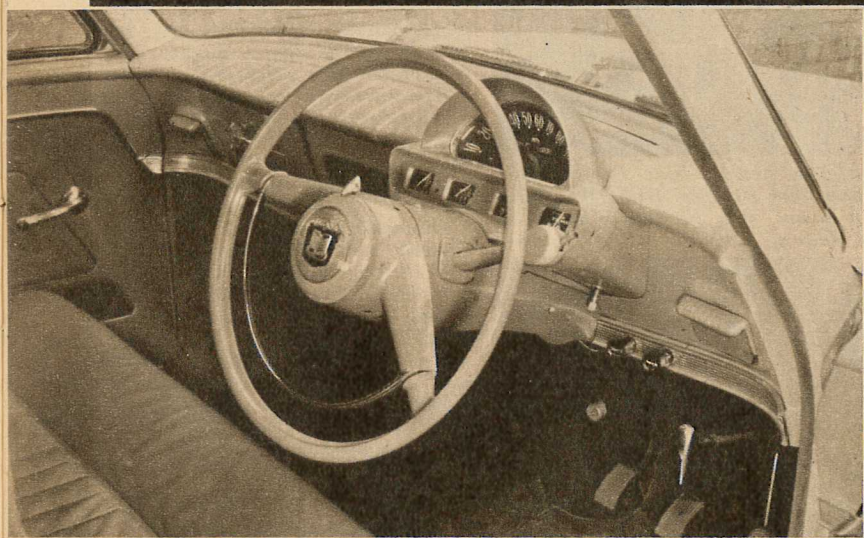


VANGUARD Series III—new body, same engine.

BRITISH CARS FOR 1956

More streamlining, greater window areas, lush two-tones characterise the cars you'll be buying next year, writes Harold Dvoretzky from London



DASH of new Vanguard, with its hooded instrument binnacle, is reminiscent of Ford Consul, Zephyr. Black dials are easy to read.
MODERN MOTOR — December 1955

THE Earls Court Motor Show, opened on October 19, gathered nearly 300 cars under one roof. New models ranged from a fabulous £15,000 gold-plated Daimler designed by Lady Docker (wife of the Daimler Company's chairman) to the Ford Ten-powered Morgan roadster with a basic price of £450 sterling.

The British 2.4-litre Jaguar shared the limelight with France's revolutionary Citroen DS-19. Alvis and Armstrong-Siddeley also showed completely new models, and Rootes sprang a surprise with their unheralded Sunbeam Rapier. Among the lower-priced cars, biggest change was in the Standard Vanguard, given an entirely new body.

Aside from brighter colors and wraparound rear windows, main trend seems to be towards overdrive: 30 cars feature it now, while last year there were only eight.

Station waggons are also in vogue, with Rootes, Ford, Standard and Morris in hot competition.

One regrettable trend is towards higher prices in nearly every case.

Here are the details of all the new or substantially modified British cars—except the Sunbeam Rapier and MG A, described more fully elsewhere in this issue.

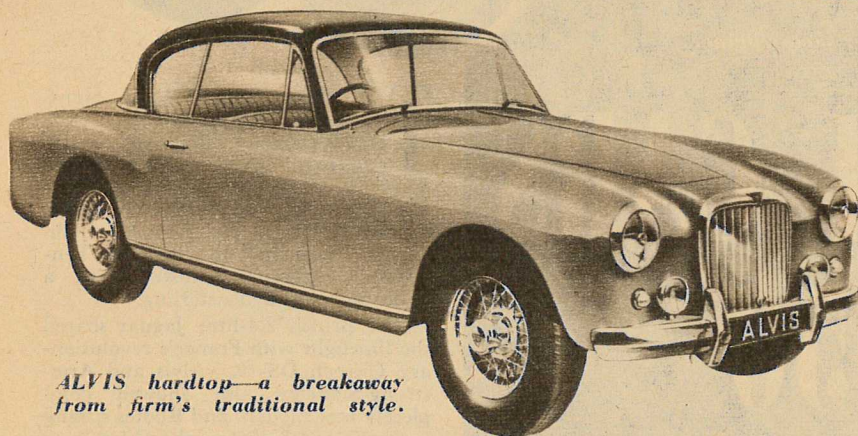
Bear in mind, when reading this, that no Australian prices have been set yet for these cars; my figures are approximations obtained by comparing basic English prices with those quoted in Australia after exchange, transport costs, duty and sales tax have been added.

