

# E A S T E R 1 9 1 3.

## C H A P T E R O N E.

Easter 1913 stole upon us unawares, partly because it is very early this year, partly through the long holiday at Christmas, and partly through the time between Christmas and Easter being fully occupied by business matters. Yet this Easter has been very interesting and enjoyable and full of an experience which to us is unique. I had practically decided to have a weeks trip to Tasmania, but during Easter week Mr Lally called and mentioned that the Canada Cycle Works Co. had a "F.I.A.T." 12/16 car for sale which they advertised for £200. He had seen it on behalf of Sir John Quick, but before receiving Mr Lally's report Sir John had decided not to purchase. I got my Brother James to see the car and he was greatly taken with it, a big heavy 14/16 car painted brown with a back seat and a boot in addition so that it can be used either as a single seater or a double seater. After two or three days negotiations the matter ended in the car being procured for £150. Mr Austin the agent obtained the

services of a motor driver, a Mr Meeby, and on Good Friday morning at eleven he brought the car to "Maranatha", being an hour late.

There was great excitement at home, food for luncheon had been prepared and as soon as the car arrived we were ready for a run. In the back seat were Mother, May and Edie. On the tool box at their feet were Lily, Jessie and Tom, the latter being the babe of twelve months. The driver with Allen and I occupied the front seat. Piled up with the children at the back were baskets of provisions.

Leaving Raleigh Street we sped along Napier Street and in a couple of minutes were in Mount Alexander road bound for Macedon. Some rain had fallen during the night and the roads were dirty. I was greatly interested in the manner in which the car would descend the hills, and as we had such an enormous load on and the body is very heavy and the car is reputed to be slow I thought that when making an ascent we might have to get out and walk. The descent of the hills proved to be a very easy matter. First we came to Spring Hill and found that the foot brake was quite sufficient. The car proved to be comparatively silent, and when we began to ascend the hill on the other side we had to get down into the third and then into the second, but experienced no difficulty whatever in surmounting the steel rise. Passing the little Roman Catholic Chapel which used to be my terminus when training for a bikeride when little more than a boy, we

descended Curly Hill, a vile proposition for a bike on account of the corkscrew twist in it and the narrow bridge at the bottom. This descent also proved to be an easy matter. We quickly passed through Keilor and could not help remarking that our speed was very different to that we used to make when driving Dodger the pony we had for do many years. Before us was comparatively level country; ahead we could see a train puffing away on the Bendigo line. We passed a junction on the left where a signboard pointed out one road (the left) which led to Ballarat and another which led to Bendigo. We followed the latter and the mile posts slipped by rapidly. It is strange that the mile posts seem to be so much nearer than when riding behind a slow horse. Passing through Riddell we came to Gisborne where we were informed by a signboard that we must slow down to ten miles an hour.

Gisborne is a beautifully situated little place. Lying in a hollow with a bend in the road it is surrounded by picturesque hills, and is a delightful little town to visit in a motor. It is just a nice drive for an afternoon. Just as we were passing through Gisborne the driver pointed out an hotel and informed us that the owner had a mania for collecting curios. The walls are covered with items of more or less interest. In one place is the butt of a cigar smoked by the Prince of Wales. The owner was unfortunate enough to get appendicitis and when he had that troublesome little organ removed he preserved it in a bottle spoiling some good spirits, had the bottle duly labelled and placed upon a shelf in a conspicuous position.

Leaving Gisborne we entered the Black Forest, a good portion of which has been grubbed. This forest extends as far as Woodend and in the old days was a gloomy place where many a traveller has been done to death. My father walked or rode in a dray through here in 1852, and he used to tell us that it was customary for men to go through the forest in groups so that their numbers would be a protection against bushrangers. Those days are in the past and we can now go through with impunity. We run through gently and soon found ourselves within a mile of Woodend and by the side of a big dam on the left of the road. We procured a billy of water from an adjacent house and lighting a fire in the bush, we spread our rugs and clothes on the grass which is springing green after the recent rain, opened our luncheon baskets and were soon engaged in discussing the good things provided.

We are forty miles from home and the car which is reputed slow did the journey in two hours. Of course we slid down some hills at forty miles an hour and once or twice we must have touched forty five. On the journey out we were passed on three or four occasions by motor bykes doing fifty, but on each we soon overtook them by the wayside stuck up by the slipping of a belt or by some of the thousand and one things that these machines are liable to. One bike passed us on three or four different occasions. The formulae seemed to be, a spurt for a few miles and then repairs.

Our children had a good time, Allen is delighted, Lily sings with the intoxication of joy, and Jessie's cup is full.

