

Advertising Post Card from the Mercury Body Corporation

OLD FAST PAPER

By *Jarvis Erickson*
Alderwood Manor, Washington

The great diversity of the automobile since the turn of the century lends itself to an almost limitless number of items for the collector. There are spark plugs, license plates, hub caps, literature, name plates . . . the choices are endless. I have seen a collection of over one hundred Model T water pumps; another of seventy-five T timers.

Even the collecting of literature has many areas. Today the trend seems to be more modern, with the muscle cars and collector cars. We seem to be going through a nostalgia kick.

Auto racing has its separate collectors. The early years of racing are divided into Professional and Amateur. The Ford, for the most part, must be the amateur. Most Ford racers and speedsters were built to be driven on the street while dreaming of the big time.

This piece will be about Model T Speedster literature, or as Neal East calls it, "*Old Fast Paper*". We'll also include a collectible or two.

Robert M. Roof, who called himself Chief Engineer, began advertising in quantity by 1917. He continued with several name changes until after World War II. I have seen over 100 different pieces which he had printed. These are not just the ads in magazines, but hand-out sheets and brochures.

Magazines from 1919 until the end of the Model T Ford era, that car-oriented people might read, had a continuous series of ads on building a Model

T speedster. The more popular names, such as Rajo, Fronty, Roof, Ames, Morton & Brett, and Mercury, changed these ads every issue. To collect all of the different ads would require a lifetime.

An after market Ford magazine that started out as *The Ford Owner*, went to *The Ford Owner and Dealer*, and finally the *Ford Dealers News*, ran T speedster advertising from the late teens to the end. Consisting of how-to-do-it articles, speed tips, and the latest in speedster ideas, two recent books have been compiled just from the content of these magazines. These old magazines still show up from time to time at swap meets.

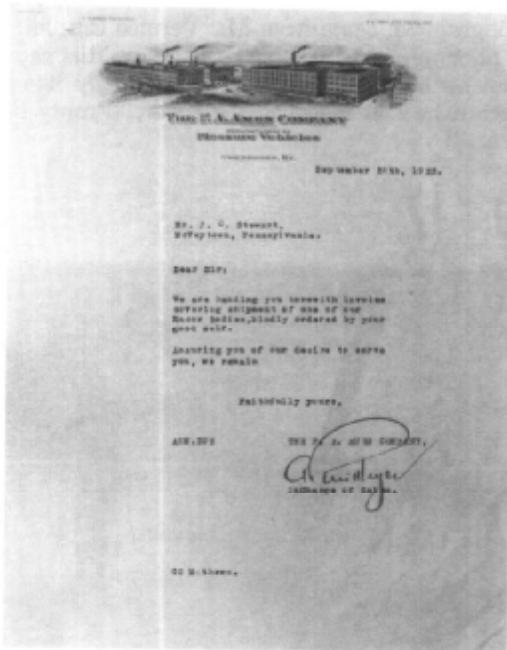
Areas of Speedster Literature to Look For FACTORY LETTERS

When you wrote to the speedster companies in answer to the ads they ran in Ford related magazines, you might get a Factory Letter. It was often four pages and would have their letter to you on the cover page, and advertising for the product on the other three pages. The Rajo letters quite often were in color and are probably the most attractive.

