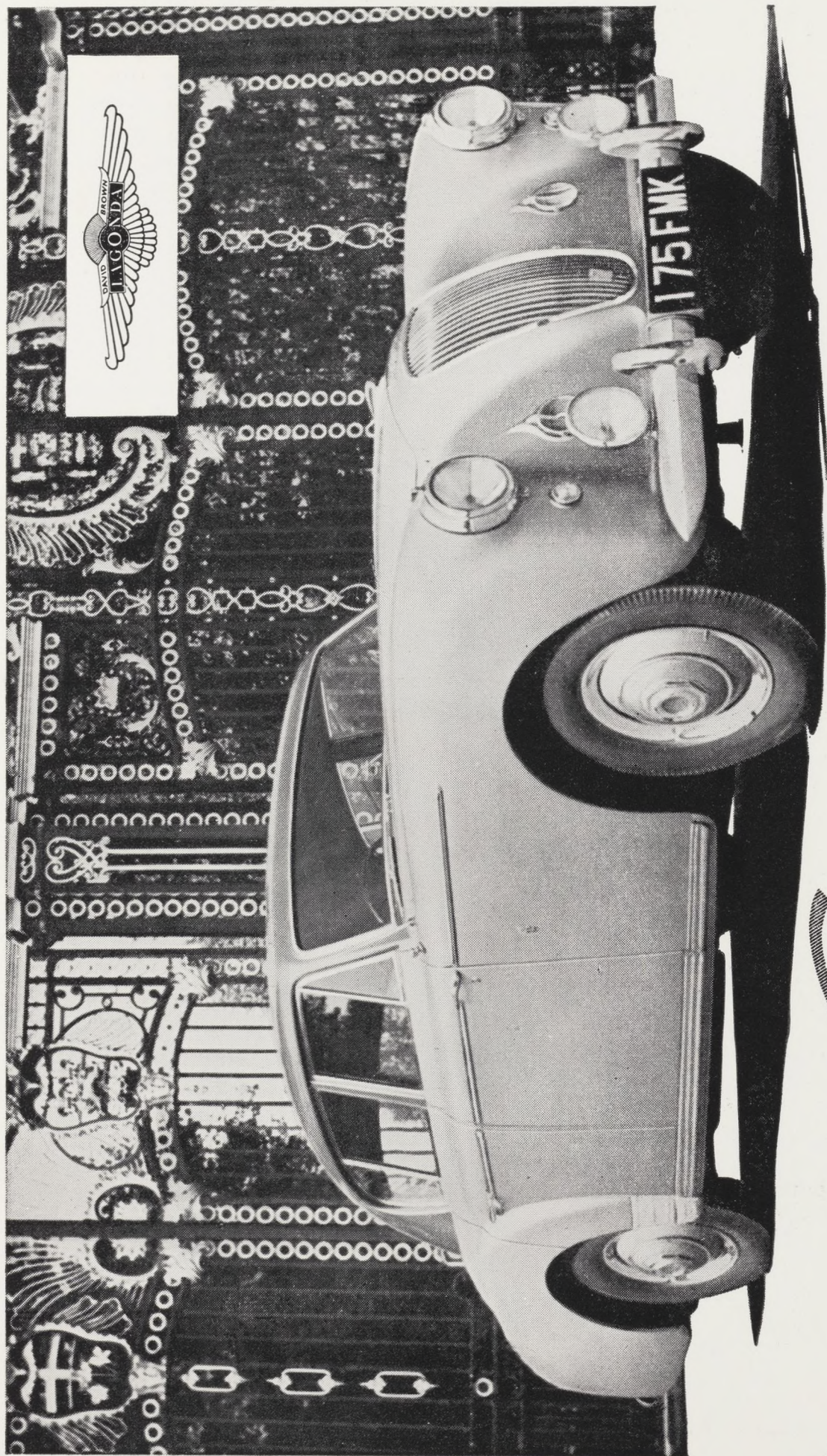


No. 24

Summer, 1957







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# THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

*Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors*

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## EDITORIAL

ACTING UPON one only of the suggestions or character assessments thrown up by the Strattons (3/3½ litre, whiskers and black trousers) at dinner after the Southern Rally that perhaps it would make a nice change to have a serious editorial for once and bearing in mind the fact that a person who shall be nameless said that we could not have another four pages in this issue there probably now remains just sufficient space for the long-suffering printers to get in the provisional results of the Southern Rally which are:—

Premier Award	COATES	M45
Class 1. First:	NEWMAN	3 litre
Second:	GOSTLING	2-litre
Third:	DE SALIS	2-litre
Class 2. First:	BUGLER	Rapier
Second:	BRANSON	Rapier
Third:	WILBY	Rapier
Class 3. First:	HUNT	Huntsman
Second:	STANDLEY	Morris Minor
Third:	HOBLEY	Triumph TR2

It is regretted that, in their eagerness to give competitors' results in The Pub the same evening, the organisers worked out the figures in their heads. Since then they have fed the figures into a sort of mechanical mangle, which gave the answers above.

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## THE COVER PICTURE

A 1939 12 cyl. short chassis Rapide Coupe.

which incorporates The Lagonda Car Club and The Lagonda 2-litre Register, aims to bring together owners of these fine cars for the exchange of knowledge and technical information, to provide help, and to organise social and sporting meetings.

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**THE CLUB SCRAP BOOK** to which reference was made in the last issue is in response to many requests now available on loan to members. This contains a fantastic number of press cuttings for the period 1933-35 and amongst other things gives all the early history of the Rapier, several graphic reports of race meetings where the Arthur Fox 4½-litres ran, and many road tests which are not usually available.

As this document is irreplaceable the Club are most anxious that no harm should come to it and therefore the following conditions of loan must be observed. If not the service may be withdrawn.

1. A deposit of £5 must be sent with the request for loan.
2. A separate remittance for 5s. to cover cost of the service.
3. The book must be returned within 14 days of receipt, by registered post.

All enquiries to J. W. T. Crocker, 15, Graham Terrace, London, S.W.1.

**TO GIVE WEIGHT** to the photograph album Alan Dakers of the David Brown organisation has presented to the Club an excellent collection of full plate photographs. These show the 4½-litre and V.12 cars in action and many "stills" of standard coachwork cars plus quite a few special bodies. Our thanks are due to him for this most interesting collection and William Hartop cannot wait to get them from the Editor and into the album. (—but will have to ! Ed.)

**THIS YEAR** sees a jubilee at Le Mans and it is hoped to have a parade of cars that have competed in years gone by. As we have in the Club the 1929 2-litre, the 1935 winner, the 1937 4½-litre and one of the 1939 V.12's it is hoped the marque will be well represented.

**BOB CRANE** who is perhaps our oldest American member (no not that sort of old, he has been a member for a long time) has now been made our official representative in America. This has certainly been a move long over due, and we are pleased to have him on "the staff". Needless to say the American membership has increased by about six in the last month or so, and he has promised a true Lagonda welcome to Charles Long when he visits the U.S.A. during the summer. Crane, would very much like to acquire Nos. 1 and 2 of the magazine. If any member has these to spare, please send them to The Secretariate.

**MISS V. E. WILHELME** has now taken over the Club Secretariate and all general correspondence should be addressed to her at the address on page 1.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

"FLAREPATH" has just looked over my shoulder to say don't forget that the Northern Rally is on the 6th July. He goes every year and like all the local members stays the night and makes it a social evening. Details from the Northern Secretary. Also the B.D.C. Silverstone meeting is on the 3rd August and he would very much like to see some newcomers in the Lagonda only race, he says he is tired of handicapping the same old people and if there are a few new faces he might be able to slip in a good handicap for himself.

**RODDY HILL SMITH** with some sorrow, parts with his M.45 tourer but is more than pleased that it has gone into the good hands of Tony Loch who, until the Army sent him overseas was a well known competitor with his 14/60 tourer. The new combination should be most effective. Roddy, who is now at "Winswood" Park Road, Crediton, in Devon will always be pleased to see members who call in with their Lagondas.

**BILL OGLE-SCAN** newly back from a spell as Air Attache in Tokio made a welcome re-appearance at the April Social. Apart from complaining that the route card wasn't in Japanese he enjoyed the English countryside, navigated by Hugh Duckett, the fibre glass man—well you know what I mean.

**WITH SOME REGRET** Alan Audsley, one time Secretary now leaves the Committee. It is nice to know that his services will always be available, and he was at once taken up on this to run the Southern Rally with Richard Hare !

## REMAINING FIXTURES FOR THE YEAR

1st June	Lagonda only Race (8 Clubs Silverstone)
6th July	Northern Rally
3rd August	Lagonda only Race (B.D.C. Silverstone)
1st September	Point-to-Point
29th September	A.G.M. and Concours D'Elegance
9th November	November Handicap
6th December	Prize Giving and Party
Plus usual Pub Meets in London, Stockport and Nr. Hull.	

**AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS** are now being organised by Whitehead who is the Club Representative there. A meeting was held in April to get the Australian Section started and all owners of Lagondas are being contacted.

**MEMBERS** may be interested to know that James Crocker has landed a "plum" job. By devious means his L.G.45 Rapide has been chosen to appear in a film being made by Associated Dragon Films Limited (Douglas Fairbanks) in which Richard Todd and Ann Baxter are to appear. In the film the car is meant to be the property of Richard Todd a gay lad from South Africa.

James has now left for the Costa Brava for location. Whilst out there one sequence is to be made concerning a record run along the coast road. Except when Todd's face appears, James will be doing the driving.

All right for some?

**MAURICE LEO** has got another sack full of something or the other. Members interested should bring their own sacks as stocks are running low.

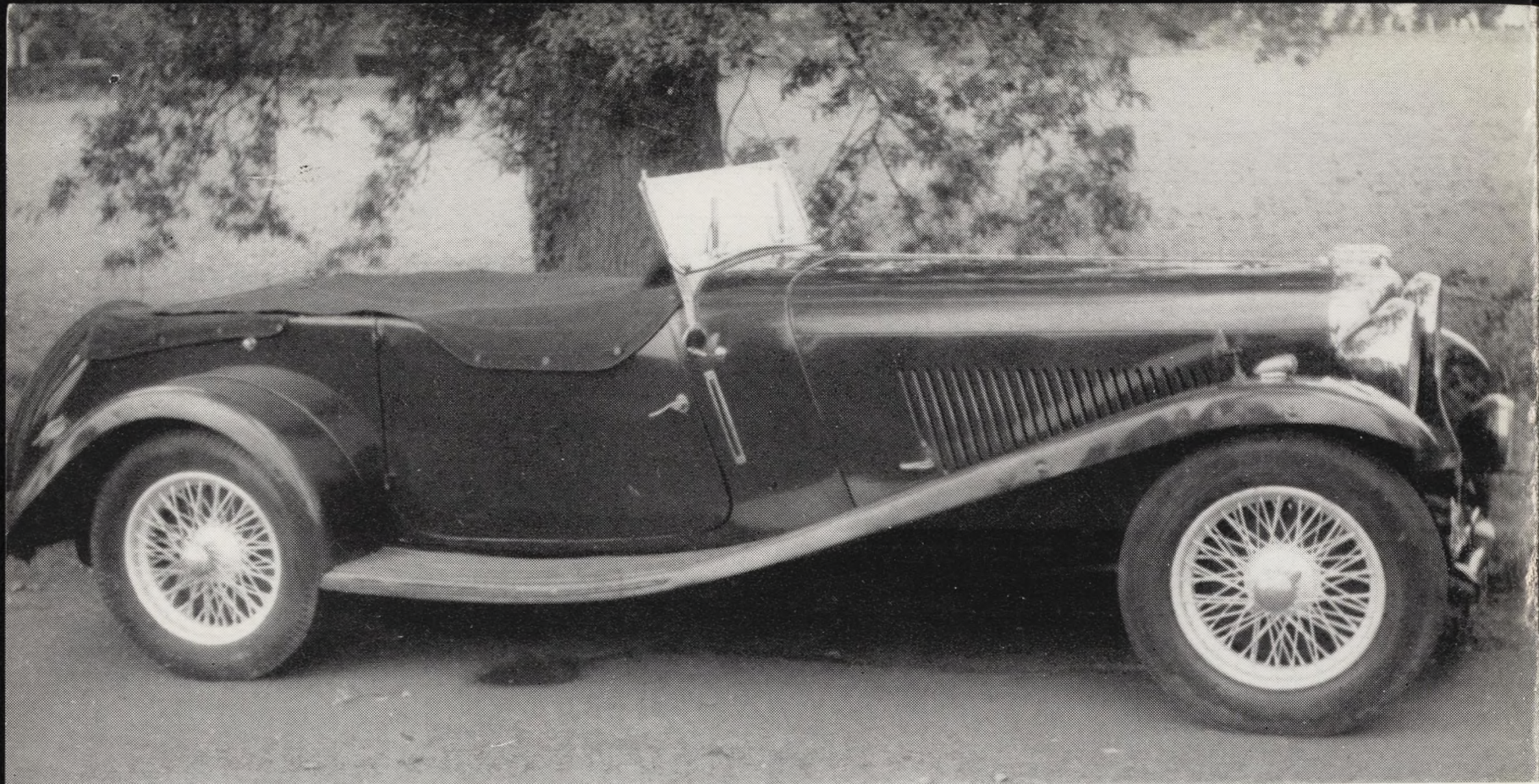
**IT IS REGRETTED** that this issue is some days late owing to a hold-up in the production of blocks for which the printers, Macaire, Mould & Co. Ltd., are not responsible.

