

- The Automobile -

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A convenient Vehicle for
recreative & educational purposes.

By R. W. Schoening

The automobile is mans private car which he can pull up to his very door step, pile in his family and camping outfit and travel to any desired spot or place of interest in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Many thousands of people in America have a wider knowledge of machinery, its functioning powers and its capabilities and possibilities, for ~~the~~ ^{but} one good reason - that they own and operate an auto.

This wonder vehicle of the age has made it possible for thousands to acquire a liberal education in mechanics. It has been directly responsible for drawing thousands of persons in possession of latent mechanical talents into serviceable action. Then, again the auto has made it possible for whole families to go ~~on~~ a tour ~~their own~~ ^{the} country, to see and learn first hand things existing in their own ~~as well as other countries,~~ country. To be able to see and learn is gods greatest gift to man.

What the eye sees usually makes the deepest impression on the mind. The automobile has made it possible for man to go there, see and learn for himself all about ^{the} things that man has created, the earth's physical wonders and nature in all her varied and affluent beauty. The writer is of the opinion that an extended auto trip across this broad land is positively the best treat that a man can give his family, himself included, when judged by its value ~~from~~ ^{to} them for its recreative and educational possibilities.

Thousands of tourists see America by auto every year. Many travel thousands of miles, who drive their auto's from one end of the country to the other, sleep, cook, eat and wash in the open. To be ones own transportation manager, pilot, mechanic, cook, tent pitcher and chamber maid, is a sport enjoyed by many auto tourists.

The writer has had some experience with the above named occupations while touring

³ the country in his auto. and ^{it} is for this reason that he has taken pen in hand to tell the world his own experience as well as that of others whom he met while traveling over Uncle Sams domain.

To begin with the story, our car is a 6 cylinder motor 5 passenger touring car of a popular make. When the writer ^{his} wife decided to make the trip from Michigan to the Pacific Northwest in July 1919 we had no idea of what we had to go through to reach our destination. We learnt as we went along however, and reached Portland Ore. our objective in the best of health. Before leaving Saginaw Mich. our home town, we had the back of our front seat cut down so that we could convert the car into a bed for the night. The job on the back of the front seat was neatly done, two hinges were placed ~~at~~ about 3" from the bottom of the floor in line with the cut so that the ^{back} could be laid down on the bottom of the car floor. The hinges acting as a support ^{for the back} both, when in a reclining or upright position. The robe bracket acting as a support for the other end for the back so that when placed in position for our bed it lay ^{on a} level or nearly so, with ^{the} front and back seat cushions. Two hooks and fasteners were placed ^{at the} side of each cut near the top of

4 ^{back} the ^{so} that when the back ^{is} ~~was~~ again placed in an upright position, these hooks and fasteners act as a lock for it, holding the back firmly in place. The leather covering for the back being so arranged that it buttoned up near the extreme edges of back, inside the car. This arrangement concealed, the ~~cut~~ place where ^{the} back was cut down hooks, fasteners and all. The workmen also ^{reinforced} ~~reinforced~~ ^{the} side of the car, ^{with angle iron} at the point where the ^{cut} back separates ^{the back} from the side panel, ~~between~~ with angle iron so that there ^{isn't} ~~wasn't~~ any chance of the body widening or twisting out of shape at this particular point. When the back of front seat lay down in position for the bed, a space ~~an~~ it left an opening of about 3 inches between the front seat cushion and its reclining back and about ⁴" open space between ~~the~~ it and the back seat cushion. It being necessary to fill up these open spaces; we made 2 sacks the length ^{of} the car's inside width, and 8" ^{are} through when filled with straw. These straw sacks ~~were~~ packed in these open spaces very tightly in order to prevent the edge of the back seat cushion from puncturing our ribs during sleep. The position of the back seat cushion ^{is} ~~was~~ reversed so that it lay ^{is} high enough for our heads to rest ^{on} properly. We soon learned just what to do and what to use to make our bed comfortable. The ^{reclining} back and seat cushions acted as our springs and mattress. We made a pad the size of our bed which we use ^{whenever we make up} as our mattress cover. ~~the~~ ^{the bed,} the blanket ^{is} ~~was~~ laid in place which we use in cool

