

# Frederic Alexander Ames (1856-1925)

By Jerry Long



Frederic A. Ames



**The Kentucky Encyclopedia, John E. Kleber, editor,  
The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 1992, p.20:**

AMES BUGGY COMPANY. Ames Buggy Company, organized in Owensboro, Kentucky, in 1887 by Frederic A. Ames of Washington, Pennsylvania, had become the largest privately owned buggy manufacturer in the nation by 1905. The factory employed 250 workers, with peak output of 125 buggies daily, some of them destined for Germany, South Africa, the West Indies, and parts of Latin America. Ames Buggy manufactured forty specific types and styles of passenger vehicles, many with silver and gold trim. During the period 1910-20 it built the Ames automobile, and from 1915 to 1925 it made bodies for Ford Model T vehicles. In 1922 Ames Buggy entered the furniture business and eventually was sold to Whitehall Furniture, Owensboro. (submitted by Lee A. Dew)



**Owensboro: The City on the Yellow Banks, Lee A. Dew & Aloma W. Dew,  
Rivendell Publications, Bowling Green, KY, 1988, pp.106-107 & 136-138:**

[pages 106-107] ... For the most affluent, or in the slang of the day the "carriage trade," there were carriages and buggies of all sorts produced in Owensboro by several manufacturers, the most important of which was the F. A. Ames Company Other buggy-makers included the Basham-Lindsey Carriage Company, the Hoagland Buggy Company, the Kentucky Buggy Company, and the Owensboro Buggy Company. The Gilbert-Wahl Company built buggies as well as wagons, and the Carriage Woodstock Company and the New Royal Body Company produced buggy and carriage bodies under contract to other manufacturers.

The Ames Company, located at Third and St. Elizabeth streets, claimed to be "the largest carriage factory in the world owned by an individual." Ames contended that his plant made a profit of only \$2 on each buggy or carriage produced, but with an annual output of 15,000 vehicles, this furnished him with an annual income of \$30,000, making him one of the richest men in Owensboro. The factory regularly shipped its products to Germany, South Africa and the West Indies, and occasionally to South American ports, as well as to "all the Southern states," and maintained sales offices in Dallas, Kansas City and Havana.



The Ames factory on West Third Street also, for a time, produced automobiles, one of which may be parked in front under the portico. The addition to the left burned in 1987 and was razed.

The work force at the Ames Company varied between 200 and 250 men and boys, depending upon market demand, with an average wage of \$12 per week (10 hours per day, 6 days per week, or 20 cents per hour on the average). The highest salaries, up to \$35 per week, went to the master finishers who were paid on a piecework basis. This wage made them the highest-paid workmen in Owensboro.

The primary feature of the Ames vehicles was the exceptional finish detail. No less than twelve coats of paint and varnish were put on the buggies, and each was hand rubbed to remove the microscopic irregularities in the finish caused by the paint brushes. Decorative stripes and finishes were then applied, including those which utilized powdered silver and unalloyed gold as ingredients in the paint. A "fad" finish in 1902 was aluminum, in which powdered aluminum was added to the finish varnish coat to give the vehicle a metallic look.

The Ames plant manufactured every element which went into their vehicles except the wheels, which were bought from the Owensboro Wheel Company. More than 300,000 board feet of locally-produced lumber was consumed annually in the plant, most of it of elm, oak, ash, poplar, and hickory. This meant an income of from \$75,000 to \$100,000 yearly for lumbermen and sawmill operators. Seat cushions, tops and other fabric products were fabricated in a special sewing room, "in which only good-looking young ladies are employed."

[pages 136-138] ... Sensing that the wagon and buggy business was soon to vanish, the Ames Company, in 1910, having observed more and more automobiles in Owensboro since the turn of the 'century, converted the Woodstock Carriage Company into an automobile plant to produce the Ames car. While construction on the plant was progressing, two sample cars were turned out – a red runabout and a tan five-seated touring car. A Texas automobile dealer came to Owensboro to test the Ames automobiles and, after touring several other cities including Detroit, he returned to order fifty Ames cars, exclaiming that they were the "best \$1,500 car" he had been able to find. By April 1910, Ames was turning out fifty cars a month and selling them from Memphis to Maine. Ames, who claimed he was building a \$3,000 car for half the price, said his car could do a breathtaking fifty miles an hour and go "as slow as a man can walk."

The Ames roadster, with four cylinders and thirty horse power, claimed as a selling point its light weight which insured savings in power and wear on its rubber tires. For \$1,500 the touring car came equipped with two brass acetylene gas lamps, speedometer, adjustable windshield, horn, brass robe rail, brass foot rail, and complete repair kit. Tops for the cars could be acquired for an extra \$75—complete with curtains, stay straps and bow straps. Manufacturing at the Ames plants lasted about five years, then from 1915 to 1925 production switched to replacement bodies for Model T Fords. In 1922, Ames branched out into the upholstered living room furniture business.

When Ames died in 1925, his company was among the top two or three carriage makers in the nation, but the end was near as the age of the automobile began to change forever the way Americans traveled. On June 30, 1926, the last "Amesbilt" buggy—the "Red Seal" rolled off the assembly line, ending nearly forty years of production of buggies, carts, phaetons, and jump-seats; and Henry Ford's assembly-line production in Detroit, rather than Ames in Owensboro, would be the center for production of the new vehicle of the new era—the automobile.

Finally in 1970, the Ames corporation sold its furniture-making machinery to the Whitehall furniture company, and after 83 years of continuous, diversified production, the Ames Corporation ceased to exist.



### **Family of Frederic A. Ames by Jerry Long**

Frederic ('Fred') Alexander Ames was the son of Candius Ames (1822-1873) & Elizabeth. His birth year in records varies. His gravestone at Elmwood Cemetery in Owensboro records only

the year of his birth, 1855, and his death, 1925. The oldest record found for him, the 1860 & 1870 censuses, and his obituary indicate a birth year of 1856. An obituary (Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 24 December 1925, p.1), stated he was born in March 1856. The 1860 & 1900 censuses and his death certificate all report that he was a native of the state of Indiana. A biography published in the Owensboro Inquirer (Owensboro, KY, 23 November 1902, p.12) recorded that he was born in Indianapolis, Indiana and while an infant his family removed to Washington County, PA.

Frederic A. Ames is listed with his parents in the 1860 census of Brooke County, VA and 1870 census of Washington County, Pennsylvania:

Brooke County, Virginia 1860 Federal Census, post office Bethany, 512:

	age		born
Ames, C.	38 m	laborer	Pennsylvania
Elizabeth	38 f		Virginia
Mary E.	10 f		Virginia
Frederic A.	4 m		Indiana

Washington County, Pennsylvania 1870 Federal Census, Somerset Township, p.344A:

Ames, Candus	48 m		Pennsylvania
Elizabeth	39 f		Virginia
Mary E.	18 f		Virginia
Frederick	14 m		Ohio
Minnie	9 f		Virginia
William G.	6 m		Pennsylvania

Richard D. Ames in his book, Ames Is The Name: A Genealogy (Hyattsville, MD, 1959, pp.156-157) writes:

Candius Ames was born in 1822 in Washington County, Pa. He was married to Elizabeth, born in 1831 in Virginia. They were living in Somerset Township in 1870, having returned to Pennsylvania some time between 1861 and 1864. Candius died about 1873, leaving a will in the probate court of Washington County. The writer believes Candius was the son of Martin Ames. Children of Candius:

- a. Mary E. Ames was born in 1852 in Virginia. She was listed in census records for 1880, still unmarried.
- b. Frederic A. Ames was born in 1855 in Ohio. When he was about 16, he apprenticed himself to a carriage maker in Akron, Ohio, and left home for good. A few years later he appeared in Owensboro, Kentucky, in answer to an advertisement. Although his first job did not work out, he launched into business for himself, establishing the F. A. Ames Company (Makers of Fine Carriages), in 1887, when he was only 21 years old. From small beginnings the business expanded until about 1910 to 1915 it was a real factor in the commercial life of Owensboro, employing several hundred people.

About that time Frederic suffered a complete nervous collapse and spent some time in the Battle Creek, Mich. Sanitarium. Recovering, he returned to his business activities until about 1923 – when the nervous trouble returned. He died in 1925, and a family by the name of Triplett took over the F. A. Ames Company.

Still operating under that name, in the same buildings where Frederic made his humble start in 1887, the Company now manufactures upholstered furniture.

Mr. Ames married Mary M. McMannon (born in 1863) and his widow died in 1933. No children had been to them, but they raised a niece of his wife's as an

adopted child. Her name was Marie, and she married R. S. Triplett, who is now president of the F. A. Ames Company, Frederic visited his old home in Washington County, Pa., occasionally, and corresponded infrequently with the Grant Ames family. A letter of his was found among the papers of Mrs. Grant Ames on her death in 1957, and led to a contact with Mr. Triplett. Without the discovery of that letter this account of Candius Ames' family would never have been written.

- c. Minerva Ames was born in 1861 in Virginia.
- d. William G. Ames was born in 1865 after the return to Pennsylvania. He followed Frederic to Owensboro, and died there in 1891.

In 1879 Frederic A. Ames was working for Benjamin Driver (1842-1923), who was operating the Owensboro City Carriage Works, at the corner of Second and Locust Streets, in Owensboro, Daviess County, KY. Below is copy of a form letter of this firm that Fred Ames used to write his future wife, Miss Nettie McMannon, of Muhlenberg County, KY. Ames and Benjamin Driver on 4 June 1884 formed a partnership in the manufacturing, buying, selling & repairing carriages, buggies, wagons and other vehicles. In 1887 Ames left the partnership to form his own carriage company.



F. A. Ames married Mary 'Nettie' McMannon (1862-1933) on 19 May 1881 in Owensboro, KY (Daviess County, KY Marriage Book R1, p.247). Born in Owensboro she was the daughter of Enoch Simpson McMannon (1831-1885) & Ellen Elizabeth Abdill (1831-1928). The following marriage announcement appeared in the Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger & Examiner (Owensboro, KY, Friday, 20 May 1881, p.3:

Ames-McMannon.

An event of considerable interest to East-end society occurred yesterday morning at 8 o'clock at the residence of Mr. E. S. McMannon, corner Fifth and Bolivar streets. It was the marriage of his beautiful daughter, Miss Nettie, to Mr. F. A. Ames, of Owensboro Junction, [note – now Central City in Muhlenberg], Ky., Rev. H. C. Settle pronouncing the ceremony. The relatives and a few friends of the blissful couple were present, and

signalized their interest in the affair by hearty congratulations. Immediately after the ceremony the wedding party took carriages for the O. & N. depot, and left on the 8:40 a.m. train for a short bridal trip to Louisville and Cincinnati, returning thence in a few days to Owensboro Junction, which they will make their future home.

The bride is the second daughter of Mr. E. S. McMannon, an excellent citizen and an efficient official of the government, having been mail agent on the O. & N. railroad for a number of years. She is one of the prettiest, sweetest and brightest of Owensboro's fair ones, and is a decided favorite in her circle.

The groom is a member of the firm of McMannon, Ames & Co., coal merchants at the Junction, and is a fine business man, and a handsome and affable gentleman. He is to be congratulated on the prize he has won, and yet more meritorious victors are rarely found.

The good wishes of a host of interested friends will accompany them on their journey through life, which, we trust, will ever shine as brightly as the matin that witnessed the consummation of their happiness.

F. A. & Nettie Ames had no children of their own but adopted their niece, Marie Cotell Tice (1893-1973), who was the daughter of Robert Lee Tice & Marie Eva McMannon. Marie Tice was living in the home of F. A. & Nettie Ames at the time of the 1900 census. The Daviess County, KY Circuit Court records show that Marie Tice was adopted by F. A. & Nettie on 1 November 1904. Marie subsequently appears under the Ames surname. Marie married Robert Samuels Triplett (1890-1980) on 10 February 1917 in Owensboro. Robert & Marie had three children: Robert Samuels Triplett, IV (1918-2004), Frederic Ames Triplett (1921-2002) and William Beckham Triplett (1923-1986).

Frederic A. Ames died in Owensboro on 23 December 1925. His wife, Mary McMannon Ames died at their home, 1221 Frederica Street, in Owensboro on 22 June 1933. They were buried in Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery (section B, lot 5). In the same lot Frederic Ames' brother, William G. Ames (1863-1891) is also buried. He had the following death notice in the Owensboro Twice-A-Week Messenger (Thursday, 2 July 1891, p.8): Mr. W. G. Ames died of consumption Friday morning and was buried at Elmwood cemetery Saturday morning. The deceased was 27 years of age and a young man of great promise, but some time has been gradually failing in health. He was a brother of Mr. F. A. Ames of this city, but has resided for several years in Memphis.



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 1 April 1887, p.4:**

**The New Carriage Factory.**

The Messenger takes peculiar pleasure in noting the improvements of the city as they are made, and at this time nothing of this character merits more particular mention than the new carriage factory that is being built for Mr. F. Ames by Dr. J. F. Kimbley. It is situated on the corner of Third and St. Elizabeth streets, fronting 64 feet on Third street and running back 74 feet. It is two stories high, the lower story being fourteen feet and the upper story twelve feet from floor to ceiling. The walls are to be substantially built of the best brick, with iron cornices and stone caps.

