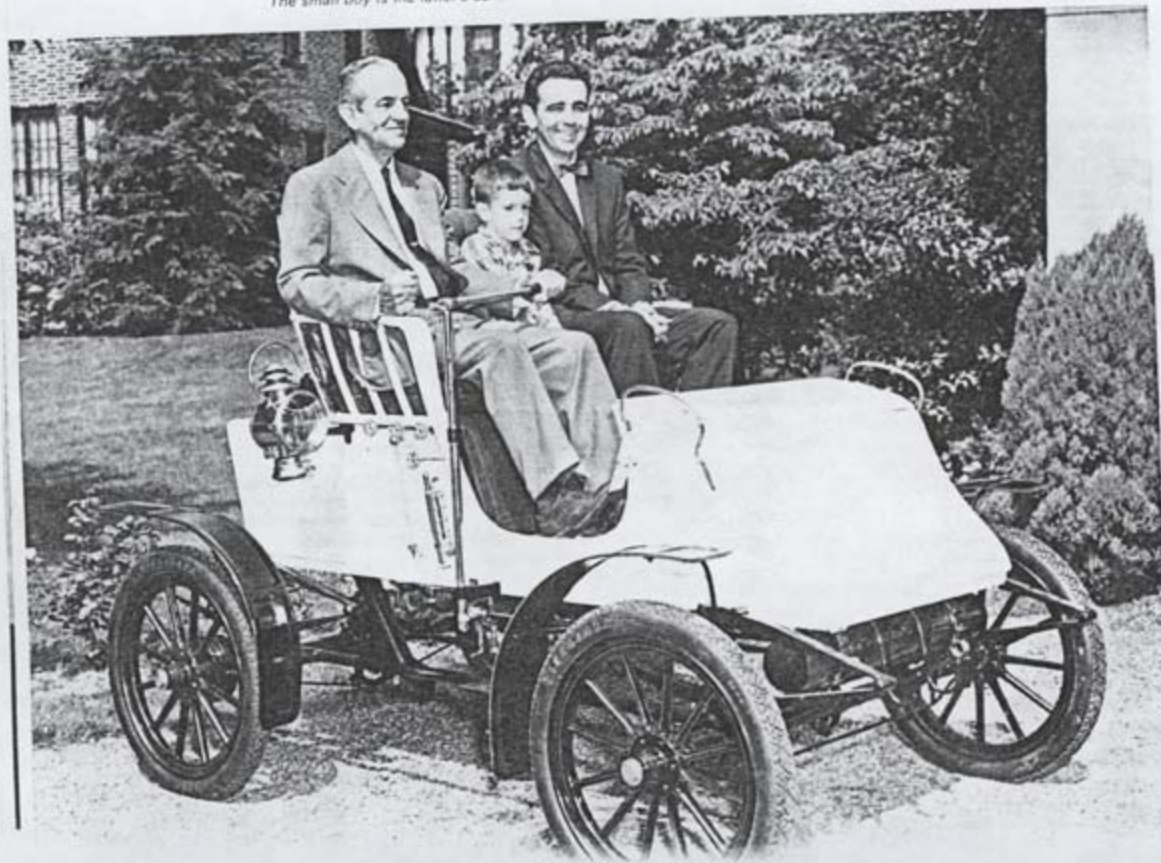


THE PRESCOTT STEAM CAR

James L. Prescott, Jr.

At the controls (l.) is Amos N. Prescott, grandson of Amos L. Prescott, founder of the Prescott Automobile Manufacturing Co., with his son Amos N. Prescott, Jr. The small boy is the latter's son, Amos N. III.



This is the story about a Prescott Steam Car that finally came home to rest.

