

STANDARD MOTOR COMPANY

As vehicles produced by the Standard Motor Company are the feature of our Power of the Past in 2013 I thought members may be interested in a potted history of this once famous British Manufacturer.

The company was founded in 1903 by Reginald Maudslay a great great grandson of Henry Maudslay inventor of the screw cutting lathe. Initially small 1 cylinder cars were made (6" bore and 3" stroke) progressing to 2, 3, 4 and 6 cylinder versions. As the business grew larger premises were acquired until the first World War saw production of vehicles cease. During the war period over 1000 aircraft were produced by Standard which included B.E.12, R.E.8, Sopwith Pup and Bristol F.2-B.

Back in vehicle production again they soon reached a market share comparable with the Austin Motor company and in the year 1924 they built 10,000 vehicles. In the late 1920s business declined and a new director from Hillman, Captain John Black, encouraged supply of Standard chassis/engine to Jenson, Avon and the Swallow Sidecar Co. That latter built cars known as S.S., a name which was later changed to Jaguar. 1935 saw a new range of vehicles named "Flying Standards" Some 20 h.p. V8 models were built and these were the first mass produced vehicles to have independent front suspension.

During the period of World War 2 car production was mainly confined to utilities with the Company building 1100 de Havilland Mosquito aircraft, 750 Airspeed Oxfords, 20,000 Bristol Mercury VIII engines and 3,000 Bristol Beaufighter fuselages. 4,000 light armoured cars and "Jeep" type vehicles were also built.

In 1945 the Standard Motor Company purchased the remnants of the Triumph Motor Company which had gone into receivership in 1939 and whose factory had been wiped out in the blitz. In the same year they signed a deal with Harry Ferguson to build the Ferguson tractor for sale in the Eastern Hemisphere. (Ford built those sold in the Western Hemisphere) In this same year Standard formed a new company called "Triumph Motor Company" and began producing vehicles under the Triumph name e.g. "Renown and Mayflower".

During this period in 1948 the Phase 1 Standard Vanguard was released. It enjoyed considerable popularity with car owners through to Phase 2, 1953 and Phase 3 1955. Also in 1953 the first of the TR series Triumphs (TR2) were announced and these were followed with TR3 and TR4. Back in the Standard factory small car production included the Standard 8 and 10 h.p. (Cadet)

By 1959 it was considered that the Triumph name was more popular than Standard and so the Triumph Herald was introduced. The last Standard Vanguard car to be made in the UK was replaced by the Triumph 2000 in 1963.

The Standard -Triumph Company was bought by Leyland Motors Ltd in 1960 and the Standard name was discontinued in August 1970 when the business became Triumph or Rover Triumph BL.

Production of these marques ceased in 1980 and BMW acquired these brands in 1994 when they purchased BL's successor, the Rover Group.

The Standard name went on into the 1980's in India with production of Triumph Herald models exclusively for the Indian market.

Reginald Maudslay was unable to use his name for his motor company as the Maudslay Motor Company already existed, managed by his cousin Cyril Maudslay.

The original Triumph Company was founded by Siegfried Bettman in 1886 selling first imported bicycles and later with a partner, Moritz Schulte, moving on to motor cycles in 1902 and motor cars in 1919. In 1936 financial hardship forced the sale of the Triumph cycle and motor cycle business to Jack Sangster of Ariel. As mentioned earlier the Company was liquidated in 1939.

Henry Eric Maudslay, the youngest son of Reginald became a Squadron Leader in the RAF and piloted one of the 19 aircraft used by "The Dambusters" in the raids of May 12th 1943, only 11 returned. Sadly the aircraft flown by Maudslay was shot down close to the Dutch border.