

MG's Y-type 1¼-litre saloon conveyed pre-War conservative styling into the new peacetime period riding high on a traditional chassis that held features – not least the novelty of coil-sprung independent front suspension – that would be introduced to the famous sports car.

This was not the first time – remember the 1936 SA 2-litre's hydraulically operated brakes – nor would it be the last that a saloon car led the way in trail-blazing innovations for the marque.

The Y-type was the last traditional saloon to bear the badge but the first MG to sport that, later familiar, sturdy, deep box-sectioned front cross-member engineering package that held the independent front axles by their own integrated suspension/damping systems and the rack housing of the new rack and pinion steering gear.

Looking at the uninspiring MG-Morris mish-mash that the Y-type appears it is not hard to see why this car is not foremost in the marquophile mind. Beauty, though, is often in the eye of the beholder and there are those who find the Y's looks agreeable for they know that under that staid skin lives a somewhat shy MG.

Summertime '39 saw the millionth Morris and in that fateful year it was confirmed that the next MG saloon would be the blood brother to its Morris relatives, Eight and Ten, when the MG Ten Pre-production model materialised. All systems were go for a 1940 Motor Show launch when war broke out.

Seven years later, in 1947, the MG Y-Type 1¼-litre saloon became available to the public. At the taxed price of £672 it sold as well, it might in a period of consumer deprivations when powered soap-box specials could have probably been off-loaded.

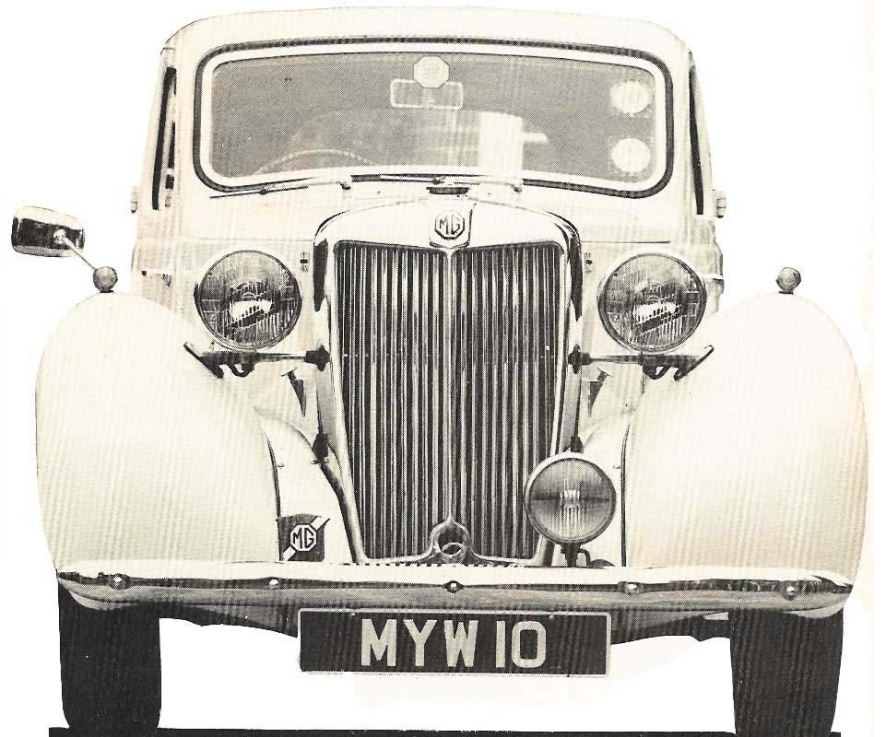
The new car was a nice drive. These were optimistic times. Things had been terrible; they were pretty bad now, but sure to get better — better than ever before. The Y felt different, it was smoother over the road and the steering was right there. It had quality strength also — an MG to boot, things were definitely on the up.

Using a traditional platform chassis, comprising new box-section members and fitted with a four-cylinder 1250 cc overhead-valve Morris XPAG engine derived from that of the 1939 Morris Ten, the MG broke new ground by using a coil-sprung and wishbone front suspension designed by the ascendant Issigonis.