weather; During ^{the} hot weather a white sheet suffices. We also carry plenty comforters to pull over us as the nights become more frigid. One ^{of us gets} on each running board of the car; ~~we~~ ^{and} make ^{up} our bed in a few minutes. We make up or tear down the bed in the same manner. Use a heavy canvass in which we roll up our bedding to keep it clean and free from dust. By day we carry all our luggage in the rear compartment of our car, by night most of the luggage (excepting valuables) is put under ~~the~~ ^{the car} ~~neath~~ ^{of}. Our car bed has a Pullman berth beat for comfort, giving us more room, no jars or sudden jerks due to locomotive action, ^{and} we breathe a purer fresher air, ^{besides} ~~and~~ ^{having} the extreme pleasure of beating the hotel keeper out of a young fortune.

The auto tourist traveling from place to place of interest, will get more sport and recreation out of his trip than ~~do~~ can the ~~out~~ ~~train~~ tourist traveling via Rail. He, Mr. Auto tourist ^{can} also see and learn more than can Mr. Rail tourist provided he is properly equipped. The advice, that a person contemplating going on a long auto tour should drive a new car with a set of good cord tires and a pair of good spare tires, is good and sound advice. Too many people attempt a cross country trip with a poor ^{car} ~~and~~ poor tires, ~~and~~ ^{totally} insufficient and inefficient equipment, a positive joy killer on any kind of auto trip. There is nothing like being well prepared

and thoroughly equipped if you wish to enjoy your trip without being handicapped or annoyed when the emergency arises. Good tools, ^a heavy set, ^{the} tire chains for ^{the} back wheels, ^a light set for ^{the} front wheels, ~~an axe~~ a sharp hand axe and a knife, a good gun, a small spade, a flash light or lantern, some ~~heavy~~ ^{good} rope, a tow cable or ~~two~~ chain, a few necessary auto accessories and supplies are ~~the~~ ^{most of} prime ~~essential~~ ^{important} to ~~the~~ long tour. Be prepared to help the other fellow as well as yourself. On the great western high^{ways}, but few travel who are mean and selfish enough to pass by a fellow tourist in trouble. Very few ^{auto} tourists ^{in distress out west} must needs resort to the giving of the S.O.S. signal. The spirit of the good tourist is such that he will not pass a fellow autoist in trouble without this noble inquiry - "What can I do for you brother" A good man from the east soon catches the big heart and spirit of the west, because he can't help it if its in him. To be an experienced auto tourist dosnt always help one, especially not, when the elements play havoc with dirt roads or some fool driver steers plumb into a fellows car without cause or warning. If we could keep the careless fool driver off the road, or putting it more to the point; if we could prevent him from operating an auto, we

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might have what we could call "saw highways"
if not smooth highways. But, what would the
Automobile factories, hospitals, florists and funeral
directors do for business if we succeeded in keeping
the auto fool off the road? ^{Therefore,} So we see, it is the
"auto fool" that steers somebody good." But, what-
ever his trials and troubles may be on the way if,
Mr. Auto tourist gets there safe ~~and~~ in good health
^{and} his car ^{is} in good ^{condition} ~~shape~~ when he arrives, it is safe
to say that he has experienced more thrills, has
seen ~~more~~ ^{and} learnt more than has Mr. Rail tourist
even though the latter arrived at the points of ^{conferred}
interest much quicker. The writer has ~~talked~~
with many auto tourists, who said that they
had been in poor health previous to having
started on their extended tour; ~~were~~ now, at
the end of [~]6 weeks or [~]2 months auto journey, ^{they were}
enjoying the very best of health. The constant
breathing of the fresh pure air on country roads
and the vibratory action of the car while in
motion has a decided beneficial effect
upon the general health of the autoist.

