



Checking Hill Climbers on Roslyn Hill

# THE AUTOMOBILE MAGAZINE

VOL. IV

JUNE, 1902



## Long Island's Century

BY FRANCIS P. PRIAL

**A** WORD or two on the Long Island Hundred Mile Endurance (?) Run, a bit of streakish description, an ingot or two of thought, perhaps, a loosely tied sheaf of fact and fancy, an aftermath of deduction and conclusion. Looking back now, when the mental and physical dust of that day had been entirely washed away, it is quite clear that the Long Island Hundred crowns with laurel primarily the promoting club, and, in another sense, the men who received the stipulated rewards, these latter deserving more commendation for holding in check the speed-impulse than perhaps for any other one thing.

For, in this day of motor car development, early though it yet be, the April 26th Century makes it certain that no very great merit attaches to any motor car capable of a leisurely hundred mile run over goodish roads largely devoid of hills and entirely free from specific ascent or descent calling for that final strain or that last high burst of speed which search out imperfection and bring the futile car to final grief. The Run proved beyond peradventure that a no-speed one hundred mile automobile amble

through fairly level country is, in these days, no tour de force, but rather a mere parade, an outing, an advertisement of the popularity and pervasiveness of motor-carism, and any self-driven vehicle which (barring of course specious accident) cannot be taken through such a run with highest satisfaction, is fit largely for the scrap-heap, is not for the salesroom, and the offering of such a car to the public were laughable, if it were not criminal; that is, criminality of the shysterian, gold-brick kind.

The run surprised in largeness of entry. The run, despite a



An interested lot of A. C. A. Members

bit of petty caviling, reflected several different kinds of credit on the Long Island Automobile Club. It was conceived in enthusiasm and managed with sustained energy. Its projection was a voluntary reaching-forth for a deal of work, criticizable, doubtful, unrequitable work. And once decided upon every available man in the Long Island Automobile Club—an effective, cohereing body of men they are—gave their all to make the event completely successful.

Of the affair itself, so much interest did it excite and so widely and exhaustively has it been photoed and written out that little now remains to be said. It is now generally known that April (26) saw her finish and like one who drowns in drink his sorrow, she went on a high jamboree. That historic Saturday night, nay

should have been a tender green day, a day of amethyst skies, and of finely spun sunshine? But no! No! No! The yelping hounds of the weather gods were unleashed all day long and Long Island was cloaked in greivous discomfort. Suffice it to say that it was a dusty, gritty, wind-worn day, one for overcoats, rubbered things and all manner and kind of protective habiliment, aided and abetted at periodic crucial moments by heating and stimulating drafts of fluidities.

There were a few major notable pictures, the start, for instance, the mile ascent of Roslyn Hill, the severely country crowd at Hempstead and, finally, the Babylon of the



At the foot of Roslyn Hill

finish. The heart of the thing was at Pettit's Hotel, in the old town of Jamaica, now legally, but not otherwise, part of New York city, Jamaica, a town of placidity, of solid undisturbable dignity, and seemingly as near the North

Pole as to the Tenderloin. The hotel itself is seared and seamed with probably a hundred winters. It was a classic in its day, and many a merry and bibulous crowd foregathered there to discourse on hogs and horses, the amenities of the trotting track, the awards of the country fair and much other gossip of the bucolic life. Even in the earliest day of cycling, Pettit's had not yet lost its halo, and "a run to Pettit's" with a teamster's dinner to boot was a thing to be rolled under the tongue days before and to be rehearsed in the club circle for days afterward. Jamaica and Pettit's, lying only ten miles from New York, exerted and still exerts the charm of a half-agricultural, half-residential country seat. And



by-the-by, since land is not sold in Jamaica by the square inch, the glory of Pettit's is not the unspeakable shoddiness enclosed by its four walls, but its obvious indeed, its only excellence is the great straggling yard which flanks it.

At nine in the morning those in interest had gathered at this place, a white and saffron-faced crowd, for the thing meant up and away at six o'clock, a forbidding hour surely for all city, indeed, for all thinking men. Besides, the morning was darkly cold, and the wet bluster of winds ate into the heart. At that hour a hundred machines and a thousand people were in the hotel yard. Car captains were busy putting on the last final touches of preparation. Scores of helpful men were at their beck and call. Automobile factories seemed to have debouched their practical men, fellows of oil and grime and the horny hand, fellows, real men who know how, each one as familiar with his machine as a Court physician is with the constitution of his King. These, moving hither and thither with much physical and vocal exuberance gave the cars their final grooming. It was amusing, affecting interesting, in a large way. The love of the true mechanic for the inanimate thing made for action—a gun, a yacht, a car and so on—approaches the human.