VANGUARD SERIES III

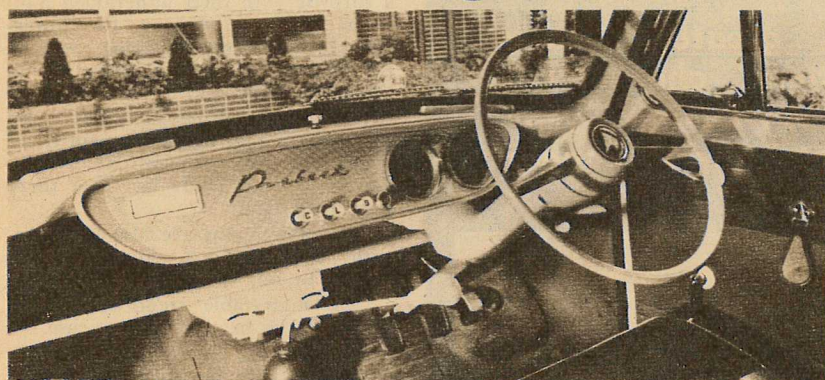
LOWER, sleeker than its predecessors, this six-seater has a cruising speed of 70 m.p.h., top of 84, gives 26 to 30 m.p.g. Engine remains the same—a 4-cylinder, o.h.v. unit of 2088 c.c., developing 68 b.h.p. at 4200 r.p.m. Compression ratio is upped



THE NEW ARMSTRONG-SIDDELEY SALOON



ALVIS hardtop—a breakaway from firm's traditional style.



FLAT DASH replaces instrument binnacle on new de-luxe Prefect and Anglia. Other features are two-tone upholstery, heater. BELOW: Ford Tens are also offered in station waggon form, with hinged window at rear. Wooden rubbing strips are on the de-luxe version, called Squire.



to 7.5 to 1. Electric overdrive can be had as an extra.

Wheelbase is increased to 8ft. 6in., length to 14ft. 4in. Track is 4ft. 3in. front and rear, width 5ft. 7½in., height 5ft. 1½in., ground clearance 7½in., turning circle 35ft.

Basic price is £44 more than previous model, which will probably mean about £80 more in Australia.

Standard have also entered the small station waggon market with the Standard 10 Companion — an all-steel four-seater with rear seat that folds down to give 16 sq. ft. of floor-space; payload, with two up, is 4cwt.

TWO NEW SIDDELEYS

CURVES replace traditional sharp lines on Armstrong-Siddeley's two new 2.3-litre saloons; they share the same luxurious five-seat body and can be had with overdrive; but there the similarity ends.

Model 236 has a six-cylinder o.h.v. engine developing 85 b.h.p. and a "manumatic" no-clutch gear-change, while Model 234 has a four-cylinder "square" o.h.v. engine that puts out 120 b.h.p. and gives 100 m.p.h.-plus performance. With a sporty floor gear lever, the 234 is Siddeley's answer to the new 2.4-litre Jaguar.

The four-cylinder engine has bore and stroke of 90 mm., capacity 2290 c.c., while the six-cylinder has 70 mm. bore, 100 mm. stroke, 2309 c.c. capacity. Compression is 7.5 to 1 in both.

Dimensions are same for both models: Wheelbase, 9ft. 3in.; track — front 4ft. 7in., rear 4ft. 6in.; length 15ft., height 5ft. 2in., width 5ft. 8½in., ground clearance 7in., turning circle 39ft. 8in. Independent front suspension is by coils and trailing wishbones, with semi-elliptics at rear.

With a basic price difference of £40 sterling between the two cars, my guess at Australian prices would be around £2200 for the fast 234, £2280 for the "manumatic" 236.

ALVIS HARDTOP

ANOTHER tradition-breaker is the Alvis 3-litre hardtop, with body design by Graber, of Switzerland.

MODERN MOTOR — December 1955

This, too, is a 105 m.p.h. sports saloon; the two-door body is superbly finished and equipped.

Its six-cylinder o.h.v. engine has 2993 c.c. capacity, and 8 to 1 compression. Fitted with twin SU carburettors, it develops 104 b.h.p. at 4000 r.p.m. Car has central gear-shift and knock-on wire wheels.

