

Some Motorists Are Not As Popular With the Farmers As Many of Them Think

The Farmers, However, Are Painfully Popular with the Motorists—Many Joy Riders Expect Much for Nothing And Believe It Is Conferring a Favor to Land a Hungry Carload Into a Farmer's Dining Room — Some Very Magnificent "Tips" Are Offered, Even to the Extent Of Fifty Cents—But the Freckle Faced Boy Refused The Dough with Scorn.

By WINNIFRED REEVE
(Onoto Watanna)

They come with the first breath of spring, ploughing along the muddy, slippery roads, bent, so they assure us, on "making the grade" to Banff, but managing generally to get as far as our ranch, kill the engine, burst a tire or run dead out of gasoline.

As the roads dry and the sun of the advancing summer glows upon the land, they come shooting along the main road to Banff, with such alarming speed and frequency, that it is no wonder a number of them manage to spill themselves off at our gates.

Summer, with all its heat and dust, brings them literally by the hundreds. We like to see them roll by and disappear into the foothills of the Rockies, but an astonishing number of these hundreds roll no farther than our doors.

We are painfully popular at this time. The fishing season has opened.

Although the cars en route to Banff lessen in number with the passing of the summer days, they increase so far as those that stop abruptly at the ranch house goes, with no pretense now of "making the grade" to Banff. Lo! the hunter is at hand.

Where They Foregather

Down at the junction of the Ghost and Bow rivers, which bound two sides of our ranch, the motor hoboos love to foregather. Neither tightly closed gates or four lines of barbed wire, daunt these trespassers, who open (but never close) the gate at the bridge, park their cars on the Ghost side under the bridge, and disappear along the banks of that forbidden stream.

Sometimes tents and camping paraphernalia are set up, either down by the Ghost river or in the pasture above the Bow river, and our motor hobo squats upon the land indefinitely. Very ingenious are some of their camping devices, and when supplies are low and they tire of a fish diet, they beg, borrow and steal from their unwilling hosts. Some of them camp "de luxe" with electrical contrivances connected with their cars, thermos bottles and other luxurious articles dear to the heart of the modern camper; but for the most part they camp in the rough, and the smoke of their fires curl up from the river, apprising us of the presence of our uninvited guests, and warning us to be on guard.

Soft Spot in His Heart

Our "hands" joke about the "paper collar dudes" in camp, but the boss has a soft spot for all would-be fishermen and hunters. As the days pass, however, and our stock strays forth through the open gates and are sometimes banged by joyriders on the highway; as incipient forest fires are barely nipped in the bud; we begin to feel a measure of irritation and alarm. So we wire the gates and stick up a "No Trespass" sign. We leave, however, a portion of the land by the bridge, where the aspiring fisherman may angle in peace.

we discover the wanton cutting of the fences, and narrowly scape being hit by the crazy shooting in pastures and woods where our cattle are grazing.

So a bunch of husky "hands" are delegated to go down to the camp or camps as the case may be and read the riot act to our guests. There they are variously received, according to their size and number and the nature of the hoboos. Of course, each hobo protests his own personal innocence, and "passes the buck" to "the fellow who just left before we got here."

Delegation of One

If our delegation is represented by the small boy of the house (it's not always convenient to spare "hands" to go three miles down the road) his reception is not always cordial by these well-meaning and perhaps unconscious incendiaries, bad shots and poor sports—for it is poor sport to fish in streams that a thoughtful government has closed for the best of reasons. Said one "big piece of cheese," as the boy described him, when approached by said small boy, and warned that his "bonfire" was endangering the brush:

"Listen to who's talking now. If you don't shut your face, I'll throw you don't shut your face, I'll throw

The Hobo Beats It

The boy, disdainful to answer, wrote down the number of the hobo's car, stuck his small spurred heels into his horse's flank, and was off over the hill before the hobo awoke to a realization of possible danger to his precious outfit. From the top of the hill the boy saw him actively at work upon the cut fence and bonfire and before the boy could reach the ranch house the noise of the departing car of the motor hobo was heard loud in the land as he escaped along the road in a cloud of dust.

