

1960-67 Ford Anglia: Angle By Engel



If you recognize the car on these pages, you're either an incurable Anglophile or have a blue-oval tattoo somewhere on your person. Yep, it's a British Ford, the revolutionary 105E Anglia.

Revolutionary? Well, maybe not like the BMC Mini, also announced in 1959, but certainly innovative for the cheapest English Ford of that time. This Anglia, you see, introduced a new family of small ohv engines that would power millions of EuroFords for the next quarter-century, not to mention early U.S. Pintos and a gaggle of open-wheel Formula Ford racers. Moreover, the 105E was the first Ford built anywhere with a four-speed manual gearbox.

And then there's that "Z-line" rear window. Look familiar? It should. Remember the 1958 Continental Mark III (CA, June 1988)? Same idea, same designer; one Elwood Engel. The Anglia's glass didn't drop down at the touch of a

button, but we're talking British Volkswagen here.

Detroit designers have long done tours of duty at one of their employer's overseas subsidiaries, and it was in the late Fifties that Engel was assigned to Ford of Britain's then-new Birmingham development center to head up styling on a replacement for the top-selling Anglia 100E. Having just had a hand in the big new '58 Continentals back in Dearborn, he undoubtedly thought their reverse-angle backlight would work just as well on a new small Ford, offering better resistance to dirt buildup and fogging than vertical or downsloped glass. Besides, it looked different. Even so, he apparently spent lots of time in a wind tunnel refining the entire shape. This aerodynamic work also explains the sloped hood, raked grille, and gently rounded nose and bodysides.

It was a startling change from the 100E,

Ford of England dispatched its little Anglia to the U.S. for model year 1960 with new styling and a modern engine. An upgraded Super model came Stateside for '65.

a slab-sided, three-box two-door introduced in 1954. (There was also a Prefect four-door and, two years later, two-door wagons called Escort and—wait for it—Squire, the latter with Yankee-style wood-look side trim.) But the 100E has significance for completing the thorough overhaul of the British Ford line that began with the 1951 Consul and Zephyr sedans. Apart from unit construction to replace body-on-frame, the English modernization mimicked Dearborn's 1949 renewal in substituting longitudinal rear leaf springs for a single transverse spring, and discarding solid front axles for independent suspension. In the British cars, the latter was accomplished via cleverly simple coil-sprung struts. All



would carry on in the 105E. (By the way, that new front suspension was the brainchild of another American, engineer Earle S. MacPherson, a recent recruit from General Motors whose MacPherson strut might have debuted on a postwar Chevrolet compact, the stillborn Cadet.)

What the 100Es didn't have were modern engines. While senior British Fords switched to efficient ohv power plants starting in 1951, the wee ones were stuck with long-stroke flathead fours that dated from the Thirties. Engel's Anglia would change that, too.

As new as the car it powered, the 105E engine was unusual in several respects. First, a 3.19-inch bore combined with an ultra-short 1.91-inch stroke to make a 997cc/61-cid unit that was revvy in the extreme. What's more, the crankshaft, as *Road & Track* reported, was "a hollow casting and is entirely innocent of counterweighting." This was made possible by the teensy stroke and "large diameter crank throws. . . . The open core is not continuous for the length of the shaft; the crank throws and their connecting webs are cored separately from the main bearing journals. Also of some interest . . . is the cylinder head, which has no siamesed ports—there being eight separate intake and exhaust holes—and fully



machined combustion chambers." As exotic as this may sound, the all-iron 105E, later known as the "Kent" engine, fast established itself as easy to work on and nearly bulletproof.

The new four-speed gearbox was novel too, at least for a low-end British Ford. *R&T* praised its light, direct shift action, but faulted the gearing, judging second too close to first and third too close to fourth. The result was a big ratio gap that the modest 41 horsepower and 53 pound-feet of torque just couldn't bridge in give-and-take traffic. It also didn't help that

first wasn't synchronized.

With all this, the new Anglia was no slingshot, despite weighing a feathery 1676 pounds. *R&T's* test car "ran" the standing quarter-mile in 24 seconds at 55 mph and took five seconds more to reach 60. Top speed? A dizzying 74 mph. The saving grace for American owners was that a 105E could run flat out all day, just like a VW Beetle. "Its design is such that no matter how hard it is pushed, it never seems to be strained," said *Road & Track*. "The 3rd gear is near-perfect for passing, and the car simply won't wind high



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1, 2. Though built in England, the 105E/123E-series Anglias had their share of American input. The styling—slantback rear window and all—was the work of Elwood Engel of Lincoln Continental fame. The independent front suspension relied on MacPherson struts, the brainchild of Yank Earle MacPherson. 3. A simple, but bright, dash confronted drivers. The instrument panel's symmetry accommodated conversion to lefthand drive for export markets.

enough in either 3rd or 4th to damage the engine. As a matter of fact, it would be pretty hard to hurt the engine in any gear, as [it] will go right up to nearly 6000 rpm and just hang there with the valves rattling. Below the point of valve-bounce there is never a feeling of strain." Just as well, that; the new Anglia had no tachometer.

