

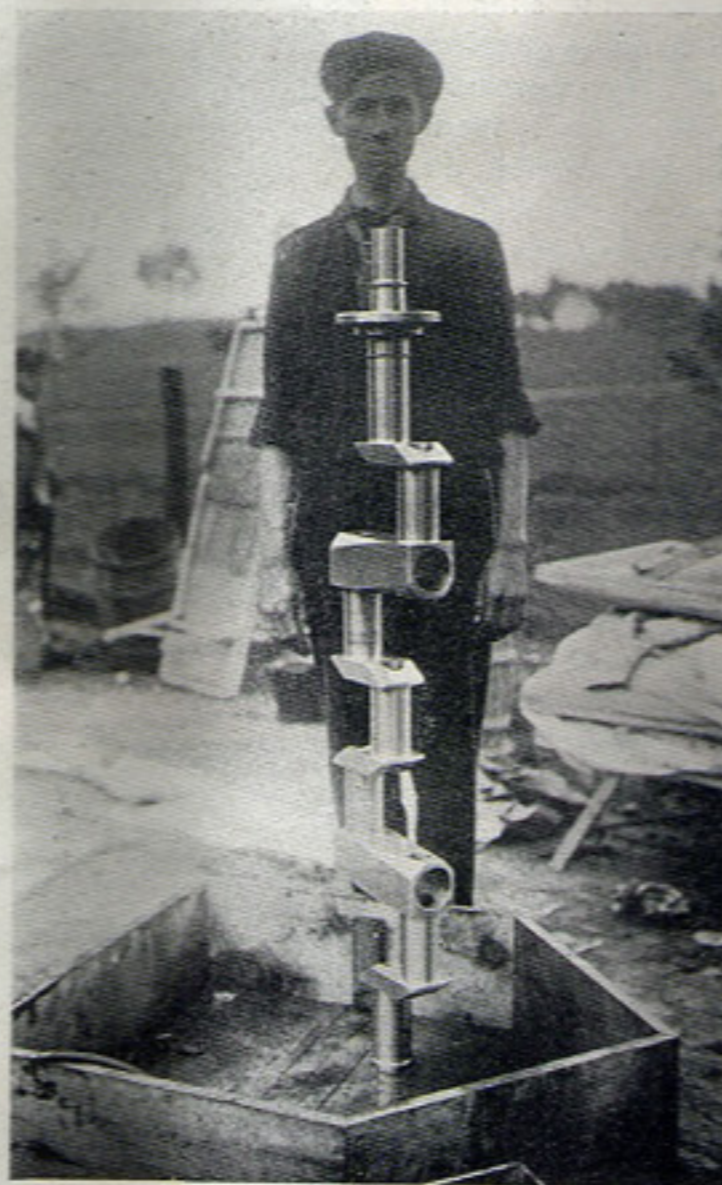
AN AUTO CAMP ON THE LONG ISLAND COURSE

By H. F. DONALDSON

It is the dynamics of racing that draws the crowd. A ton of metal projected along the road at perhaps seventy miles an hour, and carrying two tensely set figures is a spectacle that must thrill the man who has good red blood in his veins.

And yet, there is much of the picturesque about the training quarters that are scattered along the course. The Vanderbilt race gives those who live in the Metropolitan district a chance to see how a racing machine is coaxed to do its best. At quaint little inns and modern road houses, mellowing in local color, the camps of the contestants may be discovered.

There is a suggestion of military occupation about these peaceful headquarters. Driving along some pleasant road that winds through woods and fields, one suddenly comes to an unexpected enclosure, from the interior of which breaks out a steady roar of exhausts like an automatic gun. You pull up ready for the picket's challenge, and instead comes the greeting: "Hello! What time did Christie make this morning?"



