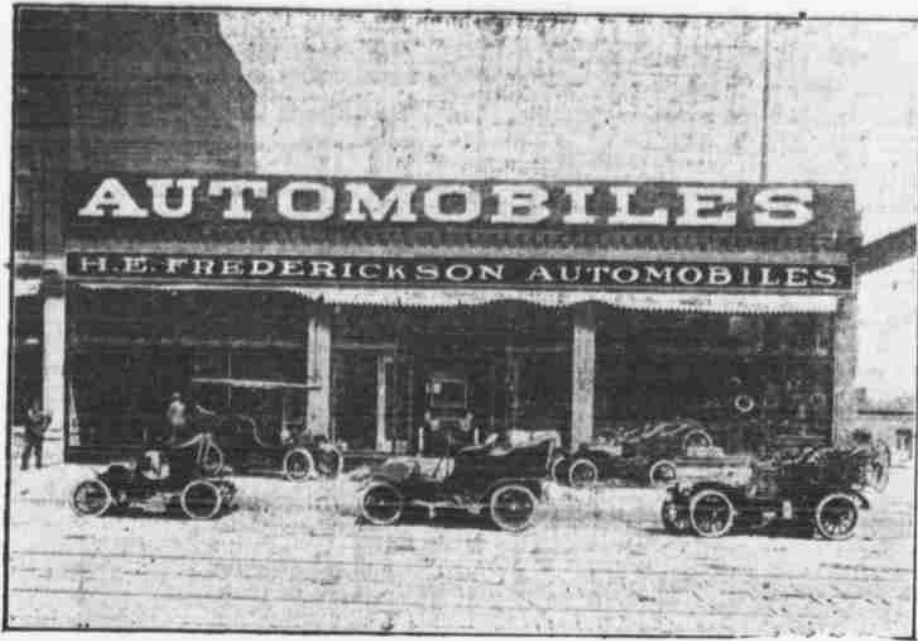
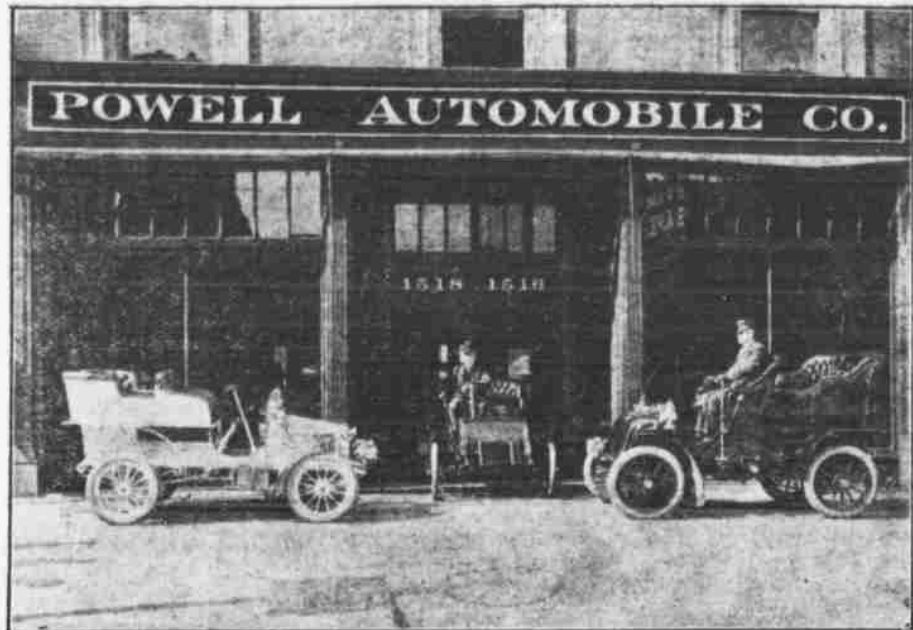


