The Society of Automotive Historians

AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW

SUMMER 1986 ISSUE NO. 20

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The Society of Automotive Historians INC

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Editorial Comment

IN SEARCH OF ACCURACY

At a meeting of the Pioneer Chapter of the SAH held on April 27, 1985, the subject of accurate reporting of items related to automotive history was discussed. At hand was the continuing presentation of misguided and erroneous statements concerning automotive history which have appeared in a great number of books, magazine articles, and newspaper items, or presented in radio, television programs, or even in motion pictures, one of which showed what was supposed to be a brand new 1906 touring car being followed by what was clearly an Overland of 1913 or 1914.

Surely the producers of that film must have known, or at least been told, that the Overland didn't fit the period of the story, but assumed that most people wouldn't know the difference, or wouldn't care even if they did.

But those of us who write the books and articles *do* know the difference, and care a great deal about the accuracy of our work, for what we write as fact will be used by future students of automotive history as their reference material.

Our present reference sources include the automotive trade publications, available in many libraries and personal collections, and also the memories of a dwindling number of people who were associated with the industry over the past several decades. Unfortunately, the trade publications, although current at the time of publication, printed quite a bit of material as contributed by manufacturers (or would-be manufacturers) just as received. Most of these trade publications were issued weekly, which left no time for verification of the material sent to them. One organization with shoe-string financing published serial numbers and specifications covering seven years of non-manufacturing without building a single model of the car they were to represent, and to this day there are some writers who firmly believe that such a car was really produced.

Two articles in this issue will demonstrate the sometimes unreliability of several sources which could lead future readers or historians to be mis-informed. First there is the case of the Eagle ("The Phantom of Cincinnati" by Keith Marvin), which existed only in the form of a brochure which was short on illustrations and completely devoid of text, and may have been a prototype of an advertising piece for a car planned but never built, or it may even be a surviving remnant of a study course in advertising. Whatever it really was, the fact that it was printed could cause some future compiler of lists of cars once made to include "EAGLE: Eagle Automobile Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1923."

The Beaver Six, of Gresham, Oregon, presents another enigma. That there was such a vehicle there can be no doubt. A photograph of the car exists, and the building in which it was built still stands, but how many were made, and what eventually became of them, are a couple of unanswered questions. SAH member Richard Larrowe, of Corbett, Oregon, devoted much time and effort to the research of the Beaver's history, and has come up with several accounts provided by former employees and other people who were involved at one time or another with the doings of the Beaver State Motor Company, but these accounts disagree in many particulars. The only really solid facts known about the Beaver are that at least one car was made, and that this car was used for several years by Mr. P. A. Combs, president of the company.

Our article is actually a series of letters to Mr. Larrowe from people who were in a position to know the facts, plus a reprint of a newspaper story by a Portland newspaper columnist. All of these accounts disagree on several points, so future historians may write different stories about the history of the Beaver.

Probably the best source of very early automotive history is to be found in the trade publications of the early years. These include such magazines as *Automotive Industries, Motor Age, Horseless Age, The Automobile, Automobile Trade Journal (formerly Cycle & Automobile Trade Journal), MoToR, Automobile Topics,* and other not-so-well-known periodicals. In these journals, issue by issue–if one has the time and patience to search the older editions– can be found the detailed history of many makes of cars, both well-known and obscure, from their founding to their almost inevitable bankruptcy. These publications are available in many of the larger public libraries, and in the libraries of many universities. If you're lucky you may be able to pick them up at flea markets, as bound volumes or single issues. Annual show numbers are the most desired, and consequently the highest priced.

If you care to invest in a low-priced microfilm reader, many of these magazines are readily available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. This source has complete runs of thousands of serial publications on every subject, including *Automotive Industries* and *Motor Age* from 1899 through 1975–just to name a couple.

As mentioned above, trade journals such as these make their share of errors, too, but all too often such mistakes are the result of mis-information supplied by automobile makers themselves, often based on expectations rather than accomplished fact. Thus for: "Work has been started on the fine new plant of the XYZ Motor Company," read: We made some rough sketches on the backs of some napkins at lunch today." The most flagrant of such errors, however, are usually repudiated or corrected in following issues.

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HAVE YOU MISSED AN ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL?

Following the mailing of each issue of the *SAH Journal,* undelivered copies begin to trickle in to our publishing office in Marietta, Georgia. These are the copies which should have gone to members who have changed their addresses without letting us know. Each of these returned *Journals* is marked "Return to Sender" – Postage Due 22c" plus a yellow label supplied by the post office giving the member's correct new address.

Up to the present date we have dutifully paid the mail carrier the 22c due for the return of the item, and then sent another to the new and correct address by first class mail for another 22c. (Bulk Rate mail cannot be forwarded, nor can single copies of such mail be sent by anything but first class mail).

As originally sent when the entire issue is mailed, postage costs 12½ cents. When a copy is returned and remailed, an additional 44 cents is required which, when added to the original mailing cost, SAH has spent a total of 56½ cents just to deliver a copy to just ONE member–usually a member who didn't let us know he had moved.

Therefore, we have, as of the previous issue, discontinued the policy of remailing these returned copies of both the *Journal* and *Automotive History Review.* The new address, as supplied by the postal service, will replace the old one on the mailing list, effective at once, and delivery of both SAH publications will be resumed. If you'd like to have a copy of the issue you have missed, send a 22c stamp to SAH, 1616 Park Lane, Marietta, Georgia 30066.

THE PHANTOM OF CINCINNATI

BY KEITH MARVIN

Did you ever hear of the Eagle automobile built in Cincinnati? You didn't? I'm not surprised, although I have. What about the Robbins or the Tiffany, touted in the immediate post World War I era? Failing these, we might mention the Oriole, the Conquerer, and the Huntley. You've probably never heard of these, either. Neither has Nick Georgano or others who have compiled definitive listings of American automobiles.

Why are the names strange? Because the cars were never produced in the first place. Not only that—there wasn't any intention to build, so don't run through your files of MoToR and MOTOR AGE to track them down. They aren't there.

The Eagle of Cincinnati and the others noted above are phantoms—names drawn out of a hat as needed, so to speak, as a part of courses being taught in commercial advertising.

In these courses, an integral part of the study entails the layout of advertising copy for newspapers or promotion on a larger scale. As the automobile was, and is, a part of the nation's largest industry, it is natural that material of this kind would be printed. The Eagle brochure. then is typical of this sort of material, and this is the probable story of its existence, if I may be allowed to conjecture on its basic purpose. It was discovered not too long ago by SAH member Steve Richmond, of California, while rummaging through a flea market.

Like others of its kind, the brochure lists the name of the car, the name and location of the "business" itself, a picture of the product and its radiator badge, as well as some highly attractive artwork. In this regard, it is more than likely that the piece was printed in conjunction with a commercial art course rather than an advertising course, but the consensus of opinion I have received from a number of those in the know is that it was probably ad-related.

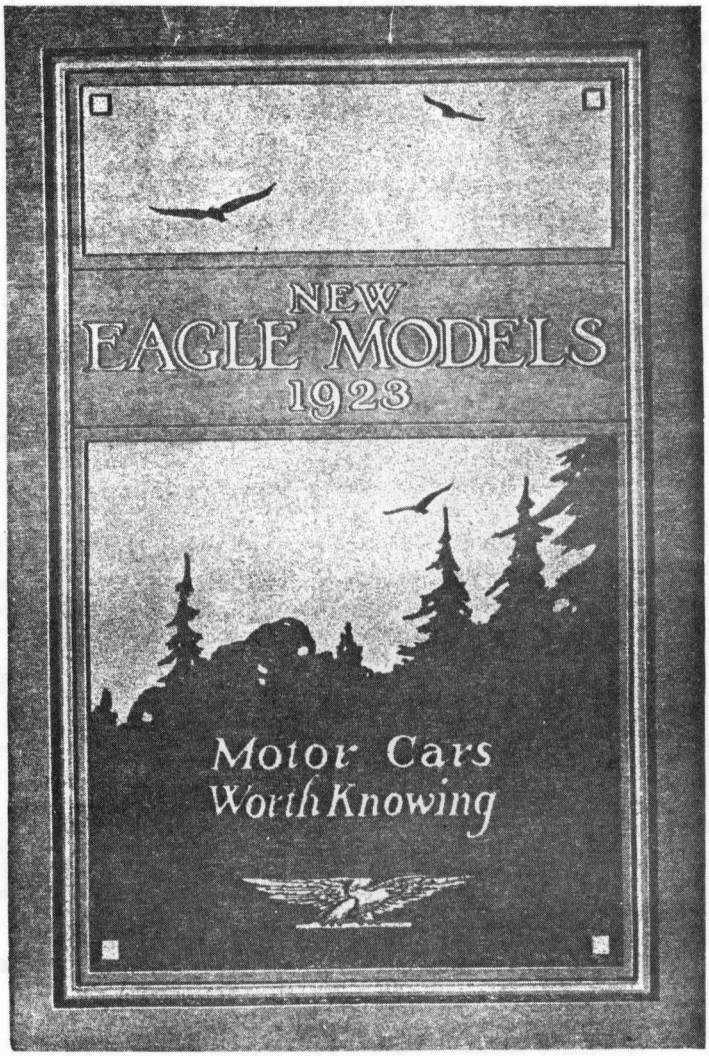
In any case, it is a pretty piece of design, with its half-dozen pages printed on buff coated paper and bound in double blue cardboard covers. Emblazoned on the front is a silhouette of pine trees and flying birds—presumably eagles—and a slogan, "Motor Cars Worth Knowing."

The only thing missing from the prospectus is the text. In its place is a series of straight horizontal lines simulating that text and indicating its placement under ordinary circumstances.

Upon discovering this booklet, the finder's first thought was that it was a prototype promotion piece—as indeed it was— but for either an existing make of automobile at that time, or of one planned for production in 1923, since the catalog is dated. The drawn picture of the Eagle as shown therein typifies the middle-priced fine car of the period, a disc-wheeled coupe with Packard or Rickenbacker overtones, and in a setting replete with affluence. Below the sketch is a coat-of-arms, obviously intended to depict the Eagle radiator badge, and suspiciously similar to that of the contemporary Maxwell. Like the text, the badge remains wordless.

Fascinated by his find, Mr. Richmond proceeded to look into the history of the name "Eagle" itself as it related to cars, and to learn something about the concern which purportedly manufactured this one. He contacted me, and together we checked out the history of the name—with some startling discoveries.

We discovered that "Eagle" had been a popular name for many cars over the decades, and that Eagles had been built in such diverse locations as Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit, Buffalo, Sandusky, Ohio; Rahway, New Jersey; Middletown, Connecticut; Elmira, New York; and Flint, Michigan, but that no listing could be found for Cincinnati. Undaunted, he then checked out corporation records for Ohio plus local sources in Cincinnati itself.



This is the cover of the Eagle brochure, or booklet. The actual size of this item is 6 by 9 inches. It is printed in various shades of blue, ranging from very dark to very light.

To his amazement, he learned that not only was an Eagle automobile listed as having been made there but that its builder had been "The Eagle Automobile Company," exactly as noted on the brochure. This turned out to be nothing more than a remarkable coincidence. The Cincinnati Eagle had indeed existed–on paper, at least–in 1909, but despite every effort we were unable to prove that any cars had actually been built and sold.

From the standpoint of time, the closest we came was in the Eagle shown at the New York Auto Show in 1924, an $865 car built by Durant to fit into the Durant line between the Star and the Durant. This Eagle died a-borning, as it turned out, and never got beyond the prototype stage.

We compared notes, and found several interesting things about the brochure.

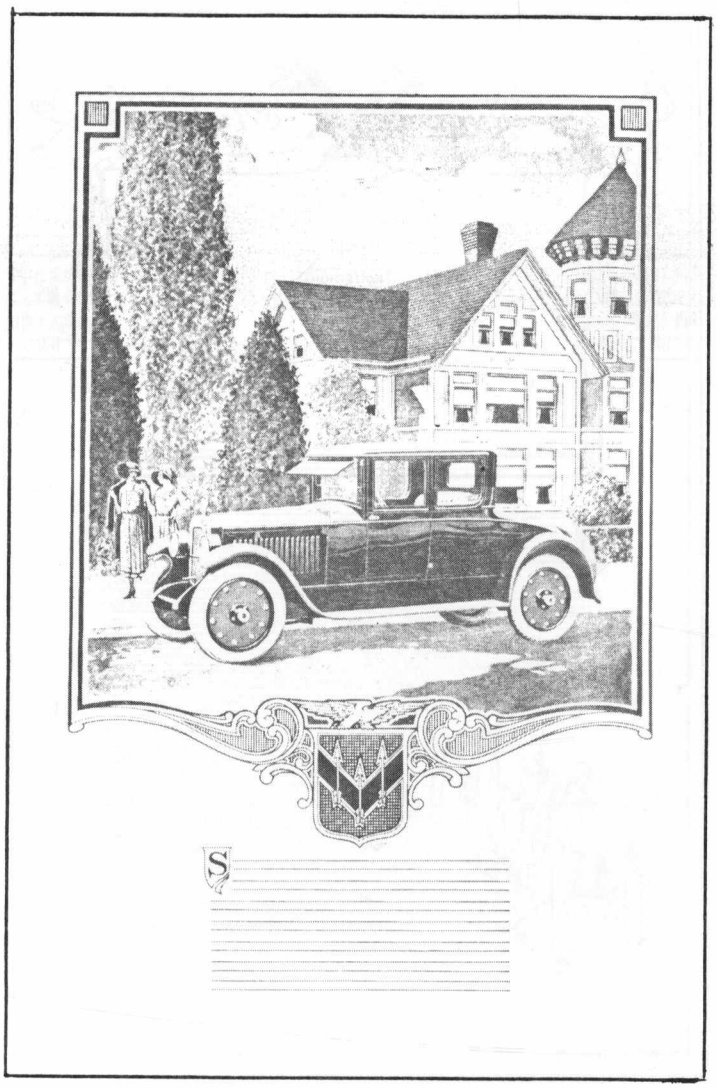
As previously noted, it did not come close timewise to Durant's attempt, as his Eagle pilot models had to have been completed during the 1923 calendar year in order to be exhibited at the Auto Show in January 1924. Yet the fact that this prospectus heralded the "New Eagle Models for 1923" implies that this would have to have been a 1922 effort. Promotional material of this sort always appears several months in advance of the stated model of car.

