

*Wisconsin Society of
Automotive Historians*



Carhart Chronicle

SPRING 2020

SPRING MEETING POSTPONED INDEFINITELY, PENDING LEGISLATION, PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, AND "SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR?"

SPRING MEETING POSTPONED

The Spring meeting planned for April has been postponed. Please see the President's message for details.

PENDING LEGISLATION TO RESTRICT COLLECTOR CAR OPERATION

SEMA, the Specialty Equipment Manufacturer's Association, has issued an alert to pending legislation to raise Wisconsin collector and hobbyist



vehicle licensing fees by 50%, double the non-operation period to December 15th to February 15th, and raise eligibility for collector and hobbyist plates to 30 years from twenty. Assembly Bill 860 is pending before the Committee on Transportation. If you want to contact your Assembly representative, a list of representatives by district and their contact information is at <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/>.

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was really looking forward to seeing many of you for our Spring Meeting at the Wisconsin Automotive Museum in Hartford on Saturday, April 18. However, just as this issue of the Carhart Chronicle was ready for print, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued Emergency Order #5 to mitigate the spread of COVID 19, effectively forcing postponement of our meeting. The Hartford meeting has long had the largest number of members attending and, along with other limitations, this Order prohibits mass gatherings of ten people or more and there is no end date established. Whether or not you think this is overreaction to the virus, the Order itself is serious and failure to comply can result in a fine or imprisonment. I, for one, am not ready to go to the big-house and have to get one of those snake or spider neck tattoos or the requisite teardrop eye corner tattoo. If all of our members would use email, we possibly could have kept the meeting date as tentative and then easily notify everyone about a week before as to whether or not we could hold the

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

meeting. As of now, just consider the meeting indefinitely postponed.

And that brings me to this: Has anyone started using email who has not had us add their address to our WSAH list? I don't send out much to our WSAH group, but you might like you get advance notice of meetings or some important message. Maybe you are one of those who think you are going to get through life without giving in and learning the basics of how to use a computer. Why not have a family member or friend get you started, or even use a library computer (many times a librarian will help you). Besides email, it is almost impossible to beat using a computer for research and you will find more information than you could possibly read in a lifetime. Whether you want to know the front-end alignment specs on a '58 Impala, see a photo of a 1932 REO Speed Wagon, or learn how to overhaul the carburetor on your Honda generator, you will find it "online."

A few words about the Society of Automotive Historians (SAH) or "the National." More accurately, the SAH is "the *INTER*national," with Associates and International Colleagues including groups in Australia, Britain, Netherlands, France, Italy, and others and with members from more than twenty countries. We are one of three Chapters: Leland Chapter, Detroit; San Diego County/Inland Empire Chapter; and our Wisconsin Society of Automotive Historians. There is also one Section: SAH Motor Sports. Once again, I encourage you to check the SAH website, as well as our own. The SAH site has a wide variety of interesting links.

On March 3rd, Don Gullikson, David Tesch and I met with the Lola Car Show staff. Jim Morris normally attends but was unable to be at the meeting. Denise Clumpner is a new staff member and will be in charge of the Blue Ribbon area as well as the north display room in the building, and will be the go-to person for anything our WSAH volunteers may need. Denise is a true passionate, life-long "car girl" and has displayed her Pontiac GTO in the Blue Ribbon area for years. She retired from teaching two years ago and is very energetic and ready to

learn and immerse herself into improving the Lola Car Show. We all had some questions and comments, then settled on such things as setting open hours for the building (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.) with Denise's responsibility to unlock and lock up, and discussing possible themes for the next two years with somewhat firm decisions. We then went to the show grounds where the Car Show office will soon be moving into the former publishing building. There is a lot of remodeling and construction in progress and I think I can speak for the others when I say it is very impressive. It is time to start thinking about volunteering to help out at this year's show. If you've helped before, you know the drill. If you haven't and just need some more information before deciding to volunteer, phone me at (920) 655-2740 and I'll answer all your questions.

Another reminder to pay your dues! I know some members pay in person at the spring meeting, but now that is not an option. If you're not sure if you're paid up or in arrears, contact Treasurer Gary Koehnke by phone at (920) 558-3090, email is gary7140@att.net or mail your \$15 check, payable to WSAH, to Gary at the address below. We really need to know who wants to remain a member, so to continue to receive the Carhart Chronicle and be included in WSAH meetings and activities, **you must pay your dues by April 30, 2020.** Thank you!

Ken Nimocks

WHERE TO SEND YOUR DUES

WSAH dues are \$15.00 annually.

