

HORSELESS CARRIAGE GAZETTE



VOL. 22, NO. 1
JAN. - FEB., 1960

AGENCY
The Thomas Flyer
NEW YORK TO PARIS WINNER



Horseless Carriage Club of America

Founded in Los Angeles November 14th, 1937

A nonprofit corporation founded by and for automotive antiquarians and dedicated to the preservation of motor vehicles of ancient age and historical value, their accessories, archives and romantic lore

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Active Members must own a Horseless Carriage of year 1915 or earlier; they have all privileges of the club. Annual Dues, \$7.00, \$5.00 of which is for a one year subscription to the HORSELESS CARRIAGE GAZETTE.

Life Members are Active Members for life upon payment of \$100.00 dues.

Associate Members have all privileges of the club except holding a National office, and voting. Annual dues \$5.00, which includes a one year subscription to the GAZETTE.

Wives of Members may become either Active or Associate members, corresponding to their husband's membership. Only one copy of the GAZETTE, the Roster and other mailings will be sent jointly to husband and wife. Annual dues, \$2.00.

Honorary Members have all privileges of the club except voting.

Regional Group Members, who must be National Active or Associate members, pay additional dues as established by the local clubs.

Illustrated fact sheets summarizing HCCA activities and membership requirements are available from National headquarters. If you have a friend who's interested in early cars and isn't a member ask us to send him a fact sheet and application form - they're free.

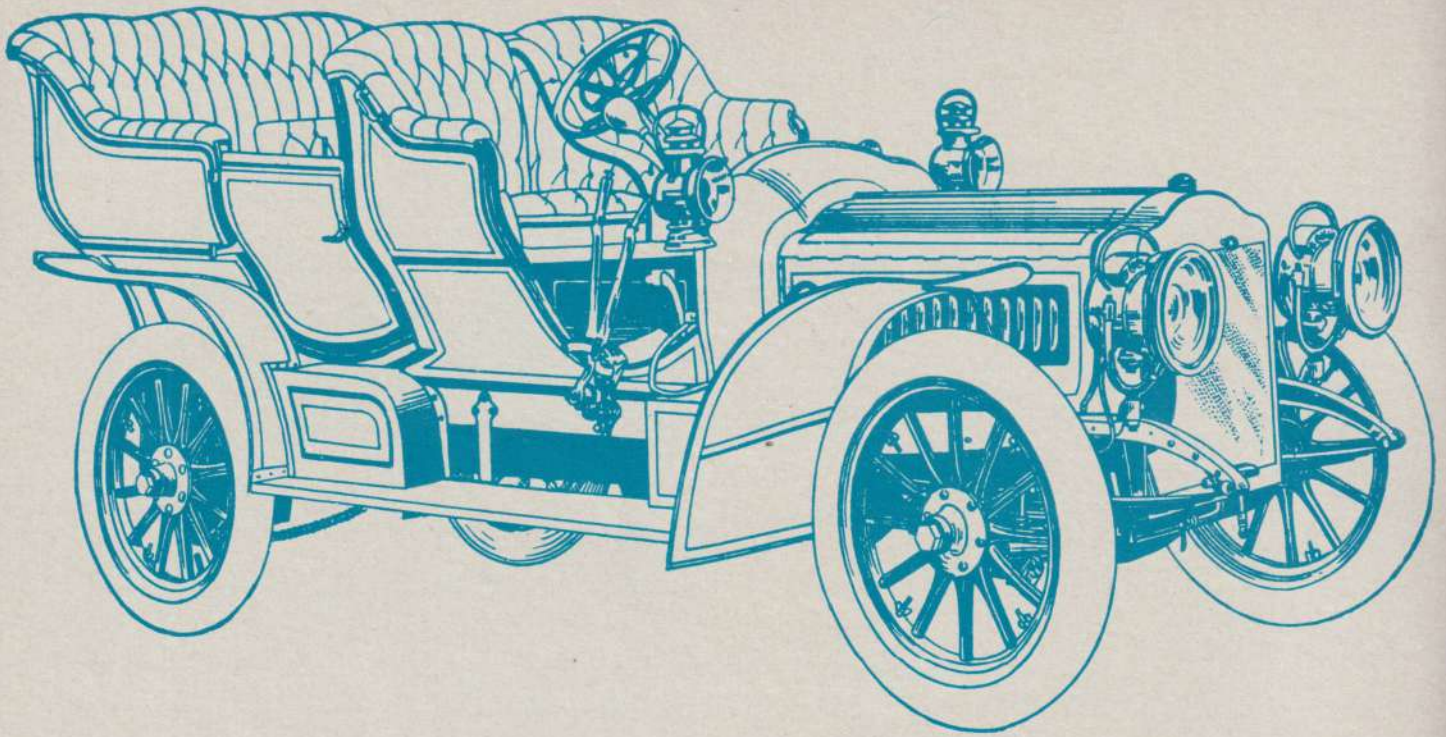


About the Cover Photo

The eight Thomas automobiles shown on this GAZETTE cover represent a good part of those still existing today. In the left foreground is a 1907 Model 36 Touring. The center is a 1906 Model 31. At the right, a 1910 670 Touring. Five other Thomas machines are visible inside the building--a one-cylinder 1903, another 1906 Model 31, a 1910 670 Touring, a 1909 670 Flyabout, and a 1912 670 Fire Engine. This once-in-a-lifetime group photo was shot by Mike Roberts at Reno, Nevada, where Bill Harrah's garage was specially decked out as an early Thomas agency for the occasion. For the complete Thomas Story see Page 10.

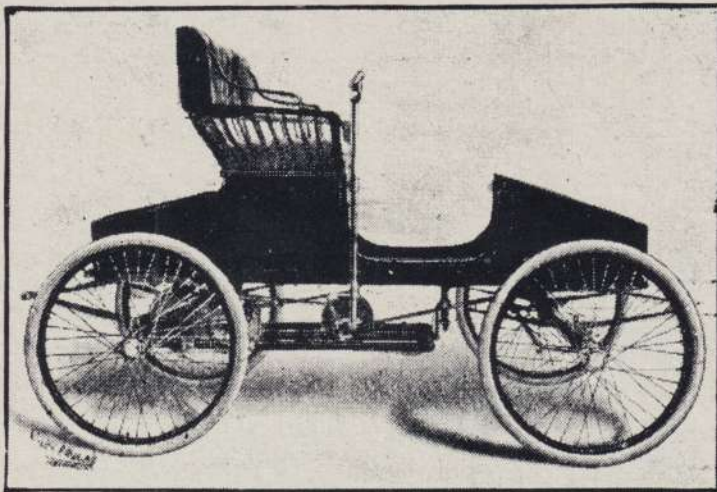


Ernest and Lillie Anne Sachreiter are contemplating a "deal" for a later model, if the bottom doesn't drop out of the Hog Market; but they better get back outside where they left their car or City Slicker Sam De Bolt will have it traded off for them--or is he just wasting "Agent" Harrah's time looking at the new catalog?



THOMAS

... the complete story



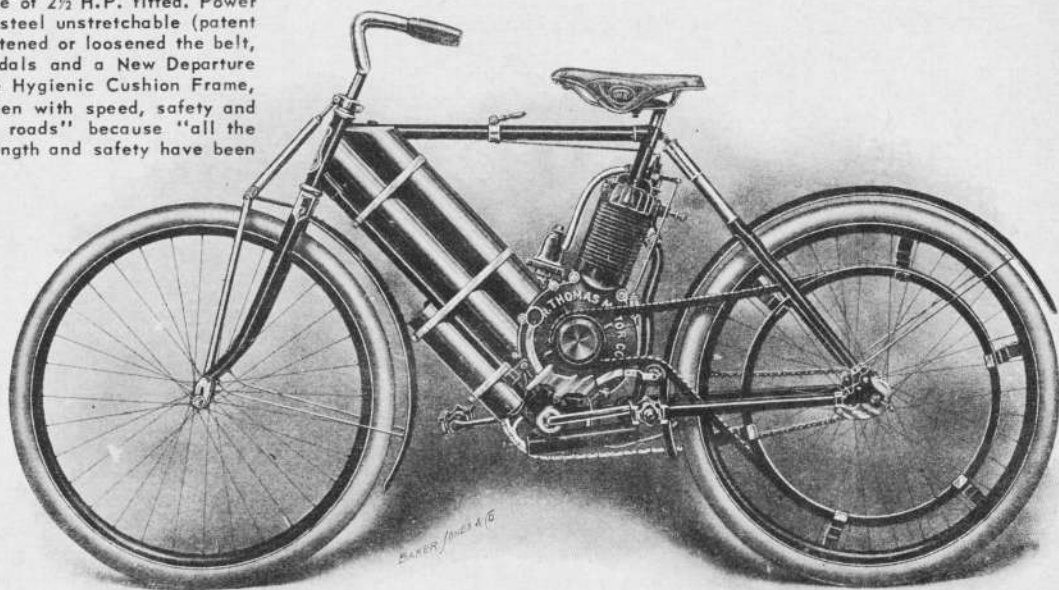
First Thomas was this little Carriage of 1899. Engine was one Cylinder, 3 H.P., and the price tag was set at \$800. Production figures are not known.

The Thomas Flyer became a legend in its day. It sprouted early and went far in a terrible hurry. Its start was in the early 20th century automobile rough and tumble, and overnight it became one of the best known and most highly prized vehicles. Here was an automobile man's automobile with sex appeal.

The roots of this famous marque extend back into the middle Victorian period, and was founded originally on bicycles. E. R. Thomas built up a reputation for light weight, strong, fast bicycles. During those years the company claimed to build one of the best in the world – a better bicycle for far less money than the finest foreign product. It was natural that E. R. Thomas would turn to experimenting with mechanical propulsion as the 19th century came to a close.

1896 is the first recorded year of engine building, and up to 1900 the company manufactured many air cooled gas engines used on tricycles and bicycles. Sometime during this period the "Auto-Bi" was born. This was a strengthened bicycle fitted with a high speed air cooled motor. But more important to automotive history was the appearance of the first spindly four wheeled carriage in the year 1899. With its 1 cylinder 3 H.P. motor, it was hardly a sample of great things to come.

The famous Thomas Auto-Bi. This is a 1903 Model 35. Actually, it was a heavy weight bicycle with an engine of 2½ H.P. fitted. Power transmission was by Thomas leather and steel unstretchable (patent applied for) belt. A ball bearing idler tightened or loosened the belt, to go or stop. It had regular bicycle pedals and a New Departure Coaster Brake. A selling feature was the Hygienic Cushion Frame, "the only motor bicycle that can be ridden with speed, safety and comfort over cobble stones and country roads" because "all the hitherto vexatious problems of entire strength and safety have been solved." The price, \$200.



FLYER

by **DICK PHILIPPI**

A listing of all the models that followed this first move into the automotive world will be found on page 30. It is sufficient to say that rapid progress was made in the direction of super fine, super big and super powerful vehicles. By 1903 a new factory was erected in Buffalo especially for automobile production. In the short period to 1905 a six cylinder 60 H.P. model, a four cylinder 50 H.P. model, and four cylinder 40 H.P. model were offered for that year. Fast work indeed for a bicycle factory.

Meanwhile all of the other factors needed to sell cars were brought in to play. Magazine advertising, catalogs, and sales manuals were ground out in vast profusion.

The leather bound Thomas Manual was 140 pages of super sales-manship with sections devoted to: The pre-approach, Approach and preliminary explanation of talking points, The demonstration and Closing Arguments. These were followed with a detailed description of each model number, and the book ended with a covey of glowing testimonial letters.

Under pre-approach it explains that **YOU MUST KNOW YOUR MAN BEFORE YOU SELL HIM.** What type of man is he? Has he any fads or hobbies? Who are his friends, etc.?

Then you approach him, and this should be timed carefully. But inasmuch as **YOU KNOW YOUR MAN**, being in possession of all the facts, which have been secured in the pre-approach, this is no problem. But, it explains that certain important rules should be observed. Don't walk into his office with your hat on. Don't walk in smoking a cigar or cigarette. Do not argue during this visit, etc. Then follows the demonstration, with these suggestions: If your prospect drives a car himself have him take the wheel for a short time, **BUT** take the wheel away from him while he is still anxious to drive.

Then again, if the prospect is a woman the salesman should employ a professional driver. This will permit the salesman to occupy the rear tonneau with the prospect and give him an opportunity to discuss the merits of the car with her. This will, of course, lead into the closing arguments, and here is the place where you have "to get down to brass tacks."

The Thomas organization found out early in the game the importance of learning how to sell, and the leather covered manual knew all and told all!

CONTINUED

THE THOMAS FLYER



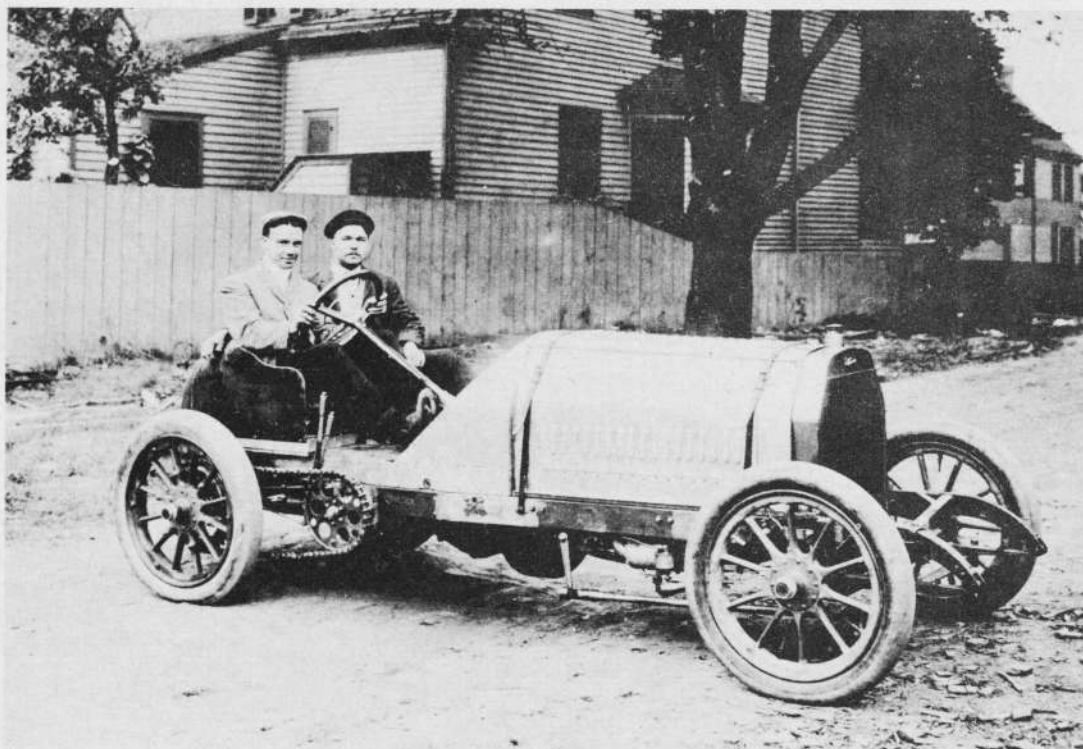
One of the most fertile sources for gaining prestige was in the field of competition. This was pursued with gusto. By 1906 the company could recite a long list of competitive achievements. These took the form of reliability runs, hill climbs and races.

By 1907 E. R. Thomas Motor Co. felt big enough to branch into Detroit and bring out another, an entirely new automobile. This resulted in formation of E. R. Thomas Detroit Co., an ill starred venture from the beginning. Splitting production between Buffalo and Detroit didn't seem to work out. By 1908 Thomas was in wobbly financial shape and ready to scuttle the Detroit plant by way of sale to Hugh Chalmers and associates.

Something electric was needed to pull the company out of the fiscal doldrums, and winning the New York-Paris race was made to order for this purpose. From 1908 on, Thomas rode this windfall of publicity for all it was worth. This event, infused new life into the Thomas organization for a brief time.

By 1911, however, signs of senility were beginning to appear. After a fantastic assortment of models in 1909 and 10, competitive wear and tear began to show its effects. In April a new management team took over and continued to fight a downhill battle. On August 29th, 1912 a federal receiver was appointed. Assets were listed at \$1,700,000 and liabilities of \$960,000. If true, and with smart management this sort of balance sheet could have brought about successful re-organization, but it was not in the tea leaves.

By March 1913 a bankruptcy sale was ordered and a large catalog was printed. It runs to almost 75 pages and contains a gold mine of informative fact, mixed with some fiction. In it were listed the achievements of Thomas, and a hard selling



This is a very special Thomas Flyer. It was built in 1906 for Vanderbilt Cup Competition. Seated in it are Montague Roberts, driver, and August Anderson, riding mechanic; car took 9th in trials. Four cylinder engine had 115 H.P. Note carburetor between steering arm, and frame.



Postoral scene that greeted average tourist in 1907, with better than average road, near Kokomo, Indiana. This is William Turner in 4-60 Model 36 Thomas Touring Car during Glidden tour of that year. Car made perfect score.

pitch on the profits to be made by the prospective purchaser of "Lot One." Lot One contained all of the repair parts, goodwill, patents, drawings, patterns, and jigs for manufacturing Thomas cars, and was presumably the largest part of the \$1,700,000 listed on the asset sheet of 1912.

One strong argument set forth the fact that a total of over 7,000 Thomas automobiles had been sold to the public. Of these, they concluded, many more than 5,000 were still in operation. The purchase of Lot One would also buy the exclusive right to supply repair parts for all of these operating Thomas cars. It went on to explain that for several months of the receivership this repair parts business had been running at the rate of \$10,120 monthly.

