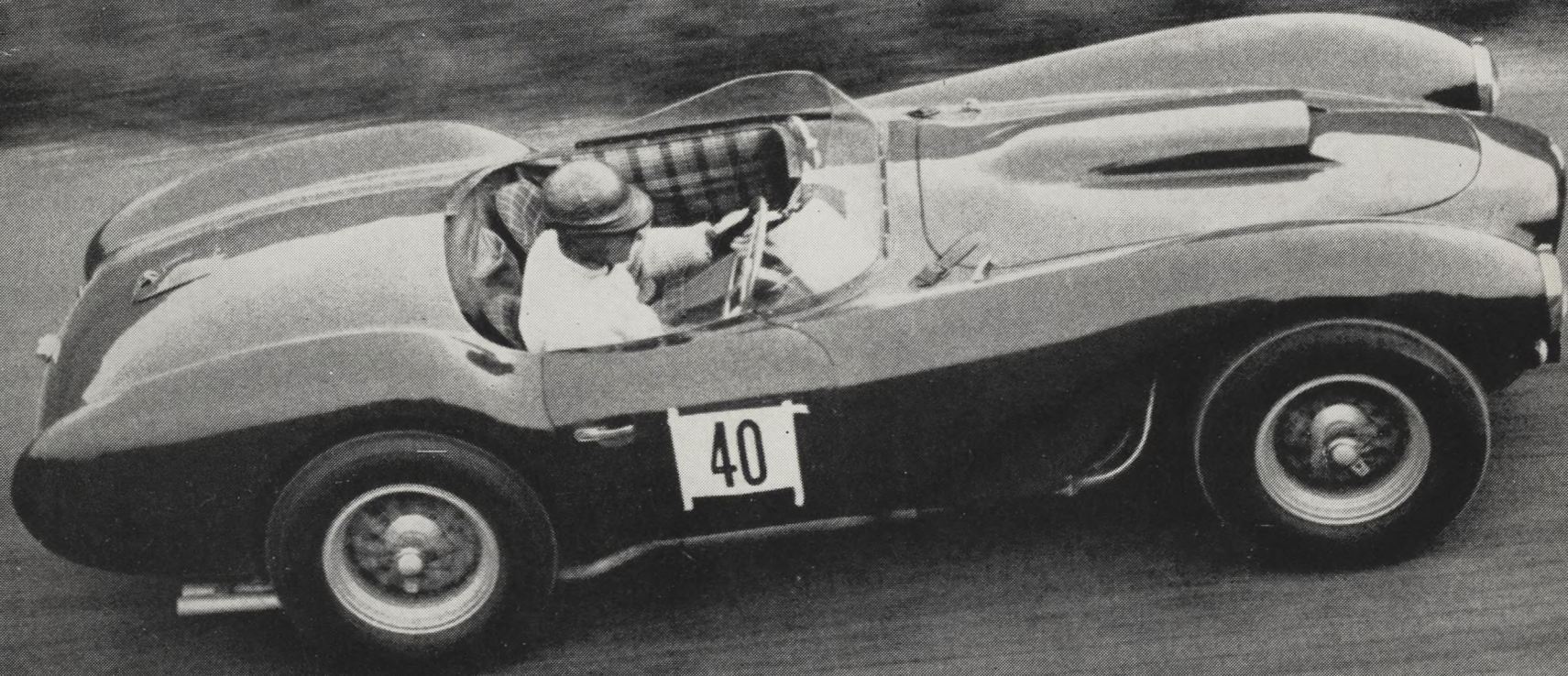


THE *Lagonda*

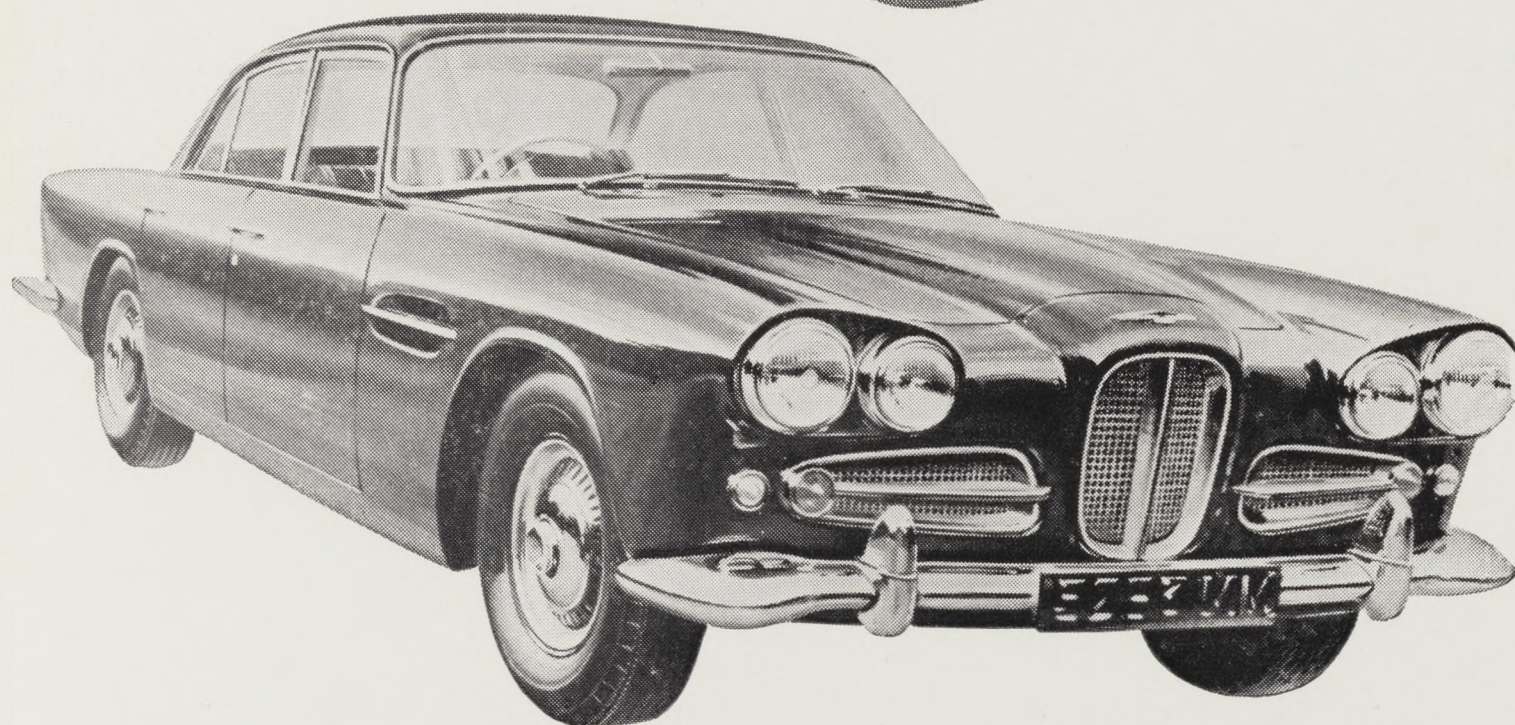
No. 44

Spring/Summer 1963



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Once again



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LAGONDA

RAPIDE



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FRONT COVER

"Full bore"—J. Goodhew in the DB Lagonda V12.
Photo by Jeremy Mason.

EDITORIAL

YESTERDAY LUNCHTIME I BOUGHT A ROLLS-Royce Silver Ghost. It was not until the evening when I had brought it home that I was really able to admire its splendid lines and note with pleasure how well its silver-grey livery toned in with the pale blue of the Type 35 Bugatti I had previously purchased. The Rolls does tend to overshadow its stable mate but then it belongs to an era when things were done on a grand scale.

In both motor cars the driver sits well up giving him a wide and clear view ahead. In this probably lies the clue to the continuing popularity of Veteran rallies and Vintage race meetings. The driver sitting in the semi-open cockpit typical of these earlier cars is clearly on view to the spectating public. His dextrous handling of the controls can be seen and admired or criticised accordingly and watching someone else working hard is a popular British pastime after all. Modern sports and grands prix cars do not provide this same satisfying experience for the spectator. He is lucky if he can see much more than the top of a crash helmet and gloved knuckles on the steering wheel. Modern racing has thus become more impersonal and the racing driver shielded from view is less *en rapport* with his supporters and spectators than his counterpart in a Vintage machine. It all boils down to whether one goes to a motor race meeting to see a particular driver driving a car or a particular car being driven.

Incidentally, I do not know from where readers buy their cars but I always get mine from a little shop just off the Aldwych. Their stock is always reasonably priced—nothing over seven-and-sixpence—and each is less than six inches long, complete in an individual box with a potted history of the car printed on the outside. Despite their size I have my garaging problems, the bookcase is getting a bit full and the time will soon come when the books will have to go!

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

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

With this issue it has been necessary to reform the Magazine Committee (or should it be "working party"?). IAN SMITH, who has so nobly carried the entire editorship for the last few years, and ANN STRATTON, who did the layout, have both with some reluctance decided that their other commitments gave them less and less time to devote to the Magazine and the point had been reached when the job had become a burden and not a joy. Our grateful thanks are due to them both and to Ian in particular for carrying on for so long under difficult conditions. It is clear that no-one, not even a person as big-hearted as Ian Smith, can be Editor, contributor, chaser-up of material, and photographer simultaneously. So rather than subject a gullible volunteer to the same treatment it is hoped that the new arrangement, whereby TONY MAY heads an Editorial team consisting of MIKE GABER (layout), MIKE WILBY (chaser-up), IAN MACGREGOR (Advertisement Manager) and last, but by no means least, JAMES CROCKER as a general overseer, will produce a better and more balanced magazine. The first effort is herewith. (We hope that Ian Smith will find time to read it in peace and quiet for a change!)

