Indiana - Auto Makers

A Product of the Hoosier State

Over 500 different models of motorized vehicles have been connected with Indiana from the 1890s to the present. They have included automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, and cyclecars. They have been propelled in various ways—including steam, electricity, and gasoline. Some were one-of-a-kind.

The industry began throughout the United States at the level of the independent inventor-entrepreneur. It evolved to include several long-lived corporations. The heyday of the industry in Indiana was in the early decades of the twentieth century. During 1909 alone, thirty-seven automobile-related companies started up. Of those, twenty-five lasted three years or less.

For a brief period, the Indiana automobile industry rivaled the growth rates of other leading states, such as Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. According to the 1920 Census of Manufactures, for example, in 1909 Indiana produced 17,253 automobiles; in 1919 it produced 66,162. Cities and towns throughout the state played a part in the automobile industry.

Many factors contributed to the development of Indiana's automobile industry. Nationally, hard-surfaced roads became more common. Indiana had raw materials necessary for automobile manufacture, such as wood and coal. Indiana was also at the center of a nationwide railroad network, providing efficient transportation. Trains could bring additional raw materials and parts to Indiana factories and distribute the finished automobiles to buyers throughout the country.

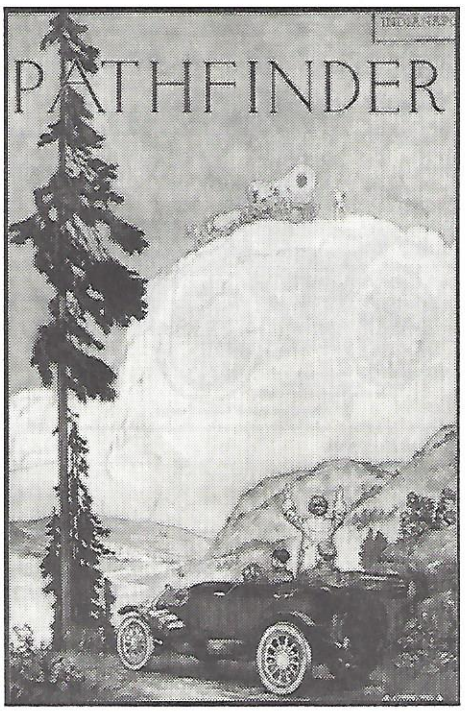
Certain industries already located in Indiana were able to move easily into automobile manufacturing. Included were those making farm equipment, milling machinery, carriages, bicycles, and wagons. Some of those industries—and the automobile manufacturers that grew out of them—exported their products around the country and the world.

Indiana's automobile industry, however, was not able to compete with the production advances of companies in Detroit, Michigan. Henry Ford came to dominate the industry. He made quality cars at affordable prices in an efficient manner and sold the cars with strong national marketing strategies. In the 1920s, the installment plan for purchasing also added to the advantage of Detroit.

Indiana companies built some of the finest luxury cars—such as the Stutz, the Cord, and the Deusenberg—but they were too expensive for the average citizen to buy. In good times, Indiana luxury cars, built in limited quantities, would sell out quickly in the national market. In bad times, however, these companies had a hard time surviving.

By the end of the 1920s, production in most Indiana automobile companies had ended. Indiana's economy, however, has continued to be linked to the automobile industry. Indiana automobile heritage is kept alive by collectors, scholars, and museums.

Sources: Huffman, Indiana Built Automobiles*; Kimes and Clark,* Standard Catalog, *Indiana entries; Phillips,* Indiana in Transition, *pp. 292-96, 310-16.*



This cover of a Pathfinder catalog, circa 1914, suggests romantic ideas associated with the automobile. The open space and the sturdy pioneer with his wagon may suggest the freedom and excitement the Pathfinder could bring to its owner. It could also suggest a farewell to the horse-drawn wagon. Note the Pathfinder pictured on page 4 and compare it to this image.

Courtesy Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

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Bell Memorial Public Library

On the Road to Discovery!

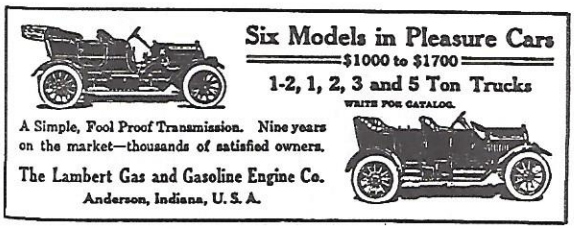
1880 William Siefker (Seymour) built a twin engine, steam-powered vehicle.

1885 Karl Benz (Germany) built a gasoline-powered 3-wheeled vehicle.

1887 Gottlieb Daimler (Germany) used his internal-combustion engine to power a 4-wheeled vehicle, one of the first automobiles.

1889 Mr. Slattery (Fort Wayne) built a 3-wheeled Electric Tricycle.

1891-93 Charles H. Black (Indianapolis) is reputed to have built an operable gasoline-powered automobile, based on a buggy chassis.