In the catalog, also, were listed a great number of complete Thomas cars of various years and models. Looking through the pages we find the following: 1910 Model M-6-40 Touring Car, and then two more of similar year and model. 1909 Model L-6-40 Touring Car. 1909 Model K-6-70 Ten Passenger Omnibus. Two 1912 Model K-6-70 fire engines. And the assortment was topped off by the "Famous New York to Paris Racer" listed as a 1908 Model 36-4-60 (actually it was a 1907). Almost anyone of these vehicles would have a tolerable resale value today. Drooling, anyone?

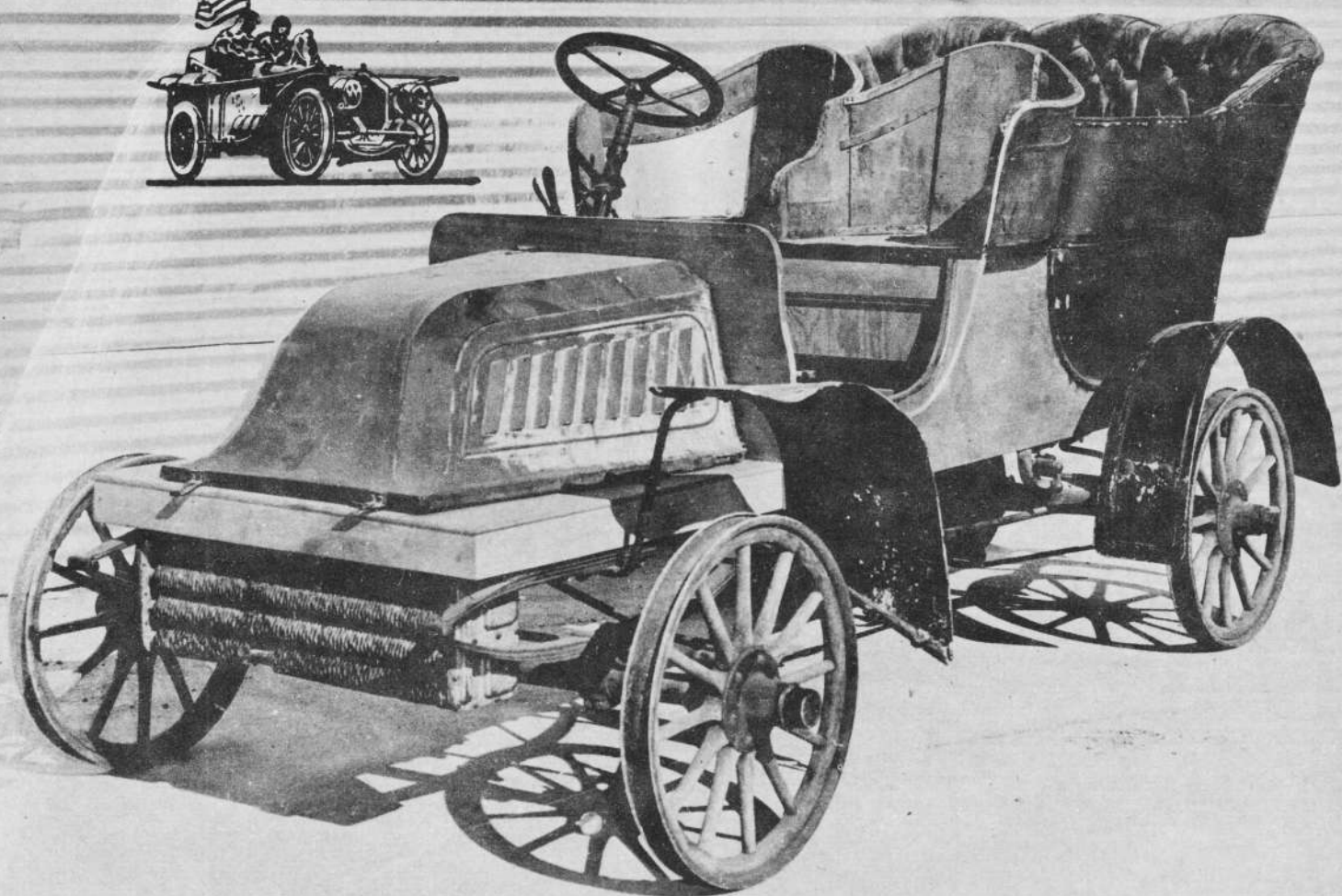
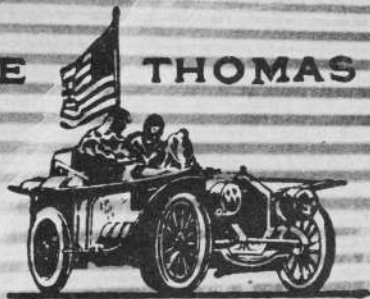
But, when the sale was held on March 17-22, 1913 Lot One was knocked down for only \$51,000, and along with all the other assets the total amount realized was \$256,000.

In this manner ended the span of the Thomas Flyer. From 1913 through 1917 someone kept trying to pump life into the name. It seemed too good to die without some effort at artificial respiration. But these attempts were not able to gain much headway. For all intents and purpose the company was laid to rest in 1912.

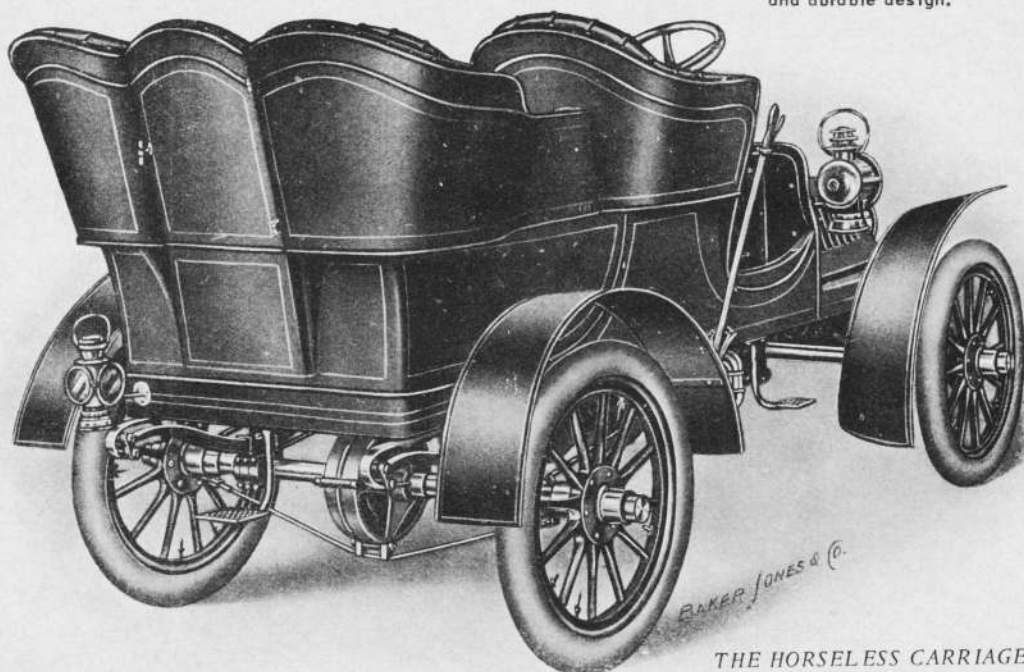


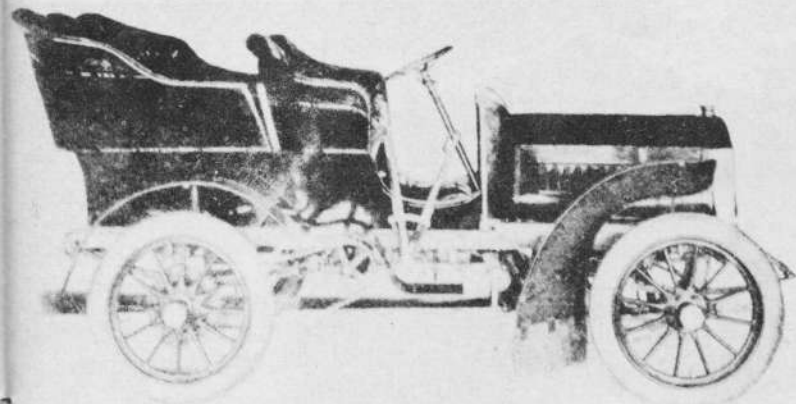
J. B. Livezey and party in 1909 Thomas 4-60 after 11 days of travel from Denver, Colorado. Scene is the old Newhall Cut, which was at that time, the best road into southern California from Goldfield, Nevada. Gasoline at Goldfield was 60¢ per gal. Car averaged 10 miles per gal.

THE THOMAS FLYER

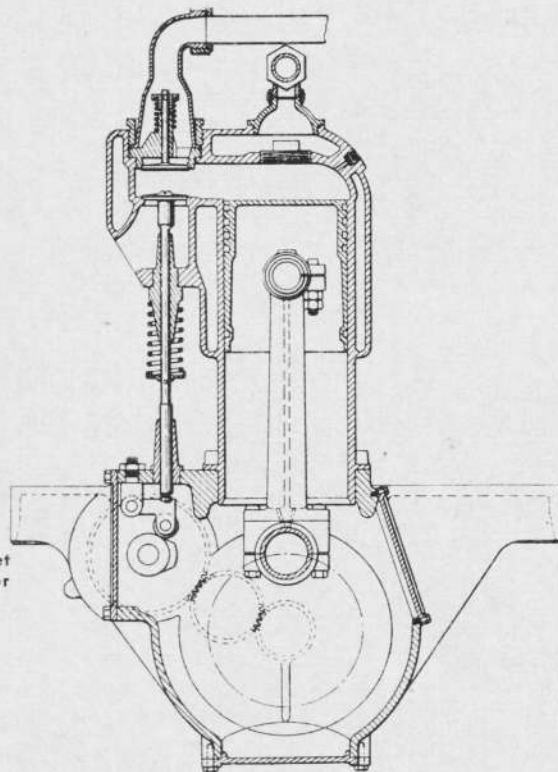


Front and rear pictures of 1903 Model 18 Tonneau. Picture above shows head on view of partially restored car owned by Bill Harrah. Below is rear view reproduced from 1903 Thomas Catalog. In these early days Thomas was constantly making comparisons with French cars, for example: "The transmission is of the best French type sliding gear" or "mechanically operated inlet valves like those incorporated on all the latest French Models". The carburetor was called the new Thomas Mixer which was of the constant level float type. Here is a cryptic remark of unbelievable magnitude: "GRADES—30% roads, any accessible". Color was London Smoke "New, beautiful and durable design."

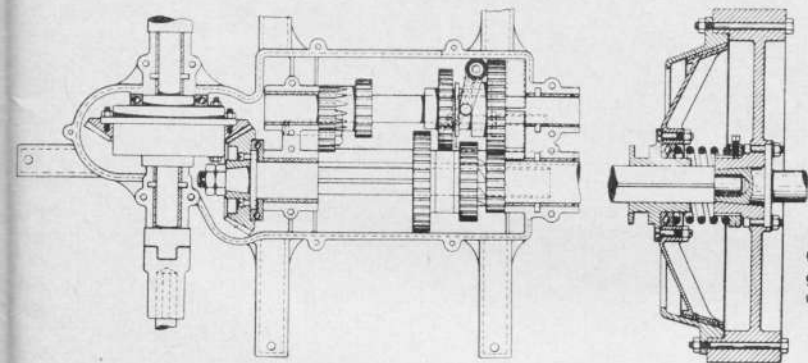




Horseless Age Magazine called this 1904 three cylinder Thomas a light roadster. There was a distinct European look about the car.

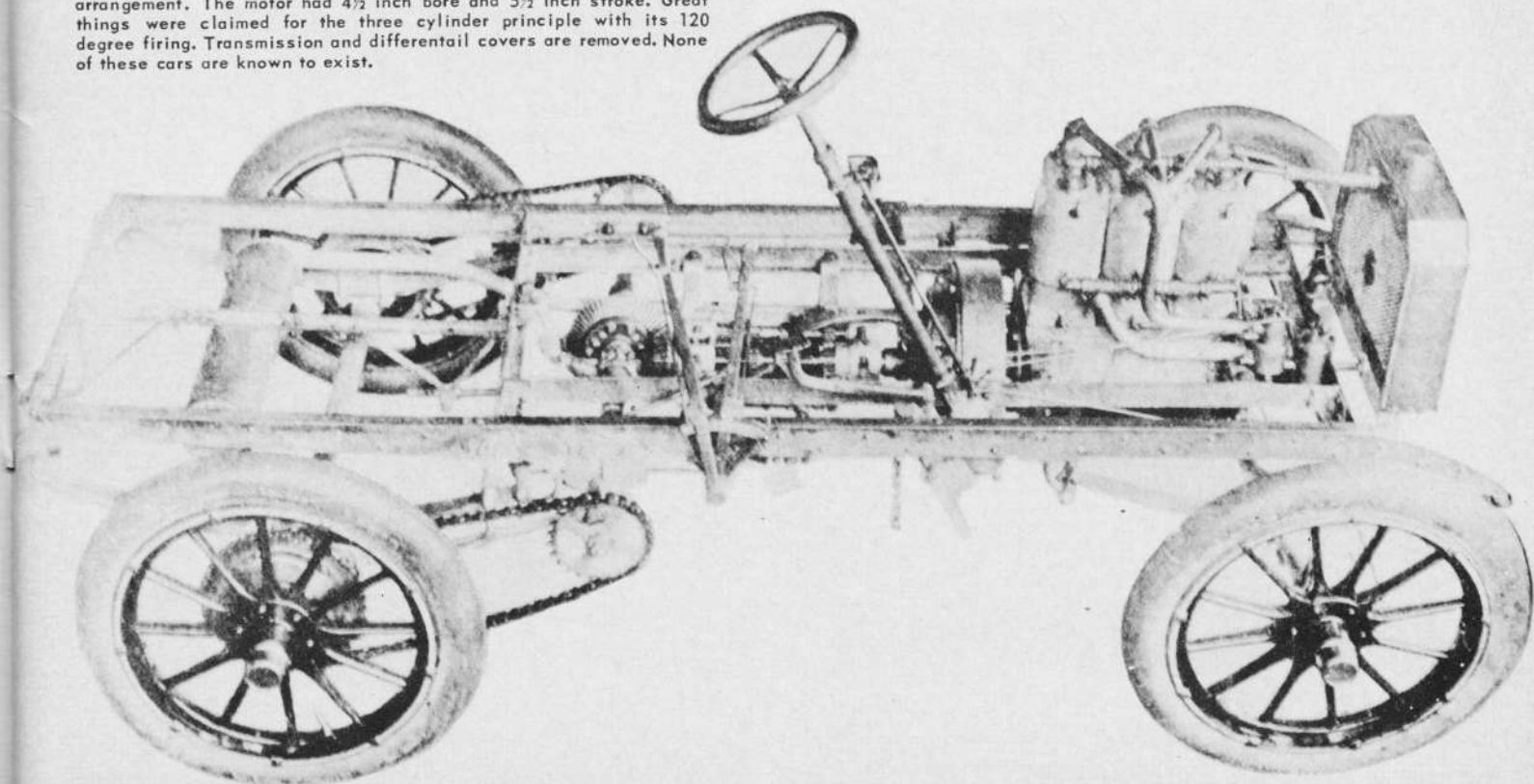


Cross section of 1904 three cylinder Thomas engine. Note offset cam followers and arrangement of automatic inlet valves. Carburetor manifold was extended affair going clear over top of engine.

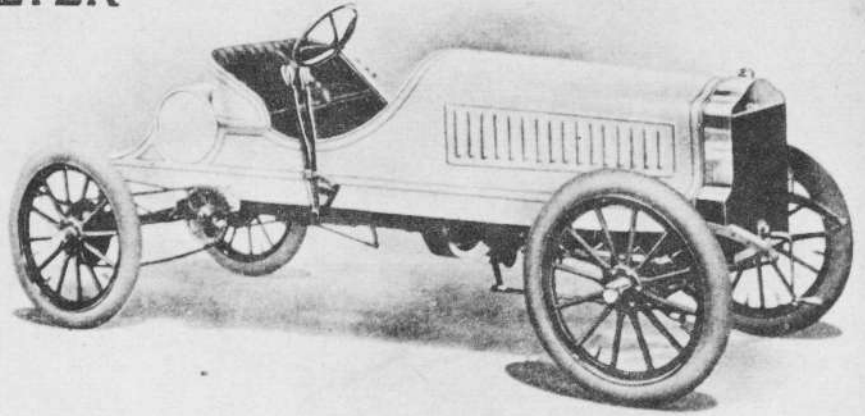
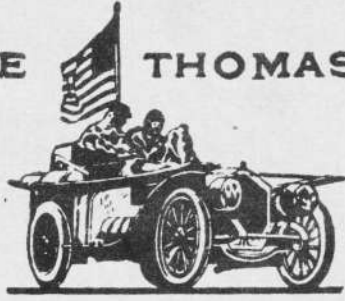


Clutch and gearbox of 1904 Thomas. Chain drive certainly gave greater stability to differential and change gear mechanism. A single unit construction.

Chassis of 1904 Thomas. This gives a good view of the general arrangement. The motor had $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch bore and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch stroke. Great things were claimed for the three cylinder principle with its 120 degree firing. Transmission and differential covers are removed. None of these cars are known to exist.



