CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

Of Carriage Manufacturing, Auto Body Building and Accessories in West Amesbury, South Amesbury, Amesbury and Salisbury, from 1800 to 1955.

Compiled by

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1898

Walker Cge Co. George Walker Sr., for a long time with the Hume Cge Co., and James H. Walker, his son, began manufacturing carriages in 1898, and were located in the

Horseless Carriage Show - First held in Boston in 1898
By Charles Henshaw

The first show of horseless carriages in the United States opened its door in Boston, October 19th 1898. Ten concerns responded to the invitation of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics Association to exhibit during their triennial fair. This number, while not large, was sufficient to convince the public that a motor vehicle industry existed.

There were four full time exhibitors - Pope Mfg. Co., Hartford, Conn. Who used bodies built in Amesbury; Riker Electric Co., Elizabeth, New Jersey; Kenneth A. Skinner, W.S. Agents for DeDion Bouton - J. W. Piper and G.M. Tinker. Making a late appearance were Whitney Motor Wagon Co., Brunswick, Maine - Hayner-Affieown, Kokomo, Indiana; and Eaton Electric Motor Carriage Co., Boston, Mass. Three others were unable to complete their vehicular history.

The motor carriage section of the fair was a center of interest. Hundreds of persons came from far and near to view this portion of the exhibition.

The first motor vehicle races were held November 9th 1898, at the Charles River Track, Cambridge, Mass. Two other carriages, which had been built too late to be entered in the automobile show, participated in this event - The new Stanley Steamer, built in Newton, Mass., body by Currier Cameron Co. of Amesbury and Duryea of Springfield, Mass.

Kenneth A. Skinner maintained a stable on Stanhope St., Boston for renting, sales and repair of motor vehicles, in 1898, and one year later, Mr. Skinner opened one of the first automobile stores at 268 Massachusetts Ave., and a display room in St. Nicholas Rink Building, New York City.

That year, 1898, Skinner celebrated these events by having a parade, starting from his Boston store. There were a dozen motor vehicles of various types in line. The route was down Huntington Ave. to Charles Street, up Beacon St., to Harvard Bridge and return. Thousands of spectators viewed the procession. The public was given its first opportunity to try this 20th century method of locomotion.

Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, some progressive bicycle and motorcycle men entered the automotive field. Tow or three of them gained experience by importing some foreign power-driven carriages. They tested these and American-built motor vehicles on the highways and tracks, in speed and hill-climbing contexts, in cooperation with the factories' experimental departments, located in Waltham, Massachusetts and other eastern cities.

In the beginning, all horseless carriages were produced and sold by "the factory" direct.

United States production in 1900 was 4192 automobiles - 6990 in 1901 - 8986 in 1902 - and 11,235 in 1903..

Some motorcars had neither a top or doors. In vogue at this time were mud scrapers to clean shoes, wicker baskets for luncheon sets, bags for umbrellas. One make of car even had a socket and whip on the back. The whip often being used to keep kids from hopping on the rear deck.

During those years a few pioneers obtained automobile dealership franchises and opened display rooms in downtown Boston, principally on Boylston and Berkeley Sts. And Columbia Ave., which section soon became known as "Automobile Row".

The list of dealers and some makes of cars that were first represented by their group included - A.R. Bange - Franklin; Harry Furdich and F.A. Hinchcliffs - Morton; Alvin T. Fuller - Northern-Packard-Cadillac; C.S. Herishaw - DeDion-Thomas-Dodge; J.M. Lincott - National-Reo; H.P. Underhill - Knox; J.W. Maguire - Pierce-Arrow; and Fred E. Randall - Stevens-Duryea.

During these early motoring days automobile dealers accepted horses and cattle in trade. Police traps were maintained on many highways to catch motorists who exceeded the eight to twelve mile speed limit.

One of these traps was in Hingham. It was operated by police officers dressed like farmers. One would stand in some person's front yard, leaning on a rake. As drivers went by he would wave a handkerchief to another "farmer" cop an eighth of a mile down the road. It was a two-way trap. Their timing was done with stop watches.

