

SUGGESTED CITATION:

MEDRANO-BIGAS, Pau.

The Forgotten Years of Bibendum. Michelin's American Period in Milltown: Design, Illustration and Advertising by Pioneer Tire Companies (1900-1930).

Doctoral dissertation. University of Barcelona, 2015 [English translation, 2018].

SOCIAL COHESION IN THE FACTORY

The history of Milltown was intimately linked to that of Michelin, the first local industry, which generated employment and was the source of growth and progress for its inhabitants. Many of them were employees of the factory or depended indirectly on the businesses that flourished around them. The welfare policies for workers applied by Jules Hauceville-Michelin as well as the interweaving with the population's social, economic and cultural systems created a beneficial symbiotic relationship, albeit with a delicate balance.

1. American tires ... and imported workers

In Middlesex County and specifically in the Milltown area, a nucleus of the working population was historically linked to different rubber industries that had been developed there. This is the case of numerous immigrants from Germany. Seeking an opportunity in the promised land, Phillip Kuhlthau emigrated to the United States around 1847 at the age of 18¹, as one of more than 43,462 Germans who relocated there between 1841 and 1850.²

As in other European countries, the difficult situation their country of origin faced after the Napoleonic Wars and the massive displacement of the population towards the main urban nuclei created precariousness and a scarcity of resources. This level of discontent contrasted with the American claim for a new life. There were attractive promises of salaries that doubled, at minimum, what could be earned in their country working in similar positions.

After earning a living on a farm for the first two years in the U.S., Kuhlthau arrived in Milltown and worked for the factory of his countryman Christopher Meyer—one of the first Germans, if not the first, to settle in New Brunswick in 1838—for nearly three years. Encouraged by his earnings, he returned to his hometown near Frankfurt, where he persuaded a significant number of family and neighbors—mostly farmers, merchants and artisans—to cross the Atlantic, settle in Milltown and work for the rubber industry.³ A large part of the 350 to 400 workers employed by the Meyer Rubber Co. in 1858 were Germans.⁴

The second major emigration of European workers and their families to Milltown was prompted by the installation of another rubber industry. In this case, it dealt with the Michelin tire factory. Although specialized labor existed in Milltown's catchment area for treating rubber and manufacturing tires—until then employed in the International A. & V. Tire Co. of Milltown and in other New Brunswick factories—they had no training in the production standards that characterized Michelin's European factories. In order to maintain strict control of the situation, a large number of highly qualified French workers and employees, imbued with the firm's corporate spirit, were relocated to Milltown. They mainly came from the Auvergne regions—where the Clermont-Ferrand factory was located—and Brittany. Michelin also proceeded to recruit employees from within the French community that had already settled in American lands. Being French was a status that was rewarded with trust:

“At the Michelin factory, it does not matter what your position is in the company, an employee always has a Frenchman as a supervising manager, and only the French have the right to work ‘in secret’ that is, in the secret manufacturing workshops [for tires]. These workers were regarded as the most reliable, and their selection required a long and drawn out process. It took a year of apprenticeship to train a specialized worker.”⁵

In this way, a younger French population was added to the town's already settled German community. Both were integrated in the life of the American population, yet without losing their identity and suitably preserving their respective roots and cultural heritage.⁶ It appears that the diversity between the two groups could have had points of friction and tension due to World War I, although it remains to be seen up to what point this affected the work relationships of Michelin's German employees, in an American factory controlled by the French.⁷

2. Milltown workers and inhabitants

The relationship between the number of inhabitants and the number of workers employed in local industry is evident in the case of Milltown. Several of the texts consulted and included in the general bibliography highlight the establishment of the Michelin Tire Co. in 1907 as a driving force for population growth, an affirmation that requires further clarification. To reach this conclusion, some authors have mentioned data in a biased way, taking into account the first available population estimate, being 561 inhabitants in 1900, and the first official national census, which was in 1910 and listed 1,584 inhabitants. This comparison results in a tripling of the population between 1900 and 1910 (see **TABLE 1**, in which new estimated population data have been incorporated).

In fact, the remarkable increase occurred in a shorter time span, considering that the 1905 Milltown census accounted for 1,210 inhabitants, an increase of 115.7% with respect to 1900. The rise in population between 1905 and 1910 was 31%—in spite of the claims of the Michelin factory, active in 1908, increasing from 1,210 to 1,584 inhabitants.

Population growth between 1900 and 1905 should be attributed to the emergence of a preceding industry, the International Automobile & Vehicle Tire Company, which had been established in Milltown since 1902. In that year it had already employed approximately 200 people in the vicinity and 300 employees in 1905, becoming the largest generator of employment in the area and well above other local firms.⁸ The majority of employees, together with the company and its facilities, were absorbed in March 1907 after being purchased by the Michelin Tire Company (see **TABLE 2**).

In its first year of operation Michelin's factory staff consisted of 1,000–1,200 workers—1,000 men and 200 women—, gradually increasing to 1,500 in 1915. After the First World War and the climate of optimism generated by the business's constant growth, Michelin reached the number of 3,000 employees in 1921. In spite of the severe but temporary crisis of 1921–22, the productive commitment of the firm maintained close to 3,000 workers by 1925. From that moment on adversity dragged the company to definitively close the factory—1,800 workers in 1928—and to cease operations in 1930 (see TABLE 2).

The rising population numbers in Milltown ran in parallel to the growth of Michelin. Between 1910 and 1920 the population grew 62.4%, from 1,584 to 2,573 inhabitants. In contrast, with the decline and closure of Michelin, the population increase between 1920 and 1930 did not exceed 16.3%, one point below the percentage registered between 1930 and 1940, which was 17.3%.

3. Living in [and for] the factory

In France, Michelin applied its social and strategic concept of business with accompanying services and infrastructures—hospital, schools, housing, cultural and athletic clubs—aimed at the welfare of its workers. It was a stewardship targeted for obtaining loyal, healthy, satisfied and productive employees in a controlled business environment. The investment in training specialized workers—including the transmission of knowledge about manufacturing processes, the cornerstone of high level business secrecy in Michelin—had to pay off. Therefore, a series of benefits that were not strictly salary-based were essential to retain employees and keep them loyal to the company (figs. 1-2).

On the subject of wages, it is worth noting the difference between what an average worker received at the Clermont-Ferrand factory and the Milltown factory. The salaries paid by Michelin American workers specialized in the sector, which were highly sought after due to fierce competition, practically triples those offered in France. According to data provided by the company itself in the booklet *Prospérité ou Sam et François* published in 1927, the daily wage or salary of a French employee was 45.00 FF, as compared to 7.00 USD for the U.S. counterpart. This difference is made explicit in the following table calculating approximate equivalences of purchasing power for French and American currency between 1927 and today (2010):

American worker (daily wage)

7.00 USD (1927) = 88.00 USD (2010) = 67.00 EUR (2010)

French worker (daily wage)

45.00 FF (1927) = 35.00 USD (2010) = 26.00 EUR (2010)

Since 1898, the French Michelin offered various incentives such as participation—through a scale of variable premiums—in business profits and added health services and accident insurance in 1902. They offered the possibility of acquiring food, coal and goods at discounted prices in a cooperative created at the end of 1910—managed from the factory and with employees chosen by the management, and in 1912, provided nursery services for employees' infants.⁹ There was also the possibility to join the Association Sportive Michelin (A.S.M.)—with more than 200 members and its own stadium equipped with sports halls and changing rooms with showers—which since 1911 promoted sports such as cycling, soccer, rugby, tennis, fencing, swimming and other distinct athletic disciplines. One could also participate in cultural and leisure activities such as music, fishing and hunting or stamp collecting.¹⁰

This business policy continued on in American lands, with the creation in Milltown of different welfare departments responsible for the well-being, health and social needs of employees and their families. In the year 1919, they were grouped under the direction of the newly incorporated Henry Rutgers Baldwin Meyers, 33 years old and a native of Brunswick. The importance of this novel initiative is reflected in a text from 1921:

“The advance in sanitary precaution, safety appliance and working condition is nowhere more marked than in the corporate industries that were formerly most indifferent. The establishing of welfare departments in mills and factories has called into being a new profession, and as welfare manager Mr. Meyers, of Milltown, New Jersey, is now devoting his talents that had formerly been devoted to pedagogy with marked success. His present engagement is with the Michelin Tire Company and his work has borne abundant fruit.”¹¹

Numerous actions that reverted to benefits for the entire Milltown community were fruit of the factory’s social and business requirements. On January 15, 1917, the First National Bank of Milltown opened its doors, the town’s first bank created by a group of entrepreneurs and business owners together with the assistance of Michelin, who also refurbished one of its buildings to be utilized as the bank’s premises.¹² The bank was a basic instrument for Michelin’s financial and commercial activity and for the numerous businesses in the area, as well as a useful service to individuals.

Jules Hauvette-Michelin ordered a French school to be established in 1910 to educate children of its employees, in which, without neglecting English, classes were given mainly in French. It was located in front of the main Michelin building, on the other side of Main Street and next to the Lawrence Brook Bridge. After passing all four levels of studies, at age 10, boys and girls were enrolled in the American public school of Milltown.¹³

Michelin also contributed to the construction of the town’s first Catholic church.¹⁴ In Milltown there were different denominational congregations, such as the local Methodist Episcopal Church, or the St. Paul German Reformist Church that officiated worship services in German to descendants of German immigrants. But the massive arrival of French workers called for a new church. A Mission already existed in the town that offered religious services to the members of the Catholic community since 1912, and whose first mass took place on the premises of the French school. Jules Hauvette-Michelin facilitated the premises of the French Clubhouse in 1917, which were used until 1920. The company contributed \$ 15,000 towards the construction of a brick church to accommodate the growing parish, on the condition that the same amount be provided by the Milltown Mission. The first stone was laid on October 30, 1921 and six months later, the first wedding was held after being inaugurated. Sunday masses were held with the gospel recited in both languages, French and English. The final cost of the building was \$ 40,000, and as an act of appreciation and acknowledgment of the generous donation from the firm with French origins, the church was baptized with the name Our Lady of Lourdes (fig. 4).¹⁵

In addition to the experiences in Clermont and Milltown, one must also consider that of the Agenzia Italiana dei Pneumatici Michelin, with headquarters in Milan and factory in Turin. In 1916 the Stabilimento Auxiliare Michelin was created in Turin, a hospital similar to the one that had been established in Clermont-Ferran two years earlier, but with less capacity. It had 60 beds and was equipped with all kinds of surgical instruments and two rooms for radioscopy and radiography. After World War I, the hospital resumed its health care provision as part of services that were provided to factory employees. Michelin also showed in Turin a great concern for hygiene and safety within its facilities. It established

an internal insurance company, managed a food cooperative for employees and set up spaces for a dining room-restaurant with discounted prices. In addition, it constructed housing in land near the industrial complex and sought to promote social cohesion with initiatives such as the Michelin Sporting Club, created in March 1920 and having 1,267 members and a dozen different sports activities by 1928.¹⁶

4. Michelin city

Providing housing for workers and their families constituted a valued claim in the fierce competition among firms in the sector for skilled labor services. In this aspect, Michelin et Cie. initiated a firm policy of housing construction in France with the creation in January 1909 of the Société des Habitations à Bon Marché, led by Édouard Michelin as President and majority shareholder. That same year two three-story buildings with 35 housing units each were constructed, equipped with modern services such as water, gas and bathrooms. Combining different types of buildings (collective lodgings, multi-family houses and detached houses) built in various locations near the factories, the figure rose in 1914 to 394 constructed lodgings. The dwellings were offered as rentals to workers, at a price lower than the capitalization of the cost price.¹⁷ In any case:

“A four-room family lodging cost 300 francs a year, representing a third of an employee’s wage (...) and a quarter of that wage was needed if one of three rooms was rented. It is thus understood that this type of accommodation was in fact not intended for the mass of workers but rather for those employees in the organizational chart’s supervisory and management positions. In any case, the area of about 400 lodgings proved to be completely inadequate to accommodate post-war business growth. In August 1920, Michelin et Cie. had made available 450 lodgings (of which 107 were in collective accommodations). This represented 5% of their total labor force.”¹⁸

Following the guidelines from the parent company, the building expansion of the Michelin factory in Milltown included lodging to accommodate workers and their families, which were built next to the factory. These residences were particularly necessary for Michelin, since housing was needed for French employees who had crossed the Atlantic and left their homes behind to participate in the start-up and development of American production. Construction work included a sewage system for homes, with a network of sewer pipes about eight kilometers in length. The installation, which at the time was fully run by Michelin, was finally sold to Milltown Town Hall in 1924.¹⁹

There were three types of housing assigned to employees, depending on their family status and professional category. The first model consisted of barracks divided into fifteen rooms, each one lodging two individuals, which were destined for lower-ranking workers and the unmarried. The second was made up of four-room bungalows. The third model consisted of single-family houses with six rooms, parquet, electrical and heating installations, a bathroom, basement and a porch at the entrance, surrounded by a garden.²⁰ This lodging was presumably for senior executives and higher-ranking employees and their families (figs. 5-13).²¹

In May 1916, the project for constructing 50 four-room bungalows, commissioned by the same construction company responsible for the remodeling and successive extensions of the factory’s production buildings and other construction, the John F. Ferguson Company, was publicly announced. Construction work was carried out during the summer of that year, with a total of 53 bungalows being built, three more than the number stipulated in the initial contract. The average cost of each residence was

\$1,125 and, although it was estimated that construction work would take 75 working days, it only took 56 days to complete them. These single-story bungalows had a wooden structure that was supported by a cement base raised above ground level, with exterior access to a basement or cellar that occupied one quarter of the building's floor surface. The exterior walls of the dwelling were covered with cedar wood while the interior surface was covered with plaster and woodwork finishes were made of cypress. Each house had a toilet and four rooms: a living room, kitchen and two bedrooms. Access to the main entrance of the house—which had its own garden—was made through a raised covered porch. There was also a back porch, but this was uncovered. The roofs of the bungalow were protected with slate tiles (figs. 6-7).²²

Over time, the number of residences grew to a total of 203, built for the staff and families of the Michelin Tire Company. The houses were owned by the company, but were rented at cost to their employees. In 1928, Michelin managed the rental and sale of 240 houses that they owned under conditions that benefited their employees.²³

Other types of buildings were intended for social functions and collective leisure activities for employees, such as the Michelin Community House. This was the company's recreational center that was equipped with an athletics hall where one could play basketball and other sports under a covered roof. It was also equipped with "bowling alleys, billiard tables, a movie theater and a cafeteria."²⁴ Employees could also join groups and men's and women's clubs that developed recreational and cultural activities, such as the factory's band, created around 1920 and known as the "Michelin Band" (fig. 14).

5. Monitored well-being

To a greater or lesser extent, all tire manufacturers had developed policies to attract and retain their employees. The term 'welfare capitalism' responds to these programs aimed at achieving the welfare of the workforce and cultivating loyalty and fidelity, and thus discouraging union membership, strikes and protests. Apart from the industrial complex's provision of direct economic benefits or services, the control of social activities outside the factory was basic to maintain productive stability. For this reason the company promoted all kinds of cultural and sports associations in which employees could occupy all of their leisure time, and even included religious services.

In the French city of Clermont-Ferrand, the competitor firm Bergougnan practiced the same policy, advancing or following Michelin initiatives. In 1899 they launched a benefit-sharing plan, in 1901 a mutual insurance and pension plan company, a nursery next to the factory in 1905, a workers' cooperative serving 1,500 members in 1918, and the initiation of a housing plan in 1912 that eight years later already had 194 lodgings constructed. It also had a sports club founded in 1912, the Gaulois Athletic Club, where rugby and cycling (team created in 1906) had an important role, as well as their own orchestra, "L'Harmonie Bergougnan," created in 1903.²⁵

In Europe, certain social provisions were historically protected by the welfare state and directly managed by government administrations. In America, this was handled in a different manner. Fierce capitalism and competition among market industries in which Michelin participated—along with workers' demands and trade union pressures—resulted in the improvement of employment opportunities associated with wages and benefits of belonging to one firm or another: "For Akron's rubber manufacturers, expansion during World War I caused twin labor problems, labor shortages and high turnover rates, as workers moved from job to job and company to company."²⁶ The examples of the "Big Four" leaders

of the tire industry are illustrative. With the exception of the first on the list—the potent U.S. Rubber Co.—, the other three—BF Goodrich, Goodyear and Firestone—were all located in the same city of Akron, Ohio.²⁷

Goodyear, through its Labor Department, launched in 1912 its own hospital, a restaurant, the corporate magazine *Wingfoot Clan*—meeting point and communication between the management and workers—and a housing project. The communities of Goodyear Heights and Seiberling Fields were constructed near the factories. Each of the 90 houses built in the first phase in 1914 (153 in 1916) belonged to one of the 19 residence typologies designed by the architects—comprising single-family, two-family or bungalows—and both the urbanization and its paved streets and homes included modern gas, electricity and telephone services and facilities. The sale of these homes was open to all citizens, although Goodyear employees had a 25% discount on the price as well as access to financial assistance.

Nearly 5 acres of Seiberling Field residence complex grounds were dedicated to multi-sport facilities, including new baseball, bowling, soccer, tennis, or firing range equipment. In 1915 insurance policies were established for employees and, a year later, a pension plan. The Goodyear Hall community building—in front of the Akron factory—was completed in 1920. It hosted an auditorium with 1,785 seats, a gymnasium, rooms for internal groups and clubs, and facilities that housed classrooms and laboratories of the newly-formed Goodyear Industrial University.²⁸ By early 1917 the Goodyear Heights complex had grown to 300 houses—by year’s end it was planned to build between 75 and 100 more—, housing a population close to 1,500 people.²⁹

BF Goodrich declined to create a housing plan for their employees, but by 1917 they developed a comprehensive health and labor protection program, centralized in a single department employing more than 125 people, including 9 doctors and 23 nurses. In addition to medical and health services, life insurance, accident compensation and legal counseling were included. Benefit-sharing plans were also established in 1920. Through the Goodrich Athletic and Field Association—of which there were 2,107 men and 506 women members in 1917—sports were promoted such as athletics, baseball, bowling, boxing, tennis, cricket or roller hockey. News about these events and other activities that promoted the corporate spirit were published monthly in the company’s magazine *The Circle*, which started in June of 1916.³⁰

Firestone also offered free health insurance and pension plans, medical care, legal advice—through the Firestone Bank set up in 1916—and life insurance (1918). They had the Firestone Stadium and Athletic Field for the practice of sports and leisure facilities for employees at the Firestone Clubhouse. In July 1915 *The Firestone Non-Skid* was published, the first issue of the corporate magazine for employees. In September 1916, one of the most ambitious employee housing projects, Firestone Park, began. In a large area adjacent to the factory and financed by Firestone, 725 homes were built in one year for rent or for purchase, which were not limited only to the firm’s employees.³¹

Other companies who were ranked lower than the four leaders—such as the Michelin Tire Company in Milltown—developed similar housing plans tailored to the needs of each industry and their workforce. In the city of Akron, **The Miller Rubber Co.** acquired land, built and sold houses to its employees in a similar fashion as Firestone during the same time period.³² In 1916 they established a well-equipped hospital for employees, who also had access to an athletic stadium and the company’s support for different sports teams.³³

Kelly-Springfield created the Cumberland Homes Company in 1919, in charge of building employee housing for the new factory in Cumberland, Maryland. Up until 1923, the year in which the project ended, more than one hundred houses were built. Cumberland Homes, the majority of which pertained to Kelly-Springfield, owned 119 residences that were rented to their workers.³⁴

As a last example, in 1919 the **Pennsylvania Rubber Company**—manufacturer of the tire brand Vacuum Cup—acquired 81 hectares of property south of Jeannette, Pennsylvania, adjacent to their factory. It was there where they initiated the project of building employee housing, beginning with twelve houses and adding 50 more in a second phase. The completion of construction work was scheduled for April 15, 1920.³⁵

6. An insured job

In early July 1919, the Michelin Tire Co. in Milltown announced an ambitious life insurance coverage plan for all of their workers. In the words of Vice President Jules Hauvette-Michelin, this policy was a reward “not only in recognition of the final ending of the World War, but also in recognition of the loyalty of his employees who stood steadfastly by the company during the dreary years of the great conflict.”³⁶ Without any cost or need for previous medical check-ups, every worker was insured, regardless of their rank and including men, women and youth. This included employees of the factory and of any of the Michelin delegations in Milltown, New Brunswick, New York, San Francisco and other branches throughout the country.

Michelin’s insurance plan was formalized through the Travelers Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut.³⁷ It had entered into force on June 16 of that same year although it was decided not to make it public until the beginning of July, following the signing of the Treaty of Versailles between the Allies and Germany. Life insurance (fig. 3)³⁸ was an additional protection granted by the company, which did not interfere with or replace other possible coverage, such as private insurance or the state’s own funding of the New Jersey Workmen’s Compensation Law. The economic coverage of Michelin’s insurance policy in the event of death depended directly on the length of employment,³⁹ according to the following criteria:

From 6 months to 1 year of seniority	\$ 200
From 1 to 2 years	\$ 500
From 2 to 3 years	\$ 600
From 3 to 4 years	\$ 700
From 4 to 5 years	\$ 800
From 5 to 6 years	\$ 900
From 6 to 8 years	\$ 1,000
From 8 to 10 years	\$ 1,100
More than 10 years	\$ 1,200

The American subsidiary’s life insurance plan was unmatched by accident insurance coverage in the other Michelin factories.⁴⁰ In France, it was unusual to contract life insurance for workers, and Michelin ruled out this type of protection due to its high cost. This was impossible to assume if we consider that—in order for a widow and children to receive a monthly income equivalent to the salary of the head of the family—the quota to pay cost a worker about $\frac{1}{6}$ of his salary.⁴¹

To have a comparative reference, the powerful company **BF Goodrich** launched in early 1916 an ambitious project of social coverage for their employees. The measures included a pension plan, a series of disability benefits, periods of sick leave and substantial life insurance. The insurance policy for each employee was \$ 500, with an annual increase of \$100 for continued service, accruable up to a total value of \$ 1,000.⁴²

In addition, the **Hood Rubber Co.** of Watertown, Massachusetts—a medium-sized firm with a potent rubber footwear business and a growing tire division developed since 1917—launched a similar plan in early 1919. Employees—numbering approximately 7,500 of which about one-third were women—received two types of coverage at no cost. Benefits included compensation from \$ 8 and \$ 10 a week for sick leave. And in the case of death, family compensation between \$ 200 and \$ 1,000 was provided. A minimum of three months' seniority was required to obtain the insurance plan and the highest compensations corresponded to workers with five or more years of service.⁴³

Another example was the plan carried out by the **National Tire & Rubber Company** of East Palestine, Ohio. Similar to previous cases, life insurance was the responsibility of the company, and compensation amounts increased automatically as the staff's seniority with the company increased. In the case of death the full amount covered by the policy was paid to the beneficiary, whereas in cases of permanent disability the payment was divided into monthly installments.⁴⁴

7. Affiliations and memberships

The passage of time may have somewhat idealized the history of the Michelin American factory with respect to work relationships. Still, as commonly occurred in large industrial companies, the coexistence between management and the mass of workers was not without incident. Unions, of course, also put great pressure on the U.S. tire industry, and employee affiliation and membership was a source of friction and conflict.