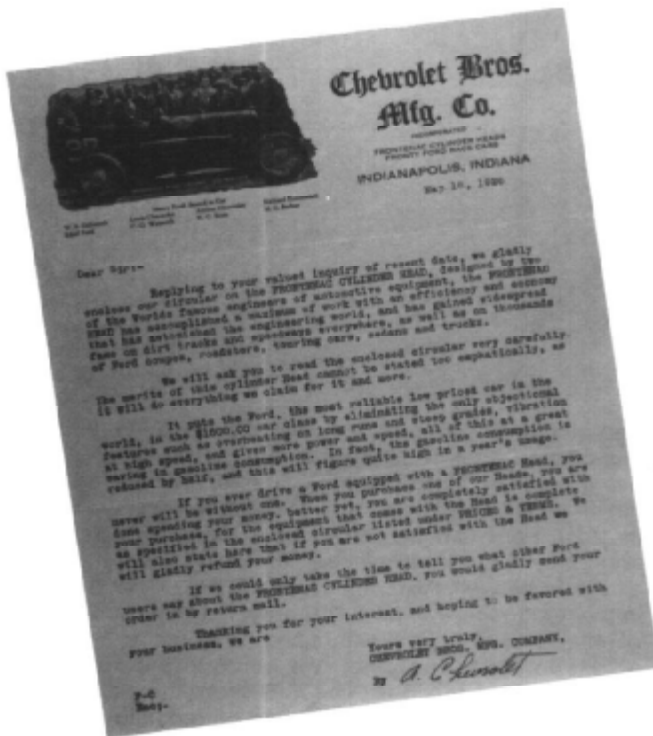
AUTOGRAPHS

Most of the companies were rather small so it was possible to receive a letter addressed to you and signed by the president. When you consider what

Factory Letters



The factory letters are interesting because they are one of the few places that color was used. As you read them you will see that if you were the first customer to inquire or respond to an ad from your area, you could become a dealer and qualify for a discount. It is interesting that the companies were so small that the owners or designers were still signing their letters personally.



autograph collectors pay for famous signatures, these are a fantastic bargain.

ENVELOPES

If your letter brought a response in the form of an envelope with a fancy return logo on the envelope, I can imagine the thrill it must have produced. Notice the race cars on the Craig-Hunt envelope. (Later they became Speedway Engineering Co., at the same address.)

BROCHURES

These would include how-to-do-it manuals. The small brochures titled, *Complete Instructions for Building a Fronty Ford Racing Car*, by A. Chevrolet, originally sold for \$2.00, or were given away free, but are now very scarce and expensive.

The Ford as a Racing Car, by P.W. Cornelius, 1924, is the only one that might be considered a book. Dividing its ninety-one pages into three sections; (A) Chassis, (B) Power Plant, and (C) General Information, it is a collecting treasure - perhaps a fantasy.



Fronty catalog No. 81 had a red cover, and is rare. It was issued February 15, 1927. Page seven has an interesting comparison of the speeds you might expect to reach. Fronty R, 96 mph; SR, 104 mph; DO, 110 mph; straightaway. This is the only time I have ever seen a company come out and give a figure.

Collecting *Old Fast Paper* has many rewards. The people you meet have usually kept a piece or two of some speedster item from the 1920 s or 1930 s. I have been very lucky to see, photograph, or record on tape their experiences. The Frontenac catalog shown came from Mr. Vernice Cranfill. He has become a friend, and he sent me this catalog when he built his speedster. I especially like the notation he had made on the cover, "Fronty Ford Driver.



The picture shown on the cover of catalog No. 80 has caused a lot of confusion. The picture usually has a caption, "Ford seated in the car that placed 5th in 1923. This is true BUT the picture was taken in 1924. Ford had agreed to be the race referee, and since a Ford had placed fifth the year before, all would be well. Also, the engine in the sole Ford in the 1923 race was an S-R Fronty, not the double overhead cam which was used on one of the entries in 1924. The other two Fords in the 1924 race still used the S-R. The S-R Fronty in either rocker arm or the single overhead cam configuration is still thought to be the cream of the crop. Not as pretty, but more reliable than the DO model.

Advertisements

SEND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CATALOG



Our net price list. Full line of auto bodies and accessories for Fordist Wholesale Prices. Save big money on bodies by buying Direct from Factory.

FOR FORD—Prices from \$27.50 up. Factory to consumer direct—Pay Only One Profit.

International Body Works, 314 W. Ohio Street, Dept. 7, Chicago, Illinois

1926

RACING AND SPORT EQUIPMENT
Direct from Manufacturers

Bodies for Ford and Chevrolet \$18.75 and up

El-Convertible Heads, underslung Parts, Racing Gears, Cowd Lamps, Roadlites, Seat covers, Alloy Hoops, Lanes, Portable Radio, Motorcycles, and Camping Outfits. Send 10c for Catalog showing bodies of rare beauty and complete equipment.

