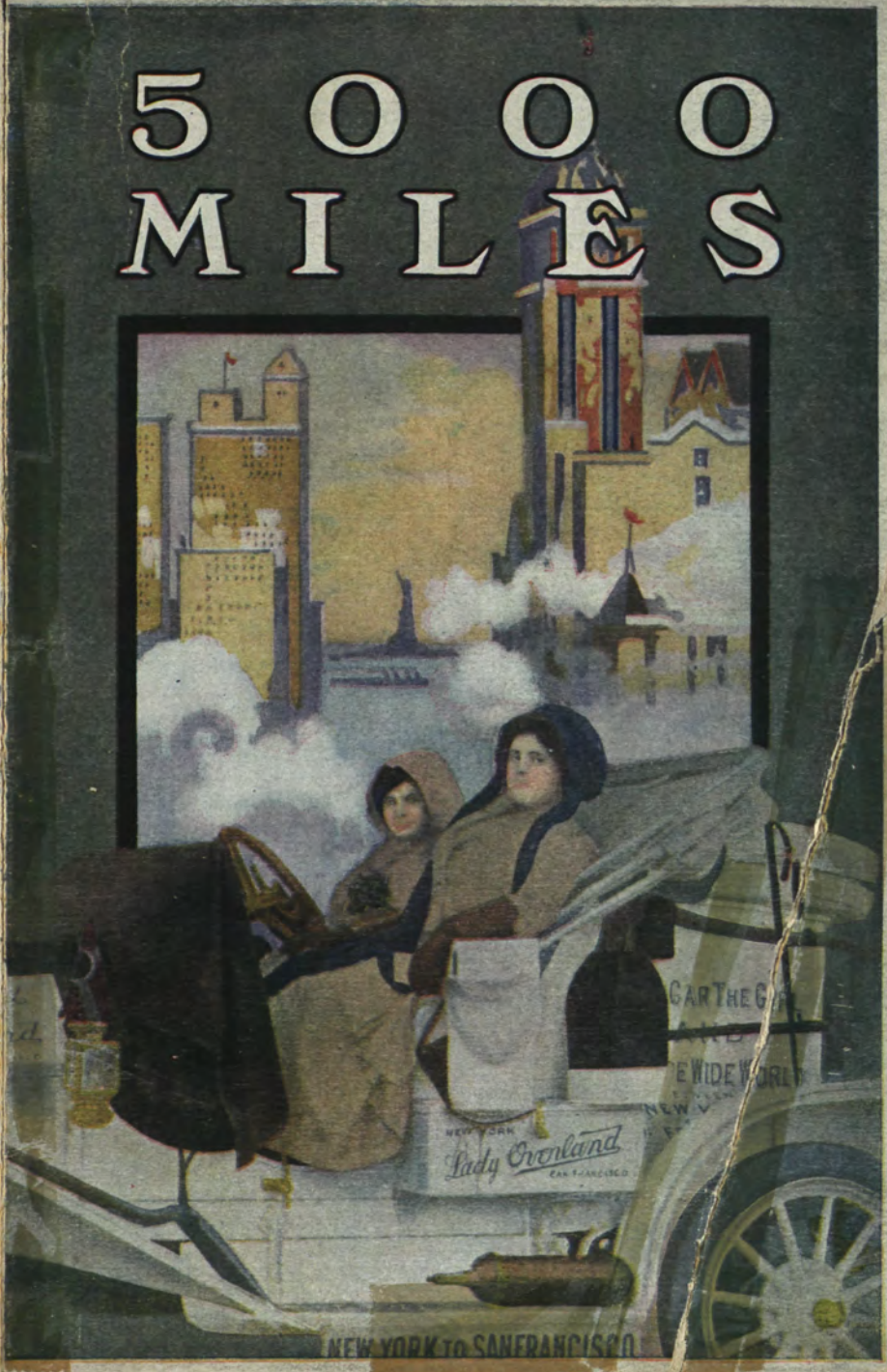
5000 MILES


NEW YORK
Lady Overland
SAN FRANCISCO
NEW YORK to SANFRANCISCO

5000 MILES

THE simple story of two women—and an OVERLAND, and a bottle of sea-water, and their trans-continental trip entirely without male assistance.

Being a brief recountal and a record of an Atlantic-to-the-Pacific pleasure trip that was a pleasure trip in every sense of the word.

5000 MILES

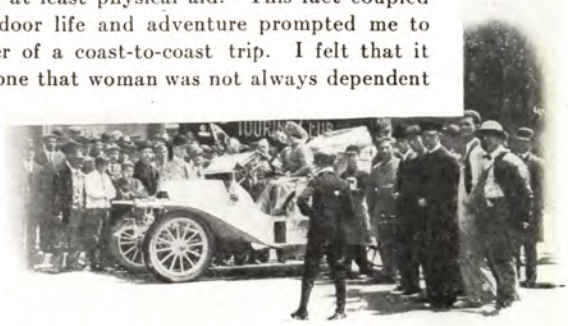
Wonderful
Performance
of a
Wonderful
Car

The Story of MISS SCOTT'S Journey *Overland*

The Journey of an Overland

"GET OUT of doors and stay there as much as possible," said my doctor, four years ago, when I was on the verge of nervous prostration, so I bought a small car and spent almost every day on the country roads around Rochester. When fall came, I found, instead of being such a nervous wreck as I was in the Spring, I had gained ten pounds and didn't seem to know what a nerve was. Since then I have been driving cars of one make or another almost constantly, and have been so strong and healthy that I felt that I was in good physical condition to make a long tour this summer, as my drives hitherto have been only in New York State and Jersey.

While in New York City, one of my friends made the remark that while women would always be able to drive in and around cities, especially in electrics, they would be more or less dependent upon a man if they attempted to tour any great distance. This remark piqued me. While not a suffraget, it hurt to feel that if I wished to go anywhere, I must, to some extent, depend upon a mere man for at least physical aid. This fact coupled with the love of outdoor life and adventure prompted me to accept gladly an offer of a coast-to-coast trip. I felt that it would prove to everyone that woman was not always dependent



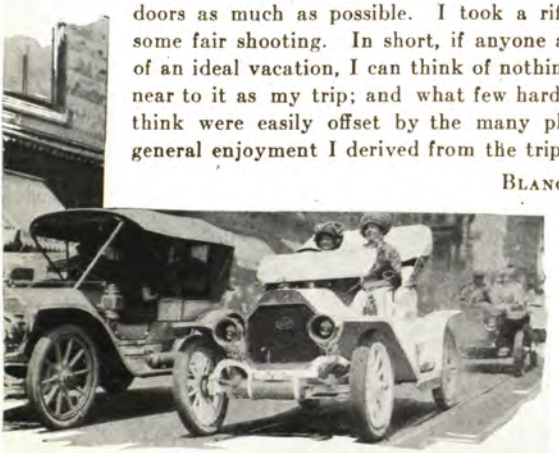
upon man and that her horizon was bound only by the limits of her own mind.

In making this trip, I wanted to prove to every woman and girl that it does not take a great physical strength or, as some put it, a knack for mechanics, but just ordinary judgment and good sense, which all American women have, as is well known.

My car equipment was standard with no extras of any kind with the exception of two additional tires. It had, of course, top, windshields and speedometer, and I had the tonneau removed and in its place a box built to hold wearing apparel, kodak, maps, etc.

I expected to take it easy going across, stopping a day or so in every town or even running forty or fifty miles north or south of my regular route, if it might be called that, to some interesting historical place or pretty summer resort on an inland lake, such as abound in Illinois and Wisconsin. From Denver on, I looked forward to taking a camping outfit and living out of doors as much as possible. I took a rifle, expecting to have some fair shooting. In short, if anyone asked me for my idea of an ideal vacation, I can think of nothing that would come as near to it as my trip; and what few hardships I encountered, I think were easily offset by the many pleasant incidents and general enjoyment I derived from the trip.

BLANCHE STUART SCOTT.



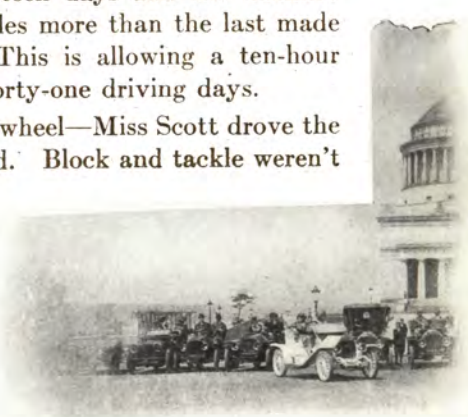
Story of "Lady Overland"

A RECORD BROKEN; THE LONGEST MILEAGE, THE SHORTEST TIME

LADY OVERLAND, the little white and silver car which Miss Blanche Stuart Scott drove, unassisted, 5393 miles from New York to San Francisco, is a stock car, model 38. A 25 H. P. Overland that anyone may own for $1000.

