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Nikola Tesla

Nikola Tesla (10 July 1856 – 7 January 1943) was an inventor and a mechanical and electrical engineer. He is frequently cited as one of the most important contributors to the birth of commercial electricity and is best known for his many revolutionary developments in the field of electromagnetism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Tesla's patents and theoretical work formed the basis of modern alternating current (AC) electric power systems, including the polyphase system of electrical distribution and the AC motor, with which he helped usher in the Second Industrial Revolution.



Tesla reportedly created and implemented an energy technology into a car for its driving power. Pierce Arrow supplied Tesla with a Pierce Arrow 1931 model fitted with an air cooled electrical motor producing 80 hp at 1800 rpm. The electric engine measured 40 inches length by 30 inches width (approx. 100 x 76 cm). The connective wires for the power supply were not plugged into any battery and there was no other visible source of power.

Tesla tested the car for a week and reported it could reach speeds up to 90 miles (144 km) per hour.



1931 Pierce-Arrow 8 Model 43 D.C. Phaeton

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The test results confirmed the Arrow's performance to be at least equivalent to a car fitted with a petrol engine, but without the need for fuel and without emitting fumes. Various newspapers in Buffalo reported the sensational news. Regarding questions as to the origin of its operating power Tesla just answered: "Ether which permeates everything! This energy is available as an inexhaustible supply."

Notable Points:

- Tesla did not have a nephew named Peter Savo who claims to have been involved with the tests and subsequently reported upon the details.
- Credible details were from a Pierce Arrow newsletter of the time.
- The Dallar Star report was written over 25 years after the facts.
- The Internet has embellished and added to the original known details.
- The standard internal combustion engine was removed and an 80-H.P. 1800 r.p.m electric motor installed to the clutch and transmission.
- The A.C. motor measured 40 inches long and 30 inches in diameter.
- Tesla reportedly went to a local radio store and purchased 12 (70L7-GT rectifier beam power) tubes, wires and assorted resistors.
- A box measuring 24 inches long, 12 inches wide and 6 inches high was assembled housing the circuit.
- The box was placed on the front seat and had its wires connected to the air-cooled, brushless motor.
- Two rods 1/4" in diameter stuck out of the box about 3" in length."
- There is no report of an antenna used.

A few months after the conclusion of the reported tests, the Pierce Arrow company shut down and the cars were phased out.

Whether Tesla actually did successfully power an electric car is suspect however what is credible is that we do think it can be done given the materials he selected for his tests.

Edited from KeelyNet.com: 1932 ~ January 24th, Sunday - Dallas Morning News

Power Source of '31 car still a mystery by A.C. Greene

Supported by the Pierce-Arrow Co. and General Electric in 1931, he ("Nikola Tesla") took the gasoline engine from a new Pierce-Arrow and replaced it with an 80-horsepower alternating-current electric motor with no external power source.

At a local radio shop he bought 12 vacuum tubes, some wires and assorted resistors, and assembled them in a circuit box 24 inches long, 12 inches wide and 6 inches high, with a pair of 3-inch rods sticking out. Getting into the car with the circuit box in the front seat beside him, he pushed the rods in, announced, "We now have power," and proceeded to test drive the car for a week, often at speeds of up to 90 mph.

As it was an alternating-current motor and there were no batteries involved, where did the power come from?

Popular responses included charges of "black magic," and the sensitive genius didn't like the skeptical comments of the press. He removed his mysterious box, returned to his laboratory in New York - and the secret of his power source died with him.