Wheelbase is 9ft. 3½in.; track front 4ft. 6½in., rear 4ft. 6in., length 15ft. 2½in., ground clearance 7½in. Australian price should work out around £3700.

WAGGONS FROM FORD

FORD'S bid for the station waggon market is a pair of snappy 10-h.p. four-seaters giving 41.5 cubic feet of cargo space when carrying two persons. Called Escort and Squire, they are based on the Anglia-Prefect design and are basically the same, the Squire being the de-luxe version.

Large side windows and a rear-opening window hinged on the roof line give excellent visibility and ventilation. The Escort should cost around £900 in Australia, the Squire £50 to £60 more.

De-luxe versions of the Anglia and Prefect are also offered. They feature a new flat dash (see photo), chrome side-strips and two-tone P.V.C. upholstery; leather can be had as an extra. Seating is improved, with more knee-room in rear; twin horns and wing mirrors are provided. Australian price should be £50 to £60 above standard models.

THE "SMALL" JAGUAR

WE jumped the gun on this one with a full story and pictures last month, so I won't repeat the details; but I've driven the car since then, and it's a winner.

It combines the roadholding of a British sports car with the soft springing and comfort of the best from America, and its 6-cylinder, 2483 c.c. engine gives flash acceleration and top speed of 103 m.p.h.

Wind resistance is at a minimum, engine noise almost nonexistent; cruising at 80, the car is so quiet it has a phantom-like quality.

From 0 to 50 took me 8 seconds, but they say it can be done in 7.5. At a steady 70-80 m.p.h. petrol consumption is around 23 m.p.g. Come down to 30-40, and you get up to 34 m.p.g.

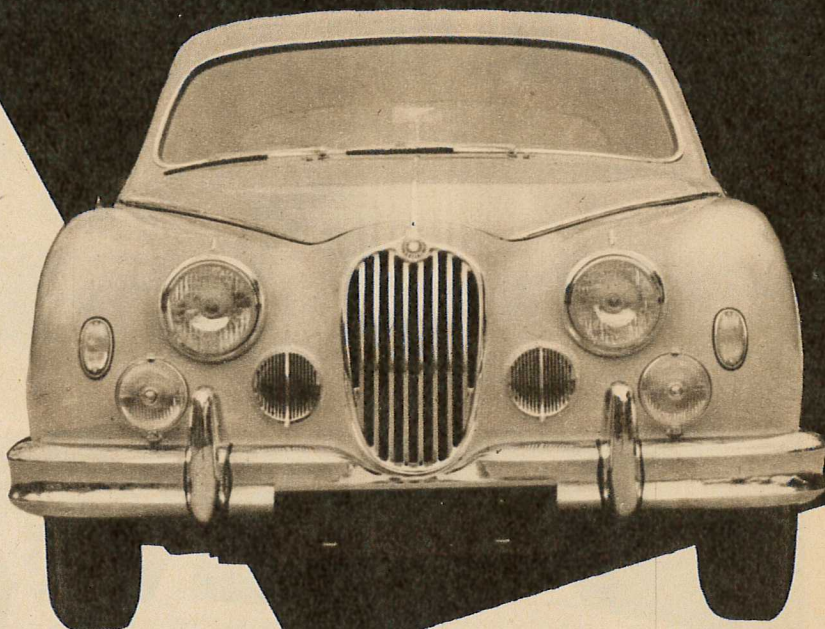
You may see the 2.4-litre Jag in Australia by the end of the year, priced around £1800.

TRIUMPH FOUR-SEATER

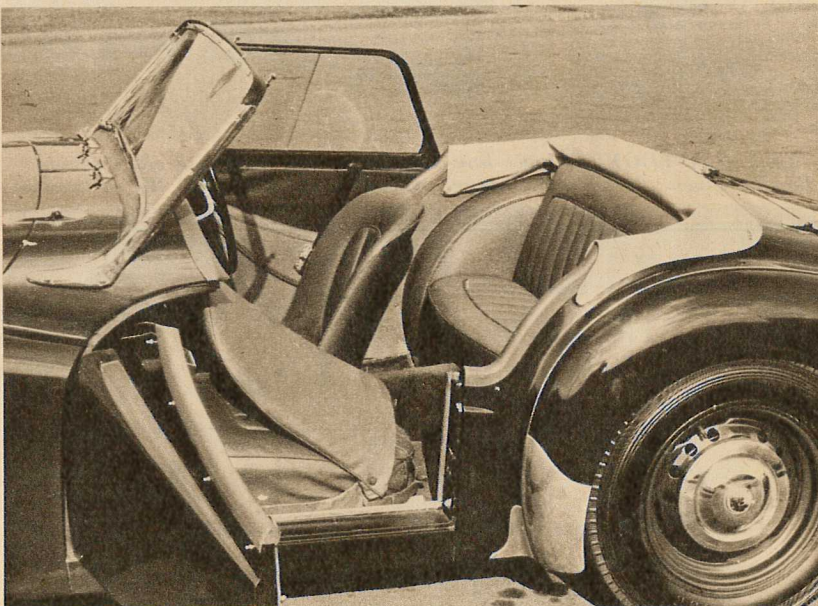
TWO extra seats, egg-crate grille, and more power from its Standard engine distinguish the new Triumph TR3.

