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## **BROWN FAMILY AUTOS – 1915 TO PRESENT**

"Let me tell you about the car my father used to drive. I can remember riding in it when I was a kid. It was really something and I'll never forget those trips we took." This is a comment all of us have heard or made ourselves. It is probably one of the chief reasons that we like antique cars, isn't it? But then we usually hear or say, "Gee, I wish I had a picture of the car, but if there ever was one, it is lost or no one ever took a snapshot of it." This is a question that I keep asking myself from time to time as I write about cars that we had in the family or those owned by friends or relatives---why didn't anyone take a picture of that great vehicle since it was such an important possession and a part of the family activities? I wish that I could send our editor a snapshot to go with the story.

Let me illustrate further what I'm thinking about. Our first family automobile was a 1914 Dodge touring, which was purchased before I was born, but I know what it looks like because someone, perhaps my grandfather, Otto Heeren, took it. "Grosspapa" (as he liked to be referred to as a German grandfather) was an excellent amateur photographer and I have a collection of his work. These photographs made with a large camera on a tripod are mostly about people, family, relatives, or friends, but not cars or carriages. We have just one great picture. Seated at the wheel is my 43 year old father, Alton, and sitting beside him is a man wearing a cap and light jacket. I have been told that he is a professional driver hired by my father to teach him how to drive. It seems strange that he waited so long before buying a car because he married my mother in 1903—but then they lived in a large city that had a great network of electric trolley cars and also they were just a short distance from the Pennsylvania railroad line that had many local stations along its main line. So, an automobile was not necessary at that time.

Now, back to the photograph. Seated in the back seat is my mother, Nelle, with a small child on her lap, my sister Adele. Since my sister was born in July 1913 and appears to be a toddler, the photo was probably taken in 1915 during the summer since the car top is folded down and a picnic basket also appears on the back seat. This picture tells a story of something that happened before I was born and it is part of my memories of my parents. It also makes me ask why Grandfather didn't take pictures of our second car, a 1917 Liberty which was built during World War I and painted in military olive drab. I know why he didn't photograph our 1918 Hudson since he died in 1917... although, I have a beautiful birthday card written to me in his hand-lettered style and a little silver cereal bowl inscribed with my name, I only know how he looked because of family photographs.

I do vaguely remember the Hudson before we moved to Los Angeles for about a year and a half. While we were there my father purchased from a cousin a Chalmers (perhaps a 1920 model) with a California top. We took several trips to the national parks

in this car but I have only 2 snapshots of it. When we came back to Pittsburgh to stay, Dad sold the Hudson and bought the 1921 Studebaker sedan my Uncle Tom had bought new when seized with the urge to drive at age 57. However, he lost interest and had the car on storage jacks in his garage. I remember this car well because we had it for ten years but nobody took a picture of it! Why? My Dad took a lot of photos with his Graflex but he didn't photograph any of the cars he loved so well.

I've recounted my experience in being run over by Dad in our 1926 Chandler opera coupe and also, we had briefly a little boxy 1924 Chevrolet coupe but again, no pictures. I'd give my right arm---Correction---I wouldn't go that far because it is a part of my body that makes my hand available to write things, but I would give something valuable to have a few snapshots of our fabulous Marmon 1923 model 34 passenger touring car. I see pictures in a car magazine of children sitting on the running board or seated in the back seat of the family Model T; the gas headlights and massive radiator of a 1908 Maxwell framing a couple of small children or their proud father.

I really envy the man who sent in the picture as he points out that HE is the small boy or the baby in the picture. I wish Dad had taken a picture of me beside or inside or in front of the Marmon. Perhaps he might have persuaded Mother to get his picture, as he sat at the wheel wearing his white linen driving cap and black linen jacket, holding between his lips one of his favorite ten inch long "stogies", but of course, she did not.

We have one photo of his 1928 Jordan sedan which he gave to my mother and hired a handy man to drive her around shopping. It is this man, Thomas Floate, who is standing beside the car—not one of the family and then the last car he bought before his death, the beautiful 1930 Jordan Air-Line Eight...there is not one picture of it! I learned to drive using the 1928 car but it was that tan bodied, black-fendered, red-wooden spoked Air-Line Eight that I was privileged to drive my mother, sister, and a friend to the 1934 Chicago World's Fair in. Did anyone take a picture of it as we drove to the Fair? NO!

