post at Cappy. There was only about a half-hour of shelling. The crescendo whistles always sound worse than they are. Most of the "77's" and "105's" fell to the north of the town, seeking the big English naval guns.

All sorts of jobs fall to the lot of an American Ambulance man! To-day, I posed with Victor White, the Irish artist, for the French artist, Tardieu. He has a Legion of Honor and other medals and is very well known. White took the part of a French "blessé," and I was the Ambulance man helping him to the car. The picture is to be used as a poster for the advertisement of a "movie" of our Section, recently taken to be shown in America.

*April 15.* I am back at Cappy again, although it's not my turn. The weather has been so bad that half the cars are in the repair shop. Also, several men are going away on the usual six days' furlough granted every three months. Things are

quiet so far. The big French mortar shakes the house at about fifteen-minute intervals, but the Germans are not replying. There was heavy firing late in the afternoon; more rifles and mitrailleuses shooting than I have yet heard. Many wounded are coming in. I carried three hit through the lungs by mitrailleuse; one lived only an hour after I brought him back from Éclusier.

Bright moonlight made the slippery canal bank easier to negotiate than usual, although it is always a ticklish business, as one cannot use lights, being in plain view and only two kilometers from the Germans. The poor fellow could n't breathe, but did not think he was going to die. The surgeons naturally let him be and looked after the others — which irritated him. I asked if they could n't give him morphia or something, but they said they had none to spare on a dying man. He passed away about two o'clock in the morning. I then started back to Cérisy with three "couchés" — two badly wounded. I had to rout out the hospital authorities, as all were asleep.



THE FRENCH ARTIST TARDIEU



I got there at 3 A.M., and got back to Cappy at 4. All lights were out as usual. I slept till 7, then took four more down to Méricourt. Some work! I found after the moonlight Éclusier trip that all the bolts on the steering-post had loosened! If I had gone much farther I must have lost control and probably have gone into the canal! I fixed it up by moonlight with the aid of an electric torch, and got back here at Méricourt for breakfast.

*April 17.* I took the Médecin Divisionnaire to Fontaine-Cappy, the most advanced post of all, where we are not allowed to go except with a "big guy." I am now waiting for him. He is making an inspection of the front trench, "brancardiers," and the rest. On his return they brought in another d——d fool. This one had injured himself by making souvenir rings. He poured some liquid aluminum in a casting which had water in it and it blew his eyes out! I took him to Cérisy. There have been a large number of casualties among the souvenir-makers and the hunters; and, as often the shells

have not exploded entirely, many hands and eyes are injured in working on them.

Some of our men have had accidents on account of bad roads. End<sup>1</sup> and Nelson<sup>2</sup> each smashed wheels, skidding into trees, while Imbrie<sup>3</sup> turned completely upside down, but was unhurt. The car was empty at the time.

*April 19.* Rain, rain, rain, nothing but rain and mud. The roads are frightful. F—— is back, cured of the “gale.” The doctors say it is a regular germ and is caught in the trenches and is transferred by blankets, clothes, rats, etc. Another fellow of the squad has it now. “Vic,” the fox terrier which we got for protection against the rats, is more scared of them than we are. He hides in the beds at night! Woolverton had his jacket-pocket eaten off last night by rats which were after some chocolate he had in it.

A number of the “blessés” we carry, I

<sup>1</sup> George K. End, Swarthmore-Columbia; New York City.

<sup>2</sup> David T. Nelson, University of North Dakota; Mayville, North Dakota.

<sup>3</sup> Robert W. Imbrie, Washington.

have noticed, are marked with the fleur-de-lys, meaning that they have been at one time convicts. The Government, shortly after the outbreak of the war, gave prisoners of this kind the choice of entering the army — which most of them did. They are nicknamed “les joyeux,” as they are only too happy to be free, and they are exceedingly reckless, as a mention of Croix de Guerre carries with it a reduction of sentence.

Woolverton leaves to-morrow and is kind enough to take this section of my diary back for me. Please take care of it, as I want to preserve a personal record of the Big War, even if my part in it is less in size than the proverbial nit on a gnat's nut!

## CHAPTER IV

### ON LES AURA

*Being an ode to the Vivandière, 1914-17*

#### "SWEETIE"

"Sweetie has a face like a tadpole;  
Sweetie has legs like a frog;  
Sweetie has a shape like a kangaroo;  
Sweetie has hair like a hog;  
Sweetie has teeth like a crocodile;  
Sweetie has a hand like a ham;  
Sweetie has a skin like an elephant's ear,  
But Sweetie don't give a D——."

EASTER SUNDAY, *April 23*. Nelson, my room-mate and side partner (we ran No. 2 and No. 1 cars respectively), left today to return to Oxford to finish his course. Sorry to lose him. Before he joined the American Ambulance, he worked with the Belgian Commission, distributing food. He says the German Government on the whole acted fairly well, but that the officers tried to work all sorts of graft. He thinks that comparatively few of the Belgians would be satisfied to quit and submit to German rule.

More moving pictures were taken to-day of our Section. The films certainly should boost the American Ambulance. Although they are not faked, of course, only the most thrilling stunts we do were taken. They can't, for instance, depict the endless car-cleaning, the fumigating, and many such dry details. Being Easter, we were treated to eggs, not only at headquarters, but even here at Cappy, where it was just my luck to get planted for twenty-four hours. However, the weather is fine and it is interesting to watch the aeroplanes. There is heavy firing at intervals, especially at the aircraft.

Mlle. Flore Granger, the only woman left at Cappy, made good her promise of last week and wrote out some of the songs she sings to the soldiers. They all love her fondly. She washes their clothes and tends to their wants in the most cheerful manner, though forced to live in a dug-out, under constant shell-fire and only a few hundred yards from the Germans. On account of a slight limp, she is known as "La Boiteuse."

CHANSON D'CAPPY

PAR M<sup>LLE</sup>. FLORE GRANGER

*(Sung in the trenches on the Somme)*

LES TRANCHÉES DE DOMPIERRE

Aux abords de Dompierre  
En face de l'ennemi,  
Près des amas de pierres —  
Restants d'la sucrerie.  
Dans les tranchées  
Des peupliers,  
Vite on se faufile en cachette,  
Braquant son fusil  
Sur l'ennemi  
Prêt à presser sur la gâchette.

REFRAIN

Aux environs d'Cappy,  
Lorsque descend la nuit,  
Dans les boyaux on s' débine en cachette,  
Car la mitraille fait baisser la tête.  
Si parfois un obus  
Fait tomber un poilu,  
Dans un fossé l'on colle ses débris  
Aux environs d'Cappy.

V'la la soupe qui s'achève,  
On prépare son fourbi,  
Car ce soir c'est la r'lève —  
On va quitter Cappy.  
Des provisions,  
Et son bidon,  
C'est c'que jamais l'on oublie;  
Du p'tit bois,



MLE. FLORE GRANGER  
The only woman in Cappy



Je connais l'endroit  
Où l'on doit servir sa patrie.

## REFRAIN

Aux environs d'Cappy,  
Lorsque descend la nuit,  
Comme il ne peut coucher  
Dans une chambrette,  
L'brave soldat se prépare une couchette  
Dans un trou ténébreux,  
Faisant des rêves affreux.  
Il se réveille pour veiller l'ennemi  
Aux environs d'Cappy.

The Third Division goes into "repos" this week, and it is not certain whether we follow them or remain, connecting up with the replacing division (the Second). The English are gradually spreading eastward. I saw some Indian troops to-day for the first time: very picturesque, but gracious! how those turbans must breed vermin! The Russians are also arriving in considerable quantities together with enormous stores of ammunition. Large numbers of additional trenches and wire entanglements are being built, and altogether it looks as if something big were afoot.

*April 27.* Lieutenant de Kersauson de Pennendreff, our boss, has had an interest-

ing life. He was with the Boers against the English, and says they subsisted almost entirely on the supplies captured from the English. They had more rifles and munitions than they had men to handle them and they buried large quantities for future use. He says he thinks trench warfare first began in that war. When the Big War broke out, he was selling autos in California. He came back and was made Lieutenant of Automobiles and later took over Section No. 1 of the American Ambulance. He is a marquis and belongs to an old Breton family.

To see a French regiment going to attack is interesting. They are all ordered to put on clean underclothes, as this prevents infection of wounds when the bullets pass through their clothing. The men kiss each other good-bye, send all their little knick-knacks and valuables back, and make their wills. They regard it as practically certain death or disablement.

*April 28.* All peasants have been ordered out of Méricourt. It looks like

something doing. Carson<sup>1</sup> is leaving to join the new auto repair section near Paris, so I get his car, old No. 10, — an awful lemon, — said to have been through the battle of the Marne.<sup>2</sup> All gift cars have the names of the donors painted on the side of the seat. It is certainly tough, after spending two weeks tuning up White's car so that it would really run. Now the work has to be done all over again. I had to put in a new rear axle, new high gear, new glass in acetylene lamps, clean and adjust commutator and vibrator and spark plugs; otherwise, "No. 10 was in perfect condition"!

A Boche aero passed over us to-day and English and French shrapnel pieces fell all around us as they shelled it. The whistling was anything but pleasant. Two German "avions" were brought down to-day. One man was captured, the other was killed. We had an inspection by the head of the Auto Section yesterday. He

<sup>1</sup> James L. Carson, Chicago, Illinois.

<sup>2</sup> No. 10 was the car driven by Leslie Buswell at Pont-à-Mousson, and the subject of his delightful book "Ambulance No. 10."

picked on us a good deal at the time, but told the Lieutenant afterwards that he was much pleased. He couldn't, of course, understand how anything so crudely thrown together as a Ford would run at all. Campbell,<sup>1</sup> Francklyn,<sup>2</sup> and White are back from their six days' furlough and one new man, Culbertson,<sup>3</sup> of Princeton, 1911. The Section is now full. Cunningham<sup>4</sup> is also back with us, having finally been able to tear himself away from the charms of Paris. He's already looking better. Roche, Magoun, Francklyn, and I now occupy the palatial apartment known as the "rat-incubator." Some of the boys have erected a tent — Underhill, Baylies,<sup>5</sup> and Paul;<sup>6</sup> as they were above us in the Rat Hole, and their feet continually kept coming through the ceiling, carrying plas-

<sup>1</sup> Joshua G. B. Campbell, New York City.

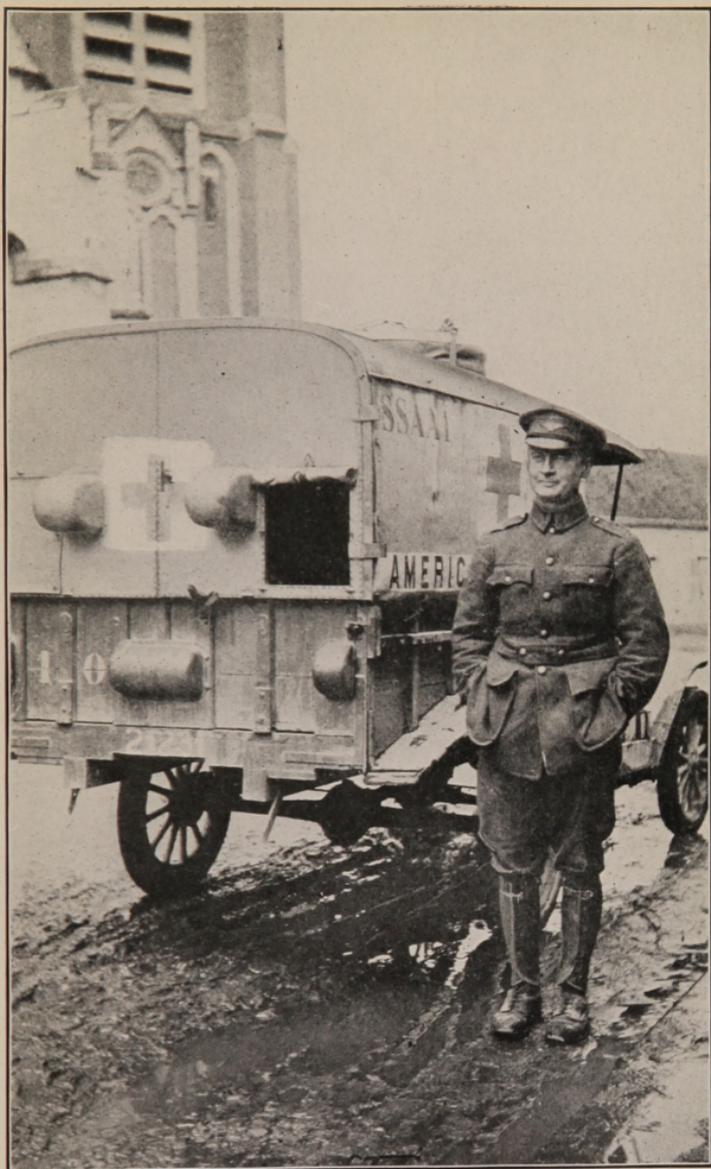
<sup>2</sup> Giles B. Francklyn, Lausanne.

<sup>3</sup> Tingle Wood Culbertson, Princeton; Sewickley, Pennsylvania.

<sup>4</sup> John E. Cunningham, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>5</sup> Frank Leaman Baylies, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel H. Paul, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania.



"AMBULANCE No. 10," DRIVEN BY W. YORKE STEVENSON IN  
1916 ON THE SOMME AND AT VERDUN

One of the ten first Ambulances of the American Field Service. The gift of  
Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, in 1915. Driven by Leslie Buswell  
in 1915 at Pont-à-Mousson



ter and splinters on to us, we are now more comfortable and clean, although Lewis, Lathrop,<sup>1</sup> and Edwards are still up there. "Huts" Townsend, White, and Woodworth<sup>2</sup> have the best rooms in a really well-kept house, while Sponagle, Cunningham, and Winsor sleep next to the repair shop. The Lieutenant and other Frenchmen attached to the Section sleep in the Bureau, a nice little well-kept cottage also. The washing is done by a nice little old woman. She hates to leave and hopes to stay despite orders.

*May 1.* At Cappy for twenty-four hours, with Imbrie as partner, now that Nelson has gone. New régime here with the Second in charge. We eat with the officers now. They say there will be a French offensive around here soon. Another Army, the Tenth, has come to back up the Sixth. The General of the Sixth is Fayolle; the General of the First Corps, to which we are attached, is Berdoulet. There is much

<sup>1</sup> Julian L. Lathrop, Harvard; New Hope, Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin R. Woodworth, Germantown, Pennsylvania.

hot air among our men about the chances of getting the Croix de Guerre. They ought to consider themselves well off if they don't get the Croix de Bois!

The English repulsed a Boche attack night before last about a kilometer from here and turned it into a small massacre, only losing six or eight men themselves. The "Germs" are beginning to show considerable activity against the English, and rumor has it that they are moving their big guns from Verdun toward the western end of the line near the Belgian front and English left. The official rat-catcher was brought down to Méricourt, but as far as results go he only appears to have made them more active by disturbing them. The French are firing about four shells to one of the Germans now, and are using more large shells, "90's," "105's," and "220's." They also have a new "400," said to surpass the German "420," and rumor has it that both the English and French are testing out a new "520"!

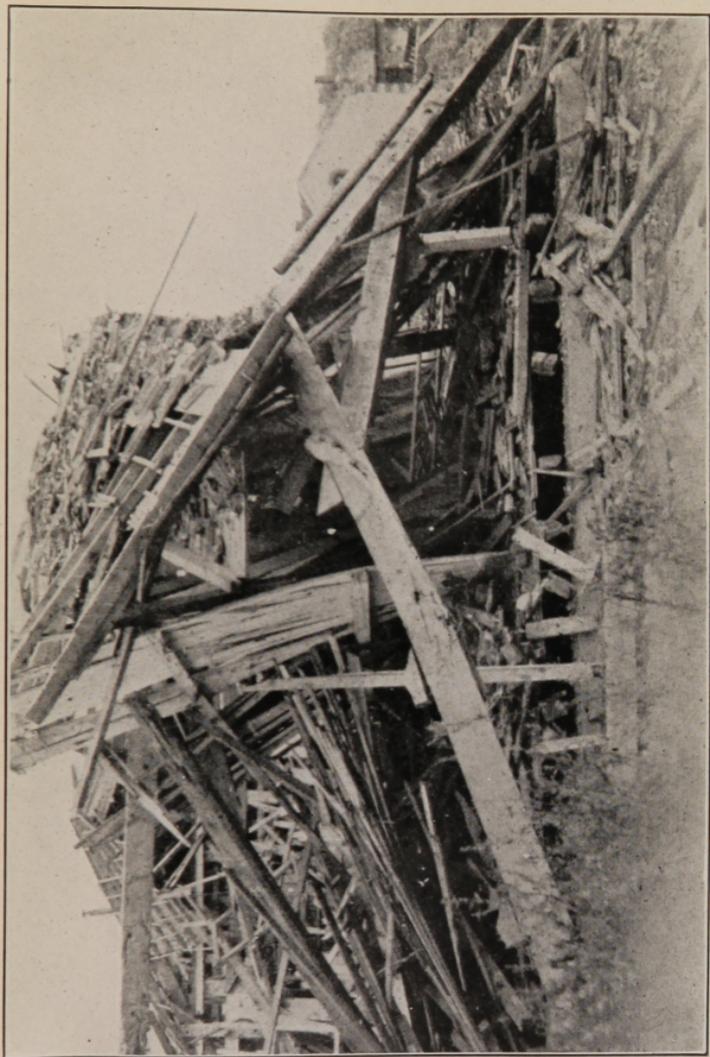
Last night at Cappy was some night! Eighteen shells dropped on the town and

four hit the hospital while Imbrie and I were in it. Imbrie was reading in the front room and I was in bed snatching a snooze before the expected night call. We heard the incessant whistle and crashes, one right after the other. Being only half-dressed, I figured it would be just as well to stay where I was as to go down to the bomb-proof, as the firing would probably be over before I was ready — which proved to be the case. One shell came right through the mortuary window and burst, leaving nothing of the room but scraps. Luckily no bodies happened to be there. Two others hit Castellane's wardroom, one about the door and the other at the step, rocking the house, which, if it had not been substantially built of brick as a municipal and school building, would have collapsed. The fourth landed on my side, and I could hear the pieces rattle through the trees. One sliver went slap through the front of my car, and I found it in the back of it this morning. This is the first time one of the cars of this Section has been directly hit, although several have been

scarred by flying bits of scenery. After firing the salvo of shots which lasted about ten minutes, although it seemed an hour, the Boches were silenced by heavy shelling from both English and French.

I got a call for Éclusier (the bad canal run) and got two men. Imbrie also got a call, and thereafter we were running until 9 A.M.; the most active session I have had yet. They shelled Cappy again just after I left. Apparently they were either after one of the little gunboats which had just arrived up from Méricourt or the extensive diggings around the hospital, making bomb-proofs for "blessés." From an aeroplane the latter may have looked like entrenchments or emplacements for guns.

*May 6.* I broke the rear axle yesterday while on "Bureau." "Bureau" is the car that takes extra calls when all the others are busy. There are first and second "Bureau" men who relieve each other. Then there are four replacement cars to take on any route over which a regular has come to grief. The order changes every day so that every one gets a turn at the va-



A SLUMP IN REAL ESTATE AT CAPPY



rious runs, replacements, and "repos." It takes about a week before one's turn repeats. I ran all day on "Bureau" calls — about one hundred miles. The first call was at 7 A.M.; the last at 11 P.M., carrying four "assis" from Faucaucourt (within rifle range of the Germans), on the perfectly level Amiens-St. Quentin route. The engine began to race and the car slipped. Luckily Brooke Edwards was with me as orderly, and he ran a kilometer to Lamotte and 'phoned for an extra car. Imbrie came and took the "blessés" (they had blown themselves up with blasting powder working in a mine tunnel). I slept in the car all night in the rain on a stretcher covered with blood. I guess I'll get "la gale" all right this time. Every now and then somebody would poke his hand in the back (the road was full of passing soldiers) and wiggle my feet and ask if I was dead or "blessé" and deserted by the driver. I had to explain a dozen times to well-meaning "poilus" that I was waiting until daylight to repair the car. At 9 A.M. Sponagle and Francklyn turned up

with an extra car and we got it in by 2 — starving.

*May 7.* We have had our heads clipped and we look like a bunch of jailbirds. It feels fine, however, and we have gone the Section 2 bunch one better. Growing beards is certainly poor sanitation. Some of the men left little scalp-locks or tiny points like devil's horns which they waxed. Of course, the French regard us as "bugs." The Lieutenant finally vetoed the extra frills as undignified.

*May 8.* I was talking to Campbell this morning regarding the beauty of the new run to Rennecourt through the avenue of blossoming apple trees, saying I was glad to draw it this morning. Good joke on me! As I started down the said avenue, two shells fell, about fifty yards ahead. Needless to say the rest of the view became a mere blur, as I opened up all speed and beat it past the shell-holes before any more dropped in. I got a blow-out later, but luckily was out of range.

*May 9.* The Lieutenant took Cunningham, Winsor, Imbrie, and me to the new

“poste de secours” on foot to-day, by the famous sugar-house of Dompierre, which has been destroyed almost entirely, not by shells, but by machine gun and rifle fire, so intense has been the fighting. The village is still held by the Germans to date, but the French hold the outskirts, and expect soon to take the whole thing. Songs have already been written about the sugar-house. We were between the first and second line trenches in plain sight of the Germans and within easy rifle shot (about four hundred yards). It is very interesting to see the trenches from the inside. I saw piles of aerial torpedoes and other munitions, including telephone posts thirty and forty feet underground! One “75” was within five hundred yards of the Boches and they did n’t know it! In one of the new posts we have to stop our motors about fifty yards away and turn the cars by hand, as the noise of backing around could be heard and a German mitrailleuse controls the approach. Needless to say we only go there at night. We walked miles through the trenches and could easily have become

lost if we had not had a man to accompany us at intervals as we entered new sections. The men seemed comfortable enough, excepting that they never see anything but the sky, as the top of the trench is a couple of feet above their heads. At intervals we passed graves of those killed at times of great activity and who had simply been thrust into the sides and pegged there with basket-work. Rather unpleasant on wet days I should think. Also at times the trenches pass through graveyards, and here again coffin-heads and bones occasionally stick out of the sides.

*May 10.* Victor White is cited by the order of the Division "for coolness, efficiency, and bravery under fire." He will get the Croix and everybody is delighted. He was loading two wounded men at Cappy when the Germans turned loose their shells and all the men who were helping beat it for the cellar. Vic finished the job by himself, started his car, and drove the men down out of shell-fire to Cérisy.

A funny thing happened to Lathrop. The Boston papers came out with long



VICTOR WHITE



notices of his death under fire. His family nearly went crazy until the Paris Ambulance wired them that nothing had happened; but since then they have been receiving letters of condolence. No explanation of how the thing started has been given, as no one has even been hurt here, and only one man has been killed in the whole Ambulance so far (Hall). We heard later that one man had died of spinal meningitis in another Section, and it was his death that caused the mix-up.

*May 12.* We had received word that we were to be inspected yesterday and that White and Campbell would be officially awarded the Croix de Guerre. Everybody slicked up, shaved, and cleaned rooms, yards, and cars, but nothing happened — the General sending word he would not be able to come.

White and Campbell were awarded the crosses because they were the oldest and most efficient men in the Section, the Third Division General having allotted two crosses to our Section. This seemed to be the fairest way to do. White also

got a special mention by the Second Division, so he gets two stars, a very unusual thing. There is also talk of giving the whole Section the Croix; but this is only a rumor.<sup>1</sup>

*May 15.* The Chasseurs d'Afrique and Senegalese have a uniform practically like the English khaki. They wear red fezes called "kitshia"; but the inside of these is yellow, so that when within range they simply reverse the hats. The Second Colonials have a fine band, — the first I have heard at the Front, — and we have concerts almost every day.

I got the old "bus" working again with a new motor, new rear construction, new wheels. The chief remains of No. 10 are the frame, body, insects, and radiator. As all the replacing parts are old, anyway, the chariot is no ball of fire at that, but she wheezes along somehow.