A strong, boxed — except at its spring-holding extremities — transverse, chassis link anchors the system. There were two separate assemblies, one for each wheel.

The front wheels' independence meant an end to their bone-jarring joint by beam axle and allowed nearside or offside bumps to be isolated at-the-wheel leaving the other free to deal with the undulations in its path. The use of coil springs as the primary suspension medium provided a long and smoothly progressive travel translating a softer ride yet the hydraulic dampers' direct connection gave a sure firming up when conditions demanded it.

To give non-driven axles their independence is one matter; doing the same for those carrying the drive is a much more costly and involved exercise. At the rear the usual axle-over-chassis by half-



PEACETIME PROSPERITY SAW THE LONG AWAITED INTRODUCTION OF MG'S NEW SALOON. AND DESPITE BEING A MARRAIGE OF CONVENIENCE WITH MORRIS, THE Y-TYPE HAS ATTRACTED A DEVOTED FOLLOWING.

elliptical leaf springs and attendant shock absorbers, arrangement was employed. Rubber bushing and 5.25 x 16-inch wheels and tyres tied it up.

A single 7¼-inch dry plate *Borg and Beck* clutch served a four-speed part-synchromesh gearbox and that the propeller shaft etc. Hydraulic pressure worked all-round 9-inch-diameter drum brakes to slow the 5-bolt steel-disc wheels and also the boastingly-named Jackall jacks fitted to the chassis family-fashion.

To this package was bolted the re-trimmed four-door pressed-steel Morris body. Its short side-louvered half-split hinged engine cowl ending in a tall, laid back, MG radiator grille with prominent starting-handle aperture and octagonal filler-cap. Chrome plating covered the grille, 8-inch traditionally mounted headlamps, wing-top bullet side lights, screen surround, bumpers, handles, petrol filler and hub caps to offset the rather drab body.

At each side well-rounded wings connected by rubber-straked running boards that formed a step below the contra-opening doors that shared central hinging; the forward pair opening rearwards while the rear one opened in modern fashion.

Rear styling maintained the short, steep, forward leaning slope associated with MG saloons and accommodated a boot and separate spare-wheel housing, the former being covered by a bottom-hinged panel bearing an MG-outline badge, while the latter's cover neatly held the number plate and rear illumination.

Rear windows in the usual three-quarter thick roof pillar position were ahead of the modern fashion and contributed greatly to an open interior where visibility was reduced only by a small rear window. Though a true saloon, it was possible to enjoy a deal of fresh air while out in the Y. A half-length, steel, sliding sun roof offered infinite headroom to front seat passengers who could also have face-level ventilation via the opening windscreen no less.

Inside the cosily-compact cabin was, what we would call today, a luxury interior; black fitted carpet, leather seats, wood dash and door cappings, wire-spoked steering wheel fitted to length-adjustable column, and looped grab-handles and beige cloth headlining. A direct, angled, gear stick fell to hand but closely-spaced floor stem pedals demanded nimble feet. Twin octagon-framed instrument clusters lay before the driver who knew that the car would deliver the moderate performance he expected from its engine's modest capacity. It was an MG, and as such would sell 6158 examples in its original form.

Fuel consumption of 27-miles-per-gallon must be considered excellent for such a weighty, low powered, sports saloon. The solidly constructed 4-seater weighed a ton just parked in the drive and the 46 bhp liberated by the XPAG at 4800 rpm was not going to set the road on fire. Though as a small saloon car of its time its performance was above average with a 71 maximum after a 23.2-second standing-quarter-mile with 50 being seen in 16.7.

MINI-PROFILE MG Y—TYPE

The 1250 pushrod-overhead-valve unit, with a 7.2 compression ratio and single SU carburettor in Y-guise, also powered the contemporary TC Midget, albeit, in a higher state of tune. This offered interesting possibilities for the go-faster saloon fraternity and might have influenced the introduction of the open tourer version as the sportier YT.