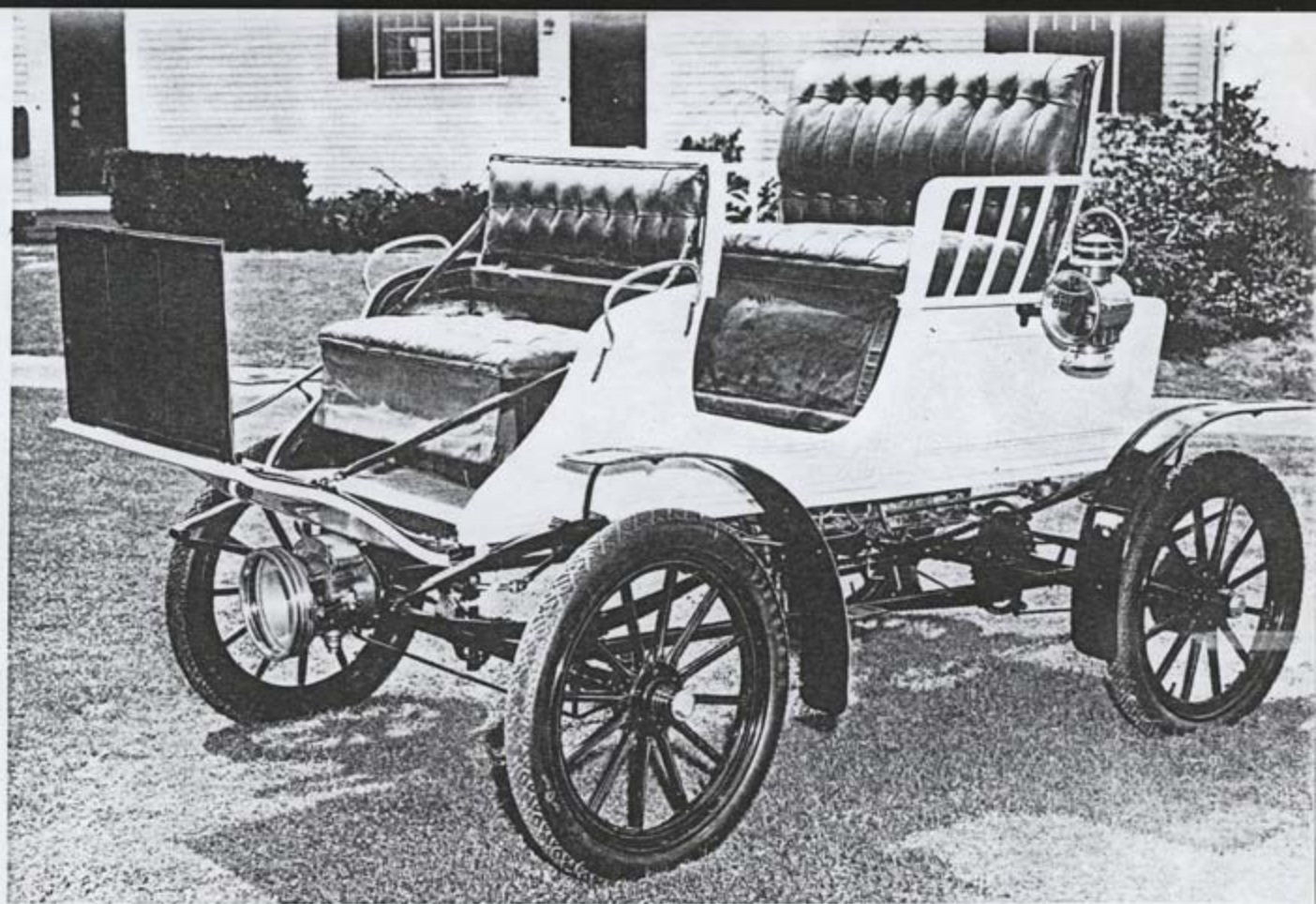
Back around the turn of the century when the automobile was being born, Amos L. Prescott, great grandfather of the author, established the Prescott Automobile Manufacturing Co. Mr. Prescott was the son of J. L. Prescott, founder of the J. L. Prescott Company, manufacturers of stove polish and shoe polish in North Berwick, Maine.

Amos Prescott moved the stove polish factory to Passaic, New Jersey in 1895 and established the company headquarters' offices at 83 Chambers Street, New York City. Shortly after moving the factory to Passaic, Amos turned to manufacturing the Prescott Steam Car, as a sideline to the stove polish business. The first cars were manufactured at the firm's present location around 1900, but as the vehicle business increased, this section, "The Prescott Automobile Manufacturing Company" was moved to a separate plant in Passaic.

The pictures on these pages are of a 1903 Prescott Steam Car now owned by the J. L. Prescott Company and which is housed in a special room in the firm's corporate headquarters.

The Prescott Steam Car participated in many early automobile events of

A view of the 1903 Prescott with the front section pulled forward.



which the New York to Boston and return Reliability Run in 1902 was foremost. This run consisted of stop points at noon and at the end of the day. The cars had to reach each stop point within a ten minute time limit. Throughout the entire six day contest, the Prescott Steam Car had no mechanical failures and no need for any assistance. It was awarded a Gold Medal for its "perfect

performance".

