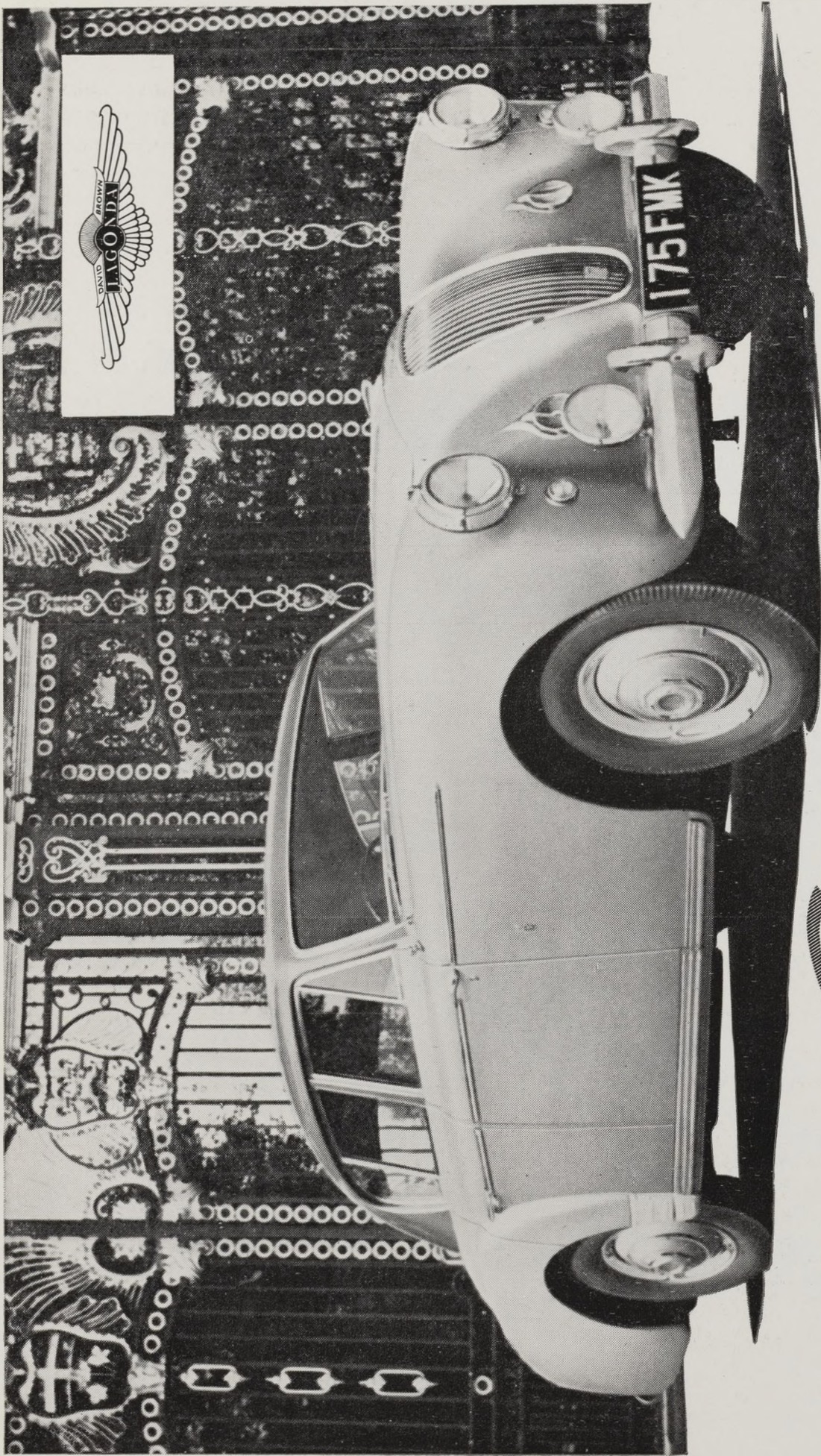


THE *Lagonda*

No. 31

Summer





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Lagonda

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

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Editor: A. Whitelegge
Assistant Editor: M. H. Wilby

EDITORIAL

WELL, you've got a new Editor. Coming away from the Committee Meeting, a member of great experience said: 'Pretty obvious what your Christian name should be'. The remark was lightly brushed aside at the time but its full significance has since been realised. However, there is also a sort of special sub-committee to help the poor chap and as long as he keeps being sent things to put in the Magazine the new Editor's principal worry is likely to be trying to be as funny as his predecessor in the Editorials. On the whole, this one thinks it's probably better not even to try.

His motto isn't: 'Nothing for everybody': the fact that there wasn't a Spring Number really has nothing to do with it at all. Instead you are going to have a nice new List of Members and their Cars. This will be right up to date when it arrives but some members for unspecified reasons appear to move just about as fast and as often as their cars will permit so before long the conscientious ones will no doubt be busy sticking on the list of amendments which will probably follow.

The idea is that the Magazine will come out at regular three-monthly intervals and with a News Letter being circulated in between it is hoped that your correspondence at the office will be pushed aside till later on in the morning about once every six weeks. Thus hopes the new Editor and the old hands look cunning and say: 'Ah! they all start like that!'

THE COVER PICTURE

'Nellie'. E. G. McDonnell's 11.1. (See page 7.)

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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ANNOUNCEMENTS

HENRY COATES has been taken to task for saying in his recent article Lag Log that he still wished he had a Bentley. He has stepped out from behind his pile (? heap. Ed.) of Lagondas to make it clear that he still loves the Staines cars and that he meant he wished he had had a Bentley. All very subtle, the repetition of one three letter word!

He has now nipped back behind the pile to make a special before the next driving test meeting but is still muttering something about the Pools and a new Continental Bentley.

New Member A. W. CARVOSSO writes: "Like S. J. Sharpe, I too was the victim of some idiot taking a dislike to the rear wing of my Rapier. After spending two months of non-stop work on the engine and bodywork I decided to go and show my shiny sparkling car to my girl friend, but to cut a long story short while saying a long and drawn-out farewell to my fair one I heard a terrific 'crump'. Managing to tear myself away I rushed out to find a rear wing lying in the road and not a sign of the B——(I don't think he means Bentley. Ed.) who had ruined my pride and joy". (I trust this refers to the car and not to the girl-friend. Ed.)

Headline in the *Evening Standard*: "The traffic stops for the Scarlet Woman". Don't blame it. "1590 Sunbeam S7 500 c.c. o.h.c. twin for sale". (Advert in Local paper) This would appear to be even older than a 1680 (or Charles II) Lagonda.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

Now that TOM GOODMAN has become a member another historic Lagonda joins the Club. He owns the sister car to JACK KIBBLE's Le Mans winner and in that race it was driven by Dr. Benjafield and Sir Ronald Gunter. It would have finished much higher in the order if gearbox trouble hadn't left it with top gear only for much of the race.

MARGRIT and GERALD KUTTER who live in Zurich are pleased to announce the birth of a son on 22nd March. We are now assured of Swiss members for some time to come!

We are pleased to welcome JOHN WYER into the Club. He is a director and general manager of David Brown's and as such deals with Lagondas and Aston-Martins but for many years he has been connected with motor racing in different forms. He has been heard to talk wistfully about the 16/80 so you can see that he has Lagondas at heart.

In the last News Letter the winners of the annual awards were given but owing to "Flarepath's" memory growing dim, no mention was made of the new awards presented to the Club in 1958.

The first of these was the W. L. THOMPSON Trophy which goes to the lady who does most in the way of competing, helping, etc. and which was awarded to KIP WAREHAM for the part she has played in several of the recent November Rallies.

The second, the HENRY COATES NORTHERN AWARD, goes to the most successful member who normally resides above parallel 53, i.e. who is officially a "Northern" member. This was won most deservedly by CHARLES GREEN and his 2-litre. Charles often leaves his native Staffordshire to uphold the Lagonda flag in "foreign parts" and very well he does it too, if you do not count the school walls he knocks down from time to time!

Members living in or near Essex and wanting an excuse for a weekend outing may like to know of the various gardens in that part of the country which will be open at different times during the summer in aid of Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association. Ingatestone Hall on June 14th is specially recommended but a full list and further information can be obtained from Brigadier G. Wade, O.B.E., D.L., Matching Green, Harlow, Essex.

Whose was the LG45R used in the film "Room at the Top"? The hero said he "dreamed of owning a Lagonda and living at the top of the hill". . . . Well, we don't all live at the Top!

DON HAGAN with 21 years' ownership of his 1929 Le Mans 2-Litre must very nearly set a record with such a long spell owning one model. You can read more about it overleaf. If anyone can beat this, what about the 300,000 miles he has covered in it!

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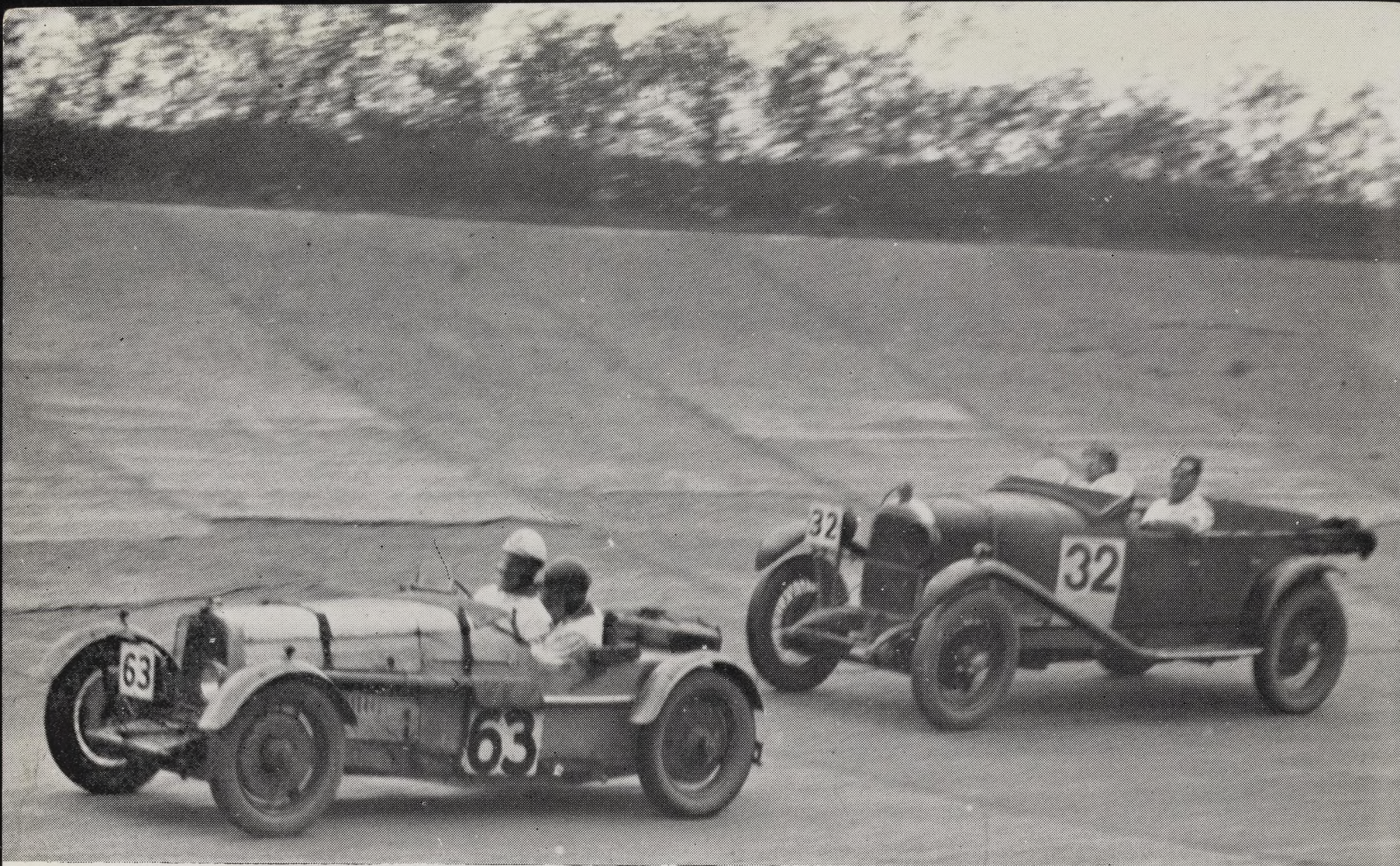


