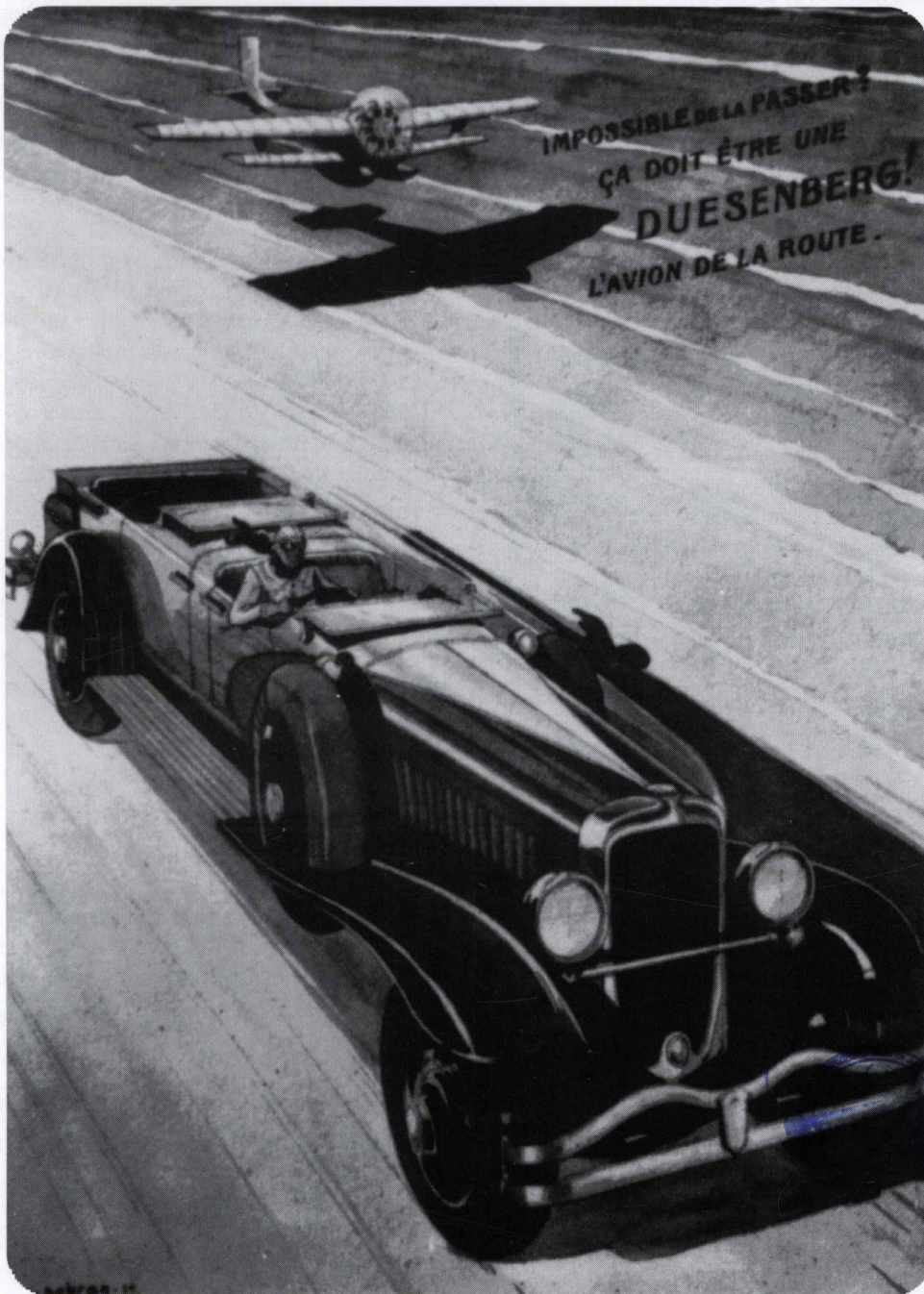


AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW

SUMMER 1996



ISSUE NUMBER 30



"The World's Finest Motor Car"
Duesenbergs

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"Impossible to pass it. That must be a
DUESENBERG!
The airplane of the road"

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

From the Editor

Dufaux (Hediger)

Greetings from the fifth editor of the Automotive History Review, who now wears the green shade of his illustrious predecessors Dick Brigham (issues #1-#10; #17-#23), John Peckham (#11), Fred Roe (#12-#16), and Kit Foster (24-#29).

One of my goals as the recent president of the Society was to find interesting materials which originally were published in a language other than English and make them accessible to our membership through translation into English and publication in the Review. The first of these appeared in the last issue, Ferdy Hediger's article on the forgotten Dufaux land record car of 1905. This issue continues with two articles on European Duesenbergs which originally appeared in 1979 in the now defunct French magazine l'Enthousiaste.

Indeed, the project proved to be a delight, because it illustrates the networking of SAH through which so much can be accomplished. Yann Saunders in Geneva translated the articles for us. Through Peter Richley in Kent and Laurent Friry in Paris, we located one of the authors, Alain Dollfus, who enthusiastically supported the project and provided updates and corrections to his earlier text. When Fred Roe, the author of Duesenberg: The Pursuit of Perfection, was consulted, he not only corrected other errors in the text but provided a good deal of material on each of the cars, as well as some thoughts on the earlier Model A's career in Europe. To him we are indebted for the photos used in this effort; most came from Fred's collection. Gregg Buttermore and the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum were helpful, too. Sam Fiorani offered a contribution on the final European Duesenberg, the Ghia-bodied 1966 one-off. Truly, there is strength in numbers. As a result, this issue of the Review represents the most comprehensive and up to date treatment of European-bodied Duesenbergs extant. We should all be grateful to these members for their efforts in behalf of an interesting corner of automotive history.

One change you'll note is the revival of a "Letters to the Editor" column, as SAH is of the opinion that correspondence should be shared with its readers.

Kit Foster, Pat Chappell, and Fred Roe proofread this issue. Special thanks are due Sam Fiorani who volunteered to produce the first galley, thereby saving us time and money.

- Taylor Vinson

Letters To The Editor

I think that AHR for Fall 95 is one of the best ever. Good going!

Griffith Borgeson
La Motte d'Aigues, France

Congratulations on a fine issue of the magazine. I am pleased to be included in such company.

Grace R. Brigham
Georgia, USA

I read with interest the article on the short history of the Dufaux racing cars, and I thought that I might send along the enclosed copies of a few pages from Armes et Sports.

Re the record, I checked in l'Almanach des Sports for 1905; it indicates Baras but the almanach was probably compiled following the end of the competitive season, in October; that for 1906 does not include records. Were they by then being shattered with such regularity, as the automobile came of age (the Paris Salon of 1907 would already have a Section Retrospective), that one became blasé? It was not, I imagine an age quite as stats-happy as is ours, especially without media-hype (and concomitant bucks) to act as mid-wife.

H.C. Hopkins
Alicante, Spain

The material enclosed by Mr. Hopkins included a one-paragraph article "Le record du kilomètre with a photo of the Dufaux which appeared in Armes et Sports" for 30 November 1905, and another with the same title for 15 January 1906, recording Hémery's new record. Oddly, neither gives the name of the make nor the speed attained, though credit is provided for the tires (Michelin and Dunlop respectively). The materials have been forwarded to the author of our Dufaux story, Ferdy Hediger, together with an article that appeared in the magazine on May 30, 1905 illustrating the efforts of the Dufaux Brothers to develop a helicopter.

In Automotive History Review, I find the article on the DUFaux interesting and enlightening. I never knew a thing of road speed record by them, nor of brand itself.

Elliott Kahn
Florida, USA

Those Elusive Vehicles (Brigham)

I personally think that we are very fortunate to have the opportunity to publish this work in AHR. It will be an excellent reference piece, not only for current members, but for our historical file. It is an incredible body of work, and I believe [Grace Brigham] is to be praised for the effort.

Pat Chappell
Delaware, USA

I am excited after reading the history of the Society, by Grace R. Brigham, in the last issue. It had a lot of references that I am interested in. Particularly of Calif. built cars.

Warren Westerholm
California, USA

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Summer 1996



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Front Cover: Motor de Luxe publicity card, Paris Salon, Oct. 1930
Drawing by Guy Sabran, 1929

Rear Cover: Drawing from Franay custom body portfolio

Acknowledgments: All illustrative materials used in this issue have been made available by Fred Roe, with these exceptions: Model A photo, p. 3, Rupert Stuhlemmer; Model A folder, p. 3: Randy Ema; Motor de Luxe Model J sales literature, p. 19, Taylor Vinson; Ghia-bodied Duesenberg, pp. 40-41, Joseph W. Gaskill and A-C-D Museum; Franay drawing, rear cover, Robert N. Tuthill.

Back Issues of Automotive History Review

We can offer sets of the 21 issues remaining in stock (numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29,) for \$70.00 in U.S. funds postpaid in the USA. Additional shipping costs for shipping outside the U.S.A will be quoted on inquiry to address below. This list supersedes all earlier lists and prices, which are no longer valid. Arrangements can be made to have out-of-print issues reproduced by copier (for personal use only, not for resale). Orders and/or inquiries should be sent to Fred Roe, 837 Winter Street, Holliston, MA 01746-1159. Make check or money order payable to Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

THE FIRST DUESENBERGS IN EUROPE

by Fred Roe

To introduce the story of the Duesenberg Model J in Europe, we should relate what is known about the company's earlier car, the Model A. Unfortunately, factory records do not exist that will help us. In addition, the records that do exist do not indicate that any RHD Model A's were built.

What we do know is that the factory had a representative or dealer in Berlin-Wilmersdorf in 1926 named Oscar Schmidt. He placed at least two advertisements in Europa Motor, perhaps the same month (November) that this well-known auto journal

printed a laudatory article on Duesenberg and its cars. Schmidt's ads showed the U.S.-bodied roadster, touring car, and enclosed sedan that comprised the Model A line. The photo nearby shows that there was at least one chassis with custom coachwork; the roadster body is by Karrosserie Lehmann & Lindenheim, Berlin. Duesenberg's German name alone should have been sufficient to pique the curiosity of the motoring public, but the car was expensive and the country had not yet recovered from the severe inflation of the early Twenties.

We know also that there is a roadster in Switzerland with a body much like that of the U.S. version, perhaps sold by the representative listed in the Swiss folder shown on the next page. A.J. Miranda, listed as Duesenberg's export manager in pre-Model J times, probably recruited these European dealers, and he is known to have arranged sales in Mexico and South America as well.

At present these sparse notes are all that we have found on early Duesenberg export activities not only in Europe but throughout the world.

OS

OSCAR SCHMIDT

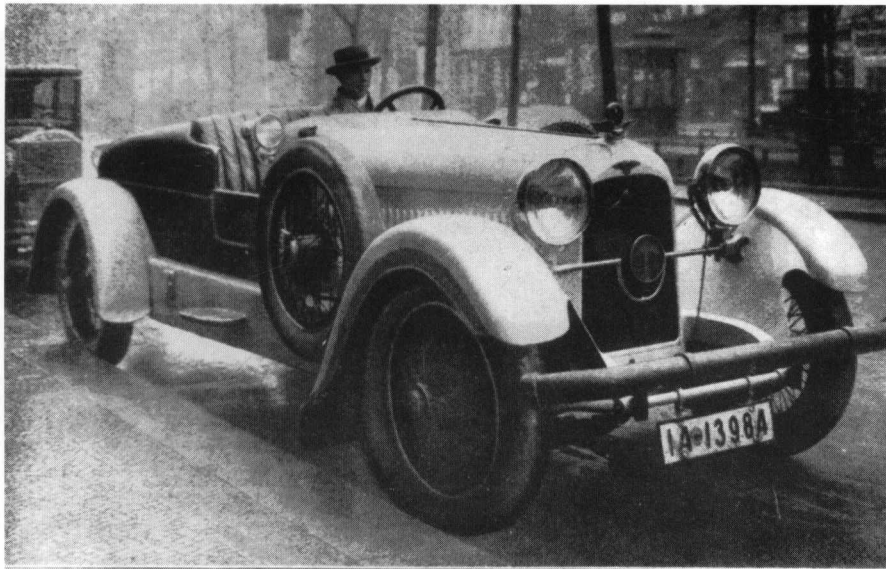
BERLIN-WILMERSDORF BADENSCHSTR. 48 UHLAND 887274

liefert den berühmten

DUESENBERG

8 CYLINDER UND HYDRAUL. VIERRÄDBREMSE

Publicity by Oscar Schmidt of Berlin



Karosserie Lehmann & Lindenheim,
Berlin

Duesenberg

Phot. Schneider

Duesenberg Model A in Berlin.

duesenberg

la seule voiture américaine

de course
de sport
■■■■ et ■■■■
de grand luxe

caractéristiques distinctives de la duesenberg

MOTEUR — 8 Cylindres en ligne; 73 x 127 1/2 (2 7/8 x 5"); cylindres lit: 4,26 (260 cu. in.). Vitesse de rotation 3.200 tours.
Culasse amovible. Soupapes en tête. Arbre à cames en desus commandé par arbre intermédiaire vertical et engrenages hélicoïdaux. Tuyauterie d'admission usinée intérieurement. Commande des soupapes entièrement graissée sous pression. Pistons en magnalite, à 4 segments. Bielles tubulaires en duralumin avec tête garnie d'ailettes de refroidissement. vilebrequin creux avec tubulures intérieures en acier pour répartition du graissage sous pression.
Volant en acier forgé.
Allumage, démarrage et éclairage par système Delco spécialement étudié pour Duesenberg.

CHASSIS — Chassis en acier chromé nickel embouti, trempé et traité.
Embrayage et boîte de vitesses d'un seul bloc avec le moteur, le tout porté par trois points. Embrayage à disque unique.
Changement de vitesses: 3 vitesses et marche AR.
Attaque du pont par arbre enfermé dans le tube de poussée. Cardan entièrement enfermé.
Pont arrière type Banjo, acier au molybdène. Arbres d'essieu tubulaires forgés d'une pièce avec les moyeux. Denture spirale.
Essies AV tubulaire, forgé acier spécial. Levier de direction à double attache.
Frein au pied à commande hydraulique sur les 4 roues, tambours en acier forgé, entièrement usinés et avec ailettes de refroidissement. Arrêt dans la longueur de la voiture à 50 km. à l'heure. Frein à main sur la transmission.

CARROSSERIE — Entièrement en aluminium. Amortisseurs et choix complet d'accessoires.

La voiture Duesenberg étant une voiture destinée aux plus grandes vitesses soutenues, toutes les pièces en sont établies en n'employant que des aciers les plus résistants et sont allégées au maximum compatible avec une sécurité absolue. Le poids non suspendu est moindre que celui de la plupart des voitures, même beaucoup plus légères.

SERVICE D'EXPORTATION:
A. J. MIRANDA, Directeur
137, NASSAU STREET, 137
NEW-YORK CITY, U. S. A.

DUESENBERG MOTORS COMPANY
Indianapolis, Ind., U.S.A.

BUREAUX EUROPÉENS:
M. H. HOEPLI, Directeur
1, BAHNHOFPLATZ, 1
ZÜRICH (SUISSSE)

Juéry, grav., Paris.

Inside spread of Duesenberg Model A folder issued in Switzerland. (above)
The two Europa Motor advertisements. (below)

Amerikas Edel-Produkt

Duesenberg-Garantie:
Jeder Duesenberg wird beim ersten Besitzer in regelmäßigen Zeitabständen vom Spezialmonteur kostenlos kontrolliert.
Es gibt keinen gebrauchten Duesenberg zu kaufen.

DUESENBERG - ZWISCHEN INGENIEUR UND KUNST

DUESENBERG VIERPLATZER SPORT-TOURERWAHN

DUESENBERG FÜRSTLICHES INNEGERÄDER

Generalvertretung:
Oscar Schmidt / Berlin-Wilmersdorf
Sadenschtrasse 48. / Telefon Nolland 8812/16.

Amerikas Edel-Produkt

Es gibt keinen gebrauchten Duesenberg zu kaufen.
Duesenberg-Besitzer trennen sich nicht von ihren Wagen.

DUESENBERG VIERPLATZER SPORT-TOURERWAHN

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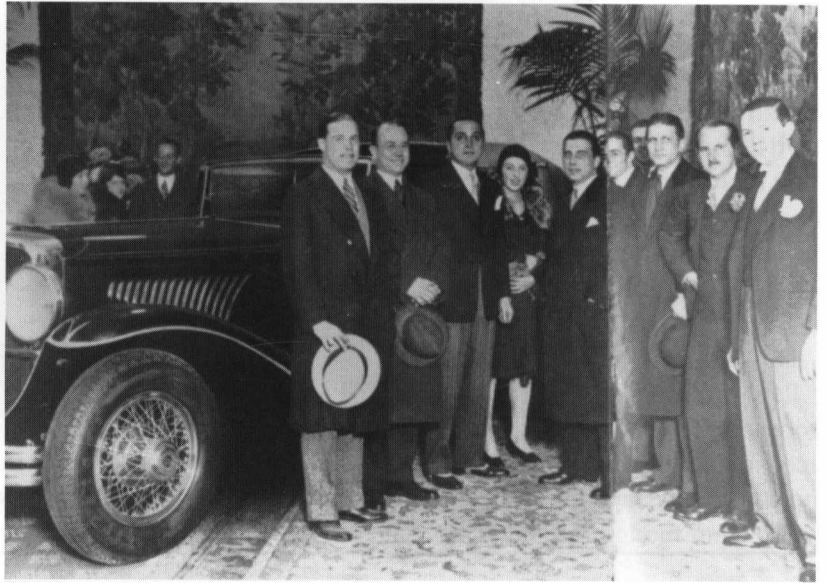
DUESENBERG'S MODEL J IN EUROPE

**Two great names for the world's elite:
E.Z. Sadovich and Motor de Luxe**
by Jacques Rousseau

*In the Thirties the Duesenberg, which many considered to be the best car in the world, was owned by only a privileged few. The story of the marque's success in Europe was told to French enthusiasts by renowned automotive writer, the late Jacques Rousseau, in the French monthly *L'Enthousiaste* for September 1979. Here is a summary translation/adaptation in English by Yann Saunders.*

The Twenties must have been a great time for those who lived through them - and had the money to enjoy it. One of those who prospered with the times was Edmond Z. Sadovich. Born in the late 19th Century in a corner of the Austro-Hungarian Empire called Serbia, Sadovich somehow prospered in real estate in inflation-ridden postwar Germany, in the early Twenties, then came to the United States, where, according to his son Alain, he made a similar fortune in Hollywood.¹ We may assume from this that he spoke English quite well. Returning to Europe later in the decade, he prospered equally as well in like ventures, and his favorite haunts were those of Europe's aristocracy: Cannes, Deauville, Monte Carlo, and Biarritz where he mingled with industry magnates, stars of the screen, blue-blooded aristocrats and in general the idle rich.

What brought him back to the United States in 1928, we do not know. By this time, however, his entrepreneurial talents had led him to open "Motor de Luxe" in Paris. If you wanted to rent a Rolls-Royce or a Hispano-Suiza, with or without driver, for a day or for a year, you went to Motor de Luxe. Somehow, on this 1928 trip, he met E.L. Cord who was about to introduce "The Mightiest American Motor Car" as J.L. Elbert termed it, the legendary Duesenberg Model J. Cord intended it to be the most expensive car in the world. Enter Sadovich. Photographs show a rather plain man, clean shaven and short, dark hair, caparisoned in double breasted suits and spats, a combination of dash and sobriety. Of animal magnetism he had plenty; one of his sons was heard to remark that his father had more mistresses than Duesenberg had bodies. Offering his experience with cars of the highest prestige, and conversant with the coachbuilders of Paris, he must have been an appealing figure to Cord. He became the Duesenberg dealer in Paris, and for the next nine years the name E.Z. Sadovich would be closely linked with Cord's European ventures.

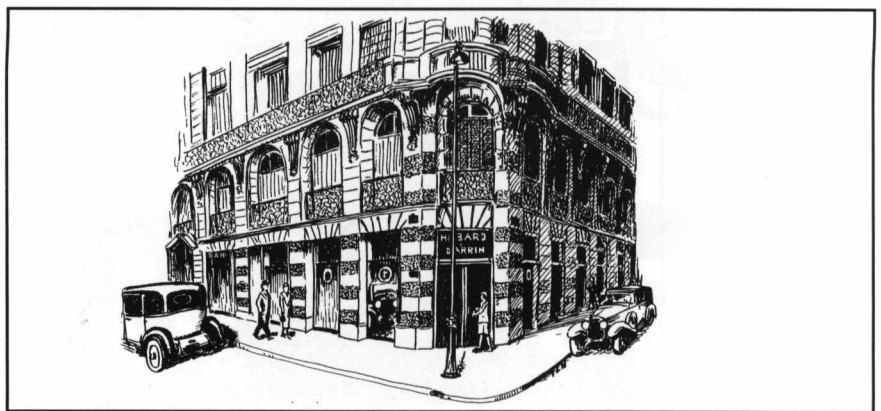


Thomas Hibbard, E.Z. Sadovich, Vance Hall (2d, 3d, and 5th from left), and Howard Darrin (3d from right), at Motor de Luxe showroom, Oct. 1929.

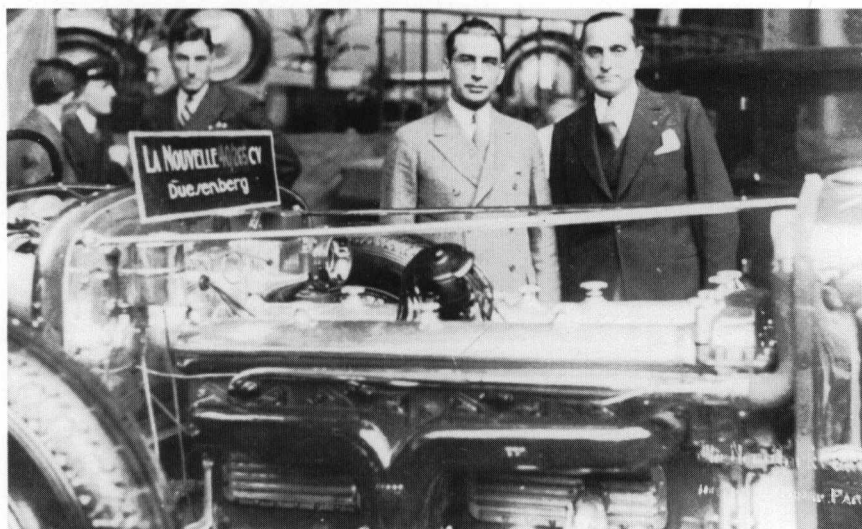
It would be no easy matter selling a car costing twice that of the competition. Sadovich travelled back and forth between Europe and the United States, scheduling production of Duesenberg's export quota, discussing contracts with the finest of coachbuilders. He also had to find a Paris showroom as well as a workshop where the cars of his elite clientele could be prepared for delivery and, later, maintained. Hibbard & Darrin had just the spot for a showroom, and rented him No. 12 rue de Berri on the corner of rue de Ponthieu, one hundred yards from the Champs-Élysées and only a stone's throw from the Hotel

Claridge, the Parisian hang-out of the world's wealthiest. The opening of Motor de Luxe's new showroom was attended by Vance C. Hall, Duesenberg export manager, and by its landlords, Tom Hibbard and Howard "Dutch" Darrin.

In the United States, the first buyers weren't able to pick up their Le Baron phaetons, Murphy convertibles or Judkins coupes until Spring 1929. European buyers had to wait until Summer. Late in the season, seven Duesenbergs crossed the Atlantic, headed for the Salons of Paris and London.



Motor de Luxe showroom at 12 rue de Berri, Paris. Let by Hibbard & Darrin. Drawing by Tom Hibbard who commented that "It was just off the Champs-Élysées and Hispano and Rochet Schneider were on the other side of the street."



Vance Hall, Export Manager, Duesenberg, with E.Z. Sadovich, by display chassis, Paris Salon, Oct. 1929.

They included at least three bare chassis for Paris, and two right hand drive for London.

The 265 HP (33 European rating) 8-cylinder Duesenberg was presented at the 23rd Salon de l'Automobile, held at the Grand Palais in Paris in October 1929, and introduced as "the most expensive car in the world". Among the first buyers was H.M. Alfonso XIII, King of Spain, attending incognito as the Duke of Toledo. He picked a Hibbard & Darrin transformable imperial in preference to Bugatti's famed Royale. After the salon closed, the J's were shown in Prague, Geneva, and Milan.

Factory records show that more than half the planned initial run of 500 cars had been built and delivered by May 1930, quite a feat for a car with a price tag ranging from \$13,000 to \$20,000. In Paris, that kind of money bought two Hispano-Suizas, or eight Hotchkiss models!

Sadovich had enlisted the best European coachbuilders. They worked relentlessly through the Winter months of 1929-1930, each one adding his own particular seal to the Duesenberg chassis.

Sixty-five years later it is still considered quite a feat for the Duesenberg marque to have achieved such high repute in the space of only a few short months. The bodies designed by Hibbard & Darrin drew considerable attention; no fewer than twelve of them were built. In addition, the French masters Letourneur et Marchand, Franay, Figoni, Kellner, and Saoutchik all were able to deploy their art on the Duesenberg chassis without ever compromising the car's American origins

and its racing heritage. The cars of these carrossiers are described more fully later.

The Duesenberg Model J made triumphant appearances at many Parisian Concours d'Élégance. In their fairy-tale world, where inter-continental travel was by leisurely ocean liner, many owners of these European Duesenbergs led a sparkling existence in cities as far apart as Paris and New York, London and Buenos Aires, Lisbon and Lima. And some of the Paris-built cars even found their way to the United States; such is the case of screen star Marion Davies who still boasted about her unique car 25 years after it was built.

