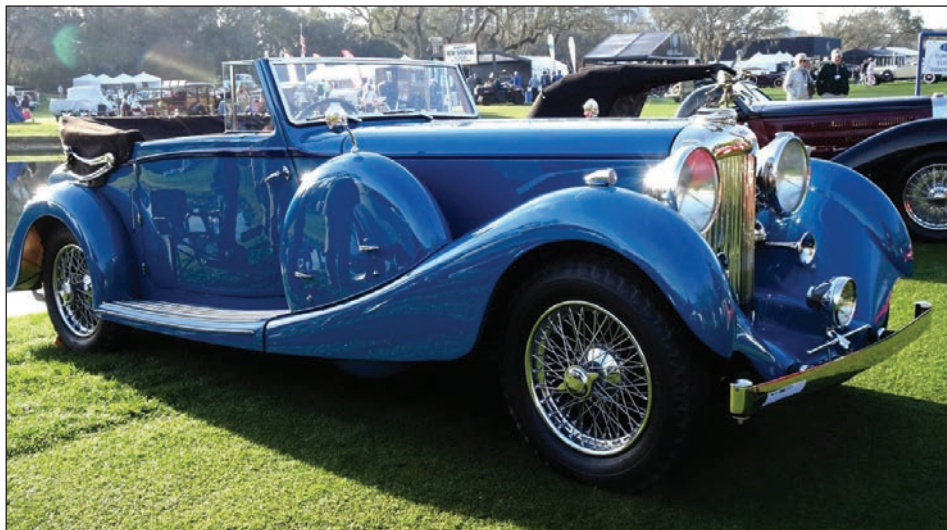




BUW 780
THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LAGONDA CLUB
Number 265 Summer 2020



*The superb LG45 belonging to Gregory Parsons who lives in California.
Here it is winning its class at the Amelia Island concours event.*

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**COVER: The magnificent M45 of Stephen Matthews pictured in front
of Basildon House in 2019 Picture from Barry Halton**

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From the Workbench

Roger Seabrook

THE ENFORCED ABSENCE from any social or competition meetings has meant there are no activities to report on. I know that many of you have used this time to tackle some work that you might have left until winter – me included.

So, thank you to those who have taken the trouble to write some articles to fill these pages! Without these contributions the magazine would be very slim indeed! There are many topics that can be covered, and as broad a coverage of models and their characteristics as you see them is encouraged. There will always be differences of opinion, depending on how you 'bond' with a particular type.

Interestingly, the light cars are receiving the kind of attention and enjoyment that I could only have dreamed of when I bought mine all those years ago. Then, the negative responses were such that I gave up on it as I could get no spares and no encouragement. Now that car has re-emerged with an enthusiastic new owner.

The 16/80 is a model that had a relatively short life, but was a logical step at the time, when six-cylinder engines were in demand - the fours were considered old fashioned and tended to be in the cheaper end of the

market. The engine of this model has often been referred to as a Crossley, but Brian Savill, who has restored several and knows them intimately, has disagreed and poses arguments on Page 32 which should elicit some comment. The last of the engines designed solely by Lagonda was, I believe, the 3½ Litre. But weren't all the outsourced engines re-engineered to Lagonda's requirements, including the Meadows, to some extent? Let's have some comments.

Have any of you fitted windscreen rubbers to your cars? You will know how hard it is to do this, both for the glass into the frame and, in the case of the saloons and some dropheads, the rubber seal around the edge of the screen. I have been struggling with the special rubber extrusion that slides into the bottom and sides of a saloon windscreen, made by Cox. I have tried washing-up liquid as a lubricant but the rubber goes about a third of the way across and then binds up. I was thinking of trying a silicone lubricant which shouldn't affect the rubber. After it's in you need to push in a thin stainless steel rod, to prevent the rubber from jumping out. Can someone write up some ideas about how to proceed – I'm sure there will be some grateful interested parties! ■

***Last date for copy for the AUTUMN Magazine is
FRIDAY 25th September 2020.
Please keep new articles and pictures coming in.***

Fatigue will tell!

John Ryder describes a mechanical failure that seriously damaged a 3 Litre Engine

LIKE MOST PIECES of machinery which one decides to renovate or even simply maintain, some areas are very obvious, others less so.

Some years ago, I was contacted about the owner of a 1928 3 Litre. His engine had stopped with (quote) "Some very nasty noises" and would not now rotate. It was later removed from the car and sent to my workshop for investigation.

As many members will know the 3 Litre unit and the later 3½ version share a number of features, one of which is the valve operating mechanism. However, the timing chain tensioning arrangement is not via a separate jockey-sprocket, with spring-loaded self-adjusting ratchet and pawl. This function is achieved by a 1¾" wide by 0.025" thick spring steel blade, loaded against the chain links by two 5" long round-wire loose-hook tension springs. An inelegant though effective device known as the 'Weller' system.

The inverted tooth pattern timing chain is 1 3/8" wide over the side plates, the Weller blade being carefully positioned to give equal overlap per side (see sketch). Splash lubrication is provided from the cross-shaft oil feed connections in the top face of the timing case which mitigates against the friction condition between blade and chain, though it cannot eliminate wear and hence, periodic inspection is

essential if the following is to be avoided. On attempting to remove the outer timing case, a metal object was seen to be protruding through a fractured area. Following a great deal of levering and prising this was revealed to be a portion of the chain. The overall damage was greatly in excess of anything anticipated or previously experienced.

The 'blade' had fractured and the two pieces, together with a portion of one tension spring had then become jammed between sprocket and chain, breaking it, distorting several teeth before passing into the area of the bronze timing gear and the casing; removing most of the gear teeth in the process caused mostly by the 5/16" upper rod. Other pieces of the blade, together with a mangled length of tension spring, had passed down the timing case into the sump, other debris subsequently being found on top of the sump baffle plate. These incidents had badly damaged both sections of the timing case and related components, all of which had to be replaced.

When the engine was dismantled shards of spring steel were found in the Autokleen strainer, and the oil pump rotor and relief valve seat were heavily marked – an indication that the 'failure' process had been occurring for some considerable time.

A trawl through the usual sources of Lagonda spares failed to locate the

necessary Weller items. My long-term spring supplier in Sheffield is fully approved by the Institute of Spring Technology, and I have privileged access to their extensive data programme.

Certified drawings, material and heat-treatment procedures, together with the special tooling required, were prepared in order to produce exact replicas of the device, incorporating superior grades to enhance wear resistance and improve the overall quality. The assembly is available from Lagonda Spares, Part No. ENG 302.

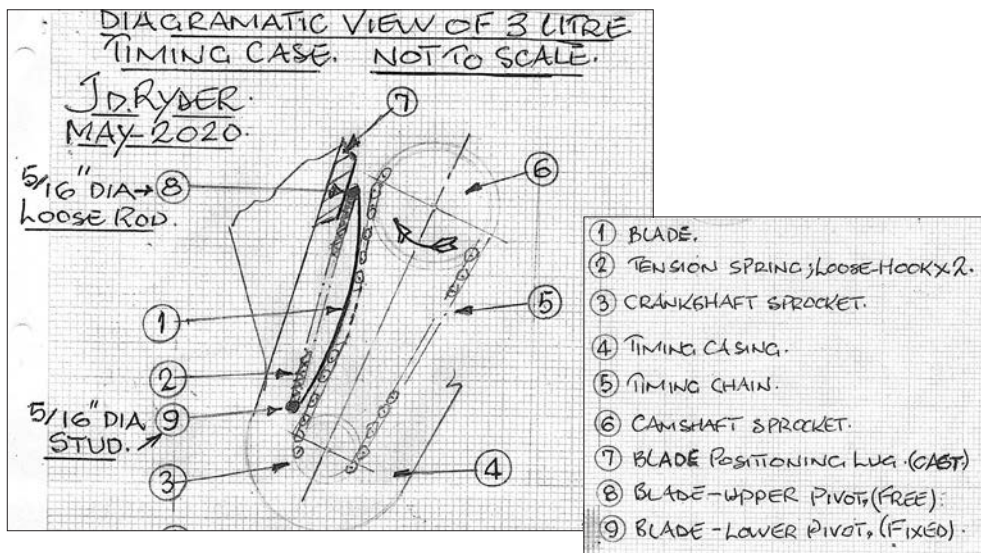
I refer to this design as 'inelegant' and, from an engineering viewpoint, it certainly is. Bearing in mind the price bracket of the 3 and 3½ Litre cars, it is surprising that something rather more sophisticated than two pieces of metal, rubbing together, was not considered. However, in the light of Lagonda finances at the time,

it is remarkable that the model was produced at all! No doubt the 'Bean Counters' had the final word.