About three o'clock we mount the car again and start for home, first driving through Woodend so that I could see the little town where my father resided for a couple of years. Our joint home was delightful, we sped along at a great pace and averaged a good twenty miles an hour.

Our experience of the next few days told us that while this car can do up to forty five on a down grade, yet if there are any hills or the country is undulating it has to be kept at its best to average twenty, or, twenty two. One cannot leave or reach Melbourne in a northerly or westerly direction without covering twenty miles of plains. This was our experience. The road was good and the grade is down for a few miles out of Keilor. The road then becomes steep and narrows as it runs into the bridge at the bottom of Curly Hill. Ascending we were soon on our third, a minute after on our second and in another minute on the first, and in another minute we were stopped.

I asked, - "Will she take us up on the first?" There reply was, - "We are nearly out of petrol and the little we have has run back into the tank".

He placed his mouth to the vent hole in the tank cover and blowing sharply filled the carburettor. This carried us a few yards, but the process had to be repeated three times before we reached the top of Curly Hill and level

ground. We were then able to run along with ease. We descended Spring Hill at a great rate and succeeded in surmounting the hill on the Melbourne side without difficulty, and in a quarter of an hour were at home. We were all tired, but as we had thoroughly enjoyed the day, and the children were so delighted we decided to spend a few days in the Western district. The Chaffeur took the car to town for petrol and a clean up and promised to be ~~along~~ at ten thirty in the morning. This has been our first day with a car and it has been very pleasant. Alen is delighted because we have a car of our very own. Edie wants to learn to drive, and generally the advent of the car has excited amongst our party universal approbation.

## CHAPTER TWO.

Easter Saturday, March 22nd 1913. Considerable movement was manifested in our family in preparing for our departure. our party was to consist of Mother, Alen and Baby Tom, myself and the driver. We had arranged to leave at ten but it was ten forty when the car arrived. The driver by way of apology for being late said that he found that the car was only doing twelve miles to the hour and he had delayed to tune her up. This news is rather disagreeable considering that the price of petrol is continually and rapidly advancing. However the tank is full, so we placed our luggage aboard consisting of two dress baskets and a tin hat box, rugs and coats. There was just room for mother, Tom and Alen in the back seat along with the impediments, however they were very comfortable. We left at II and romped down Mount Alexander Road to the top of Flemington Hill. Having made our stop to remove a cinder from the eye of the driver our second stop was at Moran and Cate's for tinned fish and fruit, this being Easter season

and the driver a Catholic. One soon learns that when a driver is present he not only enters into all our calculations but requires more attention than all the others put together.

We met Mrs Blumfield and Leah and Leah was introduced to Mother. In a few minutes we left and passing around by the stockyard at Newmarket we descended the hill to the Abbatoirs, having a fine view of the racecourse on our right. We crossed the bridge over the Saltwater River and turned towards Footscray. How these wooden bridges do frighten one; their very appearance lends the idea that a nail is sticking up, and a puncture from a large nail might be serious. There is a great deal of traffic on the road here and the result is that the surface is badly cut up and in places very bumpy. In a few minutes we were passing through the streets of Footscray and soon we reached the railway gates at the west portion of the city where we met with cross roads, the one leading to Ballarat and that on our right to Geelong. We chose the latter and were soon on the Werribee plains. The road is an average Australian, not bad for Australia in fine weather but fearful when it is wet, as we discovered when we were returning. However we were able to do up to eighteen or twenty. A short distance from Footscray the road takes a short turn to the left and we cross a bridge; the scenery being very picturesque being about the only pretty place on the road. A mile or two further on, we pass the dismal bluestone residence



once occupied by a former Patient. Twenty miles from Melbourne we pass through Werribee. There are a couple of sharp turns in the town which for a little country place seems to be pretty busy, especially about the railway station.

When we leave Werribee we run on to an unmade road which is level and composed of a smooth dry surface. I remember riding on a bike along this road some fifteen years ago and then found the road in an eighteen mile an hour condition. The morning is misty and the You Yangs are hidden until we get quite close. The road around the foot of the You Yangs is rocky and has the appearance of a road a hundred miles away from any City. The boulders run from the foot of the Mountains down to the shores of Port Phillip Bay.

We met here an eight H.P. De Dion car stopped on the road and attended by a man and his wife. Every car that we meet that is stopped the driver slows down and asks if all is well. We find on this occasion that the trouble is with a leaky joint in the circulating system just behind the radiator and that a great deal of water has been lost. Our billy comes in useful to fill the radiator and we leave them with the job nearly finished. The gentleman who is working with diamond rings on his fingers is an American and informs us that the same spirit of good-fellowship is manifested between motorists in America. Each being ready to lend a helping hand.

