

THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

September-October 1985

Issue Number 98

ANNUAL MEETING, BANQUET AND AUCTION WITH PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL AWARDS

The annual SAH meeting and banquet will be held at the Harrisburg Marriott Inn, 4650 Lindle Road (Pennsylvania Route 441) just off Interstate 283, at 7:30 P.M. on Friday evening, October 11, 1985.

At 6:30 P.M., just before the meeting, a reception will be sponsored by Krause Publications in honor of Beverly Rae Kimes and Henry Austin Clark, Jr., authors of *Standard Catalog of American Cars—1805-1942*. Those attending the dinner are invited to attend the reception as guests of Krause Publications.

Presiding at the meeting will be John Conde, President of SAH. Howard L. Applegate, former president and treasurer of SAH, will be the auctioneer.

The dinner, served buffet style, will offer:

- Large "Make Your Own" Salad Bar
- Cold Sliced Beef, Ham and Turkey
- Swiss Steak – Baked Chicken
- Selection of Vegetables du Jour
- Assortment of Cheeses, Beverages and Desserts

The cost of the dinner will be \$15.00 per person, and reservations should be made in advance by October 4th. Tickets will be distributed at the dinner. Send checks to:

George B. P. Ward, Jr., Treasurer
c/o Maryland National Bank
P. O. Box 987
Baltimore, Maryland, 21203

Make checks payable to SAH.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR THE 1986 TERM

The voting deadline for the election of our 1986 officers and directors was September 1, and David L. Lewis, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, has notified the *Journal* that those elected are as follows:

- PRESIDENT Keith Marvin
- VICE PRESIDENT Charles L. Betts, Jr.
- SECRETARY Shelby C. Applegate
- TREASURER George B. P. Ward, Jr.

ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- John Conde
- Helen C. Earley
- Thomas Bonsall

INTRODUCING OUR NEW SECRETARY, SHELBY C. APPLGATE

Shelby C. Applegate (SAH No. 739), of Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania, has been elected as the new SAH Secretary. She is definitely not a newcomer to this job, having served for most of the past year as assistant to Charles Betts, who has held this post for the last ten years.

Unfortunately, when the ballots were being prepared for printing and mailing, Shelby's biographical data was not received in time to be included. It is, therefore, being belatedly printed below:

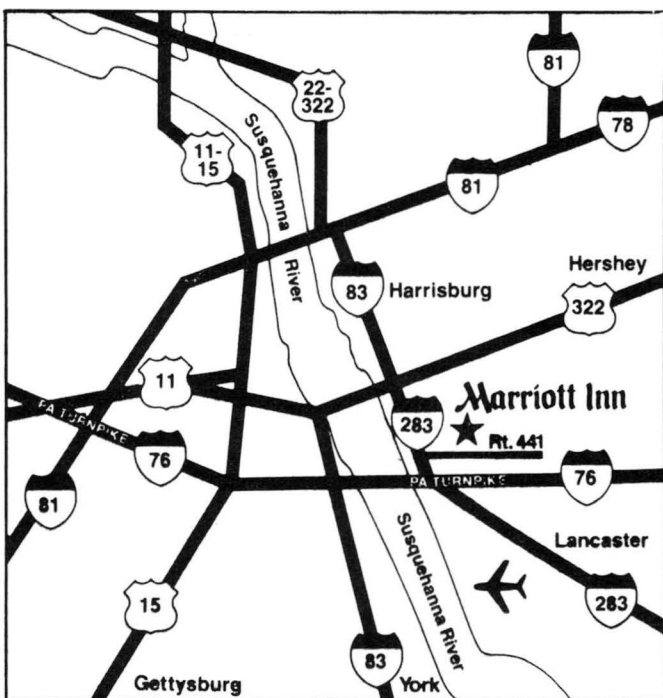
Partner in Applegate & Applegate, dealers in automotive literature, photographs, and obsolete stock and bond certificates. Authored articles in *Old Cars Weekly*, *Automobile Quarterly*, *Bank Note Reporter*, and *Friends of Financial History*. Co-authored monthly columns in *Car Exchange* and *Bank Note Reporter*, a chapter on automotive literature in the *AQ Complete Handbook of Automotive Hobbies* and an unpublished manuscript, *Collectors and Restorers Guide to Automotive literature*.

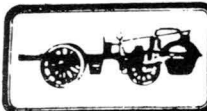
THE SAH FLEA MARKET SPACES SAME LOCATION—NEW NUMBERS

Official confirmation has been received that our regular Flea Market spaces will be available for our Hospitality Tent again this year. However, because of changes in the Blue, White, and Car Corral fields, new numbers have been assigned. They are BR-71 to BR-75.

LAST CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Plan to spend your rest break at the SAH tent and help the Society for an hour or so. Please contact Shelby Applegate, SAH, Box 1, Annville, Pennsylvania 17003. The tent is also a good place to meet friends and family in case you get separated.





THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

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Persons interested in joining the **Society of Automotive Historians**, write to Charles L. Betts, Jr., Secretary, 2105 Stackhouse Drive, Yardley, PA 19067.