Photo by 'The Autocar'

The 1929 Le Mans

**Don Hagen gives us an
account of his
1929 Le Mans 2 litre**

Car number 32 in 1929 Double Twelve driven by
R. R. Jackson and C. A. Broomhall

I BOUGHT the Le Mans 2-litre Lagonda, car number 9414, in 1938 from Surrey Car Sales of Byfleet who had advertised it in *The Autocar* as an 'Ex-racing Lagonda with full road equipment', as they knew nothing of the car's competition activities I wrote to Lagonda's, who in those days made available to owners the historical record of every car produced. The reply was tantalisingly brief—'This car, which was manufactured in May 1929, was used for the Le Mans race of that year'. However, in the following Spring it became necessary to have some work done to the engine and I decided to let Lagonda's do it. When I took the car in I had a chat with a mechanic who had helped to build it. He told me that four standard low-chassis speed models were turned over to a special department where they were completely stripped down. The chassis were extensively drilled for maximum lightness and tied down by eight triple Hartfords (they give a 'firm'

ride!) Engine modifications included a specially light crankshaft and camshafts with forms giving a quicker lift and longer dwell, the ports were honed out and polished to take 35mm. Triple Diffuser Zeniths; standard high compression (7-1) pistons were fitted but the head was planed to give a ratio of 7.2:1 and a bronze skew gear was used for the mag. drive. A larger capacity radiator was fitted with an imposing steam valve and provision was made on the water, oil and petrol snap fillers for the Le Mans 'Plombeurs' seals; the nearside front engine bearer was adapted so that additional oil could be let down from an external container into the sump; the body had to be shortened slightly to accommodate a 25 gallon petrol tank. A prototype ZE gearbox was used and final drive was through a straight cut bevel 4:1 (still in perfect condition today and I have done over 300,000 miles with it!).

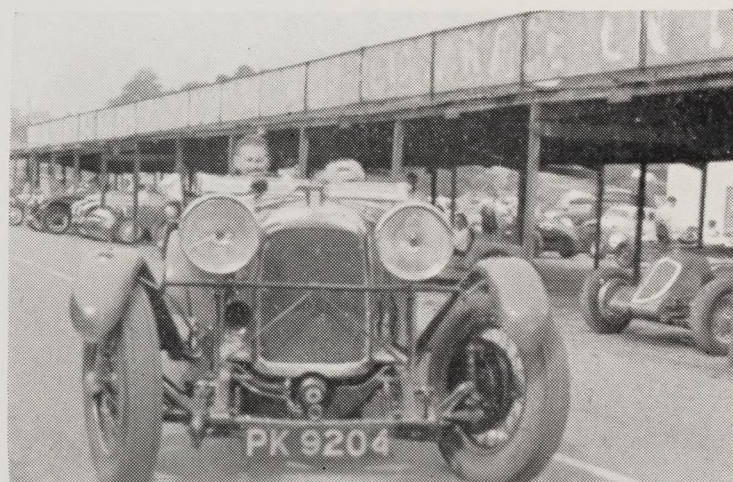
In November 1940 H. S. LINFIELD, then Sports Editor of *The Autocar*, featured 9414 in a current series entitled 'Talking of Sports Cars'. This gave me two fresh contacts. The

gained a Premier Award. She was tuned and prepared by R. R. Jackson. I drove her myself in the Bugatti Club's day trial in, I think, 1933, with Lord St. Aldwyn as navigator and she beat all the rest and we won the Premier award'. The second letter came from GEORGE ROBERTS, who was a member of the Fox & Nichol team in 1929. In telling of the Team's activities he says 'I think PK9204 was the one taken to Le Mans and it was driven by ROSE-RICHARDS and C. J. RANDELL in the Double Twelve. I am pretty certain your car if it is PK9204 did run in the 6 Hour race because the one driven by Rose-Richards and Randell in the Double Twelve also ran in the 6 Hour race driven by Rose-Richards'. The fact that Rose-Richards was the driver in both these Brooklands races as well as at Le Mans supported Roberts' memory. I now had a pretty good picture to which nothing was added until 1946 when I heard that a man named CULLING was working with L. M. Ballamy Ltd. Culling I knew to be one of the Lagonda mechanics who went to Le Mans



At Le Mans. Note 4 on chassis

first, MRS. DOROTHY L. FIELD-RICHARDS wrote 'I bought her from R. R. JACKSON in 1931 and had her for two years. When I bought her she was in a somewhat bad state after Le Mans, etc. and Mr. Jackson practically rebuilt her for me. . . I entered PK9204 for the High Speed Trial at Brooklands in, I think, 1932. I was then Mrs. Waddy and the car ran in my name and was driven by P. J. FIELD-RICHARDS and



'The Hagens' at Brooklands

with the car so I wrote to him and received a reply from MARCUS CHAMBERS, who was then General Manager of Ballamy's. He said 'I have much pleasure in sending you two photographs of your car. Mr. Culling is rather busy removing at the moment, but, should he come across any further information on your chassis we shall be glad to send it on'. Unfortunately, I heard nothing more from them.

(continued overleaf)

Finally I had a brief meeting with MR. A. FOX at the Brooklands Jubilee Memorial Day celebrations on July 6th 1957. Although he was a bit sceptical about it being the Le Mans car, Lagonda's original letter and the other references I had been given left little doubt in my mind. In addition the magneto, gearbox, differential casing and certain other accessories have a "4" painted on them and this figure is clearly shown on the chassis side member in one of Culling's photographs taken at Le Mans.

The car apparently achieved very little success in racing. At Le Mans, after much speculation in the motoring press as to whether it was to be a Works or Private entry, *The Autocar* reporting the race said 'After two hours running . . . another lap behind the leading Bentley were the Lagonda, Bouriet's Stutz and the Lea Francis . . . the lone Lagonda in charge of Rose-Richards and B. E. Lewis blew out its cylinder head gasket after 283 miles'. I wonder whether the Entrant mystery had anything to do with the fact that Lagonda Ltd., had a qualification for one car in the Rudge Witworth Cup in 1929 as the result of d'Erlanger's monumental effort in 1928? As a footnote to Le Mans I once read that during practice the Lagonda was the noisiest car on the circuit: this I can well believe if it had the same exhaust system as it had when it came into my hands! In the 6 Hour race it finished 9th in the general classification and 1st in the 2-litre class at an average of 63.98 m.p.h. The race which was run on a modified circuit at Brooklands was won by a 6½ litre Bentley at 75.88 m.p.h. Lagondas also won the Team prize and the 3-litre class prize.

It remains only for me to say that the ownership of Lagonda No. 9414 has given me an enormous amount of pleasure. For 19 years she provided my sole means of transport and during that time we covered more than 300,000 most enjoyable miles. Reliability has been excellent and the cost of repairs and replacements fantastically low. We have had our exciting moments and a lot of fun from maintaining a very fine piece of machinery.

DON HAGAN

Club List

Many members have not yet confirmed details of their cars. Should this apply to you please find your pen **Now— and give details of the following:**

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Year

Model

Type of body.....

Then find an envelope and stamp
and send this to R. P. F. Hare,
137, Broxholm Road, London,
S.E.27



Photos : JEREMY MASON

The Story of Nellie the 11.1

MY FIRST introduction to the car was when the previous owner asked for an estimate for the renovation and painting needed. He is a collector of veteran cars and this was one of his finds. It stood with two others of his collection, and I was so impressed with its simple and graceful lines compared to the others, which looked like the two ugly sisters to the Lagonda's Cinderella.

I pleaded with him to sell it to me but he declined and said he would think over the price I had quoted him for reconditioning. Some months passed before I heard from him again. He had changed his mind, to my great delight, and I became the proud owner.

I at once commenced stripping. It had previously been very badly painted so my first task was to get down to bare metal. After shifting numerous coats, I began to wonder if it had any metal at all, as the paint and filler were so thick. I am sure the car looked much smaller after I had finished. Rust was non-existent, the heavy steel plate was coated in lead and of course the joints were not welded, as on a

modern car, but copper riveted and built over with heavy filler to hide joints.

The bonnet hinge and side flap hinges were also riveted and left protruding but I thought this spoilt the finish so I flattened them and applied heavy filler to cover joints. I know all the parts on this car are genuine as when the paint was removed every article was stamped with the body number of 114.

I followed the original painting methods and applied brush coat oil filler in the orthodox way. I found the doors quite sound, but window frames needed attention.

I tried to remove the paint from the original windscreen surround but the wood was in very poor condition so I decided to have new ones made in Japanese figured oak, also the dashboard.

The trimming was also poor so it was re-covered in red hide. I had great difficulty in persuading my trimmer, who is a freelance, to carry out quilted trimming on the back squab as this is an old fashioned method of trimming and is a long and tedious job.

I applied 14 coats of filler, rubbed down and applied five coats of undercoat colour and three coats of finishing enamel, then one coat of flattening varnish and three coats of finishing varnish.

Lighting was in sound condition, except for new leads which were fitted. The radiator, lamps and fittings are all brass which are highly polished. The water jacket and carburettor were rough castings in brass which I removed and had highly polished, which gives the engine an excellent appearance. After going so far I thought a new hood would really add lustre to the old girl, so this was attended to.

After final assembly, Nellie, as she was christened, was ready to take the road.

I have tried as far as possible to keep the whole thing original, but I must confess I craftily slipped a piece of Dunlopillo into the seats to keep that happy look whilst driving.

E. G. McDONNELL.

(Editor's Note—Mac is now restoring an LG45 D.H.C. to keep the 11.1 company—look out Richard Hare!)

B.D.C. EASTBOURNE RALLY



When you have read the report turn to page twenty-three.

