MOTOR VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS BASED IN NEW YORK

Pierce-Arrow, Franklin, Maxwell Automobile, Zimmer, Harvard, Thomas Motor Company, Westcott Automobile, Herreshoff, Buffalo Electric Vehicle Company, Birmingham Motors, International Automobile League, Wilson Automobile, Van Wagoner

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1

ALLEN KINGSTON

The **Allen Kingston** was an American automobile manufactured by the New York Car & Truck Company for motor agent Walter C. Allen of New York City. The car was designed on European lines, featuring runningboard-mounted spare tires and an early boat-tailed body, but was meant for American manufacture to circumvent the 45% duty on imported cars. These 45 hp 7400 cc cars were advertised as combining "the best features of the Fiat, the Renault and the Mercedes in a harmonious new construction of the highest quality". They were only in production for two years, from 1907 to 1909.

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen%5FKingston

2

BABCOCK ELECTRIC CARRIAGE COMPANY

The **Babcock Electric Carriage Company** was an early 20th century United States automobile company, making electric vehicles under the **Babcock** brand from 1906 through 1912.

The company was founded by and named after Francis A Babcock and based in Buffalo, New York. They offered a range of electric motocars at prices ranging from $ 1,800 to $ 3,800.

In 1912 Babcock merged with the Buffalo Electric Vehicle Company.

References (URLs online)

- Early Electric Car Companies

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babcock%5FElectric%5FCarriage%5FCompany

3

BIRMINGHAM MOTORS

Birmingham Motors was a United States based automobile company. Organized in 1920, it was tentatively in business only from 1921 through 1923.

The Birmingham offered a number of unusual features, including a type of swing axle suspension and exterior finishes of Dupont Fabrikoid instead of paint.

Failure to generate capital for factory investment hobbled Birmingham. A political scandal involving the mayor of Jamestown, New York who was the company's titular President resulted in Birmingham Motors going out of business. Only about 50 Birmingham autos were built; none are known to have survived to the 21st century.

References (URLs online)

- Birmingham Motors on Scripophily.net
- Washington Post, Sep 25, 1921

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birmingham%5FMotors

4

BUFFALO ELECTRIC VEHICLE COMPANY

The **Buffalo Electric Vehicle Company** was an American electric car manufacturing company from 1912 until 1915 based in Buffalo, New York. The motorcars were marked under the **Buffalo** brand. The company formed by a merger of several groups, including Babcock Electric Carriage Company (whose founder Francis A. Babcock became Buffalo's president) and Van Wagoner. It was styled along the lines of gas-driven cars, and was marketed under the slogan "The Best of America". The company's factory and showroom was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.[1]

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- David Burgess Wise, *The New Illustrated Encyclopedia of Automobiles*.
- Early Electric Car Companies

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buffalo%5FElectric%5FVehicle%5FCompany

5

COATES-GOSHEN

The **Coates-Goshen** was an American automobile produced from 1908 until 1910 by Joseph Saunders Coates in Goshen, New York. The cars had four-cylinder engines of 25-hp and 32-hp. In 1910, larger 45 and 60-hp models were added. Production stopped when the factory burned down after about 30 cars had been made.

The **Coates-Goshen** factory still stands and, as of 2010, is in use as a car dealership owned by Healey Brothers Chevrolet-Buick. It retains its original look.

References (URLs online)

- David Burgess Wise, *The New Illustrated Encyclopedia of Automobiles*.

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coates%2DGoshen

6

DE SCHAUM

The **De Schaum** was an American automobile manufactured in Buffalo, New York from 1908 to 1909. The company offered a 7 hp High wheeler called "Seven Little Buffaloes".

References (URLs online)

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A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De%5FSchaum

7

EMPIRE STEAMER (AUTOMOBILE)

The **Empire Steamer** was a steam-driven car designed by William Tillerwinkler (or Terwilliger) of the Empire Auto Company of Amsterdam, New York. Several experimental models were made from 1898 but production only started in 1904. The car had a two cylinder engine with boiler mounted centrally. the cars were advertised at USD2000.[1]

See also (online edition)

- Steam car
- Empire (1901 automobile)
- Empire (1910 automobile)
- Empire Steam Car

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A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empire%5FSteamer%5F%28automobile%29

8

FRANKLIN (AUTOMOBILE)

The **H. H. Franklin Manufacturing Company** was a maker of automobiles in the United States between 1902 and 1934 in Syracuse, New York. Herbert H. Franklin, the founder, started out in the metal die-casting business (in fact, he invented the term) before entering the automobile business with the engineer John Wilkinson.