I change places with Alen and he is delighted to sit in the front seat

with the driver. The day is exceedingly hot being ninety degrees in the shade and though when driving rapidly it is comparatively cool, yet our faces soon become sunburned and the skin begins to crack. Mother wears a hat which looks like an inverted basin covered with a motor veil, so her face is somewhat protected, yet she feels the sun nearly as much as the others of our party. Passing Little River Thirty miles we take a sharp turn to the left and pass along a very bad road which required great care in driving. Turning again to the right it is not long before we find the houses becoming thicker and soon we are in the outer suburbs of Geelong.

Geelong has grown very much in recent days. It is now the home of many retired farmers who have built for themselves many nice villas, but who seem to be obsessed with the idea that all town people are trying to get the better of them, and the result is that they are stingy with their money. We drive through Malop Street and turn to the left into Moorabool Street where we stop while the driver purchases a billy of tea. We have a ten minutes wait and feel the sun very much. The "Courier" has just arrived and being Easter Sunday hundreds of passengers get off and throng the restaurants.

We pass up Moorabool Street and cross the Barwon River and pull up in a quiet part of the street where we have lunch, which is very much appreciated after our thirty mile drive. As we eat our lunch several cars pull up and their

drivers repeat the formulae "Is all well?" With a mouth full of bread and meat one of our number will reply "All is well". At last we are eaten out. A full stomach maketh glad. A few sharp whirls of the starting handle and we are off.

For a mile the road is a bit rough and then we are on the famous western district roads which are usually in a forty mile an hour condition. Our pace quickens, the road seems to fly beneath us, we make a stiff breeze and the exhilaration of speed possesses us. The advantage of a heavy car is that it clings to the ground and there is but little bumping. The road is pretty level as far as Winchelsea miles which we cover at an average of twenty an hour. This little place is interesting to us because it was once the home of Friend Fraser who once kept a blacksmith shop here and of Duncan Mc Innes and Jem Mowat. We did not slacken pace as we passed through but kept right on to Colac. The country in the Western District is very fine and the scenery in places is good. Time passes swiftly in a motor car; the whirl of the engine; the passing scenery, and the sway of the car reminds one of an express train. As we draw near to Colac we see on our right a lake which extends for miles in a northerly direction. In the distance, perhaps twenty miles away, is to be seen Mount Elephant. This Mount really looks like an elephant lying with its legs tucked up under its body.

Colac is a large town and like Camperdown is the centre of a wealthy district.

district. The houses are good, many of the villas being very pretty and the town itself is very interesting. We did not stop here but pushed on to our next stopping place, Camperdown miles. The day still remains hot and we are all getting very red in the face and very dusty.

A few miles from Colac we come to rougher country. Boulders encumber the ground and the fences are made of stone, not packed loosely as on the Werribee Plains, but packed as closely and as solid as the side of a stone house. An Automobile Club sign informs us that we are nearing the Stoney Rises, and that the road is very dangerous. We descend a sharp hill with a turn in it, and then in another hundred yards we turn again, the hill being so steep that we have to drop to low gear.

The Stoney Rises are remarkable for the short steep descents and ascents which arise immediately from the bottom of the hill, and for their short dangerous turns. The sensation is that of a switchback railway. The scenery though cramped is very pretty and very interesting, the road is mostly very good, and the temptation is to risk the danger and letting all out fly on the wings of speed. The distance is five miles and we find ourselves once again on high table land.

It is now getting on towards five o'clock and there are indications of a change in the weather. In the rises some rain fell and we had to put up the hood. As we draw near to Pomona a change in the wind takes place and there is a squall from the south west which brings up clouds of dust which effectually

prevents further progress. On the left are two stores at one of which we take shelter. On the right and immediately opposite the store is a butter factory. We turn the back of the car to the wind, again put the hood up and wait. It is close and we are thirsty, so we obtain soft drinks at the store. Our request for views of the town is taken as a joke.

A country store is a sort of "Johnny All Sorts". In the window is a gaudy tea service. Hanging from the roof is a miscellaneous selection of dray harness, draught wipers, and tin ware, and stacked in the shop is a little of everything that is likely to be wanted in the country, ranging from ironmongery and clothing to stationery and flower seeds.