*May 18.* We are here at Harbonnières on the new twenty-four hour service, with the Third Division — four of us; quiet nights — but this morning an aeroplane

<sup>1</sup> This they did get later. See preface, pp. xii-xiv.

fight took place right over us. Two French machines brought down a German who was reconnoitering over our lines. He landed about three kilometers within our lines.

I talked to an old French farmer who seemed very well up on late events. He said he believed Wilson would surely be defeated at the next election, and that Roosevelt would again be President. In common with most French landowners I have talked to, he felt that the aftermath of the war would be very serious. He was afraid of internal troubles over the partitioning of the spoils. He invited me to his farmhouse and gave me a glass of cider. He thinks the Boches are by no means done, but that they are on the wane. He looks for a second battle like Verdun here on the Somme, as this is a naturally weak position, being a junction of the two armies. On the other hand, the enormous amount of effort to make it impregnable is obvious. Rows and rows of second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth line trenches; acres of barbed wire; fields sown with mines, and every tree and

bush a mask for a cannon or mitrailleuse show that nothing is being neglected, while additional railways are being built to bring up supplies and the roads (thank God!) are being overhauled and repaired. The winter and spring have put them in a frightful state and our cars certainly reflect it.

*May 22.* A German flyer played a clever trick on being chased by four French planes to-day. He pretended to be driven to earth, stopped his engine, and prepared to alight. The French ceased firing, came planing down near him, and stopped; he then quickly started his motor again, veered off to the right over some woods, and got back to his lines before the French, who had actually grounded, could get up again.

I am back again at Cappy, for the first time since I broke my rear axle in a shell-hole. End and Magoun did the same thing. We have to sleep in the cave now! — very annoying. It's damp and stuffy. Loads of more guns up here. The French are using a new "270," and the fields are full of am-

munition, covered with branches of canvas painted like scenery. We went up to one of the new "postes de secours" where we are under mitrailleuse fire. We have to turn the car around by hand so that the Germans won't hear the noise of the reverse gear. On coming back we found the road blocked by a newly fallen tree hit by a shell. It took an hour, with the help of the "brancardier," to jack it up and shove it around.

Certainly I got a thrill on the second run coming back from Cérisy by moonlight about 2 A.M. Just before crossing the Somme, I noticed low-lying wisps of misty vapor. Having already been stopped twice by sentries and as the cannonading was heavy, it suddenly struck me that an attack might be going on and that this was gas. It looked pale blue in the moonlight. I stopped my motor and got my gas mask out, but as there seemed to be no general movement of troops, I decided to go ahead. I hurried through, and was greatly relieved to smell the good old fog smell. The two sentries, French and English, on the Somme

bridge must certainly have a bad time. Shelled continually, and being at the lowest point in the valley, they are more apt to get the gas than the troops quartered on the higher ground.

White and Campbell finally received the decorations to-day. An amusing incident occurred when the General took White (who had been told to stand out in front of the line) to be a mere onlooker and ordered him back. It had to be explained to him that this was the hero who was to be decorated! He apologized, of course, but it got every one giggling and somewhat marred the solemnity of the occasion.

*May 26.* Culbertson came back from Cappy with a long tale of experiences this morning. He had not been to the Sucrierie of Dompierre Poste before, and got a call at 2 A.M. He took a "brancardier" to show him the way. They got out in the open road on the top of the hill and could n't find the "poste"; so the "brancardier" went on to look for it and Culbertson stopped his motor and waited. He says it seemed about a year before the man

came back. Meantime every time the mitrailleuse would start in, old Culby would try to find some place to hide, and he says there was n't the vestige of anything within sight. Finally they got down to the "poste," and he tried to turn, with the result that he backed off the road into a trench. He had to get a lot of soldiers to lift the car out. They pushed it out amid cheers, everybody forgetting the Boches, and, incidentally, the "blessé." Then, they heard a yell from the "blessé" whom they had nearly run over with the car as he lay in the road. Culby says the Germans seemed so close that he felt as if the front wheels were in the German trenches and the back wheels in the French. Finally, coming back, he says he was so glad that he started to beat it fast, when the "brancardier" put his foot on the electric light-switch by mistake, and suddenly the lights flared up, and a moment later the Boches started shelling. He says he thought he hit every shell-hole back to Cérisy, and once he ran over a ball of barbed wire left to be stretched at the side

of the road, but he did n't care so long as he got there. The marvelous part of the whole thing was that the car was scarcely hit at all; only a few bolts loosened.

The name of the "poste" is "l'Arbre-en-Boule," because there is a large stump of a tree there which the French hollowed out and used as an observation point. The Germans got onto it and shelled it down and, having the exact range, kept the French from using it. They also employed it as a range-finder for other things, such as batteries. The French, then, moved it one night about ten yards and set it up again. Ever since, the Germans have been shelling it and missing not only the tree, but the other objectives.

At Harbonnières to-day with Imbrie, Francklyn, and Woodworth. There is a steady drizzle, and nothing to do for twenty-four hours. Imbrie is an interesting bird. He has traveled all through Africa with a professor who went there to study monkey talk; — locked himself up in a cage with gorillas, and such! and claims to have discovered twenty words. Imbrie

says "it's all rot"; but that the shooting was fine and the trip most interesting. He says that after he made up his mind that the monkeys knew more than the professor, he left him and got some splendid elephant hunting.

I went over to the English lines this afternoon and saw a series of impromptu boxing-matches. There was a new Sergeant-Major in one company who was being watched to see how he would turn out, and he organized the matches, starting in himself in the first bout. The best of feeling prevailed, and when the men threatened to become too rough, they were cautioned by the Lieutenant who kept time. Many French soldiers came over to see the bouts and both armies fraternized in the most cheerful manner. They daily play soccer football also.

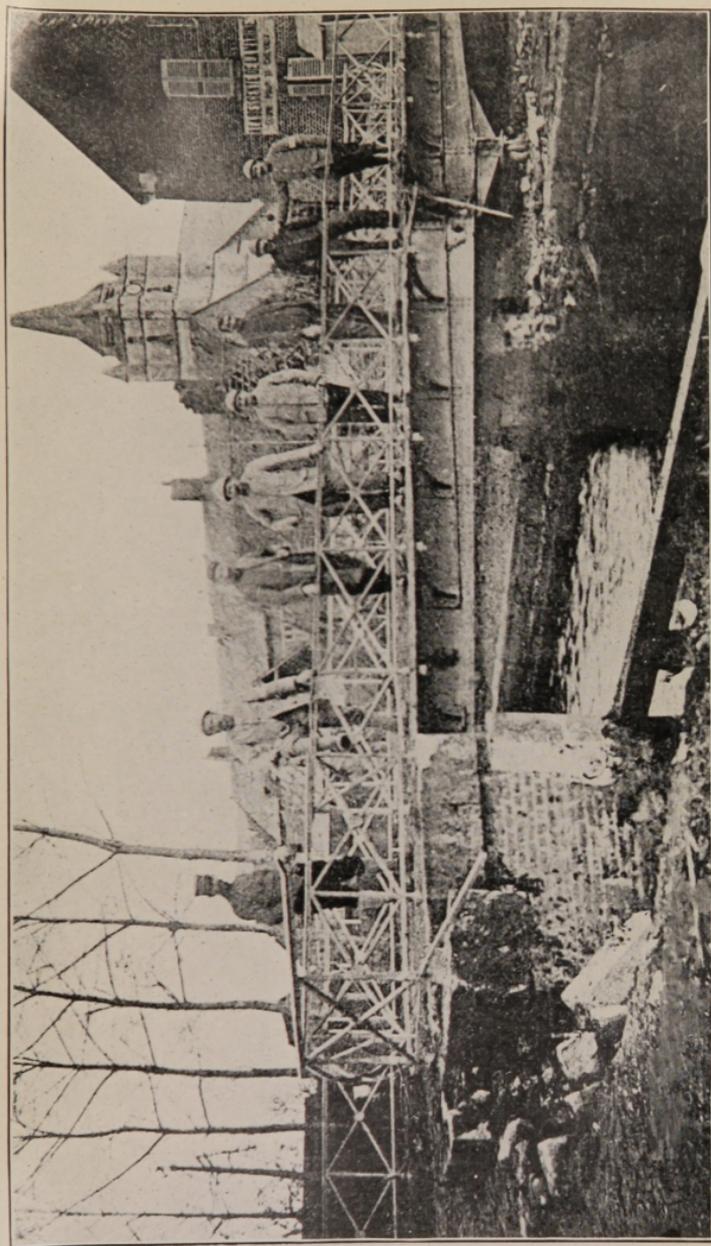
## CHAPTER V

### PREPARING FOR THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

La vie est brève ;  
Un peu d'amour,  
Un peu de rêve,  
Et puis — bonjour!

La vie est vaine ;  
Un peu d'espoir,  
Un peu de haine,  
Et puis — bonsoir!

*June 1.* Big doings to-day; the order came at 10 A.M. to move the whole encampment from Méricourt to Lamotte-Santerre, and we were ready by 2.30. Then, just before we left, we were told to go to Bayonvillers instead; and here we are! It is not such a bad billet. The town is more modern and in better repair than Méricourt. We are sleeping in our cars to-night, but will find quarters to-morrow, which does not do Imbrie and me any good, as we go to Cappy for twenty-four hours and so get "stung" out of any decent pickings for sleeping accommodations. The Section



BRIDGE ON THE SOMME CANAL AT CAPPY CONNECTING FRENCH AND BRITISH LINES



remains with the Third Division. The Twentieth Corps, which withstood the first shock at Verdun and thereby earned its place in the Hall of Immortals, is to straddle the Somme, having had a month "en repos." When the "Régiment de Fer" came in with its flags — or what was left of them — flying, everybody saluted. They are said to have saved the day in the first German rush, the critical period at Verdun. The Sixth (ours) won its spurs in the Champagne, and is next to the Twentieth, and we continue to handle the front line as before, but from a different base.

The English have moved a kilometer to the west, so that the conflicting orders bound to occur at the Somme are eliminated. A lot of new rail lines have been put through in the last few days, and the supply of ammunition in the fields is something beyond belief. Word has been given that everything in the way of preparation must be finished by the 20th. The French had arranged to be ready by the 15th, but the English asked for five more days. The

battle of the Somme should be some battle. The fields are full of poppies, yellow daisies, and cornflowers, and the country is beautiful. The poppies remind one of Omar's

“I sometimes think that never blows so red  
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled.”

At Verdun, so far, they say, the German losses amount to 450,000 and the French to 200,000 — even the poppies grow no thicker!

Big mortar batteries are arriving along the Front. I saw several here, at Cappy, this afternoon, hidden near the cemetery. Even when a man gets killed he is not permitted to rest in peace nowadays. The Germans are bound to blow hell out of the cemetery, trying to reach these new mortars.

*June 2.* Bayonvillers is not a bad town, but our quarters are awful; all of us bunk together in a big loft, with the cars and the eating-place about two squares away. The reason for the crowding is the piling-up of new troops in all these districts. I

had fun with Francklyn this morning. It appears that he used Imbrie's "paillasse" last night, and when Imbrie and I returned from Cappy it was nowhere to be found. Francklyn was still asleep, so we carried him bunk and all, out into the main street and placed him on the sidewalk. A large crowd immediately gathered, thinking he was a "blessé," as he had nothing on but a blanket. He woke up just as a Division Staff was passing, and he certainly did make a quick jump for the yard with the blanket flapping like the tail of a kite behind his long, bare legs, as he beat it.

*June 3.* An amusing afternoon. Being second "Bureau," I had nothing to do, and it so happened that a bunch of kids from Harbonnières came down to be confirmed; the girls in their little white dresses and the boys in their best Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes. Bowman, who was just back from Paris, brought out the Victrola with a lot of the latest records (I don't know what we'd do without that Christmas-gift Victrola from Miss Caroline Sinkler), and we had a regular raft of children all over us all

afternoon, as the school let out at the same time. One girl, a little older, who serves the store at Harbonnières and who had come down with the diminutive brides in all their white gear, appeared to have fallen desperately in love with Duffy Lewis.<sup>1</sup> She had his picture and looked us all over, but could n't find Duffy. Then she spotted Paul's back (Paul being about the same size as Lewis) and rushed over to him, only to return disappointed. "Ce n'est pas lui!" Then Woody, twisting his mustache, came over to ease her mind, telling her Lewis would be here, but unfortunately he was "soused," and sleeping it off! (Lewis never touched a drop in his life.) We got a lot of pictures of the priest and others and shortly afterward Duffy turned up, and what he did n't get in the way of chaffing, — some fun!

After dinner I got a call to go in a hurry for a "blessé" at the "Ravin" de Morcourt, nobody knew what "ravin" was meant, so I spent from 8 P.M. until 2 A.M. going up and down ravines all over the

<sup>1</sup> Philip C. Lewis, Harvard; Indianapolis, Indiana.

map. One time I struck a road which appeared to be taking me slap into the German lines, which was anything but pleasant. I returned twice to get further instructions, but no one knew anything, so finally I was told to turn in. Roche, Edwards, Imbrie, and Campbell all had the same experience that night. The trouble was that all the Divisions were being shifted and nobody knew where any of the "postes" were. Campbell did n't get back till nearly breakfast time. He had been called to Chuignes and Chuignelles to get three "blessés" and had found no one. I suppose that things will be straightened out in a day or two. I am off on the new Lamotte twenty-four hours' service to-day with Imbrie.

*June 6.* Culbertson, Imbrie, and I went over to Méricourt to our old camping-ground and brought over the body of No. 19 which we had left there. All the natives were delighted to see us and expressed sorrow that we were not to return. Especially cordial were the two old ladies. We then crossed the canal and paid a visit to

an English Captain (Duffy), who gave us tea and toast served on a table by an orderly, with napkins and real china! Those English certainly go to war in great style! He even had his two-room portable cabin decorated with pictures. I returned to find Vic White and Campbell in serious discussion. It appears White's mother consulted some sort of palmist or medium, who told her her son would be in great danger in the latter part of June, which was easy enough to guess, as the big offensive is likely to start then. She had written to him to come home. Vic does n't want to worry her, so Campbell and I suggested his merely giving her the idea that he was not right at the Front, which after all is more or less true, as we only run up to the lines on certain routes, and are living about two miles back. Campbell then said he lately had been growing superstitious and that he had a feeling he was going to be killed. Odd for a man who has been in the war since the beginning! He argued it all out on the doctrine of chances; he says that it's just for the very reason that he

has been in the field longer than any of us that he is therefore more likely to get it in the neck than the newer men. He says if he pulls through the big offensive of this summer, he is going home, and White says he will go with him. Pete (who has no feelings of any kind) says he dreamed several times lately that some of the Section are going to be killed or wounded. Altogether the bunch are certainly pessimistic — but I fancy the cold, wet weather and the lack of work just now have most to do with it.

*June 8.* Big train of great "220" mortars came by on their way to Chuignes this morning, eight of them drawn by huge Renault & Jeffery (American) trucks, whose wheels in front, as well as rear, were tractors — the couplings of these to the carriages carrying the trails and "camion" were the same as those on railways, and the carriages were made in Troy, Ohio. They shoot a shell five feet high weighing three hundred kilos, and carry about ten kilometers. They are meant only to reduce fortifications.

I hear that the new Section (No. 8), sent out under Mason as chief, ran right into a gas attack at the very first crack. They are stationed in Champagne, and are said to have done remarkably well, especially as they were all new men.

The big-gun train is camping here temporarily until the emplacements are finished. Everywhere house barracks and log protections are being erected and the country is simply alive with working men. One hundred "camions" turned up here to-day, of the largest size. They are just the ordinary service wagons for the "8-270's"! Another train of "220's" passed later. The gunners had amused themselves by naming them "Le Bourdon," "Le Gueuleur," and so on. All their guns and their accessories are in the multi-colored tones of paint, green, ochre, black, and brown, and look like maps. One "camion" drags the base and turntable, another the gun itself; the rest, gasoline and ammunition.

*June 10.* Dr. Maine and Peter Kemp turned up from Paris with two new cars. I went back to Cappy to-day. The roads

are jammed, and we have to run for miles on the low gear behind the heavy artillery and ammunition trains. I had to tighten the low gear band twice yesterday and it is practically worn out. I will put in a new one in a day or two. Life in the barracks is amusing. Some of the men insist on talking half the night, while others try to sleep, and still others keep their lamps lit late trying to read and write. The chief annoyance in fact is the utter lack of privacy. Roche and I came to a compromise with Cunningham and Campbell on the light question. They want all lights out at ten o'clock, so we said if they would stop talking at nine, we would "douse the glim" at eleven.

Francklyn and Avard have an amusing arrangement to wake each other up in the morning. If one cannot arouse the other by quarter to seven, he has the privilege of tumbling him out of bed! The result is each watches the other like a cat when the alarm goes off and there is generally a regular wrestling-bout. Yesterday morning Gyles broke Peter's bed, so Pete said he'd tumble Gyles out at 2 A.M., the next night.

Gyles in self-protection built a barricade of bags and saw-horses around himself and slept on the floor on a stretcher. The great connecting link is "Vic," the fox terrier pup. The dog is sick just now, and they have been taking him to a veterinary and are nursing him like a baby. It's Pete's dog, but to devil him we all call it Francklyn's, which jars Pete extremely. Pete, who is considerably older than Gyles and has had a very varied career, roughing it all over the world, at first used to beat up Gyles pretty regularly and browbeat and bully him; but lately Gyles has discovered that he can lick Pete wrestling, so he has taken to issuing official communiqués every morning as to the state of their bed war! Latimer took them both in at checkers the other day and beat them easily, as they soon got squabbling over the proper moves to make. It certainly is better than a circus. Little Woodworth is the life of the party with his continual good humor, his songs and dances, and general liveliness, and we will be sorry to see him go in July when he returns to America.

The place will be a gloom without him, as no one else in the squad is quite such a natural comedian.<sup>1</sup> Pete is also going.

*June 12.* I have just finished lunch with a party of unusually jovial Frenchmen. One used to be first violin at the Carlton in London, and having borrowed the piano from Mlle. Granger, he played accompani-

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin R. Woodworth, after Herbert P. Townsend's departure early in 1917, became Chief of Section No. 1. On June 16, 1917, he accepted the invitation of Chatkhoff, an American aviator, to take a spin near the town of S. The plane side-slipped, and he was killed instantly, crushed beyond recognition. To W. Yorke Stevenson with whom he had grown to be on terms of intimate friendship, fell the sad duty of bringing his remains back to the Section's headquarters — a ghastly run of 100 miles. In a letter the author described the funeral as follows: —

“Stockwell, Ned Townsend, Hibbard, and I were the pall-bearers. Had wonderful flowers as the boys spent all morning picking big bunches of red poppies, white roses, carnations and apple blossoms, and blue cornflowers. The coffin was draped with French and American flags, and the Croix de Guerre was pinned on it.

“Shells were falling nearby as we lowered the coffin. It was just as he would have wished, and the American aviators were flying over his grave.”

Mr. Woodworth was most popular and much beloved by many. He was gifted with a sunny disposition and much ready wit. The Diary shows the regard in which the author held him. The latter succeeded him as Chief of Section No. 1.

ments to a couple of others who sang war songs, etc. They were all much impressed with Peter Kemp's appearance. He is six feet five, as tall as Walter Wheeler, of Philadelphia, and heavier. We explained to them that that was the reason that America does n't go to war — the average men are all about as big as Peter and it takes too long to dig trenches to fit 'em!

In addition to the customary bombardment we are in the midst of a violent thunder and hail storm; the crashes of thunder and lightning mingling with the roar of the guns certainly is creating a real pandemonium. This makes one week so far of solid rain and the roads are almost impassable from mud and traffic combined. Everywhere are bogged autos and dead horses. The soldiers skin the latter for rugs and coats. "Rosalie" is the affectionate term the "poilus" apply to the new, long, four-cornered bayonet which makes a wound almost impossible to heal, as it cuts like a cross. "Rosalie" is also the name of the new paper method of smoking a pipe; a round-cut piece about

the size of a tail light lens with a small hole in the center. The advantage is a cool and easy smoke without effort of drawing and good in a wind.

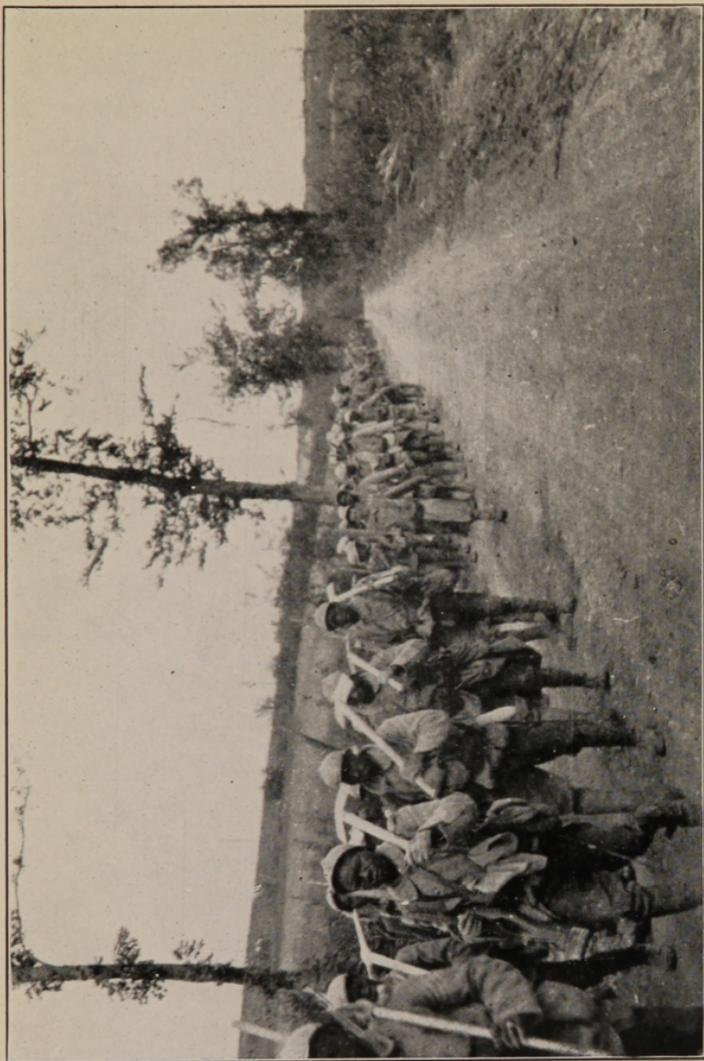
The roads are so blocked that the food is slow to reach the Front just now. To-day, for instance, we were on half-rations here at Cappy. As we sat at our coffee, however, the "ravitaillement camions" turned up and there was great rejoicing. I saw "La Boiteuse" later to-day. She's a great old girl; still as cheerful as ever and glad to have her piano in capable hands. She gave me some postcards of Cappy and a luck piece. She sent her love to Nelson.

*June 13.* I got a call to Éclusier village at 2.30 A.M. The road along the canal was six inches deep in water and could hardly be told from the canal itself, except for the yellow color. The result was that it was quite daylight when I got there, and the Boches could see us loading the car (three "couchés") plainly, but they did n't fire. In fact they have been very quiet of late. The church at Éclusier is but an empty shell with great holes down through

the sides and no roof to speak of — birds flit through the broken windows and the rain drops dismally on the floor. Most of the images are smashed, but the big stone font is still intact. The old graveyard beside it is just a tangled mass of stones and weeds, while the new soldiers' graveyard was placed in two huge shell holes the sides of which have been graded like steps, and neat little crosses bear the records of the dead. Some fifty or more found places in the two holes, and yet there was respectable space between each grave and around the edges. Back to Villers-Bretonneux with the wounded and back at Cappy by 8 A.M.; the slowness due to weather and congested roads.

Shoals of Senegalese are passing toward the Front, and it certainly looks as if the offensive was coming soon. The Russian victory in Galicia is said to be merely a diversion to help Italy just now and the real offensive has not even begun.

