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—MEMORIES—

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THE FACTORIES

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JAGUAR MEMORIES: THE FACTORIES

Welcome to the forth issue of Jaguar Memories, the penultimate offering for 2021 and where we take a look at the factories that moulded Jaguar we know today. From Swallow Sidecars in Blackpool, to producing E-Types in the Midlands, we chart the journey from 1922 and end up at Jaguar Land Rover's state-of-the-art engine facility, opened in 2014.

One figure who looms particularly large in the Jaguar story is William Lyons. Co-founding Swallow Sidecars with William Walmsley in the seaside town of Blackpool, the firm specialised in building motorcycle sidecars from a small factory just down the road from Blackpool Football Club ground. As the business grew, as did their diversity, with car coachbuilding and rebodied Austin Sevens in particular becoming a mainstay in this fledgling firm. The company took on some specialist craftsman and obtained an Austin Seven chassis. Under the direction of Lyons, a handsome and sporty-looking two-seater body was created and dubbed the Austin Swallow. It went on sale in May 1927 at the very reasonable price - around £11,000 today.

Lyons now wanted to be at the centre of the action, in the heart of the UK automotive industry, the West Midlands. Along with a reluctant William Walmsley, larger premises around Coventry were found - Foleshill.

As the 1920s drew to a close, it was Swallows' relationship with Standard that was to prove especially beneficial - it allowed the company to produce their own cars, with the SS1 debuting at the 1931 British Motor Show, receiving plaudits far and wide. This was the impetus Lyons needed. After the split with business partner William Walmsley and Word War Two, SS Cars was rebranded to Jaguar and another factory move was on the cards. This time however, Jaguar's stay would last decades, I am, of course, talking about the spiritual Jaguar home, Browns Lane. From the D and E-Type to the X100 XK8, and the MkVII to the modern X350 XJ, every great Jaguar from this era was produced here.

By the 1960s Jaguar were flying with the launch of the E-Type taking things even higher. Jaguar dominated the luxury saloon car market too, however with the newly formed British Motor Holdings Limited (BMH) now in control a rocky couple of decades ensued. Through lack of investment the quality of Jaguar cars – and, therefore, Jaguar's image – suffered badly throughout the 1970s.

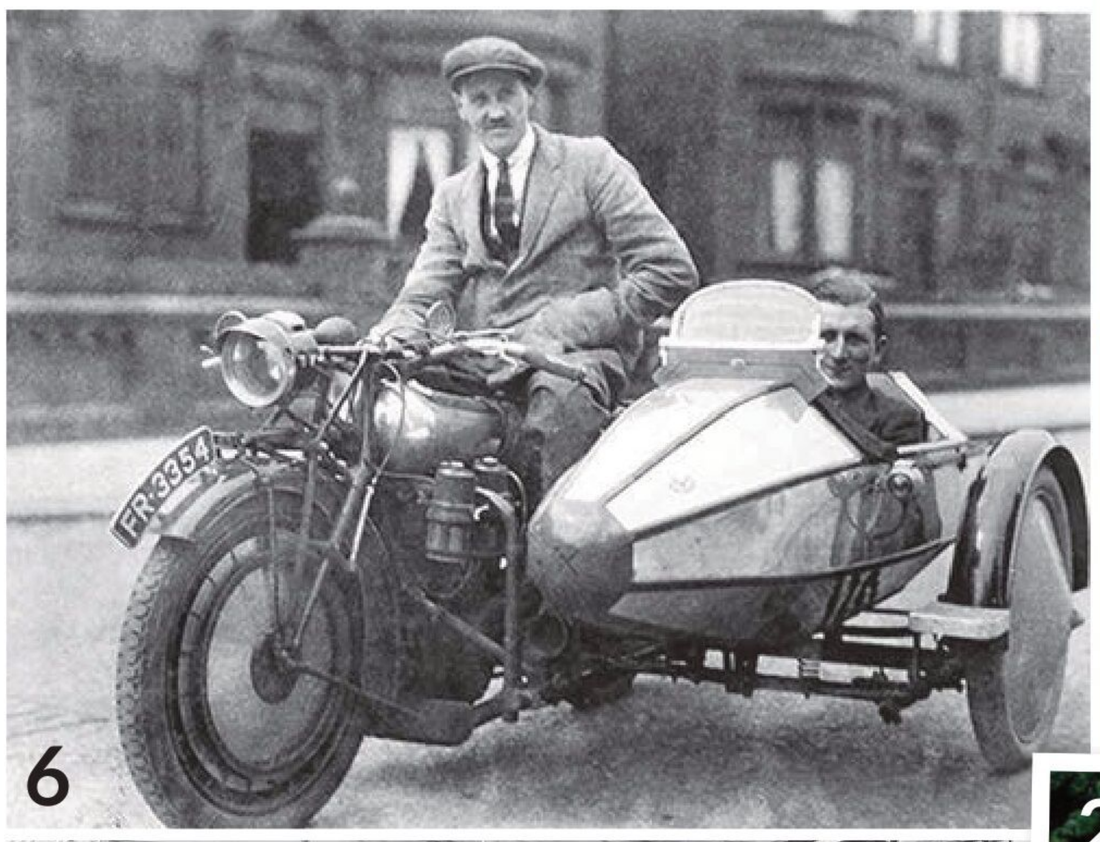
By the 1980s though, John Egan had become chairman and oversaw investment in the facilities, solved workers' issues and as such restored faith with the buying public. Sales rose and the short spell of independence from Leyland lasted until the end of the decade, when Jaguar was bought up by Ford. That said, Browns Lane remained something of an elephant in the room for Ford and in July 2005 the last car, an XJ Super V8 Portfolio, rolled off the line.

Jaguar still builds cars from its Castle Bromwich plant, as well as Solihull, and now has a dedicated engine manufacturing plant in Wolverhampton. From Blackpool, to Coventry, with a little bit of Liverpool thrown in, Jaguars still roll off the lines and may it continue for many years to come.

Paul Sander
Editor, Jaguar Memories

JAGUAR MEMORIES

The Factories



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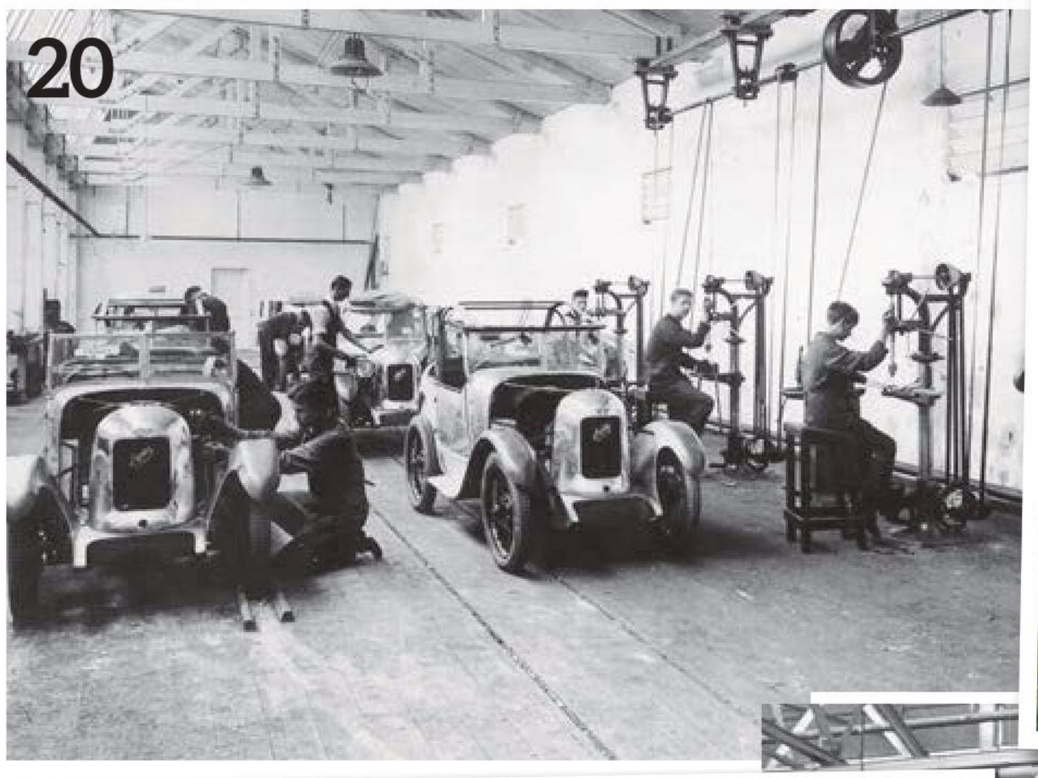

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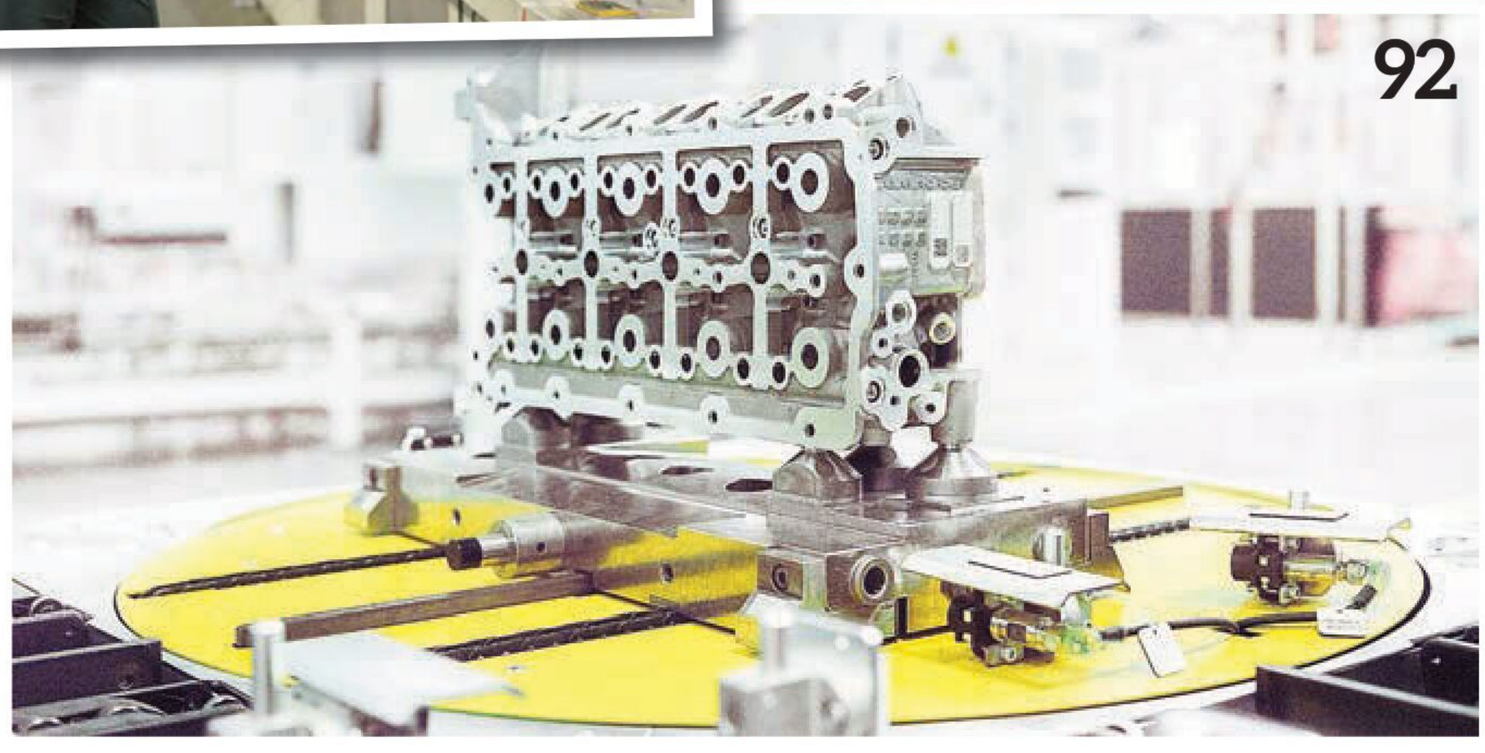

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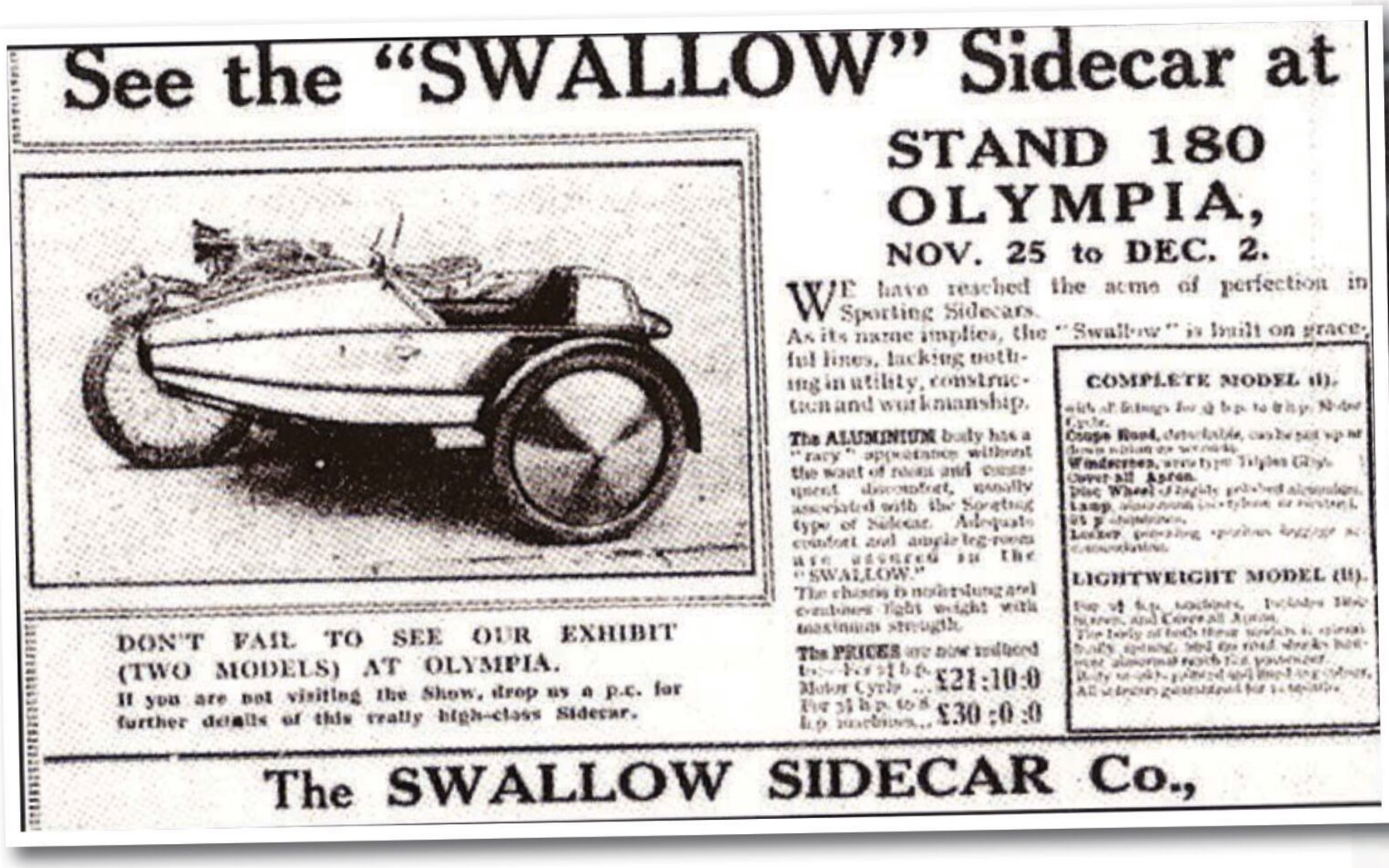
BLACKPOOL BEGINNINGS

Jaguar's 1920s origins were some distance away from the West Midlands car manufacturing heartland it would eventually call home. We look at how the company, and boss William Lyons, grew up in Blackpool

WORDS Richard Gunn

The glory days of Jaguar will forever be associated with the West Midlands, and its most famous factory at Browns Lane in Coventry, the ex-Daimler engine plant at Radford, and the Castle Bromwich assembly facility still in use today. But the company's growing pains were 150 miles away to the north west, in Blackpool. While no car bearing the Jaguar name was constructed in the Lancashire seaside resort – for the firm that eventually took the title was still the Swallow Coachbuilding Company when it moved to Coventry in 1928 – the products of Blackpool established the foundations that boss William Lyons would successfully build upon as Swallow evolved into Jaguar.

Why Blackpool though? Well, it's where William Lyons was born and lived. His birth was in September 1901 in the Lancashire town, the son of an Irish immigrant musical instrument shop owner and his wife, the daughter of a mill owner. Queen Victoria had only died at the beginning of the year, and under the new King, Edward VII, there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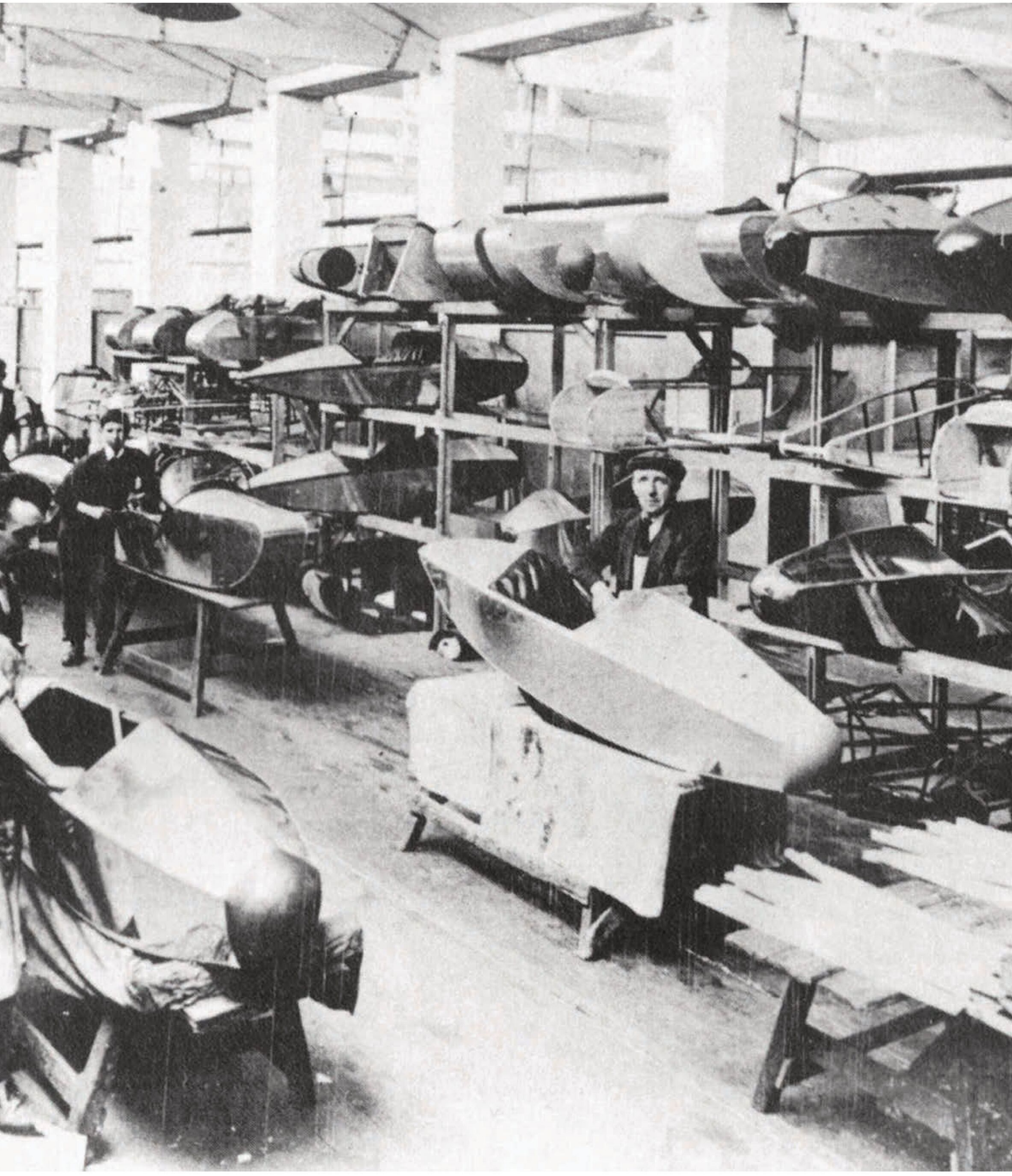
An 1922 advert for Swallow's appearance at the London Motor Cycle Show; it was appearances at events like these that gave the fledgling company considerable publicity.

