

SIDELIGHTS

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SANTA ROSA
REGIONAL GROUP
Horseless Carriage Club of America

Santa Rosa Horseless Carriage Club Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2022

6:00PM, Mary's Pizza Shack, Sebastopol

In attendance:

Stan Ramondo & Kathleen
John & Linda Pearson
Vicky Porter
Linda Eggleston
Guy, Michelle, and Dusty Smith
Jim Flint
Donna Jones
Kim & Wayne Simoni

Meeting called to order by President Stan Ramondo at 6:25PM

- Agreed that Monthly Meetings will be held 2nd Wednesday of every month, at Mary's Pizza Shack in Sebastopol, Banquet Room starting at 6PM

March Meeting Minutes Approved (Kim S)

Treasurer's Report: \$976.61 balance; all membership dues have been paid (Linda E)

Tour Report: (John P)

- Tour signup sheet with John P. Monthly tours will be the 4th Wednesday of every month
- Fishermen's Festival Tour *has been changed* to **SATURDAY APRIL 30**. Meet at El Molino tennis courts parking lot at 9:00am, depart 9:30am.
- June 4 is Forestville Parade. Anyone wanting to drive old car in parade, talk with John P. Lineup at Forestville Methodist Church starting at 8:30AM
- October 23-27 is Paso Robles Tour; details included in Sidelights

Membership: (All)

- No new members...
- How to increase membership brainstorm produced the following ideas:
 - Invite any era car friends on tours
 - Outreach at the Forestville Parade
 - Invite Model T club on our tours

Sunshine Report (Linda P)

- Al Konnoff passed away; Linda P to send card to Cleo, Wayne to provide Cleo's address to Linda P
- Guy Smith's brother passed away; Linda sent card to Guy
- Kathleen received a new knee; Linda sent a card
- Jay Whited status discussed; pretty isolated and would enjoy company, especially if you bring food. Wayne will start mailing hardcopy of Sidelights to Jay

Meeting Adjourned: 7:04PM; Next meeting Wednesday May 11, 6PM, Mary's Pizza Shack, Sebastopol.

Santa Rosa Horseless Carriage Club May Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2022

Attendees:

Stan Ramondo
Vicky Porter
Linda Eggleston
Donna Jones
Jim Flint
Guy & Michelle Smith
Wayne & Kim Simoni

Meeting called to order at Round Table Pizza, Occidental Road, by Stan Ramondo at 6:32PM

April 11 Meeting Minutes read and approved

Treasurer's Report

- From Linda Eggleston: \$973.61

Tour Report

- Fisherman's Festival Bodega Bay April 30
- 3 cars only but lots of fun! Drivers/riders were Kim & Wayne, Guy & Michelle, and John & Linda and Vicky
- Michelle to send tour photos to Kim. Kim will write up tour for next Sidelights
- Next Tour is May 25 (who's tour is it?)
 - John Pearson to send a list to Wayne of who has signed up for which dates so we can get that into the Sidelights

Membership

- Discussed again briefly. No real movement
- Agreed that a consistent monthly meeting place is a requirement to attract and retain members.
- At least for the next 6 months, we will meet 2nd Wednesday of every month, 6PM at ROUND TABLE PIZZA, Occidental Road (not Marlow!)
- Wayne to follow up with Mark Bryant and Ken Larson to see if they intend to renew their memberships.

Sunshine

- Vicky getting epidural (outpatient) for back pain on May 24. Linda P to send card!

New Business

- Forestville Parade June 4, line up at Forestville Methodist Church at 8:30AM
- Wayne to bring HCCA flyers to hand out at parade
- Expect the following to participate: John & Linda, Stan, Guy & Michelle, Kim & Wayne and Vicky, Jim Flint

Meeting closed 6:59PM

HCCA NATIONAL NEWS



Re: Have an HCCA Question? - See Who to Call; Free HCCA Merchandise Shipping. *See Below;
Issue: 2022-04-01 #05

Happy Spring!

- **I have a question. Who Do I Call . . ?** – 2022 HCCA Functional Groups and Committee Assignments.
(*) Designates non-voting Board associate.

Activities – Jon Rising / Chairperson
2023 National Convention / Annual Meeting – Mike Reid

National / International Tours – Mike Reid, Russell Holden, Jim Skillicorn, Jeff Leshner
Hershey Tent – Andy Wallace, Vince Altieri, Bob Ladd*, Jason Ladd*, Jerry Chase*

Merchandising
East – Vince Altieri, Jon Rising, Matt Rising, Tricia Wallace*

West – Kim Simoni, Jim Skillicorn
International Club Relations - **Don Plumb** / Chairperson
Keene Brewer, Russell Holden, Mike Reid, Mitch Gross*, Tracy Leshner*

Communications – Chris Paulsen / Chairperson
Horseless Carriage Gazette – Kim Simoni / Chair, Chris Paulsen, Peter Jakab, Bill Carpenter*, Michael Sullivan*, Howard Hodson*, Bruce Spainhower*, Eadi Popick*, Bill Ottemann*, Anne Ottemann*, Gil Fitzhugh (elder)*, Anne Kemp Russell*, Leo Short*, Andy Blake*, Tom and Joyce Edfors*, Tracy Leshner (Editor)*.

HCCA National News – Doug Tomb
Publicity & Advertising – Jim Skillicorn, Vince Altieri, Terry Cole, Peter Jakab
Internet/Website – Russell Holden / Chair, Mike Reid, Don Plumb, Doug Tomb, Brad Balduff* (Webmaster)

Social Media – Chris Paulsen, Kim Simoni, Terry Cole, Tracy Leshner*, Lindsey Gooding Jackson*
Gazette Indexing – Doug Tomb / Chair, Peter Findlay*, Bill Trant*, Tony Wollesen*, Sharon Gooding*, Tony Bowker*, John Gebhard*

Education – Chris Paulsen / Chairperson
Public Education – Chris Paulsen, Peter Jakab
HC Foundation Library Liaison – Keene Brewer
Museum of the Horseless Carriage Liaison – Terry Cole

Finance – Doug Tomb / Chairperson
Investment Committee – Doug Tomb, Jeff Leshner

Governance – Russell Holden / Chairperson
By Laws/Director's Handbook – Russell Holden, Matt Rising, Peter Jakab, Terry Cole, Jeff Leshner
Parliamentarian – Jeff Leshner
Insurance – Jeff Leshner
Office Oversight – Keene Brewer, Andy Wallace, Mike Reid, Doug Tomb, Don Plumb, Lindsey Gooding Jackson* (Executive Secretary)
2023 Board Nominations – Kim Simoni, Jeff Leshner, Don Plumb, Jon Rising

Regional Groups and Registries – Jim Skillicorn / Chairperson
Member Development – Chris Paulsen, Vince Altieri, Terry Cole, Matt Goist*, Tracy Leshner*
Regional Groups Publications – Matt Rising, Alex Huppe*
Regional Groups Communications – Jim Skillicorn, Vince Altieri, Doug Tomb
Award Programs – Andy Wallace, Jon Rising, Alex Huppe*

Strategic Planning – Keene Brewer / Chairperson, Andy Wallace, Mike Reid, Russell Holden

- **Free Merchandise Shipping!** – Planning on going to the Tulare Brass Era/ Pre-War Swap Meet April 23rd – 24th? Do you need a new Club Hat, Polo Shirt, or Vest? You are in Luck!
If you order HCCA Merchandise from the website, between Now and April 13th, it will be delivered Free to you at the Tulare Show. What a deal. Think of all the Gas Money you will save! Better order an extra Shirt!
Check it out at: <https://hcca.org/> Contact Kim Simoni or Jim Skillicorn, if you have questions. (*Pickup in person, at Tulare Show, is required.)

Doug Tomb / Douglas.tomb@verizon.net

Board Member – HCCA NN Editor ...

HCCA NATIONAL NEWS



Re: Visit San Francisco; Gilmore "T" Time; Celebration of Brass II; Cadillac Figures; And More ...
Issue: 2022-05-01 #06

Happy Mother's Day!

- **1906 San Francisco Video** – Want to ride down the street in San Francisco, in 1906? There is a YouTube video sent by member Riley Best, and on the HCCA Website. “New Version of footage San Francisco 1906, A Trip Down Market Street, Shot on April 14, 1906, four days before the San Francisco earthquake and fire. From the front of a cable car, a motion picture camera records a trip down Market Street, San Francisco, California, from a point between 8th & 9th Streets, Eastward to the cable car turnaround at the Ferry Building.” Check it out: <https://youtu.be/sHkc83XA2dY>
- **T Time at The Gilmore** – From Hemmings Motor News; “The Gilmore Car Museum invites car enthusiasts to take part in its Model T Driving Experience program. Learn all about driving and operating an authentic Model T from the museum’s fleet of cars. The classes last around three hours and allow you to drive along 3 miles of paved roads at Gilmore’s large campus. The sessions are taught by long-time Model T owners and enthusiasts. Plus, participants learn backstories about the early Ford Motor Company and take part in inspections of various Ts during the special guided tours. Openings are still available as early as June, all the way through September. Each class is \$125 per student and is open to anyone with a driver’s license or valid learner’s permit. After the class, participants are presented with a Certificate of Completion and a souvenir booklet. Visit gilmorecarmuseum.org to reserve a spot.”
- **Celebration of Brass II** – July 14-19, 2022. From Bob Ladd, “The Museum of the Horseless Carriage at the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, MI, is pleased to announce that this year’s Celebration of

Brass event and National HCCA Tour will feature Thomas and Thomas Flyer autos, including at least two of the earliest known Thomas cars. Currently about a dozen Thomas owners have expressed an interest or registered for the event.”

“Additionally, there will be a presentation on Friday evening, July 15, by Jeff Mahl, great grandson of George Shuster, who drove the winning Thomas Flyer on the 1908 New York to Paris race.”

To get registration forms for the event go to: www.museumofthehorselesscarriage.org/events/ or contact Bob Ladd – 717-269-5508.

