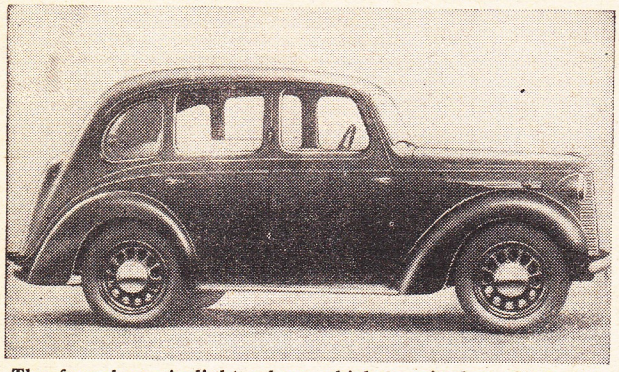
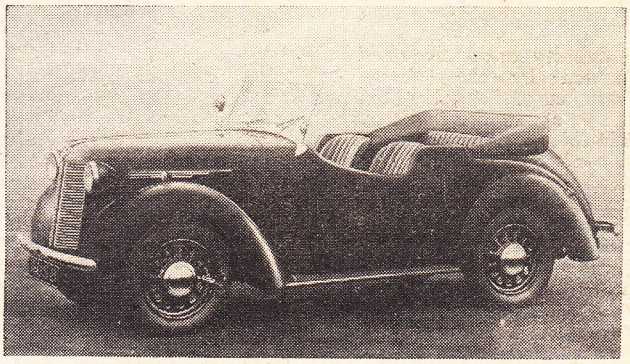
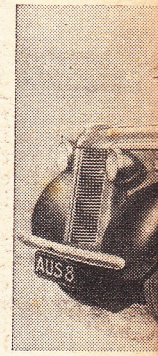
AN AUSTIN "EIGHT"



The four-door six-light saloon which is priced at £149 with sliding head.



The open sports four-seater is an attractive car. Price £135.



Smart lines

Radical Changes in Construction: A Light and Roomy Four-Seater Saloon at £128 Is the Cheapest in the Range

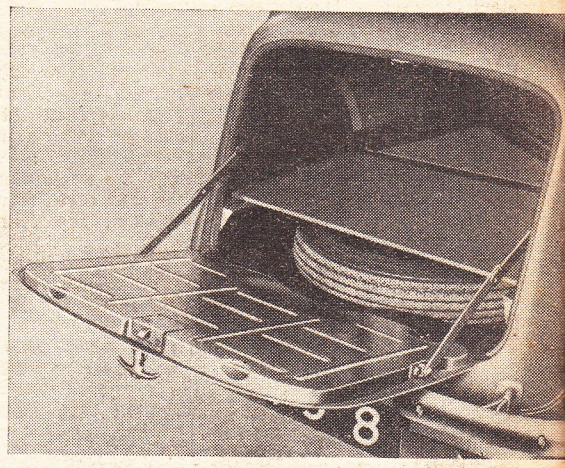
THE Austin Company is not usually associated with surprises; for the past few years it has been content gradually and steadily to improve its models, bringing them up to date year by year.

But the new 8 h.p. model represents a radical departure in Austin enterprise. Methods of construction and appearance are new to Austin. The body is virtually a shell which mounts on a pressed-steel platform-type chassis. The bottom sill of the body forms, with the chassis sides, box-section side members extending to the extreme rear of the car. Deep-section chassis members ensure rigidity. Box-section cross-members, a central transmission tunnel and diagonal front bracings are also used. This method of construction allows weight to be kept down; so effectively, in fact, that the saloon weighs only 14¾ cwt.

The saloon body has pleasing lines, the sweep of the rear panelling being broken by the luggage boot. The frontal appearance is very "un-Austin." The radiator grille follows the modern "pug-nose" tendency, and is mounted well forward. The grille is built up of chromium-plated die-castings which give an appearance of solidity whilst being modern and practical in form.