Swallow sidecar production underway in the late 1920s.



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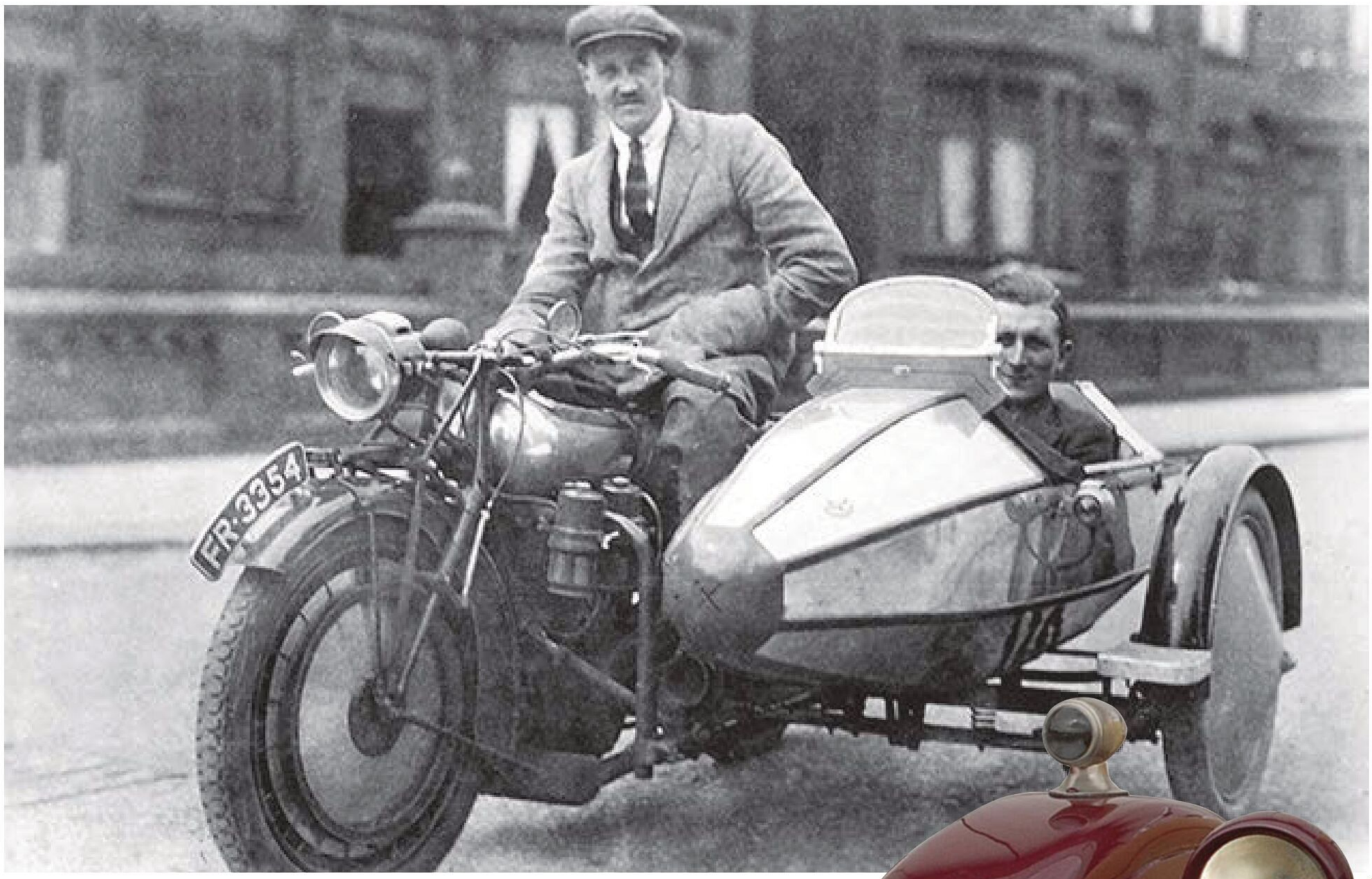


William Walmsley on the motorcycle, with William Lyons in one of Swallow's aluminium-bodied sidecars. The backdrop is King Edward Avenue, where they both lived.

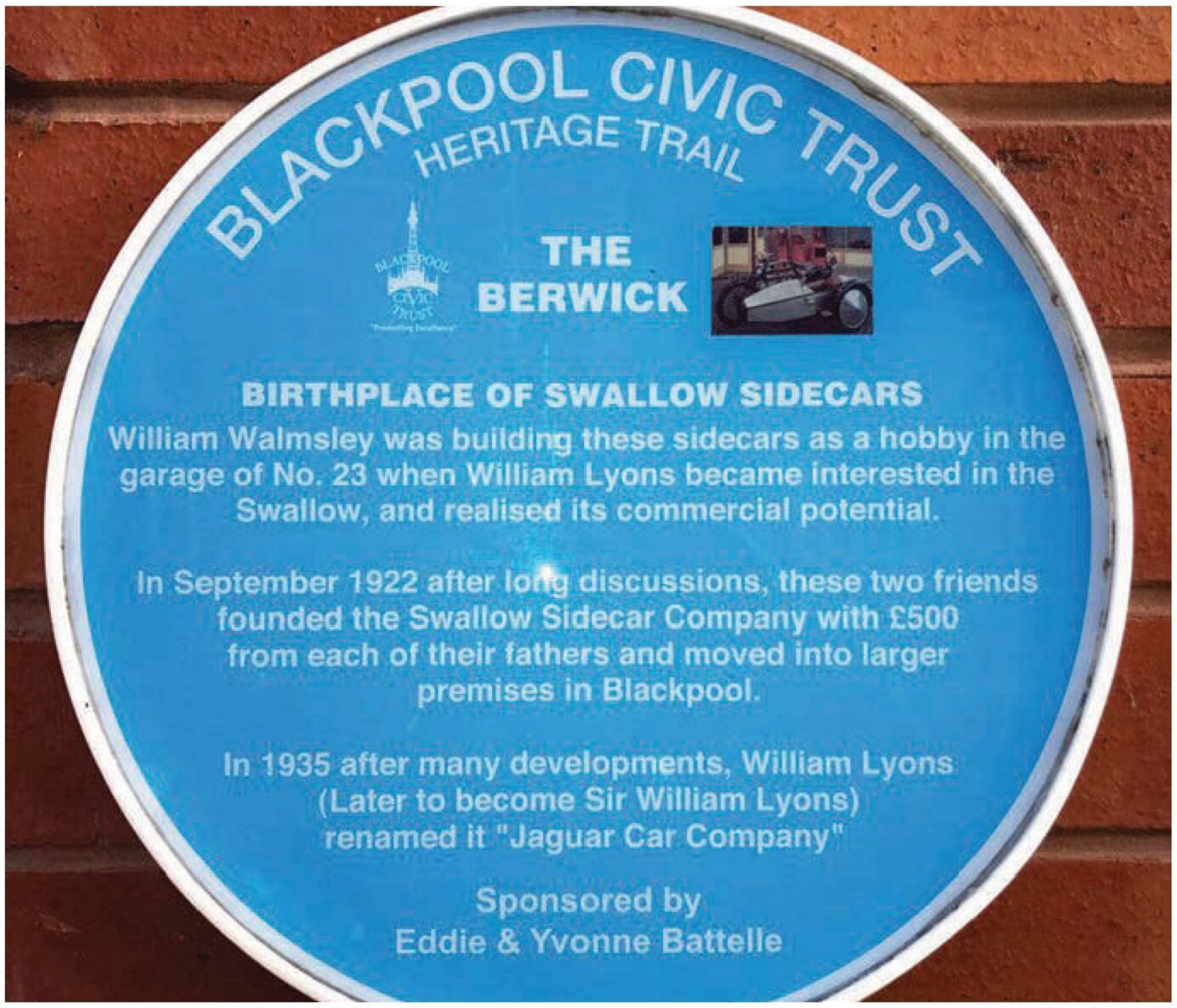
was already burgeoning interest in science and technology. It had only been 15 years since Karl Benz had invented his Patent-Motorwagen, but automobiles were slowly but surely proliferating. As William grew up, he found himself fascinated by machinery. His first workshop, as such, was Arnold House school where he started in April 1914 as 12-year-old. There, he'd tinker with bicycles and motorcycles, distracting him from academic studies and leading to his headmaster, Frank Pennington, telling him that he would 'never get anywhere messing about with engines'. He bought his first motorcycle while at school, a 1911 Triumph, and modified it to his own ideas before selling it for a 'substantial profit' after the First World War ended.

His interest in mechanical items inevitably prompted him to seek

An Austin Swallow open two-seater; the first car that Lyons turned his hand to creating.

The young William Lyons with his own favourite motorcycle, a Harley-Davidson.

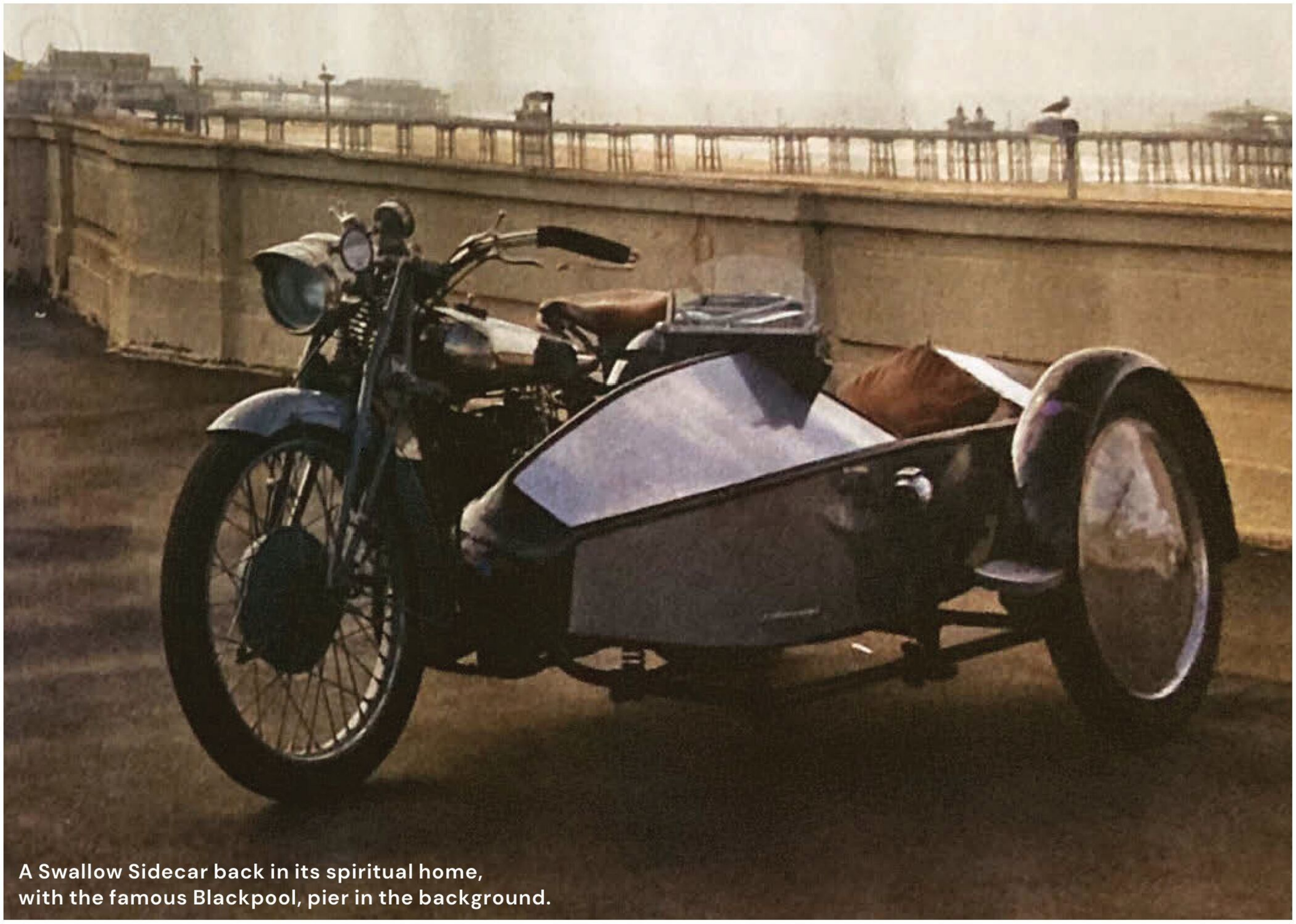
The Berwick Hotel on King Edward Avenue in Blackpool. It was here that Lyons and Walmsley began the Swallow company, that would eventually evolve into Jaguar.



The plaque that now adorns the front of 23 King Edward Avenue, telling of its significance in the Jaguar story.

a career in a similar field, and after leaving school in summer 1917, he took up an engineering apprenticeship with Manchester's Crossley Motors. In his spare time, he furthered his knowledge at the city's technical college. However, he soon departed Crossley and joined a local Blackpool motor dealership as a salesman. The return to his hometown proved fortuitous, for in 1921 the family moved to King Edward Avenue, one of the roads leading away from the seafront. Shortly afterwards, they got a new neighbour at number 23, William Walmsley. Like Lyons, he was a keen motorcycle enthusiast, but he went further than just tuning and rebuilding bikes. He'd also built a stylish streamlined aluminium sidecar of his own design for his Triumph. It was christened 'Ot-as-Ell' and Walmsley started using the small rear 14ft by 20ft garage of number 23 to build copies

IN THE BEGINNING



A Swallow Sidecar back in its spiritual home, with the famous Blackpool, pier in the background.

to sell, which he dubbed Swallows. William Lyons was one of those who was impressed by what he saw and bought a Swallow himself. Ownership only further enhanced his opinion of Walmsley's workmanship, and so Lyons suggested the two should set up a company producing them commercially.

If you visit 23 King Edward Avenue today, it's now a guest house called The Berwick. But a blue Blackpool Civic Trust plaque records the location as the birthplace of Swallow Sidecars, while inside, there's a small display detailing the place's significance in the Jaguar story. The garage that was Swallow Sidecar's first 'factory' - if it could really be called that - no longer survives, but there's a small service road around the back of number 23 where it once stood, amid other garages from the same period which give an idea of how tight and constrained the premises must have been. But from small acorns...

With the backing of £500 (the equivalent of around £30,000 today) each from their fathers, Lyons and Walmsley formally founded Swallow Sidecars in November 1922. Each drew a salary of £10 plus a share of any profits. Larger facilities were obviously a priority, and Lyons was introduced to a Mr Outhwaite, who owned a small electrical factory at 5 Bloomfield Road, almost across the road from Blackpool Football Club's ground. Its upper two floors were empty and for let; Lyons described it as an 'heaven-sent opportunity and so we decided to take it'. This building is still around today, as part of the Armfield Club for football supporters. But there's no plaque recalling its previous existence this time.

PROPER WORK GETS UNDERWAY

After Lyons and Walmsley had cleaned and prepared their new Bloomfield Road premises, proper work got underway. The first employees were trimmer Arthur Hollis, joiner Richard Binns, two tinsmiths, Joe Yates and Jim Greenwood, and a painter Cyril Marshall. There was also a 15-year-old apprentice and errand boy, Harry Gill. One of his tasks was taking cheques to Lyons' father to sign; there was a brief period when William Lyons was still under 21, and thus couldn't do them himself.

Walmsley was responsible for the practical side of things, Lyons handled the business organisation. He was soon assisted by the firm's first female member of staff, a Miss Atkinson. She was, he recalled, a 'funny little thing - very prim with thick glasses... she could not only do shorthand and

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CHASSIS No. S834923BW

1959 JAGUAR XK-150 S FHC
CHASSIS No. T835997DN

1959 JAGUAR XK-150 S FHC
CHASSIS No. 836012

1950 JAGUAR XK-120 ALLOY OTS
CHASSIS No. 670121

1951 JAGUAR MARK I SALOON
CHASSIS No. S986312BW

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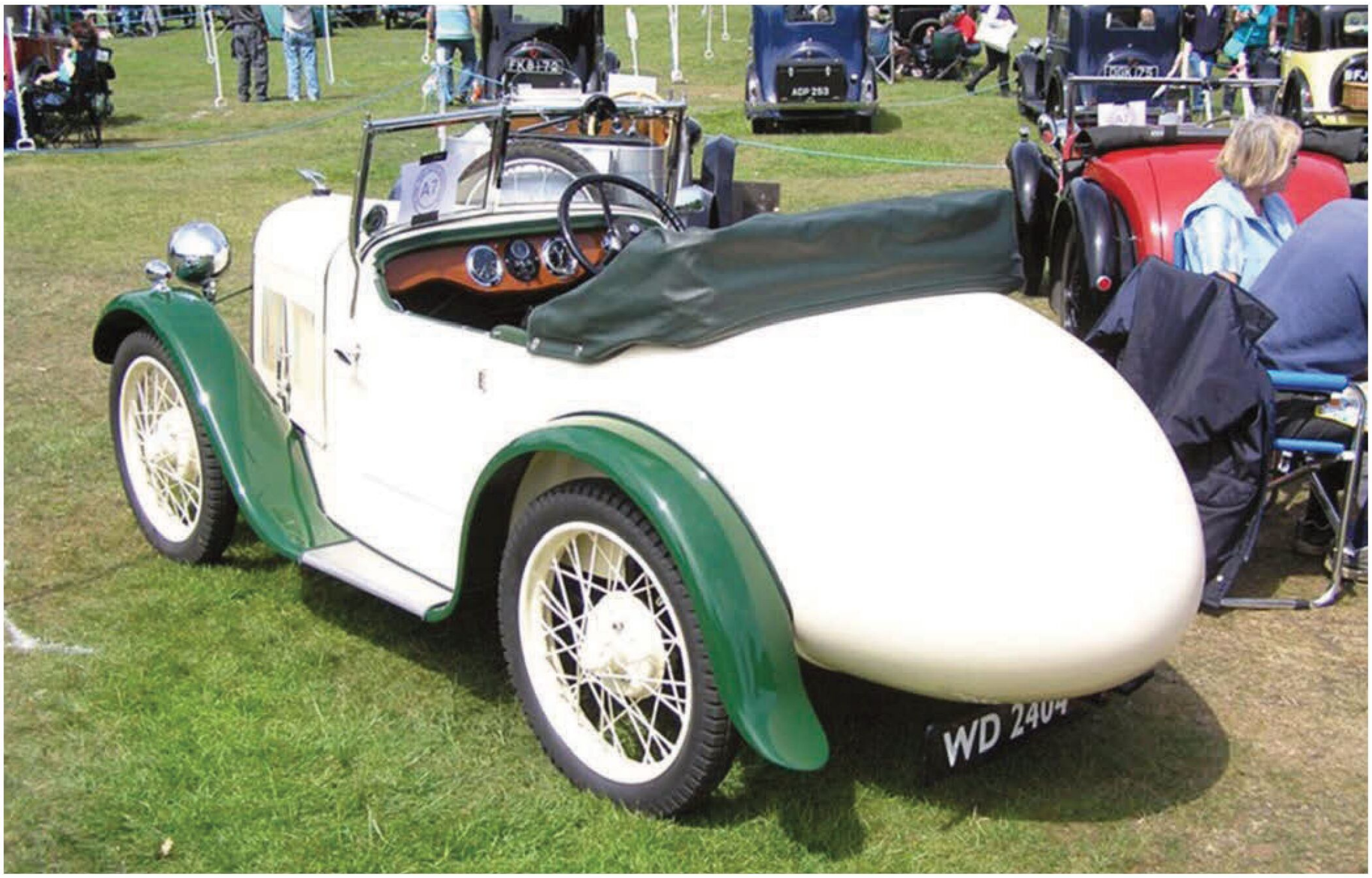
IN THE BEGINNING



Designed 'in house' by Lyons's own coachbuilder Cyril Holland, the 1927 Austin Seven Swallow was re-bodied Austin Seven chassis. The Swallow proved to be hugely popular and acted as the catalyst for the move from Blackpool to Jaguar's spiritual home, Coventry in 1928.

typing but understood the books, even if she did them rather untidily'.

In order to make ends meet, the company had to produce 10 sidecars a week. Its existence was initially quite perilous but within a year, it was doing so well that two additional nearby buildings had to be taken on to meet demand. The 'chairs' - as Lyons sometimes referred to what he was making - were being sold all over Britain and Europe, and there was considerable publicity from the November 1923 Motor Cycle Show in London, where several major motorcycle manufacturers displayed Swallow sidecars alongside their products.

