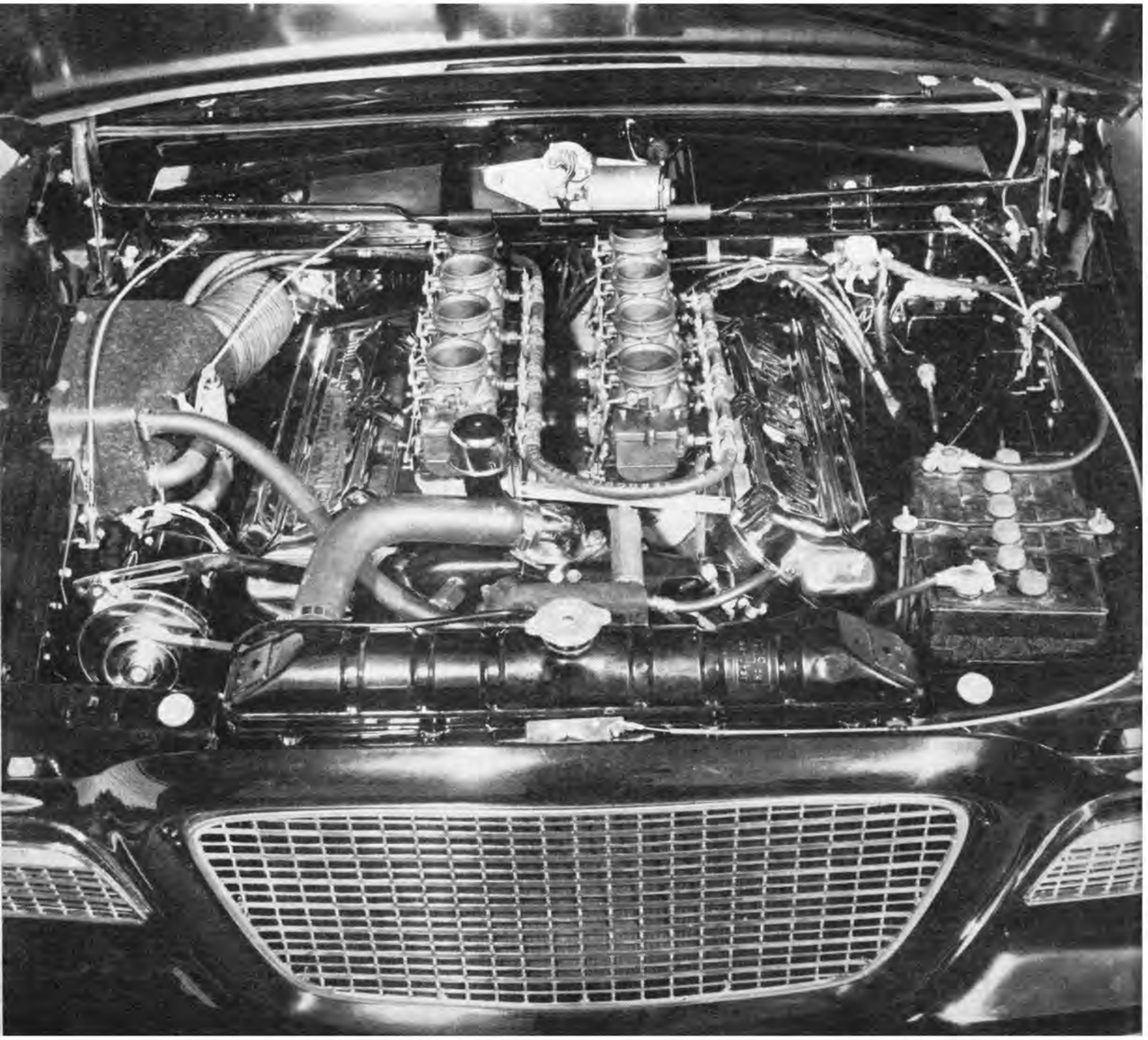
LOADED LARK



Careful placement of engine made possible using stock Studebaker frame's engine mounts after slight re-positioning. Mounting mill rather high and 1⅛-inch off-center to right gave full clearance to all steering gear. Cadillac engine mount pad assemblies ('52-56, right; '49, left) are used on '58 Chrysler block.

Only body alterations required were cutting larger transmission access hole, slight depression in firewall for magneto clearance. Plate bolted in center of stock crossmember is lower portion of scattershield. To its left is master cylinder for hydraulic clutch. Extension of the rear crossmember mounts driveshaft guard.

