

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Harper family owned oldest dealership

By James R. Dossan
of the Carlisle Mercury Staff
As one time Carlisle had the distinction of being the home of the oldest Ford dealership in Kentucky, the William Harper family has the distinction of being the owners of the dealership. William is the father of the present-day Harpers—James, who resides in Carlisle, William (Bill), Cincinnati, Ohio, who was interviewed for this article, David, Carlisle, Charles, Lexington, and Robert (Dobby) who died in 1974 in Carlisle.

William and his father, Robert, were farmers in Fleming County near Elizaville in 1915 when the mechanization of farming, which was young and unimpaired, convinced the agricultural father who raised cars "machines" that there was more money to be made in those "machines," and that therein lay their future.

And so joining forces as equal partners, and paying cash, they opened Harper's Garage at the outskirts of Carlisle about where Fred Barnett's Used Cars is located.

Their business prospered, and in 1921 they built a brick building on East Main Street which still stands, and is now owned by Bill House who is in the process of having it converted into a factory.

In 1928 a second building was constructed flush with the first building. A house which was sitting on the lot where the second building was located was moved to the corner of North and Walnut Streets where the Raymond Paul Garrett family lives.

Gene Neal, past owner of Neal's Furniture, remembers being late for school the day the house was moved, as it was quite a sight for a first grade student.

On the other side of the original building, a parking lot was built on property owned by Mrs. Marie Latta, whose house was torn down in order to make way for the lot.

Employees that Bill remembers being at the garage are Bradley Finkbe, Glenn McClintock, Alex Simpson (who picked up the slogan for his legs), the Reverend Frank

Romms, Bill Dallas (who was a salesman for 36 years), Raymond Badler, and Herchel Barton (who managed the garage for a short time before it closed).

Robert Harper retired in 1945, leaving William as the boss. Robert died in the mid 1950s, and William died in 1966.

Upon the death of William, his son Dobby managed the business until his death in 1978. At that time, knowing son, Charles managed it for a short time, while keeping his job with the state.

Barton, who had been a legitimate employee, was put in the managerial position shortly before the business ceased operation.

Gene was the bookkeeper for the business for many years, working longer for father and brother.

October 1, 1979 Lewis Edwards bought the Ford dealership, and reopened the garage as Edwards Ford. After a few years, it also ceased operation.

Gene and Powell Neal, as well as Bill, remember the Model T Ford being shipped to Carlisle in sections on horses. The chassis and the bodies were crated, individually, and put together by the dealers when they arrived at their destination.

Gene Neal said when they were put together, they were the "prettiest, shiniest black cars you ever saw."

An incident occurred at the garage one day that Gene and Bill both recall, although they can't remember the names of the men to whom the accident happened. Gene thinks it was from Exing.

The man had just bought a new Model T Ford which he promptly got in to drive home. He got the gear meshed up, put it in reverse and about back wheels through the wall at the back of the building, and dropped about 15 feet to the alley below. The man was not hurt, just shook up, saying he would never drive again.

Robert Harper, thinking the man more epileptic, and had a cliff top, the front-end of the convert-

ible to be around people." Ford's home, Fairlane (that rings a bell doesn't it? Fairlane 5007 was located in the very active Cross Point area near Detroit, Michigan).

Bill, who retired in November, 1962, worked in manufacturing all his life. His first job which was just time with his uncle, the late Henry Harger who was an electric motor and engineer in Lexington. Henry lived in Midway with his wife, Eda Henry and their two sons. He died a young man, and Mrs. Harper taught at Midway Junior College. This writer was one of her many students during the late 1950s.

Bill moved to Louisville and Mrs. Harper taught at the University of Kentucky. This writer was one of her many students during the late 1950s.

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This picture shows the original Harper's Garage building before the addition was added to the right, or the parking lot was built to the left. The date of the picture has to be between 1927 when the first building was constructed, and 1928 when the second building went up. The photo belongs to Nate Young.

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50 Yr. Warranty
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Create a more attractive decor inside and outside your home with Weng Lattice panels. Perfect for room divider, decorative lighting, holding screens, tables, porches, etc.
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2x2x8 9'5" \$42.99 sq.

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18 OZ. HYDE PARK ASSORTED
Cake Mix .69 (48 OZ. BOTTLE)

HYDE PARK
18 OZ. HYDE PARK SMOOTH ON CRUNCHY
Peanut Butter 1.59

HYDE PARK
18 OZ. HYDE PARK GRADE A
Large Eggs .69 (DOZEN)

HYDE PARK
32 OZ. HYDE PARK
Salad Dressing .99

HYDE PARK
12 OZ. HYDE PARK
Soft Drinks .69 (ASSORTED 24 BOTTLE)

HYDE PARK
12 OZ. HYDE PARK
Orange Juice 1.29 (100% PURE)

HYDE PARK
3 L.B. BOWL
Hyde Park Spread .99 (1 1/2 LITR BOTTLE)

HYDE PARK
12 OZ. HYDE PARK
Pizza .79 (COMBINATION TOPPING)

HYDE PARK
12 OZ. HYDE PARK
Orange Juice .99 (100% PURE)

PIC-PAC SUPERMARKETS

CARLISLE PIC-PAC

HYDE PARK Bath Tissue
.58 (3 ROLL Pkg.)

7.25 OZ. HYDE PARK DINNER Macaroni & Cheese 4/1.

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HYDE PARK GRADE A Large Eggs .69 (DOZEN)

18 OZ. HYDE PARK SMOOTH ON CRUNCHY Peanut Butter 1.59

GLEE Soft Drinks .69 (ASSORTED 24 BOTTLE)

18 OZ. HYDE PARK ASSORTED Cake Mix .69 (48 OZ. BOTTLE)

HYDE PARK Orange Juice 1.29 (100% PURE)

3 L.B. BOWL Hyde Park Spread .99 (1 1/2 LITR BOTTLE)

HYDE PARK Pizza .79 (COMBINATION TOPPING)

12 OZ. HYDE PARK Orange Juice .99 (100% PURE)

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Sarah Fryman

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HYDE PARK
U.S.D.A. CHOICE Sirloin Steak **2.29** (L.B.)
U.S.D.A. CHOICE Rib Steak **2.99** (L.B.)
U.S.D.A. CHOICE Standing Rib Roast **2.29** (L.B.)

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12 OZ. HYDE PARK Elbow Macaroni 1.09
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12 OZ. HYDE PARK Orange Juice 1.39
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12 OZ. HYDE PARK Tea Bags 1.59
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12 OZ. HYDE PARK TEXAS BISCUITS 2.79
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12 OZ. HYDE PARK Colby Longhorn 1.49
12 OZ. HYDE PARK Fish Hyde Park Dips .29
12 OZ. HYDE PARK Chicken Nuggets 1.99
12 OZ. HYDE PARK Fish Portions 1.79
12 OZ. HYDE PARK Baby Limas 1.09
12 OZ. HYDE PARK Pkt Ritz Dip 1.29
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WE GLADLY ACCEPT FEDERAL FOOD STAMPS