



JULY-AUGUST 1970

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 11

The Society of Automotive Historians

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PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

We have received a most interesting manuscript which should become a standard for the serious researcher into automotive history. This is the second half of Charles Bishop's Automobiles of New York. The first half of this work was published back in the early 1950s in The Bulb Horn, and ceased with the letter M.

The author has agreed to rewrite this first section, to include detailed references and when this is available the whole work will be published as the first in a Monograph series. It was believed that the serializing of this would be undesirable and would interfere with the printing of the Newsletter. When ready this work will be distributed to the membership.

.....

It has been decided to allow a new grade of membership for institutions which are interested in the same goals subscribed to by individual members. The Institutional Membership will be allowed for museums, libraries and similar organizations. Membership cost will be \$15 per year, and this will entitle the organization to two copies of each Newsletter.

THE MEETING AT HERSHEY

The second annual Hershey meeting of the Society of Automotive Historians will be held on Saturday, October 10, 1970, beginning at 10 A.M., at the Hershey Hotel. At least one of our overseas members is expected to be present at this meeting, as well as many members from all parts of the United States.

There are many subjects for discussion - probably more than time will permit. Your suggestions and opinions are important, and all members who can possibly do so are urged to attend.

ADDITIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP LIST; CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES:

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THE MAIL BAG

Letters from Members

From John A. Conde, 1340 Fieldway Drive, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013:

Here are some comments for "The Mail Bag", which is a most interesting feature of the SAH Newsletter.

First of all, here is a rare picture of a rare car, which you may publish, if you wish. It is of another BATES car, built in 1897 only by Western Wheel Works, Chicago. It is not known if more than one was manufactured.

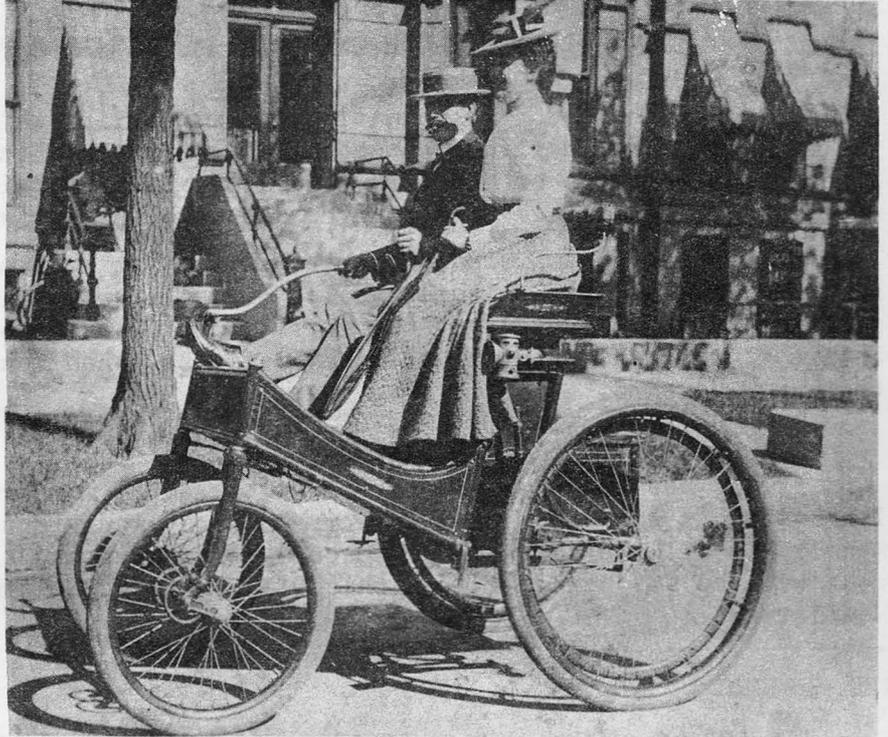
Secondly, I doubt if more than one BARTHEL car was built in Detroit. I had the good fortune of knowing Oliver Barthel, having been introduced to him in 1946 by Charles Brady King, for whom I was the official guide and host during the Automotive Jubilee in Detroit. (The month of June, 1946, was a highlight in my life because I also got to meet and talk with Barney Oldfield, Ransom E. Olds, Charles W. Nash, Henry Ford (whom King called "Hank"), and many other pioneers.

Further with regard to the B's . . . I have done considerable research on cars called BADGER. The one seldom seen on most lists is the BADGER built by Kissel Motor Car Co., Hartford, Wisconsin, in 1906 and 1907. I have an

original article published in MoToR for November, 1906, giving details of the 1907 model and including a photograph. Nearly every list includes the BADGER built from 1909-1912 by the Badger Motor Co., Columbus, Wisconsin. The third BADGER was built in Clintonville, Wisconsin, by the Four Wheel Drive Company. Only one was built (1908) and it was a steam car. It became known (that is, that one car originally dubbed BADGER) as the Four Wheel Drive. Three more models were built, according to the definitive history of the company published in 1954, all called Four Wheel Drive cars. One model of this BADGER was renamed the BATTLESHIP (1909) and was shown around Wisconsin just before World War I, to drum up interest in the company which eventually became a major truck producer, and is still in business in Clintonville building four-wheel-drive vehicles only.

Why don't we plan a seminar sometime where only a few subjects would be discussed in detail? One, in my judgment, is the most reliable kind of research - or What Do You Believe and What Do You Discard?

Re BEEBE....I have an original full page ad from Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal, May, 1906, page 8, devoted exclusively to BEEBE Model E. Two pictures of cars are shown. One shows a 2-cylinder 30-hp touring model offered for \$1250; the other shows a "natty runabout" (their words) selling for \$650. The slogan of this car, built in 1906 only by Western Motor Truck & Vehicle Works, was "Would you rather work or own a Beebe?" The ad states the company had a catalog.



1897 BATES, made by Western Wheel Works, Chicago
Picture courtesy of John A. Conde

From Maurice A. Harrison, 30, Park View Road, Southall, Middlesex, England:
(Forwarded to the Newsletter by Guy Seeley)

I thank you for having sent my membership card, directory and the latest Newsletter which I found very interesting. The Newsletter contained an item about the British B.S.A. concern which needs some expanding, as this concern was not a part of Daimlers but the parent company in the group. I shall shortly send you a brief write-up on the subject for what it is worth.