But Motor de Luxe's merchandising campaign did not stop there. Sadovich put his car through its paces in a number of road races including, for

three years running (1931-1933), the Paris-Nice rally. And he encouraged some of his clients to do the same. In 1931, Jérôme Médrano, a Motor de Luxe shopper, took second place in the Paris-Nice driving his Letourneur et Marchand convertible; in the Turbie hill climb, which was a part of the event, the Duesenberg showed its prowess as a grand tourer, losing only 35 seconds in a 5-minute race to a much lighter Alfa Romeo. These culminated in Sadovich's great success at the October 1931 Paris Salon, which resulted in fourteen sales by January 1932. Among the distinguished visitors to the Duesenberg stand was the new French President, Paul Doumer, destined to be assassinated seven months later.

The following year (1932) Sadovich himself took 17th place in the Paris-Nice race driving a Figoni-bodied J 2-passenger speedster. In 1933 he took seventh place in an SJ convertible with body by Fernandez & Darrin.

Nicholas of Roumania - as they spelled it in those days - , brother of King Carol, had picked for himself a sleek convertible built in 1930 by Letourneur et Marchand. He entered the car successfully in the renowned Gometz le Chatel hill climb near Montlhéry. He was less fortunate in subsequent Le Mans races in 1933, and 1935, despite the car being specially prepared by Joseph Cattaneo for those events. The Prince was disqualified in the '33 race for prematurely refueling on the 50th lap, and he never made it past the 38th lap two years later, when he was in sixth place. His co-driver in the '35 Le Mans was Émile Beghain who later became the owner of two Duesenbergs.



Display chassis and Hibbard & Darrin transformable imperial, Paris Salon, Oct. 1929. Fred Roe believes that the body was dismantled and shipped to Indiana for remounting and sale to William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies.

The Sadovich service building, where Prince Nicholas' racing cars were prepared, was at No. 12 rue de Sablonville, near Neuilly. Another Duesenberg with a racing heritage stopped there, the 4 1/2 liter single-seater that Italian racing-driver Luigi Fagioli was to drive in the 1935 Monza Grand Prix.

Nineteen thirty-one and 1932 were good years for Duesenberg in Europe, in spite of the Depression at home. A branch dealership aptly named the New York Garage was opened in Cannes, on the Côte d'Azur.

Despite backsliding auto sales in 1933, the popularity of the Sadovich Duesenbergs continued unimpaired, owing to the introduction of the 320 HP supercharged SJ models ...thirty-seven years before the turbocharger came into more general usage. The Duesenberg was regarded as the King of the Road although only three SJs are believed to have received French bodies.

But the end was near. European sales dwindled to nothing in 1934 with the arrival of a new breed of close-coupled, aerodynamic cars with body styles that masked economical power plants. Moreover, the French coachbuilders were somewhat bewildered by the new aerodynamic shapes and the skirted fenders. The Duesenberg J was relegated to classic status.

The Duesenbergs of 1934 had lost their 1930 punch. The 1934 sedan owned by Miss Mabel Ball is a perfect illustration of the decline in French body styling of that time. (see p. 27)



Motor de Luxe service garage, 12 rue de Sablonville, Paris.

As the Thirties progressed, Sadovich moved to a new showroom at 93 Champs Élysées, and Motor de Luxe took on a new name, SADOVA, the natural acronym for Société Anonyme Distributrice Officielle de Voitures Américaines (i.e. a limited company officially distributing American cars). Duesenbergs gave way to the Auburn 851 and 852 which were closely followed by the Cord 810 and 812.

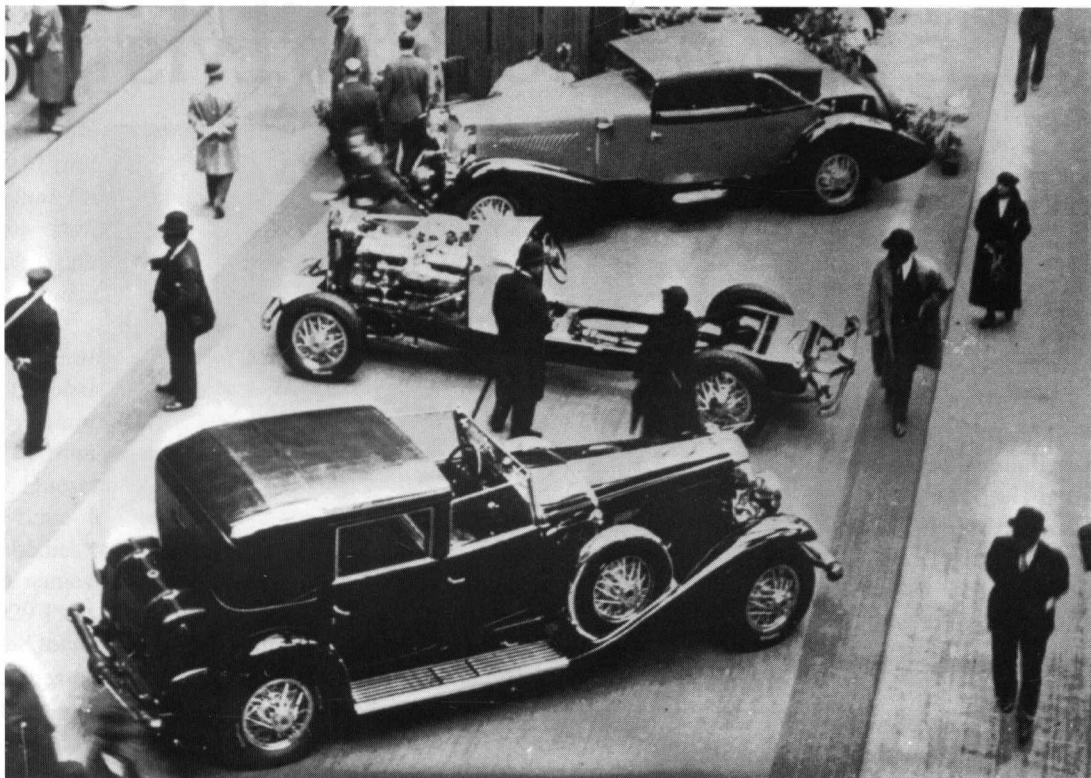
When Cord went into voluntary liquidation in 1937, Sadovich took on an Oldsmobile/LaSalle dealership in his maintenance facilities on the rue de Sablonville, closing the doors on his showroom on the Champs-Élysées. This marked the end of a golden era that E.Z. Sadovich had built from scratch.²

¹ "Les Années Folles: E.Z. Sadovich and the European Duesenbergs", by Lowell Paddock, *Automobile Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1983.

² Sadovich continued in the motor trade until his death in the 1960s. He survived the roundup of the Jews in France to return to his Olds dealership, named Sadova, where ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia was a customer for a '52 convertible. After 1958, he took on a Ford-Mercury-Lincoln franchise, which he named Sadva. Today, one of his sons sells European Fords outside of Paris under the trade name Sadeva. Sadovich's widow was believed to be alive as late as winter 1996.



E.Z. Sadovich (right), with Letourneur et Marchand faux cabriolet bought by Prince Nicholas (left) and Kellner Town Car (right) which did not sell. Paris Salon, Oct. 1929.

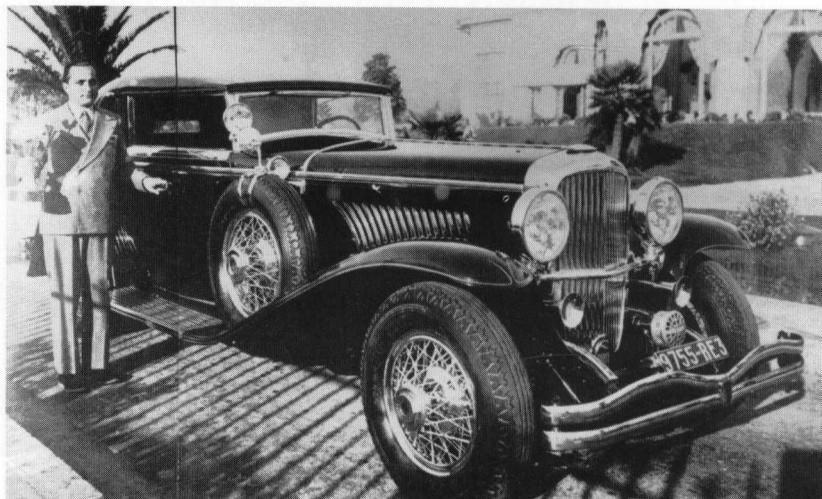


Duesenberg stand, Paris Salon, Oct. 1932, with Franay coupe de ville, SJ chassis, and the Fernandez & Darrin cabriolet, later associated with Greta Garbo.



*Motor de Luxe showroom, 1935, with same carpet as in 1929, and Auburns (left).
The Duesenberg (right), 2385 J-365 with its third (and present) body.*

E.Z. SADOVICH, RALLYIST



With Letourneur et Marchand faux cabriolet, after the Paris - Cannes Rallye, Cannes, Jan. 1931.



With his Figoni speedster, departing for the Paris-Nice Rallye in which he took 17th place, March 1932.



With Fernandez & Darrin coupé de ville, Monte Carlo Concours, 1933.

L'Avion de la Route³

by Alain Dollfus

Around fifty Duesenbergs were sold in France between 1930 and 1935, of which thirty received original French coachwork. We owe to Alain Dollfus, a French automotive writer who is particularly knowledgeable about special coachwork, this historic record of the European Duesenbergs. It originally appeared in l'Enthusiaste for October 1979, and was updated in 1996 by Alain Dollfus for the Review. Translated by Yann Saunders.

Most of the Duesenbergs exported from Indianapolis came to France where E.Z. Sadovich had bodies built for them by the greatest French names in the business. Even before the 1929 Paris Salon closed its doors, Sadovich had commissioned all of them to supply sketches and watercolors of their potential creations for the J chassis. It is estimated that sixty such illustrations were completed. They were used to decorate the Duesenberg stand at various European shows or the showrooms located in Paris and Cannes. Copies of the drawings were generously distributed to potential buyers.

Unfortunately not all the proposals became a reality, including fine designs by Gallé, Labourdette, and De Villars. Only seven French coachbuilders actually applied their art to the Duesenberg J and SJ chassis.

These may be divided into two categories:

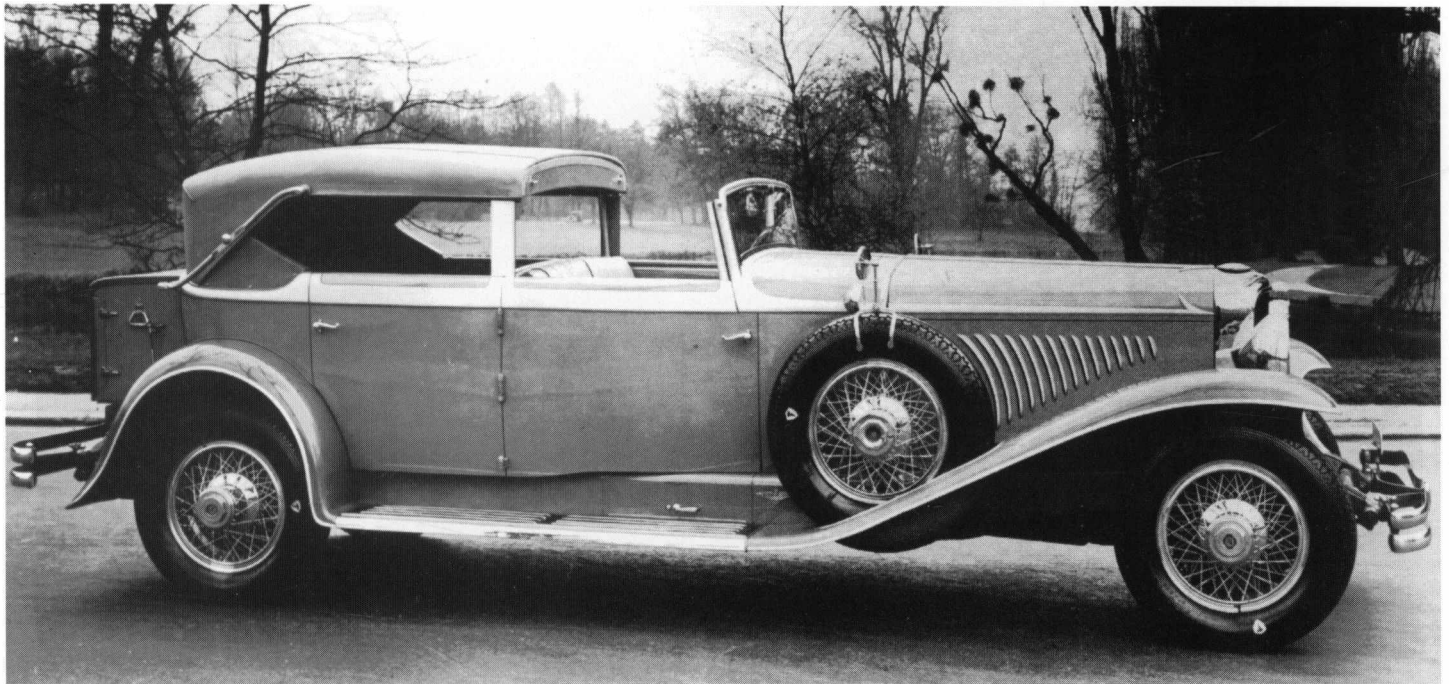
(1) those favored by Sadovich because of their ability to create a harmonious blend of French and American styling, including Hibbard & Darrin, then Fernandez & Darrin, Letourneur et Marchand and Franay whose creations were considered on a par with those of their American counterparts Murphy, LeBaron, Derham and Judkins, and (2) the remainder of the great French coachbuilders including Saoutchik, Figoni and Kellner whose designs were perhaps too French to reach the full majesty of the earlier cited ones.

Other European coachbuilders in Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and the United Kingdom received Duesenberg chassis through the Sadovich outlets in Paris or Cannes. However intricate their creations, I do not consider them to be up to those of the French masters.

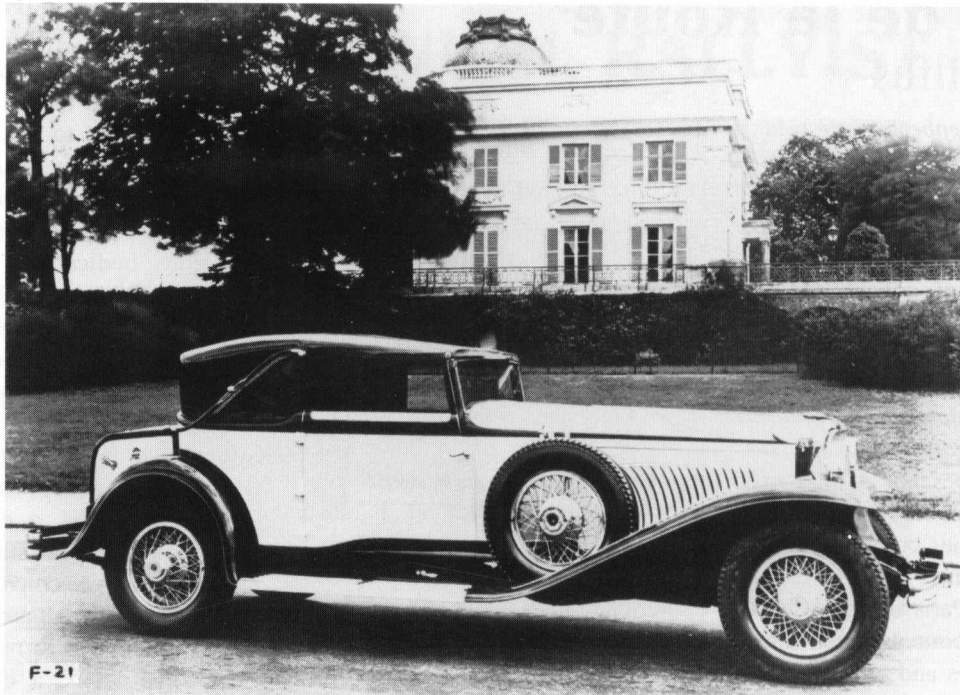
Here follows an account of these little-known cars, which Sadovich had christened "l'avion de la route" - the airplane of the road.

Hibbard & Darrin [France]

The Franco-American firm was closely associated with Sadovich, perhaps because they had rented to him, at a very moderate cost, the Motor de Luxe premises at 12 rue de Berri in exchange for first option to build on any chassis sold there. They built twelve different bodies for the Duesenberg J between 1929 and 1931 (significantly, the 1930 catalogue published by Motor de Luxe contained five photos of Js by Hibbard & Darrin and only one by another carrossier). Ten of these cars were sold in France. The other two were commissioned by the Indianapolis firm for sale in the USA. They were 2275 J-254, a convertible town car purchased for screen star Marion Davies and 2300 J-277, a convertible victoria car acquired by Mrs. Honoré Palmer. One of the first Duesenbergs to receive a French body was 2216 J-195, a cabriolet de ville or convertible town car, which took part, in January 1930 in the Rally Mondial de l'Élégance Sportive Automobile (World Automobile Elegance and Sports Rally) that culminated in Cannes after a minimum 1000 kilometer speed and endurance run. Sadovich's Duesenberg finished second behind a Rolls-Royce, beating a number of other prestige cars like the Cadillac, Chrysler, Bugatti and Packard. After a repaint (gray) it was shown at a concours d'Élégance in June 1930 by Mlle Colette d'Arville.



1929 Duesenberg - Hibbard & Darrin body



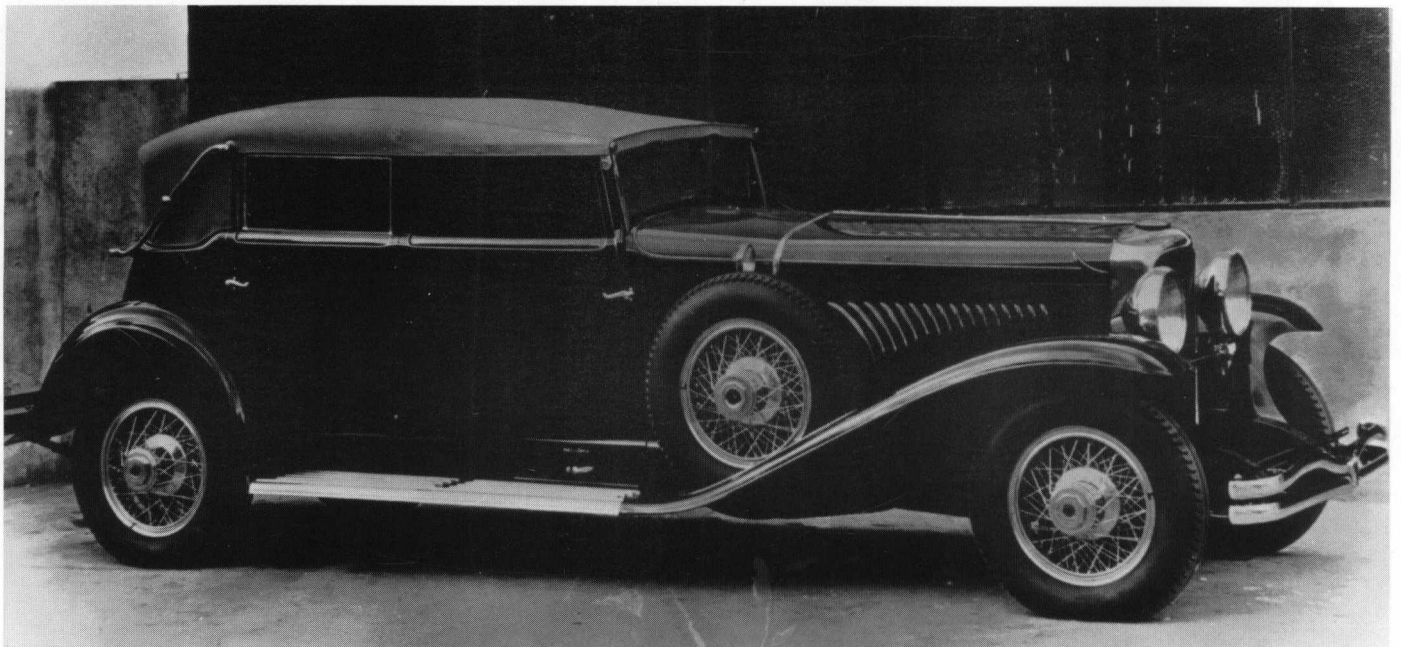
Hibbard & Darrin convertible victoria, the Brunet car mentioned below.

Among other famous Duesenberg bodies by Hibbard & Darrin was a special convertible sedan of a style built originally on a Minerva chassis that was shown at the Commodore Salon in New York in 1927⁴. It featured special metal roof bows and new "Silentlyte" aluminum body frame.

The 4-door "Transformable Imperial" Cabriolet purchased by King Alfonso is another well-known Hibbard & Darrin

creation⁵. The body was dark blue with black fenders and striping; the convertible top was gray. This is the car in which the King fled Spain in April 1931 when the Republic was proclaimed. A number of identical bodies were built. One of them bearing Geneva [Switzerland] tags was featured in the magazine *Vu* for 1 October 1930.

Other Duesenbergs bodied by this firm include the black and cream coupe owned by M. Brunet of Bordeaux who collected the grand prize at Le Touquet in July 1930, the 2-passenger roadster exhibited at Cannes on 1 April 1930 by South American Luis Martinez de Las Rivas beside his wife's Duesenberg cabriolet de ville, also bodied by Hibbard & Darrin.



Hibbard & Darrin transformable imperial. (King Alfonso's car is a duplicate)

Fernandez & Darrin [France]

After Tom Hibbard left Paris at the end of 1931 to join General Motors, Dutch Darrin teamed up with the coachbuilder Fernandez who had never before built a body for the Duesenberg chassis, although he is credited with a number of beautiful water-color renderings of suggested designs.

The ultra-modern Boulogne workshops of Fernandez & Darrin built five bodies for the Duesenberg between 1932 and 1934. Some were shown at European Salons, others were exhibited in the firm's elegant showroom at 150 Champs-Élysées in Paris.

The first Fernandez & Darrin car was built on long-wheelbase chassis, 2503 J-481. It was an impressive convertible victoria featuring light-blue body, black fenders and roadster style top. The presence on this car of seven body support brackets that had been cut off with a torch suggests that the chassis had previously been fitted with another body, of which nothing is known. The car was shown for the first time in June 1932 by French screen star Suzy Vernon at La Cascade in Paris' Bois de Boulogne. It appeared again in Cannes in August the same year and at the Paris Salon in October where it could have been

purchased by one Greta Gustavsson, aka Greta Garbo. "La Divine", as she was known in France, used the car a few times in Europe, after which it fell into the hands of a French "stylist" who inflicted his own ideas on it before it was shipped to the United States and restored to its original condition. In 1972 the car was sold for \$90,000.

Fernandez & Darrin built a similar convertible victoria on chassis 2516 J-499 for Prince Azam Jah, son of the Nizam of Hyderabad, claimed to be the richest man in India at the time. It too had a light colored body and black fenders. The Prince used it for some time in Europe. The car was discovered in India in the '50s and brought to the U.S.

In January 1933, the firm completed the 4-seater SJ convertible which E.Z. Sadovich himself entered in the Paris-Nice rally in March, taking seventh place. The car took the Grand Prix at the subsequent Monte Carlo Concours d'Élégance. Unfortunately, the current whereabouts of this car, one of only three SJ models to carry French coachwork, is unknown.

In 1934 Fernandez & Darrin built another similar convertible victoria on the SJ chassis, 2567 J-542. The skirted front fenders on this car, originally

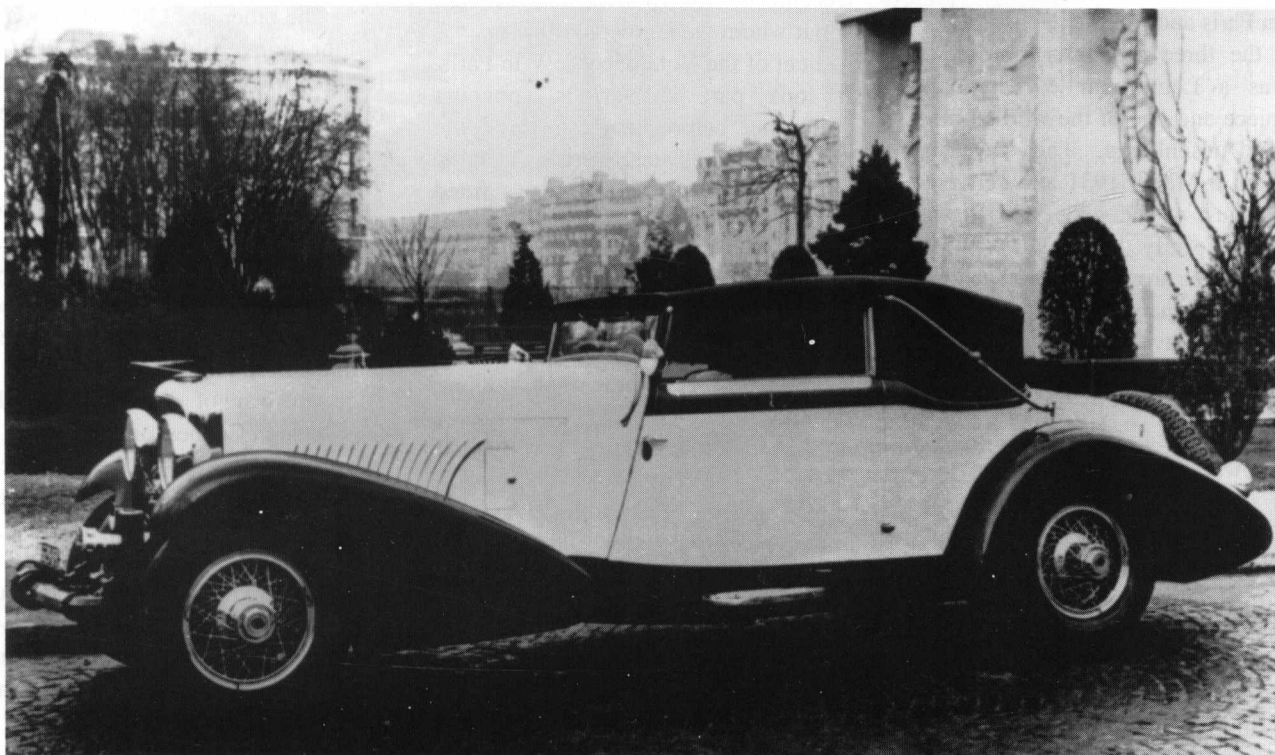
painted black, were heavy in appearance and so it was quickly given a two-tone paint job of cream and black. The car is currently in the United States.