Although no attempt for speed was made, Lady Overland unconsciously established a record; for, dividing the hours of actual driving up into twenty-four days, the time would be seventeen days and the distance covered two thousand miles more than the last made record of fifteen days. This is allowing a ten-hour average for each of the forty-one driving days.

There was no shift at the wheel—Miss Scott drove the car every mile on the road. Block and tackle weren't

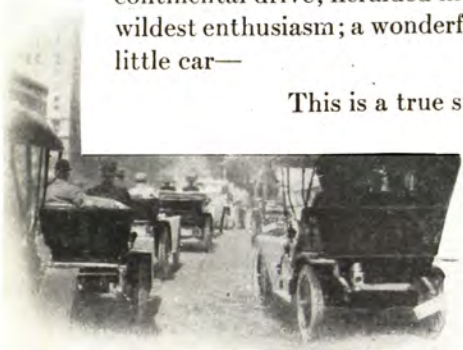


used once, but a great deal of the extra mileage was because of detours made to avoid unnecessarily bad places in the roads. Better time was made in this way and the result something almost unheard of. Absolutely no motor trouble at all; not a loose rod, not a lazy cylinder, no carburetor adjustments except in the high altitudes, everything running as perfectly when she pulled into San Francisco as when leaving New York, and two of the original spark plugs as they were first placed.

There were hard roads and hot sands; six springs were broken and many tires blown out; truss rods bent and snapped, but the frame never twisted and the axles bore the enormous strain they were subjected to.

Characterized by fewer mishaps than any other transcontinental drive; heralded in every city and town with wildest enthusiasm; a wonderful record and a marvelous little car—

This is a true story of Lady Overland.



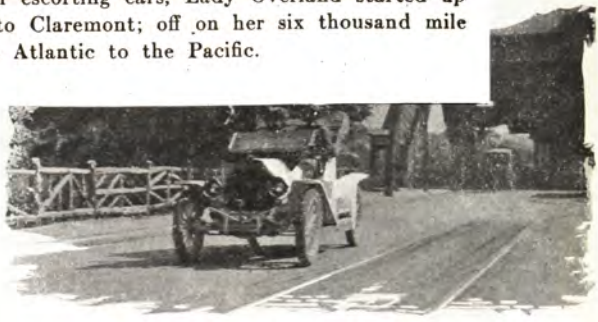
"Overland in an Overland"

MISS BLANCHE STUART SCOTT, of Rochester, N. Y., in an Overland car, was the first person to inaugurate a transcontinental motor trip undertaken for the purpose of interesting women in the value of motor car driving, the wonderful educational possibilities attending such a trip across our continent, and the benefits of long distance touring from a health standpoint.

One of the unique features of this trip was that it was not undertaken with the idea of establishing any records either for speed or endurance.

Cheering thousands lined Fifth Avenue for many blocks, and wonderful enthusiasm attended the departure of Lady Overland from Times Square, May sixteenth.

Bright in her white and silver beauty, bedecked with the flags of the Touring Club of America, the American Automobile Association, the Automobile Club of America, and followed by a long procession of escorting cars, Lady Overland started up Riverside Drive to Claremont; off on her six thousand mile journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific.



After a lunch given in their honor at Claremont, Miss Scott and Miss Phillips drove out across the 127th St. Viaduct into the beautiful valley of the Hudson, and on to Poughkeepsie, the first night's stop. The serene old river, made famous by the Dutch explorer in his good ship Half-Moon, never looked more beautiful than on this first moonlight ride into the college town.

The experience loomed big before us, rich in possibilities, glowing with promise.

Here opening before us was an opportunity to test sensation utterly new and untried. We were to be explorers in a path of pleasure.

Our trip was not to be a speed and endurance trial, not a grinding, wearing, ceaseless watching of the ribbon of road that was to unfold before us for six thousand miles; but a time of observation, of education and of enjoyment.

We were to be away from the cares of everyday life, not only in body but in spirit too; always to have the freedom that comes with knowing any road could be our road. Constantly changing scenes, little adventures of the road, the evening camp, the wayside lunch—all were to bring us the top joys of the motor car.

We tried to make our minds open and clear for impressions, like films in a camera, knowing that all our experiences would be just as instantaneous and swift as the flash of the shutter.

There was a thrill, too, at the long odds against us, as we looked at the sun shining so brightly, and remembered that our quest was ended, our venture crowned with success, only when we should see that sun sink into the West beyond the Golden Gate. Our second day's run to Albany began a week replete with interesting experiences.

In the Empire State there are many beautiful and historic spots to visit, and one of the first of these was the old baronial manor at Johnstown, once the home of Sir William Johnson. Somewhat gloomy, but with stately dignity, the home of the old English governor still bears mute evidence of the time when its vast corridors rang with the mirth of a society almost of royalty.

At Utica we met and were entertained by Admiral Robley D. Evans, who told us interesting stories of his many trips across the states, and the next day followed a big reception in Rochester.

One day was set aside for a little journey to East Aurora, to the home of one of the great writers of the day—Elbert Hubbard.

We received the warmest of welcomes from Fra Elbertus and Alice Hubbard and the rest of the Roycroft family. "We believe in women's work here," said Mr. Hubbard, "and the work you are doing is as great and good as any I have come in contact with for some time. You are teaching the American girl courage

and independence, that she may accomplish what her brothers can do."

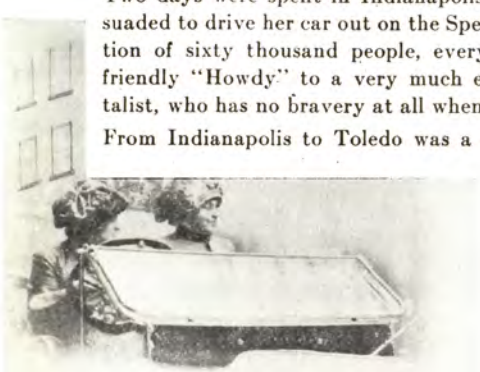
One of the most interesting days we had was divided between two enthusiastic Ohio receptions; one by Governor Harmon at Columbus, and the other by the Wright brothers at Dayton.

The Governor is, and has been, doing a great deal for the furtherance of the good roads movement, and was particularly interested in learning that a woman intended making a transcontinental trip.

Later in the day we arrived at the Aviation Field in Dayton, and there witnessed the flights of the Wrights' biplanes. Leaving Dayton the next morning in a pouring rain in order to reach Indianapolis for the Speedway races, our route was over the National St. Louis to Washington road, and we were agreeably surprised at its good condition, notwithstanding the downpour. Even the mud here was a joy after the water holes and clay of the New York highways.

Two days were spent in Indianapolis, and Miss Scott was persuaded to drive her car out on the Speedway track for the inspection of sixty thousand people, every one of whom shouted a friendly "Howdy" to a very much embarrassed transcontinentalist, who has no bravery at all when it comes to crowds.

From Indianapolis to Toledo was a delightful drive through a



beautiful rich country and over excellent graded roads. The people of the Hoosier State are cordial and courteous, and everyone has a welcome for you, whether it be at roadside, farm house or hotel.

The Overland girls left the hotel the morning of June 1st, receiving a royal send-off from the enthusiastic crowd that had been attracted by the Lady Overland, and although they had declined several offers for motor escorts, they could not refuse the kindly services of a little messenger boy, who rode beside them on his bicycle to the city limits. "Ought you not to be at work?" Miss Scott asked him. "Naw," he replied, "got a bunch of telegrams in my pocket to deliver, but they can wait till I get back. They're only business—nobody's dead."

Our route via Fort Wayne lay back over the road already covered as far as Greenfield, James Whitcomb Riley's home, and then north through Marion, Huntington, several other small pretty villages, and past innumerable farms. At every country home we would be greeted with a burst of cheers and a friendly waving by all members of the farmer's family. Sometimes two or three miles would lie between the houses and we were at a loss to know how these people knew when to expect us, until we stopped to talk to the children at one place and they let the secret out. Said their neighbors telephoned, and "paw" had gone in to "phone to Uncle John, up the road a mile or two."

On both these days hotel proprietors provided us with a delicious lunch and filled our Thermos bottles with hot coffee, and so, free for the first time from cafes and hotels, we ate our lunch by the roadside, choosing a most delightful picnic spot.

In Indiana it seems that everything possible has been done to make motoring a pleasure. The roads are perfect, the courtesy extended is more noticeable than in any other state, the right of way is generously given and everywhere you feel the warmth of a genuine welcome and friendliness.

We reached Toledo, the home of the Overland car, in a rainy disagreeable time and spent several days there before starting again on our way westward.

On the morning of June 7, accompanied by a score of cars, driven for the most part by women enthusiasts, we started out from Toledo with South Bend as our next stopping place and with this day began the long weeks of perfect weather with which we were to be favored on the greater part of our journey. Nothing of unusual interest characterized this day's run, over fairly good roads and through pleasing pastoral scenery.

The Indiana line was crossed again the next day at Hammond, where we lost our good roads and met with enough "bumps" and ruts to rack almost any car to pieces. Lady Overland took them like a thoroughbred, however, and we met our escorts in

Washington Park at 4:30 as arranged, pulling up at the hotel a little after five for another two days' stop.

