

**ON RETURN TRIP GASTONIA SHRINERS**

**SAW MUCH WONDERFUL SCENERY**

**Glories of Sunrise on Pike's Peak Are Truly Indescribable — Majestic Splendor of the Rocky Mountains Leaves Indelible Impression on Minds of all — Last Stop Was at Denver.**

(By Mrs. Juanita C. Garrison)

In my last article I promised not to bore the people any more, but several have asked me to complete the trip, so here I am again. I appreciate the kindness of the editors of the paper in giving space to these articles and am certainly grateful for the many kind expressions from friends as to the interest shown in them.

We left Salt Lake at 6:00 p. m. and were advised to retire early as the country through which we would travel next day would be very beautiful so it would be wise to get an early start with the scenery. Some professed to have been surfeited with mountains, but they were on hand as early as any next morning. We came through the Rocky Mountains for miles and they are rightly named. I did not dream there were so many peaks in the entire world as we saw that day. Some mountains would seem to be one huge rock, others looked like a mass had piled them together, so regular were the different strata; some were just ordinary brown or gray rocks and others looked as if some artist had given them the faint low tints with an immense brush.

It was mountains everywhere, with here and there a waterfall, and finally the Arkansas river wound its way along the side of the track, but the mountains rose right up from the river bank on the one side and the same on the other side of the track. Occasionally the valley would widen out and we would see small farms with tiny homes. These looked very lone some to us and we decided we did not care to live here. Many of the rocks in the mountains were copper colored and I suppose there is still a great deal of copper in them. Just about lunch time an open car known as the observation car was attached to the rear of our train for those who cared to get a full view of the Royal Gorge, through which we were to pass. Some of our party took advantage of this, others rode on the tender of the engine, and some craned their necks from the windows. The verdict of all was the same. It was royal indeed and a sight never to be forgotten but very difficult to describe. It is a very narrow place the track has to run and from the track on either side the mountains rose some of them two miles high. They were all of rock and varicolored. Near the base were a few wild flowers, but for the most part it was only the majesty of the mountain itself. We crossed the swinging bridge that looked as though it was suspended in the air, but we were over it too quickly to get frightened. This was a miniature Grand Canon, to us very wonderful, to all beautiful, but to those who had seen the Grand Canon it was very small.

The entire day was passed in the mountains. As I have stated before, we missed the ferns, rhododendrons and trees of our mountains. These were just rocks. How many times that day we exclaimed, "There are rocks enough here to make good roads all over the world."

At 10:00 o'clock that night we pulled into Colorado City. It had been decided that afternoon we would retire early, get up at 12:30 and make the trip up Pike's Peak to see the sun rise. It was raining and still the moon was shining. That is some of us retired, while others decided it would be better to sit up all night. At 1:00 a. m. we were all out at the station for the trip. It was a six-mile ride on the street car to Manitou, Colo. Then another street car to the foot of Pike's Peak. It was very dark, but no rain was falling. There were some who were pessimistic and thought we would never see the sun rise, but the climate there is like in all mountains—rain one minute and sunshine the next. The road up the peak is a cog railroad and each engine takes just one car. These cars carry 24 passengers, so our crowd had to divide. The engine is on the rear of the coach and pushes the car up. The track is nine miles long and goes straight up the mountain. For the most part it is the high rock mountains on one side of the track and a deep precipice on the other.

The engine pushes for a while as though it were no effort, but soon it sounds like it is about out of breath and reminds one of what the child said about a Ford car, when it starts up hill it says, "I can make it, I can, I CAN," but with a jerk it goes to "I mean, I mean." Thus it seemed with the engine. It said, "I will, I will, I will," but suddenly it stopped as if it said "I won't." When it stopped it slid back about six feet, and then if you wanted to know how everybody felt ask some of the Gastonia men. After one of these stops as the moon came out from behind a cloud and everything was bright as day, the conductor called our attention to a lake just below us. He asked what we thought the size of this lake, and various estimates were given, the largest about one half acre. He told us it covered ninety acres, having recently been surveyed by the United States government, and that it was five miles below us. There was nothing between us and that lake on that side of the track but the rocks that jutted out of the mountain side. A slip here did not create the most delightful sensation, as you may well imagine.

