

Chet Parsons to Adrian A. Parsons

July 25, 1918

July 25 – 18

Dear Dad & Mother ÷

Have not heard from you for several days but rec'd a letter from the Davis girls today they write like grown ups but I cant imagine them being any thing but kids.

They say they are Evans farmers since Alden went to the ship yards. It is evident they possess the patriotism of their mother Will enclose Elizabeth's letter for you to read it is so serious and yet contains all the kiddishness of her age. I suppose I have read & laughed over it a dozen times.

I hope the censor will have enough confidence in us to pass on this and I will tell you the kind of work I am doing.

We are building flying fields. I was put on a tractor after the first two months and have worked at that ever since. We have had several different kinds to use but at present I am operating a big 18 – 36 Gray Tractor Manufactured at Minneapolis it pulls four 14 inch bottoms as deep as one wants to put them. For five weeks I was on a French steam roller and it was a complicated piece of machinery.

Gasoline is playing a might big part in this war and I believe it is going to wean me from the horse to a certain extent. The Capt. is an old artillery man and he sure loves the horse. Nothing would please me better Dad than to have a saddler from Old Guy.

July 27. It has got started to raining here and puts in just about all the time. it makes our work mighty mean.

Say Dad in your letter you said the martins came back this spring How many pairs come? I suppose the wrens in the shop came but was sorry to hear that the little house wren did not. Suppose there has been war all summer between martins & sparrows. can you still hit a sparrow every shot? I rec'd the Messenger you sent there is some good dope in it. A fellow in the sqdn. is interested in the same subject he has been to Hollywood and heard some the lectures. It must be a swell place from what he says.

So Long

C. A. P.

[upside down in margin:] If you see Ralph tell him I appreciated and was very glad to get his letter will answer when I get a day off.

Tell Uncle Henry to wind up that old hand clock of his and display some of his wit on foreign soil.

Historical Notes:

ALS M00004, Adrian Parsons and Family Collection, Box 1, Folder 2, Huron Heritage Room, Avon-Washington Township Public Library, Avon, Indiana

Chester "Chet" Adrian Parsons (1887 – 1977) served during WWI in the American Expeditionary Force in France from April 1918 – April 1919. He exchanged letters with his father, Adrian A Parsons (1846 – 1929), a disabled Civil War veteran. These letters provide insight into life on the front.

"Davis girls" are daughters of Chet's sister Ethel C. (Parsons) Davis (1875 – 1953) Imogene (1905 – 1994) and Elizabeth (1909 – 2000) who lived in Mobile, Alabama. Their father was Evan Bennett Davis (1876 – 1963) and they have a brother, Alden Evan (1899 – 1951) who left to work in the ship yards.

"18-36 Grey Tractor" invented by J.W. Grey of Campbell, Minnesota was the first tractor to burn gasoline and to use the unique rear drum-drive system that provided superior traction. The later design allowed the 18-36 to pull a four-bottom (14 in.) plow utilizing only a 32 brake hp. engine.

"Old Guy" is an award winning horse owned by Adrian Parsons.

"Messenger" is the *Plainfield Messenger* newspaper, in publication from 1915 – 1964.

"Ralph" is unknown.

"Uncle Henry" is unknown; neither parent had a sibling or in-law with the name Henry.