Horse & Buggy, Schmorse & Schmuggy

Author : michaelbloomer

From Motley Fool's CAPS Blogger, fooluser17: "As to the question of whether we should bail the companies out, whether or not it was the right thing to do: I take you back to a time of the horse and buggy. Buggy manufacturers have been riding a wave of sales. They make a good product, employ people, contribute to the economy. They employ so many people, there is a fear that if the car takes off, the buggy companies will fail and the wave of unemployment from these unemployed buggy makers will cause a major economic collapse. The government, fearing what might happen to our economy if these buggy makers are unemployed, gives in to the buggy makers' lobby, which has spent millions lobbying Congress for a bailout. The buggy makers get a bailout."

More apt would be if an entirely new transportation concept were replacing the entire auto industry, including Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, etc. Let's say tele-porting . . . in this case the proper analogy would be that one set of foreign owned but nationally produced carriage builders was receiving state subsidies that enabled it to employ a business model that undercut the wages of other carriage builders . . .

Now using the analogy further certainly, then it would have been observed, as now, "Well, these foreign owned businesses make better carriages . . ."

History:

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How many carriage builders were there? Were they "mom & pop" businesses, primarily? What about unions then?

In 1900 the 3400 plus wagon and carriage makers in the U.S. with five or fewer employees managed to coexist with the 134 companies with more than one hundred workers. . . .Most surprising, however, is Kinney's discovery that most small and medium-sized shops were able to more or less match the prices of their larger, and supposedly more efficient, counterparts by

buying most of their components from large, specialized parts suppliers. These firms gave even a small shop access to economies of scale and this combined with effective use of machine tools allowed small makers to produce a nearly custom product out of mass produced parts.

BOOK Review: The Carriage Trade: Making Horse-Drawn Vehicles In America by Thomas A. Kinney (Assistant Professor of History, Bluefield College, Virginia)
http://www.hbs.edu/bhr/archives/bookreviews/79/dvitiello.pdf

1911 Ency. Britt: "**BUGGY,** a vehicle with either two (in England and India) or four wheels (in America). English buggies are generally hooded and for one horse. American buggies are for one horse or two, and either covered with a hood or open; among the varieties are the "Goddard" (the name of the inventor), the "box," so called from the shape of the body, the "cut under," i.e. cut out for the front wheels to cramp beneath and so turn in a narrow space, the "end-spring" and "side-bar," names referring to the style of hanging. A skeleton buggy, lightly constructed, is used on the American "speedways," built and maintained for fast driving. The word is of unknown origin; it may be connected with "bogie" (*q.v.*) a truck. The supposed Hindustani *bagg?*, a gig, often given as the source, appears to be an invention or an adaptation into the vernacular of the English word."

The **stanhope** was a gig, buggy or light phaeton, typically having a high seat and closed back. It was named after Captain Hon. Henry FitzRoy Stanhope (ca. 1754 - 1828, son of William Stanhope, 2nd Earl of Harrington), ... would roll over in his grave

the primary mode of short-distance personal transportation, especially between 1865 and 1915. At that time, horseback riding was less common and required more specific skills than driving a buggy. herefore, until mass production of the automobile brought its price within the reach of the working class, horses and horse-drawn conveyances such as the buggy were the most common means of transport in towns and the surrounding countryside. Buggies cost as little as $25 to $50, and could easily be hitched and driven by untrained women or children. In the United States, hundreds of small companies produced buggies, and their wide use helped to encouraged the grading and paving of main roads in order to provide all-weather passage between towns. By the early 1910s, however, the number of automobiles had passed the number of buggies.

CARS History: In 1896, Benz designed and patented the first internal-combustion flat engine, called a *boxermotor* in German. During the last years of the nineteenth century, Benz was the largest automobile company in the world with 572 units produced in 1899 . . . *Daimler*, sold their first automobile in 1892, which was a horse-drawn stagecoach built by another manufacturer, that they retrofitted with an engine of their design. By 1895 about 30 vehicles had been built by Daimler and Maybach . . . The large-scale, production-line manufacturing of affordable automobiles was debuted by Ransom Olds at his Oldsmobile factory in 1902. This concept was greatly expanded by Henry Ford, beginning in 1914. . . Soon, companies had to have assembly lines, or risk going broke; by 1930, 250 companies which did not, had disappeared. . . of some

two hundred American car makers in existence in 1920, only 43 survived in 1930, and with the Great Depression, by 1940, only 17 of those were left. . .

Anecdote from Time, December 1948: "When he went back to his home town in 1915 to practice medicine, young Dr. William Lowry Pressly worked under a small handicap. It was embarrassing to be remembered, and hailed, as "Buck." But before long he was "Dr. Buck." After 33 years he is still Dr. Buck to most of the 2,250 people in Due West, S.C. But in other ways, times have changed. In wintertime, when the roads were too bad even for a model T, Dr. Buck used to make his calls in a horse & buggy. He traded in his model Ts every four months, and wore out 22. . ."

Anecdote from ca 1920s: "THOSE GLORIOUS HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS Gone but not forgotten are those glorious days of the horse and buggy. Thank the Lord we still have horses, but only in parades can you see them hitched to the beautiful carriages, buggies, carts, gigs and surreys (with or without the fringe on top). The elaborate stables and coach houses in the cities have been changed to wash racks or spaces for Bear-cat roadsters and limousines. The lofts upstairs where they stored hay or carriages and sleighs out of season, were remodeled into chauffeurs quarters and rooms for cooks or upstairs maids. Horse barns and buggy sheds along the narrow alleys were changed over to garages for Model-T cars and trucks. . . With this new era, many of the smoke dimmed blacksmith shops switched to repairing automobiles. Where the smug-faced smithy had once pounded out shoes from red hot iron amid flying sparks and the smell of burnt hoofs for the pacers, trotters and other horses, he now was grinding valves, cleaning spark plugs and changing oil. He didn't have time to make rings for the kids from horse shoe nails anymore. Along with the smithy went the harness shops, with the floor shaking from the stomp, stomp, stomp of their sewing machines as the harness maker put together a brand new harness or patched an old one for you. The harness shop was where you could find a bit to fit any horse's mouth, a cord or leather fly-net, a whalebone buggy whip with nickel furls for a dollar, or a cheaper one for thirty-five cents . . ."

