



AN APOLOGY

We are sorry for the poor reproduction of the type in issue #55 of the NEWSLETTER. A combination of poor xerographic reduction of the type, combined with a slight over exposure of the negatives by the printer, made some of the issue almost impossible to read. The first four pages will be reprinted and distributed to the membership with this issue of the NL. If you should not get those pages, drop us a postcard.

FORMATION OF NORTHEASTERN U.S. CHAPTER OF SAH ANNOUNCED AT ANNUAL MEETING AT HERSHEY

Fred W. Soule, Director pro-tem of the Northeastern U.S. Chapter of the SAH presented the formal request of the members present at the September 24th meeting at Salisbury, Conn. for permission to form a chapter of the SAH to the Board of Directors on October 6, 1977. President Howard Applegate announced that the Board of Directors had approved the request at the Annual Meeting on October 7th.

Arthur Lee Homan is Assistant Director pro-tem and Walter Haessner is the Secretary-Treasurer pro-tem.

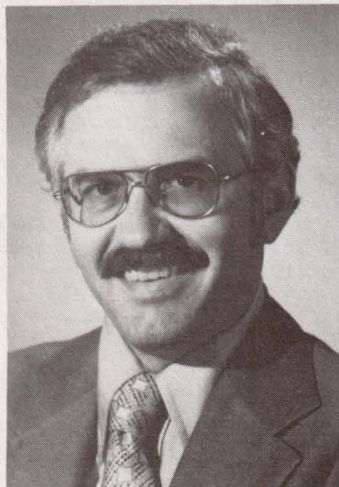
NORTHEASTER U.S. CHAPTER MEETING IN PHILLY IN FEBRUARY

The next meeting of the above chapter will be held in Philadelphia on the weekend of the AACA's Annual Meeting in February. More particulars to follow.

MORE ON THE NEW DIRECTOR OF THE FORD ARCHIVES

In the last issue of the NEWSLETTER we made brief mention of the new Director of the Ford Archives. The following is the release from The Edison Institute (the name by which the combined Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum is known).

The appointment of Douglas A. Bakken to the position of director of the Ford Archives and the Library at the Henry Ford Museum has been announced by Robert C. Wheeler, the Museum's vice president for Collections and Presentation.



DOUGLAS BAKKEN

Bakken formerly was administrator of the archives, records and corporate library at Anheuser-Busch, Inc., St. Louis. He has now taken over a newly-created directorship with responsibility for the Robert Hudson Tannahill Research Library and the Ford Archives.

The Ford Archives is the depository for all historical records of the Ford Motor Co. and the private papers of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford. The Robert Hudson Tannahill Research Library is a collection of books and manuscripts available for scholarly research on Americana.

Bakken has been an associate archivist at the Olin Research Library, Cornell University, and archivist for the Nebraska State Historical Society. He earned his bachelor's degree from North Dakota State University and a master of arts degree in history from the University of Nebraska.

He is married to Jacquelyn Neilsen Bakken, and has two daughters.

'AUTOMOBILES OF NEW YORK' - ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Coming up soon, possibly as a NL Supplement, will be an extensive amount of work done by Ralph Dunwoodie and Keith Marvin on this subject. Anyone else wanting to add to this project is requested to do so soon.

IN FUTURE ISSUES

We have several interesting items coming up. We will be continuing with J.H. Valentine's series on the automobiles of Los Angeles; a brief history of the Michigan automobile; a piece on the Indian automobile industry; the Higdon horseless carriage; more on the Cleburne; and more of the usual letters, mystery cars, classifieds, etc.

ASSISTANCE REQUESTED

Lois A. Watson, Librarian, Craven Foundation, Toronto, Canada, is looking for historical information in order to assist two researchers from Guelph, Ontario - namely Professor Robert Ankl and Fred Frederiksen with a project on the financial and historical aspects of the automobile industry in Canada. They have a Canada Council Grant and one year to complete their study.

Information if a biographical or financial nature on Brooks, Galt, Gray-Dort, McLaughlin, Tudhope and Russell is needed.

Loan material/photocopies of clippings, leads, etc. all gratefully acknowledged and return guaranteed.

CLASSIC MOTORBOOKS CATALOG NOW AVAILABLE

The 1978 edition of the Classic Motorbooks catalog is now off the press and is, again, a spectacular job. The thousands of entries cover nearly every book or publication in print on automotive and automobile related subjects. Even if you should never buy one of the books listed (perish the thought!) this catalog is invaluable reference piece. The price is \$1.00 or free with any order. Write to Classic Motorbooks, P.O. Box 1, Osceola, Wisconsin 54020.

