



1954 SUPERIOR CADILLAC FLORAL-COACH

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SUPERIOR'S HARDTOP HEARSEs

# THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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NO. 46

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**COVER PHOTO** - Following the demise of the Henney Motor Co., in 1954, the Superior Coach Corp. of Lima, O. emerged as the U.S. funeral coach and ambulance industry's style leader. Even before Henney folded, Superior was making some bold moves in the area of funeral car design. Late in 1954, Superior unveiled a daring departure in funeral coach styling with the announcement of the industry's first pillarless hardtop hearse. The coach shown on our cover was the engineering prototype for the Superior hardtops marketed in model years 1955 and 1956. The hardtop hearse was introduced to the profession at the '54 National Funeral Directors Association convention in Seattle. The series went into production in the Lima plant early in 1955. The cover car is believed to be the only '54 built. We wonder where it eventually saw service, and if it's still around.

**INSIDE BACK COVER:** Quick now, who built the body of that landau-style hearse shown in this 1964 Cadillac Commercial Division ad? Nope, it's not a Superior, Eureka, S&S or Miller-Meteor. It's a composite designed to promote the Cadillac commercial chassis without offending any of the four major funeral car and ambulance manufacturers to whom Cadillac was selling its special hearse and ambulance chassis at the time. This ad actually touted late-model, used professional cars on the Cadillac commercial chassis as a wise investment for the prudent funeral director.

**BACK COVER:** This one-off gothic panel carved hearse was originally built on a 1942 Pontiac chassis, but was updated in appearance a decade later with a '52 Pontiac front-end clip. This grey-painted hearse was used by the Charles J. Ellison Chapel of Memories Funeral Home in Windsor, Ontario until 1960 when it was replaced with a Pontiac station wagon landau hearse conversion. The gothic side panels featured stained glass inserts. Note the externally mounted "Funeral Coach" nameplate on the hood in front of the windshield.