I got stopped by what looked like the whole General Staff on the road to-day. They all had so many stripes it looked like



SENEGALISE ON THE SOMME



a flock of zebras. A trooper had fallen off his horse and hit his head and they ordered me to carry the unconscious man to Villers-Bretonneux. The car was already full, but I piled him in and took him along to save argument. Of course I had a hideous time at the hospital at Villers, not having a ticket for him. Nobody could take him in for an hour or so — the usual red-tape.

The “brancardiers” tell me they have great difficulty with the wounded negroes, as they cannot explain how they feel; also the climate is very hard on them.

The French “camion” drivers tell me that their well-known makes, such as Panhard, Fiat, Berliet, Renault, etc., are unable to put in the same high-grade material in their cars as before the war, and that the American cars are regarded as quite as good if not better — especially the Pierce-Arrow, which is making quite a name for itself both here and in Russia. Five hundred of them passed here in long trains yesterday.

I hear we are going to be shifted again;

headquarters to be at Proyart and evacuate to the new hospital at Marcel Cave. This will be just before the big attack. At Marcel Cave the French have erected an enormous hospital on the railway. To illustrate what is expected, they have purchased from the town an additional site for a graveyard to accommodate five thousand dead, expected to be the casualties from this hospital alone — not from the trenches, but those who cannot survive treatment. This gives more of an inkling as to the preparation in our Sector than anything else I have seen. And our Sector only covers some three or four miles of the Front.

*June 14.* I had an interesting talk with a Lieutenant to-day as we watched a regiment of Zouaves go up to the Front. He said that now that they were here together with the Colonials, the Senegalese, the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and the Twentieth Corps, the advance would not be long in coming. He says the Senegalese are awfully hard to handle. They won't stand shell fire, but don't mind machine guns, so

they put Frenchmen on either side of them, fifteen hundred Senegalese in each Division. They have strings of Boche ears which they keep as trophies. On the other hand, the "Germs" always kill the black wounded and prisoners, so it's about fifty-fifty. This same officer says the big attack now depends entirely on the English. If they can only manage Champagne and Neuve Chapelle, stalemates will not be repeated.

*June 17. Red-Letter Day!* The first hot bath in a tub since I've been at the Front! "Huts" Townsend, our Section Chief, took "Gimp" Cunningham and me in to Amiens. We simply wallowed in baths which only cost a franc. We did a little shopping and brought the boys back some cherry tarts for supper, for which we received loud cheers. Good old Pete Avard left to-day and took back an old car which, as usual, was stripped to the bone before it was allowed to go. The boys always attack a car going down, like a bunch of ghouls. A new man turned up with Magoun, Little, by name, from Andover,

and seems a decent sort. The fellows that sleep in the tent are not having such a pleasant time of it now. A whole regiment of artillery ("270's") has camped all around them, and the noise of men and horses keeps them awake all night long, and naturally they are afraid of thefts, particularly from the Senegalese; although the loft in which the rest of us sleep is dark and dirty, it is, at least, fairly safe from that sort of thing. The blacks love anything bright and shiny, like radiator caps or nickle-plated tools. With the advance of the hour we all now have to get up at 5.30 instead of 6.30 and already several have been caught on the "no breakfast after 6.30" order. As we go to bed an hour earlier we'll work into it all right soon, I suppose.

## CHAPTER VI

### “ILS NE PASSERONT PAS”

If this little world to-night  
Suddenly should fall through space  
In a hissing, headlong flight,  
Shrivelling from off its face  
In an instant every trace  
Of all the little crawling things; —  
Ants, philosophers, and lice,  
Cattle, cockroaches, and kings,  
Beggars, millionaires, and mice,  
Men and maggots all as one  
As it falls into the Sun, —  
Who shall say that at the same  
Instant from a planet far  
A child may watch us and exclaim,  
“See the pretty shooting star!”

*Oliver Herford*

*June 18.* We saw a French aeroplane fall yesterday afternoon right near the camp at Villers-Bretonneux. The aviator trying to volplane too near the ground, the thing slipped sideways, and smashed into a field. My car was full, so I was of no use, but Woodworth happened to be passing at the same time and ran out with a stretcher. For some time they could not get at the men on account of the flames

and were forced to watch them burn to death. They say their cries were awful. One man managed to reach in and get hold of one of the aviator's arms to drag him out, but all the flesh came away in his hand. Woody carried one to the hospital, but he was dead when he got there. Of the other there was nothing left worth carrying. . . . "C'est la guerre!"

*June 20.* Things are moving rapidly now. All "permissions" have been canceled which kills any expectation of Paris on the 4th of July. Lewis got a splendid citation for the Croix, at Fontaine-Cappy, for bravery under fire. He was ordered to leave by the Médecin Chef, and refused to do so, because he had not completed his rounds. The old man was delighted with him and cited him the next day. We move to a camp in a field between two batteries at Chuignes and will evacuate to the big new barracks hospital at Marcel Cave. The grand attack is due to start in about a week and some of the fellows are talking of making their wills. I should worry!!! A new gun has appeared, a "120" built on

“75” principles, light carriage, oil recoil, and very mobile but shorter in the barrel, thereby bringing down the weight, I suppose. It must be a terror, as it is almost double the famous “soixante-quinze.” We have been unable to buy a map of the country between the Foies-Dompierre-Faucourt line and Péronne anywhere, even in Amiens, so it looks as if that was to be the direction of the big push.

End and I had a long walk to-day. He is an interesting chap. He was in Serbia with the Columbia Ambulance. We visited the two big aviation camps and watched them sighting one of Barclay Warburton’s “Lewis” air-cooled mitrail-leuses. They have a sight much like the finder on a camera; it must be easy to aim with. We saw Farman and Condron planes, the latter with double “gnome” type-motors in front, the former with V-type twelve cylinder Renault motor aft. We didn’t see any of the famous Nieuports, as they won’t come from Verdun until the last moment, nor did we see the new self-starting Voisin planes. The orders are to “shed”

everything but the barest necessities. We also saw the funeral of two aviators. It was quite impressive, with several Generals walking behind the coffins, while one plane made the sign of the cross in the heavens above the grave.

*June 21.* I am up at Cappy again, and got a call right off to Éclusier and mighty near fell into the canal, as some idiot had left a pile of wood for fuel in the road and in trying to go over it the car skidded one wheel over the bank. I just caught it with the brakes in time.

Imbrie, as the only lawyer in the Squad, offers to make wills cheap for cash. One gets thinking about things like that in the face of what's coming.

*June 22.* Most depressing news. We are to go to Verdun. We are shifted from the Colonials because they are to bear the brunt of the attack, and the cars which are necessary for the tremendous evacuation work must be the largest possible, while ours will be more useful on the bad roads around Verdun. Our evacuation center is Bar-le-Duc where Section No. 2 and the

new No. 8 are stationed. I am sorry to have seen only the beginning of what must prove the biggest offensive of the war. On the other hand, I will be glad to be able to say I have been at Verdun, and the 250-mile trip across the country will prove most interesting. It means that we will travel from one end of the French battle line to the other,—truly a wonderful opportunity.

*June 23.* Such a splendid trip! We came down through Senlis, the town where the Boches did their worst. They burned every tenth house, and shot the citizens, including the Mayor. Then we came along the valley of the Marne, and saw the whole of the great battlefield. A perfect day, and the Lieutenant ran slowly so that the "convoi" should get a chance to take in the views. At that, we are to-night at Châlons — some ride! Every bone in my body aches and it's hard even to keep awake to write this. Woody got an awful spill. He nearly went to sleep, a very common thing after one has been driving for a great many hours — sort of hypno-

tism; his car turned turtle, but threw him clear. Paul also went to sleep, but saved himself. Imbrie nearly got ditched, too, doing the same thing. I find the only thing to do is to try to compose a letter or a verse or remember songs one half knows. It keeps one's mind out of that hypnotic rhythm. Here I am on a wonderful soft down bed with *sheets!* The Russians are here also. The lady of the house where I am quartered says that last night there was a Boche aeroplane raid, but it did no damage, except it made her baby cry with the noise. She says to-night it will be so sleepy it won't disturb me!!! — After three months of the guns! — an amusing idea! The French kids are good little fellows. One insisted I should have a rose in my button-hole to-day. Everywhere they give one flowers or candy. Another led me all around the village of Pont-St.-Maxice by the hand, and all along the roads they always, girls and boys, click their heels together and give the military salute when we pass.

*June 24.* My hostess charged "what-

ever I chose to pay" for the room. I asked if two francs would suffice, and she agreed. In the morning she handed me a bottle wrapped up and told me to say nothing about it. She would accept nothing for it and when I opened it later I found it was a pint of champagne! Certainly nice of her. Board and lodging and champagne for two francs!

We passed many smashed-up villages to-day, including Sermaize and the famous Vitry-le-François, the turning-point of the battle of the Marne. We stopped at Trois-Fontaines and saw the ruins of a twelfth-century abbey, — wonderfully beautiful, — and the château of Trois-Fontaines belonging to the Count of Fontenoy. The Boches did not injure it for some strange reason. The abbey was ruined by the French Revolutionists.

As we neared Bar-le-Duc we passed the Tenth Cavalry, every man leading an extra horse. All the horses are little, quick-acting animals of the polo pony type. They looked very efficient. We also passed the Seventy-ninth "de ligne" returning from

the Front. The men were haggard and done, but a fine-looking lot. Ten days should put them on their toes again. After one of our caravans goes through a section of country, the "pays" breaks out in spots with Ford sores for days. We have only "shed" five altogether and two are due to rejoin to-night. Woody broke his front and Edwards his back axle. Bowman burned out a bearing, Little broke a front wheel, and Lathrop had carburetor trouble. There were, of course, the usual lot of blow-outs. I had two, but was able to rejoin each time without losing my position in the line for more than a few minutes. Each man carries a part of the general extras on a hike. I was lucky in drawing the tire supply, which saved me many minutes, as I used the tires lying loose in the car rather than undo my carefully packed-away spares.

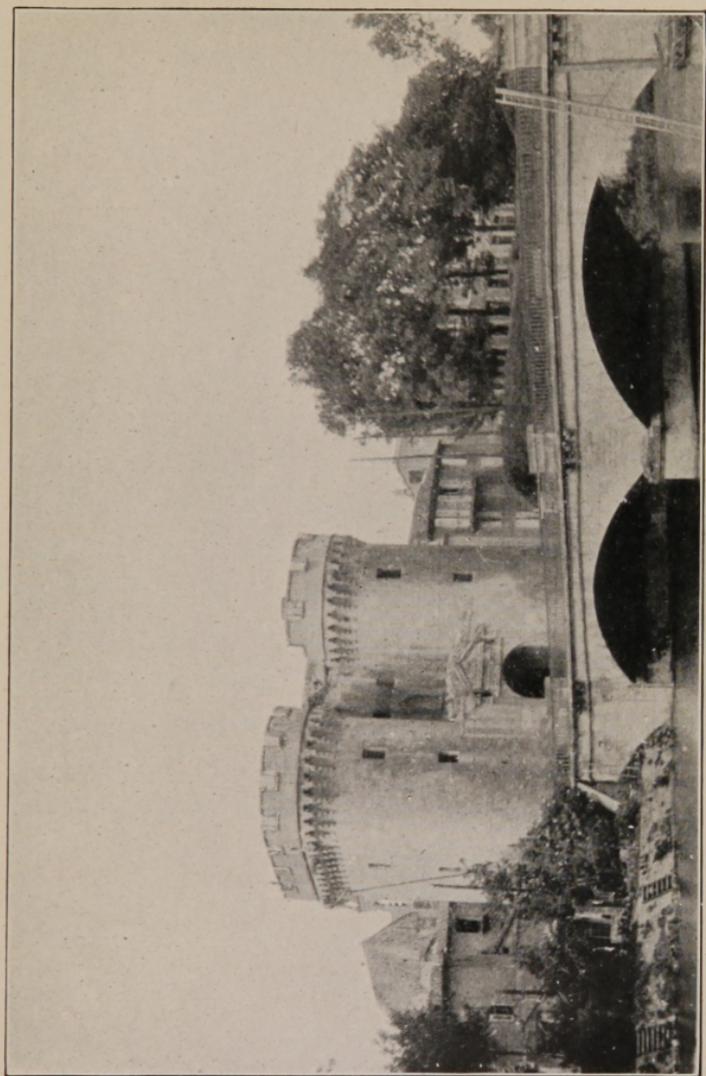
*June 25.* We arrived at Bar-le-Duc yesterday afternoon at 5 o'clock, and had our tents up and kitchen working by 6 P.M., to the astonishment of a neighboring "camion" section. We turned in at 9 o'clock.

At 11 P.M. a call came to go at once to Verdun, as there had been a big gas attack. We chucked everything out of our cars, got masks and "tin derbys," and beat it. We made the outskirts of Verdun (fifty kilometers) by 1 A.M. over fearful roads and not a car broke down, though there were several blow-outs. We ran into the Norton Section and our No. 2. They were very much surprised — as they knew we had only arrived that evening — to find us right on the job. As we loaded the coughing men into the cars, the guns were going like mad and a terrific explosion occurred — either a mine or a powder dépôt. The whole sky was bright, as when Du Pont's powder mills blew up at Wilmington last winter and we saw it in Philadelphia, — except this time it was quite close.

Each car took five men and we landed them back at Bar-le-Duc as the day was breaking. Little burned out a bearing, but otherwise we made the return trip without accidents, at a very fast clip. In fact, too fast for the good of the cars, but the Lieutenant wanted to make a good

impression at the start. The thing really developed into a race. Claxon horns, extra tires, and all sorts of loose objects fell off, and I think we got even some of the soldiers nervous. I had two bottles of beer lying between the fender and the body of the car, which Baylies had asked me to carry the previous day, and in the hurry of the moment and the dark I forgot about them. As we beat it along at sixty kilometers an hour, I began to hear a new knock in my engine. I thought the wretched old thing had every known knock already from piston slap to main bearing bang, but this clink was a new one. It got no worse nor less, whether up grade or down, and I thought, "Well, as ever, a Ford is full of infinite resources for surprise"! When we got to Verdun I began oiling up, and there were the two bottles and the explanation of the knock. Believe me, we did n't do a thing to them! The funny part of it was the boys thought I had great foresight in bringing them along.

To-day we are taking things easy and



THE GATE OF VERDUN



awaiting orders. The man who sat beside me told me that the reason they got caught by the gas was that they had taken their masks off in order to see more clearly, as the ground was treacherous and full of shell-holes, and some of the gas was still lurking in the low places. We all went to bed at 7 A.M. and slept until Roche was awakened by something licking his face. Thinking it was one of the dogs, he just gave it a slap, and then the whole tent nearly collapsed! A stray cow had drifted in and tried to get acquainted! The riot that followed set all thought of further sleep at an end, so we started in tinkering with the cars and generally shaking down. Temporarily, our camp is pitched on the grounds of an old château at a little place called Veel, just out of Bar-le-Duc.

*June 27.* No rest for the wicked. We had only just got thoroughly repaired and straightened out after our first trip, when we were called out again: this time to a little east of Verdun at 3 A.M. Well, we galloped out over that awful road again, dodging two solid lines of "camions" and

guns for the whole fifty kilometers. The French, by the way, call it the "Voie Sacrée" (Sacred Way), as, when the railroad was cut, the use of this road for carrying supplies saved Verdun. Nobody got into much trouble, however, except Lathrop who broke his brake, and as he was the next behind me he kept bumping into me steadily. When we got to Dugny we found it packed with ambulances. There had been another gas attack. I ran into Mason, head of the new Section No. 8, and several other fellows from Sections 2 and 3. Also the English "St. Johns" Section composed of Quakers who do not believe in fighting.

Chapman, the American airman, was killed yesterday near here. He shot down three Boches before he got his own. We saw his wrecked plane.

Section 8's cars were a sight. It was a shame, as they were new only three or four weeks ago; but, of course, they were nearly all new drivers and were bound to get smashed in such traffic. Most of their fenders and side boxes were ripped off as

well as lamps and radiators which were broken or bent. One of the men was wounded and two were unable to stand the strain and have returned to Paris. We got back here at noon, starving, as we had no breakfast, and got busy fixing up the cars: three broken front axles and one back axle. All I had to do was to clean out the carbon and grind the valves. We got mail at last this P.M., the first in nearly two weeks. It develops that the reason we were sent for was only partly to concentrate the American Ambulance, but also for the purpose of replacing a French Section of twenty cars, of which only ten are now working and whose drivers are about all in. Five of the men got caught in a tunnel the other night when two Austrian "380's" exploded one at either end and a third on top. The air concussion threw them some fifteen or twenty feet, first one way and then the other, while not only the glass headlights, but even the floor boards of their cars were blown in!

## 112 AT THE FRONT IN A FLIVVER

*Copy of letter dated 6 mai, 1916*

*1<sup>er</sup> Corps d'Armée Coloniale — 2<sup>me</sup> Division.*

Au nom du Directeur du Service de Santé du 1<sup>er</sup> Corps d'Armée Coloniale, et à son nom personnel le Médecin Divisionnaire de la 2<sup>me</sup> Division Coloniale, félicite M. le Sous-Lieut. de Kersauson et ses conducteurs de la Section Sanitaire Américaine N<sup>o</sup> 1, pour l'empressement digne d'éloges avec lequel dans la nuit du 4 et celle du 5 Mai, 1916, ils ont assuré l'évacuation des blessés des postes de recueil de Cappy et de l'Éclusier.

*Le Médecin Principal de 1<sup>ère</sup> classe, Médecin Div.*

EMILY.

*Q. G. le 6 mai, 1916.*

*Copy of letter dated 10 juillet, 1916*

*Quartier Général, 1<sup>er</sup> Corps d'Armée Coloniale.*

Direction du Service de Santé, le Médecin principal du 1<sup>er</sup> Colonial, Lasnet, Directeur du Service de Santé du 1<sup>er</sup> C. & C., au Lieut. de Kersauson, S.S.A.U. No. 1.

Au moment où la S.S.A.U. No. 1 est appelée à suivre une autre destination, le Directeur du Service de Santé adresse au Lieut. de Kersauson et à tout le personnel de la Section ses chaleureuses félicitations pour le zèle, le courage, et l'activité inlassable dont tous ont fait preuve pendant leur séjour sur le secteur du 1<sup>er</sup> Colonial.

Les troupes Coloniales ont su apprécier le dévouement des Volontaires Américains et elles leur en gardent une vive reconnaissance. C'est avec un profond regret qu'elles les ont vu partir, et elles n'oublieront pas de longtemps les conducteurs hardis, habiles, et empressés qui venaient enlever leurs blessés jusque dans les postes des secours les plus avancés.

(Signé)

LASNET.



THE LIEUTENANT AND THE SQUAD

Standing: Lines, Stevenson, Tyson, Lindsay, Roche, Culbertson, Lieutenant de Kersauson, Jones, Sponagle, Tison,  
Walker, Lott, Rapp

Seated: Wilson, Wallace, Edward Townsend, Campbell, Herbert Townsend (Sub-Lieutenant), Woodworth, Kurtz, Potter



*Copy of letter dated 4 août, 1916*

Le Médecin Major Saint-Paul, Médecin chef de la 127<sup>e</sup> Division, au Lieutenant Commandant le S.S.A.U. N<sup>o</sup>. 1, Lieut. de Kersauson.

*Mon Cher Camarade:* — J'ai été extrêmement contrarié lorsque j'ai appris que votre section quittait la 127<sup>e</sup> Division. Pendant les journées dures que j'ai passées avec elle, je me suis assuré que cette section fournissait un service parfait et faisait preuve du plus beau courage militaire, d'une intrépidité digne d'admiration dans les terrains les plus sévèrement battus par le feu. Vos Conducteurs sont des gens animés d'un esprit de dévouement digne des plus grandes éloges; flegmatiques, braves, d'une éducation excellente et, ce qui ajoute encore à leurs mérites, d'une modestie singulière.

Je vous adresse donc toutes mes félicitations pour la façon dont vous dirigez ce corps d'élite, n'hésitant jamais à payer de votre personne et à donner l'exemple du courage et du dévouement. J'ai remarqué les mêmes qualités chez votre adjoint M. Townsend auquel je vous prie d'adresser ainsi qu' à votre personnel et en particulier à M. Campbell mes souvenirs affectueux.

Bien cordialement,  
 SAINT-PAUL.

## CHAPTER VII

### VERDUN

For history's hushed before them,  
And legend flames afresh;  
Verdun, the name of thunder  
Is written on their flesh.

*Laurence Binyon*

*June 29.* We have been moved to Dugny on the Meuse, six kilometers from Verdun. It is to be our headquarters like Méricourt and Bayonvillers, and we are to run up to the "postes de secours" from here. We were taken to Fort Tavannes, the cabaret, and other "postes de secours." While at the cabaret the Germans began shelling the series of batteries which were all along the road. Some twenty huge (at least, they seemed huge to us) shells fell around us. This was the heaviest shell-fire I have yet been under, and I sure was glad to have something to do to keep my mind off of it. Two men about one hundred yards away were decapitated and there were a number of dead horses about. I can see

we are going to have a lively time. Coming back, an incendiary shell set a big house on fire on the outskirts of Verdun, and the shells came whirring rapidly. We passed several smashed ammunition wagons and one ambulance all in pieces. After dinner we saw some German prisoners going by. They had just been captured and were a bedraggled lot, but were neither extremely young nor extremely old, indicating that there is still a pretty good "bunch" of Boches left. We started in our service this evening and calls began to come in right at dinner-time. We send a car out every twenty-five minutes at night, but in the daytime we go every hour and a half. There is practically no "repos." Alternate days we do "Bureau" calls, interchanging with Section 8, which takes on the regular cabaret run.

One gets some astonishing directions when one is working in a new country at night. For instance, in going to Fort Tavannes, which is now being shelled by the Germans, I was told to go along the —— road, until I passed two smells and then

turn to the left. This referred to two piles of dead horses. Some Russians tried to escape from Metz last night and two succeeded. The Russian force is not just around here apparently. At least I hear nothing of them.

Some Section 2 men drifted into town to-day. They are working on the Mort Homme and Hill 304. I went over with End, who talks German, to see the prisoners. They are not such a bad-looking lot — they are well built and wiry, and they don't look ill-fed. Neither were they depressed, but answered questions freely, looking us straight in the eyes. Their average age was twenty-four to twenty-five, and they said they had not been shifted back and forth as is so often reported, but had been here right along. Altogether I got an impression that they were right on the job. They were all surprised to find we were Americans and not English.

The country just behind the front lines is littered with broken cars, smashed wagons, and dead animals. Nobody has

time to take them away. We gathered in some useful springs and an anvil to-day and hope to tow in a whole "camion" shortly that looks as if it could be made to run. Verdun itself is pretty well shot to pieces. I noticed a marble statue of Napoleon standing up in a hole above the street which used to be a window in a house. It creates a rather impressive effect, as it looks out over the ruins and desolation toward the smoking, rocking hills.

*June 30.* Edwards had a close call last night. A shell exploded right over his car and a dozen pieces were cut through the top and sides; even went through the tool box under his seat and perforated his oil can, yet not one touched him. He continued to work all night, and should get the Croix, except that we are new here and the Lieutenant may not cite him.<sup>1</sup>

Bowman carried a Division Commander whose leg was cut off by a "77." He died in the car in the arms of his orderly, whose

<sup>1</sup> L. Brooke Edwards, of Philadelphia, did get the Croix de Guerre.

only words were, "It's too bad, too bad, to be killed by a mere '77' after all he's been through." Nothing under a "130" is regarded as amounting to much around here.

Latimer broke an axle in a shell-hole; Woodworth fell into one, too, and had to be hauled out. The trouble is, the new holes are made between the time one goes out and comes back, and so they fool one. Thiaumont seems to be the Boche objective just now. It has changed hands four times already.

*July 1.* A chance of six days' Paris "permission," due to-day, is gone. Goodness knows when I will get a holiday now, and I certainly had looked forward to the 4th in Paris. Well, there will be no lack of noisy celebration around here, but not exactly as "safe and sane" as in the States. Woody goes to-day. I'm terribly sorry. He's the best friend I've made in the Section. I shall send the second and third parts of this diary by him.