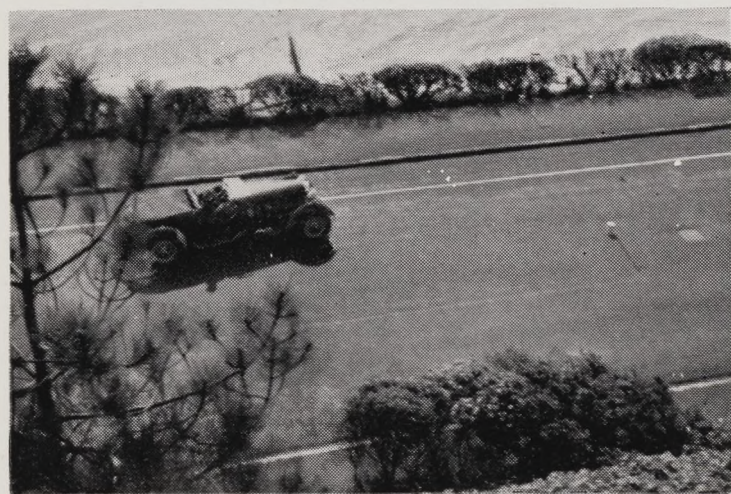
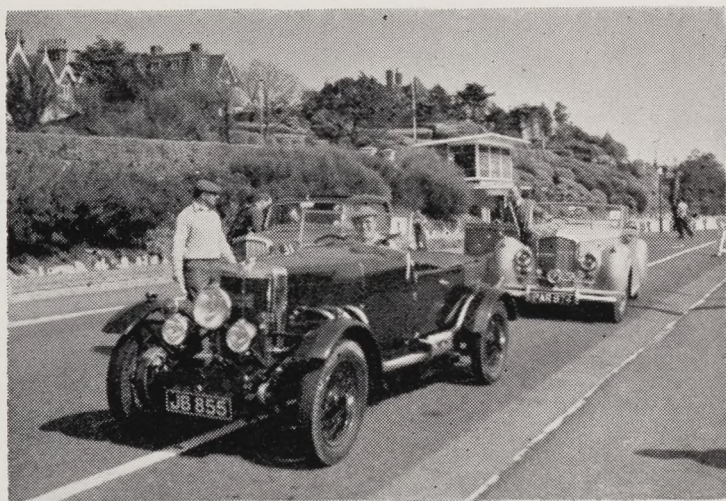
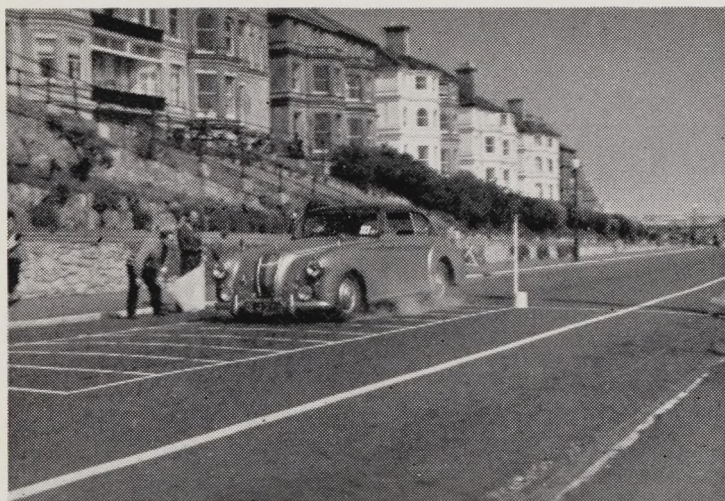
ON THE FIRST Friday in April the Bentley Drivers Club once again organised their Eastbourne Rally, following the same general lines as in previous years. This is always a very enjoyable event and it is a pity that it was not better supported—only 38 cars were entered, compared with 47 the year before. These were 22 Bentleys, five Lagondas and four Jaguars all entered by the appropriate clubs, three Wolseleys from the Metropolitan Police Driving School, two from the Essex Police and two by members of the Vintage Sports Car Club.

The event commenced at about 8 p.m. from six controls each of which was about eighty miles from Aston Rowant, where all competitors converged. The majority started from the police driving school at Hendon and went via Baldock to the next control, being allowed a comfortable time schedule which left no excuse for being late or for exceeding speed limits. Nevertheless, a speed cop trailed some of the cars for the ten miles beyond Baldock and by the time

he gave up hope of securing a conviction he had a number of other competitors following him—none of whom was foolhardy enough to pass him.

The next section involved visiting each point where a power transmission line crossed a minor road, travelling steadily eastwards in the direction of London Airport. This meant some seventy miles of motoring, but, as the crow flies, going only about twenty miles. It was not really difficult navigation, but by now the weather, which had been fine and clear, became foggy in places and this inevitably meant that many competitors lost marks. London Airport was reached at about 2 a.m. and there followed an hour's halt for refreshment.

Next followed that hardy stand-by, a photographic section to Gatwick Airport, and it was necessary to identify ten photographs and visit each place. The fog had now become general in the Thames Valley and caused some competitors considerable trouble and delay, in one case involving an



Above left : Jones' 2.9 litre

Above : Crocker's LG45 Rapide

Left : Barkers' 18/100 M.G.

argument between a Bentley and a brick wall, from which the wall seemed to come off decidedly the worse, but the Bentley was able to continue. By dawn the fog had cleared and it was pleasant to reach Gatwick in the morning sunlight.

The final section of the rally covered the last fifty miles to Eastbourne and navigators had to use their opisometers (map measurers to you) and cudgel their weary brains on some problems of rail transport involving both fast and stopping trains. At this hour the meeting of trains at successive stations did not really seem a very useful occupation, but most people seemed to manage to do so and duly foregathered at the Cavendish Hotel for a well earned breakfast.

Driving tests were held on the Promenade during the morning and followed the usual lines, acceleration and braking tests, garaging, wiggle-wobble and a fearsome manoeuvre called "The Tadpole".

The Rally was appropriately won by a

4½-litre Bentley entered by R. D. GREGORY and the next two places were taken by Lagondas, JAMES CROCKER in his LG45 Le Mans-type Rapide being second and RICHARD HARE in his LG45 Drop-head coupe third. This was an extremely fine effort on the part of both crews and even bettered last year's performance when both these cars finished in the first five places. Richard's car is not the most suitable for driving tests and coming third is therefore a particularly praiseworthy effort. It was unfortunate that DONALD OVERY managed to break a half-shaft on the final section, for he was the third member of the Lagonda team and had he finished we should have been well in the running for the team prize.

STANLEY SEDGWICK and GEOFFREY KRAMER are to be congratulated on once again living up to the Bentley Drivers Club's very high standard in the organisation of the rally.

Competition Notes

by 'Lepus'

RALLYISTS should now be able to sit back until longer hours of darkness return while the 'butterflies' come out for track meetings, but in our club they're much the same people in the same motor-cars with headlamp turned round and tyres a bit harder. It is reasonable to assume that anyone who buys a Lagonda is not merely concerned with transport from A to B. Why so few are interested to see how their own vehicle compares with others in our by no means destructive events is the more surprising.

Fixture Lists recently sent out have the revised points system for Club Trophies printed on the back. Alterations were made to allow suitable values for all the awards our competitors have won in recent years. Marks can be gained by navigators too in successful rally cars. Do please send in your claims to the Competition Secretary early in October so that he can get them checked and your trophy inscribed. People are quite unduly modest about submitting a claim. Although the Handicap Committee has to keep ears glued to the ground we don't always know about your activities in events all over the country. The Marshal's Award is an attractive, usually well-deserved prize but few claims come in. Rivalry among Northern members receives a stimulus in the fine trophy presented by Henry Coates and the Ladies have a magnificent cup from Mr. W. L. Thompson. We know of one lady member who owns three Lagondas and of others who drive hubby's very skilfully.

Can we now hope to see more of them in club events?

Fuel Economy Rally—April 18th

This rally is also reported elsewhere. We had some misgivings about fuel measurement knowing that one driver, at least, would be reluctant to fill to the brim his forty gallon tank and curly filler pipes do not make dipstick readings reliable. Marks for low fuel consumption were kept to a low value so that the rally could be, and was, won on the road section. Two clean sheets out of twenty seem to indicate that it was difficult enough, without being impossibly so, for people who do not claim to be experts. We were pleased to welcome new members Burnside in a smart 2.6, Scates in the ex-Wilby Rapier and Bloor in a 2-litre.

The route passed through some of the best parts of Sussex for those who had time to look. Unfortunately, cold weather and cloudy skies did not show off the scenic beauty. We admired the enthusiasm of Charles Green and Dr. Gordon Rider who set off in the late evening for their respective runs of about 200 miles to the Far North.

Brands Hatch Sprint—May 3rd & Southern Rally—May 23rd

A full report of the Brands Hatch Sprint appears on page 30.

Charles Green was the winner of the Southern Rally. A report will appear in the next issue.

Eight Clubs Silverstone—June 6th

We are expecting you to make a full Lagonda Handicap and to come back again for the B.D.C. meetings on the Saturday before August Bank Holiday or October 4th. If your car is not quite *au point* please come to marshal and let us know of your intention.

Northern Rally—July 4th

Brian-Dearden Briggs and Henry Coates will provide driving tests in the grand manner as before. It is well worth making a long run to this meeting. You can stay overnight for the party and trundle home in leisurely fashion the next day (Sunday).

September Social—September 13th

Mike Wilby has planned another run round the Chilterns which won't cost the earth or be too difficult for the girl friend. Other makes of motor car are admitted if your Lag. is temporarily indisposed.

November Rally—November 7th

Mike Bosworth wants at least fifty entries for our one invitation event. After all we can't have a B....y win. It will take place in Surrey, Kent and Sussex where live more Lagondas than anywhere else on earth so we're giving you plenty of warning not to book seats for "My Fair Lady" that night.

Before you forget, write for further details of these events and supplementary regulations to :—R. P. F. Hare, 137, Broxholm Road, London, S.E.27.

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There is little doubt that if only a minority of drivers decided to improve their own driving it would have a very great effect in reducing road accidents.

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HONOURABLE NORTHERN NOTES

By Hon. Northern Secretary

IT SEEMED a good idea at the time; and very easily done. Wait until he is half-way down the Pommard '52, dance round the floor until, by skilful positioning one can lean over and say 'Would you like to write up this "do" for the magazine', and move on! But now one finds oneself with the most momentous occasion in our recent history, being written by another hand. However, unless the new boy in the Editorial chair is better than the old one the whole thing will be Ancient Hist. anyway.

From an organiser's point of view the Northern Dinner (which the above is all about) was a success. Mirfield is, in theory, a good centre and the attendance of 54 people is a high percentage of Northern Membership. We shall have another.

