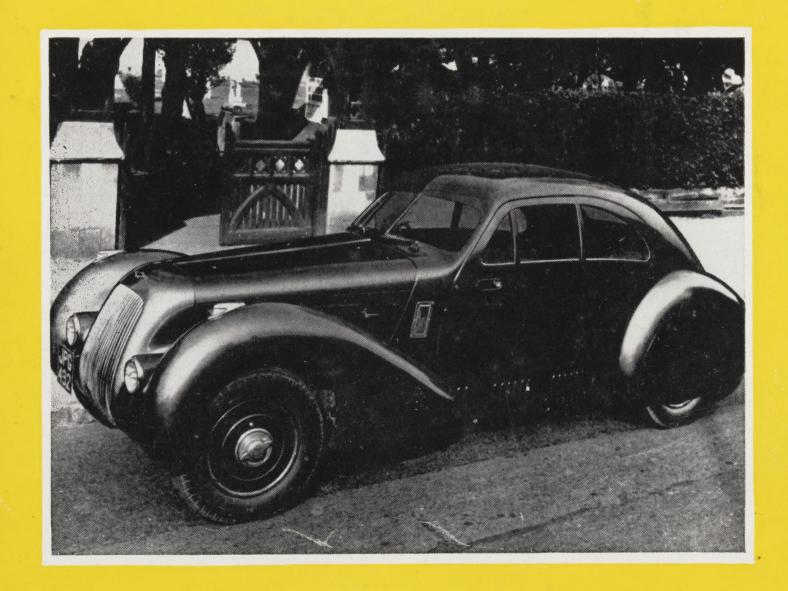


No. 38

Spring 1961





Reminder..

Spares and factory service facilities are available for all Mark I, Mark II and 3-litre Lagonda cars.

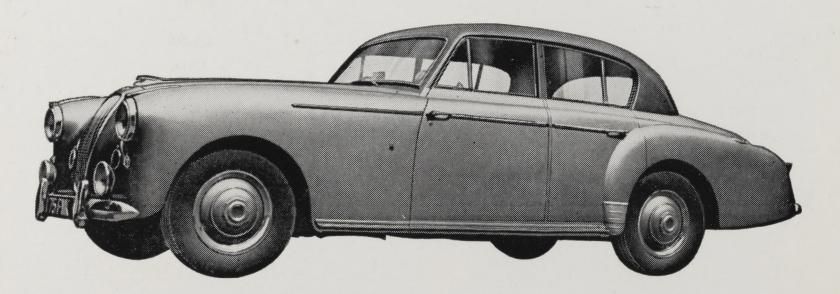


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THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

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EDITORIAL

By the time this appears in print, the winter should be well behind us. Some members have been putting the long dark evenings to good use and carrying out complete overhauls. Others, no doubt, will buy a Klumsi-Klot Botch-It-Yourself Kit and hope to achieve miracles in the course of a single week-end. Anyway, we look forward to seeing a good turnout at all the Club events but whatever the mechanical condition, do at least see that your car is clean. Owners of the older cars should nevertheless note that if they polish really hard the staines will come off the radiator.

After which horror, you will no doubt be glad to hear that there is to be a change of

Editor. Now the interesting thing is that the probable new Editor hasn't got a Lagonda either. A number of good reasons have been put forward such as "You've got to have a sensible chap as Editor" and "It can't be someone who has to spend his whole time fiddling with his car". But if, after ceasing to own a Lagonda, someone continues to take an interest in the Club, what greater compliment to it can there be than that? And, who knows, one day they may return to the fold.

COVER PICTURE

The V12 in question was the subject of an article which appeared in *The Autocar*, dated 27th September, 1940 and which is reprinted on page, 6 by kind permission.

NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Tyres again. Dunlops have recently made a batch of "obsolete" sizes including $6.00/6.50 \times 19$ and 5.25×21 which should interest M45 and 2-litre owners respectively.

The d.h.c. V12 which Jim Whitehead had when in this country has now arrived in Australia and he is starting on a complete rebuild to restore it to its original condition.

The Dinner Dance is again to be held at The Paviours' Arms, Page Street, Westminster this year on 8th April. All details later, but be sure and keep the date free.

Ian Smith and Richard Hare with twin LG45 Coupés, only two chassis numbers apart, are both having engines overhauled at Beaconsfield. Both cars are receiving treatment for the first time since they were made in 1937, which tends to justify our belief that "they don't make 'em like that any more".

Ian doesn't see much of the LG45 himself

because his wife, who handles the big car most skilfully and navigates for him in rallies, likes it too well for shopping.

Geoffrey Love now runs the News-Letter so all news items of interest which are too late for the next issue of the Magazine should be sent to him, please. Incidentally, he has now moved and his present address is: 6, Sefton Avenue, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

You may have noticed in the Motoring Press that certain chromium platers are labelling their work to show that it has satisfied the requisite British Standards Grade. Among these firms is Murrivan Ltd., whose advertisements have appeared in this Magazine for some time.

The Club film which was such a success, when it was shown at the Christmas Party, is now with the Secretary and may be borrowed from her by members for appropriate occasions.

SPARES

Since the list was compiled for the last Magazine some more information has come in.

- 1. R. G. L. Dallas writes from Cape Town: His house there has the intriguing name of "Sideways", but it is not clear whether this has any connection with the fact that his 16/80 had to be broken up before he left this country. The bits are with V.S.C.C. member, T. H. J. Eastwood at 52, Trinity Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire and the following are available:—
 - Front axle assembly complete, less brakes—no noticeable wear.
 - Steering box, column, drop arm and drag link, but no wheel—condition as above.
 - Near-side half-shaft and splined hub—splines in sound condition.
 - Complete set road springs.
 - Several 5.50×18 wheels and tyres—wheels all sound, one or two tyres useable.
 - Rear axle casing.
 - Various odds and ends.
- 2. M. E. G. Taylor has now moved to the South of England, taking with him most of the M45 bits and pieces listed in the last Magazine. His new address is 11, The Avenue, Wanstead, London, E.11.

- 3. F. W. Jones of 26, Berber Road, London, S.W.11 (telephone Battersea 9359) has a complete front and back axle for a 1933 3-litre.
- 4. And of course Ivan Forshaw, the Club's Spares Registrar. He has more than 80 tons of spares, both new and used and covering all models. Address on page 1 of the Magazine if you've lost the Blue Book.

The Green Dragon an inn of untold antiquity stoke fleming dartmouth

On the glorious South Devon Coast, near famous Blackpool Sands.

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The Timing of the

Two-litre Lagonda Engine

The following is the method of timing that Andre Kenny and I found most suitable after we had run into a number of difficulties with other methods.