- **Cadillac Production Figures** – From Peter Wood, London, UK. “I have fully transcribed the Cadillac records from 1903 to the end of production for the Model E/F’s. So the Models C, E, F are accurate. I am now about to start the very tedious task of Model K/M onwards, which are more detailed than the earliest records.” See the Link at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10229010213664170&set=gm.3087803028108565>
- **The Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra** – “Celebration of Brass II event will feature a performance by The Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra (KSO) on Saturday evening, July 16th.” Tickets must be purchased directly from the KSO at: <https://boxoffice.kalamazoosymphony.com/gilmore-car-museum-22>
For more information contact Bob Ladd.

Doug Tomb / Douglas.tomb@verizon.net

Board Member – HCCA NN Editor ...

HCCA NATIONAL NEWS



Re: Celebration at The Gilmore in July; New Tri-State Region Approved! Calendar Update;
Issue: 2022-06-01 #07

Happy Memorial Day!

- **Celebration of Brass II** – From Bob Ladd: “Thanks to those of you who have registered for the Celebration of Brass II.

For those that have not sent in your registration, please do so ASAP so that we can secure your spot and finalize plans. We still have some room on the Tour, and of course we have room for the Show, Swap Meet, and other events, as those don't have capacity limits.

For those that have registered, we wanted to let you know that the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra (KSO) will be playing a concert that Saturday evening.

Details are below, though if you are interested you do have to purchase your ticket separately for that activity, through the Orchestra directly.

For those that still need to register for the Show and Tour, here is the link.

[Celebration of Brass II @ The Gilmore Car Museum - Museum of the Horseless Carriage](#) For any registration questions, please contact Kim at 269-366-7360.

Here is the information about the Orchestra event. Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, performing Gershwin, and Dvorak's New World Symphony, Saturday, July 16, 7:00 PM. <https://www.kalamazoosymphony.com> (Concert tickets sold directly by Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra) “ Don't miss it!

- **HCCA Tri-State Region** – Exciting News! At the BBC Tour's closing Banquet on May 19th, President Andy Wallace presented the recently approved, and signed, Tri-State Region Charter, to Vince Altieri and Al Zamba, two of the founding members of the new Region, who were in attendance on the BBC Tour.

The new Tri-State Region covers the area in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, centered around Pittsburgh.

The new Tri-State Region is the Sponsor of this year's HCCA National 1 & 2 Tour in Bedford, PA.

- **Calendar Update** – The latest from the HCCA Gazette and Website:
 - HCCA National 1&2 Cylinder Tour, June 12 – June 18, 2022. Bedford, PA. Sponsor: Tri-State Region. Contact: Vince and Janice Altieri 724-516-5108 Email: cars47@comcast.net
 - Celebration of Brass II, Car Show, Swap Meet and HCCA National Tour. July 14 – 19, 2022. Gilmore Museum, Hickory Corners, MI. Sponsor: The Museum of the Horseless Carriage. Contact: Kevin Fleck 269-830-6174, Email: kfleck@outlook.com Web: www.museumofthehorselesscarriage.org
 - Southern Ontario/North New Jersey Niagara Tour. July 25 – 29, 2022. Niagara Falls, ONT. Sponsor: Southern Ontario Regional Group. Hosts: Steve and Lynn Witt 905-978-1254, Email: steve@stanpacnet.com or Ken and Linda Coombes 905-570-5129, Email: kwcoombes@gmail.com
 - 36th New London to New Brighton Antique Car Run, August 10 – 13, 2022. New London, MN. Contact: Bruce Van Sloun 612-963-7586. www.redflagmotortour.com

Doug Tomb / Douglas.tomb@verizon.net

Board Member – HCCA NN Editor ...

THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE CLUB OF AMERICA

THE BRASS ERA TOURING CLUB



WHAT IS A HORSELESS CARRIAGE?

A horseless carriage is a car propelled without the aid of a horse, of course, but it is also a marvel of mechanical ingenuity: the combination of metal, wood, rubber and leather. Although early automobiles are based upon common engineering principles, they differ as to size, shape, color, horsepower, value and type of engine.

The preservation of old brass cars is a fascinating hobby. Combined in one package are the appeals of art, history, craftsmanship and mechanical engineering. The sight of a horseless carriage draws immediate attention and admiration from all. Cares of the moment will be forgotten as your antique machine transports you to a time when the horse was still the prime mover and exciting inventions were developing into the then-fledgling automotive industry.

The Horseless Carriage Club is a non-profit association of people dedicated to the enjoyment, study and restoration of vehicles manufactured prior to 1916. The club was organized in 1937 by a group of enthusiasts in Los Angeles, California who foresaw the need for an organization dedicated to the preservation of automotive history.

The Horseless Carriage Club offers membership to collectors, historians and anyone else with an interest in vintage automobiles and their history. You do not need to own a car made before 1916 in order to belong. Many members derive their enjoyment of the hobby by reading about early automobiles in the club's bi-monthly Horseless Carriage Gazette.

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CAR STORAGE

Does anyone in Northern CA have room to store a car? We have friends in England and Netherlands that would like to keep a brass-era car in this area for touring once or twice a year. Must be inside and secure.

Email: trees@brassauto.com

The STORY of the

Buick



1903 - 1978

Author, Richard P. Scharchburg
Professor of Social Science,
Director of GMI Alumni Foundations Collections of Industrial History
General Motors Institute
May 4, 1978

THE STORY OF THE BUICK

(The title for this article was taken from the unpublished memoirs of W. C. Durant located in the GMI Alumni Historical Collection in Flint, Michigan. Mr. Durant was working on his memoirs at the time of his death in 1947. The chapter on Buick was not completed — only the title for the chapter and a brief outline are extant.)

The origins of the Buick Motor Division of General Motors Corporation begin with its predecessor, the Buick Motor Company and its founder David Dunbar Buick. Buick was born in Scotland, on September 17, 1854. Two years later his parents immigrated to the United States, eventually settling in Detroit. Little is known about his childhood and schooling. It is generally agreed that he delivered papers for the *Detroit Free Press* and *Daily Union* and apprenticed at the James Flower and Brothers Machine Shop. A short time later he entered the plumbing supply business.

On May 13, 1893 he formed a partnership in a plumbing fixture and supply concern with a former schoolmate named William Sherwood. The Buick and Sherwood Plumbing and Supply Company prospered. It was there in the Buick and Sherwood Shop that David Buick indulged his love of mechanics and engineering. Tinkering soon became a way of life for him. His love of tinkering was to be his undoing several times in his business career. Buick was a man of progressive ideas, native mechanical ability, but little business interest or caution. Finances did not concern him.

Buick was a slender man usually neatly groomed in stylish but conservative clothes. His physical appearance belied his temperament which at times was fiery. While his mind was probably average about some things, it no doubt approached genius in engineering. But he was, by most accounts, impulsive and impractical, unable to sit still for any time at all unless his hands and thoughts were both concentrated on some mechanical problem that had happened to catch his attention.

In the plumbing business Buick could have tinkered the rest of his life and remained successful and financially secure. As a young man he acquired a patent on a lawn sprinkler and a process for affixing porcelain to cast iron. The latter process made possible white bath tubs as well as other related articles in the bathroom designed for fashion and convenience.

Buick could have stayed in the plumbing business and become a millionaire, but to him a bath tub must have been a silent and uninteresting object in contrast with gasoline engines which Buick and Sherwood had begun to

manufacture in 1900. When *Buick Auto-Vim and Power Company* was established in Detroit in 1901 and began experimentation with gasoline engines, it soon depleted the financial reserve of Buick and Sherwood. The parent company also was in debt in an effort to indulge David Buick's experimentation with engines.

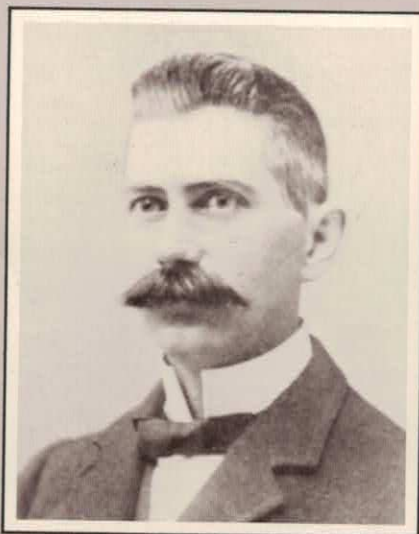
"Auto-Vim" in the name of the Buick engine company had significance. No doubt David Buick hoped to attach his L-head engine to a running gear to see if it would pull itself and a load as well. Why should he be satisfied with the motor or even selling the L-head engines for farm and marine use when horseless carriages were being developed and tested by Ford, King and others in Detroit and elsewhere? Some of these pioneering efforts were even making the popular magazines.

By April, 1901 David Buick had apparently built, or at least partially built, the first Buick automobile, which for some reason he offered to sell to Walter L. Marr. In fact Buick offered to sell to Marr "the automobile, known as the Buick, all patterns,... also deliver(y) wagon body, two new carriage bodies, engines, etc.," for \$1,800. Such a deal — the whole Buick auto business of only \$1,800.

Records show that on August 16, 1901, Buick did sell to Walter L. Marr "All my right, title and interest in the Automobile known as the Buick Automobile" for the sum of \$225. This sale, presumably constituted, marks the first sale of a Buick automobile.

Buick soon found additional financing from the Briscoe brothers in Detroit. The Briscoes were at the time in the metal stamping business, providing mud guards (fenders), cooler (radiators), and other metal parts for Michigan's blossoming auto industry. Around him, Buick had drawn two young engineers, Walter L. Marr and Eugene Richard. Their combined efforts led to the development of the soon-to-be famous "valve in head" engine. This Buick engine proved to be much more powerful for its size than any other, and eventually the entire automotive industry made use of its principle.

There is considerable controversy concerning the development of the L-head engine. The question involves who deserves the credit — Buick, Marr, or Richard? The most likely explanation is that each man contributed to its development. Regardless of the origin of the engine design



David Buick

and breakthrough, Buick was having problems with the strong-willed Marr. He and Marr quarreled and Marr then left to work on some of the first Oldsmobiles and built a car of his own design, the Autocar exhibited at the auto shows in 1903.

Again David Buick saw himself in financial difficulties. Buick like most early auto pioneers was more interested in development than in production, and even less concerned with the overall costs of research and development. In fact research and development was more trial and error than anything else. Even before he could assemble a car, Buick again had to turn to the Briscoes for additional capital.