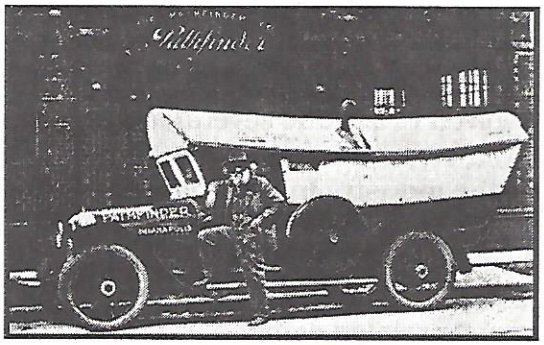
Source: Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

1894 Elwood Haynes (Kokomo), automobile pioneer and metallurgical scientist, built a gasoline-powered automobile with advanced features such as wire wheels, tubular frame, and pneumatic tires.

1895 Chicago *Times-Herald* automobile race from Chicago to Evanston.

1899 Haynes-Apperson (Kokomo) automobile made one of the first 1,000-mile trips.

circa 1900 Warner Gear Company (Muncie) organized to supply transmissions.



Source: The Hoosier Motorist, *June 1916, p. 46.*

1901 Remy Electric Company (Anderson) pioneered manufacturing of electrical equipment for automobiles.

1904 Prest-O-Lite Company (Indianapolis) began manufacturing batteries and other car parts. Prest-O-Lite gas introduced for headlights.

1909 Indianapolis Motor Speedway built, served as a forum for automobile innovation. Indiana ranked fourth in nation in value of automotive product.

1910 Haynes (Kokomo) was first company to equip an open car model with top, windshield, head lamps, and speedometer as standard equipment.

1911 Charles Franklin Kettering (Dayton, Ohio) developed the first practical self-starter for automobiles.

1913 Henry Ford (Detroit) introduced the first truely efficient automobile assembly line. Cars were carried along a conveyer belt at a slow speed for workers to assemble them. Reduced the assembly time from 12.5 to 1.5 hours.

1918 Studebaker (South Bend) was fifth largest automobile maker in U.S.

Source: Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

Sources: Gray, Alloys and Automobiles; *Alexander Hellemans and Bryan Bunch,* The Timetables of Science *(New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988) Kimes,* Standard Catalog; *Phillips,* Indiana in Transition.

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A Product of a Hoosier

Elmer and Edgar Apperson opened the Riverside Machine Works in 1889. They were known as the best mechanics in Kokomo in 1893 when Elwood Haynes asked for help in building his self-propelled vehicle.

The vehicle ran successfully on July 4, 1894, on Pumpkinvine Pike in Kokomo. Haynes and Elmer Apperson later decided to manufacture and market the vehicle together.

Official records from the Indiana Secretary of State's office indicate that in May 1898, the Haynes-Apperson Company was incorporated.

The partnership was short. Apperson split off in 1901 to form a company with his brother in 1902. Haynes dropped the Apperson name in 1904. Both companies eventually lost out to the cost-effective production of automobiles in Detroit.

The new Haynes Automobile Company (1905) lasted until 1925. The reorganized Apperson Automobile Company (1924) went bankrupt in 1926.

Sources: Kimes and Clark, Standard Catalog, *pp. 53, 628; Corporation Records, Secretary of State, Indiana State Archives.*

Articles of Association of

The Haynes Apperson Company

We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together, pursuant to the Statute of the State of Indiana, for the organization of corporations, by the following written articles:

Article 1-Name-
The name shall be The Haynes-Apperson Company

Article 2 Capital Stock-
The capital stock of this association shall be twenty five thousand ($25000.00) Dollars, divided into two hundred and fifty shares of one hundred dollars each. &.

Article 3-Object-
The object of this association shall be the manufacture of Motor Carriages, Gasoline Motors and gearing for motor vehicles

Article 4- Place of Opperation-
The business of this corporation shall be carried on in the city of Kokomo Indiana,.

Article 5-Number of Directors.
There shall be five directors for this corporation. The following directors shall manage the affairs and prudential concerns of this corporation for the first year of its existence Elwood Haynes, Elmer Apperson, G.W. Charles, J.W. Polley and W.H. Reed,

Article -6-Term of Existence,
This association shall have an existence of fifty years from the date hereof.

Article -7-Corporate Seal.
The Seal of this corporation shall be circular disc, bearing the words "The Haynes- Apperson Co" and date of organization in the center of the disc.

Above: The official incorporation papers of the Haynes-Apperson Company in May 1898. Below: The owners of the capital stock.

Reproduced from original records in the Indiana State Archives.

