

1923 GRAY TOURING

1923 Gray Touring Roadster

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$490.00

Number made: 1,772 produced 1921 – June, 1923 (Very few Grays still exist, perhaps only 12.)

Engine, etc.: 4 cyl., vertical L-head; 21.5 hp; 3 speed; 100 in. wheelbase

Gray Motor Company, Detroit, Mich.: 1921 – 1926

The 1923 Gray featured 4-wheel shock absorbing springs. The roadster started at \$490 and the 4-door sedan at \$835. Front-wheel brakes were offered in 1926, the last year of production.

With \$4 million in 1920 the Gray Motor Corporation took over the plant and equipment of the Gray Motor Company in Detroit. The plan was to build a medium-priced four-cylinder car. Executives from Packard Motor Car Company and Cadillac started the corporation. In 1921 Frank L. Klingensmith, formerly with Ford Motor Company, took over as president.

The new company didn't begin producing cars until 1921. Cars cost around \$500 and were designed to compete with the Model T. Several models were offered including a 5-passenger touring, a touring roadster, and a sedan.

A magazine advertisement for the Gray touted "exceptional high quality of coach work, graceful lines, distinctive appearance with unbeaten economy, real comfort, and mechanically right".

In 1922 a stock Gray touring car was driven from San Francisco to New York averaging 33.8 miles per gallon in 4,819 miles of travel – a new transcontinental record.

The Gray was advertised as "The Aristocrat of Small Cars" that offered "World Record Economy" with exceptional gas mileage.

While sales of a quarter of a million cars were predicted, the company made only 1,772 Grays by the end of June, 1923.

Frank Klingensmith resigned in January, 1925 and that summer the company announced it would build gas-electric buses.

The Gray Motor Corporation factory and equipment were auctioned off in 1926.

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

<http://www.classiccardatabase.com/specs.php?series=2019&year=1923&model=9111>

<http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/20scars.html> (Scroll down)