From W. S. Jaro, P. O. Box 645, Lynnwood, Washington 98036:

As the SAH has Cugnot's vehicle on its emblem, the roster list should, many will think, be based on this "initial make". Other ancient vehicles, such as the attempt by Oliver Evans of Philadelphia in 1805, should be recorded only at the discretion of particular historians.

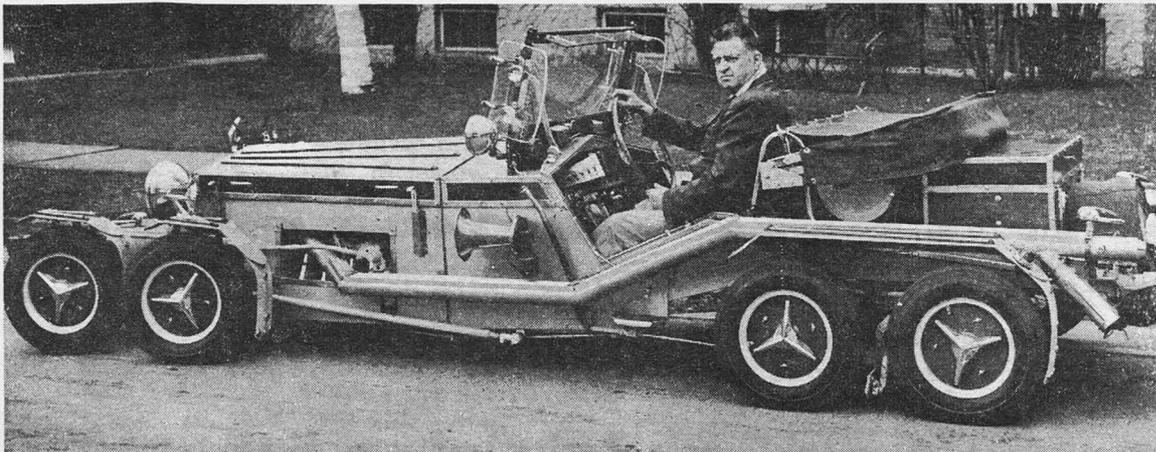
A similar method should be applied in the listing of single prototypes, such as racers, specials or experimental cars, even if these were conceived by commercial firms. This rule should stand especially in cases where the public presentation or roadability tests are unknown or debatable. Many of us, however, will accept the deeds of Messrs. Marcus of Austria (1860s) and Selden of U.S.A., even as it is well known that the later car was not built until the time of the famous Ford-Selden patent suit.

He who classifies ships considers various power sources, such as steam, diesel and atomic, and will always consider sailing vessels. Historically he will go back to the ancient Roman oar contraptions. He who records aircraft will consider free balloons and even Lilienthal's machine. Most automotive historians, however, will frown upon sail cars but will certainly list propellor driven machines - and in most cases disregard all contraptions which used levers, pedals, or were otherwise operated by transferring animal or human muscle power to the wheels.

It must be pointed out that it is extremely difficult to establish a rigid set of guidelines. For example, in the family of cargo vehicles one may be tempted to record the steam road tractor used in the Crimean War to pull carts with military supplies. This was, to many, a real predecessor of today's commercial highway monster, the giant truck with trailer.

Another difficulty lies in the area of tricycles, such as d'Yrsan, Morgan, Monos, Harley Davidson, etc. This list should exclude motorcycles or the three-wheelers with detachable side cars, but should, in my opinion, incorporate the Harley Davidson cargo tricycles.

Yes, indeed, a good historian must be unbiased, as much as is humanly possible, and should also use common sense and have feeling and some personal touch. He or she must also, by proper annotations, clear delicate marginal entries.



Machinist Enoch Johnson, 72, of Red Wing, Minn., has perseverance. He designed this eight-wheeled car in 1913 but only recently finished it. This picture, including the caption, was printed in the October 8, 1962, issue of *The National Observer*.

From William Watson, 115 Lipton Street, Winnipeg 10, Manitoba, Canada:

After looking over the roster in Newsletter #10 there is one entry I must definitely disagree with. This concerns the BEAUMONT, and all other "Canadianized" American cars. As cars like BEAUMONT, METEOR, MONARCH and FRONTENAC were not built in America, but in Canada they most certainly should not be included in a Roster of American Cars. Rather, they should appear only in a Roster of Canadian Cars, with mention of the car they were almost identical to.

The ACADIAN, on the other hand, presents a different problem. From the 1962 to 1968 model years, the ACADIAN was basically a CHEVROLET Chevy II built in Canada for PONTIAC dealers. For this period it definitely should be classified as a Canadian car. But, for the 1969 and 1970 model years the ACADIAN was, still, a CHEVROLET Nova with altered chrome but now built in America! The ACADIAN is still sold only in PONTIAC showrooms in Canada. Thus, the 1969-70 ACADIANS could be considered American cars, even though they are not sold there.

Going on to other items, I, too, like the idea and manner of including sub-makes in the roster as suggested in issue No. 7. After all, even though sub-makes are not true makes, they are sufficiently different from their parent makes to warrant a separate entry in a roster. Is it the intention of the Roster Committee to include sub-makes in the roster? I ask this question since I notice that the PLYMOUTH Belvedere and Barracuda are not mentioned in the roster in issue No. 10.

As for the idea of a probability scale, the presentation and symbols as presented by Mr. Wawrzyniak is far superior to any number or letter system. There is nothing to memorize. The symbols are quite understandable without a key, and by using a question mark after some doubtful part of the entry the reader immediately knows just what needs to be looked into and confirmed.

A "Digest of Current Literature" column in the Newsletter would be an excellent idea. As well as sending in the titles of books and the dates of particular magazine issues, perhaps the name and address of the publisher should be included. This would be extremely helpful to those who want to get a copy of the book or magazine.

May I say that I agree with the restriction on advertising in the "Classified Ads" section. As this Society is mainly concerned with the historical side of the automotive industry it would not be quite in line with the Society's scope to include the sale and search for cars, parts and services. Other clubs and magazines, with the expressed intention of serving the need for the buying and selling of cars and the like, serve it quite well. This Society should try to excel in its area of service and leave the other areas for other specialized organizations.

In conclusion, may I say that the Society is off to a great start, and if it keeps up the work it is doing, that great start will become a fantastic organization and service.

