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Lawrence B. Cummings's Diary (1)

1916 September 15- December 2

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Archives of the American Field Service
and AFS Intercultural Programs

Volume I: 6 August - 2 December 1916

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For my sons,

Talbott and John Lawrence Cummings

116 East 63rd St. - New York City

Diary of Lawrence B. Cummings

Ambulance Driver - American Field Service

August 6, 1916 - Feb. 6, 1917.

Written in the field.

Archives of the American Field Service
and AFS Intercultural Programs

Dieulouard, France - September 15, 1916

Talbot and Jack:-

I am beginning these rough notes of my days in the American Ambulance for just ourselves - the three of us. They won't interest anyone else. They can't be anything more than hasty records, jotted down from time to time, of the things I see in a small part of this great war, - which will be only a memory when we look over this note-book together. For that is my idea in keeping this diary - that some quiet evening, when you've nothing else to do, we can get it out from my kit and perhaps find in it something to interest you. Probably I shall write you much the same things in my letters; but the mails are so uncertain that they may not reach you. And anyhow on these rather lonely evenings I shall get lots of comfort in thinking that someday we three shall be sitting in our chairs with our pipes before a cozy fire somewhere, turning these leaves and talking about these stirring days in France. And I shan't be at all surprised and won't mind a bit if now and then, when you think I'm not looking, you skip some pages - just to keep your old daddy from getting too cloddery over his yarns.

I'm afraid I'm getting a little that way already, for with only about a month of this strange new

life behind me I feel the first vivid impressions being supplanted by newer ones; so I'd best hurry and set down what has happened during these past few weeks before it all turns into a blurred composite memory.

It took me some time to decide if it was really right to come and to leave the work that was hastening the time when I could have you with me. I was so conscience for you! But the thought never left me of this hideous toll of deaths, crushing the happiness out of hearts forever. My happiness with you was still ahead of me, and I grew ashamed of the selfishness that refused to add six months to my waiting-time. Finally one night the impulse came, so clear, so unmistakably right, that I knew I must follow it or never be at peace with myself or with you again. I wrote at once to the American Ambulance Committee in New York. - I was in Alabama, in Birmingham. No answer came, and I grew impatient and telegraphed, volunteering. The answer came back "vacancies open," and I plunged into preparations, only to be halted while my references were investigated. Finally after being vaccinated, inoculated against typhoid, and deluged with application blanks, I was accepted. Arriving a few days later found me in Indianapolis hastily getting my passport arranged and setting my affairs in

shape. It was a scrambling rush to get things done, and there was always a restless temptation to spend the time with the good old friends who feel so big and warm a place in my life. It was hard to leave them all; and it was one of the happiest and "chokiest" moments when, just before I left, a military watch was strapped on my wrist. I have it on now, and I often look at the initials surrounding the monogram. I want you to know whose they are. "H. H. H." - Hewitt Howland; "H. C. M." - Howard Marmow; "W. M. R." - William Rockwood; and "R. W. K." - Robert Kruse. The groovers (your Aunt and Uncle by courtesy - title) saw me off. It was a pretty sober moment, kiddies, when the train pulled out from our old home, but I thought how soon we should see one another - how soon I should hold you close against me. Do you remember that sweet, sunny day at Huntington ^{two days later,} when we spent most of the time on the beach? You took me to the train. Oh, boys, but it was hard to leave you! - The few days in New York were crowded full of hurried preparation - shopping, steamship ticket, passport vized by the French consul. My little room at the Harvard Club was cluttered with boots and sweaters and camp kit. But ultimately everything went into two suit-cases.

Between foraging expeditions I managed to spend one happy quiet evening with Lieut. Armstrong on his battleship the "Kentucky" moored under the lights of Riverside Drive. On August 6th, a Sunday morning and stifling hot, I drove to the pier of the French Line. To my amazement my two modest bags were seized and searched. Next my passport was demanded, also my signature. The photograph was closely scrutinized, and finally after passing through the hands of five officials I was reluctantly admitted to the gang plank of the Rochambeau. In my cabin I found that wonderful basket of fruit from you, and your "bon voyage" telegram among my others. Eric Fowler soon joined me, the young Princeton boy also on his way to join the Ambulance. Slowly the travelers sifted through the crowd and at noon we nosed out into the river. There was a good deal of emotion among the expectable French and Russians. I can't tell you quite how it felt to be leaving our peaceful country for blasted Europe. I remember a sense of deep satisfaction that the chance was being given me; but I stood looking a long time at the haze where Long Island had faded from sight thinking of my boys there.

The trip was not eventful except for the sinister significance of boat drill and the one practice shot from the 3 inch gun astern. Fowler and I got along

"famously" as cabin-mates. But the people were unlike most ship's passengers. Over half were foreigners, and were on some grave mission to the war. The Americans aboard were nearly all bent upon some business - Isaac Marcossion to write up the new French loan, Milton Kirk to take his consular post, two surgeons to join the Ambulance hospital. On the evening of ^{Monday} the ~~fourteenth~~ ^{thirteenth} we sighted the lights at the mouth of the ^{Garonne} ~~Garonne~~ and early next morning we were moored at Bordeaux. Government officials were already aboard and a six o'clock call had been sounded. A dismal queue formed in the dining saloon, passing slowly before the three inquirers who cross-questioned and quizzed without mercy before stamping the permit of debarkation on the passports. Fowler and I got by seat-free with our ambulance credentials and then went up on deck to catch our first glimpse of France in war-time. You could sense the war from the very outset. It did not need the bright uniforms of the officers grouped about the dock nor the faded blouses of the common soldiers with the frequent mourning-bands upon the sleeves, to tell you France was fighting. You could see that in the calmness of the men and in the quiet, brave faces of the black-clad women. It took an interminable

two hours to get the baggage off and into the douane; and we strolled about eyeing the war kit of the soldiers. Blue was everywhere - all shades and grades. Sometimes a red cap or scarlet breeches and gold lace struck a sharp note of color. One uniform stood out by its very inconspicuousness - a khaki colored service outfit, well worn. At first I thought it British, but when I got closer I read "American Ambulance" in small letters on the sleeve. In the douane all was Bedlam with people pawing wildly at their luggage and entreating the few overworked women and a couple of old men to inspect it. At last we were through and in a taxi on our way to the Hotel Terminus where I was to find our military passers to Paris. A polite interpreter elevated brows and shoulders. No passers! So we turned back in search of lunch and Marcasson. In the grey old streets we passed marching troops - black Soudanese in service blue, plodding French infantrymen. Dozens of sleek horses were tethered under trees, some stained a purplish tint. And here and there over grey stone archways hung the red cross of Geneva. And out of those archways came war men with bandaged arms and heads; and some went by on crutches with ~~an~~ empty trousers legs pinned up. Marcasson missed us and we missed

Luncheon, so off we rushed to the gare, where troops in marching kit sat wearily waiting. We had five minutes to get our tickets. We got them and then from nowhere appeared our passers. (I am still waiting for the railroad to refund my fare.) On board we rejoined most of our steamer friends. We dashed northward through the chateau country of Touraine with its pastel tints, grey walls and turrets, white winding roads tree-lined, pale golden stubble-fields dotted with sheaves, and soft green hillsides against the evening sky. The men we saw in the fields were bent and old, and women were reaping. Even on board the train the guards had been replaced by competent brown-clad women. - one told me quietly that her husband had fallen at Verdun. - Smart officers thronged the couloirs of the cars, smoking. All were in perfectly tailored tight uniforms of light blue, and many wore the green and red ribbon with the *croix de guerre* and some the bright red badge of the *Légion of Honor*. At midnight we reached the Gare d'Orleans at Paris. Hardly a cab could be found, but at last we boarded up one *voiture de place* with countless bags, got in and started to grope our way through a city of darkness. Dim street lights barely glimmered

enough to show us the way across the Place de la Concorde. The statues of the cities were ghostly grey, the Tuileries gardens black. We felt like conspirators when we drew up in front of the dark arcades of the Continental and rang for admittance.

Next morning ^(Wednesday, August 16th) Fowler and I had breakfast looking out upon the Rue de Rivoli with its processions of grey military autos, camions and taxis. Uniforms everywhere! Then we walked to the Place de la Concorde and stood where we could look up the Champs Elysees to the Arc and up the Rue Royal to the Madeleine. All about us whirled the auto traffic and in it the grey ambulances with the red cross.

Stopping at the Grillons to make a luncheon appointment we took a taxi for the Rue Pivert to the military caserne where our ordre de mouvement instructed us to report. There we found a busy courtyard guarded by sentries and at one side a little unpeinted bureau, where an officer in blue fatigue uniform stamped our papers and bowed us out. We then returned along the "rive gauche", passing the Jardin des Plantes and the big wine cellars. Notre Dame raised her pinnacles and spires in the sunlight across the river and beyond spread the dark bulk of the Louvre. Fowler was all enthusiasms, so hoping to give him the thrill of all others I took him to the Invalides

The tomb was locked, but we were repaid for our trip by seeing the captured guns and German mitrailleurs in the courtyard, along with shot-riddled aeroplanes. Returning to the Orlon we met Fowler's sister, a charming woman, now a nurse at St. Valerie. She was "in permission" at Paris. We lunched together. In our party were also a Miss Wehlerman and a Miss Baldwin, the latter a nurse at the Ambulance. Miss Wehlerman is doing a splendid work at the Quai Debilly where she is in charge of a home for crippled soldiers. There they are taught some trade that will earn them their living. There is a crying need for such training now among these stricken men. After luncheon we drove out the Champs Elysees and out the Port ^{de Neuilly} ~~Marcel~~ to Neuilly, skirting the Arc with its anti-air-craft guns. ^{stop} We drove up in the courtyard of the American Ambulance Hospital and had our first glimpse of our new organization. We saw a long brick building faced with stone, several stories high, with a pointed central tower from which the red cross floated. The stars and stripes and the French tricolor flanked it. In the courtyard behind the tall iron fence were ranged the Paris ambulances - mostly Buicks with special bockers all enclosed and painted battleship gray except for the big red crosses on the

sides. Working about them or sitting in the driving seats were dozens of young men in khaki uniforms. White jacketed orderlies were carrying a stretcher from a doorway. Mechanics in oily overalls were unloading big cans of "essence" from a camion. We approached one man in uniform much bound about with leather belts from which depended an assortment of wallets, and reported our arrival. It evidently was not an affair of such moment as to disrupt the order of events. We were asked laconically "Paris or field?" Not knowing the cryptic answers we merely gaped, and were then waved to an inner portal and told to "see Galatti." We entered an inside court, grassy and set with flower beds, upon which seemingly hundreds of windows looked down. Swathed heads could be seen in many of these. From one nearly came the sound of a phonograph. There was a pungent smell of ether. In an unobtrusive little shed of an office we found a room much littered with papers and in it a young fellow in uniform. He also greeted us casually and fished various papers at us for our signatures. He then directed us where to get uniforms and told us to come back, in a somewhat vague way. We almost wondered if we were really expected. Soon afterwards a chatty little tailor in a shop under the shadow of

the Madeline was measuring us for the regulation tunic and breeches. These are rather smartly cut, the coat belted in and fitted with four capacious pockets and shoulder tabs much on the style of a British officer's. The new "service" ideas has done away with the old choker effect. The collar rolls back, with red grenades and an A on the lapels. There seems to be some doubt as to whether these insignias are grenades or wings, and whether the A stands for "Ambulance", "Automobile", or "Artillery". But anyhow the "American Ambulance" on the right sleeve is unmistakable, as are the bronze buttons with the ~~red~~ cross. An English vizored cap with flaring crown turned up in front to show the winged shield bearing the words "American Ambulance - France" with the cross, and riding leggings of brown leather or roll putters complete the outfit. Everything is serviceable khaki color, including shirt and tie. After our call at Royd's we wandered up the boulevards a bit, idling past the shop windows, which seemed largely given over to display of military outfits. Many shops were closed and shuttered, but the tables on the pavement in front of the cafés were unusually crowded and taxis were doing a thriving business. New and more gorgeous uniforms could be seen everywhere in

a confusing profusion. I learned afterwards that this colorful dress is limited to Paris and is not seen in the field, where "swank" isn't tolerated. The most business-like are the British, and nothing looks more "up and ready" than a healthy young Englishman in his dress tunic, belted about with his "Sam Brown"; his regimental insignias on his shoulders, and his little spurs chinking on his boots. Usually he is pink in condition. But occasionally you see a stoop-shouldered blasé youth, with monocle and swagger stick, that makes you rather fearful of the future of the service. Wounded men are much in evidence. I remember seeing one young Hercules of a French lieutenant, his light blue uniform immaculate and fitting like a glove, striding through the crowd with his right arm held forward rigidly on a brace at right angles to his body. Sometimes a soldier from the trenches appears, his overcoat mud-caked, his blue corgie dented, plodding along in his hob-nailed boots with his gun, musette and canteen swung from his shoulder. I dined alone that evening and after a turn on the dark streets, ^{went early to bed.} I could not help thinking of my first night in Paris fourteen years before, when I could not sleep for thinking of the tremendously wonderful sights that I should see in the morning. A different sort of night - this!

Written at

Deaulouard - Sept. 16, 1916.

(August 17th)

The following morning, Thursday, ^(August 17th) Fowler and I again presented ourselves at the hospital. This time we met A. P. Andrews, the head of the service of the Ambulance in the field. Years ago he was my instructor in Economics at Harvard. Now after an experience in the U. S. Treasury he has taken up the work of the ambulance, - evidently in an efficient way. Like all the other officers he was very busy with preparations for moving. We were turned over to DeThaine, a cherubic young man, very English, who dispatched us to the prefecture of police for our "immatriculation". By this time we were sufficiently covered to go on any quest, and we entered the dismal courtyard down near Notre Dame like condemned culprits. It brought a gleam of hope when a gendarme caught sight of our "passers passers" and poked us through a green baize door - (anyhow, it looked like green baize) - ahead of a malodorous crowd and into a shabby office where dozens of shabby clerks wrote at shabby desks. No one noticed us except an aged pugilist in a gingham apron and bright green carpet slippers who hustled us to a row of benches where other unhappy souls were ranged waiting to be immatriculated. It was a lengthy process, but at last we confronted a fussy little man who

scowled at our passporters, asked us our mother's maiden name and then wrote out a permit allowing us to begin to live in Paris - fee two francs 10. We grovelled out and looked at the Sainte Chapelle. Then after lunch at the Cafe Webers we sallied forth again to Neuilly. We had barely reached there than we were sent forth to the Mairie to procure our "permis de séjour". It was the epilogue of our dramas of the morning. When this paper should be issued we should be allowed to continue to live - but not until then! I was much relieved when I got it next day, for I felt I had been a marked man, recklessly living without a permit. We felt we had had our fill of Paris bureaux for the day and hurried back to Paris to join Miss Fowler and Miss Wehlmann at dinner in the Bois at Armenonville. It all looked much as it used to, though few people were there on account of the early hour. There were some strikingly dressed French women with English officers. During dinner several waiters strung curtains all about the driveway to shield the lights from possible aerial visitors. From the Bois we drove to the Opera Comique and heard a superb "Butterfly" though no notable name was on the programme. The audience was as interesting as the stage - a soberly dressed lot, except for the fr.

ponderance of uniforms, with no jewels or evening clothes.

^(written at)
Deuillouarde - Sept. 17, 1916.

Friday morning ^(August 18th) found us again suppliants before the throne of Neuilly. Though theoretically left to our choice we were actually shanghaied into the field service - really a piece of good fortune. It seems that we arrived at the psychological moment when the Paris service and the field were to be wholly separated. Heretofore a new arrival was assigned to work at the hospital - the Pasteur it was to have been. But the war broke out just at its completion, and contributions from Americans, notably Robert Bacon, our former ambassador, transformed it into the main hospital of the American Ambulance. The new man drove an ambulance about Paris, evacuating the trainloads of wounded as they arrived, for weeks or even months until some men returned from the field. Then, if he was lucky, the new man went to the front. Now this was to be changed. Recruits were to have the option of Paris or field. A three months enlistment would be permitted for Paris work, but a minimum of six was required for the field. Apparently we were the first to be so affected. A little Ford car with a box of a body like the tumblers of the guillotine was being loaded with the first things to be moved to the new quarters of the field corps. We hopped in and went scoting off through

the Bois to Tassy, 21 Rue Raynouard. We stopped in front of a green door in the plastered wall and went through it into a little gravelled ^{courtyard}. Beyond, over a little railing overhung with vines, we saw Paris and the Seine and the lofty cross-work of the Eiffel tower thrusting itself skyward, the antennae of its wireless station just discernable. Below was spread a stretch of densely wooded ground, a bit of forest still untouched in Paris! Through a doorway in the wall at our right we came to the head of a wide stairway in the old "chateau", ours our home. Built in a succession of terraces on the hillside it reminded one of an Italian villa. Corridors and little open courts and balconies lead off from each landing as we went down, and at the bottom, across the dining room, tall French windows opened upon a terrace that stretched the length of the house and overhung the garden and the wood. To the right were a succession of rooms opening on this terrace - the last one very roomy, with two basalt columns and a big mirror above the fireplace. Walnut shelves and cupboards lined the walls. Ranged upon the parquetry floor were rows of iron camp beds. We chose ours and then went back to the dining room for luncheon served by Marie Louise, a bright peasant woman. At once we felt as

complete change in our positions. We were established and Andrews, Galati, de Marie and the other men were more than affable. After an excellent meal we were told to get our luggage, and went rattling away in our tumblebug, old 74, in charge of a young Givons boy. We hurriedly packed our traps at the Continental and paid our account, on which a substantial discount was given because of our being "militaires". We shook hands with our lift-man - a young man with an empty sleeve but with the cross upon his breast - and gotted back to Parry. Dinner was even pleasanter than luncheon, and afterwards we sat on the terrace, smoking. An aeroplane purred overhead, unseen in the starlight, guarding the city. Dr. Goss, our surgeon, dropped in for a chat and told us much of the life at the front. I dropped asleep in my comfortable little bed, well content at last. Marie Louise woke us next morning ^(Sat. Aug. 19th) standing in the middle of the room and clapping her hands. "Debout, mes enfants! Café, mes petits!" Yawns and groans alone answered her, so she made the rounds of the beds energetically shaking shoulders and prodding backs. At last we gathered at the tables for great bowls of steaming café au lait and thick wedges of bread cut from the brown cushion loaves.

and served in willow baskets. A big vase of golden rod was on our table. I wonder when I'll see that again.