That there is little else to report is due to the apparent close season in Lagondas, roughly corresponding to the first quarter of the tax year, which is presumably provided so that these rare beasts may breed, in a damp stagnant atmosphere, electrical troubles to amuse their owners during the coming year. It is deeply regretted that at one of our pub-meets, attended by about 18 people, there were no Lagondas present and the 'score' on this occasion was 3 tin, 2 'Noddy cars', 1 steam and 1 diesel. A Club-within-a-Club is to be formed in the North for those Lagonda owners who succumb to the idea that they can run a Noddy car while 'doing up' their 2-litre (Do-ers up of 4½'s are assumed to run 'tin'), and it is interesting to see that there are two clearly defined approaches to these cars. One is the 'all-hands-to-push-start-it, tie-it-back-with-string yes-the-canvas-on-that-tyre-should-be - good -

for-another-500-miles' attitude and the other is 'It's quite a nice little car, goes well, good roadholding. I think I shall repaint it and have the windscreen replated!' At a later date it may be possible to confirm which of these is the most effective in producing a rebuilt Lagonda!

That 2-litres are not necessarily outclassed in vintage racing, has, with the connivance of the handicappers, been demonstrated for a number of years by DICK PAGE. They may not streak home, lapping the entire field 'n' times, but for a modest outlay they can provide interesting sport with the chance of a place; and with the backing of readily obtainable and inexpensive spares. But Dick threatens to give up racing Lagondas and the mantle is dropped for someone else. One hopes that this marque will not be unrepresented at V.S.C.C. Oulton, and activity in this sphere is expected of ALAN BROWN who has a rebuilt 2-litre in the BILLY MICHAEL manner. But what one would like to see are fairly standard 2-litres being used, and a great deal of help and advice is available for anyone in the North who is considering racing this season.

Congrats and Commissers to TOMMY LONGBOTTOM on getting married and running his big-end. News is received of a former Northern member, who has succumbed to the softening of the brain that follows prolonged residence in the South, and bought a motor-scooter as tender to a 2-litre. DENIS ROBERTS at last persuades 'The Whale' to a pub-meet; arriving after 'Time' is called and proving the adage 'He who has most need is least likely to receive'. This is certainly a very odd body

for an LG45 to wear and that it does so, says much for the restraint of the chassis. One of the 'Noddys' (see above) undresses its owner, below the waist, in public, by means of a slowly revolving exposed prop. shaft. That his Lagonda only keeps him so poor he cannot pay his tailor's bill, demonstrates the more subtle approach of the superior motor. A good field of Lagondas is promised for the V.S.C.C. Buxton Rally in May and one hopes they will not be baulked by too many, newly promoted, F.W.D. Citroens.

The death of JACK ALLISON, one of the keen, behind the scenes, members was referred to in a circular and some of his friends have made the generous gesture of contributing an award to be known as the 'Jack Allison Memorial Trophy', for the most meritorious performance at the Northern Rally. This will be awarded at the organiser's discretion and will generally be for something other than straightforward winning. One believes that the best sort of people drive the better sort of cars, and gestures like this to the memory of a friend confirm one in the belief that Lagondas must be the better sort of car.

THE NORTHERN RALLY (DRIVING TESTS) July 4th 1959: Sandtoft Airfield, Near Bawtry, Yorkshire and afterwards at the Crown Hotel, Bawtry.

A circular giving details of this meeting will be sent out nearer the date to Northern members and anyone in the South who professes an interest. Copies of the regulations and entry forms will be obtainable from the Northern Secretary and the Competition Secretary but will only be sent to those who ask for them. There are a number of people who, for one unsatisfactory reason or another, have not previously entered for these sort of driving tests. Thus they deprive themselves at the highest of an opportunity to show their driving skill, and, if this is lacking, at least of a chance to dash around in an exciting manner, with all the space that an airfield affords. Anyone who is doubtful what is involved should write and ask and will be

treated sympathetically. A considerable number of Marshals are also required for this meeting and it would be appreciated if offers of help from members or friends could be made early.

Did you know that some people drive their funny old motors to pub-meets and talk about them over glasses of beer at regular intervals?

2nd Thursday: Red Lion, High Lane, near Stockport.

Last Tuesday: Half Moon, Skidby, near Hull.

B. DEARDEN-BRIGGS.

The Northern Dinner Dance

ON FRIDAY April 10th over fifty members and guests congregated from near and far to dine and dance at the Marmaville Country Club, Mirfield. Spring sprouted on every table with daffodils and flowering currant. In a floodlit and red plush curtained alcove sat the past and present Northern Secretaries with their guests. Tucked in another, though smaller, alcove outlined with midget fairy lights, the band played, while a vase of daffodils on the piano vibrated in time to the music.

A Peripatetic Persian cat (Northern—i.e. answering to 'Ch-ch' rather than 'Puss-puss')—rapidly devoured any left-overs of the tastily grilled fillet of turbot, and a very extensive wine list enabled the connoisseurs to select the most suitable wine to aid in the mastication of the Tee Bone Steak. Hardly had the coffee met the Coupe Jacques *in vivo* before the Northern Secretary was on his feet assuring us that there was to be only one speech.

Welcoming all guests, and in particular those less fortunate other makes and their drivers, he hoped they would take this chance to learn something about real motor cars. In the field of competition CHARLES GREEN had done exceptionally well in winning the Densham Trophy and the Henry Coates Trophy, being the first winner of the

latter, which is rather personal to the Northern Section. A large beetle walking across the replica of the Densham Trophy at this moment made the Secretary forget his lines and hastily reassure us that it was not the proceeds of last year's presentation which had enabled him to buy an Austro-Daimler. Turning to the future, a night navigation rally in South Yorkshire, although still *in utero* was hoped to appear soon. The cunningly devised blindfold paper driving test taken during the evening was won by MISS MONICA BOWDEN with CHARLES GREEN second.

Charles Green then showed us some very good films of Club events taken over the years in which most of the competing members appeared. Dancing was energetically resumed, and finally, as we emerged well wine and dined from the Club, a sweet feminine voice floated through the air—

'Well, I should have thought Prince Philip could have afforded a better car than *that*!'

(DR.) J. G. RIDER.

THE CROW'S FEET RALLY

THIS was a difficult event. The trouble really began as soon as the regs. arrived because no one seemed to know the significance of the name. Aren't crows feet those funny little lines that navigators get round the corners of their eyes when they have been staring at a map for a long while? A spare navigator was part of the full navigational equipment advised and very necessary too.

The event started from the Metropolitan Police Sports Club H.Q. at Thames Ditton and was in fact organised by them and by member R. C. MONTAGU in particular. BRIAN JOHNSTON of the B.B.C. sent us on our way and navigators soon began to wish that they had paid more attention during geometry lessons at school. However, we'd been warned that it wouldn't be easy and it wasn't. Of the 56 starters, 28 retired for other than mechanical reasons and the main concern of late finishers was whether the licence extension for the Bar would be long enough. Fortunately it was so everyone was happy in the end, especially as the winner was STANLEY SEDGWICK who at least has the right *sort* of car even if not quite the right make.



MAURICE LEO tells us that when compulsory inspections of ten-year-old vehicles start his garage will be an authorised testing station and he will be pleased to test all types of vintage and p.v.t. cars.

Not content with the above free advertisement he also points out for those gearless 2-litre owners who may not know, that the Z type second speed gears referred to on p.15 are second speed gears for 2-litre, 3-litre and 3½-litre gearboxes.

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LAGONDA PAST AND PRESENT

The relation of the latest 2.6 litre Cars with the productions of the past fifty years

(Reprinted by kind permission of The Motor, March 1st, 1950.)

LAGONDA will this year celebrate the 50th anniversary of the name as applied to a petrol-engined vehicle. The business was founded by Mr. Wilbur Gunn, an American, who used what is thought to be an Indian name for a motor cycle which appeared in 1900. During the next eight years this, and also single and twin-cylinder three wheelers, were built on the Staines site which was occupied by the Company up to September 1947. In 1908 the Company built its first four-wheeled vehicle and although this rapidly grew up into a 20 h.p. four-cylinder with an alternative 30 h.p. six-cylinder model these were replaced in 1913 by an 1,100 c.c. car designed for family motoring and thus in distinct contrast to the sporting cycle-car types which were then usual with engines of this size.

After the 1914-18 war, and at the instigation of W. H. Oates, the Company began to have its first experience of high-speed motoring. The engine, which had overhead inlet valves, was developed into a 1.4-litre model and fitted with a single seater body. This had an active life at Brooklands with a lap speed in the environ of 85 m.p.h.

Founding a Tradition

The standard model continued to be the only one produced up to 1925, but in 1926 it was replaced by an entirely new design which really laid the foundations of the subsequent Lagonda tradition. This car had a four-cylinder engine 72×120 mm. giving two litres capacity and 90 deg. o.h.v. operated

from two overhead camshafts. Chassis design was also entirely new and compared with previous models one might almost say that the Company had passed through a chrysalis stage and had now emerged in an entirely new field of activity. This 2-litre with a low frame was extensively used in sports car racing and in events like the Monte-Carlo Rally, and although it does not figure prominently in the general classifications a number of very creditable performances were put up. The car was, however, somewhat heavy in relation to its engine size and this led the directors to take the bold decision to offer a standard supercharged model which was shown at Olympia in 1930. This car had approximately 100 b.h.p. under the bonnet and would exceed 90 m.p.h. with an open touring body. It was, however, more remarkable for the extreme flexibility of the engine and this effort to combine smooth running with speed has been characteristic of all subsequent Lagonda productions.

A variety of technical means have been adopted to satisfy the requirements of the exacting owner and as an alternative to the supercharged four-cylinder engine running on a moderate compression ratio a six-cylinder 3-litre car was introduced in 1927, this having a straight-forward push rod engine.

Competition Success

In 1930 a six-cylinder 2-litre was produced and then in 1932 another pioneer step

was taken by marketing the 3-litre car fitted with the Maybach six-speed gear box in which the manifold depression was used to engage a gear pre-selected by a lever above the steering column. From 1934 onwards, however, increasing attention was given to the use of a large capacity engine as a means of satisfying the performance requisites, a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre push rod type being introduced in that year and being successful in winning the Le Mans race in 1935, the last time that a British-built car has achieved this signal honour.

Subsequent to this success (but in the same year) the Company's finances were reconstructed by Mr. A. P. Good and the management passed into the hands of the late Richard Watney; Mr. W. O. Bentley took the responsibility of the technical direction of the Company. Mr. Bentley immediately turned to the task of increasing the performance and roadworthiness of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre and all other types were dropped. In 1937 a new Bentley design emerged with a redesigned frame, embracing independent front suspension, torsion bar springs and choice either of a developed version of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre six-cylinder engine or an entirely new V.12 power unit of the same capacity having one overhead camshaft per bank.

It was, again, the desire to combine performance with the utmost in smooth running and silence that led to the adoption of the short-stroke, low-piston-speed, multi-cylinder, engine. Road tests showed that the new car would exceed 100 m.p.h. with full-size saloon body work on the road, over 100 miles being covered in one test at Brooklands in one hour, including a stop for a wheel change. Two specially prepared cars were run at Le Mans in 1939 and although this was a preliminary canter they finished third and fourth, although never exceeding a strict and conservative limit of engine r.p.m. Despite this they averaged 83.5 m.p.h. and 83.3 m.p.h. respectively and the slower of the pair was therefore over 1 m.p.h. faster than the winning car of 1949.

