



By G. M. LIGHTOWLER

THE present-day Aston Martins, designated with the initials "D.B.," have a family tree that few marques can emulate and many envy. One of the "Princes of the Road," the Aston Martin has a place in the automotive register that is not only unique, but exclusive. They are of the race-bred-luxury class that carry the distinctive characteristics of aristocrats of the highways.

As the elevated position of today's "D.B.'s" is directly attributed to their heritage, it is interesting to view their development since the early part of the century, 1913 to be precise.

In the immediate years before World War I, French cars enjoyed a prominence equalled only by German omnipotence in the late 30's, and it was the fervent desire of two English gentlemen, a Mr. Bamford and Lionel Martin, that this apparent invincibility of the Bugatti should be curtailed.

They formed a company in London, with the express purpose of producing a sports car painted British racing green that would replace the winning blue cars of France. Their first product was powered by a four-cylinder, side-valve Coventry Climax engine of 1398 ccs. mounted in a chassis of Isotta Fraschini design. From the start the car was a

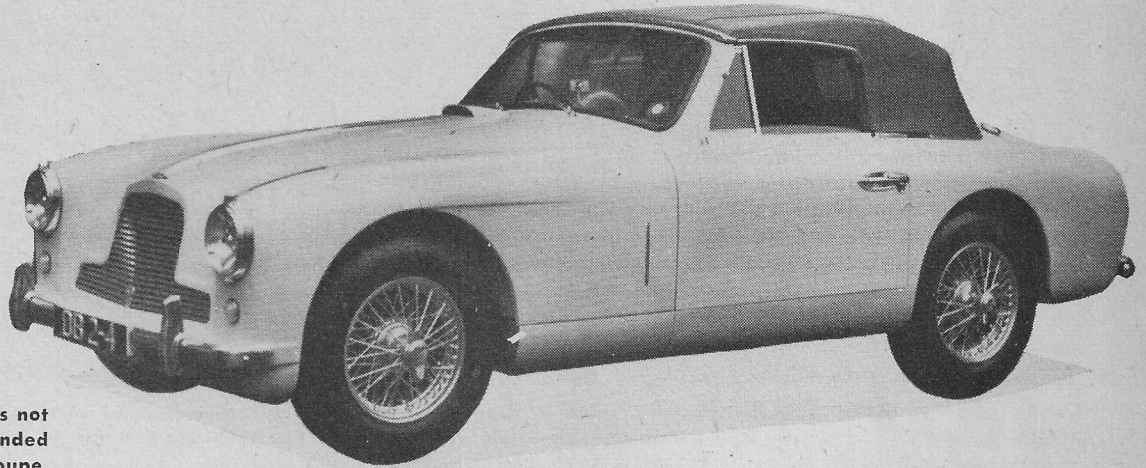
success, turning in speeds of over 65 mph.

Like many new ventures begun in Europe about that time, their continuation was halted by the national emergency. After relaxation of war restrictions, Mr. Martin assumed full control of the company and began production of a car that was to win speed trials and hill climbs throughout Europe. Frequent awards were won by his cars at an exciting hill climb at Aston Clinton, a small village just outside London. Borrowing part of the hill's name and combining it with his own, he put "Aston Martin" on the map.

From 1920, a program of competition

Aristocrat of the Highway

A 'Prince of the Road,' indeed, the Aston Martin is a race-bred luxury car that occupies a unique position among the world's fine automobiles



The DB2-4 convertible is not as fast as the well-rounded and more streamlined coupe.



Historically famous DB2 won Le Mans twice, Mille Miglia and the 1951 Alpine Rally.

was followed with growing intensity, as was a policy of continuous research and experimentation.

On May 24, 1922, an Aston Martin car made an indelible mark on the pages of automotive history. On that great day, a small sports car, affectionately named "Bunny" (it was in actual fact A.M.1) went around the Brooklands Race Track in England on a 16½-hour endurance test. In the capable hands of S. C. H. (Sammy) Davis, one of the most proficient all-round drivers of our time, it collected every record for its class, as well as disposing of several records for runs of up to 19 hours. In 1955 this same car, which has been care-

fully preserved, can still turn in speeds that make some of our present-day so-called sports cars look ridiculous.

By 1930 the company had been subjected to a series of management changes, but the intensity of their competition and research policies never abated. It was in that year that the famous "International" Aston Martin was born. This four-seater started a style that is still followed by certain European manufacturers. Publicity material released in connection with the "International" stressed certain facets of the car that can be used in describing the Modern D.B.2-4 and the D.B.3S—". . .

