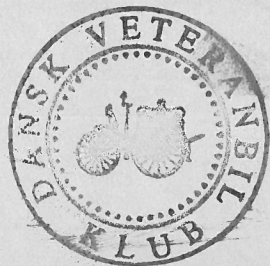


— now for the

new **AUSTINS**





1949

DESIGNED AT LONGBRIDGE BY THE AUSTIN MOTOR COMPANY, LTD.
Printed by Hudson & Son Ltd., Birmingham, England. Colour photographs by R. T. Beach.
PUBLICATION No. 402.

THE
AUSTIN 'A40'
DORSET & DEVON SALOONS



THE
STORY OF
THEIR
STYLING

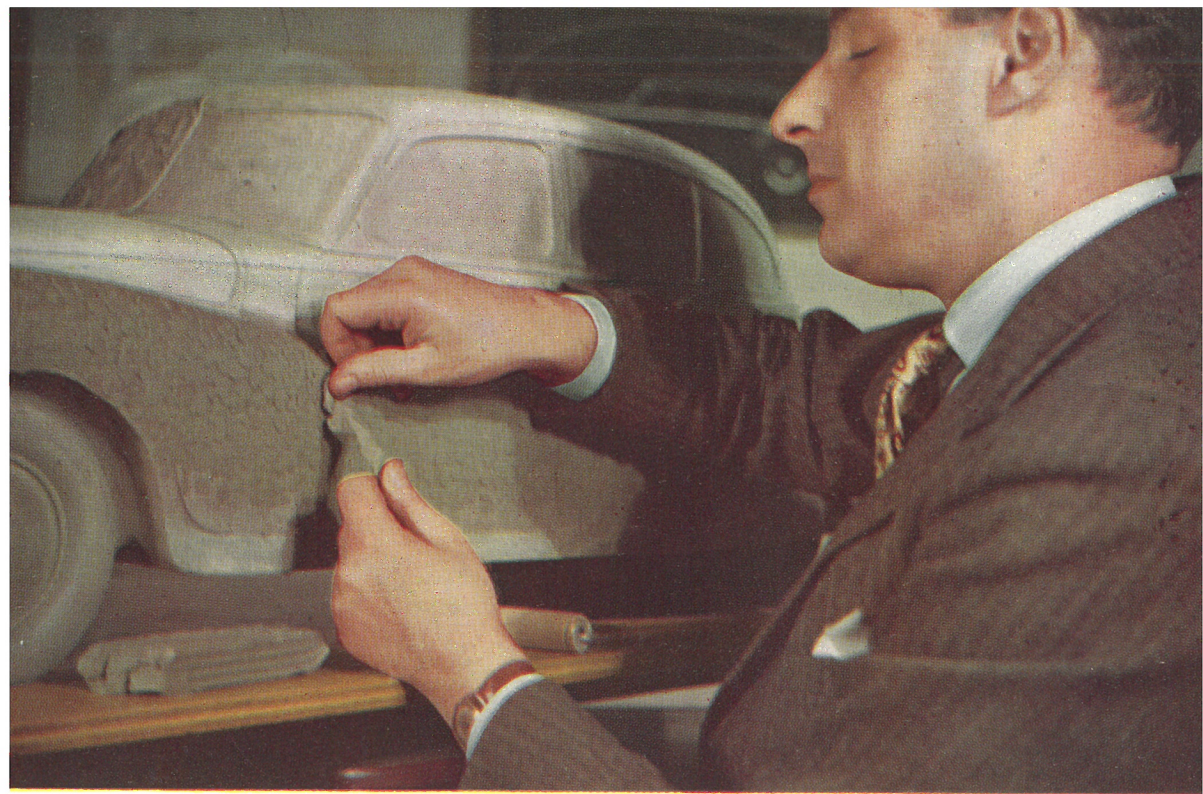


MOST people know something about motor manufacture—how cylinders are bored, gears are cut, how body panels are formed from the flat sheet steel and given their shape by powerful presses. But, because it happens so far in advance of production, and is therefore *secret*, taking place, so to speak, “ behind locked doors,” very few people know how a new model grows from the seeds of the designer’s inspiration to the final flower of the completed design.