Build a Real Auto from Used Chassis

SPORT FACTORIES Dept. K-2 **AURORA, ILL.**



1929

MAKE FORD INTO THE "LARK"
YOUR \$5.00 Red-i-Kut life size patterns Class—Snap



Famous model RED-I-KUT life-size pattern and picture instructions show how you can easily convert your Ford into the Fast, Breezy, Sport Car as thousands have done, with easily obtained materials. No need to lay up the car. Rear seat folds, reaching 4-passenger car. Send 10c price for actual body photo and see against other distinctive sport body patterns from \$1.50 up—RED-I-KUT "Snap-In" Dress, Ties and Windshields. **ORDER RIGHT NOW.**

KUEMPEL COMPANY, 93 Kuempel Bldg., GUTTENBERG, IOWA

1927

Drive This Beautiful Raceabout
instead of Your OLD FORD



Choice of Four Colors; Fast or the Bullet Nose Radial Tire. Send for 1924 Free Catalog of New Auto Accessories, Bodies and Speed Equipment. Direct from Factory.

AMERICAN TOP AND BODY CO., Park Ave. DELPHI, IND.

1924

Sport Bodies for Fords
AT FACTORY PRICES!



This Model in Gray Prime **\$38.50**

Write for Booklet A-2 Showing This and Other Models

SPORT FACTORIES, AURORA, ILL.

1925

Bodies of Rare Beauty for Fords
At Factory Prices!

\$22.75 and Up

Write for Circular A-2 showing this Deluxe Model and others.

SPORT BODY WORKS, AURORA, ILL.



1925

Only \$45.00 For This Job Complete

Have your latest freight released—no-half origins lost by buying Ford Sportster Bodies marked-down. Blinds, complete instructions furnished, all parts cut to exact fit. Anyone can assemble this job. Complete with hood, radiator and instruments, hood, upholstery, metal parts, wheel parts, fairs, springs, etc. Plus radiator shell furnished made up. Designed low with lack of wind resistance. Price sets up \$50. For more particulars on request.

The Central Auto Supply Co., Eng. Dep. 128, Louisville, Ky.



1923

MAKE FORD INTO SPORT CAR \$6.40 ONLY

Other types down to \$1.50. Famous rare El-Red-i-Kut life-size patterns and simple instructions show all details. You can easily convert your Ford into the Fast, Breezy Sport Car as thousands have done with a few dollars worth of material from the hardware store. No need to lay up the car. The "PAL" with standard steel wheel patterns, Pressed Metal Streamline Rear only \$1.40 delivered. It will look wonderfully easy. Order NOW while we can make good delivery. Send for our full illustrated prospectus a 10 per 1000. **"Judy"**

Keen, Classy Up-to-the-Minute Ford and "Gypsy" Windshields. Kuempel Co., 93 Kuempel Bldg., Guttenberg, Iowa



1922

Make Your FORD Into The "ACE"
GET READY FOR SPRING—BUILD YOUR ACE NOW

\$5.99 Red-i-Kut life size patterns Class—Snap



Famous model RED-I-KUT life-size patterns and picture instructions show how you can easily convert your Ford into the Fast, Breezy, Sport Car as thousands have done with easily obtained materials. No need to lay up the car. Makes wonderful appearance and send for price and actual photo of sport car and also material of distinctive sport car patterns from \$1.50 up—RED-I-KUT "Snap-In" Dress, Ties, Windshields and many more windshields. **ORDER RIGHT NOW and get a real sport!**

KUEMPEL COMPANY, 122 Kuempel Bldg., GUTTENBERG, IOWA

1930

LYON BODIES

Send For Our **1924 BOOK OF BARGAINS**

Containing a full line of bodies and accessories at exceptionally low prices. Buy direct from the factory.

\$27.50 AND UP

AUTO TIRE SALES CO.
Body Division Dept. P21
1346 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago



1924

Make "His" Christmas a Happy One



A snappy sport or speed for his Ford will do the trick

3 Models—Low Prices

Immediate Deliveries

SEEKING FUTURE VISIT OUR SHOW ROOM TODAY AND INSPECT DISPLAY OF COMPLETELY ASSEMBLED SPORT and SPEED CARS, BODIES and RACING SPECIALTIES.

