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## Aston Martin DB2/4 Vantage

**Chassis Number:** LML/659. **Engine Number:** VB6E/50/1413.

**U.K. Registration Number:** 760 GBL. **Date of first reg:** 14th April 1954.

**Exterior colour:** Red. **Interior colour:** Grey.

**Current Odometer reading:** miles (Not Warranted).

**Right Hand Steering, Manual transmission.**

### Background:

The DB 2/4 was introduced at the London Motor Show in 1953. A development of the well received DB2, the 2/4 was to overcome the restrictions of a two seater with the addition of two occasional rear seats. Luggage capacity also increased with access via a third door or tailgate featuring an enlarged rear window. The luggage space can be further enhanced by folding down the rear seats. At the time, when three door cars were a rarity, this almost justified the comment, attributed to the Bentley Drivers Club, that the car was then the fastest shooting brake in the world. The DB 2.6 engine is the production version of W.O. Bentley's last brain child, conceived during the latter part of the second World War. With a capacity of 2,580 c.c. the Vantage engine was fitted as standard equipment until the 3.0 litre engine was introduced in April 1954. In 1955 three cars were prepared as works entries for the Monte Carlo Rally and won the team prize. Later that year two of the cars went on to compete in the Mille Miglia. The Mark II was introduced at the London Motor Show in October 1955. It has the same chassis and mechanical specification as the DB2/4. Fitted as standard, was the 2922 c.c. VB6J engine, which developed 140 b.h.p. at 5,000 r.p.m. However, as David Brown had bought Tickford at Newport Pagnell two years earlier, the bodywork for the Mark II was the first to be made there. There was little change in the general appearance, but there are many minor trim differences and modifications. The roof line was increased by 3/4 inch to give extra head room and this model is longer by 2 inches. Inside, the seats have a better shape and the hand brake was replaced by a proper fly-off lever now situated on the floor. In all 199 Mk II's were built. A special series engine, denoted by an 'L' or 'L1' suffix, said to develop 165 b.h.p., was offered as an option. The L cylinder head has larger valves and high lift camshafts. High compression pistons, giving 8.6:1, were also offered as an optional extra for competition, along with a larger fuel tank, close-ratio gearbox, racing clutch and 40 DCO Weber's. A Mark II with standard cylinder head (chassis number AM300/1145) was road tested by Autosport (May 31st 1957), for which 0-60 and 0-100 m.p.h. acceleration times of 10 and 28 sec., a standing 1/4 mile in 17 sec. and a maximum speed of 118.4 m.p.h. were recorded. Roy Salvadori described the same car in Autocourse, (May 1957).

**Vehicle History:** The original factory record for this car gives a comprehensive insight into its early history.. The guarantee was first issued on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1954 and its first owner was a Mr.

Cunningham-Reid. The car had heavy duty shock absorbers fitted and RJ needles as the owner was obviously a sporting man. A fact born out by the fact that the records show that Noel Cunningham-Reid co-drove the works Aston Martin DBR1 to victory with Tony Brooks in 1957 at Nurburgring! The record card notes that the DB2/4 was racing at Snetterton in June 1954 with the owner's modifications. Aston Service were responsible for many of the subsequent modifications in what transpired to be only 14 months of ownership. Modified rear axle ratio, Solex carburetors, exhaust camshaft for the inlet side and modified axle buffers and rear springs. Latterly he had the exhaust system from Tommy Sopwith's car fitted plus two chromium extension pipes. The records also show a fair amount of body damage repair so the car had a very adventurous start in life. Its first change of owner, to a Mr Young of Bond Street, London, came in June 1955 and barely a month into ownership, the engine required a

full rebuild. The record card shows details of a further three owners and then a copy of the original style log book takes the story on to an ecclesiastical twist with a Mr. Bryan Parnell, who on an invoice for another engine rebuild is at a Theological College in Chichester and in the log book is noted as Reverend Parnell. He passed the car to a Mr. Whittaker and the car eventually arrived into the ownership of the current owner in 1979. **Summary:** The car has been fully disassembled for restoration by the current owner who is also the enthusiastic owner of a DB5, in the midst of restoration itself. The reluctant disposal of LML/659 is to help fund the other restoration project and it is worth noting that the car has been laid up since 1971, which means that the 1969 engine rebuild with new pistons and liners becomes timely to the new owner rather than an interesting historical footnote. It represents an unusual and outstanding opportunity to acquire a ground up restoration project and is highly commended by Byron International.

Date	Mileage	Work carried out by:	Detail of work carried out
09/06/54	1975	Aston Martin Lagonda	Modified scraper rings fitted. Rear floor modified
01.10.54	5572	Aston Martin Lagonda	Solex carb, rear axle changed, Alfin brake drums, exhaust camshaft fitted, new distributor, N/S/F wing repaired, speedo recalibrated
01.10.54	698	Aston Martin Lagonda	Modified axle buffers and rear springs, engine tuned
03.11.54	698	Aston Martin Lagonda	Service, T Sopwith's exhaust fitted, N/S door repair, new screen washer
01.01.55	3515	Aston Martin Lagonda	Service/oil change, rear demister, new O/S trailing link bush
12.02.55	4186	Aston Martin Lagonda	Tail silencer
12.04.55	6365	Aston Martin Lagonda	Service, beat out dent in bonnet, reline brakes, new master cylinder
12.04.55	6365	Aston Martin Lagonda	Beat out N/S front wing
07.06.55	8105	Aston Martin Lagonda	Change rear axle back to standard, brakes checked
30.06.55		Aston Martin Lagonda	Engineer sent with new accelerator cable
25.07.55		Aston Martin Lagonda	Full engine rebuild
25.01.56	4646	Aston Martin Lagonda	Clean plugs & contacts, exhaust & steering work, O/S/R link
20.02.56	5084	Aston Martin Lagonda	Repair accident damage
03.04.56	5084	Aston Martin Lagonda	Completion of non-insurance part of repair
29.01.58	28575	Aston Martin Lagonda	Road test and report for owner
04.02.58	28575	Aston Martin Lagonda	Recon. Engine, new prop shaft, brakes, exhaust and steering
17.03.58	29637	Aston Martin Lagonda	Brkæ linings cleaned
29.07.58	35398	Aston Martin Lagonda	Service adjustments to brakes, plugs, points and carb
29.09.58	39031	Aston Martin Lagonda	Service adjustments to brakes, plugs, points and carb
07.02.67		Wilkins Motors	Replacement exhaust system
30.12.69	03816	Stubberfields Garage	Full engine rebuild with new pistons and liners

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