It is to be arranged throughout with special reference to the requirements the carriage manufacturing business. Mr. Ames still occupies his old factory and is at present working twelve hands. This number will be largely increased when he gets into the new building.





**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 25 February 1888, p.4:**

Mr. F. A. Ames has bought a lot from L. Loeser at the corner of Third and St. Elizabeth streets. The property is 40x60 feet in Mr. Ames will build a two-story, corrugated iron warehouse to be med in connection with his carriage factory.

[Note: Daviess County, KY Deed Book 47, pp.309-310 – Leopold Loser & wife, Amelia, on 28 February 1888 sold to F. A. Ames for \$750 lot on the west side of St. Elizabeth Street and north side of Third Street in Owensboro. See also Deed Books 51, p.588; 56, p.537, 58, p.552; 58, p.557; 60, p.21; 70, p50 & 86, p.193]



**Owensboro Inquirer , Owensboro, KY, 29 March 1891, p.4:**

**Creditable Enterprise.**

Facts And Figure Not Generally Known About an Owensboro Institution.  
A Manufacturing Establishment, The Like of Which Owensboro Needs Many.

It is not generally known, but it is nevertheless a fact, that there is in this city a manufacturer of fine vehicles, who now has in course of construction nearly two thousand rigs, and who keeps on the toad to dispose of what is not sold to a large patronage at home.

The establishment is none other than F. A. Ames & Co., corner of Third and Elizabeth streets.

Dropping into his office the other day, that prince of good fellows, Fred Ames, had the writer go through his departments. On the northwest corner of the streets named are three large buildings, especially erected for and crowded with the wood and iron working departments, and warerooms for material and unfinished work. The" machinery is run by steam and there can be seen all sorts of fine vehicles at every point of construction before the "putty is put on;" and, by the way, here is where you can readily see that the Ames vehicles do not require much putty. The office, repository, painting and trimming rooms occupy the roomy two-story building across Elizabeth Street. The operations in the painting and trimming rooms show very plainly how well these parts of the work are done, and a walk through the repository will make water the month of any lover of horse and pair of ribbons.

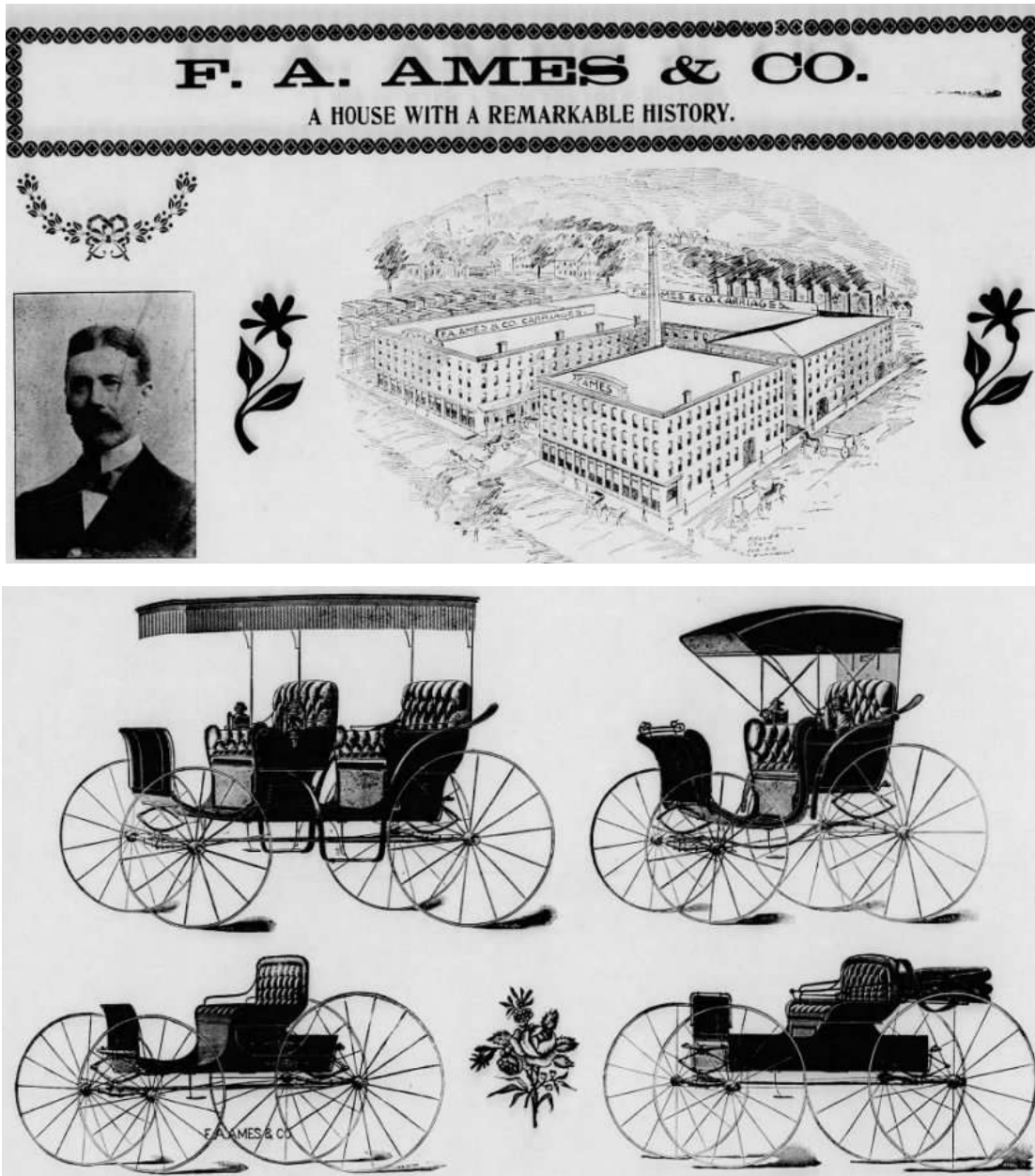
It has been the aim of Mr. Ames to build first-class vehicles for general and special purposes, at as reasonable a price as such work could be put up, and it is truly gratifying to note the result. So thoroughly has he succeeded and so completely first-class has his work proven itself on the road that he is now justified in introducing his work long distances from home, and at present has one salesman traveling in Tennessee, another in Illinois, and other in New York.

Any one contemplating the purchase of a buggy or carriage, or who needs a first-class fine vehicle built to order, can not but be repaid for visiting this establishment.



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY – Industrial Souvenir Edition, Spring 1900, p.16:**

[This special edition on microfilm of Owensboro newspapers is mistakenly labeled “Owensboro Examiner, 20 December 1878”]



The firm of F. A. Ames & Co., wholesale manufacturers of pleasure vehicles of all descriptions, is one of the largest and most representative factories in Owensboro, and has even a wider significance in being the largest concern of its kind south of the Ohio river and the largest of its kind in the United States, or you might say, the world, owned and controlled by one man. Its importance to Owensboro is not only considerable because of its present proportions, but of its remarkable growth. The business was started in a very humble way about thirteen years ago, turning out barely fifty vehicles a year, and has gradually grown until its present production is over



15,000 finished vehicles per annum. Shipments are made to all parts of the civilized world. They have distributing houses at Kansas City, Mo., Fort "Worth, Texas, Havana, Cuba, and are shipping continually to Germany and Cape Town, South Africa.

The Ames plant is situated almost in the heart of the city and occupies a full block of ground in buildings. The property investment of the concern is over \$100,000. It employs from 225 to 250 men, most of whom are skilled mechanics and make a fine body of citizens. To these men there is paid each year a hundred thousand dollars in wages, and manufactures fifty-seven different styles of vehicles.

For some time the concern has been somewhat hampered by lack of room, and during the past winter there has been under construction one building 55x80 feet and one 60x140 feet, both four stories high, which will meet all immediate demands. The cut of the plant herewith will give adequate conception of the factory.

One of the advantageous features of the industry as carried out by F. A. Ames & Co. is that they work all the material up in their own factory. Many so-called carriage manufacturers simply buy the various parts of vehicles from the concerns manufacturing them, put them together, attach a name plate and sell them as of their own manufacture. This is not the case of the firm we are mentioning. The vehicles are built from the raw material in their own plant. Even the wheels and gears are constructed. This makes it possible to positively guarantee all material and workmanship as first-class, because it is inspected and made under the supervision of their own foreman.

F. A. Ames & Co. have a number of salesmen on the road constantly covering most of the states in the union. The firm has an especially large trade throughout the southern states. They have developed this vigorously with even prospects of becoming the leading house in the country.

A large part of the hickory, oak, ash and poplar lumber used in the manufacture of Ames' buggies comes from this section. Northern and western Kentucky is known far and wide as the greatest hardwood lumber section in the world, consequently it is possible for Mr. Ames to avail himself of the finest selected timber.

F. A. Ames & Co. issue each year one of the most elegant catalogues of any carriage house in the country. Their 1900 book is especially fine and will be sent to any address postpaid. The following is their announcement to the trade:

"We attribute the demand for our vehicles to several causes. First, we spare no pains or expense to be the first to introduce the most attractive, up-to date Eastern styles into the Southern and Western markets; second, we make every part of our vehicles from raw material to the finished Job. All our bodies are made in our own factory, are screwed and glued and not nailed. All surrey sills are reinforced with a heavy steel rocker plate; third, we put a guarantee on every vehicle that will stay by it; fourth, we have the best shipping facilities, namely, by both rail and water, and can save our customers considerable in the way of freight

"Our motto long been to make the best vehicle that can be produced for the least money and sell it at a popular price. That our efforts have been appreciated is evidenced by the record of what we have done."



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 31 March 1901, p.11:**

**“No Luck In Success.”**

**What the Largest Individual Buggy Manufacturer in the Country Says.**

## Distinctive Features of the Big Establishment of F. A. Ames & Co. and How It Has Grown in Fourteen Years

A time-honored saying of worldwide application is that one half the world knows not how the other half lives. If the act of "living" be understood to embrace the very important part of it called work, it is not less true. The city people study but superficially the life and work of the farmer, and very seldom does the farmer concern himself about the daily labors of his city brother, unless as his imagination may tell him of the more comfortable homes, the neater surroundings, better clothing, etc. Great, mills, mines, factories and stores are parsed by with only a casual glance and the hasty passer-by hurries on in partial or entire ignorance of the many lessons of varied kinds that a careful study of any one of those great hives of industry would afford.

These truths were recently impressed upon a Messenger representative, when visiting several of Owensboro's great plants of various kinds, and the resolution to dispel at least a part of this indifference, if not ignorance, by presenting a few of the interesting features connected with local enterprises, was formed.

One of the greatest manufacturing plants in Owensboro is the carriage factory of F. A. Ames & Co. at Third and St. Elizabeth streets. With the buildings recently erected the plant now covers more than half the block on which it stands. The floor space is equivalent to a plat 400 feet square or about 150,000 square feet. The buildings are four stories high and below the first floor is a basement room covering large space.

It was on this lot that Mr. Ames his first, carriage shop. He came to Owensboro from Pittsburg, where he had received his training in carriage building. He thought at first only of supplying the local trade, but very soon his buggies were in demand in the neighboring counties and the business grew until now, only fourteen years after the start, he sends his vehicles regularly to several points in Germany, South Africa, the West Indies, all the Southern states, and, occasionally to South America.

Various traveling agents are constantly on the road making sales, and each of these have their definite territory. The chief of these are the following with their territory: J. B. Foley, Kentucky; H. A. Atwater, Georgia and Alabama; H. H. Prince, Virginia and the two Carolina; E. W. McMannon, Tennessee and part of Alabama; C. W. Roberts, Missouri and Kansas; and W. A. Underhill, Illinois. In addition to the headquarters which each of these agents maintains in the principal city of his territory. Mr. Ames has branch houses at Dallas, Kansas City and Havana. In regard to the latter house it is interesting to note that the ink was scarcely dry on the Spanish-American treaty before the Ames vehicles were pushed into Cuba and a branch house established at Havana in charge of the enterprising American managers, J. H. Piercy & Co.

### Fads in Buggies.

The easiest way to distinguish the products of this mammoth plant is to speak of them as "pleasure vehicles." It would be confusing to give a specific name for each of the different kinds, of which there are forty. In fact the styles and makes are so numerous that the nomenclature of the makers has been exhausted and only numbers are now used to designate many of the different styles.

Fashion rules in vehicles as in matters of dress and the alert manufacturer is quick to gratify it, even though sometimes it be whimsical. This leads to a great variety of sizes and shapes of vehicles and shades of varnish and stripe colors. One of the latest finishes is in aluminum, put on in powdered aluminum. Another, and more expensive finish, is in silver, liven unalloyed gold is

used for the striping of certain high class work. These latter grades are often sold and such finishes are popular for exhibitions.

The latest fad in vehicles is known as a "covert wagon." It is a high, narrow, single-seated rig, finished in dainty colors. On all fancy work rubber tires are now demanded.

