

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
UNIQUE SITE NO.	<u>103-05-0151</u>
QUAD	_____
SERIES	_____
NEG. NO.	_____

C1-1

YOUR NAME: Town of Islip DATE: 8/25/75
Town Hall 655 Main St.

YOUR ADDRESS: Islip, L.I., N.Y. 11751 TELEPHONE: 516-581-2000

ORGANIZATION (if any): Dept. of Planning, Housing, & Development


IDENTIFICATION

- 1. BUILDING NAME(S): Motor Parkway
- 2. COUNTY: Suffolk TOWN/CITY: Islip VILLAGE: Central Islip
- 3. STREET LOCATION: Rte 17; east side ressway
- 4. OWNERSHIP: a. public b. private
- 5. PRESENT OWNER: Town of Islip ADDRESS: _____
- 6. USE: Original: Private speedway Present: Public road
- 7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No
Interior accessible: Explain _____

DESCRIPTION

- 8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard b. stone c. brick d. board and batten
e. cobblestone f. shingles g. stucco other: Concrete
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: (if known) a. wood frame with interlocking joints
b. wood frame with light members
c. masonry load bearing walls
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
- 10. CONDITION: a. excellent b. good c. fair d. deteriorated
- 11. INTEGRITY: a. original site b. moved if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known): _____

12. PHOTO: Negative No. D-2

13. MAP: 



HP-1



- New
14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known b. zoning c. roads
 d. developers e. deterioration
 f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
 a. barn b. carriage house c. garage
 d. privy e. shed f. greenhouse
 g. shop h. gardens
 i. landscape features: Tree lined road
 j. other: _____
16. SURROUNDINGS ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ (check more than one if necessary):
 a. open land b. woodland
 c. scattered buildings
 d. densely built-up e. commercial
 f. industrial g. residential
 h. other: _____

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district) completed
 The Long Island Motor Parkway when/ [^] stretched from Bayside, Queens, to Lake Ronkonkoma. Today its eastern point of termination is still Lake Ronkonkoma, extending only as far west as Half Hollow Hills in Huntington

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):
 The Long Island Motor Parkway set many historic world precedents. It was the first reinforced concrete road outside of City Limits. (It was paved with a patented reinforced concrete called Hassam Paving.) It was the first limited access toll road; the first road with bridges over crossroads; and the first passenger road SIGNIFICANCE with banked curves.

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1908

ARCHITECT: _____

BUILDER: Mr. A. R. Pardington, General Manager

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: Speed limit was 30-40 mph, except on curves. The Long Island Motor Parkway Corporation was formed in 1906, headed by William K. Vanderbilt. The \$5,000,000 road extended east to Lake Ronkonkoma. Originally the road was sixteen feet wide. When it closed in 1937 it was twenty-two feet wide and extended forty-eight miles with forty-five bridges spanning intersecting roads. Sections of the Parkway were used for the Vanderbilt Cup Race, and the Indianapolis 500 of 1908, 1909, & 1910. It was hailed as the "world's first automobile road." Twelve toll houses and a replica of the Petit Trianon designed by famed architect John

21. ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Russell Pope were located along the route. The road always operated at a loss and in 1938 it was turned over to New York State in lieu of \$80,000 of accumulated taxes on the road.

22. SOURCES:
Atlas of the Ocean Shore of Suffolk County (Westerly Section)
 New York: E. Belcher Hyde, 1915, Pl. 6.
Bayside Times. Vol. 37, No. 4, August 13, 1970.

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"Long Island Magazine" - Newsday. April 15, 1973.

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Preservation Notes. Setauket, N.Y.: Society for the Preservation of
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February 1967.

Suffolk Times. July 10, 1975.

Journal of Long Island History, Long Island Historical Society, Fall 1962.



NEG.D-1

CI-1

Central Islip Road
7.5 min

CI-1



Northeast Sch

Brentwood Golf and Country Club

Ross Sanatorium

Brentwood

St Annes Sch

Stack Academy of St Joseph

Calvary Cem

Southeast Sch

Central Islip High Sch

Central Islip
Cordello Ave Sch

CENTRAL ISLIP
STATE HOSPITAL

Sewage Disposal

Filtration Beds



his own private siding when not in use. He also drove a tally-ho with four horses.