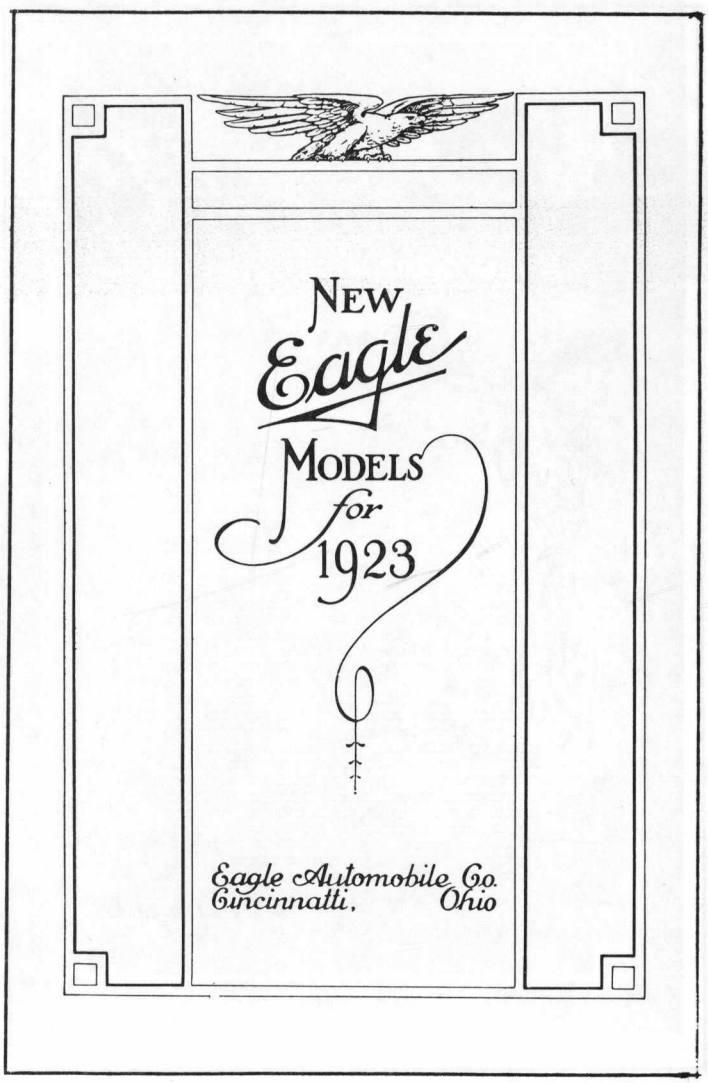
The Durant Eagle effort had existed only as a wooden-spoked touring car. The sketch in the blue-covered booklet features a disc-wheeled coupe. Besides, Durant had no Cincinnati operations in his vast automotive empire.

Too, we cannot consider any possibility that there was a connecting link between the Cincinnati Eagle of 1909 and that shown in the brochure. The earlier effort, despite the similarity of its name and address, had been off the books for more than a decade.

And finally–an odd point– the name of the car's home bailiwick was misspelled 'Cincinnatti' in the prospectus.

What, then, is the story? I think that there can be little doubt that Mr. Richmond's booklet was printed to illustrate





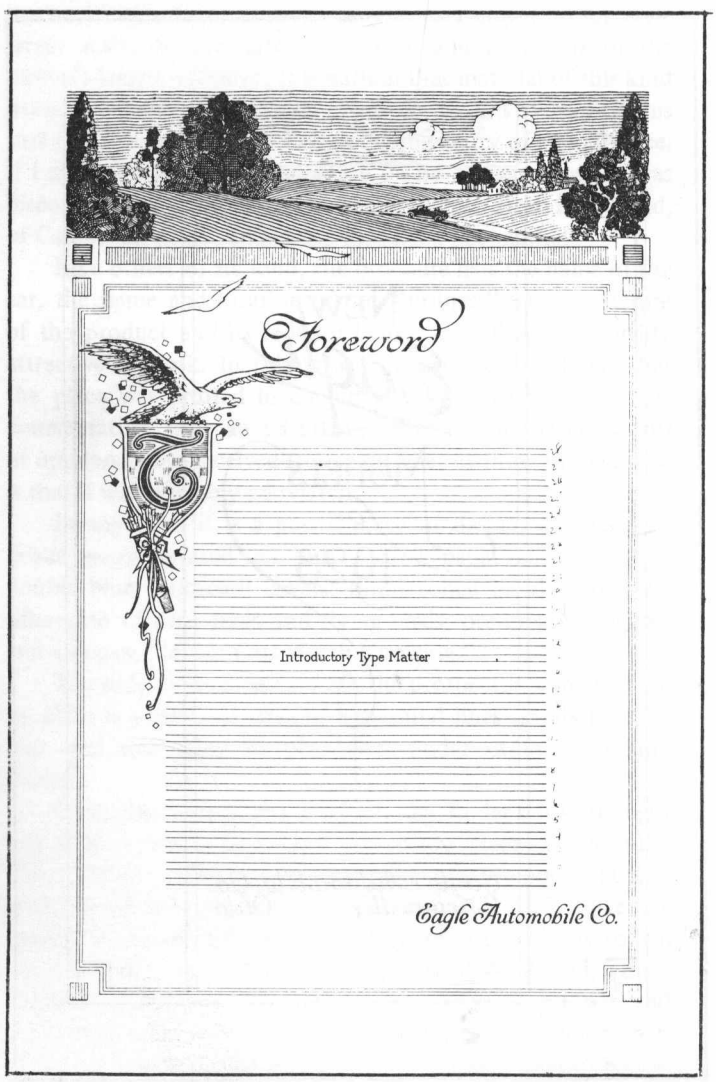
imaginative advertising layout. But why, you may ask, would "Eagle" have been selected as an apt name? And why Cincinnati?

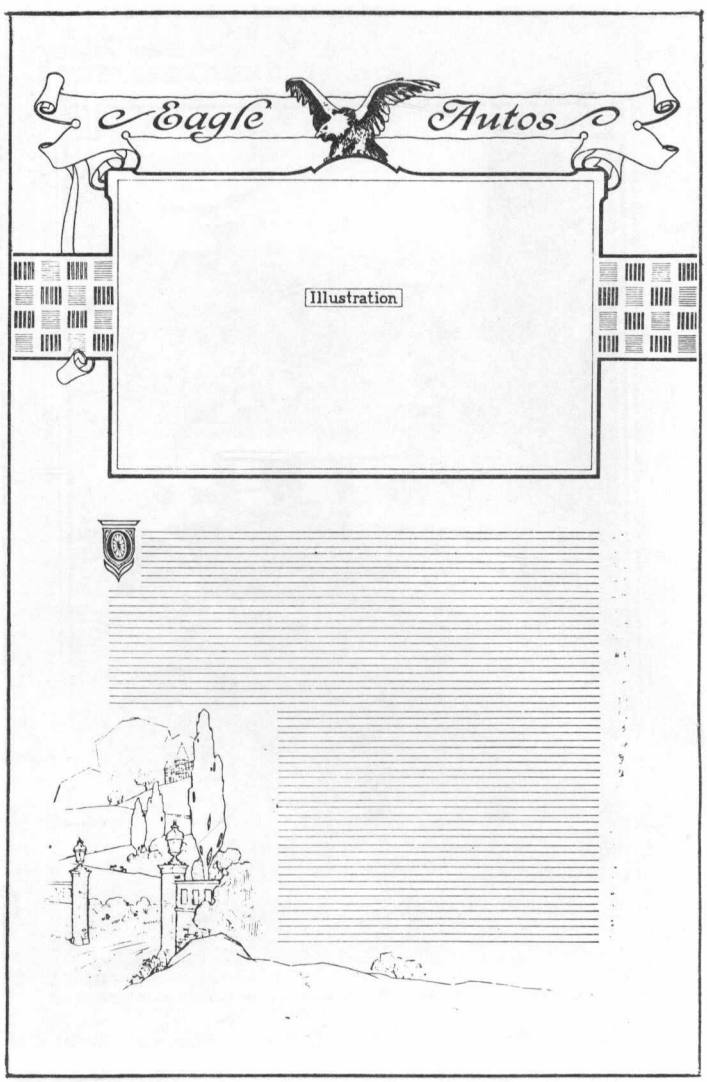
Why not? There was no existing Eagle car being made at the time and there has ever been a colorful connotation connected with our National Bird. This was probably printed sometime in 1922, remember. Durant hadn't started development of his Eagle at the time, or if he had, details of his operation were still under wraps. As for Cincinnati, my guess is that it was pulled out of the air and not by someone living in or around that city, either, where it wouldn't have been misspelled by anyone bright enough to be working on a course in advertising layout. This item was found in California, and I'm convinced that it was printed there.

There have been many instances in which aspiring enterprises have used literature promoting a product, either legitimately intended or of the stock swindle variety, and these pieces are widely sought today by collectors and automotive historians. The Eagle catalog is something far removed, as it represents a make of automobile which never was nor was ever intended to be. Some examples of this sort are little more than amateur attempts.

This one, however, was a costly endeavor, and although we don't know its source or those who designed it, we can admire its artistry and imagination. Examples such as this turn up from time to time, but they are scarce, and I would dearly love to know if there is anyone out there who has a duplicate piece and who might know the answer to the mystery it still remains.

The author would like to express his appreciation to Steve Richmond, William J. Lewis, Ralph Dunwoodie, and Strother MacMinn for their help in the preparation of this article.





EPILOGUE

Since writing this article, I have encountered three more examples of this basic type of literature. They were diverse in concept, yet with an underlying common denominator. Not being a frequent attender of flea markets, I haven't the remotest notion of how often this sort of material turns up, but I was very much interested in these additional pieces.

One of them was what I'd call an essay–that is, a projected piece not intended for further publication but printed specifically as a 'feeler'–a harbinger of the shape of things (in this case, a fully developed promotional piece) to come. It appeared to be a lower priced car of the Dort class. I could not be entirely sure of what it was, as neither name nor address appeared in the copy. This, of course, isn't exactly the same thing as described in the foregoing article.

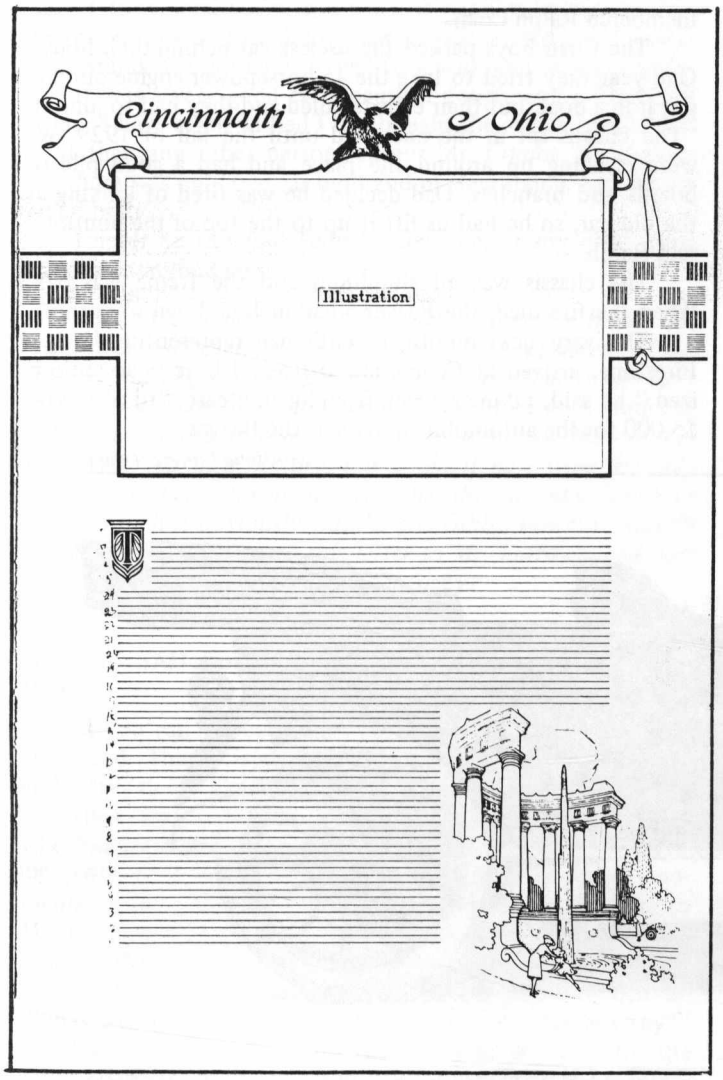
The others were similar in idea to the Eagle theme. Both were presentable and interesting but neither of them had the *elan* that the Eagle brochure does. And, interestingly, neither of them carried a name or logo, which implies that these were test pieces for students of advertising format–more specifically, in the preparation of sales promotion literature. The cars illustrated (not badly drawn but hardly imaginative) were plain in design, which further indicates that the layout was the issue; the subject itself, secondary.

So there is a variety of this sort of thing out there for the seeker, and an interesting field it is. There isn't much of it, but it exists, and I'm sure that there are collectors who specialize in this sort of thing. I don't know them, but that they are there I have no doubt.