An early example of this situation in the rubber industry can be read in a news story published in 1907. It deals with a letter from the newly formed Lambertville Rubberworkers' Union, a member of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), in reference to reprisals initiated by the Lambertville Rubber Co. of Lambertville, New Jersey, after the union's founding. According to this publication:

“(...) the Lambertville Rubber Company has endeavored to make slaves of its male and female employees by shutting down its plant and then submitting to each employee the following: Lambertville, N. J., June, 1, 1907. To Whom It May Concern: Owing to what this company believes to be the unwarranted interference of the Labor Union with the business of the company, the factory will be closed from this date until further notice. Wages in full will be paid at 11 o'clock on Monday, June the 10th. When work is resumed the factory will be strictly non-union, and any former employee will be given work at the earliest possible moment after signing the enclosed card: Lambertville Rubber Co., Lambertville, N. J. [suspension points, space for the date]. I hereby make application for employment with the Lambertville Rubber Co. and certify that I am not a member of any labor union.”⁴⁵

In the absence of any document or work contract between the Michelin Tire Co. and its employees, we can assume that this type of clause was a normal regulation in the sector.⁴⁶ Other points made reference

to safeguarding the confidentiality of business secrets and production acquired in the company, or to clauses preventing employment in a firm belonging to the competition after leaving the current company without having allowed a previously stipulated period of time pass.

The testimony of the son of Lorincz Rosta, a Hungarian immigrant employed at the Michelin Tire Company in Milltown between 1913-1925, recounts his particular vision of his childhood years:

“I don’t think that they had unions or ... didn’t speak about them (...) At Michelin, I don’t recall any union activity there. The Michelin Company was a very advanced company and they had a lot of benefits for their workers, bonus pay for extra work, good vacation pays. They even had a pension plan. So, the workers had no complaints, and, of course, during the First World War, my father was there, they were working, like, double shifts, so, they made very good money there.”⁴⁷

The local New Brunswick press as well as the national press published news items regarding altercations and strikes in the factory. In April 1908, a few months after the start of Michelin production, several workers in one department went on strike after the incorporation of two foreign [Hungarian in this case] workers. According to the news, the matter was settled after a meeting with the company officials ... and the transfer of the new workers.⁴⁸ In June of the same year it appears that some of the staff met to put pressure on management by threatening to strike after the announcement of wage reductions in production—the 90 cents paid per tire was to be reduced to 68 cents—, which was operated by two teams with rotating day and night shifts. The exposed facts were denied by Henry C. Young, superintendent of Michelin.⁴⁹

On August 8, 1916, forty-five employees—male workmen—went on strike to demand a reduction in the number of hours worked. The situation, which cost the company \$ 600 in wages, lasted for five working days.⁵⁰ News published in mid-September of that same year in the weekly *Coast Seamen’s Journal* of San Francisco, the voice for Sailor’s Union of the Pacific—a union founded in 1885 that defended the interests of workers in the shipping and fishing industry—indicated that the conflict had not been resolved. According to the news item, about six hundred workers at the Michelin mill in Milltown, many of whom were Hungarians, Poles, Russians and Slavs, with few of them correctly understanding English, went on strike to force salary negotiations. The demands of the employees were channeled through Henry F. Hilfers, Secretary of the New Jersey State Federation of Labor—the State representative in the American Federation of Labor workers trade union—who acted as the factory staff’s representative, helping them to organize and to broker negotiations with the company.

According to the news, Michelin management declined to meet in person with the representative, although they agreed to maintain telephone contact. The workers were pressured to sign a labor contract, a written text in English of approximately one thousand words that included various points which, for them, were the subject of discussion, including the following:

- Those workers who collected 21 1/2 cents per hour would receive, each April, an extra payment corresponding to the previous year worked, at a minimum rate of 17.33 cents per hour accounting for a whole year. This payment, according to the company, rewarded the workers’ loyalty and discretion regarding the professional secrecy of production processes.

- A clause specified that the worker, after leaving the company, could not be involved for a period of three years in the manufacture, sale or research concerning products of the same type or similar to those manufactured, marketed or developed by the Michelin Tire Company.
- Another important point, quoted literally in the news and present as well in the original contract, stated: “That all inventions and improvements made in whole or in part by him (the employee) or under his direction or at his suggestion during his employment by the Michelin Tire Company, shall be its property and that for the purpose of vesting in it such inventions or improvements he will execute such papers as may be necessary.”

The news item did not clarify the details of the negotiation, let alone the decisions concerning clauses affecting the preservation of confidentiality, professional secrecy and the transfer of rights. However, it did provide information with respect to emoluments. The workers, after a brief strike, raised the previous minimum wage from 17 cents per hour to 22 cents per hour, with an increase ranging from 2 to 5 1/2 cents per hour according to the salary scale of the factory staff.⁵¹

In September 1919, the press published the news of a riot at the Milltown factory. The factory had been shut down for a week by labor protests, and just after the company announced its intention to resume activities on September 11, a large group of demonstrators rushed in trying to storm the facilities. The rioters were expelled from the compound by law enforcement stationed there, consisting of 100 men armed with rifles commanded by the County Sheriff Charles Anderson. The situation was resolved without resorting to arms and five strikers were detained, sentenced to serve between two and six months in prison. The factory opened the next day under the protection of the sheriff, and about 75 % of the workers returned to their jobs.⁵²

The week of November 7 to 14, 1928, Michelin factory employees—800 on that date—went on strike to protest the salary reduction announced by the company, ranging from 3.5 to 5 %. Following the protests, a reduction limited to 2.5 % was accepted.⁵³ The chronicle of this strike was captured in a protest article published in the French trade unionist newspaper *Le Cri du Peuple* in early January 1929. It explained that the factory workers, around 1200 of whom a quarter were women, had been on strike since November 8, 1928. The trigger was the management’s proposal for a further reduction in wages, the third in the last four years. Until that day, the weekly wage had been between \$ 14 and \$ 20 (depending on the type of work) and the salary cut specified a decrease of \$ 2.40. In the same period, the rent of residences occupied by workers and their families, and owned by Michelin, had increased by \$ 2 per person per month. As a result of this protest, a workers’ union was formed for the first time, which became the responsible entity for defending a 10 % increase in wages and for obtaining express recognition by the company of the union’s existence.⁵⁴

8. The Michelin Athletic Association

The Michelin employees’ housing complex surrounded a large fenced lot occupied by the athletics center of the factory, destined to host competitions and especially the baseball games—the North American national sport—of their team. This approach to social and business cohesion was also a reflection of Michelin’s policy of creating sporting associations, which they first implemented in France and later in Turin (fig. 25).⁵⁵

In 1914 the management of Michelin Tire Company decided to remodel the old athletics field next to the factory, investing around \$ 6,000 in the new facilities. It responded to the requests of the newly formed Michelin Athletic Association (Michelin A.A.)⁵⁶ which had more than 400 members, the majority employed in different departments of the factory. This new association, formally constituted on March 10 of that year, brought together the organization of both pre-existing and newly created sports disciplines.⁵⁷

The inauguration of the new stadium, “Michelin Field,” was preceded by a series of commemorative events that were widely covered by the local press (fig. 24). For the occasion, the Milltown town hall had declared Saturday June 27, 1914 as a holiday. The factory stopped at 10:40 in the morning, to give employees time to go to their homes and prepare for the event. At 1:30 p.m. the long parade gathered in front of the Michelin buildings started off and crossed the main streets of the town, decked out for the occasion. The parade was led by the Michelin Band and company organizers carrying large American and French flags and included more than a dozen cars occupied by Michelin Tire Company management staff—with Jules Hauvette-Michelin at the head—and municipal authorities. Following them, nearly 100 members of the Michelin Athletic Association also paraded bearing flags and banners, and donning hats and caps, and cummerbunds around the waist with the name Michelin printed on them.

Over the door to the athletics hall was a large welcome sign reading “Michelin Athletic Association” which portrayed the mascot Bibendum as a baseball player. He was depicted both as a pitcher throwing the ball at one end of the banner, and a catcher, receiving the pitched ball in his glove at the opposite end. The planned events, which were attended by about 1,500 people, included a Michelin Band concert at 2:00 p.m., different athletics races and the awaited opening game of the baseball team at 3:30 p.m. (fig. 26).

The dimensions of the athletics field terrain were 190 m long by 122 m wide and its perimeter was protected by an enclosure of tall wooden fences. Inside was a football field—with a new baseball diamond—around which an athletic track of 400 meters was placed, as well as a tennis court. The venue also featured other innovations: a large panel used as a scoreboard so that the audience could follow the score of the matches from their seats in the new stands. It had a capacity for 1,500 spectators and provided modern changing rooms for the local and visiting teams. Outside the premises, a parking area was set up for automobiles and other vehicles, which were prohibited from entering the stadium.⁵⁸

9. Michelin teams

Several amateur athletic teams with the name Michelin stamped on the shirt—such as the Michelin Five of basketball—promoted the firm by participating in different commercial competitions and minor local and state leagues. Towards 1917 a Shooting Club, the Michelin Trap Shooting Department, was also incorporated into the other sporting associations, and its members competed in marksmanship with other important state clubs and in a national league.⁵⁹

The first of the athletic meetings organized annually by the Michelin A.A. took place on September 7, 1914 in Milltown, bringing together some of the best athletes in the metropolitan district of New York.⁶⁰ In September of that same year a newspaper article reports on the purpose of the Metropolitan Association of the Amateur Athletic Union of New York:

“(…) for the formation one big athletic league in the factories, department stores, and other places of business throughout his district where the employees are required to remain at their task indoors for a number of hours (….) Already there is the nucleus for such a league in the Millrose A.A. comprised of the employees of the Wanamaker store; the Michelin A.A., an organization of factory employees in Milltown, N. J.; Johnson and Johnson A.A., another factory club, in New Brunswick, N. J. (….) The Millrose and Michelin members have two splendid tracks, and in the short time they have been operating have become factors in the athletic world.”⁶¹

The runners H. Terhune, A. E. Hermann, A. Dickerson, W. Breeze, A. C. Hammoun, Joseph Lackey and C. B. Crablet were part of the Michelin team, competing in the different athletic events of the Michelin Athletic Association Annual Games. These were celebrated in 1914, 1915 and 1916 at the end of the summer as part of the U.S. Labor Day festivities and events. In addition, they participated in other races such as the 5-mile North Jersey Athletic League, the 5-mile Bronx Church House or the annual athletic races of the Keansburg Carnival Association of Keansburg, New Jersey.⁶²

The baseball team also deserves special mention. The national sport was deeply rooted in virtually every town, and the most important industries and businesses—including those in the tire sector—were represented by a team (figs. 16-20). This was also the case of the State of New Jersey in the early 1900s:

“(…) Most games were played on Saturday afternoons because of the long work week of most people. Companies in urban areas hired the best players to represent the firms on the field. Particularly strong were the Newark Westinghouse Nine, the Doherty Silk Sox of Paterson, and the Michelin Tire Company team in Milltown.”⁶³

Originally called the Crescent A.C. Milltown, the baseball team was one of the town’s pioneer athletic associations. The fact that several of its members worked in the factory and played the games in its facilities led to the name change, which turned into the Michelin A.A.⁶⁴ In 1913 they participated in the New Brunswick Factory League, dominating the rest of the teams from other industries in the area.⁶⁵ In 1914 Michelin’s baseball field received nearly 3,000 spectators—more than the total of inhabitants residing in Milltown—to see the team play in the important game of the county league that they competed for and won on several occasions, including the 1918, 1919 and 1920 playing seasons.⁶⁶ On July 31, 1920 the stadium was filled with 3,386 spectators—generating ticket sales of \$ 1,700—to watch their team play against an experienced rival, “The House of David,” to whom they lost 6 to 1 (fig. 15).⁶⁷

In April 1919 the Rubber Industries Athletic League (R.I.A.L.) was created,⁶⁸ a league consisting of different sports disciplines from rubber and tire firms in the sector, with offices and factories located in and around New York. It included thirteen major companies: Ajax Rubber, Empire Tire, Federal Rubber, Firestone & Tire Rubber, The Goodyear Tire & Rubber, The BF Goodrich Rubber, Globe Rubber Tire Mfg., Pennsylvania Rubber, Sterling Tire Corp. and United States Rubber.⁶⁹ Apart from the men’s and women’s events held for the first time at the athletic meeting on September 27, 1919⁷⁰ the baseball league activities stood out. It had been developed in the previous months and consisted of 8 teams, listed in order of the final classification: the champion Sterling Tire Corporation from Rutherford, New Jersey—also in 1920—followed by Goodyear, United States Rubber, Kelly-Springfield, Firestone, Globe, Ajax and BF Goodrich.⁷¹ The reasons for the absence of Michelin in this athletic association are unknown.

