

the A-400 Group

Box 1931 - Altadena, CA 91001

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A-400's in The Netherlands



We have three photos of this unnumbered A-400 owned by A. H. J. Kok in Blaricum. The engine number is only 4 away from the car of Lembeck, indicating that they may be among the cars shipped to Amsterdam in 1931. See Restorer 11-1, pp. 20-21.



Mr. Kok's car has come a long way. The interior wood had been burned away by a fire set by some young boys. The body shell was later used as a henhouse for several years. He still needs some rare parts and lots of help.



In this side view of Mr. Kok's convertible sedan, we see that it has the split splash apron typical of 1930 Model A's. With the scarcity of parts in Holland, such departures from authenticity may be necessary, or may even be original features of foreign built cars in 1931.

In the early 1960's a friend of Ed Rossig, who was going through the old files of a shipping company, found some photos of Model A's being put onboard a ship for Amsterdam. Imagine the interest and delight when they discovered the cars were all A-400's ... 29 of them! Nothing more is known about the shipment. Why was it all of one body type? Why were complete cars sent, when there was an assembly plant in Amsterdam? Does this represent all the A-400's originally sold in The Netherlands? in Europe?

If so, the survival rate is very high. We know of six A-400's now (or previously) in the Netherlands. With the help of Jan Dirk Legger in 1961, Ed Rossig located five A-400's. We lost touch with them in the years that followed. When the A-400 Group was reactivated in 1975, I obtained some updated names and addresses, but was not successful in reaching them.

Last year, when I received a letter from Roland Van Schelven of Gouda (asking about information in *The Restorer*), I jumped on the chance to trace the lost A-400's. He not only unscrambled the names and addresses, he obtained photos of most of the cars. We have now established correspondence with several owners.



H. H. M. Lembeck of Ermelo owns this yellow beauty (Body No. 3211). In 1961, it was reported in a wrecking yard and beyond repair. Many of the rare parts had been removed for use on car No. 3229. However, recent reports say Lembeck is the fourth owner, and that the original owners (still living) took an annual trip in the car to Switzerland.

In trying to match the body numbers on our old roster with what they reported, #3229 was missing. Studying the photos, both the new ones and those published in Rossig's A-400 manual, I made an interesting discovery: Rossig had inadvertently switched two photos. The license number of Henne Hemmen's car matches that of #3229.

Unfortunately, Hemmen was told that the Ford dealer he purchased the car from was the original



This nicely restored A-400 (Body No. 3229) is owned by H. Hemmen of Paterswolde, who purchased it in 1962 from a Ford dealer in Ulrum, Groningen. The A-400 Group records show it was sold by Jan Dirk Legger to Rein Nieboer prior to 1961.

owner! We can now trace ownership through several prior Model A enthusiasts. Sorry, Henne!

We also know from J. Legger's 1961 letter that some of the rare parts were removed from one of the other cars for the restoration of #3229. He identified the car as #3211, presently owned by H. H. M. Lembeck of Ermelo. However, his description of the stripped and burned-out wreck is more likely that of Anton Kok, the car pictured on page one. I suspect the body number plate was also removed and used in Lembeck's car.

Several body numbers are close enough to have been included in the shipment of 29 cars in 1931 (assuming the numbers were consecutive), but the cars of Van Schuppen (#2841) and Foester (#2850 - now in the U.S.) are not.

As an A-400 Group project, I feel we should take on the task of helping Anton Kok complete his A-400 to drivable condition. He needs a lot of help in reconstructing the seats and top. His sister in Colorado has offered to serve as translator and point of contact in the U.S. If you can help with specific information or parts for the complete replacement of seats, interior, and top structure, please contact me (Phil Allin) or:

Agi Rosenberg
830 Ursula St.
Aurora, CO 80011

Note: Mrs. Rosenberg will be returning to Holland in September. We need to help soon!