From Hugh Durnford, 128 Percival Avenue, Montreal West, Quebec, Canada:

In going through my files I find that I am missing Issue No. 6 of the SAH Newsletter. I would appreciate your sending me another copy, if available.

It was amazing to discover, on going through the back issues, how short a time the SAH has been going. The masses of information you have churned out, and your great activity, had left the impression that the SAH had been with us for years and years.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The kind words are appreciated, but it is the membership which has supplied the masses of information. Without such contributions the Newsletter would be very thin indeed.

All of the back issues of the Newsletter are still available, although the supply is limited. When requesting back issues, please include 18¢ (in stamps) for one issue, and 12¢ for each additional issue. This will cover the cost of first-class postage and envelope.

In the February 3, 1904, issue of Horseless Age was an article entitled "Reuben H. Plass, the Pioneer Gasoline Automobile Inventor of America". This describes an early vehicle which was run in New York City at least as early as 1870. The machine was reported to have had a water-cooled engine of four vertical cylinders. This was complete with poppet valves, a carburetor, electrical ignition and finally a multi-speed transmission. If such a vehicle existed as early as claimed it would shatter the currently accepted chronology of the development of the automobile. Furthermore, this would make the later efforts of Otto, Daimler, Duryea and Haynes that of putting amateurs.

This remarkable article is given verbatim:

The following chapter from the early history of the development of the automobile will be found to contain much that is of interest to all who are watching the progress of the self propelled vehicle; and for those who are most concerned in the welfare of the young industry, now passing through such a critical period of its existence - for those whose time and money are devoted to the building up of a business the magnitude of whose future it is almost impossible to exaggerate - it will not only be interesting but significant.

In the early sixties there was established in the city of New York the firm of Carpenter & Plass, gas engineers, general machinists and inventors, whose shops at 202 and 204 East Twenty-ninth street, near Third avenue, were known as the "Inventors' Emporium." Messrs. Carpenter & Plass prided themselves on being fully abreast of the times in all that related to the mechanical arts, and many useful inventions were developed in their shops from crude ideas and impracticable dreams. Thus, among other devices, was evolved a machine for insulating submarine cables, which was used in making what was doubtless one of the earliest cables, laid between Sandy Hook and the then centre of the city. Reuben H. Plass was the junior member of the firm, and it was he whose active brain kept his older confreres in a continual state of anxiety by his "crazy notions." One of these notions, and one which met with particularly strenuous opposition, was the idea that a practicable and safe motor could be constructed to utilize the energy contained in an explosive mixture of gasoline vapor and air, and young Plass experimented and labored with his new scheme until he not only proved its utility to his own satisfaction, but convinced his father, who was also a member of the firm, that there was something in it, and together they set to work to experiment on a larger scale.

It must be regarded as characteristic of the father and son that they elected to attack no less a complex problem than that of a self propelled fire engine - an entirely new proposition at that time. The following description of the general features of their machine will be of interest, and that the design and workmanship must have been surprisingly good the sequel will show.

The motor was a decidedly ponderous affair. Plass was not exactly clear as to the pressure his cylinders would be called upon to stand, and wisely chose the safe course, making his castings like the cannon turned out by his firm for the United States Government during the Civil War. There were four upright cylinders with buckets for the cooling water, and the trunk pistons, connecting rods and crank shaft were arranged substantially as in a modern four cylinder gasoline motor. The inlet and exhaust valves, both of the poppet type and of heavy design, were mechanically operated, a double armed lever acting on the ends of the stems. The charge was electrically ignited by a contact sparking device made by an ingenious electrician named Chester, who had a shop on Broadway at that time. Mr. Plass states that the ignition system worked well from the first, and was unchanged as long as the engine was in his possession. The motor operated on the four cycle principle. There was no carburetor, from a modern point of view, but the gasoline was sprayed into a pump

cylinder and forced into the power cylinders with an approximately correct proportion of air under pressure.

The motor transmitted its power to the rear axle through an arrangement of sliding gears by which the speed could be changed, the motor allowed to run free of the vehicle, and the water pumps thrown in. The steering gear consisted of a double armed lever on an upright column, the latter carrying on its lower end a pinion meshing with a section of a gear on the fifth wheel. Considerable power was obtained by the reduction through this arrangement. The frame of the machine was of angle iron, and the wheels had steel tires. The idea of muffling the exhaust from the motor was a refinement that did not occur to the builders, and it is stated by those who have seen the fire engine running that the combination of noises made by the exhaust and the gearing could be heard for blocks.

One night soon after the completion of this apparatus a fire broke out in a large hide house on Pearl street, near Chatham square, giving the builders an opportunity to show their mettle. Mr. Plass, senior, awoke his son, and together they got the motor started (they used a crank, and had to use it with great vigor) and set out for the scene of the fire. From the shop on Twenty-ninth street the streets were paved with cobblestones all the way to Chatham square, and Mr. Plass' statement that the trip was a "fearfully noisy" one can readily be believed. The exhaust gasses were allowed to escape directly from the cylinders into the air, and every exhaust made a loud report, while a jet of flame shot out of the opening for a foot or more, the whole producing what must have been a very correct imitation of a battery of guns in action. Add to this the clattering of the gears, the banging of the steel tires on the cobblestones and the rattle from everything on the machine that could be shaken loose, and the result can be more easily imagined than described.

By the time Chatham square was reached they were running at what was to the drivers a terrific speed, there being a down grade nearly all the way. The motor was behaving well. But suddenly there emerged from a cross street immediately in front a big double decker hand engine run by a volunteer crew, who must have been too much astonished at the extraordinary machine bearing down on them to get out of the way. Just at this extremely interesting point Mr. Plass discovered that he had completely forgotten the necessity for that most essential appliance, a brake! The motor was thrown out of gear and an attempt made to reverse, but it was too late, and a few seconds later the New Idea crashed into the Old Standby, knocking it into a large glass store front and putting out of business for the time. Despite this rough treatment the motor, which had stopped, was started again amid the loud and deep curses of the volunteers and did good work at the fire, owing to its ability to draw water from the hydrants in which there was no pressure. The next day, however, Mr. Plass was notified by the mayor that he could not operate his machine on the streets of New York. The merits of the fire engine were not altogether unrecognized, however, for it was sold later on to Lee & Larned, engineers, of Cincinnati, and Mr. Plass states that it has since been known as the Latta engine, and is probably in existence today. The motor, it is said, would work up to nearly 20 horse power.

