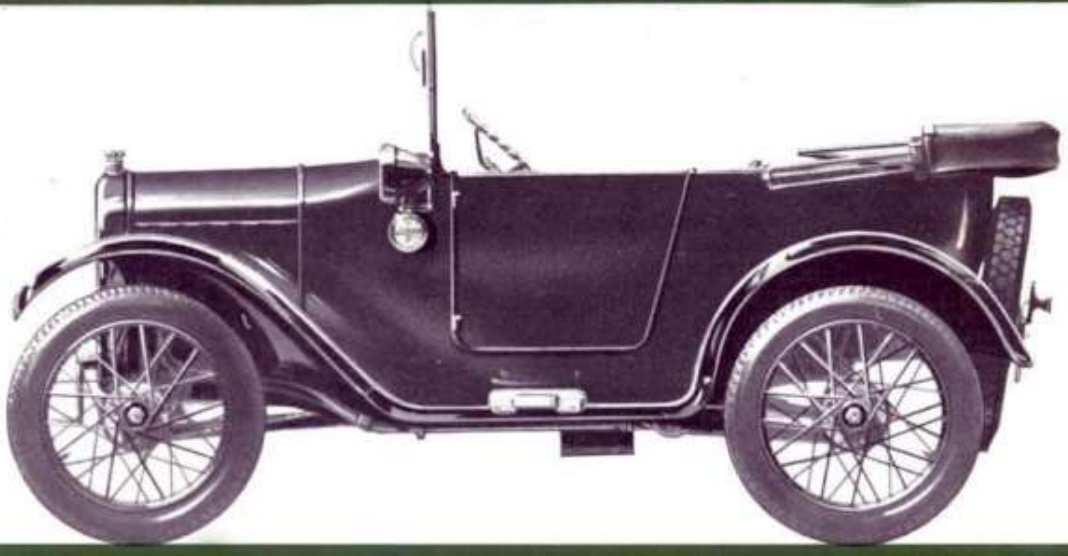
The Austin Seven



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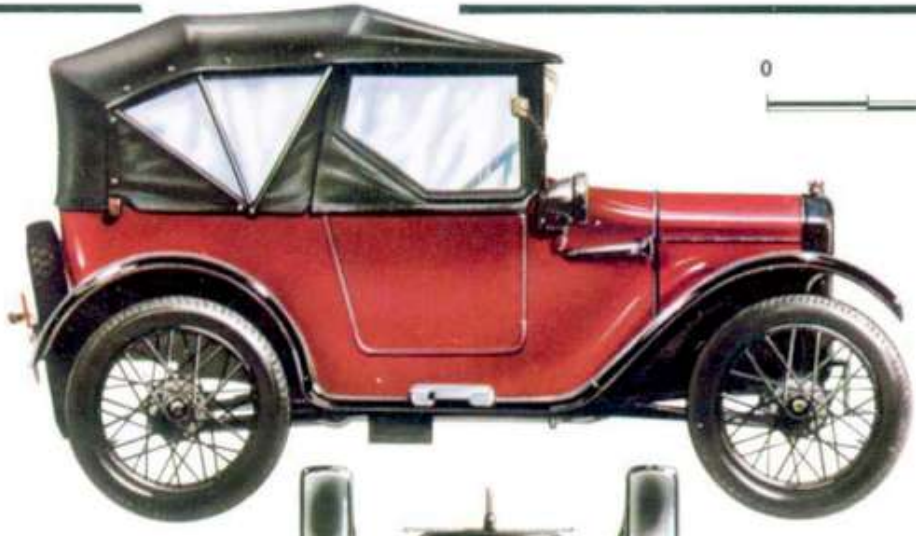


THE 1925 AUSTIN SEVEN
4-SEATER TOURER.
Owner:
Paul Nicholas, Esquire.

Photographed in 1926, this Chummy is included for the sake of its passengers. Nothing could be more perfectly in period than the trilby hat and silver fox. (Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)

by D. B. Tubbs

The Austin Seven

Confucius, it may have been, who remarked that the Austin Seven is not so much a motor-car as a habit of mind. Certainly more Austin Sevens have been rebuilt in bed-sitters than any other model. They lend themselves to the treatment not only dimensionally but ecologically, for it is a well-established fact that many a couple in the mid-1920s chose to have a Baby Austin rather than a baby of their own.

In 1922 when Sir Herbert Austin announced the Seven the idea of Motoring for the Million, as the papers called it, was quite new in England. The motorist or 'owner driver' as he was often called, was regarded as an enviable eccentric, possessing more enterprise and considerable more expertise than most. The cyclecar movement that flourished immediately before and immediately after the Kaiser war was designed to cater for the layman's needs—indeed it liked to be referred to as 'the New Motoring'—but cyclecars were too crude for all but the lunatic fringe, and full-sized cars too expensive. A motor-cycle and sidecar suited the father of a family moderately well but was quite unrideable by his wife in ordinary clothes.

