

SAH JOURNAL

THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

A few months ago, I chanced to have a discussion with another SAH member on the subject of recycling. Our conversation rambled briskly through the topic, and at one point touched on the desirability of ensuring that all paper items produced by the Society be produced with recyclability in mind.

This subject takes on increased importance as we enter the new year. My own state has just mandated that each municipality enact a form of recycling ordinance, primarily because here in the congested Northeast landfill space is about gone. A few more tons of waste per person, and we'll be sending our trash to you folks in the Middle West. Even our often fuzzy-minded state solons recognize that the most efficient way to dispose of waste is not to waste things in the first place.

I've always believed in recycling. My parents, accustomed to World War II shortages, taught us to crush cans, sort trash, and compost all "rottables." It took little cajoling from environmentalists to get me back in the groove.

On the other hand, my first priority with SAH publications is that they be informative and attractive. I'll be the first to admit that the latter consideration may get in the way of environmental consciousness. I will not, for example, countenance printing *SAH Journal* on recycled newsprint. As well-intentioned as such a move might be, I wouldn't be proud to send out such a shaggy *Journal* as that would be.

Actually, I feel that SAH publications shouldn't be recycled at all, at least not in the conventional sense. They contain so much information not available elsewhere, and so much of it timeless, that I believe most members should want to keep them. In fact, as a newcomer to the Society, I went to no small trouble to acquire as many back issues of the publications as I could.

But nothing is forever. There may come a time when you just can't hold on to your vast collections any longer. Everyone has to clean things out now and then, and historians are no exception. The best way I can think of to recycle SAH publications is to see that they get to some other person who will find them useful. The paper may get old, and continue to take up space, but the knowledge will be recycled again and again.

I know of several cases of this "new owner" recycling, and I can point to no better examples than Charlie Betts' and Fred Roe's contributions to the SAH 1990 silent auction. They each gave collections of *SAH Newsletter* and *Journal* and *Automotive History Review* to be sold for the benefit of the Society and, of course, to the benefit of the new owners. Charlie's gift was his own complete series; Fred gave a substantial collection left by the late Jerry Gebby. History may be "old hat," but it is not biodegradable.

— Kit Foster

CUGNOT, BENZ, AND BRIGHAM AWARD NOMINATIONS

Members are invited to nominate books, magazines and articles for the Society's annual publications awards. The Cugnot Award is given to the best book in the field of automotive history published during the previous calendar year. The Carl Benz Award recognizes the best periodical article or series on the subject of automotive history for the same period. This will be the second year for the Brigham Award, named for the Society's founder members Dick and Grace Brigham. This award recognizes the best overall treatment of automotive history by a periodical publication over

all issues in the previous calendar year. In addition to the Cugnot and Benz Awards, several Awards of Distinction may be granted to works of especial merit which do not win the top prize.

Works are judged on several criteria, including quality and originality of research, accuracy, clarity, significance of topic, and presentation.

To be eligible for awards, works must have been published in calendar 1990 (carry a 1990 copyright date) and must be nominated by June 1, 1991. A serial article appearing in parts of two years may be nominated for either year, but shall in no case have more than one year of eligibility. Brigham Award nominations will be for a publication's issues (cover date) for all of 1990. Previous winners of the Brigham Award are ineligible for a period of five years following their selection. (The Brigham Award for 1989 went to *Automobile Quarterly*.) If possible, a copy of the work or a good photocopy should be submitted with the nomination. This is particularly important for works which may have appeared in journals not readily available or well-known to the committee.

The awards will be presented at the annual banquet in Hershey, Pennsylvania in October. Award winners will be notified in advance.

Member nominations are the most important input the Awards Committee can get. Duplicate nominations do no harm; there is always the danger that a significant work may be overlooked. Submit all nominations by the June 1st deadline to chairman Howard Applegate, P.O. Box 514, Mount Gretna, PA 17064 USA.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE PILOT PROJECTS

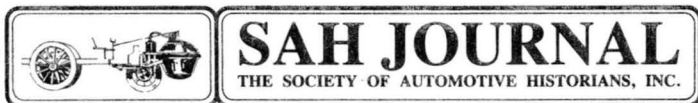
The SAH Archives Committee would like to locate and identify the repositories of archival materials relating to all U.S. manufacturers of automobiles. The results of this search would be made available to automotive historians as a research guide. To determine the feasibility of such an undertaking, the Committee intends to initiate pilot projects in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Thus far, the Committee has compiled a list of six archival categories comprising almost 40 types of materials. The categories relate to records that may be on file with state regulatory agencies; corporate financial and management records; records relating to miscellaneous corporate real and personal assets; publicity (printed and photographic materials, and original art work) relating to marketing; and court records.

A form letter with return reply card has been developed which will be sent to state, municipal, and topical historical societies, libraries, and museums; to corporate libraries or archives of any Fortune 500 companies in the three pilot states; to banks; and to state courts. The Society will offer, upon request, the services of a member to help inventory such records as are available.

A further enclosure with the letter will be the names of automobiles manufactured in the state and its cities, as listed in the Kimes/Clark *Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942* (2nd ed.). This promises to be quite an undertaking, as the list includes approximately 375 names from Indiana, 325 from Pennsylvania, and 175 from Wisconsin.

The Committee was formed in 1989 with Howard Applegate as chairman. Projects will be conducted by Jack Martin (Indiana), Shelby Applegate (Pennsylvania), and Bill Cameron (Wisconsin). The current chairman is Taylor Vinson.



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Subscription to SAH Journal is by membership in the Society of Automotive Historians. Dues \$20.00 per year.