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## ROAD TEST M45 Tourer

### 4½-LITRE LAGONDA TOURER DATA FOR THE DRIVER

29.13 h.p., six cylinders, 88.5 120 mm. (4.429 c.c.).  
Tax £30.

Tyres: 19 6.00in. on Rudge-Whitworth knock-off wire wheels.

Engine—rear axle gear ratios	Acceleration from steady speed			Timed speed over ¼ mile
	10 to 30 m.p.h.	20 to 40 m.p.h.	30 to 50 m.p.h.	

11.49 to 1	3½ sec.	—	—	
7.35 to 1	3¼ sec.	4 sec.	5½ sec.	
4.75 to 1	6½ sec.	6½ sec.	6½ sec.	
3.6 to 1	8 sec.	8½ sec.	8½ sec.	95.74m.p.h.

Acceleration from rest through the gears to 50 m.p.h.,  
10 sec.

Acceleration from rest through the gears to 60 m.p.h.,  
15¼ sec.

Speed up Brooklands Test Hill from rest (1 in 5  
average gradient), 23.09 m.p.h. (on first gear).

15 yards of 1 in 5 gradient from rest, 3½ sec.

Turning circle: 43ft.

Tank capacity 20 gallons, fuel consumption 16 m.p.g.  
12-volt lighting set; automatic dynamo output control.

Weight: 32 cwt. 2 qr.

Price, with open tourer body, £795.

Described in "The Autocar" of September 15th, 1933

A VERY remarkable motor car has been produced by the Lagonda concern in the new 4½-litre six-cylinder. Great things were expected as soon as it was known that such a car was to be made, and on test the most hopeful expectations have been more than realised. It is a delightful and intriguing machine to drive.

This is a type of car in connection with which performance figures can legitimately be stressed, for in the first instance, at all events, it will interest people who are by no means novices in handling cars, and who appreciate them on the basis of what they can do. The maximum is obviously ample, and it should be remembered that the figure shown in the table, namely, 95.74 m.p.h., represents an average over a measured distance, on the level and under conditions of wind not specially favourable to the car, but at the same time not against it. Even



better, however, are the acceleration figures; the implied ability of the car to get under way really briskly and therefore to overtake other vehicles safely and with certainty counts above all to-day.

The acceleration figures are worthy of study, for several of them—and this concerns some of the most important ranges of acceleration for road use—represent the best performance so far obtained in any of these tests made by *The Autocar* of a normal production car. What is more, the brilliance of the acceleration is shown to be consistent through the range. An additional figure was taken through the gears from a standstill up to 70 m.p.h., and three runs averaged out at 20 sec.

This Lagonda secures these excellent results, about which one can genuinely enthuse, by a very good proportion of engine power to total weight, and by the use of high gear ratios, giving most useful maxima on the indirect gears; it weighs not a great deal more than the three-litre model, yet has an engine half as big again. At the same time, it cannot be too clearly stated and underlined, as it were, that besides possessing a tremendous performance the car is amazingly docile and tractable.

It is quiet, too, both mechanically and as to the exhaust, a pleasant but not insistent "boom" being apparent only when accelerating on the gears and at the lower speeds on top gear. It will run at 5 or 6 m.p.h. on top gear with the ignition retarded, then pick up easily and very swiftly; in fact, the acceleration figures for top gear show in themselves that performance has not been obtained at the price of flexibility. This is the more remarkable in view of the high back axle ratio.

It is also a machine in which anyone at all accustomed to cars of any size quickly feels at home, for though there is an impressive length of bonnet, both wings can be seen, and the steering of the 4½-litre strikes one as being appreciably lighter than on Lagonda cars hitherto.

Then, again, the gear change handles

more easily, and the clutch has a lighter action; the gear change requires just that amount of intelligent control to make it interesting, but quite good results can be obtained even by anyone unaccustomed to the car. Also, a silent third speed is now used, and fully bears out its name. It is actually possible to run at speeds up to 60 m.p.h. without noticing that third gear and not top is engaged, whilst the change to third and back again is delightfully rapid and certain. On first gear a reading of just over 30 is obtainable, on second 52, and on third just 80, with due respect for the red warning mark on the rev. counter at 4,000 r.p.m.

In attaining the maxima timed speed given the windscreen was opened, and the speedometer recorded a limit reading of 100. With the screen closed a timed speed of 93.75 m.p.h. was obtained, the speedometer recording 97.98 under otherwise identical conditions; there were two people on board, including the driver, and the track was dry.

Another remarkable figure is for the standing start climb up the Test Hill, the figure being the best in any of these tests so far. The same hill, approached at 25 m.p.h. on third was climbed comfortably on second gear.

These indeed excellent results translated, as it were, into terms of use on the road, mean that the owner, fortunate fellow, has a car capable of going from one place to another in an astonishingly easy fashion, very swiftly if necessary, but still without the slightest fuss, for 60 is maintained absolutely effortlessly, with no noise at all, and even 70 is a cruising speed. This machine flattens out the hills on top gear, they scarcely exist, in fact, and accelerates over them amazingly if third is used. Yet the car can also be handled in town on top and third gears principally.

Coupled with the car's ability to travel quickly, it has brakes which bring the speed down decisively, though not aggressively in the sense that swerving is produced, and the actuation is assisted by a vacuum servo. The hand brake is of the fly-off racing



pattern, and was used as well as the pedal in making the stopping test. Nor would the car be of the slightest use to the enthusiastic driver if it did not permit fast cornering, and in these respects it is extremely good. There are Telecontrol shock absorbers for both axles, as well as ordinary Hartfords.

A finish much above what is general has been achieved, whilst the equipment is very well carried out. There is dual ignition, with two sets of plugs. Practical considerations have been well studied; for the back pas-

sengers there is a central folding armrest as well as softly padded armrests at the sides; the sloping portion of the tail hinges down to form a luggage platform. Very good side-screen equipment is provided. The illustration shows the latest four-seater body, with one wide door on the near side instead of two doors on that side; the actual car tested was the first of the 4½-litres, with the earlier type of body.

Altogether, this car appears to be extremely good value. (Courtesy Autocar)

## MOTORING IN BURMA

They say that bad things never come singly, and it seems to be quite true. First I was posted to Rangoon, then I lent my Lagonda magazines to someone here, and now three months later they still haven't been returned; and finally (so far) I got a command from Mike Wilby to write an article on "Motoring in Burma."

Now, for a person who even puts off writing letters as long as possible, this command is rather a heavy one and I am torn between putting it off so long that I shall have left Burma and be in another post and it would be out of date and quite useless, and doing my little bit as my way of saying "Thanks" for all Mike has done for the Club in general and myself in particular. So I guess I had better go on with it as I have got so far, and if you don't like it, you know who to blame!

In case anyone knew Rangoon before the war, I can only repeat what I am told and that is that "it isn't what it used to be." Things have generally gone to ruin and only a few extremists are happy and the majority of the people would be glad to have the British back again.

All-the-year-round motoring is very hard on cars as, due to the very heavy rainfall (about a hundred inches between May and October), the roads get into a pretty bad state, with a certain amount of subsidence which in turn brings large holes in the tarmac and the edges of the roads break up, narrowing the width so that when two cars wish to pass, they both have to get one set of wheels off the road, which in turn helps the breaking-away process. As regards the pot-holes, these are occasionally filled up with mud, which takes just a few minutes' rain to wash away, and then very occasionally the mud is covered with tarmac, but this only seems to last about a week and all is as it was. In all fairness though, I must

say that I believe the roads are repaired when the rains are over. However, it's definitely not the place for a 2-Litre.

There are very few cars of interest, and about 50 per cent of what cars there are are Jeeps which were left here by the Army. To brighten one's life here a little, there are two M45's around, and I have made contact with the owner of one. His car is kept off the road during the monsoon season, which seems to be the wisest thing to do. Other interesting cars include a 2.3 blown Alfa, a few 1924/26 vintage Austin 7's, and a couple of vintage American cars.

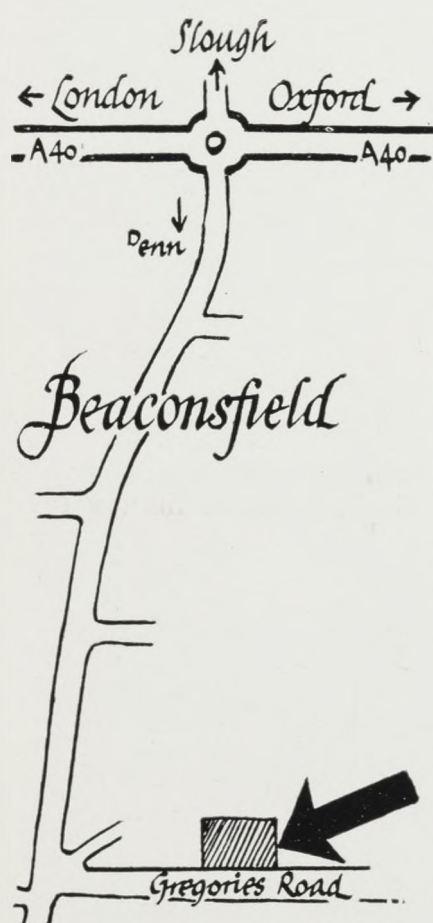
We don't have a car at the moment, and it really doesn't seem as if we shall when such abominations as a H-l-m-n C-l-f-r-i-n sell (second hand) for around £1,900. Apart from finding the money in the first place, the trouble is, when you have re-sold the car, how to transfer the local lolly into sterling. Regarding buying a car, we had quite an amusing episode a little while ago. The word had gone round that we wanted to buy a jeep (in actual fact we had talked over the possibility of doing so within the hearing of our servants), so one day a Jeep rolled up to our front door and the four occupants started off on their sales talk. We let them finish, and then my wife (who must have learnt something from Lagondas) went round the Jeep, saying "Steering's had it" (there was only twelve inches of play). This was countered by "We will fix"; and so on: "Leaking oil," "Will fix"; "What's that clonk in the engine?"—"We will fix"; "No instruments" (surely everybody knows that a *real* car *must* have lots of instruments)—"We fix"; "Paint's hopeless"—"We will re-spray." This went on for quite some time while I stood by, flabbergasted at Dorothy's knowledge. She finally came to the four tyres, one of which was just about to throw



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its tread, and the other three had huge gashes in their sidewalls which had been repaired by nuts and bolts and large washers. We didn't buy the Jeep. By the way, they only wanted £540 for it!

