

APPENDIX A ~ 20TH CENTURY CARS

Automobiles dotted city and country roads a few years before 1900, though they were usually one-of-a-kind and little more than horse buggies with a motor attached. The early attention-grabbing contraptions were steered with a horizontal stick, not unlike a boat tiller, instead of a steering wheel. This is just one example of how automobile design and function changed over the years.

The evolution of cars left a trail of changes as innovative design gave us new looks to the automobile which the owners and admirers frequently included in their photographs.

This Appendix gives you some general guidelines as to the year an automobile in your photograph was made. If an automobile can be accurately dated, this gives you a *not before* date for the picture. That is, the photograph could have been taken sometime, many years even, after the car was available, but the photo could not have been taken before the car existed.

Every car manufactured is not included in this Appendix, though the most common ones are shown. You can see that styling trends were similar, if not copied, between manufacturers.



Figure A-1. The distinctive rounded front panel and logo on the side indicates this most is probably a 1901-03 Oldsmobile.

1900 - 1909 Automobiles

Cars soon evolved to specific-built machines, not just modified buggies. The steering wheel dominated car guidance by the end of the decade, and the now-famous Model T was introduced in 1908 by Henry Ford. Mass production allowed for inexpensive cars to flood the streets, even if most of them looked alike. Yet, there were subtle differences, and even though the Model T

was produced for nearly 20 years, its look and functions changed over the years without a name change. So, a Model T can have slightly different looks depending on the year.

Most early models were open cockpit or protected with a canvas covered metal frame that could be folded back, similar to those still used on horse-drawn buggies.



Figure A-2. 1903 Model A Ford. First production car by Henry Ford. It was hand built, not on an assembly line.

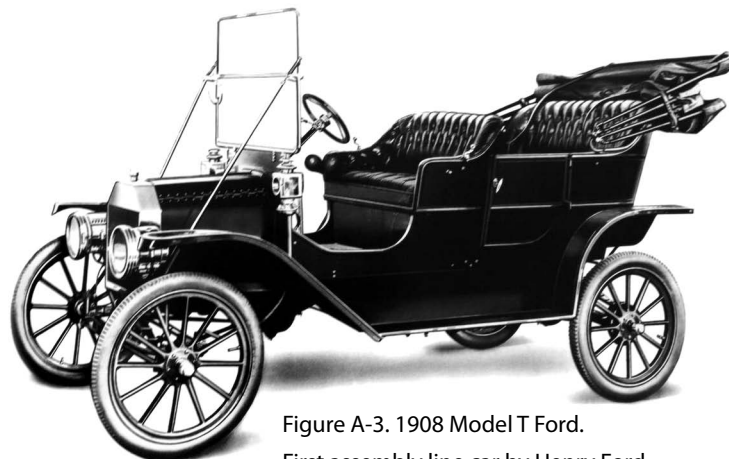


Figure A-3. 1908 Model T Ford.
First assembly line car by Henry Ford.

1910 - 1919 Automobiles

Automobiles in their second full decade of production changed only slightly from their predecessors except for one major enhancement, the enclosed cab. No longer protected only by a canvas top, steel and wood

structures were now available on the most up-to-date models, especially late in the decade. Touring and sport models were still available with fold-down canvas enclosures into the 1920s as well, as the *convertible* style never did die off



Figure A-4. This 1916 snapshot ironically contrasts the old mode of transportation with the method to soon dominate the world. These young girls would see dramatic changes over the course of their lives.

The Ohio license plate lists 1916; this model resembles a 1914-1915 Oldsmobile.

Seven More Pages in This Chapter

Figure A-5. 1910 - 1913 Ford. The models did not change much from year to year. The introduction of new models became as much a marketing ploy as a technical or product necessity.