Violation of the speed laws were invariably fined and Hingham, in those days, was renamed "Stingham" or "Hang'em" by some drivers. Boston parks were closed to motor vehicles between 10:00 a.m. and 9:00 P.M. to reduce accidents caused by runaway horses

Gasoline was hand-jumped and poured through chamois from a watering can. Yells of "Get a Horse" was a familiar greeting to motorists in trouble, and all drivers had plenty of trouble. Old timers remember running their cars through creeks to cool the tires.

To sell the idea of automobiles, which some considered a rich man's toy- was well as their product, manifest - used adopted slogans, such as Jackson - "No sand too deep, no hill to steep"; Mitchell - "40 goes like 60"; Olds - "Nothing to watch but the road" and Thomas Flyer - "You can't go by one, so go buy one."

The last Annual Carriage Opening and banquet of the Amesbury Carriage manufacturers took place in 1898.

1899

Valuation of carriage output for 1899 was $1,500,000.

Carriage shipments over the Boston & Maine Railroad for 1899 amounted to 8086, and compares to 7621 in 1898 - an increase of 436.

Cameron & Hinds commenced business this year Cedar St. Bodies & Gears
June 11th 1899 a company was formed to manufacture complete automobiles, its capital to be $150.000. Apparently no one was interested to subscribe to the stock, as it does not appear ever to have functioned. Contracts to build bodies proved profitable, however, and gradually displaced carriage building, soon becoming the main business of the town.

1900

Burbank Bros.	Off Water Street	Carriages
H.P. Wells	Chestnut Street	Carriages

In the year 1900 only 4192 automobiles were manufactured in the United States.

In 1900 the carriage business, being on the decline, the Briggs Carriage Co. changed over to building automobile bodies.

Carriage shipments over the Boston & Maine Railroad for February show a decided gain, the total being 406 as compared to 294 in 1889.

For the corresponding months in previous years the shipments were

1895 - 380	1897 - 263	1899 - 294
1896 - 586	1898 - 331	1900 - 406

1901

In May 1901 the Briggs Carriage Co. was building automobile bodies for the Locomobile Co.

Attempts were made this year to build a complete automobile in Amesbury, making the engine and all the other parts.

The first one being made and exhibited on August 23rd 1901 but Arthur England.

In 1901 the machines put on the market by Charles F. Pettingill were being sold all over the United States and in many foreign countries.

1902

Amesbury manufactures reported good business at the New York Automobile Show.

1902 was concerned with another strike.

That year a Union was formed among the carriage workers, and there began to be talk of possible trouble.

April 11th the carriage manufacturers formed an organization also, and December 24th signed an agreement not to recognize any union.

May 17th Miller Bros. Turned out a complete automobile which they had constructed.

The honor of being the first Amesbury resident to own an automobile seems to rest on Dr. Herman Cooper who purchased one in the Spring of 1902. In September he drove it one hundred and two miles in eight hours, which was considered a remarkable record. His total mileage then was twenty-seven hundred miles.

An attempt to build complete automobiles in Amesbury was started this year by Boston & Amesbury Mfg. Co. consisting of John Miller Sr., Robert Patten, G. W. Bryant and Jeremiah J. Reardon all of Amesbury, with a Mr. Seymour of Boston and they were located in the brick factory on Oak Street. They build a few cars but soon disbanded.

Essex Foundry Co.: John and Wm. Miller proprietors, started business about 1902 on Oakland Street, in the former Essex Leather Co. Building.

They manufactured a line of brass fittings for automobiles, consisting of door locks, door handles, and other fittings for same.

The company was later taken over by Wm. E. Biddle Sr. and George W. Bryant, and the business was moved to Water Street, in one of the Biddle & Smart Co. buildings, at which time the name was changed to Amesbury Brass & Foundry Co.

Robert H. Hills, salesman, later took over Mr. Bryant's share in the business, and same was continued until 1930 when it was discontinued.

Climax Ignition Co., consisting of John Miller Sr., Henry Miller and Cullen B. Small manufactured sparkplugs for automobiles in the Oak Street mill.

Miller Brothers, owing to their increasing business, have been obliged to secure new quarters, and have just leased the first, second and top floor of the building recently occupied by C.D. Pecker & Co. shoe manufacturers, located off Water Street near the railroad, formerly used by A. N. Parry & Co. carriage manufacturers.