The fifth car, with a 2-passenger boat-tail speedster body is a mystery today. It was probably shown at the 1933 Paris Salon and was also featured in the magazine Vu for 1 October 1933. Rumor has it that this car could be the mystery Duesenberg reported seen in Kiev, Ukraine.

Letourneur et Marchand [France]

From the firm's order book which Jean Marchand obligingly allowed me to peruse, seven designer's drawings were prepared for the Duesenberg J but only three were effectively built. Sadovich asked the firm for proposals for two body types: a 2-door, 4-passenger convertible coupe and a 2-door, 2-passenger roadster with rumble seat. The latter design was never used.

Two convertible coupes were exhibited at the 1930 Paris Salon. One was gray with a matching gray top. The car featured a 2-inch horizontal chrome molding with a central gray stripe. The door handles were styled like the belt molding and mounted centrally on the doors, a styling feature of which Letourneur et Marchand were particularly fond. This car was bought by Prince Nicholas of Roumania.



Fernandez & Darrin 4-place cabriolet, J-499, delivered to Crown Prince of Hyderabad.



Letourneur et Marchand cabriolet on short J chassis, Paris Salon, Oct. 1930, "vendu" to Prince Nicholas.

The firm exhibited an almost identical car on its own stand at the Paris show. The body was navy blue and the fenders black. The convertible top was black leather. Sadovich entered the car in the Cannes rally which he won in January 1931. Thereafter he sold the car to Jérôme Médrano of circus fame, who piloted his new machine to second place in the Paris-Nice event in March that year.

In February and March 1931 the company sent three stationary coupe proposals to the Marquis de Portago, a noble Spaniard who shared his time between Paris and Madrid. He picked the last of the three proposals, considered today as a Letourneur & Marchand masterpiece and one of the world's most elegant Duesenbergs. The car was ordered on 6 March 1931 and delivered on 14 August of the same year. It was painted uniformly black with a fine yellow pinstripe around the hood and belt line. The stationary roof was covered with a double layering of black leather and featured false landau irons. Upholstery was brown leather and cloth. Features included Grebel headlights, white sidewall tires and black wheel discs with a pinstripe matching that of the body. This car had a sad end. It was bought in 1950 by an inventor, who took it apart in Roanne in 1965 for no reason other than to see what made it tick.

Two additional designs were prepared in 1936 for potential overseas buyers but they never materialized, probably because of dwindling Duesenberg production.

Franay [France]

Franay built an exceptionally large number of fine bodies on various American chassis in the Thirties including no less than six for Duesenberg chassis between 1930 and 1934.

The first one, 2384 J-369, a coupé de ville, was exhibited on the Franay stand at the 1930 Paris Salon. The car was sold on 31 March 1931, to an American, K. Stanley Smith, a resident of the Ritz in Paris. Repurchased by Sadovich the same year, it was sold in December 1931 to Dr. Hans Schulte, about whom we know only that he was a client of the Hotel George V in Paris. It took part in various concours d'élégance before being shown again, this time on the Duesenberg stand at the 1932 Paris Salon where it was fitted with Grebel headlamps and hexagonal Batain bumpers. One year later, Dr. Schulte commissioned the famous coachbuilder Figoni to build an "enclosed sedan, 4-door, 4-seater with sunroof". We'll continue its story in our remarks on Figoni.

Franay completed two other bodies in 1931. The first was 2465 J-446, a special convertible sedan, not unlike the Hibbard & Darrin design exhibited by Sadovich at the 1931 Paris Salon; its first owner of record was Antonio Chopitea, a Peruvian millionaire playboy. This car is currently in the United States, where its front and rear fender styling has been modified⁶. The second was a landaulet

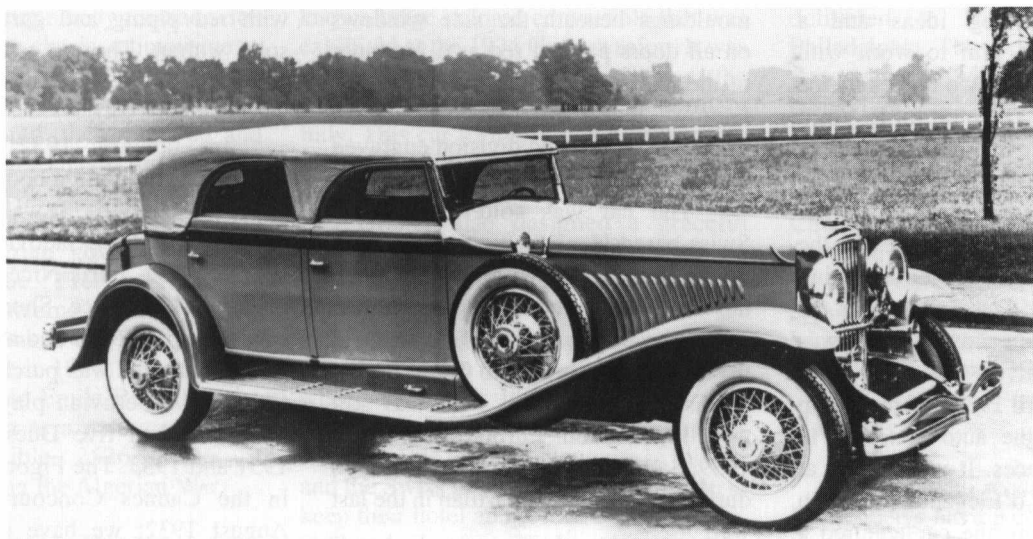
town car, first painted black and cream, that shared the limelight at the 1931 Paris Salon; it was shown at the Femina-l'Intran Concours d'Élégance in June 1932 and subsequently disappeared for good.

In 1934, Sadovich commissioned Franay to build two more bodies. Car 2385 J-365 was a rather plain 4-door, 4-window sedan with sunroof, first finished in two shades of blue, that was shown at the Paris and Deauville Concours d'Élégance in June and July 1934. In 1959, Jacques Rousseau and Serge Pozzoli, now both dead, discovered this car at the home of a retiree in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges near Paris.

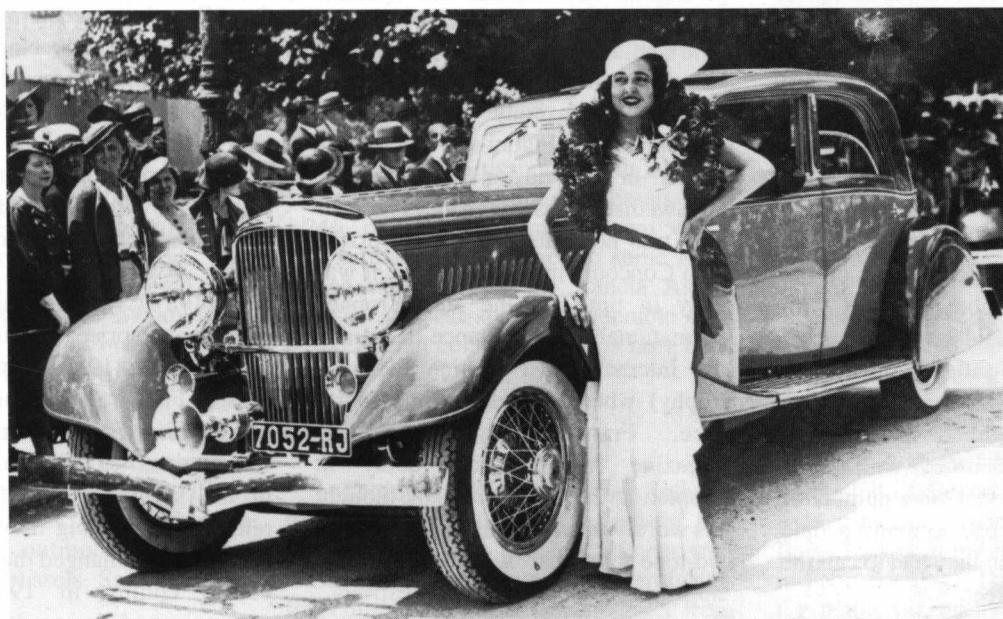
The other car, 2526 SJ-506, a striking 2-door convertible on a LWB chassis, featured three small windshield wipers and two-tone paint. It was first exhibited on Franay's own stand at the 1934 Paris Salon and then sold to Émile Beghain, one of Sadovich's faithful clients, and co-driver with Prince Nicholas at the 1935 Le Mans race. Beghain, who became a wealthy perfume producer in Algeria, left the wreck of SJ-506 on his estate, which he had to relinquish in 1962 in the tumult of the Algerian war of independence. Beghain later lived in Cannes, on the French Riviera, with nothing left from this fantastic car but a small photograph of himself at the wheel, soon after taking delivery of the car, around 1935.

In 1995, I discovered near Toulouse a small photograph of a seventh Franay-bodied Duesenberg, a 6-window limousine built around 1934-35 on a LWB chassis.

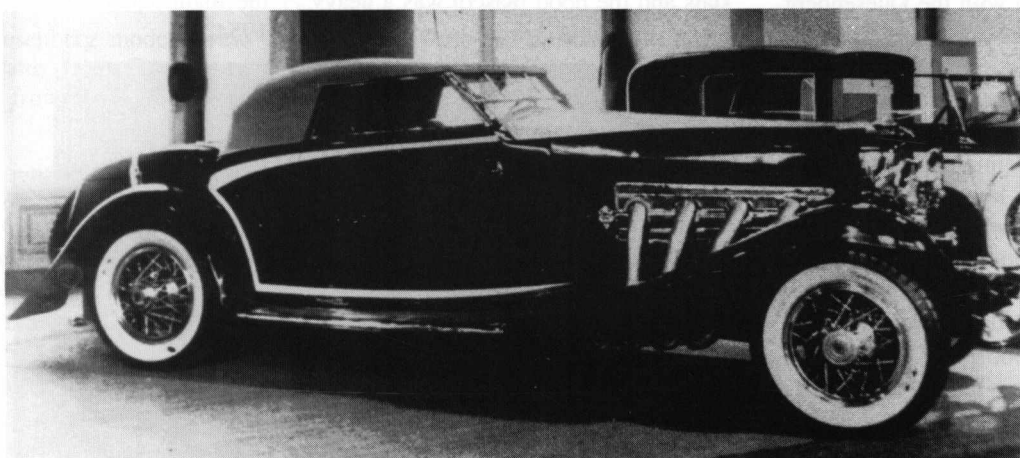
BODIES BY FRANAY



Convertible body on long chassis, Spring 1931 (the car used by Queen Marie of Yugoslavia).



4-door berline, J-365, Concours d'Élégance du Jardin d'Acclimatation, June 1934



Cabriolet, SJ long chassis, Franay stand, Paris Salon, Oct. 1934. Believed to be the last of the French-bodied Js.

Saoutchik [France]

Of all the French coachbuilders, Saoutchik had styling ideas and a clientele that suited him to work with Motor de Luxe. He did two bodies on the J. The first, 2324 J-307, built for E. Virgil Neal, the eccentric American founder of Tokalon cosmetics, was a 4-door phaeton with transformable town car front. Owner of the Chateau d'Azur in Nice on the French Riviera, Neal is quoted as saying he didn't care if the Duesenberg was the best car in the world . . . as long as it was the most expensive. The car was delivered on 29 April 1930 and picked up the first prize at the auto concours in Paris' Parc des Princes. It was shown at the Nice Concours d'Élégance in March 1931. Painted cream, the car featured a black molding that swept back from the center of the radiator grille to the windshield, blending into a broad belt molding. The magazine *l'Auto-Carrosserie* found the apple-green top "shocking". Other features included Grebel headlamps, hexagonal Batain bumpers and a huge removable trunk mounted forward on the right-side running board. Inside, the division was decorated with an elaborate, ornate "mantelpiece" of Amboyna wood with large amounts of inlaid marquetry. Like many of Sadovich's satisfied customers, Neal sent him a letter of thanks; recalling a recent trip through Switzerland and Austria's Tyrol, he noted with some vanity in April 1931 that "in a number of cities where we stopped so many people got around the car that they had to call the police to clear the street."

But a minor incident involving a broken steering bolt put an abrupt end to Neal's honeymoon with the Duesenberg. He lost faith in the car when Sadovich offered to replace the entire steering column on short notice; he took the gesture to be an admission of poor workmanship and immediately put the car up on blocks in his garage at the Château d'Azur. It was acquired in 1947 by a travelling peddler and was last seen in northern France in 1950. It is assumed that a scrap metal dealer finally took a blow torch to the 500,000 franc body.

In 1930 or 1931 Saoutchik's Neuilly-based operation built another body, a sporty 4-door sedan, on a short wheelbase J model for Poland's Count Boris von Czettinow. Pierre Saoutchik

recalled that it had red boa skin upholstery; a trademark of Saoutchik styling, there were four pointed mouldings beneath the side windows on all doors painted red as a reminder of the interior decoration. Another odd feature was the stainless steel instrument panel and division engraved with the owner's monogram.

The car was sold in 1933 to Swiss-based Hungarian composer Otto Stefan Blech who had Hermann Gräber, the Swiss coachbuilder, repaint the car navy blue with a gray roof. Blech sold the car three years later to Count Enrico di Pisciola, an Italian, who was still traveling around Europe with it in 1939. Sad to say, the car was destroyed during an allied raid on Milan in the last war.

Figoni [France]

Car motor J-263 (car number unknown) which originally carried a 7-passenger sedan body by Willoughby was rebodied by Figoni as a convertible "coach" or Victoria for Erik Akerlund, the Swedish press magnate. The new body was not finished in time for the Auto Concours in June 1930 but it was ready in time for the later Trophée International de l'Élégance Féminine (the International Feminine Elegance Trophy) where it picked up a fourth prize. France's *Auto-Carrosserie* magazine regretted the delay in completing the car which they thought was worthy of an overall first prize. The two-tone blue car was described as "appealing and perfect in all respects". The radiator grille featured chevron blades rather than the usual vertical slats and the hood mascot was a heavy swan in flight, reminiscent of the

Hispano stork. A side-mounted bumper on an ingenious sliding tube system could carry a trunk. The upholstery was suede with red piping and garnishings were of solid walnut. The car returned to Sweden where, sadly, it ended up in the breaker's yard in June 1940.

In January 1932, at Sadovich's request, Figoni built a body for Duesenberg chassis 2509 J-465. It was a white 2-seater boat-tail speedster. Sadovich entered the car in the 1932 Paris-Nice rally but only managed 17th place. Shortly thereafter the car was repainted in two shades of blue and got new tags; it was purchased by Antonio Chopitea, a Peruvian playboy who owned no fewer than five Duesenbergs between 1931 and 1933. The Figoni car was entered in the Cannes Concours d'Élégance in August 1932; we have no record of the rating it achieved there. The car came to the United States and gained some renown as the "French Speedster" (See *Automobile Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 1, First Quarter 1983). For many years the body work was erroneously attributed to Fernandez and Darrin.

We mentioned earlier 2384 J-369, originally with a Franay body, and for which Dr. Schulte commissioned a Figoni 4-door 4-window body. Figoni's invoice, No. 140/879, is dated August 28, 1933, and mentions the price of 37,000 French Francs. On May 14, 1937, this car was sold to Cronos Films. So it is no surprise that we see budding French actress Annie Vernay standing next to it in the Bois de Boulogne in the spring of 1939: Cronos had just released its first big movie, "Tanakanova." #J-369 then changed hands several times before ending in 1951 in the Isère département of France. It was last seen in a derelict state by a French classic car buff, on the main square of a small town there, in 1954.



Figoni 4-door berline rebody of Franay coupe de ville (J-369), shown with actress Annie Vernay in the Bois de Boulogne, Apr. 1939.

Kellner [France]

The most senior of French coach-builders built a single body for Sadovich on the Duesenberg chassis, a limousine or town car. It is believed to have been first mounted on 2385 J-365 in 1930, removed and stored, then retrieved and mounted on a later chassis in 1933 for Mehmet Ben Abed, President of Syria. The chassis having been damaged in an accident, the Syrian government filed suit against the French importer; however, the outcome of the judicial proceedings is unknown. The car was returned to France in 1938. After the war, Sadovich sold it to Émile Beghain, who took it to Algeria as a parts car for the Franay convertible 2526 J-506. It disappeared during the Algerian War.

Other Duesenbergs in Europe

Many J and SJ's sold by Sadovich went to the four corners of Europe, from Spain to Romania, from Sweden to Yugoslavia.

Belgium

Three chassis went to Belgium via Paris. One received a sport phaeton body by d'Ieteren Frères around 1933. The second, 2548 J-519, was completed with a 4-seater convertible victoria body from the coachbuilder; it was ordered by a Dutchman, Mr. M. Ades, in early 1935 and delivered to him in Paris a few months later. After changing hands and spending some time in Monaco, this car came to the United States in 1959. Finally, Van den Plas exhibited what seemed a rather outmoded roadster-phaeton at the Brussels Salon in late 1934.

Switzerland

The few Duesenberg models seen carrying Swiss plates from Geneva or Zurich also came from Paris. Hermann

Gräber of Wichtrach is the only Swiss coachbuilder to have built bodies for the Duesenberg. Car 2325 J-312 was the well-known beige-colored convertible that was exhibited at the 1934 Geneva salon. It was shown soon after by Frau Gräber at the Como Concours d'Élégance in northern Italy. This car formerly had a convertible town car body by Hibbard & Darrin. It ended in a scrap yard in Zurich in 1957.

Gräber also designed a graceful white roadster which was installed on 2173 J-148 which had previously had a phaeton body style by LeBaron. The car had no bumpers and featured aerodynamic headlights; the tear-drop shaped spare wheel cover was located in the pointed rear and carried a delicate fin. The Gräbers were not able to travel incognito in this car and the Swiss number plates didn't help to keep their hotel and restaurant bills down. Gräber later removed the white roadster body and transferred it to a Packard. Ultimately, the chassis was bought by Raymond A. Wolff and rebuilt in the United States. Wolff found a Kellner body around Chicago and had the chassis shortened about 8 inches so that it would fit.

The Swiss artisan also built a low 2-door, 4-seater convertible on chassis 2254 J-246, originally a Murphy town which was similar in appearance to some Pinin Farina creations on the Lancia Astura chassis. This car spent considerable time in the Harrah collection, and is now back in Europe.

Italy

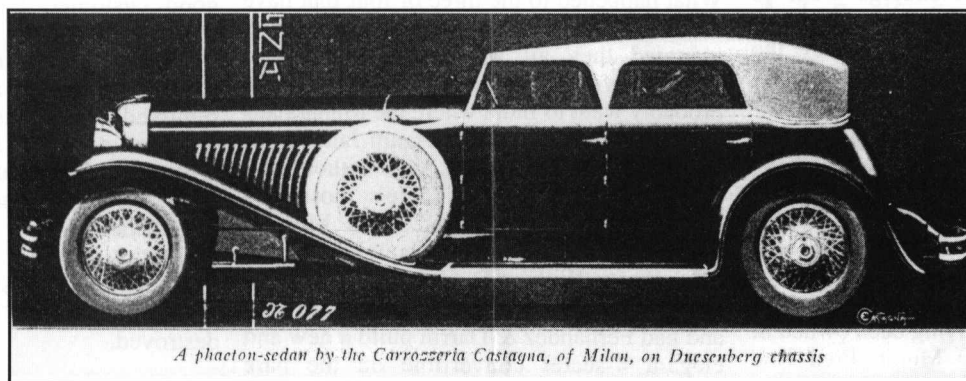
During the 1929 New York Salon at the Hotel Commodore, Duesenberg had made contact with Ercole Castagna who was showing four Castagna-bodied Isotta-Fraschinis. The Italian coachbuilder from Milan took orders directly from the Indianapolis factory for a number of Duesenberg bodies; these cars never saw inside of the Sadovich showroom in Paris.

Following the Wall Street crash, only two chassis were sent to Milan. The first,

2423 J-407, received a convertible town car body similar to the renowned "Sunset Boulevard" Isotta-Fraschini; It was delivered to Mrs. W.D. Luden of Philadelphia. The second car, 2312 J-294, was equipped with a Hibbard & Darrin convertible style body like the drawing below. After appearing on the Duesenberg stand at the Milan Salon in 1930, the car was delivered to Mrs. J.G. Shields in Chicago. Auto-Carrosserie considered the car to be of superior construction to most; the light-weight black body had a gray-cream double belt molding and chrome band. It was the most expensive car of the Milan show. Its fate is unknown.

Germany

There is no record of any Sadovich Duesenbergs having crossed the Rhine but a LeBaron bodied car (probably a phaeton) owned by a Herr Becker from Berlin competed at the Avus ring in Berlin against a Mercedes SSK in 1936. The driver of the Mercedes, Rudolf Bauer, was so impressed with the Duesenberg's performance that he ordered a long-wheelbase model in early 1937. He drew some sketches himself from which he intended to have the car built by Erdmann und Rossi. However, because of world unrest at the end of the Thirties, and the closing down of the Duesenberg factory, the chassis was assembled in Chicago and the body built to the Erdmann und Rossi plans by Rollson. It was an impressive, black 4-door convertible phaeton with dark purple leather upholstery, no running boards and V-windshield. Sad to say, the traditional Duesenberg grille was replaced with something more "up to date". Mr. Bauer took delivery of the car in New York in February 1940. This car was on display for many years as a "1938" model at a small car museum at Luray, Va., and has been written about frequently in American car publications. (See The Classic Car, June 1992)



A phaeton-sedan by the Carrozzeria Castagna, of Milan, on Duesenberg chassis

In post-war Germany there was another Duesenberg which a GI had brought there from Japan. In 1959 it was given a plain roadster body by a class of students at a school in Kaiserslautern. The car is currently in the United States where it is known as the "Kaiserslautern" car.

Blue-blooded Duesenbergs of Spain

We have noted the 4-door Hibbard & Darrin transformable imperial sold to King Alfonso, and the Letourneur et Marchand car sold to Marquis de Portago. Sadovich sold U.S.-bodied cars to the Marquis de Pescara and the Marquis de Genal. The last car was destroyed during the Spanish civil war.

Nicola Franco, nephew of "El Caudillo", owned a Murphy-bodied 1932 convertible he had bought from Juan March, a rich Catalan businessman. That car returned to the United States in 1976.

Sweden, Romania and elsewhere

In the February 1978 issue of *Autohistorica* (Stockholm), Tage Jansson, the automobile historian, told the story of the Swedish Duesenbergs. Two J models were seen in Stockholm in the Thirties. The first, car number unknown motor J-263, had been ordered directly from the factory and delivered on 17 February 1930 to newspaper tycoon Erik Akerlund, who owned already a fleet of classic cars including a Cord L-29, an Isotta-Fraschini and a Hispano-Suiza. On a return trip from Cannes, the owner had the original 7-passenger Willoughby limousine body replaced in Paris by a Figoni convertible victoria body. That car died at the hands of a scrap-metal dealer in 1940.

The second car, 2295 J-273, a Judkins limousine, was acquired by industrialist Torsten Kreuger (no relation to Ivar Kreuger the "match king") on 6 May 1930. Following an accident which destroyed the Judkins body, he sold it the following year to Erik Akerlund who, then replaced the wrecked body with the Willoughby limousine which had preceded the Figoni body on his other car. In 1936, Akerlund sold the car to motorcycle champion Martin Stromberg who converted it into a van for transporting his motorcycles. This car ended up in a wrecker's yard after an accident in 1943.

A number of Duesenbergs went to Central Europe. Prince Nicholas of Roumania, brother of King Carol, bought the Letourneur et Marchand car at the 1930 Paris Salon. He did well with it in various racing events in France. What happened to the car later is uncertain. One story has it that the Roumanian government sold it through Motor de Luxe to the Countess of Rohan, who passed it on to one of her heirs; the latter loaded it onto a ship bound for the United States in 1936, and it went later to Morocco where it is recorded as having been owned in 1938 by Prince Charles Murat. Fred Roe

speculates that the car that went to Roumania might have been the vanished supercharged Fernandez & Darrin convertible victoria that E.Z. Sadovich drove in the Paris-Nice in 1933, and that the Prince installed its engine in the car he used in the 1935 Le Mans. Meanwhile, the Roumanian car had been fitted with the engine the Prince used in the '33 Le Mans.

Prince Nicholas had another 2-seater body built on the Duesenberg chassis by Cattaneo, the Saint-Cloud [Paris] mechanic; he raced the car at Le Mans in 1933 and 1935. This could be the same car that was seen, minus body, at some local racing events in Romania - as it became known - during the early Sixties.

Queen Marie of Yugoslavia, Sadovich's home country, used the Franay-bodied convertible sedan that had been shown at the 1931 Paris salon (possibly J-446).

Nobody seems to know what happened to the J chassis that was exhibited in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1930. It is most likely that it returned to France and was bodied and sold through Sadovich.

United Kingdom

The J made its debut in England at the London Motor Show in October 1929. On display were one chassis and three completed cars: a Murphy convertible sedan and another sedan were exhibited on the Duesenberg stand. Car J-159, an elegant town car, was exhibited on the Barker stand. The marque was never shown again at any U.K. salon.

Only three cars were ever sold in England, far less than the number of French sales. The dealer, Malcolm Campbell (London) 1927 Ltd., did not have the same influential friends and relations as the great E.Z. Sadovich, Campbell (of later racing fame) having left the firm before it took on the car. Moreover, the staid English far preferred their own Rolls-Royce, Bentley and Daimler Double-Sixes to the Duesenberg which they found too heavy and too lightly steered for winding British roads. Furthermore, the heavy import duty on the car dampened the spirits of the staunchest of its admirers.