Tyres, incidentally, are even more difficult to obtain than 5.25 x 21 covers are at home. *If* you get a permit to buy one, you *may* find a dealer who will put you on his list, then when he gets any, he will draw the names out of a hat and you may be lucky. It probably helps to have a good deep pocket, too.

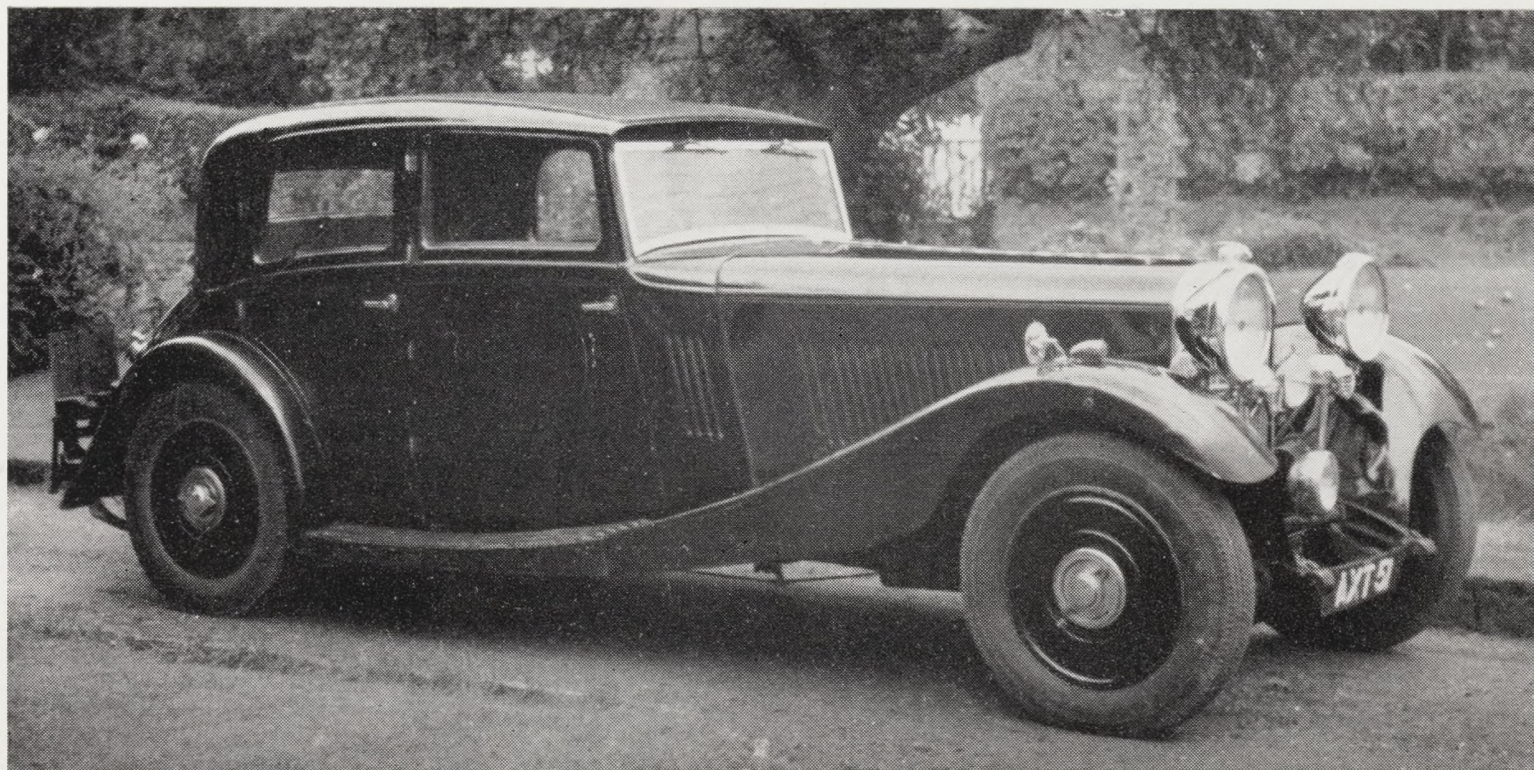
Rules of the road are mostly the same as for the rest of the Far East: drive on the left, give way to traffic coming from your right, and always give way to anything bigger than yourself, because you can be sure he won't give way to you—even if you are in the right. Gear boxes are, of course, only used for starting from a dead stop; never under any circumstances are they to be used otherwise—better by far let the car pink away in top gear than to lose face by having to change down! This of course tends to keep the speeds up once the car is actually moving, and to blazes with the springs. But even so, with the terrible state of the roads, the fastest speed possible, with safety, in an XK 140 on one of the best roads in Rangoon was around 70/75 m.p.h. Of course, the Buddhist faith adds to the road hazards, as their religion forbids them to kill anything, so the

place is full of filthy dogs which seem to know they are immune from cars and just curl up and sleep in the middle of the roads, causing rather hectic avoiding action at night time, as street-lighting is practically non-existent. Cows, pedestrians, trishaws and gharries all add to the confusion. There are three sets of traffic lights in Rangoon, and, strangely enough, people are very well behaved at them. No one jumps the red, and no one moves until the green comes on on its own. Naturally there has to be an exception, and in this case it is the trishaws: they are either blind or deaf, or they just couldn't care; anyway, they just cycle gaily on.

So there it is, the best and the worst of motor-ing in Burma. Out of Rangoon it is just the same as in the city, but more so. You may ask which part is the best. Well, I couldn't tell you, but I really couldn't care, as my Lagonda magazines have been returned to me at last, and I have just received my latest copy too. However, the worst isn't really as bad as it sounds (perhaps because I haven't mentioned the foods and the insurgents and their nasty little habit of mining the roads, both of which are to be found outside Rangoon—and not far outside, either). But a final word of advice. If you are coming to Rangoon, and you love your "Lag.", then do as I do—store it.

ALAN MACKIE.

## COACHWORK BY LANCEFIELD ON M45





## BON VOYAGE, 1956

AT THE END of the summer of 1956 we found ourselves temporarily homeless and since this state of affairs coincided with the need for a business trip to Switzerland, we decided to go there and to take a short holiday as well. The first question to be decided was "how do we travel". Walking all the way was, we decided, too slow and too tiring. This left only the choice between public and private transport. Having a number of vehicles we ruled out public transport with little difficulty. Then came the 1,000 franc question do we take one of our own or do we fly to Paris or some place and pick up a local buggy for the journey proper. A., having just frightened himself out of what remains of his wits after they have been lived on for so many years by driving a 4CV Renault round London (no thanks to Ferlec), was soon persuaded to go by Lagonda. Two voices from Cambridge were raised in support of this decision: one voice belonging to a 2-litre owner and the other to a type who then had at one and the same time an 8-litre Bentley and a 1935 rear-engined Trojan and still has the Bentley. The die being then cast we picked on the 3-litre OG 9999 which has been in A's use for some 25 years. This is a 1931 saloon with no mods. except the substitution of a Marchal fog lamp for the F.T. 37 originally fitted, and the addition in 1937 of water-excluders to the front brake back plates. The car being in daily use (to coin a phrase) no special preparation was called for before setting out. The only spares carried were a spare Scintilla magneto, a spare Bendix spring with its bolts, and some bulbs.

It should be stated parenthetically that this outing was the first serious journey outside these shores that either of us had made since A took the M.45 to Western Macedonia in 1950-51. An ice-dice from Paris to LaChaux-de-Fonds in the winter of 1953 in a Delahaye and a tour of the Low Countries (ever so low) by Buick and Volkswagen in the following year are not held to count.

We will not describe in detail our stately progress through France and Switzerland (where nothing was seen but rain and snow) and thence down the Rhone valley, across France and back up the western side. The oil consumption was rather high owing to a leak from under the rocker box where the gasket had hardened; owing to this fault  $1\frac{3}{4}$  gallons of Castrol G.P. were used from start to finish of the trip, the sump being full on our return to London.

Owing, no doubt to the Frenchman's fondness for pressing on, the Vintage car is a rarity in France. Those who maintain that "niggers begin at Calais" will probably be heard to say that since there are no gents there can be no vintagents, but this is obviously unfair to the plumbers and others (see "Clochemerle" passim). We saw the following only: at Montelimar the nougat city two Rolland-Pilain saloons of about 1928; at Angoulême one Delage DIS made into a truck; at Cahors one 1927 Chenardet Walcker 6CV

by Leslie and André Kenny

made into a van; in the wilds one Donnet-Zedal. No count was taken of the cloverleaf Citroens still in use by peasants too poor or more likely too thrifty to buy anything more modern. The new 2CV Citroen with its improbable front suspension and non-Euclidean steering geometry seems likely to be a worthy successor to the cloverleaf. Citroen Light Fifteens were seen in droves; a good one of these is a very pleasant car indeed. This description of our motorised game of "Beaver" cannot be brought to an end without mentioning the character we saw on a wet day in Vevey motoring round the town in and out of the tramlines on an immaculate 1932 EW Douglas motorcycle. The Swiss also have no old motor cars, as indeed one would expect from a consideration of their uniformly soulless commercialism.

The only real interest shown in the Lagonda was by an Englishman and an American whom we saw outside the *Salon* in Paris who were almost standing on their heads trying to look underneath.

It is customary for travellers to praise the courtesy and efficiency of the A.A. foreign touring service and this is undoubtedly a good custom. Few travellers can however have had the experience which we had when we went to Fanum House to draw our documents. The age of the car drew the statement that the A.A. did not as a rule give indemnities in respect of cars more than 20 years old. On our saying that we did not really mind but would cheerfully stick out our necks to the extent of the few pounds involved the functionary asked "how long have you had the car?" On the reply being received "25 years" nothing more was said about withholding the indemnity.

The 3-litre shows up at its best as might be expected on hilly stretches. The surfaces of the Routes Nationales in France are not now usually good enough to permit speeds of much over 60 m.p.h. to be maintained. This means that nearly all local vehicles go streaking by except where the road is well-surfaced, curly or hilly. The French motorist whether driver or passenger seems to have a more elementary nervous system than the British and is therefore able and willing to accept more punishment for himself and his vehicle. One of the things that impressed us most was the indifference of the ordinary continental motorist to physical discomfort.

Our petrol consumption of 17.58 m.p.g. was worse than we normally obtain in England where 20 to 22 m.p.g. has been the usual rate for some years, and is still. This is to be accounted for by the more arduous driving conditions which call for greater throttle openings being maintained for longer continuous periods than at home. Furthermore the fuels used were not of the quality which we use in England. Benzole mixture, on which these cars run best is not obtainable in France or Switzerland. Antar, the French indigenous petrol from Pechelbronn, seems to suit best if the premium grade is used.