* * *

Congratulations to PETER WEBB for being Bow in the Cambridge boat in this year's Boat Race. From an alcoholic view at Hammersmith Terrace it seemed that the power-to-weight ratio of the Cambridge crew must have been more like a 2-litre whilst Oxford's was that of a 4½-litre! Peter, incidentally, did some useful work in helping to compile the last Register of Members.

* * *

Every happiness to DR. W. CREE and his new wife (not that he has any old ones). The Doctor is slowly but meticulously restoring CPC 743, the M45 driven way back by Miss Ellison (see *Motor Sport* for 1935) and was once owned by Leslie Charteris, the author of the Saint books.

It is pleasant to record that CHARLES GREEN, the Midland Secretary, is making a good recovery from a rather nasty motor accident. Having been bounced along the Front at Blackpool he was somewhat knocked about a bit. He was strong enough, however, to point out that he was not driving at the time and it was not the 2-litre anyway. Even after all this he was not allowed to forget his Midland Notes for this issue.

* * *

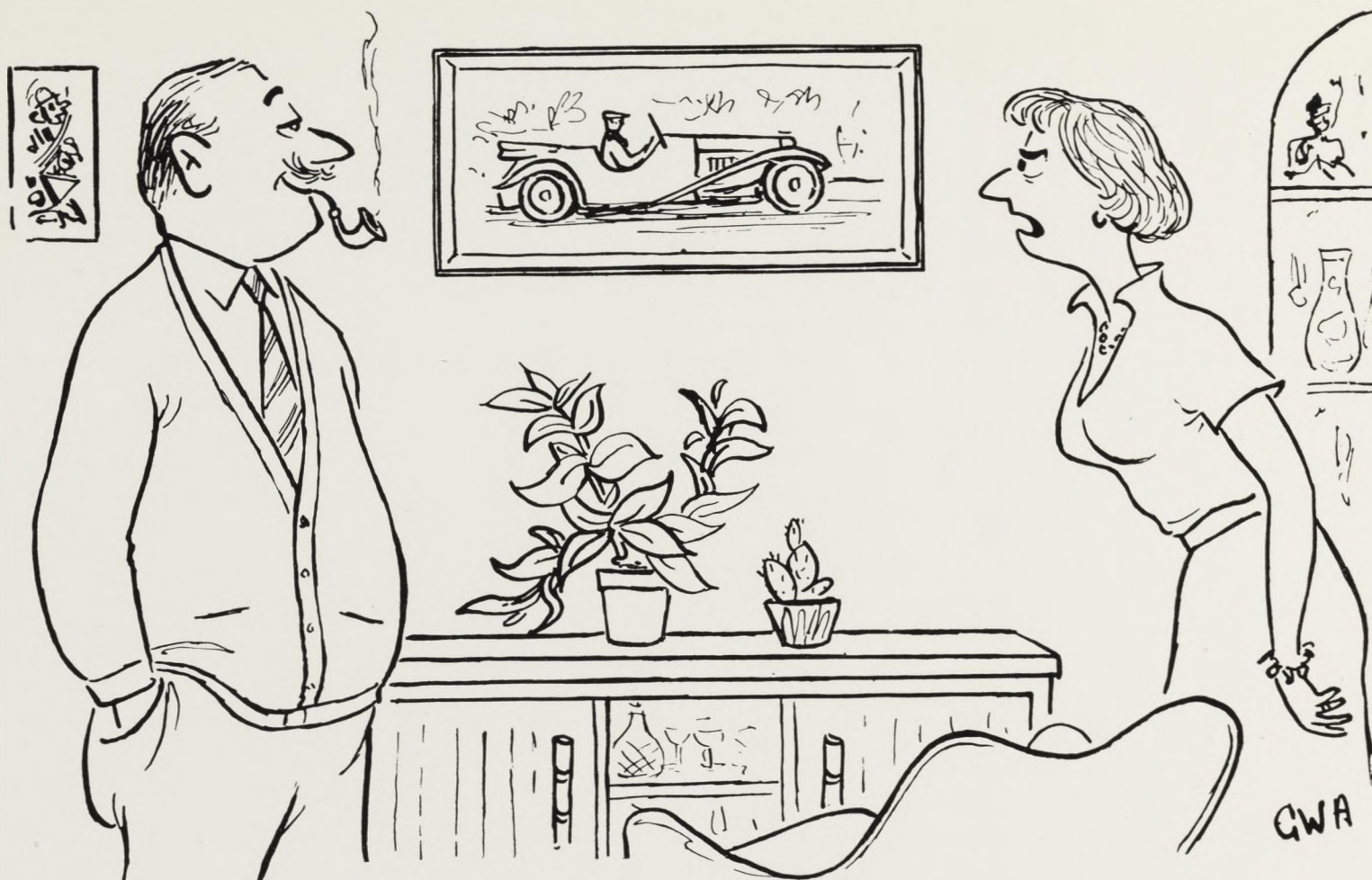
JOHN BROADBANK took time off from building his Special to marry Pauline Adkin. This also meant that Pauline had to take time off from supplying the Hull area members with books on engines and things—"Little Me" does mention a Pierce Arrow—our best wishes to them both.

* * *

The blown 2-litre of MAURICE LEO'S has recently become a film star and has been taking part in a television series. It was also photographed for some stills to advertise a film featuring "the other car"—the publicity man reckoned that no one would tell the difference anyway! Maurice was not a bit impressed by this honour and grumbled that some film star had stood all over his nice clean bonnet boards.

* * *

Members still join the Club from all over the world and now we welcome our first in Holland. In America, BOB CRANE continues the tracking down of Lagondas and they are enrolled in a steady stream. As a diversion from 4½-litres there are now two 2-litres in the States. In New Zealand it is a surprise to find two 11.9's (unless it is the same one that has changed hands), a 12/24, two Rapiers in addition to the various Meadows-engined cars and a V12. We also have a V12 in Paris and the owner, M. Chevalerias, clearly knows good cars when he sees them because in addition he has a 1923 Chenard Walker, 1935 Avions Voisin, 1935 Hispano-Suiza, 1939 Type 57C Bugatti, a post-war Talbot Darracq and a Lancia. He does not say so, but no doubt he has a 2CV Citroen for running about in!



"And what, may I enquire, has become of my Matisse?"

We are very pleased that G. W. Allen will be able to contribute cartoons to the Magazine. His latest effort appears above.

* * *

Brian Roll Productions of 9 Lowrie Park Road, London, S.E.26, have produced an interesting and realistic set of drawings of modern Grand Prix cars in action. They are available from that company in litho print form at 4s. each or 20s. for the set of five. Cars are Lotus 24-V8, Ferrari V6, Porsche flat 8, Lola V8 and Cooper Climax V8. Good value and just the thing for the lounge wall!

* * *

The Enfield & District Veteran Vehicle Society are holding a Rally of all types of veteran and vintage vehicles at Gilwell Park, Chingford, Essex, on Sunday, June 30th, starting at 2 p.m. Full details from Paul L. Harris, 38 Fernleigh Road, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21.

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250cc	3'6
500cc	5'6

COMPETITION

NOTES by Lepus

THE LONG SPELL OF FREEZING WEATHER KEPT us all busy shovelling snow from the drive and trying to prevent various fluids changing to the solid state. As a result, our overhaul programme suffered. The other tasks will have to wait until next winter now that the competition season has started. Your Competitions Sub-Committee, however, has been busy making plans for the season's events. If they seem to follow the same pattern as in previous years, it is because we have to hope they are what you want. Club members are such reluctant correspondents. They seldom reply, even when stamped envelopes are enclosed, and always send in entries after the closing date. The most enthusiastic of voluntary organisers despair if their burning of midnight oil brings no response.

David Dickson (in case you've lost your Blue Book, he lives at 63, Lampton Road, Hounslow, Middlesex) is compiling a new register of marshals. If you come to club meetings and are willing to undertake a simple job like holding a stopwatch or recording results, please let him know. If you are a competitor, send him your friend's name, with a brief note as to the sort of job he (she?) would take on. Otherwise we shan't be able to run the meetings for you.

For those who take part in races or speed events, the R.A.C. tell us that a new code of flag signalling has been brought into force. Briefly, the changes are:—

- (i) A "no passing rule" is in force while the yellow flag is displayed.
- (ii) A stationary yellow flag will be displayed at the two posts preceding a waved yellow flag—the point of danger.
- (iii) A new flag—the green flag—is introduced. It means that conditions on the course are back to normal.

Full details are in *Motor Sport Year Book* available from Competitions Department, Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. The 1963 edition will be on sale before you read these notes.

Transparent tape is not recommended for preventing headlamp glasses flying. Drivers have been stopped by zealous officials who could not see it. You may have noticed too, that it comes adrift in the rain. Personally, I find a cloth cover, secured by strong elastic, much easier to fit and to remove.

Rallyists may be interested to know that a ford having more than six inches of water is to be regarded as impassable. Times from a clock more than fifteen seconds adrift will be ignored, unless competitors are informed beforehand of any corresponding variation from the actual time of day.

In the Queen's Bench Division it was ruled that a tachometer (rev-counter to you and me) is not an acceptable alternative to a speedometer. The law requires an instrument which clearly indicates to the driver his speed in relation to statutory speed limits. You might even coast downhill at 51 m.p.h. through a 50 limit area with the rev-counter showing very little!

London-Languedoc-Sète Rally

The rally—it makes a good motoring holiday and has been reported in previous issues of this magazine—starts from Dover on Sunday, September 1st and goes to Sète, on the Mediterranean, with opportunities for a party at all the stopping places, Vichy, Carcassonne, Andorra and Sète. Lagonda crews (navigating will not be too difficult for the most glamorous girl friend) can be sure of an enthusiastic reception. Richard Hare can put you in touch with the organisers.

Lancia Motor Club Driving Tests, Woolwich Sunday, June 16th

This was a team event with a handicap formula for vintage cars. A report of the event will be made,

DON'T FORGET!

