

Poem on Early Road Building on the Santiam

The following is a clipping taken from The Statesman back in 1939, which tells of early road building on the Santiam. A subscriber thought it good reading so sent it in for publication:

"List to me good people, all, with patience if you can, I'll sing you of a jovial crew that lived by Santiam, Who started out to clear a route to eastern Oregon, And make, to join our people, one more enduring band. Across the Cascade range to go, amid great mountains white with snow, Where tallest firs and cedars grow and coolest, brightest waters flow. A jolly band of mountain men As ever threaded gorge or glen; I say this truly—well I can; I knew these boys of Santiam.

In early June the camp was set, and then the work began. Tho' woods were damp, the weather wet, and every gully ran, This did not stay their ardent zeal; they use the lever, ply the steel Of saw, of ax, of sledge or wedge, as cut or break their way they can. Up through rough canyons broad and deep, past frowning precipice steep. With Wasco plains their goal their calm determined way they keep. A plucky band of mountain men As ever threaded gorge or glen; I say this truly—well I can; I knew those boys of Santiam.

Thus, like a band of brothers joined, they worked their eastward way, No servile Asiatic men, driven by grim want for pay, But self respecting citizens, who well their public interests ken, And know what makes good

highways is work becoming kings of men.

And when a day of rest they take, some cull the rare plants from the brake, Some plumb the depths of mountain laeks, some scale the heights of Jefferson. A band of keen, observing men As ever threaded gorge or glen; I say this truly—well I can; I knew these boys of Santiam.

And when, in camp, for food or rest this party did convene, The song, the story, and the jest were not their only theme; From game and range and public lands to the world's wants their talk expands. How Europe on our plows depends

7—THE MILL CITY ENTERPRISE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1954

and to what shores our trade extends; Fair woman's beauty, man's good name, the statesman's wisdom, soldier's fame. The school, the pulpit, and the pen, passed in review before them then. Such were the boys of Santiam, On mountain top or shady glen. Include our cooks—our party, then, Were pretty girls and honest men."

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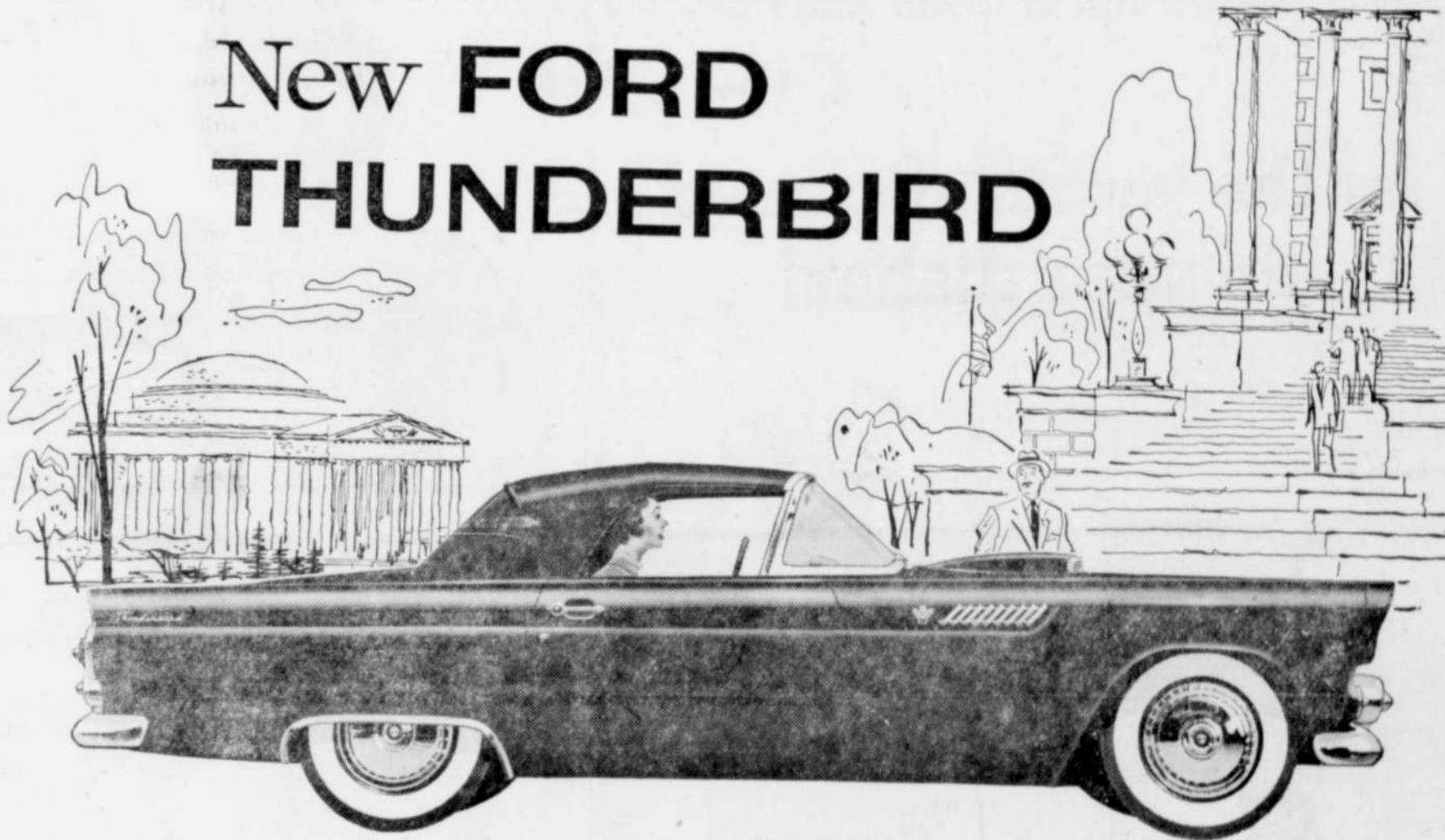