The morning was spent in hunting as cordonniers to put the regulation hobnails in our American boots and in finding real English leggings instead of the paper-like French ones. After a last luncheon with Fowler and his sister, about to return to her post at St. Valérie, I went to Loyd's and put on my uniform. Ordinarily I should have felt uncomfortable in such a first appearance, but now a uniform is accepted as a matter of course. In fact, a "civil" is regarded with suspicion as being possibly a spy or an "embusqué" - the term of opprobrium applied to one shirking military work. On that account men engaged in office work for the government or in munition factories wear a brassard to show their employment. Sunday, ^(August 20th) the next day, passed rather quietly. We took 74 into the Bois with Imbri, a man back on permission from Section 1, and under his charge practiced driving the little beast of a car. I had endless trouble with the gear shift. My previous experience in driving merely handicapped me. That evening I dined in the Quarters at a little restaurant near the Luxembourg. On Monday ^(Aug. 21st) Demaine took Fowler and myself, with Shaw,

another new man, for our driving test. We went to some office on the outskirts of Paris past the Place de la Nation and there picked up the examiners, a Rabbinical person with a fondness for dogs. As the test involved only driving straight ahead two blocks on a virtually empty street at a snail's pace we managed to pass. In the afternoon Imbri offered to take me in charge on a search for things for my kit and at his suggestion I got a small officer's trunk, a rucksack, aluminum toilet articles, steel mirrors, whistle cord, electric torch and heavy undershorts. I also supplemented the medicine kit which Mrs. and Mrs. Knefler had sent to the boat, with powdered sulphur for sores that come on the wrists, iodine that must be instantly poured on every scratch, however slight, to guard against infection, and, last, the unsavory item of flea-powder. A heavy overcoat of the English mounted service, a fatigue cap, and a pair of rubber shoes laced with rawhide completed my outfit - the (Aug 22) trousseau of the recruit. Tuesday we were assigned to duty at the Alcazar and took the Metro down to Champs Elysees station. My last recollection of the gay little theatre among the trees was a glare of light, much music, and Galys de Rys disporting on the stage. This

time I found the place dismantled and piled high with blankets, netting, bandages and clothing, while a few aproned women worked diligently preparing packages for shipment to the hospitals. Among this committee of American women, I met Miss Army, whom I used to know in Cambridge, and Louise Brent and her sisters from Columbus. We had time for only a word of greeting and then went to work packing crates for Morocco. Afterwards I learned that Louise Brent had been engaged to a French officer who fell last June at Verdun, and that since then she had been keeping bravely at this work for others. Next morning we took a tumbling ride out near St. Cloud to what is called the Parc - a factory where our cars are repaired and fitted with the ambulance bodies for the field. I remember our interest in our first dirigible that appeared over the chimneys and then moved swiftly away. At Kellner's I met my first Ford ambulance. The chassis of these sturdy little cars arrive by the score from America and are equipped here with long wooden bodies, canvas-roofed, that extend to what seems a dangerous length over the rear axle. A movable hood and apron protect the driving seat. Big shallow boxes are built along the sides for

tools and bidons of "essence" (gasoline) and oil. The tail-board swings down and is fitted with a folding step. The whole is painted battleship gray, except for the red crosses on the wooden windows on the sides and the white military numbers with the words "Americans Ambulance". I had hoped for some instructions in the mechanisms, but my net experience of the morning was how extremely difficult it is to scrub mud off of rear axles with a paint brush. I did visit the "cemetery", a back lot where dozens of worn-out or wrecked cars were lined up in dismal array. Some bore the marks of shells and shrapnel holes. While we were looking at them a convoy arrived from Boreaux with a dozen or so new chassis. They ^{men} arrived giggled and dust-covered from the three-days run in charge of Forbes, brother of the former governor of the Philippines. That afternoon we had a house-warming at 21 Rue Baynaud. The American and French flags were draped over our green door, flower-boxes bloomed with bright geraniums on the landings, and the dining-room was commandeered by a caterer. Our living-room to the left of the dining-room appeared in its new furnishings of big chairs covered with big tables

heaped with magazines, divans, and shaded lamps. On the paneled wall over the fire-place was hung the tableau d'honneur - a gold mat bearing the names of the Ambulance men who have received the croix de guerre. One name, Richard Heller, is marked "Mort pour la France." In the afternoon many of the Americans colony came for tea and we showed them about, exploring the gloomy underground passages in the wood and exhibiting the mirable mirror in our bunk-room that is supposed to conceal a stairway. The old place certainly has a history, but all that I could learn was that Gola lived there when he wrote his "Page d'Amour," and that Benjamin Franklin set up his first lightning-rod in our garden. Bartholdi, too, sculptor of "Liberty," used the house; but it must have earlier associations still for it is undoubtedly two hundred years old. Evenings at Parry were always interesting. Men from the field in dirty, torn uniforms would keep coming in unexpectedly. Most of them brought gruesome trophies in the shape of shells and grenades. They would sit and tell yarns by the hour about their experiences, the men from different sections vying with each other to tell the most lurid tales. I suspected too that many reports were colored

somewhat for the benefit of us new men, who sat about pop-eyed at the talk of forty-eight hour duty and changing tires under fire. Much of that though I found to be absolutely true. Though so far only one man has been killed, several have been badly wounded, and many have won the cross for conspicuous bravery under fire. Perfect cameraderie was always at the bottom of these fellows' chaffing, and they were invariably willing to give advice. I did not share the apprehensions of some of the new men as to getting into the wrong sections, for I thought they must be all much alike in make-up. Nevertheless I was gratified when I was assigned to Section 3 and told that I would join it the following Saturday. There are six sections in the field, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9. Numbers 5 and 6 are Hargis Ambulance, and 7 is Norton's. Each is attached to a division of the army and under direct military command through a French lieutenant. The section-leader, chef de la section, wears the two galons of a first lieutenant; the sous-chef ranks as second lieutenant. These ranks, however, do not seem to be regularly accredited. On ^(Aug. 24th) Thursday morning Fowler and I were ordered to go with a camion to the freight depot at Dury and get some cars

of parties for the Parc. We rummaged down the bank of the Seine to the freight sheds but failed to locate the boxes until Galatie and the "cleaning-house" had come to our aid.

The packing cases were almost immovable and we got only three of them away. At luncheon that day Mrs. and Mrs. Vanderbilt were with us. Mrs. Vanderbilt was in nurse's costume but wore a strand of pearls of alarming proportions. Next morning ^(Aug 25th) I made my last hurried purchases in Paris and spent the afternoon on the campus. That evening Fowler took me to dine at the Ambassadeurs, where we had our last meal together after our pleasant intimacy. He was to join Section 4 the following Sunday.

On Saturday morning August 26, I was up early getting my blankets, canteen, whistle, raincoat, overalls, and brassards from the equipment office. I was soon ready to leave. I signed an oath not to reveal anything that I might see relating to military affairs, and received my carnet d'étranger - a little red pamphlet which takes the place of all civil credentials in the war zone. Next I received an ordre de mouvement instructing me to report at Dieulouard via Toul, together with an ordre de transport for second-class railway travel. Several packages and letters for men in the section were handed me; and then Dubri and I set

out in 74 for the Gare de l'Est. The station was thronged with troops in field equipment - blue overcoats and blue casques - each man with his Lebel rifle, bayonet, cartouche boxes, and pack, to which were strapped his blankets, soup tin, entrenching spade and extra boots. Many chasseurs wore the jaunty beret cocked over one ear. All were making their way to the uncomfortable third class cars. Our car rapidly filled up with officers, mostly subalterns. At noon we pulled out, running northeast through hilly country. No sooner had we left the walls of Paris than we began passing the guards along the line - old grizzled veterans standing with grounded arms - a single one at every bridge and tunnel and crossing. A little further, and along the track, in the grain-fields with their edging of crocketing scarlet poppies and blue corn-flowers, appeared the solitary little wooden crosses, marking the graves of soldiers buried where they fell. It was the most telling note of the infinite tragedy to me. You remember how when that seemingly irresistible German machine had relentlessly crushed its way through Belgium and through France until Paris was in sight, the gallant French army, hastily carried from Paris in taxicabs and motor cars, threw itself against the Germans, and, aided by the little English expeditionary force, stopped

them in the battle of the Marne and drove them back. That was two years ago, September 9 and 10, 1914. These lonely scattered graves probably marked the outer limit of that tremendous fight. As we worked northward it became more evident at every little station that we were nearing the front. Trains of transport waggons appeared on the roads, and artillery caissons. Platforms were thronged with dusty troops. At Bar le Duc nearly everyone left the train, leaving the compartment to a young lieutenant and myself. We exchanged cigarettes but scant conversation. Once he opened his pouch and exhibited an American hunting knife. "Pour les Boches!" he explained significantly. I understand the officers have quit carrying swords and frequently go into action with only their canes and these knives, which are frightfully effective in trench fighting. Making a detour where the main track ran too near the German lines, we passed through Rigny and Doid and arrived at Toul, where my lieutenant friend obligingly helped me off with my little trunk, ruckrack and blanket roll. A young fellow in ambulance uniform hailed me - Tinkham from Section 3, sent down to meet me with his ambulance. We threw my traps aboard and ran out through the streets of Toul into a country of

smooth hillsides and distant woods. An excellent
macadam road led north through a double line of
trees and we made good time until we had to slow
down for a sentry who stepped out at a cross-road
with his rifle held above his head. A glimpse at the red
cross brought his approving nod and we went on,
dipping down into a valley where a group of chimneys
marked Daulouards. We entered the little village
just at dusk - a huddle of brown tile roofs piled up
about the dark walls of an old castle. Groups of soldiers
blocked our way as we threaded through the winding,
muddy streets and pulled up in front of the canton-
ment - a bare stucco building, two stories high. There
in a dingy little room I met some of the men
grouped about a table playing bridge by the light of
a smoky stable lantern, - a youngish lot burnt brown
as their khaki. Flowering Hill, the section leader,
introduced me, and then Timbham and I started out in
search of supper. He led me through dark winding ways,
ankle-deep in mud and pervaded with highly seasoned
smells to a row of houses with plaster walls facing
a little canal. Iron tables were placed under the
eaves and along the bank of the waterway, and I could
see dark forms of soldiers sitting about them. The

only lights were the glowing ends of cigarettes and little glimmers rifling through shutter-chunks. This was the "gold Coast", namesake of that fabled spot in Cambridge. A request for an omelette brought acquiescence from Mme. Fuchs, proprietress of the auberge and likewise arbiter of the destinies of M. Fuchs. But as it was close to the legal closing-hour, would the messieurs be pleased to mount to the little room in the back? Messieurs would. So back we went through a little court of rabbit-fens and up a ladder to a little loft of a place, where presently came Gaby and likewise René with a sizzling plate of eggs, dark army bread and watery beer. But it tasted wonderfully good. We had just started in when ambulance caps appeared in the doorway and in came Fenton, Tison and "Brakeband" Clarke. Mother Fuchs likewise mounted, in dual role of duenna and dispenser ^{of gossip}. It was one of the evenings, it appeared, when her spouse did not "see clear", - a matter which subsequent acquaintance with the gentlemen made me think hardly worth remark. Our party broke up early, according to orders that everyone be in quarters by ten o'clock, and we made our way back to cantonment. There we ascended a decrepit ladder, minus a few important steps, into a

dusty loft where low iron camp beds stood amid a
litters of blankets, kit bags and rubbish heaps. One lantern
sufficed. We were soon rolled in our blankets. Sleep
seemed easy to the others. But a distant sound like
low thunders broken by frequent thudding kept me lying
wide awake staring up at the chinks in the tiling
overhead. Gun-fire! Murderous, meant for killing!
Man destroying man over there beyond the hills!

<sup>(written at
Dienkouw)</sup> - September 18.

^(Aug 27)
We all woke early. We had to. The inflexible rule holds
that anyone late to seven o'clock breakfast washes another's
fellow's car. Sleepy, yawning, hardly stopping even to dash
cold water in our faces, we crossed the street to the auberge
and sat down in a fly-infested room to a scanty meal
of cafe au lait and leathery bread. Soon afterwards Hill
took me to meet the Sous-lieutenant, M. Derodet, of
the French army, attached to our sections, - a courteous
young fellow, very much in earnest. More papers had to
be filled out - though this time at Hill's suggestion
more direct results were obtained by answering most
of the queries by the pleasing fiction that I was "living
on my income". Hill and I then went to the Tare
here - the court of a monastery (now a hospital) -
where we found the ambulances lined up under the

chestnut trees. I was given old number 127, one of the oldest cars in the section, heretofore used by young Witt of Indianapolis who had just left. It is a weather-beaten old 'bus' but with plenty of power and enough speed. Like the other cars it has the name of the donor on it - "Phillips Andovers Academy." (Others have "New York Stock Exchange", "St. Pauls School", etc.; and one bears the words "In memory of Richard Hall".) The body has two movable board seats for four men, and also a rack for a third stretcher, the other two resting on the floor. Three stretchers (brancards) are kept folded in it. So that four "assis" (sitting cases) can be carried inside, or three "couches" (lying). By shifting the seat arrangement two "assis" and one "couch" can be so taken. There is always room for one "assis" beside the driver in front. The inside had been painted white, but it was splattered with ugly stains; and the floor was grooved with the long wear of the sliding stretchers. A rank odor clung to the car that no amount of disinfectants ever dissipated. We went over the equipment, inspecting all tools, gas generator, gasoline and oil bidons, and the two spare shoes on the roof. I found most of the things in such bad shape that I spent the rest of the day cleaning up the outfit, our two other meals

at the auberge, cooked and served by Afrins, the uniformed soldiers and ex-farmers detailed for the job, were an improvement over the first. I have discovered them to be a variable quantity. We have what is supposedly "officers' mess" - ravitaillement furnished by the government, consisting usually of soup, meat, one vegetable, red "vin ordinaire" and coffee. If properly cooked this would be an excellent menu, of course, but all too frequently the beans are in a state of nature and the meat is of the tinned variety currently known as "rings". Afrins, however, is oblivious to such slight details and announces the courses with gusto, setting down the tureens and twirling his long moustache. "La soupe, voila! Soupe de legumes!" Just day it is "Soupe! Petite marmite!" The contents of the tureens, ^{however,} remain unchanged. "A rose by any other name!" We raid the little epicerie and the one boulangerie for jam and hot bread, undoubtedly laying the foundation for dyspeptic old age; and between meals we eat crackers and chocolate. Everything we eat goes on one plate, and one glass suffices for water, wine and coffee. Our knives are formidable affairs, useful also as a universal Ford tool. ✓

The next morning ^(Aug. 28th) was clouded by an adverse fate. The church-tower clock is Dijon time, the procession

of the equinoxes to the contrary notwithstanding. Your own
Geneva's timepiece awaits not. Sunday night the church
clock developed a burst of speed and five of us were
condemned to car-washing. By special dispensation I
was permitted to wash my own. After breakfast I till,
"Slack" Clark, Brown and I walked out to meet the
marchand de journaux as he came trudging up the
road from Belleville with his budget of *Le Matin*
and *L'Est Republicain*, tooting his little horn. We
bought copies and read of Roux's entry into the
war on the side of the allies. I tell them had me take
him out in my car to show my prowess, and I found
eccentricities in the little "boat" that I thought beyond
the bounds of reason, ^{even in the East.} However, we did manage to
get along, skirting long stretches of hill crests from
which soft green valleys fell away to distant woods
and sharper peaks. Little brown towns lay here and
there - like splashes of color on the slopes. A glimmer
of silver shot from the Moselle curving through the
meadows. Once a single low peak stood out -
pyramidal, with battered walls upon its top and,
capping all, a slender white spire. I knew it afterwards
for Mousson and the spire, the shrine of Joan of Arc,
still crowned with the statue of hers though the

spire has been pierced by German shells. This is her country - Lorraine; and not far away lies Doureny. We dipped down a slope along a road with tall screens of burlap stretched along one side - screens against shell-fire. For I had pointed out German positions on distant hills beyond Mousson, equipped with guns of incredible range, and I well understood the need for masking the roads. Signs along the way reading "Exposed to bombardment - In sight of the enemy" were not reassuring. Some even specified how far apart waggons must drive and prohibited pedestrians from walking together. And, mind you, that German ground was almost bazy in the distance! As though for an object lesson, however, when we drove into Little Jozanville a moment later I saw roofs and walls with gaping holes smashed in by German obus. From there we drove through the Forêt de Pavenelles. We passed camps of wooden sheds where soldiers were idling - resting after their days in the trenches - and through the tree trunks I caught glimpses of wattled ditches, and here and there coiled barbed wire and reeked-up frames of steel, cross-membered, with sharp points. The intermittent gun-fire sounded

neaters. Suddenly we contributed our quota by blowing out a tire. While we were changing shoes a company of poilus marched by on their way to the trenches, but apparently infinitely more interested in our doings than in those of the Boches. One unshaved fellow sang out "Good morning - yes!", thereby apparently exhausting his store of English with princely prodigality. We swung home over the perfect road through Gricourt. That afternoon, humbled and chastened, I drove down to the little brook that gushes out below the castle and flows between ditches down the main street, and in full view of the populace washed my car in sociable proximity to splashing artillery horses, cows, and the village washerwomen.