Twelve Duesenbergs were fitted at the factory with right hand drive, eleven in the period 1929-1930 and one some time later. What happened to the three or four that have not been accounted for is unknown. It is assumed they all were sold in the vast Commonwealth and dominions. Some probably went to India where the Maharajahs still ruled supreme. Prince Azam Jah, son of the Nizam of Hyderabad, was without any doubt one of Motor de Luxe's most avid clients. Owner of car J-202, a Murphy convertible sedan, he later bought also a J belonging to William D. Campbell. Sadovich had it converted to right hand drive for him and had Fernandez & Darrin build a new and elegant 4-seater convertible on the bare chassis.

Another Hindu, Prince Holkar, Maharajah of Indore, put his rival to shame with his fantastic SJ rumble-seat roadster speedster with body by Gurney Nutting, 2614 J-585. This car featured a steeply raked V-windshield. *The Autocar* reported the car to be fitted with three sets of side lights: two white, two red and two blue. The white lights were for public roads. The blue and red markers were only used on the Prince's vast private estate. The red were used when the Maharajah was driving and the blue when his wife, the Maharani was at the wheel. This car was painted black and "sunset", a poetic name for a bright metallic orange hue. The upholstery was orange leather and the top black and orange.

This concludes my compilation which summarizes all that we have been able to learn about the Duesenbergs that were bodied in Europe. But the search goes on, and we hope that continuing efforts will uncover more cars and their history.

³ Literally "the airplane of the road". This slogan was used contemporaneously by Chicago Garage, Paris, for Franklin cars.

⁴ H&D built the same body on a Cadillac and other chassis.

⁵ With its transformable front compartment and fully retractable top, we would refer to it as a three-position convertible phaeton.

⁶ This is the car that Queen Marie of Yugoslavia was seen riding in on a visit to Paris earlier in the year, as shown in the 1931 Motor de Luxe catalogue. Whether it belonged to her, as some accounts have it, is doubtful. Duesenberg authority Fred Roe pointed out in "The Car Dealer, the Queen and the Duesenberg" (*The Classic Car*, March 1993) that the Queen is not listed among the prestigious owners listed in the catalogue. He now suspects that Sadovich, "ever alert for opportunities to have his cars seen with the right people in the right places" and learning of the Queen's visit to Paris, arranged to have the Duesenberg at her disposal, perhaps only for one day (or perhaps more than one car; the Queen's thank-you note reprinted in the catalogue refers to Duesenberg in the plural). Given Sadovich's prestige car rental business background and the fact that the Queen's brother, Prince Nicholas of Roumania, was a good customer, Fred Roe's surmise is a reasonable one.

⁷ It should be noted that a Dr. Fritz of Brooklyn, NY, had a similar Castagna body removed from his Isotta-Fraschini and mounted on 2406 J-401. Many believe in error, therefore, that Castagna built a third body for the Duesenberg. Along with three other Duesenbergs, it was acquired in 1942 by Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Co. which used their engines to test aircraft superchargers. Unfortunately, the body and chassis were destroyed.

Duesenberg Literature Issued By Motor De Luxe

by Thomas T. Solley

The following is a description of sales literature issued by E.Z. Sadovich to promote the Duesenberg J. It is meant to be representative, rather than comprehensive.

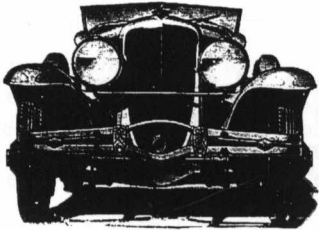
1. *La Nouvelle DUESENBERG 8 Indianapolis U.S.A.* (1929-30). French. 8.75 x 11.75 (22.2 x 29.9), 8pp. including covers, black printed thin off-white coated paper, stapled. Translation and reprint of technical article from "MoToR" (Specifications text with 17 engine and mechanical detail illustration. 2 photos of body styles.) Imp. Riégel - Neuilly.

2. *La Nouvelle DUESENBERG L'Avion de la route* (1929-30). French. 8.75 x 11.75 (22.2 x 29.9), 8pp. including covers, black printed thin off-white coated paper stapled. Specifications text with 7 engine and mechanical detail illustrations. 6 photos of cars (5 Hibbard & Darrin, 1 Saoutchik). Imprimerie Moderne de Versailles.

(Fred Roe has reprinted this piece. Alain Dollfus reports that there may be more than one version of this item, with different bodies shown).

1

LA Nouvelle
DUESENBERG 8
INDIANAPOLIS U. S. A.



*Description d'une voiture automobile de type particulier
par Harold F. Blanchard, rédacteur technique de
MoToR. Reimpression d'un récent numéro MoToR.*

Seul Concessionnaire pour la France

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MOTOR DE LUXE
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Tél. : Maillot 10-99

Magasin : 12, Rue de Berri
(Champs-Élysées)
PARIS VIII^e
Tél. : Elyées 85-30 - 34-18

2

La Nouvelle
DUESENBERG
L'Avion de la route

33/265 C.V.
190 km. à l'heure



CHASSIS A PARIS
avec droits 375.000 sans droits 250.000


Concessionnaire
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PARIS VIII^e
Téléph. : Elyées 85-30 - 34-18

3



3. **DUESENBERG (1931).** French. Deluxe catalogue. 12.5 x 8.6 (31.9 x 22), black printed off-white coated paper, pale blue endsheets, plus black printed heavier textured cream covers, cord tied. Specifications with engine photos, 7 photo plates of cars ("Transformable Impérial", "Cabriolet de ville", "Club Faux Cabriolet", "Torpédo transformable fermé", "Torpédo transformable ouvert", "Cabriolet Roadster") and 2 profile renderings ("Club Cabriolet Sport", "Coupé Demi-conduite Intérieure"). Imp. Riégel - Neuilly.

Auburn-Cord Duesenberg

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DIRECTEUR E. Z. SADOVICH
CABLES: SADMOTOR-PARIS

DUSENBERG, INC.
SERVICE STATION
12, RUE DE SABLONVILLE
(PORTES MAILLOT & TERNES)
PARIS (17^e)
TÉL. MAILLOT 1699

Paris, 19th June 1935

Mr. C. I. Bush,
Duesenberg Inc.,
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find statement of the Duesenberg parts on consignment which we hope you will find satisfactory. The removed parts under garantie which were replaced, were seen by Mr. Ingold and he was furnished with a list same as he does with the Auburn parts.

We wish to inform you that Prince Nicholas has not actually paid his bill in full but has paid on the account of the total amount owing us and the Duesenberg bill, which we have remitted you full payment in preference to our own account. For your information the Prince still owes us over Frs. 20.000.-.

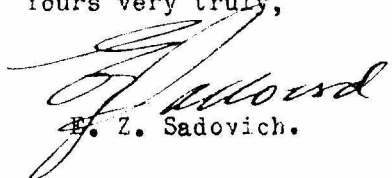
In his 3rd attempt with the Duesenberg in the 24 hours race which was held last Saturday he was obliged to abandon after running about 6 hours on account of the same piston trouble in the second cylinder which happened also last year.

After short mileage we have the same trouble again with the Duesenberg of Mr. Beghain, chassis 2526 on which the connecting rods were replaced under guarantee on this supercharger job and just yesterday the white metal has come off same as before. For your information, these were steel connecting rods

At present we are having quite a bit of trouble even with the Auburn we have the same difficulty and the Auburn car of Mr. Tazio Nuvolari is in our Service Station with this difficulty.

We are still waiting for the price of the supercharger Spe edster 125" wheelbase which you promised to let us have soon.

Yours very truly,


E. Z. Sadovich.

Duesenberg At Le Mans

by Taylor Vinson

The only Duesenberg ever entered at Le Mans was the Letourneur et Marchand-bodied J owned by Prince Nicholas of Roumania.

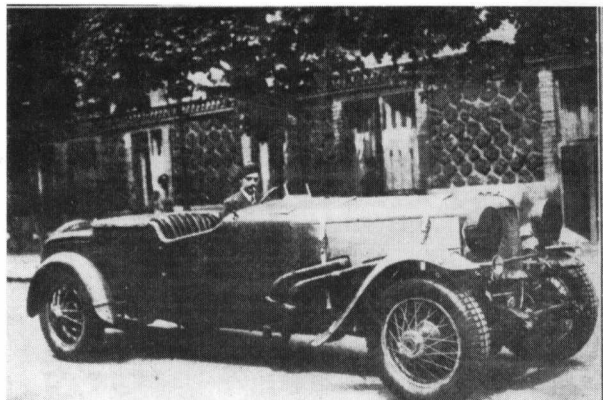
The Prince seems to have driven the 1930 Paris Salon car for about two years before having it remodeled in to a racing configuration for use in the 1933 Le Mans race. The J was designated #2 (cars were numbered according to their displacement, in this case the car's 6.882 litres was the second largest of the cars entered). The regulations permitted refueling at a minimum of 24 consecutive laps. Prince Nicholas refueled after 28 laps, and then again after 50 laps, two laps short of the required minimum of 24 consecutive laps. Joseph Cattaneo was his co-pilot.

Nicholas tried again in 1935, perhaps with an SJ engine in his car. This time he was designated #1 (6.986 litres), and Émile Beghain was his co-pilot. The car was in sixth place when "piston trouble in the second cylinder" forced it to quit after 38 laps (512 kms), according to a letter E.Z. Sadovich wrote the factory on June 19 of that year.

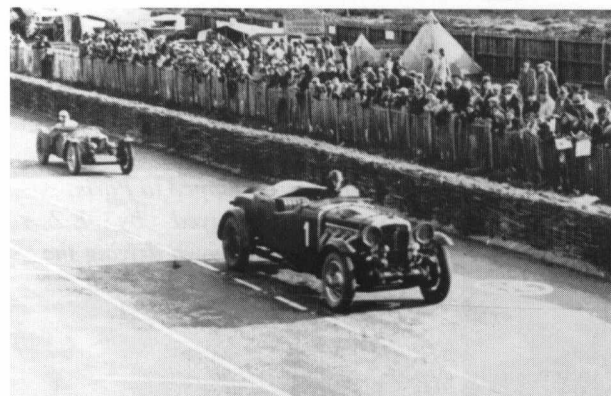
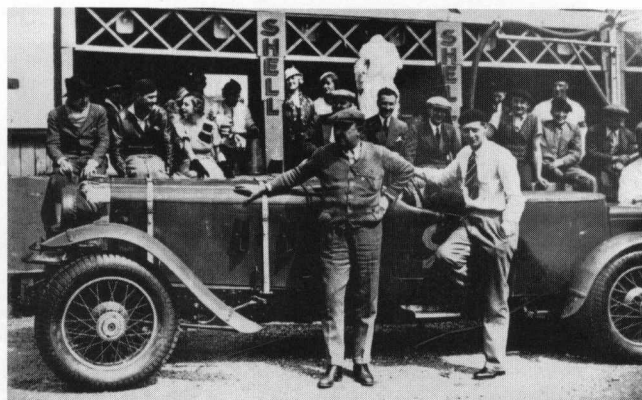
Although Sadovich refers to this as the Prince's third attempt, according to Al Bochroch in Americans at Le Mans (1975), the Prince's engine "seized in practice". There are no records or pictures of Nicholas participating in 1934.



Prince Nicholas in car in 1935 form, Motor de Luxe garage, 12 rue de Sablonville, Paris 17e.



Prince Nicholas at Le Mans, 1933, with co-driver Cattaneo at left.



Prince Nicholas at Le Mans, 1935.

Roster of European-Bodied Duesenberg Model J's

By Fred Roe

On the basis of known facts, photos, dates, and the sequence of the serial numbers, it is a reasonable speculation that cars 1 through 5 are part of the group of seven that were sent to Europe in 1929 with export manager Vance Hall for the formal introduction.

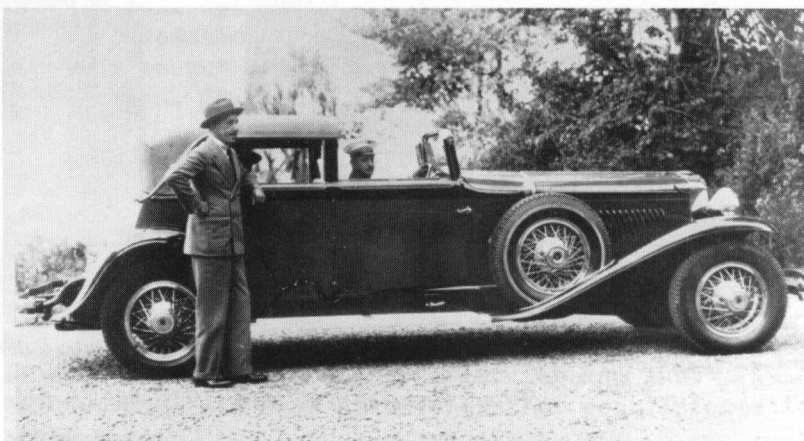
Note: The cars are listed by car serial number (four numerals), then engine number ("J" plus three numerals), where known, followed by an "L" or an "S" to indicate wheelbase length. "Unk" means that the number or numbers are not known.

The Review would like it to be known that all Duesenberg number and body listings owe credit to the work of many researchers, including A.R. Thurn, Marshall Merkes, Ray Wolff, J.L. Elbert, Ray De Vos (all now deceased), and Randy Ema, Don Howell, Dwight Schooling, Fred Roe, and Alain Dollfus.

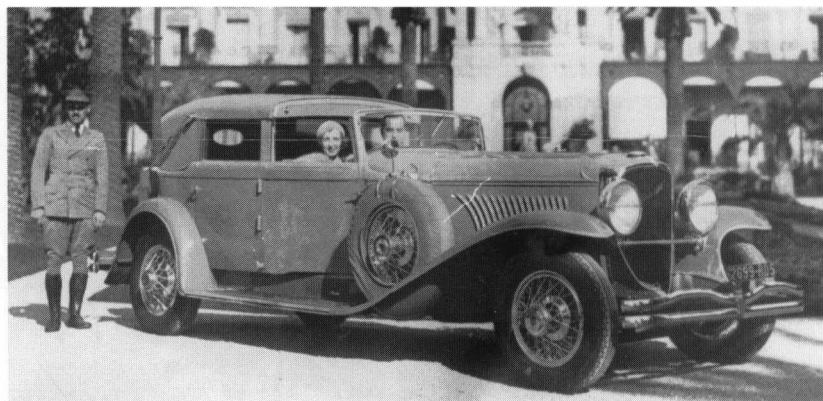


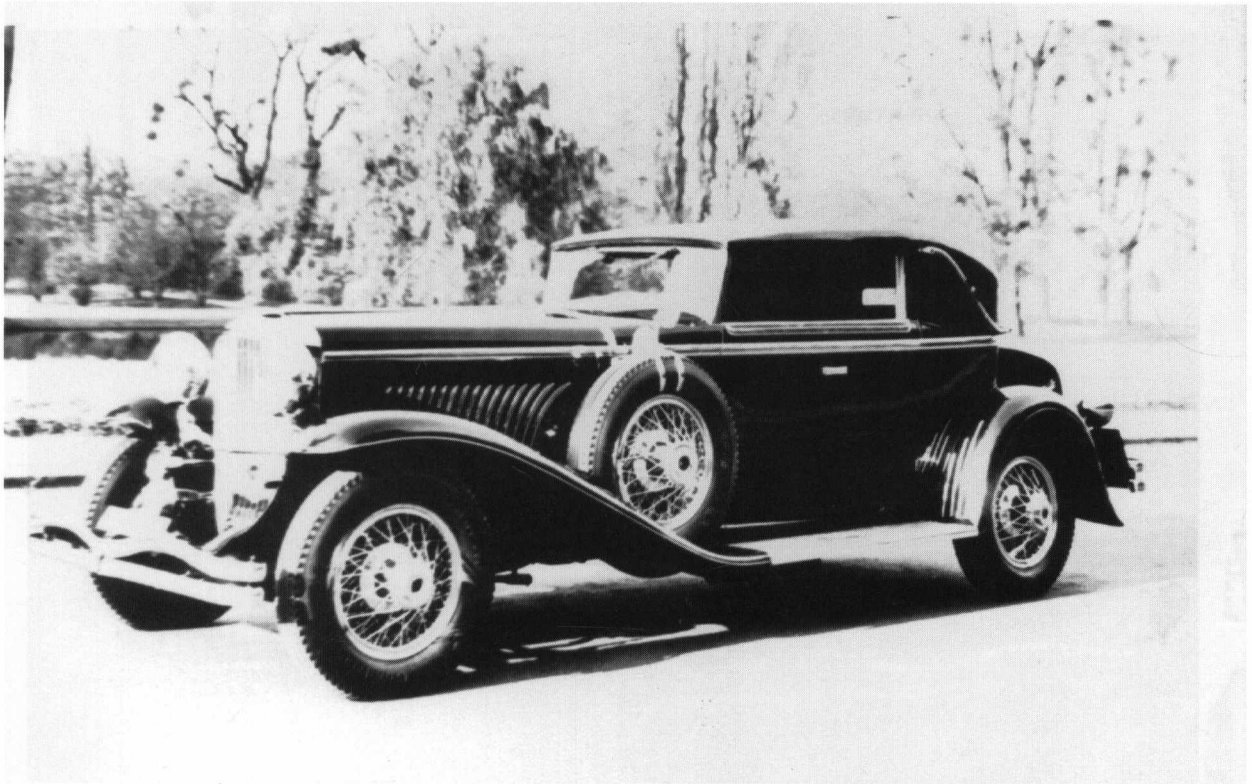
1. 2190 J-159 S Barker town car, RHD, on display at the London Show, October 1929. J-159 was sold to financiers, used sparingly, and photographed in Paris. J-159 was stored, rescued, and has been in the U.S. since the 1960's.

2. Unk. L One of the seven chassis shipped to Paris. I speculate that serial number 2215 may have been used on this chassis because it falls in the sequence that includes known numbers of cars that were sent to Europe but there is no written confirmation of this. My hunch is that this received the Hibbard & Darrin transformable imperial body bought by Alfonso XIII, for which the numbers have never been ascertained.



3. 2216 J-195 L Hibbard & Darrin convertible town car. One of the seven chassis shipped to Paris. J-195 was displayed by E.Z. Sadovich, (who is shown driving the car) at Cannes, 1 February 1930.

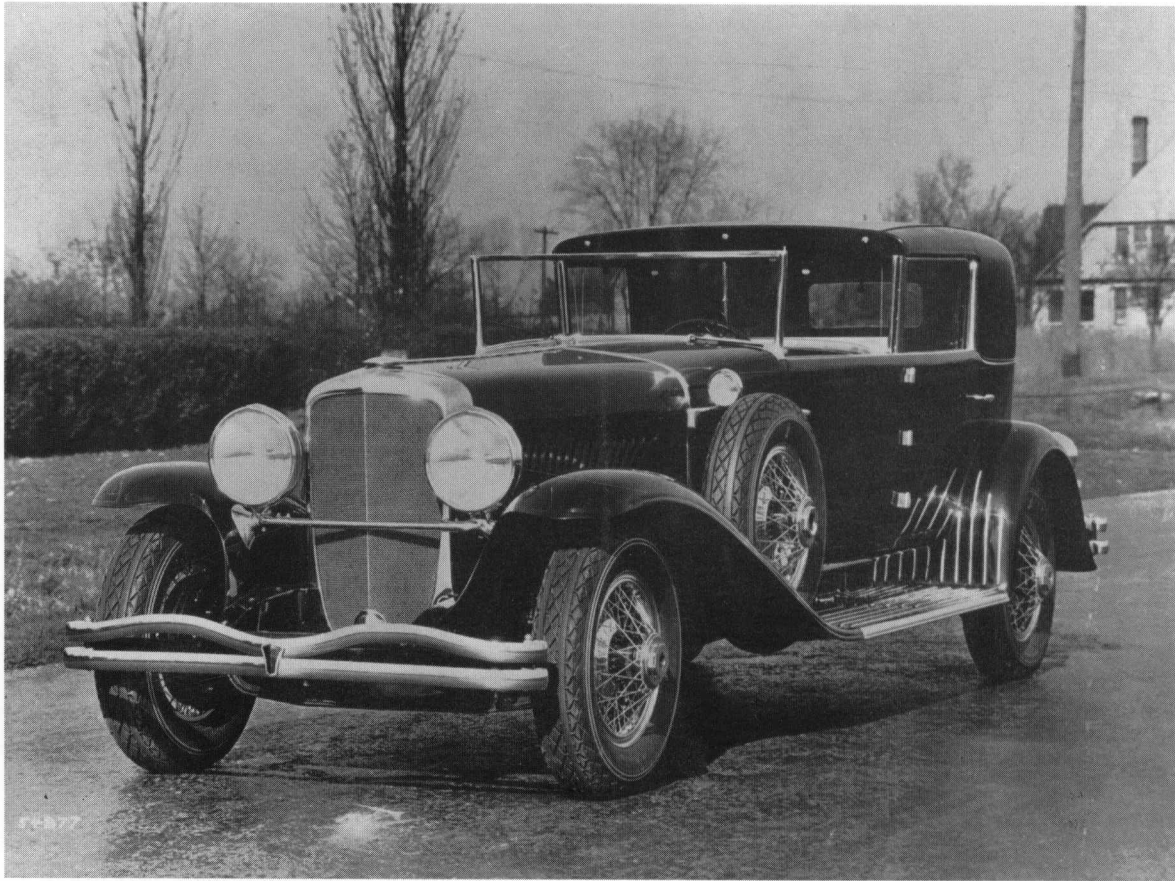




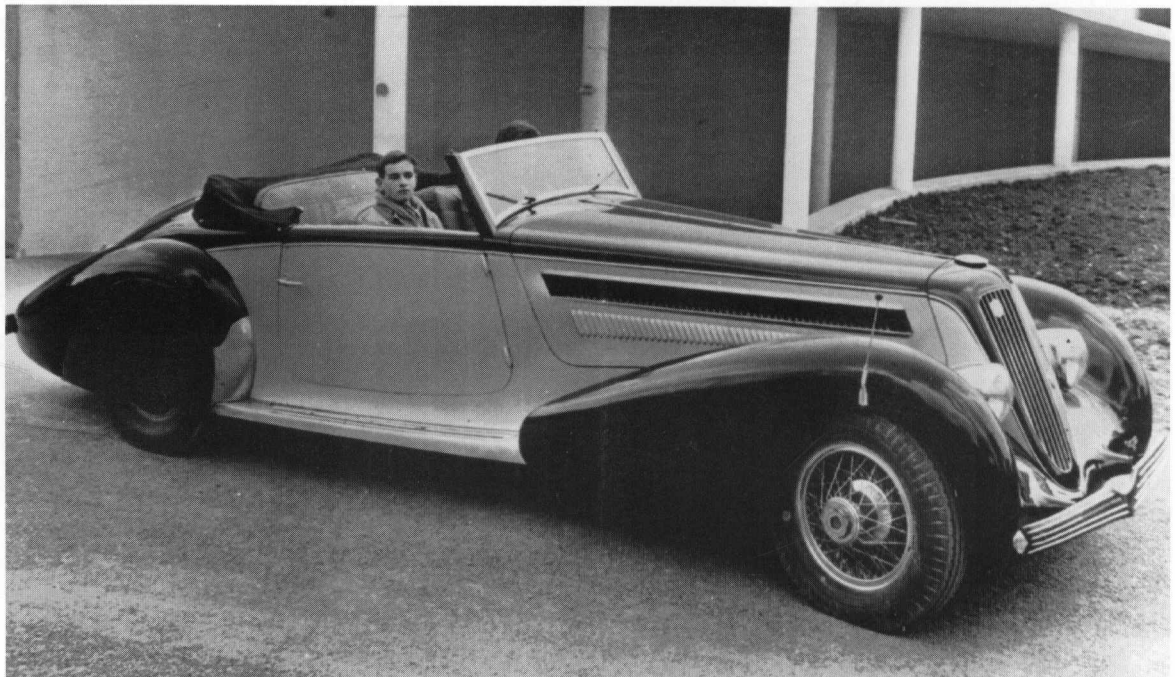
4. 2219 Unk. S *Letourneur et Marchand faux-cabriolet* body and displayed on their stand at Paris Salon of October 1930. Owned by Jérôme Médrano, the car was used by E.Z. Sadovich on the Paris-Cannes Rallye of January 1931. The fact that the car was not bodied until late 1930 leads me to speculate that its bare chassis was the one shown at the October 1929 Paris Salon, then sent to Geneva and/or Prague for display there before its return to Paris for the addition of its body.

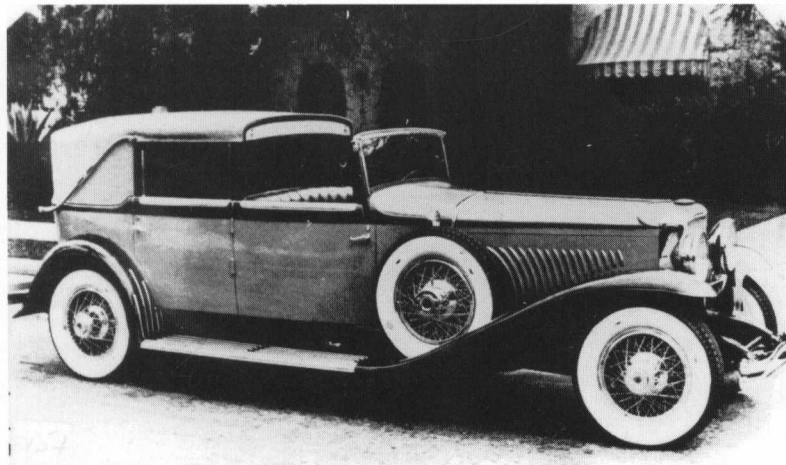


5. 2220 J-196 S *Weymann* four-door sedan, metal-panelled, RHD. Almost certainly British-bodied, J-196 was sold to S.C. Mitter who took it to India. The bare chassis displayed at the October 1929 London Show may have been that of J-196.