A TENDER FOR THE COUNTRY HOUSE

The man who saw this most clearly was Sir Herbert Austin, of Longbridge, Birmingham, whose Austin Seven of 1922 was the first civilised motor-car of really small size. It has never been better described than in the foreword to the Austin Seven handbook. I quote from the second edition:

'The "Austin Seven" was introduced to supersede the sidecar combination. It seats two adults and three small children, or if children are not carried, a large space is available for luggage. Everyone is brought within the hood, while the car is fitted with a double-windscreen, and side curtains opening with the doors. . . .

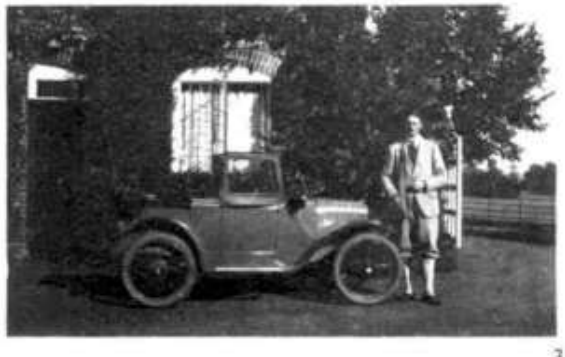
'This little car, which can be run for about a penny a mile, is an ideal car for a woman to use herself, enabling her to do the shopping without fatigue, to visit her friends more frequently and attend social and recreative functions. Another appeal is to the business man as it enables the executive to make the utmost use of his time, while his expenditure is no more than it would be on tram or bus fares, and there is no need to point out the value of such a car for the commercial traveller, who can penetrate into districts which poor train services would make it hardly worth his while to cover otherwise.

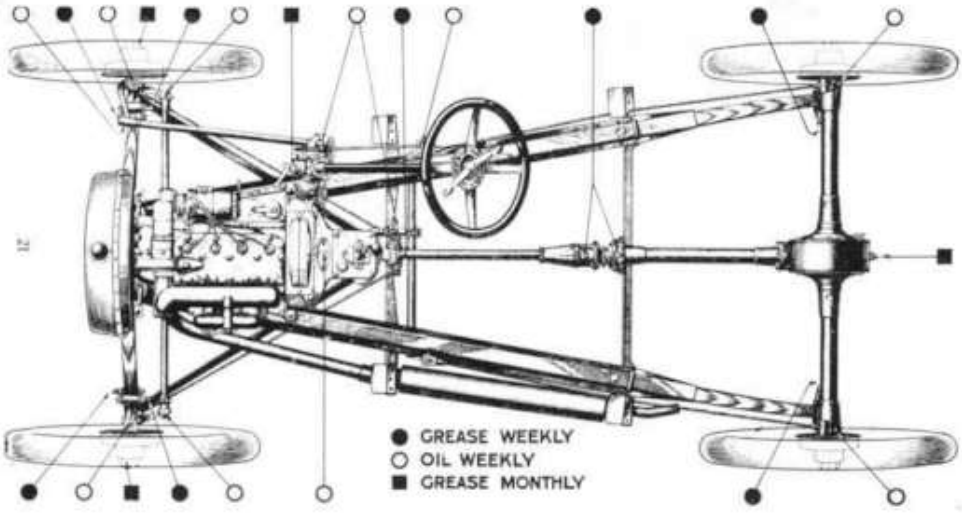
'The "Austin Seven" also serves as a tender for the country house, enabling a servant to go down to the village or post, or to the doctor at any time of the day or night, without the expense and trouble of getting out a big car. The speed, economy and road holding qualities of this small car place it beyond all comparison with the sidecar combination and it is in addition, a thoroughly good job, planned and made with the car instead of the motorcycle aspect in mind.'

There, in that mixture of naivety and pomposity that the British motor industry so seldom escapes, you have it.

The Seven was an immediate success. There had never been anything quite like it. Small cars in the Veteran period had been single or two-cylinder affairs lacking in weather protection; the nearest thing in Edwardian days had been the *Bébé* Peugeot (55 by 90, 856 c.c.) designed by, it is thought, Ettore Bugatti, which was quite a practical four-cylinder car in miniature: the *Bébé* had a catalogue life of only two or three years, and did not survive into the post-war period. Instead Peugeots introduced the long, narrow *Quadrilette*, the design of which was inspired not by motorcar but by cyclecar thinking. Lately, by a process of telescopic mythology these two models have grown together in the popular imagination, so that Austin is often said to have based his Seven on a Peugeot design. This is neither charitable nor true, except in so far as the *Bébé* had been (ultimately) a three-speed four-cylinder, and the Quad employed a transverse spring

". . . as a tender for the country house . . ."
(Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)





