

The Classic "Y"



Issue No.137 April 1997.

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

EDITORIAL

In October 1994 I announced that 'The Classic Y' was to cease being published bi-monthly and henceforward become 'irregular'; and indeed most irregular *were* its appearances from then until February 1996. Since that time, however, thanks in large part to the contributions of Neil Cairns, 'TCY' has settled back into its old familiar ways of February-April-June-August-October-December publication dates. So, 'TCY' is *de facto* being published bi-monthly at present, and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The only 'irregular' thing about it is that the traditional 20th of the month posting date is not being officially adhered to (yet?). This gives me a certain amount of flexibility (say, at Christmas) and helps cash-flow by spreading the issue (today, overseas subscriptions represent a very large part of the whole, and the postage on these is horrendous!).

Recently I was fortunate to obtain copies of some original Y-Type factory production documentation (long thought lost or destroyed). So, by way of a little contribution towards the Golden Anniversary of the Y-Type (deliveries of which began 50 years ago this month), I thought I would serialise what I have, starting in this issue. This serialisation should take us up to, and beyond, the 20th Anniversary of the foundation of the Register (1st January 1998) and the 20th Anniversary of the publication of Issue No.1 of 'TCY' (20th February 1998).

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'The Classic Y' is published by Skycol Publications.

Register News

You know how it is, you wait ages for news of another Y-Type, then four come along all at once! This was just what happened recently when two letters from Australia arrived here on the same day. They contained details of two Y-Types that were new to me, news of one which was "long lost" and numbers taken from some plates that were found "in a box of bits". Here are the details:

Y/2924, a 1949 car with engine no. SC/X12798 and body no. 2367/2400 has recently been purchased by Mike Stearn of [REDACTED], A.C.T.; it is in need of a total restoration. An earlier car, Y/0979 (1947), is owned by Mr. W. Gunn of [REDACTED] Victoria, and is further on in its restoration, the running chassis awaiting replacement of the body. The engine number of this car is SC/X10807 and the body no. 659/828. Both '2924 and '0979, incidentally, had rust in the "usual" places in the boot and spare wheel compartment, thus giving the lie to the oft-expounded view (put about by me) that (southern) Australian cars don't rust. Of further interest as regards '0979 is that documentation with the car reveals it to have been "Lanes Motors Pty. Ltd. Stock No. 8066". The original importer for Victoria, perhaps? Y/2924 has been allocated Register No. 1244, and '0979, No. 1245.

Mr. Gunn also has Y/1280, in use as a "parts car". This vehicle is No. 208 on our Register and was "picked up" very many years ago. I now learn that its engine number is SC/X11068. Finally, the "plates in a box" which came with Y/1280 were from Y/1656 which once had engine no. SC/X11460 and body no. 1349/1446. These plates are now No. 1246 on our Register!

Nearer home, YB/1360 is owned by Mr. R. M. J. Freeman of Shrewsbury and has been stored for over twenty years; it has engine no. SC2/18229 and has been allocated Register No. 1243.

Berend Kemmerling is nearing the end of an eleven-year restoration on his left-hand-drive Y/2260. Berend lives in Austria at the moment, but his car is in the Netherlands. It should be on the road this summer, resplendent in Elizabeth Grey/Shires Green.

What, no photos of Y/5190 EXLU as promised? Next time? Maybe?