By the mid-1970s, Milltown City Hall set out to remodel the former Michelin Tire Co. baseball field, known as Michelin Park (figs. 21-23), for which they received a state grant that served to cover a large part of the renovation. The municipal authorities, on the initiative of one of its members, Antony Zarrillo, wrote in June 1979 a three-page letter directly addressed to François Michelin, President of the multinational that his grandparents had founded. The correspondence explained the historical ties that the tire company maintained with the U.S. population and proposed that Michelin participate in the payment of expensive lighting facilities, estimated at \$ 20,000.

Four months later, Zarrillo received a call from the Michelin offices at Lake Success, New York. Michel Bonny, Director of the American delegation, conveyed the interest that the proposal had raised for François Michelin, and scheduled a trip to Milltown. After substantiating the numerous vestiges of Michelin's early presence that the town still preserved, a donation of \$ 25,000 was made for installing modern illumination in the stadium. On the afternoon of Friday, June 18, 1982, under newly opened floodlights, the new Michelin Park facilities were inaugurated. Various activities were carried out and events were attended by local municipal authorities as well as a delegation of Michelin and other companies that had participated in the remodeling project.⁷²

Appealing to the historic link between the town and the company, the Municipal Fire Department requested and received the donation of six Michelin tires to equip a new truck purchased in 1992, which were sent directly to the vehicle manufacturer to be fitted directly in the factory. Five years later, Michelin also covered the cost of replacing the tires for two fire trucks, leading to the image of Bibendum—in its updated corporate version—being stamped onto the body of the trucks as an emblem of appreciation.⁷³

Notes

1. Luery (1971), *The Story of Milltown*, p. 41.
2. “German migrations to New Jersey.” Chapter 1, p. 13, in *The Germans in New Brunswick, New Jersey*.
3. Luery (1971), p. 41.
4. Ibid, p. 98.
5. Jouas (2005), *Ces Bretons d’Amérique du Nord*, p. 67.
6. Another large community consisted of Jews who came from different European countries and settled in the State of New Jersey. This population increased from 5,600 estimated in 1880 to 25,000 in 1900, 40,000 in 1905, 70,000 in 1907 and to 258,306 in 1927. In New Brunswick County there was a community of 2,500 Jews between 1912 and 1924. Many of them worked in the factories of the town and its surroundings, in companies such as Johnson & Johnson, U.S. Rubber or Milltown’s Michelin. About one third of them were Sephardic Jews, some of which understood French and this was a great advantage when it came to being hired by Michelin. “New Jersey,” *Enciclopedia Judaica*, The Gale Group, 2008. An important nucleus of Hungarian, Russian and Polish emigrants had also settled in towns like New Brunswick or South River seeking work in local industries.
7. Rutgers University has a file of transcribed oral interviews with different people related to the institution who had taken part in World War II. One of them is C. Harrison Hill, born in Milltown, and interviewed by G. Kurt Piehler. Part of the interview is as follows:
 “CH: Yes, there was a Michelin plant there for many years. There was a French school, and a lot of French people. In fact, there was a certain amount of feeling in Milltown, a feeling between the French and the Germans. And, we had a French post letter carrier who got to the point of refusing to deliver to one old German fellow that he had an argument with every day up until World War II, you know? [laughter]. KP: They were arguing over World War I? CH: Yes. World War I. Uh-huh. KP: There was some tension between the two groups? CH: There was. Yes. Yes.”
Interview with C. Harrison Hill, conducted by G. Kurt Piehler and David Tsang Hou in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on November 29, 1995. Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II: <http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/Alphabetical-index/30-interviewees/interview-html-text/530-hill-c-harrison>. Part of this interview is also found in book *The Boys of New Jersey* by Tom Kindre, Victoria, Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2004 p. 62-63.
8. Regarding 1902 data: *25th Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey for the year ending October 31st. 1902*. Somerville, N.J., p. 453. For 1905 data: as listed in Table III “Summary of business established in Milltown from 1905 to 1940” in *Stage IA cultural resources survey of the area for the former Michelin Tire factory, Ford Avenue Milltown, Middlesex County, New Jersey*, pp. 37-39, based on the New Jersey State Industrial Directories. In the same report (page 31) we can read that in 1873 the Meyer Rubber Company factory in Milltown employed 200 workers (men and women), reaching the figure of 600 employees during the early years of the 1890s.
9. The information used has been extracted from Gueslin (1993), pp. 89-98; and Moulin-Bourret (1997), pp. 143-150.
10. Ibid.
11. *History of Middlesex County, New Jersey 1664-1920*. Vol. II. New York and Chicago: Lewis Historical Publishing Co. Inc., 1921. It includes a brief biography of Henry Rutgers Baldwin Meyers.
12. Luery (1971), p. 150.
13. Jouas (2005), pp. 68-69.
14. This reflected another one of the multiple cohesion services developed for the Milltown factory work structure. As André Gueslin explains in “Le Système Social Michelin (1889-1940),” *Michelin*,

- les hommes du pneu*, pp. 82-83, although the Michelin brothers and their family setting were practicing Catholics, a pragmatic spirit prevailed in the Clermont factory in the presence of religious faith: “Catholic culture, in the end, reflects a desire for social harmony that is more an ideal than a strategy (...) Michelin culture is usefully secular, the spiritual dimension did not fit into the framework of the factory. Édouard Michelin’s religious references, consisting of St. Francis of Assisi, Vincent-de-Paul and Jean Bosco, were venerated for their piety, but also for their ability as organizers. In fact, what the owners promoted from Catholicism was the exaltation of the Christian family and the involvement of their own family members in the factory’s social works.”
15. Luery (1971), p. 64.
 16. “Ai caduti dello Stablimento Michelin,” *Bibendum*, June 30, 1924, pp. 10-16. The sports facilities, originally located inside the Michelin industrial complex located next to the Doria river and bordered by Livorno and Ferrara Avenues in Turin, occupied about 40,000 m² of land in 1914. Driven by the need for space due to the constant expansion of production buildings and their premises, Michelin acquired in 1926 a new site in the Madonna di Campagna district—specifically Via Verolengo number 95—to house Michelin Sport Club activities. The new field was inaugurated in the spring-summer of 1928 with a multitudinous ceremony and sports party. “L’inaugurazione del campo sportivo Michelin,” *Bibendum*, September 20, 1928, pp. 6-7.
 17. Moulin-Bourret (1997), pp. 150-154 and Gueslin (1993), pp. 101-105.
 18. Gueslin (1993), p. 102.
 19. “New Jersey notes,” *The India Rubber World*, October 1, 1924, p. 38.
 20. As detailed by Jouas (2005), p. 68.
 21. “(...) Some of the homes in Milltown are company homes that were built. You know, we had a bungalow section, which was for the lower employees. Then we had others for their executives ... My grandfather was a builder, and he built many of them,” *Interview with C. Harrison Hill*, carried out by G. Kurt Piehler and David Tsang Hou in New Brunswick, New Jersey on November 29, 1995. Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II.
 22. “Housing by employers in the United States,” *International Labor Legislation and the Society of Nations*. Washington, U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics number 254, 1919, p. 265. “Housing employees of the Michelin Tire Company,” *American Builder*, June 1918, p. 25.
 23. “54 new houses to be erected,” *New Brunswick Times*, May 19, 1916; and *New Jersey. Life, industries and resources of a great state*, Newark, N. J.: State Chamber of Commerce, 1928, p. 312.
 24. Jouas (2005), p. 71.
 25. Gueslin (1993), pp. 97 and 102; Moulin-Bourret (1997), pp. 146-156.
 26. Blackford and Kerr (1997), p. 69.
 27. The fourth competitive firm, the United States Rubber Co, also had welfare and accommodation policies, albeit with a particular complex adaptation due to the idiosyncrasy of the corporation. It was an amalgam of companies in the footwear, tire and other rubber manufacturing sectors, which in 1916 managed 47 factories spread out in cities of different states (according to the double-page advertisement published in *Life*, August 3, 1916).
 28. Information obtained from Goodyear’s corporate history books signed by Allen (1949), O’Reilly (1983) and Rodenguen (1997), listed in the bibliography, along with the article “History of the Goodyear Company,” *The India Rubber World*, April 1921, p. 512.
 29. “Goodyear builds city for its workers,” *The Automobile*, March 1, 1917, pp. 478-481.
 30. Information from the book on the history of BF Goodrich written by Blackford and Kerr (1996).
 31. Information from Firestone’s corporate history books authored by Lief (1951), Dickinson and Hickman (2000), and Whiting’s Firestone Park text (1918), listed in the bibliography, as well as the article “Homes for Workmen reduces the labor turnover,” *The India Rubber World*, April 1, 1918.

