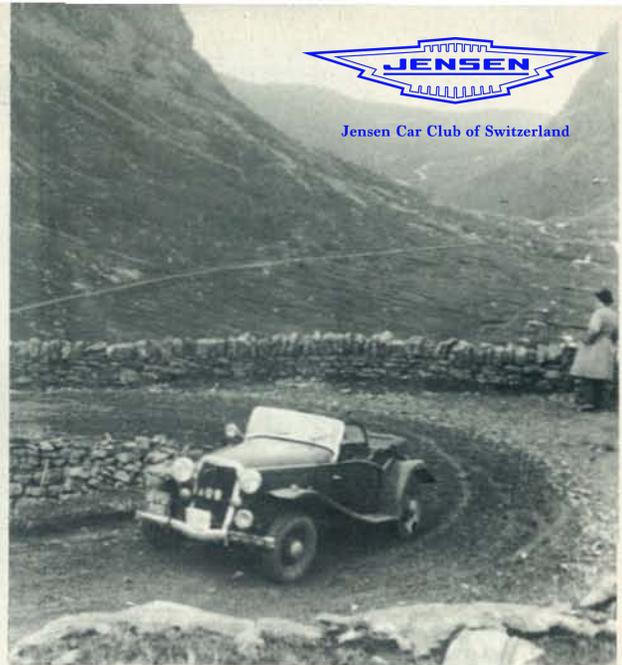
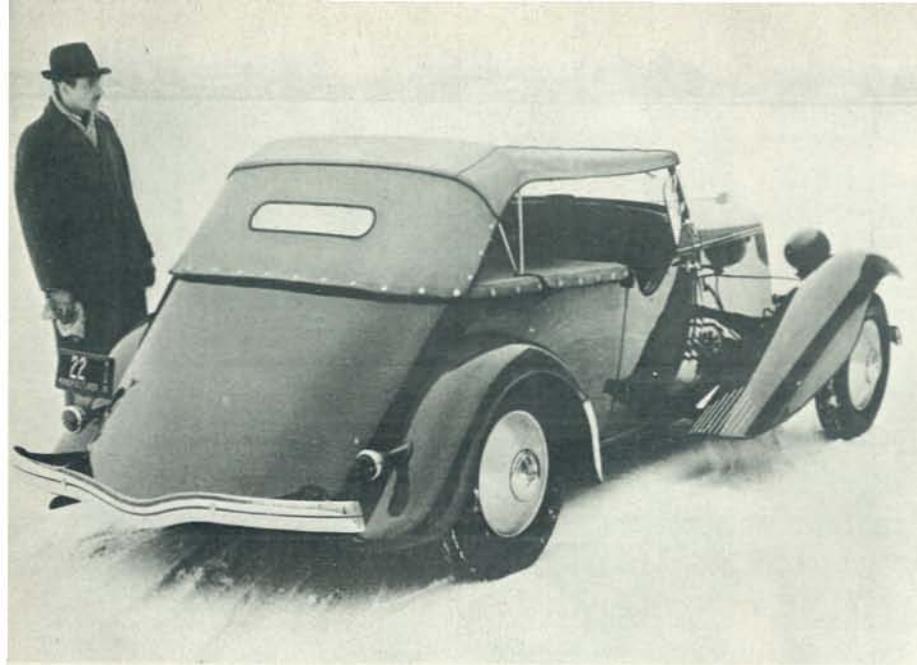