Now I do have a few photos of our new 1934 Dodge sedan—a side view and a picture of me washing it, thanks to my sister. In spite of it being my very own first car, I seem to have only one or two pictures of my 1930 Model A Coupe and just a couple of shots of my 1933 rumble seat Dodge coupe I drove to California in 1936. While there, I had several rides in my Uncle George Brown's 1931 classic Marmon V-16, but did I stop to take a picture? The answer to that is obvious and I have only mental snapshots of that great car.

When I purchased my first new car, a 1937 Dodge business coupe, I did photograph it, but I had no color films to show that beautiful Stratosphere blue color. I have a number of shots of our trustworthy 1941 Chrysler Windsor four door sedan which carried my growing family on short trips to Church, Waynesboro, or Staunton. No long trips could be made after early 1942 when gas rationing went into effect and cars such as mine with a green "A" sticker were entitled to small amounts of gasoline, ranging from 5 gallons to perhaps 8 gallons, based on how many oil tankers had been sunk by German subs off our Virginia and Carolina coasts. This measure was also to save tires because

no natural rubber was available for civilian use and butyl rubber was not yet in production.

When I was finally able to turn in the faithful Chrysler with its patched-up blue leather upholstery, the original 1941 Goodyear tires, that had been re-capped just before Japan surrendered in August 1945, were still on it. Expenses for repairs for all those years were less than \$100. What a car that was!

Of course, I have snapshots of our first new post war car, a 1941 Nash Air-Flyte Sedan with fold-down seats and the first one-piece curved windshield in the industry. The other cars that followed were photographed one way or another so I have pictures that my children can show their children of "Daddy standing beside the big blue Nash" or "There's your mother leaning out the back window of the 1953 Chrysler."

Well, that's the saga of autos in the Brown family from 1915 to present. The lesson I wanted to teach or convey is this: Please take photos of each family car you have and have your descendants keep clicking away for the enlightenment of posterity; and remember to write on the back the name of the car, the names of the people in or around it, and the year. Remember, our present family cars are our grand and great-grandchildren's antique cars of the twenty-first century.

## CARS OF MY YOUTH

A new year has arrived and as Libby, her son John, and I sat near the woodstove in the fireplace watching TV, we almost forgot to count the seconds left in the old year and then wish each other a HAPPY NEW YEAR. Turning back the years in my mind, I remember that we often went to my grandmother's home for the New Year's Eve dinner and then my sister Adele, my cousins, and I would be "put to bed" and awakened to greet the New Year. Outside in the streets, we could hear automobile horns honking and church bells ringing, as we rubbed the sleep from our drooping eyelids.

With these memories in mind, I began to think of what had happened during the years that some of our family cars were new. Soon after Dad bought our 1914 Dodge, a twenty year old Serbian named Gavrilo Princip, shot Austrian Prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife. A few months later, World War I began and the world has never been the same after that.

When I was one year old, my father bought a 1917 Hudson sedan and the United States declared war on Germany. In later years, I remember the Hudson but, of course, I don't remember the war. After we moved to California in 1921, I remember the second hand Chalmers Dad bought us to take tours of Yosemite, Yellowstone, and Grand Canyon National Parks. I also recall hearing that the great tenor, Enrico Caruso died that summer.

The Chalmers had a "California top" with sliding windows and in spite of the radiator that frequently boiled over and a rash of punctured tires; we enjoyed our travels in it.

In 1922 we came back home to live with my Uncle Tom in Pittsburgh. Dad bought Uncle Tom's 1920 Studebaker Sedan which was sitting up on jacks in the garage because he decided he didn't want to learn to drive an automobile. 1923 was the year that President Harding died and also when Dad bought his pride and joy---a Model 34 Marmon seven-passenger touring car. The following year I remember looking up in the sky and seeing the dirigible *Shenandoah* and later the ZR-3 built in Germany and re-named the "Los Angeles". Both of these ships could not be flown at the same time because the Navy Department didn't want to spend more money for helium, so the gas was valved out of one airship and placed in the other. Those were the days when our government really knew how to save money!

It was about this time that our family moved into our own house next door about a hundred yards up the street. We now had a large two-car garage which I have described previously, and the Marmon shared space with the old Studebaker. It was now 1925 and our country was shocked to hear that the mighty *Shenandoah* was torn apart in an Ohio thunderstorm and 14 crewmen lost their lives.

When 1926 rolled around the Studebaker was traded in on a Chandler Opera Coupe. I remember how excited everyone was when they heard that Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett had flown a Fokker tri-motor plane over the North Pole and a few days later the Airship *Norge* duplicated their feat. In those days, almost everything done in the air was a "first."