L. O. FORDSPEED BODY MFRS., 259 W. 54th Street, New York

1924

SPORT BODIES for FORD and CHEV. 400 at \$34.50 UP

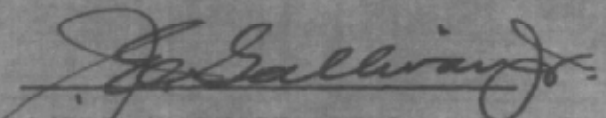
Life-size \$8 paper patterns—You can build your own body at small cost. We are manufacturers and our quantity production enables us to quote exceptional low prices. Our unique shipping methods save you 75% in FREIGHT CHARGES. Send at once for free particulars on Central Bodies. Our Book "HOW TO BUILD A FORD RACE" sent anywhere on receipt of 25c in cash or stamps. **WRITE TODAY!**

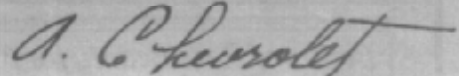
Central Auto Supply Co. Dept. 120. Louisville, Ky.

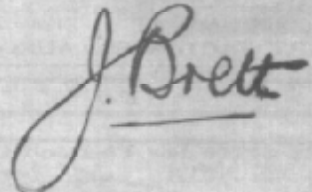


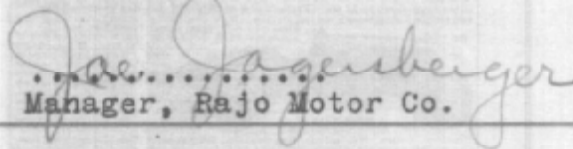
1924

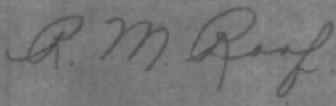

Autographs

Yours very truly,

GALLIVAN ENGINEERING WORKS, INC.

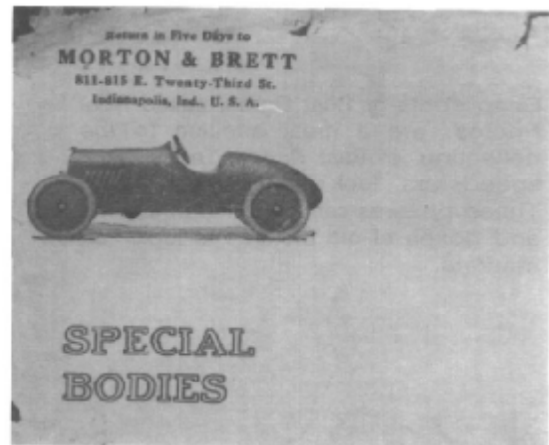
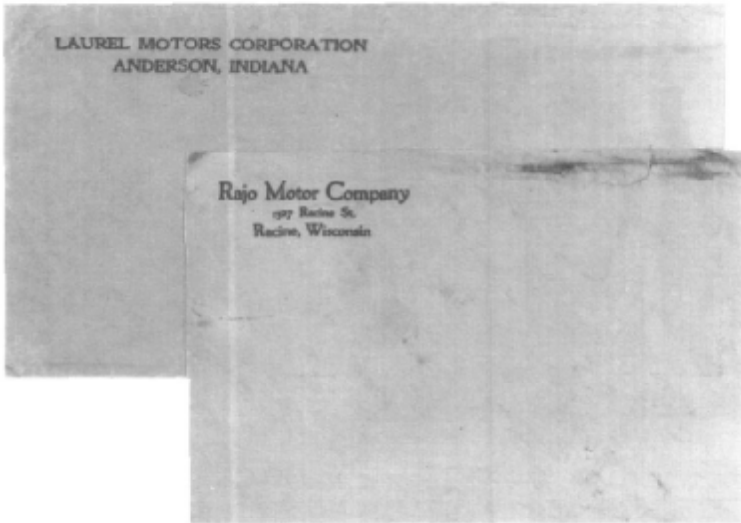
Yours very truly,
CHEVROLET BROS. MFG. COMPANY,
By 

Yours very truly,
MORTON & BRETT.


Very truly yours,

.....
Manager, Rajo Motor Co.

very truly yours,
R. & R. MANUFACTU
FMR-FR.  CH

ROBERT M. ROOF
CHIEF ENGINEER

Envelopes



Original Photos



Photos, are a great addition to the collecting of Fast Paper. Today most speedsters look pretty much alike. These pictures can be found in albums and boxes of old pictures at local flea markets.