# REPORT FROM MALAYA

## *The Business as Usual—*

THE LONG ARM of the law has nothing on the long arm of Tortoise Taylor; there is no doubt some apt rejoinder to such long distance bludgeoning, but Quack can think of nothing better than what follows, distilled from sweat, and written in blood.

Mostly Quack's.

Let it be here and now stated that this is no skit on Bill Michael's excellent cover of 4½'s, though it might qualify as H certificated demonstration of what happens when Joe Soak gets on the do-it-yourself beam. Michael's stuff has been immense inspiration, not only in shedding floods of light on problems which didn't seem to have any answer, but also in showing that others have their sorrows, which uplifts the isolated Lagondist no end. Go it, William.

Returning from leave in UK, Quack found the family motto (Don't Get Involved) missing from over the mantelpiece, so he did, with some characters who had been awaiting his return to launch Perak Motor Club. He has been its office boy ever since, watching, from vantage point at the Bamboo Bar noggin and natter EVERY Thursday, the club grow to be the largest in Malaya outside Singapore and by no means the least successful. It is also the only one with five Lags in it, though the two facts may not be directly connected.

Life, consisting of driving around all day in LG 45 Rapide and working all night on M 45 and what more could you ask, was soon interrupted by the assembly in the forecourt of the Malayan Vintage Register. It was a bleary do; floodlights and grog in the car park, eats inside. Not much eating. Jupe said it was more like a Persian market than anything else, with everybody trying to flog everybody else's motor car. Symonds appeared from the ulu where he raises rubber trees, apparently on foot and aiming to catch the midnight mail back again. However, as the evening wore on, this alarming prospect became less and less attractive, and at five to twelve, Sym banged down an exciting cheque and drove off in triumph and Needham's 2-litre.

When Sym got married and had to flog his car to Jupe, it passed through Quack's hands again, and it was nice to find that six months of Sym's football boots had made no perceptible difference to oil pressure, performance, or anything else except the tyres.

Quack now got down to bare metal on the M 45 and was mildly surprised to find one side chassis member undoubtedly half an inch longer than the

other. This entailed a little juggling with spring anchorages to attain the desirable bilaterally identical wheelbase and stop the port rear spring periodically reversing its shackle. Zero or negative spring camber is hardly possible in these parts, where bumpy surfaces shatter bump stops in no time; least bottoming is obtained with tight Hartfords plus Newtons series 17,000, but get aunt Fanny to leave her falsies at home. It would be nice to find room for the original Tele-controls as well, to allow the occasional wallow round town.

The DHC body was by now completely shot, and was regretfully discarded, a stark open two door four being essayed in its place. This is being made from angle iron for strong points, and ant-proof common domestic water piping for curved panel frames. Delightful stuff to bend; all you need is a hole in tree or fencing post to push it through, and a case of Guinness, and you're bent. Panels are attached by blind rivetting.

Otherwise M 45 needed little beyond a couple of bigend shells—how much nicer than the dreadful business of finding somebody to run the stuff into conrod eyes—new back hubs and wheels, new SU dashpots and the addition of the fourth water transfer port found on the later engines. It is hoped this will stop the local boiling in the back of the head which has always been a source of grief. (It is, incidentally, odd how much cooler LG 45 runs than M 45 in the tropics, with engines in comparable condition, deprive the latter though one may of radiator shutters and even add oil radiator.)

Time was here found to run the Rapide in Perak Motor Club's Simpang Pulai hillclimb, ½ mile; best run 38.8, best sports car time TR2 35.3, and FTD 1100 Cooper, 33.7. Shortly after this, the Rapide went on strike, after taking it uncomplainingly for a whole year; in fact it struck a rock outcrop when Quack was'nt looking and in too much of a hurry to stop. Unfortunately he didn't watch his oil guage long enough, lost all his oil through the hole where the sump plug should have been and every bearing in the engine. In the ensuing panic, a Citroen was acquired, with identical cruising and maximum speeds; it boiled continually all the time we had it, requiring addition of a bucket to the tool inventory, and using more water than petrol.

Work on M 45 stopped abruptly, and all hands turned to Rapides. Apart from the dreadful discovery that there weren't any removable shells in the bigends, the job was reasonably straightforward. Running in



for this one had got as far as a quiet 3,000 r.p.m. when, for no apparent reason, a tappet head broke off. Instead of dropping harmlessly down into the sump, as anyone else's would, Quack's gets caught between camshaft going round and bigend coming up, to detriment of both. Luckily this happened near Symond's estate, so help was summoned:

The Malay gentleman minding Sym's phone unfortunately didn't know Sym's name, and on having Sym described to him by his most treasured possessions, said indignantly "oh NO. No old motor cars on THIS estate". Eventually Sym was dragged away from the Indian wedding he was attending, and arrived, with towrope and beer, to find Quack sitting in a Chinese coffee shop swilling orange squash with the local boys and having a whale of a time though they'd hardly had a dozen words in common.

Subsequent—multiple—arrivals of spares revealed the interesting fact that LG 45's seem to have had at least two types of conrod and three types of tappet, which caused a rift for a time between Quack and his supplier. However, all was reconstituted in the end, and on we went.

No speed events were undertaken at this time, because engines never seemed to get run in before they blew up again, though a fair imitation was found in a twisty rally section where Quack's navigator read his watch backwards and gave minutes behind time instead of minutes in front, increasing appallingly in successive sections and resulting in quite a spirited dice and a new set of tyres, for which, oddly enough, the navigator was agent. You can't win.

By this time, oil consumption was climbing, and when it reached 200 m.p.g., the Time had Come. This stripdown showed bores to be 30 thou oversize plus 17 thou wear on the worst bore; items, one block sleeved to standard, new pistons, rings and gudgeons. An article by Michael here set Quack reaching for Needham's burette; compression ratio came out at 7.2 where it should have been 7.5 or so. Enquiry indicates that the answer lies in Rapides having originally special domed pistons to get their 7.5 or 7.6. Unfortunately these were not made in oversizes, so if your LG 45 Rapide has been rebored, chances are it has non Rapide pistons and a lower compression than you think it has.

Local machine shoppers blench on seeing heads like this to take bits off, so Quack is making do with a thin gasket; if this doesn't stand up as well as the standard arrangement of laminated copper and lots of copper washers dropped over the studs, nobody will be much surprised.

While this was toward, the standby Citroen was swapped for another with two SU's and a (very French) four speed box. When this box shed its insides all over the road on being asked to go out and rescue a Phantom I, nobody thought much of it, except Quack's banker, and, since he was in the Phantom I, this didn't much matter. But when it happened again a few thousand miles later, there could be no more, and the remains were traded in for

the first thing with a gearstick growing out of the floor. (This turned out to be a '55 Rover 90, by no means such an old gentleman's car as it looks. It does the 110 miles to Penang twenty minutes faster than either traction ever did. Where tractionistes get all their enthusiasm from for this thoroughly rough noisy and agricultural machine is a mystery; perhaps here an irrelevant one.)

Opportunity was taken while rebuilding the Rapide to get the thing clean for the first time since Quack got it, and the horrifying discovery was made that all aluminium castings, bulkhead and all, had at some time been slobbered over with aluminium paint. All right, George, you try and get it off!

The blessings called down on the head of the ingenious character who thought this one up could have been heard in Singapore, and probably were, since it was about this time that Jupe ceased motoring his 2-litre with unwonted decelerity, and the chap behind, in his nice shiny new Vauxhall—laughingly dubbed Velox by its perpetrators—drove smartly up Jupe's tail pipe. Quack was thereupon deluged by radiophone calls, letters and telegrams demanding spare back axle, petrol tank, road wheel, springbolts brake cables and whatnot, until Jupe discovered that the other bloke's insurers were prepared to pay him fifteen dollars a day beer money while his car was off the road, whereupon they promptly ceased.

This was just as well, since this array of fast moving spares, dragged from Quack's woodshed (knock twice and ask for Forshaw) was entrusted to a Chinese lolly dliiver who swore blind he'd do the four hundred miles to Singapore inside thirty-six hours. He didn't, not for ten days he didn't, so maybe Chinese lolly dliivers have their troubles too.

The Rapide is whole, and in the paint shop, so there is time for gossip before turning again to the M 45. Lags in the East seem to be getting commonplace; rumours reach us of various service types in the club who often send Quack postcards but this is, regrettably, as far as we get. There is a V 12, reputedly immaculate, going for an immaculate price in Singapore, and an LG 6 was seen recently, probably from Kuala Lumpur, owner as yet untraced. Bambridge and his Lancefield M 45 have been met in Penang; we shall soon have a quorum for a Far East branch.

LG 45 Rapides are beautiful. Period. Like some other beautifuls, they are both bitchy and inaccessible. Trouble is, in both cases, it so often seems to be all well worth while. Perhaps there is no better finish than to quote the chap in Staines whom Quack once asked how many Rapides were made during the three years of their production. "Ooh", says this chap, "quite a lot. Nearly fifty!"

Maybe it's just as well . . .

QUACK

*(This is not all—disaster strikes again!*

*See correspondence, page 22. Ed.)*





A competitor turns broadside at the fork during one of the "Round the Mountain" races at the Lagonda fête at Brooklands, 1930

## PILGRIMAGE by Peter Cavanagh

"NOSTALGIC beyond description" is a phrase occasionally used by one who finds himself in a situation where mere words fail to record his personal feelings; where the "sword" of memory has proved itself for once mightier than the "pen". It is with such feelings that I have attempted to record my day's visit to what remains of the Brooklands we once knew.

It was on a warm spring morning last month that I set off, and having collected John Langrishe (hon. sec., Healey Drivers' Club), turned the nose of the Healey towards Weybridge. Turning into Brooklands Road, the whole scene came back with such a bang, that it was impossible to believe that time had elapsed at all.

Turning into Vicker's car park we were met and despatched to Charles Gardner who was to "look after us", a thing which he did in no uncertain manner, with charm and friendliness that surpassed a Knight Errant.

We had hinted that perhaps a snapshot or two of the old bankings, with maybe a glimpse of the Healeys in the foreground, would be rather wonderful souvenirs to be treasured. Not only was our request granted, but an official photographer was laid on complementarily.

Passing the main block, we came upon a joyous sight, for there stood the old Club Building, complete with balconies as ever was, and still in perfect repair (now being used as offices), and in the paddock the original shelters that had once housed the "gleaming monsters" now protected a mass of workers' bicycles; with above them, still visible, the faded words "Dunlop" and "M.G." The Positions Board gantry was still there, and even some of the old boards attached to it. The concrete pits of the Campbell Circuit are more or less complete (now small workshops) as were the rows of little buildings where Parry Thomas once abided. The large wooden shed housing part of the "Ancient Aircraft" collection is

intact, and in fact a telephone call came later in the day from a gentleman who wished to fly an S.E.5 away.

How delighted we were, to see that the Test Hill had been cleared of undergrowth and looked almost "as new". (Charles said he had had this done as he felt that he "ought to".) Then we drove up the Campbell Circuit hill to behold a glorious, but oh, so sad, a picture. Before us stretched the dear old Home Banking or, I should say, most of it, overgrown with young birch trees which had seeded themselves between the crevices in the concrete. Closer examination showed that only the centre section was thus affected, the top and bottom sections being clear. We ran the cars around, gazing upwards as we went to see the railway-sleeper barriers still round the lip, complete with rusted steel facings. We paused to take our first photos and climbed the steep slope to the top, our feet slithering on the patches of moss, and surveyed the places where poor Percy Lambert and Clive Dunfree had been so tragically killed. Somebody had said at one time that a cross had been erected along the edge of the trees, but we searched in vain.