We spent a greater part of our time in Chicago purchasing a camping outfit, khaki and flannel suits, gauntlets and high waterproof boots, which we would need in the rough country further west. These, together with dehydrated food-stuffs, and a compact cooking outfit, army tent and blankets, we shipped to Hastings, Nebraska, to await our arrival there.

We were held up for the first time near Waukegan on our way out from Fort Sheridan by—but let me tell you about it first.

We were driving along a smooth country road and came unexpectedly to an effective barricade, dirt thrown up in piles from the ditches, red lanterns in readiness for night use and red danger flags fastened to the wooden horses that straddled the ditch. We had stopped the car and were about to reconnoiter, when out from behind a cluster of trees came half a dozen laughing city girls, barring our way and each insisting that we must be tagged before they would let us through.

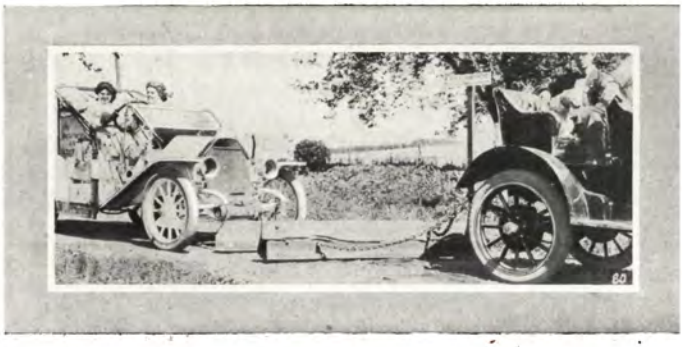
It was "tag day" in Illinois, and these girls, who were spending their vacation at an old lakeside farmhouse, devised this ingenious scheme of a fake road barricade, so as to better hold up tourists and get their donations for the orphans' fund. We were tagged, but even so, our progress all the rest of the day was

interrupted by these eager voluntary missionaries, who must look at our tags and see that they were genuine.

Milwaukee is off the direct route we had chosen, but we decided to spend Sunday there and were not sorry for the extra mileage necessitated by the detour, because the drive is beautiful to Rockford via the Blue Mound road to Brookfield, Waukesha—the home of "White Rock" and center of Wisconsin's wonderful clear overflowing springs of charged water, Lake Delavan and its many neighboring summer resorts. From Beloit to Rockford alone, the beauties of Rock River valley just at sunset and the impressiveness of the little riverside city as it is approached from the famous high bridge, went to make the most delightful drive of any day since leaving New York.

Yet more beautiful still was the run from Rockford to Clinton, along the bluffs of the Rock River. The road is narrow and in many places passes through dangerous cuts, and up and down steep rocky hills. On either side of the river rise thickly-wooded palisades, which bring back to your memory the majestic sweep of the old Hudson.

That afternoon we crossed the Mississippi at Lyons and no one can understand my feelings as I stopped the car in the center of the bridge and looked back over the country I had covered and again forward into the real west—the new wonderful country



that I was to see and know; the desire for adventure; the actual contact with the western cordiality and the new life. The Mississippi to me then seemed such a long way "west."

It is so easy back in New York to point with your finger to a little dot on the map and say—"Clinton, Iowa"—but the feeling you get when you have driven through little towns unheard of, and over obscure country roads is so entirely different. No one can understand until they have done it. It is something one never learns from a car window, and I never will forget how I felt, the exhilaration that accompanied the throb of the motor, and the bound and on-rush of my little car down the steep incline of the bridge into Iowa.

Then, too, there was another feeling—that of apprehension, for I had read the books of the "Plugger" and the "Glidden Pathfinder," and I approached the "gumbo" state with my hands up. Never have I been more surprised, and nowhere in the Union has there been so much work done, and to such good advantage as in this "gumbo" state.

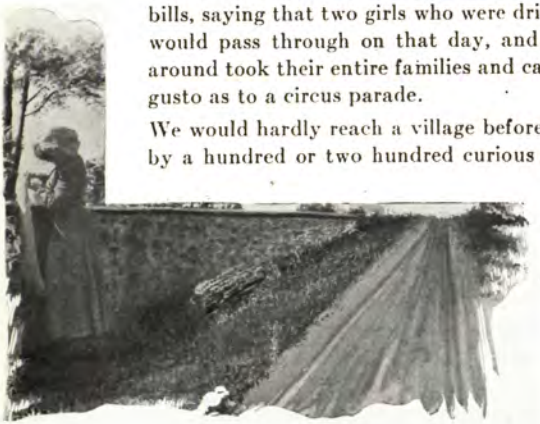
There is an excellent hard dragged and macadamized road from the Mississippi to the Missouri, called the "River to River Road," which is the complete Iowa section of the proposed new transcontinental highway, and as we were the first transcon-

tinentalists to cross it, a great deal of interest was taken in the trip throughout the entire state.

J. W. Eichinger, the secretary of the Good Roads Commission, on hearing of Lady Overland's progress toward the state line, telephoned or telegraphed the county commissioners to meet us with an escort at each intersecting county line, and to accompany us to the next county, and also added that if the road was not in good condition, "to have it dragged." Needless to say the entire three hundred and eighty miles of this highway were perfect, and with the possible exception of Indiana, these were the best roads in the entire 6253 miles through thirteen states.

We had more fun on the second day's run, through the western end of the state, than we had anywhere else, listening to the remarks about us and our trip, and answering questions. I never have been able to fathom this Iowa enthusiasm or curiosity, or whatever it may have been. It was Saturday and in several of the smaller towns the road commissioners had put out hand bills, saying that two girls who were driving across the continent, would pass through on that day, and all the farmers for miles around took their entire families and came to town with as much gusto as to a circus parade.

We would hardly reach a village before we would be surrounded by a hundred or two hundred curious people, and they weren't

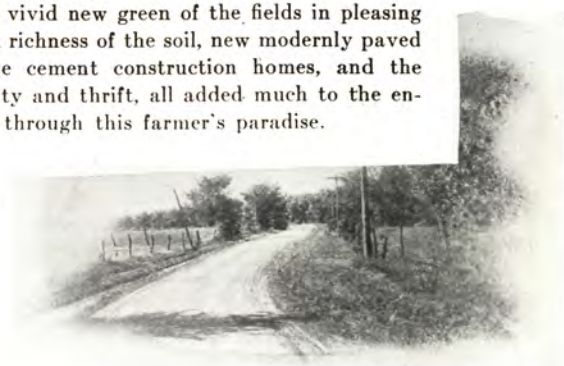


at all backward in making our acquaintance. Our hands were blistered with continual shaking, and when we reached Council Bluffs, we could hardly talk.

Many incidents made our Iowa trip so generally interesting that the Des Moines *Capitol* printed an extra bulletin every hour telling where we were; a copy of the *Guthrian*, which we received in Hastings, completed its full front page story with this little paragraph—"Certainly, Saturday, June 18th, was a red letter day in both Guthrie and Audobon counties."

From the time we entered the state until we reached Council Bluffs we were more like the pilot car for a Glidden tour than just two girls enjoying a coast to coast run, for there were never less than fifteen or twenty flag-bedecked cars following our lead, and the entire transit was a parade.

The first day's run in this state was to Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Marshalltown, Newton and Des Moines, and the second through Menlo, Guthrie Center, Audobon, Exira, and Atlantic to Council Bluffs and Omaha. The rolling country, beautiful highly-cultivated farms, with the vivid new green of the fields in pleasing contrast with the dark richness of the soil, new modernly paved towns, with attractive cement construction homes, and the general air of prosperity and thrift, all added much to the enjoyment of our drive through this farmer's paradise.



We reached Des Moines at noon and found that arrangements had been made for us to meet Governor Carroll and Secretary of State Haywood at the capitol after lunch, and we had a very interesting interview. They wanted to know about the trip through the east and a transcontinentalist's view of the general condition of the roads and how they compared with others.

I found Des Moines a most impressive and beautiful city, embodying fifty-five miles of perfect asphalt and wood blocked pavements, every mile of which is cleansed daily by specially constructed flushing carts.

Another interesting fact, disclosed upon inquiry, is that in a town of a hundred thousand, with not more than five hundred automobiles owned in the city, at least seventy-five of these are owned and driven by women.

We drove, Sunday afternoon, from Omaha to Lincoln; across the Platte River and over a hilly country. While it had rained hard the night before and in the early morning, we did not find any "gumbo," and the roads in this state are natural.