- 1. Note the following maxims; they may seem elementary to the initiated but we thought we were initiated until we tried it.
 - (a) The flywheel rotates anti-clockwise when looking at the back of the engine.
 - (b) The camshafts both rotate anti-clockwise when looking at the front of the engine.
 - (c) "Advance" means "occurs further anti-clockwise round the flywheel".
 - (d) "Retard" means "occurs further clockwise round the flywheel".
 - (e) 1 camshaft tooth on the sprocket equals 13 flywheel teeth.
 - (f) Links of the upper chain fed clockwise round the exhaust camshaft sprocket advance the timing thereof.
 - (g) At least on my engine, it is impossible to feed links of the top chain round the inlet camshaft sprocket in either direction.
 - (h) 1 link fed clockwise round the smaller half of the double sprocket retards the timing of both camshafts by 13 flywheel teeth.
 - (i) 1 link fed clockwise round the larger half of the double sprocket advances the timing of both camshafts by $6\frac{1}{2}$ flywheel teeth.
- 2. Bearing (e) in mind, work out how many teeth after top dead centre (TDC) you want your exhaust valve to close and your inlet valve to open. Work out the

difference between them. Do all this in flywheel teeth and not degrees.

3. Place both your camshafts with the screw adjusters at the top. Slacken both the nuts on the ends of the camshafts. About one turn is enough. Now if screwing the screw into its block moves the screw longitudinally to the right then you are advancing the camshaft by so doing.

However, if screwing the screw into its block moves the screw longitudinally to the left you are either retarding the camshaft or you have not placed your camshafts in the correct positions as I indicated.

You may have, as I have, one screw doing one thing and one the other. You will have to remember, or write down like I did, which is which.

Now place both adjusters in the middle of their travel.

4. Find something on which to write and draw three columns on it. We used a rusty sheet of iron and blackboard chalk. Label one column "Inlet", one "Exhaust" and the third "Difference".

Mark Differences "+" if they are in correct direction and "—" if they are wrong. The Exhaust closes after the Inlet opens.

- 5. Set everything roughly right, *i.e.*, the crank at TDC, 1 & 4, Exhaust 1 nearly closed, Inlet 1 just opening.
- 6. Place the shorter chain with one end over the top tooth of the inlet camshaft and rotate the camshaft with a spanner on its end nut one whole turn. This feeds the chain round the sprocket. Repeat with the Exhaust sprocket. You may have to do it again to get the exhaust camshaft to come into the right position

when the chain comes tight between the two camshafts. The chain passes under the top adjuster not over it. Join the chain but do not take up the slack yet.

- 7. Pass the second chain round its sprockets and join it. Slacken the upper chain and lock its adjuster. Tension the lower chain to three-eighths of an inch of slack on the slack side. Lock its adjuster and loosen that of the upper chain. Tension that to a quarter of an inch of slack on the slack side and lock it.
- 8. Rotate the engine GENTLY two whole turns being very careful not to bend any valves. It can happen if you have the timing grossly wrong.

By looking as you rotate, discover whether the exhaust valve closes before

or after the inlet opens.

- 9. Find out when the inlet opens by rocking the rocker firmly as you rotate the engine yet again. The click as you rock disappears when the valve starts to lift. Record where this occurs in teeth on the flywheel from TDC. "A" for "after" and "B" for "before" is a useful code.
- 10. Repeat 9 for the Exhaust.
- 11. Decide on the direction and amount of difference between these two. Write this in the third column.
- 12. If the difference is more than seven teeth from what it should be, decide from (f)which way you should move chain links round the exhaust camshaft to get the difference within seven flywheel teeth. For example:— Inlet opens 16 teeth after

Exhaust closes.

You want:— Inlet opens 3 teeth before Exhaust closes.

Remedy:— By (f), feed one link clockwise round the exhaust camshaft. Residual error:— minus six teeth.

Feeding two links would have left a

residual error of plus seven.

Feeding is best done by slackening the adjustment as much as possible and turning the camshaft fully anti-clockwise. Feed the link-up as far as possible with the fingers. Then turn the camshaft

- fully clockwise. After the sixth attempt you should have succeeded. Even if only in pinching your fingers.
- 13. Repeat 8, 9, 10, and 11. If necessary 12, till you are within seven teeth of the correct difference. Tension the chains before each trial or you will get the wrong answer.
- 14. Bearing 3 in mind, turn the fine adjustments to remove the residual error.
- 15. Now, assuming you have succeeded in timing the camshafts correctly together you must now determine as in 9 above, where in the cycle the inlet is opening. Divide the number of teeth early or late that the inlet opens by $6\frac{1}{2}$ and this is the number of links to be fed round the largest sprocket. Use (i) to tell you which way to go.
- 16. The final adjustment will have to be made by turning the fine adjusters again so as to advance or retard both by the same amount.
- 17. Check the timing over several revolutions of the engine.
- 18. Tighten and split-pin the camshaft endnuts. They must be loose to move the fine adjustments.

NOTES.

- A. If you use the dynamo driving dog to rotate the engine you may have raised a burr which you will have to remove before you fit the timing case.
- I took one whole day to do this wrong B. the first time I tried it.

We then did it wrong together in about an hour.

We got it right in the end in about an hour-and-a-half.

Two people make the job about three times easier, even if she only observes the flywheel whilst you turn the engine.

J. C. P. DALTON

"TALKING OF SPORTS CARS"

A Stream-lined Lagonda

Twelve-cylinder short-chassis with a four-carburettor engine

The "Cover Picture" mentioned on page 2

Only recently an article was published in *The Autocar* dealing with a "refresher" run it was possible to make in one of the twelve-cylinder Lagonda short-chassis saloons. That, the production model, is a car of very high performance. Passing reference was made to the special four-carburettor type, of which examples have been built at intervals to individual order, and which are based on the racing machines that did so well at Le Mans and Brooklands in 1939.

Since that recent occasion of re-establishing contact with the ordinary car, I have been able to obtain details of a super-special streamline saloon twelve-cylinder, which was being built just prior to the outbreak of war, and which it was possible to finish off. In fact, it has been subsequently bought by someone at present serving in the Forces, for use after the war, a state of mind which denotes cheering optimism.

The idea was to evolve a machine for high-speed work in this country and abroad. It is no more than a half-secret that if things had gone on normally it would have very probably made an attempt on that unofficial but most interesting record which was developing nicely last summer, the sports-car hour run. Prediction in such matters is notoriously difficult, but it was hoped that up to 120 miles in the hour might be within reach. The machine certainly suggests itself as a capital type for that attempt, remembering the remarkable performance of the twelve-cylinder in any

case, helped in this instance by the four-carburettor engine, a high back axle ratio of 4.09 to 1, and the very lightly constructed and carefully streamlined saloon body. In the ordinary course of events, it would have been offered as a special model for those who set ultra performance above maximum roominess. The price would have been about £1,900.

