2005

The Merci Train for South Carolina: When France and the Palmetto State were Friends, 1947-1949

Fritz Hamer
University of South Carolina - Columbia

Publication Info

Published in *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association*, 2005, pages 19-29.

The Merci Train for South Carolina: When France and the Palmetto State were Friends, 1947–1949

Fritz Hamer

"France stood by us a long time ago. And I say today
Viva [sic!] La France, Long Live France."[1]

So proclaimed Governor Strom Thurmond on a cold February day in 1949 while standing in Spartanburg's railway station. South Carolina's chief executive and other political dignitaries had come to welcome an unusual gift from the people of France. It was a small boxcar, a token of appreciation from an ally recovering from the ravages of four years of German occupation. The diminutive freight car of this type had been the backbone of the French rail system before World War I. This one was now filled with objects ranging from the simplest child's drawings to impressive works of art, all contributed by citizens of France. It was just one of forty-nine sent across the Atlantic a month before as part of what became known as the Gratitude or Merci Train, a sign of appreciation for American aid donated to the French during 1948. In light of the current political disagreements between the United States and France, this early post-war cooperation is perhaps one of the highest points in Franco-American relations during the last half-century. Not surprisingly, such good relations are virtually forgotten today on both sides of the Atlantic. This study briefly examines how this gift of appreciation came about, what role the Palmetto State played in helping the American national aid effort, and what plans South Carolina's government and citizen groups made to receive and display the French boxcar. As in most endeavors involving many organizations and communities, we shall see that the gift to South Carolina led to disagreements and jealousies across the state that were aggravated, in part, by miscommunications between interested parties.

Franco-American relations have had many rough periods. Through most of the twentieth century, the two governments in Paris and Washington have rarely agreed about international policy except during the two World Wars. Yet, as noted above, the people of both nations showed rare appreciation for the other in the late 1940s. This began when one American journalist saw a need for his fellow citizens to assist France and other destitute European allies through individual contributions rather than relying just on U.S. government aid. Since 1945 Congress had donated thousands of tons of food and supplies to Western Europe in the early post-war era, yet such assistance seemed to some observers an impersonal, if not calculated, policy.

Drew Pearson, a prominent *Washington Post* columnist, had followed the plight of post-war Europe with concern. He feared that recipients of his government's aid did not believe it came with purely humanitarian motives, but instead represented just a calculated move to combat the communist infiltration of Western Europe. This concern struck Pearson forcefully in early 1947 when he read a story that a single Soviet shipload of grain had arrived in Marseilles with huge fanfare and celebrations.[2]

To stem this perceived public relations threat of a communist challenge to American aid, the journalist decided that his countrymen needed to show their concern from the heart. To do so, he wrote several columns in October and early November 1947 suggesting that individuals across the nation donate food, clothes, and other aid that would be sent to France and its neighbors as a token of American support and sacrifice. He believed that by keeping the government out of the equation, Western Europeans could better appreciate the American heartland's concern and willingness to help. At the same time, of course, such assistance could steer them away from Moscow's allure. Pearson's syndicated columns appeared in hundreds of newspapers across the nation. In one of them he advocated "a movement by American people to stint on their own dinner tables to help neighbors in distress who in turn are helped to make democracy live." While such aid might seem easy for Americans to give because they had not suffered warfare on the homefront, the donation campaign also coincided with the early phase of the federal government's national appeal to all citizens to reduce their consumption of grains and meats. In early October 1947 President Truman called on all Americans to pledge themselves to meatless Tuesdays and abstain from poultry and eggs on Thursdays to make more food available to struggling Europe. Later in the fall, the liquor industry agreed to reduce its consumption of grain for its products. Yet even with this government appeal for personal sacrifice, Pearson's idea quickly caught on across the nation.[3]

Initially the columnist planned the stocking of a single rail freight car, which would start in Los Angeles and go across the nation picking up contributions from people along the way as it headed for New York City. By contributing $10,000 of his own funds Pearson hoped the car could be filled by the time it reached its eastern destination. Even before the journey began, however, the response was far beyond anything he could have imagined. Prior to leaving California, the lone boxcar quickly grew into what became known as the "Friendship Train." On 7 November 1947 a huge crowd came to celebrate the start of the trip and donated food and clothing for twelve cars. In addition, citizens in northwestern states and Hawaii sent thousands of pounds of contributions to meet the train before it exited the state. As the Friendship Train's national chairman, Pearson soon began receiving messages from across

the country regarding the contributions that were waiting for his caravan as it headed east. When the Friendship Train reached New York City eleven days later, it comprised 275 cars. Pearson's campaign had caught on to such a degree that another two trains were started along southern and northern routes. The southern train's final destination was Philadelphia, while the northern train, like the Friendship Train, finished its journey in New York City. The three trains totaled at least five hundred cars that hauled primarily dry foods, clothes, and canned milk; one or more cars freighted sixteen tons of vitamins, surgical preparations, and related items donated by 10,000 Rexall druggists.[4]