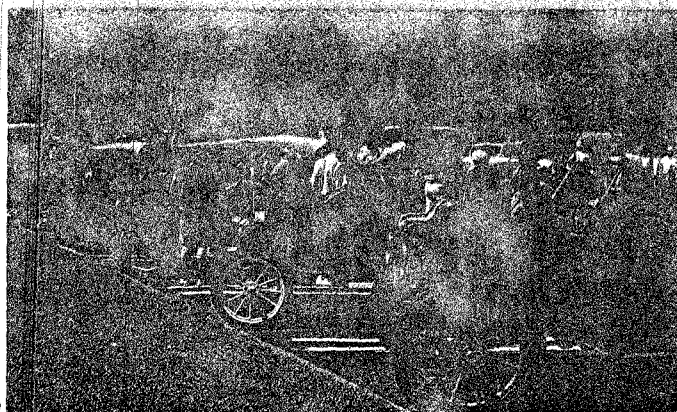
There were hundreds of beautiful homes with spacious grounds all along the south shore of Islip Town. Before the advent of the automobile, the summer population was enormous. Large homes were crowded with friends while boarding houses were filled with paying guests. It was the custom to go bathing and sailing in the morning. After lunch and a brief rest everybody went for a drive, some in tally-hos with liveried coachmen and footmen blowing horns, others in hired buggies or two-horse carriages. From two to six in the afternoon the roads had a steady stream of traffic. They became so dusty in the summertime in the well-populated areas that they were sprinkled with water. At first the expense of doing this was borne by private subscription, but later the highway department took over the cost.

Before the days of the automobile, hitching posts stood in front of most homes and stores and there were horse-blocks for the ladies to step up on, to get into their carriages. Then came the bicycle era, first the high-wheeler of which six were owned in Bay Shore. The first owner in that village was Eugene Hulse. Bicycle paths were built between the highway and the sidewalks. These were maintained by a fifty cent license bought by the bicycle owner and attached to the front fork of the wheel. Later came the automobile, William K. Vanderbilt being the first to own one in this locality. His little two-seater speeded through the dusty streets at twenty miles an hour, the occupants wearing dusters and the ladies' hats tied down. Dr. William Hulse and Charles Willey are credited with having the first really locally owned automobiles. Dr. Hulse's was called the "Northern". A little while after these two began to use this mode of travel, Dr. George S. King became the owner of a one-cylinder " Rambler." This means of transportation scared the horses and made driving unpleasant.

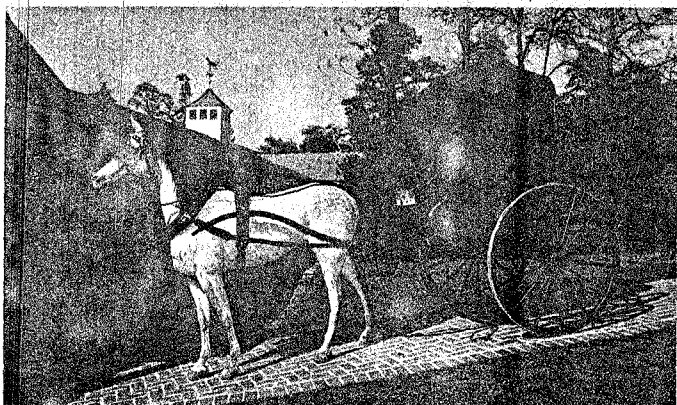
Along about this time the trolley craze started. The promoters organized companies and sold stock to local residents. A franchise was granted by the Islip Town Board in 1908 to the South Shore Traction Company to build and operate a trolley from Bay Shore to Bayport with a spur down Candee Avenue in Sayville connecting with a line running into Patchogue. This did not fully materialize as it was a losing proposition from the very start.

William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., conceived the idea of the Motor Parkway. A corporation was formed in 1906 with Vanderbilt as its president. The Commissioner of Highways of Islip Town signed a permit in 1908 for the Motor Parkway to pass through the town. It was built shortly after this, extending more or less parallel to the main line of the railroad and a mile or so north of it. It went as far as Ronkonkoma. It finally became a public highway.

The grandeur of the 1890s has gone. The village of Islip was then the largest community in the Town. Now Bay Shore ranks first, with Sayville next. We still have summer residents, mostly in Sayville, Bayport and Bay Shore. Many, however, have gone



55 Antique car rally held annually in June on Vanderbilt Parkway celebrating its adoption as a Huntington historical site.