Returning to the cars we rounded the base of the curvature, making for the "Members' Bridge". At the first sight of it, silhouetted against the blue sky, one's heart leaped, only to sink again at the sight of an enormous workshop built underneath it, leaving only about 18 feet of concrete at the top passing through to the other side. A tragic sight, believe me, to one who well remembers cars like the "Napier Railton" rushing under that bridge a yard or two from the top at around 130!

We retraced back via the Campbell gradient, round the base of the "Members' Hill" and joined up with the banking again on the "Railway Straight" side. Lambert had been photographed thereabouts making his successful 1913 record attempt, driving his Talbot as the first man to exceed 100 miles in the



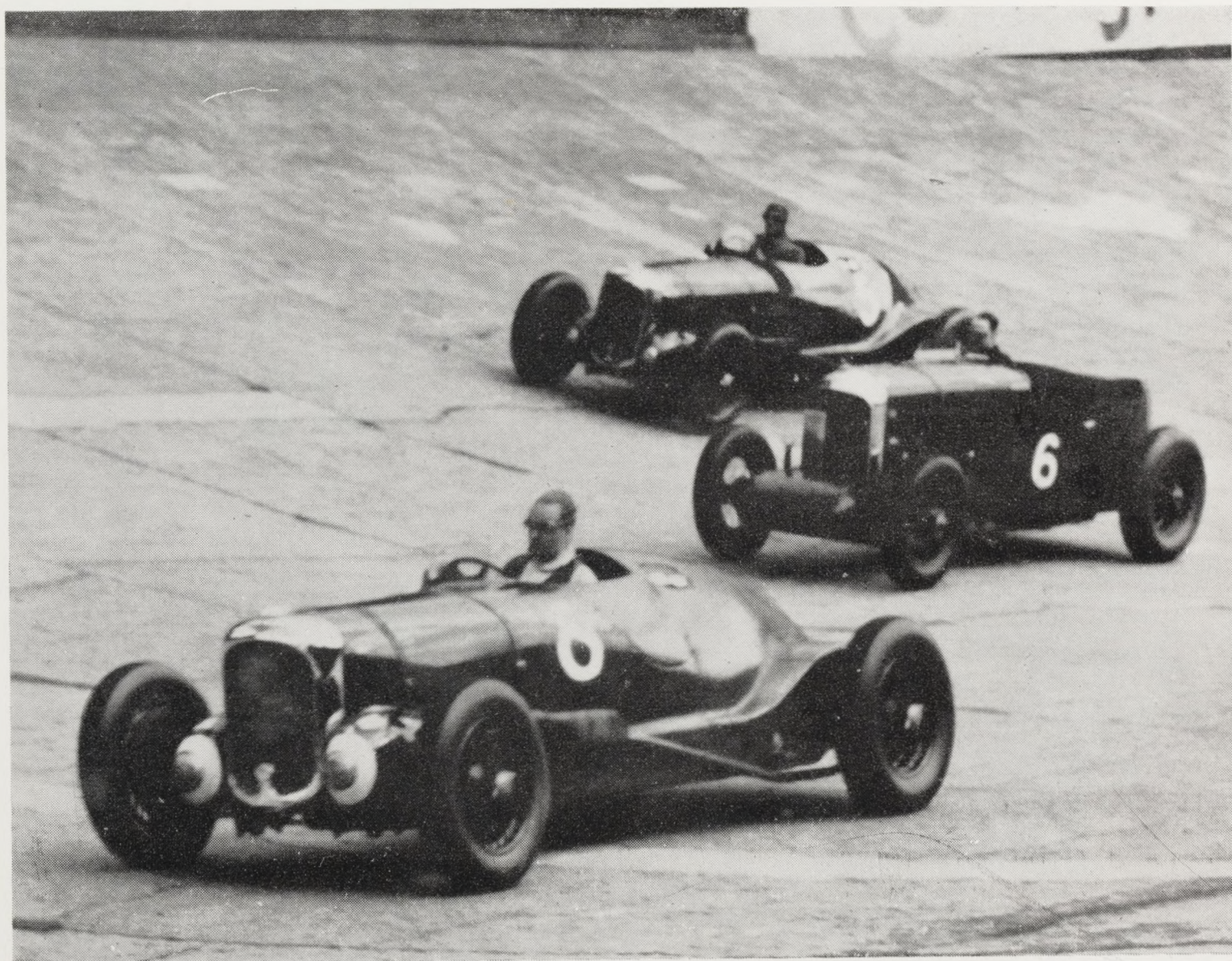
hour. It was the spot depicted on the old B.A.R.C badge, showing two cars passing under the bridge. It was always a tricky spot for drivers when there was any wind about, for on the banking behind the Members' Hill one was completely sheltered until one emerged under the bridge, and then it was a case of hang on the wheel or be blown over the 30-ft. top. Disbelievers could pay 10s. on a non-race day, take their latest sports car round and find out for themselves. I didn't believe it in 1934 and although it only cost me 5s. for a two-wheeler, I'll never forget my experience there on a Douglas motor-bike as long as I live!

Beyond where we stood, towards the Railway Straight, the track was almost clear of shrubbery, and in fact as one approaches the river (where the banking goes over the Wey), the surface is quite good for nearly a quarter mile, for some of it has a tar dressing which has prevented the growth of greenery. What was therefore the wavy part is now about the smoothest, although the "Bump" is there still (we know because we tried it!). Charles had suggested some last snaps slightly panned, to give an effect of motion as the cars came on to the straight, and that we go back towards the Members' Bridge as far as the surface was clear and return at some pretence of

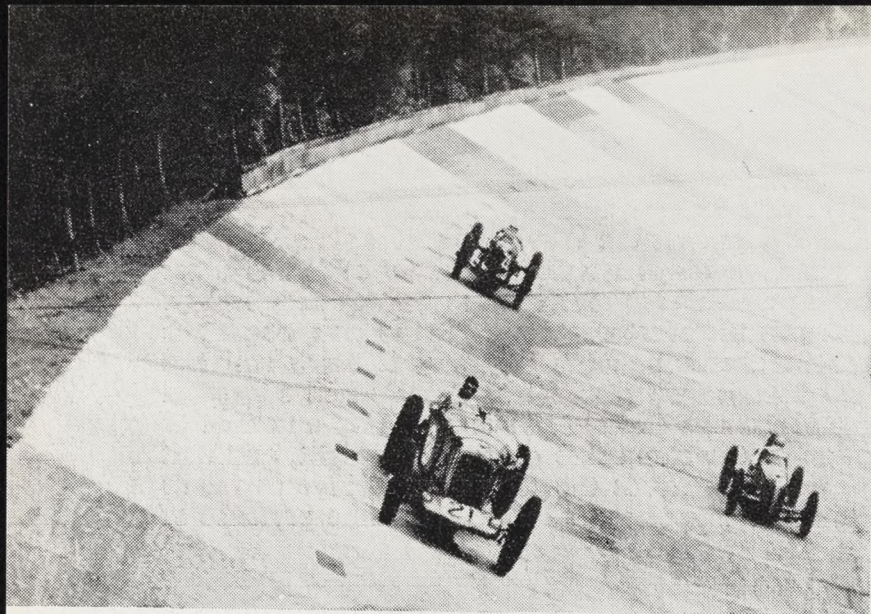
## **1939 B.A.R.C. AUGUST MEETING**

**Charles Brackenbury, No. 8**

**Lord Selsdon, No. 5**







## 1936 B.R.D.C. 500 MILES

"speed". "Pretence?"—I fear "full chat" would have been nearer the definition. I was forced to take my foot off as we swept off the banking, firstly, to stop showering stones over John's bonnet, and secondly, to enable me to pull up in the space available, for a large hanger now sits across the Railway Straight. John declared that two mechanics, finally convinced that we were not "ghosts," were about to slide back the doors so that we could carry straight through and out the other side. However, we soon saw a sad aspect to his joke, for the Straight did carry on to the "Byfleet Banking" and then ended abruptly into nothing, with runways and green grass now cutting it in half.

It is now 17 years since Brooklands was raced upon, but I estimate that a half to two-thirds of the track remains, this including the finishing straight, the course of which is difficult to follow owing to large buildings of sundry types sprawled over its surface. Though some folk may have sentimentally hoped or wondered if Brooklands could ever be used again, that, I fear, would be impossible. About all one could squeeze out of the existing surfaces would be a quarter-mile sprint or a dash up the "Test Hill" for a cup of tea on the old lawns.

With such conditions prevailing, many would take for granted that the memory of Brooklands is dead or dying, but as stated earlier, its memory is not to be allowed to die, or even lie down. A committee, including several "names" of the pre-war days, has been formed under the eye of Vickers, and I was privileged and delighted to see the drawing of a magnificent memorial, to be erected in the Railway Straight vicinity for all to see. No longer will train passengers wonder about those strange concrete banked areas as they sweep by; they will be able to read in large letters "BROOKLANDS 1907-1939". A map of the track in detail with badges of the

B.A.R.C., J.C.C., Flying Club and Vickers will surmount a list of record holders and sundry data, all engraved in bronze to be imperishable—and, who knows, but that if we all wish strong enough, the adjacent part of the track might be kept in fair condition to go with it.

A wonderful book is also being compiled by Vickers containing scores of splendid photos, many hitherto unpublished. Charles decided with us that a good title would be "Fifty Years of Brooklands".

I wonder if there stands a monument, anywhere, to the memory of Mr. Locke-King, that indomitable man who gave us the track—spending over £150,000 of his own money in doing so, and who, supported by the devotion and enthusiasm of his wife, overcame endless obstacles to provide the world's first motor track?

Looking back, I am sure few would disagree that the atmosphere of Brooklands made it an irresistible magnet to all who knew it. Even today that atmosphere has not diminished. As we stood by the Club House gazing at those pine trees, with the spring sun shining on their red-brown stems, the air seemed filled with the sounds of everything we knew—the gay colours, the chatter of voices, the revving of highly-tuned engines, the whine of the "blowers" on the distant bankings, the buzzing of bees, the rattle of tea cups, the gay dresses of the ladies swishing past the enclosure gates, the feeling of heat reflected off the dazzling concrete and a feeling of being completely and gloriously carefree. We have many excellent tracks today, but there can never be another Brooklands, ever!

But I think that the dubious rumour which has floated around from time to time of "nasty horrid, Vickers pinching our track" should be put in proper perspective. Let me put it this way. Racing at Brooklands ceased in 1939 due to a war which lasted six years. During that time the track was Ministry-requisitioned, cut about, built upon, suffered bomb damage and the like. Shareholders had not seen a penny in that time and at the end of the war were confronted with the prospect of not seeing any for another three years, since the track would not be released until 1949.

If Brooklands were to be retained, Vickers would have had to be moved, for there just was not room as things were. Heaven knows what the cost of restoring the track to first-class order would have been. But the Ministry quickly realized it was cheaper to buy the track for industrial development than to reinstate it as a motor racing venue.

The B.R.D.C. held a meeting of violent protest but, alas, the shareholders, having in mind the facts stated, and with the temptation of seeing £330,000, sold out to Vickers. Thus, on a miserable winter's day in 1946, the curtain came down.

Let us not forget, however, that Cobb declared that "The memory of Brooklands would remain immortal" and it is grand to see his wish being realized.

*(Reprinted from AUTOSPORT).*



# STARTING FROM COLD

THE TIME IS 15.45 hours and the family is at last sufficiently wrapped, padded, blanketed and embroidered to undertake a journey of some 15 miles. E.T.A. 16.00 hours.

