UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

More Car ID Madness

– Steve Sloan
sloanx@swbell.net

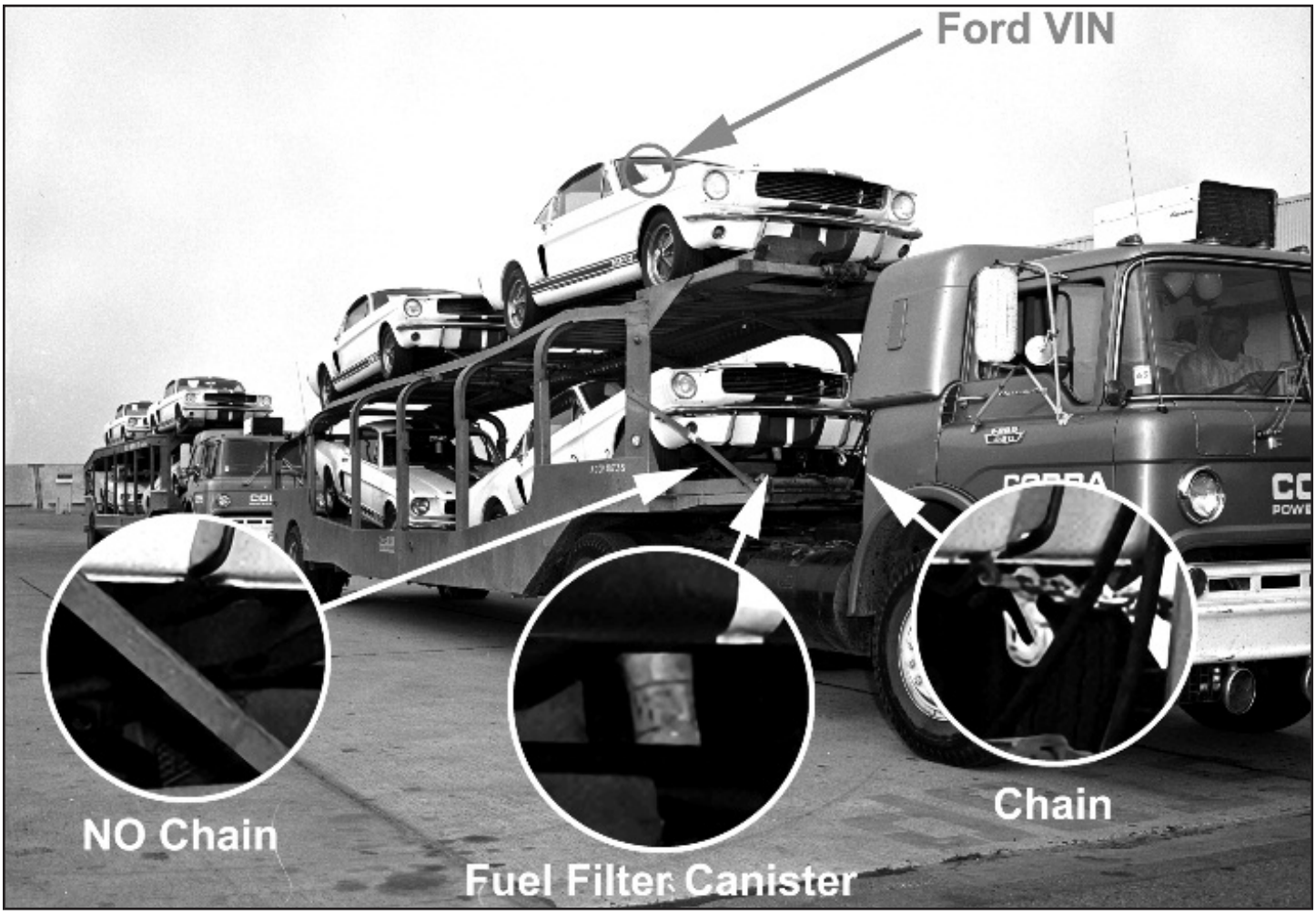
Regular readers may have seen some of the recent articles where I start with a factory photo and try to figure out the exact car(s) in that picture. In some cases I don't have much luck. However, one time I was able to narrow the list of possibilities down from 2,378 to just four cars. My 6S087 was one of those four! This case was much easier and more conclusive. But let's not give away too much up front.