If you have moved, forward your new address to Charles L. Betts, Jr., 2105 Stackhouse Drive, Yardley, PA 19067.

Material for publication in the **Journal** or **Automotive History Review** should be sent to Richard B. Brigham, Editor, 1616 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, GA 30066.

BACK ISSUES OF SAH PUBLICATIONS FOR YOUR FILES

AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW

With the exception of number two, all issues are available from one to fifteen. Price is \$3.00 per copy, plus \$1.00 postage per order in the USA.

NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL

Out of print: 3, 4, 6, 7, 23, 26, 43.

Very limited supplies: 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 33, 34, 39.

These are priced at \$1.00 each, while they last, not to be included in quantity prices quoted below.

All other issues: The following price schedule applies;

Single copies, each \$1.00
Any ten \$8.00
Any twenty-five \$17.00
All available from #10 thru #75 \$33.00

Please add \$1.00 per order for postage in USA

For shipment outside the USA please make payment in US funds and add ten percent of the amount of your order for shipping.

Make checks payable to The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc., and mail to Fred Roe, 837 Winter Street, Holliston, MA 01746 USA.



Letters from our readers

From Bill Franson (SAH No. 393), 4291 Van Dyke Place, San Diego, California 92116:

Congratulations on your Editorial Comments in Issue 97 of the *SAH Journal*. That item on the Isuzu TV Commercial starring the old Buick is right on target. I have seen other commercials on the same theme, and every time I see them I feel sorry for the car owner who eagerly watched TV to see his grand old Buick starring in a historical sketch. Instead, he sees his car misdated, ridiculed, in a commercial apparently aimed at the people who think the red touring car is, or could be, an old Isuzu. Or maybe the Buick belongs to General Motors, owner of a big chunk of Isuzu. I think I have seen a similar car in a GMC truck ad.

Your comments on fanciful stories are also quite true. Almost all car historians, including this one, have fallen for some really creative but false stories about cars and their builders. I suppose Ford and Rolls-Royce have inspired more myths than any other makes. We can't even trust contemporary ads; I have collected car ads since 1920 and I do not know of one major make that always told the 100% truth in every advertisement—TV, radio or print. But I love the old and not-so-old cars, and advertising people and salesmen will not take away the pleasure of remembering these good old cars.

* * *

From Victor C. Johnson (SAH No. 468), 630 Valley Avenue, N.W., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504:

I would like to see some stories in our magazine about early auto parts suppliers—the ones that made engines, axles, transmissions, bodies and other items used in building cars. I'm most interested in odd makes and few-of-a-kind cars, where made—by whom—people and what happened to these people. Also want information on Louis C. Erbes who was in several car companies before WWI.

* * *

From G. N. Georgano, Kinneries, Steam Mill Lane, St. Martin's, Guernsey, United Kingdom:

My suggestion for the Mystery Truck on page 5 of the July/August *SAH Journal* is that it is a Peerless, date anywhere between 1912 and 1918, when they stopped making trucks. *Ed.— Nick Georgano is absolutely correct. A few days after that issue went to press we ran across a picture of an identical truck (Standard Oil tank and all) in the March 1912 issue of Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal.*

* * *

From Paul R. Woudenberg (SAH No. 828), P. O. Box 1583, Pebble Beach, California 93953:

James Gray-Gold's entertaining article on The Great Get-aways in the July/August issue contains some minor errors which perhaps should be noted.

1.) Lincoln Zephyr did not build a coupe in 1936, and entered the market only with a two-door and four-door sedan.

2.) A 1941 Lincoln V12, being a Zephyr, would have had 110 brake horsepower. Gray-Gold must be thinking of the Ks which were last produced in 1939 and were being sold off in 1940. However, the FBI was not buying Lincolns in the late thirties. They were tremendously expensive, the cheapest sedan costing over \$5,000 and offered little pursuit advantage over numerous other cars. The days of the Model L Lincoln police flyers in the twenties were long gone.

3.) The "Liquidmatic, clutchless transmission" (Liquamatic is correct) was built only for the 1942 cars and was quickly discontinued. A complete description of this unfortunate device may be found in my *Lincoln and Continental, the Post War Years*.

4.) The 1947 Mercury used the same engine as the Ford and was some 50 pounds heavier. The Ford was always faster. I have owned them both of that year and preferred the Ford for handling and speed.

5.) Mercury was hardly top dog until 1954. The 1949 Olds 88 was very much faster, among others.

6.) The 1954 Chrysler New Yorker was a fine car but again was outclassed by the great Lincolns which routinely beat the Chryslers in competition.

* * *

From Steve Richmond (SAH No. 971) 445 West Walnut Avenue, Arcadia, California 91006:

Thank you for including my views in the last *Review* regarding articles on foreign cars, and how old a given automotive subject should be to include it in our publications. I have received one LONG letter from one of our members who feels that ANY subject matter related to vehicles, even street sweepers, should be included as recently as yesterday (literally). Well, I can't really go that far; however, if enough members are interested in having current automobiles written about, I would not object. I do feel, though, that if you took a poll you would find that most historians think of an "Historical Vehicle" as something much older than a Chevy Caprice. It never ceases to amaze me how many interests and points of view there are in automotive history, I am just happy to be a part of the membership and getting to read articles that are well written and prepared.