At Lincoln we were interested in the famous artesian well, bored to an enormous depth and throwing a continual stream of salt water, and the salt marshes on the outskirts of the city. We were beginning to find that this trip, in addition to giving us a

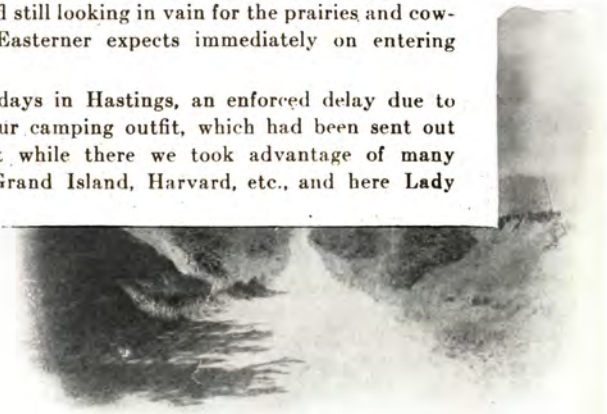
good general and practical education, was furnishing us many intensely interesting lessons in geology.

From Lincoln we went to Hastings and took along with us that day a lunch, which we intended to eat in some shady roadside place, and while we had appreciated the Iowans' kindness, we were glad to think that we could choose our own pace and go along alone enjoying things in our own way.

But this pleasure was not for us, because when at last driven to it by hunger pangs, we tried to hunt out a secluded spot in which to eat a hurried lunch, twenty carloads of curious Nebraskans lined up along the road to watch us, and, I suppose, to see if we ate as other people did. I guess they were disappointed because we both tried to look unconscious, and it took about three minutes for us to stow away enough rations to last us into Hastings.

We again took up the procession from Seward into York, arriving in Hastings that evening in time for a banquet which had been prepared for us, and still looking in vain for the prairies and cowboys that every Easterner expects immediately on entering Nebraska.

We spent several days in Hastings, an enforced delay due to lost shipment of our camping outfit, which had been sent out from Chicago, but while there we took advantage of many pretty drives to Grand Island, Harvard, etc., and here Lady



Overland was dressed in her western garb of shovel, axes, gunny-sacks, water bottles, lantern, pick and tent, in almost ludicrous contrast to her white and silver beauty.

We reached Kearney for breakfast and found that here we were mid-way across the continent, just half way between Boston and Frisco. This town is also the exact center of the state and we heard the wails of the townspeople that they can't have Kearney as capital instead of Lincoln. We struck again at Gibbons and at Buda went out onto the central of the three famous Indian trails—the one that leads to the site of Fort McPherson, and past the old cemetery in which are buried the soldiers killed in the last Indian outbreak of '98.

One peculiarity of the roads in this state is that they parallel each other and run either due north and south or east and west, and it is not yet necessary to have a pilot.

I expected flat treeless prairie land with nothing at all picturesque, but found once more that scenic conditions had been misrepresented to me. This flat country had been converted into wonderful farms, and the clusters of buildings are almost invariably surrounded by groves of transplanted trees, making pleasant oases of shade in the surrounding fields of wheat and corn.

The entire stretch for miles is circled as far as eye can reach by oothills, picturesque in their irregularity and variations in color.

We reached North Platte at sunset and decided to drive on that evening to Ogallala to consult with Mr. Hollingsworth, a well-known motorist in that section, as we had heard several rumors concerning bad washouts west of there, and wanted road data.

At Ogallala we again left the main route which had usually been chosen for this tour of the states to the Pacific, learning that the road via Julesburg to Denver had been rendered impassable by a typhoon; and instead we took the road due west to Chappell and Lodge Pole, and found that here, too, the Union Pacific tracks had been torn out on both sections by a terrific cloudburst, that all the bridges were washed out, and the roads converted into veritable raging torrents.

The clouds foretold no better weather conditions for the next twenty-four hours, and we decided the best thing to do was to go on; this we did, and I guess people are still wondering how we ever got through. As I look back on it now and see again in memory the miles and miles of water we splashed through between Sidney and Kimball, the gray dreariness of the day, the loneliness and desolation of a region stripped and torn by storm, I, myself, wonder how we got through without accident or delay.

Near Sidney we came upon a car of tourists who were driving from Boone, Ia., to Denver, and who had passed us sometime during the previous day; they had slid off a piece of high-crowned

road into a ditch of real "gumbo" and were almost hopelessly stuck, but luckily we were able to pull them out with a stout rope and they followed us as far as Pine Bluffs, where they secured lodgings for the night.

On this day our shovel was initiated in making traction for our wheels in a spot where the road had been washed half away. In many places the whole bottom of the road for many hundred yards was gullied out to a depth of six or seven feet, and we had to find new tracks for ourselves in the prairie.

When night came we were so tired that we went on to Cheyenne where we could get better accommodations and a hot supper.

This was a ride that will long be remembered. Leaving Pine Bluffs at the Wyoming state line we got out of the flood district and had our first taste of raw open prairie. This novel experience of crossing sixty miles of barren desolate waste, is, I am sure, something never before attempted by a transcontinentalist; there are no definite roads, just faint tracks in the grass, leading apparently nowhere; no posts or wires, or fences, and ahead of you nothing but the faint bobbing red tail-light of a local pilot-car only faintly discernable, and behind the blood-curdling and dreary howls of the harmless coyotes.

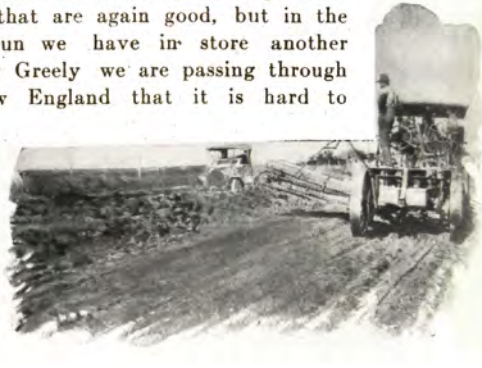
Miles seem longer at night, and space emptier, and there is no break in the monotonous regularity of the dull gray sky-line.

There is no feeling of such utter loneliness as in this country deserted by God and man; accentuate this by passing through the broken-down gateway of a little abandoned homesteaders' settlement, and you may imagine something of what the feelings of the last man in creation would be who passed through a world swept clean of humanity.

For miles we saw the faint reflections of the lights in Cheyenne, and for miles, too, they seemed to get farther away and fainter till we were almost upon the city.

That night our steaming coffee, lunch served in our room, and warm blankets were more than ever appreciated, and we slept late the next morning, starting for Denver about eleven o'clock with no villages to see but those of the prairie dogs. These little animals, although they persist in digging abominable holes in the middle of the road in the most unexpected places, are very interesting, and many times we stopped for five or ten minutes to watch them.

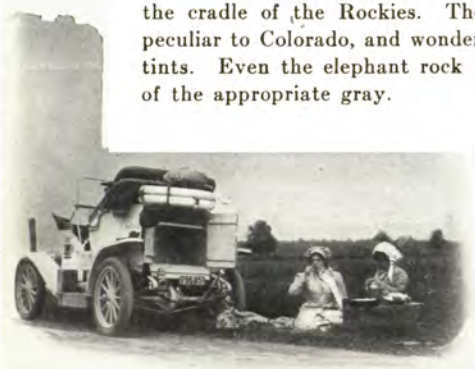
As far as Ault, Colorado, there is nothing more unusual than the huge sandpiles which are slowly petrifying. Fast time is possible over roads that are again good, but in the latter part of the day's run we have in store another surprise, and before reaching Greely we are passing through a country so typical of New England that it is hard to



imagine you are not on some part of the Ideal Tour to Bretton Woods.

The low rambling farm houses, the huge red barns and their embellishment of littered farming implements, and high top-heavy hay-racks, take you back to a New Hampshire rural district; and the picture is intensified by the first glimpses of the high mountains near Denver. Neither does the similarity end here, and the old rustics who lean on rakes or perch on top fence rails to pass the time of day with you are real 'down-easters' transplanted.

We arrived that evening in Denver—but everyone knows just how delightful Denver is—and no matter where home happens to be, you will always see someone on the street that you know came from just that place. We spent Saturday and Sunday here, and one of these days we devoted to a little side trip to Palmer Lake, through Sedalia and past Perry Park, far famed for its natural beauty. The road winds through the mountains, over deep ravines and under huge overhanging boulders, up two thousand feet from the mile-high city to the little silver lake in the cradle of the Rockies. The rocks are of that formation peculiar to Colorado, and wonderful in their grandeur and color tints. Even the elephant rock which can be seen for miles is of the appropriate gray.



Not knowing that the new bridge over the Platte at Fort Steele had been completed, we followed our tire tracks back to Cheyenne in order to there obtain a pass from the U. P. Division Superintendent, to cross on the railroad bridge, and thinking thus to eliminate the hold-ups that caused exasperating delays of the Thomas car in the New York to Paris race, and several transcontinental parties.

It was the Fourth of July this day, and it was with a feeling of lonesomeness that we left the gay crowds in the cities, the music, the parades, and drove out through a country abandoned and still. But nature had in store for us a display, more grand, more inspiring and more wonderful than any we had ever known.

We left Cheyenne for Laramie during the middle afternoon. It was a misty day, with threats of storm in the air and a pale copper globe of sun showing occasionally through the fog.

Even these faint glimpses of sun failed us as we started on the up-grade into the Laramie mountains, and the gray, dead cover of clouded sky cupped us around.