It all started when I sent another article to Rick Kopec to be considered for publication here in *The Shelby American.* I love Shelby research and then having the opportunity to share what I learn with everyone in the club. A few days later he emailed that he was going to send me a "few" pictures he had that might inspire another article or two. A week after that I received a thumb drive in the mail with a treasure trove of factory photos – well over 600 total pictures! My only limitation was that I not pass them along to anyone else without his say-so. He paid good money for the negatives years ago, and he held the legal rights to them. He preferred they not be spread around like manure on a farm.

Many of you may not know this, but Rick, despite his sometimes gruff presentation (which is mostly an act) has a heart of gold. When I wrote a story about giving some little kids a ride in my car he tipped me off to start carrying a pillow in the trunk to use as a seat booster so they could see out over the dashboard. And he followed that up by sending a batch of Shelby posters to give to my young passengers. I learned that he acquired the digital scans of these pictures as part of a deal to simply give the actual negatives to the Shelby American Collection museum. Pretty nice guy, eh?

Back to our story. I spent several days just enjoying the embarrassment of riches that thumb drive held for me. There were many factory photos I'd never seen before, plus some that I had… but never like this. These were high resolution. On some you could actually zoom in on screws and tell if they were Phillips-head or slotted. Some lock washers could clearly be seen as star type vs. the split type. I found myself going zoom-crazy, zooming in on all kinds of details just for the heck of it. Is that a mosquito or a mole on that driver's hand? Let's zoom in and find out. Incredible fun!

I was on one of those zooming sprees when I came across a photo I'd seen before. Or at least I'd seen some version of it – maybe not a shot from this angle, and certainly not of this quality and sharpness in detail. It was a photo of two Shelby American car carriers leaving LAX with eight 1966 GT350s on board. At first it just rated a casual glance since I'd seen that basic shot so many times before. But I started seeing things I'd never previ-



ously noticed. Like the fuel filter canister visible below the lower-front car on the first truck - indicating that car is a carryover.

Then I spotted "*IT*." A piece of paper was taped in the windshield of each car. My previous research had taught me what that meant. If I could read the digits on those papers they should give me both the Ford and Shelby VIN of each car. Oh, yeah!

I started frantically spinning my mouse's scroll wheel as I zoomed around that picture, examining the paper on each car. Unfortunately, seven were either blocked from view or illegible, but I struck gold on the top-front car. The upper portion with the Ford VIN was fairly clear and sharp. I couldn't read the Shelby VIN on the lower section of the paper, but

What appeared to be completed '66 GT350s leaving Shelby American on their way to dealers is now thought to be publicity photos taken expressly for the '66s introduction. As 8˝x10˝ black and white photos, they are commonly found in 1966 press kits. Shelby American's four-car haulers were used to deliver Cobras and the occasional GT350 but they were not generally used to deliver large groups of GT350s. The eight-car haulers of Hadley Auto Transport were used, based on the distance to dealerships.

that was alright. I had enough to go on. I knew I could identify that car from the Ford VIN. I just had to decide which of two paths to take.

