

THE EARLY DAYS OF AUTOMOBILES

by ELIZABETH JANEWAY

Around the track at 102 miles per hour came George Robertson at the wheel of his demon Locomobile. The crowd shrieked with excitement. The year was 1908, and the American Locomobile was the fastest car in the world.

It seemed a stunning victory—the culmination of the dreams and hard work of a handful of young men who believed fervently in the new-fangled horseless carriage.

But Robertson's victory was only one proud moment in the whole rollicking story of the automobile in America. From the day the Duryea brothers won the first great horseless carriage race in 1895 at a speedy 5 miles an hour, to the super-streamlined cars of today, the story of the automobile has been one of trial and error, of laughter and disappointment, and of courageous men taking risks and tempting fortune.

In *The Early Days of Automobiles*, Elizabeth Janeway presents a warm and rousing American pageant, a pageant of people building a network of highways, closing frontiers, getting to know each other. Over muddy cow tracks, over mule paths the American people traveled. In their Stanley Steamers, and their curved-dash Oldsmobiles they rumbled and bumped along. And as they traveled the shouts of "Get a horse!" grew fainter and fainter. The Age of the Automobile came into its own!

RANDOM HOUSE, NEW YORK

