

MISCHNY

Let's Go

From the files of Ed Fletcher, the following letters were removed to the alphabetized correspondence files:

MISC. CORRES. RE ROADS AND ROAD RACES

- Fletcher to JOHNSON, S.M. (Gen. Dir., Lee Highway Assn), 5/6/22
- MOORE, Lincoln (Fireman's Fund Insurance Co.)
 - Moore to Fletcher, 9/25/19
 - Fletcher to Moore, 9/26/19
- PRITCHARD, Robert J. (Mgr. Automotive Trades Dept. of Chamber of Commerce)
 - Pritchard to Fletcher, 7/24/20
 - Fletcher to Pritchard, 7/28/20
- RINEHART, Robert A.
 - Rinehart to Fletcher, 10/11/20
 - Fletcher to Rinehart, 10/11/20
- WILEY, A.P.
 - Wiley to Fletcher, 2/17/22
 - Fletcher to Wiley, 2/27/22
- Fletcher to WILLIAMS, E.M., 4/23/29



SOUTHWEST

Automobile Show

PROMOTED BY
Automotive Trades Department
OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

F. M. BANNELL, DIRECTOR CHAIRMAN ROBERT J. PRITCHARD, MANAGER

EL PASO, TEXAS July 24, 1920.

- COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT
- F. M. BANNELL
 - GLENN W. CURTISS
 - E. E. WISEMAN
 - A. M. LOCKHART
 - E. T. AMONETT
 - C. L. PELHAM
 - R. N. MULLIN
 - C. W. ALLEN
- SHOW COMMITTEE
- BARRY COOL, CHAIRMAN
 - JOHN BUQUOR
 - F. M. BANNELL
 - J. G. ALLEN
 - HARVEY WILCOX
 - O. C. YOUNGBLOOD
 - L. A. THOMPSON
 - M. L. NAQUIN
 - SAM WATKINS
 - P. W. BITTICK
 - D. U. RAKESTRAW

Col. Ed. Fletcher,
San Diego, Cal.

My Dear Col. Fletcher:


As you know this Chamber of Commerce last Fall promoted and successfully staged an automobile race from El Paso to Phoenix.

We stood the entire expense of the race in addition to contributing \$2500.00 towards the prize purse. Douglas, Bisbee and Tucson also contributed generously towards the purse, which totaled over \$12,000.00. Phoenix absolutely refused to put up as much as a nickle towards the expenses of the race, and the co-operation from that end was conspicuous by its absence. No charge was made for running through the town of Phoenix and there sportmanship stopped.

Naturally we in El Paso resented this spirit on the part of Phoenix, and while we propose to run a race this Fall, if possible, we would prefer the terminus to be some other place than Phoenix.

Mr. C.H. Lester, of El Paso, whom you know, in a recent conversation mentioned the fact that San Diego men had evinced a desire to run the race from El Paso to San Diego, and I am writing to you to find the extent to which this sentiment exists, and whether or not it could be crystalized in time to promote a race from El Paso to San Diego next November.

I would appreciate hearing from you on this matter as soon as possible.

Yours very truly,

 ROBERT J. PRITCHARD
 Manager
 AUTOMOTIVE TRADES DEPARTMENT

July
28th
1920

Mr. Robert J. Fritchard, Mngr.,
Automotive Trades Department,
El Paso, Texas.

My dear Mr. Fritchard:

Am very much interested in your letter of July 24th, and would like to get an expression from you as to how much money you think we should raise in El Centro and San Diego in order to pull off the race.

The race should go from Tucson via Ajo to Yuma. I made the trip with the California Highway Commission from Yuma to Ajo and Tucson last winter. We did not attempt to race or make time, but we left Yuma at 8 A. M., went by the way of Mohawk and Sentinel arriving at Ajo at 4:30 P.M. stopping an hour at Sentinel for lunch. The next morning we left Ajo at 8 O'clock and arrived in Tucson that afternoon about 2:30, going on to Phoenix that night.

The road can be made 30 miles shorter at least, by building a new road as planned by the Yuma Highway Commission, which goes from Ajo direct to Wellton. I believe this road can be brushed out and made passable by November.

San Diego has been nearly milked dry on matters of this kind. We have just raised over \$100,000 by private subscription to advertise San Diego and have just lately completed raising \$275,000 for our Naval Training Base, and with our Y. M. C. A. and other activities, it has been a continual drain, but we are interested and as soon as you let me know what is the minimum that we must raise to get the race, with the promise that I raise as much more as I can, I will get busy and see the leading business men here and give you a definite report. I can say now that something will be done to show our interest in the matter.

In this connection will say that one of the Highway Commission of Pima County, Arizona, (I do not remember his name), living at Ajo, is manager of one of the mines there. He suggested a race from El Paso to San Diego last fall, and said they would raise one-third

of the total amount. I think the idea was to have the race from El Paso to Ajo the first day, and from Ajo to San Diego the second. Any good five passenger machine can now make the run San Diego to Yuma in eight hours without any trouble; the distance is only 186 miles, and a racing machine will make it in six hours, and there should be no trouble in making the run San Diego to Ajo in ten or eleven hours.

