
"Fording America First"

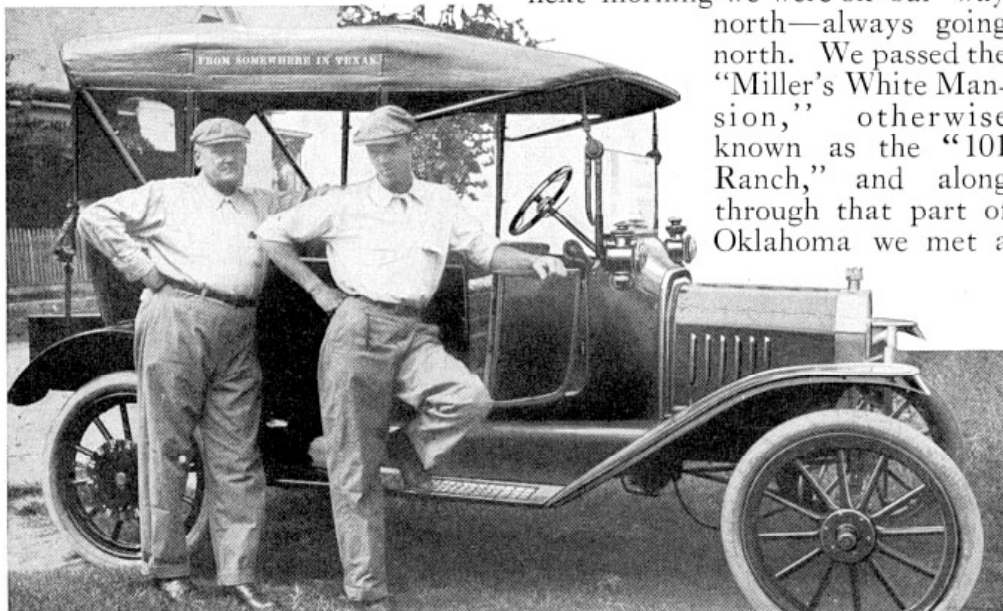
By F. R. Hutton, Houston, Texas

First we have a perfectly good Ford in our family. My boy said: "Pop, let's take a little vacation trip." Now I had been reading about people taking automobile trips, and have also seen them going through Houston with camping outfits strapped to the car. They gave me a little touch of the "wanderlust." So I told my boy to get a camp outfit, etc., ready, and we would go out for a few days. On August the 7th, the beginning of the big touring week, we gave our Ford a big feed of gasoline, a copious drink of lubricating oil, and headed north on the open road, and to my surprise, when night came and we went into camp, we were a few miles north of Hillsboro, 236 miles from Houston. Early the next morning, we rolled into Dallas. After visiting a few friends, and seeing the city for a few hours, we found that our Ford was feeling so good, and so full of "go," that we headed north for Denison, and when

we reached Denison, we were still traveling so steadily I don't believe that ten men and a negro boy could have headed us off. That night we camped near Durant, Oklahoma.

After seeing Oklahoma City we started to leave about 8:00 P. M. to get out of town and camp, and right there we had an experience. We left the city all right, but could not get out of sight of the lights. After running about an hour on a good road that had lots of grades and turns, and the lights of the city as bright as ever, I concluded there must be something wrong, so I stopped the next automobile we met and told the driver our trouble. He informed us we were traveling in a circle, and explained that the road was a driveway around the city. After we had a good laugh all around, the gentleman piloted us to the other side of the city, showed us the road to the north and bade us "God speed." We soon went into camp, and early next morning we were on our way

north—always going north. We passed the "Miller's White Mansion," otherwise known as the "101 Ranch," and along through that part of Oklahoma we met a



They posed for the camera record before leaving Houston, Texas

lot of big, fat, prosperous looking Indians.

Our Ford was doing fine, and carried us on right up into Kansas. At Florence, we took the old historic road called the "Santa Fe Trail," over which we rambled right into Kansas City, Mo., on the fifth day of our trip.