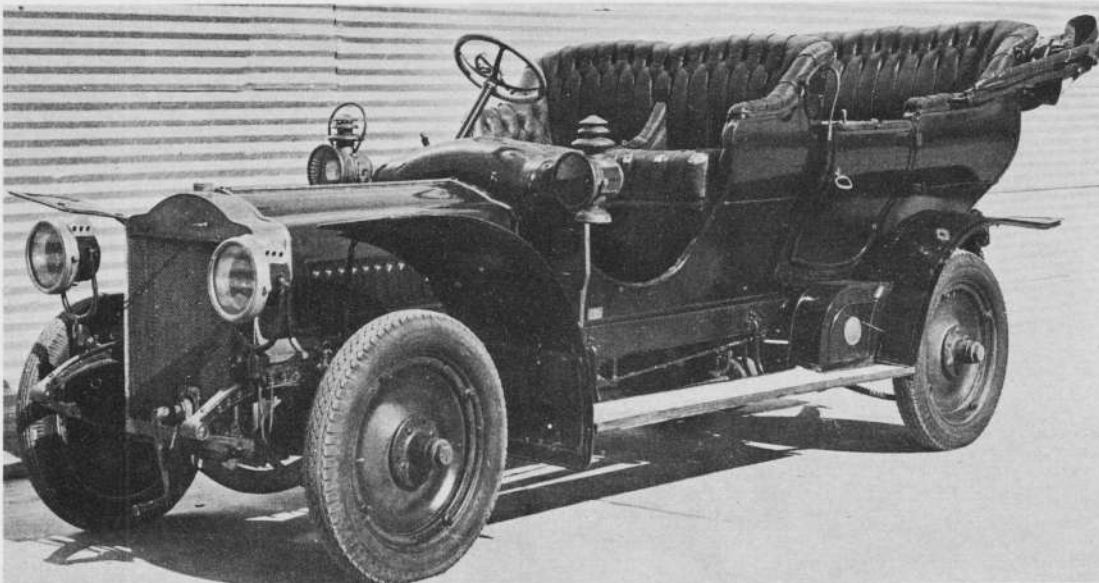
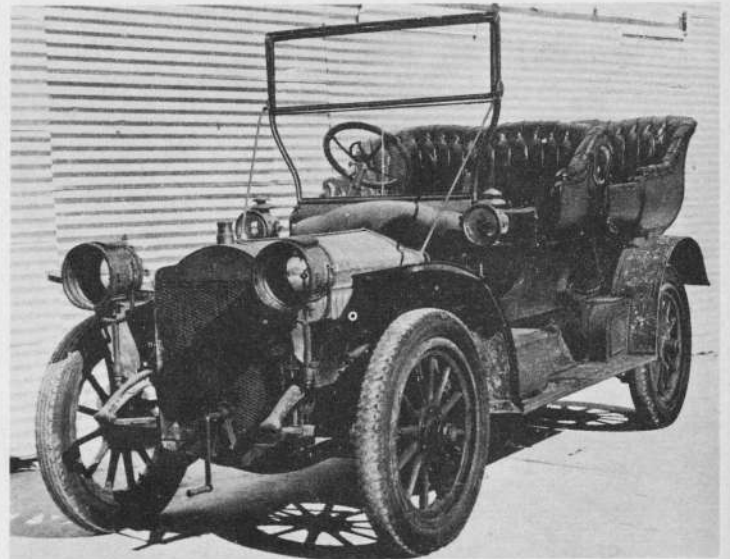
THE THOMAS FLYER

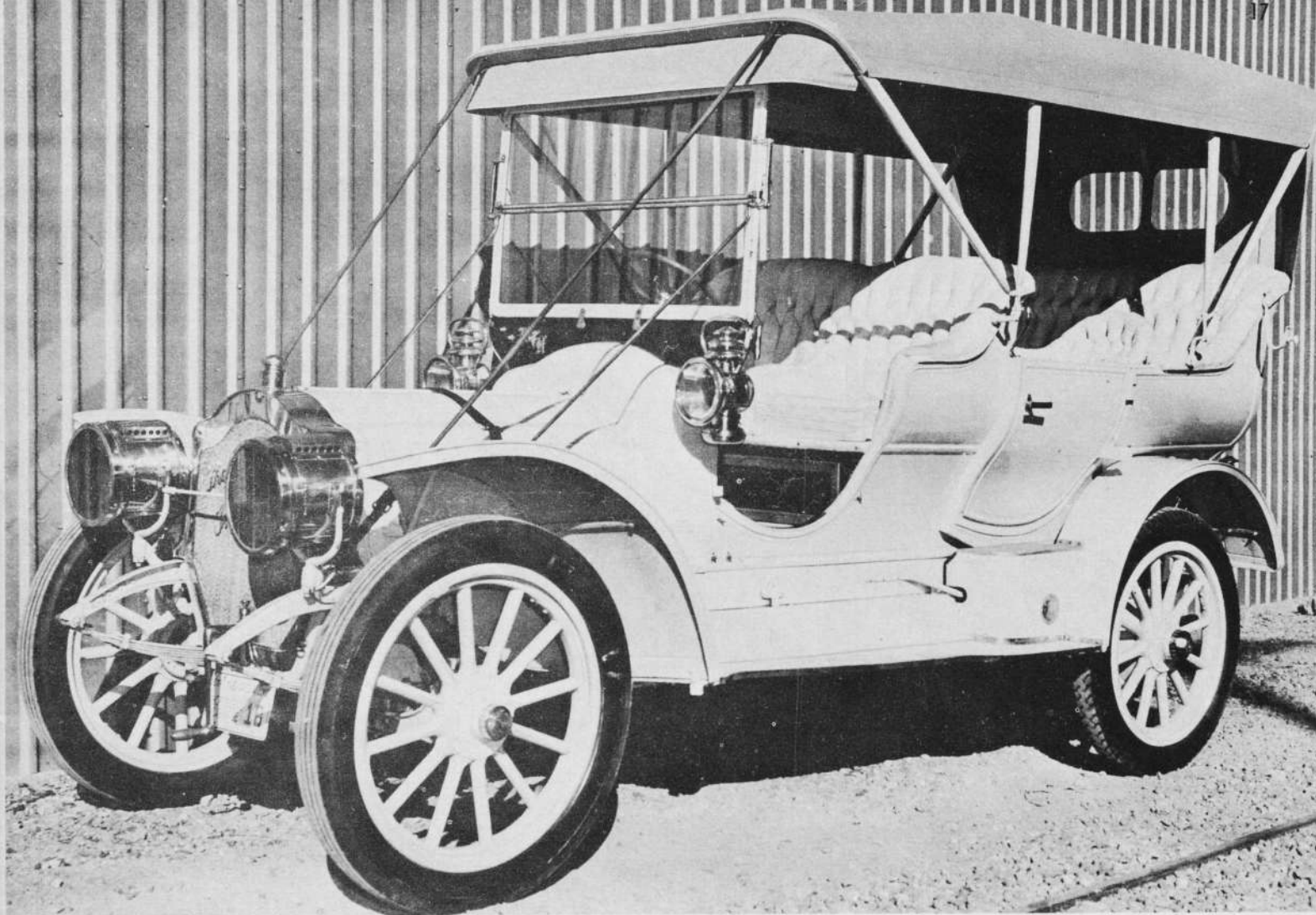


Here is a car to make antique lovers bug-eyed. The 1905 model No. 27 was made in several body styles including this stripped down racer. Six cylinders, 60 H.P., wheel base 120 inches, tire size 36" x 4½", and priced in the 6000 dollar range. No survivors are known to exist, and what a pity.



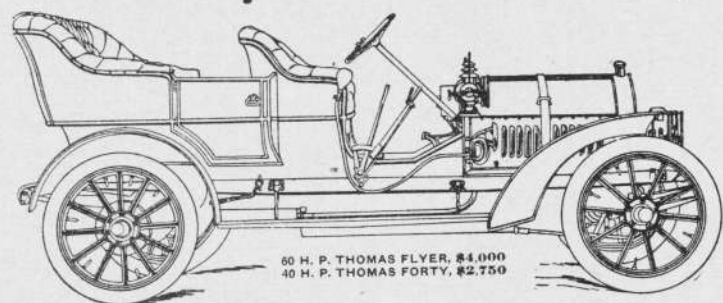
Here are two samples of Thomas Flyer 1906 production owned by Bill Harrah. Both are Model 31 touring cars, predecessor of the famous 4-60 Model 36, of round the world fame. Note how modernizers have "improved" them over the years since 1906. One has fenders with skirts added along with running board aprons. Lamps are mounted on ostrich neck forks. The other one has a nice set of disc wheels added, along with some sharp black and brass head lamps.





1907 Model 36-4-60 touring car. When questioned on the subject Bill Harrah admitted this was probably his favorite car. Although Thomas made a great noise about the 1908 car that won the New York to Paris, it was actually a 1907 model.

Thomas Forty Broke Record Yesterday



60 H. P. THOMAS FLYER, \$4,000
40 H. P. THOMAS FORTY, \$2,750

Harold Brinker, driving F. J. McCarthy's Thomas "40," reduced the Denver-Colorado Springs record to 1 hour 59 minutes. We hold \$500.00 of Mr. McCarthy's money as a wager that there is no other car sold in Denver (6 cylinder or steamers not barred), that can equal this performance. How does it look to you? It was a "Thomas," you remember, that reduced the world's 50-mile track record at Overland June 1st.

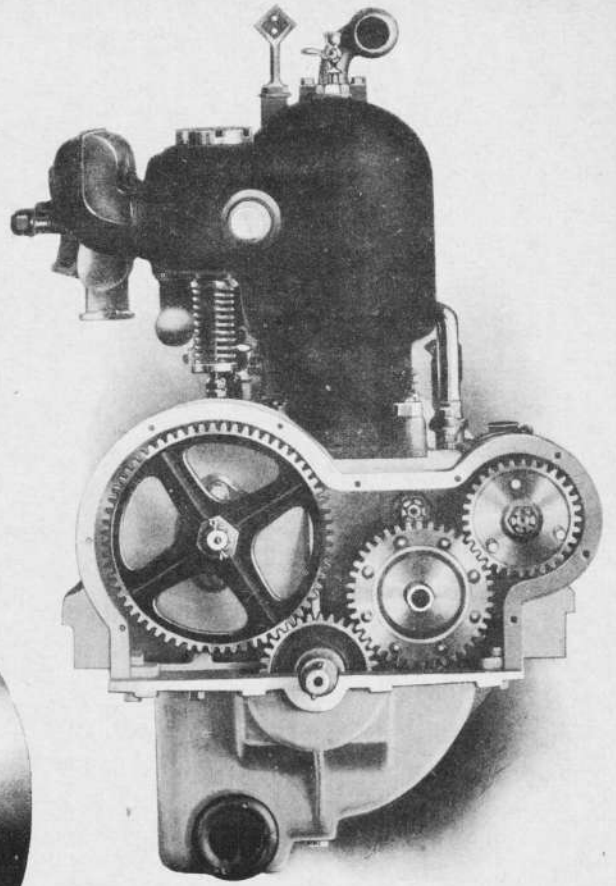
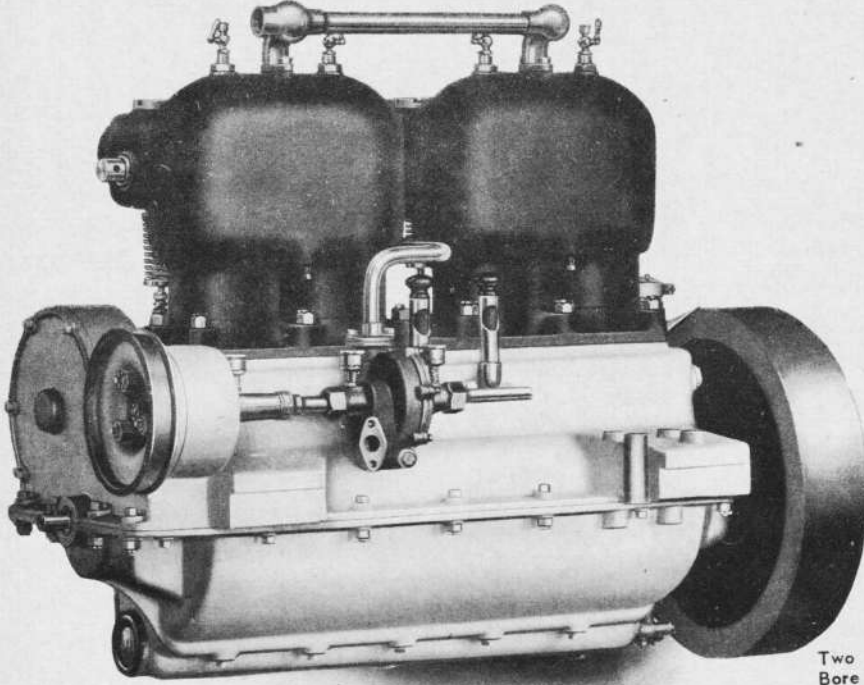
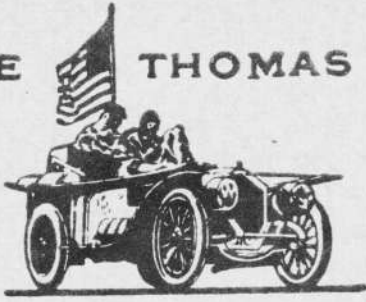
The MATHEWSON AUTO CO.

1624-30 Broadway

Distributors for Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico.
P. S.—Our allotment of 30 Thomas cars is entirely sold. By paying a premium we hope to get one or two more 80's. Better see us at once if you want one.

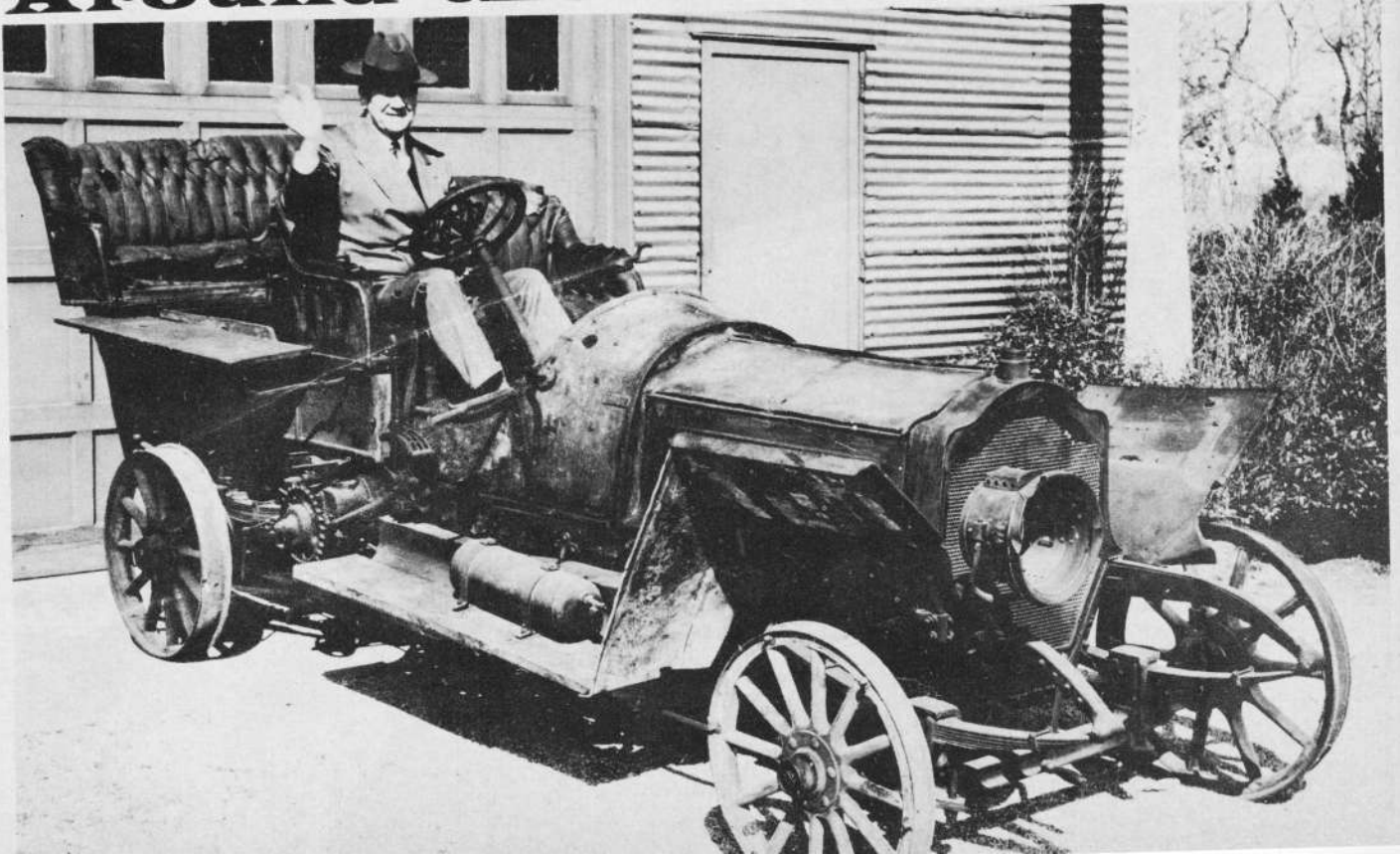
Typical newspaper automobile advertising brags about broken records left in wake of Thomas "40." This is from Denver, Colorado, paper of 1907. This is Detroit-built car.