By 1926, it was clear that Bloomfield Road and its annexes had been outgrown; not just for the amount of sidecars being demanded but also for Lyons' ambitions. He now wanted to do more than just

Above: The plaque, donated by Jaguar Cars Ltd, that is on the building which now stands on the site of Swallow's Cocker Street factory. Left: An advert for the Austin Swallow sold through Henlys; it was big orders from this business that helped make the Swallow such a success.

motorcycle add-ons, he wanted to diversify into car coachbuilding. He'd been intrigued by an encounter with a two-seater Gordon England-bodied Austin Seven, which had sown the seed that Swallow could perhaps do something similar with the diminutive Seven.

After some searching, he found a building in 41 Cocker Street which had been built specifically for coachbuilding. It was for sale, after its previous owner had run into troubles. William Walmsley's father bought it with the proceeds of the well-established coal business he'd just sold, and then rented it to Swallow for £325 per year from September 1926. The move from one factory to another was done in just a weekend, thanks to a helpful truck driver who had delivered sidecar chassis frames from Birmingham on the Friday and

then assisted with the move on the Saturday and Sunday, no doubt for some suitable unofficial recompense.

At 72ft by 45ft, the Cocker Street works was, literally, a big improvement. The entire ground floor was taken up with assembly and painting, offices and smaller workshops were upstairs, linked with a lift substantial enough to carry a bus - which is what had been constructed there before Swallow took over. Because it was owned by one of the partners' fathers, there was no objection to 'Swallow Side Car & Coach Building Co.' being prominently painted on the outside brickwork.

That the new plant was suitable for car production was proved when William Walmsley acquired a fire-damaged Austro-Daimler and had it rebodied by employees, albeit for his personal use. Lyons promptly started looking around for body builders and by the beginning of 1927, the first Austin Seven chassis had been

Swallow's final Blackpool factory at Cocker Street, with freshly-completed Austin Swallows crowding outside. It would stay here for only two years.

delivered to Cocker Street. He worked with his new coachbuilder, Cyril Holland, to produce a prototype smart aluminium open two-seater body for it and by May 1927, the Austin Swallow was being advertised for sale priced £175. It was another significant step towards what would eventually become Jaguar. Like the garage at King Edward Avenue, the Cocker Street building no longer exists, but there is a plaque on the side of the modern structure that has replaced it.

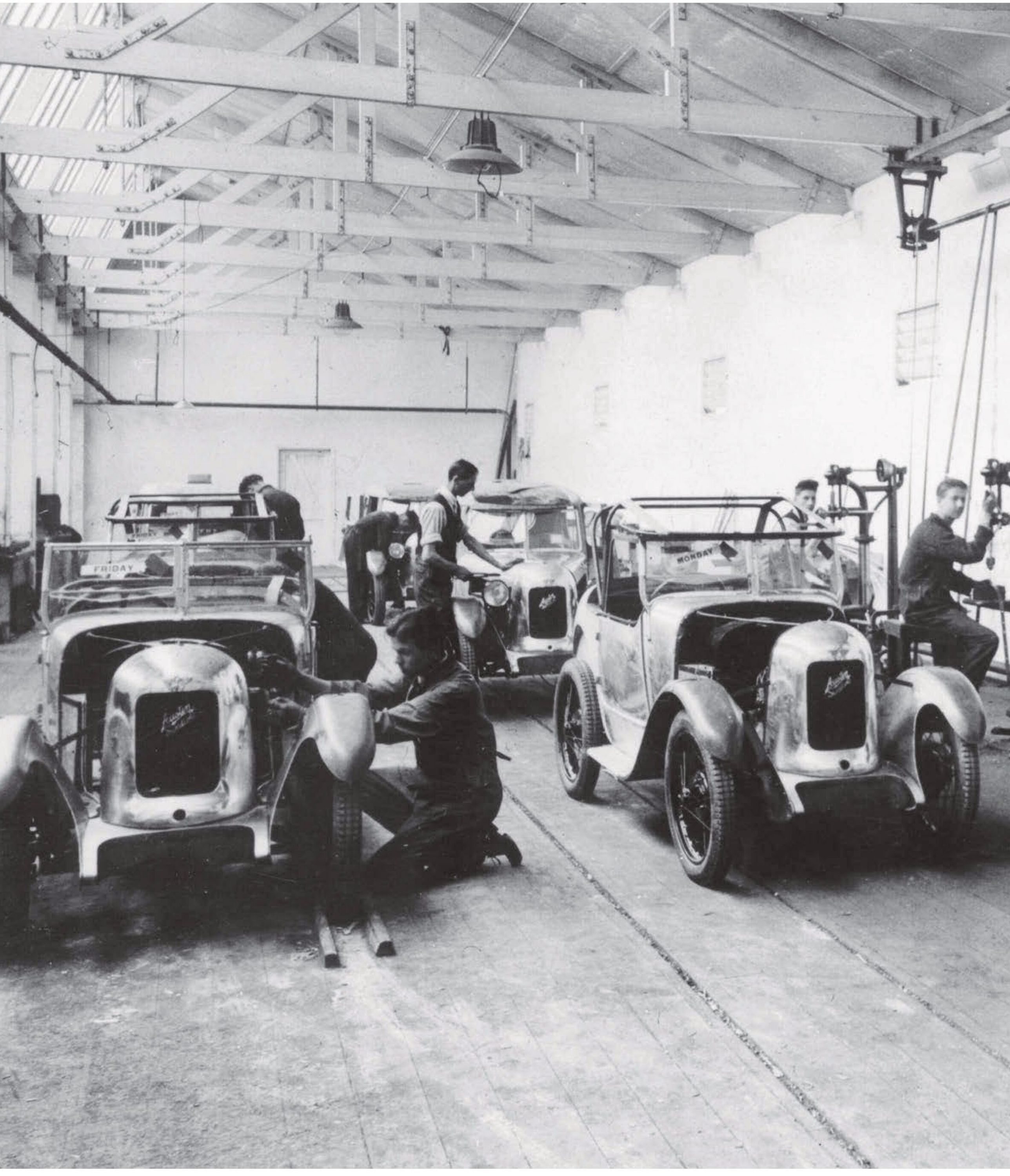
The plan was for five Austin Sevens to be built a week, something that factory and its workers could easily enough achieve alongside sidecar assembly. By mid-1928, output had risen to 12, and more and more staff were being taken on to cope. There were rather comic but rather dangerous scenes of up to six Austin chassis being towed through the streets from nearby Blackpool Talbot Street Station (now Blackpool North) to Corker Street. 'Why we didn't

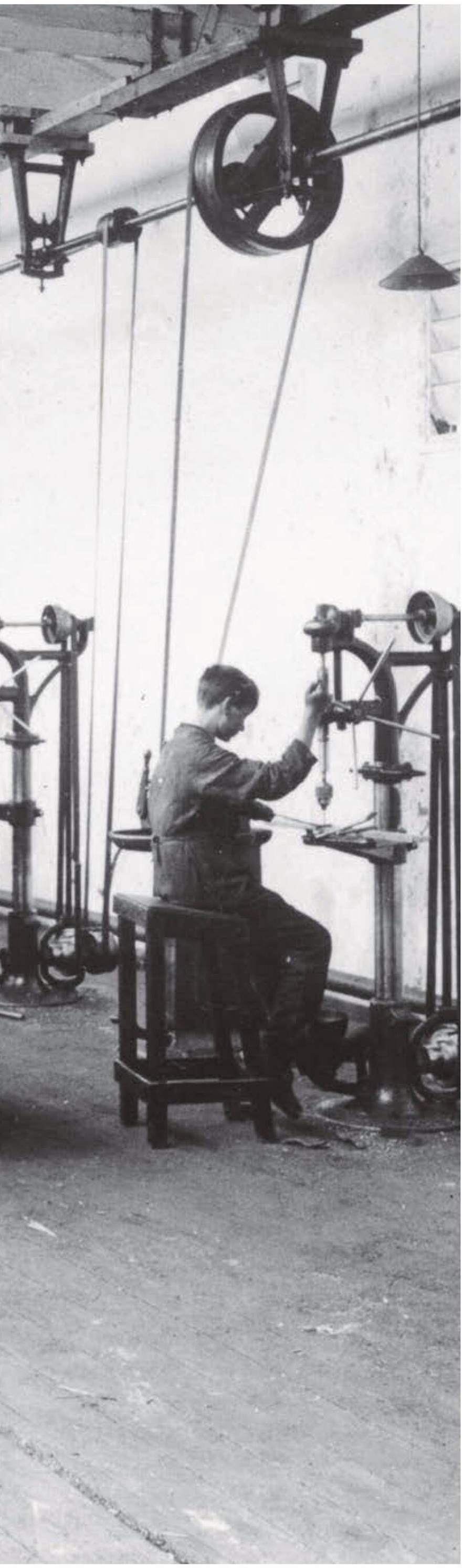
The Cocker Street factory in the 1930s, not long after Swallow had moved out and it had become a paper merchants, wholesale tobacconists and printers.

run into trouble with the police, I will never know,' remembered Lyons later. The stationmaster was also less than pleased at all the chassis building up in his goods yard, because Swallow simply didn't have the capacity to store them at its factory. Less than two years after relocating, Lyons realised that

Swallow needed to move once again. There was a half-hearted effort to see what else Blackpool had to offer, but by the autumn of 1928, he knew he wanted to be at the heart of British car manufacture in the West Midlands. After seriously looking at Wolverhampton, Lyons turned his attention to Coventry...

ARRIVING IN COVENTRY





THE FOLESHILL YEARS

Much of Jaguar's early production was based at its Foleshill plant in Coventry. We chart the factory's history.

WORDS: Sam Skelton

The sales success of the first Swallow car, the Austin Swallow Seven, meant that Swallow Sidecars needed to relocate. Sir William Lyons might have been Blackpool born and bred, but he recognised that the hub of the British motor industry was Coventry and that moving there might be an expedient business decision. That's not to say that Blackpool was abandoned; it became the default location for the annual Works' Outing. A disused munitions factory in Holbrook Lane, Foleshill, was deemed a suitable site for relocation. Lyons moved the entire company south piece by piece over the winter of 1928-1929. The new site was comfortably sized and allowed for expansion – Swallow building bodies for a number of marques.

It was at the Foleshill site that the Swallow Coachbuilding Company expanded its operation beyond the simple Austin Seven, offering coachbuilt bodies on a number of chassis. In its first year in Coventry, its range grew to encompass cars based on Swift, Fiat and Standard chassis – the latter forging a relationship that would lead to the first car to bear the Jaguar name.

It was here too that the concern first developed a sports car; based on the Wolseley Hornet, the Swallow Special was their first six-cylinder production car. Foleshill produced Hornet based specials with two and four seats until 1932. The launch of Swallow's new tourer, the SS1, cemented the earlier relationship with Standard, using the 2.5 litre six from Standard's own Fifteen model. It technically replaced the Swallow-bodied Standard Fifteen but was marketed under the firm's own name until the company rebrand of 1934. A smaller, one-litre four-cylinder model was also produced called the SS2.

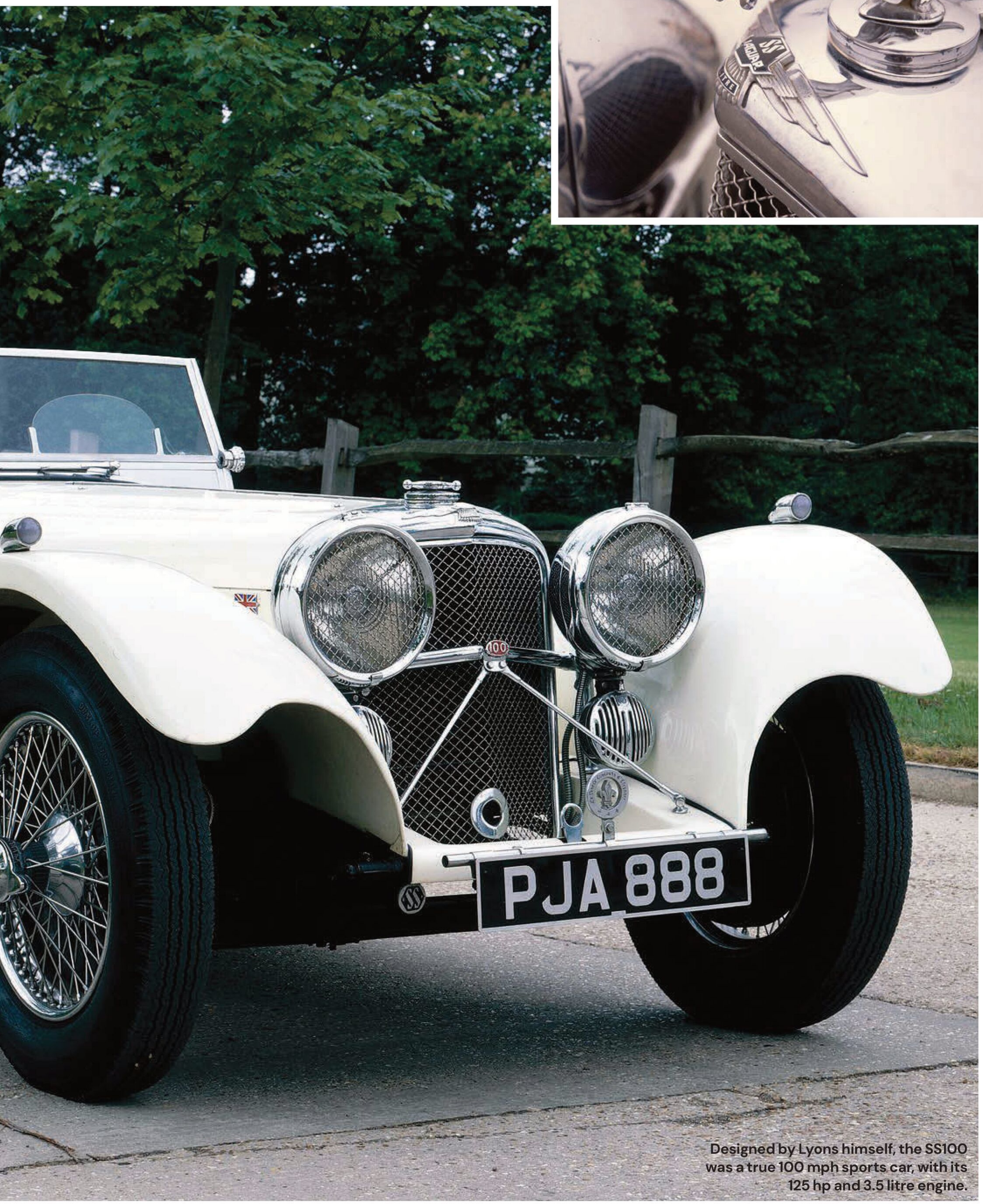
Swallow Coachbuilding Company was renamed as SS Cars in 1934 – a move widely believed to mean "Standard Swallow", but one which Lyons initially denied in order not to upset other manufacturers with whom he had contacts. However, the Foleshill years led to ever greater collaboration with Standard and the eventual use of Standard engines and chassis for Lyons's new SS cars. SS Cars had offered the SS90 – effectively an SS1 engine and chassis, cut down to the wheelbase length of the SS2, though many felt it more show than go.

ARRIVING IN COVENTRY

The ‘Standard Swallow’ SS1 uses the 2.5 litre six from Standard’s own Fifteen model.

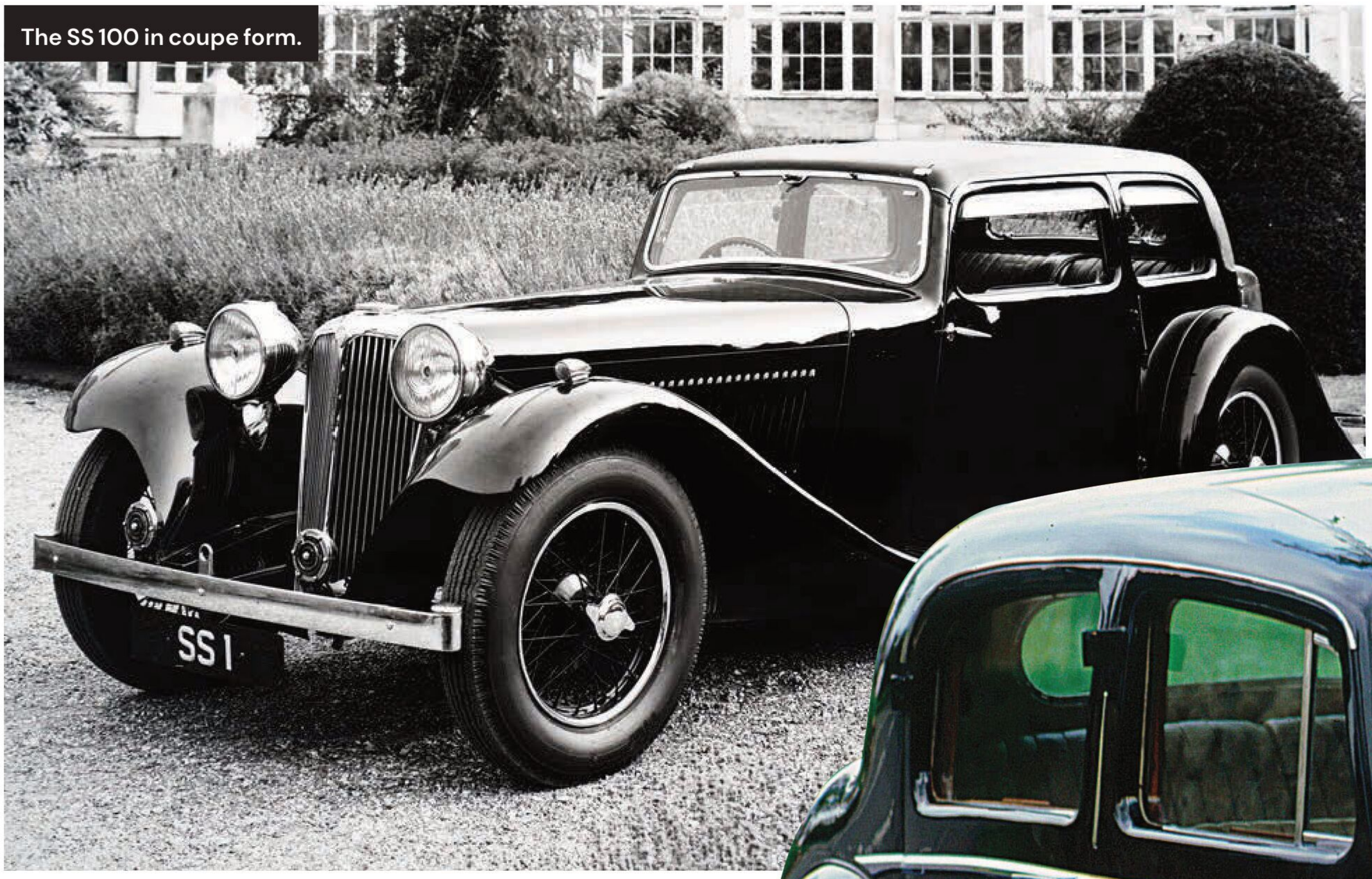
These criticisms were addressed in 1935, courtesy of extensive work from Harry Weslake to convert the side-valve Standard six into an overhead valve unit and thus offer more power. The cars to be so fitted deserved a matching name – and Sir William Lyons had the answer in Jaguar. The first car to use this name was the SS Jaguar 2.5 litre saloon of 1935, alongside the revised SS Jaguar 100 sports car. Both would subsequently be made available with a larger 3.5-litre engine from 1938. Before the cars could be developed much further, however, a very different kind of SS began to exert its influence over Europe. The government commandeered many of Britain’s companies n the name of the war effort.

During World War II, SS Cars was a key manufacturing hub, controlling not only its own Foleshill site but also a shadow factory in Leicester – a concern that had previously made shoes. The plant was greatly extended to double production



Designed by Lyons himself, the SS100 was a true 100 mph sports car, with its 125 hp and 3.5 litre engine.

ARRIVING IN COVENTRY



The SS 100 in coupe form.

space, giving SS a greater remit than it could otherwise have achieved. SS Cars was responsible for the production of almost 16,000 airborne trailers, 10000 sidecars, and a considerable amount of aircraft work. Similarly to its future stablemate Daimler, Jaguar was heavily involved in wartime aviation, though initially in its repair rather than construction. For example, damaged Whitley bombers were repaired at Foleshill, and flight tested at Tachbrook Aerodrome. By the end of the war, wings and fuel tanks were being made for Whitley bombers, sections for Stirling and Wellington planes, bomb doors for Lancasters, fuel tanks for Spitfires, and various parts for Mosquitos and Meteors.