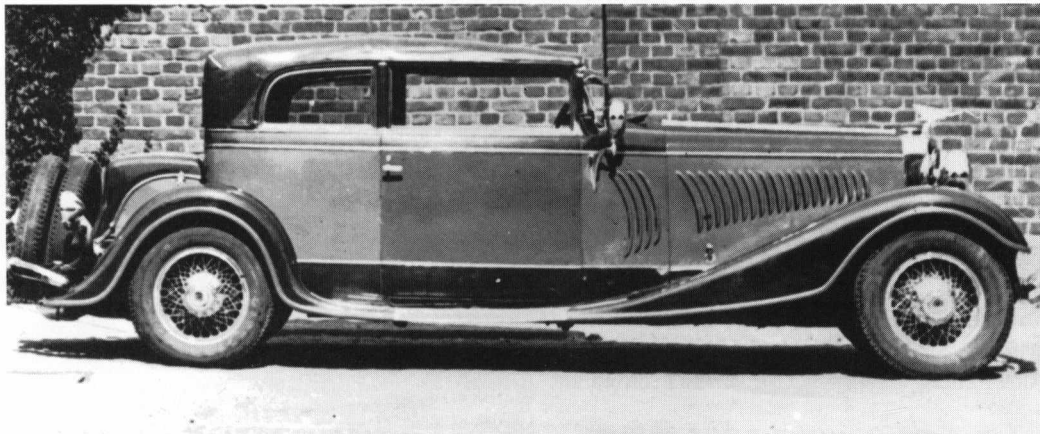


6. 2254 J-246 L *Murphy town car, perhaps the one shown above, taken to Paris in April 1931 by second owner, V. de Rachevsky. Rebodyed by Grüber in Switzerland as four-seater convertible, as shown in the photo below. J-246 was on display at Harrah's for many years, and is now back in Switzerland.*

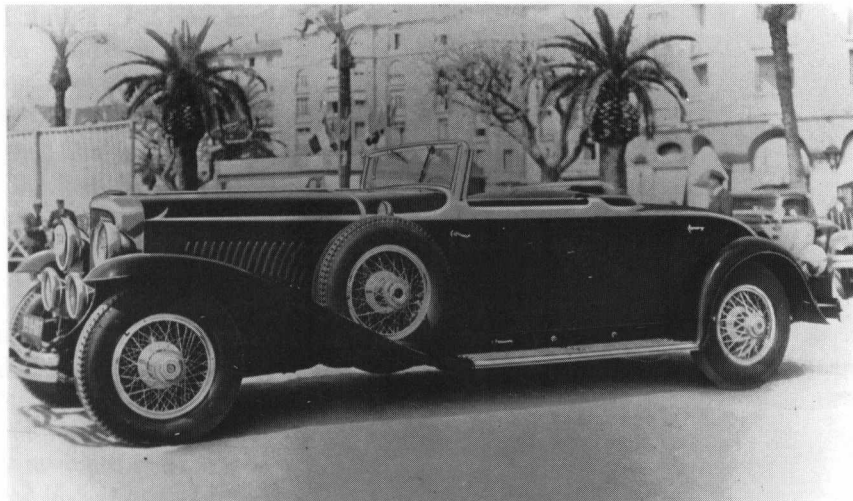




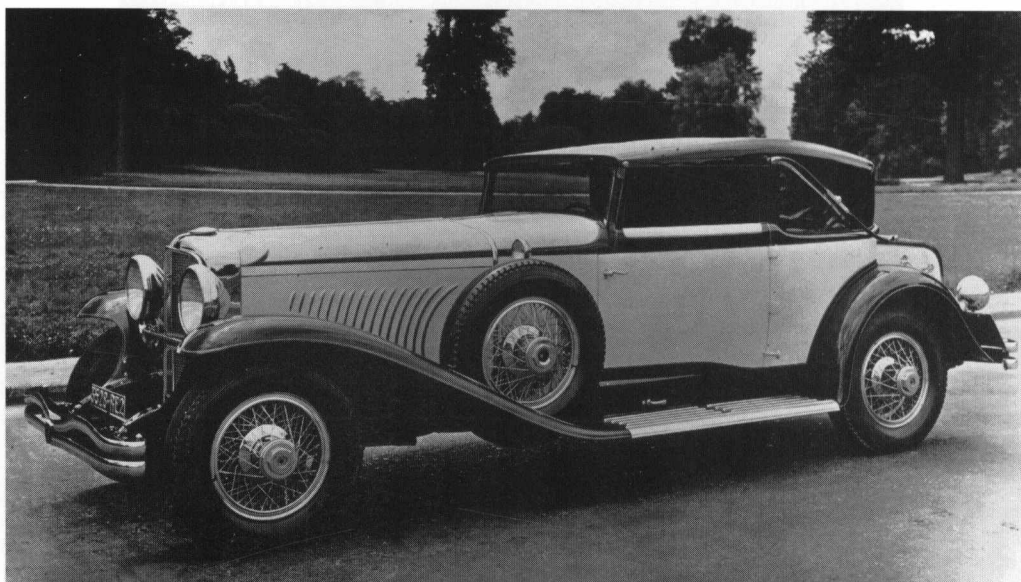
7. 2275 J-254 L Hibbard & Darrin convertible town car, body #1000. The body was shown at the Paris Salon in October 1929, but the chassis may not have been in Paris, according to visual clues and Karl Killorin who recalled removing only the body from its packing crate in Indianapolis. William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies owned J-254, and used it extensively in Europe and North Africa. J-254 appears in photos in a book about these travels. The car remains in the U.S.



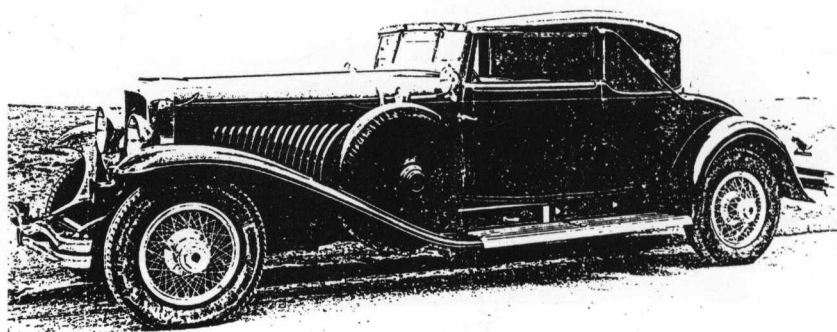
8. Unk. J-263 L Originally a Willoughby limousine, owned by Erik Akerlund of Sweden. Almost immediately after receiving the car, he had J-263 rebodied by Figoni as a quarter-window victoria and then shown at the Paris Concours in June 1930. J-263 went to Sweden and at some point was equipped with the later fenders shown here. It was broken up in 1940.



9. 2298 J-278 L Hibbard & Darrin convertible roadster, bought by L. Martinez de Rivas of Paris and Madrid, 6 March 1930 as shown at Cannes on 1 April 1930. J-278 is now lost.



10. Unk. S Hibbard & Darrin convertible victoria, owned by Paul Brunet of Paris and Bordeaux, and shown by Mme Sadovich at Biarritz. The car is lost. For the same reasons expressed at the beginning of this article, my guess is that this was chassis 2299.

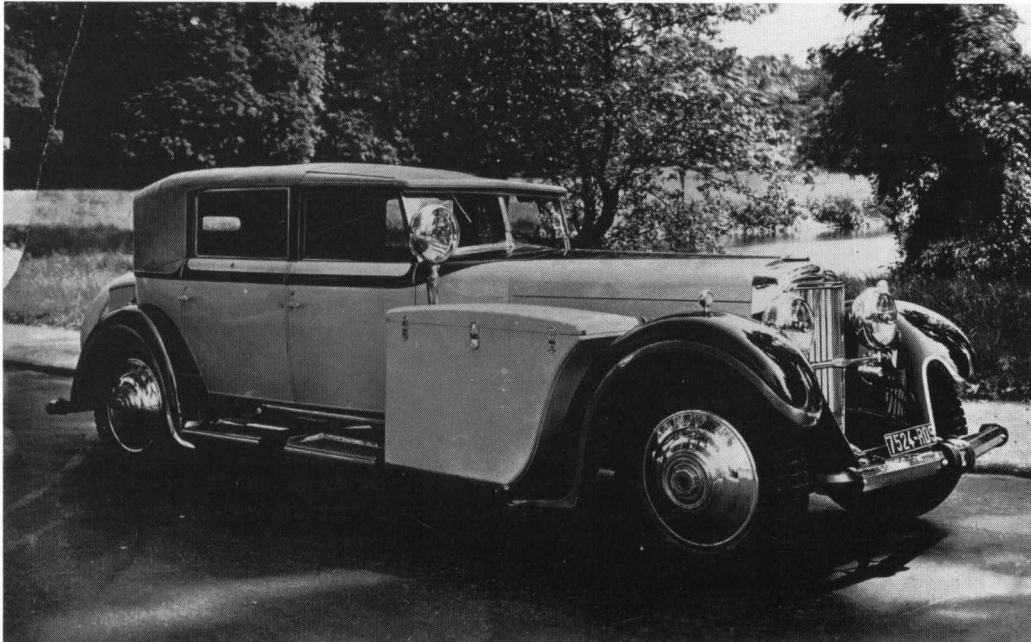


11. 2300 J-277 S Hibbard & Darrin convertible victoria with integral trunk. J-277 was sold to Mrs. Honoré Palmer of Chicago and Paris, and remains in the U.S.

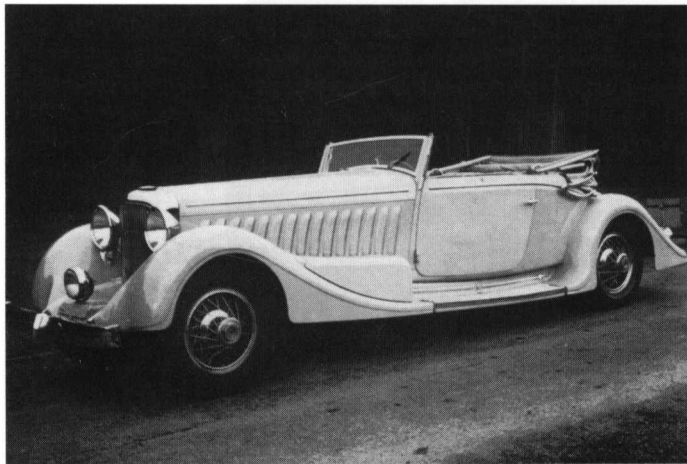


12. Unk Unk L One Hibbard & Darrin convertible town car remains unaccounted for by numbers, but we believe that it probably was fitted to one of the several chassis with numbers between 2300 and 2325 for which there are no recorded data. Similar to car #17 shown on page 25.

13. 2312 J-294 Unk Castagna convertible sedan ordered by the factory, as displayed at the Milan Show of April/May 1930. J-294 was sent to the U.S. and used as a demonstrator in Philadelphia until 1932 when it was sold to a Mrs. Shields of Chicago. J-294 is now lost.

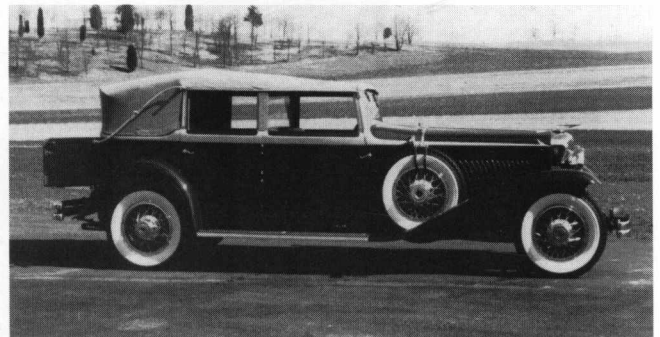


14. 2324 J-307 L Saoutchik convertible town car, sold to E. Virgil Neal of Nice, on 29 April 1930. J-307 was shown at the Paris Concours in June 1930, and at Nice in March 1931. The car was stored, then broken up after World War II.

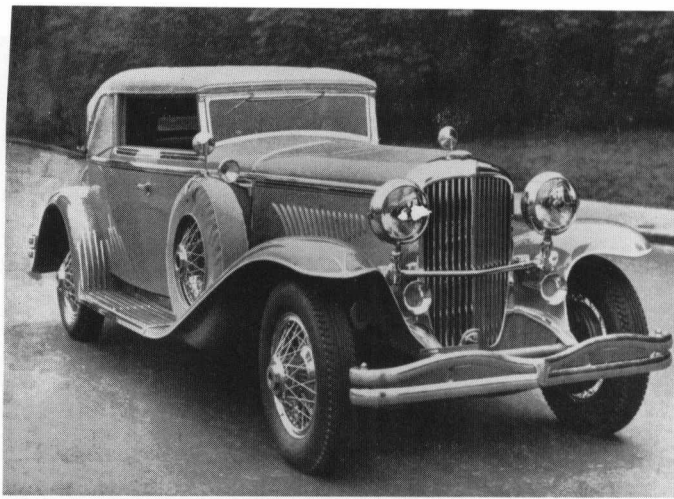


15. 2325 J-312 L Originally a Hibbard & Darrin convertible town car. It is sometimes listed as a "limousine" but Tom Hibbard told me that they didn't build any Duesenbergs with solid tops. J-312 appeared at the Geneva Show in 1934 rebodied as a Gräber convertible, shown in the photo. The car was broken up in the 1950's.

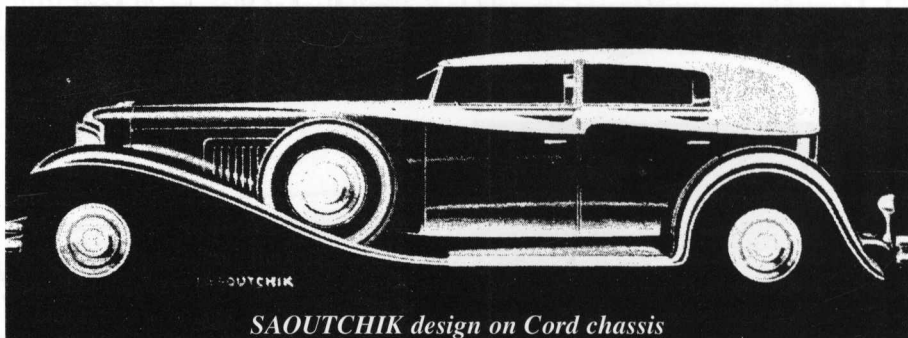
17. 2329 J-319 L Hibbard & Darrin convertible town car, owned by Mme L. Martinez de Rivas, who showed it at Cannes on 1 April 1930 (with her husband's car). The car is believed to have been traded back to Sadovich in 1931. J-319 has been in the U.S. for many years.



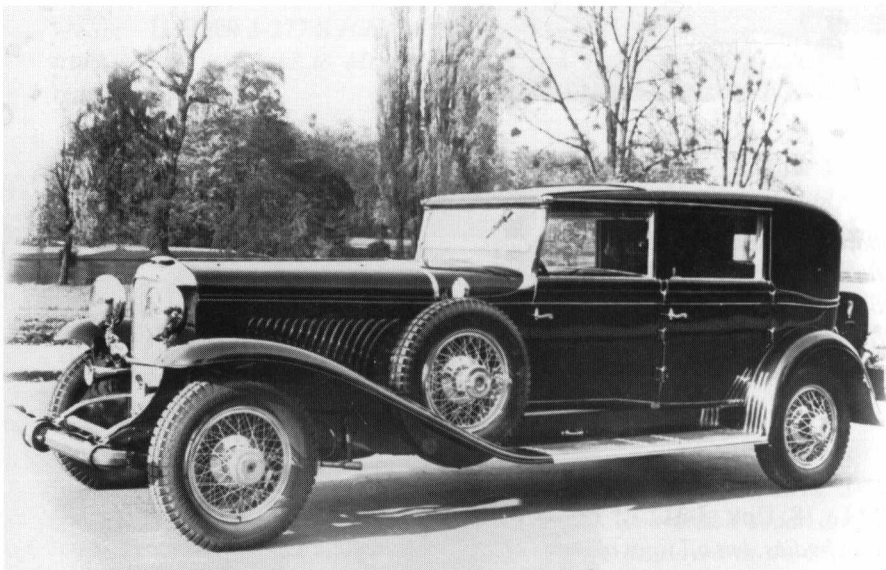
16. 2326 J-309 L; 18. Unk. J-317 L; 19. 2378 J-361 L. There are no identified photos of these three cars that carried Hibbard & Darrin bodies, but all were of styles already pictured, although #16 may have had a flap of top material separating the two side windows. It was sold to Alonzo Marsh in April 1930, later came to the U.S. and was eventually scrapped. The #18 car remained in Europe but is lost. O.W. Swenson of New York city received #19 in September 1930, no doubt the last of the 12 H & D bodied Duesenbergs. It became a parts car in the 1950's and its engine was installed in another car.



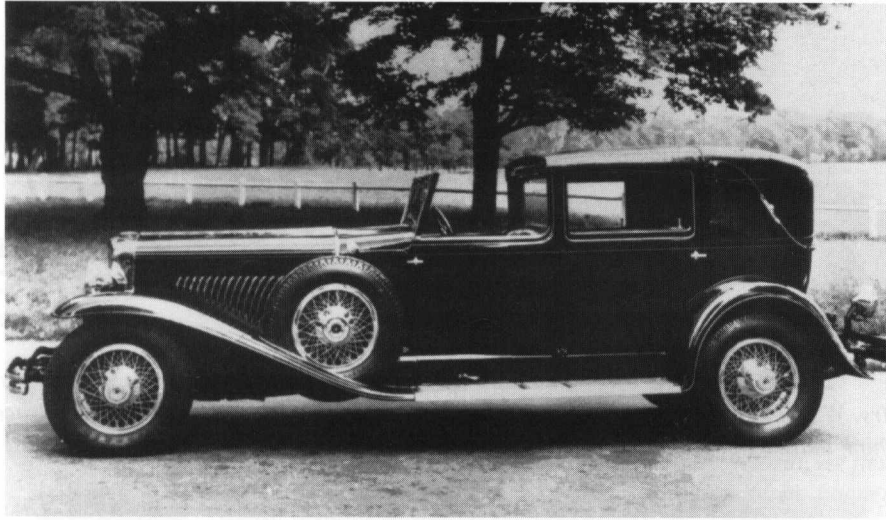
20. Unk. Unk. S *Letourneur et Marchand cabriolet*. This car was displayed on the Duesenberg stand at the October 1930 Paris Salon with a nearly identical but dark-colored car on the Letourneur et Marchand stand (see #4 above). The car was sold to Prince Nicholas of Roumania, who converted it to a racing car in 1933 and ran it at Le Mans. The car raced there again in 1935, perhaps with a different Duesenberg engine.



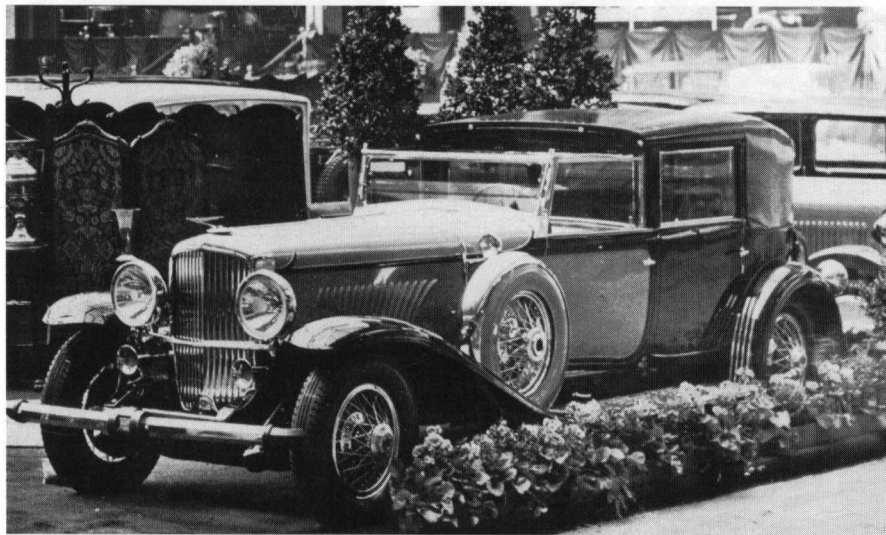
21. Unk. Unk. ? *Saoutchik sport sedan*, owned by Count Boris de Czettelow of Poland, 1930-31, Otto Stefan Blech of Hungary and Switzerland, 1933, and finally Count Enrico de Pisciola of Italy, 1936. The car was destroyed in an air raid in 1945. No photo exists but the car is believed to be similar to Cord Saoutchik.



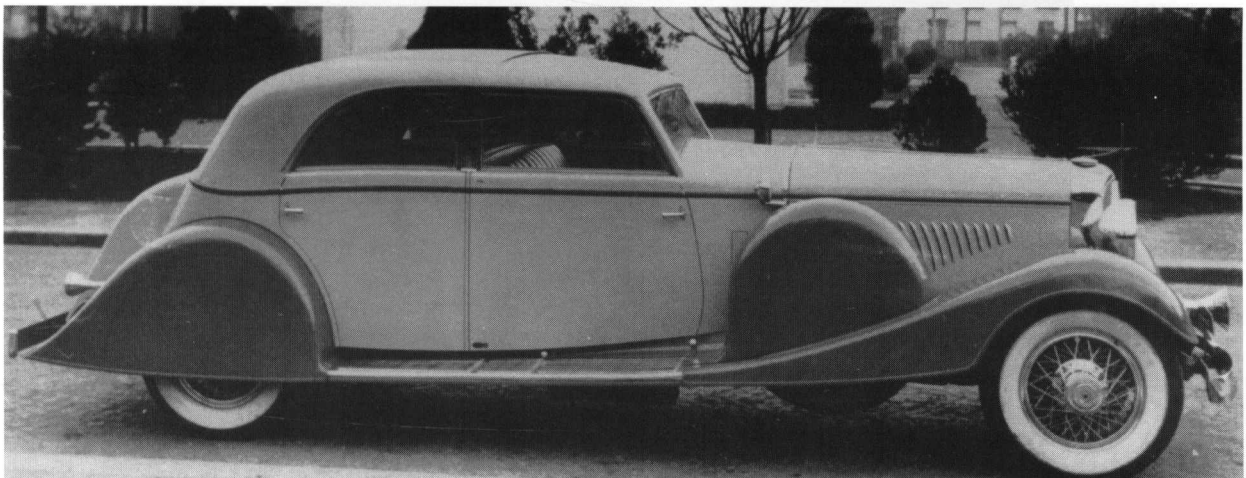
22. 2384 J-369 L *Franay coupé de ville*. Photo shows the car with Dunlop tires and Chromo-Batain bumpers added, probably to boost its price. J-369 was sold to Mrs. K. Stanley Smith of Paris on 31 March 1931, and bought by Dr. Schulte of Paris in 1932. He had it rebodied by Fignon in 1933. The car was sold to Chronos Films. J-369 was lost in France in the 1950's.



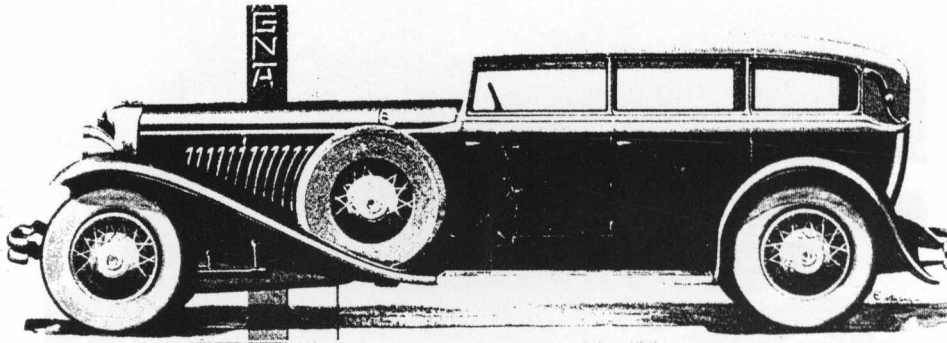
23. 2385 J-365 L Kellner town car, first shown on the Duesenberg stand at the Paris Salon of October 1930.



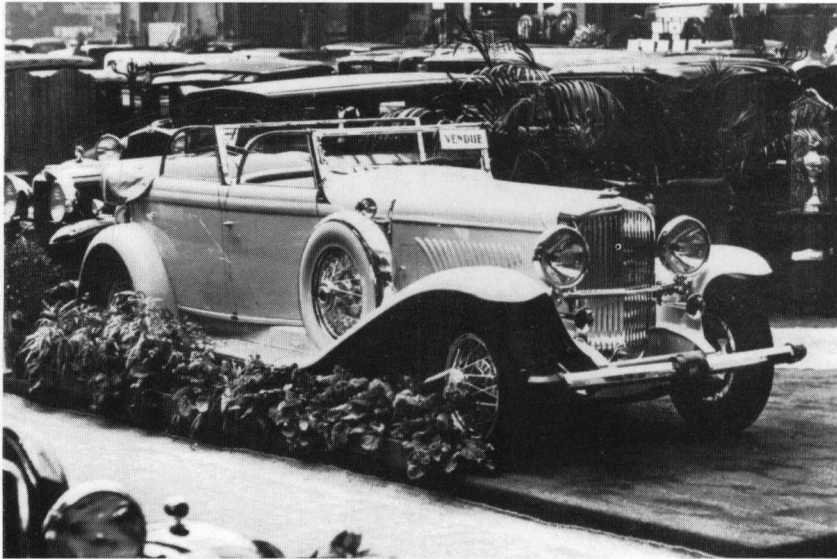
Sadovich couldn't sell the car, so its body was removed and stored, and the chassis rebodied with a Franay landaulet town car. In this garb, J-365 was displayed at the Paris Salon for October 1931, and the Concours of June 1932.