The uprated engine develops 95 b.h.p. at 4800 r.p.m. Performance claims are: top speed 108 m.p.h. in touring trim; 0-50 in 8 seconds, 0-60

MODERN MOTOR — December 1955

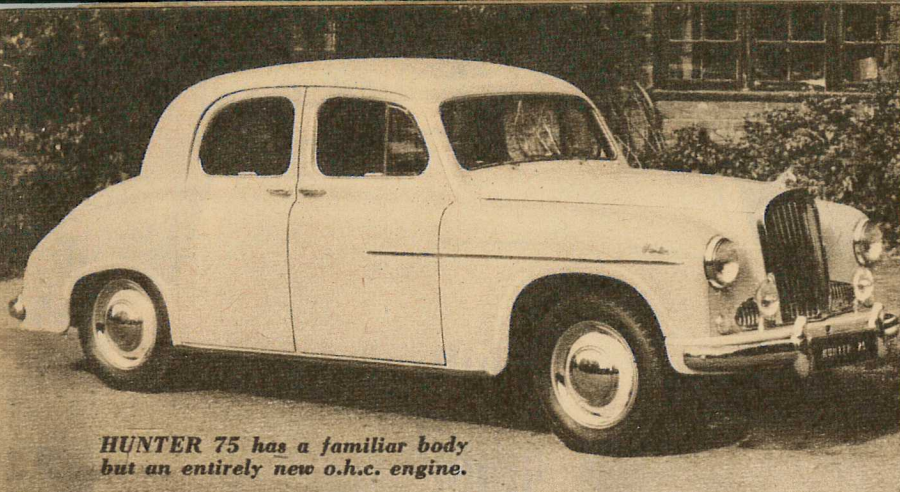


2.4-LITRE JAGUAR blends frontal appearance of XK140 with body lines of a scaled-down Mark VII, gets 103 m.p.h. from new 6-cylinder, twin-carburettor engine. It is the first "small" Jaguar saloon since 1949.

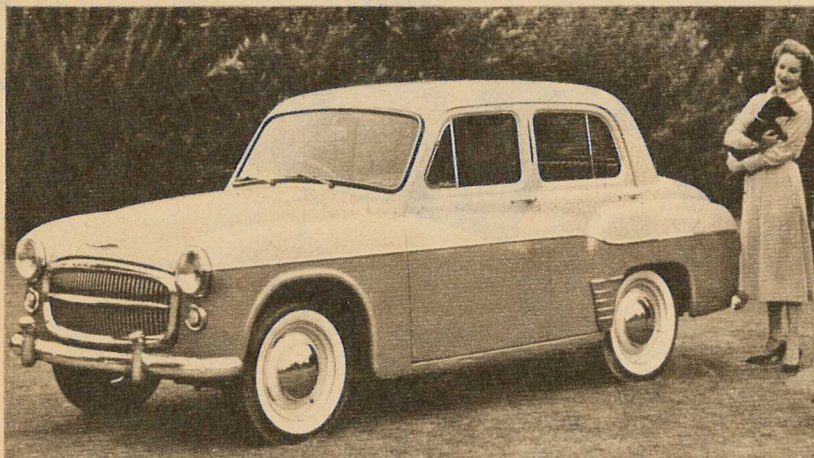


TRIUMPH TR3 has extra seating for two, egg-crate grille, and 108 m.p.h. performance from uprated engine. BELOW: Semi-wraparound design has added 61 percent to the rear window area on all Vauxhall models. Windscreens are 12 percent wider; three-tone color schemes are offered.