Brands Hatch Sprint Meeting, Sunday, 23rd June

Advance details of this event have been circulated to members and a full report will appear in the Autumn issue of the Magazine.

Silverstone, Saturday, August 3rd

The Bentley Drivers' Club are running the meeting this year. They understand our type of motor car and we should respond with an entry to make an all-Lagonda handicap race. It may well be the only Silverstone meeting for us this year, since the September one is being taken up by other types.

Firle Hill Climb, Sunday September 15th

The Bentley Drivers' Club are our hosts again. We've had more than twenty Lagondas on the hill and, last year, it was over-subscribed. Several people got their entries back and it served them jolly well right for trying to get in after the list closed. Suitable meetings for us are becoming fewer each year. Competitors will simply have to make up their minds in good time or there will be fewer still.

Ask Richard Hare for details of these last two events.

Surrey Treasure Hunt, Sunday, July 14th

A Treasure Hunt has been arranged for club members *driving Lagondas only*. The organisers don't wish to be embarrassed by a number of competitors tying for first place and the questions will be framed with fiendish cunning. Those who do not aestivate, as we are told some members do, should find it the more entertaining.

The event starts at 2.30 p.m. from the Mid-day Sun, Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon, Surrey (Map ref. 170/280½590½) and finishes near The Parrot Inn, Forrest Green (Map ref. 170/124413). It involves 35 miles motoring through the best part of Surrey and four hours are allowed.

Lunch can be obtained at the start before 1.30 p.m. Tables cannot be booked so come early and park your Lagonda in the *cinder* car park so that regular customers, who will be leaving earlier, can get at the Red Barrel and depart without a lot of shunting operations. A selection of sandwiches or an excellent meal can be had at the finish. If you want to book a table, write to the Clerk of the Course, Trevor Peerless, 80 Park Hill Road, Wallington, Surrey. He can also supply all other details.

NORTHERN NOTES

by Herbert Schofield

PEOPLE WHO READ MY LAST NORTHERN NOTES will remember the bit about John Davenport's Monte Carlo Rally LG45R. Well, another ex-Monte Carlo car has come into the area. The writer purchased last October the ex-Burgess/Franklin LG6 saloon. This car competed in the 1950 event finishing 96th, which is creditable indeed for a car which was then 11 years old.

Congratulations to Dearden-Briggs on winning the Michael Trophy for 1962. To Mrs. Viv. Harrison on winning the Thompson. To Iain MacDonald on winning the Northern, and to Jack Read on winning the Committee Trophy. All this proving once again that the North is very much alive and, as in 1961, taking more than a fair share of the Club awards.

Other News

The North Riding Rally is reported separately in this issue.

David Hine of Alderley Edge exchanges his two P.V.T. Bentleys for a beautiful white M45 tourer. He is most satisfied with the car and reports it to be superior in every department apart from comfort and silence. Brian Bentley sells his 14/60 tourer and buys a 3/4½-litre Bentley (so he should with a name like that!). Chris Horridge from Heywood is conducting a most interesting experiment by fitting an old LG45 saloon with a modern Mk.VIII Jaguar engine. We eagerly await the arrival of the 'Jaglag' and wonder how she will go. Alan Ogden, who for the last two years has been moaning about the engine in his M45 tourer which has always sounded perfect to everyone else, has bought an LG45 engine to replace it. Peter Evans, who also owns a handsome M45 tourer, has purchased an M45 saloon as a cheap source of spares. This would appear to be a good idea (if you have the room) for it is possible to buy old Lagonda saloons quite cheaply, the writer for example knows of one complete car which was purchased for the price normally asked for a 4½-litre box, and an LG45 Sanct. III saloon in running order complete with M.O.T. certificate was sold recently for £35.

By the time this magazine goes to press the Northern Dinner and Prize Giving should have been held, I say should have been because the original date, February 22nd, had to be cancelled due to lack of support. This is somewhat surprising as we could normally expect something like 60 to 70 people. However, must have been the weather, or something

Events

Keep an eye on your fixture lists. The next big Northern Event is the Northern Rally (Driving Tests). This year we are including a Concours d'Elegance for Lagonda cars, but not open to previous Lagonda Club award winners. This is something really new for the North and anyone with a respectable motor is advised to enter and at the same time have a go at the driving tests. Members in the South interested in the above please let me know so I can enter your name on my mailing list for regs. when they come to hand.

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: West Towers Country Club, Church Lane, Marple, Cheshire. Second Thursday of each month.

LEEDS: Olde Sun Inne, Colton. First Tuesday in the 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.

NEWCASTLE (Staffs.): Cock Inn, Stapleford. Last Wednesday of every month.

DORSET: Hambro Arms, Milton Abbas. Last Friday of each month.

BECKENHAM (Kent): Three Tuns, High Street. Each Sunday lunchtime.

MIDLAND NOTES

by Charles Green

The monthly meetings at the Cock Inn, Stableford, near Stone, Staffs., continue to attract an increasing number of members. Our democratic attitude of inviting owners of other Vintage cars to all our meetings has been noted, and the attendance now averages between forty and fifty, several travelling great distances. So don't forget the date—last Wednesday in the month at O.S. 110/815387.

In November we were very pleased to welcome Mr. L. S. Roy Taylor, Chairman of the Bugatti Owners Club, who showed us a collection of rare films which were made in the early days of the Prescott hill-climb.

The January meeting included a preliminary showing of the un-edited film which we all made in Cheshire last autumn, and in March Geoff Samson very kindly invited Max Hill, the well-known Midland member of the V.S.C.C. to show his films on which several club members appeared including Maurice Leo, Henry Coates, Harry Gostling, Jack Read and your worthy Chairman, James Crocker.

Congratulations to Jack Read on his award in the Pomeroy Trophy. With such an attractive navigator it is surprising Jack can achieve such concentration!

The "Pom" is, of course, not a motoring event, but an exercise in pure mathematics. However, the variety of winners which appear is complete justification for the formula which takes into account such odd things as the distance of the pedals from the back axle.

New member Michael Podmore has unearthed a Rapier in the Midlands and is busy putting it into good order. Arthur and Margaret Podmore have acquired two M45 saloons, and hope thereby to make one good one. Sounds to me like a lot of useful spares coming available!

C.S.G.

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THE TRUTH THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT ...

THE INGENUITY OF DRIVERS INVOLVED IN accidents in seeking to assert their innocence or at least excuse their errors, is apparently inexhaustible, to judge from this genuine selection of excerpts from Insurance Claims:

1. I consider that neither vehicle was to blame, but if either were to blame it was the other one.
2. I knocked over a man. He admitted it was his fault as he had been run over before.
3. One wheel went into the ditch, my feet jumped from brake to accelerator pedal, leaped across to the other side and jammed into the trunk of a tree.
4. I collided with a stationary tram car coming the other way.
5. To avoid a collision I ran into the other car.
6. Car had to turn sharper than was necessary owing to an invisible lorry.

7. After the accident a working gentleman offered to be a witness in my favour.
8. I collided with a stationary tree.
9. The other man altered his mind so I had to run over him.
10. I told the other idiot what he was and went on.
11. I can give no details of the accident as I was somewhat concussed at the time.
12. A pedestrian hit me and went under my car.
13. I blew my horn, but it would not work as it was stolen.
14. I unfortunately ran over a pedestrian, and the old gentleman was taken to hospital much regretting the circumstances.
15. I thought the side window was down, but it was up as I found when I put my head through it.
16. Cow wandered into my car. I was afterwards informed that the cow was half-witted.
17. A bull was standing near and a fly must have tickled him as he gored my car.
18. She suddenly saw me, lost her head, and we met.
19. A lorry backed through my windscreen into my wife's face.
20. I ran into a shop window and sustained injuries to my wife.
21. I misjudged a lady crossing the street.
22. Coming home I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I haven't got.
23. I left my car unattended for a minute when by accident or design it ran away.
24. The other car collided with mine without giving any warning of its intentions.

Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd.

We have been asked to point out to Club members that the telephone number of the Aston Martin Lagonda works at Hanworth Park, Feltham, is now **Feltham 3641** and not 2291. Their old number has unfortunately been re-allocated by the G.P.O. and the new subscriber has been caused annoyance by getting calls intended for Aston works.

AWARDED **SILVER CUP** FOR BEST COMPLETED PERFORMANCE

IN
THE NORTH-WEST LONDON M.C.C.'s HIGH-SPEED EFFICIENCY
TRIAL AT BROOKLANDS, JUNE 6th.

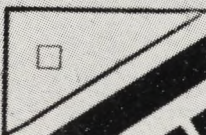
SOME PRESS OPINIONS—

"We were again much struck with the running of the Lagonda. This machine is made by the makers of the once famous tricar, and must have the most efficient engine ever fitted to a cycle car."

"The Lagonda has established a reputation for hill-climbing which is second to none."

"The Lagonda is an ideal traffic machine, the steering is easy, the acceleration is particularly good, and the brakes are powerful."—vide *The Light Car and Cyclecar*.

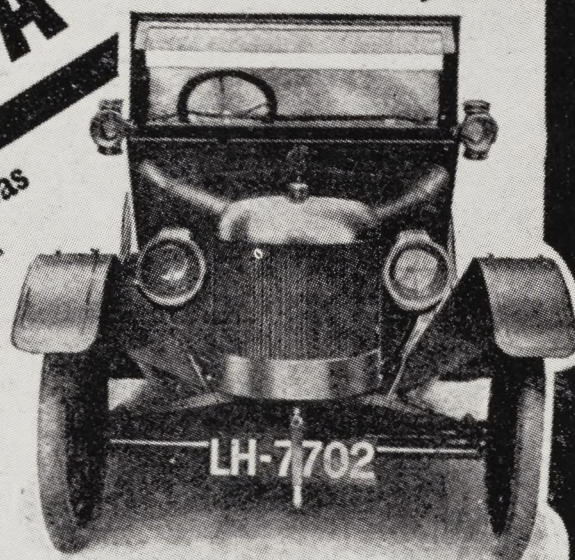
"... an unusually adept combination of the ordinary and the utterly original."—vide *The Light Car*.