A few years later Mr. Plass, Jr., constructed another explosive motor, which was an exact counterpart of the first except that it had only two cylinders instead of four. It was, in fact, made from the same patterns and drawings. This he mounted in the box of a four wheeled English cart over the rear axle. Forward of the engine was a double cone and belt arrangement for varying the speed, which was controlled by a lever from the seat. The power of the engine was transmitted to the change speed gear through a friction disk arrangement, which was used to disconnect the engine from the carriage when standing. This could also be used as a reversing gear, though the engine would run equally well in either direction. A sprocket on the shaft of the lower cone and one on the hub of the left rear wheel, connected by a chain, completed the driving gear. The left rear wheel alone was driven, thus making any compensating gear unnecessary. Gasoline was carried in a large flat tank over the engine, and the cooling water, which was circulated by a small plunger pump, in a smaller tank just forward of the gasoline tank. The carriage was steered by a wheel surmounting a

vertical column, a gear on the lower end of which engaged another gear of the same diameter on the fifth wheel.

Like other pioneers in this line, Mr. Plass does not seem to have met with a very enthusiastic reception from the "powers that be", for in the records of the police department we find that Reuben H. Plass, engineer, was arrested on February 27, 1875, charged with violating the boiler act (!), but was discharged by Justice Murray, of the Fourth Court. The inventor was compelled to operate his automobile at night and in unfrequented places, and states that several of his friends at different times accompanied him on these "runs". Trouble with the police, however, so disgusted Mr. Plass that he decided to sell his vehicle; but what was his surprise to find that none of his friends wanted to purchase it. Thinking that perhaps the price was too high, he offered it at a bargain, but still the supply exceeded the demand. Finally he went to the limit and offered to give it away. When even this failed he repaired to his carriage shed, removed the engine and other mechanism, and expressed his exasperation at the short-sightedness of his fellow men by smashing it into fragments with an axe. Having done this, he had no difficulty in selling the carriage for \$150.

Investigations now under way will probably establish the date of the construction of the carriage as being much earlier than that of Mr. Plass' arrest. Even if this should not prove to be the case, the design of the carriage is extremely interesting. All the essentials features of the modern motor vehicle seem to be pretty well covered. Means are provided for controlling the motor from the seat; for permitting it to run free of the carriage, as when standing; for reversing the direction of the carriage; for varying its speed at will; and by allowing one wheel to run free the difference in the velocities of the wheels in making turns is provided for, though, to be sure, in the most elementary manner. And last, and of no less importance, is the fact that the machine actually did run, the proof being indisputable. And the only ordinance that could be made to do duty to stop it was the steam boilers act.

Mr. Plass states that previous to the arrest above recorded (probably about 1868), he was arrested and fined three times; first \$5, then \$10 and finally \$50 and warned that the next offense would result in his imprisonment. Many persons now living in New York recollect seeing both the fire engine and the carriage in the streets.

I have attempted to confirm some of the information contained in the above, and my research follows:

(1) Article: "...Carpenter & Plass....202 and 204 East Twenty-ninth Street...."

Facts: The New York Historical Society has kindly searched the city directories from 1864 to 1879, and no mention is made of any such partnership. Furthermore, there appears to have been no Carpenter at this address. However, the Plasses, father and son, were of this location.

Reuben H. Plass	1865-6	Machinist	110 E. 29th St.
	1866-7	Clerk	-----
	1868-9	Machinist	-----
	1870	Machinist	204 E. 29th St.
	1871	Machinist	205 E. 23rd St.
John T. Plass	1864-5	Machinist	100 E. 29th St.
	1866-7	Machinist	108 E. 29th St.
	1868	Iron (?, ed.)	202 E. 29th St.
	1869	Machinist	202 E. 29th St.
	1870	Machinist	204 E. 29th St.
	1871-3	Machinist	202 E. 29th St.

John T. & Reuben H. Plass	1872-3	"Portable Gas Machines and Bandsaws a specialty"	202 E. 29th St.
Reuben H. Plass	1873-4	Machinist	202 E. 29th St.
	1874-5	Machinist	202 E. 29th St.
	1875-6	Machinist	202 E. 29th St.
Reuben H. Plass & Co.	1876-7	Gas business	202 E. 29th St.
	1877-8	Regulators	202 E. 29th St.
	1878-9	Shields	250 3rd Ave.

The interest in illuminating gas equipment is reflected in two patents:

82244, Sept. 15, 1868 - Improved Apparatus for Carbureting Air
to John T. Plass and Reuben H. Plass of New York, N.Y.

104642, June 21, 1870 - Improved Apparatus for Carbureting Air
to Reuben H. Plass of New York, N. Y.

The only interest in vehicles shows in patent 88205, March 23, 1869;
Improvement in Velocipedes - to Reuben H. Plass, New York, N. Y.

(2) Article: "...Engine (was called New Idea and was sold to)....Lee & Larned, engineers, of Cincinnati, and Mr. Plass states that it has since been known as the Latta engine.

Facts: From a recent letter from the Public Library of Cincinnati, Ohio, (History and Literature Department): ".....A. B. Latta designed the first successful steam engine (for use as a fire engine) put into service in 1853, and there was a steam engine called the A. B. Latta in 1867.....These were drawn by horses."

(3) Article: "... (Plass) was arrested on February 27, 1875, charged with violating the boiler act, but was discharged by Justice Murray of the Fourth Court." (This was for driving his vehicle on the streets.)

Facts: A search by the New York Historical Society of six daily and three weekly newspapers for the two or three succeeding days failed to confirm this incident. If this arrest, and the previous ones, claimed to have occurred in 1868, did occur, the evidence may be buried in the Criminal Court records. It was learned that all police precinct records prior to 1913 have been destroyed.

Plass was seen in print in the initial issue of Horseless Age of November, 1895, pages 41-43. A simple two-cylinder gas engine is described and illustrated as well as a cumbersome motor sleigh which used this engine. The engine was much less sophisticated than the one claimed to have been built 25 years earlier. By 1895 Plass had moved to Brooklyn, to a much more fashionable address on Lafayette Street.

Incidentally, the New York Times Obituary Index, 1858-1958, does not list either of the above individuals.