The rain comes down in torrents and we are bushed. A big thirty H. P. car pushes through and we are told that the driver is a manager for Manifold. Manifold is the rich Squatter in this neighbourhood, owning the land on both sides of the road as far as Camperdown. It is hinted that he has cut up the land between the members of his family to save Income Tax, and that he is now nominally owner of a very small portion only.

When the rain eases we make a start again, and after running a mile the rain begins to fall heavily. The Cloven Hills are on our right and the scenery is very pretty.

As we pass through Camperdown a large clock-tower or fountain is to be

seen in the centre of the street. It is dusk and a few shops are lighted up. We run through the town and then are struck by a squall and the rain falls in torrents. We turn our backs to the rain and attempt to light the lamps for it is pitch dark now. The acetylene apparatus is evidently in a disgraceful condition and though we get the lamps alight they will not stand a jolt or any wind. There is half a gale blowing and we are without matches. I beg some from a farmer who with a lady is driving to Terang twelve miles away. The small lamps will not light and either the Motor Company from whom I bought the car or Austin the Agent is very much to blame. Alen is getting tired and is urging Mother that perhaps Jessie is crying for her. He has had enough and wants to go home. When told that we are going to an hotel he suggests that perhaps the people will be out..

I told the driver that I thought we had better put up at Camperdown as it is tea time and we are all tired. He urged reason after reason why we should go to Terang and seemed so bent on reaching that place that we finally gave him his way. After a bit we got the lamps to burn and made a start again. A quarter of a mile further on the lamps blew out again and we overtook the folk from whom we borrowed matches before. This happened on three separate occasions, and I must confess to a feeling of irritability and annoyance that I had not stayed at Camperdown. After a bit we gave up trying to light the big lamps and went on with the small ones burning. The road was scarcely discernable. However the weather

c

cleared up and Mother enjoyed the trip in the evening wonderfully. Our progress was very slow indeed. In the distance we saw a pair of head-lights glaring away and when we reached them we found two men removing a front tire. They had just picked up a nail. We borrowed matches and enquired the distance to Terang.

"Down the steep hill, then a short climb, and then four and a half miles on the level."

We thanked them, wished them luck with their tire, and pushed on over the bridge. We could now see the electric lights sparkling brightly in the distance. Terang is lighted by electric light and the glare may be seen many miles away. Our head-lights are out again and we are forced to move slowly. At eight thirty we stopped at the Commercial Hotel and found accomodation. The local garage was closed so we put up the car in a leaky shed, and then had a "cold meat tea". The driver bolted his food, said that he was going to bed and disappeared. I reckoned that he had something else in view. After tea, Mother put the children to bed, and I went for a stroll through the dark main street. Only the Hotels and fruit shops are open. Groups of young fellows are standing in the main street, and the place is just as dismal as the usual small country town.

Immediately in front of The Commercial is the Post Office, and its little Tower is surmounted with a clock with four faces, lighted up and striking the hours. Half an hour is enough for me, and when I get back I find that Mother

and Alen are in bed, and that Tom is creeping on the floor delighted to again be at liberty to creep about (He cannot yet walk) and play with the handles and pretties on the furniture. He is a year old on February the 23rd and though able to stand alone cannot walk. However he can creep, and to save his knees from the gravel rash moves about on his hands and the soles of his feet. He moves gently and looks like a gigantic crab. It is ten o'clock and I reckon that it is time to get to sleep.



### CHAPTER THREE.

Easter Sunday 1913. We lie in bed listening to the rain falling in torrents. Hot water is brought in at eight, and we have breakfast at nine. The driver promised to be ready to start at ten, but we did not see him until half an hour later. He then gave us some cock and bull story about the wisdom of spending the day at Terang. The roads are wet, and he will jack up the hind wheels of the car and teach us gear changing. It is too much so I tell him emphatically that we want to get away at once. He then let out that when at Church this morning he discovered an old friend. I guessed that he wanted to get to Terang last night to meet someone. At eleven we get away. Our hotel bill is one pound for the lot. We speed through the town and around by the Presbyterian Church. It is some fifteen years since I was last here and the Lake was then a noble sheet of water. It is a poor thing now and is gradually drying up. We are twenty eight miles from Warrnambool and the road is good. We pass buggy loads of church

people on their way to or home from worship. We cross the railway line several times. The water lies deep in the ruts and if it were not for my waterproof I would be wet through. The splash reaches even to the back seats. Yesterday the roads were dusty and today they are wet.

Yesterday we met a road hog. Two men and two women were in a buggy near Colac and refused to give us an inch of the road. They drove in the very middle and we had great difficulty in getting past them. We were all very much annoyed at their boorishness and when we got past them I felt so heated that I turned around to look at them. I found that our car had raised such a dust that they were enveloped in it and could not be seen at all. This fact consoled us greatly.