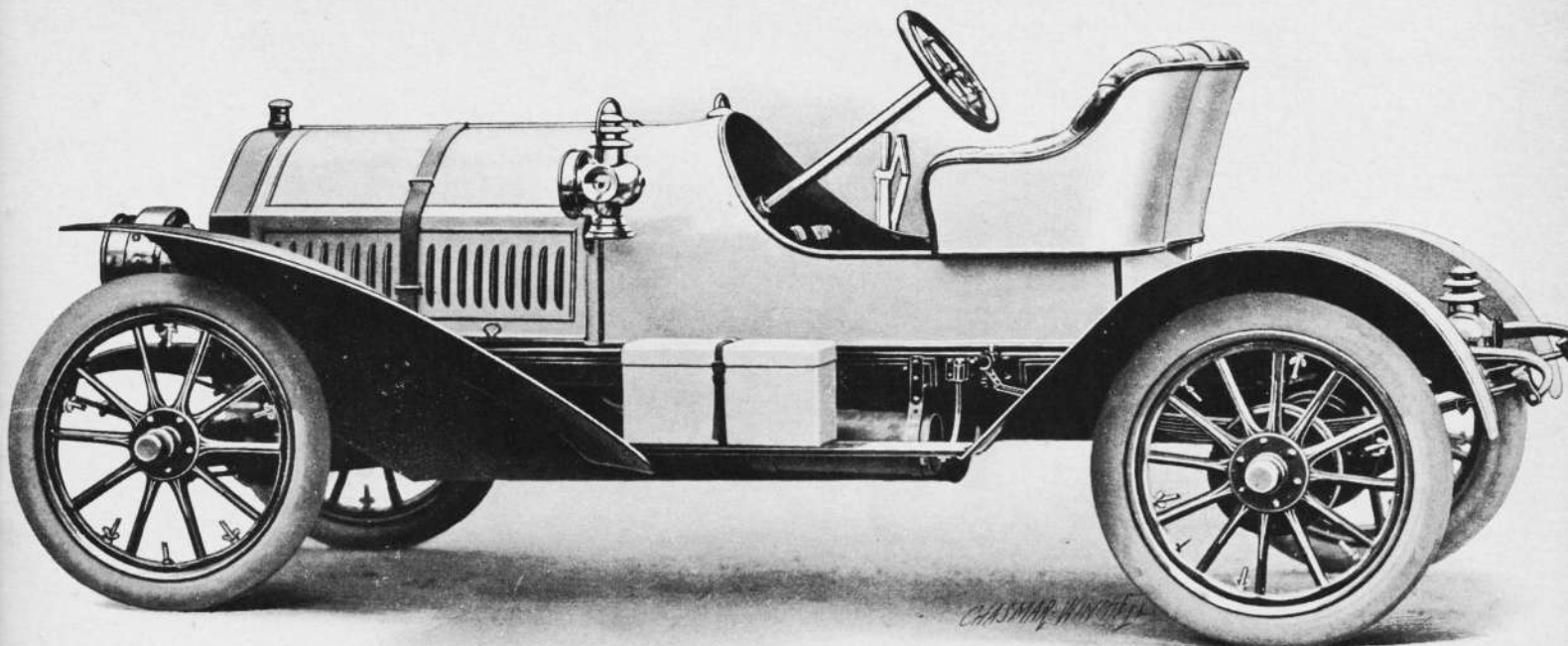
THE THOMAS FLYER



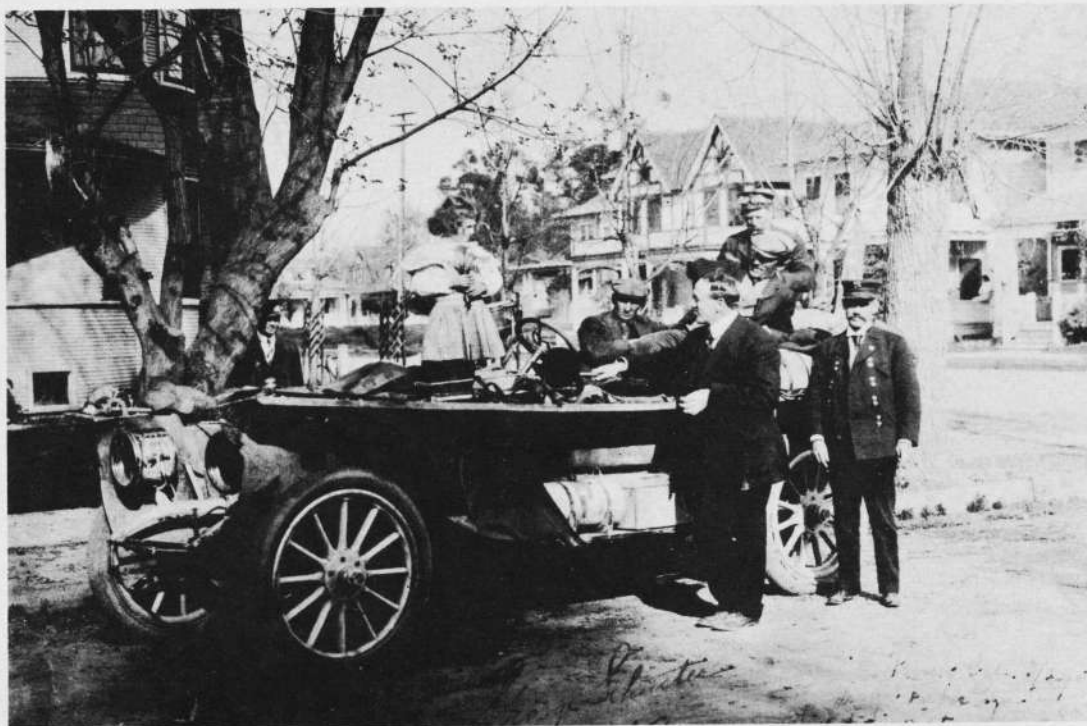
Two catalog views of the 1907 Thomas Detroit 4 cylinder motor. Bore $4\frac{3}{4}$ " by stroke 5", forty H.P., coil ignition with magneto to special order, lubrication by force feed with constant level.

Around the World in 1908

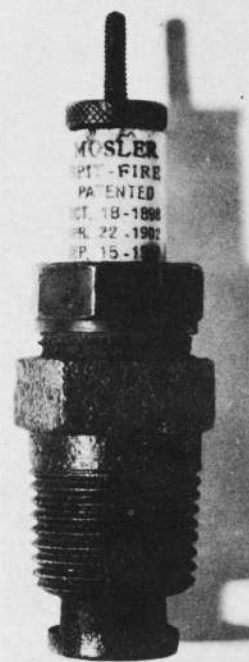





This is one of the Thomas Detroit Models of 1907. Described as, "2550 pounds of liveliness with a taste for space eating upon our American roads."



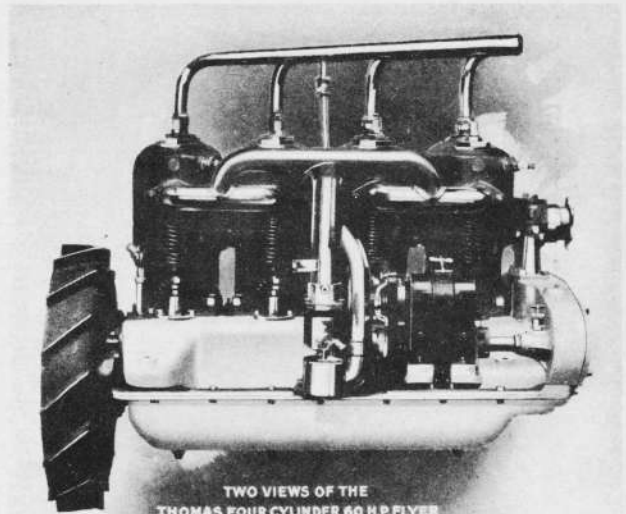
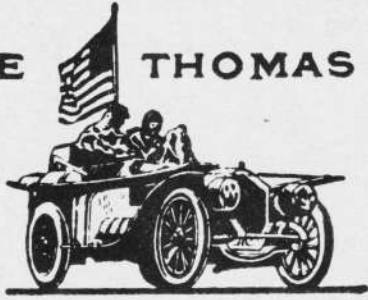
New York to Paris Thomas at Fresno, Calif., March 23, 1908. Men in car from left to right: Harold Brinker, George Schuster and Hans Hansen. Standing: W. Parker Lyon, then Mayor of Fresno, and the fire chief. Little girl standing in car is Mayor Lyon's daughter.



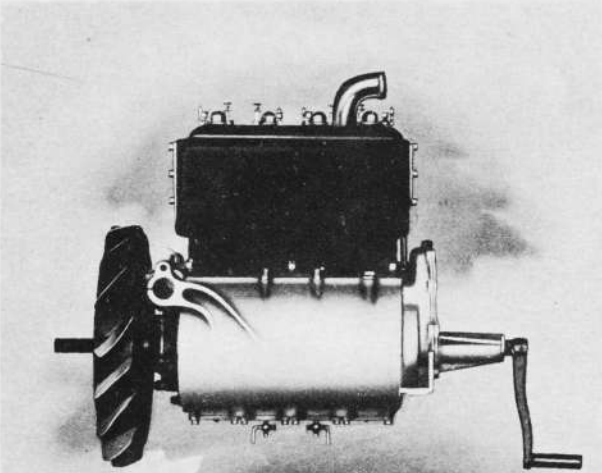
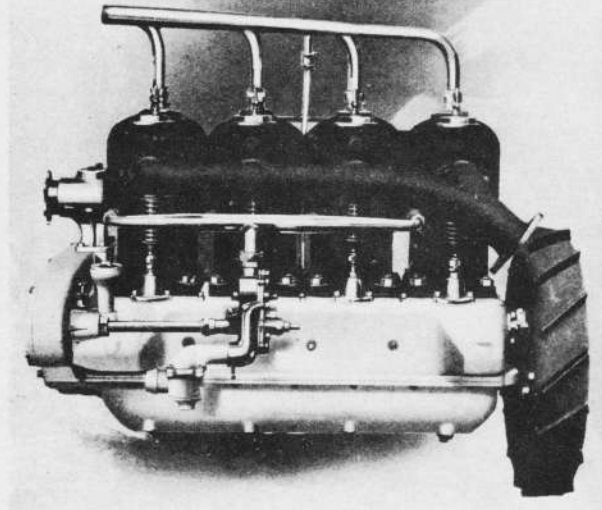
Mosler Spit-Fire spark plug taken from New York to Paris THOMAS, and presented to Ransom B. Matthews of Los Angeles County Museum by Henry Austin Clark, Jr.


 The 1907 Model 36, 60 H.P. New York-to-Paris Thomas Flyer as it appears today. Montague Roberts, one of the original drivers, (now deceased) is shown at the wheel in 1953. PHOTO COURTESY LONG ISLAND AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM AND H. AUSTIN CLARK, JR., PRESENT OWNER.

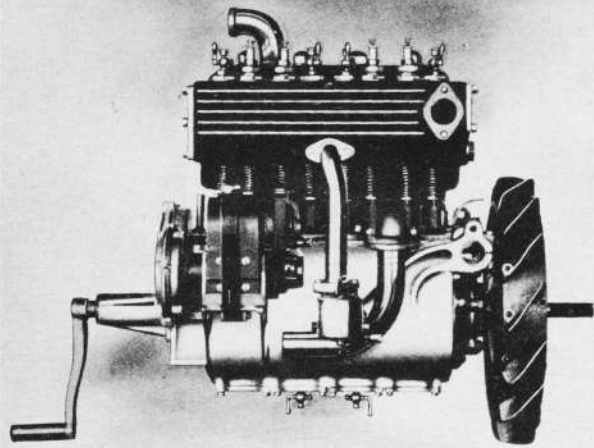
THE THOMAS FLYER



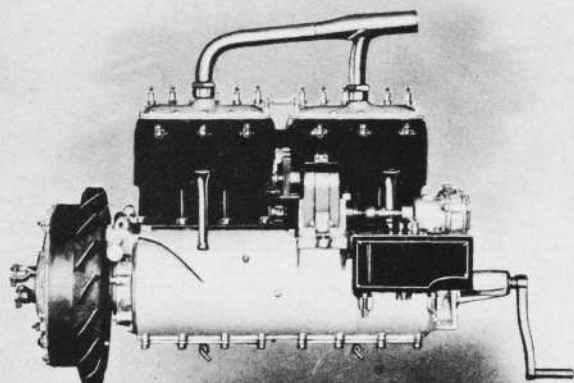
TWO VIEWS OF THE THOMAS FOUR CYLINDER 60 H.P. FLYER MOTOR



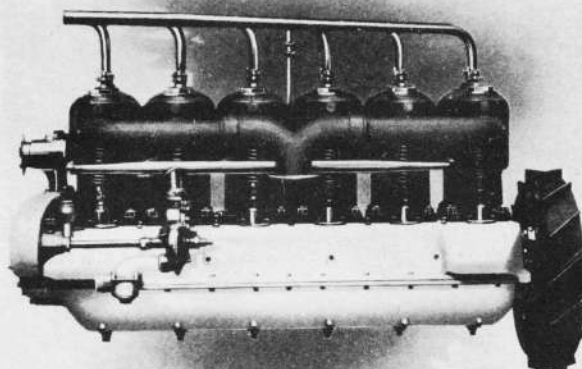
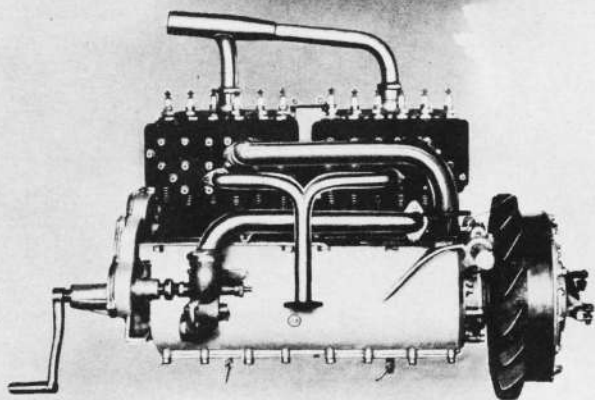
TWO VIEWS OF THE THOMAS FOUR CYLINDER 16 H.P. TOWN CAR MOTOR



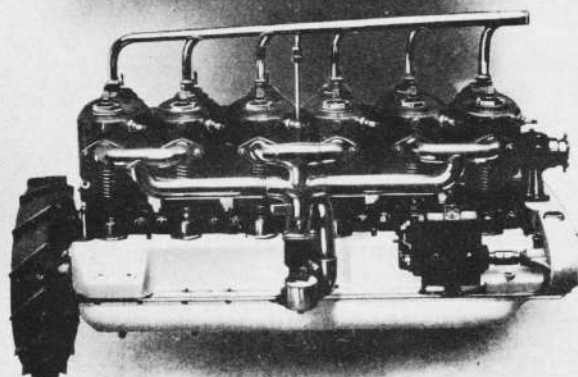
1909



TWO VIEWS OF THE
THOMAS SIX-CYLINDER 40 H.P. FLYER
MOTOR

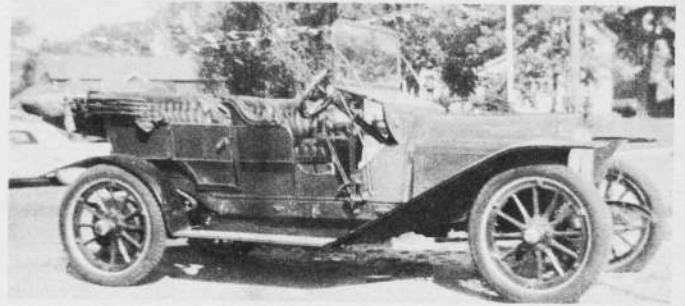
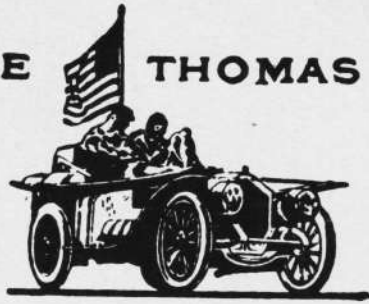


TWO VIEWS OF THE
THOMAS 6 CYLINDER 70 HORSE POWER FLYER
MOTOR

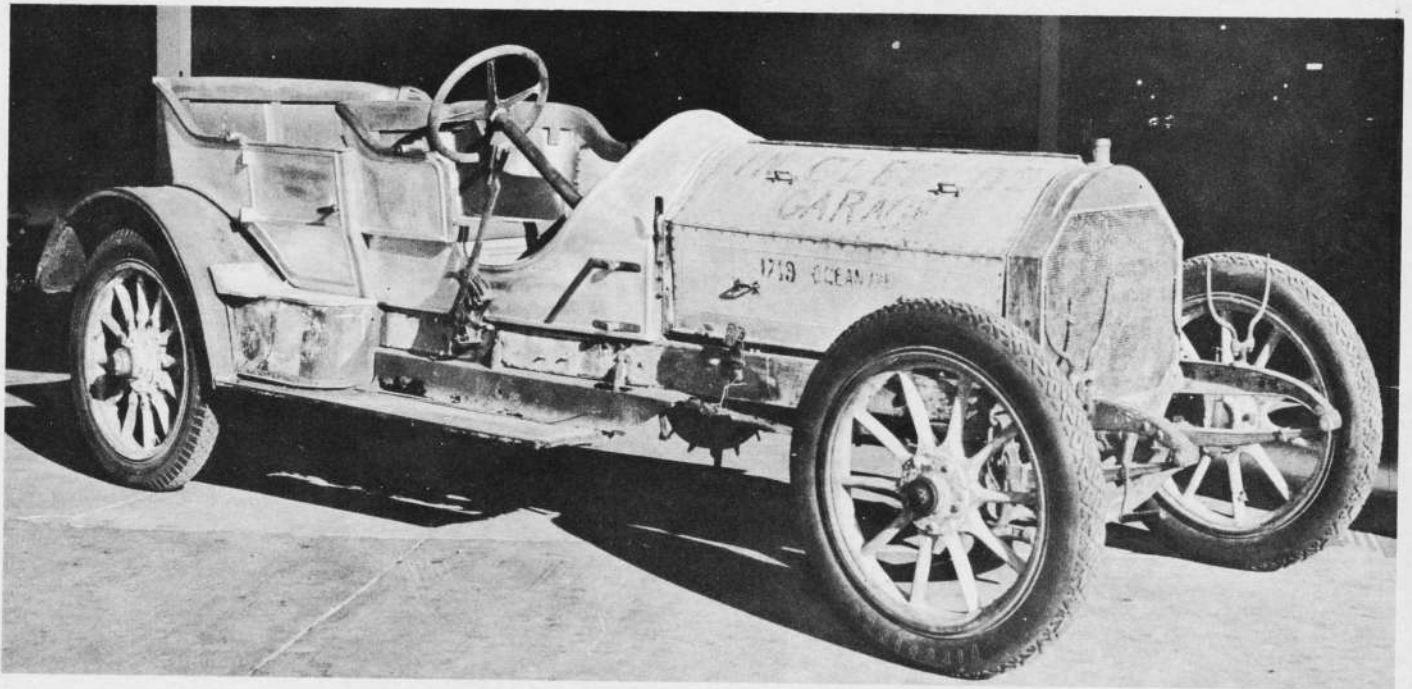


These pictures show wide range of engines available in the 1909 Thomas line. Four different engines from 16 to 70 H.P. This year was the high point of Thomas variety and selection.