When the moon was behind the cloud the car was dark. This made things seem more weird. A cold wind was blowing that seemed almost a blizzard to some of us, but at 4:00 a. m., just as we reached the top, Old Sol burst forth in all his glory. We seemed to be on the very top of the world and from horizon to horizon were spread an array of colors no painter could ever copy. If he made an attempt you would say, "How unreal!" From the deepest crimson to the palest pink, with great dashes of orange and blue, changing with the rapidity of a kaleidoscope. In almost less time than it takes

me to tell this the colors had disappeared and a very faint glow was seen from the place the glory had been and then clouds covered all. It was a miracle and will ever be no matter how many times it occurs, and I cannot imagine any one looking at it as commonplace. In all these wonders one is brought nearer to God. None of this majesty is the work of man's hands.

The top of the peak is covered with rocks of all sizes and makes one think of a rock quarry. It looks as if some giant changoing had been at work breaking rocks. The top is not so very large, but not small enough to make one dizzy. There is a small two room house here and they had big fires roaring in the stoves. It felt good. There is a flight of steps up to a very high observatory for those who wish to go higher, but to the most of us we were high enough. Some had nose bleed, while others felt short winded as if they had been on a long, hard run. Lunch was served here and of course there were cards and souvenirs to buy. Some sent telegrams from the highest telegraph station in America.

Pike's Peak is 14,650 feet above sea level, but from the place we started up in the train is only half as high as Mount Mitchell. The road is entirely different, however, this one going straight up. We looked down on Colorado City, but could not distinguish anything but the streets, which at that distance looked like rows in a truck patch. It was very cold, they had had a snow storm a few days before, but to our surprise there was very little snow. It was in deep drifts on the north side of the house.

There is an automobile driveway to the top, but it is twenty three miles long. A garage is on top and quite a number inside the trip that way, but I believe I prefer the cog train. They claim they have never had an accident and that the train could only slide back a short distance until the clogs would lock. It took very much less time to return and 7:00 o'clock found us again in Manitou. We were glad we went, gladder to be safe down again, and no one wished to witness the glory of another sunrise right away. We took cars here for a drive to the famous Cave of the Winds and the Garden of the Gods. The first is reached by a road that winds round a high mountain. At several places you can see the road three places above you and once below. It is a one-way road, so there is very little danger. The cave entrance is at the top of this mountain. The cave was discovered by two boys in 1880. They were on a picnic and saw an opening in the side of the mountain and began to explore. They must have been brave little fellows, for when the guide turned off the light it was as dark as midnight on a very cloudy night. There are sixteen rooms, all well lighted. From the ceilings hang most wonderful stalactites, while from the floors rise as wonderful stalagmites. These were ages forming and the shapes they have taken resemble the finest art of the sculptor. Lots wife with all the things she so unwillingly started the journey from Sodom is there in her pillar of salt, the Virgin Mary is there in pure alabaster. One room is called the Room of the Fluted Curtains. Here the stalactites and stalagmites had formed perfect curtains that looked as though they had been gathered back on a rod and all the beautiful colors of the rainbow showed through them. One place was filled with tiny creatures that it did not take a very vivid imagination to see might be the figures of Dante's Inferno. In one room the formations looked like bat wings and in another a perfect slice of bacon with streak of fat and streak of lean was suspended in plain view.

While possibly not so large as many caves it is wonderful and beautiful. One room had a wire netting stretched across part of the wall. Into this had been placed innumerable lamps of every variety. They told us this was the old maid's wishing place and if an old maid or any single woman placed a hair pin here in the year she would be married. It is a sure thing many have tried, but we had only the guide's word as to this.

After the trip through the cave we took cars again and, traveling through the beautiful Williams Canon we came to the Garden of the Gods. To the imagination this was only a large tract of waste land filled with immense rocks, mostly of a red variety but to the soul with the vivid imagination it was a veritable paradise in which the imagination could wander at will naming these rocks. Some one or perhaps many had named them, and on entering you saw a large steam boat, rode right into a big field of mushrooms, passed the old lady washing, viewed the angels kissing, the seals acting, saw cathedrals, and the three graces. How I longed to have the job of naming many more for in this wonderful rock formation I saw many, many things.

