

# 1937 PACKARD COUPE CONVERTIBLE

1937 Packard Coupe Convertible, Model 120-C; rumble seat

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$1,250.00 (In 1937: average car cost \$760; average household income: \$1,780; average home cost \$4,100; gallon of gas cost 10 cents)

Previous owner: Owner from Omaha, 1997

Number made: 50,100

Engine, etc.: Straight 8; L-head; 282 cid; 120 hp; 120 in. wheelbase; 3,485 lbs.

Packard, Detroit, Michigan, 1903 – 1942; produced world renown vehicles from 1899 to 1956.

In 1932 Packard introduced a smaller, lower-priced car called the Series 900 Light Eight. It proved to be a disappointment but, as the Depression continued, the need for a price leader became more pressing. A less expensive model was introduced in January, 1935, and helped Packard survive the Depression but at a cost to its prestige as a luxury car maker.

The One-Twenty, named for its wheelbase, was significant because it was the first time Packard had entered the mid-priced eight-cylinder market. The 120 had a new straight eight with a smaller displacement than the larger Eight but it had 85% of the larger engine's power. The body was all new and there were features not yet seen on larger Packards such as independent front suspension and hydraulic brakes.

The One-Twenties were well received and nearly 25,000 were sold the first year, more than three times the volume of all other Packards combined. It was produced from 1935 – 1937 and again from 1939 – 1941.

The Packard story began with Warren Packard who moved to Warren, Conn. in the 1850's and became involved in a number of businesses including

hardware, lumber, hotels, and iron mill work. His sons, William Doud and James Ward, established the Packard Electric Company in 1890 and Warren entered the "age of electricity", the first city in the U. S. to light its streets with incandescent bulbs.

The first Packard Motor Car was built in Warren in 1899 in the Packard Electric Company subsidiary plant, the New York and Ohio Company. Manufacture of a successful motor car brought about the formation of the Ohio Automobile Company in 1899 which was renamed Packard Motor Car Company and moved to Detroit in 1902.

Henry Bourne Joy from one of Detroit's oldest and wealthiest families, bought a Packard. Impressed by its reliability he enlisted a group of investors and bought the company. Henry Joy became general manager and later chairman of the board. Alvan Macauley became president of Packard Motor Car Company in 1916 when Henry Joy retired. Macauley remained in that position until 1938.

In most of the years between World War I and its merger with Studebaker in 1954, Packard was the only entirely independent auto company dedicated to the manufacture of the finest possible cars. It was the only U. S. company whose work could be compared with that of England's Rolls-Royce organization.

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

<http://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z9543/Packard-120.aspx>

<http://www.packardinfo.com/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Packard>

[http://uniquecarsandparts.com/lost\\_marques\\_packard.htm](http://uniquecarsandparts.com/lost_marques_packard.htm) (History)

See also:

<http://www.oldcarmanualproject.com/brochures/Packard/1937/index.htm> (Original 1937 brochure, all models; pdf)