AUTHORS WANTED BY CARL HUNGNESS

Carl Hungness is soliciting story enquiries for his two racing publications - Indianapolis 500 Yearbook (annual) and Racing Cars magazine (quarterly). Anyone interested in writing for him should contact Carl Hungness Publishing, Box 24308 Speedway, Indiana 46224, or phone 317-244-4792.

FRED ROE COMMENTS ON HERSHEY

A day spent at the SAH stand in the Hershey Flea Market provides an opportunity to meet and talk with a widely varied group of people with automotive interests. We get to talk with many of our own members for the first time and renew acquaintances with many of the regulars who make our space their base of operations while touring the big spread. Our sign and literature attracts numerous inquiries, and may lead to the most unexpected results.

Among those who visited us this year was a man who looked at the little unidentified car on the back page of NL #55 and stated positively that it was not a Wing Midget. Turns out he owns one of those and is intimately familiar with all its details. We talked again this year with the owner of the Stout Scarab, about as much an opposite type of car to the Wing as is possible. Tom Dunk, grandson of A. O. Dunk of Detroit, introduced himself to us. A. O. Dunk, as many of us know, was a trustee and appraiser in bankruptcy and assisted in the liquidation of some seven hundred firms in the industry. Tom Dunk is still trying to trace the material on these companies which his grandfather gave to an organization in 1926.

On Saturday morning we were able to point to the photos of the Frontmobile in AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW No. 6 and advise people that the car itself was on display in the car show.

Next year plan to make the SAH booth at Hershey your base while in the flea market. You will be pleased with the interesting people and happenings that show up at the sign of the Cugnot boiler.

BOYD KEYS SENDS ARTICLE ON RECENT FIRE AT OLD MATHESON/OWEN-MAGNETIC PLANT IN FORTY FORT, PA

Anyone wishing a copy of the article concerning the history of the Matheson/Owen-Magnetic factory complex in Forty Fort, Pa., from the Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Times-Leader, Evening News, Record (July 9, 1977), should write to the Newsletter Editor. The article was written by Harrison H. Smith after a fire which destroyed the old plant on June 26, 1977.

MEMBERS IN PRINT

Fred Roe, one of several SAH members who is also a member of the Society for Industrial Archeology, points out a comment made in the SIA Newsletter (V.6, N.4), by its Editor, Robert Vogel of the Smithsonian Institution, which we feel is worth repeating here. It appeared under the heading - "The Work of IA".

"It seems likely that more of this is going on out there than we hear of. Reporting on one's own activities should never be taken as a form of self-promotion -- if that's what's causing the silence -- rather it is a legitimate means of 'diffusing knowledge among men and women...' as James Smithson once so neatly put it. First or third person, share with the world the news of your own and other IA projects."

Taking the above exhortation to heart, Fred submits the following:

Walter F. Robinson, Jr., is the author of an article appearing in "Special Interest Autos" #41, Aug./Oct. 1977; "Buick's First 8 and How it Came to Be", which describes the very interesting developments behind the scenes which resulted in this 1931 design.

The same issue of SIA also includes a story on the 1941 Ford 6 by Ken Gross, "Derham Dodges" by Walter E. Gosden, "Half-Hour History of Rotary Engines" by Jan P. Norbye, and "The Ford Fiesta's Godfather" by Karl Ludvigsen. With Editor Michael Lamm's story on "Vintage Safety Devices" this issue is practically a clean sweep for the SAH.

Elliott Kahn has contributed several discussions on truck history to recent issues of "The Bulb Horn", bi-monthly magazine of the Veteran Motor Car Club of America, which is edited by Walter O. MacIvain. Wallace S. Phinney Sr. has contributed to the July-August 1977 issue of this magazine another in his continuing series of histories of little-known cars made in the Springfield, Mass. area, this one on "The Skene Steam Car". In the same issue Col. Earl Haefner (Ret.) contributes a piece on "Two Speed Rear Axles of By-Gone Days".

The "Retrospect" section in "Motor Trend" has been graced in recent months by William S. Jackson's stories: In the August 1977 issue "1932 Aston Martin Le Mans Tourer Prototype", in November 1977 "1965 Shelby GT 350 Competition", and in May 1977, "1925 Bentley 3 litre Speed Model".

Frederick D. Roe has a biographical article on Henry M. Crane in Special Interest Autos #42, Nov. Dev. 1977.

Prof. David L. Lewis writes on the Fordson Tractor in the same issue, which also contains Jeffrey I. Godshall's 1959-66 Lark Spotters Guide. David Lewis also contributed "The Battle of the Overpass" to the March-April 1977 issue of this magazine.

Pat Chappell's profile of SAH Honorary Member Henry A. Clark Jr. appears in Car Classics, October 1977.

Kenneth Stauffer's profusely illustrated "Auto Bodies by Fleetwood", a history of this famed company, appears in "The Antique Automobile" for July-August 1977.

