

THE
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MAYFLOWER
CLUB

MAYFLOWER FEATURES 1



March 2018 | Paul Burgess

Contents

Raise The Mayflower!	Classic Cars, April 1991	2
Pilgrim's Progress	Popular Classics, June 1993	8
This could have been Mayflower!	Classic and Sports Car, April 1995	11
The Voyage of Mayflower	Classic and Sports Car, April 1995	12
Buying a Used Car No. 2 – Triumph Mayflower	The Motor, November 13 th 1957	16
Mayflower on Trial	Autocar, January 5 th 1951	19
Pixie's Piece of History	Triumph World, Oct/Nov 2011	23
<i>Tweedledum and Tweedledee</i>	Triumph World, Aug/Sept 2015	26
Pilgrim's Progress	Restoring Classic Cars, January 1989	30
Triumph Mayflower Driven	Practical Classics, April 2007	35
Buying a Razor Edge Triumph	Practical Classics, August 1983	37
The Triumph Mayflower	The Motor, December 6 th 1950	41
A Modified Mayflower	The Motor, December 6 th 1950	44
Antique Roadshow	Triumph World, Feb/Mar 2004	47
Limo In Miniature	Classic Car Weekly, 1st Feb 2017	51
Black Box	Triumph World, Oct/Nov 1995	54
MI Tests the Triumph Mayflower	Mechanix Illustrated, Dec 1952	58
Baby Rolls	British Car, June 1989	61
A Small Knife-Edged Triumph	The Autocar, September 30, 1949	63
Flower Power	Car Classics, December 1975	66
Elegance in Miniature	Motor Trend, October 1953	73
Testing the Triumph Mayflower	Science and Mechanics, Feb 1953	75
Family favourites	Practical Classics, November 1996	79

Raise The Mayflower!

Classic Cars, April 1991

The rusting Triumph attached to a 'personal' number plate inspired its buyers to their first restoration. Arnold Wilson tells the tale



WHAT are the chances of finding a 1953 car which has had only one owner from new, has only 7,629 miles on the clock and has not turned a wheel for 35 years?

The Triumph Mayflower fitting this description was registered on August 1, 1953 at Horsmonden in Kent but, the following spring, torrential rainfall caused the local river Telse to flood, half submerging the car. When the flood subsided the car was dragged out of the water and stored in a lock-up garage, where it remained untouched for three years. It was then moved to an old barn which it occupied for the next 30 years. The total mileage covered during its brief seven months of active life was less than 8,000 miles.

Enter Alan Kormes of Bradford, who was searching for a personalised number plate. He saw just the right one - KOR 985 - advertised in the local Motor Mart and bought it (attached to an old rusting car) for £400. It was only when his wife Maureen discovered that the car, a 1953 Triumph Mayflower, was registered in the same month and year that she was born, that they decided to keep it and, as Alan put it, "to tidy it up a bit and get it through the MoT".

Alan recalled the occasion well. "The firm selling the car said it just needed a bit of body repair, a small amount of welding to the floor pan and, oh yes, the engine was a bit tight and he hadn't forced it. In the dark by

the light of a torch, it didn't look too bad, but in daylight it looked terrible with a lot of corrosion and surface rust, and the inside covered in half an inch of river mud. However, we'd bought it, so we decided to restore it." Alan said 'we' because the rebuild was a genuine collaborative effort with Maureen.

The Triumph Motor Company was founded by Siegfried Bettmann, a German immigrant, who produced his first car, the Triumph 10/20 saloon, in 1925. During the pre-war years the company prospered with models such as the Super Seven and Nine, Gloria and Dolomite being developed with the able assistance of Donald Healey, who joined the company in 1933.

In 1944 Sir John Black of the Standard Motor Company bought out Triumph and some two years later launched the 1800 Triumph Roadster and the Triumph Renown. The Renown, with its razor-edge body styling, owed much to the expertise gained from building plywood-panelled Mosquito aircraft during the war.



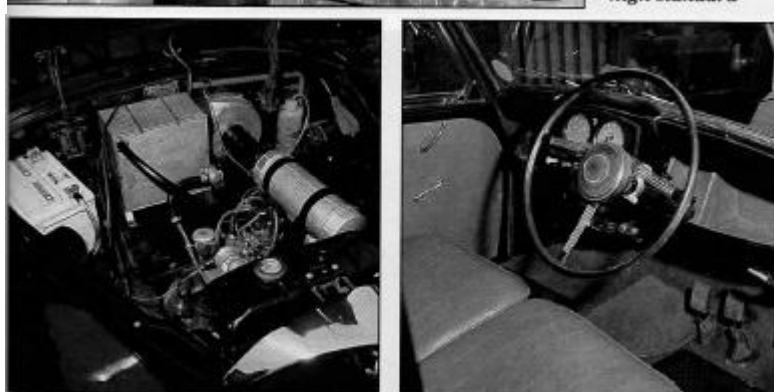
The 1950 Earls Court Motor Show saw the unveiling of the Triumph Mayflower, a scaled-down version of the Renown, with the same distinctive razor-edge styling but sporting a conventional 1,247cc engine developing a modest 38bhp at 4,200rpm. In a car weighing just over 19cwt the performance was bordering on the sluggish, with a top speed of only 65mph. The Mayflower was priced at £395 and some 32,000 were built, including 500 convertibles.

Company policy changed radically in 1952 with the unveiling of the TR1 sports car at the London Motor Show, starting a run of very successful sports cars up to the ill-fated TR7. The Renown and Mayflower saloons remain mainly in the shadows.



Above, the badly corroded Mayflower shell, completely stripped
Left, Alan works on the engine block after forcing out the seized pistons
Bottom left, many of the components of the low-mileage engine were reusable
Below, the interior was home-trimmed to a very high standard

Alan Kormes, a maintenance foreman with a heavy goods vehicle firm, has owned several sports saloons including a Ford Escort RS and two Audis, the current one being a Quattro. Although an experienced mechanic, Alan had never restored a car and initially did not have any specialist equipment or tools, although at work he did have access to compressed air and gas welding equipment. During the rebuild he bought a joddler, several pairs of tin snips, a small angle grinder, a MIG welder and a grit blaster.



Like most restorers, Alan started to dismantle the car to discover the full extent of the corrosion and rust. "We set to work with marked boxes and just stripped everything off - the lights, doors, trim and wiring - everything, right back to the bare shell. The vinyl upholstery, after scraping off the dry mud, was hard and brittle, while the rubber mats just disintegrated.

"The chassis, which is welded to the body, was in mainly excellent condition, which surprised us. Where water could collect, however - such as in the boot floor and cross member, the nearside sill and door pillar, and where the roof panel meets the body - severe rusting had left large holes all over the place."

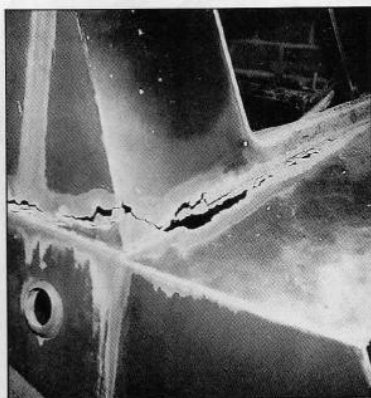
What was the condition of the mechanical parts, bearing in mind that the car had covered a mere 7,600 miles? "The engine was seized solid," commented Alan, "although externally it looked OK. The rest of the mechanical parts had surface rust but looked quite good - at least superficially."

The restoration was now under way, and by working each evening and right through the weekends the job was completed in just 15 months. "We were very keen at first," recalled Maureen. "We were using a small corner of the workshop where Alan worked, but when we discovered that the firm was moving and that 'our' space wouldn't be available, we just had to get a move on and complete the job."

Alan decided to work on the body/chassis unit, and found that the front end of the simple but sturdy ladder frame was in good order, apart from the two outriggers, which needed replacing. The rest of the chassis rails and cross members were also satisfactory, other than the rear outriggers and the back cross member under the boot, which were cut out and new sections welded in. The inner and outer sills at both sides (particularly the nearside) were in a very bad condition and had to be partially or totally replaced.

"I made templates in cardboard for every panel and part that needed replacing and then made them in steel and hoped they would fit - some did, some didn't. It wasn't easy because some of the pieces had double curves, and my meagre tools consisted of two lengths of angle iron, a few little dollies, a vice and a hammer."

However, using a mixture of trial and error, sheer determination and not a little skill our man managed to re-make the sections which had to be replaced. Mayflower panels, unlike the popular T R sports car units, are not available new and therefore had to be either made or obtained second-hand from a club member who might be breaking up a car for spares.



Repairing this area was a difficult job made worse by Fifties lead-loading

The aforementioned roof area around the lower edge of the back window and rear quarter panel was in a dreadful state, requiring much surgery and replacement with new steel, a task exacerbated by the presence of lots of lead from the lead-loading used when the car was built in 1953. Fitting new pieces was made much easier using a joddler, which puts a step along the edge of the panel, allowing it to be slid under the original bodywork while retaining a level surface across the join. It also obviates the need for edge-to-edge (butt) welding, which is not easy for the inexperienced welder.

Another large panel which had to be fabricated was the offside inner wing, which includes the battery platform and runs deep into the bulkhead. Making a new 'J' - shaped front window channel, which runs along the scuttle top, caused no end of trouble. "The water had settled in the channel and the whole area was badly corroded and I couldn't get anyone to make a new piece, because it was a wheeling job, whatever that is, so I ended up making it myself.

I heated up a strip of steel and tapped it round different sized rods - it was a devil of a job, but in the end I got it right."

The hand-formed panels were welded into place using the firm's oxy-acetylene equipment but Alan soon reached a point where . . . "I was holding a piece of metal with a bar in one hand with the welding torch in the other and the welding rod between my teeth and I thought "we're doing this all wrong', so I bought an MIG welder, which was superb - much quicker and very easy to handle."

Having completed all the bodywork repairs, the next task was to remove the paint and surface rust right back to bare steel. This proved to be more difficult than expected, taking Alan and Maureen many evenings of hard graft to rub down the rusty roof and bonnet and then to remove the lacquer and black cellulose, using both mechanical and chemical methods.

Finally the body was flatted down and any imperfections were rectified with plastic metal filler, which is the nearest thing to genuine lead loading. This also took many hours of hard grind (literally!) as Alan admits that he is not the world's best 'filler' and many areas received three or even four applications before it was considered satisfactory. At the end of a long session the couple could well have been mistaken for a pair of Homepride flour graders!

The body was then masked up and given a coat of etching primer followed by three coats of grey primer-surfacer, with wet-and-dry flatting (800 grade) between each application. This was followed by two good coats of black cellulose and then flatted with 1200 grade paper, prior to the body receiving its final coat of paint. After hardening, it was polished with a mixture of fine rubbing compound and T-cut, finishing off with a good wax polish.

After the car had been painted Alan set about installing the new wiring harness which had been made up by Auto-Sparks of Hull. "It arrived in a one foot cube box, "recalled Alan, "and when we laid it out on the floor it

was about ten feet longer than the car - there seemed to be sufficient for two cars. The leads were all colour-coded and perfect in every way. We opted for PVC inners and cotton braided covering, which cost £87 but was cheaper than one made up in the original style and specification."

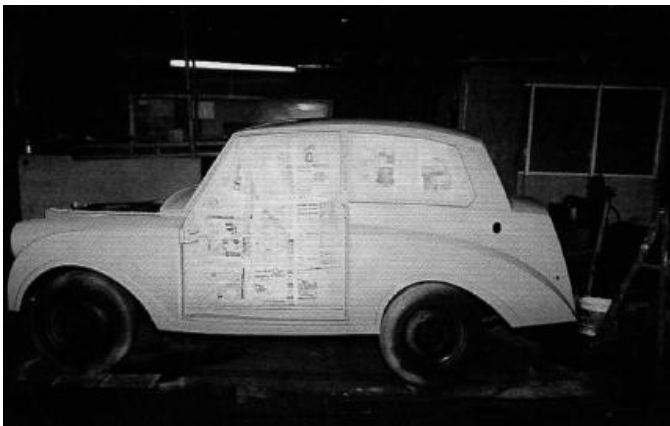
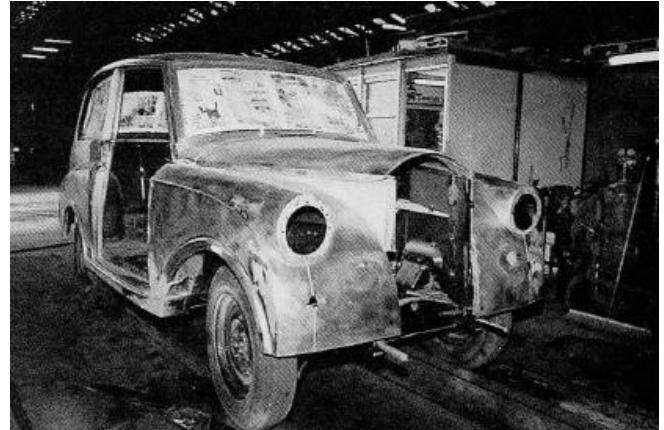
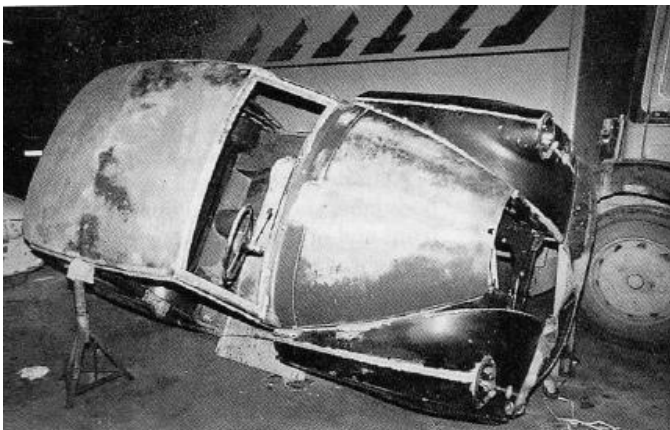
Alan, the mechanic, assumed that the subsequent restoration of the mechanical parts would be quite straight forward - but it was not to be, as the 'rather tight' engine turned out to be completely seized up.

The design of the 1,247cc, 38bhp Mayflower engine is quite conventional with a single, chain - driven camshaft set about half-way up the cast iron block, pushing inverted valves via adjustable cam followers (tappets).

Off came the cylinder head, tappet cover plate and sump. Without much difficulty the big-end and main bearings were undone and the crankshaft removed. But the pistons were immovable, being well and truly corroded into the cylinders. After some ineffective light tapping, Alan had to resort to a block of wood and a big hammer to force each piston out of the block. As all the little-ends were completely seized up, they spent the next few weeks soaking in a bucket of diesel fuel which eventually freed them. The same treatment was given to the screw - adjusting cam followers, making them reusable.

Alan then had to decide which parts he could cope with himself and which would need specialist attention. The crankshaft showed some surface corrosion and was reground to 20 thou undersize, while the block had to be rebored to 40 thou oversize to remove the surface pitting; the top being skimmed for the same reason. A number of new valves were bought from the Triumph Mayflower Club, but several had slightly wider than standard stems. As new guides were not available some had to be honed out to take the larger stemmed valves.

The aluminium cylinder head was in good order, although two of the spark plug holes had to be 'helicoiled', as plug removal had stripped the threads. Removing the broken temperature sender housing at the back of the cylinder head had stripped the threads and to have the hole plugged and re-tapped would have cost £45, but a 50p adaptor from a plumbers' merchant plus a little ingenuity finally solved the problem.



Much refabrication of panels was required before welding and judicious use of filler, in preparation for painting with three coats of primer.

The engine was then reassembled using the original oil pump, new big end and main bearings, and a new timing chain, while the original camshaft and cam followers were refitted. Oversize pistons and rings, complete with new gudgeon pins and little - end bearings completed the rebuilding of the block.

All the cylinder head bolts were replaced and, as new ones were unavailable, Alan used long high tensile set screws which were cut to length and screwed into the block using 'Loctite'. The cylinder head was cleaned up and skimmed before being torqued down onto the block.

"The starter motor didn't work", recalled Alan, "so I stripped it down, freed off the seized bushes, polished up the commutator and reassembled it, and it worked perfectly. The dynamo was missing but we managed to pick one up from Priors of Great Yarmouth while on holiday, and after I'd stripped and rebuilt it, it worked OK . "The fuel system caused some problems, because, rather surprisingly, Alan refitted the original petrol tank which started to leak while they were motoring to a rally. The problem was finally solved by obtaining a second-hand tank and making one good tank from the two. The Solex Type 30 FAIO was also malfunctioning and was eventually replaced by a new unit.

As the old one-box exhaust system was almost non-existent Alan called on the services of Ludlows, an exhaust specialist in Sowerby Bridge, who fabricated a new system in mild steel for around £75.

Fortunately the transmission system turned out to be in good order; the clutch had a new release bearing fitted while the gearbox, prop-shaft and back axle were all refitted after cleaning, painting and changing the oil.

The brake pipes needed replacing and the six seized wheel cylinders were rebuilt using re-con kits. The rear brake linings were fine but new front ones were riveted onto the original shoes. Time and the elements had taken their toll on the handbrake mechanism, but after releasing all the linkages, only the front cable required replacing.



The front suspension, which is a conventional twin-wishbone arrangement with coil springs and telescopic dampers, had fared very well requiring only new top wishbone inner bushes and wheel bearings. Rather surprisingly, Alan refitted the original dampers. Similarly the worm-and-peg steering system was in good order and, after dismantling and cleaning, it was rebuilt with some adjustment to the steering box to take up the small amount of wear. The semi - elliptic spring rear suspension did not require any replacement parts; it was merely cleaned up and painted, with the retention of the original dampers.

In the meantime Maureen had been working hard on the interior, making brown paper patterns for the floor panels from which she cut the underfelt. Using the same technique, high quality carpet was cut to shape, edge-bound and fitted to the car floor - all done by Maureen using a combination of hand and machine stitching. She then re-covered the door panels in a matching vinyl and, while this work was in progress, a friend kindly rebuilt and covered the seats.

Maureen then turned to the headlining , which surprisingly was not the standard suspended cloth unit, but consisted basically of a pair of millboard roof panels and several smaller ones sprung into the roof. She readily acknowledged that this was a very difficult job, but persevered until she was happy with the result.

Of the instruments, only the temperature gauge required attention. The rest had their faces cleaned up before being reinstalled in the fascia. The semaphore arm indicators, ignition lock and floor mounted dip-switch had all seized up but Alan soon had them working again.

Most of the exterior brightwork, including the front and rear bumpers, window surrounds, grille panels and headlight surrounds, was re-chromed, although several parts had to be patched up with brazing rod first. A new set of hubcaps from a TR2 completed the chrome.

Looking back over the whole project were there any moments when the task proved almost too formidable? "Yes," replied Alan, "making and shaping some of the panels was the most difficult part, particularly the nearside sill and door post. I kept looking at it and walked away several times - but in the end it was the only job left, so I had to face it . The rest of the rebuild was time consuming, even boring at times, but there were no other major problems - apart from the engine not working. This was traced to a missing part in the distributor drive and once again our good friend and Club member Mr Peter Benfield (who also supplied the tank) came to the rescue. Although he didn't have a spare part, he removed the distributor and drive from his engine so that I could measure up the missing part. I made a new one in the workshop at home."

Finally, Alan recalled a little bit of humour at the MoT test garage. A straight-faced young mechanic, observing the slowness of t h e wiper arm movement, commented, "Perhaps in 1952 it didn't rain so fast!"

The total cost of the restoration, including the price of the original car, was a very modest £3,000, a figure achieved by Alan and Maureen doing around 95% of the work themselves and either making the parts or using second hand items (no new parts available). Today the car is worth approximately £6,000.

The Mayflower i s now street legal just 15 months after the project started. Although Alan Kormes acknowledges that it is not the fastest of cars (top speed 65mph and 0-50mph in 23 seconds), it is very comfortable, has light, precise steering and good brakes. It is much admired and on its first outing at the Yorkshire Historic Car Club Rally it received the 'Public's Choice Post-War' award - a fitting tribute to all the hard work put in by this husband and wife team.



The Kormes' team-effort Triumph is now a popular show car with the public

Pilgrim's Progress

Popular Classics, June 1993

Triumph's Mayflower was one of the more bizarre-looking cars to come out of the 1940s, but it was surprisingly good in many ways, as Mark Dixon discovered.



THE scene could have been cribbed from that classic film *Genevieve*: the moment when Kenneth More, on the brink of winning his veteran car race from Brighton to London against John Gregson, is halted by an old gent who starts reminiscing about a car he used to own *just like* that one...

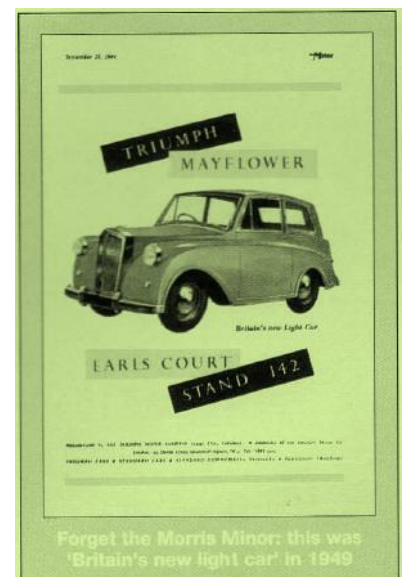
Fortunately in this case I wasn't in so much of a hurry. I was leisurely engaged in taking some pictures of our featured Triumph Mayflower when an 83-year-old farmer pulled alongside in his Land-Rover. We had time to chat for a while about cars he had owned - including an 1898 Benz, which he drove before the Second World War - before he went away misty-eyed at the sight of this cuddly little Triumph.

It's quite amazing the effect that the boxy saloon had on people we encountered during our voyage round the villages of Hertfordshire. What was especially interesting was that nearly everyone identified it correctly- straight off; the car's strange styling obviously sticks in the memory!

There's no doubt that the Mayflower has a faintly ridiculous air about it, the Rolls-Royce lines compressed onto a wheelbase little longer than a platform trolley. It seems almost as tall as it is long - in fact, cars came down the assembly lines at Canley sideways. What we have here is the ultimate subject for a cardboard cut-out model, the two-dimensional car.

It's hard to believe today that the Mayflower is what Triumph management thought America wanted in those 'export or die' days of the late forties. Market research? What market research? The simplistic thinking seemed to be that Americans liked Rolls-Royces, therefore they would like a small car which looked like a Rolls, never mind that it was totally unsuited to the driving conditions of such a vast continent.

Make no mistake, America was a key target for Mayflower sales. The very name was a blatant appeal to their patriotism, being called after the ship which took



SPECIFICATION	
Triumph Mayflower	
Built	1949-'53
Engine	4-cyl sidevalve
Capacity	1247cc
Max power	38bhp @ 4000rpm
Max torque	58lb ft @ 2000rpm
Suspension	Front: ind, coil and wishbone Rear: live axle, semi-elliptics
Transmission	3-speed manual, column change
Brakes	Drum
Length	12ft 10in
Width	5ft 2in
Height	5ft 2in
0-60mph	27-30sec
Max speed	63mph

the Pilgrim Fathers across to America from Plymouth. At the car's launch, Standard- Triumph craftsmen built an enormous model of the ship as a centrepiece for the launch party dining room.

Unfortunately, the timing was all wrong. By the time the Mayflower appeared, the desperate shortage of American cars had been addressed, and no-one wanted small cars in those days of cheap gas. Even the Volkswagen Beetle, which went on to become a huge success in America, didn't really take off there until the mid-fifties.

Not surprisingly, American road testers were sceptical of the strange British baby at first. But after a while, they were almost won over - and after a few hours at the wheel of one myself, I too was almost convinced.

That slab-sided design may look - let's not mince words here - frankly weird, but it does have quite a few advantages. It gives a huge amount of room inside, and with its narrow pillars and large glass area, the interior is notably light and airy, while the upright, squared-off rear means back-seat passengers can avoid getting a permanent crick in the neck. The body is also of unitary construction, with a box-section frame welded to the steel body at a time when many cars still had heavy separate chassis.

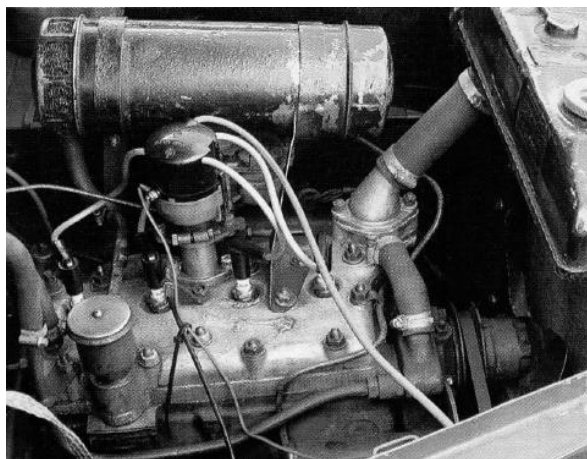
Walk round the car and give it a cool, hard appraisal. From the front it looks quite sensible: sort of a mini-Wolseley, with that tall chromed grille. From the back, too, it's convincing enough. Only when you see it in profile do you start to wonder if you're hallucinating. Quite simply, you can't get a couple of tons of finest Mulliner coachwork onto the chassis of a pram.

However, the resemblance to Crewe's finest is undeniable, so when you step into a Mayflower you expect to be ensconced in the lap of luxury - but this is late-forties Britain, don't forget, and luxury is strictly relative. The seats are leather and softly sprung, but shallow with it, while the door trims are simple slabs of fibreboard covered in leather cloth. In the back, small side pockets don't even have the benefit of leather cloth to conceal their virgin board.

There's a touch of snazziness with the dashboard, although it's hardly in the Rolls-Royce class, and it's painfully obvious that the layout was based on easy conversion from right- to left-hand drive rather than aesthetics.

A black Bakerlite centre panel, which looks as though it was styled by someone who had just discovered French curves and was experimenting, holds two silver-faced instruments and a collection of delicate, cream coloured plastic pull-switches. The Austin Atlantic also had cream switches - did they think it was an American fetish, perhaps?

This particular car is fitted with one of those Redex automatic lubricators that still turn up on auto jumble stalls from time to time. Sadly next to it a previous owner has installed a transistorised clock, of all things. Hardly a period fitting!



In front of the driver is a standard-issue 1940s sprung-spoke steering wheel, complete with Bakelite boss the size of a saucer to conceal a switch for the trafficators, which pop out of the centre pillars London-cab style. There's a column gear-change bolted straight along the steering column, and an umbrella-type handbrake under the dash.

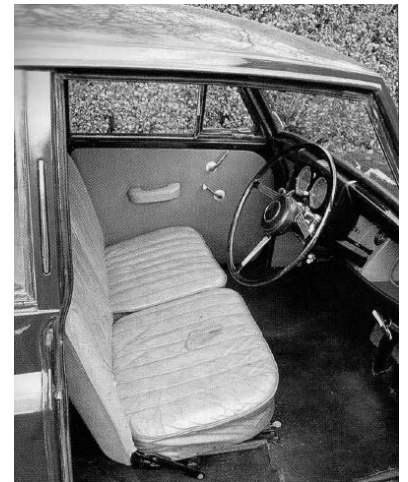
The 1247cc Standard Ten-based engine promptly rumbles into low-revving life at a pull of the starter. It's not the most powerful of engines and needs quite a lot of throttle when moving off, even in the low-ratio first gear. Naturally, the gearbox is a three speeder but it's unusual in being all-synchro', and the change itself is remarkably slick.

The Mayflower soon settles into a comfortable 40mph cruise, ideal for pottering along country lanes on a sunny afternoon, but with a flat-out top speed of 65mph you'd not want to go much faster. As always, American road tester Tom McCahill had the perfect turn of phrase: 'It's about as sporty as shooting parrots in a cage...'

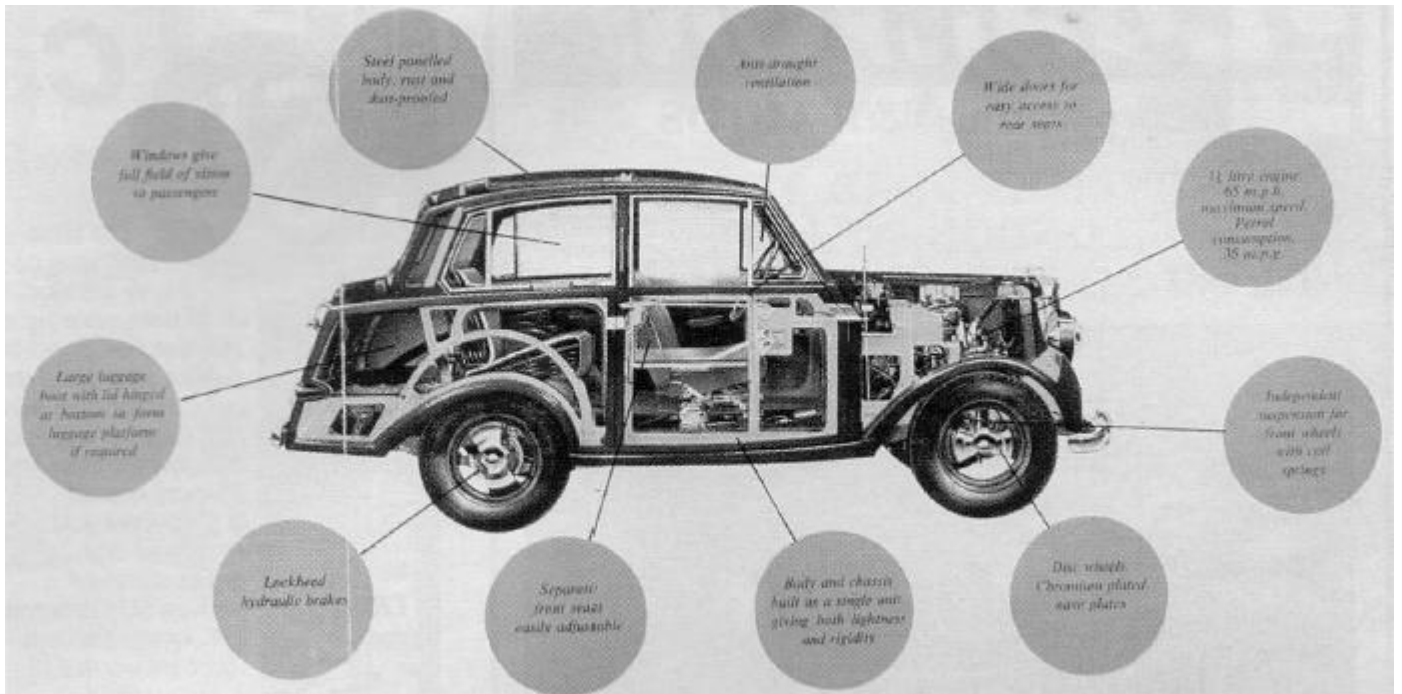
Another surprise - the steering is quite good! There's not too much slop in the system, and changes of direction are not the act-of-faith demanded by some cars of the era. Go too quickly into a corner and the car heels over like its namesake changing tack in a stiff breeze, but at a more sedate progress the handling is quite acceptable. Brakes are drums all round, of course, but they pull the car up quickly enough from the modest speeds attainable. There's telephone-box headroom in the front, even for a six-footer like me, but not quite so much in the back, where the rear seats are raised to clear the back axle. The wheel arches intrude into the back seat, too, giving a rather cosy environment; sitting in them is a bit like being in the circle at the Odeon, peering over the heads of the people in front. The Mayflower is the ultimate back-seat driver's car, its central dash panel ideally placed for mothers-in-law to keep an eye on the mischief wrought by the tearaway bank manager or accountant at the wheel.



Clever touches include an ingenious front seat mechanism, whereby the whole seat slides forward as the backrest is tilted to allow access to the rear, and a bonnet motif which is turned through 90 degrees to unlock the bonnet. The boot lid has a hinged number plate, too, so that the lid can be left down to accommodate extra-large loads - an idea picked up by the Mini some ten years later.



The longer you live with the car, in fact, the more you come to appreciate it. No-one can deny that the Mayflower has character, and, apart from a power output more suited to a lawnmower, it's a pleasant little carriage to drive. Maybe, given long enough, you could even come to like the styling - but then again, perhaps not!



This could have been Mayflower!

Classic and Sports Car, April 1995



The demure perpendicular Triumph Mayflower is just about as far as you can get from the flashy Americanised exuberance of the Nash Metropolitan. But did you know that the Metropolitan could have ended up being based on the Mayflower, and being built by Triumph?

These pictures are of the original Metropolitan prototype of 1950, the Nash NX1. Shown in a New York hotel, it was suggested the car could be produced with either a Fiat 500 'Topolino' engine or something bigger- a Fiat 1100 power unit... or the Mayflower's 1247cc side valve.

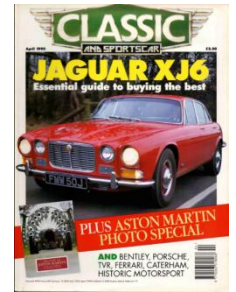
The prototype used the little 569cc Fiat 'four', but the two bigger engines were exhibited alongside. Standard- Triumph's Sir John Black let it be known that he had production capacity available to offer Nash his Mayflower engines, gearboxes and other mechanical units. He lobbied hard for a contract.

But he lost out to Austin, which assembled 104,368 Metropolitans over eight years. The bodies were supplied by Fisher & Ludlow, and the contract, beginning in 1953, must have neatly replaced that for the Mayflower shells which F&L had been making.

The Voyage of Mayflower

Classic and Sports Car, April 1995

Triumph's controversial little saloon was meant to lead sales into America – but it sank without trace. Jon Pressnel finds that, while it's no flash cruiser, it doesn't deserve to be remembered as a titanic failure.



The usual wisecrack about the Triumph Mayflower is that it never did flower. It was a failure, and gave dictatorial Standard-Triumph boss Sir John Black his comeuppance. How could he have had the arrogance and lack of judgement to think he could foist this laughable Georgian-sideboard-on-wheels on the Americans?

After all, his ambitions were clear enough in his naming of the car, called Mayflower on the suggestion of Lady Black, and launched with much sail-ship razzmatazz in October 1949. The little razor-edged saloon was intended to make Standard-Triumph the automotive Pilgrim Fathers, and bravely establish the company in the New World. Yet by the end of the Mayflower's short production run the Americans had bought only a miserable 510 of the so-called 'Watch-charm Rolls'.

By the time the Triumph was on stream the 'Buy anything so long as it's got wheels' phase had passed in the US. The economy was on the up. Detroit, churning out low-cost big cars, was meeting demand, and people found little attraction in overpriced tiddlers. It wasn't until the late '50s that the market for small imported cars took off. So what chance the quaint Mayflower, even at its relatively modest \$1685 price?

