



# COLE MOTOR CAR REGISTRY BULLETIN

Volume 1 Number 1

January 2019



I would like to welcome all Cole Motor company owners and enthusiasts to the first edition of the Cole Motor Car Registry Bulletin. This bulletin will be a periodically released companion to the website and will give updates on the registry, Cole auto news, as well as owner updates and car information. The intent is to share this electronically through email and on the website to maximize efficiency and distribution. The bulletin will be published every two to three months as content is available.



Even though we are putting this together, I want all of you to think of yourself as having a share in the registry and the bulletin. The more information and content that we all share the better the site and bulletin will be for all of us. The number of Cole autos is limited as well as it is not always easy to track down information, knowledge, and parts for these cars, so if we all work together it can be a better experience for everyone.

The Cole automobile is top quality and can stand up to most of the higher end luxury and performance cars of the era. I believe that because of limited availability and lack of accurate information, Cole has not achieved the respect that it should have in the automobile collecting community in comparison to other makers such as Stutz, Cadillac, etc.. By sharing these great autos and increasing the visibility of the information and the brand, it will benefit all of us and will help continue the legacy and wonderful story of the Cole Motor Car Company.

## COLE 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1909-2019

We are pleased to announce a gathering of Cole cars, owners, and enthusiasts in May of 2019! This event will be to celebrate the 110th year anniversary of the Cole Motor Car company. We will do this event in conjunction with the Gilmore Car Museum's Pre-1942 car tour and show.

This event will display several of the surviving Cole Motor Cars that are remaining and will include a Cole history talk, a deep dive on the changes to Cole cars over the life of the company, and of course spending time with these wonderful cars. Many Cole artifacts from the time of the company will be on display. We will also spend some time taking a look at the largest Cole Motor Company information archives at the Gilmore research library and also the Helen Cole collection of documents that the CCCA museum has on the Gilmore campus. More details will be announced soon!

**When:** May 17th and 18th, 2019

**Where:** [Gilmore Car Museum](http://www.gilmorecar.com), 6865 W Hickory Rd, Hickory Corners, MI



**Questions:** Contact Kevin Fleck at [kfleck@outlook.com](mailto:kfleck@outlook.com) or call at 269-830-6174

We have a great roster of cars and owners already confirmed. We are also working on with the Gilmore Car Museum on a larger ongoing Cole display and exhibit. I will keep you posted as we go forward.

### The Registry Update

Since we relaunched the registry at the end of October, we have verified the ownership and location of about half of the Cole cars that were on the old Cole Motor Car Club of America registry in 2009. Now begins the hard work of mailing people, spreading the word, and talking to car clubs to determine where the remaining portion of the 75 known Cole cars are residing today. This is good progress in a short amount of time and we can use your help. If you know of any Cole owners that are not updated, please pass along the information.

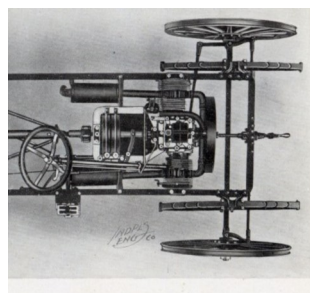
Also, we did find two new Cole cars that were not on the registry. This was pretty exciting and we are now at 77 known Cole Motor cars.

The first find is a beautiful 1912 Cole 50 2p Speedster that is car #7184. This car resides in Missouri and was acquired in 2006 as a basket case from Texas. It then went through a six year restoration and then was used in tours and shows. The car took home a class award at the French Lick Concours in 1914 and then it won the Chairman's Cup of Excellence at the Keenland Concours recently. The owner is hoping to bring it to the owners meetup in May at the Gilmore. Here are some pictures this great car and there are more pictures on the registry website.



The next car that was found was in late December. I received an email from a gentleman saying "How would you like me to bring the Cole car that none are know to exist to the owners meet in May?" As you can imagine my curiosity rose to a very high level! Car number 78 is a 1909 Cole High Wheeler and it will be unveiled at the Cole Meet up in May. There were no known surviving Cole High Wheelers from the Cole Carriage company out of the 170 that were made. You can read more about the high wheelers in general on the registry website [here](#).