ANOTHER LAGONDA VICTORY!

PRICE 140 Guineas
With 3-seater body,
Cape cart hood and screen

PRICE \$150
with 2-seater
convertible
top under.



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TELEPHONE—Hammersmith 575 and 502.
GRAMS—Lagondy, Hammer, London."

Advertisement reproduced by courtesy of the *Autocar*.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? No. I

IT SEEMS UNLIKELY that Charles Elphinstone and others who now own 11.1's would ever think of them as a suitable machine for a High Speed Trial. Still, 49 years is a long time ago, it was June 20th 1914 that this advertisement appeared in the *Autocar*, and maybe even the 11.1 was a quick car in those days. What about the phrase "and the brakes are powerful". As those who have driven 11.1 or 11.9 cars in present day traffic will know one needs a keen sense of anticipation and plenty of room to dodge!

Notice the Sole Distributors at 195 Hammersmith Road. A famous address, later to become the Lagonda Service Depot and finally the home of the Rapier Car Co. who continued to make the Rapier after the Lagonda Co. was reformed in 1935. The doors shut for ever at the outbreak of the 1939 war.

What of the 11.1, has it survived the years? How many proud owners have enjoyed its company. how many other successes did it have; how often did it return to Hammersmith for service? Perhaps we shall never know because LH 7702 is not amongst us—maybe in the corner of a quiet field, resting forever after so many adventures.

M.H.W.

A.G.M. Report

by Arnold Davey

ON THIS OCCASION THE CLUB'S TRADITIONAL luck with the weather on A.G.M. day deserted us, a stormy morning giving way to a threatening looking afternoon, although the rain did stop by bonnet opening time. Even so, there was a larger turnout than ever and for the first time more than a hundred Lagondas were present, 105 to be exact, if you count the Tricar. This was kindly loaned to us by Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd. and Maurice Leo arranged the transport of it to Ascot. It was left on the truck, partly because it would be difficult to unload without ramps but mainly to keep curious fingers off it while everyone was in the meeting. We had also been promised a new Rapide but this did not materialise.

Ben Walker and Don Roberts were to be the judges for the Concours once again, and to give everyone an idea of how they went about the business they put up a notice giving the marking scheme. Out of a possible total of 50 marks, ten each were allowed for engine, chassis, body, interior and ancillary equipment. The judging got under way immediately after lunch so as to have the results ready during the meeting. This started on time with James Crocker making the traditional Chairman's "State of the Club" speech in which he welcomed everyone to the Club's most important function of the year. Reviewing the past year, James said that if the programme appeared very similar to previous years, this was for the very good reason that people seemed to like it that way, but if anyone had any strong ideas about it they had only to speak up. He complimented the Editor and his assistants for the way the Magazine was being produced and asked, unsuccessfully, for volunteers for the job of designing the layout. This has been done by Ann Stratton for a long time now but she is having to give it up. There were a number of other retirements. Richard Paines, ex-Northern Secretary and now living in London,

retired from the Committee, as did 'Mac' Stratton. Henry Coates succeeded Richard as Northern Secretary strictly for one year and accordingly resigned from this post. The Chairman thanked all of these people for their services and called on Donald Overy to give the Treasurer's report.

This year for the first time Donald had produced a profit and loss account as well as the usual income and expenditure account and this gives the average member a clearer idea of where the money goes. There had been three magazines and a Register (which is more expensive) and a slightly increased number of subscriptions. Total profit on the year works out at about one-and-sixpence a head which is about as low as we dare let it be. Donald also gave notice that he will retire from his post at the next A.G.M., giving us a year to find a successor.

Valerie May followed with the Secretary's report. Membership continues to increase, but very slowly and we were going to try an advert in *Motor Sport* as it has been discovered that some owners of Lagondas have never heard of us. Valerie gave out the dates of the Christmas film show and of the annual dinner and mentioned that the long-awaited M45 instruction books are still with the printers.

The Competition report was next on the agenda, given by Richard Hare and starting with the announcement of a new event to be held in conjunction with the Bentley D.C. This was to be a novices' rally and much thought had gone into the definition of 'novice' so that the entrants really would be new. (They must have overdone it as the event was subsequently cancelled due to lack of entries.) The Border Rally and Bernard Raine's Yorkshire event were now fully established and in fact the 'centre of gravity' of competition in the club seemed to be shifting northward because southern members do not seem to be as active as their numbers would lead one to expect. However, some members are still very keen indeed and Richard read out a letter he had received from Bryn Edwards which showed just how keen you can get. The epidemic of resignations now claimed another victim as Richard announced that this was to be his last year as

Competition Secretary and the club had better find a replacement.

No replacement was called for by the next speaker, for as Ivan Forshaw said, "I am become a hardy annual" after seventeen years as Spares Registrar. He apologized for any delays in answering letters and admitted that he might be partly to blame because he writes such long letters, but pointed out that as he rarely had any knowledge of his correspondent's mechanical ability he had to start from first principles, which takes time. Ivan gave the meeting some snippets from letters he has received, which vary from abstruse discourses on camshaft overlap angles to the one which said, "The ignition leads on my V12 appear to have got mixed up. Does this matter?" He referred to the famous patch of Lagondic oil outside his house which at the peak of the season managed to attract eighteen visitors in one week and to the distances some members travel to come to the A.G.M., notably James Whitehead and Ian Chenoweth, both from Australia but meeting for the first time at Ascot. The spares position continues to be good and Ivan is now having made some quantities of new parts—watch the magazine for details.

(See this issue. Ed.)

The results of the Concours were given out at this point and were as follows:—

Class 1 (previous winners): Iain Macdonald, LG45

Class 2 (others):

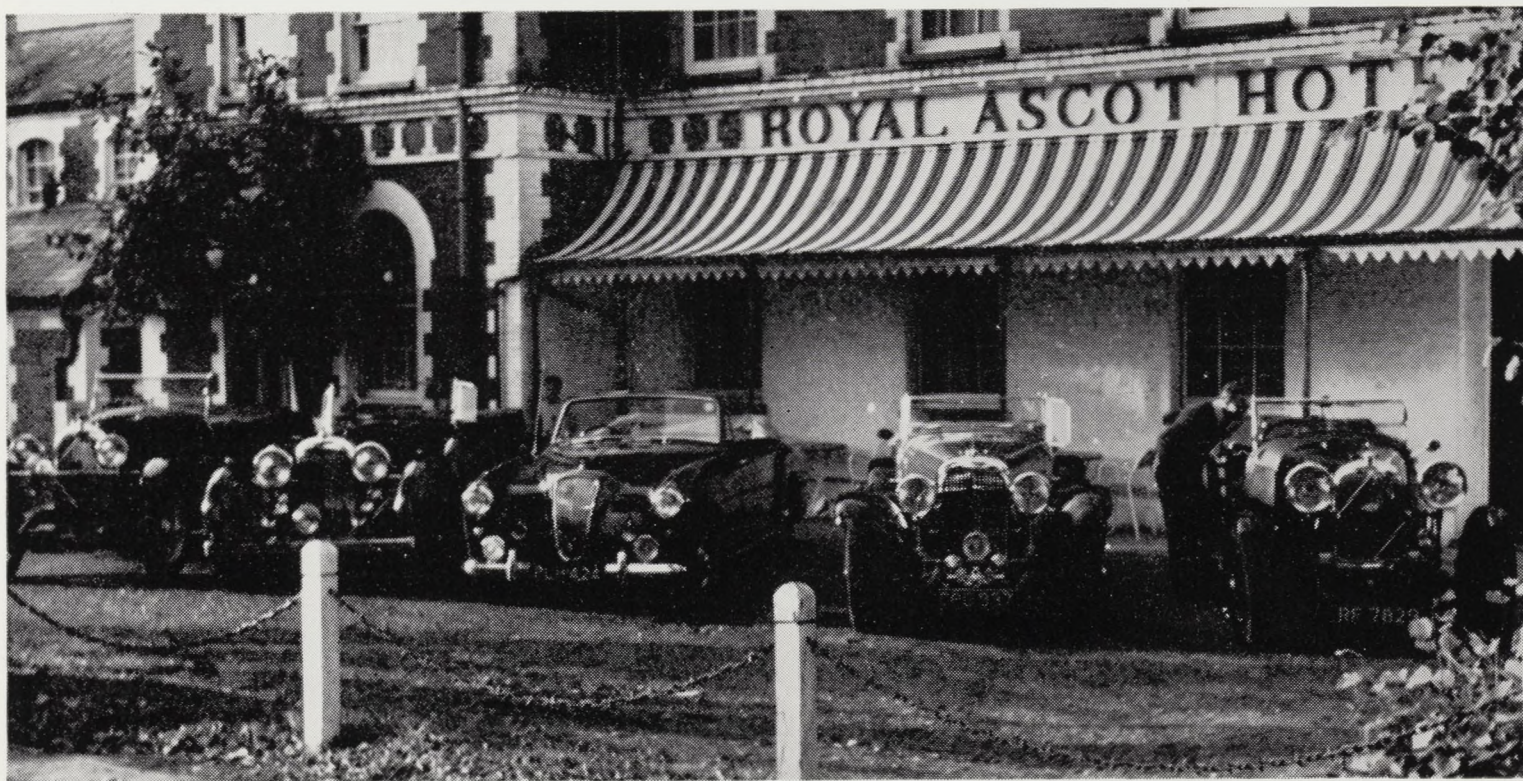
1. J. W. King, 2-litre, 41 points
2. C. E. Peerless, 2-litre, 39 points
3. I. R. MacGregor, M45R, 38 points
4. J. H. Lancaster, DB3L, 37 points

Highly commended: T. J. Peerless, 2-litre, 36 points

As you see, a very close thing.