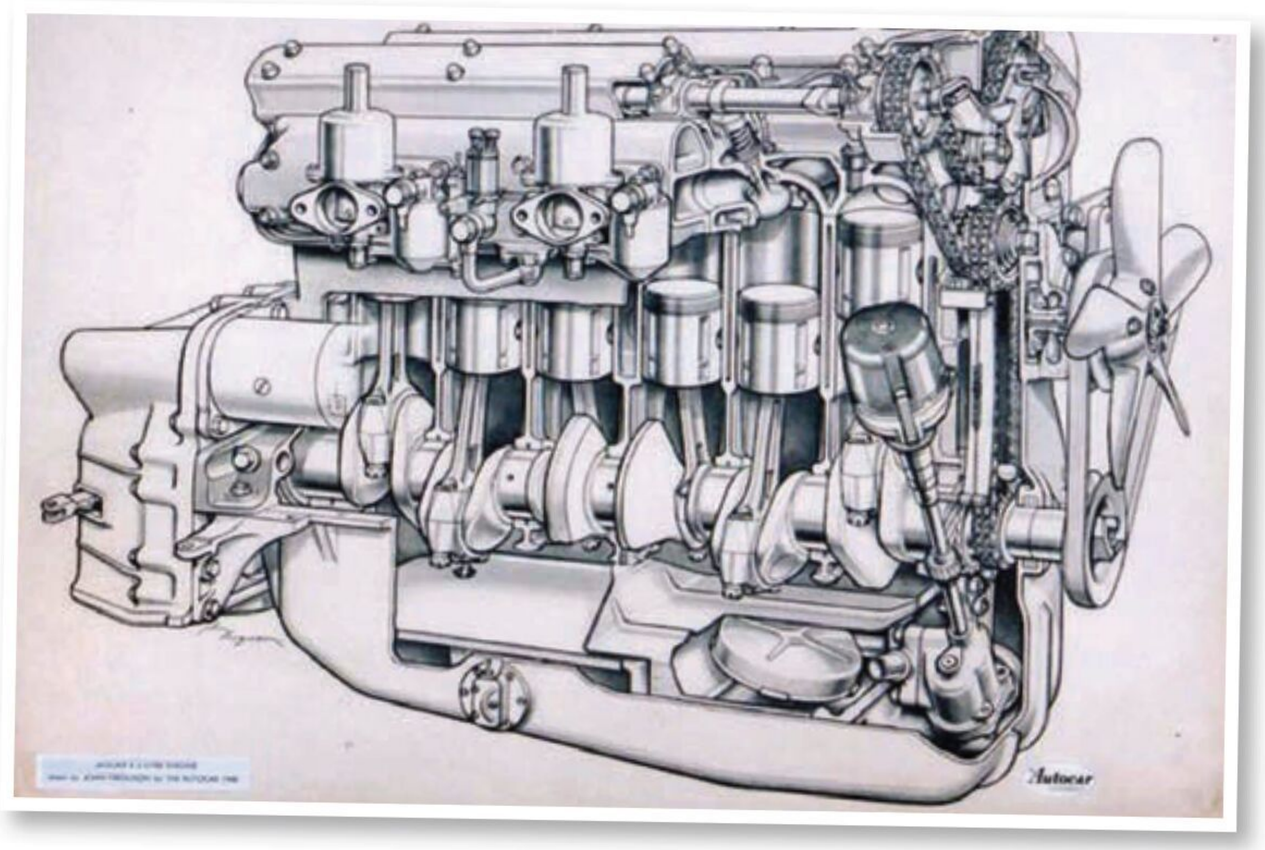
In 1945, following World War II, SS Cars changed its name to Jaguar Cars in a bid to avoid any unpleasant connotations with the Nazis. The pre-war SS Jaguar 1.5 litre, 2.5 litre and 3.5-litre models were relaunched, dropping the SS from their names and gaining the

1947 Jaguar MKIV

In the beginning... there was a prototype, perhaps more than one. This is a rare original photo of an early XK120 prototype. It stands in the grounds of Jaguar's Foleshill factory, Coventry, before the move to Browns Lane. Still some way to go but the basic shape of the wing line is already evident, as is the slim radiator grille.

subsequent nickname of Jaguar MkIV. It would also be here that Jaguar produced the first examples of the car which really put it on the map as a manufacturer of proud sporting automobiles; the 1948 XK120 sports car which saw the first production application of the all new XK engine. The 1949 Jaguar MkV would become the first new post-war Jaguar saloon, powered by the same 2.5 and 3.5 litre Standard derived engines as the pre-war cars. By 1951, this would be replaced by the MkVII (There was no MkVI as Bentley was using the name). The MkVII would be the last saloon to be produced at Foleshill and the first to use the 3.4-litre XK six-cylinder engine from the XK120 sports car. The MkVII's popularity both in Britain and America necessitated larger premises – a move which would lead to Jaguar's best-known factory location.

Looking to expand once again to meet the demand for its new model, Jaguar Cars sought planning permission to extend the Foleshill site but was denied. Not to be beaten, in 1950, Jaguar instead leased a former Daimler shadow factory from the Ministry of Supply - one located on Browns Lane, Allesley, Coventry. They started to move into it from Foleshill in 1951, and on the 28th November 1952, Jaguar staged a convention to show the site to dealers and the press. One of Sir William Lyons's proudest achievements was the outright purchase of that site in 1959 for £1.25million. The following year, he would acquire Daimler, the site's previous occupant, to expand further into its Radford Road premises.



This is the original artwork for Autocar's coverage of the launch of the mighty XK engine that so dominated sports car and endurance racing in the 1950s. It was created by Autocar staff artist John Ferguson, who was a technical draftsman and specialised in cut-away drawings like this. Many such items came onto the market as the combined Motor and Autocar archives and were sold off in 2001.

BROWNS LANE

SPIRITUAL HOME

In 1951, Jaguar moved into a former WW2 shadow factory on Browns Lane, Coventry, where it would build some of the world's most iconic cars. Seven decades later, we look back at its history, the cars it produced and why it was ultimately closed.

Words Paul Walton

On the western outskirts of Coventry is Browns Lane, Jaguar's home for half a century. It is an unlikely location for a car factory; lined with red-bricked, semi-detached houses, it is more typical of suburban Britain. But, between 1951 and 2005, this leafy street was as important to Britain's car industry as Maranello is to Italy, and Stuttgart or Munich are to Germany. From the D-Type to the X100 XK8, and the Mk VII to the X350 XJ, every great Jaguar from this era was produced here.

Browns Lane isn't Jaguar's birthplace, though; that was 150 miles to the north, in Blackpool, where a young William Lyons and his business partner, William Warmsley, started the Swallow Sidecar Company in 1922. Next came coach-built cars, which proved popular due to Lyon's eye for design. Yet he recognised that the lack of skilled automotive labour in this popular seaside resort would stop him being able to grow his company. He needed to move to the centre of British car manufacturing, the West Midlands.

So, in 1928, Lyons transferred the company (later renamed SS) to the Whitmore Park Estate in Foleshill, to the north of Coventry, and into a double-H block building that offered 5,000sq ft (464sq m) of space. Originally commissioned by the British Government as a reserve shell-filling factory, it had been completed early in the First World War, but left unused. Consequently, it was in a poor state when Lyons' workers moved in, but, on the plus side, they would be in good company because the Dunlop Rim & Wheel Company and Motor Panels were close neighbours.

With the advent of the Second World War, the company produced aircraft parts here for the war effort. Immediately afterward, Lyons (Warmsley had left in 1935) changed its name to Jaguar.

The first few XK 120s were built at Foleshill, as was the Mk V, but their success meant Jaguar soon outgrew the factory as it tried to keep up with demand. When the local council refused to allow Lyons to extend, he looked for an alternative.

In early 1950, and after sending investigative teams to Scotland, Wales and even Northern Ireland, Lyons decided that the solution lay a mere two miles away – a former World War Two shadow factory on Browns Lane, in Allesley. Despite this modern factory (originally built

BROWNS LANE

for Daimler to produce the Ferret armoured car) being in a largely residential area, with one million sq ft (992,900sq m) of manufacturing space Lyons thought it ideal. Tough negotiations with Sir Archibald Rowland of the Ministry of Supply followed, during which both parties threatened to walk away, but a deal for the rent was eventually struck: five years fixed at £30,000. Ever the clever businessman, Lyons sold Jaguar's existing factory to the Dunlop Rim & Wheel Company.

Although production of the Ferret was tailing off, Daimler was slow to move out; it was May 1951 before Jaguar could start to move into the new site. Each weekend, an entire department was moved (the machine shop first, the paint shop last) using lorries borrowed from all over the West Midlands. It turned out to be a long, laborious process and the move wasn't completed until November 1952.

The shadow factory had included a separate ballroom and a sports club that overlooked Browns Lane itself. To this, a two-story brick building was soon added to contain the reception, staff canteen, administrative office, board room and Sir William's own office. What had been the ballroom became a showroom of Jaguar's current models and, later, its growing collection of historic cars (all with drip trays underneath to protect the plush carpet). The building's big double doors and the wooden façade around them would become the most recognisable part of the site due to the many new models and personnel that were photographed outside.

One of the site's most famous areas, though, was the competitions department, located in a small, independent building at the north end of the factory and where the D-Types and, later, Lightweight E-Types were developed and built. In Jaguar's typical

Far left: The first D-Type is built alongside C-Types in the competitions department during 1954

Main: Jaguar used this D-Type prototype in 1954, capable of a top speed of 180 mph, in motor racing events. D-Types were victorious at Le Mans in 1955, 1956 and in 1957, when the cars filled all the first four places. Only 16 cars were converted for road use before the factory burned down.

BROWNS LANE

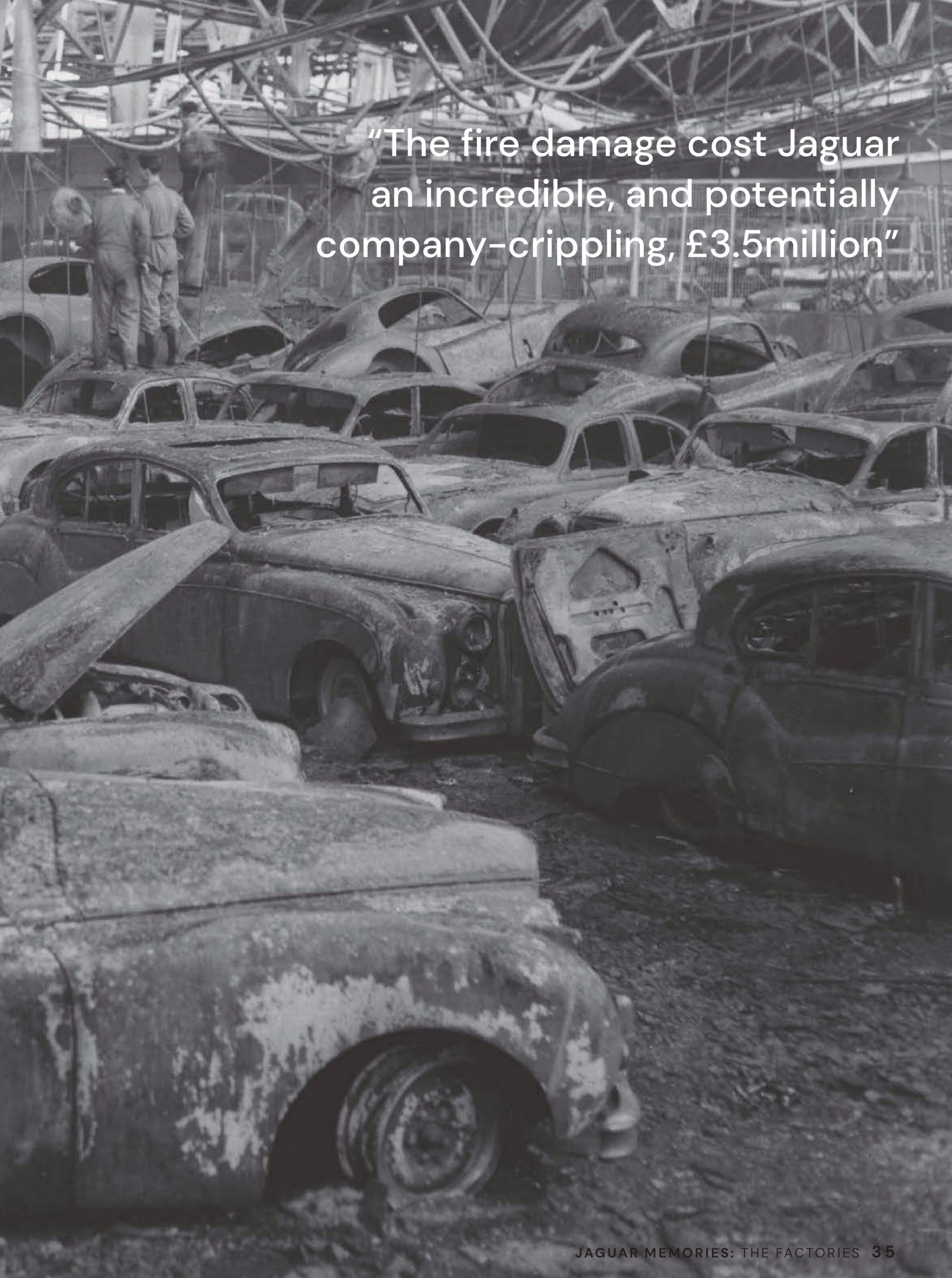
'make do' mentality, it went on to become the experimental department and then Jaguar's first (and very basic) dedicated styling studio.

The XK 120 and Mk VII were largely built by hand and had to be physically pushed throughout the manufacturing process. But, in the mid-Fifties, the rise of a new, higher-volume small saloon – the eventual 2.4 – would require a mechanised assembly line. Instead of sourcing new equipment, though, Lyons bought a second-hand line from the Standard-Triumph factory (formerly Mulliner) on Torrington Road, on which, among others, the Triumph Herald had been built. He also bought body finishing and painting equipment from the same location, tools that would be used for the next 40 years.

Browns Lane quickly became one of the most successful post-war factories of the West Midlands, with 10,868 cars sold in 1955, many of which were exported. In recognition of this success, HM Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip visited the factory in March 1956, touring the assembly lines alongside the newly knighted Sir William and Lady Lyons. The book From Foleshill to Browns Lane records how Prince Philip spoke to its author and former Jaguar employee, Brian James Martin, asking what he was doing. "I told him that I was fitting a heater," writes Martin. "In response to my stammered reply, he said, 'You are all doing a grand job for England.' It was as good as a pay rise!"

Yet it all could have come to an end on the evening of 12 February 1957 when a huge fire destroyed large sections of the factory. It began in a tyre store close to the service department in the north of the factory and, despite the rapid response of the fire brigade, it was soon burning uncontrollably. "Half an hour after the alarm was given, at 5.45pm, it was out of our control," said Bill Cassidy from the experimental department the following day to news reporters.

BROWNS LANE



"The fire damage cost Jaguar an incredible, and potentially company-crippling, £3.5million"

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BROWNS LANE

The blaze was finally brought under control in the early hours of the 13th, when its damage could be assessed. Some 14,493sq m (the equivalent of two full-sized football pitches) were affected, and 270 cars. In total, the fire damage cost Jaguar an incredible, and potentially company-crippling, £3.5million.

Thankfully, the fire brigade stopped the flames from destroying the main production line, engine assembly area, machine shop, chroming areas and press shop. Lyons himself had directed the fire-fighting effort to ensure the fire was cut off before it could spread to these sections.

It was with the knowledge that these important areas had been saved that Lyons could say he was confident things would get moving again. He told reporters, "I should imagine we can make a start on a reduced assembly line in a day or so." He wasn't wrong.

The clean-up operation started that day. Organised by the service department's foreman, Jock

Top: Workers clean up after the fire of February 1957 that gutted huge parts of the Browns Lane factory. Above: Sir William Lyons outside the Browns Lane office block in the early Sixties, with products produced by the Jaguar Group. Right: The Mk 2 assembly line in 1964.


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BROWNS LANE

In 1961, with the popularity of the E-Type increasing, Jaguar staged a dealer handover event, featuring 60 brand new examples.

Thompson, and manager Bill Borbury, the destroyed cars were removed and parked across the factory, even along Browns Lane itself. All the staff worked on clearing the debris, and the damaged areas were soon cleared, allowing the roof to be repaired and car production to restart a mere 36 hours after the fire. By the end of the first week, 93 cars had been built; by April, this had risen to 1,000 and production was back to pre-fire levels.

In fact, 1957 turned out to be a record year for the company, the 12,952 cars beat the previous record, set in 1956, of 800 cars. Even more incredibly, the new 3.4 saloon was launched during this time and a fortnight after the fire more than 200 had been exported to America.

For some time, Lyons had been negotiating with the Government to buy the Browns Lane plant and, in early 1959, his offer of £1.25m was accepted, an achievement that he would later count among his most satisfying.

However, with three successful models (XK 150, Mk 2 and Mk IX), by 1960 Jaguar had also outgrown this factory. With Lyons' request to expand the site declined and the company too large to move in the way it had done a decade before, Lyons instead bought Daimler to get access to its own one million sq ft factory in Radford, which, for the next four decades, would be Jaguar's engine plant and engineering centre. Browns Lane's role in the company, once an extra track had been added, was to focus purely on assembly, rather than manufacturing.

In 1966, Jaguar was taken over by BMC, forming British Motor Holdings Limited (BMH) which, in turn, became British Leyland following its merger with Leyland Motors in 1968. No longer independent, this was the start of a rocky two decades for both the company and its factory.

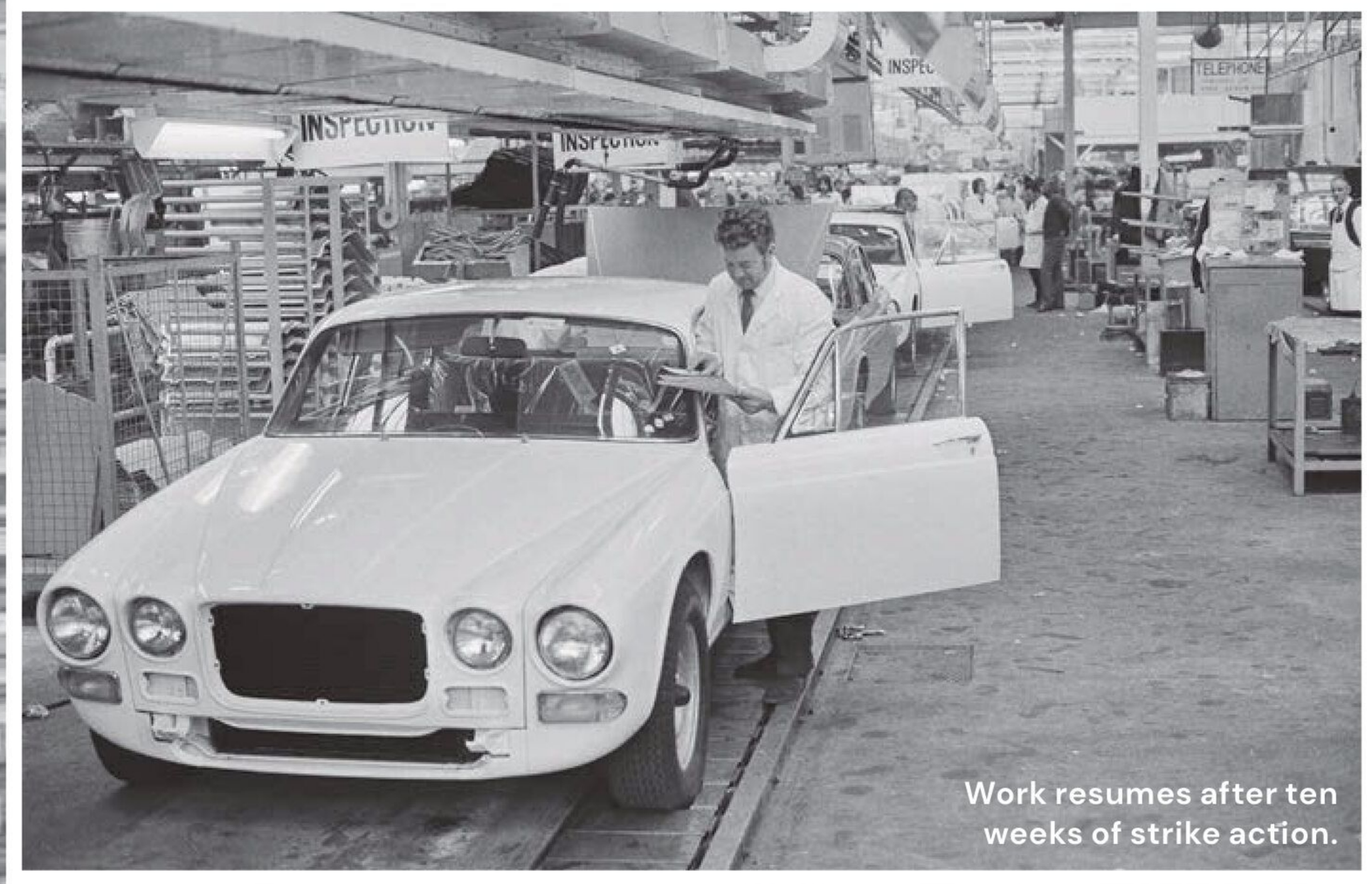
By the early Seventies, Browns Lane had become badly neglected due to little or no investment for years. "In some ways it was a bit of

BROWNS LANE

The factory's main gate off Browns Lane in the Seventies, looking exactly as it did in the Fifties.

a shock because it did feel quite run-down, old and slightly has-been," says former designer Keith Helfet, who joined the company in 1978. Still using the same assembly track Lyons had bought in the Fifties, plus ancient tooling, the quality of Jaguar cars – and, therefore, Jaguar's image – suffered badly throughout the decade. As Geoffrey Robinson (Jaguar's chairman for two years from 1973) remarked, "Bill Lyons wanted a first-class bodyshell off third-class tooling." By 1975, production was down to 21,752 cars, a big drop from the 31,549 of just four years earlier.

