

WE DRIVERS

A Series of Brief Discussions on Driving, Dedicated to the Safety, Comfort and Pleasure of the Motoring Public. Prepared by General Motors



No. 3—MIST AND FOG

So long as there is light we may skip around at a lively rate over this old globe of ours. We may span oceans in surprising time. We may cross the continent from sun-up to sun-down.

But every now and then Mother Nature decides to put us in our place, and of all her devices to make us slow down, none is more effective than mist and fog.

Now we may not have to contend with fog and mist very frequently, but we're bound to now and then, and when we do, it can cause us a lot of annoyance and trouble.

When a good heavy fog comes—on land, at sea or in the air—everything that moves, moves with caution. The ocean liner slows down several knots an hour. Lightships signal, buoys sound and foghorns boom. Airlines ground their planes and cancel trips. Even trains on tracks reduce their speed—and we drivers on the highways, too, must make our way cautiously through that baffling screen. For one thing is true. In spite of all our progress, transportation still depends on pairs of eyes in human heads.

Scientists who have studied fog, say that it is composed of tiny drops of water. These drops are so small and light that they hang in the air, and so close together that light can hardly get through them. Instead, these little drops act like tiny convex mirrors. When we try to pierce them with a beam of light, a great deal of it is thrown right back at us, so the effect is just like a great, gleaming white curtain in front of us.

Experienced drivers say that the first thing to do is to get our lights right. The main thing is to direct the beams downward. If we have them shining straight ahead, those little mist-drop mirrors reflect the rays back in our eyes. But if they're pointing downward, the rays are deflected toward the road.

Then they say it's a good idea to guide by the road edge at our right, and if we have a spotlight on our car, to focus it right on that road edge, close to the front of the car, so the edge will be clearly lighted. But we have to keep a good weather eye ahead, too, because fog veils more than the road. It hides not only things on the road but such things as roadside warnings of curves and hills and intersections. Even the traffic light's red and green signal rays have the same hard time that our headlights do getting through that strange haze. In fact, in a good heavy fog, the best we can do for our vision is none too good. And so the main thing is to slow down. The ships have to do it, the trains have to do it, and we have to do it too. If we won't make up our minds to that, they tell us the best thing we can do is to pull off the road, or if we have not yet started out, we had better just stay home.

But seeing in fog and mist is only half the story. We not only have to see, but we also have to be seen. Our headlights properly adjusted are strong enough to do their duty in pointing us out to people coming from the opposite direction. And, in addition, some drivers use their horns like foghorns by giving them a "toot" every now and then. But another thing we have to think of is to be sure drivers behind us see us. That's why it's so important to have our stop-signal and tail-light working when we're driving in fog. And so it's a good thing to make sure that these lights are working and to wipe off those little red glasses if they happen to be covered with mud. If the weather's clear and our tail-light has gone out, the other fellow's lights may point us out fairly well. But if his headlights are fighting fog, they can't do much to protect us.

So, when all is said and done, driving in fog is just a matter of having our headlights and tail-lights right and being a little more careful. If we do that, we can drive our cars safely, even through Nature's stubborn obstacles of mist and fog.

Facts Worth Remembering About the History of United States

By CHAS. B. ROBERTSON

Anti-Masonic party held a national convention at Baltimore, Maryland, September 26, 1831, and nominated William Wirt, of Virginia, for President, and Amos Ellmaker, of Pennsylvania, for Vice President.

The first locomotive built in the United States, "The Best Friend," was completed at the West Point Foundry shops in New York City, January 15, 1825, and made its maiden run on South Carolina Railroad.

Ex-President James Monroe died in New York City, July 4, 1831, aged 73. His remains were buried in New York City where they remained until July 2, 1858, when they were removed to Westmoreland county, Virginia, his birthplace.

On June 1, 1832, General Thomas Sumter, a distinguished soldier of the revolution, died at Camden, South Carolina, at the age of 98 years.

A convention of National Republican party, nominates Henry Clay for President, December 12, 1831. The convention declared for high tariff and internal improvements.

The National Bank bill which had passed the Senate June 11, and the House July 3, was vetoed by President Jackson July 10, 1832. The Senate failed to pass it over the President's veto July 13.

Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence,

died at Baltimore at the age of 95, November 14, 1832.

The Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Gazette, established July 29, 1786, was the first paper west of the Allegheny mountains.

May 14, 1789, a discussion occurred in Congress as to the proper manner in which to address the President of the United States. The Senate wanted to address him in this manner, "His Highness, the President of the United States of America and Protector of their Liberties." The House objected to this, Mr. Madison saying, it would be objectionable to the common people, as there was no royalty in this country. After a consultation with George Washington it was decided by the House, in which the Senate finally concurred, that the proper salutation should be, "To the President of the United States," without additions of title.

At the trial of Aaron Burr for treason in Richmond, Virginia, 1807, John Marshall, chief justice of the supreme court of the United States, ordered the President to attend and bring the records of the war department. Thomas Jefferson refused to obey his orders.

The first public school established in the United States was in Boston, Massachusetts, 1823.

The United States weather bureau was organized in 1870 and was a part of the signal service of the war department until June 30, 1891, when it was transferred to the department of agriculture.

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