Membership inquiries and renewals should be sent to the Secretary at P.O. Box 339, Matamoras, PA 18336

NEWS

AUTOMOBILIA NEWS

Billed as "everything for the automotive memorabilia collector," *Automobilia News*, a new publication by SAH member Tom Barnes, is directed to collectors of all things automotive. *Automobilia News* is primarily a no-frills advertising medium, but will also include features on prominent automobilia collections from time to time. Another feature will be a "silent auction" format for advertising, a technique which has been very successful for record collectors for many years. The publication also introduces a standard grading system for automotive literature. Further information on *Automobilia News* can be had by writing to Tom Barnes at P.O. Box 3528, Glendale, AZ 85311.

HORSELESS CARRIAGE FOUNDATION LIBRARY OPENS AT SAN DIEGO MUSEUM

The Horseless Carriage Foundation Library opened January 12th at the San Diego Automotive Museum. The library houses a growing collection of books, periodicals, sales literature, manuals, original drawings, and correspondence.

Significant accessions in the library include the collection of Richard A. Teague, retired styling vice president of the former American Motors Corporation and a stylist whose long career included work for General Motors, Packard and Chrysler. In addition to the Teague collection, the library houses the Alfred S. Lewerenz collection of pioneer auto correspondence, the archival materials of the Horseless Carriage Club of America, and several smaller collections.

Richard Teague officially opened the library, at which time the reading room was named in his honor. The library is located in the San Diego Automotive Museum, which is adjacent to the Aerospace Museum in San Diego's Balboa Park.

HOOSIER HERITAGE CHAPTER FORMED

The Society's newest chapter, the Hoosier Heritage Chapter, was formed on October 24, 1990 at an organizational meeting held in Speedway, Indiana. Present were Henry Blommel, Joe Collins, Jim Hoggatt, Jerry Jones, Matt Joseph, William Locke, Skip Marketti, Nan and Jack Martin, and McCord Purdy.

Those assembled voted to petition the Society board of directors for recognition as a chapter, and elected the following officers: Jack Martin, director; Jim Hoggatt, vice director; McCord Purdy, secretary; and Joe Collins, treasurer. Henry Blommel was designated editor and publisher for a periodic newsletter. After discussing several automotive history topics of special interest to members, the group set their second meeting date for Saturday, January 26, 1991, in conjunction with the Hoosier Auto Show and Swap Meet in Indianapolis.

The SAH board of directors approved the formation of the Hoosier Heritage Chapter in a mail ballot certified by Society secretary Jim Cox on November 17, 1990.

JOSEPH AIRS TALK "ABOUT CARS"

SAH president Matt Joseph took to the airwaves on January 5th to debut his program "About Cars" on the Ideas Network of Wisconsin Public Radio. "About Cars" is a weekly call-in show devoted to the automobile, and gives listeners the latest product and industry news, road test results, editorial comment, and advice on listener concerns. Joseph is assisted by radio veteran Carol Cowan.

"About Cars" intensifies WPR's automotive coverage, joining "Car Talk" — the nationally-syndicated autoentertainment bazaar — on Saturday mornings. In contrast to "Car Talk," an irreverent, free-wheeling romp through callers' motoring maladies, "About Cars" focuses firmly on the topic of cars. Said Joseph, "I'm not very 'entertaining,' so the topic is always of primary importance to me."

BOARD TRACK: GUTS, GOLD, AND GLORY

Such is the title of a new book on this specialized field of auto racing by Dick Wallen. A limited collector edition, it combines the work of twenty well-known motor sport writers with hundreds of race photos, memorabilia, driver statistics, and box scores. Further information on *Board Track - Guts, Gold and Glory* may be obtained from Dick Wallen Productions, P.O. Box 2261, Escondido, CA 92033.

OBITUARIES

DONALD J. SUMMAR

Donald J. Summar of Millersville, Pennsylvania, SAH member 147, died on August 14, 1990. A specialist in pre-1930 autos, he was particularly known for his research into early Pennsylvania vehicles. The results of much of that work have been published in *Automotive History Review*, a notable example being his treatise on the Twyford all-wheel-drive car which appeared in *AHR* No. 14. *SAH Journal* expresses the condolences of the Society to his widow Eyla.

THURSTON WILLIAMS

Thurston Williams, member number 1462, passed away on August 17, 1990. A resident of Wilton, New Hampshire, he spent his winters in Indianalantic, Florida.

Although a relatively recent member of the Society, he was a keen enthusiast of the later steam automobiles. *SAH Journal* expresses the sympathy of the Society to his widow and family.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the last issue of *SAH Journal* I reported that I had attended the organizational meeting of the Society's new Indiana chapter — the Hoosier Heritage Chapter. I can now update that report. After receiving an application from the Indiana group for formal recognition of its chapter status, I asked Jim Cox, our secretary, to poll your board by mail on this issue. By mid-November, Jim was able to report that a majority of the board members had responded favorably, and that chapter status for the Hoosier Heritage Chapter was approved.

This, the first new SAH chapter in a decade, is the direct result of the efforts of SAH vice president Jack Martin. Jack is generally responsible for chapter relations and can now claim first hand knowledge of the process of creating a chapter. If you live in an area in which you think that there might be potential for formation of a new chapter, if you are a member of a chapter that could use some new spunk, or if you just want to discuss chapter affairs, Jack would like to talk with you. He is presently working on some revisions of our bylaws, vis-à-vis chapters, so this would be a very good time to discuss with him any concerns in that area that you might have.

* * * * *

By now you have received the 1990-91 *SAH Membership Directory*. This directory is the result of the collaborative efforts of several people. Our indefatigable label maker and computer guru, David Babb, designed much of the format for the new *SAH Membership Directory*. He and his wife, Jean, also did the considerable work of "inputting" the membership data that is printed in it. Our editor, Kit Foster, worked on some refinements in the new format, and our new printer, Harry Brigham of Printcraft, added some layout and design touches. All of this required a great deal of work by those involved in the project. The result is excellent, and the work of those who contributed to the *Membership Directory* will be greatly appreciated by SAH members.

