
1904 Rambler Model H

Lot sold	USD 72 890 - 86 143 GBP 55 000 - 65 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1904	Location	
Chassis number	4596	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	208		

Description

1904 Rambler 7hp Model H Rear-Entrance Tonneau
Registration no. BS 8435
Chassis no. 4596

Producers of bicycles under the 'Rambler' brand name, partners R Philip Gormully and Thomas B Jeffery diversified into automobile manufacture as early as 1897 with a single-cylinder gasoline engined car. Thomas's son Charles then built two cars of improved design and the company exhibited at the Chicago and New York auto shows in the autumn of 1900. These first Jeffery-designed cars were of front-engined, left-hand drive configuration, marking them out as advanced among contemporary American automobiles.

Following the death of Philip Gormully, the Jefferys sold their bicycle business and set up as automobile manufacturers in a new state-of-the-art factory in Kenosha, Wisconsin, producing the Charles Jeffery car in revised form. Doubtful that the public would accept a front-engined, left-hand drive vehicle with wheel steering, Thomas Jeffery opted for conventionality in the form of a right-drive, tiller steered car with its engine mounted beneath the seat, the first of these new Ramblers being sold in February 1902. A high quality vehicle offered at a value-for-money price of \$750, the Rambler was an instant success, selling 1,500 units in its first year of production, a figure bettered only by Ransom Eli Olds' curved dash Oldsmobile. Larger, twin-cylinder models followed - some with front engines - and wheel steering had been reinstated by 1904, in which year 2,342 Ramblers were sold.

Moving up market, Rambler had discontinued its single-cylinder models by 1905 and introduced a

brace of fours. The 1910 range consisted of four-cylinder models only and by this time Rambler was established as one of the US auto industry's leading firms. Following Thomas Jeffrey's death that same year, the company continued with Charles at the helm, but from 1914 onwards its products would be badged as 'Jeffery'. A famous name had gone.

The Rambler offered here is a 7hp Model H: a right-hand drive, single-cylinder model equipped with all-round elliptic springing, throttle control, from-the-seat starting, detachable tonneau and the correct Badger brothers 'solar' brass side lamps and headlamp. The car was purchased in America in 2005 from long term family ownership and imported by the vendor. Since arriving in this country the Rambler has taken part in several London-Brighton Runs and many VCC rallies including the Creepy Crawley. The vendor has described the car as easy to start, reliable and a pleasure to drive. Recently the wheels have been rebuilt and new tyres have been fitted. Offered with an entry into the 2020 London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, as well as several files of history documentation and a V5C Registration Certificate and the VCC dating certificate. There is also a windscreen and canopy roof which can be collected directly from the vendor by arrangement.

Bonhams 1793

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