Jensen Car Club of Switzerland

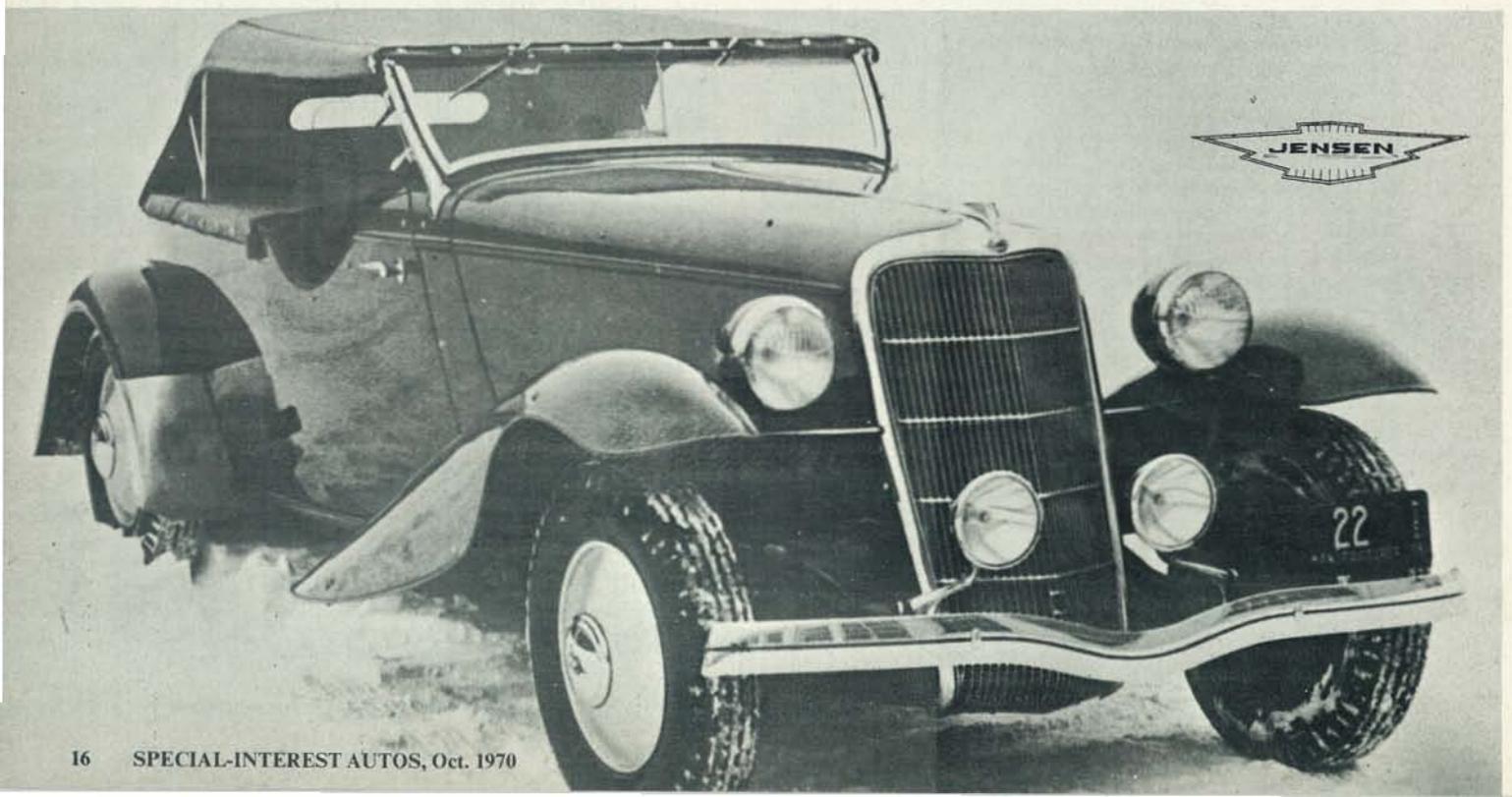


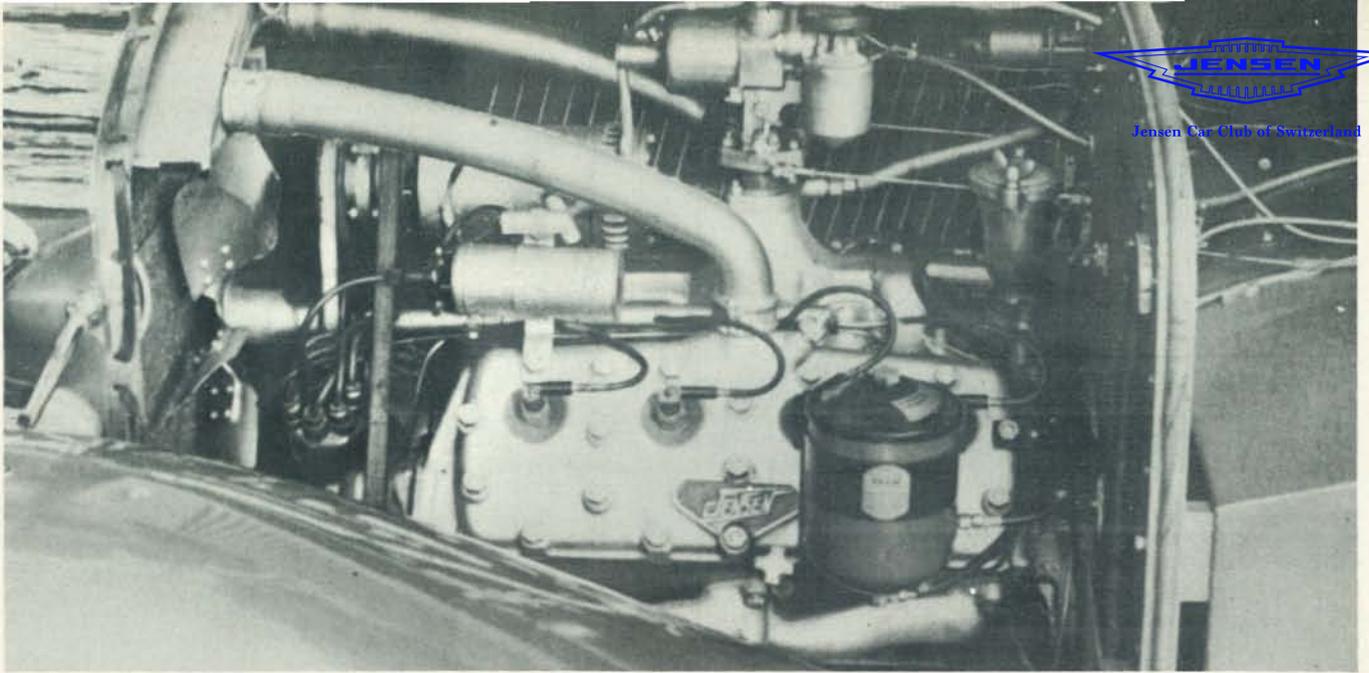
*Edsel Ford brought this Jensen over from England after a trip there in 1935. While lines are very 1934 Ford-like, body is aluminum over ash frame. These photos were taken in Dearborn, but man shown is not Edsel. Jensen built 3 other tourers with lines like this car's.*

*Jensen-Ford participated in Welch Rallye late in 1934 but didn't do too well. Final position isn't known. Jensens weren't really race cars.*

# Those Svelte Jensen-Fords

*Beautiful British sports tourers  
used Ford running gear, V-8s,  
Columbia axles, aluminum bodies*





*Jensen-Fords used 3.5-liter (221-cid) V-8, twin S.U. carbs, Scintilla-Vortex mag with conventional distributor, aluminum heads and fan.*

*Look closely and you'll find second carb dashpot beside first. Output rated 120 bhp. Double firewall kept noise down, made hood longer.*

**T**ODAY, Jensen Motors Ltd. builds a series of very fine, expensive, handsomely styled, Chrysler-powered sport coupes. The British Jensen FF is the only production sports car in the world with 4-wheel drive. It uses Ferguson patents.

During the early 1930s, though, when the Jensen Brothers were just setting up shop, they rolled out a lithe aluminum 4-seater tourer: long, low, veddy sporting, with cut-down doors and a rear windscreen.

The only item missing at first was a suitable powerplant. The Jensens, Allan and Richard, hadn't decided what sort of engine to use. Like so many other assemblers of low-volume British sports cars, they counted on "borrowing" an engine from an established manufacturer. The question was which.

Someone suggested the flathead 3.6-liter (221-cid) Ford V-8. News of Ford's sizzling success in the 1933 Elgin Road Race was just reaching Great Britain, and a sturdy, compact, powerful, economical powerplant seemed just what the Jensen car needed. So the two brothers fitted their first styling prototype with a V-8, and it ran amazingly apace.

There was only one snag. Henry Ford wasn't too crazy about other carmakers using his engine. So when Edsel Ford happened to turn up in West Bromwich on a pleasure trip through England in early 1935, the Jensens invited him to visit their small factory.