Franklin innovations

All Franklin cars were air-cooled, which the company considered simpler and more reliable than water cooling, and the company considered light weight to be critical in making a well-performing car given the limited power of the engines then available. Most Franklins were wood-framed, though the very first used an angle iron frame (1902) and, beginning in 1928, the heavier cars adopted a conventional pressed-steel frame. Lightweight aluminum was used in quantity, to the extent that Franklin was reckoned to be the largest user of aluminum in the world in the early years of the company.

Production

Offerings for 1904 included a touring car model with a detachable rear *tonneau* and which seated 4 passengers. The transverse-mounted, vertical straight-four engine, producing 10 hp (7.5 kW), was mounted at the front of the car. A 2-speed planetary transmission was fitted. The car weighed 1100 lb (499 kg). List price was US$1300. By contrast, the Ford Model F in 1905 was priced at $2,000, the FAL was US$1750,[1] a Cole 30[1] or Colt Runabout was US$1500,[2] the Ford Model S $700, the high-volume Oldsmobile Runabout US$650,[3] Western's Gale Model A US$500,[4] the Black could be as low as $375,[5] and the Success hit the amazingly low US$250.[3]

Franklin cars were technological leaders, first with six cylinders (by 1905) and automatic spark advance, in 1907. Demonstrating reliability, L.L. Whitman drove a Franklin from New York City to San Francisco in 1906 in 15 days 2 hours 15 minutes, a new record.[6] Franklin were undisputed leaders in air-cooled cars at a time when virtually every other manufacturer had adopted water cooling as cheaper and easier to manufacture. Before the invention of antifreeze, the air-cooled car had a huge advantage in cold weather, and Franklins were popular among people such as doctors, who needed an all-weather machine. The limitation of air-cooling was the size of the cylinder bore and the available area for the valves, which limited the power output of the earlier Franklins. By 1921, a change in coolingmoving the fan from sucking hot air to blowing cool airled the way to the gradual increase in power.

Franklins were often rather odd-looking cars, although some were distinctly handsome with Renault-style hoods. Starting in 1925, at the demand of dealers, Franklins were redesigned to look like conventional cars sporting a massive nickel-plated "dummy radiator" which served as an air intake and was called a "hoodfront". This design by J. Frank DeCausse enabled the Franklin to employ classic styling. The same year, Franklin introduced the boat-tail to car design.

Improved engine design

In 1930 Franklin introduced a new type of engine which ultimately produced 100 horsepower (75 kW), with one of the highest power-to-weight ratios of the time. In 1932, in response to competition amongst luxury car makers, Franklin brought out a twelve-cylinder engine.[7] Air cooled with 398 cubic inches (6.5 L) it developed 150 hp (110 kW). It was designed to be installed in a lightweight chassis, but the car became a 6000 pound behemoth when Franklin engineers were overruled by management sent in from banks to recover bad loans. Although attractive, the Twelve did not have the ride and handling characteristics of its forebears. Unfortunately, this was simply the wrong vehicle to be building after the crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed. The cars sold poorly and came

nowhere near to recouping the company's investment. The company declared bankruptcy in 1934.

Car production did not survive, but the name and assets were sold and production of air-cooled engines for commercial and aircraft use was continued by (Aircooled Motors of Syracuse). This company was bought after World War II by Preston Tucker. The flat-six engines were fitted with water-cooling jackets and used in the short lived Tucker automobile. The company was sold again after Tucker was disbanded.

Franklin engines powered numerous light planes as well as (thanks to their light weight) most early American-built helicopters. Aircooled Motors, the last company to manufacture air-cooled engines under the Franklin name, declared bankruptcy in 1975 and its designs were sold to the Polish government. Engines based on these designs are still in production.