Please make your check payable to the WSAH and mail it to:

Gary Koehnke
WSAH Treasurer
931 Beta Street
Neenah, WI 54956-1357

If you don't remember writing that check, it doesn't mean you're getting old. It means you've not yet done it. Please mail it today!!

SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR?

Our Treasurer, Gary Koehnke, passed along an article about the ALCO – an unsuccessful automobile made by a company very successful at making other things.

This is one of those other things:



ALCO was the acronym for the American Locomotive Company, one of the major manufacturers of steam locomotives through the 1940's. ALCO was in the news last year when the Union Pacific Railroad, commemorating the 100th Anniversary of completing the first transcontinental railroad, took the newly restored engine 4014 – the "Big Boy" manufactured by ALCO and pictured above – on a national tour. The "Big Boy" was the largest steam locomotive ever produced. With a "4-8-8-4" wheel arrangement, it is 133 feet long, 17 feet tall, weighs 604 tons, has 6,000 horsepower and a maximum tractive power of 135,375 lbs. It was – and now is again - capable of pulling a 100 car, 3,600-ton freight train unassisted up the Wasatch Mountains in Wyoming – the job for which it was originally designed in the early 1940's. (And if you think restoring a car is hard work and complicated, consider the challenge of restoring to operating condition a steam locomotive that has been on outside display in a museum since the 1960's – one with over a mile of boiler tubes and flues.)

If you missed seeing the "Big Boy" last year, another of the eight remaining is on display at the National Railway Museum in Green Bay – and you can dovetail that visit with one to The Automobile Gallery in downtown Green Bay.

Gary, however, wasn't interested in the locomotives. He was taken by the car – and with good reason. It's a remarkable car – and story. At one time, ALCO was the most expensive automobile sold in the United States – and perhaps the best. It was the product of a perfectionist approach that ignored cost. ALCO advertised that construction of a single car consumed 18 months, of which six were employed in the machining and assembly of the rear axle, at ALCO's manufacturing plant in Providence, Rhode Island.

ALCO began production in 1905 with a design licensed from the French Berliet and advertised the similarity of the ALCO to the French vehicle – as seen in the advertisement below.

AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE MOTOR CAR
BERLIET
=TOUJOURS PRÊT=



Recognized leading foreign car
Selected by our engineers
Because of its simplicity and reliability
To reproduce in this country,
At the Providence Works of the
American Locomotive Company,
Using French Models, Materials and methods.
One of the features of the show in the
69th Regiment Armory, New York.
Sizes 24-30 and 40-50 Horse Power
Built under Berliet License

American Locomotive Automobile
1776 Broadway **Company** New York

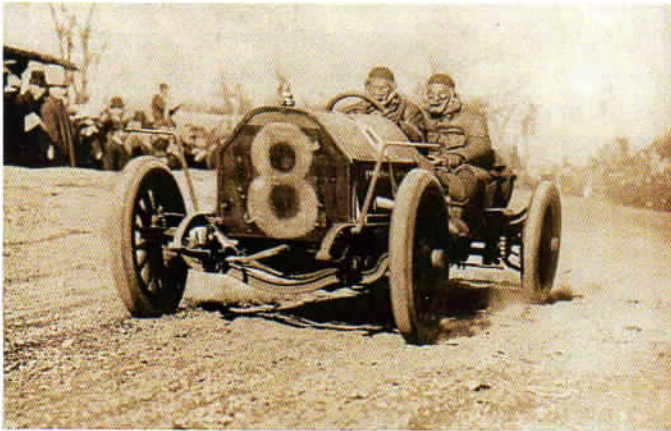
Within two years, ALCO brought design in-house, switching in 1908 from chain drive to shaft drive and building automobiles to its own design.

ALCO stressed that its automobiles were produced with interchangeable parts – a feature that apparently had become expected of quality automobiles after Cadillac won the Dewar's Trophy in England in 1908 by proving its parts were manufa-

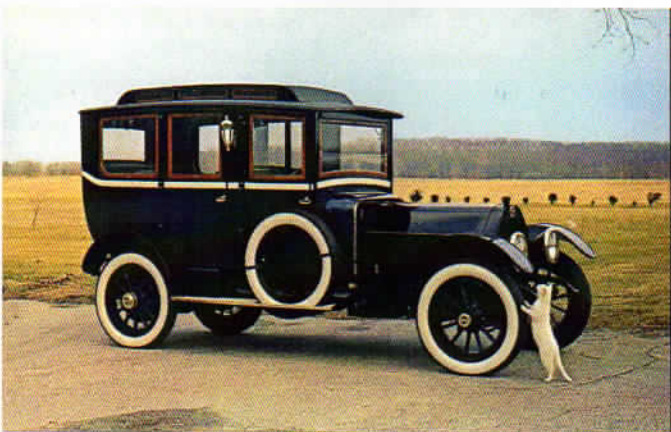
SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR? CONTINUED

ctured to identical standards. (History does not explain why it would take ALCO six months to machine the axle of a vehicle manufactured with standardized parts.)

