

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, March 19, 2018

Driving a Stanley near the Factory: The Stanley factory where the cars were built consisted of a group of at least 10 buildings surrounding the original Boston-area buildings of the Stanley Dry Plate Company. Once the photo dry plate business was sold to George Eastman in 1904, these buildings, too, were used for the manufacture of the Stanley twins' steam cars. The factory was close to the Charles River in Watertown, but the address of Newton, where the twins had elaborate homes, was used for both the dry plates and the steam automobiles.

When the factory closed in 1924, F. O. Stanley, the surviving twin, built longtime employee and racing car driver Fred Marriott a modern garage one block away on Galen Street. Until his death in 1956, Fred operated this garage and serviced many Stanleys, as well as other auto makes. It was natural, therefore, for Stanley owners in the early collecting period of the late 1930s and the 1940s, several who lived in the Boston area, to depend on Fred for advice, parts, and repairs to their cars. George Monreau, grandfather of Brent Campbell, worked for Fred for much of this time and acquired a used 1913 Model 65 Stanley as his personal car, which he named "McGee." When the Charles River Parkway, paralleling the river, was built in the 1930s, more than half the buildings of the former Stanley Motor Carriage Company were condemned and torn down.

Although I visited Fred Marriott's garage several times, twice with my father, visiting the area with a Stanley was not quite as easy when we lived nearly 400 miles away. Here are the occasions I can recall:

1. October 1946. At George Monreau's home in Cochituate, about 12 miles west of Newton, my father and I took delivery of our 1915 Mountain Wagon and drove it home.
2. December 1946. At Donald Randall's home in Randolph, perhaps 20 miles southeast of Newton, I took delivery of my 1914 Model 607 and drove it home (see "News" of 3/12/18).
3. September 1947. With our restored Models 71 and 735, my father and I passed through Boston on the New England Glidden Tour that year, en route from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to the tour's conclusion at Newport, Rhode Island. When we reached Memorial Drive in Cambridge, we were stopped in front of the M.I.T. campus until all cars on the tour were assembled, after which we enjoyed a police escort through Boston.
4. July 1951. The steam car men around Boston, namely Stanley Ellis, Frank Gardner, and Ed Pamphilon, hosted a 1½-day steam car tour headquartered at Wellesley, and I drove to and from in my Model 607, accompanied by passengers Elwood Wilkins and Bob Ostwald. From North Jersey to Wellesley and return, Earle and Harriet Eckel accompanied us in their 1914 Model 712, 20-horsepower roadster. We crossed the George Washington Bridge in both directions, no problem with a Stanley in those days.
5. September 1954. Again, a progressive Glidden Tour circumvented northern New England and ended at the Larz Anderson Museum in Brookline, perhaps 5 miles from Fred Marriott's garage. Norbert Behrendt accompanied me in my father's Model 76. Frank and Eloise Gardner, accompanied by Byron Spence, were on the tour with Frank's newly restored Model 74, and they invited Norbert and me to spend an extra day before heading for home. During this time, we visited the ailing Carlton Stanley, nephew of the twins and manufacturer of many Stanley violins, and Fred Marriott at his home, as he did not feel well enough to go to the garage that day. Finally, we posed Gardner's Model 74 and our Model 76 at the exact location next to the factory where the famous twins had been photographed in their first car in 1897, and again in a Model 730 20 years later.
6. July 1979. At the conclusion of the long Key West-to-Halifax trip, I drove the Model 87 home, accompanied by Jules Reiver. We skirted the west side of the Boston area on Interstate 495, less than 25 miles from the Stanley factory at the closest point. This portion of the trip was eventful in that we covered 138 miles from

Portland, Maine to Worcester, Massachusetts, in a non-condenser without a water stop (a tail wind and 140-gallon water capacity).

7. September 1980. Again in the Model 87, I drove home from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, using I-495 west of Boston. This was at the conclusion of the double-hub Glidden Tour, and Dr. John P. Miller of Newtown, Connecticut was my passenger.

8. July 1989. Again completing one of the "Trans-Con" tours in the Model 87, Ruth and I drove home from Ellsworth, Maine in the Model 87, using the same I-495 route around Boston. This trip had begun in Galveston, Texas, and we had no breakdowns.

9. June 1997: The Stanley Museum sponsored a Centennial Celebration commemorating the very first Stanley 100 years earlier. Stanley owners were invited to come with their cars for parts of three days, during which time parades were held down Commonwealth Avenue and through Newton, visits through the homes of F. E. Stanley's daughters were arranged, and luncheons were held at a Newton country club and at the Stanley factory. Ruth and I took our Mountain Wagon in my trailer, but the rear axle broke on the second day, and our car was disabled.

I have said that I drove a Stanley over the road to New England 20 times, but only on the eight occasions mentioned above did one or more of our cars penetrate the Boston area on its own power.