And like so many spinoffs of the main subject of automotive history itself, I think that this sub-subject, remote as it appears, will become more widely known and I hope it does. Steve Richmond's Eagle brochure is indicative of that.

Like philately or any other specialties of hobbyists at large, I think these are highly important and significant items. They are rare, highly interesting, and desirable. Their popularity has only brushed the surface. I'm sure of it.

KM



Tales of the BEAVER SIX - Fact or Fancy?

There can be no doubt that there really was an automobile called the Beaver Six. A few newspaper and magazine articles have been written about it, automotive historians have studied it, just about all rosters of cars once manufactured include its name, and all agree that it was a product of the Beaver State Motor Company of Gresham, Oregon. These references also agree that the car was running on the streets of Gresham and Portland before the end of 1912.

The photograph of the original Beaver Six, printed at the bottom of this page, was reproduced from the Portland Auto Show program of 1970, and has been used by automotive writers ever since. No other pictures of the Beaver have come to light, though it is almost certain that others were taken for advertising or publicity purposes.

Along with the photograph is printed the unlikely comment that "This car has been on the streets of Portland since October, 1912." This statement, printed in 1970, would suggest that the car had been in use for 58 years which, if true, would surely have been noted in every automotive magazine and newspaper column, and every car collector or historian would have been well aware of its existence. (Bill Harrah would certainly have tried to acquire it years ago).

SAH member Richard Larrowe, of Corbett, Oregon, had already done a considerable amount of research on the Beaver before he joined our Society as member number 84 in the first year of its existence. Almost immediately he began to contribute bits and pieces of Beaver history to our publications, and the most recent of these contributions included copies of correspondence from people who were personally involved with the Beaver State Motor Company, none of whom (he says) are now living. Their stories do not agree in many particulars as to dates, number of Beavers produced, or even the body styles.

Reproduced herewith are some of Mr. Larrowe's comments, letters from some of his correspondents, and the words of columnists who wrote about the car and its maker.

This item was published in *The Gas Leak*, the Newsletter of the Portland, Oregon HCCA of June, 1976:

THE BEAVER AND THE BONFIRE

The Beaver State Motor Company was Oregon's only automobile factory. It came to life in 1912, issued $300,000 worth of stock, built two cars that were displayed as the newest model for five straight years and ended up taking a dive that landed the company in bankruptcy court.

"That is when my father came into the picture," said Ralph Coan. "He was the bankruptcy trustee attorney. The company didn't have much in the way of assets except for their two display cars and an old empty brick factory in Gresham."

Bankruptcy proceedings took a dozen years, and by then one of the original automobiles was missing. It was never found.

"The other, a Beaver 6, was still sitting on blocks and Dad bought it. My brother and I drove it to school a half-dozen times before the smooth rubber tires just rotted away," remembered Ralph Coan.

The Coan boys parked the useless car behind their house. One year they tried to take the 45-horsepower engine out and put it in a boat, but their efforts failed and they had to junk it. "The chassis sat in the backyard until the fall of 1929. We were cleaning up around the place and had a good pile of boards and branches. Dad decided he was tired of looking at the old car, so he had us lift it up to the top of the bonfire," said Ralph.

The chassis was all aluminum and the frame was oak. When the fire died, the Beaver 6 had melted down to nothing.

The very next month, a gentleman representing Harvey Firestone, arrived at Coan's law office. "I have been authorized," he said, taking a check from his briefcase, "to offer you $5,000 for the automobile known as the Beaver."

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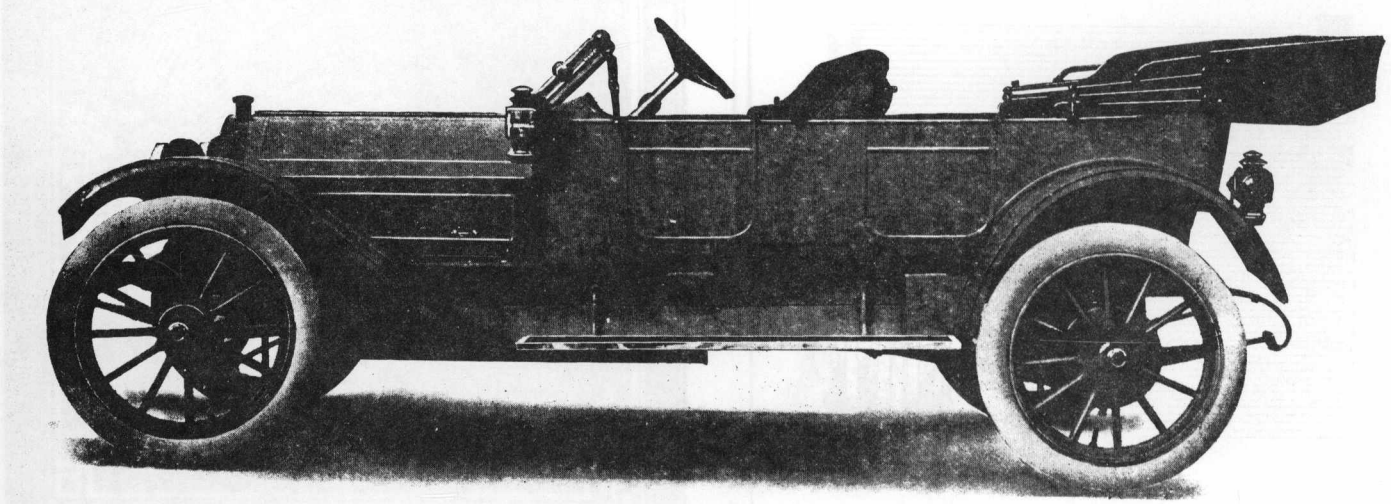

THE BEAVER SIX OF 1912 — This is undoubtedly the prototype car which P. A. Combs, president of the Beaver State Motor Company, is said to have driven almost daily for several years. This is the only photograph of a Beaver automobile known to exist, and has been used by just about everyone who wrote anything concerning this make.

The speechless attorney shook his head and from that day until his death 25 years later, he never threw anything away and always looked through the trash at least once before burning it.

By Patrick Steber
From OLD STUFF

* * * * *

Letter to Richard Larrowe dated April 1, 1986, from Roy H. Gibbs, Mesa, Arizona:

I was born and raised in Gresham, Oregon, 1897, and graduated from Gresham High School in 1916. I started to work for the Beaver State Motor Company in January 1919 and was with them until it closed in bankruptcy. I was office manager and accountant, and in close contact with the operations. I had lived within a short distance of the plant, saw the plant built, and watched its progress.

After the plant was built they assembled the first car, and I might say it was an assembled auto. I never saw any patterns or molds used in making the car in the factory. After the car was assembled, the war broke out and production was stopped. Shortly after, they started the constructing of power saws and later centrifugal pumps.

Mr. P. A. Combs, the president of the company, drove the Beaver for several years, and when it was finally retired from operation it was stored in a warehouse at the plant, and I understand it was finally towed to a junk yard and scrapped.

It was a very good car, beautiful design, and a four door sedan. I have often wished I had bought the car, as I was closer to it than any other person, except Mr. Combs. As you can see there was only one car built and of steel frame, and regular metal body.

I never heard about Harvey Firestone, or any offer made by him or anybody else.

Editor's comment: Mr. Gibbs agrees that the Beaver car was driven for several years by P. A. Combs, president of the Beaver State Motor Company. He also says that it was later stored in a warehouse, and finally towed to a junk yard and scrapped. If this is true, then this could not be the car that was destroyed in a bonfire, nor could it have been the only Beaver car made. But he also says that the car was a four door sedan, which it obviously wasn't. Mr. Gibbs, however, was 89 years old when he wrote this letter to Mr. Larrowe, and may be forgiven if his memory was a bit fuzzy.

* * * * *

Letter to SAH from Richard Larrowe, dated February 25, 1986:

As you can see, everyone concerned with the Beaver car is now dead. Thus it is possible that I am the world's foremost authority—or Mr. Coan, if you prefer.

There may have been a chance to meet more old people who had something to do with the Beaver, or even find surviving parts, if it had not been for Mr. Coan's doubtful comments. A lady reporter from the *Gresham Outlook* spoke to Mr. Coan several times and she believes him. In reference to Charles Raney, who questioned Coan's story of the bonfire Beaver, Coan makes comments that alienate me such as, "What would a factory hand know about the car, anyway?"

Martin Clark, now deceased, was a music critic for the Portland, Oregon, *Journal,* now out of business. He wrote a front page gossip column with about as much credibility as those newspapers sold in grocery stores by the cash register—"Joan Collins Came from Venus on a Flying Saucer" etc.

I used to get very serious about such things, trying to find the truth and getting it to the public until one day it dawned on me that the public doesn't really care about it.

So it is with Mr. Coan's story. The public wants to believe that rich men will appear, offering big money for worthless junk. It astounded me to find that even some members of the best known antique car clubs want to believe this.

At this point it is doubtful that any Beaver cars or parts will ever be found. I looked for one for quite a while, and even told the *Gresham Outlook* that I would pay $10,000 for one. My wife was worried that someone would find one.

* * * * *

THE BEAVER ACCORDING TO MARTIN CLARK

In the early 1970's the following story of the Beaver State Motor Company was written by Martin Clark, a columnist for the now defunct *Oregon Journal:*

Around the year 1912, P. A. Combs, a resident of Portland, Oregon, decided that his fellow Oregonians would purchase locally-made automobiles if some entrepreneur would make and market them. Combs, formerly vice president of an automobile supply firm, decided to give it a try. Accordingly he designed and built a car and christened it the "Beaver," with the expectation that it would be the first of many which would follow it. Unfortunately, the Beaver was to be another of those automotive dreams which never came to fruition.

Based on his first prototype car, Combs and half a dozen Portland business executives organized the Beaver State Motor Company with a capital of 300,000 shares at $1.00 par value stock. During the time the capital was being raised, the plans changed slightly. The Automotive [sic] Trade Journal of April 1913 says the Beaver State Motor Company recently incorporated with $150,000 capital and will build a plant in Vancouver, Washington, to manufacture cars. The same magazine in December of 1913 said the plant was being built one-half mile from the Mt. Hood railroad station near Portland, Oregon. It was to be the first Oregon firm to build cars and trucks. The building was completed in March 1914 and still stands. The Mt. Hood railroad station has long since disappeared. The new firm then issued a glowing prospectus booklet designed to attract investors. Speaking of the Beaver prototype car, the booklet stated:

"Our first model car, the Beaver Six, appeared on the streets of Portland in October 1912. It is a high class car with beautiful lines and is a very satisfactory machine. It has been thoroughly tested under all kinds of conditions and has proven satisfactory. It weighs 3050 pounds, is a six-cylinder 45 horsepower car made of the best materials and equipped with the latest accessories. It is believed to have been the first pleasure car in the United States equipped with the Daimler-Lanchester worm drive, the gears being imported from Coventry, England."

The brochure went on to say that plans were also being made to market a smaller low price car and commercial trucks. The booklet included a picture of the new factory in Gresham, Oregon, a suburb of Portland. The brochure also mentioned the broad automotive experience of its president and of E. T. Fetch, factory superintendent, who had been associated with Packard for 12 years, and is best remembered for his participation in an early cross-country motor car race in a Packard. Mr. Fetch was no stranger to innovation and probably put his expertise to good use in the foundry at Beaver. The booklet stressed the sales appeal of freight savings on West-Coast-built cars; emphasized the safety of prospective investments in the company, and of great possibilities for profits in automobile manufacturing. It cited the success stories of such cars as

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Packard, Reo, and General Motors cars, but particularly spoke of the Ford Motor Company of ten years before, which started out just about the size Beaver was in 1914. They didn't mention Chevrolet which was probably only slightly larger than Beaver in 1914, but the Chevrolet success story shows that the Beaver could have succeeded, as the Beaver was very similar to the prototype Chevrolet of 1911.

The late Charles H. Raney, a onetime Beaver employee, believed that the 1912 prototype was the only complete car ever built. It was a steel frame, steel body car and was driven daily to work by the company president and was used as the company car. On weekends it was driven on hunting trips up nearby Larch Mountain.

The factory kept busy making items such as rail car wheels, sewer pipe, brass, aluminum and iron castings, and later, drag saws, cement mixers and gasoline engines. Various excuses were given for the lack of complete cars—the inability to obtain rear ends from England; other war shortages, and finally, a lawsuit against Beaver by Overland for patent infringement. The company managed to last into the 1920's before going out of business.

Recently the *Gresham Outlook* ran another story on the Beaver which included some new facts which have come to light. I cooperated with the newspaper and learned a few things. The reporter wondered if the Beaver State Motor Company was a fly-by-night hoax designed to take the stockholder's money and run. I honestly don't think it was because it stayed in business too long making drag saws and other industrial equipment. I think they had every intention of reentering the automobile manufacturing business.

Later articles in the teens in the *Gresham Outlook* spoke of as many as four prototype Beaver cars in the factory, including a roadster, a touring, and a light truck.

Mr. Ralph Coan of Portland tells an interesting story. One of the prototypes must have had an aluminum body and a wooden frame, although Mr. Raney did not remember it. Mr. Coan's father bought the car at auction when the assets of the Beaver State Motor Company were sold. It was still inside and may possibly have never been completed. The Coans kept the car until the fall of 1929 when Mr. Coan senior decided he was tired of looking at it and torched it. "The aluminum ran into the ground in puddles," says Coan. The only part left in later years was the camshaft which Mr. Coan's brother had chrome plated and used for a necktie rack. At last word, the tie rack is also lost. Mr. Coan insists that a month after the car was destroyed a representative of Harvey Firestone approached the elder Coan offering $5,000 for the automobile known as the Beaver. For years I doubted this story, believing it to be too fictional to be true. Perhaps somebody at Firestone could shed some light on this mystery of why Harvey Firestone wanted this car. I doubt if this was the car which was driven daily by P. A. Combs, the president of the Beaver State Motor Company.

