



The Society of Automotive Historians

PRINTING AND PUBLICATIONS OFFICE, P. O. BOX 6465, MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30062

John M. Peckham
President
675 Pinewoods Ave. Rd.
Troy, New York 12180

Richard B. Brigham
Vice-President
136 Park Lane
Marietta, Ga. 30062

Vernon W. Vogel
Secretary
Box 24
Edinboro, Penna. 16412

William S. Jackson
Treasurer
P. O. Box C
Hummelstown, Penna. 17036

G. Marshall Naul
Librarian
5 Queen Ann Drive
Newark, Del. 19711

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

To those of us who are interested in commercial vehicles, the date of December 24th is an important one; yet it is one which tends to go unnoticed. Christmas Eve, 1972 should have been considered even more important, since it marked the bi-centennial of the conception of the idea which would ultimately lead to the construction of what might be called the first self-propelled commercial vehicle in the United States.

Two hundred years ago, on the afternoon of Christmas Eve, 1772, Oliver Evans became aware of the possibilities of constructing a high pressure steam engine and using it to drive mills, boats and road wagons. Unfortunately, his plans for a self-propelled road vehicle did not come into fruition until 1805. There is considerable evidence that Apollos Kinsley, a gentleman of Hartford, Connecticut, actually operated a steam carriage on the streets of that city during 1798 or 1799, but his interest was with personal transport. Evans, on the other hand, was more interested in commercial traffic of goods and people. His second vehicle (the first was started but not completed) was the famous "Orukter Amphibolis" which may have travelled as much as 40 miles on land before being launched into the Schuylkill at Philadelphia. With this effort, Evans proved his concept of Christmas Eve, 1772, and the history of self-propelled commercial road vehicles was well under way in this country.

Despite the long history of commercial motor vehicles, little has been done to record the important information connected with the subject. Admittedly, there are some efforts under way to publish a book covering the period from Evans to the present, but the years from 1895 to today are so filled with material concerning this industry, which played such an important part in shaping our country, that it can still be considered a wide-open field. At least one of our SAH members, an automotive book publisher, is interested in producing books on the subject. It can be seen by the ever-increasing number of trucks at antique car meets that there is a great potential interest in this line. Complete histories of MACK, AUTOCAR and WHITE are well under way by SAH members, but this leaves the door open for hundreds of more such efforts. Here is a subject which has not been worked to death, as has been done with some makes of automobiles. It is a field which offers such a diverse group of approaches that it almost boggles the mind. Naturally, truck builders are the prime target for the historian, but there are also such items as body builders, social and economic influences of the industry, Unions, trucking companies and dozens of other subjects that are just begging to be gathered and recorded.

While it seems that the time is ripe for a concerted effort on this segment of automotive history, there are quite a few other aspects that have been, for the most part, ignored. Mr. Huffman's letter in Issue #27 of the SAH Newsletter brings to mind the possibility of someone doing a history of cyclecars and children's vehicles.

What about that void that seems to hover around the period between the first Duryea cars and 1900? When you consider that more than 90 individuals and companies had entered the 1895 Times Herald race, there must have been a whale of a lot of things going on during that period, but no one has bothered with it.

Next, I could suggest projects on camping vehicles, trailers and motor homes; or automotive toys; or touring, maps and other travel aids; or highway advertising; or, for that matter, just highways. What about accessory manufacturers and suppliers; or what about critical history of automotive advertising? (I don't mean just another collection of ads.)

We all tend to research and write on certain makes. Let's, as we get moving into the second century of our country's automotive history, take a look at the broader aspect and work on it, too.

Best Wishes to all, for the coming year!

John M. Peckham

THE AMERICAN TRUCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On October 14, 1972, the United States Truck Historical Society and the American Truck Historical Society merged. The new organization will continue under the name of the American Truck Historical Society.

James B. Godfrey, Jr., was elected to serve as President. The Vice-Presidents are R. W. Gerstacker, A. H. Nielsen and H. L. Willett. Treasurer is W. M. Frantz, and W. E. Given is Secretary.

The membership is largely made up of "Industry" people. ATHS has been recognized as the duly authorized organization founded for the recording and preservation of trucking industry historical data by the American Trucking Associations, Inc.