1903

Gray & Davis needing more room for their automobile lamp business, and being unable to find a suitable building, purchased a lot of land on Oakland Street, near the railroad, and erected a brick factory 150 ft. long by 40 ft. wide, used for general work.

J. Nelson Lane succeeded to the carriage business of his brother Edward S. Lane, at the corner of Elm and Oak Streets.

Moore & Lunt commenced business this year. Bodies & Gears

1904

Klein Cge Co.	Clark Street	Carriages
David D. Ellis	Friend Street	Auto Repairing
Jeremiah J. Reardon	Clark Street	Auto Tops
Robert G.. Ellis	Friend Street	Auto Repairing

Briggs Car Co. and the wheel department of the Briggs Carriage Co. moved to High Point, North Carolina, where they carried on business for a number of years.

Gray & Davis erected a three-story brick building 115 ft. long by 50 ft. wide, followed by another two story brick 100 x 50 ft. and a one story wooden 40 x 75 ft.

1905

Amesbury Top Co.	Cedar Street	Automobile Tops
Pettingill Machine Co.	Elm Street	Machine Shop

October 15th 1905: Promise of a new and important industry for the town, is the building of some large motor cars by S.R. Bailey & Co. for the Essex Motor Co. of Boston.

November 21st: Another fully equipped automobile was shipped from the factory of the Biddle & Smart Co. yesterday.

1907

Mr. Wm. E. Biddle Sr. died December 23rd 1907 and as the other member of the firm had also passed away, the management fell upon Wm. E. Biddle Jr., who was made President and Treasurer, and developed wonderful business sagacity, occupying a larger plant than his father's company did and doing a much larger business.

While other manufacturers were content with gas and oil for automobile lamps, Gray & Davis were taking big strides forward: they saw "the handwriting on the wall" and turned their attention to developing the first practical electric lighting equipment, that made possible the worldwide electric movement of today.

When motorists were still battling with the inconvenience of the dangerous "Engine Crank, the Gray & Davis Co. developed and manufactured the famous Gray & David "Electric Starter"

The plant had now grown to be a large factory, but not large enough to meet the demands for their products.

1908

August 9th: Biddle & Smart Co. shipped four metal automobile bodies to Buffalo, New York last night on the American Express Special.

January 22nd: Last night's freight shows that business is picking up in Amesbury.

July 24th: In spite of the present business depression, one at least of Amesbury's firms are busy with an abundance of orders. This is the Biddle & Smart Co., builders of automobile bodies.

1909

Hollander & Morrill took over the carriage business of Lambert Hollander on Chestnut St. and commenced manufacturing automobile bodies.

Keene Peaslee Co., Frederick B. Keene and Bartlett Peaslee commenced manufacturing paints in Water Street.

Robert H. Hills was promoted to Vice-President of the Biddle & Smart Co. in charge of sales.

The Sir. Bailey & Co. have turned their attention to building an electric run automobile called the Bailey Electric Victoria Phaeton, in conjunction with Thomas A. Edison, who had just brought out an electric storage battery for that purpose; and their body was chosen from a number, built by other manufacturers, as the most suitable for their use.

1910

As late as 1910 high-wheel, chain-driven automobiles were being built here.

The manufacturers of automobile bodies and carriages give employment to over two thousand people at the present time and are the principal industries in Amesbury.

As builders of Limousines, Landaulet and Taxicab bodies, that stand the wear and tear and racking of city pavements, Hollander & Morrill are meeting with great success. "This firm builds nothing but what is known to the trade as heavy work That they are delivering the goods in noted by their increased orders."

An enviable reputation is being won by the Pettingill Machine Co. with their machines for the making of metal automobile bodies.

Practically every automobile concern in the country use one or more, and the company recently made a large shipment across the water.

At this time the Biddle & Smart Co. had grown to be the largest builders of automobile bodies in the world and still continued to grow. "Bodies Before Fisher".

In 1910 The Willy's Overland Co. purchased the Castle Lamp Co. and continued same in Amesbury, until 1911 when they moved the plant to someplace in Michigan.