Though ALCO ultimately did not succeed on the sales floor, it dominated at the race track. The ALCO "Black Beast" won the Vanderbilt Cup race in 1909 and, as pictured below, in 1910, both times with Harry Grant driving.



This is a car weighing 3,306 lbs., with a T head six-cylinder engine of 680.6 cubic inches (11.16 liters) and 100 hp – essentially the 60 hp production engine with larger displacement. (Which may be why Hemmings.com has called the ALCO the "Bugatti Veyron of its day.")



The prime focus of the ALCO automobile, however, was upon a more sedate clientele – albeit a very prosperous one. Their Berline model of 1912, pictured above, was priced at \$7,250 – equivalent to almost \$200,000 today. It was advertised as "the latest and newest car in America."

ALCO



Standard 251" x 100"	1912
Standard 251" x 100"	1913
Standard 251" x 100"	1914
Standard 251" x 100"	1915
Standard 251" x 100"	1916
Standard 251" x 100"	1917
Standard 251" x 100"	1918
Standard 251" x 100"	1919
Standard 251" x 100"	1920
Standard 251" x 100"	1921
Standard 251" x 100"	1922
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Standard 251" x 100"	1954
Standard 251" x 100"	1955
Standard 251" x 100"	1956
Standard 251" x 100"	1957
Standard 251" x 100"	1958
Standard 251" x 100"	1959
Standard 251" x 100"	1960

A Daring New Berline

HERE is pictured the Alco Berline. It is the latest and newest car in America.

Daring, new lines—new ideas in refinement—a new conception of a motor car.

Note the roof lines—the breaking away from the old, the commonplace, the stereotyped—and in their stead the original, the beautiful.

Observe the Pullman ventilators in the roof. Fresh air, warmth, no drafts.

Wide 251-inch doors, upholstery 10 inches deep, and a large area of room within.

Steps illuminated at night—automatic by opening the door.

The white stripe around the graceful body—a badge of motor individuality.

These suggest the ultra in the Alco.

Price \$7,250.

Catalog on request.

AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE COMPANY, 1893 Broadway, NEW YORK

Bullfinch also of Alco Motor Trucks and Alco Tankcars

Chicago Branch: 1015 Michigan Avenue
Boston Branch: 207 Bay State Street

Canadian Headquarters:
200 St. Catherine Street, W., Montreal

Twice winner of the race  for the Vanderbilt Cup

It was also a losing financial proposition for the company, and ALCO automobile production ended the following year.

ALCO remained one of the most successful manufacturers of locomotives throughout the steam era that extended through World War II. It was, however, slow to adapt to manufacturing diesel locomotives, competing against the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors and against General Electric. The company diversified, ultimately ending locomotive production when it was acquired by Worthington Corporation in 1960.

Gary's interest in ALCO, however, suggested that there might be other companies that failed as automobile manufacturers, but were winners at making something else.

And there were. One made washing machines. One made pianos. And one made bib overalls.

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REV. DR. CARHART ON THE SPARK

THE CARHART CHRONICLE IS NAMED IN HONOR OF THE REV. DR. JOHN WESLEY CARHART, PICTURED BELOW, CREATOR OF THE SPARK STEAM CARRIAGE, CONSIDERED THE FIRST TRUE AUTOMOBILE, AT RACINE, WISCONSIN, IN SEPTEMBER OF 1873.

Here's the story in Dr. Carhart's own words, from letters he wrote in 1914, the year before his death, as published in the Capital Times newspaper on May 26, 1921:

"In 1871, I was a resident of Racine, Wisconsin, and suffered from a long siege of fever. When I began to convalesce, I thought much about the steam buggy matter, and for amusement during my enforced leisure I sketched the outlines; and as my brother, Professor H. S. Carhart, now emeritus professor of physics in the University of Michigan, was stopping with me for a time, and being skilled in mechanical drawing, he made the working drawings of my engines and some other parts of the mechanism.