Further information may be had by writing to: American Truck Historical Society
22234 Ford Road, Dearborn Heights, Michigan 48127

NEW MEMBERS

Nelson H. Adams 1043 Western Road Castleton-on-Hudson, N.Y. 12033	Nathaniel T. Dawes 51 Catherine Street Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601	Dr. John H. LeBaron 7703 Lem Turner Road Jacksonville, Fla. 3220
---	---	--

ADDRESS CHANGES

Vicente Alvarez, M.D. Saramiento 2061 - Piso 3, D.7 Buenos Aires, Argentina	William C. Williams 5059 Washburn Ave. South Minneapolis, Minn. 55410	Lawrence W. Koenig Box 18-D Stoney Run Rd. Hanover, Md. 21076
---	---	---

BACK ISSUES OF THE NEWSLETTER (AND OTHER GOODIES)

The following issues of the Newsletter are still available, although some are in very short supply: No. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27. Also available is the Newsletter Index, which lists the contents of issues 1 to 14.

The above items may be ordered on a first-come, first-served basis, at 50¢ per copy, postpaid.

Still available are some copies of Motor's Historical Table of the American Motor Car Industry. This is a reprint of a roster of American auto makers as compiled by Charles E. Duryea and published in MoToR magazine in 1909. Well over 600 manufacturers who were in business during the years 1895-1909 are listed on a year-by-year arrangement which shows the years these companies were in production, name changes, and changes of ownership. Sent post paid, \$1.00 per copy.

Official Program of the First Annual Race Meet, Columbus, Ohio, July 4, 1903. This is not only a reprint, it is an exact reproduction of the original program of ten events, some of which included special exhibitions by Barney Oldfield. Several auto ads are included. Sent postpaid, \$1.00 per copy.

Any of the above items may be ordered from the Society of Automotive Historians, Publications Office, Box 6465, Marietta, Georgia 30062.

THE MAIL BAG

Letters from Members

THE RED BUG

I was most interested in the article in Newsletter No. 27 about the cyclecars made, or sold, by the American Motor Vehicle Company of Lafayette, Indiana.

Despite the notice in front of the RED BUG claiming that it was manufactured by the American Motor Vehicle Company, this machine looks suspiciously like the Briggs & Stratton Flyer, which was also sold under the name RED BUG or AUTO RED BUG. These names were apparently coined by the Automotive Electric Service Corp. of Newark, N. J., who were the east coast agents for the cars. The electric version appeared later, probably not before 1922, and was also named RED BUG or AUTO RED BUG. Contrary to some statements, these names did not apply only to the electric models, and the next edition of The Complete Encyclopedia of Motorcars is being modified accordingly.

The question is, did American Motor Vehicle Company make the RED BUG under license from Briggs & Stratton, or did they originate the design and sell it to B & S? And if so, where does A. O. Smith come in, who is also claimed as the originator? The earliest date I have seen for Smith is 1917, and for B & S, 1919.

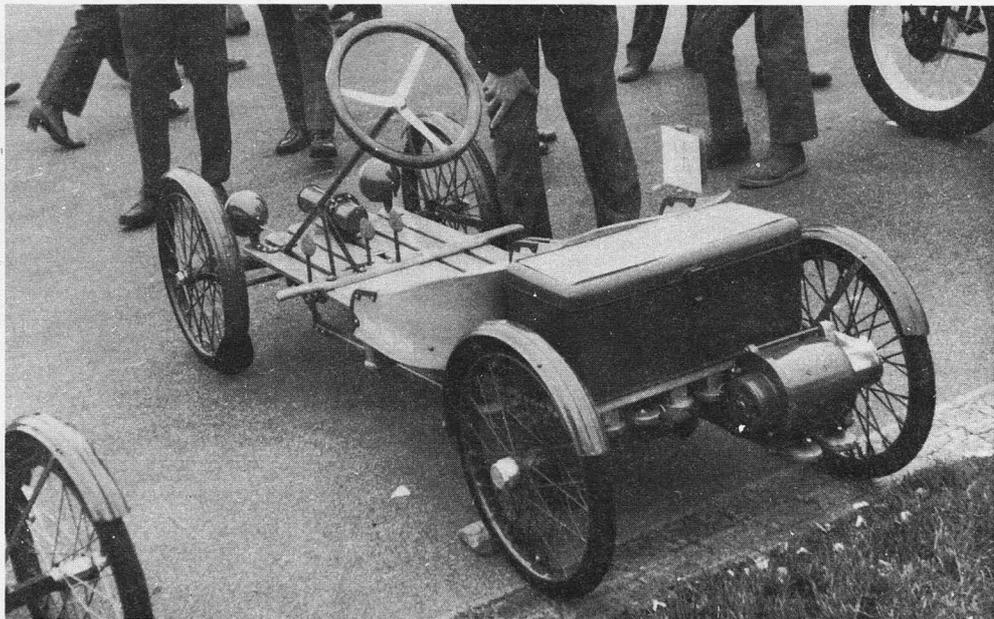
The reference to Palm Beach presumably means that the cars were used for riding along the front or promenade, and in this connection it is interesting to note that, according to Richard Evans whose Manz Motor Museum houses the only B & S Buckboard known in England, there were a number of RED BUG electrics similarly used at Le Touquet, France, in the late 1920s.

