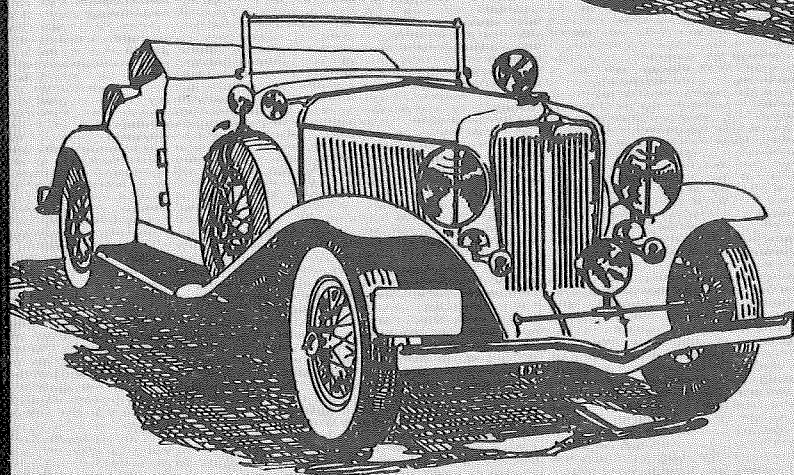
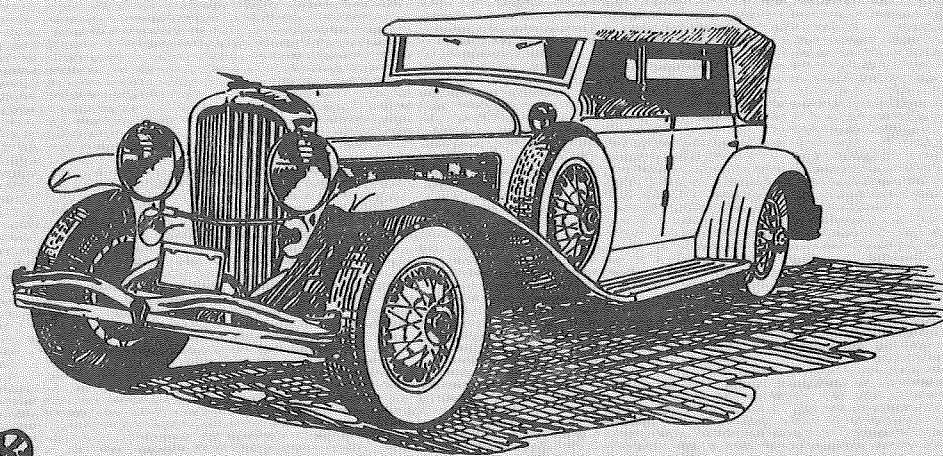
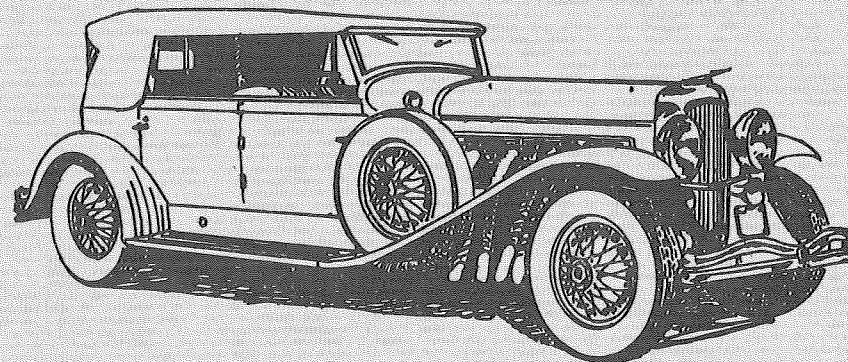


# THE BUMPER GUARDIAN

FALL 76 - WINTER 77



CARMIN





# THE BUMPER GUARDIAN

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The Classic Car Club of America is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New York. The Club seeks to further the restoration and preservation of distinctive motor cars produced in the period from 1925 through 1942, to provide a channel of communication for those interested in such cars, and to bring together in good fellowship all who own or admire these finest examples of automotive craftsmanship. The sole requirement for membership is a demonstrable interest in a Classic Car or Cars. Application for membership should be sent to John C. Dennis, Membership Chairman, Pacific Northwest Region, P. O. Box 171 Mercer Island, Washington 98040. National dues are \$13 for Active Members and \$15 for Affiliate Members, Associate Membership dues, limited to the spouse of an Active Member, are \$2. Regional dues are \$7.50 annually.

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## My Illusive Dream

Jim Tallman

"Hallelujah," after years of dreaming and drooling over the famous and finest of auto engineering, the Duesenberg, it finally became a positive thought that I might own one of these fine specimens. After 6 months of hounding my banker, trying to convince him that good Classics are a sound investment and a worthwhile personal asset, he finally broke down. Not being a drinking man, the 6 martinis must have had some effect on his decision. Having located a Duesenberg I could finance, I was ready with all the numbers and titles to my other cars and got everything done before his numbness wore off. I finally had accomplished the impossible, or at least I thought. I couldn't sleep, or eat or think straight. 10:30 that night as I was studying my Duesenberg book, the phone rings, I answer it, who is it? My banker. I exclaimed half out loud, "Damn, what's happened now."

He came alive and informed me that he had to get head office approval. I thought to myself .... here goes my dream. I slept very little that night. Up as usual at 5:00 and went to work. At 11:00 my friend the banker called. He stuttered some, asked how the weather was, and seemed somewhat cool. I thought it was a no go. His next sentence was, "It's been approved." I couldn't believe it and got a chill. It finally occurred to me that I was hopelessly in debt, up to my ears, at my age, but damn, I'll finally have the car that makes it seem all worthwhile. I sat back in my chair, in a bit of a daze, and thought to myself, how in the hell am I going to make them payments. I started to plan what I should sell first ... the Auburn? No, not by a damn sight, we have had too much

fun in that car, and its perfect running engine hasn't coughed in 8 years, nope, that's not the place to start. The end, maybe, but not now.

Then came to mind, I have a smoke-belching, oil-dripping Packard. A popular choice of scrap iron to many, but a painful project for me to restore, especially when I have many better cars to work on. I finally relaxed and thought maybe someone will want it. I chose, also, to think of selling my 27 Pierce Arrow, a fine, stately car but homely as a one-eyed frog. Having 6 Pierces, surely the ugly one won't be missed. But will anyone want the car bad enough to pay money for it? I thought to myself that I did, so there must be one more person in this world that would. I went back to work, but couldn't think straight, so locked up and headed home.

As I was daydreaming with that magnificent Duesenberg on my mind, I passed a radar cop at 65 in a 50 mph zone and had a friendly discussion with the local representative of the Washington State Patrol. I cautiously shut the engine off of my Chev pickup. I had just installed headers with Gloss Pack Free Flow Mufflers. That would have been another ticket. I got warned of my carelessness and was allowed to leave. Trying to keep that engine quiet was hard, but apparently he couldn't hear too well inside his car. As I turned the Purdy Corner, I ran out of gas. I coasted, then pushed that damn pickup into the local Texaco station. After refueling I raced home to tell Dian of our being plunged into hopeless depths of indebtedness. She laughed when I told her, and exclaimed



"You wouldn't dare." We can't sell the house; we just moved in. I told her it was true. Then came the silent treatment. Then she exclaimed, "I won't do this, I won't do that, we can't afford this, there's no money for that, but you'll buy another damn car." She started murmuring something about a psychiatrist. I fixed a couple of double Blood Marys, 1 for her and 1 for me, snatched my Duesenberg book from the cabinet and started brushing up on some statistics about this great car.

Dian became relaxed, from the drink, I guess, and murmured that she was happy that we could do this and would be content to live in a tent if we had to or maybe in the back of the Duesenberg if need be.

Another sleepless night passed as the thoughts of the great Duesey entered and left my mind repeatedly. What excuses could I make if I got cold feet now. I fell asleep with a dazzled impression of that great engine on my mind. Next morning came with a killing frost that got all my strawberry and peach blossoms. Oh well, we didn't need them anyway! I had an appointment at the bank at 11:00 to pick up the check.