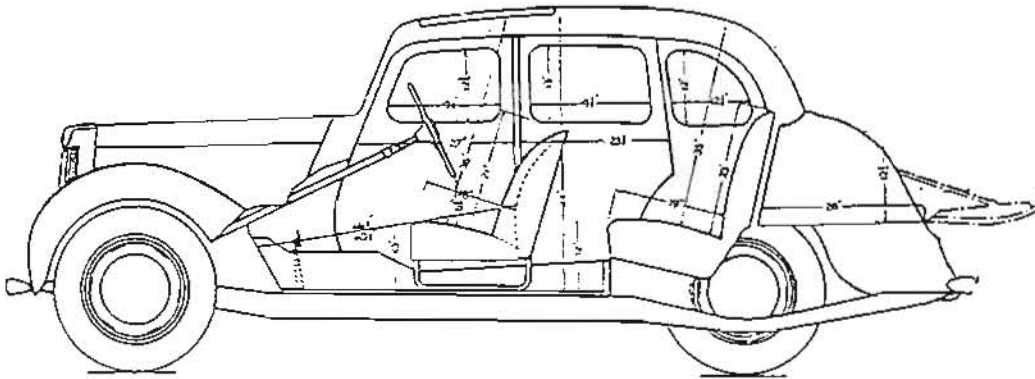
For Sale

M.G. 1½ Litre Series YB Workshop Manual. Approx. 125 pages. £12 plus postage. Contact: Mrs. K. S. Gunner, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Surrey, [REDACTED].

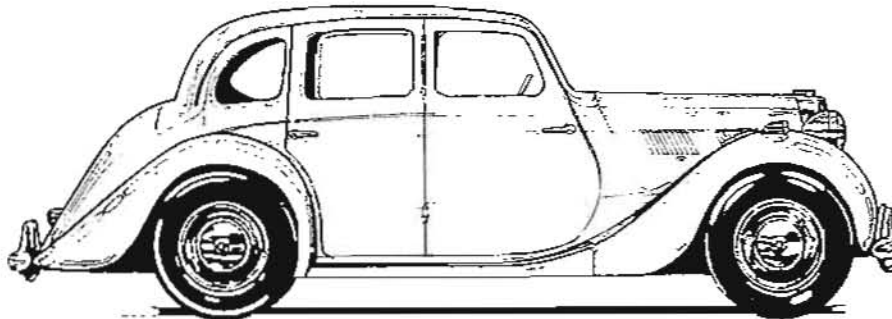
"M.G. YB Saloon 1952. Fully restored. Finished in original colour and trim. 1953 M.G. YB Saloon can be included in sale. Genuine enquiries only, please. Contact J. F. Cochrane on [REDACTED] (evenings only)."

"UNDERSLUNG TIMEWARP"

In the late 1930s when the M.G. Car Company was busy fitting M.G. saloon bodies to Wolseley and Morris based cars and engines, they were not alone in the idea of having a small saloon car, with a sporting image. The One and a Quarter 'Y' was M.G.'s answer to the market in those pre-WW2 years. It was bang up to date, with independent front suspension, rack and pinion steering, overhead valve engine, hydraulic brakes, dry clutch, and an **UNDERSLUNG REAR CHASSIS**.



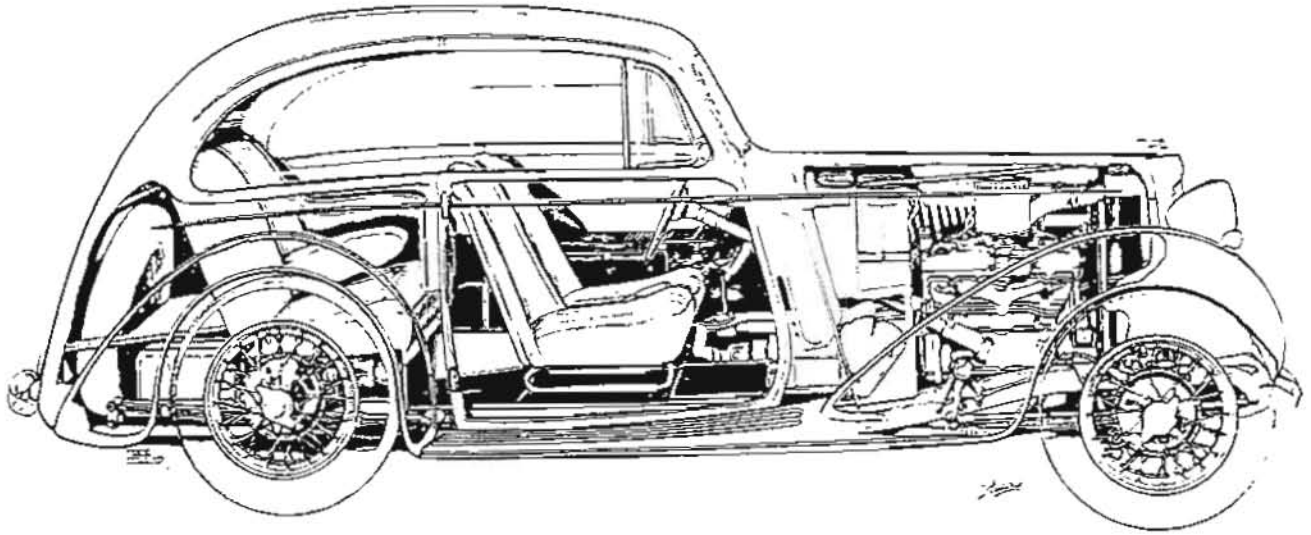
The idea behind the framework of the car going under the rear axle was to lower the centre of gravity, to build the car with a low "line" to look sleek and sporting, and it just happened to be all the rage at the time, (a little like today's aerofoils on bootlids; completely useless unless you do 120mph....)