But a total of 34,000 Mayflowers were made, and that's not bad going:

production got under way only in June/July 1950 and lasted a bare three years. In eight years BMC knocked out only 39,568 Riley One-point-Fives, and nobody has ever called that a failure. And if the Mayflower is deemed a lemon, how do you categorise the Singer SM1500, of which only 18,666 were made over seven years?

Disappointing sales or not, the Mayflower was always going to be a stopgap. Although it was profitable, it was an expensive car to produce. To lock horns with Austin, Morris and Ford, Sir John Black would sooner or later have to invest the necessary funds to produce a lightweight cheap-to-make small car. Despite initial thoughts



about re-bodying the Mayflower, or building a new car on its floor pan, the all-new Standard Eight and Ten of 1953 and 1954 were the only logical way to move forward.

The Mayflower racked up 16,395 home sales and 17,605 export sales. Australia, New Zealand and Canada were good markets, and Sweden took an estimated 1200, most of which were assembled from kits by top Swedish importer ANA. The Mayflower was also found as far afield as Nigeria and Pakistan and unlike so many of its contemporaries it proved gratifyingly reliable in service.

The Mayflower was all about styling. Nine years before Farina's trendsetting Austin A40, it offered a bold counterpoint to the curvaceous lines of the era; more particularly, it sought to capitalise on the good reception



given the Triumph 1800 saloon, which had been much lauded for its spacious and airy interior and its classy mini-Rolls knife-edged body. The trouble was that the Mayflower's looks provoked as much hostility as approval.

The idea was sound, however. With its factories largely given over to Vanguards and Ferguson tractors, Standard-Triumph lacked the capacity to compete directly with the likes of the Morris Minor and the Austin Devon. An upmarket 'added-value' product made in smallish numbers was the only option open to the company, at least in the short term. So Leslie Moore, chief body designer at Mulliners of Birmingham, proposed a shrunken version of the Triumph 1800, for which he had been responsible. Standard's chief body engineer, Walter Belgrove, honed the concept, in particular the front - arguably the least successful aspect of the car. The body was tooled up for production as an all-steel unit-construction structure; this was to be made for S-T by the then independent Fisher & Ludlow.

As the Triumph 1800 before it, mechanically the Mayflower was a clever concoction of existing hardware. The engine was a slightly down-bored 1247cc version of the alloy-head side valve unit used in the pre-war Standard Ten. It was mated to a version of the Vanguard three-speed gearbox: "We tried to cheapen the Vanguard 'box as much as possible, to knock as much money out of it as we could," recalls former S-T transmission engineer David Eley. This gearbox, with column change and the unusual refinement of a synchronised first gear, took drive to a similarly downgraded version of the Vanguard back axle, as subsequently adapted for use in the PIII Vanguard and TR2.

The only totally new mechanical element was the front suspension, a tidy set-up using wishbones and coil-enclosed telescopic dampers. With angled telescopics helping to locate the leaf-sprung rear axle, and with hydraulic brakes all round, the chassis engineering was fully up to the minute, although enthusiasts would doubtless have preferred a steering rack to the cam and peg box that engineer Harry Webster took from the parts bins.

Standard had stumbled with the engine. The unit-construction body was reinforced with a substantial box-section chassis welded to the floor, giving a kerb weight of 18.8cwt. That made the Mayflower a definite heavyweight compared with the 15.7cwt Morris Minor two-door. Yet lugging this weight along was the modest

38bhp side valve giving the Triumph a weedy 65mph maximum speed. Why didn't the Mayflower use the overhead-valve version of the Standard Ten engine which had been supplied to Morgan for use in the 4-4?

"The ohv unit was made especially for Morgan, as a favour, because Sir John Black had once worked as a draughtsman for HFS Morgan," says David Eley. "The engine was very much a small-production thing, made on knife-and-fork machinery temporarily adapted with drill plates and so on. I don't think the contract was renewed post-war, and it wouldn't have made sense to use the unit in the Mayflower."

Harry Webster confirms this: "It all came down to cash. We'd have had to convert our machining equipment, and economics didn't allow this. We had to make do with what we had around us - we weren't a rich company."

Engineering compromises or not, the result is a surprisingly endearing little saloon, if retired teacher Peter Benfield's superb 1953 car is any guide. One of the best in the Triumph Mayflower Club, of which Peter is vice-chairman, it's the third he's owned - the first was run as a hard-worked daily car from 1957-64, when it even took him up and down the Alps.

Never mind that it looks just right in its metallic grey finish, so much more pleasing than the other factory choices of black, medium blue or metallic pale green. It's when you step inside that the Mayflower falls into place. It's not luxurious: there's no wood. Instead, you get honest painted metal, with an open-plan dashboard featuring two parcel shelves and a central Bakelite instrument panel in glossy black. Vynide seats and rubber mats, too - at least in theory. Peter's car has the optional leather-faced seats and neatly-edged carpets. So it's plain, even if the raised-plastic instrument lettering and the white plastic switches are brashly 'Festival of Britain'. But there are opening quarter-lights front and back, twin sun visors, wheel arch armrests and Herald-style cubbies at the rear.

The Mayflower is spacious, and there's good visibility all-round, helped by a high driving position. The individual front seats are comfortable, and come together to form a bench. With the shallow transmission hump, three-abreast seating is thus feasible for a suitably slim trio. At the rear, legroom, headroom and elbow room are all generous, helped by an upright seating position and the provision of foot wells; access is aided by the front seats sliding forward when the seat back is moved. The overall feeling is of a tastefully trimmed and intelligently arranged car that makes maximum use of its 13ft length thanks to the boxy styling. The boot is pretty good, with the spare in a wind-down tray and the lid serving as an additional luggage platform.



Only UK style was two-door saloon; 10 dropheads were made by S-T, but never entered production, and Aussies did pick-up

Such points are worth dwelling on, because for the Mayflower's clientele they'd doubtless have been more important than how the car drove. The bonus is that from behind the wheel the Triumph is a delight.

It's slow, but not painfully so: *The Autocar* found the Mayflower substantially quicker to 50mph than the side valve Minor and even three seconds faster than the A40 Devon. Hills knock back the speed as much as you'd expect, but the torque of the long-stroke engine means you can often haul yourself up without a down change.

Not that a deft slice into a lower gear is a problem: the neat chrome lever has a firm and precise movement and connects with synchromesh which is well up to bridging the large gap between second and top. Add the joys of a synchronised first, and keeping up momentum on the hilly Yorkshire Dales is no hardship.

On the open road the Mayflower bumbles along happily at what seems a good speed. In fact a happy cruise proved to be nearer 45mph than the 55mph I'd imagined it to be, but at this pace the engine is pleasantly refined - it's only when you hold on to second that the side valve becomes thrummy. Find enough straight and gradually speed will creep up: "On a long run you tend to end up travelling quicker than you think," claims Peter. "You get quite a shock when you discover you're doing 55mph. But once its wound up it'll plug on forever at a steady 50-55mph, and turn in 35mpg."

After the Queen Mary under steer of the Renown and the over steering tendency of the Triumph Roadster, I expected the worst of the Mayflower's chassis. In fact the car handles with genuine accuracy, if not with the wide track poise of a Minor. There's none of the front-end softness of rival Austins, and the steering is quick, free of play, smooth and well-weighted. Helped by the radials Peter has fitted, the Mayflower can be scuttled round corners at a reasonable lick - especially as the short-travel brakes inspire full confidence. The only flaw is a fair bit of roll, possibly exacerbated by a front track three inches narrower than that at the rear. Firm suspension is part of the secret, and bad surfaces show up a certain knobbliness in the ride; never, though, does the response become uncomfortably abrupt.

So the Triumph certainly impresses, despite its less-than-ideal mechanicals: "With overhead valves and a four-speed 'box it would have been tremendous, and would have made an excellent small 'executive' car," says Peter "The A40 Devon I ran before my first Mayflower seemed a much faster car, but had a very bouncy front end and its hydro-mechanical brakes were a bit of a letdown unless really accurately adjusted. It also wasn't as well built as the Triumph."

I was rather charmed by the Mayflower It has a feeling of quality about its finish, drives with decorum, and exudes a gentle good taste which puts it a discreet rung above its more mass-produced contemporaries. Sir John Black might have been the car industry's very own Mussolini, but his touch was surer than his critics made out.

OWNING A MAYFLOWER

The Vanguard-derived elements of the Mayflower's running gear will go on forever, says Peter Benfield, while the engine's only weak point is the corrosion-prone alloy head. The Triumph Mayflower Club has well administered new and second-hand spares operations, and can provide most mechanical parts. Interchangeability with Vanguards and TRs is a big help. It extends to the front suspension, which was used in modified form on all TRs; brake parts, master cylinder excepted, are common with those used on early Minors. The only body repair panels available are part-finished outer sills, but there are plenty of second-hand body parts knocking about. In any case, the Mayflower is pleasantly rust-resistant: after 17 years standing in the open, Peter's car needed only new sills and some bottom-of-wing patching. The Triumph also has the virtue of being affordable. The club's magazine usually advertises two or three restoration projects at £600-800, and restored cars are hard-pushed to command more than £2500.

Buying a Used Car

No. 2 – Triumph Mayflower

The Motor, November 13th 1957



On this page is abbreviated a Test Report art a car conducted by the Automobile Association for one of its members. We submitted the facts to a qualified service engineer well acquainted with the particular model concerned and in the text below he shows the cost of making the car fully reliable if (a) the work is undertaken by a garage or (b) done by a competent private owner. Reference is made in the Test Report only to assemblies and components found to be in an unsatisfactory condition.



FIRST REGISTERED – 1953

RECORDED MILEAGE – 33621

PRESENT VALUE – about £435

TEST REPORT

COACHWORK

Condition of paint—Serviceable but dull in places.
 General comment on bodywork—The general condition of the bodywork is commensurate with age but the front floor carpet is patched on the nearside. The chrome plate of the radiator shell is scratched and worn. The starting handle aperture door is a little distorted. The head, lining is slightly soiled.

ENGINE

Signs of knocking (if any)—Some small end tap is audible at idling speed but not sufficient to warrant attention at this stage.
 Are there any external defects?—The underside of the engine is dirty and oily.
 Any general comment?—This unit is considered to be capable of a further period of service. The exhaust tail pipe is eroded but serviceable at present.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Does the horn function?—Not the offside unit.
 Does screen wiper function?—No.
 Condition of lamps and wiring—Lamps sound but head lights short circuited during examination.
 Does lighting installation function?—Yes, except the rear index light and head lights (see above).

TRANSMISSION SHAFT

Condition of shaft bearings and joints—The front joint is worn, otherwise serviceable.

BACK AXLE

Is there any undue leakage of oil?—Yes, from the nearside rear hub.

STEERING GEAR

The steering column stator tube requires tightening.
 Was steering satisfactory on road test?—Yes.
 Some wear is present in the idler unit and steering box but not sufficient to warrant attention at the present.

COOLING SYSTEM

External condition of connections—By-pass hose kinked.
 Is pump or impeller functioning?—Yes, but should be checked, engine temperature high on road test.

BRAKES

Functioning of brakes (foot)—Pedal requires pumping to eliminate undue travel.
 Functioning of brakes (hand)—Requires adjustment.

RUNNING OF CAR

Quietness of running—Slight rattle from nearside front seat and steering column stator tube.

TYRES

N/S front tread ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50% wear
O/S front tread ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50% wear
N/S rear tread ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	As new
O/S rear tread ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	As new
Spare	Worn	smooth	on	outer	section	of	tread

Repairs Recommended by AA Engineer

Attend to body defects as desired. Replace the spare tyre. Rectify electrical defects. Overhaul front transmission shaft joint. Eliminate oil leakage from nearside rear hub. Tighten steering column staton tube. Check cooling system. Put the brakes in order. Eliminate rattles. Service car throughout.

THE service manager of a big Standard distributor once remarked with feeling that it was just as well the entire Standard output did not consist of Triumph Mayflowers, for this model was proving itself to be so reliable that it would have put his service department out of business. Even allowing for a degree of bias, it is certain that this car has acquired so high a reputation for trouble-free running that used examples are in considerable demand in spite of the fact that production ceased in 1953.

This particular car is therefore a late model, and its recorded mileage may well be its true mileage. From the list of repairs recommended by the Automobile Association, it will be seen that nothing very vital is required, or very expensive. The only major mechanical component that needs to be replaced is the propeller shaft front universal joint, and even though this work is carried out by a garage it will cost only £3 10s. or so providing that all goes smoothly. It should, perhaps, be stressed at this point that such estimates can only be approximate, for the major cost in carrying out any repair work these days is the labour charge, which of course depends directly on the number of man-hours needed to carry out the operation. A component which has been in regular use for three years or more may behave itself and come apart without trouble, or it may prove to have welded itself together with corrosion in which case a whole morning can be rapidly absorbed by the dismantling of some quite minor unit. It is for this very reason that the unit replacement system has been gaining ground so rapidly since the war.

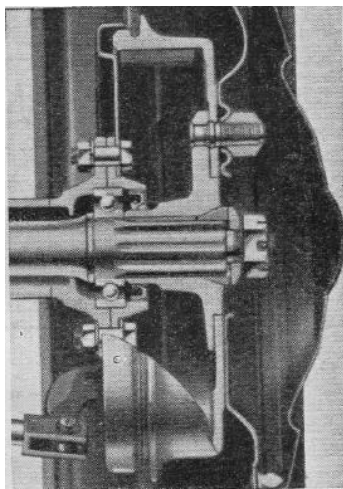
Essential Preliminary

The oil seal for the near-side half-shaft must be replaced, for otherwise any attention to the brakes will be negative by oil leaking onto the new linings. Replacement of the seal by a garage will cost about £1 10s.

It will be recalled that the engine temperature was high when the vehicle was road tested. As a first step the radiator should be flushed out thoroughly and its core checked for leaks. If these attentions do not cure the trouble, a new water pump will be needed. The thermostat may also require replacement, but even though both these items are changed, the total cost of the overhaul by a garage should not much exceed £6 6s. 6d.

The brakes obviously require urgent attention to make the car roadworthy. Should the master cylinder only require replacement, then the job should cost about £6 17s. 6d., including cleaning the brake shoes, bleeding and balancing the system and adjusting the handbrake. Should all the brake shoes also require relining, then the cost of overhauling the braking system would be increased to about £12 10s.

The electrical system also requires some sorting out. The non-functioning of



Special tools, as described in the text, are needed to extract the hub and oil seal, which in this drawing lies to the right of the shaft bearing race.

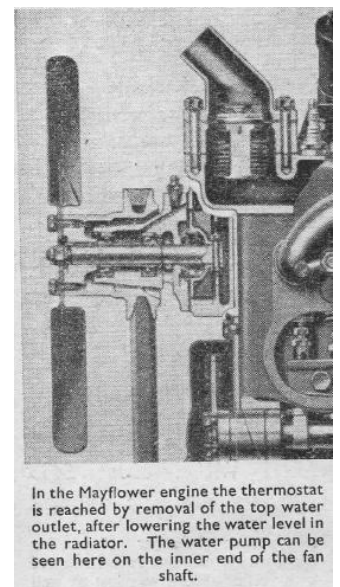
the off-side horn may be the result of a loose connection, a blown fuse or the horn itself may be defunct, and the same of course applies to the out-of-work windscreen wiper. The wiring for the head and side lamp circuits also requires a thorough going over. Even should a new horn unit and a new wiper motor be needed, the total cost should not exceed about £11 9s. 6d.

A new cover for the spare wheel will cost £7 3s., and a thorough hunting down of rattles and general servicing and lubrication a further £3, bringing the total cost of the restoration to about £36 16s. 6d.

Should the new owner of the Mayflower decide to carry out the work himself, then he will require a copy of the Service Instruction Manual for the car which can be obtained from Standard-Triumph dealers price 30s. Most of the replacement parts required are obtainable on an exchange basis, an allowance being made for the old part. Under this system, a replacement front propeller shaft bearing will cost £1 9s. 2d.

A new oil seal for the near-side half shaft can be obtained for 4s. 1d. To get at the oil seal, the rear hub will have to be removed. A special hub remover (Part No. M.86) and a tool for withdrawing and replacing the oil seal (Part No. M.29) were produced by V. L. Churchill, Ltd., to facilitate these operations, but the tools are now obsolete and no longer obtainable, although it may be possible to borrow them from a local Standard-Triumph dealer.

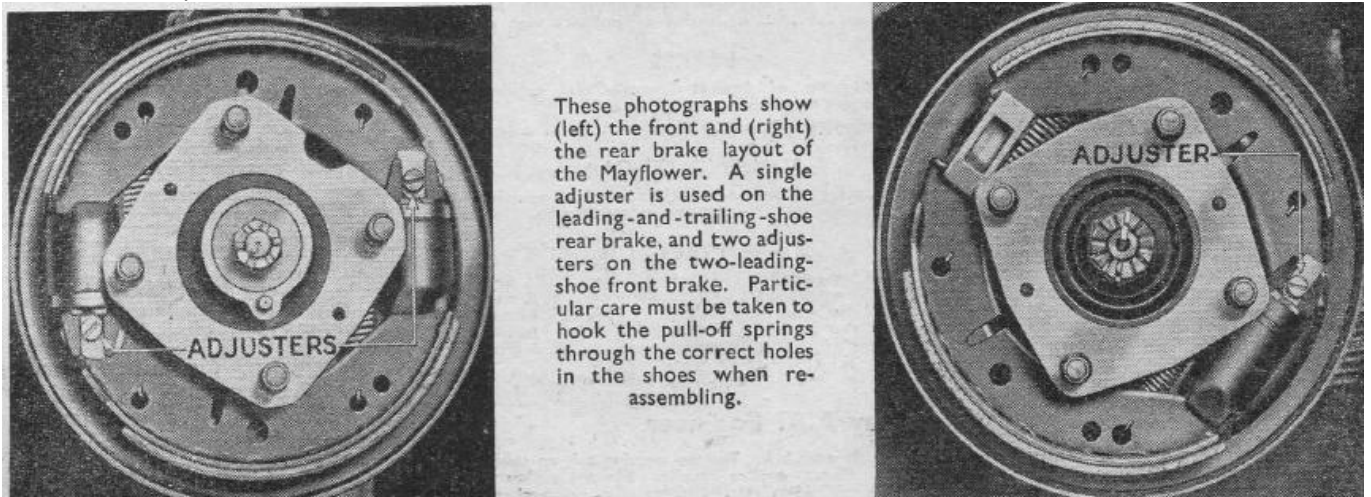
The cost of a replacement water pump is £3 15s., should tests show one to be required, and a thermostat costs 17s. 6d. The thermostat valve should begin to open at a temperature of between 149 and 158 deg. F. and should be fully open at 176 deg. F. Its operation can be checked by placing the thermostat in a bowl of water and



In the Mayflower engine the thermostat is reached by removal of the top water outlet, after lowering the water level in the radiator. The water pump can be seen here on the inner end of the fan shaft.

watching to see whether the valve opens when the water reaches the required temperature as shown by an accurate thermometer.

To bring the brakes back into effective working order, a replacement master cylinder costing £1 16s. 3d. will be required, and relined brake shoes may also be needed. These, too, are obtainable on an exchange basis at a cost of £1 9s. a pair, so that new shoes for all four wheels will cost a total of £5 16s.



If it is found that the failure of the off-side horn to work is not the result of a loose connection or a blown fuse, then check the tightness of the fixing bolt. Provision is also made for taking up wear, and this adjustment should be tried before the decision is taken to obtain a replacement horn on an exchange basis at a cost of £1 12s. 6d. The connections to the windscreen wiper motor should also be checked and the commutator cleaned before the motor is condemned. It may be found that the motor itself is working but is not transmitting its motion to the wiper spindles, in which case the guides for the cross-head should be lightly smeared with medium-grade engine oil. Should all these attentions have no effect, a replacement wiper motor will cost £3 12s. 6d.

Even should these electrical units have to be replaced and all the brake shoes renewed, the total cost of overhauling the car, if the owner does all the work himself, will amount to £23 9s., which sum includes £7 3s. for a new tyre.

Mayflower on Trial

Autocar, January 5th 1951

First impressions adjusted by practical experience of a likeable small car



The Mayflower in the county of Oliver Cromwell, at St. Neots, Huntingdonshire : A market town a short distance east of the Great North Road usually missed by those to whom A1 is the main north-south artery and by those with little time to spare. It takes its name from a Cornish saint whose bones were moved there in the ninth century.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1949: "A New Mayflower launched " : The date and the phrase happen to stick in one's mind. It was the occasion of the current smaller model of the Triumph range first being seen by those outside the Coventry factory and it was "put over" remarkably effectively in a setting which used a gaily coloured and, for all I know, highly rustic scaled-down version of the frail craft in which the Pilgrim Fathers set sail from Plymouth to start something that has developed fantastically beyond what they could ever have envisaged or wished from their venture. It is a question whether new motor cars need to be "put over," much as are film stars and *haute couture*. One could not but admire the taste of the surroundings, pillared and draped for the occasion, in which the newcomer was revealed to the eyes of the (Press) world; but for all its decor did it really help the car?

At least one slightly hardened member of the Fourth Estate came away that day wondering whether he really liked the look of the new Mayflower on wheels, but none the less, cynic that he may be sometimes, he was eager to sample this newcomer of the unusual lines for its size of car, reproducing partly the square-cut style that has been so successful on its larger relative, the Renown. As it happened, a year was to pass before that curiosity was satisfied, although in the meantime *The Autocar* was able to carry out the usual Road Test (April 14 issue).

The aesthetic question was left at that for the time being, for quite often, as with people, has proper acquaintance revised initial opinions of unorthodoxy in appearance as well as those of road behaviour. The outcome, in due course, was exactly on those lines.

One wet and stormy evening after the 1950 Show a Mayflower stood at the door, all but bearing a "Please try me" label. No moment then for studying lines, but the occasion for plunging off, with rain lashing the windscreen, into a route riddled with tramlines—although many of these monsters have disappeared lately from London their spoors remain. A quickly registered impression was of the adequacy of the wipers and of the benefits of a wide, deep screen on a dirty night in London traffic. A colleague with whom countless times opinions of an ever-changing panorama of cars have been exchanged over the years took charge of it for the night and it was a day or two before the first opportunity came of trying the Mayflower on a main road run. Incidentally, we agreed initially that for reasons practically impossible to analyse we found the car particularly easy to drive under adverse conditions at night and almost liked it better at night, which is unusual notwithstanding personal theories regarding night driving being on the whole the safer.

Then it was taken over a main road route of some sixty miles into Sussex and back at night over an even better known road. Admittedly it was a week-day, there had been fog the previous night and, a good many



drivers having apparently been scared off for the moment, the roads were clearer than usual. But that was not by any means the whole reason for the Mayflower's time for the return run being as good as that of many a bigger and more expensive car. It held its 50-55 m.p.h. and went round the bends which are plentiful on this route a good deal faster in safety than, candidly, it had been expected to like taking them.

A spell of experience with it followed that gave exactly the desired opportunity of seeing the car in everyday

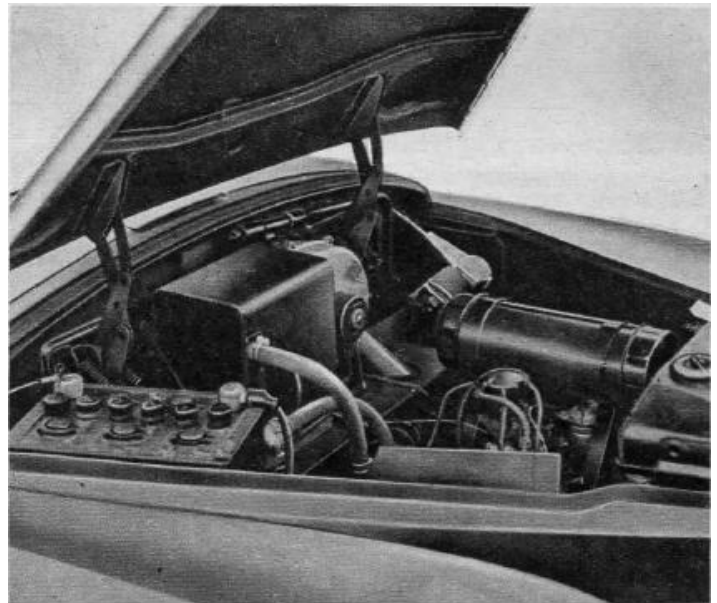
conditions, in and out of London, standing about for hours while the Showtime round of dinners was coped with, and being under cover at night only as the exception. Now and again it would go on a real run, and always the average speed capabilities and standard of handling were good.

There was one striking example of this side of the car's behaviour. From Surrey and Sussex and Central London it had ranged up to Huntingdonshire, the county of Cromwell and therefore not inappropriate to receive an example of modern transport bearing a name linked with the seventeenth-century Pilgrim Fathers.

The return to London over A1 at night found it due to run in company with a car of 85-plus maximum speed in the hands of a colleague who is notable for exercising a remarkably agile right shoe and for being not among the slowest round the curves. We agreed to run south for some forty miles on England's premier highway and then change cars. The Mayflower (Triumph) got away three or four minutes in advance while the other people dallied, and its driver, torn between putting on as much lead as possible and sympathy to % a cold engine, awaited developments astern. A1 was in its usual state as regards volume of "heavies," almost without exception as courteously handled as could be wished by that capital band of fellows who operate the "real" lorries on the trunk routes; it was raining slightly and there was a suspicion of mist.

Within about the first ten miles bright lights rapidly closed on the now well accelerated Triumph and the other staff-driven car dashed past, its rays, arced by the mist, soon being lost round a succession of the remarkably tricky bends which the Londonwards end of the Great North Road mixes with some fine straights. The Mayflower driver was making good time, but as always happens in such circumstances he soon felt alone in the world and miles behind, pressing the inevitably unequally matched mount for all he and it were worth within the limits imposed by the weather. Came Eaton Socon, the Bedford fork and Tempsford, for those who know their A1, murky space mostly ahead and nothing else overtaking the Mayflower, which was steady at around the speedometer 60 and taking the long slopes in great style.

Biggleswade and then a fast eight miles to Baldock, where the rendezvous had been made, and the weather by no means improving. The car ahead might have been a county away. Sharp right into Baldock, where the Royston road goes off, and just round the corner was the "other car," being driven in the opposite direction. Obviously one was so far behind that a search party was setting off! But the actual facts were interesting. The always data-minded driver of the other car had set a stopwatch running on halting to await the arrival of the Mayflower and had then turned about in search of petrol. He stopped the watch on sighting the Mayflower and the interval proved to be— 2 min 16 sec. Counting the starting advantage the smaller car had had, the fast sports type machine had picked up only five to six minutes in the best part of fifty miles.



The efficient heater and demister unit is prominent under the bonnet. It can be used to introduce fresh air, warmed or not, as required, with sufficient circulation effect in moderate temperatures even without use of the blower.

An insistent motoring conscience compels me to analyse the circumstances further and to stress the weather conditions, but even so the main advantage is to the Mayflower and in praise of its practical equipment. Its fresh-air type of heater and demister installation had given its driver good vision without any of the blurriness that is such a handicap to even an experienced driver; the other car had no such equipment and proved to be a bad case for misting up its glass. The weather conditions had prevented the quite fast car from using its top end more than once, though according to its passenger it had been doing quite nicely at intervals.



It all went to support views already held concerning the small benefit that can be gained on the majority of journeys in this country from, say, a 20 m.p.h. potential advantage in top speed and even with a useful four-speed gear box, freely used, compared with a three-speed box as the Mayflower has. Perhaps this *proved* nothing, yet I cannot help feeling the reverse, knowing my driver of the other car, in spite of the difficulties of that particular evening.

Three Speeds versus Four

The subject of the three-speed box needs a further word or two: the instinctive reaction, especially with an engine of 1,247 c.c. with side valves and a total running trim weight of just over 19 cwt, with the extras of radio and heater system, is that four gears would be better. But in practice I am not so sure for average motoring purposes. Second on the Mayflower gives a comfortable 40 m.p.h.—as much as most drivers ever use on an indirect gear. With four speeds, by the time some people have decided to come off top it is too late for third gear to be effective with a smallish engine, and it is a case for second. An intermediate ratio of 8.56 to 1 as in the Mayflower's three-speed box will still cope when the change down has been left late. The driver who will make the most of the box would probably gain an advantage with four speeds, but the majority, no. In any event, the steering column change on the Mayflower is excellent of its kind, light, easy and certain, with good

synchromesh on all ratios, which can be seen as a distinct further asset of the three-speed plan, for probably with four gears it would be uneconomic to give all gears synchromesh at the Mayflower's moderate selling price.

It is not the present purpose to compete with the Road Test of the model that has already appeared. In a mileage exceeding 1,200, covered in the main in one driver's hands, but introducing three others for substantial individual distances, the Mayflower justified itself in relation to its intended place in the motoring scheme—that of the small car in engine size, with, therefore, the modest thirsts that go with such size, allowing 28 m.p.g. under mixed conditions of use, and yet in appearance and overall dimensions, as well as in the highly individual style of the body, one that is above the ordinary level of small car practice hitherto. It is not meant to put anyone connected with *The Autocar* on a pedestal when I add to its list of successes in staff hands the fact that three faster-than-average drivers found the all-round performance satisfying. Particularly did it endear itself to one for its relative compactness in the seemingly ever-worsening congestion of the London area and for its parkability. Yet it is no tiny car, as the overall length and width of 12ft 9in and 5ft 1 in make clear.

At no time did it falter in firing from cold, even when left in the open overnight, though it was found desirable to return the choke control almost at once over part of its fairly considerable travel, otherwise over-richness developed, whilst if the final return was made too soon there was a tendency to stall. In main road running, as the experience quoted on A1 demonstrated by implication, the car corners well; on wet tramlines, with light loading, there was some tendency when power was applied, even on top gear, for the tail to slide and

the rear wheels to spin mildly. The steering is reasonably geared, as a quick swerve to miss by inches a suddenly halted car in quite thick mist showed encouragingly in early acquaintance, and the Lockheed brakes do what is wanted of them. The driving position is comfortable, the body and luggage space are roomy, and the equipment is good. The heater system (an optional extra) has already been given credit. The only surprising omission in a well-turned-out small carriage is an ashtray, whilst also a clock is not standard.

To end as begun, on an aesthetic note, without a twinge of misgiving it can be said that the Mayflower's distinctive, even unique, lines grow on one after the car has been around the place for a time. Not everyone likes them and one of my colleagues told me after he had had the car in his hands for two or three days that no car he has used similarly since the war has attracted more attention and comment from the passer-by, specialized and entirely lay alike. The modern Mayflower is now being seen with some frequency on British roads and from the experience now gained of it in a diversity of conditions it is safe to assume that it is giving a great deal of pleasure to its owners.

Character in stone at Stilton, on the Great North Road, adjoining the fine old coaching inn, the Bell. The famous Blue Stilton cheese can be bought here "off the ration."



Pixie's Piece of History

Triumph World, October/November 2011

Malcolm Robertson discovers a charming little car in Australia that is really hers, not his. More than that, it has a very special place in the family.



I love the way life is full of fascinating little surprises. And I never cease to be amazed at what we remember from our childhood — things that jump into sharp focus long after we thought they were forgotten and gone. Take Elva Marshall, for example. When she went to a car show in Australia with her husband Frank about 12 years ago and saw a gorgeous little car similar to the one you can see in the photos here, she was quite unprepared for the flood of memories that the quirky little car brought back. 'The styling was so distinctive that I suddenly remembered that this was the sort of car we had when I was very young,' she recalls. 'It was our first family car, and dad bought it in about 1951.'

Elva's father, Norman Chittick, was a farmhand and worked on a property at Pyree near Nowra, south of Sydney in New South Wales. 'He bought the car from Moorehouse the Machinery Man in Bomaderry near Nowra, and I can still picture mum learning to drive on it with the three of us - my older sister Lynette, me and my younger brother George - in the back!'

The car was, of course, the stunning new small saloon from the Standard-Triumph company, their first after the end of the War, and released in Australia in 1950. Like many English cars of the time, it was aimed primarily at the American market to comply with the Government's *export-or-die* program. It was called the Mayflower in an attempt to capitalise on American history, the bit about the Pilgrim Fathers who had sailed the Atlantic in the Mayflower in 1620.

Elva picks up the story again. 'I didn't realise that it had been a Triumph, and you can imagine how pleased Frank was once I'd made that connection,' she laughs. 'He just loves Triumphs and has a garage full of them - that's why we were at the show!'

Elva, known as Pixie to many, says that her father sold the car when she was about 10, so her memories of it are a bit hazy. 'We don't even have a photo of it from those days,' she says sadly. But after having those childhood memories re-awakened so vividly at the car show, she and Frank decided to track one down and do it up in the same colour scheme as her father's Mayflower – silver paint with a red interior.

Tracking one down was easier said than done, however. Even though some 4500 Triumph Mayflowers were sold new in Australia in the early 1950s, their survival rate has not been as good as, for example, the contemporary Morris Minor. Maybe that quirky styling, known as razor-edged, has had something to do with it. It was quite different at a time when most cars were throwing off their pre-war mudguards and vertical radiators in favour of the new rounded and streamlined look then sweeping design studios in Europe, England and America. You have to admit though, it is intriguing.



LEFT: The Mayflower was featured on the cover of *The Australian Monthly Motor Manual* in March 1951.

BELOW: Pixie can remember sitting in the back of a silver Mayflower with her brother and sister while their mother learnt to drive.



RIGHT:
The Mayflower's engine was a modest little sidevalve unit from the pre-war Standard 10.



BELOW:
In case anybody missed the Mayflower connection, Triumph thoughtfully added this reminder!



In post-war Britain, razor-edged styling made a brief appearance on large luxury cars with bodies made by specialist coachbuilders, cars such as Rolls Royce, Bentley and Daimler. In Australia, we can still see hints of it on cars such as the stately old Rolls Royce our Governor-General uses on formal occasions. And as readers of *TW* will know, Standard-Triumph had already used the styling on their larger cars, so it was logical for them to try it on their small car too.

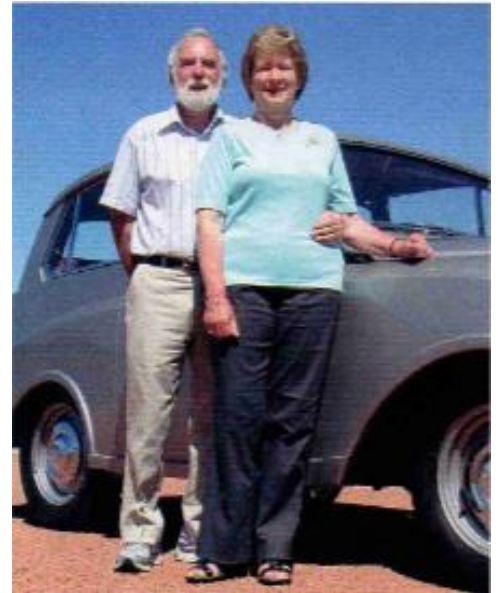
They were nice little cars, not fast by any means with their three speed column-change gearboxes and 1247cc side valve motors, but comfortable enough as a family car in those far off, less affluent times. They also ride nicely and so were excellent for longer trips over bumpy Aussie roads, so long as you weren't in a hurry to get anywhere. Back then, Aussies generally weren't, and even now they are usually content to sit on the posted speed limit of 100km/h all day - very tedious!