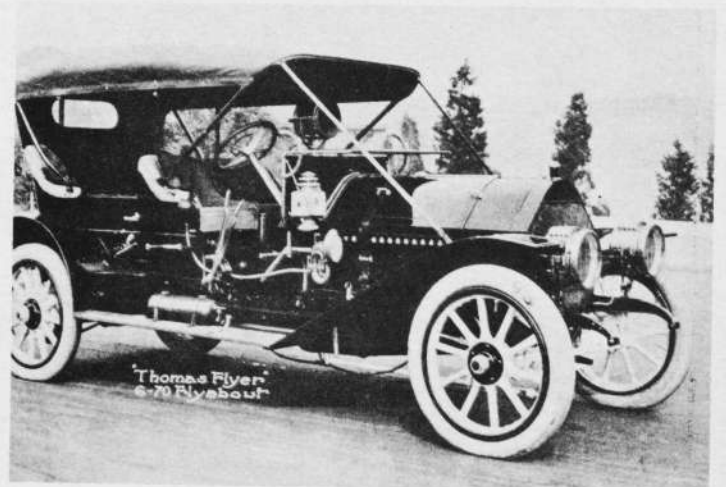
THE THOMAS FLYER



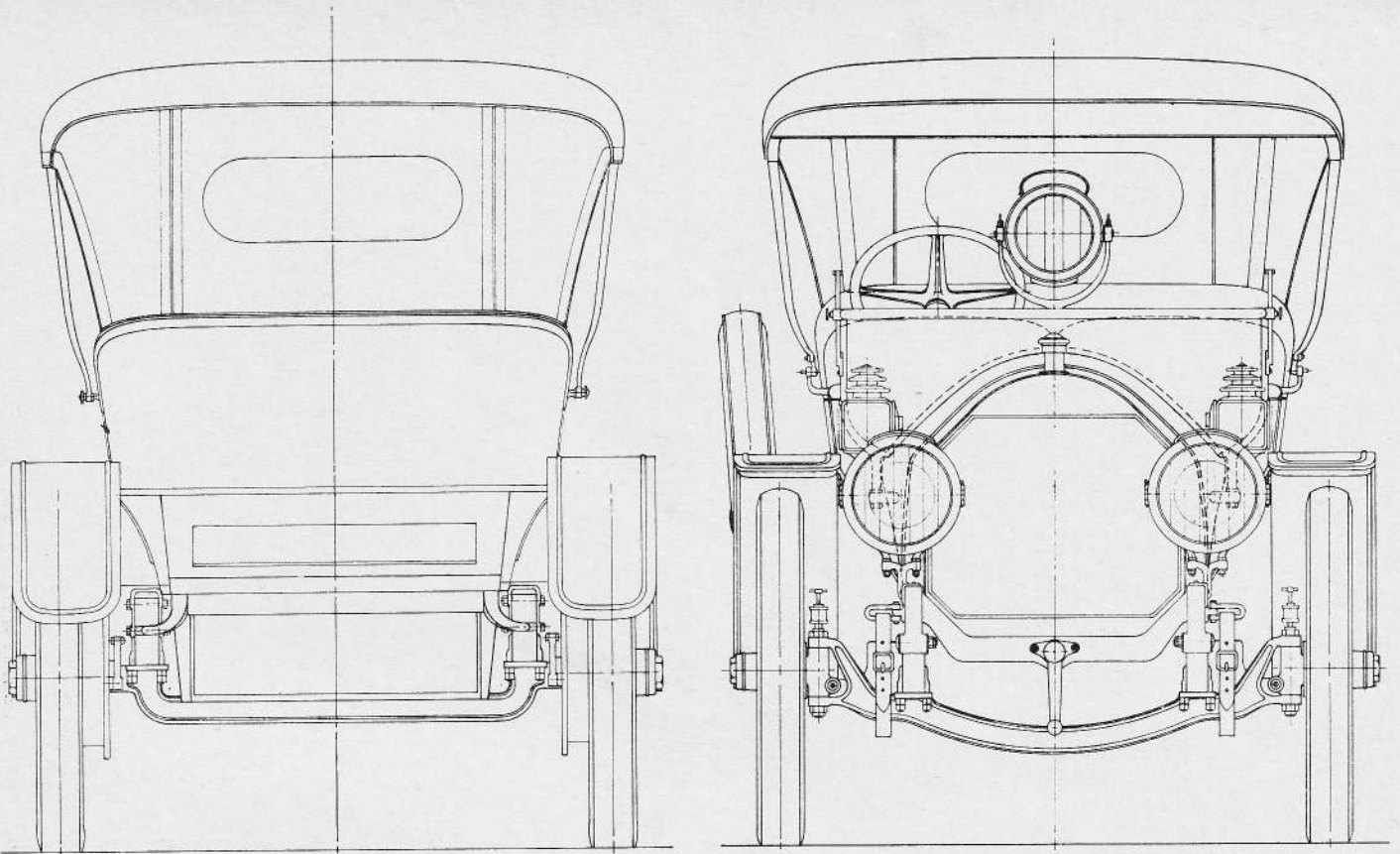
Unrestored 1909 Thomas 6-40 Flyabout Model L owned by Bill Harrah. This car came into production when Thomas was beginning to feel the competitive pinch. They bragged about the elimination of "A thousand pounds of crude weight. The car without a noise, jar or vibration, weighing only 2000 pounds and selling for only 3000 dollars."



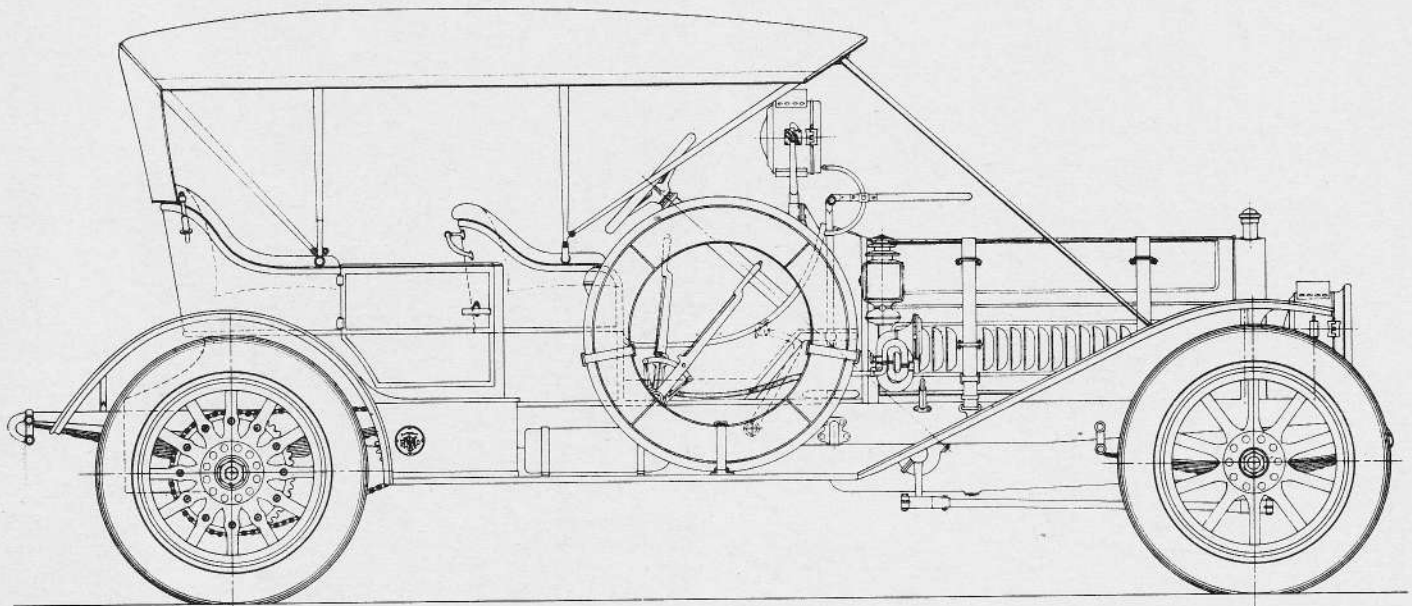
Partially restored 1909 Thomas Flyer 6-70 Flyabout Model "K" owned by Bill Harrah. This is the kind of car you can drive any place and back again.



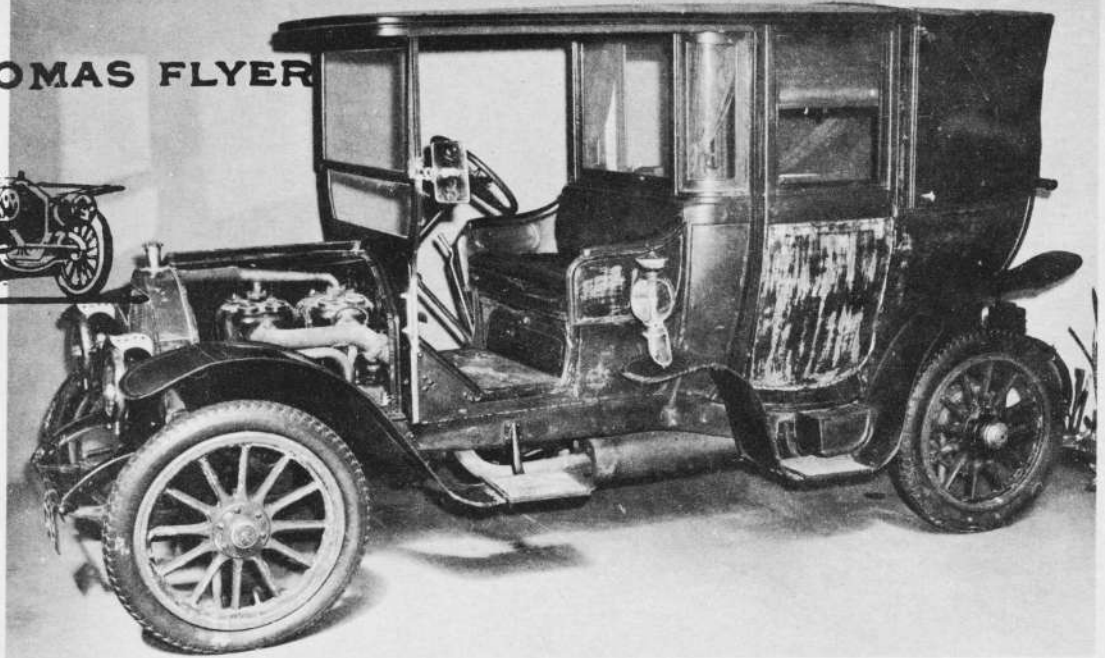
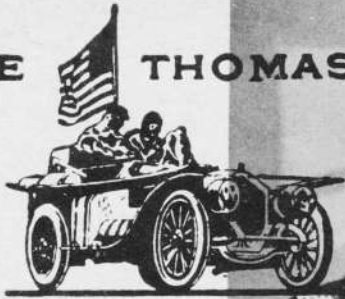
1910 picture shows how Bill Harrah's 6-70 Flyabout will probably appear when finished. There are few antiques with the rakish lines and catlike take-off look of the Flyabout. Note searchlight behind windshield. And then, there is the exquisite whir of the double chain drive in action, like a swarm of bees in a Locust tree!



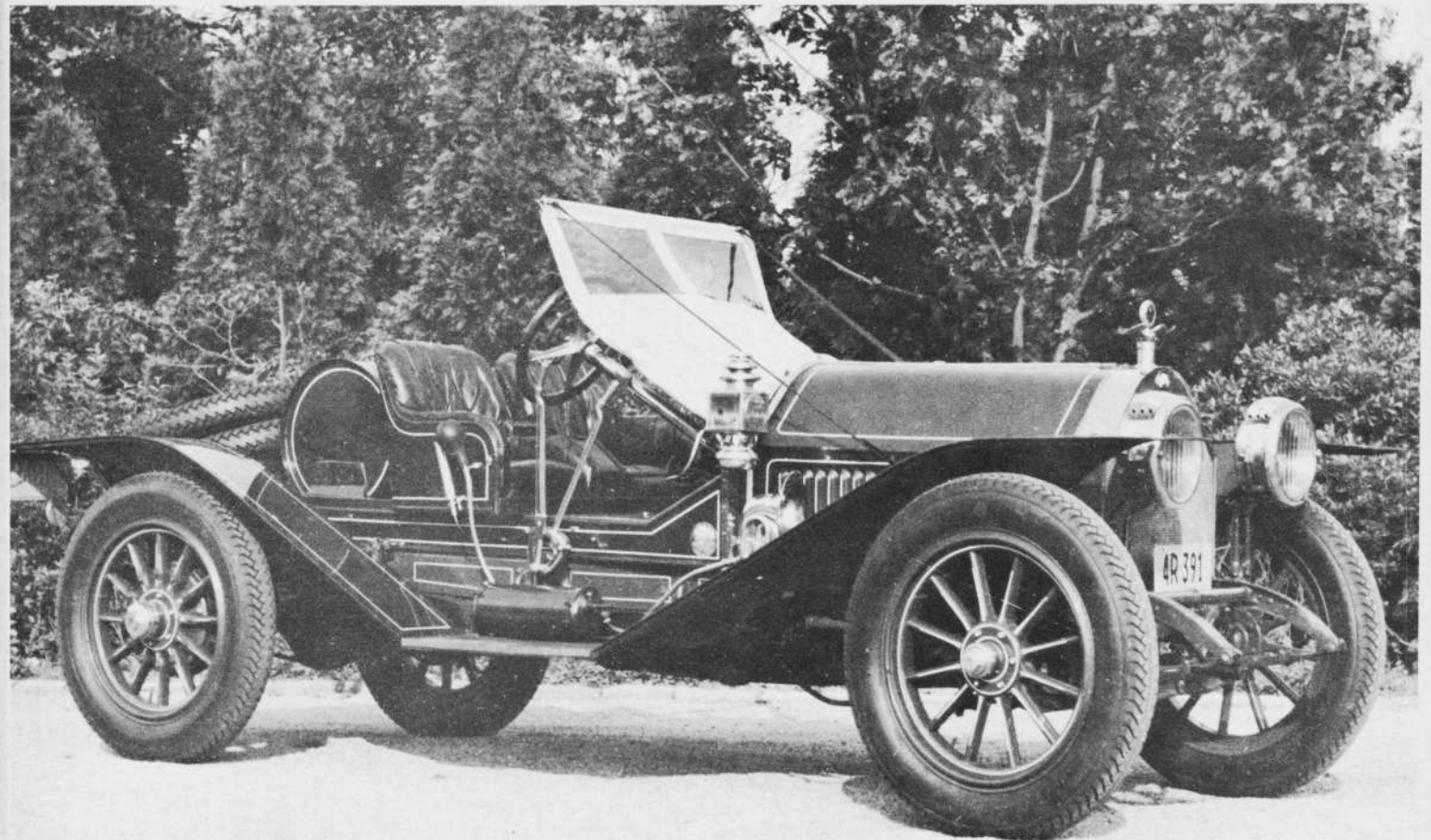
Engineering drawings made by W. Everett Miller to aid in rebuilding of Thomas 1909 6-70 Flyabout.



THE THOMAS FLYER

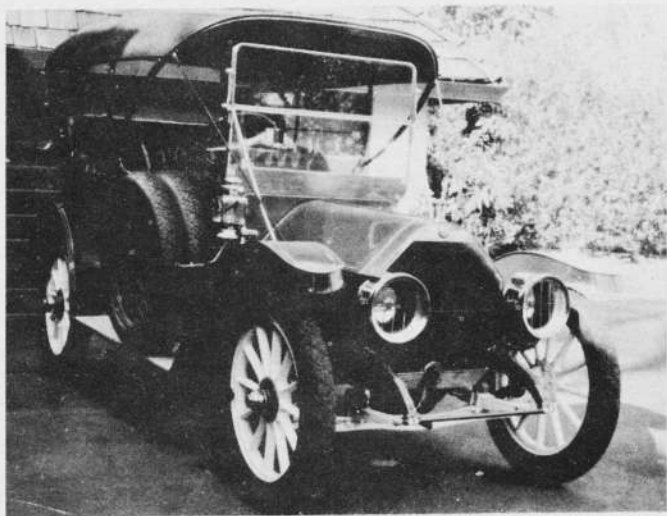


This is a 1910, Thomas Four Cylinder, 28 H.P. Model "R" Landulet, in the Kansas State Historical Society Museum at Topeka. It was donated by the estate of Hiram Price Dillon, a Topeka Capitalist. An interesting feature of the car is the electric lighted signal system, between the passenger compartment and front dash board - 1. Faster, 2. Stop Right, 3. Right, 4. Slower, 5. Home, 6. Turn Around, 7. Left, 8. Stop Left. Photo, Courtesy of John W. Ripley.

