

Humkey Bought First Auto In Marion Co.

"He Felt Like A King Driving To Louisville At 12 Miles Per Hour"

By Joyce G. Humkey - 2004

Heinrich August Humke was born in Detmold, Lipps, Germany, on April 6, 1849. He migrated to America as a young man. On August 29, 1871, he married Melissa Jane Vowels of Lebanon, Marion County, Kentucky. At sometime between birth and his marriage, he changed his name to Henry and added "Y" to Humke, so that his name became Henry Humkey. He and Melissa resided in Lebanon during their married life. By trade Mr. Humkey was a carriagemaker (as opposed to wagons or buggies).

In the late 1970s a letter came to the newspaper in Lebanon, Kentucky, which was delivered to a family member. A young man, who was living in Huntsville, Alabama, told of driving by a farm in Tennessee and seeing an old carriage decorating the front lawn. He talked to the lady of the house and managed to buy the carriage from her. He took it home and began refurbishing it. When he cleaned away some of the grime and paint he found a brass marker that said "Humkey Carriage Works, Lebanon, Kentucky." The young man had completed repairs on the carriage and had gotten split hide harness from the Amish in Tennessee. He was driving the carriage in a street parade for July 4th and asked that any of the Humkey family who wished to do so, come and ride with him. Unfortunately, we were unable to join him.

Mr. Henry Humkey had eight children (two deceased at birth): Joseph Louis, Walter Bernard, Matthew Karl, Francis Henry, William Aloysius, and Marie Johanna.

William Aloysius married Harriet Nuel Doody in 1910. He had worked as coal-boy for the Cumberland Telephone Company. This job consisted of carrying coal from a pile by the buckets, to the office on the second floor or the news office. He later owned and operated a poolroom on the second floor of the *Falcon* newspaper building. He then worked for a time at Benedette's Confectionary in Lebanon. Then, he and his brother, Joseph, operated Humkey's Confectionery on Main Street in Lebanon; which is now a bank building. At the time John (son of William Aloysius and grandson of Heinrich) and I married in 1961 the name Humkey's was still spelled out in marble in front of the store, which was then a drugstore with

a soda fountain. On court days they offered an all-you-can-eat meal of fish, fried potatoes, coleslaw, cornbread, and coffee for 25¢. They also had homemade pies from Miss Annie (Louis' wife) in the basement. There was a large wooden tub with a five-gallon metal insert, which was used to make homemade ice cream. In 1961 the ice cream apparatus was still in the basement, but not in use.

Sometime just prior to his marriage in 1910 Henry Humkey bought the first automobile in Marion County. It was a Maxwell, and had carbide lights. In order to have lights at night it was necessary to stop the car, get out, and light the carbide lamps in front. Mr. Humkey said nightlights were not

often used, since vision was not too good, and roads were very poor. He said he felt like a king going along to Louisville at 12 miles per hour. "Not enough power to pull the hat off your head" was his expression.

He also related an experience at High Grove near Bardstown, when the cloth top blew off and disappeared over a bluff. After searching for an hour it was considered a loss, and they proceeded on to Louisville.

Mr. Humkey wore his chauffeur's uniform, complete with cap, when he hired the car out for rides around town for weddings, etc. Gasoline was brought



Henry Humkey bought the first automobile in Marion County, a Maxwell, ca. 1910. He wore his chauffeur's uniform when he hired the car out for rides around town for weddings, etc.

in by railroad car in 50-gallon drums.

In his early 40s Mr. Humkey was very ill. His appendix had ruptured and the doctor in Lebanon was unwilling to operate. Dr. Irving Abell, a world-renowned surgeon from Louisville, came to Lebanon by train. Bringing his nurse with him he operated in a makeshift operating area, using the kitchen in the home and the kitchen table for this. Mr. Humkey's appendix had indeed ruptured. Dr. Abell stayed in Lebanon for a week, and the nurse remained there for three more weeks. Mr. Humkey eventually regained his health, returned to work, and lived to the age of 89.