We have now three dogs attached to the Section. Besides "Vic," Magoun has

picked up a little woolly one at Bayonvillers; while Bowman got a sad sort of mongrel pointer along the road to Bar-le-Duc. They are really more trouble than they are worth, as they continually get lost, while at night they come nosing into the men's blankets and get kicked out to the accompaniment of the usual yelping. Fleas, of course, also help! There are signs, I see, of another joining the squad here. It looks somewhat like a young hyena and is hanging around the cantonment. The tame crows and fox of the "camion" drivers at Bayonvillers were amusing and could be caged, but these pups are continually escaping. What with our three tents, the Zouave, "Lizzie," and the varied menagerie, we certainly are assuming the aspect of a traveling circus.

*July 2.* I had an amusing trip with a Captain this morning. I had been running all night from Tavannes and the cabaret. The Germans made an attack near Vaux and our "tir de barrage" stopped it. We drove past some one hundred guns, "75's" and "105's," whose muzzles project over

the road, and when they fire as we pass in an incessant "tir rapide," the noise is enough to break the ear drums. I stuff cotton in my ears and keep my mouth open. The sheets of flame come half across the road and the concussion has even broken some of the little windows in the cars.

Well, this Captain was at Dugny and asked me to take him up to Tavannes, as he was on his way to the front lines. Being daylight it was against our official rules; but, individually, we endeavor to be of as much aid as we can to the army and often waive such rules. When we passed the cabaret we could see the German "saucisses," and, of course, they could see us. At Tavannes, the Captain suggested that I carry him on to the Mardi Gras redoubt close to the lines and in plain sight. I told him I was "under his orders," so we proceeded, passing more dead horses and all sorts of smashed stuff, and winding our way around huge craters. At last we got there. In thanking me he said some complimentary things, and remarked that he

had asked a member of another Ambulance Section to take him up here a few days ago, and that he had refused, although it was still only dawn.

Incidentally I picked up three "blessés" at the redoubt who were about to be taken the couple of miles down to the cabaret "poste de secours" on "pousse-pousses," little two-wheeled pushcarts which carry one stretcher. This meant the saving of an hour or more for them. When I got back here, I found Will Irwin and another magazine writer being shown the fighting by Piatt Andrew. Unfortunately they missed the "tir de barrage" which, alone, is worth crossing the ocean to see. A solid line of flame several kilometers long, crowned by exploding shrapnel and all kinds of colored lights and flares and a noise so deafening as to make one's head reel and one's brain stop working. There were eleven hundred guns working just as fast as they could (about twenty-five shots a minute) for an hour in the space of about two square miles. No words of mine can do justice to that "tir de barrage" across the Étain

road. I have been scared in my life, but never like that. The German "incomers" one regards as luck. One hears the warning whistle and thinks it's coming right at one, and it falls a hundred yards away. Again one hears the whistle and regards it as distant — and she blows up right beside one. There's a cheerful uncertainty that means bad luck if one is hit; but when obliged to drive in front, within twenty feet, of those "75's," and others, with the flame apparently surrounding you, and unable to hear or think for the stunning noise, you don't know whether the motor is going, and you also wonder where the wads are going. They, alone, are enough to kill a man. You also hope the gunners are on to their job, as some new recruit might aim a foot too low! Then, occasionally, a badly timed shot bursts at the muzzle, which means exactly above the car. Believe me, I'd rather take a chance with the erratic "Germ" incomers than to have to pass that often. If I get out of this without being permanently deaf, I'll be lucky.

Just as the old Fokkers beat all other war planes and the Nieuports beat the Fokkers in point of speed, the Boches have suddenly, within the last few days, introduced a new Fokker much faster than the fastest Nieuport. Johnston, one of the American Ambulance men who went into the Aviation Corps, and is in the camp at Bar-le-Duc, told Sponagle to-day that he and his squadron were caught by surprise over the German lines, and only escaped by the greatest luck. The French and English, of course, will immediately start to build an even faster plane, but temporarily the supremacy of the air appears to have been snatched from the Allies and even our own aviators admit it.

The French batteries are certainly beautifully concealed. One can only spot them at night by the flashes. In the daytime they shoot and shoot and one never sees them.

*July 3.* George End this morning saw a man killed by the shock of a "210" on the road into Verdun. The "Germs" were attacking Thiaumont again. The

shell exploded just beside the road and the man was n't even touched, but was killed by the shock.

Funny the directions the fellows give each other as to the safest roads to take! End, of course, advised me not to go to the cabaret by way of Verdun, but to go through the woods where Edwards was hit. Ten minutes later Francklyn came in and said to be sure to take the road through Verdun, as the Germans were shelling h—l out of the "casernes" on the wood road, and to be careful. Imbrie, with his usual cheerfulness, remarked: "Careful! Careful! Good Lord, how's anybody going to be careful? If we wanted to be careful we should have been careful not to leave America!"

*July 4.* My idea of nothing to do is to go out under shell-fire in the pouring rain. That's what Squad A of Section 1 has been doing all day. It rains thirty days out of each thirty-one in the month, and in those months that have only thirty days, it is n't clear at all.

While we were swimming in the Meuse

yesterday, we saw a Boche aeroplane attack one of the fifteen "saucisses" around Verdun and in a few moments the thing burst into flame and fell like a plummet. The observer was killed.

The French chased the aviator, but he got away.

Imbrie is certainly a scream. He remarked to-day that on going out on his run to the "poste" the road was O.K., but coming back he saw a fresh-killed horse. He said: "Now, that's the sort of thing that causes one to stop and reflect, but I did n't. I jammed down both levers and did my reflecting at forty miles an hour!" There are a number of Philadelphia cars in Sections 1 and 8. Two new ones from the Huntingdon Valley Country Club came up yesterday. There is one from Henry Brinton Coxe, and one from John K. Mitchell, one from the University Club, one from J. H. McFadden, one from George F. McFadden, and one from Clement B. Newbold.

Great news! The Government has awarded forty-eight hours' "permission"

to all Americans in the army to allow them to celebrate the 4th of July. Only five of our Section are allowed to go, however, but as my regular "permission" was due July 1st, along with Roche, Lewis, Paul, and Edwards, we were the five selected. Section 8 is allowing eleven men off; but, of course, they have been here longer and deserve it more. All the aviators and all the other Sections are letting men go down, and, believe me, we'll have big times in Paris. The Boches got Thiaumont this morning; but I guess that's about all for them if the Somme offensive continues to progress.

*July 5.* I arrived in Paris yesterday with five to ten men from each of the American Ambulance Sections and some Norton men, and saw all the old bunch of fellows at Henri's, including ——, who invited me to dinner at Maxim's. He gets his divorce to-day! This morning, after a hectic night, I stopped at the hospital to see our wounded "ambulanciers," especially Hollingshead, of the Norton Squad, who came over on the steamer with me. He

got hit on the shoulder at Bras, near the Mort Homme; but is coming around all right. The three "blessés" whom he was carrying were killed and the car was smashed. The two Frenchmen were buried, but they left the body of the Boche lying in the ambulance for the Germans to find. They were thought to be about to capture the place at the time, but I believe have since been pushed back. I saw several other wounded American Ambulance men including the new fellow from Section 8 who had only been at the Front about twenty-four hours before he got a piece of shrapnel in the arm. Barber, the Section 4 man who got an "éclat" in his stomach, will recover, after all.

*July 9.* I got back yesterday and worked on the car all day putting in a new engine. Ned Townsend returned; he, Roche, and Paul bringing up some new, or rather rebuilt, cars. They are not balls of fire by any means; but anything is better than driving some of the old cripples they heretofore have handed us. George End is down with dysentery, and some of the

others also complain of it, Vic White particularly.

We had to shoot the little woolly dog. Its ribs were crushed by a car, poor little beggar! Section 8 has gone "en repos" and we are now working with new English and French Sections. We have had no trouble whatever in holding up our end so far. An attack on Souville last night was repulsed. Ned Townsend was up there, and had a splinter clink off his "tin derby"; the first time I've actually known of their being useful to us except to keep the rain off. In the trenches when only the head is exposed, of course, they are very useful; but judging from the general line of solid ivory nuts we've got with us, other parts of the body require more protection than the dome!

I've become very humble of late. I, honestly, never realized what an awful ass I must have been at the start until (entirely involuntarily) I was forced to listen to the idiotic drool pulled by some of the new men in the watches of the night. They all regard themselves as young Atlases



NELSON, EDWARD TOWNSEND, AND ROCHE



LOADING AN AMBULANCE WITH THE HELP OF A GERMAN PRISONER



supporting France and the world through the grace of God and Ford. And oh, those eternal arguments about the whateverness of whichever! — or words to that effect — when all that it is necessary for them to know and do, is to crank a car and steer it to where they are told to go!

*July 10.* Having had swims in the Somme, the Marne, and the Meuse, we are now looking forward to a paddle on the Rhine. I have a hunch that before very long there may be an attack to the east of Verdun beyond the St.-Mihiel salient, or possibly right there. My only reason for this is the advent of fresh Senegalese and other Colonial attacking troops, such as we saw on the Somme. Also the Russians on this front are yet to be heard from, while their brethren on the other side are doubtless doing as well. Bonne nouvelle! I have been given a new car; not a made-over wreck, but a real new one.

*July 11, 4 A.M.* I am writing here at the Étain-Moulinville cross-road beside a dead and odoriferous horse. Watching

the dawn break and listening to the whining of the shells from both sides passing overhead, and now and then one breaking entirely too near for comfort is, believe me, no place for a nervous child! I'm simply writing this to keep my mind off the crape and "don't-he-look-natural-please-omit-flowers" stuff! It's cold, and it's going to rain, and these blessed "brancardiers" are late with their trench "pousse-pousses." I'm also hungry and I'd give a quarter for a fifteen-cent drink; and I'd as leave have it at the Racquet Club in old Philly as here. Just now the Boches are firing "210's" which are landing in the ravine a hundred yards away. I hope they'll keep perfectly accurate and are not going to give any raw greenhorns practice. I entirely sympathize with the fellow in Bairnsfather's famous cartoon: "There'll be dirty work at the cross-road to-night."

*Later.* It appears that one of the shells I listened to lit close to "Huts" Townsend's car at the Tavannes cross-road and nearly crowned old Roger. They came up

and ordered me to return, as I had stayed over my allotted time.

In the afternoon, the Lieutenant, Spognale, and I went up to Fort Dugny and had the luck to see another attack on Souville. For once it was clear and the sight was marvelous. The whole hill smoked. We also saw the American Escadrille go into action, six of them; but they disappeared in the smoke far back of the German lines. The big bombardment was followed by a gas attack between Vaux and Douaumont, and the fight was fierce all night, around Damloup. We began to get calls around 5 A.M. and, thereafter, ran all day under heavy fire. I saw a bully "155" shell on the road and wanted to pick it up, and had already slowed down, when one burst within thirty feet of the car—I changed my mind and moved on! Nearly all the men we carried were "gassed." They kept coming in all day from the trenches, or rather shell holes, in the Bois Fumant and Froide Terre near Fleury. We alone carried some twelve hundred of them, and believe me, it was some strain.

Many new dead horses along the road. The gas gets them, even the smallest whiff, and, of course, they have no masks. Even at 10 A.M. there was still enough gas to make our eyes smart. The Germans tried a new dodge, — a sort of “tir de barrage” of “77” gas shells. They do not make much noise, just about as much as a yacht cannon, but the gas spreads fast. It was about forty feet high and extended for about two hundred meters along the Étain road. The men who were caught by it all admitted they had taken off their masks for one reason or another. Some get sick at their stomachs and that forces them to take off their masks. It is not amusing to talk to men who don't know they're as good as dead! One really should have two masks, and switch in such a case, not breathing meantime. We all have had another one issued to us to-day.

The work became exactly like a road race. At our cantonment, after delivering the wounded, we had a table on which were coffee and crackers. There were extra tires, oil, water, and gasoline, and the

mechanics all ready to put them in. We made eleven round trips during the day from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. Some cars only carry five and some six, so that the total wounded carried would have been over eleven hundred if all had been going perfectly. During the night we necessarily worked slower, but carried some nine hundred, I should judge. I broke a spring clip which detained me a little while, and I lost about a half-hour around noon, but made it up later. The doings of the last two days are chronicled more or less in the "official communiqués." The bombardment being dignified by the term — "Extreme violence."

The Germans again got within five hundred yards of Tavannes, by the use of gas. This evening, at 6.30 P.M., without artillery preparation, the French counter-attack was made and was entirely successful. Not only was all lost ground regained, but they captured some one hundred prisoners, several machine guns, etc. The leaving out of the artillery preparation entirely fooled the Boches.

As the hospitals are overflowing, we have

had to take in a lot of the gassed men with us in our cantonment. It is pathetic to hear them try to get their breath as if they were drowning; also it's not conducive to sleep. I carried the Commandant who was in the attack. He had a piece of shell in his stomach, but he was a brave beggar. Never said a word, and thanked me when I apologized for the jolting he got. The "Germs" got the Damloup redoubt today.

We nearly had a scrap of our own just now. One man implied that another had been running less than the rest. He was sent to call him and found him sleeping while all the others were on the road. We had to pull them apart. It is due to overwork, overexcitement, strain. Every one's nerves are on edge.

It's wonderful to see the French artillery in action. Our "poste" at the cabaret is entirely surrounded by batteries; and to see the relief come galloping up, split in fours, and each go dashing out into the fields by the pale light of a clouded moon, is a sight one can never forget. In about

two minutes they are unhooked and old Mr. Boche is receiving "billets-doux de soixante-quinze."

We were ordered to move to rejoin the Division which has been "en repos" about a week. The Boches started shelling the railway station with the Skoda "380's" this afternoon; but everybody was too sleepy even to go up to photograph it. They never hit it, anyway, and the old peasant women continue to tend their gardens all around the huge shell holes. All through the valley back of Tillat, Tavannes, the Mort Homme, and so forth, the peasants till their fields under shell-fire. Now and then they lose a horse through asphyxiating gas; but otherwise they don't give a curse for the Germans.

*July 13.* We leave in caravan to-day to rejoin our Division "en repos" at a little village outside of Bar-le-Duc. The heavy fighting has died down again and now everything is quiet. We have received quite a lot of praise for our work through the gas attack. The new location is Tannois, just outside of Bar-le-Duc. We are

beautifully situated in a little valley, with a clear mountain spring, ripe cherry trees, and wild strawberries everywhere. We all celebrated the day with champagne, and Pierre got fresh with the Lieutenant and was given twenty-four hours in jail; but to-morrow being the 14th, the sentence really only holds good for a few hours, as all minor offenders are to be released. The Lieutenant knew that before he sent Pierre to jail. The "Loot," as every one calls him, is really one of the best of fellows, and knows just how to handle the men so that they don't feel too much restraint, and yet are kept well in hand. Roche and I go to Paris on our long-delayed "permissions" to-morrow. Winsor is going down on sick-leave. End joins us to-morrow. He leaves for good, after two years' service, partly in Serbia.

We had a mock marriage to-day with a little girl in an "épicerie" shop, — who was tickled to death and got right into the spirit of it, — and Sam Paul. Sam was so rattled he could n't say or do anything but blush! Josh Campbell was the Master

of Ceremonies and it was a scream! They bathed the old Zouave cook, De Vaux, in champagne.

The "Loot" is tickled to death with the way the Section went through the attack. He received an awfully nice letter from the General of the Division, and he told Roche and me coming down in the train that he believed the whole Section might get cited — a very unusual thing. It appears that we broke the record for the number of wounded carried during twenty-four hours in that Sector, or something of the sort. Culbertson got off a classic to-day. He was talking of heavy shell-fire coming in, and of being scared, and somebody asked him the size of it. He replied, "Oh, I guess about a '105' or, you know, a '380' Bowman"! We speak of the "77's" and "105's" as "380 Bowsmans" now.<sup>1</sup>

*July 17.* Trouville and a salt bath. A thing I've forgotten to mention is the staining of the white horses a sort of sorrel.

<sup>1</sup> Bowman was a young man in whose eyes things loomed large. Hence the joke.

What reminded me of it just now was the way they are fading, on account of the months of rain. Here in Trouville they are becoming a sort of pale "baby pink." Some of the dead horses around Verdun also have been washed almost white again by the rain. They are very useful landmarks at night.

I have seen more pathetic sights here than almost anywhere else. The Trouville and Deauville casinos are convalescent hospitals. Most of the big hotels are also. I was driving along the land just back of the beach, past the fine-looking private villas, when we came to a series of the same sort which looked like "Little Italy," with the clothes hanging out and the babies all over everything and small chimneys sticking out of the windows, the regular New York tenement look. I asked what on earth it was doing in the middle of Trouville, and was told that it was part of the Belgian refugee camp sections, which are scattered all along the northwest coast. One almost has to apologize for not being a cripple at

Trouville. It's terrible to stand the looks of scorn! But one can't stop and explain to each individual that one has been dodging shells at Verdun for two weeks, and is only on a two-days' "permission" here.

## CHAPTER VIII

### “EN REPOS”

France, you may pin sparse tokens with war-tried fingers to the breasts that lift beneath eyes that look to you living and dying.

But the decoration you have set in these faces belongs to millions that march and that serve you still, living or dead.

*John Curtis Underwood*

PARIS, *July 24.* Old End finally left. He was a good fellow. I remember the time when he forgot the password for the bridge at Cappy, which the Germans were diligently trying for with “77’s” and “105’s.” The sentry stopped him, of course, asking the word, and in his slow, drawling, vague way George said in English, which, of course, the sentry could n’t understand, “I don’t remember exactly, but it seems to me it sounded something like ‘Motor Boat.’” The word was “Montauban.” What with the noise of the bursting shells and the rest, the sentry simply gave it up and let him pass. He woke me up at 4 A.M. to say good-bye and to give him a cocktail.

I ran into Waldo Peirce in the château, with Foster, who is going to Serbia with the Rockefeller "Foundation." Peirce had a close call at Nouvelle Fleury. A piece of shrapnel got him in the chest, but was deflected by his heavy leather pocket-book which was filled with papers and money. Peirce says he's never going to be without money hereafter — he does n't care whose! He's shaved his beard and lost about twenty pounds. I hardly recognized him.

Cartier tells me that when Waldo's wife wrote asking him when he was coming back, he did n't answer; then she cabled requesting a reply; so he wired back — "Après la guerre."

*July 25.* Bonne nouvelle! The Section has been cited by the Order of the Division for the work before Verdun. They will have to solder the Cross on an oil can, I suppose, as we carry no pennant. A thing that is worthy of record, but which as we all know it so thoroughly I had forgotten to mention in the part of this diary written at Dugny, is that "Huts" — otherwise called "Herbert" — Townsend, of New

York, our leader, has all kinds of nerve. When I went up to the cabaret the night of the final gas attack on Souville, I thought, each time, that his calm manner and perfectly casual talk only acted on me personally. I was scared so that I did n't know whether I was coming or going, although, of course, I did not show it; but every man of our Section with whom I have since talked said the same thing. Old "Huts" steadied us down, whereas if he had shown signs of getting rattled, some of us might have become nervous. As a matter of record we all rolled thirty-two hours without a serious hitch of any kind — except when C—— and B—— suddenly declared a personal war of their own. "Huts" will wear the Croix, I suppose, and he deserves to wear a dozen of them.

*July 26.* Off at last in the Hotchkiss. I made the trip without a hitch. The boys were all glad to see us. We brought much mail, and cakes, and so forth. On our way we stopped at Montmirail for lunch. There we ran into a Mrs. Squiers, of New York, who had become a Sister of St. Vincent de

Paul and is located at a hospital there. She told us that one of her sons was in the English Ambulance Service and the other in a motor battery. She was glad to talk with English-speaking people again, she said, after so long; but as she did all the talking I could n't see that we did her much good.

TRIAUCOURT, *July 27*. We were decorated to-day by the Divisionnaire. He was unusually complimentary, — said we were cool, brave, drove where we were told and showed “an élan most commendable,” and so forth; and finally pinned the Croix on Edwards's car, representing the Section.

*Copy of Order No. 78*

*2<sup>me</sup> Armée, Direction du Service de Santé du Groupement E.*

En exécution des prescriptions réglementaires, le Directeur du Service de Santé du 6<sup>me</sup> Corps d'Armée cite à l'ordre du Service de Santé du 6<sup>me</sup> Corps d'Armée —

La Section Sanitaire Automobile  
Américaine N<sup>o</sup> 1.

Sous la direction du Lieutenant Robert de Kersauson de Pennendreff, et des Officiers Américains Herbert Townsend et Victor

White, la Section Sanitaire Américaine N° 1, composée entièrement de volontaires, a assuré remarquablement le service quotidien des évacuations en allant chercher les blessés le plus loin possible, malgré un bombardement parfois violent. S'est particulièrement distinguée le 11 Juillet 1916, en traversant à plusieurs reprises une nappe de gaz toxiques sous un feu intense sans aucun répit pendant 32 heures pour emmener aux Ambulances les intoxiqués.

*Le Directeur du Service de Santé,*

**J. TOUBERT.**

*Quartier Général le 26 Juillet 1916.*

Sponagle also got one for repairing a car under heavy fire. He is our head mechanic and an awfully good fellow. His citation was signed by Joffre himself. Brooke also received his Croix and got a bully citation from Nivelles. Altogether it was a gala occasion. The Section's "Croix" will be framed with the "Citation" and a copy given to each of us. That also comes from Nivelles.

*July 28.* For some reason or other the boys nicknamed me "The Judge" almost from the first moment I joined the squad





on the Somme. Pete Avard was the first to pick the name, and I never could find out why except that I tried to be even-tempered and pleasant to all of them — which is hard enough at times. Pete used to be in the Fourth U.S. Cavalry — “Gallop-  
ing I” troop. — We are still in the Ar-  
gonne. Of the new men Walker and Wal-  
lace are exceptionally good fellows.

There is going to be a big celebration to-night. “Very Good Eddy” and Brooke are going to christen their Croix and that of the Section.

*July 29.* Tardieu has designed an Indian head as the “Convoi’s” emblem for the squad, taking his lines from the regular Indian on the \$5 gold-piece. This lends a real “ton” to the cars, the head being stenciled life-size in red, black, and white on the sides, and, as one might say, it puts Section “One” on the map.

The cobbler’s daughter in this village (Triaucourt) is quite pretty and intelligent. She showed us the hole in her arm where a German high explosive hit her. It killed her grandmother beside her, dis-

emboweling her. She says that the Germans took care of her, however, and acted decently enough, except that they set fire to a group of stores in the town when they left. The woods hereabouts are dotted thick with graves, German and French; hundreds of them. They are about a year old.

The talk now is that another big offensive by the Allies is brewing in the Champagne. The Russians are nearly all concentrated there. It should break out pretty soon, if there is anything in the reports we hear.

I saw a lot of the French troops from Indo-China, the Anamites. "Tirailleurs Tonquinois" is their official title. They are little fellows dressed in pale yellow, but wearing the dull blue casque. It was a beautiful sight watching the long yellow and blue worm, winding for miles along the distant road in the hazy sunlight. We have now had nearly two weeks of good weather; the longest period of the sort since Méricourt. A farmer tells us it came just in the nick of time to save the crops, which were

beginning to rot. He says the grape and wine crops are going to be the best in years, especially in Burgundy. He says the Chambertin of this year will be a wonder in time.

Beside us here is a machine-gun section — air-cooled.

*July 30.* I had my first introduction to soccer football last evening. We played the French before an audience of a couple of thousand soldiers. They licked us as usual, 3-2.

Cunningham and I had a long walk in the woods to-day. He tells me that he is "fed up" with war and is going home. He has been here almost since the beginning. He says one of the most depressing things is the way the personnel of the squad changes every few months. Just as all get to be pretty good pals, a lot have to go home and new men fill their places who are awkward and strange. We are going through that process already and it will be accentuated next month. I'm sorry to lose old "Gymp," although he's terribly pig-headed in his ways, and always sees everything in the most dismal light.

Vic painted a whale of a picture of him: the head in a deep shadow with a grouchy expression; and a sunny, cheerful background behind. He named it "Sunshine and Shadow." It is a scream!

I have been struck forcibly with the quiet, restrained, and generally dignified behavior of the thousands of French soldiers camped about here. They wander through the handsome Poincaré château grounds and never disturb or injure anything. Bottles of wine left to cool in the spring are not touched.