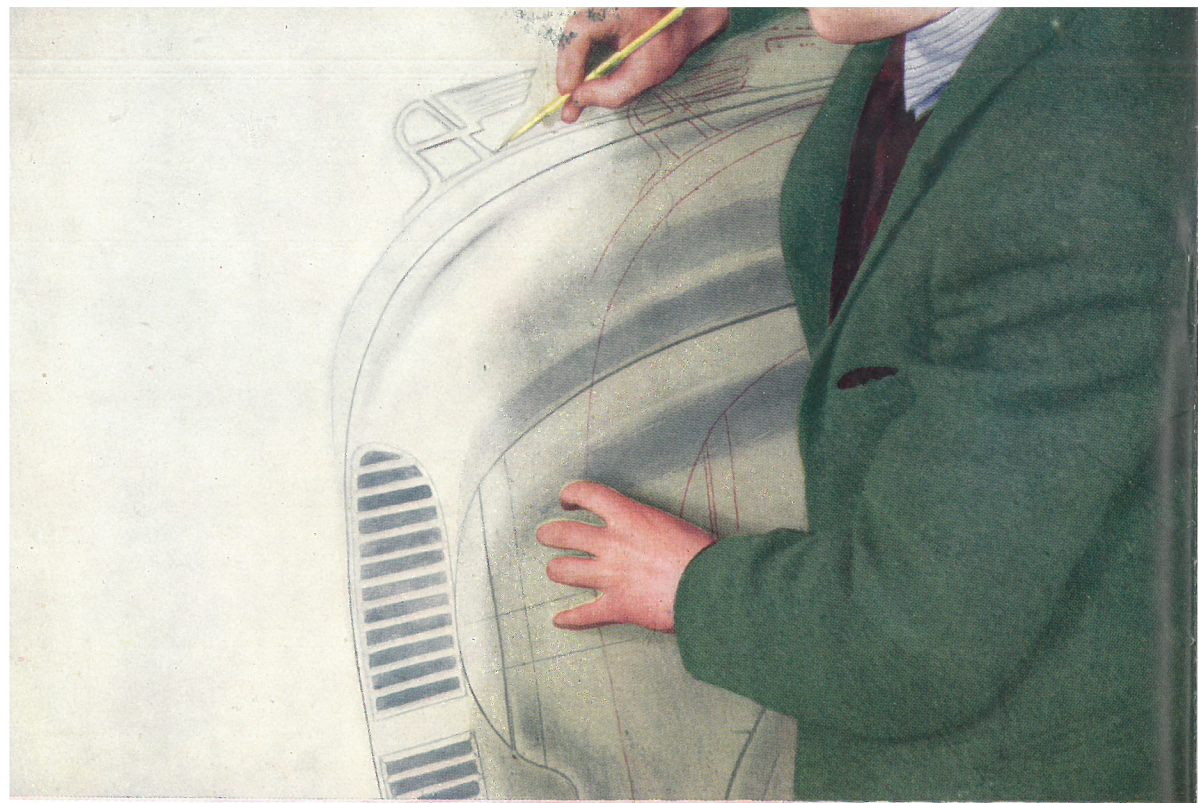
In this booklet, for once, we intend to unlock those legendary doors, and reveal the secret of one phase of motor car manufacture, by showing in pictures some of the earliest stages in the development of the new Austin ‘A40’ Dorset 2-door and Devon 4-door Saloons—successors to the famous Eight and Ten.

At the outset the fundamental problem of the designer or styling engineer is to evolve a new shape and style, in sympathy both with the trend of public taste, and with the technical advance of production methods. But he must also preserve the “ family ” characteristics and qualities on which previous popularity has been won. With Austin cars this calls for a handsome yet honest design, avoiding airy flamboyance on the one hand or sombre dignity on the other. Any new Austin must also provide full comfort and visibility, and in good measure all the positive qualities needed in a modern car.

From knowledge of these needs, and acceptance of these principles, springs the first idea which, while fluid and tentative, is expressed in the plasticine model which can be shaped and re-shaped as ideas harden



First real glimpse of a new Austin comes as the plasticine model is shaped to the preliminary sketches.



Scaled-up to full size on the drawing board, the new design becomes dimensional—more positive and assured.

into decisions. From the plastic stage, the next step is to paper, where the car becomes full-size, though now only two-dimensional and in the flat.