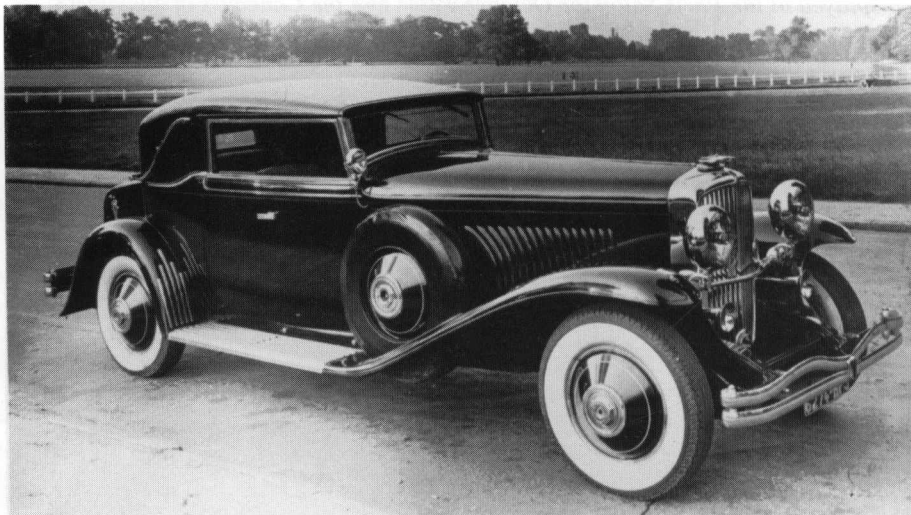
Franay again rebodied J-365 as a 4-door 4-windowed berline, in time for the June 1934 Paris Concours. J-365, owned by Countess Porcière (née Mabel Ball), is now in the U.S.



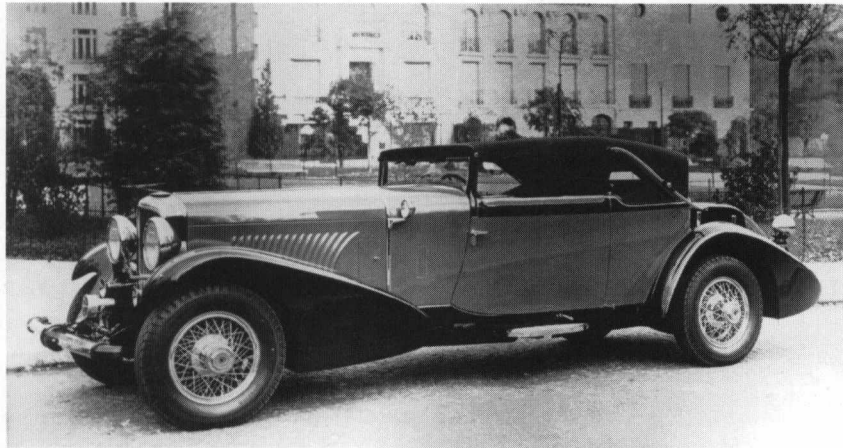
24. 2423 J-407 L Castagna imperial landaulet, ordered by the factory, and sold to Mrs. W.D. Luden of Philadelphia and Paris early in 1931. J-407 has not been traced. We think that this is a drawing of the car.



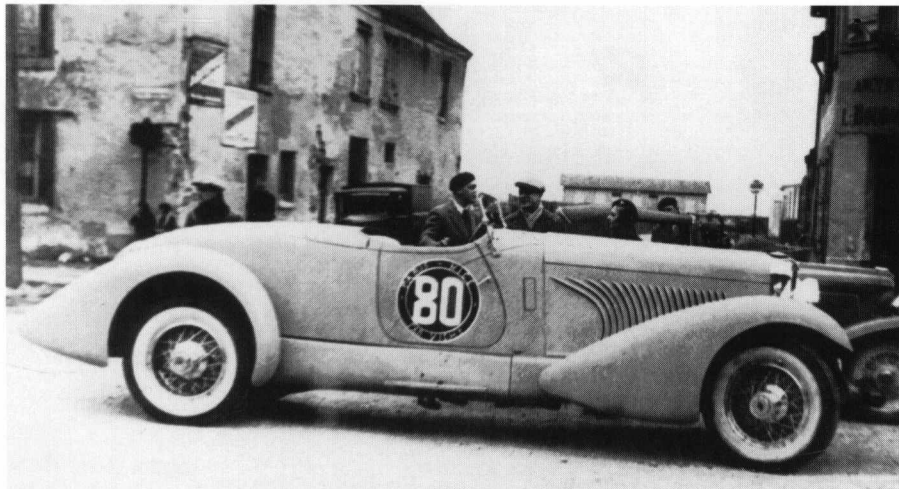
25. 2465 J-446 S Franay convertible sedan, shown at the Paris Concours in June 1931 and used that month by Queen Marie of Yugoslavia. J-446 was displayed on Sadovich's stand at the October 1931 Paris Salon, then sold to Antonio Chopitea. The fenders were changed. J-446 was brought to the U.S. before World War II. One U.S. owner used it daily for 30 years.



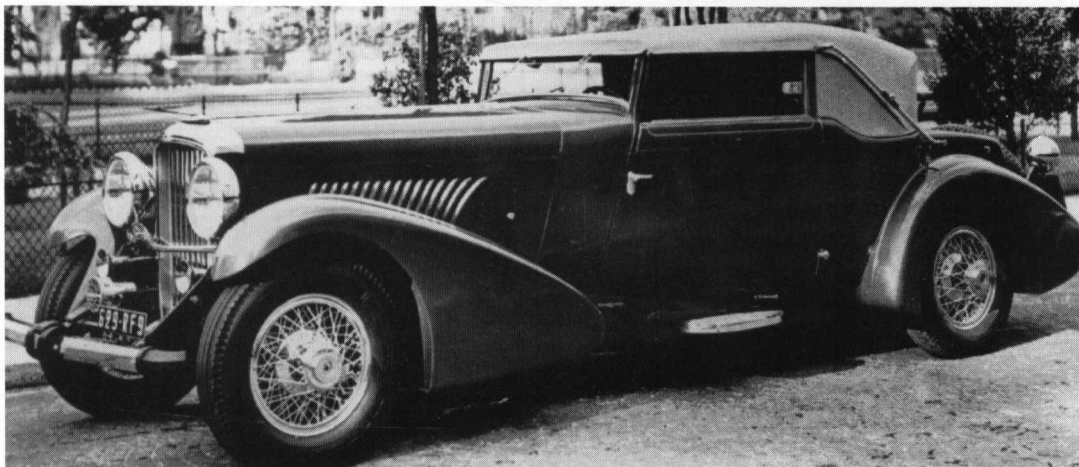
26. 2484 J-466 S Letourneur et Marchand faux cabriolet, delivered to the Marquis de Portago on 14 August 1931, and scrapped in Roanne in 1965 by M. Depalle.



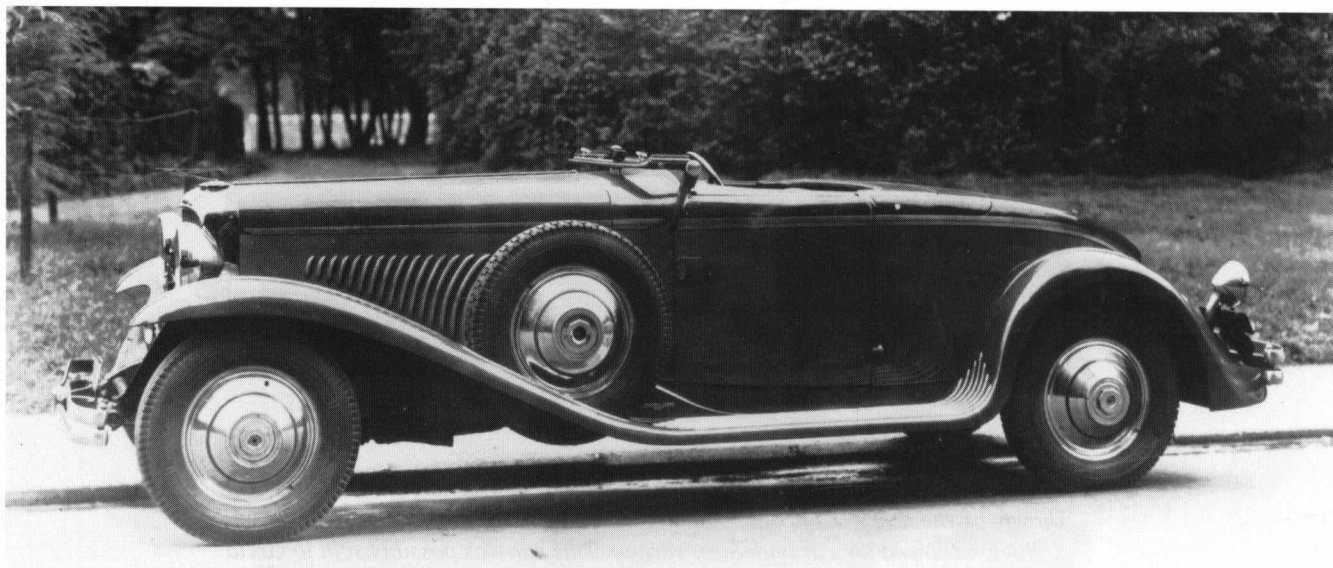
27. 2503 J-481 L Fernandez & Darrin convertible victoria, as first shown at the Paris Concours, June 1932. After a repainting of its bonnet, Sadovich showed the car with Suzy Vernon. This car was possibly sold to Greta Garbo. There is some evidence of a previous body on this chassis. J-481 was little used. A later owner made styling modifications (since removed by the U.S. owners of J-481).



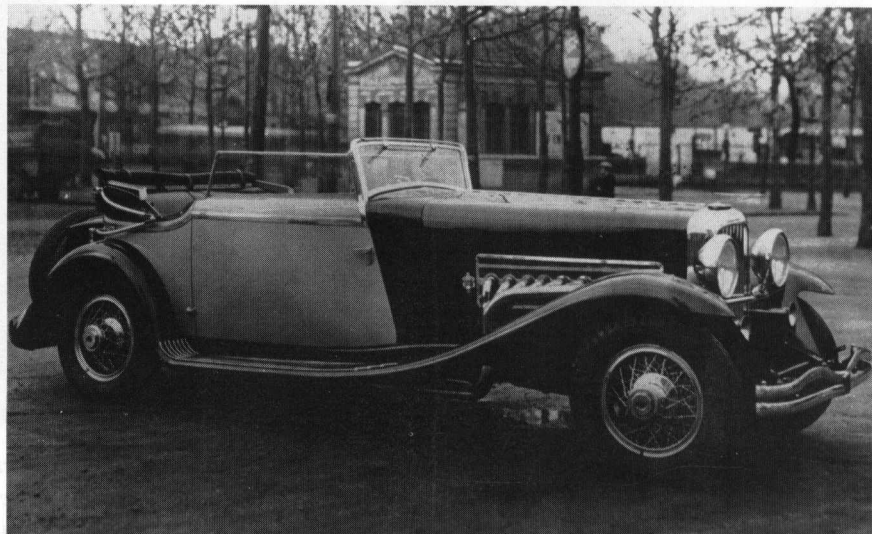
28. 2509 J-465 S Figoni speedster, ordered by E.Z. Sadovich in January 1932, as driven by him in the Paris-Nice Rallye of March 1932. It was repainted and sold to Antonio Chopitea who showed it at the Cannes Concours in August 1932. J-465 was incorrectly attributed to Fernandez & Darrin until the late 1970's. The car has been in the U.S. since 1933, now with several modifications.



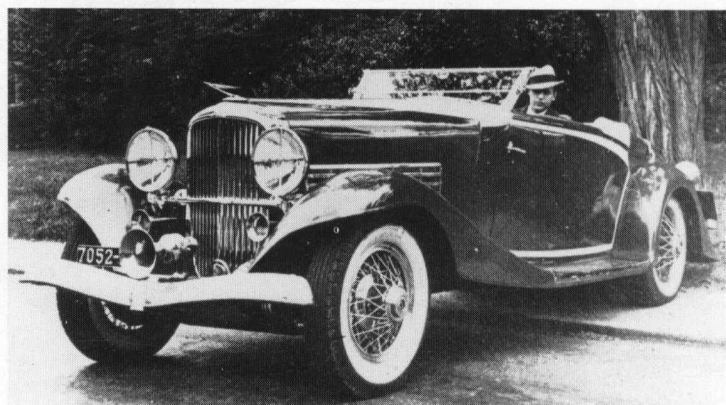
29. 2516 J-499 L Fernandez & Darrin convertible victoria, a near twin of #27 above. Shown in its original form. Sadovich converted it to RHD for Prince Azum Jah of Hyderabad who used it in Europe before taking it to India. J-499 had minor design changes and now is in the U.S.



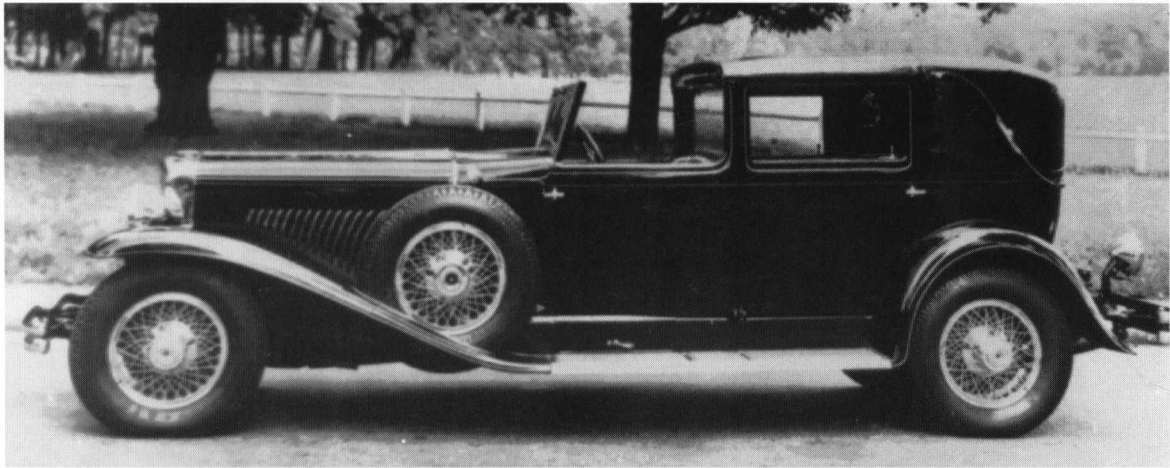
30. Unk. Unk. S Fernandez & Darrin speedster, shown at the October 1933 Paris Salon and in the magazine *Vu* for that month. This body possibly replaced the phaeton of W.D. Campbell on 2393 J-373, a car bought in New York City and taken to France. This was possibly owned by José Chopitea, brother of Antonio. It is possibly also the car rumored to have been seen in Kiev. This car is sometimes mistakenly attributed to Fernandez alone but the F&D insignia clearly shows in two photos of this car when it was new.



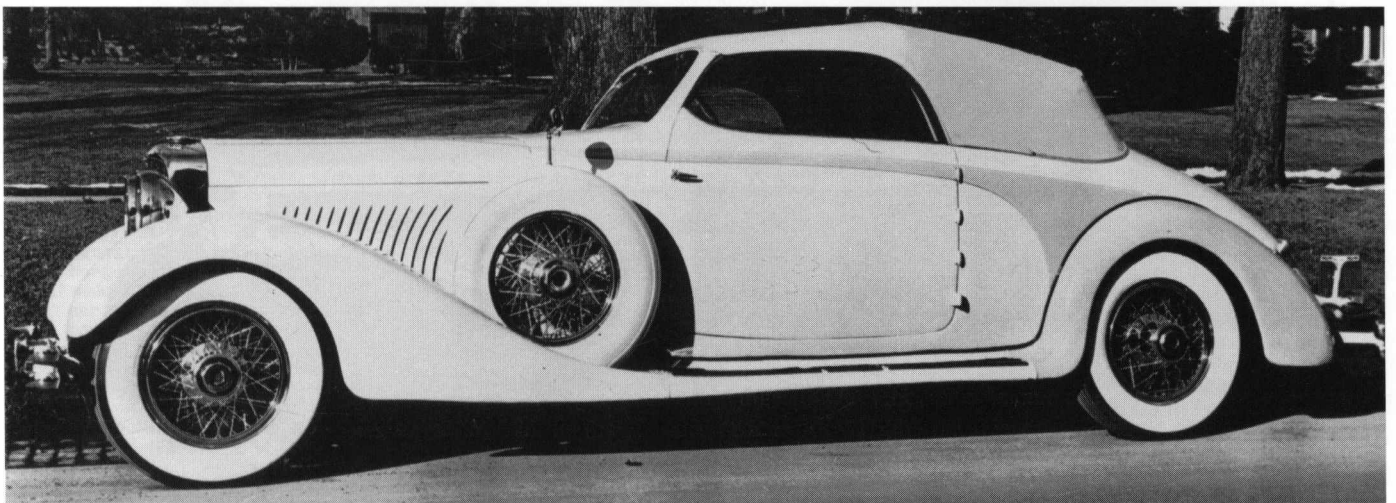
31. Unk. Unk. S. Fernandez & Darrin convertible victoria, supercharged, and driven by Sadovich in the Paris-Nice Rallye of March 1933. It took the Grand Prix d'Honneur at the Monte Carlo Concours afterwards, and is untraced thereafter. Possibly its engine was used by Prince Nicholas at LeMans in 1935.



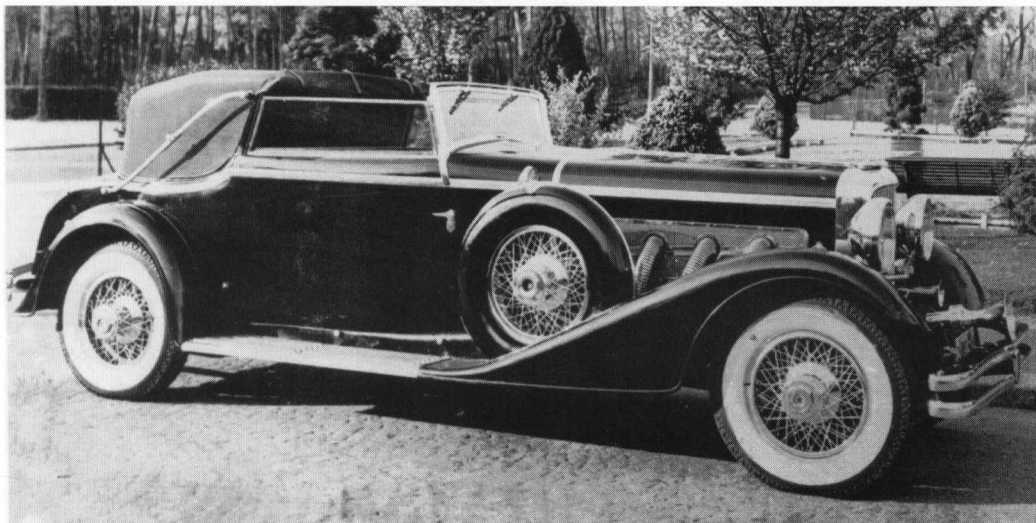
32. 2526 J-506 L Franay convertible coupe, supercharged. J-506 was taken to North Africa by Émile Beghain (co-pilot with Prince Nicholas at Le Mans, 1935) where it was left for scrap during the Algerian war of the early 1960s. Photo shows Émile Beghain at wheel.



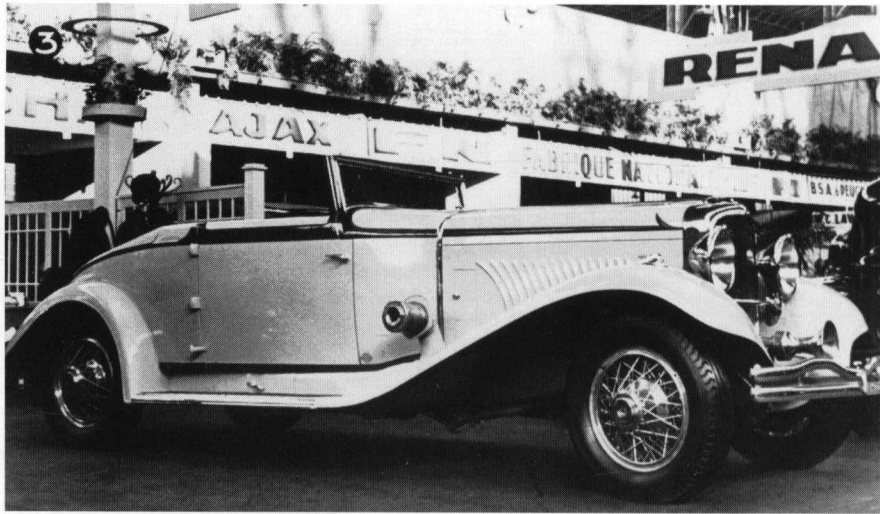
33. 2541-J516 L Kellner town car. See #23, p. 27. Body retrieved from storage and placed on chassis in 1933 with new headlamps. J-516 was sold to the President of Syria but had so many mechanical problems that it was returned to France in 1938. After the war, in 1948, Sadovich sold it to Émile Beghain as a parts car for J-506 (see #32, p. 30). He took this car also to North Africa where it met an identical fate.



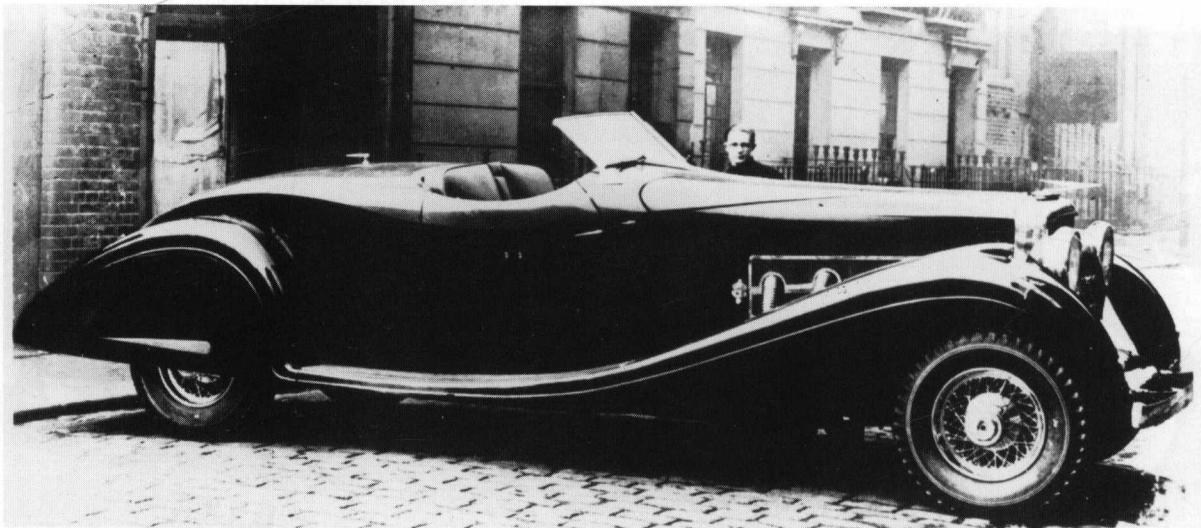
34. 2548 J-519 S D'Ieteren Frères convertible victoria, sold in 1935 to Mr. Ades, a Dutch citizen living in Paris. J-519 was later owned in Monaco, but came to the U.S. in 1959 and now is in Texas.



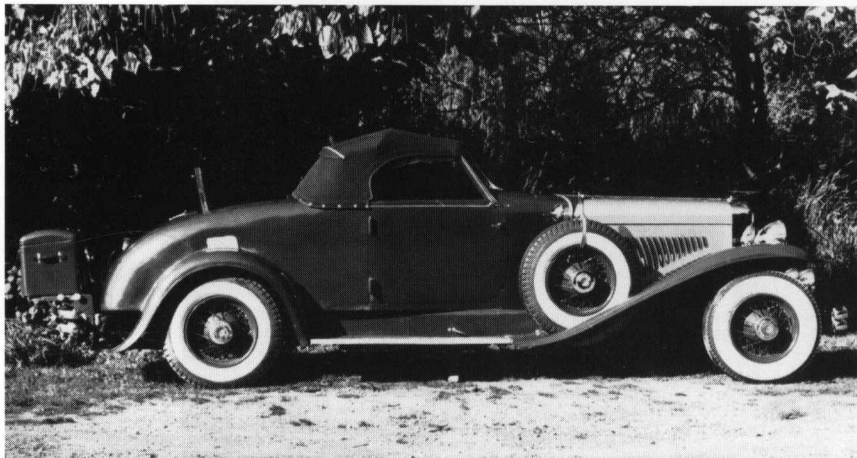
35. 2567 J-542 S Fernandez & Darrin convertible victoria, supercharged, very similar to #31 page 30, but with flexible pipes, side-mounted spare tires, and skirted fenders. J-542 was built in 1934. Vincent Fiermonte of New York and Paris became its second owner in 1935. J-542 has been in the U.S. for many years.



36. Unk. Unk S Van den Plas (Belgium) convertible coupe, shown at the Brussels Show, November 1934. From the cowl to the rear of its doors, this body is so similar to Hibbard & Darrin aluminum bodies that I have speculated for years that salvaged H&D parts may have been used in its construction. Possibly this is mounted on a used chassis of unknown origins.



37. 2614 J-585 L Gurney Nutting special roadster, 1935, supercharged. J-585 was commissioned by the Maharajah of Holkar and bodied in England. It was driven across the U.S., shipped from the West Coast to India, where it remained until brought to the U.S. in the 1970's.