Studebaker's little sweetheart maintains an aura of innocence around a big-inch Chrysler

photo story by Eric Rickman

Engine swaps, bad news to the unwary a few years ago, have become commonplace enough that one no longer takes for granted the fact that a Chevrolet will have a Chev engine, a Ford be powered by a Ford, or a Plymouth house a Plymouth mill. HOT ROD Magazine, in line with its readers' painfully acquired sophistication in this respect, has contained fewer and fewer articles pertaining to engine swaps in recent years. This, has not been due to lack of popularity in behalf of this particular phase of rodding, but because of our previous coverage on the most popular combinations as they first came into vogue.

Now the only notable thing about having an engine other than the one the manufacturer provided in a car is either the neatness of the installation, or perhaps the unusual choice of components making up the combination. When we first heard of Dick and Taylor Ambrose's Chrysler powered Studebaker Lark, it was obvious that here indeed was an installation that would qualify for coverage in HRM on the basis of reader interest in bizarre combinations of engine and chassis—but after actually seeing the installation itself, we *knew* that here was exhibited a standard of craftsmanship of the type that has made hot rodding a world-renowned activity. This is without qualification, in the opinion of our Research Editor Bob Pendergast, the most workmanlike engine swap we've encountered.

To start with, Dick Ambrose and Taylor, his 18-year old son, decided to go first cabin all the way by installing a fire-breathing Chrysler in a brand-new automobile. Light weight and sturdiness of chassis components were the basis of their

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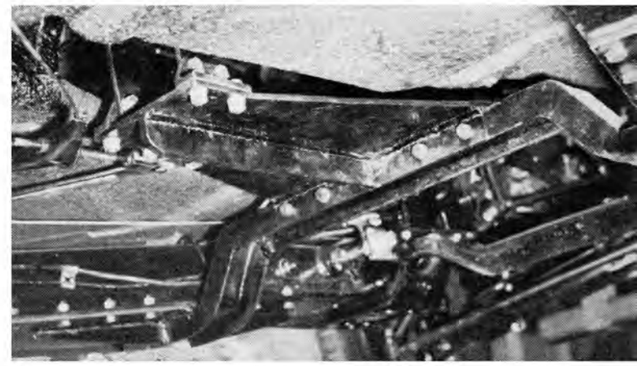
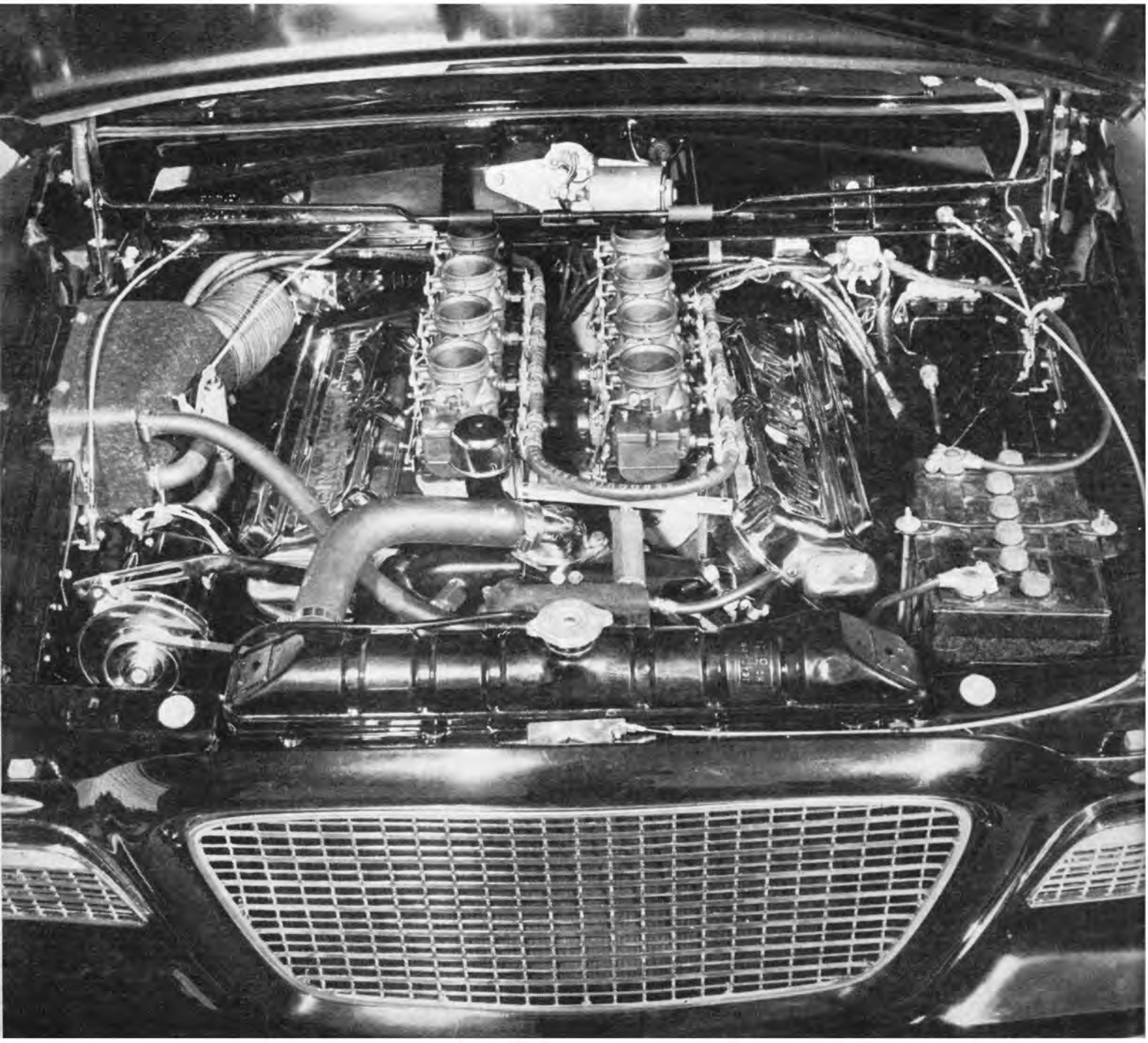


