

ferry and proceeded to Ocean Springs. There the line of autos traveled up and over Biloxi Bay to the foot of the wooden D'Iberville Bridge. Moving southward over the bridge the convoy paraded through Biloxi to the White House Hotel for lunch. At the White House they talked of eliminating ferries and building bridges. Then, joined by the Biloxi automobiles, the convoy proceeded to Gulfport where the courthouse would be the scene of the booster crescendo.

That night at the courthouse Judge Chidsey observed that, "Three things are revolutionizing our social system—the motor car, good roads, and the movies. The roads are 20 years behind the motor cars." He was correct. In 1900 there had been one automobile in the state of Mississippi. As Chidsey spoke, the count in the state had reached approximately 100,000 autos.

The automobilists spent the night at the Great Southern Hotel. The next day the convoy drove the front beach road to the Bay of St. Louis ferry and crossed over for a meeting in Bay St. Louis. They did not go to New Orleans because no direct road existed. After the meeting in Bay St. Louis the boosters recrossed the ferry to Pass Christian and returned to their respective homes.

### Chronology 1923-1928

**February 26, 1923. *Daily Herald.*** Joe S. Richardson Jr., president of Free Tire Service, Inc., of Gulfport announced an alternate route to cut the driving distance to New Orleans by four hours. By way of comparison, the distance by rail from Gulfport to the New Orleans terminal was 68 miles. According to Richardson, the usual automobile route from Gulfport to New Orleans began with a drive on the front beach road to Pass Christian, "thence northward and westward through Kiln to Logtown. At Logtown the ferry is taken across Four Rivers to Indian Village, from which point the drive is to North Shore [of Lake Pontchartrain south of Slidell] where ferriage is made to Chef Menteur thence to New Orleans. This route covers 124 miles." Richardson's shorter route, which totaled 84 miles, involved driving from Gulfport to Henderson Point and crossing the Bay of St. Louis by ferry. According to Richardson, "From Bay St. Louis a 20-mile stretch of good graded country road leads to Pearlington, where the steamer *Lena M. H.* leaving at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon lands at Chef Menteur at 5:30. From Chef Menteur to Canal Street, New Orleans is 22 miles of paved road." The ferriage either way was the same—11 dollars [multiply by 15 to 20 to get an idea of 2003 dollars].

[According to Harral Ayers, managing director of the Spanish Trail Highway Association, the *Lena M. H.* could carry only 30 cars a day between Chef Menteur and Pearlington. Ayers further stated, "often in New Orleans travelers waited in the hotels for days until they could get reservations on this little ferry."]

**March 27, 1923. *Daily Herald.*** The Sixth Annual Convention of the Old Spanish Trail Highway Association began the night before in New Orleans. A total of 140 delegates attended the convention representing every state except New Mexico that was crossed by the transconti-