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THE FOLLOWING account of the 1913 Glidden tour was prepared to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of that event. Dr. Waters, who is a St. Paul physician, is a past director of the Minnesota Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America. The Central Division of this organization, in cooperation with the Minnesota Region, will observe the golden anniversary of the last Glidden tour at a commemorative meet, to be held in the Twin Cities, July 11–14, 1963. Inquiries concerning it may be addressed to Dr. Waters at 559 Capitol Boulevard, St. Paul 1. Ed.

EARLY on the morning of July 11, 1913, the doors of Frederick E. Murphy's garage on Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis swung open and a varied assortment of roaring machines took to the city streets. A few minutes later they assembled before the Radisson Hotel, where, in a steady downpour of rain they awaited the starting signal for what was to be the last of the great Glidden tours.¹

¹ *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, July 12, 1913.

² Chris Sinsabaugh, *Who, Me? Forty Years of Automobile History*, 76, 80–82 (Detroit, 1940).

These yearly events had begun in 1905, when Charles J. Glidden, a retired New England telephone magnate and an automobile enthusiast, had established a trophy to be awarded the winner of an annual long-distance reliability run conducted by the American Automobile Association. Only stock model cars were allowed to participate, and speed was not the primary object. Time limits were set, however, and penalties were assigned for lateness, repairs on the way, and damage sustained by the cars along the rugged course laid out. Routes of the first tours were confined to the northeastern states, but they soon reached into the Middle West. In 1909 the tour ran from Detroit to Kansas City via Chicago, Minneapolis, and Denver, and in 1910 from Cincinnati to Chicago by way of Dallas, Texas.²

Endurance contests of this kind were especially popular in automobile circles of the early 1900s. They helped to demonstrate the practicality of motoring and the reliability of various types of cars. An incidental but also important benefit was the focusing of public attention on the need for better roads. There were as yet no national highways, no uniform route markers, and few all-

weather roads even in the most advanced areas. By no means the least exciting part of a reliability run was the preparatory trip, made by a "pathfinder" to search out a passable route for the contestants. Many such runs were held, but the annual Glidden tour was easily the largest and best known.³

Though originally intended for individual car owners and local automobile clubs, the contest was soon taken over by manufacturers who saw in it an opportunity to prove the merits of their cars and to attract publicity. This trend was reversed in later years, when the larger makers withdrew, apparently feeling that more attention was focused on the difficulties and misadventures of the run than on the successful contestants. By 1912 a tour scheduled from Detroit to New Orleans failed to materialize, and it would seem that the 1913 tour from the Twin Cities to Glacier Park was put over mainly through the enthusiasm of Minnesota automobile clubs, supported by Louis W. Hill, Sr., chairman of the board of the Great Northern Railroad.⁴

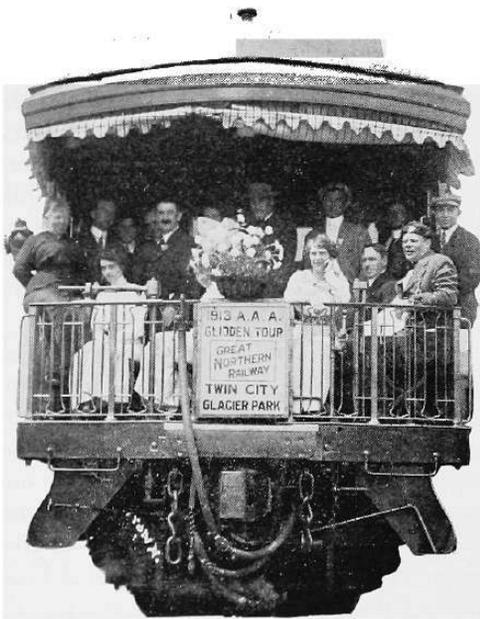
Hill undertook to provide food, lodging, repairs, and general hospitality along the en-

tire route by running a special "hotel" train. Besides six sleepers, two diners, and an observation car, the traveling accommodations included a garage car supplied with equipment for repairing automobiles and a newspaper car fitted out with a linotype machine, a photoengraving plant, and mailing facilities. With these the newspapermen accompanying the tour produced the *Glacier Park Blazer*, a daily four-page souvenir sheet reporting the events of the trip, the ceremonies with which the tourists were received along the way, and the jokes and gossip current among the party.⁵