On our way to the far west

We stopped off at Flint and Detroit Mich.
It was in the above named cities where we
paid visits to some of the largest automobile

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plants extant. It was in one of these mammoth
factories where the hero & in our story was
built. Believe me, the auto industry has
taught the world a thing or two in modern
speed production. An automobile pro-
ducing organization is one of the smoothest
and speediest "pieces" of human machinery
the writer has ever seen in action. At
Grand Rapids we visited many furniture
factories, ~~here~~ ^{here} we saw thousands of men
at work ~~shaping~~ making useful articles
for the home and office. In Kalamazoo
we drove past her celebrated celery gardens.
In Michigan city Indianan~~a~~ we camped
for the first time in a school yard and
slept in our auto bed. It seemed rather
strange to us this first night, to sleep in
such a lonely dark place, but we soon
got used to it, that, not very long ago
we pulled up ~~to a~~ beside a cemetery
and slept peacefully with the dead.

It will be noted here in connection
with camping on the school grounds, that
2 years ago very few eastern towns had made

~~never~~ ^{not} heard of, much less thought of providing auto tourists with a convenient place to camp in for the night. The western towns are more up-to-date when ~~it comes~~ ^{we consider} auto camp grounds. Some of the western camp grounds offer the tourist every desired ^{accommodation} convenience.

Lately we have come across auto camp grounds as far east as Michigan and we hope that ^{the} east will catch the hospitable spirit of the west and provide decent camping grounds for Mr. Auto Tourist.

The drive from Michigan City to Hammond Ind. proved rather rough going owing to the main road being badly worn. We arrived in Chicago in good condition.

This city's wonderful system of boulevards linked up with all her splendid parks caught our fancy. The windy city has many places both of artistic and historic interest. But, her great stockyards scenes seemed to us as being her premier attraction. We met with our first auto accident in Chicago during August 1919. A fool driver veered so far to the left that he bumped our cars left front wheel, the impact resulted in a bent

in many towns.

front axel. The fool driver paid the cost of the necessary repairs to both cars. The fellow that bumped us, was a man of middle age, said, that he had driven his car for four years on Chicago streets without having had a single accident. He appeared both sober and level headed, but could give no reason for his "bone headed" drive. This explains most of our fool auto accidents - "I don't know why I did it." "It was done so quickly that I can't tell you how it happened."

After we had finished sight seeing in Chicago we purchased a road map of the Yellowstone highway trail, that ~~be~~ famed highway that leads the auto tourist to America's wonder, - 'Yellowstone National Park.' We drove north out of Chicago via Milwaukee Wis. Zion City Ill. will never be forgotten by us, for the reason that the highway at this point was unpaved and very rough. Perhaps Zion City's good inhabitants figure that a "good" road leads the autoist to ruin and perdition. Milwaukee, the leading city of Wis., ~~and~~ ^{itself made famous by a} famous brew, evidently had not signed the pledge with the rest of America. Milwaukee's many saloons had large ^{placards} play cards in their windows, giving notice to the public that within it could quench

its thirst with the "real stuff". We were thirsty and a bit curious and forthwith satisfied both with the drink that made ~~both~~ men and places famous. The Yellowstone trail takes the tourist through a somewhat hilly, yet picturesque portion of Wisconsin. In this state we camped in school yards, as these afforded the best out^{door} accommodations available.

Many tourists prepare breakfast before starting on their days journey. But, while we did this on several occasions, we found the two meal plan more satisfactory.

We managed to travel 50 or 60 miles in the cool of the morning, then ^{would} have our first meal at 9 or 9.30 a. m. Driving west, the sun often bothers a driver about between ^{5 p. m.} ~~sun~~ and sun down, therefore we found it best to rise early, make a quick gettaway and make for camp early in the evening. ~~Therefore~~, we would have our first meal in a hotel café and as a rule have our last meal in the camp prepared by ourselves.

Many tourists use elaborate kitchen outfits, carry cumbersome oil stoves &c. But, we

use a small stove, which has 2 burners and burns canned heat ~~as~~ ^{for} fuel. We found the simplest foods the best for daily rough road travel. Eating a little fruit between meals such as oranges or apples proved very refreshing.

Drinking plenty of fresh water keeps the tourist in going trim. The writer is of the opinion, the reason many tourists are ill at ease and lack nerve on the road, is, that they indulge in too much of the refined foods and drink too little water. Our trip through Wisconsin was unmarred by any untoward incident, save that we had one tire puncture and got a "bad steer" from a Jewish person, whom we had asked for information concerning the roads going west. He replied - "da roadt is smooat like a floor" The informant ^{may} ~~might~~ have been honest in his statement, for ~~it~~ ^{this} all depends ^{on} what kind of floor he had in mind. This informant evidently had a foundry floor in mind, ~~for~~ ^{as} we found the road very rough.