This car is in Kansas and a gentleman that was the owner recently passed away at 95 years old and this was in his barn. The man purchased the car when we was in high school as a car to work on and play with. Over the years it did have some modifications made to the seating and other various components. The man didn't even really know what kind of car it was and he just loved it for what it was. In the 90's he did write to the Horseless Carriage Research Foundation and sent them pictures and information about the car and they came back that it was a 1909 Cole Solid Tire High wheeler. The person that is doing work on the car for the family will be bringing it to the Gilmore and doing a talk on the car at the event. I am not going to share pictures of it now, except a teaser shot of the two cylinder engine. The tank and oiler are wrong on it and are being changed out, but the actual engine, exhaust, and transmission matches up perfect to the photos from the sales catalog.



## Cole Motor Car Registry Bulletin (Continued)

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### CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA CELEBRATING THE WORLD'S FINEST AUTOMOBILES

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Did you know that in 2012, Cole Motor cars 1916—1925 were added to the CCCA car list as Full Classics? Cole automobiles are part of prestigious group of cars recognized for being distinctive, expensive, and of limited production when they were built and remaining distinctive and limited today. There was a lot of work in 2011 to fully document Coles and why they should be added to the list and the car that was submitted as the first car was the 1925 Cole Brouette with body by Willoughby that was part of the Cole family for most of its life.

Today there are five cars and 4 owners that are listed in the CCCA members lists. It would be great to see more Coles on the roster and participating in the CCCA

events such as the grand classics and tours that are held. I am planning on bringing our Coles out to some of these events in 2019. Also, the Classic Car Club of America Museum has an archive of Cole research information that Helen Cole donated to them.



One of the keys to enjoying the fabulous Cole autos that we own or admire is to be able to keep them on the road driving and to understand the history. Whether your interest is to take your Cole to a show, on a tour, or just for a Sunday drive to get some ice cream, it is not always easy maintaining them. I have only been into older cars and Coles for a few years now so I am still learning a lot and I want to ensure that I share and give back to the Cole community. One of the goals of the Cole Motor Car Registry is to build a network of owners and enthusiasts so that we can share history, technical know how, and resources. I have started to build a library of Cole related materials myself and also Leroy Cole from the former Cole Motor Car Club has passed on a great amount of information to me and my son. If you have any good connections for Cole know how, please pass them along to me so I can make them available to other owners.

Here are a few sources for knowledge related to the Cole Motor Cars and Company:

1. [Colemotorcarregistry.com](http://colemotorcarregistry.com)—We will continue to build this site with more Cole information, car information, and knowledge as we have time.
2. Gilmore Car Museum Research library—Leroy Cole donated a very large volume of Cole historical information, technical information and other Cole related materials. This is definitely the largest collection of knowledge related to the Cole Motor Car Company. <https://www.gilmorecarmuseum.org/education/research-library/>
3. Classic Car Club of America Museum Library—They have a collection of historical documents related to Cole donated by the Cole family. <http://cccamuseum.org/Explore/Archives/ArchiveViewer/tabid/116/Default.aspx>

Cole questions, parts needed, or any other Cole related needs? Please email me at [kfleck@outlook.com](mailto:kfleck@outlook.com) and I can share with the other owners to see if we can get you an answer or point you in the right direction. We might not always be able to solve everything, but the better the network we have the more we will be able to enjoy these magnificent cars.



This article is reprinted from the Cole Motor Car Club of America Bulletin dated 2009 and was the 2nd issue of that year. Thanks to Leroy Cole!

### President William Howard Taft and the Cole Automobile

There is another player in the Cole Motor Car start up – William Howard Taft, and the First Motoring Presidency 1909-1913 (McFarland & Company, Inc., publisher). He won the November 1908 presidential election in the month Cole built his High Wheeler. The story of Taft and motoring is contained in the above named book by Michael L. Bromley.