*July 31.* The big vaudeville went off with great éclat. It could n't have been pulled off in a more beautiful or suitable spot. A little clearing in the forest with a tiny stage flanked with French flags, and the general lighting furnished by M. Rapp, of S.S.U. No. 1: all the acetylene lamps we had. Jimmy Sponagle was the only one of us that could produce a stunt, and the Frenchmen in the kindness and politeness of their hearts put him last. Of course, old Sponny did the best he could, considering that he followed some

of the greatest comedians and singers on the professional stage; nevertheless, I wished for Woody. He and Sponny could have put over something pretty good. Then they asked — no, really begged, us to sing “Tipperary.” Well, we sang it, of course. Nobody really knew it and it was a frost. The “*mise en scène*” was wonderful — all green surroundings. It reminded me of Robin Hood stories and the revelries in Sherwood Forest: by luck, a clear night and the stars thickly spangled over the opening in the woods. The trees were filled with men and whenever one lighted a cigarette his face shone through the foliage like the pumpkin heads at Halloween. It was marvelous. That and *Trois Fontaines* stand out as the two most beautiful, peaceful things I have ever seen. Of course, nothing compared with Verdun at night. That, like the *Penseur* before the Pantheon, is all alone in its glory.

We have a lot of fun evacuating the late sleepers. Some of the men lie in bed after eight o'clock, and so the fellows sneak

up, surround their cars, and quickly grab the stretchers, pull them out, and dump them on the grass. Some of them get mad, and then there is a rough-and-tumble fight. One time at Veel they started my car and drove me all around the country. To-day, we put Francklyn in the middle of the main street, and the village girls had a great time kidding him. We carried him out to the tune of the "Dead March" from "Saul!"

*August 1.* We have found a swimming-pool at last. The discovery was made by Baylies in a peculiar way. He was called out to get a man who had been drowned. We could n't believe it, as the streams all around here are so shallow, but he was taken to a little dam about ten minutes from here that we had entirely missed. So henceforth we are all right.

*August 2.* I got a shock this morning. I awoke to find my face had turned quite green. I thought for a minute gangrene or something had set in. The explanation came quickly. It had rained a little in the night and Mrs. Charles M. Lea's beau-

tiful green silk pneumatic pillow had got a trifle damp — that pillow, hitherto, has been a joy!

I had to laugh at Imbrie. Like Cunningham he's always growling and kicking and calling this a hell of a life. Just before I went to Paris he said his time would be up the 1st of August and he was "fed up" and going to quit and go back — and all that. Well, I asked him to-day what boat he was sailing on, and he grinned sheepishly and said that he'd just signed up for another three months! As a matter of fact he loves it. All his life has been spent traveling around the globe, including a long stay hunting in Africa, and he could no more leave this than fly.

We had a scream of a cross-country hare-and-hounds run this evening. "Huts" Townsend, as Section Chief, opened champagne at dinner in honor of the "Citation." There was one bottle extra and much argument arose between the two tables as to which should have it. Culbertson went over and grabbed it and they all fell upon him. Finally Roche got away

with it and supported by a couple of others ran off. After a little interval we all decided to hunt for them and there ensued a regular chase across country. We must have covered several miles. But they were foxy. They hid the bottle and then led us a long run. Then they sneaked back and drank it up, while we were still hunting in the woods. The Frenchmen thought we were all "nutty," but we explained it was a regular American game!

"Huts" heard from our old Division, the Third Colonials. It appears General Gaddel lost his hand in the attack on the Somme: and poor little Abbé Souri, the chaplain, is not expected to live.

*August 5.* I hear that W. M. Barber, of Toledo, Ohio, the Section 3 man who was shot in the stomach, is out and around again: quite a resurrection. He completely fooled the French authorities who gave him the Médaille Militaire, in addition to the Croix de Guerre, which is generally considered as about guaranteeing the "Croix de bois." Now he's going back to the Front again.

I had a nasty nightmare last night. I dreamed I was dressing to go to a formal dinner-party at home. It certainly was a relief to wake up here.

They put a large yellow flea-bitten mongrel dog and a live chicken in Bowman's "bus" where he was sleeping last night. There was a jolly riot, as may be imagined.

*August 7.* I broke a ligament in my leg playing ball. Rough luck! Will be out of business for about a week, I suppose, if it's anything like as bad as the last time. I can't walk at present. Lucky we are still "en repos," so somebody can take my runs for me temporarily.

Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt came up to see us last night with the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre and Andrew. She gave us all cigarettes. Their car had a close call near Pont-à-Mousson when a shell exploded close to them.

We moved this afternoon to a new camp: only about ten kilometers. Vaulecourt is the town nearest us. The place is partially wrecked; the church destroyed.

The bells, by the way, were presented by an ancestor of Clermont-Tonnerre. It is a pretty spot in the woods. There is a little thatched hut where a peasant and his daughters live. They have a pet pig, and the oldest daughter is a most self-possessed young woman, considering her age, about fifteen. She is n't a bit rattled at the jollying we give her.

Andrew told us that the Field Department of the American Ambulance was now officially separated from the Paris Hospital and had secured new quarters near the Trocadero — 21 Rue Raynouard.

*August 8.* We went wild-boar hunting last night. Nothing doing. They say they are quite thick around here; also deer, but they are protected. I saw two young boars a farmer caught, — pretty little animals, very fast on their feet. A fine stream to wash clothes in is the Aisne, but hardly deep enough for swimming around here. However, we wade out and duck under. I took a "malade" over to Révigny and a couple of big boars came between the road and the railway as we got there.

I stopped in the main café and found "Winny" O'Connor and "Doc" Ryan's names carved on one of the tables, dated 1915. Section 4 used to be up there. The town is badly shot up; in fact all the towns hereabout are half-ruins. The little peasant girl says her father used to own a farm here, but it was burned down. The French had to bombard the place, as the Germans were in these woods. In fact one of their old trenches runs right beside our cantonment.

The little peasant girls are remarkably strong for their age; they can lift big logs, hoe the fields, and do men's work; but are terribly dirty. It is rather pathetic. When we started to jolly the older one, she went into the hut and in a few minutes came out in a different calico smock: her best, I suppose, and she had done up her hair; but her hands and face were as dirty as ever. She has a sense of humor, though. She came out this morning with two potato hoes and a basket. Edwards promptly rushed forward and asked if he might go over and dig the potatoes. So she gravely

thanked him, handed him the basket, and the hoes, and said, "Go ahead; I will sit here and talk to these gentlemen." Of course, we all cheered and Edwards was much crestfallen. Then Culbertson, who stands six feet, offered to carry a basket of beans for her, and she looked at him a moment, then shook her head; "Non, non, pauvre petit Américain, j'ai peur que ça ne te fasse du mal." And all this from an imp of fifteen, brought up in a hovel in the back woods! "Vic," the club dog, is utterly nonplussed at the tame pig, which is just about his size. It is a scream to see them together. They call the pig "Guillaume II."

*August 10.* "Duffy," Phil and Lew left for home and fair Harvard to-day. We went through the customary burying procession to the tune of the "Dead March" from "Saul." Every one was really sorry.

Wild-boar hunting still goes on these moonlight nights, but Lathrop is the only one who has had a shot, and as he only had a revolver, he missed. There are plenty around. The place is full of tracks

and several have caught glimpses of them in the distance. Lathrop's method is rather unique. He fills his pockets with rocks, and when he hears the boars in the long grass, stirs them up by chucking stones at them, and then, when they break cover, he lets go at them with the old revolver.

*August 12.* Still loafing. All there is to do is read, eat, sleep, and swim and watch the French troops drilling. I saw an interesting lesson in trench "cleaning" yesterday. All the troops are now being taught the gentle art of bomb and hand-grenade throwing. The method of advance up an enemy trench was most interesting. First two men armed with rifles and bayonets, each keeping one length of trench apart, move forward, so that both won't be killed by the same shot. They are the scouts. They signal the first bomb-thrower, two sections back, by means of pebbles, as of course, in battle, no voice or whistles can be heard. The first bomb-thrower and his orderly, who carries the basket, are connected with the second bomb-thrower and his assistant by a messenger. The second

bomb-thrower, however, is two trench sections back, and is picked for a long-distance thrower. He throws over the heads of the others. After it is seen that three or four grenades have landed in the trench, the scouts advance again and signal back as before, and everybody moves up, including the reserves, who lie back two or three sections and also are connected by a messenger. It takes quite a while to clean up even a half-mile of trench — some two or three hours. They throw with a curious, overhand, tossing motion almost like bowling a cricket ball. The ordinary baseball throw is impracticable, as the arm and shoulder would have to come above the trench.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE BATTLE FOR FLEURY

Allons, enfants de nos alliés,  
Les jours de gloire sont arrivés.

**Man that makes new chaos out of fire and rending steel and  
masters and emerges from it, . . .**

**Finds new forms of life that live and freely move across this  
powder pitted wilderness of torment.**

*John Curtis Underwood*

*August 15.* At last! We move to-day: just about time. We go to Landrecourt near Verdun; a little to the west of Dugny, where we were stationed before. We either do the Mort Homme or Bras-Souville work, they say, but we won't know for certain till we get there. Little Hélène offered to do my laundry yesterday. I was quite surprised as she is n't much that sort. She did it very well, too. She had no soap, so I gave her a piece and she would n't accept any pay; said she'd keep the soap. I told her not to use it as a souvenir, but for what it was made for, at which she got sore. Considering that her father beats

her if she talks to us, she ran a big chance doing my clothes, and it was certainly sporting of her. Her old man knows he can't lick us, so he beats her instead, and it naturally keeps us from chatting with her except when he is away. As a matter of fact, not a man in the squad would even think of doing her any harm.

*August 16.* I could find no good place to camp at Landrecourt, so came on past to a beautiful old farm-château called Billefont right outside Verdun. Great, big, beautiful place with fountains, splendid gardens, and park. The only reason it was empty was that the officers of the "Génie," who occupied it until a week ago, got shelled out. The place itself was hit only three or four times, but a good many shells landed all around the house, showing the Boches had the range. When the "Génie" moved out, the shelling ceased. Now we can test the oft-mooted question whether the Germans shell ambulances on purpose. Personally, I have always held that they do not; but that, if an ambulance happens to be in

the way or in line with something they are after, they don't pay any attention to it one way or the other, — hence the many stories from rattled drivers that they personally were being shot at. The price of shells is too high.

Of course we only enter or leave the place at two-minute intervals and are careful not to stand in groups. Also we do not open the shutters, and we screen the windows with blankets at night. We are not only in plain sight of the Boche "saucisses," but also from Fort Douaumont which they hold. The cars are scattered all over, — under bushes so that not only they won't attract attention, but also, if a shell does come in, only one or two will be smashed at a time.

Paul Kurtz, of Philadelphia, joined the Section to-day. He used to be with it up at Dunkerque, but went back to America last winter and has only just returned.

The last people here certainly fled in a hurry. Contents of closets and drawers are scattered all over the place; everything is topsy-turvy. Some of the closets

have been nailed up. Probably books and other articles of value are in them. The owner, whoever he was, must have been quite a faddist besides being an up-to-date farmer. He has all the latest implements and quite a chemical laboratory. He was also apparently interested in electricity and hypnotism, judging from his pamphlets and books. The caretaker says he was arrested as a German spy. It appears that a German company owns the land and quarry across the road. To allay suspicion they placed a number of Frenchmen on the directorate, and also had a French overseer who lived in this château. The company went into receivership at the beginning of the war, but suspicion did not attach to it until the receivers began to investigate. Oddly enough, the place was n't shelled until the overseer, who still lived in the château, was removed a few months ago. Then, when the "Génie" Staff moved in, the shelling soon followed. For some time since the place has been vacant and, as we eased in very carefully, we hope to get away with it.

*August 18.* Off on twenty-four-hour "poste" duty with Lathrop, at a sad dump near Souilly, named Hôpital Fontaine de Bouton. We stay here and have a run of less than a half-mile taking treated "blessés" to the train. The worst of it is that they keep us going at short intervals all night.

*August 19.* Heavy shelling and some sort of an attack last night on Thiaumont, so we were kept busy. Many Boche prisoners are here working on the hospital grounds. They are a healthy-looking lot. Their own officers are allowed to command them and they are very well treated. One of them with spectacles, who is an electrician by trade, told me that on the whole he would rather be on this side of the line than the other, but when I asked him for details, he shut up. I told a German "blessé" whom I carried what his compatriot said, and he nodded his head, agreeing; but he asserted that they would take Verdun if they never did another thing. It looks just now as if they were going to do it. Another violent attack (counter) is on.

The French got one half of Fleury, up to the church, last night. The Germans are counter-attacking now. The fighting is going on in cellars and what's left of houses: the rottenest kind of work. One sometimes does n't know for a day or two whether the town is captured or not. Some of the Boche "blessés," who have been coming in during the last few hours, can't be more than sixteen or seventeen. We worked hard all night. The hospitals all around are jammed and men are lying even outdoors.

I had a curious experience. A Harjes car came up, and in the dim light of a smoky lantern a familiar face appeared. I stared at it for a moment and then a muffled figure remarked, "Is n't your name Stevenson?" It was Charley Clark, of Philadelphia!<sup>1</sup> I had n't seen him for ten years. It appears he lived in Chicago for a while and then moved to Boston. He came over to France in May and

<sup>1</sup> Charles Motley Clark, of Philadelphia, son of the late Clarence H. Clark. His mother was Miss Motley, of Boston, niece of the historian.

joined Harjes. We chatted for quite a while. He is at Dugny doing evacuating work.

It is almost impossible to get any real account of how the fights go from the "blessés"; each has his own particular little local in mind, and also much depends upon the time when the individual was wounded. One Senegalese, for instance, claimed all the officers had run away when the word came to charge. Another man later told me they were all killed. Some say they advanced a considerable distance; but most of the wounded are pessimistic. The fact is, however, that many German prisoners, both wounded and *unwounded*, were taken, and that usually indicates a victory.

*August 20.* We started in the new Souville "poste" service, called Caserne Marceau. We handled the men fighting for Fleury. The village has changed hands almost daily during the past week. Three cars were on duty twenty-four hours. Some fight! When I got up there, the first thing I saw was a wrecked car and four

bodies lined up beside it, — three of them Lieutenants. The Caserne Marceau is absolutely shot to pieces. The doctors live in deep dug-outs. The road is simply pockmarked with shell holes. I picked up a dozen fusées just walking about near by.

The English Section we are relieving has had three cars wrecked and several men wounded. Thank Heaven, we have “shed” at last the other little dinky service of the past three or four days. We drive from Château Billefont, through Verdun, and then up toward Souville, much closer to the lines even than at Tavannes. Squad A (Nos. 1 to 10) started in at noon and worked till 8 P.M.

A counter-attack (German) on Fleury started around 5 P.M. We had hardly got to bed after dinner when we were all called out again. Squad B had been hoodooed from the start and we had to help out. Roche, White, Lathrop, and I had not had any sleep for two nights. Wilson we found, down with a broken axle in a big “380” marmite hole right in the road, new since he had gone up to the

“poste.” Baylies was broken down in Verdun town with tire trouble. Jones got lost and landed in a muddy ravine which enjoys the cheerful title of “Le Ravin de la Mort” (it was pouring rain), and he could n’t get out. Some of the others also got temporarily lost or had tire trouble. No wonder Squad A had to go in. We got through about 4 A.M. The Landrecourt Hospital was filled up quickly, and we had to take our last few loads away back to the Fontaine-Bouton Hospital. The machine-gun division of the 143d was practically wiped out. We carried several of the men with whom we played football at Triaucourt, poor fellows! One man said all the officers had been killed, and that just ordinary soldiers took command. As I said above, we saw three of the dead Lieutenants at our “poste.”

The ground over which the men fight is simply indescribable, — nothing but twisted and splintered stumps of trees (the place around here was formerly a wood). The ground looks as though a huge plough had furrowed and turned it over.

Empty shells everywhere, arms and accouterments of all sorts strewn the land, unexploded grenades, and fusées that threaten one every step. Bastions of bags and bits of trenches, hastily made, connect up a few of the larger and most useful shell holes — dismounted “75’s,” bloody rags and clothes, mouldy food and half-empty tins. And the most pathetic of all, numberless graves simply made by covering up a body in a shell hole, with a bit of wood stuck in it, or a bottle with the man’s number on it. These, in turn, have been blown up again and again. Over all prevailed a smell of rotting flesh and the acrid, damp odor of burned clothes and wood, such as one gets after a city fire when the ruins have been soaked in water. Not a sign of life except the myriads of gnats and flies which darken the air when disturbed, and the rats that scurry from under one’s feet.

One of the “Génie” told us that the job of trench-digging through this land fought over for two years is about the most horrible imaginable, as they constantly have to dig through rotting bodies which render the

trench, once dug, almost uninhabitable. And steadily, at almost regular intervals, the shells come whistling in, bursting with a frightful crash, only once more to hurl skyward the whole dreadful rotting mass of filth that was once the Bois Chapitre and the Froide-Terre.

*August 21.* We have worked three days and nights without any sleep except naps snatched in the cars or "postes." Several of the fellows have had pretty close calls. Rice got his initiation with a vengeance on his first time out, when a "150" dropped in the road within a few feet of him while he was loading "blessés." Walker got spattered with mud by another which fell beside the road.

There was the usual comic scene with Baylies. Bowman was coming down the road when he found it blocked by a mass of dead and wounded horses and men all tangled up with harness and wagons, and beside them one of our cars. It turned out to be Baylies, who came running up to Bowman, exclaiming, "There's been an awful mess, Bob!" and Bowman perfectly

unthinkingly ejaculated, "Good Lord, what have you done now, Baylies?" Baylies was as sore as two sticks and growled, "Ah, where'd you get that stuff?" His conventional answer to all gibes. The word "to Baylies" (French "Bayliser") has been standardized in Section 1 and is even spreading to the other Sections.

The thing that gets on one's nerves in this service is watching the shells burst along the road ahead, while one is loading, and knowing that one will have to pass right there in a minute or two. Once on the way, the road is so steep and bad that it requires all one's attention, and the bursting marmites don't loom so large. Souville is certainly the home of the souvenir hunter. If we could ever carry away all that we collect, the steamer would be laden down to the gunwales. Ned Townsend evidently thinks he can move half the remains of the battle with him, — at least he goes about collecting as if he expected to have a "camion" of the largest size to cart his things down to Paris for him.

*August 22.* Our greatest difficulty is to

snatch a chance to sleep. I have run every night since we've been here so far, and I snatch naps at the "poste" or in Verdun where we have established a secondary headquarters in the big military clubhouse, now deserted and partially wrecked. Five cars got to the caserne, ten are lined up by the river in the town of Verdun, and five remain "en repos." So five men get one night's sleep in three. I take my hat off to Roche. He can curl up anywhere and sleep peacefully. Last night he got a very bloody "brancard," laid it under the bench where the "blessés" sit awaiting their turn to be patched up, and was sound asleep for four hours, while the Boches dropped "220" marmites around the "poste," and the groans of the wounded and chatter of the doctors and "brancardiers" kept up a continual disturbance. I've given up trying to sleep in the "abris" and take a chance in the car outside. At least it is cool, and the air is foul only with the odor of burned wood and rotting flesh. In the daytime we have less to do and only operate five cars except in cases of emergency.

To date we still hold Fleury despite repeated German counter-attacks — eight took place on the night before last, and three last night.

There are some curious sights in Verdun. The gendarmes are everywhere and have prevented all looting, so one peers through shell holes into placid-looking interiors — some with the table set for dinner; others, sitting-rooms with all the furniture left, just as when the owners fled from the town. In one, you see that the shell burst right on a rosewood piano and the rest of the room is not much disturbed. In another, there is a bully library, the side of which is torn out, but rows on rows of handsomely bound books are left untouched, neatly arranged on their shelves, and a table on which are writing materials, papers, and the rest.

*August 23.* Some of the men we carry certainly have had weird experiences. Culbertson had “blessés” who told him that, at one time during the fight around Fleury, the French batteries were firing a trifle short and were landing on their own men.

A big "155" hit just back of this fellow, went deep in the mud, and then exploded. It blew him ten feet in the air; and, while he was up, a Boche mitrailleuse got him "on the wing," so to speak. He was as sore as a crab, as he figured he would n't have been touched if it had not been for his own guns blowing him out into the open like the ball in the fountain at a shooting gallery! Two men were killed at our "poste" to-day and one wounded.

To-night, as we sit here waiting our turns to roll, the "big marmites" are dropping all around us and the "poste" is rocked by the explosions. It is not as good as the one at Cappy, being above ground. It is made of big arched metal sections set in the side of the hill, and sandbags and logs piled above it. The theory of the logs is to cause the shell to explode before it penetrates. The ends are also protected by sandbags. The Staff "abri" is thirty feet under ground and practically safe except from being completely blocked — which occurs occasionally. The latest figures regarding the 143d show only 247 men left unin-

jured out of 2000! — and they were in the front line just three days.

A little added touch to the general difficulties was a nice, heavy fog that we had last night. One could n't see more than ten or fifteen yards ahead, but luckily there was n't any great rush of work, so each of us made only two or three runs. I carried a "poilu" who had been in the Fleury bickering, and who complained that the shell holes and attempts at trenches were continually being filled up by the dirt tumbling in as the ground got shaken by new explosions, so that when one thought one had a three- or four-foot hole to hide in, it gradually would work up shallower and shallower until one had to beat it to a fresh hole.

Our club at Verdun is certainly a snappy place: a big four-story building filled with banquet-halls, card-rooms, a billiard-room, and a fencing-hall; fully as large as the Racquet Club at home. The only trouble with it is that the roof has been blown off, and many of the rooms have been wrecked by high explosives which came in from two

sides — over the Meuse from the direction of the Mort Homme and directly back from Douaumont and Vaux. However, the lower floor is in pretty good condition, and we use the fencing-hall. Sponagle went to Bar-le-Duc to-day with “Huts” to see the aviators of the American Squad drill, and came back by aeroplane. Norman Prince just dropped in with him, as it were!

*August 24.* Last night, Squad A was to get its first full night's sleep in five days, but we got fooled. The French attacked at 5 P.M. and the entire Section was called out. Sponagle had to take the place of one of the new men. The latter had gone to pieces under the strain, and was given veronal and ordered by “Huts” to rest. Being a new man he could hardly be blamed, so nobody thinks any the worse of him. He should be all right again after twenty-four hours' rest.

The Germans began throwing real “380's” into Belleray in the afternoon — nothing unreal about those! They were trying for the canal. Some of us walked

over and took some pictures. The reserve cars went out at dusk and we headed down to our club. The Boches were trying for a "270" battery concealed near the river just at the edge of the town, and the shells came whistling over us, landing in and along the river. The reverberations and echoes caused by the houses on either side amplified the explosions until the whole valley seemed to be in one continuous roar. Some day a musician will set those rising and falling, ever-changing cadenzas to a great song, the "Song of the Guns." They ring in rhythm like chimes, louder and fainter, as the ebb and flow of sound goes up and down the river.

Around midnight, word came that the attack had been successful and eight hundred yards gained to the west of Fleury in the Froide-Terre; also that three counter-attacks had been repulsed. The reserve cars had to make only one trip each, as the casualties were remarkably light, considering. The 342d and the 17th did the trick, taking a couple of hundred prisoners. They had previously relieved a regiment that

got all cut up because the men failed to carry their charge home. They hesitated right in the open and were practically annihilated, of course.

Francklyn and Walker had a close call: they were sitting in front of the dug-out reading a paper, when a "105" high explosive hit a tree not five yards from them. Pieces of the shell smashed into Francklyn's car and a shower of stones knocked the paper out of Walker's hand and both men were thrown to the ground. Walker says all he remembers was that some one seemed to snatch his paper away and knock him down at the same time, and he found himself crawling under his car, while Gyles made one long slide for the dug-out entrance.