Over the next month several shiploads of rail cars left New York for France and Italy. When the first shipment arrived in Le Havre, France, on the 17 December 1947, the French greeted the American gifts with great fanfare. The train received the same reception as it wound its way east and distributed donations to French communities along the way. Often local dignitaries in each community insisted that the American journalists and officials on board drink more alcohol than they desired. Pearson commented that the locals made it impossible not to accept a toast of one of France's many famous vintages. "You had to be able to drink champagne early in the morning, because at every station you had to sample the wines."[5]

As one might expect, South Carolina participated in a less coherent fashion. The upstate contributed four carloads of food and clothing to the national train. The leader of this effort, Greenville insurance executive Broadus Bailey, coordinated the region's collection with the assistance of local veterans' groups. Using local newspapers and radio stations, Bailey and his associates solicited funds from schools, churches, women's clubs, and the Grange. Subsequently the proceeds were used to purchase supplies of food and clothes to fill their rail cars, which proceeded to the Northeast and were included in one of the shipments sent to France at the end of 1947.[6]

Instead of following the upstate's lead in contributing to the national Friendship Train, communities in other parts of the state organized their own programs and adopted individual communities in France to which they sent food, clothes, and other needed goods following local donation drives. Aiken, Columbia, St. George, Kingstree, and other cities and towns responded in this fashion. One of the largest local efforts was that undertaken by Charleston, which adopted the village of Flers-de-l'Orne in Normandy. Charleston's director of Promotional Development, J. Francis Brenner, led the campaign with Mayor William McG. Morrison's full support. Civic organizations, schools, churches, and businesses from the area contributed food, clothing, and funds that were collected at city fire stations. The Charleston campaign

began in December 1947, had its most intensive phase in January, and ended the following month with full-page local newspaper ad campaigns in the *News and Courier* and appeals over the radio. Businesses placed small solicitations in their own regular ads. A local furniture store that sold appliances and furniture included this plea in one of its promotions: "Let's everyone help the people of Flers."[7] The finale of the donation drive was a "Public Card Party" at the end of February. Nearly one thousand people paid admission to eat and dance, and the proceeds were employed to buy more supplies for Flers. Brenner used his connections to persuade the local Carolina Shipping Company to donate space on one of its cargo vessels to ship the contributions to France. The vessel, re-christened the *Charleston Bounty* for the special voyage, left Charleston on 17 March 1948 with the city's 100 tons of donations. As had happened when the Friendship Train distributed goods in France a few months before, in April 1948 the citizens of Flers also welcomed these gifts from the South Carolina Lowcountry. Columbia followed a similar formula to help the French town of Berck, located south of Boulogne, about the same time as the Charleston campaign came to an end.[8]

Needless to say, the Friendship Train, whether the national program or the local versions, represented a huge success for American charity and humanitarian principles. It was not long before the French, in appreciation, started a campaign to return the favor. The idea to send a train full of articles to America began with a French veteran and employee of its rail system, Andre Picard. Like Pearson, he hoped to promote a plan for his countrymen to fill one boxcar with French-made articles. Once Picard's plan began to circulate in cafes and communities across France, it quickly outgrew his original idea. Its appeal was more than one man could handle, and soon the National Headquarters of the French War Veterans Association assumed responsibility and expanded the plan. Now it was proposed to fill forty-nine boxcars with gifts from citizens all over France, one boxcar for each of the forty-eight states, with the forty-ninth to be shared between the District of Columbia and Hawaii.[9]