Ivan Forshaw held the view that the 3 Litre was the best engine that Staines ever produced. I acquired my derelict example in 1967 and spent around four years on a bare-chassis rebuild – I still own it. With certain reservations I agree with his sage opinion but, after all, the most useful present an engineer can be given is the 'Hindsight Manual'.

I hope the foregoing may encourage owners of the model to peer into the timing case from time-to-time, and should anyone require further information on the issue to let me know. I will be only too pleased to assist.

Editor's note: In case this article prompts a rush to the workshop by owners, I have checked with the Spares Team and they have a decent stock of ENG302. ■



The Revival of a Long Lost 2 Litre - HE 4591

By James Woollard

TO TELL THE story of HE 4591 we have to go back to the late-Nineteen fifties, when competitive activities in vintage cars were very demanding on spare parts which were not very easy to come by. For example, in those days when Tim Carson was V.S.C.C. Secretary, the Lagonda Club would help when possible, and one day I had a tip off from Tim to say that a fellow member was moving house in North London leaving a quantity of 2 litre spares behind free to anyone who could clear them quickly! I still have many of those parts today.

Some time later, I met a publican near Olney in Buckinghamshire who owned an early low chassis 2 litre which was deteriorating in his pub

yard, following a minor shunt.

After some lengthy persuasion, a deal was done and the car stored at my father's farm near Stony Stratford. This would help to keep me motoring in my H C 2 litre for the next 30 years as, of course, most of the parts were common to both models.

In purchasing this old wreck, purely to cannibalise, I had no intention at that time of restoring it but I have since become curious to find out what I could about its origins. There is only one known faded photograph of the car shown here owned by a Mr B. R. Smith from Coventry with the number 34 at the bottom margin. I had always thought



that this came from the then Hartop album, which it may well have done, but must have originated from the 2 Litre Register List of 1949, membership number 34.

This list also shows HE's sister car HE 4573, now in the capable hands of our Editor. Number 34 was one of over two hundred members of the Register in 1949, at its peak and just prior to it becoming absorbed into the Lagonda Club. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of cars in the Register, only four years from its instigation in 1945. Details of the membership makes some interesting reading. This was at the time the VSCC Membership was about 1,500.

The only time I saw HE on the road was on the Croughton, Northampton roundabout proceeding rapidly towards Oxford but I never found out

who owned it at the time.

It must then have passed on shortly afterwards to the publican from whom I bought it. That is really where the story begins.

Moving on to the Seventies, we moved to Suffolk and HE 4591 came with us. Over time, when work and vintage motoring permitted, I removed the body and engine and had the front of the chassis straightened. The offside dumb iron had been pushed back in the shunt also bending the front axle. The photo shown here shows the arrival of the chassis at Coachmans shortly after we had moved in and erected suitable stabling, sometime during 1994.

With the chassis came a considerable quantity of spares which had been temporarily stored at Combs Tannery, near Stowmarket with the kindly help of Nic Portway of 30/98



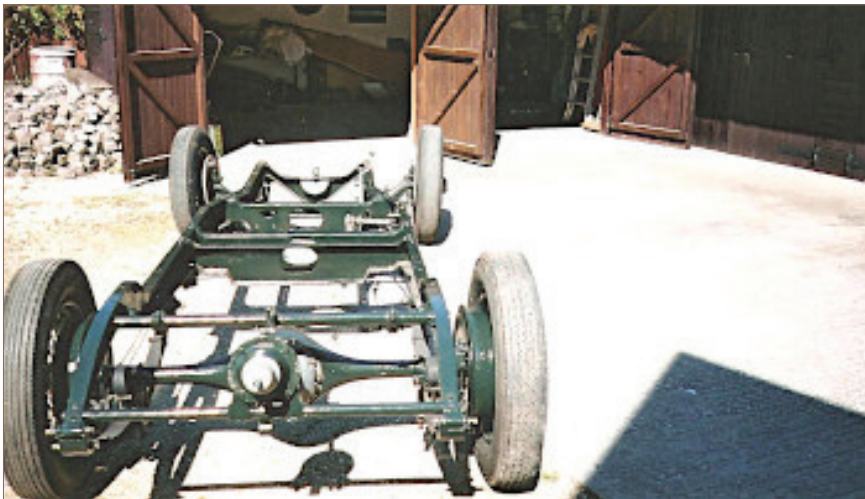
fame, Nic was also instrumental in helping to get the chassis straightened.

During this time, my interest in Lagondas had temporarily been dampened by the seduction of a very attractive Italian Lady in the form of a 3rd Series Lancia Lambda, to which I had succumbed four years earlier. This affair has lasted through joy and sorrow all of 25 years and is still very strong.

However, my friendship with

Phil Ridout which goes back to the 1950'ies when he lived in Elstree, had been strongly maintained through this period and around the time of the Millennium which coincided with my retirement, we agreed that I should start to put together all the disparate parts of HE 4591 before they disappeared.

So in the next four years with much help and advice from Phil, I reassembled the chassis to that which you see here.



As I cleaned and fitted each part, approved by Phil, we sometimes marvelled at the hidden beauty of

some of these, such as this very artistic universal joint.



There is then a pause of another four years before the next stage. The body, although almost complete, was in a

parlous state. What if anything could be saved?





As you can see, this T1 body has always had three doors which is unusual, possibly unique.

We managed to save the doors and fittings,



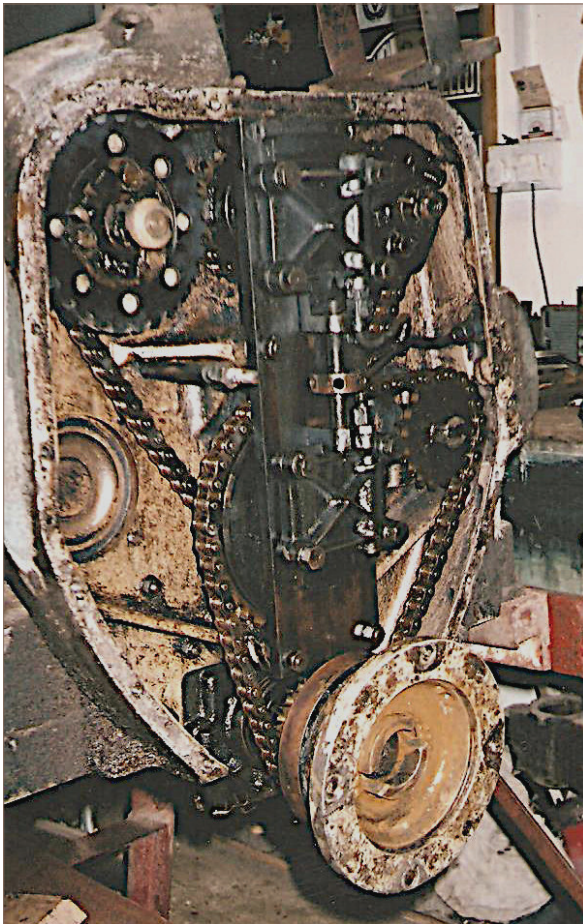
also the windscreen, dashboard and bonnet side panels. The rear wings were missing, sold to a needy owner many years earlier - the front wings

useful only as a pattern.

Whilst this was going on, I had plenty of time to decide what to do with the engine.