*August 25.* They threw the hook into our batteries all day yesterday, and several of the "brethren" nearly got done for. "Huts" and I were standing outside the "poste," when a "130" Austrian dropped right back of it and blew earth and "éclats" all around. Also, several have fallen on the road, which is very an-

noying when driving at night, thinking one knows all its various convolutions and corrugations, and finding they have been quite altered since the last time one ran over it. We stopped and filled up a couple of fresh ones that were really too deep to leave. From all the shelling we supposed there would be an attack; but nothing happened, and our squad, which was "first reserve," slept in the club at Verdun peacefully, lulled to sleep by the rhythmic boom of the guns. Squad A2 still has to get its first night's sleep in our own château, however. To-night we are on duty at the "poste" again. A French aeroplane was brought down by three Boches to-day. It fell in a field near our "poste." The German machines swooped down from behind and fairly riddled the Frenchman, who managed none the less to navigate his plane to the ground, though badly wounded.

I carried a crazy man this morning. I found him wandering aimlessly around Verdun with a nasty hole in his head, and tried to get him into the car, but he kept

insisting he was too heavy. Finally, with the aid of a couple of soldiers we made him get aboard. He murmured all the time, "Je suis trop lourd. Je suis trop lourd." I held him with one hand while I steered him to the hospital in the town. The poor devil was so weak from the loss of blood and from the bang on his head that it was n't difficult. Then, when he got to the hospital he refused to leave the car. He seemed to have become attached to it, so we had to drag him out.

*August 26.* They brought a real, raving maniac into the "poste" to-day. He was the only one left of a squad of eight — all killed in a shell hole by one marmite. He lived with the dead bodies for three days! When they dragged him into the tunnel he shouted, "You're going to kill me! You're going to kill me!" The place is rather gruesome, being dark except for the acetylene lamp over the operating-table. They sent him down with two "brancardiers" sitting on him. At Landrecourt he attacked the Médecin Chef, so they put him in a straight-jacket.

He thought every one wished to kill him. He was absolutely unscratched.

Vic White and Kurtz cleaned out the fountain to-day, and we will now have a fine bathing-pool. Crane, of Section E, dropped in to see Roche and me; first time we've run across him since the "Rochambeau" and the days of waiting in Paris. He says they have had considerable work around Toul and that he has become quite expert at ducking shells and sliding for dug-outs, like an enthusiastic base-runner trying to stretch a three-bagger. They are now stationed at Ipecourt and have a long run to Fort Glorieux, their "poste."

*August 27.* I shan't forget last evening in a hurry. To begin with, as the historic tale commences, "It was a dark and stormy night and the rain was pouring in torrents." Well, we could n't see the road a yard ahead of us, and, of course, the Boches took it into their heads to attack. The men we carried later said they had never seen the Germans come on with greater fury; but finally they were beaten back. The French "tir de barrage" was

fearful; just like the night of the big attack on Souville; and the Boches kept shelling the road all night. In addition to the shells, the danger of being run into by some one of our amateur speed kings was very great, as the road is merely a narrow, muddy lane winding up the side of the steep slope to Fort St. Michel and Souville. The batteries around Fort St. Michel were getting hot on our left also. Well, first, I nearly collided with one of the "brethren" as he came tearing up the hill while I was coming down slowly with a load of "couchés." He drove me clean off the road, but luckily I was on the inside against the hill, and not going the other way, or I'd have been in the ravine a couple of hundred feet below. On my next trip up I found that Townsend had collided with Walker and both machines were "Bayliesed" beyond immediate redemption. The fronts of both looked like concertinas. I asked Walker privately how it happened, and he said, "I was coming along slowly and tooting my whistle when Ned came tearing down, hell-

bent, on the wrong side of the road." I then took Ned aside and asked for his version, and he said, "I was coming along slowly, and tooting my whistle, when Sam came tearing down, hell-bent, on the wrong side of the road!" So there you are.

As a matter of fact, they merely proved beyond doubt that two "Flivvers" cannot occupy the same place at the same time, wonderful as they are! White took Townsend's "blessés," who were luckily uninjured by the accident. He had n't gone a half-mile when he blew out a tire; so the unfortunate passengers were again transferred, this time to Roche. They must have had a very unneutral opinion of the American Ambulance. Meantime I went on my way up to the "poste." As I got within about a quarter of a mile of it, I heard the whine of a big shell, and a moment later saw it burst about a hundred yards ahead of me right beside the road. Visions of "Please omit flowers" came to Willie all right, so I opened her up as much as I dared in the dark, in the hope that I'd get by the bad corner before the

next one came along. I just did it by a half. The second shell was almost right beside the road again and, believe me, the flying pieces seemed to whistle all around the car. It was the closest call yet — or at least so it seemed with the various accompaniments of rough weather, pitch darkness, awful roads, and speed-mad “brethren.” Dawn was certainly welcome when it finally came as I finished my third trip.

On the last round I carried a well-educated “poilu” of about forty years of age, who paid the American Ambulance many compliments; he said that no matter how our Government had acted the soldiers of France who had had the privilege of seeing our work would never forget the debt they owed us, and more to the same effect. This man had rifle bullets through both hands. He said he and another soldier got the drop on four Boches, who put up their rifles and yelled “Kamerad” in token of surrender. Then, when the Frenchmen beckoned them to come in, and let down their sighted guns, the Boches suddenly

opened fire, wounding my man; but his partner and a machine-gun squad wiped out the four dirty curs before they could play any more of their foul tricks.

“Huts” came back this evening and announced that there were some new and deep shell holes in the road, and to look out for them. So I suggested that some of us go ahead of time and fill them up. Baylies volunteered to go with me, and we worked till the light gave out; we did about six or eight. It helped the road a lot. We expect a big bunch of “blessés” to-night, as a more or less general attack was made by various regiments, including the Senegalese. Vic White went up with the “Loot” to the artillery observation post and said it was an awful sight: bodies blown high in the air and falling down in little pieces. He said the attack was scheduled for five o’clock, and the minutes of suspense just before it occurred were frightful. At the stroke of five, little blue manikins appeared out of the earth and began to move forward all along the line. The whole field was dotted with explosions and

clouds of smoke, and now and then a manikin would suddenly drop or jump up in the air. The Boches were hardly discernible in the distance, except when they were blown bodily out of their shell holes. There were no trenches to speak of, naturally. The attack was only partially successful. As far as we know, to date, some of the regiments were checked by hand-grenades; others advanced a hundred yards or so; but they got quite a bunch of prisoners. Vic says there's nothing to be seen of Fleury but a white and red smear on the brown earth — the bricks and mortar; not a house, not a wall standing. He described how one Boche was blown in three pieces high up above the treetops and two of the pieces fell rapidly, but the third came drifting down slowly: it was his overcoat which had been ripped right off him by the explosion.

*August 28.* Last night was a repetition of the previous one. The whole squad was out all night, including even the "camion" which was used to carry "assis." Nobody was smashed, however. The returning cars

were ordered to make a part of the run by the road through Belleray, which eliminated at least a modicum of the chances of accidents between our zealous "brethren." It was pitch black, and rained intermittently, and the roads were frightfully slippery. In addition, new shell holes appeared in the road to make up for the ones we had filled in. I got a blow-out, and so did Vic White. Yesterday's attack was, as I feared, a failure and a costly one. One can tell, by the general attitude of the men we carry, how things have gone. They, of course, only know of their own immediate surroundings; but the feeling of victory or defeat quickly spreads, even though no definite information is forthcoming for days afterwards.

*August 29.* It poured last night, but our squad was "en repos," and for the first time since I've been here, I slept in my own blankets and "brancard" in the château. Bowman had a narrow escape from a shell which burst right beside him and wounded one of his "blessés" in the leg. He'll probably be cited. Wilson fell into

a ditch, the road being entirely covered with water, and he had to stay there till daylight, when he got out. Culbertson and Bowman collided near the Verdun Gate, but no damage was done. Little had tire trouble, and had to transfer his "blessés" twice.

Lathrop and Paul left to-day. Every one was awfully sorry. They are hard workers, good drivers, and Paul an expert mechanic besides. The Groupement E Chef has been so pleased with our work that we have been permitted to shed the Thirty-second Division which went out to-day for "repos." We are dreadfully sorry to lose the old Catholic priest, Abbé Lauras, who was with the Thirty-second: a fine man, always on the job night and day. He knows just about as much of the handling of troops as do the officers; and many of them consulted him as to the disposition of their men in the "abris." He certainly was worked to death during the two weeks he was here, and looked very haggard and about "all in" when he was replaced. The new priest seems to be a

good sort too — in fact, all the priests at the Front are an exceptional class of men and many carry the Croix de Guerre.

We're to remain another fortnight with the Sixty-eighth Division. The other Sections will be as sore as crabs when they hear we are to stay. Section 2 has been pulling all the wires it can to get our job; and so have the Harjes and the English Section 1, which we displaced. We are to do the same work, and a French Section of Pugeots will take the evacuating from Landrecourt. It took some jollying on the part of our "Loot" to let us supersede them, as they were the normal ones to take the Souville job, being the regular Section with the Sixty-eighth Division. With Paul and Lathrop gone, and Imbrie still absent in Paris owing to family and business affairs, we are short two men, but Wallace and Ned Townsend's cars are smashed, and they are taking the released cars; hence all that can roll are doing so. "Huts" has telegraphed and written to Paris again for more cars, but so far has received no satisfaction.

*August 30.* It is astonishing how news carries in the trenches. On the night of the 28th, I carried "poilus" who told me that Roumania had gone in with the Allies. There was not a word about it in the papers of the 29th and I thought it was idle gossip. Yet this morning it proves to be true! I had fun with the Protestant "Aumônier" of the new Division, who had never been under fire before. I carried him from the hospital at Landrecourt to this new "poste" at the Caserne Marceau, below Souville. As we neared Verdun he was much interested in the view, the Mort Homme, Hill 304, Tavannes, Souville, St. Michel, and so on; but as we passed through the ruined city and began to get close to the guns, he got more and more nervous, especially as he could n't differentiate between the outgoing and incoming shells. Finally he asked where the "poste" was and, as luck would have it, a big shell burst right over it, up the hill, and I pointed it out to him. The new "100" marine guns were barking like mad, nearly jumping him out of his seat; and the finishing touch occurred

just as we arrived at the "poste," when a "105" shrapnel burst above us. He was almost incoherent. But when he saw some of the old Division still there, for a moment he had a ray of hope that he had got to the wrong place. This was quickly dispelled, however, and when I left to go down again, the old Catholic priest was kindly explaining to him that he would take him to his dug-out a hundred yards up the road, just as soon as the Boches stopped shelling it for a moment. Poor fellow, I felt sorry for him. I doubt if he will be of much spiritual benefit to his flock for a while, at least.

Potter and Francklyn collided last night and both bent front axles. That puts four cars out of business and makes the work all the harder for the rest of us. However, old Sponagle — "Eddy" — has suddenly developed a fit of energy, and is hard on the job, so he should get a couple of them in commission again soon.

*August 31.* Last night it rained and blew hard. Wilson thought it was Sunday, and ran into a church at Landrecourt, and

ruined his front assembly. While I was dozing in my car at Verdun, I was awakened to find it running down the street: the wind blew it. Such a surprise! This morning, a shell hit the "poste," but out of pure luck no one was hurt; only two cars. Francklyn's and White's got "éclats" through the radiators. White had just been filling his radiator a moment before and would have been hit, surely. As luck would have it, Paris sent two radiators up by "camion" just in time and "Very good Eddy" was able to replace them without delay.

This afternoon it looked as if we'd have to leave our happy home at Château Billemont. The Boches took it into their heads to throw a few "150's" into it. We had grown careless, lately, about leaving the cars in the open and not close-shuttering the windows; hence they had probably noticed signs of life about the supposedly empty place. Luckily the shells landed back in the garden and the shooting stopped after a few minutes.

I nearly broke my wrist cranking the

car to-day. The claw slipped and let me down with my whole weight, but it's only sprained; an awful nuisance, as I can't use it, and have to crank the motor left-handed.

*September 1.* The scene is laid before Verdun. It is raining like the devil; shells are falling; a voice is heard outside the cave in the middle of the night. — "I'd just like to meet de guy what started this G—— d—— war, anyway!" — in plain American Bowery accents. And in splashed a blue-clad Franco-American, boss of Senegalese trench-diggers. He had lived in New York for ten years; now a "sous-officier" and glad to find friends.

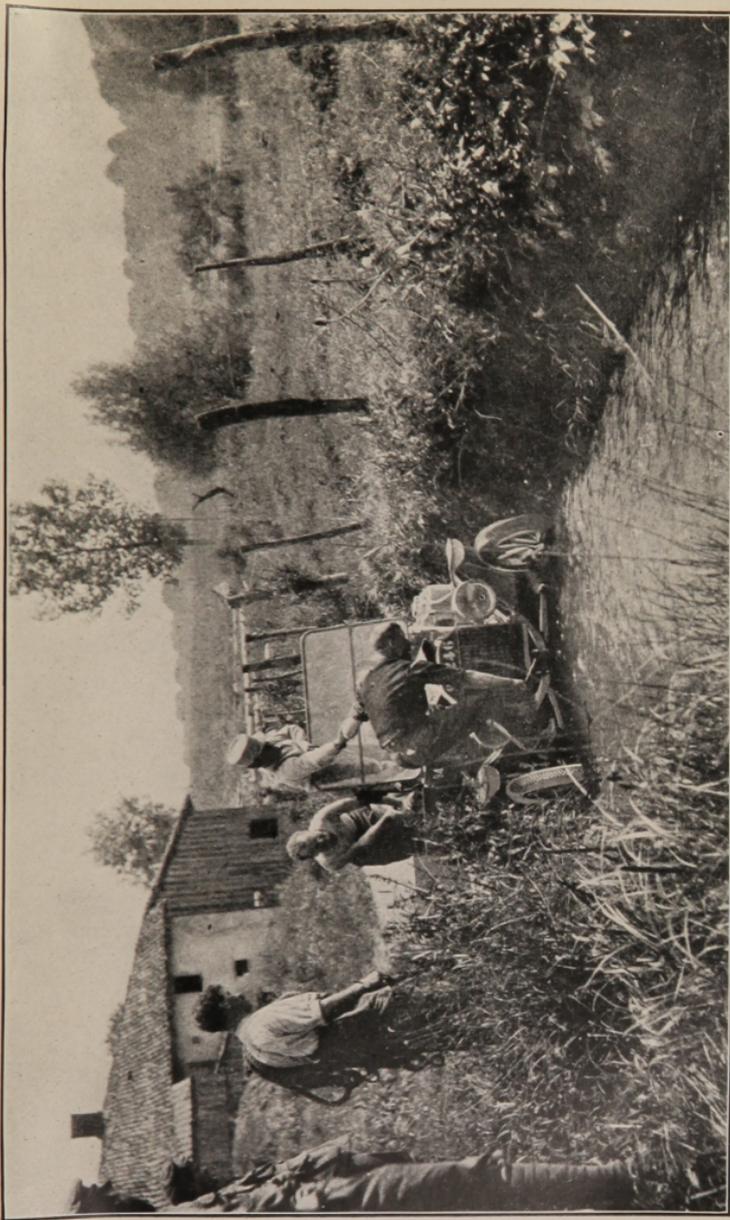
The "Germs" shelled out the "poste" and the road to-day, when we were on day duty. Generally everybody looks forward to that because it means photos and souvenirs. But, to-day, one felt more like home and mother! Wallace coming to relieve us for lunch had an awfully tight squeeze making the hill while we watched him. The road there takes a big

“S” turn, and the Boches were dropping “130’s” all along the lower half, trying to get the marine “100’s” batteries. One dropped right ahead of Wallace, and a second ten feet behind him. I don’t know whether he or we were scared the worst. It was new to him, whereas we’d been getting Hades since 11 A.M., but each time we ducked into the “abri” just in time.

Nobody cared to ease down to lunch, although we’d previously all agreed that we were ravenously hungry around eleven o’clock. Those appetites faded away somehow. Believe me, nobody cared for that little lofty spot, although they tell me “it’s quite safe, because they’re not shooting at *it*, but at a battery.” Of course, I know that; we all do. But the same thrill gets one’s spine when that nasty “ziss-bang” comes by, whether they’re shooting at one or not, especially when the difference can’t be more than a millimeter on the sight and is only a couple of meters at our end, seeing that we are on the edge of the ravine and our batteries are below us. If they hit us, they miss the batteries; and

if they hit the batteries, they miss us. I'm (personally) quite unpatriotic when they're firing!

Our squad was called out again at 2 A.M. There had been two Boche attacks on Fleury. Incidentally, they'd landed on the magazine at Belrupt and the thing was going off like a set of fireworks. It kept up all night, as the fire could not be controlled and spread from one store of shells and powder to another. The attacks were stopped none the less; but "Peter" distinguished himself by pulling a brand-new kind of bonehead trick. In pushing his car from the stand behind the "abri" to the door to take on "blessés," he let it get away from him, and instead of grabbing the steering-wheel or the brake he tried to hold it back by hand. The thing quietly but firmly toppled over the bank into the ravine below. Luckily no one was in it or under it, as the spot it landed on was just on the edge of a cemetery and, *mirabile dictu*, the car was uninjured; but "Huts" Townsend was so provoked that he threatened to have "Peter" recalled to



FISHING A FORD OUT OF A HOLE

A not uncommon accident. Roger, Stevenson, the Lieutenant, Herbert Townsend. Water in the Carburetor



Paris. I don't blame him, as we need every car badly. How we got it up on the road again, I don't yet know. It took about half of Joffre's army and most of the American Ambulance to do it, by lifting and hauling with the aid of many expletives both French and English. This morning we were all set to washing cars, as there is a rumor that the head of the Auto Service is coming to inspect us. A2 Squad has therefore had no sleep now for twenty-four hours and is on duty again to-night and to-morrow night. Cheerful outlook. If some more "bones" are n't pulled during the next forty-eight hours it will certainly be surprising.

*September 4.* The last entry in my diary proved only too correct. For three days there has been heavy fighting around Fleury and the French got over a thousand prisoners. We have been going steadily. First of all, Jack McFadden turned up convoying two new men (Lindsay and Darden, both Southerners), two new cars, and a big White truck and kitchen trailer. They used the truck at once to carry

“assis” — eighteen at a time — a great help, as it takes the place of more than three cars.

On the night of September 2, coming down with a load, a shell burst right ahead of me, just as I was passing a convoy of “75’s” ammunition caissons, the horses of which were standing, while the drivers had ducked for the roadside “abris.” The shock and flash of the explosion, which pasted mud and stones all over the car, made the unattended horses wild. It seemed for a minute as if I was in the center of a sea of crazy animals. In avoiding them I nearly ditched the car and broke the front springs, but got away all right. Barring a wrecked side box, and a couple of rock holes in the side of the car, I was able to make two more trips before the front construction gave way altogether. Luckily this occurred near our cantonment.

The next night, the 3d of September, was a “bird.” Pitch black — a fine drizzle of rain — heavy attacks by the French, which not only caused us to be all ordered

out again, but even stimulated the Médecin Chef into ordering six additional French cars to be placed at our disposition in case of need. This, of course, got our back up, and we just managed to pull through without using them; but at the cost of the following accidents: Bowman, stranded by a pile of rocks; Jones, ditched; Walker, bunkered in a shell hole; the little "camion" broken down; Rice and the little ammunition steam train amalgamated together; the new White "camion," ditched completely and lying on its side. Culbertson and Stevenson again proved that two Fords cannot occupy the same spot at the same time: result, smashed front construction and thumb for me, and a ruined radiator and steering-gear for Culby.

This occurred at "dead-man's turn" as we call it; Culby coming up empty and I going down with a load — absolutely so dark that the road was scarcely visible. Luckily we both were going slowly; but we were unable to fix up No. 10, and so transferred the "blessés" to Little. Culby ran back to the "poste" to get him. After

that we set about fixing up the cars — and maybe we did n't hate each other! Each was polite enough to say nothing, after the first cursing-out at the time of the smash, but we worked in monosyllables.

In trying to straighten the starting-crank of No. 8, Tyng bent the biggest monkey wrench into the shape of a fish-hook. It then slipped off, and six feet three or more of American Ambulance driver hit the road with a shock that must have disturbed the aim of the French battery near by. That broke the tension and we both just sat back and roared with laughter. After that we worked together amicably enough; and finally we agreed the blame of the collision lay about fifty-fifty. We pushed No. 8 around, after vainly trying to straighten the starting-crank, and got her going by coasting. We certainly worked in a hurry, as dawn was due to break in a few minutes, and with it would come the customary Boche bombardment of the road. As it was, several marmites lit unpleasantly near. I knocked my thumb out of joint on the throttle

lever when we hit, and it quickly swelled up to the size of a turnip. This, in addition to the swelled wrist, made my right "mit" pretty nearly useless. We found it impossible to straighten the front triangle of No. 10 sufficiently to steer it, so pushed it to the side of the road and went down with No. 8 zigzagging in so weird a fashion that we must have been taken for a couple of drunkards. Culby got her back safely, however. We had some breakfast and a couple of hours' sleep, and then went up again with Roger to put in new front constructions.

The car was in plain view of the Boches, but they contented themselves with lobbing "130's" over our heads at the battery behind us. It was none the less nervous work, as we could n't be sure when they'd decide to hand us one for luck. I think we established a speed record for the reparation in question.

Baylies came back from a run to-night and remarked that he could n't understand why it was so dark. Vic White rubbed his chin thoughtfully and said,

“Well, you see, Baylies, I think it was four — no, let me see, yes — possibly five hours ago that the sun set, and you know it’s really apt to get dark at such times.”

*September 5.* Vic had a regular “meller-drammer, father-save-the-cheild” time last night. He had three “blessés graves” in his car, and, in crossing the railway track, got his rear wheel caught and had to stop. He went to his tool-box and found that somebody had “borrowed” his jack, and as all his “blessés” were “couchés,” they could n’t help him. Just then a man with a lantern came running up — “Allez vite! allez vite!” he cried; “le train arrive!” Just in the nick of time — as is ever the “mellerdrammer’s” way — Little came by. They got busy with his jack and the train passed as the car got off the track. The way Vic tells the story is a scream.

The Senegalese retook the ground lost in the Bois Vaux-Chapitre last night, but went on farther than they were told to go and were annihilated. Of one whole battalion only six survived; but luckily the

reinforcements were rushed up in time to hold and consolidate the ground gained. They say the charge was frightful. They bayoneted every Boche and cut off his head with their big knives — a cross between a machete and a cutlass. Sometimes they did both; and when they stick the bayonet in, they usually pull the trigger at the same time, so there are few Boches wounded. In fact, I am told the white officers give instructions just before the final rush to kill every white man, as some of the negroes are so stupid that they can't tell the difference between a Boche and any one else, especially in the dark. Naturally the French officers do not lead these charges.

My hand hurts like the dickens; but I am rolling. I only hope I don't have to replace a tire, as I have no strength in the right grip. Walker was so careful to avoid the shell hole he fell into last night, on the right side of the road, that to-night he eased into one exactly opposite it on the left side! He got rolling again with the aid of a large part of Joffre's army. The "ca-

mion" was also dug out of the ditch with cheers and is working again, thank goodness. It saves us many trips with "assis," and lets us take care of the really urgent cases much better. They say that when it toppled over the bank, there were seven French wounded sitting on one side and eight Boches on the other, and as the French were on the up side they fell on the Boches, who thought they were being attacked again. It was quite a job to get them all extricated; but apparently the mix-up did little harm to any one.

I carried a regular "pousse-café" of a load this afternoon: a Boche, an Englishman, a Senegalese, a Martiniquan, and a Frenchman, with an American driving.

I slipped down to the "75" battery last night with an artillery corporal, and he let me pull the string. I hope I landed a couple. Anyway, it is some satisfaction to have handed the "Germs" one, for all they've "wished" on us. This afternoon, as we have expected all along, they started in to shell our perfectly good château. One shell dropped right close to Roche, who

was covered with fine stones and mud. For some time after he was even picking bits out of his hair. Culbertson, who also was near, dived under his car. Nearly all the machines were more or less sprinkled, but the house was not touched. They dropped about five or six in all, I understand, although some of the "brethren" insisted upon it that at least twenty came our way. I was out at the "poste" at the time.