As an update on that 95-year-old car salesman, Victor Christen, he is still one of the top salesmen at the Coliau Chevrolet Company in South Pasadena, and still has more "spunk" than I do.

Ed.— Many of our members have received LONG letters from the man to whom Steve Richmond refers. We have told this member several times that if he wants articles on street-sweepers, fork-lift trucks or any other kind of self-propelled off-road vehicles we will be happy to print any sensible and well-written manuscripts he cares to submit.

At this office we edit articles sent in by members, set the type and lay out the pages, prepare the photos, and deliver the complete set-up to the print shop. We do not select the subjects or write the articles which appear in the pages of the SAH publications, with the exception of editorial comment such as these paragraphs. As members of SAH, however, we are entitled to the privilege of contributing articles, and perhaps one day we will.

But in the meantime we encourage all members to send in articles on any historical automotive subject—even street-sweepers—controversial or otherwise.

RESEARCH and CLASSIFIED

INFORMATION WANTED: What was the wholesale price to the Thomas dealers of the Thomas-Detroit cars? Anyone have anything on a Thomas-Detroit Model B? One was entered by Barclay Auto in May 1908, in the Minneapolis Endurance Run. It was listed with a non-standard 5 x 4¾ engine. Still looking for the dealer magazine *Thomas-Detroit Doings*; quality photocopies fine, or will buy outright. **D. J. Kava, 1755 Bandera, Beaumont, Texas 77706, phone 409/892-7958 of 409/833-5393.**

FORD VERSUS CHEVROLET EARLY THIRTIES SURVIVORS

by G. Marshall Naul

For some time I have been aware that Ford Model A's were much more prevalent at old car meets than Chevrolets of the same model years. Only recently have I gathered some figures to substantiate the above impression. Production figures were taken from *The Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942* and extant lists of Fords and Chevrolets were taken from the 1968 *AACA Register*. While the latter may be out of date, the figures shown are sufficient for the purpose of illustration. Years considered are 1928 through 1932, and trucks are excluded. In tabular form, the bare data are:

Year	Chevrolet		Ford	
	Mfd.	AACA	Mfd.	AACA
1928	1.124 x 10 ⁶	29	0.634 x 10 ⁶	86
1929	1.329	21	1.507	53
1930	0.864	17	1.155	137
1931	0.624	36	0.542	189
1932	0.323	39	0.287	48

(Chevrolet figures are for model years, while Ford production is given in calendar years. However, this minor difference should make no significant change in the overall results.)

The above figures can be reduced to survivors per 10,000 cars manufactured, with the following results:

Year	Apparent Survivors /10,000 Manufactured		
	Chevrolet	Ford	Factor, Ford/Chev.
1928	0.26	1.36	5.3
1929	0.16	0.35	2.2
1930	0.20	1.19	5.9
1931	0.58	3.49	6.0
1932	1.21	1.67	1.4

To make an overall comparison it is necessary to go back to the original and survivor figures for averages. The factor for Ford/Chevrolet for the overall four-year period is 4.24.

The value of 4.24 shows that there is a significantly greater survival rate for Fords of the four years given than for Chevrolets of the same period.

The reasons for this difference could be many. However, I propose that the Fords of the period were much more rugged, had a much simpler engine, and contained much less wood in the bodies. I would welcome any rebuttal to this argument.

The Art of Exaggeration

AS REVEALED IN EARLY AUTOMOBILE ADVERTISING COPY
BY STEVE RICHMOND

The following article has been reprinted in its entirety from the Newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the SAH.

Slogans, illustrations, and outlandish claims made by automobile companies, following the turn of the century, often were remembered long after a given make of car had left the scene. All advertising was designed, of course, to capture the attention of the prospective buyer and to ultimately sell the car, but this was not as simple as one might believe considering the times. In 1900 there were 97 manufacturers building and marketing horseless carriages, and one might consider the competition to have been intense; however, the real obstacle to the acceptance and popularity of the automobile was the old, reliable horse. Revered and trusted, and still a bit more reliable than those early automotive efforts, the horse became the target of many early advertising campaigns. At one time, even those able to afford the luxury of a horseless carriage in 1900 were often those hardest to convince of its potential as a means of transportation. To make matters worse, those having wealth and social position still thought of a well groomed horse pulling a sturdy buggy as the ultimate in prestige.

We have all enjoyed Oldsmobile's early ads comparing the small Runabout with the horse. One memorable ad stated: "NATURE MADE A MISTAKE IN GIVING THE HORSE BRAINS. SCIENCE DID BETTER AND MADE THE OLDSMOBILE. IT IS MECHANICALLY PERFECT!" It would seem only fair at this point to give the horse equal time to respond to such an accusation; however, beyond that, let's go directly to the claim that Oldsmobile was "MECHANICALLY PERFECT!" This is, of course, exactly what the prospective buyer was looking for in 1901; however, as reliable as the Oldsmobile Runabout was, it was far from perfect. One would think that the word "Perfect" is a bit too strong to use in automotive advertising, but this was not the first, nor would it be the last, example of its use in describing a given make of vehicle.

