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Vauxhall Classics No. 1 – Veteran 5 hp Light Car, 1903

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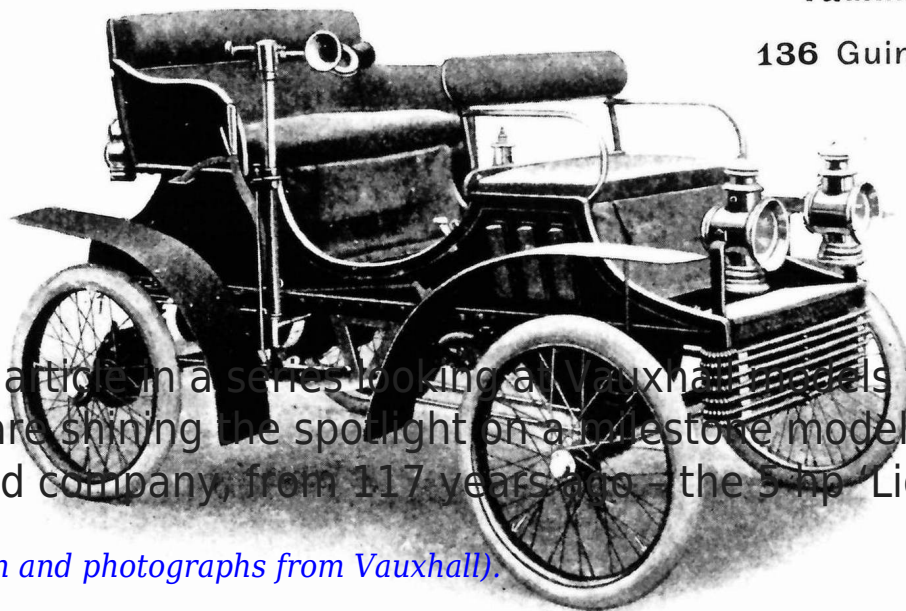
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THREE-SEATED

“Vauxhall Car,”

136 Guineas, Net.



In this first article in a series looking at Vauxhall models through the years, we are shining the spotlight on a milestone model for the Luton-based company, from 117 years ago – the 5 hp ‘Light Car’...

(All information and photographs from Vauxhall).

Built from 1903, Vauxhall’s first year of car production, and known as the ‘Light Car’, the model featured a slow-revving, single-cylinder engine producing just five horsepower.

Perhaps showing Vauxhall’s roots as a producer of marine engines, the Light Car was steered by a tiller, with its speed regulated by a brass hand-wheel next to the driver. A two-speed epicyclic gearbox sent drive through a large chain to the rear wheels, and if determined, the driver could probably squeeze around 25 mph from the little car.



This model - like all others manufactured in 1903 and 1904 - was built in Vauxhall's original South London factory, where around 84 of this type rolled off the production line. The factory moved to Kimpton Road, Luton the following year, where it has been ever since.

The 5 hp four-seater in the photographs - the oldest of its kind in the world - is part of Vauxhall's Heritage Collection and is a regular entrant in the annual London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.



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Photograph by Matt Howell; www.matthowell.co.uk 07740 583906

Technical Data:

Colour: Blue (Interior colour: Black leather)

Engine Capacity: 978cc

Top Speed: 25mph (ungoverned). 0-60mph: n/a

Fuel Consumption: 38.25 mpg

VAUXHALL MOTORS

They tell us:

Vauxhall Motors started making vehicles in the UK in 1903. Today, as the oldest and most familiar of Britain's automotive manufacturers, its philosophy is to build vehicles that are relevant to all. Vauxhall's two manufacturing plants in Ellesmere Port and Luton produced 206,000 cars and vans in 2018, and its sales accounted for nine per cent of the UK market.

Vauxhall has been a Groupe PSA brand since 2017. By 2024, each of its models will offer an electrified version, part of the company's PACE! plan to become sustainably profitable, global and electric. www.vauxhall.co.uk

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