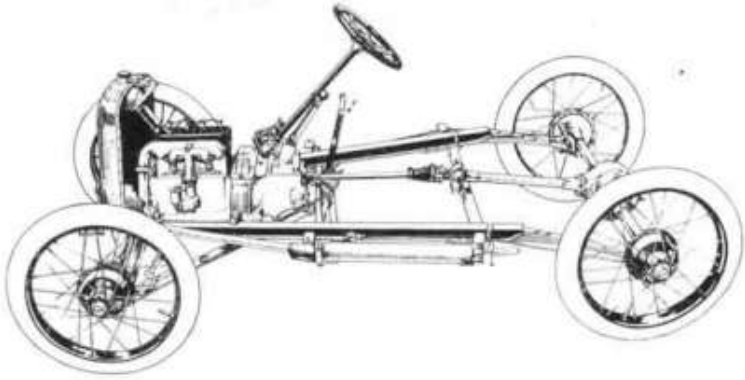
Left and Right: *Almost nothing could be simpler than the Seven chassis. As time went on longer and more substantial steel extension-pieces grew out parallel with the rear springs to hold the heavier bodywork. A D-shaped axle-casing superseded the banjo type in 1933.* (Drawing: Austin Motor Co. Ltd.)

at the front and quarter-elliptics behind. Otherwise it differed from the Austin in almost every way, having a plain-bearing engine, multiplate clutch, worm-drive back axle and a wheelbase of 7 ft. 7 in, as compared with 6 ft. 3 in. (75 inches) for the Austin Seven. One dimension was common to both the *Bébé* and the Austin, namely the cylinder bore on the 696 c.c. prototype, which was 55 by 75, and therefore 7.5 h.p. by R.A.C./S.A.E. rating, and well into the 8 h.p. taxation class. Herbert Austin was rather a one for fiscal misnomers, his 'Twelve' having paid tax on 13 h.p. and his 'Twenty' on 23 h.p. Realising that the Seven was really an eight he took the logical step of increasing the bore to 56 (2.2 inches), thus getting as big a bore as he could for 8 h.p. At the same time he added a millimetre to the stroke to bring the engine within rebore tolerances of 750 c.c., the limit of international Class H for competition purposes.

The chassis was ingenious and almost rustic in its simplicity. The frame was shaped like a letter A, the apex of which formed a mounting for the radiator and a point of attachment for the transverse leaf spring. The legs of the A, made from inverted U-section steel, stopped just aft of the front seats. From these channel frame members a quarter-elliptic spring protruded on each side, like legs emerging from a pair of trousers, the back axle being shackled to the ends of these springs. The engine was in unit with the three-speed gearbox, the back of which rested on a cross-member. From the latter a short open prop-shaft ran aft to the cross-piece of the A, where it kept its rear universal; from here aft the prop-shaft was enclosed in a torque-tube, the latter having a double ball-jointed mounting on the cross-member at its forward end and being bolted at the other to the symmetrical banjo casing of the spiral-bevel final drive and differential. The rear axle shafts were semi-floating at first, later three-quarter floating; ball bearings and thrusts throughout. Early cars were subject to a malady which could have picturesque consequences. When a half-

Within a year of its coming on the market the Seven had been adapted to the needs of the commercial traveller by means of a lid like that supplied with Lancias.
(Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)

The Austin Seven was a 'natural' for publicity photos. The girls enter into the spirit of the thing in November, 1923, the spirit in question being Pratt's High Test Motor Spirit, predecessor of Esso. (Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)



shaft broke, as they often did, the rear track of one's Austin would increase on one side as the shaft withdrew itself from the axle like a sword from its scabbard, until shaft and wheel went bouncing away down the road. This type of axle was referred to as 'semi-detached.' In 1933 the three-piece 'banjo' gave way to a two-piece D-shaped axle-casing.

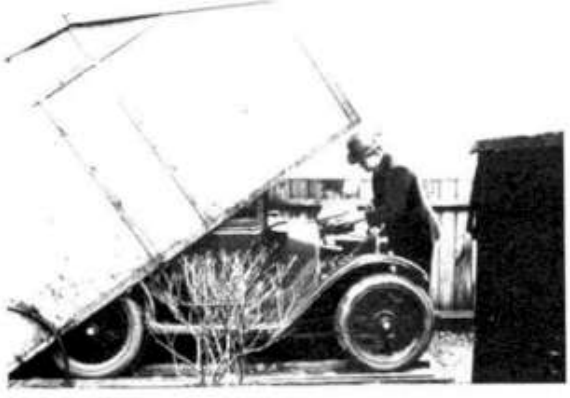
Viewed in plan the front of the car, too, presented an A-shaped appearance, the sides of the A being radius rods running back from the stub axles to trunnion bearings on the back of the gearbox. Steering was by worm and sector, fully adjustable for wear. It was very high-geared.

Four-wheel brakes were proudly offered by Sir Herbert a couple of years before they appeared on Rolls-Royce. They were, he said, compensated and instantly adjustable. All brake parts were interchangeable. There is no doubt about the Seven's complying with the law, which calls for two independent braking systems, for the back brakes worked by the pedal and the front ones by hand-brake only. Clearly the pedal was regarded as the service brake, for customers were instructed 'when descending a long hill' to 'supplement the action of the foot-brake at intervals by the use of the handbrake for brief periods.' By putting the car on to full lock it was possible to jerk the hand-brake cable taut on one side, thus causing the car to pirouette. This was occasionally done on purpose. Austin brakes, like those of many Bugattis, were notoriously feeble, although for a different reason; for whereas *Le Patron* deplored good brakes because they took the way off, 'Pa' Austin did so because they encouraged furious driving.