The above information is not consistent with the claims made in the 1904 article, and these discrepancies are sufficient to make the whole account suspect, despite the near-truths which make it sound so factual. From this, the charitable explanation would be that the anonymous author drew from a clouded memory, either his or Plass'. At worst it would be concluded that the entire account was a hoax perpetrated by the unknown author.

A PRELIMINARY LISTING OF PRE-1890 SELF-PROPELLED PASSENGER VEHICLES - by G. Marshall Naul

There are a number of secondary references to these primitive vehicles, but such references will require confirmation by more direct references. The technical press of the nineteenth century did not enjoy the coverage which the automotive journals of the twentieth century were able to maintain. For example, very few of these vehicles are mentioned in the Scientific American of the era, and this was the most prestigious periodical in the United States.

It therefore appears that for confirming these examples it will be necessary to rely on local sources in each case. This will present considerable difficulty, as the secondary sources may be inaccurate as to time and location. Furthermore, local newspapers are not generally available except in that locale. Anyone who has searched through a few months' accumulation of nineteenth century newspapers to locate a particular item can appreciate this proverbial 'needle in a haystack' approach. In cases where they exist, local historical societies may be of assistance in locating newspaper items.

It is likely, however, that most of the entries in this list will remain in the category of 'reported but not confirmed'.

As brand names for these vehicles were not common until after 1900, it seems pointless to assume that the makers' is synonymous. For this reason, the reported name of the individual constructor is given in alphabetical order. Only those vehicles whose existence seems to be above question are shown in caps. A large number of the listings were probably some sort of non-passenger vehicle, but for this preliminary list it will be assumed that all fall into the category of passenger vehicles, until proven otherwise.

Any confirming information, and any additional vehicle names, should be forwarded to G. M. Naul.

PRE-1890 U. S. PASSENGER VEHICLES

AMOSKEAG	Amoskeag Corp. Manchester, N. H.	1876-1906
	(Steam fire engines well known, but did they make any passenger cars?)	
Blanchford, Thomas	Springfield, Mass.	1825
	(Reference to this has been misplaced)	
Brayton, George B.	Providence, R.I.	ca. 1870
	(HA 11-25-03; used Brayton engine in horse car belonging to Union R.R. Co. Described in 2-3-1893 issue of <u>Providence Journal</u>)	
CARHART, John Wesley (steam)	Racine, Wisc.	1872
	(This two-passenger vehicle is well covered in several references)	
Copeland, Lucius D.		1884-1886
	(Hornung in <u>Automobile Quarterly</u> , Vol. 2, No. 1)	
Curtis, Frank (steam)	Newburyport, Mass.	1866
	(C. W. Bishop's <u>Automobiles of New England</u>)	
DUDGEON, Richard (steam)	New York, N.Y.	1860
	(In fact his second (and last) vehicle is now in an Arkansas museum)	
Edwards, John	Rochdale, Mass.	?
	(Ref. MA 12-24-08 (26): claims he was first to build a horseless carriage in U.S.)	
EVANS, Oliver (steam)	Philadelphia, Penna.	1805
	(Numerous references to this amphibious vehicle called ORUKTER AMPHIBOLUS, but it was a working dredge, not for passengers)	
Foster, Thomas J. (steam)	Westbrook, Mass.	1889
	(Ref. HA 2-3-04 (135) letter from builder making this claim. Says this was illustrated in an early issue of HA. This latter reference is needed)	

Fields, Edwin F.	Lewiston, Maine	1887
(Ref. MA 3-6-13 (5-9))		
House, Henry A.	Bridgeport, Conn.	1866
(C. W. Bishop's <u>Automobiles of New England</u>)		
House Brothers (electric)	Boston, Mass.	1882
(Ref. <u>Scientific American</u> 6-5-15)		
James, William T.	New York, N.Y.	1829-1830
(Ref. Hornung, <u>Automobile Quarterly</u> , Vol 2, No. 1)		
Kinsley, Dr. Appolus	Hartford, Conn.	ca. 1797
(Ref. C. W. Bishop's <u>Automobiles of New England</u>)		
Norcross, Alvin C. (steam)	Boston, Mass.	1865
(Ref. HA 6-12-12 (1028))		
OLDS, Ransom E. (steam)		1887
(Ref. Bentley's <u>Old Time Steam Cars</u>)		
Parker, Lemuel H. (steam)	Rockland, Maine	ca. 1877
(Ref. <u>Scientific American</u> 6-15-12)		
Pratt, P. W. (electric)	Boston, Mass.	1888
(Ref. <u>Scientific American</u> 6-5-15)		
Reed, Judge Nathan (steam)	Danvers, Mass.	1791
(Ref. MA 5-6-13 (5-9) Apparently models only)		
Reed, J. A. (PRARIE MOTOR) (steam)	New York, N.Y.	1858
(Ref. MA 4-5-06 (17) and <u>Commercial Vehicle</u> Nov. 1906 (280-281), also MA 11-12-14 (23) mentions a steam vehicle built by John A. Reed of New York City, which was shipped to Nebraska in 1862. Are these identical?)		
Morrison-Sturgis (electric)		1888
(Ref. Hornung, <u>Automobile Quarterly</u> , Vol. 2, No. 1)		
ROPER, Sylvester H. (steam)	Roxbury, Mass.	1862-
(One of these is in Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich. Described in <u>Scientific American</u> January, 1863. Also see <u>SAH Newsletter</u> No. 6)		
SIMONDS, Clarence (steam)	Lynn, Mass.	1884
(Ref. HA, Nov. 1895 (33), also NEAJ 5-26-06)		
Walker, T.W.	_____, Illinois	?
(Ref. Hornung, <u>Automobile Quarterly</u> , Vol. 2, No. 1)		
Ware, Elijah	Boston, Mass.	1861
(Ref. MA 3-6-13 (5-9))		
Whitney, George E.	East Boston, Mass.	ca. 1878
(Ref. C. W. Bishop's <u>Automobiles of New England</u>)		
Wilkins, J. W.	San Francisco, Calif.	1877?
(Ref. HA 1-6-09 (16))		
Woods, J. Elmer	Boston, Mass.	ca. 1870
(Ref. MA 3-6-13 (5-9))		

THE ROSTER - some problems

The replies - with corrections, comments and additions - to the section of the roster published in Issue #10 have been arriving in considerable quantity. How to list all of this material is a problem, but some of it appears elsewhere in this issue.