Automobiles Popular in Omaha



HOME OF THE WINTON IN OMAHA—H. E. FREDERICKSON'S GARAGE AND WORKHOUSE

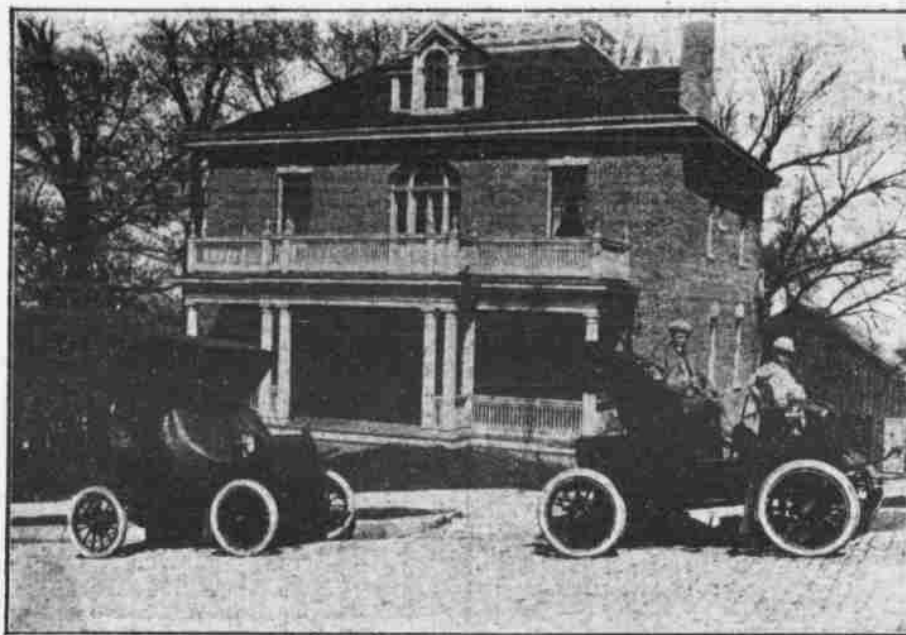


CADILLAC AND WHITE STEAMERS ARE TO BE FOUND AT THE GARAGE OF CLARK POWELL

P RIMITIVE man probably dreamed of the time when he could get from one place to another in a hurry, and without the expenditure of much effort on his part, but he didn't dream of the realization that has been reached by man of the present enlightened age of the world. Man has conquered old ocean, the earth, and has made something more than a start at reducing the realms above the earth to the condition of well explored and carefully marked courses for the passages of swift-flying airships. While the achievement of that desirable result is still in abeyance, man is busy with his latest genuine triumph, the horseless carriage. It is not the purpose here to go into anything like a history of the machine, nor of its development; the idea being rather to deal with it as it is. In a general way, it may be stated that the present highly developed automobile carriage is one of several blessings for which we are indebted to the French. It was a Frenchman who conceived the idea of making a boiler out of a coiled tube, so arranged that water pumped in at one end came out superheated steam at a tremendous high pressure at the other, and this by the minimum expenditure of fuel. This boiler made the steam wagon a practical affair. Prior to this electricity had been used, but the sufficiency of the storage battery had not yet been established. Wizard Thomas A. Edison contributed from his genius, and now the storage battery is all that could well be asked of it. Some time before the building of autos had been established on the high plane of industry it has now attained gasoline motors on the principle of the gas engine had been in use, and the enterprising mechanic wasn't long in adapting the gasoline motor to whizz-wagon uses. As in the case of the bicycle, specialists have taken hold at every point, and the motor car that was a wonder four years ago is a hack number now, and the triumph of today is likely to be outclassed by the car that will be on the market next season.