56 An appropriate forerunner of the modern auto age is the above smart cabriolet owned by Alfred G. Vanderbilt who lost his life on the Lusitania. It may be seen at the Carriage House in Stony Brook among their collection of over 300 horse drawn vehicles. Also, harness shop, old print shop, blacksmith shop, 18th century barn, 19th century schoolhouse.

The Nation's First Modern Highway (1908)

VANDERBILT MOTOR PARKWAY was constructed by William K. Vanderbilt for the purpose of spurring American automobile manufacturers into surpassing European car designers. He may well be considered the father of the super-highway. It became the site of the Vanderbilt Cup Races, and originally extended from Flushing to Lake Ronkonkoma, although now only the section east of Huntington remains well maintained, modern, and serviceable.

The Motor Parkway pioneered many "firsts" in highway construction:

- ... First limited access toll road,
- ... First road to use reinforced concrete,
- ... First road to have no crossroads,
- ... First passenger car road to have banked turns for high speed driving safety,
- ... First road with non-skid surface,
- ... First privately owned paved road,
- ... First road to employ safety guard rails,
- ... First road fenced to keep animals and pedestrians from wandering onto the road,
- ... First road to use landscaping for a true "parkway" appearance,
- ... First road to be patrolled by specially trained highway police.

Road architects, highway engineers, motor car lovers & just plain curious came from all over the world to inspect and ride on this new wonder.

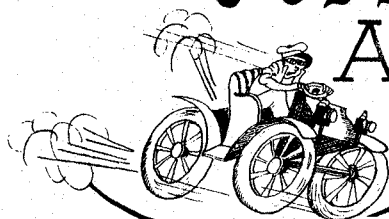
A HISTORICAL TOUR OF SUFFOLK
BY J. J. HEATLEY
GILBERT HANSE, COMMISSIONER

file: Motor Parkway

July 10, 1975

Reese & Tines

ANTIQUE AUTOS



by Henry Austin Clark, Jr.



Motoring History Made On Long Island

Most people think of Detroit as the "Motor City" and assume that Michigan is where the automobile first developed. Actually Long Island saw as much activity as, and probably more than, Michigan. While only a few factories were here on the Island, the East was far ahead of the Middle West in early motoring.

There were, of course, pioneer factories in southern Michigan, such as Oldsmobile (1901), Cadillac (1902), and Ford (1903), to mention only three. But there were older ones in the East, such as Duryea (1896) in Springfield, Mass., Columbia (1897) in Hartford, Stanley (1898) in Newton, Mass., Mobile (1899) in Tarrytown, N.Y., and even the American Daimler (late 1890's) in Long Island City.

Some of us have heard about the Glidden Tours run by the American Automobile Association from 1905 through 1913. There were earlier endurance runs as well, run in various parts of the country. One of these was the 100-mile Endurance Run of the Long Island Automobile Club which took place on April 20, 1901. The course started in Jamaica, went north to Flushing, east to East Norwich via Whitestone and Glen Cove, then south to Hicksville, and back west to Jamaica. There were enough wanderings to take a full hundred miles. Almost all of the cars finished in spite of foul weather.

Ask anyone what is the most important

auto race in America, and you are likely to hear "The Indianapolis 500". The first of these was held in 1911, and the first race on the track was in 1909, but it was for only 200 miles. By 1911 all six early Vanderbilts on Long Island had already been run. The first, in October of 1904, was the first international automobile race held in America, as well as the first race here of any importance. The trophy was donated by William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., America's foremost early motorist. That large silver cup stands today in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., a permanent monument to racing history on Long Island.

Halfway through these great races, after the 1906 event, crowd control problems were so great that the Nassau County Board of Supervisors, in an effort to stop the carnage, forbade continued use of the public roads. Undaunted, Vanderbilt and his associates bought up land—without the benefit of condemnations—and built a limited access toll road called the Long Island Motor Parkway. Eventually the road ran from Fresh Meadows in Queens to Lake Ronkonkoma, and portions were used for the 1908, 1909 and 1910 races. This was the world's first real automobile road, and parts of it still exist today.

While Long Island was never destined to become a great automotive manufacturing center, it certainly saw a great deal of touring and racing history.