Take for example the now famous "BOSS OF THE ROAD" ad. It was the Ford Motor Company's first which was widely circulated in several 1903 magazines and trade journals. In it Ford's business manager, James Couzens, was responsible for the phrase "positively the most perfect machine on the market." Wow! It was not only perfect but "positively the most perfect." But how could Mr. Couzens have been so sure? He certainly didn't road test over 200 makes of horseless carriages being sold that year. Even though this ad seems extreme, it was not unlike hundreds of others written for automobiles in that era.

Some claims and slogans had a way of backfiring, and in some instances even costing a manufacturer hundreds or even thousands of dollars in the process. Hupmobile advertising once offered its customers a "GUARANTEE FOR LIFE" which proved very costly, evidenced by the fact that the offer ceased prior to 1915. Hupp was not the only company to try such a risky approach, but this type of advertising was avoided by the vast majority of auto makers. The following was taken from an actual Hupp catalog of 1912 and explains the company's policy toward this offer. "In addition, you get our absolute guarantee for life, which means that any time during the life of the car we will replace any part which shows a defect in either material or workmanship. There are no conditions attached to this guarantee, and we aim to be as liberal as possible in its execution." It should be noted that Hupp did, in fact, stand behind its guarantee, but it had to have been a painful experience to do so.

In possibly the very first slogan ever used by an American car company, the catchy "NOTHING TO WATCH BUT THE ROAD" was put out by Oldsmobile. This caught on almost immediately, in spite of the fact that a dissatisfied customer, who was widely quoted, wrote, "Yeah, but I get darned tired of watching the same piece of road!"

Remember "NO HILL TOO STEEP, NO SAND TOO DEEP?" These words were a part of almost every Jackson Motor Car Company ad, giving the impression that there was no obstacle of nature that a Jackson could not handle. We have all seen some pretty steep hills and some pretty soft sand, but the exaggeration was accepted by those reading it as the norm, and most likely Jackson received few, of any, negative comments regarding its use.

To be noticed, some ads kept you guessing as to their real meaning. Some Knox Motor Car ads said, "THE CAR THAT OBTVIATES THE TOW." Right away you're probably wondering what in the world does "Obviates" mean? The dictionary says "to prevent." Why didn't Knox just say "prevents?" The literary hurdle was probably left in purposely to attract attention, thus, hopefully be remembered. A Columbia car ad of 1911 could also be classified as vague. It claimed to be, "ONE OF THE THREE BEST CARS BUILT," which would seem right off that Columbia was willing to concede first and second place to some other make of car. No where in the ad does it identify the other two makes. Looking further, we find that Columbia was really referring to a pair of Connecticut-built cars, the Locomobile and Pope Hartford. Originally the ads specified this fact and stated, "ONE OF THE THREE BEST CARS BUILT IN CONNECTICUT," which, if printed, would have cleared things up considerably. To those familiar with Columbia advertising in previous years, this presented no problem, but one can only imagine what a reader might have thought in St. Louis, Chicago, or even Buffalo.

Sometimes manufacturers tried to convince us that the automobile was a living, breathing thing; a human, if you will, disguised as a car. Consider Oakland's memorable by-words, "THE CAR WITH A CONSCIENCE." If the Oakland had a conscience, would this not mean that it was equipped with a genuine, full-fledged brain? A frightening thought when you stop to think about it, but Oakland was only trying to convey the thought that the product was built with such care as not to leave the customer stranded somewhere in "no man's land."

Many slogans that lasted the longest were not necessarily those that overstated a fact. Packard's famous words, "ASK THE MAN WHO OWNS ONE," were probably the most honest statement ever made by any car company. When considered, what could be more fair? It was surely a confident Packard Motor Car Company that would invite such scrutiny.

One of the automobile's worst faults early on was the fact that it was extremely noisy, especially those powered by gasoline engines. The Northern was powered by just that, a single cylinder engine, but would lay claim their product to be as "SILENT AS THE STARS." A strange comparison, to say the least. Of course, stars are quiet. When is the last time you heard one making a racket?

In advertising quietness, most companies chose a more conservative approach. "PRACTICALLY NOISELESS," says Stoddard Dayton. Reading further, "SOME MOTOR CARS IN MOTION SOUND LIKE A BOILER SHOP ON A BUSY

DAY. THEY POUND AND GROAN WITH RHEUMATIC REGULARITY." This could just as well be a description of my Chevy Chevette, but seriously, companies regularly used words like "practically," "almost," or "nearly" to protect themselves from customer ridicule or even lawsuits.