The chassis is the normal short version of 10 ft. 4 in. wheelbase, with the rear springing stiffened up to suit the performance characteristics. The body, made by Lancefield, is something like four hundredweight lighter than the standard short saloon, and has Perspex instead of glass in all the windows. As will be seen, it is a two-door type, the wings and radiator are faired off, and the head lamps built in, while care has been taken to reduce wind resistance in detail as well as major items, for instance, by enclosing the door handles.

It makes a perfectly practicable car for ordinary use on the road, hence the fitting of the current head lamp mask, and for the moment the engine has been detuned to suit Pool petrol. Incidentally, one of the noticeable features of the ordinary twelve-cylinder Lagonda engine is the almost complete absence of pinking on the wartime fuel, though all the performance anyone can reasonably want remains available. The streamlined saloon is understood to be capable of well over 100 m.p.h. even in the present modified state of tune. V.

Pub Meets

For your information, here is a list of the regular meetings:—

LONDON: Coach & Horses, Avery Row, Grosvenor Street, W.1. Third Thursday of each month.

MANCHESTER: Red Lion, High Lane, Stockport. Second Thursday of each month.

LEEDS: Princess Hotel, Little London, Rawdon, Nr. Leeds. Second Tuesday of each month.

NEWCASTLE: Lion & Lamb, Horsley. First Wednesday of each month.

HULL: Half Moon, Skidby. Last Tuesday of each month.

CANTERBURY: The Grove Ferry Hotel, Upstreet, Nr. Canterbury. First Sunday of each month.

HORSHAM: Crown Hotel, Carfax, Nr. Horsham. Last Friday of each month.

As to Horsham, Graham Thyer reports that either there are few people in the area or they are in permanent hibernation, but at any rate, attendance is still very poor. Nevertheless, he is still keen to go on trying to organize something, so anyone in the area who thinks that another time or place would be better should write to him with their suggestions. His address is in the Blue Book.



WHEN OVERTAKEN BY A HURRYING JAGUAR

ONE CAN ALWAYS POINT OUT THAT AFTER



ALL CHARACTER & CRAFTMANSHIP

MEAN MORE THAN SHEER PERFORMANCE.



ON THE OTHER HAND WHEN ONE

OVERTAKES A SLOWER CAR IT IS -



NATURAL TO COMMENT THAT THE OLD LAG

STILL HAS PRETTY HAIRY LEGS .



THE SNAS IS WHAT DOES ONE SAY

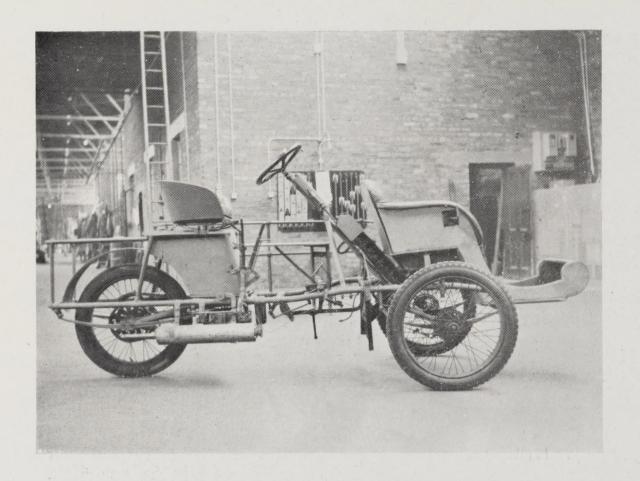
WHEN HOPELESSLY BEATEN OFF THE MARK



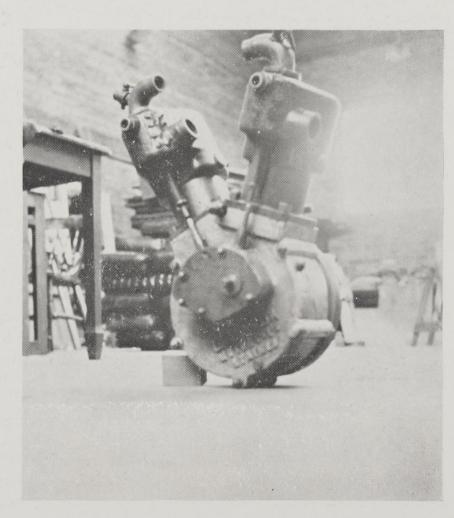
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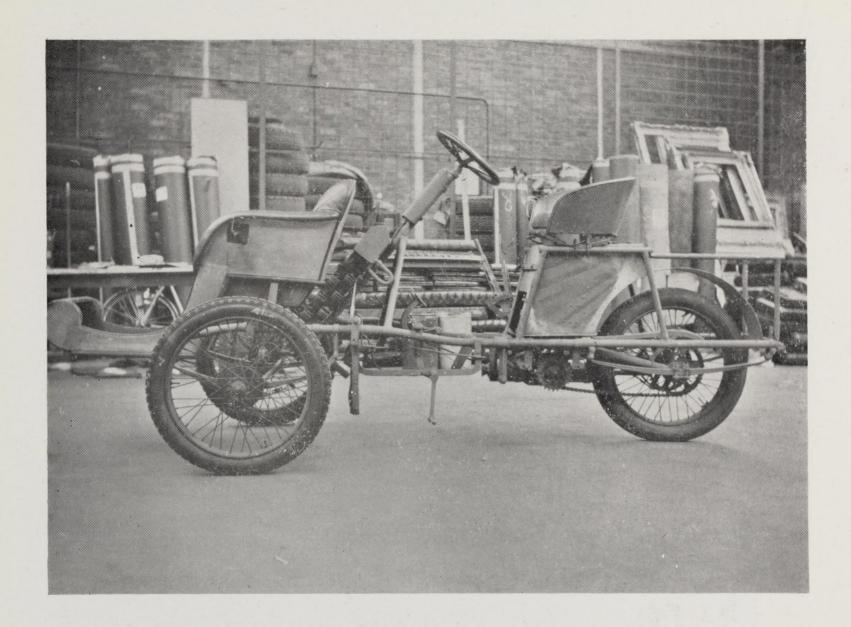
MINI-MINORS!

G.W. ALLEN ~



There is a Second Tri-car





There is a Second Tri-car

The possibility that a second Lagonda Tri-car might still be in existence first came from Bill Hartop, who has a happy and invaluable knack of producing periodically these curious and useful pieces of information.