Viewing same area shown in photo above, this time from below, reveals welded-up, bolted-in special rear crossmember supporting rear end of transmission and engine assembly. Trans is Corvette 4-speed unit, rests on crossmember through stock mount. 3/32-inch wall steel tube driveshaft has Chev and Stude U-joints.

Power for hydraulic clutch actuation comes through standard Stude foot pedal linkage to '53 Chevrolet master cylinder mounted on under-bellhousing crossmember with homemade bracket. Clutch assembly is a Schiefer, uses standard Chevrolet 11-in. disc with 7/32-in. removed from front of hub for clearance.

LOADED LARK



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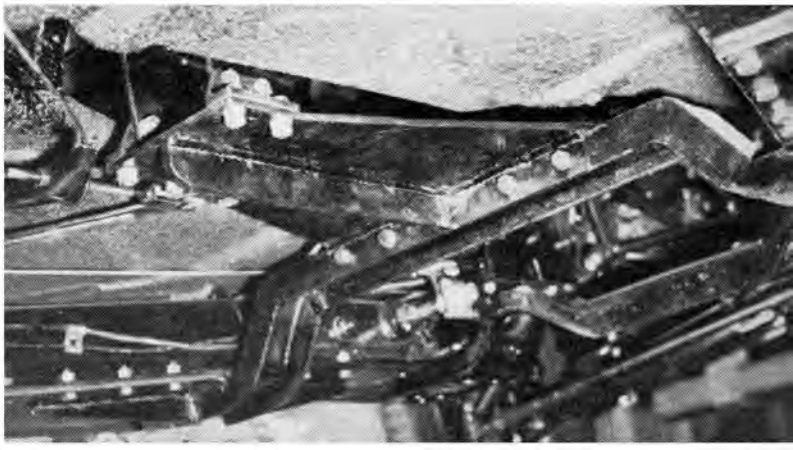

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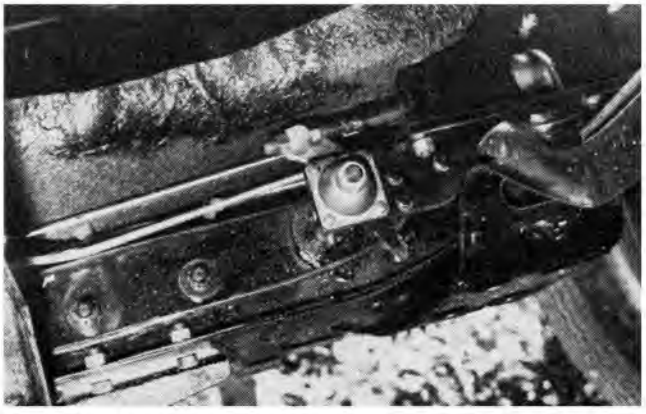