"A wealthy citizen of Racine, seeing the drawings, offered to furnish the money to build the vehicle; and accordingly the patterns and many of the parts were made in the shops of the well known J. I. Case Threshing Machine Co. of that city. The

principle part of the vehicle was built in our own shop, our lathes being operated by a pony tread power. The steam boiler was made by the Button Steam Fire Engine factory in Waterford, N.Y., after special design, the drawings of which I still have.

"There were two reciprocating engines attached to the boiler, which was upright and in the rear of the seat, each engine independently propelling a drive wheel, this doing away with differential gears. The

steering was done by lever and chains, attached to the front axle which turned on a fifth wheel, buggy fashion.

"As liquid fuel was the unknown, I used hard coal for fuel, and I carried it under the seat, having a chute from the front into the door of the boiler fire box. With a jointed poker it was easy to fire the machine. Water was carried in tanks appropriately located. The boiler was furnished with whistle, steam-gauge, and safety valve and was capable of carrying a pressure of 300 pounds to the square inch, although I generally ran with about 120 pounds.

"The whole affair weighed 1,100 pounds. Other heavier horsepower machines had been tried in England 100 years before, but mine was the first light self-propelled road vehicle in the United States and probably the world. My first appearance on the streets of Racine was fantastic and exciting. My engines exhausted their steam directly into the smoke stack, and the exhaust not being rhythmical, the noise was hideous and the steam and smoke from the stack really alarming. No need for traffic police, for man or beast."



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SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR? CONTINUED

Frederic Maytag founded the Maytag Washing Machine Company in 1893. In 1910, he acquired the Mason Automobile Company of Des Moines, Iowa. The first Mason had been produced in 1905. The company had been organized by Mr. Mason, a local lawyer, and two brothers whose name would become automotive legend: Fred and August Duesenburg. With Maytag's acquisition of the company, the product was renamed the Maytag and Fred Duesenburg briefly served as production superintendent.



A Maytag, such as the 1910 Model C above, was not as expensive as an ALCO, but it was a lot more expensive than a Ford – the 1911 model range cost from \$1250 to \$1750. Maytags were promoted as “The Hill Climber” and the company also advertised

oo

THE “MAYTAG” Formerly The Mason

“The Hill Climber”

This irresistible Car has Whipped them All in Climbing Hills, Endurance, all Displays of Power and Economy of Maintenance.




The “Maytag” (formerly the Mason), though of modest price, has been creating sensations in different parts of the country for the past four years. Climbing hills that are absolutely inaccessible to other cars—winning over more than \$5,000 stakes in Glidden tours, hill climbing contests, endurance runs, and the like. The making for records, medals, trophies and cups won.

And the Maytag is equally far ahead of all low or medium priced cars in other respects—roadster riding, simplicity in operation, most economical in maintenance, travels from four to forty miles an hour on high, and is so silent as a ghost.

Made in six models, \$1,250 to \$1,750.
Double opposed horizontal and four cylinder—
24 to 28 and 35 to 38 H. P.

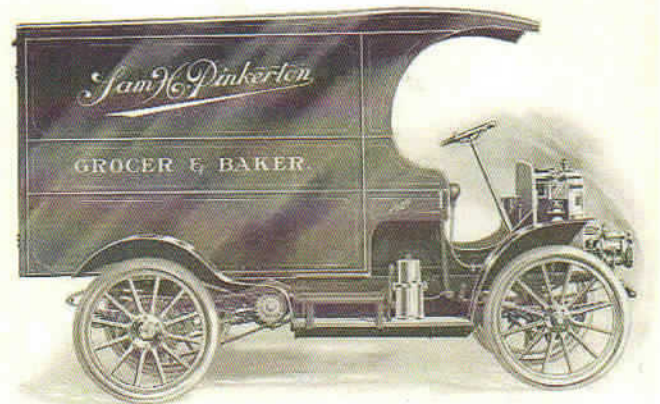
Write for catalog and name of nearest dealer

The dealer the “Maytag” line for 1910 is the only whitetinted on wheels. Write at once for proposition.

MAYTAG-MASON MOTOR CO., MAYTAG STATION Waterloo, Iowa

the versatility of their “pleasure car” line because it could be converted into a light delivery vehicle. The enterprising merchant could use the same vehicle for his business and his family, simply by changing the configuration as circumstances required.

Maytag also sold a “business-car” line that was designed only for commercial use, with a single bench seat and enclosed or open cargo area – such as the 1911 Model 10 below.