A New Approach

Despite these very encouraging results there was a feeling that the overall economic tide was running with rising strength against the large car as such and also that the technical and commercial requirements of a refined high performance car could be met with less power and less capacity by simultaneously reducing weight and improving roadworthiness. The result in metal of this line of thought was disclosed to the public in September 1945 and took the form of a 2.6-litre engine with double overhead camshaft having 46 per cent. the piston area of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre model but by reason of superior b.m.e.p. giving 60 per cent. of the maximum power at approximately the same r.p.m. So far as possible this lower gross power was offset by reduced weight (to the tune of some 25 per cent.) and by lower drag achieved by smoother lines, although no effort was made to produce a body of professionally aerodynamic form. Apart, however, from the statistical aspect of performance a great effort was made to secure the best possible relation of average speed to maximum, acceleration, and hill climbing, by providing independent suspension to all four wheels from which very low unsprung weight, soft suspension and abnormal traction for the rear wheels were derived.

Plans were for the production of this car at Staines on a substantial scale but a number of financial and physical impedimenta arose and the project was on the verge of being abandoned when Mr. David Brown, decided that Lagonda should be added to Aston Martin, which was already a subsidiary of David Brown Tractors Ltd. As is generally well known Mr. David Brown is also a Director and large shareholder in the world-famous gear cutting Company of David Brown & Sons (Huddersfield) Ltd., and apart from these industrial interests he has always been a most enthusiastic motorist with considerable experience of competition work. For some time he owned and raced one of the 1922 T.T. 3-litre Vauxhalls with engine designed by Ricardo, and his

spare time has been divided between high-speed motoring, flying and foxhounds.

Under the terms of the agreement by which he acquired Lagonda the name, drawings and stock of parts alone came into his possession, and it was necessary to build a new organisation to manufacture from the ground floor up, including acquiring a new works, as the old Staines plant had been taken over for the production of oil engines.

Moreover, although in some respects arrangements for production of the 2½-litre car were well forward, only three had been built at the time of sale and a very considerable amount of engineering and development work remained to be done upon them. In these circumstances a rapid extension into production would clearly have been disastrous but in early 1948 two cars put in some concentrated high-speed development work on the Continent, and when the lessons learnt had been digested, production on a very small scale was initiated. Engines and, of course, gear boxes are constructed near Huddersfield, frames and bodies at Feltham, in a plant The organisation has been progressively strengthened and the Road Test carried out by *The Motor* on September 14th, showed that the car would reach 90 m.p.h. and had a combination of comfort and stability which may be truly termed unique. As the chassis has not been described during the past 18 months, a brief description of its leading features may not be supererogatory at this time.

The power unit, having six cylinders with a bore and stroke of 78 × 90 mm. and capacity of 2.6-litres, is one of the few in the world which produces well over 100 b.h.p. This fine performance is largely derived from the careful porting of the cylinder head which has valves inclined at 60 deg. and the inlet and exhaust systems on opposite sides of the head. The exhaust-valve guide is in direct contact with the water and each line of valves is operated by its own overhead camshaft through the medium of inverted steel cups which shroud the double valve springs. This gives very low valve gear stresses

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at up to 5,500 r.p.m. and smooth running is ensured over the whole speed range by a carefully designed crankshaft (with substantial overlap between the crankpin and the journals) which runs in an immensely stiff cast iron crankcase of true box formation. That is to say the four main bearings are firstly assembled on the shaft and then inserted endwise into the casing.

Novel Features

By using detachable wet liners completely even cooling of the cylinder bores is obtained, coupled with a very hard wearing material, whilst the light-alloy pistons are pressings made by the Specialloid Co. Some years of experience and many tens of thousands of miles with this design have shown that wear is almost negligible and that really astonishing distances can be run without change of pre-set valve clearances. In the past few months particular attention has been given to im-

proving the low speed torque and top gear performance and the models now leaving the works represent a considerable advance in this respect over their predecessors.

The drive is taken through a D.B. synchromesh four-speed gear box with the lever mounted on the steering column to an open propeller shaft which connects with a bevel box fixed to the frame. This contains hypoid gears and permits a completely flat floor at approximately hub level. The drive to each rear wheel is through an open shaft with two universal joints and the wheels themselves are mounted upon links which give a geometry representing a compromise between swing axle and parallelism.

Springing is by means of two torsion bars at the back, the front wheels being mounted on wishbones and coil springs. Steering is by rack and pinion and all the mechanical elements of the car are mounted in a frame of unique design. This has no side members in the accepted sense but consists of two beams each $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. deep arranged as a pure cruciform, although there are of course attachments for the fuel tank etc., also two side tubes which act primarily as body mountings. The braking system, also, is unique on British cars in having the rear drums mounted adjacent to the bevel box by which means the unsprung weight is reduced by one-third.

It is scarcely surprising that so comparatively unorthodox a car has taken some time to develop and put into production, but having first overcome the various small engineering problems which are normal to all new types and secondly established continuous production in the new works, it became possible to direct attention to the refinement of the body and equipment.

The cars offered at the new reduced prices are therefore noted for a number of improvements, the most important of which is a large capacity ventilating unit which feeds air from the outer world into the car and in winter raises it to the temperature required by the occupants. A special air stream can

also be imposed upon the windscreen for the purpose of de-misting. Additionally, the front passengers are now provided with armrests mounted on the doors and the rear passengers have an armrest formed over the wheel arch on each side of the rear seat in addition to a centre armrest of the folding type. Ashtrays are situated in each front door and at the back of each front seat for the benefit of the rear passengers. It may also be observed that an extensively wide choice of colour schemes and upholstery are now available and it is a natural virtue of small quantity production that individual owner's wishes in this respect may normally be satisfied fully.

Tradition Maintained

A visit to the works discloses the great care with which the whole car is constructed. Engines and gear boxes are received from Meltham in Yorkshire, where they are made in an exceedingly modern plant, and it is worth noting that the production models show a performance in every respect superior to the hand-made and assembled prototype.

The assembly of the car is carried out by skilled men, some of whom have been with the Staines organisation for very many years—a fact that also applies to the body engineer and many of his assistants. The bodies themselves are rare these days in being of the true coachbuilt type and it is a tribute both to the design of chassis and the constructional methods employed that the Road Test car is one of the few which have been taken to the Continent by *The Motor* and have returned entirely without deterioration in the structure.

Some idea of the methods used to ensure highest standards of workmanship, in small scale production, and it is gratifying to be able to put on record that the resources of a very large and financially healthy organisation are being used to further the commercial development of a specialist car which worthily upholds the reputation of British design and craftsmanship at its best.

THE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

THIS INSTITUTE has the right idea on driving ability and should receive the support of members, who might like to know how that body has fared since the last report on it appeared in the Magazine (Christmas 1956).

The membership of the Institute is growing fast and now stands at over 9,000. Up to 31st January, 1959 14,880 tests had been conducted with 8,903 passes. In addition about 600 holders of a Class I Police Driving Certificate have been admitted to membership without the formality of a Test.

Test centres are now situated all over the country and there is therefore no excuse why anybody should not try their skill. Do not just talk about what a good driver you are but prove it by taking and passing the test. The list of test centres is:—

Birmingham	Manchester	Newcastle
Bournemouth	Leeds	Bristol
Cardiff	Liverpool	Nottingham
Doncaster	Edinburgh	Oxford
Coventry	Plymouth	Exeter
Southampton	Glasgow	Sheffield
	Tunbridge Wells	

and of course London. The fee is £3 3s. 0d. and all applications should be sent to London, the address being:—

The Institute of Advanced Motorists, 21, Harrington Road, London, S.W.7. (Phone: Kensington 6637/8).

The Institute still hope to organise a Skid Pan for the use of Members although these plans to date have been thwarted by the planning authorities and also lack of finance. The Institute was hit by the petrol rationing period at the time of the Suez crisis when of course testing ceased. As will be seen from the membership figures given above, this set back has been largely overcome.

One point of driving technique has received considerable publicity in the press and that is the positioning of the hands on

the steering wheel. The Council's views on this and other such matters are as follows:—

'So many criticisms have been levelled at the Institute that its Examiners fail candidates whose hands pass the 12 o'clock position when steering, and so forth, that the Council feels the time has come for this matter to be settled once and for all. Every test report is carefully checked and no candidate has ever been failed for one technical fault, or even more than one if danger was not involved.

'The Institute considers it is time for agreement on a system of driving in the interests of road safety generally. Time spent on this would be much more valuable than effort wasted in criticism and pin-pricking. It is the duty of everyone to play a part in reducing casualties resulting from unnecessary road accidents. No one person or body has a monopoly on this and the first step must be an effort to raise the standard of behaviour by all road-users.

'Roadcraft and trackcraft are two entirely different subjects, not to be mixed. It is often said that this or that racing driver adopts a particular technique: all of them, however, would agree that the speed and method of cornering on a race track could not possibly be used on busy highways. It should also be remembered that racing drivers are very highly skilled and able to carry out a manoeuvre in comparative safety which in the hands of a novice would be menacing.

'It has been said that the Institute frowns on "heeling and toeing". This is nonsense. We have not any objection to this technique when expertly used. But drivers whose behaviour under test is not consistent with safety, who drive too close to a preceding vehicle, overtake dangerously or negotiate crossroads at a fast speed certainly are failed'.

If you have not already done so, take the Institute's test now and having passed it (we hope), keep your standard of driving up to that required by the Institute. This is not just a question of good driving, but good sense.
J.W.T.C.

THE FUEL ECONOMY RALLY

SATURDAY, APRIL 18th, 1959

HAVING BEEN in the club since 2-litre Register days and having never written anything for the magazine, I thought I had got away with it like most of the other members. However, having agreed to give a hand as a marshal I got cornered into acting as reporter. I understand that there are only two ways to avoid this happening again: one is to write about the wrong subject, the other is to land the club in a libel action by being rude about the entrants—I will try both methods.

However, I would first like to give some details of the November Handicap to be held on Saturday 8th November. For those who have not previously competed let me explain that it consists of a start at 1.30 p.m. with a short road section of 20 miles. This is followed by driving tests on good concrete roads, after which competitors do two night navigation sections with a total mileage of approx. 100 miles. The finish is at 9 p.m. (the same Saturday Night unless you get lost!) and a hot supper and drinks round off the evening.

The start this year will be at the Croydon Airport Hotel on the Brighton Road, the finish will be at Blindley Heath. The driving tests are going to be specially designed for large cars—garages will be at least 50%

wider than the car. (Hurrah! Ed.) The navigation will be a little more difficult than the event on which I am supposed to be reporting. We want 40 Lagonda entrants and there is no reason why everyone who took part in the Fuel Economy Rally should not also enter in November.

There were 22 entrants for the Fuel Economy event of which four failed to get under starter's orders. If you allow for eight further members who were marshalling this leaves about 729 members who were unable to take part—I wonder why? Scrutineering provided nothing very horrifying except a Ford Anglia and a 2-litre with bent track rods and very worn front tyres. Cause and Effect.

