

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, April 26, 2010

**The First Trip in Our '37 Packard:** Our "top of the line" '37 Packard Twelve arrived at Auburn Heights in November 1937. It was a "leftover" new car, as the '38s had been on the market for several months. I'm sure there were short trips in the winter of '37-'38, but the first I really remember was in June and July 1938.

At age 14, there was nothing I'd rather do than follow my father in his pursuit of the sport of trapshooting. With my mother aboard, we began a trip shortly after June 20 that would take us to eastern New York and the New England states and take in two major trapshooting events. The primary goals of this writer were 1) to shoot well, and 2) to enjoy the trip. The former, he did not; the latter he long remembered. We made our way to the Hendrik Hudson Hotel in Troy, New York, about 12 miles from the location of the New York State Shoot at Howard Akin's shooting grounds at Johnsonville. The Packard was like "riding in a sleeping car."

We spent two days at the New York State Championships. Fletcher H. Woodcock of Ithaca, a representative of the Western Cartridge Company, was showing off the first clay target trap built by his company on my father's design, inspected the January before and demonstrated to Woodcock and other Western officials at Yorklyn in early May. Eight such new traps were shipped to the Yorklyn Gun Club in time for the August tournament in 1938.

On a rainy day, we drove from Troy to Poland Spring, Maine. My father was anxious to show my mother and me the old resort of the Ricker family, built on profits from selling spring water. My dad had visited his father, who was there for his health in 1910, and he had his first Mountain Wagon ride from the station at Danville Junction to Poland Spring on one of these large Stanley vehicles owned by the resort. In late June 1938, the huge Poland Spring House was just opening for the season (in 1910 my grandfather had stayed at the more modest Mansion House), and there were very few guests. With the weather still cool and wet, we stayed two days before heading northwest to the Maplewood Club in New Hampshire's White Mountains to attend the annual Maplewood Trapshooting Tournament, sponsored by the hotel to encourage early-season business.

The trapshooting program lasted four days, and the weather remained very cool and wet. Trapshooting friends from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Harry B. Hostetter and his wife, planned to stay in the White Mountains a few days following the Maplewood "shoot," and they moved over to Peckett's on Sugar Hill, a very attractive sprawling inn with excellent food. They invited us for a delicious lunch before we left the White Mountains.

On the way home, we did sightseeing in the Boston area and had dinner at Longfellow's Wayside Inn, recently bought and restored by Henry Ford. Then we went through Plymouth and westward to Narragansett Bay, stopping in Newport and having lunch at a bayside restaurant near Bristol called the Lobster Pot. Two months later, this restaurant and hundreds of buildings up and down the Bay were washed away in the New England Hurricane of 1938.

My dad wanted to visit the headquarters of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company in New Haven, and the Remington Arms Company in Bridgeport, where he had friends in both places.

My mother's niece, Margaret (Peggy) Shallcross, was married to John Aubrey Walker, a young Remington executive, so we visited them at their home outside Bridgeport in Nichols, Connecticut. The big talk was of the new Merritt Parkway, the construction of which was pushing its way from the New York State Line northeastward and was expected to open as far as Bridgeport that summer. Our trip home was circuitous, as my dad wanted to have a repair made to his gun by Elmer Miller of Millersburg, Pennsylvania. The big Packard ran flawlessly. Come see it, 72 years later!