



President's Paragraphs

Tools of the Trade: I view the writer/historian as a sort of funnel. Raw research pours in at the top of his head, and the finished article comes out through his fingertips, into his typewriter.

Somewhere inside this funnel, as information swirls its way downward, it passes through a series of sieves and filters: judgment, perspective, backgrounding, care, etc. The quality of the historian depends in large measure on the quality of his filters.

A lot depends, too, of course, on what goes in at the top. When I used to write and edit **Special-Interest Autos** magazine, we had the very tiniest of staffs* plus a format that demanded 12-14 different articles every issue. I used to write about 80% of the magazine's content every issue, grinding out an average of one full article every 4½ days.

I mention this because to keep up that pace required tremendous speed in research and writing. That's no boast - working to any deadline erodes the finished article. My feeling is that the shorter the deadline, the worse the erosion and, usually, the worse the product.

Yet I am proud of the high-speed techniques we developed to cope with SIA's tough regimen. It's these techniques I'd like to talk about here - to share some of our shortcuts and hurry-up aids. Even if you never find yourself in the bind we lived with for four years, our techniques might come in handy.

Our biggest chore was to assemble a great deal of research material on any given topic as quickly as possible. The idea was to gather everything we could about, say, a certain car. Or a type of car or a component. We tried to start with as big a mass of data as we could find.

Research shortcuts were all-important. Early in the game, I had my assistant, Ann Best, go down to our public library and make Xeroxes of all pages under the headings "Automobile" and "Automobiles" in both the **Readers Guide** and the **Industrial Arts Guide**. We began with the year 1918 and Xeroxed both guides right up to the present. For certain years, I also ordered Xeroxes under the headings of specific carmakers - Studebaker, Ford, GM, Chrysler, etc. These Xeroxes were filed and were readily accessible in my office, so I could look up previously published articles without leaving my desk. I would then order any articles that sounded pertinent, and Ann would drive down to the library and get them for me. Anything not available locally was requested from out-of-town sources, usually the Detroit Public Library, Harrah's, etc.

The complete runs of these "guide" Xeroxes cost something like \$60 - a bargain I've never matched anywhere else.

I also had Ann Xerox complete **specifications** from the back of a 1958 Motor's Service Manual. These basic specs cover all U.S. cars from 1928 through 1950. For more detailed specs I relied (and rely) heavily on **Motor** show numbers, **Automotive News Almanacs**, and **Ward's Automotive Yearbooks**.

Another invaluable time-saving source has been a set of **membership rosters** from the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). I have them from 1968 to the present. The SAE Roster lists names and addresses of auto engineers plus the year each member joined. (This last gives a clue to how old the engineer is.) I've been able to quickly track down and then interview by telephone any number of important engineers, thanks to the SAE Roster. Older editions of the roster list some deceased members, whose heirs are usually worth contacting, so that's why I use obsolete rosters as well as the current one.

Unfortunately nothing similar exists for auto designers. Retired and semi-retired, non-engineering auto executives can sometimes be found in the AOT (Automotive Organization Team) Roster, which I also use fairly often.

Then I keep detailed lists of **public relations offices** of the major Detroit automakers and suppliers. These lists contain names and numbers and include not just the straight PR offices but also those having to do with styling, engineering, marketing, and technical services. I keep a similar list of automotively oriented libraries and archives. All these are invaluable time savers.

My office library isn't very large, but the one book I'd be lost without is **Georgano's Encyclopedia**. In SIA days, I used it constantly for a tremendous range of quick research and fact-checking.

The one office instrument I've found most valuable as a research tool was (and is) my **tape recorder**. It's just a \$25 Panasonic, but it's a priceless aid. I hook it up to my telephone (Radio Shack sells a phone jack for less than \$2), and the tape recorder makes long-distance interviewing a pleasure. Interviews, of course, spark any history, accurate or otherwise. And when you record a conversation, you realize how much information you miss when you hear a person speak.

Ann became very adept at quickly transcribing interviews - same-day service in most cases. I'd make my calls early in the morning, when phone rates were cheapest, and then I'd read and write the rest of the day.

Once I had all the research data in hand (and we often had 30-40 articles going concurrently, some of which we kept adding to for a year or more), the tough part was to digest what we'd gathered. I'm a slow reader, but I'd go over everything several times, get it in order, discard what seemed unimportant or unreliable, note the noteworthy, etc. After digesting the raw material that had been poured into the big end of the funnel, writing an article was simple. Once I'd assimilated the input, the output poured out in about the time it took to type it.