The new *Membership Directory* was designed with space efficiency in mind. By compacting the format somewhat, and using lighter paper, we were able to produce and mail the new *Membership Directory* for much less than has been the case in the past. This raises the possibility of issuing an annual *Membership Directory*, rather than a biennial one, as has been our practice in the past. Your board will consider this possibility at its April meeting.

* * * * *

In the week before Hershey, I was contacted through one of our members by the head of public relations for the North American branch of a major European automobile manufacturer. I was asked if SAH would like to have its 1990 Hershey banquet "sponsored" by that group. In this case, "sponsored" meant that the manufacturer's North American affiliate would completely pay the costs of our banquet. In return, they asked to be allowed to make a brief address at the banquet on the history of the parent company, to display historical prints and paintings dealing with the early automobiles and racing cars made by the company, and to distribute a book or booklet on the history of the parent company.

This offer intrigued me. SAH members attending the banquet would hear a brief presentation regarding the history of some interesting cars, they would have a chance to look at interesting prints, and they would receive an historical book or pamphlet. In return, we would be able to stake out new territory in disproving that old saw, "there ain't no such thing as a free banquet." The downside of the matter was that by the time this offer was made, the time available to make a decision about it was down to two days.

Since accepting this kind of sponsorship of our banquet would reflect a major change in how we conduct our affairs, I decided to consult our officers by telephone to see how they felt about it. One officer was adamantly in favor of accepting the offer, and another was just as adamantly against it. A third officer was "mildly" disposed against the offer, mostly because he felt that there was inadequate time available to consider it, and the possible ramifications of accepting it. I shared this latter point of view, so the offer was politely declined, with the reservation that we would be open to considering such an offer to support our 1991 Hershey banquet.

That offer has now been made, and will be considered by your board at its meeting in early April. My inclination would be to develop a policy in this matter which would allow automobile-involved corporate entities to

support our banquets — and possibly other aspects of our activities. I would envision such support as being somewhat comparable in concept to existing corporate support for public broadcasting. I think that we would have to develop protocols that would preclude a sponsor from making overtly commercial presentations, and from using the Society's name in inappropriately commercial ways. We would also need to limit the frequency of sponsorship of banquets or other activities by one entity. That would open the opportunity to provide financial support of our activities to many potential sponsors.

I would guess that the benefits from such arrangements would outweigh the possible drawbacks. That is what I think, but we really need to know how our membership feels about this issue. If you have strong feelings "pro" or "con," please write to me, or let any other officer or board member know your opinion. That will help to provide the basis for a discussion of this issue at our meeting in April.

If you have a strong opinion on the issue of controlled commercial support for the annual SAH banquet, this is the time to voice that opinion. After a decision is made, don't mumble "sellout" or "great missed opportunity" if you didn't let us know how you felt, and you disagree with our ultimate decision on this matter.

* * * * *

At the October Hershey board meeting a provision in our new bylaws relating to non-attendance at meetings by directors "kicked in." That provision states that if a director misses two meetings in one membership year, he or she is automatically removed from the board by the application of this provision.

In the case of John Gunnell's directorship, the board voted to authorize me, as president, to offer the position to those who had run unsuccessfully for the board in the most recent election, in the order of their vote ranking. Accordingly, I invited Bill Lewis (California) to accept the vacated position. He agreed. Bill is well known to most SAH members. Among his many accomplishments has been organizing the enormously successful Southern California Chapter's literature swap meet at Pasadena. He is a terrific addition to our board. Welcome, Bill.

In the case of Jim Wren's vacancy, the board was swayed by the reasons for his absences to reappoint him to the position that he had vacated. He also accepted. Welcome back, Jim.

* * * * *

For many years our "legal" mailing address has been the National Automotive History Collection (NAHC) at the Detroit Public Library. For the last year, your board has considered changing this address to the AACA Library & Research Center at Hershey. At our October meeting this change was voted into effect. The officers and directors present expressed general appreciation for the service that NAHC has rendered us in the past. We are supportive of the programs at NAHC and wish them the best of luck in the future.

While the vote that your board took in October was limited to the issue of our official mailing address, several members expressed the hope that there will be close cooperation between us and the AACA L&RC on a variety of programs and projects in the future. My contacts with the L&RC indicate that there is considerable enthusiasm there for such cooperation between the two organizations.

— Matt Joseph

BACK ISSUES OF SAH NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL

Through 1990 there have been 129 issues. Numbers 2 through 7, 23, 33, 34, 39, 43, 62, 63, 100, 101 and 118 are out of print. There are only one or two remaining copies of issues number 7, 20, 25, 65, 94, 99, 124, 125, 126 and 129 remaining, so please inquire before you send payment for these numbers.

Otherwise, all numbers are \$1.25 postpaid per single copy, or \$1.10 each for more than ten.

Special price for all available numbers through 129, which will be slightly more than 100 issues, is \$100.00 postpaid USA.

Make all checks payable to the Society of Automotive Historians, Inc. and send to Fred Roe, 837 Winter Street, Holliston, MA 01746.

MORE ON EARLY REGISTRATIONS: CYCLECARS AND OTHERS

by J. H. Valentine

Since publication of my article "Early California Registrations" in *SAH Journal* No. 119, several members have offered helpful comments and new information, and I have reviewed the 1917 registration data in more depth. But before going into the details of what we have learned, a few words on semantics will prove helpful.

Many SAH members use the terms "brand," "make," and "builder" interchangeably. This causes some confusion when we endeavor to construct or analyze a list of vehicles. For example, some lists may include vehicles proposed but never built, while omitting some that *were* built, but for the builder's own use, not for resale. Lists often do not clearly define their assumptions or limitations. Some include all passenger cars known to have been built in a certain city, state, or region. Others may include only cars manufactured for intended resale. Any published list, and even discussions that may take place in correspondence, should indicate any limitations inherent in the work.