ANOTHER GOVE TRUCK!

Our friend and digger-upper of weird vehicles, Ralph Dunwoodie, has done it again! He points out that a Gove truck is listed in the 1922 edition of the Automobile Reference Manual. In this case, the address is Pocatello, Idaho. Very little information is given, except that it was the Model 'A'; had a four cylinder engine, rated at 15.63 hp; was designed to carry 1½ tons; and was to have cost \$2250. George Risley notes that the company had an automobile on their lists, too. Can anyone fill in a little more?

The Mail Bag

From Fred Roe, 837 Winter St., Holliston MA 01746

Dear John: I must defend the members of SAH committees whom you seem to feel have fallen down on the job. In fact the very opposite is nearer the mark. We



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Automotive
Historians

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have achieved recognition through the work of the Awards Committee which has selected Cugnot Award winners for the last five years or more; the committees for Oral History and the collection of audio-visual material are functioning even though not making any noise about it, as are several other of our groups in Detroit who have members within the industry. Our Truck Roster Committee continues to do its thing and does show evidence of its results in the pages of the Newsletter. In fact almost everything which is being done for the benefit of the Society is the work of someone on a committee. That there has been no report of their activities in the Newsletter does not mean that there is nothing being done. As for the committee you suggest to form Standards and Definitions, it has existed since 1971 when then President Marshall Naul made me its Chairman. In some way it failed to get listed in NL #52, although it was on the listing sent in.

As for limiting discussion on the subject of makes after two letters have been published in response to mine which was designed to provoke responses, let me say that I think this defeats the whole purpose of the Newsletter, which is a means of communication for the whole membership. Any group can correspond between themselves, but this does not draw in others whose opinions should be considered. You would be justified in pleading for shorter, more concisely-written letters, but please do not draw a curtain over this or any other subject just because you feel it might become an unending discussion. Maybe you won't get any more letters anyhow.

As a fellow member with you of the Publications Committee I know you did not mean your statement to give offense in any way and offer this clarification in your behalf.

(I apologize to Fred and other committee members if my remarks seemed harsh, but I feel that they still seem to be true in some cases. I would like to point out from the start that I am on some of those "inactive" committees, so I am not taking a swipe at just other people.

Such committees as Awards, Nominations and Publications are in a position where the membership can easily see what they are, or are not, doing. Some other ones, like the Truck Roster Committee, continually plead for help, and it is obvious that the Chairman is trying to accomplish something, but other members are apparently unwilling or unable to help.

Fred says that some are functioning but not making any noise about it.

We need that noise.

If the various committee chairmen do not make at least an annual report of their activities to the membership, that membership will have no idea what is being accomplished, or where help is needed. In this situation, the committee might just as well not exist. Secrecy does nothing to help us out.

I'm sorry for not listing Fred as the Definitions Committee Chairman in NL #52, but a check of the material sent to me for that list did not have his name on it.

As for limiting debate on "what is a make" after two letters, I must point out that this discussion has been going on since issue #7 of the Newsletter, at least. It is not a new problem, and it is no nearer being solved than it was in NL #7.

I wonder how some borderline case can be recognized as a make, sub-make or non-make if the Definitions Committee has not formulated the necessary definition. Wouldn't it be more sensible to make the rule, and then study the possible exceptions? All this palaver over whether this car is a make, or that one just a model, reminds me of those L-29 Cord ads with the horse behind the cart. A great deal of space can be used in the NL wondering if the Whatzit Four is a make or just a smaller model of the Halocsen Eight. Without the proper definition first, we may never know.

It is obvious that the various committees must first develop their rules or definitions before they get down to their appointed tasks and/or protracted question and answer sessions. This, and annual reports to the membership, is a must. Otherwise, the committees will be all but useless. JMP)

From Michael Sedgwick, Paddock View, Easebourne Rd., Easebourne, Midhurst, Sussex, GU29 9AY, England; I echo Fred H. Fox's plea for authors to be shown proofs, even though awful things can creep in 'twixt cup and

lip. I shall never be allowed to live down the allusion to the original '03 Cadillac (In a work for UK consumption) as a '1½-liter' (sic) which came out as '12-liter'. In future it will be cubic inches and to Hades with the complaints of my compatriots.

Also never let an article for domestic consumption be translated without some editing. As one who produces material currently for UK, USA, Australian, French and German consumption, I'm careful to offer different wordings for each, in that what won't interest one will interest another. Further, what needs explaining to the tune of an extra paragraph to a Frenchman will pass an American without the extra wordage.