The election of club officers came next, with James Crocker re-elected Chairman and Herbert Schofield elected Northern Secretary. The Committee, in addition to the re-election of Harry Gostling and the return of Mike Wilby, welcomes four new faces, David Dickson, Iain McGregor, Jeff Ody and Duncan Westall.

At the conclusion of the agenda there was an informal 'any other business' and Harry Wareham took the opportunity to try and get some support for the November Rally which was to have three starting points and



Ascot line-up

Photo by Richard Hare.

be admirably arranged so that the day's drinking would not be interfered with. James Whitehead described the Australian Lagonda scene and explained that, due to the distances involved, the members hardly ever met but they were all prolific letters.

In closing the meeting James Crocker said that this was the last time we should be at the Royal Ascot Hotel as it was to be pulled down and he asked everyone to look out for somewhere suitable for next year and let Harry Gostling know if they found it. The place must have a large hall, and enormous car park, a licence, serve lunches and teas, be fairly cheap and be somewhere near Oxford if possible. Well, now you know what to look for.

A DO-IT-YOURSELF NORTHERN PARTY

by BETTY RANGLES

BY THE TIME THIS IS PUBLISHED, IN THE glorious heat of an English summer, it will be unbelievable that our Annual Northern Party was postponed for a month due to snow-shovelling sickness and generous avalanches in the passes over the Pennines. However, we Yorkshire tykes, already worked up into the party mood, decided to entertain the nomadic Lagondarites already gathering at our house unaware of, or despite, the weather.

Several hours over a hot stove and many phone calls later, saw our house brimming with the usual Lagonda mixture of conversation, plus food and drink, a preview of the 1962 film and a collection of John Turner's colour slides from previous events.

As usual, the men immediately launched upon typical car-talk, whilst we touched on most other subjects. Ian Smith was still bemoaning the lack of Lagondas in Grantham since Mr. Marples drew his by-pass around it; and an occasional snippet came through the

smoke haze—"took 2½ gallons of oil and then it was only half full"; "practically square exhaust valves and only running on two cylinders"; and something that came over to unappreciative feminine ears as "another thou. off the floggle-toggle and it cured the camshaft"; or: "... the tappets (or did he say poppets?) fixed in next to no time with a spot of glue and some sponge rubber—good for another 50,000 miles". And still more worrying I overheard in one of those lulls in the conversation.... "and woodworm too, had to strip her down and spray the whole back-end...."

But what about the ladies? The oft-repeated pattern of talk at pub-meets and other events where we gradually boil up into a state of animated animosity as husbands and boy-friends find it essential to dive under bonnets to count and examine every nut and bolt. The way we are expected to navigate with those eyes in the backs of our heads, read maps held upside down, find invisible clues, get all the turnings correct first time *and* cope with the kids and the dogs, calls for a race of superwomen. From the female side scraps of conversation such as these were heard: "... the point of having one's hair set only to arrive in an open 2-litre looking like a frozen fish finger in a North Sea gale"; or more subtly.... "Well, was it his wife or...." Then comes the plaintive bleat, "Why don't we go in the Mini, so much more comfortable and you do know that you are going to get there." And: "I feel so sorry for his wife, since he got it she has not seen him from one meal to the next". We all know the classic male reply to this is: "Well, she does know where he is and what he is up to." Enough to make you scream.

Reluctantly, with reminders of baby-sitters still sitting, the party eventually broke up with conversations to be continued at the official party in March. Funny thing though, when we saw them off through our drifts of frozen snow there was not a Lagonda in sight—nothing but a miscellaneous bunch from the all-purpose hygienic VW to the instantly inflatable post-war Bentley saloon. Perhaps Lagondas are strictly for taking to little pieces and talking about?

NORTH RIDING RALLY

by Henry Coates

One of the navigators has said what he thought about the Rally. A few words about the navigators from the management—incidentally, I wonder if the member who murmured something about oughting to marshal will still think the same next March? I think it would be a perfectly splendid idea if he ran it and let us compete!

Mixture as before, but more controls and tighter timing, and two more clubs invited. M.G. not only took part but provided much valuable help. Jaguars entered, but one of their people unfortunately had 'flu. Iain Macdonald flew to South Africa and entered from there, but was unable to get back in time. The new North Hon. Sec. had pump trouble, and passengered instead. So some score of post-war cars started, including Peter Bilton in his nice 3-litre Lagonda, Dr. Turner in his VW and Mrs. Harrison in the M.G.

Of the pre-war class, all but two Bentleys were "ours". Alvis internal communications broke down and the invitation appeared in a news letter three days AFTER the Rally. That did not prevent two of their members—Halliwell and Newton—marshalling to great purpose. We are most grateful to them. Frank Sowden brought his magnificent 8-litre. He is now Northern Chairman of the Bentley D.C. and has always supported our events. The other Bentley was a Derby edition driven by one Veevers. He had an unfortunate argument with a stone wall, but despite spending all Sunday making good the damage he claimed extreme enjoyment and almost entered for next year on the spot. Davenport and Dearden-Briggs represented the other side of England, Rider came from Doncaster, Colquhoun came from what WE call the North in his good looking 2-litre while the Lower East, as it were, brought out Townsley, Winder and Paterson. Winder's 2-litre saloon was off form—it has subsequently come to light that the valve timing was

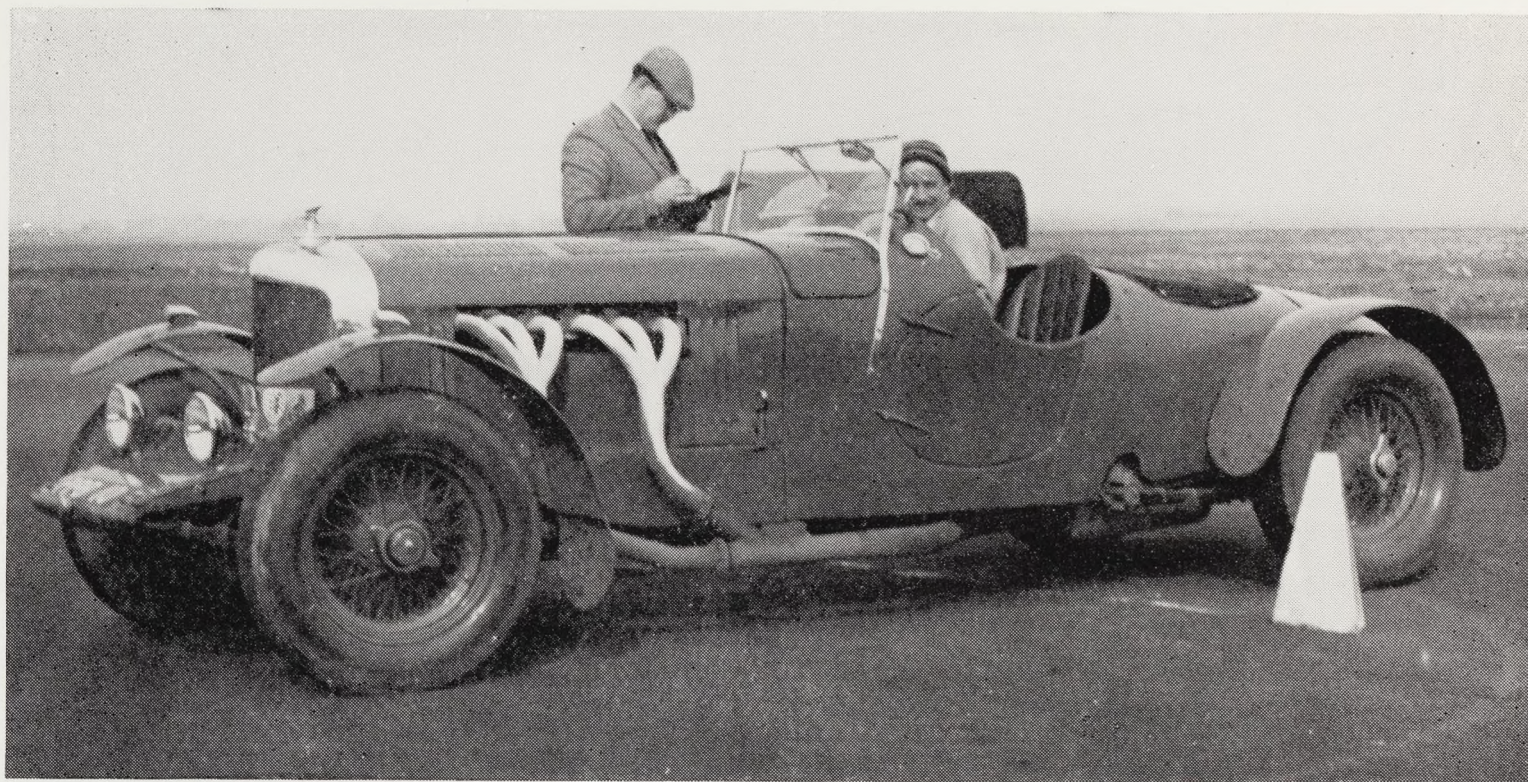
approximate in the extreme. Paterson swapped his Morris 1100 for the evening for Coates' 2-seater—and made his sister navigator rather ill! The Townsley machine improves in looks, but still seems to have an outsize gremlin incorporated.

Sowden had an almost clear round in the Bentley. Dearden-Briggs lost most of his marks on one section—Davenport got so far quite well, then an error took him on to rather too white a road, where the car had to be abandoned for the night. Paterson finished comfortably within the limit but missed a couple of controls, while the Townsley gremlin put its oar in (never seen a gremlin rowing?).