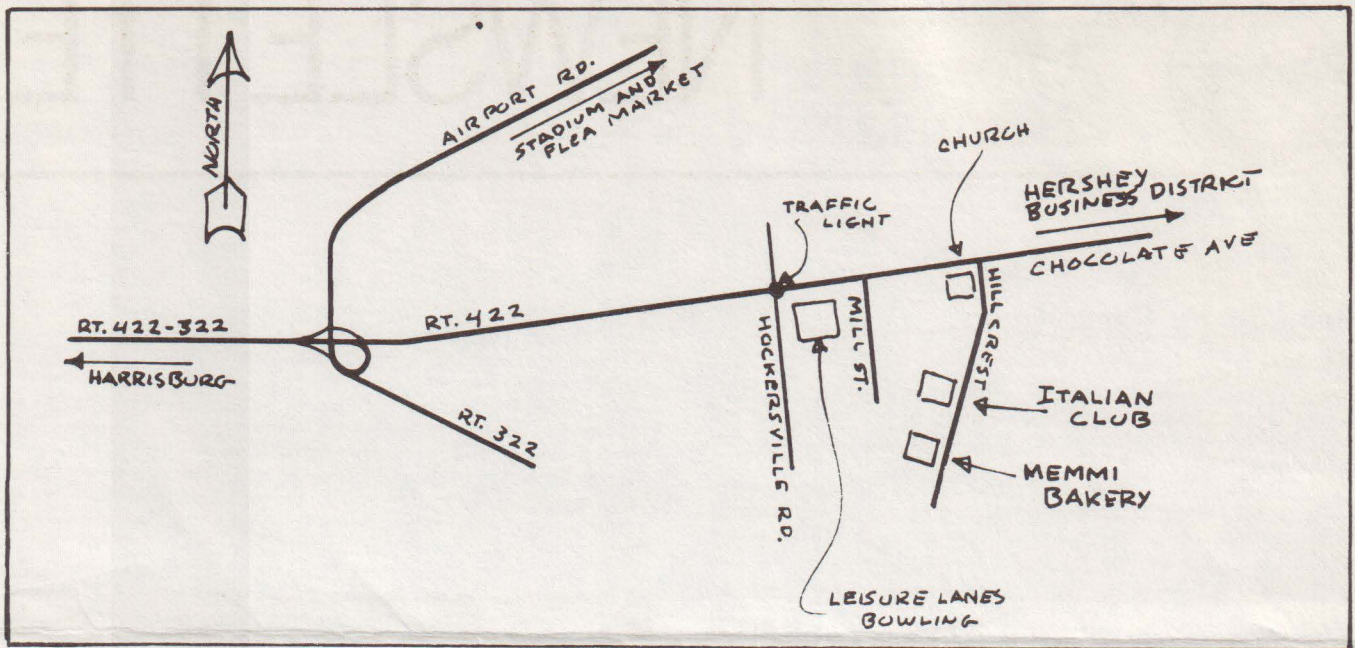
I'd be interested in comparing the shortcuts we developed at SIA with those you might have conceived in your own research and writings. I pass mine along for what ever they're worth and hope you'll do the same. **Michael Lamm**

*To be specific, SIA's entire editorial staff consisted at that time of me plus one assistant, Ann Best. We also listed a ringer on the magazine's masthead, one Bill Williams by pseudonym, but Bill never existed. SIA's "editorial offices" were in the basement of my home. Our business offices (and we had a real business staff - no ringers) were in Bennington, Vermont; an arrangement that spanned 3000 miles but worked out amazingly well.

Friday, October 10TH

The Annual Meeting And Our Space At Hershey.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held at the Italian Club in Hershey, Friday, Oct. 10. The Club is on Hillcrest Avenue, as shown on the map. Cocktail hour will start at 6:30 PM and dinner at 7:30 PM. The dinner will cost \$8.95, and reservations are required. If you do not have them, get in touch with Fred Roe or check at our space at the Flea Market for the possibility of last minute cancellations or reservations. We expect to have Zenon Hansen, former Executive Director of Mack Trucks, Inc., and presently the Director of the American Truck Museum, as our speaker.



People not desiring to come to the dinner are welcome to attend the meeting which will follow.

If you have further questions, the Society will be occupying space at the Hershey Flea Market. The number is A2 62-63. Stop by and visit.

OBITUARIES

FRANK T. SNYDER, JR.

On August 7, 1975, the Society of Automotive Historians lost a good friend and member. Frank died in his sleep in Chandler, Arizona, where he and his wife, Carolyn, had been living for the last several years. Cancer has stilled the mighty pen but his work will be with us for years to come. He put untold hours into automotive research and seemed to have tireless energy on his favorite subject.

I met Frank in 1960, in Philadelphia. We discussed our parallel courses and became fast friends. I always wondered at Frank's hurry to get things done, not realizing that even then, he knew his time was limited. All of us will remember the prodding letters, to get us off dead center. It was through his dedicated efforts that this club was able to hold some momentum.

Carolyn is going to continue with Frank's membership and will help, as she can, with research into some of the marques that Frank has material on. The Snyder collection,

while not huge, is one of the finest in the country. Knowing the multitude of material that there was, he wisely limited his collecting to one item on each make. In this way he was able to cover a lot of ground without filling his home to overflowing.

Our prayers are with Carolyn these days and we hope that she will stay with us.

ALFRED S. LEWERENZ

This summer has been a bad one for the Society. In the death of Al Lewerenz we have lost another of our true historians. There wasn't anything that he wouldn't dig to try and find. His interests ran the full gamut, from the earliest single cylinder motorcycle to the latest rocket that put the Russians and Americans in space together. If it was a mode of

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I would like to propose some kind of a memorial fund in the names of these two men. A fund that we could donate to and make it possible to have our Society place fitting automotive efforts in some libraries around the world. Some of the libraries don't have a book fund that may cover auto history. My pets are the Detroit and Philadelphia collections and I'm sure, even they, could use a little help now and then. Think it over and let's talk about it in Hershey. SKY

The Society of
Automotive
Historians

NEWSLETTER

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SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS' OFFICERS - 1975

<p>PRESIDENT Michael Lamm P. O. Box 7607 Stockton, California 95207</p>	<p>VICE PRESIDENT Michael Worthington-Williams 42, Woodsland Road Hassocks, Sussex, England</p>
<p>SECRETARY Vernon Vogel Box 24 Edinboro, Pennsylvania 16412</p>	<p>TREASURER Frederick D. Roe 837 Winter Street Holliston, Massachusetts 01746</p>

New SAH Brochures

By the time Hershey rolls around, the Society should have its new brochures. They will contain information on the purposes of the SAH, how to make donations to the Society, and membership application and information. Copies will be sent to all members, and you may pick up additional ones at Space A2 62-63 or at the Annual Meeting.