Fresh capital led to what must have appeared to be endless tinkering. The Briscoes continued to express interest and provide modest financial backing. As the amount of money provided by the Briscoe brothers increased, they demanded some security and reorganization of the company structure. David Buick, having no real choice agreed, and on May 19, 1903, the Buick Motor Company was incorporated with capital stock of \$100,000. The Briscoes were to receive \$99,700 and Buick \$300. Buick was given the option to purchase the company stock, provided he exercised the option before September of that year. This was not a bad deal for Buick since the agreement stated that he could have all the stock if he repaid \$3,500 the total that the Briscoes had advanced for his experiments.

Buick failed to exercise the option by the prescribed time and the Briscoes took over management of the newly organized Buick Motor Company. David Buick remained president, but for all intents and purposes he had been forced to surrender control of his company. For the first time tinkering had cost him control of his company.

By this time the Briscoes had lost all patience and interest in the Buick automobile. However, they had not lost their interest in automobiles. In fact they had met Jonathan Maxwell, another auto pioneer who already had a car more nearly ready for production. And so the Briscoes began a search for a way out of the faltering Buick company. They heard of an enterprising wagon maker in Flint, James H. Whiting, who had some interest in engines. A deal was struck and the Flint Wagon Works, of which Whiting was manager, bought out the Briscoe interest and got Dave Buick in the bargain. The Buick company was yet to market its first car.

Announcement of the Buick purchase by Flint Wagon Works interests appeared in *The Flint Journal* September 11, 1903 and specified the new enterprise would manufacture "stationary and marine engines, automobile engines, transmissions, carburetors, spark plugs, etc." When Whiting was asked about rumors of automobile manufacture, "he smiled pleasantly and suggested that for the present the engines and accessories would be built by the new factory and that the broader opportunity was one for further consideration."

The day before the Flint purchase

of Buick, Barney Oldfield had driven a racing car through a fence at the Grosse Point track, killing a spectator. America had a motorcar fatality every month or so. The death rate was so alarming that newspapers frequently conjectured which would kill the most people, automobiles or football.

The Detroit News-Tribune published a full-page illustration of "The People's automobile" — a crowded streetcar.

Flint, in 1903 was most interested in a blacksmith's convention, securing a Carnegie library, municipal ownership of the waterworks, re-organization of the electric power company, improvement of gas service and telephone connections to nearby towns. The first streetcar to Hamilton Avenue and the carriage material factories there was proving such a success that a second car was contemplated. Rumors were published that interurban cars might use gasoline engines.

Almost daily news of that period was Carrie Nation, saloon smasher, who was touring the fairs. American business was reported thriving. Trading stamps were the vogue in retail trade. Average factory wages in Michigan had risen from \$1.68 a day in 1902 to \$1.75 a day in 1903. A Socialist convention was coming to Flint.

Flint, like most cities in mid-America was essentially a horse-and-buggy town, not very enthusiastic about the automobile that was beginning to hurt the carriage business in the East and also causing much unpleasantness for local horse owners. Wagon and carriage traffic was so heavy on downtown Saginaw Street that the hitching posts were becoming a menace. Saturday night parking for horse rigs was a serious problem.

James Whiting, one of Flint's leading carriage and wagon manufacturers, by most reports of the day, was not enthusiastic about the prospects for automobile production. As noted earlier he announced that the Wagon Works intended only to build and market stationary engines.

Ground was broken September 11, 1903 for the first Buick Engine plant in Flint and production began there three months later. It was located south of the Wagon Works main building at the west end of West Kearsley Street.



Buick Motor Co. Engine Works

Reorganization of the Buick Motor Company in Flint was completed with incorporation January 29, 1904 at \$75,000 capitalization instead of \$50,000 as had been planned at first. The stock was half paid for in cash, Flint Wagon Works declaring a \$35,000 dividend for the purpose. David Buick and his son Thomas received 1,500 shares between them. Other large stockholders were James H. Whiting, 1,505 shares; Charles W. Begole, 1,000; George L. Walker, 725; William S. Ballenger, Sr., 707 shares. Not only other stockholders of the Wagon Works, but other Flint businessmen bought Buick stock. The officers of Buick at first were the same as in the Wagon Works, except that David Buick was secretary.

Soon Whiting, probably at Buick's or Marr's urging, put a few of the Flint Wagon Works eggs in the tool box of the first Buick car. Sometime in 1904 Whiting thus gave-in

and authorized development of a prototype car. According to William Beacraft, one of Buick's first employees, the first valve-in-head double-opposed engine was ready for installation on May 27, 1904.

Obviously another truce had been reached between David Buick and Walter Marr, and Marr rejoined the Flint based Buick Company. Marr agreed to another whirl with David Buick. They promised to curb their tempers and try to get along.

Accordingly Marr perfected the valve-in-head-double-opposed engine which went into the first successful Buick car as noted. Contrary to various reports, that car was not built in Detroit in 1903, but in Flint in the summer of 1904.

Whiting's approval of steps that would eventually lead to auto production was qualified upon proof that Buick and



1904 Buick Engine Works. Man in cap with mustache in foreground is William Beacraft.



The entire Buick factory employees group when the first Buick was built in Flint.



1904 Model B, Buick finished in indigo blue, with bright yellow wheels, price \$950.00. Rear: Charles M. Begole, James Whiting. Front: Walter Marr, driver; Tom Buick, inventors son.

Marr could develop a car that would really perform. Several pioneer Flint auto workers recalled seeing the first Buick chugging around the Wagon Works early in July 1904. Whiting then approved a test run to Detroit and back.

The historic run apparently started from the Buick Plant on Kearsley Street on Saturday, July 9, 1904, and ended there on Tuesday, July 12. *The Flint Journal* reported on Saturday, July 9, "One of the new Buick autos was on the streets this afternoon and attracted considerable attention. The machine was not wholly completed but from its speed it looks as though the Buick will cut quite a figure in the auto world when the company gets to turning them out in greater numbers."

It looked like local people were taking notice of the Buick and some at least did not hesitate to predict success. On Monday, July 11, the *Journal* again reported on the road

test: "The trial run of the new Buick auto Saturday, from Flint to Detroit was made in fast time, the distance from Pontiac to Birmingham being covered in 10 minutes. The machine made the trip without a skip and the party expects to return tomorrow."

That the car driven by Walter Marr and Thomas Buick, reached Detroit is confirmed by research by Charles E. Hulse, a Flint antique auto enthusiast and historian. Hulse discovered a list in the September 11, 1904 *Detroit Free Press*. This list recorded the second 500 cars registered in Detroit. Detroit had a law requiring the registration of self-propelled vehicles. An earlier list (May, 1904) had the first 500 cars registered. On the September list of the second 500 registrations was number 1024 issued to Thomas D. Buick of Flint.

The Flint Journal of July 13, 1904 reported the results of the run in a half column article:

MADE RECORD RUN

Test of Buick Automobile a
Success

A Mile Every Two Minutes

Was Average Time Made by
The Machine

Covered 115 Miles Between
Detroit and Flint in
217 Minutes Over Muddy Roads

Bespattered with flying real estate from every county they had touched but with the knowledge that they had made a "record," Tom Buick and W. L. Marr, of the Buick Motor Works who left for Detroit on Saturday to give the first automobile turned out by that concern a trial on the road, returned to the city late yesterday afternoon. The test of the machine was eminently satisfactory, and, in fact, exceeded expectations.

In spite of the muddy condition of the roads the trip home was made in the remarkable time of 3 hours and 37 minutes, or at the rate of a trifle less than a mile in two minutes on the basis of the distance traversed as figured by the gentlemen in charge of the machine. Through a mistake they

failed to take the right turn when near Lapeer and it was necessary for them to make an extra 15 miles. This increased the total distance of the run to nearly 155 miles as they passed through Pontiac, Orion, Oxford, Lapeer, and Davison, not following the direct route.

"The machine made the run without a skip," said Mr. Marr today, "and reached here in the best of condition. We took hills handily with our high speed gear and the machine sounded like a locomotive. It simply climbed. In one place we raced with an electric car and showed them the way. We went so fast at another time that we could not see the village 'six-mile-an-hour' sign."

The machine used in making the trip is the \$950 Tonneau put out by the Buick company and is equipped with a 12-horse power engine that can develop from 18 to 21 horse power on a pinch. It was provided with a "testing" body and was stripped of everything that would add unnecessary weight. Its long rakish looking body covered with mud gave it the appearance of a speedster and attracted much attention along the route of the run.

Upon its return to the city the machine and its occupants, mud and all, were photographed by C. R. Quay.

Ten years later Walter Marr recalled the following humorous incident about the historic 1904 test run:

"I did the driving and Buick was kept busy wiping the mud off my goggles.



1st Buick — 1904, 1st and
Saginaw St., Flint July 12, 1904,
Driver — Walter Marr
Passenger — Thomas Buick

At one place, going down a hill I saw a bump at a bridge too late to slow up. When I hit it, I threw on all the power and landed over it safely in the road. Buick was just taking a chew of tobacco, and a lump of mud as large as a baseball hit him square in the face, filling his mouth completely. We were plastered with mud from head to foot when we reached Flint, but the little car ran the entire distance without a skip. The last I heard of the Buick was in 1913, when I was in Chicago, and it was still running.

It is remarkable how these engines never seem to run out. Talk about your 372 hour contests, a man was in my office last week, who has one of these old engines rigged up as a power-plant in his factory in Detroit, which has been running all the time, every day, and for four years and one-half." --- Walter Marr

At the New York Auto Show in 1905 statements were made that Buick's two-cylinder motor would develop 22 horse power. This statement was published in the *Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal* in October, 1905. Gasoline engine "experts" were surprised at these performance claims and Buick competitors were critical. Some very spiteful comments were reportedly made about the Buick, and as a result, a Mr. H. L. Arnold came to the Buick Factory in Flint and conducted experiments to authenticate Buick's claims as stated in his article.

On November 21, 1905, under Mr. Arnold's supervision, three runs were made with a Buick two-cylinder car. The first test run showed 29.07 bhp, the second run, 31.53, and the third run developed 32.52 bhp.

The results of Arnold's tests were published and attention was again being showered on the performance of the Buick. Cars now began to sell. The first car was delivered to Dr. Herbert Hills of Flint on August 13, 1904. Orders for another 17 Buicks had also come in. Within the next two months 16 Buicks were completed and sold.

