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The sixty-five issues of the Rouen Post that have left Arthur Melville's Southwest Printery since May, 1936, contain the outstanding poems of the first World War, and the choruses, at least, of many song hits of that period. The latter are obviously inferior in quality to the contributions of such bards as Seeger, Brooke, Sassoon, McCrae and Kilmer; their value if any, lies in the memories they recall. The other night we conned over a book of war songs, favorites of "Over Here" and "Over There"... drivel set to music... yet each able to revive different scenes and associations.

There is "Katy." How well we remember our introduction to that once popular gal. Our thoughts go back to a blustery December night in Brittany nearly 24 years ago. We are on leave in the St. Malo area with Franklin Carr, Earl Hursey, Mike Ganey and Arshav Nushan. In the crowded Casino at Dinard, the sullen rumble of the surf adds a sombre cadence to the orchestra at a Y. M. C. A. show. A black-face comedian bows and shuffles into the wings amidst hilarious applause from the soldier audience. The stage darkens—and a vivacious lass, alluring in the spotlight, opens the way for encores as she launches her act with:

"Ka-ka-ka-katee, beautiful Katee,
You're the only gu-gu-girl that I adore.
And when the moon shines
Over the cowshed
I'll be waiting at the ka-ka-kitchen door."

The musicians, the actors, and the audience in khaki are scattered far and wide. But in fancy, as long as the moon shines over cowsheds, we shall be with them in the Casino at Dinard.

The wintry gloom of Brittany fades before a July sun. We are in Paris again. It is the morning of July 14, 1918... Bastille Day... and detachments from the Allied armies are parading down the Avenue Champs Elysees amid the cheers of a holiday populace. With Holland Chalfant we cling to the palings of an iron fence atop the wall of the Tuileries Gardens and watch the troops swing across the most imposing square in the world—the place de la Concorde. The lofty obelisk rises like a shaft of snow in the sunlight, airplanes, droning through an azure sky, drop showers of roses on the crowds below; for the moment we forget the intermittent crash of shells from Big Bertha seventy-five miles away. The English, French, Italians, and Belgians step past the reviewing stand to time-honored martial music of their respective coun-
tries—but not the Americans. As a battalion of Yanks enter the Square the bands blare forth a song still damp from the printing press—George M. Cohan’s jittery contribution to the war to end all wars:

"Over there, over there,
Send the word, send the word over there
That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming,
The drums rum-tumming everywhere.
So prepare, say a prayer,
Send the word, send the word to beware,
We’ll be over, we’re coming over,
And we won’t be back till it’s over, over there."

Our favorite number of those days was one of the few songs not inspired by the war. Hearing it on rare occasions over the radio sends us back through the years to a rainy, depressing evening in the early spring of 1917... with the late Paul Anderson, then on the threshold of a great career in journalism, we lounge before an open fire in the living room of a flat on Berlin avenue. From an overworked victrola the silvery voice of John McCormack soars above the haunting wail of a cello as the beloved Irish tenor sings the chorus of the beautiful ballad by Leonard Cooke and Lillian Ray:

"Give me your smile,
The love-light in your eyes,
Life could not hold
A fairer Paradise!
Give me the right
To love you all the while,
My world forever,
The sunshine of your smile."

"The Sunshine of Your Smile, has had its day; the friend with whom we shared its melody for the first time sleeps in the shadow of the Great Smoky Mountains. But the memory lingers on.

It is the winter of 1916. America is singing "I Didn’t Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," but the throb of warm drums is punctuating the music with gradually increasing volume... The lights along Washington avenue gleam feebly in a thick cloud of smog. In the snow-bound Coliseum thousands of boxing fans peer through a haze of tobacco smoke at the light-flooded ring as Harry Trendall, "Pride of the Patch," and Ted "Kid" Lewis, great English welterweight, climb through the ropes for the main event. Managers, officials and seconds swarm the ring; as the contestants pose for newspaper photographers, a beefy quartette in dinner jackets bellow sound advice to foreign-born ingrates:

"If you don’t like your Uncle Sammy,
Then go back to your home o’er the sea,
To the land from where you came,
Whatever be its name,
But don’t be ungrateful to me!
If you don’t like the stars in Old Glory
If you don’t like the Red, White, and Blue,
Then don’t act like the cur in the story,
Don’t bite the hand that’s feeding you."