The car is in a private collection in Scotland and is reputed to have come from the Reading district. It appears to be mechanically identical to the car already registered with the Club and owned by Mr. David Brown, and is almost certainly 1905/6. Hopes were high that it might be a true veteran, but in this we were to be disappointed. (For the record, your veteran pre-1905 Lagonda Tri-car will have handle-bar steering and a single cylinder air-cooled engine.)

This car is the later twin-cylinder water-cooled model with wheel steering. No information is available as to chassis or engine registration numbers.

The cooling radiator lies behind the passenger seat, and the petrol tank under the driver, with a locker below. The engine is located with the crankcase under the chassis, and the cylinders between the driver's feet. The tank on the steering column is for oil.

The photographs show the car in the course of being completely rebuilt. The picture of the engine shows clearly the name "Lagonda Motor Co. Ltd., Staines" on the crankcase casting.

C.S.G.

The Challenge Trophies

As most of you know, the Club possesses a fine collection of trophies which, as they are awarded annually, adds keenness and enjoyment to the fun had by the more active members.

In spite of all the different models which take part in Club activities, it is heartening to see that they all share the honours, proving as always that a well found 2-litre can keep up with the LG45R's in our competitions which are designed with that point in mind.

THE FOX TROPHY is awarded for best performance in Club calendar events and so appeals to those who cannot necessarily embark on a full season's events as well as those who "have a bash" at everything, including meetings run by other clubs.

The first three places were:—

ARTHUR BARNETT Rapier 215 marks
JAMES CROCKER LG45R 190 ,,
COLIN BUGLER 2-litre 175 ,,

This was a popular win by Arthur who has supported all events for a number of years and now knows exactly how to get the best from his Rapier. He won his class at Brands Hatch and in both the Southern and Northern rallies as well as figuring in races and hill climbs. He doesn't seem to have much time for the Concours though!

James cannot get away too often to go motoring but when he does, it is most effective, and outright wins in the Southern Rally and November Rally almost got him to the top!

Colin used to be a very consistent Rapier driver some years back and this, his first year with a 2-litre, shows that he has lost little of his flair. He comes regularly from Hampshire and awards at Brands Hatch, Firle and Silverstone have been some compensation. (And see the letter to the Editor from Henry Coates—Ed.).

These three were followed by Iain Macdonald and Richard Hare with LG45 tourer and D.H.C. respectively. Both big and awkward cars for competition but both always beautifully turned out showing that fun can be had with the so-called sedate models.

THE MICHAEL TROPHY goes to the best performance in all competitions and this year, as can be seen, produced a pretty convincing win for Arthur Barnett.

ARTHUR BARNETT 590 marks
JAMES CROCKER 470 ,,
COLIN BUGLER 230 ...

As, however, Arthur had already won the Fox Trophy, and no one can win more than one major award, it is awarded to our worthy Chairman, in second place. James has been trying to win an annual trophy for some time and often puts some very queer legal interpretations on the marking systems!

This year even the Competitions Committee could see that he had done well and, in addition to his successes already mentioned, he has collected awards at B.D.C. Eastbourne Rally and V.S.C.C. driving tests as well as giving good support to the race meetings.

Arthur incidentally took part in fourteen events during the year and won nine awards—need one say more? It was a happy ending to a long partnership with the 4-seater tourer Rapier and as in the coming season he will be out in a light-weight 2-seater, he should be worth going a long way to see.

Behind Colin's hard-worked 2-litre come Iain Macdonald, Brin Edwards (M45 tourer) and Bill Michael (LG45 team car), all with equal marks, the latter two collecting most of their marks at race meetings and hill climbs.

THE DENSHAM TROPHY is awarded to the best performance throughout the year

by a 2-litre or 16/80 and, as the results show, went most deservedly to Colin.

COLIN BUGLER 230 marks
JAMES WOOLLARD 200 ,,
CHARLES LONG 150 ,,

James Woollard gives good Lagonda support at V.S.C.C. meetings and has won awards there as well as his class at our own Southern Rally. He always tries very hard and maybe he will move up one place at the end of this season.

Charles is generally too busy at our own driving test meetings looking after the equipment to do anything else but at race meetings and sprints the 1929 team car has been much to the fore, flames and all!

Maurice Leo was next in his blown 2-litre. Nice to see him out, and doing so well after giving his car a lengthy rebuild and it is hoped he will be able to find time to take part even more this year.

THE COATES TROPHY is rather like the Michael but is only open to members in the North, that is those who live above an imaginary line drawn across the country at about Nottingham.

This award was presented with the idea of encouraging Northern members to take part and although Henry Coates himself doesn't need any prompting to enter for a competition it was grand to see him, oh! so nearly win, and yet he would be the first to join in congratulating Iain Macdonald on winning this award during his first season.

IAIN MACDONALD LG45 Tourer 210 mks. Henry Coates M45R Special 205 ,

Iain comes all the way from Newcastle-on-Tyne and when it is remembered that he has gained marks at the Eastbourne Rally, Prescott, Firle and the Southern as well as the November Rally, it is, perhaps, fitting that such enthusiasm should be so rewarded.

Henry, of course, needs no introduction and his well finished and firmly driven special is seen whenever it is possible for him to appear. These days, driving tests seem to be his forte but just to show all things come alike, he netted second place and best Lagonda in the November Rally. Roy Paterson, who is seen at most of the Northern events with his large touring bodied M45, filled third place and as there are to be more events in the North, this year can well see his steady driving gaining even more marks.

THE W. L. THOMPSON TROPHY was presented to the Club in order that the ladies should have an award of their own. The donor realised that the women folk help and encourage in many ways apart from just driving and while it would be nice to see it given for competition work (if the girls would only take part!), so far it has gone to more behind the scenes activity.

This year the Competitions Committee were pleased to recommend that it should go to:—

MRS. VALERIE MAY, in grateful recognition of all the administrative work she so cheerfully undertakes—all being quite outside the jobs she originally agreed to do when she joined the Club. Now that Valerie has the whole of the secretarial side to deal with, it seems more than ever well earned.

THE CAR CLUB TROPHY is perhaps the most difficult of all awards to deal with as it is awarded at the discretion of the Committee for meritorious motoring during the period under review. There are always so many conflicting claims, people who have done well in the most impossible cars, members who plug away year after year and never win, brilliant drives under difficult conditions, all these and many other things not necessarily connected with true competition would make this award worth winning. This year it goes to:—

Brin, who lives in the depths of South Wales, always gives as much support to the Club as he can. He is always willing to form part of any team when the name Lagonda needs representing and has travelled long distances to be the sole supporter of the marque.