After this was securely in my possession, I left Seattle on a North-bound ramp opposite direction from Gig Harbor. After a frustrating experience of getting turned around on the I-5 freeway, I headed back to Tacoma for a lunch appointment; I forgot the location. I radioed my secretary. Damn radio quit, so I had to find a phone to call the office. When I did finally get through, she informed me that a Revenue Tax Auditor was waiting to see me. What next?!

I met my appointment, got back to the office late, had my monthly argument about unjust Timber Taxes, and commenced to get my office work done before 6:00. At 5:00 A.M. next morning we were leaving on our vacation to St. Louis, Missouri, to pick up our cherished possession.

I made some phone calls, one to Don Jenson in Humboldt, Iowa, who I had talked to earlier about a new Park Glider covered car trailer. He had one that I wanted and I told him we would be there at noon on the 3rd day out to pick it up.

The next call was to the owner of the Duesey in St. Louis, and one to my sister in St. Charles, Mo. We had everything set. The car would be brought from storage to Georgia and be in St. Louis when we arrived.

The next call was to Dian, telling her all my plans. A good way to get on the best side of your wife isn't to advise her 4:00 in the afternoon that we are leaving at 5:00 the next morning for a 10-day journey across 16 of the United States. When I called, she exclaimed, "But I have jury duty!"

I told her to tell the organizer that the guy was guilty or anything, just get out of it or I had to leave her home. She got relieved. I had a refrigerator leftover dinner and a cold shoulder that night, and as we prepared for our journey, many explosive remarks were exchanged, all in good humor, however, for we were off on a true adventure.

## The True Adventure

Dian Tallman

He came home one day all excited: "I got one, I got one." One what, I said. "A loan for my Duesey!" Oh great, I thought, just what we need, another loan. Oh well, before I knew it we were packing and on our summer vacation???? This is what he called it anyway ... VACATION!!! It was also my Mother's Day gift. Next morning, there we were, four of us - Jim, me, his daughter Lisa, and Bruno, the dog, crammed in the front seat of a truck and on our way. At first I was upset, 'cause knowing Jim, he would push himself and go about 500 miles a day (some relaxing vacation), but I really shouldn't have worried about the 500 miles a day, because it ended up 800 miles a day. Tell me, what do you do in a crowded truck 17 or 18 hours a day ... You hold the dog, peel the oranges, pass the pop can back and forth, watch the road map, and try to take a nap, but just about the time you fall asleep there is a rest area and he pulls over and naturally wakes you up. I forgot to mention losing an hour each day going East. Nevertheless, we were up at 5:00 AM again (which was really 4:00 AM Pacific Time) and the third day 3:00 AM Pacific Time. Our first night was in Bozeman, Montana, and our second in Mitchell, South Dakota. We got to Humboldt, Iowa on the third day where we had ordered an enclosed car trailer from Don Jensen's Enterprises. He also owns a restaurant where they sell (of all things) DUES-EYBURGERS! We naturally all had Dueseyburgers, even the Dog. We also collected a handful of yellow napkins with large Duesenbergs on them. After starting out with our new car trailer behind us, I offered to drive so Jim could rest. After all

the warnings about the weight of the trailer behind us, the wind swaying it, "Watch those trailer brakes," "Don't go over 50," I drove approximately 10 minutes when there was a sign "STEEP GRADE NEXT 8 MILES!" Scared to death after Jim's warnings, I had to pull over and wake him to take the darn thing down the mountain. On to Ottumwa, Iowa, our third night. I think we could have made another state, knowing Jim, but those fancy headers he put on his truck were causing it to cough, miss, and nearly quit. We found a teenager working at a service station who diagnosed the problem immediately, so Jim spent a very hot afternoon over a very hot engine tapping up wires that were hitting the manifold and causing all these problems. While he did this, Lisa and I sat in a hot truck with no cool breeze, holding a dog barking wildly at the station's pet cat.

SUNDAY, MOTHER'S DAY, I asked for one thing ... I thought that was really reasonable ... All I wanted was a hard chocolate ice cream cone, but do you realize they are practically impossible to find. I had to settle for a soft vanilla, one that a person had to hog down to keep it from melting all over. That was my MOTHER'S DAY ... Except Jim kept calling this vacation his gift to me, along with the remark that I wasn't his mother!

We arrived in Wentzville, Missouri, Sunday at Jim's sister's along with 14 other Missouri relatives we never saw before, and heard conversations about the large black snake they just killed in their yard, and that all the

jiggers and ticks were in the grass this time of year. This was while I was sitting outside on the lawn with a beer in my hand. I immediately stood up. I was really tired of sitting so much, anyway.

Jim phoned St. Louis the following morning for directions to go pick up HIS Duesey. I couldn't believe my ears at the half of the conversation I heard. It went like this. "But where is the Car?" "How long will it take for parts?" "Atlanta, Georgia!" "Call me back!", and he hung up. I was scared to ask what I knew in my mind was going to happen. We waited, Jim pacing the floor like a new father, (although he had been through that 6 times) and finally the phone rang. Again I heard half of the conversation that went something like this ... "Four days for parts?" "We can't afford to waste time waiting." "We'll leave at 5:00 AM in the morning." I wasn't sure whether to smile and get away from the snake stories and ticks, or cry at the idea of another 1300 miles, but after actually seeing a tick in the house, and a lime green (like Jello) snake in the yard, I decided 1300 miles was much better.

Up again at 5:00 AM for Atlanta, Georgia, and all those Georgia peaches and grits. Needless to say, our relaxing day took us through the rest of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia. You can see why I worry about Jim pushing himself so, but in vain I must say. I was again peeling the oranges, passing out bruised peaches, and trying to find Jim a good western station on the radio, but believe me, it was truly

impossible to find a good western station in Nashville, Tennessee. Unbelievable, but true. All the while with a teenager in the truck wanting that "stuff" they listen to. Usually the good clear stations all were her kind.

Jim did buy us a really lovely dinner in Georgia that night, and little Bruno is the only dog I know who gets sick on prime rib.

Wednesday, May 12th. Jim was the proud father to a 7,000 pound "Black" baby Duesenberg. I am now in second place. I guess I should be happy with second place, after all the conversations about selling the house or selling the kids to pay for the new addition. I asked him if he would ever consider trading me for the Duesey, but he said he didn't know, he never had any offers.

We met Jim Southers of Classic Car Investments that morning, and Lisa and I climbed in the back seat while the two Jims were in front, and off we went down the busy streets of Atlanta. You could see Jim's face drain of blood and turn pale as the Duesey was being wheeled in and out of the traffic, but finally we were back and getting it loaded in the new trailer. We got a late start driving that day, around noon, but believe me, we didn't lose any miles. We made it all the way back to Wentzville, Missouri that same day. Just drove a little later. Till 1:00 AM or so.

We woke to our first rain the next morning, and headed for Kansas and Nebraska. We never could take time for sightseeing, or souvenir shopping, but we spent three hours in North Platte, Nebraska looking at two Pierce Arrows. The trip was going along smoothly, however, except for the 8 miles per gallon, and pulling 10,000 pounds behind us.

In Cheyenne, Wyoming, the temperature that day was 90, and the same in Laramie, but that night dipped to 25, and we woke the next morning to snow. We saw a lot of antelope, deer, three mountain goats, and an occasional old car body in someone's field, but we didn't have any room to haul one home ... thank God!

Jim took only six pictures on our 6,000 mile trip, but when we arrived home he took 14 more in our own yard of his Duesey. It now has its stately place in the middle of our rec. room, and Jim says being it's in the house, it is my job to keep it dusted and polished, and that we better start charging admission to see it. I even bought Jim a Duesenberg key chain, and tie tack, and promised him when he died I would have him stuffed and seat him behind the wheel of his car. He smiles, thinking that I am joking, and goes back to work after his vacation, to put in double shifts and try to meet the first payment. In five years, we will invite you all over for the burning of the mortgage ....