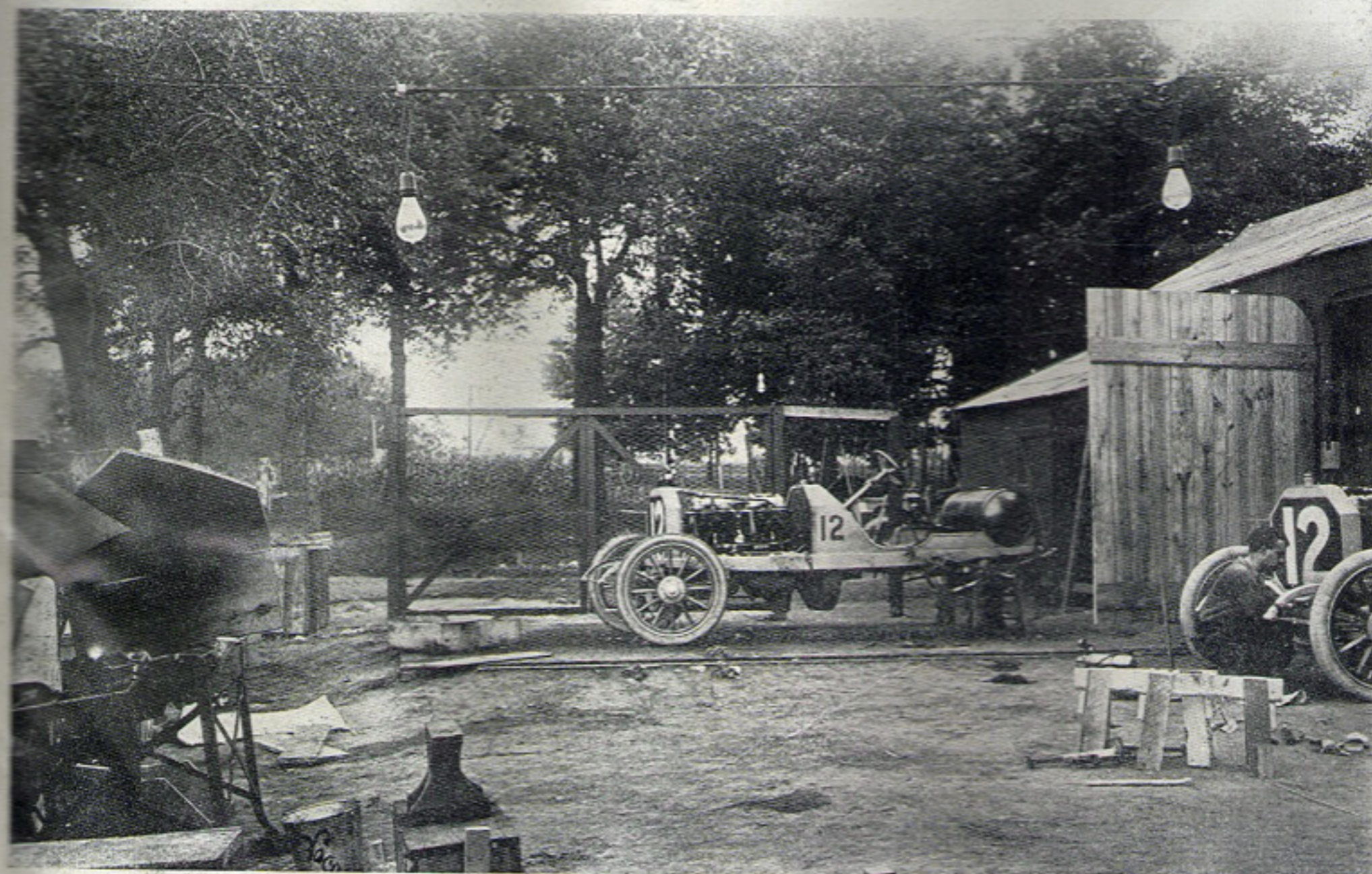
THE LOCOMOBILE'S SPARE CRANKSHAFT.

A little bit of gossip is always a safe conduct to an automobile camp.

Of course, there are camps and camps, varying in their equipment all the way from a bench and vise with a closet full of supplies to a machine shop filled with tools and a house jammed with tires and fittings.

A typical camp of the latter kind is that of the Locomobile, at the Lakeville turn. There a swinging sign attracts the eye to the old-fashioned inn, shaded by a thick grove of maples. From its build it might have dated back to Colonial days, when through one of its many doors some fleeing Tory could have easily eluded his pursuers. Whatever the reasons, there are more doors than windows—an ideal place for the fresh-air cure on a windy day.

Behind this peaked-roof inn, where ancient trees stretch their branches, and vines and other creeping things stray about the grass and graveled walks, a big wire net enclosure surrounds the camp. An old horse stable has been extended into a row of barn-like buildings with tight wood floors and wide, unpainted swinging



VIEW OF THE LOCOMOBILE CAMP ON THE VANDERBILT CUP COURSE, AT LAKEVILLE, LONG ISLAND.

doors, that house the two big racing cars and enough machine tools and spares to start a model factory.