As usual in these affairs, members of provincial clubs and "modern car" clubs are a bit more practised as to navigation. There were three completely clear rounds, but most lost time or missed controls, or both. Bilton missed a couple of controls early, but afterwards was well in the hunt. Mrs. Harrison had electrical interruptions after a water splash, but otherwise lost little time.

Marshalling were Dalton, from Cambridge, but with a parental-in-law base at Catterick; Cook from the Far East—we won't flatter ourselves that he came all that way on purpose—Pape in his usual job of Clerk of the Course.

Panic reports of a Bentley catastrophe sent the writer out in a modern to search the most distant part of the course. He was grateful for the sure-footedness but would have preferred more power for the up bits—or a nicer gear change. He was also grateful for the comfort and economy. Needless to say the reports had been exaggerated, and the only casualty found was Townsley's car outside a pub. Thinking the owners might be inside consoling themselves the door was tried, but this only produced a very positive silence from what had been a noisy interior. It was some time before the revellers could be convinced that it was not the police, and the silhouetted figure holding the curtains tight relaxed, and the landlord came out to explain that the occupants of the car had gone home in a taxi. Please, next time, will folks not only send frantic messages when



Henry Coates tells Frank Sowden where to put his 8-litre Bentley. Photo by Dearden-Briggs

they are in difficulty, but send a not-to-worry message when they stop being in difficulty—at approaching midnight it is nicer absorbing liquid into one's person than burning it on a wild goose chase! Not to worry though—the M.G. faction, nearly all of them working in Scarborough Hotels, had kept the waiter going, so personal absorption was not entirely off for the night.

At great expense, we had hired an airfield for the tests next morning—a penalty of virtue this—everyone uses this airfield, but without permission. We have to have permission or we cannot have a Rally.

Test 1 was a variation of wiggle-woggle. Wiggle up, woggle back, then straight there. Of the heavy stuff quickest, quite, Roy Paterson, though Dearden-Briggs wiggled his larger car to great effect.

Test 2. Four garages to be visited once each at own discretion as to order and direction was surprisingly an almost walk-over for the 8-litre Bentley, though Rider and Davenport were not so far behind.

Test 3. Accelerate and brake. Six secs. by the Bentley, equalled only by M.G.A. and T.R.3 in modern class and beaten by one of them; 6.1 secs. by Rider and Paterson.

Test 4. A comic double scissor affair, best aggregate by Dearden Briggs despite a marker penalty.

Test 5. Rather a nightmare—round and round pylons. No doubt this time—Pater-son's test! A clear two seconds better than the best modern—a lovely run!

Back to lunch and sums:

Premier — F. A. Sowden, Bentley 8-litre

Class 1 — B. Dearden-Briggs, Lagonda 4½

Merit — R. Paterson, Lagonda 4½

Class 2 — J. Liddle, Ford

Merit — P. Holmes, M.G.A.

Merit — M. Holliday, M.G.A.

AN AIRING WITH ALVIS, ETC.

TO CLOSE LAST SEASON, SOME OF US TOOK PART in some explorations under the auspices of the Alvis Owners' Club. Starting at Colton—the first Tuesday rendezvous of our Leeds faction—the route led North, and via that jolly climb up White Horse Hill to Helmsley. Thence along the Southern slopes of the North Yorkshire Moors through Hutton-le-Hole, Lastingham, Cropton, with the ultimate goal of ham and eggs at Levisham. Really lovely country, and though the plot was to the usual pattern of finding the right places,

and noting "things" to show one had been there, it was still fun. Such affairs are always interesting—given a little ingenuity and originality in working out. On this occasion no-one had time to spare, though the actual average demanded, if one was not to miss tea, seemed modest in the extreme. The final section almost disorganised several. Casual perusal of the map might indicate that some two miles separated Newton from Levisham. A well navigated crew could indeed achieve Levisham in two miles, but close study of the map failed to show any route passable to four-wheeled vehicles of less than 10 miles. So it was that the writer found himself urging his driver to velocities more comforting to read in road tests than from the passenger seat; and the final climb could have been epic but for untimely baulk by an itinerant natural milk bar. Departing from normal custom the final control was at the tea table—to the mild confusion of the last minute arrivals.

Just to show that our members are not always the also-rans, the three most complete road books were handed in by "us". Unfortunately one of our Kens—Pape—navigated by another Ken—Winder—was delayed too long allaying dehydration at a hostelry on the way, that he was deemed to have arrived too late. The first prize therefore went to Roy Paterson, and second to Mrs. Harrison. Third prize was to be given to the best of the Other Club, and we, with no malice at all, like to think that our hosts had hoped a Lagonda member would have been the recipient. Mrs. Harrison's crew regretted that they had not been sufficiently hardy to have lowered the roof, also that they had not brought a larger vehicle and filled the rear with observant youth, as had Roy Paterson—some of the "things" one had to observe being up aloft or at least not all that readily noticeable to a navigator diligently conning an Ordnance map.

Visitor of Honour must indeed be Mike Wilby, though he did not set out to follow the complete route—rather to have a look at countryside we Northerners are rather proud of. Bernard and Mrs. Raines were there too; also Irene Dunn and John Broadbank—no connection! Thank you Alvis—we will come again.

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ANNUAL DINNER DANCE AND PRIZEGIVING

Held at the Osterley Hotel, 9th February, 1963

THE TICKET READ 6.30 P.M. FOR 7.0 P.M., BUT a quick glance round the bar at 6.35 p.m. revealed only 17 persons anxiously watching the door in the hope of recognising someone. Fifteen minutes later such was the arrival of members and guests that the door did not have time to close. Some came ready and willing for the evening's ordeal while others had obviously been travelling some distance and had yet to prepare themselves, to these especially and not forgetting the "locals" must be given the credit of making this year's date another of Harry's success stories.

Harry Gostling, the brain behind this year's event, is that tall chap who owns Continentals and almost made a habit of winning the Densham Trophy. He has turned his hand to something less fatiguing these last two years and organised the last two very good Dinner Dances. To him, thanks for the effort.

During his speech after the meal the Chairman expressed regret that Mrs. Arthur Fox could not be with us; summarised the Calendar for 1963; invited more to take part in the Brands Hatch Sprint and other forthcoming events, and told an odd story or two but failed to mention the celestial inference regarding the art of navigating. The Prizegiving followed, Mrs. Crocker presenting the trophies assisted by Mike Wilby.

It was a little monotonous to see the same faces up more than once, but they obviously have something the rest of us have not got. The Chairman, J. Crocker, did get a handshake from his wife but no trophy—it's lost. He made an appeal as to the whereabouts of the Car Club Trophy, it went North last year to be presented but no-one can trace it from thereon. If anybody knows where it is, pass it to the Chairman as he has a bare space in his trophy room or wherever you keep those sort of things.

Back to the bar while the tables were cleared and the band tuned up. Some got down to beer while others were on the stronger stuff. Back axles, twin carbs and high lift or something; most were settling down to small-talk but soon resistance to the musical strains lessened and even the most ardent Thursday-nighters were seen to be as skilled with their partners as their cars. In fact it appears that Lagonda owners were as discerning when it came to the fairer sex as with other things.

Some wanted the lights low and the band soft—they must have come to talk business—however a compromise was reached such that the band could see and the dancers were not blinded. James Crocker was seen doing a sedate Charleston which showed he (a) did not know how to do it, or (b) was not interested, or (c) could not, or (d) was just not with it. While in the meantime some of the Northern crowd showed that those down South just don't know what dancing means. Another member was also seen and heard behind a microphone explaining to those present how to perform one of those modern dances which went out of date next day—in song. Time went all too quickly and even Mike Wilby only made the floor with about forty minutes to go.

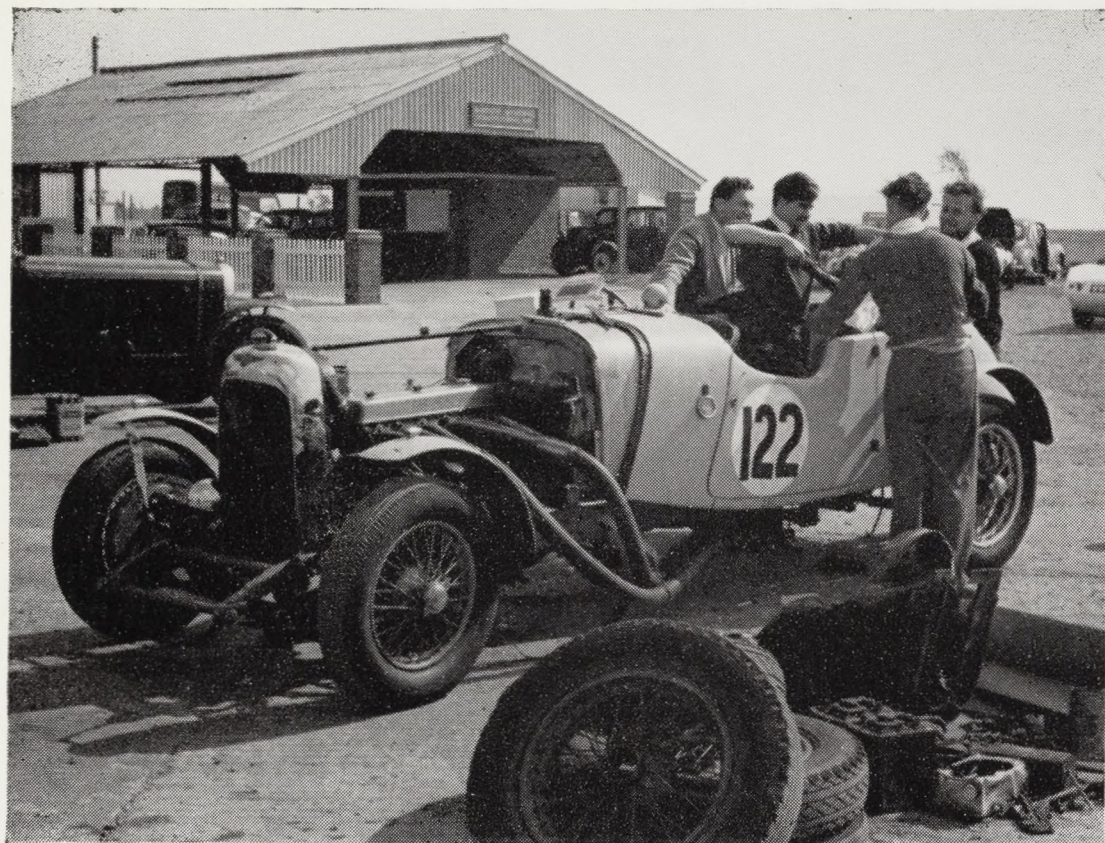
We regret that Mr. and Mrs. Charles Green were unable to be with us, but look forward to seeing them at the same place, February 15th 1964. For the technical or those who want facts—those present numbered 117, Lagondas present approx. six, and the profit was just fractional so everybody was happy. Go ahead Harry and do a similar job next year.