Not long after Robinson took over the reins, he laid out an ambitious plan for the factory's expansion to include a new manufacturing facility to house a modern paint shop that would be surrounded by a test track. To support the necessary planning, a new entrance was envisaged to lessen the amount of traffic down Browns Lane itself, to appease those who lived there. But these plans were soon scrapped. Following a report by Sir Don Ryder (the newly appointed head of the UK's National Enterprise Board) with recommendations to make the



Work resumes after ten weeks of strike action.

A 1971 strike leaves the factory floor deserted and half-finished cars languishing on the line.

BROWNS LANE

The XJ Series 3 on the production line in 1979

then-ailing Leyland more productive, it was decided a new paint shop should instead be located at Leyland's Castle Bromwich plant in Birmingham, another former WW2 shadow factory that was already producing the bodyshells for Jaguar's cars.

One of Ryder's most important recommendations was to remove autonomy of the individual brands and for Leyland to rationalise its many resources. Read the report, "BL cannot compete successfully as a producer of cars unless it can make the most effective use of all its design, engineering, manufacturing and marketing resources." As a result, in 1977, Jaguar's Browns Lane factory was renamed 'Large car plant number 2'. To further rub salt into the wound, British Leyland required the removal of all Jaguar signage at the site and the company colour was changed from racing green to British Leyland's universal white and blue. Jaguar's loyal staff were so outraged by this that the Browns Lane plant director instigated the careful removal and storage (even at workers' homes) of everything displaying Jaguar's name or image.

Despite Leyland's attempt to erase Jaguar's identity, its heritage meant that even in the Seventies the factory had a unique aura. Keith Helfet explains, "Being the petrolhead I was then, I loved the fact that on that site wonderful things had happened and clever people had been doing brilliant things. For example, our styling studio had been the competitions shop, where the racing cars had been built."

But the poor reputation of its cars, a striking workforce, and regular energy shortages that stopped production, meant that by 1979 Browns Lane was down to producing a mere 14,283 cars. Thankfully, help was coming.

XJ-S production in the mid-Eighties.

BROWNS LANE

Main: The X300 generation of XJ6 on the refurbished assembly line. Top right: The final XJ40 comes down the line, in August 1993, before Browns Lane received an £8.5m refit.

In 1980, former Massey Ferguson director (Sir) John Egan was appointed as chairman. Not only did he solve many of the workers' issues, but he also oversaw investment in the facilities. An increase of sales naturally followed – 33,437 in 1984 – which resulted in Jaguar's privatisation the same year, allowing Jaguar to break free of Leyland and make its own decisions for the first time in almost two decades.

That freedom didn't last long, though, because five years later the company was bought by Ford. After paying 1.6billion, Ford's executives were shocked by the poor state of Jaguar's facilities, Browns Lane especially. As Alex Trotman, then Ford of Europe chairman and integral to the company's takeover, said years later, "There was nothing wrong with Jaguar manufacturing that a bulldozer wouldn't fix."

As an example of the problems Ford faced, shortly after new chairman Nick Scheele had arrived at Jaguar in 1992, he went to the water booth where cars were tested for leaks; new models were scoring in the 90s. Scheele had spent much of his career working for Ford on the other side of the Atlantic and, according to American practice whereby results were scored on a scale of 100, that seemed to Scheele to be a good result. But the test engineer pointed

BROWNS LANE

Workers and union members demonstrate against the proposed closure of Browns Lane.

out that, at Jaguar, the figure meant the vehicle had 90 leaks.

Consequently, over a three-week period in August 1993, the Browns Lane assembly plant received a £8.5m refit that replaced the ancient, ex-Triumph assembly line with modern equipment. As the quality of the cars improved, so did sales; in 1992, Browns Lane had produced a mere 22,499 cars, but just six years later this figure had increased to 50,225. In 2000, as vindication to the scale of improvements made, the respected American research firm JD Power gave the Browns Lane factory first place in its European plant awards.

In 1999, production of Jaguar's new executive car, the S-Type, started at Castle Bromwich (which had been under Jaguar's control since 1980). This was followed by the X-Type in 2002 at Ford's Halewood plant (it had previously produced the Escort). Production moving to these factories would later facilitate the closure of Browns Lane.

By the early 2000s, both the company and its American parent were making serious losses – in 2004, Ford reported a second-quarter pre-tax loss for its Premier Automotive Group of $362million, with an estimated $178million attributed to Jaguar. Part of the problem was producing cars in three locations. For volume car manufacturers at the time, 300,000 was the optimum annual production for one plant, but, in 2003, Jaguar had produced just 120,000 at three. In need of the most investment and with the least room for expansion, Browns Lane was earmarked for closure, which Jaguar's chairman, Joe Greenwell, announced in September 2004. "It is not a decision we have taken lightly," he said. "We do have a strong attachment to Browns Lane, but it does not have the infrastructural advantages of other plants." He later told MPs on the Trade and Industry Select Committee that to continue producing 120,000-cars-a-year at three plants was, "A recipe for the end of Jaguar. "Unless we follow this path, the future viability of the company is at risk, as are the jobs of 8,000 people."

Still, 1,100 jobs were cut, prompting demonstrations by Jaguar workers and union members to keep the factory open. "This is a bleak day for the British car industry," said Tony Woodley, general secretary of the T&G Union, while Derek Simpson, general secretary of the Amicus Trade Union, believed, "Ford's decision may kill off Jaguar. Our members will fight like tigers to keep the lion's share of quality car manufacturing in Britain."

Their protests were ultimately unsuccessful. On 1 July 2005, the final car – an XJ Super V8 Portfolio

The final car to leave the Browns Lane line: an XJ Super V8, in July 2005.

Remains of the Browns Lane assembly buildings after the site was levelled in 2008.

BROWNS LANE

An XF in the Swallows Nest housing estate, 2013; the houses were built on the former site of the Browns Lane factory.

rolled off the Browns Lane assembly line. It was the 1,447,677th car to have been built at the plant between 1952 and 2005 (a tiny figure compared to the numbers BMW's vast Munich factory, or Volkswagen's enormous Wolfsburg facility, produced at the time). Production of the saloon moved to Castle Bromwich, where it joined the S-Type and new X150 generation of XK.

"This is a huge emotional blow to Coventry," said Nick Matthews of the Warwick Manufacturing Group at Warwick University. "Jaguar is in Coventry's DNA and vice versa. It is like losing a friend or a member of family."

The 117-acre site was eventually sold in 2007 to Australian developer Macquarie Goodman, and the historic assembly and administrative buildings were demolished the followed year. A housing development called Swallows Nest and Lyons Park Industrial Estate now occupy the area, the latter home to the Technology Centre, where clients include Jaguar Land Rover.

Today, Jaguar is a global business with manufacturing facilities all over the world, but its long association with Browns Lane and the many iconic models produced there means for many it will always be the company's spiritual home.

Lyons Park Industrial Estate and Technology Centre which includes Jaguar Land Rover as a client.

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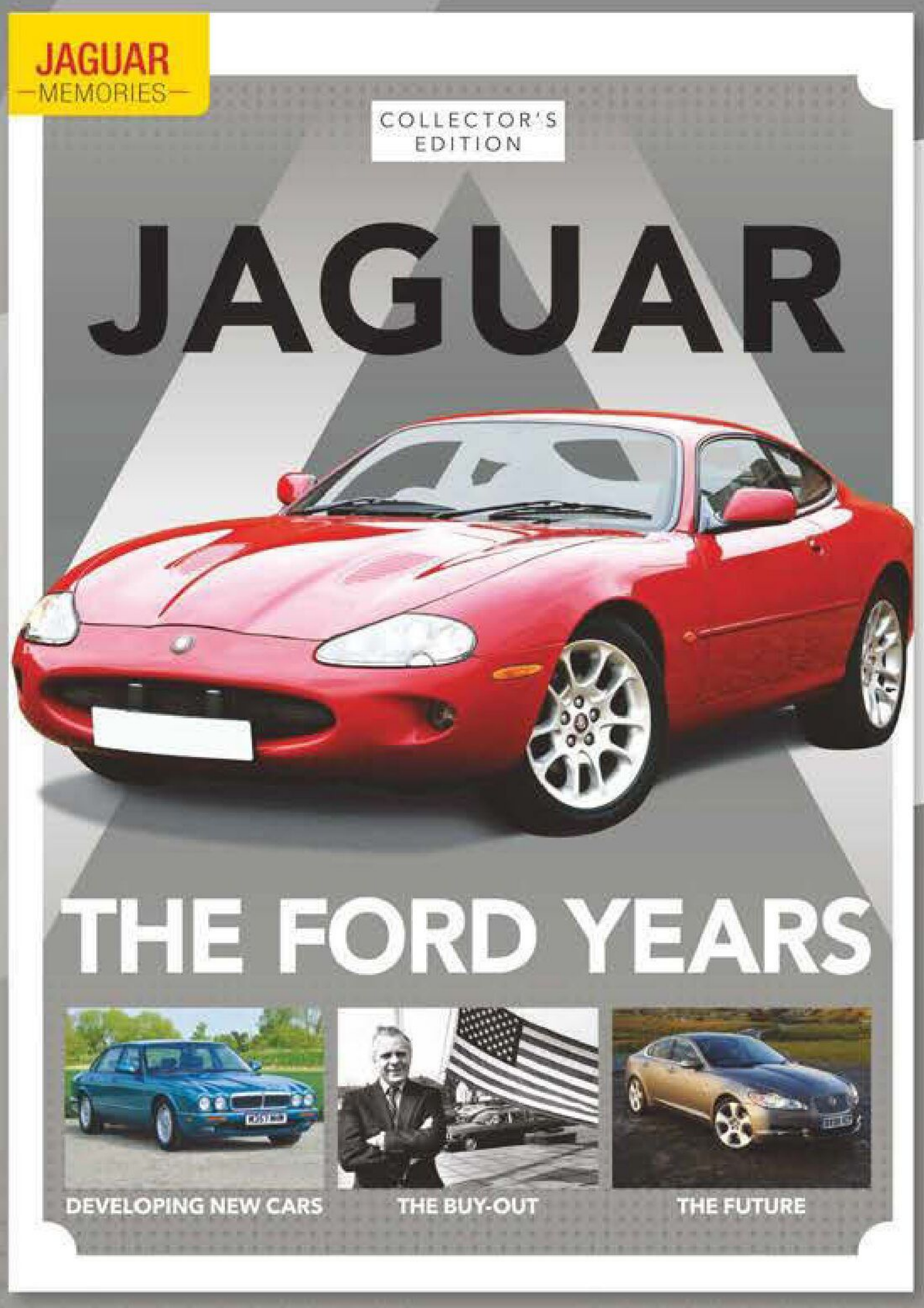

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THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

ABSORBING THE COMPETITION

The Jaguar takeover of Daimler brought not only the name, but the factory and workforce. We look into why a failing asset was deemed worthy.

WORDS: Sam Skelton

By the end of the 1950s, Jaguar was doing rather well for itself. Its XK sports car had matured into a fine long distance GT. Furthermore, its large saloon range was making headway at the top of the market and had reached its pinnacle with the MkIX model, and its small sporting saloon range (retrospectively called the MKI) was stealing sales from marques such as Humber and Riley. Business was booming - and the big cat needed space to stretch its claws out. But the Browns Lane factory was only a finite size, and it wouldn't be possible to accommodate Sir William Lyons' planned expansions for the marque in the existing factory. Furthermore, the government has refused planning permission for a new factory. So, in need of space, Lyons went shopping.

At the same time, Daimler had become something of a problem child for the Birmingham Small Arms company. The fallout from the excesses of Sir Bernard and Lady Norah Docker had led to his replacement as chairman of the company. As Docker left the board in a fit of pique, he took a number of his more influential friends with

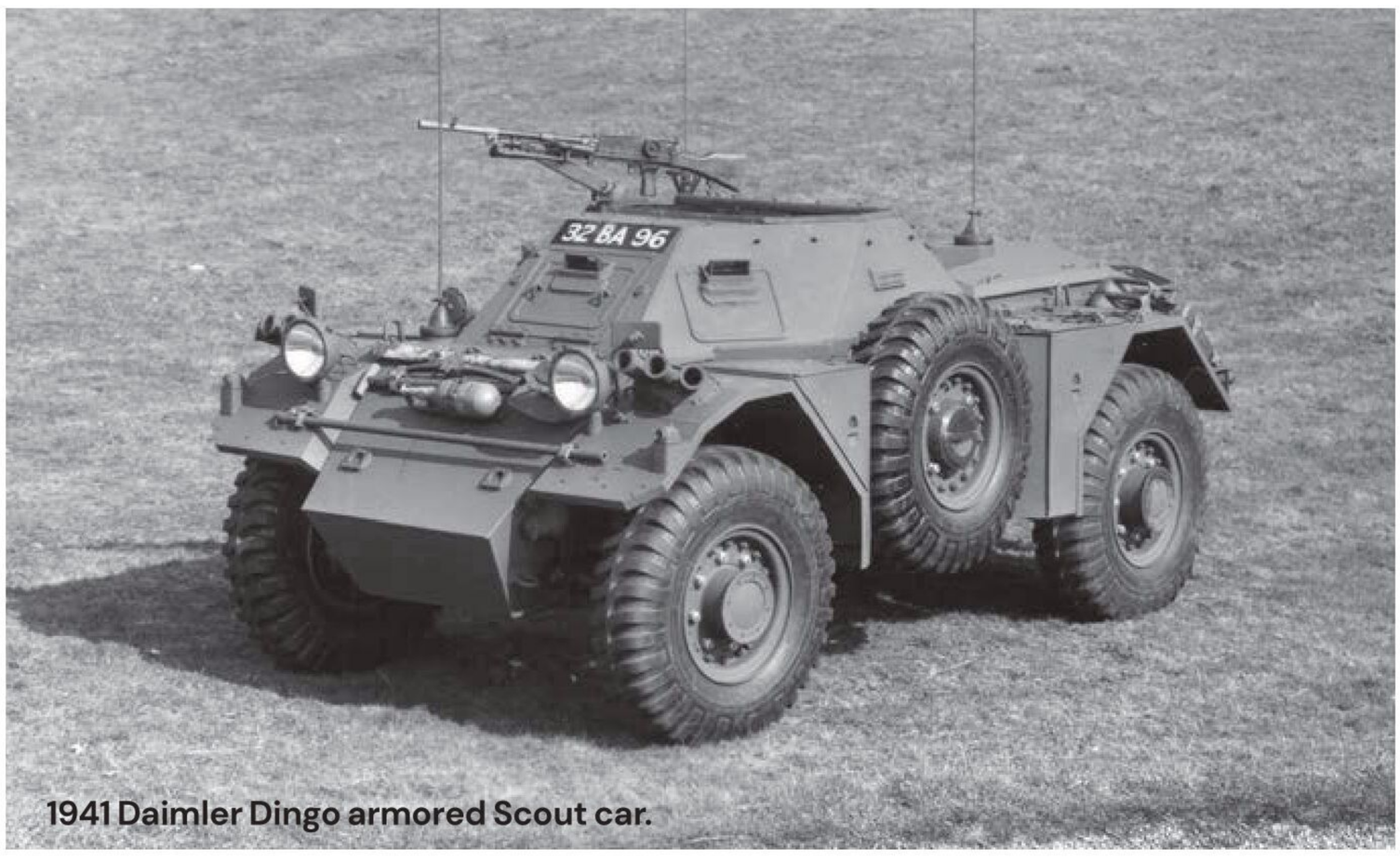
The Model 15 was Daimler's attempt at a more affordable car for the 1930s.


FIRE
EXTINGUISHERS
FIRE
EXTINGUISHERS

THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

him – thus reducing Daimler's sales output drastically, given that many of its existing clientele had been buying because of the Docker connection. Moreover, as Royal patronage had effectively ended during the mid-1950s and Rolls-Royce had replaced the entire Royal fleet by 1960, it was becoming evident that Daimler's desirability had dropped. By 1959-1960 turnover represented just 15% of BSA's assets, and it was no secret that the concern wished to rid itself of its motoring interests. Enter Sir William Lyons, who identified Daimler's production facilities as the answer to his prayers. A deal was concluded for £3.4million, and Jaguar stated on the public record that it would continue with Daimler production and development.

This deal included the one million square foot Daimler factory in Radford, Coventry, which had been Daimler's primary base of operation since the First World War, a lucrative armoured car contract in the shape of the Ferret, and Daimler's new and advanced V8 engines. The factory had been Lyons's primary motivation. During WWI, Daimler produced large calibre shells and aircraft engines here, alongside complete Bristol and De Havilland aeroplanes and engines for the first tanks. It also became the site of one of Daimler's shadow factories during WWII, when it once



1941 Daimler Dingo armored Scout car.

THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

again produced aircraft components and engines alongside gun turrets and Bren guns. A bombing raid in April 1941 destroyed half the factory – stores, tool rooms, and the spare parts department, drawing and planning offices. Most of the factory records perished. Post-war, Daimler resumed its manufacture of cars for those with wealth, a marked contrast from most Britons' austerity. At this time, the Dockers moulded Daimler into purveyors of transport for the wealthy and flash. It was also during this time which the firm lost their association with the Royal Mews. 1950s excess had effectively created the circumstances of the takeover of one of Britain's oldest motoring names by a marque intent upon making use of its assets.

In practice, the takeover didn't quite pan out as the Daimler company would have hoped. The first project to be shelved was the DN250 – their attempt at a smaller saloon would have competed in a similar marketplace to the new Mk2 Jaguar. The car used the

Far left: Turner's hemi-head V8 made its first appearance in the SP250 sports car which was an intriguing combination of TR3-style chassis and fibreglass body.

THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

Daimler Dart SP250s on car transporter for delivery circa 1960.

THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

The combination of Turner's V8 and the Mk2 shell created an appealing alternative to the Jaguar-badged car.

2.5-litre Turner V8 from the SP250 sports car, coupled to a body derived heavily from the PA Cresta – though with the Vauxhall's strongest Atlantic influences eased away.

Bowing to a deal made with Daimler distributor Stratstone, Jaguar focused its efforts upon slotting the Daimler V8 into its own Mk2, replete with a somewhat ill-fitting oval variant of the Daimler grille. In return for this smaller model, similar to the Conquest of the 1950s, Stratstone abandoned its Volkswagen franchise to focus on Jaguar and Daimler models alone. The 2.5V8 (as it was initially called; V8-250 after the facelift of 1967) was seen as a car with a slightly conflicted image – the brand's sensible solidity clashing with the perceived caddishness of a Jaguar. But that didn't prevent it from becoming Daimler's best selling product to date at the time of its discontinuation in 1969.