^{Written at}
Dieulouard - Sept. 19. There is a routine assignment of work for us which is more or less regularly adhered to. Of the twenty cars in the section five are kept on duty at Pont A Mousson, one man going there daily to replace the one returning who has had his five days. Of the fifteen at Dieulouard three are on duty daily at the Park to answer calls and make evacuations, one goes to the hospital at Belleville, one stands the night truck, and the remaining unfortunate is orderly. A card with the assignments for the following day is posted at

luncheon time in the auberge. Men not listed have the day to themselves unless there is repair work on the cars in the atelier next to the cantonment, where Fenton works with two mechanics. Besides the ambulances we carry a big repair-car, a car for parts, a ravitaillement camion, and Hill's little Ford touring-car. Derocles also has his car and chauffeurs. We have to sign for all "essence" and keep accurate reports of our "rolls" and the number of men we carry - whether blessés or malades, arriés or couchés. This bright particular

^{Tuesday, Aug 29} morning, I was orderly. I gave our quarters only a "lick and a promise", for otherwise it would have been an Augean task, especially around "Brakeband" Clarke's bunk, where he has cached his shoes and belated washing.

I was given my gas mask, - a goblin like affair of black rubber with goggle-eyes that covers the whole front part of the head burying the mouth and chin in wadded gauze impregnated with some chemical with a sweetish smell that counteracts the fumes of a gas-attack. It must always be carried where it is instantly available. We keep ours in the elbow-boxes of the cars, but the soldiers wear them slung on their belts in oblong blue tin boxes. At Verdun last June during their first days of work in the hell of that bombardment many of the

boys in their section owed their lives to their masks. That evening just before twilight I had by first glimpse of the war in the air. A trumpet suddenly brayed from the lookout post on one of the castle towers, and a moment later we heard the bang of guns. Up in the evening sky high above us little cottony balls of smoke ^{burst forth} appeared. In quick succession they appeared, marking a path. 75's were firing shrapnel. You could see the flick of flame of the shell in the air as the shell burst. At first that was all that I saw, but following as pointing fingers I at last saw the flying biplane just ahead of the last puff. He was flying high - a mere speck. Suddenly the hum of an engine sounded close and over the Bois de Cinte came whizzing a French machine from the aviation field on the road to Foul. We hoped we might see the meeting of the Frenchman and the Boche, but before the French machine could get the altitude the Boche had turned and disappeared over his own lines, while the French guns barked vainly after him. That evening several of us gathered in Potter's room on the ground floor of the cantonment. From some mysterious place he had produced a perfectly good piano and was playing Toccata and Bohème. A poilu in faded blue with a half healed scar on his temple came in and asked if he might sing

for us. He was a café-concert singer and had a really rich voice. As he sang soldiers gathered at the windows. It all made rather a striking picture - the dingy walls and high fireplace. Behind the group of boys in their brown uniforms, a single lantern barely outlining the shadows but glinting here and there on a button or the red cross of a brassard, the hairy faces of the poilus in the windows and the little singers by the piano, his ~~head~~ ^{finger} over one ear and his head thrown back, ringing with all his might. And constantly from the darkness outside came the boom and mutters of the guns. Next day, Wednesday, Aug 30, I was on duty for the first time at the Parc. I sat nearly all day in my car writing letters. The hospital, a grey old buttherseed building, stretched across the back of the walled court, where the cars and camions were parked. Wounded soldiers in various stages of convalescence hobbled about in bandages and stood in rapt wonder at the miracle of cleaning spark-plugs. Cars came and went with loads of "blessés" or "malades". At strange hours everyone gathered about the long tables set up in the open air for "Café soupe" served from the wooden kitchen shed. In the middle of the afternoon my turn came to "roll" and with one lone poilu and a "méchante chef" aboard I set out for Belleville down the tree-bordered road by the canal, through the little ^{Town} ~~canal~~.

and to the surgical hospital - a three-sided court of unpainted wooden sheds all abloom with flowers and scrupulously clean. Here the wounded are brought from the trenches where they can be given effective surgical treatment after the hasty bandaging at the postes de secours. Here I saw the real red-cross nurses at work in the long wards, in their white uniforms as spotless as though they were at their home hospital. Leaving my man and his papers of identification I "dropped" back. Next day, Thursday, Aug 30, was an idle one. I strolled about Dieulouard, exploring the little passages that twisted up the hill between the houses. I found several doorways capped with what looked like carvings from Roman buildings. Some had vines trained over them - the only touch of green on the bare plastered walls. I went up the causeway and into the old castle, poking about the squalid stone courts and passages and finding nothing more interesting than an army farrier shoeing a horse. Later de Hevers joined me and piloted me up the Bois de Coute, the steep hill north of the village. Standing on a cliff edge we could look far north beyond Mousson in the direction of Metz - all German ground. Across the Moselle on a long hill, squared off in browns and greens of farms and, beyond the little town of St. Genevieve, where at the time of

the battle of the Marne, another German army was held
and turned. We went on, pressing through narrow paths
among the bushes and thick-set trees, past trenches and
gun emplacements seemingly unused - probably part of
some secondary defense-work. On the edge of the wood
stood two lonely wooden crosses where some poor
fellows lay. Next morning, Friday, August 31, I had new
impressions a-plenty. Starting off with ~~Stolz~~ in his "staff
car", - Brakeband Clarke on the back ~~seat~~ half hidden
under a blue steel helmet - we took the road to Pont a
Mousson and the trenches, running out of the village
under the rocks of the Bois le Route and along the disused
railroad. Barbed wire stretched nearly all the way.
We ran about eight kilometers through the village of
Blémont to the town of Pont a Mousson - a place of some
size and now ~~strategically~~ ^{strategically} important. Passing the
churned station and its grass-grown tracks we turned
a corner in the wide street. Instantly was faced us in
a new grim aspect. On the corner stood the post-office,
a large building ^{smashed} ~~was~~ and pitted by shell and shrapnel.
The cupolas had had an immense hole torn in it. As we
drove on down the street there was not a house
but bore the marks of bombardment. Every few feet
upon the walls near the ground was clambered the red

double cross of Lorraine (†) indicating an abri. White
placards showed stairways where upper rooms could be
reached in case of gas attack. Electric bells were placed at
intervals to give warning of the approach of an enemy
avion. Sand-bags were piled about windows and
foundations. It was a city with the sear of death
upon it. Continuing on we passed along the single street
into Maichères, I felt marking new holes in wall and
ground. Here even the openings between the buildings
were screened. And the short streets, running north had
big stretchers of Burlap hung across from cave to cave
in parallel lines like theatre-floors. Sentinels stood at every
crossway of importance. Through Maichères we came
into the open, and on the right rose the low slope of
scarred ground, capped with a dark forest that will
always bear a bloody name - the Bois le Pretre. All was
quiet now, but death lurked there in terrific form.
We came to Montauville - a single street. More crosses
of Lorraine - more hospital flags marking the little shops
where the wounded are now gathered! On further,
rushing up a sweeping rise in the macadam road,
through a bit of wood and out upon a cross road in
the open. A battered little building stands there - the
Auberge Saint Pierre - buried to its middle in sand bags

and earth-work where dark tunnel-mouths open. A young Lieutenant leans in the doorway, hands in pockets. "Did they take you last night?" He asks in French. "oui - toujours," he answers with a shrug. We turn about, backing so as not to get upon the cross-road which is exposed to fire from the German mitrailleuse, and go back to Montauville. From there we cross over to the slope under the Bois le Pretre. Nearly at the edge of the wood we pass a little structure hardly distinguishable from the hillside - Petan, poste de secours number one. Below it lies a little plot of ground with uplaid wooden crosses - and above them stands the Groupe des Carmes marking the graves of the "heros of Bois le Pretre". Into the woods we go hugging the narrow road. We meet tired, muddy soldiers, their ~~carries~~ ^{carries} pushed back from their streaked faces. We pass others plodding to the front. A big group crowding about a portable soup kitchen, food-tins extended Oliver Twist fashions, stops us. Poor devils, they act half famished, though they are fed well. Down the hill runs a ditch twisting and zig-zagging, lined with wrens basket work. The trenches! only a remote one, though. On we go through the woods. More troops. great depots of paraphernalia appear - sheds, lumber, coiled wire with long, wicked barbs, Chevaux de frise.

More trenches. Then another poste de secours - Glorie Cote. On further, barely squeezing the little car between the trees, all about stretches the trench-work like the tracks of some army of giant beetles. Down in one, cleverly concealed, lies another poste - Les Carrieres. Back then to Petaw. We turn again and enter the wood and visit Thuy. Again we do this and visit Fontaine du Pere Helmon - and still again Patte d'oie. I remember a jumbled vision of wood roads, hidden postes and cities of Troglodytes - and I am to come here in my car at night, without lights, for wonder? - A rifle cracks! - I can feel my flesh creep, but nothing happens. I see apparently never heard it. - (As a matter of fact, it was probably fired away from us - some French soldiers sniping at the German trenches!).

We made our way back to Pont and stopped at Les Glycines - the headquarters of our Pont contingent. It is a hideous plaster villa set in a little grove, with vines climbing to the eaves and tumbling great masses of yellow bloom over the ugly walls. A driveway circles it to the old tennis courts, now covered by our carshed. There is a marble statue in the middle surrounded by squatting ducks. Out on the balcony in the back of the house the men are loafing in the sunshine waiting

calls. We chat a while and drive home to Dieulouard -
That afternoon I sought out a carpenter for some slight
repairs for the car. In the course of our dealings we not
only got our repairs made but I became his tenant -
for he had a "chambre a louer" right on the street. This is
quite "en règle". Most of the fellows have these palatial
lodgings. The standard Dieulouard price is twenty francs
a month, and it never varies, regardless of location.
So now behold me installed just under the lee of the
castle, with one of the corner towers, rising sheer from
our little court ^{in the rear.} My fellow-tenant across the hall, the
one-legged grocer - with his government prices tacked
on his door - keeps his enormous dog there when it
isn't harnessed to the little cart. As for me, I have a
real bed, a table, and a stove - not to mention
the wise and foolish virgins of holy writ upon the wall -
and it isn't far to the spring to fill my canteen. Mine
host assures me that I shall have fresh sheets,
without fail, no less than every three weeks. More than
that, he will see that I have them changed the first
time at the end of two weeks, again without fail,
seeing that the prior tenant (to me unknown) has
already slept in the bed one week.

-(When I shall be able to scribble more I don't

known. Orders have just come to us that the entire section leaves tomorrow. We don't know where - perhaps the Somme, where the drive is on, perhaps Champagne, where things may happen, and perhaps back to Verdun. But wherever we go, boys, your daddy will be thinking of you always.) -

Written at 21 Rue Raynouard - Paris - Sept. 24, 1916

The next few days I passed in Dieulouard, sometimes on duty at the Pares, sometimes tinkering with 127, sometimes just loafing. When it rained the streets became rivers of mud and your fingers got blue with the chill. When the sun shone Dieulouard produced strange odors in great variety. Children in gingham aprons played diligently in the mud - starved looking little youngsters. Washerwomen and soakers in all stages of undress ceaselessly washed clothes in the brook, thrashing their paddles on the stone runs. Troops swarmed everywhere in all kinds of uniforms of every shade of blue - their regimental numbers in wool letters on their collars, their service stripes on their left sleeves, their wound stripes on their right. The insignias of rank are confusing. Commissioned officers wore the galon on the cuff - a single straight strip of gold - one for sous-lieutenant, two for lieutenant - and so on, one being added for each rank through colonel. Generals wear stars. Non-coms. wear tiny galons set slant-wise - two woollen for corporal, ^{one gold for sergeant,} two gold

first
for sergeant or maréchal de logis. The latter are usually
great swankers, often wearing red caps and breeches, and
hard to distinguish from staff-officers. But in these times
even a common soldier is likely to be as man of means.
Headgear of all sorts is worn. The blue steel helmet
and the rakish beret with the Alpine horn are most
popular, though one sees kepis and fanciful peaked
fatigue caps, pointed fore and aft. Evidently an effort
has been made to put as little color as possible on the
uniforms and the different branches of service are
indicated usually by little tabs of color on the collars.
We are at present attached to the 29th Division under
General Gonby. I haven't ever found out just what comprises
the division - all well-ordered lines of organization
having broken down with the decimation of regiments.
We have several regiments of infantry - both line and
chasseurs, field artillery equipped with "soixante-quinze";
colonial troops in khaki - from Morocco and Algiers;
some cavalry, and the service de santé. Then there are
the "genie" (engineers), transport trains and ravitaillement
with their heavy lumbering camions. The big guns - heavy
artillery and pieces de marines - are not permanently
with any one division but remain in their emplacements.
It was a source of endless interest to watch there war-

searched recruits (for now nearly every man in the army is a veteran). Often trains of artillery would go by, six horses to each field piece and caisson, the sergeant riding ahead. Long processions of convoys would pass - big gray trucks carrying food and forage up to the trenches. Smart officers on fine mounts rode by often - each followed by his orderly on horseback. Most of the infantry marched together - but often stragglers, flopped along alone, bent under their packs, saving their steps with heavy walking sticks. Though strictly forbidden we usually gave these fellows a lift in our cars. Sometimes their clothes were stained ^{with} ugly splatters of green and yellow from the gas. They were always effusive in their thanks. In fact, I haven't yet found a French soldier whose attitude was anything but one of warm friendliness. It used to be interesting to watch them gathered in a crowd during the excellent regimental band concerts in the hospital yard, their officers mingling with them. One afternoon we saw a decoration, the *médaille militaire* pinning the cross on the tunics of a dozen men who had been cited for bravery on the field. Nearly all were *braves hommes*. I grew to know every angle of that hospital court in the duty days there. Sometimes we patronized the little folk, barbers in *leur* tiny shed with dire effects on our self esteem, as

we usually emerged like shorn convicts. Sometimes our peaceful
freemeters were invaded by the town-criers, a weakened little man
with a drum. He would beat this with much gratification to
himself, and having thus commanded his audience would roll
forth his announcement in stentorian tones. The import of his
summons to the populace always escaped us. One day I was
assigned to "taxi-cab duty" and carried a surgeon to Toul,
rattling him about inside the ambulances immmercifully.
At Toul no less a personage than a general joined us, but
a ride of a few blocks sufficed, though he did declare
the vehicle marvellous. Another day I got the Belleville
assignment and ran back and forth from the surgical
hospital to the "hopital de convalescence" - long sheds where the
wounded were housed and fed until the train took them south.
Then I ingratiated myself with the man in charge of the stores
and got a new canvas belt, and a couple of canvas capes.
One afternoon at Daulouard the trumpet brought us into the
street, and above us we counted nine French aces. We
heard afterwards that there had been a bombardment of
Metz. Finally Hill took me out for another turn around
Jezanville. I made a sorry enough showing of my ability
with the Ford, but got by sufficiently to get the Pont A Mourson
assignment next day. At noon I went for Col. Gray, chief
of Brancardiers, and with the car loaded full of grub