38. 2290 J-268 S The only Duesenberg exported to Japan, where it was never properly bodied. An American serviceman brought it back to the U.S., then took it to Germany where he had this body designed and built for it in 1958 by students at the Meisterschule für Handwerke in Kaiserslautern. J-268 now is in California.

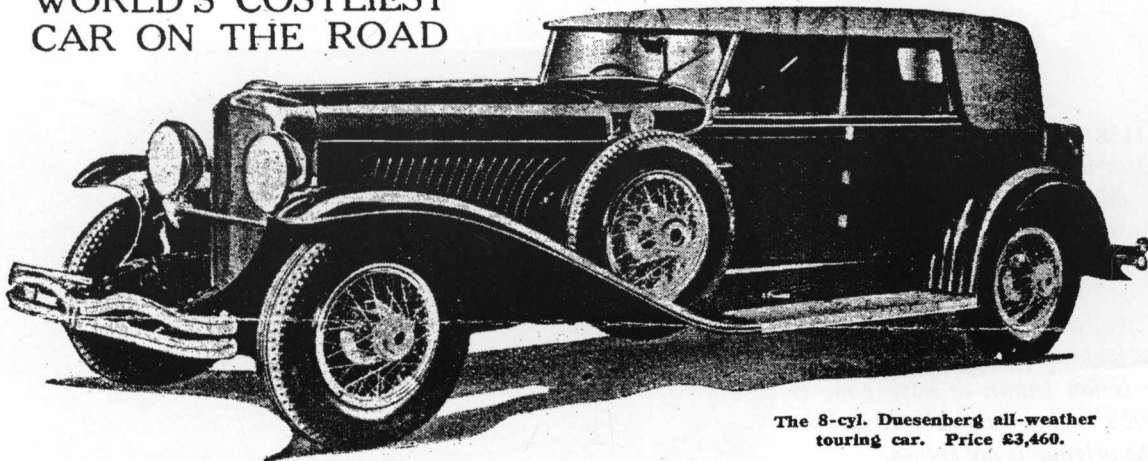
39. Unk. Unk. ? D'Ieteren Frères (Belgium) records list a "torpedo sport" built around 1930 for a Mr. Silverthorne. No details of the car or its history have been found.

The catalogue issued by Motor de Luxe (Sadovich) in 1931 listed as customers Michael Ulam, Paris; Marquis de Pescara, Spain; Mme. Adolph Blaquier, Paris and Buenos Aires; for whose cars we have no details. Alain Dollfus reports that the Genal car was destroyed in the Spanish Civil war, and that the Blaquier car may have had a Hibbard & Darrin Body.

Based on the number of RHD firewalls that show in factory purchase records, there are still two to four RHD cars that are not accounted for which must have been exported. One may have been the rumored car in India equipped with prayer rugs more valuable than the car. Car 2210 J-189 is LHD but its firewall is an altered RHD type. Car 2287 J-266 was built as RHD but was converted to LHD at the factory.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE DUESENBERG

WORLD'S COSTLIEST
CAR ON THE ROAD



The 8-cyl. Duesenberg all-weather touring car. Price £3,460.

SPEEDY, docile, possessed of unlimited power. Such is the Duesenberg—the world's most expensive automobile produced in commercial quantities—as it impresses us after a brief run. A hurried road-test squeezed, figuratively speaking, between the cargo boat and Olympia, gave us an inkling of what we may expect when we put the car through *The Motor* standardized road-test in the near future.

To begin with, the controllability of the car is so excellent that one does not appear to be driving such a big vehicle. The steering is as light as a feather; the lock is good, silence is absolute and springing all that one could desire.

The Duesenberg is as pleasant to handle as the best European productions. On the open road it is rock-steady at any speed, answers the most minute movement of the steering wheel

and can be "thrown" round corners fast with the certitude of a racing car. Hills simply do not exist for this powerful car. Newlands Corner was toyed with as if it were a piece of level road.

Acceleration is striking. We should say that there are few standard cars which can compare with the Duesenberg in this respect. Second gear—as silent as top—will permit of speeds higher than those the average car will reach on "top."

The brakes, hydraulically operated, are as safe to use as they are light to apply. The pulling-up power seems adequate for any emergency.

The controls operate nicely. The clutch, reasonably light to disengage, takes up the drive smoothly so that the car will get away on top gear without a sign of transmission snatch. The gear change is easy, an extremely short

movement of the lever being called for when passing from second to third or vice-versa.

Speeds of below 5 m.p.h. on top gear may be maintained, in traffic, without touching the clutch, while from a crawl one can accelerate really rapidly on top gear without a sign of pinking. In the course of a brief run we found that 80 m.p.h. could be reached in little more than half a minute from a speed of 10 m.p.h., but we were prevented by force of circumstances from reaching higher speeds.

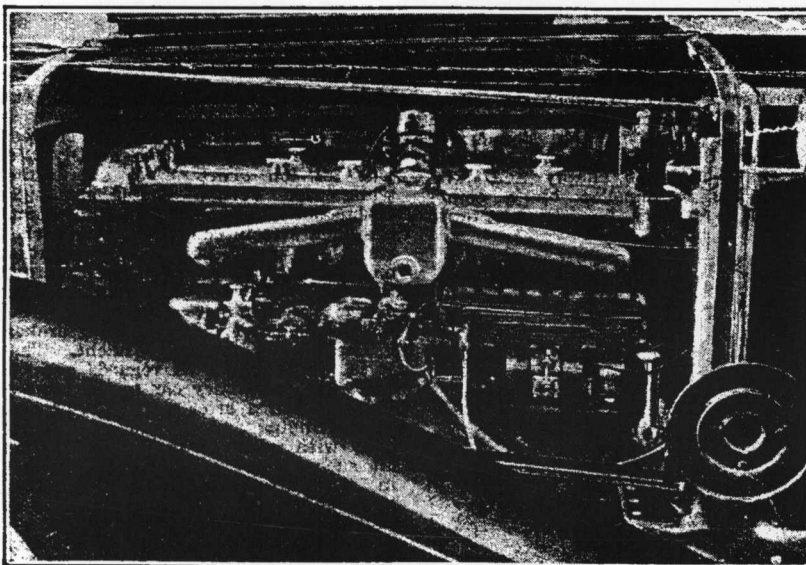
The springing has that singularly rare quality of being as efficient at low speeds over potholey roads as when swinging along at a mile a minute on an undulating highway. There is not the slightest suggestion of "roll" on corners, and one can pull down the camber of a road at high speeds with the car feeling under complete control.

The "memory ticklers," as they may be called, are a unique feature of this fine car. Every 70 or 80 miles a green light appears on the near side of the instrument board to indicate that the chassis-lubricating oil reservoir is full, while an instant later a red light, flashing into view above it, tells the driver that oil is being delivered under pressure to every part of the chassis. Again, every 700 miles, another light suggests to the driver that he should have the oil changed in the engine, while at intervals of 1,400 miles a signal light points out that the battery may require "topping up" with distilled water. Thus is the car a perfect owner-driver's vehicle despite its twin-overhead camshaft engine of some 7½ litres capacity.

A great feature of the engine is its absolute smoothness at all speeds. It will rev. up to 4,500 r.p.m., which is very unusual for a power unit of this size. At 4,200 r.p.m. the output is said to be 265 b.h.p., but an enormous amount of power is always available at much lower rates of revolution.

The chassis is priced at £2,380, and the car is handled by Malcolm Campbell (London), 1927, Ltd., Byron House, St. James's Street, W.1.

G17

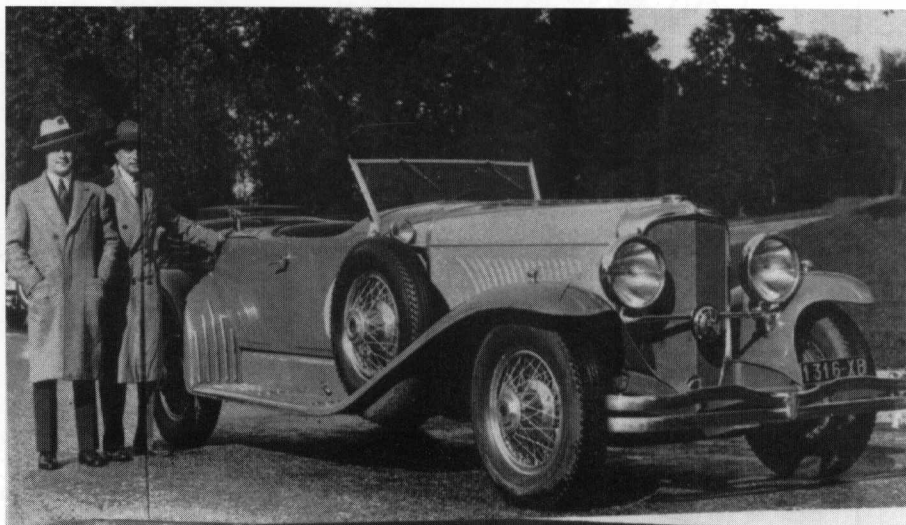


The overhead-camshaft Duesenberg engine.

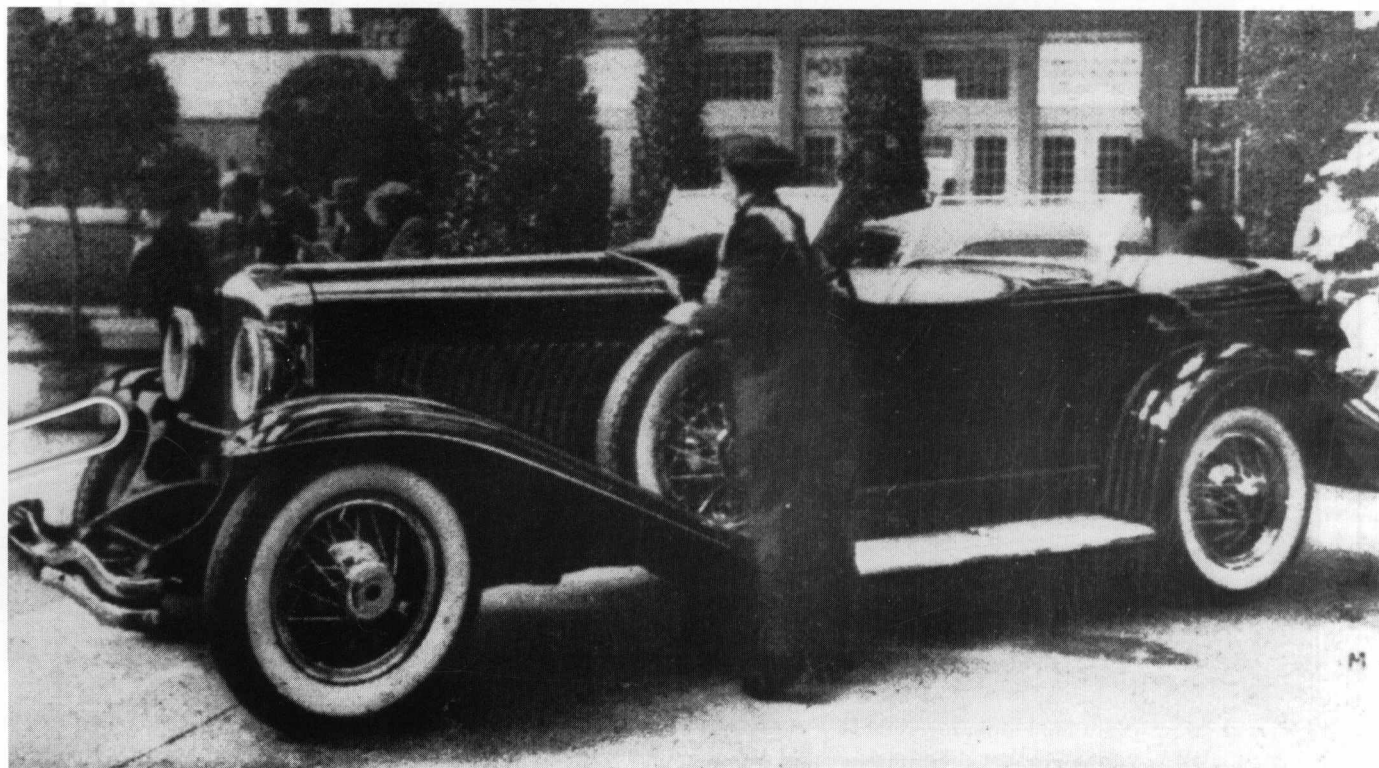
ROSTER OF U.S. - BODIED DUESENBERG MODEL J's SOLD/USED IN EUROPE

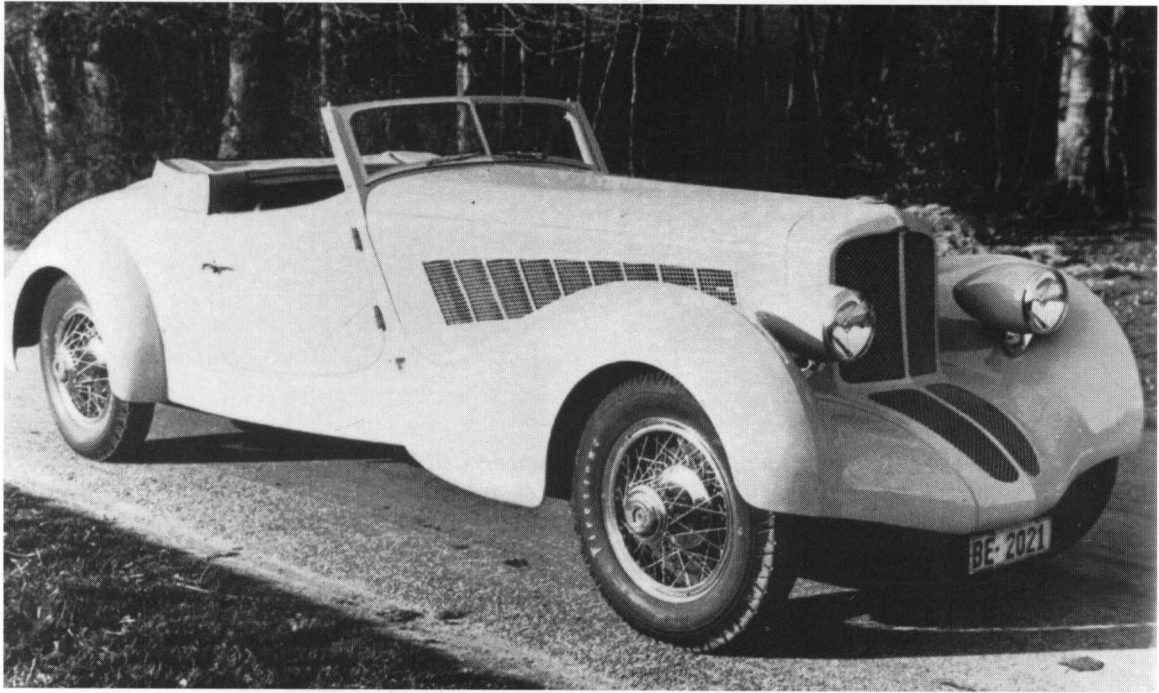
by Fred Roe

1. 2158 J-292 S LeBaron phaeton, bought by Martin d'Alzaga Unzue of New York, Paris, and Buenos Aires on 23 July 1929. J-292 was possibly bought in New York and taken to Argentina where its remains were retrieved in the 1960's by the late Ted Billing. He claimed that the 1930 Paris photo with d'Alzaga and Sadovich (right) showed his car, but the car is not known to have gone to Europe. J-292's engine was replaced and the number of the original is not known.



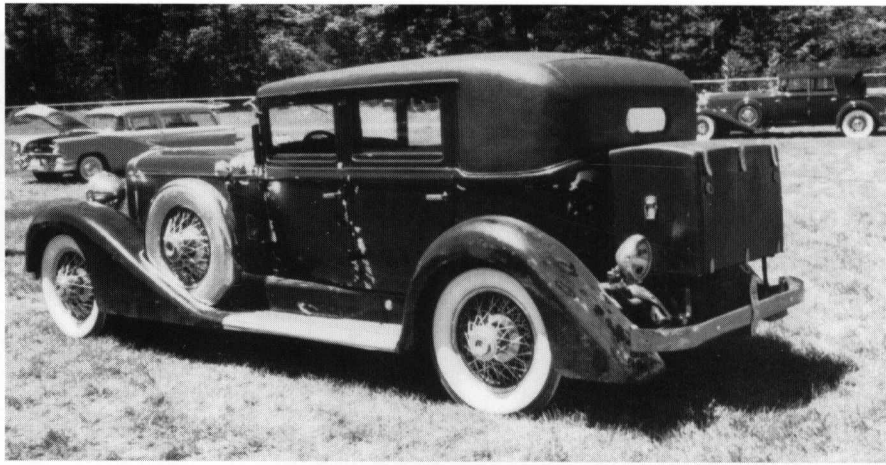
3. Unk. Unk. S LeBaron phaeton, photographed in Berlin, 1932 with Countess Asti am Steuer. No information, but there is some indication that it was owned by Becker in 1936. It has the same body as #1 and #2, but probably came to Europe after these.





2. 2173 J-148 S Originally a LeBaron phaeton, bought by Walter LaGrange of Paris on 8 July 1929. Gräber of Switzerland shortened the chassis and installed this roadster body, later removing it to a Packard chassis. The Duesenberg chassis returned to the U.S. where it was rebodied with a Kellner "Scaphandrier" body (below) found in the Chicago area. J-148 now resides again in France.

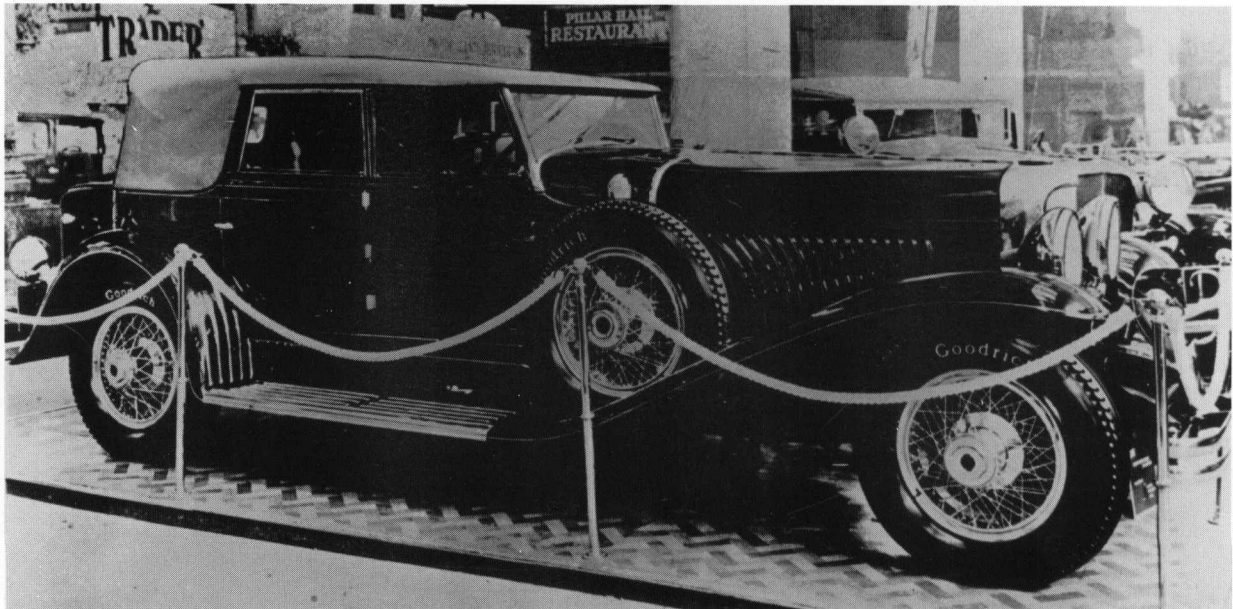




4. 2187 J-164 S Derham sedan, with metric instruments and silver hardware. Bought by Archduke Franz Josef of Austria and Paris, on 3 July 1931; later owned by George J. Gould, Paris; Antonio J. Chopitea, Paris and Peru; Prince Loutfallah, Egypt; and Alex Sursock, Egypt and France. J-164 returned to the U.S. in the 1950's. 1994 photo.



5. 2204 J-184 S Murphy convertible coupe, RHD, bought by Sir Geoffrey S. Duveen on August 27, 1929. This date indicates that J-184 was sold before the London Show. Elbert indicates that J-184 was one of the seven shipped overseas for formal introduction but it was not displayed at the Show. J-184 returned to the U.S. where the factory converted it to LHD before resale. Car shown is U.S. LHD model.

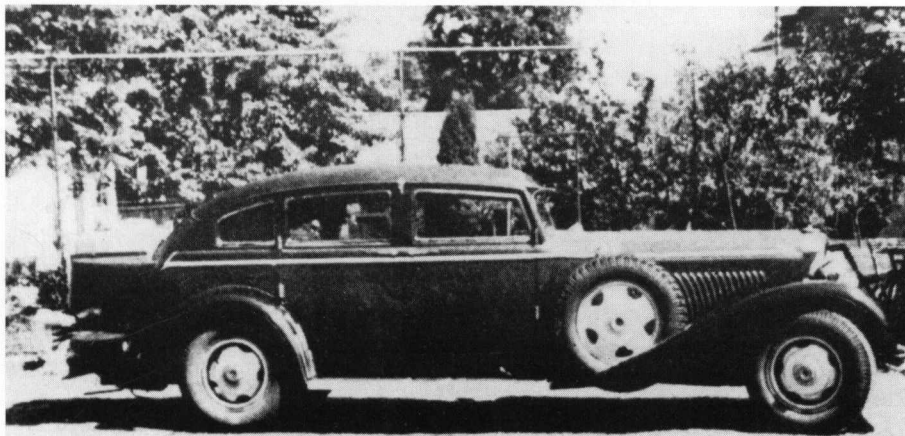


6. 2222 J-202 S Murphy convertible sedan, RHD, as displayed at October 1929 London Show. J-202 was sold to P.K. Mitter (brother of S.C. Mitter who bought J-196,) who also took his car to India. J-202 no longer exists. This was the seventh of the cars shipped to Europe in the summer of 1929 for the formal introduction.

