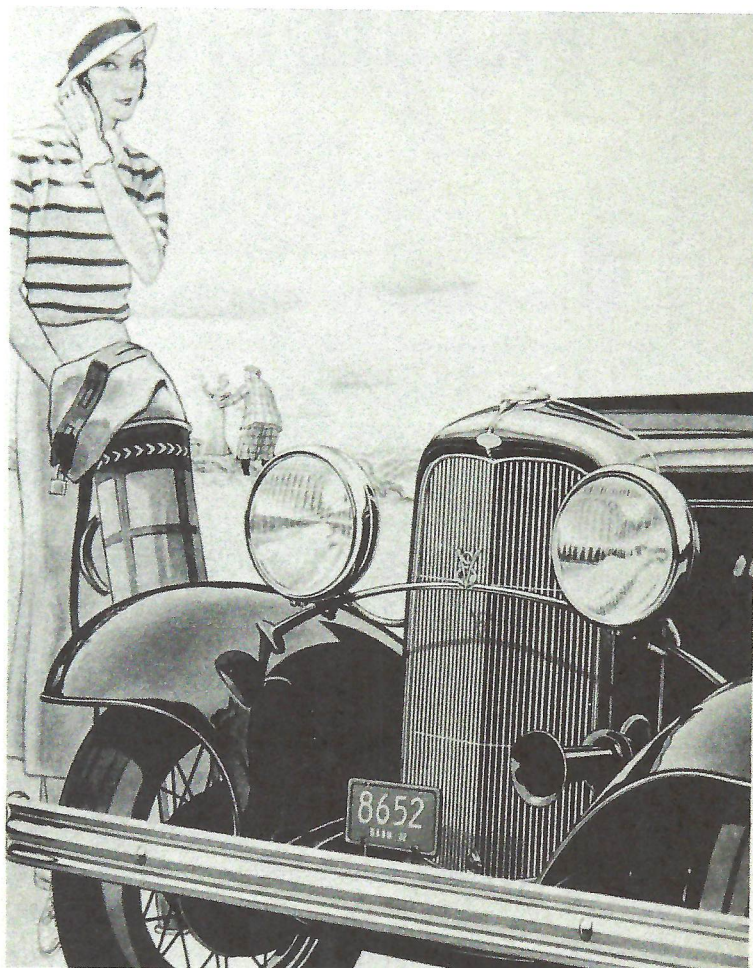


1932 FORD V-8

by Dave Graham



—Photo courtesy of the Ford Archives

IT WAS mid-1931, and the time had come once more to change models at Ford. Sales of the utilitarian Model A had plummeted from a high of nearly 2,000,000 cars in 1929 to a low of 620,000 in 1931. America was foundering in the depths of the Great Depression, and Model A, excellent though it was, could not offer an adequate challenge either to the negative impact of the Depression on the one hand or to the positive impact of greatly improved competitive cars on the other. Henry Ford therefore stopped production of the Model A in August, 1931, and began preparations to come forward again, as he had in 1927, with a totally new car.

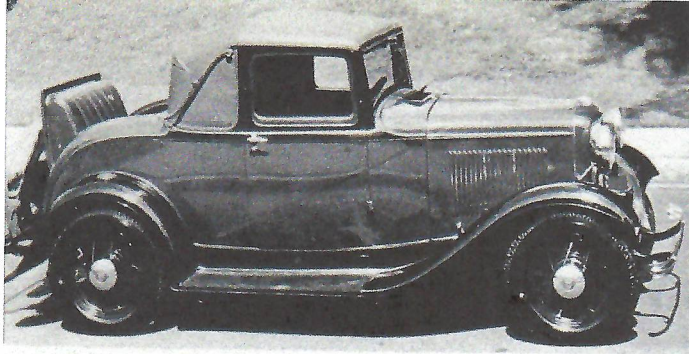
Henry and Edsel Ford had eyed the situation for some time, while planning the much improved four-cylinder Model B for 1932. They had argued, discussed and debated the need for a more positive course of action to open the new year on a note of hope. They decided to augment the Model B with a product that could lift America's largest industry from its morass of despondency. The Fords decided to mass-produce a new low-cost V-8. All they had to do now was figure out how. The story of how they did it . . . how "Cast Iron Charlie" Sorensen managed to cast "en bloc" a V-8 block, how bodies and chassis were adapted to the new engine . . . the plant retooled . . . testing conducted . . . all in four months, would make a book. The important thing is that they did it.

It was March 9th before the first Ford V-8 engine was successfully produced. By March 31st the dealers made their public introduction of the first mass-produced V-8 automobile in the industry. It not only revitalized the Company, but gave it a product that would carry it through the Depression and many years beyond.