Perhaps this situation indicates that the time has come (early in the game, to be sure) to pause for a reconsideration of methods and guidelines. To date the plan has been a bit vague. A section of the roster was to be printed in each issue of the Newsletter, followed in the subsequent issue by additions and corrections sent in by members, preferably with references. Now, after only one regular listing, the dam has burst, and the water is rising.

Mail received at this office - either directly or via Wawryzniak, Naul, Seeley, et. al., indicates several things: first, there were a great many more very small automobile companies (who may or may not have produced cars) than any one of us ever suspected; and second, references from sources assumed to be accurate and reliable often do not agree - so how can we be sure which, if any, is correct? And third, it becomes increasingly apparent that many of the small companies (and a few of the big ones) made grandiose plans, announced them in the trade journals, then changed their minds and did something quite different, without bothering to correct the previously published items. An example of this situation follows:

Not included in the "B" listings in Issue #10 was "Badger, Kissel Motor Car Co., Hartford, Wisconsin, 1906." Letters received have called attention to this omission, and one of them included a photocopy of a page from MoToR magazine of November, 1906, which begins *"The Kissel Motor Car Co., Hartford, Wis., have put on the road the first of their 1907 line of touring cars, which will be known as the "Badger".* This is followed by a rather detailed description of body styles, prices and mechanical specifications. In addition, there are two photographs, one of the engine and the other of the car itself. On the other hand, one of our members who formerly lived in Hartford and was personally acquainted with members of the Kissel family, says that Mr. William Kissel has stated that no Kissel product was ever named "Badger". It would seem that the Kissel company had planned to name the car "Badger", issued press releases to that effect, and then decided not to use that name after all.

But who really knows? More than one manufacturer has denied, for reasons unknown, the construction of vehicles which were known to exist. The Johnson Service Company of Milwaukee, whose cars were advertised and described in the pages of the trade papers of around 1910 now claims to know nothing about any such products. The Packard Motor Car Company stoutly denied having built experimental Packards with front wheel drive in the early 1930s, yet at least one, and probably two such cars exist today.

Does Mr. Kissel's statement fit this pattern? Here we seem to have two solid references which directly contradict each other. All we know is that the Kissel company either did or did not build a car named "Badger". And this is where we came in.

Some of the car names we have received for addition to the list are new to us, that is, they are names which have appeared in no roster we have ever seen, and no real references are available. Probably many of this variety came from lists of "New Incorporations" or other tiny items in the trade journals. While most of these never amounted to anything at all, it is possible that a few of them did build and sell a few cars in their own locality and without benefit of advertising. An example of such a make is the "Gatts", a buggy type, built by A. P. Gatts of Hamersville, Ohio, in 1905. It is said that only five were made. Proof of production and sale exists in the form of a completely restored "Gatts" (Serial No. 3), owned by J. William Goodwin of Frankfort, Indiana. Presumably there were hundreds of makes in this category, but there were just as many which were never made at all. In such obscure cases, the separation of fact from fiction usually requires a personal visit to the town where such a make was said to have been built, checking records and talking to the elder citizens.

Many of us are old enough to remember a few hundred makes by having actually owned them, seen them, or knowing someone whose family once had one. The really obscure ones are those made and largely forgotten before we were born, or those made in very small quantity in a distant locality. These are the elusive makes whose history is difficult to verify. Actually, a large proportion of the entries in any car roster are assumptions, founded upon the best evidence available to the historian. Such evidence ranges from absolutely positive to highly questionable. Some of the types of evidence are listed herewith, in what would seem to be a declining order of reliability.

EXISTENCE OF A SURVIVING VEHICLE

This, without question, is definite proof of the production of at least one car. Mr. Goodwin's "Gatts" is an example.

MENTION IN LICENSE REGISTRATION BOOKS

Such books were published, in the past, by several states. If a make is mentioned, somebody bought a license for it, which would seem to confirm its existence. One such make is the "Dalton", which appears in the 1914 book published by the State of Connecticut as a 1912 model, although the name and location of the maker is not given. The same book lists a "Case" (not of the J. I. Case variety) made by the Lethbridge Motor Car Company of Lethbridge, Kansas. This is a 20-24 hp Model A, 1907.

PHOTOGRAPHS, OTHER THAN ADVERTISING

Occasionally an old photo, from somebody's family album, will turn up with a name and date. If such information was put on the back of the photo when it was made, it should confirm at least the existence of that make of car.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES, WITH PHOTOS

This type of article appeared frequently in the trade magazines, with several photographs and a detailed description. Such articles should constitute pretty good evidence that such a car was built (but what about the "Badger"?).

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

Automobile ads, published for a given make for a few years, must be considered proof that such a make was produced for at least those years. However, "one-shot" ads were quite likely to be issued by companies whose optimism exceeded their production capabilities. Such ads with line drawings in lieu of photographs are always suspect, and even those with photos may not be dependable. "Shad-Wyck" built no cars, but used a "Roamer" photograph in advertisements. Also, the "Norcross", supposed to have been made at Norcross, Georgia in 1907, used a picture of a 1907 "Knox" in its ads.

SALES LITERATURE, BROCHURES, MANUALS

Such items, published by a manufacturer, are generally (but not always) reliable. Some companies published elaborate sales brochures but made no cars. Craig-Hunt, of Indianapolis was one of them.

NEWS ITEMS IN TRADE JOURNALS

When such items concerned the better known makes they were usually, but not always, accurate. Most of these were press releases, sent by the manufacturer, and published with little if any checking.

DIRECTORY LISTINGS (City or Trade Directories)

Here again the publisher depended on the company concerned for the information published. Often such listings were carried over from previous years, and might indicate a longer life span than the company actually enjoyed.

CORPORATE RECORDS

Records of incorporation are on file in the state capitols across the United States, and access to such information is readily available. However, such records provide only the dates of incorporation, the amount of capitalization and the names of the incorporators. No evidence of production is included, although the intent to produce is apparent.