I enclose a photograph of a RED BUG electric, taken at Hershey in 1970.

Nick Georgano, 44 Kensington Park Gardens, London W11 2 QT, England

Electric model of
the RED BUG

Information provided by Mr. James Altman says that this car is owned by Mr. Boyd Muir, of Ligonier, Penna., and has won 12 National Senior Awards at A.A.C.A. meets.



Thank you for running the item on pages 6 and 7 of SAH Newsletter No. 27 in regard to the cars built by the American Motor Vehicle Company. The part about the RED BUG was most interesting.

About 1916 or 1917 these cars were sold by John Wanamaker, Philadelphia, in the sporting goods department. The reason I remember it so well is that I sure tried to get my father to buy me one. I know it was not the New Jersey RED BUG, as I was driving standard size cars by that time.

Is it possible that this RED BUG was the forerunner of the SMITH FLYER? I believe that A. O. Smith did not originate the car but took it over from someone else. I have a note (The Automobile, 11-2-16, Pg. 727): "Corporation formed to take over company." This might indicate where the SMITH FLYER started. I don't have this issue, but this might be a start.

Frank T. Snyder, Jr., 748 West Laredo Street, Chandler, Arizona 85224

EDITOR'S NOTE: The first powered wheel for the propulsion of bicycles seems to have been the invention of a man named Wall in England, circa 1910. It was known as the Wall Auto Wheel, and manufactured by the International Auto Wheel Co., Ltd. Manufacturing rights were acquired by the A. O. Smith Company of Milwaukee, whose product, the Smith Motor Wheel, was in production by October of 1914.

Apparently the RED BUG was developed by the American Motor Vehicle Company of Lafayette, Indiana, in 1916. A Smith Motor Wheel provided the power. Rights to this design were acquired by A. O. Smith, who called the little buckboard car the SMITH FLYER.

Manufacturing rights to both the car and the Motor Wheel were purchased by the Briggs and Stratton Corporation, Milwaukee, in May, 1919. The SMITH became the BRIGGS & STRATTON FLYER. Early in 1924 both car and engine were acquired by the Automotive Electric Service Corporation, North Bergen, New Jersey. This company continued to make the car, but changed its name to AUTO RED BUG - almost its original name! They also introduced the electric models of the vehicle, which were powered by Northeast 12 volt starter motors and used on the DODGE BROTHERS car of the period. There is evidence that the AUTO RED BUG was manufactured as late as 1928.

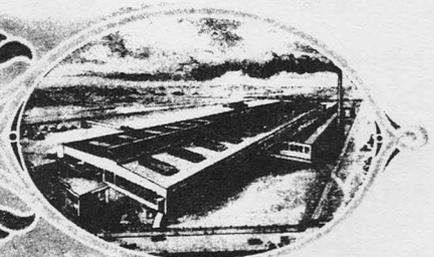
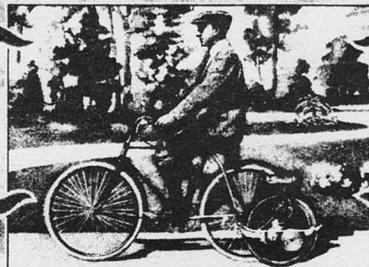
ALL AGREEMENTS CONTINGENT UPON STRIKES, FIRE OR OTHER DELAYS BEYOND OUR CONTROL. ALL CONTRACTS ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE HOME OFFICE.

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE COMPANY - MOTOR WHEEL DIVISION.

A. O. SMITH CORPORATION



PARK ST PLANT



GENERAL OFFICES
27TH ST PLANT.

SOLE MANUFACTURERS & DISTRIBUTORS

Smith MOTOR WHEEL AND *Smith* FLYER

FULLY PROTECTED BY U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS

MOTOR WHEEL DIVISION.

J. A. BENSON,
SALES MANAGER.

Milwaukee, Wis. u.s.a.

