

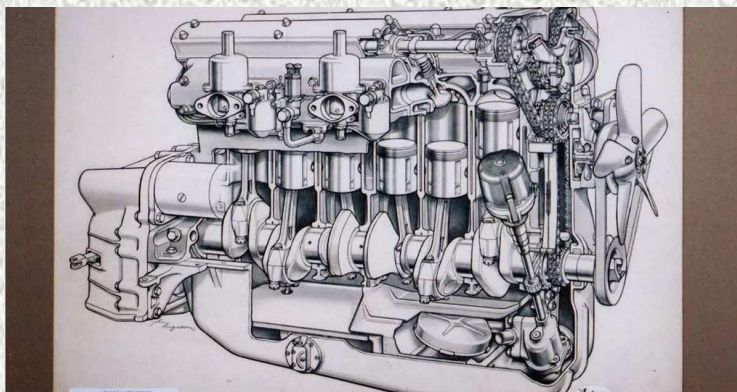
The Rise and Fall of the British Motor Car legend, Sir William Lyons and the iconic Jaguar Cars. - Part 5

By Geoffrey O'Connell (Continued from Part 4 – June magazine)

During the nights wartime fire-watching duties were introduced at the Foleshill SS Cars factories. Amongst the personnel involved were three highly qualified engineers who, whilst on the night-time duties, spent long hours planning a new series of engines. The trio were Claude Walter Lionel Bailey (Baily) (1902-1988), Walter Hassan and William Heynes. It has been suggested that two prototype engine units were constructed and tested as early as 1943. By September 1947 a straight 6, 3.2 litre version of the engine had been tested but it required a higher torque at a lower speed. An increase in the unit's capacity to 3.4 litres solved that problem and thus was born the XK6 engine – a straight 6, dual overhead camshaft (dohc) unit that in various capacities was produced between 1948 through to 1992. The different displacements and initial year were as follows:

3.4 litres or 3442cc, 1948; 2.4 litres or 2483cc, 1955; 3.8 litres or 3781cc, 1958; 3 litres, 1959; 4.2 litres or 4235cc, 1964; 2.8 litres or 2792cc, 1968; the 'new' 3.4 litres, 1975.

In order not to have to buy in the 2½ and 3½ litre engines, in 1942 Lyons purchased from John Black of Standard Motor Co. the machinery and tooling which would enable Jaguar Cars Ltd. to manufacture those engines. The collection of the equipment was organised by Lyons as quickly as possible after



which it was installed in one of the Foleshill factories. That only left it a necessity to purchase the 1½ litre engine from Standard Motors. It was reported that Black realised he had made an error in agreeing to the transaction and attempted to cancel the arrangement, but Lyons would have none of that suggestion. Thus began the conflict between the two motor car entrepreneurs.

Towards the end of 1945 or early 1946 – depending – Swallow Coachbuilding Co. (1935) Ltd., was sold to the Helliwell Group who manufactured aircraft parts as well as carrying out alterations and repairs to aircraft. They had a factory at Walsall Airport, Aldridge Town, Staffordshire, some 8km/5 miles distant from Walsall. Whilst juggling post WW2 finances Jaguar Cars Ltd. sold the Motor Panels factory, which they had acquired prior to WW2, to Rubery Owen.

As soon after the end of WW2 as was possible, Jaguar Cars Ltd. commenced manufacturing the (unofficially designated Mark IV) Jaguar 1½, Jaguar 2½ and Jaguar 3½ litre models. They were constructed on a separate chassis frame with semi-elliptical leaf springs fastened to rigid axles at the front and rear of the vehicle. The only visible alterations to the pre-war models were that the radiator badge read 'Jaguar', with the engine capacity, and the rear bumper motif being 'J'. The 1½ litre was only available with a saloon body and ceased production in 1949, it being recorded that between 1935 and 1949 some 10,980 were made. The 2½ litre cars were built between 1935 and 1948 and 6,281 were produced whilst the 3½ model also ceased production in 1948 and between 1937 and 1948 it was recorded that 3,162 were manufactured. Those years were of course without any production during WW2.