The tourist soon learns of whom and where to inquire. The offices of the American Automobile Association, The various State Auto Association or any reliable garage are the places to ask for information concerning the roads and their condition. The Yellowstone trail is well marked however, yellowstone signs have been tacked on fences and telegraph poles all along the route. Even rocks, barns and garages are painted yellow with a black spear pointing towards Yellowstone Park.

On arrival in St. Paul Minn. we looked up a reliable service station as our car had developed a knock which seemingly caused it to labor on the hills. It also lacked pep and "pickup ~~quick~~ power". The garage men touched up our car, and incidently touched our pocket book. This is one thing the tourist is up against on the road. He is always at all times at the mercy of the unscrupulous garage man, who knows how to touch him for a stiff price, but doesn't do the job right. The tourist

can escape the clutches of the hotel and cafe birds, but not so easily the "hold up" garage man. He is apt to get Mr. Auto tourist one way or another. There are however, many garages whose business policy is absolute honesty, ~~and good workmanship.~~ ~~Since~~ Mr. Auto tourist is a stranger wherever he goes, (outside his own home town) he is apt to be "touched" more or less frequently by the bad men in the garage game.

We usually refer to our car by name and call it "Billy". The reader will please note that ^{any} ~~all~~ future references to "Billy" has allusion to our car, the hero in this story. The St. Paul garage men had done a good job on "Billy" ~~even~~ and from this time on (over the Rockies, Bitter root and Cascades) he percolated fine, until ~~our destination was reached.~~ ^{we reached our destination.} A good running automobile sure helps a tourist to forget some of his troubles, especially such trifles as human inconsistencies. In St. Paul we saw the beautiful interior of Minn. state capital building. He visited many points of interest in, and adjacent to, the beautiful city of ^{Minneapolis} Minneapolis.

The roads through Minnesota were very good. We drove from St. Paul to Milbank S. D. in about 12 hours. This time includes all stops enroute.

South Dakota is a great wheat ^{producing} ~~raising~~ state.

To the tourist from the city, the prairies are not very attractive. The sameness of the land and scenery (if it can be ^{called} ~~named~~ scenery) for many miles, with practically no trees, flowers or shrubbery to be seen anywhere, the drive sure does get monotonous.

Aberdeen ^{S.D.} is a good ^{prairie} ~~prairie~~ town with a tourist camp grounds. The roads were fair through S.D. until we reached Mobridge S.D. From this point 15 miles west the roads were rough. ^{On} Leaving

Mobridge we were obliged to ferry across the river. We noticed that a gentleman driving a car with a Wisconsin license number pulled just ahead of us on to the ferry.

A woman sat beside him in the front seat and two little girls sat ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ the rear seat. Their car was heavily loaded with all kinds of camping ~~for~~ paraphernalia. A lantern hanging at the rear fastened to his spare tires, was sufficient evidence that this tourist hadn't forgotten useful things around the camp. This particular tourist had a kind facial expression which impressed

the writer and caused him to remark, "I bet the fellow driving that Wisconsin car is a doctor." The wife asked, "what makes you think so?" The make up of his face, his kindly and intelligent expression harmonizes with the cut of his goatee, so that his profession is plainly written on his face, explained the writer. The wife laughed saying that she felt sure the writer ~~is~~ ^{was} mistaken. But, on our arrival at Mr. Saublin we stopped our cars for refreshments, gas, oil, and water. He made it a point to start a conversation with Mr. Wisconsin tourist. He forthwith introduced ourselves and asked him point-blank if we had guessed his profession. The man replied in the affirmative, however adding, that ^{he} was not an M. D. but a B. P. which meant "bone puncher" commonly called an Osteopath. The bone punching doctor ~~at~~ ~~once~~ immediately introduced us to his wife and ^{their} 2 little girls, aged 6 and 12 years respectively. The doctors family and ourselves became fast friends and agreed to travel and camp together. To meet, ~~with~~, travel and camp with so pleasant and fine a people as was this doctors family, was sure a big treat for us.