Production models

- Franklin Sedan

See also (online edition)

- Brass Era car
- List of defunct United States automobile manufacturers

References (URLs online)

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- 2. Clymer, p.63.
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- 4. Clymer, p.51.
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- 6. Clymer, Floyd. *Treasury of Early American Automobiles, 1877-1925* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1950), p.158.
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- *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* (January, 1904)

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- Definitive History of the H.H. Franklin Co.
- 1916 advertisement

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin%5F%28automobile%29

9

HARVARD (AUTOMOBILE)

The **Harvard** was a Brass Era car built in Troy and Hudson Falls, New York and later in Hyattsville, Maryland over the course of the period 1915 to 1921.

After selling his Herreshoff Motor Company in Detroit, Charles Herreshoff teamed up with Northrup R. Holmes, who had already founded the Herreshoff Light Car Company as a Troy dealership for the previous Herreshoff car. Herreshoff brought with him the prototype for his new light car that he had been working on while still in Detroit. Plans were laid for production in Troy, with an eye on the export market (especially New Zealand).[1] Herreshoff abruptly departed town for South America, taking his prototype with him. Holmes then approached Theodore Litchfield to be business partners, as Holmes still had the plans for the car in his office safe. Litchfield was a Troy mechanic and the dealer for the Herff-Brooks automobile. Holmes and Litchfield formed a new company, the Pioneer Motor Car Company to manufacture the newly-christened Harvard auto. The company name was quickly changed to the Harvard-Pioneer Motor Car Company.

The cars featured a small four-cylinder Model engine, and was one of the first and maybe *the* first in the U.S. with a covered compartment for concealing the spare tire. Another distinguishing feature of the Harvard was that the headlights were attached to mounts directly bolted to the radiator shell. In early 1916, Holmes partnered with local auto dealer George N. Nay to use the latter's facilities in neighboring Hudson Falls. Assembly of the Harvard now took place on the top floor of the Adirondack Motor Car Company, of which Nay was the owner. The plant supervisor was one Walter Bulow, previously of Lozier and American Fiat. Walter redesigned the Harvard in 1919, giving it a more rounded radiator shell. In October 1919, the company name was once again changed, this time to the Harvard Motor Car Company. Not long after the name change, a group of businessmen bought the entire operation and transferred it to Hyattsville, Maryland. Several of the Bulow-designed automobiles were built in Maryland, before the company finally succumbed to the depression of the early 1920s.[2]

Notes

- 1. Kimes, Beverly Rae. *Standard Catalog of American Cars: 1805-1942* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1996), p.681.
- 2. Kimes, p.681.

References (URLs online)

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A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard%5F%28automobile%29

10

HERRESHOFF (AUTOMOBILE)

The **Herreshoff** was an automobile built in both Detroit, Michigan and Troy, New York, by the Herreshoff Motor Company from 1909-14. The Herreshoff started as a small car with a 24hp (18 kW) four-cylinder engine, and was made with three different models. Later models were upgraded to six-cylinder engines up to 3.8 liters capacity. For 1911, Herreshoff had a roadster with a rudimentary rumble seat at US$950; by contrast, the high-volume Oldsmobile Runabout went for US$650,[1] the Ford Model N and Western's Gale Model A were US$500,[2] the Black went as low as $375,[3] and the Success hit the amazingly low US$250.[1]

A light car with a 16hp (12 kW) engine was introduced in 1914. Fisher produced bodies for the company.

Notes

- 1. Clymer, p.32.
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- 3. Clymer, p.61.

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See also (online edition)

- List of defunct United States automobile manufacturers

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herreshoff%5F%28automobile%29

11

INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILE LEAGUE

International Automobile League was a brass era American automobile company.

Founded in Buffalo, New York, in summer 1908 with a capitalization of US$50,000, International's officers were A. C. Bidwell and C. H. Bowe.

In summer 1910, it was reorganized as the International Automobile League Tire and Rubber Company, capitalized at one million dollars, again by Bidwell and Bowe.

Like many early American automobile companies, it is doubtful International actually built any cars.

Source

- Kimes, Beverly Rae. *The Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942*. Iola, Wisconsin: Krause Publications, 1989. ISBN0-87341-111-0.

See also (online edition)

- List of automobile manufacturers
- List of defunct automobile manufacturers

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International%5FAutomobile%5FLeague

12

MAXWELL AUTOMOBILE

The **Maxwell** was a brand of automobiles manufactured in the United States of America from about 1904 to 1925. The present-day successor to the Maxwell company is Chrysler Group.[1]

Online image: Comedian Jack Benny (shown here shaking hands with Harry S. Truman from the seat of a c. 1908 Maxwell Roadster) kept the Maxwell familiar in U.S. popular culture for half a century after the brand went out of business.