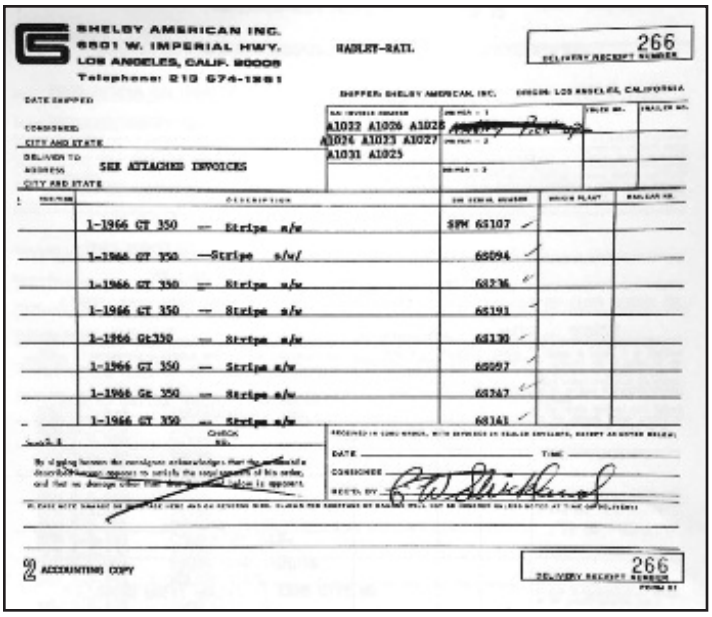
But wait… slow down. I'd promised Kopec to keep all photos confidential. I couldn't locate that car's owner and then not offer him a copy of this picture of his car leaving Shelby American. A short request to Rick was immediately answered in the affirmative. Just like that I had the permission to share this photo with the owner…if I could only find him. I had two choices of what to do next.

On one hand, I could simply send that Ford VIN to Howard Pardee and let him take it from there. He would check his records for the Shelby VIN and touch base with that owner if he had current contact information. But using in this method I might never know the Shelby VIN of that car. Normally I'm not one to pry into the secret Ford VINs, but in this case that secrecy was keeping me from my goal of identifying that car for my own satisfaction.

On the other hand, I'm a member of the Carryover Owners Group (COG) and I was pretty sure that car was a carryover – like the car below it with the fuel filter canister visible in the photo. If I went about this properly I might find the car and owner on my own. I could always go the Pardee Route if that didn't pan out.

I figured that was worth a try, so I sent a few carefully worded emails to some COG members. Some are comfortable discussing their Ford VINs and others will excommunicate you for even bringing up the subject. So it took me a few days to come up with the proper wording for my messages. It was worth it when Dave Zech replied that the Ford VIN I had matched his 6S236. Yee ha! I was both thrilled and

6S236 as it sits today, owned by SAAC member Dave Zech of Hamilton, Virginia.



SHELBY AMERICAN INC.
6501 W. IMPERIAL HWY.
LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90009
Telephone: 213 674-1581

HADLEY-RAIL

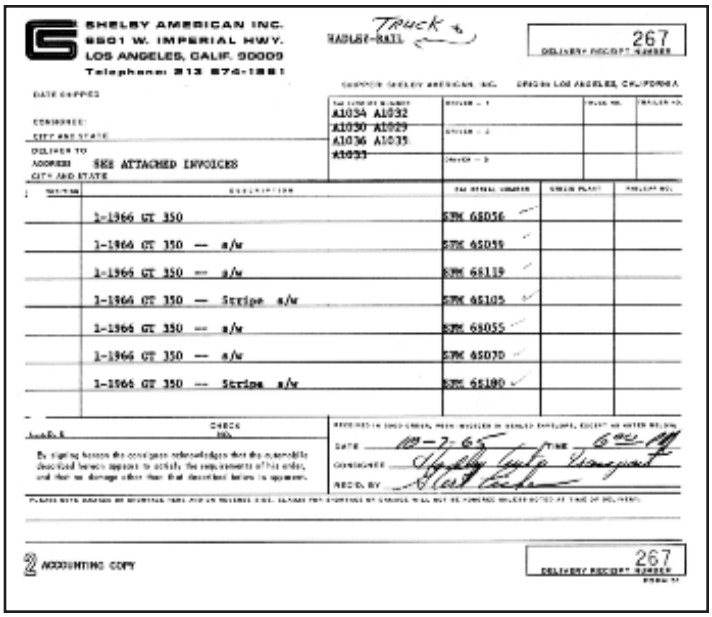
266

SEE ATTACHED INVOICES

1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	SFM 6S107	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S094	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S236	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S191	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S130	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S097	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S247	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	6S141	