The brochure was designed by John Peckham, and the photos supplied by Austin Clark's, Long Island Automotive Museum, John Peckham and Mike Lamm. The pictures span a period from 1900 to 1958. That, and the fact that they fit the layout, was the main criteria for their selection. No one was looking for favorites. Next month's *NL* will let you know what each one is. Until then, you'll just have to try to guess them all, yourself.

The Mail Bag

From: Perry Zavitz, 460 Ridgewood Cresant, London Ontario, Canada. You asked a question at the bottom of page 2 in June Newsletter, which I would like to comment about. I am rather inclined to have a fondness of station wagons, having owned two different ones in the past. I have always considered all station wagons to be passenger vehicles, therefore cars. In my literature collection, I have found that I am kept more than busy just with cars, so do not save truck literature, as such. However, I do collect items dealing exclusively or partially with station wagons on truck chassis, such as, Chevrolet, Dodge, Fargo, GMC, and International.

But I don't draw the line right there. There are two other types of vehicles which I include in my collection. One is the so-called crew-cab models, those with a rear seat and either 2 or 4-doors. The second class is the Jeep type vehicles like the Bronco, Blazer, Jimmy, Scout etc. If these vehicles have rear seats, even if they are removable, I consider them to be passenger vehicles - a type of car.

If we look at it the other way, are they trucks, I think they are. I guess that makes these vehicles Mugwumps or Transvestites. It is a debatable matter, but this has been the way I have sorted them out.

Two more types can be brought into the picture. Buses are passenger vehicles, but I don't accept them as cars. They are commercial vehicles, even though they are designed to haul people. I do save bus literature if the items include the truck based station wagons.

What about Motor Homes? They can carry several passengers. I haven't quite settled that one yet.

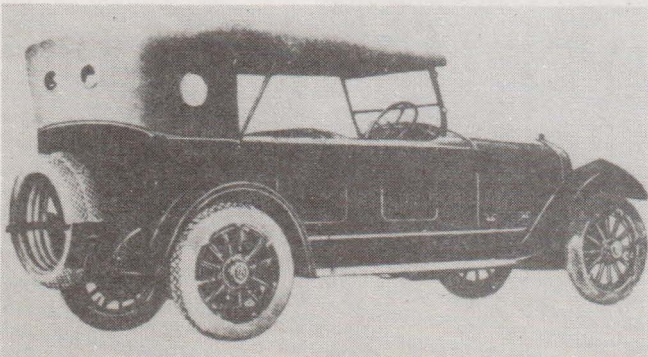
From: Maxwell Gregory, 'Beltana' Korumburra Rd., Drouin South, Victoria, 3818, Australia. Can you use another entrant in the ongoing saga of "If you don't have a picture of your car, use someone else's?"

The accompanying photos are of the first illustration of the Australian Six and of the contemporary Studebaker Big Six.

Right hand drive on the Studebaker indicates that it is a photograph of Australian origin. While that of the Australian Six is clearly a worked-over version of it. Major areas of revision are the hub caps with a letter 'A' and the rear lines of the top.

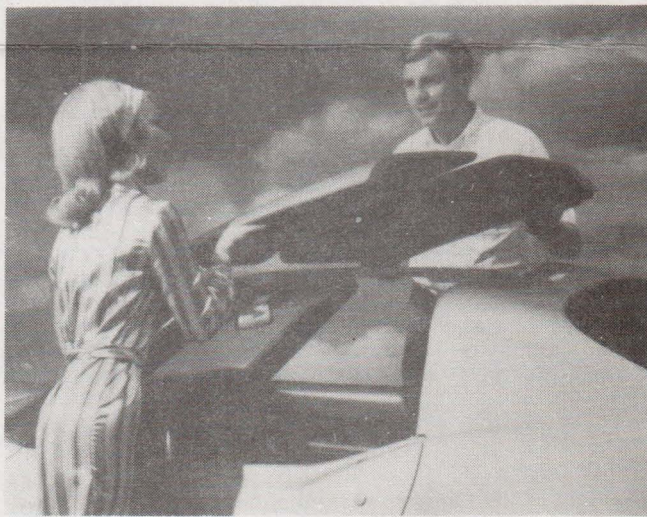
This illustration was used for the Australian Six advertising from April 1919 until, apparently, a complete car was available to photograph. This appeared in July 1919 with the caption "actual car photographed in Sydney," and differed in many respects to the car portrayed earlier, having a single spare wheel, 6 lug rim mounting and slightly slanted engine compartment louvres as very obvious points.

First illustration used in advertising for the Australian Six 1919.



From: Karl E. Ludvigsen, 1070 Esplanade, Pelham Manor, N.Y. 10803. I read with great interest the review by Keith Marvin of the photo retouching practices used on automotive promotional illustrations back in the 1920s. Just to show that this is far from an ancient practice, I'm enclosing a much more recent example of the kind that I find highly frustrating when attempting to cope with relatively modern automotive history. When Chevrolet developed the new coupe roof for its rebodied 1968 Corvette, it planned to have a single removable roof panel above the cockpit. This is the way the original styling prototype, used for press photography, was built. When the car was being tested just before production, however, engineers found that it needed a stiffening bar between the windshield and the back portion of the roof. Instead of photographing the car all over again, Chevrolet's resourceful Myron Scott retouched all his p.r. pictures to split the roof panel into two parts and to insert a semblance of the bar in the car's roof. The enclosed photo is one of the most amusing ones to survive this treatment.

