

The Classic 'Y'



Issue No.171 December 2002

The Newsletter of The M.G. "Y" Type Register

EDITORIAL

First, of course, an apology for the diabolical slippage of the page-six photos in the last issue! A replacement page is herewith enclosed for all those of you who were adversely affected.

Second only to that announcement is to wish all my readers and Y-Type enthusiasts everywhere a Very Merry Christmas and a Safe & Peaceful New Year. Don't forget, our 25th Anniversary is coming... (next issue).

REGISTER NEWS

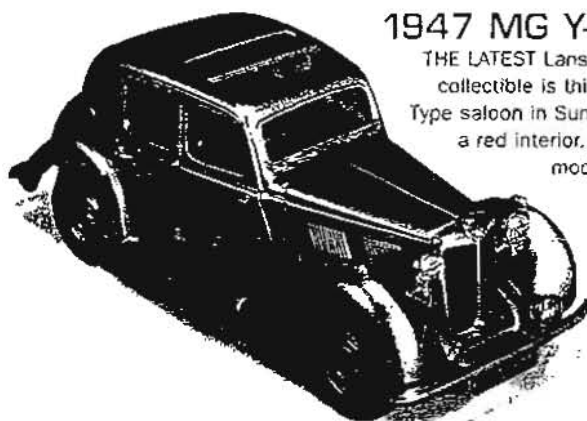
Another early "Y", previously unknown to us, recently came to light. It is Y/0303, with engine number SC/10043. This car was purchased in November by Mr. Dennis Sears of [REDACTED] Hampshire. I know Dave Lawrence will be very interested to hear of this car, as over the last few years he has established that the early cars differed somewhat in their specification from those built from late 1947 onwards (e.g., the very first cars did not have the small Bakelite ashtrays in the backs of their front seats). Mr. Sears says he thinks the original body colour of this car was "pale greenish blue", so it could well have been Elizabeth Grey, I suppose.

I had some further thoughts on the Elizabeth Grey shade recently when Jerry Ticknor from Michigan (one-time owner of Y/5174/EXLU) sent me an old copy of *M.G. Magazine* (No.41, March 1992). This contained an illustrated article on the record-breaking achievements of Goldie Gardner. The important point about this for our purposes was that the article was illustrated by colour slides taken in May 1939 by John Dugdale (at the Dessau Road during the well-known record-breaking runs). Dugdale was on the staff of *The Autocar* at the time, and of course colour photography was still quite rare in those days. I mentioned on page 3 of *TCY* 168 (June 2002) that there is a colour photo of a two-tone "Y" on page 713 of *The Autocar*

cont'd...

for 15th August 1947. Dugdale was still working for *The Autocar* at that time, and had Y-Type associations through his journey to Italy (to report on the Mille Miglia) in 1947 in Y-Type, "DRX557". Those photos of the Goldie Gardner episode all have a curious green tinge or haze to them, no doubt a feature of that particular type of early colour film. I don't think it would be stretching the imagination too far to conjecture that the Y-Type colour photo of 15th August 1947 might also have been taken by Dugdale, using the same type of colour film, and maybe even the same camera. If this is so, then the greenish haze given to the Elizabeth Grey main body colour could well be somewhat deceptive - perhaps something to bear in mind when trying to come up with a modern equivalent for Elizabeth Grey?

Apart from the above, Dave Lawrence has again come up with a number of "new" Y/Ts: Y/T/EXR 3709 was originally exported to Australia and has recently found its way from Perth to Denver, Colorado, where it is now in the hands of John Brock. Another previously unknown Y/T in the U.S.A. is possibly Y/T/EX(U) 2859 (with a chap named Ken Presti, who wishes to sell the car). And Robert Patry has Y/T/EXR 4919 in Canada.



1947 MG Y-TYPE SALOON

THE LATEST Lansdowne Models white metal collectible is this attractive post-war MG Y-Type saloon in Sun Bronze metallic paint with a red interior. A heavy, well proportioned model, it has a chromed grille, bumpers and hubcaps. The half-open sunroof is an interesting touch.