As you can see it was one of the relatively few “backwards engines” as fitted to about fifty of the early low chassis cars.

Dismantling an engine is always fun, reassembling it quite another matter.



The temptation to modify the re-build was resisted, as I wanted to keep it very much as it left the factory. The only change I did make was to put it back to standard timing gears. The block was then taken to Belcher Engineering, only ten miles away, to make new main bearings and refit the existing rods and pistons which were in good shape, needing only new rings and gudgeon pins.

In due course, the block came back home for me to start reassembling.

At this point having taken everything apart the moment arrives when you have to start rebuilding it. As anyone who has restored a complete car will know doing it the right order is very important, if only to avoid having to do it twice. More of this to come. ■

To be continued

Alec Downie

Stephen Matthews remembers a good friend of the Lagonda Club

I FIRST MET Alec at the Lagonda AGM at Aldermaston Manor, on a warm September day in 1993. Alec was selling Lagonda 'bits & bobs' out of the boot of an impressive LG45 Freestone & Webb Saloon. Although I didn't know it at the time, Alec was in his element, surrounded by Lagondas, Club Members and doing some 'wheeling & dealing'. At this time Alec was in his mid-seventies and already had many years of pleasure with the Lagonda Club, having joined in September 1975, then serving on the Committee from 1979 as Southern Secretary and was generally well known on the various rallies and Club activities.

Born within an easy cycle ride of Brooklands and the Lagonda Factory in Staines, he had been hugely influenced by the local Hanworth Airpark in Feltham. Of working-class roots, he found himself as a trainee electrician working for Vickers at Brooklands. When war broke out, he remained as a civilian at Vickers; his role was to repair aircraft that had got back to an aerodrome but were unable to fly again without major repair. Often staying at distant aerodromes for weeks at a time, he remarked that the damage 'flak' could do to an aircraft wiring was unbelievable. I am sure that experience of 'making do' and getting the aircraft flying again explained much of his approach to working on Lagondas.

At the end of the war, Alec worked at a local garage in Teddington but money was tight. To supplement his income, he started to sell candyfloss and toffee apples at local fairs and racetracks. When in his Nineties he could still demonstrate 'tic tac', a traditional method of signalling used by bookies. The candyfloss was a real success but obtaining the quantity of sticks required was a problem, however Alec found a solution with a local company who had plenty of offcuts. He then started to sell his sticks to other traders; so, then he needed boxes to put the sticks in and from that he became a major dealer in second hand cardboard boxes. Alec bought the boxes while his business partner ran the operation in Twickenham; over the next thirty plus years the business flourished.

Alec's first Lagonda was a 1931 Blown 2 Litre Tourer car and then he bought a completely burnt out 1928 High Chassis Tourer. He started to buy all the 2 litre spares he could find, including a spare chassis and slowly, over seven years working in the evenings and weekends rebuilt the car to its former glory. At the end he still had enough spares left over to build at least 1 ½ more cars and continued to provide 2 Litre spares for the next three decades! In 1982 he had the opportunity to buy an LG45R, paid for in cash and not



Alec as many of us remembered him - in his beautiful LG45R



Alec & Sylvia pictured outside their home on his 90th birthday

invited over the threshold of the owner! And so, he started another restoration, but much shorter this time; the car was resprayed in a bright shade of red, 'Monarch Red' which seemed appropriate, for Alec this was his crowning glory and he and the Rapide became inseparable. Always a fast driver, the car suited his personality and he also joined the Lagonda elite 'Band of Brothers' who also had Rapides. Retirement from business also led Alec and Sylvia to move from Cobbetts Hill, Weybridge to Carpenters Farmhouse in Sherfield on Loddon, near Hook in circa 1985. The Farmhouse provided spacious accommodation for the cars, storage and workshop but rather more modest living premises. Alec created a Lagonda network, constantly visiting friends. Peter Whenman at Phoenix Green, Derek Green and Colin & Valerie Bugler in Hartley Wintney – envelope stuffing for the monthly Club Newsletter a regular event. There was also Geoff Seaton and John Walker, David Ayre and then BishopGray but also a whole network of suppliers and interesting people to visit. He and John Oliver travelled widely finding parts for the Club spares scheme, while Alec provided a repair service for starter motors and other electrical items. Autojumbles, auctions and rallies completely filled Alec's time.

Alec and I had many things in common; having helped us to find our home in 1995 we lived only 10 minutes from each other and shared a passion for Lagondas. We saw each other two or three times a week

for over twenty years; we helped each other a great deal but more importantly we laughed a lot. As he got older, I drove and always, as he got into the Lagonda, by some magic 20 or 30 years would drop away from Alec, and for that short period he was a younger man again. For Alec, being a 'Club Member' was hugely important – nothing was too much trouble or effort for Club members. The stories of him helping others are legendary; rebuilding engines, providing spares or driving miles to solve a problem. For Alec it was a pleasure and he always welcomed folk to Carpenters Farmhouse, first to look at the cars and then the fish – in a converted swimming pool attached to the house – and always to talk Lagondas. The Club was very much an extended family where he felt appreciated and valued.

As Alec approached mid-nineties, he had a difference of opinion with a horse-rider while he was driving his 'modern' car; with much reluctance he surrendered his driving licence and tried to adjust to life without a car. He did get an old bike out of the barn but quickly gave that up as a bad job. His life without the regular visits become a challenge and dementia started to become evident. He went full-time into a care home which was very tough; he often remarked that he was sure he was at a Lagonda AGM but wondered where were all the Lagondas were. Alec, a man who cared for all things Lagonda, a pragmatist and, above all, an enthusiast and a wonderful friend to so many Club Members. ■

Wheel Spinners

John Sword compares those fitted by Lagonda over the years

IN ADDITION TO their job of holding our wheels securely onto their hubs, wheel spinners are an important part of the finish and appearance of our cars. Any Rudge-Whitworth 52mm spinner will do a perfectly safe and satisfactory job of holding a wheel onto a Lagonda, but most people also want their spinners to be 'correct', and to be the same as those originally fitted when their car left the factory. Unfortunately, though, many Lagondas today are fitted with spinners that are 'wrong', and this short article sets out to show what design of spinner was originally fitted to each Lagonda model, covering the 'wire wheel' period between 1926 and 1940 (note - I am not covering Rapiers here as they used 42 mm hubs).

As always with Lagondas, it is dangerous to try to be definitive about what parts were originally fitted to particular models, as we all know about Lagonda's indiscipline in this area, their willingness to respond to the requests of individual customers, and their tendency to use up old stocks that were on the shelf.

Having said that, however, and after consulting in depth with Arnold Davey and others, here goes:

There were four different styles of 52 mm Rudge-Whitworth spinner that were fitted to Lagondas during

this 1926-1940 period. I will call these Types 1-4 and they are covered in turn, below.

The Type 1 spinner was fitted to 14/60s and 16/65s. Early versions of these models were fitted with artillery wheels, which were gradually phased out during 1926/7 in favour of wire wheels. This early spinner design, carrying the Rudge-Whitworth emblem stamped on its face, was nickel plated and earless, requiring for its operation a c-spanner, which engaged in radial holes in its circumference (and which lived in a dedicated slot in the tool roll). This awkward arrangement did not last long, and when the first 2 litre



Speed Models were launched in 1927, the eared spinner was introduced. This was then also fitted to the 14/60 and 16/65 (which continued to be manufactured into 1928).

Owing to the small number of 14/60s and 16/65s that have survived (less than 30 cars, we think), it has not been worthwhile for the Club to have Type 1 spinners manufactured, but the writer has had a set made for his own car (used for the photos above) by re-machining one of the later, eared variety.