32. Whiting (1918), p. 6.
33. "The rubber trade in Akron," *The India Rubber World*, January 1, 1917.
34. Jackson (1988), pp. 87-88.
35. "Pennsylvania Rubber builds homes," *Motor Age*, July 31, 1919; "Penna. Co. builds homes for workers," *Automotive Industries & The Automobile*, December 4, 1919.
36. The information is detailed in the articles "Michelin insures all its employees," *The New York Sun*, June 29, 1919, p. 10; and "Michelin plans insurance for all employees," *Indiana Evening Gazette*, July 5, 1919. Also included are the news in *The New York Times*, July 6, 1919; *The India Rubber World*, August 1, 1919; and "Michelin insures employees," *Automotive Industries*, July 3, 1919.
37. Traveler's Insurance Co. was the first American insurance company to create an insurance policy for automobile accidents in February 1898, on behalf of Dr. Truman Martin from Buffalo. It cost \$12.25 and provided coverage of \$5,000 in case of damage/accidents. "Profile America," Public Information Office of the U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov).
38. The original document of the insurance policy issued in the name of Henry Bordier (?-1954) was personally facilitated by Marie-Hélène Kerneur, granddaughter of Henry and Frances Bordier. Henry Bordier moved to Milltown from France around 1917, working as a Michelin driver on the bus lines that transported workers to the factory and as a chauffeur for other vehicles with tires undergoing tests and controls. Frances Bordier and her brothers and sisters, eight in all, also lived in Milltown. The family left town and headed for France in 1930, after the closure of the factory.
39. This policy was extended to new workers, taking into account that insurance was established after first having worked on the job six months.
40. The medical service of the Clermont-Ferrand factory was created in 1902 although at first, only workers with more than three years of seniority could use their services free of charge. Over the next two decades, Michelin created several health and care centers as well as hospitals for their workers and their immediate family members. It was not until 1929 that the Société de Secours Mutuels du Personnel des Établissements Michelin (S.M.M.) was founded by the initiative of patron employers, as Panthou (2008) explains more fully in his article, pp. 1-3. The Italian subsidiary, for its part, had an internal dispensary with a capacity for 40 beds in the Turin factory, and employees had medical-pharmaceutical care which was 90% covered by the company, as explained in *Bibendum. Rivista mensile illustrata*, Series III, year XVI, number 8, November-December 1928.
41. "The protection against the consequences of a worker's death was so costly that the Michelin firm and the nation itself recognized they were incapable of assuming it. In fact, in order to guarantee widows or children an income equivalent to the remuneration of the head of the family, the latter should pay a considerable premium, estimated at 1/6 of the salary. In addition, arranging life insurance was an unusual practice in France, particularly for blue collar workers. However, Michelin management granted coverage for widows and children of workers and employees who died in service activities whose amount varied according to the degree of the worker's seniority. They also covered almost all of the funeral expenses and maintained benefits for the family of the deceased: use of the cooperative, health care when ill, admission to the Charras school and the apprenticeship school [both administered by Michelin], etc. Social Security also worked to mitigate the consequences of the head of the family's death. On the one hand, the children would continue to receive family financial aid, and if the mother found a job she could still benefit from the social benefits granted to housewives. In addition, a corresponding compensation was paid for the deceased person, in principle, up to 90 days of their salary, with a maximum limit of 30,000 francs." As explained by Jean de Vimal du Bochet (1948), p. 183.
42. "Insurance and pensions for Goodrich employees," *Horseless Age*, February 1, 1916.
43. "The rubber trade in Massachusetts," *The India Rubber World*, February 1, 1919, p. 264.

44. "National Tire & Rubber insures employees," *Automotive Industries*, February 20, 1919.
45. Letter published on December 6, 1907 in the *Iowa Unionist* union newspaper of Des Moines, Iowa. The Lambertville Rubber Company was one of the important firms in those years dedicated mainly to the manufacture of rubber footwear. It was created in 1860 and after a temporary closure during the Civil War, reopened in 1865. In that year it had 20 workers, a figure that reached 450 employees in 1905.
46. These dissuasive clauses against union affiliation—declared illegal in 1932—were known in 19th century United States as the 'infamous document' and 'iron-clad' and beginning in 1921, coined with the term 'yellow-dog contract.'
47. *Interview with John G. Rosta*, carried out by G. Kurt Piehler and Mark Rybak in New Brunswick, New Jersey, October 18, 1997. Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II.
48. "Michelin Tire Co. has strike," *New Brunswick Times*, April 4, 1908.
49. "No strike at Michelin works," *New Brunswick Times*, June 25, 1908.
50. As explained in "Strikes and Lockouts in New Jersey for the Twelve Months Ending September 30, 1916," p. 263, *Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the Bureau of Industrial Statistics of New Jersey for the year ending October 31st 1916* (see bibliography).
51. "Tire makers raise wages," *Coast Seamen's Journal*. September 15, 1916, p. 8.
52. "Strikers rush factory," "Strikers quiet at Milltown," September 10-11, 1919, *The New York Times*.
53. "Principal strikes and lockouts beginning in November, 1928," *Monthly Labor Review, January to June, 1929*, volume 28. Washington, U. S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 110.
54. "1200 ouvriers des usines Michelin de Milletown (Amérique) sont en greve," *Le Cri du Peuple*, January 5, 1929.
55. As explained: "A Michelin cyclist society existed [in France] since 1904, imitated in 1906 by the Bergougnan society (...). In October 1911, Marcel Michelin, André's son, founded the Association Sportive Michelin (ASM). It had at its disposal 3 hectares of land, sports tracks and showers. Its 200 members mainly played soccer, rugby, tennis, cycling and gymnastics. They were provided with important economic support, which was the envy of other sports clubs." Moulin-Bourret (1997), p. 156. In addition, the Michelin Sporting Club (already active since before 1924) was established at Michelin's Italian headquarters, having its own athletic field at the premises adjacent to the Turin factory, and with soccer, cycling, boxing, hunting, mountaineering, boules and different disciplines of athletics registered in corresponding federations. "Ai caduti dello Stablimento Michelin," *Bibendum*, June 30, 1924, pp. 14-15.
56. "The rubber trade in Trenton"" *The India Rubber World*, April 1, 1914. "H. C. Young again heads Michelin A.A.; reads his annual report showing progress made by the association since it was formed," *New Brunswick Times*, December 3, 1914.
57. For example, in 1912 the Michelin Tire Company in Milltown had a basketball team "composed of the best basketball players in the county. All are in the employ of the Michelin Tire Co." "Michelin Tire basketball team," *The New Brunswick Daily Times*, September 16, 1912, p. 3.
58. "Michelin new \$6.000 athletic field ready for formal opening tomorrow," June 26, and "1,500 people at the opening of Michelin's athletic field," June 29, 1914 in *New Brunswick Times*. This topic is also mentioned in Jouas p. 70; and "The Michelin Tire Plant," *The Rubber Age and Tire News*, August 25, 1917, p. 447.
59. "The Michelin Tire Plant," *The Rubber Age and Tire News*, August 25, 1917, p. 447.
60. "Champions in Michelin A.A. Games," *The New York Times*, September 6, 1914.
61. "Plans industrial athletic league," *The New York Times*, September 27, 1914.
62. See news published in *The New York Times*: "Team beats old time in 1,200 yard event at Michelin A.A. Games," September 8, 1914; "Jansen Handicap Victor," April 24, 1915; "Bronx athletes star,"

- August 22, 1915; "Athletic Games for Labor Day," August 28, 1915; "Marathoner defeats H. J. Smith in Michelin A.A. feature event," September 7, 1915; "Giorgio first in 5-mile Jersey run," October 13, 1915; and "Michelin A.A. plans special meet," August 3, 1916.
63. "Baseball," *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, p. 58.
 64. Luery (1971), p. 196.
 65. "The rubber trade in Trenton," *The India Rubber World*, April 1, 1914.
 66. Luery (1971), p. 197.
 67. *Milltown. Images of America*, p. 30.
 68. "Rubber company employes form an athletic league," *The India Rubber World*, May 1, 1919.
 69. Some of the athletic equipment was related to different firms of the rubber manufacturing industry and consisted of products they commercialized, such as sneakers with rubber soles, tennis balls, and those used in baseball, with cork interiors covered with a layer of rubber.
 70. "Rubber Industries Athletic League outing," *The India Rubber World*, October 1, 1919.
 71. "Sterling again wins R. I. A. L. pennant," *The India Rubber World*, November 1, 1920.
 72. "Michelin, Milltown renew old relationship," *The Home News Tribune* (East Brunswick, N.J.), June 17, 1982. Part of the story is also mentioned in chapter 11 of Andrea C. Dragon's article, "Rubber, 30.0," *Extractives, Manufacturing and Services. A Historiographical and Bibliographical Guide*, volume 2. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1997.
 73. Information personally facilitated by Brian Harto, retired member of the fire department and affiliated with the Milltown Historical Society.

Bibliography

- ADAMS, Willi Paul. "La Emigración a América en los Siglos XIX y XX."
Historia Universal: Los Estados Unidos de América. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1996.
- ALLEN, Hugh. *The House of Goodyear. Fifty Years of Men and Industry*.
Cleveland, Ohio: The Corday & Gross Co., 1949.
- BLACKFORD, Mansel G.; KERR, Kathel Austin.
BFGoodrich. Tradition and Transformation, 1870-1995.
Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1996.
- DE VIMAL DU BOUCHET, Jean. *L'Entreprise Michelin: Étude Économique et Sociale*.
Doctoral Law Thesis, Strasbourg Faculty, 1948.
- DICKSON, Paul; HICKMAN, William D. *Firestone: a Legend, a Century, a Celebration. 1900-2000*. New
York: Forbes Custom Publishing, 2000.
- DUMOND, Lionel; LAMY, Christian; GUESLIN, André; MAZATAUD, Pierre.
Michelin, les Hommes du Pneu. Les Ouvriers Michelin, à Clermont-Ferrand, de 1889 à 1940.
Paris: Éditions de l'Atelier-éditions Ouvrières, 1993.
- GRAMM, Carl H. *The Germans in New Brunswick, New Jersey*.
Cleveland, Ohio: Central Publishing House, 1968.
- JACKSON, Kenneth A. *The Kelly-Springfield Story*.
Cumberland, Maryland: The Kelly-Springfield Tire Co., 1988.
- JOUAS, Josette. *Ces Bretons d'Amérique du Nord*. Rennes: Éditions Ouest-France, 2005.

- KUEHNERT, Alfred. "Festschrift 800 Jahrfeier der Gemeinde Oberzell, 23 June to 25 June 1967."
Article compiled by Sue Foster for the Middlesex County Genealogy website.
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njmiddle/Towns/milltown/oberzell.htm
- LAMY, Christian; FORNARO, Jean-Pierre. *Michelin Ville. Le Logement Ouvrier de l'Enterprise Michelin, 1911-1987*. Nonette: Éditions Creer, 1990.
- LIEF, Alfred. *The Firestone Story. A History of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company*.
New York: McGraw Hill, 1951.
- LUERY, H. Rodney. *The Story of Milltown*. Crandbury, South Brunswick and New York:
A. S. Barnes & Co. for The Borough of Milltown, 1971.
- LURIE, Maxine N.; MAPPEN, Marc. *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*.
Rutgers, N. J.: The State University, 2004.
- MERCIER, M.; GILLET, F. *Cent Ans d'Industrie: Histoire Anecdotique de la Maison Michelin*.
Unpublished manuscript. Michelin Archives, Clermont-Ferrand.
- MOULIN-BOURRET, Annie. *Guerre et Industrie. Clermont-Ferrand 1912-1922: la Victoire du Pneu*. Vol-
ume I. Clermont-Ferrand: Publications de l'institut d'Études du Massif Central, 1997.
- O'REILLY, Maurice. *The Goodyear Story*. New York: The Benjamin Company, 1983.
- PANTHOU, Eric. "Note sur le service médical et les caisses de secours mutuels de l'entreprise Michelin,
de leur origine à après 1945." Clermont-Ferrand: Université Clermont, 2008.
- RODENGEN, Jeffrey L. *The Legend of Goodyear. The First 100 Years*.
Florida: Write Stuff Syndicate/Quality Books, 1997.
- WHITING, R. S. *Housing and Industry*.
Chicago: Engineering Bureau/National Lumber Manufacturers Association, 1918.
- Milltown Centennial Committee. *Milltown. Images of America*.
Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing/Milltown Historical Society, 1995.
- Bibendum*, number 20, May-June 1924. Corporate magazine of
Agenzia Italiana Pneumatici Michelin, with administrative headquarters in Milan.
- Industrial Betterment Institutions in New Jersey Manufacturing Establishments*.
Trenton: The Bureau of Statistics of New Jersey, 1904.
- Annual Report of the Bureau of Industrial Statistics of New Jersey*,
in their annual publications between 1900-1917. Trenton, N. J.: Department of Labor.
- Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Health of the State of New Jersey 1913 and Report
of the Bureau of Vital Statistics*. Paterson, N. J.: Board of Health of the State of New Jersey, 1914.
- Prosperité ou Sam et François*. Clermont-Ferrand: Michelin et Cie, 1927.
- Stage I. A Cultural Resources Survey of the Project Area for the Former Michelin Tire Factory, Ford
Avenue Milltown, Middlesex County, New Jersey*. Report prepared by Boraie Development, LCC
for the Ford Avenue remodeling and development project promoted by the Milltown City Hall
through the Milltown Ford Avenue Redevelopment Agency, August 2006.
- Works Progress Administration. *History of Milltown*.
Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936. Document edited from the original,
typewritten and presented to the Milltown Historical Society by Linda Matlack Butch.