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Heiss: employed the skills of painters, blacksmiths, carpenters, trimmers, machinists, and wheelwrights. Museum: Bronwen Sanders, Executive Director, Phone: 570-966-1355 Email: buggymuseum@jlink.net The Mifflinburg Buggy Museum preserves the only intact 19th century carriage factory open to the public in the United States.

It's also, on a deeper level, that we use a word that has little emotional content, "Big 3," as a stand-in for the bigger and more humanized words that mean "the millions of working people, and their families, who form the 'Big 3'" Using "Big 3" in its place makes it much easier to distance ourselves from their plight. A "Big 3" doesn't, in a real sense, "die," "go hungry," or "go without a meal"; except metaphorically, a "Big 3" is inanimate. But "people who work to support their

families" is alive and pulls at the heart strings. Our sanitized language of laissez faire capitalism, or "the people who work to support only their families" cannot abide that, so it imports the inanimate to keep a wall between us and its deeds.

1984-speak . . . corporate speak . . . Repubs became good at it, to hide the emotional impact of their more draconian proposals . . . it's a concept like "collateral damage" or "enhanced interrogation techniques"

Ultimately, this "h&b" talk is, firstly, inapt, and far more importantly, it, like the phrase "auto indusrty,"sanitizes the real damage.
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http://www.lewrockwell.com/alston/alston53.html

In 1926, the Carriage Builders' National Association met for the last time, signaling the automobile's final triumph over the horse-drawn carriage. Only a decade earlier, carriages and wagons were still a common sight on every Main Street in America. In the previous century, **carriage-building had been one of the largest and most dynamic industries in the country.**

396783602 people weren't dependent on jobs created by horses. moot point.

^Still, the scope of the auto industry now if much more far reaching than that. The amount of infrastructure, parts, shipping, FUEL etc is exponential in terms of impact than the "carriage" industry was. Also the types of employment/pay scale is much different.

By 1900, customers were buying over 900,000 carriages and wagons a year which were made by 6200 manufacturers at a sale price of $150. With an average annual income of $438 per worker, at 3 times annual salary you can see it was an important industry to fold.

Think of the engineering that goes into the development of a modern car in comparsion to a buggy, as a start.

But one industry was REPLACING another.

There was a burgeoning auto industry that kept jobs stable.

Shutting down an industry so utterly massive in a time of job loss across the board would be catastrophic.

So whats next?

25-50% fewer domestic dealerships. Curtailed product lines.

I live in Kelowna right now. A town of just 100,000 people.

There are TWO Chrysler stores, TWO GM stores and TWO Ford Stores (plus a Saturn store).
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from:

"We, as Americans, have driven for years. Since the early 19^th^ Century, to be exact. Replacing the horse and buggy, the common taxicab, the car was the Century's technological triumph for transportation. Since then we've seen a myriad of car manufacturers come and go but a few have stood strong throughout the test of time: General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. America, initially enamored with the luxury of the automobile, became dependant upon it. Other companies made the scene, Honda, Toyota and the like and gave the American team a run for their money. For years they were neck and neck... then something happened, something which turned the tide against the "Big 3"; the American consumer was more attracted to the Asian cars for their size, economy, efficiency and environmentally-safer standards. The Big 3 had a choice to make - change what they are doing and compete with the Asian cars or stay the course, depending on America's desire for larger, more powerful machines to win their customers over. Unfortunately, they took the latter path. . . "

Here's where the h&b/car analogy breaks down : he writees of the h&b industry, but uses the car industry alone when he applies the analogy. It is true that many h&b businessses went bust due to changes wrought by other, more innovastive, firms. THAT's the correct analogy. What actually happened to end the h&b industry was a true technological and ransportation revolution, the engine powered car.

Rumors of my death have been greatly exaggerated:

From: http://www.cbc.ca/canada/ottawa/story/2008/08/11/ot-horseandbuggy-080811.html

Horse and buggy lowers gas costs for Kemptville animal sanctuary

Last Updated: Monday, August 11, 2008 | 3:53 PM ET

Galloping gas prices have prompted an eastern Ontario man to choose a transportation solution that runs on oats, hay and grass.

Andy Parent started using a horse and buggy to haul feed for his animal sanctuary in Kemptville, about 30 kilometres south of Ottawa, more than a month ago when he got fed up with the soaring

cost of gas.

"At some point we have to stop and say, 'Enough is enough,' " said Parent, who runs Big Sky Ranch Animal Sanctuary, which cares for 142 formerly abused and neglected animals ranging from cats to emus to donkeys.

Parent decided to skirt high gas prices.

He called Ontario's Ministry of Transportation to ask whether a special permit is needed for horses on the road, and he found out all you need is a reflective, orange triangular sign marking the buggy as a slow-moving vehicle.

Now the car stays home when volunteer Lynn Kent heads to the Kemptville feed and seed, and Parent says clip-clopping down to the store has clipped his costs by $300 to $400 in the past two months.

"He eats slower than your gas tank does," said Parent of Sam, the 22-year-old Canadian horse that pulls his old Mennonite buggy. "This place being run on donations, we value every penny we get."

One commenter, Jon202 . . . "Does he have to get a DriveClean check done on those tail emissions?"