'SPIT AND HOPE'

The fury in this case was provided by a rather charming little water-cooled 'four' of great simplicity. It had side-by-side valves, a detachable head with compression-taps, and the block was detachable from the aluminium crankcase. Lubrication was by a system known to heptaphiles as 'spit and hope': that is to say a vane oil pump driven by skew gears from the camshaft raised oil to a gallery along the top of the crankcase from which faith, hope and gravity caused it to run down little jets and be caught by catchment pockets in the webs of the crankshaft and thence down oilways to the plain big-ends. The camshaft bearings were lubricated by the same pump, but the pistons, little-ends and mains were quite adequately looked after by oil-mist, as the back main had roller bearings and the front one a roller-race with a ball-race in front of it. The valve-gear was oiled by a breather in the valve-chest. Oil collected on the walls of the crankcase and returned to the sump by gravity, leaving the larger impurities on top of a gauze filter. Owners were instructed to remove two brass nuts on top of the crankcase every so often and clean the jets with a straight piece of $\frac{1}{16}$" wire. Oil pressure seldom exceeded 5 lb per square inch and there was no gauge, merely a small button on the dashboard which protruded so long as the oil was circulating and could be depended upon to leak on to the driver's trousers or skirt whenever the occasion demanded smart clothes. Ignition was by magneto.

The earliest engines gave 10.5 b.h.p. at 2,400 r.p.m., a peak speed corresponding to just over 38 m.p.h. in top gear (4.9: 1) Second (9: 1) gave 21 m.p.h. and bottom (16: 1) 13½ m.p.h. at these revs. Owners could claim any speed they wished as there was no speedometer to say them nay; the only instrument was



The enterprising E. C. Gordon England not only raced Austin Sevens and built the Cup model and a special saloon, he also marketed a portable garage. He is here refuelling one of his saloons.
(Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)

The Austin 7, like the Model T Ford which it somewhat resembled, was light enough to go anywhere, on the road or across country.

The Austin made many friends overseas. Miss Bell and Miss Reitz pose for their photograph after motoring without incident over 850 miles between Grahamstown, Natal, and Cape Town in June 1926. (Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)

an ammeter. A pair of miniature head-cum-side lamps were mounted beside the scuttle, illumined by battery and dynamo, and provided with a dimmer. There was no self-starter on early cars, and none is mentioned in the *second* edition of the Austin Seven Handbook. These early machines had 26 × 3 in. non-skid tyres on three-stud wire wheels, inflated to 35 pounds per square inch. The windscreen was a two-piece, the front side-screens opened with the doors, there was a good hood and the whole car, including the radiator and lamps, was stove-enamelled like a motor cycle. So much for people who scrape and polish an Austin Seven radiator. Lamps, wings and running-boards were black. A very practical little all-weather car, the open tourer or 'Chummy'—with a wheelbase of 75 inches and a track of 40 inches, it weighed only 7 cwt (784 pounds) and it was a lot shorter than today's 10 ft. Mini—8 ft. 10 in. overall.

It was at once small and cheeky. Cartoonists loved it. They pictured a Seven sheltering under the cape of a point-duty policeman, and drew a brace of them slung from davits on a Rolls. The public laughed, but they queued up to buy. The Seven was an instant success. I wish one could call it a good car.

THE MARGINAL VICTIM

Sir H. Austin's 'Baby' had two virtues. It was small, and it was almost indestructible, being made like the Model T Ford for the most part of excellent material. There are in fact many parallels between the two cars. They each tapped a new market by providing cheap transport for the marginal motorist, they each bred a host of jokes, and they both inspired loyalty and affection in their victims, because the latter were mainly of two kinds—those who did not know what a good car was, and those who aspired to improve the manufacturer's design. So often in history it has been the bad cars that have inspired the loyalty. A sort of Prodigal Son syndrome.

The Austin Seven chassis had the virtue of simplicity but as a motor-car frame it was terrible. As the front spring was shackled at each end and attached only in the middle, with no Panhard rod to locate it laterally, the axle was free to move from side to side under stress of bumps or cornering. The rear-axle geometry was equally wayward, since the length of each quarter-

M.C.C. trials like the London-Exeter, London-Edinburgh and London-Land's End attracted many Austin Seven entries. This one seems to be climbing well, assisted by chains and a bouncing passenger in the back.
(Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)

All-weather Tourer. An early modification to the original Chummy was the wider door with sloping rear edge. The rigid side-curtains were regarded as extremely weather-tight in 1927.
(Photo: Austin Motor Co. Ltd.)

elliptic spring changed according to the load being applied to it by cargo or cornering-forces. As Bill Williams put it in his useful book 'Austin Seven Specials' (G. T. Foulis & Co. Ltd., 1958), 'when the chassis rolls outwards as the car takes a corner, the outer rear spring will flex more than the inner and, being steeply cambered, it will increase in length as it flattens out, pushing the outer wheel backwards in relation to the chassis. At the same time, the weight being relieved from the other spring, it moves the inner wheel forward. Thus the back end is steered outwards, causing violent oversteer which the driver must continually correct. The same effect is felt when the car is traversing a bumpy road.'