We make great time to ~~Warrnambool~~. We run through a long straggling town of some dimensions and at last we enter the streets of Warrnambool, a clean and a pretty city. After looking about a bit for an hotel we are directed to the Western. Here we have dinner, and notice two or three cars drawn up at the side door. This is evidently the best hotel in the place, the tariff being two shillings and sixpence a meal. We have a very good dinner indeed.

As we come away I unintentionally take another man's hat, a poor thing, and leave mine, a much better hat. This seems to be reversing the usual order.

We are able to procure petrol here at 9/6 for a four gallon tin. We are supplied by a bad tempered sulky boy who is evidently the son of the Proprietor

or. When we ask for the loan of a funnel he objects on the ground that those to whom he usually lends this interesting and convenient article are in the habit of getting away with it. We promise that we shall give it back into his own hands, which promise we faithfully keep.

We are still doing only about twelve and a half miles to the gallon. After lunch we go to the seaside. First a stiff climb and then a very stiff descent which necessitates very great care. We are amused by reading a sign at the bottom which warns drivers of motors to ascend the hill at a slow pace. The hill is so stiff that the average car will find a difficulty in getting up at any pace.

We have a level run for half a mile on a road good enough for sixty an hour and then we draw up at the entrance to the pier. Leaving the car we cross a swing bridge and read the notice that those who cross must keep well apart. We are on the Coast and the sea is only slight and the tide is out. The great cliffs which characterise the Australian coast are to be seen here in their rugged beauty. The seas have washed out large caves and under our feet the rocks are hollow in many places. We enjoy an hour on these cliffs and enjoy the health giving ozone. Alen finds a patch of sand and in a few minutes has his hat full and is building a sand heap. He has a real good time.

We again cross the swing bridge which sways to and fro as we walk over it. There is an inlet from the sea here and the tide comes in for a mile or more.

We next walk along the breakwater pier that has been built at great cost. We climb the concrete wall and walk for quarter of a mile and can see the great ocean billows beating against the base of the wall far beneath us. A man swims a dog for a quarter of a mile on the sheltered side and Alen is greatly interested. After we reach the end we slowly saunter half way back when we are met by the car and all enter. We see a three wheeled cycle-car which simply runs away from us on the hillside. We run around the town for a bit, decide to give up our trip to Portland and Hamilton, and once again turn our faces homeward. One of four front tires is a picture. It is worn down until the rubber has disappeared and we can see where four layers of canvas are worn through. We notice a group of men viewing it with admiration. We bounced along at eighteen miles an hour and reached Terang before dusk and were once again installed in our rooms. After coming to an understanding with the driver that we are to leave at nine sharp in the morning he immediately disappears. At night I went to the Church of England the service commencing at seven thirty. About forty were present. His sermon was a comparison between "Touch me not" and "Reach hither thy finger". What his great point was, I forget.

## CHAPTER FOUR.

EASTER MONDAY. At breakfast there were our party less the driver, and two or three strangers and the eternal Bride and Bridegroom. The maid came forward and said, - "Boiled eggs, fried eggs, poached eggs, and eggs and bacon".

I replied, "What a blessing it is that we have chooks".

"Yes it is" said the maid, who lacks humour.

We had eggs and eggs usually mean a bilious attack for me.

We had determined to leave at nine, but as usual our driver was an hour late and it was ten before we turned sharply around and looked at the Post Office clock for the last time. Our first stage is Camperdown thirteen mile along a road that took us nearly two hours to cover on Saturday night. By daylight the road is first class and nearly a dead level. In the distance we see a train puffing away on the main line. Our driver opens the throttle and lets her out. Our car bounds along as if revelling in pace and in thirty one minutes we cover the thirteen miles and are in Camperdown. Twenty five miles an hour good is our pace.

and we are delighted. We do not stop at Camperdown but run right through it at the speed limit and make for Colac. It is not long before we pass the shop where we sheltered from the storm but this time there is no dust to bother us. Our pace is kept up until we reach the beginning of the Stoney Rises. We are passed by two cars, one a thirty H. P. and the other a high powered car of another make. We go through the rises at thirty an hour though the sign at the entrance warns us that the road is very dangerous. We go through at too great a speed for my liking, and without sufficient tooting of the horn. When half way through there is a loud report like that from a gun and we come to a sudden stop. The tire put on the off side front wheel this morning has blown out. There is a hole six inches long right through the side of it and the tire is ruined. In addition the new tube is blown out and is temporarily laid aside.