Few, even of those who purchase and use these fine vehicles, know the amount of painting and rubbing to which they are treated. Not less than twelve coats of paint and varnish are put on many of these. They are treated to several rubbings done by specialists who use the natural lava stone first and later a finer-fibered rubbing stone made from the volcano's discharge, ground and reformed. The last of these rubbings is done chiefly to remove the irregularities caused by the finest paint brushes used. These little ridges on the surface of the wood are invisible to or unperceived by the ordinary eye, but the man who does this delicate work has both sight and feeling so trained that he quickly detects them.

It is no exaggeration to say that of the 125 buggies turned out daily every one is worked upon to some extent by each of the 250 employes; so it may be truthfully said that it takes 250 men to make a buggy. The picturesque-ness of this statement is somewhat enhanced by the fact that every vehicle has about it certain parts which pass through a stitching or sewing room in which only good-looking young ladies are employed.

#### No Labor Troubles.

It would hardly be surmised that an institution of this magnitude could be run by other than well-paid and contented employes. This reasonable conclusion is correct, but it is correct with special emphasis in this, that the factory has not shut down, except three or four times to take an inventory, in the fourteen years of its history, nor has there ever been a strike or any "labor troubles" of any kind in all this time.

The highest wages is paid to men who do what is known as "piece work." Here skill and speed count and their possessor is often rewarded with \$35 per week. The lowest wages is paid to mere beginners, who are usually boys or youths, but the average pay of the whole force is close to \$12. Payment is made every two weeks and the average pay roll is \$3,000.

The office force consists of six men and two ladies. Gale B. Smith, who is in charge of the bookkeeping and credit and financial department, came here four years ago from Utica, N.Y. O. H. Brooks, formerly of Fort Wayne, Ind. has been in charge of shipping and entering orders for four years; W. H. Beaty came from Nashville, Tenn., and has had charge of the business correspondence for five years. The chiefs of the various departments, with time of service, are: Ferdinand Wagner, blacksmith shop, ten years; Chas. Drager, wood-workers, four years; C. E. Horn, painting, four years; Frank Horstman, trimming, four years; Henry Gress, burnishing, eight years; Charles Nicholas, inspector of finished vehicles, ten years; C. H. Wilkie, in charge of assembling department, seven years; R. L. Puckett, crating, eight years; Wm. Gonder, rough-stuff and varnish-rubbing, seven years. J. E. Cruse has charge of local collections.

The ever-watchful and always present head of the whole concern is Mr. F. A. Ames, who is the sole proprietor of the business conducted under the title of F. A. Ames & Co. He "knows his men" whenever he meets them and is always pleased when they can be advanced in their various departments. He offers inducements to his men to be inventive and ingenious and has been benefited by suggestions and inventions of his workmen that tended to economize time and labor.

#### Welfare of Employes.

A notable feature in the history of this great industry is the fact that no adult worker in it has died during its fourteen years of successful operation. This does not apply to deaths by violence only, but also to deaths resulting from normal illness. It is even affirmed by those familiar with the facts that the ingredients of some of the paints and varnishes, especially the latter have a salutary effect upon the lungs and the system generally, as they consist of various gums and wholesome vegetable substances.

Closely connected with this sanitary phase of the workmen's life is the fact, of which Mr. Ames is quite proud, that his men are invariably sober. Not one has lost his place owing to drunkenness. This, too, is a condition not the result of any coercion or organized effort, but seems to be spontaneous. However, it is well known to all that drunkenness would not be tolerated any more than other vicious habits. Mr. Horstman, the foreman of the trimming department, has exerted a strong influence in this direction. He recently summed up his practice in this sententious sentence: "No, sir, we have no cigarette smoking or other ruinous foolishness around here."

A strong moral influence is also exerted in behalf of education. Boys are not encouraged to quit school for a "job." In emphasizing this Mr. Ames declared that a course through the grammar grades of a good school made a youth handle even rough lumber with greater skill and efficiency.

In the whole factory from 200 to 250 men are constantly employed. Many of these men have been with Mr. Ames for ten years and very few have been with him less than four years, except about fifty who were engaged when the plant was recently enlarged. Nearly all of them have their permanent homes in Owensboro and practically all of them, except the expert foremen, were born and reared in Owensboro, or in Daviess or adjoining counties. Many of them are married men of families. It will then be seen at once the importance of this vast business to the business and social interests of this section of the state.

#### The Making of a Buggy.

At present a vehicle's different parts are made up of elm, oak, ash, poplar and hickory. Formerly the hub was made of locust, then of oak, and now elm is used almost exclusively. This change was brought about because of the great scarcity of locust and suitable oak. In former days the hub was almost entirely of wood and that wood had to be of the best. Now, however, the hub is so banded and sheathed with iron that the elm hub is stronger and more durable than was the locust one. Large amounts of elm are used also for crating for shipment. The yearly amount for this purpose alone is not less than 300,000 feet.

Nearly all the lumber is bought from the local mill men and farmers and from \$75,000 to \$100,000 is paid out annually for this yield of the Kentucky forests. The only part of the vehicles not manufactured under the same roof is the wheels. These are bought of the Owensboro Wheel company.

A great elevator is safely operated in the center of the plant. Every department is easily accessible to this and transfers of rough parts and material from one department to another are made quickly and inexpensively. This matter of cheap transfer of material has been figured down to even the half-cent. A good illustration of this is seen in the alterations that are continually being made. One change now being made is the building of a track into the "drying room" so that the loaded car may be run into the drying room and left until this process is finished and then easily run to the planing department, thus saving the carrying that was formerly done, very laboriously, by hand. "No Luck About Success." It seems almost incredible to the uninitiated that a great plant like this, with every detail attended to so carefully, should be operated to make a buggy for as little

as \$2 profit. However, as explained by Mr. Ames, what he is after is not the \$2 profit on one buggy, but the \$30,000 on the yearly output of 15,000 buggies.

This story might be prolonged indefinitely with interesting details about the various ingredients and fabrics used in the ornamentation and making comfortable of the vehicles. Their source and history are full of interest, but a conclusion can best be made here in the words of Mr. Ames, the sole proprietor of the largest carriage factory in the world owned by an individual. He said of his enterprise: "Only thoughtless people talk of luck. Luck suggests lack of law. Law rules everything. There is a reason for every result, a cause for every effect. Management and merit bring success in business. One is the fulcrum, the other is the lever. There is no luck about success. I have had good workers. They have used care, conscience and skill. That is all."



**Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 23 November 1902, p.12:**

### Men Who Have Made Owensboro

Frederick A. Ames was born in Indianapolis, Ind. His father was a New Englander, having moved to Indianapolis from Boston. While the subject of this sketch was an infant the family removed to Washington county, Pa.

At the age of eighteen years Mr. Ames came to Owensboro and found a position with Benjamin Driver, who was at that time engaged in manufacturing buggies in a small way. After two years he severed his connection with Mr. Driver and removed to Central City, where he became a member of the firm of McMannon, Ames & Co. The other members of the firm were E. S. and George P. McMannon. This firm engaged in extensive coal mining and timber operations. In connection with their other interests they operated a large general store.

This business was carried on for five years and at the end of that time Mr. Ames returned to Owensboro and formed a partnership with his former employer, Mr. Driver, for the manufacturer of buggies. The concern was known as the Owensboro Buggy company, with which Mr. Ames remained connected only two years.

The firm dissolved in 1889. Mr. Ames retiring. He then established his present business under the name of F. A. Ames & Co., which it still retains. The business was begun in a very small way turning out only fifty finished vehicles the first year. Its growth has been gradual but sure. At present the concern employes fifteen traveling salesmen, who cover more than half the states of the Union and the territory which they do not reach is supplied through jobbers. The output is in excess of 20,000 vehicles a year, amounting to more than \$1,000,000. The average number of men employed is 225 and the annual pay roll is more than \$100,000. The factory exports work to South Africa, Germany and Cuba.

Mr. Ames is a prominent member of the city council. He was first elected to succeed Mr. Robert Brodie, who died three years ago. At the expiration of this term he was again a candidate on the Citizen's ticket and was elected. He is on several important committees.



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 24 July 1904, p.13:**

## Another Plant For Owensboro

Large Wood-Working Department of Ames Co Finished.  
ONE OF THE MOST SUBSTANTIAL STRUCTURES ABOUT CITY.  
TO START RUNNING SHORTLY

Will Work Best of Skilled Labor – An Immense Dry House Being Constructed.

The new wood working department of the Ames carriage works is about completed at Seven Hills. The engine has been installed and is now being to run a planer and other machinery that is dressing and sawing the flooring for the factory. Ten men are at work at this and it is expected that the floor will be ready for the installment of all the machinery in a few days. Considerably of the machines have already been delivered and the remainder will soon be in the building. In all there will be twenty machines and each will do the work of about ten men so that the machine capacity of the whole factory will be equivalent to about 200 men. Only about fifty men will be required to run these twenty machines so that no great number of employes will be on the payroll here. This, however, is the tendency of the times to do all that is possible with machinery operated by skilled hands and to make steam or electricity do what brawn was formerly depended upon to do. This modern innovation is welcomed in all of the Ames' shops to the greatest possible extent and this newest of them is to have many of the very latest. One is the system of trucks which will take the rough lumber from the rail road switch which will run up to the very door of the factory and not only carry it to every machine to which it must be introduced but also carry the finished product to the storage room or to the shipping department.

In this connection the switch is worthy of mention. The main one is almost a half mile long and runs from the L. H. & St. L. railway at a point near the crossing of the I. C. This was the first consideration when Mr. Ames went out side the city to look for a site and he secured the assurance or the railroad company that they would give him the switch and also the right away from the property holders before he took any steps to build. The result is that the very best of all railroad facilities are row secured as the three railroads are within easy access. In fact the switch of the L. H. & St. L. runs right up to the fuel room of the furnace division of the building so that the coal can be shoveled right into the fuel boxes.

The boiler room and the engine room are built slightly apart from the main building. A space of a few feet is between them. This leaves no dark corners in the main building and affords ample and equal light in every part of it. It also prevents much noise and also more or less of that vibratory disturbance that originates in every engine room. The boiler room is 21x46 feet and the engine room is of exactly the same size. Over the engine room is a wood-bending room and over the boiler room is a large steambox 12x44 feet. The main part of the lower floor is to be devoted to office rooms and machine room. The offices, however, will not be extensive as it is the purpose of Mr. Ames to transact most of his business through the downtown factory office. There will be one or more elevators and the whole second floor will be devoted to stock storage and bench work.

The entire building is 214 feet long by 80 feet wide. Through the entire structure runs a line shaft on which are innumerable pulleys. This shaft is 210 feet long and it can be revolved at almost any desired speed. The great engine that drives this is a splendid specimen of the Bates Corliss of 150 horse power. It has been running since last Monday and is proving satisfactory in every way. Lindsey Eberhart is the engineer. A Cook deep-well pump supplies the water from a well 200 feet deep that furnishes an excellent variety of water. There is also a Cookston heater and filter.



The entire building is supplied with automatic fire protection. Several lines of pipes run along each ceiling and are filled with water at a high pressure and as soon as they become heated as in case of a fire certain "heads" on them melt off and at once streams of water begin to play upon the source of the heat. The water and the pressure are supplied from the top of the factory, where is located a 20,000 gallon pressure tank, and two gravity tanks. These are the first of the kind put in here and cannot but be of interest to all local concerns.

The great smoke stack is entirely outside of the building. It rises to a height of sixty feet from a brick stump 20 feet high. Into this stump extends from the top of the furnace an iron britchen through which the gases and smoke make their exit. At the base of the stump is a combination chamber and on it is fixed, not too securely, an iron safety door which, in case of an explosion or accumulation of gases which might cause an explosion, falls off and thus prevents any harm. The shavings and saw dust from every part of the factory will be gathered and carried automatically to a point near the furnace where they are used for fuel. In this entire building there was used 550,000 brick and three car loads of lime or 600 barrels. There are 255 double windows of sixteen lights each in the building. The timbers are of oak and the posts are 12x12 inches and the girders are 12x14 inches.

Just now work is in operation for the erection of an immense dry house. This will be of brick below and wood above. It will be 40x80 feet. It will have a capacity of 80,000 feet of lumber and 20,000 feet can be taken out every day. The grading was commenced for this last week and the brick laying will be commenced tomorrow. Cooper Bros., who put up the main building, will erect this also.

This seems to make a great showing for this as an extensive enterprise and yet there are doubtless definite hopes in the mind of him who caused this to go up that in the near future he may double the capacity. There is a reservation of ample ground for such an addition and if such should be the case it would not be as surprising as has been the marvelous growth of the mother plant that now well nigh covers the whole square that lies surrounded by Main, St. Elizabeth, Third and Locust streets, and yet within about twenty years it all grew out of one small repair shop.

About 700,000 feet of lumber has already been delivered at the Seven Hills plant and daily deliveries are being made. It is expected to have the plant in full operation in about three weeks. A part of the force from the old plant will be transferred to the new but a number of new hands will be employed. These will be scured here as they can soon be taught what they will be required to do.