This was not enough to survive in a rapidly consolidating automobile market. Frederic Maytag sold his interest in the company in 1912 – at a loss. Though not legally obligated to do so, he eventually repaid all those who had invested with him in Mason-Maytag. Upon his departure, the company resumed the Mason name, but was bankrupt by 1915.

The Maytag washing machine company continued making washing machines, diversifying over the years into kitchen appliances and even furnaces. After the last of the founding family died, the company's management made several acquisitions that incurred debt – too much, as it turned out. That led to corporate cost cutting, which led to reliability issues in the product line and decreased sales. Whirlpool acquired Maytag in April of 2006, closing the corporate headquarters and all assembly plants the following month and transferring the name to Whirlpool manufactured products.

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SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR? CONTINUED

One of the approximately 20 remaining Maytag automobiles was donated by the Maytag company to the State Historical Society of Iowa in 1978 and is on display periodically at the Jasper County Historical Museum in Newton, Iowa, the town where Maytag was once headquartered.

Now about the piano maker that also made cars.

It was Steinway. They made a Mercedes. Or maybe it was General Electric that made the Mercedes. It was called the "American Mercedes."

The story begins, as all good stories do, once upon a time in a land far, far away – specifically, 1888 in Germany.

Gottlieb Daimler, working with William Maybach, had developed a gasoline engine in 1885. William Steinway, son of the founder of Steinway & Sons, met Daimler through Maybach in 1888 while visiting Germany. (There is a misconception that Steinway was originally a German piano because Steinway makes pianos in both the United States and Germany. Actually, it is an American company dating to 1853 that later opened a branch in Germany in the 1880's.)

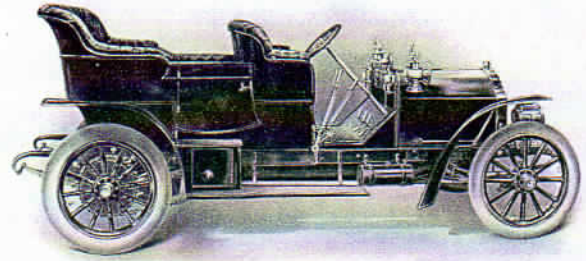


William Steinway, pictured left, saw the internal combustion engine as the technology of the future – though he was not, at least at first, thinking of an automobile. Rather, he saw it (as did John D. Rockefeller, initially) as a stationary engine for industrial use. With this

use in mind, Daimler and Steinway formed the Daimler Motor Company in New York City in 1888. By 1895, the company was producing engines for both stationary and automotive use and William Steinway was planning to produce an entire automobile – what would become the "American Mercedes."

Then, in 1896, William Steinway died. His heirs did

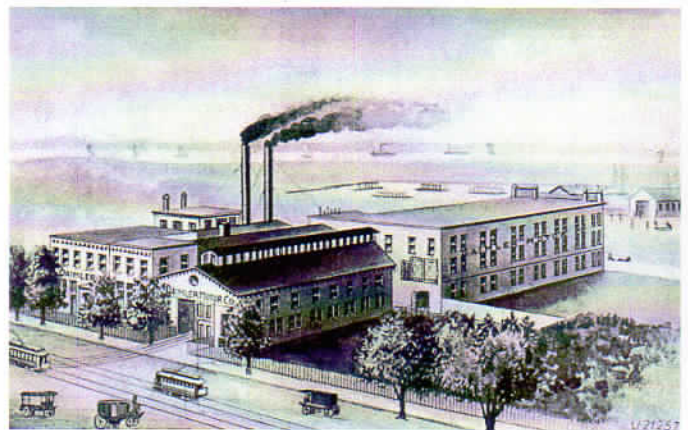
not share his vision of an automotive future. They sold the Steinway interest in the company to General Electric.



45 HORSE-POWER AMERICAN MERCEDES

The first American Mercedes was displayed in January of 1905 at the New York International Auto Show. It was, as the name implied and the company's advertising made explicit, based on the European Mercedes design – 6.8 liters, four cylinders, with 40-45 hp and a top speed of 50 miles per hour.

Daimler Manufacturing Company, as it was now named, began production in their manufacturing facilities, pictured below, across the street from the Steinway piano manufacturing complex in the Astoria section of Queens, New York. The first American Mercedes was sold in 1906.



Then came disaster. On February 14, 1907, the plant burned to the ground. Eight completed automobiles, including one sold to John D. Rockefeller and forty being built, were destroyed, along with all manufacturing machinery and the engineering drawings.