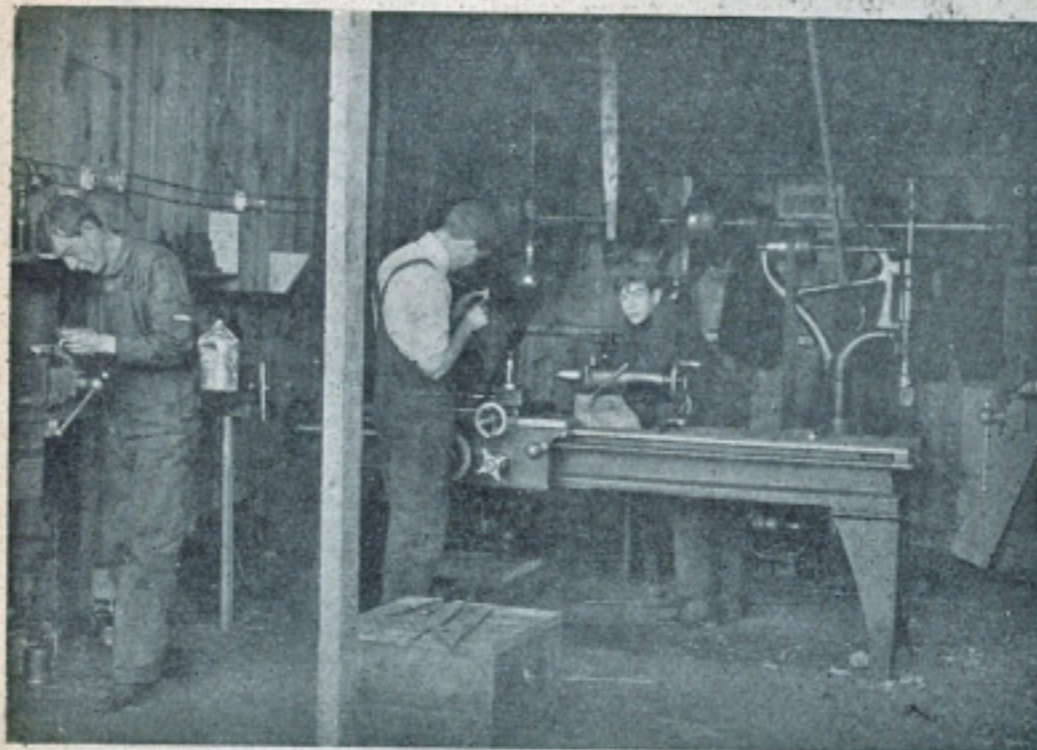
Each racer has a separate compartment. Around the walls are all the extra parts that will hang on pegs, and trays and boxes on shelves contain screws and bolts and little fittings.

Next to the compartments for cars, the machine shop is fitted up with a screw-cutting lathe, drill press, and a grinder, all driven by an electric motor belted to a countershaft. Several parallel vises and a miscellaneous lot of tools, from a rat-tailed file to a big Stillson wrench, are carried on benches or in racks along the walls.

The last compartment of the big wooden building has been christened the garage, for here the working cars are stabled. There are five of them—stock machines of different sizes—and it is the task of a separate gang of factory hands to keep them ready for instant service. They are seldom idle, too, for there are trips to be made to the city for supplies, or to the railroad depot at Great Neck for passengers, or to some distant part of the course, where a station is to be located.

In the inclosure in front of the sheds the blacksmith's forge and anvil are always ready to work a heat or dress a tool.

It is in the early morning, after the practice spins, that the camp is really active. When Tracy drives the big machine into the yard from a speedy tryout on the course, he may order the gearbox taken down or all of the road wheels re-



A LOOK INTO THE LOCOMOBILE MACHINE SHOP.

moved. The car is run onto the platform (shown in the photograph), wooden horses are put under the axles, and in less than half an hour the gang of a dozen experts from the shop has the machine dismembered, ready for inspection. Then the work for the day is laid out by the driver and things quiet down to a routine in this al fresco shop. Poole, the clever mechanic of the team, keeps an experienced eye on the work to see that things go forward smoothly.

At the further end of the inclosure a small padlocked house contains dozens of tires—some armored for wet day driving—costly oil by the barrel, carbide by the keg, and metals and materials of a dozen different kinds, all ready for use. A long-distance 'phone supplies a ready means of filling a need if anything else is wanted.

Neither day nor night is taken into account when any work is to be done; there are 150 32-c.p. lamps wired in the inclosure, and switches in every compartment.

To win the race is a big undertaking, bigger than it seems when one watches the cars flying past on the road, and the Locomobile folk intend to win if they can. It costs money to keep a camp going when, for instance, a single meal means a dollar, and what one can see at this camp is found in similar or less degree at the other quarters. Nassau County, Long Island, has discovered that there are shorter ways to wealth than growing potatoes.