By then, Daimlers were being built on the same production line as the equivalent Jaguar models in

Browns Lane. Production had in fact, moved to Browns Lane soon after the acquisition, repurposing space that had previously been used to build engines and axles. Such production, and the machine shop, were moved to the Radford site, where Jaguar stayed until 1997. When the works closed, Jaguar's owner Ford moved all engine production to its own plant in Bridgend, Wales.

Daimler's plans to replace the SP250 were cancelled when their planned SP252 was found to be

The regal DS420 limousine was produced only as a Daimler and would last until 1992.

THE DAIMLER TAKEOVER

Jaguar used the Daimler name for the 'Double Six' V12-powered XJ saloons.

over twice as labour intensive as the E-type. Similarly, efforts to replace the Majestic Major with a Daimlerised MkX went awry when Jaguar found that the 4.5-litre V8 made the Daimler prototype significantly faster than the XK-engine car. Subsequent development of the famous name belied the original intention of the takeover. The first of the new breed was the Sovereign – effectively a Daimler variant of the new Jaguar 420, which mated the S-type chassis to the engine from the larger MkX. Barring the badges, fluted grille, winged D on the bonnet and enhanced equipment, it was no different to its Jaguar stablemate. Selling for 10% more than the 420, the only change was the standardisation of power steering from 1967. By the launch of the XJ based Sovereign in 1969, the die had been cast, and all subsequent Daimler models would be lightly revised variations of the equivalent Jaguar. The DS420 limousine of 1968 might have had a unique body, but BMH subsidiary Vanden Plas built that – and underneath lurked the chassis and running gear of the Jaguar 420G.

On sale for only two years between 1975 and 1977, just 2084 straight six and V12 powered Daimler XJ based coupés sporting the marque's famous fluted radiator rolled off the assembly lines, a ridiculously low number that now makes road worthy survivor's highly sought after classics.

The Daimler tag was also applied to the XJ6 replacment, the XJ40.

Daimler Corsica was sadly destined never to make production but was a classy four-seat convertible.

DAIMLER DISAPPEARS

The Daimler badge was still being used on the all-new aluminium Jaguar XJ which debuted in 2003, but Daimler versions weren't available in the US market, the range-topping cars wearing Vanden Plas badging instead. The reason was simple: that trademark dispute which Edward Turner had avoided back in the '50s had come back to haunt the company. Following the de-merger of DaimlerChrysler, Jaguar attempted to trademark the Daimler name for use in the US market, but was refused in 2009 by the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the grounds that it was primarily a surname.

This effectively meant the end for the Daimler-badged Jaguars, with the final Daimler – a Super V8 – now resident in Jaguar's own Heritage collection. Given the potential for confusion with the German company of the same name, it's unlikely to make a reappearance.

FROM SPITFIRES TO JAGUARS

Like Browns Lane in Coventry, Jaguar's Castle Bromwich factory was originally established as a wartime shadow factory. But it took the company a little longer to occupy what is now its most important plant

WORDS Richard Gunn

Although Castle Bromwich has only been part of the Jaguar family of factories since 1977, its history stretches back far further than that - and it was responsible for some of the most iconic British machines of all time, while the marque that would eventually take it over was still called SS Cars.

The location now known as Jaguar Land Rover's Castle Bromwich Assembly, just outside Birmingham, began life in the mid-1930s, as part of the government's shadow factory plan. War with Germany was looking inevitable, and so a scheme was hatched to create new factories that could 'shadow' the activities of other car manufacturing facilities. The aim was that they could be easily turned over to military aircraft and armaments production should the political situation in Europe deteriorate any further. Which, of course, it did. Tragically quickly.

The Castle Bromwich shadow factory was constructed on land besides the town's First World War airfield. It encompassed an old sewage works, which some might feel was the perfect metaphor for some of what it turned out during its later life under British Leyland ownership.

Fisher and Ludlow, which pressed panels and built bodies for car manufacturers, acquired Castle Bromwich after the war.

An aerial shot of Castle Bromwich during wartime.

CASTLE BROMWICH

And it was one of the major players in the future BL, Morris Motors, that was given responsibility for managing Castle Bromwich, with the brief to build Supermarine Spitfires and Avro Lancaster bombers. The building was originally priced at £2 million, but ultimately cost double that. Castle Bromwich's beginnings were very troubled - again, perhaps a mirror of future times - with incompetent management and an initially incalcitrant workforce. Eight months after the start of the war, it still hadn't built any planes. A frustrated Air Ministry removed Lord Nuffield - William Morris, founder and boss of Morris - from control and took over operations. In June 1940, Castle Bromwich built its first Spitfires - 10 of 'em. It eventually reached a maximum output of 320 aircraft per month and, by the end of the war, had produced 12,129 Spitfires, over half of the total built in Britain. Lancaster production began in 1943, and eventually peaked at 25 per month for these much larger and more complex aircraft. Today, the remains of the factory's wartime beginnings can still be seen, with traces of camouflage paint and cast winged roundel motifs apparent in some places. A rumour also persists that, somewhere in the roof, there's an old Spitfire wing, either just left there or forming part of a repair.

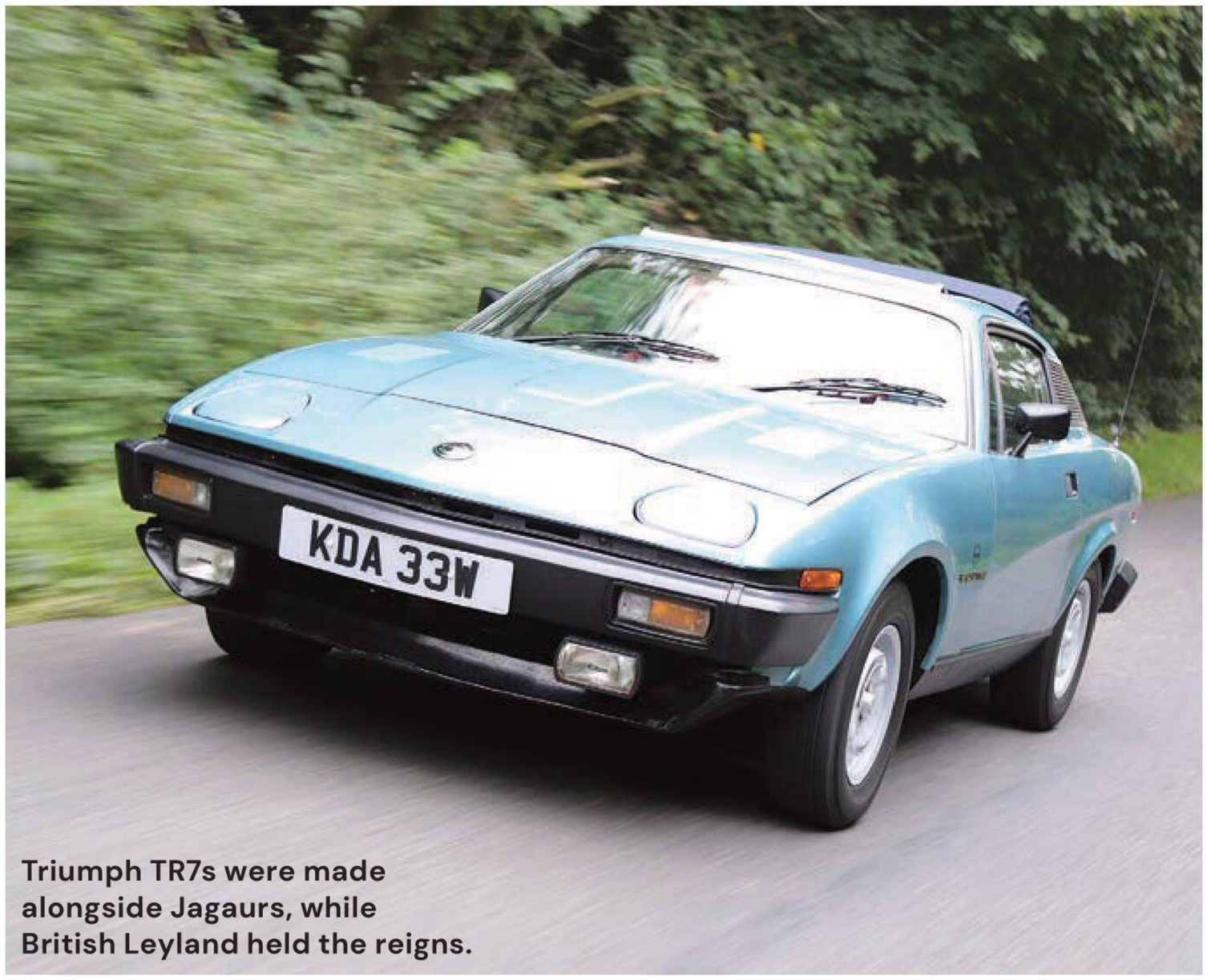
After hostilities ended, many of the shadow factories found themselves passed onto companies whose original facilities had suffered badly from bombing. Fisher and Ludlow, which pressed panels and built bodies for car manufacturers, acquired Castle Bromwich. In 1953,

A celebration of Jaguar XJs. Some of which would have rolled of the line at Castle Bromwich.

Morris got some sort of revenge for having the factory taken away from it 13 years previously when the newly-formed British Motor Corporation, which it was a major part of, took over Fisher and Ludlow. The firm had been one of its major body suppliers. To a certain extent, the swallowing up of Fisher and Ludlow played a role in Jaguar's later decision to merge with BMC; for it had subsequently blocked the supply of bodies from the Castle Bromwich concern when Triumph wanted to build its Herald in the late 1950s. When BMC then snapped up the Pressed Steel Company Limited in 1965, Sir William Lyons of Jaguar feared history would repeat itself, as Pressed Steel made Jaguar's bodies. He decided jumping into bed with BMC was probably the best way to ensure his firm's survival. Pressed Steel and Fisher and Ludlow would eventually combine to become Pressed Steel-Fisher.

But that was some way in the future. Castle Bromwich continued to construct huge numbers of bodies and pressings for its parent conglomerate, as BMC became British Motor Holdings, and then transformed into British Leyland in 1968. Eventually though, the factory concentrated on just two marques, Triumph and Jaguar, supplying unpainted shells - known as 'bodies in white' - to both brands. Eventually though, BL installed a paint plant, which unfortunately created more problems than it solved. Because the final stage of the Thermo-Plastic Acrylic (TPA) system melted the final colour coat at very high temperature, to give a high-gloss finish, there were often issues with the lead loading used on Jaguar

shells. It would often run into the paint because of the intense heat, resulting in Jaguar having to repaint many at its main Browns Lane base in Coventry, using a more conventional process. It was expensive, time-consuming and hugely wasteful.



Triumph TR7s were made alongside Jagaurs, while British Leyland held the reigns.

GOODBYE TRIUMPH, HELLO JAGUAR

When British Leyland began to wind down manufacture of the Triumph TR7, it left Castle Bromwich with only Jaguars to make. British Leyland found itself with a vast plant that was only rolling out 15,000 bodies a year and losing a lot of money as a result. Closure seemed the only real option, with Jaguar shell construction theoretically switching to the Austin factory at Longbridge.

However, the new chairman of Jaguar, John Egan, had other ideas. Appointed to head Jaguar in 1980, he appreciated that, if Castle Bromwich could be made to work properly, Jaguar would gain a valuable asset. He convinced Harold Musgrove, boss of BL's Austin-Morris division (which by then had responsibility for the facility) to transfer total control to Jaguar. 'You take the plant, all its overheads and workforce, and the best of luck to you,' said Musgrove to Egan when the deal was done. 'But mark my words, you'll waste a lot of time and trouble at Castle Bromwich. I'll give you three months before you give up, and I end up making your cars for you at Longbridge.'

Sorting out the technical issues at Castle Bromwich was the major

Lead loading used on Jaguar body-shells caused havoc when the high-temperature Thermo-Plastic Acrylic (TPA) system was in use.

New chairman of Jaguar, John Egan (centre) was a champion of the Castle Bromwich factory and knew it could be made to work.

priority. Bodies had to be made more accurately, using less lead to mask imperfections, while the TPA process was tinkered with, so that its temperatures were enough to bake the final gloss finish, without causing the lead underneath to melt. Castle Bromwich also had an extraordinarily limited range of paint shades - red, white and yellow. And Egan really disliked the yellow. So experts were brought in to introduce a more varied palette.

Matters did improve, but not enough to satisfy what Egan - and his customers - expected from a prestige manufacturer such as Jaguar. So the decision was taken to abandon TPA completely, and adopt the same system that other luxury car makers employed; a clear coat over the base colour, which gave a glossy finish, but didn't require the same sort of extreme, potentially damaging heat.

Taking on Castle Bromwich was a major undertaking for a concern that, in 1980, was losing around £50 million per year, as Jaguar was. However, just by improving the paint process - meaning that cars weren't having to be redone twice - major savings started to be made and quality went up. Castle Bromwich became a crucial cornerstone in Jaguar's efforts to revive and re-invent itself for the new decade. Egan introduced new leadership techniques, some of which were quite novel, such as bringing in an acting coach from the Royal Shakespeare Company to teach managers how to chair meetings and make training videos. 'We did not all turn out to be John Gielguds, but we all improved our performance and some of us became polished performers,' he recalled. It was probably unlike anything Castle Bromwich had experienced before.

There were other interesting moments at Castle Bromwich during the 1980s, such as a visit from Arthur Scargill, the leader of the National Union of Mineworkers. He, rather surprisingly, was a Jaguar owner. Castle Bromwich at the time was being powered by both coal and oil, and Egan wanted to cut out one in order to save money and time. Scargill, naturally, trumpeted the cause of coal, further stressing that if the factory was solely using coal, it would make his union's cause stronger in the coal miners' strike that was looming. Egan promptly opted for oil. 'There was a limit to what I would do for a Jaguar driver!'

By 1982, Jaguar was making a modest profit of £10 million. Just four years later, this had made the remarkable leap to £121 million. Because Castle Bromwich allowed considerable room for expansion,

without the need for new buildings to be constructed, it helped considerably with that charge towards healthy revenues and increased sales. For example, for the launch of the XJ40 in 1986, the factory could use its spare capacity to build up test prototypes and pre-launch stocks of its revamped XJ6 without disrupting supplies of existing models. There was also considerable investment too, such as £100 million on a new robotised body-in-white facility in preparation for the XJ40.

Jaguar was now having to stand on its own two feet, having been privatised by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government in 1984, once it became clear just how rosy its future looked. At least on the surface.

A SMALL MINNOW IN A BIG POND

As a small minnow in a big pond, Jaguar was protected from being snapped up by any bigger fish until 1990. But in 1989, Ford started acquiring shares, with a view to takeover. General Motors was also interested too. This wasn't welcome

Sir John Egan shows the Queens Award for Export Achievement presented to him today by Lord Aylsford, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands. 26th June 1986.

The XJ40 would be a product of a £100 million investment in the Castle Bromwich production line.

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CASTLE BROMWICH

The S-Type was the first new model to roll off the line, once Ford had taken control of Jaguar.

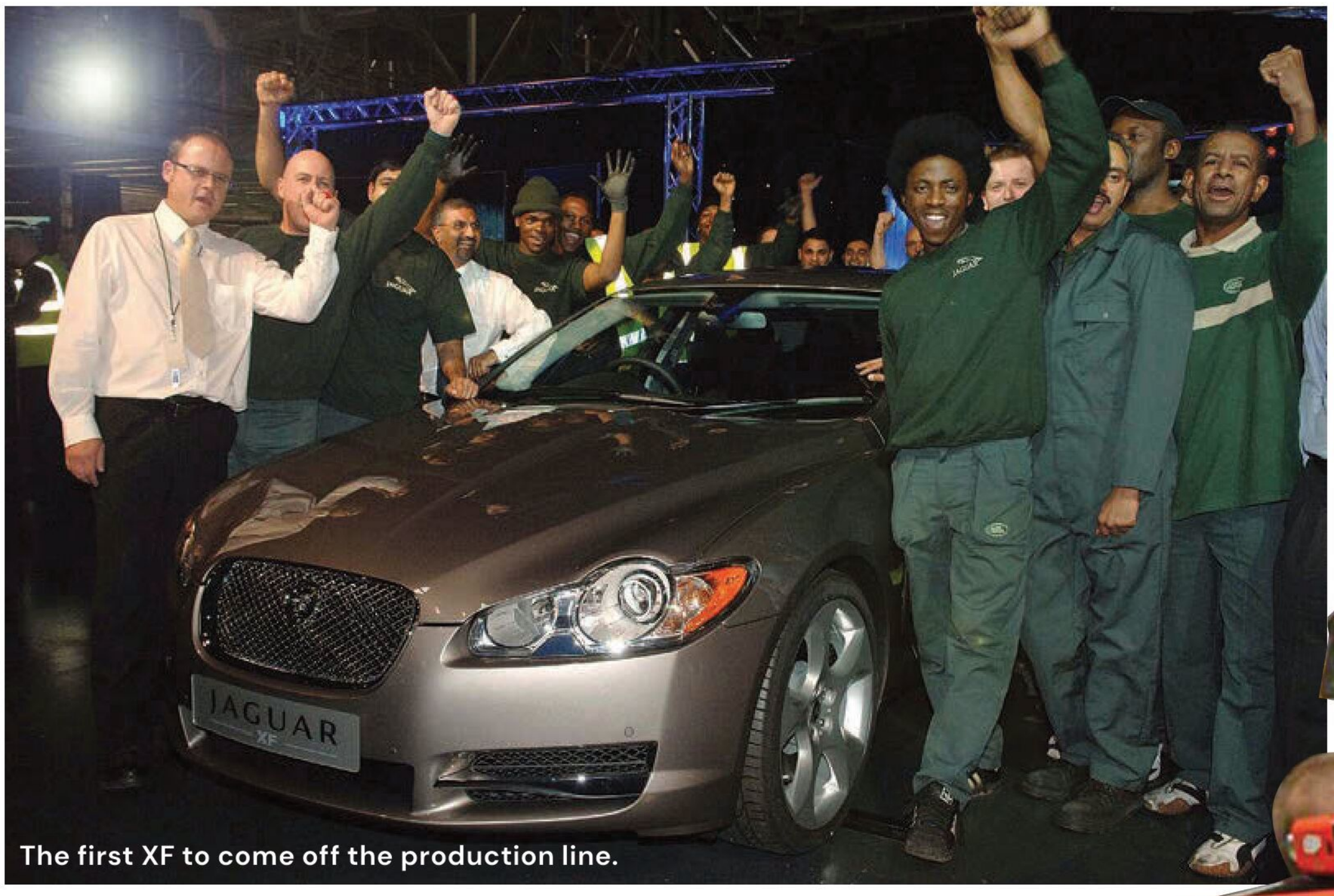
news to Egan; Jaguar had only been independent for five years and now it looked like it was going to be consumed by a huge conglomerate again. 'I suppose it is a bit flattering to think that we have created something worthwhile with good products, good dealers and good customers that so many very much larger companies now appear to want,' he commented. When Ford formalised the deal to buy Jaguar in early 1990, Egan announced he was leaving.

With the £1.6 billion that Ford paid for Jaguar came Castle Bromwich plus Browns Lane, as well as the ex-Daimler facility at Radford building engines, and a design and engineering centre in Whitley, both within the Coventry conurbation. Egan's successor, a dyed-in-the-wool Ford man by the name of Bill Hayden, was far from impressed by the infrastructure. In an infamous quote given to CAR magazine, he said he was '...appalled. I've been to car plants all around the world. Apart from some Russian factories in

Completed S-Types are loaded onto rail carriages to be distributed around the Jaguar network.

The first production XK rolls off the line at Castle Bromwich.

CASTLE BROMWICH



The first XF to come off the production line.

Gorky, Jaguar's was the worst I'd ever seen'. Whatever the modernisation, investment and other huge strides of the Egan era, industrial giant Ford clearly felt Jaguar's assembly facilities still left much to be desired.

In June of 1990, early into the Ford era, Jaguar ended night-shifts at Castle Bromwich's paint shop, thus saving on the premium payments to workers. Job cuts followed the next year, and Ford methods of production were introduced. But it was only in 1995 that Jaguar made a profit again, its first since 1990. The £26 million operating profits in the final quarter of 1995 were probably very minor solace for the £800 million that had been lost since Ford took over.

Nevertheless, things were moving in the right direction, and Castle Bromwich received a boost in July 1995 when a plan was revealed to invest £500 million in the premises. Post-war, the factory had only ever built - and painted - bodies, which would then be completed elsewhere. Now, a full production plant was being mooted. £80 million came from the British government, in order to secure the future of the forthcoming S-Type model there, after Ford threatened

CASTLE BROMWICH

to construct them in the USA unless it received financial aid. The first examples of the retro-styled smaller Jag left the new Castle Bromwich assembly lines during 1998; the first production model to be fully-built anywhere other than Browns Lane since the 1950s.