The cars used to collect and transport the gifts had a direct tie with American veterans of both world wars. They were small general freight vehicles built between 1872 and 1885, and during World War I they became the essential (albeit primitive) means of transporting thousands of American doughboys from the French coast to the front lines. This function was repeated in the Second World War when American GIs used the same rolling stock to cross France for the final push against the German Wehrmacht. Measuring only twenty-nine feet long and nine feet wide with a weight of twelve tons, these rail cars had become known as *Quarante et Huite* (forty and eights) because each could hold a maximum of forty men or eight horses. Quite old

by the railway standards of the day, the cars had to be collected from rail yards all over France. Each was given a new coat of paint and sent to Paris; soon they rolled into the Channel port of Le Havre.[10]

In the meantime, collection centers were established throughout France to collect the contributions of over six million families. Many items were personal family "treasures" such as children's rough drawings, ashtrays made of broken mirrors, and wooden shoes. More highly crafted gifts given by dignitaries and organizations included works of art such as Benjamin Franklin's bust by the great French sculptor, Jean Antoine Houdon (1741–1828), fifty rare paintings, and—from the Society of Parisian Couturiers—forty-nine hand crafted dolls dressed in fashions from 1796 to 1906. Perhaps the most heartfelt offering came from a disabled veteran who had carved a gavel out of a tree that came from the World War I battlefield of Belleau Woods. In all, 52,000 packaged or crated gifts were sent to Le Havre and packed into the "forty and eights." In December 1948 the freighter *Magellan* shipped the forty-nine cars across the Atlantic to Weehauken, New Jersey.[11]

As the vessel entered port, the painted message "Merci, America" was prominently emblazoned on the hull amidships in large block letters. Waves of Air Force planes flew overhead in recognition of the French gifts, while fireboats sent columns of spray into the wintry sky. Once the ship was safely tied to the pier, the cars were unloaded by dock workers who volunteered their services. Shortly before *Magellan* had left France, Congress joined in the generous mood of the day by passing a special bill waiving import duties for the Merci Train. New York's own "forty and eight" received a ticker tape parade down Broadway loaded on the back of a flatbed trailer. More than two hundred thousand people lined the route shouting their approval with "you're welcome" to the people of France.[12]

Meanwhile, the other forty-eight rail cars were separated into three trains with destinations to New England, the West and the South. As had been the case in New York City, each state gave a big welcome for its Merci car. But while the public expressions of appreciation were genuine in all venues, some state organizers were unable to show the same joy when it came to cooperating among themselves. In some states veterans' organizations that had shown little or no support for the Friendship Train now claimed their right to accept their state's Merci car. As Drew Pearson arranged for the "forty and eights" to be received by each state, he sometimes became exasperated with veterans' organizations. According to the journalist, the American Legion in California, "which did almost nothing for the Friendship Train," now "wanted" their state's Merci car. A similar problem arose in South Carolina. Before that state's "forty and eight" had even arrived in Spartanburg, jealousy and hard feelings between

local leaders and veterans groups had already begun as they argued over who should accept and control the car. Greenville businessman Broadus Bailey, a veteran of World War I, had served in the next war as the city's director of civil defense. As previously mentioned, he had spearheaded the Greenville participation in the national Friendship Train. Based on his and his associates' efforts to assist Pearson's national effort, Bailey argued that he and the local Greenville veterans' chapters were the only ones in the state with the "right" to take custody of South Carolina's Merci car.[13] Since Pearson had selected Bailey as the custodian for the state's Merci car, the latter had considerable justification. As far as Bailey knew, no other section of the state had participated in the national Friendship Train. Consequently, if what he characterized as the "gratitude train" arrived in South Carolina and other sections of the state also received this gift as well, then "the people of the Piedmont area would simply be furious and justly so."[14]

Needless to say, this claim caused resentment among other veterans groups and communities in the Palmetto State, particularly the state chapter of the veterans' branch organization called the "Palmetto Grand[e] Voiture du South Carolina [de] La Société des Quarante Hommes et Eight [sic!] Chevaux." This national organization was organized in 1920 under the auspices of the American Legion by World War I veterans who had ridden the "forty and eights" during their service in France. The organization continued to attract members after 1945 from those former GIs who had followed in their fathers' wake to ride the same cars during the last year of the second war. In 1948 the Palmetto *chef*, or director of the Grand Voiture, was George Levy, a Sumter attorney and veteran of World War I. Governor Thurmond appointed him and the state's American Legion commander to arrange the car's tour and the distribution of its contents. But since the Greenville area had been the only section of the state that had contributed to the national Friendship Train, Pearson had considered Bailey the only logical choice to assume responsibility for the Merci car. As a result, friction between Levy and Bailey's upstate organization already had surfaced two months before the Merci car arrived in Spartanburg. Levy soon protested to the governor that Bailey had excluded his organization from arranging the car's itinerary. Perhaps if the governor had known of Bailey's earlier designation by Pearson, some of the antagonism that followed could have been avoided. But Thurmond did not, and thus became embroiled in a difficult situation. The collision between Pearson's intentions and Thurmond's action ensured disagreement between the upstate and the remainder of South Carolina, and thereby ultimately diminished the goodwill originally created when the Merci Train began its journey through the United States.[15]