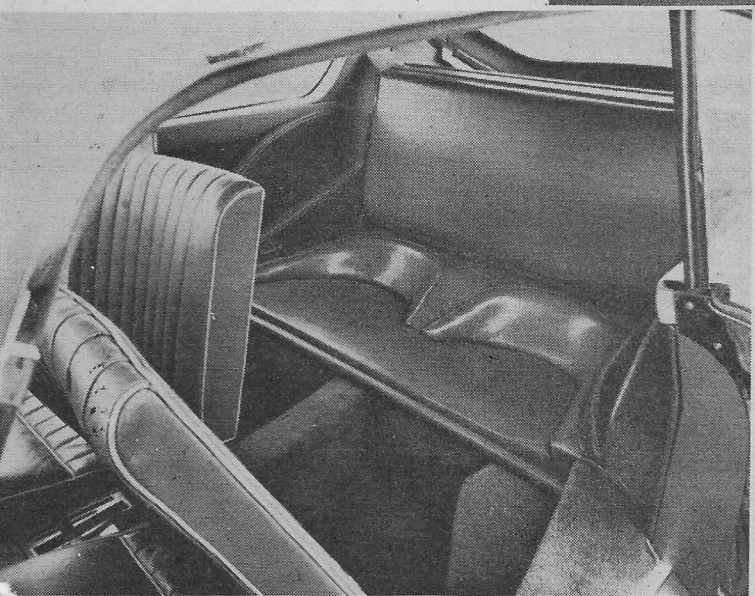
fierce acceleration and positive road holding."

From the first the Aston Martin company had its eyes turned towards France and the classical Le Mans 24 Hours Race, but it was not until 1932 that it had its first victories in the race which is so vital to sports car manufacturers. In 1932 Bertelli and Driscoll collected the Biennial Cup, having qualified the previous year by finishing the race. The Biennial Cup was won again by an Aston Martin in 1935, when with one of their latest models Charles Brackenbury and Charles Martin (Lionel's son) finished the 24 Hours Race at an average speed of 75.5 mph. They lifted the average



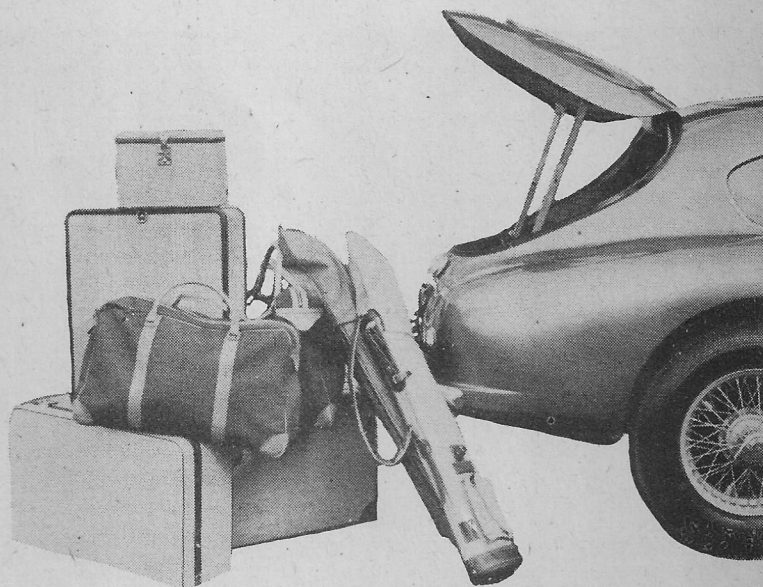
Heavily handicapped competing against Grand Turismo class cars, DB2-4s did very well in Monte Carlo rally.

Both the DB3S and the DB2-4 utilize an Aston-Martin engine developed on race tracks against the stiffest of opposition.



Two occasional seats in rear of driver's seat fold forward when not needed, affording platform for stowage of luggage.

Photo at right gives an idea of vast amount of gear that can be stored in trunk, lid of which includes rear window.



it is realized that the 3½-liter winner in General Classification finished the 24 hours race at an average speed of 93 mph. The highest tribute payable to the Aston Martin was made by one of the drivers, who when asked how he got on in the race, replied "... oh, we all had a trouble-free run." A statement like that could scarcely be made by many drivers of other makes of cars. Interesting to record is the fact that the winning coupe bore the registration plate VMF

64! The car had been slightly modified since George Abecassis drove it to victory in 1950. Between the time of its two Le Mans wins VMF 64 had been piloted to success in the gruelling Mille Miglia by Tom Wisdom, and the car was still to take the prize in the International Alpine Trial. VMF 64 is a power to contend with and it is still winning races at major club meetings. The fact that it has a coupe body does not detract from its sports performance.