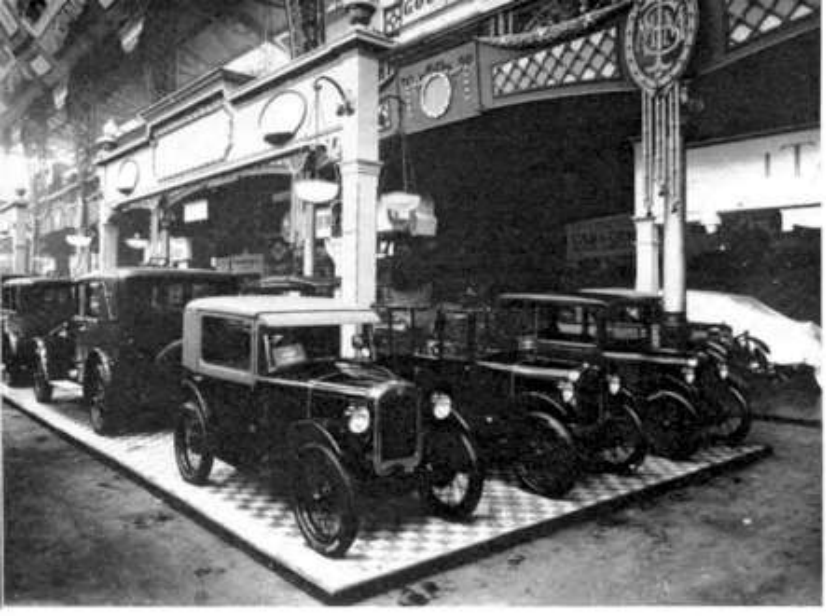
The brakes on most Austin Sevens were nugatory, a mere concession to the survival wish. On the other hand the clutch pedal was most dramatic in its effects, there being little more than a quarter of an inch of travel—or so it seemed—between 'out' and 'in'. There was a marked lack of science in the cylinder-head design, castings varied considerably from car to car, and the roller-bearing engine kept up a continuous rumble and growl. Notwithstanding all this many thousands of people learned to drive on Austin Sevens; indeed it was truly said that anyone who could drive a Baby Austin so that it felt like a motorcar could drive anything. It required good 'hands' and great sympathy with the mechanism. The Seven clutch and torque-tube made the fortune of at least one music-hall artist, part of whose act entailed making the car bounce up and down without moving forward at all. Not every motor-car will do this. In 1923, its first year, the Seven 'Chummy' cost £165, or just about the same as the most expensive Morgan three-wheeler. At that time a Morris Cowley cost £415. What is more, the Austin went an absurdly long way on a gallon of petrol. There were comparisons with a cigarette-lighter.

Beguiled at first by the thought that so small a car would run at all, people soon turned to making it run quickly. The works themselves raced under the aegis of A. C. R. Waite, Sir Herbert Austin's son-in-law, and many amateurs tuned their cars for power and speed. The principal limitation seemed to be 'whip' from the crankshaft at high revs causing the pistons to smite the head, which, considering that the shaft had no centre bearing and was only an inch and one-eighth in diameter, was not surprising. Nonetheless sports and racing Sevens had a long and worthy history, which will be examined in later Profiles.

The Baby seems to have been very much a private venture on the part of Austin himself, designed, it is said, on the billiard table at his home, Berwood Grove, Erdington, unknown to his fellow-directors. Desperate remedies were needed, for although the Austin Motor Company had done well during the war and Mr Austin

The Seven chassis was popular with coachbuilders, who managed to produce some very light fabric bodies. Jarvis became famous later for their racing bodies on George Eyston's M.G.s.
(Photo: Montagu Motor Museum)

The late 1920s produced a yearning for closed cars, and Weymann or sham Weymann fabric bodies were chosen for lightness. Here master and man show off a two-door fabric saloon.
(Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)



London Motor Show, Olympia, October 1928: Coupé, Tourer and Fabric Saloon. (Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)

had emerged from it with a munitions knighthood, the post-war slump had nearly killed it and the official receiver was in. 'Well', said Austin, 'we've lost everything except our good name, we must be careful not to lose that.' He was a little sheepish about the Seven to begin with. Showing off the prototype to the wife of his colleague A. J. W. Hancock he said 'Well, that's what we've got to come to!'