Names	Residence	No. of Certificate	Amount
C. F. Hendrickson	Portland	12	1200.00
W. H. Reed	"	15	1500.00
C. C. Cartwright	"	12	1200.00
J. W. Polley		10	1000
C. H. Haynes.	"	10	1000.00
Walter W. Haynes	"	21	2100
Lewis W. Hoover	"	3	300
George W. Charles	Kokomo	10	1,000.00
A. A. Charles	Kokomo	10	1.000.00
Elwood Haynes	"	73.5	7,350.00
Elmer Apperson	"	73.5	7350.00

Examine the Sources

- What was the purpose of the Haynes-Apperson Company as stated in the Articles of Association?
- Does the listing of stockholders equal the stock specified in the Articles of Association? Who had control of the company based on the stock held?
- Ask an attorney to talk with your class about incorporation and issuing stock under today's laws.
- Locate companies in your area that are incorporated and have issued stock. Have the owners talk with you about why they did this.

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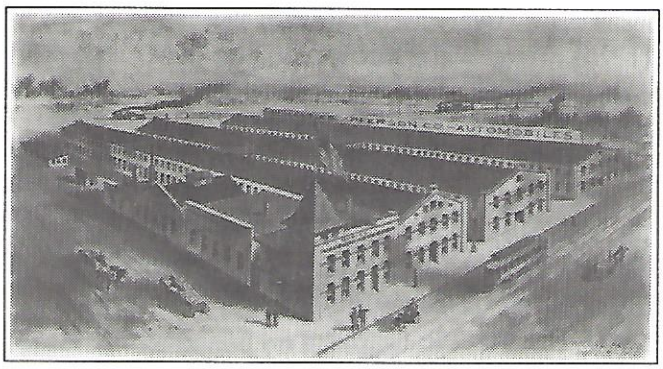
From the Fragile and Impractical . . .

The Haynes-Apperson turn-of-the-century factory in Kokomo is representative of the facilities of early Indiana automobile companies. They commonly adapted one- and two-story brick-walled, wood-framed buildings that had been used for the manufacture of bicycles, wagons, and other farm implements. In the reuse of these older factory buildings, there had been little planning for efficiency of production. Such buildings did not easily allow new assembly line concepts of production to become common in the Indiana automobile industry.

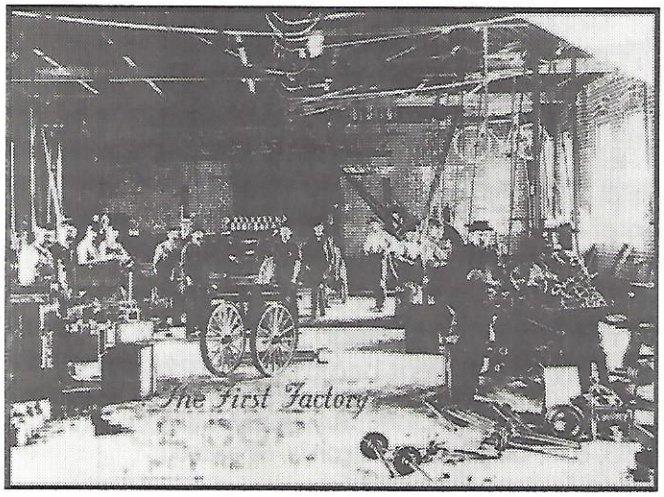
The photograph of the interior of the Haynes-Apperson factory illustrates the state of manufacturing techniques when Indiana automobile companies were starting up in the 1890s. They used a labor-intensive process: parts and workers went to the vehicle frame. This method required more time and increased the cost of the finished automobile. New assembly line processes moved the vehicle frame to the parts and the workers. Workers then had one job, such as attaching wheels or body parts.

The advertising text from a 1903 Haynes-Apperson sales catalog makes clear what people wanted in a car: reliability. There were many new automobile companies forming nationwide. Records of endurance and dependability were, therefore, very important. There were few options for equipment.



Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Drawing of Haynes-Apperson factory, Kokomo. Reproduced from Haynes-Apperson Company catalog (1903), p. 2.



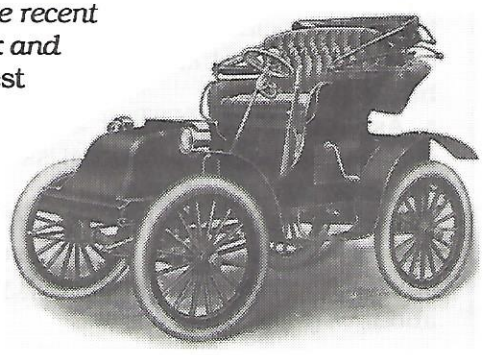
Indiana Historical Society Library, Negative # C5617

Interior view of Haynes-Apperson Company factory, 1889.

