

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| ID | 25 |
| Code | B |
| Year | 1912 |
| Make | ALCO |
| Model | 9-60 |
| Body Style | 7-Passenger Touring |
| Manufacture | American Locomotive Co. |
| City State Country | Providence, RI |
| Color | Dark Blue & White |
| Lic Number | HC 7900 |
| Coachbuilder | Fleetwood Metal Body Co. |
| City St Country | Fleetwood, PA |
| Engine Number | A 228 |
| Serial Number | 960 B 166 |
| Body Number | N/L |
| Engine Type | T-Head |
| Cylinders | 6 |
| Bore | 4 3/4" |
| Stroke | 5 1/2" |
| Displacement | 579.5 cu. in. |
| Horsepower | 70 |
| Price New | 6000.00 |
| Restored By | Harrah's Collection / Nethercutt Collection |
| Purchase Date | 09-29-84 |
| Purchased From | William Harrah, Reno, NV - Auction |
| Prev Owners | Harrah's Automobile Collection, Reno, NV / Robert R. Hannaford, OH / Henry Austin Clarke - Long Island Automotive Museum, Southampton, NY / Harold Scott, Ridgefield, CT |
| Present Owners | The Nethercutt Collection 8-2005 |
| Special Features | Alco white stripe around the entire body became a feature. |
| Misc Info | One of two or three known Weight - 4125 lbs |



History

1912 ALCO 7-PASSENGER TOURING

"Nethercutt Collection: The Cars of San Sylmar"

Odd as it may sound, Alco's claim to fame was boasting that it built the most expensive car in America! The Model 9-60 Touring shown sold for \$6,000 in 1912. In all truth, it wasn't the most expensive car available, but it was priced high enough to eliminate itself from consideration by about 95% of new car buyers. The remaining 5% were drawn to more recognized makes such as Oldsmobile, Packard, and Cadillac. Still, Alco sold enough cars to remain in business from 1905 to 1913. They were produced by the American Locomotive Company, which came about through the 1901 merger of

eight railway locomotive builders, and eventually expanded into the automotive arena in 1905. Virtually hand built, the cars were made to order in Providence, Rhode Island, at an exhaustingly slow pace. In 1909 and again in 1910 the mighty Alcos won the prestigious Vanderbilt Cup, but it did little to increase sales, since it took an average of 19 months to build an Alco.

Built atop a chassis of vanadium steel, described as the "anti-fatigue metal", and fitted with a live rear axle forged in one piece by the largest drop hammer in the world, the Alco 9-60 Series was powered by a 579.5 cubic inch T-head six-cylinder engine developing 70 horsepower. Beautifully finished and handsomely styled automobiles, Alco claimed that they lost \$460 on every car they built, which no doubt contributed to the company's decision in 1913 to throw in the towel and concentrate all of its efforts on building steam and diesel locomotives. The car pictured is one of only two or three still known to exist.

1912 ALCO 7-PASSENGER TOURING

"San Sylmar"

Proud of its reputation as a 'snob' in the car world, the American Locomotive Company boasted that it produced the highest priced American automobile of its time - the Alco. Built with the 'mystery metal' vanadium, it took a year and seven months to build just one car! No expense was ever spared and as a result, the American Locomotive company lost an average of \$460 each time an Alco was produced. It's no wonder that the company folded after only five years.

CURATOR'S HISTORY

Produced under Berliet license (France) from 1905-1913 Alco was a high quality and expensive automobile built by a subsidiary of the American Locomotive Co. of Providence, R.I. Their racing cars won the famous Vanderbilt Cup in 1909 and 1912. These were built to order and the company claimed that they lost \$460.00 on each car produced, which seems incredulous if they were serious about being in the automobile business.