1911

Hodge & Graves	Oak Street	Automobile Auxiliary Seats
Frederick B. Keene	Friend St.	Hardware and Paints

If you take the trouble to notice the name on a dozen automobile lamps, you will find that the majority are Amesbury made by Gray & Davis, who are recognized as leaders in that line and have sold their entire output for 1911.

January 1st, 1911. The Walker Wells Co. was organized with George Walker Sr., James H. Walker, Harlan P. Wells and Henry Miller as members of the firm, succeeding the Amesbury branch of the Walker Carriage Co.

September 11th, 1911. The Walker Wells Co. purchased the Folger & Drummond carriage factory located on the line of the Boston & Maine Railroad, near the depot. A five-story, brick building175 x 55 ft. with a three-story ell 65 x 45 ft.

1912

The Pettingill Machine Co. moved into the three-story, brick building formerly used by J.S. Poyen & Co., at the corner of Elm and Clark Streets, to make room for their expanding business.

1913

January 1st, 1913 the Walker Wells Co. Inc. was formed with the following officers: Harlan P. Wells, President; George Walker Sr., Vice President; James H. Walker, Treasurer; and Henry Miller, Secretary.

Also in 1913 they were one of the largest manufacturers of closed automobile bodies in New England.

They were the producers of large quantities of Roadsters and Touring car bodies, practically all made of aluminum and of the highest quality.

In 1913 there were ten establishments devoted to the manufacture of automobile bodies in Amesbury, where output is valued at several million dollars, as follows:

Biddle & Smart Co.	Hollander & Morrill
Briggs Carriage Co.	J. N. Leitch & Co.
Clark Carriage Co.	Miller Bros. Inc.
Currier Cameron Co.	Shields Cge. Co.
Hassett & Rogin Co.	Walker Wells Co.

In 1913 S. R. Bailey & Co. were listed as an electric automobile factory.

The following names firms, still in business as carriage manufacturers, automobile and carriage body buildings, accessories etc. were as follows:

Amesbury Brass & Foundry Co.	Automobile	Body Fittings
A. N. Parry & Co.	"	& Cge. Accessories
Arrow Auto Store	"	" " "
Amesbury Top Co.	"	Tops
Jeremiah J. Reardon	"	"
Gray & Davis	"	Lamps
Amesbury Lamp & Plating Co.	"	& Cge. Lamps
Hodge & Graves Co.	"	Auxiliary Seats
Franklin R. Whitcher	"	& Cge. Covers
Biddle & Smart Co.	"	& Cge. Bodies
Currier & Cameron Co.	"	& Cge. Bodies
James N. Leitch & Co.	"	& Cge. Bodies
Hassett Rogers & Co.	"	& Cge. Bodies
Briggs Cge. Co.	"	& Cge. Bodies

Miller Bros. Inc.	Automobile & Cge. Bodies
Hollander & Morrill	" Bodies
Shields Cge. Co.	" "
Clark Cge. Co.	" "
Walker Wells Co.	" "
John Lane	Carriage Bodies
Charles C. Brown	" "
Thomas W. Lane	Carriage Manufacturer
Bird & Schofield	" "
Wm. H. Rand	" "
Crowther & Coombs	Blacksmiths
Edward M. LeGive	"
Jules D. Roy	"
Irving Seavey	"
Thomas Tannian	"
Frank S. Merrill	Carriage Wheels
S.R. Bailey & Co.	Electric Automobiles
Amesbury Hinge Co.	Automobile Body Hinges
A. W. Rogers	Harness Manufacturer
Amesbury Bent Glass Co.	Glass Grinders
Thomas D. Nelson Paint Co.	Paints and Colors
Frederick B. Keene	" "
Amesbury Reed & Rattan Co.	Reed and Rattan Work
Standard Thermometer Co.	Speedometers
Pettingill Machine Co.	Wood & Metal Machinery
Baker Foundry & Machine co.	" " "
Moore & Lunt Co.	Carriage Gear & Shaft Makers

Hassett Rogers & Co. successors to Howarth Rogers & Co. automobile body building, consisted of John Hassett and James Rogers, who continued the business until 1915.