The price of the original 696 c.c. Seven, announced in July 1922 was £225, but by December of that year the capacity was up to 747 c.c. and the price down to £165 for 'this energetic little car' as *The Light Car and Cyclecar* called it. Their road test spoke cautiously of the brakes, though, remarking that 'the front-wheel brakes are not startlingly sudden and tremendously powerful in action'. A brilliant bit of journalistic meiosis. They commented on the family likeness to the Austin Twenty and explained that the inlet and exhaust manifolds were made in one casting, and the exhaust led out forwards not in the interests of gas-flow but to avoid cooking the driver's feet. In July 1923 the cruising speed was given as 20-25 m.p.h., with a 'comfortable' maximum of 35 m.p.h. Some early cars were fitted with a not very effective hand-starter device in the cockpit capable of turning the engine one and a half revs. Electric starting followed in January 1924, when the Chummy was joined by a two-seater. The following month *The Light Car and Cyclecar* praised the Austin gearbox with faint damns: 'With a little practice', they said, 'a clean change can be made from top to second at speeds up to 25 m.p.h.' An interesting sidelight on Vintage driving methods. A long-tailed sports model was also announced at £175, complete with raked steering-column and gear-lever, shock-absorbers, speedometer, fan and electric starter. The Gordon England sports Austin appeared in August 1924 but these are outside the scope of this Profile.

In September 1924 the Chummy was given a vertical windscreen and more graceful scuttle, the doors were widened at the top, a fan was fitted and so were shock-absorbers. A fabric front universal replaced the metal one. Competition in the car world was quite keen: the Austin at £155 found itself up against the 7.5 h.p. Citroen two-seater at £145, the 'cloverleaf' three-seater at £155 and a coupé at £170, but Austin sales continued to mount so that by March 1928 chassis numbers had reached nearly the 60,000 mark, and 10,000 Austin Sevens had been exported.

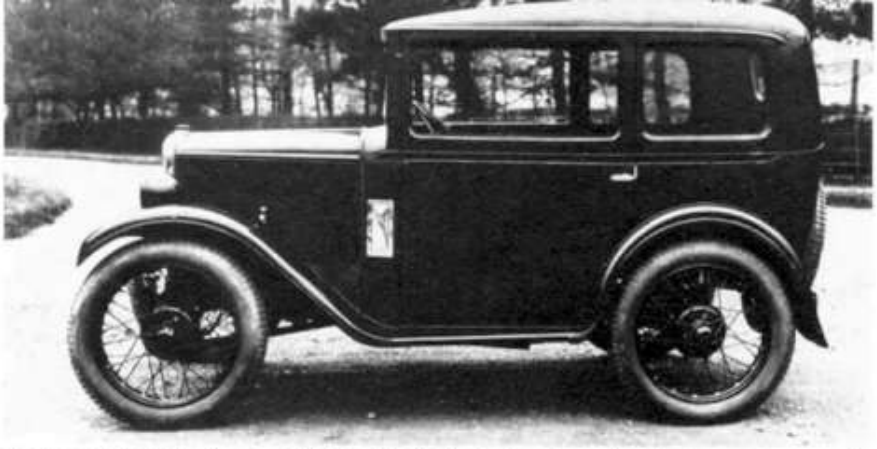
SALOON SEVENS

By this time the Chummy had acquired a built-on lid—at least that is what the first saloons looked like, although the doors were rectangular. The panelled saloon was joined by a fabric one built at the works and an alternative Mulliner fabric saloon at the same price, £135. Gordon England also marketed a rather rakish little saloon the following year at £160. Tastes had become more sophisticated and saloon bodies were fashionable. One of the best was an all-weather fabric saloon with fixed cantrails and a fully opening head called the Merlyn, designed by the well-known architect R. A. Duncan, F.R.I.B.A., who achieved almost big-car lines by abolishing the running-board and valances, and adding a horizontal line. It was to sell for £185.

Other highly individual Sevens at this time were offered by the Swallow sidecar and body people, a concern run by a young man called William Lyons. They had an 'Easter-egg' back and a cowled radiator. The saloon, painted in two colours, the upper colour being brought to a point at the radiator cap, cost £187 10s. The Swallow two-seater with hood cost £170; with detachable coupé or hard top £180; or with both kinds of lid £185 10s.

The 1930 season brought the first important changes in specification. The crankshaft was thickened to $1\frac{5}{16}$ inches and a ball-change gear-lever superseded the gate, to the fury of the die-hard drivers. For 1931 the chassis was strengthened and re-inforced with another longitudinal member, and the front and rear brakes were coupled for the first time. Prices were reduced and no

Pratt's publicity again. By 1929 the lamps have moved forward from the scuttle and the radiator is nickel-plated. Wings, too, have a deeper section.
(Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)



A 1932 fabric saloon on the short wheelbase.
(Photo: Austin Motor Co. Ltd.)

driving) it showed 38 m.p.g. The weight had crept up to 12¾ cwt and the turning-circle (4·75/16 tyres) was 38½ ft. The Girling brakes were now much better, giving a stopping-distance of 37 feet from 30 m.p.h. (82 per cent). A few 1938 and 1939 cars were fitted with Girling rod brakes, and in those years the big-ends had shell bearings. The Seven continued until July 1938 when it was superseded by an inexpressibly dreary 900 c.c. creation with much more room called the Big Seven, which will not be described.

During its seventeen years the Austin appeared in many guises including a special model for the War Office. It was made in France under the name of Rosengart, in Germany as the Dixi where it made the fortune of the BMW concern, and in Japan as the Datsun. The American version known first as the American Austin and later as the Bantam, sold 6,700 cars, although always in financial straits. British production exceeded a quarter of a million cars. The last chassis was numbered 290135.