Finally, in 2001 Frank found a Mayflower in the Victorian town of Geelong. It was almost complete, so he had it transported to his home in the national capital, Canberra, along with a spare

body that came with it. Frank says that the restoration was not all that difficult. He started in late 2002, had a break in early 2003 while he fixed up their garden after the Canberra bush fires (which burnt over 300 houses) destroyed it and the fences, but got back to the Mayflower in mid-2003. He has done most of the work himself, including rebuilding the engine and the gearbox, the spray painting and all the electrical wiring. Only the chrome plating and the upholstery of the seats were left to the professionals.

'And just about everyone who has come up to us since we put the car back on the road a few years ago remembers them,' says Frank. 'Either their parents had one, or someone they knew had one, so they must have been very popular in their day. It has a top speed of about 100km/h, but it's best to cruise at 70km/h. That's about 45mph in the old system.'

He says that the car's trickiest aspects are cornering, which reveal an alarming tendency to lean due to the high roll centre. Braking also takes some getting used to, as they require a good firm push. 'But I love it,' enthuses Frank, 'because it's an elegant little car from a bygone era!' 'And I love it,' says Pixie, having the last word, 'because it reminds me of my childhood and growing up on a farm. It's a nice feeling.'



Triumph Mayflower in brief (courtesy of the Triumph Mayflower Club)

Triumph's new small car was launched at the Earls Court Motor Show in London in October 1949, a major achievement for all involved in its conception, design and production given that the decision to build the little car was only taken a year or so earlier. According to Walter Belgrove, Standard Triumph's Chief Stylist and Body Engineer at the time who was interviewed many years later, the Mayflower was intended to be a short wheelbase version of the Renown saloon, and also the first volume-produced Triumph. 'It continued the knife edged styling with a vengeance and I believe the policy to build and produce this type of vehicle stemmed from Sir John Black's discussions with Mr Antweiller, Managing Director of Mulliners in Birmingham.'

The Mayflower was styled by Leslie Moore, Chief Body Designer of Mulliners who managed to reflect the lines of the Renown on a shorter wheelbase. Belgrove considered the side view to be very good indeed, with the swept line from headlamp boss to the tail managing to retain some characteristic features of the bigger model. The little car carried a traditional Triumph front end and was engineered by Triumph, but manufactured by Fischer and Ludlow at Castle Bromwich, Birmingham.

The press reports of the day were quite enthusiastic about the car, especially the way it exuded luxury among a cadre of new small cars that had all been built down to a price in a very budget-conscious post-war Britain. At over £475, the Mayflower was quite expensive compared with, for example, the new Morris Minor at £383. Nevertheless, the Birmingham Gazette stated that: 'Every Motor Show has its own particular "baby" which invariably catches the public's imagination. This year I have no hesitation in declaring that it will be the new Triumph Mayflower four cylinder two door saloon with a razor-edged body bearing a marked similarity to the Triumph 2000.'

The Evening News enthused that: 'The knife-edge Triumph Mayflower stands out from all the other ten horsepower cars in the Show by reason of the exceptional vision afforded by its wide glass side windows, which run almost the full width of the body. If there is one aspect more than another in which the British weekend motorist is at the moment dissatisfied with modern trend in car design is in the increased tendency to "box-in" the driver and his passengers. The Triumph Mayflower goes a long way towards the ideal by affording weather protection with a light and spacious interior.'

Maybe one of the most interesting quotes comes a bit later from Laurence Pomeroy, Technical Editor of The Motor: 'The bulk of my 1952 motoring has been in one of the best [small cars], the Triumph Mayflower ...After 30,000 miles ...the steering and chassis parts appear as new, and the body structure is completely sound and weatherproof... Many may think 30,000 odd miles with almost no trouble and a loss of faculties is a matter of no great moment, whereas those who have some detailed knowledge of the life lead by a Technical Editor's car will consider such a feat a mid-century miracle. Certainly I can say that the Mayflower is indeed a trusty Triumph, with performance, visibility and size well suited to my annual 800 hours of London driving.'

Production of the Mayflower got into its stride in June 1950 and ceased in July 1953 after some 34,000 cars had been built.

The above synopsis is just a fraction of the information contained on the encyclopaedic Triumph Mayflower Website and is reproduced here by kind permission of the author, Stephen Coulman, and the Triumph Mayflower Club.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee

Triumph World, August/September 2015

Typical - you wait ages for a Mayflower and then just like buses, two come along together! On the other hand, it does give us a superb two-for-one high value feature on these often-overlooked Triumphs.



ABOVE: Scaling the larger Renown's razoredge styling down to create the diminutive Mayflower resulted in a car that is like no other. Well built and surprisingly spacious on the inside, they have developed a small but devoted following on the classic scene.

Triumph Mayflowers may not be a common sight on our roads today even though a creditable 35,000 were sold between 1949 and 1953, but these two near identical twins live barely a dozen miles apart in Warwickshire. One belongs to John Castle, the Chairman and Regalia Secretary of the Triumph Mayflower Club, and the other to Chad Brown who is the club's Vice-Chairman and Rally Secretary. Their cars are both Colman Grey and both were built in 1953, the final year of Mayflower production. They are not quite identical twins though, as the interior of John's car is red while Chad's is grey.

"We spent a very pleasant morning with both gentlemen, dodging showers and pottering around the local roads in search of appropriate venues for photographs. To be honest we have never needed convincing of the case for owning a Mayflower, but we came away from our visit with an added appreciation for this quirky little byroad of Standard-Triumph design. But rather than bore you with our own impressions, we'll let John and Chad tell the story behind their cars, and also give us a flavour of the Mayflower ownership experience.

John: I grew up in Coventry, and I remember seeing these Mayflowers on the road and thinking they were beautiful. Before I could drive, I used to stand at the bus stop and play the game that we all did of recognising cars from their grilles - by the time you were ten, you knew them all. Whenever a Mayflower came along, it simply glided by. Even at that stage I was struck by the air of quality about them.

That stuck with me and I always thought that when I could afford one, I'd buy it. When the time finally came, I was lucky enough to get one in good condition as it had been restored by the previous owner. I haven't had to do any major work, just little bits and pieces, and have been able to enjoy the car.



Sir John Black's idea was to create a luxury car in miniature. Unfortunately the American market he was targeting was not convinced.



Trafficators are a period curiosity now and flashing indicators are a must.

Chad: I wish I could say the same about the condition of my car! In many ways it was a very rash purchase. I lead a busy life and I didn't do my research properly. I didn't even know there was a Triumph Mayflower Club, which really was very foolish. As a result I paid above the odds, far too much for the condition it was in. The Mayflower came with an MoT, but I have no idea how it got one. All in all, it was a really bad buy.

John: Chad's car was basically a one owner car, though technically Chad is the third owner because he bought it off eBay from the chap who acquired it from the original owner simply to sell on at a profit. Prior to that it had been left in a barn for 40 years. Fortunately we found ACR Garage in Hinckley, run by Neil Munton. As well as his regular staff, Neil's father Frank helps out, particularly on the old cars. ACR stands for All Cars Repaired, and they lived up to their name with Chad's Mayflower. They also sorted mine out recently because I couldn't get it running properly. It would run, but it was rough.

Frank found that the timing had been fitted 180 degrees out. Our club technical officer had noticed on the first rally I went to that my distributor was the wrong way round. I had been tempted to fit an electronic ignition, but now Frank has sorted it and I am still running the original points set-up.

Chad: And now Frank has got his own Mayflower, but somewhat by accident. It had been brought into ACR for some restoration work, but that was going to cost so much that the owner sold it to them instead - Frank is going to restore it this year.

I got my Mayflower purely out of nostalgia, because I'd had one as my first ever car. I've always ridden bikes and didn't start driving until my early twenties. I just saw a Mayflower on a local garage forecourt and it was available at the right price - about £27 or something, as I recall. This must have been about 1964, so it was already looking a bit dated, but I've always loved old cars so that wasn't a problem. I have since had many other classics, including a Renown which was my main car for some years. I loved the Renown, but I still yearned back to the first car I owned. Sometimes after you go back to a car after a gap of many years the first drive can be a disappointment, but I always had a romantic feeling about the car and I loved it. Getting the Mayflower was the right decision, though paying so much for one in poor condition was not.

John: They are not the easiest of cars to restore. They do share parts with other Triumphs of the era, including the TR2, but some items are difficult to find.

Chad: They haven't survived in the same volumes as many later Triumphs, of course. We have 117 members in the club now, of which about 97 are in this country. That is the number of members, so there are certainly people with Mayflowers who are not in the club, while some of our members have more than one. We estimated that there are about 100 Mayflowers still running in the UK, but a lot of the survivors are in various states of restoration, as indeed are the owners!



Progress is generally sedate in a Mayflower, but not quite as sedate as this picture suggests - the speedometer cable on John's car broke during our photoshoot!

John: We are a very small club, but we are still attracting new members. We have an annual show, usually in the south Midlands area, but in recent years have only been getting a handful of cars. So this year Chad suggested going north and joining an event at Ripon, which always used to take place two or three weeks after our rally and where they would get a handful of Mayflowers too, but different ones to those that we attracted.

Chad: We are too small to have regional meetings, so we have one AGM to which all the members are invited, plus our National Rally. The Ripon Old Cars/Ripon Classic Car Gathering will be at the end of July, and we'll have a display area of our own. We have always joined in with other cars - the Triumph Roadster Club and the Razoredge

Owners Club always make us very welcome and are very good to us, but this event at Ripon will just give members something different to see and hopefully pull a few more cars out of the woodwork. Multi-marque events such as this are very interesting to be part of but there is always the danger of getting positioned between some pretty exotic cars and finding that the Mayflower gets overlooked.

We do get our share of attention and nostalgia, though. I was filling up with petrol recently and a chap came up to say that his sister had got married in a Mayflower. It had been a new car they'd hired for the wedding, and she is now celebrating her 60th wedding anniversary. There is a lot of nostalgia out there and people like to see our cars on the road as they bring back memories, but when you go to shows you do have an awful lot of competition. I never cease to be amazed how many great cars appear for these shows. And as a rule of thumb, the bigger the show the less interest there is in the Mayflower because there is so much to see.



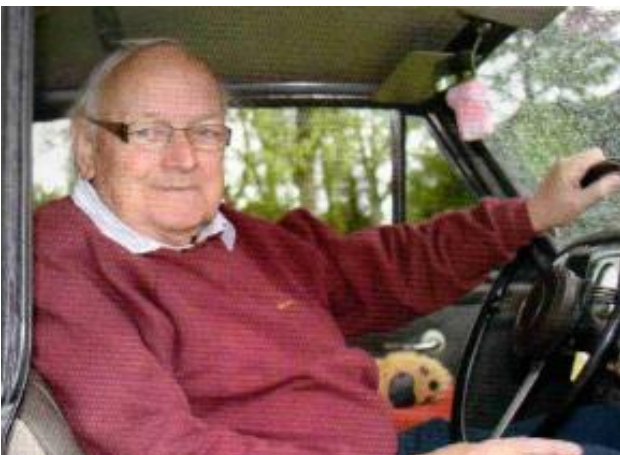
Some people say that a SatNav can be company on a long journey when driving solo. Chad has a more traditional (and quieter) solution in his stuffed bear.



The side valve engine was derived from the pre-war Standard 10. Its 1247cc puts out 38bhp@4200rpm and propels the Mayflower in a quiet and unfussy manner, but not quite all the way up to the 70mph national maximum.

John: The interest must be out there though, because values of the Mayflower have started to rise at last. Hopefully this means there will be a few more returned to the road in future. A project car is now worth a few hundred pounds. Cars in the same sort of condition as ours should fetch between £3500-£4500. You'd certainly want £4500 for a good one, and need to pay at least £3000 for one you could drive away. The valuations in the magazine guides have gone up to reflect this, though perhaps still not quite enough as £4250 is the top figure quoted there. One of the nicest I know of belongs to our man in California who does the club's website. He has stripped his car completely and restored it in immaculate detail.

Chad: There are a lot of very knowledgeable people like him in the club, but unfortunately I am one of those people who, if the ashtrays are empty and the carpets look good, thinks it is a good car! Some people are a lot more technical than I am and their cars are in superb condition. I just love my car and enjoy driving it.



Chad Brown bought rashly, and has spent generously to save his Mayflower.



John Castle bought his Mayflower in better condition and has only had minor fettling to do.

John: They are not the most sporting of Triumphs, of course. I rarely push mine much above 50mph.

Chad: Well, their top speed when new was only 65mph. Having said that, on this year's Drive-It-Day I did 263 miles in the one day. I was doing 60mph on the main roads, and that felt fast. But the progress of car design has been relentless over the years. I also have a 1935 Austin Ten, and when I get into the Mayflower after driving the Austin, it feels positively luxurious and powerful. But then again, I was never a speed merchant.

John: I used to be fast driver, but I've slowed down a lot as I've got older. The big wheel and heavy steering don't encourage you to press on, even if the engine had the power to do so. And there are only three forward speeds, selected via a column change that works well.



A village post office, a wisteria-clad cottage - this is the Mayflower in its natural habitat!

Chad: I agree that there is a nice feel to the change, but the thing about the Mayflower is that you are very soon into top gear, and once you are there she will pick up from about 15mph so you don't need to change too often. It almost feels like driving an automatic.

John: You do have to think ahead as far as braking goes, though. They are not brilliant, and with no servo you have to remember that they need a good shove.

Chad: But she'll run perfectly happily at 50mph.

John: And it will do 30-35mpg, despite being a very solidly built car. It is very upright though, so it does roll a bit through the corners rather like a boat.

Chad: Talking of boats, the story has always been that the Mayflower name was chosen to appeal to the American public, but I read recently in Nick Black's book that his mother named it after the flower. But I call my car Little Nell, the main character in Dicken's *Old Curiosity Shop* because the American public said: '*Little Nell must not diet*' and I've spent so much money on making sure this one survives. As John will tell you though, it was also called various other things at certain stages of the restoration.

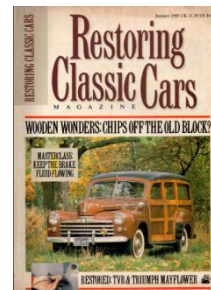
That's all in the past now though, and I love the car partly for what it is and partly because it has such strong nostalgic links for me. Not everyone has the same memories from way back however, and for anyone who does not have the same historic connection but who likes Mayflowers, I think its biggest appeal must be that it is so totally different to anything else on the road.

John: When you think about it, they were quite expensive when new and the Mayflower has always been rather exclusive. With all that chrome on the front they do catch the eye, but they were an acquired taste back then, and I suppose that they are still the same on the classic scene today.

Pilgrim's Progress

Restoring Classic, Cars January 1989

The Triumph Mayflower, once a popular 1950s saloon, is now largely ignored by the classic-car fraternity. Most would-be owners are deterred by a body style uncharacteristically angular for its time, but father and son Harry and Ian Hodkinson were so taken by its lines that they acquired and rebuilt first one and then another. The task wasn't without problems, but the lessons learned on the first car made the second a lot easier. Zoe Harrison reports.



When Ian Hodkinson's Triumph Mayflower was unloaded outside his Lancaster home, he began to realise the size of the job he had taken on. 'As we winched it off the trailer,' he recalls, 'you could see sunlight shining through the rusted holes in the car's floor!' The car was first registered in the Bradford area on 1 May 1953, but had not been run since 1972 when Ian bought it. 'It even had the name and address of the original garage in Bradford who had supplied it stuck onto the dashboard,' Ian comments, 'but I discovered that the car's first owner had recently come up to live nearby in Morecambe.'

He originally liked Mayflowers because of their rather stately appearance, their flat panelled lines and their hard corners which caused them to be known as the 'razor-edged' Triumphs. They were relatively short-lived as a marque, being in production only from 1949 until 1953; the last of the Triumph side valve-engined cars. 'They look a bit like a miniature Bentley,' Ian remarks. In fact, the family so liked Ian's acquisition that when his father, Harry, retired, he too bought a Triumph Mayflower, also black and in need of restoration, and - surprisingly enough - it too had been a non-runner since 1972. To push the coincidence still further, Harry's car was likewise registered on 1 May 1953, although in his case somewhere in Bristol.

Now the matched pair of cars sit black and gleaming on Ian's driveway - a tribute to father's and son's hard work. The two Mayflowers are both shown and a regular sight out on the roads round the Lancaster area where the Hodkinsons live. To get Ian's car to its present position, however, took 18 months' labour. 'The body of the car itself wasn't too bad on the whole,' he recalls, 'and it needed repairing rather than any new panels, but the footwells and sills were pretty horrendous.' Part of the problem with the sills on the Mayflower was that the jacking points were open to the road and had become full of muck which had eventually rusted them through. Both the footwells, too, were severely rotten and required new steel box-sections making up and welding in. This Ian did himself using a MIG welder. He also made up the new sills, and cut out and replaced the bottoms of the doors.

Another section which had rusted was that round the edges of the headlamps. In repairing this area Ian took out the original headlamps, fitting instead new sealed-beam units. 'The car is used on an everyday basis,' he used on an everyday basis,' he remarks. 'In fact, my wife uses it for shopping and running the children about, so I



Following advice in manual, Hodgkinsons used apertures in body shell to skewer it and rotate it for easy access to underside. Wings cleaned up, every trace of rust carefully cut away

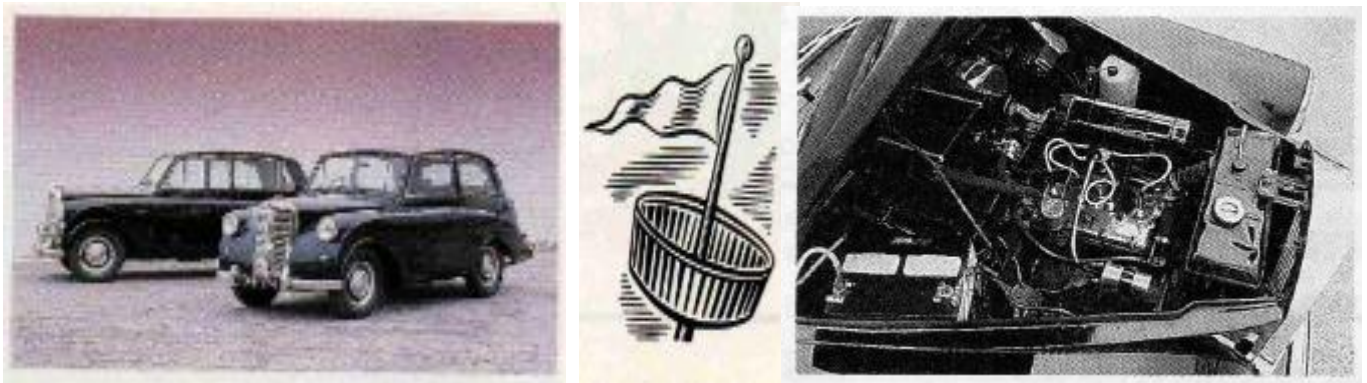


Roof prepared on rotated car (above left). Parts methodically wire-brushed by Hodgkinson Senior (left). Leather seats refurbished (right); engine in a truly deplorable state

wanted to put some better lights in.' For authenticity he did, however, retain the old-fashioned semaphore indicators.

Overall there is little filler in Ian's car. The bodywork was reasonably level and therefore he only really used it round the new welded-in sections. Under the surface, apart from the footwells and sills, only the inner rear wings needed replacing. 'There's a beaded edge between the inner and outer wings which is hollow and traps water,' Ian recalls, 'but we discovered that MGB rear wings can be made to fit - and they're slightly easier to get hold of than proper Mayflower ones!'

Despite the fact that Ian had never had anything to do with side valve engines before, he found the unit very straightforward to work on. He stripped it right down, adding new standard size pistons and new bearings. 'We got these bits for the engine from the Triumph Mayflower Club, who proved a very useful source of otherwise elusive parts for the car. Although I made up all the gaskets we needed for the engine out of Klingerite,' he comments, 'they are exactly the same as those on a Standard Flying Nine.' In fact, the car managed to blow the head gasket and Ian was forced to remove all the studs and rub the block down smooth again using a piece of glass and wet-and-dry sandpaper. 'The only other problem we had was due to ignorance of the correct shape of the gearbox-oil dipstick.'



When Ian bought the car, the dipstick had a rather strange bend in it which he assumed was the shape it should be. Thus the gearbox itself only received a thorough inspection and cleaning. 'Unfortunately, this bend was a bit of a mistake and the dipstick became so weak at that point that it snapped and the pieces jammed the teeth in the gearbox.' To avoid totally dismantling the gearbox, Ian and Harry drained the oil and pulled the bigger pieces out by fishing with a magnet. They then flushed out any remaining bits with petrol and have had no more problems with it since then.

The suspension proved fairly straightforward to overhaul. With the front end being the same as a TR2's, they managed to get any necessary bits from TR Specialists in London. To cope with everyday running, the old rubber bushes were replaced with some beefier nylon ones and the rear suspension cleaned up. 'We've never really done any work on the steering, just stripped and cleaned it,' Ian comments. Something which did cause a few problems was the ball-joint gaiters. 'They were bigger than usual and difficult to get hold of, so we ended up improvising and using squash balls with holes in them instead!'

EK Brakes in Lancaster provided new brake cylinders, which are the same as those used on a Morris 1000, and a local garage man, Peter Hunter, made up the brake pipes. 'The braking is by a Lockheed hydraulic system and very effective,' Ian remarks.

Inside the car, all the leather trim on the seats was revitalised using a re-Connolising kit from Woolies in Market Deeping, near Peterborough, and the headlining was scrubbed clean. 'The door panels and the trim over the rear wheel arches were re-covered with leathercloth which we got as old stock from Nairns in Lancaster before it closed down,' Ian recalls. 'It was very similar to the original material.' The car's interior was otherwise relatively complete, with Ian only needing to mend the temperature gauge. 'It was one of the old direct-reading type, which was filled with ether,' he adds. 'I took it to work and managed to refill it there using an electric kettle to heat the ether up enough to get it into the reservoir at the end of the pipe. I think the boss was quite glad when I'd finished that one!'

Ian's car was finally finished in 1982 and, not long after, Harry acquired his Mayflower. 'It came up through a rally we went on with Ian's car,' Harry remembers. 'A chap came up to us and said he had one exactly like it for sale. Well, we eventually bought it and we were off again!'

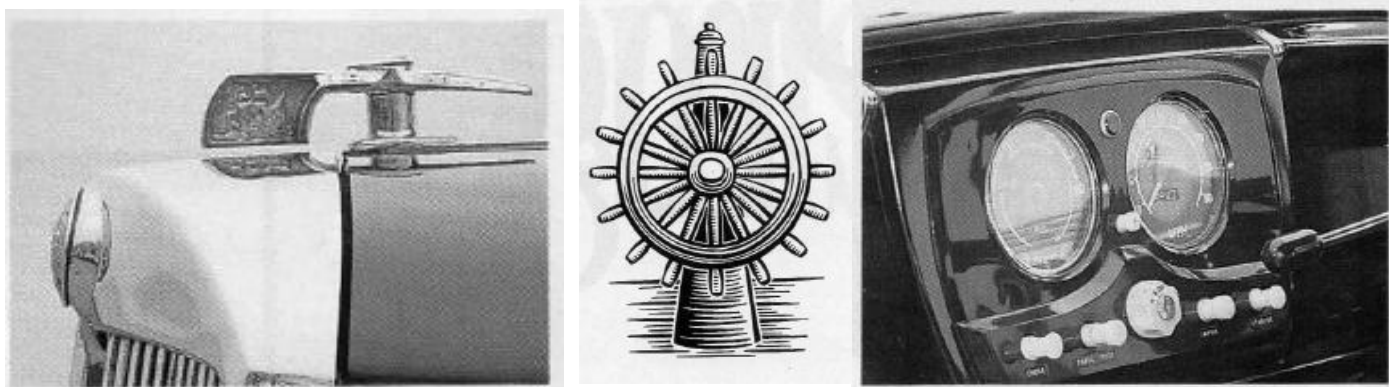
All work on the Hodkinsons' cars is carried out in a nearby barn which has none of the home comforts like light or heating, making work at night or during the winter difficult. Nevertheless, Harry's car was completed in

just six months, compared with the 18 for Ian's. 'This one wasn't really in any better condition,' Harry comments. 'In fact, the engine was in a terrible state. A conrod had come through the block and a piston had disintegrated, hence the fact that it hadn't been run for over ten years.' The engine had to be rebuilt, but during this period they managed to find a complete replacement 1200CC side valve engine and gearbox through a private sale in Stockport. 'We went to collect it in a Fiesta and managed to fit it all in the back, I think the Fiesta's front wheels were very nearly off the ground for most of the way home!'

Inside, Harry's car was again almost intact, although one of the seats needed a new spring and they discovered a replacement for a missing door-pull in a scrap yard on a Wolseley 1500. The car even came complete with its original radio, which Ian has had problems finding for his vehicle, and to date has not yet found one. Father and son also made their own carpets for the second Mayflower, which they now consider to be better than those they bought ready-made for the first. The trim was otherwise treated in exactly the same way as Ian's car.

The main reason why Harry's Mayflower was refurbished so quickly was the Hodkinsons' discovery of the bodywork supplement of an original workshop manual. In this it stated that there were two metal plates - one in the forward wall of the boot and one in the rear of the engine bay. These plates, when unscrewed, revealed holes through which a long steel box-section could be inserted once the engine had been removed. 'The car is only light and it was then fairly easy to lift it, one end at a time, up onto trestles,' Ian explains. 'With the Mayflower being the same height as it is wide, and the box-section running roughly down the centre of the car, it was possible to rotate it round on the trestle as though it was on an enormous spit.'

Apparently, this method was used by the factory for ease of assembly. In the Hodkinsons' case it made restoration work on the underside of the car both far quicker and also far less uncomfortable. 'When I was doing mine,' Ian recalls, 'I had to lie on my back for hours under the car wire-brushing the chassis. A lot of rust and dirt fell into my ears which became infected, and for a while I ended up with vertigo!' Being able to revolve Harry's car meant that the underneath could become a vertical surface - which was much more convenient, not to mention less painful. The main sections needing attention on the car were over the rear wheel arches and the chassis members, which were again tackled with a MIG welder.



'When we tilted the car over we rested the sides on big cushions to stop the bodywork from getting damaged,' Harry comments, 'and although it made things less difficult, I must admit there were still times when I got very fed up with rubbing down all the paintwork.' Once the bodywork was rubbed flat the car was sprayed using two-pack paint, unlike Ian's which was painted with cellulose. External trim, such as the brightwork, was cleaned up and re-chromed in Bolton by Stainless Electro-Plating, who also worked on Ian's car. 'Although we had the cars painted by someone else,' Ian remarks, 'when we got them back we decided to respray the engine compartments ourselves and make them smarter under the bonnet.' A section in the compartment on Harry's car had been eaten through by battery acid so this was duly repaired.

As for obtaining parts for the Mayflowers, the Hodkinsons have found that the owners' club is probably the best place. Items such as contact breaker points are otherwise very difficult to get hold of, and the Club is now remanufacturing door seals and stainless- steel exhaust systems. 'We used the original seals on our cars,' Harry recalls, 'and Ian went round the scrapyards for an exhaust from another car that could be adapted to fit.' Tyres were also something of a problem and, in fact, modern-style radials were all that could be found to suit.

Now completed, both the Hodkinsons' Mayflowers are certainly regularly used. 'We used to take them to shows all over the country, but we tend to stay closer to home nowadays,' comments Harry, Ian, however, has taken his car over to Europe for a rally in Holland. 'We did about 600 miles non-stop and it never missed a beat.' The pair are also members of the Lakeland Historic Car Club, and are usually to be seen out on the various runs

held over the summer months. 'We've had very few problems with the cars on the whole,' Harry remarks. 'They do have their little quirks, though - for example, it is far easier to adjust the tappets if you take the engine out first!'

And what of their next project? Another Triumph - an 1800 this time - or they also have an Austin Seven in need of restoration. Unfortunately, they won't be able to revolve these two, but I'm sure they will make just as good a job of them anyway . . .



Triumph Mayflower Driven

Practical Classics, April 2007

It's easy to let prejudice cloud your judgement but a whole new world of classic motoring could be yours by setting sail in a Mayflower...



THERE'S THAT OLD adage that goes along the lines of not judging a book by its cover but I'm afraid I'd already fallen into that trap long before I drove Adrian Williams' 1953 Triumph Mayflower. You see, up to that point, I hadn't really got beyond the angular, over-exaggerated styling that makes the Mayflower look like something that's broken free from a children's merry-go-round. I'd always parked this car in my mental garage somewhere between the comedy of the Rytcraft Scootercar and the 'distinctive styling' of the Nash Metropolitan. It's the sensible saloon that Noddy might aspire to when he grows up and trades in that fancy yellow Fiat Gamine of his. Fie on me, I know.



However, when you get up close and personal with the Mayflower, it doesn't look dumpy or as big as you imagined it to be, yet strangely it seems really big on the inside. I'm more than six feet tall but the interior doesn't feel cramped, ingress and egress is smooth and requires no third-party intervention, there's plenty of leg and head room, and the visibility is impressive. This is a family car, there being enough room on the back seat for two or maybe three family members without their pelvises becoming inextricably wedged between the wheel arches. With sufficient ardour and acrobatics, you might conceivably start a family there, too.

Driving couldn't be much easier. The only thing that requires a little concentration is the column gearchange that stirs up the three-speed gearbox. Despite learning the gate, it wasn't long before I forgot what I was doing and first gear said hello to reverse while on the move, with the attendant wails of anguish and abject apologies to both Adrian and the cogs. Once moving you really only need top gear, terrain and other road-users permitting.

Mayflowers would have made good driving instructors' cars. But as far as everyday use is concerned, it's worth noting that seat belts aren't easy to fit in the front, and the heater was an optional extra, which is why there's only a blanking plate on Adrian's car. Where's the hardship in wearing thermal long-johns under your little black dress to the winter ball, anyway?

The car's performance reflects its status as a small Fifties' family saloon and is therefore adequate. It wouldn't be your first choice of getaway car.

The 1277cc engine is pretty lusty but the aforementioned gearbox doesn't quite provide it with much of a mechanical advantage over the rear wheels; the ratios are

SPECIFICATIONS	
■ ENGINE	1277cc/4-cyl/SV
■ POWER	38bhp@4000rpm
■ TORQUE	59lb ft@2200rpm
■ GEARBOX	3-spd man
■ TOP SPEED	65mph
■ 0-60	23sec
■ MPG	35mpg
■ LENGTH	12ft 10in (3.91m)
■ WIDTH	5ft 2in (1.57m)
■ WEIGH	2149lb (975kg)

well spaced but there's just not enough of them if you're inclined to drive up hills all day.

That said, the torque of the engine is such that it's happy to keep slogging on - if you listen hard enough, you can hear it saying 'I can and I will...' The independent front suspension allows the car to cling to the tarmac at slightly elevated velocities but be prepared to get more intimate with fellow occupants as the body roll is quite something.

Everything inside the car is soused in Forties/Fifties' charm and quality, from the optional leather seats and carpets (most were fitted with Vynide seats and rubber mats), to the pistol-grip handbrake and the trafficator lever on the Bakelite steering wheel boss. The trafficators are great, but it's worth augmenting their operation with some arm-waving - modern motorists won't know what you're signalling but at least they'll take notice of you.

I'm starting to be impressed with this car, which is more than can be said for the Americans. Standard-Triumph, like all car companies in post-war Britain, desperately needed to sell to foreigners, and this new design was tailored to the export market. It had been noted that the largest group of buyers, the Americans, loved quality cars like Rolls-Royces with razor-edge, coach-built bodywork, so Mulliners of Birmingham was told to design a 10hp Rolls-Royce.

When you look at the Mayflower in this light, it makes sense. You can see those styling cues, albeit without the scale or proportion. This is how it earned its nickname 'the watch charm Rolls'.

The Mayflower was launched (a pun also used at the time) at the 1949 Earls Court Motor Exhibition, where one lady was overheard to exclaim: 'Oh, how perfectly bloody.' It was put on sale in 1950 and production ceased in 1953 after 34,000 had been built. As it transpired, the little Triumph wasn't the Americans' cup of tea - more were exported to Ceylon than the US. It's been suggested that even the Brits weren't too enamoured but we were so desperate to get our hands on any motorised vehicle that we'd even pay good money for a pram with a lawnmower engine strapped thereto.

But this is cruel. The Mayflower is still a solid, practical classic. Fisher and Ludlow of Birmingham built the unitary constructed body out of some stern stuff and rust isn't a huge problem, although you're advised to inspect the usual places with care. And the looks are beginning to grow on me - the view out across that bonnet is jolly splendid, too.

There's nothing mechanically baffling, and most of the greasy and electrical bits came from other parts bins of the era, so availability is good. The Standard Flying 10-derived power-plant is simple and rugged, as is the gearbox, but the alloy head can grow so attached to the studs that you'll need to borrow a lifting tool from the Triumph Mayflower Club (TMC) to separate the two. Speaking of which, you'd be hard pressed to find a more welcoming and cheery bunch of folk than in the TMC (www.triumphmayflowerclub.com).

There you have it. The Mayflower is unlikely to snap knicker elastic at even ten paces, but who cares - it makes up for it by being characterful, fun, reliable and cheap to own. I've come to really like the Mayflower and I'd be happy and proud to own one.



Buying a Razor Edge Triumph

Practical Classics, August 1983

Geoff Le Provost looks at two similarly styled but widely differing cars.



Old fashioned even when they were new, the Triumph razor edge saloons were not a great post-war sales success. The 1800/2000/Renown coach-built saloons were expensive and the all-steel Mayflowers, aimed squarely at the American market, just were not what the customer wanted. It has taken more than 30 years for that tide of opinion to change for the bigger car while the Mayflower remains largely neglected and inexpensive. The Renown family have an air of pre-war, rather upper crust, quality and grace, emphasised by the swan-necked curves in those classic wings and the perpendicular style of the ash-framed body—altogether too well built for its own good, as the profit margins on these cars must have been tiny! The Mayflower on the other hand is something of an anachronism, owing little to anything else of its period. It was 'mini-limo' designed totally without the benefit of market research and which sold on home markets simply because in the '50s, you could sell any car, no matter how odd it looked. In the export market it was a disaster.

