

The Ahooguh Origin

by Tom Endy

The ahooguh horn, also known as a Klaxon horn was developed and patented by Miller Reese Hutchison, an inventor of the early 20th century. Hutch, as he was known, patented the mechanism in 1908. The Lovell-McConnell Manufacturing Company of Newark, New Jersey bought the rights to manufacture the device and it later became standard equipment on motor cars. Franklyn Hallett Lovell Jr., the company founder, coined the name *klaxon* from the Ancient Greek verb *klazō*, meaning shriek. Klaxon horns produce an easily identifiable sound, often described in English as "ahooguh". Like most mechanical horns, the klaxon has largely been replaced by solid-state electronic devises, though the memorable tone has persisted on in classic cars of the era. Klaxon later became a brand name. The Klaxon horn was used on U.S. submarines during WWII. The Klaxon horn's characteristic sound is produced by a spring-steel diaphragm with a rivet in the center that is repeatedly struck by the teeth of a rotating cogwheel. The diaphragm is attached to a horn that acts as an acoustic transformer and controls the direction of the sound. In the first Klaxons, the wheel was driven either by hand or by an electric motor. Hutchison went to work for Thomas Edison in 1909, and was the chief engineer for Edison from 1912 to 1918. The ahooguh sound is usually heard today when a Model A Ford goes rolling down the road.



Miller Reese Hutchison 1876 - 1944