He has managed to make his M45 motor
(Continued on page 15)



My Experience of the 2.6 Lagonda

There are probably many real Lagonda enthusiasts who are not willing to concede that the post-war 2.6 is a Lagonda at all. A few, in fact, take the same view of all cars made since the grand old 2-litre, and maybe, with justification. However, the 2.6 has a very fair title to be regarded as a true Lagonda. It was especially designed for the Lagonda Company by W. O. Bentley, which would appear to place it at least in the same category

as the V12, and the fact that the company was taken over by a well-known firm of tractor manufacturers who promptly duplicated the engine and bunged it in the so-called Aston Martin does not really affect the issue. The only differences between the 2.6 as designed and as produced were the gear box (a tragedy) and a minor alteration to the rear suspension (an improvement). Furthermore, in the road test report (June, 1951) The Autocar says: "... there is an abiding satisfaction in the way it operates and handles, and in its response to the type of driving that derived the best from the great vintage cars of the past". Such words, from such an authority, may surely be taken as evidence that the car

is worthy of its name.

Before buying my 2.6 I pondered long and deeply. For eight years I had driven that incomparable light car, the Lagonda Rapier, but my family had grown up and I needed something larger. When one has been used to a vehicle as steeped in personality as is the Rapier, one becomes difficult to satisfy. If I could have found a good one, I might have acquired an LG6, although I couldn't rid myself of the feeling that a push-rod job was a come down after twin overhead camshafts. Anyway, the only LG6's which came on the market at that time were in indifferent condition and then, finally, I saw a 2.6 advertised at a price I could afford. Here, I felt, was my chance; twin OHC, 105 bhp, the only British car (at that time) with independent suspension all round and a drop-head coupe, something I had always wanted. I went along to see her and fell in love straight away. She was in excellent shape; the cellulose, although obviously not a re-spray, was still quite first-class, as was also the chromium. The real leather upholstery was a joy to look at and the hood, recently cleaned, showed no blemishes. The carpets had all been renewed and the head lining gave no cause for complaint. speedometer reading was 42000 which, according to enquiries I made later of the previous owner, appears to have been correct. The tyres were good and the brakes had been relined but the clutch had not and the gear change linkages were sloppy. However, the

vendors agreed to remedy these last two defects without cost to me, although I suspect that when they did so they had not realised it was necessary to remove the engine in order to get at the clutch. This is due to the cruciform chassis, which crosses immediately behind the gear box.

In due course, I took delivery and drove home, absolutely loathing the steering column gear change although, as it had been renewed throughout, it was probably better than most of its kind. The radio, however, quite the best car radio I have ever heard, was very soothing in London traffic.

I set to work to get used to the car and to nose out the defects which are only to be expected when one buys a car which is eight years' old. The back axle seemed O.K. but first gear was noisy. The engine burnt no oil but oil pressure wasn't too good when hot so, as I proposed touring Scotland in the near future, I enlisted the aid of some friends and we lifted out the engine and stripped it. All bearings needed renewing, although wear on the crank was trifling. There was some wear on the wet liners but not enough to warrant the cost of replacement, so we fitted Duaflex rings, renewed the bearings, ground the crank and gave the top end a spring clean. Whilst on the job we renewed first and second cogs, finishing just in time to use the Scottish holiday for running-in purposes. As a matter of interest, I may mention that the worn bearings were probably due to some genius, who, in the past, had resourcefully filled up the drain hole from the water pump with a twig, with the result that when the gland wore, the escaping drips of water had nowhere to go except into the sump, with consequent oil dilution.

The cost of this overhaul was not light although kept to a minimum but I succeeded in recovering some of it from the vendors under their warranty. In any event, I now had, in near new condition, a three thousand pound motor car which had cost me in all only a few hundred pounds and I looked forward to enjoying it as soon as the running-in process was completed. I was not to do

so at first however, because there was a strange lack of power; in fact, the car was only a shadow of what she had been before the overhaul. The usual process of elimination reduced the cause of this to the valve timing which really gave me a lot of trouble because the instructions in the handbook are specially designed to be incomprehensible to the amateur and indeed, incapable of fulfilment without expensive equipment and long practice. It was some time before I discovered that the David Brown Co., marketed a special jig which makes the whole affair absolutely child's play. The difference when the matter was put right was, as might be expected, prodigious, and all 105 ponies seemed to be available at last.

I have now had the 2.6 nearly two years and have covered about 12,000 miles. Like everything else in this world she has her good points and her bad, but let me say at once, I consider, the good ones vastly outnumber the others. She is, of course, not a sports car. I suppose she is what is nowadays described as a Gran Turismo car and I regret to have to confess I have reached the age when amenities like a heater and screen washers appeal to me. I have no claim whatever to be considered a competent critic, but my own general impressions are as follows:—

On the debit side, the car has, with the hood up, the worst rearward vision I have ever encountered. The pair of tiddley little back windows are utterly inadequate, the rear wings are on the bulbous side and reversing is an absolute nightmare, it being difficult to get one's head far enough out of the window. At night it is quite worth driving two or three miles forwards to avoid reversing round a corner. Then there is no tappet adjustment. When decoking, one grinds the ends of the valve stems to the correct length. This is really just a joke because each time a valve is fitted for verification purposes 24 camshaft bearing bolts have to be undone and done up again. (If anyone thinks it possible to hold a valve up manually without fitting the spring, I can only invite them to try it and see if they can make up their minds whether their thumb has yielded a couple of thou when the feeler gauge is shoved in). Imagine, therefore, one's mental reaction when offering up the same valve for the third time and finding it still a bit out. If, of course, too much is taken off the stem the only thing left to do is to grind it a bit deeper into the seat.

In their advertisement in *The Lagonda*, December, 1951, the David Brown Co. said: "The Lagonda asks to be judged by the most exacting standards in every particular—design, production, etc., etc.". Well, I should like to show them the ragged diagonal groove running across one of the ports in my cylinder head and ask them what on earth is the good

of trying to polish that?

The engine is standard. I should, of course, have liked a Vantage engine with improved inlet cam profiles and a higher compression ratio. Mine, having been made in the days of pool petrol has a c/r of 6.5:1. I must admit, though, the performance of the car (of which more hereafter) is such that it really doesn't seem to matter and anyway, I suppose a low compression is easier on the bearings. By modern standards the stroke is long (90 mm.) and as 5,000 revs. come up pretty easily, I sometimes find it difficult to keep piston speed out of my mind. Happily,

however, my apprehensions have so far been quite groundless.