In other contests, the Prescott was awarded the Silver Medal for the fastest mile of a regular stock car in the Speed Trial on Staten Island, May 31, 1902. On September 11, 1903, E. J. Foley, a business associate of Amos Prescott, drove the Prescott Steamer for a "first" in the Exhibition Mile Race at the Clifton Track in Clifton, New Jersey. In

July 1904, Amos Prescott, accompanied by his daughter Margaret, drove the Prescott in the "Climb to the Clouds", the first annual national automobile hill climbing contest up Mt. Washington, N.H. Mr. Prescott was awarded a medal for first place in this competition.

A number of Prescotts were sold from 1900 to 1905. Amos Prescott also ap-

pointed a sales representative in England and many Prescott Steam Cars could be seen touring the English countryside.

The 1903 Prescott car pictured in this article was purchased from Mr. George Fenton of Quincy, Massachusetts in 1956. Amos N. Prescott, Jr. and James L. Prescott, Jr., great great grandsons of the founder of the company, drove



An early photograph of company founder Amos L. Prescott (l.) and his son James E.

the car in the qualifying run of the Four Roses Antique London to Brighton Car Meet in New York City in 1959. They received a citation award presented by James Melton.

After twenty years of participating in auto meets, parades and the J. L. Prescott Company picnics, it was decided that the 1903 vehicle needed restoration, so in 1975-76 the car was completely restored by Hibernia Auto Restorations in Hibernia, New Jersey.

The Prescott is powered with a vertical two cylinder 7½ horsepower reciprocating type steam engine.

There were two carriage models, the two passenger and the four passenger versions. The front section of the four passenger model opens up allowing

seating capacity for two in front of the driver's seat. According to a sales brochure the car was offered with a black body with a choice of green, red, dark blue or yellow on the body's raised panels. The undercarriage running gear was painted to match the panels. The fenders are made of patent leather. A Victoria top was available as an option.

The vehicle is steered with a tiller located on the right side of the driver's seat. The car's speed and acceleration are controlled by a throttle handle on the right arm rest next to the driver. A reverse pedal is on the floor and there are two double-acting brakes on the rear hub which are operated by a brake pedal at the driver's feet.

The Prescott is equipped with a ten

gallon fuel tank and has a 32 gallon copper water tank behind the driver's seat. The boiler is a seamless drawn-steel shell sixteen inches in diameter. It contains 367 one-half inch twenty gauge seamless drawn copper tubes. The burner is constructed so that it cannot warp or burn out.

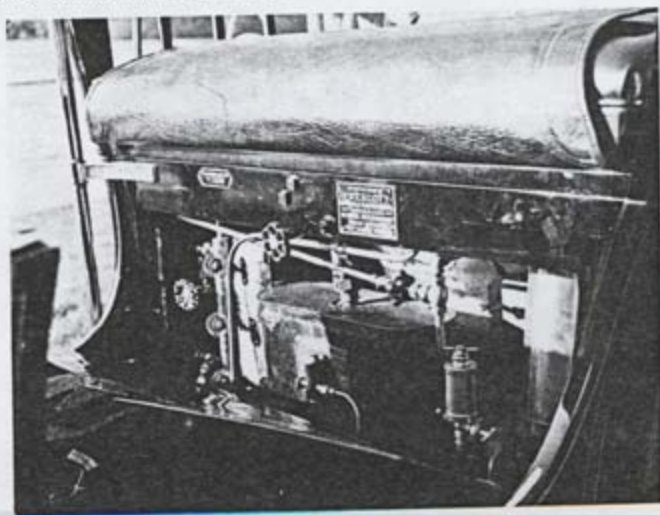
With the advent of the gasoline engine, Amos Prescott decided to

discontinue making his Prescott Steam Car and in December of 1905 all manufacturing ceased.

Now, 76 years after its "birth", the 1903 Prescott Steam Car has come home to rest in the same town where it originated, where it is the treasured possession of the descendants of the company's founder.



Gold medal awarded to a Prescott car by the Automobile Club of America for the car's "perfect performance" in the New York-Boston Reliability Run in 1902. Formerly owned by Joel Knee, great grandson of the founder, the medal was donated to the Prescott family.



View under the seat of the 1903 Prescott.