Another first occurred at our home when I darted out from the corner of the house into the path of our Chandler which knocked me down and pinned me beneath the front wheel. You know that I survived or I wouldn't be telling you this story, but I did have some sore ribs for several weeks.

The 1927 found our cars a year older and the world was astounded to hear that Charles Lindberg had crossed the Atlantic Ocean alone from New York to Paris. He was soon followed by Clarence Chamberlain and then Richard Byrd, whose Fokker tri-plane almost made it but had to ditch in the ocean because of the fog.

The Chandler had become an "orphan car" in 1928 so it was traded for a Jordan sedan just about the time that Cal Coolidge turned the presidency over to Herbert Hoover. Richard Byrd was promoted to a rear admiral and took off for the South Pole. This was the year I fell in love with a Model A Ford and I started saving my nickels and dimes toward a purchase in the distant future.

I remember 1929 for several things: I had my first date with a girl, Dad sold the beloved Marmon, and the stock market crashed in October. To me the importance of these events was in the order I just gave. Of course, the stock market crash proved to be the most important of the three.

In 1930 Dad decided to buy another car for his own use and to give the 1928 Jordan to my mother. He employed an unemployed preacher, who assumed duties of handyman and chauffeur for mother. This move was necessary because my sister Adele was away at college and I was not old enough to get a driver's license. I was sure that I could drive, but the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania thought otherwise.

Dad's new car was a 1930 Jordan Airline Eight sedan. It had a beige body, black fenders, and crimson artillery wheels. Wow! Over in Germany that year Hitler's Nazi Party was getting more seats in the Reichstag, but nobody in the US paid any attention to that.

We used the new Jordan to take a trip to Canada and to go camping in northern Pennsylvania. Soon after these trips Dad became ill and never recovered his health. Early in 1933 I became the male head of our family. Now it was my turn to take Mother shopping and visiting relatives and I treated that Jordan like it was the Crown Jewels---washing, waxing, and driving it very, very carefully. This was the year that Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and a man named Zangara took a shot at President-elect Roosevelt and killed Mayor Cermak of Chicago instead.

In 1934 I drove my mother, my sister, and my uncle's housekeeper to the World's Fair in Chicago---just after I bribed my teachers into allowing me to graduate from high school.

Also that year, in addition to the World's Fair, the world learned that Russia was admitted to membership in the League of Nations and in Canada, Mr. and Mrs. Dionne had quintuplets---all girls. Later that year, I persuaded Mother to sell the two Jordans and buy a new Dodge sedan; It had a gun-metal gray paint job and "free-wheeling". The Jordan factory in Cleveland closed and their cars joined the growing list of orphans caused by the Depression. Such great marques as Marmon, Pierce-Arrow, Peerless, and Stutz were gone forever. So were my youthful, carefree days. I was accepted as a member of the freshman class at Bethany College. Bethany College where all dates back at the girl's dormitory by midnight, no beer, and no automobiles. But we still had a wonderful time!

## CARS FROM MY COLLEGE DAYS

I associate my college days with two cars; both of which I bought second hand. My very first car was a 1930 Model A Standard coupe with a rumble seat. It was painted Kewanee and Elkpoint green and I paid \$180 for it. I doubt if Cinderella was more thrilled with her pumpkin coach than I was when I started the A and headed for home.

I drove the car about two years between Pittsburgh and Bethany College in rain, snow, and fair weather without any major problems. On one occasion I was traveling between Bethany and Wellsburg, West Virginia when the ice jam in Buffalo Creek suddenly broke up. The water rushed over the roads and huge cakes of ice came floating down towards me. I managed to keep away from the ice cakes which must have weighed twenty tons or more but I was concerned when the murky waters rose over the running boards.

The only way that I could guess where the roads were was by watching the fence posts on either side of the road and hoping that I was in the middle. I also remember that the high water forced hundreds of rats out of their lairs and several hundred of them began swimming my way. Some of them tried to clamber up on the running boards but I was able to go fast enough to wash them off. I soon reached higher ground and the only problem that I encountered were a set of four very wet brake bands that took a while to dry out...To make a long story short, I kept the Model A for about two years and then "traded up" for a 1933 Dodge coupe. It was painted black, had the famous Dodge ram on the radiator cap, crank out windshield and natural varnished wood wheels.