It didn't have much else either, but then base price was only about \$1600 when U.S. sales commenced for the 1960 model year. British buyers were offered standard and DeLuxe models, but only the latter were sold in America, identified by a full-width chrome grille and sybaritic features like a passenger sunvisor and locking glovebox. You did get tube-frame individual front seats, plus room for four six-footers provided they were close chums. At least the flat Z-line roof afforded better-than-usual rear head clearance, plus a large trunklid that raised almost upright.

The 105E was somewhat shy on dynamic ability too. It was quite maneuverable with its 90.5-inch wheelbase, trim 153.5-inch overall length, and slim 56.5-inch width. But it was also a tad nose-heavy (55/45 percent), which gave unusually good crosswind resistance but also marked understeer on the dainty 5.20×13 tires. As Britain's *Popular Classics*

magazine observed in 1993: "All models of Anglia will delight their drivers with their eagerness to please. They rev smoothly, ride well and handle reasonably given the limitations of their suspension layout. Violent cornering is not to be recommended, however." Who says the British have no sense of humor?

Britons certainly loved the 105E, rear window and all, and more than 950,000 were sold through 1967 (after which new Anglo-German Escorts took over, marketed by a new Ford of Europe organization). All but 200,000 were DeLuxe sedans. Another 130,000 were estate cars (wagons), a few of which came Stateside. All were two-doors. Ford also built nearly 73,000 123E Anglia Supers with a long-stroke (2.29-inch), 1199cc (73-cid) engine borrowed from the larger new 1962 Cortina. These claimed 48.5 bhp, a sizzling 0-60 of 24 seconds, and blazing top speed in the low 80s. Britons got the Super in 1962, but Americans waited until '65, when it replaced the 105.

These Anglias now go for tuppence even in their homeland, but time, attrition, and lowish original sales make it tough to find a good one here. Then, too, "performance" really isn't up to most U.S. demands. On the other hand, the ubiquitous Kent engine poses no parts problems, and these cars enjoy good club

support. There are even some reproduction and NOS parts around, including body panels, though they do cost. Remember that, because rust is chronic and can be crippling.

Of course, a Sixties Anglia won't be everyone's cup of tea even as cheap wheels, but what a great conversation-starter parked next to a '61 Continental (CA, October 1991). That one has Engel angles too, you know.

From the Back Seat

These little English Fords seem to be overlooked by collectors. Buyers looking for an early-Sixties compact tend to automatically gravitate toward the more common Corvairs, Falcons, and Chevy IIs. Too bad. The Anglias sure are cute little things. They're better proportioned than some of the other compacts of that era. A touch more exotic, too. The Anglia would make a nice collectible when you consider the fact that it uses some pretty common Ford parts and has decent club support. Plus it offers the bonus of being able to confound the local "experts" who will think it's a Rambler or Studebaker.

David Bellm

Ford brought cars to the U.S. from Old Blighty for years, but outside of a dedicated circle of club members, they're mostly forgotten on this side of the Atlantic. The sagging but externally solid '63 Plymouth Valiant hardtop I saw puttering down the expressway recently reminds me of the many other cars I'd rather spend a small amount of mad money on before settling for an Anglia. Only unreconstructed Anglophiles need apply.

John Biel

Although the Anglia was an efficient early-Sixties economy car, it's not a viable choice as cheap wheels. It's a novelty, an amalgam of period Ford Motor Company styling cues rendered in ¾ scale. British assembly does it no favors, either. A nice Falcon of the same vintage is just as interesting today, and would make more sense in terms of parts and maintenance.

Chuck Giametta



1960-67 Ford Anglia

Restorable	Good	Excellent
forget it	\$500-1,500	\$1,500-3,000

Historically, the Ford "Angular's" most memorable accomplishment came as the vehicle of choice of Oddjob, the cinematic evil henchman of Auric Goldfinger, whom James Bond first met perambulating down the precise center of an English A-road. Bond's Aston Martin brushed by the Anglia with the contempt that it deserved. Why would anyone want one of these? Undoubtedly they are cheap wheels, but they have no collector value at all. Still, the Anglia is certainly rolling exhibit A of what was wrong with the English car industry, and maybe there's a perverse reason for driving one to explain what happened. English price guides enthusiastically quote exorbitant prices for Anglias in outstanding condition; we don't believe it. At least they don't bring much on these shores.