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From the pages of automotive history

By Mark Niblett
UXBRIDGE - "I'm not convinced that's an engine; I think it's a still he's got there".

Charlie Emmans was peering into the hood of a Stanley Steamer. The car had stopped only a few minutes previously, shooting off clouds of steam, and heat still radiated from the boiler.

Behind the Stanley a low-slung, green Auburn roadster started up, the raccoon tail on its hood ornament quivering. Further along the line, a few teenagers sprawled on the running board of a Lincoln V-12, listening to the car's radio. A prim 1914 Model 'T' seemed to be gathering its skirts in distaste for a racy-looking black-and-yellow Ford V-8, vintage of about 1934.

It looked like a scene from a movie: "The St. Valentine's Day Massacre", say or "Little Caesar". A glistening black Hupmobile, bearing a plate saying "Repeal 18th Amendment", took you back to the days of the hip flask and the Charleston.

There was really nothing sinister about it, though. All these cars and more - a total of 51 vehicles - were participating in the 14th Annual Normoska Tour. They were parked in a field north of Uxbridge while their owners, members of the Historical Automobile Society of Canada (York Region) caught some sleep or wandered around chatting and drinking lemonade.

"I've been participating in these things since 1967," said club president Norm Helmky. "But I've been in rallies on an informal basis since '48." His own contribution to this rally was a



Driving a Model 'T' may be fun, but cranking it is another matter. Mrs. Carl Puterbough (left) and daughter Wendy of Uxbridge, watch as owner Charles Emmans gives the motor a spin.

restored Overland sedan, a flawless dark-green in color. Norm specializes in Willys products.

"There aren't many left," he observed. He points at a young couple nearby.

"They've come on the rally with a 14-week old baby. This is completely a family-type club."

Most of the members do all the work on their cars themselves. Safety regulations are strict: this club requires safety glass in the windshield only.

"We don't worry too much about the rear windows, not yet, anyway," said Norm. Each car must also have a safety check before going on the road. "These cars spend a lot of time on the road, too. Last year, five members

took their vehicles to the Maritimes - they averaged about 5,000 miles each.

Charlie Emmans has just finished restoring his Model 'T' and this is the first time he's come on a rally in an automobile. Charlie has three antique motorcycles, the oldest dating back to 1900.

To anybody under 30, the names may not mean much. It's a long time since anybody walked into a showroom to buy a new Overland or Nash.

But the cars themselves - That's something else again. The Model 'T' looking like it just rolled off an assembly line, was built before World War I. The cream-colored Auburn 653 speaks of an era when the rich could ride in real

luxury; before high income taxes, before the tinpot 'luxury' of mass-produced Cadillac and Lincolns. These old cars are living memories of another, and perhaps a gentler, time.

Norm Helmky is right; there aren't many of them left. But those that survive, lovingly tended by careful owners, have a spirit of their own. The Oldsmobile sails serenely along at 25 miles an hour; the

driver of the Auburn puts his foot down and pulls away from an impertinent Chevelle SS, whose driver was trying to pass 'that old crock'. They dwindle off down the road, a line of old cars with inherent beauty. You can't go back again; but it's nice to have a glimpse, once in-awhile.

An all-western horse show at Al's Tack Shop, Vandorf Road, Sunday, at 10 a.m.

'Sky pilot' was off course

STOUFFVILLE - The Stouffville Stockyards Limited employs two qualified auctioneers at the site every Saturday.

James Robertson, of no fixed address was arrested by Constable Tom Wauchope on a charge of vagrancy.

For Robertson, a self-appointed preacher, it was a second appearance before Judge Russell G. Pearse in Newmarket Court. A few days earlier, he had promised the Judge to leave York and never return. But he got only as far as

Goodwood. The first car to come along, brought him right back to Stouffville.

"I didn't know where I was, so how could I know where I was going?" he asked the Judge. He attributed the coincidence to 'the work of God'.

"There was some poor sinner in Stouffville, I was obviously intended to save. Aren't you aware the disciples were told to go out and preach the Word? By asking sinners to repent, am I disturbing the peace? Judge as ye shall be judged".

Judge Pearse was not impressed. His only problem was deciding what to do with the accused.

"Where would you like to go this time?" he asked. "north, east or maybe west."

Robertson said he didn't dare go west as he had already been arrested once in Mississauga.

"Well, where would you like to go?" asked Mr. Pearse.

"Anywhere there are sinners," the preacher replied.

Judge Pearse suggested the County of Simcoe. "Pearse, in a new area, they might be more receptive."

Following a light lunch in Newmarket jail, Robertson was provided a police escort to the York boundary limit.

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