

AUTO POPULARITY DATES FROM JOHN LANE'S FIRST REO

His Was First Motor Car Owned By A Citizen Of Dunn

A SOURCE OF WONDER OF MANY SMALL BOYS

Wave Of Buying Did Not Hit Community Until After 1910

When one looks about Dunn these days and sees the streets and highways filled with automobiles it is hard to realize that fifteen years ago a motor driven vehicle in this part of the country was a curiosity. It seems but yesterday that John Lane drove the old Reo through the mud of Broad Street and produced consternation in the hearts of the fastidious farm mules tethered along the way.

It was a great old boat that the infatigable John drove. With its advent came the motor bug which ever since has been spreading. In this day it would appear a monstrous thing, but then it was the last word in motor perfection. It would almost climb in high gear the hill which skirted the George Riley Hodges home, and given a good start it would chug slowly in low over the crest of Turlington Hill—which twelve years later was pie for Old Flivver.

Source of Wonder
Small boys never ceased to wonder about John's chariot. They'd follow it about as those of an earlier generation did Barnum's elephants. Many of the present able mechanics about Dunn date their interest in automobiles from the time Mr. Lane piloted the Reo.

After the Reo came the chair-driven things bought by Doctors Sexton, Higginbotham and Hicks. These were simpler machines, but just as wonderful to the small boy. Mack Denning, then a grimy-faced village kid, did a Marathon every day behind these spattering demons. Mack would sit outside one of the doctors' offices until a machine started. He would run behind it until it stopped, no matter where it went. Then he would sit to feast his eyes on the, to him, wonder of the age. Then was born the idea which since has brought much success to Mack. Today he is a successful automobile dealer and garage owner in Norfolk.

Motor Craze Spreads
Lloyd Wade, Hannibal Goheen, Robert L. Goheen and some others bought higher-priced cars a few years later, and from them the motor craze spread throughout the district. The Ford car, with its ever lowering price, helped a lot; but the Dodge, the Buick, the Nap, the Overland, Hudson, Essex, Cadillac, Packard and other makes had their devotees.

About the most famous of all the cars that have seen service here were a White owned locally by Henry Lee, and called "Betty," owned by the younger Kenneth Howard, a Dodge owned by Dr. I. F. Hicks, a Ford owned and still operated by Astor Barnes and still owned by B. Fozell. The Henry Lee White made many of the best runs in the county.

memorable night with Kenney Howard at the wheel when it collided with Ben Denning's horse and buggy, with much grief and real injury to all concerned. Its carcass rested behind the Dispatch office for years.

The Howard Buick, after going through the war with Kenney, passed into the hands of Dr. C. H. Sexton after Kenney had driven it 100,000 miles. Dr. Sexton sold it to Neff Green for a new store, and some where it still is running.

The Hick's Dodge went on all of its rounds of duty for many years, but was taken the same after a certain overhauling and piloted it into the police station on the night when a flood and otherwise thingy and was after the rule of Chief Page.

Flivver's Stormy Career
Ade Barnes' Ford has been with that close mission so long that it

knows all of Astor's customers by their first names and has sold many a pair of shoes for its master.

And Ford's Dart—Old Flivver— known to every man, woman and child from Hamburg to Harriman, was the prize boat of the open. It was acquired on the day preceding the night in which Tighman's mill burned. When the fire alarm sounded, Flivver was hoisted beside the curb at Droughoff's store. Holding down its back seat was an inebriated gentleman who had bumped a berth from the Marie that never-to-be-forgotten hero of Chateau-Thierry who was skipper of The Dispatch's motor type machine—and who was guarding the precious boat against depredation.

When the alarm sounded, Ford mounted to the cabin to make the run to the mill and help protect the interests of his friend Granville Tighman, who was sojourning at Hot Springs. Flivver got excited. Instead of backing out from her pier, she eased over the curb and very sweetly and gently kissed the big plate glass window in the Droughoff store. Then she backed away, to stall in middle of the street, blocking traffic while affording amusement for numerous on-lookers gathered about to add to the pilot's chagrin.

Flivver got started eventually and made a record trip to the burning mill, where she mixed down in a potato patch and would have been there yet had the Mighty Young not lifted her out. The inebriated gentleman never heard of the fire.

She was a capricious old girl, possessing much of the nature of the goat. Really she had her owner's goat most of the time. In her two years of travel through the byways and hedges of Eastern Carolina she left her mark on trees and telephone posts of many roads.

Page Speaks Her Heart
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Following the opening of the war in Europe cotton prices touched bottom in 1914. Then there was a revulsion to auto buying. As things settled over, business with the automobile folk became brisk. Cars were in demand. In 1919 everybody wanted an automobile and bought it if they could find any old car to buy. This caused a lot of mongrel makes to be sold, all of them sold high.

Meantime John Thornton had quit the Ford agency here. The Irish moved over from Carolina and the Parish-Draper Company took in Willys-Knight and Overland. E. V. Gainsay sold the Chandler, Henry Johnson the Auburn and several trucks; Neff Green sold the Buick, Lillington with the Buick, Fred McKay and Edward Smith started to selling the Buick and the Studebaker; Z. V. Snipes started the Snipes Garage. Business in the automobile was booming.

The year of 1912 and 1913 saw the zenith of the auto business in Dunn reached. Hugh Prince and Rufus Smith built a garage and sales place for the American Edmund Six. Bud Hawk Jernigan built the big garage in Broad street. Henry Johnson, burned out while business was best, replaced his building with the largest garage in North Carolina. Others were planning to enter the business and many of those already in were planning to broaden their activities.

Another Crash in 1920
Then came the crash, with the slump that lasted two years. Many of the dealers surrendered their agencies, leaving Thornton, Smith & McKay and E. V. Gainsay, who had taken over the Overland-Willys-Knight agency, and Neff Green masters of the automobile sales field. Meantime most of the old cars in operation became decrepit indeed. They bumped with their patched tires over the town streets and rattled as their battered fenders vibrated.

The fall of last year saw things picking up again. Hugh Prince, Robert L. Denning and Z. V. Snipes organized the D. P. S. Motor Company to handle the Hudson and Essex, with headquarters in the Snipes garage, which had held its own through the storm.

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Ed E. Warren, Treasurer of the Harnett County Agricultural Fair Association and one of the largest farmers in the Dunn District.

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Secretary and treasurer of the Home Building and Loan Association.

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A Service You Can Depend Upon!

When Better Automobiles Are Built Buick Will Build Them.

OUR GARAGE IS EQUIPPED WITH EVERY CONVENIENCE FOR YOUR COMFORT AS WELL AS FOR YOUR SERVICE. LADIES WILL LIKE OUR REST ROOM.

How often in your experience as an automobile owner have you paid for service you did not get?

Automobile repair service is an important thing. The life of your car is at stake when you run it into a garage and turn it over to the mercies of a mechanic. If the mechanic knows his business, you have nothing to fear; if he doesn't, you are out of luck.

You Know You Are To Get Good Service At Green's

Our shop is thoroughly equipped and capably manned. Every mechanic in our employ knows his business. He has proven his worth through many years of constant service to the motorist of Dunn and the surrounding country. They know not only the Buick cars we have sold to scores of discerning owners, but practically every other make of car driven in this section.

You can trust these mechanics. Their advice will be valuable to you, no matter what car you drive. They are at your service day or night, whenever their services are required.

GREEN'S BUICK SERVICE STATION
N. S. Green, Proprietor