**TABLE 1:
POPULATION OF MILLTOWN (1900-1940)**

Year (decades)	Number of inhabitants	Percent increase over the previous decade	Year by year	Number of inhabitants	Percent increase over the previous year
1900	561		1905	1,210 *	
1910	1,584	182.3 %	1906	1,340	10.7 %
1920	2,573	62.4 %	1911	1,659	4.7 %
1930	2,994	16.3 %	1912	1,734	4.5 %
			1913	1,883	8.6 %
1940	3,515	17.4 %	1914	1,902	1.0 %

**TABLE 2:
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SECTOR'S LOCAL INDUSTRY
PRIOR TO MICHELIN'S IMPLEMENTATION**

YEAR	EMPLOYEES
The Meyer Rubber Company	
1873	200
1890s	600
The India Rubber Company	
1901	300
The International Automobile & Vehicle Tire Company	
1902	200
1905	300
1906	300

Data compiled from different sources:

*"Census figures in this city and elsewhere," *The New Brunswick Times*, August 1, 1905.

United States Census Bureau.

Luery, H. Rodney. *The Story of Milltown*.

Crandbury, South Brunswick and New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1971, p. 35.

Report of the Bureau of Vital Statistics of the State of New Jersey. Years 1901-1907, 1909, and 1911-1915.

Trenton, N. J.: Board of Health of the State of New Jersey.

44th Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey for the year ending October 31st. 1901. Trenton, N. J., p. 475.

25th Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey for the year ending October 31st. 1902. Somerville, N. J., p. 453.

The Industrial Directory of New Jersey, 1906.

Trenton, New Jersey: Bureau of Statistics of New Jersey, p. 230.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE MICHELIN TIRE CO. FACTORY

YEAR	EMPLOYEES	YEAR	EMPLOYEES
1908	1,000 *	1925	3,000-4,500 **
1909	1,200	1927	1,703
1912	1,250	1928	1,800
1915	1,500 *	1929	1,500-1,000 ***
1918	1,800	1930	700-300 ***
1920	3,000	MICHELIN REALTY COMPANY	
1923	2,000	1934	40 ****

Notes. It is assumed that the data provided by different sources refer to the Milltown factory staff, without counting employees from territorial delegations comprising Michelin's commercial network deployed throughout the country.

* In the *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey for the year ending October 31st, 1907*, p. 559, it specifies that the factory had a workforce of 1,200 workers: 1,000 men and 200 women.

** The high number of 4,500 employees is cited in the Work Progress Administration report although, not having been able to compare it with different sources, I have doubts about its veracity as it appears excessive. I believe that the maximum number of 3,000 workers reached, as indicated by Luery (page 44) in *The Story of Milltown*, is more precise.

*** The figures for the period from 1929 to the factory's closure in the spring of 1930 are estimated, taking into account the numerous staff reductions that had taken place. According to the news "Michelin factory changes likely to bring about better tire production," *The Milltown Review*, October 3, 1929, the company reduced its workforce by 200 employees. According to the news "Michelin factory shutting down, throwing 300 employees out of work; Mergers discussed," *The Milltown Review*, April 25, 1930, in the months prior to closing, the workforce consisted of 700 workers, progressively being reduced to 300 staff who were employed at the time of closure. According to a report in July 1930, "the company habitually employed 1,500 workers, but 200 of them have been dismissed."

**** This figure in actuality does not correspond to Michelin factory staff, but rather to those of the Michelin Realty Company who, after the factory's closure, was in charge of the management and sale of the industrial complex, its facilities and buildings as well as of housing rented to workers.

Data compiled from different sources:

Annual Report of The Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries of New Jersey, in publications until 1917.

The Industrial Directory of New Jersey. Trenton, New Jersey, Bureau of Statistics of New Jersey, in the quarterly editions from 1906 (p. 230), 1909 (pp. 270-271), 1912 (pp. 289-290), 1915 (pp. 318-319), 1918 (p. 361), and 1927.

Luery, H. Rodney. *The Story of Milltown*. Cranbury, South Brunswick and New York, A. S. Barnes & Co. for The Borough of Milltown, 1971.

History of Milltown. Works Progress Administration, Washington D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1936.

Stage I. A cultural resources survey of the project area for the former Michelin Tire factory, Ford Avenue Milltown, Middlesex County, New Jersey. Report prepared by Boraie Development, LCC for the Ford Avenue remodeling and development project promoted by the Milltown City Hall through the Milltown Ford Avenue Redevelopment Agency, August 2006. Especially in Table III "Summary of business established in Milltown from 1905 until 1940," pp. 37-39, based on Industrial Directories from the State of New Jersey.

"Milltown News (...) This looks prosperous for Milltown where the Tire works employ over one thousand hands." *New Brunswick Daily Times*, July 29, 1908, p. 5.

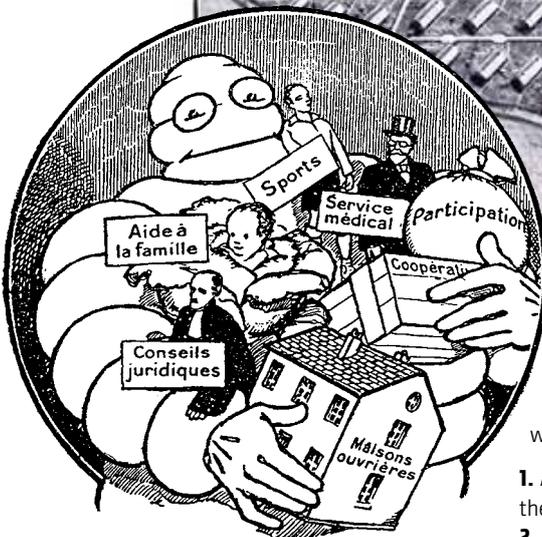
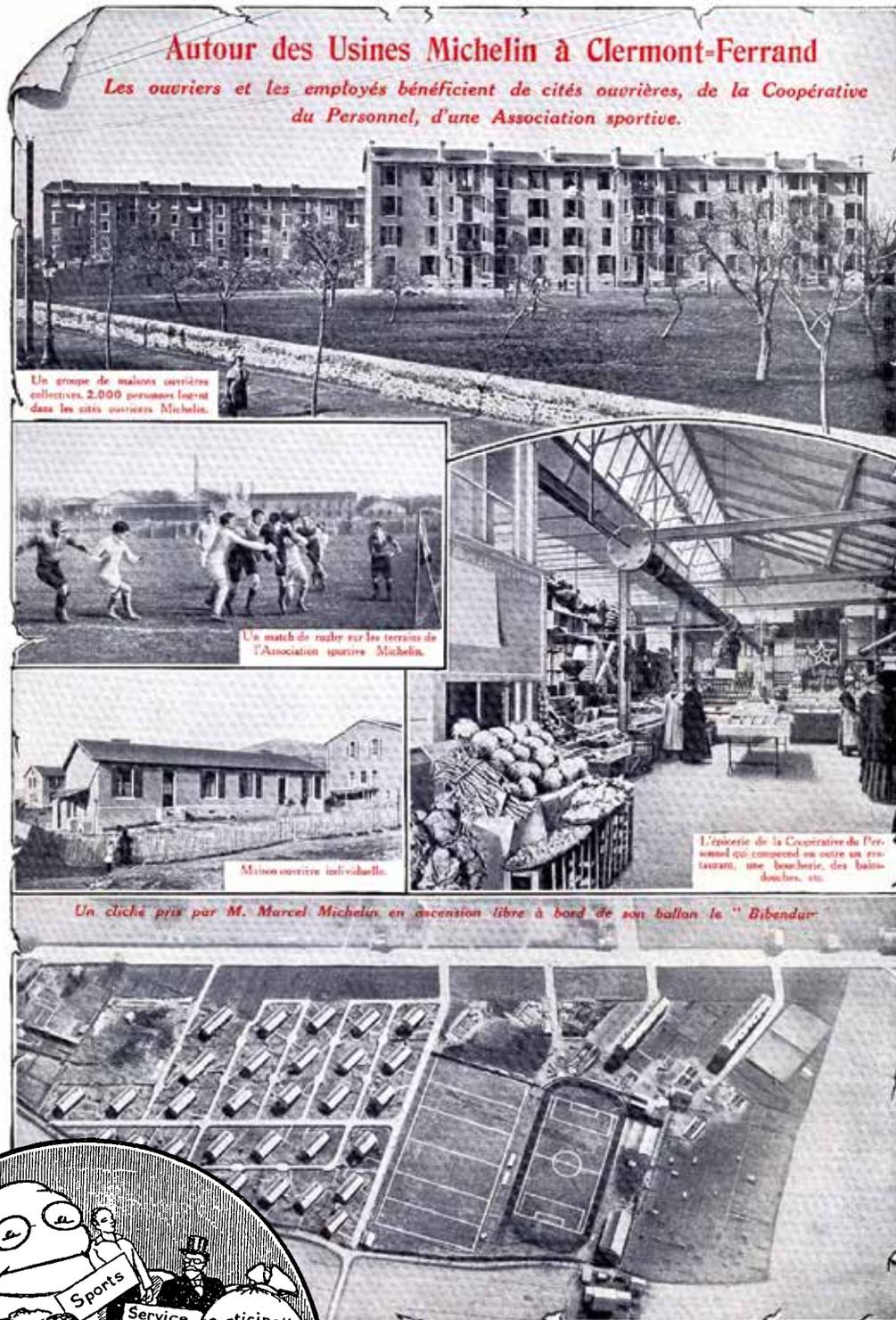
"About 3,000 men, women and young people, are employed and the business is rapidly increasing." *History of Middlesex County, New Jersey 1664-1920*, volume 2. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1921, p. 465.

"The Michelin Tire Co., Milltown, finds business 100 per cent better than last year and is now operating with three shifts. The plant is also run on holidays. About 2,000 hands are employed." *The India Rubber World*, March 1, 1923, p. 379.

"The American company counts on 3,000 salaries, the one in Turin from 3,000 to 3,500." In Dumond, *Michelin les Hommes du Pneu*, p. 57.

"There is maintained a community house for the use of the 1,800 workers." In *New Jersey. Life, Industries and Resources of a Great State*. Newark: New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, 1928, p. 312.

"Men laid off to get Michelin bonuses," *The New York Times*, July 18, 1930.



LIVING IN CLERMONT-FERRAND.