All vehicles built have need for a name or specific identity. If the vehicle is to be sold, the name is often a registered trademark (or included in one). These might better be called "brands" than makes, for often a vehicle built by one entity is sold as something else entirely. Witness the current Geo brand, whose vehicles are built by Daihatsu, Isuzu, Suzuki and NUMMI. Other vehicles may be produced by a person or firm for their own use. In the early days this was quite common, and some firms built entire fleets of vehicles but sold none commercially. These might have a better claim on the term "make," for they were actually made by the person or entity proclaimed on their badges.

The 1917 California registration list contained quite a number of home-built cars, particularly cyclecars. Our "more experienced" (older) members may recall the days when "everyone built themselves a cyclecar."

And what were these cyclecars? Some were intended for everyday street use. Others were juvenile cyclecar racers which seem to have begun in southern California and spread quickly across the United States. But were these really toys? Not exactly. It may have come as quite an insult to the cigar-chomping, he-man racing drivers who were part of some big-bucks factory teams when, in 1916, a skinny 16-year-old high school kid beat the one-mile closed course record for the under-231-cubic-inch (3.8 liter) class, doing a 54-second lap. In his tiny *homemade* cyclecar racer.

Like all cars, and other valuable or costly property, some of these cyclecar racers, some of the grownups' racers, some of the homemade passenger cars, and some of the trucks built for a company's own use did appear in the 1917 California listing of registered vehicles. They had to be registered and identifiable to protect the owner in case of theft. They also needed to be registered and licensed in order to be operated on the streets and highways, as they often were. In those days, many of the race cars, both full and juvenile size, were driven on the streets to and from their events. The photographs of the time show winning Stutz, Mercer and Duesenberg racing cars posing proudly with their enameled license plates bolted firmly in place.

Wait a minute, you say. Duesenberg? They were not built until 1920. No, not passenger cars for resale. The Duesenberg factory built and marketed engines in the mid-teens, and used a stable of its own racing cars to showcase its product. When changes or improvements were made in the engines, new racers were built and the old ones were then sold to non-team drivers. So Duesenberg cars *were* built, registered, and also sold (but only second-hand) prior to 1920. These could be considered a "make" of automobile, not a "brand." As such, they would not appear in lists of brand names (of vehicles produced commercially) during that time period.

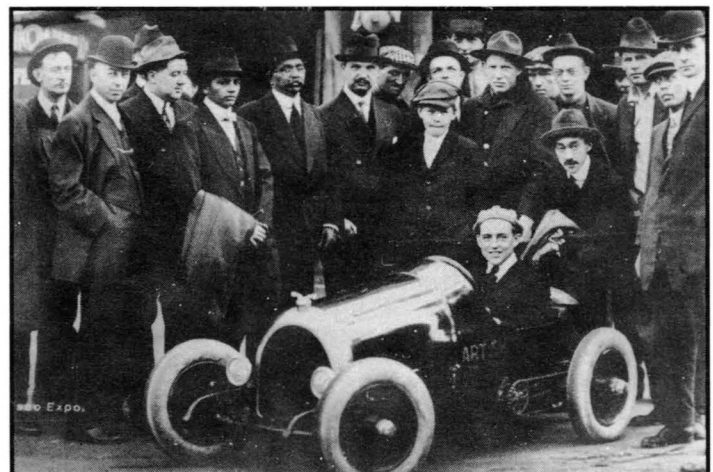
Now we come to the circumstances whereby race cars are seldom found on lists of automobile makes or brands at all. This is understandable, as in many cases the name of the car would change each season with a change of owner, or sponsor or, sometimes, girlfriend. The 3.8 liter speed record car mentioned above was the "U.S.-Indian" racer during 1914; for the 1915 season it became the "Houk Special." Nearly all lists of makes or brands I have seen, and even books showing all automobiles known to have been built, have by-passed the racing cars, despite many of them having been registered, licensed automobiles. To do otherwise would cause an unwieldy mess, or a mess of mazes. If the need for such a compendium arises, for the convolutions required suggest that this listing be a totally separate effort.

Regarding my discussion of the odd brands of vehicles found in the November, 1917 California registration listings (*SAH Journal* No. 119), it seems these distinctions in their "make" entries varied with the registration office, or even the clerk making the determinations. So the listings included several probable one-onlys having the owner's first or last name as the "make" entry, while 102 others were shown as "Assembled," "Cyclecar," "Homemade," "Rebuilt," "Special" and the like. A fair number of these had truck bodies, and were likely either modified passenger cars with small goods or work bodies added, or else Ford trucks with frame extension kits added. Of the private owners on whom I was able to acquire employment information, 15 of 33 were mechanics, machinists, or repair garage operators. As such, they were likely to have been able to construct or rebuild the vehicles themselves.

In the same group, 33 of 53 had body types which might have been used as racing cars, either the juvenile cyclecar racers or the larger adult type. At least two of them were. One was a cyclecar registered to young Murillo M. Brockway of Los Angeles, whose father was head of the Crown Coach plant. The firm built truck bodies at the time, and later complete vehicles, both buses and trucks. Murillo raced his as the Brockway Car in the juvenile cyclecar races which began in 1914. Another was the homemade roadster registered to T. A. Tomasini of San Luis Obispo. This was entered as the Tomasini in a pair of long distance racing events held in 1915 at the Panama-Pacific exposition grounds in San Francisco.

The Art Smith racer mentioned in my earlier article was one of at least eight (and probably at least nine) built by the young San Franciscan who was also an aviator. These were raced daily, five at a time, on an indoor track at the exposition. I was able to acquire a photograph of one, and also viewed another. In the background is a sign advertising "Miss Edith Wilson of San Francisco," who was to drive one that day only, supposedly at 90 mph. Each Art Smith racer had an individual name painted on its sides; the one in the photographs was "The Comet." The car had headlights and a 1915 California license plate with a number not fully visible. Its appearance resembles the later Wing Midget, so popular with our eastern members. This one-man racer had chain drive on the left side and a zig-zag exterior exhaust stack on the right. The tread and wheelbase dimensions appear to be 36 and 68 inches respectively, and it seems to have the 20-inch wire wheels common to the type. Smith took eight of these cars on a tour of the Orient after the exposition closed, which Harry Hartz said created "no small amount of excitement and much favorable comment and interest."

