



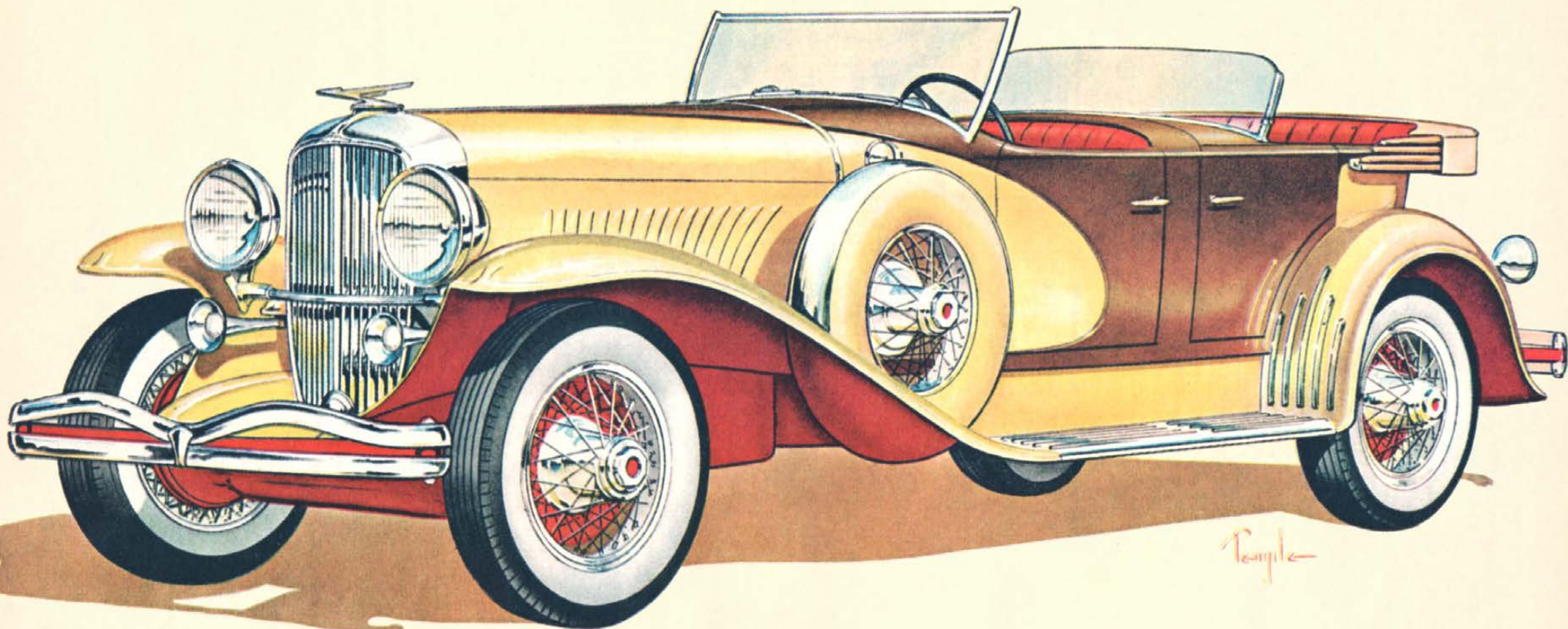
The undisputed king of American Classics is the legendary Model J Duesenberg. By sheer size and imagination, the Model J was at the head of a class of giants. Its near peers — Marmon, Cadillac, Packard, Pierce-Arrow — couldn't match it for coachwork or speed. ■ Duesenberg manufactured the engine, running gear, and chassis only. This sold for \$8500-\$9000. The customer could then take his choice of a number of coachbuilders — Murphy, LeBaron, Rollston, Willoughby, Derham, and others — and develop the car as extravagantly as he wanted. The range of body styles set on the "J" chassis is probably wider than any other in America. The torpedo phaeton shown here was one of the more popular. ■ Duesenberg's engine was as grandly conceived as the rest of the car. Its 420 cubic inches gave 265 hp at 4200 rpm (later, the supercharged Model SJ gave 320 hp). Torque was 374 pounds-feet at 2000 rpm, dropping only to 335 at 500 rpm. These figures explain a good deal about the car's acceleration. ■ Twin overhead cams (with four valves per cylinder) on a marvelously engineered Straight Eight were driven by two chains. One ran from the crankshaft to a reduction sprocket midway up the block, the second from that sprocket to the cams. Each chain had its own idler, so there was hardly any noise or looseness. ■ Duesenberg blushed very little in their advertising. Besides being "The World's Finest Motor Car," a 1929 ad in THE

AUTOCAR boasted 88 mph in second gear, 116 in high. No one doubted these figures. Acceleration was comparable, with the Model J covering the span from 10 to 80 mph in high gear in 22 seconds. ■ Despite the car's size, its weight was less than expected. Aluminum played a major role here. The firewall, dash, spare tire mounts, differential housing, oil pan, pistons, rods, and many external engine parts were cast in the light metal. ■ Because of good weight distribution and a relatively low center of gravity (despite its overall tallness), the Model J gave above-average stability and road holding. Its rigid frame resisted any twisting. Ride was on the firm side by today's standards, but because of long wheelbases, no one could complain of choppiness. ■ Brakes were in keeping with the "J's" power and speed. Modern in every respect, the system was four-wheel hydraulic, had huge, finned drums, and standard equipment included wire wheels for optimum ventilation. Duesenberg had pioneered four-wheel hydraulics, and was severely censured for them in earlier days when critics felt they stopped a car too quickly. ■ In 1932, the factory coachbuilders' catalogue listed complete cars ranging in price from \$14,750 to \$17,750. This was the year Fords and Chevy sold for less than \$450. By this standard, similar new Duesenbergs today would cost upwards of \$64,000. But no car today is so far ahead of the rest as Model J was in 1930. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine.....	In-line 8
Bore & stroke.....	3.75 x 4.75 ins.
Displacement.....	420 cu. ins.
Valves.....	ohv, 4 per cylinder
Cam.....	dohc, chain drive
Crankshaft.....	5 mains, mercury balanced
Lubrication.....	full forced feed
Horsepower.....	265 max.
Torque.....	374 @ 2000 rpm
Transmission.....	Warner 3-speed
Rear axle choices.....	3.8, 4.0, 4.3, 4.7
Radiator capacity.....	8 gallons
Crankcase capacity.....	12 quarts
Fuel capacity.....	26.5 gallons
Wheelbase choices.....	142½ or 153½ inches
Body.....	coachbuilt only
Tires.....	7.00 x 19
Frame.....	ladder, 6 crossmembers
Suspension.....	semi-elliptic springs
Curb weight.....	(phaeton: 5500 lbs.)





1930 Duesenberg phaeton — Model J
FROM THE MOTOR TREND RARE CAR COLLECTION