

THE SPEEDWAY ACROSS LONG ISLAND

THE first automobile speedway ever constructed in this or any other country will be built on Long Island, and ready for use in less than a year, if the plans of the company headed by William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., materialize with the degree of speed that would appear probable, judging from the extraordinary and widespread interest taken in the plan.

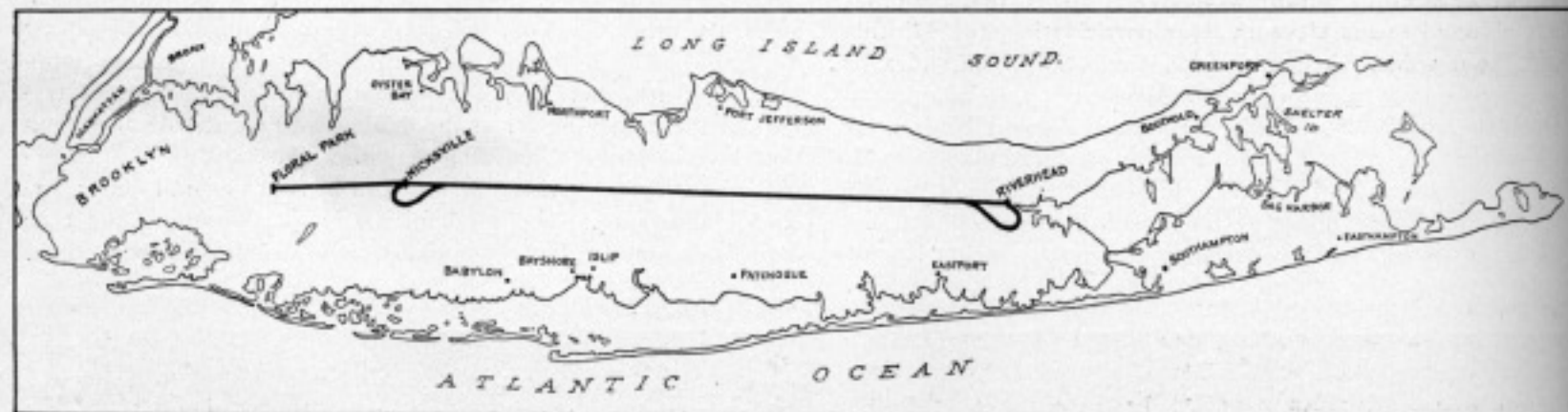
Upon the heels of the Vanderbilt Cup race came a unanimous conclusion that to attempt another road contest under similar conditions was utterly out of the question. A privately-owned course was agreed to be the only means by which another race could be thought of, and the offers of support were so numerous that a start was made immediately, looking forward to the construction of a speedway. Mr. Vanderbilt, Chairman Thompson of the A. A. A. Racing Board, and several leading American makers, formed the nucleus of those who promised support.

The plans are still under discussion. The general scheme provides for a straightaway road of 65 or more miles that will extend from Floral Park through the center of Long Island to Riverhead. The idea takes on a more practical phase than the mere building of a race course, the proposition being to provide an automobile highway whereon manufacturers will have opportunity of thoroughly testing their cars, individuals will have a place

access at frequent intervals. Each tollgate will take the form of an old English inn, where the motoring public will be privileged to refresh themselves under club conditions. Each inn will be provided with its garage, charging and supply station, oil-sprinkling equipment, road repairing tools and material, and will be controlled by the company promoting the scheme. The route of the highway is purposely withheld for the present. It will be a highway in the broadest sense of the word, and although it will be especially constructed for the purpose, it will follow the natural grades and bends incidental to all general public highways.

The Plan and Scope Committee, consisting of W. K. Vanderbilt, Jr., chairman; Jefferson DeMont Thompson, Ralph Peters, Dave Hennen Morris, A. R. Pardington and Dean Alvord, will hold another session this week, and the work already started will be pushed without any hesitation, the intention being to have the road ready weeks before the time for holding the Elimination Trial for the next Cup race.

Such well-known makers as Henry B. Joy, president of the Packard Motor Company; E. R. Thomas, of the Thomas Motor Company; Henry Ford, of the Ford Motor Company; Windsor T. White, of the White Sewing Machine Company; H. H. Franklin, of the Franklin Manufacturing Company; A. L. Riker, of the Locomobile Company of America, have given assurances of financial support. Windsor T. White, in sending a subscrip-



where they can drive to the limit of speed, and, incidentally, a course will be made for the Vanderbilt Cup or any other international trophy by providing wide turns at two points along the road, possibly Hicksville and Riverhead. Since the road would be fifty feet in width, there would be plenty of room for passing in opposite directions on the straightaway.

An informal meeting of those interested in the project was held at the Lawyers' Club, 120 Broadway, New York City, October 18, at which time Long Island was selected as the location for the speedway. Of the \$2,000,000 required, \$400,000 was pledged at this meeting, those present including August Belmont, William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., Ralph Peters, president Long Island Railroad Company; L. C. Weir, president Adams Express Company; Commodore F. G. Bourne, Colgate Hoyt, Jefferson DeMont Thompson, H. K. Burriss, W. G. McAdoo of New Jersey Tunnel Company, Anton G. Hodenpyl, A. R. Pardington, Dave Morris, president Automobile Club of America, and Dean Alvord.

The following agreed to serve as incorporators and directors, and sent regrets for being unable to be present: Harry Payne Whitney, Clarence H. Mackay, E. Russell Thomas, W. J. Matheson, John Farson.

In the announcement that followed the meeting this information was included:

The automobile speedway will be on Long Island, and will be open to all drivers of pleasure automobiles. As proposed and decided upon, it will be constructed on a private right of way, with no grade crossings and of sufficient width to insure safety under all conditions. It will be protected by suitable fences and will provide high-class accommodations for motorists. As a toll road it will have numerous feeders, controlled by tollgates allowing

tion of \$5,000, wrote as follows to A. R. Pardington: "As the establishment of a course will so greatly benefit manufacturers, it seems proper that they should give the project their financial support. Acting in accordance with this idea, the White Sewing Machine Company will subscribe \$5,000 to the stock of the company formed to build the course, and I wish that you would put this formal offer before the committee. I would say, further, that we do not wish to have it understood that we are not prepared to contribute further to this worthy cause."

E. R. Thomas, the Buffalo maker, expressed himself in this vein: "As a manufacturer of automobiles, I regard the establishment of a private course for speed, endurance, and other contests an absolute necessity for the development and perfection of automobiles. The construction of a touring car for public use must, in no sense, be experimental, for the safety of human life is involved, and a great reserve of strength must be had."

A. L. Riker, designer of the Locomobile Company of America, comments in this manner: "The proposed automobile speedway is what the automobile manufacturers have been waiting for for years. It will enable the manufacturers to thoroughly test out both touring and racing cars."

"All of the men who attended the recent meeting were unanimous in favor of Long Island," states Mr. Pardington. "Propositions from New Jersey, New York state, and Connecticut were presented and carefully considered, but Long Island, in view of the new bridges and tunnels giving greater accessibility from New York City, in addition to the projected city boulevard beginning at the Long Island end of the new Blackwell's Island bridge, was deemed far superior to all other proposed sites."