

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, November 22, 2010

Notable People on the 1957 Glidden Tour: I took part in 12 Glidden Tour revivals from 1947 through 1984, the first 11 in Stanley cars from our collection (in 1984, I drove our 1937 Packard to French Lick, Indiana, and return). I drove the Model 76 four times, the 71 and the 607 twice each, and the 78, 87, and 735 just once. My father went on seven of these tours (1947 through 1953) and used the 87 three times, the 735 twice (he and I shared this car in 1953), and the Mountain Wagon twice. All these trips were memorable; we drove the cars over the road as we had no trailers, and the tour in 1957 was a highlight.

The tour began in Roanoke, Virginia, and Bob Way (my third cousin and the owner of a 1919 Model 735) and I drove from home in the Model 76 to Luray, Virginia, over 200 miles the first day and on to Roanoke on the second. On the first official day of the tour, we were headed for Charlottesville, via Natural Bridge and Waynesboro, our luncheon stop. As we approached Waynesboro, I looked in the rearview mirror, and just behind was Locomobile #16, with its owner, Peter Helck, and a friend at the controls. For those who don't know, this is perhaps the most famous antique racing car in the world, in which Barney Oldfield won many races. Helck was a well-known artist who depicted in great detail many of these early auto races. That afternoon, we visited Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, with the Glidden Tour cars climbing the mountain by the old driveway used in Jefferson's time. Arriving at the historic site, I needed water for the Stanley and asked a groundskeeper if there was a spigot nearby. He told me to pull onto the front lawn of Monticello, where numerous connections for attaching a garden hose existed. This worked out well, but seeing the Stanley on the front lawn, everyone on the tour wanted to be photographed there, and the yard was soon full of Glidden Tour cars. Today, it's not possible to drive within ½ mile of Monticello itself.

The next day we went to Williamsburg, via Richmond, where I dropped off Bob Way, as he had to return home by train. On the last stretch, it was a very hot afternoon, and as I stopped for water, an exhausted man and his wife pulled in with their 1906 Jenis boiling over. This was an impressive car with a lot of brass, and it happened that its owners were in the room next to me at the Williamsburg Motor Lodge for the next two days. I invited them to ride to an outdoor picnic in the Model 76, and the husband was somewhat impressed. It turned out this was Carl S. Amsley (1921–1998), who, within a couple of years, was in the business of restoring and building Stanleys in a big way. While we were in Williamsburg, Queen Elizabeth II was in town to help celebrate the 350th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown. She spoke in front of the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary, and most on the tour went to see and hear her. I did not. However, I recall riding with Curtis L. Blake (co-founder of Friendly's Ice Cream) in his newly restored 1920 Pierce Arrow.

At Mount Vernon, I took on water at the rear entrance to the grounds, and the next day in the rain on the final leg to Hershey, Pennsylvania, I came up behind a most unusual vehicle traveling about 30 M.P.H. It was a huge machine and had a rear platform like an old-fashioned railroad observation car. Sitting on this platform and bouncing up and down on the overhang was its owner, James Melton, well-known tenor of the Metropolitan Opera, Hollywood, and the radio, probably the most famous collector of old cars in the mid-20th century. The "car" was an oversized Winton of about 1918, built especially for Sam Pennypacker when he was running for Governor of Pennsylvania. We ended the tour at Hershey and had to clean up our cars that night for displaying them at the annual Fall Meet of AACA the next day. A fun tour!