Mr. Charles Drager, foreman of the wood working department of the Ames factory was the designer of the matchless plant and he also superintended every step in its erection. The material in its construction was bought by Mr. J. E. Cruse. Between the expert bargainer and the skillful designer it is said Mr. Ames has been given one of the most substantial, convenient and economical buildings ever erected south of the Ohio river.

[Note: The following Daviess County, KY deeds related to F. A. Ames' Seven Hills property were recorded. Deed Book 78, pp.4-5 – F. A. Ames on 22 March 1904 purchased four lots in Seven Hills from the Homestead Land Co.; Deed Book 78, pp.66-68; Deed Book 78, pp.213-214; Deed Book 81, pp.635-636; Deed Book 85, pp.180-184 – plat of Seven Hills; Deed Book 104, p.623; Deed Book 150, pp.417-419 – bankruptcy sale of property to Earle Hart Woodworking Machine Co. in 1941; Deed Book 162, pp.24-26 – property sold to Victor E. Anderson in 1945.]



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 9 October 1909, p.3:**

**Test Run**

Made By Auto Manufactured By Carriage Woodstock Co.  
Was Successful in Every Respect –  
Climbed The Steps of Y.M.C.A. Building

F. A. Ames, principal owner of the Carriage Woodstock company plant in Seven Hills, has practically completed an automobile, that he is figuring on manufacturing. The engine, constructed by the Gunther-Wright Machine company, was installed yesterday in the frame and a trial run made. The demonstration of the machine was entirely satisfactory. Several test runs of the machine have been mapped out and will be put through as soon as the entire machine is completed. The machine was run up eight stone steps of the Y.M.C.A. building yesterday; Those interested in the proposed manufacture of the machines have not given out any information in regard to the venture.



**Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 2 December 1909, p.1:**

**FINISH PLANT BY FIRST OF YEAR**

To Be Used For Manufacturing of Automobiles  
AN ADDITION TO CARRLIGE-WOODSTOCK FACTORY  
TO TURN OUT 500 A YEAR

Cars Will Be Models of Beauty and Durability and Speed Will Not Be Lacking

Owensboro, already known in nearly every state of the union for its wagons and buggies, within a few years may attain a like reputation for its automobiles. Work is well under way on an addition to the Carriage-Woodstock plant in Seven Hills, which, when completed, will be given over to the manufacturing of automobiles. The addition will be 175 feet in length and eighty feet in width. It will be two stories high. The building will be completed by the' first of the year. This will be the quickest contract ever carried out in Owensboro, but it is necessary for the work of turning out automobiles to begin the first month in the year.

**Will Make Two Models**

Two models will be manufactured, a runabout and a five-seated touring car. Thirty horse-power engines will be used in the machines. The models that have been turned out in the last few weeks have answered every test and have been pronounced by automobile experts to equal any car on the market today.

F. A. Ames, who is the largest stockholder in the Carriage-Woodstock company, believes that the field for automobiles is just opening in the United States. It is the purpose of the company in which he is interested to turn out a car that in durability and beauty is not equaled by any of the American or foreign makes.

**Most of Work in Owensboro**

The greater portion of the machine will be constructed in Owensboro by the Carriage-Woodstock company. There is no one concern that makes all of the parts of an automobile and it will be necessary to obtain many of the parts in different manufacturing centers of the country. In doing this only the most thoroughly tested parts will be used.

It is the intention of the company to turn out about 500 machines next year. To do this a number of the most skilled mechanics in the United States will be brought here. It is the general belief of those interested in the venture of manufacturing automobiles in Owensboro that it will prove a success from the start and that it will be necessary to increase the capacity of the plant within the next twelve months.



**Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 July 1910, p.11:**

### Owensboro Automobiles

Over 40 Are Owned in This City, Nine of Them Ames Cars  
FIRST ONE WAS AN ELECTRIC CAR  
And Owned by the Homestead Land Company – Some of Those of Today

The automobile is becoming very common throughout the world and many of the large cities of Europe and the United States have automobile manufactories. The "benzine wagon" and "wagon without horse or mulee," has become very popular for street and road use. It carries its own motive power, has been used in England since the year 1865, but it was not until the year 1893 that the modern form, including pleasure, cars, passenger coaches and freight trucks, began to be successfully developed.

About ten years ago, the first auto made its appearance in Owensboro. It was an electric car, was owned by the Homestead Land company, and could make a speed of about 15 miles an hour. It had an electric motor. Mr. J. T. Dawson, who owns and operates the public garage, purchased a car, which was soon followed by a Cadillac car purchased by Mr. Allan Reid. Mr. Reid owns the same machine today, which makes about 15 miles an hour. Near the same time a machine was owned by Mr. Z. T. Robinson. Mr. Nat Alsop then purchased a fine Acme auto, which he today owns, and which makes about 60 miles an hour. It has a 60-horse power engine. However Mr. J. E. Perkins owns a Stevens-Duryea auto, formerly owned by Mr. Sam Tompkins, and which is rated at 62 miles an hour, and which is touted as the fastest machine in the city.

Among the first machines of the city was a Franklin' auto, owned by Dr. J. H. Hickman, which was later sold to a party in Rockport, Ind. The only delivery auto ever run in Owensboro, was a Cadillac machine, owned by J. V. Gasser, baker, and used as a delivery wagon.

It is estimated that there are 41 automobiles in Owensboro. Of these, nine are Ames cars, which make the speed of 35 miles an hour, and considered by dealers as one of the best machines for its quality and price on the market today. It is a handsome car and attracts attention everywhere it is demonstrated. Many cars have been shipped out in the past few months by the Ames people.

There are several machines in the city that were put together by local people. Dr. S. S. Watkins has a fast machine that was placed together by the Kentucky Electrical company.

Mr. H. C. Jones also owns a machine put together by local people, and has installed a six-cylinder Wisconsin motor. His machine makes a good rate of speed.

Mr. Lawrence Spring is at present placing together an auto which will shortly be ready for running. He has installed a six-cylinder Brownell motor with about 35 horse power. His car will make a good rate of speed.

The different machines owned in Owensboro and their makes are given as follows: D. E. Berry, Cadillac; L. H. Basham, Mitchell; Joe Perkins, Stevens-Duryea; W. P. Daniel, Maxwell; William Cushion, Overland; Sam Tompkins, Ames; R. B. Mullen, Brush; Dr. W. E. Irvin, Simplicity motor; W. H. Brannon, Haynes; D. C. Stimpson, Hudson; J. E. Baughn, Cadillac; G. H. McCutcheon, Ames; L. R. Bruner, Cadillac; N. J. Baxter, Ames; two Ames cars owned by F. A. Ames; Taylor Lashbrook, Locomobile; Jones, Wisconsin motor; Ben T. Field, Oldsmobile; Dr. E. B. McCormick, Reo; Mr. Kelly, Maxwell; R. P. Farnsworth, Buick; Robert Tenny, Cadillac; Allan Reid, Cadillac; J. N. Alsop, Acme; W. L. Reno, Pope-Toledo; J. T. Dawson, three Overland machines; Dr. J. C. Hoover, Overland; Dr. J. R. Anderson, Buick; Dr. K. W. Coffman, Ames; Dr. J. B. Lacer, Ames; Dr. J. C. Calhoun, Model motor; Dr. H. E. Becker, Ames; Dr. S. S. Watkins, Continental motor; Mayor S. Lambert, Breeze; Dr. W. O. Rash, Buick; Dr. D. M. Griffith, Maxwell.



**Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 29 May 1924, p.9H:**

**Two Big Factories Operated Here By F. A. Ames Co.**

Noted Carriage Maker Saw A Second Opportunity  
And Began Manufacture Bodies For Autos  
Launched Half Century Ago at Owensboro by F. A. Ames  
Concern Buys Largely on Local Markets

Opportunity is a repeater.

This has been proven in the case of F. A. Ames, one of America's most widely-known carriage makers, whose two plants at Owensboro, that of the F. A. Ames company and the Ames Body company spend annually half a million dollars in their home town and give employment to 500 people.

Half a century ago Mr. Ames noted the trend of the tide towards pleasure vehicles and launched boldly into the manufacturing game. His factory turned out buggies that possessed the comforts and refinements that were then little known. From a small beginning, by the customary processes of evolution where energy, skill and determination are combined, this plant grew to great proportions. In the same block, Third and St. Elizabeth streets, where stood the original small shop, of wooden construction and scarcely more pretentious than that which housed the crossroads smithy, was eventually erected the present magnificent brick structure, four stories in height and covering almost the entire block.

**Second Opportunity**

A decade ago, Mr. Ames took another glimpse into the future and saw his earlier opportunity duplicated. He arrived very sanely at the conclusion that the same impulses which made the public buy better buggies would incite them to buy individual bodies for their Ford cars.

He had as an asset long years of experience in producing fine coachwork and ample capital with which to launch his new venture.

The Ames Body Corporation, domiciled at Seven Hills, a suburb of Owensboro, was the result. It occupies a building as large and as costly as the up-town plant.

Today the Ames business is the largest of the kind in the world. Its original capital was vision and courage.

In catering to the demand for a body that would adorn the Ford chassis, the Ames factory designed and built a body for every taste. Its calculations were based on the existence today of more than 6,000,000 Ford cars, with 7,000 new Fords being turned out of the Detroit plant every day. If only a small per centage of the owners of these machines should have the desire that prompts more wealthy owners to possess a distinctive car, it was a mathematical certainty that the Ames Body Corporation would never run short, of orders. Human nature has been unchanging down through the ages, and it runs on like the babbling brook forever. There are untold numbers of motor enthusiasts who are pleased with Ford service and Ford economy but who aspire to eliminate Ford body design.

#### Meets Demands of Times

In another sense the Ames factory enlarged its output in keeping with the trend of the times. It began the building of commercial wagons, which include ice wagons, laundry wagons, express wagons and similar vehicles.

It also began the manufacture of wooden hogsheads, for which it was already well equipped and which required the purchase of no additional machinery.

With the increasing popularity of the automobile the carriage making industry has been confronted with changed conditions. However, as the demand decreased the number of factories also lessened, until probably scarcely more than half a dozen of national consequence remain. These find compensation in the reduced competition, and have felt no decline in their annual volume of sales. The F. A. Ames company, in fact, reported a larger business for 1923 than for any previous year in its history. It still maintains all its old designs.

#### Owned by F. A. Ames

While the F. A. Ames company and the Ames Body Corporation have separate identities, they are both owned and controlled by F. A. Ames, the pioneer carriage builder. His activities as a manufacturer have served to widely advertise Owensboro, for the fame of Ames buggies, commercial wagons and auto bodies has spread throughout the nation. The line, with the exception of buggies which is confined principally to the South, is distributed throughout the entire United States. Sales are made both by mail and through traveling salesmen, some score of whom are employed during the active season.

It is the policy of the Ames company to make its purchases in Owensboro, when possible. It buys much of its lumber here, and has for many years been a large consumer of Kentucky hardwood. Its payroll mounts into large figures and is a stimulus felt in all channels of trade.



**Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 23 December 1925, p.1:**

## F. A. Ames Takes Own Life: Shoots Self With 41 Calibre Pistol At J. J. Hill's Shop

### Buys Weapon, Walks to Rear of Building and Sends Bullet Through Head

Fred A. Ames, 70 year old, president of the F. A. Ames company and the Carriage Woodstock company, pioneer vehicle manufacturer of Owensboro, was found this afternoon in the rear of the gun and locksmith shop of J. J. Hill about 4 o'clock, dying from a self-inflicted gun shot wound.

Mr. Ames walked into Hill's shop, purchased a 41 Double Derringer pistol and asked Mr. Hill to load it. After one bullet had been inserted, Mr. Ames took the pistol and said he would see if he could do it. "I see you are busy, Mr. Hill said Mr. Ames told him, "I'll take it back here and finish loading it." A few seconds later the report of the gun was heard. Employees rushed back to find he was shot in the right, temple, dying almost instantly. The gun lay by his side.

"I never dreamed what his intentions were," Hill said. "He came to the shop last Sunday. I was in here. He rattled the door. I saw who it was and let him in. He told me he was thinking of buying a small pistol, to carry in his. automobile and asked me to let him see some. He asked the price of a 41 Dearinger. I told him and he said' he would see me and talk with me about, it some other time. We chatted on general topics for a while and he left."

"When, he came in today," said Mr. Hill, "he reminded me of his former visit and said he had come lor the pistol." The rest happened so swiftly that Mr. Hill hardly knew how.

Asked whether anything in Mr. Ames manner could have betrayed his intention. He said not. Mr. Hill said he did recall that Mr. Ames appeared a little nervous and quite a hurry.

News of the tragedy spread rapidly and fell like a pall upon the community, which Mr. Ames has helped as much as any other man to make one of the chief industrial cities of the south.

The rise of Fred Ames from the proprietorship of a small smithy on the West Second street corner where the Hafendorfer grocery now stands, to the ownership of what, in the days of horse-drawn vehicles, was one of the largest buggy plants in the county, is a story full of business romance and achievement such as few lives have told.

