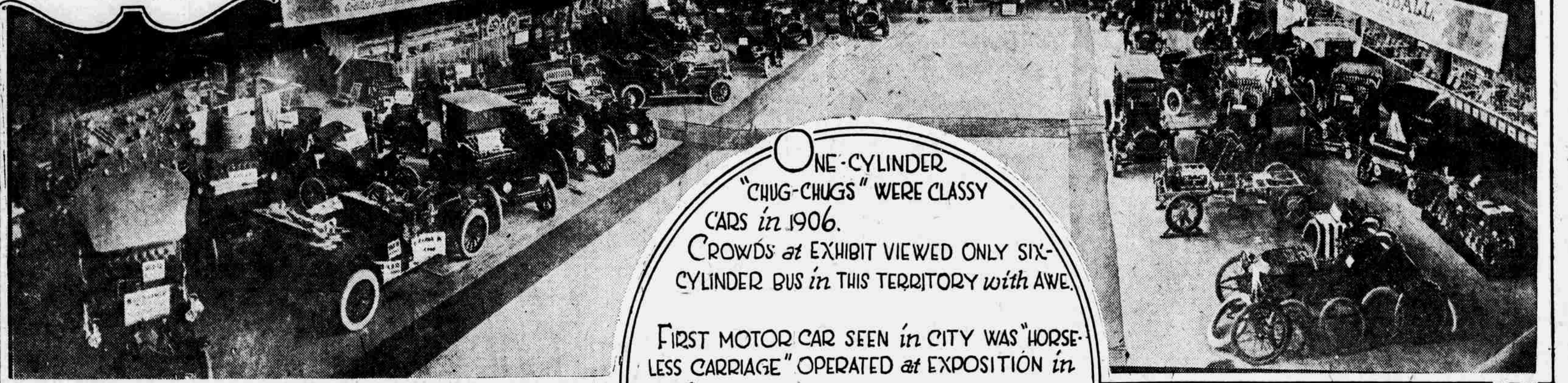


SNAPPY MODELS at OMAHA'S FIRST AUTO SHOW

AND HERE'S THAT FIRST AUTO SHOW WITH SPORTY WAGONS WHICH AROUSED WONDER OF OMAHA IN 1906



ONE-CYLINDER "CHUG-CHUGS" WERE CLASSY CARS in 1906. CROWDS at EXHIBIT VIEWED ONLY SIX-CYLINDER BUS in THIS TERRITORY with AWE.

FIRST MOTOR CAR SEEN in CITY WAS "HORSELESS CARRIAGE" OPERATED at EXPOSITION in 1898 GROWTH of INDUSTRY HERE REMARKABLE.

By A. R. GROH. You've looked through the old family album. You got many a laugh out of it, didn't you? There was the picture of old Uncle Eliphabet Bodkins with his hip boots and whiskers and smooth-shaven upper lip. Gosh, but he looked stern. There was the tintype of Grandmother Mehitable Grimm when she was a little girl. She wears pantafoles, gathered in at the ankle and a dress that fits her form like the paper on the wall. And here is Aunt Elvira when she was a gay and beautiful young woman in hoop-skirts and tight waist. And there's a whole flock of little children's photographs of the long ago, each child with one arm draped over something. They couldn't take a child's picture in those days unless one arm was draped over a table or the back of a chair.