We drove ahead into the towering lonely hills from whose dark heights we could look down into a valley almost equally still and dreary, with a few small settlements studded here and there in the immensity. The desolation of the mountains was as

nothing compared to the desolation of that bit of transplanted "No-Man's Land."

Away to the northwest the cold snow-capped heads of the Rockies loomed ghost-like against the stormy clouds, and while an occasional ray from a now unseen sun made copper flashes on the nearby rocks, the distant hills stood sombre and unlightened.

A freight train climbing slowly and humanly along a painful and winding course, with long blasts of their whistle carrying sobbing echoes into the still hills, cut unexpectedly across our road. The engineer slowed down to give us the right of way, and we passed them with a flashing wave of hands, and a little thrill of kindred feeling. We were all going into the darkness and the storm.

In the Sherman Pass, our eyes were charmed with a great bronze pyramid, standing clear, a hundred feet or so into the sky. We had visions of Indian legends, until we discovered that it was the Ames monument, erected at the highest point of the Union Pacific railroad in the Rockies.

At the top of the pass we again rode under the gray wings of the storm. And here, at the apex of the continent, Nature gave us our Fourth of July; such as no small boy, even in his wildest rocket-streaked and cracker-starred dreams, could conceive. Across the black map of the heavens great forks of lightning

darted angrily. Around our ears thunder roared, and the hills catching the echoes whimpered fearsomely.

Then came the fusillade, and the air was white with the great stinging hail-stones. They popped against the rocks with persistent steadiness, shredding the vibrant air till even the thunder was faint.

We swept through this and down the rough mountain road, a drop of many hundred feet, down toward the distant lights of Laramie.

It was cold, so cold that the air sweeping by the car was like a dash of icy water in the face. We gasped but would not give up. Ages and eternities of cold seemed to pass with the lights of Laramie still a distant goal, but presently, our fingers stiffened, and our faces numbed, we drove into the town wrapped like Arctic explorers in sweaters and ponchos over our flannels.

From Laramie came a series of hard driving and lost roads, boundless rolling prairies, with no gateway to civilization through the dimly distant mountains that completely circle our wilderness. Prowling around the foothills are packs of sly, cringing coyotes and gray wolves; mountain wild-cats starting at the unaccustomed throb of our motor, and darting away to the hills—gray living streaks in the sunlight, and every now and then an antelope rearing his head high for a last startled look before

bounding off to the friendly cover of the snow-capped range. We were in a new sphere, this west we had read about was lonely; there were no cavalcades of howling wild-eyed cow-boys, no ranches or boom towns—just a great big emptiness, and still—so still that we could hear the silence pounding in our ears, so intense and awesome that even the birds fly low, close to the friendly earth, as if afraid to soar high and free—as if they, too, here at the top of the world, felt the enormity of space and were afraid of it.

Here there are no bursts of song, no chirping and whirr of insect life, for every living thing feels and imbibes the awe of the silence, and your voice dies abruptly where no wall or cliff gives back its echo.

Thirty miles out of Laramie there is a good mountain road and at a junction of ways we followed the one designated by the roughly drawn pointing hand that tops the country's only road sign, a rough board set deep in the sand, and piled around with a cone of rocks. This bears the inscription, "28 miles to Tip Hunter's Saloon, Medicine Bow."

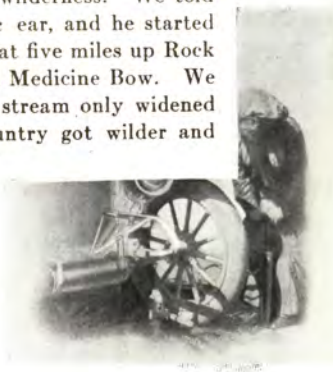
We had bumped along for hours over a gullied trail, which at best was only a couple of brush-filled ruts, fording streams, blocking up two broken springs with ax handles and straps, retracing two miles of the worst road in the world in order to recover our

lost prestolite tank, out across alkali pits and past the dreaded Soda Lake, through sluggish streams, to finally sink into the mud and sand of high-walled Sherman Gulch.

It was late in the afternoon before we got our car out over the strips of canvas, and up onto the opposite bank, only to find there was no trail of any sort. For two or three miles, then back four or five, we zigzagged back and forth in vain hope of finding some wagon tracks or even a path, and it was nearly sunset when we hit a trail and followed it joyously, finding that it, too, had its end, for it led to the junction of Rock and Sheep creeks—no bridge and no chance of fording.

Disheartened, we toiled back over the baked river bed and saw finally a sheep camp on the bank of one of the now widening streams. Off the trail again and laboring out across the brush, all the time waving a handkerchief for a distress signal we went down the hill toward the camp.

The sheep-herder came out to meet us, glad, I suppose, for a brief glimpse of a human face in all that wilderness. We told our troubles into a seemingly sympathetic ear, and he started us north with the comforting knowledge that five miles up Rock Creek we would find a bridge, not far from Medicine Bow. We searched vainly for twelve miles, but the stream only widened and looked more forbidding, and the country got wilder and

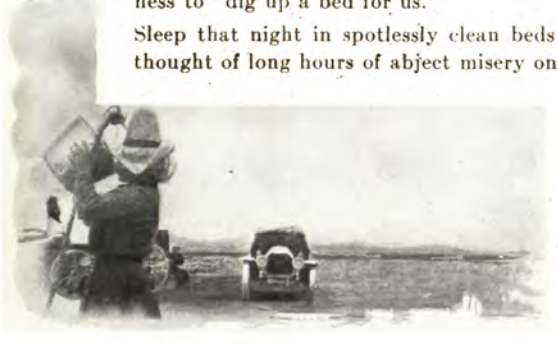


rougher with every mile. Driven to it at last by desperation, we rushed the creek and emerged safe, but wet and frightened, with night coming on us fast and still hopelessly lost. We turned again to the setting sun. We had not eaten since early morning, but being lost isn't conducive to keen appetites, and our one and only desire was to find a road. This we didn't do until after dark, and nothing in the world has ever been as welcome as that hard-packed travelled stretch of sand.

Leaving Laramie that morning we fully expected to reach a town before noon and hadn't taken on an extra supply of gasoline and water, and things would have become pretty serious for us had we not found this road.

Following this desperately, with no regard for mileage or direction, only realizing that it would eventually lead us to some habitation, we reached Medicine Bow a half an hour after midnight, and the only ray of light in the town of Wister's "Virginian" shone brightly out from the open door of a saloon. Too cold then and too tired to prepare a supper from our gunny-sack supplies, we sat down in the saloon and munched "bar" cheese and crackers, while Tip Hunter went cheerfully out into the darkness to "dig up a bed for us."

Sleep that night in spotlessly clean beds was oblivion, and no thought of long hours of abject misery on a choppy sea of sage-



brush disturbed our dreams, until we awoke late the next morning with a start, remembering that there was a long job for "our friend the blacksmith." Broken springs must be strengthened, new brackets cast for the gas tank—and it was noon before we could start out again for Rawlins.

Had we found the direct way from Laramie to Medicine Bow the day before, it would have been only fifty-eight miles, but our speedometer showed a hundred and twenty-nine miles when we set it up for the day's run through Carbon and Hanna.

Desolation is the key-note here. For miles the road is along the top of a disused railroad grade to Carbon, not "Sweet Auburn, loveliest of the plain," but just a deserted Village, abandoned because the high hills' treasures had been exhausted and to the settlers, the lure of their rugged splendor had not appealed.

There is something pathetic in this row of onetime homes, stripped of every vestige of habitation, empty staring windows and open doorways, used now only by the nightly procession of rats and scavengers. Even the tired prospector passes through with a shudder at nightfall, and out into the hills to roll up in his blanket in the cold, but ghost-free starlight.

Lost again the next day—we were set right by two Utah tramps, while we were negotiating the almost perpendicular bluff road

to Pathfinder. We had ten miles more of hard work, and night found us at Fort Steele.

Glad of a rest and anxious for a change from sand and sage-brush and treeless hills, we went the next day to Saratoga and Grand Encampment, between the Medicine Bow and Sierra Madre mountains, proving by this day's drive that all the Wyoming roads aren't bad, and glad of a day that could be devoted wholly to a pleasure trip.

The route is over the mountain passes of the Snowy range and through the magnificent Platte canyon to Encampment. The scenery is rugged and beautiful and the little mining towns so in keeping with the wide-spread stories of the locality, that one thinks himself in the midst of some well staged western play.

Coming into Rawlins, just at the sunset hour, with the main street ending in a foreground of rose-tinted mountains, the tree-bordered streets with their pretty modern homes, the beauty of the town came as a decided surprise after the rough mining camps characterizing the surrounding country.

We were here just in time to witness the finish of a bronco-busting contest, and spent that evening visiting the show places of a street carnival, the tents, Merry-go-rounds and Ferris wheels which filled the main street for several blocks.

This was the first town which came up to our ideas of people and things typically Western.