Though more lavish than any previous Glidden tour, the 1913 event reflected in other ways the decline of the reliability run. Rules were relaxed, cars being penalized only for lateness and not for repairs by the wayside. Only three types of automobile—Metz, Krit, and Hupmobile—were represented by manufacturers' driving teams. The remainder of the cavalcade was made up of individual owners' entries, all but one from Minnesota and North Dakota. In addition, local motoring enthusiasts along the route joined for all or a portion of a day's journey, swelling the average number of vehicles to 154. Thus after the first miserable days of rain and mud, the affair became a gala social event rather than a grueling test of men and machines.⁶

Nevertheless, the nine-day, 1245-mile course through the Red River Valley and over the plains of North Dakota and Montana was difficult and provided plenty of challenges. It also produced several results

PLATFORM of the hotel train

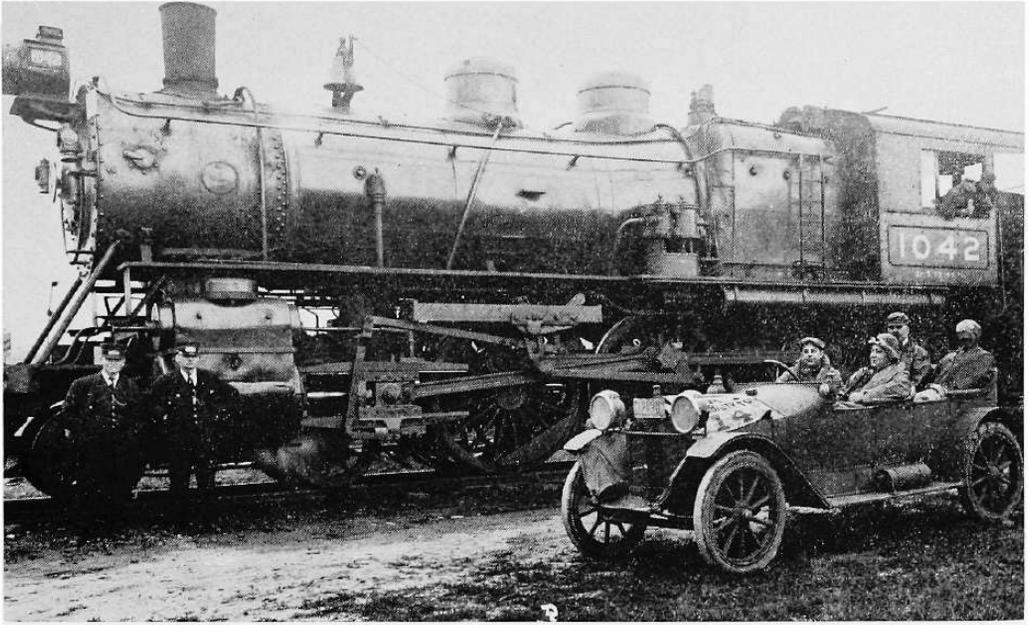


³ Sinsabaugh, *Who, Me?* 82; M. M. Musselman, *Get a Horse! The Story of the Automobile in America*, 202 (Philadelphia and New York, 1950).

⁴ Musselman, *Get a Horse!* 203; Sinsabaugh, *Who, Me?* 81; C. B. Glasscock, *The Gasoline Age*, 38 (Indianapolis and New York, 1937); "Opportunities in the National Tour," in *American Motorist*, 5:495 (June, 1913); *Tribune*, July 10, 1913.

