

A newspaper report of a trip from Napier to Wellington and return in 1920.

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EXPERIENCES ON THE ROAD.

A TRIP TO WELLINGTON.

A very eventful trip is reported by a motor party which went through to Wellington last Friday, and arrived back in Napier an hour before midnight on Wednesday. The party was taken through by Mr. **Peter Annan**, in an A.A.P.W. Hudson. Departure from Napier was taken from the Napier post office at 12.03 a.m. on Saturday morning, and after a good run through, during which the engine was not stopped the party arrived in Wellington at 8.10 a.m., the average being nearly 30 miles per hour. "We were careful to slacken down when passing through boroughs where there was a speed limit" stated Mr. **Annan** to a "Tribune" reporter yesterday.

Continuing, Mr. **Annan** stated: We went to the races at Wellington on Saturday morning and again on Monday. On the latter day we landed a "bluey" for exceeding the speed limit. There was a set of police traps on the road, and dozens of people were caught. A favourite position of the trap was to get under cover with a pair of field glasses, a measured distance from a corner. The cars would be picked up with the glasses at the corner, and the time taken till they passed the trap. We were much amused at a motor cyclist who was caught. He saw a motor bicycle proceeding at a fast pace, and thinking as he afterwards told us, that there was no limit on the road, opened out. Unfortunately for him, the man on the motor cycle who had first been speeding was a traffic inspector, who was after a car in front of him, and the civilian cyclist fell into his arms.

We left Wellington at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, and the weather being very bad we commenced our experiences. The first obstacle we encountered was an accident near Porirua. A large truck had collided with a Ford and the two were locked together in the middle of the road. We assisted in clearing the road and proceeded. Coming down this side of Paekakariki was very dangerous.

THREE MILES THROUGH WATER.

The roads were very slippery, and we barely escaped a slip that was in the act of coming down by speeding up, which was in itself a very dangerous thing to do. All the banks were badly undermined. The roads were then good till shortly after we passed Levin. The country here was very flooded, and the roads were covered with water. For nearly three miles we ran on low gear through an average of about 15 inches of water. One of the passengers, Mr V. S. McGregor, sat on the bonnet and pushed aside floating wood and other material with a stick. We passed one car abandoned in the middle of the road, standing above its axles in water.

PASSENGERS WITH "WIND UP."

The roads to Palmerston were good and we arrived at about 4 p.m. Reports there were very bad and the roadmen of the council stated that we would not be able to get through for two days. As the report was also "no traffic for two days" on the following day we decided to take a sporting chance and endeavour to get through. As the Gorge road was absolutely impassable we decided to take the Pahiatua track. You leave Palmerston on the Wellington road, and pass over the main Manawatu bridge, then to the left on to clay roads. The roads were in very bad condition, and some of the passengers got the "wind up" when we passed over some of the spots - where the road was undermined or had disappeared. We came down this side under compression, as the brakes would not hold the car. The whole hill was in a very dangerous condition.

A DEEP FORD.

We got through to Woodville and started for Napier. We met several cars returning to Woodville, and were informed that we could not possibly get past the Maharahara crossing as the road in the vicinity was under flood. We saw two cars that had tried to get through, and had left the road and absolutely submerged having to be pulled out with horses. We resolved to try the crossing, and found that the water was very deep, and nearly 50 feet across. Mr. McGregor borrowed a walking stick from Mr. P. Le Grove, and took up his position on the bonnet again. By means of sounding all the way across, and backing and changing course when required we managed to get through. Our "pilot" was cheered as he climbed back to his seat. The water reached to just below the cylinders, but as the carburettor was high up we did not have any trouble from it. The screens in front of the radiator were closed down to prevent a wave of water stopping the engine. The rest of the trip through was good, and the roads were the best we had passed over. Several Hawke's Bay cars were held up in Palmerston, and have not yet got through, except one that came by rail.