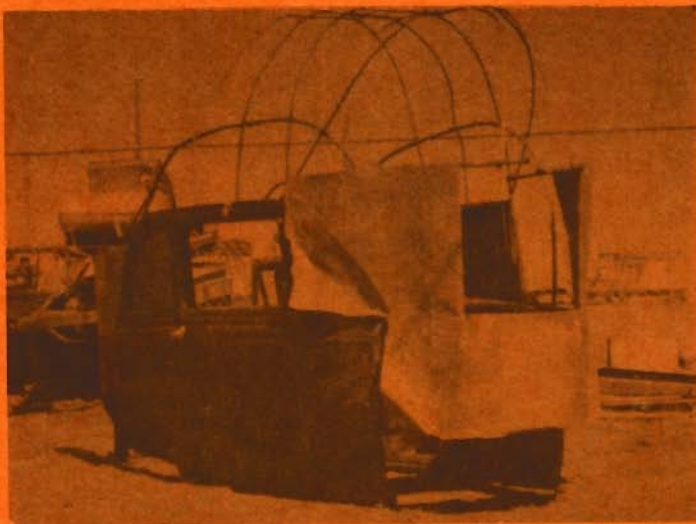
Group News



Perhaps the longest owned A-400 in our group is #4170, owned since the early 1930's by Samuel Osgood of Akron, OH. It now has the original wheels back on it.

Response to the questionnaire has been very good; over 67% of the "confirmed" owners on our 1977 list have verified that they still have their A-400's. I apologize for the short deadline. When I prepared the questionnaire, I expected to mail the issue first class. The extra pages pushed us over the 1 oz. limit, so the postage would have been 24¢ each. I decided to send them as "printed matter", and you know what happens to such mail in the Christmas rush.

I held off publishing the 1978 Owners List in this issue because there is a lot of information on part sources and items needed by members which needs to be digested before I can publish the new roster. There are a few new owners and address changes (included in this issue), but most of the 1977 list is still correct.



So you think your A-400 is rough! This A-400 body, owned by Dr. Merlin Peay of Albuquerque, NM., was made into a horse trailer. Recent reports are that he found another A-400, so this restoration will have to wait.

THE A-400 LOG

PART 2

LOG

by Phil Allin

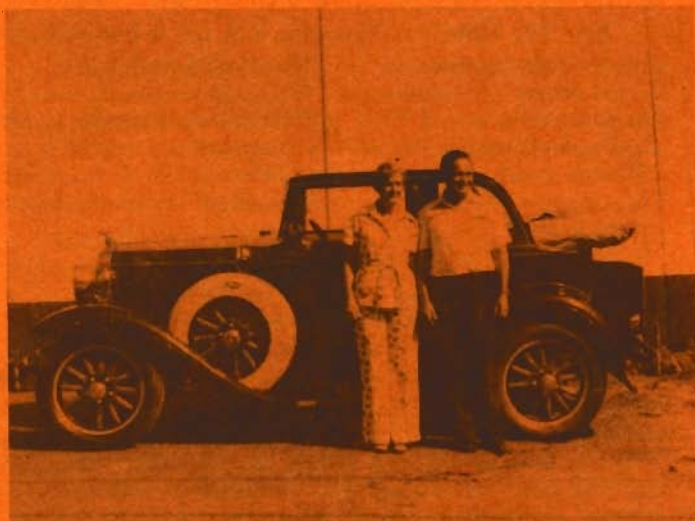
This is a continuation of a personal diary telling how we acquired and restored our A-400. It was originally published in *The Restorer* (Vol. 10, Issue 6).

NEXT PAGE

Note: The A-400 referred to in the May 3rd entry is now owned by Ron McIntosh of Visalia, Calif. Its restoration was just completed within the past month (and it's beautiful!)

Next Issue

The next issue will include an updated listing of A-400 parts reproductions, plus the parts needed or available by each member. "The A-400 Log" will be continued (an unpublished sequel to what appeared in *The Restorer*) if there is space. I am working on technical articles describing the floor structure (from the cross sills and floor pans to the seat supports), seat construction, and accessories typical of the A-400. If you have information to share on these topics, please write.



Bob and Delores Nick (Waterford, PA.) own this A-400 (#1809) with unusual wooden spoked wheels.