I went overboard by purchasing a Motorola radio which had the dial attached to the steering column. What a luxury! As soon as school was out, my roommate and I loaded up the car and took off for a transcontinental trip to California.

The summer of 1936 was characterized by drought and extreme heat. On most days the temperature was near 100 degrees and we managed to survive by dousing ourselves with water and propping open doors which hinged from the back (often called suicide doors). As we drove through Nebraska we saw hundreds of dead cattle beside the fences that were seeking a few blades of green grass but the worst sight was the swarms of grasshoppers that flew at the car and mashed themselves on the windshield. We had to stop every fifteen minutes or so to wipe away the mess so we could see.

We arrived in California after eight days and stayed with my Uncle George Brown, had a nice stay, met some cute gals, visited Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks and headed home. The only casualty on the whole trip was a flat tire on the ramp leading to the Oakland ferry which we changed in four minutes flat with 200 cars behind us tooting their horns. All in all, it was an exciting trip for a couple of 22 year old boys and we had nothing but praise for that old Dodge.



In 1938, I traded it for my first new car---a 1938 Business coupe with a boot that was about 4 feet wide and about 6 feet deep which made sleeping in the back a lot of fun--- but that's another story that took me down the road a piece.

## CARS THAT MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION

As I walk down the road of past memories, I am thinking about some of the automobiles that were not ours but as a child these cars made a lasting impression on me. The first of these cars was owned by a family that lived in the big house next to my uncle with whom I lived until I was eight. To me it was the most beautiful vehicle I had ever seen. This automobile was a 1920 double cowl Pierce-Arrow Phaeton. It was painted maroon with lots of gleaming nickel.

When I looked out my bedroom window, I could see it parked on the sloping driveway about fifty yards away. One summer afternoon, I had been sent up to my bedroom for a nap since I was just recovering from a severe case of the measles. I remember looking out the window and seeing the family drive into the driveway with the beautiful Pierce-Arrow. The man and his wife hurriedly got out of the car and rushed into the house for some reason or other and as I watched, the huge automobile began slowly to move down the steeply sloping driveway. As I watched, it began to gain speed and then bounce over the curb near the garage, and then go crashing down the hill and into the ravine below.

Still wearing my pajamas and bedroom slippers, I ran past my astonished mother and made my way through my uncle's flower garden. Scrambling down the hillside, I suddenly saw the car. There it was, lying on its side up against a large beech tree—its top smashed; its body battered and hot water dripping out of the radiator. At that moment, Mr. McEldowney, the owner, arrived and said something about being careless and not pulling the parking brake tight enough.

I remember the final episode in the story. A large cable was attached to the Pierce and a horse powered a windlass and pulled the big car back up the hill. It was hauled away by a wrecker and I never saw it again but for years I would stop and look at the scars on the big beech tree.

Another automobile that impressed me was the big Franklin owned by a Mr. Cummins who lived in the house on the other side of my Uncle Tom's property. This was one of the Franklins with the "horse-collar" radiator that really wasn't a radiator but just a grill that protected the huge air cooling fan behind it. The hood was hinged in the front and lifted straight up to reveal the engine with its huge air duct which cooled the engine block.

Mr. Cummins enjoyed raising the hood and explaining to me the virtues of an air-cooled engine. He never owned any other make of car and in the early years of the Great Depression, when he learned that the H.H. Franklin Company was going out of business, he bought two 1933 cars so that he would have Franklins to drive for the rest of his life. When he died a few years later, his son-in-law was given both of these beautiful cars which he and his wife drove all during the war years. Perhaps they ended up in some antique auto enthusiast's collection. I certainly hope so.

## **MY FIRST NEW CAR – 1937 DODGE BUSINESS COUPE**

In my last column I mentioned my first new car—a 1937 Dodge business coupe. It was a beautiful color, called "Stratosphere Blue" by the Chrysler Corp. The trunk space was about 5 feet wide and over 6 feet deep.

When July rolled around my dearest friend and roommate, the late Jimmy Harrison, and I took off for a two week trip to New England. We had no special route planned so we drove leisurely and stopped wherever a place seemed interesting.

I recall that we visited many auto junk yards and I could kick myself for not making a collection of the wonderful enamel radiator emblems we saw on many rusting relics of the 1920's- Chalmers, Pierce-Arrows, Paige, Cord, and many other names that are just memories today. In several yards a Model T could be bought complete for about 10 dollars. We stopped at many antique stores in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and in other states and bought such things as pistols, muskets, books, pipes, Indian relics, and a pair of "tater bug" mandolins on which Jim and I learned to play duets.