⁵ "National Reliability Tour to the Big Park," in *American Motorist*, 5:689 (August, 1913); A. G. Bachelder, "The Story of the National Tour," in *American Motorist*, 5:784-788 (September, 1913); *Tribune*, July 12, 13, 1913.

⁶ *American Motorist*, 5:689, 690; 5:784.



ENGINE of the Great Northern hotel train and one of the Munzer Hupmobiles

of interest to the automotive industry. In defiance of the large, expensive machines in the contest, the Metz Auto Company of Waltham, Massachusetts, sent a team of three Model 22 Metz roadsters, and the Krit Motor Car Company of Detroit also entered three light runabouts. The roadability and steady performance of these small cars with short wheel bases was one of the notable features of the run.

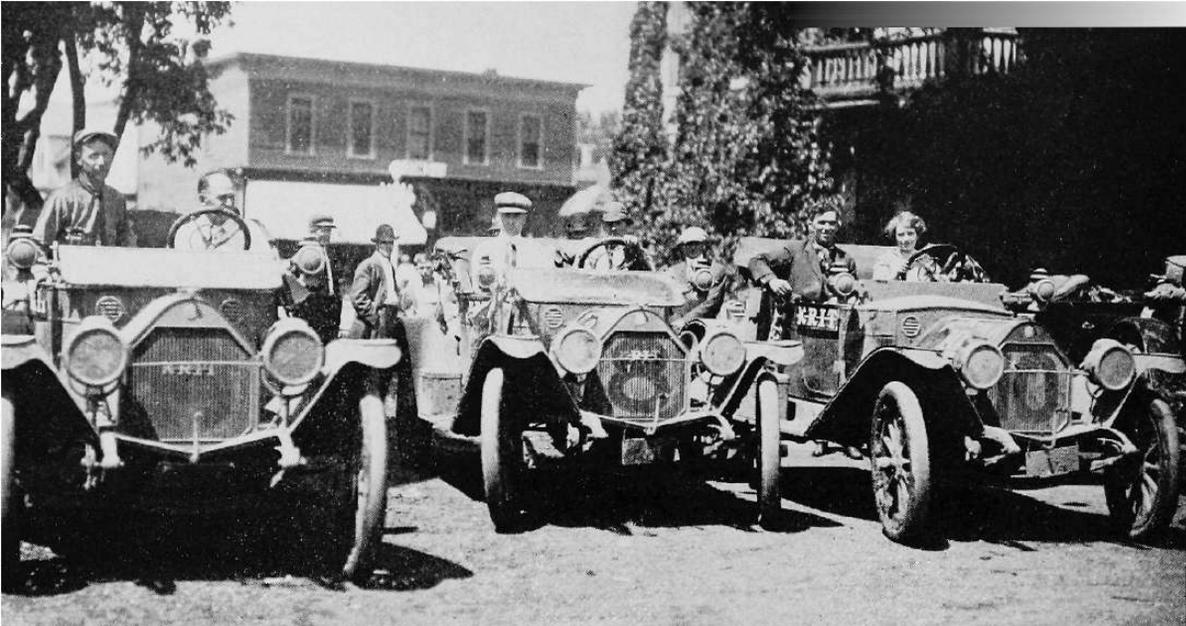
Implying that the established course was not a sufficient test for his cars, Charles W. Metz drove one of them from Boston to Minneapolis in order to join the tour. The other two Metz cars, shipped by railway, were found upon arrival to have been stripped by thieves. Lamps, tanks, tires, and in fact everything movable had been stolen. Replacements were found, however, and mechanics at Murphy's garage worked through one entire night in order to have the Metz team ready for the start.⁷

⁷ *Tribune*, July 10, 1913.

⁸ *Tribune*, July 10, 1913.