In its favour, the pressed steel unitary bodied Mayflower was very well put together around a deep and rigid box section frame.

While the Renown has a satisfying, deep engine note, the Mayflower is characterised by its quiet but high-pitched sewing machine chatter — if it doesn't sound like a sewing machine, there is something wrong with it!

Like them or loathe them, you have to admit that the cars have a striking individuality and it is probably this which is finally winning them new friends. With both cars, you can see what you are getting — the rot on display is the rot that there is, there are few 'hidden' areas to check other than routine suspension, steering and jacking points.



Triumph's two razor edge saloons of the late '40s and early '50s, the Mayflower (left) and the Renown.

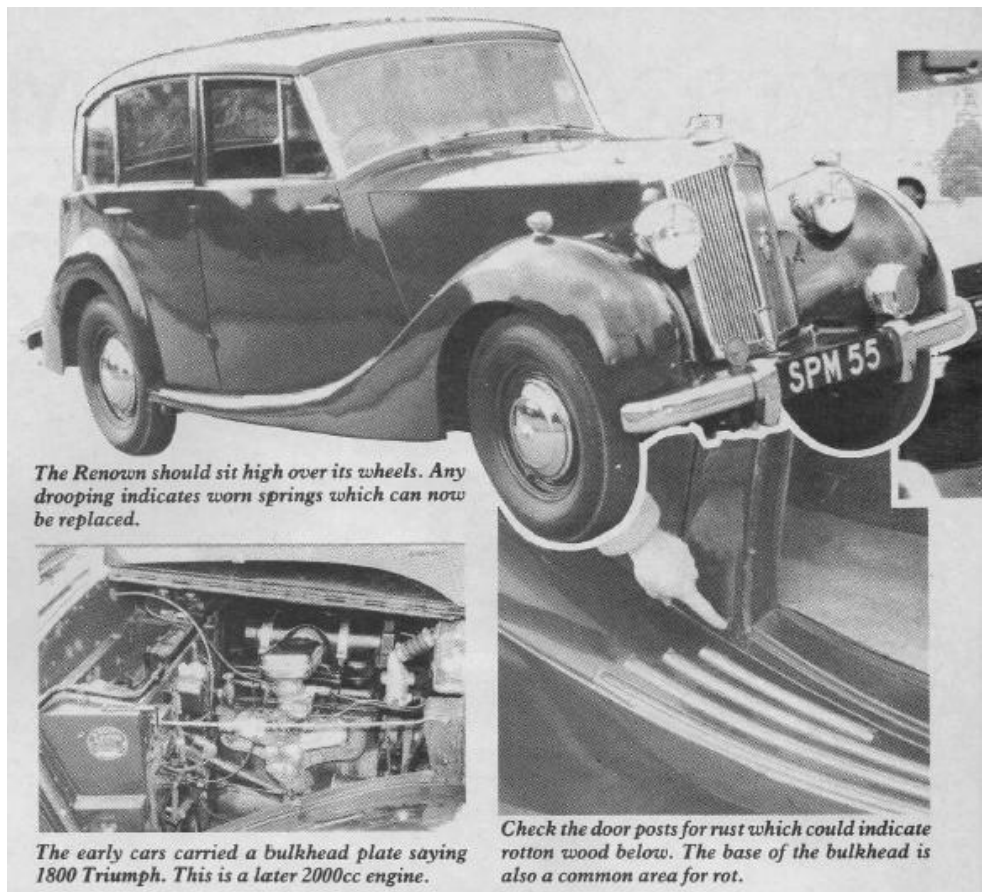
Although almost the same height, the Mayflower was considerably shorter than the Renown, giving it a rather boxy look.



The Triumph Renown

The two cars featured here belong to enthusiast Malcolm Bath, an active member of the two clubs which cater for these models. The day after these pictures were taken, he was using the Renown as transport to his wedding. It is that sort of car.

Triumph went bankrupt before the war. At the end of hostilities, the Standard Motor Company bought the Triumph name — and that was about all they got for their money. It was decided that post-war Triumphs would continue to have their own distinctive body styles, but that they would have to use Standard mechanical parts. The first such Triumph saloon was the razor edge 1800, introduced in 1946.



The Renown should sit high over its wheels. Any drooping indicates worn springs which can now be replaced.

The early cars carried a bulkhead plate saying 1800 Triumph. This is a later 2000cc engine.

Check the door posts for rust which could indicate rotten wood below. The base of the bulkhead is also a common area for rot.

The car used an existing Standard 1776cc engine in a tubular steel chassis — sheet steel for chassis work just was not available — and the body was made by Mulliners of Birmingham. That tubular chassis was fairly durable, but spares for the Standard engine (also used by the 1½ litre Jaguar) are now quite rare.

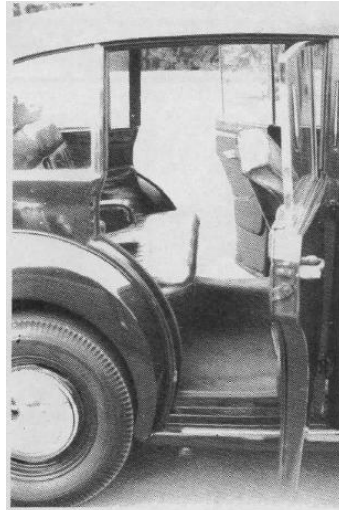
In 1949, the car received the Standard Vanguard engine to become the Triumph 2000 and later that year, sporting the Vanguard's pressed steel chassis, the car finally became the Triumph 2-litre Renown and it is these 2-litre cars which are the ones to look for today because so many parts were common to the Vanguard which was produced in far greater numbers and far more recently than any 1800 engine car.

The car the enthusiasts look for is the Renown with mechanical overdrive — it is less troublesome than the electrically operated unit. The spares situation is such that owner Malcolm was able to buy a new gearbox - still in its box - for only £15.

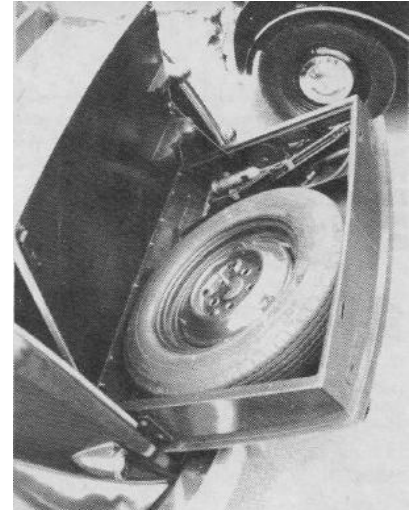
The Triumph Razor Edge Owners Club, which caters for the 1800, 2000 and Renown, is producing steering



The traditional mixture of wood and leather.



The roomy and comfortable back of the Renown make it ideal for use as a wedding car.



The spare wheel and toolkit nestle inside the bootlid of the Renown.

idler joints – a mechanical weak spot - and has just had a batch of springs made to help the cars sit up straight.

Body panels, of course, you can forget. Doors, boot and bonnet panels were alloy on some cars and steel on others. The parts that rust first, the wings and those running boards, were made of steel. The panels clad an ash frame which is quite often in powder form -repairing such an advanced state of wood rot is not a job for the faint hearted. Malcolm has replaced the wood on one side of his car and recommends having a first class woodworker close at hand to cope with intricate curves.

Signs of rust around the door shuts are fairly reliable indications that the wood beneath them is rotting as well. Rust on the wings is less serious than on a unitary car - there is no concealed structure to worry about.

The interior of the car is high quality rather than high luxury with upholstery wear surfaces in leather and with the dashboard and door cappings in wood. It always pays to find a car with a good interior. Restoring a poor example will almost certainly cost more than the car is worth.

The old-fashioned 'feel' of the car is accentuated by the high ride position and the large steering wheel. The gears are selected by a column shift and there is an umbrella handbrake under the far right hand side of the dashboard.

Progress in the Renown can only be described as stately. Performance is acceptable while not startling and the car should be comfortable for the longest of journeys.

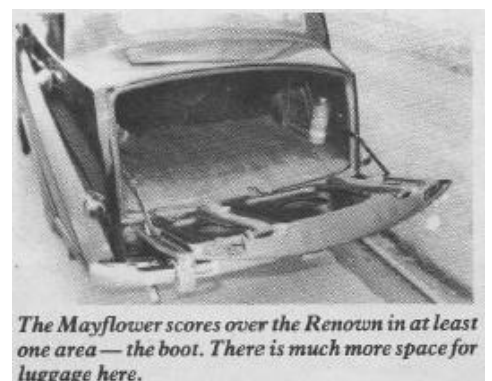
What to pay

The very best Renown might just reach the £3,000 mark but there are some quite acceptable cars for a lot less. £1,000 should buy a usable specimen needing little work and a runner can be had for £500-£600. Anything less than that will need a lot of time, energy and cash. Go for the best you can afford.

The Triumph Mayflower



The slab sides of the Mayflower are broken by the deep swage lines which flow back from the wings.



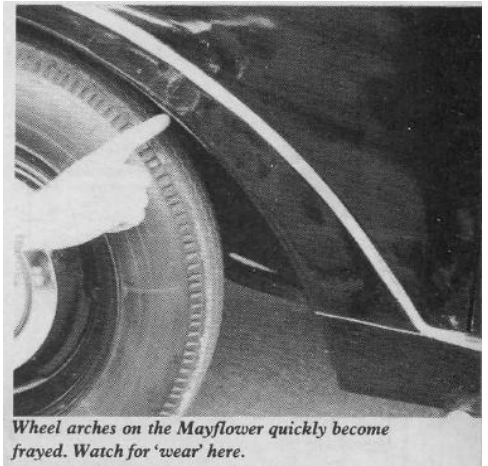
The Mayflower scores over the Renown in at least one area — the boot. There is much more space for luggage here.



Mayflowers sometimes had leather seats, but the interior is spartan compared to the Renown.

What to pay
 The Mayflower sits squarely at the bottom of the classic valuation list and you should get good value for money from a sound example. The best Mayflower around will probably sell for £800-£900 if a buyer can be found while a runner will be found quite often in the £100-£200 range. A lesser car, at the moment anyway, is really only suitable for spares.

The makers of the Mayflower were stunned to learn that the Americans, for whom they designed the car, could find little use for the underpowered and rather strange looking Triumph while in car-hungry Britain sales matched production simply because there was nothing else.



Wheel arches on the Mayflower quickly become frayed. Watch for 'wear' here.

Mulliners' design team had a hand in the Mayflower, but the company could not cope with quantity production of the pressed steel shells which were built by Fisher and Ludlow. The fairly robust structure attracts rust in the usual places: wheel arches, sills and wing seams. As with the Renown, the steering can be a weak point and spares are rare. Check for wear in the steering box and the idler arms.

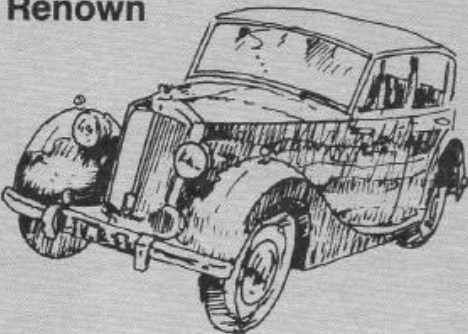
The side valve 1247cc engine was fitted with an aluminium cylinder head and this is its weak spot. The heads suffer from corrosion and replacements are unobtainable which means a costly repair job on the damaged head.

New body panels do not exist but hub caps, bumpers and over-riders do turn up now and then, says Malcolm Bath. The suspension is much the same as the Triumph TR2 and replacement back axles and gearboxes reputedly never wear out and the 5.90 x 15 tyres are readily available.

The interior of the Mayflower is far less opulent than that of the bigger car, lacking the wood trim for instance, although some cars were available with leather upholstery as an option. At 60 mph the Mayflower is getting breathless and long journeys would probably be a trial. It could make an ideal classic shopping car though.

The Mayflower appeared in only one version in its production life between 1949 and 1953 although Mulliners did convert about 10 into dropheads in 1950. You are unlikely to come across one of these.

**Triumph 1800/2000/
Renown**



1800 saloon. Engine: 1776cc. Bore 73mm, stroke 106mm, compression ratio 6.7:1, 63 bhp at 4,500 rpm.

Suspension: Independent front suspension using transverse leaf spring and upper wishbones. Live rear axle with half elliptic leaf springs and anti-roll bar.

2000 saloon. As 1800 except

Engine: 2088cc, bore 85mm, stroke 92 mm, 68 bhp at 4,200 rpm.

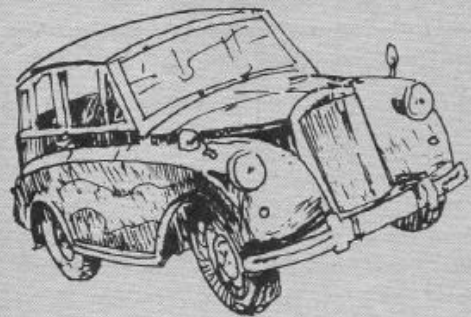
Renown. As 2000 except:

Suspension: Front, IFS by coil springs and wishbones, anti-roll bar.

Renown Limousine: As Renown except: long wheelbase chassis and central partition.

Performance: 20-22 mpg, max speed 88mph.

Triumph Mayflower



Engine: Four cylinder sidevalve 1247cc, bore 63mm, stroke 100mm, compression ratio 6.7:1, 38 bhp at 4,200 rpm.

Suspension: Independent front suspension by coil and wishbones. Live rear axle with half elliptic leaf springs.

Performance: 25-30 mpg. Max speed 70mph.

The Triumph Mayflower

The Motor, December 6th 1950

A Small Car of Refinement

APPEARANCES are a true guide to the qualities of the Triumph Mayflower, the model with which the Standard Motor Company have re-entered the small car field. If you think, as some people do think, that its angular lines and rather cubical proportions represent regression, then you will not greatly like it as a car to drive or ride in. If, on the other hand, you think as very many other people think that the design, with its bold rejection of any pretence at streamlining, represents a welcome return to common sense, then you will find that the car reveals on the road just those virtues which its appearances promise.



To be more explicit, the Mayflower does not claim to have unsurpassed acceleration through the gears, to corner like a racing car, or to attain high maximum speeds. What it does offer is roominess, comfortable riding, ample and exceedingly smooth top gear performance within the limits of a maximum speed rather above a mile a minute, and sensible economy of fuel. It seems safe to predict that a great many motorists, both inside and outside Britain, will find the Mayflower extremely well suited to their tastes and needs.

Come out of doors, in your imagination, to where the Triumph Mayflower stands waiting to be driven. It is not a car which takes up a great deal of space in a garage or car park, with its 13ft. overall length and 62in. overall width, but its razor-edge coachwork is obviously capacious. It may not have been washed down since it was driven over muddy roads last night, but it still looks quite smart, thanks to mudguarding which is genuinely effective: those flat body sides may be vulnerable to scratches if your neighbour in a car park flings his door open, but they are also very easy to keep clean with the minimum of labour.

Open the doors: there are only two of them, but they are front-hinged so that they cannot fly open while the car is moving fast. Getting into the front seats is really easy, thanks to the flatness of the floor and the width of the doors: getting into the back is as easy as can be expected, too, helped by the fact that the whole of each front seat moves forward as the back is tilted forwards. Sitting in the back, you cannot reach a door handle, but that can be a good thing when young children are being carried.

Try the seats, and you will find them pleasantly comfortable and roomy. The individual front seats are not shaped to hold you steady during fast cornering, but, on the other hand, they can be set together to form a bench on to which it is not impossible to crowd three people. The back rests are perhaps a little low, but with the fixed arm-rests (shaped

INDEPENDENT LINE
—Razor-edge styling, as favoured on other recent Triumph saloon models, is applied to full width two-door bodywork on the Mayflower, giving roominess and large window areas.



as pull handles, to facilitate giving the doors the firm slam they require) you can comfortably spend the whole day in these seats. Passengers riding behind you have no cause for complaint, either: they sit in a fairly upright position, but are not stinted of knee, foot or head room.

Now, start up the engine in readiness for your drive in the car: the half-way setting of the rich mixture control will give a prompt start from cold unless the weather is really bitter, and will give a fast idling speed whilst you reverse out on to the road. It might, perhaps, have been handier to have the starter and rich mixture controls alongside one another, rather than widely spaced apart, but when it gets dark you'll appreciate that those white control knobs are so positioned as to be just conveniently shown up by the discreet glow of the instrument lighting.

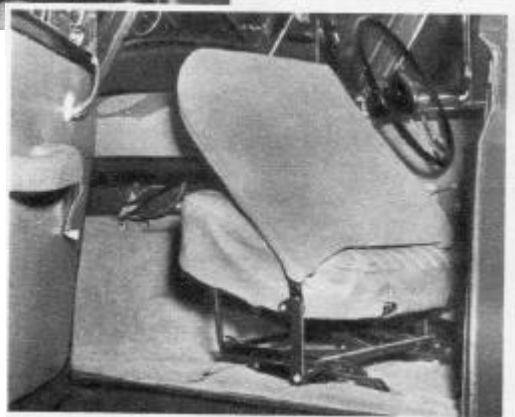


Drive away, and before a mile has been covered you will have finished with the rich mixture control. You may think the engine has stopped when you are held up at a traffic block, but it hasn't; it merely happens to be one of those all-too-rare units which is really inconspicuous when it is idling.

Don't try to hustle your getaway: let in the clutch at quite a low engine speed and you will go smoothly and quietly away, being ready almost immediately to use the steering-column gear lever for a change up into second. You could quite comfortably have started in that gear had you been lazy, although the instruction book frowns on the idea. Probably 20 m.p.h. will suffice for you before you decide to change up into top - and there you will stay.

Restrain your urge to change down when traffic checks your pace: certainly this is a small car, but nevertheless it is perfectly happy down to below 10 m.p.h.

in top gear or to practically zero speed in the middle ratio. If you want either of the lower gears for hill climbing or for extra acceleration, good synchromesh mechanism gives the simplest of silent engagements, but you will soon learn that right-angle turns are easily negotiable in top, whereas second gear gets fussy above 25 m.p.h. and gives little extra urge above 30 m.p.h.



INTERIOR—Instruments are centrally grouped on a fascia panel which is flanked by parcel shelves, and the individual front seats move forward and up, as shown in the right-hand view, to facilitate entry to the back of the two-door body.

Gentle and smooth as the engine is, you are not likely to find it lacking in power to keep you in or ahead of the traffic stream on an arterial road. Certainly 40-45 m.p.h. is the smoothest pace, but provided you keep the ventilator panels closed you won't be unduly bothered by wind noise at higher speeds. There can be a trace of drumming audible as you go up the speed range, but 55 or even 60 m.p.h. can be held quite comfortably if need arises.

Tyre pressures were checked before we came out, of course, because no small car can be expected to handle well at speed if they are incorrect. Choosing roominess in preference to streamlined coach work, you will notice whether there is a head, tail, or side wind blowing, but the very light steering will keep you 100 per cent, in control of any situation. You have not chosen this car with a view to phenomenally fast cornering, but by using the nice steering to place it intelligently you will get along very well on winding roads: there is a modest amount of roll but very little tyre howl, and if an unexpectedly sharp corner does take you by surprise, an extra quarter turn of the wheel will get you round all right.

Soft springs with a lot of damping is the suspension recipe on this little car, so that when you drop over the brow of a hump-back bridge it stays firmly down without any bouncing. The riding is at its most level if you have only the front seats occupied, but both you and your rear seat passengers will travel very comfortably if you use just a little restraint about rushing over rough roads - don't be afraid to leave the metalled road, because tracks broken into potholes inches deep in water won't bother you at 25 m.p.h., but don't expect quite the ability to tackle any surface at any speed which (provided you forget about the cost of tyres) some modern large cars reveal.

In hilly country you will appreciate the engine's willingness to pull smoothly even down to low speeds, which will save you many a gear change. There are, of course, limits to the pulling power of even the most helpful 10 h.p. engine, but bottom gear is a ratio low enough to re-start you on a very steep hill indeed and to take you slowly but surely to the summit: also, if you do need bottom gear on a holiday in Devon, you will be pleased to find that it has synchro-mesh mechanism to help you engage it.

Down the other side of the hill, after you have enjoyed the view from the summit through the big windows of the Mayflower, you will find the brakes unusual in feel, but very effective. There does not seem to be any appreciable movement of the pedal in response to your reasonably firm pressure on it, but the retardation is nevertheless both powerful and progressive in action.

By this time, you will probably have appreciated the heating system which is an optional extra on this model, a system in which either the car's speed or a not too-audible electric fan pushes air through a ventilator below the windscreen and then past a radiator and into the car. The rain-trapping arrangements seem proof against anything but the most exceptional of sustained deluges, and even if you are not yet a convert to central heating as an aid to motoring comfort, you will appreciate having a safely clear windscreen despite weather which invites misting-up.

For warmer weather, you have hinged ventilation panels on the rear windows as well as the front ones to help keep the atmosphere inside the car fresh. At this time of year, you will find that they can be opened without rain coming in, but be careful how you use the rear ones because they can direct cold air on to the driver's back as well as doing a useful job of extraction.

Darkness? The headlamps, which are mounted at a sensible height, are pleasantly powerful, but for this unhurried style of car it would perhaps be worthwhile to have the lenses modified to give less length of beam and a rather wider spread of light. Instrument lighting is of just the right brilliance, and further movement of the push-pull facia switch controlling it brings a good interior light into operation. The instruments, incidentally, are arranged for the simplest of understanding, oil pressure and coolant temperature gauges being set alongside one another and arranged so that a drop of either needle from its horizontal position is a warning signal, either for inadequate oil pressure or excessive water temperature.

Has the car shown itself to have the sort of virtues which matter to you? Let's take a final look around before we must leave it. Top up the fuel tank, and it will probably be found that the fuel consumption has been rather better than 30 m.p.g. Open the rear locker, and you will find a really generous amount of luggage space, unobstructed by the spare wheel which is mounted below the tail of the car. Undo the tool-roll even, and apart from, the easy-to-use jack and the emergency starting handle which are housed under the bonnet, you will find a better-than-average kit.

The car for everyone? There is no such thing, and the Mayflower does not attempt to cater for every taste. A modest sized car of unusual refinement? The Mayflower is just that, and as such should make a great many friends.



TAILPIECE.—Generous luggage capacity may be extended by leaving the locker lid open, separate spare wheel stowage being provided on a shelf hinged to let the wheel be withdrawn from below the bumper.

A Modified Mayflower

The Motor, December 6th 1950

The Technical Editor describes some worthwhile additions to one of Britain's Newest Small Cars



WITH some 25,000 miles on the odometer of my Morris Minor I stand on the threshold of exchanging it for a Triumph Mayflower. Of intention, the Morris has been driven as a 98 per cent, standard motor car as delivered from the works, but it is an interesting intellectual exercise to envisage in what way one would set about developing a volume production car given a free hand. As dispatched from the works, the Mayflower is exceptionally well-equipped, a heater, clock and interior light for the luggage boot being available, but these by no means exhaust the equipment which it would well be worth while carrying.

Dealing first with items of embellishment or those promoting individual comfort, I would make an external change by adding the well-known Ace rimblishers to the wheels and would follow up the classic knife-edge motif of the whole design by having it lined out in some agreeable contrasting colour.

Taking now the interior of the body, I would cover the facia panel, window cappings, etc., with wood veneer attached to canvas which can be stuck on to other surfaces if I could obtain it from France, or alternatively with leather in the manner adopted for a sister car in the range - the latest Roadster. If the latter course were followed I would again follow Roadster practice by having a leather-covered rim to the steering-wheel - a feature which considerably improves the feel of a component which, taken throughout the year, is in my hands on an average for four hours a day.

I write without experience of the seating comfort over long distances, but I have observed in road testing cars of every size and price that one of the major merits of the best cars costing £1,000, and over, is that the seats are considerably more comfortable at the end of 300 miles than they are on vehicles selling for half this price or less. Unless, therefore, the Mayflower proves a great exception to this rule I would expect to replace or modify the seats so as to have Dunlopillo cushions and exceptionally high rear squabs so as to provide full support for the shoulders drawing my lessons in these respects from both Jaguar and Bristol.

Loose covers for the seats are an item which many would specify as these preserve the real surface and enhance the re-sale value of the car. In the meanwhile, however, they do not improve the interior appearance, and for this reason alone I would not fit them.

Once upon a time I was a great advocate of wool upholstery in preference to leather, and I still feel it has certain advantages. Experience in the last ten years with fabric upholstered cars has, however,

shown me that sheep fur and dog's claws go ill together, and given choice in the matter I would unhesitatingly rely upon the best that Mr. Connolly could provide.

Indulging another personal wish, I would have the body modified to give a sliding roof, for although I would not expect to use this frequently in normal motoring there are other times when its presence is a blessing indeed. This applies in particular to Alpine touring and also to those not infrequent occasions when one is stationary in the car on a sunny day, or when one wishes to have a high grandstand seat for some motoring or other event.

Having experienced the pleasures of really first-class reception given by the Radiomobile set with two loudspeakers installed in my Minor, I would certainly install a similar set in the new car, especially as I believe the performance of the latest equipment to be even better than their predecessors.

I would add to the burden on the battery by supplementing the two normal headlamps with a wide beam, sharp cut-off fog lamp, and also with a really long range affair which would really pick out potential obstacles in good time even when travelling at maximum speed. This last item would be of particular value when doing long night journeys in deserted country and, in the opposite conditions of travelling on crowded roads, I would appreciate the cunning Lucas mirror which automatically eliminates glare from pursuing headlamps. Finally, and without any real justification, the current instruments would be replaced by the type used by Rolls Royce and others which have a far plainer and, to my eye, more attractive figuring. It has always been a matter of interest to me that the lettering of numerals on the instruments which clutter the stylist's desk is often hideous beyond belief whereas, in the test house, one can see dials which have a clarity well worthy of the eighteenth century.

It will be apparent from the above list that embellishing a car to any great extent beyond the standard is not a cheap proceeding, and one would be lucky to get the work above described carried out for £170.

Possibly the first step from the engineering as distinct from the embellishing aspect would be to have "Underseal" rubberised coating spread on to the underpart of the car and, with a view to reducing the noise to a minimum, it might be well worth having a similar treatment to the bonnet, scuttle, and the interior of the doors. This would increase the weight substantially, but as the car is not a high performance type this penalty might well be paid in view of the increased life and sound deadening.

The next move would be to protect the engine from both abrasion and corrosion. In the standard form a floating pick-up ensures that reasonably clean oil is supplied to the bearings, but in addition to this I would take the precaution of fitting a very large full-flow filter, at the same time reminding my secretary that she must badger me to have the element changed at least once every six months. Having thus guaranteed clean oil all the time I would attack the problem of cylinder wear by fitting Laystall Cromard liners to the block, the experience of commercial vehicle manufacturers having shown that one could run 50,000 miles with insignificant wear.

Whilst the engine was dismantled I would ask the Fescol Co. to hard-chrome the crankshaft, and I would consult the appropriate experts as to whether there would be any advantage in deviating from the standard type of main or big end bearings in view of the fact that they were now going to operate on an exceedingly hard surface.

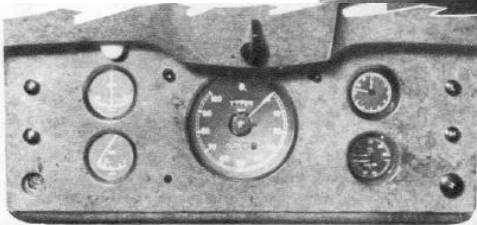
I should attack the problem of valve wear by having inserted valve seats and the valves themselves coated with "Brightray" which I know from experience is an admirable protection not only against wear but also against the attack of leaded fuels. I would have a stellite tip welded to the end of each valve stem, and I believe that once adjusted properly such a set-up would, like the pistons in their liners, run for tens of thousands of miles without further attention. I would not modify the engine with the object of producing more power, as I think the expense involved and the sacrifices which have to be made scarcely worth while on a car of this kind. Let us look at the matter from this point of view. To raise the maximum speed from, say, 63 m.p.h. to 70 m.p.h. would involve increasing the output up to about 45 h.p. and the maximum engine speed to close on 5,000 r.p.m. This savours rather too much of flogging a doubtless willing horse, and also if one is not driving a fast car I feel it is always better to accept with good grace that one is handling a slow one. A vehicle which will give one an honest 90 m.p.h., or better still "the ton," is a vastly attractive affair by virtue of this fact alone (assuming road holding and brakes

are in keeping), but I confess myself indifferent to maximum speeds of a lower order and have had great satisfaction from cars which would do barely a mile a minute.

INTERNAL MODIFICATIONS—Suggested changes to the Mayflower interior include leather covering for the steering wheel rim and dashboard and the employment of more expensive instruments and switchgear of the type shown below.



If I were prepared to carry out some real experimental work I would like to observe the effect of fitting the old-fashioned type of metal-to-metal ball and socket joint to all the steering connections for although adding to the



maintenance, I suspect that they would give a far more direct and rigid feel to the steering, especially if coupled with a fairly high-g geared and a reasonably reversible steering box.

With an eye to possible Continental trips I would also like to change the standard brake drums for the Wellworthy A1-Fin type in which a ferrous lining is chemically bonded to a light-alloy drum.

I would quite certainly supplement, or possibly even replace, the normal centrifugal ignition advance mechanism with a hand control. There are very big variations in the anti-knock qualities of Pool petrol, and this alone makes it impossible to provide an automatic advance system which will fully provide for all running conditions. Apart from this the correct operation of a well-designed and sensitive hand advance is, I think, one of the inherited pleasures of motoring which it is folly to throw away.

This attitude may possibly label me as a die-hard, but I feel no such reverence for tradition in respect of the clutch mechanism. On the modern car it is a relatively insensitive affair compared to my Vauxhall which with multi-plate clutch will start on a top gear of 33 m.p.h. = 1,000 r.p.m. with an engine set at a fast tick-over. And since I have tried the Bochory vacuum control I know that both starting and gear-changing can be done better automatically than I can manage it myself. I should therefore make every endeavour to have one of these devices on the car in conjunction, if possible, with the de Normanville overdrive as fitted to the larger Triumphs.

With these two modifications I should have two-pedal control in traffic and instantaneous gear-changing between all four ratios effected merely by moving smartly the gear lever. I should, moreover, have a fourth speed giving 60 m.p.h. at 3,300 r.p.m. so that between 55 and 60 m.p.h. could be comfortably sustained for hours on end on what I feel sure could be claimed as the most completely equipped small car on the road.

To be realistic, one must estimate that the cost of the mechanical modifications to be of the order of £200, and it is a salutary thought that all the changes suggested would total about £370, or only £25 less than the first cost of the new car. The overall price, including original purchase tax, would therefore be £875, and it is also sobering to realize that if sold at the end of a year such an investment would still bring a return of at least 10 per cent.!

Antique Roadshow

Triumph World, February/March 2004

When an object gets passed down the generations, it gains a value for family members that cannot be expressed in simple monetary terms. It might be a piece of furniture, some jewellery, a book, or even a toy, but no matter what it could fetch at auction, to relatives it is priceless - just like this Mayflower.



Left: Malcolm Barnsley, a 52 year old London Taxi driver, inherited the Mayflower from his grandfather on the condition that he looked after the car

Above: With only 36,000 miles on the clock and full documentation from new, 1952 Mayflower is about as original as it is possible to get. Note painted headlamp rims.

Anyone who owns a Triumph in 2004 has an old car. Even the most, recent model to bear she famous name - the Honda-based Acclaim - is now at least twenty years old, and completely out of date when compared to any new saloon car. And, by that sort of yardstick being more than half a century old a Triumph Mayflower is positively antique.

Of course, it isn't only age that defines a car's place in automotive history; technology and styling play a much more important part in assessing its significance. As far as technology goes it would be fair to say that the Mayflower was by no means 'pushing the envelope' when it was introduced in 1949. The 1,247cc four cylinder side valve power plant (a descendant of the pre-war Standard Flying Ten engine) and three speed gearbox were pretty average stuff back then and there was nothing special in the design of the suspension, brakes or steering, either.

One area where the Mayflower does score highly is with its unique body style. Generally referred to as 'knife-edged' or 'square-line' by contemporary journalists, it went against the post war trend for what a writer in The

Motor described as '... a wave of fashion in which the envelope type of body with submerged lamps, integral wings and rounded, flowing lines has become almost universally accepted. One of the advantages of the

Mayflower design features in every review of the car is the excellent all round visibility and spacious interior – criteria that today are rated as highly as they were fifty years ago.

In recent times there has also been something of a resurgence of the 'knife-edge' school of styling, with several manufacturers adopting a sharp-lined, slab-sided look. Of the current crop of small cars, the most closely related to the Mayflower - purely in appearance terms - is probably the Nissan Micra.

What we call a small car today would quite possibly have been classed as a 'light car' in 1950, the Mayflower was certainly advertised as such by the factory. As part of a campaign that was run under the banner 'All that's best in Britain...' (which was also used to promote the Renown model), the Mayflower was initially described simply as 'Britain's New Light Car'. Subsequent ads in the same series placed more emphasis on the tradition of attention to detail that went into building these quality Triumph cars.

The supply of all new cars was extremely limited in the early 1950s, due primarily to the motor industry concentrating on the export market. This situation was confirmed by the comments in the opening paragraph of The Autocar road test in April 1950: '...the new Mayflower is found to have a very definite and attractive character, which makes it all the harder to have to tell would-be home owners that deliveries for this country are still far from reach'. Imagine how frustrating it must have been to read a glowing report on a car, and then not be able to even get a look at one for months, let alone take a test drive.



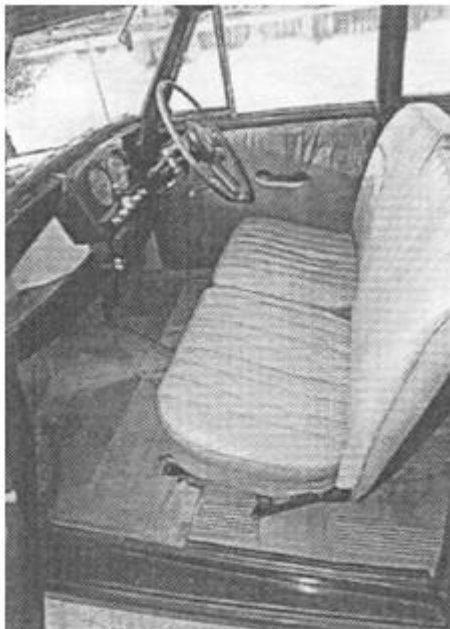
Although a top speed of 65mph is usually quoted, the owner says that 60mph is scary enough. Jade Green metallic is a very unusual colour and a partial respray was carried out where the paint had faded.