and - surreptitiously - Brown and Blumenthal, set out for
Les Glycines. There after scooping out a place for my kit in the
clutter of blankets I established myself in really the lap of
cantonment luxury. At six o'clock I made the rounds of the
posters in Montauville and Maideres and set out for
Doulouard and Belleville to deliver my blessings and
malades at the hospitals, returning for an excellent dinner
at the hands of Mme. Marame. A wonderful person is this
lady - always cheerful, no matter how much we loaf
in her kitchen, - always first to get news of the fighting -
always first with words of sympathy or pity. Her ducks
and her rabbits are objects of incessant attention. I think
she may suspect the forgers who use our stable for their
kitchen and there comes huge watafullers of lentil soup
and coffee which they transport on their soup-kitchens -
a sort of thermos bottle affair that keeps the food hot on
the road. Down in our "cave" an abri has been made of
sandbags and railroad iron - a mighty useful place. -
(Not long ago Andrews took Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt on a tour
of inspection of the sections. The Germans chose her
night at Les Glycines for a bombardment of Pont à Mousson,
and the lady spent most of her time in the abri while
Boche shells exploded in the next square. Over two
hundred fell) - The next morning I went out to do some

chopping down in the square towards the river, across the railway. Every street crossing was screened. At the tracks the screens were cleverly painted to represent the station. The openings of the arcades around the square were completely filled with sand-bags and the cobblestones were grass-grown, but behind the arches most of the little shops were doing business - especially the patisserie shops. No debris appeared anywhere, though walls and roofs were smashed and battered - and had been for a year and more. As I walked along the ^{distant} firing was incessant, apparently all along the line - but only the regular daisy work. I walked on to the river where a sentry stopped me at the end of the bridge, - a temporary wooden affair spanning the gap blown in the stone arches by the French when the Germans first swept down. I looked across at the other half of Pont de Mousson, with its quaint half-timbered houses along the bank, and up on the hill to Mousson itself where the Bronze Maid of Orleans still kept watch from her towers. All that day we had little to do. We even had time for some baseball, Bluthenthal and Tison putting over some curves for the edification of the soldiery present. That night we were snoozing away when suddenly some wakeful one sung out "There's an arrival, boys!" I heard a screaming whistle that ended in a terrific, rocking crash like the detonation of

bulb loomed ahead - the auberge. We stopped and turned. out of a black hole a stretcher is borne. The steel frame on it shows dimly in the lantern-light, half blanketed, half bandaged. There are red splashes on the white. The stretcher is slid in gently, the tail board fastened up. "Gouvernement béni! A Belleville, vite!" a brancardiers whispers. Back we go - faster this time - tearing through village streets and under black tree branches - on through Vincennes and Belleville. A red light is burning over the doorway of the hospital as we pull up. A couple of stretcher-bearers come up. The stretcher is lifted out and set upon the ground. He has not moved - our béni. The head lies turned a little. One hand hangs limp. The hair is grizzled, the jaws unshaven. Even in the red lamp glow the face is ghastly with a greenish tinge. A surgeon comes out of his room buckling his belt. At a motion the stretcher is carried aside under the glare of light. The surgeon kneels, feels the limp wrist, turns back an eyelid, then stands up. "Mort!" - Gone, poor fellow! Three mitrailleuse balls through him! - An orderly reads the numbers on the little disc chained to the wrist and covers the face.

Next night I went as supercargo with Magnus on his call to Thiry. It was almost still in the woods with soft moonlight slanting through the trees. There

had been a considerable amount of firing late in the after-
noon at about five o'clock. We had gone up on the balcony on
the third floor of Les glycines, ^{overlooking the Bois le Pretre} and watched the black smoke of
the bursting shells - probably craps-villotes - rising in moment
after the sound struck us. It seemed to be all at the poste
of Thiry, but Magnin and I found only one "malade" ^(written at Eppe court - Sept. 28) next
evening as I went through Dieulouard with my blessés.
I found the whole section out in the street around Andreus,
who had just arrived on a round of visits. That evening
he ^{went to Fort de Mourson and} dined with us at Les glycines, bringing with him
the Duc de Clermont-Tonnere and the army photographers.
We had an elaborate dinner of several courses - off of
one plate - and were very swanky. The next morning
the photographer was escorted to several postes. He
evidently did not enjoy his job and requested frequently
to be informed as to the exact locations of the Boches.
At noon our guests left, and I started on a walk that
I had been anxious to make for several days into the
trenches of the Bois le Pretre. It was very warm and
my casque got very heavy before I had tramped half
way to Petaw. I stopped a while by the little cemetery
on the slope below the little hut of the poste - hundreds
of low wooden crosses hung with the strange beadwork
of the French - and in the centre the rough beech Croix

des Carmes - the cross of the Carmelites - bearing the words "To The Herons of the Bois le Pretre". I entered the wood then, walking a long way along the quiet road. Soon, though, I came to a little city of huts in the wood - low wooden sheds grouped about a concrete tank where a stream splashed. Soldiers were idling about half-dressed, resting after their turns in the trenches. Further on I came to an abandoned group of dugouts - mere kennels underground - usually in the roots of some forest tree - black holes barely large enough to crawl into, with an earthen ledge and a few wisps of rotten straw. Here the road was screened with wattle-work. Big pits alongside showed where shells had fallen. Suddenly the road ended. Beyond spread a desolate waste of blasted trees - gaunt, shorn of branches, shattered. Tangles of barbed wire showed near the ground. The earth was torn. Beside me, almost underfoot, was the roof of the poste de secours of Thury - hidden in the trenches, its roof cleverly covered with stones and branches. The sloping entrances to the trenches dropped away from each side of the road. I went down into the poste - a little dark room opening off of the trench, roofed with layers of railroad iron and concrete slabs. A group of branch-armies were leaning against the

brown earth walls of the entrance, chatting. Inside in the darkness a flickering candle showed two or three bunks, a table, a few stretchers. Trenches led away at confusing angles, some roofed over, all numbered and posted like roadways. Gratings of wooden planks were laid along the bottoms - convenient now but of small use when the water and mud were waist-deep. A corporal of brancardiers offered to pilot me out toward the front trench. I was eager to go, for several of the boys had done it. Magnificent even to a porte d'écoute in front of the first line only thirty metres from the Germans. We tramped through a maze of "boyaux" - connecting trenches - twisting and zig-zagging in seemingly haphazard fashion, but designed with careful skill. Here and there a narrow opening dropped into a black abri. Lookholes were set in offsets so that defenders could send a raking fire down the boyau. The walls were so close that they grazed your shoulders. The upper edge was about two feet above your head. At one turn I climbed a step ladder affair and took a hasty peep into the wire entanglement ahead. We went on a little further through the twisting passages - but it seemed miles to me. Just ahead lay that first line trench and

beyond it that No Man's Land where once stood the
Croix des Carriers. All through the bitter fight of the
summer of 1915 it stood in the blast of shell and
shrapnel and rifle fire between the trenches. Then in
a sweeping rush the French took it - their pilgrim's
cross - and set it up in the acre of their dead. Behind
the porte of Petani. Before we got to that first line
a crash and a roar all in one tore the air and
shook the ground about us. A crafuillot! With
equal suddenness we stopped in our tracks. I'll
admit a very purposeful desire to turn and run
possessed me. My corporal, however, went on a few
steps with what seemed to me nothing short of
suicidal intent. A second later another crash followed.
Again we stopped. The narrow ditches that before had
looked so safe now seemed ^{about} to yawn and widen to
catch German crafuillots. My brancardiers suddenly
remembered that it was strictly forbidden to enter the
trenches as he was - without his helmet. If he had
said without his silk hat I should have found
nothing to quibble over in his remarks. We turned
and made a dignified but determined exit. I had
lost all curiosity regarding the porte d'ecoute. While
I stood chatting again at Thiry more of those

hellish tubers fell into the trenches up ahead, belching great columns of black and yellow smoke into the air. I found the place too warm for comfort and went back to Petans. From there I went to Fontaine du Pèré Melanion - a little valley that once must have been the sweetest spot in the whole wood, but now torn and dug with yellow trench lines. Down at the bottom stands Melanion's little tile roofed house with its spring of gushing water. Here in the fighting of last summer (1915) by tacit understanding the French and Germans came at different hours, sharing the waters, until the French army drove their lines ahead and took the spring. The francardiens at the post told me that hundreds of dead lay buried on the hillside. They were more interested, however, in the capture of a sickly kitten on the roof of the porte than in the history of the war. They exhibited their chewed boots and knapsacks and reviled the huge camp rats. They assured me that they needed the kitten to protect their accoutrements. The stalking of the cat was somewhat marred by the discharge of a battery of French 90's on the hill above us. There was something horribly fascinating in the rhythmic swish of the shells overhead. We judged the direction was against some

German position fronting Invaresson. Leaving my cat-
hunters still after their prey I again went back to
Petaw and from there took the road to Patte d'oie,
threading through Montauville. It is not wise to leave
the main roads on these tramps as the French officers
do not like it. On several occasions the boys have been
arrested for "snooping," but have always got away with
a good natured admonition from the higher officers. At
Patte d'oie I went with another brancardiers - these
fellows are nearly always seen ^{and therefore unable to go all the way up.} up to
the second line. He said that every afternoon between
five and six the Germans had been putting crapullots
into the first trench and it was then five o'clock. We
went over some very broken rocky ground between
lines of trenches until we came through a thin
fringe of trees on the edge of a cliff. A group of
brancardiers were having supper in the ruined
foundations of a farm house, making a great clatter
and laughing. The day before it had fairly rained
crapullots there at that hour. A young sergeant
came forward and led us around a pile of rock
to where a brass cylinder lay with its nose half
buried in the gravel - a crapullot that had fallen
that morning without exploding but which nevertheless

was receiving plenty of respect. Turning into a little cleft-like tunnel in a small fortification the sergeant showed me his trench-mortar, a small brown iron tube only about two feet long pitched at forty five degrees. He put a torpille in it - a smallish affair of a cylinder with a stem that went down the muzzle of the mortar leaving the big part with its charge of Lydite projecting outside. Three balancing wings sloped backwards. The projectile is fired with the explosion of a sack of powder in the mortar and bursts with a time fuse. It is even more effective than the more cumbersome crapauds of the Germans, but both are frightfully deadly. The range is only about 350 yards and they go rather indefinitely as to aim. But they can tear a trench to pieces if they fall in it. (The hand grenades are used by both sides, dozens of them being pitched over at once by squads. Many wounds are received by the men in practice, usually by holding the little iron ball too long after hitting the igniting spring. We heard these going off in the trenches at Patte d'Oie.) On my way down the hill to Montauville I passed unknowingly alongside a battery of "soixante quinze" in a little grove. With the suddenness of a lightning bolt a piece

cracked, the concussion beating against the air like a physical blow, the departing shell whining like a gigantic golf-ball. Again and again the pink flash spat out from the trees, and the helmeted soldiers flooding up the hill to their right in the trenches nodded and said "Ca va!" They love the 75's. That night I got another call to the auberge - another mitrailleused foire. But not seriously wounded. I got him to Belleville comfortably and then jogged back to Les Glycines in the moonlight, meeting only the sentries at the cantonnement limits and passing them with the word "Ambulance!"

Written at Eppecourt, Sept. 29, 1916.

The next day I returned to Dieulouard. There I heard of the interrupted bathing party. It was a habit of some of the boys to go for an afternoon swim in the Ruesselle. This time they had hardly got into the waters with their customary disregard for style in bathing costumes when a Boche plane appeared almost over them. The French 75's promptly let go and spent shrapnel balls fell flopping into the waters. Everybody took to the bushes and for a few minutes it looked like a Bacchic revel. On the following day after changing my mufflers which had blown off and made odd 127 sound like a charging mitrailleuse I walked up alone

on the Bois la Coute and sat on the edge of the high rock that overhangs the valley there. I could look far down the Moselle valley past the hill of Mousson towards Metz, the river as glinting ribbon of silver under the oaks on the banks, the hills all marked in squares of green and brown with the little brown towns appearing and fading as the cloud shadows passed. Along the white road below me artillery trains and victualling convoys passed, and wellies ranged the hillside whistling to big ~~minigun~~ trench-dogs. I could look into the German territory. Just now the line runs from the coast near Dunquerque, where the English troops are gaining ground, across France along the Somme and through Champagne into the Argonne forest. There the line forms the famous Verdun salient, bending southeast at the famous fortress down to St. Michel, held by the Germans, thence northeast again to Pont a Mousson, and then taking a southeasterly course through part of Germany to the Swiss borders. This is the so-called western front which has suffered little change since the armies dug themselves in after the battle of the Marne. After the three oncoming German armies, crushing their way to Paris through Belgium, Luxembourg and western France, were hurled back in September, 1914, there was a continuation of the subjugation of Belgium.

The English tried an unsuccessful drive. There was deadly fighting in the Argonne, and terrific slaughters in the Bois le Pretre in 1915. Little advantage was gained by either side. The greatest activity centred in the east - the Russian retreat and recovery, the English checks ^{and counter checks} in the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia and Egypt, the landing of the allies at Salonika and the entry of Italy into the war. Suddenly in February ¹⁹¹⁶ the Germans threw their hosts against Verdun. For eight months the greatest battle of the world has raged there. And in midsummer came the splendid drive of the English planned by their dead Kitchener, and a few weeks later the whirlwind onslaught of the French at the Somme. So the war stands today. That night I slept in my clothes in the cantonment on night duty - but I might have been comfortably at home under the carpenter's roof, for no calls came.

Written at Eppecourt, Sept. 30, 1916

Next day was a quiet one - that is so far as work was concerned only, for it was rarely quiet in Deulouard with the thumping of the guns forever sounding just over the Forêt de Puvelliers or borne from some more distant point in the lines by the wind or cloud-echo. Sometimes we thought we could hear the big shells at Verdun. There are two places of gun-fire - one the "clefart," the discharge

of the propelling charge, - the other the "arrivé" the explosion of the shell itself. Then ^{too} there is the whistle of the shell in the air. The sound of the different explosives is easily distinguishable to a trained ear. Artillerymen can tell the size of the gun by the sound - the 75, 90, 120, 155, 220, 380, 400, and even bigger guns. The Germans and Austrians have sizes approximately the same as these. Of course we hear 75's the most. These have a quick detonation. The bigger ones roar. The rifle gives a sharp crack. The mitrailleuse in the distance sounds like a one cylinder motor boat. Grenades go off like flocks of giant fire-crackers. But a crapinlet sounds as though the world had blown up. Of course the range of the big guns is almost unbelievable, 25 miles and more; and the big "obus" (shells) weigh over a ton and are as tall as a man. I am told, though I never have seen one. Just below the rock of the Bois de Cinte a big emplacement is being built for a huge marine gun that can batter Metz, but no one is allowed near. It is difficult to see such things. One day on a walk to Jézauville I was turned back by a sentry and not allowed to see even hand grenade practice. Some of the boys buy souvenirs grenades and shells

from the soldiers, and there is always the unhappy possibility that they may still be loaded. We have ousted several from the cantonment. Next day I was on Belleville duty and missed the visit of John Marefield, the poet. He spent the night at Pont a Mousson, and the Boches entertained him with a bombardment, dropping in about two hundred shells. He spent the greater part of his time in the abri of Les glyceres. On a Sunday following, Bonant, Tison, Brakeband Clark and I walked to Jurecourt along the road with the old bombardment signs - "Route Marmitee - etc." giving minute directions as to walking in groups and the distance to be kept between vehicles. We passed through hop fields with their forests of poles into the little village, and there saw old Garby, our general of division, standing in the street hearing the plaints of the soldiers that flocked about him. On the way home we counted four sauciere balloons over the lines, probably getting artillery ranges. On Monday I heard my first real military music. A regimental band marched through, married with trumpeters and drummers - all brassardiers. At a signal the trumpeters held their tasseled trumpets above their heads, whirled them, and then blew a call.

