

**WILLIAM E. SWIGART JR. (1913-ca. 1999):** W. Emmert Swigart of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, was a highly respected insurance executive who loved old cars and had a fabulous collection of license plates. He bought dozens of cars from scrap dealers during the Depression years and became an active member of the Antique Automobile Club of America (possibly a charter member). He had two sons working in his insurance business: John, who preferred horses to old cars, and William Jr., who loved his father's hobby. At the end of World War II, Emmert Swigart died suddenly, and William "Bill" inherited his father's love for old cars, license plates, and the hobby in general. In 1947, he and his young wife, Helen, completed their first Glidden Tour Revival (through New England) in one of their Model T Fords.

My father and I, participating with Stanleys on these early Glidden Tours, got to know the Swigarts quite well by 1950. On our way home from the tour that ended in Rochester, New York, that year, we were invited to stop at Huntingdon and be entertained overnight by the Swigarts. They had used a 12-cylinder 1915 Pathfinder landaulet on the 1950 tour, with Bill behind the wheel in the chauffeur's compartment (and in chauffeur's livery) and Helen in the back seat alone. At Huntingdon, we were impressed with the display of license plates, by state, that lined the walls of the insurance offices, and with the several antique cars we saw. That fall, Bill Swigart was the force behind the founding of the Allegheny Mountain Region, AACA, and became its first president (then called "Regional Director"). At the time of the AACA Fall Meet at Devon in mid-October 1950, the Swigarts spent two nights with us at Auburn Heights, along with their two children (later, they had two more).

William Swigart had been impressed with the operation of our Stanleys on the Glidden Tours, and he wanted an operating one for his collection (his father had previously collected about three very early Stanleys, but they hadn't run for years). There was a 1913 Model 65 for sale, which had gone from Frank Gardner to Jim Keith to Kellogg Clarke, and the latter had sent the car to us for repair after he scorched the boiler. Swigart bought the car, and the plan was that I was to teach him how to operate it as he drove it home from Auburn Heights to Huntingdon, about 175 miles, following the Devon Fall Meet.

With Bill Swigart behind the wheel, we stopped at a filling station in Harrisburg for water. As he backed toward the water hose, he forgot he was in a Stanley and not in a Model T Ford, so instead of closing the throttle, he opened it wide. The car shot back and came to a stop against the wall of the building, having demolished a display rack of tires on its reverse journey. I ran around and closed the throttle. Bill was unnerved and said it would be better if I drove the rest of the way. I refused and made him get behind the wheel again and after a brief stop for lunch, we were on our way. He couldn't seem to keep the steam pressure up, and we were creeping along. Knowing darkness was coming, I did drive for about 30 miles and made out well, arriving at Lewistown as darkness was closing in. I had planned to go on to Huntingdon, but I had to catch an eastbound train that would put me home that night, as I needed to go to work Monday morning. The last chance to achieve this was to take the train from Lewistown, which I did, assuring Swigart that he should be able to make the last 35 miles to Huntingdon on his own. Since traffic was light, none of us feared night driving with gas lights in those days. I learned within a day or two that he made it but had a "terrible time" with much duress. I promised I would come to Huntingdon at a future date to troubleshoot his Stanley's problems.

(I spent several happy hours with the Swigarts in 1953 and again in 1956, at which times I worked on his Model 65, but he was never comfortable to fire it up when I was not there.)

My father and I joined the Allegheny Mountain Region and enjoyed several weekend events it sponsored. In June 1951, Elwood Wilkins joined me for a fast trip in my Model 607 to Cumberland, Maryland. In July the same year, there was a weekend at Gettysburg, chaired by John Teeter and his family, to which our Models 87 and 607 and Earle Eckel's Model 712 were driven. In 1954, Joe Mitchell joined me, also in my 607, as we traveled to a meet at an old frame hotel in the woods at White Sulfur Springs, Pennsylvania, west of Bedford. From his outstanding work with the Allegheny Mountain Region, Bill Swigart became a Board member of the national club, rising to president in 1956 and serving two years in that capacity. During this time, he was asked by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Motor Vehicles to design a license plate for antique cars in compliance with the

new registration category for antique automobiles. This he did but using an old “ditto” copier in his office that reproduced only in purple; all the Pennsylvania antique plates turned out purple.