The Long Island Motor Parkway

Reaches all Points on Long Island and has eliminated

45 Highway, Railway and Trolley Grade Crossings by the Most Modern Type of Bridge Construction

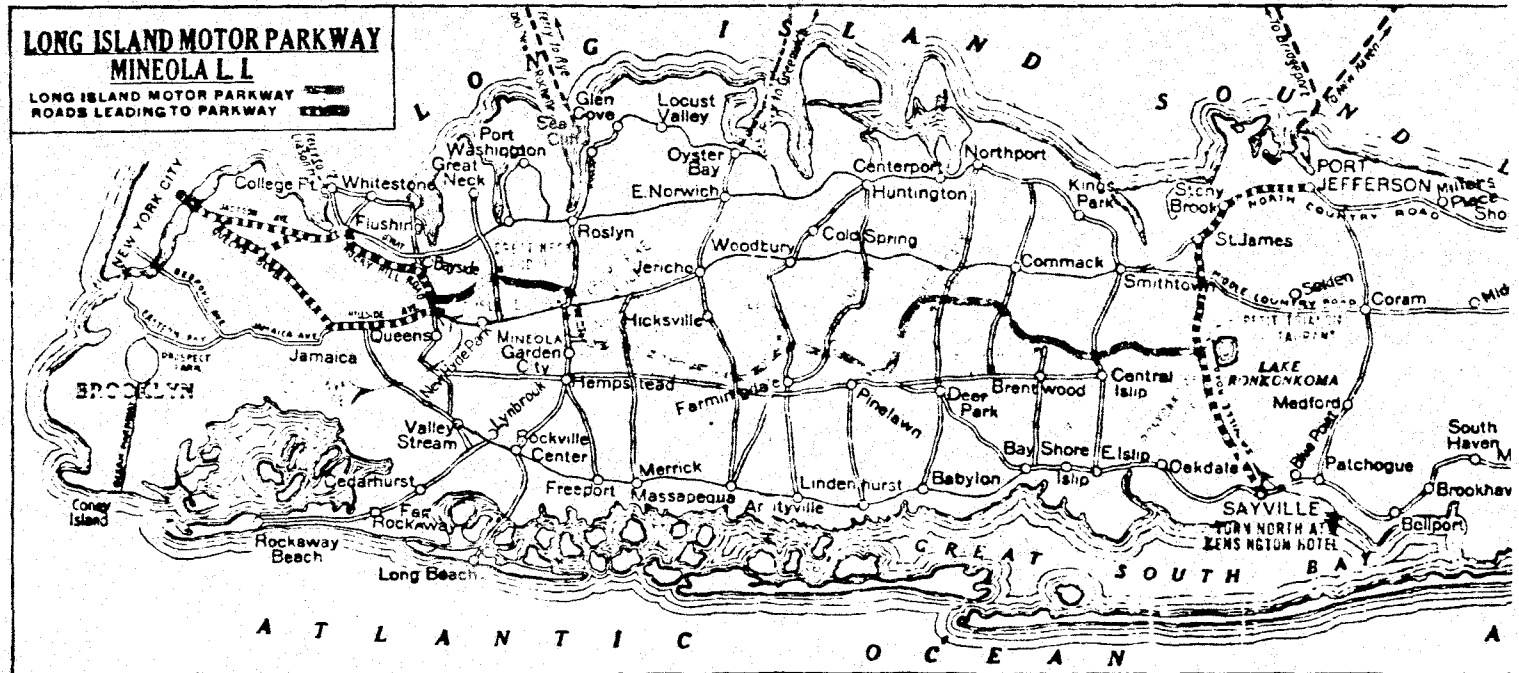
Entirely Paved with the latest type of Hassam Concrete Pavement, most suitably adapted to Automobile Traffic

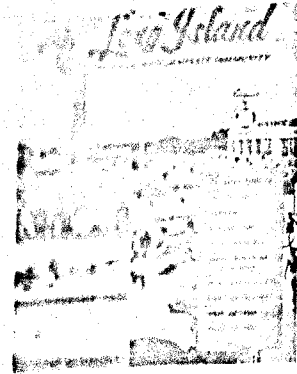
ADMISSION

CAR AND PARTY, daily tickets—good for the day, with privilege to leave and return	\$ 1.00
CAR AND PARTY, season tickets, January to December	50.00
CAR AND PARTY, season tickets, July to December	30.00
MOTOR CYCLES, daily tickets	50

FOR MOTOR CARS ONLY

ABSOLUTELY DUSTLESS





Illustrations for cover furnished at length courtesy of Long Island State Park Commission.

