



1923 FORD MODEL T

By: Irving Jensen, Jr.

Model T Touring; Serial: 5337554

The car that started it all! Our Ford Model T is a 1923 touring car powered by Ford's own 177 cubic inch four-cylinder "en bloc" motor (that is, all four cylinders in one block, as common now, rather than in individual castings, as common then) producing 20.2 horsepower for a top speed of 40-45 mph.

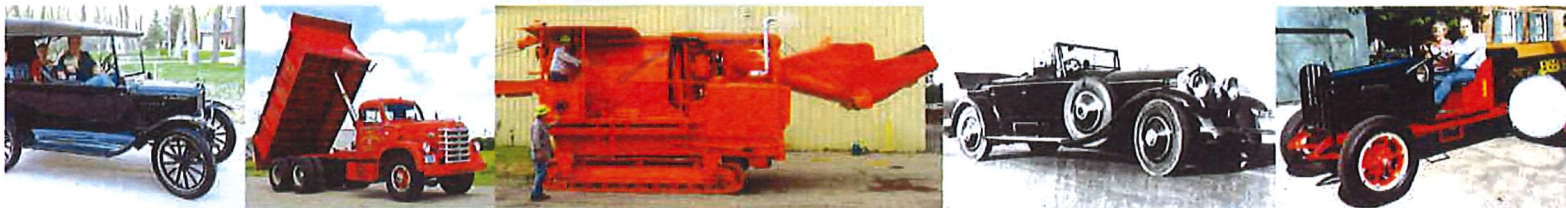
The Model T is rear-wheel drive vehicle with a planetary gear-type transmission billed as "three speed." By today's standards it is considered a two-speed, since one of the three speeds counted was reverse. The Model T's transmission is controlled with three foot pedals and a lever that is mounted to the road side of the



driver's seat. The throttle is controlled with a lever on the steering wheel. There is no separate clutch pedal.

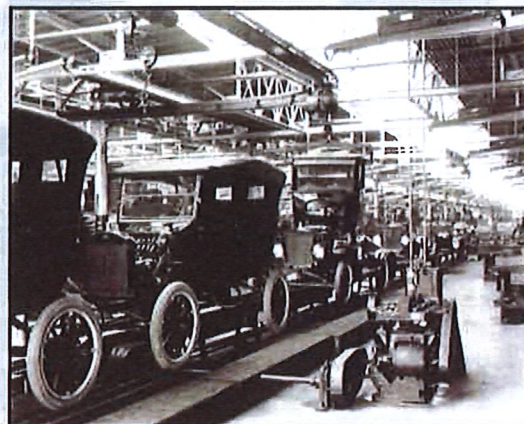
The Model T suspension employs a transversely mounted semi-elliptical spring for each of the front and rear axles, which are "live," i.e., not an independent suspension. The car is fitted with 30 inch pneumatic tires. The old nomenclature for tire size changed from 30×3 to 21" (rim diameter) × 4.50 (tire width). The wheelbase of the car is 99 inches.

The car's 10 gallon fuel tank is mounted to the frame beneath the front seat. Because fuel



relies on gravity to flow forward from the fuel tank to the carburetor (no fuel pump), a Model T cannot climb steep hills when the fuel level is low. The immediate solution was often to drive up steep hills in reverse. In 1926, the fuel tank was relocated forward under the cowl on most models.

The Ford Model T (a.k.a. "the Tin Lizzie" and "Flivver") was produced by Henry Ford's Ford Motor Company from 1908 to 1927. It is generally regarded as the first affordable automobile, the car that "put America



Henry Ford's moving assembly line.

on wheels;" some of this was because of Ford's innovations, including assembly line production instead of individual hand-crafting, as well as the concept of paying the workers a wage proportionate to the cost of the car, so that they would provide a ready made market. The first production Model T was built on September 27, 1908, at the Piquette Plant in Detroit, Michigan.

Our Model T was purchased new by W.R. Beppert of LaCoste, Texas from Adams Company in Devine, Texas (a neighboring community) in October of 1921. After Mr. Beppert there were two other owners before I purchased the car in 1956.

Make check mark to show whether a
 First Registration Date 10 1921 No 1139
 or a Re-registration

Received by the Tax Collector of Medina COUNTY, TEXAS:
 Current year license fee 1.93 Delinquent fee _____ Penalty _____ Total 1.93

In payment of all State license fees due for the year 1921 on the motor vehicle described below.

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Seal Number <u>349839</u> | The serial number of the seal issued with this receipt must be written in the square space to the left. The State Highway License Number must be written in the square space to the right. Seals must be issued in numerical order. | License Number <u>542147</u> |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|

Name and Model and Year Made Ford Model 1922 H. P. 22

Class: (1) Motor Vehicle (2) Commercial Motor Vehicle (3) Interurban Commercial Motor Vehicle

Tax Collector will check the class to which vehicle belongs, and if vehicle comes in class (2) or (3) he will show in following space total net carrying capacity: _____ lbs.