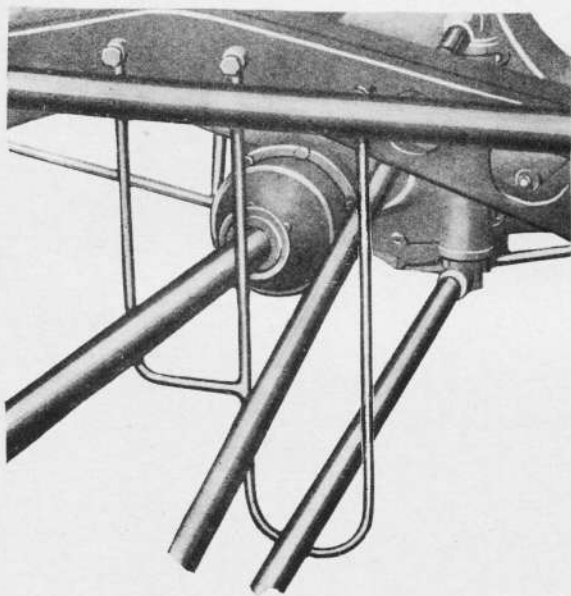


Nicely restored 1910 Thomas model "M" 6-40 Raceabout owned by Paul Rutherford. It may be that this is the combination car listed in their catalog of 1910, which combined features of the Runabout, Tourabout and Flyabout.

PHOTO COURTESY LONG ISLAND AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM



These two pictures show the transition of one Thomas. On the right a snapshot taken in 1910 has the following legend written on the back: "Ole G. Brende family of Baltic, South Dakota, in 1910 Thomas Flyer when the car was new. Taken at the home place." On the left, the same model "M" 6-40 fifty years later. Now owned, and restored, by Gordon Howard of North Hollywood, California.



The title of a 1911 book on Thomas was "Little Things Done Right." in it we find the following description: "A safety loop is used to catch the driving shaft or torque member in case any accident should drop the front end. This is important, since such accidents are usually fatal." How could you resist such forceful language.



2 Antique Car Posters

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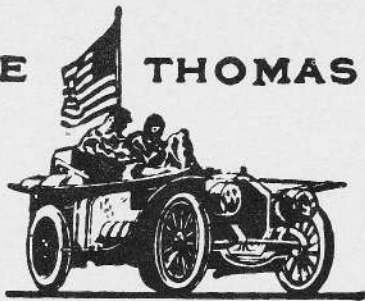
ANTIQUE AUTO MUSEUM

ONE OF THE LARGE MIDWEST COLLECTIONS IN COLORADO

APRIL TO NOVEMBER

Estes Park, Colorado

THE THOMAS FLYER



SIX

THE STORY OF
THE NEW
E. R. THOMAS MOTOR CAR CO.

SIX

TO effect a thorough reorganization of the E. R. Thomas Company, a complete executive organization has been transplanted from the Packard Motor Car Company of Detroit to the Thomas Plant at Buffalo.

Fifteen men who have worked together in one plant, with one common aim and who have aided in the upbuilding of the greatest motor car organization in the world, now control the destinies of the reorganized E. R. Thomas Motor Car Company.

E. P. CHALFANT, the President, heads the marketing and publicity departments; **F. R. HUMPAGE**, Vice-president and General Manager, is responsible for the manufacturing and purchasing; **W. L. GLEASON**, as Factory Manager is in charge of production; **J. J. RAMSEY** is Treasurer, and attends to financial affairs.

These men have given up important positions to devote their entire energies to the development of the Thomas Company and the refinement of the Thomas Car.

With its ample financial resources this organization assures to the automobile buyer a car as thoroughly good as knowledge and skill can make it and with every car sold the Thomas Company pledges a thorough and complete technical service to the owner throughout the entire life of his car.

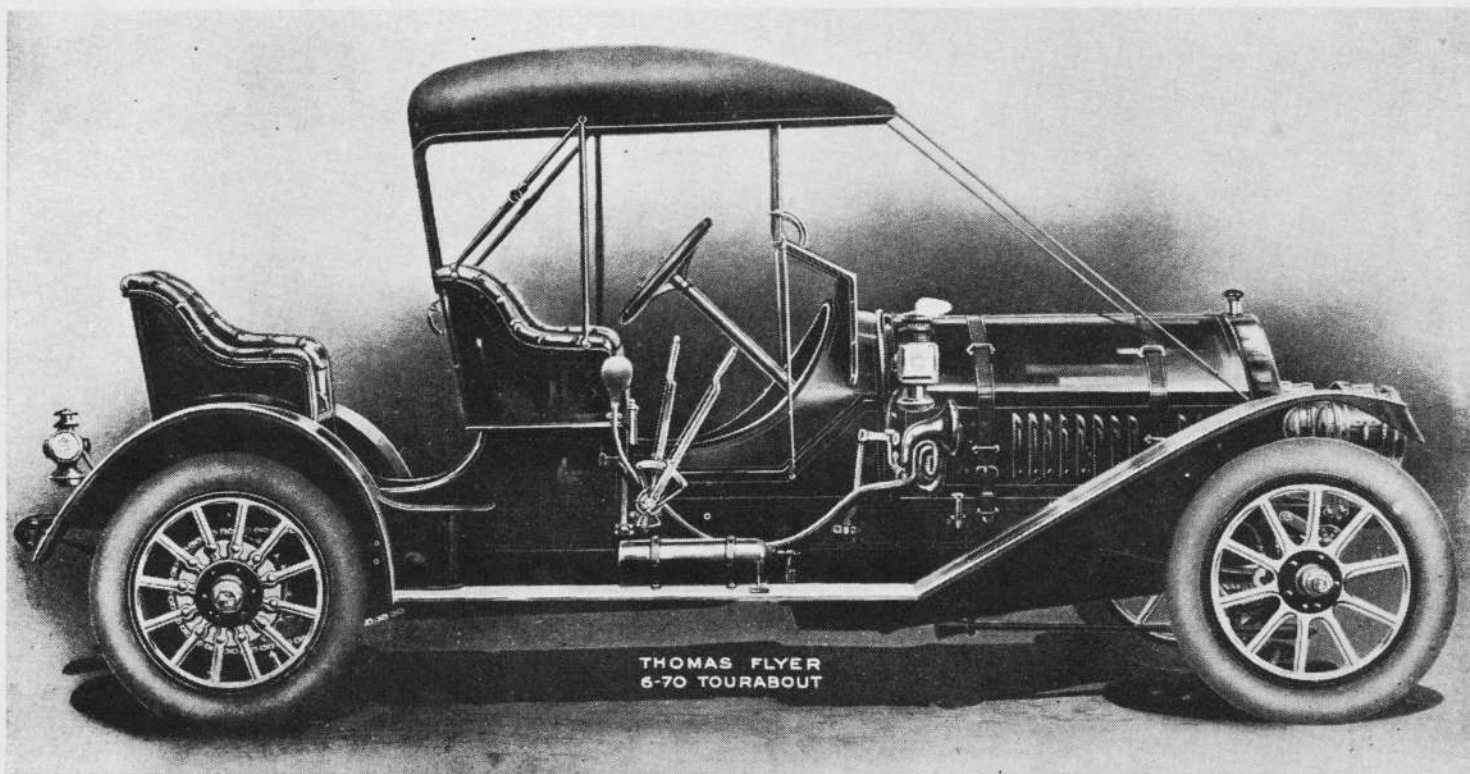
The unceasing effort of the Thomas organization will be to produce a high-powered car of the highest class and to develop and refine each model along the most advanced lines of sound engineering practice.

As an example of what we mean we ask your critical inspection at our nearest dealer's of the

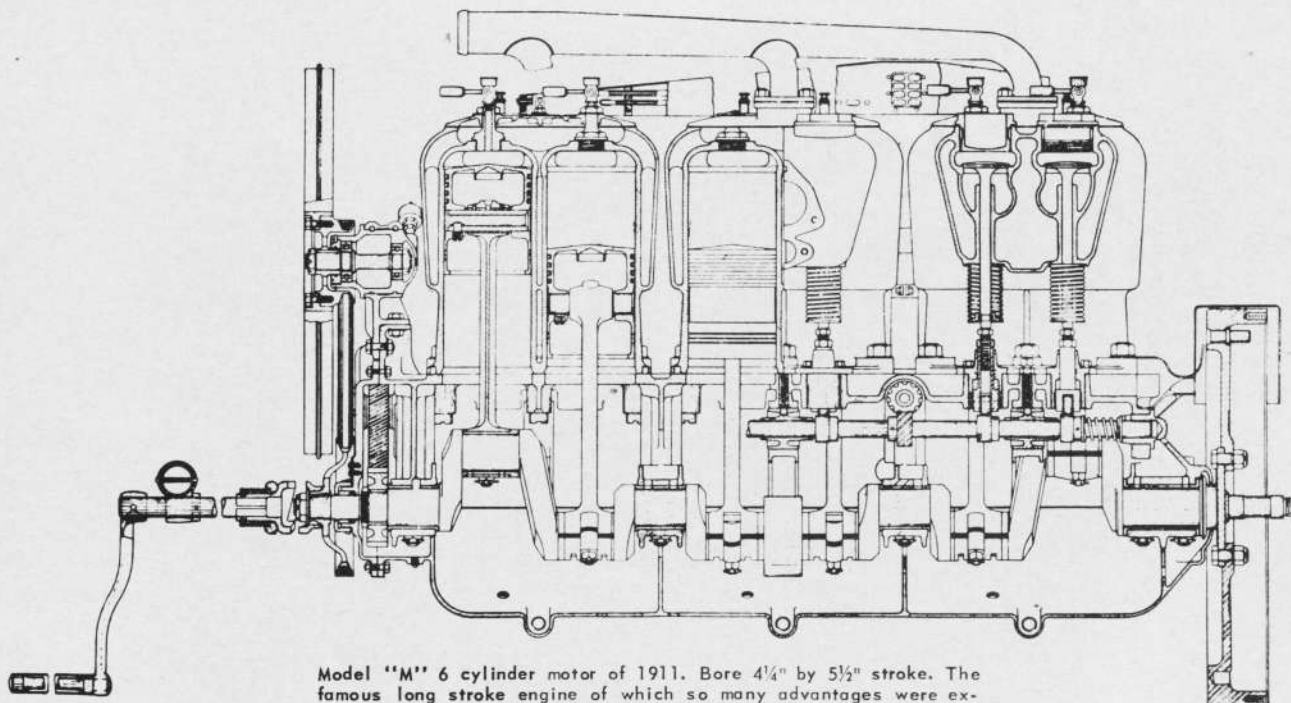
THOMAS MODEL M SIX CYLINDER CAR
COMPLETELY EQUIPPED, \$4000
We shall be glad to put you in touch with this dealer.

The E. R. Thomas Motor Car Co.
BUFFALO

Advertisement from April 1911 issue of "Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal" telling of the reorganization of the E. R. Thomas Motor Car Co. This was forerunner of receivership which occurred in August of 1912.

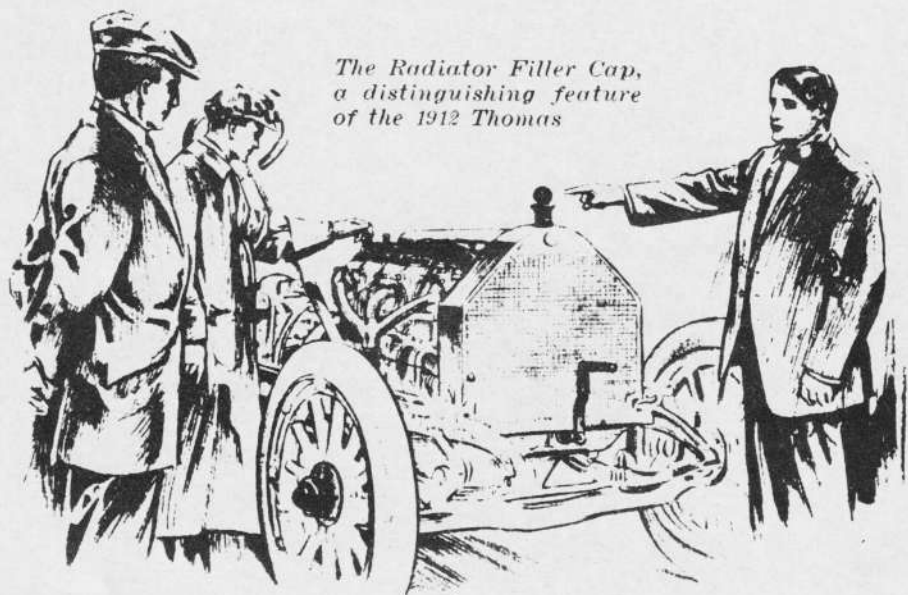
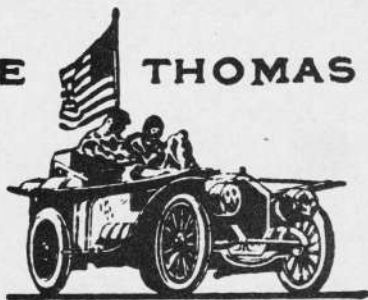


Tremendous 1911 Thomas 6-70 Tourabout. This car had interesting top which featured electric dome light and parcel carrier. Standard equipment also included electric cigar lighter run from storage battery. Specifications did not indicate whether there was a generator to charge the battery, or not.



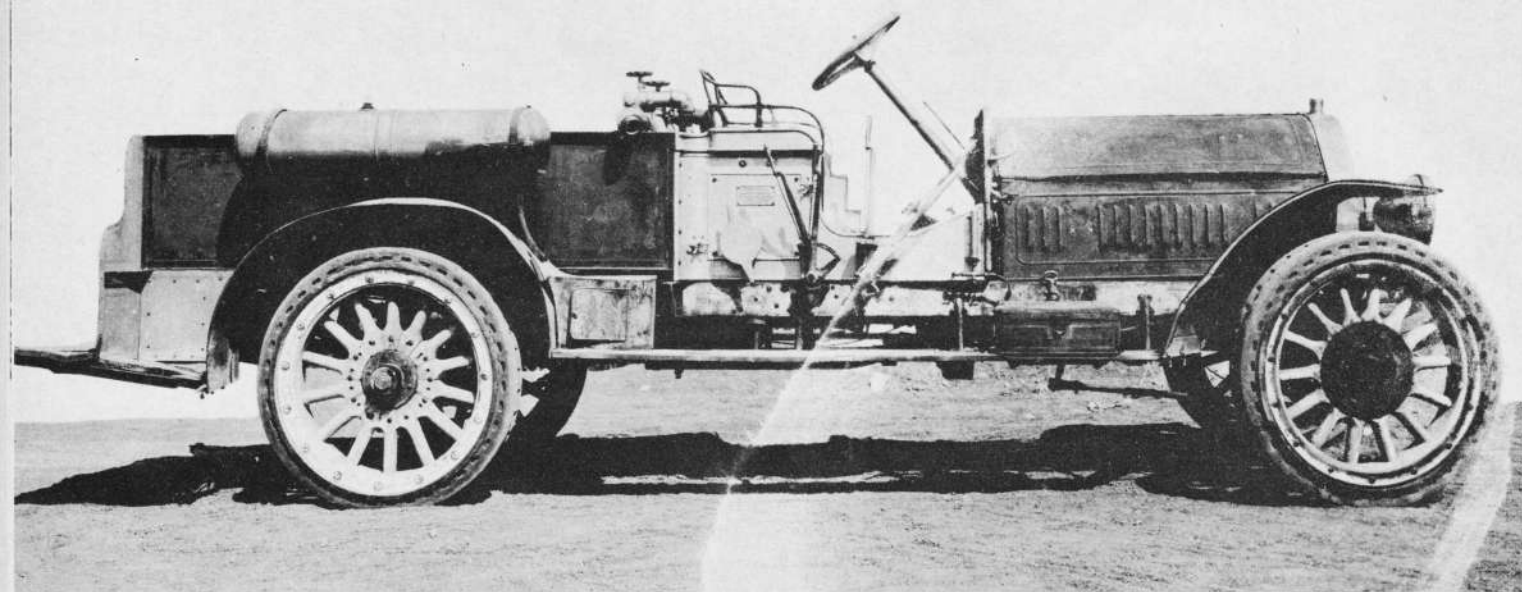
Model "M" 6 cylinder motor of 1911. Bore $4\frac{1}{4}$ " by $5\frac{1}{2}$ " stroke. The famous long stroke engine of which so many advantages were expounded. Major claim was that engine revolutions could be cut down thus eliminating extra wear. This is a quaint argument by present Detroit standards.