The Type 2 spinner was introduced with the launch of the 2 litre Speed Model in June/July 1927, and was fitted to all car models from then until late in 1931. It was distinguished by its thick, square-edged ears which were set at an angle such that the knock-off side of each ear was almost parallel to the radius from the centre of the hub, thus giving optimum leverage to the hammer blows. Type 2 spinners were fitted to all LC 2 litres, except for supercharged cars and the Continental (probably also to all LC cars from late 1931), and to all 3 litres up to late 1931 (possibly changing to the Type 3 at the introduction of the ZM chassis, although the cut-away drawing of the Selector Special shows Type 2 spinners). As so often with Lagonda, the exact timing of the changeover from Type 2 to Type 3 is uncertain. The Type 2 spinners were also stamped with the R-W emblem and were nickel plated at the start, switching to chrome as this became adopted during 1930. You will know which plating is correct for your car



by reference to its other plated fittings - windscreen, lights, door fittings etc., except for the radiator, which continued to be made from 'German Silver' until well into 1931, long after chrome had taken over elsewhere on the car. The Club supplies reproductions of Type 2 spinners, in both nickel and chrome plating. The Type 3 spinner was first fitted to the 2 litre supercharged cars in 1930 and seems to have been fitted generally from late 1931. The ears on this spinner were symmetrical across its diameter, and were slimmer than the ears on the Type 2. The ends of the ears were 'pointy', although from period photos it seems that there may also have been a version with more rounded ends, similar in shape to the

type 4, below (if any member has one of these, I should be most interested to see a photo of it). As with the earlier types, the Type 3s were embossed with the R-W emblem - they were also stamped (perhaps not all?) with the R-W emblem inside the spinner. All were chrome plated.



Type 3 spinners were fitted to all Lagondas in this period (except Rapiers, of course), up until the receivership in 1935. The Club supplies reproductions of Type 3 spinners (the pointy-ear version only, at the moment).

The Type 4 spinner, was introduced when the new company, LG Motors Ltd, was launched in 1935, being fitted to LG45s from their introduction. It is similar in form to the Type 3 but with more rounded ends to the ears. However, instead of the R-W emblem on its face, it carries a heavily stamped

LAGONDA. The Type 4 was fitted to all Lagondas produced under LG Motors, from 1935 until the war - the LG45, the LG6, and the V12.

The most common error in members' choice of spinners is to fit Type 4s to pre-LG45 cars. Understandably people like to fit Lagonda-stamped spinners, in order to add to the brand identity of their cars, but unfortunately this is incorrect for pre-LG45 cars. The Club supplies reproductions of Type 4 spinners.



As always with such things, there are uncertainties, but the above is the best information that we have today. I would be very happy to hear from any member who can add to our knowledge. ■

Picture Quiz

Does anyone know what the device pictured below is, and where it fits on a car? Do you know which company made it, and what it was claimed it would do?

The answers will appear in the Autumn Magazine. ■



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Pitfalls - Part II

By David Hine

CONVERSION TO CONVENTIONAL coil and distributor arrangement is a route some recommend. However, these set-ups are not always fool proof. I had an embarrassment when I was the only Lagonda on a Bentley rally, and my distributor mysteriously failed. It turned out that the rotor arm had developed an invisible earth fault and the vital spark was disappearing and not reaching the plugs. Alan Brown sent me another rotor from Knarr Mill in a jiffy bag and that saved the day. Later I cut the old rotor open but nothing was visible...weird. I now carry spare rotor and a set of points.

What else to carry as spares is always a compromise where luggage space is at a premium. One pal always carries a pair of half shafts complete with hubs so, as a result, he can't fold his hood properly. Another carries a crown wheel and pinion set up complete. His logic is, that this is the only bit of his car that he has not restored by his own hand! I actually carry very little in the way of spares. I have my trusty tool kit of spanners (one adjustable), screwdrivers, scissors, hammer, pipe wrench, wire trimmer and feeler gauge. Also, a plug socket and tyre levers together with an inner tube and a small tyre pump. I have an extra fuel pump plumbed into the reserve petrol pipe so I don't carry a spare any more. I also carry jump leads, a torch, a warning triangle, high vis jackets and one of those small starter batteries which are meant to get you going. I have a little box of small nuts and bolts, wire, emery

paper, bulbs and the aforementioned magneto spares. Finally, I have a spare set of rockers. The latter are probably the most highly stressed bit of the engine and don't take up much room.

There are several pitfalls involved in rebuilding an engine and too many for this article. However, I would highlight a couple. The Club supplies a gasket which goes between the block and the crankcase on Meadows engines. Some early type engines need extra holes punching, in this gasket, for oil to drain through in order to avoid disaster. The big pitfall which applies to most pre-war engines is the clearance allowed when re-boring for new pistons. New shiny pistons come with a recommended clearance often marked on the side of the box. This is usually 3-4 thou". If this clearance is used you will almost certainly observe that your engine seizes up in the first few miles. Due to arcane tax rules many pre-war cars had engines with a very long piston stroke compared with modern units. This means the maximum speed of the piston is double or even treble that of current engines for the same revolutions per minute. I always allow 4-5 thou" extra clearance when doing a rebuild and have never had a seizure similar to the two I have experienced in the past. Over the years I have had the plain bearings on the Meadows water pump seize up and also the camshaft bearings on a 16/80 engine seize, both through working to excessively close tolerances.

Braking systems give rise to much consternation for many Lagonda

owners. These systems tended to evolve over the years. The front brakes on the vintage Lagonda appear to be a different design to the rear brakes. If the front brakes are adjusted up too tight then, under heavy braking, the whole car can leap up and down alarmingly. The Z type chassis still used the Perrot-shaft system but the said 'leaping up and down' only happens when braking in reverse. The Z type has a different problem if the rear brakes are adjusted too tight and then luggage and great aunt are loaded up in the rear. The axle moves slightly backwards, the brakes bind on and much heat and molten grease result. The Girling brake system was first used on the Rapier and M45R chassis. This was an amazing technical leap forward. It was a much simpler design, cheaper to install and worked much better than the Perrot-shaft arrangement. However, the pitfall is that the aluminium expanders inside the drum must be slightly free to slide in their little slots. If not, the car could swerve under heavy braking. I had a LG45R for six years until 1975 and, due to my ignorance, it always swerved a bit! For some reason the Company changed to hydraulic brakes for the LG6/V12 chassis. It was a prototype Lockheed system and pretty awful. Meticulous cleanliness and special rubber lubrication is required.

Some mini pitfalls are quite amusing. I once noticed my Ki-gass pipe glowing in the dark when I forgot to attach the earth braid to the starter motor. I set up the front springs and ran into the dreaded slow speed wheel wobble until I fitted bigger wedges. After 50 years I discovered that the annoying clonk was the starting handle jumping up and down in its holder.

A pal left his 3-Litre with an expert firm to fix the clutch. They did a good job with his clutch but fitted the wrong-handed starter spring, which unwound and was impossible to get out! They also told him his timing chain had slipped because they couldn't believe the inlet valve opened after top dead centre.

Most of us know that it is prudent to prime the oil pump on a 2-Litre engine after a long lay-up. However not many realise that V12 engines can also suffer from this problem and should be primed through the oil filters prior to start up. The twin oil pump set-up on a V12 is quite extraordinary. Its initial sophisticated design was laudable with one pump supplying the crankshaft and the other supplying the camshaft and timing gears at a much lower pressure. However, the aluminium con rods expanded when hot and this caused an alarming loss of oil pressure on the gauge. A quick factory fix was to cut a slot between the two oil filters and run both oil pumps and filters at high pressure to supply the crankshaft. The camshafts were then fed through a sneaky pin hole and/or a let-down bypass valve. None of this shady fix was mentioned to the sales chaps so the posh handbooks were never altered. All went well until, after the war, nobody did expensive oil changes. The system then seized up, high-pressure oil flooded the camshafts and then oiled up the inaccessible spark plugs. This gave V12 engines an awfully bad reputation.

This was made worse by the rapid crystallization of the aluminium con rods leading to spectacular failure at the high revolutions these engines can achieve.