The Nethercutt Alco spent its life on the east coast and was purchased in the 1940's from an owner who kept it in a barn for over 30 years. William F. Harrah acquired the car in the 50's. It received a perfunctory restoration in the Sparks shops and was on display at Harrah's Automobile collection until it was auctioned in 1984 with the dissolution of the collection. In Sylmar, it received a frame-up total restoration to return to its original high quality.

ARCHIVIST NOTES

Owner Chronology (Theory only - from present to oldest known):

J.B. Nethercutt

Harrah's Automobile Collection

Robert R. Hannaford, OH

Henry Austin Clark - Long Island Automotive Museum (1953)

Harold Scott, Ridgefield, CT (- 1953

*On back of photos in the car file it is written "1912 Alco Touring Car about to load at North Ave., Ridgefield, Conn. Harold Scott, former owner, at left Walter Scott, his brother, at right" & "Starting to load on trailer. L - R: Walter Scott, Norris Hopping (LIAM Master mechanic), John Mollitox (LIAM Mechanic), Boatyard man." In the photo the trailer has written on it "Long Island Automotive Museum, Southampton, NY."

*On back of postcard" 1912 Alco 7P Touring Car. From the collection of Robert R. Hannaford, Hudson, Ohio. Published by the Long Island Auto Museum, Southampton, New York. (10-8-1964)

* On "Google" I found an entry for the aaca bulletin board, unfortunately, the board has expired since, and I couldn't go to it., but the entry said: It was once here in Ridgefield, Connecticut. Henry Austin Clark found it and parted with it to the fellow who restored it. That is one great tour car!"

HENRY AUSTIN CLARK JR.: 1917-1991

Austie, whose Long Island Automotive Museum and huge collection of automotive literature were treasured by serious historians and hobbyists alike, was 74. He had completed the donation of his vast literature collection (over 27 tons) to the Henry Ford Museum the night before he died, assuring the continuation of that legacy.

Austie was a leader of the irreverent Madison Avenue Sports Car Driving and Chowder Society. He served as chief of research to former "Automobile Quarterly" Editor Beverly Rae Kimes in her monumental work, "The Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942". In addition, Austie was a regular columnist for "Old Cars", from the publication's inauguration over 20 years ago until his death.

HENRY AUSTIN CLARK, JR'S LONG ISLAND AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM Brochure

The Museum houses over one hundred antique cars and trucks in several buildings. These include examples of both famous and obscure makes of American and Foreign cars. They range from small machines of the late nineteenth century to powerful classic cars of more recent years. Steam and electric vehicles are shown as well as gasoline. Special collections of the Ford and Pierce-Arrow lines are featured. Including every important model of each.

The workshop is constantly engaged in the restoration of more cars, to a condition similar to new, without deviation from their original condition. A special section is devoted to a display of automotive art, both old and new, as well as a fine selection of brass lamps, insignia, horns, hub caps and other old accessories.

HARRAH'S AUTOMOBILE COLLECTION

"The Classic Car" Winter 1968

The world-famous group of automotive museums and restoration shops, known officially as Harrah's Automobile Collection, is located about 3-1/2 miles east of Reno. At present it included about 1,400 cars of all vintages, ranging from an 1896 Riker Electric phaeton to a 1969 Mark III Lincoln Continental.

The man responsible for this giant complex devoted to collecting, restoring, and displaying Americana - but featuring the automobile - is William F. Harrah, the owner of two gambling casinos. The Harrah Club in Reno and the Harrah Club at Lake Tahoe. Harrah, a tall, lean man in his early fifties, lives at Lake Tahoe and commutes over the 50-odd miles to Reno by car almost daily - usually in high-powered sports cars.

The whole idea started in 1948 when Harrah picked up a 1911 Maxwell, infected by the old-car fever, he soon bought a 1906 Model F Ford and a 1902 Curved Dash Oldsmobile. Early in the decade his stable numbered about 15 cars.

Considered (and proved) to be one of Nevada's (or any other state's) most astute business men Harrah quickly recognized the possibility of combining his interest in antique vehicles and promotion of his casino activities. He soon began showing his cars to casino visitors, whose interest was immediate and overwhelming. Thus the Harrah Automobile Collection was born.