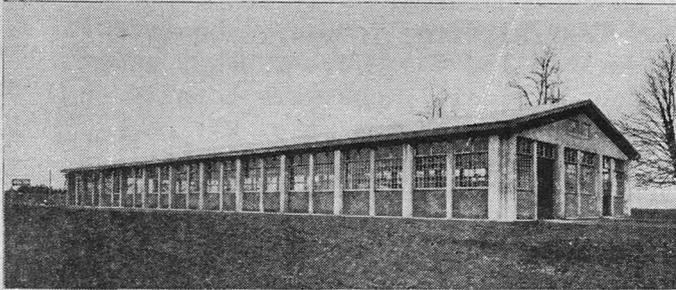
1917 Letterhead of A. O. Smith Corporation, Motor Wheel Division, loaned by Mr. James Altman of New Kensington, Penna. Mr. Altman has made a thorough study of this make, and owns a collection of eight Motor Wheels, one Smith Flyer and two electric Red Bugs, all restored. An article of Mr. Altman's about the history and development of the Motor Wheel was published in Antique Automobile, March-April 1971

THE BEAVER STATE MOTOR COMPANY

Here is a recent photo of the Beaver State Motor Company's building, located in Gresham, Oregon. The building is now used as part of a sawmill. In the late twenties the building was used by my uncle as a refrigerator factory. He used the original foundry and equipment in the manufacture of refrigerators, known as King Berea brand. He was no more successful than the original tenant, going out of business with the depression. Beaver lasted until 1927 making drag saws and cement mixers, some of which still exist. No Beaver cars are known to exist.

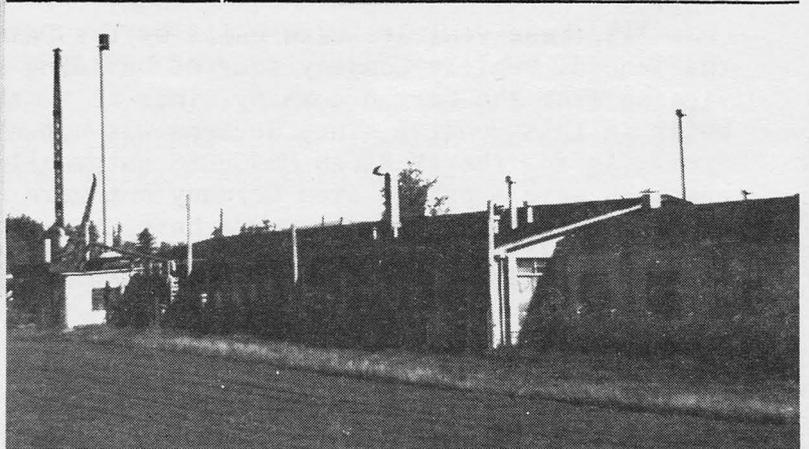
Two other auto factory buildings exist in Portland - the old Ford assembly plant on South East 17th Avenue, and the old Kaiser-Frazer factory on North East Lombard Street. Both are now used for non-automotive purposes.

Dick Larrowe, Route 1, Box 900, Corbett, Oregon 97019



ABOVE - The BEAVER plant at Gresham, Ore., as it appeared in 1914.

RIGHT - Same plant as it looks now. It is presently used as a sawmill.



INTRODUCTION DATES

Dick Langworth's article in Newsletter No. 26 brings up a good point concerning Introduction Dates and what would be considered the proper Introduction Date for new models. The logical choice for an Introduction Date would be the day the car appears in the showroom, on the day the manufacturer selects for official first sale. However, in recent years this practice has not been followed. For example:

Beginning with the introduction of the 1972 models the Big Three openly advertised on television and in newspapers that the new models were available for immediate delivery even though the model year closeout had weeks to go.

When I purchased my 1971 Plymouth, a full ten days prior to the 1972 model introduction, the dealers in the San Diego area were selling the new models -- and advertising as such. Both 1971 and 1972 models were sitting side by side on the showroom floor.

Therefore, I would like to offer an additional consideration to the term Introduction Date. Use the date the manufacturer releases all information to the press in the form of press releases. All press releases concerning new models state, in so many words, "for release on or after...." with the release date, and the information is available in detail to the general public. Long Lead press releases, issued mainly to magazines such as Road Test and Motor Trend, should not be considered due to the magazine's lengthy time to assemble all information. Also, many historians would have definite dates of a model's release, or introduction, and this also comes directly from the manufacturers. They are the ones who decide the dates.