Father seats himself and presses the starter button. The only result is a sound like Gunk, and everything jams solid.

Family piles out and solemnly watches me slide back the front passenger seat, disinter the 1955 toffee wrappers, hairpins, dust and dead moths, raise the floor boards and prise the starter pinion free. The sliding seat now resolutely refuses to go back in its original position; either it misses one runner or both, or slides too far, or jams, or fails to engage, but whatever happens, it disappears into the rearmost depths, as soon as sat upon.

Stability is eventually attained with the help of my son's knees against the back of the seat and the ritual is commenced once more.

The reaction from the starter is now somewhat as follows:

Yurr—one bar rest—yurr-yurr, two bars rest, y—,

“Look, would you mind going back indoors for a bit, I'll get this fixed in a minute”,

## Formula

- Insert penny to keep choke in position.
- Turn on petrol and flood carburettor, where-upon one's ration floods through with a roar like the waves of the sea.
- Turn off petrol quick.
- Shut hand throttle, retard ignition, edge round to the front end (at this moment a shelf full of odds and ends is dislodged and descends on one's shoulders) and turn over four times.
- Now, edge backwards, rather after the fashion of leaving a royal audience, switch on, edge forward and crank up—once, twice, etc.

One is rewarded by what can only be described as a smirk across the radiator.

One now crawls beneath, wrestles with drain taps, gets a squirt of icy water up one's sleeve and most of the spare grease from the water pump on one's cuff.

Water can to kitchen sink, which has to be cleared of an accumulation of domestic utensils and crockery, to find that the boiler is low and the hot tap provides a trickle at 68° F.

“When are we going to Auntie's, Daddy?”

“Shut up!”

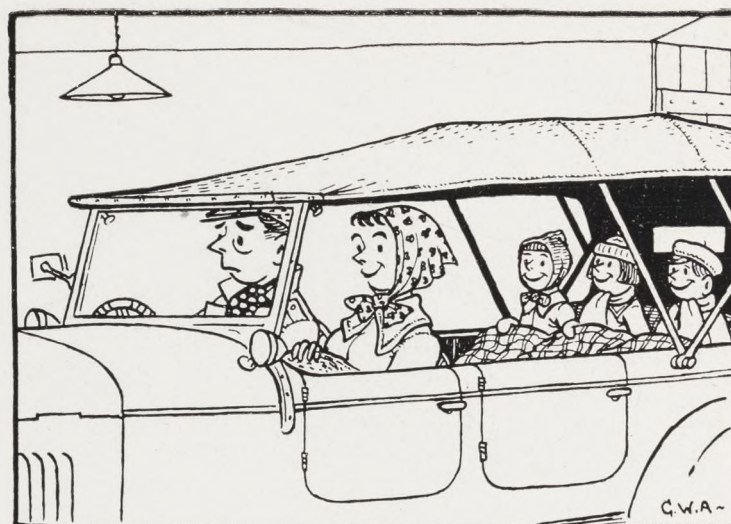
With the aid of the kettle, the first two gallons, somewhat tepid, are poured in, and promptly reappear on the garage floor. Turn off drain cocks and try again.

At last everything is set for the next assault.

Crank-crank-crank-crank. Silence!

(thinks) What about a little advance on the ignition? Crank—!

Whilst one is picking oneself off the garage ceiling, the starting handle has revolved widdershins about three dozen times, but it is consoling to know that the brute is still alive.



“Yurr.....Yurr—Yurr.....Y—”

Less spark—more throttle.

This time, there is a shattering roar as the engine fires on four cylinders at once and the rev. counter needle bends itself against the stop.

A joyful leap to the driving seat, gear lever goes up one's right trouser leg, into reverse, clutch in, and then rending noises which indicate that the offside door which one has forgotten to shut has engaged with the garage door frame. (Later examination shows that the locus of the door is a helix and no longer a quadrant). Silence intervenes once more because one forgot to turn the petrol on again—

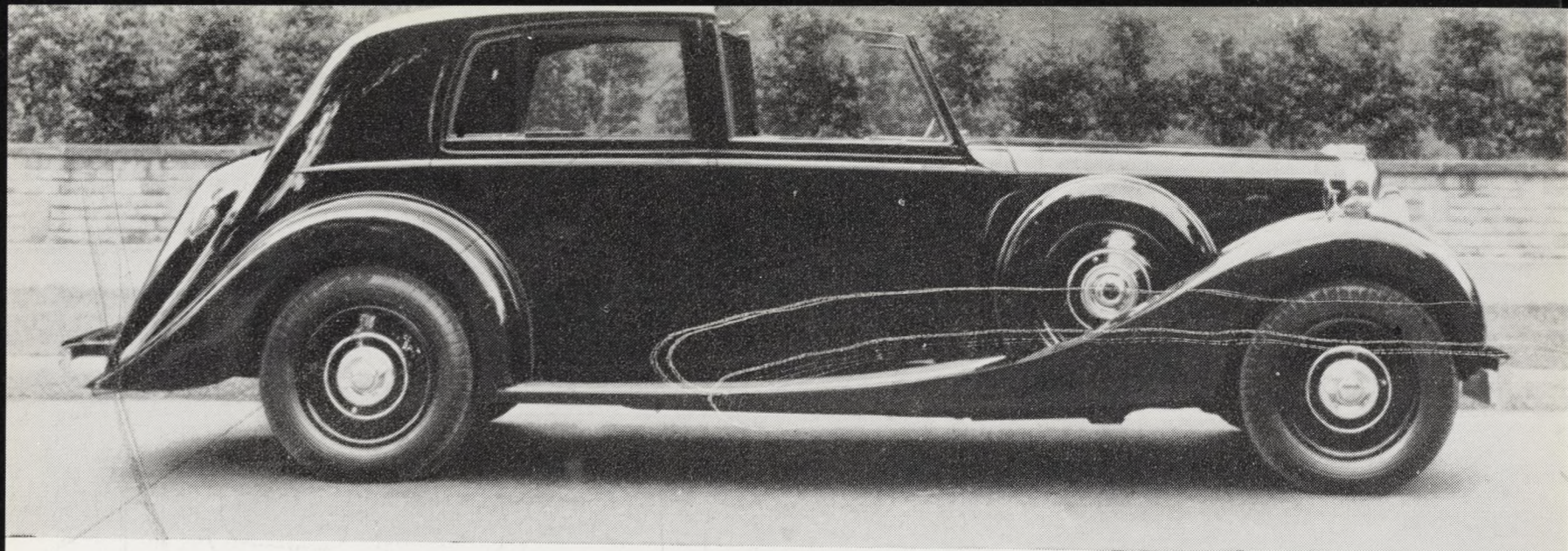
Lucia dear, don't grind your gears at me like that, of course I'm not talking about you—I think you are the nicest, comfortablist, most reliable car, I do indeed, Lucia, really I do. I never even mentioned your name, Lucia, I . . . help, help, help. HELP!

MARTIN HUTCHINSON.



“Shut up !”





*1939 12 cyl. long chassis Mulliner Sedan*

## NORTHERN NOTES *from Henry Coates*

MANCHESTER and it's environs, or rather the members who inhabit that area, have done very nicely by getting up a party, and letting the Hon. North. Sec. call it the Northern party. Some comments on that function should appear elsewhere in this issue. It was pleasant to be entertained once again by Mr. and Mrs. Jack who coped with us for several parties at Cottons. It was also pleasant to have with us the Hon. Midland Sec. and other members from that area.

Northern Rally. Again it seems a little uninspiring to say that this will be much as before. But as the primary function of a summer Rally is to allow folks to see each other, it seems altogether more convenient to have the competition in a ring fence as it were. There will be therefore, again, a series of driving tests on the afternoon of Saturday, July 6th, and facilities for refreshment of mind and body afterwards. Full details and entry forms will be circulated in due course to northern members, others in more distant areas can obtain regulations from me at Hill, Farm Swine, Nr. Hull. But for those able to plan ahead, here are the locations of Rally and refreshment point:

The driving tests will be held on the airfield at Sandtoft as last year. The approach is from a cross roads M.R. 743080, up a short lane, almost an avenue, to the East. From the South—Bawtry, Finningley where R (S.P. Wroot) for almost 1 mile to Cross Roads where R for  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles to Cross Roads where L for  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles along a quite straight road to the airfield. From Doncaster to Hatfield where R (S.P. Scunthorpe) and in about 1 mile, just past the Green Trees Inn, bear right and continue for 4 miles almost straight to airfield. From the North—Thorne, follow Bawtry signs for about 2 miles where turn acutely L just short of Green Trees.

Arrangements for a meal have been made with the Crown Hotel, Bawtry—now under new management. This is on A1, about 157 miles from London. A really good three course dinner is being served for an all in cost of 9/6—by “all in” is meant inclusive of service charge, and has no reference to what the less voracious may leave on their plates or the less dextrous may scatter on the table cloth or floor. This is a substantial reduction of the normal charge and bookings and payment should be through the North. Sec. A provisional booking of several rooms has been made, but members wishing to stay the night should write direct to the Hotel, and they will be allotted rooms from our block booking. As it will be the busy season and it is on a busy road we are asked to get ourselves organised for accommodation as early as possible.

It will be a tremendous help therefore if such as can commit themselves, do write, without waiting for the regulations, also where possible and seemly, to be willing to share twin bedded rooms.

In this part of the world Hotels are less frequent than in the London area, and we think it better to make arrangements with a good one, than try and save a few shillings and risk discomfort. The Crown is thoroughly comfortable, the food very good, and we are having a room to ourselves after dinner. There is also adequate car parking and room for several cars in shelter.

Address: CROWN HOTEL, BAWTRY. Telephone: Bawtry 341.

Makes of car competition: There was quite a gratifying response to this, and several good lists were tendered. Quite astonishing was that of Mrs. Robinson of South Norwood, who found over 1,000. It is hoped that she will venture to Bawtry to collect the free entry and food offered as prize.



Who has owned Lagondas for the longest period? Now driving a very lovely L.G.6 Rapide, H. Overstall has strong claims. He bought his first in 1929 and has never been without a Lagonda since.

MONTHLY meetings. Each SECOND Thursday, Red Lion, High Lane, Stockport. Each LAST Tuesday, Half Moon, Skidby, Nr. Hull.

#### Oulton August 5th

V.S.C.C. members will hear all about this through the usual channels. Non-Vintage members are welcome as spectators, and will have no difficulty in securing tickets from Members of the V.S.C.C. There is no charge for entrance to the course, but a fee is payable for parking the car.

This is a very suitable venue and occasion to make a debut as a "Racing Motorist". The initiated will tell one that it is far less hazardous hurrying on a race course than among the average Saturday afternooners. At least on the race course, the majority of people in circulation are going the same way—It is not quite the idea for all to go the same speed.

Should anyone feel desirous of ascertaining what it entails—beyond of course the obvious effort to get round quicker than everyone else—the North. Sec. will be glad to provide information.

Lagondas are now supporting the various club events very strongly at Silverstone, can we do the same at Oulton Park?

## BOOK REVIEW

"THE DIFFERENCE TO ME" by John Bryan (published by Faber & Faber at 13s. 6d.) has a strong motoring theme running through it.

The story concerns a Canadian Intelligence Officer who comes to London on business in the immediate post war years and gets mixed up in the most wonderful underworld murder cum smuggling situation.

Of course there is the beautiful woman, but it is she who has the interest in cars and there is talk of Brooklands and Le Mans where she used to race and her present mount is a blown 1750 Alfa Romeo.