I shan't easily forget a moment of weakness in which I allowed (probably because I'd only a nominal share in the copyright) an article on French cars written for an English magazine to be translated wholesale into French. The result was beautiful - so much better than my own rather hamfisted attempts at the language - but the translator had laboriously tackled purely English (or at best American) literary allusions with consummate skill. A Francophone with limited knowledge of English would never have caught 'em. What they thought will never be known, and perhaps it's as well. There's only one thing worse, and that is an article written for translation solemnly rendered in one's own language, with sudden outbursts in to CV and PS where horsepower would suffice. Nowadays I insist that nothing I write be published except in the language - and in the market it is intended for.

One of the magazines I write for over here runs a SACKCLOTH AND ASHES column in which any errors are corrected the moment they are spotted, be it by the author, editor or readers.

Finally, an awful warning against the joys of translators who've never seen an automobile, but possess a Major in their Domestic Language. It fell to my lot some years ago to do a concordance-text (English-French) on a certain automobile. The animal started life with what you call vacuum feed and what we call an Autovac, but at some time it had acquired an electric pump of the S.U. make. Now the French call a vacuum feed an exhausteur which is after all what it does. So do I, in French.

Not so our Sorbonne scholar, who fondly imagined that I thought 'exhausteur' meant exhaust pipe. Thus the edited French version ended up with the 'pot d'échappement remplace par une pompe électrique', a revolting thought by any standards, and certainly not one to be entertained in present day California. There was no time to do anything about it, either, so the blessed solecism remains in print to this day. (I'm not telling you where).

Yes, a lot of mistakes occur crossing frontiers, so beware!

From G.H. Brooks, 493 Magill Road, Tranmere, South Australia, 5073: Firstly, regarding the Mystery Car in NL #44, which I suggested might be a Studebaker. The Editor queries whether the Studebaker of the period had an "S" on the hub-caps. In my Dover reprint of the N.A.C.C. "Handbook of Automobiles" on page 107 the "S" on the hub-caps of the Studebaker Light Six is quite plain.

Secondly, in NL #49 there is a photograph of a Lewis car and in my accompanying letter I wondered whether it was an imported car sold under the Lewis name. I have since found in a newspaper called "The Critic", dated 22nd April, 1908, an interview with T.P. O'Grady, who was workshop manager of the Lewis company at the time the car was built, in which he clearly states that the car was built under his supervision and that it was still running in Perth, Western Australia. Also, it appeared on the Lewis company's exhibit at the Agricultural Show in Adelaide in March 1903, and again in the opening run of the newly formed Automobile and Motor Cycling Club of South Australia in October 1903.

Thirdly. In Charlie Chaplin's film "The Kid", what was the make of the large closed car in which the baby was placed, at the very beginning of the story?

Fourthly, and lastly, can someone put me straight on the story of the Motorette made by C.W. Kelsey Manufacturing Co., of Hartford. According to AQ, Vol. 13, No. 2, the three-wheeler was introduced in New York on New Year's Eve, 1910, and the company went bankrupt three days before Christmas, 1911. It was listed in "MoToR's 1912 Motor Car Directory", pub-

lished in February 1912, but that could be due to the fact that the Directory had been prepared for the press before the end of 1911. But where the puzzle comes in is in the fact that there was an agency for the Motorette here in South Australia operating in July 1913 (see "The South Australia Motor" for July 1913, p.45). Some were sold during 1914 and there is a survivor (Chassis no. 143, engine no. 314, four-stroke, water cooled). Can anyone suggest how it came about that the cars were still being sold by an agent so long after the bankruptcy of the company?

From Max Gregory, "Beltana", Korumurra Road, Drouin South, Victoria, 3818, Australia. The comment by John Montville about the work done by the Detroit machine shops in respect to prototype and development work on new makes strikes a responsive chord with me as here in Australia we have at least two specimens of this sort of activity.

He mentions about some of these hopeful motor makers being located in distant points, and I guess that Aussie would be about as far distant as they would be likely to get.

First of the makes in question is the Lincoln of 1918. The Australian Motorist of November of that year reported that Charles Innes had just returned from the U.S.A. after a trip to arrange for the supply of components for a five-seater car to be assembled in Australia. The first chassis was built in the U.S.A. and was driven 3000 miles across the country to be shipped. It was at the time having the bodywork built for it in Sydney. At the time of release in April 1919 it was said that he received so much assistance and cooperation from parts suppliers that it was resolved to give the new car an American name, thus the choice of that best known of all American names.

