

## Stalking Pulaski County 'Kicked' by his Ford

Cars built before the early 1920s didn't have electric starters to rotate the crankshaft and activate the fuel pump until the gasoline could fill the ignition chambers and explode, rotating the crankshaft, so the car could be driven. There was a crank at the center front of the car, at the base of the chassis. This crank was to be pressed against the crankshaft and turned by hand until the engine "fired". There was a skill to knowing when to release the crank engagement with the crankshaft, avoiding the crank continuing to spin along with the crankshaft, breaking a thumb or worse. At this time, at least one car owner was "kicked" every few months. And one death.

### Chris 'kicked' by his Ford

[In 1921, Chris Hansen, along with my grandfather, John Kruzick, and his brother, George, incorporated Winamac Cement Products, which built silos and small bridges. Chris was also a successful progressive farmer and active in civic affairs, e.g., July 4 Committee.]

#### **CHRIS NURSES "FORD HAND."**

While attempting to crank a Ford the latter part of last week, Chris Hansen sustained severe injury to his right arm when the thing "kicked" for him. One bone in the forearm above the wrist was broken, and the right thumb fractured.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat Jan 8 1925: 1. Microfilm.

### Chris 'kicked' by his Ford

Chris Hansen had the misfortune to break his right arm and thumb last Friday while cranking his Ford.

Winamac (IN) Republican Jan 8 1925: 3. Microfilm.

### Chris out of splint

Chris Hansen was able to take his hand out of the splints on Wednesday of this week after a severe accident while cranking his car.

Winamac (IN) Republican Feb 5 1925: p. Microfilm.

### Car runs over owner

#### **RUN OVER BY OWN CAR, FATALLY HURT**

Albert Boller, 59 Years Old, Resident of Beaver Township, Loses Life.

#### **CRANKS MOTOR WITH WHEELS IN GEAR**

Machine Plunges Forward as Engine Starts—Owner Unable to Stop It.

Cranking his automobile with the motor in gear cost Albert A. Boller of Beaver township his own life Sunday, when, with the machine advancing so rapidly that he was unable to get out of its path, he fell beneath the wheels and received injuries that resulted in death about four hours later.

The accident happened near the Reutebuch garage at Pulaski between 11 and 12 o'clock. Mr. Boller had stopped there to inquire about having some work done on his car. He had just returned after making a trip to Gary to deliver garden truck. After talking with men about the garage for some little time he walked to the front of the machine, a Chevrolet touring car, and cranked it.

He either did not know or had forgotten that the machine was still in high gear. It plunged forward as the engine started and he pushed vigorously against the radiator in an effort to stop it. Unable to do so, he lost his footing and fell under the wheels. Ed Reutebuch and other men at the garage saw the accident but were unable to reach the car in time to render help. Their first thought as they reached the injured man was that he was dead, but while they were discussing his condition he remarked that he was not hurt as badly as they thought. He was then carried to a shady place and made as comfortable as possible until medical aid arrived. The car ran against a post and stopped, the wheels spinning until someone shut off the gas.

**Fractured Skull Causes Death.**  
On reaching the injured man's side, Dr. T. E. Carneal advised his immediate removal to a hospital. He was placed in the doctor's car and the drive made to Logansport, Ed Reutebuch accompanying. At St. Joseph's hospital an X-ray examination revealed a fractured skull, broken bones at one shoulder and at one hip, and three broken ribs. Death came about 3:30, due to the skull injuries.

The remains were brought to the Anstis & Barnett undertaking parlors in this city yet that evening, and were taken to Marion for interment on Tuesday. Services were held in that city.

Mr. Boller was fifty-nine years of age, and lived for a number of years in Beaver township, west of Pulaski. His wife died twelve years ago, and he has lived alone most of the time since. He leaves a daughter living in California, a sister in Michigan, and a brother, Cyrus W. Boller, in Gary. The latter was here Monday making arrangements for the funeral.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat 1 Sep 1927: 1. Microfilm.

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Car runs over owner

### ALBERT BOLLER LOSES LIFE UNDER AUTO AT PULASKI

Albert A. Boller, aged 59, of Beaver township, died Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock from internal injuries and a fractured skull he received when he was run down by his own automobile. Mr. Boller was in Pulaski when the accident occurred at about ten o'clock Sunday morning.

When he started to crank his machine it was in low gear and he attempted to keep it from running into the river. The power of the car was greater than the man and Boller was knocked down and run over. The car hit a post and stopped before reaching the river.

Winamac (IN) Republican 1 Sep 1927: 1. Microfilm.

By the mid-1930s, those who could afford it bought cars with electric starters. The rest had to continue to take their chances.

Compounds on both arms from Ford kick

### Car Left in Gear; Breaks Cranker's Arms

(Monterey Correspondence)

Clarence Fisher of Leiters Ford suffered a compound fracture of both arms Monday evening in a peculiar accident at his home. He was cranking a car, which had been left in gear, and was knocked down when the car jumped ahead and struck him. He was taken to the Woodlawn hospital at Rochester for treatment.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat Aug 19 1937: 1. Microfilm.

By the 1940s, hand cranks were rare, but accidents did occur.

Crank boy recovering

### Boy Injured Cranking Truck Is Improving

Robert Dennis, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dennis of Indian Creek township, is recovering from injuries sustained on May 4 when a truck driven by his father knocked him down and passed over his body after the boy had cranked the engine. The youth, fourteen years of age, was to have returned to his home from St. Joseph's hospital at Logansport Wednesday unless prevented by flood. He is in a cast because of three broken vertebrae.

At the time of the accident it was not known definitely what had happened, but after Robert regained consciousness he stated that as he was bent over removing the crank after starting the engine the truck started. It knocked him down and he went rolling over and over under the vehicle. Mr. Dennis was unable to see the boy when he started the truck.

Pulaski County (IN) Democrat May 20 1943: 8. Microfilm.