

barn to throw down feed. He promptly backed outside. He was speechless. Drawing six-shooters, the others crept around to windows and doors. Then they raced in a body for their horses and galloped back to town.

They didn't return until the sun was high next day, and by then Hadj Ali reported to an army outpost in New Mexico. His name was soon translated by the friendly westerners as "Hi Jolly." He was friendly, honest and popular. Not so his camels. The war department continued to receive adverse reports on the adaptability of the camels. No American could get along with them. Another trouble was that the southwestern desert region is generally covered with rocks which cut the soft padded hoofs of the camels, adapted to the fine sand of the Arabian deserts. The experiment was soon termed a failure. But the camels were there and so was Hi Jolly.

"I have done what I contracted to do," Hi announced. "Now I like this country and I shall make it my home." He lived on in his adopted land until 1902. He is buried near Quartzite, Ariz., under a stone pyramid topped by a camel in coper silhouette.

The camels drifted over the wild lands and one by one were shot by hunters or pulled down by coyotes or cougars. One was captured and put in the zoo at Los Angeles. It died a few years ago after 70 years of wondering at the strangeness of America.

Its ashes were buried with those of Hadj Ali, under the pyramid monument that stands on an Arizona desert.

—Oren Arnold in Pathfinder Magazine.

Agricultural Information's Ally, Motorized R. F. D., had Humble Start

"Neither rain, nor snow nor icy blast shall halt this carrier on his way."

Such is the slogan of the U. S. mail carrier, a knight without armor.

It is the responsibility of the Post Office department to distribute information material issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Experiment Stations and Extension Services attached to the State Colleges of Agriculture. The rural mail carrier shares in this responsibility, as it is he who must ultimately deliver all USDA, state Experiment Station and Extension information mailed to the farmers even in the remotest sections of the country.

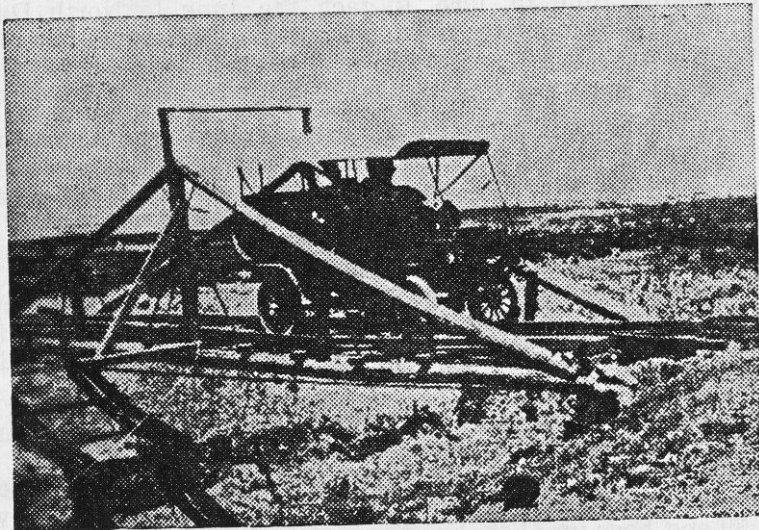
The first automobile mail line in the United States was started by an ingenious fellow by the name of Jim Stockard, a pioneer settler of Roswell, New Mexico. The line started operating in January, 1906, carrying mail and passengers from Roswell to Torrance, N.M., a small town on the Rock Island railroad about 100 miles northwest of Roswell.

"Yellow Devil" was the distinctive name given the first mail car used. It was constructed in a Roswell blacksmith shop from discarded parts of old Buick automobiles. The paint job, a brilliant yellow, gave it the colorful name. Travel was rough and slow. The mail route traveled was not over any highway or road at all. A heavy wooden drag was hauled over the route, marking a dim trail for the mail cars.

Upon arriving at Torrance, passengers headed for Santa Fe spent the night at a local hotel, continuing their journey the next day by a Rock Island morning train. A bridge was especially constructed for crossing the Macho, 25 miles north of Roswell. This river was usually nothing but a

dry riverbed, but at times carried a roaring torrent which was impossible to cross without some kind of crossing.

The bridge was a crude affair built of two substantial logs placed from bank to bank over the river, with a trough, formed of planks, nailed onto the logs, that just fit the car wheels. This unique bridge would not serve for crossing of horses or horse-drawn vehicles. The same contraptions were built over barbed-wire fences and over ruts and areas of sand, and other bad places on the route.



Crossing the Macho, 25 miles north of Roswell, N.M., on the unique bridge fashioned especially for the Yellow Hornet, is the first auto mail route and first motorized mailman in the United States. The line, started in 1906, ran from Roswell to Torrance, N.M.—(Photo courtesy of The El Paso Times.)

Until the Half-Way House station was built in 1907, four tents were used, stationed half way between Roswell and Torrance, on a point six miles from what is now U. S. Highway 285. The larger tent was used for shelter of the mail cars and mechanics' shop for repairs, needed on nearly every trip. Next in size was the cook tent, and dining space. There were two sleeping tents for the drivers and passengers when there were any layovers for the night.

In this way began the mail transportation system which in a few years was to spread to every section of the country. Today, within the service which bears the title, "R. F. D." are over 32,000 rural mail carriers serving 30 million persons in the United States. And in the remote areas of 48 states as well as in Alaska and other U. S. possessions, agricultural information flows from half a hundred agricultural colleges to farmers, students, implement dealers; housewives, poultrymen, fishermen, country bankers, rural newspapers, radio stations, vocational agriculture teachers and Indian reservations, all following the route blazed nearly half a century ago by Jim Stockard and his Yellow Hornet.—J.B.