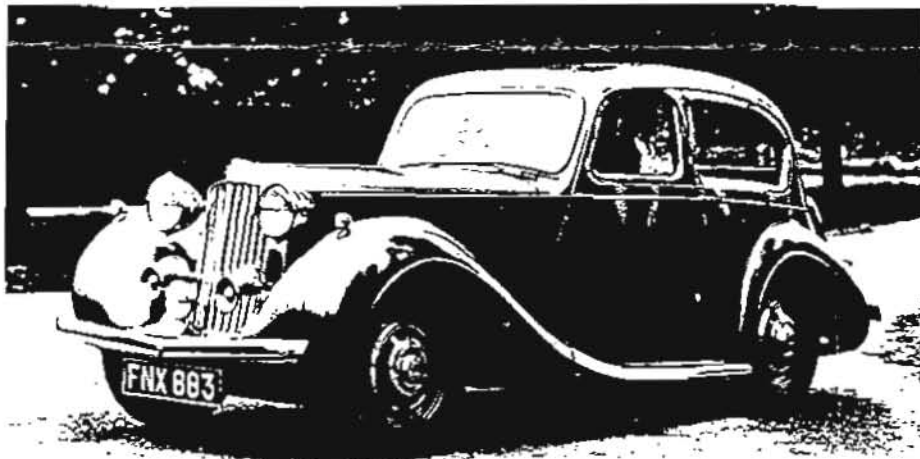
Like many car builders of those days, to keep costs down items already in production were used. The Morris Eight body tub, the Morris Ten/Four engine and gearbox, and off the corporate shelf, Morris brakes and rear axle. Completely new was the IFS and the rack & pinion steering, actually destined for the Ten/Four Series 'M' monocoque car, that ended up with a cart front sprung beam axle and worm & peg steering due to costs. Had the 'Y' been introduced in 1938/39 it would have had some similar competition in its structure (but not price) bracket.

The Hillman Aero Minx from the Rootes Empire also had an underslung rear chassis, and had been nicknamed a "Minx in a Party Frock," as under the smooth lines was a standard Hillman Minx complete with side valve engine. Like M.G., Hillman used corporate bits to make up a Sports Saloon in the Talbot Ten of 1937, a glance at