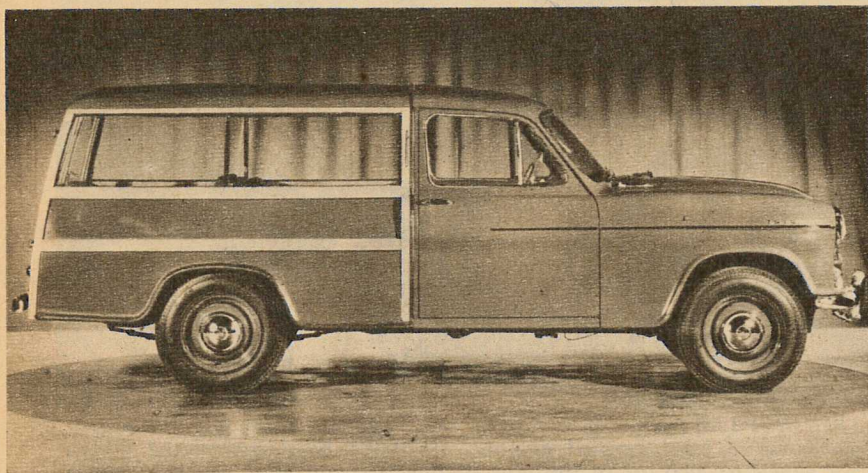




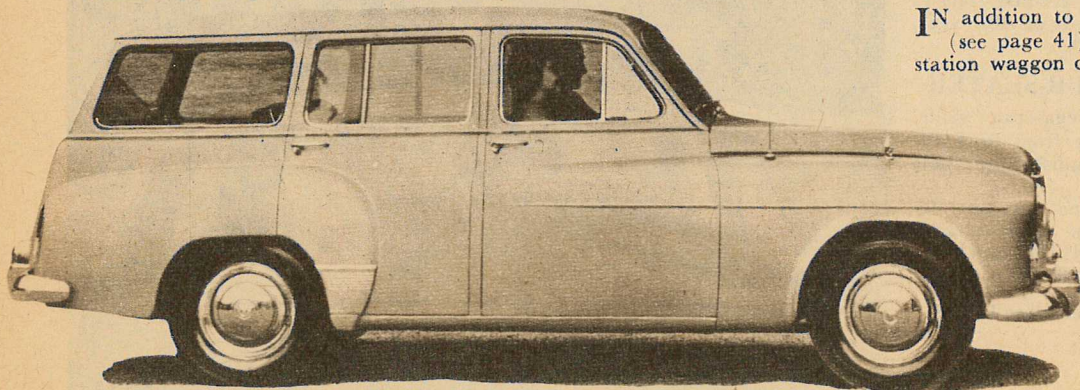
HUNTER 75 has a familiar body but an entirely new o.h.c. engine.



"NEW GAY LOOK"—that's how Rootes call the two-tone color schemes they've given the Hillman range. Choice covers at least 25 variations.



MORRIS ISIS TRAVELLER is an eight-seat station waggon, with 6-cylinder engine; a short rear-facing seat takes the two extra passengers.



HUMBER HAWK is also offered in station waggon form for the first time. It has a steel body and seats six.

in 12; petrol consumption on fast touring, 26 to 32 m.p.g.

Probable Australian price: £50 to £60 more than the TR2.

VAUXHALLS GO DETROIT

SEMI-WRAPAROUND rear windows, wider windcreens and two- and three-tone color schemes show growing Detroit influence on the G.M.-controlled Vauxhalls.

Other body changes are winding drop windows and plunger-type door locks with a free-wheel device that prevents the doors being opened accidentally.

Tubeless tyres are now standard, and separate indicator lights are provided. Improved brakes, with separate drums for easy maintenance, are another feature. A stiffer front-suspension cross-member allows longer coil springs to be fitted if extra clearance is required.

There's no more running-in for Vauxhalls; they just tell you to "avoid sustained high speed and full-throttle operation for first 1000 miles." Reason is that Vauxhall were the first popular-priced British cars to fit chrome top rings as standard; the bores took 10,000 miles or more to run in, so the usual speed limits were dropped.

Vauxhall prices are up about £A30 on Wyvern, £A50 on Velox.