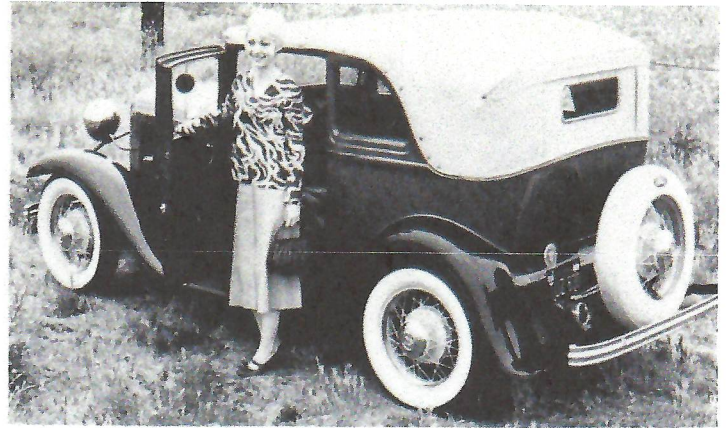
It carried the industry as well, for that V-8 eventually cleaned out all the Fours, the Straight Eights, the Twelves and Sixteens that cluttered the industry. Only the Six was to remain, and that as an economy engine. Since that time Ford has gone on to produce more V-8s than any other manufacturer, most of them still going strong on roads all over the world.

The styling of the new line of Fords for 1932 presented quite a refinement over the Model A, though still unmistakably Ford in appearance. The "Deuce," as the '32 Ford was affectionately known to the "hop-up/chop-up" set, was so popular that most 1932 Fords restored now were once hotrods. Very few original 1932 Fords could be located when the interest in older cars was kindled not too many years ago.

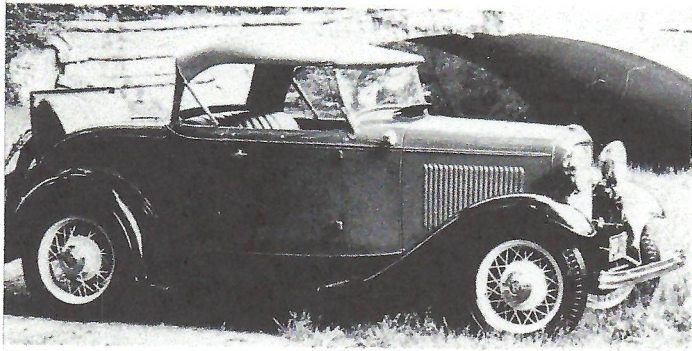
The softened contours of the radiator shell, painted in body color . . . the slightly V-ed grille on



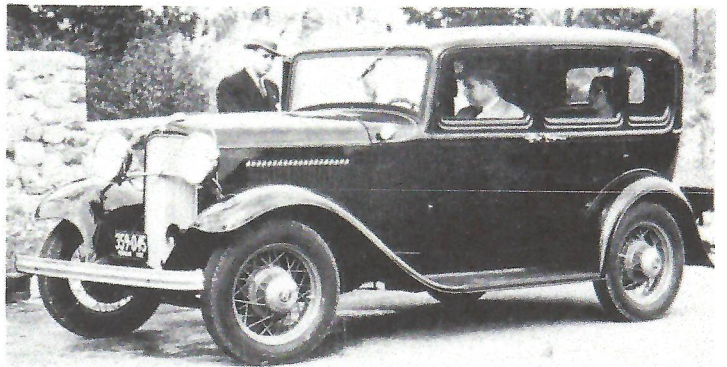
SPORT COUPE—Very popular because of the sporty appearance provided by the soft top. This was in waterproof light brown landau grain material. Rumble seat was standard. Top was stationary, but the rear curtain could be attached to the inside of the top, thus permitting conversation with rumble seat passengers. (Ford Archives photo)



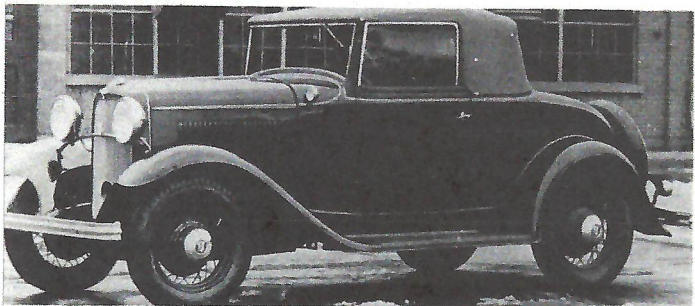
CONVERTIBLE SEDAN—offered five passengers the advantages of a closed and an open car. Upholstery was russet brown genuine leather or Bedford Cord. Top could be readily raised or lowered. (Ford Archives photo)