While the S-Type proved successful enough, rather than steal substantial market share from other manufacturers, it seemed to mainly harm the numbers of XJs finding new homes. In the wake of the car's launch, X308 XJ production went down by 40.48 per cent. Eventually, the marque's wavering fortunes led to the unthinkable - and Ford announcing towards the end of 2004 that vehicle manufacture would cease at the Browns Lane during 2005. Of the many things that Jaguar aficionados had cause to be upset with Ford over during its ownership of the brand, the demise of the historic HQ, that had once turned out XK120s, E-types, Mk2s and Le Mans racers, under the watchful gaze of Sir William Lyons, seemed especially harsh and unforgivable.

However, Browns Lane's loss was Castle Bromwich's bounty. Many positions were transferred to the Birmingham plant instead, which now took on all Jaguar production save for the X-Type, built at Halewood. The XJ and XK ranges found themselves transported a dozen or so miles north west, where they joined the S-Type in 2005 within Castle Bromwich's assembly halls.

In 2008, Ford put both Jaguar and Land Rover up for sale, as a job lot. Land Rover was profitable, Jaguar much less so, but the two companies had become so technically tangled with each other, sharing so many resources across the board, that it would have been very difficult to separate them. Indian industrial conglomerate Tata was the winning bidder - just in time for the global economic downturn. Sales of Jaguars promptly fell by

CASTLE BROMWICH

The 'under-wraps' F-Type.

30 per cent, Land Rover by 35 per cent. Like its fellow Halewood and Solihull plants, job losses followed at Castle Bromwich and it went to a four-day week. Then Tata announced that it planned to close either Castle Bromwich or Land Rover's established Solihull plant, and use the survivor to manufacture models from both marques. As dicey as it looked for the factories, ultimately both were reprieved, in a deal with unions that guaranteed they'd stay open until at least 2020.

Fortunately, by the middle of the 21st century's second decade, Castle Bromwich had new products to build. The F-Type went into production there during 2013, and was joined by the XE - the rather belated successor to the X-Type - in

Assembly line at the modern Castle Bromwich.


5
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CASTLE BROMWICH

Some of Jaguar's current line-up.

2015, along with the new aluminium version of the XF, which replaced the steel-bodied version manufactured at Castle Bromwich since 2007. It was also due to build the new electric XJ saloon - something regarded as essential for the survival of the site and the 3000 or so people employed there - from 2019. However, with the unexpected cancellation of that project, instead Castle Bromwich found itself moved to a four-day week as part of a major cost-cutting exercise.

However, as Jaguar's sole British full manufacturing plant now, responsible for body stamping operations, assembly, paint and trim, and final production for everything the marque builds here, Castle Bromwich is probably guaranteed a good future. Even if, until Jaguar sorts out which direction it wants to go in, that future may be a little unsure.

'Wall-art' at Castle Bromwich

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HALEWOOD HISTORY

Jaguars may only have been built at Halewood for nine years, but they helped secure the Merseyside plant's post-Ford future. And the factory remains in Jaguar Land Rover ownership today, even if only Land Rovers presently roll down its production lines.

WORDS Richard Gunn

In 2000, Jaguar found itself with a new factory, in the form of what is now known as Halewood Body & Assembly. The plant, situated on Merseyside, was picked to produce the X-Type, Jaguar's new mid-sized saloon. At the time, the marque was owned by Ford, with the X-Type being based on the contemporary Mondeo. So it was somewhat appropriate that the car with Blue Oval underpinnings, intended make Jaguar more accessible in mainstream markets, should be manufactured at Halewood. For, before Jaguar moved in, the plant had been responsible for turning out common-or-garden Fords for nearly 40 years.

Prior to the 1960s, Ford wasn't quite the major player in the British market that it is today. During the 1950s, its range was limited to small, rather antiquated cars with sidevalve engines, plus larger machines in what would today be called the executive class. The plant at Dagenham, alongside the River Thames in East London, was capable of fulfilling Ford's needs at the time.

However, with the advent and subsequent sales triumphs of the more modern and exciting Anglia 105E in 1959 and the Cortina in 1962, Ford needed to expand. The location it chose, in 1960, was a greenfield

The first car to be completed at Halewood, a Ford Anglia Deluxe, in March 1963.

An X-Type on the Halewood production line at Halewood.

HALEWOOD

site at Halewood on Merseyside, far away from its East London HQ. Part of the reason cited was 'to help with the unemployment situation and to reconcile its plans with government policy for the steering of new industrial development into areas of more-than-average unemployment'. Philanthropic it may have seemed, but the truth was that Ford was forced by the government to site its proposed £30 million 2,605,000 sq ft factory far away from Dagenham, against its wishes and financial common sense. However, being just six miles south east of Liverpool, there was a ready supply of labour, while the nearby main A561 road and Liverpool to London railway line meant components could be easily be brought in, and finished vehicles sent out.

In March 1963, Ford's new Halewood factory turned out its first car, a Ford Anglia Deluxe. It wasn't fully complete by that point, but still capable of building 200 cars a day, which instantly

Ford Escorts of all generations were built at Halewood from 1967 to 2000, and are arguably the car for which the factory will always be best-known.

The X-Type was built at Halewood from 2000 to 2009. It secured the future of the plant after Ford Escort production stopped, but never realised the volumes hoped for.

It was hoped that sales of the X-Type would reach 100,000 per year. In the event, Halewood never turned out any more than 50,000 per annum.

reduced pressure on Dagenham. The Anglia was the first of a long line of Fords to be built on Merseyside; in the years to come, the Corsair and various generations of Capri and Escort would emerge from Halewood.

Meanwhile, elsewhere in the British car industry, as Ford's fortunes steadily rose, Jaguar's fluctuated wildly. The glory days of the 1960s, when it seemed like the company could do little wrong, gave way to the torrid times of the 1970s when, under British Leyland, it seemed like it could do little right. It was only when John Egan took over as Jaguar chairman in 1980 that it seemed able to revitalise itself. By 1984, it was doing so well that

The plant at Halewood in 2006, during the days when it was building the X-Type.

HALEWOOD

even the government had noticed, and Margaret Thatcher's administration decided to privatise the firm.

Under the rules of the sell-off, Jaguar couldn't be taken over by any other companies until the end of 1990. As that time approached, General Motors and Ford started acquiring shares, each with a view to snapping up Jaguar when the rules allowed. Ford won - although, to be more honest, GM pulled out - and at the start of 1990, Ford formally became the new owner of Jaguar, for around £1.6 billion.

It was a lot of money for a car company that didn't build that many vehicles, and Ford was keen to expand the marque's portfolio with new models, some of them aimed at sectors that Jaguar hadn't previously competed in. The X-Type, of 2001, was a prime example. As a compact executive car, based on Ford's CD132 platform as shared with the Mondeo, it was intended to double the marque's worldwide sales. That meant, among other things, a significant increase in production facilities to cope. But Jaguar's Castle Bromwich factory was already being extended just to cope with its existing workload, and Browns Lane was already fully stretched, with little chance of expansion nearby.

Only Land Rover vehicles currently pass down the assembly lines at Halewood.

HALEWOOD IS THE ANSWER

Fortunately, Ford already had the answer. When the Focus was announced as the successor to the Escort in 1997, it was also confirmed that manufacture would only be

Jaguar Land Rover's investment in Halewood has been considerable, including £45 million on this new press line in 2014.

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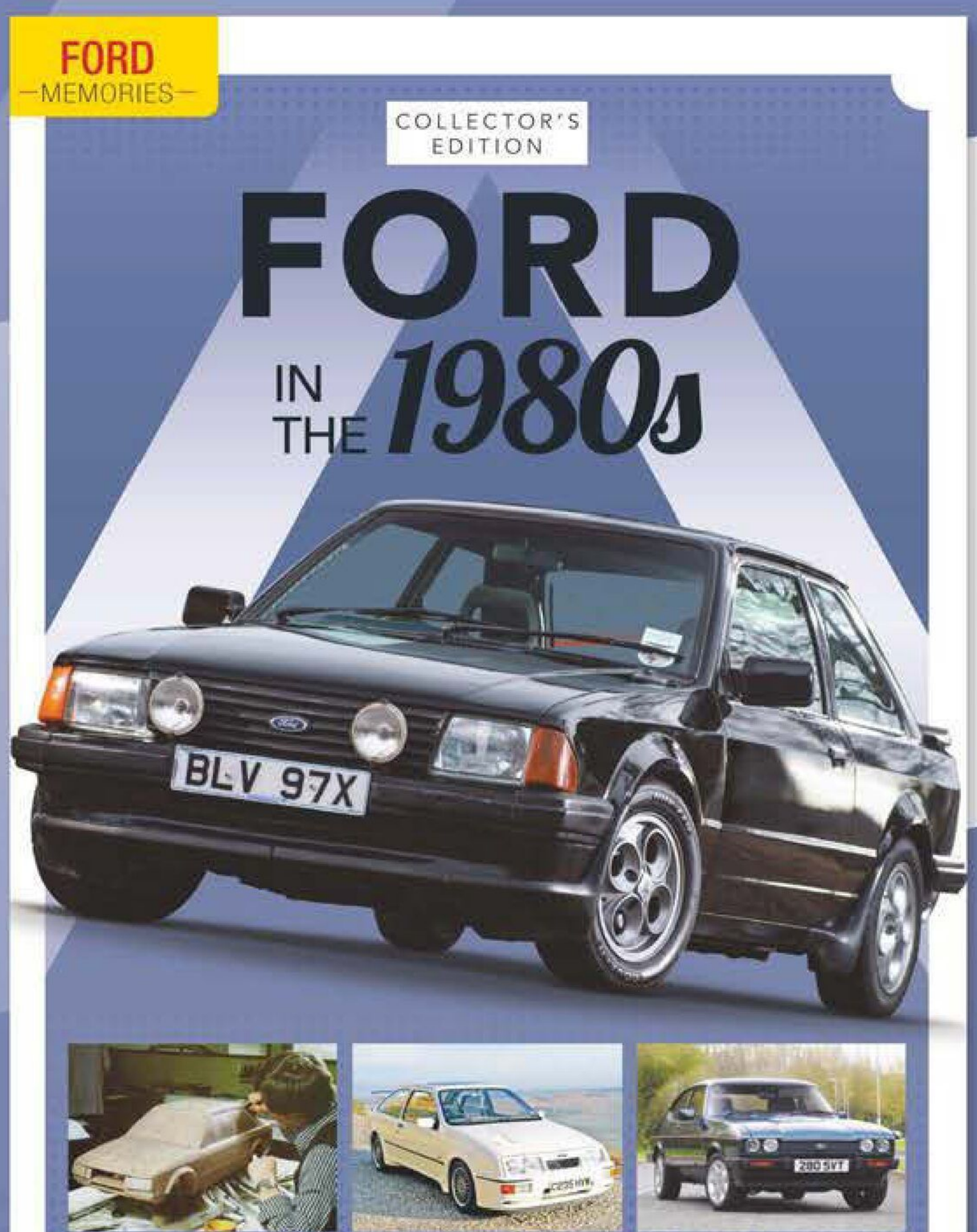

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HALEWOOD

David Hudson, Manufacturing Operations Director, left, and Colin Tivey, Operations Director, in front of the X-Type production line.

in Germany and Spain. That led to rumours that Halewood would be closed, as it had been troubled by quality, productivity and labour relations troubles. Instead, in November 1997, Ford reached an agreement with trade unions to switch from Blue Ovals to Leaping Cats at the Merseyside facility, and use it to build the X-Type. Although sites were investigated elsewhere in Europe and even in the United States, it was deemed more appropriate that the new baby Jaguar be built in Britain. A £43 million government grant in 1998 secured Halewood's future, bringing the total new investment in the plant up to £400 million. After the final Escort rolled down the assembly line in July 2000, the plant tooled up for the X-Type to replace it, with 3000 of the 4500 jobs at the facility safeguarded by the cash injection and new product. Assembly began towards the end of the year.

The X-Type was launched in February 2001, riding the era's trend for retro-styling. It turned out to be not quite the success that Ford had been hoping for. Although the cars


While it was a very different vehicle,
the Range Rover Evoque was the
replacement for the Jaguar X-Type
on Halewood's production lines.
It's still built there today.
RANGE ROVER
LAND ROVER

HALEWOOD

were well-built and well-specced, initially with all-wheel drive and 2.5- and 3.0-litre V6 engines (although front-wheel drive, diesel engines and a smaller 2.1-litre petrol V6 eventually followed), purists were somewhat sniffy about the Mondeo underpinnings and general whiff of Ford-ness. In addition, the attempt to reduce the style of the XJ to more diminutive dimensions wasn't completely happy. It did look like a Jaguar. But one that had shrunk in the wash.

Jaguar - and by extension, Ford - planned to sell 100,000 X-Types a year. That never happened. Although it was the best-selling Jaguar model throughout much of its life, Halewood's production could only peak at 50,000 during 2003. Sales in the USA were especially disappointing, going from 21,542 in 2004 to 10,941 in 2005. To take up some of the slack, the Land Rover Freelander 2 was built alongside the X-Type from 2006, Ford having taken over the best 4x4 firm by far in 2000. It would point the way to where Halewood's future lay. Despite the disappointing performance of the X-Type in the marketplace, the factory's standards of workmanship had improved considerably under Jaguar's influence, and it was regarded as one of the best Ford-owned plants in the world while the X-type was being put together there.

However, that Ford custodianship would not last for too much longer. The US giant announced it planned to sell Jaguar, along with Land Rover, in June 2007. Neither marque had quite delivered what Ford had been hoping for. In March 2008, the Indian conglomerate, Tata Motors emerged as the buyer, picking up both concerns for £1.7 billion - a mere £100 million more than Ford had paid for just Jaguar 18 years earlier. The three manufacturing plants that passed into Tata's hands were Castle Bromwich (Jaguar), Solihull (Land Rover) and Halewood (Jaguar and Land Rover).

While Halewood may have started life back in the 1960s, it now features lots of hi-tech automation throughout the plant.

HALEWOOD

For a while, it was business as usual. Halewood continued to build the X-Type and the Freelander, although overall Jaguar sales were by then (2007) just 60,485 - well below the 80,000 volume needed for the company to break even. They continued to fall, down a further 30 per cent more in 2008. Tata responded by integrating the two marques to form Jaguar Land Rover Limited. There were job cuts at Halewood, and from early 2009, a four-day week and pay freeze at Halewood.

The downturn also spelled the end for the X-Type, and in July 2009, it was revealed that the X-Type was to be axed. There was to be no direct replacement, at least not immediately. However, Halewood's bacon was saved by the Freelander continuing to occupy its assembly halls, and the promise of the new Land Rover LRX - which would eventually see the light of day as the Range Rover Evoque. But it wouldn't come to Halewood until 2011; in the meantime there were 300 redundancies, and the plant shut down for three weeks between September and December of 2009.

Halewood in 2006, before the days when 'Land Rover' had joined the 'Jaguar' branding on its exterior.

From that point onwards, Jaguar became solely a Land Rover factory. The Evoque did go into production on Merseyside in July 2011, with the aid of a £27 million grant from the government. The Evoque turned out to be the sort of runaway success that the X-Type hadn't been. More workers were taken on during 2011, taking the employee total to 3000. The following year, an extra 1000 staff were employed and the facility moved to 24-hour operation, for the first time ever, to keep up with demand. When the Freelander was discontinued in 2014, the Discovery Sport took its place in 2015, accompanied by a £200 million investment.

The Evoque and Discovery Sport continue to be constructed at Halewood today. And although uncertainty hangs over Halewood once more, as a beleaguered Jaguar Land Rover faces new challenges, the Merseyside plant has proved itself an automotive industry survivor. It has manufactured the vehicles of three very distinct brands over nearly 60 years. And, who knows, perhaps at some future point, it may even build Jaguars again.

The Land Rover Discovery Sport has been built at Halewood since 2015, replacing the previous Freelander 2.

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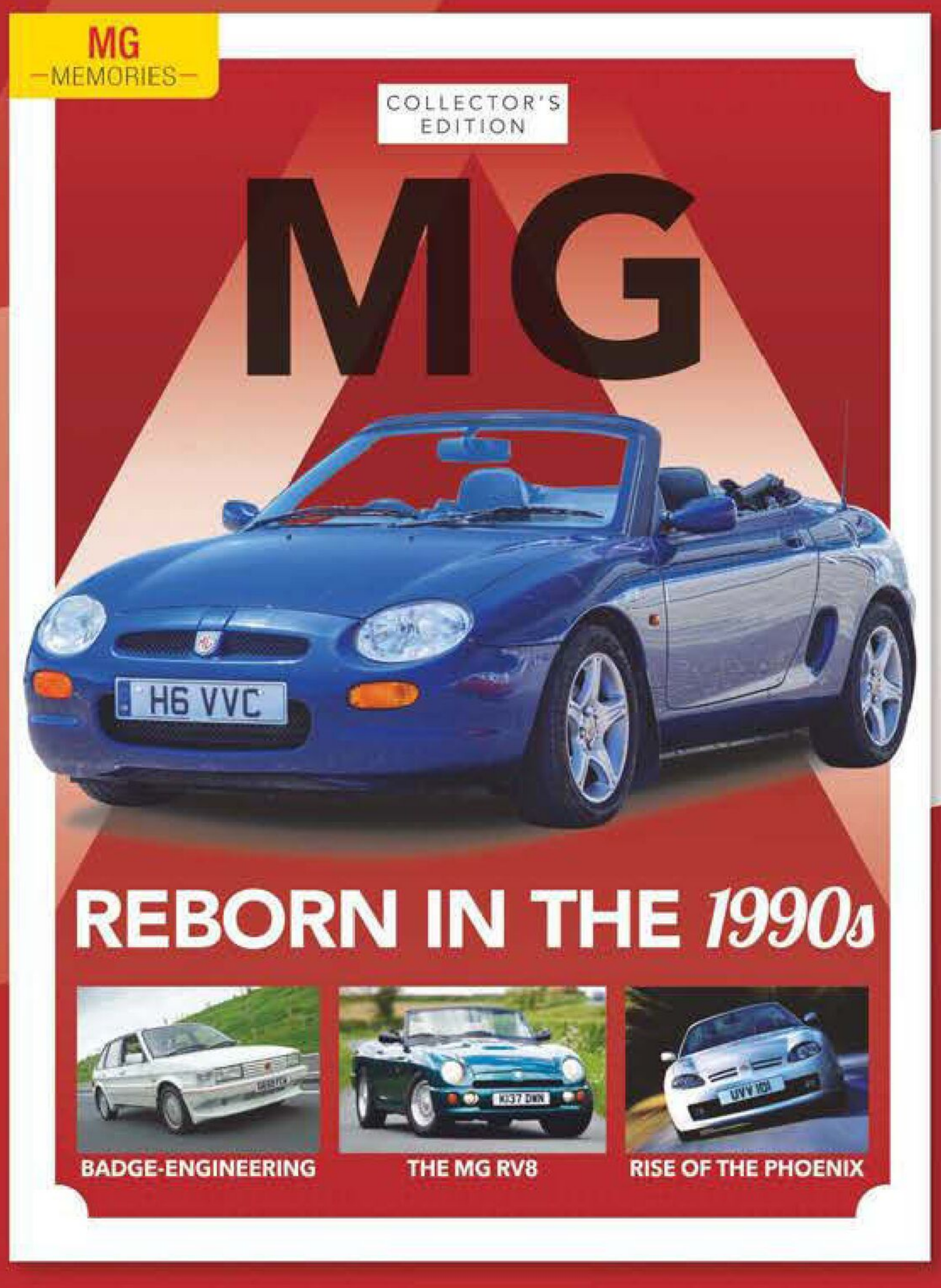

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GOING IN-HOUSE

Jaguar Land Rover's Engine Manufacturing Centre near Wolverhamption was the first time in a generation engine production was brought in-house.

Opening of the state-of-the-art Engine Manufacturing Centre near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands, in 2014 was a seminal moment for Jaguar Land Rover. Embarking on manufacturing engines in-house for the first time in a generation, the plant would become home to the 'Ingenium' engine family, which now powers the new generation of Jaguar Land Rover products.

At a cost of £500m the factory was officially opened by Her Majesty the Queen on Thursday October 30th 2014, accompanied by the late His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.