In my current work on a book on Porsche cars I've had a similar problem. In their early days, Porsche didn't hesitate to retouch the previous year's photos for the next year's catalogue, even when quite extensive body changes were involved.

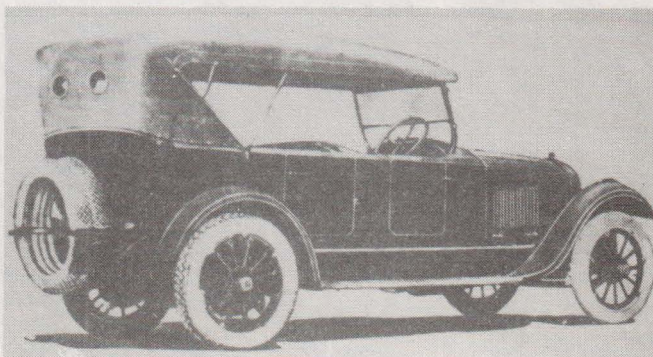


The highly retouched 1968 Corvette picture mentioned in Karl Ludvigsen's letter. The photo is from the Ludvigsen Collection.

From: Franklin B. Tucker, 216 Central Avenue, West Caldwell, New Jersey 07006. I enjoyed reading the last few issues of the Newsletter, however, I think as an Automotive Historical Society we are remiss in not providing captions to the various pictures appearing in the Newsletter.

I believe a caption should appear against each picture even if a more detailed description concerning the picture does appear in the text of the article against which the picture appears. This would make for much easier reading and identifying of the pictures when one is searching through past issues looking for information.

Studebaker Big Six 1919 [Australian market].



From: Jan Eyerman, Toad Hall, RD #3, River Road, Stanhope, N.J. 07874: I have been pleased with the "Review" but I was somewhat surprised at the lack of detail on the life of Dr. Porsche. For instance in World War I he designed and built a huge artillery tractor for the Austro-Hungarian government. The oddity was that it was a gas-electric powered vehicle, following the designs of his early cars. I'm sure things like the World War II "Elefant" tank destroyer will also be skipped along with the beautifully designed turret for the Tiger II tanks. The "Elefant" was also an electric drive vehicle.

PARAGON - A MODEL OF PERFECTION AND EXCELLENCE

I'm sure that the announcement in January of 1920 had this in mind. The Paragon was to be just that, a superb motor car, within reach of the normal man's pocketbook. Not knowing what the normal man's pocketbook looked like in 1920, I would say, in retrospect, they didn't either. The price range they shot for was \$3000. A Buick, of equal size, for that year, sold for around \$2500. A Nash of like size would go for around \$1700, a Dodge in the smaller vein for \$900, and then the Ford for maybe \$375. In there somewhere is the average man. In 1920 you could buy a Stearns-Knight, a Peerless, and almost a Packard Twin-six for the \$3000 price tag. These three cars, plus many other fine machines were fairly well entrenched by this time. I point these few facts out as a prelude to what eventually happened to the Paragon.

The Paragon Motor Co. was formed in Cleveland, Ohio in the very late days of 1919. As announced, the car was to sell for \$3000 in three models, the 5pass. touring, 4pass. sport model, and the 2pass. roadster. The chassis was to have a 122" wheelbase and the completed cars would weigh less than three thousand pounds. To get the project off the ground, it was decided that several pilot models would be built in Cleveland. Paul F. Hackenthal was in charge of engineering. He was formerly assistant chief engineer at Mercer and Templar. Hackenthal was also made a Vice-president of the new company. The president was Fred Kurtz, or J. Fred Kurtz, and it was more than likely his money that got the effort off to a start, if nowhere else. Mr. Kurtz was from Connellsville, Pennsylvania and this was a factor in the group picking this location as a place to build their plant. This also

The front of the Paragon was quite imposing with the heavy aluminum radiator shell. The peaked fenders were something special, as was the windshield.



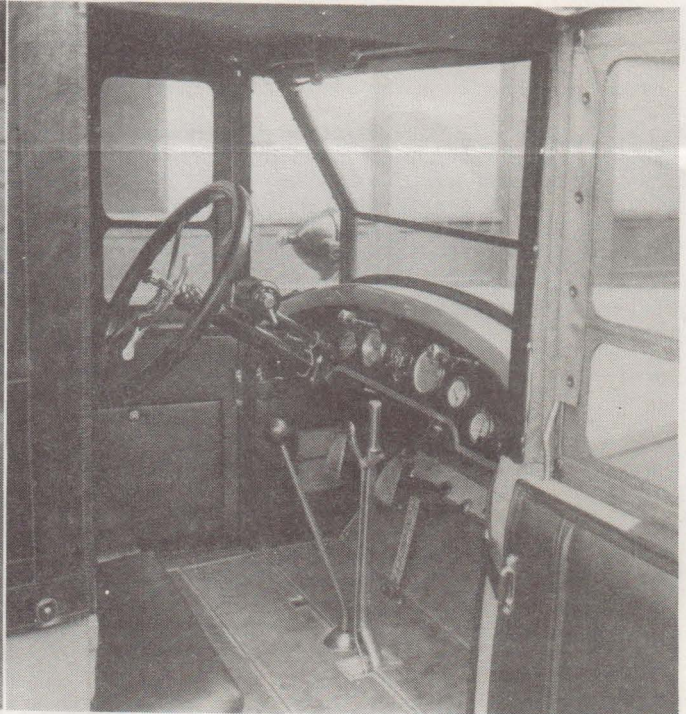
gave them a prime location, sixty miles south of Pittsburgh, about equal distance between the Lincoln and National Highways. It was also a lot closer to J. Fred's bank. Other members of the organization were; C.H. Landsittel, formerly director of purchasing at Haynes, general manager; Charles E. Bailey, formerly assistant sales and advertising manager of Templar and Hal, director of sales, and R. Karasinski, formerly designer of Premier and Cleveland, assistant chief engineer. With this setup, they announced a \$3,000,000 corporation with financial backing from Kurtz and some of his friends in the banking and coal industry of Connellsville.

