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THE FIELD SERVICE PARC AT BILLANCOURT

The parc at Billancourt is closed and another landmark of the old Field Service has passed into tradition. It rightly claims to have been the oldest landmark, for long before " 21 " had been thought of, the cars for Section 8 were delivered, and soon after, Section 9, one early morning, rolled out from its gates to Alsace via Versailles. From then on, its business was to meet the demands of rue Raynouard and car after car was delivered to be sent to the front or formed into new sections. At the same time spare parts were received, sorted and sent out to meet the incessant orders from the front.

For those — and there are many of us — who came into close contact with the parc, there are remembrances which go deeper than the 980 cars repaired and set up or than the many thousands of dollars worth of spare parts issued. What original member of Section 8 will ever forget those days at the newly established parc where he worked as a carpenter, mechanic and painter ! — A good training for the work that was ahead. How many of those who volunteered later to help in the equipping will forget that the French army insists that tires must be numbered and recorded accurately ! Some of them were section leaders later, and perhaps the training helped them.

What section leader and mechanic has not felt the parc was an intimate part of his daily work, looking on it either as a friend or as an enemy, depending on the way his cars were running that day. The parc stood for him as something to be telegraphed to or telegraphed at, always something which he knew the success of his section depended upon.

To a few of us — those to whom all of its details were in the day's work — there are many incidents which made that part of the work alive with remembrances. There was the first summer when things were easy, when chassis were driven from the ports on wonderful summer days, and spare parts for the few sections were easy to obtain. Then quickly the change when transportation was tied up, and parts which foresight had ordered from America, were lost among the millions of cases in Bordeaux and picked out months later among those cases and brought up. Then came the period when chassis for which no gasoline could be spared had to be brought by rail in space which could not be gotten, but which was gotten. Then came the triumph of being able to supply Section 3 on forty eight hour notice with the huge new equipment which its adventure to the Orient required. Then again the routine of the winter, broken by the unexpected early frost which froze the radiators of all the reserve cars showing that the parc was human after all. Then finally the days of the next spring, days of terrific pressure when section after section must leave and at the same time parts and cars must be sent to the old ones. Pressure which reached its height during the month of May when five new sections of cars were delivered at rue Raynouard!

The parc's two years was a full page in the history of the service, a fuller page than most members of the service could realize because its work like its founding, and like its close last week, was done without fuss but with always the day's work accomplished. Perhaps in reading this the men of the old service will look back again on their days at the front and recall that good days and bad days were judged by how their cars were running and perhaps they will find that the good days were more frequent than the bad days and that the latter were often due to their own negligence. If they do they will realize what part of their success they owed to the parc and what was accomplished by Robert Moss and those who helped him in those two years of work which had no excitement or adventure but which had their reward in work well done.

S. G.

OLD F. S. COAT

*Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude...*

SHAKESPEARE.

Au revoir, old F. S. uniform
That encased my shape of yore
They've put the kibosh on you,
And you'll be seen no more.

Yet I somehow hate to part with you
For this handsome U. S. coat
Which is cut so short up in the rear
And bulges at my throat.

I paid a goodly sum for you
After many efforts blind
To get the full equipment that
They promised when I signed.

So you've done your duty ever since
I signed away my name
As a member of the army seeking
Thirty dollar Fame.

All winter you did stoutly keep
The bitter cold away
While the government sent me numbers
And delayed to send the pay.

Yet somehow I can't figure why
You make the Service sore
You're really quite as handsome as
The one the Captain wore.

Au revoir — and yet in parting
I'll remember one thing, coat:
While I wore you you sure gathered
More than one lieutenant's goat!

R. A. D.
S. S. U. 18

O TEMPORA ! O MORES!

The shades of night were falling fast
As thru our Argonne village passed
One bitter cold December night
An Ambulance without a light. Excelsior.

Around the corner madly dashed
A camion — Bang ! The two had crashed.
In French and English both did curse,
Mille Dios! and a whole lot worse.

The camion, dented, wheel and hood
The shock of contact well withstood ;
The Ford, distorted, twisted, bent,
Barely reached the cantonnement.

" This must be stopped ", declared the boss,
" The rules I strictly must enforce. "
The driver, broken, to the brig was led,
And the faithful Ford, with a sigh dropped dead.

The Big Blat, Feb. 1918.

MIRAGE

My pain of wandering and these lonely days
Will have an ending in some quiet form
Whose certitude I feel.
Of home and springtide and of tender ways,
Of fireside havens when December flays
My homeland fields with sleety stinging storm
Over an icy seal.

How oft beyond the roaring and the fire
I see beyond a beckoning of bliss
In quiet tender eyes.

Beyond the stench of this carnal pyre
I scent the honey of a blossomed briar.
I feel the courage of a promised kiss
Out of my heart arise.

The loss of comrades and the weary nights
And all this seeming endlessness of time
Were hard to bear
Except I see my labor in the light
Of other comrades suffering this plight
Who wait as I those moments of a clime
Where love and peace shall fare.

Ray W. Gauger.
S. S. U. 622

SECTION 17 CITATION

Old Section 17 (now S. S. U. 635) received the following Corps d'Armee citation on April 24th, 1918.