A few years ago Mr. Ames was in very poor health. He seemed to have wholly recovered, however, and recently had taken great interest in the embarking of his industries upon the field of his furniture manufacture. At times, however, intimate friends have recently expressed apprehension about his condition and feared that some tragic end might befall him.

Mr. Ames was married many years ago to Miss Nettie McMannon, of who with one adopted daughter, Mrs. Robert Triplett, survive. He was a member of the First Presbyterian church.

### Prominent Manufacturer

F. A. Ames was the head of one of the oldest and perhaps the. largest carriage making plants in the United States, operating two factories in Owensboro, the Ames Manufacturing Company on West Third street, and the Ames Body Corporation in Seven Hills. These plants were established more than 50 years ago and employed hundreds of workmen.

With the advent of the automobile and the consequent decline in the. demand for horse drawn carriages, the Ames company had utilized portions of its big plants in manufacturing automobile bodies, contracting the output in the line to come of the largest producers of motor cars. Recently the plant has also been turning out high grade parlor and dining room, furniture and apparently was developing a big trade in this line.





**Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 24 December 1925, p.6:**

Fred A. Ames

The joy of the Yuletide Season is halted and we are shocked beyond description at the sudden passing of one of Owensboro's most prominent citizens, Fred A. Ames.

What has been contributed to Owensboro's growth and prosperity by Mr. Ames cannot be measured. Mr. Ames came here when Owensboro was not much more than village, bringing with him superb physical strength, together with acute mental qualities and a vision of personal achievement, factors which hooked up with an indomitable will must and did eventuate into realization.

Mr. Ames made the great mistake, which perhaps caused his untimely death, of assuming too much responsibility in carrying on his various enterprises and in not allowing his organization to free him in his later years from the overwhelming burden of details. He was one of many men who believe that they personally must look after details to insure the carrying out of their policies.

Mr. Ames' manufacturing interests here have provided hundreds of people with work for a great many years, increasing the population of the city and adding incalculable wealth to the community.

Owensboro will sustain a great loss in the passing of Mr. Ames and the people should feel grateful to him for his large contribution to the upbuilding of the city.

We extend to his family our deepest sympathy.



**Daily Times, Chattanooga, TN, Thursday, 24 December 1925, p.2:**

**FRED A. AMES KILLS HIMSELF WITH PISTOL**

Owensboro, Ky., Dec. 23 (AP). – Fred A. Ames, one of the leading manufacturers of Kentucky, head of the F. A. Ames company and the Ames Body corporation, of Owensboro, committed suicide this afternoon by, shooting himself in a gun shop.

Mr. Ames used a double-barrel caliber pistol. He died instantly.

Mr. Ames had been one of the most successful business men in Kentucky. He started life in Owensboro with a small blacksmith shop, later entering into buggy manufacture and building a plant, which became one of the largest in the country. He also founded the Carriage Woodstock plant in Seven Hills, suburb of Owensboro, and the Ames Body Corporation plant. He recently began the manufacture of furniture. Mr. Ames had extensive holdings in Mobile, Ala.

Mr. Ames is survived by his widow and one daughter, Mrs. Robert Triplett, whom he adopted when she was a child.

Mr. Ames was at his office today, leaving the office about 2 o'clock. It is said that he had not been in best of health recently.

Kentucky Death Certificate 1925 – certificate #28736:

Form V. S. 9-25a-4-11-25 1 PLACE OF DEATH		COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY State Board of Health BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		File No. <u>865</u>
County <u>Daviess</u>	Registration District No. <u>410</u>	Registered No. <u>28730</u>		(If death occurred in a hospital or institution give its NAME instead of street and number.)
Vol. Fol. _____	Primary Registration District No. <u>2145</u>			
Inc. Town _____	(No. <u>1221 S. Frederica St.</u> Ward)			
City <u>Owensboro</u>				
2 FULL NAME <u>F. G. Ames</u>				
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
1 SEX <u>Male</u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u>White</u>	3 Single <u>Married</u> Married <u>Married</u> Widowed or Divorced (Write the words)	16 DATE OF DEATH <u>Dec 29 1925</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)	
6 DATE OF BIRTH _____ (Month) (Day) (Year)			I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from _____, 192____, to _____, 192____, that I last saw h. _____ alive on _____, 192____, and that death occurred on the date stated above of _____ m.	
7 AGE <u>74</u> yrs. _____ mos. _____ da. IF 1280 than I 65y. _____ mos. _____ da. or _____ mo?			The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: <u>Pistol shot in right temple.</u> <u>"Suicide"</u> (Duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da.	
8 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work <u>Manufacturer</u> (b) General nature of industry, business or establishment in which employed (or employer) <u>Bugsy</u>			Contributory (Secondary) (Duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da. (Signed) <u>Delbert J. Adams Coroner</u> <u>Dec 29, 1925.</u> (Address) <u>Owensboro Ky.</u>	
9 BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <u>Indiana</u>			*State the Disease Causing Death, or, in death from Violent Cause state (1) Means of Injury; and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal.	
PARENTS	10 NAME OF FATHER <u>Ames</u>		17 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients or Recent Residents) at place _____ in the _____ State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ da. Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? Former or usual residence _____	
	11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) <u>Mont'ne</u>		18 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Edgewood cemetery</u> DATE OF BURIAL <u>Dec 29, 1925</u>	
	12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>Mont'ne</u>		19 UNDERTAKER <u>W. T. Brown Co</u> ADDRESS <u>Owensboro Ky</u>	
	13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) <u>Mont'ne</u>			
14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) <u>F. J. Triplett</u> (Address) <u>Owensboro Ky</u>				
15 Filed <u>Dec 27, 1925</u> <u>L. L. Carpenter</u> Registrar				

Daviess County, KY Will Book G, pp.544-545:

The will of Frederic A. Ames was recorded on 11 January 1926. He bequeathed to his wife, Mary M. Ames, all of his estate. He appointed her executrix of his estate and guardian of their adopted daughter, Marie Cotell Tice.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 14 June 1961, Part 2, p.31:**

**Ames Company: In One Family From Buggies To Furniture**

F. A. Ames Incorporated, owns and occupies that part West Third Street between St. Elizabeth and Locust Streets, half way to Second, together with one lot, used for lumber storage connecting with Second Street.

The company was incorporated In 1905 and operated prior to that time as a partnership, of which Frederic A. Ames was the principal.

In the early eighties Fred Ames, a gangling boy of 15, over six feet tall, ran away from his home in Washington, and apprenticed himself for three years to a carriage builder in Akron, Ohio. There he learned the trade of a "carriage blacksmith" – not to be confused with a horse shoer, or farrier – but a proficient artisan capable of making and forming the various iron and steel parts used in spring vehicles.

Having few opportunities for bettering himself in Akron, and being a person possessed of ambition and vision, he answered an advertisement of a local general repair man who signed himself as a "carriage builder." Ames came to Owensboro by steamboat. He was disappointed with what he found but had made bargain and stayed with it. He soon formed a partnership with his employer and typical of the way he did things, the firm was "Ames and Driver," (not Driver and Ames). This partnership operated at the northwest corner Main and Locust Streets.

This partnership was dissolved, and in 1887 Ames went on his own in a small sheet-iron faced building on the northeast corner of Third and St. Elizabeth Streets. Here, he did a general repair and sales business in buggies and road carts, trading, rebuilding and actually building by hand a few new vehicles, employing four or five helpers.

This venture prospered and Ames bought property across St. Elizabeth Street. He built his "factory." This also had a sheet-iron exterior and only one story. Business was largely local but expanded rapidly and more property was bought and larger buildings put up, this time of brick and four stories high.

Soon the Ames firm had become one of the larger factors in the buggy industry and was further enlarged by the replacement of the original sheet iron building with a modern four-story structure with 18-inch brick walls, faced with stone and Roman brick. This addition of 25,000 square feet brought the total to about 150,000 feet.

This was the beginning of a very prosperous era and the company became one of the leaders in the carriage industry ranking at or near the top in capacity and output.

In the middle teens the company's fortunes commenced to wane. The automobile was showing its face over the horizon and breathing its threatening fumes upon the sturdy, but tired, horse drawn vehicle industry. Many carriage manufacturers of that day turned their plants to the manufacture of automobiles – Studebaker, Dort, Gardner, Durant, Moon, Nash and others. "Ames" was no exception.

A subsidiary, "Ames Motor Car Co." operated in Seven Hills about 1912 to 1914, producing several models of five passenger "Touring Cars." The cars were splendid examples of the rugged, dependable automobile needed for the roads and usage of that day. But the

consolidation of the automobile industry in the North had begun, thus discouraging the enlargement of this young venture, and it was discontinued.

Being the visionary person that he was, Ames tried many other substitutes for the declining horse drawn vehicle business, but without sustained success. These conditions, mounting losses and ill health combined to bring about his untimely death in 1925.

R. S. Triplett succeeded Mr. Ames as president, confronted with the immediate problems of finance, liquidation of an outdated business and the establishment of a new one.

The company's previous ethical reputation made possible an arrangement for debt retirement which was soon completed, and in a reasonable time all indebtedness was paid in full.

The vehicle business was continued for a while, with the idea of early but orderly liquidation. The last shipment was a carload of Ames "Red Seal" buggies to Planters Hardware Co., Hopkinsville, Ky., on June 30, 1926,

Certain talents in woodworking, finishing and upholstering made it easy for the organization to convert its business to manufacturing upholstered household furniture, the fundamentals of which been under study since 1921. There has been developed a fully integrated operation from dry kilns to finish, with sales reaching from Arizona to New England in all the central States. This business has continued to the present, with more emphasis placed on quality of product and maintenance of volume than expansion primarily for growth's sake.

The Ames furniture factory occupies all of the downtown space of the original Ames Buggy Co., except the building at Third and St. Elizabeth Streets and the adjoining frontage on Third Street.

In 1926, management made this 50,000 square feet of the plant's 150,000 square feet available for office space, modernizing it throughout and installing a passenger elevator. When Texas Transmission Corp., which has occupied these quarters, consolidate all of its offices in its new building in 1962, Ames Company plans to continue renting it to others.

This company is probably the oldest manufacturer in Owensboro, having operated continuously for 74 years at the same location, and with only two managing heads in that time.

The younger generation, Frederic A. (Tag) Triplett, executive vice President, J. R. Ames, vice president in charge of sales. L. K. Rish, production manager, are all experienced and look forward to continuing the usefulness of this old establishment, both for its owners and the splendid community of which it is a part.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 2 May 1976, Bicentennial Edition, Part 1 p.4:**

"Automobiles once rivaled Detroit products:  
F. A. Ames & Co. built reputation for buggies, cars"

In April 1887, ground was broken at the corner of Third and St. Elizabeth streets for the Ames Co. Carriage Company as it was then called. No one realized it then but one of Owensboro's most famous industries was being born.

Frederic A. Ames, a native of Pennsylvania, had moved to the Owensboro area with the coal industry. In 1881, he married an Owensboro girl, Nettie McMannon, and the couple returned to Owensboro Junction (Central City) where Ames was a partner in the coal dealership, McMannon, Ames and Co.

In the story about his wedding, a local newspaper said, Ames "is a fine businessman and a handsome and affable gentleman."

Within a year of his opening in Owensboro as a carriage builder, Ames had to build a larger plant. He guaranteed his work and customers weren't hard to find.

A description of the first Ames buggies said the hubs were of locust or elm, the spokes and rims of hickory, the bodies had ash sills and poplar panels, the axles were steel and all the trimmings were of top-grade leather or English cloth.

By 1892, Ames had to enlarge his quarters each year. The Inquirer said, "The name Ames soon became a synonym for fine, durable work." The firm's trade area was listed as "from Maine to Mexico" and in "nearly every state in the union."

There were 60 to 75 hands employed at the company by 1892 with a weekly payroll of \$500. Ames was spending about \$100,000 a year locally.

His annual production had risen to 5,000 with income of \$150,000, which would seem to put his average price at about \$30 a vehicle.

While one of his rivals, the Owensboro Wagon dealt mostly with utilitarian farm wagons, Ames met the demand for pleasure vehicles. His buggies sported about town and around churches.

An Owensboro wagon was good for hauling corn to market, but when you went to pick up your sweetheart, an Ames "hug-me-tight" buggy was hard to beat.

In addition to buggies, the firm also made carts, phaetons and jump-seats. The latter was "comfortable for four passengers and elegant for two."

One of his advertising gimmicks was a buggy whip with the name of the firm on the butt. Thousands were given away each year.

Later Ames entered the delivery wagon business too. He said three words described half of the delivery wagons in Owensboro "Shake, rattle and roll."

For those interested in not shaking, rattling and rolling, Ames suggested that they look at his line of 12 styles or let him repair their old one.

Soon after the turn of the century he built a second plant in Seven Hills and started the Carriage Woodstock Co.

By 1910, Ames sensed that the wagon and buggy business wasn't going to be around much longer. For 10 years, Owensboroans had been driving more and more automobiles so Ames decided to go with the future.

In February 1910, he converted the Carriage Woodstock Co. into an automobile plant to produce the Ames car. While the construction work on the building was still under way, Ames turned out two sample cars a red runabout and a tan five-seated touring car.

