

# 1919 MAXWELL TOURING

1919 Maxwell Touring, Model 25, All Weather Touring Sedan, 5-passenger

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$1,005.00

Engine, etc.: 4 cyl.; 3-speed, 21.03 hp; 108 inch wheelbase

Maxwell Car Company, 1905 – 1925; 1913 – 1925, Detroit, Michigan.

In 1903 Jonathan Dixon Maxwell and Benjamin Briscoe designed, built and tested a little car which ran so well that they decided to put it into production. Both men were pioneers in the automotive business.

Back in 1894, Maxwell had joined the Apperson brothers in helping Elwood Haynes build the first Haynes auto buggy which evolved into a famous car.

By 1904 Maxwell and Briscoe incorporated their firm and produced their first two models, two-cylinder cars, one with 8 hp and the other with 15 hp. Both engines had a bore and stroke of equal dimensions in order to limit piston speed – a progressive idea for those days and one that engineers only years later would realize influenced engine life and efficiency. The cylinders of the smaller engine were four inches by four and in the larger engine, five by five.

The Maxwell was the first popular, quantity produced car to use shaft drive instead of the usual chains.

The first four-cylinder Maxwell was produced in 1907 and cost \$1,500. By 1909, more than 9,000 Maxwell cars had been sold. The first six-cylinder Maxwell appeared in 1913 and cost \$2,350. The firm sold its Tarrytown, NY plant and moved to Detroit that year also.

For the next two years, it achieved success in racing and in 1914; Barney Oldfield drove a Maxwell to second place in a 301-mile non-stop race in Corona, CA.

One of Maxwell's strongest selling points was its economy. One owner wrote: "Total operating expenses on my Maxwell touring car for a period of 8,000 miles, including gas, oil, repairs, an extra tire and an occasional wash have been but \$73.84. This is less than a quarter of a cent per mile per passenger."

Due to the recession which followed World War I, Maxwell became over extended and deeply in debt. Maxwell dealers had 17,000 unsold Maxwells in 1920 and were hopelessly overstocked.

The following year, a beefed-up version of the Maxwell engine that developed 32 hp was developed and introduced as a new model, advertised as the "Good Maxwell".

In 1923 Walter Percy Chrysler arrived. He took over Maxwell with definite ideas in mind.

By 1924 Chrysler had become president of the Maxwell-Chalmers organization. He introduced his new Chrysler in January, 1924. His idea was to build a truly modern car that would bear his name and not admit to any compromise in quality.

Maxwell lingered through 1925 when Chrysler formed his own company – Chrysler Corporation. The Maxwell line was phased out and company assets were absorbed by Chrysler.

Eclipsed, outsold and no longer economically feasible the veteran of the industry faded from public view.

Source: Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 -1942. Beverly Rae Kimes, et al. 3rd ed. Krause Publications, 1996.

<http://www.americanautohistory.com/Marques/Marque731.htm> (Maxwell history, 1916 – 1925)

<http://www.americanautohistory.com/Marques/Marque730.htm> (Maxwell history, 1903 – 1916)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell\\_automobile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell_automobile)

See

also: [http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Maxwell/1919\\_Maxwell/1919\\_Maxwell\\_Catalog/dirindex.html](http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Maxwell/1919_Maxwell/1919_Maxwell_Catalog/dirindex.html) (Original 1919 brochure; pdf)