Hovering, strolling and pushing about were five score scribes open-eyed, ready-eared; also a company of camera men, a regiment of officials and observers, and finally, the fringe of purposeless loiterers, the simply curious, the mob of the open-mouthed. It was, you may be sure, an inspiring sight. The number of machines, the many styles, the tenseness of all concerned—all this spoke a big word for automobiling. As for the competitors, their enthusiasm, their anxiety was simply remarkable. They were as men going into a battle. These were of two classes, the private owner of a pet car, in which he deeply believed and was most anxious to show off, much as a groom puts through the pace a blue-blooded filly, one destined in another summer for a Suburban, for a Derby—the other class, the man of trade, the man with a factory and a ledger, who was staking and quite willing to stake his reputation on the performance of his product in the day's run.

Between nine and ten o'clock the cars had all somehow been gotten into motion, and were well on the way to glory or disgruntlement. Of the start it might be said that there was no uniformity or sequence or style. It was strangely non-military, spasmodic. But these runs are new, complex, biggish, and time and

experience will mend, improve and perfect. Later, in events of this kind, there will be more officialism, uniformity and absolutism, and, of course, less of the picturesque. Such was the start.

Through the courtesy of the Long Island Railroad, who provided a special car for the purpose, it was possible to observe the run at two interesting way points, at Roslyn Hill, twenty-two miles out, and at Hempstead, sixty miles away. The hill contest provided no excitement. It developed, in the final analysis, that the rise at Roslyn was no very great shakes, while the 14 per cent, knob at the top of it, which promised a strenuous moment, proved to be but a flea bite and pro-



Nearing the top

vided absolutely no agony. In addition to that there was no visible competition, the final result being a matter of mathematics, and none knew who had won fast time prizes until night-fall.

At Hempstead, one merely saw the proverbial Long Island village. There was the town square, walled in with a shambling hotel, an odd tavern or two, a church and a school, the church, high-spired and immaculately white, a modest house of God. Lining this square were such-Hempsteadites as had the leisure of a Saturday afternoon, a hundred or two in number, and the cars sailed through this lane of rustic humans without any very great



First in. Charles D. Cooke and  
H. Percy Maxim

thought that a non-competitor was disporting himself; but, as the vehicle rounded in front of the hotel, placard No. 3 appeared on it and the crowd gave it an excited welcome. Shortly after another car came breezing home, the crowd elated, the officials askant. In brief, the vehicles began now to rapidly arrive and it dawned upon the timers and judges that, unwittingly or designedly a dozen entrants had disregarded the "time limit" condition (6 hours 40 minutes for the run, a condition based on the speed laws) and had made a race of it.

As soon as this violation of the rules of the contest had been digested the officials stoically ignored all arrivals until the fixed minimum time had elapsed. It was at once bruited about that

claquer or eclat. One after another they quietly came into view, sailed around the turn and passed away. The blood was not aroused.

At the finish, the crowd, official and unofficial, waited for the real work to begin, at four o'clock, or thereabouts. But hours before that time they were aroused from various time-killing devices by the breathless arrival of a car. At first it was



A. L. McMurtry's Packard

all cars arriving before the prescribed time would be disqualified, and this was afterward officially done, except that a car violating the rule only ten minutes or less was not cast into outer darkness. The general understanding that the "fast brigade" would surely be disqualified weighed lightly on the crowd and on most of the con-



Elwood Haynes in one of his own make

testants. The former were interested and pleased over what appealed to them as "sport," while any disappointment the disqualified contestants may have felt was swallowed up in the sense of complete satisfaction that their cars had come through in fast time without accident, without development of flaw, or any weakness whatsoever, and they seemed to value that far beyond official blue-ribbonism. In certain private cases there was joy to the full, as, for instance, where A had beaten C on a purely speed basis, the contest being born of boast or claim, or of some other private circumstance. Thus it was a run degenerated, in part, into a race, with a half score of private wagers and comparisons up for settlement.

So, throughout the wasting afternoon, the cars came home, at first proudly and with triumph, later, dolefully halting, and still later, at night-fall and long after, straggling and disgustedly making their way back to the finish. At night there were clinking of glasses, much fluid and solid replenishment and over all compliment, babblement, congratulation, commiseration and explanation, with much truth and a leaven of romance.

Such was the history of the **Long Island Hundred**—a day of bedevilment, a strenuous drive through dust and gravel, a big collection of handsome and effective cars, an affair managed with courtesy, firmness and justice, a day of import to automobiling, a day proving that a fairly smooth hundred-mile run is meat and drink to the average motor-driven car—this run decided that. And now for more heroic contests, now for still more refinement, efficiency and beauty in manufacture.

#### LONG ISLAND A. C. ENDURANCE TEST.

April 25, 1901.—(Course 100 miles.)

