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Douglas, Arizona Meet

The first arrivals of the 67 steam enthusiasts who registered at the Gadsden Hotel in Douglas, Arizona, were out in front to greet many of the celebrities of the steam car world who congregated for this special occasion. The members came from the Yukon, Massachusetts, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington, not to mention the usual large representation from California and, of course, many Arizona hosts. The frequent comment made by each arriving delegation was regarding the ideal weather which made for clear views and a panorama of wide visibility across the vast horizon.

The huddles got an early start. The steam was high. By the time of the first session on Thursday evening, October 13, almost everyone was acquainted with the whole group. As I looked out over those present and welcomed them to this grand meeting, I could not help but observe, "There is a special feature to this audience at Douglas because so many of the men who have been working on modern steam cars and the engineering problems in them are with us." This was really the theme of our meet.

When the collection of experts was brought to their attention, each one started looking around to see who these celebrities were. At the head table were none other than our host, Alick Clarkson, who has designed, patented and manufactured many steam cars and buses, as well as steam power plants, and his son, Anthony, who is associated in his business endeavors. Others who deserved this recognition were: William Besler, steam engineer and manufacturer of the Doble, and the well-known Barney Becker, who has driven his own Doble to many meets and advised many members on conversion units; Charles T. Briar, who has owned several Dobles and has written many articles on construction and operation of modern steam cars; Roy Ferrier, engineer and designer of modern steam car engines; Brooks Gardner, the engineer in charge of the new Besler steam car; Thomas A. Hosick, who has lectured at several meets on thermodynamics and is working on a modern steam car; Charles F. Keen, engineer, designer and manufacturer of several modern steam cars; Wendell E. Mason, professor of mechanical engineering at the University of California at L. A.; Ford Walters, the builder of the steam dragster that attracts so much attention at our meets; and R. R. Waterman, steam engineer and manufacturer of several steam trucks.

Wendell E. Mason showed power plant slides during his talk on Friday morning. His subject was "Engine Design as Influenced by Valve and Cylinder Arrangement." The questions asked after his presentation were halted only by the announcement that everyone was to pick up his box lunch and head for the Clarkson's Rancho San Jose in Paul Spur, Arizona. The two Clarksons fired up a small boiler and then demonstrated various engines that others had brought to the meet and two of his own design. The questions about the engines were mostly related to Mr. Mason's valve and cylinder lecture that morning.

Another feature of the meet was the tour of the Wonderland of Rocks for the ladies.

Back to the Gadsden for dinner Friday evening, where our speaker was Thomas A. Hosick of Winston-Salem, N. C., whose comments on thermodynamics will be carried in a future issue of our magazine, THE STEAM AUTOMOBILE.

Saturday morning was set aside for everyone to cross the Mexican border and see how the natives live. Along the two blocks of paved street were a few shops carrying local merchandise -- some of which came back to the Gadsden.

See the story in the next issue, too, for more of the details of the technical subjects covered at this very successful meet, at which the reception area of the lobby was staffed by Betsy Clarkson, Avril Becker and Edna Guth. Carl Guth was the master of ceremonies in his capacity as Chairman of the Western Division of our Club.

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