In 1913 five large factories in other localities outside of Amesbury, with an enormous service organization, were engaged in producing Gray & Davis Electric Starters, Lighting Dynames and Electric Lamps, that stood out preeminently above all other equipment for automobiles, giving the highly efficient service that quality equipment should give and making their products the standard of the world.

The local factory was the first in the world to be erected for the exclusive manufacture of automobile lamps: It was also the best equipped with the most modern machinery and advanced methods were used.

1914

The Biddle & Smart Co. have booked orders for two hundred and fifty touring car bodies from one concern, with prospects of many other orders, and it is one of the most encouraging items of local news.

1915

Thomas Miller	Friend Street	Auto Repairing
Bela Body Co.	Elm Street	Automobile Bodies
Wentworth Brown Co.	Cedar Street	Auto Truck Bodies

In 1915 the Bela Body Co. was formed with Albert G. Bela and Wm. Taylor, who was interested in the Pettengill Machine Co. and carried on the automobile body business in the same building, at the corner of Elm and Clark Streets, formerly occupied by John S. Payen & Co.

Wentworth Brown & Co. were located on Cedar Street in 1915, building light automobile trucks, employing thirty-five people, who were busy fitting new bodies to auto chassis for light delivery work.

1916

The G. W. J. Murphy Co., consisting of G.W.J. Murphy and Edward Cummings, came to Amesbury from Merrimac January 1916 and started manufacturing curtain fasteners for use on automobile tops, and were located in the former Hume Cge. Co. buildings on Carriage Ave., now Oakland Street.

In this factory nine-nine percent of all fasteners used on automobile tops were products during the time the company operated in Amesbury. They employed one hundred and twenty-five workers and did a very successful business here until 1931, when they moved to Boston, where they are still operating under the name of The Carr Fastener Co.

The Biddle & Smart Co. now have seven hundred and fifty persons in their employ.

March 29th the Biddle & Smart Co. shipped fifteen limousine bodies, which was considered a record. They have also fitted up spacious offices in the Bailey building now owned by them and will shortly move into their new quarters.

This year the Bela Body Co.'s automobile body plant was moved to Framingham, Mass., and R.H. Long, a manufacturer of that town was taken into partnership, where they continued the business until 1918, when Bela and Taylor sold their share of the business to Mr. Long, and returned to Amesbury, starting again in the auto body business.

Soon after Mr. Bela purchased Mr. Taylor's interest in the company, also his share of the Pettengill Machine Co. , thereby becoming owner of both firms, and continued operation of same until his death which occurred May 28th, 1927.

1917

The Amesbury Body Co. was organized this year and consisted of James H. Walker, Wm. Selley and Henry Miller, who commenced building automobile bodies in the former J.H. Clark & Co. building on Oakland Street, consisting of a three-story brick factory 150 ft. long by 60 ft. wide, with a three-story ell 165 ft. long by 65 wide. They also used the former Hollander & Morrill factory corner of Chestnut and Oakland Streets, which was a three-story brick building 115 ft. long by 50 Ft. wide with basement.

The Biddle & Smart Co. have commenced work on the 1918 model of the Hudson Companies auto bodies.

Fully one hundred people went out on the 7:40 train this morning, bound for the automobile show in Boston.

Dudley J. Marston advertised automobile trade at thirty-eight dollars each.

1918

Harold S. Toggerson	Clark Street	Auto Tops
Unit Mfg. Co.	Cedar Street	Auto & Truck Bodies
Hollander & Morrill	Moved to High St.	Automobile Bodies

The Gray & Davis munitions factory is working to its capacity and it is reported they are to start regular night shifts.

August 24th 1918, in spite of the present business depression, one at least of Amesbury's firms are busy with an abundance of orders: This firm is the Biddle & Smart Co., builders of automobile bodies.

In 1918 Mr. Harlan P. Wells retired from the Talker Wells Co. and it was merged with the Walker Body Co. using the Walker Body Co. name.