The shortage of cars for the UK was a problem that wouldn't be resolved for several years. Reflecting this, it wasn't until 1953 that Triumph advertisements included a price for the Mayflower – £450 plus £ 188 12s 6d Purchase Tax) with a heater and radio £35 (plus £14 11s 8d tax) extra. Among the features focused on in the advert were a 65mph maximum speed, knife edge style body, 35mpg fuel economy, independent front suspension, wide doors for easy access and anti-draught ventilation.

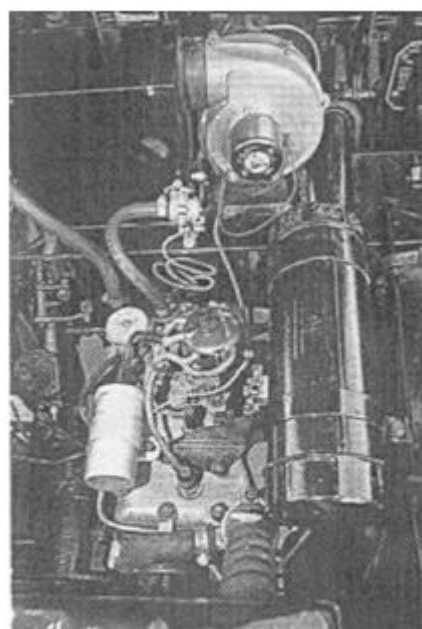
But for William Greaves, the first registered owner of LKV 558, it was definitely the body styling that was the main attraction, "My grandfather was very taken by the razor-edge style, and he called it 'A small Bentley'," revealed Malcolm Barnsley, who is the second owner named in the Mayflower's log book. "He also regarded it as being the first really new car after the war." In 1952 Mr Greaves was a jeweller in Birmingham and, although his name was the first to appear in the document, strictly speaking he was not actually the car's first owner. The saloon was bought by an RAF officer, who left it, standing in the showroom of Triumph dealers S.H. Newsome for a month before announcing that he had been posted overseas and therefore had no use for a new car. Exactly what sort of manipulations Mr Greaves had to go through in order to acquire the Mayflower isn't clear, but buy the car he most certainly did.



Above: Large doors and seats that swing forward makes for easy access to rear seats. Floor mats are rarely seen nowadays.



Above: Interior has what antique furniture experts call 'a lovely patina' that comes from years of use, and is only found on genuine items.



Above: Four cylinder, 1247cc side valve engine had aluminium head with 6.8:1 compression ratio and produced 38bhp. Hidden under the large cylindrical AC air filter is a single Solex carburettor

For the first five years of his ownership, Mr Greaves used the Mayflower on a regular basis and, by the time he retired to live near Bournemouth, in March 1957, it had clocked up 27,000 miles. When Malcolm inherited the car, in 1971, the mileage had only reached 34,591 and it was still in completely original condition. "Extracting it from the old wooden garage was a bit of a nightmare." Recalled Malcolm, "because the building had subsided considerably. But, once released, the car drove up to Swanley in Kent beautifully."



Above: Angular styling makes the Mayflower instantly recognisable from any viewpoint. Large boot capacity was featured in advertisements

Angular styling makes the Mayflower instantly recognisable from any viewpoint. Large boot capacity was featured in advertisements.

Apart from a partial respray in the factory colour of Jade Green metallic, and normal service items, the car remains as per its original specification, it has even been used as a reference source and provided additional technical information for the Triumph Mayflower Club, "Until this car reappeared it was thought that all Mayflowers had chrome headlamp rims," explained Malcolm, "but further investigation unearthed the fact that, for 1952 only, they were painted." This car also has the original rubber floor mats - a real rarity these days. Wherever possible, Malcolm has re-used items like the original nuts and bolts but, even when components have had to be replaced, he has carefully stored away the old parts, so that any

future researchers can look at them.

A London taxi-cab driver by profession, Malcolm is probably better placed than most motorists when it comes to assessing the Triumph's on-the-road performance. "Well, I definitely wouldn't use the Mayflower as a taxi!" he laughed. "It is quite exhausting to drive long distances in. The worst aspect is the extra braking distance you have to allow for - and the steering wanders quite a bit, too. I once had it up to 60mph going downhill with a following wind – and that was truly frightening!"



Central dash panel has only two big round gauges. Radio and heater cost extra in the '50s

Regrettably, the Mayflower hasn't always proved itself to be one hundred percent reliable, and badly disgraced itself on the way to the Queen's Golden Jubilee parade in June 2002. "Number four piston disintegrated en route to London," said Malcolm, "It's a well known weakness with this engine, but it took me a long time to forgive the car for letting me down and missing out on that once-in-a-lifetime occasion," Fortunately, the bore wasn't harmed and he was able to rebuild the engine within a week, "It is such a simple unit to work on." he enthused.

And despite his previous misgivings expressed about driving the Mayflower, Malcolm does derive great pleasure from using the car. "It's the enjoyment it gives to other people," he said. "Whenever anyone sees the Mayflower, they always smile and tell me what wonderful memories it brings back." The Micra may-possibly - be classed as a sort of modern equivalent to the Mayflower, but will the Nissan be regarded with such the same affection as the Triumph in fifty years' time? Somehow, we don't think so?

Limo in Miniature

Classic Car Weekly, 1st February 2017

The Mayflower is a bit of an oddity in the Triumph line-up with grown-up razor-edged styling scaled down around a Standard 10 engine. But we reckon this baby boomer has charm aplenty



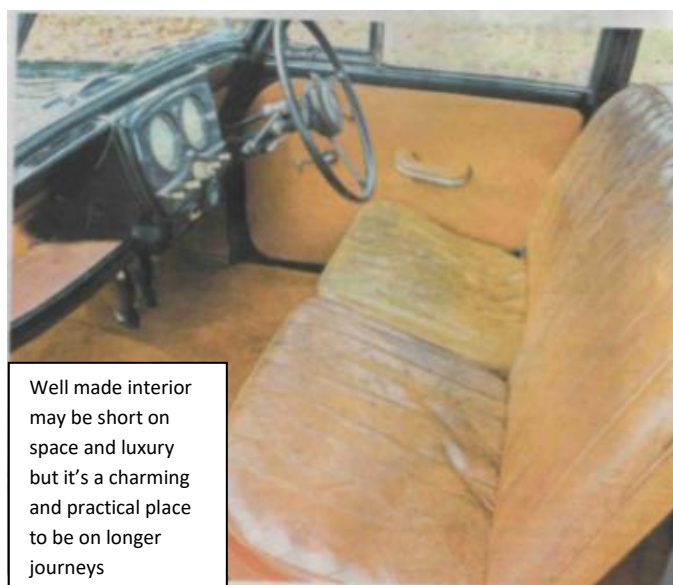
There's no mistaking the Mayflower's distinctive sharp-edged looks – they certainly appeal to buyers wanting something just a little different to the norm. With styling that apes the Bentley MkVI, the Mayflower was clearly targeted at wealthier buyers - those who perhaps might have foregone a chauffeur and bigger car as a result of increasingly stringent tax hikes levied by the post-war government.

Open the generously proportioned door, slide into the bench seat and you're struck by how much room there is in the front. A column change gearlever and small transmission tunnel combine to create a lot more floor space and elbow room than the Mayflower's compact dimensions might suggest, and armrests built into the doors take the strain off your elbows during longer journeys.

Longer journeys aren't quite so pleasant for those sitting in the back. They'll need to get on well too, because they're fairly well hemmed-in back there, but Triumph thoughtfully provided opening rear quarter lights to help alleviate any stuffiness. And besides, there's none of the forced intimacy you'd get in, for example, an Austin A30 or A35.

All-round visibility is pretty good; and while the metal dashboard isn't exactly a thing of beauty, it's reasonably attractive and there's plenty of room on the shelf for maps and a few packets of sweets - which would, of course, have been rationed during the Mayflower's production run.

But what's it like to drive? Is it as dowdy as the nay-sayers suggest? Or is there a hidden heart of gold waiting to be discovered? Adjust your mindset to a slower pace and the Mayflower really does come into its own and scores for all the right reasons. It isn't quick by any means, but taking into the account the 1247CC pre-war side valve engine, that's hardly surprising. Turn the ignition key, pull the starter and the engine parps into life almost immediately, often without the need for much choke. Once it's underway with the choke pushed in, the little flathead engine offers more torque than you might have expected.



Well made interior may be short on space and luxury but it's a charming and practical place to be on longer journeys



Pre-war Standard Flying Ten power unit sits low in the engine bay but provides easy access to the DIY tinkerer.

The three-speed column-change gearbox is pretty good too. It's not quite as slick as a well adjusted Ford Zephyr Mk1/II Ford Zephyr's set-up and the driver's changes need to be accurate to avoid graunches, but it's easy to change up and down reasonably quickly once you've got used to the feel of it.

The brakes don't disappoint either - they're not quite up to the friction forces generated by most small 1960s cars, but they're efficient enough and surprisingly resistant to fade after repeated use. The handbrake's strong too, meaning hill starts don't have to be a delicate juggling act on the pedals.

So, it's not quick and many consider

its looks to be rather controversial, but this little slice of England is a joyously compact treat. It's not dynamic - it was never meant to be - but it's an endearingly competent all-rounder and makes a first-rate compact classic.



Spare wheel sits under boot floor, so luggage space is good.



Bakelite switches and Jaeger dials are very 1950s.

ENGINE 1247cc/4-cyl/SV **POWER** 38bhp@4200rpm **TORQUE** 59lb ft@4200rpm **MAXIMUM SPEED** 65mph **0-60MPH** 27sec **FUEL CONSUMPTION** 23-30mpg **GEARBOX** RWD, three-speed manual **ENGINE OIL** Castrol Classic XL30 - 4 litres **GEARBOX OIL** Castrol Classic XL30 - 1 litre **AXLE OIL** Castrol Classic EP90 - 0.85 litres



1 DAILY DRIVING

The Mayflower is in its element around town or buzzing down country lanes and is more than capable of keeping up with modern traffic once you've adjusted to the idea of keeping your right foot buried in the carpet. Its compact size means it'll slot into car park spaces that other classics would have to forego, too. The column change can get tiring over time and the trafficators are all-but-invisible to modern drivers, so it's wise to adopt a motorcyclist's wariness - or fit modern flashing indicators. Luckily the Mayflower has pretty good all round visibility, though the thick C-pillars and small rear window can make reversing tricky.

2 IN THE SERVICE BAY

Open the bonnet and peer deep into the engine bay and the little engine is revealed. Yes, it's small, and yes it needs regular oil changes, but everything is easily accessible. Standard servicing jobs such as changing the plugs, points and condenser are straightforward, although an inspection light is useful because the cavernous engine bay is quite dark. Parts are easily available through the Triumph Mayflower Club and a drain tap on the radiator

means that flushing the system is quick and easy. The front and rear suspension needs greasing regularly but it's all easily accessible, so it's not too onerous a job.

3 ON THE SHOW CIRCUIT

Be prepared for questions, cheeky 'expert' remarks and the occasional appreciative one-liner. The Mayflower encompasses all classic emotions, from the enthusiastic to the downright hostile. There's no denying that its opinion-polarising looks are the biggest draw, but so too is its comparative rarity, so be ready to explain why you've taken the path less travelled. A Mayflower sparks attention wherever it goes - rightly so, given that it's one of the first new British cars launched after World War II - and it looks as perfectly at home at the Goodwood Revival as it does at the local village show. Accept and embrace its dynamic shortcomings during the drive to and from a given show, and bask in all the attention while you're there.

4 THE LONG WEEKEND

If you're venturing some distance away from home, a long weekend is advisable because, while the Mayflower will get you there, it won't be quick. Nevertheless it has room for four at a pinch and the boot's big enough to take three large soft bags. Front-seat occupants have plenty of arm and leg space, but those in the rear will feel more cramped and taller passengers in particular will need regular stops to get out and stretch their legs. If you move in country house weekend circles, accept that you won't be the first to arrive - but will certainly get most of the attention when you do.

5 THE B-ROAD BLAST

Expect a B-road meander rather than a blast, but if you accept that this is a post-war car with pre-war roots, you won't be disappointed. It's easy to get the Mayflower rolling and maintain momentum once you've mastered the column gear change. It grips pretty well, despite its narrow track, and impresses (or terrifies) other road users with its pronounced body roll. Maintaining revs and keen anticipation means you won't demand too much of the brakes. All in all, the Mayflower doesn't so much disappoint as persuade the driver to reassess his or her driving style.



THE CCW VIEW

Any car with personality is worth seeking out, and the pint-sized Mayflower has it by the bucket load.

Its looks won't appeal to everyone, but it's an eminently usable compact saloon with room for three or four plus their luggage, allied to straightforward engineering. It demands regular maintenance (but no special skills) and driving one isn't difficult once you've familiarised yourself with little idiosyncrasies such as the column gear change and slightly slow steering.

Ultimately it's not a demanding or expensive car to own - if you buy wisely in the first place - and its rarity and unusual razor-edge looks will always ensure a ready crowd of onlookers whenever you park up at a classic car show.

BUYING TIPS

1 BODY SURVEY
The first thing prospective buyers must check is the bodywork - both what you can see and the underside, because the Mayflower features unitary construction. Corrosion has killed off many Mayflowers over the years so any serious rot means you should walk away. Unless you're particularly handy with a welder.

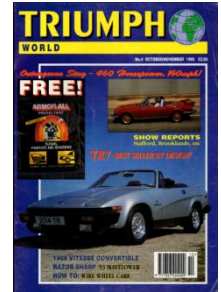
2 PANEL PERFECTION
Finding replacement body panels isn't easy - remember the Mayflower wasn't built in large numbers and many have already been scrapped. If your car needs wings, doors, bootlid or even glass, then a donor car is going to be your best bet if the owners' club can't help. Alternatively, wait for a better example to surface.

3 HOW'S THE INTERIOR?
The interior is a relatively smart place to be but the ageing process is likely to have taken its toll over the years. Seat facings can deteriorate if exposed to the sun and door cards exposed to water ingress rot quickly. Headlinings are vulnerable to staining and failing adhesive causes them to droop and fall away. Once again, a good donor car may be your saviour if any trim needs to be replaced.

4 TAKE A DRIVE
A good example should have a smooth gearchange and the clutch should be light and unobstructive. Even the best engines won't give any more than average performance, but all should be reasonably quiet and smooth in operation.

Black Box

Triumph World, October/November 1995



There was nothing magical about the angular styling of the Mayflower yet it was the most successful model Triumph had ever built up until then. Some of the secrets behind this unique looking car are revealed by David Hawtin.

Opinions of Triumph's Mayflower were once as sharply divided as the planes of its distinctive razor-edge coachwork. Announced in September 1949, the Mayflower was a bold attempt to re-create the look of the successful Triumph 1800 Town & Country Saloon in small car form. Although popular when applied to large up-



This degree of body roll is seldom encountered in anything but a sailing dinghy today!

market cars in the 1930s, razor-edge styling was not everyone's cup of tea when married to the post-war idiom of integral wings and faired-in headlamps as on the Mayflower. 'The combination strikes some people as displeasing,' noted *Country Life's* motoring scribe.

Nevertheless, the model sold like no other Triumph before it. Some 35,000 were built between 1950 and 1953, a little over fifty percent of which went for export. Despite its evocative name, attempts to sell the Mayflower in the USA were a dismal failure; what the Americans wanted then were cheap, fast, large cars, not cheap, slow, small ones.

Whatever their thoughts about its appearance, the Mayflower's critics could not dispute that its boxy shape constituted a very effective piece of automotive packaging.

Within a wheelbase of a mere seven feet, the baby Triumph achieved an interior only marginally less roomy than that of the considerably larger Town & Country. Slim screen pillars and a generous glass area made for excellent visibility, and the overall feeling of interior spaciousness was much commented on at the time.

Styled chiefly by Leslie Moore at Mulliners with some input from Standard-Triumph's Walter Belgrove, the Mayflower's all-steel body was manufactured by Fisher & Ludlow. Its superstructure was welded to a combined floor pan cum chassis, and while thus not a true example of unitary construction, it was nevertheless a big advance on separate chassis/body designs.

The integral body shell's superior rigidity enabled the Mayflower to make the most of its all-new independent front suspension. Of conventional layout with unequal length wishbones, the system broke new ground by enclosing the telescopic dampers within the coil springs and using a ball joint for the top swivel bearing – uniquely among contemporary mass-produced cars.

Elsewhere the Mayflower was less innovative, its engine and transmission being sourced from other Standard-Triumph models. Displacing 1247cc and producing 38 bhp at 4200 rpm, the four cylinder side-valve power unit was descended from that of the pre-



From certain angles the Mayflower looks just like a London taxi, and in some parts of the world (such as Sri Lanka) it can still be found doing duty as a cab

war Standard Flying Ten. Mated to it was a version of the Standard Vanguard's all-synchromesh three-speed gearbox. Synchromesh on first gear was an unusual feature at the time, but was deemed necessary for a low-powered car weighing well over a ton when laden. Power was transmitted via an open propshaft to a hypoid



bevel gear rear axle, also Vanguard in origin. Semi-elliptic springs and telescopic dampers controlled rear axle movement. Brakes were Lockheed hydraulics all round.

While the Mayflower's external elegance earned it the soubriquet of the 'Watch Charm Rolls', its interior was much more utilitarian. Where acres of polished walnut might have been expected, there was nothing but painted steel, and though carpets and leather-faced seats were options, standard equipment was Vynide-trimmed seats plus rubber mat flooring. After all, Standard-Triumph's main rivals were Austin and Morris, not Rolls-Royce.



A comfortable carriage for four, the Mayflower could accommodate five at a pinch with the front seat arranged as a bench. Rear access was made easier by the front seats automatically sliding forward when tilted. To maximise the limited boot space, the spare wheel was stowed beneath the floor in a wind-down tray. However, it's doubtful whether the boot could have held even the modest amount of luggage needed for a day at the seaside. S-T's designers were obviously aware of this shortcoming, arranging for the boot's bottom hinged lid to serve as a load platform.

Although he's now the Triumph Mayflower Club's technical officer, Howard Pryor from Barnet in north London, knew next to nothing about the model when he acquired NLO 739 in 1988. Advertised in *Exchange & Mart*, the 1953 Mayflower was a non-runner, a fact which enabled Howard to get £150 knocked off the £750 asking price.

"I fancied owning a classic car - something big with wings and running boards - and thought a Mayflower would be just the job. Of course, what I had in mind was a Renown!" he confessed. "When I went to see the car it was covered in dust, but the bodywork was in very good condition. Apparently, the car's then owner had never used it, and it had been laid up for some time. The most recent tax disc was dated 1967, so the recorded mileage of 54,000 could well have been genuine."

Mayflower interior at its most luxurious, rubber mat flooring was standard

A full restoration was not Howard's intention at this time – he merely wanted to get the Mayflower running and then use it. Unfortunately, the engine stubbornly resisted every effort to get it to perform properly, and was eventually despatched to a local engineering firm for reconditioning. The overhaul included reboring, fitting a set of oversize pistons, regrinding the crankshaft, and renewing all the bearing shells.

"Even at 1989 prices, the cost - just £245 - was a bargain," remarked Howard. "Especially considering that these days a set of pistons alone will set you back £120."

While the engine was away, Howard took the opportunity to restore the engine bay. One thing led to another, and he ended up having the entire car re-sprayed. "The painter said he'd bring the car back when it was finished, which turned out to be eighteen months later!" recalled Howard ruefully. "I must say though, that he's done an absolutely first class job. All the body repairs were



leaded, there was no filler used anywhere."

Not that there was much wrong with the Mayflower's bodywork apart from a poorly-fitted repair section discovered in the nearside rear wing - almost certainly resulting from accident damage - and severe corrosion of



Boot lid can act as load-carrying platform for extra luggage capacity. Note fold down number plate

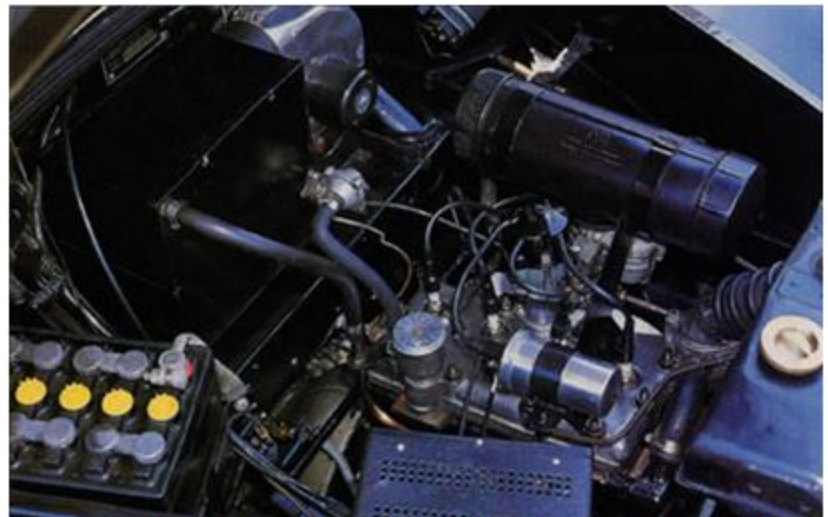
the thin rib which runs across the boot deck beneath the rear window. This had already been subjected to a bodged repair, and it was considered easier and cleaner to remove it completely. That aside, there was no serious rust anywhere on the car; even the floor pan, a known weak point, had survived unscathed. This was just as well, as replacement panels for the Mayflower are non-existent these days.

"I've learned from speaking to fellow owners, that my car's condition was exceptional," revealed Howard. "I've broken two Mayflowers since, both of which were badly rusted behind the front wheel

arches. Once rust gets a hold there, it spreads to the rest of the floor pan, which is also vulnerable at the rear beneath the petrol tank. The weight of the doors is a problem too, and the hinges often fail. My car's doors are fine, which again points to its low recorded mileage as being genuine."

A quantity of spares sourced from one of the Mayflower's past owners yielded a brand new rear bumper, and a new radiator grille and front bumper were obtained through the Triumph Mayflower Club.

A previous owner had overhauled most of the Mayflower's running gear, leaving Howard with the job of replacing the shock absorbers. New front shocks were obtained from the TMC, and a pair of Bedford Midi units installed at the rear. Nothing was left to chance with the braking system, which was completely rebuilt with a new master cylinder, wheel cylinders, pipes and shoes.



Four cylinder side-valve engine started life in the Standard Flying Ten

By April 1993 the re-assembled Mayflower was back on the road. All was far from well however, as the engine refused to run cleanly. Not only that, but the head gasket would blow with monotonous regularity. "The engine had been modified with bolts holding down the cylinder head instead of studs and nuts, and at first I didn't realise that this arrangement was non-standard," Howard admitted. "Head removal can be difficult on these engines as the chemical reaction between the aluminium head and steel studs tends to seize them together. Obviously, someone had tried to solve this problem by fitting bolts. The trouble was, you couldn't torque the head down tightly enough."

Unable to obtain suitable studs from the Mayflower Club, Howard had a set made up, only to then discover that the special hardened nuts and washers also were unobtainable. "They had to be custom made too," he recalled. "Ordinary ones turned out to be useless, and I was getting through head gaskets like there was no tomorrow. Even after the original head fixing arrangements had been reinstated, the gasket was still inclined to blow. I ended up increasing the torque loading over the recommended figure. So far it's been okay." With the spate of blown gaskets now behind him, Howard turned his attention to finding the cause of the engine's rough running and lack of power. At first the valve timing was suspected, but after checking with a degree plate this was found to be spot on. To complicate matters, a bout of fuel starvation then made the engine impossible to start. The fuel pump was checked and the tank cleaned out before the cause - a perished fuel line - was discovered.

"The steel outer sheath looked okay, but the rubber tube inside it had disintegrated," said Howard, who eventually traced the root cause of the engine's malaise to the breather pipe which links the crankcase to the inlet manifold; or rather, to the absence of the pipe's restrictor. Situated at the manifold end, this seemingly

insignificant component - a .375 inch diameter disc with a .050 inch hole in the centre - is vital to the engine's smooth running. Should it be missing, then the incoming mixture will be diluted by an excess of air drawn directly from the crankcase.

"I'd come across references to it in the technical literature, but I'd never seen one," Howard told me. "It wasn't until a local Triumph specialist found that the mixture was exceptionally lean, and checked for the presence of the restrictor, that the mystery was finally resolved. I arranged to borrow one from a fellow Mayflower owner in order to make a copy, and once I'd seen it, I went and searched through the spares which had come with the car. Sure enough, there was the original! "

By this time - the summer of 1994 - six years had elapsed since the Mayflower's acquisition, and although the car was at last a reliable runner, its restoration was by no means completed. The next stage was the refurbishment of the interior, which was carried out by a professional upholsterer over the winter of 1994/95. Howard was keen to retain as much of the existing trim as possible, so only the front seats' leather facings were renewed, along with the door trims and carpets.

Apart from the water temperature gauge, all the instruments were in working order. The instrument panel's plastic pull-switches had deteriorated with age, but Howard was fortunate enough to find some replacements on an auto jumble stall. "I paid £12 for seven brand new switches," he recalled. "They're as rare as hen's teeth - I would gladly have paid £20 for one!"

Assessing the Mayflower's straight line performance soon after its launch, *The Motor's* correspondent wrote: 'You will not find the engine lacking in power to keep you in or ahead of the traffic stream on an arterial road.' 40-45 mph was reckoned to be the car's smoothest pace, with 55 or even 60 mph sustainable should the need arise, which only goes to show how much slower was the pace of motoring life back in 1950.

"If you're prepared to be patient, then driving a Mayflower can be fun," says Howard. "It's surprisingly comfortable for a small car of the period, which is just as well as Mayflower travel doubles your normal journey time!"

For all its shortcomings, the stylish Mayflower was an outstanding sales success for Standard-Triumph, arguably because it brought big-car looks within reach of those who couldn't afford the real thing. More refined and better built than most of the contemporary opposition, the car is these days in demand as an entry-level classic.

"Many classic car enthusiasts start with a Mayflower because they're comparatively cheap," explained Howard. "Though most soon move on to a larger car because they find the Mayflower's performance disappointing."

Even if Howard Pryor does move on to something bigger - he admits to still fancying a Renown - I can't see him parting with the Mayflower; seven years of trouble and strife seeming only to have deepened his affection for the model. "Once you get them sorted, Mayflowers are lovely little cars" he says.

FACTFILE	
1953 TRIUMPH MAYFLOWER 2-DOOR SALOON	
Engine:	Sidevalve, four cylinder, cast iron block, aluminium head, three bearing crankshaft
<i>Capacity:</i>	1247cc
<i>Bore and stroke:</i>	63 x 100 mm
<i>Compression ratio:</i>	6.8:1
<i>Maximum power:</i>	38bhp at 4200rpm
<i>Max torque:</i>	58.5 lbs/ft at 2500rpm
<i>Carburettor:</i>	Single downdraught Solex
Transmission:	3-speed all-synchromesh gearbox, hypoid bevel back axle
Chassis/Body:	
<i>Wheelbase:</i>	7ft 0in
<i>Overall length:</i>	13ft 0in
<i>Overall width:</i>	5ft 2in
<i>Unladen weight:</i>	2107 pounds
<i>Suspension:</i>	Coil spring independent front with double wishbones. Live rear axle with underslung half-elliptic leaf springs
<i>Tyre size:</i>	5.50 x 15 inches
Performance:	
<i>Top speed:</i>	65 mph
<i>0-50 mph:</i>	25 seconds (approx)
General:	
<i>Price (December 1950):</i>	£395 (plus £110 9s 6d Purchase Tax)
<i>Production total:</i>	35,000 (including 10 drop-head coupes)

MI Tests the Triumph Mayflower

Mechanix Illustrated, December 1952

Apart from the knife-edge styling, which may or may not send you, best feature of this car is its price. By Tom McCahill



THE Triumph Mayflower, an ounce-size English bucket, looks more than a little like the Mayflower that brought one million three hundred and forty-seven thousand immigrants to the shores of Massachusetts back in 1620. (In New York City alone, if any politician could collar all the votes of people claiming to be direct descendants of the guys and dolls who assaulted Plymouth Rock on that cold December day over 300 years ago, he could swing any election in a landslide.)

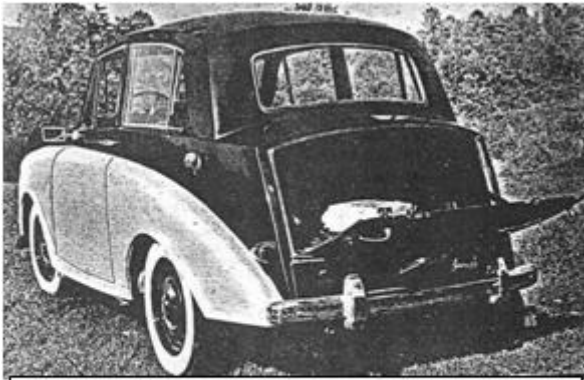


Uncle Tom and his ever critical Joe cast an appraising eye over the Mayflower and discover it has some very remarkable virtues.

But let's get back on course. The Triumph Mayflower, an automobile that has more acute angles than you can find in the uplift ads, is the only car in the world selling for less than ten grand that follows the knife-edge school of design. Until the Mayflower came along (the car, not the boat), knife-edge finish was more or less a Rolls-Royce or Bentley exclusive. It was usually found on the more ultra-ultra formal rigs of state used by the toffs for Coronation parades, the opening of Parliament or going to the opera. The Triumph Mayflower is to me a baby town car. It is a design most people either-hate on sight or warm up to gradually. It is about as sporty as shooting parrots in a cage and as streamlined as King Farouk doing a one-and-a-half off a ten-foot springboard.

When Joe Ferguson of Fergus Motors, the American distributors, asked me if I would like to test one, I told him, "Okay, Joe, but I want you to know I think it's a hell of a looking car and if it's half as bad as I think it looks I'm going to blast it wide open." Joe said he thought I would like it 'if I gave the car a chance so he and Jim McMichael brought one out to my house for testing."

This car, with a 1 ¼ litre engine (same size as the TD MG), is only 154 inches long overall and 62 inches wide. This makes it a lead-pipe cinch for handling in heavy traffic and for parking. It is 62 inches in height, which insures



Boxy design of the top gives exceptionally good head room for a small car. Sharp lines are like those of a Rolls-Royce, Bentley.

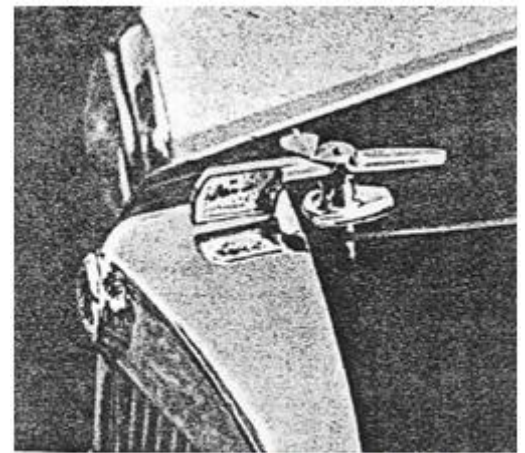
those on the driver's seat plenty of head room, but in the back seat I found the head room limited. My first impression when I got behind the wheel was amazement at its big car roominess in the front seat and its real chair height comfort. In this respect it reminded me of our own Chryslers of late years. It has a steering-column shift and a three speed transmission, unlike the typical British four-speed box. "

I had hardly left my own driveway before I realized that I was tooling an exceptionally fine handling car. The steering was light and sure and the first run through my standard test curve was an eye opener. At 50 miles an hour through this bend that would send some Detroit barges into the woods, this jigger-size, slab-sided tobacco can held on like a tar stain on a white shirt. Its cornering ability was not full sports car stuff, such as you get

from an MG, but considering this car's height, shape and weight it was as solid as a 16-pound shot landing on your head. The more I drove the Mayflower the more I liked it. But the big pay-off came in the hill climb test.

With myself and Joe and 500 pounds extra added weight, it took my long 28 percent- grade hill climb without the slightest sign of distress. Naturally this was done in low gear but at the steepest point I stopped the car dead and then started off again without a single buck. With one average size driver alone in the car, the Mayflower would be a real threat on Switzerland's Matterhorn. Considering its size and the fact that four people, all scaling better than 200 pounds, can go for a trip in this barge, the Mayflower is quite a naughty little atom.

On the highway this car, though no bolt of lightning in breaking from a light, nevertheless can whip up to 30 miles an hour from a standstill in 7.7 seconds and get to 60 in 26.33 seconds. Somewhere between 65 and 70 the cork gets pulled all the way out of the bottle and that's that.



One unusual wrinkle is the locking handle for the hood.

When I got this pickle jar back to the house and started taking pictures I realized that, like a teen age kid's beard, it was slow in growing but nevertheless this car was growing on me. Even the knife-edge body treatment got less hard to take and the fact that it was so entirely different from all competitive rigs gave the Mayflower a bit of distinction. So would rubber boots on a ballet dancer, I know, but on the Mayflower this slightly stuffy look, at first glance silly, soon gave it a sort of an aloof Colony Club appearance,

Now, the point where I switched from laughing at this turnip to taking it seriously was when I asked Joe what it cost delivered in New York City. He told me that \$1,685 is all the loot you have to raise to own one of these book ends. In my book that's the big feature. If this little geranium pot cost a thousand dollars more I would still be laughing every time I saw one and would recommend it only to advertising executives' and my worst enemies. At \$1,685 this job has a lot to offer. As already stated, its ease of handling in hard traffic is a feature in itself for suburban or city travel. As a second car for going to

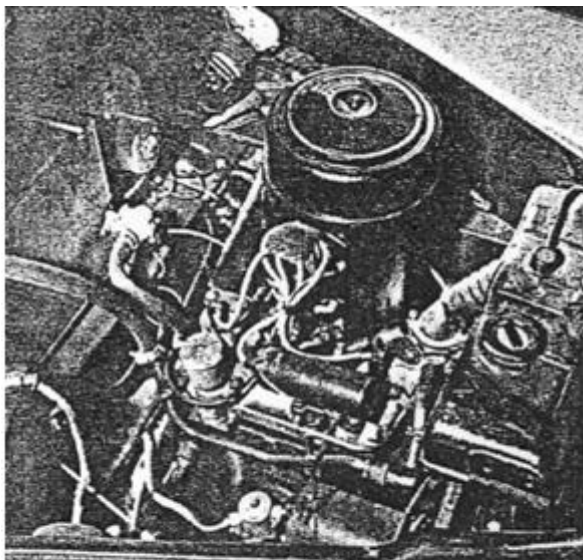


Fully-adjustable chair-height front seat makes for very comfortable riding, our expert learned.

the station or taking up to three kids to school, it would be hard to beat.

