

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, November 1, 2010

Roxbury, New York, 1957: A third cousin of mine, Robert M. Way (1921–1999), whose father, Frank T. Way (1878–1942), had bought a Stanley from my father when he was a dealer, wanted one because his father had owned one before he was born. About 1954, my father sold Bob Way a 1919 Model 735, four-passenger touring car, for \$750. The Ways, father and son, were wholesale rose growers in Kennett Square. Bob was a talented mechanic and had no trouble in retubing a boiler for his new toy. Getting his Stanley on the road within a year, he, his wife, Kay, and their four children began to attend steam car tours, driving their Model 735 over the road to the tour's location.

My very good friends in the Boston area, Frank and Weezie Gardner (they were mentioned in the *Weekly News* of October 11, 2010), enjoyed the Ways, and the feeling was mutual. Since we lived nearly 400 miles apart, the opportunity to tour together was infrequent. In June 1957, however, a small hotel in Roxbury, New York, on the west side of the Catskills, was chosen as a central point where we could meet and share good times. The hotel's owner and operator, Tom Porter, was a member of the Veteran Motor Car Club of America and had inherited some very interesting high-end cars.

The Way children did not go, but Bob and Kay in their Stanley and I, along with my passenger, Albert Harvey, in my father's Model 76, left home after lunch on June 20, traveled the new Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, stayed near Scranton that night, and arrived at Roxbury the next afternoon. Weezie Gardner was seven months pregnant, so Frank invited a very interesting friend, Frank E. H. Johnson of the Boston area, to accompany him, and they drove in Frank's 1912 Stanley Model 74 the 250+ miles to Roxbury, also in parts of two days, arriving when we did. Frank Johnson was a native of the British Isles and had witnessed the death of Charles Rolls (of Rolls Royce fame) while the latter was stunt flying at a Brighton fair in 1910. Having emigrated to the United States the following year, Johnson had retired about 1955 as head of the service department at Boston's largest Buick agency. At Roxbury, we were joined by Curtis L. Blake (ca. 1918–) and his father, Herb, both antique car collectors. Curt and his brother Presley founded the Friendly Ice Cream Company in 1935 with a \$1,500 loan from their father. For the first time, we learned about their expanding chain of ice cream stores and sandwich shops all over the Northeast. Anyone ever hear of them?

Tom Porter had been the head chauffeur for a Mrs. Shephard, daughter of the famous or infamous Jay Gould. The late Mrs. Shephard's estate was just outside Roxbury, and before she died, she had bought the small frame hotel on a green in the center of town for her favorite employee. Along with other cars, she left him an English Lanchester and a 1937 Model K Lincoln seven-passenger touring car. The Lincoln was in need of restoration, but it was still running, and I had a ride in it. When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (the Queen mother) visited the United States and Canada in the summer of 1939, the government asked the Ford Motor Company to provide a parade car for the Royal couple. Ford was making nothing suitable in 1939, as the big 12-cylinder Model Ks had been discontinued in 1937. The company contacted Mrs. Shephard, asking if they could borrow her big touring car. In return, they offered to completely restore it, mechanically and cosmetically. She agreed, and the car was used as intended.

The Gardner car and the Marshall car left Roxbury together and traveled to Lenox, Massachusetts, where we stayed at Gardner's guest house (no relation to Frank). The two Franks left for Boston, and the Ways, Albert Harvey, and I spent the next night at the old Interlaken Inn at Lakeville, Connecticut, after having lunch at our very first Friendly's Restaurant at Lee, Massachusetts. From Lakeville, we made it home in a day without incident.