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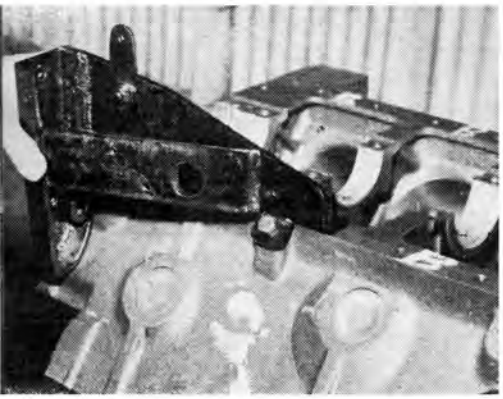
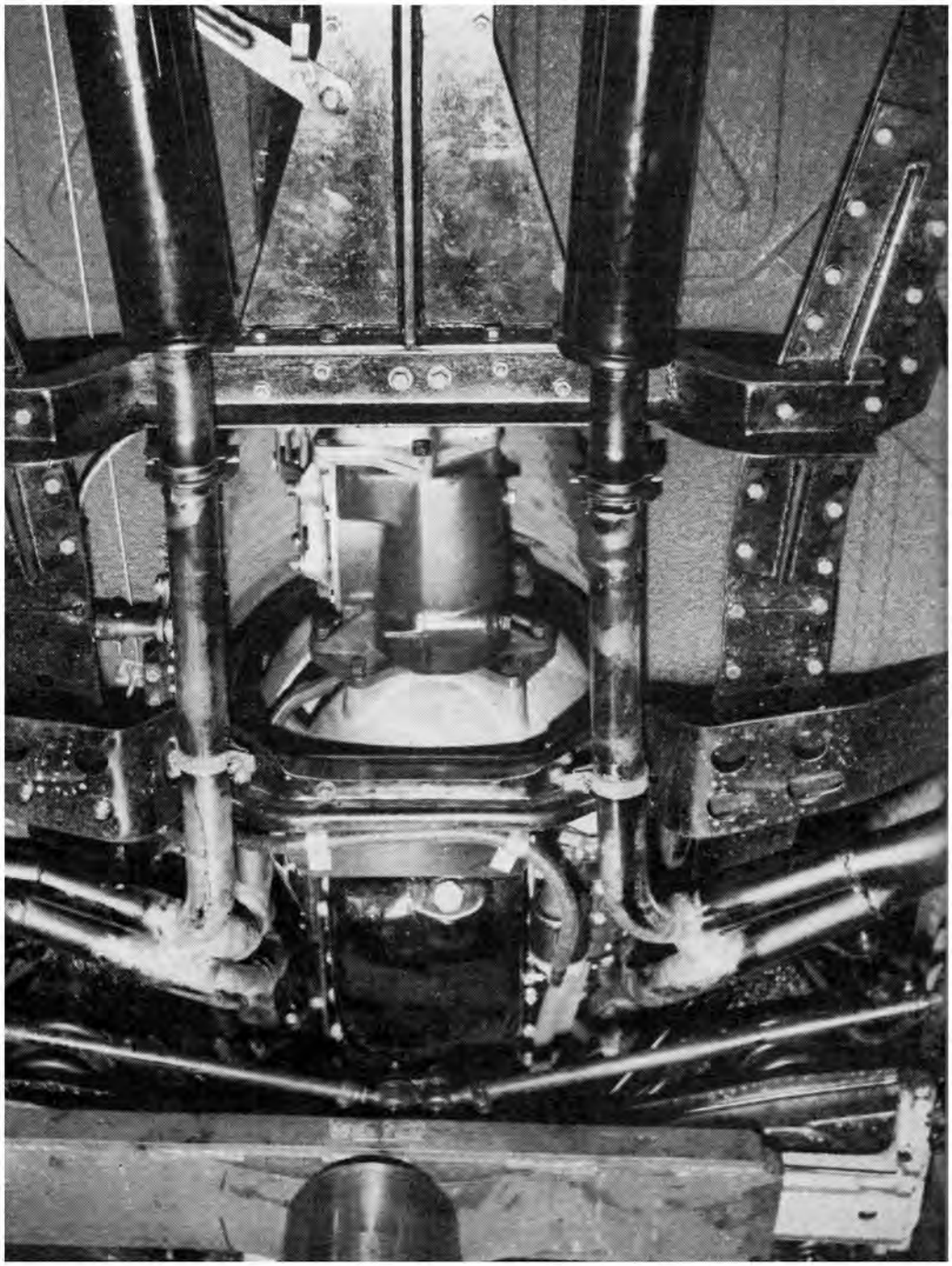
ABOVE — Goodyear Blue Streak racing tires, reversed rear wheels are major outer clues to little Lark's "double life." As yet untested at press time, potential is terrific.