To be concluded ■

Bruce Watson's Photographs of Two Litre Lagonda Register & Lagonda Club Rallies

By Gordon Watson

THE LARGE FAMILY photograph albums filled the drawers of my father's desk and it became a tradition to get them out when relatives visited and, later, at family gatherings. Alongside these were equally heavy albums of photographs of vintage and veteran cars taken over 30 years from the mid 1940s. Typically, the photographs were taken in the car park or paddock at VSCC events, a wide range of rallies and special events such as the RAC Diamond Jubilee Cavalcade in London in 1957, the Anglo American Rally at Goodwood in 1954 and the International Rally in 1963. Included are Two Litre Lagonda Register and Lagonda Club rallies in 1948, 1950, 1951, 1955, 1957 and later.

E. Bruce Watson joined the Two Litre Lagonda Register in 1946. He responded to a letter from P. A. Densham which he sent in September 1946 to ten Lagonda owners, plus the Autocar and Motor Sport. Peter Densham wrote "I should very much like to see a register of 2 litre Lagonda owners, object being mutual advice, spare parts, buying or selling. Towards this end I have been collecting addresses for the past year and have now got ten which will have to do to start with". My father was member No 10 and I still have his 2 Litre Register badge with 10 stamped on it. Peter Densham recalled in the Lagonda Club magazine in 1951 that he had advertised his car for sale in Motor Sport and this put him in touch with

Lagonda enthusiasts. He produced the Register's Notes regularly, reaching issue No 26 in December 1950, and the first rally was held in 1947. The Register had over 200 members by 1949. As is well known, the Two Litre Register and the Lagonda Club merged in 1951. The Register of Members and their Cars issued in 1960 listed 776 members.

Bruce Watson joined with the 1926 14/60 two litre Lagonda, registration YR 5299, which has a unique drop head coupe body (two-seater and dickey) by James Young of Bromley. He owned this car from 1937 and noted on the form that he believed the mileage to be 195,000. Contributing to the high mileage were the European tours that he did in the car from Edinburgh to Albania via Croatia and returning through Italy in 1937, to the Bavarian Alps in 1938 and around Norway in 1939, returning home just before the start of the Second World War. Post-War this was my father's main car and he used it for family holidays, including towing a caravan, trips from Kent to Scotland and North Wales and various rallies. Our late brother Roger Watson wrote a detailed history of the car, named Miranda from the 1930s, in *The Lagonda* No 126, Autumn 1985. Miranda is now in my care and I'm part way through restoring it, aiming to keep it as original as possible. In 1956 Bruce Watson bought the 1937 LG45 Lagonda with drop head body FPA 521 that now belongs to my eldest brother,



Some of the cars at the 1948 Newbury Rally



The old and the then-new pictured at the Wheatley Rally in 1955

and Club member, Brian Watson. The car is in excellent condition as Brian had it fully restored. We attended the Annual Gathering in this car in 2016. One of our father's photographs shows this car at the AGM in 1957 with Brian standing on the running board.

The earliest Lagonda Club rally in the photographs is the 2 Litre Register rally and AGM in autumn 1948, which was held at Newbury. There are 15 negatives of the event which show the cars gathered, I think at a location in the morning and then at the Chequers Hotel for the AGM in the afternoon. My father and mother Kathleen drove from Broadstairs in Kent in YR 5299.

I should mention that finding the negatives is via my father's index cards which list the negatives by place. He numbered every negative and the cards have a date and short description. It would be a lot harder without this meticulous system as the negatives are not stored in strict chronological order.

The next events recorded by a few photographs only are the No Ration Rally at a derelict army camp near Hindhead in July 1950 and a further rally there in 1951. (Petrol rationing only ended in May 1950.) The 1950 rally was described by Ivan Forshaw in Notes 25, September 1950. This included driving tests and my father is recorded as third from last in the results. Forshaw wrote: "Miranda, her appearance belying her age, pirouetted with grace and dignity, Watson working hard at the wheel but enjoying himself immensely". My father attended the Lagonda AGM and Rally at Wheatley in 1955, 1957 and 1958. These were held at Brimpton Grange, Milton Common, Wheatley on the A 40. The 1955 event

included a parade to mark 50 years of Lagonda Achievement with the 1905 Tricar, Nancy Audsley's 1923 11.9, Geoffrey Seaton's 1930 3-litre, Ian Stewart's 1939 V-12 and a 1955-6 DB 3-litre.

For many years, my father's cars were repaired at the Dumpton Park Garage in Broadstairs run by Peter Gore. By the early 1960s there were a number of Lagonda owners in Broadstairs and I remember seeing some of their cars in the Garage and out on the road. Geoff Hibbert, previously on the 2 Litre Register Committee, worked at Dumpton Park Garage and owned the 1932 supercharged 2 litre APA 524, that had competed in the 1933 Monte Carlo Rally. Other owners in Broadstairs were Bruce Balcombe, 1931 LC 2 Litre PL 8771, and Roland Morgan who had the 1931 2 litre LC OU 9664 and the 1930 supercharged 2 litre GK 8901. I know my father was extremely grateful to Ivan Forshaw for supplying spare parts and for his sound advice and I have a few of Forshaw's wonderful hand-written letters.

My thoughts are that the photographs are of most interest to the Club and current owners of the cars pictured. With that in mind I scanned the photographs of the rallies mentioned here and suggested to the Editor that some of the photographs may be worth including in The Lagonda, especially now as Covid-19 means there will be few, if any, events in 2020. I will continue and scan the photographs of later rallies in the 1960s and 1970s and make these available to the Club. ■

A Day at the Races and where that led

By Arnold Davey

Part Two

MY FATHER CAME out to survey the new acquisition. The Rapier Maltby drophead was very handsome, with a hood, had there been one, which folded down out of sight and didn't form an untidy heap when furled. Set in the top rail of each door was a full-size metal model of a rapier. Some, but not mine, had two more of these models on the dash. It was all green, green coachwork, green seats and green wheels. But someone, probably during the war, had given it a quick blow-over in matt khaki, much of which had peeled off. The body was reasonably sound except for the villainously heavy doors, which had dropped, to the extent that they would have fouled the running boards, had there been any. Some previous owner had taken these off, leaving a thin strip of metal attached to the rear end of the front wings, which had been turned in and welded up to form a new termination. It had been very well done and looked original.

Father was a highly skilled cabinet maker, working for the firm which held the royal warrant, and the more he examined this body the lower his estimation of the coachbuilders' art became. We reckoned we would have to renew the windscreen pillar on the driver's side, rehang both doors after tightening up all the loose joints and, of course, get new seats and a hood. The hood frame was intact. All the

chromium plate was dark brown but attacking a small section of the windscreen frame showed it would polish beautifully, given enough elbow-grease. In a matter of days, father had acquired a great slab of ash and made friends with the bandsaw operator at work to cut the new pillar. By the winter father had finished his work but the onset of cold, wet weather showed his censure of coachbuilders was perhaps mistaken. He had made the doors fit as he would have for expensive furniture, with only about a millimetre of clearance. Damp wood expands, so by Christmas we had a car with doors that were immovably closed.

With the temperature dropping I attempted to drain the engine, but could only find one drain tap, under the water pump. Common sense suggested there must be another, but it was nowhere to be found and I had no instruction manual. What had happened was that some previous owner, in a fit of madness, had removed the cylinder block tap and substituted a bolt, which looked like all the other bolts, so I had inadvertently left the block full of water, which then froze and cracked. So, bodywork activities ceased while I removed the head to check the bores and made up an annealed copper patch, held on with dozens of 2BA set screws, all tapped into the cast iron.

The bores proved to be OK, in fact in excellent condition, so it all went back after a decoke and valve grind. In refitting the heavy cylinder head, I overbalanced and dropped it but the protruding dog of the oil pump drive hit the top of the block and saved me losing my fingertips.