With the production of Buicks getting underway, you would have thought Whiting would have been pleased with his budding automobile company. He wasn't and now moreover had a lot to worry about. He had brought the Buick Company to Flint in hopes to help the city he loved so well. Buick was deep in debt to several Flint banks. The company couldn't meet the demands for its stationary farm engines and the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers, the creation of the Selden Patent threatened to stop production of the Buick car as they had with the Hardy Flint roadster. Whiting realized that if Buick folded, Flint would lose valuable ground in the automobile business.

Moreover Whiting was personally concerned because it was at his encouragement that the wagon works had bought Buick and he had approved the move into motor cars. At a Chicago Carriage Convention in late 1903 James Whiting happened to chat with Fred Aldrich, secretary of the Durant-Dort Carriage Company also of Flint. No doubt their conversation turned to the new type of transportation, the horseless carriage.

As a result of that casual conversation Aldrich probably suggested to Whiting that Billy Durant was the man to solve Whiting's problems with the Buick. Whiting needed a forceful go-getter who could promote the Buick car — a man who could raise additional capital and sell cars. Aldrich reportedly said "Billy Durant is your man."

Durant was the grandson of Henry H. Crapo, one of Flint's most distinguished businessmen and citizens. H. H. Crapo had come to Flint in 1856 and established one of Flint's largest lumber mills. He had served as mayor and twice governor of Michigan during the closing years of the Civil War.



FIRST BUICK OFFICE STAFF, 1903 — among those pictured are William Beacraft, Duncan Clint, Arthur C. Mason and Miss Ethel Lobdell. Photo was taken at a Mrs. Beckman's home where many early employes took room and board.



William C. Durant

Durant and his partner, J. Dallas Dort, had established the Flint Road Cart Company in 1886 and by 1901 the business, now called Durant-Dort Carriage Company, had grown to 14 plants. In addition, the Durant-Dort enterprises included firms manufacturing parts that ranged from wheels to whip-sockets. As success accumulated, Durant began to search for other challenges. Around the turn of the century he moved to New York and began to study the stock market. This relationship with "the street" continued to fascinate him for the rest of his life.

When first approached by Whiting, Durant did not appear interested. After all why should he? Wasn't the Durant-Dort Company doing very well and hadn't it made him a millionaire and allowed him to indulge his latest interest in the stock market?

But the idea of the motor car must have appealed to his temperament, for it emphasized qualities and powers like some of his own: speed, novelty, flexibility, and ability to get where he wanted to go — fast! Its possibilities for salesmanship and showmanship would also appeal to one who had proved himself already a most successful distributor of vehicles. The motor car, he could see, fitted the progressive American spirit like a glove. In addition, here was a piece of merchandise that could not be hidden; the motor car would advertise itself on the street and at the curb. But, after the car had met his severe tests, Mr. Durant looked no further: Buick would do.

On November 1, 1904, the arrangement between W. C. Durant and Buick Motor Company was completed. Capital was increased from \$75,000 to \$300,000, with an agreement for another increase to \$500,000. It was less than a year later the stock had zoomed to \$1,500,000. Durant was a super salesman!

Somehow, in the reorganization shuffle, David Buick was lost. Durant assumed absolute management of the company and Charles M. Begole, son of another former

Michigan governor, an executive with Flint Wagon Works and one of the original Buick stockholders, became president. Ironically, David Buick didn't seem to care — at least for awhile. He just kept being shuffled downward. Records in the GMI Alumni Historical Collection relate that on March 10, 1904, David Buick owned 1000 shares of stock and on September 9, 1905, held only 110 shares, helping to prove this point.

The new builder of Buick was finding there were problems. Durant found it necessary to relocate the assembly operations in Jackson, Michigan, due to the fact that the Buick facilities in the west end of Flint were inadequate. The first things first, there was an automobile show opening in New York and Durant decided it was necessary to display a Buick and see what he could do. A few weeks later his wife wrote a friend. "William has just returned from the Auto Show in New York where he sold 110 machines," adding with undue modesty, "The Buick is certainly a success." Billy Durant never wasted a word or a moment; as a salesman he was soft-spoken, honest, direct — and obviously very persuasive.

Durant's plan was to use the empty Imperial Wheel factory building in Jackson. Engines were to be made in Flint but shipped to Jackson where the cars would be assembled and shipped. The people of Flint hated to lose this young industry on which their hopes for future growth of the city lay.

Some of his Flint friends asked Durant the terms under which he would agree to bring the entire Buick activities back to Flint. Durant realized it was inefficient to build parts in one city and ship them to another place to be assembled. He assumed he would add on to the Jackson factory. Jackson could not be persuaded to raise the money. He then went to Bay City, Michigan. The money wasn't raised there either. Durant then said it could be moved back to Flint if the city would buy an additional hundred thousand dollars worth of Buick stock.

The directors of the four Flint banks agreed to share the burden. With the hundred thousand dollars subscribed, plans to build an enlarged plant in Jackson were abandoned. The Jackson people had missed the boat. They did not share the confidence of the Flint people in the future of the automobile industry; they still believed that decades of prosperity lay ahead of the horse-and-buggy business. As to Flint, that stock subscription, which in

retrospect appears like a very small amount, ensured the future of the city for there has never since then been any question of Buicks being made anywhere except in Flint.

The agreement was written up and signed on April 24, 1905. Flint would be Buick town.

In 1905, Durant's first complete year with the Buick Company, he had increased production and sales by more than twenty times to 750 units. In 1906, production escalated to 1400, in 1907 to 4641.

In order to move Buick back to Flint, Durant would need a new factory. The site would be the 200 acre Hamilton farm on the north edge of the city near some of the subsidiaries of Durant-Dort. The price was \$22,000. Durant saw the future of the automobile, and he wanted to be the world's largest producer, so it was no wonder he wanted the largest factory to build them in. The building, when completed, was 14 acres under one roof.

Durant was also interested in starting a supply system to help develop the automobile. He contacted Charles Stewart Mott of the Weston-Mott Company of New York, which built axles for Buick, to see if he would be willing to relocate or set up a branch. On June 6, 1905, Mott replied that he was not interested in setting up a branch, but might consider relocating if the opportunities were attractive enough.

It wasn't until September that Durant went to visit Mott in New York. The citizens of Flint would subscribe \$100,000 in new capital, and Weston-Mott would be given a site next to the new Buick plant. Along with the above they would be given a big axle contract with Buick. Visiting Flint the weekend of September 1, 1905, Mott and his partner William Doolittle decided to transfer the Weston-Mott Company to Flint. By February 1, 1907 the move was complete.

The Weston-Mott and Buick plants were hardly completed when W. F. Stewart Company was persuaded to build its largest body plant across Hamilton Avenue at the northeast corner of Industrial. Close by already were the Imperial Wheel Works, Flint Axle Works, Flint Varnish and Color Works, and J. B. Armstrong Spring Manufacturing Company. All but Armstrong were Durant-Dort projects. All soon became automobile parts plants and were soon

No. 1



No. 2



The evolution of Buick factory.

No. 3

absorbed by Buick. In 1907 the Oak Park Power Company was organized to provide heating, electric, steam and compressed air power for the expanding industrial complex centered around the Buick plant. In a little over a decade the old Hamilton farm had become the industrial heart of Flint and soon to be the cradle of the largest auto producer in the world — General Motors.

When Buick had been consolidated in Flint the Jackson plant was not immediately forgotten. Durant kept trying to use it for one thing or another. As long as he had a vacant building, he sought to use it for some new promotion.

He brought from the East a naval armament engineer named Janney, who had designed great coastal defense guns and other naval weapons. Janney Motor Company was organized at Jackson to produce a light four-cylinder motor. Two models were reportedly produced and two samples of each may have been built.

Apparently the motor was not quite satisfactory for production and in a few months the whole business was absorbed by Buick in an exchange of stock. Walter Marr and his assistant, E. A. DeWaters, redesigned the motor and in 1908 it became Buick Model 10, a low-priced car with a planetary transmission, operated by a foot pedal.

Selling at \$850 and \$900, the new Buick was formidable competition for Henry Ford's tin lizzy. New York papers heralded the Buick Model 10, nicknamed the "White Streak" because it was painted aluminum or Buick gray, as "out-Fording Ford" when it out-sold Fords at the New York automobile show. The Model 10 production reached 4,002 in 1908, nearly half the total of Buick sales for that year. Soon however bigger and finer cars were on the drawing board.

With Buick production up to Durant's expectations, he proceeded to the problem of marketing the cars. No sense developing the sales organization if you couldn't produce the cars! Durant's sales record easily allied any doubts that he could sell.

The eyes of the auto world were on Durant. Could he market his cars in a nation of harassed and frenzied failures? Then the man acted. He seemed to sense the dramatic.

In conference with James Whiting, Charles H. Bonbright, the latter the sales manager of the Durant-Dort Carriage Company; Charles W. Nash, the superintendent

and vice-president of Durant-Dort; and several others with the Durant-Dort operation. He carefully and quietly explained a program he planned to put in effect.

"We will use our Durant-Dort carriage display rooms throughout the country for showing the new Buick. It is a dandy. It's the best car yet built in the world — not the biggest — but the best. The Buick engine is powerful. The car rides well. It can beat any other car made in hill climbing performance. It looks good and the paint job is good. Our Buick racing team has carried Buick's fame everywhere. And there will be no panic in Flint."

And there was no panic — neither in Flint nor for W. C. Durant, nor for Buick. The effect of what Mr. Durant did, his actions, answered his colleagues' questions in no uncertain terms.

This explanation is an example of the way Mr. Durant sold plain people on the idea that a horseless carriage was almost a public utility. The coast to coast display of Buick cars in carriage agencies in 1907-08 was the introduction to America of the first automobile showrooms as such. Selling the people that an automobile was a public utility will always be the real monument of service Mr. Durant left behind him.

But Durant and Buick's problems were not solved. Orders had been obtained but a long widespread, wet spring kept down the flow of deliveries. Most car producers shipped cars on the public road in caravans called "drive-aways." Bad weather delayed shipments and deliveries of cars already ordered. Others who had not ordered cars waited for fair weather to buy new cars.