Sources, pp. 6 and 7: Selm and Conant, "Indianapolis . . . Automobile Industry: 1890-1940"; Flink, The Car Culture*; Kimes and Clark,* Standard Catalog*; Weintraut, "Losing the Business."*

**The title is part of a statement—"Automobiles, fragile and impractical at the beginning of the century, became a widely popular and dependable mode of transportation."—in Alexander Hellemans and Bryan Bunch,* The Timetables of Science *(New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), p. 385.*

". . . our Standard *model which has already made itself famous by winning more prizes in road contests than any other automobile in America. It is capable under favorable conditions of a speed of 35 miles per hour and has proved its reliability in numerous contests. Its latest achievement was the winning of the* gold medal *in the recent reliability contest between New York and Boston.* It has never entered a contest in which it did not win the highest honors awarded to any car. *Weight 1900. Price $1500. Top $75.00 additional. 36x3 1/2 Double Tube Tires. 12 horsepower motor." Reproduced from the Haynes-Apperson Company catalog (1903), p. 11.*



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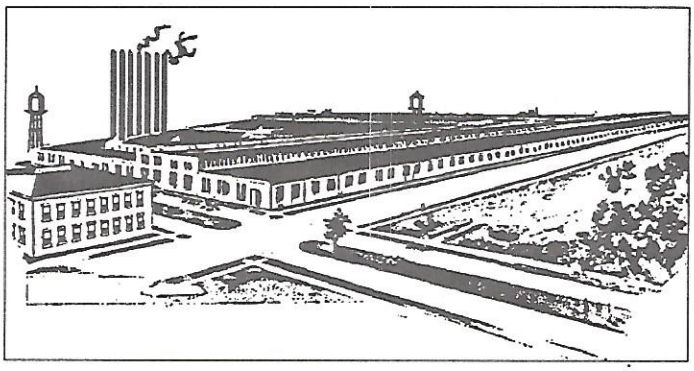
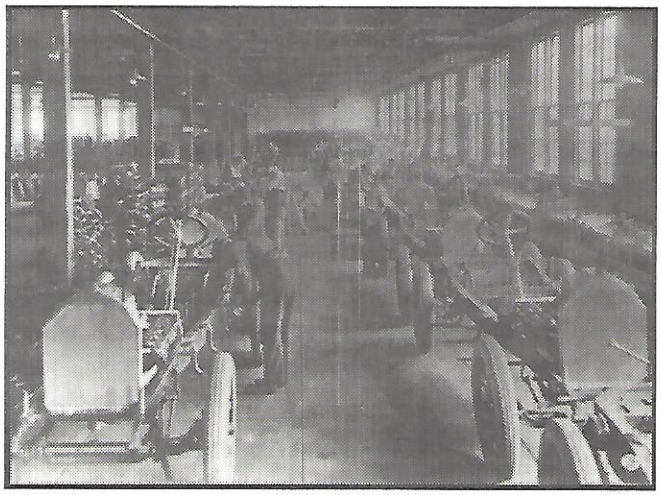
. . . to Widely Popular and Dependable



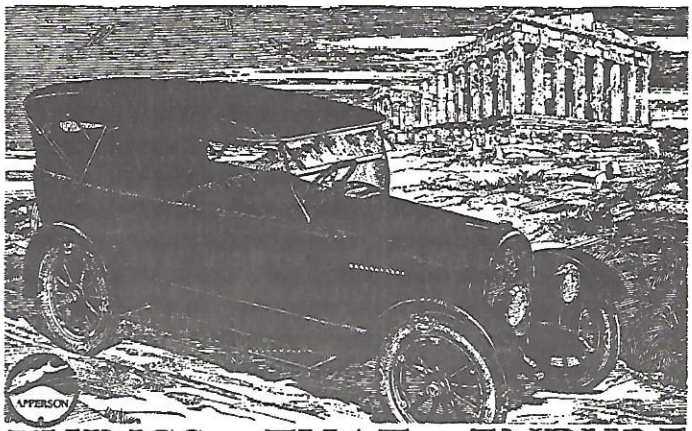
Drawing of Apperson factory, Kokomo. Reproduced from Kokomo An Industrial Center *(1916), p. 14.*

Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.



Indiana Historical Society Library, Negative # C5616

Interior view of Apperson Brothers Company, circa 1920.



Source: Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

The Apperson Brothers Automobile Company factory, Kokomo, is representative of the more modern automobile factory of the twentieth century. The trend was toward line-oriented assembly techniques. Frames, engines, and bodies were assembled in different areas and then brought together on the assembly line.

Apperson automobiles, however, were high-quality cars. They still required many workers to assemble. The cost of labor and materials kept the sales price high. Like many other such companies in Indiana, lack of cash from a low volume of production and sales kept Apperson from adding other advances in methods of automobile assembly.

The photograph of the interior of the Apperson factory illustrates the move to adopt assembly line production in order to survive. Many companies in Indiana went out of business quickly because the competition was too great.

The advertisement for this Apperson focuses on the elegance and power of the vehicle—the enduring excellence. This concept, however, did not fit the average Hoosier's lifestyle or pocketbook. The majority of automobiles purchased by Hoosiers in the early twentieth century were built out-of-state and were economical.