Roomy Four-Seater

The Austin "Eight" cannot be termed a small car, for the overall length between bumpers is 12 ft. 5 in. Other measurements are: Width, 4 ft. 8 in.; wheelbase, 7 ft. 4½ in.; front track, 3 ft. 8 in.; rear track, 3 ft. 9 in.; ground clearance, 6⅛ in. From these dimensions it can be seen that the car is a roomy four-seater. The rear seat measures 48 in. wide over the arm rests, and is 20½ in. deep. Front seats are of the bucket type and are built on the modern tubular design, with coil-spring frame. An easy adjustment is provided for the driver's seat, whilst the passenger's seat can be set as required by releasing two floor clamps. The seat backs hinge forward to facilitate access to the rear seats. There is ample head and leg room, while the driving position has been studied to give good visibility.



A feature of the new "Eight" is the exceptional amount of luggage space available. The spare wheel is easily accessible.

Large Luggage Accommodation

Another important feature of this car is the exceptional amount of luggage space. The rear boot, in addition to accommodating the spare wheel, has a capacity of 6 cu. ft. and the rear panel can be used as an additional luggage grid, carrying ¾ cwt. if required.

The body is of pressed steel welded construction. The panels are sound insulated and the sliding roof on saloon models is

The in

SPECIFICATION OF THE NEW AUSTIN "EIGHT"

ENGINE: Four-cylinder side valve monobloc with detachable head, bore 56.77 mm., stroke 89 mm., cubic capacity 900 c.c., R.A.C. rating 7.99 h.p., 27 b.h.p. at 4,400 r.p.m. Large diameter crankshaft, in three bi-metal bearings. Duplex roller chain close-centre camshaft drive. Inclined valves operated by barrel-type tappets. Zenith downdraught carburetter with air silencer fed from 6 gallon rear tank by AC fuel pump. Forced feed lubrication to all crankshaft and camshaft bearings by camshaft driven gear-type pump. Ignition by coil, distributer and 14 mm. lugs. Thermo-syphon cooling, assisted by fan. "Live" rubber engine mountings. Rubber mounted silencer.

CLUTCH: Single-plate with spring drive; gearbox-mounted pedal lever with adjustable connection to clutch operating shaft.

GEARBOX: Four forward speeds and reverse, 2nd, 3rd and top are helical constant mesh gears with synchromesh engagement. Centre ball change ratios: 5.357, 8.23, 13.08 and 21.6 to 1.

PROPELLER SHAFT: Hardy Spicer with needle-bearing universal joints.

REAR AXLE: ¾-floating with pressed steel casing and spiral-bevel drive. Bevel type differential. Splined detachable axle shafts.

FRONT AXLE: Stiff I-beam with large pivot pin bearings.

FRAME: Welded pressed-steel platform type. Box-section cross members, and reverse U section side members forming, in conjunction with body sill, continuous box side members.

BRAKING: Full Girling design throughout with wedge and roller shoe expansion. Balance lever compensation and tension operating rods. Cast iron brake drums, 8 in. diameter. Automatic compensation between front and rear brakes to allow for transfer of axle loads when braking. Foot and handbrake controls operate on all four wheels. Independent adjustment on each brake.

SUSPENSION: Long semi-elliptic low-periodicity springs at front and rear, controlled by Luvax piston-type hydraulic shock absorbers. Silent-bloc anchorages and lubricated shackles adjustable for side play. Springs are designed to be flat under normal load to give maximum lateral stability.

STEERING: Forward mounted Austin "hourglass" worm and sector, forward track-rod. All connections Thompson self-adjusting type. Large 16 in. diameter flexible spoke steering wheel (at extra cost on open models).

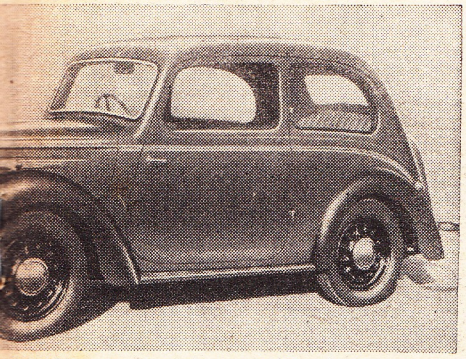
WHEELS AND TYRES: Detachable 4-stud large-centre easy-clean pressed-steel wheels with Dunlop 4.50 x 17 in. tyres.