The Krit team, sponsored officially by the Northwest Automobile Company of Minneapolis, was manned by factory drivers. One of them, Frank A. Witt of Detroit, shared the task with his wife. The young and vivacious Mrs. Witt drew considerable attention, and her fellow drivers gallantly declared that she was "more steady at the wheel and works the engine more evenly" than a man.⁸

Two Hupmobiles made up the third manufacturer's team. They were entered by Rudolph W. Munzer and Sons, Minneapolis distributors of the car, and driven by Clarence I. and Warren W. Munzer. Other prominent Twin Cities contestants were Leslie H. Fawkes, of the Fawkes Automobile Company, Minneapolis, who entered a Marmon and a Premier, the former driven by his son, Bohn; Frederick C. Legg, a Minneapolis jeweler who drove a Stutz; Emmor B. Stimson, of the Minnesota Motor Car Company, who drove a Little; Joseph A. O'Brien, president of the Tri-State Automobile Club, driving a Moon; and Charles A. Van Duzee, of Minneapolis, driving a Chalmers. From Du-



THE Krit team, showing Mrs. Witt at the wheel of number 10

luth came Dr. James D. Park, president of the automobile club in that city, whose 1909 Locomobile, already a veteran of 100,000 miles, was the only private entry to finish without penalty. Another Locomobile, driven by E. A. Everett of Waseca, brought up the rear with a staggering total of 380 penalty points. Altogether there were twenty-five contestants, a number of whom were forced to withdraw before the end of the run.⁹

REGISTERED as the first entry and leading off at the starting line was a Packard driven by Hill, who personally opened the race, and then returned quietly to St. Paul. The contestants were preceded by several official cars. These included the pilot vehicle, a Mitchell "Moose," with a load of confetti used in marking the route; the pacemaker — another Mitchell — which carried the referee, Dr. Charles E. Dutton of Minneapolis; a Winton loaded with national officers of the American Automobile Association; and a Paige "36" which served as the press car.¹⁰

The pilot car departed shortly after 7:00 A.M. and was followed at 8:30 by the pacemaker. The first contestant was checked out immediately afterward and the rest proceeded at intervals of thirty seconds. The cars were to run on a schedule of twenty,

eighteen, and sixteen miles per hour, graduated according to the size and price of the model. All were to check in on schedule at noon and in the evening at specified control points.¹¹

The steady downpour apparently did little to dampen spirits, but it had a disastrous effect on the route. Slippery, muddy roads were the rule, and nearly every car was in the ditch at some time during the first day. Some experiences were casual; others were hair-raising. Near Melrose the Premier entered by Fawkes skidded in taking a left turn, twisted, slipped, and finally stopped at a perilous angle overhanging a deep ditch. At noon Referee Dutton lowered the entire schedule by two miles per hour.¹²

The official cars had at least as many difficulties as the contestants. Five miles east of Osakis the pilot Mitchell got away from its driver, dipped into the ditch, tore through a fence, and finally came to a stop — all but tipped over and buried over its wheels in mud. It took forty-five minutes and horses

⁹ *American Motorist*, 5:784; *Tribune*, July 20, 1913.

¹⁰ *Tribune*, July 11, 1913.

¹¹ *Tribune*, July 11, 1913.

¹² *Tribune*, July 12, 1913.

¹³ *American Motorist*, 5:689; *Tribune*, July 12, 1913.

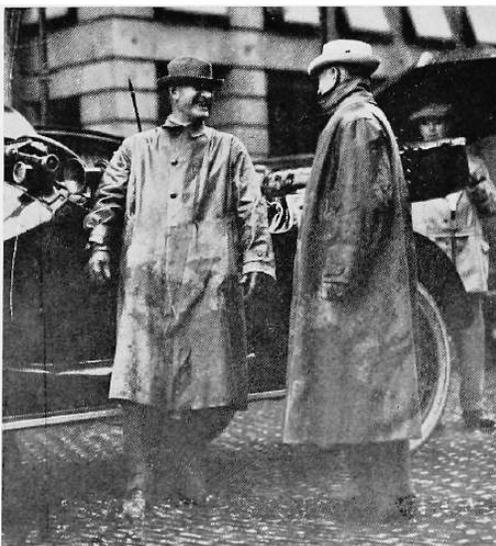
¹⁴ *Tribune*, July 13, 1913.