Consider the Evidence

- Look in your community or area and see if there has been—or is—a connection with the automobile industry. Check with your historical society and public library for clues. Compile your own local automobile history.
- Gather some advertisements for automobiles today in various places. What do they focus on? How do advertisements for different types of automobiles vary? Are advertisements realistic?
- Visit or write to an automobile factory in Indiana today. Ask someone who works at a factory to talk to you about automobile manufacturing. What changes have taken place?
- Investigate automobile construction. How do cars today differ from the early vehicles—in appearance and equipment, for example.

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The People Behind the Machines

WANTED—At once, competent trimmers for automobile and carriage work. We pay by the piece, but guarantee 40c per hour. Address Laporte Carriage Co., Laporte, Ind. 4t3

Advertisement (enlarged) from the South Bend Tribune, April 6, 1910.

Hours and Wages

My husband and I came to Kokomo January 1st 1899 to work in the new factory in which the shop had moved a few weeks before—I as stenographer at $6.00 per week and John at $3.00 per wk. He was to learn the trade—and was paid the customary wage. Hours ten a day and nine hours on Saturday.

This excerpt was written by Mary E. Landon, probably in 1968 to Spencer Huffman. Several publications give Mrs. Landon credit for having been the first woman to drive a gasoline-powered automobile in the United States. Mrs. Landon, at age 91, attended the dedication of the Elwood Haynes Museum in Kokomo in June 1967.

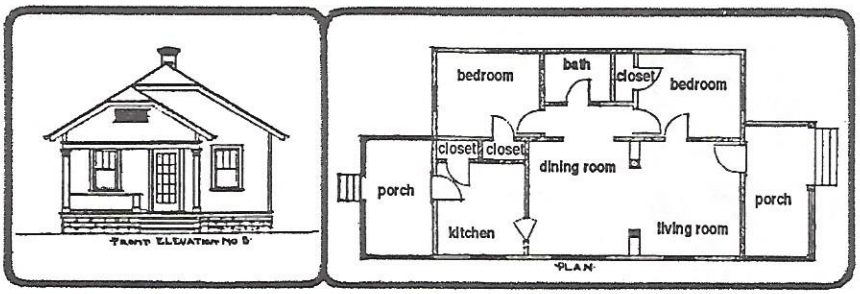
Source: Manuscript, Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.

Worker Housing

In 1919, as the Haynes Company neared completion of its new factory building, there was a severe housing shortage in Kokomo. Vice President A. G. Seiberling then led the way to provide company housing for employees.

The plans below show the type of house constructed. The houses were to be sold ". . . to the workmen on the basis of a small initial payment and the balance to be paid just as if a man were paying out rent."

Source: "Haynes Company Builds Homes for Employees," reprint from Haynes Pioneer, *December 1919, Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library.*



Front elevation and ground floor plan for Haynes' worker housing.

Accidents Happened

William Edwin Sidney, a mechanical engineer, began working for Haynes-Apperson in 1899. He was the victim of an industrial accident, which indicates the lack of safeguards for workers.

. . . the gallon can of burning Gasoline was thrown directly on me. My hair was instantly aflame and I was most severely burned. . . . I ran, reaching the [water] *tank I plunged completely under while the entire surface flamed from the gasoline from my saturated clothing. . . .*

Sidney was saved when the flames on the surface of the water were smothered with lap robes from a car. Sidney survived and worked at Haynes until 1902.

Source: Memoirs of William Edwin Sidney, p. 72. Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

You Investigate

- Compare today's auto workers wages and hours with those of the Landons in 1899.
- What safeguards do factories have for their workers today? Contact a nearby factory or the Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration (IOSHA) for information on workers' safety.
- Interview someone who is working in an automobile factory. Local automobile unions are listed in the telephone book. Interview retired workers and compare their experiences with someone still working.

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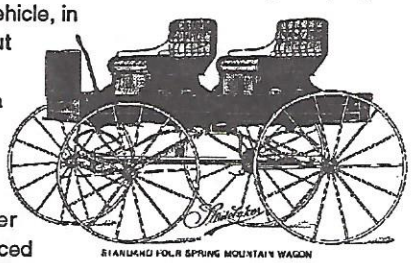
From Buggies, Boilers, and Bicycles

Automobile manufacturing companies in Indiana generally grew out of existing and related manufacturing operations. A sampling is given here from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Studebaker, 1902-1964

First established in 1852 as a blacksmith and wagon shop, the company became known as the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company in 1868. Its first self-propelled vehicle, in 1902, was an electric runabout designed by Thomas A. Edison. In 1903, it produced a car with a chassis by the Garford Company of Elyria, Ohio. After 1911, the company—now the Studebaker Automobile Company—produced its own vehicles. Among all the Indiana automobile companies, this company endured the longest. It closed its South Bend plant in 1964.