J.M. GILLAN—ONE OF TRIO WHO LAUNCHED FIRST SHOW



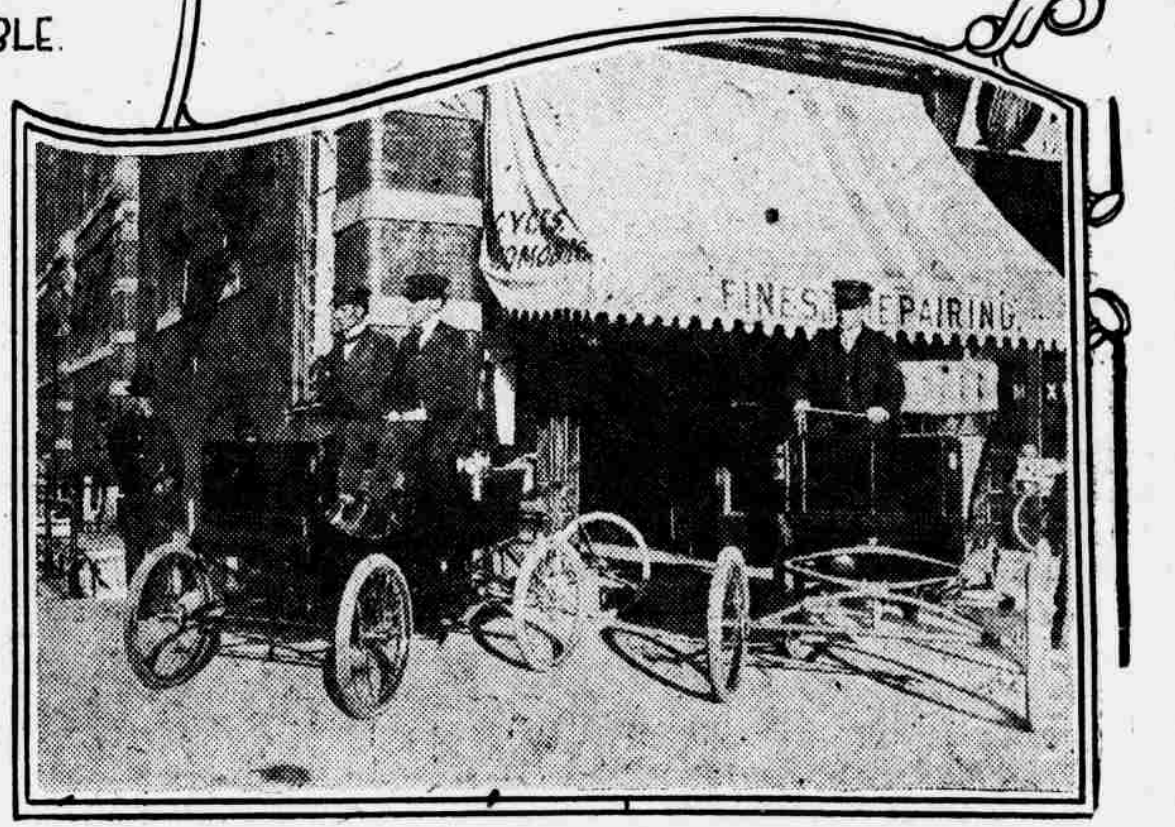
J.T. STEWART JR. PRES. OF 1921 SHOW



LEE HUFF DIRECTOR 1921 SHOW



CLARKE POWELL PIONEER OF OMAHA AUTO DEALERS and MANAGER OF FIRST AUTO SHOW



HORSES USED TO SHY WHEN THESE CAME DOWN THE STREET—A HORSE WOULD PROBABLY DO THE SAME THING TODAY

Looking Back. Funny old pictures, aren't they? And, while you get a laugh, there's a little lump in your throat sometimes as you look at the family album. There is much the same kind of feeling in looking back at Omaha's first automobile show. That was only 15 years ago. Yet the "classy" model of that year looks funnier today than the picture of your Uncle Eliphabet Bodkins. The upright steering wheel, the funny seats, the queerly shaped body. Would you believe it, folks—the Cadillac and numerous other cars of that day had only one cylinder. "Double cylinder" cars were considered rather experimental. One or two very advanced models had four cylinders and a "freak" with six cylinders was exhibited. Sunnybrook? What's 'at? In the Bee of that year are auto ads, contemporary with the narrow-waisted, trailing skirted, big-sleeved dresses worn by the women of that day, contemporary with some "nifty" models of young men's suits, the coats reaching nearly to the knees, contemporary also with ads of some mysterious things called "Schlitz Beer," "Anheuser Busch" and "Sunnybrook, \$1.50 quart."

Exhibits in their booths of automobile sundries also. No Decorations. "There was no decorating of any kind except strips of burlap spread on the floor and a row of lights hung on each side of the hall. The boxes were not removed from the Auditorium, nor were the stage and basement used as in later shows. "Very few of the cars shown were owned by the dealers. They were borrowed from the owners and cleaned up for the occasion." In contrast to this are the great shows of recent years with every available foot of space in the Auditorium taken, with the stage filled and the basement occupied and now an annex building to the south also filled with cars. At last year's show there were 77 exhibitors, 94 different kinds of cars and a total of 284 cars on display, ranging in price from \$387 to \$11,000. Wonderful decorations characterize the present-day shows and the crowds surge through the building for the entire week.

Those First Ads. Four little automobile ads appeared in The Bee the Sunday before that first auto show opened. Every one of them is a "scream." The car of that day was a fearful and wonderful thing. There were no fenders at all. The steering wheel stood about upright. They had no self-starters and the cars cranked at the side. Here is one ad: RAMBLER. THE FAMILY CAR. 18 Horse Power. \$1,200. Here's another: DOUBLE CYLINDER BUICK The Most Remarkable Hill-Climber on Record. H. E. Fredrickson, Fifteenth and Capitol Avenue. "The first Omaha Automobile show opened in the Auditorium Wednesday, April 4, 1906, and was considered something of a "freak" and wild idea. The newspapers told about it in half columns on inside pages. Some people said it was just an attempt to ape New York and Chicago, which were the only cities that had essayed auto shows up to that time. The promoters themselves, Messrs. Powell and Deright and