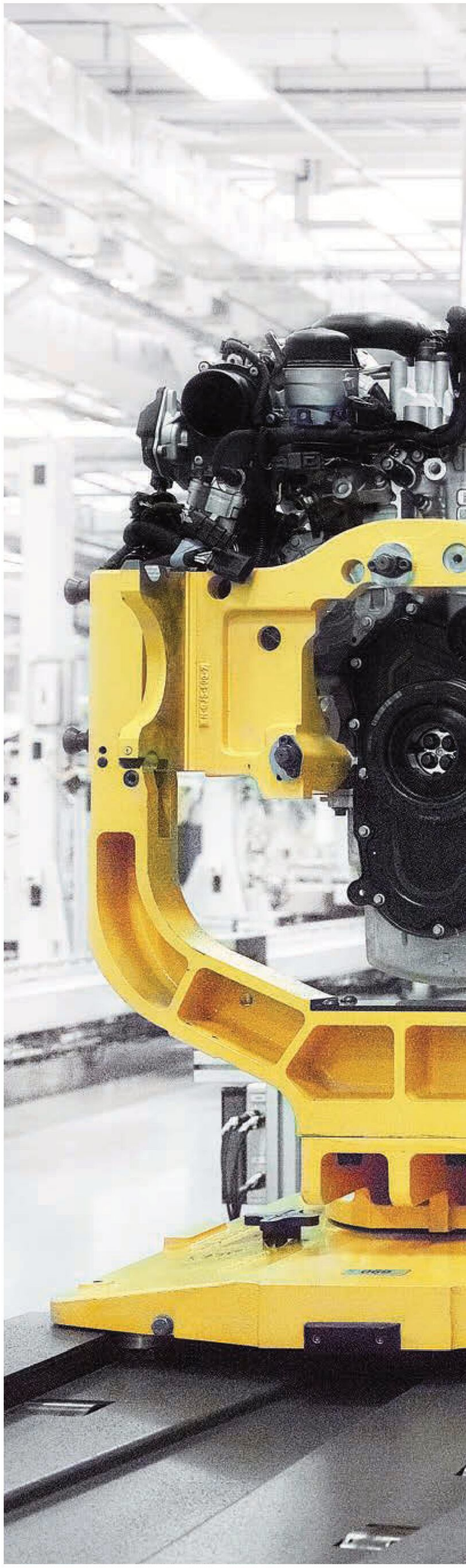
INGENIUM ENGINE

Developing their own engines, Jaguar Land Rover's new family of advanced technology, low-friction, high-performance petrol and diesel engines meet the demand for lower fuel consumption and cost of ownership, without compromising performance and the driver experience.

Ingenium's design brief presented Jaguar Land Rover's engineers with a tough and complex challenge. Its new engine family would need to be:

- Configurable to enable seamless installation in a range of new Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles
- Scalable up and down to create smaller or larger displacement

Her Majesty the Queen opened the Engine Manufacturing Centre in October 2014.

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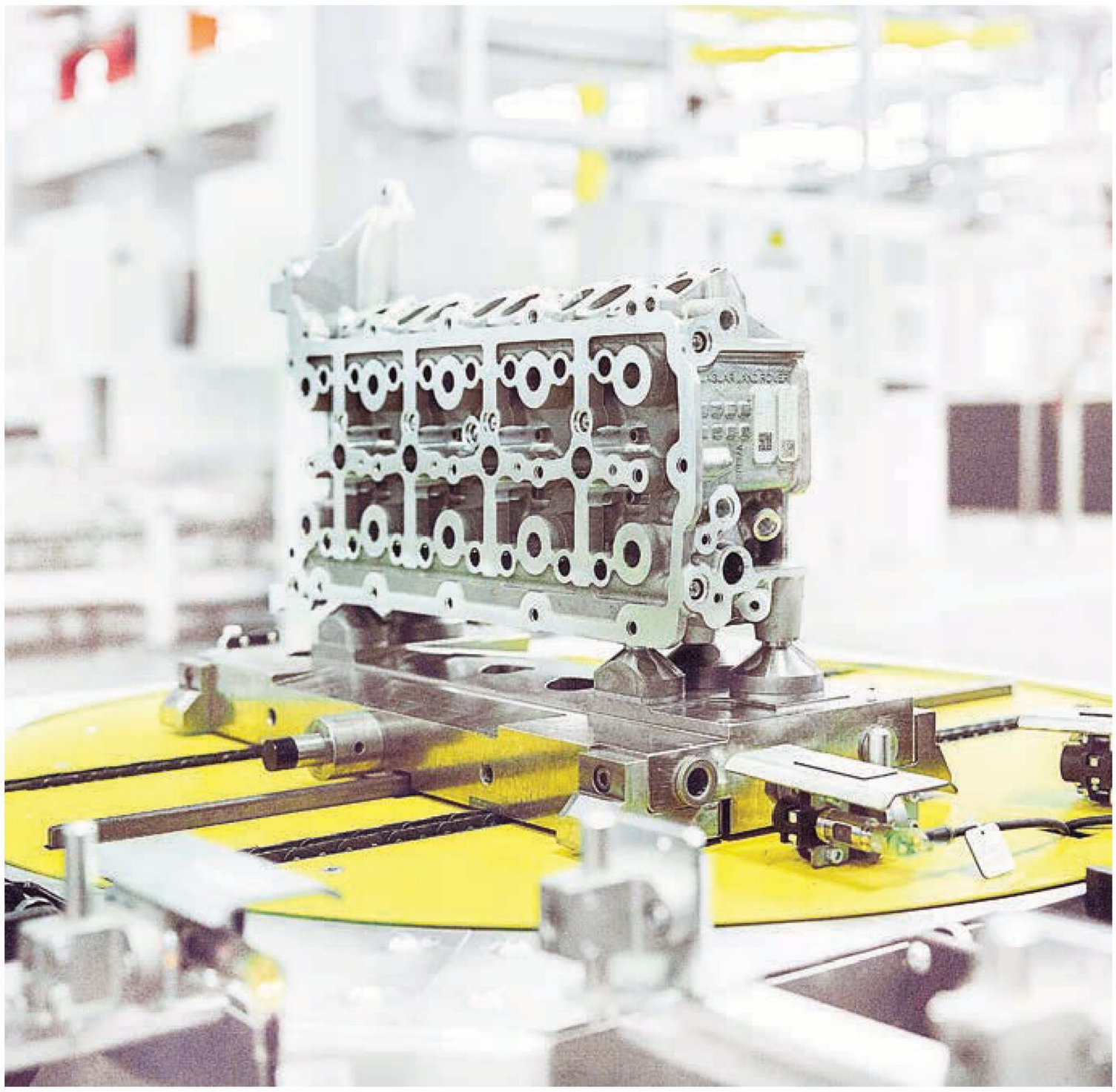
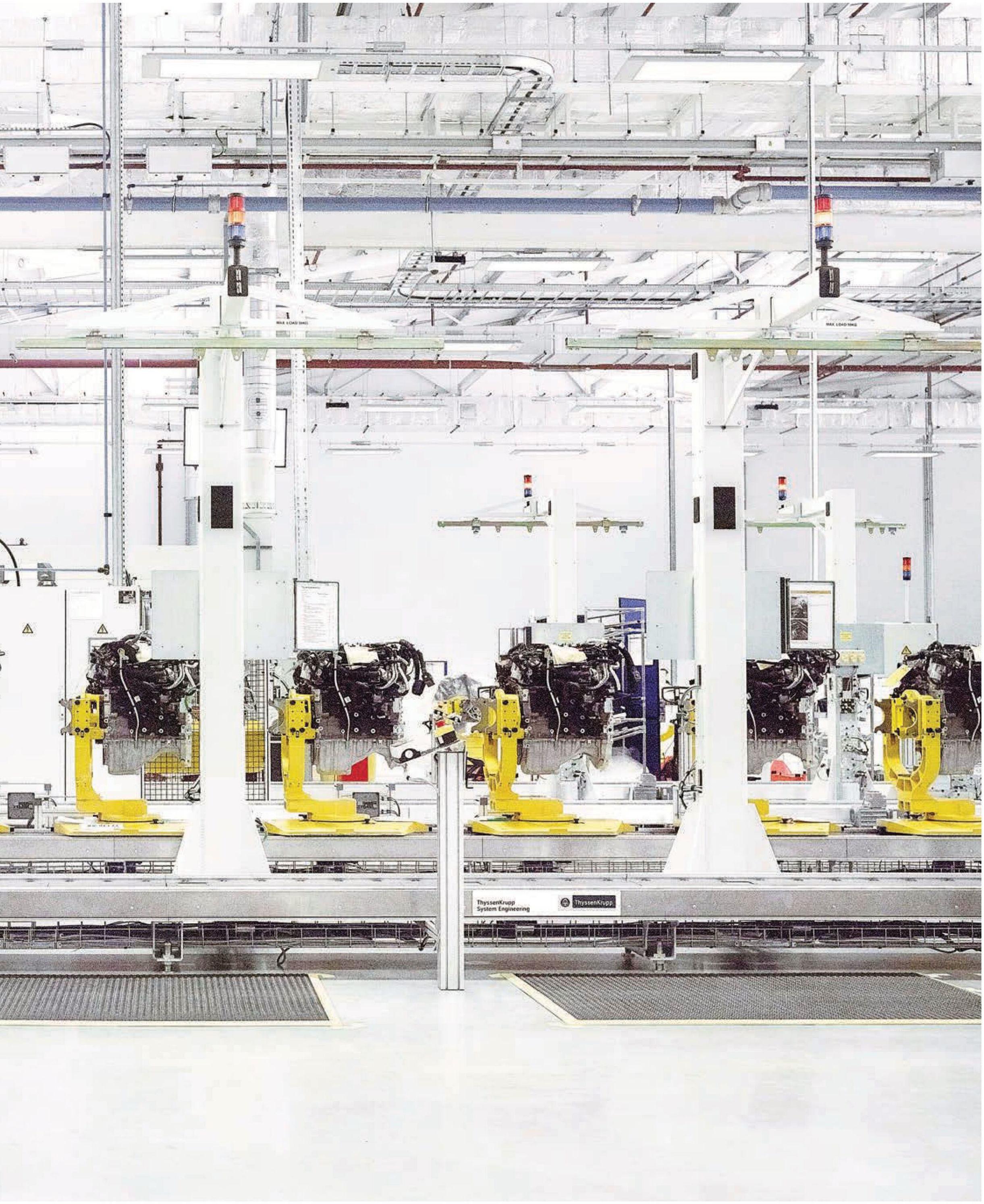
KEEPING IT MIDLANDS



- Able to accommodate a range of powertrain layouts including rear-, all- and four-wheel drive
- Engineered to support manual and automatic transmissions as well as electrified hybrid drive systems
- Easily accepting of new advances in engine technologies as they become available

Jaguar Land Rover powertrain engineers at the company's Whitley and Gaydon development facilities based the Ingenium's foundation on extremely strong and compact aluminium blocks for both diesel and petrol versions. These lightweight blocks share the same bore, stroke, cylinder spacing and 500cc cylinder capacity. This helps give Ingenium the configurability and flexibility around which smaller or larger engines can quickly and efficiently be developed to meet future regulatory and competitive requirements.

All diesel and petrol Ingenium variants are equipped with state-of-the-art turbochargers that improve performance, particularly at low speeds, and that help reduce consumption and CO2 emissions. With its modular design both petrol and diesel engines share many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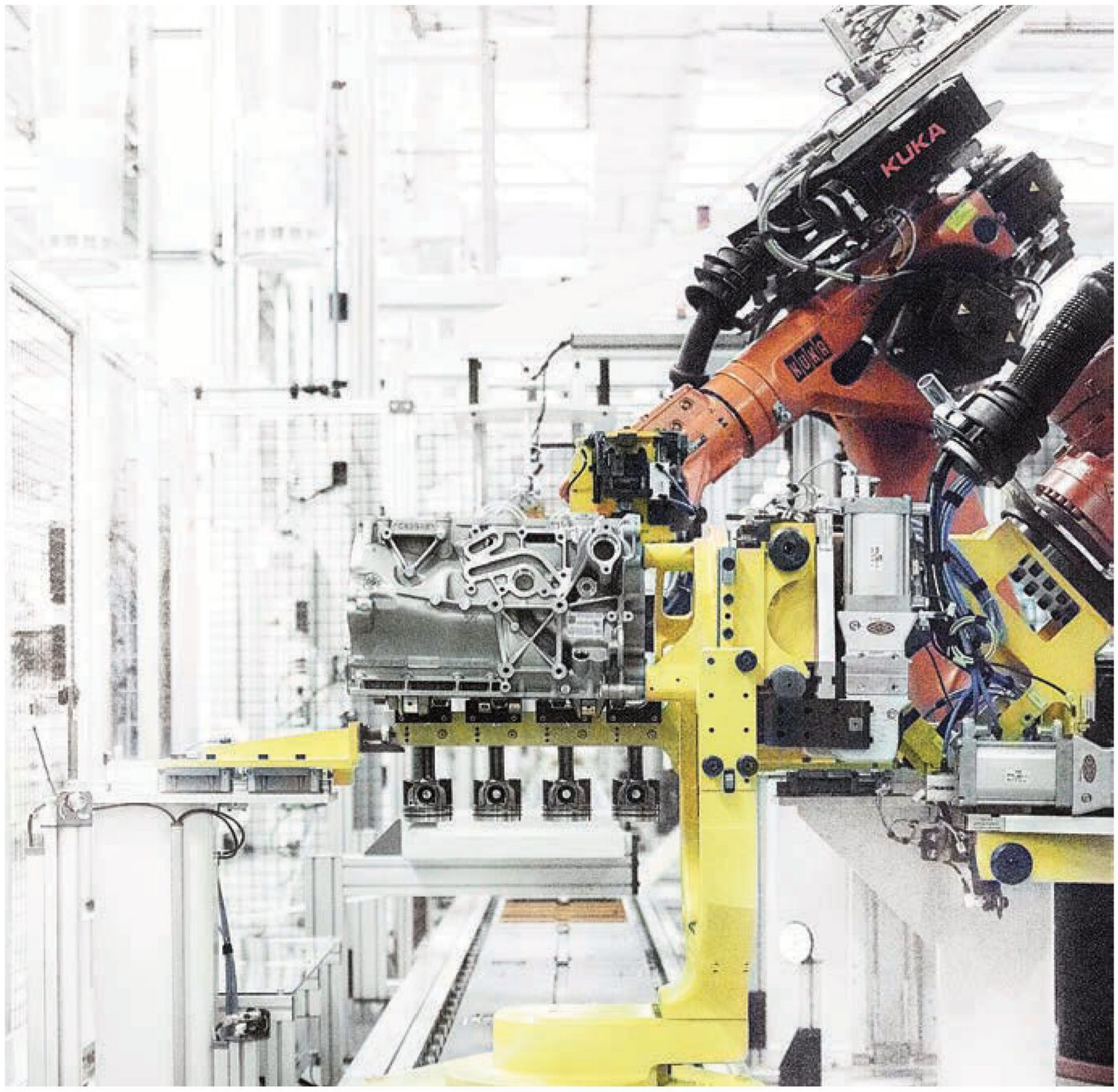
KEEPING IT MIDLANDS

common internal components and calibration strategies. This reduces complexity, raises quality and simplifies manufacturing

Production started with the 2.0-litre diesel engine for the Jaguar XE and with its cutting edge manufacturing technology, the production line uses 150 state-of-the-art machines working across three lines, with everything from assembly robots and lasers to drilling and high-pressure wash machines.

The first line is where the aluminium block begins its transformation from a simple chunk of metal to the technologically advanced heart of the Ingenium engine. It is heated in an oven before undergoing a series of machining operations, always punctuated by high-pressure washes to filter debris away. The second line contains the cylinder head, which undergoes a similar process. The crankshaft line differs as it is machining forged steel, not aluminium. Here, the steel is milled, turned and drilled. Both automated and manual tests take place throughout each line, ensuring that each component is made to the highest standard of quality possible.

"Customers around the world are increasingly demanding cleaner-running, more efficient vehicles that maintain or even enhance the performance attributes expected of a rugged all-terrain vehicle or a high performance car. Our Ingenium engines deliver this to a new level," said Dr. Wolfgang Ziebart, Jaguar Land Rover Group Engineering Director.

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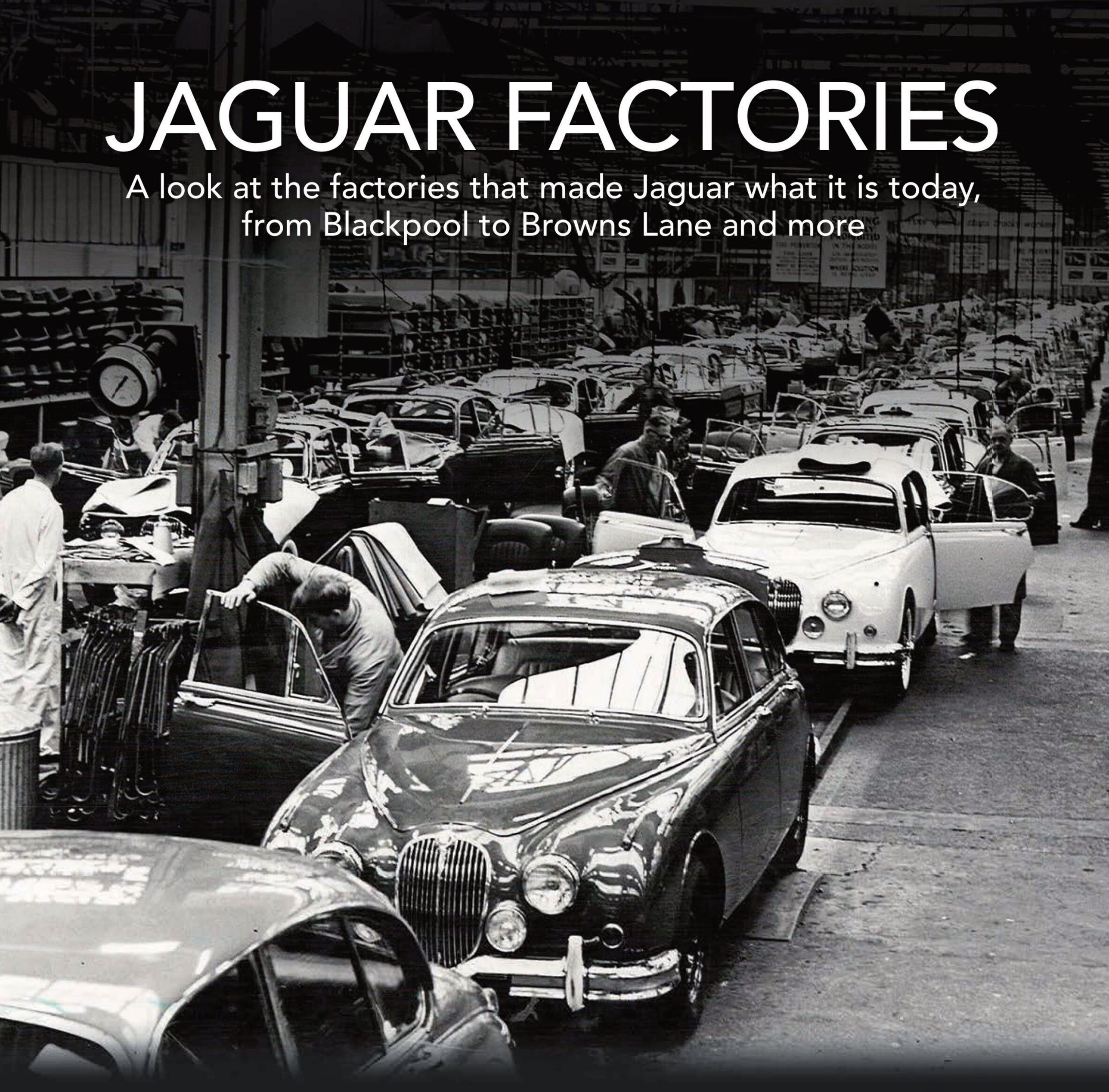
JAGUAR FACTORIES

A look at the factories that made Jaguar what it is today, from Blackpool to Browns Lane and more



This fourth bookazine in the Jaguar Memories series looks at the factories that have shaped Jaguar into the brand it is today.

From the humble beginnings in Blackpool with Swallow Sidecars, to relocating to the Midlands, becoming Jaguar, and spending decades at its spiritual home, Browns Lane.

This issue also looks at the Jaguar's interim Midlands home, Foleshill, as well as the take-over of Daimler and the consequential cars that came after. We also chart Jagaur's history at Castle Bromwich and look at the Halewood factory while under Ford control.

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