We draw into the roadside and witness an exchange of tires. The tire that we dreaded the most and that has been so much admired is again put into service and we are now without a spare. Our hearty wish is that we will not have any more trouble.

There is now a feeling of nervousness that fear of another blow out and our thoughts are constantly on this subject. The driver engaged by the day is not worried by this fear as he is again doing thirty an hour. We soon reach Colac and stop for petrol and lunch. The driver goes to an hotel and we to a tea

room

There is a hospital fete in the Show Grounds and I go to see the Sports. The procession is just over. A couple of hundred visitors are in the Show Ground, and four boys are engaged in a bicycle race on the bumpy grass. There is a foot race between young men and a party of Cadets are marching across the ground into the centre of the ring. A sheep is penned up and is the subject of a guessing competition regarding its weight; the entrance fee being sixpence, and the prize the sheep. A card attached to the pen boldly announces the name of the donor of the sheep. There is no band yet present and the whole thing is as tame as it can be, and those present look unutterably bored. Ten minutes or a quarter of an hour is enough for me and I wend my way to the gates much to the surprise of the attendant who collected a shilling from me a few minutes before.

We left Colac about two in the afternoon for Beac miles. We followed the Geelong Road for a portion of the way and then turned off to the left. The road was good. A few miles up we run into what is apparently a dead end with a cross road. We found a butter factory on the right and enquiries elicited the fact that we were to cross the line and to follow the line on the other side. This we did and a few miles further on we run on to an unmade portion of the road which was practically under water. A mile of this brought us to a house on the side of a country lane with an entrance to the house at the side. We run into the yard at the side and tooted. In a few moments the door opened and Mrs Mc Inness and Sister Lil Scurry presented their faces radiant with smiles. "Why didn't you

bring me and save me my fare?" was the first exclamation by Lil. Duncan was in the paddocks ploughing. Donald assisted us and then went for his father. Then the table was laden with good things to which we did full justice. The driver cleaned out the generator for the headlights, and the rest of the evening we spent in a friendly and brotherly chat.

Alen looked around and said "What a little House". He had been used to a thirty by thirty room and to him a twelve by twelve room seemed a joke. At five Duncan harnessed up his horse in a jinker and took Mother and me for a drive into Cressy. We could see at once that a horse and high wheeled jinker though much slower than a car are much surer when the roads are but little better than puddled of water. Cressy itself is a straggling place. There used to be an hotel, blacksmiths shop and a store. Now they have built a railway station half a mile away from the town and purpose spending many thousands of pounds in making it a depot. The result is that numbers of houses have been put up and the town is now rapidly drifting towards the station. The roads in Cressy are absolutely unmade, but at the station the metal road commences and extends into Geelong.

The day has been so fine that we have found it unnecessary to open the hood, but about five it starts again to rain. We drive around the town and cross a bridge over the creek and I have pointed out to me the place where Jim Mowat lived when a boundry rider on the sheep run before it was cut up. The outlook



is very pretty in the neighbourhood of the bridge, and we here see a Main road that leads to Hamilton.

We take a back road home and pass a hawker's waggon on the roadside. They have camped and their fire glows red.

After tea we go into the front room and began to chat. Our conversation, hampered by the presence of the driver who is a Roman Catholic is about things in general rather than about religious topics in particular. About ten we got tired and it was not long before we all went to bed. We had a good night's sleep. Alen slept well with Donald though he scarcely liked the idea of sleeping so far from his parents.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

EASTER TUESDAY. It has rained all night and the roads are a swamp. We stand on the verandah and gaze across the plains. Away in the distance can be seen the railway line which looks like a thread. We can see some gangers working a motor-truck on the line going to their daily occupation. Along the road in front of the house a motor bike with a side car in which is a lady passes, and a little later the pip pip of an exhaust tells us that another motor-bike is on its way to Oressy. Our car has been covered with a large tarpaulion and is dry. We have breakfast, receive some warm words of love, pack up, enter the car and are off.

