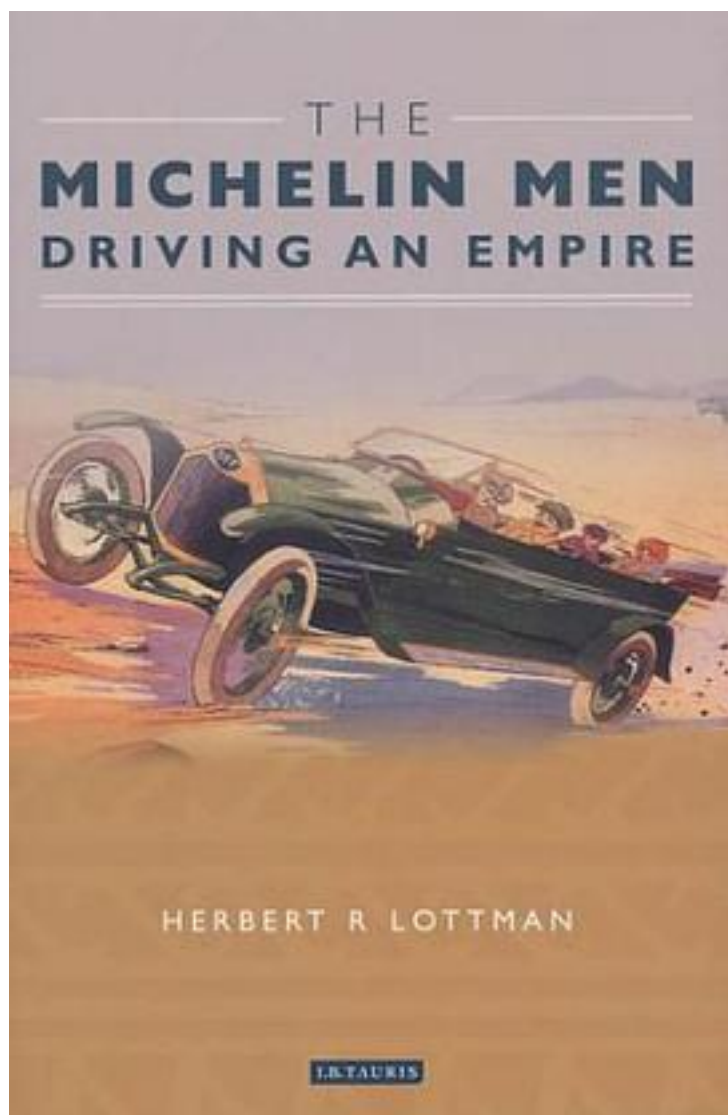


The Michelin Men



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The remarkable story of how two brothers--Edouard and Andre Michelin--turned the sleepy family rubber firm in the heart of rural France into one of the most innovative and successful tire makers in the world. Edouard, a landscape painter, displayed an engineering genius for tire making and product innovation, while Andre, trained as an engineer, displayed an artistic genius for advertising and marketing. Together they kick-started the world's automobile industry and gave us one of the most famous and best loved company logos--the "Michelin Man." In their relentless search for new ways to publicize and market their products, they created a tourist industry around the motor car and their now-legendary Michelin Guides.

作者介绍:

Lottman (Man Ray's Montparnasse), former European correspondent for PW, delivers an intriguing history of the French family-controlled tire company that had its beginnings in 1832, when two cousins opened a factory in the small central French town of Clermont-Ferrand. Two of the founders' grandsons, Edouard and Andre Michelin, took over and began manufacturing rubber bicycle tires. They later expanded to the production of tires for automobiles and planes, advertising their wares by sponsoring long-distance races and, in 1900, publishing the first Guide Michelin, which encouraged travel by car. Even more successful promotion occurred when Bidendum, the rotund company logo, was created. Considering that Lottman did not have the cooperation of the Michelins, renowned for obsessive secrecy in product development and finances, his readable account is surprisingly detailed about the inner workings of the business. He presents the positive aspects of their enterprise, including a reputation for quality and innovation (they invented a detachable tire in 1891 and the radial tire in 1946) that insured dominance of the international tire market. Their highly popular, incorruptible travel guides still advise travelers where to eat and lodge. Lottman, however, does not neglect Michelin's less attractive activities. The company has always been paternalistic and virulently anti-union, and, in the early years, fired labor activists. Lottman explains that before WWII, some family members were involved in a right-wing terrorist bombing and, during the war, the company cooperated with the Vichy government and produced war materiel for the Nazis. Photos.

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