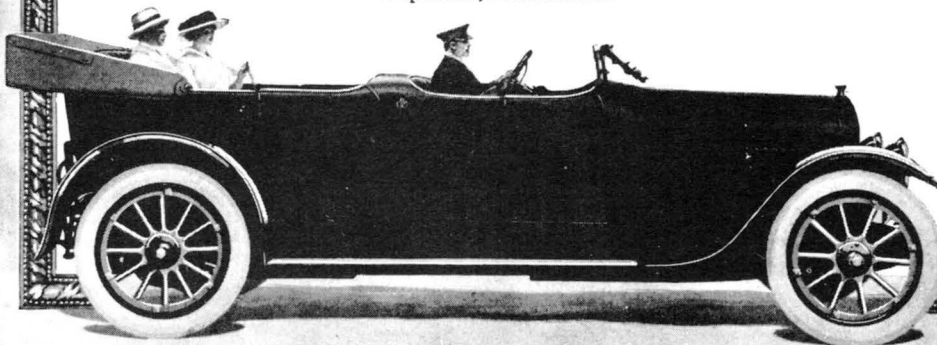
Written words were not the only exaggerations in early automotive advertising. Illustrations and photographs too were often altered to make a given automobile look much larger than its actual size. Many firms were guilty of such deception including: Chandler, McFarlane, Chevrolet, Studebaker, and Nash just to name a few. One of the classic examples can be seen in Saxon ads, especially those published immediately following the introduction of the marque in 1913. Many drawings and photographs did honestly depict the actual size relationship of passenger to the car; however, there were just as many, if not more, that were touched up to make the Saxon appear almost twice its actual size. Remember, we are talking about a very small car sporting a mini 96-inch wheelbase. To put this in perspective, imagine the Saxon fitting nicely within the frame of a Henry J and you have some idea how small Saxons really were.

Many company claims were found to be totally false but continued to be published. Take the assertion by Elwood Haynes that HE was the creator of "AMERICA'S FIRST CAR." These words were included in the company's logo as late as 1920. The Apperson brothers too laid claim to having built the first vehicle while in collaboration with Mr. Haynes in 1894. Haynes and the Appersons would part company in 1901, and one can only wonder if this festering disagreement had a hand in their decisions. The Duryea brothers, Frank and Charles, must not have been too thrilled themselves, knowing that they were the real heirs to such an honor. It is interesting that today, most all historians agree that the Duryea brothers not only successfully ran America's first gas powered vehicle in 1893, but also started America's first car company in 1895.

Although not a definitive history of early automotive advertising, it is often interesting and amusing just to look back on a few literary gems of the past. Did these creative treasures really have a significant impact on whether an automotive company survived or failed? Probably not. Economic conditions, competition, poor management, and the quality of the product contributed far more to a car maker's financial fortunes. It is noteworthy, however, that the vast majority of the auto makers of the early years chose to "play it safe" in the advertising of their products. They would rarely, if at all, be boastful or pompous in print. Many times they would just list specifications in what seemed like a never ending list, only occasionally reflecting enthusiasm for a particular feature. Here we have tried to honor those who did not take the easy road, but rather took the chances the others cowed away from. I guess today we call this "GOING FOR IT," and our hats are off to those individuals who seemed to promote and master the "ART OF EXAGGERATION."

THE WHITE COMPANY, Cleveland
Manufacturers of Gasoline Motor Cars, Motor Trucks and Taxicabs

Exhibiting at Transportation Building, Panama-Pacific International
Exposition, San Francisco



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Motor History of America, by C. B. Glasscock
The Automobile in America, by Stephen W. Sears
Birth of a Giant, by Richard Crabb
Those Wonderful Old Automobiles, by Clymer
Early Automobile Advertisements, by Q. David Bowers
FORD 1903-1984, by David L. Lewis, Mike McCarville,
& Lorin Sorensen

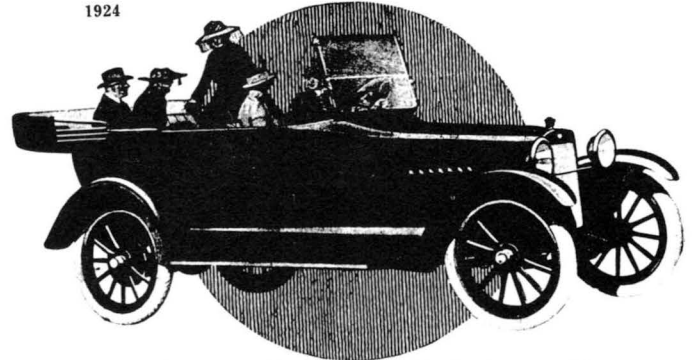
A special thanks to Bill Lewis for assistance in the preparation of this article.

THE FOLLOWING MIGHT BE FOUND ON SOME AUTOMOTIVE GRAVESTONES

"No Clutch to Slip, No Gears to Strip" (Metz)
"Ride in a Glide and Then Decide"
"Lexington Leads Because it Lasts"
"Surpasses the Rest by Actual Test" (Cutting)
"All the World Loves a Winner" (Liberty)
"The Only One that Always Won" (Haynes-Apperson)
"The Gem of the Highway" (Columbia)
"The Ace of the Highway" (Kline)
"From a Thinking Automobile Manufacturer to a
Thinking Automobile Buyer" (Moon)
"Perfectly Simple, Simply Perfect" (Maxwell)
"Silent as the Foot of Time" (Mitchell)
"The Car that Shuns the Repair Shop" (Thomas)
"The Car of NO Regrets" (King)
"The Car You Won't Regret" (Reo)
"The Car with the Punch" (Stephens)
"The Car with a Thousand Speeds" (Owen-Magnetic)
"The Car for Aesthetics" (Peerless)