History

The brand name of motor cars was started as the **Maxwell-Briscoe Company** of Tarrytown, New York. The company was named after founders Jonathan Dixon Maxwell, who earlier had worked for Oldsmobile, and the Briscoe Brothers Metalworks. Benjamin Briscoe, an automobile industry pioneer, was president of the company at its height. Maxwell was the only profitable company of the combine named United States Motor Company formed in 1910. Due to a conflict

between two of its backers, the United States Motor Company failed in 1913. Maxwell was the only surviving member of the combine.

In 1907, following a fire that destroyed the Tarrytown, NY factory, Maxwell-Briscoe constructed what was then the largest automobile factory in the world in New Castle, Indiana. The factory continued as a Chrysler plant until its demolition in 2004. In 1913, the Maxwell assets were purchased by Walter Flanders, who reorganized the company as the **Maxwell Motor Company, Inc.**. The company moved to Detroit, Michigan. Some of the Maxwells were also manufactured at a plant in Dayton, Ohio. For a time, Maxwell was considered one of the three top automobile firms in America (though the phrase **the Big Three** was not used) along with Buick and Ford. By 1914, Maxwell had sold 60,000 cars.[2]

The company responded to the increasing number of low-priced carsincluding the $700 Ford Model N, the US$485 Brush Runabout,[3] the Black at $375,[4] the US$500 Western Gale Model A,[5] the high-volume Oldsmobile Runabout at US$650,[6] and the bargain-basement Success an amazingly low US$250)[6]–by introducing the **Model 25**, their cheapest four yet.[7] At $695, this five-seat tourer had high-tension magneto ignition,[7] electric horn and (optional) electric starter and headlights, and an innovative shock absorber to protect the radiator.[7]

In a short period of time, however, Maxwell over-extended and wound up deeply in debt with over half of their production unsold in the post World War I recession in 1920. The following year, Walter P. Chrysler arranged to take a controlling interest in Maxwell. Maxwell Motors was re-incorporated in West Virginia with Walter Chrysler as the chairman. Around the same time that all of this was happening, Maxwell was also in the process of merging, awkwardly at best, with the ailing Chalmers Automobile Company. Chalmers ceased production in late 1923.

In 1925, Chrysler formed his own company, the Chrysler Corporation. That same year, the Maxwell line was phased out and the Maxwell company assets were absorbed by Chrysler. The Maxwell would continue to live on in another form however, because the new line of 4-cylinder Chryslers which were then introduced for the 1926 model year were created largely by using the design of earlier Maxwells. And these former Maxwells would undergo yet another transformation in 1928, when a second reworking and renaming would bring about the creation of the first Plymouth.

See also (online edition)

- List of defunct United States automobile manufacturers

Notes

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- 2. Clymer, Floyd. *Treasury of Early American Automobiles, 1877-1925* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1950), p.148.
- 3. Clymer, p.104.
- 4. Clymer, p.61.
- 5. Clymer, p.51.
- 6. Clymer, p.32.
- 7. Clymer, p.148.

Sources

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- Early Chrysler history (including Maxwell)

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell%5Fautomobile

13

PIERCE-ARROW

Pierce-Arrow was an American automobile manufacturer based in Buffalo, New York, which was active between 1901 and 1938. Best known for its expensive luxury cars, Pierce-Arrow also manufactured commercial trucks, fire trucks, camp trailers, motorcycles, and bicycles.

Online image: 1919 Pierce-Arrow advertisement; ads for the cars in early years were understated and artistic, and did not discuss details about the cars.

Early history

The forerunner of Pierce-Arrow was established in 1865 as Heinz, Pierce and Munschauer. The company was best known for its household items, and especially its delicate, gilded birdcages. In 1872, George N. Pierce bought out the other two, switching the name to **George N. Pierce Company** and, in 1896, bicycles were added to the product range. A failed attempt to build a steam-powered car was made in 1900 under license from Overman but, by 1901 Pierce built its first single-

cylinder two-speed (no reverse) Motorette[1] with the engine licensed from de Dion. In 1904, a two-cylinder car, the **Arrow** was made.