The next day the desert and Bitter Creek—which has been termed by transcontinentalists the very worst part of the coast to coast trip. Hard?—Yes, I'll admit that, but not at all in keeping with the hardship tales associated with it. No block or tackle needed, no hoisting, no amateur engineering, only one bad ford and that through Bitter Creek, and we covered a hundred and twenty miles in that one day, to Point of Rocks.

The confines of the great Red Desert are narrowing rapidly. Reflect that but a quarter of a century back the journey we made in comfort was a matter of wild adventure; at cost of months of arduous travel and at hazard of life; not only because of human foes, but from scarcity of food and water. One never appreciated the full stride of American progress until he has crossed in an automobile such a territory as this, where bleached bones of cattle and sheep, and lonely mounds of scattered graves justify its traditional horrors.

Leaving Monell, we entered the Bitter Creek section prepared for the worst imaginable road conditions—we found we were in a country that could be made beautiful or desolate, according to what one looks for; but fascinating under any circumstances. The unique panorama, the wonderful shading of the sand to

buff and back again to deep red, lost sometimes in the vivid green of the greasewood and the purple and gold tints of the distant table lands; the fantastic shapes of the dunes and hills, and the peculiar rock and sandstone formations go to make this trip not one to be dreaded, but most attractive.

Further on toward Point of Rocks, the road in many places was dangerous, running along the top of steep embankments and washouts and crossed by innumerable dry gullies. It is sandy, too, in three or four places, but nowhere can be truthfully termed impassable, and there is no excuse for broken rods and stripped transmissions, at least, with any "Overland" car.

The following day on entering the palisades of the Green River, we passed through the last of the Red Desert territory and left the "horrible Bitter Creek to its raging and overflowing."

We stopped for lunch at Rock Springs, the world's most cosmopolitan town; then out into a line of prodigious mountain terraces, extensive plateaux, profound canyons and flat arid plains, hills veined with precious metals, and alternating desolate beds of lava; bald mountain cones, grass-carpeted slopes, uncouth vegetable growths of the desert and bleak rock spires; beyond all of which white peaks gleam radiantly in the almost perpetual sunshine.

Here, as in many other parts of the west, the actual height of a

mountain is greater than is apparent to the eye. The ascent begins at a point considerably above where the eastern mountain-climber leaves off, and the whole region is itself a huge mountain, thousands of square miles in area, of which the projecting peaks are but exalted look-outs. Black Buttes and Aspen mountains to the south and ahead of us Irenda Buttes and Table Mt., with its Castle rock and famous Sphinx head, were transformed by sunlight and shadows into huge pallettes of rainbow tints.

The frequent stretches of wide horizon exert a fascination no less powerful than that of arduous mountain fastnesses, or the secret shadows of the dense forest. There is here that dignity of nature, that mystery—potent even to those who can least define its thrall. Miners confess to it, and herdsmen, and to us—travellers—it appealed in its novelty; this land of sage and grease-wood, of frowning volcanic piles, shadowed canyons and painted buttes.

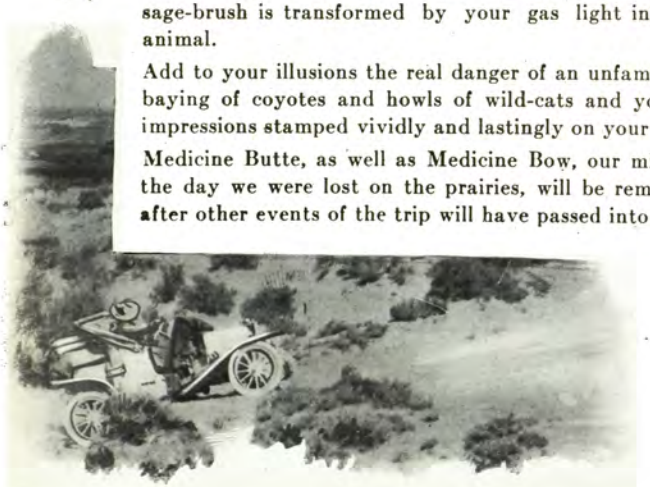
Here in the fertile valley of the Green River, we lost our relics of a dead emptied sea, and went out into a country of new scenes and new life. First through the deep cut of Pilot Butte and into the green fields of Bryan, easily fording Black Fork, and on to Granger, where we recrossed the river; then northwest to Opal, crossing Ham's Fork, a wide but shallow and hard-bottomed river; then on through Kemmerer, Diamondsville and Cumberland to the south of Bear River Divide.

Leaving Cumberland at six o'clock, we reached Evanston at midnight, although the distance was only thirty-five miles. We did not know that the five mile hill that they told us about was a hard sandy climb of nearly four thousand feet to the summit of Medicine Butte. A mountain of slopes that bend in a single sweeping curve to depths that the brain reels to contemplate, down which a loosened stone will spin until the eye can no longer distinguish its course, and huge folds and precipices and abysses of which no hint is given—and that for twelve long miles the southern decline was over a road winding dangerously around the edge of bluffs shelving into the rock of the mountain side.

If you want some real excitement and thrilling experiences, just tour through the Rockies on a dark night when every shadow at the edge of the road seems a bottomless pit, and every sage-brush is transformed by your gas light into a skulking animal.

Add to your illusions the real danger of an unfamiliar road, the baying of coyotes and howls of wild-cats and you have some impressions stamped vividly and lastingly on your memory.

Medicine Butte, as well as Medicine Bow, our midnight haven the day we were lost on the prairies, will be remembered long after other events of the trip will have passed into oblivion.



Another incident of the day, one to be laughed at now, was our hold-up outside of Kemmerer. That section is peopled for the most part by Hungarian miners, and seeing a "Hunky" driving a pair of frightened horses toward us, we slowed down just in time to see him pull a gun out of its "golf-bag" sheath, and lay it down on the seat of his high Melvin wagon. The weapon—well—it assumed the proportions of a coast defense gun, and it appeared from his frequent inspections and priming, that its owner was very fond of it.

In obeyance to his signal we shut off the motor, and a little alarmed we waited for his dancing, balking horses to come alongside. Then, shouted to us in broken English, we got this bit of information: he didn't want us to be frightened, but the last auto that came up there had been the cause of a spill and for revenge he had shot their tires full of holes.

Just how this feat of marksmanship was accomplished with a runaway team to manage and a fast-disappearing auto as a target, we didn't stop to learn. Sufficient to know it was only our tires he was after.

We got our supper that night at a Chinese restaurant, the only place open in Evanston, and we routed out the hotel proprietor to get our rooms and breakfast ordered for we had completed thirty-five days of driving, covering in that time a distance of

four thousand, two hundred and fifty-six miles, and were anxious to get to Salt Lake the following day.

The flat country out of Evanston to Wyuta, on the state line, gave no promise of the wonderful farming country in Echo canyon. The grassy slopes with millions of grazing sheep and cattle, and the further grandeur of Weber canyon, where the road winds perilously along Weber River through this wonderful deep cut in the Wasatch mountains.

Passing the famous "Devil's Slide," we leave the Ogden route at Pat Moran's camp near the foot of the canyon and go down over the old Mormon trail to Salt Lake City, getting here our first view of the strange old lake shimmering in its setting of hazy mountains.

This part of the state is wonderfully beautiful and there are many legends and stories, not widely known, which made more interesting our stay in the Mormon town.

The day following our arrival there was given to a side trip through Lagoon and the fertile farming country outlying Ogden, and on into the canyon that leads to Idlewild. This road, another of wild scenery and rugged cliffs rising on either side of the swift mountain stream, penetrates deep into the cut. Weird rock faces leer from every side. Idlewild is an ideal mountain tavern, low-ceiled, mission furnished, rug-strewn—a spot where

one longs to forget the flight of time, the hurry and bustle of things, and linger aimlessly—drinking in all the solitude of restfulness.

We left Salt Lake, taking the southern route past the huge smelters of the Utah Copper Company, and through the salt marshes to Grantsville.

Here we met the Law—embodied in the person of the Tooele county sheriff, who had arrested our pilot on a case of mistaken identity, and we spent the greater part of the day conversing amicably with him in the back room of the general co-operative store. He admitted that he was sorry to detain us, but said he was there in behalf of the law, and the law is such a new thing out there in Tooele county that they don't know what to do with it.

Across this dead land the telephone was our silent but vital companion, a slack wire stretching along on toppling poles, the last link with the cities we had left, our last hold on civilization and mankind. The road led us directly toward a Hawaiian ranch, Iosepa, which has been re-named Kanaka, or "people's ranch." The manager, Kialoaha, a great dark man with piercing black eyes under heavy brows, came out to greet us, and all the brown-skinned people crowded around our strange car, few of them able to speak our language, but gesticulating and talking among themselves.

We were made very welcome, and the freedom of the ranch was tendered us with almost as much ceremony as had the key of a great town been given us. Contentment was the motif of the place. They basked in the sunshine; they smiled at the tree-tops waving in the languid breeze; they were satisfied. And in that contentment and satisfaction was a touch of extreme pathos. Many of these people had been born in this desert place and were capable of no realization of anything greater, more beautiful; looking at these unconscious exiles from the paradise of the world, Hawaii, one was conscious of the futility of pity.