The drums rolled, and then all the brass crashed into a march. It seemed too bad that music no longer has a place in war. I needed cheering up. I had just suffered the ignominy of carrying a case of mumps to Belleville and poor old 127 was sealed up with a disinfecting fume going in her. We were all growing restless with the inactivity. Rumors came now and then of a possible change - the Somme, Champagne - or even Salonique. No one knew, and we had settled into gloomy resignation when one night Hill suddenly issued orders to pack up. The whole section was going to Berrailles. Next morning, September 20, we were up early, strapping blanket rolls, stuffing rucksacks and loading our cars with all the supplies of the section. One carried tires, another meat. I had the office records, the canteen and maps. At breakfast Hill assigned us our places by number in the convoy line. The "Lieut" was to dash ahead in his Berlet arranging for meals, Hill was to lead us in his staff car. We ambulances were to follow at intervals of 30 metres, followed by the tool car, and lastly Fenton driving the Hotchkiss repair car. The ravitaillement camion was to lumber along as best it could. By eleven o'clock we were lined up with most of Deulouard looking on, when

up dashed a military limousine. out of it climbed old
Gorby in his muddy Polish overcoat, old cap and
cartouche belt, his little cuff stars alone showing
his general's rank. Calling us about him he started
to make a little farewell speech. His voice broke,
though, and he only said "Young men, I wish for my
sake you were not going. - Please think of me not as
your general but your friend - I was with you through
Verdun with me. - Now I want to shake hands
with each one of you." And with tears streaming
down his fine old face he passed in front of us
giving us each a ^{It made me wish I had been at Verdun when he touched me.} hand clasp. We stood at salute
as he drove away. With him on the front seat was
a Russian who had just escaped from the Germans.
Two blasts of whistles gave the signal to crank
up, one to start, and we were off. We wound away
through Toul and its forts, up hills and down by
little streams, through villages where the people
rushed out to see the show. - all afternoon until
we rolled into Bitry le Francois. It was an unusual
sight - that long string of gray cars - especially on
the reverse curves of hills where you could see
the line of red crosses in front of you and behind
you as you made the turn. At Bitry we found three

rooms available, so most of us slept in our cars, - and it wasn't such bad sleeping at that, even though the neighbors were unduly inquisitive. I understood Dr. Cobb's remark as to having "no more privacy than a gold-fish". Left morning at five-thirty we were up, dressing in the street - such as we did - and off we strung again breakfastless. When one man fell out Fenton rescued him, and we stopped occasionally to make a fool. We were following the battle line of the Maine, and the rising sun-rays fell on the little flags in the fields, set upon groups of graves with wooden crosses. At Fere Champenois we had coffee, and at Tournay we had luncheon, eating like wolves. It was a wonderful ride, and I often looked away from Jackson's car rolling ahead of me to the fleeting panorama of grain fields and bulging stacks, white walled houses with high-pitched red-tiled roofs all moss-grown, and distant sweep of hill and forest. Often we ran through old mediaeval gates and down long avenues of trees, passing teams of sturdy Norman horses and herds of cattle tended by old women. Farm buildings like fortresses built around wide courts stood close by the road. And

everywhere were soldiers. We passed stolid Boche
prisoners working in the fields in vigorless caps with
red bands, green uniforms, and knee boots. They
stared at us and so did their French sentry standing
guard among the sheaves with bayonet fixed. In the
middle of the afternoon we hit cobbled pavement.
We skirted the southern limits of Paris, past
huge hangars of various colors that could have
housed thousands of aeroplanes, and at half past
four pulled into Versailles. We stopped in the street
while Hill and the Lieut. went ahead. In an hour
they returned. "Sleep tonight at Rue Raynouard! The
section goes to Solonigae!" That night I was back
in the chateau ^{at Paris} having left 127 at the Parc after swinging
past the palace at Versailles and through a vast array
of giant ^{new} ambulances there. They looked like giants beside
our little Fords. But those little Fords were veterans,
home from the Vosges and Verdun.

¹²⁷ Written at Eiffel tower - Oct. 2, 1916.

Next morning we went to the Parc (Belluier's) where we
had left the cars. Some were driven back to the wood of
the Parry chateau, but poor old 127 went to the grave-
yard. Poor old boat! I hated to give her up. That
afternoon I did some shopping, and in the evening

Clarke, Hollister and I went into a vaudeville at the Alhambra. Everyone during the day had been all excitement over the plans. It was of course a compliment to the section, ^{for it} to be chosen for the foreign service; but it meant a reenlistment for six months from the landing at Salonique, with probably a five weeks' voyage and no chance of returning. Before the end of the term, no matter what the necessity might be. I wanted to go, for I hated to leave Section 3, and the experience of a foreign campaign would have been different from anything else in the war. But I could not think of cutting myself off from you youngsters. That was my real reason for telling Hell I could not go. I must be where I can get to you. I can do that now - and the thought helps, - just how much I don't believe you'll ever know, kiddies! Besides, I didn't come here for just excitement alone. It would have been absolutely without justification to have done that; and since I'm here on the western front I shan't lack occupation. But I should have liked to go with the sections, just the same. — On Sunday I got my kit in order. (it seems to need constant overhauling) - for I knew I shouldn't be idle long in Paris. In the afternoon I

had tea with my old friend, Mrs. Morris, and spent a very pleasant hour chatting over old days. Next morning several of us went to Kellner's to get some of the new cars for the Salonique expedition. We had hardly reached there when the news came of the death of one of the men in Section 4 the night before - Kelly, the newest member of the Ambulance, killed by an shell near Verdun. Sanders, with him on the car, was reported dying. It was pretty sobering - that sudden death. Poor fellow, he had been in the field just six days! The second man in all the Corps to go - following Richard Hall, dead in the Dardanelles. When we got back to Passy Galathie making my orders - to join Section 4 next day. I hurried into Paris for more money and a good meal, Watkins joining me. Next morning early we were on the train bound for Bar le Due - Watkins, Tison, and I - three of us who could not go to Salonique and were now scattering to different sections. It was just a month to the day, the 26th, since I went over the same road to join 3. At Bar le Due Tison and I said good-bye to Watkins who continued on to Nancy. At the station we met men from Sections 1 and 2. They had just seen poor Kelly buried and were

very sober. While they had lunch Tison and I poked about the town. It bore marks of aerial bombardment, especially about the station. Saying good-bye to Tison I joined a man from 2 who was to drop me at Effecourt, and we took his chief's car out from Bar upon the famous road to Verdun. Wide, white and dusty it rolled before us off through the bare hills. It was this new highway, and the army of camions that sped over it, that held the great fortress safe all through these months since February while the German Crown Prince hurled his soldiers by the thousands against it unavailingly. Every approach by railroad was cut off. But the ravitaillement went up to the city daily. When I saw it the great macadam road was almost empty. Verdun will never fall. My pilot was a speed-friend and our little car swerved and leaped. We turned off to the left from the Verdun road. Suddenly we flashed through the husk of a bombarded village - razed walls and rubbish heaps. Off to the west a series of low wooded slopes lay hazy in the afternoon sunlight - the forest of the Argonne. While I looked a column of black smoke shot up - a mine! - so far away we could not even hear

it! On we flew. Another shattered village - Iffecourt. We came to a little hollow in a green hillside, turned through a rustic gateway, and stopped in the camp of Section 4.

Written at Iffecourt, Oct. 3, 1916.

It was a strange place - that camp. Running along the hillside and built against it was a wattle-work structure built in two terraces, ^{the lower} about a hundred yards long. Wattle doors opened every few feet upon the terraces. Down below on a parking space of crushed stone the ambulances stretched in a long line with the regulations tool cars, Hotchkiss, and camionette. A half completed wattle shed served as garage. At the far end of the lower terrace the kitchen sent up its smoke. Blankets were hung on the terrace-railing, running. Men were working about the cars or loafing in and out of the wattle rooms. The whole affair had been built some time before by Boche prisoners. Three men are billeted to each room. I went in with Russell and Osterheimers, taking Sanders' place. I found the little cubby cozily fitted up with three iron camp beds, rough tables, bookracks, shelves and lanterns. The floor was earth partly covered with crushed stone, and cape tents were stretched over the

long walls and roof over our door was marked a cow
skull. Our neighbors on the right bears the sign
"Tumble Inn". Balancing this apartment is another
marked "All In". I met Ware, the sous chef and was
introduced to the men in camp at the time. Others
returned from runs in time for dinner, served off
a table of undressed boarding in a larger wattle
room in the dim light of two small lamps. The food
was excellent. The Lieut. - Turbushan - a middle aged
man, ate at a small table with Perry (chef de la
section), the marshal de logis and the clerk - a subtle
distinction somewhat difficult to define. The talk was
all of Kelly and Saunders. Kelly had been buried that
afternoon at the little village of Blercourt. After dinner
Wallace, one of the oldest men, took me into Tumble Inn
and read me his diary entry telling the story of Kelly's
death. Saunders and Kelly as orderly had the main
assignment on Sunday night. It is a poste de secours
in a bombarded village very near Verdun. Their car
had just reached the first barrier of the village in total
darkness when a high explosive shell hit right in
front of it. The shell struck the car - (I had just seen
it in the garage) - piercing the radiator and fenders,
shattering the wheel and tearing a hole in the front of

the ambulance-body. Kelly was instantly killed, his head
blown to pieces. Sanders too was struck in the head.
The car hit the barriers. Sanders tried to get to the abri
but fell. His cry for help brought the Brancardiers, who
took him into another abri. Gooch, on duty at the
porte de secours, left his abri, facing more shell-
fire and also mitrailleuse which the Boche had
opened at the sound of Sanders' cries, and brought in
Kelly's body with the help of what few Brancardiers
dared go with him. Later he brought Kelly's body and
Sanders, desperately wounded, back to the hospital
near here. Kelly was buried with honor, his croix de
guerre being carried to his grave. Sanders happily
will recover. He has been moved to Devilly. of course
there was a feeling of deep sadness through the section,
but I found the men very cordial and ready to
make me feel at home. There are several men older
than I, and also many younger men, who have
come out since I joined the field, so I do not feel
conspicuous and hope to slide into my place
quietly. I immediately got on excellent terms with
my "Gunkies" in a defensive alliance against the
other denizens of our "wicking". I had hardly rolled
up in Sanders' bed when a great squeaking and rustling

began in the twigs of the wall, soon followed by swift
scurrying over the floor. Finally a large rat ran right
over me on the bed. - *C'est la guerre!* - Next morning
I got comfortable, and in the afternoon joined Allen
as his orderly on his afternoon excursion service
at Clair Chene. We took a long run to Sadelancourt
and Ramfont, beyond which the hospital lies - a
group of long sheds on a hillside. From Iffecourt
Section 4 works the Verdun sector on the left (west)
bank of the Meuse. The "rolls" are exceptionally long,
often picket duty of 12 to 24 hours. This day we
went over excellent macadam roads through a war-
country with scenes wholly new to me. I no longer
saw the sweet green hills of the Moselle valley. Instead
the hills were almost barren - twodens bare and
brown by the passing of massed troops. Long trains
of cavalry horses could be seen winding over them.
Whole regiments were on the march. Artillery trains of
extraordinary length almost blocked the roads. Boche
prisoners labored on the macadam. Black Senegalese
squatting beside the road in blue uniforms, with burrwool
and turban, cracking stones. Hospitals spread their
buildings in neat compounds right in ploughed fields.
Bast munition depots and aviation hangars could

be seen. Nearly every building was of wood. In the villages nearly all stone structures had fallen under the rain of shell fire. Roofs were smeared with blotchy coloring, and the huge ^(many carrying beef) cannons and commandeered Paris curreys had been similarly painted for concealment and disguise. Gun fire was only a distant grumbling, but avions purred overhead unceasingly. Now and then a bugle sang out. All was constant movement - lines of blue moving on fields of brown - war, grim, calculated, relentless! Allen and I made repeated trips between Hospital 15/8 (Clair Chene) ^{at Bannont} and H.O.E. (Hospital d'Observation et d'Evacuation) at Badelancourt, carrying loads of maladers. Allen is a robust youngster, the "lad" who so astonished Will Brown, and figures prominently in his recent article in the Saturday Evening Post. At dinner that night I had car 184 assigned me. We also heard the good news that Sanders would recover and that day had received the medaille militaire - the highest honor of a French soldier. Much to my gratification Eric Fowler came in from duty that evening - dirty and happy. I was awfully glad to see him again. The next day was a drizzly one.

and our wattle work leaked. However, I was busy that day grooming my cars and next day too - under the direction of Trubham, our new mechanic and my old section-mate in 3. We had plenty to do - putting in a new spring and wheel-bearing and scraping carbons. The engine has good power and the car is in better shape and a later model than old 127. Furthermore a brancardier cleans the body daily - protecting us from much of the exposure to infection from our blerries ("birds" we call them).

On Saturday I was posted for afternoon duty at 15/8. The mud was knee-deep, and I churned about from one group of buildings to another transporting my section passengers. On Sunday,

I got the night duty at Clair Chene (15/8). I spent the night on a cot in the stuffy "salle d'attente" waiting hall. Sleepy orderlies by morning on brancards. Now and then soldiers in marching kit came chumping in. At three I was called by Russell, in from a poste with a load of birds. The men were ticketed (one was inoculated) and I loaded them in and ran down to the I. O. E. Yesterday, Monday, I was assigned as orderly to Davis on the Marre run. We left in a driving rain, in rubber

coats and cargues. We carried no lights and it was growing dark as we turned off the great Verdun road and climbed up among the hills. We rolled into Flommereville and joined our two picket cars there while we looked on ravitaillement for Marre at the door of the sand-bagged abri. Then on we went in the dark towards the Mort Homme ^{hill}. Guns flashed and the reflection played on the clouds like an aurora. Fuses flared. Batteries crashed now and again about us, answered by some heavy piece beyond the Meuse. We climbed behind Fort Charny that overhangs Verdun but we could not see the town in the engulfing black. The road was rough from previous shelling. At last we rounded Charny corner and sped on toward Marre paralleling the German lines by about 400 yards. I trilled my whistle very softly to warn straggling, lonely soldiers, Davis watching the roadway for shell holes as well as the faint ghostly light permitted. The French front trenches were only 50 yards away. Running so for several kilometers we felt buildings ahead. A wheel just grazed a fresh shell-hole. Then we entered Marre - midnight black - crawling through the narrow opening in the first barrier

where poor Kelly fell. Two more we passed. A clink of light showed. We turned and stopped at the abri, though I could see nothing. Dim forms appeared. We took out our provisions and followed the branchers down a flight of steps concealed behind a blanketed doorway. We were in the cellar - the abri - timbered and shored up heavily. Two adjutants and a sergeant were dining in the second little room. We joined them and had our canned supper. Soldiers and officers appeared now and then from dim passageways. Davis and I turned in on a bunk under shelves of bandages. Outside the batteries crashed. Then two shells fell in the street above us, splitting the air and jarring our walls. Toward midnight the firing died away. We waked several times, going up once and running the engine. No calls came in. An orderly wakened us at four thirty and we put on our coats and went up into the street. Dawn was just beginning faintly. Tom and blackened walls rose about us. The rain fell steadily. With two maladers aboard we started. An orderly sat beside me. I had come out with a lighted cigarette. As we got under way he motioned to me to hide it, pointing

significantly across the fields. "Les Boches!"
Further on a farm rose out of the ground by the
roadside. We stopped at a deep bog and took on
two more sick men who emerged from a sub-
terranean poste de secours. We sped along to
F-commerewille, reported there, and then by way
of Ramfont and Badelancourt, reached our
walled cantonment and breakfast.

There, buddies, we have caught up with the
story. I know I have said this crudely, writing
it in my ambulance, in the woods, in hay-loft,
in a chateau and lastly in my little hutches on
my trunk by the light of a stable lanterns. I'm
just talking to you as I write, just as I am
thinking of you and wanting you and - loving you

Iffecourt - October 6, 1916. I am beginning to get shaken
down into the work. Day before yesterday I got the night
assignment at Clair Cheu. It was a nasty night outside
with plaster mud knee-deep. I tried to write letters in
the salle d'attente, but the car from Hill 272 brought
in some maladers and I had to plough out. I unloaded
my birds at H.O.E. and returned to find my best
blanket missing. I stole about among the brancards,

and beds with my flash-light, hunting for the ^{the blanket} ~~miserable~~ among the smoring piles. But finally located ^{it} ~~it~~ tucked up as a portiere over one of the doctor's doors. Sweet are the users of adversity! Yesterday was a miserable drizzling day. I drove home at noon to a stopping camp and found myself billeted as Hausen's orderly on the special car. After dinner we left for Flommersville, turning off lights just beyond Blereaut. We passed several companies of troops silently marching up to the trenches - black moving shapes massed together in the night. At Flommersville we went deep into the abri. The mouldy smell there is sickening. I banged my casque repeatedly against iron beams. Boelling and Morris were on duty. We stood ready to relieve the pressure there, at Marre, or at Hill 272, but were not called. Instead everyone, including brancardiers, telephonist, medecins, and conducteurs turned in on blanketed brancards. I tried a bench for a time, but found dozing in a chair preferable and so spent the night. Wallace and Paul came in from 272 with a load, and toward morning Goveh and Trubham stepped in on the way from Marre. That let us out, so we scotched for home. I slept all morning after a soggy breakfast out of the fireless cooker kept in readiness

for the return of the night frowlers. This afternoon the
sunshine brought us out of our holes like toads after a
shower; and I improved the opportunity to sun my
clothes in an effort to get the tomb-like taint of the
abris off of them. I am first car on general call and am
now sitting on the job. We are rejoicing in the advent
of a new cook who so far has made good use of our
kitchenette - an admirably arranged affair that is a
trailer on the big white truck when we go on convoy.
It and the truck arrived only a few days ago. The
white will be very useful in carrying assis. It will
take eighteen and relieve the Fords of much evacuation
work. We now have an imposing array of motors
lined up - 22 Ford ambulances, 2 Ford tool cars, the
Hotchkiss repair car, the big camion, the white truck,
the kitchenette, the Ford staff car and the Lieut's car.
We are shy on ^{ambulance} drivers, but the place seems to swarm
with French soldiers billeted as kitchen help, brigadiers,
and telephonists. There is the Lieut. himself; Delannoy, the
maréchal de logis; Delessert, the clerk; the brigadier in
charge of the auto supplies; Andre, the mechanic;
the Lieut's chauffeurs; three cooks; another brigadier; a brancardier
and another man in charge of the camion. A French
soldier's pay is five sous a day, and we receive the

same princely sums. In section 3 it was the custom to turn this in on our ravitaillement - regular rations supplemented by the Ambulance. Here in 4 the boys go for theirs with infinite promptitude and spend their monthly 7 francs and a half in riotous living on chocolate and Petit Beurre biscuits.