19031927

1911 Pierce-Arrow Five-ton Truck Online image: 1915 Touring Car, Salt Lake City, Utah Online image: Pierce-Arrow vehicles Model 48-B-5 7-Passenger Touring 1919 Online image: 1927 Pierce-ArrowOnline image: 1930 Pierce-Arrow Model B Dual-Cowl Phaeton Online image: 1934 Pierce-Arrow 840A Convertible Online image: 1934 Pierce-Arrow 840A Coupe

In 1903 Pierce decided to concentrate on making a larger, more luxurious car for the upscale market, and the Pierce-Arrow car was born. This proved to be Pierce's most successful product, and the solidly-built cars with powerful engines gained positive publicity by winning various auto races. During this period, Pierce's high-end products were sometimes advertised as the Great-Arrow. George Norman Pierce sold all rights and the company in 1907 - He died in 1910. In 1908 Pierce Motor Company was renamed The Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company. The Pierce Arrow Factory Complex, designed by noted industrial architect Albert Kahn in about 1906, was constructed at Elmwood and Great Arrow Avenues. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.[2] The Pierce-Arrow's engine capacity started as 11.7 liters and later was 13.5 liters.[3]

In 1909, U.S. President William Howard Taft ordered two Pierce-Arrows (along with a pair of White Model M Tourers) to be used for state occasions, the first official cars of the White House. An open-bodied Pierce-Arrow carried Woodrow Wilson and Warren G. Harding to Hardings 1921 inauguration. A restored 1919 Pierce-Arrow is on view at the Wilson Presidential Library.

Herbert M. Dawley (later a Broadway actor-director) joined Pierce-Arrow in 1912, and designed almost every model until 1938.[4] In 1914, Pierce-Arrow adopted its most enduring styling hallmark when the headlights of the vehicle were moved from the traditional placement on either side of the radiator into flared housings molded into the front fenders of the car. This gave the car an immediate visual identification from the side; at night it gave the car the appearance of a wider stance. Pierce patented this placement and it remained in place until the final model in 1938, although Pierce always offered customers the option of conventional headlamps. A small minority of customers purchased these less distinctive models. Through 1914 Pierce-Arrow also produced a line of motorcycles.

The Pierce-Arrow was a status symbol, owned by many Hollywood stars, corporate tycoons; royalty of many foreign nations had at least one Pierce-Arrow in their collections. In American luxury cars it was rivaled only by Peerless and Packard, which collectively received the accolade **Three P's of Motordom**. Industrial efficiency expert Frank Gilbreth[5] extolled the virtues of Pierce-Arrow, in both

quality and in its ability to safely transport his large family. Its wheelbase was 12 feet 3 inches.

Pierce-Arrow advertisements were artistic and understated. Unusual for automobile advertising, the image of the car was in the background rather than the foreground of the picture. Usually only a portion of the automobile was visible. The Pierce-Arrow was typically depicted in elegant and fashionable settings. Some advertisements featured the car in places an automobile would not normally go, such as the West and other rural settings, a testament to car's ruggedness and quality.

Several second-hand Pierce-Arrow cars were bought by fire departments, stripped down to the chassis and engine, the wheelbase lengthened, and built back into fire engines. Some of these fire engines were in service for up to 20 years.[3]

1928-1933

In 1928, the Studebaker Corporation of South Bend, Indiana, gained control of the Buffalo firm. The association was to last for five years, with moderate benefits to both companies' engineering departments, which continued to function as separate entities.[6]

1933 Silver Arrow and the end of the line

Main article: Pierce Silver Arrow

In 1933, Pierce-Arrow unveiled the radically streamlined Silver Arrow in a final attempt to appeal to the wealthy at the New York Auto Show. The car was well received by the public and the motoring press, being announced with the slogan "Suddenly it's 1940!" Pierce sold five examples but, since it was priced at $10,000 during the worst of the depression, the rich were hesitant to spend so much. The bodies were built at Studebaker,[6] which subsequently assisted in rolling out a lower-priced production model. This, however, lacked many luxury features of the show car and still failed to generate enough sales.

Starting in 1936 Pierce-Arrow produced a line of camper-trailers, the Pierce-Arrow Travelodge. They also produced a new V-12 sedan that was redesigned and considered the safest and most luxurious sedan back then.