2 ACCOUNTING COPY

266



SHELBY AMERICAN INC.
6501 W. IMPERIAL HWY.
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Telephone: 213 674-1581

Truck
HADLEY-RAIL

267

A1034 A1032
A1030 A1029
A1036 A1035
A1033

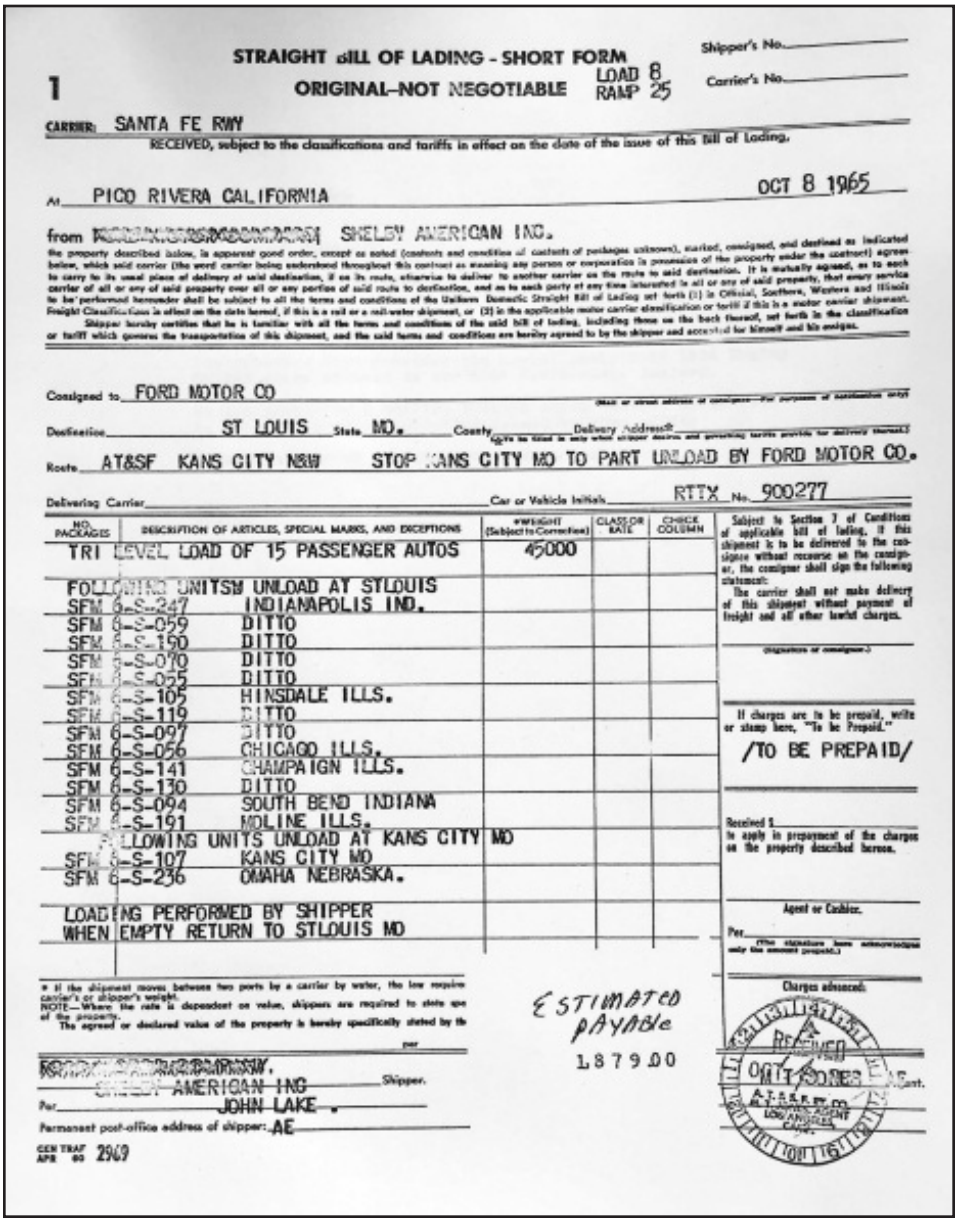
SEE ATTACHED INVOICES

1-1966 GT 350	SFM 6S056	
1-1966 GT 350 — a/w	SFM 6S059	
1-1966 GT 350 — a/w	SFM 6S119	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	SFM 6S105	
1-1966 GT 350 — a/w	SFM 6S055	
1-1966 GT 350 — a/w	SFM 6S070	
1-1966 GT 350 — Stripe a/w	SFM 6S180	

10-7-65

2 ACCOUNTING COPY

267



STRAIGHT BILL OF LADING - SHORT FORM
ORIGINAL–NOT NEGOTIABLE

1

LOAD 8
RAMP 25

Shipper's No.
Carrier's No.

CARRIER: SANTA FE RWY

RECEIVED, subject to the classifications and tariffs in effect on the date of the issue of this Bill of Lading.

At PICO RIVERA CALIFORNIA OCT 8 1965

from [redacted] SHELBY AMERICAN INC.

Consigned to FORD MOTOR CO

Destination ST LOUIS State MO. County Delivery Address

Route AT&SF KANS CITY N&W STOP KANS CITY MO TO PART UNLOAD BY FORD MOTOR CO.

Delivering Carrier Car or Vehicle Initials RTTX No. 900277

NO. PACKAGES	DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES, SPECIAL MARKS, AND EXCEPTIONS	WEIGHT (Subject to Correction)	CLASS OR RATE	CHECK COLUMN
	TRI LEVEL LOAD OF 15 PASSENGER AUTOS	45000		
	FOLLOWING UNITS UNLOAD AT STLOUIS			
	SFM 6-S-247 INDIANAPOLIS IND.			
	SFM 6-S-059 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-150 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-070 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-055 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-105 HINSDALE ILLS.			
	SFM 6-S-119 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-097 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-056 CHICAGO ILLS.			