We know what happened to one of them. What happened to the other three? My guess is that they disappeared in the World War II scrap drives, if they lasted that long. Gresham has grown to probably 50 times the size it was when the Beaver assets were auctioned. The building that was the Beaver factory is one of the oldest buildings in Gresham. Most other buildings that old have been torn down over the years to make way for new building projects. It is very doubtful that any Beaver cars are squirreled away in a forgotten corner of a disused building.

Comment by Dick Larrowe: *After the first few stories appeared in the* Gresham Outlook *about ten years ago, I visited the Raneys and found their daughter had made an embroidered pillow and given it to them. The car was green with red wheels. I asked if that was the color of the car Mr. Combs drove and they said it was. Mr. Coan says the car that burned was unpainted aluminum.*

* * * * *

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES RANEY, AND FURTHER COMMENTS BY RICHARD LARROWE

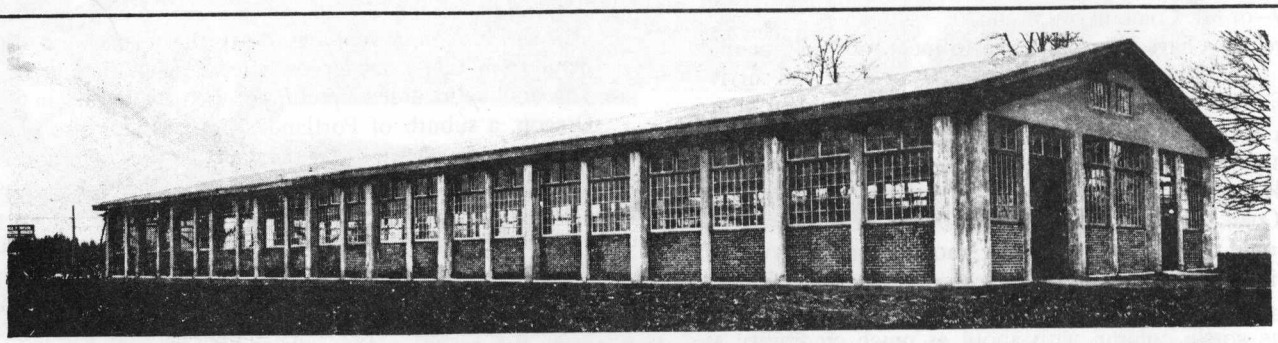
Charles Raney was the sole surviving employee of the Beaver State Motor Company when I interviewed him in 1969. He has since died. He was a descendent of the Oregon Pioneers and, at the time of his death, still lived on the original family homestead which was, at that time, the third oldest home in Multnomah County (Portland).

Since the company was not making cars, they built Cascade and Beaver brand drag saws, and also made cement mixers.

At one time 40 men worked at the Beaver State Motor Company. Mr. Raney remembered the building as being very cold and damp. The present owners say it is still hard to heat. The building was abandoned during the 1920's and was extensively vandalized, and this is the condition it was in when it was later sold to new owners.

Mr. Raney said that the bank which controlled the stock of the Beaver State Motor Company went bankrupt in the early 1920's and took Beaver with it. Beaver did not fail through its own fault.

The company was unusual because it made its own parts, other than the imported Daimler-Lanchester worm drive rear ends. The entire engine was made in the factory, down to and including the piston rings, some of which exist today in New Old Stock condition. The later drag saws and cement mixers were also built entirely from parts produced within the factory. I believe everything was made in Gresham except the



This photo of the Beaver State Motor Company's plant at Gresham, Oregon, was taken on March 7, 1914, shortly after its construction was completed. Obviously the 1912 prototype Beaver car was built elsewhere, presumably in Portland where the company had offices in the Lumbermen's building. (See "Other Notes on the Beaver" at the end of this article).

magnetos and spark plugs.

Mr. Raney doubted the rumor that a bright red Beaver automobile had sold in Portland for $10,000. This story was reported in the *Oregon Journal* (in Martin Clark's column). If true, and added to the other rumors it would mean that there was one unpainted aluminum Beaver, one with green body and red wheels, one dark blue or black Beaver, and the above mentioned red one–which adds up to four cars and matches the other rumors as to the number of cars built.

The cars were designed by P. A. Combs and built by pattern makers employed by the company. In an age of the "assembled car," automobiles were put together with parts purchased from outside manufacturers. The Beaver was unique in that it was built from the ground up in its own home plant.

Mr. Raney thought that there was no radiator emblem used. He said the Beaver factory was ready for large-scale production but, for various reasons already mentioned in these columns, stayed with the production of industrial equipment.

Mr. Combs was very optimistic about the future, believing that Gresham was the ideal site for exporting cars to other countries. The recently opened Panama Canal would make it possible to sell cars on the east coast. He compared auto building in Oregon to the California gold rush, but believed the riches to be generated by the Beaver car would be the result of careful planning and hard work.

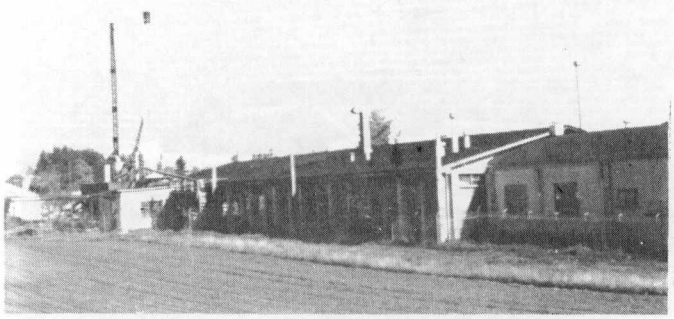
Mr. Combs was probably an automotive genius. He designed the engine, a six-cylinder flat-head. The company was later sued by Willys-Overland for allegedly copying Overland designs. On the other hand, Combs designed a single-plate dry clutch for use in the Beaver which was basicaly the same as the clutch used with modern manual transmissions.

The Beaver State Motor Company also had plans to build smaller cars, which evidently never got beyond the prototype stage. A 1915 Beaver was advertised as "the smallest six-cylinder car in existence." It was also more than likely the model of the Beaver car that Mr. Coan's father torched–if he did.

Most old-timers in the Gresham area remembered the bright red water tower with the words "Beaver State Motor Company" painted on it.

A reporter from the *Gresham Outlook* visited the plant in early 1918 and found 125 drag saws on the assembly line. War shortages were blamed for the lack of auto production, specifically the rear end assemblies that could not be shipped from England. The usual automobile prototypes were again seen in the factory, and note was made of them.

It is possible that the burned prototype had cast aluminum body panels, on the order of early Pierce-Arrow cars, because there was an aluminum casting foundry within the factory. The wooden chassis could have been explained by the fact that the car was a prototype and wood would have been easier to change than steel. In the years that I doubted the car fire story, I thought the Coans had really torched an old Franklin, but such may not be the case.



Former factory building of the Beaver State Motor Company as it appears today. *Photo contributed by Richard Larrowe*

OTHER NOTES ON THE BEAVER SIX

Chilton's Automobile Directory of April, 1912, lists the Beaver Motor Truck Company, of 271 Glisan Street, Portland, Oregon, as a maker of both electric and gasoline motor trucks. The same publication in its issue of January 1913 lists the Beaver State Motor Company, of Portland, as a builder of passenger automobiles named "Beaver Six." Was the Beaver State Motor Company a continuation of the Beaver Motor Truck Company? In any event, it is almost certain that the prototype passenger car was made in Portland, and probably at 271 Glisan Street.

* * *

Mr. Raney says that the only Beaver car made was the original prototype, driven for many years by Mr. Combs, designer of the car and president of the Beaver State Motor Company. Dick Larrowe, however, points out that Raney was no longer employed at Beaver at the time the additional three cars were allegedly made.

* * *

SAH member William Lewis, of Anaheim, California, has found a 1921 Beaver automobile listed in a 1922 book of cars registered in Southern California, in addition to the four cars apparently accounted for, which brings up more questions: Could this be a fifth Gresham Beaver, or was there an entirely separate Beaver made by some obscure and short-lived California company?

* * *

Automobile Trade Directory for April, 1916, lists the Beaver State Motor Company as a manufacturer of both passenger automobiles and gasoline commercial cars, each with the name "Beaver." The company's address is given as the Lumbermen's Building, Portland, Oregon–obviously an office address.

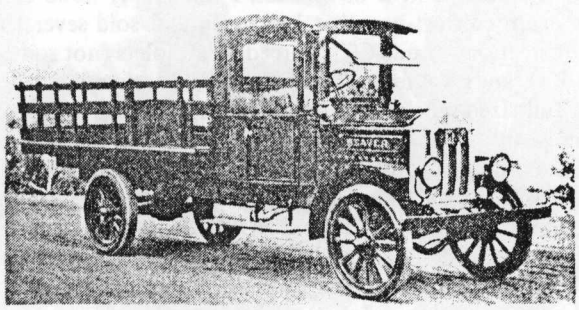
* * *

How long was the Beaver State Motor Company in business? Various accounts say that bankruptcy occurred anywhere from 1920 to 1927, The Chilton Automobile Directories list the Beaver Six, Gresham (or Portland) from 1913 to 1923.

* * *

And now, just to muddy the waters a bit more, it seems that there was another Beaver truck, or trucks, as the Best Manufacturing Company of San Leandro, California, is shown in the Chilton Directory of January 1913 to have made both gasoline and electric commercial vehicles. Did this company, perchance, run off a few passenger cars for Bill Lewis to find in his 1922 registration book?

* * *



This is a 1920 1½ ton Beaver truck, but it was made in Canada by the Beaver Truck Corporation Ltd., of Hamilton, Ontario, 1918-1923, and was in no way related to the Beaver State Motor Company of Portland, Oregon, which made a few trucks in 1914-1915.

From Georgano's Complete Encyclopedia of Commercial Vehicles

The ARMARETTA

Editor:– The following item was sent by its author, SAH member Rick Lenz of Bloomington, California, to our vice president, Charlie Betts, on January 1 of this year. Charlie took it to the annual board meeting in Philadelphia on February 7 and gave it to Beverly Kimes, who heads the publications committee. She, in turn, mailed it to me on February 11, with a suggestion that it be published. I think it should be, so here it is, photos and all.

It's great that there are people willing to research the histories of auto companies and personalities, for there's no time to waste, with many pioneers disappearing without leaving any accurate account of their activities. [See *Tales of the Beaver,* this issue]. Historians should also be keeping track of the current automotive happenings. There must be attempts at auto-building all over the country that may become known only locally or not at all. How many dozens of brands of electric passenger cars may have been built, sold, and collapsed in the past 25 years just in Long Beach, California, alone?

I try to save information on any new venture I hear of, but, of course, I don't have access to the many local newspapers across the country, and by the time a national publication replies to an inquiry for the address of a proposed car company mentioned in its pages, the company may already be kaput. I urge you to get photos and facts about any automotive undertaking near you (even if it's another Auburn replicar and you don't approve). If you don't there may be no records left of what was attempted when or if the company folds: here today and gone forever tomorrow. Did anyone get any information on the latest "Centaur"? It surfaced again in Milwaukee in early 1985, but lasted only long enough to place one advertisement.

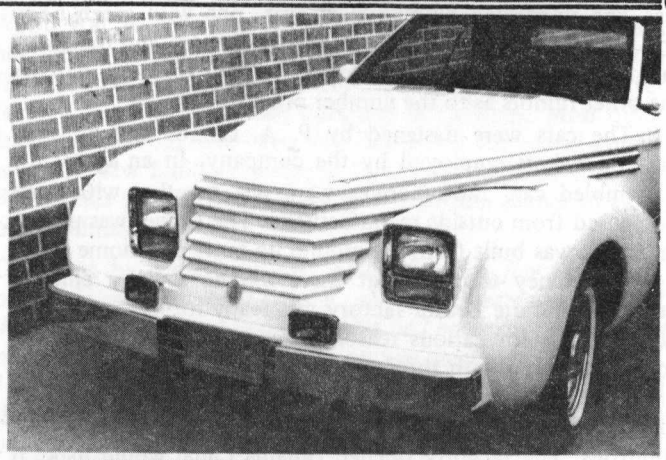
I urge any and all journalists to follow up on the "Armaretta" and put it in print. I can't seem to get an "in" with any publisher who reports on new cars, but here are some background facts:

Two running prototype Armarettas have been built; a coupe and a convertible, on a 129 inch wheelbase. The convertible will be the production car on a stretched GM chassis. Three are begun, with fourteen already ordered. As you can see, it's not a copy of the Cord 810 but a variation on the Cord style, equipped with the expected luxuries, and you CAN get in the car (I'm 6'2"). It was designed (against advice to include fake sidemounts, a stand-up hood ornament, etc.) by Les Lerner, Lerini Coach Corporation, 12045 Sherman Way, North Hollywood, California 91602.

If this viewpoint is of interest, I can supply news of two other nearby firms; one that has made and sold several full-sized recreations of mid-30's Mercedes cabriolets (not someone else's kit), and another that has displayed a scale model chassis and a full sized mock-up of the body, of what was intended to be the world's fastest sports car. Unfortunately, the money to build the running prototype was so long in arriving that the designer has gone on to other projects such as single-passenger off-road vehicles that can be sold NOW.

Frequently there are electric car projects in progress that might actually go somewhere if they were known about and could attract investors, but they fizzle out for lack of funds.

