

The Chalmers Automobile Newsletter

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The history of Chalmers reveals a link to commercial and military vehicles, which is not commonly known. In this issue, I will unveil this bit of history after the Chalmers Classified section.

CHALMERS CLASSIFIED

The Chalmers Classified listing is intended as a service for members to advertise Chalmers cars and parts that are for sale and/or wanted. Please contact me regarding items that should no longer be listed and pass-on your new wanted and for sale items.

WANTED:

- 1922/1923 hubcaps (posted 4/2000) - contact Bob DuBois (#9).
- 1912-1914 Chalmers Model 12/18 "Six" (also 1910-1912 Model "Forty", 1912-1914 Model "36", or 1914-1915 Model 24/29 "Master Six") (posted 4/2000) - contact John Lehnert (#35).
- 1914 Chalmers Model 24 "Master Six" shop manual (posted 4/2000) - contact Jim and Donna Stamper (#52).
- Model T Splitdorf magneto for 1912 Chalmers Model 11 (posted 12/2000) - contact Al Shaw (#25).
- 1911 Chalmers Model "30" Pony Tonneau complete rear axle assembly (or any parts for it) (posted 7/2001) - contact Fred Hoch (#38).
- 1908-1909 Chalmers-Detroit Model F "30" radiator (posted 10/2001) - contact Alan Leclair (#42).
- 1923 Chalmers Model "Y" Jaxon disc wheels (one or more) for 24" tires (posted 2/2002)- contact Alan Maris (#56).
- 1913 Chalmers Model 36 front wheel hub and left side bail handle sidelight (kerosene and electric) or a matching pair (posted 2/2002)- contact Lloyd Elliott (#26)
- 1912 Chalmers Model 11 "30" rear spring and running board toolbox (posted 2/2002)- contact Mike Morris (#65)
- 1915 Chalmers Model 26-C "Six-48" Entz starter/generator, oil gage, distributor, steering wheel, crank, hubcaps, speedometer, and other parts & photos of wood framing (posted 7/2002) - contact Scott Sandersfeld (#69)

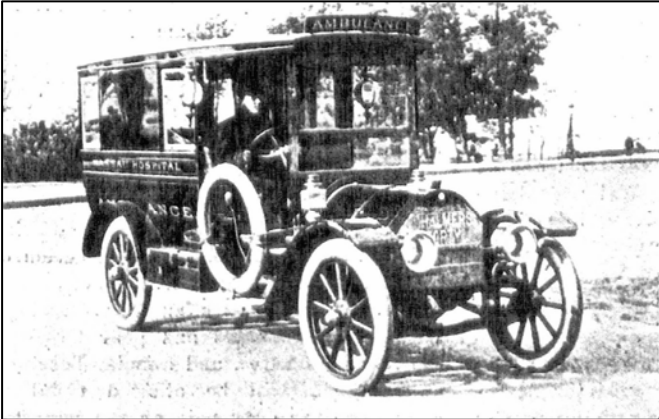
FOR SALE:

- 1916 Model 35-A "Six-30" parts and some sheet metal (posted 4/2000) - contact Don Ohnstad (#19).
- 1909 Model F "30" engine cooling fan assembly (includes fan, hub, pulley, and bracket) in good painted condition with no rust for \$95 or best offer (posted 9/2000) - contact Chuck Fanucci (#45).
- 1917 Model 35-A "Six-30" described as a diamond in the rough that is drivable but needs some restoration for \$5,000 (see it at <http://www.AlternateFuels.com/1917.htm>) (posted 3/2001) - contact Glenn DeRosa (#58).