Let me know how much El Paso to Tucson can be counted on to raise and in a few days I will let you know the name of the member of the Pima County Highway Commission at Ajo so you can write him, for I am sure you can count on \$3000 or \$4000 from Ajo alone.

Let me know whether it is feasible to make the run in a day from El Paso to Ajo. I am interested and will help you.

I am interested in roads, am President of the Dixie Highway, Vice-president of the Bankhead Highway, and a member of the County Highway Commission, and give considerable of my time to this work as a hobby.

An early reply from you will be appreciated, and in the meantime I suggest that nothing be published in the newspapers. I suggested a race to Mr. C. H. Lester nearly a year ago, and told him to take the matter up with you.

Yours very truly,

EF:KLM

El Paso, Texas,
October 11th, 1920.

Re - Proposed El Paso-San Diego
Road Race.

Mr. Ed. Fletcher,
Fletcher Building,
San Diego, Cal.

Dear Mr. Fletcher:-

Pursuant to your request I take pleasure in making you a report of the road conditions and public sentiment with reference to the proposed El Paso-San Diego road race. For the past three or four years there has been a growing sentiment among the Good Roads enthusiasts in the cities of El Paso, Deming, Lordsburg, N.M., Douglas, Bisbee, Tucson, Yuma, Arizona, and your own city, San Diego, that there should be promoted a road race between El Paso and the Pacific Coast for the purpose of advising the motoring public of the United States of the good roads that now exist during the entire 12 months of the year.

It is a well established fact that we have the only route over which the motorists can travel thru the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast without interruption by either snow or rain. The Ocean to Ocean Highway, the Lincoln Highway, the Yellowstone Trail, are not so favorably located, and in the winter months traffic is blocked from two to four months. The road between El Paso and San Diego by way of Bisbee, Douglas, Tucson, Ajo and Yuma is hardly known to the motorists who do not live adjacent to this route. By promoting this road race we could gain great publicity in practically every paper in the United States and it would be one of the greatest advertising campaigns we could hope to inaugurate. The cost to the cities en route would be practically nil in comparison with results obtained.

In making a survey of the road conditions, Mr. Lester and I found from El Paso to Las Cruces, Deming, Lordsburg, a distance of 165 miles, there is a concrete and graded road the entire distance. From Lordsburg to Rodeo, N.M., 48 miles, this stretch of road will receive State and County aid during the coming season. At present it is a very good desert road. From Rodeo, N.M. to Douglas, Ariz., 52 miles, there is now completed 30 miles of State Highway and the remaining 22 miles will be completed in a very short time. From Douglas to Bisbee, 26 miles, a concrete Highway has just been opened to traffic. From Bisbee to Tucson, 115 miles, there is a State Highway practically the entire distance. From Tucson to Ajo, a distance of 186 miles, 35 miles of Highway has already been completed, and we were informed by the Highway Commissioner at Tucson that the Highway will be completed the entire distance within the next 12 months. This condition also maintains between Ajo and Sentinel, a distance of 46 miles. From Sentinel to Yuma, 94 miles, we found that Yuma County has already built 10 miles of road running East to the East boundary of Yuma County. This road will connect up with Pima County Highway which passes thru Ajo to

Oct. 11, 1920

Sentinel. At Yuma we were informed that there would be completed a Highway to the East boundary of the County line probably by the Spring months of 1921, and of course you know better than I the road conditions thru Imperial and San Diego County.

From the information obtained on this trip it would seem practical to promote the first El Paso-San Diego road race during the month of November or December 1921. However, before any definite action should be taken, it is my opinion that another survey of the road should be made sometime during the month of May or June of Next year, at which time a report could be made to all the cities on the route.

On behalf of Mr. Lester and myself, I wish to thank you most heartily for the interest you have taken in this proposition, and wish to assure you that both of us will be glad to cooperate with you at any future time regarding the proposed El Paso-San Diego road race when the opportune time arrives for its promotion.

Yours very truly,



Mr. Robert A. Rinehart,
207 Mills Bldg.
El Paso, Texas.

My dear Mr. Rinehart:

I received the following telegram Saturday morning from the California Highway Commission: "ANSWERING YOUR LETTER OCTOBER FIVE STATE MOTOR VEHICLE ACT DOES NOT RECOGNIZE ROAD RACES AND THIS COMMISSION HAS NO JURISDICTION. LOCAL AUTHORITIES APPARENTLY HAVE CONTROL."

We will have no trouble in Imperial and San Diego Counties in getting consent when the time comes.

Yours very truly,

RF/als

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 70 Folder: 10

**Business Records - Other Fletcher Activities -
Highways - Proposed El Paso-San Diego road race**



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