

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

engaged in the manufacture of bicycles or carriages, or accessories for these two types of vehicles.

I used to marvel at such men as Winton, Haynes, Olds and Jeffrey, and some of the others as well, neglecting their profit—taking hours in the cycle field to waste—and that is what it looked like to me in those days—their valuable time with experiments on internal combustion engines.

As we moved up Time's flight toward the year 1900, a merger involving *Bearings*, *Cycling Life* and *Recreation*, all devoted to cycling, was effected, with *Cycle Age* as the name of the combined publications, and with Sam Miles, later the daddy of the national auto shows, and myself as co-editors.

Sam, like yours truly, had assumed a scornful attitude toward this gasoline engine foolishness, but we decided we had to do something to appease our readers—and especially those readers who also were advertisers—and we hit upon the happy idea of intruding two pages of horseless carriage news in a magazine heretofore devoted solely to the glorifying of the bicycle.

It was a daring precedent we were setting, and one not unattended with danger, for our sources of information were meagre. European inventors had made considerable progress in the development of the gasoline motor, but American engineering genius seemed to be floundering in the uncharted seas.

So, knowing little or nothing about this new and strange mechanism, Sam and I plied the shears most assiduously, culling from foreign newspapers and magazines such random notes as went into this department.

Soon we found ourselves in the precarious position of being considered authorities on a subject about which we were poorly qualified, either by study or ex-

II

As a youngster I had sold newspapers on the streets of Louisville, Kentucky, and Evansville, Indiana; toiled as a copy boy in the editorial rooms of the Cincinnati Enquirer, ran messages for the old American Union Telegraph Company, and peddled soap from door to door, all of which landed me in Chicago in 1890, when the Chicago Cycling Club gave me a job soliciting advertising for programs for its race meets.

That eventually resulted in N. H. Van Sicklen and George Barrett, then owners of *Bearings*, a cycle fan and trade publication, adding me to their advertising staff. While with this publication in that capacity, I officiated as clerk of the course at the bicycle meets from coast to coast, missing only one national competition throughout those years.

My duties with *Bearings* naturally brought me into close contact with the bicycle manufacturers, the real fathers of the automotive industry.

Traveling through the nation, I made the acquaintance of those who were destined to become the pioneers of the motor car world—Benjamin Briscoe, John N. Willys, Amzi Barber, John Brisben Walker, A. L. Riker, H. G. Fisk, R. E. Olds, H. H. Franklin, Elwood Haynes, F. C. Chandler, Col. William Mitchell Lewis, Jack Bate, Alexander Winton, Lewis S. Clarke, William C. Durant, Thomas B. Jeffrey, Charles Nash, F. E. Seiberling, Windsor T. White, Charles E. Duryea, Henry B. Joy and dozens of others, then