NEW SERIES

1924



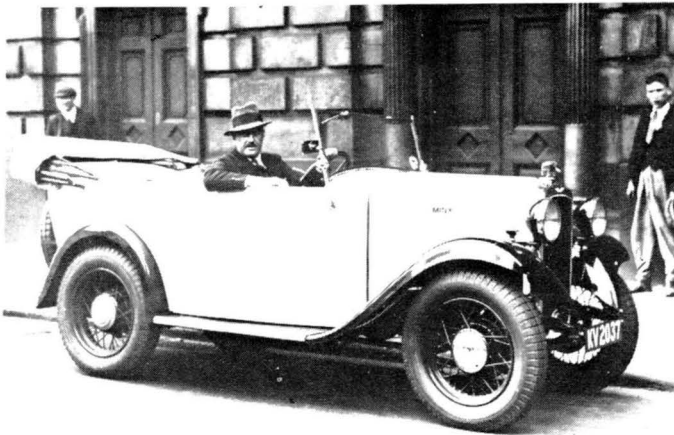
SAXON "SIX"

with added attractions

Little passengers make this small
1924 Saxon (above) appear larger
than it really is . . .

and make this big 1917 White
(left) look even bigger.

CAPTAIN BENYON'S "LONDON-INDIA" MOTORING RECORD



If the above photo looks familiar to you, it is because it was used, in larger form, on the back page of Journal No. 96. The picture was reproduced from a small book, acquired several years ago at a flea market. Its appearance in No. 96 brought a reply from P. T. Noonan, P. O. Box 6018, Raumanga, Whangarei, New Zealand, who enclosed pages copied from Modern Motoring, October, 1932, and who also sent the following letter:

"I was interested to notice the rear page photo of a Hillman Minx and brief commentary. I have done some research from my library and enclose a brief resume of Captain Benyon's trip which comments on the bulldog mascot, but not whether he beat the ship.

"This article appeared in Modern Motoring, a Rootes Ltd. in-house publicity magazine. Rootes Ltd. were at this time sole world exporters of Hillman cars. From 1933 they had ownership of Humber-Hillman-Commer and from this the "Rootes Group" developed.

"Modern Motoring runs from 1928 to 1966, and I have almost all the run. Besides the publicity it is quite a good record of British marketing and motoring of the now defunct Rootes Group.

"I am able to assist with most enquiries relating to the products of Humber, Hillman, Commer, Karrier, Sunbeam and Singer. Vehicle-wise I am loyal to Humber.

When Captain T. Yates Benyon set off from London in his little Minx tourer for Calcutta, in a match with the B. I. Mailboat *Manora*, probably no one appreciated the gigantic nature of the task more than Captain Benyon himself. Yet this intrepid Briton, already flavoured of many dangerous and adventurous undertakings, and in mostly all parts of the world, possessed an unshakeable belief (as with many of his race, perhaps) that a lucky mascot, a mere adornment in Captain Benyon's case, to the radiator cap of his Minx, and a strong faith the car itself, would surely see him through. The result, as the world at large knows—and, as Captain Benyon here gives abundant proof, the world did indeed know of his project—was that his belief and his faith stood him in fine stead despite many, many obstacles. It is only when one fully understands the exact nature of the difficulties which came his way that the brilliance of his effort is appreciated.

In Benyon's Own Words

To begin with, the journey from London to Calcutta, as it transpired, was 1605 miles, by Captain Benyon's route, over and above the 7,000 miles running originally supposed.

"Yet if it had not been for the 6 days' delay by the side of the road in Baluchistan near Quetta, owing to floods which

had washed away the road and the railway lines," writes Captain Benyon, "I should have been in Calcutta certainly a week earlier. And in spite of this aggravating hold-up I averaged 230 miles a day, though, to be precise, at times I was able only to do 8 or 9 miles in a day, and on occasions as much as 600 to 700 miles!

"The little Minx crossed the Syrian desert a distance of 650 miles, in 26 hours," continues Captain Benyon, "and this included an hour at the Rutba Wells, where I lost my bearings for nearly 5 hours, and had a search party sent out to find me. Incidentally, this was the first time that a car of such low horsepower had ever been known to cross this desert.

"From Quetta, across India, I was joined by Mr. J. W. Ross, of Messrs. Walfords of Calcutta for the last 2,000 miles. Huge portions of this journey, however, consisted of swollen rivers, the water coming up over the front seat on many occasions. Nevertheless, the engine started without the slightest difficulty when we reached the other side—a truly marvellous performance.

Flashing the News

"The news that the little Minx was going to try and reach India by road," adds Captain Benyon, "was spread through every country through which I passed. No sooner had I put the car on the boat to cross the Channel than an interested crowd collected, while the whole of the journey through Belgium, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Jugo-Slavia I was forever answering questions. It was necessary only to stop the car for one moment to attract an eager and questioning crowd.

"At most frontier posts the car was recognised by officials and on many occasions the local paper was produced, just to show me a paragraph concerning my expected arrival.

"Even at the top of the Dragoman mountains, where there is a frontier post, orders had been given all along the road by officials that I should not be hindered by unnecessary formalities.

