

JOSEPH TRACY

AUTOMOTIVE TESTS AND RESEARCH

10 EAST 53rd STREET

NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

April 29, 1946

Mrs. Norma B. McDonald,
Technology Department,
Detroit Public Library,
Detroit 2, Michigan.

LETTER A

Dear Mrs. McDonald:

I have your very interesting letter of April 26, and in compliance with your request am pleased to write the following for your information, relative to my early automotive experiences -

Built 2 experimental motor bicycles in 1897-98. First had a single cylinder air cooled vertical engine driving the rear wheel by friction pulley in contact with the tire. Bore of engine 2 inches, stroke 3 inches. Carbureter of the "vaporizing" type, in which the air to the engine cylinder, was led through passages lined with canvas, partly immersed in gasoline. This was the so-called "wick carbureter," and was without float control.

The second motorcycle had a horizontal engine $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch bore and 3 inch stroke. Same carbureter, and drive. Ignition on both machines was by "make and break" low tension system, 6 volts, with storage batteries as the source of electric current.

1900-1902 worked on radial 3 cylinder engine car for F. A. La Roche Co., Hudson and 13th Streets, New York. This was the first "gasoline-electric" automobile built in this country.

1902-1904 - made one and 10 mile records on Empire City Track in Yonkers, N. Y.

Also drove in "Reliability runs" sponsored by the Long Island Automobile Club on Long Island. Drove Peerless Gordon Bennett car at Ormond Beach (1903).

1903 - Drove Renault car in 100 mile road race near Havana, Cuba.

1904 - Drove Royal Tourist in Vanderbilt Cup Race on Long Island.

1905 - Drove Locomobile in Gordon-Bennett Cup Race in France in July, and in Elimination and finals for this Cup on Long Island.

1906 - Drove Locomobile car in Elimination and final races for Vanderbilt Cup on Long Island.

See sheet
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for correction

1906 on January 1st drove a Dragon car from New York to Philadelphia using denatured alcohol as fuel. First time a car was driven by alcohol in this country.

See sheet 3
for correction

1908 - Drove Hol-Tan car from New York to Philadelphia using Benzol for fuel. First time benzol was used in a car in this country.

1906-1908 - operated first engine testing laboratory, and had first electric dynamometer built to my instructions by the Sprague Electric Company, West 34th St., near 10th Avenue, New York. This was made from one of the companies 3½ h.p. electric motors, by a re-arrangement of the field castings, removing the supporting legs.

1902-03 - Imported and used one of the first "Optical Indicators" for determining cylinder pressures in gasoline engines - this was made by Carpentier of Paris.

Date of birth - March 22, 1873.

Associates - In Gordon-Bennett and Vanderbilt Cup Races, Alfred J. Poole acted as my mechanician. He also accompanied me on the New York, Philadelphia runs, first with alcohol as fuel, second with benzol. Mr. Poole is now with the Scintilla Magneto Co., Unadilla, N.Y.

In 1903, I obtained a patent on an automatic igniter for automobile engines.

Very truly yours,

Joseph Tracy

In 1910, I invented, manufactured, and sold
DYNAMOMETERS, for testing engines.

In 1926, I invented a fluid dynamometer which was manufactured and sold by

Wesal Stamping Co., Long Island City, N.Y.,

for several years.

JOSEPH TRACY
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NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

May 3, 1946

Mrs. Norma B. McDonald,
Technology Department,
The Public Library
5201 Woodward Avenue,
Detroit 2, Michigan

Dear Mrs. McDonald:

Supplementing my letter A of April 29, I would like to correct some errors of dates as follows:

The run to Philadelphia with the Dragon car using alcohol as fuel, started from 58th Street and 8th Avenue, New York, at midnight, January 1, 1907.

The run to Philadelphia with Benzol, started from New York on January 10, 1908.

In 1902, I obtained a patent on an automatic igniter for automobile engines.

In ¹⁹¹⁰ ~~1908~~, I invented, manufactured, and sold fan and reaction DYNAMOMETERS, for testing engines.

In 1926, I invented a fluid dynamometer which was manufactured and sold by

Metal Stamping Co., Long Island City, N.Y.,

for several years.

Very truly yours,

Joseph Tracy

JT/r