The first section involved locating and visiting eleven post offices in a given area of the map. Only CROUCHER (2-litre) decided to make the section difficult and visit some offices in a different area involving far greater mileage. DUCKETT (Ford) was a late starter but arrived with the leaders at the end of the section. This meant saving 15 minutes on a 30 mile section. Many people lost marks for failing to get the name of the post office/village store: reading and writing does not appear to be one of the attributes of Lagonda owners.

The second section covered an official

mileage of 54 miles for which two hours were allowed and ten map reference points had to be visited. The route consisted of a fair amount of main road and there should have been little difficulty in keeping to time. DONALD OVERY and his Scarlet Woman (not you Betty) were heard to say that it all depended upon how much the navigators argued about the map references. This section ended at BOB FREEMAN-WRIGHT'S house where it was hoped that one or two competitors would get torn to pieces by the savage Great Danes. However the dogs were locked up and competitors were not delayed in moving on to the third short final section.

This last section was probably the most difficult, as it involved covering a short twisty narrow route of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles including two secret checks in less than 18 minutes. This meant rapid motoring and several penalties were incurred.

After checking the petrol consumed at the finishing point, entrants were able to proceed to the bar and refuel with further alcohol. The official total mileage was 92 miles for which SCATES (Rapier) required a mere $2\frac{1}{2}$ gallons, most of the 2-litres used about $2\frac{3}{4}$ gallons and WHITELEGGE ($4\frac{1}{2}$ Bentley) swallowed $5\frac{3}{4}$ gallons—this must prove something about lorries etc. (This is the libel bit. See first paragraph. Ed.)

The results appeared before closing time and showed that there were two clean sheets, WILBY ($4\frac{1}{2}$ Lagonda) and DUCKETT (Ford). Since these cars were in separate classes the bonus points for petrol economy had little effect. CHARLES GREEN (2-litre), all the way from Stoke-on-Trent, got home second having incurred penalties of 130 and JOHN SCATES (Rapier) was third with 150 penalty marks.

A private battle had been going on between TONY LOCH ($4\frac{1}{2}$ Lagonda) and ADRIAN WHITELEGGE ($4\frac{1}{2}$ Lorry). The Army failed on navigation but gained on petrol bonus points with the result that the Lagonda ended up 26 points and the Bentley 32 points.

Our more sporting members had a very

good day out. BURNSIDE (2.6 Lagonda) got a fine pheasant and GREEN (2 litre) got a duck. A fine day's gentle motoring was enjoyed by all and our thanks are due to the organiser RICHARD HARE.

See you at the November Handicap.

Final Results:—

Class I (Lagondas)	Penalties	Bonus	Total
		Marks	
1st M. Wilby $4\frac{1}{2}$ -litre	Nil	—360	—360
2nd C. Green 2-litre	130	—430	—300
3rd J. Scates Rapier	150	—402	—252
Class II (wrong makes)			
1st Duckett Ford	Nil	—292	—292

J. M. B.

The Green Dragon

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WAKE UP EVERYBODY

YOU WILL SEE from the report that once again the B.D.C. Eastbourne Rally was an amusing and entirely suitable event for our cars, big or small. Despite this, we fielded five entries only. What on earth is the matter with everybody! One of the most depressing things in the life of a club such as ours is *apathy*. I realise that some of us never wish to compete for varied and undoubtedly good reasons. For others it is geographically impossible or impracticable to turn out for this event. But what about the rest? I am satisfied there are many people who *would* have taken part in this rally if grasped firmly by the hand by some already overworked club official and led to the starting point. But for heaven's sake, why should this be necessary? Do please buck up.

The question of expense of this rally is often discussed and the following figures may be of interest. The road section was 285 miles, so call it 400 miles door to door. The event is one which lends itself to two navigators and this helps spread the financial load. The sharing of expense in my car is

that the driver pays the entry fee and the other expenses are split. I have given consumptions which are likely to be met with on rally work to the nearest gallon and used a price of 5s. per gallon. I have assumed that two copies of the two 1 in. maps used were purchased (paper unfolded edition—3s. 6d. each, 14s. in all).

Table of Costs

	4½s, 3½s, and 3s.	16/80s	2s, Rapier
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Maps	14 0	14 0	14 0
Breakfast (3)	1 1 0	1 1 0	1 1 0
Lunch (3)	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Petrol	6 5 0	5 0 0	4 5 0
	9 10 0	8 5 0	7 10 0
Cost per Navigator	3 3 4	2 15 0	2 10 0
Cost per Driver	3 3 4	2 15 0	2 10 0
add Entry Fee	2 12 6	2 12 6	2 12 6
Total Cost per Driver	5 15 10	5 7 6	5 2 6

I consider the above figures to be genuine and they cover everything, even beer! Drivers, if they adopt my method for expenses, may feel that £2 12 6 is rather steep for an entry fee. However the B.D.C. Eastbourne is run on professional lines, printed road books and route cards and practically every control marshalled.

Now what about it? I fear this event will not take place again unless better support can be guaranteed. There is only *one* Eastbourne Rally and it would be a great pity to kill it, not because members do not want to enter for it, but because they will not make the effort unless wet-nursed.

Wake up, everybody.

JAMES CROCKER.

PUTTING AN EDGE ON THE RAPIER

PART I

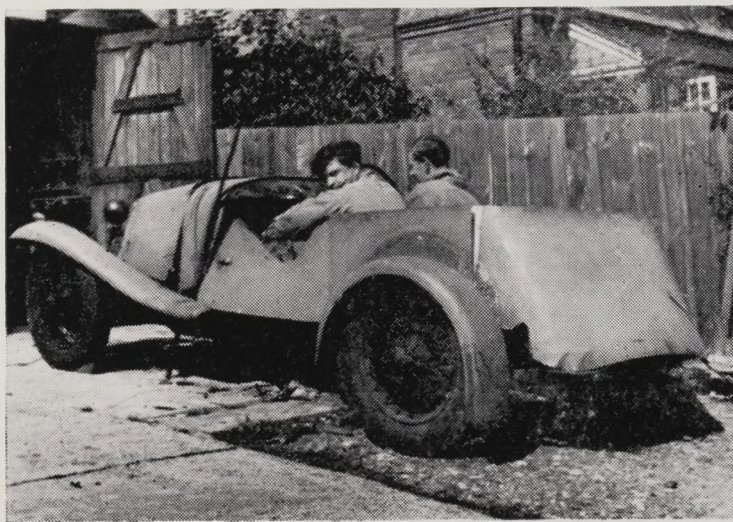
WHEN my friend Ray and I had run my 16/80 Lag. for a number of years in Rallies and Club races the inevitable happened. We wanted a quicker car. That was when our troubles started.

We had long been discussing the sort of car we wanted and came to the conclusion that unfortunately there was no standard Lagonda that fulfilled our requirements. A Lotus or an M.G. seemed more suitable

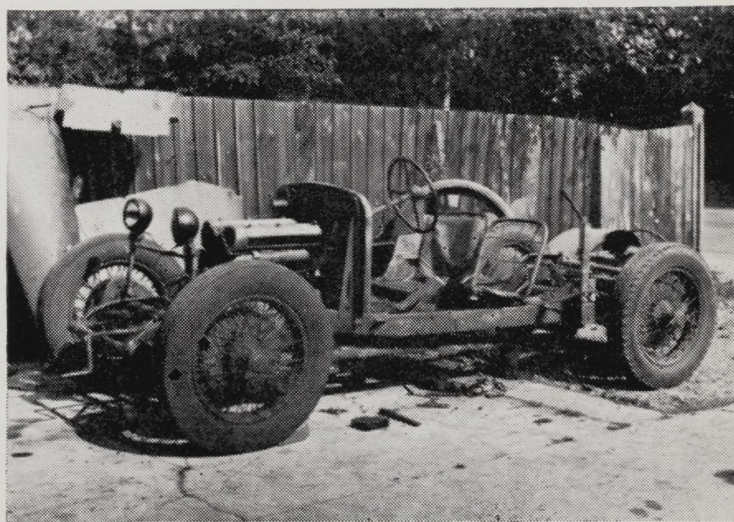
but they are expensive pieces of machinery and we perhaps rather misguidedly decided to remain faithful to the Marque Lagonda!

Having once decided this we 'examined' the various models with a view to modification and decided that a Rapier seemed most suitable and thus it was that whilst reading an *Exchange and Mart* borrowed from a friend our fate was sealed.

In the Used Car section under the sub-



The car on arrival at my home



Two blows later

heading 'Lagonda' only one advert appeared. It read:—'1935 Lagonda Rapier. Mechanically very good. Temporary body. £80', with instructions to apply to a North East London address. I was all for dashing over immediately but Ray being much wiser than I in these matters insisted that we should leave everything for a while. So it was that nearly a month later we arranged to go and see this car. The body certainly was temporary but just about held together. The engine and chassis on the other hand appeared to be in quite good condition and in fact the owner assured us that he had had a considerable sum of money recently spent on the engine, as he was going to convert it into a Special, but his wife had disapproved and made him buy a Lancia instead. The car was neither taxed nor insured and so we arranged to borrow a large car park adjoining a nearby Dog Track. The car went very well indeed and to see and hear Ray tearing around on the loose cinder surface was most awe-inspiring. As a result of our delay in going to see the car we were able to purchase it at a figure considerably lower than that first asked. It was not possible to drive it home so we arranged to have it towed home the next day. Three o'clock the next day, Sunday, the local inhabitants were horrified to see the Thing being towed behind a vast 'Al Capone' type Buick full of odd characters in greasy overalls and polo neck sweaters. The Rapier was left in our runway and we were not sorry to see the Buick disappear in a cloud of oil smoke. Turning back to look at the Rapier we realised for the first time quite what a job we had undertaken.

As the body was very temporary, we decided to rip it off straight away and get down to the chassis. In starting to take the doors off I leant on top of the gearbox and found it nearly red hot—the propshaft had not been disconnected during the twenty mile tow. Somewhat enraged by this, we went at the body with hammer, cold chisel, packing case opener and hacksaw. In less than two hours we had the chassis laid bare and a neat (fairly) pile of 22 and 26 gauge duralumin in my father's garage. That, as

my father was quick to realise, was the thin end of the wedge and in only a very few weeks he had to keep his new car outside, the other side of the double garage being occupied by my 16/80—well, my tonneau cover was new.

On examining the chassis, we were quite surprised to find that it bore a marked resemblance to the illustrations of it we had seen in various publications, this being contrary to our previous experiences with Lagondas and drawings of Lagondas.

Now started the more interesting side of the proceedings. We had decided what was necessary to make our Special 'suitable' for us and we now had to decide the best way of achieving this.