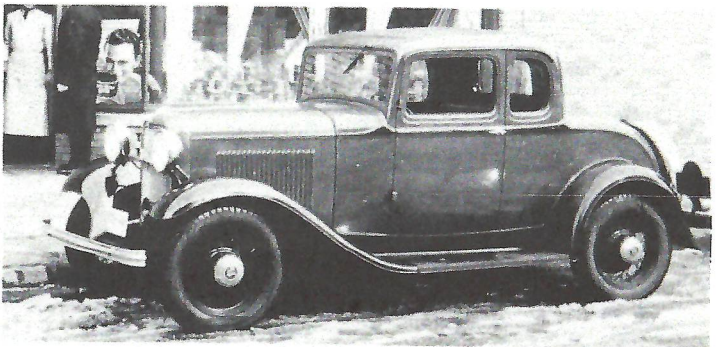
DeLuxe ROADSTER—Perhaps the most popular Ford ever built was this sporty Roadster with genuine leather front seat. Rumble seat was standard equipment, as were the cowl lamps, natural wood bows and tan top. There was also a Standard Roadster at a lower price. (Ford Archives photo)



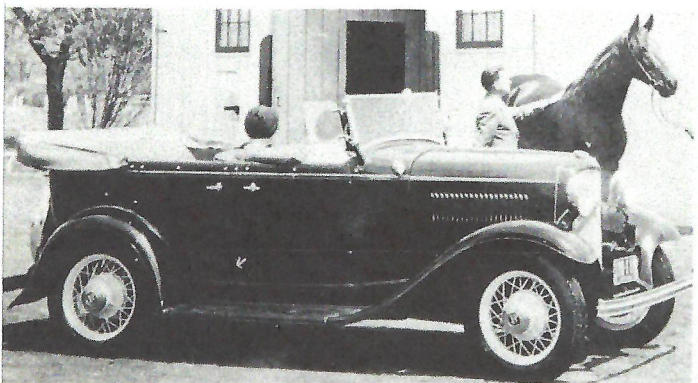
DeLuxe FORDOR SEDAN—A roomy sedan with four individual doors was common back in 1932. Three handsome upholstery materials were available: broadcloth, mohair, and Bedford Cord. (Photo courtesy of Detroit Public Library via member Dick Ormiston)



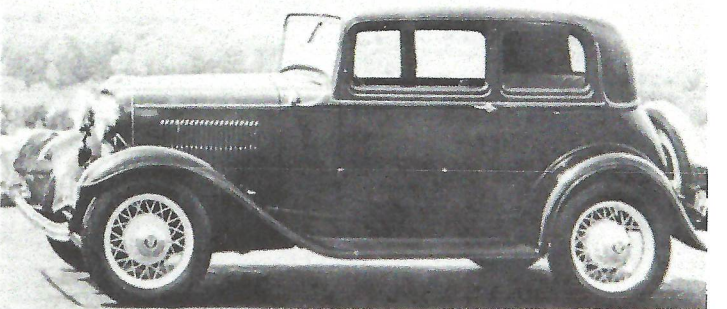
CABRIOLET—combined beautiful lines with the advantages of the open and the closed car. Top could be raised or lowered from inside the car. Safety glass all around. Choice of genuine leather or Bedford Cord upholstery. Rumble seat was standard and rear curtain could be fastened overhead. (Ford Archives photo)



COUPE—The Standard Coupe had five windows, counting the one in the rear, which could be lowered for ventilation. Rear deck provided storage space. Only two upholstery choices were available on Standard models. (Ford Archives photo)



DeLuxe PHAETON—Quite a step up from its Model A equivalent was this glamorous open touring car. It had four doors and a full width bench seat up front. Both seats were upholstered in copra drab genuine leather. The Standard model did not have leather seats or cowl lights. —Photo courtesy of the Ford Archives



VICTORIA—was a special DeLuxe body style whose graceful lines of top and rear gave a continental touch. Appointments included a dome light, ash trays, arm rests and safety glass. Upholstery options were: broadcloth, mohair or Bedford Cord. — Ford Archives Photo

narrow vertical strips painted French Grey . . . the corrugated bumper . . . and the large headlamps with softly rounded lenses all combined to give the car one of the most striking frontal appearances of any car ever built.

The new car, so painfully developed, had a host of outstanding features. Its 22-cu. in. engine developed 65 horsepower, could accelerate from 0 to 60mph in 14 seconds, and could move the car at a top speed in excess of 85 mph in a day when 55 was about the best that could be expected from most low-priced cars. The cars weighed 2400 pounds, about the same as the Model A, and like both the A and the T, could deliver 20mpg. Styled by Edsel Ford as a direct adaptation of the 1932 Lincoln, it was quite streamlined in design. Seats were low and cushions were deep.

The Ford V-8 of 1932 has been described as Henry Ford's last great mechanical triumph. It was indeed that. But it was more, for it brought into being a new era just as conclusively as the Model T had done in its own way 23 years earlier. As Mr. Ford said:

"We did not invent the 8-cylinder car. What we did was to make it possible for the average family to own one. As always, we have done the pioneering work. Motor manufacturing practices will follow the trail we have blazed."