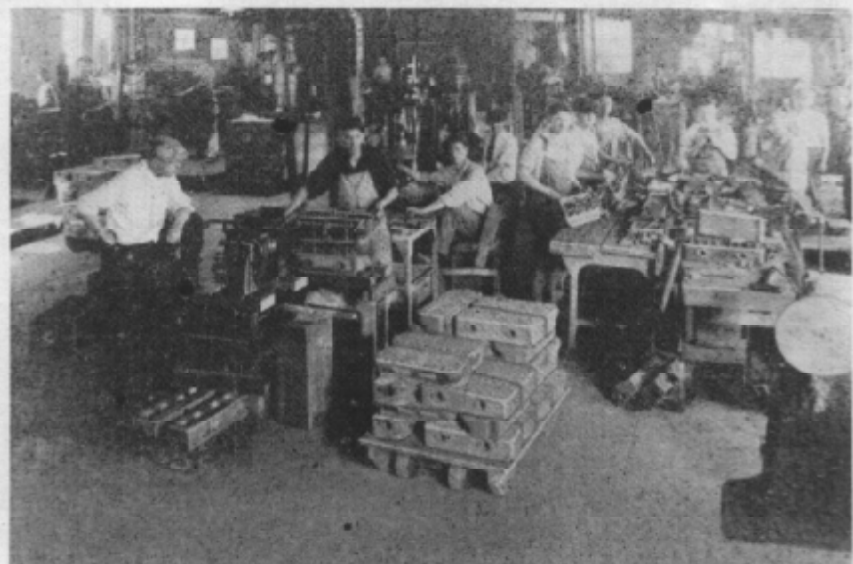


Snap shots or Post Cards, called Real Photos, are a great addition to the collecting of Fast Paper. Today most speedsters look pretty much alike. These pictures can be found in albums and boxes of old pictures at local flea markets.

The two top pictures on this page are speedsters built in the Seattle area. The top picture is a 16-valve Roof. The car with the Gilmore tire cover had an 8-valve Rajo. All of the speed equipment, and one of the cars still exists.




Assembly room of the Laurel Motors Co. A skid of un-machined 16-valve Roof heads.



Brochures

**How To Build
A Ford Racer**



A Book Written Especially For Those Desiring To Convert Their Fords Into Fast and Powerful Cars, Dealing In Detail With All Changes and Additions Necessary To Accomplish This.

PUBLISHED BY THE
Central Auto Supply Company
Louisville, Kentucky

Cable Address "FRONTY"
Codes: ABC 5th Ed., Bentley-3 Letters

INSTRUCTION BOOK
AND
PARTS PRICE LIST
OF THE
Frontenac Cylinder Head




For Fords
MARCH FIRST
1927

Manufactured by
Chevrolet Bros. Mfg. Co.
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.
U. S. A.

THIS SUPERSEDES ALL
PREVIOUS PRICE LISTS

COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS
FOR BUILDING A
**Fronty-Ford Racing
Car**



BY
A. CHEVROLET

Designer and Builder of the Fronty-Ford.
The most sensational performer on half
mile tracks up-to-date.

PRICE \$2.00

Free to purchasers of Frontenac Cylin-
der Head or other racing equipment.

**Arthur Chevrolet
Aviation Motors Corporation**

Formerly
Chevrolet Bros. Mfg. Co.
410 West Tenth Street
INDIANAPOLIS, IND., U. S. A.

Cable Address—"FRONTY"—Indianapolis
Codes: ABC 5th Ed. (3 letters)
Bentley—Letters

May 15, 1929
Catalog No. 82



Exclusive Man. Lecturers of
"Fronty" Racing Cars
"Frontenac" Cylinder Heads
Speed Specialties and Racing Units
for Fords, Chevrolets and Whippets

This voids all former notices.

Speedway Products

Heads and Other Ford
Speed Specialties

—

*Making the Ford
Fleet-Footed*

—

Speedway Engineering Co.
960 NORTH ILLINOIS STREET
INDIANAPOLIS, IND., U. S. A.

Promotional Pieces



The Winfield sign is a beautiful porcelain sign with blue and yellow lettering.

The stick pin pictures a pretty red-headed lady. The lettering is as follows: "Ames of Owensboro Pleasure Vehicles. Two varieties are known to exist.

