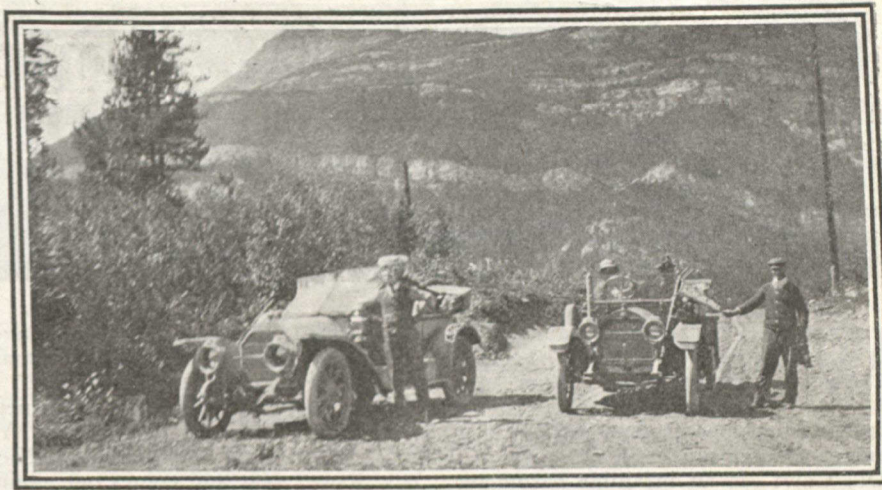




On the summit of Crows' Nest Pass.



On top of Morrissey Hill.

Across the Rockies in an Auto

By ROBERT JOHNSTONE

TORONTO, Montreal, and Winnipeg men are sometimes inclined to talk as if they represented the quintessence of automobile culture in this country. Last summer three Calgary motorists effectively demonstrated that they could show anybody on the continent tricks about automobiling. The West sets a fast pace. Whether it be pleasure, or the money game, the Westerner wants to get the most out of things. The three Calgarians, six months ago, determined to exhaust the possibilities of the motoring sensation. They had at least a joy ride unique in the history of the sport of motoring. Every motorist, no matter how staid, has a venturesome instinct. He likes to thread his car through the maze of down-town traffic at noon hour; go a trifle over the limit when the P. C. is not looking; and "let out" for a mile or two on the open road. He wants to be thrilled. It was the lure of excitement and adventure which took F. D. Soloan, Herbert Mapes, J. G. Maxwell, and their chauffeurs, all of Calgary, on a short tour which provided more of those little thrills, so dear to the affections of motorists, than were felt by any other three Canadian motorists last year.

In Calgary, is an Automobile Club. Soloan, Mapes and Maxwell belong to this club. So they do to the Metropolitan Security Company. Last summer, they divided their time between these two institutions. The dog days came. One day in July, all three became peeved at the same time with heat and business. They got their heads together; also their machines. In a burst of Western impulsiveness, these three hard-working business men of Calgary quietly announced to their friends that they were going to do the Rocky Mountains by Auto.

Who but a Westerner would think of attempting an audacious stunt like that? The average Easterner, and the average Westerner, too, for that matter, realizes his entire insignificance whenever the Rocky Mountains are mentioned. If he doesn't, he ought to. Most of us have got some kind of impression of the Rockies sufficient to inspire us with reverence and awe for those great monuments of nature. If we haven't seen them, we have read vivid word pictures of the "majestic splendour" of the Rockies, from which we have gathered that they are very lofty, precipitous, cavernous, treacherous, and very beautiful; also deceptive and illusory to the tenderfoot who thinks to grasp them, and then looks about him for seven league boots.

Soloan, Mapes and Maxwell, of Calgary, are the first men to have been conveyed through the Rockies, in a squat vehicle with four rubber



The road leading to Wardner, B. C.



On the road to St. Mary's Lake.



Going to Jaffray, B. C.

tires, and delicate engine supplying all the motive power. They chugged out of their native city at 5 p.m., on July 23rd, 1911. They had two well-filled cars, one sixty, the other thirty horse power. Their equipment was that of an expedition travelling light. They had cameras for snapshots of landmarks to satisfy credulous friends at the Club; instruments of pleasure such as fishing tackle and hunting rifles; and they did not forget a mascot. There is still some dispute as to who was really mascot. That honour has been variously claimed by a four-year-old youngster and a tiny, fluffy, white dog, both of whom were carried. The excursion of the motorists lasted exactly three weeks. Their route lay from Calgary and the Alberta Foothills, through the Great Divide to Windermere, B.C. This is a jaunt of 473.4 miles. Altogether, including the return journey, and a side trip, the speedometer registered 1133.7 miles.

The hazardous nature of the trip through one of the unexplored treasure palaces of nature makes the excursion of the Calgarians significant in the annals of American motoring. Some idea may be given of the perils which beset them at every turn; little that would be adequate, can be said of the wild, magnificent scenery which lay in the canyon's riot of colour, the gurgle of the mountain stream, the peak's sunset glow. The man who views the Rockies from a C. P. R. observation car with an opera glass gets a kaleidoscopic view; the Calgarians in their motors were at the heart of a spectacle. They could specialize on parts of the panorama.

But they had to pay for their orchestra chairs in heart throbs. There were dangers of the road—or rather trail; for the paths of the Rockies were fashioned by Indians and surveyors long before the panting of a gasoline engine. Consider the adventure with the coal miners. Taking a narrow grade one day, the cars suddenly met three tons of coal hitched to four horses. The pathway on one side looked into a ninety foot "drop"; on the other, a cliff banked high. It seemed impossible for motors or horses to pass each other, unless one party sacrificed itself for the other's convenience by taking a plunge over the precipice. That would be effectual, but messy. Necessity is the mother of invention. With considerable ingenuity, two of the horses were assisted to the bank side and pastured among the trees. The three tons of coal were hoisted by a jack and their position altered. Scarcely was there passage for the motors. They took a chance and lost nothing but some paint.