So much for the motor hoboos who bear a sort of relationship to sports. We feel for them a certain sympathy, and even liking at times, so long as they close our gates, do no wild shooting near the cattle, fish in the open streams, and do not set our woods on fire. They are part of the "game" of ranching in this part of the country, and we take their presence among us as philosophically as we do such visitors as the fish and game in season.

What They Require

We come now to those who chug up the hill to the ranch house, and proffer their various requests and demands. Experience forces us to regard with suspicion all applicants for shelter, meals, milk, eggs, tools, horses, vegetables, use of telephone, use of verandah for picnic, gasoline and berries. Now the man traveling from Calgary to Banff, knows just how much gasoline it takes to carry him that far. If he has put on insufficient gasoline, there is Cochran midway between, where he can fill up. We have had one motorist after another, drive up to

and casually demand gasoline. We've had them help themselves to gasoline from the drum outside our garage—the "boss" being away, and the women of the house uncertain how to measure out gasoline, and the motor hobo assuring us they would be very careful. We have had them procure the gasoline from our "hands" in our absence, omitting to pay for the same (at a time when gasoline was as high as 60 cents per gallon), but handing a tip to the "hand." At 3 in the morning we have been awakened by a joyrider asking for gasoline, his car being stalled down the road, with a party which included girls and men, and if we would but get up and get him some of the desired fluid he would pay us a whole dollar per gallon.

Not a Garage

We do not run a public garage, but a cattle ranch. When the farmer hauls out to his ranch at considerable labor and cost, a drum of gasoline, he does it for his own especial use, because he is not near to the sources that supply the joyriders.

Often the motor hoboos are of the feminine persuasion, and very persuasive they are. With ingratiating smile, they tender their various requests, the commonest ones being a square meal, a harbor for the night, butter and eggs and "Could we go into your woods to get raspberries, saskatoons and gooseberries." They have first scouted through said woods, and assured themselves of the presence there of the desired berries, before making the request, which is nearly always granted.

Here's a Sweet Sister

One sunny day an especially blooming type of the female motor hobo species, blew up the hill in a great giddy car, that was brim full of chattering and beveled sister adventurers, and sought to induce us to give them a meal. She seemed to think the request to feed eight extra people on a ranch was a trifling matter, and, in fact, I suspect that at first she thought she was doing us a mighty favor by asking us. We politely returned that we were a private ranch, not a hotel; but if she kept on a bit further she would come to a place where, no doubt, they could get a meal. Our motor hobo, in this instance was apparently one used to having her own way and would take no refusal. She first flattered (the looks of our ranch and of us); she then endowed us with most charming smiles; she then pathetically told how dogged tired and hot and hungry they all were, and wouldn't we let them wash up and refresh themselves on the verandah before dinner, etc. She then, lowering her voice, descended to bribery, mentioning the alluring amount she was prepared to pay for a good fare dinner, and, finally, aggravated by our stubbornness, she waxed indignant and extremely haughty, and her aside remarks about "Rubes" were not good for us to hear. She stated further that she understood it was the custom of the country for the farmers to take in people who were on the road as they were, etc., and suggested that we were outside the breed of those kindly souls who lived according to said rule. We acquiesced in this, and apprized her of the fact that that rule applied to wayfarers, farmers like ourselves; people who were unavoidably held up or had an accident, and included also the pedestrian tramp, but not the mere motor hobo. We also inquired whether if we drove p to the lady's house in Calgary with a load of "Rubes" aboard our Lizzie if she would trouble even to parley with us on the subject of grub.

She left our premises in a fine huff, convinced, I am sure, that farmers were not all they were cracked up to be, but a tight-fisted, mean lot—their women at all events. It should not, however, be supposed that we turn such a steady

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