On the credit side, I can only say that leaving aside the shortcomings mentioned above, she really and truly is the car to endear herself to the heart of the discerning enthusiast. One has only to sit at the wheel for two minutes to realise that this is a car of quality and personality. The massive and solid chassis, in the best Lagonda tradition, gives the feeling of complete safety. The handling is excellent and the driving position just right. The acceleration, for a 28-cwt. luxury car of under three litres is formidable. (0-60 thro)gears 18.8 secs., 30 - 50 in 2nd, 6.7 secs.). The close ratio third gear, on which one can quickly knock up over 70, is a delight in traffic, whilst main road hills are hardly even noticed and quite sharp curves may be taken flat out.

The crank case is of classic rigidity and each camshaft has twelve bearings; the crankshaft is, of course, statically and dynamically balanced and high revs. come up smoothly and without effort.

Soon after I got the car, I drove over to Feltham to ascertain the spares position and was told by the Stores Manager that they had £150,000 worth in stock for the 2.6 (I told him I didn't think I should need them all).



In fact, everything I have ever wanted has

been produced straight off the shelf.

I think, though, that the outstanding feature of the 2.6 is its astoundingly low secondhand price, low that is to say in comparison with its high quality. Why this should be has often puzzled me and I can only conclude that as comparatively few were made, no proper secondhand market has ever been created. In the event, what other car of remotely similar quality and performance can be purchased to-day for well under a thousand pounds? She cruises comfortably and well within herself at 80. The Autocar gave top speed as 91; personally, I have recorded 90 (5,000 rpm) with my foot still well off the floor and over a touring holiday of 2,300 miles this year the petrol consumption worked out at 19.28 mpg, which included long spells at high speeds. The brakes are adequate but cannot, of course, compare with disc brakes.

It may be that 1951 was a vintage year; I wouldn't know. Shortly afterwards, however, the purchase tax went up again and one or two features of the 1951 car were dropped on later models, possibly to cut down the cost. On my car there are self-lubricating kingpins (they work too!) and an electric starter carburettor. Both these attributes were dropped on later cars whilst the babbitted big end bearings were replaced by shells, the heat dispersion of which would seem to me to be inferior.

All in all, I would not change the 2.6 for any car available at up to twice her market value and, although I may be sticking my neck out, I will say that to me at least, she is a LAGONDA.

E. M. LANE

"Cars of the Connoisseur" by J. R. Buckley

272 pp. Published by B. T. Batsford Ltd. 30s. In recent years, Batsford have served car enthusiasts well with a series of handsomely produced books on motoring matters. One of their latest publications, "Cars of the Connoisseur", is well up to the standard set by its predecessors and in it the author selects nineteen different marques which he considers produced motor cars that reached near-perfection in quality of manufacture and manner of performance.

Buckley's choice of marques ranges over such names as Rolls-Royce, Bugatti, Hispano-Suiza, Mercedes - Benz, and naturally Lagonda. A chapter is devoted to each make and includes a brief history of the manufacturer, together with technical information and performance figures of the various models. There are numerous illustrations, including one of James Crocker's LG45 Rapide.

The author succeeds in conveying to the reader his obvious enthusiasm for the subject and while, perhaps, the book does not reveal any new information, it does make extremely interesting reading and offers in compact form the stories behind some of the most fascinating vehicles produced between the two world wars.

A.W.M.

The Challenge Trophies

(Continued from page 11)

very quickly and this clean and tidy car finished the season in brilliant fashion by winning the last Lagonda race and also the 10-lap Allcomers, helped not least by Brin's determined driving and in the process lapped the Silverstone club circuit at speeds of the LG45R's. Perhaps he will have both sets of plugs working this season!

"FLAREPATH"

Competition Notes

by "LEPUS"

1960 was a very wet summer. Even the meteorologists admit that, but our meetings were not much upset by rain. Apart from drawing a most unlucky time for the August Silverstone race, competitors had something from dry to warm and sunny for all the other events. Brands Hatch and all the September events seem to have set a tradition for good weather so we may hope the new boys who made promising first appearances will be

encouraged to turn out again.

The "simplificate and add more lightness" cult is spreading. Bill Michael was one of the first successful exponents. Henry Coates has been doing well with his light $4\frac{1}{2}$ and Iain Macdonald is rumoured to have one on the stocks. Monty is working on yet another 4½. Mike Wilby and Roger Greenway have a Rapier coming along and Arthur Barnett is giving his new Rapier the full treatment. Club handicappers have their ears to the ground and standard touring cars will still have a fair chance. Everything is noted in the little black book, so when Tony protests about his handicap, saying the engine is stiff. won't go over 3,000 and then does 1m. 35s. to come in fourth, they were not far out.

1960 lap times and fastest times by each type are set out below and on page 19.

"Class Records"

Fastest, all		
types	L. S. Michael	1m.19.6s.*
LG45R	D. D. Overy	1m.27.4s.
LG45 Sal.		
& Coupé	R. P. F. Hare	1m.40.4s.
M45R	J. B. Kibble	1m.29.4s.*
M45	B. J. Edwards	1m.28.4s.*
M45 Sal.		
& Coupé	D. White	1m.38.0s.
$3\frac{1}{2}$ -L.	F. Smith	1m.41.4s.

3½-L.	J. W. T.	
Limousine	Crocker	1m.51.8s.*
3-L.	R. J. Newman	1m.33.2s.
3-L. Sal.		
& Coupé	C. Lyne	1m.49.0s.
2-L. S/c.	R. S. Page	1m.34.6s.
2-L.	H. C. Long	1m.44.6s.*
2-L. Sal.	J. G. Fisher-	
& Coupé	White	1m.52.0s.*
16/80	R. B. O'Beirne	1m.46.0s.
Rapier	J. M. Read	1m.34.8s.*
Rapier Sal.		
& Coupé	J. C. Bugler	1m.55.0s.
* Recorded a	fter improvemen	ts to track

surface.

Bill Michael's longstanding M45R time has gone to Jack Kibble by 2.6 seconds. Jack had the Le Mans winner and a rather better track surface to help him but business commitments prevent him getting much practice and the axle ratio is a bit high for the club circuit. Bill keeps knocking a little off his personal best—nearly four seconds in the last two years—and can make a lot of modern sports cars look unimpressive. Brin Edwards provided a real sensation. 1m. 28.4s. was quite astonishing for an M45 tourer with one magneto out of action—from experience we know this drops about 400 r.p.m. at the top end. Deservedly, a repeat performance later in the afternoon won him another handicap Arthur Barnett has been working race. steadily on Mike's old Rapier time, leaving it nearly four seconds better until Jack Read appeared on the scene with a lighter, more highly tuned and carefully prepared car. 1m. 34.8s. is going to take a lot of beating. Charles Long had the 2-L. team car going better than ever this year and is left holding the "record". On a wet track in August he and Jeff. Reed were noticeably less put off by the rain than all the rest. Colin Bugler showed the same skill with a 2-litre as with his old Rapier, but he says family responsibilities will restrict him to a few well-planned appearances. Ian MacGregor has been con-

(Continued on page 18)

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sistent and very tidy. Brian Dearden-Briggs brought a supercharged M45 to Silverstone, demonstrating good acceleration. Frank Moore and R. D. C. Taylor drove creditably on their first outings with the club and D. S. Johnson arrived with a very presentable high chassis 2-litre. We hope to see you all again this year.