They were good company on the road and in the camp. He assisted each other when in trouble and worked together preparing the camp fire and the meals. They were good vocal artists, entertaining us with some of their splendid singing around the night camp fires.

At Wautauga S.D. we camped in a school yard. The following day was blazing hot. Billy's radiator would get steaming hot in a 10 or 15 mile run. The doctors car acted likewise. One time the writer lifted the radiator cap, the steam shot ^{out} of the radiator like it does out of ~~the~~ a geysers crater. The writers face and arm were slightly burned. After this experience we were a bit more cautious when removing the cap to give Billy a fresh drink. He allowed the motor to cool off a bit before removing the cap. Our next camp was along the little Missouri river at Marmouth N.D. After leaving Marmouth N.D. we soon crossed the state line and entered the ~~was~~ big state of Montana. Here the long 5 months draught had played havoc with the crops and the cattle. Water was a very scarce article

in eastern Montana. The tourist should carry a water bag of some kind and never neglect keeping it full of fresh water when touring over vast stretches of arid lands. Also carry a small flask of pure soft water for the batteries, for it is surprising how rapidly water in the batteries and radiator evaporates in hot ~~high~~ ^{in the} higher ~~altitudes~~ ^{altitudes}. Batteries should be tested for their specific gravity frequently. Long drives in hot weather consumes oil ^{and} water, but thank goodness the consumption of gas per mile is ^{usually} less. A good grade of oil in the crank case and this kept up to the level — ^{is a safe rule to follow.} Autoists have a lot of trouble because they neglect looking after their oil and water requirements. Many tourists burn their headlights for a couple of hours during the day to prevent overcharging their batteries. A good battery man can and will inform the autoist if this precaution is or isn't necessary. The doctor and his family were obliged to stop over at Jerry Mout. to pay their friends a visit for a day. This left us ~~left~~ going it alone again.

A tour through the country over all manner of roads and weather conditions is one way of getting first hand knowledge of what your machine can do and what it can not do.

If a tourist keeps his eyes and ears open he is bound to learn much that will be very useful to him in the upkeep of his car.

The doctor was a very handy man around a car and he taught us a few stunts that have meant a considerable saving to us. It sure was profitable for us to get acquainted with, and travel with so good a sport as ^{he is} him and we felt mighty sorry that we had to part with his company for a few days. We reached Miles City Mont. in the evening and drove to its pretty camp grounds. The Miles City camp grounds for tourists was the best equipped ^{grounds} we had thus far had the pleasure camping in. ^{an} Electric lighted camp grounds with water, shower baths, houses ^{equipped} with stoves, chairs and tables and wash stands. The Miles City ~~camping~~ grounds sure was a treat for us and open^{ed} our eyes as well our thoughts to the limitless possibilities of the spirit of the west. It makes a tourist feel good to be treated so well and naturally every east going tourist

with whom we had the pleasure to converse,
~~with ^{we would} ~~we would~~ never forget~~ to tell him or her to be
 sure to stop off in Miles City and camp on
 her wonderful free camping grounds.

The Yellowstone trail runs along the Yellow-
 stone River Valley and the Northern Pacific
 R.R. The highway crosses the River several
 times and the Railway many times through
 eastern Montana. On our way to Billings
 Mont. we encountered a terrific rain storm
 which bore the ear marks of a genuine cloud
 burst. This was the first rain fall this section
 of Montana had ~~had~~ received in 5 months.
 The ~~the~~ long drought had threatened ~~the~~ ^{many}
 cattle ranchers with ruin. But, this great
 rain, ^{fall} proved a real life saver ^{for} both men
 and cattle. We put on our rear wheel chains
 (this being our first experience with chains)
 and drove along until we came to a hill top.
 Here we found several tourist parties had
 stopped their cars. We went over to these tourists
 and asked why they had stopped? They
 answered, saying that they were afraid to
 descend the steep slippery grade. We again