I repaired the back seat upholstery with some brown vinyl we had . . . looks pretty good. Reinstalled the rock guard on the radiator, even though it will have to come off again for plating.

Today I trimmed a little off the top over the right door. It was a little too wide and kept getting caught in the door. I hand-sewed the edge binding. Took out the seats and gave the interior a good scrubbing . . . painted it black.

I retapped the holes for the floorboard screws. We need a dozen 12-24 screws to secure it right.

Well, the miracles of the A400 keep happening. Today we were at Loma Alta Park and another "A" drove in. I introduced myself and found out they were from Highland Park (Calif.) Their 1930 Tudor Sedan is partially restored, but he says he doesn't plan to put the 19" wheels on . . . but he has a set which he will sell us for the price he paid . . . 50c each!

April 27, 1964 . . . Today we bought the wheels . . . for \$2.50 (five wheels) and also got a set of four hubcaps on an even exchange for my present ones (for 16" wheels).

May 2, 1964 . . . This weekend we drove to Porterville (Calif.) in our Chevy. I showed a picture of our A400 to my uncle. He said he knew of someone in Porterville that has done. He told us where the man lives and we decided to see if it really is an A400.

May 3, 1964 . . . Sure enough . . . the car is an A400. It belongs to (censored). The top is gone and the interior is quite weathered. The rear bumper is gone, but most of the car seems to be intact. (The car also lacked the garnish trim and ashtrays, which are so hard to find.) I talked briefly with the owner. He didn't seem interested in selling, but we will try to change his mind.

May 6, 1964 . . . Tonight I brushed the top of the car to remove the weathered layer of material. It looks much better now.

May 9, 1964 . . . Straightened the right door so it will close properly. I worked on the rear window mechanisms to make them work better now. I stripped the paint off the left door and re-primed it.

May 11, 1964 . . . Today I sent a letter to the Porterville A400 owner, offering a trade of a Model A pickup (in good running condition) for his convertible sedan. Now all we can do is hope. . . .

May 12, 1964 . . . Things to look for at Swap Meets:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| *Interior window trim for doors | *Rear tail light (right) |
| *Ash tray (1) | *Luggage rack |
| Inside door handles (2) | *Outside door handle, scroll type (R) |
| Window crank | Choke rod |
| *Escutcheons (4) | Headlight lenses |
| Hood bracket | Bumper brackets |
| Right front fender | Ignition switch |
| Sparton horn plate | Wind wings |
- *Priority (This is a good indication of how naive I was)

June 1, 1964 . . . I have been doing some work on the fenders and splash apron on the right side. They've shaped out pretty well. I think if we get the front fender welded, we can use the one we have. It has been hard to get the running board as far forward as it should be (because the brackets had been bent way back). After trying to pull the brackets forward with cabinet clamps, jacks, etc., I tried the "direct" approach and pounded them with a big wrench (like 20 lbs.).

We need a new muffler. The old one rattles like it has tin cans inside.

June 6, 1964 . . . Today I did a little work on the car in preparation for a swap meet tomorrow. I primed the fender and right door with what I thought was grey primer. It turned out to be light grey and glossy! Looks terrible. . . .

June 7, 1964 . . . The swap meet was a big nothing! There was too much junk . . . some nice looking cars. Everyone wanted to sell things; nobody wanted to buy. I bought a tail light.

June 11, 1964 . . . This weekend I did some body work . . . stripped down the right door and filled some dents with polyester filler. Then I primed the whole side and hood. I also wired up the new tail light and installed a new muffler.

July 13, 1964 . . . Converted the headlights back to bulbs and reflectors. I had some trouble with the right one shorting out, but I traced down the problem.

July 20, 1964 . . . Traded our new "A-oogah" horn for a genuine Sparton horn. Things to do: Have wheels sandblasted, prime and paint, buy new tires.

August 23, 1964 . . . I began stripping the old paint off the 19" wheels . . . using paint remover, steel wool, wire brushes, and elbow grease. So far I have two done and primed. The other three are almost done . . . just the "detail" work to do.