The automobile has been made practical and practicable for all purposes to which a vehicle can be devoted. In Europe it has been installed in every avenue of human activity requiring transportation facilities, and in America it has passed beyond the fad stage, and is coming to be recognized as a real factor, if not an actual necessity, in urban life. Omaha has been a little slow about taking hold of the new departure, mainly because of the nature of the country and the condition of the roads about the city, but now that the machines are made so that they are really serviceable on any road that is at all passable, the Omaha people who have the money to spend for an automobile are buying them as fast as several agencies can deliver them. About 100 machines are now owned here, ranging all through the several sizes and makes, and orders are in for many more, to be delivered during the summer, so that the toots that are now heard on the streets will be multiplied and increased before winter comes again. One of the local owners demonstrated that an auto may be made very comfortable even for winter uses by housing his in, leaving only the chauffeur exposed to the weather. Others scorned to seek the protection thus afforded and drove through all kinds of weather during the winter, and proved that a machine is of just as much service as a team could ever expect to be.

Up to the present no effort has been made to introduce the self-propelled truck to the streets of Omaha, but it seems only a short time ago that the steam or gas driven carriage was a stranger here, too, so it is not unreasonable to expect that before many moons the chauffeur will be busy around the freight houses and in the jobbing district, and eight and ten-ton loads will rumble over the street on cars



R. R. KIMBALL HAS THE STEVENS-DURYEA AT A PLEASANT HOME.

pushed by engines registering several times the number of horse-power now used in handling Omaha's infernal freight traffic. Very recently in New York a test was made of these trucks, and they were found to have a wonderful degree of efficiency.

Auto racing, said to be a most exhilarating and exciting form of sport, is still in its swaddling clothes here. Last season two or three owners of big machines engaged in some desultory tests of speed and driving ability, but the addition of a number of the great touring cars, with their engines running away up into double figures on indicated horse power, is certain to bring about an ambition to beat somebody in a race. The Omaha Automobile club has not as yet formulated any program, but some of the owners have intimated that they would not be averse to an invitation to see whose machine can cover the distance in the shortest time. It has been suggested that some interest might be developed in a road race over the old century course, from Omaha to a point north of Tekamah and return. In the days when Omaha was full of bicycle riders that course was frequently negotiated by the ambitious roadburners, and it certainly offers an ideal place to test not only the powers of the machine, but the skill and nerve of the driver. It has the hills and the level stretches, the curves and the straightaway bits, and affords a variety of scenery, in case the racing chauffeur should find himself with time on his hands to look at the country he was passing through.

H. E. Fredrickson, who carries a large and fine line of horseless carriages, was the pioneer in the automobile business in this city. He brought to Omaha the first auto that ever traveled its streets, about five years ago, and later brought the first heavy touring car that came to the city. Mr. Fredrickson said:

"When I passed up Farnam street with the new Winton touring car crowds of people congregated on the sidewalk to look at it. Those I talked to said I would never be able to sell it here; that the price was too high, and the machine too elaborate for any one in Omaha, but I sold that one and many others since. Last year we disposed of seven of these heavy machines, and sold six of them in two months.

"I have made the automobile business a study ever since there has been such a business. It has been my policy to attend all the automobile shows in different parts of the country, and there I have picked up a large stock of information about the machines and the business.

"The outlook for business this year is

better than it has ever been, and we have made many sales already, with numbers of people in sight who are contemplating the purchase of an auto. Since the business has proven successful a large number of other dealers have engaged in it. My trade is about equally divided between the city and country. The bulk of my business is confined to the states of Nebraska and Iowa, but my mail order and supply business extends over a much larger territory. There has been nothing but American-made cars sold in Omaha so far. The foreign cars, I believe, are too high-priced, and the majority of people believe they are not as durable on our roads as the American cars.

"It is my intention to accept the challenge of Colonel Hayward of Nebraska City to race him from that place to St. Louis, he to use his steam launch and I a Winton car. The race will probably be open to all comers and I think it will be very interesting. It is the present intention of several Omaha people to go to St. Louis for the great automobile meet to be held there in August. I will go, leaving here about August 9, and will make the trip in an automobile."