Using many different cars, Bill Swigart never missed a Glidden Tour into the 1990s. He was long recognized as the “dean of touring” and annually presented awards to the winners at the conclusion of each year’s tour. With the opening of the Swigart Antique Auto Museum near Huntingdon about 1960, his Stanley Model 65 was painted and put on display there, where it still resides. Helen Swigart passed away in the late 1980s, and Bill married Patricia (whose maiden name I do not know). Patricia loved the old cars and still operates the museum in loving memory of her husband. In 1992, Bill Swigart visited Auburn Heights for the last time. I asked him how many antique cars he owned. He said he didn’t know. I asked, “Would it be 100?” He nodded. I asked again “Would it be 200?” He said, “That’s about right.”

**Work Report:** On Tuesday, April 28, 14 volunteers were on hand: Jerry Novak (in charge), Bill Schwoebel, Dave Leon, Ted Kamen, Brent McDougall, Anne Cleary, Jerry Lucas, Devon Hall, Mike Ciosek, Steve Bryce, Bob Jordan, Tom Marshall, Dennis Dragon, and Emil Christofano. Good weather and hard work by a few dedicated volunteers have moved the track replacement near the new retaining wall along in good order. Much of the track was laid in place and splice bars were connected. Additional sections were assembled in the shop. The Model 735 was fired up as a test for the upcoming Old Dover Days, a small leak was repaired, and all appeared good. The left front wheel was put in place on the Model 725, after its spoke-tightening procedure. This car was prepped for its use as a training car on 4/29. The tops were put down for the season on our Model T Ford and on Stanley Models 71, 87, and 735. More sanding was done on the frame of the popcorn machine. The battery for our blue trailer was put on charge in anticipation of its use on May 2. The Models 71 and 87 had been fired up and tested briefly on April 27.

On Wednesday, April 29, four operator lessons with four different Stanleys took place before dark. Steve Bryce instructed Dave Leon on the Model 76, Jerry Lucas had Paul Kratunis and Devon Hall on the Model 725, Kelly Williams had Jared Schoenly on the Model 607, and Tom Marshall had Richard Bernard and Tim Ward on the Model 71. All went well with minor problems. The 607, especially, performed flawlessly.

On Thursday, April 30, again 14 volunteers took part: Tim Ward (in charge), Bill Schwoebel, Dave Leon, Lou Mandich, Steve Bryce, Bob Stransky, Eugene Maute, Gerhard Maute, Bob Jordan, Emil Christofano, Jim Personti, Paul Kratunis, Tom Marshall, and Richard Bernard. Work continued in the FAHP Library. Still more sanding was done on the Cretors popper frame prior to priming. The track replacement project continued unabated; good progress is being made. A large opening in the burner pan on the Model 71, where the superheater pipe comes through, was patched and plastered up. A small leak developed on the seat of the pilot screw, which was lapped in (it still leaked -- this was repaired the next day). It was noticed that a lot of cylinder oil was evident in unwanted places on the Model 725, and it is believed that the pump is putting out far too much oil. The pump has been adjusted, and the boiler will be washed out. A major adjustment to and securing of the valve linkage on Locomotive 401 was accomplished. This locomotive will be tested on air at the first opportunity, and a major improvement in the cut-off is expected. Both trailers were prepped for the trip to Dover on Saturday, and the 87 and the 735 were loaded therein.

The “Dover and Diver” weekend had mixed results. At the Diver Chevrolet Centennial Party in Wilmington, our 1932 Packard won a best-of-show award (it appeared this was shared with a ’31 Franklin), and their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary kick-off event and our participation in it turned out well. Thanks to Jerry Novak, Dan Muir, Lou Mandich, Tom Marshall and Susan for making this a success. The five (Steve and Ann Bryce, Art Sybell, Tim Ward, and Dave Leon) who took our cars to Dover Days had poorer luck. What is believed to be a leak in the vaporizer prevented the Model 87 from being fired up, and the 735 stopped pumping water while giving rides part-way through the afternoon. A trailer tire also failed, but all returned to Auburn Heights by 5 P.M. with nothing damaged permanently. There will be no regular work session on Tuesday, May 5, as the Volunteers (and prospective Volunteers) Meeting will take place in the museum. Arrive by 6:30; the Meeting starts at 7:00. We hope to see you then.