I hope the Society will look into this matter in the months to come, and hopefully agree on the term of Introduction Date.

Dave Hermanson, 23920 Anza Avenue, Apt. 228, Torrance, California 90505

BROWNIEKAR; DAIMLER

Similar to the AMERICAN JUNIOR (Newsletter #27) was the BROWNIEKAR, built by the Omar Motor Company of Newark, New York (not New Jersey, Delaware or Ohio). Enclosed is a picture of the vehicle from an undated catalog in my collection.

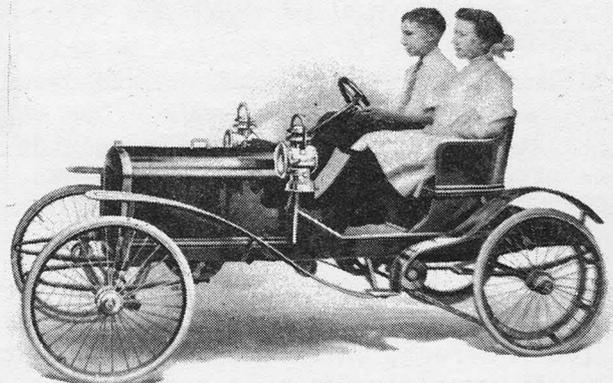
The company started out as The Child's Automobile Company, but the name was changed to Omar Motor Car Company when it was incorporated in October of 1908. Omar, by the way, is an anagram of Mora, with which it had some connection - primarily Samuel H. Mora. The company lasted only three years.

I would like to note a correction for the Roster of Makes. In regards to DAIMLER; no Daimler vehicles were built in the United States until 1900. Trucks were built from 1900 to 1903, and they were referred to as DAIMLER trucks. In 1902 a prototype AMERICAN MERCEDES was built but production did not get under way until 1904. It ceased in 1907 when the factory was destroyed by fire.

All these vehicles were built by the Daimler Manufacturing Company. About 1914 the General Vehicle Company started building a truck called the G.V.-MERCEDES under license from the German company. This is a make, not a model. These were totally built in this country since Germany was not about to part with potential war machinery. As for the AMERICAN MERCEDES automobiles, some of the forgings and steel castings were supplied from Germany but were machined and finished in the United States. Everything else was made here.

John M. Peckham, 675 Pinewoods Ave. Road, Troy, New York 12180

The BROWNIEKAR of 1908. The advertised price was \$150.



INFORMATION REQUESTED - HUFFMAN BROTHERS MOTOR COMPANY

I am seeking information and references concerning the Huffman Brothers Motor Company, which was located in Elkhart, Indiana, from 1919 to 1924. The company made the HUFFMAN Six and the HUFFMAN Truck.

Any and all material will be greatly appreciated, including ads, photos, news items or other references.

Wallace Spencer Huffman, 409 East Walnut Street, Kokomo, Indiana 46901

Because of some confusion occasioned by the changing of officers of SAH, the publication of this issue of the Newsletter has been delayed by several weeks. However, work on Issue No. 29 is already under way, and publication will be quite soon.

Therefore, if you have letters or other material for No. 29, please send it as soon as possible.

Address it to SAH Newsletter, P. O. Box 6465, Marietta, Georgia 30062.

RE: TRUMBULL, also RE: C. T. SILVER

I owned a basket-case TRUMBULL in 1953-55. The car was fitted with a rear trans-axle. There was also a friction-drive TRUMBULL in Pasadena. The Harrah car is fitted with a center-mounted unit. Mr. Hermann was in Glendale, Calif. However, his personal files were destroyed in a fire at his home in the 40s.

Newsletter #24 says a future article (on C. T. Silver) is in preparation. The author is - ? Any PEERLESS Silvers? Did you notice the CHALMERS Silver Special, inside back cover, Antique Automobile, some three years back?

I there any connection with the PIERCE Silver Specials of the early 1930's?
Charles W. Proctor, 2337 La Linda, Newport Beach, Calif. 92660.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The forthcoming article on C. T. Silver will have many authors, for it will be a wrap-up of a great deal of material and several lengthy letters sent in by numerous members.

So far we have received no information or pictures concerning a PEERLESS Silver Special. There are, however, many hints that Peerless did built a car or cars for Mr. Silver.

There seems to be no similarity between the CHALMERS Silver Special and the cars of C. T. Silver, and in this case the name "Silver" probably refers to the paint job.