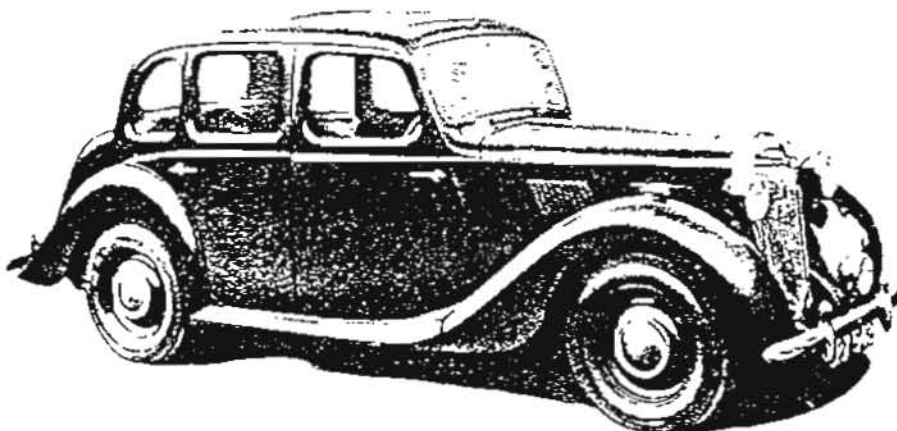
the cut-away drawing will show up the Hillman Aero Minx underneath, still with side valve engine but a very nice body, and still using leaf sprung front axles with worm & peg steering. The 1938 Sunbeam-Talbot Ten, as it had become, has a very marked similarity to our little 'Y' saloon.



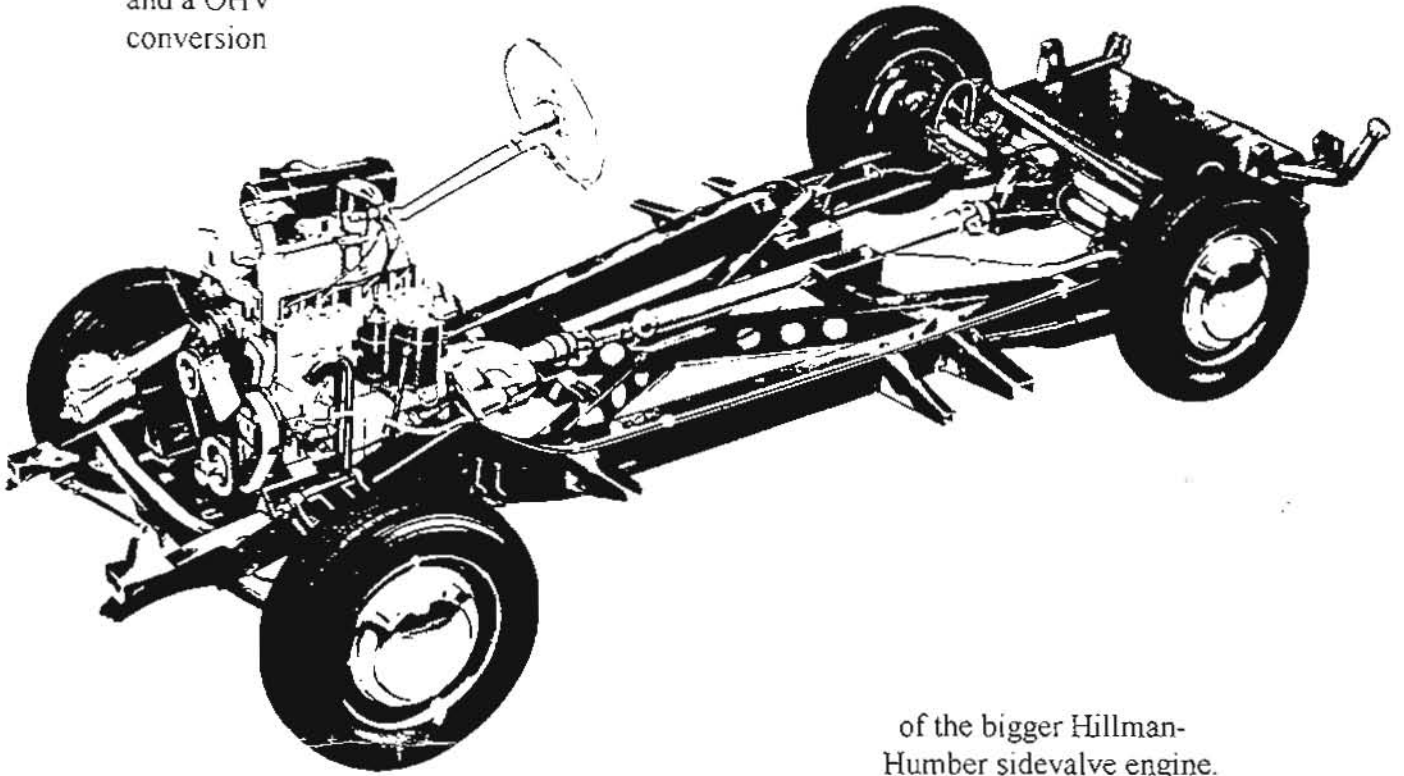
TALBOT TEN saloon, with underslung chassis.