Beside their brick factory near the railroad, the Walker Wells Co. Inc., were occupying in 1918 a three and one-half story wooden building 200 ft. long by 25 wide. A one story wooden building with basement 100 ft. by 45 ft. in the rear of this factory, also a five-story wooden factory 140 ft. x 50 ft., across the track. This group was known as Plant #1 with a total of 113,900 square feet of floor space.

Plant #2 was located on Oak Street and consisted of a three-story wooden building 40 x 80 ft. with basement, and three-story brick factory 200 ft. by 50 ft., a one-story wooden building 165 ft. by 75 ft., a one-story brick dry kiln 65 x 35 ft. and a three-story wooden building 125 by75 ft. for storing lumber and 60 x 25 ft. for hammering, making a total of 82,675 sq. ft. floor space.

The Walker Wells Co. also carried on an extensive business making auto door locks, flywheels, guards, engine guards, fenders and housings, together with other metal accessories, used in connection with the manufacture of automobiles. This work was done at Plant #2.

In 1919 the Bryant Body Co. purchased the F.S. Merrill wheel factory on Cedar Street, a two-story brick building 220 ft. long by 65 ft. wide, and moved their auto body business from #4 Mill on Water Street.

May 20th 1919 the Biddle & Smart Co. will have as a feature in the Red Cross parade next Tuesday evening, one of the automobile bodies they are making for General Pershing's use in France.

1920

February 29th 1920, following a very heavy snowstorm which blocked all traffic, several hundred volunteers turned out with shovels to clear the Boston & Maine freight yard and the branch line to Salisbury, so that freight might move, thus ending a freight embargo, which had caused the Biddle & Smart Co. to shut down.

Col. E. Wm. Bailey, son of the founder of S.R. Bailey & Co. and his son Samuel R. Bailey 2nd in 1920 opened an experimental shop in a portion of the first floor of #8 Mill located at #31 to #43 Main Street, corner of Friend Street, under the name Bailey Mfg. Co. and devised the first satisfactory channel for glass used in automobile windows and the machinery for its manufacture.

The rolling of spring metal into shape suitable for use as a run for glass had not been done previous to this time. In fact rollers of metal had expressed the opinion that it could not be done, however by patience and determination the two Bailey's, father and son, kept at the task until it was finally accomplished.

F. P. Lyons came from Manchester, NH this year and started building "Folding Trailers" For tourist use under the name F.P. Lyons, Inc., and was located on Clark Street. These were the forerunner of the present automobile trailers, but not proving practical, the company remained in business only a short time.

1921

The Gray & Davis Co. moved to Boston in 1921, later being absorbed by the Borsch Mfg. Co. They occupied a large brick building on the Charles River Drive and the executive offices were located at #58 Landsdown Street, Boston, Mass.

1922

In 1922 business fell off greatly, but began to pick up at the end of the year.

Amesbury Seat Mfg. Co. moved toYpserlanti, Michigan.

The Merrimac Valley Power & Building Co's #2 Mill on High Street afforded the Hollander & Morrill Co. the opportunity to construct and mount automobile bodies on their chasses, which were sent to Amesbury the their builders. This was done on order of a large western automobile manufacture.

The quiet, although steady operation of this firm, was one of the mainstays of the auto body industry here during the years.

It was one of the companies which caused the reputations of Amesbury's high grade of craftsmanship to spread through the nation, and earned a stamp of appreciative approval by many automobile manufacturers.

1923

Business was much better in 1923: There were two hundred and seventy-five transfers of real estate and the total of payroll for the year was $4,500,000.

This year the Biddle & Smart Co. purchased the "Colchester Mill" property located at #77 and #79 Elm Street, consisting of two large brick buildings, and the auto body business of the Currier Cameron Co., who had carried on a very successful business for thirty-six years, to take care of their increasing business

1924

Was a wonderful year for "Hudsons", which was important for Amesbury, as Biddle & Smart Co. were building Hudson automobile bodies, and they were one of their largest customers.

The local factories were all busy.

1925

Biddle & Smart Co. shipped nine carloads of automobile bodies, Saturday March 19th.

Thomas W. Lane: Carriage manufacturer was the last one remaining in carriage business in Amesbury, he having continued to build and sell carriages, also doing repair work in the rear of 121 Elm Street in a building he originally used as a refractory.