August 24, 1964 . . . We ordered five tires from Sears. I wanted to get Goodyear tires, but they would cost quite a bit more and we need some soon!

August 28, 1964 . . . Sears sent a card that said they couldn't supply the tires for two weeks. I was having some second thoughts about the Sears tires, so I cancelled the order and ordered some Goodyear tires. Finished cleaning and priming two more wheels.

September 6, 1964 . . . Painted the wheels (Tacoma Cream) and had the new set of tires mounted. They really look good and make the car look more like an "A."

September 12, 1964 . . . Well, today I started taking off pieces to finish priming the body. I removed the window frames, dash, windshield, seats, rear windows, window mechanisms, window channels, top, rear bumper, bumper brackets, mirrors. The rear bumper brackets are not the same length and one is broken. Primed part of the body.



APRIL 1964 . . . Stripping paint off the dash.



JUNE 1964 . . . Progress on the damaged right side.

Restoration Log, continued

September 13, 1964 . . . Continued stripping: floor boards, cowl trim, cowl lights, hood, hood welt, hood latches, headlights and bracket.

September 20, 1964 . . . Filled two holes in the left quarter panel. Removed the radiator shell, horn cover, and right front fender. Also front bumper. Cleaned part of the front axle. Did some sanding here and there on the body. Next, I must get the welding done on the fenders.

September 26, 1964 . . . Today I picked up the front fender brackets which were being welded on a couple of small cracks. The man reinforced the area very well. So I reinstalled the brackets and the left front fender. I found that one of the bumper brackets needed straightening. After finding that I would have to take it somewhere that has a forge, I decided to do it with the barbeque and the vacuum cleaner. . . .

I got the charcoal going and blew it with the vacuum cleaner. By burying the piece in the coals, I got it hot enough to bend straight. Then I quenched it to retain the temper.

September 27, 1964 . . . We decided the broken fender was going to be too much work to make look good. I noticed a good fender at one of the Ford parts shops for \$15, so we bought it. It will require some work, but no welding.

October 12, 1964 . . . I have been priming the body and fenders with lacquer primer . . . Shaped out the new fender pretty well. Removed the welt around the gas tank and primed under the cowl strip.

October 17, 1964 . . . I straightened the rear bumper brackets (using the charcoal-vacuum technique) but discovered the bracket-to-body connection on one is different by $\frac{1}{2}$ ". So I had to set the longer one into the wood about that much.

October 20, 1964 . . . I began wet-sanding the primer to remove rough areas. This showed up a few rough spots that aren't right yet: left front fender needs welding, right splash apron needs welding, right rear fender needs welding, rear splash apron is still rippled, hood and left front fender have ripples.

I repaired and installed the dash light.

November 1, 1964 . . . We picked up the cowl lamp brackets we had rechromed. I mounted the lights with 8-32 screws and nuts rather than the 10-32 screws because the heads fit better. I mounted the lights temporarily.

I removed the top bow mounting brackets. The pins will have to be remade because I had to tear them up getting them out.

November 8, 1964 . . . George Ladner is going to make the new mounting pins for me out of stainless steel. Tapped new threads ($\frac{5}{16}$ " coarse) into the bracket on one side from which I had to drill out the pin.

November 14, 1964 . . . Today I put the top back on the car after sewing the back seams and trim. Since it will cost at least \$150 to have the car painted, we will have to wait until next spring to do that step.

November 15, 1964 . . . I put new window channel on the back windows and reinstalled the glass and mechanisms. I reinstalled some of the window trim (frames) and door panels. I plan to glue new black felt on the deep window channel in the doors.

November 21, 1964 . . . During the week I repaired and "refelted" the deep window channel. After installing the left door glass, it worked pretty hard. When I tried to install the right door glass, it broke.

I would like to buy some new deep window channel before putting new glass in the doors. I installed the new top bow mounting pins this week.

November 22, 1964 . . . (I made a new estimate of the cost of restoring the A400 in comparison with the figures I set March 13, 1964.)

