

Marmon produced 6 and 8 cylinder Full Classics[®] before their incredible V-16s

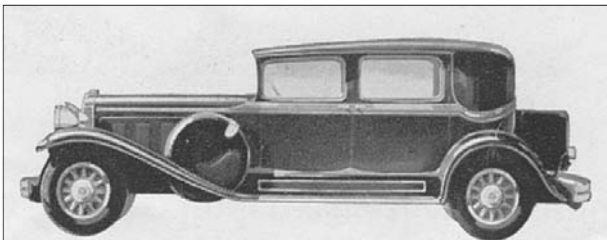
Periodically *The Roadrunner* prints an article about American made Full Classics[®]. The most recent article was about Lincoln in the October 2005 edition; the Locomobile story is on Page 16 and McFarlans and Mercers are covered on Page 17 of this issue.

By Les Jackson

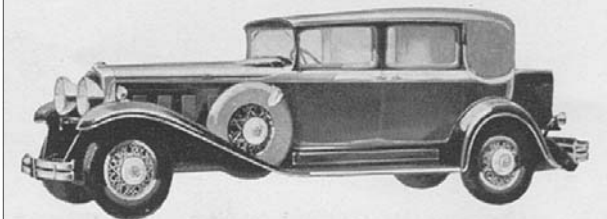
These days when we think of Marmon we are most likely to be talking about their magnificent 16 cylinder cars of 1931-1933. But there were several Full Classic[®] Marmons in the earlier classic years.

The Nordyke & Marmon Company of Indianapolis was an old well-established manufacturing company when it produced its first experimental car in 1902. Production increased through the years and by 1925 it reached more than 4000 cars. In 1926 the company became the Marmon Motor Car Company.

The CCCA Handbook identifies the following as Full Classics[®]: "All 12 & 16 cylinder, 1925-1926 74, 1927 75, 1928 E75, 1930 Big 8, 1931 88 and Big 8".



Big Eight Four-Door Club Sedan



Big Eight Four-Door Brougham

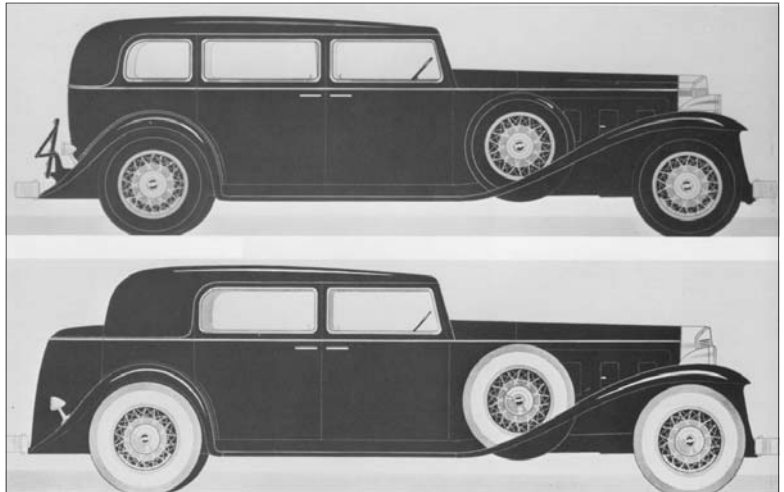
These are 2 of the 5 models Marmon cataloged in the Big Eight series for 1930. Others were sedan, 7 passenger sedan, limousine, and coupe with rumble seat.

During the last days of the Marmon, Howard Marmon, vice president, engineering, produced a 12 cylinder car, but the following month the company went into receivership, so there was no continuing production of the 12 cylinder car.

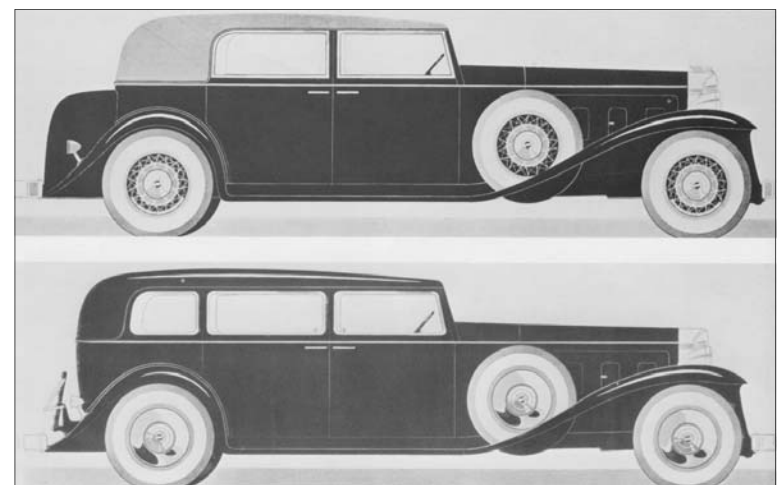
Earlier Classic Marmons

The earlier Full Classic[®] Marmons, the D74 and E75s of 1925 through 1928 were 6 cylinder cars with 339.7 cubic inch displacement engines producing from 75 to 84 horsepower. They rode on a 136

(Continued on page 15)



At top is the 5 passenger sedan in the 1931 V16 Marmon series. Below that is the 5 passenger close-coupled sedan.



The 5 passenger convertible sedan V16 1931 Marmon above and the 7 passenger sedan below.

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inch wheelbase and weighed from 3600 to nearly 4500 pounds. Prices ranged from \$3165 to \$3565.