NEW-ENGINE SINGER

A NEW 1½-litre engine that develops 75 b.h.p., gives 38 m.p.g. at a steady 40 m.p.h. or 25½ m.p.g. at 80, and pushes a 24cwt. saloon to a top speed of 90 m.p.h. is the surprise feature of Singer's Hunter 75.

Other performance claims are: 0-30 m.p.h. in 5.3 seconds, 0-50 in 12.8, 0-60 in 17.7.

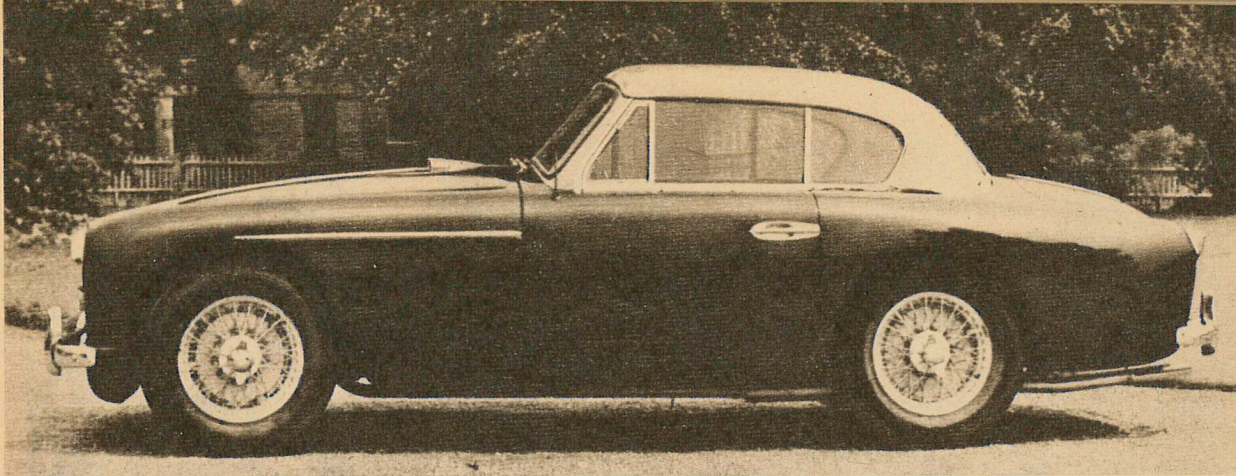
Valves, set at 90 degrees in hemispherical combustion chambers, are operated by piston-type tappets off twin overhead camshafts. Compression is 8 to 1, and twin Solex carburetors are fitted.

Standard equipment includes tubeless tyres, fog lamps, windscreen wipers, heater and demister, tinted sun visors and leather upholstery.

Main body dimensions are same as those of original Singer Hunter, which continues at the old price. The Hunter 75 should cost around £1550 in Australia.

HUMBER HAWK WAGGON

IN addition to the Sunbeam Rapier (see page 41), Rootes offer a new station waggon on the Humber Hawk



ASTON-MARTIN hardtop is a new addition to the DB2-4 series. Top speed is claimed to be around 120 m.p.h.

chassis; it's a steel-bodied six-seater giving a luggage space 7ft. long with the rear seat folded. Price should be around £A1720 (overdrive extra if required).

Hillmans are substantially unchanged but feature bright two-tone color schemes with dividing chrome strips; and the Humber has been given shark-fin rear wings.

All prices are up: £A30 to £A40 in the Hillman range, £A40 on the Hawks, £A160 to £A180 on the Snipes.

MG A, MORRIS ISIS

TOGETHER with the new MG A (see brief road test on p. 44), Nuffield showed their recently released six-cylinder Morris Isis saloon, described last month; also the Isis Traveller station wagon, with the same 86 b.h.p. engine. This is an eight-seater, with two of the seats folding down to give 65 cubic feet of cargo space. Australian price should be around £1340.

Nuffield are one of the few firms that haven't raised their prices (except that the MG A costs £A60 to £A80 more than its predecessor).

Austin, Nuffield's partners in the British Motor Corporation, have made no substantial changes in their cars this year.