THE THOMAS FLYER

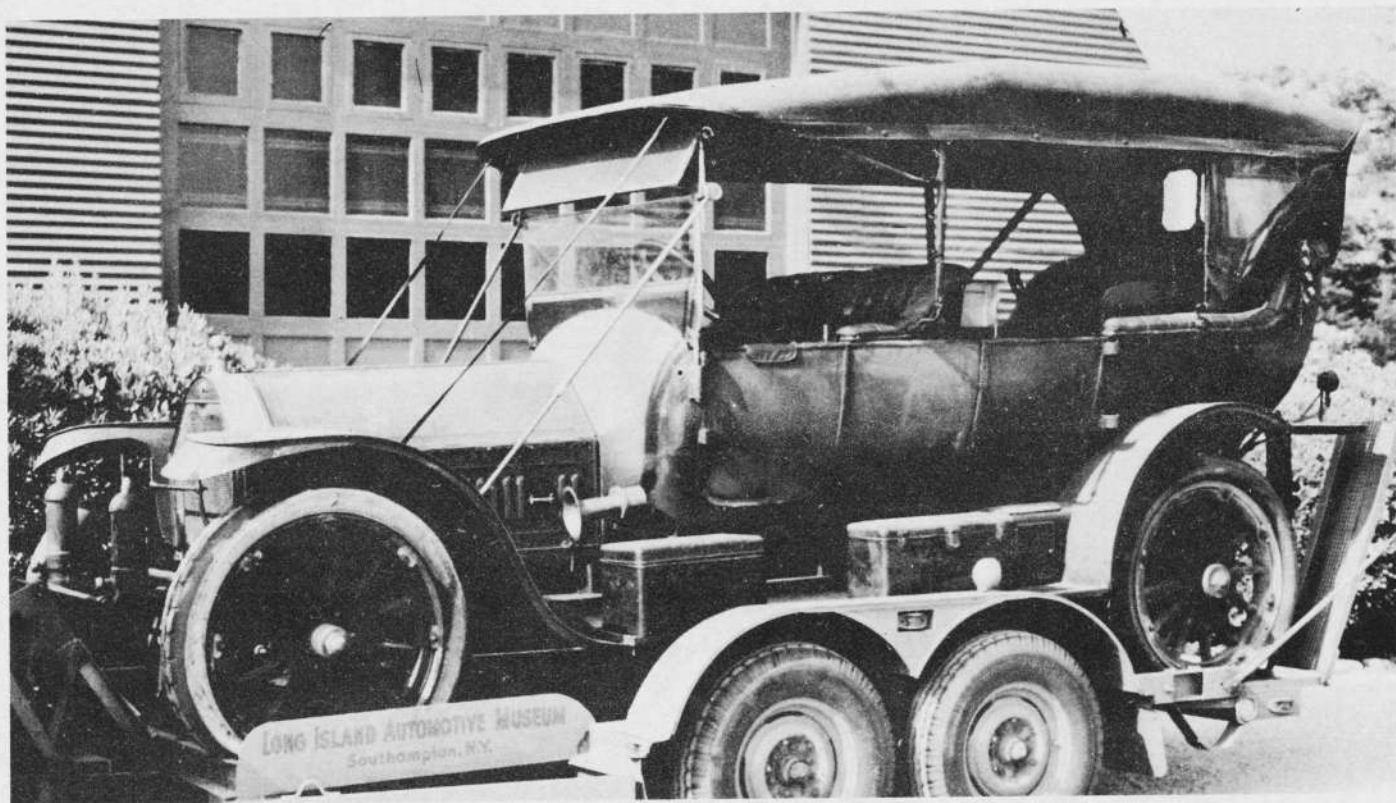


The Radiator Filler Cap, a distinguishing feature of the 1912 Thomas

"The Story of the Thomas" a book published in 1912, has a yarn in it about Sales Manager Fitzsimons conducting a Thomas owner and his chauffeur through the Thomas factory. When they reached the chassis Erecting Room Mr. Fitzsimons pointed out the round brass ball with the Thomas trademark emblem on it which decorated the radiator cap. The picture catches this dramatic moment.

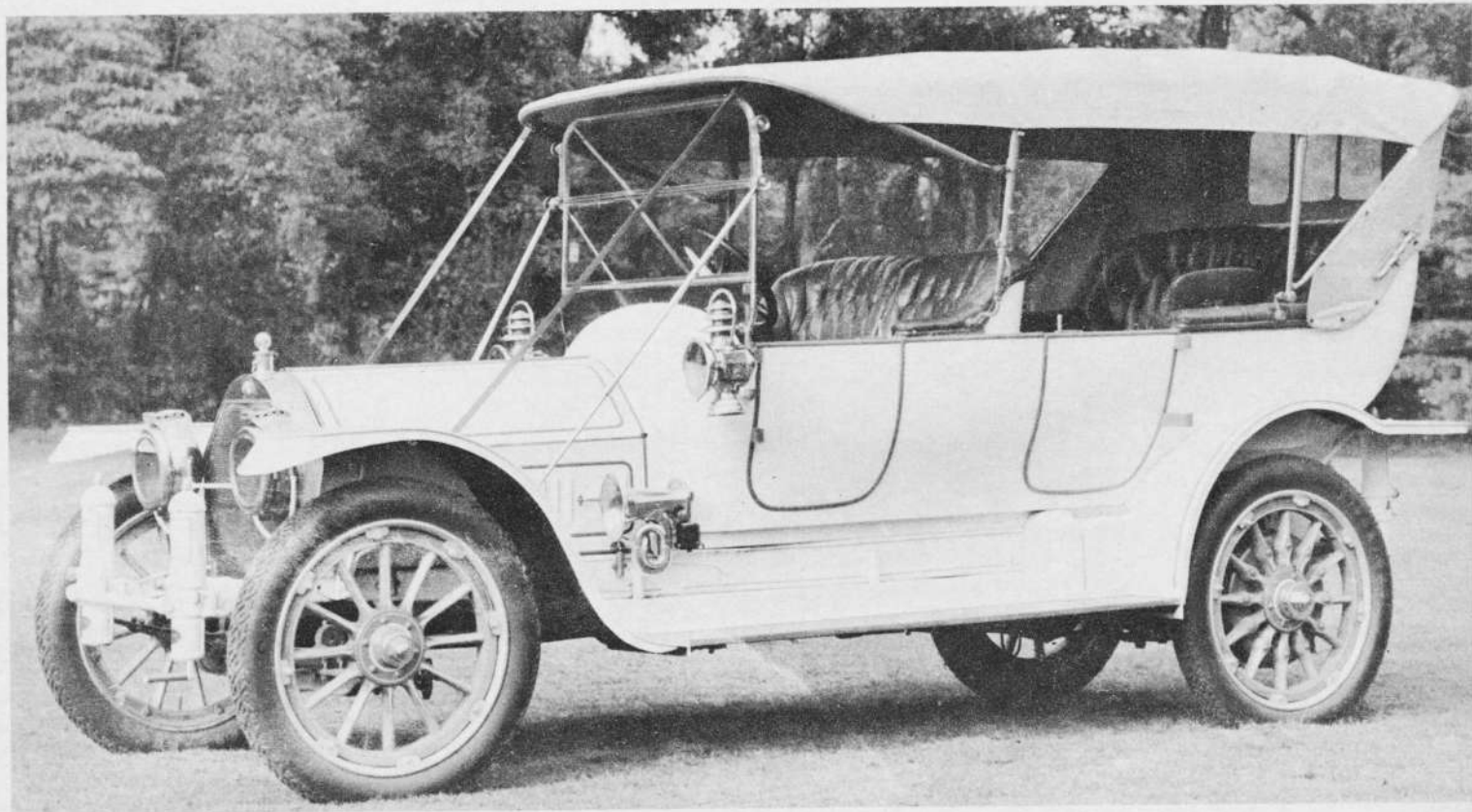


By 1912 Thomas was deep into the production of fire engines. Here is an example of that year's 6-70 pumper model KC from Bill Harrah's collection.



Before and after shots of 1912 Model MC 6-40 seven passenger touring car owned and restored by Kenneth K. Royl. 1912 was the last year of regular production by Thomas.

PHOTO COURTESY LONG ISLAND AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM



THOMAS MODELS THRU THE YEARS

1896, 1897, 1898 and 1900

Thomas Motor Company built the famous Thomas "Auto-Bi". This was a motor bicycle. It sported a single cylinder, $2\frac{1}{2}$ H.P. air cooled engine and was quite popular. Included also, was a motor tricycle of which no details are available.

During this same period development was under way on the production of a satisfactory horseless carriage. In 1899 a tight carriage was built, with 3 H.P. engine, to sell for \$800. This little vehicle had a planetary transmission and chain drive. Production figures are not known.

1900 Carriage type body, one cylinder 3 H.P. engine, planetary transmission and single chain drive.

1901-1902 The car still had a one cylinder engine, but with a sliding gear transmission. An early catalog stated that in 1901 the goal came a little closer with the manufacture of runabouts and cheap tonneau. The year 1902 brought the use of roller bearings on all axles.

1903 In this year Thomas began to push the automobile business. The catalog of that year lists automobiles, motor bicycles, steel and leather belts - in that order. This year, also, a model number was assigned to the car "The New Thomas Model 18". The engine was known as "Thomas Motor No. 93", one cylinder water cooled, but no bore or stroke is specified. Sliding gear transmission with single chain drive to rear axle.

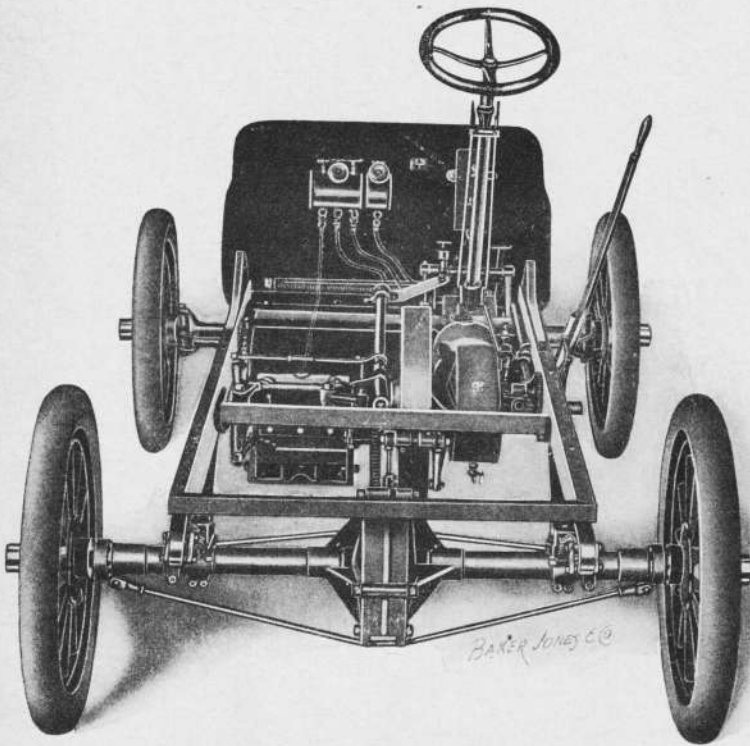
Two body Styles were offered. One was a King of the Belgians style, with rear entrance detachable tonneau. The other was a physician's runabout.

1904 After a beautiful build up on the one cylinder auto in 1903, Thomas chucked the whole line and went to three cylinders in 1904, Model No. 24-24 H.P. Some of the arguments used were convincing indeed. Bore $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches and stroke $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, automatic inlet valves and cone clutch. The transmission was housed in an aluminum case as was the differential. Double chain drive to the rear wheels. Rear entrance touring and light roadster were built.

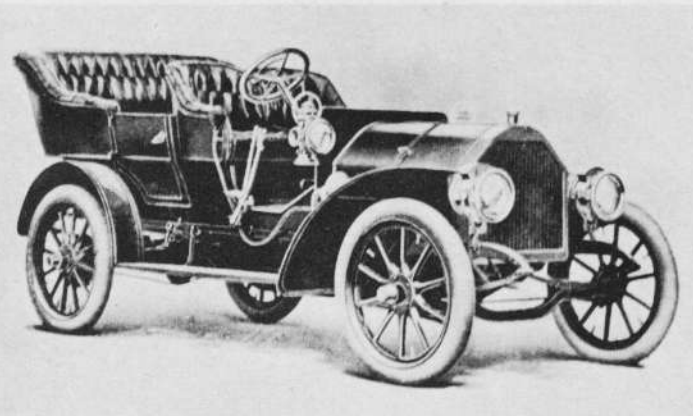
1905 Came another turnabout this year, the cylinders now number four and six. Models were as follows:

Four Cylinders-40 H.P. Model 25-Touring
 Four Cylinders-40 H.P. Model 26-Side Entrance Tonneau
 Four Cylinders-50 H.P. Model 29-Limousine
 Six Cylinders-60 H.P. Model 27-Side Entrance Tonneau or racing body

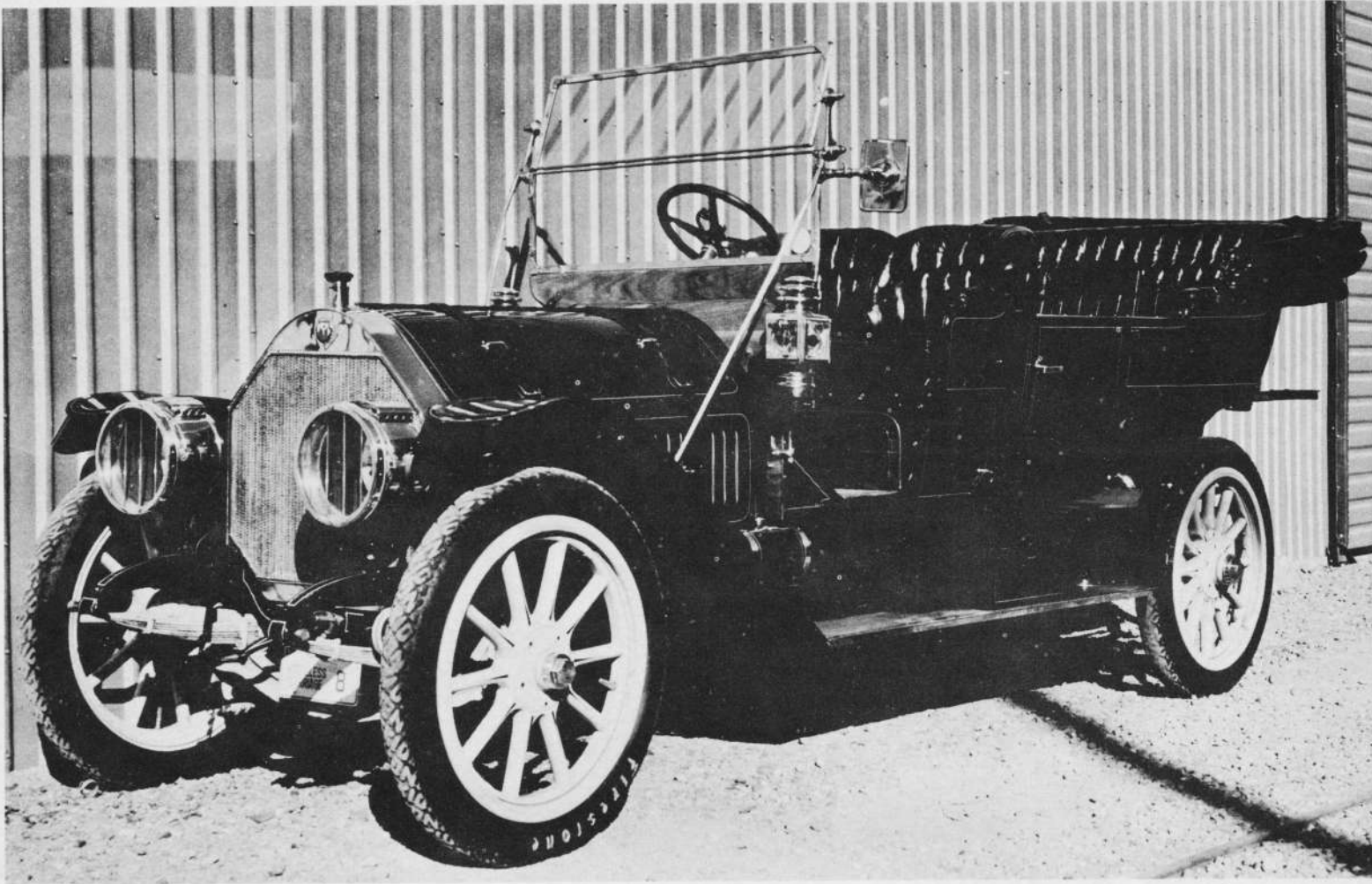
1906 This year featured one four cylinder engine of 50 H.P. It had $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch bore and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch stroke. There was a three-disc metallic clutch of Thomas design. Transmission was sliding gear selective type housed in an aluminum box. Final drive was by double side chain, and this deserves a word. Two full pages of the catalog are devoted to justification of this method of applying power to the rear wheels. The clinching argument was as follows: "The shaft drive has been abandoned with reluctance but it has been tried and found wanting." The only talking point in favor of the shaft drive being its neatness and the absence of the purring of the chains. This last item is a noise that a lot of antique fans would love to hear today.



Chassis of 1903 Model 18 Thomas appears similar to most cars of the period. One singular feature is cross mounted sliding gear transmission as opposed to usual planetary unit for this type of drive. Thomas always made virtually all of their own components. Wheels carried 28" x 3" tires.



This car is result of Thomas venture in to Detroit auto production in 1907. Model CII, 40 H.P., four cylinder touring car. It was claimed this car was entirely new, direct from the drawing board. Something that would not conflict with the famous 4-60 model built in Buffalo.



Here is Bill Harrah's monstrous 1910 Model "K" 6-70 touring car. Engine $5\frac{1}{2}$ " bore by $5\frac{1}{2}$ " stroke. Wheelbase 140" and tires $38 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ " front with $38 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ " back. And this car will really travel as many drivers of Buicks, Fords, and Stanleys will attest after watching it go bye-bye on the Reno tour!

Four Cylinder—50 H.P. Model 31—Touring
 Four Cylinder—50 H.P. Model 32—Limousine
 Four Cylinder—50 H.P. Model 33—Landaulet
 Four Cylinder—50 H.P. Model 34—Demi—Limousine

Note the last three models show that expensive luxury is beginning to show in the Thomas line.

1907 This is the year that production was split between E. R. Thomas Motor Co., Buffalo, N.Y., and E. R. Thomas Detroit Co., Detroit, Michigan. Cars from each plant were radically different and this arrangement only lasted a short while.

Thomas, Detroit Models

Four Cylinder—40 H.P. Model C-I—2 Seater Runabout
 Four Cylinder—40 H.P. Model C-II—Touring

Thomas, Buffalo Models

Four Cylinder—60 H.P. Model 36—Touring
 Four Cylinder—60 H.P. Model 39—Limousine
 Four Cylinder—60 H.P. Model XL—Landaulet

Model 36 is the one that went around the world in 1908.

1908 In this year the handbook of the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers listed production under two headings. They were E. R. Thomas Detroit Co., Detroit, Michigan, and E. R. Thomas Motor Co., Buffalo, N. Y. The E. R. Thomas interest in the Detroit plant was sold to Hugh Chalmers during 1908.