To Club members it is rather sad that the hero buys a DB.2 Aston Martin instead of a Lagonda but there is mention of other good cars including a Bristol 403. There is a delightful description of the Alfa chasing a big Buick at night, quite the Dornford Yates touch, and another point when the Aston getting away from a Mark VI Bentley just gets between two coaches, it sounds just like the Brighton road on any Sunday!

The sketches of London brought to life the smelly streets of Paddington and the descriptions of Sussex and the South Downs almost brought the smell of sea air into ones nostrils.

A book worth reading by all who like cars, or London, or the Country, or good food, or just plain good fiction.

M. H. W.

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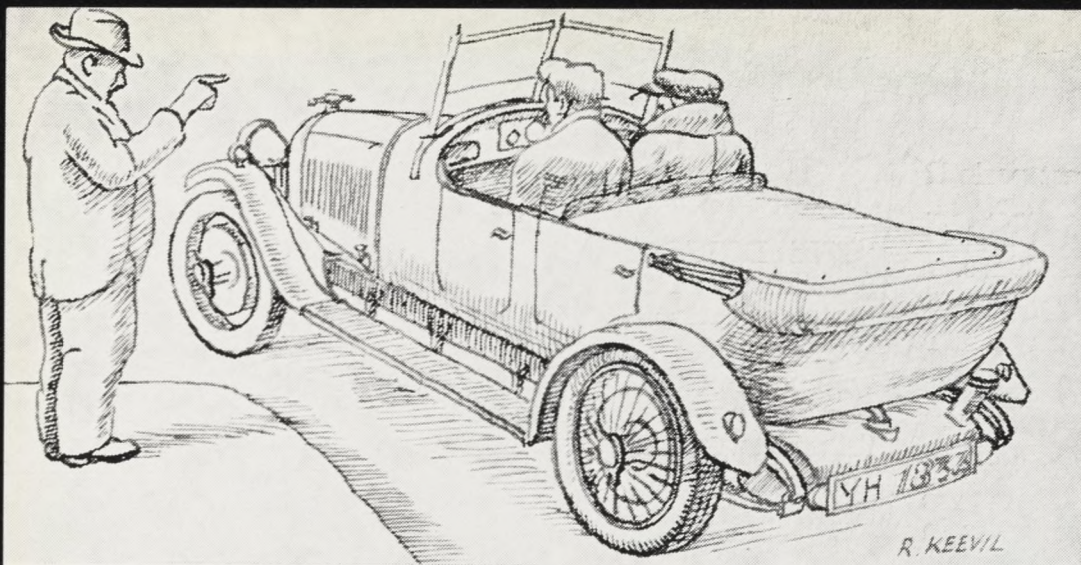
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## “That a’way for Buckingham Palace!”

A “graphic jotting” of an incident that happened to member Keevil which he thought was a rare piece of cockney wit—far more subtle than shouting “Genevieve!”

THE FOLLOWING is the very sad report received from Harry Wareham of activities in the Midlands:

“The Midland Centre held a meeting at the Fleur de Lys Inn at Lawsonford, Nr. Henley in Arden, Warwicks: on Wednesday 27th March last and due to the generosity of the proprietor who lent a 16 m.m. talkie projector free of charge I was able to show three films, Mille Miglia 1953, Grand Prix 1955, and Le Mans 1952, these being by courtesy of Shell Mex & B.P. Ltd.

Although the meeting was announced in all the motoring papers NOT ONE person from the Lagonda Club turned up! I repeat NOT ONE. Fortunately I took the precaution of inviting the B.D.C., Midland Automobile Club and V.S.C.C. so that altogether about thirty people were present.

It seems a pity that my time and energy should be used in providing entertainment for other Clubs, fortunately I do not really mind, perhaps one day a Lagonda Club member will turn up. Mine host had for the occasion obtained an “extension” and so drinking went on until quite late. All present voted it a great success.

Due to the lack of interest in Midland Centre matters I went up to Henry Coates Northern Centre party the other week and had a wonderful time! A car park full of Lagondas, and such enthusiasm everywhere—what a difference to “my” area.”

Needless to say the Committee are very perturbed to read Harry’s report, and while it is appreciated that out of London “get togethers” are more difficult owing to geographical reasons it does seem that members in the Midlands are not very keen on having Club activities provided for them. As Harry Wareham is such a useful man he will soon be snared away to help in the North or the South unless we can find him some encouragement in his own area. It is something of a puzzle that any person who owns a Lagonda doesn’t want to meet other such fortunate people. Before the full Committee decide the future of the Midland Centre, and there is no point in keeping it going for the Hon. Midland Secretary alone, it is hoped that the members will write to Harry Wareham at Haywood Cottage, Five ways, Hatton, Nr. Warwick and tell him what they want.

## COMPETITION NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS to Lord Dunleath on carrying the flag at Snetterton on Sunday 19th May, when he worked his way through the field in The 5 lap Vintage handicap race to win ahead of Blandfords Alfa-Romeo.

IN THE Spring Issue of the magazine it was announced that owing to petrol restrictions the Committee had decided that the marking for the annual challenge trophies should be suspended for the time being. That decision was taken in December and as it now seems that the position regarding petrol is much better the Committee are pleased to announce that the marking system for these awards is restarted as from the 1st February last. Therefore for this year the operative period will be from the date mentioned above up to and including the November Handicap.

As there has been a slight re-arrangement of the awards following the generous gift from Mr. Arthur Fox the trophies will now be awarded as follows:

**MICHAEL TROPHY.** To the member gaining the greatest number of marks when driving a Lagonda. All events entered to be taken into account.

**ARTHUR FOX TROPHY.** To the member gaining the greatest number of marks when driving a Lagonda in CLUB CALENDAR events only. That is, Southern and Northern Rallies, Lagonda only races at 8 Clubs and B.D.C. meetings, September event, November Handicap, Concours d’Elegance, and the Social runs.

This is designed to encourage members who cannot embark on a vast programme, and it is fitting that Arthur Fox who did so much to keep Lagondas in Competition should still be keen enough to help us compete by presenting this cup.

**CAR CLUB TROPHY.** As originally intended, this will now be awarded at the discretion of the Committee to the most noteworthy performance by a Lagonda. It will not necessarily be awarded every year.



The marks for the Arthur Fox Trophy will be recorded automatically by the Competitions Sub-Committee, but marks, or claims for marks for the other awards must be submitted by the members themselves. Normally this should be done before the November Handicap as points gained in this event will be added for you.

The marking is as under:

#### Rallies and Driving Tests

	Promoting Club only.	Events with 2 or more Clubs.
Best performance of the day	35	50
Class Winner	25	35
Award of merit or 1st Class award	20	30
2nd Class award	15	20
3rd Class award	10	15
Best Lagonda (if at least 6 and none of above won)	—	15
Starter	3	5
Finisher	5	10

#### Race Meetings, Sprints and Hill Climbs

Fastest time of Day (Outright)	50
Event Winner	30
Event 2nd place	25
Event 3rd place	15
High speed trial (qualifier)	30
Starter	6

#### Lagonda Club Social Events

Concours d'Elegance.	Winner	35
	2nd place	20
	3rd place	10
Social Events.	Winner	20
	Runner up	10
	Finisher	3

NOTE.—Starting or finishing marks only awarded if none other are gained.

#### Marshals Award Only

In events listed in Club Calendar or to which Club is invited.	Organiser	35
	Marshal	20

**DENSHAM TROPHY.** To the member driving a 2-litre of 16/80 who gains the most marks.

**Note.**—No person can win more than one of the above awards.

**MARSHALS PRIZE.** To the member who organises or marshals most in CLUB CALENDAR or events to which the CLUB is invited.

## V.S.C.C. MEETINGS

### HESTON

Early in February the V.S.C.C. despite petrol rationing were bold enough to put on some driving tests at Heston. Their gamble was well rewarded as some 60 odd cars entered and the spectators park was even more full.

The chance of having a "bash" was too good to miss and many Lagondas had their first outing of the season. In the Vintage Sports Car class we were represented by Maurice Leo and his blown 2-litre and James Woollard and the high chassis 2-litre. In the P.V.T. sports car class there was James Crocker and his fine L.G.45 Rapide, Colin Bugler all the way from Southampton in the D.H.C. Rapier, a tourer Rapier in the hands of Arthur Barnett and Mike Wilby's very slimey and well known Rapier. Bill Michael didn't think the ex-team 4½ very good for this sort of thing so entered Mike's car as well.

Maurice drove as well as ever but in a hotly contested class just couldn't get amongst the awards while James Woollard found the new gear box a great help but it was offset by him not being very sure were to point the car at times.

Colin Bugler had all this time been pursuing a neat and quiet course, and in due time it was found he had won a first class award. Bill and Mike seem to spend the afternoon seeing who could get most revs out of the Rapier, and it seems that the owner won as he netted a second class award as against Bill's third class. James then started on the L.G.45 and in no time at all had also swept about fast enough to gain a second class award. Arthur Barnett who is still new to this type of event didn't quite make the grade but went well enough to have learnt quite a lot during the day.

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Upholding the Lagonda tradition in the spectators car park were the ex-Spiller 2-litre of the Mason's, John Masterson's "new" L.G.45 tourer, and of course Denis Stratton in the 3½-3-litre.

Congratulations to all concerned, a very good showing.

### SILVERSTONE

The first V.S.C.C. race meeting came along on the windiest and coldest day in April (I know, I waved flags there for about eight hours!), and a few of the regulars used the meeting as a sighter for Lagonda races later in the year. We had the old firm of Michael and Dunleath with the two fast 4½'s, Donald Overy and the Scarlet Woman, looking more scarlet than ever, that man Bugler again, Harry Gostling and the Continental, and of course Ron Newman with the fastest 3-litre of all time.

Bill and Henry had a couple of very good private dices but as they had to give starts to such things as stripped Monza Alfa-Romeo, and 2.3 litre Bugatti there wasn't much chance of them getting very far.

In the first race Henry won by a small margin and it was most noticeable that his Bentley gearbox, by using second, enabled him to draw away coming out of Becketts. In the second race Bill made the better start and Henry just hadn't the speed to get by so that was that. At one stage the brakes on Henry's car locked on so he changed down to pass the time until they came off again.

Donald also suffered from some flattery on the part of the handicapper and having not much to chase didn't really get going. It was only when he got into the wrong gear at Becketts that he woke up and then perhaps it was too late. He says he is really waiting for the 8 Clubs meeting.

In the following race Ron moved the 3-litre at a pace that was fast enough to draw kind remarks from the commentator, and from close quarters it looked very fast indeed. For four laps he held a good position only to be swamped by the heavy metal on the last lap. Anyway third place was some reward and his fastest lap has made the Lagonda race handicap team think some very dark thoughts indeed.

Colin Bugler found the wind in the wrong quarter for the bulk of his drop head and couldn't hold on to his handicap long enough to keep amongst the leaders and went away muttering all manner of things about extra speed by the next time.

The Gostling man had to wait until the last race of the day to do battle from the same mark with an Amilcar and an Austin. Initially the 2-litre led but gradually the lighter cars won back and in the end the private race went to the French car by a small amount. Now if only he hadn't had those two extra pork pies at lunch time.

There were many members amongst the marshals and spectators, and the usual Club gathering took place at the "Horse & Jockey", though everyone said they only went inside to get warm.

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# APRIL SOCIAL

WITH PETROL still rationed it was necessary to restrict this event to some extent, but a very creditable display of machinery was nevertheless to be seen outside the Swan and Bottle at Uxbridge shortly after lunch on Sunday the 14th April, of the nineteen entries seventeen being present. The organisers had laid on a warm sunny day, as well as arranging an extremely pleasant run of some thirty miles, which occupied most of the afternoon.

