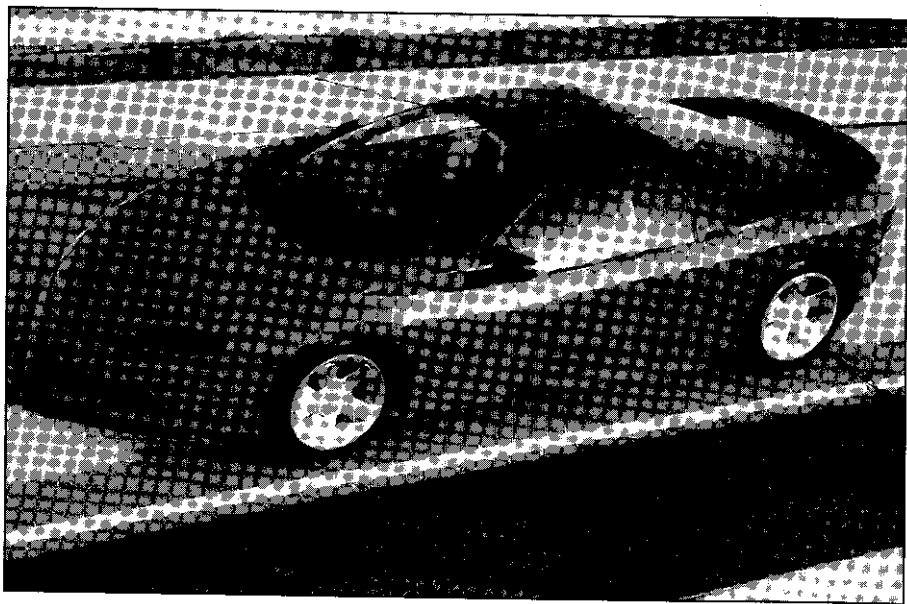


CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



The next-generation Camaro. (Photo courtesy of Chevrolet Motor Division.)

DAWN OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE AGE

The dawn of the motor vehicle age occurred around 1769 when the French military engineer, Nicholas Joseph Cugnot (1725-1804), built a three-wheeled, steam-driven vehicle for the purpose of pulling artillery pieces [1]. Within a few years an improved model was built, only to cause the first automotive accident when it ran into a wall! This was followed by a steam-powered vehicle built in 1784 by the Scottish engineer, James Watt (1736-1819), which proved unworkable. By 1802, Richard Trevithick (1771-1833), an Englishman, developed a steam coach that traveled from Cornwall to London. The coach met its demise by burning one night after Trevithick forgot to extinguish the boiler fire. Nevertheless, the steam coach business thrived in England until about 1865 when competition from the railroads and strict antispeed laws brought it to an end [2].