THIS IS THE WAY IT WAS ...

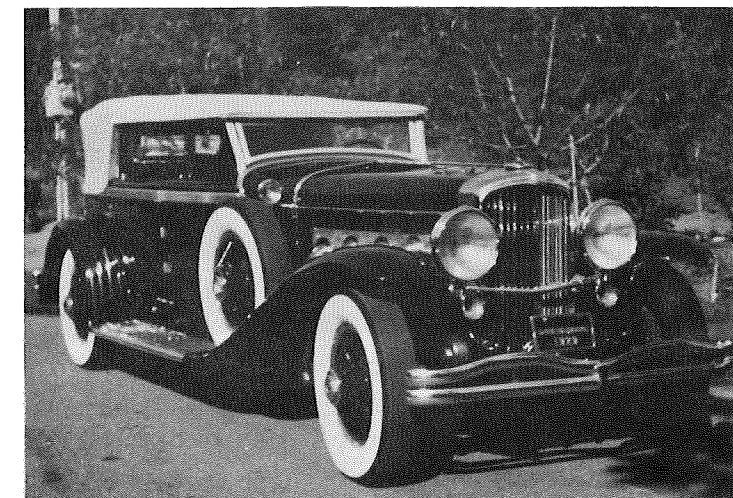
## The Mightiest of American Motor Cars

Jim Tallman

In 1929, over 125 makes of automobiles were being built in the United States. Mightiest of all these was considered to be the Duesenberg. In an era that had just come into Chrome Plating instead of Nickel for brightwork, many models of the principal makes came forth with an array that has never been equalled.

All components of the Duesenberg were superbly engineered to result in a very attractive and proportioned automobile, among the largest and heaviest ever to be built.

Beginning in 1929 and fading away in 1938, two chassis were built, one at 142-1/2" wheel base, and the other at 153-1/2" wheel base. Chassis weights



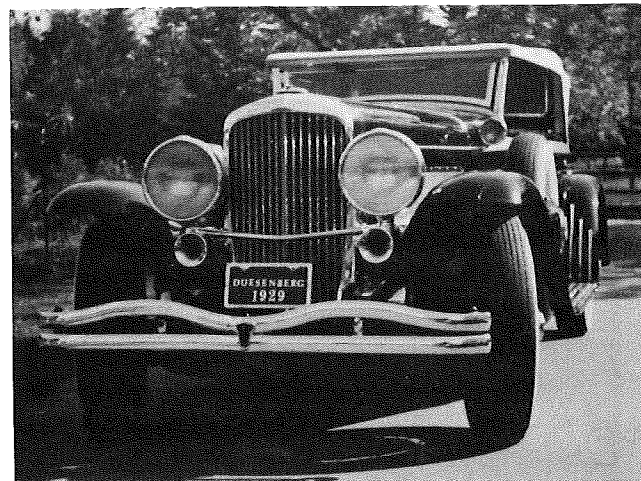
ranged from 4,450 pounds for a short wheel base to 4,700 pounds for a long wheel base.

After a custom body was attached, the weights were to reach an all-time high of 5500 to and exceeding 7000 pounds.

Only Cadillac, in 1934, outstretched Duesenberg wheel base by 1/2" on its V 16 model.

Two basic chassis were built starting in 1929, the "J" was standard model with engine rated at 265 H.P. to the "S.J." supercharged engine rated at 320 H.P.

Duesenberg built the chassis only, and all the bodies were custom built by one of several custom Coachbuilders. As a prospective buyer of a Duesenberg, you could choose the body of your desire. Murphy built bodies were most popular with the beautiful LaGrande with sweep side panels a close second. Most expensive models were the Murphy and Rollston bodied cars. Cost of the average Duesenberg affixed with the body of your choice was \$13,500 on the low to \$17,950 high. F.O.B. Indianapolis, In.

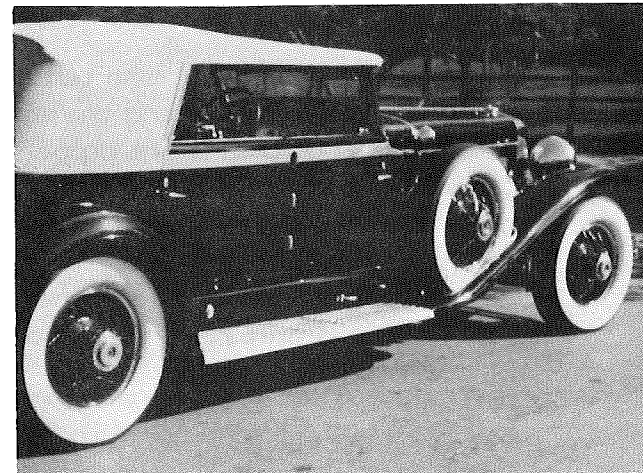


Duesenberg employed Philip Derham of the Derham Body Co. to design new ideas into bodies offered prospective buyers. Murphy bodies still outnumbered other makes and continued to be very popular. The massive engine that pushes these beauties down the road is truly a work of genius engineering.

The perfect balancing of its engine is perfected by two cartridges of Mercury

attached to the crankshaft. The 320 H.P. Supercharged engine could attain 104 M.P.H. in 2nd gear, accelerating from a standing start to 100 in 17 seconds. Speeds in high gear have yet to be ascertained.

The standard 265 H.P. Engine could attain 87 M.P.H. in the same time. The developed H.P. was attained at 4200 R.P.M.



Both engines had a bore of 3-3/4 and a stroke of 4-3/4 and displacement of 420 cubic inches. 4 valves per cylinder operated by overhead cam shafts took care of the top end.

The engine has a very adequate oil pressure system experiencing practically no known failure due to engineering.

This fine automobile stands to be challenged for the top of the fine, fine American built automobiles, and stands out above all the rest as "King Of The Road."

## The Model "A" Duesenberg Racing Engine

### AND ITS SUBSEQUENT POOR RELATIVES

Alec Ulmann

The brothers Augie and Fred Duesenberg had the wonderful opportunity of being exposed to the latest ideas of European high performance engines, when the War Production Board called them in 1917 to build the King (re-designed 16 cylinder) Bugatti aviation engine, which was to compete with the Liberty 12. This is a most interesting phase of the Bugatti story and is very well documented by Hugh Conway, the eminent Bugatti historian (Bugatti, Le Pur-Sang des Automobiles). Suffice it to say that this wartime experience in which the brothers were guided, not only by Charles King, but also by Ernest Friederich of the Bugatti Works in Molsheim, was of great educational value. They clearly saw an end to the walking-beam valve rocker design used by Mason-Duesenberg. Immediately after the war, they embarked on a straight-eight layout, which was strongly reminiscent of one-half of the Bugatti aero engine. The purpose of this dissertation is not to go into the numerous variations of the 183, 122 and 91 cubic inch racing engines the Duesenberg brothers designed and built, but to compare these very high performance cars with the very advanced Model A productions built in Indianapolis and line this up with the disaster which they were forced into by E. L. Cord after their effort went to the wall. I am referring to the

truck-like behemoth, the Model J Duesenberg, of which more than 400 or so were built.

It has been my good fortune to obtain numerous bound volumes of the British Automobile Engineer from our worthy member, Walter Hadley. This official organ is published in London by the Institution of Automobile Engineers. The drawings and photographs of parts are all taken from several 1924 issues. In the August and September issues of that year, no doubt prodded by Jimmy Murphy's victory at Le Mans, they made a comparison between the victorious Duesenberg engine of 183 cu. in., the corresponding Vauxhall Grand Prix engine, and the newly-announced 260 cubic inch Duesenberg Model A production touring car offered to the public.

