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ENGLISH JOURNEY

By WALTER K. LEGGE Article No. 5

Nothing seems to have such a demoralizing effect on the character of the English people as the gasoline restrictions, and motorists seem to attempt any kind of deception to get around them.

In a desperate effort to enforce the regulations the authorities have set most severe penalties which appear to be out of all proportion to the punishment for much more serious offences. The new regulations in effect from June 1st make it more difficult than ever to catch illegal users. Up to June 1st no car could travel on the road at all except by permit for essential work. However there seemed to be thousands of ways to prove that the driving was essential.

Since June 1st it is not necessary to prove that a car is doing essential work, but the allowance of petrol is so pitifully small that the automobile owner's position is not much improved.

To catch drivers with illegal quantities of gasoline, all used for commercial driving is being colored, and if any of this colored gasoline is found in a private car, the punishment is really fantastically severe.

There is one thought that continually crossed my mind, and that is that the transportation systems, both railways and buses, are now government owned and operated. To cut the use of private cars to a minimum must force people to use the government transportation monopoly.

Everywhere I went, I heard the lament that my hosts could not drive me around as much as they wished on account of the gasoline restrictions.

However with some little motor driving and by the use of buses I was able to keep continually on the move and see something interesting and unusual every day.

As I mentioned before, by staying at a central place it is possible to get almost everywhere that one would wish to go. It is surprising to find that there is very frequent bus service usually about every half hour or hour, to almost any place within a reasonable distance.

I shall try to describe a few of the interesting places I visited. Almost every hamlet in England has some ancient shrine, some particularly old or beautiful church, an ancient castle or some association with a famous writer, author, statesman or hero.

One of the first places I visited was Stoke Poges and there are a few more beautiful spots in England. To get to that famous churchyard I took a bus from Amersham, a journey of about half an hour, and walked about a quarter of a mile along a tree and hedge bordered road.

Stoke Poges churchyard inspired Thomas Gray, the poet, to write what is considered the most beautiful poem in the English language, the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," which starts:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

There are hundreds of similar churches and churchyards in England, just as old or older, just as pretty, but Gray's poem has made Stoke Poges famous for as long as the English language is spoken. It is recorded that Wolfe on the eve of the capture of Quebec quoted this poem and as he came to the line "The paths of glory lead but to the grave" said with prophetic words that he would rather have been the writer of that poem than the man who would take Quebec.

Gray himself was buried in the same tomb as his mother. His name does not appear on the tomb but a tablet in the church wall nearby records his burial "in the same tomb upon which he has so feelingly inscribed his grief at the loss of a beloved parent." He was buried on August 6, 1771.

Near the south porch still stands the ancient yew tree under which it is said that he sat and penned his famous poem. About 100 yards away is a stone monument in Gray's memory on which are inscribed some verses from the Elegy.

The church itself dates back to 1230 A. D. for the south aisle, 1270 for the north aisle, but it is known that a church has existed here since before 1107 A. D.

An interesting feature of the church is a private entrance from the Manor House which stands a few hundred yards from the church.

The manor goes back to Anglo Saxon times and the present Manor House is chiefly known for having been the home of the Penn family.

William Penn, the founder of the state of Pennsylvania is buried about six miles away at Jordans, a Quaker shrine, which I visited on another day. It is reached by taking a bus

to Seer Green and walking about a mile.

The Jordans Meeting House was built in 1688 and was one of the early gathering places for the Quakers or Society of Friends.

The early Quakers were subject to a great deal of persecution and one of their greatest advocates in their time of trial and tribulation was William Penn who in 1681 founded Pennsylvania.

As might be expected the Meeting House is a plain and simple building both inside and out, the exterior looking much like a most unassuming house.

Inside at the rear is a sort of balcony in which is a small museum containing many original manuscripts and letters written by William Penn, and other items intimately associated with the Quakers.

Just outside the front door are the graves of Wm. Penn, both his wives and nine children. Penn and his second wife are in one grave at the head of which is a small stone with only the wording "William Penn, 1718, Hannah Penn, 1726."

On the way from Amersham to Seer Green is the cottage at Chalfout St. Giles where Milton wrote "Paradise Lost".

When the Plague was raging in London in 1665, Thomas Ellwood, a Quaker, at the request of Milton located a small cottage at Chalfout St. Giles, where Milton moved to get away from the Plague, and it was here that he wrote most of "Paradise Lost".

The cottage dates from about 1600 and remains much the same as when Milton lived in it. It is now a museum, administered by ten trustees and contains first editions of "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained" and numerous other items.

It is a most picturesque spot with a beautiful old garden.

Before leaving Chalfout St. Giles a word should be said about its beautiful old church. The chancel and nave date from the 12th century, the north aisle from 1260, the chancel arch from 1410, and the clock from 1710. In the entry is a list of incumbents unbroken since 1217.

On the walls some very old medieval paintings have recently been discovered and are now being restored. One is a scene of the beheading of John the Baptist showing the executioner and Salome.

Every parish church has some unique feature such as this.