We drove back to Colorado Springs and boarded our train for Denver for our last stop. We reached Denver about 2:00 p. m. To our surprise we were met by the Shriners from El Jebel temple and nowhere on our trip did we meet with more hearty welcome. We were the forty-second temple they had entertained, but their hospitality was as fresh and spontaneous as though we had been the first. We were taken first to their beautiful temple, which is complete in every detail, and then to the Kenmark hotel. The manager and nearly all the officials were shriners, so the freedom of the hotel was ours, rooms, baths, etc., were free, and you may believe we made good use of them.

Denver is a beautiful city and we were surprised to find everything had been

placed there by men. No natural grass or shrubs, but all cultivated. It shows what determination can do. Denver's park system is divided into two divisions: (1) city parks and boulevards; (2) mountain parks and highways. In the first division there are thirty-nine parks, including seventeen supervised children's playgrounds. There are eighteen miles of improved parkways. And Gastonia cannot find room or money for one!

We spent the afternoon sightseeing, shopping and resting, and at 11:00 that night we started home. Tire! Yes, but all well and happy. The next day we began to realize we were nearing home as it began to get warm. We came through the wonderful wheat fields of Kansas. Acres were being harvested and we were told the granaries were still full of last year's crop. They can't get cars to move it, so they claim. Still we are paying a big price for flour and millions are said to be starving. I forgot to say we saw so many fields of sugar beets in California and Colorado. They looked like fields of turnips.

Sunday night we pulled into Kansas City. Only a short stop was made at the Union Station and we were glad to be on the move again for it was very warm. That night we went through the Ozark mountains and it was the roughest part of the trip. The engineer was making time and we turned those curves so swiftly we almost fell out of the berths and were glad to see daylight.

Monday was spent passing through Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama. The first named was the most desolate. Here the train seemed like the slow train through Arkansas sure enough. It was swamps everywhere. The train had been marked before we left with the Oasis emblem and on each car something such as Gastonia, N. C., to Portland, Ore.; Charlotte to Portland, Ore.; Oasis Patrol; Oasis Band, etc. At one small station in Arkansas the children ran up to know what show we represented and some thought the boy had spied the fat lady and was sure it was a real circus.

Another hot, sticky day. We pulled into Memphis that night and were so glad on waking next morning to see our own mountains. How good they looked covered with green and flowers blooming on the sides. It was nice and cool, too. Asheville was reached about 8:30 and the first of our party left us. Then all along the way we dropped them until the Gastonia bunch began figuring on leaving the train at Newton and taking another C. & N. W. for home. This we did and were safe in Gastonia at 5:00 o'clock Tuesday, July 6th. We had been away twenty-two days, had traveled eight thousand miles, through twenty-two states, without an accident of any consequence.

We were so grateful to all the train men for the untiring effort to make the trip both safe and pleasant. No crowd could have been more congenial and we are all hoping to go west to Frisco in 1922 with the Shriners again. The hospitality of the West is wonderful and I know of no finer hosts than the Shriners.

**JOY IN THE BLACKJACKS.**

Yorkville Enquirer.

Again the blackjack country has come to its own and is rejoicing in the return of the old time prosperity that was so common throughout that section previous to the world war.

By the blackjack country especial reference is had to the southeastern corner of Bethesda township. There are other blackjack localities in the county; but none so extensive as the Bethesda blackjacks and none other exactly like them.

Readers of the Yorkville Enquirer generally know in a general way what residents of the blackjacks know to an absolute certainty, that although they have potentially the most productive agricultural soil in this whole section, without the application of plenty of potash, it is of but small value.

The breaking out of the world war put the price of potash out of sight, when blackjack farmers were no longer able to get potash, their cotton crops were cut in half, and all other crops suffered almost in the same proportion.

All kinds of hopeful theories were advanced when the potash supply was cut off. Among these theories was one to the effect that the soil having already been "sweetened" up with potash by continuous applications over a great many years, perhaps no disastrous results would follow the skipping of a few applications. But it did not turn out that way. The crop of 1915 showed the effects of no potash, and the crops of 1916, 1917, 1918 and 1919, each showed a little worse.

Farmers who had prospered for years previous even on the lower prices of other days, became greatly discouraged in 1915 and some of them seriously considered the idea of getting out of the blackjack country on to other soils. In fact some of them really did get away.

But apparently it is all over now and things are getting back to where they used to be. Although prices were higher last winter, still it was possible to get potash in abundance, and during the spring the blackjack people applied the precious substance most liberally.

