

1917 LOCOMOBILE TOURING

1917 Locomobile Touring Sedan, Model 48, 4-door, 7 passenger

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$5,400.00

Previous owner(s): Owned by a woman in Villa Park, California 1988 – 1992, then by a man in Fullerton, California, 1992 – 1993.

Number made: Total Locomobile production, all models, 1917: 1,000

Engine, etc.: 6 cyl., 527 cid, 48.6 hp; 4-speed manual; 142 inch wheelbase

Locomobile operated from 1899 – 1900 from Watertown, Mass. and from Bridgeport, Conn., 1900 – 1929.

The company was incorporated in 1899 by John Brisben Walker, editor and publisher of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, and Arnzi Lorenzo Barber who made a fortune in asphalt. The name "Locomobile" was based primarily on the likeness the machine had with the railroad locomotive with its two pistons and connecting rods located in the rear axle. The car was actually a Stanley Steamer with the name Locomobile on it.

In 1905 they began producing race cars and, in 1906 built two 90 horsepower race cars that were entered in the prestigious Vanderbilt Cup races that year. In 1908 one of the two Locomobile race cars won the race, the first international race won by an American built car.

William C. Durant purchased the Locomobile Company of America in 1922.

Locomobile was later known for building some of the finest automobiles in the country and was considered the American Rolls-Royce. It was called the "best built car in America". Its primary competition came from Pierce-Arrow, Peerless, and Packard – all prominent car makers, but Locomobile was the most expensive. The cars were built for quality rather than quantity.

When a car was ordered from a Locomobile dealership, a team of six highly qualified mechanics went through the factory and gathered the parts and pieces needed to build the car to order. The lead mechanic would stamp his initials in the main bearing caps as he assembled the engine. Locomobile never built their own bodies.

The company's first six-cylinder production car was the Model 48 introduced in 1911. The 525 cubic-inch, T-head engine featured a square design with a bore and stroke of 114mm. The wheelbase was almost 30 inches longer than a modern day Chevrolet Suburban. It was built until the company's last year, 1929. It could cruise at 55 mph on the occasionally encountered truly good road.

Octagonal shapes such as the lamps and instruments were a common theme for Locomobiles and helped differentiate it from other cars. By 1914, custom body builders were often contracted to build bodies for wealthy clients. Interiors used English broadcloths, velours and tapestries, Tiffany lamps and accessories by Tiffany Studios.

After several changes of ownership, Locomobile ceased production in 1929, largely a result of the stock market crash which caused its market to disappear.

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

<https://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z14376/locomobile-model-48.aspx>

<http://www.locomobilesociety.com/history.cfm>

<http://www.classiccarweekly.net/2012/06/01/locomobile-model-48/>