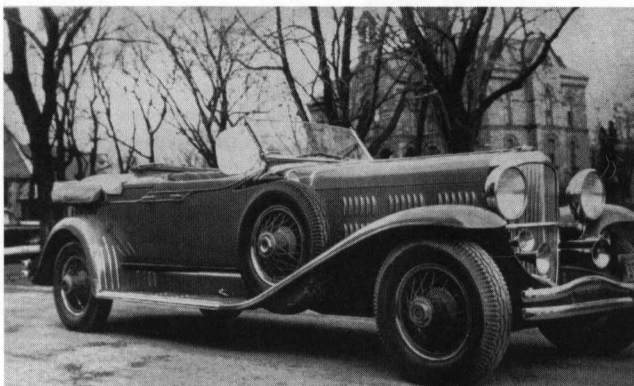


7. Unk. Unk. S *Murphy convertible sedan of standard style, LHD. Photo shows this car standing outside of Motor de Luxe garage, Paris.*

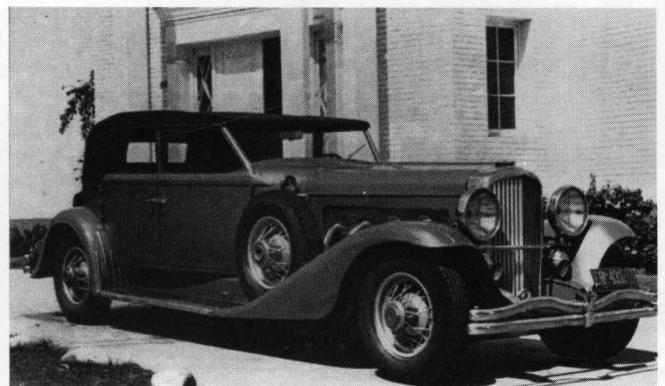
8. 2238 J-215 S *LeBaron phaeton, bought by Gustavo Chopitea of Paris and Peru on 18 September 1929. After World War II J-215 was taken to the U.S. and dismantled after being damaged. No usable picture. Similar to #1 and #3 (p. 34).*



9. 2295 J-273 L *This car was a Judkins limousine (style 1091), originally bought by Torsten Krueger of Sweden on 6 May 1930, who sold it to Erik Akerlund in 1931. After an accident, the body was replaced by J-263's original Willoughby one. J-273 was later restyled and used for transporting motorcycles, as shown in the photo. It was broken up in the 1940's.*

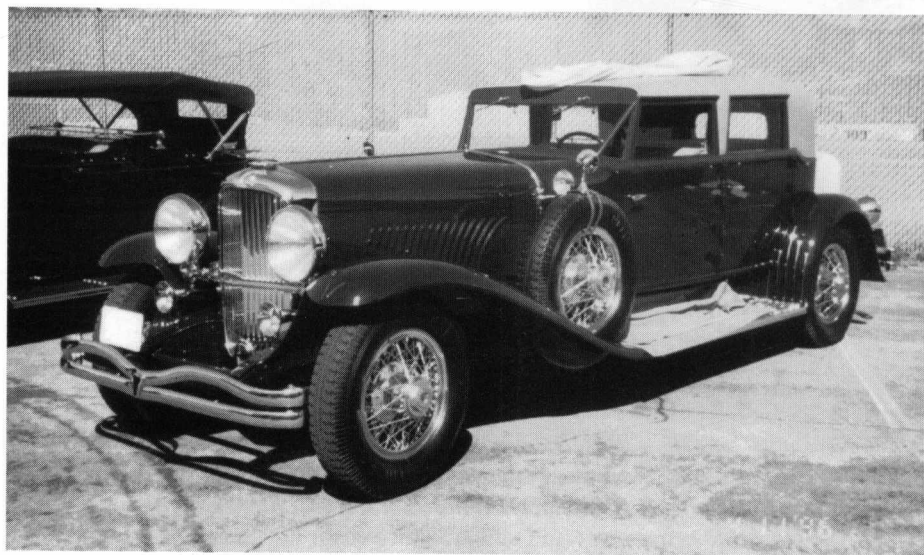
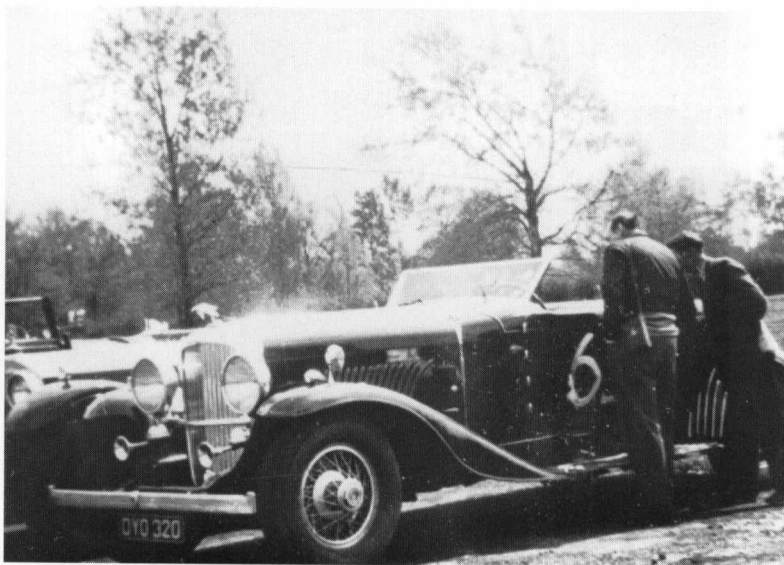


10. 2323 J-318 L *LeBaron special phaeton, sold to W.K. Ryan in April 1930. It was said to have been delivered to him in Paris, used there, and returned to the U.S., where it was photographed in Minnesota. The non-standard hood louver design is presumably to his order.*

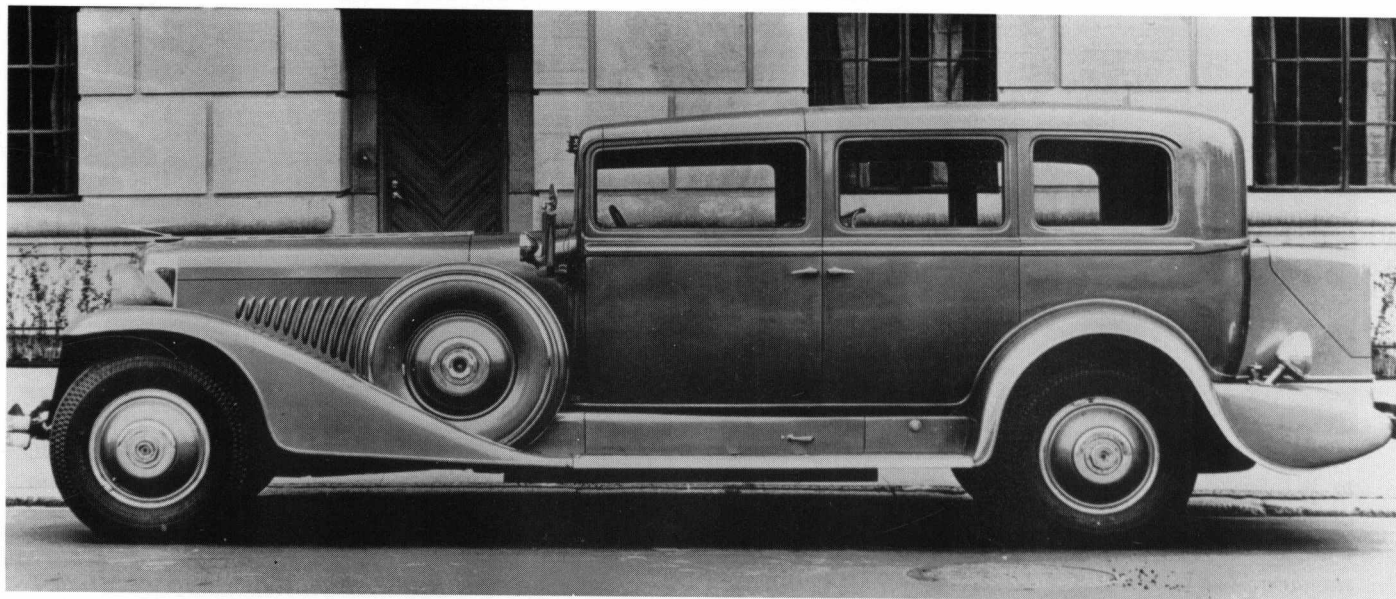


11. 2437 J-425 L *Murphy convertible sedan, bought in New York City on 13 July 1933, by Antonio Chopitea who sent it to Paris and later Peru where this photo was taken around the 1950s. J-425 is now in the U.S. (His fifth car, Murphy convertible coupe 2426 J-404, may have been one of that style shown but unidentified in European photos; J-404 was last heard of in South America.)*

12. 2492 J-249 S *Murphy torpedo convertible coupe ("boat-tail"), sold to Jake "The Barber" Factor. J-249 went to England and was dismantled. The engine is now in the U.S. This is the only available photo of the car.*

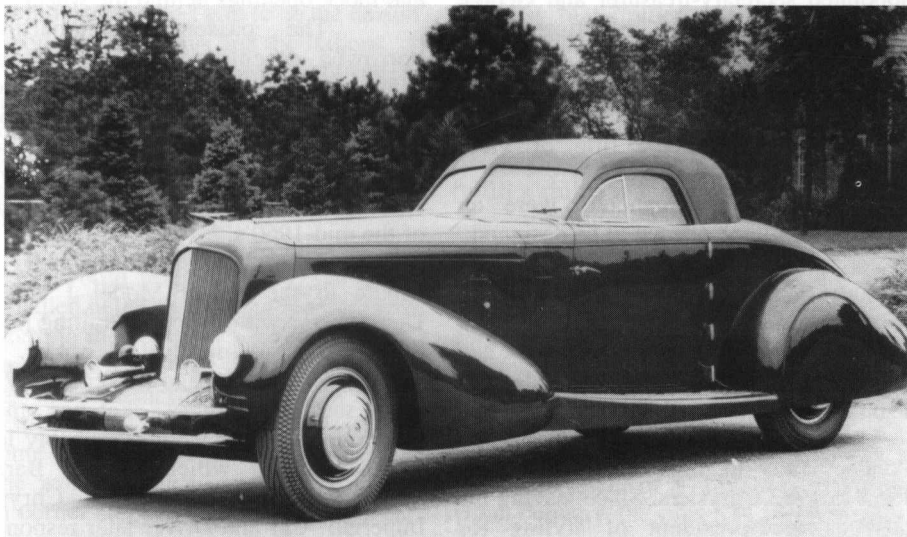


13. 2508 J-485 L *Murphy "Beverly" berline, bought by Evalyn Walsh McLean (the owner of the Hope Diamond), who took it to Great Britain and the Continent for extensive tours over a long period. J-485 has been restored and is in California.*

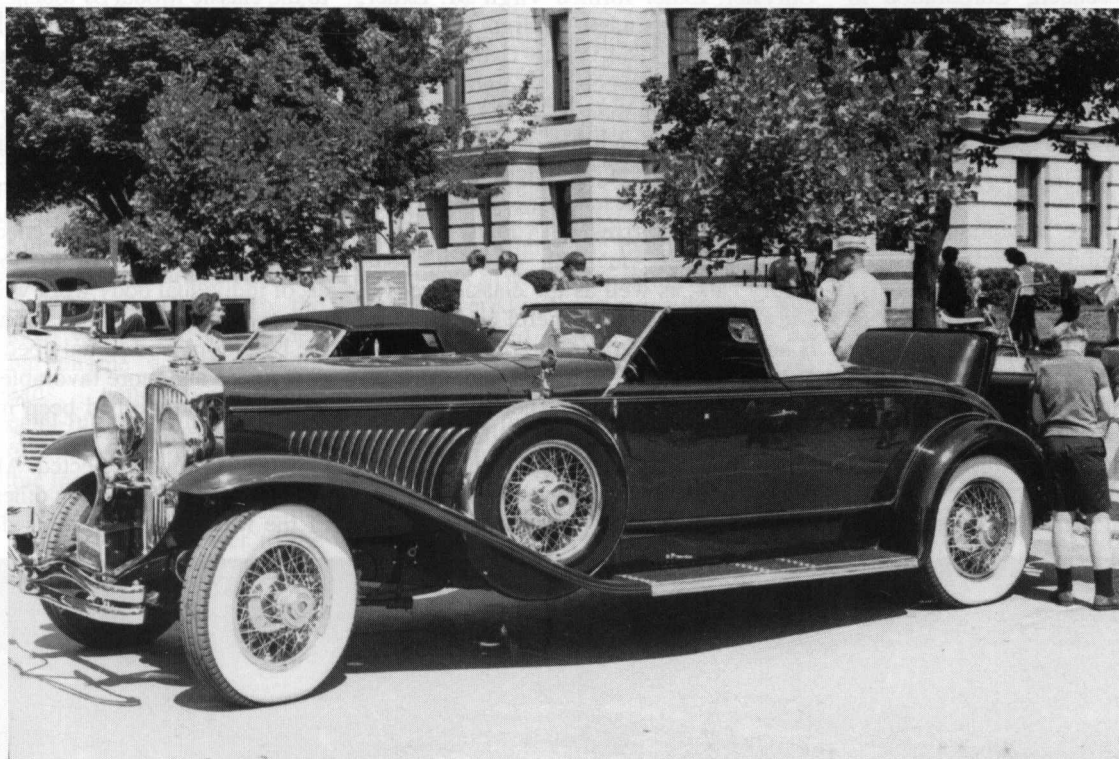


14. 2514 J-497 L *J.G. Kirchoff limousine for Mrs. Anna Ingraham, 1932. J-497 has special features for extended travels and was used on a world trip. The car has been restored and is in the U.S.*

15. 2556 J-527 S Murphy convertible coupe. J-527 had several owners in New York, was stolen, wrecked, rebuilt, shipped to Cuba and ended up in Spain with more owners, the last of whom was Nicholas Franco who bought J-527 in 1965. Its supercharger was removed in Spain. J-527 has been in the U.S. since 1976. Car is similar to #5, p. 36.



16 2569 J-554 S Walker special coupe, no external Duesenberg design features. J-554's second owner (1935) used it in Great Britain for an extended period. The car is now in the U.S.



17. 2576 J-550 L Rollston convertible coupe, with pointed fenders. Bought in 1935 by Isabel Pell, New York City. J-550 was taken to France before World War II, and was stored in Cannes in Sadovich's "New York Garage." When I saw it there early in 1945, it had been stripped of its tires and wheels by the Germans. J-550 returned to the U.S. by way of Cuba in the 1950s and has been beautifully restored with standard fenders.

18. 2266 J-236 S Murphy convertible coupe based in the U.S., was used in Europe, as were several similarly bodied but unidentified cars. Car is similar to #5, p. 36.

Other cars which may have been used in Europe by their U.S. owners known to have Paris addresses include: **2407 J-402** town car (bought 30 November 1930) and **2504 J-486** Derham sedan (11 July 1934) (C.R. Bitting), and **2464 J-448** Derham tourster (19 September 1931) (W.S. Odom). However, there is no evidence that they did so.

THE LAST EUROPEAN-BODIED DUESENBERG

by Sam Fiorani

We don't know whether E.Z. Sadovich was still alive in 1966 to see the last Duesenberg bodied in Europe, but he might have smiled, knowing that it was the offspring of Augie's son. Fred's namesake.

Fred Duesenberg died in 1932 due to complications from an automobile accident. After the E.L. Cord empire crumbled, Augie Duesenberg and a few craftsmen assembled the final Duesenberg chassis in 1937. In 1947 Augie was engaged by Marshall Merkes to assist in the marque's re-emergence, which never progressed past the planning stage. His heart gave out in 1955 and Augie died at the age of 77.

With the cachet of a name like Duesenberg, the story couldn't end there. Augie's son, Fred "Fritz" Duesenberg founded the Duesenberg Corporation in late 1963.

Newspapers in January of 1964 reported that the design for the newest Duesenberg would be completed by February. An aluminum V8 would produce more than 500 horsepower from beneath the new car's hood. The body of this \$9500 luxury car would be a combination of aluminum and high-strength plastics. Features would include four-wheel disc brakes, independent torsion bar suspension, and fully-adjustable shock absorbers.

To raise the estimated \$2 million necessary to produce such a car, a number of investors joined the corporation as officers. Mr. Duesenberg was initially named president. Milo N. Record was

appointed secretary-treasurer and George L. Diven was chosen as attorney. In September, Texas real estate developer Fred McManus, Jr. became president, Duesenberg moved to chairman and Record was given the title of vice-president.

Once the financiers were on board, a prototype needed to be designed.

Independent of the Indiana venture, *Esquire* magazine ran an article describing the potential styling of 1964 model year classic American marques, had they survived. Virgil Exner illustrated the 1963 article.

Exner had designed the 1938 Pontiac, 1939 to 1949 Studebakers and 1955 to 1962 Chryslers. Since leaving his post as vice-president of styling for Chrysler, Exner formed Virgil M. Exner, Inc., an independent design house. In November of 1964, Virgil Exner, a long-time fan of Duesenberg automobiles, was chosen to design the car.

Exner and his son, Virgil Jr., submitted fifteen sketches to the executives at Duesenberg. These styling exercises borrowed ideas from contemporary American and European luxury cars, as well as the classic pre-war Duesenberg. "Lean, graceful and elegant" is how Exner described the final design.

Reminiscent of the radiator shell on the Model J, the Exner Duesenberg wore a prominent chrome grille. Flanking the nearly seven-foot long hood, elegantly curved from quarters gave the illusion of pre-war fenders with peaked leading edges

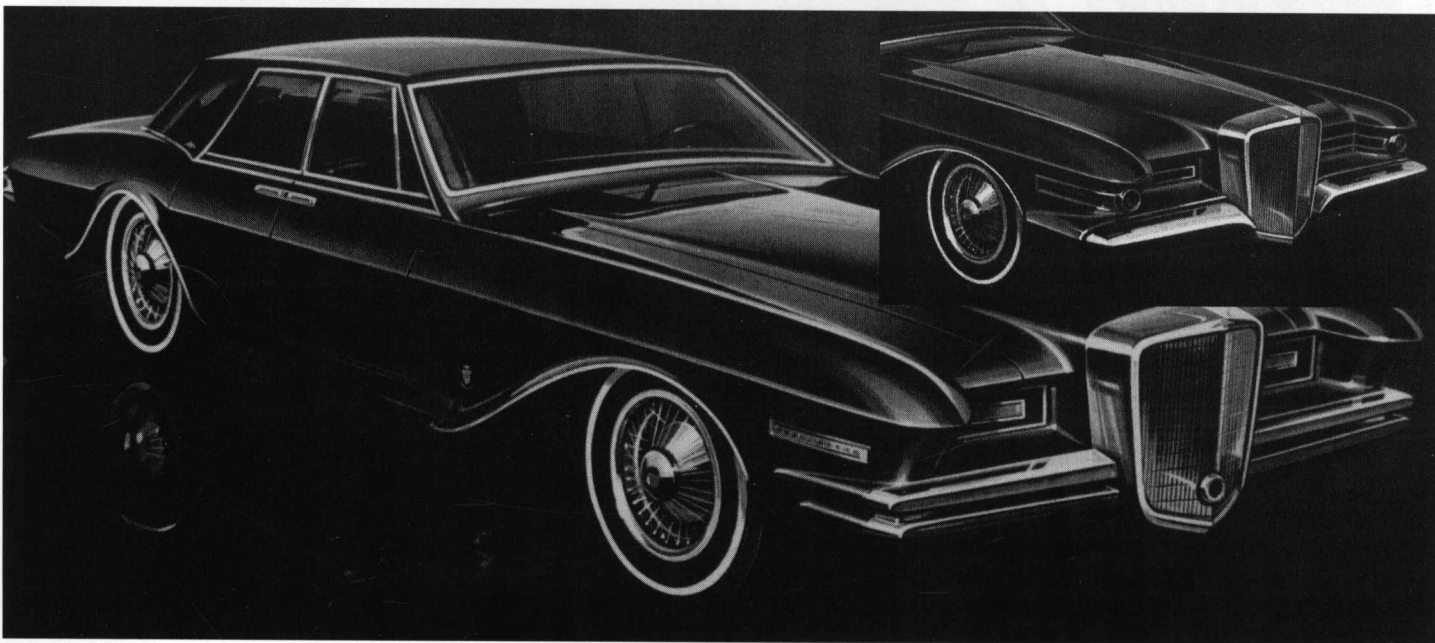
and mock openings behind the wheels.

The passenger compartment borrowed accents from Chryslers and Lincolns. With Imperial-style door handles, the Continental-like suicide doors opened wide to a expansive interior. Over-stuffed bench seats front and rear were standard fare for American luxury sedans of the mid-1960's.

Rear quarters continued the tribute to the earlier Model J and SJ Duesenbergs with sweeping trailing lines.

The styling had it critics. Jan Norbye wrote in *Car and Driver* that by the time the preliminary sketches made production, the car would "probably look like something which George Barris' apprentices had done to a Chrysler Imperial." *Car and Driver* later responded to the classic Model SJ touches saying that the "Duesenbergs would have kept up with the times." Norbye agreed stating "the 1965 model would have no more in common with the 1935 SJ-type than the 1965 Cadillac has with the Cadillac of 30 years ago."

Once a design was chosen, the company shopped for a coachbuilder to assemble the car. According to Exner, "the art of individual body work was lost in this country after the Thirties." The search for the builder moved to Italy because of their experience and more favorable labor costs. Although Bertone had been mentioned in an early account of the car, Carrozzeria Ghia of Turin was selected. Alas, Hibbard & Darrin, Franay, and the other carrossiars of the Model J era were as dead as Fred



Duesenberg approved for production. (Inset: Pre-production front end design)

and Augie.

Engineering the vehicle for production became the next priority. Former Auburn - Cord - Duesenberg engineer, Paul Farago, having worked for Ghia, moved back to Turin to be the liaison between the Americans and the Italians.

Sales literature arrogantly stated, "perhaps no other automobile ever produced achieved the standards of motoring excellence and elegance as the original Duesenberg. The new Duesenberg surpasses those standards."³

The design and features of the new car would bring Model D, as it has been called in the press, up to the standards set forth in the company's sales catalogue. Riding on a wheelbase of more than 137 inches and with an overall length of nearly 245 inches, the 1967 Duesenberg would become the largest regular production car in the world. Twelve-inch disc brakes at each corner stopped this 5,700 pound car. Firestone designed and built new 8.9 x 15 inch tires and twin 18-gallon gas tanks exclusively for the Duesenberg. Full instrumentation, including a tachometer and separate gauges for each fuel tank, and an extensive list of standard equipment placed this car on a level a notch or two above the typical luxury car.

Power for the new car came from a specially-tuned Chrysler drivetrain. Although the prototype featured a standard 440 cubic inch V8 producing 350hp, the production model was to use a modified version of that engine with 426 hemi cylinder heads, generating 425hp (although *Special-Interest Autos* reported in February of 1983 that the car was to have a 426 cubic inch engine instead of the 440). A three-speed Chrysler Torqueflite transmission transferred the power to the rear wheels.

By the time the Ghia-bodied car was introduced at 10 a.m. 28 March 1966, in the Cole Porter Room of the Indianapolis Sheraton-Lincoln Hotel, the company claimed that the first model year's production run was sold out. Without even seeing a prototype, chewing-gum magnate Philip K. Wrigley ordered the first car to roll off of the assembly line.

Other early orders included a Florida cattle rancher, a Houston oilman, the American importer of Lowenbrau beer, and the chairman of Milwaukee's Ampco Metals. The Indianapolis newspaper *The News* reported that "other orders came from persons who told Duesenberg officials that they didn't have a dime during the depression in the '30s, but fortune has smiled on them since, and they now are financially able to buy a Duesey, hoping to fulfill a childhood dream."

Fortune had to have been very kind to prospective buyers in 1966. The introductory price had risen \$10,000 from the previously announced price to \$19,000, about the price that one of the 400 remaining original Duesenbergs would sell for at that time. A deposit of \$1,000 was needed to secure production of a new Duesenberg. Sixty days before delivery, a second payment of \$4,000 was expected. Upon delivery, the final \$14,500 was paid. All prices were at the factory in Indianapolis.

The cars would be shipped from Italy to the final assembly plant on the corner of 79th and Zionsville Road in Indianapolis for installation of the powertrain and suspension.

Although the ground breaking was held on 27 January 1966, on the 88-acre parcel of land, the factory was never built. The materials to build the factory were delivered in the summer of 1965 and were untouched a year later. By July of 1966, the \$20,000 bill for those materials had not been paid. The supplier, when asked about the overdue payments, said, "we're going to grab the material and to hell with them."⁴

An unnamed Los Angeles group mentioned the desire to buy the Duesenberg Corporation in the summer of 1966, when the financial troubles first became public knowledge. Virgil Exner and his son had not been paid for their work on the car, but agreed to future royalty payments. Bozell & Jacobs, the public relations firm in charge of Duesenberg's publicity, was owed \$17,000. Record, the corporation's vice-president, posted the automaker's cash

need at an additional \$2.5 million to cover the continuation of the project. If investments totaling that sum were not found by October, the company said that the California firm would be allowed to purchase Duesenberg.

Fritz Duesenberg's problem with alcohol contributed to the downfall of this revival of the famed marque. The company slowly closed its doors as the funding dried up. The factory never proceeded past the ground breaking. The Los Angeles firm's purchase of Duesenberg never materialized. Closure came when the prototype, the only car built by the Duesenberg Corporation, was sold at Boston's Parke-Bernet auction in May 1968.

Television antenna manufacturer Harry Resnick purchased the car for \$37,500 to add to his 60-car collection. He later sold the car to Sam Schwartz of Long Island. In a 1982 interview with Ken Gross, Schwartz said that although he admired the car, "for all intents and purposes, it's a dolled up Imperial, not a classic heir." His car is on permanent loan to the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum in Indiana.

Duesenberg remains a part of American automotive history. Like the post-war Cadillacs, Lincolns, and Packards, the Duesenberg would have lost its flair and status had it survived the depression era.

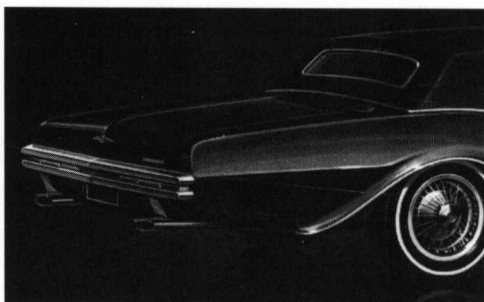
In the 1940's, Marshall Merkes tried. In the 1960's, Fritz Duesenberg tried. Even though Harlan and Kenneth Duesenberg tried again in the 1970's, (see *SAH Journal* #163) all of this effort may just prove that the concept of the Duesenberg is one whose time may have come and gone. Thanks to the efforts of the team from Indianapolis, we have the proof of one last valiant attempt to revive the flame. Oh, but what could have been...an era when it could have been said that all new Duesenbergs had been bodied in Europe.

¹ *Automobile Quarterly*, Volume 4, Number 4

² *Automobile Quarterly*, Volume 4, Number 4.

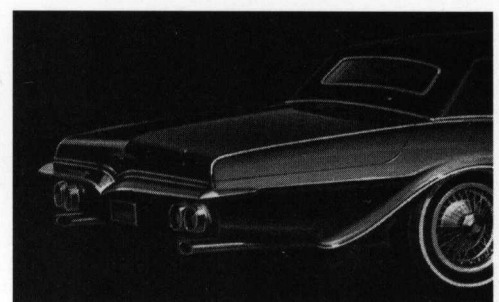
³ 1966 Duesenberg sales catalogue.

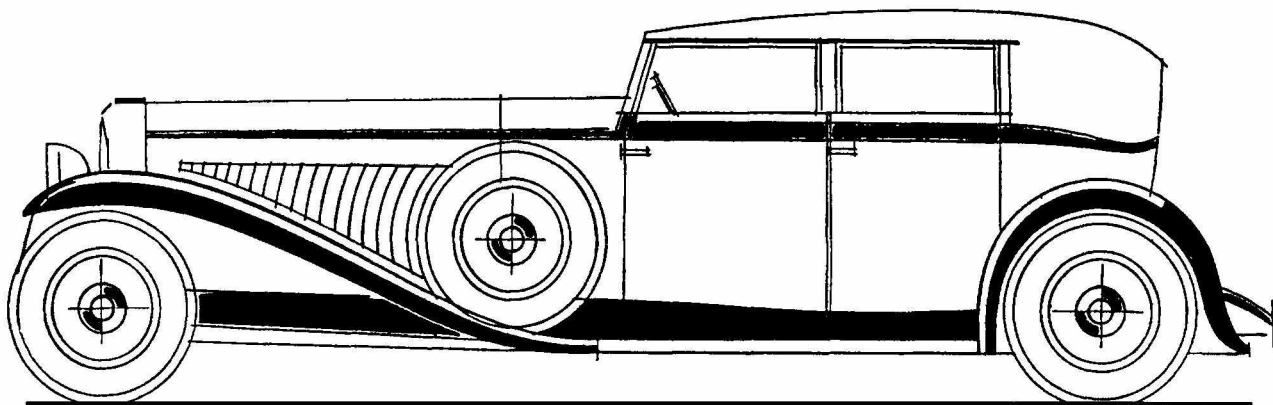
⁴ *The Indianapolis News*, 25 July 1966.



(left) Production rear end design

(Right) Prototype rear end design





CABRIOLET

SUR 8 CYL. DUESENBERG
PAR

FRANAY

AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW

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