A Texas automobile dealer came to town and rode in the cars and then went to several other cities including Detroit. He came back and ordered 50 Ames, saying they were the best "\$1,500 car" he had been able to find in the country.

His first cars were tested on the streets of Owensboro and Seven Hills (a separate town then) but Ames soon built a circular track with a half-mile circumference next to his Seven Hills plant for testing his cars. By April turning out 50 cars a month and had closed deals with dealers in Memphis and in Bangor, Maine.

The Messenger said, "Expert automobile men have declared the Ames car to be one of the best being manufactured in the United States."

The Ames 30 Roadster had four cylinders, 30 horsepower and the motor, clutch and transmission "are put together as one compact unit, impossible to get out of alignment."



Ames said, "The result is the absolute minimum of friction and a sweet, smooth, velvety action. The entire mechanism is thoroughly protected by an aluminum oil-proof case."

He also claimed that "no high-priced car runs smoother or with less noise, is more economical, more reliable or gives greater comfort."

The Ames could do 50 miles an hour or go "as slow as a man can walk."

Ames said what he was building was a \$3,000 car for half the price.

The "powerful power plant" was encased in a mud and dustproof housing and many of its other features of the car were listed as "extras" on other models, he said.

One selling point of the Ames, he said, was its light weight which ensured a savings in power and wear and tear on the rubber tires.

Ames advertised that "anyone can learn to handle so simple a car in a very few minutes. The car is controlled with only two pedals, the steering wheel and two levers at the side.

"With the pressure of one foot on one pedal, the power can be thrown off and the brake applied so that the car is rendered so absolutely safe that even a child can soon learn to control it."

The touring car came with two brass acetylene gas lamps with generator, two brass oil side lamps, a brass oil tail lamp, speedometer, adjustable windshield, horn, brass robe rail, brass foot rail and complete repair kit – all for \$1,500.

The Ames 30 was similar. Tops for the cars came extra, but for \$75 you got the top with curtains, stay straps and bow straps.

The Messenger observed, "With the advent of an automobile manufacturing plant in Owensboro it is believed that the day of the foreign (like Detroit) car is at an end. Home pride will induce the citizens to purchase a car made in Owensboro by an Owensboro concern."

Auto manufacturing at the Ames plant lasted approximately five years and then from 1915 until 1925, the company made replacement bodies for Model Fords.

In 1922, Ames entered the upholstered living-room furniture business.

At his death in 1925, Ames' company was among the top two or three carriage makers in the nation, but the end was only a year away. On June 30, 1926, the last "Amesbilt" buggy rolled off the assembly line bound for Bowling Green, ending nearly 40 years of production.

About 1970, the Ames Corporation sold its furniture-making machinery and other assets to Whitehall Furniture and the 83-year-old firm ceased to exist.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 26 May 1976, p.1C:**

**Last buggies best, Triplett remembers**

Robert Samuels Triplett lives in the house where he was born in 1890 a house built at 1540 Frederica St. by his grandfather shortly after the Civil War.

A 1907 graduate of Owensboro High School, Triplett worked as an assistant cashier for Central Trust Co. until 1912. He then became treasurer of the Anglo-American Mill Co.

On Feb. 10, 1917, he married Marie Ames and went to work for her father, F. A. Ames, as vice president (later president) of F.A. Ames Co.

Triplett was only 27 when he took over management of his father-in-law's buggy building company. "I was probably the youngest manager of a buggy factory," he says.



"I had a part in designing those buggies. My sales manager came into my office one day we had adjoining offices and asked me how long I wanted to continue making buggies. (When I first knew the buggy business it was on the decline)."

Triplett told the sales manager, "Just as long as you can sell 'em and we can make 'em."

Although the buggy industry was already dying when he became involved with it, Triplett says there were still 75 to 100 buggy manufacturers in the nation in 1917.

"We were the last of the big ones," he says. "We were always in the top two or three (buggy companies). Henderson, Owensboro and Evansville, I guess, built half the buggies in the United States."

Although he never worked on buggies, other than designing them, Triplett says, "I was capable of doing it. I could do with my hands what most of the people in my business were doing. I made it my business to learn it. I never made my living with my hands, but I was capable of doing it."

Although the last few years before Ames stopped manufacturing buggies in themid-1920s are described as the declining years of the industry, Triplett says the buggies were actually better.

"The best buggies ever built in America were the last ones. We didn't go down we went up. We built the finest that I know.

"It went out gradually because Kentucky, Tennessee, Southern Ohio and Indiana were famous for their fine farms and they wouldn't give them up."

In Ames' heydey, the company catalogue listed about 100 different models from a road cart to a surrey, Triplett recalls.

What was the difference between a buggy and a surrey?

"A buggy typically was a one-seated affair with springs in front and back. A surrey was two-seated. It had to be a rugged article to take the beating it received from hills, valleys and rough roads. The buggy business was the most interesting of any and you dealt with some of the highest type people in the community," he says.

Until the last buggy rolled off the assembly line, Ames' was selling mostly to dealers of farm supplies, Triplett says.

"Owensboro had been a manufacturing center for many years. Hercules was the biggest (buggy manufacturer) in the country and we were always scrapping around for second place.

"Over where V.E. Anderson is in Seven Hills, we made seats and other parts for buggies and sold to other dealers. We also manufactured automobile bodies there."

The main plant was at Third and St. Elizabeth streets (Ames American Building today) and covered almost one city block.

"We later sold that property," Triplett I still go down there sometimes."

After buggy building died out in 1926, the company switched to furniture manufacturing. It was sold out six years ago to Whitehall Furniture.

Triplett, a high school athlete and long distance swimmer, was president of the Owensboro Board of Education from 1935 until 1942, was one of the organizers of the Owensboro Country Club and describes himself as a "Democrat, old time kind."



**Nomination Form for National Register of Historic Places – 1986:**  
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Name: Ames Building

Location: 401 W 3<sup>rd</sup>, Owensboro, KY

Owner: David Mead, 213 N. Main St., Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Description: The Ames Buggy Co. is composed of a complex of contiguous brick industrial structures of varying heights. This manufacturing complex covers a large section of a block near the downtown commercial area of Owensboro. The largest section of this complex is a four-story structure at the corner of St. Elizabeth and Third Streets. Brick piers on the upper floors and rusticated stone pilasters on the first floor divide this facade into three sections. Each of the upper floors have double tripartite windows in each section. Brick corbelling and a simple cornice with recessed panels finish the building. The detailing continues on the St. Elizabeth facade, which is divided into five sections. Modern fire escapes, awnings, windows and doors have been added to the building. Along Third Street, a small, two-story building connects the corner section with a central, four-story building. The two central buildings share a unified first floor supported by stone pilasters. The upper three floors of the central building have recessed, arched windows grouped into sections of three. A modern steel awning covers the main entrance to this section. Adjoining this central section is a three-story building at the corner of Third Street and Locust Street. Brick pilasters divide the upper floors of the Third Street facade into six sections, each containing a row of three arched double windows. The first floor stone cornice is still visible, but the stone pilasters have been covered with aluminum siding and brick walls and modern window sashes fill in the former window openings. Steel awnings also cover the entrances to this building. On the Locust side of the building, several arched windows and doors on the first floor have been filled in with brick. The second floor windows remain but have modern sashes. Most of the interior first floor space has been converted into office space. Much of the upper floor interiors retain the open, unadorned space associated with a factory building.

Significance: The buggy and carriage manufacturing business was the chief industry in Owensboro during the early 1900's with six buggy manufacturers, two buggy body makers, one wheel factory, and five wagon manufacturers. Frederick A. Ames came to Owensboro from Washington, PA in 1887 [should be circa 1875] and established a carriage repair shop which he expanded into one of the largest carriage manufacturing plants in the nation. He began by building new buggies in his spare time and found it necessary to build a three-story brick building at 3rd and Locust Streets in 1900. [should be 1887] By 1905 it was necessary to add additions and the final building covered one half of a city block. A second plant was built in Seven Hills, outside the city limits, as the company continued to grow. By 1926 It was one of the top two or three of the nation's carriage builders. Between 1915 and 1925 Ames made replacement bodies for Model "T" Ford automobiles, as the demand for buggies dwindled, and entered the upholstered living-room furniture business In 1922. The company filed bankruptcy In 1941 and the building was remodeled into offices. Despite the modern alterations and changes, the Ames Buggy Co. complex retains its architectural significance because of the simplicity of the original design and the variety of detailing, mass and height. This factory is an important surviving example of the solid, functional architecture that developed in Owensboro at the turn-of-the-century. Acreage: Approximately 1 acre.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 12 August 2007, p.1A:**

Coming home Man owns rare 1924  
vehicle with Owensboro-built body:  
Coming Home?

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

Eighty-three years after it left the F.A. Ames Body Co. plant on East 18th Street in Owensboro, Harry Waldrop's 1924 Ames Sport Roadster might be coming home this week.

Waldrop, who lives on a farm south of Pembroke in Christian County, is considering bringing the car - one of only 21 Ames/Fords known to have survived - to the Street Legends car show Friday and Saturday at Diamond Lake Resort near West Louisville.

But the Model T Ford with the Ames body was built years before air conditioning. And with only 20 horsepower, the 100-mile drive to Owensboro will take awhile.

"If it's this hot, I won't make it," Waldrop said Wednesday as the mercury neared the 100-degree mark on his farm.

The Weather Channel predicts a high of 97 for both days of the car show.

Ron Tipton of Owensboro is organizing an "Ames Homecoming" for the 2008 Street Legends show.

And he's hoping Waldrop and John McClaren, a Michigan man who also owns a Model T with an Ames body, will be able to come this year to spark more interest in the event.

The Ames story begins in April 1887, when Frederic A. Ames moved to Owensboro from Washington, Pa., and opened a carriage repair shop.

Within five years, the Ames Co. at Third and St. Elizabeth streets was producing 5,000 carriages a year with a work force of 60 to 75. And Ames buggies were selling from Maine to Mexico by the 1890s.

By the end of the decade, the Ames Co. claimed to be "the largest carriage factory in the world owned by an individual."

By then, it had a work force of 200 to 250 producing 15,000 buggies a year and shipping them as far away as Germany, South Africa and the West Indies.

The company even had a sales office in Havana.

But on July 13, 1900, James H. Parrish, an Owensboro banker, went tooling through town in his brand-new Waverly - the city's first automobile.

And though few realized it at the time, the wagon and carriage industry that had made Owensboro famous was on the way out.



Harry Waldrop steers his 1924 Ames Sport Roadster down the driveway of his Christian County home Wednesday. Waldrop is considering bringing the car – one of 21 Ames/Fords known to have survived – to the Street Legends car show at Diamond Lake Resorts next weekend. The Ames body, which sits on a Ford Model-T, was built on East 18th Street. Harry Waldrop and his wife, Ilene, spent months restoring the car, which he bought from the original owner in 1958.

#### First Ames in 1909

In late 1909, Ames decided to build his own "horseless carriage."

His shop built the car, and the Guenther-Wright Machine Co. built the engine.

On Oct. 13, the first car made in Owensboro made a trial run up the steps of the old YMCA at Third and Allen streets and then drove through the city.

From 1910 to 1915, Messenger-Inquirer records show, Ames built two models - the Ames 30 and the Ames Roadster at his Carriage Woodstock Co. plant at 1517 E. 18th St. - where Sun Windows is today.

They sold for \$1,500 and were advertised to travel at speeds of up to 50 mph in an era before paved roads.

"If memory serves me correct, around 400 Ames cars were made," Kevin Mowle, a Canadian who has spent 20 years researching the company, said in an e-mail, "Sales were poor, and I believe that Ames took the next three or so years to sell the initial inventory of automobiles made. Competition was fierce for expensive high-end cars like the Ames, with a limited number of people who could afford them."

However, the Web site Coachbuilt.com estimates that Ames was building 50 cars a month for five years or so.

"That the Ames was a most meritorious vehicle is indicated by the fact that after a test ride, a Texas automobile dealer ordered a lot of 50, because the Ames was the 'best \$1,500 car' in the entire country," the site says.

"The last models were called Kentucky Thoroughbred, which 'The Automobile' found appropriate: 'The car lives up to its nickname ... by its smooth lines, clean running board and general racy appearance'," the site says.

Mowle said he's never been able to find an Ames vehicle, despite years of searching. In 1915, he said, Ames gave up on the cars and began building "aftermarket bodies to fit the Model T chassis.

#### Made Model T's flashy

Henry Ford's Model T's were basic cars painted black.

The Ames bodies made them more sporty and more flashy.

One ad from that era says, "Makes Your Ford the Smartest Little Car In America."

"They promoted the bodies and franchised dealerships across the country to sell both the bodies and assembled Ames/Ford cars ready to drive off of the showroom floor," Mowle said.

In 1924, a Christian County farmer named Malcolm Body spotted a Pepsi-Cola-blue Ames/Ford at a dealership in Clarksville, Tenn., and paid a little more than \$700 for it, Waldrop said.

"He bought it to go courting in, but she ran off and married somebody else," Waldrop said of the story he's heard many times. "He never drove it much after that."

