

A BREATH OF HOME

by Jim Mourning

When racing enthusiasts gather to talk of the Vanderbilt Cup races, their reveries drift to its growth to classic proportions, to the days when it made the United States an important name in racing circles, to the time when the starting line saw near legendary men like Nuvolari and Rosemeyer. But one man is invariably overlooked. He is a man who nearly gave his life in the Vanderbilt Cup Races without ever getting to the starting grid. He is my great-grandfather on my mother's side — Sir Thruppence Cadwalliger, III.

One day, in a quaint little English village named Ripping-on-Avon, Sir Thruppence stood talking to Fortisan Thermo-throckle, his loyal and trusted friend.

"Fortisan, my loyal and trusted friend," said Sir Thruppence, "I think I shall travel to the colonies to participate in this Vanderbilt Cup dicing."

"Ye gads," cried Fortisan, "what about the Indians?"

"I shall be prepared," Sir Thruppence assured him. "I am taking my horse pistol with me."

"But," asked Fortisan, "where will you find a horse that can shoot?"

Beating to his knees with a limp tea bag, Sir Thruppence stalked away, boarded a ship and set sail for the United States. But the trip across was as bumpy as a Bugatti's ride and when Sir Thruppence staggered ashore, green and haggard, he could only make his way to the hotel and fall into the bed with a prodigious moan.

As the day of the race grew nearer, Sir Thruppence grew weaker and weaker until, at last, he had four full acres of weakers. Just when it looked as if he were breathing his last, a friend who had just arrived from England dropped past.

"Not feeling top drawer, Chappie?"

"Gnaaaa!" said Sir Thruppence.

"Must be beastly, being cooped up in here," said the friend.

"Urk," cried Sir Thruppence.

"I have my Jaguar outside, you know," volunteered the friend. "Brought it over from England. Would you like one last drive in the country?"

"Aaaaagh," murmured Sir Thruppence.

Taking this as an affirmative answer, the friend carried Sir Thruppence out and dropped him into the Jaguar. For several hours they blasted around the countryside, until a bit of color (blue) returned to Sir Thruppence's face and he could mutter an intelligible word or two. After a time, they returned to town.

"Put in gayrage," murmured Sir Thruppence as they drew up in front.

Stepping down on the accelerator, the friend snapped into the driveway and roared toward the garage, running over a garden rake as he did so. With explosive force, the tyre gave way. Mustering his last bit of strength, Sir Thruppence threw himself from the car and crawled forward until his face was bathed in the flow of escaping air. He lay there for a long moment, then bounded to his feet.

"Gad," he boomed, "nothing like a breather of home."

"Good show," shouted his friend. "Now you'll be ready for the race."

"Nonsense," thundered Sir Thruppence, smiting him a friendly blow across the forehead with a tire iron. "Must get back to Jolly Old England before the stimulant wears off."

Being a man of his word, once his mind was made up, he left.

And that is how one man came to the United States to compete in the Vanderbilt Cup Race and nearly lost his life without ever reaching the starting grid. It is, indeed, a courageous band of men who spend their life chasing the checkered flag.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1956

A practice period will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Practice period is mandatory and drivers that do not complete a minimum of 6 laps practice will not be permitted to race.

Race 1 — Prod. Sedans up to 1500cc. — 30 min.

Race 2 — Formula III and Formula Libre — 30 min.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1956

11:00 A.M.

Race 3 — Prod. under 1500cc. — 45 min.

Race 4 — Prod. over 1500cc. — 45 min.

Race 5 — Mod. under 1500cc. — 45 min.

Race 6 — Mod. over 1500cc. — 1 1/2 hours.

If less than three cars start, the car will move up one class.

If three cars in one class start, one award will be made. If four start, two and if five start, three awards.

**Class Awards and
Overall Trophies
In All Races**