	SFM 6-S-141 CHAMPAIGN ILLS.			
	SFM 6-S-130 DITTO			
	SFM 6-S-094 SOUTH BEND INDIANA			
	SFM 6-S-191 MOLINE ILLS.			
	FOLLOWING UNITS UNLOAD AT KANS CITY MO			
	SFM 6-S-107 KANS CITY MO			
	SFM 6-S-236 OMAHA NEBRASKA.			
	LOADING PERFORMED BY SHIPPER WHEN EMPTY RETURN TO STLOUIS MO			

Subject to Section 7 of Conditions of applicable bill of lading, if this shipment is to be delivered to the consignee without recourse on the consignor, the consignor shall sign the following statement:
The carrier shall not make delivery of this shipment without payment of freight and all other lawful charges.

(Signature of consignor.)

If charges are to be prepaid, write or stamp here, "To be Prepaid."

/TO BE PREPAID/

Received $ to apply in prepayment of the charges on the property described hereon.

Agent or Cashier.

Per (The signature here acknowledges only the amount prepaid.)

Charges advanced:

* If the shipment moves between two ports by a carrier by water, the law requires carrier's or shipper's weight.
NOTE—Where the rate is dependent on value, shippers are required to state specifically in writing the agreed or declared value of the property.
The agreed or declared value of the property is hereby specifically stated by the shipper to be not exceeding

per

ESTIMATED PAYABLE 1879.00

[redacted] AMERICAN INC Shipper.
Per JOHN LAKE
Permanent post-office address of shipper: AE

GEN TRAF APR '60 2969

humbled to get that news. Thrilled at identifying that car and actually knowing the owner. Humbled that Dave knew his reply revealed his Ford VIN to me. A sacred trust that I take very seriously. (You'll notice that Ford VIN does not appear in this article.) Dave must have been pretty happy too. He's having that picture blown up large enough to cover one wall of his garage.