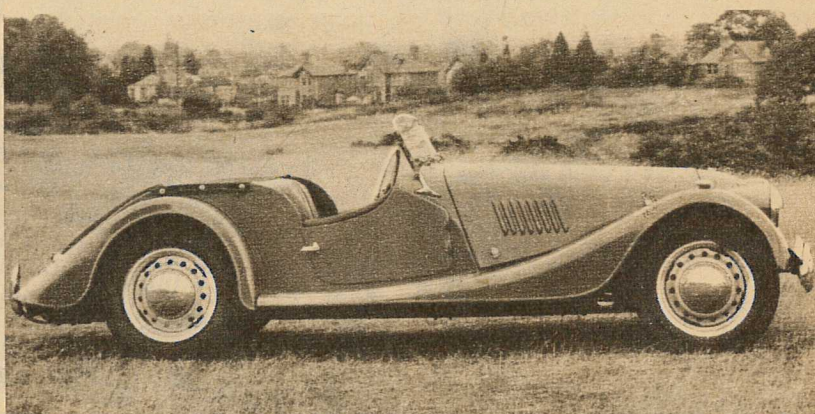
ASTON HARDTOP

ASTON-MARTIN have joined the hardtop brigade with their DB2-4 Mark II—an addition to the DB2-4 sports saloon and drophead range, with the same four-seat layout. The 3-litre DB3S competition engine gives a top speed of about 120.

Added features include air-conditioning through a bonnet intake, a fly-off handbrake alongside the central gear lever, and a stronger type of rear axle.

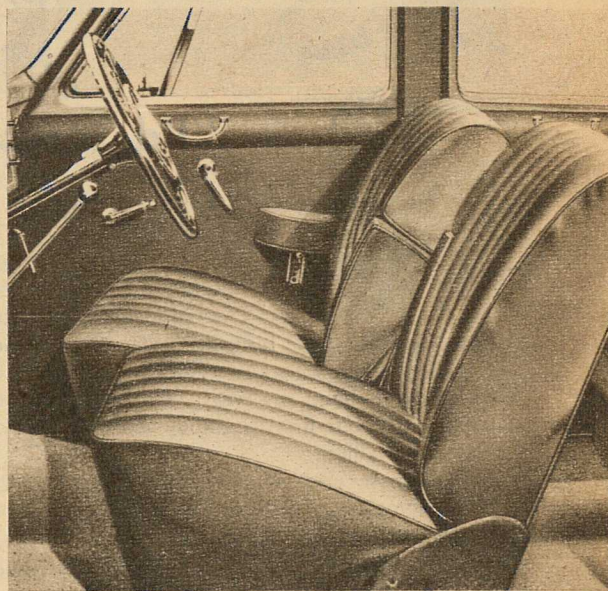
Prices are up—to about £A4000 for the saloon and hardtop, £A4250 for the drophead. The DB3S competition car alone remains at the same price (about £A5000).

Only major change to the Lagonda series, from the same factory, is fitting a floor gearshift as standard; the

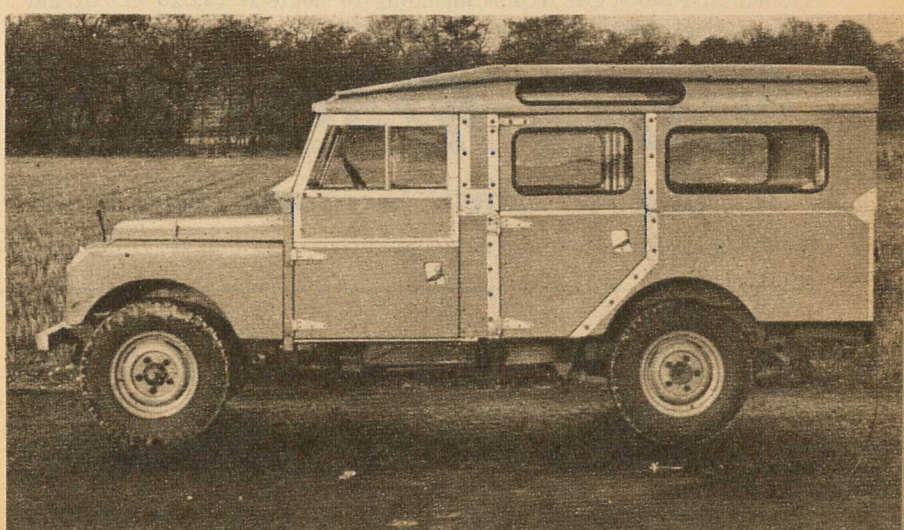


MORGAN 4/4 Series II is powered by the Ford 10 engine; it costs much less than the normal TR2-engined version.