“WALLFLOWER”

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Amazing the odd things one finds in the boot.

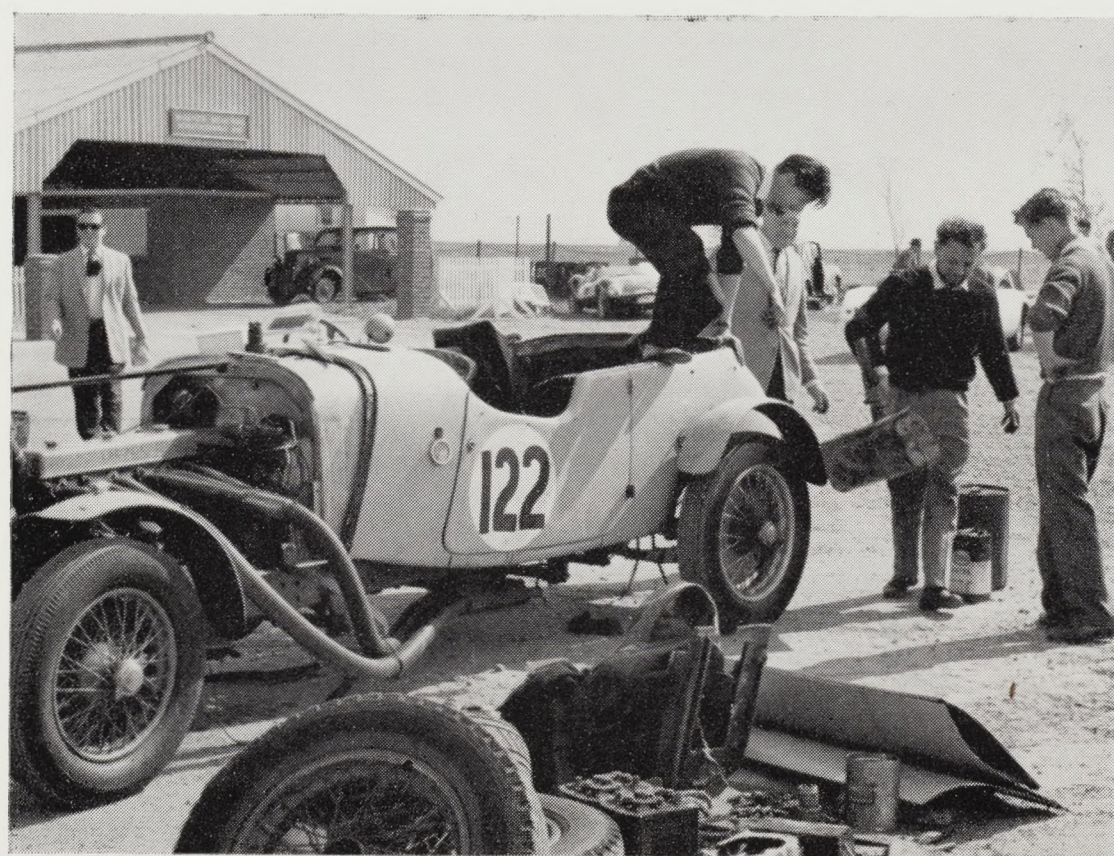
There always was too much wiring on this model.

or How to baffle the Scrutineers

One way to save petrol—throw the tank away!

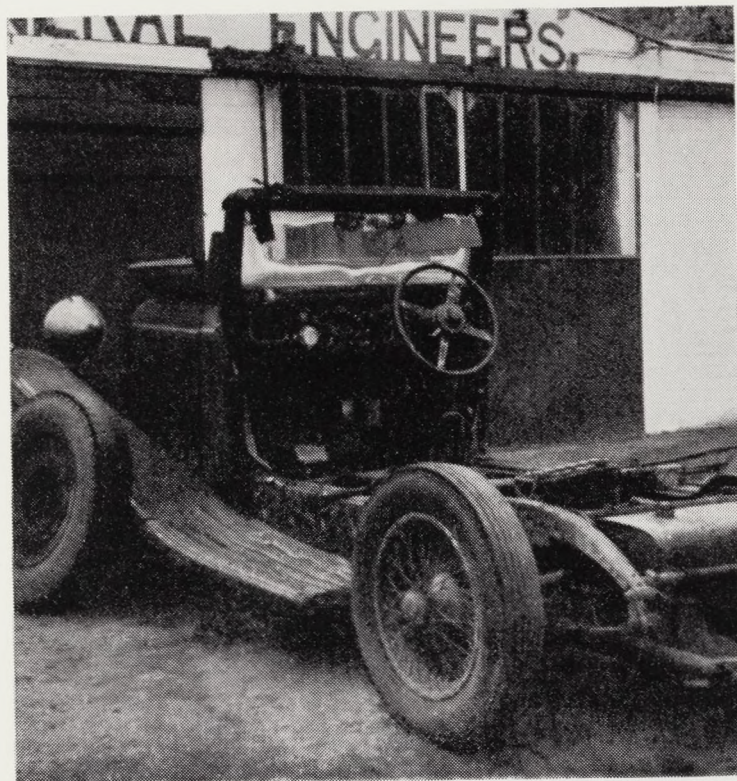
Now is there anything from the front end that can be got rid of?

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and friends**



Photos by Iain Macdonald

THE REBUILDING OF AN M45 LAGONDA



By JOHN SKEFFINGTON

THE CAR IN QUESTION WAS A 1934 M45 Pillarless Saloon with a 4½-litre Meadows engine. I found the car in a garage that deals with Vintage cars, mostly Rolls-Royces. It was in the original state, but in a ghastly mess. The body was one mass of rust, the windows were broken, and the doors were hanging off their hinges all rotten throughout. The wings were beaten in, and all the chrome was corroded with rust beyond redemption. Mechanically, however, there was a different story. The motor, so the garage owner said, "Had been done up from top to bottom". On observing this massive corroding mess, I thought the accuracy of his statement was open to doubt. However, when I turned the motor over with the handle (not missing) I found that the compression was ferocious—I could hardly move it. The garage man then got it running by producing a trolley full of batteries and with only the slightest touch of the button the motor roared into life. As the exhaust system was missing the noise was

fairly impressive even just ticking over. Despite this small point, and the fact that the magneto was (you have guessed it) not working, she seemed to run sweetly enough. We then went for a run, the performance was stunning (so was the noise). We bellowed down the A20 in a cloud of smoke doing an impressive 60 m.p.h. There was one small incident which demonstrated the car's inability to stop, or even retard speed, using the brakes. We arrived back green from the fumes, shaking from the above incident, and with our ears buzzing.

After this demonstration I decided that with all the plugs working and fitted with a sports body this car could be very good indeed. After a fortnight's haggling I beat the owner down to £50. I began the restoration work in February 1961. The first thing to be done was to rip off the old body from the scuttle back and I did this with the aid of a sledge hammer and farm crane. I also threw out the seats and any trimming that was left, plus about a hundredweight of other miscellaneous junk. Cleaning down began next; I used about ten gallons of gunk and a dozen wire brushes. Now I could see what I was about. The wheels were sent away to be shot-blasted, sprayed, repaired and balanced. I also had to find a spare—this was done with difficulty, after some weeks' hunting. Five new tyres were purchased which set me back a bit, and gave me a taste of things to come. Next I tackled the suspension, all the shock absorbers were in the last stages of decay, so they went the same way as the body. I managed to obtain a new set of Andre Tele Control shock absorbers and I also bought two new friction pad shocks for the front suspension. On the rear I put two Armstrong telescopic shocks, having welded a bar across the chassis to take them. The suspension is now rigid and it is possible to leap up and down on the rear tow bar, and there is about three inches give. I also cleaned down the springs, and bound them with sticky tape. The brakes were next on the list. I relined them, and adjusted the cables. The servo was dismantled, freed from rust, reset, and a few new bits supplied. The brakes now work as well as they ever did, which unfortunately is not very well by modern standards. However, I now removed the

petrol tank and cut it open (after filling it with water on account of the fumes) and shovelled out all the sand, shale, nails, bottle tops, twigs, stones, etc. After rewelding the seam I put it back after blowing the fuel lines. The next job was the motor, I decided to leave the head on as there seemed nothing wrong. I feel it is best to leave 'sleeping dogs lie'. The main fault was the ignition, so I sent the magneto away to be rewound and repaired. I also fitted new plugs, points, coil, condenser and leads, and the ignition was then reset. Carburettors were dismantled, cleaned and polished, the gaskets and needles were replaced. After this the motor ran very well indeed and has given me no trouble. I got a firm of plumbers to run me up a copper exhaust system, this gives the motor a wonderful note.

