

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

Think of it in these days when the trip from Gotham to Boston is little more than a morning or afternoon jaunt, that the schedule then called for a whole week of driving to get to the Hub and back!

We got no further than New Haven the first day, with luncheon at Stamford. Our second night's stop was at Springfield, with a noon repast at Hartford. The third day we pulled into Worcester for lunch and got into Boston about nightfall.

I rode in a Gasmobile with "Wally" Owen as its pilot. He was a clever mechanic, and doctored the old "clunk" so that it got us as far as Bridgeport on the return jaunt, where we fell by the wayside, and returned to New York by rail.

It is no exaggeration to say that no trophy ever offered did more to accomplish its purpose than did the Glidden Cup. The fact that the Glidden Tours were conducted by the Contest Board of the American Automobile Association, which Colonel Glidden made the custodian of the trophy, helped to mobilize the motoring world around them.

The first tour was an amateurish sort of an event, run in 1905, from New York through Hartford, Boston, and Plymouth, N. H., to Bretton Woods and returning by way of Concord, Worcester, and Lennox, Mass., to New York, a distance of 870 miles. The winner was decided by vote of the contestants themselves, the trophy being awarded to Percy Pierce, who needless to say drove a Pierce-Arrow.

Then the industry woke up and the 1906 tour was put on a real competition basis, with penalties for repairs and lateness. It was a strenuous test, too, the route being from Buffalo to Bretton Woods, N. H., through Canada, a distance of 1,200 miles, with forty-

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eight cars starting and only nineteen finishing. But of those nineteen, thirteen had perfect scores, so Percy Pierce, who was one of them, was allowed to retain the trophy.

It was at Elizabethtown, in the Adirondacks, on the occasion of the 1906 tour, and the hotel accommodations were, as usual, entirely inadequate. With one foot on the bar rail, Ed Lozier, manufacturer of the Lozier car, and J. E. Demar were bemoaning another night's rest on the soft side of a pool table, when a kindly stranger offered to take them to his home.

It was a fine looking residence from the front, but as their host led them through the back rooms he opened first an ordinary door and then a steel grilled door, and they found themselves in the county jail.

At their exclamation of surprise their host laughingly introduced himself as the sheriff, and pointed out comfortable cots in two empty cells. For companions they had a horse thief, a wife beater and a murder suspect, but the experiences of that night are another story.

On leaving in the morning, the sheriff asked his guests to sign their names in a book, saying he was allowed eleven cents per person per night for lodging.

Toward the close of that tour a number of contestants had a difficult time in maintaining their complement of passengers. Jimmy Becker, who drove an Elmore, was one.

At Quebec, he hired a young fellow to ride with him, offering ten dollars a day and all expenses. While waiting for his starting time, Becker noticed a man of legal bearing conversing with his hired passenger. A moment later the third hand demanded that Becker