The Waukesha Motor Co. made the Waukesha Ricardo speedster high compression head for T s.



While I was putting this material together I received a letter from a friend in Arizona, Harry Mann. He was kind enough to let me know about the passing of a mutual friend, Chuck Condon. I am very sorry to head this news. We had corresponded for over twenty-five years and I had the pleasure of meeting him one time. Long-time speedster people, and readers of *The Vintage Ford* will remember the double overhead cam four-port Roof he designed and built. Volume 7, Number 4 (VP) had an excellent article on this conversion.

I would like to add a note. If there is anyone you know that had experience in any part of the automobile history, become an amateur historian and try to capture their experiences either with a camera or a tape recorder. When you realize that

we are roughly eighty years into the history of the automobile, many of the early pioneers are no longer with us.

Good hunting for Old Fast Paper. I would like to thank those who let me use their material so that I could photograph it. Some belongs to the author, and I am allowed to use the largest collection of Model T Speedster literature in the world.

As usual I am so desperate to correspond about Model T Speedsters that I will answer any letter or whatever. I am especially looking for photos of T speedsters taken during the '20 s and '30 s, as well as anything on the Mercury Body Corporation of Louisville, Kentucky. Please write to Jarvis, Box 2245, Alder-wood Manor, WA 98036. (206) 776-2804.

MAKING THE FORD FLEET-FOOTED



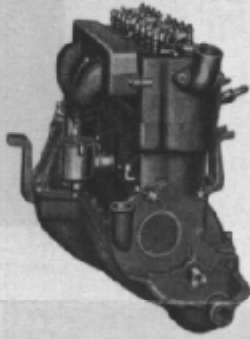
We have been building the fastest 16-valve head for Fords.
We are now also building the best and fastest 8-valve head for Fords.

Everything comes complete. No extra parts to buy.
Use either Ford or any other make of carburetor.
Ford ignition. Exhaust couples up to Ford exhaust pipe.
Intake manifold passes through exhaust manifold insuring warm carburation.
Dust, oil and noise proof cover over valves and rocker arms.

Price, L. o. b. Indianapolis . . . \$85.00

Speedway Engineering Co. :: Indianapolis, Ind.

"Speedway" 8-valve Head for Fords
TRUCKS :: PLEASURE CARS :: SPEEDSTERS
40% MORE POWER LESS GAS
60 Miles per Hour Stock Ford Equipment



We have been building the fastest 16-valve head for Fords.
We are now also building the best and fastest 8-valve head for Fords.

Everything comes complete. No extra parts to buy.
Use either Ford or any other make of carburetor.
Ford ignition. Exhaust couples up to Ford exhaust pipe.

Speedway Engineering Co. had a rather clever advertising piece. The top was folded over to form the valve cover. Lift the flap and the top of the engine with the rocker arms becomes exposed.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

The club does not issue new membership cards each year at renewal time unless a card is requested. This policy was adopted many years ago after an extensive survey which indicated that the vast majority of our members indicated that such cards were of little use or interest. The savings in printing, handling and postage costs are substantial and are one reason our annual dues remain relatively low.

Those members who would like a card may obtain one by just sending a postage stamp with their request. We will supply the envelope and the new card at no charge.

MTFCA BUMPER STICKERS

"My Other Car is a Model T Ford bumper stickers are now available. They are 12 long and 3 high, white with blue printing, as shown above.
The price is just \$1.00 each, postpaid, and the can be ordered from the club at our Burbank address.

SWAP MEET PROMOTIONAL KITS

The club has a few promotional kits available for the asking, for use at swap meets and car shows in an effort to promote interest and membership. These kits include a MTFCA banner, application brochures, sample copies of The Vintage Ford (for display only), decals, patches, lapel pins, service manuals and other items for sale.

If you would like to help the club, as well as make a small profit on the sale items, please contact our promotions chairman. These kits are only available to our Chapters and other recognized organizations within the United States. Shipping costs preclude our shipping elsewhere.

For information or to order:
Ted Aschman
214 Morningside Dr.
Elitabethtown, KY 42701
(502) 769-3050

EVERY MEMBER get a MEMBER

There are thousands of Model T enthusiasts who are not members of the MTFCA. Have you made an effort to have them join?