The aims were that it should have reasonable overall size with as small a frontal area as possible for track work and yet be comfortable on an all night rally, with good all weather equipment. A navigator cannot work with a wet and flapping map and small size is a tremendous advantage in the driving test type of event. The maximum speed should not be very high but good acceleration was the aim. It was thought that with the gearing we had and oversize rear tyres a maximum of about 90 m.p.h. should be obtainable and our eventual target was to be 0-80 m.p.h. in 20 sec. With little chance of getting the weight below 14½ cwt. this meant a blown engine and oversize rear tyres would give better adhesion and a bit smoother ride. We had decided to fit an all enveloping body and this would mean lowering the chassis which in turn would necessitate fitting hydraulic brakes. The reason for that I will explain later. Weight saving, all through the conversion, would be pursued with great determination, not forgetting the problem of unsprung weight. Lastly, and certainly not least, the car was not to look a 'heap' but should have a reasonable standard of finish throughout.

How we set about this, and the snags we came across will be set out in the next issue of the *Lagonda Magazine*.

RICHARD PAINES

CASTOR FOR 4½-LITRE LAGONDAS

“Nihil est quod non expugnet pertinax opera”—Seneca.

FIRST let it be said that this has nothing to do with the stuff you put on your morning grapefruit nor with the horrid, viscous fluid administered to us as small boys after eating something more than usually indigestible and later by us as a *sine qua non* for “sports” engines.

During the summer I wrote about steering troubles with my LG45, for which I had found no cure. More recently an acquaintance with the other make of 4½ told me that he once owned a 4½ Lagonda with steering so heavy that it induced coronary thrombosis. The prospect of weeks of convalescence or worse just through driving a Lagonda so frightened me that I rushed out to the garage to have another look. The only thing I hadn't checked—because I didn't know how to—was the castor angle. Experts said they had, but now fitters are chiefly concerned with neatly packaged factory replacement units, it might be questioned.

Beam axles may have the designed castor angle forged into them or it may be applied by wedges. I knew it should be 1 degree 15 minutes and some wedges in the garage with just this amount of taper bore Lagonda part numbers, so it seemed reasonable to assume that swivel pin axes are normal to the plane of the spring mounting platform on the axle. Then I looked out a precision block level—it's like the thing carpenters use, but has a cast-iron body about nine inches long, machined true and parallel top and bottom and is extremely sensitive. No doubt an ordinary wooden pattern would serve well enough if the top face were quite flat and parallel to bottom surface.

The level was set on a flat piece of steel ground stock on wooden blocks raising it so

that, with its top surface just touching the back of the spring mounting platform, the bubble was dead central. Then the front of the level was lifted to line up with platform by sliding a suitable steel rod along underneath (in this case a $\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter drill shank). Calculation from the diameter of this rod and its distance from the end of the level gave the inclination of my axle. (“Lepus” is a mathematician as well as a classical scholar. Ed.) Horror of horrors, it appeared to be 5 degrees 16 minutes! Repeating measurements on the offside produced the same result to within 2 minutes. But we mustn't forget the floor must we?

The garage floor is fairly flat, sloping a little towards the doors so that coolant which used to leak from the water pump before we had a carbon seal put in it ran into the garden and didn't make the lawn-mower go rusty. Using as a straightedge a long piece of 2 in. drawn steel tubing (reserve stock for exhaust pipes) and raising one end of the level again I found the inclination of the floor almost identical at both sides—1 degree 23 minutes. So now the castor was 3 degrees 53 minutes.

So far nothing at all had been dismantled. I had a pair of wedges made up on a surface grinder with .184 in. taper in their 4 in. length and about $\frac{1}{16}$ in. thick at the thin end. (These wedges should be 4 in. long, 2 in. wide with a $\frac{5}{8}$ in. dia. hole exactly in the centre for the spring centre bolt.) After slackening the U bolts (with the chassis supported) some persuasion was needed to part axle from spring. The spring centre bolt has quite a deep head which, as a dowel, locates the axle and gets rather tightly jammed in the process. Wedges slip over the bolt, thick end to the rear, if you have excessive castor as I did.

I suppose the measurements took an hour and an evening was spent dropping and refitting the front axle with wedges. The steering is much lighter now and still has enough self-centring action. Mike says it is more lively than other 4½'s and I feel confident it is as the makers intended.

L. PUS.

V.S.C.C. POMEROY TROPHY

HOW NICE to be able to say that a Lagonda has at last won this important event.

As most of you know it consists of a series of very long special tests, a one hour 'blind' (against a set number of laps) at Silverstone and a navigational section on the road. Having done all this, a tortuous formula is applied which is supposed to level up the performance of its many diverse motor cars and if you have still done well at the end of all this you are jolly lucky.

This year we were represented by BILL MICHAEL and the LG45R Team car, MIKE WILBY acting as assistant, and JAMES WOOLLARD and his high Chassis 2-litre with ALAN MACKIE in attendance. DON ROBERTS for once wasn't there as both 2-litre and driver were not 100 per cent. fit but KEN WALKER as usual was looking every inch a proper Steward.

The 2-litre wasn't really able to make much headway even with its formula but as always James tried very hard and he had the satisfaction of completing his minimum number of laps in the hour.

Alan said it wasn't worth giving him any pit signals as he would be flat out anyway whereas in Bill's pit his staff spent their entire

time trying to slow him down as all were mindful that this was the beginning of the season. However, having lapped the Alpha Romeo Giulietta Sprint, he clearly had had his money's worth and stopped wearing the car out.

As he had previously done a rousing standing $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in 16.82 seconds followed by a flying one at 10.2, both being the fastest of the whole entry, he could well feel that the car had tried very hard.

One look at the weather the next morning took the smiles off the faces as it was raining steadily. As the team car had no windscreen wipers, no speedometer or mileage recorder, no hood and no room for the navigator it was clearly going to be a very amusing morning. The LG45R mumbled off into the mist and after its allotted interval of time arrived back again its crew happy that they hadn't lost any time and had been able to do all the special tests correctly.

And so in due course TIM CARSON announced that Bill Michael had won the Pomeroy Trophy by three marks from SAM CLUTTON'S 1929 3-litre Bugatti, so his formula works after all!

A very good effort on Bill's part and full marks to James for trying with the 2-litre; if not in the money, at least home.

Lamorissey and Lagonda

FRENCH FILM maker Albert (the Red Balloon) Lamorissey spotted the 1934 Lagonda in the streets of Paris.

'I'll buy it', he said to the driver, Sub-Lieut. Nicholas Gambier, a descendant of Admiral Lord Gambier. 'It's just right for my new film, The Voyage of the Balloon.'

Nicholas, however, explained that the car belonged to his father, Captain Robert Gambier, R.N.(Retd.). That, he thought, was the end of the matter . . . until a few days ago.

Albert arrived at the Gambier home in Hampshire, with a plea to borrow the car. This time he was successful.

'So my wife and I are driving it to France next week,' the captain told me yesterday. 'I expect M. Lamorissey will want it for about four months.'

'Don't know why he was so keen on our particular Lagonda. But at least we get a couple of days in Paris out of it.'

Reprinted from Tanfield's Diary in the Daily Mail by kind permission.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following letter has been received by the Liaison Officer from the Dunlop Rubber Co. Ltd.

7th April, 1959.

Dear Mr. Wilby,

In spite of attempts to hold down costs we have had to make some adjustments to the prices of tyres in our vintage and veteran range. A copy of the new price list is attached. I should be glad to supply more copies if you want them.

You may like to know that Mr. M. W. Boller, who has been for some time our authority here on tyres and wheels for vintage and veteran cars, and who is well known to many enthusiasts, is leaving to become Commercial Manager of our Rim & Wheel Company at Coventry. His place as Manager, Conversion Equipment Department, Fort Dunlop, is being taken over by Mr. C. F. Way. I know that Mr. Way will be just as happy as Mr. Boller was to help with tyre and wheel problems.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. SINCLAIR.

	Cover			Tube		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
5.00/5.25-21	13	0	0	1	1	6
5.25/5.50-18	7	17	6	1	0	0
19	8	17	6	1	0	0
20	13	0	0	1	1	6
6.00-21	17	0	0	1	8	0
6.00/6.50-18	12	10	0	1	6	6
19 Fort	16	5	0	1	6	6
20	18	0	0	1	8	0

FOR SALE

2-LITRE S.M. 1930 High Chassis, swept wing tourer, all metal, believed prototype M.45 coachwork. A fine example, quite original, mechanically sound, etc. £165. J. Crabb, "Royal Oak", Herston, Swanage, Dorset.

1933 LAGONDA 16/80, Grey Drophead. Complete mechanical overhaul with Laystall engine restoration. New radiator block. In daily use. 25 m.p.g. Spares from additional engine, gearbox, differential. Tyres excellent. £250. Kershaw, School of Tropical Medicine, Liverpool, 3.

1930 2-litre L/C Sports. Rebuilt 57/58. Refabricated; re-upholstered; new tonneau cover; new batteries; rewired. Some work needed on engine but generally in excellent order. £175 o.n.o. M. J. R. May. "Warden", Whiteleaf, Nr. Princes Risborough Bucks.

LAGONDA 1935 Pillarless Saloon, breaking up, all spares. Write Galla-More 53 Church Road, Hove, Sussex.

1939 LG 6 DROPHEAD. Excellent mechanical and good general condition; first rebore 10,000 miles ago. No known defects; hood and tyres as new. Car maintained and vouched for by Ben Walker, who suggests it is worth £500, but offers are invited. Reason for sale—need small car and cannot keep two. Dr. J. D. Irving, 5 Macartney House, Chesterfield Walk, Greenwich, S.E.10. Tel.: GRE 4033.

"The Motor" Reference Year Book 1959

THIS is a new publication by Temple Press (Bowling Green Lane, E.C.1.) and for its size is without a doubt the most complete reference book ever published.

Its 290 pages cover every aspect of motoring, both sporting and otherwise and in a short review it is impossible to do more than pick out the highlights. No matter what sort of question you ask, from how fast did Rigolly drive his Gobron-Brillie in 1904, to what are the gear ratios of a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud you will find the answer quickly in "The Motor" Reference Year Book.

Full specification of all British cars and all Foreign cars on the English market are given as are the performance figures of some 49 different cars and models. Did you know a Lotus 7 isn't as fast 0-50 m.p.h. as a 4½? There are useful sections on foreign touring and miscellaneous information.

The 1958 racing season is reviewed and all race results are given. In the case of "Classic" races a brief summary of what happened is also included. There are drivers' records and the history and complete list of winners of all major races.

In fact the sporting side is well covered and includes such things as circuit plans and details of the leading racing cars.

A book that apart from its reference value will give many hours of happy reading and it is hoped it will continue to be produced as an up to date yearly publication as it fills a long felt need of all enthusiasts.

At 6s. it is marvellous value and as it only measures 7 in. by 4¾ in. you can buy it at once and pop it in your pocket.

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A.C.—LAGONDA SPRINT MEETING

Brands Hatch, May 3, 1959

BRANDS HATCH is a small kidney-shaped track of lap-length about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, running along a valley a little beyond Farningham. There is no very long straight on it, and its bends are mostly combined with gradients. It thus has the disadvantage (or advantage, according to what car you drive) of being rather a tight circuit. This is further accentuated by the fact that the width of the track is mostly no more than that of a secondary road. From the spectator's point of view however, these drawbacks have their attractions, for a seat in the grandstand enables one to see nearly all the track at once, looking for all the world like a parlour game laid out on the table.