The Mayflower is well built and the upholstery and general finish are tops for a car in this price class. Even your grandmother Hot Pill Nellie, wouldn't look at all out of place rolling up to the Woman's Club with Jake the Chauffeur on the box. In all, the Triumph Mayflower is a 30-cent aristocrat with a rare port and custom cigar look. I can't see Bulldog Drummond stepping out of one of these but I can picture Pierpont Nickelnose, the slick city banker, arriving in one for a board meeting.

The four-cylinder, 1 ¼ litre engine develops 38 horsepower and the entire car, unloaded, weighs just over 2,000 pounds. The three-speed steering-wheel shift will not appeal to the sports car group but it has a lot of advantages in traffic. It is easy to change gears and you can leave it in second, mile after mile, without any blow up effects. The average woman driver will find this far easier for shopping trips than the floor shift, four-speed box. For those who live in big cities and make occasional trips to the country on weekends, the Mayflower would be hard to top. In fact, it makes a whale of a lot more sense than owning a big Detroit balloon. You can store it in most garages for less, it gets 35 miles on a gallon of gas and, what's more important, it will look just as funny or just as good (depending on your aesthetic viewpoint) five years from now as it does today. This means if it does the job you want, it won't go out of date like its high style American contemporaries. If this happens to be your type of rig, old boy, I recommend that you grab your bowler and go to your nearest dealer, for a closer look. As the Marlboro cigarette people say, "If you want to escape from the commonplace" the doors are open with that \$1,685 price.



Developing only 38 horsepower, the four-cylinder engine pushes the 2,000-pound car at 70 mph

SPECIFICATIONS

MODEL TESTED:
1953 Triumph Mayflower two-door sedan

ENGINE:
4 cylinder, bore 2.48 inches, stroke 3.94 inches; piston displacement 76 cubic inches; road clearance 7 inches; brake horsepower 38 @ 4200 rpm; compression ratio 6.8 to 1

DIMENSIONS:
Wheelbase 84 inches; overall length 154 inches; width 62 inches; height 62 inches; weight 1,960 pounds; standard tire size 5.50x15; gas tank 10 gals

PERFORMANCE:
0 to 30 mph, 7.7 seconds
0 to 60 mph, 26.33 seconds
Top speed, 65-70 mph



Uncle Tom was pleasantly surprised to find the little car could negotiate the "McCahill Test Hill" in low with a full load without bucking.

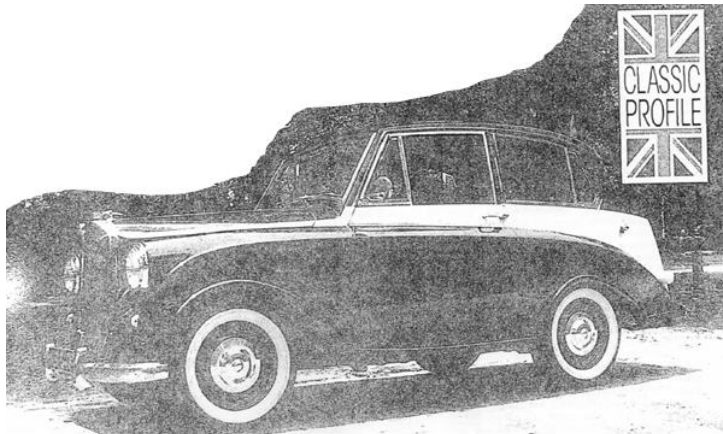
Baby Rolls

British Car, June 1989

The story of the Triumph Mayflower. By Richard Truett



Upon seeing the brand new Triumph Mayflower at Earl's Court in October 1949, a woman waltzed up to the compact Triumph and uttered these now famous words: "Oh, how perfectly bloody."



No one got the lady's name. But her comment almost four decades ago has stuck with the Triumph Mayflower from its debut to this very day. Indeed, those words have become a part of the lore that surrounds one of Triumph's least understood cars.

And there are people today who are still trying to figure out exactly what the Triumph Mayflower is all about. According to authors Richard Langworth and Graham Robson, Standard-Triumph Chairman Sir John Black, always the shrewd businessman, was looking for ways to cash in on the huge demand for cars in post war

America. Sometime in early 1947, Black had a conversation with Louis Antweiller, managing director of Mulliners of Birmingham, a well-known coach builder. This is where the Mayflower story begins.

"Americans liked Rolls-Royces. Rolls-Royces were razor-edged; therefore, they would like a small saloon styled the same way . . . Antweiller made this very point, and Sir John grabbed the ball and ran with it," according to Robson and Langworth.

Styled by Leslie Moore and Walter Belgrove, the Mayflower was about the same size as a Volkswagen Beetle. Many people thought it odd to apply razor-styling to a car so small. The result was that the Mayflower was either instantly loved or instantly hated. Rarely, though, was it ignored. It earned such nicknames as endearing as "The Watch Chain Rolls" or as unflattering as "The Slab Sided Tobacco Can." Today it remains an anomaly.

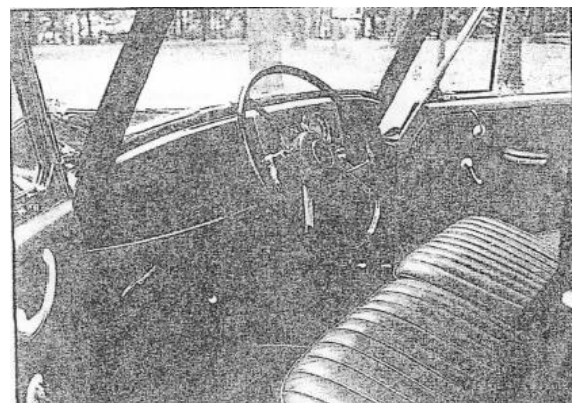
Although it was designed (and named) with the American market in mind, the Mayflower never did do well in the three years (1950-53) that it was in the U.S. market. In fact, it showed how insulated the British were to the American market.

First of all, the 38 horsepower Mayflower was dreadfully slow and woefully underpowered. The factory quoted a 0-50 time of 23 seconds and a top speed of just 63 miles per hour. Second, the Mayflower came with an engine that needed much more maintenance than Americans were used to. According to the Mayflower owner's manual, the cylinder head should be removed every 25,000 miles and "decoked."

The Mayflower came with a three speed manual transmission. Although this gearbox was one of the first fully synchronized three speeds in a British car, its gear ratios were extremely wide, which made for awkward shifting. But like almost every misunderstood car, the Mayflower may have just come along at the wrong time.

The Mayflower was one of the first cars to utilize unit body construction. The Mayflower body was built by Fisher & Ludlow, makers of a deep box section frame welded to a steel body. This made the Mayflower extremely rigid without adding unnecessary weight. Also, the fit and finish of the compact Mayflower was among the best of the day for a car in its class.

Inside, the Mayflower sported a super roomy interior that featured leather covered seats (for the American market) and room enough to carry four large adults in comfort. According to Langworth and Robson, the Mayflower used an incredible 86.8 percent of its total width for interior space. One interesting innovation was the unique way the seats moved to allow



passengers into the back seat. As the front seat backrest was tilted forward, the seat slid forward. This coupled with the Mayflower's wide doors made ingress and egress extremely easy for a car with a wheelbase of just 84."

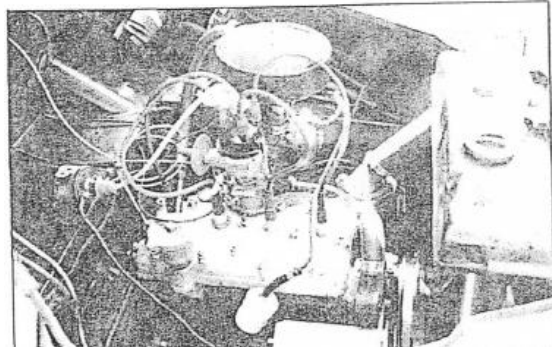
Although the engine probably killed any chances of the Mayflower taking root in America, it did deliver anywhere between 35 and 40 miles per gallon. That made driving the Mayflower very affordable. The little Triumph sold for \$1,685 in 1950. Although the Mayflower did garner favourable press reviews throughout its three-year stay, sales never did catch on. Although the exact figure is not known, no more than 200 or so Mayflowers were sold in America. However, the Mayflower was not a total failure. In the three years the car remained in production, exactly 34,000 Mayflowers were built.

According to Philip J. Hall of Bristol, England, the former chairman of the Triumph Mayflower Club, 16,395 Mayflowers were built for the home market, while 17,605 were built for export. According to the Mayflower Club, only 611 examples are known to have survived. Five of those are in Canada and nine are in the United States. Hall says Mayflowers are reportedly still being used in such far flung places as Sri Lanka and Pakistan.



But the rarest of the Mayflowers are the ten missing convertibles that were built in 1950-51. The whereabouts of all ten is a mystery, and a Mayflower convertible would be a fairly valuable vehicle. Even though such factory information as serial numbers, trim details, and exact build dates are known, the history of the ten convertibles is anyone's guess. All that survives is a publicity photo taken sometime in 1950.

So what is it like to own and drive a Mayflower? That question was referred to Phil Hall, who, in addition to owning and restoring several Mayflowers, has nurtured a decades-long love affair with the car. Says Hall: "The Mayflower is a car with character. It will willingly cruise along at 45 mph, and with the busy choked up roads here in Great Britain, that is more than sufficient. Of course, the Mayflower is not the car for the Daytona racing circuit or England's Silverstone. But it was never intended to be anything more than just a friendly family car with no frills or refinements, and that is exactly what it was and is."



ABOVE: A publicity photo of one of ten Mayflower drophead convertibles built between August 29, 1950 and January 19, 1951. Where are they now? (Photo courtesy of The Triumph Mayflower Club) LEFT: The 1247cc Mayflower engine was not used in any other car. Developing only 38 bhp, it just wasn't powerful enough for the American market.

Ironically, sales of the Mayflower began to pick up just as Standard-Triumph began phasing the car out of production to concentrate on the Standard Eight and Standard Ten, known in this country as the Triumph TR10.

Mark Norris, an Orlando, Florida, car collector who owns a Mayflower, said he has discovered that finding mechanical parts for the car isn't too difficult, but locating trim parts is next to impossible. Norris said he recently had the brake system overhauled and discovered many of the Mayflower's brake parts were used on other British vehicles such as early post war MGs.

Norris' Mayflower was sold by Fergus Motors in New York. Then, somehow, it ended up spending several decades in a museum. Today it lives in the tropical Florida climate and makes an occasional appearance at British car shows.

Had the Mayflower come along during the small car economy boom of the late 1950s, we might think of more than Pilgrims, Plymouth Rock, and Thanksgiving whenever the word Mayflower is mentioned.

SPECIFICATIONS: TRIUMPH MAYFLOWER 1950-1953

ENGINE
Type: Sidevalve inline four
Displacement: 1.2 litre (1237cc)
Bore X Stroke: 63mm X 100mm
Compression Ratio: 6.8:1
Power Output: 38bhp @ 4000 RPM, 693 lb-in. torque @ 2000 RPM

TRANSMISSION
Type: 3-speed manual column shift w/ synchro on forward gears

BODY/CHASSIS
Type: Two-door unit construction

Suspension: Front independent w/coil springs, rear live axle w/ semi-elliptic springs
Dimensions: Width 61", Height 62", Wheelbase 84"

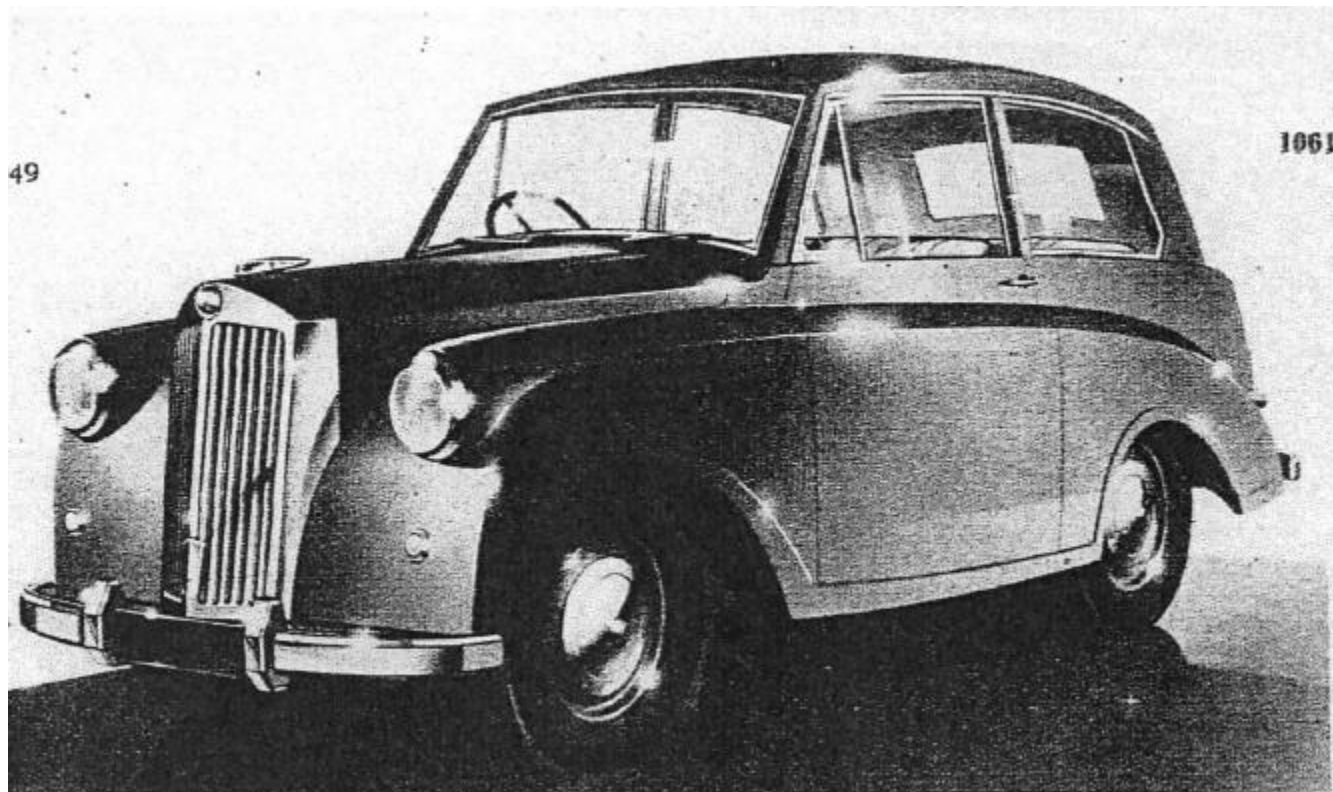
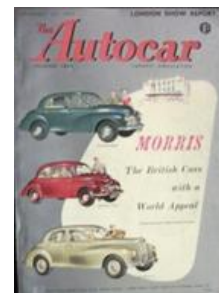
PERFORMANCE
0-50mph: 23 seconds
Maximum speed: 63 mph

PRODUCTION
1950-53, 34,000 cars built including 10 convertibles. Vehicles traced and known: 611.

A Small Knife-Edged Triumph

The Autocar, September 30, 1949

A new car described



The new Triumph 1200 saloon brings knife-edged styling to the small car class.

PARTLY because it is entirely new, and partly because the world wants good cars of economical size, the new Triumph 1200 Mayflower has already become a focal point of interest in the Show. Broadly, the intention behind this two-door four-seater saloon, with its 1,247 c.c. four-cylinder engine; is to produce not necessarily the least expensive small, car but definitely one of the most attractive. To that end it has been designed with the knife-edged style of body, for which the 2-litre Triumph saloon has already established a strong following of enthusiasts. The writer has owned a Triumph 1800 saloon for over a year; and would without hesitation describe it as one of the most satisfying saloon bodies which he has encountered in a long experience.

The reasons for that appreciation are quite simple: the knife-edge design gives an exceptionally large area of window, and the pillars are thin, so that the outlook from each seat is wide and cheerful. Passengers can see the country. Again, the square outlines add to the interior air capacity, the spaciousness giving a mental "lift," so that the car is never oppressive.

The seats are most comfortable; the room is ample, and the body does not develop small squeaks and rattles. Moreover there is a dignity about the appearance that the present bulbous fashions at times conspicuously lack. Any owner of a Triumph 1800 or 2-litre saloon will understand immediately why Sir John Black has elected to make his new small car a replica of it on a reduced scale. It will thus be a small car *different* from other small cars. Incidentally it will be the first knife-edge, style of coachwork to be put into large scale production of pressed steelwork. This Body is rust-proofed by the Bonderizing process.

Some idea of the size, of the new Triumph can be gathered from certain of the dimensions; the wheelbase is 7ft, the track (front) 3ft 9in, and rear 4ft. Overall length 12ft 9in, width 5ft 1in, height 5ft 4in, and weight—ready

for the road with fuel, oil and water—about 2,016 lb. Maximum interior body width is 53in, effective seat width at the front 48in, at the rear 38in, and over the rear elbow rests 50in.

The four-cylinder engine develops a maximum of 35 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m., and a maximum torque of 693 lb-in at 2,000 r.p.m. Designed performance figures are acceleration from a standing start to 50 m.p.h. in 23 sec, a maximum speed of 63 m.p.h., and a fuel consumption of 35 m.p.g.

The saloon body has two wide doors with drop windows and triangular ventilating panels, and the rear windows, which are fixed, extend almost to the back, giving a large area of vision. As on the larger Triumph, the pillars are slender and the Triplex toughened glass is carried in narrow chromium plated channels which set off the appearance. The doors are hinged at the front. Roof and screen are fixed. The front seats are separate and easily adjustable, and are readily movable to give access to the rear seat, which has elbow rests. Pivot type door handles are fitted. The left side door can be locked internally, and the driver's door by a lock operated by the ignition key; the same key locks the large luggage locker at the rear. This has a lid which opens downwards and can be used as an extra luggage platform. The spare wheel is carried in a retractable metal sling below the luggage locker and its securing mechanism can be operated only from inside the lockable luggage compartment. There is a substantial parcel shelf on each side of the fascia; on the fascia the control buttons and instruments, speedometer, fuel, oil pressure and water temperature gauges and the ignition warning light are centrally grouped. Behind the rear seat is another parcel shelf.

Ventilation is controlled by the triangular hinged deflector lights already mentioned; these are part of the windows above the doors. There is also a ventilator in the scuttle. Provision is made for the fitting of a car heater and a radio set.

Some of the main features of the comprehensive equipment of the car include twin sun visors, roof lamp controlled from the fascia, flush-fitted sealed reflector head lamps and side lamps, foot operated dip switch, wind tone horn, ashtrays, carpets with thick felt, underlay, self-cancelling traffic indicators, a single-piece bonnet top locked from inside the car, twin electric screen wipers, and substantial bumpers with over-riders. As compared with the larger Triumph saloon the 1200 has front and rear wings blended into one streamline flank, and the head lamps are built in.

In construction this new car is equally interesting. It has a deep box-section frame, pressed in the form of a channel with the hollow upwards. The steel bodywork meets the top of the channel and is welded to it, so forming the box section, and making an integral construction of considerable rigidity without unnecessary weight. Fairly far forward in this frame and flexibly mounted is the power plant, which consists of the four-cylinder side-valve engine, dry-plate clutch and three-speed gear box, from which the drive is taken through an open propeller-shaft to a hypoid bevel gear in the rear axle.

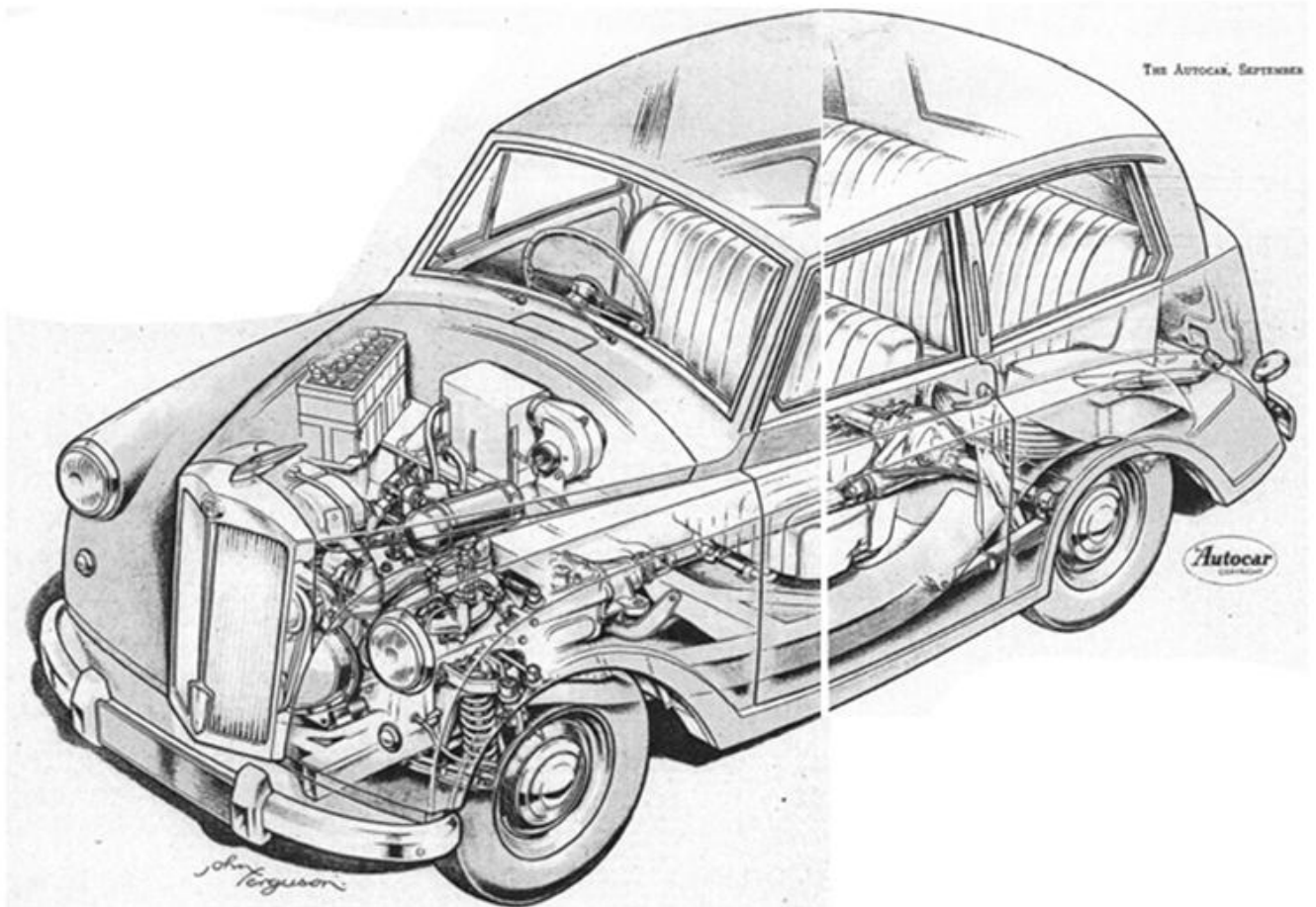
Although new, the engine is a descendant of the well-proved Standard Ten engine, but of course has all the modern developments incorporated in it. The cylinder block is of chromium iron, with a detachable aluminium alloy cylinder head. Side valves are operated from a four-bearing camshaft which is driven by chain. The crankshaft, generous in size, is counterweighted and carried in three main precision bearings. The connecting-rods are of steel, with floating gudgeon pins, in aluminium alloy split skirt pistons. Compression ratio is 6.7 to 1. Pump water circulation has a thermostatic control, and a 12 in fan is driven in conjunction with, the dynamo by a V-belt. Inlet and exhaust manifolds are integral, and the carburettor is a downdraught feeding on to a hot-spot. A combined air cleaner and silencer is fitted.

Pressure lubrication is provided by a Hobart-Eaton submerged pump, which draws oil through a floating filter and serves it to all chief bearings. Crankcase breathing is of the sealed type; that is to say, the breather is coupled to the induction system, and all the exterior bearings have oil seals. To prevent the transmission of exhaust noises to the body the exhaust system is flexibly rubber mounted.

The clutch is a 7 ¼ in Borg and Beck, and has a balanced control linkage so that the movement of the engine unit on its rubber mounting cannot affect clutch operation. The gear box is interesting, because it is, in fact, the Vanguard three-speed box, which should "wear forever" in a small car. A light acting gear change is mounted on the steering column. The box has a special patented positive synchromesh on all forward gears. As a general rule synchromesh is not fitted on first gears, as there is likely to be difficulty in engaging first gear when the car is stationary. The Vanguard synchromesh overcomes this difficulty. The advantage of having synchromesh on first, or bottom, gear when tackling a very steep hill is obvious. The overall gear ratios are 5.125, 8.56 and 18.14 to 1. The propeller-shaft is a Hardy Spicer carried on needle roller bearings, and the sliding spline is inside the tail of the gear box. The hypoid bevel final drive is mounted on taper roller bearings, and carried in a three-piece axle casing with semi floating axle shafts.

Independent front suspension is provided by wishbones attached to the front of the frame by rubber-bushed bearings. The steering swivels have a screwed bottom bush and a ball joint at the top. Low-period coil springs are employed, and telescopic hydraulic dampers pass through the hollow of the coils, a neat arrangement. Half-elliptic rear springs are used, also with telescopic double-acting dampers. The brakes are hydraulic, with two-leading shoes in front. The hand brake is controlled by a pistol grip, mechanically connected to the rear brakes.

The electrical system is Lucas 12-volt, with coil ignition and centrifugal automatic advance. Tyre size is 5.00 x 15in for the home market and 5.50 x 15in for export.



A sectioned drawing by *The Autocar* artist of the new 1200 Triumph Mayflower saloon. From this can be seen the independent coil spring front suspension, the box-type stiffener on the floor of the body unit, and the sliding joint of the propeller-shaft housed in the gear box extension. The spare wheel is carried below the tank on hinged brackets. The gear change is on the steering column and the petrol filler cap is lockable.

Flower Power

Car Classics, December 1975

The gentle art of Mayflowering with Triumph's one that got away. By Richard M. Langworth



The hairy '55 Chevy sits rumbling at a stop light, white painted axle and dual exhausts showing beneath its uplifted rear bumper, glistening blue lacquer bearing the cream-painted legend, "Big Bad Chevy." This ought to be a laugh. You move over to the right lane, and pull abreast. The cat looks over, incredulous. You give your car a few revs, the unmistakable challenge at traffic light grand prix everywhere. Cat guffaws, clamps a big sneakered clog on the gas and the Chev erupts with the familiar bellow of a deep breathing V8. "Okay man, you asked for it," he hoots. But as the light turns green you spurt out ahead and actually hold him for 28, 29, 30-inches. After that, who cares - you've proved your point. You're driving a 1953 Triumph Mayflower, fastest car in the world up to three miles an hour.

Hardly anybody remembers that this waifish little watering can, as high as it is wide and straddling narrow, wobbly looking tires, was Triumph's entry in the economy car market of the early 'fifties. Triumph was never known for wheels like these, but for fire-breathing sports cars, kings of E-production sports car racing, giants of the Alpine and Monte Carlo rallies, class winners at Le Mans, favourites of American sports car lovers for a quarter century. Yet Triumph's first sports car, the TR-2, was created extensively from components already in production on the innocent little Mayflower. Itself a failure, it spawned a legend.

Today the "other Triumph," or as Tom McCahill called it, the little geranium pot, is a rare car indeed. Only 500 were imported to the United States, and though several thousand went to Canada, the unit body suffered drastically from corrosion, so most Mayflowers have long since dissolved into the ground. Worldwide, only 32,000



Inspiration for the Mayflower was Triumph's 1800 saloon, later known as the Renown. This one bears the arms of the Duke of Gloucester.

derivative Gloria Monte Carlo and Southern Cross sports cars designed and run by Triumph's great experimental manager, Donald Healey. Healey also created the grandest of all Triumphs, the fabled Dolomite Straight Eight of 1934, which unfortunately was not produced in a quantity larger than three. But all pre war Triumphs exemplified Bettmann's high standards of quality and performance, and consistently lived up to his famous description, "the quality light car."

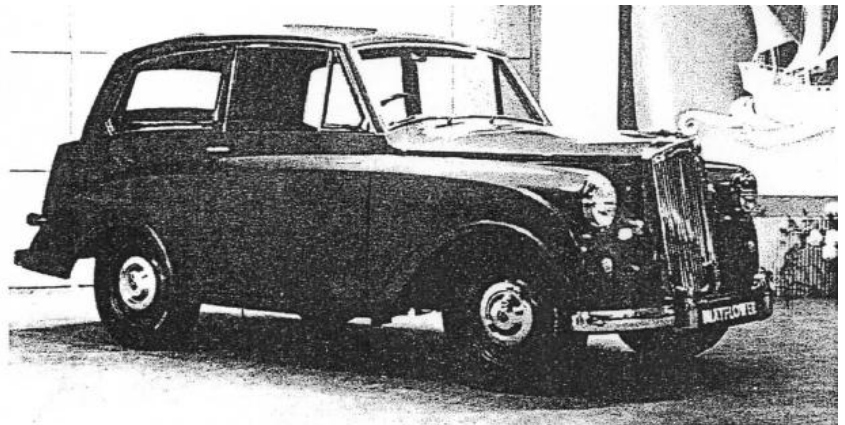
During and after the Battle of Britain, in the holocaust that swept Coventry at the hands of Hitler's Luftwaffe, much of the Triumph works were flattened. In 1944, the name and good will of Triumph was put up for sale by owner John Ward Ltd., which had bought the bankrupt concern on speculation in 1940 and had no desire to manufacture automobiles again after the end of the war. Triumph was bought by the Standard Motor Company Ltd., a prosperous Coventry neighbour headed by curmudgeonly Sir John Black, who had been looking for a sporting name to purchase in order to expand Standard's interests in the performance market and, if possible, to challenge William Lyons' Jaguar on its own ground.

Sir John Black was a mercurial individual with a sharp tongue and ruthless manner, both within and without the factory. Standard had originally supplied frames, gearboxes and engines for Lyons' SS Jaguar, but when the Jag became a commercial success. Black regretted having contributed to its efforts. After the war, Lyons bought the tooling from Standard in order to build Jaguar on his own, and in a fit of pique Black determined to produce a rival sports car that would hopefully add the audacious Bill to the ranks of the also rans. Thus appeared the Triumph 1800 Roadster, a unique looking but deadly slow two-seater with the world's last rumble or dickey seat, which was promptly eclipsed by Lyons' stunning XK-120 Jaguar. From that point on, Black lost all interest in trying to better his formidable and brilliant rival.

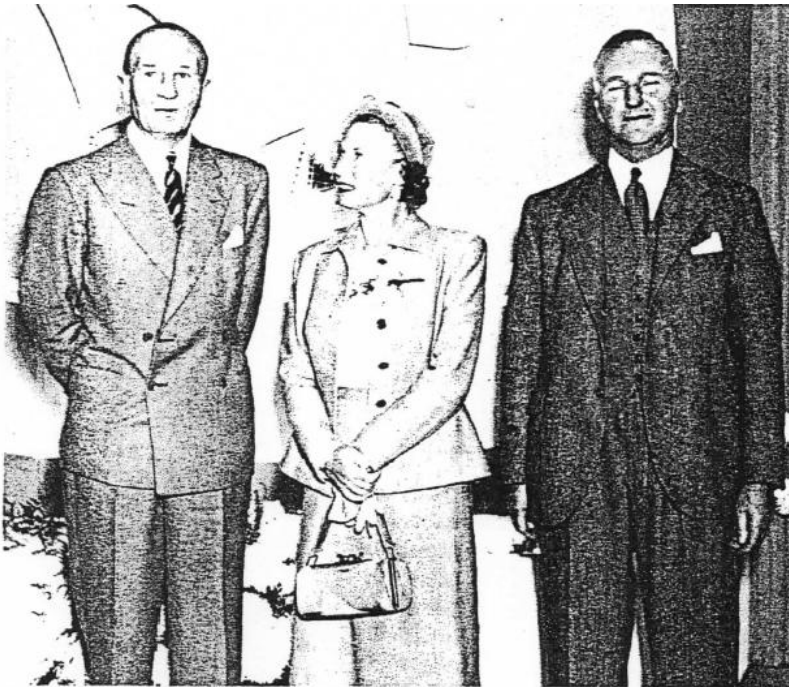
But despite his razor's edge temperament and sometimes irrational jealousy. Sir John was a canny businessman who could foresee future markets for his automobiles. Chief among these was the United States. After the war, with Britain on austerity and an "export or die" program, selling cars to the outside world was vitally necessary. The British people were not in a position to take as many new cars as the motor industry could

were built, and if there are 300 still alive today, it's a wonder. Nevertheless, the Mayflower owns an interesting history.

The Triumph Motor Company Ltd. was organized to build passenger cars in 1922 by Nuremburg-born Siegfried Bettmann, founder of the famous Triumph motorcycle firm several decades earlier. Triumph cycles were traditionally popular, fast and reliable, and their success prompted Bettmann to venture into four-wheeled transport beginning with the 1923 model year. The Depression killed off the passenger car business (which was divorced from the cycle trade in 1936) in 1940, but in its short lifetime the pre war Triumph established itself a fine reputation. Most significant were its rally-winning Super Seven of 1927-32, its beautiful Gloria range of 1934-38, and the



The Mayflower debuts at Triumph's Banner Lane factory, 1949.



Sir John Black (left), Lady Black, and Triumph chief engineer Ted Grinham.

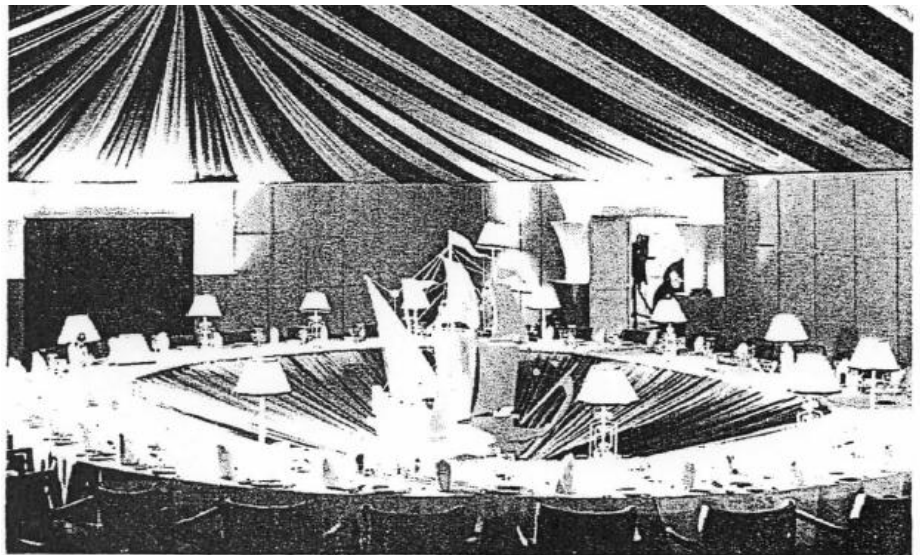
produce, while certain hard currency markets like the United States were. Black was one of the first Coventry executives to recognize this, and when the war was over he decided to produce a new and revolutionary small car for Americans who could never afford new cars in the past.