Our car has large and somewhat old fashioned wing boards and as she rushes through the water she sends the splash up for all the world like a steamer dipping into a heavy sea. I am nervous about the tires and exhort the driver to keep down to twelve or fifteen miles an hour. He does so for a mile and then

reaches thirty miles an hour again. As we pass through Cressy the roads are a foot under water and the side slip is very bad. The locals stand and gaze at us. Our car is mud stained and is a picture. We pass the Post Office, turn off at the Station, cross the line and for a mile run on a very bad bit, and then in spite of my exhortations creep up to thirty. There is a slight drizzle again, we are still on the plains and the plains are the same all over Victoria. Our direction is nearly due East. There has been an abundance of rain and every water hole is filled up. At last we come to a drain, steep and more or less V shaped, the water lying in it is about twelve feet across the surface. We are doing about eighteen and drive right into it. The water is up to the top of the radiator, the high mud guards send it away on either side and the sensation is that of a boat plunging into a heavy sea. We get safely through and on the other side the motor stops. We get out and the driver spends fifteen minutes in cleaning the magneto. Upon trying to start up, the engine runs irregularly. However there is enough power to carry us along and in five minutes we are doing over twenty. The new railway line still in the hands of the construction branch is on our right and for miles nothing can be seen but dreary sheep paddocks of immense size. No houses and no sign of life. We at last reach                      and find that the town consists of one long street in which are a few shops and a few houses. At the far end are two hotels, one on either side of the road. That on the right

being of bluestone. We pass through without stopping, cross the bridge and turn to the right. A mile out we hear a report and realize that we are kerflumixed. Our car stops, we get out and find that the tire that has created so much comment still stands, but that the back tire which looked perfectly sound still stands

What the driver should have done was to take the tube out and fill the cover with old bagging or grass so that the car could have been taken slowly to Geelong. The cover of course would be ruined, it was ruined at anyrate, but the rims would have been protected. What he did do was to turn the car around and run it back to the bluestone hotel and so totally ruin a new tube. We determined to take the matter humouredly and have a laugh at it. A laugh seemed to us to be the only thing that we could get out of it. At the bluestone hotel there were about fifty railway employes engaged in construction enjoying their Easter Holidays. Drunken men were lying about on every side, some under the verandah unconscious and all besotted looking. The hotel looked dirty and we could almost smell the bags. Mother decided to sit in the car.

We found a telephone at the Post Office and learned that the two hotels had recently changed hands and were now being run for the purpose of getting as much out of the construction hands as possible. We at last got on to IO14 Central but could hear nothing. The telephone attendant, a woman, was extremely

discourteous, but at last conveyed our order for two tires. We felt so little confidence in our message being delivered that we sent a telegram through as well asking for two 820x I25 tires to be sent to Bannockburn railway station by the train leaving Melbourne at three. The telegram was sent at one and wereckoned that there would be some rare bustling by Brother James. This proved to be the case as both Dunlops and the Continental warehouses were closed for the holidays. It was only by Tarrents man telling a big fib and saying that they were for a gentleman who was waiting for them that they succeeded in getting them. Thus we find that a lie or two in the proper place saves a lot of trouble. We hung about the car until three and then caught the Coach, an open American Waggon, to Bannockburn. We left strict injunctions to our driver to change the tires when they arrived at seven, to leave early in the morning doing the eighteen miles to Geelong and have breakfast there. We advised him that there would be a letter at the Post Office informing him where to pick us up.

The Coach driver was three sheets in the wind. There were six men all more or less tight on the little waggon as well as Mother Alen Tom and myself and we had but a light horse to do the work. Tom entered into the spirit of the thing at once and seizing a rein said "Gee Up". The road was good, but after three or four miles it wended its way through a Government Reserve unfenced on the one side. A lot of water was lying in the track which was a little boggy in parts.

We reach Bannockburn in good time for the train having just pulled up at the station. A drizzling mist was falling and a number of people were on the platform amongst whom were several college girls evidently returning to school. The train was late, a delay having occurred through having to disconnect a car because of one of the axles running hot and emitting loud squeaks. The train was so uncomfortably overcrowded that we had difficulty in obtaining soft spots. At last we succeeded and were at ease.

Arriving at Geelong we took a cab and went to Mr Taylor's who occupies a corner house in Gellibrand Street close to his Timber Yard. We received a very warm welcome and as some of their Easter visitors had left that day we were put up in the visitor's room. I met Mr Taylor for the first time and we had a pleasant chat about motor cars. He has the fever and is seriously considering the purchase of a Darraque. I strongly advised him against it. There were a couple of young lady visitors present and the theme is Tennis, and Tom Reynolds, and Rolls Royce. After tea I take a walk to the Post Office and see Geelong at night. Some few are going into the Pictures and a few are in the street, but the great bulk of the people are in their homes. Geelong is quiet at night.

I got back early and had a chat and to bed at ten. The most comfortable night's rest since we left home.

C H A P T E R   S I A.

Wednesday following Easter 1913. I had suggested to the Chaffeur that he put the tires on the car at night and leaving early in the morning have his breakfast in Geelong. This, I rather thought, was not in his way.