The cotton and corn fields through the blackjacks are smiling again as of old. The corn is up from knee to waist high and the cotton, of "greasy green" color, already growing at a rapid rate is beginning to shade the ground and promises to go through the July and August droughts if they come, without rusting in the least.

The farmers of the blackjacks are all taking heart again and it is a beautiful prospect throughout the whole section.

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**WOMEN'S OXFORDS**

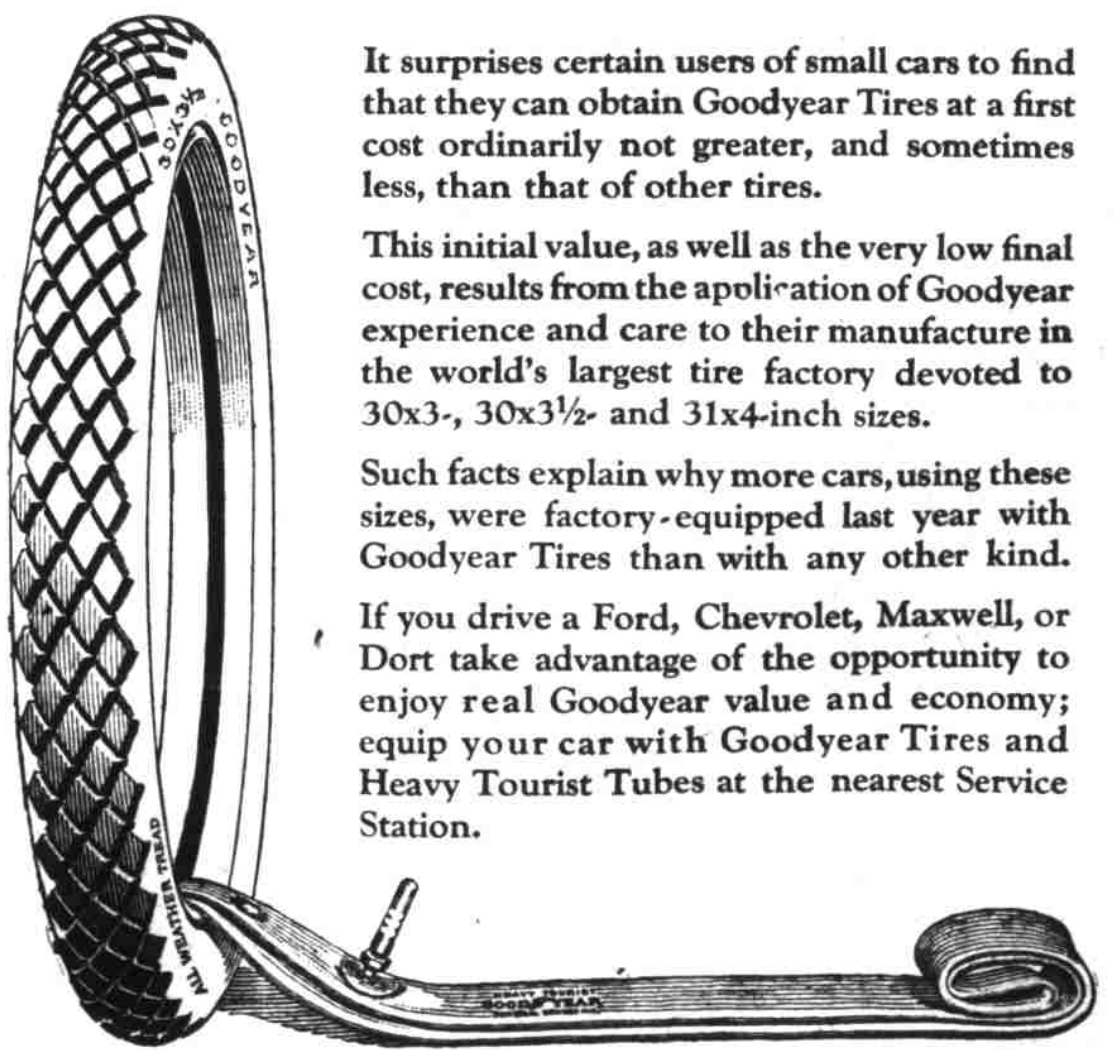
- All \$15.00 Oxfords at ..... \$12.00
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