The Meister vehicles mentioned in the earlier article brought a response from member Cornelius Hauck, who referred us to the firm of A. Meister & Sons in Sacramento. His comments appeared in *SAH Journal* No. 120. At the time, A. Meister & Sons Co., Inc. was located at 9th and D Streets, and also at 1405 K Street. They moved to 2019 'O' Street in North Sacramento in 1922. Albert E., Charles E., Edward A., and George F. Meister ran the firm, with Charles W. Harris as their superintendent. The firm represented itself as "carriage and auto manufacturers and dealers" in the city directories of the time. About 1922, the firm also acquired the Pacific Motor Bodies Co. in Los Angeles, appointing J. Louis Kenyon as its general manager, but by 1925 this facility was closed.



Art Smith Racer "The Comet" in 1915. The fat 20-inch tires are mounted on aircraft wheels. Identity of the driver is unknown. J. H. Valentine Collection.

In reviewing the 1917 registration information, I find there were *ten* vehicles by Meister listed, rather than the nine I mentioned in the earlier article. Five were described as having touring bodies, three as bus, and two as the stage type. Most were owned by hotels or tour firms associated with the hotel owners. All had three- or four-digit serial numbers, clustered together, presumably their own assignments and certainly not Ford serials. *The Commercial Car Journal* of October 15th, 1914 has a photograph of a 20-passenger closed bus by Meister on a Kissel chassis. *Automobile Trade Journal* of July 1917 has a photograph of an extended Ford chassis with a roofed (but not fully enclosed) Meister bus body. Seating capacity was 15, all in individual seats. Two operators were named, one having at least two such units.

Another entry in the "home made" category was the delivery truck (serial number one) of Joseph J. Schnerr (not Schnee, as so often appears) of San Francisco. Schnerr paddy wagons, ambulances and fire trucks were also constructed, though in small quantities and apparently only on civic government contracts. Schnerr was primarily in the repair business at 780 Golden Gate Avenue for a number of years. According to the extensive research done by R. Dale Magee of Vista, California and described in the March-April, 1990 issue of *Fire Apparatus Journal*, at least seven various items of fire equipment were supplied by Schnerr from 1915 into 1918. A triple-combination pumper was supplied to St. Helena, California in 1918 at a cost of \$5400. That city still owns and displays this six-cylinder apparatus, which bears serial number eight and is in full working order.

Among the little-known makes mentioned in the earlier article was the Champion roadster, serial number one, registered to the Champion Auto Equipment Co. in San Francisco. It was odd to see the first car of a series to be registered on the West Coast when the firm had its home offices in Chicago and its factory in Wabash, Indiana. Odder still was that the Pacific Coast Division's manager, Charles W. Harris, soon became the general superintendent at the Meister plant in Sacramento. Harris left in 1926 to build and market (apparently unsuccessfully) a tractor-trailer type of transit bus towed by a modified Ford tractor.

Among the previously unknown makes mentioned in the earlier article was the Danville roadster owned by machinist Jens P. C. Pedersen of Oakland, presumably named after the city a dozen miles to his east. The D V Special of Percy S. Simms, Los Angeles, was likely a racing car; but who were "D" and "V"? Then there was the H & S Special of Berkeley's Walter J. Seaborn. Who was "H"? With body type unknown, and the term "special" used, it also could well have been a racing car. Millwright Arthur J. McKinley's McKinley roadster might have also been one. John A. Osterdock's Rapid Vacuum Cleaner vehicle was not a street sweeper but presumably contained carpet cleaning equipment used in conjunction with his rug business. Any further information regarding Alex Schelling of 705 Washington Street, Santa Rosa and his Schelling touring car(s) would be appreciated.

The author would like to thank SAH members Ralph H. Dunwoodie, Cornelius W. Hauck, Elliott Kahn, William J. Lewis and Jeffrey C. Minard for their information and comments on this material.

CADILLAC JUST BEFORE THE LELANDS LEFT

by W. F. Robinson, Jr.

The creation of automobiles involves design, manufacturing, and sales. Those interested in the history of the automobile have tended to concentrate attention on the finished product and the reasons for its mechanical or aesthetic features. The manufacturing process needs some attention.

My wife's uncle, Burton F. Curtis of Mercer Island, Washington, worked for a time at the Cadillac factory before Henry and Wilfred Leland left to build aircraft engines. His memories of that experience are well worth recording.

Armed with a letter of introduction to Henry M. Leland from a friend of his father, Mr. Curtis set off for Detroit. He didn't use the letter, however. In fact, he showed it to Wilfred Leland only after he landed a job and had been working for a while.

The Lelands were still very much in evidence at Cadillac. Henry M. Leland seemed to be a patriarch to young Curtis. Wilfred C. Leland, H. M.'s son, was more approachable, but he was seen less in the factory. H. M. was still driving the one cylinder Cadillac coupe he called "Osceola."

General Motors was engaged in a program to smooth the production process by more accurate control of the flow of materials. Each factory

division was assigned a "production foreman" as part of this plan. Curtis was first assigned to the frame shop. He soon found that he was usually referred to as the "production clerk." The frame shop was very noisy. The various parts of the chassis arrived in less than perfect condition. Most of the pieces had to be hammered, bend, or filed to fit. People worked longer in those days. The foreman of the frame shop was from Nova Scotia. He went back home on a two week vacation and learned that he was 83, which was two years older than he had thought. He remarked on his return that had he known of his true age he would have retired.