Kialoaha, finding that we were warm and tired, and wished to sleep, waved his hand toward the deep grass under the trees, and leaving us with an impressive speech, sent out a small brown toy of a girl to fan us so that we might rest without being disturbed by the cloud of small insects floating low above the grass.

She was the daintiest, quaintest little body we had met in all our travels, a miniature Queen Liliokalauni, transplanted to this almost man-forgotten spot in a region of endless sand.

She made friends with us after her own strange fashion, smiling at us with shiny black eyes like marbles, and red lips that parted over firm white teeth.

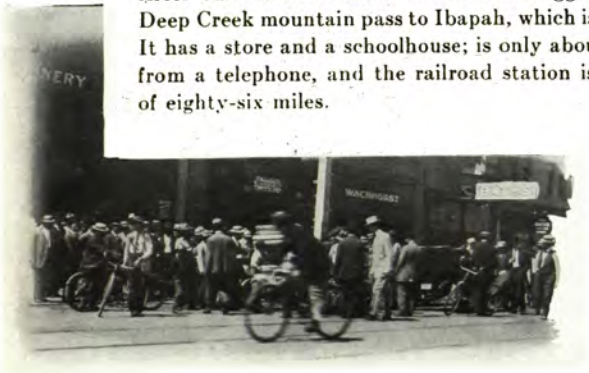
It was her smile that sped us into dreamland and her smile was the brightest of all smiles as just before sunset we started from the ranch amid a waving of hands and enthusiastic tones of an alien tongue, to swing out into the great West, absolutely alone. Once more in the day we saw ahead of us an oasis of green in the vivid yellow of the Brigham weed—a road leading straight to a log house; treeless and forlorn this is called Stetson's ranch, but why I do not know. A few acres of grass and wheat, a worn "desert-rat" wearily tilling the unproductive sand, a lean cringing hound with head and tail drooping dejectedly, and in the doorway of the hut a gaunt, sun-beaten woman, whose steel-blue eyes momentarily glinted with interest, as while filling our water bags we recounted month-old happenings of the life and land she had left. What does life hold for such as these? Cut off from the world and friends, brought in touch with human interest only when some infrequent traveller stops for water, the dreariness and monotony must become almost unbearable. Then out again into almost roadless sand of the long sloping beach of the real desert, we reached Fish Springs at sun-down, crossing Stansbury range, horrible Skull Valley and the lower end of the Great American Desert, that enormous waste which with Sahara furnishes unwelcome but palpable proof of our earth's slow sure decay, and conjures up the awful picture of a planet dead.

There are mountains out here, huge forbidding piles of jagged rock, but hiding in their depths the precious gold that has led so many thousands to a death untimed. Even on that day we passed a prospector's team at the desert well, and caught momentarily something of their treasure-seeking lust.

At sunset we left Fish Springs, a bleak handful of stone huts, edging the slimy pool where strange nameless fish still swim undisturbed, and drove for miles over rough country to Willow Springs, which the Indians called Callao and where they gathered for their feasts.

The settlement here is a large one, seven families in all, and we received real old-home hospitality from the Kearneys who live in a low rambling ranch house, and answered our timidly-put questions, but telling us that they were perfectly happy and contented, while little Leila Kearney, who was born in the old house, looked on in wide-eyed astonishment, probably learning for the first time that there was a big world of people and things beyond the hills and low-lying alkali flats.

After our usual breakfast of ham and eggs, we went over the Deep Creek mountain pass to Ibapah, which is quite a settlement. It has a store and a schoolhouse; is only about twenty-five miles from a telephone, and the railroad station is only a little drive of eighty-six miles.



There is no amusement hall for these jolly care-free people, so for entertainment they all gather on the porch of the general store and read, with peals of laughter, a clipping from a Boston paper. Somehow this sheet found its way back to Ibapah where Miss Grace ————, of Meredith, N. H., taught school last winter, and it quotes her on the dangers and horrors of the Nevada deserts, the abject poverty of the hovels, and the uncontrollable wildness of the fierce-eyed cowboys, as she graphically portrayed them at a Concord teachers' convention.

She tells how, mounted on a burro, she toiled for days through the broiling heat to the railroad station, almost dying of thirst, etc. But Mrs. Sheridan, a bright charming well educated and well dressed woman, who boarded the teacher for $12.00 a month, laughingly told us of the $90.00 a month they paid her for teaching a dozen children, the new modern brick schoolhouse, and the new books that made her work easy, and of the stage that runs to and from Ely twice a week, bringing mail and supplies. The hardships are a dream, the cowboys a myth, and the last Ibapah saw of Grace she was waving a fond farewell from her comfortable seat beside the stage driver.

From this town to Ely a sixty-mile detour cutting off Schellbourne pass eliminated all road troubles, and our drive was again picturesque. We went out through Pleasant Valley, rounded

the end of Antelope range and went north into Elko county around Goshute lake, crossing the Nevada & Northern railroad, again south along Egan range and down Steptoe valley to Ely, Nevada is made up of a series of hot desert valleys and high mountain ranges, all lying north and south. One hour you are sun-baked and hot, the next cool and comfortable. The valleys abound with boiling springs and hot creeks, the hills with tiny tumbling brooks of cold water which lose themselves mysteriously almost immediately on emerging into the desert.

Here, too, frequently are terrific electric storms, each centered in one small circle, a downpour sometimes of hail, sometimes of hot heavy raindrops, but always a blot on the hot white shine of the sun. These storms are shifted rapidly by the wind, but always keep to the shape of a huge water-spout, their smoke-gray tops funnel shaped, fading almost imperceptibly into nothingness The day we came down the Steptoe valley into Ely four or five of these columns, each sending incessant volleys of lightning flashes into the ground, shifted rapidly, tearing up roads as they went; and in spite of our racing away from them at twenty-five or thirty miles an hour they were swifter than we, overtaking us and drenching us three times in a single afternoon.

The continual battle for supremacy between the companies controlling Ely and East Ely has resulted in a wonderful little

city of beautiful homes, modern paving, lighting and drainage, palatial hotels, and with markets and stores providing every luxury of apparel and cuisine. The casual visitor wonders at the continued growth and improvement of a mining camp whose boom is practically dead, seeing only the perfect whole and knowing nothing of the bitterly raging strife between two big New York brokerage firms, each trying to outdo the other in perfecting its individual town.

Our route out of Ely lay through Murray Creek canyon and White Sage Valley to Ward and Barnes. A little west of here we crossed Grant range by way of the beautiful Currant Creek pass; this canyon scene is wonderful, deep rock coves shut in by huge redstone precipices, green-carpeted and edging the wooded stream, and Currant, a charming isolated cluster of quaint houses with tree bordered lawns, finishes the splendor picture with a touch of life and color. Then almost immediately again we found ourselves crossing a moon-lit desert into Duckwater, eight miles across the sand.

Here we built a brushwood fire, got supper and pitched camp for the night. Up at sunrise the next morning, we went out into Little Smoky Valley, lava strewn and desolate, with its hard black cinder road leading up around the crater of a nameless volcano, which the natives closely associate with the still vivid recollections of the middle-century Indian wars.

While we were preparing our lunch in the refreshing shade and close, very close to the sweet cool water, we heard the distant chug-chug of an approaching motor. Wondering who else had braved the desert heat, as if in answer to our questioning, a queer character pushed towards us and said in ministerial tones, "That's Frank Irwin comin', he's been to Tonopah for a week and comes here to water up on his way home to Duckwater."

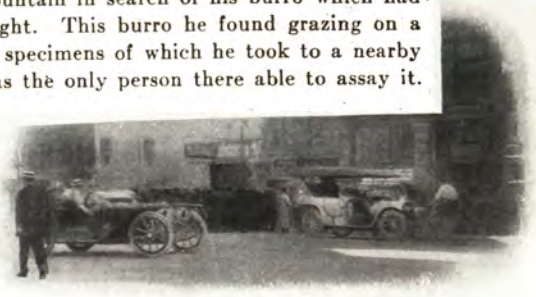
Then Frank Irwin drove up in his "desert" car, as different from the city motor as the desert-rat is from the clubman. Paint baked and crackled by the sun, no top, no windshield; both covers of the bonnet doubled back so that the motor may be air-cooled; burlap-covered canteens hung from every angle, tonneau piled with bags and boxes—this is the desert car. It is first built, then stripped for utility, and there is no beauty or symmetry of line; no shine of polished brass or nickel—just a huge ugly mechanical beast of burden. Spokes are wound with rags which are soaked at every water hole to keep the wood from drying out, the tires are encased in rude canvas shoes, and ropes, canvas and tools are carried for every emergency for there is no help in reach when your car fails you on the desert. Only a mockery, as was that gasoline can we saw one day on the desert, mounted carefully on a high sand-pile and so placed that its printed GASOLINE leered mockingly—but empty! as impotent a bit of sarcasm as could be devised

This car we saw at Stone Cabin was of the type found all through Nevada, and they might all be of one make, so devoid are they of distinguishing line or feature. Their drivers give no thought of saving the motor—to them an automobile is not a pet, something to be carefully tended and watched—and I would not be surprised to see a chauffeur get out of his seat and savagely lash at a car that balked, as he would at a tired mule.

