

BOOK REVIEW

This year sees the 50th.-anniversary of the foundation of the Austin Motor Company, and to commemorate the event the Company has published an extremely interesting book which tells the story of the growth of this huge concern from it's earliest days up to the present time. The narrative is written in a concise, readable form and on every page there are photographs of the cars produced by the firm during the period to which reference is made, together with a background of line drawings of contemporary events. The whole is beautifully printed on excellent paper and is a credit to the firm whose anniversary it celebrates.

Some interesting facts emerge as one browses through its pages. One that was news to the present writer is that, for a short time after the Great War (14/18), Austin produced a range of aircraft as well as cars.. One of these was a single-seater biplane which sold, surprisingly, for £500. Another fact which the book recalls to those who have forgotten (and to others who never knew) is of the astonishingly comprehensive range of Austin cars which was produced during the 1934 trading season, when there was a choice of 44 separate models based on 9 separate chassis. If the various combinations of colour and equipment were taken into consideration, one had a choice of 333 different cars. This was indeed variety par excellence, and one wonders whether the like will ever be seen again.

The vintage and veteran enthusiast will find much to interest him in the Austin anniversary book. There are photographs of many classic products of the firm, such as the 100 h.p. racing model of 1908, and the single cylinder 7 h.p. 2-seater of the same period.

Shown also are some of the lesser-known models; did you know that there was an Austin Westminster on the market in 1910?

Later models recalled are the first baby Austin of 1922 (designed entirely by the founder of the company, Sir Herbert Austin) and the famous 12/4 model which remained in production for nearly 19 years.

As a contrast the last few pages include pictures of some shorter lived products such as the A90 Atlanta and the A40 Sports. There is even an illustration of the vulgar and infamous nash "Metropolitan" - the best history books after all, relate both happy and unhappy events!

A pleasant hour can be spent with the Austin Anniversary book, which unlike most worthwhile things, can be had for the asking.

D.G.S.W.

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