End of story? Not quite. There were seven more cars in that picture begging to be identified. A little more digging yielded an undated Hadley-Rail Delivery Receipt #266 that listed 6S236 along with seven other 1966 GT350s. Oh, my! That sounded promising. I also found a Santa Fe Railroad Bill of Lading dated 10-8-65 that listed 6S236 and fourteen other cars. The Registry indicated that those fifteen cars left Shelby American on 10-7-65. So my thinking was that those two documents probably contained the answer to the identity of the other seven cars in that LAX photo. Hmmm… I had reached the limits of my knowledge about the inner workings of Shelby American. Time to call in the real experts.

A consultation with Howard Pardee and Greg Kolasa popped my bubble about "Hadley-Rail." For forty-plus years I've seen cars listed on those Hadley-Rail delivery receipts thinking they represented vehicles loaded onto

Hadley-Rail railroad cars. And eight cars on the delivery receipt meant those eight vehicles were the full load for a particular rail car. All facilitated by a company named Hadley-Rail. Sounded logical but not exactly true.

It turned out the company involved was actually Hadley Auto Transport. Those delivery receipts were for delivery of cars from Shelby American to the railhead at Pico Rivera, California. How they were loaded onto the rail cars was what the Santa Fe Bill of Lading was about.

Then another bubble was popped when Howard and Greg mentioned that the Shelby American four-car auto carriers (as seen in the photo) were only used for local deliveries. For cars being shipped around the country by rail Shelby American called on Hadley Auto Transport, who sent their own eight-car carriers for the job. That information matched nicely with the Hadley-Rail delivery receipt #266 I had that listed eight cars (including 6S236) being delivered to the railhead. The subsequent delivery receipt (#267) that Howard provided was for seven other cars that left Shelby American that day. The cars on those two receipts were the exact same fifteen cars on the Santa Fe Bill of Lading. And they are the only cars known to have shipped from Shelby American that day – October 7, 1965. A full railroad car would be fifteen cars stored on three levels.

If 6S236 was shipped from Shelby American to the railhead on an eight-car Hadley truck, what explained this photo of 6S236 and seven other cars leaving LAX on two Shelby American transports?

It had to be a staged public relations photo shoot. Ouch! They sure fooled me. Shelby American wanted pictures of 1966 GT350s leaving the factory to include in the press kits during the introduction of the new 1966 GT350s. They were also given to the press and can be seen in numerous period publications that introduced 1966 GT350s.

That conclusion is supported by the fact that the front of the car in the lower-front position on the car carrier is only secured by a chain on the driver's side. No chain is shown on the passenger side. The car is only partially held in place. Good enough for a spin around the lot perhaps, but not for a long-distance delivery trip on the open road. (Special thanks to Kieth Champine for spotting this.)

So, those pictures may have actually been taken days or even weeks before 6S236 was actually shipped out. Additionally, those cars may not even be completed GT350s. They could have been just cars that looked complete for the publicity photos. Double ouch!

This is where the search for the identity of those other seven cars hit the wall. Unless we find a photo that shows the Ford or Shelby VIN on their windshield papers we'll probably never be able to pin those cars down. All we can say for certain is that they shared at least one day at Shelby American with 6S236.

Such is the life of a true Shelby nut – one amazing success goes on the board against seven failures. As usual, I had a blast doing this research and my one victory was exhilarating. What an adventure! Now back to the photo stash that Kopec shared. I know there's more gold to be mined there.

Special thanks to Howard Pardee and Greg Kolasa for their assistance and patience in advancing my knowledge of the inner workings of Shelby American.

We included this photo of Hadley Auto Transport's eight-car transporters to show the difference between Shelby American's four-car transporters. This photo was taken when Shelby American received the first delivery of cars destined to be R-Models from Ford's San Jose production facility the week before Christmas, 1964.