MANUFACTURER:

Lansdowne Models

PRICE: £46

SCALE: 1:43

VALUE FOR MONEY:

●●●●●

Terry Cathcart of Belfast sent me details of the above model. It would appear to be cheaper than the R.A.E. product (which works out at £60-plus, I believe, in ready-assembled form). According to *Gentleman Driver* magazine, the Lansdowne model has been available since around January 2001 and its catalogue number is LDM28. The question now is, where can we obtain one?

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"MG had been ready to jettison their large saloons in 1940, but sedate customers had to be placated, and in 1947 the charming little YA had been launched. This had long been on the stocks as a VA replacement, a fact to which the presence of elderly prototypes in Oxford attested. The car looked as one would expect of a 1941 model to look: a 1939 chassis, body and trim with independent front suspension and rack-and-pinion steering attached. The close-set pedals, cramped interior and tiny boot belonged to an earlier era; we have already encountered the 46-bhp TC-based engine in the Wolseley 4/44. The 16-inch disc wheels anticipated the TD of 1950, built-in jacks were part of the package, and the Y-type was a delight to drive up to 70 mph when one ran out of steam. Surprisingly, about 50% of the 6,158 YAs built went abroad, though the improved YB of 1952 with 2LS brakes and hypoid final drive was strictly a home-market offering. MG fared no better than Austin or Singer with their sports tourer, the cross-bred YT with a 54-bhp twin-carburettor engine. It was never offered in England, and only 877 were exported.

The ZA Magnette which replaced the YB for 1954 was a unitary Austin of Wolseley shape, fitted with a twin carburettor 60-bhp edition of the 1½-litre B-type unit. Longbridge influences were detectable in the hydraulically actuated clutch and coil suspension: Cowley contributed the SU electric pump and rack and pinion steering. There was some compensation for the curved grille, alligator type bonnet and ugly fascia in the wood-and-leather trim and remote-control gearchange. It attained a useful 80 mph, and, though a Swedish enthusiast described it as 'an indignity to all Magnette owners, and to all who know what a Magnette is' worse things would happen a few years later".

"The T-type MG's contribution to the motoring scene was out of all proportion to the 49,000-odd built during the 1946-56 period. Though only two-thirds of all TCs were exported, the breed reintroduced Americans to open-air fun motoring. Among the USA's racing drivers, John Fitch, Richie Ginther and Phil Hill all cut their teeth on the breed.

Basically the TC was the old TA of 1936 with a conventionally sprung frame, tubular cross-members and open two-seater bodywork with Le Mans-type slab tank. 18-inch wire wheels were fitted, and the brakes were hydraulic. The engine, already in use in 1939, was a 'stretched' M-series Morris Ten unit with 66.5mm bore and twin semi-down draught carburettors, giving 54-bhp from 1,250 cc. The top speed on a 5.125:1 axle ratio was a little under 80 mph. By 1950 it had given way to the more modern TD.

This model sold even better, averaging 10,000 a year; it had taken four seasons to turn out that number of TCs. Externally it was identifiable by its disc wheels, bumpers (the TC had suffered from American parking techniques!) and coil-spring independent front suspension. It cost little to engineer, being merely a shortened YA chassis with a TC body, the package including the saloon's rack-and-pinion steering. A weight penalty of 170 lbs was easily offset by factory-sponsored tuning kits. Such modifications could extract 97 bhp and three-figure maxima. Blowers, special heads and pistons and high-ratio rear axles were available. Sadly, the TF of 1954 was yesterday's lunch warmed-over, since the new BMC management considered the Austin-Healey 100 'enough sports car' for them and played the MG down. The sloping radiator and padded fascia were pretty enough, but even a 1,476 cc 63 bhp engine introduced during 1955 could not save the model. Less than 10,000 were sold.

The MG A was introduced late in 1955 and was based on the aerodynamic two-seaters run at Le Mans that year. The suspension and steering were inherited from the T-series, but Abingdon had resorted to the ubiquitous 1½-litre BMC B-type unit, giving 68 bhp in twin-carburettor tune. At 1,968 lb, the car was heavier than the TD, but at long last MG offered proper luggage accommodation for a modest £844, and no tuning kits were needed to attain the magic 100 mph or a 0-50 mph time of 11 seconds. The MG A survived into 1962: 101,081 were produced, inclusive of the latter 1600s and Twin-Cams, and a record 96% were exported. For 1957 the two seater was joined by a fixed-head coupe, MG's first such style in twenty years".