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LOCAL ORANGE LODGES CELEBRATE THE TWELFTH

Members of Victoria Lodge No. 2368, Richmond Hill, participated in the Orange Walk at Kitchener, Saturday. Parading with the local lodges were members of Aurora and Thornhill lodges. The Aurora lodge was awarded the cup for the lodge travelling the greatest distance to be in attendance.

On Monday, nineteen members of Empire L.O.B.A., No. 894, with three members of Queen Mary Lodge, Aurora, and several members of Victoria Lodge journeyed to Orillia where they took part in the largest Orange Parade ever staged in that town.

The annual church parade of Victoria Lodge was held to the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church Sunday morning. The members of Empire Lodge also joined in Divine Worship. Rev. Mr. Hirtle delivered an inspirational address. Mr. K. Svane-felt sang "In The Garden" and special music was presented by the choir.

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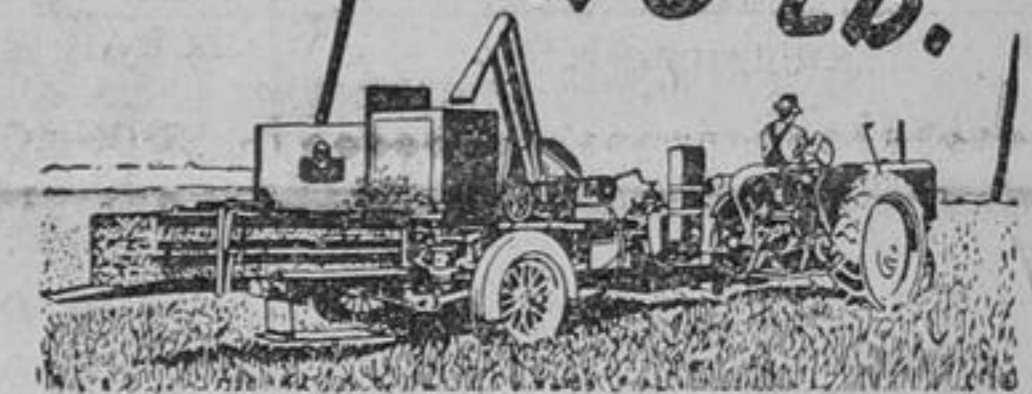
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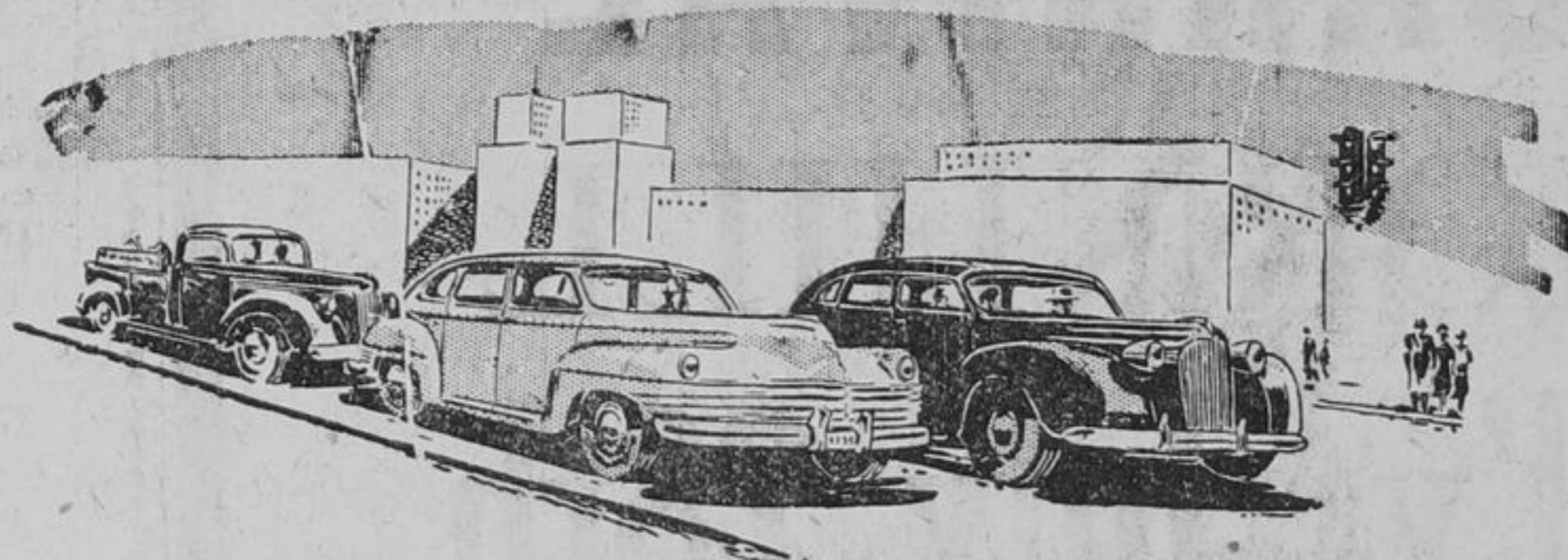
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