CHALMERS ASSOCIATIONS WITH COMMERCIAL & MILITARY VEHICLES

Chalmers Ambulance

Some early Chalmers vehicles had a connection with both commercial and

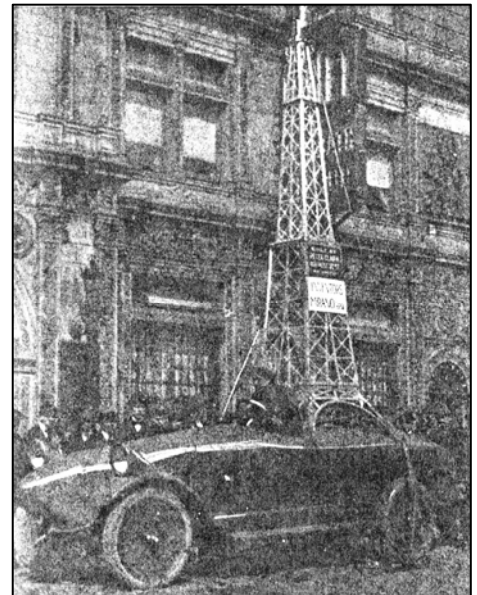


1909 Chalmers-Detroit ambulance

and military uses. For instance in 1909, many Model "Forty's" were seen transformed into ambulances. Later in 1915, the Chicago Auto Body Company was in the business of configuring the Model J "Forty" chassis with ambulance bodies. These Chicago Auto bodies were based on a limousine type with two side doors and a double rear door giving access to 95 x 60 inches of interior space. It is presumed that some of these ambulances saw duty in Europe during World War I.

Armored Car

The most unusual example of a military vehicle was the 1917 armored car built on a Chalmers chassis. The armored car had a steel tower rising vertically from the rear body. The Mirano Brothers, an acrobatic team from New York, originally built it for their circus act. However, it soon was turned over to the U.S. Army for military duties in World War I. The tower, which could be extended to 20 feet, was hinged at 12 feet so it could be folded back and tied down to the body for road travel. It was proposed by the Army that the tower could serve as a radio antenna, machine gun platform, and observation platform. Heavy steel braces unfolded from the side of the car to provide stability when the tower was extended. This became essential whenever the machine gun was operated. Radio messages were received while the car was on the move - making it a kind of traveling messenger service.



1917 Armored car with Chalmers chassis and 20 ft. tower

Chalmers Truck

A Chalmers experiment in producing a light delivery truck was reported in late December of 1911 by *The Motor World*. This report speculated that perhaps the new truck would be based on the Model "Six" touring car that was being readied for introduction in 1912. Then in the January 1912 issue of *MoToR*, a description of a Chalmers Model 14 "30" Delivery (truck) appeared. According to company documents, only 50 serial numbers (4901 to 4950) were assigned to the Model 14, however no illustrations or photographs have been found to verify this endeavor. Bob DuBois (#9) believes that there were some light truck models created based on an analysis of part numbers in the Chalmers Master Parts List. In that list, he found evidence of three body styles; Panel Side Type, Open Body Express Style, and Canvas Side Body. The Canvas Side Body style was only assigned to serial numbers greater than #4925 (and it was noted that the rear was not enclosed). Bob also found specific part numbers for the Delivery frame and the front & rear fenders. Regarding the fenders, the first group of 25 serial numbers had support irons that were located approximately 6-½ inches from end of the fender while the last 25 listed 8-½ inches for this dimension. Based on part numbers, it appears that the Model 14 windshield frame and glass was shared with the Model 11 and many other parts were shared with Models 9 & 11. Bob notes that his Chalmers Master Parts List is a 1920 publication and asks the question: "Why would Chalmers continue to list these 1912 parts in a 1920 parts list edition if they did not make the Delivery model?"

Highlights of the 1912 *MoToR* description included the following:

- Body - Full paneled delivery with rear doors
- Load Capacity - 1,000 pounds
- Wheel Base - 115 inches
- Gauge - 56 inches
- Tires - Front and rear, 34 x 5½ inches [made by Standard Universal, Goodrich, and Dorian]
- Springs - Front, semi-elliptic; rear, semi-elliptic
- Brakes - Service and emergency
- Engine - 30 HP, 4 cylinder (cast en bloc), with dual ignition
- Clutch - Multiple disc
- Change Gear - Selective, sliding type
- Speeds - Three forward and one reverse, with direct drive in third speed
- Drive - Shaft and bevel gear

- Equipment - Lamps, gas tank, tools, horn, pump, jack, tire repair outfit, and demountable rims
- Price - \$1,750

The Model 14 Delivery will remain a mystery until a photograph or an illustration can prove that it was actually manufactured. If anyone has such evidence, please contact Bob DuBois (#9) or myself.

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D. C. Hammond
110 Sourwood Drive
Hatboro, PA 19040

That's all for now and I hope you enjoyed the brief history of the Chalmers connections to commercial & military vehicles. If you have friends that are interested in these vehicles, please make a copy of this newsletter for them, as they may have helpful information for Bob DuBois (#9) and me.

As usual, forward your questions, comments, or other items of interest for the next newsletter.

Dave Hammond