It is now assumed by many that the conditions in manufacturing plants were barbarous before the advent of the welfare state. Some perspective is given by an article "Benefits Count at Cadillac Factory" by Allen Sinsheimer in the March 29, 1917 issue of *The Automobile*. The custom of repeated collections by the employees by the "passing the hat" method had become tedious to them by 1912. The men in the trim and paint shop petitioned for the formation of a benefit society. The management, on the theory that gratitude and nourishing food were influential in promoting improved relations, agreed. A society was formed. Dues were ten cents per week. Those off work from illness or injury could draw a dollar a day for up to six months, and there was a one hundred fifty dollar death benefit. Those injured at work, of course, also received workmen's compensation.

After the society was established some of the employees requested provision for eating facilities in the plant. At first, a quart of meat stew or thick soup with two slices of bread was served at noon and in the evening for the overtime men. The price was six cents. From meals of this kind delivered to the various departments, two large restaurants and four lunch counters had developed by 1917. A quart of stew was more than many wanted, so the quantity was reduced to a pint and the price to three cents. Later a unit pricing system grew, with portions sold by a ticket which was worth 3½ cents.

The company promoted the society by conferring benefits on its members such as by providing beds in New Mexico and Michigan for those who had contracted tuberculosis and by providing for their families during their illnesses. The company also paid for the administrative costs of the society. By 1917 the society had 7,700 members, which must have been a very sizeable portion of the work force.

These were the days when Henry Ford's five dollar a day plan was still fresh. Curtis soon found out that those in the automobile trades were quite aware of what the public overlooked. Mr. Ford's high wage was not only the minimum; it was also the maximum. There were many ex-Ford workers at Cadillac where their skills enabled them to earn more than the five dollars a day paid at Ford.

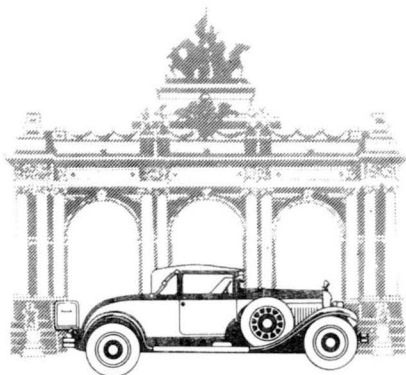
Those were also the days of the efficiency expert. Time and motion men were busy in the plant studying the way specific tasks were performed and timing the workers. It remains a mystery to Mr. Curtis that the workmen, who knew they were being timed, would throw themselves into their work. They would labor furiously when being timed, although they must have realized that the resultant time would be used as the norm from then on.

Mr. Curtis was at Cadillac when the second series of V-8s was being produced. Cadillac was then making their own bodies, but obtained the closed model bodies from Fisher, except for a coupe. This coupe was made at Cadillac from a set of cast aluminum panels. If the flanges of the individual sections were warped the panels wouldn't fit. Since the soft metal flanges were frequently bend, assembly of that body type caused frequent problems. For all of H. M. Leland's rectitude, even his patience gave way on one occasion when an awed young Burt Curtis heard the patriarch shout, "I wish every _____ one of those panels was at the bottom of the Detroit River!"

When the Cadillac company announced its first V-8 there were references to their having experimented with six cylinder engines. Little or nothing has ever been printed about those engines, so it was most interesting to have Curtis's recollection that some of these Cadillac sixes were powering trucks which were used about the plant while he was working there. These engines used the individually cast cylinders with copper water jackets used on the Cadillac singles and fours.

Ideally, stories of this kind would conclude with the statement that the individual has owned nothing but that make of car ever since. However, Burton Curtis, like most of the rest of us, has been a sampler of many makes.

AT THE MUSEUMS



Autoworld BRUSSELS

Located in Brussels, this museum is described as second only to the French National Automobile Museum among the fine European collections. It is housed in a spacious exhibition hall attractively set in a park created in 1880 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Belgium's independence.

The museum is said to have about 450 vehicles on display, plus several hundred others, mostly still unrestored, which have to be warehoused elsewhere because of space limitations. The core of the holdings is formed by the magnificent Mahy collection. The exhibited vehicles are either good originals or fine restorations.

Understandably, the collection of Belgian cars is exceptional. Virtually all of that nation's output is represented, including 14 examples of the famous Minerva, plus Imperias, Nagants, Germaines, Fondus, FNs, Miesses, and even one each of the rare Vivinus, Belga-Rise, and Hermes. A lamented absentee is the highly regarded but scarce Excelsior.

The marques of other countries are also well represented, not only from France, Germany, England and Italy, but even a Russian Moskvitch. Many American cars are featured, owing to the enthusiasm of the Mahys for them, even though, as noted in the museum's catalog, "Most European collectors are contemptuous of American cars . . . For them, the only models with any class are a Stutz or Duesenberg or, at a pinch, a pre-1935 Packard or Cadillac." Good for the Mahys!

As if the foregoing were not more than enough to make Autoworld well worth visiting, there are also numerous items of automobiliana. Raymond Katzell, who visited the museum recently, has a copy of its 167-page illustrated catalog and will be glad to take inquiries.

LETTERS

GEORGE DUNHAM REVISITED

Some mistakes need to be corrected in my George Dunham biography which appeared in *Automotive History Review* No. 24. On page 4, bottom of the center column, the correct production of the Oldsmobile Model S is 1400, rather than 1500 as stated. On page 7, the end of Note 2 should read "May, 1878" instead of 1978.

Subsequent research indicates that the paragraphs on Dunham's patent filings can be expressed more precisely. The first assignment to Olds seems to have been filed in late April 1906, and is for a valve lifter and keeper for an L-head engine. This was followed in December by a front fender guard designed to be laced in on the 1907 Model A Palace Touring. The next year, in March, he filed for the two lever controls mounted on the steering column of the type used on the 1909 Model X. The final Olds patent was filed just after Dunham officially left and was a triangular profile gas pedal which sank flush with the floor at maximum speed for driver comfort.