Forty miles more and we reached Tonopah, the "mushroom town," the place of rainbow dreams and vast illusions. Some of its dreams have come true in the hundreds of beautiful homes, its huge refineries and flumes, and its general air of prosperity and well-being.

A great many of the far western towns are built on the financial equivalent of sand, and, some of them have met the proverbial fate of the "houses that go down into the sea."

Tonopah's rise has been quick but sure, and is one of the most spectacular stories of all the big, picturesque western country. A few years ago a prospector, "Jim" Butler by name, was camping in the valley that is now Tonopah, and in the morning had to go up onto the mountain in search of his burro which had strayed during the night. This burro he found grazing on a veritable bed of gold, specimens of which he took to a nearby schoolteacher, who was the only person there able to assay it.



His claim staked there was the beginning of the now famous Mizpah mine, and consequently the opening of Tonopah's real life.

The little burro, now on the retired pay-list and in long days of contentment, among beds of knee-deep alfalfa, has found his reward for unconscious discovery.

Leaving Tonopah we crossed the Monte Cristo mountains and down again into the then tiresome desert, disturbing a band of wild horses, thirty or forty in number, led by two magnificent creamy roan creatures; tossing heads and long easy lope telling their joy of freedom. Curiosity as to this strange animal that had invaded their domain got the better of their fears, and they followed us for miles, finally bearing across our path and disappearing into the hills.

Sodaville passed, we saw ahead of us a great white gleaming stretch, many, many miles in width; the dried bottom of a lake—what a chance this was to let Lady Overland prove her speed after being always on the lookout for bumps and holes.

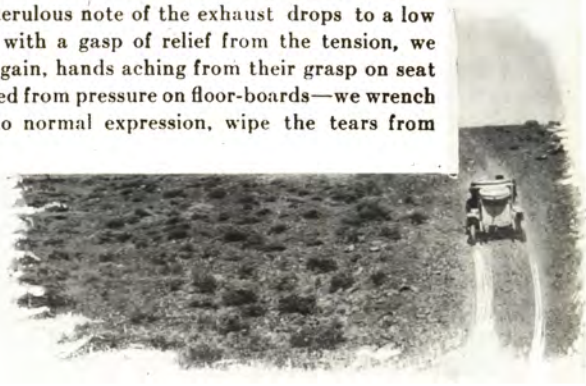
Before us a wide white stretch of hard packed sand, behind a country of rough roads and slowness; beneath our feet an engine purring and gurgling, the hum of the exhaust droning a low note of comfort, as the throttle creeps forward and the spark slowly advances; the hum rises an octave to the middle register; it

sings of the pleasures of swift motion, the joy of the bouncing springs and the exhilaration of soft air in your face, and then as the engine picks up the song skies to the upper register, higher and higher, until as the air meets your face in a wayward rush that beats at the eyes and all but pulls the breath from your body, it becomes a single screaming note.

For a few minutes you hear it—this wild cry of speed—hear it without noting it, and for the space of seconds you are one with the gods, and touch Elysian fields; learn the meaning of the riddle of existence, and understand why you have lived.

For miles the sand is level and smooth, and there is only one thing worth while—speed. Speed—speed—SPEED! to go faster, Faster, always FASTER! to become a human rocket hurtling through space—to be a part of the air, a part of the machine, a part of motion, to, to—words and thoughts fail; you are drunk with the joy of it—this swift twentieth-century rush through space.

Then ahead again we see the familiar desert trail; the spark is retarded, the high querulous note of the exhaust drops to a low contented purr, and with a gasp of relief from the tension, we come back to earth again, hands aching from their grasp on seat and wheel, feet numbed from pressure on floor-boards—we wrench our set faces back to normal expression, wipe the tears from



our eyes and take a great deep indrawn breath. "GREAT! ISN'T IT?"

Our burst of speed is over and with it the monotony of landscape —at least what some people have called monotony. Before us rose majestically the last huge wall of the Rockies, snow-topped barriers to our land of the Golden West; at their base, azure blue and glistening in the sunlight, lay Walker Lake, and at its foot the quaint old town of Hawthorne.

We followed along the foot of the mountains, over Bodie's trail, and at the point where we began our long fifteen-mile climb we could look straight up to the Lucky Boy mine, a wonderful new town clinging to the rocks two thousand feet above us. At the summit we looked back to the valley we had left at noon, many thousand feet below; the lake now a tiny blue-white diamond set around with the emerald of the field.

With irresistible impulse our eyes swept ahead, across a wonderful rich valley that called to all the home-loving instincts in our wandering hearts, to the distant mist-veiled outlines of the Sierra Nevada mountains, the last barrier reared between us and the Golden Gate. Their lower ledges were dark against the snow-marked crests, and the last rays of an exquisite sunset added "unnecessary beauty to a sea of pink-gold color."

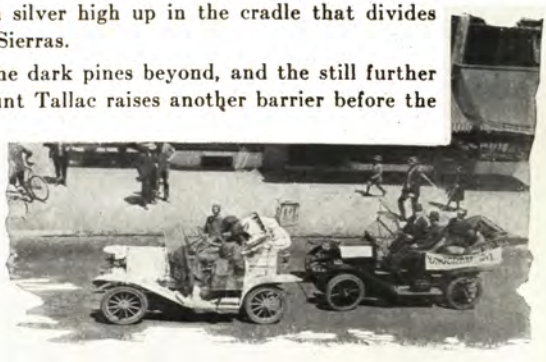
In the soft glow of the late afternoon we wound slowly down the

Wassuk mountains to Fletcher and Sweetwater, going on through rich farm lands on the Walker River to Wellington, where we spent the night. The next day's drive took us into California. From Gardnerville to Genoa, a little village at the very foot of the Sierras, a brief resting place before the dark hour of seeming defeat that we always pass through before the first gray dawn of achievement.

Kingsbury grade, the pathway of the Forty-niners, was the hardest climb of all. For twelve miles the sandy road ascends the mountain in a great series of sweeping "switchbacks," winding snake-like back and forth up a mighty spur, doubling so abruptly that on each turn you see directly beneath you the same white speck of a town and the same sweep of Carson valley, 5,000 feet below.

At the summit, 8,400 feet above our goal, we began another descent, but this one through forests of big trees and jungles of fern; midway down the slope we crossed the state line into California. A road covered deeply with pine needles, whose balsam fills the air, brought us to the rim of Lake Tahoe, lying like a cup of molten silver high up in the cradle that divides the Rockies and the Sierras.

The lake is lost in the dark pines beyond, and the still further giant outline of Mount Tallac raises another barrier before the



end. Slight though, and the climb is easy over the Little Tallac pass to the head of the Placerville canyon, which stretched before us far down into the valley of the Sacramento.

Forty-seven miles of winding road, up and down the slopes of the wooded foot-hills, past rushing torrents and giant precipices; the great valley is a tragedy of wild unrest when nature's forces were destructive. It was but yesterday when men were feverishly searching these western mountains for gold that this other treasure of the Sierras was given to the world; a treasure beautiful beyond dreams of men, and which all may share and none be poorer for the sharing.

Sacramento and the little towns of the valley are sweet and bright with the bloom of tropical flowers, stately palm trees bear evidence of perpetual sunshine, and above this tranquil loveliness rise cloud-supporting hills, piling on one another in huge billows of wonderful color.

South into Stockton and Livermore we went, across the low-lying coast range into San Leandro, and here we spent the night so that we might go into San Francisco in the morning and see our ambition realized in sunshine, as bright as the glowing beauty of the day we left New York.

And on July 23rd, accompanied by a long parade of motor cars, up Market Street through thousands of interested spectators,

staunch little LADY OVERLAND, much of her brightness lost in the long journey over plain and mountain, but with motor purring steadily and keenly sensitive to every slightest touch of throttle and lever, at last brought us safely into our city of golden dreams.

We stood in the city of our dreams and watched the sun sink in the west, out beyond the Golden Gate and knew that the task was done. We had accomplished what we had set out to do—back across forty-one days of driving—in New York.

The task had been a pleasure after all, and pleasure or task, as we choose to call it, it was done. There was regret in the triumph, a drop of bitterness in the unalloyed sweetness.

We broke the visible chains of responsibility—the last link—when we drove out across the city through Golden Gate park to the farthermost point of rocks, where the Cliff House gates had been opened to us, and emptied into the blue waters of the Pacific the little bottle of water we took from the Atlantic at the beginning of the trip.

This little bottle had gone through all the deserts with us, had accompanied our climb up the stubborn hills, had been a small symbol of a great purpose which we had kept constantly before us.

The trip was over, the living experiences but dead memories; but our lives were fuller and richer for every one of those thread-like thoughts woven into two months of our existence.

GERTRUDE LYMAN PHILLIPS.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