The Rio Grande Southern Railroad converted five Pierce-Arrow automobiles (and a couple of Buicks) into motorized railcars, effectively buses and trucks on rail wheels. The nickname *Galloping Goose* was soon applied to these vehicles, based on their waddling motion and honking horn. All still survive.

Pierce was the only luxury brand that did not field a lower price car (e.g. as the Packard 120) to provide cash flow, and without sales or funds for development, the company declared insolvency in 1938 and closed its doors. The final Pierce-Arrow assembled was built by Karl Wise, the firm's chief engineer, from parts secured from the company's receivers. Pierce's holdings were sold at auction on Friday, May 13, 1938 which would probably include the 40 Arrows made in October 1938.

The factory equipment used to make Pierce-Arrow V-12 engines was bought by Seagrave Fire Apparatus, who used it to make engines for fire engines.[3]

Revival of the name

In 2006, a group of classic car enthusiasts from Switzerland bought the rights to the Pierce-Arrow brand which is being applied to a 10-litre, 24-cylinder car designed by Luigi Colani.[7]

See also (online edition)

- List of automobile manufacturers
- List of defunct automobile manufacturers
- Studebaker

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- 4. Georgano, G. N. *Cars: Early and Vintage, 1886-1930*. (London: Grange-Universal, 1985)
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- Pierce on City of Buffalo History site
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- Pierce-Arrow History and Photos
- Pierce-Arrow Theater
- White Glove Collection Pierce Arrows
- The return of a legend, The new Pierce Arrow company
- Pierce: The Missing Link on MyByk

- 1916 advertisement

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierce%2DArrow

14

THOMAS MOTOR COMPANY

E. R. Thomas Motor Company was a manufacturer of automobiles in Buffalo, New York between 1902 and 1919.

Road Cars

The 1904 *Thomas* was a touring car model. Equipped with a tonneau, it could seat 5 passengers and sold for US$2500. The vertically-mounted water-cooled straight-3, situated at the front of the car, produced 24 hp (17.9 kW). A 2-speed planetary transmission was fitted. The steel-framed car weighed 1900 lb (862 kg). A modern cellular radiator was used for cooling. An 8 hp (6 kW) tonneau model sold for US$1250.

New York to Paris Race

A 1907 **Model 35** with 4 cylinders and 60 horsepower, dubbed *Thomas Flyer*, won the 1908 New York to Paris Race, the first and only around-the-world automobile race ever held. The race began in Times Square, New York, on February 12 and

covered some 22,000 miles (35,000 km), finishing in Paris on July 30, 1908. Six teams started the race (one Italian, one German, three French, and the Flyer). Only three of the cars finished, the Thomas Flyer which won, the German Protos, and the Italian Züst. The original intent was to drive the full distance. In the course of the race, the Flyer was the first car to cross the United States, and the first to do so in the winter, with George Schuster the first driver to ever make the transcontinental winter crossing of the US. Finishing in 169 days was a remarkable feat, considering the lack of roads and services in 1908. Schuster, the driver, was the only member of the Thomas crew to go the full distance.

The Flyer survived and was restored to the exact condition it entered Paris on that day by William F. Harrah. It is now on exhibit at the National Automobile Museum in Reno, Nevada. Additional details with numerous photos and videos on the 1908 New York to Paris Race are available at The Great Auto Race of 1908

See also (online edition)

- Brass Era car
- List of defunct United States automobile manufacturers

References (URLs online)

- *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* (January, 1904)
- http://www.thegreatautorace.com/ The Great Auto Race of 1908

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas%5FMotor%5FCompany

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VAN WAGONER

The **Van Wagoner** was an American automobile manufactured between 1899 and 1903. Advertised as being "built on a simple plan that does away with several levers and push buttons", the car was built in Syracuse, New York, and could supposedly be "controlled with one hand". In 1900 the marque's name was changed to the Syracuse, in which guise it was manufactured until 1903. There were a number of reported problems with the 1901 in which the rear brake compressor periodically gave out.

It was the Syracuse Automobile Company of Syracuse, New York who produced this small electric two-seater from 1899 to 1903. The car was originally known as the Van Wagoner, after the original designer William Van Wagoner.

References (URLs online)

David Burgess Wise, *The New Illustrated Encyclopedia of Automobiles*.