ROVERS can now be had with arm-rest-fitted bucket seats or a bench seat. All models have higher compression; result is better performance.



NEW LAND ROVER on 107-inch chassis takes 10 passengers or a lot of cargo; seats can be quickly rearranged to form two sleeping-bunks.



(Continued on page 73)

breeding, lasting beauty and luxury. It had to have quiet dignity to appeal to elder statesmen, plus the lushness that would attract those of the nation's younger motorists who could pay 10,000 dollars for a car.

To achieve distinction in a new model is far from easy nowadays. No designer in his right mind would try to improve on the length of the Cadillac or the width of the Nash. To get under the overall height of the Studebaker would be equally difficult. Nor could the new Continental rely on expensive accessories to make it stand out, for even the humblest product of Detroit is now available with everything from air-conditioning to power steering.

So Bill Ford solved his problem by appealing to the motorist who likes his car made to measure—and can afford the price of custom tailoring. For the new Continental, announced on October 5, is no off-the-peg job. Customers have been told they can practically write their own production schedule. Upholstery, trim, fittings, choice of material are all to be selected by the purchaser.

It is possible that no two Continentals will be made alike, for the range of choice will be very great and the possible combinations almost infinite. Customers will also be invited to watch the final stages of assembly. If they want to change their minds about some of the minor decorative features, Ford will be happy to accommodate them.

The extent to which luxury will be carried is best illustrated by the following quote from the makers' promotional pamphlet:

"When the Continental Mark II leaves the plant, it is shipped in a fleece-lined canvas and plastic covering, assuring maximum protection while in transit to the dealer."

What more could you ask? . . .

CARS FOR '56

(Continued from page 39)

steering-column lever now becomes optional. (The Duke of Edinburgh started this fashion by ordering a floor gearshift on his personal Lagonda drophead.) Here, too, there will be substantial price rises.

CHEAPER MORGAN

A CHEAPER Morgan 4/4 sports car has been produced by using the Ford 10 engine, as fitted to Anglias and Prefects. Known as the Series II, it strongly resembles the TR2-engined version (which continues in production), but costs only

about £A900, making it Britain's cheapest sports car.

Unmodified, the Ford engine develops 36 b.h.p. at 4400 r.p.m. with 7 to 1 compression; top speed of the new Morgan is quoted at 75 m.p.h.

ROVER RATIOS UP

ROVERS remain unchanged in appearance, but performance of all models has been uprated by raising compression ratios to 7.5 to 1 on the 90, 7.2 to 1 on the 75 and 6.9 to 1 on the 60.

Central gearshift is retained, and buyers now have the choice of arm-rest-fitted bucket seats or a full-bench seat in front.

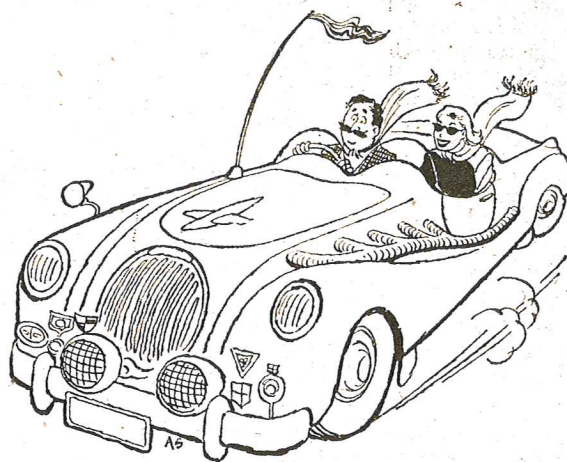
To match its improved performance, the Rover 90 is now fitted with

Girling two-trailing-shoe brakes, plus servo-assisters on the front wheels. The old Rover freewheel has been discontinued.

Fitting overdrive on top gear as an optional extra on the 90 raises cruising speed from 65 to 80 m.p.h. and improves fuel consumption from 21/24 m.p.g. to 22/26.

Prices are up by about £A60 for the 90, and £A40 for each of the other two models.

Country readers will be interested in the new Land Rover waggon on a 107-inch chassis. It's a tough, versatile four-wheel-drive vehicle that will seat ten or carry a mountain of cargo with the seats folded. The seats can also be rearranged to sleep two. Price?—£A1400 to £A1500. . . .



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LP-4

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