Following on the heels of the D.B.2 there came the open D.B.3 designed specifically for competition, and lacking some of the comfort and luxury of appointment of the D.B.2. The object of the D.B.3 was to use it as a test car for improvements to be incorporated in future coupe models. Within a year of its introduction the engine had been enlarged to 2.9 liters and the car became a consistent victor in all types of events.

(Continued on Page 86)



WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS
BEST LOCATION IN THE NATION
MOST COMPLETE AUTOMOTIVE STOCK IN THE COUNTRY

Quick Delivery

SPEED SHOPS, GARAGES, CAR DEALERS
SAVE TIME AND COSTLY SHIPPING CHARGES
BUY AT CALIFORNIA PRICES F.O.B. OUR WAREHOUSE

LOOK

At This "Who's Who" of Brand Names

- BELOND
- EDELBROCK
- EDMUNDS
- FORGED TRUE
- GRANT RINGS
- HARMAN-COLLINS
- H-C PRODUCTS
- HELLINGS
- ISKENDERIAN
- JAHNS
- MALLORY
- MARECO
- McGURK
- OFFENHAUSER
- SCHIEFER
- AND . . .
- MANY OTHERS!

SPEED SHOPS
GARAGES
CAR DEALERS

Send for 1955 Catalog and Discount Sheet on Your Letterhead

NEW 1955



SPEED
POWER
SAFETY
Equipment

FULLY ILLUSTRATED WITH PRICES

America's most comprehensive catalog of speed, power, custom and safety equipment. Fully illustrated and complete with prices IS NOW READY—it lists products of all manufacturers which are available for immediate delivery. **SEND FOR YOURS TODAY—**

Featuring
NEW ITEMS FOR ALL O.H.V. ENGINES

NEW CATALOG . . . 50¢
 Refunded On First Order

Midwest AUTO SPECIALTIES
 DIRECT FACTORY DISTRIBUTORS
 formerly MIDWEST RACING EQUIPMENT



13907X Miles Ave., Cleveland 5, Ohio

Wyoming 1-5977
 Wyoming 1-4900

Aston Martin

(Continued from Page 47)

In 1953 the D.B.3S was produced and after two most successful seasons of racing it is offered to the public for 1955. The engine that had been used in the D.B.3S is now also installed in the new D.B.2-4.

Without going into detail about achievements of the D.B.2-4, let it suffice to say that results of the Monte Carlo Rally (February 1955) are representative. Six Aston Martin D.B.2-4's started the Rally. All six finished, collecting the Coupe de l'Automobile Club de

Monaco, Challenge Automovel Club de Portugal, Coupe de Koninglyke Nederlandsche Automobile Club, Coupe de la Commission Sportive de l'Automobile Club de Monaco, Challenge Anthony Noghes, the R.A.C. Challenge Trophy (all by Maurice Gatsonides and Marcel Becquart), and the Prix d'Equipe, which was awarded to the Aston Martin team (Gatsonides, Parnell and Collins). The Gatsonides-Becquart car was the only one in the Grand Touring class to complete the 203-mile mountain circuit without loss of marks. Cars in this class were required to keep an average 8 per cent above that of the normal class.

The D.B.2-4, available in two body styles, is equally attractive as a coupe or as a convertible, both powered by the race-tested 3-liter engine.

All Aston Martin cars are hand-built. The aerodynamic body is based on a

chassis of special lightweight steel tubing, giving the car a high power-weight ratio and exceptional body strength. The smoothness of the line of the coupe, and the lack of protrusions reduces the wind resistance by as much as 25 per cent when compared with the convertible.

The comfortable driving position and the fact that the nose can be easily depressed when the car is stationary would lead one to believe the car would roll on a corner; such is not the case, as it clings to the road giving no feeling of deviation from the vertical however fast a corner is negotiated. Nor is there any forward or backward movement of the body and engine on the chassis on violent acceleration (which has to be experienced to be believed!), or on fierce braking. The chassis, of unusual design, is suspended on four coil springs; incorporation of trailing links and an anti-roll bar in the front suspension and a parallel radius arm linkage and a Panhard-type anti-sway bar in the rear, account for the dampening at speed of the comparatively soft suspension at rest.