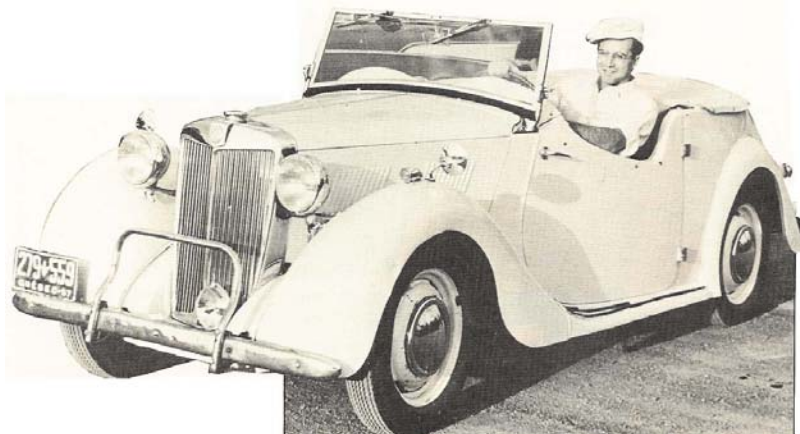
Open four-seaters had been popular in the past whether small, like the P-type Midget, or as large as the most recent WA 2.6-litre. Powered by the TC, twin carb, version XPAG and some 1¼ hundred-weight lighter as a result of decapitation and the loss of the rear doors — the YT was produced in late '48 as an export number.

Selling less than a thousand in two years, it was not a great success but, no doubt money was made. Perhaps post-War austerity had polarised UK buyers into two distinct — sports car, saloon car — groups or perhaps the man going for four seats wanted saloon comfort. Morris might even have feared inter-marque competition because there is no denying the closeness of the YT to the TC and perhaps more so to the 1949 TD.

Many think of the YT as something of a Noddv — Car but let them ponder the TD's chassis, suspension wheels and general appearance or the YT's fold-flat windscreen, bowed dashboard and cut-away doors. Let them weigh the lighter and more powerful sports car against the tourer's ample accommodation. Just 877 examples of the very useful YT were produced before it was dropped from the range in 1951, the year MG offered their third Y-type.

This model was the YB and went into production towards the end of the year, from which point saloons became known as YAs.

The new model had minor bodywork changes over the rear wheel arches, MG-marked hubcaps, bumper over-riders that added 3-inches to the car's overall length



In 1962 this 1949 Y-type tourer was driven 2,500 miles from Montreal to Mexico City, then climbed 14,000 ft. to the summit of an extinct volcano named Nevada di Toluca. With considerable help from the natives it finally reached civilization once again.

and smaller diameter, 15-inch, but larger profile, 5.50, wheels and tyres. Overall gearing lowered slightly to compensate the half-hundredweight gained by the YB. A semi-floating hypoid unitary rear axle with its lower propeller shaft drive replaced the earlier removable differential type. A front anti-roll bar, new shock absorbers and beefed up, 2-cylinder, 2-leading-shoe front brakes were introduced as was a pull, instead of push, starter knob and twin horns.

Modifications to appear under the bonnet included a new oil filter, increased sump capacity and, finally, a well-hidden larger diameter 8-inch clutch plate.

Handling of the Y was very positive, in fact an oversteering tendency may have been due to unfamiliarity with these developments by the makers or downright driver abuse. The ride, in normal driving, was a definite improvement.

Not surprisingly, the YB handled sweeter and went a little faster but a rather obvious question at this stage might be why didn't Morris fit the YT engine? Though a better car, the YB was no great seller and its dated lines must bear the blame for 1301 units — hardly one-fifth of the Y-type saloon total.