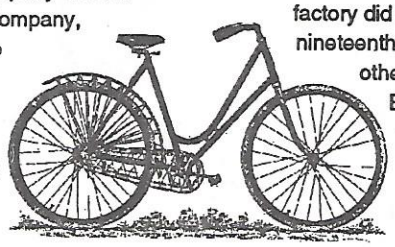


Anderson, 1907-1910

The Anderson Carriage Manufacturing Company, Anderson, began making Anderson Motor Vehicles in 1907 along with its traditional horse-drawn vehicles. The company built vehicles it described as "automobiles reduced to their lowest terms." The vehicles were "compact, serviceable, light, easy to buy, easy to maintain and always available." Speeds of 25-30 miles per hour were possible with their gasoline-powered engines. The company catalog indicated that "they will travel any road that a horse-drawn vehicle can travel . . . ." The base vehicles cost $425. From *Anderson Motor Vehicles,* (no date), p. 3.

Waverley Electric, 1898-1903; 1909-1916

The merger of the American Electric Vehicle Company, Chicago, with the Indiana Bicycle Company, Indianapolis, produced the first Waverley Electric. Later sponsors included the American Bicycle Company and the International Motor Car Company, both of the Albert A. Pope manufacturing empire based in Hartford, Connecticut. The basic Waverley Road Wagon in 1903 cost $850. It could go 5-15 miles per hour. The electric vehicle was described as "clean, noiseless, easily controlled . . . ." From *Waverley Electric Vehicles*, 1903, p. 5.



Maxwell, 1906-1916

This New Castle automobile plant, completed in 1907, was a branch factory of the Maxwell-Briscoe Motor Company of Tarrytown, New York. This site is unique in that an out-of-state firm built a new factory. The factory did not depend on an existing nineteenth century plant, as did the other companies on this page. By 1910, the Maxwell was the third best seller nationally, behind Ford and Buick. In 1908 the Maxwell two-cylinder 14 HP Runabout cost $825.

Richmond Steam, 1902-1903

The Richmond Automobile Company began manufacturing a steam engine in 1901. It produced its first car in 1902. The car contained a 6 HP steam engine. The engine was designed by Isham Sedgwick who had built three steam-powered vehicles in Richmond from 1899-1901. The first Richmond Steam was a four-seater (occupants seated back-to-back) with a chain-drive. After 1903, the company continued with production of steam engines only.

*Source: Kimes and Clark,*Standard Catalog, *pp. 48, 867-68, 1209, 1329-30, 1440.*

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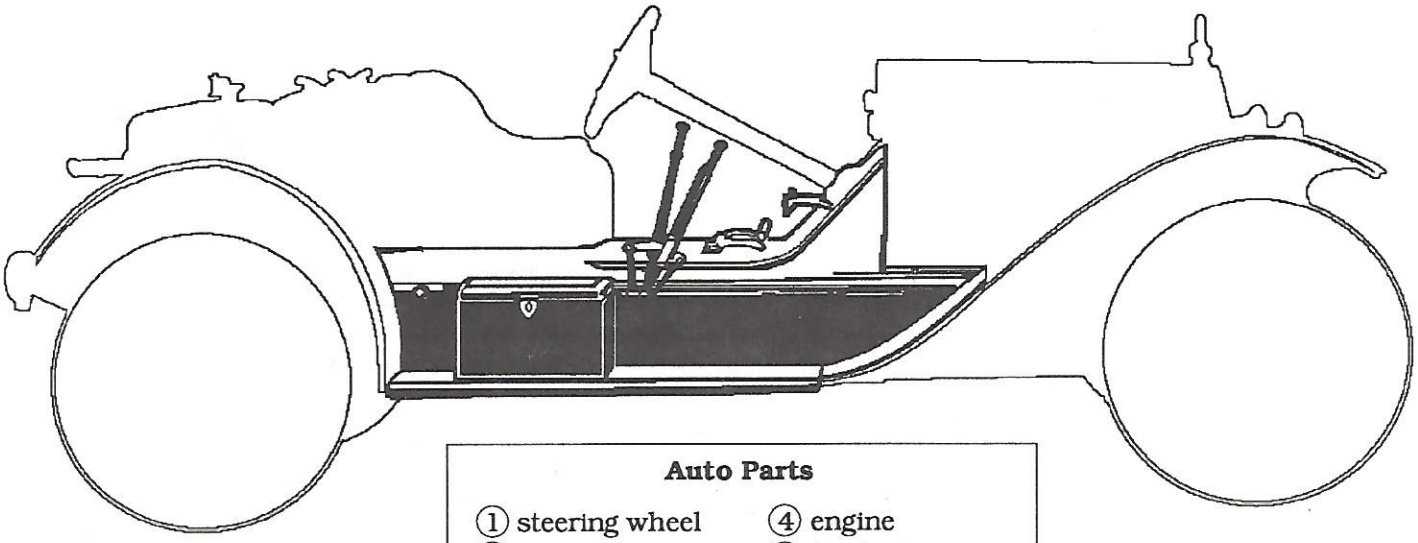
Build a 1916 Stutz Bearcat!