"In Jugo-Slavia the car was recognised by a Colonel of a cavalry camp, who insisted upon my going to the barracks, where he supplied me with food and a bed for the night.

"I left at 6 o'clock the next morning and even then I found an interested crowd of soldiers already examining the car. And they seemed to know all about my race to India.

"At Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia and right down to Istanbul, the local newspapers had been reporting my progress, with the result that I spent many valuable hours answering questions when I could better have spent the time resting.

"At Istanbul the Chief of Traffic Police asked me, as a special favour, to leave my car outside his office, *because it might be seen by his friend, who was greatly interested.*

"At Aleppo another vast crowd awaited at the hotel for my arrival, and then, at Damascus, the news having already spread that a little 9 h.p. car was going to attempt to cross the desert the next day, a crowd collected at the Nairn Transport Depot, remained there throughout the night, and gave us a hearty send-off at 6 o'clock the following morning.

"Even the news that the little Minx had crossed the desert was spread in double quick time, with the result that our arrival at Baghdad was witnessed by another large and excited crowd. Incidentally, at Teheran, Meshed and other large towns in Persia, I received invitations from high officials, and from the British Legation, to demonstrate the car to them before I left their town.

A Ceremonious Finish

"Our entry into Calcutta," concludes Captain Benyon, "was both spectacular and impressive. A procession of cars, including all the Minx in Calcutta, met Mr. Ross and me a few miles outside the town. Here we were given an escort of A.A.B. (Automobile Association of Bengal) motor-cycle scouts, while a Minx tourer carrying a huge placard, 'London to Calcutta in a Hillman Minx,' headed the procession. Following us was a long line of flag-bedecked cars.

"Thus with the traffic held up all along the route, and the route lined with enthusiastic spectators, we made a truly ceremonious progress through the main thoroughfares of the city and to the showrooms of Messrs. Walfords, of Park Street, which we reached a few minutes before 6 o'clock in the evening.

"In the showrooms and its precincts, the cosmopolitan crowd was indeed a big one. It increased in volume until late in the night, and any attempt to regulate the throng, or to bring about any sort of order, had to be given up only after a few moments' trial."

* * *

BOOK REVIEWS

AUTOMOBILE QUARTERLY TWENTY YEAR CUMULATIVE INDEX. 227 pages, 8¼" x 10½", Hardbound. Automobile Quarterly Publications, Route 222 and Sharadin Road, P. O. Box 348, Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530-0348. \$24.95; with slipcase, \$29.95.

I don't know when I was so glad to see an index in my life. This new volume will turn drudgery into instant relief for anyone whose predilection is automotive history and who uses *Automobile Quarterly* for reference (and don't we all?)

This fine work replaces the four previously-issued four-year indexes which have been out of print for several years. It doesn't relegate then to obsolescence; far from it. Those attractive books will serve their purpose perfectly in their coverage of the time span to which they relate. However, for those whose runs of *AQ* are either complete or almost complete and for future consideration, the *Twenty Year Cumulative Index* will be a valuable tool in the trade. Moreover, it contains four years coverage (1979-1982, Volumes XVII through XX) which have never before been indexed. What we have here, then, is a complete index of all *Automobile Quarterly* magazines from the initial issue of Spring 1962 through the Fourth Quarter of 1982, comprising some 12,000 pages, 6,500 cars photographed in full color, plus many thousands of black and white pictures and material on hundreds of automotive personalities, inventors, engineers, designers, racing drivers, collectors and coachbuilders. All entries have been cross-referenced which eliminates thumbing through other pages or separate indexes.

What, you might ask, does one do in the future? Well, that's the best part of it. Sometime in 1987, a four-year index will be published to cover the years 1983-1986 and this policy will be repeated at four-year intervals. The only inconvenience will be that until then, one will have to sift through individual issues to find a specific item, but the inconvenience would be small and unavoidable in any case.

Nicely printed, attractively bound, and featuring a Peter Helck sketch in color on the cover, this index is a godsend to anyone and everyone whose library is embellished with *Automobile Quarterly*. The press run has been limited to 5000 copies and my advice: strike while the iron is hot on this one.

Keith Marvin

PIERCE-ARROW: THE GOLDEN AGE, by Marc A. Ralston. 134 pages, 226 illustrations, 38 in color. Hard covers, 11" x 8½." Privately published and available from Motorbooks International, P.O. Box 2, Osceola, Wisconsin 54020, phone orders, 800-826-6600. \$31.50.

SAH member Marc Ralston is vice president of the Pierce-Arrow Society as well as being a Pierce-Arrow owner and a noted authority on the make. He is the author of *Pierce-Arrow* (See *SAH Newsletter*, Nov.-Dec. 1982) and well-versed in his subject.

In this beautiful book, Dr. Ralston treats his readers to the eleven-year period he believes was Pierce-Arrow's zenith from the standpoint of design, public appreciation and a time when the car reached its pinnacle of international recognition as America's most prestigious automobile. This time span—1908 through 1918—saw a remarkably varied spate of models emanate from the Buffalo factory—too varied, as it was proven later after reorganization of the business, modernization of the plant and a marked decrease in available models.