Comparison of Estimates

	March 13th	Nov. 22nd
1. Body Repair and Exterior	\$150.00	\$120.00
2. Painting	75.00	175.00
3. Wheels and tires	120.00	150.00
4. Chrome plating	105.00	70.00
5. Engine	50.00	80.00
6. Interior (upholstery)	145.00	150.00
7. New top	75.00	100.00
	<u>\$720.00</u>	<u>\$845.00</u>

November 24, 1964 . . . I noticed what looked like part of the original leather upholstery showing on the edge of one of the front seats, so I took out the tacks and slipped off the cover . . . sure enough! . . . under the light colored covers is the original leather on the seat backs. I didn't take the seat part off, but I'm pretty sure the original is gone from these areas. The parts which remain will help to show the pattern.

December 19, 1964 . . . I remembered that I have a window from the Model T, so I checked to see if I could cut a new side window for the "A." It was plenty big so I cut it to size. It took quite a while to smooth the cut edges, but I got it installed. We will want to change it to safety glass before completing the car.

January 31, 1965 . . . For several weeks I have been bothered by a lack of power, rough idle, and an odd noise when the engine is under load. I figured one of the valves may be burned. This was apparently confirmed when I made a compression check today. The No. 2 cylinder showed half the amount of compression of the others. So I pulled the head to correct the problem . . . but the valves showed no evidence of poor seating. There was nothing to explain the lack of compression.

I started cleaning out the carbon and polishing the valve seats. While cleaning carbon from the intake port on the No. 2 cylinder, I found the reason . . . a carburetor jet that has been floating around the intake manifold for months (since March). It is long enough to hold the valve open

and shows evidence of pounding on the ends.

February 21, 1965 . . . My work on the car slowed down quite a bit during the spring and summer. We went to a swap meet today and sold a pair of windwings, windshield frame, and a few small parts. I bought a few items and met a new A400 owner (Neal Gann, Ontario, Calif.)

May 20, 1965 . . . Today I had the running board and left front fender welded.

May 30, 1965 . . . A friend, Don Birchall, came by and said his Dad had bought a partial '31 Town Sedan with the slant windshield. He thought the windshield frame would fit my car. We checked the measurements and it is the same except for having no hole for the wiper shaft (and not being chrome plated).

July 25, 1965 . . . I had the windshield frame plated. It will be best to take the top piece off my old frame for several reasons, the most important being the bracket which supports the wiper motor.

September 20, 1965 . . . I haven't done much on the A400 for months. Yesterday we had the first (Pasadena Chapter) Rally of the Roses for Model As. The rain kept the turnout down to 15 cars, but it was a lot of fun for everyone and therefore successful.

September 23, 1965 . . . Tonight I installed the chrome plated windshield frame. This is only temporary because I plan to have the top piece of the old frame plated to use permanently.

October 1, 1965 . . . Tonight I took some more parts down to be plated: Top piece of windshield, windshield mounting strip, rock guard and mounting brackets, windshield wiper motor.

October 3, 1965 . . . I decided to have some more pieces chrome plated. So I took the top frame off. It required drilling the rivets out of the brackets, but they can be replaced. The additional parts are: Top frame, left and right, screws for second bow, mounting plates for main bow rubber cushions.

October 23, 1965 . . . Today we drove down to Knott's Berry Farm for the Model A Roundup (sponsored by the Orange County Chapter, MAFCA). There were a lot of beautiful A's there. Of the four trophies awarded in the 1930-'31 Open Class, three were for A400's! Les Jones, of our Pasadena Chapter, won the sweepstakes trophy with his 1931 4-door Phaeton. It sure makes me want to get my car restored. . . .

