

PICTURESQUE SCENE ABOUT OREGON, ILL.

HAS INTERESTING HISTORY

Originally Ogee's Ferry and Is Now Sought by Artists Because of Beauty; Early Annals Told

Do you know Illinois? Under the heading, "Little Journeys in Illinois," the Chicago Motor club is publishing a series of articles in Motor News, the magazine of the club, designed to give Illinois motorists a greater knowledge and love of their own state. The first article, written by Marjorie Beem, deals with the Rock river country.

"In 1825, the great stream of travelers, from Peoria to the lead mines at Galena, passed over the Rock river at a place called 'Ogee's Ferry,'" says the article. "Seven years later came John Dixon with a government contract to carry mail from Peoria. He bought from Ogee the ferry and his log cabin, which was the first house in what is now Dixon. The site is marked by a bronze tablet. Businessmen sometimes a hundred wagons were there waiting to be ferried across."

In Pioneer Days
"To the east, not a hundred miles away, Chicago, then a small group of log cabins, struggled valiantly in the mud. Aurora, Grand Detour, and others were all neighbors of this growing Dixon. Between those settlements were great prairies and swamps. In winter this meant bitter cold for the unsheltered traveler. In summer, there were swollen, impassable streams, and roads so muddy no vehicle could pass over them. Yet that lusty pioneer life went on. Indian traders came and went, and Indian discontent grew, until finally, in the spring of 1832, driven by despair and starvation, Blackhawk returned to his old Rock river home, and war was declared on him."

Build Fort
"In front of the little town of Dixon, on the north side of the river, were built the small fort and block-house, that were to shelter a group of young soldiers, all fated to play dramatic parts in their country's history. Here was Jeff Davis, and his general-to-be, Johnston. Here were Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, and young Anderson, who was to defend Fort Sumpter. And here private Abraham Lincoln was mustered in to become a captain. It is interesting to note that from Gettysburg on, this is the first spot along the Lincoln highway, touched historically by Lincoln."

"Ten miles north of Dixon is a hundred-acre tract of magnificent trees called 'The Pines.' This is an ideal spot for tourists who appreciate the grandeur and dignity of such scenery. A small suspension bridge crosses a rocky ravine, filled with giant pines. Cottages are for rent in this beautiful spot, also."

Deere's First Plow
"The village of Grand Detour soon outgrew its neighbor, Dixon. John Deere built his first plow here in 1837 and his plow factory made the town grow rapidly. It became the center of life for miles around. A young

New Yorker wrote home that she dreaded coming back to dull New York after the dances and horseback rides at Grand Detour. Gallant army officers, daring adventurers, brave pioneers gathered there. Then suddenly gaiety fled. The railroad chose Dixon instead of Grand Detour. Deere was forced to move his plow factory to Moline. The fine colonial stone houses were deserted. Some are still standing and well preserved, others have crumbled away, as has the former main street of this town."

Blackhawk's Trail
"North from Grand Detour, we pass, on the Blackhawk trail, scenes of surpassing beauty. Here was long ago, a great divide, through which the river had cut its way and here are great central rocks, along its side as a result. Here is Prospect Rock, and the famous Castle Rock, and many others. So we pass hundreds of beautiful camping sites, and arrive at the town of Oregon."

"The founder of Oregon was John Phelps, who wanted to found a city on a beautiful site. The story is that while canoeing slowly up the river he saw a camp pitched high on the bluff, and finally reaching there he met the son of Alexander Hamilton, who was making a preliminary survey of the country. Hamilton had been all over the Rock river country, and it was on his advice that the present site of Oregon was chosen."

Artist Colony
"Here come in summer a company of distinguished artists. The town library houses an art gallery that any city might envy. Here is Lorado Taft's famous group, 'The Blind,' and canvases by such artists as Charles Francis Browne, Ralph Clarkson, Sorolla, and many others."

The famous artists' colony, 'Eagle's Nest,' is an interesting place for visitors to see. Hamlin Garland gives an interesting glimpse of this colony in his book, 'A Daughter of the Middle Border.' It was here that he wooed and won his wife. Here, on the brow of tall cliffs, are the camps and cottages of all the artists connected with Lorado Taft's colony. Here, also, is the famous Ganymede Spring, so named because Margaret Fuller was so impressed with the beauty of this spot that she wrote a poem here — 'Ganymede to His Eagle.'

"A few steps away, on the Wallace Heckman estate, is the mighty concrete statue of Blackhawk, designed by Lorado Taft, and presented by him to the city of Oregon. Blackhawk, wrapped in his blanket, looks sadly out over the wonderful vistas of Rock river."

Hospitable to Tourists
"Oregon takes good care of its tourists. Homes are hospitable and several fine hotels are noted for their cooking. The enthusiastic patron of one hotel had this to say to me: 'I love to go to Oregon for my vacations. The scenery beats anything we can find in the Canadian Rockies. The people there are wonderful. There's only one drawback. The food is so wonderful that some day, when dinner is announced, someone is going to get killed in that rush for the dining room.'"

Touring in Illinois where the roads are good and where there is no gas tax, is a joy forever.

Gene Tunney has signed to fight for a million dollars, which is more money than we got for winning the World war.