Rick Lenz
P.O. Box 580
Bloomington, CA 92316



The History of the Jaguar

PART TWO OF TWO

By Sir William Lyons — Contributed by Andrew J. A. Whyte

The following text is a continuation and conclusion of an article that began in issue No. 19 of Automotive History Review, *in which Sir William Lyons told the story of the rise of his very small enterprise, The Swallow Sidecar Company, makers of sidecars for motorcycles, to its present status as the manufacturer of the well-known Jaguar automobiles.*

Some months before the end of the war, in 1945, we received a 'go-ahead' from the government that we might revert some of our activities to our peacetime production. Coincidental with this, John Black advised me that he intended to concentrate the whole of the Standard organization on the production of one model, which he was to call the 'Vanguard.' He told me that he would no longer be able to make our engine and, after some discussion, offered to sell us the special plant he had put in for its production—very generously at the written-down value. Before the war, Black had given me reason for a great deal of anxiety on the question of the exclusive continuity of the engine he was making for us. Several other makers had asked him to supply them, and I had not found it easy to prevent him doing so, even though he accepted that the design of the engine, apart from the cylinder block and crankshaft, was ours. Therefore, I was delighted to learn of his proposals as I felt it was a release from an arrangement which I could not have broken honourably, having regard for the fact that it was his willingness to put down the plant, which we could not afford at the time, that got us off the ground with this new engine. I saw this move as a great step towards our becoming the self-contained manufacturing unit at which I had aimed. I had a great admiration for John Black in many respects, but I quickly grasped the opportunity to obtain security. Therefore, within a few days, I sent transport to collect the plant and sent our cheque in payment for it. It turned out that I had been right to do so for it was not long before Black proposed that we should revert back to the old arrangement and return the plant to Standards. I said, "No thank you, John. I have now got the ball and I would rather kick myself." He pressed me very hard, even to the extent that we should form a separate company together, but I was unwilling to accept his proposals, even though I so much appreciated his help in the past.

About that time the Triumph Company, which occupied an adjacent factory to ours, was in very 'low water' and a receiver named Graham was appointed. He approached me to ascertain if we were interested in purchasing the company. They had previously sold the motor-cycle side of the business in the mistaken belief that it was this which was responsible for the losses. Jack Sangster, who had built up Ariel after it had gone into liquidation 20 years before, bought it and I believe, had made £100,000 the first year, largely due to Edward Turner, who designed for him an entirely new machine. We examined the Triumph balance sheets and the prospects of the company and realised that, without jeopardising our resources, we would be unable to restore the company to a profit earning basis, and it would be better to concentrate on our own increasingly successful company.

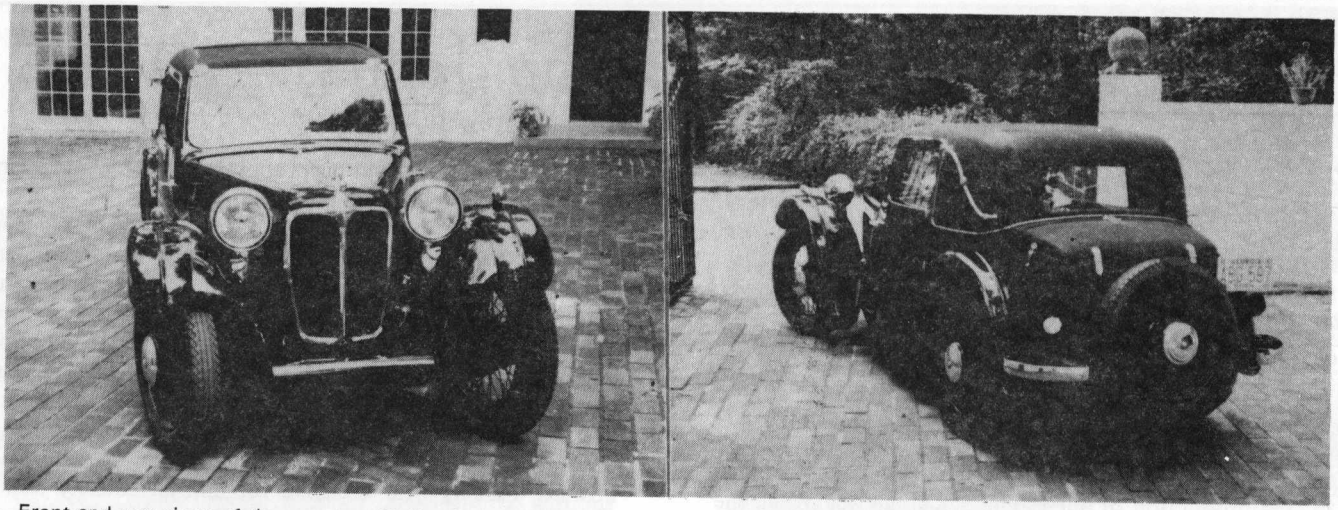
The availability of Triumph brought Black back into the picture. He told me he had been going into the question of buying it, but he would not do so if I would change my mind and join forces with him. I told him I could not change my mind, whereupon he said he would buy Triumph and go into competition with us. He said he could not see us surviving it, and he did make some success of Triumph, but it did not have the effect upon us that he had forecast. In spite of our differences, I would like to pay tribute to him for his great energy and the success he made of the Standard Motor Company in the early postwar years.

With the end of the war in sight, we started thinking about our return to car production and decided that we must make the finest engine it was possible to design. Our research satisfied us that we must go for a twin overhead camshaft hemispherical head, six cylinder unit, and we set our sights as high as we could. We had a first-class engine team headed by W. Hassan, under the direction of our Chief Engineer, W. M. Heynes. In two years we produced an engine which had far greater horsepower per litre than any other engine in the world which was available to the public as a normal production unit.

Swallow's first half-page advertisement appeared in The Motor Cycle *on November 23, 1922, after a last-minute space allocation at the London show. The following paragraph has been copied from a part of the original text:*

The ALUMINUM body has a "racy" appearance without the want of room and consequent discomfort usually associated with the Sporting type of Sidecar. Adequate comfort and ample leg-room are assured in the "SWALLOW." The chassis is underslung and combines light weight with maximum strength.

Sir William and Lady Greta Lyons attending Jaguar's half-century exhibition at Coventry, 1972; also Mr. and Mrs. Bill Duff with their (sole surviving) Swift-Swallow.



Front and rear views of the very rare SS 2, a four-cylinder version of the six-cylinder SS 1. This car is owned by John B. Steen, of Atlanta, Georgia, who loaned the photographs for use in this article. Mr. Steen is a dedicated Jaguar enthusiast who has owned 14 Jaguar cars, and who presently owns four.

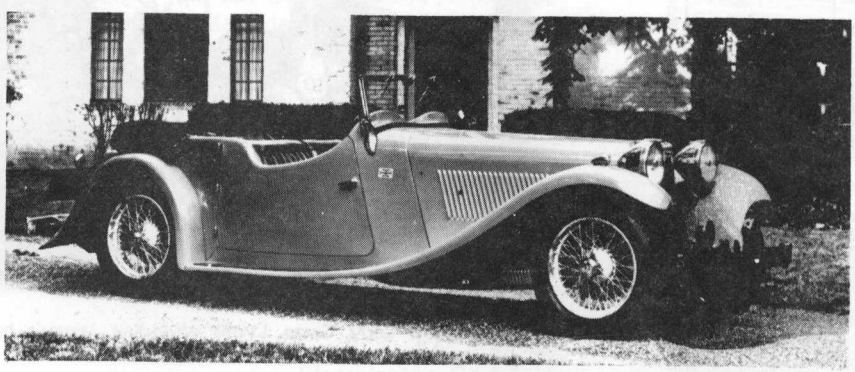
This new engine—the XK—put us right into the forefront and, in 1948, we introduced it in what was regarded as an entirely new conception of a sports car—the XK 120—so christened because its estimated top speed was 120 mph. This proved to be far below the car's capabilities for, when we took it to Belgium, together with a chartered plane-load of the Press, and demonstrated it on the Jabbeke autoroute, the car attained a speed of 132.59 miles per hour. This was a tremendous increase in speed compared with anything that had been achieved before by a standard production vehicle. It had been intended that this car would just be a test-bed for the new engine, and the bodies were virtually hand-made in aluminum. However, so great was the demand that we went ahead with a pressed steel body for volume production.

Undoubtedly, this model paved the way for the very substantial expansion of our American business and enabled us to appoint the best distributors and dealers available to us. Although they were in the main in a very small way of business, because no American franchise holder was permitted, nor indeed is he permitted today, to sell competitive makes, many of these distributors built up magnificent organizations, largely due to the Jaguar business.

One of the major problems facing us after the war was the rationing of steel. Permits were required and this provided a very limited allowance for home market business. We had enjoyed only a limited export market before the war, because we had always been able to sell on the domestic market all the cars we could make. So we did not go to the expense of establishing export outlets—a situation which would be very much criticised today. Accordingly, we set out to convince the Government that the models we had coming along would command a substantial export market. We prepared a very elaborate brochure, which set out our programme for exports—the countries to which we were going to sell, the number of cars and the amount of steel we required. I delivered this personally to Sir George Turner, who was then Permanant Secretary to the Ministry of Supply, and I elaborated verbally on our plans and obtained his promise of support. Within two weeks we received a permit for the full quota of steel for which we had asked. This gave us a tremendous boost, because we only had to make the cars for selling which was no problem in the car-starved world. However, we did not allow this to lead us into a state of false security.We went flat-out to establish selling outlets throughout the world which enabled us to reach one of the highest—if not the highest—percentage of export sales in the industry. At one time, nearly 80% of our cars were going abroad and we have rarely—if ever—dropped below 50%.

A very good example of the progress we made, apart from North America, was the establishment of a new distributor in Australia. The distributor who, in a half-hearted way, had represented us before the war was not disposed to contract with us for more than 100 cars per year, and we had much more ambitious plans. It became known in Australia that we were prepared to change our distributor and, in consequence, we received a cable from a then comparatively small dealer, Bryson Motors, offering to contract for 2,000 cars in the first year, if we would appoint him as our distributor. We obtained excellent references, although they only represented Morgan and a number of motorcycle companies. We made the appointment, and it was only because we could not supply them with the full 2,000 cars that they did not reach this target. In fact, they did exceed 1,500. Within two years this distributor had taken over the showrooms of our previous distributor, which were the finest in Sydney, and have never failed to take the cars for which they have contracted.

I think I can fairly claim that Jaguar and M.G. virtually



1935 SS1 Tourer

Photo contributed by John B. Steen

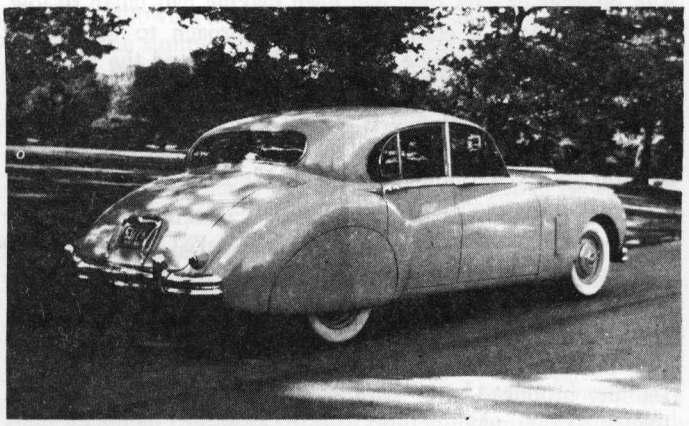
pioneered the U.S.A. market for imported cars, which now [1969–Ed.] represents some 10% of vehicle sales. Volkswagen have by far the largest share of this business. It is interesting to recall that, in those early days, they proved very difficult to sell. So much so, in fact, that our then distributor for the East Coast, who was also the distrubutor for Volkswagen for the whole of the U.S.A., insisted that all dealers who ordered a Jaguar had to take two Volkswagens as well!

The XK 120 was tremendously successful in sports car races in all parts of the world, and it was as a result of Leslie Johnson and Bert Hadley's outstanding performance with one of these cars in the 1950 Le Mans race, in which they succeeded in getting into third position in the last few hours of the race, before they retired with a broken clutch, that we decided that in a car more suitable for the race, the XK engine could win this greatest of all events. So, in 1951, we arrived at Le Mans with a brand new team of three 'C' types in charge of F.W.R. England as competition manager, who later became joint managing director and, in January of this year, deputy chairman. It was immediately obvious from the practice session that these cars could outpace the competition, and this proved to be the case in the race itself. Stirling Moss and Jack Fairman led for about eight hours, until they fell out with a loss of oil pressure due to the failure of an oil pipe flange. Unfortunately, the same fate befell Leslie Johnson and Clemente Biondetti, but Peter Whitehead and Peter Walker went on to win at a record speed for the race. It was the first time that a British car had won at Le Mans since 1935–that is, for fifteen years. This success set a pattern which we were to follow and improve upon during the next eight years, Jaguar finishing in 1st place at Le Mans on five occasions, 1st and 2nd place on two occasions; and on another occasion, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th places.

The reliability and performance of the XK engine had been proved in the XK 120 and it was, therefore, with every confidence that we put it into a new saloon, the Mk. VII, which was to be announced at the 1950 Earls Court Motor Show. The *Autocar* described it as the 'Prima Ballerina of the Show.'

By 1951 our production had again outgrown the capacity of our factory and the need for expansion was vital to our contined progress, but we were faced with a particularly difficult position because, although I went to the highest level, we were unable to obtain permission to extend our factory; there was a complete embargo on building in Coventry. At that time a shadow factory in Browns Lane, Coventry, which was occupied by Daimler, was falling into disuse, as Daimler's were moving back to their Radford factory. After many hours of talks with the 'powers that be' I was able to purchase the Browns Lane factory– the only shadow factory, I believe today, not on a rental basis. There was one condition–that we should undertake the manufacture of the Rolls-Royce 'Meteor' tank engine, which was required to meet the rearmament programme at that time. We tooled up this magnificent engine and had it in production within two years, well ahead of the programme date. Although we were very proud of this achievement, we were pleased when the contract suddenly came to an end, so enabling us to step up car production, which was being adversely affected.