What gives this book a high degree of authenticity is that the photographs reproduced are factory shots, and one can fully appreciate what was going on in the Buffalo works from year to year. The color pictures are of restored cars in the 1908-1918 range. Primarily a picture book, *Pierce-Arrow: the Golden Age* is truly a must for lovers of fine luxury motorcars in general and Pierce-Arrow in particular.

Remove the dust jacket (which features a color photo of Dr. Ralston's 1917 38-C town brougham) and see the beautiful scarlet cover emblazoned with the famous Pierce script in gold. This fine book is limited to 1,000 copies, each one numbered and signed by the author.

Keith Marvin

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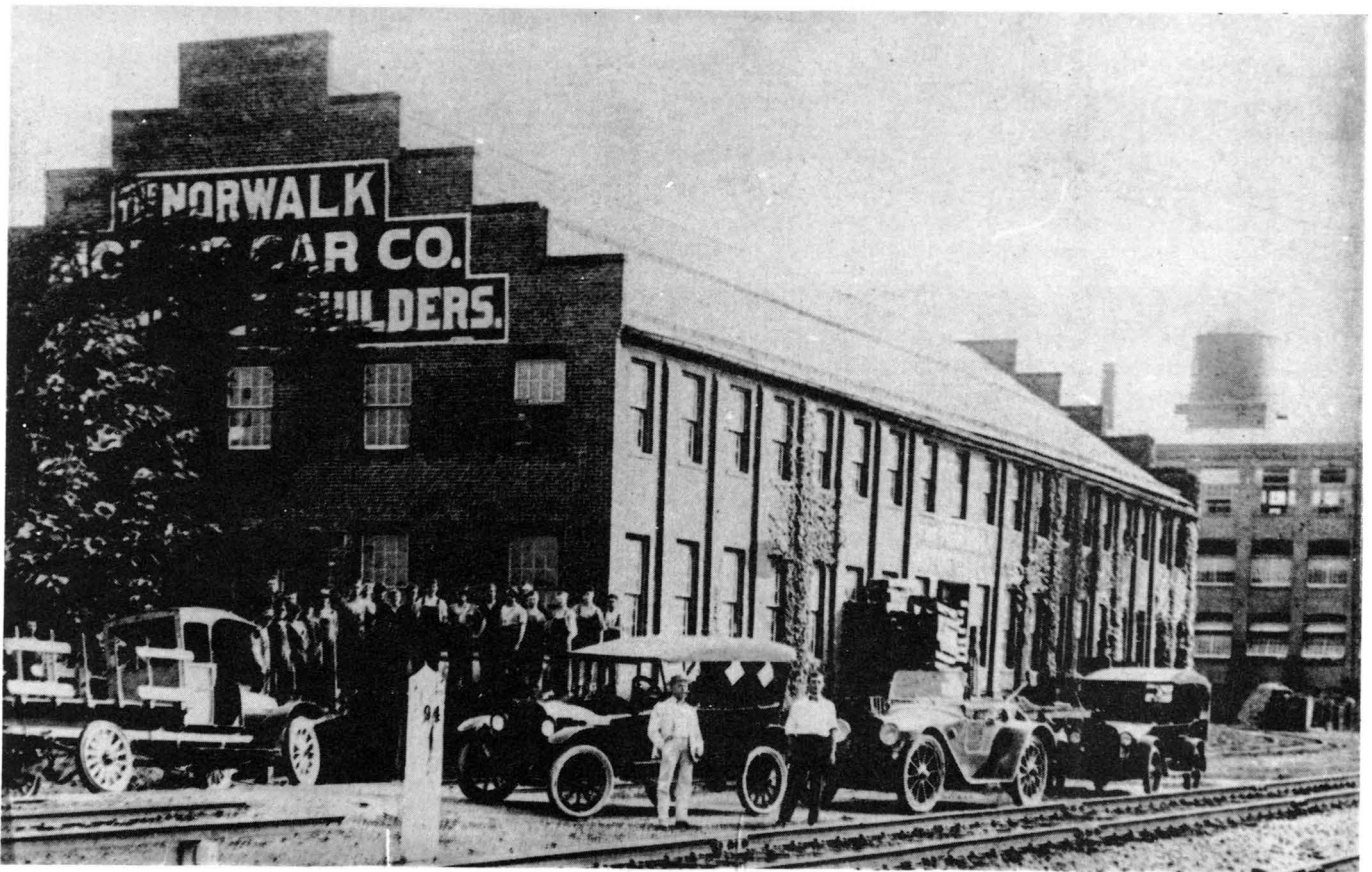
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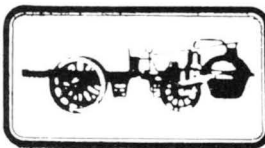
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This was the factory of the Norwalk Motor Car Company in Martinsburg, West Virginia from 1912 until the company failed in 1922. The building still stands and is presently a warehouse. Until 1915 the company made the big, powerful Norwalk Underslung Six, but later switched to a line of run-of-the-mill assembled cars sold under the Norwalk name and also badge-engineered for several other firms. Of the three cars shown in the photo, the center one is an Underslung Six; the other two are the later Norwalks.



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