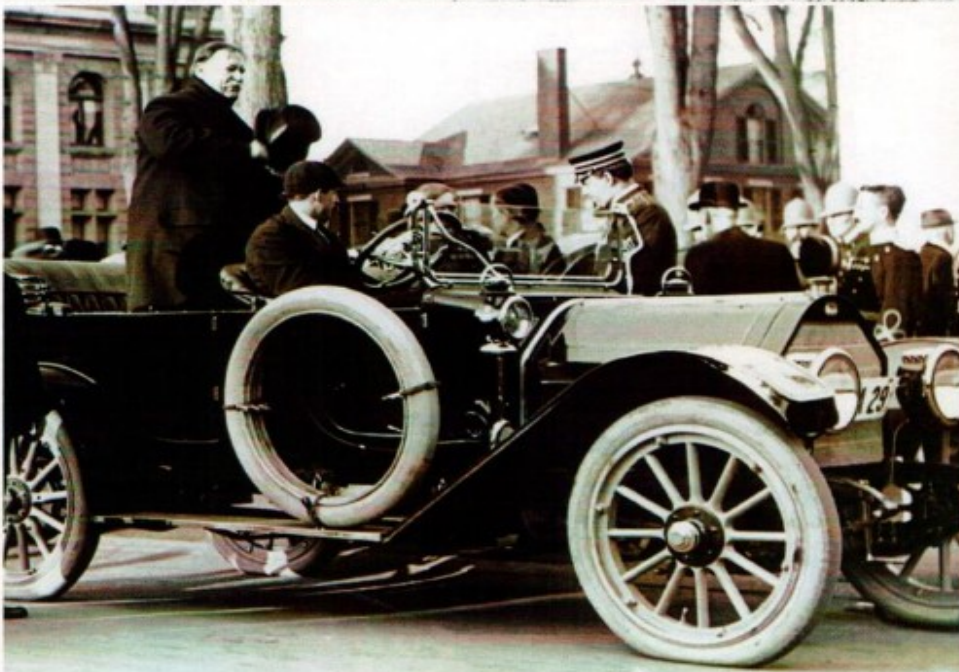
Taft loved automobiles which went counter to the sophisticated carriage culture of the elite. His adding automobiles to the White House Stable removed the cultural stigma of the Motor Car. "I have pleasure in

saying that there is no movement that I know of that will have a more direct effect to alleviate the difficulties and burdens of the farmer's life, will stimulate the traffic, and add to the general happiness of the people more than the establishment of good roads, throughout the country."

"How rapidly we adapt ourselves to the absolute necessity of those improvements of which we knew and imagined nothing fifty years ago! I am sure that of all of them the automobile, coming in as a toy of the wealthier classes, is going to prove the most useful of them all, to all classes, rich and poor."

The following quote is taken from an article in THE MOTOR WORLD, Dec. 2, 1909. "Ever since the prominent office holder and the political candidate succeeded the chorus girl and the baseball celebrity as desirable subjects for automobile photographers, the publicity man who is able to secure a picture of the President in or near to a

#### TAFT MAKING "STUMP" SPEECH



President William Howard Taft has been photographed in many automobiles, but the Cole was fortunate in not only being the car designated in Concord, N. H., to carry the President on his visit to that city, but a second Cole car was used to carry his official escort. W. H.

Alexander, the Cole agent in Concord, drove the Indianapolis-made car that bore the chief executive. In writing to the Cole organization here he said: "Why it was just the proper thing. Mr. Taft is the largest chief executive and the Cole is the largest individual manufacturer of automobiles in Indiana."

particular car, has counted himself in at least the second heaven of fame, it matters not if the picture is as tame and uninteresting as dishwater. It follows that during his recent swing around the United States, President Taft occupied many different brands of automobiles and was photographed in most of them."

Under Taft the motor car went from the toy of the rich to cultural acceptance and on to the desire of everyone to be mobile beyond the train tracks. 1909 through 1913 was Taft's term of office as well as the years in which the Cole became established as a contender in the American Motor Car industry.

Wrapping the President in blankets for the long cool ride.