Affecourt. - October 11, 1916. After writing this last entry I was just about to turn in when a call came for the first car out. Bigelow had broken down on the way to Marre. So I rolled out for Flommereville to take the place of the supplementary car which had gone on to replace Bigelow. I met him returning with a cracked wheel. There was considerable traffic on the roads - ravitaillement camions, some 75's, and several companies of infantry. After passing through the ammunition camp with its great stacks of shells I dipped down the hill around the Frana farm and into the open stretch of hills where the fusere's first show. There seemed to be more than the usual amount of derultory firing. As I swung around the last corner and took the bit of road to Flommereville I met a body of infantry. They gave me the road. Just as I passed them a shell burst in the field alongside us with a deafening crash. (I saw the hole next morning.) I parked in front of the

abri in Frommerville and joined the group about the
littered table in the smelly place. Soon I made up my bed
on the floor between two of the crowded rows of cypress
posts and got a good sleep. Returning ^{to the camp} next morning
with Dell, who had gone out as Bigelow's orderly, I
found myself posted as regular picket for that day
at Frommerville. I had just time to fill up my car
and go back to my old haunt - this time for twenty-
four hours. The weather was abominable - thin misty
rains drizzling from a lead colored sky and grey liquid
mud squirting from the wheels. Even the loathsome
abri was preferable to the car. I found the same
old group - the clerk and the telephonist under the
flickering electric light, and Russell who was to share
my watch. This time I made a narrow bed on a
table above the cat gone. Drifting braucardiers came
and went, and occasionally a medecin looked in.
Now and then the telephone jingled fitfully. A yellow
cur dog went sniffing about the shadowy corners. At
dusk Russell and I splashed up a stinking alleyway
to a room in a cottage where the sour officers were
at table. We had an excellent dinner, though the
excitability of our companions and their volubility
made it anything but a peaceful meal. Nearly all were

adjutants - a rank unknown in America - and served as medical workers. One little chap - Goyard - was medecin auxiliaire. He spoke excellent English. As usual, no napkins were supplied, and there was a great deal of frank cleaning of plates with bits of bread between courses. Trough bunkers were built against the walls; surgical dressings in meat rollers were heaped up with reserve bits, - casseres and eggings, strings of dried vegetables hung from the smoked ceiling over the wall ovens. The soldiers cook, bobbing in and out from his kitchen, joined freely in the Babel of talk, serving crisp fried potatoes from the platters with his stubby fingers. That evening Gorch and Bigelow joined us with the supplementary cars, and later the crews of the mine and keel cars looked us on their way to their ports. With a final look at the three little Fords standing alone in the grim blackness of the deserted street we all turned in. Next day dragged along wearily without a single call. I went out between drizzles and walked up to the church that stands on a little rise of ground on the edge of the village. Old tombstones cluster close against the grey stone walls, but in a new square of ground new graves have been made - long rows of freshly turned earth, each marked with the symbolic cross of

wood, and hung with an ornate wreath of hideous glass
beadwork, marked "From the Colonel and Officers of
Such and Such Regiment". The sight inside the church
is sad and even terrible. A shell has torn a gaping
hole in the roof of the nave through which shattered
timbers hang, dripping moisture upon the pews and
rotted floor. Broken plaster is strewn everywhere
from the wrecked altar to the porch, nearly every
window is broken except one - some of are listening
to the angels' voices. While I stood there the jar of a
big gun in the distance loosened still more of the
plastering which fell in little jets of dust. The rest
of the day I loitered in and out of the rooms of the
forte through which the abri opens on the street.

Soldiers came and went or huddled miserably in
their sodden clothes about the tiny stove. Some came
for treatment and stood about half dressed while the
medecins poked and prodded. One half naked fellow
lay stretched on his stomach on a braceboard while
the red whiskered attendant "cuffed" him. It was
rather a hideous sight. A bit of alcohol-soaked cotton
was dropped into a glass bulb and lighted, and the
bulb then clapped on the bare flesh. The cotton burnt
with a puff, creating a vacuum, and the red flesh

popped up like a bubble into the bulb, holding it there. Nearly a dozen of these bee-like affairs were stuck on the poor devil. Finally our two relief cars arrived and we jogged home at four o'clock.

Our work on this sector covers a wide area. The two advanced posts are Marre and the famous Hill 272. A car carrying two men is at each of these every night, going up by way of Flommereville. Two picquet cars with one man each are on duty at Flommereville for 24 hours. A supplementary car with two men stays every night at Flommereville to replace any of these four. From these posts the wounded or sick are carried to Hospital 15/8 (Dunize hut) where they are "sorted" and assigned to the various line hospitals. One car stands watch at 15/8 all night, one all day, and a third all afternoon, doing evacuation work, usually to the big H.O.C. at Badelancourt. Three cars are also on call at camp. The runs are very long, from 30 to 40 kilometers, and nearly all are made at night. Section 4 has been on this work for four months. Before that they were at Toul. It is a younger section than 1, 2, or 3, having been out only since November, 1915; but its work in this Verdun fight has been without let-up. Leaving Paris in late November they did evacuation work for several weeks at

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Bancoulours, going from there to Toul at about the first of 1916. Perry was made chef de la section in March. On June 11th the section camped in Dippcourt with the 64th division of the 31st corps of the 2nd armée. For a while at the beginning of the work the 65th replaced the 64th division en repos. Since the organization of Sec. 4, two new sections, 8 and 9, have been recruited and put in the field. Daily things happen in camp to keep up new interest. One day poor Kelly's carque was brought in, pierced through - a ghastly relic. Another day at Luncheon Perry opened a letter and read aloud Dele's citations for bravery in volunteering to make the run from Frommerville to Marre in daylight. He did it and brought back a dangerously wounded sergeant, winning the Croix de guerre. One morning just after breakfast an ear-splitting fusillade brought us running out upon the terrace. For a few minutes we thought a new battery had been installed on the hill facing us, but we discovered it was a group of poilus engaging in grenade practice. That afternoon Tinkham and I went up to investigate. We found a section of zig-zag trenches and bayonet in the field and beyond these shallow ditches dug to represent enemy trenches. The ground was pitted with holes about the size of a hat and fragments of iron clad were strewn about. Today I stole up again during

practice. The men would be handed grenades and would then go down into the trenches. At a signal from the officers standing at one side the grenades were struck against rocks. You could hear the sound of the pins driven home into the fulminate fuse. Then a shower of black objects like a low flight of birds would go skimming out. A second later the racking crash of irregular explosions would come and the air would fill with a huge spatter of éclats, covered instantly with thick white clouds of rolling smoke. The grenades are thrown with a stiff arm like a cricketer's bowling. They go off four seconds after the cap is struck. Dotted over the hill are crosses on graves of the battle of the Marne. The names are obliterated on nearly all. On the graves are laid bits of shell, empty cartridges, rotting cartridge boxes, parts of mess tins, and the little red kepis worn by the troops at that time. There is something very tragic about these nameless graves. At night as we look up through the little notch in the slope behind us the sky flickers like an aurora with the flash of gun-fire, and the air shakes with the cannonading over beyond Verdun. Night before last Perry and I took the turn at Hill 272. There was a nip in the air as we rolled out through Affecourt.

The road shone white in the moonlight. As we neared
Rampont a winking light shined in the sky over the
woods on the hill behind Clair Chene, and we made out
the shadowy form of the saucisse balloon. We passed the
usual strings of camions and marching troops and
once passed a string of big guns hauled by motors,
their wicked muzzles hooded and pointing skyward.
They were smeared with paint to ~~match~~ the coloring
of the ground and trees. One bore the name "La Brute".
We stopped at Frommerville and looked in on the boys
in the abri and then turned off toward the lines. It had
darkened and the road was slippery with mud. For a
while we climbed low rolling hills. Then dimly about
us we saw the jagged outlines of trenches. Low doorways
overland with logs marked a battery site close beside
the road - and others, narrower, led down into abris,
black holes ^{outlined} against the dark ground. Sometimes we
passed a dozen of these in a group. Frayed burlap
screens stretched alongside. We passed through the
empty street of Bethelaville, turning sharply through
a black alley into the countryside again. We climbed
through Signyville, - blasted and shattered into a
veritable Pompeii. On we went into the bleak bare
hills, always climbing. More forbidding timbered

doorways, heaped about with stones, exhaling a dank
odor and half sunk in the earth, appeared - like a village
of gnomes. All about the road and eating into it
were shell holes, so thick that the ground looked pock-
marked. All about the amphitheatre of hills sweeping
around to the Mont Homme the guns flashed and
roared. Star bombs flared and floated. We passed a
cross-roads, a crucifix starkly outlined in the moon-
light. Beyond it we met a train of mitrailleuses.
The leading mule took fright at our car, backed
and plunged and swung sharply about overturning
the caissons and seemingly crushing the two men
under it. By the time I could get to it the men were
up and righting it and calling the frightened beast
"Un espee de vache!" - which is very awful cursing.
We got under way again. Under the moonlit cloud-
ranch the hills spread indistinctly. The place was
desolation itself, and loneliness - a Lear's heath -
ghostly, terrifying. Perry stopped the car near the top
of a rise and turned. "Here is the poste!" he said.
As we stepped out upon the road the screams of
an onrushing shell suddenly halted us. It lasted
only a second or two, but it seemed an eternity
before we heard the swish of it high over us.

Then it burst over the hill beyond, the cloud of the
shrapnel smoke hanging for a moment motionless
in the air. Another followed it and we made for a
bogyaw in the new earth of the little hillside by the road.
A moment later we were in the abri of the post - a
big cylinders of ribbed steel about eight feet in
diameters, divided by a wooden partition. Passing a
solitary branchardier in the outer compartment we
entered the miners cubby, where four non-coms were
seated at a table reaching by the white light of a tiny
acetylene lamp. It looked like the interior of a sub-
marine. We sat on little benches for a while until the
air became unbearable and then went out to the car
for crackers and coffee from the thermos bottle. Going
back inside Perry crawled into the board bunk and I
tried to read. But I was soon outside again, for I
had a desire to see what it felt like to be alone on that
great battle-field. The air was faintly luminous - a
bluish gray. The lines of the hills stretched away
dimly. Star bombs rose over the trenches - those of
the Germans flaring suddenly in an arc and dying,
the French ones dropping from a curve of sparks and
floating. Red spurts of flame stabbed the dark
as shrapnel burst - and afterwards you heard the

boom of the discharge, the whistle of the shell, and then the crash of the explosion. The air was full of whining sounds and rushing noises as the great projectiles passed overhead. Over on the Mort /omme big pieces roared. And then behind me a battery of 75's fired — one, two, three, four, five — like some hellish time-piece. At three o'clock the brancardiers came back from the trenches empty handed. (If they have wounded, they usually bring them on little two-wheeled ^{Rappel-} carts.) We were free to go and so we started, our only passenger a brancardier with a superficial wound. He convulsed his companions by insisting on carrying an umbrella. At Fromereville we picked up a sad little invalid and then hurried on to Clair Chene. There the sleepy attendants gave us two more "binders" all slight cases — and we went on to the Surgical Hospital and the H. O. E. At each place it is always the same procedure. "What have you, messieurs?" "Two assis - blessés" — or whatever your passengers may be. And then the back doors of the ambulance are opened and the tail board with its little step lowered, and your men come shambling out, ducking under the low roof. Then there is much agitation over gathering up each man's

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"affairs" - his dented casque, sack, odds and ends of mess tins, and lastly his Lebel rifle and cartridge belt. There is always much caked mud left behind and an assortment of cigarette butts and pipe contents. The attendants consult the "fiche" tied to the man's coat, and he is rather hustled away. Usually though he stops to say "Au revoir" or "Bonne chance" to you. -

Poor, grateful, patient blessés! - When we passed the encampment of the Senegalese with their conical tents and left our last men at M.O.E. dawn was breaking, and we drove home to our wattle house through rosy mists that melted with the sunrise.

Today we have been working like beavers paving our terrace with crushed rock, for we feel sure that we shall be here well into the winter. We also got our sheep-skin coats. And so, kiddies, here we are again down to date. What will the end of it be, I wonder. Whatever happens, though, I shall always be glad that I came into this life of the Ambulance, here with these men and manly boys. It has taken me far away from you - and yet I know that when it's over and peace has come again, you and I will be the happier for it. Good night, my boys. God guard and keep you safe for me!

Sphecourt - Oct. 18, 1916. Last Thursday I went as Tricketts orderly on the supplementary cars at Fromereville. We drove in Kelly's car - the first time that it had been out since he was killed. The night passed without incident except for some small shelling by the Germans. Apparently all the shells fell beyond the Church. When we returned to camp next morning we found plans made for our going out to reposs the following day, that being the day that the 65th division would return and our division, the 64th, would go in reposs. Next day, Saturday, I had the all day shift at Clair Chene, going over in the early morning. I found the roads jammed with the transport trains of both divisions, going in opposite directions. At Rambout around the railroad yard there was a blockade nearly all day, camions loaded with troop equipment getting fouled by hay waggons, 75's and their camions, and little mitrailleuse. On both sides of the road camps were in process of making and unmaking. Long strings of artillery horses, two abreast, wound down to the streams and back. On a siding two gigantic guns stood, mounted on flat cars - 400's! They looked like huge chimney stacks set plant-wise. The muzzles were painted with the usual splashes of color, and later on in the day big tarpaulins

were drawn over both cars and guns, painted so cleverly that the whole affair looked like a golf-bunker. Infantry was on the move - thousands! I went up on the hill behind 15/8 hospital and looked over the little valley all alive with movement. On the hillside opposite the troops were marching in big banks of blue. From Blescourt to the railroad bridge and back in a reverse curve stretched a seemingly endless line of transport camions - all motors. The troops carried little beside their arms, their equipment having all gone forward on baggage vans.

I could not estimate the number of men, but there were certainly several thousand. Just as we went into the little cook tent for dinner the camions began loading. When we came out after our short meal the hill was bare of men and not a camion was in sight - all on their way out to the trench camps - a striking example of the mobility of the modern army. I understand that the French army unit is the infantry company of 250. Four companies make a battalion, and three battalions a regiment (3000 men). A brigade is composed of two regiments. A division consists usually of several infantry regiments (3 or more), a regiment of light artillery (12 batteries of 4 guns), some cavalry, a company of the genie (engineers).

(regimental brancardiers with each regimental unit) and a section of the service de route, - a total of from 25,000 to 30,000. The larger units are the corps and the armee. The officers are virtually the same as ours. The service de route is an organization in itself with its *medecin divisionnaire* and other officers working in conjunction with the military ^{groupe Brancardiers, Div. Divisionnaires, and groupe Brancardiers de Corps.}

All day as I ran with my loads to Balancourt and Julzeourt I encountered the same crowded activity on the roads. It seemed impossible to believe that so much activity could be caused only by a shift of divisions. There were rumors of a contemplated attack, but only rumors. At 14.0. E. I met an Englishman on a car from one of the English ambulance sections. He told me one of their cars had been smashed by a shell the night before near Verdun. Late in the afternoon a message came to return to camp and I got back to find everybody busily washing cars. We shall be in repos two days. The five already passed have been spent in repairing and painting the cars between gusts of rain. Everyone is clattering about in ^{and aprons} ~~salvages~~ drenched with gray paint and grease. Even our leisure-loving French contingent is busy, boarding up our dining rooms. When your car is painted you can spread rocks on the path. - Such is repos! -

At any rate we do not have to spend our nights in
abris. We are all preparing our hutchers for winter.
Some have even sported stoves, which will probably burn
us all in our beds some frosty night. We have given
up our case as hopeless, requisitioning Perry for
extra blankets instead. We have bent our energies to
the extermination of the rats. Last night we bagged
sevens. Bonne chance!

— Roster of Section 4. —

- Oliver Perry, Chef. - (Princeton)
- Richard Ware, Sous chef - (Harvard)
- [Signed] Hansen,
- Julius Allen. - (St. Paul)
- Wm. Stanley Dell. - (Princeton)
- [W. de F.] Bigelow. - (Harvard)
- Clifford Davis - (Harvard)
- William Wallace - (Columbia)
- William Russell - (Yale)
- Fred O. Ostheimers -
- R. B. Cummings - (Harvard)
- Lawrence Morris - (Yale)
- Joe Parrott - (Cambridge) arrived after I did
- Rogers Twitchell - (Harvard) arrived after I did
- Kimberly Stewart - (Tech.)