A few streamlined, silver-colored cars were produced by Pierce in the early 1930's but these were called PIERCE SILVER ARROW - not Silver Special. Ol' C.T. had no hand in the building of these cars.

INFORMATION REQUESTED - GRANT MOTOR COMPANY.

In doing a bit of research into the affairs of the Grant Motor Company, a few somewhat obscure details have appeared. There are references to the Grant family, but little information as to just who were members of that family. George Grant, one of at least two brothers, was once connected with the sales departments of Dodge, White and Cadillac.

References abound to show that the Grant car started out as a cyclecar, made in Detroit in 1913. It is a matter of record that the Grants purchased an existing factory building in Findlay, Ohio on November 26, 1913. but it is also apparent that the Detroit facilities were still in some sort of operation, for the Findlay plant, acquired in November, displayed four prototype 4-cylinder cars in December, and by January of 1914 was shipping fifteen cars a day to dealers. Question: how long did the earlier operation in Detroit continue?

A still more confusing reference has appeared. Chilton's Automobile Directory, of January, 1913, contains two references to the GRANT SIX, made by the Grant Motor Company, East 152nd Street, Cleveland, Ohio (pages 50 and 420). Although the company did transfer its automotive operations to Cleveland in 1916, I have found no references, other than those quoted here, to indicate that Grant had been in Cleveland at an earlier date.

Further, it would seem that a publication such as Chilton's, published for distribution in January of 1913, must have compiled its information in the late months of 1912, and that the Grant Motor Company must have had at least a little something going at the East 152nd Street address at that time. This address, incidentally, is the same one used by the Abbott Corporation in 1917.

It is entirely possible, of course, that this earlier Cleveland venture was one of those things which was planned, but which never materialized. Perhaps the early GRANT SIX was never made at all, but instead became the GRANT cyclecar, made in Detroit.

Any and all information on these little puzzles will be appreciated.

Richard B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, Georgia 30062

FOR EXCHANGE - Back issues of Antique Automobile

Have duplicates of the following issues:

1957, Vol. 21, No. 1		
58	22	4
59	23	1
60	24	1,3,4
61	25	1,2,3,4,5,6
62	26	1,2,3,4,5,6
63	27	1,2,3,4,5,6
64	28	4
69	33	6
70	34	1,2,3,4,5

Need these issues:

1957, Vol. 21, No. 2,3,4,5,6		
58	22	2,6
50	14	1,2,4,5,6
51	15	2,3,4,5,6
52	16	2,4,5,6
53	17	3,5,6
54	18	2,5,6
55	19	2,3,4,5,6
56	20	2,3,4,5,6

Richard B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, Georgia 30062

Retired emblem collector wants to BUY-SELL-TRADE for automotive TRADE MARKS of all kinds, from all over. Anything with an automobile name on it - mascots, sill plates, body plates, emblems, motometers. Will buy entire collections. Have wall charts available that show many hundres of carembles. Stamped, self-addressed envelope, please.

Harry Pulfer, P. O. Box 8526, La Crescenta, Calif. 91214

FOR TRADE - Dyke's Aircraft Engine Instructor, by A. L. Dyke, 1928. A very rare book about aircraft engines of the teens and twenties, 372 pages in very good condition, except for some wear on cover. Loaded with excellent photographs. Includes detailed descriptions, specifications and service instructions on these engines: Wright Whirlwind (all J-5) models); Pratt & Whitney Wasp; Curtiss 12 cylinder water-cooled models D-12, V-1500 and GV-1550; Packard 12 and 24 cylinder models; Fairchild Caminez (a large 4-cylinder radial engine which used a huge 2-lobed cam instead of a crankshaft); Junkers L-5 and L-2; Ryan-Siemens 70, 100 & 125 hp; Air-Cat; Bristol Jupiter; Anzani; Curtiss OX-5; Gnome Rotary; Liberty.

Also includes details and service operations for Scintilla and Splitdorf aircraft magnetos; Stromberg carburetors; engine starters; instruments and controls; Fold-out charts showing lubrication systems of Wright Whirlwind engines, Pratt & Whitney Wasp, Curtiss D-12, Packard and Fairchild Caminez engines.

This is a rare and unusual book, full of hard-to-find information. Will trade for any two annual show issues (March) of Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal, 1920 or earlier, except 1910, 1912 or 1916, or any bound volumes amounting to one full year of Motor Age (except 1920 & 1921) Horseless Age, The Automobile. 1925 or earlier preferred.

Other trades or cash offer invited.

Richard B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, Georgia 30062