Culby remarked that if one wanted to be safe now, one might just as well go up to the "poste" as anywhere else. They were shelling the road around there, too, this afternoon, and also Verdun itself. Altogether the "Hymn of Hate" rang loud to-day.

One of the worst local disasters of the Verdun battle has just occurred. The railroad tunnel at Fort Tavannes caught fire last night. One end was blocked against the Germans and the tunnel used for storing supplies, powders, chemicals, and ammunition. Also the Division "brancardiers" and staff of doctors, some six hundred in all, lived there, and it was

used as a "poste de secours." The entire crowd were wiped out. Nobody could help them and we could only watch helplessly as the smoke kept pouring out of the tunnel all day. It was purely an accident, not due to Boche efforts.

*September 6.* They shelled us again last night, but most of the shells were squibs. They did n't explode because of landing in soft mud. The house was n't touched even. Somebody remarked at breakfast that these Austrian Skoda guns certainly could shell a long way. "Yes, they can," was the reply, "right across Switzerland." Those which were really handed us, however, were about "155's" or "210's" marine shells, as they had the soft-metal point covering for armor penetrating, instead of the ordinary time or contact fuse. They came from down the river in the direction of Bras; but of course the shellee always feels that he is receiving the largest missiles in captivity.

I ran across a funny "brancardier" to-day — a new hand — who insisted on swabbing out the blood before putting

“blessés” in the car. He said the sight was bad for them. The delay is a nuisance, as often the cars fairly run blood, but he’ll learn better after a while. As for the “blessés” they’re generally too dazed to notice anything. There was heavy fighting in the Vaux-Chapitre Wood, to-day; also on both sides of Fleury. The French are nearly at Thiaumont now. The smoke of the battle almost hid the moon for a time last night. We received a gas warning, but it did n’t materialize. One man I carried, by the way, asked me where I came from; and when I answered, “America,” he said: “I know, but what city.” I said, “Philadelphia.” “Thought so,” he said; “I lived for years at 13th and Pine Streets and taught in the Berlitz School there”!

He described the fighting now going on as the worst of the war. The relieving parties have to throw the bits of human bodies out of the shell holes, in order to occupy them. When a shell falls near, one is spattered with bits of flesh, sometimes fresh and more often rotten. It may

be a comrade or a part of a disinterred body. Battalions and divisions melt away in three or four days, and have to be replaced. He said that he walked over a veritable carpet of Senegalese and Martiniquans. General Aimée, of the Sixty-seventh, was killed near our "poste" to-day. Bowman carried the body down.

One fellow I brought down told me that he had captured a Boche and was taking him in when he himself was wounded; but the Boche, instead of turning around and capturing him, helped him back to the French lines and then surrendered. The last lot of prisoners are very young, — sixteen and seventeen years old, — and are easily taken. They say the Germans, instead of distributing the latest class of recruits among the seasoned regiments, as do the French, form new units of them and these prove weak.

Stories of fraternal aid between the opponents are mingled with others of a blood-curdling kind. One man prided himself upon having waited until a Boche came right up to him, surrendering, and then

he blew his head off with a hand-grenade. Another story is to the effect that the Boches kill off the French wounded lying in the shell holes in the same manner. This, however, is doubtless in retaliation for the Senegalese atrocities. The latter carry ears, teeth, fingers, as charms, and believe they can't be killed if they wear them.

Bowman ran into a battery of "75's" galloping into action last night, but only broke his lamps and mudguards. Pretty lucky. I nearly got crowned by one of our "speed kings" who was chasing around the country in a sort of "Fireman-save-the-cheild" style.

*September 7.* We rolled all night and took care of a tremendous number of "blessés" (later, I found the exact number to be 472, with only fifteen cars and the "camion" working). I picked up three on the road who had been hit by a marmite, and had had only first-aid care. I rushed them to the emergency hospital in the famous Vauban Citadel of Verdun. It was the first time that I'd had occasion

to enter it. It is a wonderful labyrinth — a city in itself, cut out of the solid rock, such, I imagine, as Gibraltar must be: endless tunnels, rooms, and corridors — even a theater and auditorium.

It certainly is a satisfaction to note the contrast in the comments concerning the American Ambulance, at the Front, from those to which one is forced to listen in Paris and other cities far from the lines. Here the soldiers can't praise us enough and the same is true of the officers and even of the priests. Many soldiers make it a point to salute the ambulances when they catch sight of the now familiar cars and uniforms, because they have heard of the quickness and comfortable springs — so different from the ordinary type of "camion" ambulance.

"Ah, c'est les volontaires! Bon!" is a common phrase from a wounded man. This, however, does not apply to the Senegalese, who very often take us for Boches, and it gives one an uncomfortable feeling of doubt about their intentions. They have often been known to jump at Boche

prisoners or "blessés," and they have to be watched carefully by their officers.

*September 8.* A touch of autumn in the air. These are great days. The weather is better and the Allies are advancing. Even here at Verdun we are making tiny gains. The Boches attacked in the Bois Vaux-Chapitre again this morning, with gas and a terrific "tir de barrage"; but they were stopped without much effort. We carried only 169 wounded. My last drive down the Souville hill, called the Côte de Meuse, brought a wonderful sight. The sun rose blood-red through the clouds of smoke and gas. Then a little wind sprang up and cleared the mists of battle away in just one spot, and a shaft of bright, golden light fell full on the great cathedral of Verdun towering above the town, still in semi-darkness. All hailed it as a good omen. In the low places men were wearing masks and the smell of gas was very strong — a sweetish odor as from a candy-factory.

*September 9.* The Commander of the 214th arrived with his regiment last night

to relieve the 67th. We carried his body down this morning. He had n't been at the Front three hours before a shell got him!

Ned Townsend — our archæologist — brought in the biggest find yet to-day: the whole barrel of a wrecked "soixante-quinze." First he went after it with a wheelbarrow and could n't manage it, and then came back and got a Ford. He explained that the difference between a Ford and a wheelbarrow was that the latter had only one wheel. He set it up in the front "lawn," but the "Loot" had a fit. He said it was bad enough to have the Boche "saucisses" and planes see all the cars about; but if they saw a gun emplaced, they'd simply shell the tar out of us. So Ned had to disassemble his masterpiece. He is a crank! — trophy-hunting all the time. He goes around with a trench shovel, a hammer, and a chisel. The Frenchmen around the "poste" derive no end of amusement out of him. He is so keen on getting hold of all the junk there is. How he expects to get it all away from

here without a corps of "camions" and a special freight ship is beyond me.

*September 10.* Well, we go "en repos" to-morrow. To-day we are loafing and packing up. Oddly enough, this is the date of the end of my enlistment in the Field Service. I'm already a month over my enlistment with the Ambulance, but I think I'll hang on a little longer. We tried hard to get transferred to still another Division, and to hold on to the Front Service and our bully cantonment,—the best the Section ever had; but as we have been on the Souville job longer than any Section has been since the beginning of the attack on Verdun last February, they told us we must take a rest. Also we must go back to the Thirty-second Division again, which has been re-formed (it lost some fifty per cent of its strength in four days), and is now at Thiaucourt. They were all extremely sorry to see us go, and we have heard nothing but pretty speeches from both officers and men.

*September 12.* The fact that our Division had been pretty well hammered

turned out luckily for us. Naturally, when a Division is cut to pieces, the "Service de Santé" gets more than the ordinary work. Hence, when it came to distributing the war crosses, the "brancardiers," doctors, and others came in for more than their usual share. "Huts" Townsend was cited by Order of the Army Corps and everybody was happy about it. Bowman and Francklyn were also cited. The former got a shell hole through his car which wounded one of his "blessés" a second time, while Francklyn got knocked down by the concussion of a shell as he was loading his car. The ceremony occurred here at Thiaucourt when we arrived this afternoon. We are quartered on the grounds of the château of President Poincaré's brother. The "blonde" was glad to see us, as were all the natives, including Francklyn's washerwoman. We had fun with "Gillies," who was exceedingly nervous. We told him that he should wear gloves at the ceremony, so he chased all over the place to get a pair, and actually appeared with them! He surely got a laugh.

*September 13.* Section No. 1 cited by Order of the Army Corps! This puts us "top dog" of all the foreign Sections. The citation originated from the Sixty-eighth Division for which we worked during the last ten days of our stay at Verdun. Culbertson and Bowman left on their "permission" this morning. The "Loot" made a dandy speech last night, telling us what he thought of us and eulogizing "Huts." Then the Croix men produced champagne. Culby's evening was somewhat marred by the "Loot" happening to discover a large canvas bag of his, full of trophies, and, of course, he had to make him open it. He only abstracted some bayonets, though, and left him his casings, and other things. The "Loot" hates to do this, but has to according to the Regulations, and he frequently warns us when he is about to make an inspection; so it was entirely Culby's fault he was stung. I shipped a big box of junk to Paris as soon as the warning came. The Lieutenant came back from headquarters this morning with the news that the Section

that replaced us at Souville had had four men killed and three wounded, while six "brancardiers" were also wounded at the "poste" the very day we left. A shell burst among them while they were loading the cars. One man lost both legs and another one is not expected to live. One car was completely wrecked. We certainly were lucky. That's the second time a replacing Section has had men injured following us. At Tavannes a car was lost and two men badly hurt.

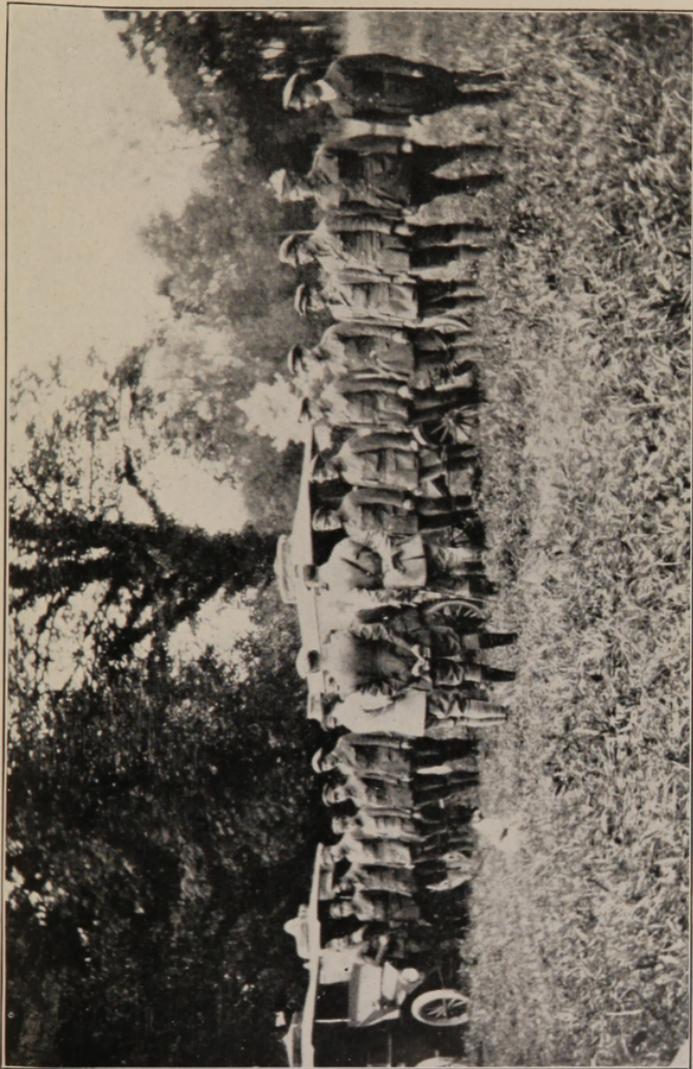
*Copy of letter dated "Grand Quartier"*

*le 1 Septembre 1916*

*État-Major 32<sup>me</sup> Division.*

Le Général Bouchez, Commandant la 32<sup>me</sup>  
Div. d'Infanterie.

Le Général commandant la 32<sup>me</sup> division adresse tous ses remerciements à la Section Sanitaire Américaine No. 1. Pendant la période du 20 au 30 août la Section sous les ordres du Lieutenant de Kersauson et du sous-Lieutenant Townsend, a assuré, dans le secteur le plus bombardé de Verdun, l'évacuation des blessés. Tous les conducteurs ont en maintes circonstances fait preuve de courage et de sang-froid. Ils ont fait l'admiration de tous



AMERICAN SANITARY SECTION No. 1 RECEIVING ITS CITATION AND CROIX DE GUERRE  
FOR ITS WORK AT SOUVILLE-TAVANNES



ceux qui les ont vu accomplir leur devoir. Toute la Division leur est reconnaissante de leur dévouement pour les blessés et est fière d'avoir compté dans ses rangs des volontaires Américains dignes descendants de Franklin et de Washington.

(Signé) BOUCHEZ.

*Copy of letter dated "Grand Quartier" État-  
Major — Service de Santé*

Le Médecin principal de 1<sup>re</sup> classe de Casaubon — Médecin Divisionnaire à la Section Sanitaire Américaine No. 1.

Aux félicitations et aux remerciements adressés par le Général commandant la 32<sup>me</sup> Division à la S.S.A.A. No. 1, le Médecin Divisionnaire ajoute ses félicitations et ses remerciements personnels.

Il a vu la S.S.A.A. No. 1 à l'œuvre. Il a pu s'assurer qu'elle avait réalisé ce qu'il attendait d'elle; de son courage calme et souriant, de son dévouement absolu, de son ardeur à faire le mieux possible pour le plus grand avantage de nos blessés.

Le Médecin Divisionnaire conservera des jours de Verdun un souvenir inoubliable dans lequel tiendront une belle place les distingués officiers qui commandent la section et leurs vaillants conducteurs volontaires.

(Signé) DE CASAUBON.

*September 14.* I certainly did n't expect to continue this diary after September 10, when my enlistment expired, but I have agreed to stick along for another three months. The big push is gaining in intensity and it's hardly the time to quit, although I'm afraid that we are sidetracked in the Argonne again. However, I hope for the best.

*September 15.* To-day the Section moved to the so-called "Front" again, but in the Argonne this time. A little place, named La Grange-au-Bois, near Ste. Menehould, where Louis XVI was kept by the Revolutionists when he was caught. I saw the room in the Town Hall where he was prisoner. The "Loot" announced at dinner last night that two cars would have to remain for a couple of days with the *État-Major*. He said he wanted two men who would talk French and dress decently, and then picked Roche and me! I took the Commandant all around northern France to-day, and Roche had to run to Bar-le-Duc. To-morrow, at 5 A.M., I've got to be on the job again to take

the Commandant to the advance posts. The warfare on the Argonne line is rather different from other parts, being almost entirely confined to vast mining operations; and the "Génie" are therefore the main thing. Of course, there is also the usual artillery hammering, but little infantry fighting. They say this mining is very hard on the morale of the men, as they are blown up by regiments instead of companies; but of course the explosions are relatively few and far between, as compared to the regular "tir de barrage" work.

*September 16.* I lunched with officers at their quarters back of the château, in a little cottage fitted with old furniture which made one's mouth water. There was a chest of drawers and a grandfather's clock that any collector would have given several hundred dollars to have; and I suppose they could have been bought for a song if only we had the means of getting them away and of packing them properly.

A swanking young officer who has been "embusqué" in the Automobile De-

partment, wearing fancy khaki clothes, got caught to-day, and has been sent into the regular line work. The army is gradually sifting out the "embusqués" (young men of military age who are hiding in soft jobs), and replacing them with older men whose term of service is ended — a good thing.

Old Roger has been fired by the "Loot" for impertinence. I was sorry to see him go, he was so typical of the soldier of Napoleon's time. Big, broad-shouldered, with the bristling mustache and imperial. I fancy he did n't mind going much, as he was a regular soldier and not an auto-mechanic. Perhaps we'll get a really good "mec" this time to help out "Very good Eddy" and Rapp.

*September 17.* We have arrived at La Grange-aux-Bois on the main Government road between Paris and Metz. We are camped here in a somewhat leaky barn about seven or eight kilometers from the Front. The customary rain has been falling ever since. The "postes" to which we go are unusually close to the lines. There's

nothing doing, however, except intermittent bombardment. I was asked to-day by an apparently intelligent-looking Frenchman if I was American, and when I said "Yes," he said he supposed I came from Buenos Aires! It seemed to be the only town in the Western Hemisphere he'd ever heard of. He also asked if America was a Republic. Of course, there followed the customary inquiries, if we were volunteers, and how much we were paid; and when I said, on the contrary it cost us money, he became very much offended and walked himself off as if I was trying to make a fool of him!

*September 18.* Crowds of Russians are here. We thought the Champagne attack had started at last, according to what we heard from them and also judging from the increasing activity of the guns to our left. This proved not to be the case, although everybody thought so at the time. We are doing our best to get transferred back to the Colonials who are working with the Russians only a few kilometers from here. I did the customary chauffeur-

taxi work to-day. I took three joy-riding officers into Ste. Menehould, where they stayed for a couple of hours and came back with two live chickens, which I was told to carry over to the car, just like "Jimes in the ply" because it looked "odd" for them to do it. However, it's amusing and I don't give a hang anyway, as we are here to help the French!!

*September 21.* The only advance "postes" we have which are really worth while evacuate the "Four de Paris" and "La Fille Morte." There Germans are in sight and the "camoufleurs" have been busy screening the road. There are some fine trenches, and redoubts beautifully fixed up and electrified around here; but the fighting is only sporadic. The Boches attacked the other night, but were easily repulsed, and one car was able to handle the "blessés." Nobody pays any attention to the fact that the Boches are so close; and every one walks around unconcernedly, not thinking of entering the dug-outs except for meals or when it rains. Culbertson and Bowman are back from

their "permissions." The first casualty for Section No. 1 occurred to-day when Kurtz ran a bayonet through his hand while using it to sling apples. He was treated at the hospital.

A lot of the men are down with bad colds and grippe, however, as it has rained nearly all the time since we have been here, and the barracks are simply soaking wet. I sleep on a cot with a rubber sheet over my blankets and the rain pours through the leaky roof, splashing dismally all night. Sponagle left his boots carelessly out from under his cot last night, and in the morning they were full of water which he poured into a basin for washing, thereby saving a trip to the spring! The stove, which we stole from another barrack, only works at intervals and usually chokes and fills the place with smoke. The rats crawl all over the place, too; but the twenty cots Christine sent us save those who have them from this particular annoyance. Half the squad was taken in the "camion" to Ste. Menehould yesterday for a hot bath, the first I'd had in over

two months, when I was last in Paris! Our clothes did n't fit us when we came out — just hung limply over our thinned-down figures. Kurtz gave a birthday party night before last. He had the “eats” sent from Châlons. — It was great! — mushroom omelet, real peas, chops, tomato soup, fresh fromage à la crème, and champagne.

*September 22.* This is real life. I learn a new trade every day. I've just been putting a new roof on the barracks; tar paper and laths. Two sets of us tried rival methods — up-and-down strips or shingles effect, and we're now hoping for rain (having had only this one clear day in three weeks) in order to test the two theories. “Jack” McFadden turned up to-day to take one of the old cars down. He tells us there's a chance for Salonika. Section 3 has come out of the Vosges and is at Versailles, and they may go right off. It should be quite a trip. If they do put that through, we should try for Egypt — a nice soft place to spend the winter.

*September 23.* Culby had some funny

times in Paris. He met X, whose wife had just threatened to come over to see him. He cabled, "I love you, I love you, but stay where you are!" The censor read this effusion, studied it, shook his head, and decided it was a new sort of code that he did n't understand and refused to pass it. Culby also met "Tommy" Holt and "Bill" Hoover, of Section 2, who are going home.

Culby tried to climb over the Gare de l'Est fence, one night, in a search for food, and got caught on a spike and hung dangling by the seat of his pants, until a gendarme came along and unhooked him as he would a ham! It must have been a weird sight to come across a six-foot-three-inch soldier hanging on a fence doubled like a sack in that casual manner.

Culby ran into the American Flying Squad in Paris. They were in process of being transferred from Verdun to the Vosges and were celebrating. They had somewhere purchased a young lion cub, which they dragged around from hotel to hotel for five days, much to the consterna-

tion of the inhabitants and to the annoyance of the lion, which kept up a steady stream of growls and snarls. He had only just been weaned and liked to have a finger to suck; but if the owner wished to withdraw it, there was nothing doing until the lion wanted him to. Culby had to sit perfectly still with his finger in its mouth for an hour, and he said it was the worst experience he'd had since Verdun.

The balance of Christine's cots arrived this afternoon amid loud cheers.

*September 24.* A telegram arrived from Andrew, calling for volunteers for Salonika. I wish I could go; but one has to engage for seven months; also Section 3 is being used as a nucleus. If we could only go under Townsend and our "Loot" I think the whole Section would jump at the chance. Francklyn, Bowman, Imbrie, Baylies, Culbertson, and Roche said they could go; but it is understood that only three or four from each of the Field Sections will be picked according to length of service. We have a new decoration now: the order of the Golden Baylies with fig leaves and

moons instead of palms and stars. Jones was the first to receive it last night for revoking at bridge. Rice pulled a new method of getting the men up this morning. Instead of the customary evacuation by upsetting the bed, he threatened to write a poem about the men who were still in their blankets. That was sufficient to bring all out standing.

*September 26.* I went over to Edward Kelly's funeral with "Huts," Vic, and Roche. The ceremony was impressive; of course, Catholic. It was held at Blercourt, near the Mort Homme. Section 2 took over Section 4's job for the day, so that all of them could attend. Section 4 is at Ipecourt and 2 at Rampont. A few Section 2 men are also there and a couple of Section 3, as well as one of Section 7 (Norton). Sections 8 and 9 being in the Vosges could n't send any one nor did the Paris Squad. Andrew came up, of course. In all, there were about thirty-five Americans who filled the left side of the little church at Blercourt. The other half was filled with high French officers including the

Médecin Directeur, who carries the rank of a two-star General. Andrew sat with them. "Huts" and the other American Lieutenants were grouped together. The choir, made up of good French singers, picked from the Division, sang "La Mort" — a singularly fitting tribute as the accident occurred near the famous hill of that name.

The coffin was surrounded with funeral wreaths sent by the various officers, the "brancardiers," the hospitals, and the various Sections. Over it was the French flag and a heap of the little purple crocuses which have come up so strangely for the second time this autumn. They looked like a heap of orchids. On a pillow carried by Section 4's American Lieutenant was a little American flag, such as the ambulances carry, and on it was pinned the Croix de Guerre with a gold star.

After the coffin had been carried from the church to the grave by six French "poilus" in full accouterments as a mark of honor, and the priest was through, the General stepped up and paid a wonderful

tribute to the American volunteers, addressing Andrew, who was crying. In fact, even some of the Frenchmen cried. It was a speech one could never forget. Some of us afterwards went over to the hospital to see Sanders; but he was in a state of coma and could n't recognize any one. He had been already trepanned twice, and they were waiting until he could get a little strength, to extract the bad piece in the back of his head. The danger lies in the possibility of infection before he gets enough strength to stand the operation.

William W. Wallace, who washed Kelly's brains out of Sanders's car, told Roche and me the story of the accident. Kelly was new. He had been at the Section only five or six days and had not even been assigned a car. Indeed, one of the most pathetic things about it was that his mates did n't know his first name, even, and I had to get it from their Lieutenant. He was taken by Sanders as orderly to see the advance post at Esnes, on the side of Hill 304, near the Mort Homme.

There had been nothing doing there for a month or more. In fact all the fighting was on the right bank, around Fleury and the Froide-Terre. So that, barring the customary shelling, it was practically a quiet Sector. Well, they got within a hundred yards of the "abri," when the shell burst on the road about ten feet in front of the car. It blew in the radiator, but otherwise did not injure the car. Kelly received the charge full in the head. Sanders was only hit by three small "éclats," two of which cut his cheeks and neck. The third entered his mouth, and breaking his left teeth lodged in the left side of his skull, where it still is. The force had been checked by the steering wheel which was first hit by all three "éclats." Sanders was able to stop the car and walk about halfway to the "abri" calling, before he fell. Gooch, who had arrived a few minutes before, heard a "brancardier" shouting for a stretcher and got one out of his car. Not until he actually got a lantern and saw Sanders, did he know that any of our men had been hurt.