We had traveled 1,005 miles, through some very poor looking, and plenty good looking, country and towns. After seeing Kansas City, and giving our Ford the once over, we held a consultation and concluded to start east over the "Boone's Lick" road for St. Louis, 300 miles away. We made camp that night just outside of Kansas City. Early next morning, while making the coffee, I heard a racket that caused me to think we had run into a part of the European war. My son had stepped on the home of a family of Missouri bumble bees, and one had gotten up his trouser leg. After the excitement had died down, we had our coffee and eggs, and then got on our way

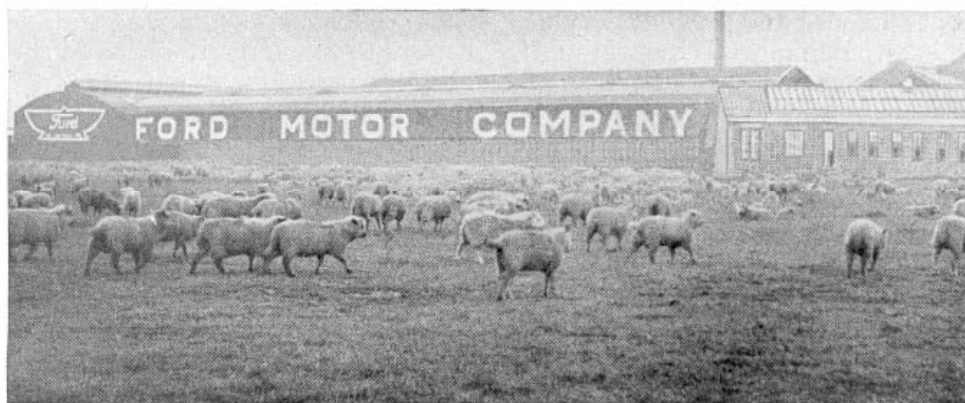
east. The car was doing fine, the roads were good, and it looked like 300 miles for us that day. In a few hours we rolled over the 124 miles to Boonville, which is one of the most interesting and historic towns in Missouri. In the early days it was the starting place for the caravans and pack trains that supplied Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the Southwest. Boone's Lick Trail, the deer path that Daniel Boone followed from the Mississippi to the Salt Licks in Howard County, ends across the Missouri River from Boonville. On the bluffs above the river, in the Court House yard at Boonville, will stand the shaft which is to mark the eastern point of the Santa Fe Trail. We crossed the river on the good ship "Dorothy," and started to roll off the 176 miles to St. Louis, Mo. We negotiated 15 miles of mud, and then just as we reached the good, hard, smooth rock road we picked up the only puncturing tack that lay between Houston and St. Louis. We then went into camp at

with St. Louis only

and there
7:00 P. M.
fifty miles
away.



This is the way C. D. Evans, wife, four children and a dog traveled 1250 miles from San Diego, Cal., to San Antonio, Tex. Although the superstructure is strange, there is the everlasting Ford chassis underneath



"Arcadia" in Trafford Park, Manchester, England, showing a corner of the plant of the Ford Motor Company (England), Ltd.

The next morning our Ford hit that rock road in such a hurry that a motor cop had a hard time in getting close enough to tell us to slow down to 25 miles per hour, as that was the limit. We recrossed the Missouri river at St. Charles on a toll-bridge, and were soon in St. Louis, having made 1305 miles in six days flat.

Next day we traveled over the city and fractured several traffic laws, but the police seemed to be our friends; they would explain, then smile, and ask how are things down in Texas.

I will here state that in Kansas City we had painted on the side of the car these words, "From somewhere in Texas" and believe me it looked as if all the world likes people from Texas.

Once more it rained all night, and we waited two more days for the roads to dry in Illinois, because that state has only dirt roads—good if dry.

Indianapolis, Ind., Springfield and Columbus, Ohio, marked our trip eastward and I tell you it was a grand and prosperous looking country. We stopped a short time in Wheeling, West Virginia, and came on over the old pike that is a couple of hundred years or more old, on

through Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and past the spot where General Braddock was killed, also a bridge over Youghiogheny river, with a stone marker which states that this is the place where our great Washington and General Braddock crossed, and we were traveling over this range of mountains on a pavement as smooth as in any city. Many miles of it is brick. We go on through Cumberland and up to Gettysburg. Then about 17 miles out of Gettysburg on the road to York is a little village called Rossville. There we visited an old stone church that is over 200 years old. It was given to the people by William Penn, the Quaker. The writer's forefathers attended that church in those days, and are buried there in the churchyard which is a beautiful little cemetery. We made a short stop at York, and then went on to Baltimore.

Here we concluded that we had gone east far enough. That night we headed our car south for Washington over a fine pavement, 40 miles long.

About 9:00 P. M. we made camp about fifteen miles outside of Washington. We arrived in the capital early the next morning. It was August 26th. After seeing the

Government buildings and the place where the immortal Lincoln died, and a trip to the top of the Washington monument, we next visited Arlington and Fort Myer. Then we hurried down to Mount Vernon, Washington's tomb and old home, 16 miles from the capital.