SUNBEAM-TALBOT TEN, smoother Aero Minx.



The Sunbeam-Talbot was continued after the war, and was updated with the Rootes IFS, and a OHV conversion

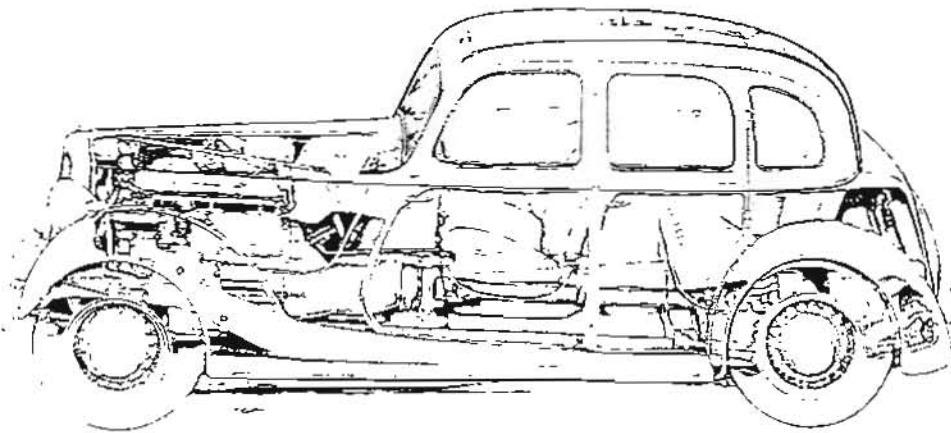


of the bigger Hillman-Humber sidevalve engine.

This picture shows the rear chassis still as an underslung unit at the rear.

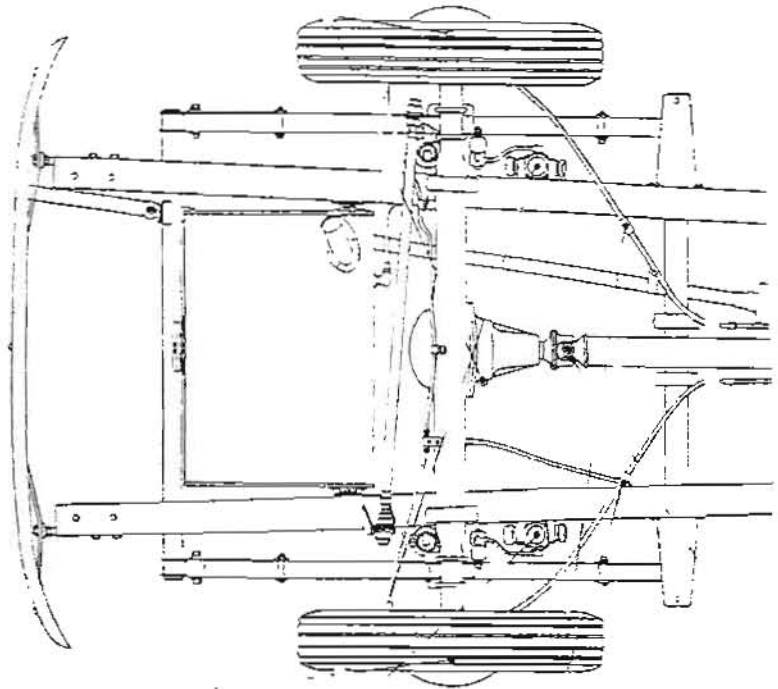
The model was made up to 1957.