BODYWORK: All-steel welded construction, secured to chassis along lower sill to form continuous box side-members. Centre hinged doors of exceptional width. Flush-fitting sliding roof on de luxe models. Sound insulated panelling. Bulkhead type dash. Ample luggage space, and spare wheel compartment. Rear panel serves as additional luggage platform. Special provision for side-screen stowage in luggage compartment on open models. Winding window glasses in doors and screen. Toughened glass throughout.

EQUIPMENT: Six-volt lighting, with foot-operated dip-and-switch headlamps, automatic return direction indicators, electric windscreen wiper, combined stop-and-tail light, compensated voltage control, illuminated large-dial instruments, and a full complement of body appointments, including leather seat upholstery on sliding-head models.

DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase 7 ft. 4½ in., track, front, 3 ft. 8 in., rear 3 ft. 9 in. Ground clearance 6⅛ ins. Turning circle 37 ft. Overall length 12 ft. 5 in. Overall width 4 ft. 8 in. Weight 14¾-cwts.

ANNOUNCED



stinguish the two-door model. It is priced at £128.

flush fitting. Centre hinged doors ensure easy seat access.

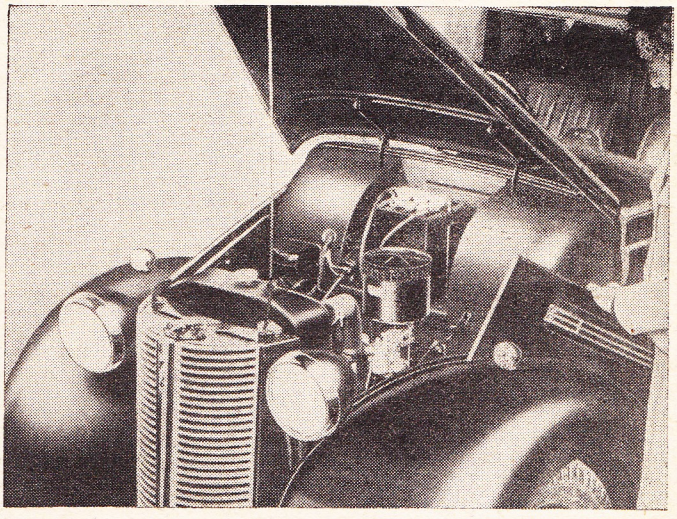
The engine of the Austin "Eight" is basically the "Big Seven" power unit with several modifications and higher compression ratio. It is a 900 c.c. four-cylinder side-valve engine with a bore and stroke of 56.77 mm. by 89 mm. It is rated at 7.99 h.p. and develops 27 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m. The cylinders and crankcase are cast as one and are enclosed by a pressed-steel oil reservoir and a cast-iron cylinder head. A large diameter crankshaft is carried in three bi-metal bearings as is the roller-chain-driven camshaft. The valves are inclined, and are operated by barrel-type tappets working on cams specially contoured for quiet operation. From the camshaft, the gear-type oil pump and the automatic-advance distributer are driven by skew gears, and the A.C. fuel pump by an eccentric.