LOG OF COSTS

Record of all "direct" costs connected with the A400 to date.					
2-29-64	Purchase	\$100.00	7-12-64	Headlight lenses	5.00
3-1-64	Battery	17.63		Bulbs	1.00
3-2-64	Registration	11.00	8-29-64	Wheel paint	4.00
3-7-64	Gas cap	1.50		Spark plugs	3.60
	Hood latches	1.90		Window cranks, etc.	3.50
	Manual (catalog)	.75		Term. box cover	1.55
	Carburetor kit	3.80	9-6-64	Tires & tubes	131.70
3-18-64	Generator repair	7.94	9-15-64	Door handles, etc.	4.37
3-19-64	Fan belt	3.04	9-26-64	Welding, webbing	11.00
3-22-64	Manual	1.00	9-27-64	Fender (used)	15.00
	Radiat. hse, pipe, etc	3.85		Welding, Fndr brkts.	5.00
	Spark connections	.80	10-10-64	Primer	2.00
	Hood welt	1.60		Metal etch	2.00
	Dashboard screws	.75		Lacquer thinner	2.50
3-27-64	Running board (used)	7.50	10-17-64	Spark link, etc.	5.30
	Grommets	.60		Cowl brkt. plating	3.00
	Horn	12.50		Hood corners, etc.	3.50
	Horn wire covers	1.40		Engine gaskets	3.00
4-5-64	Right door (used)	10.00		Gear grease	.89
4-27-64	Wheels (5)	2.50	2-21-65	Running board rack	3.00
6-7-64	Tail light parts	1.20		Misc. parts	2.70
6-12-64	Muffler & tailpipe	8.50	5-20-65	Welding	5.00
	Tail light & lens	6.50	5-29-65	Windshield frame	5.00
	Hood bracket	.95	7-25-65	Wndshld fr. plating	10.00
	Total invested as of 6-64:	\$207.21	7-25-65	Wndshld rbr, tape	6.17
				(and on . . . and on)	

THE A-400 FAMILY . . . Wife Peggy, Son Paul, the author-restorer, and Son Steven.



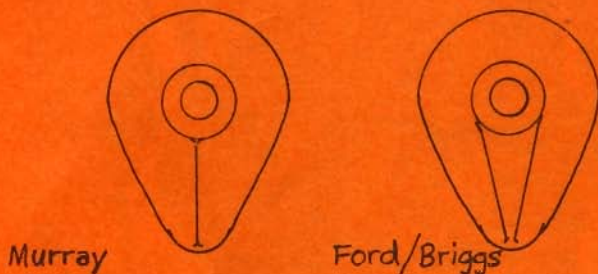
To be continued . . . we hope.

More on Striping, etc.

Paul Pestka (Wisconsin) added some interesting comments to his questionnaire reply: "I would like to discuss what happened to the wheel colors after June, 1931, when Tacoma Cream, Apple Green and Vermilion became the only wheel colors, and also the only stripe colors. I have found, from looking at original cars after June 1931, that the striper used any of the three with any body color, according to his taste. I have found Lombard Blue on a 68-C (Slant w/s Cabriolet) with an Apple Green Stripe. I own a 1931 Roadster (with 34,000 miles) painted Black with a Vermilion stripe, and red wheels.

"Bronson Yellow is a problem color after June 1931 -on the 68-C or A-400. If used, what color would the stripe be? Most answer with Vermilion and Black wheels. (Ed. note: Rodney Gott of the "68-C Group" says this is what they have found.) But this goes against the advertising of Colored wheels. The red, yellow, and brown combination is ugly. The only stripe that looks good, in my opinion, is Apple Green.

"I have also found a difference in the 1931 indented type firewalls. Cars with Murray-built bodies have a firewall indentation with a single crease from the hole to the edge. Ford and Briggs built bodies have a double creased indentation (as illustrated below):



"I have checked this out with several cars: two 68-C's (Briggs), four A-400's, and ten Ford-built cars. This would mean that Murray had its own dies, and (perhaps) Ford supplied Briggs with firewalls. This information may help people who need to replace their firewall (and don't know what to look for)."

I would be interested in hearing from anyone who finds that their A-400 has a Ford or Briggs-built body (as indicated by the double crease), or from anyone with a Murray body (as identified by the body number plate) which contradicts this information. --Phil Allin



Here's a closeup of the paint and striping on Vivian Hammer's (CA) car #1735. Note how nicely the "second pattern" stripe goes with the "style C" paint job.