Here are the results of their research work:

	Vauxhall Racer	Duesenberg Grand Prix Racer	Duesenberg Standard Model A Engine
Displacement, Cu. In.	183 (3 liters)	183 (3 liters)	260 (4,265 liters)
No. of cylinders	4	8	8
Bore, inches	3.34	2.50	2.875
Stroke, inches	5.20	4.625	5.000
Comp. ratio	5.8:1	5.1:1	4.5:1
Wt. of reciprocating parts per cylinder lbs.	1.7	0.766	1.072
Max. brake H.P. at R.P.M.	129 4,500	125 4,250	98-100 3,600
No. of inlet valves/cyl.	Two	One	One
No. of exhaust valves/cyl.	Two	Two	One
H.P. per litre	43.0	41.7	23.3

Figure 1 shows the sectional drawing of the 1920-21 Duesenberg racing engine. You will note that the Duesenberg brothers incorporated three valves per cylinder in the overhead single-camshaft design, two exhausts



and one inlet, just the opposite of what Ettore Bugatti preached at the time. Although some apprehension can be voiced in having used a three-bearing crank shaft, the rest of the rotating and reciprocating parts were of a most refined type. Note the fully-machined tubular connecting rods, the ribbing for cooling, and the stiffness of the big ends and dual-forked exhaust

throat diameter each, with a lift of 5/16 inches. Naturally, when the Duesenberg brothers decided to produce their passenger car, they were required to do some compromising and detuning, but they still retained the salient features of their racing engine and chassis. Figure 3 shows a section through the 260 cu. in. Model A power plant, which now sports

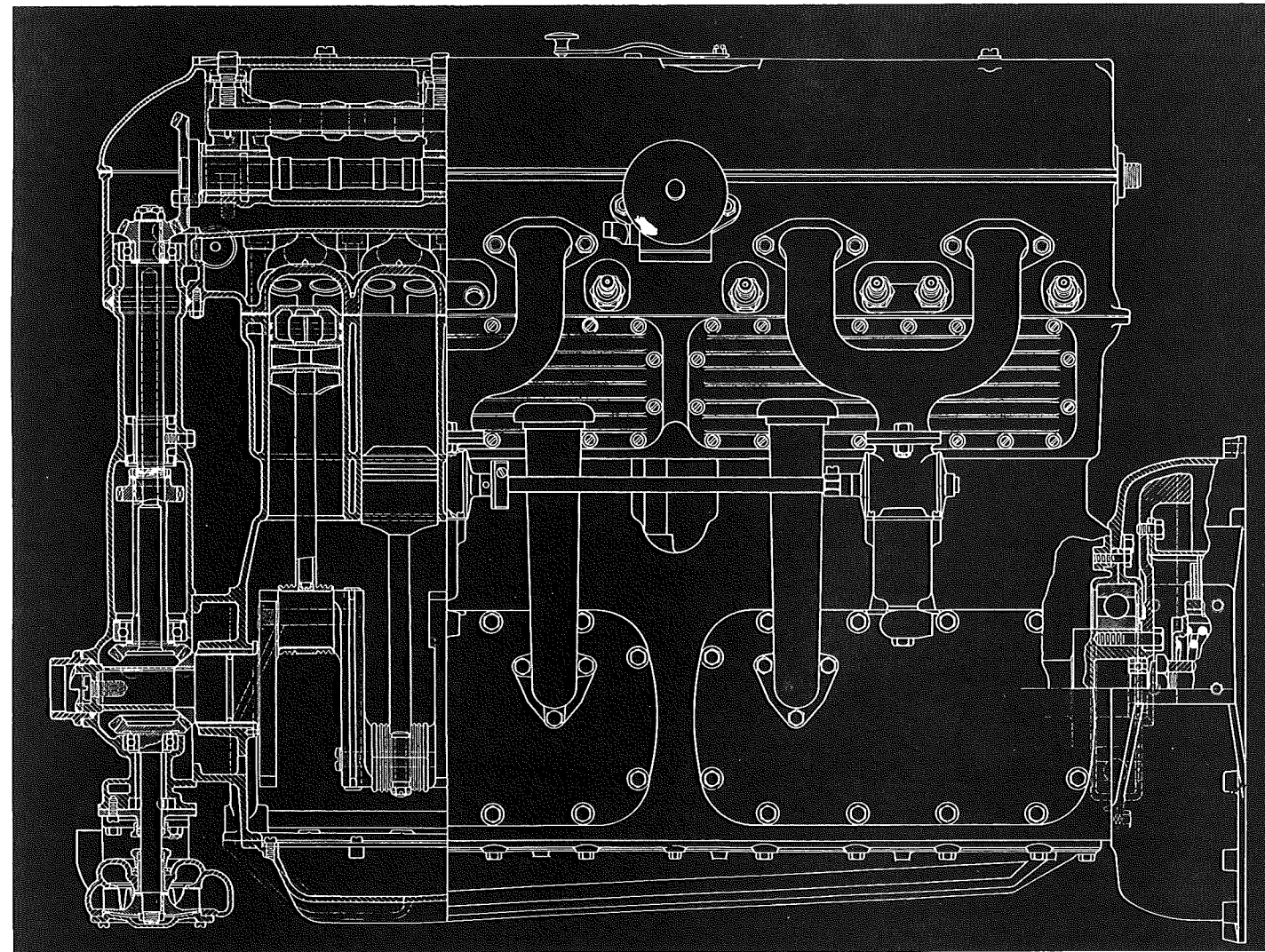


Fig. 1 Duesenberg 1920 183 cu. inch engine.

rockers, drilled for lightness and to pass lubrication, shown on figure 2. Following aircraft practice, the water pump was located at the lowest position under the camshaft vertical drive. Obviously, the engine was laid out for efficient breathing, the single inlet valves having a throat diameter of 1-3/8 inches and a lift of 3/8 inches and the dual exhaust valves 15/16 inch

only one exhaust valve and a relocation of water pump and generator drive, but with most internal and external parts very closely approximating the racing engine concept. Anyone who can read a drawing will agree with me. Figure 4 shows a cross-section of the engine and Figure 5 shows the camshaft and front accessories drive. Naturally, aluminum pistons were

used and the crankshaft, fully machined and drilled for oil passage, resembled those used on the racing engines. Note that dual valve springs were specified on both the Model A and the racing cars.

racing practice, 23" Rudge-Whitworth triple-spoked quick-detachable wire wheels were standard on the racing and passenger cars. Naturally, the total car weight depended on the type of body structure applied to the chas-

