

# 1909 METZ RUNABOUT

1909 Metz Plan Runabout, Model 2

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$378.00

Number made: 1,816

Notable: This car is a bit rarer than the other 1,816 made because it has a right hand drive.

Engine, etc.: 2 cyl.; 10 hp; 81 in. wheelbase

Although Metz was not the first to offer a kit car, Metz did offer the first known kit automobile on the installment plan, known as the Metz Plan. The buyer would buy 14 groups or packages of parts for \$27.00 for each package (\$378 total) which would be put together with the plans and tools supplied, or a completely factory-assembled automobile could be bought for \$600.00.

On the driver's side running board is a kerosene tank with fuel for the headlights. Once the lights were filled, the driver would light the wick and then have light for the road. This should not be confused with the Acetylene Generator on the Model T Speedster.

The Waltham Manufacturing Company was started by Charles Herman Metz and became an important company in America. It built America's the first motorcycle and the largest bicycles. (The bicycle had ten seats.)

Metz started building automobiles in Waltham, Mass in 1898. He left the company in 1901 over disagreements with two major investors. In 1908 he got his old company back. Waltham Manufacturing was in a state of financial disrepair with a large inventory of parts. However, it offered potential.

Metz began offering a payment and self-assembly plan by selling car parts packages for \$25.00 each.

Fourteen packages made one car that you assembled yourself. By the time you finished putting together the components of Parts Group One, Parts Group Two arrived.

The new owner paid for his new car as he was building it. The last package contained the steering wheel – the car was unusable without it. The Company made sure it had been paid for all parts packages before shipping the steering wheel.

The idea was an immediate success and, by the late summer of 1909, Metz had paid off all of Waltham's debts and reorganized as the Metz Company.

In 1910 the Metz Two started being offered with factory assembly.

Source: Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 -1942. Beverly Rae Kimes, et al. 3rd ed. Krause Publications, 1996.

<http://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z15773/Metz-Two.aspx>