* * *

Austin Seven fanciers, like Bugattisti and devotees of the Model T Ford, are apt to resent objective criticism. It was not done, for instance, to notice the rumble from the mains nor the tinkling from the unlubricated clutch withdrawal, or the continuous symphonic variations from the fan pulley when the belt was over-tightened, as it usually was. The writer was exposed to Austin Sevens in the family from 1929 until 1939 with annual changes, so he speaks from experience. The virtues of economy, reliability and small size were always apparent, as was a certain whimsical charm; but it was obvious that neither the owner nor his circle of friends applied normal motoring standards to the Seven, and they resented those who did, as 'regulars' in a public house resent outside criticism of the beer. The sporting Austin Sevens were quite another matter. The writer owned an Ulster with great enjoyment, but when compelled by circumstances to operate that most top-heavy of cars, a 1938 Ruby saloon, for six weeks he relinquished it with relief while freely admitting that downhill with a following wind it gave a greater impression of speed than any other car he had been in. Verily 'the price of wisdom is above Rubies.'

SPECIFICATION: AUSTIN SEVEN 1923 MODEL

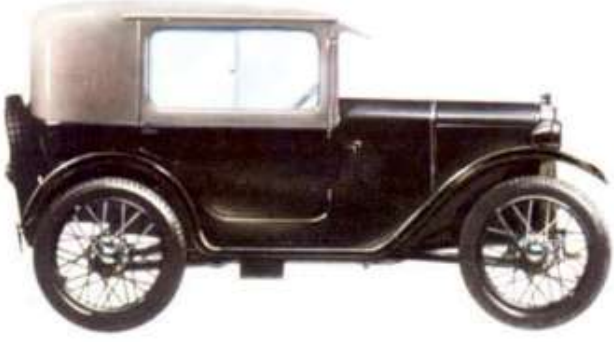
Engine: Four cylinder, water cooled, detachable head. Bore 2·2 in. (56 mm). Stroke 3 in., (76·2 mm) 45·6 cu. in. (747·5 c.c.) RAC/SAE rating 7·8 h.p. B.h.p. 10·5 at 2,400 rpm. Ignition: magneto. Lubrication by pump. Thermo-syphon cooling with film radiator. Fan optional for export. Crankshaft bearings: front, ball and roller; rear, roller.
Clutch: Single dry plate.
Gearbox: Three speeds, ratios 4·9, 9 and 16 to 1. Reverse 21 to 1.
Rear Axle: Semi-floating, with differential and torque-tube. Final drive by shaft and helical bevel; metal universals.
Springs: Transverse semi-elliptic front; quarter-elliptic at rear.
Steering: Worm and sector, with provision for taking up wear.
Front Axle: Forged, H section.
Brakes: On all four wheels. Hand-brake to front wheels; foot-brake to rear wheels.
Wheels: Special wire wheels, detachable. 26 in. by 3 in. non-skid tyres.
Petrol Tank: 4 gallons.
Lighting: By gear-driven dynamo, with accumulator and dimmer.
Dimensions: Overall length 8 ft. 10 in. Overall width 3 ft. 10 in.

Army Model. Shod with motor-cycle tyres and affectionately known as the 'Pram', this model was much used by officers on manoeuvres.
(Photo: 750 Motor Club)

The Austin-built fabric-bodied 4-seater saloon.

The Wembley Saloon by Gordon England Ltd.

The Austin-built 2-seater fixed-head coupé.



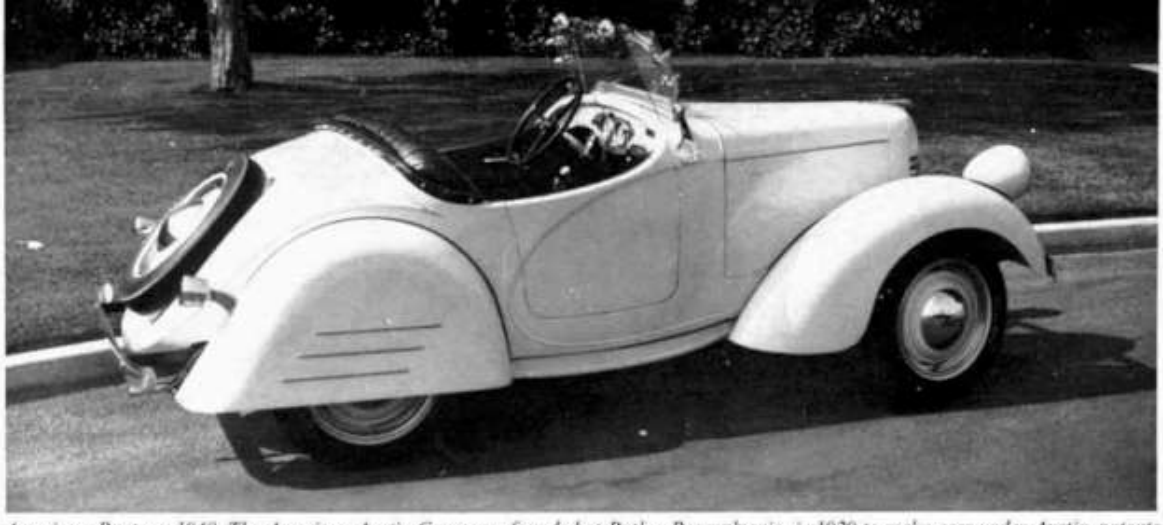
The later (1929) 4-seater tourer (Chummy). Compare with page No. 2.