There was a diversion here when the government decided that all cars must have two rear lights, with fairly stringent requirements on matching. The Rapier had one D-shaped Lucas attached to the number plate, itself mounted on a plate of shiny metal. Mr Halford supplied a matching D-lamp and a coil of wire and I tried to attach it to the shiny plate, assuming it to be aluminium. None of my drills would touch it; after half an hour I had just polished a couple of dots. So, back to Brian on the Monday. Told of my problem, he said that the shiny metal plate was in fact a piece of DeHavilland Comet skin and only a tungsten carbide drill would penetrate it and probably rubbish the drill in the process. Thankfully I took up his offer to take it to work and use oxy-acetylene to make the four holes I needed. Returning the next weekend to pick it up, I found Brian up to his neck in a friend's Silver Ghost, attempting to add a second rear lamp to that car. His problem was the typical Rolls-Royce over-engineering. All the wiring was contained in cast aluminium ducting, closed by flat plates held down by scores of tiny screws. When he finally got the lids off, he found that the existing wiring totally filled the duct and there was simply no space to add another one, let alone the two that R-R practice called for!

Meanwhile I had set about investigating my wiring. Somebody had been at it already and had clearly not wanted to spend much money, shown by using only black wires, all the same size. I managed to identify the magneto earthing wire and re-attach it to the ignition switch to save all the groping under the dash when stopping the engine. There were laughs to be had; finding a dead-end wire folded over and taped up with insulating tape, I traced the wire half-way round the car to see where it went and eventually came upon another dead-end, taped over.

John S. had by now acquired another Lagonda as a 'parts car'. This was another 16/80, a tourer this time, with its original maroon and black paint job and no ill-advised gold paint additions. If anything, it was in better condition than the saloon and it didn't boil with anything like the same frequency. But his two-Lagonda status didn't last. Coming home from a New Year party in the saloon Lagonda, John and Barbara were T-boned by a drunk in a Ford Zephyr who jumped the traffic lights at North Harrow. The Ford hit the Lagonda square on the side-mounted spare and the whole T-shaped assemblage was carried sideways across the junction, and then the wide pavement, to finish up in a shop front amid a welter of broken plate glass. Miraculously, no-one was seriously hurt, only cuts and bruises. The drunk had the book thrown at him but the Lagonda was a total wreck, with a banana-shaped chassis and totally splintered bodywork. So, the tourer (which survives in the club today - see picture in Part 1) became their main car until Barbara fell unexpectedly

pregnant and something with a roof was called for.

Back in Southgate, I made a start on the paint. The original intention was to strip back to bare metal (everyone starts by saying that). But while Nitromors got the khaki overlay off easily, it was a different story with Maltby's green cellulose. I made the usual novice's mistake of trying to treat too large an area at once, converting the tolerably flat, if shabby, paint to a model of a ploughed field covered with knobs of gloop. At about this time power tools for the amateur were just becoming available and my father had indulged himself in a Wolf drill, which I was able to borrow and add a sanding attachment to remove all the knobs of old paint and produce a reasonably flat surface. Valspar enamel was the paint of choice for all penurious amateurs at the time. No-one could afford a professional respray and provided you took care, used new brushes and didn't hurry, Valspar gave pretty good results. Its secret was its slow drying, so once a panel was applied it was essential to leave the garage door shut for a week. I chose a two-tone colour scheme of black over mid-grey, and was quite pleased with the result.

Then we ran into problems. My mother was a superb leather worker, as befitted a cobbler's daughter (to this day I use the brief case she made for me when I went to uni.). The original intention had been for her to restore the seats, but in the couple of years since buying the Lagonda her breast cancer had returned with a vengeance and she had died. Meanwhile the Singer had gone. It had developed a habit of breaking the link between

the clutch and its pedal. I could never understand why, since there was no great stress on this component. But it was easy to make replacements and I carried one in the toolbox at all times. Finally, it broke one on a January Friday night rush hour at the Hanger Lane junction on the North Circular. Fixing it, which involved laying under the car with your legs sticking out, on a January night, is one of my more traumatic memories. By Monday night I was the owner of an 18-month-old Triumph TR2 and a hire purchase agreement.

The TR was a fast car by the standards of the late 1950s, to the extent that I had dreams of racing it, starting with some hill climbs and sprints, so I joined the BRSCC (British Racing Sports Car Club) for the purpose, since they got invited to almost everything going. I never won anything but did have fun.

I was hampered by having to use the same car for daily work, so dared not risk breaking it. The TR understeered like most contemporary saloons and I sometimes found the gearing not quite what was required. For example, at the Bentley DC Firle hill climb you ran out of revs in second but dare not risk a change up to third. One day, not long after purchasing it, I spotted something odd. The front tyres said Dunlop on the walls but had a Goodyear tread pattern. Closer inspection revealed that they had been worn totally smooth and then some psychopath had cut a Goodyear 'tread' in with a gouge. And I had not been dawdling in it either. No MoT in those days, of course.

But I am getting ahead of my Lagonda experiences. There was an

item in Motor Sport about the setting up of a Rapier Register, so I joined in December 1954 and the following summer went to an extremely wet Ranmore Common meeting, where I met Mike Wilby. From that it was almost automatic to join the Lagonda Club, because they held monthly social meetings in London, where one could learn a great deal. These were held at the Coach & Horses in Avery Row, behind Bond Street. Not only did it have a vast mews to park in but the landlord, Bill Noble, was a member. After closing time, the epic all-Lagonda road races along Oxford Street still make good bragging yarns. By 1960 Mike must have decided I could help run the club and persuaded me to come on to the Committee to assist Richard Hare, then Competition Secretary. The club had a substantial competition programme, with both Northern and Southern Rallies, events in the Hull area and most important, a sprint at Brands Hatch, run jointly with the AC Owners Club.

Somewhere about this time the Rapier Register began to have monthly London meetings too, in the downstairs bar of the "Shakespeare's Head" pub close to the Palladium. The Register had tracked down Tim Ashcroft and persuaded him to come along, which he did and was naturally feted, with a queue of members wanting to ask questions. A liberal supply of whisky was provided by said members and the smoky atmosphere in this cellar, plus the drink, plus his asthma meant that Tim was frequently the worse for wear. We didn't realise, because of his authoritarian manner, that he was stony broke and probably hadn't eaten all day. When I showed him

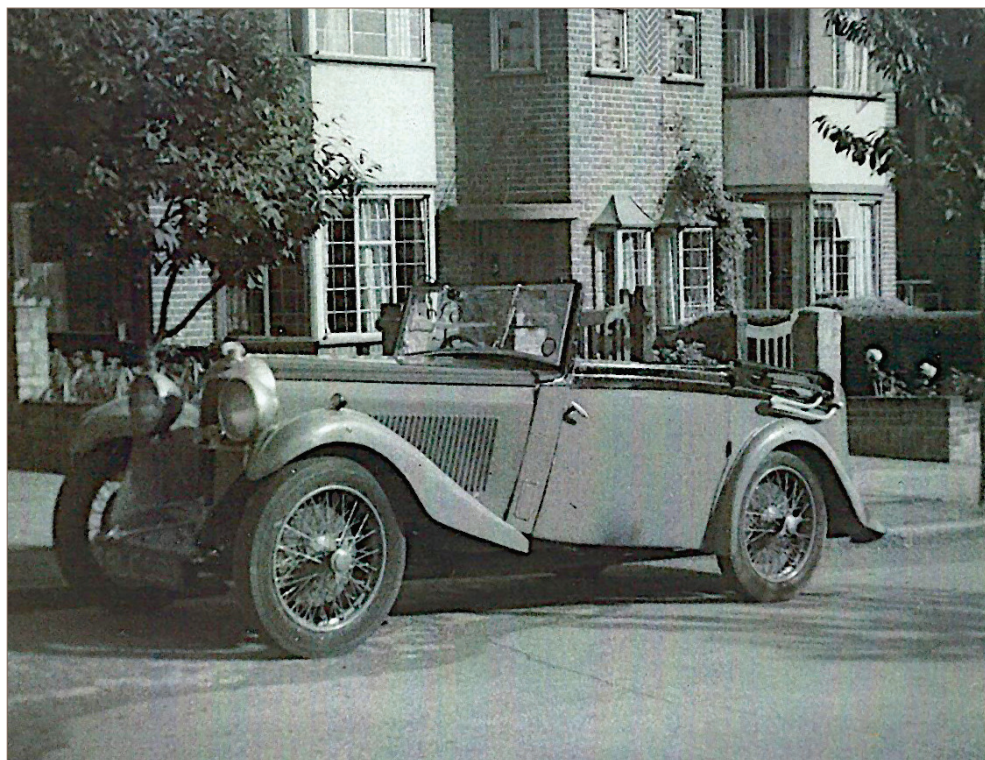
my sketches of an improved design of exhaust manifold, he offered me a job! All the 2-litre sports car events were won by AC Ace-Bristols, so when the opportunity arose to buy one cheaply, I grabbed it, realising that this was probably daft. The TR was totally reliable and suited to everyday commuting, the AC, with its unique history, anything but. It had started life with an AC engine, one of the early chassis of 1954. It had later been bought by Betty Haig, who had put the Bristol engine in, complete with its gearbox and added a short exhaust system that exited under the driver's right elbow. The three Solexes were set extremely rich, so that 12 mpg was the norm until I got a less extreme setting organised. It was the only car I have ever met that had a second horn button for the passenger, put there for continental fast driving. The extreme cam meant there was little power below 4500 rpm, at which point it came in with a bang and projected you towards the horizon, simultaneously the exhaust note changed to an ear-splitting scream. **Now** we might win something - it was a seriously fast car by 1961 standards. A well-heeled friend had bought one of the new E-type Jaguars and while he would disappear over the horizon on a motorway, I could hold him on anything twisty or in the wet, especially as his coupé rear hatch had a habit of flying open on bumpy surfaces. Ms Haig was a lot shorter than me and the car had been built to fit her. As a result, I had to adopt an Indian tailor driving position, legs akimbo.