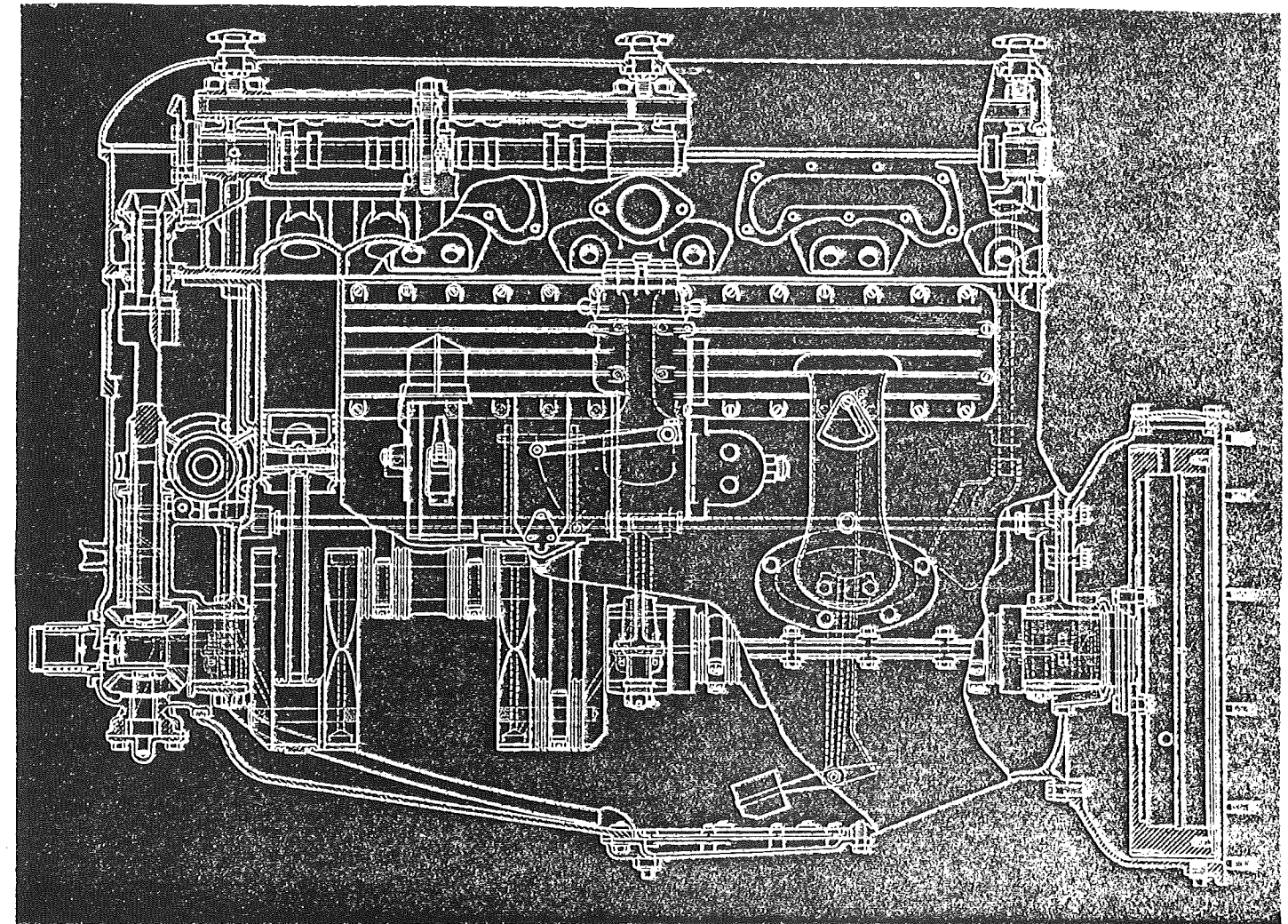


Fig. 3 Duesenberg A 260 cu. inch passenger car engine section through cylinder head.

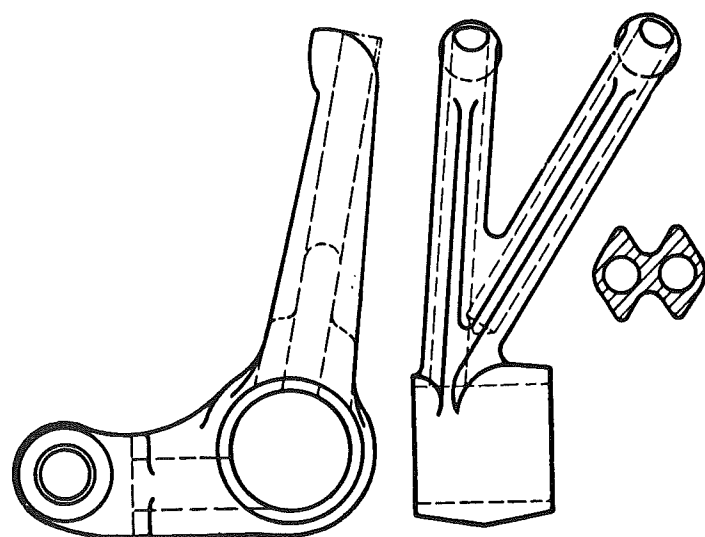
Realizing the importance of low unsprung weight, the front axles were of tubular construction, duplicating the racing car layout, and equipped with the great novelty of the day, front wheel hydraulic brakes. This alone was a revolutionary breakthrough and probably a first in America.

Figure 6 shows a view of the front end and figure 7 is a drawing of the front axle and brake. Following

sis. The Automobile Engineer quotes "3,000 lbs. for a five-passenger touring car, with tanks full, completely equipped even to the tools supplied by the maker." This agrees with the advertising page shown here. For its day, this was an extremely low weight. If one considers that some 600 of these Model A's were built between 1921 and 1927, it is incomprehensible to me why this outstanding Duesenberg has not received the acclaim and notoriety so lavished on the

ugly duckling, the heavy monstrosity, the Model J. So, let us compare the two impartially.

It is my sincere opinion that Eric Lobban Cord's technical knowledge and engineering ability were completely overshadowed by his business acumen and marketing ability. In 1927, he very bravely went about to purchase the Duesenberg Company remains and acquired the services of the brilliant designers, to outdo Pierce Arrow, Chrysler, Cadillac,



Exhaust valve rocker.

Packard, plus the deluxe imports, such as Rolls-Royce, Hispano-Suiza, Isotta-Fraschini, to name a few makes that were contending for the top dollar in the luxury car field in the United States and abroad. Commercially, Cord's judgment was extremely wise in overruling Fred Duesenberg's advice for a smaller, lighter car, which was to bear his name. So, what emerged was a muscle-bound juggernaut which had nothing in common with the previous breed of Duesenberg cars, whether racing type or the Model A.

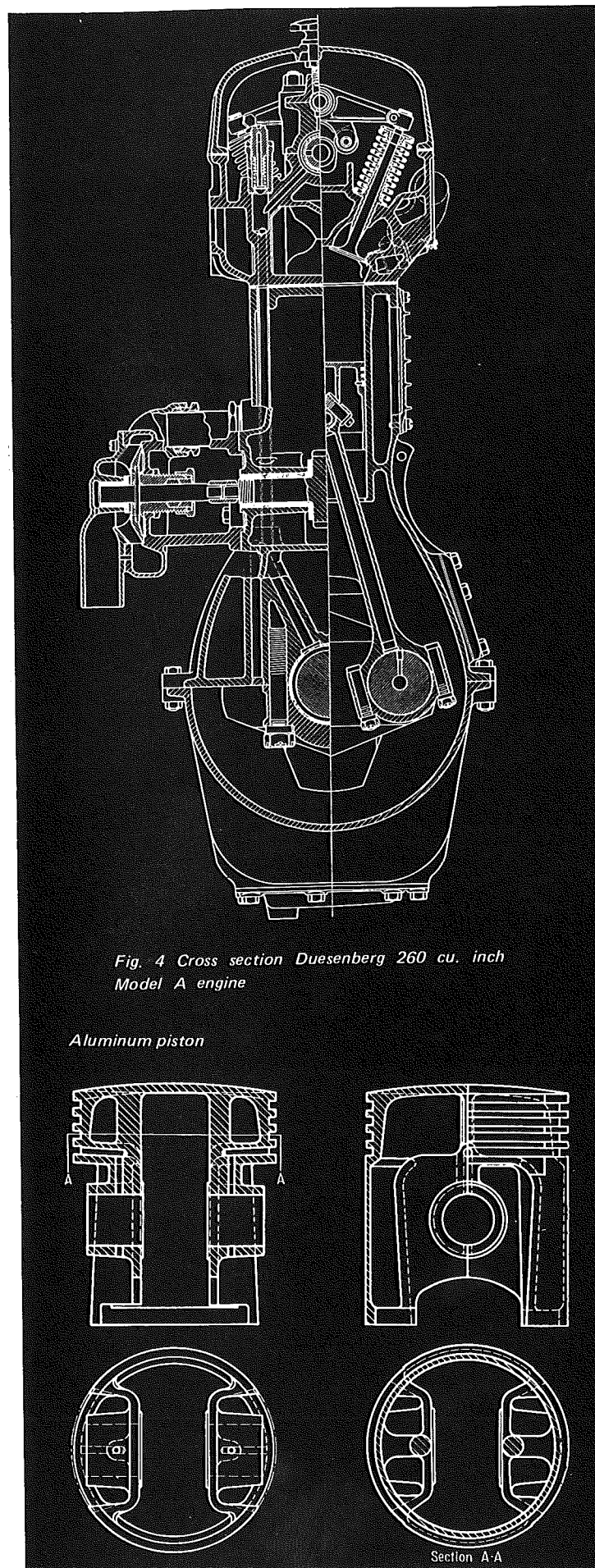


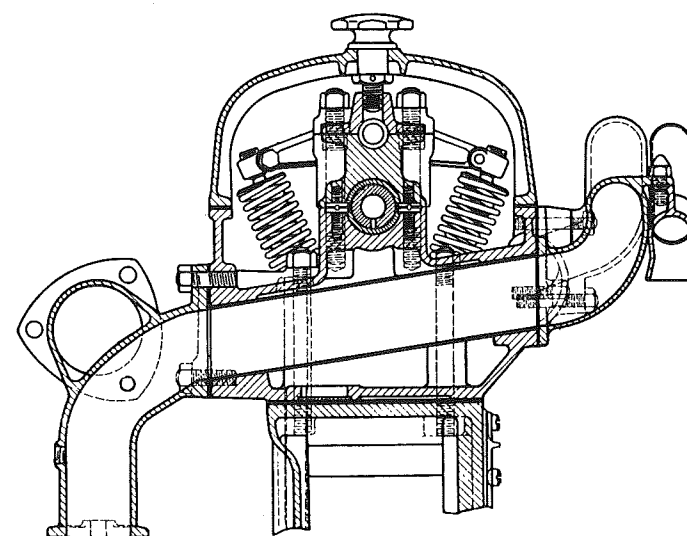
Fig. 4 Cross section Duesenberg 260 cu. inch Model A engine