Convention Plans

June will soon be here. The national conventions of MARC and MAFCA should provide another opportunity for A-400 owners to meet and discuss their shared interests.

Paul Buckhout was working on plans for an A-400 owners meeting at the Dearborn event. Nothing formal has been announced, but you might contact Paul (see: Iowa) if you're planning to be at the MARC national. I will not be able to attend that event because the Restorer has to be finished before we leave for Arlington, Va.

At the MAFCA event, I will be conducting an A-400 Owners Seminar on Thursday, June 29th, at 1:00 pm in the Thomas Jefferson Comm. Center. Ed Rossig and John Acerra have offered to assist in the seminar.

Following the convention, Peggy and I plan to spend some time in the East. Our current plan is to rent a car and drive to New York and Boston, returning by a different route for our return flight from Washington DC. We'd like to visit some of you in the northeast, so don't be surprised if you get a letter or phone call.



Ralph Yamicello's A-400 (#3152) in NY is nearing completion. He has painted it Bronson Yellow, just like the one he had in 1942 when he and his wife eloped.



Let's not forget the "lost" ones. This A-400 (#886), once owned by Ed Rossig, has still not been located. It has been reported as owned by various persons in Indiana, but no one has acknowledged having it.

Owners List Corrections

Status	Name	Address - City	State	Zip	Body No.	Notes
<u>New Owners and members:</u>						
78C	Parker Bros.	2021 W. Cheryl Dr., Phoenix	AZ	850--	--	from So. America
78A	Hodnett, Richard	8005 Alma Mesa Way, Citrus Hts	Ca	95610	-- U4	body (from Page (NH))
78m	Lewis, Marshall	Box 146, Empire	Ca	95319	n/o	
78C	Lewis, Ralph	Box 687, Tulare	Ca	93274	B-400	son has in Okla.
78D	Rosa, Michael	(no address) Sacramento	Ca	958--	1537	old record
78m	Summers, Bruce	1440 Veteran, #432, Los Angeles	Ca	90024	n/o	
78A	Clem, Doug	1915 Rosemont, Warsaw	Ind	46580	B-400	
78A	Perry, Chester	1001 Perry, Wichita	Ks	67203	110 U	from Colorado
78D†	Bradley, J.	(no address)	Ma		297 U	<u>not</u> sold to Worsham
78A	Holzwasser, Harry	555 Main St., Hudson	Ma	01749	3361 R	from Calif.
78C	Hallet, Russ	1412 Eaton Dr., Las Vegas	Nv	89102	--	
78m	Wilhelm, Jerry	7985 Dines Rd, Novelty	Oh	44072	n/o	
78A	Meyers, H. L.	5915 S. Walker, Oklahoma City	Ok	73109	4095	second A-400
78A	Miller, Dr. Cleon	7838 Crosby Rd. NE Woodburn	Or	97071	2106 R	from Windham
78C	Carlin, R. S.	P. O. Box 218, Snowshoe	Pa	16874	4372 R	
78A	Yeanish, B. W.	RD #1, Box 181, Slatington	Pa	18080	--	second A-400, from ND
78A	Bonagofski, Al	2903 Mt. Vista Rd, Centralia	Wa	98531	1240 R	from Cobb
78A	Baumgartner, Tom	2613 Lake Shore Dr, LaCrosse	Wn	54601	-- U	
78A	Bigioni, Aldo	140 Sylvan Ave., Scarboro, Ont.	Can.	M1M1K4	654	from Boyd
<u>Address Changes:</u>						
78A	Allin, Phil	2222 Loma Vista St., Pasadena	Ca	91104	1648 R2	(Yes, me!)
78A	Bolton, David	Rt. #3, Box 73, Dawson	Ga	31742	1595 U	
78A	Dye, Harold	863 Angevine Ct., Lilburn	Ga	30247	1976a R	from Alabama
78A	Astorino, Bob	600 Cloverlea Rd., Louisville	Ky	40206	2180 R1	from Massachusetts
78A	Lindberg, Jimmy	Rt. #3, Box 181, Cambridge	Mn	55008	-- U	