THE team
of Metz
roadsters

to extricate the “Moose” from its predicament. A short while later the pacemaker was likewise marooned and the tour flag was transferred to Legg’s Stutz. Surveying the sea of mud and water, Dr. Dutton suggested that decoy ducks be used instead of confetti to mark the trail. He concluded philosophi-

TOUR officials at the starting line



cally, though, that “compared to last year, these roads are a cinch. . . . They had no bottoms then.” All entrants plus the official cars at last succeeded in sliding through the mud to the first overnight stop at Alexandria, 140 miles from Minneapolis.¹³

The second day’s run, from Alexandria to Fargo, North Dakota, was also accomplished in a driving rain and again proved demanding of both participants and autos. Nineteen miles east of Fergus Falls the pilot car once more hit the ditch, and its occupants had “a marvelously narrow escape from death in four feet of water.” At the time of the mishap the speed of the car was not over fifteen miles per hour. The roadway of clay on sod was very spongy; eight feet was its average width. The right rear wheel slipped, and the bank began to crumble beneath it. When the machine, which had its top up, finally came to a stop midway down the bank it was balanced so delicately that a few pounds of pressure would have overturned it. Fully realizing their danger, the four occupants leaped to safety.¹⁴

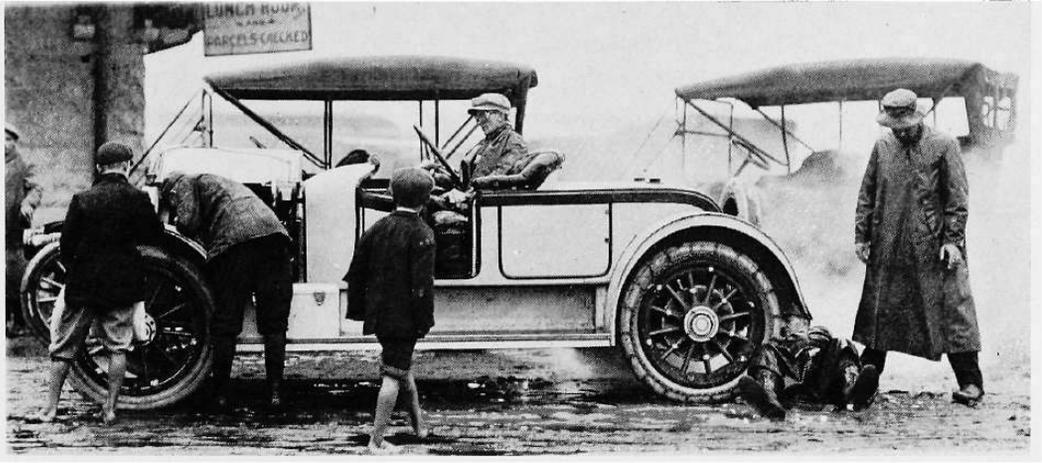
The next problem was to save the “Moose” from its precarious perch — a slip of a few



CONTESTANTS
at an unidentified
control point.
Numbers 2
and 3 are the
Marmon and Stutz.

THE pilot car in trouble, five miles east of Osakis





FAWKES' Marmon delayed in St. Cloud with tire and carburetor trouble

inches, and it would have capsized and probably sunk out of sight. With the aid of a team and "eight men on a rope," the car was at last hauled back onto the road. It had been resting at such an angle that the lubricating oil had run out of the crankcase, and not knowing this, the driver continued. Within a few rods, however, the engine stopped, necessitating a transfer of the pilot flag and

confetti to the press car. After a frozen piston was freed, the "Moose" promptly returned to service.¹⁵

By noon the roads had changed from clay to gumbo, and the cars continued to slide and slip. Truer words than "get a horse — a team, that is!" were probably never spoken, as car after car was hauled out of the ditch. The rain ceased in midafternoon and the caravan reached its first good roads, allowing all the cars to arrive in Fargo on time — another 119.5 miles closer to the finish.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Tribune*, July 13, 1913.