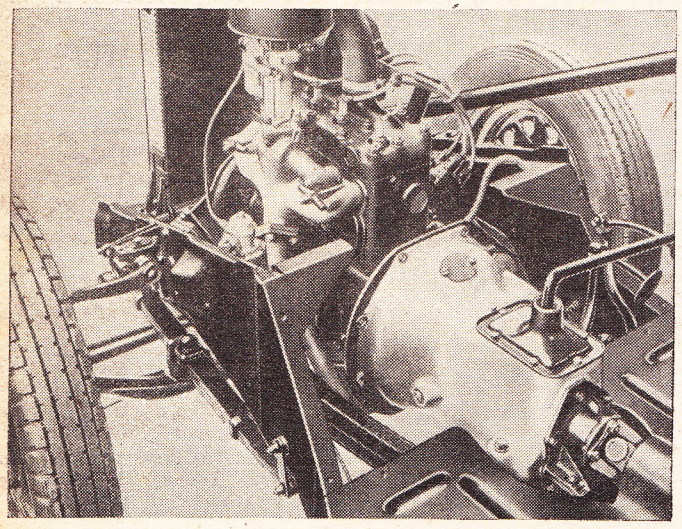
A Zenith downdraught carburetter with interconnected throttle and strangler controls is employed, being fed from a 6-gallon rear tank. A large air cleaner and silencer is fitted. Cooling is by thermo-syphon and is fan assisted. The engine is carried on live rubber mountings, two at the front and one at the rear.

One-Piece Bonnet

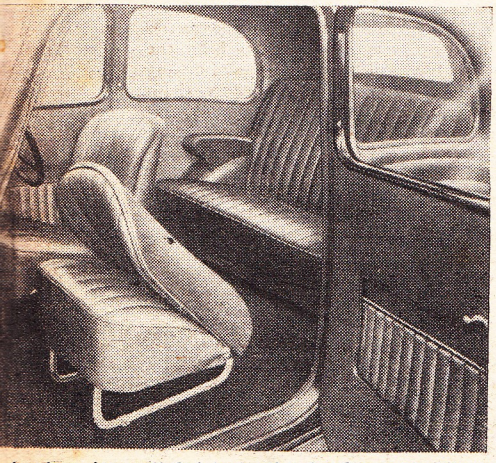
The one-piece bonnet is hinged at the scuttle and lifts from the front, a chromium-plated mascot acting as a locking key.

(Right) The one-piece bonnet hinges from the scuttle. Most important points of the engine are accessible.





(Left) Showing the engine and the sturdy design of the front end of the chassis.



rior is quite well finished, with leather upholstery. Four people can be carried in comfort.

The bonnet sides are detachable to give additional facility for such adjustments as setting the tappet clearances. For the purpose of valve attention, the manifolding has been designed for easy removal.

The clutch is the single-plate type with spring drive. The pedal is mounted on the gearbox, while the connection to the clutch-operating shaft is adjustable. Synchromesh for second, third and top is provided in the four-speed gearbox. A centre ball-change gear lever is used. A Hardy-Spicer propeller shaft with needle bearing universal joints transmits the power to a three-quarter floating banjo-type axle with spiral bevel drive. The axle shafts are splined into the differential pinions and can be withdrawn without dismantling the axle.

Semi-elliptic springs of low periodicity are used front and rear, and are designed to be flat and laterally rigid under normal loads. The springs are anchored on Silent-bloc bushes, while the shackles have plain bushes with provision for lubrication and for taking up side play. Luvax piston-type hydraulic shock absorbers are used.

Forward-Mounted Steering

Steering is of the well-known Austin "hour-glass" worm and sector design, the gearbox being mounted well forward to give good steering column rake. Thompson self-adjusting ball joints are used on the steering connections. A large diameter steering wheel with flexible spokes is used.

Braking is effected by the Girling system with wedge and roller shoe-expansion system. The usual Girling balance lever compensation and tension-operating rods are used. There is automatic compensation between front and rear brakes to adjust the braking effort in accordance with the forward transfer of axle load as the car is retarded. Cast-iron drums, 8 in. in diameter are used. There is independent adjustment on each brake. Both foot and handbrake controls operate on all four wheels. The hand lever is placed between the front seats and is offset at an angle.

Electrical System

The electrical system is 6 volt, the battery being accessible mounted under the bonnet. Charging from the large ventilated dynamo is subject to compensated voltage control. Other electrical equipment includes foot-operated dip and switch headlamps, horn, windscreen wiper with large under-bonnet motor, self-cancelling direction indicators, combined stop and tail light, panel light and roof light.