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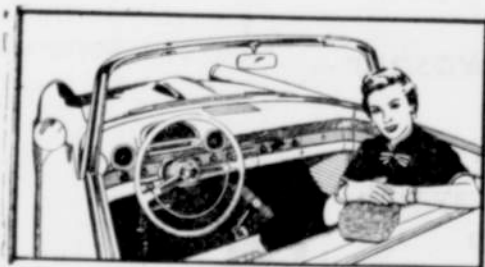
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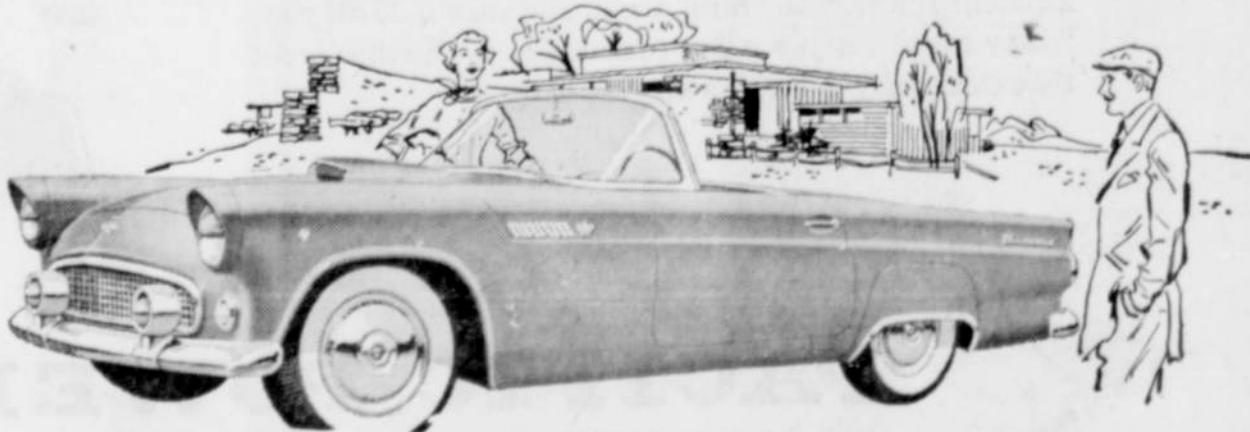
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