During 1927, 1928 and 1929 Marmon also produced a number of non-classics including the Little Marmon and series 68 and 78.

In 1930 along came the Classic Big 8 followed in 1931 with the Big 8 and the Model 88. But the big news was the V16 which hit the market in 1931, several months after the first Cadillac V16's.

Huge 490.8 inch displacement

The V-16 Marmon engine displaced 490.8 cubic inches and produced 200 horsepower at 3400 rpm. The wheelbase was 145 inches with 7.00 x 19 or 7.00 x 18 tires and weighing 5360 pounds. The 1931's cost \$5200 to \$6000, rising to \$5700 to \$6100 for 1932, then with the depression really closing in, the price dropped to \$4825 to \$5175 in 1933 when production plunged to 86 cars.

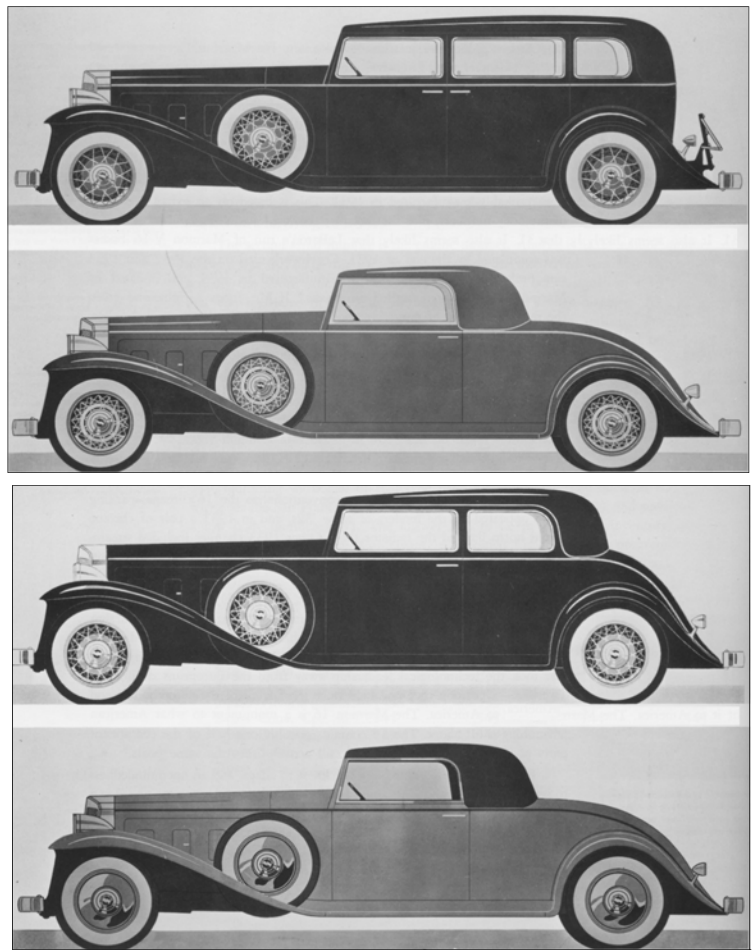
The company's last non-classics were made in 1932 with the model 70 and model 125.

The bodies of the V-16's were built by LeBaron in Detroit. All of the chassis of the cars were tested at the Indianapolis Speedway before the bare chassis were sent to Detroit.

Downshifting at 80 mph

The gears could be shifted from high to second at 80 mph without a gear clash according to the company. Try that on your Classic at your own risk. The car was guaranteed to be able to reach 105 mph.

It is believed that fewer than 400 Marmon 16's may have been produced, but the actual number may have been larger. Models were the 5 passenger sedan, 7 passenger sedan, 7 passenger limo, 2 passenger coupe, 2 passenger convertible coupe, 5 passenger victoria, 5 passenger convertible sedan



More V16 1931 Marmons. From the top: 7 passenger limo, 2 passenger coupe, 5 passenger two door coupe and the 2 passenger convertible coupe. Marmon said "... the Marmon sixteen has the unusually low ratio of some 25 pounds of car weight per horsepower. The average automobile engine being called upon to pull approximately 35 to 45 pounds per horsepower."

and 5 passenger club sedan, plus custom cars.

There were only small cosmetic changes in the 16 cylinder bodies from the first to last year of production.

Sources for this edition of *The Roadrunner*:

Third Edition Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942, Beverly Rae Kimes and Henry Austin Clark, Jr., Krause publications, Iola WI, 1996. *Locomotive*, Locomobile Company of America, Inc., Bridgeport, CT. December 1928. *Sixteen Cylinder Motor Cars, An Illustrated History*, Roy A. Schneider, Heritage House, Arcadia, CA, 1974. *The Specification Book for U.S. Cars 1920-1929*, G. Marshall Naul, Motorbooks International, 1978. *The Specification Book for U.S. Cars, 1930-1969*, G. Marshall Naul, Motorbooks International, 1980. *The Production Figure Book for U.S. Cars*, Jerry Heasley, Motorbooks International, 1977. *4 Great Straight Eights by Marmon*, Marmon Motor Car Company, Indianapolis, IN. Form No. AH 171, undated. *The Marmon Sixteen*, Marmon Motor Car Company, IN, undated. *Historical Catalog of 1927 Cars*, Floyd Clymer Publications, Los Angeles, CA, undated. *Handbook of Automobiles 1925-1926*, National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, Dover Publications, New York, 1970 republication.