In 1955 we introduced the first of a completely new range of medium sized saloon cars which was to form the basis for a steady increase in our production. This 2.4 litre saloon was followed by the 3.4 litre and then, in 1959 in a revised Mark 2 form, with the addition of the 3.8 litre engine. Subsequent models carried the titles 'S' type and 420–the latter being our big 4.2 litre engine. This range of models accounted for a substantial increase, not only in our volume of production, but also in our profits, which rose five-fold between 1955 and 1968.



This 1951 Mark VII Jaguar (actually manufactured in late 1950) was one of the first two of its kind to be delivered to a New York dealer. Serial numbers indicate that it was the 37th left-hand-drive Mark VII Jaguar produced.

Photo by R. B. Brigham, owner of this car.

In 1957 we had a disastrous fire in which we lost nearly half our main factory. It appeared that it would impossible for us to produce cars for many months, but the misfortune acted like magic on our workpeople, suppliers, building contractors and fellow manufacturers. We were inundated with offers of help, loan of plant, personnel–in fact anything we could ask for. Our workpeople 'buckled to,' offering to work, for day-rate pay, with shovels and anything they could lay their hands on to clear up the mess.

Our building contractors brought in many of their competitors and the task of rebuilding was started within 48 hours of the fire. Tarpaulin structures were erected to provide temporary working protection and, in exactly nine days, production on a limited scale had recommenced, and within six weeks we were back to normal. It was a wonderful experience and another example of what the people of this country can do when they have their 'backs to the wall.'

By 1960 our factory was once again 'bursting at the seams.' Unfortunately, this came just at the time when the Government was increasing its pressure on manufacturers who wished to expand to move into distressed areas and, of course, no factory extensions were permitted in Coventry. It came to my knowledge that the Daimler Company, which occupied the very fine factory at Radford, within two miles of our existing factory at Browns Lane, was for sale. After some preliminary talks with Jack Sangster, who was then chairman of B.S.A., having followed Sir Bernard Docker, we eventually agreed upon terms for us to acquire the Daimler Company. I do not recall a more amicable deal with anyone, although when we both thought that everything had been settled, a matter of £10,000 arose between us. Since each of us was honestly convinced that this was in our own favour, we decided that the only way to settle the matter was to toss-up for it. I am pleased to say that we won.

The Daimler factory just about doubled our floor space, and, in addition, we acquired a bus manufacturing company as well as a contract from the Government for the Daimler Ferret armoured fighting vehicle. Both were at a very low ebb–the output of busses being no more than three per week and orders for the Ferret showing a decline. In spite of diminishing Government contracts for the Ferret when we took over, so good is the vehicle that it has not yet been replaced, and we continue to make it in limited numbers. Indeed, it is one of the standard wheeled vehicles for NATO forces.

An unfortunate inheritance which we also acquired with Daimler was the run-down state of the car side of the business.

The number of cars they had been making had fallen so low that it required a completely new approach to the whole question of volume, type and price. We resolved the problem by introducing the excellent Daimler 2½ litre V8 engine into our Mk. II body shell, and it proved to be a very good selling car indeed. We also followed this policy of using volume production bodies and units to produce the Daimler Sovereign—a car which has gained a very high reputation.

There were some good engineers at Daimler under the leadership of C. M. Simpson, and it was not long before we brought out the 'Fleetline' double deck bus chassis, which had a very good reception from municipal and national authorities, and now enjoys a very high reputation. In fact, in 1968, Daimler produced more rear-engined double deck bus chassis than any other manufacturer.

Entry into the bus market also provided us with an opportunity to get into the heavy commercial vehicle industry, so we set up a small Engineering department at Daimler, under a very competent designer—C. Elliott— who had been responsible for the highly successful Dodge truck. However, before the final design was completed, I learnt that a receiver had been appointed at Guy Motors Ltd. of Wolverhampton by Lloyds bank and I saw this as an opportunity to speed up our entry into the commercial vehicle field. Guy Motors was a long established firm, with a reputation for producing quality vehicles, but I must say that a visit to the factory had some discouraging effects, and the balance sheets of the company showed that they had been making losses over the previous four years at an average of nearly £300,000 per annum. I had long negotiations with the receiver, and eventually made him an offer. I made it clear that whilst I appreciated it was a low offer, it was the maximum to which I was prepared to go. He put this offer to the bank, and they accepted it.

We transferred the small commercial vehicle engineering department from Daimler to Guy, reorganized the administration, and put the general manager, Arthur Jones, in charge as managing director. Only three years later we introduced a completely new range of heavy duty quality trucks known as the Guy Big 'J' range. We put a lot of effort and 'know how' into Guy and were soon out of the loss making situation and profits have built up to over £300,000 per annum. I am sure that Guy will play an important part in the future of the BLMC Bus and Truck Division.

In 1963 we acquired Coventry Climax. We had a great admiration for their achievements, and Mr. Leonard Lee had built up a most successful fork lift truck and fire pump business. The story of how the fire engine pump was developed into a successful racing car engine is, I believe, well known. It is not so generally known, except in racing circles, that this engine, together with its successors, which completely dominated Grand Prix racing during the whole period during which the company participated in racing, was master-minded by Leonard Lee and executed by Walter Hassan, who had earlier left Jaguar to become chief engineer of Coventry Climax. He had left with our goodwill but we were pleased that he rejoined us as a result of this acquisition. Walter Hassan is now Group Chief Engineer (Power Units) heading a team which, I think it is generally recognised, is one of the most able in the country.

Finally, in 1964, we bought Henry Meadows, Wolverhampton. Apart from their light engineering interests, they also manufactured an excellent range of marine gearboxes.

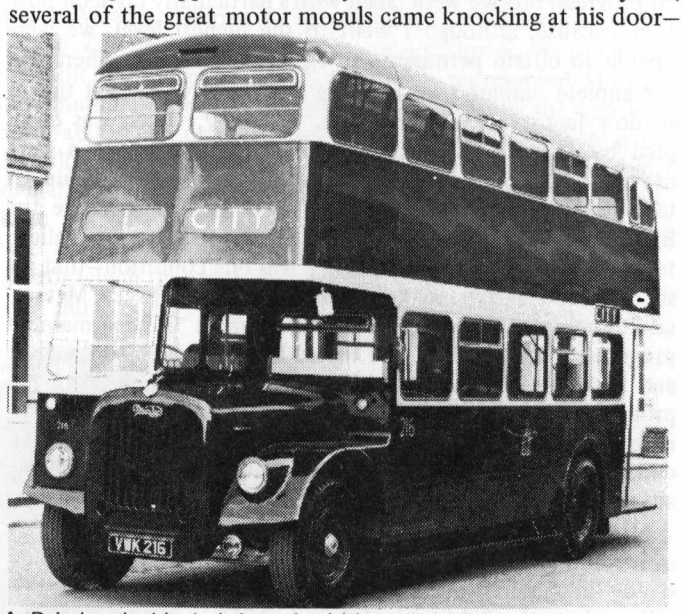
In these six factories we employ approximately 10,000 persons; in addition to cars, we produce trucks, buses, coaches, material handling equipment, fire pumps, marine gear boxes and armoured fighting vehicles. We export over 50% of our car output—one of the highest percentage of exports to total production in the industry—and we have active trade relations with over 104 different countries.

In the mid 60's there was talk about the leading British manufacturers getting together so that as an industry we would be better able to face world competition. I was an enthusiastic protagonist as I believed that this was both necessary and desirable. We had many discussions together, but marriages of this kind are not easily arranged and little progress was made until Sir George Harriman said to me one day, "We don't seem to be making much progress; what about you and I getting together?" I agreed, although I knew this would mean having to give up my majority holding in the organisation I had founded, and British Motor Holdings Limited was the outcome. This was soon followed by Rover joining Leyland. I played an active role in the negotiations which, in May 1968, completed the unification of 95% of the British motor industry, under the banner of the British Leyland Motor Corporation, now headed by Lord Stokes, thus creating the second largest motor group outside America.

All this is a far cry from the three men and a boy with which this story began.

Here ended the speech delivered by Sir William Lyons in 1969 in which he related the story of Jaguar's growth from its earliest beginnings as a maker of motorcycle sidecars. The continuation of this story which follows is taken almost verbatim from Jaguar—the Definitive History of a Great British Car, *by Andrew Whyte, author of several books about the Jaguar cars, their racing triumphs, and their evolution from the pre-Jaguar SS models to the fine luxury cars of today. All photos loaned by Mr. Whyte unless otherwise credited. (The text begins in the mid-1960's.)*

Sir William Lyons and his fellow directors were not getting any younger, yet it would not have been in anyone's nature to ask them what plans there were for Jaguar's future. Only Lyons, holder of 260,000 out of 480,000 voting shares would have any idea: but there were no family ties now, with anyone he or his board might wish to nominate as his successor for personal reasons. To let the company grow bigger still, and yet retain its independence; these seem to have been the thoughts uppermost in Lyons' mind as, over the years, several of the great motor moguls came knocking at his door—



A Daimler double-deck bus. Aquisition of the Daimler Company by Jaguar added a whole new line of buses, commercial and passenger vehicles to Jaguar's existing products.

Photo from G. N. Georgano's Complete Encyclopedia of Commercial Vehicles.

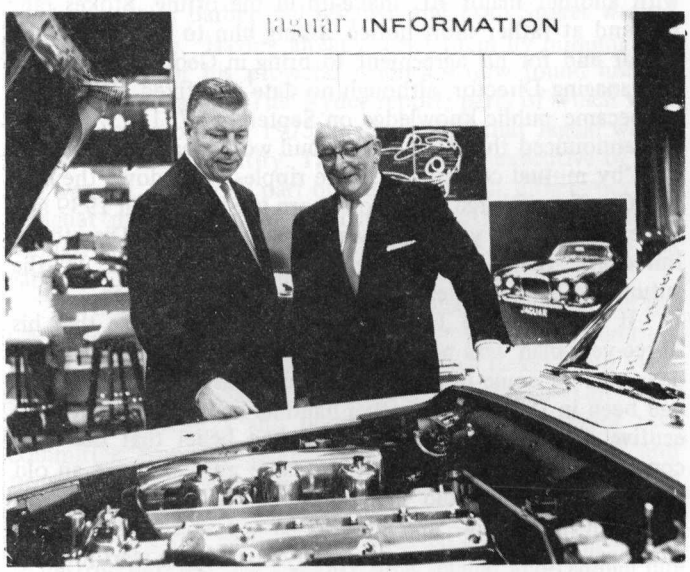
not the least frequent of his callers being from a bus and truck factory, situated not far from where he had set out upon his own career (namely Leyland Motors).

One thing was certain; Jaguar was beginning to make too many models. The E-type was doing very well, exceeding 200 units a week at the peak of its appeal. The saloon range, however, needed slimming down. Interim models were brought in to bridge the gap between the Mark Two and the Mark Ten, but they would soon be supplemented and/or succeeded by Lyons' ultimate Jaguar motor car. This was intended to be the car with the world's quietest and most refined riding qualities, bar none, and retain Jaguar's famous attributes of performance, controllability, comfort, and value for the money.

The Jaguar XJ would live up to all these requirements, and it does so today. Sir William Lyons knew it was going to be all right when, on July 11, 1966, he and Sir George Harriman made their joint statement: Jaguar Cars Ltd and the British Motor Corporation would merge. The irrevocable step had been taken.

The Jaguar group of companies consisted of the following in 1966 at the time of the merger with the British Motor Corporation: Jaguar Export Sales Ltd; Jaguar-Cummins Ltd (50 percent); SS Cars Ltd; The Daimler Company Ltd; Lanchester Motor Company Ltd; Daimler Transport Vehicles Ltd; Barker and Co. (Coachbuilders) Ltd; Guy Motors Ltd; The Sunbeam Trolleybus Co. Ltd; Coventry Climax Engines Ltd; Coventry Climax Electrics Ltd; Coventry Diesel Engines Ltd; Henry Meadows Ltd; Newtherm Oil Burners Ltd; and Badalini Transmissions Ltd (50 percent). Overseas: Jaguar Cars, Inc.; Jaguar of New York, Inc.; Jaguar-Daimler Distributors, Inc.; Jaguar Cars (Canada) Ltd; and Coventry Climax Engines (Australia) Pty Ltd.

The decade of the 1960s was a period of 'getting together' in many spheres. Large groups were being formed in the trade, and some well-known names disappeared as others became more prominent. At New Year, 1968, Sir William Lyons relinquished his title of Managing Director of the Jaguar Group, but he remained Chairman and Chief Executive. Raymond (Lofty) England and Robert Grice became joint managing directors. Arthur Whittaker was not well, and beginning to hand over responsibility for group supplies to John McMillan, whom he had brought in to be his personal assistant in 1961; now McMillan joined the Jaguar board. Soon afterwards



Sir William Lyons and Johannes Eerdmans (head of Jaguar Cars, Inc. of New York) with Mark Ten Jaguar in 1962.

The following is a list of directors of Jaguar Cars Ltd as it stood in the summer of 1966, immediately before the merger with the British Motor Corporation: Chairman and Managing Director, Sir William Lyons; Deputy Chairman, Arthur Whittaker; Vice Chairman (Engineering), William Heynes; Deputy Managing Directors, Raymond England and Robert Grice; Board Directors, Leonard Lee, R. Lockwood, Alan Newsome, and Arthur Thurstans; and Executive Directors: Geoffrey Ball (Work Study), Claude Baily (Power Unit Design), Jack Beardsley (Radford Factory), Norman Benfield (Browns Lane Factory), Robert Berry (Press and Public Relations), Albert Brown (Production). Alan Currie (Home Sales), Jack Earl (Quality Group), Walter Hassan (Power Unit Engineering), Robert Knight (Vehicle Engineering). Bert Langley (Planning), John McMillan (Supplies Group), John Morgan (Export Sales), Geoffrey Pindar (Service), Harry Teather (Purchasing), and William Thornton (Body Engineering).