We slept on air mattresses placed in the boot of the Dodge with mosquito netting draped over the trunk lid. It was quite comfortable and very easy to get ready. We had a large rooster jug with a spigot that we used for washing, and tooth brushing in the morning.

On one occasion in New Jersey we obtained permission to park in a farmer's pasture. That night we were "entertained" by a large German-American Nazi Band in a camp nearby who sang all the Nazi songs in German. After they calmed down we went to sleep only to wake up the next morning to find half a dozen Holstein cows sniffing at our mosquito netting!

We drove all the way up to Maine and stopped at Camp Winona where I spent many happy summers as a boy. At a little New Hampshire town named Center Sandwich we were invited to join in the music for a wedding party and we obliged with me playing my accordion and Jimmy playing his saxophone.

We had a wonderful time in that Dodge with no flats or other troubles-no traffic tickets and no high prices. When it rained, we stopped at small motels with charges of about \$5.00 double and gasoline for 21 cents a gallon. Well, those days are gone forever but not forgotten. I'd still like to find a 1937 Dodge coupe again...does anyone have a lead I can follow up????

## **OUR 1923 MARMON 34 7-PASSENGER TOURING**

Since the turn of the century, the automobile has continued to be an important part of people's lives and even today, just about everyone has memories of one particular car that they enjoyed more than any other.....

During the early twenties, we had a succession of cars such as a 1920 Studebaker sedan, a 1919 Hudson touring, a 1918 war-surplus Liberty, and a 1925 Chevrolet coupe. Along with these venerable vehicles my father also purchased in 1923 my favorite—a seven passenger Marmon 34 touring. It was painted a dark blue and had dual side mounts and a five –suitcase trunk in back.

The Marmon Company, located in Indianapolis, was one of the first to make use of aluminum in their car bodies and in the engine. One part that was not aluminum, however, was the hubcap. These hubcaps were about six inches in diameter and were made of cast bronze with the Marmon oval emblem in the center. The standard model 34's had huge wire wheels but for some reason our car had natural wood wheels that looked quite sporty to our family.

This car immediately became our summer trips vehicle and I can still remember the excitement my sister and I felt when Dad announced that he was getting the Marmon serviced for our first trip of the summer. These preparations also included packing the five suitcases and the preparation of the picnic lunch which also included hot cocoa in one of the big black thermos bottles and ice water in the other.

We would always leave at sunrise in order to beat the heat and Dad would have on his linen driving coat, linen knickers, golf socks, and a white linen cap. There was also a box of Pittsburgh stogies on the floor which he enjoyed smoking as he drove.

I recall that placed below the black dialed Stewart-Warner instrument panel was a cigar lighter which pulled out on a cord. When we traveled, my sister and I took turns with my mother in sitting up front. We usually used one of the jump seats in the back so that the other person could stretch out on the back seat.

For some reason or other, I used to put on my amber-tinted sunglasses, lean out over the front door, and pretend I was a railroad engineer. Other diversions on the trip were games involving the spotting of animals, reading those wonderful, Burma-Shave signs (backward when we were going in the opposite direction) and looking out the back window at the tarred-over cement road cracks that wiggled like snakes when looked at from a low angle.

In that old Marmon we drove to Maine at least three times and visited many interesting and historical sites in Pennsylvania, New York, and many other states. On certain occasions we would have a flat tire and we would each have a job to do when the big Goodyear Double Eagles went flat.

When a shower was imminent, we would stop and get out the rain curtains, insert the metal rods in the doors, and snap everything shut. The windshield wiper had a round nickel knob on it which Dad would grab and work furiously while steering with his other hand. On these occasions the cigar would have to be thrown away and the passenger would have to use a rag to wipe away the fog on the inside of the windshield.

There are fond memories of the old Lincoln Highway which still had many covered bridges to cross and detours that took us through small towns with hay wagons which we would pass and grab a wisp of hay for making a secret wish.

We kept the Marmon until 1930 when it was traded in on a Jordan Airline Eight. It almost broke our hearts when we spotted our beloved car with the back cut off and a towing crane installed by a wrecker service in a neighboring town. I saw the Marmon there for several years and used to stop and look at it. She is gone now but she gave us some of the happiest moments of my childhood.