*Changed to Pershing during the war hysteria of 1917-18,
THE ROUEN POST

We could ramble on like this indefinitely but it suddenly occurs to us that in detouring the reader down our private lane of memories we are comparable to a host who inflicts the family album on his guests. Our only excuse is that we have a certain amount of space to fill, and in view of the little assistance received from other members of the Unit, this is not always an easy stint. We leave you now to Retta Snyder’s memoirs and a few notes on the activities of former comrades.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A WORLD WAR NURSE

January 28, 1918

By Retta Snyder

This is Sunday night, and the appointed time to write my family a letter. But I don’t see how I can. I’m so full of the horrors of war and so bursting to tell my patients that nothing seems worth while to write about. The convoy tonight seemed awful though it was no worse than other nights probably. I vowed I would not go to the Point, so went up to my hut to put on more clothes and the convoy started to come in. But I found myself running to get back before they were carried out. I have to go to my line then, but until they start I can stay around. The night is clear and very cold and a number of stretchers had to be laid on the ground. I heard a man groan, the first I have ever heard come in groaning. I went over to him and later Miss Carson and I held the bowls and helped several men drink their soup. They didn’t want it enough to make the effort alone.

A study of penetrated abdomens, shrapnel wounds, and Thomas splints, would give the folks at home an idea of our work. Thomas splints are as thick as flies and quite a wonderful invention.

By the way, we hear that the Red Cross things are somewhere, Paris probably, so we hope for our things to come this week. The hymn books came from Dad and were used tonight. Unfortunately I could not be there. Another box of candy came this week. The American and Woman’s Home Companion also came. I’ve so much to read now I can scarcely go to bed, and with mail coming more frequently I stay up until noon to see if I get any. I had a letter from Dad yesterday written December 8th, and last week one from a friend posted December 28th. I don’t know where Dad’s has been. There was an article in a paper this week protesting the way tradespeople were putting up prices on the Americans. It is the limit. They have one price for the French a higher for the English, and a much higher one for the Americans. My money simply oozes away, and we have to try to save some for our leave. The new detachment will begin to go on leave in two months, and for a two weeks stay in Paris we have to have five hundred francs at least. It has taken the others eight months to save enough even with some they brought along, so we are going to be up against it I’m afraid.

They all say there is nothing to spend money for, but we seem to find plenty. More woolens, extra laundry, French lessons, this, that, and the other all amount up. I want to buy some small pictures, and a silver Joan d’Arc box. “The Big Four,” Mrs. Hausman, Misses Taylor, Hilligas, and Love went to Paris Friday. Kate Murphy and Edith Dangerfield go in two weeks. They will stay in Paris five days, and go to Nice for a week, then back to Paris for a couple of days. We are going to the forest for a walk this morning as Olive has never been there and is eager to go. I hope I’m not too tired.

I have written home for two large heavy bath towels, one medium sized bath mat, two large face towels, and three napkins. It seems strange but we could not buy an inch of damask here. The bath towels are expensive and very poor. I’m sure there were more things I wanted but I can’t think of them now. I shall ask Olive and she will remember. I ask her to whom I have written and what I wrote, and she usually knows.
The American came today. The first of our Christmas magazines, I was so interested in it. Really, we have so much to do I can’t see how we can waste time sleeping. Tomorrow is our French lesson and tonight I have been absorbing pronouns. We say all we lack is vocabulary and verbs, otherwise we could talk fluently. After payday we will take two lessons a week. Our leave will be along before we know it, then to Paris for two weeks. I’m not keen about it, for I did enough sightseeing in New York to last me a year.

(To be continued)

APPRECIATION

Dear Mr. Engel:

Will you please express to Rouen Post, my deep appreciation of the service rendered me by Commander Charles Jablonsky.

Owing to a physical condition which puzzled me, I was desirous of having a medical examination. Through the assistance of Mr. Jablonsky I was admitted to the Veterans hospital on Sept. 9 where I remained until Oct. 12.

The tests revealed spinal arthritis which explained my inability to walk in a normal manner. While there is little to be done for this, it has relieved my mind to know the cause of my lameness.

Sincerely,

Emma E. Habenicht

Major Julia Stimson, of New York, appearing on a nation-wide radio program from Fort Dix, Sunday, October 26, discussed the part played by women in World War No. 1 and the present conflict. Major Stimson, now president of the American Nurses Association and formerly superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps, is a niece of Secretary of War Stimson. Her sister, Dr. Barbara Stimson is serving overseas with the British Emergency Medical Service. Dr. Stimson, who was associate in surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, is on duty at the Royal Free Hospital in London, which is a casualty clearing station having a base outside of the city with a bed capacity of 1000.

Gary Cooper has long been one of our favorite cinema stars but we have no desire to see his current portrayal of Sergeant York. The hysterical glorification of that fortunate hill-billy, 23 years ago, was an affront to thousands of equally capable soldiers. Hollywood should have left him in the moth-balls.

A VAGABOND SONG

There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood—
Touch of manner, hint of mood;
And my heart is like a rhyme,
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
Of bugles going by.
And my lonely spirit thrills
To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;
We must rise and follow her,
When from every hill of flame
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

—Bliss Carmen.