



1941 METEOR CADILLAC GOTHIC PANEL CARVED HEARSE

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THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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COVER PHOTO - After an absence of more than a decade, the ornate carved-panel hearse made a dramatic comeback in 1934. The carved-drape hearse was the industry style leader for the next five years, but America's funeral directors soon began to tire of this heavily ornamental style of funeral car. They wanted something different in a carved coach. They got it at the 1938 National Funeral Directors Association Convention held in New York City, where the Meteor Motor Company of Piqua, O. introduced a new departure in carved funeral car design. Meteor's fresh approach featured Gothic "church window" panels instead of simulated drapery. The A. J. Miller Co. and the Bender Body Co. also introduced Gothic panel or "Cathedral" style hearses for 1939. The coach on our cover is a 1941 Meteor Cadillac Gothic-Panel Carved Hearse. Our sincere thanks to well-known author Tom McPherson who kindly provided some of the photos used to illustrate this article, including our cover.

INSIDE BACK COVER - Kansas City PCS member Steve Loftin really lucked out at a flea market last year when he found a stack of old funeral service trade journals on one vendor's table. Barely able to contain his excitement, Steve nonetheless talked the owner down and walked off with the whole pile. This is just one of many professional car ads Steve found in the January, 1926 issue of The American Funeral Director. The ad cuts show two hearses and an ambulance -- all limousine body styles -- built by John W. Henney & Company of Freeport, Illinois. Henney was using Velie chassis components at this time.

BACK COVER - The Owner's Pride subject in this issue is Past National President Paul Cichon's 1949 Superior Cadillac Landaulet Funeral Coach. The photo on our back page shows what the '49 looked like when Paul bought it -- complete with fake wire wheel covers and Harley-Davidson insignia!