And here it might be thought the familiar process of detail designing, the building of prototypes and their rigorous testing, the planning of production, the ordering of materials, and the general progress into full output could begin. But first there is a lot more work to be done, calling for the greatest skill and painstaking care. In short, it is not sufficient to judge a new model in the miniature as a solid, or full-size in the flat as a drawing. Every aspect of it must receive final sanction only in a faithful replica for size and shape, and that means a full-scale wood model.

These pages, then, show the initial translation of the design into wood, whereby the fundamental line and proportions can be established as giving all the qualities the designer has in view.

This is as far as our story takes us here, but it must be remembered that from this point a whole host of activities can begin. The press tool designer can prepare his scheme and detail his tools. More wood patterns can be made for every panel in the model, this time in hard instead of soft wood, to enable the dies to be cast in metal and accurately shaped. And, of course, the body designers can produce the detail drawings to which all components must be produced.

Further, all this takes no account of chassis development. The chassis, at least where Austin products are concerned, can always be relied upon to give a good account of itself, but because it is not featured in

the pages that follow, it must not be forgotten that, equally with the new body line, the new features of chassis construction require prolonged and careful development and testing calling for the application of ripe experience combined with engineering inspiration, to produce a car that will enhance a lustrous reputation.

It has often been said that it takes two years to develop a new car—from the idea to the product—and you, the man at the wheel, may have wondered, “why so long?”

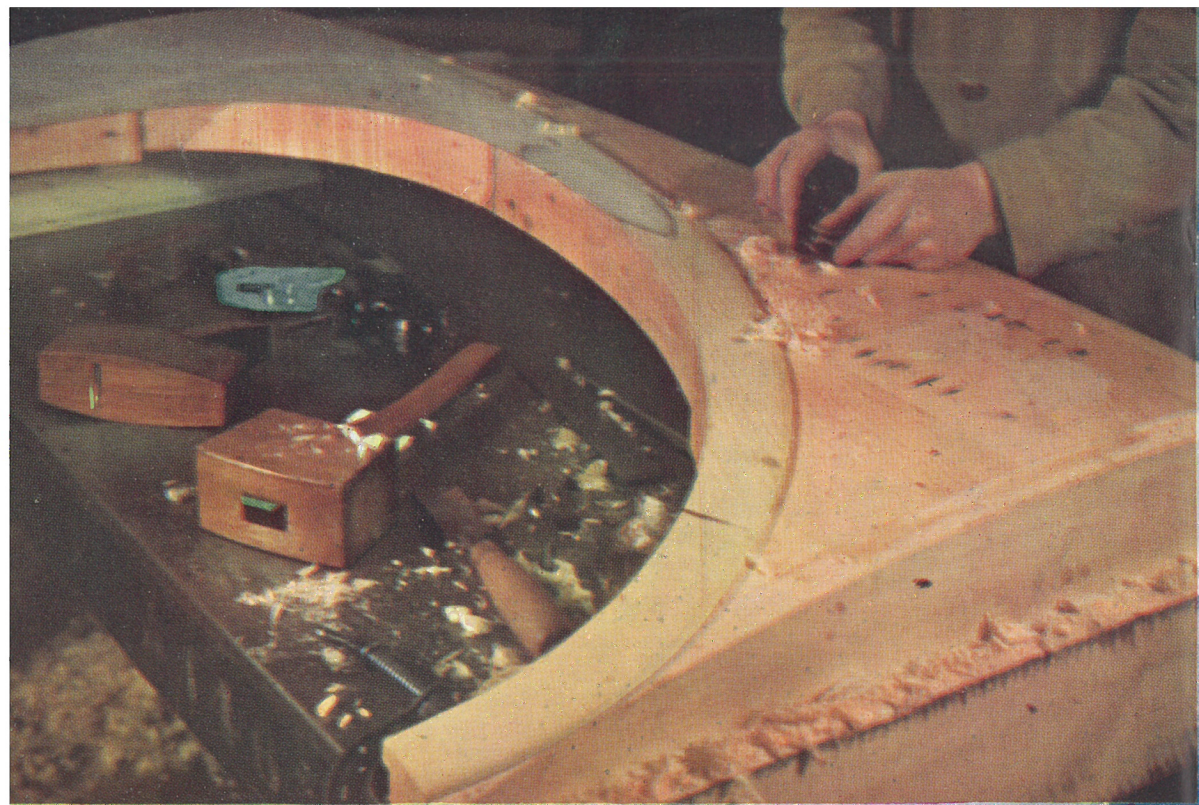
Here, then, is the answer, for within that space of time there is packed an immense amount of thought and work. In developing cars like the Austin ‘A40’ Dorset and Devon Saloons there are no short cuts if the result is to be worthy of the phrase “*Austin—you can depend on it!*”



Sweeps, or standard curves, enable each element of the body line to be precisely specified by number.