Harry E. Shiland, a former auto dealer from the east who Durant persuaded to join the Buick sales organization, mapped out a branch warehouse system, with a large distributing agency in a key city of each district. Numerous branch managers would be better able to organize and control sales than one home office in Flint. Each branch would also carry a large stock of parts and accessories and assure more prompt service than dealers had been able to give when they had to obtain parts direct from Flint. Durant adopted the plan and toured the country to help set up the branches and find managers. Buick could not eliminate bad weather, but they could and did organize sales to assure more even outlet for factory production.

Among the most successful branch houses were those of Charles Howard at San Francisco, Harry Pence at Minneapolis, C. C. Coddington in the Carolinas, "Carload" Collins at Kansas City who began to buy whole trainloads of Buicks. Collins, succeeded Harry Shiland as general sales manager of Buick in November, 1910.

The foreign car at this time was a very dominant factor in racing. Durant set out to prove that Buick cars were equal to those produced by British or Continental manufacturers. So, back in 1906, a Buick car was entered and won the tough thousand mile free-for-all race at the Empire City Track in New York. It was only a short time later that the famous Buick racing team of Louis and Gaston Chevrolet, Bob Burman, and Louis Strang, were running wild capturing almost all the racing trophies for which they competed. Other manufacturers entered cars in races with the sole idea of defeating the Buick, for there was no other conten-



Early Buick factory — Hamilton St., formerly Imperial Wheel plant.

der. Durant was interested in racing, but more aware of the value of the publicity gained by winning races. Durant also would use the race as a test in which he instructed the drivers to drive the car until it broke down under the strain so that weak parts could be discovered. It was about this time that auto shows began to be an event of great news importance, and it was here for years that Buick stole the show.

Durant did enjoy racing and it was through racing that the new Buick slogan began in 1907. It took place when Mr. Durant took Bob Burman, of the Buick Racing Team, through the Buick plant.

To Burman he said, "Bob, now that you have a good racing team, you drive your Buick car as hard and as fast as you can. I don't care if you win races or not. When some part breaks, or wears out, you bring it to the factory immediately, and we'll build it better, and when better automobiles are built Buick will build them."

Buick production had tripled to 4,641 in 1907, despite the fact that a financial panic created a depression across the country. People just weren't buying cars and many automobile manufacturers were closing their doors. Durant was juggling bills and forcing them to extend credit to keep building Buicks at full tilt.

Some people feel that Durant was lucky the panic was short. Durant's gamble to continue building cars paid off. When people were ready to buy cars, Buick was the only

automaker with plenty of them to sell. From this point on Durant figured he could just ride out any temporary recessions.

Buick production was on the move. The production kept doubling and tripling. In June, 1908, the company set an industry record for any month when it built 1,409 vehicles in Flint and 245 in Jackson, in 1908 Buick production had reached 8,820. This figure was enough to put it in the number one position ahead of Ford and Cadillac — its closest rivals. Durant was the largest automobile manufacturer in the world and in a little more than three years!

In 1908 the Briscoes again entered into the history of the Buick. The top four auto producers in the United States were Buick, Reo, Maxwell-Briscoe, and Ford. Benjamin Briscoe had the idea to form an auto combine. He had secured tentative approval from eastern bankers to provide the necessary financing for an auto merger. According to Durant's own account, the formation of General Motors started out like this:

Benjamin Briscoe called Durant on May 15, 1908, from Chicago.

"Hello Billy. I have a most important matter to discuss with you, and want you to take the first train to Chicago."

"What's the big idea, Ben?"

"Don't ask me to explain; it's the biggest thing in the country: there are millions in it; can you come?"

"Impossible: too busy; sorry. But I can see you here (in Flint). Why don't you take the ten o'clock Grand Trunk arriving at seven o'clock tomorrow morning? I will meet you at the station and we will have breakfast together."

"All right, I will be with you."

When Briscoe arrived in Flint he informed Durant that the house of Morgan was interested in some part of an auto combination and he wanted Billy's ideas. Briscoe had ideas of combining about 20 leading companies. But Durant didn't like the proposal and told him that the proposition "was too big, too many concerns involved, too many conflicting interests to be reconciled." Instead, Durant suggested getting together "a few concerns committed to volume production" and suggested Ford, Reo, Maxwell-Briscoe, and Buick. About two weeks later Durant, Briscoe, Henry Ford, and Ransom E. Olds met in Detroit. Negotiations at first were strained, as no one had a definite plan. Discussion followed on many phases of a proposed merger. The meeting ended cordially. Benjamin Briscoe indicated that he would talk to the Morgan interests and arrange for another meeting, probably in New York.



BUICK RACING TEAM — Shown in the center are Walter Marr (with beard), chief engineer; Bob Burman, Louis Chevrolet and Louis Strang, drivers.

In due time the meeting was held, but Ford expressed reservations that came as a surprise to Durant, Briscoe, and Olds. Then Ford, at a subsequent meeting to arrange final details for the merger, announced that he would join only on the basis of cash and that he would not accept stock as payment in any merger or consolidation. Everyone was surprised, especially the Morgan bankers and Durant. R. E. Olds then stood up at the meeting and also demanded a cash payment. Since cash was in limited supply, any further discussion of consolidation or merger was useless.

But Durant had all the Buick stock "in his pocket" and unless he moved immediately he might never have the chance again. With Ford and R. E. Olds out of the negotiations, Durant offered to deal with Briscoe alone. The house of Morgan agreed to underwrite \$5,000,000 of a proposed new holding company to be called International Motors. About this time, Frederick L. Stetson, Morgan's attorney, began to question the method by which Durant, on advice from his attorney, John J. Carton, intended to exchange Buick stock for stock in the proposed new company. Stetson demanded a formal meeting of stockholders. Durant insisted it was unnecessary since he owned all stock or had proxies representing 100 percent of Buick stock. The two parted and J. P. Morgan lost his

opportunity to control the auto industry as they controlled rails and steel.

However Durant was still determined on a consolidation and decided to go on alone. And so on September 16, 1908, he incorporated General Motors Company in New Jersey, originally capitalized at \$2,000. On the 28th of September, the newly formed GM Board of Directors increased the capitalization to \$12,500,000, a sum reflecting the Durant name and financial audacity more than anything else. The next day General Motors bought Buick for a large amount of the new stock and only \$15,000 cash. Durant then proceeded with the purchase of Oldsmobile in Lansing, Cadillac in Detroit, and Oakland (later Pontiac) in Pontiac. Thus within a few months, Durant brought under the General Motors umbrella all the auto producers, except Chevrolet (which he had not yet founded) which comprise the General Motors Corporation today.

Soon after the formation of General Motors Company, Durant began an aggressive often impulsive expansion program for General Motors. In what must be reckoned a terrific outburst of corporate energy, the following units were added to the General Motors family, either through outright purchase or by buying controlling interest. This program consumed Durant for the next two years and included:



Hamilton Avenue in front of the Buick main office, Ca. 1908.

Champion Ignition, Flint
 Weston-Mott Company, Flint
 Reliance Motor Truck Company, Owosso
 Rainier Motor Company, Saginaw
 Michigan Motor Castings, Flint
 Welch Motor Car, Pontiac
 Welch-Detroit, Detroit
 Jackson-Church Wilcox, Jackson
 Michigan Auto Parts, Detroit
 Rapid Motor Vehicle, Pontiac
 Cartercar, Pontiac
 Ewing Automobile, Geneva, Ohio
 Elmore Manufacturing, Clyde, Ohio
 Dow Rim Company, New York City
 Northway Motor and Manufacturing, Detroit
 National Motor Cab Company
 Marquette Motor Company, Saginaw
 Seager Engine Works, Lansing
 Randolph Truck Company, Flint
 Bedford Motor Company, London, Ontario
 Novelty Incandescent Lamp Company
 Heany Lamp Company
 Heany Electric Company
 Brown-Lipe-Chapin Company, Syracuse,
 New York

This listing is not complete but gives an idea of Durant's intention for forming the largest manufacturer of auto parts and accessories ever conceived in the United States at the time.

This tremendous expansion program eventually caught the General Motors Company short of operating capital. Of course, Buick could not remain isolated from Durant's impending financial dilemma. Construction at the Buick complex on Hamilton Avenue stopped; workers were laid off in droves. As a matter of record, Buick was the major money-maker of the company, but frequently there wasn't enough money on hand to meet Buick payrolls. "One Friday the payroll was met by Buick's Boston distributor Harry K. Noyes, who shipped the money to Flint in suitcases. If regular channels had been used, the currency would have remained in the banks to serve as collateral toward an overdraft. On other occasions Durant-Dort and Flint Wagon Works loaned Buick payroll money." But through it all Billy Durant remained optimistic.

The solution lay, as Durant saw it, in the hope of a sale of securities for cash. But the market was not inclined to invest further in auto companies. In late August, 1910, Durant, as chairman of the General Motors' executive committee, announced a plan for increasing the capitalization of the company and declaring a stock dividend of 400 percent. But before he could put this plan into effect, the immediate demands from banks and suppliers had to be met. As Durant and his associates scoured the country for cash, the extent of the crisis became evident, and the longer they searched the more cash they needed.

Durant had built General Motors and its expansion around the credit and good name of Buick. Therefore, Buick's credit and reputation were on the line. The banks



Buick Plant — Flint, Michigan

had demands on Buick for \$2,700,000 and on its suppliers of another \$5,000,000. At the insistence of Buick's creditors, a committee was appointed to bring about "a reorganization of the management and a restriction of enthusiasm." Arrangements were made to extend credit and at the same time advance \$2,000,000 on new loans secured by the capital stock of the Oldsmobile and Cadillac companies. This was totally inadequate to meet anything but the most pressing demands.

While all this was happening, others who had interests in General Motors, among them J. H. McClement and Henry and Wilfred Leland, were negotiating and persuading eastern financiers to formulate a plan to meet the long-term capital needs of General Motors. By the end of September, 1910, the bankers and General Motors had entered into an agreement whereby the company sold to the bankers \$15,000,000 in six percent first-lien sinking-fund notes, and \$4,500,000 fully paid GM common stock was released from the company's treasury as a bonus to the bankers. The purchase price of the notes and stock was \$12,750,000. This plan for the issue of notes, accompanied by a five-year deed of trust secured by the deposit with the voting trust officers of a majority of the outstanding preferred and common stock of General Motors, was formally adopted by the company's board of directors on November 11, 1910. Although Durant was a member of the voting trust, he was required to relinquish management control of General Motors and Buick.