Name of Person or Firm Purchased from Adams Co

Engine Number 533755 Factory Serial Number _____

Owner's Name in full W. R. Beppert (Write plainly)

Owner's Correct Mailing Address _____ (Direct, Rural Route or Box)

 (City or Town, and State if other than Texas)

RECEIPT—FORM NO. 1 (Signed) J. G. [Signature]

MOTOR VEHICLE Tax Collector Medina County Texas
 COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE
 INTERURBAN COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE By _____ (Over)

THE B. S. STICK CO., BOSTON 3288-720-122,450 in trip



Ownership History:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| W.R. Beppert | Oct, 1921 – Aug. 10, 1946 | < 45 years * |
| Max R. Sibert | Aug. 10, 1946 – Mar. 25, 1954 | < 8 years * |
| Robert M. Dale | Mar. 25, 1954 – Mar. 13, 1956 | 2 years * |
| Irving F. Jensen, Jr. | Mar. 13, 1956 – present | |

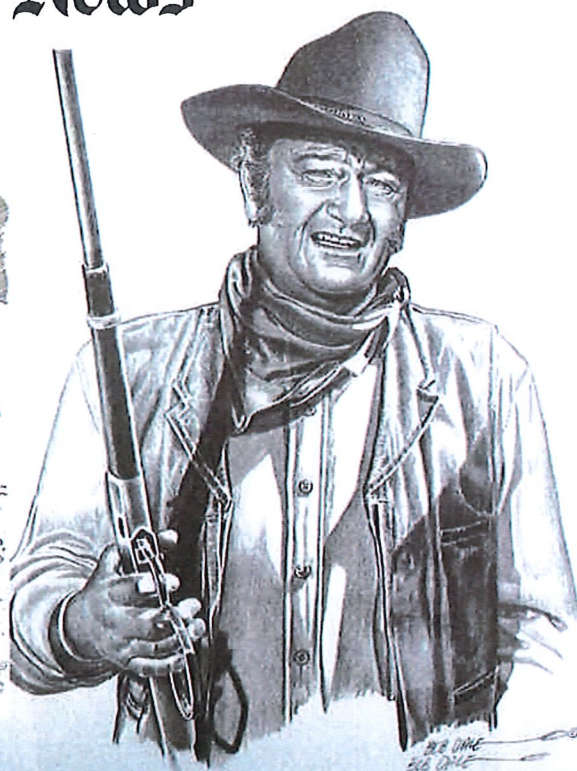
** Dates taken from original Texas transfer documents and vehicle registrations*

In the middle 1950's Tigger and I were living in San Antonio, Texas where I was stationed as a Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. I purchased the Model-T in the spring of 1956 from *San Antonio Express-News* editorial cartoonist Mr. Robert "Bob" Dale for \$146.60 including tax! During the transaction, Tigger made a comment to June (Mr. Dale's wife) about it being a good idea to purchase the car so I could get this old car-thing "out of my system." June took pity on Tigger saying, "Young lady, this is just the beginning." It probably goes without saying, but she may have been a prophet!

San Antonio Express-News



A sampling Bob Dale's editorial cartoons and artwork.





| STATE COMPTROLLER'S RECEIPT For Motor Vehicle Sales, Use, Gift, or Transfer Tax | | TAX COLLECTOR'S RECEIPT FOR TITLE APPLICATION Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the statutory fee and application for ORIGINAL - CORRECTED Certificate of Title | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--------------|---|---|
| Name of Seller Robert M. Dale | | By Owner Irving F. Jensen, Jr. 202 Croyden-Apt B San Antonio TEX. | | | |
| CASH, CREDIT and/or EXCHANGE PLUS TRADE IN | | Year 22 | Make Ford | Body Style Touring | Motor or Permanent Identification No. 533755/4 |
| TOTAL VALUE | 145.00 | Surrendered Title No. 13305072 | | License Number 4N 4340 | Serial Number |
| HOLD HERE FOR FIRST SNAP | LESS FEDERAL TAX ----- | 1st Lien Date None | | Name and Address of First Lien Holder | |
| NET VALUE | 145.00 | 2nd Lien Date | | Name and Address of Second Lien Holder | |
| AMOUNT OF SALE OR USE TAX | 1.60 | Date Issued 3-13-56 | | Issued By: P. T. DICKSON TEXAS COUNTY Brasher | |
| EVEN EXCHANGE TAX NEW RESIDENT TAX GIFT TAX | | ORIGINAL - To Applicant if no lien. To Lien Holder if lien. | | Tax Assessor-Collector Deputy | |
| Received amount as shown hereon, in payment of Motor Vehicle Sales, Use, Gift, or Transfer Tax as per Art. 7047K on the motor vehicle described hereon. Address communications regarding this tax to State Comptroller, Austin, Texas. | | For: TEXAS HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT Important— See Reverse Side. | | | |

The body of the Model T was in good shape. And, save for the rear fenders, the paint was in satisfactory condition as well. *The rear fenders were painted in gray primer.* The folding top was old and faded, but replacing it would have to wait since the upholstery was in tatters (and therefore a higher priority). I could only afford so much as a young Air Force Lieutenant with a family to support.