The Bearcat was the most famous of all of the Stutz models. The first Bearcat was produced in 1913 by the Stutz Motor Car Company, Indianapolis. This popular car looked like a race car and had a top speed of 75-85 miles per hour. This Bearcat sold for about $2,000.



Auto Parts

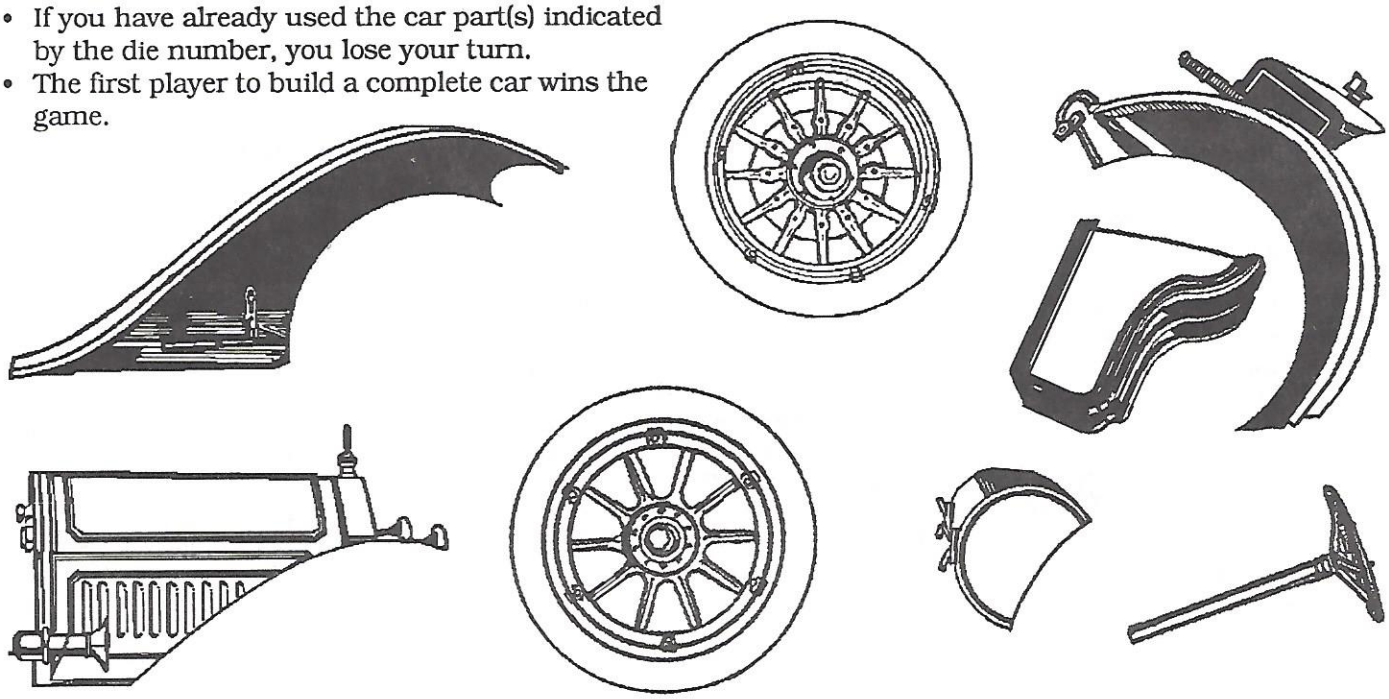
① steering wheel	④ engine
② wheel	⑤ fender
③ seat	⑥ gasoline tank

Directions

- Each player rolls the die in turn. Select the auto part next to the circled number that matches the number on the die and put it on your car body.
- If you have already used the car part(s) indicated by the die number, you lose your turn.
- The first player to build a complete car wins the game.

Equipment

- one die or a game spinner with six numbers
- one photocopy of the car body and car parts for each player (cut out the parts carefully)



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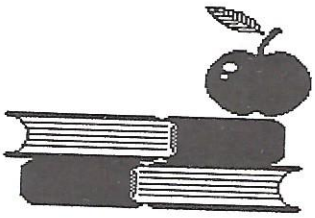
An Apple for Everyone



Selected Sources

Student Reading

• Bergere, Thea. *Automobiles of Yesteryear: A Pictorial Record Of Motor Cars That Made History—Pioneer, Antique, Classic, And Sports Models.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1962.

Bergere provides over ninety detailed drawings of the outstanding cars of all time in a readable history of the automobile. This is a good beginning source for students or adults.

• Lafferty, Peter, and David Jefferis. *Top Gear: The History of Automobiles.* New York: Franklin Watts, 1990.

The pioneers in automotive history and the evolution of different types of cars are included in this easy-to-read book.

• Sutton, Richard. *Car.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.