Flint industrial employment had more than doubled from 1908 to 1910. In 1908 Flint had 4,499 wage earners in all factories averaging \$2.62 a day. By 1909 there were 10,265 wage earners in 123 factories at an average of \$2.20 a day.



Saginaw St., Flint, Michigan in 1909.

Flint was a swashbuckling boom town in that period. It was literally swamped with prosperity. Its rapid expansion, however, caused growing pains.

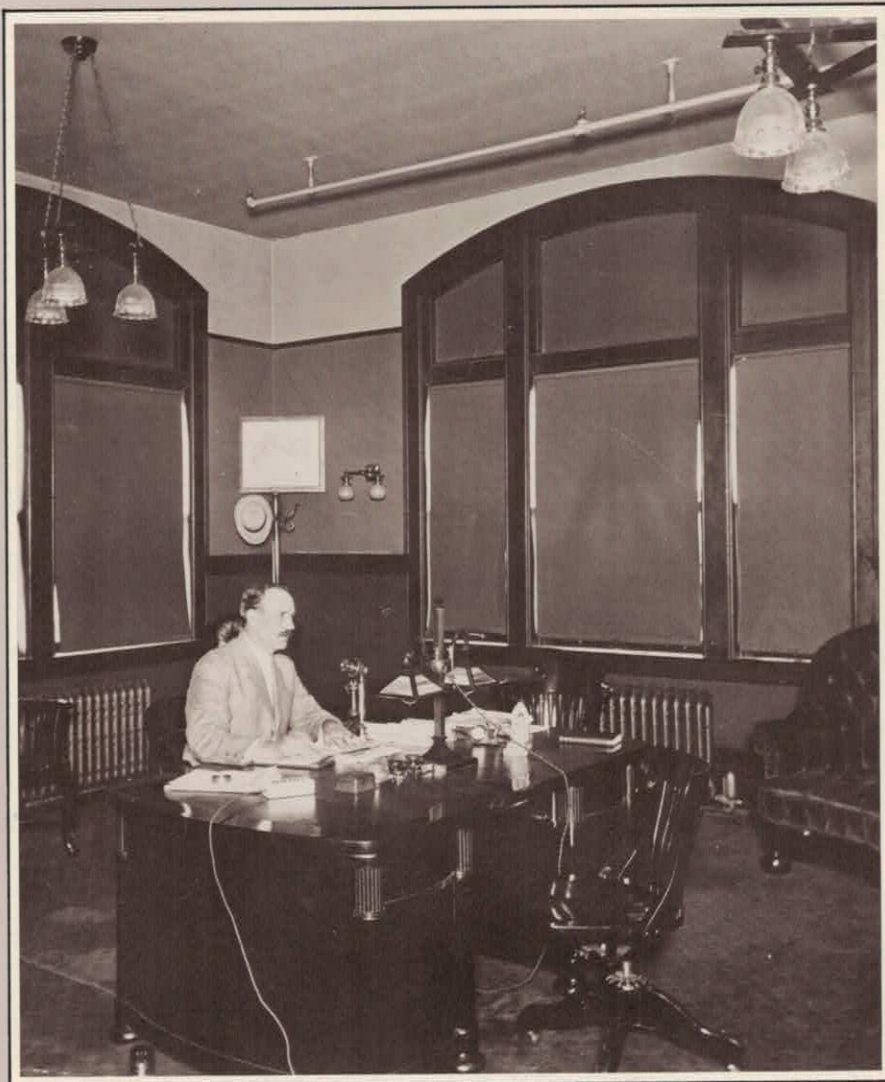
Even though money was plentiful it could not buy adequate housing. Schools, streets, water and sanitation systems — nearly everything was inadequate. Only saloons kept pace with the new automobile tempo. For years there was a saloon for every 1,000 residents. Hotels and rooming houses could not accommodate the inrush of workers, not even by renting to day workers by night and night workers by day. Hundreds of families lived in shacks and tents hurriedly set up in any open space near the plants. Oak Park was a tent city. In 1909-1910, 1,000 persons were estimated to be camped on the river banks and in the woods behind Buick. A couple of piano boxes back to back was a choice bunk. Sometimes old wooden railroad cars were parked on infrequently used sidings and served as temporary homes for the influx of workers demanded by the Buick factories.

In spite of these adverse conditions the workers continued to flock to Flint. Housing development became one of Flint's most feverous businesses, and banks and land developers prospered. General Motors itself eventually got into the building of houses to meet the ever-increasing demand for housing. All-in-all Buick's

effects on Flint, though at first hectic — especially through the Durant years, must be measured by events that followed after 1910. In September, 1910, Charles W. Nash, at Durant's suggestion accepted the top management at the Buick. Nash at the time, was vice-president and general manager of the Durant-Dort Carriage



Workers temporary housing near Buick Plant in Flint.



Charles W. Nash in his office at Buick.



Outdoor living in temporary housing.

Company. He knew almost nothing about automobiles but was a past master of production methods and management.

Nash's task was a formidable one — restore production and sales and put auto workers back on the job. Nash was more than equal to the task. Abandoned building operations were resumed and completed. The famous Model 10 was discontinued and the overall number of models was reduced from nine to seven. 1911 prices were increased to insure a greater margin of profit. The range began at \$550 for the Model 14 and ended with \$1,850 for the Models 38-39.

As mentioned before Richard H. "Carload" Collins, who had been a Kansas City distributor for two years, came here as sales manager in 1910, when Harry E. Shiland was transferred to management of GM's Saginaw plants. With Mr. Collins came Fred W. A. Vesper as assistant sales manager and advertising man, already well known here for having sold many thousands of Durant-Dort carriages.

Next another soon-to-be famous name entered the auto field — Walter P. Chrysler. Chrysler joined Buick in 1911 as works manager, having been recruited by Charles Nash. Previously a western railroad mechanic, Chrysler had made himself an automotive engineer, beginning by buying a car, tearing it down and rebuilding it over and over until he knew all its operations.

Nash and Chrysler, late arrivals in the automobile field both eventually established their own firms, on the basis of fortunes and experiences acquired with Buick and General Motors.

On July 12, 1912 Charles W. Nash was elected a vice president of General Motors partly in recognition of his success in Buick management. Although Nash continued to hold the title of President of Buick, the actual management of Buick was in the hands of Walter P. Chrysler from 1912 to late 1919. This period was one of the most dynamic in local Flint history. It included not only the first World War but the rise of Chevrolet through which Durant recaptured control of General Motors, and with it Buick.



Front row seated: L-R; Walter L. Marr, chief engineer; Walter P. Chrysler, works manager; Charles W. Nash, general manager; R. H. Collins, general sales manager; Cady B. Durham is standing behind Chrysler.

Buick production up to the end of 1912 was over 94,000 cars with a steady increase in each year's production up to 1917, when production was curtailed in order to make room for the manufacture of war materials for the government. Liberty engines, tank engines, army truck parts and shells were eventually produced.

Naturally, because of Buick's long experience in motor building, it was one of the first to undertake the manufacture of Liberty engines for airplane use, both in the eight and twelve cylinder types. One type of Buick car was immediately discontinued in order to take on these contracts and be sure of quick production.

Tools, dies, jigs, fixtures and machinery were altered in order to build Liberty engines under substantially the same production system as that which had proven itself so efficient in the building of Buick valve-in-head engines.

The Liberty engine was of course the most famous single unit built by Buick during the first World War, but there was a great quantity of other material built. This material ranged all the way from tank engines to special

forgings. The full record is impressive:

- 1,338 Liberty engines
- 1,278,422 3-inch mortar shells
- 1,267,562 mortar bases
- 1,058,806 shell casings
- 397,088 cartridge containers
- 13,500 trucks
- 11,000 sets of truck axles

Also included were wheel rims for trucks, miscellaneous forgings, including front spring shackles, transmission hangers, and engine supports.

During Walter Chrysler's management of Buick he had the assistance of many other capable Flint men, including two who were to follow



Bird's-eye view Oak Park sub-division, Flint, Mich.

him in the presidency — Harry H. Bassett and Edward T. Strong.

By 1919 Buick had gained first place in automobile sales by achieving the highest dollar volume of sales of any car in the United States. This leadership was maintained continuously through 1926, covering the last seven years of Edward T. Strong's term as sales manager.

In the same year, 1919, GM capitalization had nearly trebled. General Motors had grown by leaps and bounds under another Durant expansion program. The GM organization now included Chevrolet, GM of Canada, Fisher Body, Samson Tractor, Frigidaire, Sunnyside Electric Company and United Motors Corporation which included, Hyatt Roller Bearing Company, Harrison Radiator Company, Dayton Engineering Laboratories New Departure Manufacturing Company, Remy Electric Company, Jaxson Steel Products and Perlman Rim Company. Modern Housing Corporation, which developed Chevrolet Park and Civic Park in Flint, was one of the 1919 additions to GM. In 1919 the Durant Building (later renamed the GM Building) in Detroit was also begun and completed about 1921. On January 29, 1919, General Motors Acceptance Corporation was incorporated in New York at \$2,000,000, beginning the worldwide financing of car distribution, both wholesale and retail.

Much has been written about Mr. Durant being a benevolent dictator at the helm of General Motors. Following his hunches he made so many millionaires that his aids for the most part idolized him and never questioned his judgment. If he sometimes imposed on them, he was so considerate about it that they usually forgot and forgave. But not always.

It is reported in C. B. Glascock's *Gasoline Age* a story of one man Walter P. Chrysler who was irritated by Durant. It seems Chrysler had just made a contract with the A. O. Smith Company in Milwaukee to manufacture frames, expecting to save considerable for Buick by the deal. Mr. Durant unexpectedly telegraphed the Flint Chamber of Commerce that General Motors was about to build a \$6,000,000 frame factory in Flint. Flint cheered, but Chrysler fumed. Eventually he resigned first from the vice-presidence of General Motors and then from Buick. Chrysler was asked to try to salvage the sinking Willys-Overland Company and finally when Durant bought out Chrysler's huge holdings in GM, Chrysler formed the Chrysler Corporation and began manufacture of his own cars. Durant and Chrysler were too much alike — creative, impetuous, proud, and self-determined to both work in the same organization. They remained friends until Chrysler's death.