Interestingly, when the Detroit Lincoln finally got under way they did not view with favor the idea of some obscure little make from Australia using their name and took legal proceedings. This was in 1923 when the Aussie Lincoln was into their second breath after the first attempt had ended in the ruins of a

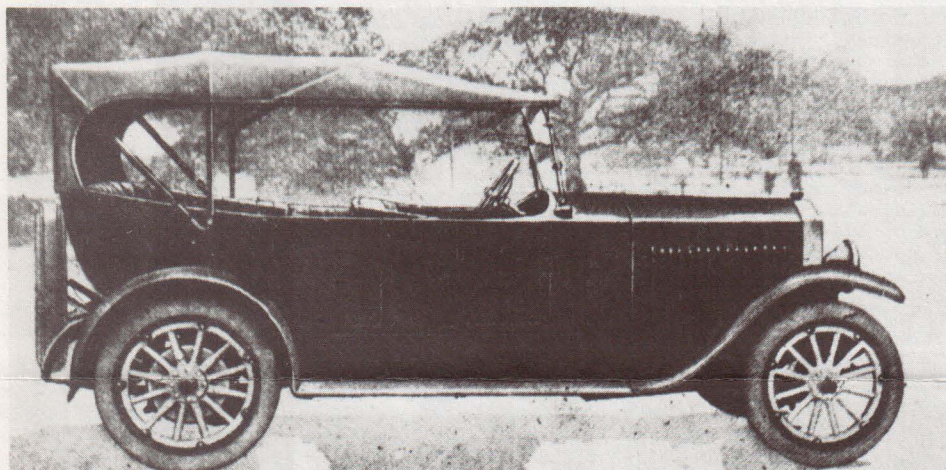
large city fire which destroyed six other businesses as well. Only one car survived the catastrophe for the firm as they had meagre insurance cover which might go some way to explaining the three year delay before the make was offered again.

The American Lincoln action took the form of opposing the Sydney firm's application to register a trade-mark.

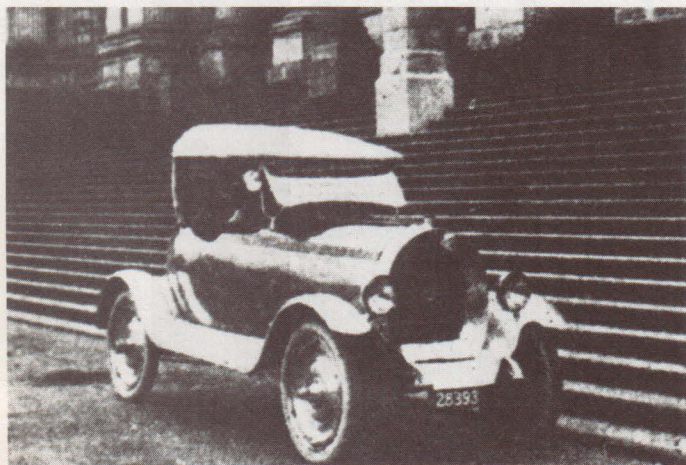
They said that they intended to import cars into Australia using the name and that the delay in doing so had been caused by the pressures of War contracts and had produced 6000 12-cylinder Lincoln-Liberty aero motors. By this prior use of the name, in this application, they believed themselves exclusively entitled to the name.

The Chief Justice, however, took the view that there was no reason for rejecting the Australian company's application always provided that they did not claim any right to the exclusive use of the name. Interestingly, they were represented by a young barrister named Menzies who was later to become Australia's Prime Minister.

The other Detroit built Australian car was the Eco of the 1920-21 period. G. Hamilton-Grapes, formerly of New Zealand, conceived the Eco with its numerous features such as the patent gasifier, enclosed spare wheel location, adjustable seating, heavily shrouded radiator of light weight and small water capacity, great use of aluminium, not only for the radiator collar, but also for the wheels with built-in fins around the rims to disapeate tyre heat build-up, mud-guards (also called wings and fenders elsewhere I gather), running boards. The very large hub caps were built of duralumin and were designed to accept a cable so that the car could self-winch itself out of bogs, also to act as a slinging point for shipping. The previously mentioned gasifier, also called the Atac (Automatic Thermal Auxiliary Carburetter), took the form of a retort which allowed the heavy fractions of fuel to be retained until boiled off. This gave, additional to great economy, a dry gas to obviate oil dilution and the ability to use low grade fuels. Tests run by the Zenith Co. in America resulted, on May 6,



The 1919 version of the Australian Lincoln, of which only one example escaped the catastrophic fire in the area of Sydney where the Lincoln works were situated.



The Detroit-built Eco roadster seen here drawn up at the steps of the Victorian Parliament House in Spring Street, Melbourne.

1921 with a sample car built in Detroit with a 3 x 5 inch Turmo model "C" 4 cylinder engine, in 34.9 miles per U.S. gallon, or 41.9 miles per Imperial gallon.

The Eco differed from the Lincoln in that it was completed in Detroit, being fitted with a roadster body with a tapered tail. It was driven to the Pacific coast and was then shipped, via New Zealand, to Melbourne, arriving late in 1921.

Thus, there were two "Australian" cars made in Detroit.