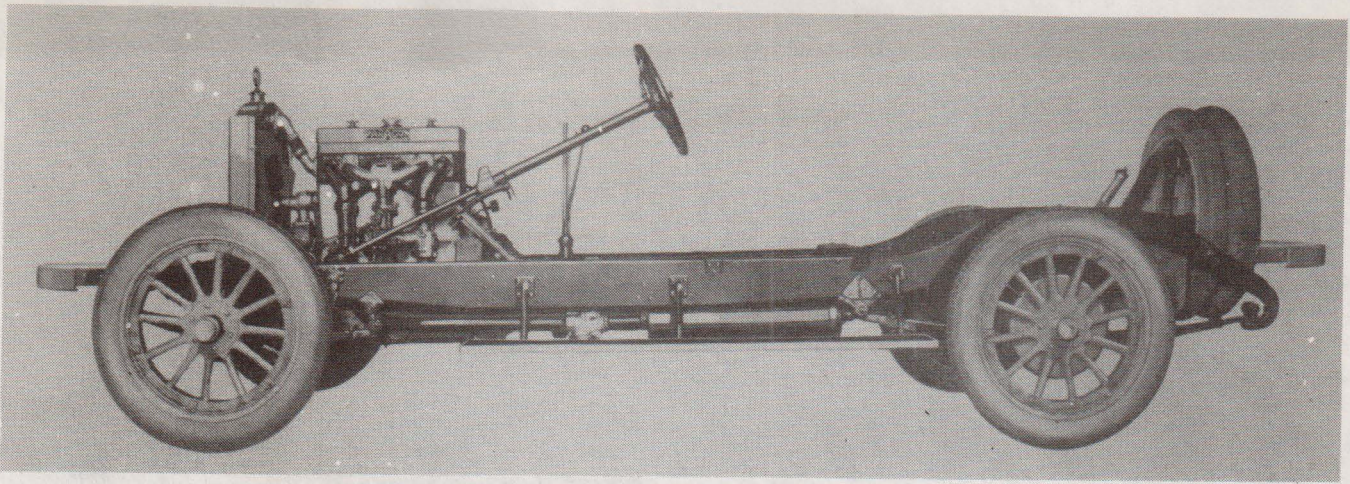
While the plant site was being chosen, the men, still in Cleveland, got to work on the Hackenthal designs and came up with some pretty sharp automobiles. As far as I can find out, there were five or six cars built in Cleveland, two tourings, two roadsters, at least one sport model, and a complete chassis. These cars were to be used in the raising of funds and to study assembly methods for later production. The design of the vehicle was quite low because of a very deep drop frame. The engine was of overhead valve construction with two inlet valves of small construction against one large 2" exhaust valve. It was a four cylinder and also of Hackenthal design. The bore was 3 3/4 by 5 1/8 stroke, developing around 50hp. They were first shown to the public in Cleveland in February of 1921. The first car was finished in September of 1920, having had numerous setbacks in transportation delays and labor problems. It took them all summer to get enough machinery together to start the experimental models.

The beginning of 1921 brought a bit of a money scare and the Connellsville people made it plain that they wanted out. The cars looked good. The people that saw them thought they had great possibilities. The roadster was especially handsome with a nautical motif with ship type ventilators for parking lights and a torpedo stern, like a motorboat with railings and all the trimmings. It was a very attractive package with Houk wire wheels. The looks did not deter the Kurtz group from pulling out for there was too much money going down the drain, for the results to date. The organization got a bit shaky for a few weeks until word came from Cumberland, Maryland. There was new interest there and a Philip M. Blake of Cumberland made an offer they couldn't resist.

Blake was made the new president and the company was moved to that city to look for another factory site. The

