

in Gasoline Alley, and knew how to deal with any mischance that could happen to a car on the road.

They were weighted down with equipment worthy of an expedition into darkest Africa. Each carried ropes and an extra oil-burning lantern, block and tackle, mud hooks and chains, shovels and picks, water bags, tents and food—in all, equipment and provision to suffice for days if lost in mountains or deserts. The cars represented every automobile manufacturer in Indiana. There were the Marmon, Marion, Pilot "60," Haynes, American, McFarland, Apperson, Henderson, Empire (which Carl manufactured), and Pathfinder "40" Premier trucks—one carrying extra equipment and one an entire load of spare tires.

Carl sat at the wheel of his Premier, with the brim of his white felt hat pushed back. I felt like a pioneer's wife, seeing him drive away. This time he had refused to let me go along—it was too rough a trip.

Indianapolis turned out to cheer the Trail-Blazers who drove through the crowded streets on their way toward the goal which was Good Roads for America. No pioneer Argonauts in their covered wagons ever set out with greater enthusiasm. The cars were hung with flags and the Lincoln Highway pennants from Indianapolis. They would collect more along the way.

The trail they blazed during the next thirty-four days followed the course of America's history. The men left Indianapolis to make their way through actual frontier country. They were following in part the overland trail broken by Indian and buffalo, by the first white men to trade with the Indians, by Frémont and Kit Carson, by the Argonauts on their western trek for gold. The shards and other relics of that western treasure hunt could still be seen along these rutted, dusty roads—a half-buried oxbow from a Contestoga, a wheel gray with alkali, a stone roughly chiseled with the name of a pioneer for whom the trail had proved too strenuous back in 1849.

This was a modern trek to Eldorado. It was America's first epic movement on wheels since '69, when the strips of the first railroad had been laid from coast to coast. In the half-century since, America had concentrated on building railroads and neglected the building of highways.