In this approach Black was hardly alone, though his viewpoint was not widely shared in England. Henry Kaiser and Henry Ford had both considered small cars for the post war market, though Ford's grandson, Henry I, dropped the idea shortly after V-J Day, as did Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Chrysler and Willys. But a lot of planning continued toward the eventual production of compacts, particularly at Nash, Studebaker and Hudson, and in 1949 Willys revived the idea and eventually produced the Aero series. Black's idea was to beat the

locals into production with his own cars — around the same time he also recognized that M.G.'s early post war success indicated a large sports car market in the States, and commissioned designs culminating in the TR-2, which is another story.

Alick S. Dick, then Black's assistant and from 1954 to 1962 managing director of Standard-Triumph, told the writer that the TR program was strongly influenced by Christopher Jennings, then editor of *The Motor*, and Fergus Motors in New York, U.S. distributor of many British cars - run by the brother of Harry Ferguson, the tractor magnate. Thus it appears that Blacks' fortuitous market planning was at least partly abetted by associates, and one of these who proved influential sparking the Mayflower project was the body firm of Mulliners, in Birmingham.

From 1946 and alongside the Triumph Roadster, Black had manufactured a lovely razor edge four-door sedan originally called the Town and Country and later named the Renown. At first powered by the 1.8 litre Standard engine also fitted to the Roadster, the sedan later inherited the Standard Vanguard 2088 cc engine and three-speed, column-mounted gear shift. It persisted in this form through 1955, when it was phased out to allow Triumph to concentrate on sports cars, but throughout its life it was beautifully crafted and fitted with the finest burl



Black presided over this splendid table for S-T directors on launch day. The ship was a meticulous model of the original Mayflower.

walnut and Connolly hides that money could buy. Mulliners of Birmingham (no relation to coachbuilders H. J. Mulliner) had built the Renown body for Black, and managing director L. Antweiler of Mulliners was responsible for convincing Standard's director that a smaller version of it was a practical idea.

Beaming the Triumph small car at America was probably natural after representations by Jennings and Fergus, and indeed the name "Mayflower" was chosen to connote patriotic appeal - despite the car's origin in the land of King George. The car's general arrangements had been set down in prototype form in 1945, when Black announced that a ten (taxable) horsepower sedan would be produced alongside the 1800. A wooden mock-up of both cars was built; the larger duly went into production while the smaller, powered by a 10 hp Morgan engine,

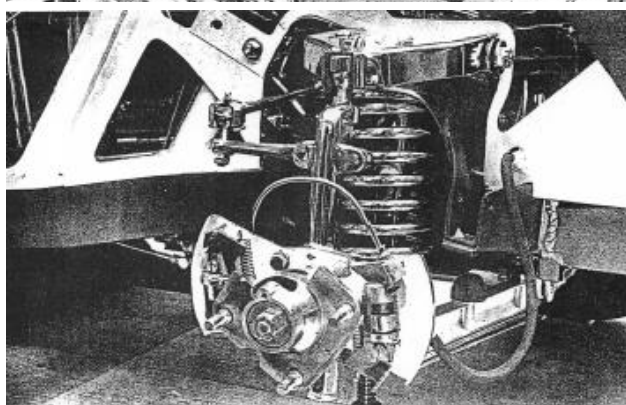
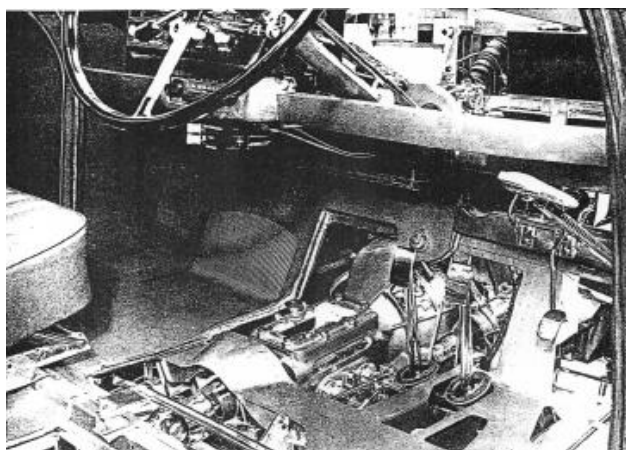
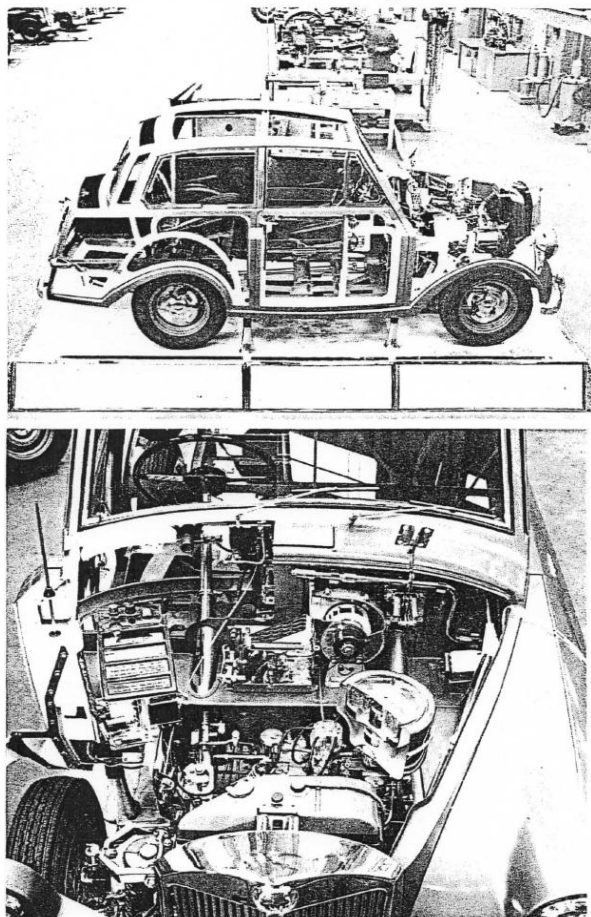
was postponed. Another Mayflower prototype was built along the lines of the British Mosquito aircraft - ply/balsa/ply - according to Alick Dfck: "a fascinating" thought for a car, but not very good for Nader."

The Mayflower's design was placed in the hands of a department headed by the talented Walter Belgrove, Triumph's main connection with its pre war years, designer of the Gloria, Vitesse and Dolomite, and soon to author the TR-2. "I built the original design model of the vehicle and had something to do with the front and the overall package," Belgrove says. "It was engineered by my department, but I do not claim its design. The side elevation was by Leslie Moore of Mulliners."

A box is the optimum shape for containing large volume, so it was natural that the squared-off lines of the little car made for cavernous interior space. Despite its 84-inch wheelbase (ten inches less than Volkswagen), the little Triumph easily held four people comfortably. Chief body engineer Arthur Ballard, who helped design the Triumph Roadster back in 1945, was responsible for a novel design of the front seats whereby the seat cushion moved forward as the backrest was tilted - the same way as many latter day cars that like to claim this feature as a first.

Flower power was unique and never supplied to another Triumph: it came from an L-head four of 1247 cc, bore and stroke of 63 x 100 mm with an aluminium head, producing 38 horsepower at 4200 rpm. For shifting purposes, chief engineer Ted Grinham elected to use the Vanguard

Views of Sectioned Mayflower

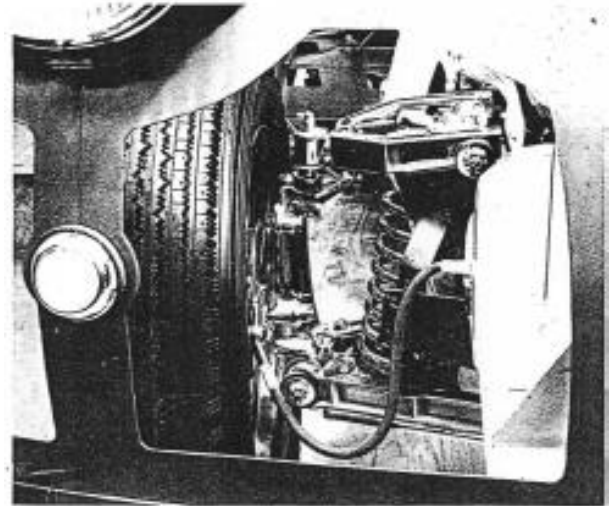
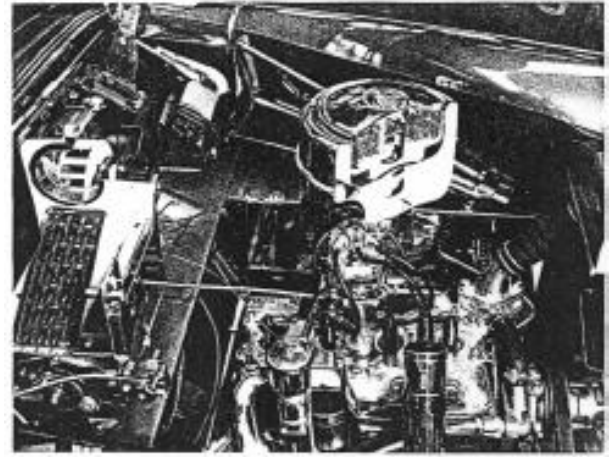
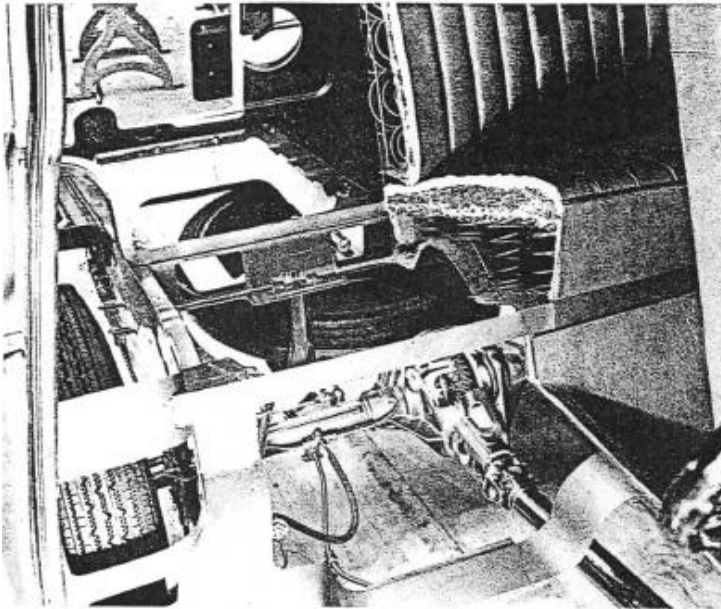


gearbox, itself a derivation of the first Roadster/Renown four-speed but using only the top three gears. Since these were synchronized, the Mayflower and Vanguard offered the world's first all-synchro three-speed column shift, an innovation Ford would spout proudly about fifteen years later. But the high gearing necessitated a low rear axle ratio of 5.125:1, which helped account for the unbelievable Mayflower spurt from zero to three mph noted at the outset of this story!

Needless to say, the Mayflower's long stroker didn't turn out much torque: *The Autocar* pegged it in "pounds-inches" to make it sound better. There were 693 of them at 2000 rpm or, in more familiar terminology, 57.75 foot-pounds. Top speed was 65 mph, though the car took most of the forenoon to get there, and fuel mileage was a creditable 40 miles to the Imperial gallon, or 32 to one of ours.

The Mayflower was introduced at the Triumph factory in 1949 amidst a great hullabaloo, with Sir John presiding at a round table encircling a huge model of the original Mayflower, built by a Coventry craftsman. Publicity continued to be imaginative - for the Festival of Britain in 1951 another Mayflower was laboriously sectioned to display literally every interior and mechanical detail, and each metal part was polished to a mirror finish, for details

of which please refer to the photos on these pages. Attached to all displays was the usual broadside of Mayflower promotion, touting this "light car of elegant British styling and unusually handsome appearance, designed for



comfortable family motoring. [It is] well equipped, roomy, with wide doors and front seats that hinge forward to allow easy access to the rear seats, a car that offers the best in modern engineering, skill, design and performance."

The Mayflower sold for \$1685 in New York and as low as \$1595 in Canada, where it was fitted with a heater and a leather front seat as standard equipment. But even models for the South

African bush were comprehensively equipped, boasting a key locking bonnet mascot, oversized oil bath air cleaner, locking gas cap, full set of tools including a non-slip jack and starting handle, and a luggage compartment lid that flopped down to carry big loads, the license plate bracket hinging down to remain visible. Radio and heater were the usual U.S. options, though one could order full leather upholstery if desired. Most American Mayflowers came with cut pile carpeting, while others used rubber floor mats, and were often two-toned with the contrast line miming the full length of the car at the crease where fenders met body.

Unremarkably, the most amusing and accurate road test of a Triumph Mayflower was performed by Tom McCahill in *Mechanix Illustrated*. Uncle Tom said it had "more acute angles than you can find in the uplift ads, and is the only car in the world selling for less than ten grand that follows the knife-edge school of design [he forgot the Renown] ... To me [it's] a baby town car. It is a design most people either hate on sight or warm up to gradually. It is about as sporty as shooting parrots in a cage and as streamlined as King Farouk doing a one-and-a-half off a ten-foot spring board." But Unk was one of those who warmed to the Mayflower. After his test he called it "an exceptionally fine handling car," and said it held the road "like a tar slain on a white shirt. The more I drove the Mayflower the more I liked it. With myself and [Labrador retriever] Joe and 500 pounds extra added weight, it took my long 28 percent grade hill climb without the slightest sign of distress. Naturally this was done in low gear but at the steepest point I stopped the car dead and then started off without a single buck. With one average size driver alone in the car, the Mayflower would be a real threat on Switzerland's Matterhorn. Considering its size and the fact that four people can go for a trip in this barge, the Mayflower is quite a mighty little atom."

In time for Earl's Court 1950, a new Mayflower model appeared in the form of a drophead convertible. Frank Callaby, co-designer of the Roadster back in 1945, recalls that "Sir John Black asked Mulliners to design the dropheads and build the conversions." But only ten such models were made between August 1950 and January 1951. Callaby adds: "Tom Cox, who joined Standard-Triumph from Mulliners, thinks the high cost of converting the saloon body was the most likely reason that prevented it from going into limited production."

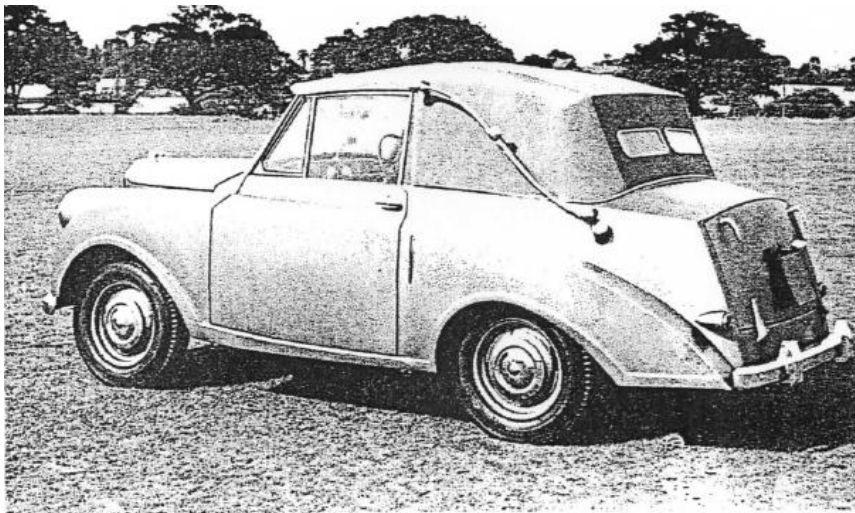
The drophead Mayflower, with its enormous roof and landau bars, was an ungainly looking rig but one which has remained much sought after by enthusiasts of the bizarre. Of the ten cars built, eight were done in gray with red leather upholstery, the remaining two in maroon with brown and maroon with tan leather. Three dropheads

(two grays and a maroon) had left hand drive and were possibly exported to the U.S. or Canada. This writer takes the liberty of putting the reader on the alert. If you hear of one, call us first!

Frank Callaby says that the 32,000 production run during three calendar years was reasonably successful by Triumph terms. "Ironically the demand increased considerably as the model was phasing out in 1953. But it was considered to be more profitable to replace the Mayflower." By the mid-Fifties Standard was producing the Ten (Triumph Ten in the States), a lumpy looking little saloon or station wagon with nothing particularly to recommend it. The cost of assembling the numerous sharply creased body panels of the Mayflower precluded its continued production once the Ten had arrived.



The 1950 Mayflower drophead convertible.

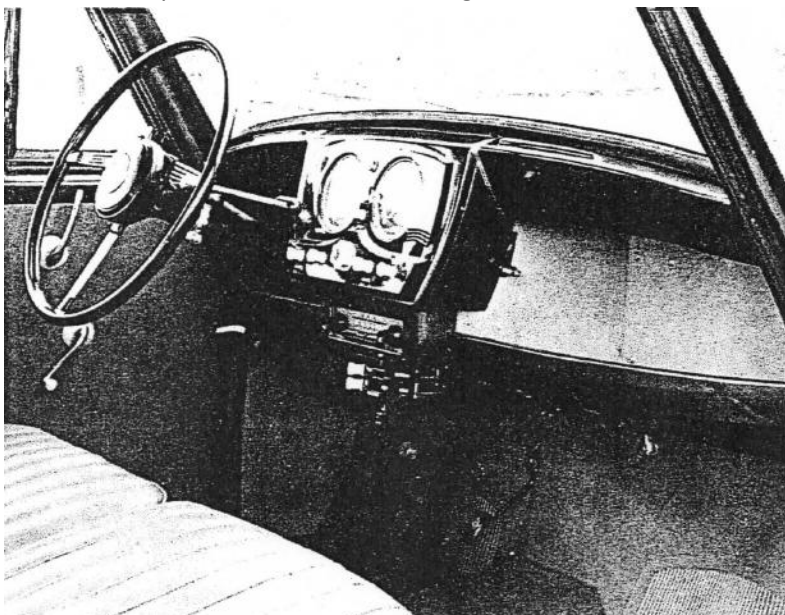


Visibility from inside the closed drophead was limited to say the least. . . .

To return to the driving impressions which began this story, it is no exaggeration to suggest that driving a Mayflower is like no other four-wheeled experience. It has a greater ability to stop people in their tracks than an SJ Duesenberg. Meaning no disparagement to the King of Cars, but people are more used to seeing a full blown Classic on the road than one of what McCahill called these "slab sided tobacco cans." People simply stare at it. "What kind of car is that?," they query with shy smiles. "A Triumph? I never knew they built anything like that!" Others don't even bother to

smile — they just burst out laughing. For the sheer fun of seeing people enjoying your car, the Mayflower can't be beat.

But we digress. The wide doors swing open easily and one finds himself in a chair-high seat from which even the shortest person has a commanding view of the road. All around is plentiful glass, affording excellent visibility.



Mayflower dash featured near full instrumentation, was designed for either left-hand or right-hand drive.

To the centre of the dash sits a pair of large circular instruments, one a speedometer (with trip odometer) and the other a combination gauge for oil pressure, water temperature and fuel. The only idiot light in sight is a dime-sized ruby warning signal that glows when there's a battery discharge — though the Flower runs a 12 volt system that never tires of spinning its little crank. Below the gauges is a row of plastic buttons: choke, panel/interior lights, key/headlight control, wipers, starter. Below those is a radio blank, followed by Mr. Smith's heater, whose main characteristic is a high pitched wheeze and little or no output no matter where the controls are set. Mayflowers are from a land where winters are mild.

The car starts with a pull of the starter button and springs into a high, tinny idle. There's no mystery about the gearbox — one faces a conventional American-type three-speed, except that he can dump it into any forward gear thanks to the synchro feature. This proves a needed advantage, for there are times, more numerous than imaginable, when the Mayflower must be downshifted to first while still rolling. You'd be surprised how often the poor little thing would just roll backwards otherwise. On the road the Mayflower handles well and the steering, with a familiar TR type wheel, is very positive, though it lacks centring action. The exhaust, spitting out of a pipe the size of a pea shooter, somehow sounds a little more impressive at speed. Cornering is adequate, though the height of the car makes it pretty comical when so engaged - it has some body roll and seems at times ready to fall over on its side or roll over on its back, with its little wheels spinning in the air. Acceleration is nil. McCahill ran one up to 60 in 26.33 seconds, but the best we've ever done is 30, with a strong tailwind. Road test figures of 65 mph and 32 mpg seem accurate.

The Mayflower's most extraordinary feature has to be its efficient use of interior space. There is more room in every direction — above, below, to the sides, and in the trunk — than the VW Beetle, and a lot of other cars of greater wheelbase. Arthur Ballard's seat action allows for easy entry, and once seated the passenger has plenty of space and visibility. He does rattle around in there a little, because with this wheelbase the ride closely resembles that of a roller coaster, and on a concrete surface every tar strip loosens another filling. The VW comparison is revealing in several respects:

1953 Triumph Mayflower	1973 VW Beetle
Engine 1.2 liter L-head 4	Engine 1.6 liter flat 4
Horsepower 38 gross @ 4200 rpm	Horsepower 53 gross @ 4000 rpm
Compression Ra. 6.8 to 1	Compression Ra. 7.5 to 1
Transmission all-synchro e spd.	Transmission all-synchro 4 spd.
Wheelbase/Length 84/154"	Wheelbase/Length 94.5/159.8"
Width/Height 62/62"	Width/Height 61/59"
Passengers 4 comfortably	Passengers 4 tightly
Curb Weight 2100 pounds	Curb Weight 1825 pounds
0-60 Accel.27-30 seconds	0-60 Accel.22-25 seconds
Top Speed65 mpg	Top Speed82 mph
Fuel Economy32 mpg	Fuel Economy23 mpg

What is the Mayflower's forte for collectors today? For one thing, it's cheap. No speculator, auctioneer or "investor" is going to hassle us on this one, friends, because nobody wants to be bothered. You can buy a nice Mayflower, when you can find one, for \$500 to \$1000, and a mint original recently sold for \$1800. Pay no attention to the ads following in the wake of this article, which usually do when a car rakes in some publicity. A Triumph Mayflower priced more than \$2000 is priced too high.

Parts are readily available through an enthusiastic Mayflower Club in England. And for those interested in all Triumphs in general, may we recommend The Vintage Triumph Register.

What else a Mayflower offers is practical second car transport for the age of high priced petrol. In good tune one of these buckets will easily return 30 miles to the gallon, and will be happy at the 55 mph speed limit, if you're one of those rare birds who obey it. The Mayflower is also guaranteed to provide you with more fun per dollar just from watching bystanders' expressions than any other car short of a white shag upholstered VW.

Uncle Tom probably said it best. "The Triumph Mayflower is a 30-cent aristocrat with a rare port and custom cigar look. I can't picture Pierpont Nicklenose, the slick city banker, arriving in one for a board meeting. [But] what's more important, it will look just as funny or just as good (depending on your viewpoint) five years from now as it does today. As the Marlboro cigarette people say, 'If you want to escape from the commonplace,' the doors are open.'

Elegance in Miniature

Motor Trend, October 1953

The Triumph Mayflower is just as much at home in rough going as at a garden party

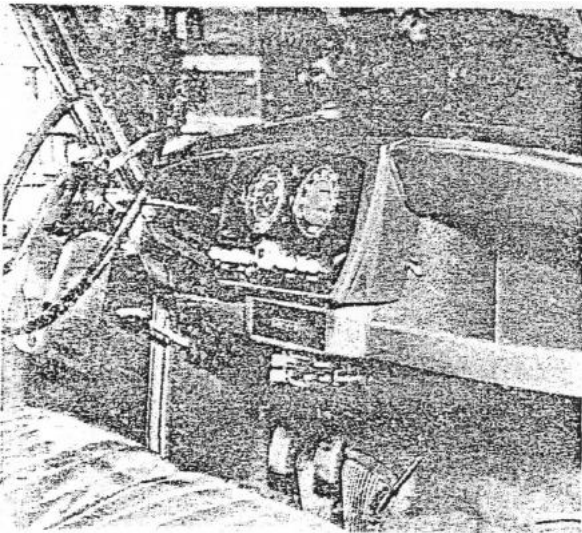


WHEN WE DROVE OUT of the Vaughan-Singer agency in Los Angeles with the Mayflower, we suspected we would receive a lot of comment on this quaint-looking little car. The comments—and there were plenty of them—were obviously spontaneous: "Oh! What a cute little car" (woman). "Looks top-heavy" (man). -"Watch-charm Rolls Royce" (man). "Like a baby buggy without handles" (woman). We had no intention of conducting a public opinion poll, but one thing was apparent to us—you either like the looks of this car or you don't. And even if you don't, you've got to admit it has distinction. It has something else remarkable—an engine with amazingly little vibration.

How does it ride? Definitely on the firm side. Big bumps don't faze it, but short, sharp ones are quite obvious. It didn't bottom on severe dips at 45 mph. Sharp curves and rough roadways produced little pitch or roll. The body was free of vibration even on rough spots. It rumbles under some conditions; undercoating would probably clear this up. Steering wheel vibration was quite noticeable on washboard roads.

Is there enough room? The front seats are exceptionally comfortable for both passenger and driver. You sit quite high, in keeping, with the dignified air of the car, and the semi-bucket seats hold you in position. There is ample legroom when the seats are moved back, but this restricts rear seat legroom.

Is it easy to drive? We found it very pleasant. The large, squarish glass areas give excellent visibility. Many U.S. drivers will prefer to add a larger rear-view mirror (the standard one is strictly ladies'-purse size). Manoeuvrability is excellent. The steering-column shift lever (standard three-speed shift) had a rubbery feeling to which we didn't become completely accustomed. Changing gears must be done quite slowly. When we violated the manufacturer's recommendations on this point, the transmission produced some very unhealthy noises.



Here's the front compartment of the "miniature Rolls-Royce." Controls may look foreign, but they work like a U.S. auto

Do you have to treat it gently? No, handling is tops. We flew the tar into light, gravelled turns at higher-than-sensible speeds, yet we found little tendency for the rear end to break loose. On very bumpy turns a slight correction on the steering wheel snapped us back on the track. There was no wheel fight or tendency toward slewing in patches of loose gravel. Brakes proved adequate. Acceleration is fair up to 35 mph but falls off rapidly beyond that point (the flat-head four gives just 38 bhp). Caution is desirable when passing other cars on the highway. We pushed up to 60mph and felt we might have gone a little faster. We felt considerably more comfortable, though, when cruising at 45 to 50. We got almost 35 miles per gallon.

Are controls and instruments handy? Instruments are grouped in a neat cluster in the centre of the dash. The speedometer is on the right-hand side and is difficult for

the driver to see. The cane-type emergency brake is on the left side of the steering column. Controls are within easy reach of the driver with the exception of the cowl vent lever (it's out of sight under the instrument panel). Twin electric windshield wipers have excellent sweep and overlap. An open parcel shelf extends on both sides of the instrument panel.

Is the interior novel also? Not particularly, though it's trim and smart. Upholstery is good-quality simulated leather. Washable plastic covers the headlining. Rubber floor mats in front and rear are closely fitted. Unlike current domestic cars, the Triumph's inside door handles push forward to open. If this bothers you, it is simple to



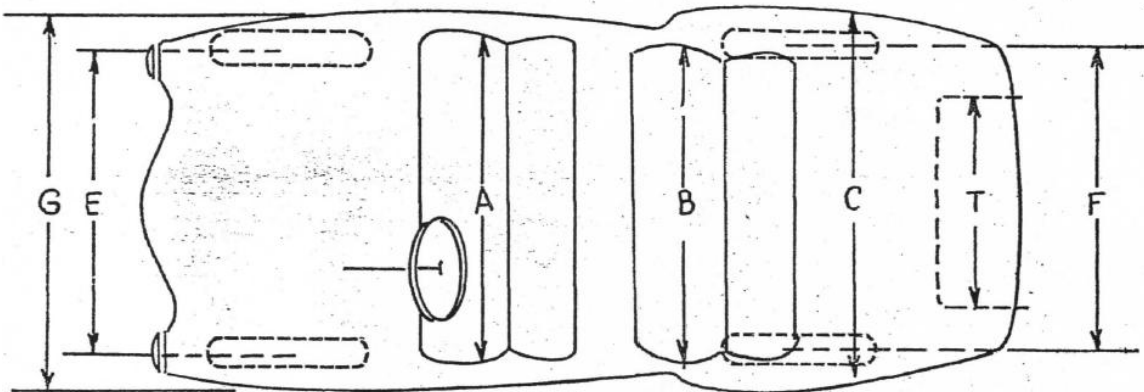
There are few handier ways to get your spare out of the rear compartment than to have it fall, clean and neat, at your feet

rotate them 180 degrees. The trunk's lid folds down to form a tailgate and to facilitate loading luggage. The license plate holder and light are hinged so you can drive the car with the lid open if you want to carry an unusual amount of luggage. The spare wheel is in a hinged tray under this compartment, where it will never soil luggage. Tools and jack are stowed under the hood.

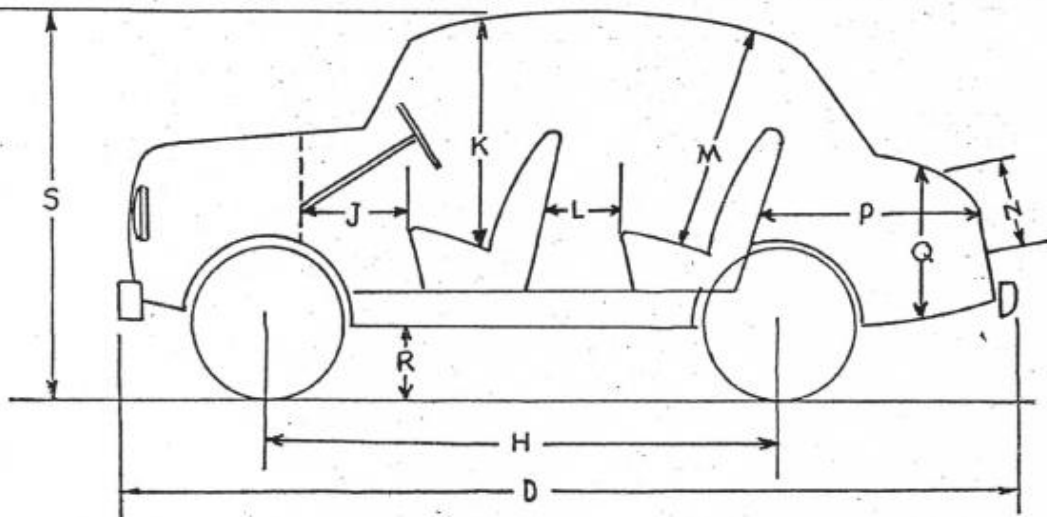
Is the car well put together? Yes, body panels fit well and the trim and finish are good. A single key fits all locks including the trunk and hood. The single door lock is on the left-hand side.

In general, the Triumph Mayflower is a smart and utilitarian little town car that surprised us with its good behaviour where the going was tough. It would also be quite satisfactory for trips of moderate length and speed.

CAR	ENGINE						WEIGHT & RATIOS			CHASSIS		
	Type	Bore & Stroke	Displ. Cu. In.	Comp. Ratio	BHP @ RPM	Torque Lbs.-Ft.	Dry Weight	BHP per Cu. In.	Lbs. per BHP	Turns L to L	Rear Axle Ratio	Fwd. Speeds
Austin A-40.....	Ohv, 4	2.59x3.50	73.2	7.2:1	42@4600	58@2200	2184	.57	52.0	2.3	5.28	4
Hillman Minx.....	L, 4	2.56x3.74	77.2	6.6:1	37.5@4200	59@2200	2039	.48	54.6	2.5	5.22	4
Ford Consul.....	Ohv, 4	3.13x3.00	92.0	6.8:1	47@4400	74@2400	2262	.51	48.1	2.5	4.56	3
Ford Zephyr.....	Ohv, 6	3.13x3.00	138.0	6.8:1	68@4000	112@2000	2447	.48	35.9	2.5	4.38	3
Morris Minor.....	Ohv, 4	2.28x2.99	49.0	7.2:1	29@4800	40@2400	1662	.59	58.0	2.5	5.38	4
Triumph Mayflower	L, 4	2.48x3.94	76.1	6.8:1	38@4200	58@2500	2058	.50	54.2	2.3	5.13	3
Volkswagen.....	Ohv, 4	2.95x2.52	69.0	5.8:1	25@3300	51@2000	1550	.35	62.0	2.4	4.43	4



CAR & MODEL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L	M	N	P	Q	R	S	T	Clear Door Opening		TYRE SIZE
																			F	R	
Austin A-40.....	32	39	51	199.5	48.5	50	63	92.5	13 27.5	38	20 5.5	34	21	31.5	25	6.75	64	32.5	31	29	5.25:16
Hillman Minx.....	31.5	38	57	157.5	48.62	48.5	62	93	21.5 29.5	36.5	13 8.9	33.5	22.5	21 Av.	17	7	60	45.5	33.5	30.5	5.00:16
Ford Consul.....	33.75	53	49.25	164.75	50	49	64	100	19 24.5	37.5	14 8.5	37	21.5	31	18	6.5	60.75	48.5	31.5	31	5.50:13
Ford Zephyr.....	33.75	53	49.25	165	50	49	64	104	19 24.5	37.5	14 8.5	37	21.5	31	15	6.5	60.75	48.5	31.5	31	6.40:13
Morris Minor.....	50	40	41	148	51	51	61	8.8	10 25.3	36	23 7.5	32	23	23 Av.	16	6.75	60	32	36	—	5.00:14
Triumph Mayflower...	51	37.5	51	156	46	49	62	84	23.5 20.5	38	6 11	34	18.5	21	19	7.5	62	40	36.75	—	5.50:15
Volkswagen.....	47	32.5	42	160	51	49.2	60.5	94.5	13.5 30.5	36.5	6 17	32.5	—	17	8.5	6.3	61	49	36.5	—	5.60:14



Testing the Triumph Mayflower

Science and Mechanics, February 1953

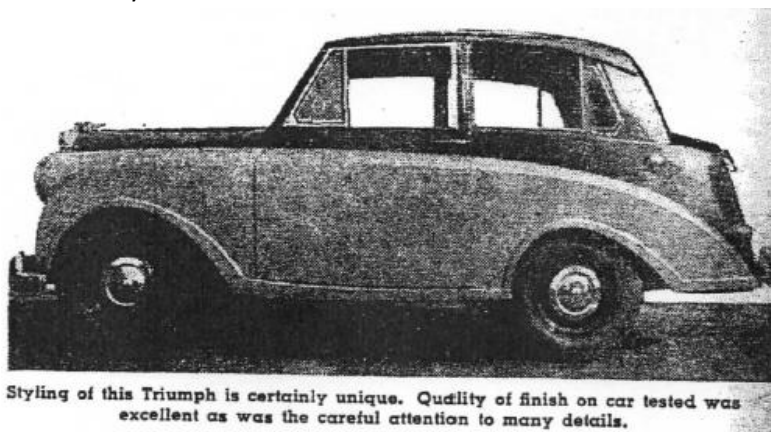


YOU may or may not have a quarrel with the razor-edge styling of this little English car—that's a matter of the style you prefer. Personally we feel that the Mayflower designers tried to produce, something reminiscent of a scaled-down Rolls Royce, and the Rolls doesn't have the type of lines that scale down harmoniously.