From Keith Marvin, Toad Hall, Route 1, Box 24, Pomfret Center, CN 06259: I was interested in the picture of the "Baby Dispatch Car" on page 6 of the NL (#55). This is listed as "c. 1918. Perhaps a Wing Midget."

There is no denying that there is a great similarity here-- in fact, several similarities. I enclose a piece of Wing sales promotional literature so you may compare it with the car appearing in the NL.

The size of the cars is similar but the Wing has a much more massive cast and you will note that the front is wider and flatter on top than the baby Dispatch car. I say "front" rather than radiator as the Wing used a Cameron air-cooled engine so the "radiator" is false. As a matter of fact, if you look closely you can see through it in this picture.

On the Wing, the dummy "radiator" cap, which is probably an ornament, has two sort of "horn" handles protruding from the single base (and, if you will, suggestive of the steering mechanism of Ford's "999" racer). On the Baby Dispatch Car, a conventional cap is employed.

The wheels appear similar although I would guess that they are larger on the Wing Midget.

As you see, the Wing Midget is chain driven, but the presence of the passenger on the Dispatch Car makes it difficult to determine whether that protrusion to the right of his leg is a chain or more probably, part of the extra seat structure. The radiator emblem is larger on the Dispatch car than that used on the Wing, also.

Note that the steering wheel on the Wing may be seen several inches above the cowl. On the Dispatch car it is nearly out of sight.

Finally, you are quite correct in the date of the Baby Dispatch car as 1918, providing we assume the license plate was valid when the photograph was taken-- and I see no reason to doubt it. The Wing Midget didn't appear for four years after that, coming -- and going -- during 1922.

There were a handful of Wing Midgets made and Henry C. Wing, Jr., son of the builder, told me a year or so ago that two of them were used in a silent film of the early twenties, which was fairly well known at the time, but its name has slipped my mind.

A Wing Midget still exists in the possession of Mr. Wing.

The Wing Midget was not a cycle car. I wonder if the Baby Dispatch car was?

From Michael Sedwick, 'Pippbrook', Chichester Road, Midhurst, Sussex GU29 9PF, England: On Packard London, I fear this one has eluded me visually, though in the May-June issue of ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE, p.75, there is a classified ad for a 1924 Packard London Saloon from a private owner in Sydney. I can't explain this one, except perhaps that it was the trademark of the W.C. Gaunt Company, who were Leonard Williams' predecessors as Packard importers in the UK. Nor can I readily expatiate the presence in Australia of a 'British' rather than Canadian edition of an American car. True, the more expensive cars were shipped in 'fully imported', but some very odd things do turn up in the Commonwealth. About four years ago, I heard of a 'Chrysler Croydon Airflow Six' in the State of Victoria. This is, of course, a DeSoto SE in English trim, but enough of that complicated subject.

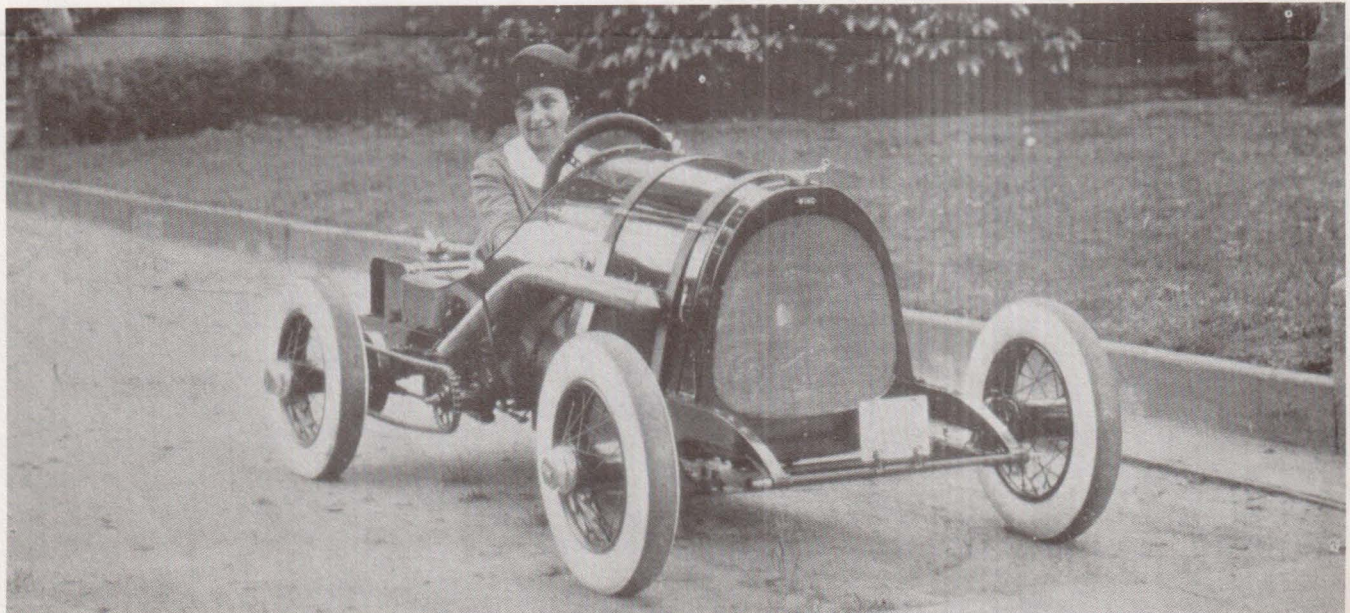
Now for Max Gregory's comments. I apologize for the omission of the 1917-19 Willys Six which is unpardonable, but I am still not sure about the Whippet. I would say that it was an Overland up to late 1926, and I think the hub caps read Overland up to that year. The 1939 use of the Overland name was a one-year stand, and I think confined to the car's native USA.