Another car that began its career pre-WW2 was the Rover 10-12-14-16hp P2 range. It too had an underslung rear axle, as the drawing shows. A 1939 14hp is shown, and the style is again similar to our 'Y', albeit a much more up-market, and staid, car. A beam front axle can be seen though, and worm & peg steering; our 'Y' was ahead here.



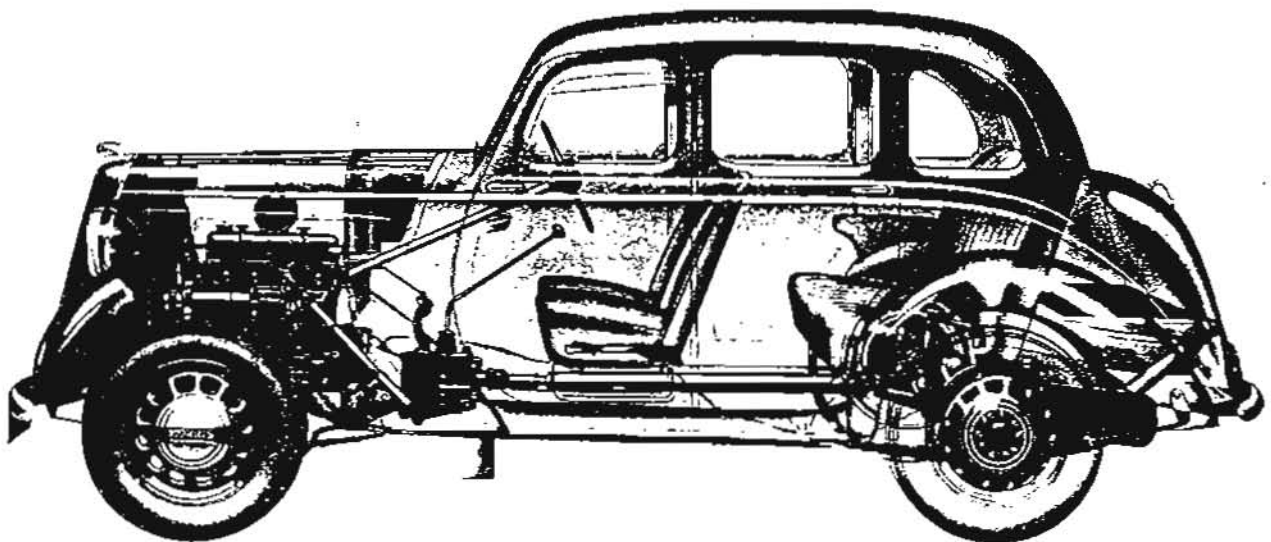
ROVER P2 14hp, 1939, 6 cylinder 1901cc.

The 'Y' has a boxed-in chassis, unlike the open channel used on the Minx or Sunbeam-Talbot. The Rover was boxed at the front but open at its rear. As the same chassis/running gear was to be used on the new M.G. sports car, the T.D., it is odd that the rear was made into the more normal over-type. The T.D. was only a two seater car, whereas the 'Y' was for four.