Gillan were rather doubtful. But they went ahead with faith. And behold crowds came to see this pioneer show! The picture above shows what a poor thing it was compared with the great automobile shows that have since gone into Omaha history. Automobiles in that day were almost an unknown quantity, and thousands of people had never ridden in one. The cars at that first show were chiefly one and two-cylinder machines. The admiration of the whole show was N. B. Updike's wonderful six-cylinder Franklin which cost \$4,000, exclusive of top, lamps and windshield! Cars in those days came without these things and you had to pay extra if you wanted them. Here is an excerpt from "Notes of the Show" on its second day, taken from The Bee of April 6, 1906: Among the most striking of the new features added to the show last night was the six-cylinder Franklin. The Powell-Bacon company had this big machine expressed from Syracuse to get it here in time for the show. It is the first six-cylinder car to be brought to this territory and aroused considerable interest, as engineers predict that the six-cylinder motor will be the one practically universally used in the big high-class touring cars. The Cadillac exhibit is devoted solely to one-cylinder cars. It includes a runabout, a runabout with convertible body and a light touring car. The first show lasted only four days and by the final hour on Saturday, the success of the new idea was assured. The Bee of that date says: All Omaha seems to be interested in the automobile show in progress at the Auditorium and the attendance has been far in excess of anything which was anticipated by the promoters of the show. Buick Wins. A feature of the final day was a hill-climbing contest between a Buick and a Reo. Both negotiated the Cass street hill from Seventeenth street, west, the Buick winning the thrilling contest "by nearly a brick." Today when it is a rare thing to see a horse and buggy on the streets it is hard to realize that only 20 years ago an automobile was such a rarity on Omaha streets that people stopped to look

and smile when one appeared. Today, with rows of splendid automobile salesrooms, with automobile factories and assembling plants, it is hard to realize that 20 years ago there wasn't a single automobile dealer in Omaha. Twenty years ago there wasn't a solitary garage in Omaha! Even 15 years ago it was still something of a distinction to "have a ride in an automobile." The cars of those days were ungainly, chugging little things. Their one or two-cylinder engines panted and rattled, threatening to stop on every hill. There was no such thing as a self-starter and if folks took a drive of a dozen miles without trouble of some kind they felt they had a license to boast about it. And probably they had. The first automobile ever seen in Omaha was the "horseless carriage" operated by Montgomery-Ward & Co. at the Transmississippi exposition in 1898. They charged 25 cents for a short ride and some of the more venturesome took a chance. Horses Shy. Otto Baysdorfer, seeing this strange machine, decided to build one for himself. He started in the fall of 1898 and had the "critter" finished the next spring and drove it out on the streets of Omaha, causing the horses to "shy" and the people to shake their heads and wonder "what will they do next?" The first factory car sold in Omaha was a one-cylinder Winton gasoline car, owned by Dr. Cameron Anderson in 1900 and folks told each other that he was actually visiting patients in his automobile. What was the world coming to? Along in 1900, also, Harry Sharp started building himself a steam automobile which he finished four years later. He drove it downtown and brought it to a graceful stop in front of Ed Maurer's restaurant. While Harry was in Maurer's eating dinner, there was a loud report and he looked out just in time to see most of his car flying toward the sky. It had blown up. It Wouldn't Run. Dr. Fred Conner had one of the early cars. It was a Darling, built in Shelby, O., and delivered here in 1901. The doctor was wont to remark, "That was a mighty fine car, only I couldn't get it to run." George Patterson had a steam car in the early days and Dick Stewart of Council Bluffs owned a Locomobile steamer. The Oldsmobile Motor works, selling stationary engines, began handling Oldsmobile curved-dash cars here in 1901, selling one once in a while. The first car sent out from Omaha was shipped to Frank Young, a banker at Broken Bow, Neb. H. E. Fredrickson, who sold buggies and bicycles, and J. J. Deright who handled safes, began selling automobiles as a side line in 1901. They merely held the agency for cars, but did not keep any in stock. Clarke Powell was the first honest-to-goodness automobile dealer in Omaha. He started in 1902 at Fifteenth and Capitol avenue, handling one-cylinder Cadillacs and one-cylinder Packards. First Auto Race. R. R. Kimball followed Mr. Powell into the new business and soon it began to gain momentum. Among the cars sold here in early days were Winton, Darling, Buifalo, Cadillac, Packard, Friedman, Toledo, White, Locomobile Steamer, Mobile Steamer, Oldsmobile, Autocar and Stanley. The first automobile race meet in Omaha was held in 1904 on the old Transmississippi track on North Twentieth street. Nels Updike and Frank Golpeter were leading spirits in bringing the meet here. Barney Oldfield in his Green Dragon and A. C. Webb in his Pope-Toledo-Cyclone were the star attractions. The Powell automobile company entered a one-cylinder Cadillac which Guy L. Smith drove to victory against a one-cylinder Oldsmobile. City's Largest Industry. The automobile business has grown from nothing, less than 20 years ago, to the largest industry in the city today. The present officers of the Omaha Automobile Trade association which gives the auto show, are: J. T. Stewart, 2d, president; Guy L. Smith, vice president; Clarke G. Powell, secretary; Lee Huff and John Opper, directors. Let us close with a beautiful, little verse of philosophypoeetry composed by the author as follows: Oh, the models of 1906 Now look to us like "mix." Because we're now in 1921. But in 1936 The cars that look like "hicks" Will be our classy cars of '21. The world do move, folks. Is it not the truth?