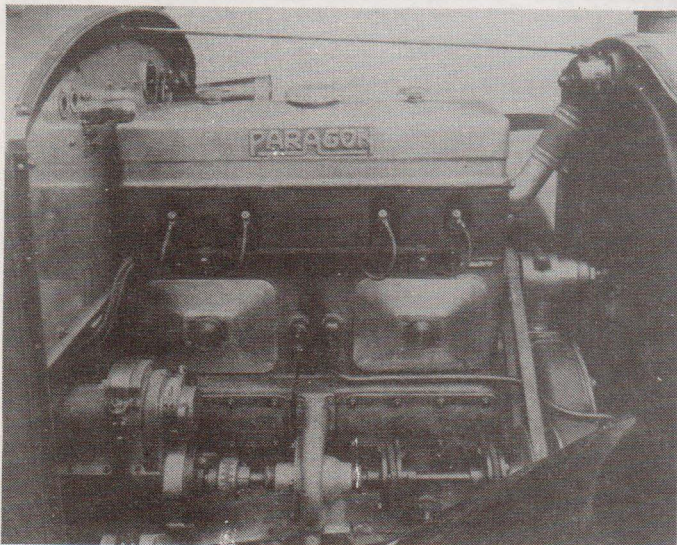
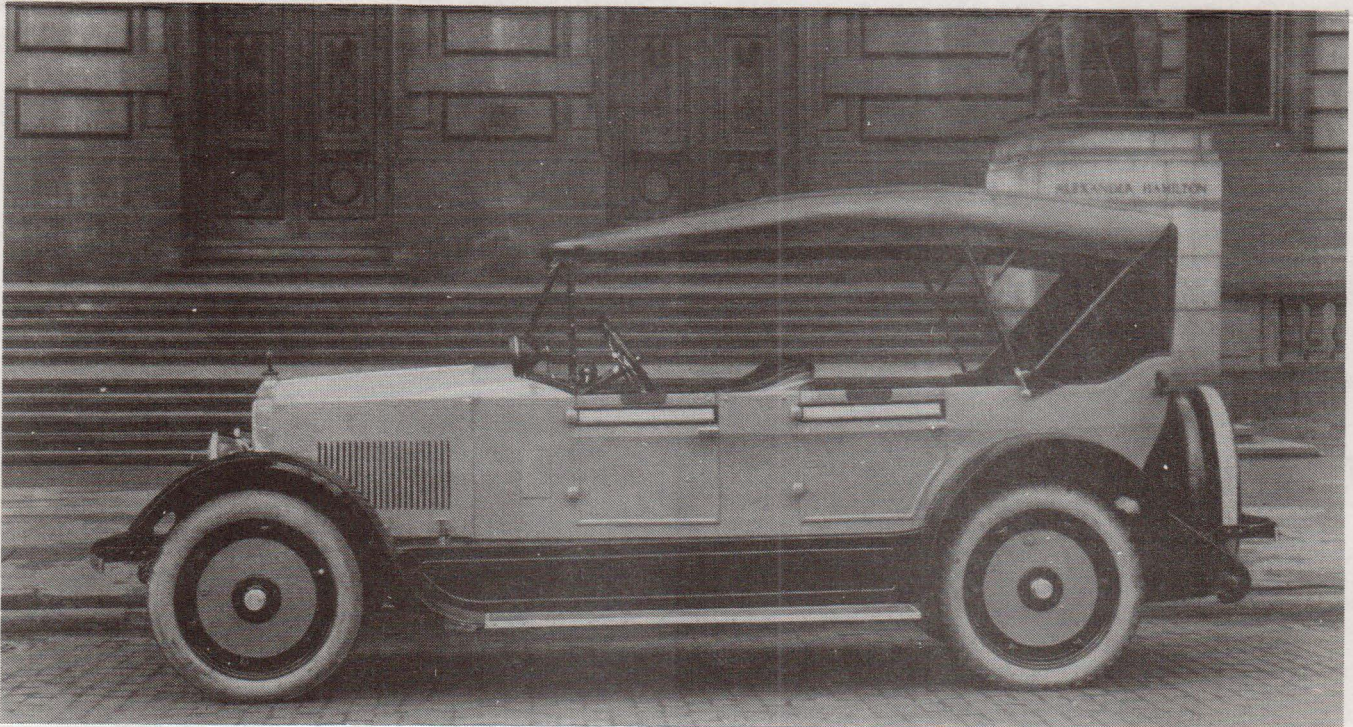
This inside view is of the same car. Note the different steering wheel on the others. The odometer has 99 miles on it. Note the special accelerator pedal and that tremendous headlamp control. You can see where a lot of the money went with these little nicities.





This solid looking demonstration chassis points up the good sized drop in the frame and the clever hookup on the rear spring shackle.