ABOVE—Bracket for late Ford pickup type hydraulic clutch's slave cylinder on inverted bare block prior to assembly. Actually two brackets in one, dual-piece construction was used to ease removal and replacement of oil pan.

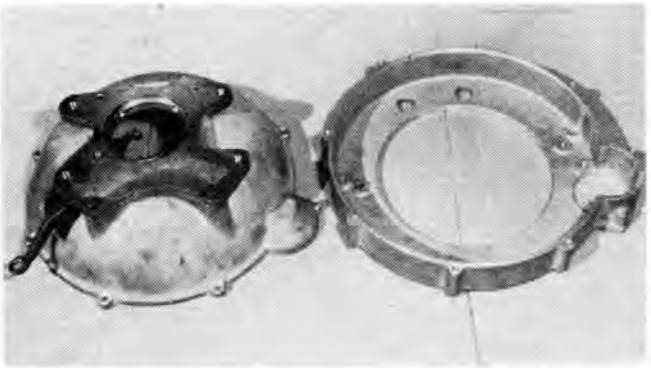
RIGHT—Fully bolt-in throughout, this entire conversion may be removed and replaced at will. Even the special, additional crossmember is bolted, not welded, to the main frame rails. Clutch arm protruding from Cragar adaptor is '47 Chev item, actuating the Borg and Beck cover of the Schiefer unit through a special release bearing.



LOADED LARK continued

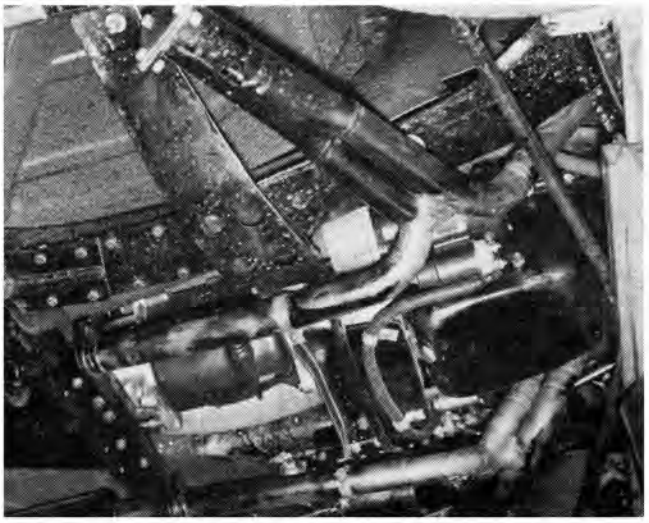
selection of the '59 Studebaker Lark "export" model, which has many chassis parts which are Packard Hawk in origin. These include the A-arms, springing, spindles, brakes, limited-slip differential, etc. This availability of "high beef" components as standard equipment, plus the small size and girth of the Lark, made this one a heretofore untapped "natural."

Along with their penchant for quality in components, father and son Ambrose were equally finicky about workmanship, so they commissioned Gerald Duff, Police Car Mechanic for the City of Santa Barbara, California, to do the conversion in his spare time. The wisdom of their choice of a "swapper" can only be fully appreciated by carefully examining the photos of his work on these pages—let's have a look.



Dual adaption was required to join Chrysler '300' mill to Corvette 4-speed box. Cragar Chrysler-to-Ford unit is mated to trans with homemade supplementary adaptor, flame-cut from mild steel. Ring at right is Cragar starter switch-over bellhousing, used to eliminate interference between starter and steering.

Export model Larks intended for rugged fleet use have sturdier rear ends of Packard Hawk pattern. This one incorporates limited slip differential in connection with 4.11:1 ring and pinion ratio. Traction Master radius arms team with the export model's stiffer-than-standard rear springs to curb wheel hop.



Excellence of workmanship evidenced throughout this entire conversion is demonstrated in neat securement with Adel clips of starter cable to scattershield. Full-flow filter is located remotely from engine by means of homemade bypass valve assembly that had to be made just for this job.

Beautifully designed and executed as they are, Hedman "Hedders" visible in photo above are better appreciated when viewed whole, as may be seen below as they appeared before installation. These custom units played a large part in the Lark's feathers remaining unruffled by conversion to the big-inch Chrysler V8.

Eight #97's on Edelbrock manifolds are controlled with Marbet hydraulic throttle system. Stock bore, $\frac{5}{8}$-inch stroke gives 454 cubic inches to breathe through Isky roller cam. Forgedtrue 10.5:1 pistons, Alpenfels' boxed rods, hardchrome crank, Chrysler '300' bearings provide reliability.