An easy-jacking system is provided, a ratchet-type being employeed. This engages with the bumper brackets, and is easy to operate.

Prices

At £128 for the two-door fixed-head saloon the Austin "Eight" is remarkably good value. A sliding-head model costs £139. There are also a four-door sliding-head and a fixed-head saloon at £149 and £139 respectively. There is an open four-seater at £135 and an open two-seater at £132 10s.

Both open models have attractive "sporty" lines and are fitted with a sports-type forward-folding windscreen. The door sides are cut away. Also, access to the spare wheel is afforded by a detachable panel at the rear, while the luggage space, which includes separate accommodation for the side screens, is reached from inside the body.

AN AUSTIN "EIGHT" ANNOUNCED (Continued from previous page)

Impressions On The Road

The Austin "Eight" Handles Well and Has a Good Performance

WHEN we journeyed down to Brooklands to see one of the new "Eights" we hardly expected the surprise we received when we saw the car. The design was such a complete departure from what we had come to consider as Austin standards. In spite of, or because of, the radical alteration the car is pleasing to look at, with a nice flowing roof-line, falling-away waist, and forward mounted radiator.

A cursory examination of the car made us take the wheel with a feeling of anticipation—and felt "at home" at once. The seat is well designed and supported the legs just at the right place, whilst the back is so shaped that it fitted the body all the way down the spine. Due to the forward mounting of the steering gearbox, the column is well raked, and the steering wheel is nicely placed for a comfortable hold. The windscreen is deep and slightly raked. This, together with the deep side windows and fairly narrow door pillars, gives a wide range of vision, while the forward radiator mounting did not detract from our view of the nearside of the road.

Instruments and Controls

The long gear lever was within easy reach whilst the position of the handbrake was appreciated. This is between the front seats and at an angle across the car. A pressed-steel dashboard is used, with the instruments immediately in front of the driver, following the usual Austin practice. These comprise a speedometer and a combined ammeter, petrol gauge and oil gauge. The lights and ignition switch and starter button are to the right of the dials. To the left is an extremely deep glove compartment. There is a centrally-placed handle for opening the windscreen, to the right of this being the control for the single arm of the windscreen wiper. Provision is made for the fitting of another arm and control, if required. On the spring-spoked steering wheel are the horn push and the indicator switch.

"Useful" Performance

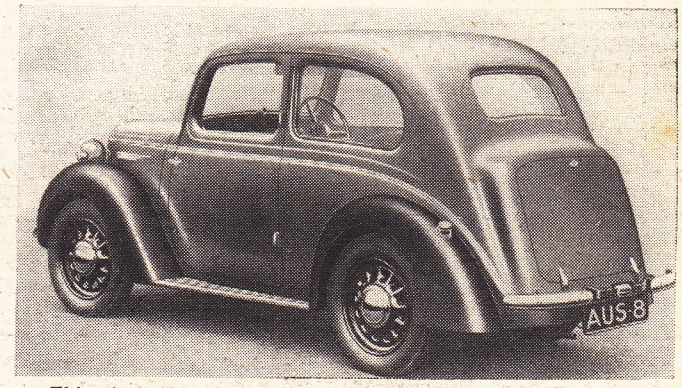
The car proved to be quite lively but as it had done only 500 miles, and had also been "caned" in that distance, it was thought unfair to subject it to acceleration tests against a stop-watch. Second gear gave a maximum of about 28 m.p.h., whilst on third 45 m.p.h. could just be exceeded. The maximum speed on top was a genuine 58 m.p.h., and about 62 m.p.h. in favourable conditions. It is to be expected that with a car properly run-in the maximum would be a little higher. But the pleasing point is that the car would hold a steady 55 m.p.h. round and round Brooklands track without any sign of fuss. At low speeds some engine noise was noticeable, but this did not increase as speed increased.

As was only to be expected with a brand new car, the gear change was fairly stiff, but all the same the change was quiet and simple.