asked if anyone had attempted ^{going down} this slippery hill? They said yes, three auto's had gone down. Being green drivers we tackled this steep hill, covered with a clay that is sure sticky and slippery. The natives call it "gumbo" We had descended ~~this~~ ^{the} hill about half way when Billy started skidding and slipped into a ~~cup~~ ^{saucer} like depression beside the road. If it ~~hadn't~~ ^{hadn't} been for this hollow place along side of this road at this particular spot, ~~we'd~~ ^{we would have} ~~gone~~ ^{rolled} rolling down the steep embankment ~~on the~~ into a deep ravine or gulch of some kind. We attribute our luck to ^{the fact that we were} ~~being~~ green drivers over this "gumbo" stuff. After this hazardous drive we soon entered the little town named Buster Mont. We were so glad to have ~~seperated~~ ~~our souls from~~ prevented seperating our souls from our bodies, that we did not go any further than Buster that day. The reader may be eager to learn just how we managed to get out the saucer like hole that held our car from going over the embankment; Well, this feat was also more

good fortune than good driving. We wiggled out of it in low gear onto the road. By the way, going down a long steep grade, it is best to kill the engine and descend in low or intermediate gear. We found this method safer and easier on the brake linings.

Another thing we have learnt, is this; The ordinary tire chains are too light and their cross sections too far apart for slippery "gumbo" or "dobe" roads. A heavy pair of truck chains for the rear wheels and a light pair of ordinary chains for the front wheels with the cross ^{chain} sections about 3 inches apart is to our notion the only safe method of travel over wet, slippery, and hilly roads. Custer Mont. is 60 miles north from the point where the intrepid Custer and his men met their fate at the hands of the Indians. The little hotel at Custer Mont. isn't much of a building but the management knows how to treat the public in their dining room to a real good meal. Billings lay 60 miles west of Custer, we started out the

following morning to negotiate Billings in a few hours. But, to our dismay we did not reach Billings until 4 p. m. that day. To be exact, the time getting there was 8 hours and 20 minutes. The rain had ceased in the morning before we started away from Custer, but the roads were still very wet.

We had not traveled but a mile when our Billy skidded into a deep ditch. We got a farmer to pull us out of this with his horses. Horses are still used to pull autos out of bad holes everywhere. Billy's skidding worried the wife as she ~~was~~^{sat} at the wheel, where, she naturally felt much safer than she would had her other half sat there. The wife claims that holding on to the wheel steady's her nerve and when the writer is at the wheel, oh, well you might imagine what happens - she ^{the wife} simply goes to pieces. The worst of it was, ~~that~~ we had again sprung the front axle going into that first ditch, which made steering rather difficult for her. The writer asked her in his kindest of kind way to let him

have the wheel, nothing stirring said she, you'd have us in the ditch most of the time. Well, we kept Billy going west very slowly. The writer had to jump into the ditches several times to hold the car from skidding ^{into them}. Finally the car got into the ditch; of course this wasn't the wife's fault; she blamed the bent axle. We were pulled out by another team of horses. We finally arrived in Billings, Billy and ourselves ^{were} covered with bespattered "gumbo" from head to foot.

This experience had taught us another good lesson. ^{uhh} It doesn't pay to be in a hurry. Had we remained in Buster just a few hours longer, chances are, that we would have arrived in Billings much sooner, over dirt roads, without grief or trouble of any kind.

After securing a room in a Billings hotel, the writer steered the car to a service station. The foreman would not believe that the car could be run 60 miles with a bent axle until he satisfied him-self by taking the car around the block. Billy steered all right on city pavement, but what ached

the foreman was, how this was possible over wet "gumbo". The writer assured him that this feat had not only been made possible.

But ^{but} a woman had manipulated the car all the way. We found Billings a nice little town of fair size. The axel straightened, we drove to Livingstone where we cleaned and polished Billy so that he looked new again. We left Livingstone on a Sunday morning for Gardiner, a little village at the north gate entrance to Yellowstone Park. Gardiner is about 60 miles south of Livingstone. It is well for the tourist to load up with sufficient food supplies either at Livingstone or Gardiner before entering the Park. Food, Oils, Gasoline, and tobacco's are harder ~~and~~ to obtain and far more expensive in the park. The officials at the ^{Park} entrance look your car over to see that the springs and especially the brakes are in good condition. To have your cars brakes lining, rods and all in good shape is a wise precaution, owing to the steep grades and inclines of the mountain