« La Section Sanitaire Automobile Américaine 635, sous les ordres du lieutenant De Joly et du lieutenant Neffel :

« Pendant tout le cours des opérations, et plus particulièrement pendant les journées des quatre et cinq avril 1918 a, de nuit et de jour, assuré sous le feu, avec un dévouement infatigable et un mépris absolu du danger, le transport et l'évacuation des blessés des premières lignes. »

FINE WORK OF U.S. "ACE".

New Record for Sgt. Frank L. Baylies (S.S.U. 1 & 3).

Huit Victoires en trois mois.

« Guynemer disait autrefois qu'un chasseur aérien ne se forme pas. D'après lui on naît avec les qualités d'un as et l'aviateur qui n'abat pas un Boche après un mois d'escadrille de chasse devait céder la place à un autre.

« Cette théorie tout d'une tranche s'applique du bon côté pour l'as américain, le sergent Baylies, dont les exploits remarquables valent une mention spéciale.

« Il vient de détruire son 8^e avion ennemi.

« Sa première victoire remonte au 10 février. »

Le Matin, 14 Mai 1918.

Nine for Sgt. Baylies.

Sergeant Baylies the United States pilot, has scored another victory, says the *Matin*, thus bringing his total up to nine, of which four have been scored this month.

Daily Mail, May 15 1918.

NOTES

Lieut. W. J. Losh (S.S.U. 10) has received the Croix de Guerre.

Will Hood (T.M.U. 184) has received a commission as 2nd. Lieut : in Q. M. C.

VISITORS AT 21 RUE RAYNOUARD

Arthur C. Kimber (S.S.U. 14) 1st lieut. U. S. A. A. S. ; Andrew K. Henry (T.M.U. 397) American Records Office ; Vernon McClellan (S.S.U. 68) Ord. Dept. N. A. ; William A. Lowrie (S.S.U. 67) U. S. A. A. S. ; W. R. Hees, Jr. (S.S.U. 67) U. S. A. A. S. ; Dalton V. Garsten (S.S.U. 67) U. S. A. A. S. ; E. C. Lawrence (S.S.U. 13) U. S. A. A. S. ; Carl W. Vail (S.S. U. 19) U. S. A. A. S. ; Robert A. Cunningham (S.S.U. 66) A. R. C. Rome, Italy ; Philip T. Sprague (S.S.U. 8) Gas Service Laboratory ; Lansing Warren (S.S.U. 70 and 18) U. S. A. A. S. ; Burnet Wohlford (S.S.U. 10 and 18) U. S. A. A. S. ; Jos. T. Walker, Jr. (T.M.U. 133 and 526) 5 bis, Brigade Ecole Militaire, Fontainebleau ; Larry Walsh (S.S.U. 68) A. P. O. 731 A. E. F. ; Louis G. Caldwell (S. S. U. 65) 90° Brigade Ecole d'Artillerie, Fontainebleau ; Edmund R. Purves (S.S.U. 4) U. S. A. A. S. C. A. Whitbeck (S.S.U. 9) U. S. A. A. S. ; Charles W. Love (S.S.U. 30) U. S. A. A. S. ; Edward L. Pelham (T.M.U. 184) Y. M. C. A. J. G. Crafts (T.M.U. 133) Aviation ; Walter Emory Powers (S.S.U. 16) U. S. A. A. S. ; Richard B. Varnum (S.S.U. 3) U. S. Aviation ; Charles A. Amsdem (S.S.U. 3) U. S. Aviation ; H. W. Patterson (T.M.U. 133) 90° brigade Ecole Militaire Fontainebleau ; T. F. McAllister (S.S.U. 69) 5° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; Parker K. Ellis (S.S.U. 9) 90° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; James M. White (S.S.U. 1) Gas Service ; William Ford Moreland (T.M.U. 526) 97° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; John F. Howe (T.M.U. 133), 5° Brigade Ecole Militaire, Fontainebleau ; J. M. Parmelee (S.S.U. 27) 90° Brigade Ecole Militaire, Fontainebleau ; Edward J. M. Diemer (S.S.U. 2) U. S. A. A. S. ; Andrew Jack (S.S.U. 70) U. S. A. A. S. ; Alton C. Ingraham (S.S.U. 70 and 16) U. S. A. A. S. ; Russell Davy Greene (S.S.U. 68) Air Service ; J. R. Van Cleve (S.S.U. 29) ; J. R. Steers Jr. (S.S.U. 29) ; Fenton G. Elwell (S.S.U. 66) 5° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; John W. Ames, Jr. (S.S.U. 2) 45° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; William M. Barber (S.S.U. 3) 5° Brigade, Fontainebleau ; Robert Buell (S.S.U. 15), Fontainebleau.

LOCAL NOTES

During the past week many of the old A. F. S. men who joined the Red Cross Ambulance service in Italy have dropped in at " 21 " their six months engagement there being terminated.

The Whitsuntide holiday caused an overflow at meal hours at rue Raynouard which brought back memories of olden days. There was a large sprinkling of blue uniforms.