After the death of his father-in-law Mr. Humkey purchased M. Doody Coal Company and sold the confectionery to a group of Lebanon men. He continued working for the coal company until his retirement when he was in his late 70s.

Joyce G. Humkey, 904 Terry Street, Columbia, KY 42728, shares this article with our readers.

Jan 29 1936
Humkey-Lankford.

The wedding of Miss Anna Louise Humkey and James Lankford, a well known young couple, was quietly solemnized Wednesday morning at 6 o'clock at St. Augustine's parochial residence in this city. Rev. Paul Greenwell performed the ceremony in the presence of the immediate families and a few close friends.

Miss Susan Abell was the bridesmaid and Bernard Ryan was the groom's best man.

The bride was attractively attired in a Royal blue Georgette dress with hat to match and carried pink rosebuds. The bridesmaid wore green flat crepe with hat to match. Her flowers were pink rosebuds.

Following the ceremony a wedding breakfast was served at the home of the bride's parents after which Mr. and Mrs. Lankford left on a bridal trip to Cincinnati. Upon their return they will go to housekeeping on his farm on the Bradfordsville pike several miles from town.

Mrs. Lankford is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Humkey. She is attractive and possesses a charming personality that has made friends of all her acquaintances, and is a member of Lebanon's younger social circle.

The groom is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lankford and is a splendid young man.

Humkey

Humkey

Humkey-Rogers.

The wedding of Miss Frances Humkey of this city and George Rogers of New Haven was solemnized at 5:45 o'clock at a Nuptial High Mass Thursday morning, October 2, at St. Augustine's church in this city, the Rev. J. A. Hogarty, pastor, officiating. The only attendants were W. B. Humkey, Jr., brother of the bride, and Joseph Rogers of New Haven, brother of the groom.

The bride was becomingly attired in a brown chiffon dress with egg-shell trimmings and hat to match. Her flowers were yellow rosebuds and ferns.

Immediately following the ceremony, a wedding breakfast was served at the home of the bride's parents on High street, after which Mr. and Mrs. Rogers left by motor on a bridal trip. Upon their return they will go to housekeeping at New Haven.

The bride is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Humkey and is one of the most attractive members of Lebanon's younger set. She is a girl of lovable traits and admired by many friends.

The groom is a well known young business man of New Haven, being associated with his father in the garage business. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Shirley Rogers and is well known in Lebanon.

Among the out-of-town guests here for the wedding were: Mrs. Shirley Rogers, Mrs. Victor Rogers, Miss Edith Ray and Misses Addie and Josephine Rogers of New Haven, Mrs. Raymond Fogarty of Jeffersonville and Robert Swift of Louisville.

Humkey-Mudd.

A pretty church wedding of the season was that of Miss Dorothy Lee' Humkey of this city and Wm. C. Mudd of Springfield, which was solemnized at a Nuptial High Mass at St. Augustine's church in this city Monday morning at 7:30 o'clock, the Rev. J. A. Hogarty officiating. The church was prettily decorated in spring flowers and lighted candles for the occasion.

Miss Flora Nell Abell was the bridesmaid and James Noe of Springfield was the groom's best man. W. B. Humkey and Richard Abell, both of this city, were the ushers.

Immediately following the ceremony breakfast was served at the home of the bride's parents on Proctor Knott avenue after which Mr. and Mrs. Mudd left on a bridal trip. Upon their return they will make their home at Springfield.

The bride was attractively attired in a powder blue chiffon dress with hat to match. Her flowers were lavender sweet peas and yellow roses. The bridesmaid wore a tan Georgette dress with hat to match and a corsage of lavender sweet peas and pink roses.

Mrs. Mudd is the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Humkey. She is an unusually attractive young woman and is a popular member of Lebanon's younger social set. She is a graduate of St. Augustine's High School of the class of 1929.

The groom is a splendid young man of Springfield, being connected with a drug firm there. He is a son of Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Mudd.