Valiant: we are back with an impossible matter here. Forgetting the Aussie species at the moment, I go with Mr. Gregory that the chassis code letters weren't 'P', even in the USA. They were QX in 1960, RV in 1961, SV in 1962, TV in 1963 and VV in 1964. Branham quotes the 'VH' prefix on Signet models in 1966, which seems to support part of Mr. Gregory's thesis.

The Australian cars were always CHRYSLER Valiants in England, where they were sold for several years and can, I believe, still be obtained. Amusingly, I borrowed an early Adelaide built example when I was in Australia in 1964, but never bothered to check out its official designation.

I did once attempt a survey of Chrysler nomenclature, but feel that if we must be exact, there's a case for Valiant as a make-name in Australia when sold to Australians, providing that the car was made in Adelaide. But wait: - I've just checked out a guide to the Argentine automobile industry published in '71, and what do I find? -- 1962 Valiant V-200 (no mention of Plymouth). Ditto, with different designations, thru 1967. In 1968 it becomes a Dodge Valiant (help), and in 1970 they drop it, presumably bogged down in semantics.

I suspect that this has merely confused the issue. Maybe I ought to reactivate my study into Chrysler



sub-variations, but what can be done with a firm that offers a (Dodge) Diplomat hardtop in the USA, and a (DeSoto) Diplomat, alias Plymouth, in Canada and sundry export markets. And, Mr. Gregory, haven't I seen something called a Kew-DeSoto in Australia, which is or was no more than a British Dodge truck bearing no relation whatever to anything from anywhere in the State of Michigan?

One may mourn the Hillman brand-name, but it's perhaps as well that we now call the thing a Chrysler.

From Elliott Kahn, 58 Verbena St., Clearwater Beach, Fla. 33575: I note in an earlier NL this year that the Pontiac catalogue for 1977 was pointed out with errors in it. It seems now that the big Buick catalog, which incidentally is perhaps in its size, format and art work is by far the finest of the pieces of sales literature for automobiles in the 1978 selling season, does unfortunately for the historian also contains some untruths. Again it seems part of the trouble is that old bug-a-boo the confusion between annual years and model years.

Like similar ventures with Cadillac and Ford, Buick is said to be celebrating their 75th year in the business and all their many predecessors.

The Buick Mfg. Co. built its first valve in head engine in 1902, though the 1978 catalog says it was 1903. True he did "develop" it in 1903, and no doubt it has been "developed" or improved however you want to call it, in many years since that time. Apparently the very first "Buick" automobile was completed in 1902, but this was an experimental vehicle, not made for production though it was actually sold. David Dunbar Buick though may have been designer of the first valve-in-head engine, though there is no proof that he did, or that he did not. Three people, Eugene Richard, formerly with Olds motor Works, was probably as much responsible for the engine as anyone being an engineer with the firm of Buick. Walter Marr may have either partly or entirely designed the engine. The truth is that no one around really knows, and there apparently are no records to prove anything. It is known that Buick Motor Co. was organized in 1903 to take over a bankrupt Buick Mfg. Co. It is also known that still another Buick Motor Co. took over the 1903 firm in 1904, in the fourth or fifth reorganization of this engine building firm as it had mainly been.

No doubt others would question the claim of Buick building the first aluminum V-8 engine. I know I would.

In the big picture spread of older Buicks as put together by members of the Buick Club of America (in California), there are two factory body styles both custom, one of them being in truth a commercial car, or hearse. It is seldom noted that most GM makes during the mid, late 30s and early 40s all put out commercial car chassis, Buick among them.

On page 4 of the catalog they picture a Buick Model 15 modified speedster. Earlier in the catalog they mention the famous Buick Bug racing car, but the car pictured though they might like to believe was similar (although they do this by insinuation, not statement of fact) looks little like a Buick Bug. The modified Type 16 racing car as used by Louis Chevrolet in winning in Atlanta, Ga. on Nov. 19, 1909, looked quite a bit different than this speedster and indeed had some special racing parts in it not on this car.