His prediction has proven correct. In 1938 Mercury introduced the V-8 to the medium-priced field. Oldsmobile in 1949 and Studebaker in 1950 changed to the V-8. Chrysler in 1951, Buick in 1953, then Dodge and DeSoto in 1954 joined the ranks. Chevrolet, Pontiac, Hudson, Packard and Nash followed suit the next year.

Whether Henry Ford foresaw the evolution of this kind of automotive power plant to the dimensions and capacities it has achieved is a matter for conjecture. But there can never be a question that he should be given full credit for opening the era to the universal V-8 when he made his audacious 300-million dollar gamble back in 1931-1932.

1932 Ford "4" and "V-8" PASSENGER CARS
(Color Combinations Optional on all Models)

Entire Body	Molding	Stripe
Ford Maroon IM-1011	Black	Gold
Brewster Green Medium IM-1017	Brewster Green Light IM-1247	Silver
Tunis Gray IM-180	Old Chester Gray IM-1027	Cream
Old Chester Gray IM-1027	Tunis Gray IM-180	Cream
Washington Blue IM-1246 (Medium) IM-1014	Black	Cream
Brewster Green Light IM-1247	Brewster Green Medium IM-1017	Silver
Winterleaf Brown Light IM-986	Winterleaf Brown Dark IM-499	Cream

1932 PRODUCTION BY BODY TYPES
(Domestic Only)

The following information was provided by Dr. John L. Mansell at the time he returned his original 1932 Ford Owners Survey Form.

Body Types	Model 18	Model B
Standard Phaeton	598-\$495	613-\$445
DeLuxe Phaeton	978-\$545	300-\$495
Standard Roadster	568-\$460	984-\$410
DeLuxe Roadster	7,418-\$500	3,727-\$450
Standard Coupe	31,112-\$490	20,662-\$440
Sport Coupe	2,169-\$535	742-\$485
DeLuxe Coupe	21,175-\$575	970-\$525
Victoria	8,054-\$600	526-\$550
Standard Tudor	62,688-\$500	37,122-\$450
DeLuxe Tudor	20,200-\$550	4,082-\$500
Standard Fordor	9,984-\$590	4,224-\$540
DeLuxe Fordor	20,471-\$645	2,684-\$595
Convertible Sedan	884-\$650	42-\$600
Cabriolet	5,962-\$610	429-\$560
Chassis	302	15,396
Station Wagon	351	1,032
Totals: Model 18 cars	192,261	
Model B cars	77,107	
Total Passenger cars, 18 & B		269,368
Model 18 Station Wagons	351	
Model B Station Wagons	1,032	
Model 18 Chassis	302	
Model B Chassis	15,396	
Total Domestic Units		286,449

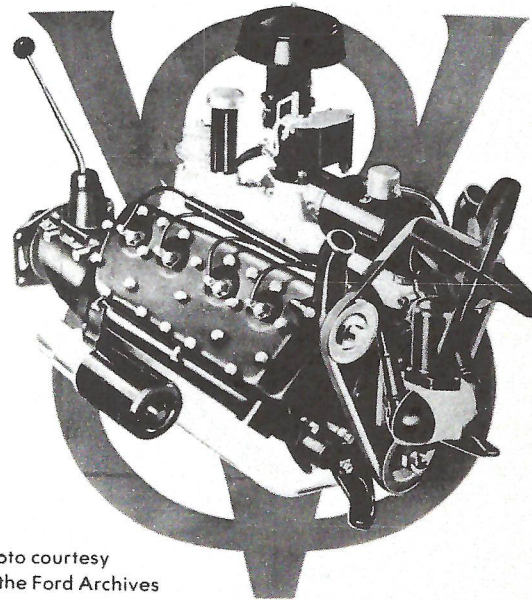


Photo courtesy of the Ford Archives

Editor's Note: Dave Graham has reprinted several of the original Ford sales brochures, including the one for 1932. All are faithfully reproduced from the originals.

- A GREAT NEW MOTOR CAR. Story of the all-new 1932 Ford cars, 11 passenger body styles in full color, etc. \$4.75
 - THE NEW FORD V-8 FOR 1934. Color brochure announcing the new 1934 Ford car. Fold-out in full color has seven photos of the new models, valuable information for the '34 buff \$3.25
 - THE NEW FORD, 1931. Rare brochure in full color showing 12 body styles has descriptive information not found elsewhere. \$1.25
 - 1932 WALL POSTER. 17 x 22 inches, shows all body styles, full color \$2.25
- Additional reprints being reproduced. All above are postpaid. Send check or money order to David Graham, 15140 Essex Circle, Westminster, California 92683.