

Whoa, it Happened To Every Mule Driver

by Harvey Olander

This was the situation my grandfather P.A. Olander faced. The car he owned had no front wheel brakes. The brake pedal only controlled a brake drum attached to the drive shaft. The clutch pedal, when pressed all the way down put the car in low gear. Releasing the pedal put the car in high gear. The middle position was neutral. That released the brake and drive shaft from the engine. Depressing both pedals created a tug of war. The engine tried to over power the brakes, and most of the time the engine won. Most cars slowed when the throttle was released. Wrong, not on the model "T"-it kept going. A hand throttle on the steering wheel controlled the speed. What chance did a mule driver have driving a Model T Ford?

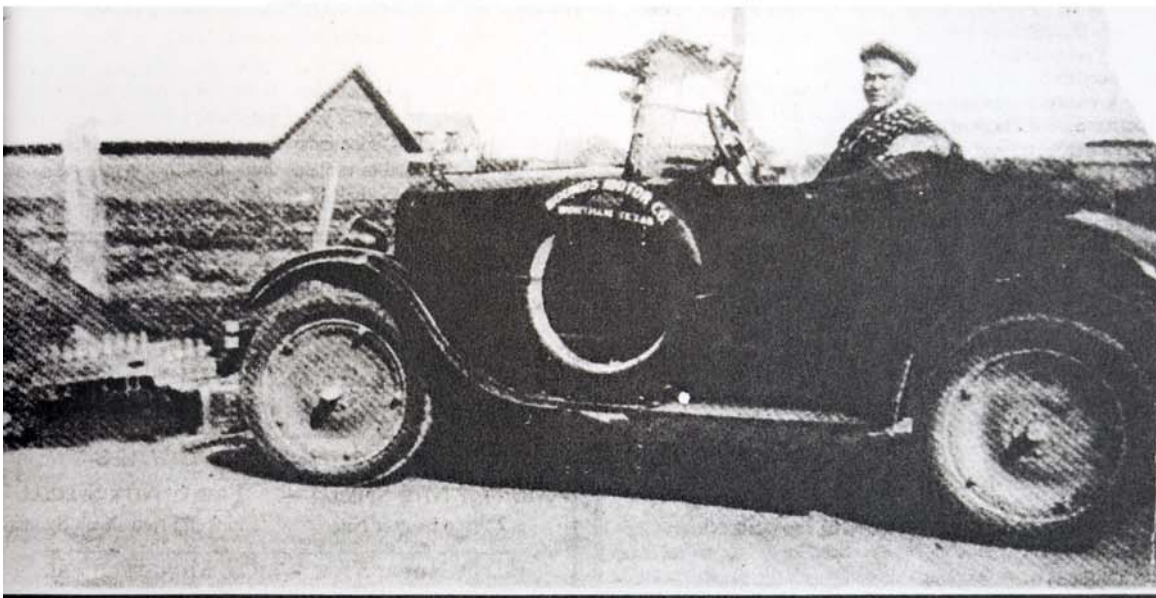
Upon retirement Per Adolph had moved to Hutto. All the church members were buying new cars while he still drove mules. To outdo his church friends, he bought a deluxe Model T. Has anyone ever heard of a Model T with disk wheels? His car had disk wheels. He must have gone to Timbuktu to find them. It also had a sun visor, spotlight, hand-operated windshield wiper, a temperature gauge on the radiator cap, luggage fence on the

running board, and side curtains with isinglass peep hole windows. As a bonus the dealer gave a wooden stick gas gauge to poke in the tank to measure the gas level.

P.A. wanted the car to be in the garage before dark. He had seven children and they were the drivers. He always sat in the front seat beside the driver and was an excellent front seat driver.

On this night all the children were gone. It was now his turn. Starting the engine was a breeze. He did not break an arm hand-cranking the engine. He revved up the engine to the proper roaring sound, released the emergency brake and pushed the pedal down slowly to move forward, aiming for the garage entrance.

All went well until it was time to stop. He stepped firmly on both pedals instead of releasing the power pedal to the middle position. The "T" kept going. He did everything he could think of, including the one most familiar. He yelled "Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! At least he did not take the Lord's name in vain. The engine was making so much noise-IT DID NOT HEAR HIM! I think he was the first person to ever have owned a drive-through carport!



George "Beck" Eklund of Hutto is pictured in his 1925 Chevrolet. It is similar to P.A.'s Ford "T" car in body style, wind shield, sun visor, and especially the disc wheels. (Photo courtesy of Mary Sutton, Beck's daughter)