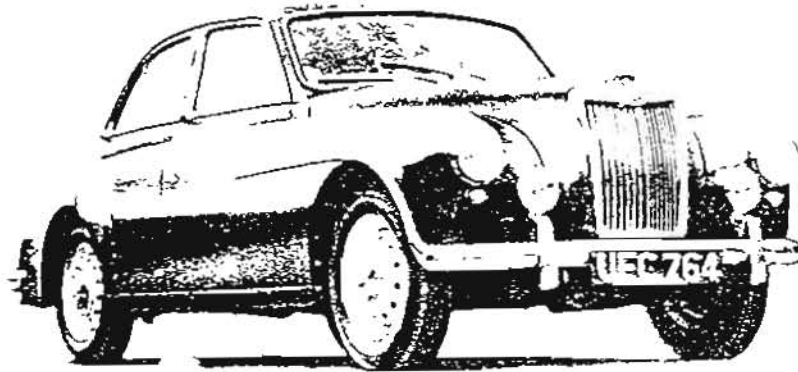
At the same time as the 'Y' was being designed, so was the new Morris saloon, the series 'M'. This was a monocoque; that is with no chassis. As Nuffield has decreed that M.G. was to use in-house parts for their cars, it is odd that the Morris Ten/Four series 'M' was not used as a basis for the 'new' M.G. saloon.

THE MORRIS TEN-FOUR (SERIES "M")

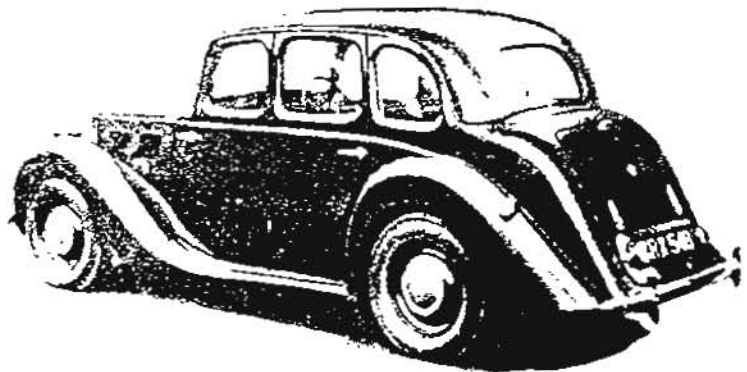


The above ghost-view of the Morris looks very 'Y'-ish if you draw in the flowing front wings, the boot bustle, and make the radiator grill upright. Where would the T.D. have come from had Nuffield insisted on using the Ten, and not let the Eight tub be used?

Just as the M.G. Series 'Y' One and a Quarter Litre arrived on the market place in 1947, delayed by WW2, the Hillman had gone over to monocoque construction as well as the Morris, (as had Vauxhall, who was first, Morris second, Hillman third, to produce a mass-produced small car this way.) So the lead that M.G. had in 1938 had gone by 1947 for innovation, though it was still a good car, ahead in roadholding and ride.



The car that replaced the 'Y' was the Magnette 'Z' series; apart from the steering nothing else was carried over. The 'Z' was a very different animal, a small BMW of its day.



The 'Y' looked very dated by the side of the 'Z', with Austin running gear and full width styling. The Rover had gone through the P3 post WW2 update of the P2, to the 'Aunty' version, called P4, with an 'over' type chassis by 1950. Only the Sunbeam-Talbot still used an underslung chassis under its quite pleasing early 1950s lines.

Even though M.G. updated the 'Y' to the 'YB' with twin leading shoe front brakes, deleted panhard-rod, and smaller wheels, in 1952, it did not sell well. The room was needed for the T.D. that had proved so popular in the UK and overseas. The fact the poor 'Y' had had its day was shown by how well the 'new' Magnette 'Z' sold on introduction. By the end of its life in 1958, it had outsold the 'Y' by 4.5 to 1; both were made for about 6 years.

The UNDERSLUNG CHASSIS just was not the 'thing' for the 1940's and early 1950s!

GUARANTEE PLATE ISSUE LEDGERS

THE YBS - Pt. I.