By 1962 it numbered about 600, and by 1965 it had increased to 1,000 vehicles of all types - electric, steam, gasoline, and turbine; domestic and foreign; antique, classic, and modern; restored and unrestored.

In addition to restoring and displaying the cars, Harrah's workshops and skilled technicians are serving to preserve craftsmanship's and skilled methods of construction, once unique to the automotive industry, that have disappeared from Detroit's assembly lines.

HARRAH'S AUCTION by Bill Snyder

"Car Collector" Jan. 1985 (excerpt)

Blow the limit they did. Saturday's opening bid on the first car, a 1912 Alco seven-passenger touring, was \$30,000. That sum is very close to the amount listed in the popular "Old Car Value Guide" for a restored car - and perhaps an indicator of just how inaccurate such guides can be. For this huge antique, in blue with ivory trim and loads of brass, the bidding marched right up to \$80,000. It was sold to Los Angeles multi-millionaire J.B.

Nethercutt, the first of nineteen cars he bought during the two-day sale.

The Alco set the pace for heavyweight, brass bound antiques of Pre World War I vintage.

CLASSIC ERA - ALCO by Brooks T. Brierley

"Car Collector" Nov. 2004 (excerpts)

As the 19th-century turned to the 20th, the American Locomotive Company had been in business for nearly 30 years. It was one of the largest and most profitable American manufacturers - during the 1906 railroad boom the company earned the then phenomenal sum of fifty million dollars! That encouraged the firm to branch out into the emerging automobile manufacturing business.

By 1913, ALCO appeared to have achieved an impressive position - the third largest American builder of commercial vehicles. The company continued to emphasize its commercial vehicles to improve profitability, since about 85 percent of ALCO's business was reported to be trucks, versus 15 percent automobiles. Yet there was a signal in March 1913 that something was wrong - sales manager Haupt left the company to go to Lozier. Suddenly in August, there was an announcement that ALCO would shut down. The company's 1,200 employees were given 30 days notice. While 1912 operating losses of \$600,00 were cited as the reason, that was a pittance when compared to what the locomotive company earned in a single year. There remains a compelling question about the demise of ALCO. Did the remote location of the Rhode Island factory make it too difficult for the ALCO business to be economic? Unlikely. The real question was the company's truck manufacturing. Did the railroad locomotive customers object to the company's promotion of non-rail freight transportation by truck? The answer may never be known.

Nine ALCO's - eight cars and one truck - are known to survive. All are in the United States, save one living among relatives in France. The finest example of the ALCO in America is a majestic 1912 Touring in the Nethercutt Collection located in Sylmar, California.

POINTS OF PERFECTION IN THE 1912 ALCO Brochure

1. Low, pleasing lines of the body; large, symmetrical doors
2. Provisions for increased comfort; softer, deeper seat and back cushions; more room
3. Silencing of noise in motor, transmission, and rear axle.
4. Extension of radiator below center line of crankshaft; neater appearance and protection to crank case.
5. Clutch refined in detail - offers even more efficiency in crowded traffic.
6. Brakes refined in adjusting and equalizing.
7. Even more rigid specifications and testing of materials than before; more than 60 expert testers.
8. Increased rigidity in finished tests of cars.
9. Further refinement of heat treating processes of materials.
10. Refinement of lamp equipment and attachments; more substantial lamps; new designs.

ALCO (AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE CO.)

White stripe around the body is a symbol of individuality, an emblem of motor car distinction. It emphasizes the perfection of finish and adds a touch of life to the color

Equipment when new - Tire brackets, Acetylene headlights, windshield, Sears-Cross combination speedometer and clock, Klaxon horn, combination electric-oil, dash and tail lamps and slip covers, gypsy top, coat rail, extra folding seats and foot rests.