He build a Concord Buggy to order as late as 1924? Or 28, and did "repair" work for several years later.

June 2nd 1925: The shifting engine used in the Boston & Railroad freight yard has been put back in operation again, and is kept very busy. Yesterday, there were ninety-seven freight cars in the yard. The largest number ever handled in one day being one hundred and fourteen.

In 1925 the Biddle & Smart Co. shipped the first of the Rolls Royce Co.'s order of auto bodies to Springfield, Mass.

June 18th 1925 the Biddle & Smart Co. purchased the Hollander & Morrill body plant in #2 Mill, located in the upper Millyard on High Street, a five-story brick building two hundred by fifty feet wide.

They also purchased at the same time, the Thomas W. Lane factory on Chestnut Street, a three-story wooden building eighty by forty-five ft., with a wing sixty-three by fort-five feet, the same height, surmounted by a tower sixteen by eighteen feet, sixty feet high.

In 1925 David C. Bailey was the second son to become associated with his father and brother in the Bailey Mfg. Co., as plant engineer.

Also this year, needing more room, the company moved from #8 Mill on Main Street, to #14 Mill on High Street, using a portion of the top floor, and in three years they were occupying the whole building.

At this time the Bailey flexible channel, with a floating head, was produced, which could be formed into any number of desired bends, by anyone on the production line.

This channel was eagerly seized by the automobile trade, as it provided for a much better product and could be used with a greater degree of efficiency.

David C. Bailey was the creator of this new type of channel.

1926

After the war Biddle & Smart Co.'s automobile body building steadily expanded, and in time they took over most of the available factory space in town.

March 6th 1926 they bought the Witham body factory, former the N.H. Folger Carriage building, adjoining their own property between Back River and the Boston & Maine Railroad tracks.

March 9th 1926 the Biddle & Smart Co. commenced nigh production, working thru eight-hour shifts with a total of forty-seven hundred and thirty-six being employed, with a payroll of $159,000 for one week, which was the largest number pf persons ever employed by any local company. Their largest day's production was on March 15th 1928, when they guilt 410 automobile bodies, which necessitated the cutting of seven carloads of hardwood lumber, and gave employment to 414 men in the woodworking mill.

This year 1926 was a good year for the town also. The Biddle & Smart Co. produced more than 40,000 automobile bodies; the Walker factories from 8,000 to 10,000.

Beside the 4736 employees, Walker Body Co. was employing 1500, and the Merrimac Hat Co. 900.

A long line of electric cars brought employees from Newburyport, Salisbury, Merrimac, Haverhill, and many by auto's from Newton, So. Hampton, Portsmouth, even as far away as Nashua.

The Boston & Maine early trains were packed, and the automobile traffic into town, before and at seven O'clock in the morning, was so heavy that traffic officers had to be on duty.

When the night shifts were operating, Market Square at midnight was as busy as at noon. All the lunch rooms were running full tilt.

July 29th 1926, Amesbury and all the surrounding towns were greatly excited by a payroll robbery on the mid-morning train from Newburyport, soon after leaving the Salisbury station, by two armed men who had been riding as passengers, drove the train's men out of the baggage car, seized a mail sack containing money, and jumped from the moving train, as it was passing Bartlett Street in Salisbury. The mail pound contained $65,000 in currency intended for the Powow River National Bank in Amesbury.

January 28th 1927 three men were arrested, all former employees of the Biddle & Smart Co., two being taken in Nashua, N.H. and one in Texas. March 1st 1927, they were sentenced to twenty-five years each at Atlanta, Georgia.

Very little of the money was ever found.

September 1926 the Biddle & Smart Co. purchased the two-story brick factory building 220 ft. long by 65 ft. wide and a one and a half story wooden building, 40 x 50 ft. on Cedar Street, occupied by the Bryant Body Co.

The Briggs Cge. Co. closed out their automobile body business in 1926.

A statement published in 1926 represented that the Walker Wells Co. manufactured that year eight to ten thousand automobile bodies, which would bring the total for that year about the same as built in 1925. They employed about fifteen hundred men and women and built bodies form some twenty automobile manufacturers, among them Frainkline and Holmes.