KNOW Long Island

AMERICA'S MOST COMPLETE COMMUNITY

CI-1

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Publisher
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Editor
ARTHUR HODGES

Business Manager
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Associate Editors

- COAST GUARD** — Dan Morris
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Contributors

- PAUL BLAUVELT
- HONORABLE JAMES N. GEHRIG
- GEORGE DADE
- ELSTON SWANSON
- COL. FRANK DeK. HUYLER
- JACK STRANDELDT
- CHARLES REA
- FREDERIC P. WIEDERSUM

Photo Editor
JOHN HEMMER

Photo Sources

- Long Island State Park Commission • Nassau County Public Information Bureau • Nassau County Department of Public Health • Port Of New York Authority • Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority • Mincola Fair • Joseph H. Maceway • Mitchell Air Force Base • Long Island Lighting Company • Long Island Rail Road • Long Island Telephone • John L. Loesel • Windward & Route • Wide-World Photos • Long Island State Hospital • Kings Park Hospital • Henry Treadwell, Jr. • United Community Choral • United Brotherhood • Suffolk County Air Force Base • Lockwood, Kessler & Bartlett • Long Island Chamber of Commerce • Photo Photo Service • Dr. M. Rodin • Nassau Museum • Frederick P. Nassau County Associates • Nassau Academy of Medicine • Harvey Weber • John Heimerl • Edward Justice • Long Island National Laboratory • Joe Dade • Fishing Long Island Waters • George C. Dade • Brennan Photo Service • Howard Frye • Walter D. Spelman • Nassau Engineering Corporation • Nassau Aviation Gyroscope Company • Nassau Aviation • Boy Scouts • Girl Scouts • Cerebral Palsy Ass'n • North Nassau Schools • All State Properties • Nassau Corp. • Edmund D. Purcell • Nassau Agency • Heckscher Museum • Nassau State Racing Association • John Mather Lupton Agency • New York City • Department of Parks

C O N T E N T S

A DEDICATION	15	
ILLUSTRATED MAP	12	
LANDED GENTRY OF THE NORTH SHORE	19	
HISTORY, LEGEND AND FOLKLORE	23	
AN ERA OF GREATNESS PASSES	27	
SPEED AND DUST ON A ROAD TO NOWHERE	29	
GOVERNMENT BY CHARTER	33	
PUBLIC SAFETY	39	
COURTS	41	
A CLOAK AROUND CHILDREN	43	
IF IT HAPPENS WE ARE READY	45	
HOMES GROW FASTER THAN TREES	51	
FROM POTATO FIELDS TO PAVEMENTS	57	
AND STILL THEY COME	59	
A COMPLEX MASS OF MOVEMENT	63	
THERE IS A BONUS IN TIME FOR THE FAMILY MAN	65	
THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY	67	
SHOPPING ON THE NEW "MAIN STREET"	69	
THE OLD AND THE NEW	73	
THE TOWN AND VILLAGE	77	
LONG ISLAND'S AVIATION BECOMES THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY	81	
FROM THE PLAINS OF MID-ISLAND TO LE BOURGET'S RUNWAY	87	
THE LIFE BLOOD OF THE COMMUNITY	89	
YOUR HOME IS THEIR BUSINESS	93	
LABOR ON A UNITED FRONT	97	
A MODERN SCIENCE BECOMES A MAJOR INDUSTRY	99	
HOME SERVICE AND INDUSTRY GROWTH	105	
LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE	109	
THEY DEAL IN KNOWLEDGE	111	
CONTOURS CHANGE	116	
POTATOES, DUCKS AND CAULIFLOWER	119	
THE WORKER HAS A CAMPUS	121	
NEW PLACES OF WORSHIP	125	
EXPANDED HOSPITAL FACILITIES	129	
L.I. LEADS IN THE CARE OF THE MENTALLY ILL	133	
HELP FOR THOSE IN NEED	137	
PLACES TO GO AND ROADS TO GO ON	143	
RECREATION AND PLEASURE TO ORDER	145	
SPACE FOR FUN AND RELAXATION	149	
A RIBBON OF CONCRETE	151	
WORLD'S FINEST BRIDGES	153	
HIGHWAYS, TURNPIKES AND ROADS	155	
PLAYGROUND FOR MILLIONS	161	
A DREAM COMES TRUE	165	
A STRIP OF SAND	169	
SPACE FOR FUN AND RELAXATION	171	
POUNDING HOOFS BENEATH THE LIGHTS	175	
SUNSHINE, CHARM AND WEALTH	177	
A TOUCH OF SUN AND THE TANG OF SALT AIR	179	
EDUCATION GEARED TO MODERN NEEDS	183	
LONG ISLAND'S NEW SCHOOLS	185	
SCHOOL OPERATION IS BIG BUSINESS	189	
OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCED STUDY	193	
LOW COST EDUCATION FOR ALL	199	
EDUCATION AT A PRICE	201	
SCHOOLS FOR SPECIAL STUDY	203	
MUSIC, PLAYS AND FESTIVALS	205	
SNUG HARBORS FOR TINY CRAFT	211	
THE ALLURING CALL OF THE WATER SIREN	217	
LONG ISLAND'S MILES OF SHORELINE	221	