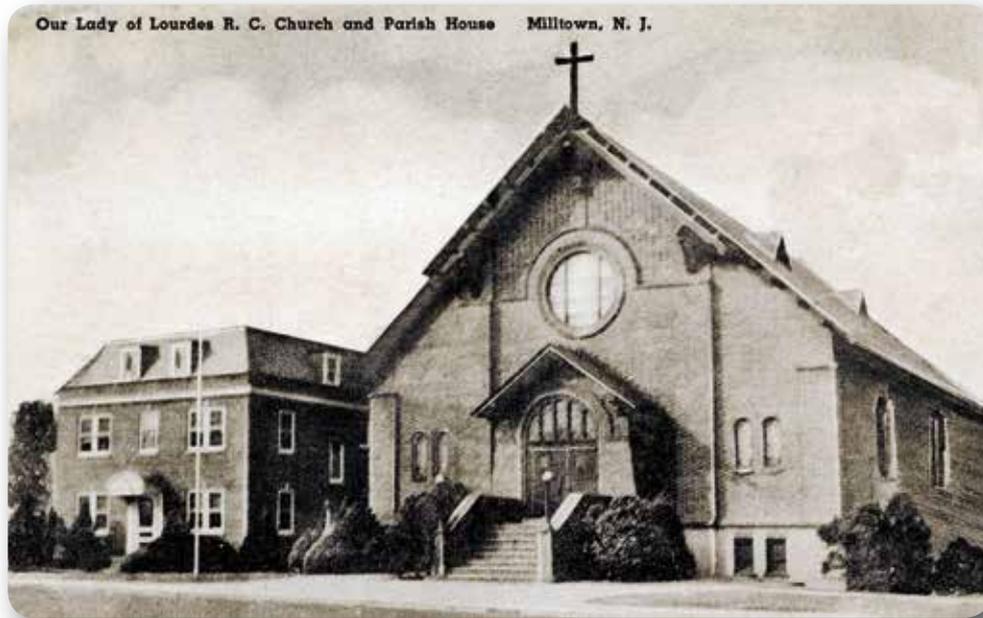
The page above shows buildings and housing destined for employees located in enclaves near the French factories, a sample of the collective and individual buildings comprising Michelin's working-class cities in which "2,000 people [employees and their families] are housed." The staff shop, the Coopérative du Personnel, and sports facilities were some of the additional benefits apart from the housing complex.

1. Advertisement for Michelin social works. Published on the back cover of the magazine *Le Théâtre Illustré*, July 12, 1913.
2. Bibendum loaded with the benefits package for employees. Illustration by Georges Hautot for the pamphlet *Oeuvres Sociales de Michelin et Cie*, 1927.



LIFE INSURANCE. The above image depicts the life insurance policy issued by The Travelers Insurance Company with which the Michelin Tire Co. of Milltown provided coverage to their employees. An allegorical illustration is employed depicting the omnipresent Bibendum: the Michelin ambassador delivers the insurance document to the employee who is benefiting from coverage, in this case Henry Bordier.

3. Main page of the insurance policy, dated June 16, 1919. Document from the family archive of Marie-Hélène Kerneur.



CELEBRATIONS. Our Lady of Lourdes Church was inaugurated in 1922 and responded to the needs of parishioners from the growing Catholic community in Milltown, largely made up of Michelin French workers and families. The image below is a portrait of Marie Bordier (1919-1994), the daughter of Henri and Marie Françoise Bordier, celebrating July 4 in the garden of their home—a Michelin lodging—at number 78 South Street in Milltown, next to the athletics field.

4. Postcard with photograph of the Catholic Church, c. 1940. 5. Photograph from the family archive of Marie-Hélène Kerneur, 1922.



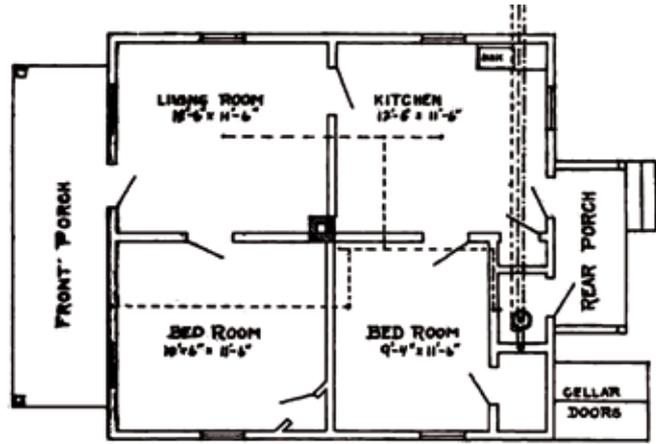




THE FIRST HOMES.

The photograph on the left shows the urbanization containing the first homes built by Michelin in the summer of 1916, a total of 53 houses. They were simple buildings, as can be seen in the blue print on the right, with a square space divided into four equal parts—four rooms, one with a toilet—and two porches, one at the main entrance and one at the rear.

6-7. View of the housing complex and the basic model of the floor plan. Published in the *American Builder* magazine, June 1918.



A NEIGHBORHOOD UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

Single-family homes were set right next to each other in the housing development built by Michelin in Milltown for employees and their families.

8. View of intersecting avenues in the housing complex next to the factory, c. 1915.



MODEL ACCOMMODATION. The single-family houses were raised wooden structures with two floors and an attic, basement, slanted two-sided roofs covered with slate and wood-covered exterior walls. The front facade had a covered porch and stairs leading to the front door and each plot was separated by a fence and had a relatively large garden surrounding the house. They included basic services such as running water, electricity, and a fireplace for heating.

9. One of the standardized housing models for Michelin Tire Company employees, c. 1915.



STANDARDIZATION. There were small variations in housing models, depending on the number of family members who would be living there and the phase of construction in which they were built, as can be seen in the examples shown here.

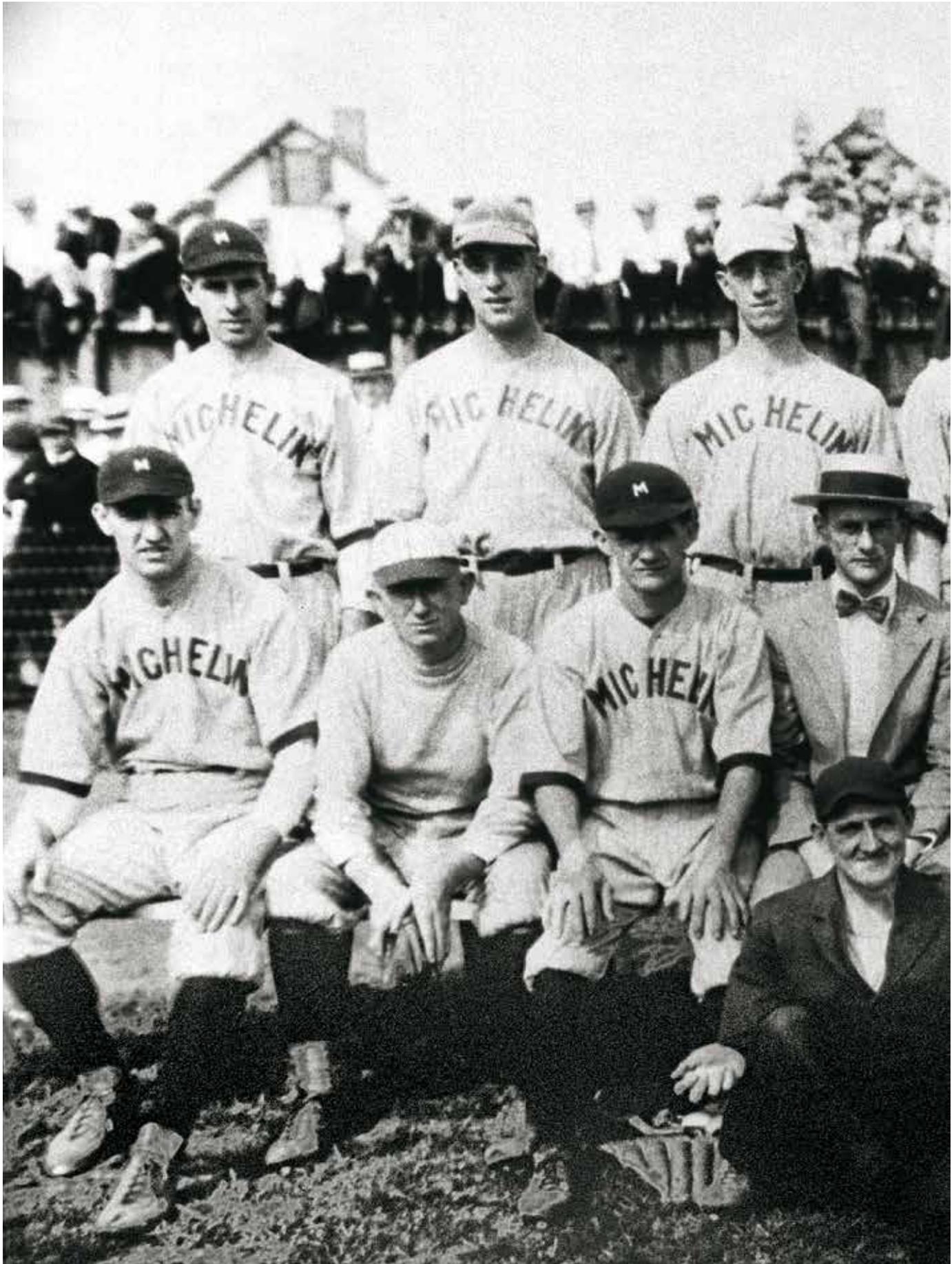
10-13. Four different types of single-family homes for Michelin Tire Co. employees, c.1915.

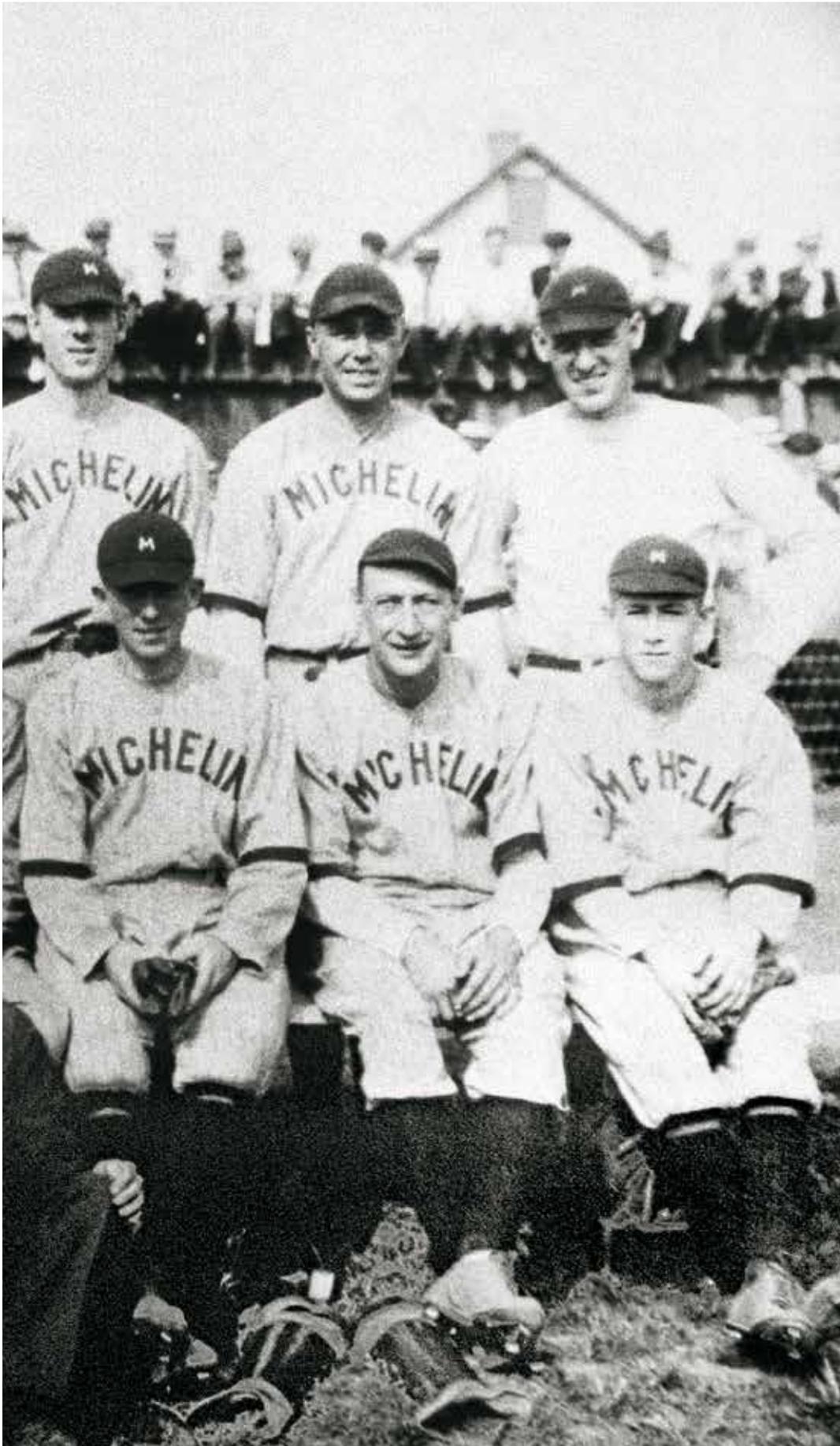


THE MICHELIN BAND. A group of factory workers with musical training—several of them learned while on duty in the Gallic army during the Great War—made up the Michelin Band, who was in charge of enlivening activities, social events and celebrations of employees and their families. In the group portrait, taken in front of the Community House, some French names can be recognized flanking the large central drum such as Joseph Digou (left) and Louis Fichen (to the right of the instrument and next to the snare drum). The faithful Bibendum is represented in the center of the drum, carrying the baton as the band's director.