Despite the squabbles, however, community leaders and organizations in many parts of the state wanted to know how they might have the car routed through their

town. Interest in receiving articles from the car led to citizens' inquiries. Thurmond received many letters about the matter. The Garden Club of Latta wrote Thurmond more than a month before the Merci car arrived in South Carolina requesting a "tree" from the car. In nearby Bennettsville, State Senator Paul Wallace solicited on behalf of the local French *Sans Souci* Club "one of these gifts" from the French. Charleston's own Francis Brenner contacted the governor just before the Merci car's arrival to inquire about the "plans for distribution you have made" for the contents from the "forty and eight" to the rest of the state.[16]

In response to numerous inquiries the state's chief executive made it clear that he was not in charge of distribution of the car's contents. In December 1948 he told one person that the American Legion in South Carolina and the Palmetto Grand Voiture would arrange the distribution. But after learning in a letter from Drew Pearson (the National Chair of the Merci Train) that Bailey had been appointed as the state chair, the governor seemed to reverse himself. Thurmond began referring inquiries to Bailey and his Greenville committee as well, even though he still suggested that Levy also be approached. By late winter 1949 the discontent over the Merci car became a growing sore point.[17]

For some unknown reason, Mayor Frank Owens of Columbia tried to work out a compromise in late January 1949. He had come into office in 1946 and had led his city's local Gratitude train donation during the spring of the previous year. He suggested to Pearson that while Bailey should keep his role as state chair when the Merci car arrived in Greenville, other veterans groups in the state should be given a role in determining the car's future itinerary. The mayor argued that many communities deserved recognition for adopting their own French towns and sending donations. Although they had not contributed to the national train, he thought these communities should nevertheless get to see the state's "forty and eight." Besides, he reminded Pearson, some of these communities had wanted to contribute to the original national effort; Owens himself and other community leaders had asked – in unheeded requests made directly to the Washington columnist – that a section of the Friendship train come through their region of South Carolina. Whether this line of argument had any influence on Pearson or Bailey appears unlikely, for Owens's attempt to forge a compromise bore no fruit. The Merci car remained in Greenville for five months after its arrival.[18]

Bailey's and the Greenville committee's lack of cooperation with Levy also exasperated a number of communities in the state. Even though the national committee expected each car to travel to as many towns and cities as feasible within each state, Bailey seemed reluctant to allow the Merci car outside the bounds of Greenville

after its arrival in his city in February 1949. And while its first stop had been Spartanburg, the boxcar and its contents spent just an hour or so there before heading to its neighbor to the west, where it was unloaded and its artifacts were placed on display in the Civic Art Gallery. There they remained until the South Carolina American Legion annual meeting in July. Once the veterans left town, the Greenville custodians finally allowed the rail car itself and some gifts to travel to communities throughout the state, but only if the latter had received an invitation from the car's Greenville coordinators. Those communities that accepted then had to take on the charges for its transport to their town.[19]

Because of the arbitrary way the Greenville committee arranged the Merci car's itinerary, at least one observer grew disenchanted with the car's long stay in Greenville. In spite of all the initial publicity when it came to Spartanburg and Greenville in February 1949, one disgruntled Spartanburg leader – Louis Changeux, manager of Spartanburg's Piedmont Club – asked the governor a year and half later what had happened to the state's "forty and eight." In fact, Changeux called it a "ghost car" since its whereabouts seemed unknown. And the rail car never returned to Spartanburg, although it did have brief stops in other towns, including Charleston and Columbia, despite the rancor its arrival had engendered.[20]