Aluminum piston

Section A-A

What did the trick was a combination of beautifully-designed bodies turned out by the premier "carrossiers" of the world, plus the glamour of dual overhead camshaft engine (eventually supercharged), and meaningless accessories supplied as standard equipment. To the neophytes of engineering, the car was a delight then, just as it is today and it fetches today, the world over, astronomical second-hand prices. But, what about the fine engineering points, with which the Model A bristled? In my humble opinion, in no way can a J hold a candle to the A. Let me be more precise.

Section through cylinder head



To begin with, the total weight of a Model J, with phaeton body, averaged in the 5,500 to 6,000 pound class. The similarly equipped Model A weighed under 3,000 lbs. Contrary to good engineering practice, the J's extra weight applied partially to unsprung parts, such as front and rear axle assemblies, wheels and running gear. Thus, on the Model J, the very fine and lightweight tubular axle was replaced by a conventional I-beam unit,

weighing 450 lbs., exactly double the weight of the Model A axle. The same increase took place in the rear axle assembly, wheels and hubs, as well as the springs. The abnormal shift in forward weight distribution because of the heavy engine made it necessary to stiffen the front end of the frame, with a corresponding total weight increase. This resulted in lock-to-lock steering that was totally incompatible with cars of such speed potential. It had to be done to permit reasonably low effort at the steering wheel for parking.

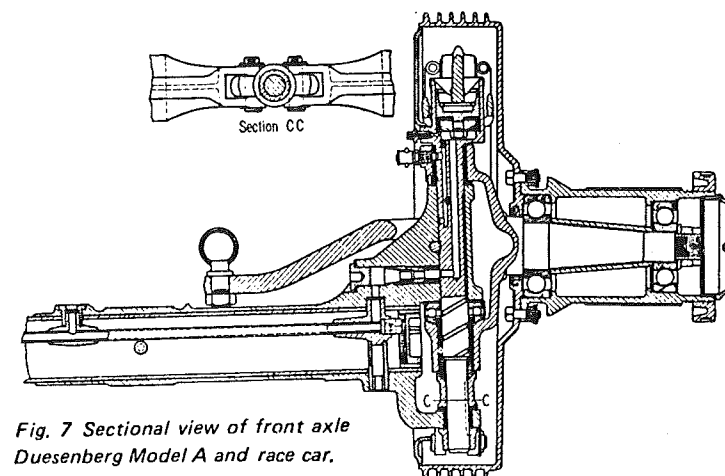


Fig. 7 Sectional view of front axle Duesenberg Model A and race car.

And now we come to the famed dual overhead camshaft 420 cu. in. (6.888 cc) engine of the J, with its quoted performance of 265 H.P. at 4,200 R.P.M. It is quite possible that this well-advertised figure applied to the theoretical SAE measuring method, which permits evaluation of engine performance without fan drive, less all the accessories, except ignition distributor and water pump and unrestricted open exhaust. According to "Road and Track" magazine, which, in my books, is the best in the United States (May 1953) the top H.P. that was pulled by a 420 cu. in. Duesenberg under ideal conditions was a maximum of 208 H.P. at top R.P.M.



A bit of arithmetic will clearly show that the H.P. available in the Model J amounted to 34.5 H.P. per lb., compared with 32.7 H.P. per lb. for the Model A. This was a step backwards, despite eight years of "progress" and all the ballyhoo of Mr. Cord's advertising departments.

The opinions of John Bond, Editor of "Road and Track" magazine, are very

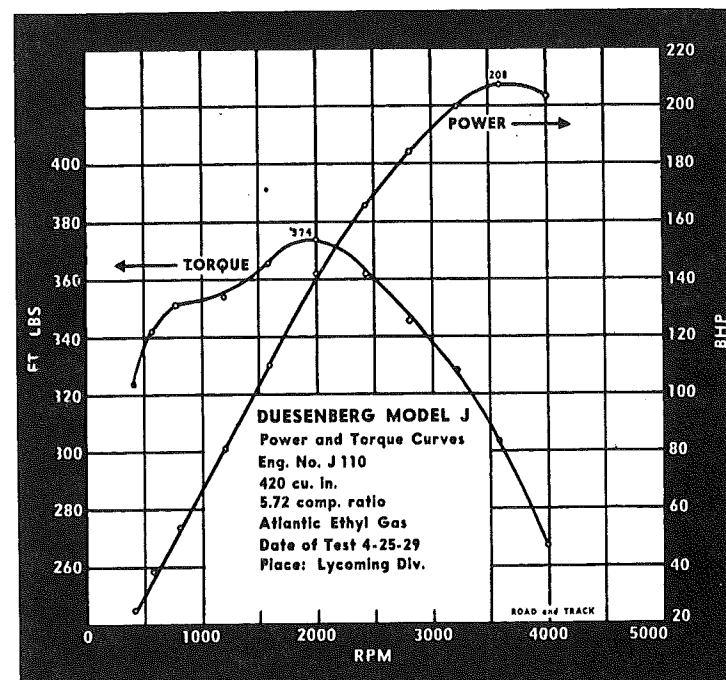


Fig. 8 Duesenberg Model J engine power curves

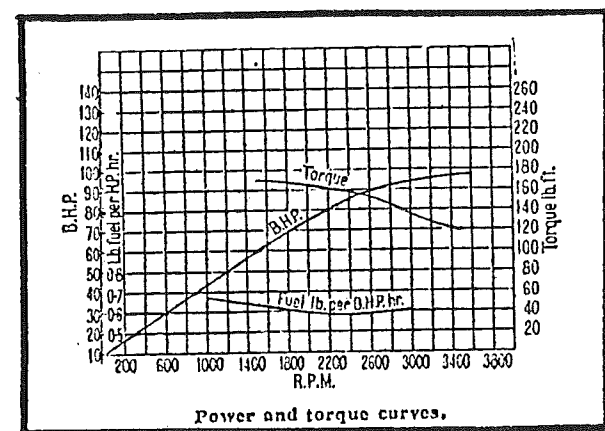


Fig. 9 Duesenberg Model A Power Curves.

much respected in the industry. Consequently, one should not doubt his findings. He obtained the H.P. and torque curves for the 420 cu. in. Duesenberg Model J from the files of the Lycoming Division of the Cord Corporation, the builders of the engine. Curves shown on figure 8 were the highest reading of four engines picked at random and tested. They referred specifically to engine No. J-110.

No doubt a downward correction of the 208 H.P. must be made of this figure, because of the SAE net method of testing. It is worthwhile to compare these Model J engine performance curves with the Model A curves I located in the British Automobile Engineer, which are shown in figure 9. Contrary to advertised total unladen weight for closed cars of 5,500 lbs., the November 1956 issue of "Road and Track" listed the Murphy-bodied boat-tail phaeton at 6,040 lbs. So here again, one is suspicious of the total weight figures catalogued by Duesenberg for their convertible, chauffeur-driven limousines and sedan cars.