"By 1953 the 4/50 had given way to the 4/44, a combination of the future MG Magnette's unitary hull with a detuned 1,250-cc engine from that firm's current Y-type saloon. This car sold nearly 30,000 before receiving the BMC B-type engine and floor change as the 15/50....."

...transcribed for us by Gary Mills.

HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR CAR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

THE BATTERY

IN the national interest and your own interest, it is more important than ever to keep your car and its equipment in good working order, particularly the electrical equipment, often the most neglected part of the car.

"Prevention is better than cure" has always been especially apt in the case of the battery, the heart of the car's working system. Only a few simple attentions are needed regularly to keep the battery healthy and ensure long life, yet, neglected, serious damage can occur if not checked, for a battery can go on giving a good performance long after deterioration has set in.

Each month you should:—

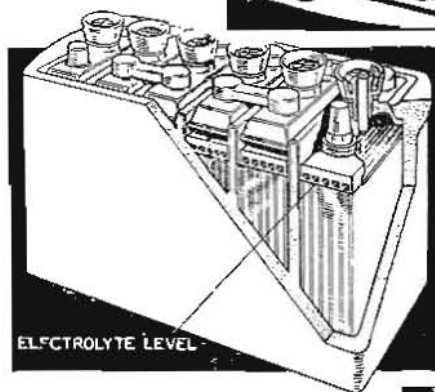
Top up each cell with distilled water to bring the acid solution (electrolyte) level with tops of the separators. Do not use tap water. Do not use a naked light for examination of cells.

Keep terminals clean. If corroded, scrape clean and smear with vaseline. Wipe away dirt and moisture from battery top. Make sure connections and fixing bolts are clean and tight.

Check battery's condition by taking hydrometer readings of specific gravity of electrolyte in each cell. Specific gravity readings and their indications:— 1.280—1.300, battery fully charged; about 1.210, half discharged; below 1.150, fully discharged. If one cell reads very different, it warns you trouble is there and specialist advice is needed.

Never leave battery in a discharged condition; have it properly charged from a current supply. If out of use for any length of time, it will need a freshening charge occasionally.

★ If you do need a battery, remember every new Lucas Battery has Two Years' Insured Life, enabling you to obtain a brand new one at cost proportionate to the length of service. 500 Lucas Official Battery Service Agents are available for the benefit of both motorists and motor trade.



(Top illustration)

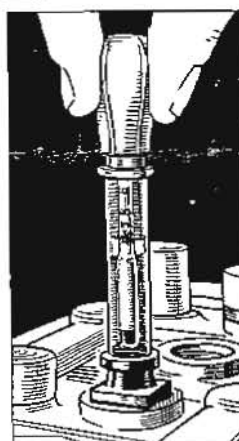
Keep terminals tight, free from corrosion and well smeared with vaseline. Top of battery should be clean and dry. If cables are frayed, tape them up or renew.

(Middle)

Top up to bring acid level with top of separators. Do not overfill. Never add acid (unless actual spillage has occurred); it is only the water content which evaporates.

(Bottom)

Take regular hydrometer readings, the surest way of testing the battery's condition and therefore guarding against deterioration. Using the hydrometer as a filler is also the best method of topping-up.