GM earnings reached a high of \$60,000,000 in 1919 and Buick sales were at the second highest point in Buick's history. But before the year was over, Buick faced an economic slow-down. On the first anniversary of Armistice Day, November 11, 1919, General Motors stock dropped 31 $\frac{3}{8}$ points on the New York exchange, falling another 20 points the next day. The following July there was another precipitate drop, but the real slaughter came in November, 1920. From a peak of 402 in 1919, General Motors fell to 12.

The second Durant expansion program eventually caught the Corporation short of operating capital. Sales declined sharply and unexpectedly in mid-1920. It became evident that the optimistic projections of 1919 were in serious error. Instead of a surplus of \$100,000,000 as predicted earlier, when 1920 began the Corporation had to turn again to the bankers and almost overnight found itself obligated for over \$200,000,000. Efforts to secure additional capital through sales of stock failed to produce enough funds to meet demands for cash.

In a desperate effort to bolster the falling market value of General Motors stock, two approaches to the financial problem were undertaken. First, Durant personally began to buy stock on the open market. When Durant's personal efforts failed to rally the market in General Motors stock, a syndicate was formed involving the Morgans and other eastern bankers. This syndicate attempted to assist Durant in stabilizing stock values as well as attracting new investors. On June 23, 1920, a General Motors issue of 1,491,856 shares of common stock was underwritten by J. P. Morgan and Company. On July 16, 1920, Durant, the Morgans, and the duPonts entered into a second agreement to form a new stock syndicate specifically established to attempt to stabilize the price of General Motors stock. The new syndicate was headed by a Morgan partner, Edward R. Stettinius. Stettinius had also recently joined the GM Board as a representative of the Morgan firm. Despite the efforts of Durant, the Morgans, and the duPonts, the price of General Motors stock did not stabilize. New investors could not be induced to buy into an obviously falling market in General Motors stock. The post war recession was more serious than almost anyone had anticipated.

Durant was personally caught in the market with his own speculations and in his attempt to support the price of General Motors stock, which was falling rapidly. There is little doubt that Durant exhausted his entire fortune of at least \$90,000,000 in an attempt to try to stop the flooding of selling which finally carried the price of GM stock to a low of 12 from 42 early in 1920.

As a matter of fact, Durant became so deeply involved that, both from a personal standpoint and relating to Corporate credit, it became absolutely imperative that measures be taken to finance a settlement with Durant's brokers and take his stock off the market.

This extricating operation resulted in Durant's second, and final exit, from General Motors. The duPonts and J. P. Morgan financed this project and when all the chips were counted, Durant, after making every attempt possible to safeguard the interests of friends and stockholders, had nothing left but debts. He was forced to sell out to duPont and Morgan at prices that wouldn't even allow him to pay his bills. And then, as if to add insult to injury, he was requested to resign as President of General Motors. He was replaced by Pierre S. duPont on November 30, 1920.

A period of anxiety in Flint followed Mr. Durant's resignation. It was reported that he would remain on the board and continue to advise the GM management, but he resigned also from the board on April 20, 1921. Ten weeks after Walter Chrysler's resignation, Harry H. Bassett was elected general manager of Buick with C. S. Mott, vice-

president. Other Weston-Mott executives who had come into Buick were also advanced at that time. Coleman J. Ross, a master mechanic with Weston-Mott since 1906, was Buick general superintendent. Harvey J. Mallery, former Weston-Mott comptroller, became Buick comptroller in 1920 and Robert T. Longway was also promoted to assistant general manager. Cady B. Durham also occupied the assistant general manager's job during this period as executives were shifted to meet changing conditions.

Under new management Buick production which dipped sharply in 1921 gradually regained its position as a major supplier of quality cars. In fact the 1,000,000 Buick was produced in 1923, a year of record sales, 201,572. The 2,000,000th came off the line in another record year, 1926, when sales totaled 266,753. During this period Buick had the highest dollar value of sales of any car in America. Buick was still the money-maker of General Motors, as it had always been.

Surely a good deal of the credit for this recovery and leadership belongs to Harry H. Bassett, very nearly the perfect executive. Bassett was born on a farm at Utica, New York, September 11, 1875. Upon graduating from high school he took a job with the Remington Arms Company, as an office boy. For 14 years he remained with the company being promoted on merit and eventually became assistant general manager.

No doubt visioning the promising future for the au-

tomobile, he resigned his position in 1907 to become assistant superintendent of the Weston-Mott Axle Company at Utica. When the company moved to Flint, he followed the company becoming works manager. Bassett was, according to C. S. Mott, largely responsible for production during the difficult time when the company was moving. Being promoted to assistant general manager shortly after the move to Flint, he became general manager in 1913.

When the Weston-Mott Company was combined with the Buick Motor Company in 1915, Bassett was made assistant general manager of Buick, and, in April, 1919, was promoted to general manager. Walter Chrysler's time was mainly occupied with corporate affairs. On May 1, 1919, he was elected a director and vice-president of General Motors Corporation, and in January, 1920, after Chrysler's resignation, was elected president of the Buick Motor Company.

Through his years of training as a production executive, Mr. Bassett was nearly ideally suited for his responsible position. He had exceptional understanding of men and his office was ever open to his employees regardless of their position. He spent much of his time in the shops familiarizing himself with his operation and maintained a personal acquaintance with thousands of his workers.

Bassett also began a tradition of Buick executives for community service. He devoted much time, study and attention to the problem of his workers, and he was largely



H. H. Bassett in 1908(?) Buick, outside Weston-Mott Plant, Flint.

instrumental in the establishment of classes in general, as well as, vocational education.

He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Industrial Mutual Association, an organization of factory men having a membership which exceeded more than 20,000 in the 1920's. With Bassett's urging the association established a trade school as one of its activities, and he studied it carefully, and, as a result of his observations recommended to General Motors that it establish a college offering special courses in automotive, mechanical and engineering work. The resulting institution, General Motors Institute, serves the Corporation today by providing engineers and management training courses to a greater degree than any other college or university.

While on a business trip, Bassett contracted pneumonia and died quite suddenly on October 16, 1926. C. S. Mott commented: "His loss will be terribly felt not only by his family and associates but all Flint will mourn and miss his energetic help and support in all good works." The team of E. T. Strong, as general manager, and Cady B. Durham, as assistant general manager took over the management of the Buick organization.

New models, price adjustment, and several bad sales years consumed much of the time of the new management team of Strong and Durham. Buick began to feel the approaching depression in 1927 and sales fell continuously until 1933, in spite of the introduction of models priced in the below \$1000 class.

Severe measures were required and Strong attempted to streamline the organization and eliminate waste. In what the *Flint Journal* called a "house cleaning at Buick." Strong eliminated unneeded jobs and effected other economies.

As Buick began to recover from the ravages of the depression year under Strong's aggressive leadership, Richard H. Grant, vice-president of GM, suggested a pooling of Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac sales and management. This was effected in April, 1932, and called B-O-P, at first just a sales organization but then a partial merger of production management, under William S. Knudsen.

Irving J. Reuter, Oldsmobile manager, came to Flint as president and general manager of Buick and Oldsmobile under the B-O-P consolidation. Strong retired and with him Robert T. Longway who had succeeded Durham as works manager.

The most important development under B-O-P was the increase in number of interchangeable parts, especially



Harlow Curtice

between Buick and Oldsmobile cars and between Chevrolet and Pontiac. These changes reduced the cost of tooling. By the end of B-O-P which lasted only 18 months it had become apparent that the idea looked good on paper but the operation had never just sat right with the majority of the people concerned. Buick sales fell in 1933 to a 19-year low of 40,620 cars.

On October 21, 1933, B-O-P was dissolved and the various divisions went their own ways under separate management again. Harlow H. Curtice, who had risen in 19 years from bookkeeper to president of AC Spark Plug, was appointed general manager of Buick.

Commenting on Curtice one of his associates once remarked — in baseball language — Curtice could "pitch, catch, and cover first at the same time." Curtice got his chance at Buick.

Under vigorous leadership, a new quickly-tooled line — the Series 40 — was added and introduced — and sold! Buick's sales volume doubled in 1934, and the resurgence

of the division was assured.

The new president of Buick worked 12, often 14 hours daily. In the sales section, he set up a factory organization to distribute the cars. Then he coordinated the manufacturing, engineering and sales staffs with one objective: Restore Buick to its former eminence.

The rush back to the top of the automotive market reached its apex in 1941. A record total of 377,428 cars were produced. For the four years preceding World War II, Buick sold 8 percent of America's cars.

Late in 1940, with the threat of American involvement in the European war a very real possibility, Curtice offered Buick's facilities to William S. Knudsen, then the coordinator of United States defense production.

Knudsen handed Buick a tough job. He needed Pratt & Whitney aircraft engines for the Liberator bombers. The Liberator bombers, along with the Flying Fortresses, were the nation's top long-range bombers.

Taking personal charge of the war production team, Mr. Curtice adapted auto production methods to the engine job. The Army got the 1000-a-month volume it needed for the war effort.

Ground was broken for a new plant. Six months later, the plant was finished. Six months ahead of schedule, the first bomber motor was delivered. Buick made 74,797 engines altogether, enough for 18,000 Liberators.

A standout achievement under the leadership of Mr. Curtice was the development and production of the M-18 "Hellcat" tank destroyer. Powerful and mobile it was the first allied weapon to prove a match for heavy German tanks.

Possessed of great patience and a ready wit, Mr. Curtice not only "got the job done," but he did it in so outstanding a manner that he received the Medal of Merit from President Harry S. Truman.

Curtice plunged into the difficult task of reconverting to peacetime production with far-sighted plans for Buick. Under his direction, millions of dollars were poured into building, expansion and modernization. Buick girded to build a half-million cars a year. By September, 1948, five million Buicks had been built. Nearly half the total — 2,500,000 — came before Curtice joined the corporate management ranks in the fall of 1948. Curtice was replaced by Ivan R. Wiles on November 1, 1948.

With Harlow Curtice's move to General Motors Central Office an era ended. The "old style" works manager/president represented by men like Harry Bassett "who knew hundreds of production workers by first name" and Curtice who took charge of the Pratt & Whitney engine program personally, were becoming as scarce as blacksmiths at Buick. (At this writing Buick had only one blacksmith left.)

