

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

A. Egan was the "Owl" and Wetmore wrote as "Jonah."

They say that republics are ungrateful, but some day I hope the automobile industry and sport will wake up to something long left undone and pay Morgan a tribute for the things he did to further the "cause."

While the promotions of the "Senator's" were in the eyes of many men mere money-making schemes, as a matter of fact they made no money and left Morgan at their end as poor as when he started them. Money making may have been pretext sneering critics assigned, but let me tell you it was real enthusiasm for the automobile that inspired this tireless missionary for the motor car in the days when it needed demonstration to put it over.

The Ormand-Daytona Beach races were the first of Morgan's motoring promotions. They were followed by the "Climb to the Clouds," the race across Florida, the Wilkesbarre hill climb, "Montauk Light or Bust," and a dozen other demonstrations, that opened the eyes of the public to the wonders and finally convinced them of the practicability of the automobile. The friends of Morgan on the press and in the sport followed the "Senator" with willingness and furnished the executive help needed by this man of great ideas rather than of detail.

More than a month before the inaugural tournament in February, 1903, S. H. Hathaway, a fellow speed enthusiast, personally prepared a five-mile course on the beach, and went out and drove a mile at 48.39 miles an hour in the first measured-speed test ever recorded on the beach, a trial made under my own supervision, for Hathaway had wanted everything about his run to be made official. Thus bringing me and my

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organization of timers down from New York to give him the starting signal and record the time of his vehicle.

The Winton "Bullet" and the Olds "Pirate" of 1903 were a far cry from the trim, scientifically-designed racing machines of today. The Winton, forerunner of the current eight-cylinder cars, had its motor strung beneath a high chassis, the whole carried on four big wooden wheels. It was cooled by a radiator that protruded in front like a bale of hay, and the working parts were covered by a box-like enclosure. The only streamlining was produced by the manner in which the driver arched his back in the bucket seat perched high on the rear of the contraption.

The Olds "Pirate" was more of a skeleton structure, with a light frame on four buggy wheels. Two small rocket-like gas tanks supplied the four-cylinder motor, and the pilot sat in a seat at the tail, his feet resting in stirrups hung from the rear axle.

Late in December of that same year, Otto Nestman appeared on the beach with a Stevens-Duryea which showed many traits of similarity to the "Pirate" except that the steering apparatus was directed on a vertical plane. After repeated trials under the supervision of J. Frank Duryea himself, Nestman wore out his tires and returned to New York in disgust, not having broken a record.

The first car that looked like racing equipage appeared on the beach in January, 1904. It was called the Packard "Gray Wolf" and was piloted by Charles Schmidt, a Paris-born German, who had been the partner of the French driver, Fournier, and who had won the Paris-Berlin and the Paris-Bordeaux races twelve months before. This Packard speedster established