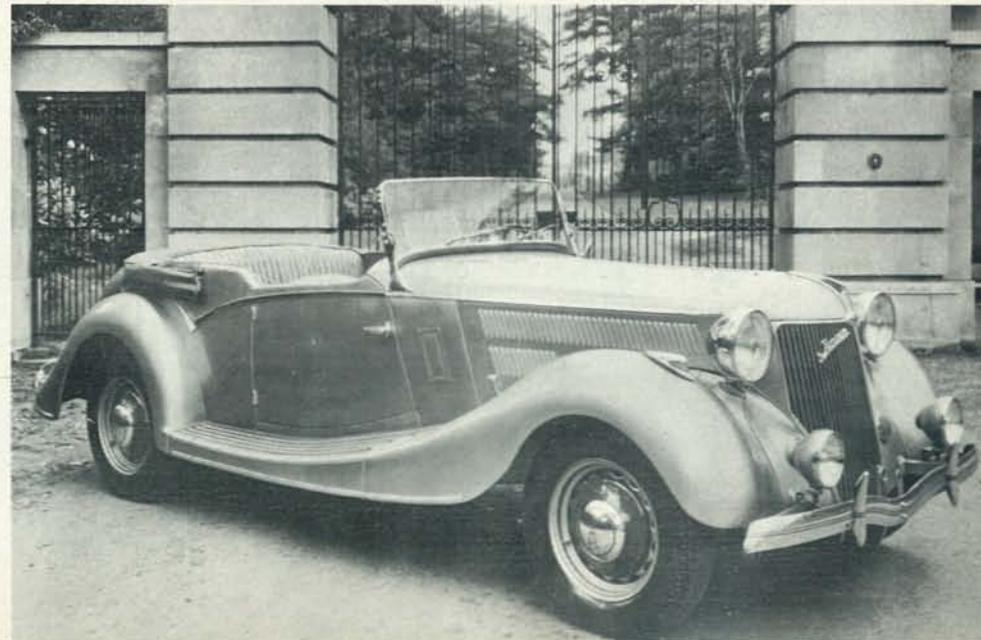
Edsel, who always appreciated fine coachwork and strong lines, liked the Jensen right away. He said it was perfectly all right to use the Ford V-8. In fact, Edsel bought one of four special Jensens built on a 1934-35 Ford chassis. He toured England in it, then brought it home and drove it around Dearborn for several years.

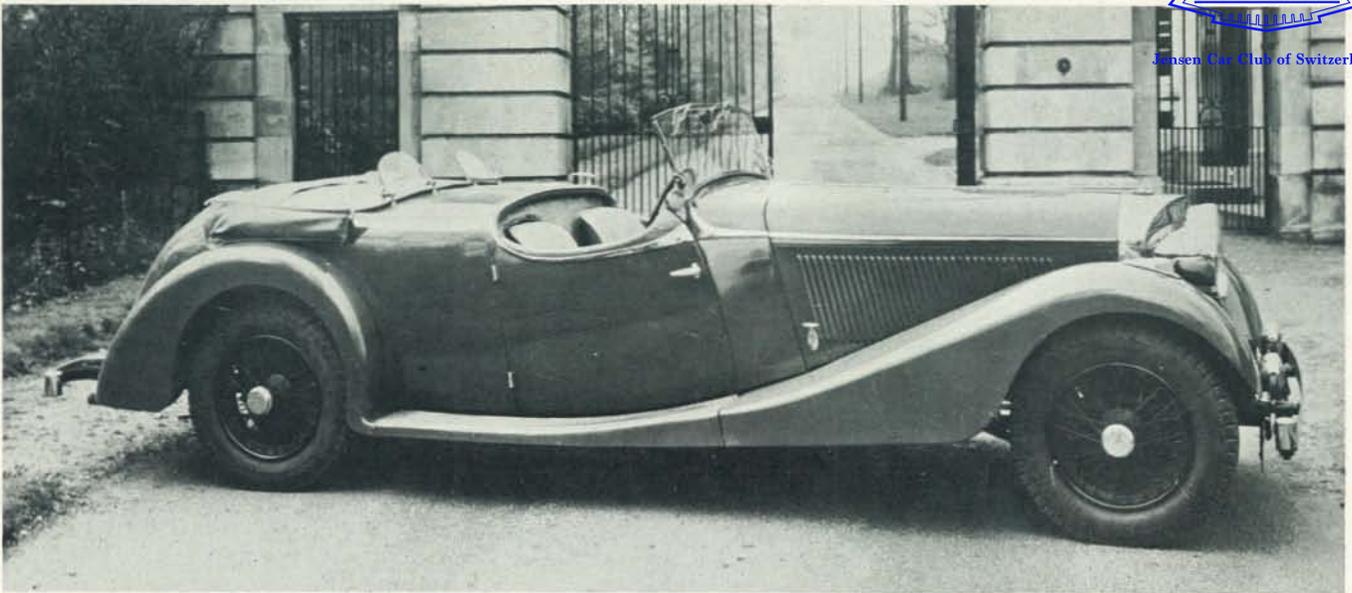
**J**ENSEN manufactured Ford-powered cars from 1934 until war broke out in 1939. During that time, they warmed up the venerable 21-stud V-8 from its original 65-85 bhp to 120 by installing twin S.U. carbs on a special aluminum manifold. Ignition came via Scintilla-Vortex magneto, with a conven-



*Clark Gable brought home this 1936 Jensen. Lengthened wheelbase shows up in stretched fenders. Jensen used unmodified Ford suspension, brakes, running gear. Columbia 2-speed was standard.*

PHOTOS: FORD ARCHIVES/HENRY FORD MUSEUM, JENSEN MOTORS LTD.