Y. W. C. A. CLUBS IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

Business Girls' Plan Dance and Bunco Party, Mar. 8; "Cubs" Hold Party Monday

At the last regular meeting of the Business Girls club, plans were made for a dance and bunco party to be held March 8, in the Y. W. C. A. club rooms. The club is very desirous that all their friends attend. Refreshments will be served. Tickets may be had at the Y. W. C. A.

The "Cubs" of the Y. W. C. A. had a very delightful party on Monday afternoon.

Seek Company of Young People
"If you are beginning to feel old, get into Y. W. C. A. work. It keeps you thinking in terms of girls instead of old ladies. Moreover, it will keep you abreast of the times and tax all your mental resources." Such is the terse advice of Mrs. John M. Hanna of Dallas, who after the age of fifty has been elected the national president of the American Y. W. C. A.


Incidentally, Mrs. Hanna's election came by vote from convention delegates who represented the membership of 600,000 girls and women, chiefly an extremely youthful one.

"Most people, I find, think in terms of boys and their needs rather than about girls," said Mrs. Hanna. "The smaller the community, the harder it is to arouse them to thinking about the girls right in their own midst. As for boys something must be done about them! And it isn't only men who tell you this. Women voice the same opinion. Being with girls and sharing their point of view and problems, is the best recipe for retaining a youthful interest in life."

Girls talk over their problems with her, continued Mrs. Hanna just as if she were another girl. Girls in her opinion, have a frank and square way of looking at questions and facing them in their daily lives.

Reaching the girl who lives in the small town or on isolated farms is one of the biggest fields ahead of the Y. W. C. A., in the new president's opinion.

Much is said by the agitators about the class struggle, and it gets pretty fierce between the sophs and the freshmen in the schools and colleges.



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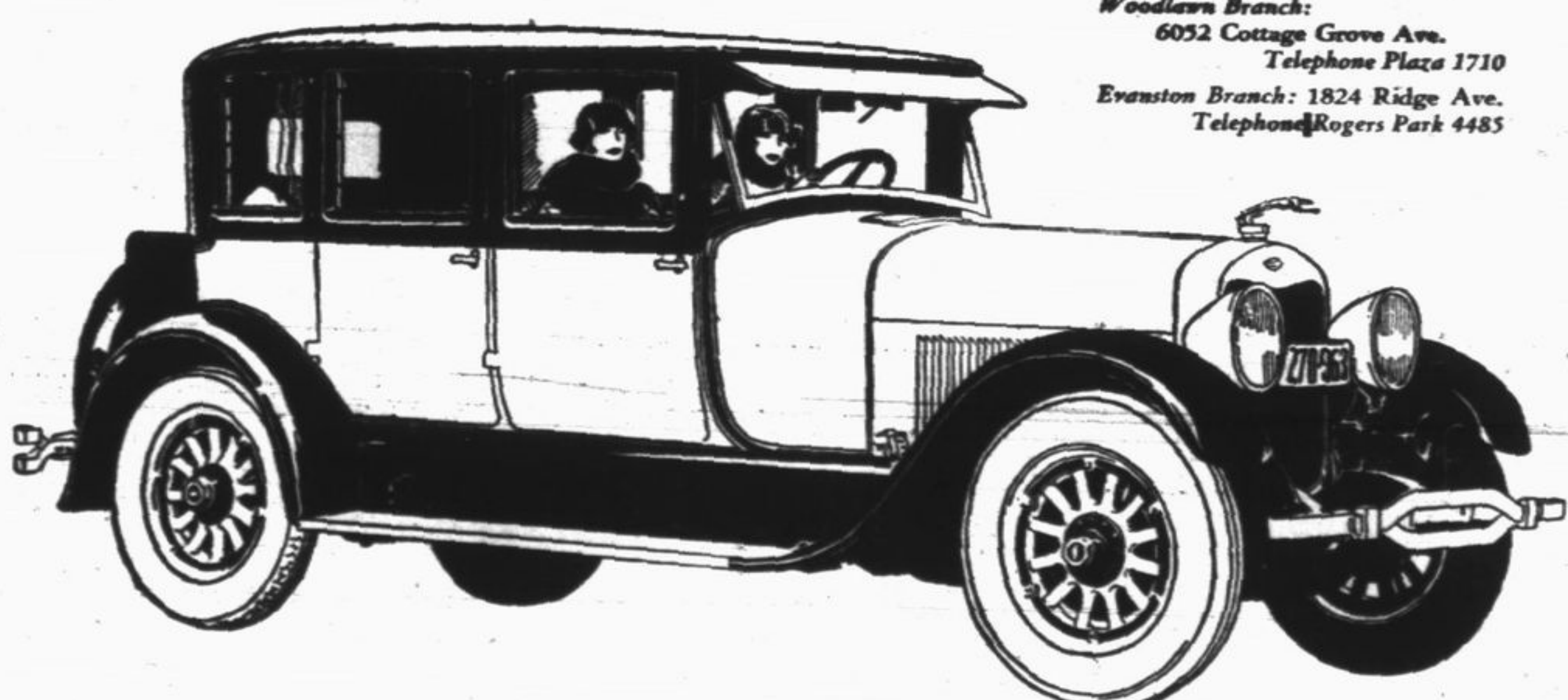
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