As mentioned earlier, according to British tests, the Model A developed 23.3 H.P. per litre displacement (41.7 for the racing 3 litre Grand Prix job) and the Model J engine gave about 30 H.P. per litre displacement, assuming that correct data were furnished by Lycoming. Now, the most amazing part is that the only time a Duesenberg J raced in an international event was when Prince Nicholas of Rumania entered a Duesenberg Roadster in the 1935, 24-hour Le Mans Race, to be driven by him and Emil Beghin.

The car only lasted 38 laps after completing 512.7 km. (320 miles). Be this as it may, the official displacement was listed by the Le Mans officials as 6,986 cc. or almost 7 litres. Now, I know from my experience while helping to manage the Briggs Cunningham Le Mans efforts that the officials of Le Mans take the engine displacement very seriously. Thus, Briggs had to invite the French Club representatives to the U.S. (AAA Contest Board, at the time) to measure the bore and the stroke of the engines which were to compete. Each part was then marked by the inspector, in order to prevent a hassle in case of a win, when a protest might oblige the winner to show the innards of his engine. So, how come Prince Nicholas had this larger engine? It gives me food for thought. As far as I know, history is silent on this matter. So, while on this sole abortive racing exploit in serious competition, what did Duesenberg racing and A engines accomplish in the years 1920 to 1932?

Let me enumerate participation, noting first of all, Jimmy Murphy's win at Le Mans in 1921, against the best in Europe. But, what after that?

Here is the Duesenberg record for Indianapolis:

1920  
Third - Murphy; Fourth - Milton  
1921  
Second - Sarles; Fourth - Murphy; Eighth - Hill  
1922  
Second - Hartz; Fourth - de Palma; Fifth - Wonderlich; Sixth - Fellerman; Eighth - Thomas  
1924  
Fourth

1925  
First - de Palma; Third - Milton; Eighth - Kreis  
1926  
Sixth - DePaolo  
1927  
First - Sonders; Sixth - Evans  
1928  
Gleason finished  
1929  
Third - Gleason; Fifth - Winnai  
1930  
Free Formula, no Duesenberg entries  
1931  
(Phili Pardee with Desmodromice engine) Fifth, Tenth (Model A)  
1932  
DNF: Ira Hall Model (A) Winnai, Winn

In our learned colleague, Griffith Borgeson's great book on "The Golden Age of the American Racing Car", he mentions (I quote from page 161): "Expert William A. Johnson has determined that about 667 Model A's were built, the last 17 being called Model X but differing from the A only in details of appearance. These figures are interesting in that they show that far more A's were built than the approximately 470 much more famous Models J and SJ. How did the two compare? Van Ranst was close to both projects: 'E.L. Cord told Duesey what he wanted. Fred of course always thought in terms of high-speed, high-output engines. He had never concerned himself with the necessity for high torque for getaway and acceleration. So Fred designed the prototype J in the same spirit that he designed the A. He gave it a little over 300 cubic inches displacement and the performance and size of the car didn't suit E.L. at all. Fred enlarged everything but E.L. still wasn't satisfied and insisted that it be enlarged



again. It wound up at 420 cubic inches and all this rehashing left the J quite unlike what Fred had intended it to be. Low-end torque and power-to-weight remained poor in spite of all the inches and the J still had no real acceleration, in spite of its 116 MPH advertised top speed."

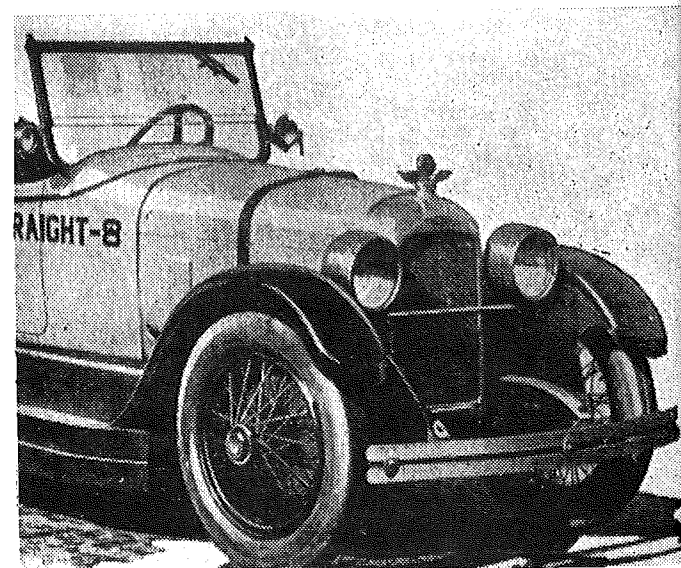
So we see that because of the longevity of the J, it was, to a great extent, totally unsuited for oval or road racing. Therefore, a great number of the total of some 470 cars went to pasture. Someone will bring forth the A.B. Jenkins, Bonneville, Utah records, but this can be relegated to the world speed records on flats, which does not have anything in common with racing. This is not so with 183, 122 and 91 cu. in. racing engines, including the Model A's which were used in a variety of specials in oval racing for more than a decade. No wonder there are so few left of the 667 built by the Duesenberg brothers, when they were their own bosses.

While on the subject of records, how many remember the Duesenberg Model A; 24-hour record? In 1923, Fred Duesenberg decided to compete for the Samuel B. Stevens Stock Car Trophy, to be awarded for a continuous 24-hour run, at least more than 60 MPH. On April 27, 1923, a standard Model A Duesenberg touring car was run on the Indianapolis Speedway. The car covered 3,155 miles at an average speed of 62.63 MPH, as certified by Mr. C. R. Schuler, the technical representative of the AAA Contest Board. This average included two tire changes. Two spark plugs were replaced. However, except for the tires, the car and engine were kept running all the time. The test car was fitted, as can be seen from figure 10, with a bumper on the right side of the running board and the supply car had a similar bumper on the left side

of its running board. This allowed for the cars to run abreast when drivers were changed and supplies taken on board. Even the spark plugs were changed while in motion.

To sum up, I contend that the J engine and chassis could never be classed as a competition sports car. Its weight, engine volume, double snake-like chain drive to the camshafts, aluminum forged rods (later replaced by tubular steel rods, as in the A), the enormous flywheel to allow for smooth torque at low speeds, as well as docile timing, made it an attractive, but expensive toy for the play-boys and haute monde of the period. In that respect, it was a winner and remains so today. Mr. E. L. Cord was a good prognosticator, but what a pill all this must have been to August, especially if one considers that his brother lost his life in 1932 in an accident. The car was an S. J. Duesenberg.

Reproduced from Bulb Horn,  
May-June 1976 issue.



## Technical

Edward W. Jacod, Chairman  
Technical Services Committee

As of this date all post-war possibilities, except the Lincoln Continental, are still "Please Apply". However, the Technical Services Committee will recommend at the August National Board Meeting that all 1946-1948 Cadillac 75 and all 1946-1947 Packard 2106 and 2126 be granted automatic approval. Rolls-Royce and Bentley will remain "Please Apply". Some fine post-war Classics, even without pre-war counterparts, have been approved. I do not see any more automatic post-war approvals beyond those mentioned.

In the pre-war category automatic (that is, without application) Classic status was given to the following:

- 1938 - 1939 - 1940 - 1941 Cadillac 60 Special
- 1939 - Packard Model 1703
- 1940 - Packard Model 1803, 1804, 1805
- 1941 - Packard Model 1903, 1904, 1905
- 1942 - Packard Model 2023, 2004, 2005

The 1942 Packard Model 2003 is specifically excluded.

The Technical Services Committee is reexamining the "almost Classics" to see if these were unfairly judged non-classic.

We are studying the Packard 900; we will look at certain Chryslers, Buicks, Studebaker President, etc. However, we hope we make wise recommendations, not expedient ones.

## Titling & Licensing Part II

Frank Starr

This time I went out and got the State Patrol's side of the problem. The patrolmen at the Tacoma office refused to be tied to any statements, but referred me to the Vehicle Identification Department head, Capt. H.F. West, at the Olympia office. Back to Olympia I went again.