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SERIOUSLY? THEY MADE A CAR? CONTINUED

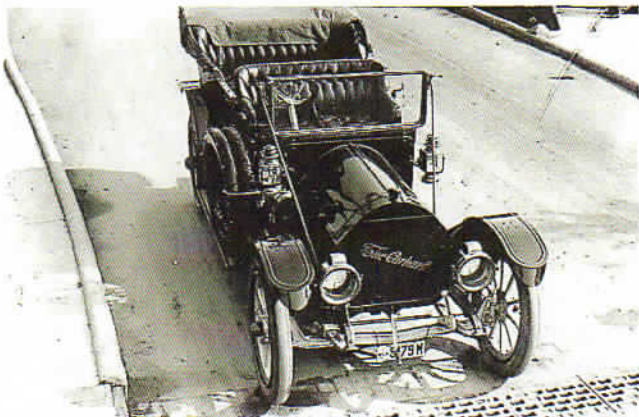
So, it seems it was actually General Electric that made the car, as it was the stockholder in Daimler in 1906 when the first American Mercedes was sold.

Perhaps the strangest combination of company and car is . . . Carhartt. It is still making work clothes, just as it did more than 100 years ago. But, for a brief time, there was also a Carhartt automobile.

The Carhartt Automobile Corporation was formed in 1910 by Hamilton Carhartt, pictured here, one of the founders of the clothing company in 1889. Starting with two sewing machines and a half horsepower electric motor in a Detroit loft, Hamilton Carhartt & Company focused on the clothing needs of railroad workers and Carhartt bib overalls became the standard uniform for railroad laborers. By 1910, Carhartt & Company operated mills in South Carolina and Georgia, with manufacturing facilities in four states, Canada and England.



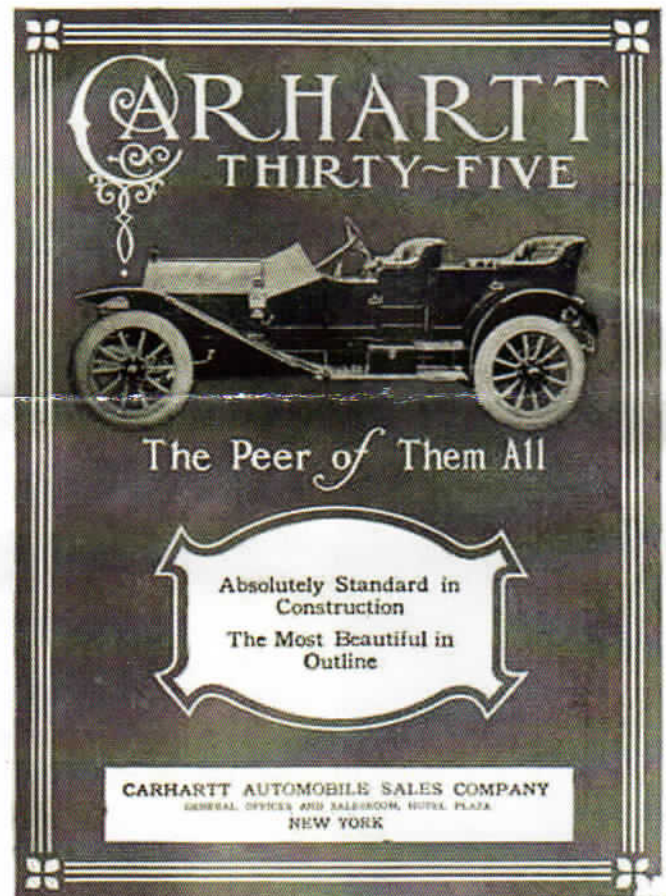
Hamilton Carhartt was ready for something new.



He belonged to the Detroit Athletic Club, long the location where business, particularly automotive

business, and pleasure were profitably mixed. His friends included Henry Joy of Packard, Roy Chapin, Sr. (founder of Hudson), and Walter Chrysler. He decided to manufacture an automobile.

Introduced in 1911, as seen in the catalog below, Carhartt automobiles were priced from \$1100 to \$2250 – a range that effectively bridged the price gap between a Model T and a Packard. (Note that the catalog refers to the Carhartt as “absolutely standard in construction” – another brand that boasted interchangeable parts.) The models were named for their horsepower – the 35 and the less expensive 25.



One report claims that the Carhartt family invested \$1,000,000 to capitalize the company – but by 1912 the automobile company’s liabilities exceeded cash on hand. Hamilton Carhartt folded the car company. Today, the clothing company remains privately owned by his heirs.

No Carhartt automobile is known to survive.