Entries, 82; Starters, 66; Withdrawn or Disqualified, 28; Awards, 37.

BLUE RIBBON—NO STOPS—100 PER CENT.

Vehicle.	Power.	HILL CLIMBS.	
Toledo.....	Steam.....	Rochet-Schneider.....	1.19
Pierce.....	Gasoline.....	Locomobile.....	1.42
Packard.....	Gasoline.....	Winton.....	1.42
Lane.....	Gasoline.....	Peugeot.....	1.46
White.....	Steam.....	Prescott.....	1.59
White.....	Steam.....	Packard.....	2.03
Packard.....	Gasoline.....	Packard.....	2.06
Century.....	Gasoline.....	White.....	2.06
Elmore.....	Gasoline.....	Groul.....	2.06
Knickerbocker.....	Gasoline.....	Century.....	2.07
Knickerbocker.....	Gasoline.....	Packard.....	2.08
Haynes-Apperson.....	Gasoline.....	White.....	2.08
Haynes-Apperson.....	Gasoline.....	Toledo.....	2.10
Autocar.....	Gasoline.....	White.....	2.20
Peugeot.....	Gasoline.....	Autocar.....	2.30
Oldsmobile.....	Gasoline.....	Haynes-Apperson.....	2.33
Toledo.....	Steam.....	Lane.....	2.34
Packard.....	Gasoline.....	Prescott.....	2.40
Winton.....	Gasoline.....	Winton.....	2.50
Winton.....	Gasoline.....	Gasmobile.....	3.05
Rochet-Schneider.....	Gasoline.....	Knickerbocker.....	3.38



## LONG ISLAND A. C. ENDURANCE TEST—Continued.

## RED RIBBON—98 PER CENT. AND OVER.

Vehicle.	Power.	P. C.
Prescott.....	Steam.....	99
Peerless.....	Gasoline.....	99
Panhard.....	Gasoline.....	98
White.....	Steam.....	99
Gasmobile.....	Gasoline.....	96

## HILL CLIMBS.

Long Distance.....	5.38
Gasmobile.....	5.42
Elmore.....	5.57
Peerless.....	4.04
Wheel Within Wheel.....	4.12
Olds.....	4.16
Haynes-Apperson.....	4.19
Haynes-Apperson.....	4.45
Peerless.....	4.53
Knickerbocker.....	5.02
Knickerbocker.....	5.36
Pierce.....	6.42
Gasmobile.....	6.46
Panhard.....	7.22
Torbenesen Gear, Ltd.....	10.42
Toledo.....	11.45

## YELLOW RIBBON—95 PER CENT. AND OVER.

Gasmobile.....	Gasoline.....	95
Gasmobile.....	Gasoline.....	95
Torbenesen.....	Gasoline.....	97
Peerless.....	Gasoline.....	97
Knickerbocker.....	Gasoline.....	97
Locomobile.....	Steam.....	96

WHITE RIBBON—91 PER CENT.  
AND OVER.

Vehicle.	Power.	P. C.
Haynes-Apperson.....	Gasoline.....	93
U. S. Long Dist.....	Gasoline.....	91

VERY HIGHLY COMMENDED—86 PER  
CENT. AND OVER.

Vehicle.	Power.	P. C.
Groul.....	Gasoline.....	87
Gasmobile.....	Gasoline.....	86

## HIGHLY COMMENDED—80 PER CENT. AND OVER.

Vehicle.	Power.	P. C.
Prescott.....	Steam.....	83

## GASOLINE CONSUMPTION FOR THE 100 MILES.

Vehicle.	H. P.	Weight.	Passengers.	Gals. gas used.
Groul.....	6	900	2	12
Toledo.....	7½	1,500	2	12 15-18
Toledo.....	7½	1,400	2	13 7-9
Lane.....	9	1,350	4	17
Olds.....	4	800	2	3 1-6
Torbenesen.....	5	800	2	4 5-9
Knickerbocker.....	6½	900	2	5
Knickerbocker.....	5	1,010	2	4 2-9
Knickerbocker.....	5	1,050	4	4 5-18
Autocar.....	8	1,000	2	4½
Winton.....	8	1,800	2	5 5-9
Peugeot.....	11	1,970	2	5 5-9
Elmore.....	8	1,000	2	5 7-9
Peerless.....	18	1,600	2	6
Panhard.....	16	2,600	4	13

Awards hill climbing test. For steam vehicles, all weights and powers. J. M. Page (Locomobile) time 1.42. Gasolene machines, under 1,000 pounds, W. J. Stewart (Autocar) time 2.30. Gasolene machines between 1,000 and 2,000 pounds. Percy Owen (Winton) time 1.42. Gasolene machines, over 2,000 pounds, and open class. Oliver Jones (Rochet-Schneider) time 1.19.