One afternoon in 1961 there was a knock at the door. A young man called Jeff Ody had just joined the Rapier

Register and discovered to his surprise that a fellow member (me) lived in the next road; in fact, our mothers had been acquaintances. But he had not seen my Rapier about and could he have a look at it? Of course, he could and the next hours were full of those "Does yours have the snifter widgets?" conversations. Jeff had bought an Abbott tourer (BPJ 303 – D10848) with good bodywork but a very worn engine. I had a car with the opposite pairing, good engine but needing a lot of work on the bodywork, which was too heavy anyway. After several meetings I agreed to sell mine to Jeff,

since my initial enthusiasm had worn off and the AC needed constant time-consuming attention. (Every Saturday morning was spent changing and cleaning sparking plugs). Within a very short space of time Jeff discovered the cause of my Rapier's mysterious lack of power; the exhaust cam had jumped a tooth, or possibly two. I had checked the inlet camshaft timing and never thought to check the other one. Jeff then installed my engine in his chassis, to make one good car and sold the other one. ■

To be continued



The Maltby bodied Rapier after some 'TLC' circa 1961

Running Board Edging

Peter Walby explains his method of preparation

I ENJOYED MIKE Dufton's article on the running boards of his T2 tourer in magazine 264. I went through this painful forming process quite recently for tourer GP 4585. I had no success in annealing the aluminium edging strips from the Club. The metal is very hard and, although I tried with heat and soap, I could not get the material to work well at all. The Club kindly supplied further edging material when I explained that the process was becoming fraught.

I resorted in the end to an all cold approach and flattened the curve in a padded vice in the section to be curved. I then used a metal stretching or shrinking tool, keeping clear of the ribbed section to obtain the correct convex or concave curve and then re-created the curves over steel forming jigs with a soft mallet. When the curving was finished the striations caused by the metal stretch or shrink were then polished out. It was a much longer process than Mike describes, I fear, but has given what I think is a good result.

I did find that I had to be very careful to stretch or shrink only the

exact amount needed. If I tried to go back and use the opposite tool to undo over-curving, the metal inevitably started to split.

Mike's description of creeping up on each piece of finished metal to make the dove-tail joints neat is particularly important. You have to make the points meet while keeping the ribbed sections even and the joint tight. Until you have tried this you would think it would be a simple cut and file job. Not so.

I describe this method as a successful alternative means of forming these difficult curves but I think Mike's method is probably better if you can master the annealing.

I understand aluminium extrusion is just not manufactured in the soft alloys of old.



Stretching the edging strip



Rear section in the forming jig



Edging rear section - finished

16/80 Musing

Brian Savill raises questions about the engine's identity - Crossley or Lagonda

A PUNDIT WAS holding audience, looking at a 16/80 engine, to which he announced, "It is a Crossley engine, modified by Lagonda". As there is no concrete evidence as to who manufactured and assembled all the mods for the 16/80 engine, the statement that it is a Crossley engine, and Lagonda purchased them and modified them, just can't be true.

Let's put ourselves in the position of Lagonda management. Would we purchase engines, then discard many parts, make, or have made, new parts, and then re assemble them? I think not - it is more prudent to have Crossley supply the engine to the required specification.

Could it be rightly said that it is a Crossley engine when, starting from the top, we have the items that are not original Crossley:-

The rocker cover, the rocker shaft and its stanchions, and the rockers.

Lagonda did use the valves and the springs, but not the manifolds, the carburettors, or the push rods, camshaft and camshaft cover, oil pump, and the external oil gallery pipes. Or the drive shaft for the Dynamo and the Magneto which were also changed and a separate cradle used for them.

Or the oil cleaner, sump, flywheel, and clutch, and last but by no means least the starter motor. In fact, also changed for a modified design was the

flywheel/clutch cover (bell housing). So, what were used, but modified, were the head and the block.

What is interesting is that Crossley did use, for at least one of their later models, an engine as per the one installed in the 16/80, but not the camshaft or the later so-called low water pump.

However, there is one part that was not changed for use in the Lagonda engine based on a Crossley design, and that is the dip stick. Continued use of the original design is not only an error but does lead to over-filling with oil, and consequential problems. ■

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Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Dear Roger,

Referring to the picture of PL 7593 on Page 15 of the Spring 2020 Magazine, yes, it is my car although I have passed it on to my youngest son, David, who absolutely loves it and drives it very well. He trained as an HGV 1 driver so has no problems with the gearbox. One of his brothers drove the 2 litre for 200 yards, got out of the car and said “never again”. He just could not cope with the gearbox. I first bought this car (which I call Pandora for very good reason – so many things went wrong at first) in September 1959.

Having blown the picture up the headlamps do appear to be different sizes and I am wondering whether it was easier to fit the blackout mask to a smaller size lamp.

This photograph appeared in the February 1944 Motor Sport in an article about 2 litre Lagondas by Mr Griffiths.

The fuzzy 1938 photo (top) was taken in an hotel car park at Polperro and next to my car was a 2 litre which is now owned by Dick Jones. The bottom is how she appears today.

Kind regards, Colin Bugler



Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Dear Roger,

Further to Tim Wadworth's letter in the latest issue regarding CEI threads used for 2 litre cylinder studs, the same is the case for the 3 litre.

My ex – “Quack” Young 16/80/ M35R hybrid bitsa has a 3 litre engine which reputedly was found in a ditch behind a garage in Kent. Needless to say, it was seized solid.

I found that nuts of the wrong tpi had been graunched onto the cylinder head studs and some were slightly bent. With this and rusting between the studs and the holes in the cylinder head, getting the head off without damaging it or the block was a prolonged and difficult task. None of the studs were re-useable and with the then Spares Scheme being much less comprehensive than it now is, I had to search for suitable replacements. I found that Mk II Jaguar are perfect for the task being the same length and they screw straight into the block. They are readily available at reasonable cost and have the advantage of being slightly waisted for much of their length so the head rusting on will not be a problem again.

I could not find any deep nuts for use on the new studs and, thinking laterally, found that the local trailer factor had wheel nuts of the correct size and tpi and these are of decent depth and are fitted with tapered side upwards.