"Automobiles," said G. L. Smith of the Clark Powell Automobile company at Fifteenth and Davenport streets, when asked to give his view regarding the outlook for "red-deviling" this season. "There is to be more tooting about the streets the coming season than even those in the business dared hope for. Everyone who has the price seems to want one, and hardly do we get a consignment of machines before they are all sold. The main reason for this demand is that the machines are vastly improved. The automobile that had a penchant for coming to a stop right across the car tracks and holding back a long line of cars and sarcastic conductors is gone. Gone also is the machine which created a noise like a volley of musketry and emitted an odor unlike rose bouquet, and with the passing of those types of machines has disappeared the once general opinion that an auto was a thing with which no life-loving man ought to tamper.

"Many Omaha automobilists are contemplating a trip to St. Louis this year in their machines, intending to travel from here to Topeka and thence on. We have had a large demand for medium-sized touring cars. White Steamers and Cadillacs seeming to catch the popular fancy. Besides those who buy machines for pleasure, we are supplying many autos for people whose business necessitates them traveling around the city and who formerly kept horses.

"The one drawback for the auto in this city is the condition of the roads. I always thought the city council did a lot

of unnecessary work when it passed that speed limit ordinance, as no man with a respect for the insurance companies would travel over the limit as the roads are now. A beginner loses much of that pleasurable thrill which is only allowed the person with the auto specs, when he dives over a precipice on Dodge street or manuevers around the irrigating ditches on Capitol avenue."

J. J. Deright of J. J. Deright & Co. says: "While we are carrying automobiles in stock and selling some, we are not as yet in the business to any great extent, but we are carrying what we believe to be the finest line of cars in the city. It is our intention later to put in a much larger stock and go into the business on a more extensive scale. It begins to look as though there is to be much more interest manifested in the automobile."

Among the cars carried by the firm is a depot wagon which is certainly a model of beauty and neatness. It is equipped with electric lights both inside and out. All of the windows are of plate glass, and by drawing the curtains the car can be made perfectly dark. A speaking tube hangs by the chauffeur's seat with which communication can be had with the occupants of the car. The sidelights are equipped with electric light bulbs, and the finish of the whole vehicle is about as nearly perfect as it is possible to make it. The car is a Waverly. By an indicator on the footboard in front of the driver's seat it can be seen just how much electricity is on hand, so that there is no danger of running out between stations. A Thomas three-cylinder gasoline car is also displayed, which is capable of making a speed of fifty miles an hour. The run from Omaha to Fremont was made one day last week in one hour and thirty minutes. The Waverly runabout is also a very neat affair with all modern improvements.

"We are in the automobile business more for fun than anything else just at present. I like to put in some of my time with them, as it is very interesting to me, but we are going in heavier a little later on," said Mr. Deright.

T. M. Bromwell, representing the Rambler Automobile company in Omaha and the state, was installing a car of machines in his salesroom at 1506 Capitol avenue, when the status of the automobile of today was asked of him. Mr. Bromwell said: "Last season proved the practicability of the automobile as a means of locomotion, both from a pleasure and business standpoint, and the seeds planted last year are bearing fruit in abundance this season. Yes, indeed, the automobile is a practical proposition, particularly from a business standpoint. So far this season fully 85 per cent of our sales have been to the medical profession alone. They, more than any other of the professional men, have found the machines adapted to their peculiar needs and they are falling in line with remarkable rapidity. Other business men to whom time is an important factor are also being enrolled.

"The multi-cylinder car, of ten or more horse-power, is the kind most in demand. People want a machine that will overcome such obstacles as mud, sand and bad roads; in fact, I have figured that 85 per cent of our sales have been on machines of this class. I might state that in the smaller towns we have sold 75 per cent in places of 3,000 or less population and about 85 per cent of these sales have been to the farming class. In the past people sought merely a machine that would transport them, but now they seek one that can be relied on absolutely as a means of locomotion.

"At recent automobile shows over 75 per cent of the machines exhibited were operated by gasoline, which was fully established as a motive power last season. There is little change in this season's machines aside from minor improvements that