Away from the circuits we have been able to welcome some of the senior members; Peter Densham (M45), Mrs. De Salis (2-litre), Charles and Pamela Elphinstone (11.1), Bill Hartop (we had hoped to have a 2-litre diesel class in the Southern Rally). It is most encouraging when they have come a long way to the meetings as did at least three of the Annual Trophy winners. Iain Macdonald has about the longest journey, nearly four hundred miles from Newcastle to Firle.

Henry Coates, runner-up for the Northern Trophy never seems to mind a trip south and has been known to take in another rally half-way home. Colin Bugler, Densham Trophy, has a long run from Southampton and Brin Edwards, Car Club Trophy, drives up from South Wales. This makes the people who don't like crossing London seem rather spoilt.

Fixture Cards will have been sent out before you read these notes but, just in case it is already lost or eaten by the dog, here are a few reminders of important coming events.

Saturday, April 8th. Annual Dinner Dance at The Paviours Arms, Millbank, S.W.1. Details from L. S. Michael, 26, Bryanston Square, London, W.1.

Sunday, April 16th. Spring Social Runs in Lancashire, and The Chilterns. Details of the

(Continued on opposite page)

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Northern run from R. H. Paines, Sevenstones, Bilbrough, York; of the Southern run from C. S. Elphinstone, The Lodge, Woodcock Hill, Berkhamsted, Herts.

Saturday, April 22nd. North Riding Rally. Details from D. H. Coates, Hill Farm, Swine, Hull, Yorks.

Sunday, May 28th. Brands Hatch Sprint Meeting. Details from R. P. F. Hare, 137, Broxholm Road, London, S.E.27.

Treasure Hunt, Yorkshire. Details from R. H. Paines, Sevenstones, Bilbrough, York.

Saturday, June 10th. Southern Rally, Driving Tests. Details from A. Davey, 9, Summit Way, Southgate, N.14.

Sunday, June 11th. Border Rally, Coldstream. Details from I. G. Macdonald, 37, Oaklands, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 3.

Saturday, July 1st. Northern Rally, Driving Tests. Sherburn in Elmet. Details from R. H. Paines, Sevenstones, Bilbrough, York.

If you are unable to compete come along just the same. The organisers will get a little

more sleep at nights if you volunteer beforehand to hold a watch or carry out a simple duty.

MORE DATES

As a result of the apparent popularity of the New Forest picnic and the museum visit week-end in 1960, we have decided to repeat this in 1961. Details have still to be fixed but we hope to arrange the first picnic in the New Forest area probably in early June, and the museum visit will probably take place again in late September or early October. Final details will be announced in a future magazine and news letter as soon as they are fixed.

The First Race Meeting of the Season! We have been invited to take part in the Jaguar Drivers' Club Restricted Race Meeting at Brands Hatch on Saturday, April 15. Regulations available from Jaguar Drivers' Club, 75, Baker Street, W.1, or Mike Wilby. This is the first time we have been able to have a full scale race on this circuit and it will be jolly good practice for our own sprint there on May 28.

		April VSCC	July VSCC	August BDC	Sept. JDC
Barnett	Rapier	1-36.4	1-36.4	1-43.8*	
Bugler	2-L.	_	_		1-45.0
Crocker	LG45R	1-28.4	1-28.4	1-34.8*	
Dearden-Briggs	M45 (S/c.)	_			1-38.6
Edwards	M45	_	<u> </u>	1-37.8*	1-28.4
Fisher-White	2-L. Coupé	<u></u>	_	1-56.8*	1-52.0
Garnham	Rapier	<u> </u>	_	1-50.4	1-49.0
Johnson	2-L.	_	<u> </u>	* - <u>190</u>	2-08.0
Kibble	M45 Le Mans	1-29.4			_
Loch	M45				1-35.0
Long	2-L. Team Car			1-50.6*	1-44.6
Michael	LG45 Team Car	1-19.6	_	1-21.0	14 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
Moore	M45		400		1-37.2
MacGregor	M45		_	1-37.2	1-37.0
Overy	LG45R		1-30.2	1-29.6	_
Read	Rapier		-	1-40.2	1-34.8
Reed	M45R	1-39.4	1-37.2	_	_
Taylor	2-L.	_	_	1-51.4	

^{*} On a very wet track.

We regret that we omitted to acknowledge G. E. SUNDERLAND, F.R.P.S., Savoy Studio, Bradford, in the last issue. Mr. Sunderland was the photographer who took the excellent shots of the Northern Autumn Social Meeting held at East Riddlesden Hall.

Northern Notes

This year the Northern Party will have been held (by the time you read this) in the Manchester area. Our Manchester representative, BILL BRIGGS, has kindly arranged it at the Crimble Hall County Club. Bamford, Rochdale. For the first time, as far as I know, awards for the Northern events will be presented, and it is hoped to continue this practice. Let's hope that the sight of them whets some appetites and brings into being a new set of competitors. Another "first" will be the first and I hope not the last appearance of MIKE WILBY as a very popular "guest of honour". To conclude what is always a very good evening BETTY and BRYAN RANDLES will show their films of the Northern Rally and the Autumn Social, and will also show the club film of some southern events. Thank you all for attending, especially Bill for organising, Henry for seeing to the tickets and finance, and Mike for coming so far to see us.

Our first event of a sporting nature (although getting to the party can sometimes be that) will be the Spring Social which BRYAN DEARDEN-BRIGGS is setting out in the Lancashire area on April 16. Please note that this is a social event, the first in the season, suitable, as a try-out, for people who have not competed before, and equally suitable for more experienced men as a warm-up for the next week-end, when we shall have a new and very important event. This will be the North Riding Rally, a restricted event. A lot of work has had to be done to see that all competitors, whether new or experienced, driving 14/60's or modern cars, have an equal

chance. There will be a navigation section (about a hundred miles) starting at 5.0 p.m., on Saturday, April 22, from Northallerton, Yorks. On the following morning, there will be driving tests, which will be over by lunch time. The emphasis will be on navigation rather than split-second timing. There will be four classes. Besides the usual awards there will be a novices award and a "best vintage light car award".

The usual clubs and the local Northallerton Club have been invited—the latter are pro-

viding their own awards.