His sole Hudson patent is for the steering gear and controls for the Model 20, filed in March 1910. More interesting, though, is the fact that his first successful Chalmers-Detroit application, for an oil can holder, was

filed barely a month after his transfer to Chalmers at the beginning of 1910. It was followed in March with a lubrication system which had dual reservoirs for engine and transmission connected, and in May by the radiator flap. His next successful application was filed in February 1911 for an engine breather pipe. In April, an acetylene running board tank holder followed. In August 1914 he submitted two applications on an overhead cam inline engine: one on the valve train, the other on the lubrication system. In October, an oil pump design, apparently for the same engine, was the last of his Chalmers applications.

SAH member and Graham-Paige Club president Michael Keller expressed surprise on learning of the early Graham Brothers tractor experiments. He was pleased to report finding some test run photographs in Indiana.

Patent research can be tiring and expensive, but clearly it provides an interesting snapshot of all types of existing technology. **D. J. Kava, 1755 Bandera, Beaumont, TX 77706**



MEDIO SIGLO DE AUTOMOVILISMO ARGENTINO, by Ricardo Lorenzo (*Borocoto*). Approximately 290 pages, 10 pages of illustrations, 6 × 9 inches. Editorial ATLANTIDA, S.A., Buenos Aires, 1953. Spanish language only, currently out of print.

It may seem rather pointless to review a book which has been out of print for perhaps thirty years. However, this is an important book which may not have received much previous notice. Automobile historians, especially those concerned with competition, will want to know about its existence.

Argentina has long been considered the most "European" of South American countries; in recent years it has been a "gold mine" for car collectors seeking specimens long vanished from the more traditional sources. In some ways similar to distant Australia, Argentina can often fill blank spaces in histories usually centered in Europe or North America. Argentina also produced Juan Manuel Fangio, five times World Driver Champion, and other notable drivers, some still among the most competitive today.

The author of this book was a sports journalist whose reports appeared under the nom-de-plume "Borocoto"; an Argentine friend recently characterized him as "sort of the Howard Cosell of Argentina." Thus, his primary emphasis is on automobile competition events and historians will find scant reference to corporate or industrial history which the book's title might suggest. Nevertheless, those interested in the socio-economic aspects of automobile sports in South America in general and Argentina in particular will be rewarded with an abundance of intriguing anecdotal information.

Lorenzo has done all the tedious work, almost impossible for North American or European specialists, by digging out old contemporary accounts. He records the first "Carrera de Automoviles" of December 1906, sponsored by the newspaper *El Pais*. From this point, up to the date of publication — the "half century" in the book's title — one is presented with the essence of contemporary newspaper accounts, interspersed with the author's comments, on the various forms of racing, personalities and automobiles which comprise this era of activity in Argentina. Not the least value of this book is an appendix of more than 80 pages of detailed compilations of race dates, results and statistics from 1906 through 1952; the kind of information that is probably unavailable anywhere else in automotive historical sources.

In view of the recent flood of automotive books, I am certain that a new edition — let's hope an English translation — of this book would be much appreciated and very useful to aficionados of automotive competition.

Though not a normal part of a book review, with only this opportunity, I would like to express my appreciation to my friend Alex Pujo and to his mother who, at my request, contacted the widow of the author who kindly provided a copy of this important book.

— Frederick A. Usher

THE AMBULANCE, by Katherine Traver Barkley. 207 pages, 165 B & W photographs and illustrations. Softbound, 5³/₈ × 8³/₈ inches. ISBN 0-9626357-2-3. Load N Go Press, P.O. Box 175, Kiamesha Lake, NY 12751. \$13.95 plus \$2.00 shipping (hardbound edition available at \$18.95).

This book is a new edition of a work first published in 1978 by Exposition Press, but out of print for over ten years. Published by SAH member Myron Gittell's Load N Go Press, it is, as the book's subtitle tells us, "the story of emergency transportation of sick and wounded through the centuries." Tracing the history of the ambulance to the Anglo-Saxon hammock of circa 900 A.D., the book takes the reader to the most modern conveyances as of its first date of publication. (In fact, some of these have been made historic by the passage of time; one example is a Hess & Eisenhart ambulance on a Cadillac chassis. When was the last time you saw one in service?)

As one would expect, there is coverage devoted to the use of ambulances in major wars. In addition, there are chapters on specialized topics such as miniature ambulances and animal ambulances, plus a bibliography of over 120 entries. Competently written, this book will find special appeal with those interested in "professional" cars and emergency medical service.

— Kit Foster

THE MOTOR CAR IN ART: Selections From the Raymond E. Holland Automotive Art Collection, by John J. Zolomij. 300 pages. 400 four-color and 50 black & white illustrations. Full color laminated cover, 11¹/₄ × 10¹/₂ inches. ISBN 0-915038-95-1. Published by Automobile Quarterly and available from the Raymond E. Holland Automotive Art & Toy Collection, 111 North Fourth St., Allentown, Pennsylvania 18102. \$99.95 plus \$6.00 shipping and handling charges for U.S. orders; \$11.00 for overseas.

This is one of the most remarkable books on automobiles and automobilia I have ever had the pleasure of reading. I cannot praise it too highly (I pan books, too, you know). This is an in-depth visual history of the many facets which combine to make the automobile an important subject by all standards, and gives the reader a singular view of the influence the motor car had in almost every form of art. Its author is universally known as an authority on the subject, writes for many publications, and serves as director of the Holland Collection of Automotive Art from which the material published here has been taken after careful scrutiny; scrutiny geared to guarantee complete authenticity of the subject shown, but in the readers' interests as well. Mr. Zolomij also lectures on a worldwide basis. The Holland Collection is the largest in the world, and a tribute to the man who so carefully amassed the best art of various types over a period of many years. Comparatively few have seen this remarkable collection, housed in a private museum. Now a good deal of it has been made available to the public, by illustrations and the written word.