After breakfast I went to the Post Office and after half an hours wait during which I was able to admire the brusqueness of the attendant in the Telegraph Office I was able to get on to the telephone to Inverleigh. It was then ten, and the Driver who came to the telephone said that he was leaving in ten minutes and would be in Geelong at eleven. I had a walk through the City and purchased some cups and sauce rs for the children and then returned to Mr Taylors. We had eleven o'clock tea and waited. At noon I got the fidgets and at a quarter past I was at the Post Office telephoning to Inverleigh. I received word that the car left at eleven thirty. I returned to Mr Taylors and had dinner. I told them that the driver would have some cock and bull yarn about difficulty in

getting the new tires on and would probably concoct a yarn about a puncture on the road. At One we found that the car had turned up at the timber yard. The driver enquired from a sawmill hand if I were present and receiving an answer in the negative, left. I went to the Post Office and found the car there. The driver was evidently inside but a loud toot caused him to come forth. Lo and behold, as I expected, he had his story all ready. I asked him what time he left

"Ten-thirty. I had great difficulty in getting the tire on, the road to Geelong is fearful, and I had a puncture on the way".

I felt that raw that I dared not trust myself to say anything. However when near to Melbourne and when the subject had apparently blown out, I said to him, "Do you know, I don't like that woman at the hotel a bit".

"Why?"

"Because she is such a liar and I cannot stand a liar at any price. I rung her up and she said that you had left at eleven thirty"

"She must be mad."

"No, not mad, but a liar."

I noticed that the driver was scarlet, and felt consoled.

Mrs Taylor kindly gave the driver his dinner, and at two thirty we left. First some purchases at Charity's in Malop Street and then we took the road to Melbourne. In five minutes we found ourselves on the Ballarat road and had to retrace our steps for half a mile. The Melbourne Road is in such an unmade con-



dition that we were in doubt for some time whether we were on the right road or not. We realized that the Melbourne Road is bad, but this begged description. However we found a signboard a few miles further that told us that we were right.

As we drew near to Little River we turned to the left down a side street which was in a fearful condition. The water lying in great sheets and the mud a foot deep made motoring difficult. When we turned to the right again the road improved a little but was scarcely ridable. No wonder that most motorists send their cars to Geelong by boat preferring to pay the fee of one pound as it takes than a pound's worth out of the car. We noticed a deep drain on the left and on the other side of it something that resembled a road along which a Ford was dancing merrily towards Geelong. Going at about eighteen in one place we came to what was apparently a small drain, but got a shock that made us think that the concern was wrecked. We had jogged over a drain two feet wide by eighteen inches deep. I believe that it was the drain that Friend Borrett bent portion of his steering gear in attempting to cross, and that nearly sent Mrs Borrett to glory with a bounce. I felt that if the car could stand this it could stand anything.

The road improved a bit further on and we were able to make some pace. We were passed by a motor-bike, and later we came to a drain some ten feet wide and a foot or two deep in its centre and saw the motor-bike held up. We went through with a rush and when we turned to look the Bicyclist had removed his boots

and socks. I think that he took off his pants as well and carried them on his head.

We noticed that the differential was making an irregular noise, and as we proceeded it increased. The Chaffeur tried to get me to give him a weeks job taking the car down, but I was "off him". The road was not in good condition as we neared Werribee but we swung through it, crossing the Werribee River, which was in flood and looked very pretty. We made good progress to Footscray, Alen being eager to get home. He asked how far it was to home. "Eight miles," answered Mother. "I wish I was at home now" Mother said "I wish We were just starting again". The boy looked as if he were about to take a fit. He had had sufficient motoring for one spell. We passed quickly through Footscray, down the hill to the Saltwater River, around by the Abbatoirs, and through Newmarket. Our differential was causing me some concern by its loud noise. A new Hupmobile passed humming like a sewing machine and the comparison was disagreeable. We reached Essendon at five and in a few minutes the car was in the stable, the hind wheels jacked up and the driver gone for ever so far as we were concerned.

So ended our first motor trip. Mother is delighted. It is the best time she ever had in her life, and she is glad we have a motor.

Alen is glad. Meeting a little girl next day he said, -"Has your father got a motor?"

She replied "No."

"My father has", and his chest swelled vizibly.

The baby looks fifty per cent better for his outing and he is glad.

All the others are glad because they anticipate many happy days in the car.

Am I glad? I will know when I have the twenty two pounds for the tires and when Bevans have pulled the car down and made it perfect, and when I have paid their account. I hope that I will be glad, for if I am not I will be very sorry indeed.