Entry fee will be £1. An additional inclusive fee of 50s. will cover tea and buffet supper on Saturday, bed and breakfast and lunch on

Sunday.

The secretary of the meeting is HENRY COATES (Hill Farm, Swine, Hull, Yorkshire) assisted by KEN PAPE, to both of whom our thanks for the time and work they are putting into it. The closing date for entries is April 15 and any entries received after this date cannot be accepted.

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LETTER FROM AMERICA

Bob Crane reports:—

"We have been away for two weeks in New England and Canada. After a week-end in Connecticut, we proceeded to Boston where we had dinner with the three Lagonda owners in that area and their wives. The three are: Garrett Fuller who owns the remains of the Le Mans V12 14,090, from whose car came the engine I have. He has now a Chrysler Firepower V8; the chassis has been cut back to about 110 in. wheelbase. He has installed a roadster body which is quite good looking along the lines of 1940 vintage. The doors, which are still to be installed, will be cut down à la Van den Plas. He also has a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -litre Maserati grand prix car which he also races.

The second owner is Hector Petri who owns what is probably the only Rapier in this country. It was raced by W. A. Bedford and has also been raced by Petri. At present the engine is in the chassis, but the rest of the car is disassembled. He owns it only to race.

The third owner is Charlie Rheault, who owns an LG6 Rapide, 12,373, which he is restoring meticulously.

On the way back from Canada we returned through Bar Harbor, Maine. There is stored for the winter another LG6 Rapide, 12,372/R, owned by H. R. Bullock of Philadelphia since new. In very fair shape—for sale.

The Princeton-Harvard football game went off beautifuliy with reasonable weather on the 5th November, a wonderful group—we had 26 people; we had special parking space right at the gate and everyone ogled and gaped; we had ideal seats and an excellent meal afterwards. The only regret was another event of only three Lagondas. The same as we had last year—Calkins in the 1934 team car from Washington, D.C., Roeser from

Penna and, of course, our old V12. I was just sure we would break the jinx but . . . two cars with no oil pressure, etc. One of these was John Ogle who had promised and planned to come up from Florida (1,350 miles each way). I am starting right now determining the date of next year's game and promoting three plus . . . or bust!"

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hill Farm, Swine, Nr. Hull. January, 1961.

Dear Sir,

Thank you—or one of your reporters—for a nice story about the November adventures in Wales. You, or he, have however missed one very fine effort: that of Colin Bugler in the 2-litre executing the test in 93 secs.

That car must be classed among the "heavy

metal" as to size, yet it has less than half the engine capacity to cope with the eleven times it was necessary to start being somewhere else very quickly. A very nice run indeed.

Yours, etc.,

D. H. COATES.

Gregories Road Garage, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

Dear Sir,

Squadron Leader E. M. Townsend's letter in a recent issue of *The Lagonda* raises

interesting points.

There are in fact two different firing orders for the 12-cylinder Lagonda engine, namely:—1, 2, 9, 10, 5, 6, 11, 12, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 1, 12, 9, 4, 5, 8, 11, 2, 3, 10, 7, 6. The early cars used the former sequence whilst the latter order was adopted on the subsequent engines.

I consider the later system to be the more satisfactory. As the power strokes are more evenly distributed, this must produce less torsional vibration and smoother operation. To enlarge slightly, with a 60 degree V-engine there are six power strokes to each revolution

of the crankshaft, three from each bank of cylinders

The Lagonda camshafts utilise the 1, 5, 3, 6, 2, 4, order. Therefore, after setting the inlet valve to open on No. 1 cylinder front offside, one can, after moving the camshaft 60 degrees clockwise, either set No. 2 or No. 12 inlet valves to open.

With reference to the V12 Rolls Royce Merlin Engine, the alternative six-cylinder firing order 1, 4, 2, 6, 3, 5, is adopted, using the latter Lagonda method of spreading the

load. The Rolls Royce engine crankshafts were designed to use the alternative 6-cylinder

firing order.

I feel that 75 lb. is rather high for a normal running oil pressure when hot. The handbook states that 30 lb. at 30 m.p.h. is a minimum pressure, although 60 lb. is approximately the normal running pressure when hot, depending on the strength of the relief valve spring. 75 lb. at 20 m.p.h. would possibly be a misprint.

Yours sincerely, M. LEO.

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E. TOWNSLEY



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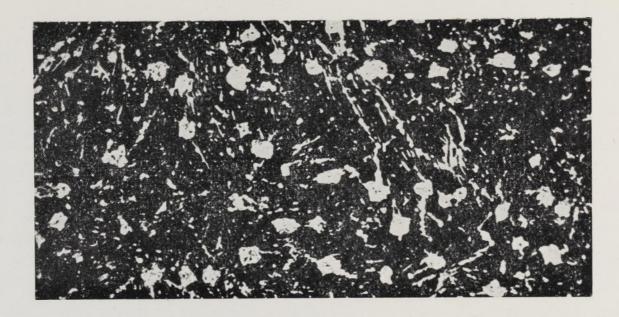
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Every Picture Tells a Story



Our Chairman recently asked "Lepus" for an opinion on the condition of the Rapide's main bearings. An extract from his report follows with a photo-micrograph.

"Tin, antimony, copper bearing metal with moderately severe fatigue crazing... unsatisfactory adhesion in places...loss of angularity of SnSb cuboids through prolonged heating on fast runs . . . normal six-pointed stellate Cu₆ Sn₅ crystals (top centre) modified by backwards excursions at Becketts . . . effect of hammering in penetration of cuboids by tin-copper needles (bottom centre) after Measham Rally . . . "



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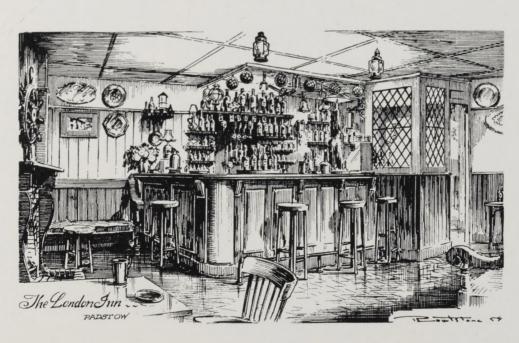
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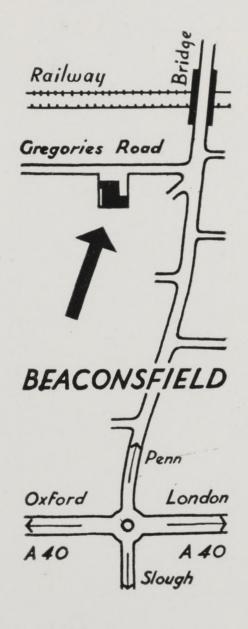
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