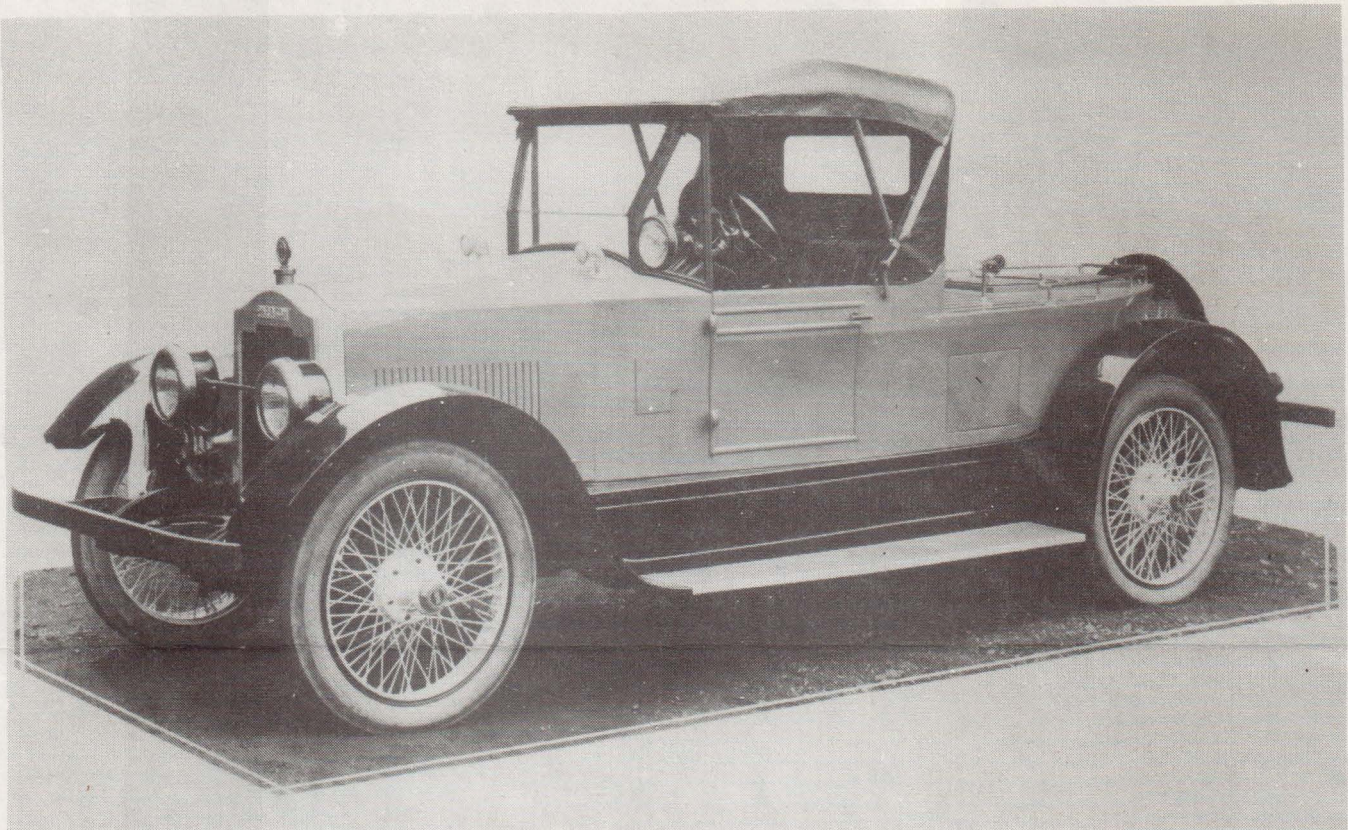
The side view of this model indicates room for possible jump seats. It is just too long for a five passenger car. The wheels are of the Disteel type used in 1922 and 1923 by many makes. Note the little cane inserts and the different steering wheel. Note also the body line that shows a pronounced bevel below the inserts.



sport model and the roadster got a raise in price to \$3500 at this time. By May of 1921, the group in Cleveland had assembled four cars and were starting on another four. The money situation remained very tight and little came in from the sale of stock. Some acreage was found in Maryland but there were no funds available to purchase it. All through the summer they tried to raise capital and by August it was plain that other plans would have to be made. Additional machinery was brought into the Cleveland facility and it was decided that they would build additional cars there, for demonstration purposes.

For all practical purposes, this is the end of the Paragon. There was no known production in Cumberland,

The well finished engine compartment is of one of the roadsters. Note the little pull out trouble light up on the fire-wall and the well machined engine parts. I've had trouble finding the drive for the overhead valve setup. It was supposedly all run by a single shaft.



Maryland, although Auto Trade Journal has them listed there as late as April, 1922. It is my opinion that they did have an office there, after Blake was made president. The activity was in Cleveland and there could have been twenty-five or thirty units put together there, after the initial test cars. They certainly never went beyond that. They just picked the wrong slot. SKY

This is thought to be one of the last built. They switched to a different type of headlamp. Catch all of the little nautical features. At this time, this model was advertised at \$3500.

Book Reviews

KAISER-FRAZER: THE LAST ONSLAUGHT ON DETROIT, by Richard M. Langworth, an Automobile Quarterly Library Series Book. 10 x 8 1/2, 288 pages, 550 photos, 41 in color. \$16.95.

It was July 17, 1945 when Henry John Kaiser and Joseph Washington Frazer first met. Subsequent to that meeting, the American auto industry was affected in some ways it would not have been otherwise. With the know-how acquired by Frazer's long and successful automotive experience, and Kaiser's fantastic ship production record during the War, the Kaiser-Frazer Corp. was launched. Its home base was the huge former aircraft assembly plant at Willow Run, Michigan.

Production of cars began just eleven months after the two men first met. By the end of 1947, K-F production exceeded Studebaker to become the largest independent. Expressed another way, Kaiser-Frazer, in a year and a half, was one of the Big Four. They maintained that position in 1948.

The car they were making was styled by the famous Dutch Darrin, although his design was altered, much to his disgust. Nevertheless, it pioneered the straight-through fender line and flat sides in a full size car. In 1948, K-F introduced the first post-war 4-door convertible, the first 4-door hardtop (which had a padded roof), and the first hatchback.

At the conclusion of the book, an examination is made of the many factors which contributed to the Kaiser's demise. Then most of these factors are boiled down to one general fault, which appeared at different times and in different ways all through the Kaiser decade.

"Onslaught" is more than a chronicle of Kaiser history, however. The story is woven in with the whole American auto

industry. It relates all the major conditions of the first post-war decade, and how they affected the industry as a whole.

This well researched and well written volume meets all the high qualities we have learned to expect from Automobile Quarterly - the horizontal format, the many clear pictures, and the section of full page color photos, which show all representative Kaiser models, as well as a selection of color ads and catalogs.