The exact itinerary of the "forty and eight" during its subsequent state tour is unknown. Charleston welcomed it for a time in late 1949 or early 1950 and received some of the Merci car's contents. The Charleston Museum became that community's main recipient, and some artifacts still remain part of its collection, including a brass lamp, assorted Neolithic stone tools, Merovingian iron projectile points and knives, and pottery from the same era. Other articles given to the city found homes in other institutions or with individuals. Several French books from the Merci car were distributed to libraries in the Charleston community. Mrs. C.A. Graiser received a set of earrings and brooch, while Mrs. Morrison received a copper cake mold. Nonetheless, Greenville appeared to receive the bulk of the car's contents in the end. Unfortunately only one artifact can still be located there, namely a wooden sculpture replica by the Italian Florentine firm of Bartolozzi e Maioli now in the collection of the Greenville County Library. The fashion doll from Paris allotted to South Carolina and other artwork that came with the Merci car cannot be located to date. Work continues to track the whereabouts of these and the remaining items.[21]

Fortunately, the final disposition of the state's "forty and eight" rail car is better known. Once its tour ended, the Merci car returned to Greenville and found a home at McPherson Park for two and half decades. Over time it began to deteriorate and by the early 1970s appeared, according to the Merci Car Book, in "bad shape." In

1973 the local Auxiliary Unit 3 of the American Legion took on the job of restoring the car and had it moved to another park in the same city. By the end of the following decade it had fallen into neglect once more. In the early 1990s local American Legion members decided that it needed a new home and offered it to the recently-opened State Museum in Columbia. After this offer was declined, another home was found in Columbia behind the American Legion post on Pickens Street. There it now stands refurbished again and protected by an aluminum roof.[22]

In conclusion, this preliminary study has tried to resurrect a small, brief, but also interesting chapter in the volatile saga of Franco-American relations. It shows how grassroots campaigns of assistance can become great community-wide efforts that governments do not need to coordinate. Although the reception South Carolina gave its French gift was tarnished by miscommunications and jealousies within the state, it is important to note that through their local support alone many towns and cities across the Palmetto State provided aid to an old ally. Some questions remain for future research. What motivated ordinary Americans – in South Carolina and throughout the land – to contribute to the Friendship Train? Put another way, what roles did simple humanitarianism, affection for a recent wartime ally, and fear of the communist threat play in this charitable effort? How did South Carolina communities besides Greenville and Charleston organize and carry-out their own aid projects for France and Western Europe unrelated to the Friendship Train? What motivated South Carolina communities to receive the Merci car, and which communities were involved? For the author and other museum curators there is also the question regarding the fate of the car's contents, whether extant today or lost. Stay tuned, there is still more to this story!

NOTES

1. The *State*, 10 February 1949. The author wishes to thank the following colleagues for providing research aid and suggestions for this article: Susan Hiott, Clemson University Special Collections; Suzanne Case, Greenville Public Library, Greenville, SC; Mrs. John S. Conway, Greenville, SC; Jan Hiester, Judy Logan and Sharon Bennett, Charleston Museum, Charleston, SC; Francis Brenner, St. Johns Island, SC; and Molly Hennen of Minneapolis, MN for reading and reviewing this paper.

2. On Pearson's origination of this idea see Herman Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines: The World of Drew Pearson* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 147–64 and the *New York Times* (hereafter *NYT*), 8 November 1947. My discussion in the following paragraph relies heavily on Klurfeld's analysis. For information on Franco-American relations during the twentieth century see Bernard Poiretste, *Francaises: Les Relations transatlantiques, The French-American relationship, (with Conversations in English translations included)* (Nashville, TN: Champs-Elysees audiopublications, 2003); the author thanks Jean Marie E. Mille of Columbia, SC for sharing his copy of this insightful examination of the relations between the two nations.

3. On Truman's appeal to the nation see the *Charleston News and Courier* (hereafter *CNC*), 6 October 1947; on the need to save grain see *CNC*, 3, 4 October 1947, and *NYT*, 27 November 1947.

4. *NYT*, 7, 12, 14, 15, and 23 November 1947; Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines*, 147–49.

5. For these and other details on the Train's reception in France see Klurfeld, *Behind the Lines*, 156–60, and *NYT*, 18 December 1947.

6. On Bailey's biography see the *Greenville News* (hereafter *GN*), 17 June 1980. For details about activities in the Upstate see Bailey to George Levy, 6 December 1948, Strom Thurmond Papers, Clemson University Special Collections (hereafter STP).

7. For this advertisement see *CNC*, 23 January 1948. For similar ads by other businesses see *CNC*, 26, 29, 30 January 1948, and for a full page ad see 13 January 1948; all of these are in clippings file folder "Adoption of Flers de L'Orne," Francis Brenner Collection, Archives of the Charleston Museum (hereafter Brenner Coll.).

