

1914 LOCOMOBILE ROADSTER

1914 Locomobile Roadster, Model 48, 2-door

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$5,100.00 (\$120,827.00 in 2016)

Number made: 1,000 (total Locomobile production for 1914)

Engine, etc.: 6 cyl.; 48.6 hp; 4 speed transmission; 140 in. wheelbase; weight: 3 tons

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

This 1914 Locomobile roadster was part of a long line of expensive and beautifully made touring cars. This particular model sold for \$5,100 in 1914, at a time a Model T could be bought for \$360.

The Locomobile 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. It was one of the most expensive and elegant cars ever manufactured in the U. S.

The 525 cubic-inch, T-head engine featured a square design with a bore and stroke of 114mm. Many of the powertrain components were cast in bronze and the chassis was chrome-nickel steel. 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. Accessories by Tiffany Studios were not uncommon. It was an expensive, old-fashioned vehicle for wealthy, conservative, old-fashioned people. Owners included names such as Vanderbilt, Wanamaker, Mellon, and Gould on the East Coast. On the West Coast, Charlie Chaplin, Tom Mix, and Cecil B. DeMille owned Model 48's.

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

Mr. Taulborg bought this car at an auction and it is the only one he went "upside down" restoring. The cost of the restoration was more than the car was worth.

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

<http://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z7417/Locomobile-Model-48.aspx>

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

<http://oldcarmanualproject.com/pix/L/Locomobile/1914Locomobile.jpg> (Original ad)