This remarkable collection of memorabilia has been divided into six basic sections: Pen & Ink, Metalwork, Ceramics, Mixed Media, Playthings, and Daily Life, all of which apply to the automobile in one way or another, from oil paintings to shaving mugs, humidors to umbrella stands — all of it inspired, and all of it rare. The book takes the reader back to the salad days of the motor car in the 1890s, through the *fin de siècle* period and into the 20th century.

The text is limited to an author's introduction and two forewords (by Wendall D. Garrett, editor of the magazine *Antiques*, and by Richard Teague). Most of the material has been drawn from England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.

The sections are beautifully formed, covering a wide artistic spectrum, from lithographs by Henri de Toulouse Lautrec and the racing prowess of Peter Helck to carved ivory automobiles from India, tapestries, steins, ashtrays and advertising signs — just about anything imaginable which went to glorify self-propelled road transportation before the novelty wore off!

Space prohibits any further paean from the writer. Even if you order a copy without previously seeing one, I seriously doubt you'll be disappointed in your venture. But don't overlook it while it is available, as this magnificent volume was printed in a limited number of copies.

— Keith Marvin



SAH Journal welcomes advertisements from members. Ads are free, and should concern items of interest to historians: books, literature, photographs, illustrations, memorabilia, information, for sale, wanted, to trade. Ads for vehicles or parts are not accepted.

WANTED: Back issues of *Electric Vehicle News* from the 1970s. **Patrick R. Foster, 42 Buckingham Place, Milford CT 06460, (203) 878-6672.**

WANTED: Description (in any form) of the 1902 Metcalfe mentioned in the *Standard Catalog*. Want present address of a 1905 Armac child's car or its dimensions. It was similar to a 1912 Niagra Lad's Car. David Fegre of Lombard, IL owned an Armac in 1974. Anyone know his present address? **Hayden Sheply, 5467 Taylor Avenue, Port Orange, FL 32127, (904) 756-8580**

REWARD: \$10 for first information on present location or fate of the first production 1957 Ford Fairlane. It was secretly shipped to the US Embassy in Moscow, and created a sensation on the streets of the Russian capital before its official US introduction date. **John R. Chevedden, 2215 Nelson Avenue, No. 205, Redondo Beach, CA 90278, (213) 371-7872.**

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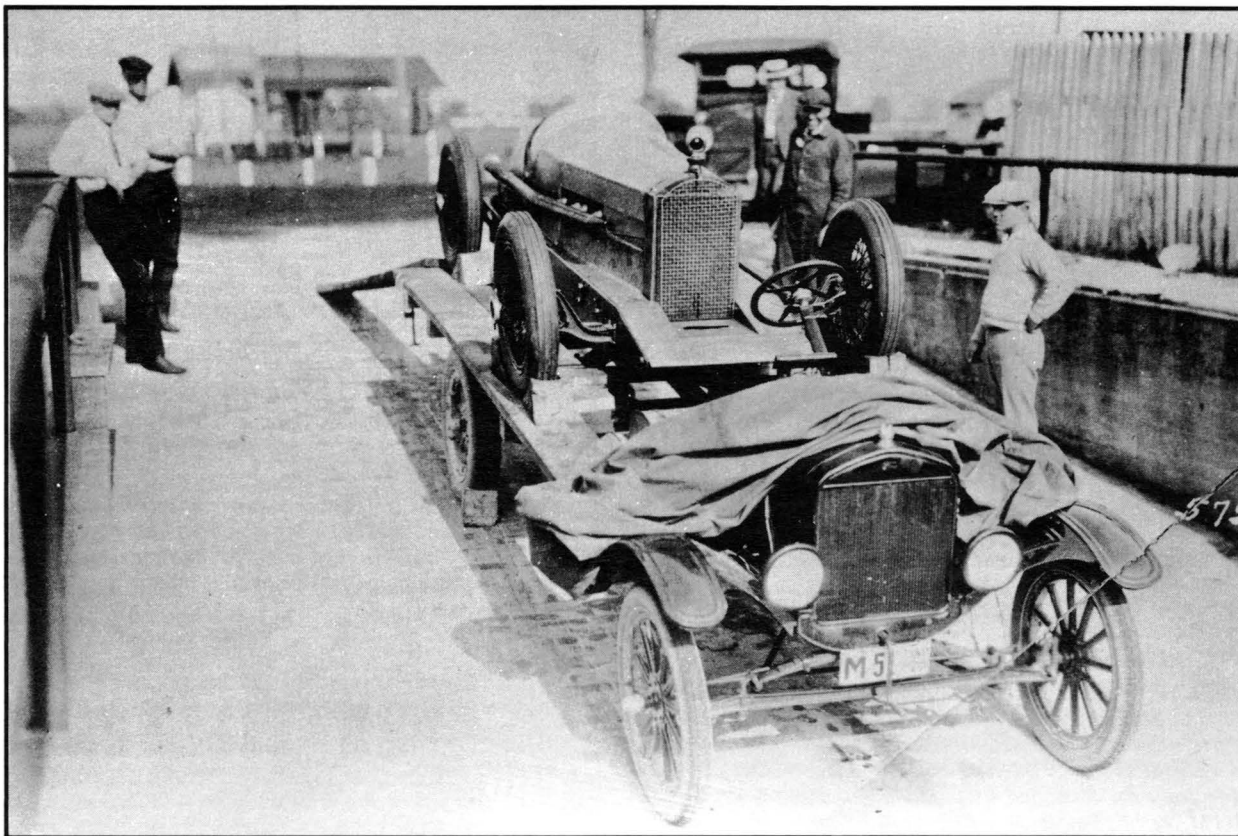
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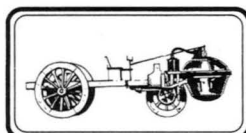
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HOW TO DELIVER your racing car to Indianapolis. Knowledgeable skeptics will say "What racing car?" as this one is the Shambaugh, which was entered regularly for years but never qualified. It was undoubtedly the last chain drive car ever entered. From the collection of the late Jerry Gebby, courtesy of Fred Roe.



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