The D.B.2-4 is 169½ inches overall, with a wheelbase of 99 inches. It has a 54-inch track, turns in a 35-foot circle, and is 53½ inches in height.

The positiveness of the steering, one of the car's outstanding features, is due to the employment of a three-piece linkage and a worm-and-roller type box.

The 6.00x16-inch Dunlop center-lock quick-change wire wheels insure maximum rigidity with minimum of weight. The wheel hubs carry 12-inch diameter Girling hydraulic, large-area brake drums, cooled by streams of air directed through carefully aligned vents in the front of the body covered by an integrated radiator grill. Special light bi-metal brake drums are available as extras.

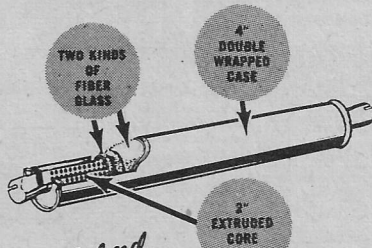
The hood opens forward, being hinged beneath the radiator grill, and allows excellent access to the 2922 cc., six-cylinder engine. The engine, the same that powers the D.B.-3S, has an 83-mm. bore and a stroke of 90 mm., and uses a compression ratio of 8.2:1 to develop 140 bhp. at 5,000 rpm. The cast iron cylinder block is equipped with highest grade centrifugally cast iron detachable liners, providing maximum cooling with the maximum saving of weight. "Through bore" for the main bearings gives a fine rigidity of the crankshaft. The crankshaft, carried on four massive main bearings, is short, stiff and light, with an appreciable overlap of the pins and journals on the webs, and is statically and dynamically balanced. For good heat dissipation the four crankshaft bearings are supported in special aluminum alloy housings.

The quickly-detachable cylinder head embodies the fully-machined hemispherical combustion domes. The valves, inclined at 30 degrees in the cylinder head, are of generous size and efficiently cooled; the valve guides are in direct contact with the coolant. The twin overhead camshafts with direct-attack valve actuation eliminate the necessity for tap-

(Continued on Page 90)

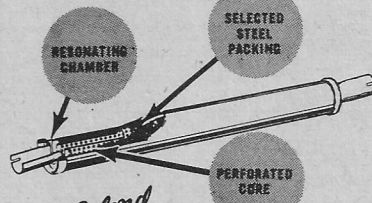
The Emphasis is
on Tone Quality!

Belond* TONE-LINE MUFFLERS



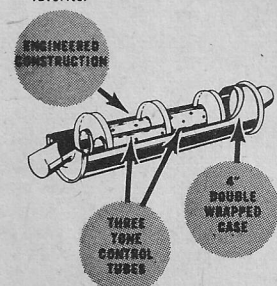
Belond* "GOLDEN-TONE" GLASS PACKED MUFFLER

Combines all the proven principles of design, construction and tone control, into the finest glass packed muffler obtainable.



Belond* "MELLO-TONE" STEEL PACKED MUFFLER

A mainstay in the Belond line for many years, we proudly present this new improved version of an old favorite.



Belond* "RHYTHM-TONE" HOLLYWOOD MUFFLER

Produced to meet the ever increasing demand for an inexpensive muffler that produces a pleasing tone.

PROPERLY DESIGNED — EXCELLENTLY
CONSTRUCTED — COMPETITIVELY PRICED

Belond, the recognized leader of the specialized exhaust system industry, invites you to see these fine mufflers at your dealer soon. Available nationally through automotive parts stores, new car agencies, muffler shops and speed shops.

*T. M. REG.



Southern California
MUFFLER CORPORATION

11029 Washington Blvd., Culver City 24 Calif.
1801 Spielbusch Ave., Toledo 1, Ohio

Aston Martin

(Continued from Page 86)

pet adjustment. Wear is kept to the minimum by the cams contacting large-area thimble tappets situated directly over the end of the valve stems. The camshafts are driven by duplex chains with hydraulic tensioners that lengthen the life of the chain.

Lubrication to the crankshaft, connecting rods and camshaft bearings is guaranteed by the use of a full pressure system, with incorporation of a positive filtration system.

Connecting rods have a steel beam section and integral bolts; maximum stiffness with minimum reciprocating weight is assured. The die-cast aluminum pistons have two compression rings, with a top chrome ring, and two scraper rings; large diameter gudgeon pins are located by means of circlips.

