

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, September 25, 2006

Trip to '51 Steam Car Meet at Wellesley, Massachusetts: In October 1946, we took delivery of my father's Mountain Wagon at George Monreau's home in Cochrane, Massachusetts, and I drove it home with my dad following in the '37 Packard tutoring me all the way, which I needed badly. The trip established two "firsts" for me: the first of 20 times I drove a Stanley from or to New England (most of the trips were round-trip) and the first Stanley I had ever purchased, as I bought the Model 607 from Donald H. Randall of Randolph, Massachusetts (it was driven home in December that year).

With my father as master mechanic, I drove my 607 a lot in the first years I owned it. Probably the longest trip was to the steam car meet headquartered at Wellesley, Massachusetts, in late July 1951. Elwood Wilkins Jr. of Strickersville, Pennsylvania, and I left here early Friday morning; we met Bob Ostwald of Staten Island and Mr. and Mrs. Earle Eckel Sr. of Washington, New Jersey, for lunch at a restaurant near Pine Brook, New Jersey, and proceeded from there with Ostwald in my car and the Eckels in Earle's 1914 Model 712 roadster. We crossed the George Washington Bridge and the Hendrik Hudson Bridge across the Harlem River, then swung east toward the Hutchinson River Parkway and onto Connecticut's Merritt Parkway, the fastest way to New England in those days. Both cars were going strong, but somewhere around New Haven, Earle discovered his feed water heater was leaking, and he shouldn't go very far before by-passing or repairing it. We stopped for the night at a tourist home in Meriden, Connecticut.

We wanted to help Earle make his repair the next morning, but before we arose he had the job done, even though he had to disassemble a lot of things on his roadster to get at the trouble spot. Again we took off in the two cars, meeting a contingent of antique gas cars on the west side of the Charter Oak Bridge. This caravan traveled the 40-plus miles to the newly opened Old Sturbridge Village, where about 30 antique cars were parked on the green in the village while their occupants had lunch. Three Stanleys had come from the Boston area to meet us there, so we had a five-car tour from Sturbridge to Wellesley, the headquarters for our steam meet. We were glad to see (and they glad to see us) Stanley Ellis driving his Model 740, Frank Gardner driving Stanley's Model 607 (like mine), and Ed Pamphilon driving his 1919 Model 735. These three were the sponsors of the Wellesley meet. As we passed through the square in one of the small towns, the burner on Ellis's 740 let go with a loud bang, commanding the attention of most onlookers, but it never fazed the driver, who looked straight ahead and kept going as if nothing had happened.

The meet consisted of arriving and having a group dinner Saturday evening, a run of about 35–40 miles on Sunday, stopping at a few places of interest around Concord and Lexington and Sunday dinner in early afternoon at a country restaurant. Joining us for Sunday's run was the chassis of Frank Gardner's newly operational Model 74 (in which Frank "cleaned up" everyone), George Monreau, grandfather of Brent Campbell, in his 1913 Model 65 named "Magee," and George Woodbury, author of *The Story of a Stanley Steamer*, in his 1917 Model 730, which he had driven from his home in Bedford, New Hampshire. Possibly Ralph VanDine and Calvin Holmes were also present with their Stanleys.

Monday morning the two cars of us from outside New England headed for home, stopping to see Earle Eckel's old friend, Al Garganigo of Princeton, Massachusetts, who had amassed a fantastic collection of fine, early cars, bought mostly from junk yards. Stopping that night at a tourist home in Westport, Connecticut, the next morning we visited James Melton's first museum on Route 7 north of Norwalk (his second was in Florida a few years later). We said goodbye to the Eckels and to Bob Ostwald near where we had met them, stopped to ride on a roadside steam train not far from there, and then Elwood and I headed for Yorklyn, arriving well before dark on Tuesday. In five days, the little 607 had covered nearly 850 miles, most of the time with three passengers, luggage, spare parts and tools. Oh, to be young again!