Competitors were required to visit eight points on the map and were assisted by map references, sign post readings or spot heights. At each point ten marks could be gained by collecting certain information, such as "What time is the last post?" or "How high can you measure the Ford?" A further ten marks each could also be gained for bringing to the finishing point a miscellaneous collection of seven articles comprising:

picture of a ship	worm over 4" long
black feather	Lady's garter coloured
clay pipe	blue
1907 penny	snail

The convoy of cars which had left Uxbridge quickly dispersed in the Buckinghamshire lanes, and many crews must have been gratified or mystified to find Lagondas travelling confidently in the opposite direction from themselves. They seem, however, mostly to have had the correct places in mind even though they had different ideas about the best routes to follow, for the proportion who correctly answered all the map reading questions was very high. The collection of articles caused the main difficulty and many motorists out for a pleasant Sunday afternoon run to Burnham Beeches must have been surprised to see our members and their families busy digging small holes in the ground in search of buried treasure. Exactly what means were employed in an effort to obtain Ladies' garters is not known, though it was thought that the later arrivals at the finishing point must be going to untold lengths to obtain one of these desirable articles. Suffice it to say that none was produced.

The first to reach the Bell House, near Beaconsfield, was Alan Audsley and his family who arrived just before four o'clock, but unfortunately had not collected the sundry articles. Other members followed during the next hour and the car park began to assume an interesting appearance. There was a good display of Lagondas and Adrian Whitelegge's Bentley, as well as several more modern vehicles. It was a pleasure to see Charles and Pamela Elphinstone in their 11.1 "Gerald" which they had taken straight to the finish.

A good tea was provided at the Bell House and during the course of consuming this Mike Wilby was regaled by members reporting with their snails, worms, etc. The younger passengers showed great



*The Winner - James Crocker*

prowess in collecting and some ingenuity in presenting their finds. One, on having the worm's length queried, replied "But it will stretch!" It did, but broke. It was felt by some that *escargots* were not proper accompaniment of tea, but others seemed quite immune to the presence of such crustacea.

When all had checked in it was found that James Crocker in his L.G.45 Rapide and Tortoise Taylor driving his L.G.45 Drophead coupe, had tied with 130 marks out of 150, a number of others coming close behind with scores of 120. A special test had been arranged to settle a tie, and James and Tortoise were required to drive between two points 100 yards apart taking as near to one minute over this as they could. They were, of course, denied the assistance of clocks or watches, but were able assisted (Humph!) by Betty Woodhead who was the appointed passenger and distractor-in-chief for this test. James Crocker put up the very good time of 67.2/5 seconds to win the event and Tortoise Taylor came second with 75 seconds. (which was also very good, considering!)

So ended a pleasant Sunday afternoon's motoring with a mildly competitive flavour which was much enjoyed by all those taking part. It was a pleasure to see some of the less frequent competitors, amongst whom was Wing/Commander Ogle-Scan, who has been in Tokio as Air Attache and has not been active in Club events for some years.

*The Loser - Ed.  
Note E. Woodhead on left*





# CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

I was so pleased to read Geoffrey Allen's letter in the Spring issue and I write to support him.

I have taken my blown 2-litre plus wife and three kids from Kent to Lands End. What is more I took them all by road and what is even more we came back by road but we journeyed overnight.

Very enjoyable, apart from intense mental fatigue induced by my ears and nose straining to receive the first hints of trouble from a 25 year old engine.

Do that journey by day under normal modern traffic conditions, not those of 25 years ago, and, with those gear ratios, it would be sheer hell.

Now! if I had all the money in the world, I should have no difficulty in drawing up a short list of four cars (Lotus, Porsche, Frazer-Nash or the new H.R.G.) for the use of my wife and myself. I would have a nervous break-down trying to decide which one, but at least there are four that I would condescend to own.

But honestly, there is not one car made these days, of which I have heard, that would satisfy my requirements as a 4/5 seater.

My answer is to put a modern engine and gearbox into a suitable vintage chassis and body. I have not the money, but I have the suitable body and chassis.

This, of course, is approaching ones' motoring from a different angle to that of the one-make enthusiast, purist, or maniac. This is not suffering from a special type of madness or admiration but wanting the nearest one can get to one's ideal type of car.

So let those of us who feel this way be honest with ourselves and write in support of Geoffrey Allen, it would be very interesting if all those who agreed did write.

Throw away that poor old engine, but with due reverence, and replace it with a big fluffy Yank. I wish I could.

Yours apprehensively,  
J. K. YERBURY.

Bogle, Lynsted,  
Kent.

Dear Sir,

Allen, in his letter in the last issue of the magazine, is right to the extent that a 2-litre is not all that potent by modern standards. There is no need to muck about with other engines though, there are plenty of faster Lagonda cars ready made.

At the same time they did persuade the old 2-litre to hurry a bit at one time, Le Mans at not far short of 60 m.p.h. for a lap despite being bent, and I think a timed 95 on a straight in the T.T. Incidentally I used the engine out of Norman Ledson's special for about 13 years, it being rescued from under a bench

in his shop where it was nicely rusted. It ran in a car for five years then eight in my pig truck and not only was it not bored but it did not need it over much. The shaft was oval when I first had it, but the bearings were done half way through this time. Anyway it has now had some proper treatment and is in a car in Darlington.

Yes, the 2-litre will stand tuning, I have never heard of one blowing up but perhaps I haven't listened hard enough. I had mine up to 5,000 r.p.m. on more than one occasion and nothing fell off or out.

With best wishes,

HENRY COATES.

Hill Farm,  
Swine, Nr. Hull.  
11th March, 1957

Dear Tortoise,

If-mum-could-see-me-now dept.

Rapide's thin cyl. head gasket blows at 300 miles. Head off. Realise compression ratio sums all wrong. Re-check. CR really 6.95. Do more sums. 2 mm. off head means CR 7.59. In any case head touches block at ends but by no means in middle; send to Chinese chap with machine shop and reputation. Head back, check on surface plate, flat within 1½-thou. Happily drop head back on. Receive note from Needham, says not good enough, you need surface plate hasn't been used as anvil. Press button; gasket promptly blows in same old place and three new ones as well. Begin to think Needham knows something.

Quickly send wife on leave; stop messing about, head off, extract all studs, clean off faces, blue, head on, oscillate professionally, lift off (this is easy to WRITE about) and gaze incredulously at minimal marking ends of head, none anywhere else. Say things about professional reputations.

Put head back on block, find three thou. feeler rattles about between like pint going down Hartop's gullet. Head off, butter on grinding paste, head on, and get down to it.

Five nights, two tins grinding paste, one sprained wrist, two worn-out operators and twenty-seven bottles of beer later, they're touching. Can't think why people don't just put in domed pistons.

Only bright aspect of all this is now have shoulders like Carnera and can show Hartop with impunity, next time I see him, the bit he knocked off white elephant's 3rd (G9) gear at Bawtry in 1954.

Daren't press button yet. If no news long time, assume situation still normal.

Yours hyperpietically,  
QUACK.

Ipoh,  
1st March, 1957



# HARPING

by Hartop

THE INSTRUCTIONS on the postcard were simple. "Copy", it said, two thousand words thereof *and* by the end of April! Admittedly, the iron fist was wrapped in a velvet glove—Slightly, but why it just had to be myself when there is a whole eddy of editorial Junctionaries, "assistant", "production", "associate" and a plethora of others. Perhaps the club list in the editorial of "The Lagonda" No. 1 March 1951, where it was written "Editor"—one who edits, —, —, no mention of his having to write a line—"! Then we thought of all those intelligent and erudite types, not to mention those who reached great academic heights, or better still those with a typewriter, a secretary, or both. But no, it is "us", indignantly plural who must tread this particular mill.

The choice of subject was left very vague, providing of course it was faintly connected with matters Lagondic, and whilst searching our addled brain for suitable matter, a variety of topics presented themselves mainly of a trivial nature, but some of them worth examining.

"Why", we asked ourselves was the 3-litre ever made? Not, you will mark, why was *a* 3-litre ever made, but *the* 3-litre. At the risk of offending the owners of what the writer believes to be a reliable, smooth, but unexciting machine, the question is posed. If they, and by "they" the then directors of the company are meant—if they wanted a 6-cylinder, why not add two more pots to the 2-litre and get 50 per cent. more horsepower (instead of almost the same amount) and about 50 per cent. more weight which would approximate the weight of the 3-litre as we know it. But if a 3-litre was the object, why not a "fatter" version of the 2-litre? At very little increase in weight, and perhaps an extra couple of inches in overall length. That surely would have been quite a potent engine for its day. Perhaps someone can tell us just how large our can bore a 2-litre.

In the course of dismantling (and occasionally

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## Correspondence—continued.

Dear Sir,

I am very sad to tell you that I sold my Rapier after two years of good motoring. I own now an Alfa-Romeo 1931 that gives me much more trouble than the Lagonda.

I stay very interested in Lagonda cars and will be very pleased to get the Lagonda Magazine and have news of the club and members.

Tell my kindest regards to Mike Wilby.

Yours sincerely,

34 Frohburgsti, Zurich,  
Switzerland.

JEAN-TH. SULJER.

9th March, 1957

reassembling) our family transport it has been noticed that the oil pumps (2-litre) are all marked with five-figure serial numbers both on the body and on the edge of the cover. Is there a reason for this; perhaps they were sub-contracted by a specialist firm?

So far, this has tended to resemble a quiz programme of "who", "what" or "why", and whilst in the mood, one is tempted to ask if any other example of the aluminium head for the 2-litre is known, other than that possessed by Alan Audsley. One might also query why, having dropped the offside idler sprocket on the early low-chassis 2-litre, it was re-introduced shortly afterwards. The writer is of the opinion that a greater range of timing-chain adjustment is thereby gained.

From this point one's mind wanders over the vast field of owners and marvels at the extreme catholicity with which Lagondas select their possessors. The Church, the law, medicine, engineers, schoolmasters, publicans and doubtless sinners too, not to mention architects, chemists and representatives of the Services and others too numerous to state. A convoy of Lagondas in fact might well appear a modern analogy of Chaucer's pilgrims—the Canterbury Tales, except that I wrote of no prioress in the owners list. The list of clerics however seems commendably strong. It might not be uninteresting to publish in the Register one day, the occupation of each member.

On the subject of the Register, it is encouraging to note that the response to the recent circular has been most encouraging—over 100 "new" cars coming to light. Out of a total of nigh 750, 2-litres lead with nearly 300, 3-litres and M.45s are neck and neck for second place with 88 and 87 respectively. Then come 16/80s—74, L.G.45—53, Rapier—50, V12—26, 3½—20, L.G.6 and D.B.2.6—16, 119—8, DB3L—7, 11.1—2 and 1 solitary tricar. Mention should be made of those few conscientious people who take the trouble to inform the Register when cars are broken-up, it is most helpful.

A visit of a member the other day and the arrival of some photographs, brought home the fineness of line of some of the bodies fitted. Particularly the Abbott bodied Rapier tourer and the relatively rare sports saloon and drophead coupe bodies built by Lancefield on the M.45 chassis. There can be few cars of the conventional era more authentically pleasing than the Lancefield saloon—what a pity there aren't more. At the same time one might wonder at the fixed and drophead coupe bodies built by various firms on the Rapier chassis—how unsatisfactory they seem and out of place.

In a meandering dissertation such as this, it is difficult to know how to finish, but who, I wonder owns that particularly nice-looking LG45 Rapide which is often to be seen parked by the "Green Man" at Trumpington—just outside Cambridge?

W. C. HARTOP.



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