Here on Sunday, May 3, for the second year in succession, the A.C. Owners' Club and the Lagonda Club ran a joint sprint meeting. A sprint consisted of two consecutive laps, the car's times for each lap being recorded separately. Thus in each sprint each car clocked a standing lap time and a flying lap time. The cars ran in sets of up to four, but started at intervals of a few seconds, so that there was no jockeying for position into the corners, no possibility of anybody's line being spoiled, and no suggestion of racing—except against the clock.

Practice, which started at about eleven o'clock, consisted of a three-lap sprint for each car, and was over by lunch time. The meeting proper started at about two o'clock, which gave sufficient time to go right through the programme twice, so that every car had two runs. The inevitable rain at about four o'clock discouraged competitors (and officials) from a third attempt, and the meeting closed.

As the results-table shows, there was a varied Lagonda Club entry. One of the most interesting was Doc. Young with his L.G.45 Rapide. For four and a half years this car has been to the writer no more than an occasional photograph and a series of curious letters in the Lag. Mag., written from the Far East. On May 3, it materialized, and a very pretty sight it was too on the start line with the three other $4\frac{1}{2}$'s.

There were few untoward incidents. Billy Michael spun in practice—no damage. In the paddock

Charles Long's ex-team 2-litre had a rocker-cover gasket fail, causing an oil leak, but he goo'd it up in time. Charles Green suffered a semi-collapsed rear wheel on his second sprint. However, he did not need the second go, apparently, for his first one won him the Lagonda Club handicap.

Detailed results are tabulated on next page. It will be noted that A.C cars and Lagondas did not compete together in common classes, although members of the two clubs did so in Class I, driving other makes. Each club was responsible for its own awards. The Lagonda Club made its competition a handicap, and the outright winner and class winners are indicated in the table. For this purpose the better of the two sprints counted, *not* the better standing lap and the better flying lap—although naturally the two were usually synonymous, *viz*, in the sprint in which a car did its better standing lap, it usually did its better flying lap.

Apart from the Lagonda Club handicap interesting conclusions may be drawn, correctly or incorrectly, from the results-table. The two fastest cars of the day were A.C. Aces, the fastest with an A.C. engine, and the next with a Bristol engine. Third was Michael's L.G.45 ex-team car, which was thus faster than the Jaguar XK140, an Ace, an Ace-Bristol, and two Austin-Healeys (although perhaps we would have assumed the latter in any case). It looks as though an Ace, whether A.C.- or Bristol engined, can be made to go round this circuit a few seconds quicker than the bigger Lagonda or XK, which is doubtless a reflection of the A.C.'s excellent cornering, with its independent rear suspension, on this constricted circuit. Possibly too, since the A.C. is a lighter car, its brake-horsepower per ton weight of car may not be much less than that of the Lagonda or XK. Charles Green's 2-litre seems to have been developed enabling him to get near to the Rapier tourer's time, while the times of both of them demonstrate, perhaps, how well these models handle on corners—particularly when well driven.

D.S.

A.C. OWNERS & LAGONDA CLUBS JOINT SPRINT MEETING—BRANDS HATCH 3rd May 1959

RESULTS

No.	Name		Run 1	Run 2	Best Stdng.	Best Flying	Secs. Hcp.	Nett
CLASS B—POST-WAR A.C.								
1	P. V. Cochrane	Saloon	3.05.4	3.05.4	1.36.8	1.28.4		
14	*E. C. Martin (A. B. Martin)	Saloon	2.52.6	2.50.0	1.29.0	1.21.0		
* 1st Class B								
CLASS A—PRE-WAR A.C.								
6	*D. T. Sinnett Jones	Comp. 2 str.	2.43.6	2.43.8	1.24.2	1.19.2		
7	P. A. Blunt	Ace 16/80	2.53.6	2.52.6	1.30.6	1.22.0		
* 1st Class A								
CLASS C—ACE & ACECA								
8	J. M. Mann	Ace Bristol	2.24.8	2.26.0	1.15.4	1. 9.4		
10	A. J. D. Brown	Ace Bristol	2.33.0	2.31.4	1.18.2	1.13.2		
11	D. P. Woolf	Ace	2.40.6	2.40.6	1.22.8	1.17.6		
15	*R. Staples	Ace	2.24.2	2.24.6	1.14.6	1.9.6		
* 1st Class C								
CLASS D—4½ L. LAGONDA & RAPIER								
18	*L. S. Michael	LG45R	2.29.6	2.27.8	1.16.2	1.11.6	Scr.	2.27.8
21	A. J. Loch	M45	2.52.4	2.53.6	1.31.0	1.21.4	16	2.36.4
23	Dr. A. Young	LG45R	2.45.6	2.46.4	1.25.2	1.18.4	9	2.36.6
24	D. D. Overy	LG45R	2.43.6	2.41.6	1.25.2	1.15.4	12	2.29.6
29	A. E. Barnett	Rapier Tourer	2.58.2	2.57.8	1.33.6	1.24.2	30	2.27.8
* 1st Class D								
CLASS G—2 L. LAGONDA & RAPIER								
17	R. B. O'Beirne	16/80	3.07.8	3.05.0	1.38.0	1.27.0	42	2.23.0
19	D. C. Cumbers	2 L	3.18.6	3.12.8	1.41.8	1.31.0	44	2.38.8
22	J. C. Woollard	2 L	3.24.0	3.24.0	1.46.4	1.35.8	52	2.32.0
25	A. H. Gostling	2 L	3.11.0	3.10.8	1.41.8	1.28.6	44	2.26.8
26	H. C. Long	2 L	3.20.0	3.17.6	1.44.4	1.33.2	44	2.33.6
28	*C. S. Green	2 L	2.59.2	3.07.2	1.34.6	1.24.0	44	2.15.2
16	E. M. Lane	Rapier Saloon	3.33.0	3.36.8	1.51.6	1.41.4	65	2.28.0
* 1st Class G 1st Lag. Hcp.								
CLASS I—OTHER MAKES								
2	J. F. Ilsley	Morris M.			Did not start			
3	*J. Beeson (M. Doland)	XK140	2.30.0	2.31.0	1.17.6	1.12.4		
4	D. O. Beales	Morris Spl.	D.N.F.	2.46.8	1.28.6	1.18.4		
5	E. W. Palmer	Jaguar 3.4			Did not start			
9	J. Fish	Austin A40	3.16.8	3.33.0	1.42.6	1.33.8		
20	G. R. Richards	M.G. TA	3.00.8	3.01.0	1.35.2	1.24.8	27	2.33.8
27	C. F. White	A. Healey 6 cyl.	2.45.2	2.44.4	1.25.0	1.19.4	12	2.32.4
12	M. Macrome	A. Healey 4 cyl.	2.52.4	2.47.0	1.26.2	1.20.8		

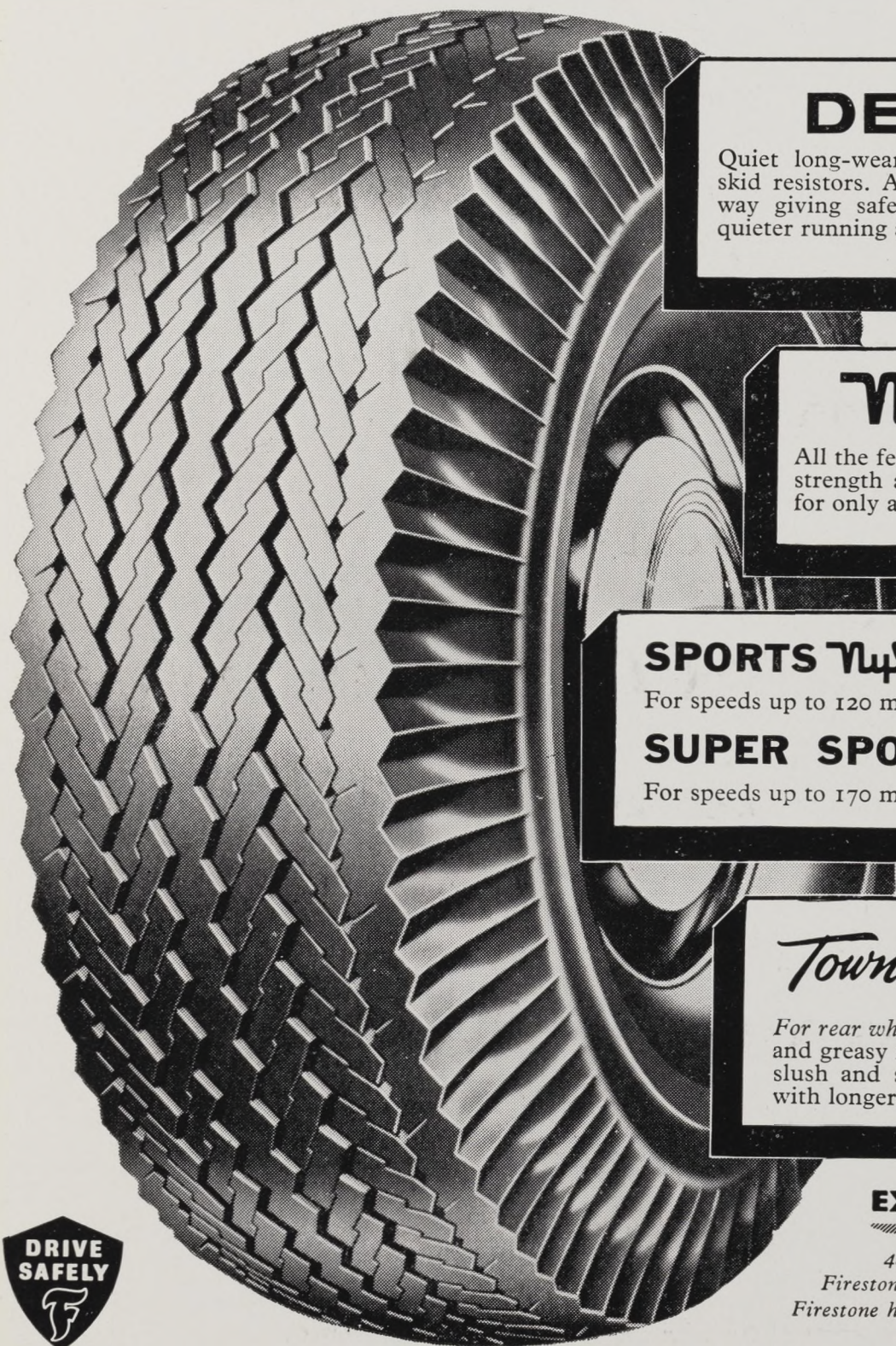
*1st Class I

Classes D & F and Classes G & H were amalgamated as provided for in the Supplementary Regulations for this event.

Note—In reading these results 3.05.4=3 minutes 5 1/5 seconds.
2.52.6=2 minutes 52 3/5 seconds, etc.

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