Also, many companies continued to exist, in another line of business, for years after their last automobile was produced. In such cases company records can be misleading. The Albaugh-Dover Company of Chicago, which ventured briefly into the automobile business in 1910 with the "Aldo" car, remained in business until 1927 as a manufacturer of gears. The Cole Motor Car Company, of Indianapolis, which made its last car in 1925, is to this day a going concern. Cole's buildings are well maintained, with the company name prominently displayed. This is now a real estate operation in which the Cole company rents bits and pieces of its plant to smaller concerns.

Methods of procedure in the compiling of the roster will be up for discussion at the October meeting at Hershey. Many suggestions have already been received, and all of them will be considered. Sorting the wheat from the chaff will be a tremendous job, and, as one member pointed out, we are starting about 75 years too late.

All comments will be welcomed.

DEPARTMENT OF EXCUSES, EXPLANATIONS AND APOLOGIES

This issue is a combination package - July and August both in one issue. And even though it is printed in mid-September, it is our biggest issue to date.

Let's begin with the explanations. Your Newsletter is printed by Brigham Press, of Marietta, Georgia, which is without doubt the smallest print shop in these parts. The entire staff consists of Grace and Dick Brigham (who also serves as Newsletter editor). Our work includes commercial printing, the publication of an occasional book of our own (on the subject of antique automobiles), and, as time permits, the printing of all of the SAH material. Of all of the things we do, the SAH printing is by far the most enjoyable. But, because the business of making a living must take priority, it is difficult to maintain a regular schedule for the Newsletter.

Now for the excuses. During the last couple of months we have been completely swamped with commercial printing orders. We've been working long hours, but it seems that for every job we get out, two more come in. I guess we shouldn't complain because business is good, but it would be nice to have a bit more time for old-car activities.

And finally, apologies. For a while, a few months ago, it looked as though we would soon be back on a semblance of a schedule, but it didn't work that way. What started out to be the July issue was hardly under way when suddenly it was August. Thus we decided to combine July and August into one big issue - and here it is September. There may be time to squeeze out a small September issue before the meeting at Hershey (October 10), but that remains to be seen. Meanwhile, we're sorry about the delay and will try to get back to a regular once-a-month schedule - before we get fired.

The Roster - Notes, Additions and Corrections concerning previous listings.

From Donald H. Paul, Muscatine, Iowa:

A.B.C. - A.B.C. Motor Vehicle Co. formed 1905. In 1908 this company made 183 cars.
Ref. HA 6/30/09 (878)

ALBANY - Bankrupt August 1908. Assets \$2500, Liabilities \$4800. No cash.
Ref. HA 8/26/08 (266)

ALLEN & CLARK (electric) - The Toledo Electric Vehicle Co. has been incorporated at Toledo, Ohio, to manufacture electric cars. The new company takes over the business of the ALLEN & CLARK CO., 2014 Adams St., Toledo, a development concern organized to perfect a storage battery invented by A. F. Clark....it will begin at once the manufacture of electric runabouts. Ref. HA 10/7/08 (511)

ANDERSON - The Anderson Carriage Mfg. Co. of Anderson, Indiana, will bring out a high wheeled motor buggy next season. Ref. HA 9/16/08 (349)

ASHTON - Ashton Motor Car Co., Bridgeport, Conn., incorporated for \$10,000 by T. R. Ashton, M. A. Hall, G. E. Morton. Ref. HA 9/30/08 (482) Listed under 'New Incorporations'.
[Ed. - But did this outfit ever build a car?]

AURORA - Aurora Motor Works, Aurora, Ill., bankrupt August, 1908. Factory closed some time ago for wage claims of \$900. Ref. HA 8/5/08 (182).

Will resume operations under management of Joseph Devore. Creditors settled for 10%.
Ref. HA 1/13/09 (76).

Plant purchased by Black Automobile Co. of Chicago. Black has had its cars made by others, but will now take up manufacture itself. Ref. HA 5/26/09 (749)

AUTOETTE - Manistee Automobile Co., Manistee, Mich., organized to manufacture a low priced runabout and delivery truck. MA 4/11/12 (11)

From Charles Bishop, New Haven, Conn.

BACHELLE (not BACHELLES) - Mr. Von Bachelles took space for one electric, April, 1901; 3 spaces December 1901 at Chicago show, for Bachelles Automobile Co. No address.
Ref. The Automobile 10/12/05 (404-5). Illustration of his first car. Article says he has constructed 7 cars and a bus so far.

BAKER-BELL - Baker-Bell Motor Co., 665-9 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, 1913. Catalog in the Connecticut State Library of this maker of friction drive cars and trucks notes that they also distribute CARTER friction drive vehicles.

BALBOA - Scudder, Vol. 2, notes charter forfeited 2/27/26, gives company name as Balboa Motor Corp. (not Motors).

BALDNER - Connecticut Motor Vehicle Record, 1912, finds the same company still in existence in 1906, but moved to Chicago with a 30-35 hp touring car. Their 1903 was groovy - 3 cylinders, 3 speeds forward and 3 speeds reverse! and free wheeling. Tiller or steering wheel, customer's choice.

BADGER - Badger Motor Car Co., Columbus, Wisc. Press notices of public display in December, 1909, would seem to qualify 1909 instead of 1910 as starting date. Conn. MVR, 1912, listing models B and C for 1910-1911 infers a model A prior to 1910.

BAILEY - BAILEY-PERKINS - Bailey Auto Company, Springfield, Mass., 1907-1910. The short form of Auto is used in both an illustrated press item of 1907 and in Conn. MVR, 1912. PERKINS, 1906, was its prototype, as indicated in Automobiles of New England. Please let us have documentation on Bailey-Perkins Automobile Co.

BAILEY-KLAPP - Elwood Iron Works, Elwood, Indiana. Makers of ELCO. New 8-cylinder BAILEY-KLAPP illustrated in MA 2/11/15 (30). Same source mentions the company's involuntary bankruptcy 8/19/15 (33) stating that they had planned to build the ELCO but rights were secured by the Bimel Buggy Co.

Baldwin Automobile Manufacturing Co., Connellsville, Penna, 1900-1901, made LOCOMOTOR. Successor company made the KURZ. Baldwin bankrupt in 1901.

BALZER - Stephen M. Balzer, 370 Girard Ave., Bronx, N.Y., 1897-1898. See CAREY, 1906. Balzer Motor Carriage Co., (same address) 1900. (Hiscox)

- Omissions -

BACKUS, 1903, of Newark, N.J., not to be confused with BACKHUS (commercial) of East Rutherford, N.J., 1926-1927.

