

interesting things are over the next hill, so you must stop at each junction, appraise the various roads and choose the one which promises the most excitement.

From Vincennes, heading due west across Illinois, I discovered one of the most serious drawbacks of riding a small bike: wind. A strong headwind sometimes necessitated a crouched riding position and a lower gear. All was not bleak, however. I was happy enough to become so engrossed in staving that I ran off the road into a ditch. The only damage was to my pride and the wooden luggage rack, which I tied up with string to better-than-ever condition.

East St. Louis, Illinois brought a welcome visit with relatives. It was interesting to hear their varying reactions to my journey.

(Horrified) "Bobby riding all over on one of those!"

(Amazed) "Can't get over it!"

(Envious/approving) "Wah! I coulda done that when I was 21."

(Encouraging) "Above all have fun."

It also brought a visit to the woods and fields of my boyhood. As might be expected, they had been destroyed by commercial development. But that's another story

My first day in Missouri brought 40-degree temperatures and rain. Camping was out of the question so I spent the night in a motel, standing for almost an hour under a hot shower trying to stop shaking. The only other entertainment in the squalid motel room was Gideon's Bible; which if you take time to read it, isn't all that bad.

The next day I climbed that large upwelling of land known as the Ozark Plateau — a very pleasant place to be in the spring. The road was patched so heavily it looked like an asphalt quilt. The weather was balmy, and the tree-covered hills looked like mounds of green whipped cream. The occasional farms, each tucked away in its own little valley complete with its own set of chickens along the road, were gray, weathared and rusty. There were very few signs of human presence.

When I had crossed the Ozarks and returned to the "flatlands", I found myself on a straight and level road over-run with turtles. Hating the idea of them becoming squashed by cars, I stopped

In the Missouri Ozarks the mood is an almost primeval quiet, accentuated by the occasional farms, each tucked away in its own little valley.