The standard Austin-built 4-seater saloon.

The Mulliner (of Birmingham) fabric-bodied 4-seater saloon.

The 1929 Swallow 4-seater saloon by Swallow Sidecars Ltd. of Blackpool.

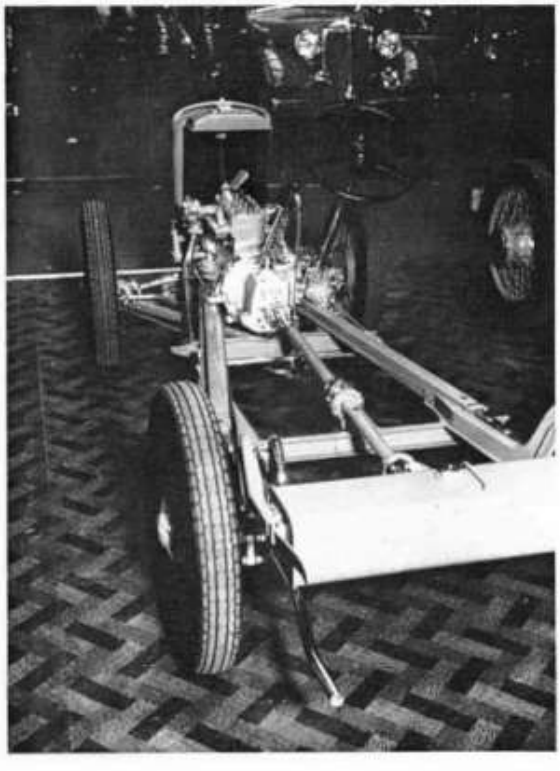
The Mulliner 2-seater coupé with boot.



American Bantam, 1940. The American Austin Company, founded at Butler, Pennsylvania, in 1929 to make cars under Austin patents failed in 1934 because Americans would not take the car seriously. It was reconstructed, and the designer, Harry Hazard, re-worked chassis and engine to dodge Austin patents. This machine is basically a development of the 1929 Austin Seven.
(Photo: J. Underwood, 750 Motor Club)

Wheelbase 6 ft. 3 in., track 3 ft. 4 in., weight 7 cwt approx.
Bodywork: Two bucket seats for driver and passenger, instantly adjustable and detachable. Rear seat to carry two or three children. Hood, double screen and full side curtains (those over doors open with them). Electric horn. Road clearance 9 in. The panels are stove-enamelled for durability of finish and ease of cleaning.
Workmanship and Materials: Austin quality.
Insurance: Special insurance has been arranged at £8 10s. per annum.
Makers: The Austin Motor Co. Ltd., Longbridge, Birmingham.

A show-finished chassis at Olympia 1935. Note stouter cross-members, heavy extensions, fatter tyres and rear fuel tank.
(Photo: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library)



PRINCIPAL CHANGES

1924: Electric starter. **1925**: Tyres 700 by 80. **1927**: 26 in. by 3½ in. Dunlop balloon tyres; small body-carrying extensions on frame. **1929**: 16 in. rad. with nickel-plated shell replaces 14½ in. painted brass. Coil ignition, larger dynamo. **1930**: Stronger, 1-7/16 in crankshaft. Direct starter. Ball change instead of gate. **1931**: Coupled brakes. Central stiffening rib to chassis. 17½ in. radiator with chromium shell. **1933**: Wheelbase now 6 ft. 9 in., rear track 3 ft. 7 in. Tyres 4.00 by 17 or 3.50 by 19. Gear positions reversed, 5·25 axle ratio. Starter motor on off side. Brake drums increased from 1 in. to 1¼ in. in width; Two-piece 'D' axle casing. **1934**: Rubber engine mountings. All-ball front bearing; syncromesh on 3rd and top. **August 1934**: syncromesh on 2nd, 3rd, top. Automatic ignition control. **1935**: 17 in. wheels replace 19 in. Larger brake-shoe leverage. Positive-earth wiring. Pressed steel radiator shell with vertical slats. **1936**: c.i. brake drums; steel brake-shoes instead of aluminium. Centre bearing for crankshaft. New cyl. head, 14 mm sparking plugs. **1937**: 5·125 to 1 axle. Girling cable brakes. **1938**: Thin shell big-end bearings; a few chassis had Girling rod brakes. 4·75 by 16 tyres on export models.

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Austin Sevens were manufactured under licence in France (Rosengart), Japan (Datsun) and Germany (B.M.W. Dixi). The car shown is a Dixi 3/15 PS (h.p.) Limousine series DA 1 (8th thousand) built in 1928. (Photo: 750 Motor Club)

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