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Pickups: Classic American Trucks

William Seitz, Harry Moses



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The first American pickup truck was introduced in 1896, as part of the similarly great industrial revolution: The King High Wheeler built by a Chicago machinist. As they developed, the first major manufacturer, Ford, brought forth the Model C Delivery Van in 1905. It was not a runaway success. They produced 10. The 1914 Dodge was another matter. Sales: 30,000.

Here are glorious vehicles, purchased for a song or traded for a shotgun; lovingly restored for thousands of dollars; and proudly entered in contests and shows.

"Old pickup trucks don't merely recall a simpler America or a better America. They ARE America. Pickups reflect this country's essence in its purest and most concentrated form. An old truck is a novel by Faulkner, a drawing by Rockwell, a building by Wright. It is Spencer Tracy in **Bad Day at Black Rock**, Henry Fonda in **The Grapes of Wrath**, Gary Cooper in **High Noon**.

These basic, rugged reliable vehicles have a remarkably widespread appeal. In researching this book we found old pickup trucks owned by farmers, lawyers, furniture makers, doctors, inn keepers, actors, plumbers and musicians. Some drive their trucks every day. Others have lovingly restored their pickups and drive them sparingly. But all the owners share the same singular experience: whenever they take their pickups out for a spin, people stop and tell them that this truck of theirs is the most beautiful thing they have ever laid eyes on." -- Harry Moses

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