## **AUTOMOBILES & THE GREAT DEPRESSION**

What was it like in the "Great Depression" that lasted from 1930 to 1940? What was its effect on the automobile industry? That great cowboy humorist, Will Rogers who spoke for most Americans said that "America was the only country in the history of the world that went for the poorhouse in an automobile." He was exactly right. Most American families whose breadwinner was unemployed would cut down on food, clothing, and nearly everything else so that they could keep the family car. It might be used to take a short drive on a hot summer night, a visit to see relatives or friends, or perhaps a trip to another part of the state to answer an ad for a job or business opportunity.

As a young person (we didn't hear the word or know that we were "teenagers"), I remember a number of things that affected the auto industry in the years from 1930 to 1934 when I was fortunate to graduate from Edgewood High School in the bottom half of my class. I remember very clearly going to a dance by calling on my date and walking five or six blocks to our high school! These young ladies we dated understood that our parents needed the family car for business and shopping and that we did not have access to this vehicle. We were "kids" and were still supposed to be "seen and not heard" by our grandparents and other elderly people.

I recall going to a Saturday matinee with several of my close friends and then when leaving the theater we were fascinated by demonstrations on a street nearby. These people showed us that you could add water to your gas tank and get ten or twelve extra gallons if you used their special carburetor. The crowds around the demonstration were quite large but my pals and I, being only sixteen, were not really interested because we were not permitted to use the family Ford, Chevy, Franklin, Jordan, Essex, Dodge, or Buick.

Most of my classmates and I were really excited when told that we could have the family car for the Junior-Senior Prom. This meant that we were permitted to drive to the prom and later to an acceptable establishment for a sandwich, an omelet, or a soft drink at the unbelievable hour of 1 o'clock in the morning. Who could ask for anything more? As far as I know, all family vehicles (Fords, Chevys, Plymouths, etc.) were returned to their garages in perfect shape without a dent. At this period in U.S. history, the Volstead Act was still in effect and we had no access to alcoholic beverages or narcotics of any kind. We got "high" on dancing with most of the girls at the dance and a short but passionate embrace with our prom date at the front door, or if we were lucky, a few minutes on the living room couch before her dad turned on the hall light and suggested that our date was terminated.

During those Depression days from 1931 to 1938 the average price for a Ford, Chevy, Plymouth, Terraplane, Hupmobile, Willys, Jordan, Pontiac, and some other marques was about \$800 and the gasoline to make them go was usually about six gallons for a dollar! No, I am not senile although I am now over Jack Benny's age of 39!

A driver could buy a complete set of new tires (Firestone, Goodyear, Fisk, etc.) for about eighty dollars. But----they were only guaranteed for twelve thousand miles! I believe that it was Kendall that had a logo of a hand holding up two fingers suggesting that their oil was good for 2,000 miles. That was a good selling point when one had to shell out a dollar for five quarts of oil!

I wonder if anyone in 1986 would take off on a trip to the West Coast and back in a 1933 Dodge Coupe. The trip I took with a college friend was in 1936 and has been well documented in the past few years in this column. The point I wish to make is that motels, family homes, and small hotels charged only three or four dollars for a night's lodging. Of course, there was no TV, no air conditioning or McDonalds. Some of those places had a radio but that was an extra that was unexpected. Most of the travelers just counted the flowers on the wall, read the local newspaper and went to sleep.

Then there was the standard price of five cents for a hamburger which included a couple slices of sweet or dill pickle, all the mustard and onions you wished, a napkin, a glass of water, a toothpick (optional) and big smile from the waitress. Now that was a real value. From about 1931 to 1937 a driver could often get six or seven gallons of regular for a dollar and "high test" was about two cents more per gallon. But then to keep everything in perspective, we should keep in mind that those persons who were gainfully employed took home only an average of thirty to fifty dollars for a six-day work week.

Even so, many families were able to set aside a few dollars and put a down payment on a new Plymouth, Chevrolet, Ford, or Dodge which were then selling for prices ranging from \$475 to \$900. Still a small number of marques such as a s Packard, Cadillac, Pierce-Arrow, Lincoln and Franklin were sold to wealthy people and such public characters as Al Capone, "Pretty Boy Floyd", and "Machine Gun Kelly."

The depression years were rough, sad, and discouraging but the American people were equal to the test and they were ready for World War II which ended our economic struggle in 1941. My last thought on this subject is, "Aren't we lucky that so many people stored or saved their Model As, Chevys, and Packards so that we could restore and enjoy them in these past forty or fifty years?" I think we are.