Louis Rosenthal, who had been managing director of Meadows, was put in charge of manufacturing at Jaguar and became a board member, too. It was also in 1968 that the British Leyland bombshell came. It was not what Sir William had wanted. He had hoped that the merger between Jaguar and BMC would provide the ideal answer for his company, but the snowball was already rolling on and gaining momentum. He still felt that a united British motor industry would be the strongest one, however, for throughout his career he had shown his awareness of the threat from foreign competition; and in only one year (1940, following the purchase of Motor Panels) had his own company ever shown anything other than a good profit. On the other hand, Jaguar's new 'equal status' partner, BMC, had just made a huge loss. Thus British Motor Holdings was in a poor bargaining position during 1967, when Sir William Lyons spent much of his time trying to support Sir George Harriman and also maintain autonomy for Jaguar.

In his message to everyone at Jaguar on January 19, 1968, Sir William Lyons stated that 'both BMH and Leyland are convinced that the merger is in the best interests of the country, the companies, and all their employees.' He also stressed 'that Jaguar will be able to pursue its own course within the overall policy of the new corporation' and that he would (as a member of its board) 'promote our interests at the highest level.'

The British Leyland Corporation became operational on May 14, 1968, and on June 11 its first new model was announced. It was the new Daimler Limousine. Soon this massive vehicle would be offered to coachbuilders as a 'drive-away' chassis—for the specific use of undertakers. Despite the formation of British Leyland, plans for the XJ6 announcement were far enough advanced for this to be very much a Jaguar occasion. Announced on September 26, 1968, the car really *was* the culmination of all the ambitions Sir William Lyons had for the company he had founded, and the applause he received at London's Royal Lancaster Hotel, when the spotlight was switched on to him and his new creation, was spontaneous.

An interesting comment at the time of the announcement of the XJ6 was that 'within the next two years it is intended to introduce new and additional power units' and indeed V12 and V8 engines were already in cars and on test—but only the V12 ever reached the production line, although the new machine tools were set up to take either type. The XJ6 soon began winning accolades keeping Jaguar's name strong in all parts of the world. Among its most important successes was its nomination as 'Car of the Year 1969' by a *Car* magazine jury.

Towards the end of 1968, Arthur Whittaker went into full retirement. He had helped build the body for Walmsley's† Austro-Daimler; he had been Swallow's first sales representative, and he had become Deputy Chairman of the Jaguar Group. He was known throughout the industry for his business skill and fairness. Sir William Lyons described his contribution to the company as 'immeasurable.' Lofty England now became deputy chairman.

During the XJ6's early days, when production was taking time to get under way, a Series Two version of the E-type continued to sell well, helping to keep up export volumes. In 1969 Daimler was brought into line, with a 'fluted grille' XJ6, and 1970 saw the saloon range suddenly reduced to one shape—the XJ shape. By this time, Bill Heynes had retired in mid-1969, after guiding Jaguar engineering so wisely for over 34 years. He was succeeded on the Jaguar board jointly, by Wally Hassan on the engine side and Bob Knight in charge of vehicle engineering. Hassan stayed on until he was 67, to see the arrival of the new Jaguar V12 engine. It had been very much 'his baby' and he was only sorry that it could not have had fuel injection from the outset; that was to come in 1975. Wally Hassan and Bob Grice retired on the same day, May 1, 1972. The retirement of Arthur Thurstans, the financial chief, had happened ten months earlier. Lyons himself went (accompanied by Harry Mundy) to the American launch of the V12 E-type, which also marked the virtual bowing out of Jo Eerdmans in favor of Graham Whitehead, the English boss of British Leyland's North American subsidy. (He leads Jaguar Cars, Inc., today.)

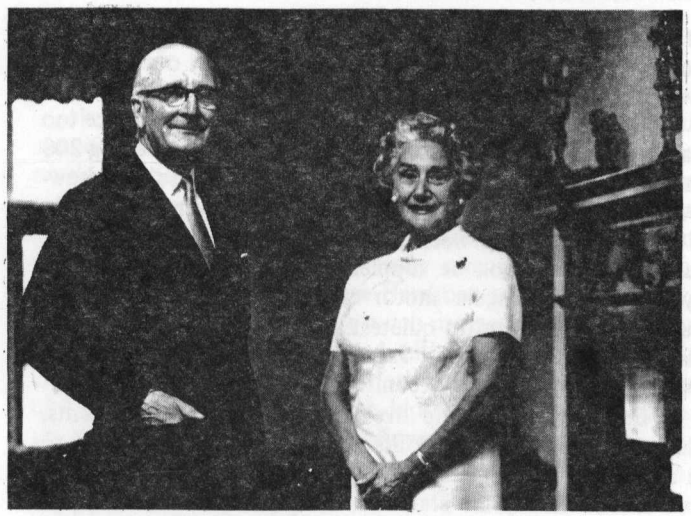
1972 was, of course, jubilee year for the company and in conjunction with the Coventry authorities, the city's main art gallery was taken over from spring to autumn by a comprehensive exhibition of Lyons' life and work, with rare vehicles loaned from far afield. It was to be the best-attended exhibition in the art gallery's history. Sir William and Lady Lyons opened this, and another Swallow anniversary in Blackpool later in the year. Sir William was, after all, able to give more time to such happenings now, for he himself had handed over the reins of office. He was well into his 71st year, and it was over 50 years since he and Walmsley had begun working together.

The official anniversary was, of course, on September 4, 1972. It must have come as no surprise to him, yet it still seems ironic that, within a month, Jaguar Cars Ltd ceased to exist as a separate company. From October 1, 1972, British Leyland's corporate policies did at least still permit Jaguar an identity, and an identifiable top man—but not for very long.

Of the few top men left at Jaguar, Lofty England was the natural successor to Sir William Lyons as Chairman and Chief Executive. Yet the 'youngster' of the Jaguar boardroom was already 60 years of age. He knew that for Jaguar to retain any of the autonomy originally intended for it, a long-term successor for *him* must be found. England's start was not easy. Almost as soon as he had committed the company to launch the latest Jaguar car in July, a strike was called, and it stopped Jaguar for more than ten weeks. After things returned to normal, England was able to get down to a year of business consolidation for the XJ range and. as if in tribute to Bob Knight, his two leading engineers Harry Mundy and Jim Randle,* and

†Walmsley had been Swallow's founder, with Lyons.

*the top engineering man today, responsible for the XJ 40.



Sir William and Lady Greta Lyons at the time of his 70th birthday in September, 1971. He retired in 1972.

the whole engineering team, the Jaguar XJ 12 was declared 'Car of the Year.'Thinking back to his Daimler apprenticeship, Lofty England chose a special name to identfy the XJ 12 in Daimler form. Daimler had made a V12 before. It had been called the 'Double-Six' and that was the name that England now revived. He also cherished the link forged with Vanden Plas in the BMH days, when the new limousine was being created. Now the co-operation of Roland Fox (who had succeded his father as the boss of the British Vanden Plas company) and his chief lieutenants, led to the introduction of a special luxury Daimler saloon for top businessmen and women not wishing to go as far as a Rolls-Royce in terms of price. (This may be badge-engineering, but no more so than Bentley and Rolls-Royce. If ever Jaguar presented too sporty an aura for Britain's Prime Minister, the name 'Daimler,' apparently does not).

Despite frequent interruptions and problems in the progress of his empire, Lord Stokes found time to come to Browns Lane to present the prizes at the annual apprentice day in April 1973. 'Jaguar is top of the British Leyland range and is going to stay there,' he said. 'Jaguar Cars has tremendous opportunities for the future, at home and abroad. . . Jaguar needs British Leyland, but clearly British Leyland needs Jaguar and we intend to develop the company to its utmost.' But with another major BL shake-up in the offing, Stokes rang England at rather short notice, asking him to be chairman of Jaguar and for his agreement to bring in Geoffrey Robinson as Managing Director, although no date was fixed. The shake-up became public knowledge on September 7, 1973, when it was announced that George Turnbull would leave the corporation 'by mutual consent,' and the ripples went down the line.

Geoffrey George Robinson—born in Sheffield in 1939 and therefore only 34 years old—was already Managing Director of Innocenti, then British Leyland's Milan Factory. In the autumn of 1973, Stokes called him back to run Jaguar.

It did not take Lofty England long to realise that his 'three-year-plan' was not going to work. He had expected the new man to come in as boss; after all, this is what Robinson had been in Italy. On the other hand he had accepted 'non-executive' Chairmanship of Jaguar in the belief that the newcomer would play his way in and take advice. 'I am an old man,' England had told the *Evening Telegraph* in his rather tongue-in-cheek way. 'We need to have a successor. It is no good walking out of the door on my last day to start looking for a new man.'

In January 1974, Lofty England announced that he would retire. 'It must be done; it makes sense,' he told Keith Read, who asked him if he felt that five months (it had been even less!) had been sufficient time for Robinson to settle in. 'Yes, he has been chief executive before,'answered England. 'He has the ability and energy to do the job at Jaguar.' What he did not say was that he felt Robinson was trying to 'achieve the impossible in five minutes' and had probably been told to do so.

While England set off on a final tour of overseas agencies, Robinson completed his re-shuffle at Browns Lane. Only two Jaguar men—Alan Currie (who had joined the board 18 months earlier, just before Jaguar ceased to be a 'real' company) and Bob Knight—were nominated for Robinson's seven-man board. Three former executives of the Ford Motor Company became part of the top management at Jaguar Cars, and two of them were members of the seven-man board led by Mr. Geoffrey Robinson.

Of his final departure early in 1974, England says: 'I was no longer enjoying my work which had always been so rewarding in the past.'

Other notable departures included those of Jack Earl (quality), and finance chief David Jenkins, who had succeeded Arthur Thurstans, Louis Rosenthal (manufacturing), and Jim Butterworth (purchase director).

Other notable departures included those of Jack Earl (Charles Newcombe's successor in charge of quality), and finance chief David Jenkins, who had succeeded Arthur Thurstans. They were given 'corporate jobs.'

It is not possible to assess what might have happened if the Robinson regime had been allowed to continue. His was an energetic team and some of his plans did begin to bear fruit. The planned investment, however, even short term, far exceeded any sum a private 'Jaguar-sized' company could expect to have available at any one time for expansion.

Robinson pressed ahead with his massive expansion plan, and in October 1974 it looked as if the Coventry and West Midland planners would approve it. Then the whole program was frozen while Sir Don Ryder's investigation team (appointed on December 8 by Anthony Wedgewood Benn, after it had been discovered that British Leyland already had net liabilities of £43 million) explored the tottering empire prior to making its fateful recommendations.

Soon, John Barber had resigned and Lord Stokes was no longer in charge. Having already upset them by jumping the gun on some of his projects, Robinson now found himself thoroughly thwarted. The Ryder report, parts of which were published on April 23, 1975, made it clear that Jaguar would not continue as an entity. The job of 'chief executive of Jaguar' was not, therefore, part of the Ryder plan, either—nor was a Jaguar 'management board.' This was contrary to Robinson's strongly-voiced aspirations for Jaguar. The board had to disband, and Robinson resigned.

At this point Leyland Cars was formed and Jaguar ran the risk of losing its way altogether. A Jaguar operating committee was announced by new car chief Derek Whittaker, with Cowley manufacturing man Tony Sampson as chairman. Unfortunately, circumstances and politics conspired to prevent that committee from operating, especially as the Radford and Browns Lane factories were now being managed from different corporate centers. Somehow, several Jaguar cornerstones managed to avoid being totally wrecked by the swinging ball of destruction; but, for the first time, Jaguar and Daimler did not have their own motor show stands, and the brand new XJ-S was bunged in with BL's other Earls Court offerings.

One man who fought long and hard to keep enthusiasm and marque pride going at Jaguar was Browns Lane plant director, Peter Craig. After Robinson's departure he used diplomacy as well as persistence to keep a Jaguar aura at 'his' factory and undoubtedly succeeded. Against all corporate thinking, he even re-introduced a small works newspaper called *Jaguar Topics**. The saddest aspect of it was his own obituary in the first edition. Also recorded in the newspaper was the retirement of George Lee (in 1976), superintendent of the sawmill and the last 'Blackpool man' of all to leave.

While whole departments, such as sales and service, had disappeared into the amorphous corridors of BL power, one had remained aloof—Jaguar Engineering. Since Wally Hassan's retirement in 1972, Bob Knight had been in command and remained a board director. Geoffrey Robinson had called him his 'right hand.' When Robinson had gone, Knight insisted on reporting directly to Derek Whittaker. In the period of general acceptance of the Ryder team's recommendations, maintaining this arrangement took up a great deal of Knight's time, but it ensured a very positive identity for his department, and therefore for the Jaguar motor car itself.

Recognition of the term 'Jaguar Cars' was something new. Indeed a new broom *was* sweeping through the corporation. Derek Whittaker and Lord Stoke's successor, Alex Park, soon left the impossible tasks imposed upon them by the now discredited Ryder Plan when Michael Edwardes became the new man at the top towards the end of 1977. Not only was the long battle for Jaguar engineering integrity won, but in due course Knight was able to rescue the essential and essentially personal customer service function and bring it back from Oxford to Coventry, to be run by Neville Neal. On the manufacturing side, Knight was ably backed by Peter Craig's young successor, Michael Beasley.

