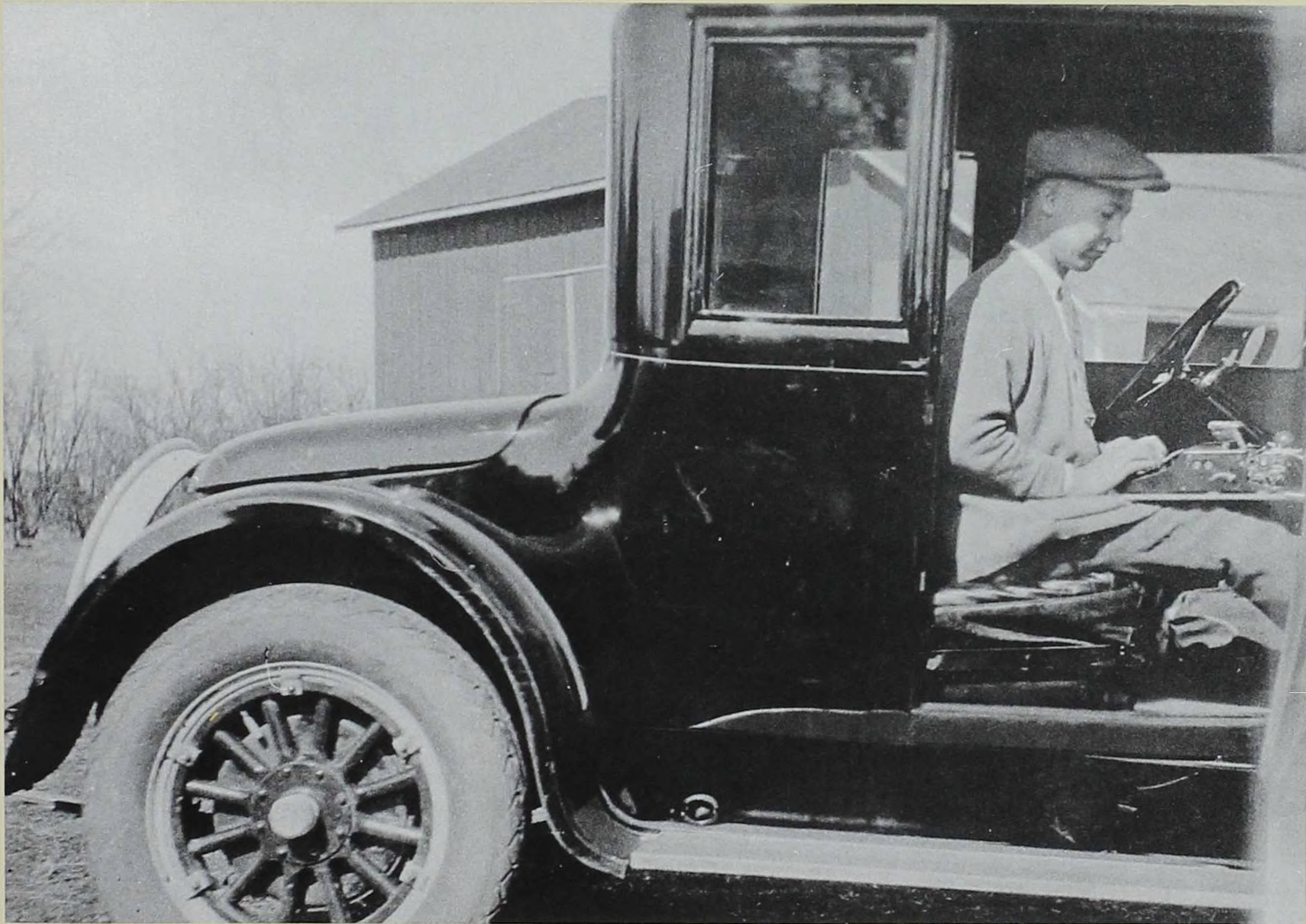


COURTESY SHS (IOWA CITY)



Early Laptop?

Well, in a sense.

Ben Stevenson was a county extension agent in the early 1920s, when this photo was taken. Here, on a farm visit in Cedar County, he takes a moment in his auto to peck away on his portable typewriter.

Typewriters were nothing new in the 1920s. The first successfully marketed commercial typewriter was manufactured in 1874 by E. Remington & Sons, then better known for their guns and sewing machines. Variations emerged over the decades, and some designers aimed for smaller and lighter machines. By 1910, the Bennett typewriter, for example, weighed only a few pounds and fit into an 11x5 inch case, half the size of our laptop computers today.

How's that expression go? Something about "nothing new under the sun"? —The Editor