14. Photograph from the family archive of Marie-Hélène Kerneur, late 1920s.







THE KING OF SPORTS.

The Michelin baseball team played their games at Michelin Field, the multi-sport space remodeled in 1914 by the Company, who invested approximately \$ 6,000 in construction work.

A grandstand with the capacity for seating 1,500 people was set up and the perimeter of the enclosure was delimited with a wooden fence.

In the background of the image shown here, a group of spectators contemplate the event while sitting on top of the fence, behind which the typical Michelin single-family employee homes can be seen.

15. Photograph of the Michelin Tire Company baseball team, taken on July 31, 1920. Milltown Historical Society Archive.



TEAM WORK. Sports teams, which were common in all industries and large companies such as the tire sector, were made up of salaried employees representing the firms they worked for. Not only was it a way of keeping workers busy—as players and spectators—fostering corporate spirit in their free time, it was also a way of displaying and promoting the company's name in matches and competitions that were played away from the home stadium.

16-20. Portraits of baseball team players from different companies in the sector during the 1920s: Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. from Springfield, Ohio (1919), Sterling Tire Corp. from Rutherford, New Jersey (1920); Hewitt Tire Mfg. Co. from Buffalo, New York (c.1920); Gillette Rubber Co. from Eau Claire, Wisconsin (c.1920); and Savage Tire Co. from San Diego, California (1920).





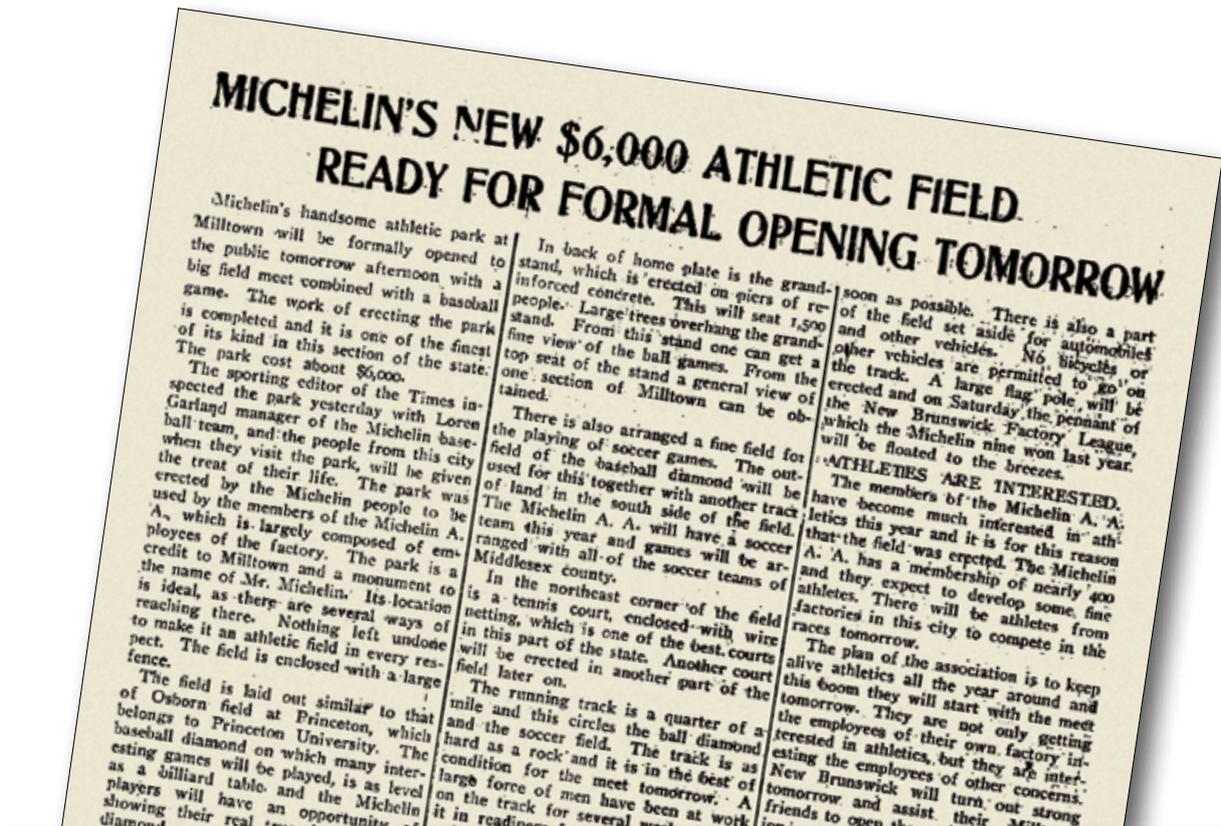
21. Photograph of a baseball game in the old field of the Michelin Tire Company, before its complete remodeling. On the left side of the picture, next to the players, the factory's buildings, smokestack and water tank appear. c. 1908.



22. The photograph shows us the renovated athletic field surrounded by a large wooden fence. Behind it, one can see the row of houses built by Michelin to lodge their workers, with the industrial complex in the background. c. 1920.



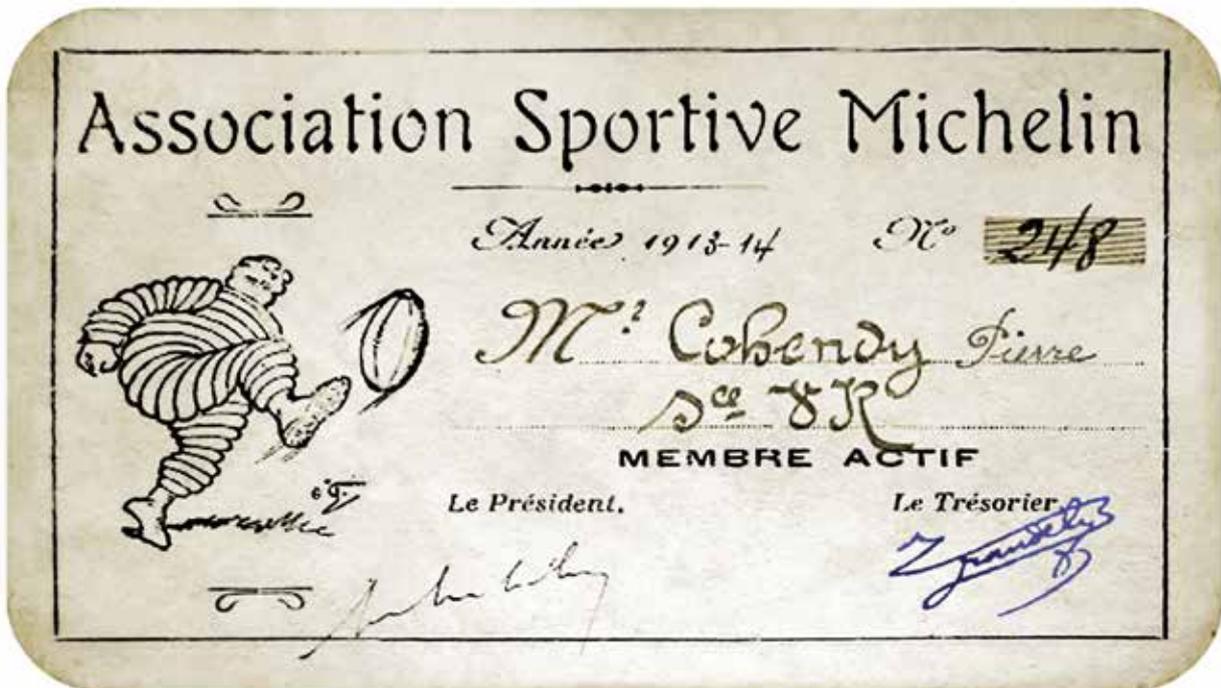
23. A picture of the baseball field in its current state, after nearly a century of uninterrupted use. In the background, the factory's old smokestack chimney, still standing, remains a testimony of the past and of Michelin's presence. © Michael Chang, 2009.



SPORTS REFLECTIONS. The image above depicts one of the news items announcing the imminent official opening of the Michelin Tire Company's new athletics field in Milltown on a site near the factory. The local newspaper carried out detailed coverage of the planned events and, in later days, of the activities carried out. The below image portrays one of the French membership cards for the Association Sportive Michelin in Clermont-Ferran, which served as the inspiration and model to follow for the other athletic clubs formed by Michelin production center employees in Turin and Milltown. As can be seen, the figure of Bibendum appears in the document, depicted as the company's corporate mascot. It is probable that there was a similar card that would accredit members of the Michelin Athletic Association in Milltown.

24. News item published in the *New Brunswick Daily Times*, June 26, 1914.

25. Membership card for the French Association Sportive Michelin (Clermont-Ferrand), valid for the 1913-1914 season.



The
MICHELIN A. A.

Formal
 FIELD OPENING

June 27th, 1914

Milltown, N. J.

Parade 1:30

Band Concert 2:00

Track Meet 2:00

Baseball Game 3:30



... OFFICERS ...

Hon. President	J. H. MICHELIN
President	P. CHOLET
Vice-President	H. C. YOUNG
Recording Secretary	W. R. EVANS
Financial Secretary	GEO. CRABIEL
Treasurer	L. R. MITTON

Souvenir Program



A RECORD DAY. The long-awaited inauguration was celebrated by approximately 1,500 people, from its beginning at the parade of personalities and sports teams until joining in the competitions that culminated the official acts. There was a special event that aroused the most interest, the baseball game of the Michelin Athletic Association. Before this occurred, a number of competitions were held involving several members of the Michelin Athletic Association playing against athletic teams representing companies and industries from neighboring towns such as the U.S. Nickel Co., Webb Wire Iron Works or Johnson & Johnson and the manufacturer of Simplex cars, both with production centers in New Brunswick. The different events were: *100 yard dash* (91.44 m); *220 yard dash* (201.168 m); *1,000-yard dash* (914.4 m); *Four mile road* (6,440 m); *One mile relay* (1,609.34 m). After the baseball game ended, the event was closed with the 440 yard mysterious race (402,34 m), a humorous race in which participants wore costumes and ran carrying a suitcase.

26. Commemorative program for the inauguration of the Michelin A.A. stadium. 1914.