As I began driving the car, a couple mechanical issues hampered my fun. The first issue was the condition of the tires. I suffered one flat tire after another. Unfortunately, buying a new set of tires was also financially out-of-the-question. So I patched and patched the old inner tubes trying to get by. In fact, I patched them so frequently that the attendants at the nearby service station knew me well! The issue was finally resolved when my father shipped me a new set of tires; I think he grew tired of hearing about my problems.

While living in San Antonio I became acquainted with other Model T enthusiasts in the area; most notable was J.D. Powell.

J.D. was very helpful, especially when I was confronted with the next issue ... a rattling sound emanating from the engine. The noise was caused by failure of the main rod bearings. With J.D.'s encouragement I handled the repair work myself. Best of all, J.D. provided a place to work on the car, tools, and all the free advice I needed. And thus I found myself working under a carport outside of "J.D. Powell's Ice House" Southwest of San Antonio. *I quickly learned that an "Ice House" is not where ice is stored ... in the south, an "Ice House" is synonymous with a bar!*

I successfully disassembled the engine, had new rod bearings poured, and reassembled it again. I also replaced the bands in the transmission. But due to my limited budget, I didn't go any

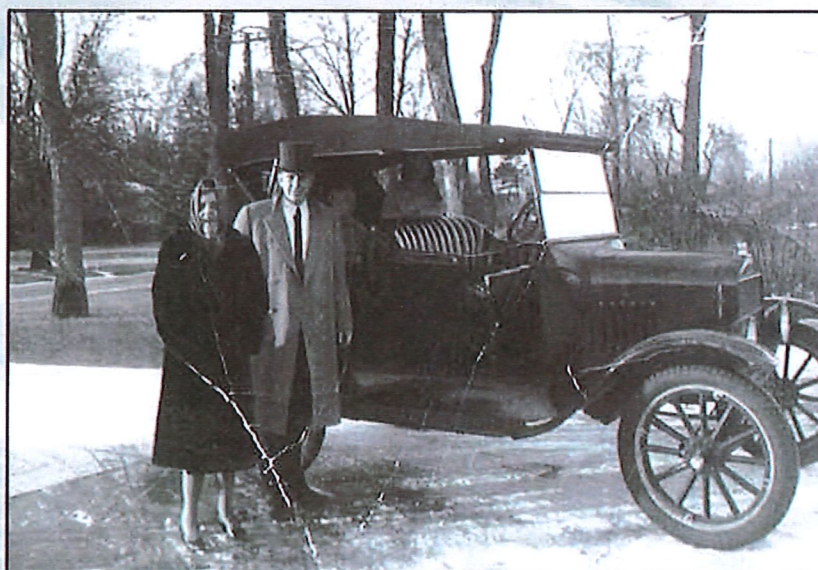
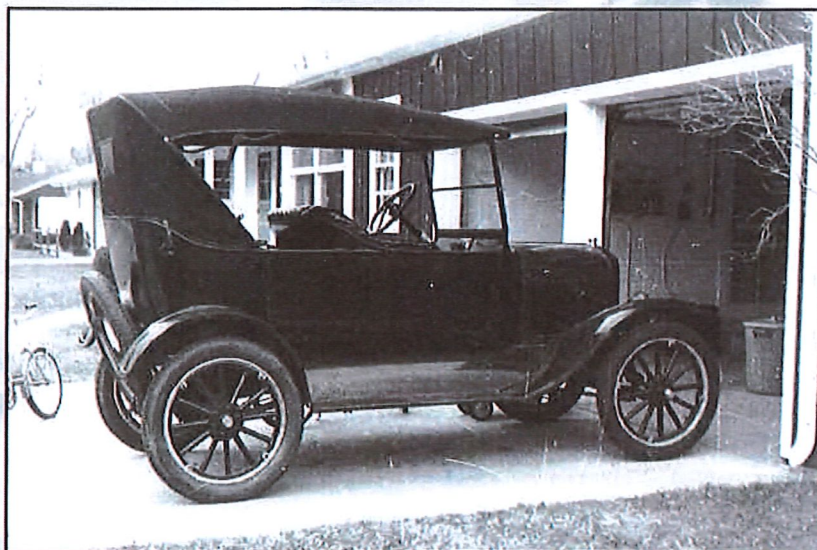


further with the mechanical work than absolutely necessary. I only addressed the critical issues so I could get the car back on the road and enjoy it.

And drive it we did! Each night after I was off duty, my eldest daughter Mia would accompany me on nightly drives around San Antonio. I have very fond memories of our trips together.

When I left the service, I had the drive shaft disconnected and we towed the Model T back to Sioux City behind our car.

In the years that followed, the engine was completely overhauled, Dick Keller replaced the top, and we repainted the car. Although I drove it less frequently with each passing year, the Model T was still important to me; for it sparked my interest in antique vehicles.



The Model-T parked in front of our first house in Sioux City.