8. In reference to the securing of the cargo vessel and its trip to France the author spoke with Francis Brenner in his Charleston home on Johns Island; see notes from interview, 12 December 2003, in possession of the author, and *CNC*, 17 March and 25 April 1948, Brenner Coll. For Columbia donations for Berck see John H. Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community, 1740–1990* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993) 453. Not only did other South Carolina communities implement their own donation programs, but the same charitable impulse was also manifest in other communities, including Schenectady, NY. This town adopted Chambois. See untitled clipping in Brenner Coll., possibly from *CNC*, 25 April 1948. For details about other Palmetto state communities that adopted French towns see Mayor Frank Owens (Columbia) to Drew Pearson, 31 January 1949, STP. These towns were Orangeburg, Summerville, Georgetown, Beaufort, and Ridgeville.

9. For information about the French plan to thank the United States see C.W. Ardery to George Levy, 28 July 1948, STP; Palmetto Grand Voiture du South Carolina . . . Merci Box Car Memorial Book, June 24, 1983, copy on file at the South Carolina Room at the Greenville County Public Library, Greenville, SC (hereafter Merci Car Book). See also Manuel A. Conley, "Merci, America: How a Whole Nation Said Thank You," *American Heritage* 32, number 6, October–November 1981, 94–96.

10. For details on the "forty and eight" cars see Conley, "Merci America," 94–95, and Merci Box Book.

11. For published account of the French Merci Train see Conley, "Merci, America," 94–96; there are several websites that also discuss the Merci Train in various levels of detail and accuracy. See, for example, http://www.rypn.org/Merci/SC_ANDY_DOLAK.htm.

12. See previous note. Also see Tyler Abell (ed.), *Drew Pearson Diaries, 1949–1959* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1974), 18–19.

13. For the best illustration of this disagreement within South Carolina see Bailey to George Levy, 6 December 1948; Levy to Bailey, 31 January 1949; Levy to Governor Strom Thurmond, 14 December 1948; all three letters in STP.

14. Bailey to Levy, 6 December 1948, STP. For Pearson's frustration with some Legion posts in California see Abell, *Drew Pearson Diaries*, 21.

15. Thurmond to Bailey, 3 December 1948; Levy to Thurmond, 14 December 1948; Ardery to Levy, 28 July 1948, all three letters in STP.

16. Marian L. Allen (Latta, SC) to Thurmond, 11 December 1948; Brenner to Thurmond, 31 January 1949; Paul A. Wallace (State Senator, Marlboro County) to Thurmond, 7 December 1948, all three letters in STP.

17. The reason for Thurmond's shift is still unknown and more research is needed to elucidate how and when his plans for coordinating the Merci Car changed. See the letter of complaint by Levy to Bailey, 31 January 1949, along with Thurmond to Bailey, 3 December 1948, which reports the Governor's original appointment; both letters in STP.

18. See Owens to Pearson, 31 January 1949, STP.

19. C.M. Gaffney, Jr. (American Legion Post #3) to Thurmond, 1 March 1949, STP.

20. Louis Changeux to Thurmond, 20 October 1950; Bailey to Changeux, 23 October 1950; both letters in STP.

21. The author examined the records of the Charleston Museum and some of the relevant artifacts in their collection. For distribution of books by the Museum to libraries in the Charleston area, see the Museum's archival file on the "Gratitude Train Objects," which includes several letters thanking the museum: Mary Powers (College of Charleston Library) to Milby Burton, 14 April 1950, and John Potts (Avery Institute) to Milby Burton, 28 April 1950. For other articles given to individuals see the following letters in the same file: Milby Burton to Mrs. C.A. Graiser, 7 April 1950, and to Mrs. Morrison, 10 April 1950. For the Italian replica the author visited the Greenville County Public Library, where the staff of the South Carolina Room allowed him to examine the piece. For a pictorial study of the Paris-made gift dolls placed on the Merci Train see Michelle Murphy, *Two Centuries of French Fashion* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1949); according to Murphy (see foreword) all of the train's dolls were donated to the Brooklyn Museum in order to keep the collection intact.

22. For the story about the car's later history in South Carolina see Merci Car Book. The author has viewed the car in its current location on Pickens Street many times and recalls that the American Legion offered it to the State Museum in the early 1990s. Because of its size and the immense upkeep it required, the Museum had to refuse its inclusion due to budget constraints.