BACK BAY, 1900.

BAKER - J. C. Baker, Oakland, Calif., 1900 (Hiscox)

BAKER - Baker Mfg. Co., 24 Hamlin Street, Middletown, Conn.

BALLARD, 1895 (Sat Eve Post List) Have we laid the ghost of this one? How?

BALTIMORE (two) 1900; 1903.

B & H - The Brew-Hatcher Co., Cleveland, Ohio, 1904-05 (Clymer #5 (40). Formerly BREW-HATCHER, formerly BREW & HATCHER.

B & P - The B & P Company, 128 Ferry Street, Milwaukee, Wisc., 1903.

From Stanley K. Yost, Royal Oak, Michigan;

Some of the "B" clarifications -

BELMONT - 1909-1912. Incorporated May 27, 1909, Belmont Automobile Mfg. Co., New Rochelle, N.Y. To Castleton, N.Y., June 1909 Ref. MA 6/17/09. To New Haven, Conn., January, 1910. Ref. CATJ March, 1910 (172).

BELMONT - Belmont Motor Car Co., Toledo, Ohio. Incorporated January, 1917. Ref. eight listings to March, 1917 in The Automobile, Vol. 36, and a few in Vol. 37. Light car, very few built.

BAILEY-KLAPP - Elwood Iron Works, Elwood, Indiana. Was assembled, basically, with key parts manufactured by the Elwood plant. Bailey and Klapp were engineers with the company, and they did supply running gear parts to APPERSON.

BARNES - I have this about as listed, but not starting until 1908. The 1907 car was called SERVITOR. I have ads but little else. There was also an honest BARNES (formerly ANHUT) built in Detroit, and also a BARNES electric.

BEAVER - I have this one as 1913-1921 and would like to know of anything later for my own files.

BENHAM - This very fine car was the former S & M Six, which looked like a cross between a Stutz and a Palmer-Singer. It was the S & M in 1914 and the BENHAM in 1914 and 1915. Mr. Benham was in the S & M company and continued the car with his own name. A fire destroyed the plant in 1915, and in 1948 all of the literature, photos and blue prints were destroyed by a fire in Mr. Benham's home.

BEEBE - for both 1906 and 1907 there were two different passenger models available; a semi-high wheeled runabout and a full sized 40 hp touring car. They also made heavy trucks.

From G. Marshall Naul, Newark, Delaware:

More on the BELMONT -

Charles Bishop has sent me a copy of his information regarding the BELMONT. Some time ago I checked with the Hartford Public Library which gave me the following:

Belmont Motor Car Company, New Haven, Conn., incorporated in Connecticut Jan. 3, 1910, and surrendered rights on Feb. 17, 1910. (No wonder they were not mentioned locally). This data was from Marvin Scudder Manual of Extinct or Obsolete Companies, Vol. 2, 1928.

Also: Horseless Age, 1/12/10 (103); Belmont Motor Car Co. incorporated. Incorporators were Dr. C. Baxter Tiley, Frank B. Frisbee, William J. Smith. (The first two were later connected with other Connecticut auto companies).

ibid., 8/17/10 (250) Belmont Automobile Co., New Haven, bankrupt.

ibid., 9/14/10 (383) Belmont Automobile Co. of New Haven, leases plant at Castleton, N. Y., and will try to start up again.

ibid., 9/7/10 (351) Belmont Motor Vehicle Co., Castleton-on-Hudson, N. Y., incorporated with capital of \$25,000.

ibid., 12/15/09 (713) Belmont Automobile Company, a New York corporation, has a plant in Hartford, Conn., and will manufacture the BELMONT "30".

[Editor's Note: Other equally confusing references to the BELMONT have been received. At this writing it would seem that the Belmont started out in Castleton, moved briefly to New Haven, and then went back to Castleton. But what about Hartford? It would seem that this company was too busy moving to build many automobiles. At any rate, all accounts of this company's activities are subject to immediate and complete revision.]

AND MORE TO COME -

The foregoing comments on the previously published lists are just a sampling of the material which has been received. All have been shortened, and the balance of this material will be printed in the next several issues - along with those whose comments didn't get into this one.

Our thanks go to all of you who have contributed this material.

Classified Ads

This classified ad section is open to all members of the Society of Automotive Historians at no charge, for buying, selling or trading items of interest to automotive historians, such as catalogs, books, magazines, automobile ads, photographs, etc. No ads for cars, parts or restoration services will be accepted.

Send your classified advertising to: Society of Automotive Historians, Publications Office, P. O. Box 6465, Marietta, Georgia 30060.

For Sale or Trade: Over 50 issues of MOTOR AGE, from 1917, 1919 and 1920. Some complete months. Some have loose covers, but the insides are in very good condition and have no missing pages or clipped pictures. Will sell for \$4 per copy or trade for Pre-1915 truck material (American or foreign), Pre-1930 foreign auto books, or Pre-1915 auto magazines (American or foreign). Send for list of issues. JOHN M. PECKHAM, 675 PINWOODS AVENUE ROAD, TROY, NEW YORK 12180.

6 section Wall Chart that shows 554 old car emblems dating back to 1901. \$5.35 postpaid. This is the old EATON chart copyrighted in 1951 and reissued in sections to be mailed in flat form. This most valuable historical reference should be on the wall of every den. Other Wall Charts can be made up on emblems and the lists of 2734 cars made or sold in the USA. SSAE please. HARRY PULFER, BOX 8526, LA CRESCENTA, CALIF. 91214.

Wanted: Iron Age magazine, July 30, 1931. Any DeVaux material including magazine ads I don't have. Anything pertaining to Beaver, Portland, Pacific or any other car or truck made in Oregon. Anything pertaining to the Portland Kaiser-Frazer factory. Ads and magazine articles about 1936 Chevrolet 6-wheel truck. Fortune ads for Mark II Lincoln Continental. RICHARD LARROWE, ROUTE 1, BOX 900, CORBETT, OREGON 97019.

Just Off The Press - Early Car Serial Numbers, 1910-1942. A new 56-page (8½ x 11) book listing serial numbers of over 200 makes, with dates and places of manufacture, and location of serial numbers. This is an original research project, not a reprint. \$2.00 postpaid. BRIGHAM PRESS, BOX 6465, MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060.