Ilene Waldrop, Harry Waldrop's wife of 55 years, said Body "had kept it in a garage in Clarksville for years and then in a barn. A tree grew up in the barn door and they had to cut the tree to get it out."

Harry Waldrop saw the car in 1956 and wanted it.

"I kept after him to sell it to me for two years," he said. "And the last six months, I went to see him every day. People said nobody could buy this car from Mr. Body. And I was determined to get it."

Ilene Waldrop remembers the day in 1958 that her husband made the deal.

"I cried my heart out when he brought it home," she said, laughing at the memory. "He'd just gotten out of the Navy, and we'd bought a farm. We didn't have money to spare back then. And he bought that thing. Brought it home on a wagon. It was nothing but a pile of rust, and the top was hanging down in rags."

The car only had 300 miles on it, she said, but 34 years of neglect showed.

"We spent three or four months restoring it," she said.

"It wasn't that rusty," her husband said. "It had a couple of spots, but it wasn't that bad."

The restoration included painting the car red. But Harry Waldrop is thinking about painting it blue again.

#### Production ended in 1925

In 1925, Ames stopped making the car bodies and switched to building furniture, Mowle said.

The company closed in 1941.

Waldrop said he took the Sport Roadster on an 1,100-mile trip across Kentucky about 20 years ago during a Model T rally.

Then, it spent 15 years in the Pennyroyal Area Museum in Hopkinsville.

"It hasn't been on a trip in 20 years," Waldrop said.

The car, which doesn't have a gas gauge or a speedometer, gets about 12 to 15 miles to the gallon, Waldrop said. "The gas mileage isn't as good as people made it out to be."

The body is made of wood covered with sheet metal.

That was fairly common, said Waldrop, who also has a 1931 Chevrolet with a wooden body.

The Ames-built car – Model 826, Body 644 – has side curtains to keep the two-passenger vehicle warm and dry in bad weather.

"I drove it back from Hopkinsville (about 10 miles away) once when it was down to zero outside, and I stayed warm," Waldrop said.

The paint is flaking in several spots, and that bothers Waldrop.

"I hate for people to see it like this," he said.

Tipton said Indiana is having a national Model T rally next June.

A man in Washington state is planning to bring his 1916 Ames/Ford to that show, he said, and then leave it in Owensboro - possibly at the Owensboro Area Museum of Science and History - until the Street Legends show in August.

"I've been working on this for two years," Tipton said. "The guy in Washington state has enough Ames memorabilia to start a library. He's making copies for me."



## Ames Photo Gallery



F. A. Ames (from Owensboro Inquirer,  
Owensboro, KY, 29 January 1899, p.8B)



Frederic A. Ames (1856-1925) is in the front row with hands draped down over his knees. This is the central part of a much larger photograph (57 in. x 9 in.) of Ames and the employees of the F. A. Ames Company. The photograph was made in 1913 in front of the Ames Building at 401



West Third Street in Owensboro. Several copies of the photo are in existence. A full copy of the photo can be seen on the Library of Congress website ( <https://www.loc.gov/item/2007661674/> ). A copy can be viewed at the Owensboro Museum of Science and History (122 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Owensboro, KY).

In 1987 I acquired an original framed copy of the 1913 photograph. I had been contacted to do some historical research by Robert E. Anderson (1936-2020), owner of the Sun Windows & Doors Company in Owensboro. He wanted to create a mini-museum room in the Sun Windows' building at 1515 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street. He asked me to compile some documentation on the history of the building. In 1943 Mr. Anderson's father, Victor E. Anderson (1903-1972), had located his firm, V. E. Anderson Manufacturing Co. (manufacturer of widows & doors) in the building. The building was formerly the Carriage Woodstock Company that had been built by F. A. Ames in 1904. In my research in 1987 I contacted the late Frederic Ames Triplett (1921-2002), grandson of Frederic A. Ames. Mr. Triplett gave me the large 1913 framed photo of Ames & his employees. In 2018 I transferred the photograph to Ronald Tipton, an Ames car enthusiast, of Owensboro, KY.



Frederic A. Ames (1859-1925, standing left); his wife Nettie McMannon Ames (seated right), friends, Beauregard A. "Bootie" Evans (standing right) and his wife, Penelope Alexander Evans (seated left).





Frederic Alexander Ames (1859-1925), seated on right; seated left is George Vest Triplett (1856-1931); child, Robert Samuel Triplett, IV (1918-2004) held by an Ames employee, August George Bosler ('Gus', 1888-1957). Pictured was taken about 1920.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 17 October 1937, p.1B:**



Fifty years ago F. A. Ames began manufacturing horse-drawn vehicles in this small building. The two large Ames plants now in use were used successively in the manufacture of buggies, automobiles, automobile bodies and furniture. For the last twelve years they have been devoted exclusively to the furniture business. Inset is a photograph of the late Mr. Ames.





F. A. Ames Company letterhead



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 11 August 1966, p.14A:**



New Façade – Pictured above is the new face of the recently remodeled Ames Building located between St. Elizabeth and Locust Streets on 3rd . Now available is 48,000 square feet of office space with an additional 17,000 square feet scheduled for the near future. The view above is from the southeast corner of 3rd and St. Elizabeth and shows the 267 feet fronting on 3 rd. The construction is part of a move to give downtown Owensboro a new look through renewal.



V. E. Anderson Manufacturing Co, former Carriage Woodstock Company building, at 1515 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street in Owensboro, KY in 1943.



Ames Radiator Emblem





# Ames-bilt

4-Passenger CLOVERLEAF for Fords



*Makes Your  
Ford the  
"Smartest  
Little  
Car in  
America"*

**P**UT your Ford in automobile society by dressing it up with an Ames-bilt Cloverleaf. With this beautiful body on your Ford you can mingle with pride among the elite on the most select drive-ways. It is the classiest body ever built and will make your Ford the most beautiful little car in America—a source of genuine pride and constant satisfaction, an object of real admiration and envy on every hand.

Order this 1918 model today and be a year ahead of everybody in your vicinity. It comes complete, ready to attach to any Ford in a jiffy, \$215 f. o. b. factory.

Note for dealers of other phases and commercial bodies for Fords. Contact under a demonstrator with details regarding every Ford model & prospect.

**THE F. A. AMES CO., Inc., Owensboro, Ky.**

*Producers of Quality Vehicles for Over 20 Years*

SPECIFICATIONS	
Capacity of body, 4 seats	215 f. o. b. factory
Weight, 1,200 lbs.	
Wheel base, 48 in.	
Overall length, 108 in.	
Overall width, 48 in.	
Ground clearance, 6 in.	
Engine, 16-hp. Ford	
Transmission, Ford	
Drive shaft, Ford	
Front axle, Ford	
Rear axle, Ford	
Wheels, 16 in. spoked	
Tires, 16 in. spoked	
Steering wheel, Ford	
Brakes, Ford	
Lighting, Ford	
Horn, Ford	
Tools, Ford	
First cost, \$215	
Delivery, 10 days	



Ames-bilt Cloverleaf for Ford Model 1918

1917 ad



*Amesbill*  
TOOL & DIE

*The Quality must go in before  
-the Name Plate goes on*

FREDERIC A. AMES

R.S. TRIPLETT  
VICE PRES. & TREAS.

FREDERIC A. AMES  
PRESIDENT

E. KIRK  
SALES MANAGER

*The F.A. Ames Company*  
INCORPORATED  
Builders of Pleasure Vehicles for Thirty-three Years  
Owensboro, Ky.

*Deal in Old Kentucky*

circa 1920 ad





## A NATURAL DEVELOPMENT

### Home of the Hardwood



**T**HE valley of the Ohio, including particularly the states of Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, has furnished a very large proportion of the hardwood used in this country.

From the Alleghany and Blue Ridge Mountains the tributaries of the Ohio brought silt and clay and spread it like a floor over the river bottoms. In this soil thrived the oak and maple, beech and hickory.

Naturally the industries which sprang up in this section were dependent upon this wealth of hardwood and the central valley became renowned for its furniture, its mill work, and most of all for its carriages and wagons.

In the city of Owensboro has grown up an interesting group of vehicle manufacturers. The hardwood at their doors and easy water transportation close at hand combined to make Owensboro the "Wheel City."

### The Ames Industries

A pioneer in this development was Frederic A. Ames. More than thirty years ago he established in Owensboro a little factory which grew into the greatest carriage plant south of the Ohio. The name Ames became known on every highway and in every hamlet of the south and southwest, and there is little doubt that Ames buggies have had a big influence on the industrial development of this section.

When the automobile appeared Mr. Ames quickly formulated plans to build an Ames car that would measure up to the reputation of the Ames buggies. He and his associates spent time and money freely in experiment and development.

### The Ames Car

The climax of their efforts is the Ames 45, the "KENTUCKY THOROUGHbred." This car has demonstrated its ability to stand up under heavy strains, to perform consistently and satisfactorily under difficult as well as favorable conditions, and to give its owner the kind of service he expects to get for the price he pays.

### Just a Good Dependable Car

There are a number of reasons why the Ames should interest *you*.

#### 1. No Freak Experiments.

The Ames buggy was satisfactory to a large number of people because emphasis was placed on soundness of construction and design. The same policy is followed in building Ames motor cars.

#### 2. No Untried Parts.

No accessory or part unit is included in an Ames car except it has proved its merit in actual service, and has an added guarantee in the responsibility of the manufacturer who builds it.



FREDERIC A. AMES





**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 10 October 1991, p.1C:**



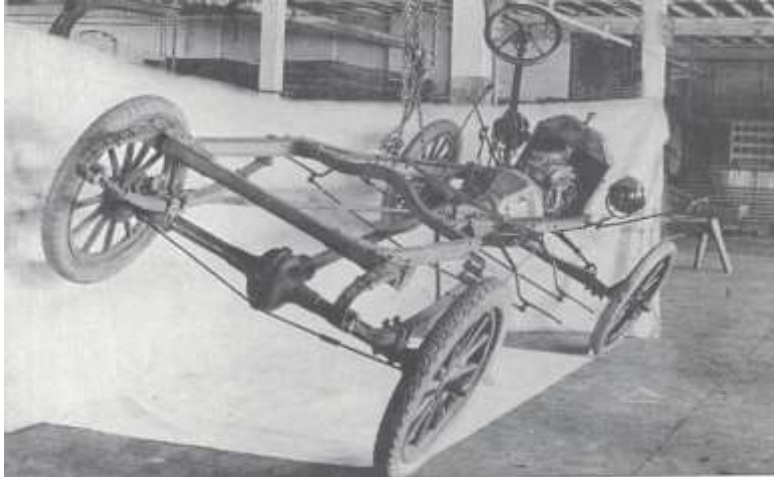
Getting ready to roll: Sam Kravetz, left, gets help moving the cab of a turn-of-the-century Ames & Co. buggy from right, Owensboro Area Museum Director Don Boarman, curator of exhibits Dillus Moseley and assistant Chris Norton. Kravetz found the mint-condition buggy in Indian's Amish country.



**A Pictorial History of Owensboro – Daviess County,**  
**Vol. 1, Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 1994, p.21:**



An Ames Model 827 Speedster built ca. 1916. The car cost \$140 with fenders, khaki top and windshield, or \$110 without the top and windshield.



Ames Chassis used by Ames Company.



Ames carriage buggy.



In 1887 Frederic A. Ames began manufacturing horse-drawn spring vehicles. The F. A. Ames Co. was known as one of the foremost carriage factories, building a full line from a two-wheel cart to the finest surrey. The last buggy was made in June 1926. It is estimated that over 300,000 Ames buggies, carriages and spring wagons were produced at the Third Street Plant.



**Postcard History Series: Owensboro, Terry Blake & David Edds, Jr.,  
Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC, 2017, p.24:**



Frederic A. Ames opened a carriage repair shop on the southeast corner of Third and St. Elizabeth Street in 1887. A native of Washington, Pennsylvania, Ames enjoyed building new buggies in his spare time. The business grew to be among the top carriage builders in the nation by 1920. When the last buggy was completed in June 1926, over 300,000 buggies, carriages, and spring wagons were estimated to have been manufactured by Ames. The [following] real-photo postcard shows Mr. and Mrs. B. S. Chambers of Dixon, Kentucky, in front of the downtown Owensboro headquarters. The sign in the window reads, "We sell Ames Buggies bred in old Kentucky."



**Owensboro Today, Owensboro, KY, April 2006, p.22:**



Ames Auto



1918 four passenger Ames Cloverleaf body



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 2 October 2021 p.1C:**



Frank Anderson, Sun Windows & Doors, president, stands next to his Ames bodied Model T Ford in the newly-restored Sun showroom at 1515 E. 18th St. The car was manufactured in the same building that has been home to Sun Windows & Doors since 1942.