Letters From Home-Made Father to His Son

By ED. STREETER. The Question of the Vice President. Dear Son: As Chairman of the Town Library Committee I have had an exhaustive week drawn up the examinations for Librarian. In order to cut municipal expense it was decided to make the examination so hard this year that nobody could pass it. We had considerable trouble over it till I put in the question "Who is the Vice President of the United States?" This aroused a smart discussion, a number of the Committee claim that the examination should only contain questions on useful information. Our side finally won on the ground of economy. The more I think of this job of being Vice President the less I understand it. According to history he's the second choice of the people for running the Ship of State. By the rules of sea warfare this ought to rank him First Mate. As a matter of fact his place in the Seaman's Union comes somewhere between second assistant and a stowaway. There ain't no other job just like it in the world. In private life if a man gets to be Vice President of a big corporation while he's still walkin' without the aid of a wheel chair he's looked on as an infant prodigy. His descendants refer to him proudly, when tryin' to cash a

check as "My granfather, you know, Vice President of the Iron Biscuit Company." An relatives that he never knew he had consider it an honor to borrow off him. With the Vice President of the United States, though, it's different. There ain't no law against it, of course. It's just the sort of thing that ain't mentioned, like losin' your money or wearin' a glass eye. You achieve the Presidency, but you ain't the Vice Presidency. If a man is ever overcome with a pressin' desire to hide all he has to do is be Vice President on his own tailor couldn't find him. Instead of being the second highest gift of the people it seems to be the lowest trick a man's enemies can play on him. If Brown, who's looked on as an up and comin' leader, gets in wrong with the powers there's a meetin' in a room upstairs to decide the best way to get rid of him. Somebody suggests stickin' a marked bill in his pocket and callin' the police. That scheme has to be gave up cause nobody will risk the bill. Poison, blackjakin' an kidnappin' is all turned down as not sure enough. "Let's make him Vice President," says the Chairman, a hold an unscrupulous man. A shudder runs round the room. The more conservative shake their heads. He must be got rid of, but he hasn't deserved that. After

a stormy discussion the radicals win. Stampede Out of Danger. The following day the President is nominated by the National Convention with great enthusiasm. Immediately all but the more seriously wounded delegates rush from the hall for fear somebody'll put up their name for Vice President. Our friends of the previous evening spring to their feet and nominate Brown. The motion is seconded and unanimously carried by the doorman an three porters who are engaged in removin' peanut shells. The next mornin' the voters grab their papers to see who they have chose for President. If they have time to read down to the last paragraph they find Brown is to be Vice President. Most of em have a feelin' they've heard the name before an turn to the sportin' page. At the home of the successful candidate the scene is heart-rendin'. A crowd, attracted by morbid curiosity, is waitin' at the station. As the train pulls in the band, havin' stuck hankerchiefs in the horns, strikes up a slow waltz. The President of the Board of Trade advances an shakes hands solemnly. "We won't forget you anyways," he says, an then retires overcome. From the time of the Vice President's conviction to office till he begins to serve his term he is given a

final taste of active life. It is his duty to travel from place to place makin' speeches so as to find if it's safe for the President-elect to stop there later. It's rough work as he must be a man of parts; partly for everythin' an partly against; equally quick to dodge a question or a brick. He must be able to talk for hours without committin' himself; to lay a corner stone with one hand an raise a flag with the other to spring out of bed at any hour of the night to shake hands with the engineer; an durin' his spare time he writes interestin' articles for the magazines. If he lives through four months of this he is allowed 24 hours to wind up his affairs before retirin' from active life. On the day of inauguration, or as soon after as the government clerks can get around to it, he is notified by post-card (Form 10063) to report for duty. Assurin' his former well-wishers he doesn't hold em responsible, he buys a ticket for Washington an starts life as the Second Assistant Gentleman in the Land. The last time his name appears in print is when he finally succeeds in gettin' it in the Washington telephone book. He is now launched on the peaceful current of his official life. For a man require an uncommon amount of sleep it ain't an unpleasant voyage. Each mornin' begins to serve his term he is given a