This is a fascinating book for students or adults. It includes a photographic essay about the history, development, and impact of automobiles. Detailed cutaway photographs are included showing how the moving parts of a car work. Part of the *Eyewitness Books* series.

Advanced Reading

• Flink, James J. *The Car Culture.* Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1975.

This book describes the social impact of the automobile, with chapters also devoted to interpretations of the Ford Motor Company and General Motors.

• Gray, Ralph D. *Alloys and Automobiles: The Life of Elwood Haynes.* Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1979.

This book covers Haynes' career as a metallurgist and automotive pioneer.

• Kimes, Beverly Rae, and Henry Austin Clark, Jr. *Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942.* Iola, Wis.: Krause Publications, second edition, 1989.

In this comprehensive book, automobiles are listed alphabetically by trade name. It provides brief histories of both successful and failed companies.

• Phillips, Clifton J. *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920.* Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, 1968.

An excellent source for Indiana information in this time period.

• Rae, John B. *The Road and the Car in American Life.* Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971.

This volume covers the broad impact of the automobile on American roads and highway systems. It discusses urban, rural, and suburban changes caused by the automobile.

• Selm, William L., and Alan Conant. "Indianapolis-Marion County Automobile Industry, 1890-1940: Historic Context Study & Property-Type Analysis." Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, 1990.

This work provides a statewide historical context and an analysis of factory and showroom structures remaining in Indianapolis.

• Weintraut, Linda. "Losing the Business: How Hoosier Automobile Manufacturers Failed Middle America." M.A. thesis, Indiana University, Indianapolis, 1989.

This work describes the background and reasons for failure of the Indiana automotive industry.

Available in Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

Of Special Interest

• The Wallace Spencer Huffman Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library. See p. 2.

• Numerous museums in Indiana feature automobile collections. Call the museums listed below for more information.

  • Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum, Auburn; 219-925-1444.
  • Blommel Historic Auto Collection, Connersville; 317-825-9259.
  • Elwood Haynes Museum, Kokomo; 317-452-3471.
  • Indianapolis Motor Speedway Hall of Fame Museum; 317-248-6747.
  • Maclyn Museum-Antique Motor Cars & Mechanical Apparatus, Metamora; 317-647-2541.
  • S. Ray Miller Foundation Antique Automobile Museum, Elkhart; 219-522-0539.
  • Studebaker National Museum, South Bend; 219-235-9714.
  • Wayne County Historical Museum, Richmond; 317-962-5756.

• Videos from the Indiana Humanities Council Resource Center, 317-638-1500.

  • *Studebaker: Less Than They Promised.*

  This award-winning documentary uses interviews, clips from historic company, and Hollywood films, and current film footage. It tells the story of Studebaker's relationship to the workers and the effect of the company's closing on them and the city of South Bend.

  • *Studebaker Archival Videos.*

  Historical films about Studebaker's automobile production, testing, commercials, and corporate history have been transferred from 16 mm originals to nine VHS tapes. Segments date from the early 1930s through 1962.

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The Indiana Historical Bureau was created in 1915 to celebrate the centennial of statehood. It is the duty of the Historical Bureau to edit and publish documentary and other material relating to the history of the state of Indiana, to promote the study of Indiana history, and to work with others engaged in such pursuits. The Historical Bureau provides books, educational resources, and programs for students and teachers. Several are listed below. The Bureau also directs the Historical Marker Program and the care of the Governors' Portraits Collection.

- **BROADSIDES** produces supplemental educational materials based on primary sources for teaching Indiana history. Student packets encourage active participation and skills development with possible integration in various grades and subjects. An extensive teacher guide provides ready information and teaching resources.
- **Indiana Close Up** is a high school local government program affiliated with the national Close Up Foundation. This participatory annual event encourages study and discussion through the Jefferson Meeting on the Indiana Constitution.
- **Indiana History Day** encourages students grades 4 - 12 to research and prepare papers, exhibits, performances and media presentations on an annual historical theme. An emphasis on original research and interpretation allows students to experience the excitement of discovering or developing skills and interests that enrich their education and their lives. It is part of the National History Day network.
- **REACH**—Resources Educating in the Arts, Culture, and History—is a dynamic program that utilizes art and objects to stimulate dialogue and provide hands-on experiences, exploring not only the arts but also the culture and history of Indiana. Its arts-in-education basis encourages on-going planning for involving community resources in the school.

The Indiana Junior Historical Society is a network of history clubs for students in grades 4 - 12. Locally sponsored clubs initiate and participate in activities which encourage the study of Indiana history, often outside the classroom. The Indiana Junior Historical Society program is administered by the Indiana Historical Society, 315 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202; 317-232-1882.

The Indiana Junior Historian is published nine times each school year by the Indiana Historical Bureau, State of Indiana. It is distributed to members and sponsors of the affiliated clubs of the Indiana Junior Historical Society of which the Indiana Historical Bureau is a co-sponsor.

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