The highly efficient coil and distributor has a built-in automatic retard and advance mechanism, and the distributor has an "octane" selector. Carburetion is by twin variable jet S.U. carburetors fitted with twin air cleaners.

The clutch, of large friction area single-plate design, is fully balanced. The gear box is of David Brown manufacture and of unit construction with the engine, with a light alloy casing. Power to the hypoid bevel final drive is transmitted by way of a specially balanced open propeller shaft.

The D.B.2-4 is basically a two seater, but provision is made for the occasional carrying of two other persons in small seats in the rear. Behind these two seats is liberal luggage space reached by raising the rear window. When the two rear seats are not required the back folds forward and increases the luggage space, giving rise to the claim that the D.B.2-4 is "the fastest car in the world capable of carrying two people with a month's luggage."

The sports car world was favored when Aston Martin announced it would produce a D.B.3S for general purchase, for this type of car is usually retained for "works" purposes. Lessons learned from racing were passed on to the customer. Inasmuch as the D.B.3S is for the racing enthusiast, we will not go into construction of the vehicle in as much detail as we did with the D.B.2-4.

Wheelbase of the D.B.3S is 87 inches, while overall length is 154 inches. With a 49-inch track, it has a six-inch clearance and can turn in a 30-foot circle. Overall height is 41 inches.

The engine in this model is more highly tuned than that in the D.B.2-4, with such refinements as polished and matched ports. The cooling system has a closed circuit layout, a centrifugal water pump and a large capacity radiator with an integral oil cooler and separate header tank. Three horizontal dual-choke carburetors are installed for directing the fuel mixture.

POWERFUL MIDGET TV ANTENNA



Amazing Television Invention!
Fits Into Palm of Your Hand

AS CLEAR A PICTURE AS WITH \$35 ANTENNAS! ONLY \$1.00

Installed in Seconds!
Hidden From View!
This Powerful Midget outperforms far costlier antennas. Weighs only few ounces. Works on all frequencies. Sensational value at \$1.00

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE!
Junk that old unsightly weak-pulling TV Antenna for this handy, newest Evans All-Frequency TV Antenna. See the difference immediately. So low-priced you can't afford to be without this "Midget Wonder". Mechanism fully concealed. Perfect for apartments, where outdoor T.V. Antennas are prohibited.

CLIP THIS AD AND MAIL WITH ONLY \$1 plus dime for postage. We'll ship postpaid to your door. If not delighted with improved TV reception, return in 10 days for full refund. Order for yourself and friends today while this bargain offer remains in effect.

EVANS RADIO CO., Dept. 6P
650 ASBURY AVE. EVANSTON, ILL.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

or reserve your copy of SPEED
AGE at your favorite newsstand.



- RamCote Flexible Leather Finish for LEATHER
- RamCote Flexible Plastic Finish for VINYL PLASTICS
- RamCote Sealer for worn and porous LEATHER

Restore original color and texture to your car upholstery. Or change color! Easily applied. No crack or peel. Washable, fadeproof, preserves, protects. Write for FREE color chart. 1141 W. 69th St., Chicago 21, Ill.

The clutch is of a special heavy-duty competition type. The gear box (of David Brown manufacture) incorporates four close ratio speeds forward and has a baulk ring synchromesh on second, third and top.

Steering is by rack and pinion and utilizes a wheel that has duralumin spokes and a polished wood rim.

The Girling hydraulic brake system is specially designed for D.B.3S; front shoes are 13x2½ inches, rear 12x2¼ inches; back plates are of magnesium and Al-fin bi-metal drums are fitted.

The chassis of the D.B.3S is of remarkably simple construction, being built up of large diameter round tubes that give a high torsional and beam stiffness.

The suspension in the front is made independent by trailing links with triangulated upper arms that engage the shock absorbers and torsional anti-roll bar; the lower arms rest on needle roller bearings. Springing is by torsion bars housed in a transverse tube of the chassis frame. Rear suspension is De Dion with parallel trailing links; again a transverse tube of the chassis frame carries the rear torsion bars.

Both the D.B.2-4 and the D.B.3S are finished with the same care and craftsmanship, both are extremely fast and both enjoy a high standard of roadability. For the out-and-out sportsman seriously interested in racing, the D.B.3S fits the bill for 1955; for the weekend sportsman, the D.B.2-4 is the answer. ☆☆

CAR LIFE