The previous models were followed by the Mark V (1948-1951) available as a two-door convertible (or drophead coupe) and four-door saloon seating five adults powered by a 2664cc or 3485cc straight 6, overhead valve engine. A test car cost £1,263 3 shillings and 11d. A drophead coupe model was displayed to the Jaguar distributors and the press on the 30th of September 1948 and placed on display at the company's stand at the London Motor Show (LMS) held at Earl's Court (SW5) between the 27th of October and the 6th of November 1948. By the by that was the first LMS held after the end of WW2. As the proposed Mark VII four door luxury saloon (XK engine, straight 6, dohc, 3442cc) would not be ready for that exhibition it was decided to display the XK6 engine in a new sports car which had to be built in a few months. Lyons, assisted by Fred Gardner, chose a Mark V shortened and lightened chassis onto which was mounted an aluminium clad wooden frame with two doors and finished as a two-seater open top/roadster. It was designated the Jaguar XK120 and was priced at £1,298.00. The car reportedly caused a sensation, so much so that Lyons decided to put it into production rather than treat it as a short run exercise. Even so the first 242 of the XK120 were hand built, aluminium bodied cars. At the outset of 1950 the model's bodywork was pressed steel but the doors, bonnet and boot lid remained constructed of aluminium. The model was built between 1948/9 and 1954 during which period some 12,055 were made. The Jaguar XK120 sports car also became available with drophead and fixed head coupe bodies. The front suspension was independent with transverse wishbones and long torsion bars, telescopic dampers and an antiroll bar whilst the rear suspension was a rigid axle with semi-elliptical leaf springs and dampers. The 120 of the model's designation referred to the vehicles top speed which at that time made it the fastest production car in the world. As there were some doubters as to that claim Jaguar Cars on the 30th of May 1949 organised timed runs recorded by the Royal Automobile Club of Belgium on a closed section of the Ostend to Jabbeke motorway. With the windscreen and hood erect the timed distance was covered at 126.4 mph (203.4km) whilst without the windscreen and hood fitted the measured speed was 132.6 mph (213.4km). The doubters doubted no more.

With the ever-expanding business Lyons wished to increase his workshops at Foleshill, Coventry, but was refused planning permission. Fortunately, the Daimler Motor Co. had moved from their No. 2 factory at Browns Lane, Allesley, Coventry. As the premises were still classified as a wartime 'shadow factory' Lyons had to enter a five-year lease for the property with the Ministry of Supply which he did in 1950. The next year or so was spent making the move which was finally completed by November 1952. Lyons was able to

purchase the premises in 1959 reputedly for £1.25 million.

By the by, post WW2 the hard to procure materials were only supplied if, in the case of motor car manufacturers, they could guarantee to export the majority of their output.

At this point in the narrative I should make it clear that I intend to continue the Jaguar epic up to when William Lyons agreed to sell the Company to the British Motor Corporation in 1966. In my opinion that was to all intents and purposes the end of the amazing dynasty. From thereon it was mostly all downhill. From the end of WW2 to 1966 there were three compact executive models, five large executive models, four sports cars and three racing and competition vehicles. I intend to concentrate on the sports cars and the racing and competition vehicles – as I would.

The referred to compact executive cars were the: Mark 1 (1955-59); Mark 2 (1959-67); and S-Type (1963-68). The large executive vehicles were the: Mark V (1948-51); Mark VII & VIIM (1951-56); Mark VIII (1956-58); Mark IX (1958-61); and the Mark X (1961-66).

The Sports Cars.



Jaguar XK120

The XK120 was followed by the two-seater XK140 sports car which was manufactured from 1954 through to 1957. The XK140 was powered by a 3.4 litre XK6 engine and improvements included greater interior space, rack and pinion steering, improved braking and telescopic shock absorbers.

In 1956 it was the first Jaguar sports car to feature automatic transmission as a choice instead of the manual gearbox. The initial price was £1598 8s 4d and a total of 8,884 were made.

The termination of the XK140 led to the two-seater XK150 (1957-1961) initially only available as drophead or fixed head coupe which allowed a rather cramped third seat behind the driver and passenger. An open top two-seater became available in 1958. The power unit was as for the XK140 but in 1960 a 3.8 litre XK6 unit became available.



Jaguar XK140



Jaguar XK150

The XK150 was the least stylish of the three models and gave the impression of being rather more heavily built.

Despite drum brakes being listed, Dunlop disc brakes were fitted front and rear on all production vehicles. The price for a 1958 model with a few extras was £1861 and during its production 9,385 were built.

The XK sports cars were followed by the Jaguar E-Type range of sports cars manufactured between 1961 and 1974. Those in the know maintain that the E-Type was developed from the Jaguar D-Type sports racing car, which won the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1955, 1956 and 1957, and its road legal XKSS offspring as well as the sole competition, D-Type based Jaguar E2A. The XKSS cars were road going adaptations of a number of unsold D-Types. The modifications, which allowed them to race in the USA as production sports cars, included a passenger seat, a passenger side door, the removal of the directional tailfin behind the driver, a conventional windscreen, side screens to the doors, an all-weather hood, chrome bumper bars and legal light clusters. Well, that is off my chest!

Jaguar Series 1 E-Type



Jaguar C-Type



The introductory two-seater E-Type, known in the USA and Canada as the Jaguar XK-E, was designed by Malcolm Sayer (1916-1970) who during WW2 had been an aircraft engineer and joined Jaguar Cars in 1951.

He had also been responsible for the design of the competition and racing car C-Type (1951-53) and the D-Type (1954-57).

The E-Type was powered by the 3.8 litre (3781cc) XK6 engine coupled to a synchromesh Moss gearbox (that is apart from the first gear) and was available as an open top (roadster) or a fixed head coupe. The bodywork was detailed as being of a semi-monocoque arrangement.

Jaguar D-Type



Geoffrey

Continued as Part 6 in August magazine