The next morning we stopped at the old town of Fredericksburg, Va., an hour or so, and the next stop was at the Spottsylvania Court House. Ten miles farther on we rolled into Richmond.

After visiting most all of the places of interest, including Jeff. Davis' old home, etc., we pulled out for the South, going through Petersburg, Raleigh, N. C., to Camden, S. C., and here we found the large bridge had been washed away. We bought two new tires here, loaded our Ford on a flat car and waited 28 hours for a train to pull us over the river. We soon made Columbia, S. C., the capital. After a short stay there, we were on our way to Augusta, Macon, and Andersonville, Ga.

On down south we went, and as we neared the Florida state line, the roads began to get bad. The country looked poor and we met very few automobiles on the road. Also we found to our sorrow, that everything on wheels in that part of the country is 60-inch tread. Our Ford could only straddle 56 inches, which gave us hard, slow going when in ruts. One town that we came into had a drinking fountain in the street. I wanted to refill our water bag. Holding its mouth under the pipe the bag began to fill, when an old-time darky who was standing close by remarked to another old-timer: "Lawzy, look at dat, water is running in dat bag, and it doan lek."

After watching it a few more seconds he said to me, "Say, Boss, is you sho nuff putting water in dat bag?"

After going through a number of turpentine orchards, and swamp after swamp, we arrived at Fair Hope; here we loaded the car on a boat and crossed Mobile Bay to the city of Mobile. We made a short stop in Mobile, and were soon on our way to Pascagoula, Miss. There we got the first and only repairs for the car on the entire trip. We ran into a hole going through some water that was so muddy we could not see the bottom, and bent the radius rods. A blacksmith straightened them and charged us 40 cents—our total repair expense for the whole journey. And then we paid \$4.00 to be ferried across 8 miles of swamp water on a little dinky flat boat.

In a short time we were at Gulfport, where we could look out upon the waters of the great Gulf of Mexico, and our road lay along the Gulf to Pass Christian. It is about ten or twelve miles between the



The oldest bridge in the United States. It was built in 1619 and spans Falling Creek on the road from Richmond to Petersburg, Va.

two towns, and the driveway and view are splendid—elegant homes and grounds on one side, the Gulf and beach on the other, with great, large trees that almost cover the roadway. From here we started for Mandeville, which lies due west, but were compelled to go north to Cameron Ferry, nearly a hundred miles out of the way to get around a large swamp. At Mandeville we boarded a boat for Milneburg, and in a few hours we had crossed the lake and arrived in New Orleans about dark, September 6th. Next day, after driving over the city and seeing most points of interest, we started north for Donaldsville, 80 miles from New Orleans. The road runs right along the mighty Mississippi river, whose waters not such a great many years ago were covered with floating palaces. But alas, since the railroads came these river steamers are a scarce article. We stopped the car three times, climbed the river bank and scanned the river, but never a boat could we see. And this river road is as crooked as a corkscrew. It is a good road, some bad places when wet, and on the east side of it is a "town" that reaches from New Orleans to Darrow, 80 miles. The houses are so close together all the way is the reason I call it a town, and I must say that it has an air of prosperity about it too.

The next morning we crossed the great river at Donaldsville. We had a stretch of good roads for about 50 miles and then they commenced to get bad. They got so bad between Lake Bridge and Boueff

that our trunk box broke from the back of the car. The people gave us sacks for padding and ropes and helped us tie it in the car on the back seat, and apologized for the condition of the road. They would not accept any pay and treated us so generously that it took all of the edge off our feelings. The next bad place was between Jennings and Lake Charles. The road was mostly dry and dusty with mud holes so long and deep, we had to be towed about four miles hitched to a farm wagon, and the last ten miles of Louisiana was through a rough road in a swamp. Then we crossed the river into Orange, and were back on grand old Texas soil. Saturday about noon we arrived in Beaumont, and while standing still getting our tank filled the last tire that had Houston air in it blew out. We soon fixed up the leak and were on our way to Houston and home.

We arrived in Houston Sept. 9th, feeling fine, and hungry. We had rolled off 4,463 miles by road and approximately 56 miles by rail and water—used 221 gallons of gas, an average of 20 miles to the gallon, and 14 gallons of oil.

I think the reader will ask: Was it tiresome? In answer I will state that at times it was ding-busted tiresome. But we had our fun. We met all kinds of people and saw a vast part of this great country that we live in, and could not have seen in any other way. My boy gained six pounds in weight, and I came home with an appetite that scared my wife.

Today's the day, this hour is the hour, now is the minute—it's the Code of Accomplishment.