Several appendices contain identification data, color and trim data, specifications, production figures, etc. for the restorers.

This book is highly recommended for everyone with any interest in the auto industry right after World War II, or a curiosity about Kaiser-Frazer. **Perry Zavitz**

1976 Officers & Directors

The results of the balloting for Officers and Directors for the term covering the year from January 1, 1976 to Dec. 31, 1976 are as follows:

President: Michael Lamm
Vice-President: Maurice Hendry
Secretary: Charles Betts
Treasurer: Frederick Roe

Directors For 3 Year Term:

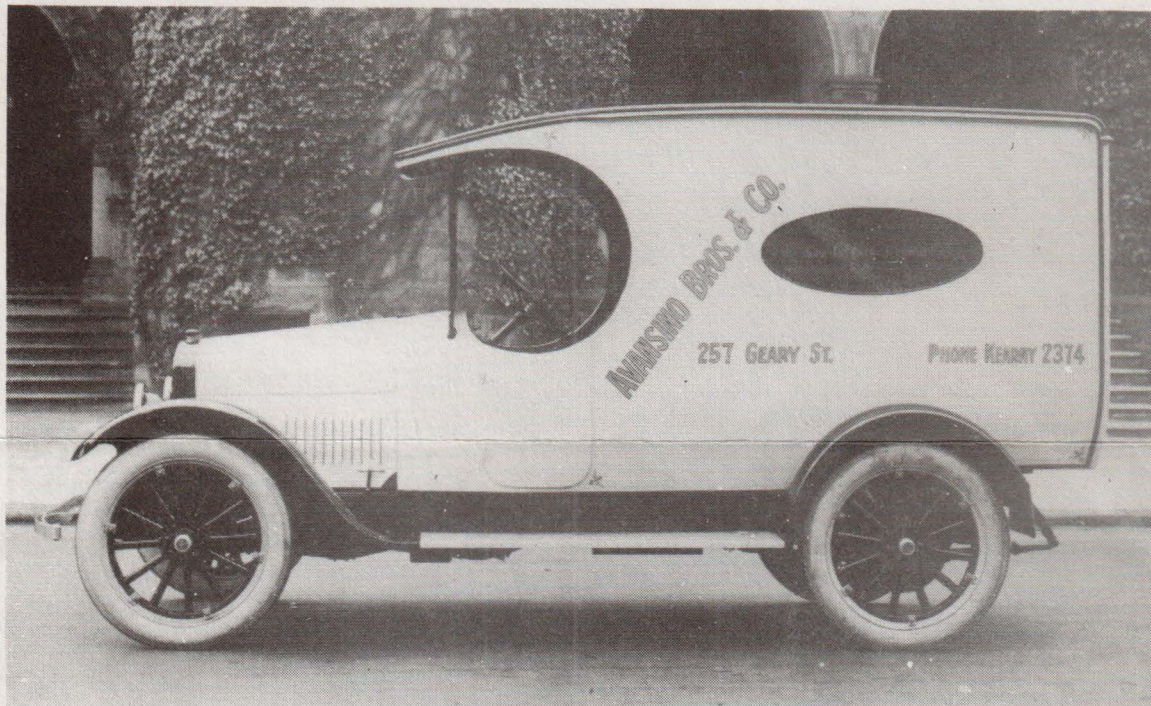
Vernon Vogel
 Menno Duerksen
 Hans Mueller

These replace Keith Marvin, Harold Angel and the late Alfred Lewerenz, whose terms have expired.

Due to the passing of Frank Snyder, Henry Blommel will fill his post as a Director for the remaining year of Frank's term.

Mystery Car

Our mystery car this month is a mystery truck. John Montville, who sent us the picture, says that it was taken in San Francisco, Ca., about 1918. The emblem on the hubs is a dark, squarish letter "S" on a light, square background, which is, in turn, in a dark circle.



The March Mystery Car

Word has come to us that the March Mystery Car, which had been identified as a **Rockwell**, is not a Rockwell at all. Unfortunately, it is still unidentified. Anyone else want to take a crack at it?

Members In Print

MEMBERS IN PRINT — Every month, dozens, if not hundreds of automotive history articles and books appear before the public. Unfortunately, none of us receive all such publications and, therefore, we miss much that might be of interest or value to our researchers. To help remedy this to some degree, the NEWSLETTER would appreciate it if members would let us know of their forthcoming articles and/or books. Just send the title; subject; name of publication; publisher's name and address; and the date of publication. If it is a book or non-newsstand magazine, include the price. We will be more than happy to run the information in this column.

In addition, a copy of the book or article, sent to the Society's Librarian, G. Marshall Naul, would be a welcome contribution to the library, and it would automatically put you in contention in the appropriate category for the Cugnot Award.

Typesetting and printing of the SAH NEWSLETTER by courtesy of Haessner Publishing, Inc., Newfoundland, N.J.

Miscellany

A Couple Of Space Wasters

Can you figure out the names of the SAH members indicated by the rather skimpy clues?

- 1 The vehicle of the J & M Motor Car Co., Laurenceburg, Indiana; and a car built in Cicero, Illinois in 1920 and 1921.
- 2 A car built in Muskegon, Michigan, 1910-1912; The Highway King from Grand Rapids, Mich.; a highwheeler from Lansing, Mich.; and the car of Distribuidora Marcom, Barcelona, Spain.
- 3 The product of the St. Louis Electric Automobile Co., St. Louis, Missouri; and another electric built in Amesbury, Mass.