It was a pity that acceleration tests were not taken, for undoubtedly they would have confirmed the impression of liveliness.

Cornering Capabilities

We were also impressed by the way the "Eight" kept to the road. Brooklands track can by no means be called a first-class highway, yet the car rode over the bumps very evenly and steadily. There was no tendency to pitch or sway at all. Cornering was remarkable for a car of its size and weight. It could be "thrown" into a corner much faster than most small cars and yet remain perfectly steady. This was noticed not only on the track but on the road as well, where there was no banking to help it.



This view gives a good impression of the two-door "Eight."

Petrol Consumption

Though the makers do not make any claims as to the petrol consumption, it would probably work out somewhere in the region of 40 m.p.g. At a steady 30 m.p.h. round the track the figure was 44 m.p.g.

Mention must also be made of the brakes, for they were very effective, pulling up the car smoothly even when applied hard. Our tests showed that the car could be stopped in 33 ft. from a steady 30 m.p.h.

Well Furnished

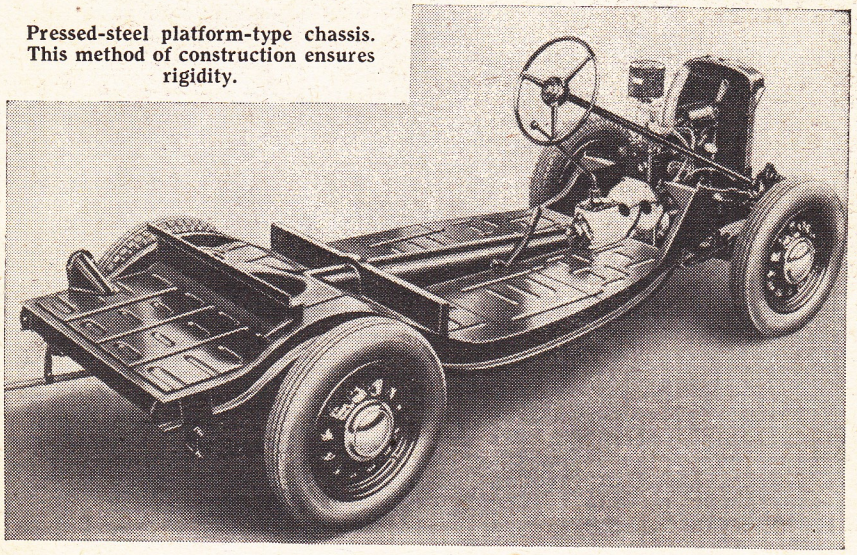
The car tested was the two-door saloon with sliding head. It is a roomy car, there being ample leg and head room for two full-size adults in the rear compartment. The doors are wide, and with the backs of the front seats hinged down, entry to the rear seats is quite easy. The seats are leather-covered and comfortable. Also, in the usual Austin manner, the windows are deep and long so that visibility to the front, sides and rear is excellent. Incidentally, toughened safety glass is used throughout.

The interior furnishing is good and there is no suggestion of "skimping" or shoddiness. Chromium-plated fittings are, of course, used.

Viewed from outside it would not be thought that the luggage space is 6 cu. ft., for the boot is not large and does not overhang very much. On opening the lid, however, it can be seen that the compartment is deep, and also extends the full width of the car. The lid is large and folds flat to provide a grid for additional luggage. In fact, if any criticism can be raised about it, it is that too much luggage can be carried! Laden to its capacity, the weight must have an adverse effect on steering and road-holding.

Access to the Engine

Engine accessibility is an important point to our readers. The bonnet is hinged at the scuttle and lifts up from the radiator. A metal rod holds it in the open position. Though the engine is mounted low in the frame, it was found to be quite easy to reach the sparking plugs, carburetter, dipstick and distributer. A long oil-filler pipe makes topping-up the sump simple. To get at the tappets the nearside bonnet side must be removed and the manifolding system detached. This is quite straightforward.



Pressed-steel platform-type chassis. This method of construction ensures rigidity.