

Hercules Engine News

By Glenn Karch

Gas Engine "Economics"



Old-engine collectors seem to have a renewed interest in "Sparta" Economy gas engines as of late. "Sparta" Economy gasoline engines were first produced in the spring of 1909 for Sears, Roebuck & Co., by Holm Machine Manufacturing Co. of Sparta, Mich., a wholly owned company. The first engines the firm produced were the Model A Economys, with total production of about 1,500 engines. The serial number range of the Economy Model A engines reported so far is 526 to 1391.

Although they were produced in 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 HP sizes, only the 2, 4, and 6 HP engines have been reported to still exist. In total, 22 Model A Economy engines are found on the current registry.

Fortunately, two very good pieces of descriptive literature about these engines still survive. One is an instruction manual and parts list that contains much more descriptive detail than many other manuals of the era, and the other is a circular measuring 14-by-21 inches that's printed on both sides in color and

Top: A marvelously colored 14-by-21-inch Sears circular touted the improved features of its Economy engine line.

Center: The price listing taken from the Sears Economy circular.

Bottom: A "Sparta" Economy instruction book printed by Sears, Roebuck & Co. gives collectors much more detail about these engines than many other manuals.

46 IMPROVED ECONOMY GASOLINE ENGINE **109**

60 DAYS' TRIAL

GUARANTEE

FOR 6-HORSE POWER

FOR 4-WHEEL POWER

FOR 2-WHEEL POWER

FOR 1-WHEEL POWER

THE ENGINE FOR YOU TO ORDER

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

Economy Price List from circa 1909

HP	Engine only	On trucks	With saw
2	46.95	\$59.85	N/A
4	\$79.45	\$99.15	\$169.95
6	\$109.75	\$156.50	\$249.65
8	\$168.95	\$226.80	\$294.75
10	\$243.45	\$326.90	\$369.45

GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF AND OPERATE THE ECONOMY GASOLINE ENGINE

Study this book carefully; it contains valuable information pertaining to the proper care of gasoline engines in general; it deals with all gasoline engine troubles and gives advice as to how to remedy them; also illustrates all parts in detail and gives a full list of repairs by horse power, with number and price of each part.

Save this book, it will save you many dollars. If you read this book carefully you will need no gasoline engine expert to get you out of trouble.

Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago, Ill.

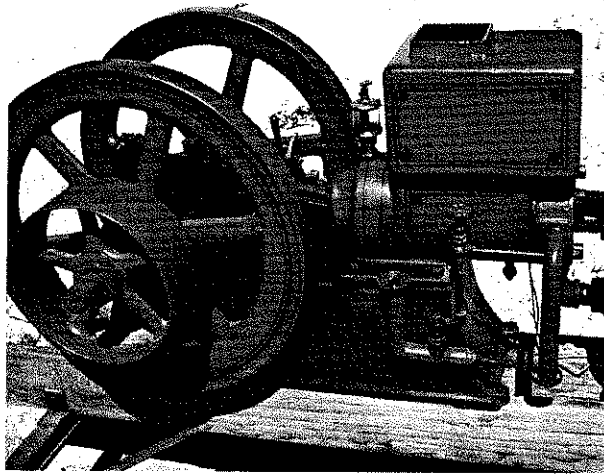
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shows engines with various details and prices. Interestingly, someone wrote in beautiful script a Nov. 27, 1909, date in the lower margin.

Several characteristics separate the Model A from the later-model Economys. The Model A has solid-flywheel hubs and uses a gibb key for tightening. It has a distinctively raised hopper lip and uses the Witry-patented fuel system similar to that used on the Waterloo-built engines of the time. The fuel tank is cast into the base. Later Model A Economys also have a shallow fuel primer and choke cup.

By late 1909, Economy Model A engines were replaced with a slightly modified Model B Economy engine, but that subject will have to wait until next time.

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Left and below: Later Model A Economy engines featured a shallow fuel primer and choke cup, along with a raised hopper lip, indicative of ways Holm Machine changed the model to produce a better engine. Knowing these changes enables collectors to evaluate when an engine was produced.