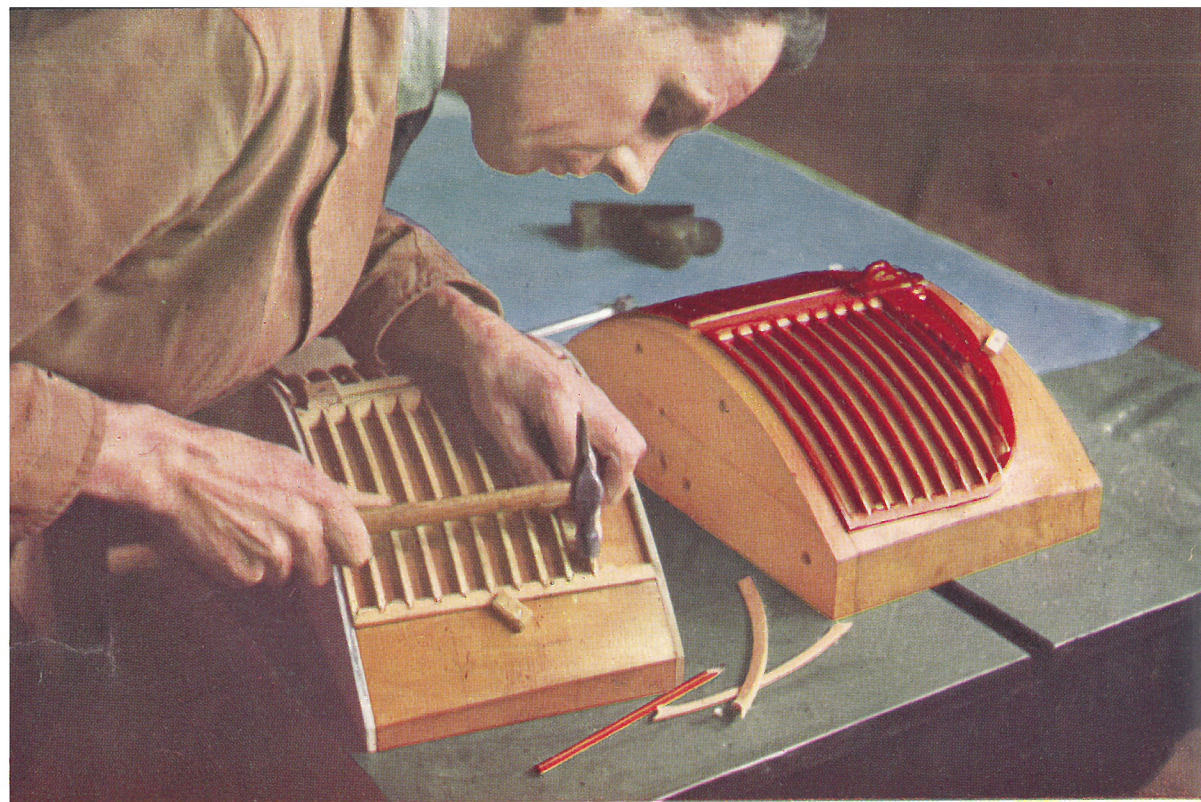
Pinocchio senior—the wooden man—is the first to “sit” in the new model. Being life size he is the check on all essential profile dimensions.



The car is first reproduced full size in wood, built up from the main body elements. A wheel arch being shaped.



In the wooden replica, wood pins and glue, instead of bolts and nuts are the means of assembling.



Every detail of the complete design is reproduced—even to a wood version of the intricate radiator grille.



The skill of the wood craftsman is given full scope in this delicate work of faithfully blending every curve.