The Chevrolet car had no headlamps or lights period on it, had twin rear mounted gas tanks no spare wheel rode on a bare frame with seats mounted directly on the frame with no real body as illustrated by this car on page 4, had different cowl and different dash. It also had a rear stabilizer bar, not on the car on page 4. The big brass lettering on the radiator of the pictured car was missing on Chevrolet's racer too. No doubt some parts in two automobiles were similar, but a speedster does not make a race car, any more than a stock car today makes a stock car racer.

Buick did introduce its new six cylinder engine in the 1914 models, but the historian must be aware that the first models appeared in the year 1913, unlike what he may read on page 8 of the Buick catalog for 1978. Again on page 14 it says the model 35 came out in 1922, but of course it was actually August 1921. It was a 1922 model.

On page 24, they show what was supposedly the "first" Buick woodie station wagon. As a factory offering the 1940 model was the first, though woodie Buick station wagons had been sold by dealers back in 1920s, with a semi production body from body firms. But the description of "port holes" in the fenders leads me to believe whoever wrote it either does not know what a port hole is, anymore than he knows what a fender is on a car, for the vents in the side of hood on the 1940 model are neither portholes nor located in the fender. Most of the dates in the book, must be mentally noted by the historian, they are talking in a model year, not an annual year. But in case of the 1934 Model 40, this was a late starter and did indeed come out in 1934, as they state.

In the Buyers Guide portion of the catalog they say that in 1908, Buick ranked second in production behind Ford, and to be honest they are consistent in using their model year interpretation, for Buick actually out produced Ford during the calendar year of 1908. You might also question fact that Charles Nash "invented" the Nash automobile as they say, but in any case he decided on its name I would imagine. I doubt that Buick produced the first "pillarless" sedan in 1918, as Nash had beaten them by a few years. Another wrong item, is that Buick did not introduce its first 100 h.p. rated engines with the 1938 models. Buick had 100 h.p. rated engines long before that, even with some 1932 models.

It's too bad these errors appear for the Buick catalog will be a collectors item, much sought after in future years, because it represents possibly the most expensive give away book of all the auto manufacturers for 1978.

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Bernet sale catalog for the Simplex Garage (Art Austria)
sale Oct. 17 & 18, 1971 in Venice, Calif., I would
gladly pay any reasonable price for copies of the pages
pertaining to the 1903 Stewart and the 1923 L&E chassis.
J.H. Valentine, P.O. Box 2596 Culver City, CA 90230

WANTED: Photos, specs., serial numbers of the Kansas City Built Severin, Beggs Six, Highlander (Midwest Motor Company). Have camera rig to copy photos or sales literature. D.J. Kava, 1755 Bandera, Beaumont, TX 77706. 713-892-7958.

WANTED: Have any of our members in the South Pacific area ever come across any mention of the Harvard automobile in local publications? If so, would you please let me know? The Harvard was built in Troy, NY for export to that area. John M. Peckham, 675 Pinewoods Avenue Road, Troy, NY 12180.

WANTED: A copy of the NEWSLETTER Index for issues 1-45. Information on the following autos made in Kalamazoo: Wolverine, Scott, States, Cannon, Blood. Jim Petersen, 1808 Harvey, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.

WANTED -- Reproducible photos of the following Past Chairmen of the Indiana Section of the Society of Automotive Engineers:

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R. H. Combs	1913-14	F. S. Duesenberg	1928-29
L. R. Smith	1914-15	H. M. Jacklin	1931-32
F. E. Moskovics	1915-16	H. E. Winkler	1933-34
C. S. Crawford	1916-17	E. C. Booth	1940-41
Earl Bessom	1917-19	G. L. Brinkworth	1941-42
D. L. Gallup	1919-20	Stuart Wilder, Jr.	1956-57
C. C. Berry	1922-23	J. D. Bryan	1963-64
F. F. Chandler	1923-25	R. E. Young	1964-65
G. T. Briggs	1925-26		

Kindly advise Robert P. Atkinson, 7814 Knue Road, Indianapolis, IN 46250, of photos/names you can furnish, together with cost.

MYSTERY TRUCK

This item comes from Nick Georgano, and is out of the files of the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu, England. The truck is American and the picture was taken in 1922 in San Francisco, California. The radiator has a fairly common type of cast, finned top to it, not unlike Pierce-Arrow trucks of the period, but the shape is not quite right for that make. The dash is the most unusual feature with the lamps as an integral part, but protruding somewhat at the sides. I wonder if the J.E. Shoemaker Co. is still in business? Can anyone help.