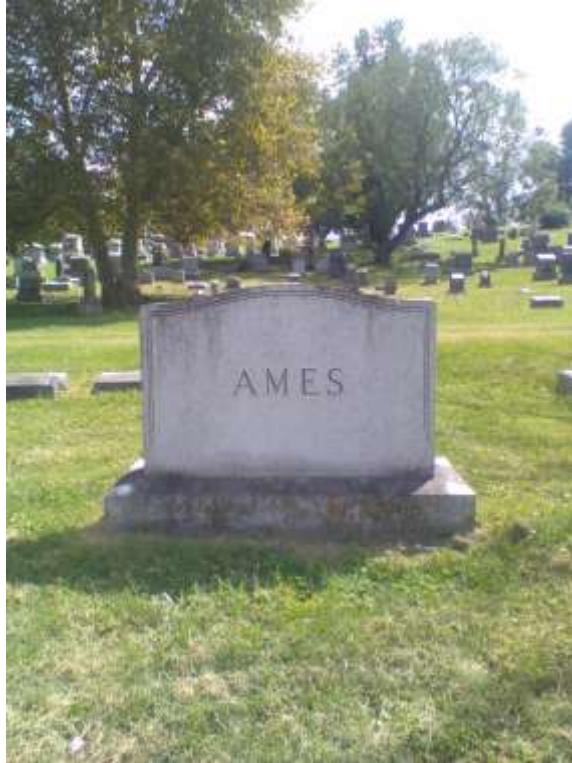


A Ford Model T, with an Ames car body that was manufactured in Owensboro, is on display in the showroom of Sun Windows & Doors. The vehicle is owned by Ron Tipton of Owensboro.



Ames 1925 Speedster, owned by Ronald Tipton, of Owensboro, KY. Displayed at Daviess County Memorabilia Day at the Daviess County Public Library in Owensboro, KY on 11 July 2015.





Ames family lot in Section B at Elmwood Cemetery, Owensboro, KY:





## **Some Owensboro newspapers articles about F. A. Ames**

### **Compiled by Jerry Long**

- Semi-Weekly Messenger – 1881: 5/20 p.3 (F. A. Ames married Miss Nettie McMannon in Owensboro, 19 May 1881, daughter of E. S. McMannon)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1887: 3/6 p.4 (erecting a brick carriage factory at the corner of 3rd & St. Elizabeth)
- Messenger & Examiner – 1887: 3/10 p.3 (carriage factory of Fred Ames will be built at Third & St. Elizabeth)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1887: 4/16 p.4 (“The new carriage factory”)
- Messenger & Examiner – 1887: 4/21 p.3 (Ames factory under construction)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1888: 1/1 p.7 (factory of F. A. Ames & Co. a growing business)
- Messenger & Examiner – 1888: 1/5 p.4 (articles on local businesses)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1888: 2/25 p.4 (purchased lot at the corner of Third & St. Elizabeth Streets, will erect a two story corrugated iron warehouse to be used in connection with his carriage factory)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1888: 3/14 p.4 (preparing to erect carriage warehouse)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1889: 11/26 p.4 (sold his carriage warehouse in Henderson)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1891: 3/29 p.4 (his factory described)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1891: 11/8 p.4 (F. A. Ames Company becoming a big industry)
- “A Glimpse of the Progress of Owensboro, Daviess County, Ky.”, Inquirer Publishing Company, Owensboro, KY, 1892
- Owensboro Messenger – 1893: 12/6 p.1 (enlarging carriage factory on Third & St. Elizabeth; the new building will be on the west side of St. Elizabeth and will be 3 stories, 30 feet wide & 135 feet long)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1898: 10/16 p.1 (wins three blue ribbons in vehicle department at St. Louis Exposition, his factory is now largest in world under ownership of one man)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1899: 1/29 p.8B (“Marvelous. The March of Progress of F. A. Ames & Co.”, Special Illustrated Edition on Owensboro and Daviess County, pictures of F. A. Ames & his plant)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1899: 2/26 p.4 (F. A. Ames & Co. swamped with orders)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1899: 3/12 p.1 (shipping about 1,000 vehicles a month)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1899: 12/29 p.1 (elected to the Owensboro City Council)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1900: 3/2 p.1 & 3/6 p.1 (Owensboro Buggy Company incorporated)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1900: 3/6 p.4 (“Arbitration Prevents Suit Over the Name of a Corporation”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1900: 3/25 p.8 (new four story brick addition to factory nearing completion)
- Owensboro Messenger – Industrial Souvenir Edition of the Owensboro Daily Messenger, Spring 1900, p.16 (“F. A. Ames & Co. A House With A Remarkable History”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1900: 7/31 p.2 (four story addition to plant at corner of Third & St. Elizabeth Streets)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1900: 7/31 p.1 (addition to factory at 3rd & St. Elizabeth will take place of old church building)

- Owensboro Inquirer – 1901: 2/21 p.3 (bought the residence of Dr. C. H. Todd on Frederica Street for \$5,500 and sold his residence on South Frederica to John L. Lyne for \$4,500)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1901: 3/31 p.11 (company has grown in past 14 years; several personnel are named)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1901: 4/28 p.10 (copy of his paper on Good Roads that he read at a recent meeting of Daviess County Farmers' Institute)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1901: 8/6 p.4 (proposes a union station train depot at meeting of Owensboro City Council)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1901: 11/17 p.9 (contract for 5,000 buggies)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1902: 11/23 p.12 ("Men Who Have Made Owensboro", while an infant his family moved to Washington County, PA, at age of 18 came to Owensboro and found a position with Benjamin Driver, who was engaged in manufacture of buggies, after two years left & went to Central City & became a member of the firm of McMannon, Ames & Co., partners with E. S. & George P. McMannon, they engaged in coal mining, timber & a general store, at the end of five years he returned to Owensboro & again formed a partnership with Mr. Driver in the Owensboro Buggy Company, after two years this firm dissolved in 1889, and then formed his current firm, F. A. Ames & Co., this year the company produced over 20,000 vehicles, and employs about 225, the factory exports work to South Africa, Germany & Cuba; Mr. Ames is a member of the Owensboro city council)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1902: 11/24 p.1 (part of farmer's combine)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1903: 3/29 p.12 (to build a reservoir)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1903: 9/18 p.1 ("A New Factory: Hinges on the Securing of Way for a Switch")
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1903: 11/11 p.8 (erects unique advertisement on 25 foot tower at factory on Third Street)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1903: 11/18 p.3 (construction on new plant in Seven Hills will begin in a few days)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1904: 7/24 p.13 (new Ames Company factory at Seven Hills almost complete)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1904: 7/26 p.5 (new factory at Seven Hills)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1904: 9/11 p.4 (acquires 4 tracts of land in Seven Hills from Homestead Land Co. on the condition that he establish & operate a buggy manufacturing plant for a period of five years)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1904: 10/9 p.9 (Carriage Woodstock Company is incorporated)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1904: 10/9 p.5 (Owensboro Carriage Wood Stock Company incorporated)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1905: 1/17 p.1 (F. A. Ames Company incorporated)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1905: 1/18 p.4 (F. A. Ames & Co. incorporated)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1905: 7/16 p.11 (factory crowded with orders)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1905: 9/28 p.3 (F. A. Ames Company publishes its most complete & handsomest catalogue)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1906: 12/22 p.1 (F. A. Ames plant closes down over unionization issue)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1906: 12/27 p.1 ("Resumes With Non-Union Men", Carriage factory resumed operations)

- Owensboro Messenger – 1907: 6/19 p.2 (Carriage Woodstock Company to add a new building)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1907: 10/16 p.5 (addition to factory on Third Street is planned)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1908: 11/1 p.2 (begins construction of new building)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1908: 11/5 p.6 (“Fine Building To Be Erected By The F. A. Ames Company: Old Structure at the Corner of Third and St. Elizabeth Streets is Being Razed”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1908: 11/17 p.3 (“Work To Begin On The Ames Building Monday Morning: Old Structure at the Corner of Third and St. Elizabeth Completely Demolished”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1909: 1/20 p.2 (The New Ames Building”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1909: 10/9 p.3 (Ames automobile to be tested)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1909: 12/2 p.1 (“Finish Plant By First Of Year: To Be Used For Manufacturing Automobiles”; addition to Carriage Woodstock Company)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1910: 2/6 p.1B (first cars to be manufactured by F. A. Ames Company)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1910: 4/10 p.6 (“Fine Automobiles Made in Owensboro”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1910: 5/22 p.8 (“The Ames Industries in Owensboro”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1910: 7/17 p.11 (owners of automobiles in Owensboro)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1910: 9/25 p.7 (“Creating Intense Interest All Over the Country: The 1000-Mile Endurance Contest of the Ames “30” Completed With the Car Running as Smoothly and Apparently With More Energy Than When it Started”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1911: 2/21 p.4 (bought residence of Dr. C. H. Todd on Frederica Street, he will make it his home)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1911: 10/18 p.6 (production of Ames factory in Seven Hills to increase from 1 car a day to 3 with addition of new building)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1912: 7/16 p.1 (Ames Motor Car Company to incorporate)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1912: 8/8 p.3 (“Capital Stock is \$100,000: Ames Motor Car Co. Files Articles of Incorporation”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1914: 4/5 p.12 (full page ad for several Ames models)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1915: 1/10 p.1B (report on Carriage Woodstock Company)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1915: 8/22 p.8A (Ames Motor Co. to move plant to Third & Locust)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1919: 3/16 p.1B (“Change Name of Woodstock Co.: Ames Body Corporation Now Has Capital Stock of Half Million”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1919: 3/23 p.1B (“Ames Companies Will Soon Employ Six Hundred Men”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1919: 6/8 p.5B (“ Now Building Bodies For Ford Automobiles”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1924: 5/29 p.9H (“Two Big Factories Operated Here By F. A. Ames Co.”)
- Owensboro Messenger – 1925: 1/25 p.1B (“Ames Co. Plant in 7 Hills is Busy”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1925: 11/8 p.2 (“Lower Ames Factory To Pass A Factory Site – Will Be Converted Into Stores”)
- Owensboro Inquirer – 1925- 12/23 p.1 (“F. A. Ames Takes Own Life: Shoots Self With 41 Calibre Pistol At J. J. Hill’s Shop”)

- Owensboro Inquirer – 1925: 12/24 p.1 ("Tragic Death Due To Trivial Worries") and 12/24 p.6 ("Fred A. Ames")
- Owensboro Messenger – 1925: 12/24 p.1 ("Fred Ames, Despondent, Kills Self: Manufacturer Ends Life With Pistol In J. J. Hill's Gun Shop")
- Owensboro Messenger – 1933: 6/23 p.1 ("Death Comes To Mrs. F. A. Ames")
- Owensboro Messenger – 1937: 10/17 p.1B&4B ("Ames Industries Established Here 52 Years Ago")
- Owensboro Messenger – 1943: 7/2 p.1 (V. E. Anderson purchases old Ames company on 18th Street)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1961: 6/14 p.31C ("Ames Company: In One Family From Buggies To Furniture")
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1965: 2/19 p.1B ("F. A. Ames Co. Originally A Carriage Firm")
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1965: 10/5 p.8E ("Autos Made Here")
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1966: 8/11 p.14A ("Ames Building Modernization Aids Downtown", building owned by F. A. Ames Co., on Third Street between Locust & St. Elizabeth, converted into office space)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1969: 4/3 p.5C ("Evolution of Ames Auto Traced To Its Demise", by Hugh O. Potter)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1974: 9/29 p.10C ("Antique located: Pembroke man has Ames auto", by Joe Ford; owner - Harry Waldrop)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1976: 5/2 Bicentennial Edition, Part 1 p.4 ("Automobiles once rivaled Detroit products: F. A. Ames & Co. built reputation for buggies, cars")
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1976: 5/26 p. 1C ("Last buggies best, Triplett remembers", recollections of Robert S. Triplett)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1976: 10/8 p.1D ("Local automaker used county roads in 1910 for publicity gimmick", by Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1986: 5/6 p.1C (Ames Building, 401 West Third Street, declared historic, nominated for National Register of Historic Places)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1987: 7/18 p.1A ("Fire razes part of downtown building", by Dan Heckel, Messenger-Inquirer; west side of Ames Building at the corner of Third & St. Elizabeth Streets was destroyed by fire yesterday morning; the east side of the building, occupied by Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. was saved)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1991: 10/10 pp.1C & 3C ("Ames buggy rolls back to Owensboro: Relic will be on display at museum next week", by Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 1999: 5/25 p.1C ("Whitehall Furniture to be sold", by Steve Vied, Messenger-Inquirer; formerly the F. A. Ames Furniture Company)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 2002: 9/25 p.1A ("Wall of 18th Street building buckles", by James Mayse, Messenger-Inquirer; building is owned by Sun Windows; it was built in 1904 to house the Carriage Woodstock Co. by F. A. Ames; the building later housed Owensboro Junior College of Business until the college moved in 1999.)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 2007: 8/12 p.1A ("Man owns rare 1924 vehicle with Owensboro-built body, by Keith Lawrence. Messenger-Inquirer; 1924 Ames auto on display)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 2011: 6/12 p.1D ("Company displaying Ames autos in showroom", by Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer)

- Messenger-Inquirer – 2017: 10/15 p.1D (“Sun Windows shining brightly”, by Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer)
- Messenger-Inquirer – 2021: 10/2 p.1C: (“Bourbon, barbecue and cars: Owensboro was once home to automobile manufacturer”)

