

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

could not be passed until the first ten miles had been left behind. Then, one after another, the leaders had dropped back, until the Duryea reached its destination, something like an hour's driving time ahead of its nearest rival.

The foreigners were beaten on their own soil. This unique record stood for many years unbroken. In fact, it may still stand. Others tried to duplicate it, and failed. Clearly in those days America led. Duryea vehicles were built for bad roads, and could travel over good ones as well.

But what of the result? Did auto making flourish? Not at all. To build a few successful cars and to get an industry established are widely different matters. Although abroad there were annual racing events and the interest and business grew, in America there was stagnation. There had been but two men willing to put up the money to encourage the development. Prospective buyers were amused, but not convinced. Further demonstration was needed. Not until several years had passed by and the success of the auto abroad was coupled with the advent of the little toy steamers did the public wake up. Then, as usual, they went at it wrong end first. First, the heavy, inefficient electric was tried. Then the steamers had a brief but flashy period, followed by the gasoline car, with slow but constantly growing popularity.

Why this delay and failure of recognition? Simply because, as some one so truly said, "The more advanced the thought, the more certain it is that men will misconceive, despise and reject it."

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While Henry Ford emerged from the metamorphosis that carried the automobile from a dream to a reality as the lone survivor of the early experimentors as well as one of the world's richest men, it was Alexander Winton who actually laid the cornerstone of the multibillion dollar motor industry of today.

When Alexander Winton set for himself the task of producing a horseless carriage that would actually run and haul people about, America had not yet produced a commercially successful gasoline automobile. The future of the prospective industry was a wilderness, waiting for pioneers to blaze a trail through it.

Friends shook their head and said that Mr. Winton shouldn't be wasting his time fooling with such a crazy idea. He was at that time a manufacturer of bicycles, and the bicycle business was in its boom period. But Mr. Winton had an idea, and he was faithful to it.

Many were the discouragements he faced. His experimental work ate money as an elephant consumes hay. Capital looked askance at him and his machine, and gave him no support. When the machine itself seemed almost on the verge of success, money was lacking. When money came, the machine took into its head strange notions, necessitating still further days—nights—of patient and faithful labor.

Yet he was not wholly without encouragement. George H. Brown and Thomas Henderson, associated with him in the bicycle business, believed in him and his