When I cleaned up the head I found there were four cracks across No. 2 and No. 4 valve seats. I spoke to Ivan Forshaw and his advice was to run it cracked which I felt was too risky to do. John Ryder gave me the

name of Arthur Sosbe of Leicester who ground out and fusion welded the cracks. With a minor blow hole being found in one of the welds when it was machined back, Arthur was willing to weld it again. However, with the possibility of the “dreaded unleaded” fuel over the horizon we decided instead to have hardened valve seats fitted. John Batt recommended taking 0.120” off the head to give the engine more “go” and this was done.

The half-sized Ordinary bicycle Arthur had built for his son was a magnificent piece of work. The long and tapered forks are hollow.

Freeing the seized pistons in the bores was an even more prolonged process with soakings of Coca Cola and diesel. I loosened off the main bearing caps and the big ends and cut a length of seasoned Ash which fitted into the bores and enabled the pistons to be given regular shock treatment with a 2lb hammer on a weekly basis without doing any damage. Eventually the engine freed and could be turned over. Its rebuild was another saga.

With there being mounting points for double shock absorbers at all 4 wheels I have recently rebuilt a set of Andre Hydro Telecontrols and found the plumbing fittings are 3/8” x 24 tpi which is near enough the same as UNF. I wonder if Tim can identify what is actually the thread form used?

Graham Brown at Vintage & Classic Shock Absorbers [email: grahamvcsa@hotmail.co.uk] was, like his father before him, very helpful with advice and supply of parts. ■

Kind regards

Robin Michelmore M9

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails



Rebuilding the 16/80 bodywork



The partly restored car with the big engine - son showing due respect for his father!

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Hello Roger,

I refer to the photo of UU4968 at the top of page 20 in "The Lagonda" Number 264 Spring 2020.

I am surprised to read "*It is not listed in the 2 litre Register at that time*".

In the January MCMXLIX (1949) Lagonda Register "*Compiled by Members of the 2-litre Lagonda Register for all those who believe that the older Lagondas are amongst the world's best motor cars*" (my copy is very smart, must be a reprint), I find it listed as Serial No. 2 on the list, as follows :-

*"UU4968 Chassis No. SM9131
Engine No. OH874 Type T. Date Regd.
5/29 Owner T. B. Webb, 8 Aldersmead
Road, Beckenham, Kent."*

So, it must have some claim to fame, being the second car to be recorded by The Lagonda 2-Litre Register (yes, they used a capital "L" in the hyphenated "2-Litre").

It appears also in their Address List, January 1948, Membership List dated 30th June 1950, and in another one, undated but May 1948, I think. Furthermore, there is mention thereof in the very first "2 Litre Lagonda Notes", No.1 Nov. 1946, as follows :-

"T.B. Webb offers the following details of his 1929 car:- Make of piston, Hepolite Invar(?) Strut. Wt. plus pin 16 oz. Comp. ratio 6.0 at .04" oversize. His Zenith 36 VH carb. has jets, choke 27mm main 115 compensator 85 slow 65 starting 120. Cam lift 7.8mm (says 'I think this should be 8.3mm, mine have worn

and after dressing this was the result. I think this has an important bearing on the performance') Max speed 68 mph. It was this car that did so well at the VSCC Bisley rally."

And further down that same issue :-

"(2) Webb offers complete set unused Lag. Brake linings (Duron)."

It is possible there may be other mentions in the 26 copies of 2-Litre Lagonda Register published Notes that I have, but I have had a quick scan through and not spotted any others.

Hope the above may be of interest. ■

Best Regards, Mike Pilgrim



Dear Roger,

With reference to the 2 Litre in the upper picture of the Picture Quiz in the Spring Magazine, this car was owned by members of the Lagonda Car Club at the relevant time but has since disappeared. Its chassis number was OH 9131. In 1947 the owner, and presumably the man in the photo, was T. B. Webb from Hendon in North London. In 1950 it changed hands and the new owner was E. S. Limpus from Surbiton. Nothing has been heard of it since and I assume it was broken up. The little blisters on the sidelamps contained special aftermarket parking lamps which took advantage of a loophole in the regulations. At the time and until the 1960s the law said a car parked on the public highway at night had to be lit, which could flatten an ailing battery if left on all night.

Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

For driving on sidelights, which everybody did in towns, the sidelamps had to have 6 watt bulbs, but nothing was said about when the car was parked, so a bare glow sufficed. The Lord de Clifford picture appears in Geoff Seaton's Illustrated History on page 74. It shows him looking at J. S. Hathaway's 2 Litre, UE7826, which has similar parking lights, taken at Brooklands in 1930 at the MCC High Speed Trials.

Also, on pages 14 and 15, the V12 Le Mans car was driven to Chessington by Derek Rutherford, then Chief Tester at the factory. I have his autobiography and met him several times when researching my book. There is a later picture somewhere in the archives, with the car festooned in bunting at the show. ■

Regards, Arnold Davey

Hi Roger,
I'm never sure whether you seek photos for the magazine - or get inundated with them from proud owners. So this one is sent without expectation of it appearing.

It shows Jan with GX 188 on our first "social distancing" picnic outing since lockdown was eased. Idyllic or what?

Quite different from those crowded beach and street scenes we have seen on our TVs recently. ■
Kind regards, Barry Stiff

Ed. Always glad to see pictures of fine Lagondas – please keep them coming in.



Letters & emails ... Letters & emails

Roger

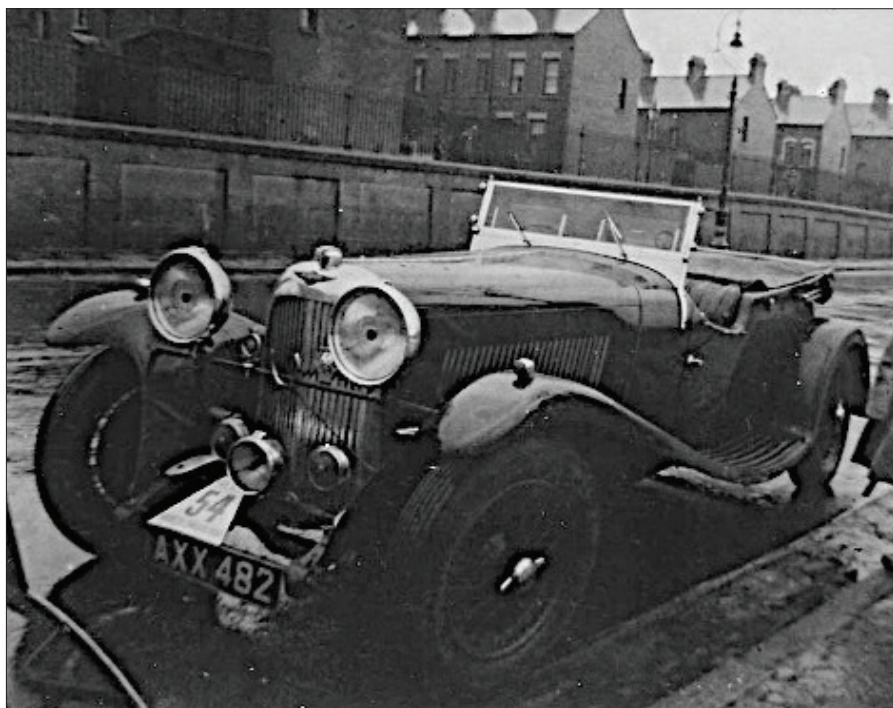
Here is a photograph of a 1934 M45, AXX 482. It was taken by Ian Titterington (age 15), a local who later took to motor racing quite seriously. It is at the start of the 1947 Circuit of Ireland Trial at Ormeau, Belfast. The photo is in his scrapbook and labelled as R.B. Walpole's car and recorded as having crashed on the event.

Unusually for an M45 it is fitted with the old flat screen with the

side-mountings for the aero-screens which was later used in the LG45 tourers.

It clearly survived its crash as Colin Bugler tells me the car had been in intermittent Club membership from the 1960s but not currently, having last been with an owner in Germany in 2015. ■

Regards, Peter Walby





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