The Biddle & Smart Co. installed the conveyor system this year, which speeded up production very naturally.

1927

Albert G. Bela, proprietor of the Bela Body Co. and the Pettengill Machine Co., die May 23rd 1927.

1929

In 1929 the largest item of construction for the year was an addition of one hundred feet to the three hundred feet, three-story wooden factory building, located on Oak Street, of the Walker Body Co.'s Plant #2.

1930

1930 was a depression year. The Biddle & Smart Co., in operation ;since 1870 and occupying factory space covering acres of land with floor space of 560,160 sq. ft. went out of business and closed it doors, never to reopen. This was caused by the different automobile manufacturers, who had purchased "Bodies before Fisher" in Amesbury, either started building their own bodies, or bought them from companies operating near their factories, such as the Fisher Body Co., Briggs Body Co. and others, thereby saving the freight charges.

1931

The G.W.J. Murphy Co., who came from Merrimac in 1916, and dominated manufacturing curtain fasteners for auto tops, continued until 1931 when the business was moved to Boston, Mass. And is still operating in 1955 under the name of The Carr Fastener Co.

The Walker Body Co. continued the auto body business until 1931, when same was closed out.

1932

Amesbury Metal Products Co., manufacturers of automobile lamps, fluorescent lighting, etc.

In 1932, with the depression at its worst, John J. O'Brien of Amesbury, formerly with the Walker Wells Co., took over the Aga Lamp Co., successors to Gray & Davis, business and saved it for Amesbury.

With much confidence, Mr. O'Brien, who had long and successfully been associated with the automobile business in Amesbury, diligently applied himself to the establishment of the business. In consequence of his efforts, there was constant expansion and steady employment for many Amesbury people, up to the present time (1955). Another example of the old adage "that local industries are in surer and safer hands, when directed by the interest and devotion of native sons".

The factory, the former Gray & Davis lamp factory, was equipped to undertake practically all types of metal fabrication and finishing, from the time the metal is delivered at its own railroad siding, until it is shipped out as finished product. Due to the diversifications of the various lines, they have steadily increased their business from year to year and in 1955 are still in full operation.

1933

Doman Marks Co. Motor Engines

Founded November 1933 by Karl T. Doman, Edward S. Marks, formerly Franklin Motor Co. engineers, and James H. Walker, were located in Plant #4 of the Walker Body Co. on Oakland Street.

Here they created a heavy-duty, air-cooled engine suitable for many transportation and general commercial uses. Many of these engines were shipped to foreign countries.

1936

Working space of the Bailey Co. Inc. was again at a premium, and the mill building adjacent to #4 Mill was taken over and later purchased by them. At this time, while a major part of their production was absorbed by the automobile trade, the company also manufactured used metal shapers, not strictly associated with the motor industry.

Samples of this particular product of the Bailey plant, approved in railway cars, battleships and air-conditioned units, also in stove and heating accessories, radiators, refrigerators, vending machines, and in many architectural applications. At this time the company normally employed one hundred workers, but an additional hundred were added at the peak of their production schedule.

March 28th 1936, passenger service was suspended on the Amesbury branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad.

Since the opening of the rail one hundred years before, there had been continued passenger service; but it had become so unprofitable that its further continuance was impossible.

1938

In 1938 the following named concerns were still in business:

A. N. Parry & Co.	Oakland St.	Automobile Supplies
The Bailey Co. Inc.	Water St.	Auto Window Channels
Pettengill Machine Co.	Elm St.	Power Machines etc.
Elmer B. Sands	Elm St.	Blacksmith
August Theriault		Blacksmith
Amesbury Bent Glass Co.	Oakland St.	Glass Products
Amesbury Metal Prod. Co.	Oakland St.	Auto Lamps
Harold Toggerson	Pearl St.	Auto Tops Etc.
Wm. S. Gillespie		Sheet Metal Worker
Louis Bartley	Old Country Road Off Water St.	Sheet Metal Worker
Amesbury Auto Body & Repair Co.		Sheet Metal Worker
Barcelo Auto Body & Fender Repairs Co.	Monroe St.	Sheet Metal Worker