Dan Morris
L.I. MOTOR PARKWAY
Arthur Hodges
Hon. James N. Gehrig
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John Pascal
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C1-1

OUT IN FRONT IN VANDERBILT CUP RACE

The leading car in the Vanderbilt Cup Race roars down a dirt road lined on each side by spectators, leaving a cloud of dust and smoke in its wake. It will be noted this car carries a passenger, presumably a mechanic in case of engine trouble or a flat tire. The first Vanderbilt Cup Race was held in 1904 and the last in 1910, each over a slightly different course.

SPEED AND DUST ON A ROAD TO NOWHERE

... the motor parkway sets the stage for modern roads then passes into history.

Back in that misty long ago when horsepower was just that — Nellie and Dobbin out in front of a fringe-topped surrey — something new was fast becoming the plaything of the rich.

It chugged, it smoked, it sputtered and roared but it moved, and it moved faster than old Nellie and Dobbin, now back in the barn, could ever dream of moving.

The really big question then was "what's it going to move on?" The dusty lanes and country roads certainly weren't built for speed.

Well, one answer — and perhaps the first really good answer — came from a group of wealthy Long Islanders. Together they financed what was, in its time, the most famous road in America.

They called it the Long Island Motor Parkway.

It was a 48-mile private toll road, rich in bold new ideas and the forerunner of all the modern parkways, thruways and turnpikes that weave across the vast breadth of America today.

And yet, incredibly, it was a total failure. It lost the race to Progress. What happened was that before it could be completed, World War I came along and delayed construction. It never went as far as its originators had planned, and by the time auto traffic was heavy enough to support a lengthy toll road, other and better public roads were going up on either side of it, matching its distance mile for mile — and then far beyond.

Heading the Motor Parkway's financial backers was William K. Vanderbilt Jr. Sections of the parkway were used in the famed Vanderbilt Cup race — an event that proved a timely spur to American manufacturers to build better cars.

Along with Vanderbilt in the venture were such fabulously wealthy men as J. Pierpont Morgan, Jacob H.

Schiff, Harry Payne Whitney, Henry Ford and Alfred G. Vanderbilt. Everyone but Ford had an estate on Long Island.

Vanderbilt and his associates spent about \$5,000,000 on the parkway. And, although they collected thousands of dollars across some 30 years, the road never proved a financial success. It always operated at a loss.

In 1937, the Parkway began its long, sad road to oblivion. The project was abandoned. Vanderbilt simply turned it over to New York State in lieu of about \$80,000 in taxes that had accumulated against the Long Island Motor Parkway Corp.

Today, virtually every trace of that long-ago road has disappeared. Most of its bridges have been destroyed.

TROPHY FOR WORLD-FAMOUS EVENT

The Vanderbilt Cup, coveted trophy in the Vanderbilt Cup Races held on Long Island from 1904 to 1910, stood 30 inches high and held 10 gallons. Standing beside the cup are Col. George Robertson, left, first American winner of the cup, and Glen Ethredge, a racing contemporary in the pioneer days of the sport.