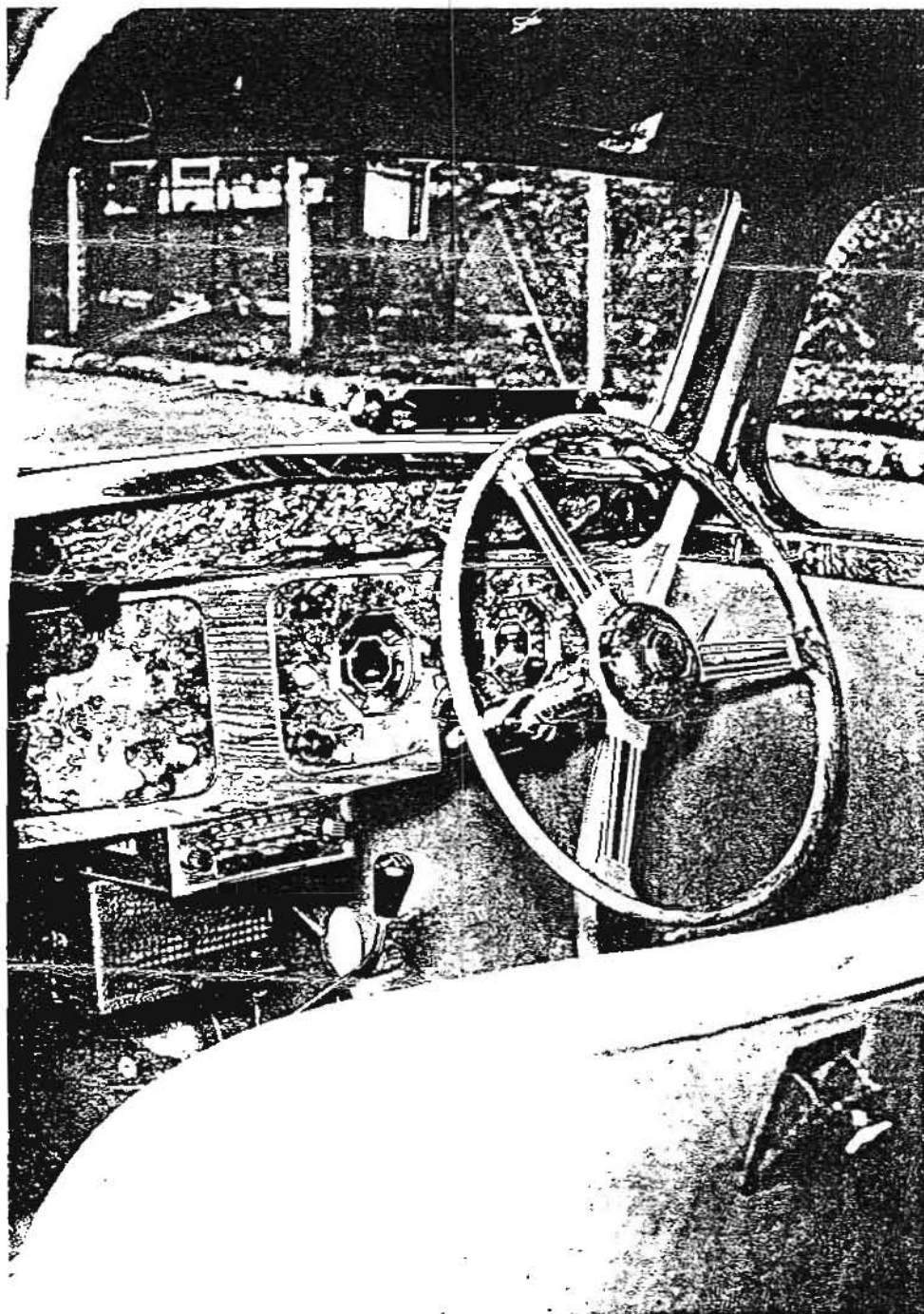
Issued by

JOSEPH LUCAS LTD • BIRMINGHAM 19

Lucas colour-coding system

Where two colours are quoted, the first is the main colour and the second a thin tracer.