Chassis No.	Engine No.	Completion Date	Chassis No.	Engine No.	Completion Date
YB/0250			YB/0298	SC2/17171	13/12/51
YB/0251	SC2/17131	21/11/51	YB/0299	SC2/17169	13/12/51
YB/0252	SC2/17189	27/11/51	YB/0300	SC2/17012	14/12/51
YB/0253	SC2/17198	27/11/51	YB/0301	SC2/17141	17/12/51
YB/0254	SC2/17199	27/11/51	YB/0302	SC2/17172	17/12/51
YB/0255	SC2/17100	27/11/51	YB/0303	SC2/17170	17/12/51
YB/0256	SC2/17193	28/11/51	YB/0304	SC2/17148	17/12/51
YB/0257	SC2/17182	28/11/51	YB/0305	SC2/17140	18/12/51
YB/0258	SC2/17133	28/11/51	YB/0306	SC2/17101	18/12/51
YB/0259	SC2/17203	28/11/51	YB/0307	SC2/17162	14/01/52
YB/0260	SC2/17197	28/11/51	YB/0308	SC2/17256	14/01/52
YB/0261	SC2/17185	29/11/51	YB/0309	SC2/17126	14/01/52
YB/0262	SC2/17188	29/11/51	YB/0310	SC2/17257	14/01/52
YB/0263	SC2/17134	29/11/51	YB/0311	SC2/17242	14/01/52
YB/0264	SC2/17173	03/12/51	YB/0312	SC2/17245	14/01/52
YB/0265	SC2/17200	03/12/51	YB/0313	SC2/17237	15/01/52
YB/0266	SC2/17191	03/12/51	YB/0314	SC2/17249	17/01/52
YB/0267	SC2/17196	03/12/51	YB/0315	SC2/17255	17/01/52
YB/0268	SC2/17195	03/12/51	YB/0316	SC2/17253	18/01/52
YB/0269	SC2/17183	03/12/51	YB/0317	SC2/17241	18/01/52
YB/0270	SC2/17192	03/12/51	YB/0318	SC2/17254	18/01/52
YB/0271			YB/0319	SC2/17239	18/01/52
YB/0272			YB/0320	SC2/17130	18/01/52
YB/0273			YB/0321	SC2/17248	18/01/52
YB/0274			YB/0322	SC2/17250	24/01/52
YB/0275	SC2/17186	04/12/51	YB/0323	SC2/17238	24/01/52
YB/0276	SC2/17178	04/12/51	YB/0324	SC2/17235	24/01/52
YB/0277	SC2/17069	05/12/51			
YB/0278	SC2/16994	05/12/51	engine changed to SC2/17202 on 02/01/52?		
YB/0279	SC2/17139	05/12/51			
YB/0280	SC2/17145	06/12/51	YB/0325	SC2/17251	24/01/52
YB/0281	SC2/17129	06/12/51	YB/0326	SC2/17147	26/01/52
YB/0282	SC2/17187	06/12/51	YB/0327	SC2/17243	18/01/52
YB/0283	SC2/17144	06/12/51	engine no. also given as '17235 (see YB/0324)		
YB/0284	SC2/17149	06/12/51	YB/0328	SC2/17244	28/01/52
YB/0285	SC2/17150	06/12/51	YB/0329	SC2/17258	28/01/52
YB/0286	SC2/17146	10/12/51	YB/0330	SC2/17160	28/01/52
YB/0287	SC2/17103	10/12/51	YB/0331	SC2/17221	30/01/52
YB/0288	SC2/17153	11/12/51	YB/0332	SC2/17123	30/01/52
YB/0289	SC2/17102	11/12/51	YB/0333	SC2/17161	01/02/52
YB/0290	SC2/17155	11/12/51	YB/0334	SC2/17262	01/02/52
YB/0291	SC2/17156	11/12/51	YB/0335	SC2/17265	01/02/52
YB/0292	SC2/17152	12/12/51	YB/0336	SC2/17260	01/02/52
YB/0293	SC2/17163	12/12/51	YB/0337	SC2/17276	05/02/52
YB/0294	SC2/17164	12/12/51	YB/0338	SC2/17279	05/02/52
YB/0295	SC2/16950	13/12/51	YB/0339	SC2/17287	05/02/52
YB/0296	SC2/17168	13/12/51	YB/0340	SC2/17286	06/02/52
YB/0297	SC2/17159	13/12/51	YB/0341	SC2/16994	06/02/52

see YB/0278