

## HOW THE "MAGIC AGE OF STEAM" WAS STARTED . . . .

The Marshall family has lived in this area since 1734, the old home-  
stead being one mile north on Red Clay Creek. In 1889, Israel W. Marshall  
(1850-1911) and his brother, Elwood, bought the mill property just below  
the present "Magic Age of Steam", and in 1897 Israel built "Auburn Heights",  
the large Victorian mansion on the grounds.

T. Clarence Marshall (1885-1969), Israel's younger son, sold Stanley  
Steam Cars in this area from 1910 until 1920. When he was married in 1921,  
he purchased the home from his mother. In 1940, he bought a local Stanley  
he had sold as a dealer in 1913 from John Becker, the original owner. It  
was roughly restored, and by the time World War II broke out there were  
three Stanleys and a Packard "conversion" operated by steam in the infant  
collection. These cars were used during the war when kerosene was readily  
available, but motor fuel was strictly rationed.

By 1946, there were upwards of 20 cars in the Marshall collection.  
The present Museum building was erected in 1947, and soon it was full of  
old cars. Most all the mechanical restorations were done by T. Clarence  
Marshall, though painting and top work was done elsewhere. At an Antique  
Automobile Club of America meet in 1948, twelve cars from the Marshall  
collection were driven to the Meet, and nine won prizes. Many of the  
Stanley cars have been driven on the Glidden Tours, and other tours for  
old automobiles.

In the late 1950's, T. Clarence Marshall turned his attention to the  
building of small scale-model steam locomotives, and the tiny engines that  
pull the trains around the grounds are the result of his efforts. In  
1960, the original "Auburn Valley" railroad line was built, and this little  
railroad was opened to the public by Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc. from  
1961 through 1965. 33,000 passengers were carried during 70 operating  
days in the five years.

Following the death of T. Clarence Marshall in 1969, his only son,  
Thomas C. Marshall, Jr., and Weldin V. Stumpf, presently mechanical direc-  
tor of the Museum, prepared to open the facilities to the general public.  
After the rebuilding of the rail line (about 3/4 of the present railroad  
is relocated trackage from the original), modernizing the museum building,  
and installing a new steam system for heat and power, the "Magic Age of  
Steam" opened for the first time in September, 1971. It was open for  
seven months each year on week-ends only, and during the Christmas-New  
Year holiday. In 1973, daily operation during July and August was inau-  
gurated. (Since the schedule is subject to change, be sure to check the  
latest brochure for current dates.)

In 1971, just two rides were offered: the little train and the  
Stanley Steamer "Mountain Wagon". By 1972, two more had been added, the  
Toonerville Trolley, and the four-basket Ferris Wheel. In August, 1973,  
the paddle-wheel steamboat "Robert E. Lee" began plying the waters of  
the newly constructed pond on the property.



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