- *[H.D.] Jewett
- *[J.G.] Paul
- ✓ Eric Fowler (Princeton)
- *[R.K.] Gooch - (Virginia - Oxford)
- ✓ Douglas Bolling - (Virginia)
- ✓ Edward Trukham - (Cornell)
- *[M.D.] Thomas - (Oxford)
- *[W.C.] Harrington - (Harvard) - arrived after I did

*[First names/initials supplied by Ed. - WPD] 1986

Effecourt, Oct. 27, 1916. Last day of our repose! We are all
fainted and overhauled and ready to start work tomorrow.
The weather has laid several of us by the heels. I felt
particularly low for several days until preparations
were made to pack me off to the infirmary at Effecourt -
as barn - whereupon I rose as well man. Morris is
sojourning there, however, with the gripper. Last Sunday
we received a delegation from Paris delivering four
new cars to us. At least they are called new as a
matter of fact they are old ones rebuilt. One is "the
Indianapolis" - the ambulance which several of my
friends gave. I cherished a secret hope that it might
be assigned to me, especially as Arthur Grover was
a subscriber to the fund for it, but I am too new
in the section and so shall continue to navigate
"Geo. T. Vanderpool" who, by the way, is running like
a breeze and looks very natty in his new gray.
We call our cars by the names of their donors.
The other day Wallace made a rather startling
announcement to the effect that he had just given
Mrs. Mackay a bath. - C'est la guerre! -
Section 2 has been doing our work while we are
en repose. Last Monday there was some unusual
shelling in front of the poste at Frommerville.

The first shell is said to have killed two and wounded eight men in the street. The second hit a Section 2 car, seriously wounding the driver, Walker, in the thigh. He was hurried to a hospital and operated upon, but will probably be lame. I heard that a Norton ambulance also has been hit. Things are coming rather thick. The preparations that I saw on the road the other day were significant after all. Last Tuesday there was a tremendous attack by French artillery on Douaumont and Baux. All that morning we watched the aeroplanes. Once a Boche plane appeared and was driven off at once by the anti-aircraft guns. We did not hear the big firing - probably on account of the wind, but the reports say that nearly half the German batteries were silenced and that the French marched into Douaumont with shouldered rifles. This puts the Germans back almost where they were when they first began to attack Verdun - a splendid victory for the French, won ^{this time} apparently with very little loss. It is reported that 3500 prisoners were taken. Drovers of them are in detention camp at Souilly near here. A long procession of camions passed our camp that night.

taking them there, and detachments are still passing. Dell says he saw "Papa" Joffre going up to the front in his car before the attack. "On les aura" indeed, as the poilus say. Without doubt there will be a counter-attack, and we shall have our work cut out for us.

These last few days of repose have been rather galar ones, especially at meal times. Several of the fellows have driven in to Bar le Due ^{on different days} on various missions. They are always burdened with commissions for nearly everybody in camp and return with their cars full of purchases. Our canteen managers then looks like a bazaar with the wares spread out - sabots (now in great demand), biscuit tins, matches, underwear, ~~knives~~ cigarettes, hob nobs, - even stoves. There is always a great potter and a lot of complicated accounts and a general "rough-house." Yesterday Gooch and I took Ware to Bar le Due. During a lull in our frenzy of shopping we managed to get to the barbers and to the public bath. I felt like standing under the hot shower all afternoons in the tiled room and never invested seven sous to greater satisfaction. We also had two ambrosial repasts at the Cafe

vicars, having first got our permit for them from the commandant d'etapes. (There is rigid supervision of meal service to outsiders ^{from another place} in the war-zone.) I wished that I could have had time to look about the quaint town with its church overhanging it, its little squares in front of chateau-like buildings, and its shrine built in a tower ^{on} an old bridge over the rushing little river. It seemed strange to see a civilian population going about its business after our days in these shattered villages occupied by ^{practically} only the military. After a final raid on the patisserie shop for gateaux for the section we dined and then took the road for camp. It was raining coal and black clouds whirled across the frosty stars. The hills were black on each side of us as we whirled along the wide Berchem road, and gun flashes burst again and again in the darkness to the north. Perhaps the Boches were hitting back.

Today I have been a gentleman of leisure. Geo. P. Vanderpool is ready for service, so I have sat in my new arm chair, just imported for the purpose, in my Sheepskin and sabots, warm as toast, chinning with callers, scribbling, and watching the

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bury ones putting the final touches to their cars under Andre's direction and help. We had a marvel of a luncheon from Pablo, and kept the graphophone busy with every course celebrating the firing-up of our new stove. As the boys say, some repot!

Jubacourt, November 4, 1916. Repot ended October 28.

We were assigned to a new sector - the one immediately west of our old one - and loaned temporarily to the 15th Army Corps. Our main work is the poste at Genval, where the wounded are brought from the famous hills 304 and the Mont Homme. Our first day of work began in a confusion of arrangements. In the middle of the afternoon three cars went up. I went on the first as Allen's orderly. At Jubacourt we stopped for the ravitaillement for Genval under the direction of Camclaire the medecin chef of the G. B. D., commonly known as "Pouf! Pouf!" As we ground up the hill beyond the town the rain hit us in sheets, lashing the hooded poilus along the black road. Skirting a piece of wood we coasted down into Gomballe, a town partially bombarded but still ^{to a degree} busy. Passing through the rain-swept streets we took the road to Monzeville. Great shell craters appeared, the largest that I had seen, as symmetrically round as though

dig by hand. We crossed the wooded ridge of the Bois de
Bethelainville with its muddy poste. Below lay Monzeville
in ruins. A rift in the clouds to the west let through a
sulphur-colored light upon the battered walls. Out beyond
we came into that desolate heath that I had seen on the
night of my watch at Hill 272. The road stretched ahead
like a river of yellow mud, flanked by the trunks of
rotted trees, felled before a shell might toss them into
the road. The sodden bare hills stretched away on both
sides, dum colored and lifeless. Formless mounds of
raw earth showed here and there - probably abandoned
battery sites. To our right we saw the gaunt lines of the
Calvary on our old road to 272. Only a solitary figure
in French blue on the road ahead was to be seen. We
turned a corner where gnarled and twisted trunks of
trees lifted black limbs. It was like a Dore picture
of the Inferno. Ahead in the dim dusk a blasted heap
of stones appeared - faint skyline showing the shape of the
Battle hills beyond. We came to what had been a street
now a jagged pathway between heaps of crumbled
plaster, tiles and scorched timbers - Eeew! Not a
light showed. Rats ran squeaking in fright across the
road. Then a battery crashed just above us - a dozen times
and on the slope of the nearer hill the pink spurts of

the flame of the shrapnel burst. We turned a corner in the gigantic rubbish heap up a black path barely wide enough to take our cars and stopped in the courtyard of what had once been the chateau - now a jagged, shell-torn wreck. Night had fallen. A ruddy glimmer of light came from a corner where food was cooking. Dim forms came and went in the half-light and chattered about the cars. The rain poured. Then up from a black doorway they brought our wounded - three couchés. One poor devil groaned horribly. From around the corner toward the grim hills more stretchers were borne in - fresh wounded arriving. Hansen's car rolls in. We have more than we can carry and another car is sent for. Then we start back. The batteries are bellowing on the hill behind us. Over the trenches our own left the fuses flare. Ahead toward Verdun a red rocket soars up - a battery signal. We feel our way along in low gear, for the wounded man inside on his stretchers screams at every jolt. It is just possible to feel the road - not to see it - in the pitch blackness. There is a jingle of harness and a rumble ahead, and we are instantly alongside a virtual long-train of waggons. A clear space for a moment - How the fellow groans!

Then big formless shapes bulk up like mammoths -
the camions. The little brancardiers sitting outside on
the tool box screams "a droite!" We are by, just
grazing them. Then suddenly we are surrounded by
queer fantastic little shapes - dozens of them, flexing
along or blocking our way - the little donkeys with
their pack saddles, on their way up to the trenches -
into the trenches, in fact. A star bomb shows a
great herd of them. We get by somehow and into
Monzeville. We stop and stumble dropping into the sand-
bagged underground poste to report. Then on we go. - on
and up into the woods of Bethlanville. Inky black!
I have my pocket lamp. Allen calls for it. It's
forbidden, but we can't see a foot ahead - and there
is something coming. The light snaps on and off like a
flame. A gun team is coming full at us. For a
second every detail of horses, harness, and wheels
stands out. "A droite!" Allen yells. The leaders
reverse away. There is another behind - and another -
a long line - and then the marching troops. We
catch flash-light glimpses of the dark forces under
the casque mists. Then come the camions again. The
rain is ^a driving deluge. The engine grinds up the
hill on low gear. It's darker than the pit. Something

whirls past in the camion line - one of our Fords
going up. Perry probably. Now we're slipping down
grade. We're out of the woods at last, but it's still
black. On we go through Dombasle and up the hill.
Our lamps are lighted now. A touring car comes
into the glare of them - standing by the roadside -
a familiaruddy face - Lereer's - peering out. It's
the Lieut's car en panne. He's gone ahead on foot.
We push on through Jubeceourt and into Belle
sur Courzaner. We reach the hospital sheds and
our blessés are taken out. We wait a few minutes
in the liquid mud conferring with the Beut, then
back we go to the woods again - to the Bois de
Bethlanville. Some limping poilus clamber in. We
race back to Dombasle, turn off to the left and
stop somewhere. We can hardly see. Under a
clump of gloomy pines is a house - or what was
a house. We grope through a black door. Back
in a smashed room with rain splashing through
the gaping cieling little Goyard is waiting with
a malade for us. It looks like the house of Asher.
Our route again to Belle sur Courzaner! There is
more work there than our cars on duty for the
night can handle. Pieds gelés! Rows of rocklans.

dejected soldiers sitting against the wall, their feet swathed in shapeless bandages. Trench feet - from standing day and night in freezing mud and water! We take a load to Fridors - one a black Senegalese. Then at eleven we roll into camp.

Next day just after sunrise I was off for Ravoye, crossing the fields with the golden rays slanting before me and lighting the autumn foliage on the hills. At the town I found the bureau of the service de santé and was politely asked to wait outside. While so doing I fell under suspicion of the police and the general curiosity of the populace, but braved the disapprobation of all concerned by eating my bread and cheese in the street while soldiers and civilians filed in and out of church. The impression in the minds of the 15th corps was evidently to the effect that the American Ambulance is a glorified taxi service, for my duties for the day consisted in joy riding a couple of rear-officers to Belle sur Bouzance. Later in the day a peremptory telephone call took me back to meet my two "birds" at the bridge. They failed to keep their rendezvous, however, and I went back without them, fervently hoping that they would have to

tramped home through the rivers of mud that streamed
between the scene of their Sunday sojourn and
Lavoie. Next day Russell and I got the Jubcourt
assignment. We went up to Bernes again in a
downpour and brought back a load of "trench feet"
to Bill and Courance. We dined that night at Jub-
court with our friends ^{the young-ones} of the Groupe Brancardiers
Divisionnaires, heretofore at Frognerville, and spent
the night in the "Infirmierie" in an antlight room
alongside a lot of Brancardiers who slept soundly
and stertorously in their berets. Trimbham took my
place on the regular four o'clock run to Bernes, ^{next morning} and
I tramped up and down in front of the G.B.D.
headquarters and heckled the gendarme in his sentry-
box curse the "sable temps". Russell and I after
rolling home in the "Indianapolis" spent the rest of
the day in fabricating a highly ornate door and
windows for the "Cuberge des Pates" - our cubby - our
sole implement being the cook's bucksaws. Russell's
architectural career will not be advanced by our
achievement, but we have succeeded in keeping
some air out and letting some light in. And
the Tete de Vache - the cow's skull over our door -
now marks the swankiest dwelling place in camp.

I had great luck next day. Russell, out of sorts with the performance of the Indianapolis, traded it for George P. Banderpool. I was delighted to get my home car, of course, and even burning out my defective brakes that very afternoon on evacuation work at Belle sur Courzanne could not mar my pleasure in my new acquisition. It happened when I was taking a very dignified medicine chef and a load of fresh geese to Fleury. Indianapolis rolled blithely along until sheer inertia stopped her. Luckily I got my poor birds safely unloaded and shipped my medicine chef home from Froidos in Parrot's car. I made my way gingerly back to Belle sur and telephoned for a relief car. Everyone was going in "pauze" it seemed - cars go out of commission sometimes in bunches during heavy work - so my mishap almost escaped notice. There was a great amount of aerial activity. While at Froidos I counted over twenty saucers strung out in a long line above the French lines and watched dozens of planes skimming around them. Today we heard that the fort of Saux was really taken yesterday without the loss of a single man. Next day Andre and I went to work on Indianapolis to get her running as well as she looks. She is

really a good looking car with the new style wooden body all enclosed, painted blue gray, and fitted with solid storm curtains, and metal shrapnel-shield. We interrupted our work long enough to inspect Allen's load of "graves bladders" which he brought into camp in the afternoon. He and Delannoy arrived in his new ambulance from Baubicourt. When the back curtain was lifted we inspected the passengers - two half grown pigs, very fat and stolid. They were at once christened "Auto" and "Fritz". Everyone helped construct the pen where they are now living royally under Rubio's care awaiting Thanksgiving and Christmas, their days of doom. Yesterday I went again with Russell to Jubicourt, but saw no more of war's alarms than could be seen from my seat at the G.B.D. table and my brace and overnight in the infirmerie. Today Andre almost finished Indianapolis, and she will probably "function" tomorrow. Today we said good-bye to Hansen. He is going to do work for the ambulance in Paris after nearly two years in the field. Wallace came back after several weeks sick leave in Paris, bald as a billiard ball from some strange infection. He has a weird egg like look.

Effecourt. November 5, 1916 - I have had rather an exciting time since my last entry. Last Sunday Andre reported Indianapolis in fine order and the Bulletin Board showed me as Carl at Jubecourt. I started out in the middle of the afternoon with Parrott as my orderly. We picked up the ravitaillement for Erners at Jubecourt - a cask of Pinard and two great sacks of bread and meat - and headed for Erners in the usual downpour of rain. On the hill beyond Brocourt the engine quit, but by coasting back to the bottom we were able to start her again and to reach the poste at Monzeville, picking up a medicin and his orderly on the way. There we found a large number of malades and slightly wounded, but had to make room for two medecins - the same of our existence at present. We had an excellent dinner at Jubecourt with our friends of the G. B. D. I made some slight adjustments on the crates and we took the road again for Erners, this time in a flood of bright moonlight. Stewart and Jewett were working the second car, evacuating the Boirde, Bethelainville, and had gone ahead. We met Allen, called from Jouy, with a load from Monzeville. We were all going full tilt. Returning with a full load we passed Stewart en panne with a broken feed-pipe. He was on his way to get another load from Erners. Telling

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him to telephone if he didn't get out of trouble we rolled on to Belle sur Curgance and checked in at the Infirmerie at Jubiac. No word came from Stewart and yet he failed at come in with his wounded. At half past one I roused the telephonist in his straw bed and had him call Erners. He lay half dozing with the receiver to his ear until the call came back. Stewart was on his way, but more men were still there for our early morning run. We took to our beds, getting two hours sleep before the brancardiers de garde came clumping in at four o'clock and woke us. We got under way at once. It was pitch black again. But we made good time through Donbas. Then Indianapolis went lame and I put in a fresh spark plug, groping about with wrench and pliers with the flash lamp under the hood, for we were in the Bois de Bethelaimville. There was the faintest glimmers of dawn as we pulled into Erners, but the trench rockets were still flaring. We took in four "arsars", and Lignac, a lieut. in the medical corps, came from a fall from his horse, got up beside me, Parrott perching on the running board. We went slowly out past the shattered walls, bumping over shell holes and once clear of the ruins picked up speed. Just out of Erners the road bends uphill for a short distance past a corner. From that point

to another corner beyond - about 500 yards - it is exposed to a raking fire from German Batteries on Hill 304 and the Mort Homme. At the first corner lies the wreck of a French ambulance, riddled by shrapnel. We were about one third of the way up this slope when the engine died. Parrott cranked away in vain. We could get only one sickly cough. We raised the hood and I went over my contacts. More cranking without result made us resort to pouring in more gas. I was just at the bedow box when a star shell flared up from the Mort Homme. Somehow it seemed unusually near and everything stood out with startling clearness. Our men shifted uneasily. Signac urged me to hurry. "A bad place," he kept saying. "The Boches can see us!" Then it came - the whistle of an arrive. The shell burst to the right above us, just off the road, - a flash of devilish red flame and a spatter of earth and stones. "They see us!" Signac repeated. "We must get out of this!" Just how we were to accomplish this desirable result he did not say. A mutterance crackled. We stood out on the order of our going. Parrott put his shoulder to the side of the car and we backed a little way down hill. The slope was too slight and the car stalled in the mud. I jumped out and pushed until

the sweat poured down my back. The car barely moved. I opened the ambulance and one of the men with a slight head wound got out and even made a game effort to help push while Lignac held the wheel. Foot by foot with every pound against the car we crawled backward. But the dawn had caught us, grey and badens but showing us plainly on the hillside. Some shells went overhead toward the French positions. At last when we could not have pushed another foot we reached the wrecked French ambulance. I sent Parrott hurrying to the post to telephone. It was only a ^{few} hundred yards or so to the edge of the town. I told the men they must walk back, and much to my relief I soon had the four poilus plodding back among the ruins. This still left Lignac to provide for, however. He could barely hobble and made pretty slow progress, limping along a few rods. Seeing that

he could not make it I ran after the poilus to the chateau and told the brancardiers ^{there} to go out for the lieutenant with a stretcher. I then started back to Lignac. By this time the machine guns were popping. I had never paid much attention to the sound of them before. They had always seemed of secondary importance to the shells. But this time as I went back among the

battered walls and crumbled chimneys the air was full of vicious little whetting sounds - half whine, half spit - and the thud of bullets striking earth and stone. It seemed to me as though I were in a line of direct fire and, kiddies, I'll own up to being scared more than I ever was before in my life. I felt prickles all over me. I must have looked pretty silly to anyone who saw me - though I think I had the place to myself. I remember ducking along past the open spaces in the walls, hanging on to my helmet and though I thought the wind would blow it off. I found Rigas hobbling along and told him to wait for the brancardiers. For some reason they did not come and I went back to hurry them up. Happily the mitrailleuse showers had stopped, for otherwise by that time I should have undoubtedly tried to stick my head ostrich-fashion in the mud. I found the men with the stretchers. They had gone up by the church for some strange reason. I got them started right and then rejoined the lieutenant. At last we got him on the brancard and carried him to the poste at the chateau. On the way I asked the brancardiers if they had heard the mitrailleuse. They said it came from the other side of 304, carrying over the trenches on the crest. At the poste

