



1921 RIDDLE FORD CARVED HEARSE

NUMBER 64 SECOND QUARTER 1992

A GALLERY OF GOLDEN OLDIES

THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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ON OUR COVER - In this issue we feature a gallery of "Golden Oldies", those tall, boxy professional cars built in the teens and into the mid-1920s. The car on our cover is an unrestored Riddle carved hearse body mounted on a lengthened 1921 Model "T" Ford chassis. This hearse was acquired by the Timmons-Von Hook Funeral Home of Chico, California in the 1960s. The Riddle Carriage & Hearse Company was located in Ravenna, Ohio and built hearses into the 1920s. This hearse body is interesting because it combines the classic eight-column carved body style with large side windows through which the casket and flowers could be seen. Note, too, the drapery carvings on the front doors and the carved column and drape ornamentation below the second side window of the driver's compartment. Side visibility must have been minimal at best.

INSIDE BACK COVER - From 1912 through 1934, the Sayers & Scovill Co. of Cincinnati OH assembled its own hearse and ambulance chassis using components purchased from many sources. In 1935, the company introduced several lower-priced models based on Oldsmobile running gear. In 1936, S&S switched to Buick. The 1936 "Sayers Claremont" Limousine Funeral Coach illustrated in this ad in the March, 1936 issue of The American Funeral Director was basically a Buick. A companion carved panel hearse was called the S&S Alexandria. Other '36 S&S models including the Romanesque and Arlington carved hearses and the Brighton Ambulance were thinly disguised Buicks.

BACK COVER PHOTO - The Algoe-Gundry Company was (and still is) a prominent funeral firm in Flint, Michigan. In addition to undertaking services, Algoe-Gundry also provided the citizens of Flint with ambulance service. This photograph of the company's up-to-date motor equipment was taken in 1925. On the left is a 1924 Sayers & Scovill "Kensington" Ambulance. The firm's equally modern hearse is a 1925 Meteor Model 236-A Limousine Funeral Coach built by the Meteor Motor Car Co. of Piqua, O. The long, low limousine style hearse was beginning to displace the carved panel hearse which had made the epochal transition from the horse-drawn to the motor era. Photo courtesy of Matt Lee, Plymouth, Mich.