The Triumph took 35 minutes of this rugged lugging through the sand traps without excessive engine heating or any sign of chassis weakening

The purpose of these Science at the Wheel reports, however, is not to burden you with our ideas about styling. Instead the tests conducted for us by the independent Motor Vehicle Research laboratory give you the facts about how the car performs and how it is built, and let you decide for yourself whether the car we report on is the one you want.



Styling of this Triumph is certainly unique. Quality of finish on car tested was excellent as was the careful attention to many details.

What is impressive about so many of these small imported cars is the true craftsman's attention to small details, small comforts and the elimination of small annoyances that goes into them. Rather than giving you gas-gulping high speed and acceleration, the British designers usually give you a precision-made small engine that gets you there on as little fuel as possible, plus good tools and convenient servicing points that mean you can make many simple adjustments yourself, and keep your repairman from having to add costly time to his bills—just getting at the source of the trouble.

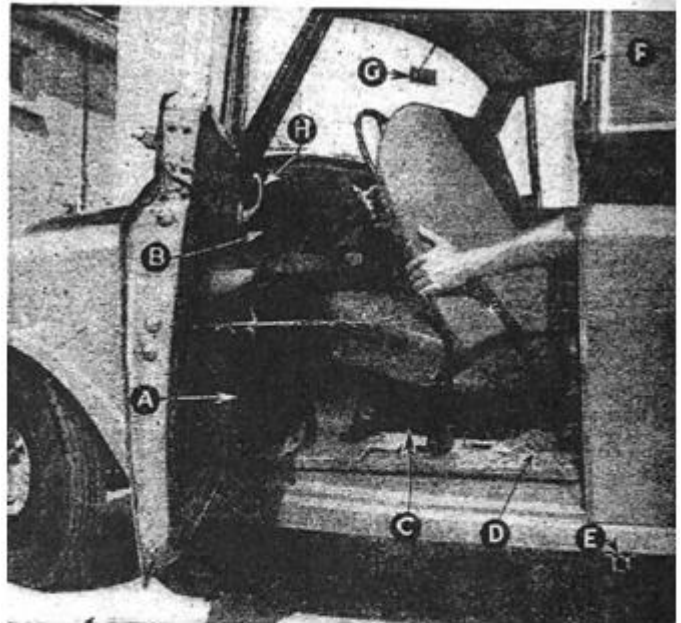
Take this Triumph as an example. In the MVR tests, her true top speed was only 63 mph but her gas mileage on the measured 5-gallon run averaged an excellent 29.4 mpg. At a steady 30 mph she recorded 39 mpg which is about as good as the best figure we have recorded to date. On acceleration, it took 33.68 seconds to go from standstill to 60 mph, proving that this Triumph is certainly no thunderbolt.

Sometimes, however, the car that can hold a good steady speed on curves as well as straightaways gets there just as soon as the speedster that has to slow down to take the curves. How does this Triumph do? It took the curves fairly well and managed a driver-estimated maximum safe speed on a paved 400 ft circle of 41 mph, which, in all fairness, is no better or worse than what many American cars did on the same test. On the regular road runs this little import had steady, stable road manners, with a minimum tire howl on the curves. As for stopping ability,

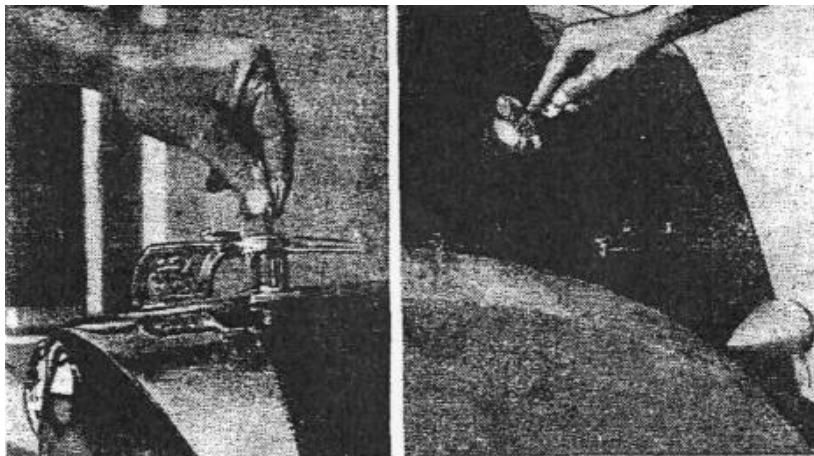
this car had good braking characteristics and showed a minimum amount of slewing or fading, even after repeated panic stops.

How about those small details that mean a lot to the type of owner who is not in an eternal hurry, trying to beat his neighbour's Mercury away from the stoplight? This relatively low-cost Triumph (\$1750 f.o.b. with heater at the nearest port of entry) has a good share of such thoughtful features. For instance, there's a key-locking hood, an oversized oil bath air cleaner, locking gas cap, clips to hold your luggage secure in the trunk, a very complete set of tools (including a non-slipping jack which allows you to change a tire in your Sunday best) and that old fashioned implement long extinct on this side of the Atlantic, a crank. The next time the thermometer bumps the zero mark and your starting motor can't budge the engine, think of that crank.

The frame of this car is clean and rugged, and the hydraulic brake lines and linkages are well protected. The body and frame are united by welding, giving a unit type of construction that proved very durable, withstanding the worst we could give it in the torture chamber and rough track tests. Only the garnish moulding loosened due to production faults, but this was easily repaired with a screwdriver. Incidentally, your serviceman will not have to be a double-jointed contortionist to service this car, since the key servicing points are easy to reach and adjust.



Front seat area showing (A) fulcrum type foot pedals, (B) open area glove compartment, (C) how entire seat moves up and forward allowing rear seat passengers ample entry space, (D) sunken floor in rear for more foot space, (E) slot for jack to fit in, (F) folded in semaphore-type direction signal, (G) small rear view mirror, (H) door handle within too easy grabbing distance for safety.



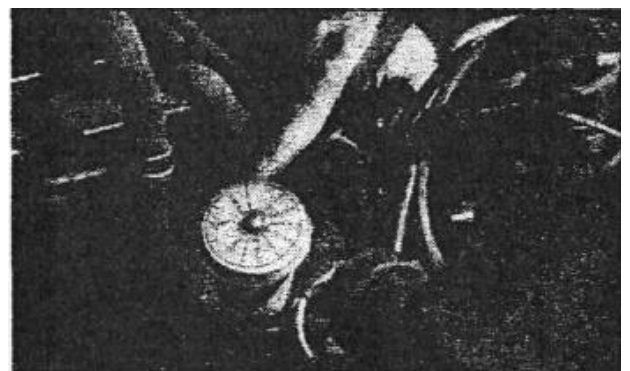
Both hood and gas tank can be locked to prevent fuel loss or engine tampering. Extras like these are plentiful on this Triumph.

cloudburst. The side windows and vent panes leaked as badly as those on any vehicle tested to date, and the windshield had several leakage points. Other seam areas showed comparatively little leakage and the car started and was driven away immediately after the test, indicating that even in the worst rainstorm the engine wouldn't stall.

How safe would this car be in the event of an accident? Probably as safe as the average. It is a well-built car, but it uses a three-spoke steering wheel (whose bottom spoke might impale the driver if the wheel rim breaks off). Also, the front door handle is positioned in front of the arm rest in such a way that it might be grabbed and the door opened

There are some features in this car's design and production which could have been improved upon. The possibility of vapour locking is present in this car because of the unprotected fuel line between the pump and the carburettor. Some of the wiring almost touched the engine block. This could cause rapid deterioration of the insulating material.

Our MVR technicians were quite surprised when what appeared to be watertight construction leaked excessively at several points when two 2 1/2 inch hoses with 100 pounds pressure soaked the car more thoroughly than a heavy, hard



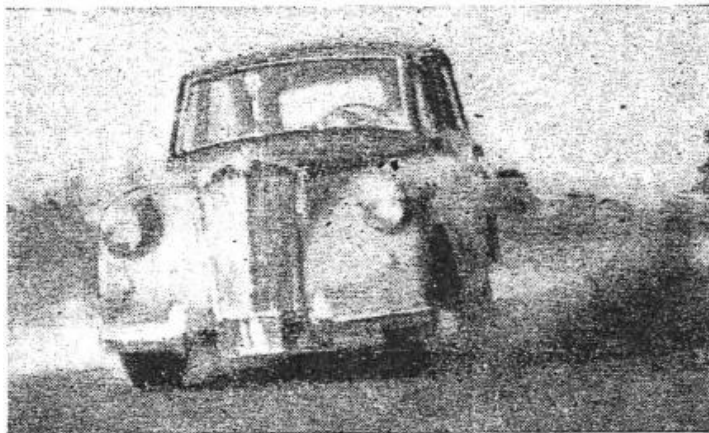
Oil intake cap tells you just what types of oil can be used in this car at handy location.

in case of a sudden stop or slow down. Then there is that matter of the one speed electric windshield wiper—adding another speed would give you that change of pace that helps to keep you alert during those long rainy drives by varying the wiper stroke speed.

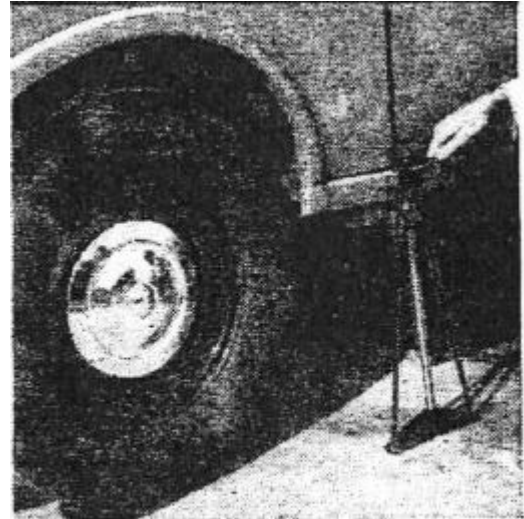
However, these complaints are commonplace ones, and the general level of construction in this car is of very high quality.



The driver-estimated maximum safe speed on this 400 ft. circle was 41 mph, which is what the Triumph is doing here.



Triumph makes a panic braking stop. Her braking ability was good and fading was at a minimum throughout the tests.



Jack fits into one of four lugs on the body, works easily.

Drivers' Observations

ROADABILITY: Good cornering and road holding, and a very smooth ride for so small a car. Tire howl on fast corners very low. Wind noise level is medium at 50 mph. Engine roar at a minimum up to 50, increases sharply above this speed. There is low road shock to the steering wheel. No failures were experienced in the most rugged tests, although the front suspension bottomed at low speeds on the cross-ties.

RIDING COMFORT: For such a small car it is very good, with ample room from both the driver and passengers' standpoint. Quality construction holds the rattle-squeak level low. Plenty of room for driver's thigh to clear steering wheel when applying brakes; rear compartment floor is sunken to provide more leg room. Hand-brake lever located on left of steering wheel can jam driver's hand against the underside of dash when applied. Windshield reflection pickup includes steering wheel and shift lever in the daytime. Instrument cluster reading very good at night, but dash lights cannot be dimmed. Speedometer located at far right of instrument cluster (original design was for right-hand drive), picked up intermittent reflections during daylight, reducing ease of reading. At speeds above 50 mph, a pronounced draft hit the driver's neck. Leather and plastic upholstery material appeared to be good quality. Vision was good in this car. Heater is excellent and is designed to take in air through the cowl vent, eliminating the possibility of sucking carbon monoxide

from any car in front of it—a very worthwhile safety feature.

INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROLS: Pull-type starter button and windshield wiper control on dash, easy to reach. The speedometer is equipped with a regular and a trip odometer; the latter can be reset by a small knob on the right hand side of the dash cluster. The temperature gage is calibrated in centigrade rather than fahrenheit. Dimmer switch to left of clutch easy to get to and to operate. Action of the accelerator is sensitive. Direction signal controls located on top of horn button. The transmission is a standard three-speed, with steering column gear shift lever.

HARMONIC BALANCE POINT: (best cruising speed as determined by the "feel" of the car to the driver). 35 mph indicated in top gear on level road.

SPECIAL COMMENTS: The enamel finish on this car was excellent, showed minimum orange peel effect. The door sill and the window frames which also form the tops of the doors are solid brass, heavily chrome-plated. Hub caps are finished on the inside with a special plastic paint to prevent rust. Motor, transmission, and spring shackles rubber-mounted. The car produces very little vibration. Counter-balanced hood operates easily. The trunk door, hinged at the bottom, can be left down like a tailgate in order to carry unusually large loads. With lid in this position, tail light and license plate swing down so they may be seen.

Triumph Mayflower Performance

DATE OF TESTS: September 9, 1952.
TYPE OF CAR: 1952 Triumph Mayflower 2-door sedan.
WEATHER CONDITIONS (prevailing at time of recorded road tests): Temperature 74-81° F. Humidity: 31-74% average. Wind velocity: 5-9 mph. Wind direction: W/SW. Barometer 29.15-29.9.
ROAD CONDITION (for gas mileage, acceleration, and brake efficiency tests): Asphalt-covered crushed rock, clean and dry.
MILEAGE AT START OF TESTS: Over 1,000 miles
MILES COVERED DURING TESTS: 1265
GASOLINE USED: Regular
OIL USED: SAE #20

TEST DATA

GASOLINE MILEAGE (checked with fuel velocity flow meter, gas volume meter, 5th wheel, and special vacuum gauge. Passenger weight: 345 lbs., test equipment weight 51 lbs., fuel tank full. Two steady runs made at each speed, north and south, in (3) gear and averaged. 1% grade. Tire pressure front and rear 25 lbs. Speedometer corrections not applied to miles-per-gallon readings):

MPH Speedometer	True Speed (5th Wheel)	Miles Per Gallon	RPM
20	19	37.68	1308
30	28	39.25	1988
40	38	36.75	2490
50	48	30.06	3175
60	57	28.16	3803

ODOMETER CORRECTION (checked with Veedor foot counter, calibrated "6th" and "7th" wheels used, with car tire pressure 25 lbs. cold. Wheels error checkout was 1' 7 1/2" in 5,280 ft. Indicated speed maintained during tests 20 mph):

Car's odometer reading, 5,280 ft. True distance traveled, 4,920 ft. Odometer error in mile, .360 ft. Car's odometer reading in 2 mile check, 10,560 ft. True footage, 9,830. Odometer error in 2 miles, .730 ft.

BRAKE EFFICIENCY (checked with decelerometer and Sloux pressure cylinder. Tire pressure 25 lbs. cold all around. Times between normal stops approx. 3 min.; between panic stops 3 min.):

NORMAL STOPS

MPH Speedometer	Pedal Pressure in lbs.	Efficiency in %	Approx. Time in seconds	Stopping Distance
20	48	45	1.77	197'
30	47	45	3.10	70"*
40	48	45	4.04	98"*
50	49	51	4.82	143"7/8*
60	54	51	5.51	230"4/8*

PANIC STOPS

MPH Speedometer	Pedal Pressure in lbs.	Efficiency in %	Approx. Time in seconds	Stopping Distance
20	63	79	1.90	24"1/2*
30	74	89	2.05	40"
40	75	90	2.70	56"
50	73	83	3	99"
60	81	78	3.80	159"

REAR WHEEL HORSEPOWER (checked on dynamometer. Temperature in laboratory 69° F., under hood -87° F., humidity 64%, barometer 29.15, rear tire pressure 25 lbs. cold, absorption unit temperature 115° F). At an indicated 1,990 rpm, with 2" vacuum, indicated speed of 30 mph, developed horsepower recorded at rear wheels was 14.653.

Family favourites

Practical Classics, November 1996

There's little more than 100cc between them and they could all be bought in the mid-1950s. Yet these four cars could hardly be more different. Which one would Nick Larkin take home?



ONE'S small and neat, another a strange mass of compressed curves and sharp edges. A third is almost cuddly and the fourth strange yet pretty.

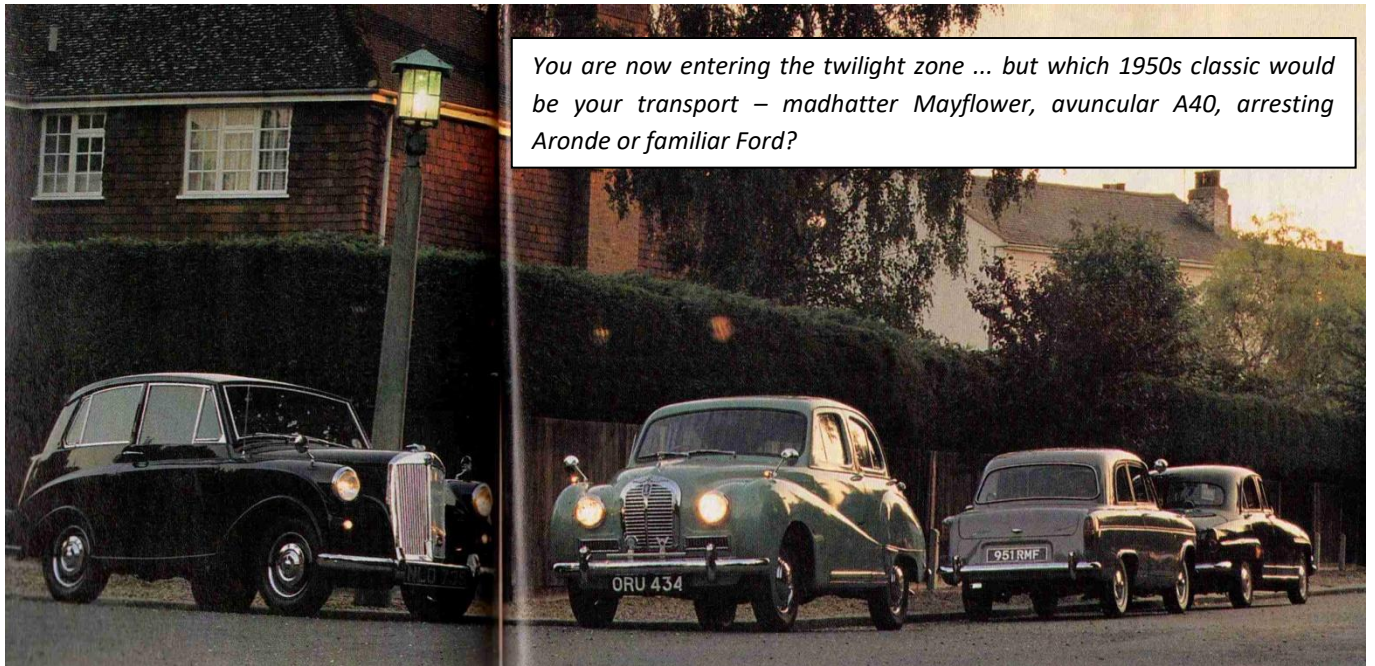
No, we're not talking about the ladies in our advertising department but four cars from the 1950s, lined up and ready for scrutiny

The merest of glances shows that even in a coal mine at midnight you'd never confuse any of our contenders by their looks. As we're soon to find out, the same is true when you get behind the wheel, too.

Introducing the contestants: From Dagenham comes the Ford 100E Anglia. Straightforwardly but attractively styled, the 100E range which first saw the light of day in 1953 was also produced in Popular and Prefect forms, plus estate and van versions. Ford's 1172CC side valve engine was still being used when the last car left the line in 1962.

Despite this handicap, the 100E range sold well throughout its life, and the number surviving today is tribute to the cars' sturdiness.

Canley's contender is the Triumph Mayflower, named after the ship which took the Pilgrim Fathers to discover their new world in America. Triumph hoped this unique small car would invade the US. It didn't to a great extent but 35,000 were sold worldwide during 1949-'53, which could have been worse. No-one who's ever seen a Mayflower forgets the shape - imagine an Austin Princess limousine compressed to half its normal size. Definitely distinctive, and definitely fun nowadays!



You are now entering the twilight zone ... but which 1950s classic would be your transport – madhatter Mayflower, avuncular A40, arresting Aronde or familiar Ford?

The Mayflower's 'razor edged' styling echoed that of the larger Renown, though it had its own 1247cc alloy-headed side valve engine, the block being based on a pre-war Standard unit.

All the way from Longbridge is the Austin Somerset, a curvy car in the best 1950s Austin tradition. More than 173,000 were sold during 1952-'54, the model using the mechanics from the previous Devon model of 1947. A separate chassis was retained, as was the 1200cc engine, though the Somerset's styling echoed that of the larger Hereford.

Finally fresh from France we have a 1955 Simca Aronde, a car which was well received when it was launched on the British market but which was robbed of the sales success it deserved by a combination of high Purchase Tax and a rather sparse dealer network.

Simca had been making Fiats under licence since it was founded in 1934, but the Aronde, introduced in 1951, was the French company's own design, though its Italian allies assisted.

We wonder whether even Simca was prepared for the runaway success that the Aronde would become, with more



1955 SIMCA ARONDE
LAURENT CHARBONNIER AND PHILLIPE PEREZ



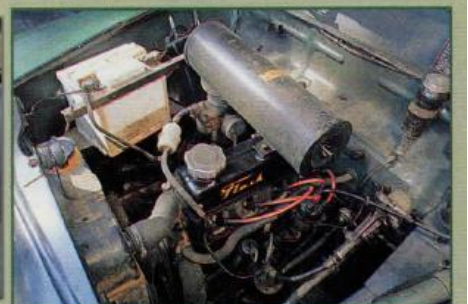
IF YOU THOUGHT French classics ended with the Citroën Traction and DS, you'll have a lot to learn from Laurent Charbonnier and Philippe Perez. With more than 20 years' experience of working on and selling Gallic cars, the duo have just set up Mr Frenchy's in London. Philippe has lived in Britain for 14 years, much of the time employed by Citroën, and Laurent has been here seven years after previously

being engaged in selling British classics to the French! Mr Frenchy's will carry out all repairs on vehicles as diverse as Panhards and Renault 4CVs, and a long list of French contacts means just about any classic can be imported by Philippe and Laurent. In the case of the Aronde, it was taken in part-exchange from a friend in France who wanted a Rolls Royce. A one-family-from-new car, the Simca was resprayed in the 1970s but is other-

wise original. A new clutch has just been fitted. 'The Aronde is one of the best cars to come from France and is very much underrated in Britain,' says Laurent. Mr Frenchy's, tel 0181 968 4738, have the Simca for sale at £2500.



Simca interior is very 1950s but also typically French, which means it's quirky and illogical to Anglo-Saxons.



Engine is the performance 'Flash' version, with no fewer than 48bhp from its 1290cc, giving a 76mph top speed.

1953 AUSTIN SOMERSET

PETER RIDGEWAY



PETER RIDGEWAY must know his Austin Somerset quite well by now. He's owned the car since 1960!

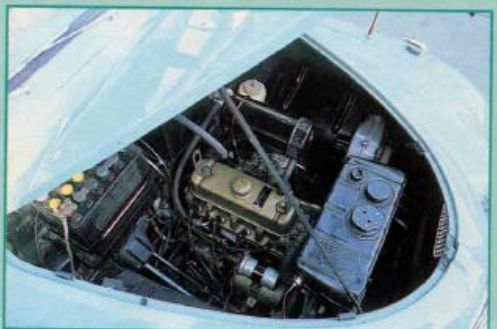
'I honestly can't tell you how many miles it's done,' he says. 'But it had a reconditioned engine fitted in 1965...'

The car was fully restored after being hit side-on in 1970. A few years later, Peter decided to preserve it.

'It's a quality car, easy to maintain and reliable.'

wouldn't sell it,' says Peter, a 58-year-old joiner from Farnborough in Hampshire.

The Somerset has starred at two family weddings, and Peter still enjoys driving it as much as ever!



than 1.5 million cars finding homes over 1950-'58. The car was initially available with a 1221cc engine, but from 1955 the wonderfully named 1290cc 'Flash' engine joined the range. A major restyle saw the car lasting until 1964 as the Aronde P60.

All those buyers couldn't be wrong, could they? Our 'test' 1955 Aronde has come straight from France courtesy of London-based Gallic car specialists Mr Frenchy's.

As you'd expect from its country of origin, the car is a fine mix of style and quirkiness. Do I detect overtones of Standard Pennant from the front, Volvo Amazon at rear and Skoda Octavia from the side?

Not a bad looker overall, I thought, while sitting comfortably on the front bench seat. The cream steering wheel is smaller than many cars of the era, but the column is the size and shape of a large period coffee flask. Many things on this car are not where you'd expect them to be nor do what you'd expect them to do. Thus the wipers and light switches are small sliding devices just behind the steering wheel, there's a separate switch for a parking light, and what you'd imagine to be the indicator stalk is a light dim-dip. The horn ring looks like a piece of old coat hanger suspended from the steering wheel boss.

The dash is dominated by a large speedometer, with petrol and oil gauges and warning lights, but there's no temperature gauge; strange when it has such modern features as an automatic choke and a security device whereby you can lock the car in reverse gear.

The outer door handles are in stainless steel rather than chrome, and you push the inner ones away rather than towards you. The glovebox lids which form much of the plain 'crinkle effect' dashboard open upwards and inwards rather than outwards and downwards.

Drive the Aronde and you could forgive it virtually anything. You sit down fairly low but otherwise the driving position is first class. The steering is superbly light and positive, the column 'change responsive.

The ride is quite firm by French standards but still good. Cornering's an unflustered affair, thanks to the calming effects of good damping allied to an anti-roll bar, while the brakes are only verging on average but never give any cause for alarm. The Aronde makes the most of its 1290cc, for the engine is flexible through its power curve, which peaks at 5200rpm. All good, sensible stuff.

If the Aronde is Brie and baguettes, then the Austin Somerset is Wensleydale and Hovis, a piece of quintessential 1950s Britain, a car you want to talk to encouragingly as it plods along, gearbox whine, chattery tappets and all. Your conscience wouldn't let you thrash a Somerset into a series of sweeping bends. You make it your business to find out what the Somerset *wants* to do rather than see how it performs under stress.

The curvy bulbous body makes everyone smile, and what a lovely period colour our test car is. When it comes towards you there's almost a human face: two headlights for eyes, a snub-nose grille and

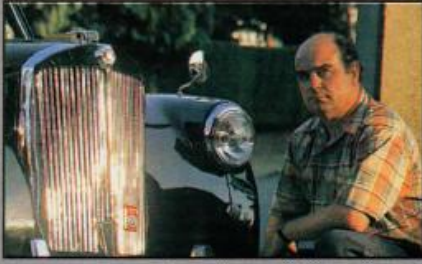
two oblong air intakes to form a moustache.

Open the tall, heavy driver's door there it is, facing you, an early 1950s world preserved perfectly for you, valve radio and all. You almost feel as if you clamber up onto the vast, squashy but still supportive seats. You sit up high, looking out onto a rounded bonnet and big Flying-A Austin sign.

This time, the steering wheel could have come from an ocean liner, such is its size. Austin knew how to lay out a clear dashboard, so the speedo dominates the central area like a mantelpiece clock, and below it are four instruments all in a row to indicate fuel, charge, oil and water status. The lights are operated by turning a plastic device around the ignition switch.

1953 TRIUMPH MAYFLOWER

HOWARD PRIOR



'WE'VE ALL just fallen in love with her. She's known as Mabel by everyone,' says plumber Howard Prior of the 1953 Triumph Mayflower he has restored over a number of years.

But Howard, 45 and from Barnet, Herts, admits this wasn't the case originally. He freely



confesses it was the car's low price which persuaded him to view it seven years ago. 'Then I realised it had good bodywork and that I could fix the mechanics.'

Mabel has since had her engine rebuilt and been treated to a rewire, rechrome and respray.



The car has now picked up a number of concours awards for its proud owner, who enjoys exhibiting it at local classic car shows.

Exactly 1200cc of Austin power is at your disposal when the engine fires. Like the Aronde, the Somerset has well-spaced gear ratios, apart from a rather low first gear, and a Somerset will bowl along at 55-60mph without a murmur

The column gear change is positive enough but under no circumstances will it be rushed. The clutch pedal is heavier than the French car's but not oppressively so, and the brakes are, if anything, better, though the pedal needs a shove for the system to give of its best.

Heavy and tall, Mr Somerset does wallow a little on ye olde bends, but matters could be worse. Where this separate-chassised car really excels is in its standard of ride: not too soggy not too firm, just right.

The Mayflower is another car which could only have come from England. Whereas the Somerset's styling makes you gasp in nostalgic joy the Mayflower's simply makes you gasp!

Anyone with a love of eccentric Britishness will fall for this car, however It is just so, well, unique. The front could have come from a Rolls-Royce rival — and the back too, I dare say It's just that, on a Mayflower, there's not the normal great expanse of bodywork in the middle between them!

The Mayflower is easy to enter thanks to its large doors, and the cabin has a nice light and airy feel which I put down to slender pillars and sheer height. Forward visibility benefits too, of course.

Time to survey the rest of the cockpit from a comfortable leather seat. Actually the interior's more spartan than you'd think, without a single match stalk of wood to be seen. The centre instrument panel, made from Bakelite or similar, with its carefully laid out cream knobs, is neat enough, and the three-speed column change a doddle.

This particular car is a regular show winner and a credit to its owner, matters which were very evident during a brief test drive.

Under no circumstances could a Mayflower be described as nippy — in fact for a vague moment I wondered if

I'd set off with the handbrake on — but you soon adjust to the Triumph's 38bhp, relaxing in the knowledge that the braking system is easily capable of its job, given the modest speeds we're talking about.

The ride isn't bad at all considering the car's size and weight (you certainly don't experience the feared pitching effect) but on a corner there's the feeling that the car is rather top-heavy as your brain comes to terms



Mayflower looks like a Bentley or Rolls-Royce that's shrunk in the wash.

SPECIFICATIONS

	Austin	Simca	Triumph	Ford
ENGINE	1200cc 4-cyl ohv	1290cc 4-cyl ohv	1247cc 4-cyl sv	1172cc 4-cyl sv
POWER				
(bhp @ rpm)	42/4300	48/5200	38/4000	36/4500
TORQUE				
(lb ft @ rpm)	62/2200	65/2800	58/2000	54/2150
GEARBOX	4-speed	4-speed	3-speed	3-speed
TOP SPEED	71mph	76mph	63mph	71mph
0-60MPH	36secs	24secs	30secs	38secs
MPG	30mpg	35mpg	35mpg	33mpg
LENGTH	13ft 0in	13ft 0in	12ft 10in	12ft 7in
WIDTH	5ft 3in	5ft 1in	5ft 2in	5ft 0in

with the body roll. It almost feels as if you're riding on a sturdy chassis, but in fact the car is of unitary construction.

As with the two other cars, the Mayflower's handbrake is of the umbrella, under-the-dash type. The steering wheel is vast and spoked, but the system it's connected to does its job well enough.

Now to the Ford Anglia. Again, we're in Three-Speed 'Box and Sidevalve City, but at least we have a floor change this time.

The cabin again looks well designed and spacious, and it feels by far the most modern of the vehicles on test. The driving position is a bit knees-in-the-air deckchair style, however, but the steering wheel and gear lever are where you'd expect them to be. The dash is mainly painted metal but is a paragon of neatness and efficiency

First gear is quite low, and there's a major gap between second and third, which you learn to anticipate, but the side valve unit's more flexible than you'd think and the steering and brakes are both up to a reasonable standard.

So now I'm expected to pick a favourite. Not at all easy as each car has its own brightly shining beacon of character

The Mayflower is completely mad, but the sort of car which is more than capable of inspiring affection. Once you accept you ain't going to get anywhere quickly — not at a 63mph top speed, anyway — you settle down to enjoy everything Mayflower style.

The Ford Anglia, like all other 100Es, has something attractive and endearing about it that's not easy to put your finger on. The styling is neat and not over-frilly and yet manages to exude more period charm than many of the most excessive automobiles of the era. The side valve isn't a road burner but is fine on the urban straight, and no-one could mistake the noise a 100E makes. The cars are also well built in a no-nonsense way.

Which leaves us with the Aronde and Somerset, a battle to the finish between two nations. The Aronde appears the lighter car to drive, but the Austin has a delightfully unburstable feel about it. Both are loaded with period touches. The Simca's quieter, but the Austin has a lovely chattering, musical engine note.

Let's resort to facts. Austin — 42bhp; Simca with Flash engine, 48. Austin top speed — 71mph; Simca, 78-ish. Both have anti-roll bars...

Hang on, a list of figures isn't going to decide this. To be honest, the Simca is very appealing but for me it doesn't measure up to the Somerset's cuddly friendly-as-an old-sock ambience.

After the test I was offered a lift back to base in the Austin. The sun was swiftly setting, emphasising the car's lines. On came the tiny sidelights. I noticed how the car was more than happy at 60mph cruising speed and could only marvel at the quality of its ride.

Definitely the winner, I thought as we bowled along. It almost felt as if the old Somerset was, in a restrained and awfully British way quietly celebrating its victory!

1957 FORD ANGLIA 100E

ANDREW CARTER



A MERE £10 secured 15-year-old Andrew Carter his Ford 100E Anglia.

That was 11 years ago, and Andrew, now a 26-year-old paint sprayer and treasurer of the Small Ford Club, has done a lot of work on the car since.

'It had been standing in a garden and was in a state,' recalls Andrew, from Isleworth, Middlesex. New wings, sills, a replacement bonnet and doors were on the shopping list, along with some welding, but Andrew had the Anglia on the road by the time he was 17. He's sprayed it himself and his sister was drafted in to recover the seats.

He also fitted a rare vacuum-operated Handa overdrive, found for sale during an owners' club trip to the Isle of Wight. This means the car will now cruise at well over 70mph, which is a bit exciting on crossply tyres,' says Andrew, whose Ford is now kept company by a Riley 4/68.



three-box design of Ford 100E is hardly adventurous but still tidy looking.



when these cars were new, hefty Purchase Tax counted against the Simca here. These days it's a worthy alternative to the three rival British contenders.