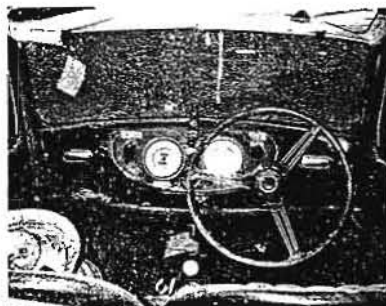
Battery or solenoid switch to ammeter (if fitted)	Brown
Battery or solenoid switch to control box (dynamo)	Brown
Battery or solenoid switch to switches (bypassing control box)	Brown
Battery or solenoid switch to alternator	Brown
Ammeter to control box (dynamo)	Brown/White
Ammeter to switches	Brown/White
Control box to switches (dynamo)	Brown/Blue
Dynamo 'D' terminal to control box	Brown/Yellow
Dynamo 'F' to control box	Brown/Green
Ignition switch to coil SW terminal	White
Ignition switch to ignition-controlled fuse	White
Ignition switch to petrol pump	White
Ignition switch to ignition warning light	White
Ignition switch to accessory fuse	White/Blue
Ignition switch to starter solenoid	White/Red
Ignition fuse to wiper motor	Green
Ignition fuse to flasher	Green
Ignition fuse to stop-tail switch	Green, or White on some cars
Ignition fuse to heater fan motor	Green, including Herald and Imp.
Ignition fuse to reversing light switch	Green
Ignition fuse to instruments	Green
Light switch to side/tail lamps	Red
Light switch to side and tail fuse	Red
Light switch to panel light switch	Red
Panel-light switch to panel lights	Red/White
Side and tail fuse to N/S side and tail lights	Red/Black, or Red/Brown
Side and tail fuse to O/S side and tail	Red/Orange, or Red/Brown
Side and tail fuse to side and tail lamps, both sides	BL Red/Green, Vauxhall Red/Blue
Lighting switch to dipswitch	Blue
Dipswitch to dip beam	Blue/Red
Light switch to main beam	Blue/White
Wiper switch to motor (wound-field motor)	Black/Green
Wiper switch to motor (permanent magnet type motor)	Blue/Green, Red/Green, or Brown/Green
Stop-light switch to stop lights	Green/Purple (green/yellow—Fords)
Reversing light switch to reversing lights	Green/Brown
Flasher unit to indicator switch	Light-Green/Brown
Flasher unit to indicator warning light	Light-Green/Purple
Indicator switch to N/S flashers	Green/Red
Indicator switch to O/S flashers	Green/White
Petrol gauge to tank unit	Green/Black
Temperature gauge to transmitter unit	Green/Blue
Oil warning light to transmitter unit	White/Brown
Ignition warning light to dynamo 'D' terminal, or alt. 'ind'	Brown/Yellow
Coil to distributor	White/Black
Fuse to horn	Brown(unfused) Purple (fused)
Fuse to interior light	Ditto
Fuse to clock	Ditto
Horn-push to horn	Purple/Black, or Brown/Black
Horn relay to horn	Purple/Yellow
Interior light to door switch	Purple/White
Earth	Black



The MG's fascia betraying all the signs of 1930s coachcraft thinking. But at least the steering column was adjustable for length ...

— 6 —

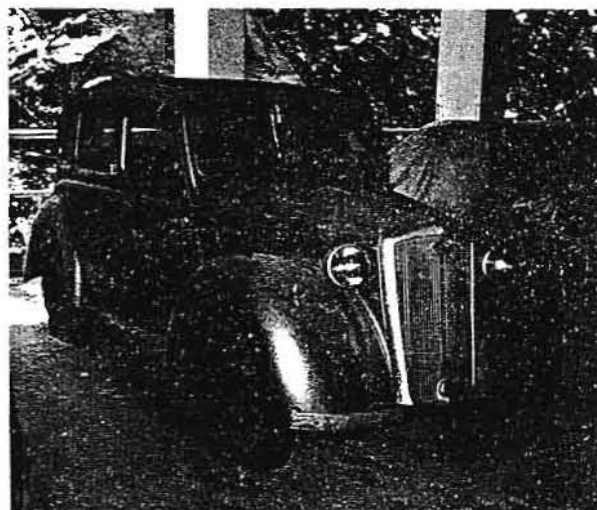
Wolseley Eight in Hong Kong – ripe for revival



Real wood – unlike on Morris SE



Paint not original; body is sound



Car has sliding roof; under bonnet, 918cc ohv unit

A mere 5344 Wolseley Eights were made during the model's brief 1946-48 currency, so it's rare that you see one.

It's good to report, then, that one of the little saloons – effectively an upmarket Morris Eight Series E – has surfaced in Hong Kong. Sitting on inflated tyres,

it's in the basement car park of a block of flats in North Point.

Andrew Hannington, who found the Wolseley, says it's complete and apparently very sound, under its rather startling metallic green respray. Restoration is presumably envisaged.

