

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, July 9, 2007

A Fast Weekend in a Stanley: Before I was 30 (in the dark ages), I didn't claim to drive a Stanley 5 miles in four minutes as my father did in his two-year-old Model K in 1910, but I made some amazing mileage in my 1914 Model 607. In late June 1951, I worked in the travel office until noon on Saturday, went home and fired up, and shortly after dark was in Cumberland, Maryland, having covered about 220 miles. Leaving Auburn Heights shortly after 1:00, I picked up Elwood Wilkins III, at Strickersville, Pennsylvania, and we headed for a weekend meet of the new Allegheny Mountain Region AACA in Cumberland Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Bill Swigart was the founder of the region, and Dave Davis, who owned a 1910 Oakland, was the most active Cumberland resident. With the possible exception of the National Capital Region, this was the nearest AACA region to us at that time! The next month, my father and I attended another Allegheny Mountain weekend meet at Gettysburg, driving the Model 87 and the Model 607 Stanleys.

Elwood and I drove on 896, 796, 41, and Route 10 to Cochranville, Parkesburg, and Honey Brook, getting on the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Morgantown. We stopped for water at Honey Brook, where a young Amish girl was repairing her buggy wheel. The turnpike was a cinch in those days—light traffic and no problem at 40 m.p.h. or slower, even through the tunnels. The frequently spaced Gulf stations and Howard Johnson restaurants were ideal for getting water. We got off at Breezewood, proceeded west on Route 30 to Bedford, then south down the valley on Route 220 to Cumberland. We probably bought kerosene at Breezewood, Everett, or Bedford for less than 25 cents per gallon (one place north of Harrisburg sold it for 14 cents). Just below the old resort of Bedford Springs, I stopped and lit the gas lights for the final 20 miles into Cumberland. The day's car activities were over, so we went to the B & O Station and watched a westbound passenger train come through. It may have been the Capitol Limited for Chicago, and to my dismay, it was diesel-powered. We bedded down in an old hotel with no ventilation or air conditioning, but young people slept well.

Sunday morning, it had been arranged to have breakfast and show the cars at a nearby country club, and there were perhaps 12 to 15 cars there. One of the cars was a nice '32 Packard Standard Eight Convertible Coupe owned by Alvin Storey of Cumberland. I asked him if he wanted to sell it. A few weeks later, my father bought it for \$600. The event was over by noon, and the group dispersed. Elwood and I started for home, and my memory fails me as to where we spent Sunday night, but it was somewhere between Bedford and Harrisburg. We were home by noon on Monday, and I went to work. I don't recall any problems for 450 miles, and the Model 607 would often roll at 45 m.p.h. with no stress, but the car was only 37 years old. Today, a trip half this long seems like a major undertaking.