¹⁶ *Tribune*, July 13, 1913.

THE Hupmobiles and an official car pause to let a team of horses pass



THE THIRD DAY, Sunday, July 13, was spent recuperating in Fargo. Penalty points for the first two days were announced there, most of them being for lateness due to tire trouble or water in magnetos and carburetors.¹⁷

The fourth day's run was the longest of the trip—188.8 miles from Fargo to Devils Lake, North Dakota. The route followed the Minnesota side of the Red River to Crookston, then turned west to Grand Forks, North Dakota, and Devils Lake. Throughout the morning the "loving" gumbo roads of the river valley caused slow going and overheated radiators, but in the afternoon, as the procession pushed westward across the plains, the driving conditions improved greatly.¹⁸ This was no doubt appreciated most by the occupants of the larger cars, which had slithered hopelessly in the mud but took the bumps of dry roads more comfortably than did the smaller vehicles with short wheel bases.

The runabouts continued, however, to

prove their worth. The Metz team, still without penalties, passed their competitors, and despite a broken steering knuckle on one and a broken spring on another negotiated the day's run in time to wash all three cars before checking in at the control point.¹⁹

With clearing skies and dry roads the spirits of the party rose and they responded with more enthusiasm to the greetings they received at the various towns along the way. Crowds gathered, flags and large signs were displayed, and at one place the thundering cavalcade was met by a fusillade of revolver shots. Devils Lake citizens turned out en masse to the accompaniment of a brass band. A more unexpected greeting awaited one of the reporters, E. G. ("Eddie") Westlake of the *Chicago Post*. Some practical joker had placed a notice in the *Devils Lake Daily Journal*, announcing that Westlake loved cats and would pay a dollar each for all he

¹⁷ *Tribune*, July 14, 1913.

¹⁸ *American Motorist*, 5:786.

¹⁹ *Tribune*, July 16, 1913.

REPORTER Westlake and enterprising cat salesmen of Devils Lake





AN emergency welding job on a broken spring

could get. He was met by a crowd of small boys ready to take him up on the offer.²⁰

The fifth day, from Devils Lake to Minot, was comparatively uneventful, the only casualty being a broken spring on the Stutz. A different picture faced the contestants the following day, however. The run from Minot to Williston was one of the shortest of the trip, but it traversed the hills, benchlands, and trails of western North Dakota. Many rough areas were encountered; punctures and blowouts, broken springs and radiators, and lost lamps marked the route. At one point the pacemaker and a dozen entrants missed the road and were lost for nearly an hour in the hills. After much searching they found the confetti trail once more and were forced to run at high speed to reach the control point on time. One of the Hupmobiles had four blowouts and two punctures, and the driver got it to the control point on a flat tire just ten seconds before his three-minute grace period expired. The Stutz was eliminated when it struck a rock and tore a hole in the crankcase.²¹

²⁰ *Tribune*, July 15, 1913.

²¹ *Tribune*, July 17, 18, 1913.

²² *Tribune*, July 17, 1913.

²³ *Tribune*, July 18, 1913.

Although predictions had frequently been made that the smaller cars would begin to suffer on the rough roads, they held up well and the Metz team maintained its perfect score through yet another day. The little cars ran up and down gullies, over rocks and hummocks like rabbits, and those watching from the hotel train as the cars sped alongside declared that no prettier work of driving was being done.²²

The seventh day, from Williston to Glasgow, Montana, was another grueling run. Bumps and poor roads continued to take their toll, despite minor miracles of repair accomplished with the equipment carried by the hotel train. Fawkes' Marmon had to be dropped when it burned out its clutch, and the pacemaker suffered a broken steering knuckle when it hit a culvert. Tire troubles, of course, remained frequent. The Hupmobile team especially was bedeviled with punctures and blowouts.²³

Drivers and passengers were also beginning to feel the pace. The machines generally traveled with their tops down as a precaution against violent bumps, one of which, early in the trip, had stunned a passenger by throwing him against the top of the car. As a result, faces suffered from sun-