The tax price now stood over £200 higher than the launch figure but this was

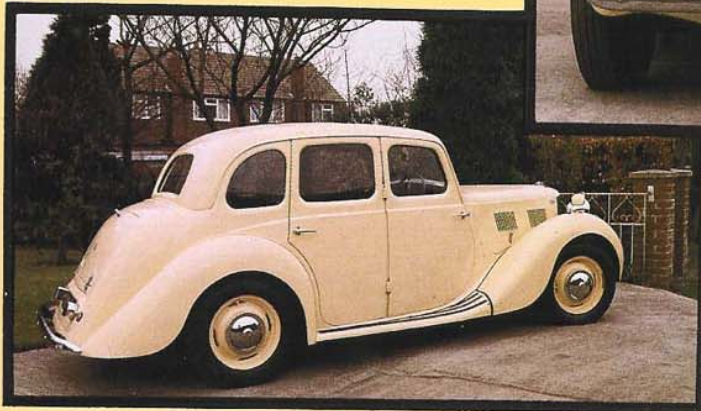
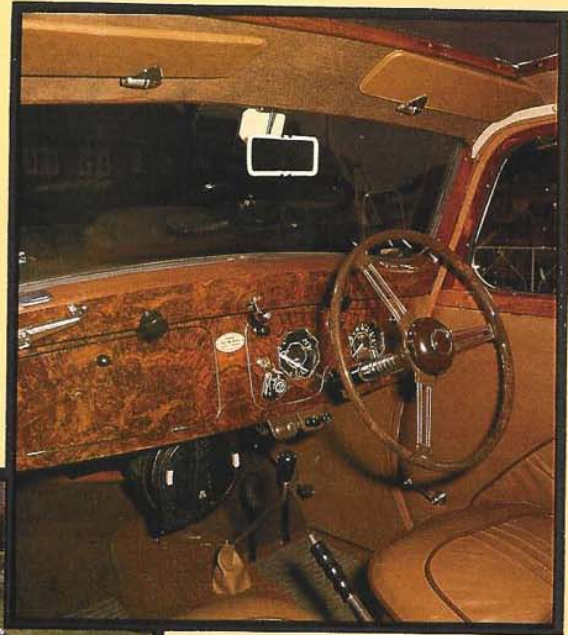
boom time. Boom time in Belgium the previous year the supercharged XPAG of Dick Benn's Y-saloon after fulfilling his wish to see the car exceed the ton in a timed run by the great Goldie Gardner. Boom time for the YB and Dick Jacobs. Three Silverstone Production Car, class-wins in three years — '52 thru '54 — was success, as was 8,336 cars produced over the seven years that, at the time, confirmed the Y-type 1¼-litre saloon the marque's most popular and proved the viability of an MG saloon in the face of outwardly-similar Nuffield cars.

The 919 cc 30 bhp side-valved Morris Eight Series E including four doors and a sliding sunroof and with stub tail and Porsche-type headlights to rule out later confusion sold at just under £400 in 1946. Its Ten Series M stablemate soldiered through the War, its engine being taken up by MG for its Y and T series cars and its 1140 cc capacity and 37 bhp output increased to suit their purpose. Although leaf-sprung, it was the first chassisless monocoque Morris.

The motoring public still expected the benefits of the MG badge and what is more, that badge did not deceive. YA, YT, or YB, the car was still MG.



MINI-PROFILE MG Y—TYPE



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MODEL		MG Y-type 1¼ litre
PRODUCTION	Period	E 1947 – L 1953
	Total	8,336
BODYTYPE	Saloon and open four-seater	
CONSTRUCTION	Pressed-steel body and panels	
CHASSIS	Steel frame	
ENGINE	Material	
	Cylinders	4
	Valvegear	Pushrod-operated overhead valves
	Capacity	1250 cc.
	Bore/stroke	66.5 x 90 mm
	Carburettor	1 semi down-draught SU; YT-2
	Output	46 bhp at 4800 – YA and YB. 54 bhp at 5200 – YT.
	TRANSMISSION	Gearbox
	Clutch	Single dry plate
	Drive	Propeller shaft, bevel coupling, differential, rear axle.
BRAKES	All-round 9-inch drums Operation Hydraulic	
SUSPENSION	Independent at front by coil springs and wishbones with a half-elliptic leaf spring axle-linked rear. All-round hydraulic dampers	
	Wheels	5-bolt steel disc
	Tyres	5.25 x 16 – YA and YT 5.50 x 15-inches – YB
	Track	3-feet 11 ³ / ₈ -inches, front, 4' 2", rear
	Wheelbase	8 feet 3 inches.
OVERALL CHASSIS DIMENSIONS	Length	13 feet 5-8 inches
	Width	4 feet 11 inches

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