

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, June 11, 2018

**Funny Old Cars and Parades:** When I was first exposed to antique cars immediately after World War II, most observers considered them things of high mirth, along with their occupants, worthy of a good laugh. The early collectors did their best to oblige the public. My father and I had some ridiculous costumes and wore them at many parades, especially at Halloween. He had a full Indian Chief's costume, complete with feathers down the back, which he wore in the V-J Day parade in West Chester in early September 1945 driving his 1913 Stanley Model 76. Norris Woodward of Mendenhall was his passenger, also attired in one of his outlandish outfits.

It seemed like every small town in southern Chester County had an annual Halloween parade; I remember well attending several years in Kennett Square, Avondale, and Oxford. Using the gas lights on the early Stanleys, it was a chilly 40-mile round-trip in the dark to Oxford, in addition to the parade itself. I've been cold ever since, but we really enjoyed it or we wouldn't have participated. In 1947, right after the Mountain Wagon had been painted (for the first time under our ownership), we went in the Halloween parade in Kennett Square, with my father at the wheel. Starting with a manageable passenger list of about 12, including three Greggs from Yorklyn and Jake Noznesky from Kennett, we picked up passengers as we went along and ended up with 19 on the "Wagon" including those on the running boards. My father guided his treasure skillfully up the South Union Street hill at parade speed. Most of our passengers were attired in Halloween costumes. Even my mother was aboard (she seldom went on "steamer" trips). For my Christmas card in 1947, I reproduced a photo of myself standing alongside my Model 607, attired in a cowboy outfit with pasted-on handlebar moustache. Steam was coming out all over the place: from a blow-off, through the drip valve, etc. This was supposed to be funny, but it seems most inappropriate for a Christmas card.

Some larger places would pay the owners to bring their cars to a parade. Once my dad and I, accompanied by Norris Woodward, went to a July 4 parade on North Broad Street in Philadelphia (it was actually held on July 5, as the Fourth must have been on Sunday that year). I drove my father's 1917 Packard Twin Six Clover Leaf Roadster, a fine car for that period, and even though it was a hot day, we had no trouble with overheating. Owned earlier by Sam Baily and George Gerenbeck, my father later traded it to James Melton for the Cagney locomotive in the collection, a 9-inch-gauge train, and a miniature carousel.

A summer evening parade in Media offered to pay \$15 per car, and my dad and I took two Stanleys. Roy Benge may have gone also in his '15 Stanley. George Hughes Sr. took six cars to Media, all on their own power but with no licenses. Mr. Hughes, one of the pioneers in AACA and president twice in the early years, was known to hold his cars together with bailing wire, but they got him there and back. He would put "any old" license tag on a car he wanted to take on the road, and he always got away with it. Despite these questionable practices, George Sr. was a fine man and died much too young in 1953 at the age of 42.