I tried to keep my interview of Capt. West to the State Patrol's function in licensing of vehicles. The main object of the vehicle inspection is to verify that the numbers on the vehicles are authentic, check to be sure that the numbers on the title and vehicle match, check the vehicle to see if it is stolen, and verify that the vehicle exists. Their safety inspection is to confirm that the vehicle complies with the state standards that were in force when the vehicle was originally constructed. The state doesn't care if your car has mechanical brakes and only one tail light, just as long as the car was originally sold when this equipment was used. The state doesn't care what engine you have under the hood. There are no state laws requiring the retention of emission controls on late model engines that are installed in older vehicles. Kit or assembled vehicles are licensed as the year they appear to be, NOT the year they were reconstructed or completed. Kit vehicles only have to have the necessary safety equipment required by the motor vehicle code. The vehicle need not be complete for a serial number inspection and the inspecting officer cannot cite you for defective equipment found at the inspection. He can warn you about any deficiencies, though. If your vehicle

is driveable but not licensed you still can drive it to the inspection station if you call ahead and tell them that you are coming in for an inspection. This will cover you if you are pulled over for not having a license.

Capt. West cleared up the fog we have been in on serial numbers. State law says that vehicles manufactured after 1958 have to be identified by a body serial number, not an engine number. If your vehicle is titled under the engine number and your car has a serial number on the body you can have your title changed for a small fee. The State Patrol can place an assigned serial number plate on the vehicle if there is no serial plate. Your car will still be called on the title the correct year and make it appears to be. NO 1976 Model T Fords, in other words. If you have to change body styles you only have to file a change of style report and have it inspected to verify that the change was completed.

The State Patrol can check with every state by their computer network to see if the number on your vehicle was ever titled and if it is stolen. They are mostly interested in seeing that the vehicle is clear on previous owners and that all are accounted for. If there is no record of your number on the number on your vehicle is destroyed they may assign you a serial number but DMV may require a bond. The State Patrol also has special techniques for detecting serial numbers and special officers trained in this field.

When you apply for a title and go in for the inspection, be sure you have all bills of sale and all receipts. Descriptions should fully state what the parts purchased are and serial numbers, if any. The state prefers nota-

rized bills of sale and can reject any that are not notarized. If you have any questions or problems, I suggest you contact Capt. West in Olympia at 753-4410 or Wayne Roice, who is the administrator of the Title and License Department at DMV at 753-3060.

## How A Cheapskate Acquires A Few Old Cars

### FIRST CHAPTER

Russ Humphrey

1940 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet - About 13 years ago, during a bad snow storm, this car was advertised in the Everett paper. I was the first one there due to a new Chev. pickup with post traction. I wasn't quite sure what a Lincoln Continental was, but I had a ride in a partially-restored one at W.S.U. in 1947. The former owner had partially dismantled to restore; the engine looked restored, but no wires. The rest was there. My first old car for \$450.00, and I needed help. I finally met that great guy, Pete Manello, who put me on to the L.C.O.C. Then we started our great new house, and I haven't touched it since.

1940 L.C. Cabriolet - one of 350 mfd. I was in San Francisco on business at the same time as the Western Regional meet of the Lincoln Continental Owner Club in 1968. I introduced myself to all owners of 1940 Continentals and bought a mess of parts which were a little difficult to bring home on the airplane. Ed Lonergan won the Ford

Trophy (I have) with his beautiful Burgundy Cabriolet. Ed and I celebrated that night at Fisherman's Wharf carrying the three-foot trophy with us. They later moved to Oregon and we stopped to see them on the way to a Thunderbird Convention, and I asked Ed to call me if he wanted to sell the car. Several years later he called me and said I could have it. I told him I was interested, but privately, due to the expenses of the new house, I wanted to postpone a decision for a few days. Two days later I ended up in Port Angeles hospital with a stroke. I was released the next day, paralyzed on the right side and couldn't speak coherently. I printed a note to Janette with my left hand and told her to call Ed and buy the car. I was through with working so hard on the job and on the house and would devote most of my time to old cars. The house is still unfinished. I regained the use of my right side because of the weeks of polishing and rubbing that beautiful car.

1940 L.C. Coupe - one of 54 mfd. - I spotted this car when driving on the job near Sequim. The owner wouldn't break down and sell. I stopped in from time to time over several years, then car and mobile home disappeared. Later, I stationed one of my foremen at Sequim. He informed me that he found a Zephyr and did I want it. Yes, I said. The owner found the L.C. in a wrecking yard about to be scrapped. The former owner was divorced and everything sold at sheriff sale. New owner had a difficult time obtaining title. He delivered it to my garage after a horrible time towing that 2-1/2 ton car on a two-wheel trailer.

1956 Mark II Lincoln - Purchased one year ago in Bellingham. Body excellent, but needs restoration. Just purchased one of the last factory new short block.

1966 Lincoln Four-Door Convertible Sedan - Purchased in used car lot in Everett two years ago.

## The Calcutta Olive Drab Road Race

Russ Humphrey

The native policeman, resplendent in his white uniform and turban, motioned Stop. I quickly stopped the lively jeep just a few feet from the policeman on the wide, but crowded, main street in Calcutta. Crash! Bang! Screech! What a din! I turned my head around with horror and amazement as 200 jeeps and trucks tailgated into each other. The youthful and happy drivers and Army vehicles were not harmed because the speed was low and the stiff springs did not allow the vehicle front to dip much when braking.

On a beautiful Sunday the word came down that 200 volunteers were needed. We worked six days a week overhauling aircraft engines for the China, Burma, India theatre. Sundays were precious to us, but most of us were eager about engines, airplanes and cars. We seldom got the opportunity to drive anything with wheels. I sadly had to leave a lovely dark blue 1936 Ford Cabriolet when I enlisted in the Air Force on November 1942 and hadn't much opportunity to massage a gas pedal since.



The word was that 200 vehicles had been shipped from the African campaign and needed to be driven from the docks to the rail depot some 20 miles out of Calcutta. Then, the vehicles were to be taken to China. Wary of volunteering for anything, most of us smelled a faint odor of a lark and agreed to go.

Can you imagine the hunger of 200 young hot rodders eager to get behind a steering wheel and mash the gas pedal to the floor? When we reached the docks I knew what I wanted. I spotted it - a jeep with Air Force markings with a slight modified appearance. I jumped in, started the engine and then I knew that some mechanic in Africa had performed some magic to that four banger. It was not a flat head V8 convertible, but it would do. I put the windshield and top down, put on my Air Force dark glasses, dropped the clutch, and yippie! I had hot wheels.

The great race started. All of us in jeeps gunned for first place while the less fortunate in trucks followed. We tore into the streets of one of the largest cities in the world crowded with rickshaws, bicycles, bullock carts, busses, beggars, sacred cows, etc. Wheeling in and around the traffic, honking the horns, screeching around corners, the 200 G.I.'s were having a ball! I finally maneuvered the lively jeep into the lead and was getting ready for a good push when the policeman at the intersection motioned Stop and the greatest rear-ender in history happened.

We knew that this was the last intersection and would soon be out in the country where we could go flat out. The policeman motioned Go and we crunched through the gears. Another jeep got out front when I was cut off

by traffic and I swung to the right just as a rickshaw being pulled by a skinny little man and occupied by a big fat Hindu pulled out from the curb. I just ticked the rickshaw and, looking in the mirror, I could see the rickshaw spinning like a top with the rickshaw Walla madly screaming with his feet a yard in the air.

Weaving in and around traffic, sometimes three jeeps abreast on a four-lane road, battling for first place, we finally reached the two-lane road in the country. Slow trucks, bullock carts were the obstacles. We would be roaring along flat out when suddenly we would run up on a cart doing one M.P.H. Two jeeps ended up in swamps, one truck rolled over the edge, and tragically, one truck smashed into and killed a bullock.

Several court martials resulted and we were never asked to volunteer on group basis for the duration. But, that was a great day!