This 1937 Jensen S-Type open tourer shows the marque's more typical styling. Note hinged rear cowl and "aeroscreens." S-Types again used Ford V-8.

## Those Svelte Jensen-Fords

*continued*

tional distributor geared off the front of the block. Compression was raised by shaving the stock aluminum heads. And a special 4-bladed, cast-aluminum fan replaced the standard unit. It had its own belt, not the same one that drove the water pumps and generator as on stock Fords.

All Jensen-Fords used the Columbia 2-speed rear axle. This gave a standard ratio of 4.11:1 or, in overdrive, 2.90:1. Jensens kept the stock Ford 3-speed stick gearbox; also solid Ford axles with transverse springs front and rear. Wheels were Dunlop 17-inch wires on splined hubs, brakes being 4-wheel hydraulic and incorporating a Dewandre vacuum booster.

It was in coachwork, though, that Jensen-Fords really excelled. Most often, they *didn't*

look like U.S. Fords, though several editions did — the car that Edsel bought and the one-off built to spec for Clark Gable. From 1936 to 1939, Jensen built their S-Type, which still used Ford running gear but was fitted to a special non-Ford chassis which carried completely un-Ford-like bodywork. The S-Type didn't come in just one style, though. Shapes kept changing, and in effect customers could choose any number of distinctive designs.

The famous Clark Gable car looked like a stretched-out 1936 Ford roadster. But for all that, there was very little actual Ford in it. Wheelbase was lengthened, the body made of aluminum over an ash frame (nearly all Jensens used this construction), and there was an extra firewall (or "scuttle") ahead of the real one. This foremost scuttle helped cut down engine noise, and it also gave space for tools, but mostly it served as an excuse for a longer hood.

The Gable car, after changing hands several times among Hollywood movie stars and press

agents, survived at least through the mid-1950s. John Bond of ROAD & TRACK remembers seeing it during those years, and for all anyone knows it's still gathering dust in someone's private garage.

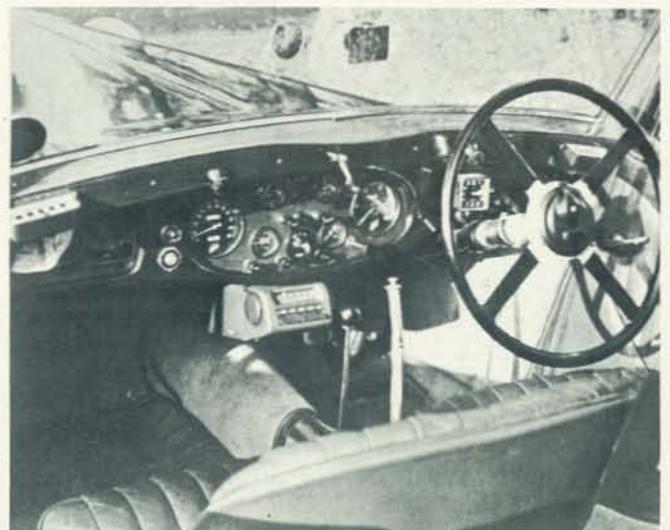
Nearly all Jensen-Fords were 4-seater tourers, but they did make a few saloons and coupes. Jensen entered several rallies during the 1930s, and while doing so-so, they never really established themselves among the record-setters.

Today, the old Jensen-Fords rank with Railton-Hudsons as rare and desirable hybrids. If you find a late 1938 or 1939 Jensen, don't be too surprised to discover it carrying a Nash flathead 6 instead of the Ford V-8. The Nash engine became an option in 1938. But if you find any Jensen at all, count yourself very lucky, because there weren't many made.

Jensen is now beginning to import its 1970 Interceptor series into this country. Soon they plan to bring over the 4wd Jensen FF. Should be another interesting hybrid. □



Check flawless bodywork on Edsel's Jensen; also tonneau and leather seats. Rakish windshield, lack of running boards reinforced low look.



1939 S-Type sports walnut veneer garnish. Control for rear axle stands above clock face. Gearshift lever and handbrake show Ford origin.