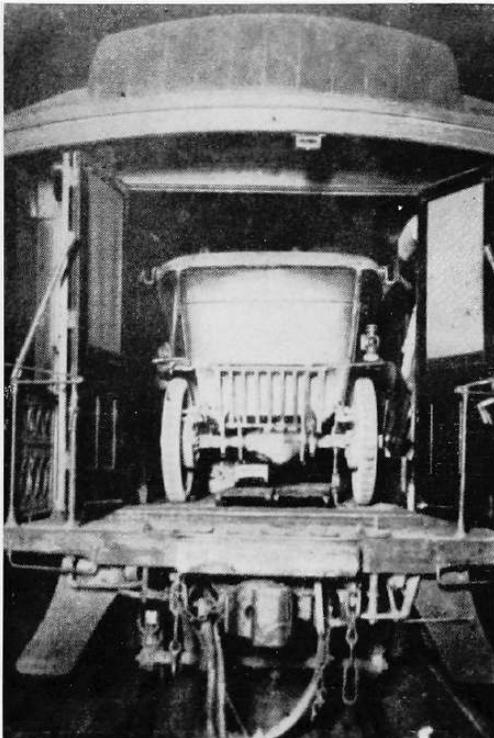


DR. James D. Park
at the wheel of
his 1909 Locomobile

burn and alkali dust. Cold cream was at a premium, and many tied handkerchiefs bandit-fashion around nose and chin. Beards were allowed to grow as shaving became intolerable over carnation red skin.²⁴

A diversion greeted the travelers at Poplar, Montana, where a band of mounted and costumed Blackfeet braves surrounded

ONE of the casualties



them. In the lead, riding an Indian mustang with casual skill, the motorists were astonished to find their host, Louis Hill. He had bypassed the cavalcade by train and was now prepared to join them for the final days of the trek.²⁵

These proved comparatively uneventful. The eighth day brought the tourists into Havre in time for a large-scale celebration and banquet, and the ninth took them through breathtaking scenery as they approached Glacier Park. Seven cars drew in at the finish line before the Glacier Park Hotel with perfect scores — though Dr. Park in his amazing Locomobile made it by only sixty seconds, and his passengers hinted that they were lucky to be alive. Another sensational finish was scored by Clarence Munzer, who pulled his Hupmobile in with two flat tires and scarcely a minute to spare. He then collapsed and had to be revived by the onlookers. All three cars of the Metz team had escaped penalties, as had the two Hupmobiles driven by the Munzer brothers. The other perfect score belonged to the Krit piloted by Witt and his wife.²⁶

Numerous trophies were awarded. The coveted Glidden Cup went to the Metz team, and Dr. Park won the American Auto-

²⁴ *Tribune*, July 13, 17, 1913.

²⁵ *Tribune*, July 18, 1913.

²⁶ *American Motorist*, 5:784, 785, 788; *Tribune*, July 20, 1913.

OFFICIALS of the
AAA as
they selected
the winning cars



mobile Association Touring Car Trophy. Two additional cups in the runabout class were awarded by drawing lots among the six small cars that had perfect scores. One went to a Hupmobile and the other to a Metz.²⁷

²⁷ *American Motorist*, 5:788.

THE DESIGN on page 205 was drawn by Celine Charpentier and inspired by a title page in the June, 1913, issue of the *American Motorist*. The photographs are from a series printed by Brown's Photo Company of St. Paul.

Thus ended the 1913 "King of Tours" — the last of the great Glidden events. Like its predecessors, it played a part in convincing the average American that automobile travel could be undertaken without undue hazard. A second aim acknowledged by Hill and the other Minnesota sponsors of the tour was also accomplished: the nation's attention was drawn to the northern route across the Great Plains and to the as yet little-known beauties of Glacier Park.

WARREN Munzer displays his prize-winning Hupmobile before the Glacier Park Hotel





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