Developments within industry, the country, and likewise at Buick, were demanding new management skills. In the first place Buick, in spite of a few years of reduced auto production, had been growing by leaps and bounds since World War I. The physical size of the operation was enormous. Technology had advanced and the number of cars manufactured annually was in the hundreds of thousands. The complexities of finance and management of the sprawling complex at Buick added unprec-

edented demands upon the resources of the top job at Buick.

Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., comments in the introduction to *My Years With General Motors* that "General Motors (is) a group management comprised of very competent individuals." What was true for General Motors was also true at Buick. It is possible that the operating divisions hadn't quite "caught up" with President Sloan, but as the post-World War II era arrived there was gradually evolving a new type of plant manager. This new manager was usually college-educated, knowledgeable of the complexities of finance, able to build staffs of "competent individuals," and in a broad sense able to deal with the complexities of industry in the post war era.

The general managers of Buick over the next three decades were well-suited to meet the challenges of the '50's, '60's and '70's. They were men who had come up through the GM and Buick organization. These men were: Ivan L. Wiles, November 1, 1948; E. T. Ragsdale, March 5, 1956; E. D. Rollert, May 1, 1959; R. T. Kessler, July 1, 1965; Lee N. Mays, April 7, 1969; George R. Elges, January 2, 1973; and David C. Collier, October 1, 1975.

When Wiles took over in 1948, there was a backlog of nearly 500,000 cars. In 1955 shortly before Wiles moved to an executive position with the Corporation, Buick had set an all-time record of 744,861 cars sold in the calendar year. Buick introduced its 1949 line of cars in mid-November, 1948. Highlighting its new styling were flowing full-length fenders, a lower, wider grille, full-vision curved windshields and rear windows. The three portholes in the front fenders of the Super series and four in the Roadmaster became distinguishing features of Buicks of that era.

Buick temporarily discontinued the Special, but late in August 1949, a brand new Special was offered. This was the first car introduced by Buick under the leadership of Wiles, and it was an immediate success. Its styling was to set the pattern for the entire 1950 line of Buicks. New options were offered to Buick customers such as tinted glass, power steering, power brakes, automatic transmissions and air conditioning.

With the 1949 line, Buick also established another first which was to set a styling pattern for the entire auto industry. The Riviera was offered to the public. It was a two-door passenger car and had no center pillar supporting the top. The "hardtop" is said to have been the inspiration of the wife of a Buick executive, who preferred convertibles but never put the top down because the wind mussed up her hair. With Kettering's self starter and the hard-top, women could now drive with ease and style. The production pace during 1950 at Buick set division records that stood for years — 552,827 cars!

1950 once more brought world conflict when South Korea was invaded by the Communist North Koreans and the United States led the United Nations in defense of South Korea. Early in 1951 Buick, for the third time in its history, was ready to do its share in the Korean War. It received an order to build cross-drive tank transmissions and built its first one six months later. It also received orders to build the J-65 Sapphire jet aircraft engine. Prior to obtaining defense contracts, Buick had already started a huge manufacturing plant north of Stewart Street. This was



1963 Buick Riviera

announced in October, 1950, without revealing what operations would be housed there. This was an example of the forward planning capability of Buick's management team.

On March 5, 1956, E. T. Ragsdale succeeded Wiles as general manager of Buick. During the early years of Ragsdale's managership more powerful engines were added. The engine of the Special was boosted to 250 hp and the Century, Super, and Roadmaster to 300 hp. In 1957 the Limited was revived and became Buick's top-of-the-line car.

On September 15, 1958, Ragsdale announced that the 1959 line of Buicks "was so new that we had to change the names." Starting in 1959 there were LeSabres, Invictas, and Electras. Styling changes emphasized a wider, lower car with canted headlights, and "delta-wing" rear fenders.

In the spring of 1959, Ragsdale retired and Edward E. Rollert, an engineer whose background included watches, spark plugs, ball bearings, and radiators, became general manager of Buick. As one of his first moves Rollert established a separate Department of Reliability and Quality Control, thus setting the tone for his tenure with Buick and adding yet another mark to Buick's already distinguished heritage.

Many auto historians and car collectors would say that the highlight of Rollert's years at Buick came with the introduction of the Riviera late in the fall of 1962. Although the name Riviera had been in other cars in the Buick line, but now in 1962 it became a model with its own distinctive styling. The Riviera Silver Arrow was the sensation of the New York auto show and was described as a car "with the feeling of a Rolls-Royce and the flavor of a Ferrari." But the result was a car not like any other — a car that set styling

concepts for years to come.

Robert L. Kessler was elected a vice-president of General Motors and appointed Buick's 15th general manager on July 1, 1965. Kessler had joined Buick in 1961 as general manufacturing manager.

Kessler had been a classmate of Edward Rollert at Purdue and was groomed by Rollert for a career at Buick. Kessler carried on the Rollert tradition of reliability and quality control and Buick sales steadily climbed.

Kessler was moved to Fisher Body Division and Lee N. Mays was appointed to succeed him on April 7, 1969. Mays had come up through the sales organization of Cadillac and Chevrolet, serving as general sales manager in those divisions. Mays was the first Buick general manager whose management experience had been entirely with other GM divisions.

Buick sales continued to climb, reaching a peak under Mays of over 688,000 in 1972. Mays was also responsible for promoting the development of a prototype compact car for Buick that subsequently became the Skylark.

George R. Elges became general manager of Buick on January 2, 1973. Elges was a graduate of General Motors Institute sponsored by Cadillac. He worked in the Cadillac-operated Cleveland Ordinance plant after graduation from GMI.

The plant was closed in 1961 and Elges returned to Cadillac, eventually becoming general manager of that division.

Elges's first year at Buick looked like the old 1955 record sales year was about to be shattered. However, in October, 1973, the Arab oil embargo hit and Buick sales dropped-off sharply. Not at all daunted Elges launched Buick's entry

into the compact class with the Apollo.

Most importantly, however, was the reintroduction of the V-6 engine used in the Skylark, Century, and the subcompact Skyhawk. With the trend toward lighter and more fuel efficient cars the revival of the V-6 engine was particularly significant. Today Buick is the foremost manufacturer of V-6 engines in the world producing 4,000 engines daily. Production is expected to reach 4,600 daily within the near future.

In 1978 Buick carried the V-6 engine one step further with the introduction of a turbo-charged engine used on Regal and LeSabre Sport Coupes. The turbo-charged engines utilize an automatic spark advance and retard control, essential to effective operation. Buick is the first American passenger car manufacturer to offer turbo-charged engines in its regular production models.

Elges also has the "distinction" of being the only Buick general manager to drive a Buick car in a race and lose. General Motors Institute Alumni Day in 1975 featured the "Beat the Bug" race (The "Bug" is the famous 1910 Buick racer often driven by "Wild Bob" Burman.) Pete Estes, president of GM, led the field of three entrees, driving a 1910 Buick Model 10 Runabout. George Elges drove the Bug. Dr. Harold P. Rodes, GMI president, drove the third entry, a 1975 Buick Pace Car from the Indianapolis 500-mile race. The boss won!

Today Buick is ably managed by David C. Collier, the youngest general manager since Harlow Curtice. Collier came to Buick in 1975 from GM's Central Office in New York. His previous management experience in various financial staff positions included General Motors of Canada, Ltd., and assistant treasurer of the Corporation.

Collier is "bullish" on Buick and Flint; bringing a fresh vigor to his current assignment. He enthusiastically talks about his plans for Buick in the years ahead highlighting a new Riviera design and other styling and mechanical changes in Buick's other lines. He points with knowledgeable pride to the 75-year old partnership between Buick and Flint, noting that the relationship has been good for both Buick and Flint. Buick's general managers continue to emphasize Buick's heritage of styling, quality, and industry leadership while looking eagerly into the Division's future.

The Buick plant in Flint is General Motors' largest manufacturing facility on a single site on the North American continent. Its employment is in excess of 19,000 persons and its daily output includes 3,500 cars, 4,800



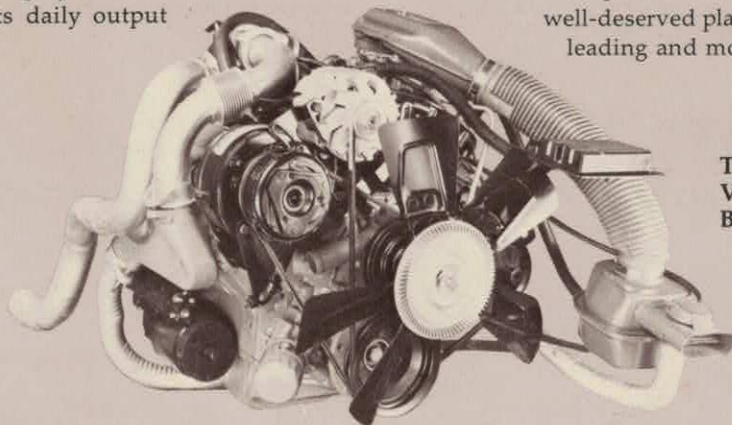
David C. Collier

transmissions, 4,400 engines, 3,200 axles, and 33,000 springs, plus 1,500 tons of cast iron.

Of these 75 years of the Buick it can be said, "There is a Buick heritage, a Buick feel, a flavor — a design continuity." There are Regals, Centurys, LeSabres, Electras, Skylarks, Skyhawks, and still Rivieras in Buick's 1978 line — some names like Riviera seem timeless!

It is estimated that on May 19, 1978 — BUICK'S 75th BIRTHDAY — 20,753,988 Buicks will have been built. That's quite a few cars for a company once considered risky by the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers, who questioned the wisdom of licensing Buicks.

At a vigorous 75, Buick remembers the frail-looking little car created by David Buick and that William C. Durant transformed into a colossus. Buick also recalls the thousands of people over the years who have guided its growth and development. At a lively 75 the Buick looks to the future, proud of the past and confident of its well-deserved place among the auto industry's leading and most prestigious "marques."



Turbocharged 3.8L (231 CID)
V6 Engine
Buick Motor Division

May – June

Birthdays



Vicky Porter – May 10th

Wayne Simoni – May 13th

Ken Larson – May 22nd

Jay Whited – June 12th