E. R. Thomas Detroit Co., Detroit, Michigan

Four Cylinder—40 H.P. Model 4-40—Touring

E. R. Thomas Motor Co., Buffalo, N.Y.

Four Cylinder—16.9 H.P. Model 4-20—Landaulet
 Four Cylinder—48 H.P. Model 4-60—Touring
 Six Cylinder—72 H.P. Model 6-70—Touring

During 1908 the Thomas Company, suffering some financial troubles, was given a tremendous boost by winning the New York to Paris race. In our time it is hard to imagine the impact this event made on the general public of 1908.

CONTINUED

THE THOMAS FLYER



1909 Thomas was now catering strictly to the wealthy prospect as witness the list of cars produced in this year. Only exception was cheaper Model "L":

Four Cylinder-53 H.P. Model "F" 4-60-Touring
 Four Cylinder-53 H.P. Model "F" 4-60-Flyabout
 Four Cylinder-53 H.P. Model "F" 4-60-Tourabout
 Four Cylinder-53 H.P. Model "F" 4-60-Limousine
 Four Cylinder-53 H.P. Model "F" 4-60-Landaulet

Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70-Touring
 Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70-Flyabout
 Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70-Tourabout
 Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70-Limousine
 Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70-Landaulet

Six Cylinder-31 H.P. Model "L" 6-40-Touring
 Six Cylinder-31 H.P. Model "L" 6-40-Flyabout
 Six Cylinder-31 H.P. Model "L" 6-40-Tourabout
 Six Cylinder-31 H.P. Model "L" 6-40-Limousine

Four Cylinder-18 H.P. Model "G" 4-16-Cabriolet
 Four Cylinder-18 H.P. Model "G" 4-16-Town Car
 Brougham
 Four Cylinder-18 H.P. Model "G" 4-16-Landaulet

Four engine and chassis sizes, and seventeen body styles, almost every one aimed at the man of distinction.

1910 Again we have a splurge of engine and body styles. More or less the same as 1909, with new designations.

Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70 with following bodies:
 Touring, Tourabout, Flyabout, Landaulet and Limousine.

Six Cylinder-40 H.P. Model "M" 6-40 with following bodies:
 Touring, Combination Car (with features of Runabout, Tourabout, and Flyabout), Runabout, Tourabout, Limousine and Landaulet.

Four Cylinder-60 H.P. Model "F" 4-60 with following bodies:
 Touring, Tourabout, Flyabout, Limousine and Landaulet.

Four Cylinder-28 H.P. Model "R" Ladies Special Town Car-Landaulet.

1911 Thomas continued to have a great profusion of models, a type for every human whim.

Six Cylinder-72 H.P. Model "K" 6-70 with following bodies:
 Touring, Tourabout, Flyabout, Limousine and Landaulet.

Six Cylinder-40 H.P. Model "M" 6-40 with following bodies:
 Touring, Fore Door Touring, Seven Passenger Touring, Fore Door Seven Passenger Touring, Tourabout, Flyabout, Fore Door Flyabout, Limousine and Landaulet.

Four Cylinder-28 H.P. Model "R" 4-28 Town Car with following bodies:
 Broughm, Limousine and Landaulet.

Even Ford or G. M. today can't offer such a variety of body styles. The Company was re-organized in May 1911 with a whole new staff of executives who moved over from Packard Motor Car Company.

1912 The policy of building only high class and expensive cars continued in this year. The large 6-70, still chain drive, was built on special order.

Six Cylinder-60 H.P. Model "MC" 6-40 with the following bodies:
 Seven Passenger Touring, Five Passenger Phaeton, Surrey, Runabout, Limousine or Landaulet with Touring Car Type Foredoors, Vestibuled Limousine or Landaulet, Inside Drive Broughm and Coupe.

Six Cylinder-70 H.P. Model "KC" 6-70 with following bodies:
 Seven Passenger Touring, Flyabout, Runabout, Limousine or Landaulet with Touring Car Type Foredoors, and Vestibuled Limousine or Landaulet.

On August 29th, 1912 receivers took over control of the E. R. Thomas Motor Car Company. A peremptory sale was held, starting March 17th 1913 to disperse the company assets for the benefit of creditors.

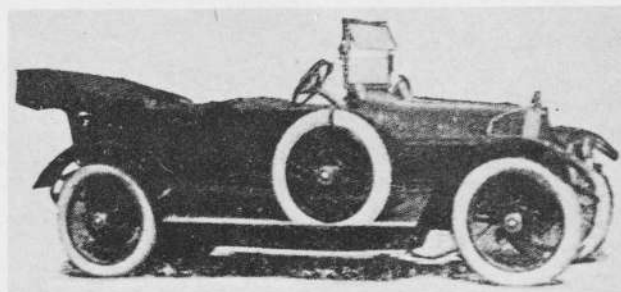
1913 Despite the receiver's sale in early 1913 the Company was revitalized enough to present one model:

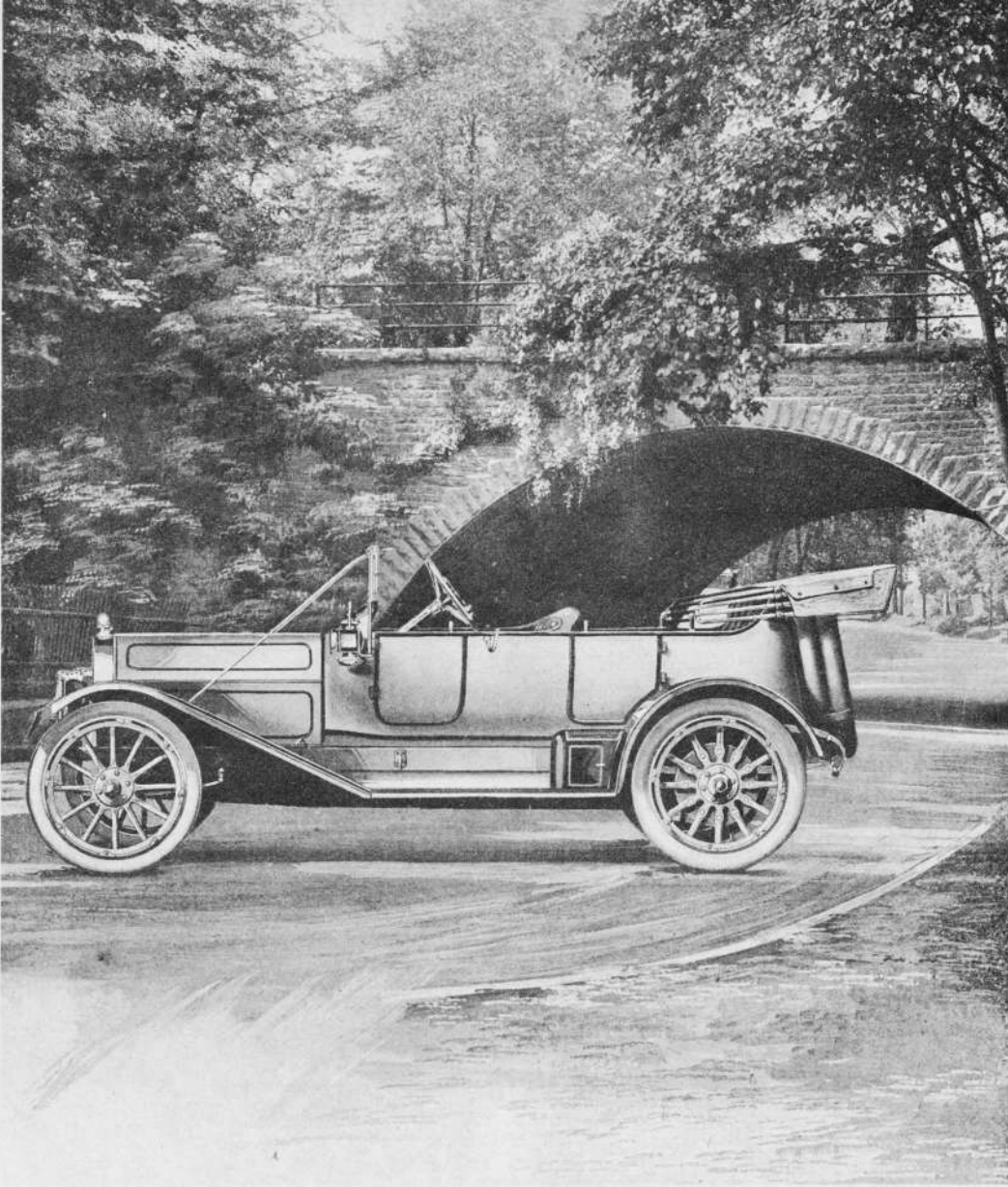
Six Cylinder-46 H.P. Model 6-46 with following bodies:
 Touring, Phaeton, Surrey and Runabout.

There is reason to believe that few were made.

1914 Models K and KC-No further information. Production not known.

1915 Models MCX and K. The MCX had six cylinders, 43 H.P. and was supplied in either 5 passenger touring at \$3250, or 7 passenger touring at \$3250.





By 1912 Thomas cars were showing fore-door bodies on every model featured in the catalog of that year. This surrey shows early symptoms of streamlining. Some refinements of the 1912 models were as follows: Cam shaft bearings graduated 1/64" front to back to facilitate installation or removal. Speedometer in center of dash so both passengers in front may read it. One key opens all Yale locks on the car. Running board splashers arranged to drain water beneath the running boards, etc.

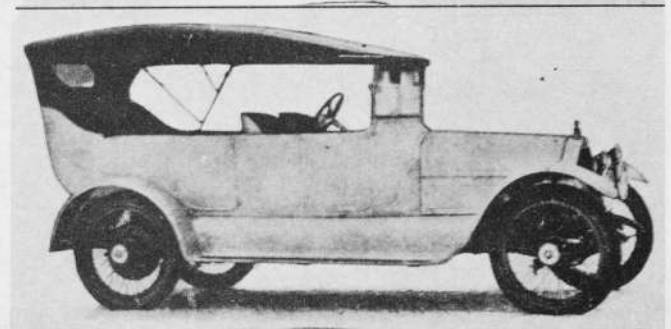
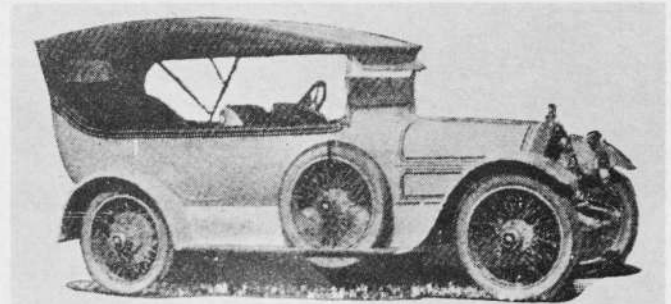
1916 In July 1915 the E. R. Thomas Motor Car Co. announced their new model for 1916 as follows: ▶

Six Cylinder-43 H.P. Model MF with following bodies:
Touring \$4000, Roadster \$3600, Limousine \$4800,
Berline \$5000, Coupe \$4500, Sedan \$4800.

Also Model K was listed.

1917 Models MF and K were again announced for this year. ▶

How many cars were produced during the period 1913-1917 is a hard question to answer. Apparently there was an attempt at keeping the Thomas name alive, but production must have been small. No cars of these years are known to exist.



How to find a THOMAS

These pictures were made by George F. Puth of Torrance, California, who owns a Thomas six cylinder, 60 H.P. model MC 6-40 7 passenger touring. The car was discovered in Wisconsin and it took 12 long years of persistence to finally buy it. Then came the job of digging it out of the back yard rubble where it had lain for 35 years.

To quote Mr. Puth: "My first act in the restoration was chopping down the trees growing up through the frame and digging out the springs from the ground. Luckily it was complete and most of the parts were stored in the owner's house. It has a very distinctive radiator cap and headlamps."

This radiator cap was a special feature of 1912 Thomas cars. It was a round brass ball with the Thomas trade mark emblazoned on it.



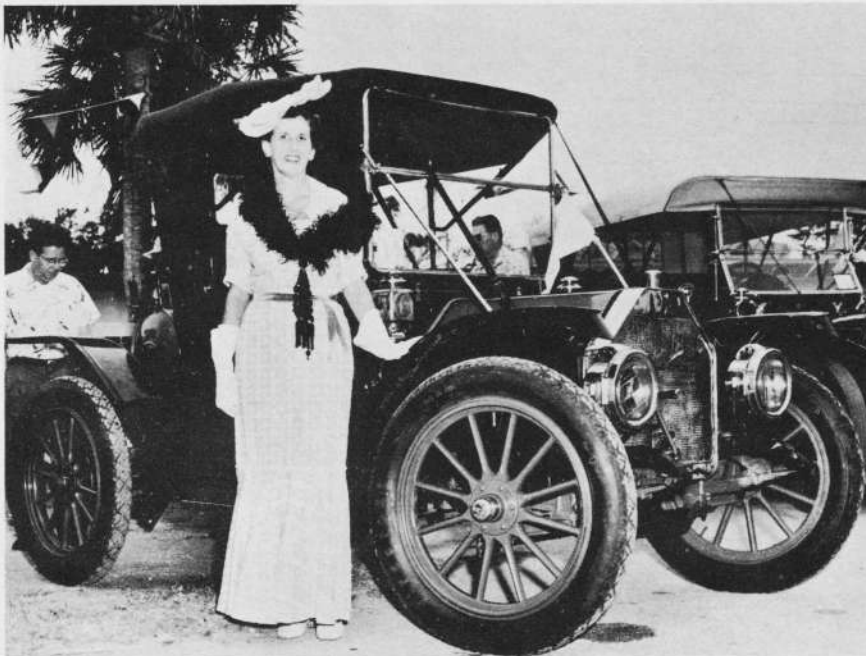
The verdant Wisconsin Climate sprouted trees and vines all over and through the frame. This is after considerable work had been expended bringing the frame to light. Springs are firmly embedded. It took ten days to dig out and assemble all of the parts for transport to California.

Rear of aluminum body shines out of bosky thicket. Paint is completely gone due to years of exposure. All wood was rotten and upholstery was hardly restorable. There was not a dent in the body.

Entire 5000 pounds of the car stowed on a slightly sprung trailer for trip home. One tire, miraculously, still held air.

Florida members meet

The Birthplace of Speed Association again sponsored Florida's top Winter antique car meet, with about 75 cars attending. HCCA members were prominent among the award winners, Mal Harris' 1910 Brush and Jerry Foley's Mercer raceabout both taking first place awards. The quarter mile sprint race for pre-1911 cars was won by Charles Sebastian in his 1910 Hupmobile.



Mrs. M. B. O'Kelley of Leesburg, Florida with her 1911 Buick roadster.



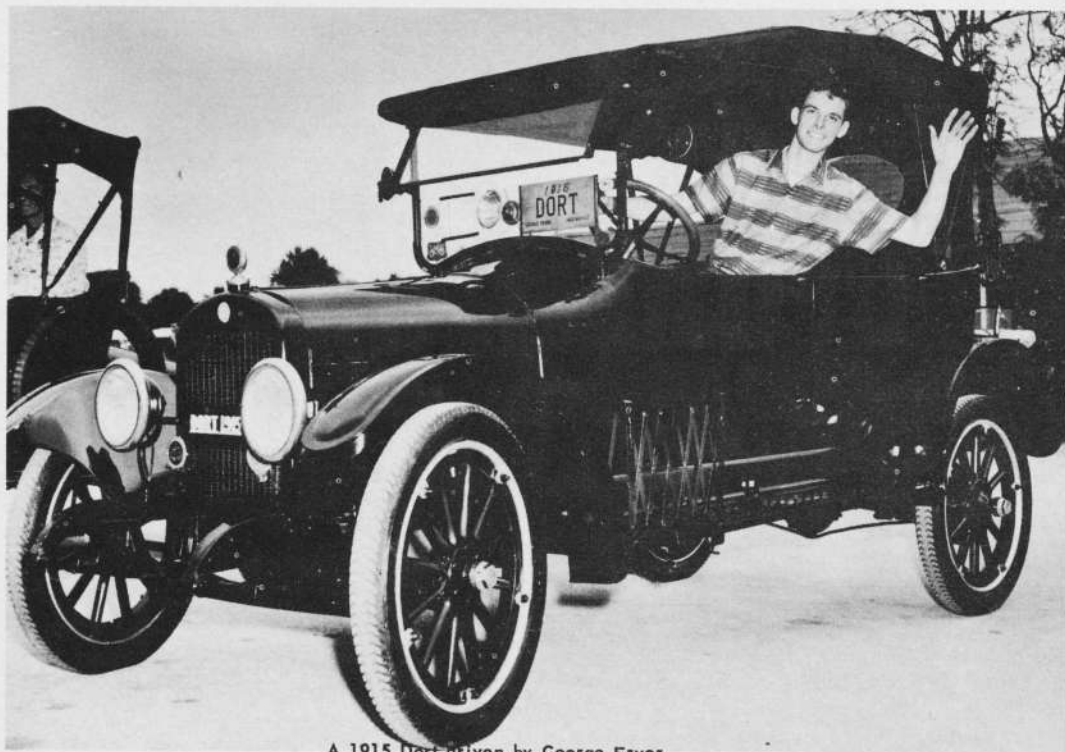


THANKS

. to Bill Harrah for making his library available. Much of the foregoing THOMAS material was lifted from his collection. Thanks are also due Dr. Alfred S. Lewerenz, Sam De Bolt, Gordon Howard John W. Ripley, Harry Pulfer, Henry Austin Clark, Ed Catlett, Fred Hayward, Floyd Clymer, John G. Perrin, and Ransom B. Matthews for original material, help, advice, suggestions, criticism and pictures that made the job of compiling this story a lot of fun and easier than it might have been.

Dick Philippi

et at Ormond Beach



A 1915 Dorr driven by George Fryer.

Lester Foley of Jacksonville, Florida in his 1907 Cadillac touring car.