He asked Sanders about Kelly and Sanders gasped out, "Kelly's dead," and then fainted.

*September 27.* "Huts" and I, after the funeral, went over to Bar-le-Duc and fetched up Tison,<sup>1</sup> who came across about the same time I did, and was sent to Section 3. When Section 3 was picked for Salonika, Tison could n't go, as he had to get back to the States by the first of the year. So he comes to us to take the place of one of our three who are going to Salonika. They leave shortly. We gave Imbrie and Francklyn a sort of farewell supper last night. They are going to be a great loss. Tison is a good fellow, however. Only about six feet four inches high. When he, Culby, and Roche come into a café, the whole conversation stops. Everybody turns to see the giants. Pity we have n't still got Lathrop. There'd be twenty-five feet of America represented by four men.

*September 28.* On twenty-four hour "poste" duty at "Le Chalet," the evacuating post for the "Four de Paris" and

<sup>1</sup> Paul Tison, Harvard; New York City.

“La Fille Morte.” I went up to the front lines to have a look at the Boches. In one “poste d’écoute” we were within four or five yards of the Germans, they told me; but there was nothing to hear or see, so we came away. Except for a few rifle shots, scattered through the woods, and an occasional aerial torpedo, fired from the little trench mortars called “crapouillots,” which throw about a hundred pounds of dynamite some eight hundred yards, everything was quiet. The battle-line, however, was very definitely marked by the blasting away of every trace of vegetation. The thick woods and undergrowth stop suddenly, and one comes to nothing but bare rocks, and earth, and stumps of trees. It looks as if some great flood or fire had swept along a perfectly defined line across the country, in a path about a mile wide. Last night I was awakened by the car shaking as if some one was rocking it. I thought at first that they had a call for me, but looked out and found nothing. This morning I was told that the Boches had exploded a big mine

up the ravine. Mines make practically no noise — just a sort of muffled detonation; but the earth shakes for miles.

The “Génie” are certainly sincere liquor artists. We eat with them at the Chalet Poste, and they do their best to entertain us. Most of the men have been in this one place for a year or more burrowing like moles. They say their little motto is, “Mangez beaucoup, buvez beaucoup, dormez beaucoup, et travaillez peu!” We have their keg of Pinard filled for them at La Grange every day.

Old “Wilkins” Wilson, who has a perfectly good sense of humor, has doped out a schedule of simple phrases with their English translation for use at the “postes.” He is going to hang up a copy in each “poste,” and they run something like this: —

Will you come to lunch?

Have you had enough?

Will you have a drink?

Will you have another?

Will you take the Pinard barrel to be filled?

Is the Pinard barrel empty?

Yes, the Pinard barrel is empty.

*September 30.* The Salonikans left today and Francklyn took little "Vic" with him, which I think almost peeved Section 1 as much as the loss of the men. Fond as they were of "Gillies" and Bob, "Vic" had come to be considered our mascot and knew us all well. He would associate with no one else. Peter Avard picked him up at Vic-sur-Aisne, about a year ago, when he was only a few weeks old, and some one always took the pup up to the firing-lines in a car, riding cheerfully on the front seat or on the hood. The "poilus" and "brancardiers" all knew him and patted and fed him. I believe "Vic" has been under fire more often than any one of us excepting possibly "Huts" and the "Loot." When Pete left the Section he left the dog under Francklyn's care, so that he got to be regarded as Gyles's pup. We have lost most of our menagerie. Only the brown mutt, who looks like the result of a mesalliance between a cockroach and a seal, remains. The "Loot" calls him "Flip" and claims he is a pointer! Ned Townsend is down with diphtheria and

left to-day for the Bar-le-Duc Hospital. This leaves us four men shy, but as there is nothing to do, except the two "poste" runs and an occasional "bureau" call, we can afford to lie low and look over the new men carefully before picking any.

*October 1.* Vic White left to-day; the worst loss since "Woody." We gave him a dinner last night, but it was not a particularly cheerful function. The squad is certainly being shot to pieces. Since I joined last March it has lost some half-dozen men and has only three left from the days of Dunkerque and Ypres, a year and a half ago.

I went over to La Contrôlerie with Eddy Sponagle in the "camion" to-day, to carry a load of gas masks to Rarecourt, just beyond the two ruined towns of Les Islettes and Clermont. The church spire at the former was just touched by a shell and leans over in a drunken sort of way like a child's broken toy. Clermont is beautiful in its desolation, and nature is already busy covering the ruins with ivy and other creepers, although the shell-

ing only occurred last February at the opening of the Boche drive on Verdun, both towns being on one of the "ravitailement" roads leading there. Now the ruins are toned down and the autumn foliage is very beautiful. By the time the ubiquitous American tourist comes camera-snapping and souvenir-hunting, however, nature will have hidden much of the stark harshness still to be seen. The handsome church on the top of the hill, reached by a long flight of some hundred or more wide stone steps, is completely gutted; and the fine stucco work and stained-glass windows litter the floor. From there we could easily see the lines five miles away and the shells bursting.

*October 3.* Bowman changed his mind about Salonika, and Baylies gets his chance to go. Everybody is sorry to lose him — a good boy, good-tempered, standing all the chaffing in a really fine way.

We were inspected for contagious and infectious diseases to-day.

Some of the fellows had an amusing time up at La Chalade Poste the other day.

They got to swapping hunting yarns with the doctors and "brancardiers." Little told them of a wonderful animal in the States. Its habitat was the Rocky Mountains and it was called the "Flipodoodle." It has two of its legs on one side shorter than the others, so that it could walk on the sides of mountains, but it could, of course, go only one way. He told it so solemnly that the Frenchmen believed it, until Vic, later, overdid the story. They asked him if it were true, and he said "yes" he had seen the animal; that the male always had two females because they could only give birth to one and a half offspring apiece and the halves had to be joined together afterwards. He added that it was the only animal known to man which was larger at birth than at any other time. This offended the medical sense of the doctors and they got sore. Vic saw that and added, "Well, I guess you won't believe I saw the devil once?" "When?" they exclaimed. "Thirty-five years ago," said Vic. "How old are you?" they queried incredulously. "Just twent-

four," replied Vic. "You can believe one tale as much as the other." Then they all laughed and said the drinks were on them.

*October 5.* I went to Châlons with Sponagle, De Mare, and Bonat, in the "camion," for "ravitaillement." Bonat bought lunch and it sure was a good one. We had a bath and altogether a fine day. A "sous-officier" up at the "poste" tells me he has been playing chess with the Boches. They call the moves across the few intervening feet, and they have a perfectly good time, mutually cutting out the hand-grenades.

We got a letter to-day addressed from one of the "nuts" on "permission" down in Paris to Section "Solitaire" Américaine, and nothing else. Strange as it may seem, the postal authorities saw the point and delivered it! As old "Doc" Wilkins would say, "Rauther good, eh, wot? I should say so, don't ye know! Yes, bah Jove!"

*October 6.* I was passing along the road when I heard some "kids" singing an air

which seemed familiar. I stopped and listened, and sure enough! they were singing: —

“Yip hayaddi, hayah hyo  
Yip hayaddi hayay,  
I don't care what becomes of me,” etc.

They evidently learned it from some passing British troops or some itinerant American “Ambulancier.”

*October 7.* On “poste” duty at La Chalade. The “poste” is in the old abbey; a fine historic building of large size. The men have been finding old coins of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in odd corners of the place. The Boches shell it occasionally, and it has been hit a number of times, but is still in fair shape.

Pons, the little one-stripe doctor, tried to pull one on the two priests at dinner. He produced two bottles labeled “Pommard.” One was just plain Pinard, the other Château Margaut. The Pinard was served first, but the priests were polite and said it was very nice, but not a “grand cru.” Then he opened the Bordeaux, which was real, and they told the difference at

once. One can't fool those old fellows. They declared it promptly not even Burgundy, but Bordeaux.

*October 8.* Two new men turned up to-day. One is the son of former Mayor Gaylor, the other Newberry, also of New York. They seem pretty good fellows, but they certainly did n't expect much rough living. Both are accustomed to the simple New York life, and they don't know how to make a camp bed or even wind their putties. However, they look as if they'd turn out all right.

*October 9.* Wandering through the cemetery here at La Grange aux Bois, the name Du Pont caught my eye on one of the new war crosses. No less than three were buried here in the last year — Joseph, Joseph Henry, and Ernest. I wonder if they are any relation to our Du Ponts. Also Louis Martin was buried there — it sounds like the old New York restaurateur. The soldiers have made ingenious crosses out of "75" cases; and the central cemetery cross is made of wood wrought in a gigantic replica of the Croix de Guerre.

*October 11.* Culby got shot at up at the Fille Morte Poste this morning by a sniper in a tree. The bullet hit quite close to him while he was standing on the little bridge looking up the ravine. This, and the shelling of "Doc" Keenan's car (Section 4), near where Kelly was killed, are the first definite instances I know of where the Boches deliberately have fired on the American Ambulance. Of course they often shell places where we happen to be, but they are not after such small fry as a rule. News came to-day, by the way, that our old Caserne Marceau Poste de Secours, under Souville, had been destroyed by shells. We had a hunch it would be, if they kept piling sand bags on top of it, as it was beginning to assume the aspect of a regular redoubt. The "poste" has been moved about a half-mile down the hill to the railway crossing.

Mrs. Vanderbilt's sheepskin coats arrived to-day and were hailed with grateful hurrahs! They can start fighting in the Arctic now, as far as the American Ambulance is concerned.

*October 13.* For some strange reason the sun came out yesterday, so the "brethren" jumped at the chance to dry out blankets, shoes, and bags. Darden got so energetic that he set to work making a rat-trap — a most elaborate affair which would require quite a high order of intelligence on the part of the rat to manage to get into. He explained, in his funny Southern drawl, that he was "gitten tiahd of havin' dem dawg-goned animals conductin' their love affairs on mah baid!" The trap, however, failed to work, which was explained by Darden by their "bein' French, they probably did n't understand an American trap!" Culbertson then went to Ste. Menehould and purchased a gigantic wire structure which he carried all around town with him, and was asked at least a dozen times what it was for. At last he grew tired and replied to another polite inquiry on the part of a French officer that it was "pour mon canary oiseau!" The rats had a fine time feeding in it, but refused to remain within its handsome portals.

*October 14.* Lines came to-day. He used to be with this Section at Dunkerque. He got sick, then joined Section 8, and got transferred back here.<sup>1</sup> Jones, Wallace, and Walker left on "permission." Campbell is made "sous-chef" in place of White.

*October 17.* The "Génie" crowd, up at Le Chalet, certainly are screams. One engineer was complaining at dinner last night that the "poilus" hogged everything. He said he had only just completed an "abri" for a water reservoir and had come up that morning to install the tank, when he found two infantrymen asleep in it with the place converted into a regular home — lamps, flooring, and beds. He went to where he was to install his 3 H.P. gas engine and pumps, and here were two more completely at home, and also sleeping. He said he didn't disturb them until he was ready to put his stuff in place.

The regular Le Chalet cook has gone on "permission" and the meals are at-

<sup>1</sup> Howard B. Lines of Cambridge, Mass., graduate of Dartmouth. Since died.

tended to by a chemist, who knows nothing whatever about cooking. They are something fierce. However, I bought some eggs and tomatoes, when I had a run down to Les Islettes, and cooked them for myself.

They threw torpedoes at each other all day yesterday and the earth continually trembled. Some of them hold as much as a hundred kilos of dynamite and other high explosives. One does n't hear them coming and the firing of the little "crapouillots" is scarcely more than a yacht cannon; but one can occasionally see them in the air, as they fly comparatively slowly. "Éclats" fell all around the "poste" continually, yet the things were landing two or three hundred yards away.

*October 21.* The Boches have been trying out a new type of shell around La Chalade lately. Kurtz saw one explode near the road. It blew a hole in the earth about twenty feet across and from that came dozens of smaller shells which exploded over a radius of thirty or forty yards — a sort of huge shrapnel.

Four of the famous tanks came in near here the other day, and are to be used in a new offensive at Verdun, so it is said. They look like huge eggs with the caterpillar strips going all the way round them, and they carry two "soixante-quinzes" as well as mitrailleuses. The French also have developed several types of air guns firing small torpedoes, varying from about the size of a hand-grenade to that of a good-sized bomb. They fool the Boches as to the direction from which they are coming and can therefore be operated almost without interference.

*October 22.* The Boches dropped a number of shells on La Chalade Poste when I was there yesterday morning. A pane of glass above me, hit by an "éclat," fell on my head while I sat outside writing a letter. I don't know whether it is lucky or not to have that happen. For a moment I felt as if I were in one of those kaleidoscopes of childhood's happy days. About a bucketful of colored glass came scattering all around. It is like getting religion thrust upon one, so to speak. Two shells came

very close to the car, and a man standing near got an "éclat" in the casque which just saved his "nut." The casque was all crushed. Another fellow had a small bit cut his hand. It was rather nervous work for the half-hour they kept coming in, as there was no cave worthy of the name, so we just stood around and joked and hoped for the best. In the afternoon came a warning of a coming gas attack. The French had been giving the Boches hot work all day after the episode of the shelling of the abbey, and as the wind was right, the expectation was that the "Germs" would retaliate with gas. So we got out our masks and waited up until about 10 P.M., and as nothing happened we all went to bed.

*October 24.* I arrived in Paris on "permission" with Roche. I got a "jolt" the moment I struck Rue Raynouard. The authorities had confiscated all souvenirs, dozens of different kinds of shells, shrapnel, and the rest; and a complete set of Boche casques I got for father. Hard luck.

*October 26.* I ran into Neilson Warden; also into "Bob" Glendinning and "Doc" McCloskey. The two last are over here arranging for the graduates of "Bob's" aviation school to be taken into the French army, without having to pass the long preliminary wait. He tells me they turned down Antelo Devereux and some others, who were fully competent. I also ran across Carson,<sup>1</sup> who used to be in Section 1 and then went to the Paris Squad. He returned to Chicago and tells the same old story of not being able to stand the banalities at home. He says he was passing along the street one day and his eye caught the sign "S.S. Rochambeau, sails September 2d." He went in and bought his ticket right off the reel. He is in the Paris Squad now, but wants to shift back to the Field Service.

*October 27.* I spent a solid hour last evening trying to get a taxi to get to Ewell's. Everything was busy. Paris is certainly livening up. Finally, about 8.15 I got hold of a fool Hollander or Belgian who got me entirely lost. So I never reached

<sup>1</sup> James L. Carson of Chicago.

there. I had to write him a long apology which, of course, he won't believe. I ran into Parsons, all "dolled up" in his new aviation uniform. He's at Pau. The last time I saw him he was ditched with the old Daimler "camion," and Fenton and I went out to fix him up. I also saw Ayton, who has gone into the Aviation Service, just lately. I called to see Sanders. He's wonderfully cheerful, considering his face is going to be somewhat disfigured. They took forty small pieces of "éclat" out of his head in all; only three large ones, the rest dust.

*October 31.* "Woody" and George End turned up to-day, and "Huts" came down from our place on his "permission." We had quite a reunion. Both "Woody" and End are going to rejoin, which helps. I had feared Woodworth would go into the Aviation Service.

*November 3.* I am back at La Grange aux Bois, with a nasty cold. It's lucky there is nothing to do, anyway. I have just discovered that one of the members of the English Ambulance Corps, operat-

ing in the Sector next to ours, is no less a person than Jerome K. Jerome, of "Three Men in a Boat" fame.

An epidemic of boils and carbuncles seems to have struck Section 1. Old "Doc" Wilson had one cut out of his arm: "Awfully awkward, don't ye know." Culby had a sort of Cæsarian operation on his stomach; and Townsend has several where he sits. Tison has chronic indigestion, and the rest with varying degrees of colds and dysentery. A fine line of warriors we all are just now!

*November 4.* We have moved from the barracks into rooms in the village where we can have at least dry feet and a modicum of warmth. The only trouble is that the rooms are relatively small, and one has to listen all day long to a lot of drivel from our war tacticians. A new man, Tyson, from Philadelphia, arrived to-day to take Newberry's place who is sick and going home.

*November 7.* It is certainly interesting to hear the "Génie" discussing their work. One fellow told me what a bawling-out he

got, when he was putting a temporary bridge on the Somme and let the water out of the canal-draw, to facilitate the driving of piles on the canal bottom. An irate Fusilier de Marine Captain and a lot of his men came up cursing like madmen. It appeared that his action had dropped the level of the canal all the way along a foot or more and the gun bores had entirely lost their aim, all elevations having thus been altered. He said a madder lot of men he never saw. Talking of their work here at Le Chalet, he said they often suddenly found themselves in the Boche diggings, but that both sides took good care not to start anything. He predicts, however, that there will be something doing here before long; all telephone wires are being buried and deep "abris" are being dug. He also says the Eightieth have been ordered to take certain positions near La Chalade.

*November 10.* Nobody seems to know who is elected President and nobody cares very much here. The two candidates are regarded as about fifty-fifty. I had a funny

experience this morning. I was taking the Médecin Major to Rarecourt, when the sentry at Les Islettes asked for the password. We yelled "Jena," but did n't stop altogether — just slowed up. The sentry did n't like that, and slammed his bayonet straight at the "Doc," who was sitting beside me. The thing went clean through the woodwork of the car and wrenched out a piece the size of one's hand. The "Doc" got out and "laid into" that sentry in great style, took his name and number and turned it in to the Captain. Every now and then one hits up against some fool like that.

Mrs. Audenried sent us up a complete outfit of fine fur-lined leather gauntlets; "bonne nouvelle," as it's getting mighty cold. They shelled La Chalade again to-day; Kurtz was on "poste" and everybody had to go to the cellar.

*November 12.* The apotheosis of the futility of human endeavor seems to me to be the work of the Sappers and "Génie" around here. A couple of days ago a French tunnel broke through into a Boche tunnel.

Both were completely taken by surprise and simply withdrew and each blocked up his own tunnel. Then yesterday, the Boches thought they'd pull a stunt, so they opened up a small hole in the temporary walls, sneaked in, and nabbed two French miners who were quietly sitting eating breakfast, and made them prisoners. The French got sore, and by way of retaliation to-day blew up the whole bloody business. So now both sides have to start digging all over again. I suppose the main idea is to keep the men busy, to prevent their dying of ennui.

*November 13.* Letters from Baylies and Imbrie. They must have had an awful time getting to Salonika. They were put in the hold with eight hundred Annamites, nearly all of whom were seasick. Sortwell was killed by a truck when they reached there; and George End, who was coming back to us, has sailed to take his place.

*November 14.* I certainly take my hat off to the women of France. Nothing fazes them. Kurtz and I walked into Ste. Menehould yesterday and stopped in the

“pâtisserie” for some cakes and port. While we were there the Boches began tossing “380’s” into the town, trying for the railway station. The huge craters and terrific explosions shook the whole place; yet the little girl serving us cakes merely laughed and said, “The Boches are hating us very much to-day, n’est ce pas, Messieurs!” The newspapers mentioned the incident this morning. The gun (an Austrian Skoda) was no less than thirty-six kilometers away! They luckily did n’t hurt anything, most of them landing in the field just about a hundred yards away from the station. One lit in the courtyard of the barracks on the hill and it looked like a sort of volcano in eruption, but that did no damage either.

*November 15.* They shelled Ste. Menehould again to-day. One big fellow fell right in the center of the road in front of the station, knocking out all the windows for a block and wounding two soldiers. The hospital has been closed and we now take the wounded to Villers-Deaucourt.

*November 18.* Gaynor left to-day: nerves in bad shape. The new men keep piling in — about ten of them now, and more coming. Everybody was sorry to see Sam Jones go. He is entering the Aviation Service. Heavy ice everywhere to-day and a light fall of snow. Starting the car is some job these days.

*November 20.* I took a walk with Sam Walker, and saw the great cemetery of the "Defenders of the Argonne" — a place on the side of the hill back of Ste. Menehould as large as Laurel Hill with most of the little wooden crosses marking *trenches* of bodies, not single mounds; next to it was a small graveyard with crosses over the mounds, but no names. These were what was left of those caught and shot as spies or as deserters or for self-mutilation in order to get away from the fighting.

*November 22.* Some one is constantly having fun at the expense of P. and R., neither of whom knows much about cars. The other day R. had a miss in one of his cylinders and could n't fix it. He went to

Sponagle, who gravely asked him if he'd greased his fan belt. R. bit and spent an hour doing that! P. is very proud of a brass radiator, which, instead of painting the usual gray, he polishes assiduously with regular brass polish. Yesterday Wallace painted "Nuts" in large letters on it which nearly broke P.'s heart when he noticed it. Ever since he has been scraping and polishing away to reinstate it in its pristine glory. This morning somebody had hung the "Feuillée" sign on R.'s car while he was sitting in it writing, and he could n't understand why every passer-by roared with laughter at him.

*November 27.* My last day in the War Zone, and I happened to draw the Fille Morte Poste! Sort of hard luck. The "Loot" offered to replace me, but it would n't have looked well before the new men, so here I am planted for twenty-four hours, and now I may miss the morning train to Paris, going down with Tison, Wallace, and Walker, all of whom are leaving for home. Culby is waiting for us in Paris. Roche leaves next week, so that

poor old "Huts" will have practically a new Section to break in. The Boches are shooting "77" shrapnel over us and trying for the little railway back of us. General Bouchez came up in his car to the "poste." His chauffeur tells me that he just missed being killed yesterday and the glass in the car was broken by an "éclat." Great excitement was caused by a cavalry officer trying to cross a swamp down below us. He got bogged, and they spent an hour trying to get the horse out. The Boches, seeing the group of men, started shelling again, but failed to come within fifty yards of them.

It's astonishing how everybody trusts everybody else. The Frenchmen give us money to buy them wine, tobacco, send telegrams, and so on; whereas we leave all our belongings lying around loose and they never touch them. Of course, it would n't be safe with the Senegalese, or on a highway where troops keep passing, but up in the lines, nobody touches any one else's things.

*November 28.* Poor old "Huts" is still

sick; but he got up out of bed to see us off.

*December 2.* We had a great time in Paris. Andrew came to see us off at the train.

*December 3.* The Chicago did n't start, of course, so that there was no movement of machinery and water to drown any noise, no matter how trifling. Most of the women on board are overworked Red Cross nurses and are in a pretty nervous state. C. started the ball rolling by copying in his sleep the sound of the guns at Verdun. He did it so well that it sent one woman into hysterics and they had to wake him up. Then an aviator on twenty-one days' leave proceeded to have a nightmare. Then they tell me I called out in my sleep, "What, four new men up and only one going? For Heaven's sake!" They say it was quite distinct. Then a woman began copying the guns, entirely unconsciously. As the steward remarked, "C'était rigolo."

*December 7.* Three perfectly clear days, calm as a lake: no warships in sight. We

have a marine "100" on the afterdeck for Mr. Submarine. I met Vic White's sister: awfully jolly girl.

*December 8.* Wireless warning received that another Boche cruiser is loose on the Atlantic. We saw what looked like a submarine in the distance. It may have been the Deutschland. We kept a gun trained on her, but we distanced her. Weather still perfect: wonderful sunsets and full moon; more like yachting in the South Seas than on the Atlantic in mid-winter. 'T is so warm we don't wear coats or hats. I won ship hat-pool.

*December 9.* Miss White won pool. Sea rough for first time. Our latest citation is before the Army and reads: —

*Copy of "Ordre général N° 189"*

*Groupement D.E. État-Major, au Quartier général.*

*S.C. No. 6611. Le 1 novembre, 1916.*

Le Général Commandant le Groupement D.E.  
cite à l'ordre du Corps d'Armée:

Section Sanitaire Américaine N° 1, sous le commandement du Lieutenant Robert de Kersauson de Pennendreff et de l'officier américain Herbert Townsend, en août et

septembre, 1916, a assuré l'évacuation des blessés de trois Divisions successivement dans un secteur particulièrement dangereux; a demandé comme une faveur de conserver ce service, où officiers et conducteurs on fait preuve du plus brillant courage et du plus complet dévouement.

(Signé)

*Le Général Commandant le Groupement D.E.*

**MANGIN.**

**THE END**

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