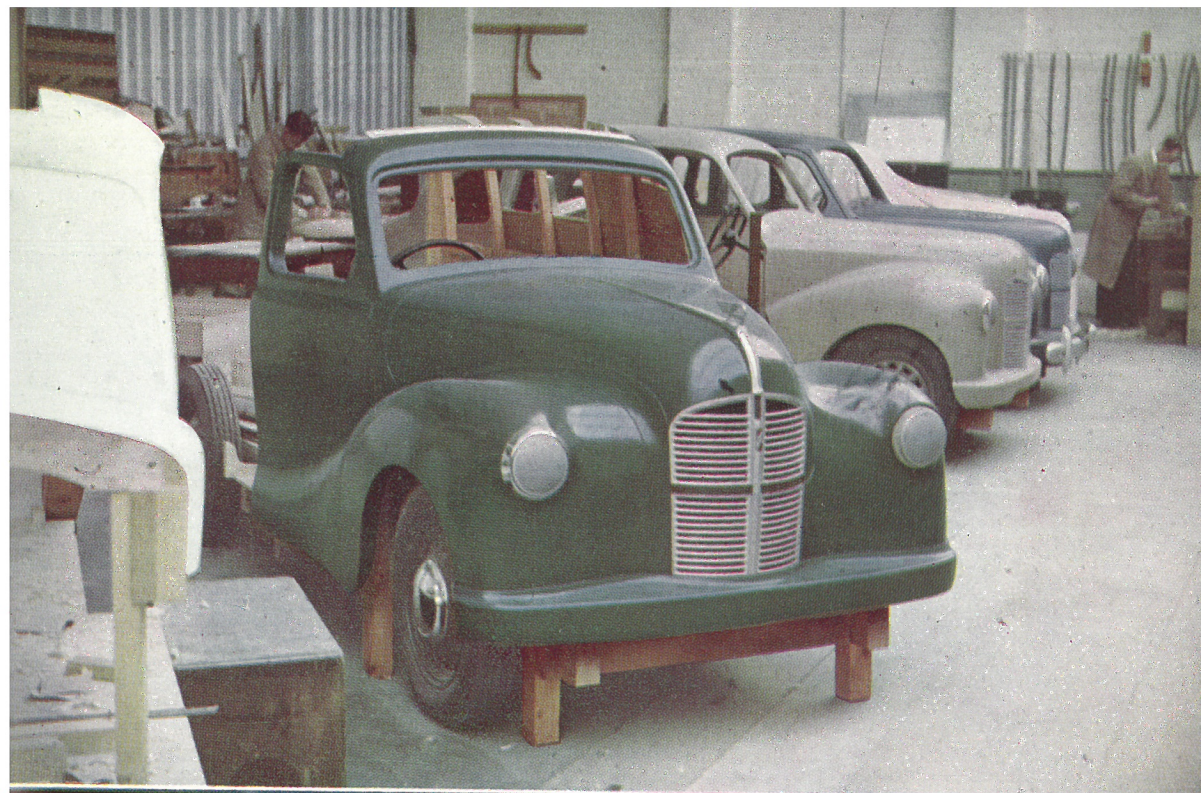


In due time the main shell and body panels can be assembled and the finished wood replica is almost in sight.



But the new "car" is not complete until the frontal treatment is established by assembling the grille and badges.





Eventually the new design appears in the solid and full size—a faithful forecast of what the new car will be like—but still capable of modification, when comparisons of different models enable the final niceties of design to be decided.



The designer's conception of the new car is at last given full and final expression, and the Austin 'A40' is ready for its road tests.

George Eyston, who has broken more speed records with different cars than any other driver, including the World's Land Speed Record at 357 m.p.h., takes over in the Swiss Alps and drives the new Austins over the highest passes—the Grimsel, Furka, Susten and St. Gothard. After most searching tests he commends the new models as "*the finest light cars Austin has yet produced.*"



The Austin 'A40' Dorset 2-door and Devon 4-door Saloons,

successors to the famous Eight and Ten, are powered by an overhead valve engine of 1,200 c.c. Their stylish modern line, incorporating rear opening doors with concealed hinges and running boards, is matched by an equally refreshing performance. On the road they are responsive and thoroughly well-behaved. Independent front wheel suspension, high efficiency Cam gear steering and hydraulic and mechanical brakes see to that. Further, they are exceptionally well equipped, including a heating and demisting unit, and afford ample luggage accommodation in a really roomy boot.

They are certainly most interesting cars, and if you wish to know more about them, you will find, in the Showrooms of your Austin Dealer, willing information and friendly advice.

A U S T I N — Y o u c a n d e p e n d o n i t !