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Van%5FWagoner

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WESTCOTT AUTOMOBILE

The **Westcott** was an automobile produced in Richmond, Indiana and Springfield, Ohio (United States) between 1912 and 1925. The car company was named for its founder, Burton J. Westcott.

The Westcott was advertised as "The Car with the Longer Life". The Westcott was powered by a Continential Engine, and rode at least two wheelbases, 125 in (3,175 mm) and 118 in (2,997 mm). In 1923, the company released a model named The Closure, which was a touring car with hard panels that could be removed from the sides of the car during the summer months.

Burton Westcott is also known as a client of architect Frank Lloyd Wright, who designed a Prairie Style house for the Westcott Family in Springfield, Ohio in 1904. Restoration of the Westcott House began in 2004.

Websites (URLs online)

- 7-passenger Westcott Auto

- 1914 Westcott Specifications
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Westcott House
- Westcott Hotel and early Auto in Richmond, Indiana
- Photos of Westcott's Wright-designed home and a Westcott Auto

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westcott%5Fautomobile

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WILSON AUTOMOBILE

Wilson Automobile Manufacturing Company was a manufacturer of automobiles in Wilson, New York between 1903 and 1905. Their automobile model was sold as the **Niagara**.

The 1904 *Niagara* was a runabout model. It could seat 2 or 4 passengers and sold for US$850. The vertically-mounted water-cooled single-cylinder engine, situated at the rear of the car, produced 5 hp (3.7 kW). A 2-speed sliding transmission was fitted. The steel and wood-framed car weighed 1100 lb (499 kg). Full elliptic rear suspension and semi-elliptic front suspension was fitted.

The assets of the company were purchased by the La Salle-Niagara Company in 1905 who then built the car until 1906.

References (URLs online)

- *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* (January, 1904)

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilson%5FAutomobile

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ZIMMER (AUTOMOBILE)

Zimmer is the name of a U.S. neo-classic automaker, based in Syracuse, New York, currently owned by Art Zimmer.

History

Zimmer Motorcars Corporation was established in 1978. The idea for this automobile was initially drawn on a napkin at a private dinner between Paul Zimmer, Chairman and President of Zimmer Corporation and Robert Zimmer, Paul Zimmer's son, employee and shareholder of Zimmer Corporation. Paul Zimmer drew what was to become the Golden Spirit Motorcar on a napkin, handed it to Bob Zimmer and told him that not only were we (the company) going to build a neo-classic automobile, but that he (Bob Zimmer) was going to be responsible for the product development, initial manufacturing set-up, staffing for all functions of the operation and ongoing supervision of Zimmer Motorcars Corporation.

The Zimmer Golden Spirit was the flagship of the Zimmer Motorcars Corporation with a more than 1,500 being produced during its production run. The second

Zimmer Motorcars Corporation offering was the Quicksilver which was built between 1984 and 1988. Both models were built in the same factory in Pompano Beach, Florida on simultaneous production lines.

At its peak, Zimmer Motorcars Corporation employed 175 people and produced $25 million dollars in annual revenue.

In 1988, Robert Zimmer sold his shares in the company and purchased an automobile dealership. Shortly after that, Paul Zimmer suffered a major heart attack, required a triple bypass and lost the energy, creativity and stamina that had been his trademark throughout the years. At that time a group of employees and members of the Board of Directors attempted to direct the operation of the company and were not able to navigate such a large entity during a difficult economy and the loss of the company's most important and influential member. Zimmer Corporation fell into serious economic distress and the $325 million dollar a year parent company was forced into bankruptcy, taking down with it all of its operating divisions, including the highly successful and profitable $25 million dollar a year car company.

In September 1996, a man named Art Zimmer, (who is no relation to the original Zimmer family) acquired the "Zimmer Motorcars" name and various Zimmer Motorcars Corporation materials and started the Zimmer Motor Car Club for Zimmer car owners. In 1997 Art Zimmer started the Art Zimmer Neo-Classic Motor Car Company which currently builds 10 to 20 automobiles each year.

Sources

- Art Zimmer's Golden Spirit by Travellady magazine

Websites (URLs online)

- Zimmer Motor Cars
- Zimmer Golden Spirit Club
- Zimmer Parts & Technical Assistance
- Hovey Motor Cars - Zimmer Sales

A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zimmer%5F%28automobile%29

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