There was still no single head man at Jaguar, however. The difficulty could have been foreseen back at New Year 1978, when Michael Edwards announced his recovery plan for the nationalised corporation. From then on, the word 'Leyland' would mean 'commercial vehicles' once more, car marques would be cherished after all, and the company would seek a kind of anonymity for itself as a whole behind the letters BL. That was the overall plan.

The detail was less simple. There were to be two bosses of the car-making business. Derek Whittaker was replaced by Ray Horrocks and Pratt Thompson. Horrocks was to run Austin Morris, while the quiet American, William Pratt Thompson, set up headquarters at Browns Lane with the intention of making his conglomeration work—as Jaguar Rover Triumph Ltd. But inevitably the attempt to combine the so-called specialist marques was doomed. The plan was dropped in less than two years, and Thompson moved to a BL international post in London without getting to know the Jaguar people at all. Once again the 'front offices' of Jaguar were empty, and the winter of 1979-80 saw nominal chairmanship of Jaguar fall to Percy Plant, best known at that period for his skill at closing factories down. Jaguar needed bucking-up more than ever. A full-time chairman must be found, and Plant was as anxious as the next man to appoint one.

Jaguar employees' feeling of detachment came to a head when assembly workers went on strike over grading and pay on April 9, 1980. With rumors of Jaguar assembly being moved to Solihull or even stopping, morale over Easter 1980

* Andrew Whyte was its editor.

† Today he is Sir John Egan's deputy.

was as low as it had been when Ryder published his plan five years earlier.

Forty-year old John Egan had spent four months making up his mind about becoming top man at Jaguar. Thoughts of Coventry's future, as well as his own, helped him reach his decision. He moved into Sir William's office at Browns Lane quietly. He spent the whole of Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, with shop stewards, union officials and managers, and after those two long days of persuasion a small majority vote set the production lines in motion. What Egan had done was, simply, to declare his personal commitment to Jaguar. He had no other business interests, either in BL or elsewhere. He had found himself in sympathy with the striker's sentiments if not their actions.

John Egan's sheer enthusiasm was effective at once, and his presence as a full-time 'Mr. Jaguar' was soon reflected in morale and productivity. He was clearly proud to be following in the steps of Sir William Lyons and Lofty England. On his arrival at Jaguar, Egan was quick to say that his difficulties would not be as great as faced by Sir William Lyons. He realised the need for a 'father figure' and did not shirk the role; within the factory he made time to stop and talk to people and listen to what they had to tell him.

It was to be a year before the most dangerous threat–that of Jaguar's total closure–went away.

Where John Egan found long experience he put it to good use, and this was emphasised by the continuity of management after his first five years in office. When he arrived in April 1980, however, there were some key functions over which he was not given immediate control. He had to prove himself. The most significant of these areas were those of sales and marketing, which remained within the complex BL structure. There were, however, two men from the 1960's Jaguar team who could be nominated for return to the fold almost at once. Bob Berry returned from Austin-Morris and BL international marketing, but it was not a satisfactory situation for him to have one foot in BL's camp and one in Jaguar's. He left to go with Alfa Romeo and, by late 1980, was seen to be putting his characteristic gusto into selling the Italian marque to sporting Britishers–not the easiest of jobs.

The other Jaguar front-man to 'come home' was John Morgan, who had accumulated a wealth of practical experience around the world. His return to lead the redevelopment of Jaguar markets in Europe was a positive move which helped the mood of growing confidence. Further 1980 appointments included Kenneth Edwards–the only member of Geoffrey Robinson's 1974 Jaguar heirarchy to return to Browns Lane–as Company Secretary and Personnel Director. (Bob Knight, the saviour of the marque, retired in 1980.)

On December 1, 1983, a Conservative body, the Centre for Policy Studies, published *BL Changing Gear,* the well-used title for a report which urged Trade and Industry Secretary Norman Tebbit to speed up the actual separation of the profitable sections–notably Jaguar and Egan's earlier 'baby' Unipart– from BL, for sale to private ownership. Within a fortnight, Tebbit confirmed that Jaguar would be sold-off during 1984. That would be a year in which Jaguar rarely left the headlines.

In January came confirmation of record sales in the USA–over 15,000 cars in 1983–a positive result of the 1981 dealer exercise. Acceptance in North America always has been and always will be crucial to the very existence of a true Jaguar motor car.

The structure of the new organization became clearer by May 1984 when it was announced that John Egan would maintain his role as chief executive of the Jaguar Group, meaning that he would remain Chairman and Managing Director of Jaguar Cars Ltd–the operating company–and Chairman of Jaguar Cars, Inc., which handles the marque's biggest export market. There would be also a new 'umbrella' company–Jaguar plc.

May, June, and July 1984 were climactic months for the Jaguar management, as the famous name was prepared for sale. Finance Director John Edwards and his unrelated colleague, Company Secretary Kenneth Edwards, were spurred on by the encouraging picture they were painting. Back in 1980, for example, productivity had dropped to 1.4 cars per employee. From nearly 10,000 employees, John Egan and his team had pulled the numbers down to about 7,200 in 1982, by which time the company was responding strongly to its new-found self-sufficiency. By the end of 1983, despite a strong recruitment drive, the productivity figure had risen to 3.4 cars per employee for the year.

Then, as the Offer for Sale was about to be published, it was indicated that the first six months of 1984 would yield profits in excess of £40 million. The scene was set for the greatest moment in modern Jaguar history. Jaguar was going private, putting shares worth nearly £300 million on the market.

Tales of stampedes for shares had been reported nearly fifty years earlier, when SS Cars Ltd was floated. Now Sir William Lyons himself was among the buyers. With a price of 165p per share, the scene at Barclays Bank in London's Farringdon Street resembled 'the start of a sale at Harrod's china department' reported Alison Hogan in *Financial Times* on August 4.

1985 dawned brightly, and it was clear that Jaguar had entered a period of true stability. The company had manufactured an all-time record of 33,000 Jaguars and Daimlers in 1984, with well over half of them destined for the USA. The existing 6- and 12-cylinder models were achieving regular quality standards to match the character and refinement which had been their hallmarks ever since Sir William Lyons launched the original XJ6.

Only with such an exceptional product could the people of Jaguar have hoped to see their company pull through from near extinction. Jaguar people, it is clear, do not give up–and their reward on this occasion was a new feeling of job satisfaction, while the XJ sold better than ever before. In early 1985, as the Jaguar Annual Meeting approached, Jaguar's 10,000 employees could feel secure but not complacent–for staying at the top is as hard a job as getting there. The news was that 1984 had seen a continuation of high productivity (3.6 cars per person, or thereabouts). It was expected that pre-tax profits of at least £90 million would accrue from a turnover of more than £600 million, and each employee was due to receive over £400-worth of shares (subject to four years' retention). This was the second such opportunity since the company returned to the private sector.

As Jaguar's honorary president, Sir William Lyons–whose influence undoubtedly will continue to play a part in future Jaguars– was able to express his pleasure more effusively in 1985. There is no doubt that the very high regard Sir William, John Egan, and everyone at Jaguar held for one another was a sound foundation for keeping the marque British–and truly great.

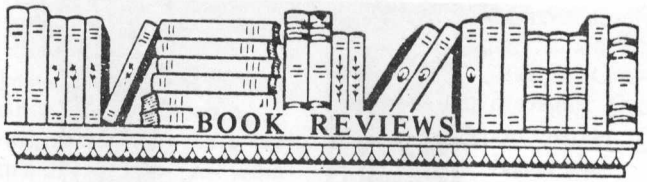
[Footnote: Since this was written, Jaguar has progressed for more new records in terms of output and profits, all of which have been well recorded. In June, 1986, Sir John Egan became Jaguar's chief executive. - *A. W.*]

1985 JAGUAR XJ-S

Photo courtesy of John B. Steen, Atlanta, Georgia

1985 JAGUAR XJ6

Photo courtesy of John B. Steen, Atlanta, Georgia



AUTOMANIA, by Julian Pettifer and Nigel Turner. 288 pages, more than 225 color illustrations and over 200 in black and white. Originally published by William Collins & Sons Ltd at £12.95, later by Little, Brown & Company, Boston, Massachusetts, at $19.95.

This book was based upon the British Independent Television Network series of programs studying the automobile's impact on society, produced by the Central Television Network in Birmingham, England. the book being issued as a companion volume to the TV series, an occurence more common in Britain than in the United States. By the nature of its origins, it is aimed at a varied readership. This, of course, determines some dimensions of the subject matter to be covered. The authors, British professional writers and researchers, do not claim to be automobile specialists. Their work does reflect the automobile as seen through the worldview more or less shared by British culture.

Automania blends lighthearted observations of the motoring scene with serious indepth analysis of questions about how the automobile has adapted to societies around the globe, and more critically, how the car has forced an adaption of those places to it.

Overall, I found *Automania* to be well written and illustrated, the authors utilizing many historical and contemporary photographs, drawings, posters, cartoons, and engravings.

Numerous aspects of the automobile and its impact on the world's societies are considered in this volume. Some are commonly dealt with; others are more rarely discussed. In the first chapters consideration is given to the historical, legal, and cultural impact of the car in the industrial world, emphasizing events in England, The USA, Australia, Germany, France and Japan. Then the manner in which the car has penetrated the very heart of our societies is examined. The authors conclude that the automobile has been used by the manufacturer, advertiser, and other culture "shapers" to create a new form of dependency. People must have cars for most of their needs to be met, including a sense of personal esteem. Our geography and social systems are altered to accomodate it. We become financially indebted to it and ultimately resource-poor because of it.

The cult of the car is a look at ways in which the car is imbedded into society. Another chapter studies the relationship of the automobile to courtship in western nations, noting that it has been forever changed due to the car. One chapter is given over to the involvement and images of the automobile in movies, art, music, and popular culture.

Of particular note is the examination of the car's impact on third world nations. What happens in societies which are recipients of the "car culture secondhand," so to speak, is proving to be a serious social problem. A fine chapter concerns the automobile and its relationship to death, a topic too seldom seriously studied.

Yet the final chapter titled "Future Car," where the authors could cogently focus on the future of the car in our lives, appears to run out of gas. There's little evidence of quality thinking of earlier chapters.

In sum, though imperfect, it is a delightful volume; humorous, readable, visually enjoyable, well arranged, packed with a lot of good data, and innovative in presentation– a good choice for a wide variety of readers.

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THE HISTORY OF HOLDEN SINCE 1917, by Norm Darwin. 223 pages, approximately 1,125 illustrations, 94 in color. 8-3/8" x 10-3/4." E. L. Ford Publications, Pty. Ltd., Newstead, Victoria 3462, Australia. Hardbound, $21.00 (Australian); Soft covers, $12.50 (Australian).

Lavish in its number of illustrations and a fine text makes *The History of Holden* an outstanding bit of automotive history from any viewpoint. SAH member Norm Darwin has created an attractive, informative story of Australia's "own" car which, prior to production, was Australia's largest body builder in the automotive industry.

In its earlier days, Holden built bodies for virtually every make of automobile imaginable on both British and American chassis. There *were* Australian cars in their own right back in those days–all-Australian makes such as the Australian Six and the Lincoln Pioneer Six, as well as such automobiles as the Summit which was almost entirely made up of foreign assembled parts, but the English and American markets exported the bulk of the cars used down under back then.

Holden interests then gravitated toward General Motors and was eventually absorbed by that conglomerate, and by the 1930's was pretty well geared toward bodying Chevrolets and Vauxhalls (which had also come under GM's wing) and to all intents and purposes became GM's body division.

Some of these cars were striking, such as the Chevrolet Moonlight Roadsters and those cars which, although designated as "coupes" in Australia, would have been known as "fastbacks" in the United States where such types weren't to appear until several years later. Other fetching Holden bodies were the phaetons which were being produced long after they had been abandoned by American lines.

Then came 1946 and with it, the Holden car. Its emergence into the pattern of things might be compared to GM's announcing a Fisher car in the U.S.– which, of course, it didn't–but ever since 1948 Holden has held its position in the Australian automobile picture with a large variety of offerings; dependable, good looking, and as Australian as the kangaroo.

This is a fine addition to automotive literature, and especially significant in subject matter not quite as well known in this hemisphere as it might be.

Keith Marvin

John Conde contributed this interesting photograph. It was purchased by him as part of a collection of pictures, with no date or location stated.. The automobile at the far left has front doors and gas headlamps, suggesting a date of 1912 for the car but not necessarily for the photo. The scene might be anywhere on the coastline of the United States (note the U.S. flag on the boat). At first glance, the steamer suggests the type of excursion boat so common on the Great Lakes for many years, but this picture seems to have been taken at low tide (note the high-water marks on each of the piers, which rules out the Lakes). The time of year might be in early spring. A light snow has fallen and is now melting rapidly in the mild temperature, indicated by the mild-weather clothing worn by most of the people in the picture and the folded tops on three of the motorcars.

Can any of our readers tell us anything about the location of this scene?

1910 KATO 1½ ton truck. This was a four-wheel-drive vehicle, built by the Four Traction Auto Company of Mankato, Minnesota. This firm was organized in 1908 to make both trucks and passenger cars, apparently using the chassis designed by Ernest Rosenberger for both types of vehicles. The company's first five cars, produced in 1908, and were powered by Brennan 2-cycle engines. Truck production began in 1909, and in the next three years a crew of about 20 men built 25 to 30 trucks and nearly a dozen passenger cars. A three-ton truck was offered in 1913. At this time the assets of the company were sold to the Nevada Manufacturing Company of Nevada, Iowa. Parts, drawings and partly finished vehicles were moved to Iowa, but none were completed despite a federal government order for 500 trucks. *Photo and information from* Minnesota History, *a quarterly publication of the Minnesota Historical Society*

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