Parrott reported our men as none the worse for their jaunt and Stewart on the way to get them. He had also called the camp and reported us as being. We were smeared with mud and pretty well blown and were glad to go down in the abri for hot tea. Coming out we found a group of pickets indignantly discussing the fact that the Boches had fired on our ambulance. They insisted that the star bombs had shown us and that the shell was meant to get us, though I think it doubtful, as shells often fall near that corner. It was a generous place ^{large at the corner} enough. Through an archway we could see the clustered wooden crosses of the little cemetery. A grave was being filled and the priest was leaving, strangely garbed in his black cassock with trench boots and helmet. A bloody stretcher leaned against a wall and two gas masks, half trodden into the mud ^{at my feet}, had the semblance of hideous distorted faces. A drizzling rain fell. The broken shutters of the chateau banged in the wind. All about the batteries crashed and the shells whined away overhead speeding toward the German trenches. We sat on a kitchen table by the entrance to the abri and smoked a couple of pipes. I remember a queer little image of Charlemagne stuck up near us on another table had quite a friendly look. Very soon

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Stewart and Jewett rolled in and took our former passengers aboard. They were nearly out of gas and said they would drain my reservoir and also push my car off the road. Then they left. We waited a little longer to give the repair car time to come and then started out. Much to our surprise we found Andre already at work with Gooch alongside. They must have broken all records from Springfield. It was then eight o'clock. For two good hours we three stood helplessly about while Andre tried to inject life into poor old Indianapolis. I shall always admire Andre as the most thorough and painstaking of all mechanics, with deliberation as a strong asset. In fact I think I never saw that admirable trait so thoroughly developed. This thought grew upon me as the morning waned. It grew every minute. It grew particularly when the Boches began dropping shells over 304. We had been watching the shells from the French guns behind us bursting in the brown trench that cut across the slope of the Mont Homme. The precision was amazing. One after another the guns cracked, the projectiles tore whining overhead, and the bursts of blackish smoke marked the demolition of the earthwork on the hillside. Then the

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Bochers replied. Shell after shell fell on the rear side of 304. And still Andre merrid around in the engine. Tentative suggestions from us as to the undesirability of Ames as a halting place for the day could not move him. Arrives meant nothing in his professional career, it seemed, when a Ford refused to "function". But at last when the highway had assumed the aspect of a garage in full operation and I had resigned myself to die among the tools and spark plugs, an unusually ambitious shell came over the hill and into Ames, and Andre capitulated. We piled into Jones's car and "beat it" to Spencer. There, however, I found no "respite or reprieve". Andre remembered one thing that he might have done but didn't, and after lunch we were scooting back again in Ware's car. Indianapolis was sitting calmly where we had left her, and all the guns were still exchanging compliments. I spent another agonizing hour while the car was completely rewired. My one faint gleam of gratification in the persistent immobility was that I had made a thorough game of it. It would have been more than humiliating to have called for help and to have had the brute of a car start off obediently at the touch of the master's hand. Eventually Andre admitted final defeat and

we got ready to tow. First though we went into Ernest
and took some snap shots. We had brought along a bag
of odds and ends of presents sent over for the soldiers
by American women, and put them to the rather bare use
of getting us to a battery in action. Just back of the
Chateau on the hill slope two old 90's had been
installed at each end of a fresh trench. We made our
way to the nearer one and there found the crew of four
men working under a young "artillery". The piece was
on wheels and rolled back and forth in a flimsy box
of a piece. Down the hillside orders were called from
one man to another stationed in line. Just as we
came up the piece was fired. There was a great flash
of white flame and a blast of sound and air that
lifted my cap. The old gun bucked and danced like
a toy cannon but you could hear the shell speeding
viciously. Shell after shell was fired. One man put in
the shell, another the sack of powder, a third set the
piece, and a fourth closed the breech and pulled the
 lanyard. They were very merry about it, sending messages
with every shot. When they had used up their quota we
went in and examined things. I was handed out the
bags of gifts which seemed to delight the men, for
they all crowded about eagerly and shook hands

and saluted as we left. Going up to the other gun we could see as far as Douaumont. They told us they had been firing over the Mort / Tommie eight kilometres smashing mitrailleuse emplacements. We then got under way going out to Indianapolis and taking her in tow. We dragged her as far as Monzeville and there left her for the night in front of the abri. Yesterday we found we would not be allowed to go out with the big white truck until after nightfall, so after dinner Le Bon, the new American mechanic, drove me out in the big bus with Stewart and Paul and we brought the refractory Ford to port at the end of a towing rope. Today we held a clinic and discovered deep internal trouble in the magneto, requiring a major operation in the morning. So much for sentiment for the Boosier state!

This morning we heard of Hughes' election*, which seemed to please most of the section. Wilson's handling of the war situation has met with disfavor abroad, as it ^{evidently} must have at home. I wish the judgment of the fingers there could be tempered by the knowledge of the true meaning of modern warfare. ³⁹

Today the camp has resounded to the dulcet strains of Twichell's harmonica. Fortunately he wore his

* We did not get the correct report for several days.

courage or the consequences might have been painful. Several members of the clan with souls not attuned to views of Strauss took his hut by storm armed with firewood. "Twitche" thereupon made a peace offering of a brew of hot Pinard. Moffatt, a Harvard man, has come out to take Hansen's place.

Eppe court, November 19. Not much has happened worth telling. Both Indian police waiting us in disgrace for the arrival of porters from Paris. I have felt pretty useless. I am getting a reputation as the Jonah of the section. due to the regularity with which I have been going in failure lately. My second offense was with Geo. P. Vanderpoore which was confided to my care one night when Russell was at Paris. I stuck in the middle of the Jabecourt hill with the car's new vitaillement and had to unload it into Harrington's car. Later on with Le Bon's aid we got the old car to "function" in a feeble way and made the early morning run to Eeener. While at the chateau taking on a malade, we got a shell uncomfortably near. It hit the wall somewhere above us scattering a considerable amount of brick and mortar, and Moffatt and I were glad to pull out, though the Brancardiers on duty coolly smoked and said that there wouldn't be any more. Next night I went as Harrington's orderly.

We got a call to Hill 232 for two graves Bleasers. As
neither of us knew the way we had the Brancardiers at
Monzeville telephone for a poste Brancardiers to stand
in the road to stop us. It was so dark as we pulled
out of Monzeville that we made slow time to the fork
where the Hill road branches off. On the way we
smashed into a waggon and got one wheel down
in a shell hole. At the fork the poste Brancardiers met
us, having tramped up from 232. I got out and
splashed through the mud with Lewis in the dark
ahead of the cars looking for holes, while Harrington
ground along behind us in low gear. The cars
lurched over big boulders that had been hurriedly
thrown into the road to fill the holes torn by the
oburs. We came to a halt where a big raixtaelled
waggon had broken down across the narrow road-
way. A big shell-hole alongside full of water
blocked the way effectually. The ditches alongside
were brimming waist-deep in liquid mud. I
told the Brancardiers that we could not go on, and
he volunteered to bring the wounded men there on
the "pousse-pousse", - the two-wheeled braced carts.
He hurried away full of encouraging assurances, his
main point being that the Boches had not shelled

the road since four o'clock. The moon was now out and Harrington and I cast about for some place to turn the car. There wasn't any and we finally had to resort to backing to the fork, a good quarter of a mile. We had barely started when along came the ravitaillement train. Waggon after waggon careened past us where the car stood crowded to one side, the drivers urging on the floundering horses. Then a horse went down and the road became inextricably jammed. I left the shouting, heaving tangle and hurried ahead to try to catch the brancardiers before the carts started with the wounded, for it seemed impossible to get them through the blockade. The batteries had by this time taken up their customary cannonading and a few Boche arrivals landed on the slope above the road to Eerner. I am getting to hate the noise even of the departes. There is something hellish in the whine of the shells. Sometimes it seems impossible to believe them man-made. This night they had an exceptionally sinister sound on the lonely road with the ghostly moonlight and the fitful flare of the fuses on the gaunt hillside. I met the brancardiers coming with two stretchers-carts. The road bed was rough and one man was groaning horribly, but the brancardiers were determined to push on. When we got

back to the car the horse was up and the roadway partially cleared. The brancardiers got past and continued on the Monzeville, while Harrington and I began our journey to the fork crawfish-fashion. The reverse gear shrieked in protest but we finally made it, cranked around and went head foremost to Monzeville, where the blessies were waiting. We passed Stewart. When we saw him at Jubincourt next morning he said he found a fresh shellhole exactly in the middle of the road at the fork. It wasn't there when we were.

Appercent, November 24, 1916. - One day last week Wallace drove Bigelow in to Bar-le-Duc starting him on his way to Paris on permission and I went along as supercargo. On the way we passed the Ferme Banx Marie, a group of shattered brown faros buildings that mark the hottest fighting in the battle of the Marne. The Crown Prince had his quarters here and the place is said to have been taken and retaken sixteen times. Hundreds upon hundreds of French and Prussians lie buried there in heaps. At Bar I purchased a diminutive stove for the Auberge des Rats, which has been voted a success. It has even inspired others with an enthusiasm for the back saw; and we like to get things well fired up of an evening and sit about the little hot box.

discussing momentous questions. A hot stove always seems to encourage argumentative oratory - whether here at the front or at the corner stove at home. Next night after the Barr trip I shipped our orderly to Moffatt on Car 2 at Jubricourt, but we got no call and slept through the night in the evil smelling Infirmerie. I often wish I could carry away pictures of the places where we stay - Rembrandt-like rooms for the most part. The Franciscans at Jubricourt, for instance, sleep on board benches in a narrow passageway. The roughly chinked stone walls are hung with carpets and curtains. The earthen floor is damp. The high rafters flicker in the candle light. Loaves of bread hang on wires. The shadows are black. The men's faces grouped about the light are in high relief, their bodies and their faded uniforms hardly visible. In the Infirmerie we fare better. We even have mural paintings, for over the fireplace above the jars and medicine bottles is painted a flamboyant Louis XIV, gloved hand on silken hips, and with a laudatory Latin inscription and coat of arms. He is likewise embellished with spectacles, a pipe, thick whiskers and a police helmet - truly an imposing figure. At the Popote, where we eat with the sour officers of the G. B. D. the walls are also decorated - though more in

the style of the "art nouveau". There we meet at the long table where dripping candles sputter in the cracks of empty bottles - little Roux, Quatrevalle, Goyard, Ribateau, Marechal, du Clergy, and the others. And how we eat! In the room outside Christens, and his two followers, potter about the cooking in leisurely fashion, cigarettes and pipes going full tilt. They occasionally move a pot or two on the tiny stove set up in the wide old fireplace or poke a flaming stick ~~down~~ under the pot swinging from the crane. There is ample time for voluble discussions of the communiqués in the Matin and the Echo de Paris. But promptly on the hour wonderful food comes from stove and pot, miraculously are rabbits from a juggler's hat, and we sit down to a dinner of onion soup, beefsteak, creamed cauliflowers, fried tomatoes, salad, Camembert and coffee, washed down, of course, with Pinard. It almost makes us sorry to go back to the questionable waffles of Iffecourt. Our cook, however, outdid himself on the night of the twentieth, the birthday of Section 4. Timbham, who, it developed, had won the croix at Verdun with Section 3 last June, gave the party. We had toasts - plenty - France, the Allies, the U. S. A., and our officers. We drank a silent toast to Kelly, "who died for France".

After dinner Labon blossomed out as an entertainer,
clogging to Twitchell's harmonicas. We gave all the cheers
of the collegers in the sections, sang the Marseillaise,
and started our second year with a world of enthusiasm.
Next day Indianapolis, equipped with a news magneto,
took me to Jubecourt as Car 2. I had Allen as
orderly. We were both jubilant over his citation, which
came just before we left camp. He really deserves it
after fifteen months of active service at the front -
just a boy of eighteen. He is going home to enter Howard.
We spent a night undisturbed by anything more than
the rats, and Allen went back to camp at daybreak
with the other cars. That afternoon Gen. Gouzeine,
medecin inspecteur of our corps, pinned the cross on the
boy I wish I had been there. Instead I had to go up
to Dombarley and Montzeville, getting back to Effecourt
after dark, having changed a tire at Jubecourt in a
sea of grey mud. That night Fowler and Russell took
the Emers run. They haven't said much about it, but
I have found out that they got into some pretty hot
shelling there. There were several bursts of shrapnel
near them in the street, and one high explosive shell
at the chateau drove them under the car - a poor
enough refuge. No one says much about the Emers run

these days. A significant notice has been posted at Jubincourt. "American drivers are not to start for Ernes until twilight. By orders". It seems that the medic's chief interviewed some soldiers back from the trenches and learned that the cars are plainly visible from the German trenches on the Mont Homme. Old "Pouf-Pouf", who really does care about us though he hates to show it, thereupon issued the orders, so that now we go to Ernes by daylight only when it is a case of a "grave blessé". There is absolutely no other traffic on the road in the daytime. The boys are generally reticent about expressing themselves, but I find a sort of fatalistic attitude throughout the section, especially with the more experienced drivers. "If they get us - well, it's a risk that is part of the job". And that's about all that you will get anyone of them to say. The Ernes cars leave every afternoon in as matter-of-fact a way as the ones to Lille sur Curzance; but there is always a lot of gaiety and laughing among the ^{Ernes} crews when they roll in in the morning ^{after the trip is over.} And you don't hear nearly as much about the shells as about the blessés that they carried. It is a big relief to get away from those crushed villages in that valley of death, with the only dwelling places the black burrows of the abris. Now there seems

like gnomes, huddled in timbered caverns reached by black
tunnel mouths so low that you stoop to enter. I shall
always remember Marchand of the G. B. D. sitting in the
abri of Montzeville - a kind of Eotaw with his big
brown beard and heavy brows beneath his high-peaked
cap - in a huge arm chair between two tree-trunk
columns. It is good to get back to camp, to loaf in and out of
our "dug-outs" where someone nearly always has a fire
crackling, unless it is sunny enough to sit on the terrace.
There is always someone greasing boots or running
blankets and in need of expert advice on the same. And
it is always a pleasant fortune to lean on the railing
and encourage some unfortunate who can't get his
car to function down on the "explanade". It is rarely
peaceful, because there is usually grenade practice on
the hill in front of us and mitrailleuse practice on the
hill behind us. But the sunsets are glorious over the
hill across the little railroad. And almost all the time
there are silhouettes of baggage trains, or cavalry or
marching companies along the crest. Bugles ring out from
the camp near the village, and the sawmill droners away
down by the woods. It is war in what is almost its
pleasant aspect - perhaps because of the good
fellowship about us here. It gives you a queer feeling

to hear somebody whistling "Up the Street" or "Dixie".
I like the work and the men in the work, and
I'm glad I came.

White, a Princeton man, and Danison have
joined the section.

Paris, December 2, 1916 - Permission came on
time and since Sunday I've known the joys
of a real tub and a real bed, ^{and} one glimpse
of the chateaux at the Rue Raymond teeming
with the new birds of Section 10 getting ready
for the field sent me into town to seek more
restful lodgings, and now, installed at the
Continental with Eric Fowler, I live in heavy
state, even breakfasting in my room under the
awerome ministrations of the floor waiter.
It all seems remarkable - especially the people,
and I enjoy just sauntering about and watch-
ing them. A few weeks in the army zone almost
makes you feel that all the rest of the world
is in uniform. But here the number of civilians
is astonishing, and somehow they don't seem so
intent upon the war as before. That, however, is
probably imaginary, for Paris is really a grave
city. Rigorous police regulations compel show-

keepers to put lights out at six o'clock. Restaurants must close at half past nine. And there is talk of even one day a week without meat.

On Tuesday I go back to the front. Oh, boys, if I could only see you before then! I am keen for the work - but I am so lonely without you, little sons. I think of you all the time, and the loneliness has been worse in these days of illness. Don't forget me, little sons!

Continued in a second note book.

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