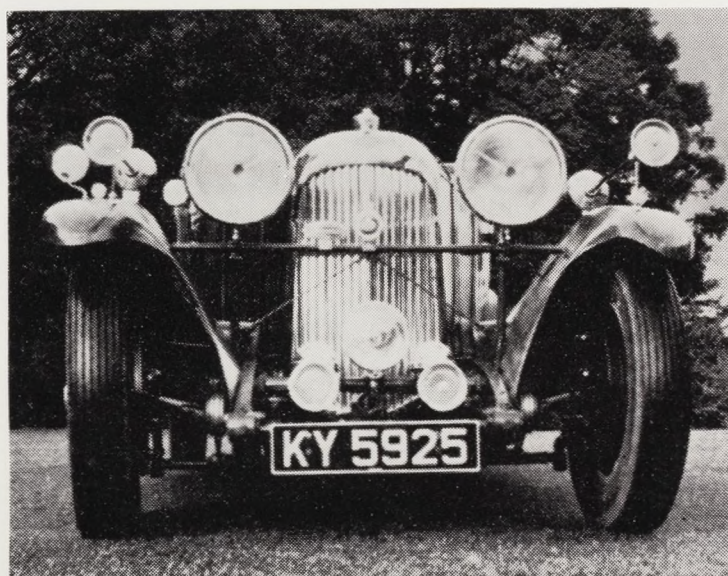
I then turned my attention towards the instruments. I found that none of them, with the exception of the ammeter, was working. I sent them away to Smiths with the petrol tank float unit and they were returned eight months and twenty-six letters later. Smiths had, however, done a very good job as all the instruments had been rebuilt and even the faces had been re-done to perfection. In the meantime I had painted the chassis and had the bright parts re-chromed. Having got this far the car was in a reasonable shape, but my bank account was not. However, having gone so far I had to press on.

My next step was to get a new body built. I approached four different coachbuilders about doing the job, their tenders were startling. For example, "We might be able to knock up something, strictly austerity, you understand, for around £2,000". Another firm said they would do it for about £1,000 if I supplied my own blueprints. In the end I found a firm in Tenterden who said they would build me a body for £250 following my plans. The car was despatched and the chassis was fitted with a very strong two-seater body panelled in aluminium, with no doors or double curves. The frame was made of steel, and covered with oak. It is very well built and the general effect is pleasing. I had a folding windscreen made up for £35 and the back wings had to be rolled specially. The car was then driven back to my home under its own steam. I had a bench seat

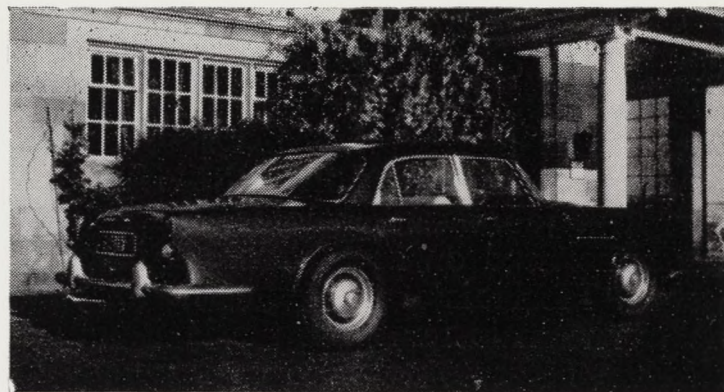
made up together with an extra five sq. yards of p.v.c. for the trimming. I then built the battery boxes in the well that was used for the rear passenger's feet. These were made of plywood and covered with the tool trays. The interior was then trimmed and this was done using the spare p.v.c. covering a hardboard backing. No easy job I can tell you, if one has had no previous experience of such work. I next fitted all the chromed parts back on including four horns. I have a pair of the Lucas long horns on the wings, and a pair of the Lucas pre-war horns on the front. The wiring of these was quite complicated as it involved relays. However, I was by now quite proficient at wiring as I had had to rewire the whole system on the car. I now fitted new runners on the running boards which took a long time, but was worth the effort. I am now in the process of having the car sprayed. The only thing left to do is to have a roof, frame, and weather equipment fitted. Up to date the restoration has taken two-and-a-half years, and cost around £700, including purchase price.

I hope to have my car on the road this summer, but I said the same thing last summer and the one before.

My family in the past have been keen Lagonda fans. My aunt had a V12 in 1938 when she was eighteen, and my father also had one just before the war. My aunt has only just sold her Lagonda because the spares situation in Eire was impossible, also the Irish roads kept getting in the way of the sump.



THE LAGONDA RAPIDE



Reprinted from the *Wellington Journal & Shrewsbury News*, Oct. 27th, 1962, by courtesy of T. G. Leake, Esq.

JUST over a year ago much excitement prevailed in the David Brown group of companies when it became known that he was to re-introduce a Lagonda after a lapse in production of some four years.

The car when it was announced in September, 1961, turned out to be a very handsome, large saloon using platform chassis, De Dion rear axle, Superleggera (super light) bodywork styled by Touring of Milan, an enlarged version of the Aston Martin DB4 twin o.h.c. 6-cylinder engine using larger bore wet liners to 3,996 c.c. capacity, and an interior finished in the highest quality of everything upon the Aston Martin theme.

Since that day, following 12 months of continuous development, only a handful of these cars have been built and sold, and I am extremely grateful to Mr. John Wyer, technical director and general manager, and Mr. R. Jackson-Moore, sales manager of Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd., for the privilege of being one of the very few people to be able to borrow one of these desirable pieces of machinery for road test which I did early last month.

Since the original car was produced and shown at last year's Motor Show, some development work has taken place on the car, including the redesigning of the interior by the late David Ogle. In place of the cowed facia containing the instruments in a leather-finished surface there is now a sumptuous wood-grained dashboard with, quite frankly, everything the driver needs for information

and operation right where it can best be found, with the sole exception of the four electric window controls which, grouped around the ignition switch in the centre of the facia, are not nearly as convenient as they might be.

Quick off the mark

Now the Lagonda Rapide is a big car—some 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ ft. long, 5 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide, and weighing some 34 cwt. (dry). But—it motors!! Quick off the mark, with massive acceleration, as one would expect from a race-bred 4-litre engine and final drive ratio of 3.77 to 1, and this quickness of acceleration is one of my most vivid memories of this car—particularly the pick-up in speed from 90 to 120!

Another impressive recollection is of the firmness and surefootedness of the ride, both in the front seat and as a passenger in the back. Suspension is transverse wishbones, coil springs and large telescopic dampers at the front and De Dion rear axle on parallel trailing links, located transversely by Watt linkage, with transverse torsion bars and double-acting piston-type shockers. The Lagonda is one of the very few cars nowadays to use the De Dion method of carrying the back end, and the result is a leachlike standard of road-holding, which, with the precise, high-g geared (though on the car tested, relatively stiff) steering, allowed a considerable amount of verve to enter the traverse of long distances, both upon motorways, and main roads across country. Fierce cornering pro-

duced neutral steering characteristics and an absence of roll, while at no time did any protest emanate from the Mark II Avon Turbospeed tyres.

1,400 miles

I am indeed grateful that I was able to use this very rare car for an important function on the west coast of Scotland, as this resulted in a total test mileage of 1,400 and, even though it spanned a week-end when Mr. Marples' 50 m.p.h. limits were in operation for much of the journey south from Carlisle, a respectably high average speed overall was maintained. Producing a claimed 236 b.h.p. at 5,000 r.p.m. and transmitting the drive through a three-forward speed automatic transmission with torque converter, and manual hold in the intermediate ratio, the engine is never over-taxed. Maximum speed was a true 125 m.p.h. (long stretches at 120 on the M1 could be undertaken without qualm) while the intermediate hold, either by means of the steering column selector, or by using the kick-down on the throttle, allowed an overtaking speed up to 87 m.p.h. The throttle linkage is adjustable for pedal pressure, which is just as well, as the car in question had the system set up hard enough to tax the leg muscles of a professional weight-lifter

Breathtaking

The engine is fed by two twin-choke horizontal Solex carburettors which allow an idling speed as low as 250 r.p.m., with the transmission beginning to pick up at 350 r.p.m. This makes for easy trickling in traffic queues without snatching, and from then on the surge of power is quite breathtaking! In the intermediate range there is a certain amount of gear whine, while the transmission can also be heard within the car, particularly on the over run. A certain amount of exhaust roar was apparent on rapid acceleration and this, coupled with the taut feel of the suspension, produces an effect of driving an extremely sporting saloon.

Plenty in reserve

With performance such as this car is capable of, the braking system must be to match, and so it is. Servo-assisted discs all

round pull the car steadily down from maximum speeds. Repeated applications still left plenty of vacuum in reserve, and the system inspired the greatest confidence, particularly as the passengers do not get flung about as the car pulls to a halt steadily and evenly without curtseying. It was noticeable though that the passengers are not provided with grab handles or straps, although the lack of them was only really felt on violent turns.

The ride in the back, although the rear seat on the car tested was not standard, is extremely steady and comfortable even at near maximum speeds. No pitch or sway was experienced and, in fact, I was even able to write notes while being driven extremely rapidly over minor roads. But for the back-seat passengers, there really is a premium on leg-room, even with the infinitely adjustable front seats in the middle of their fore and aft setting, and this lack of space is aggravated by the drop-down tables in the front seat squabs (one kept dropping every time we went over a humpback).

The Rapide is a car in the true Lagonda tradition of the sporting style carriage for the enthusiastic driver and the passenger who likes to be taken from point to point, distance no object, at a high rate of knots. But even at a gross price, including purchase tax, of £4,951, the car suffers from one or two most irritating shortcomings. For instance, the large lockable lid to the glove compartment opens to reveal a space capable of taking, just, a 4-oz. bar of chocolate—on edge. The fuel gauge could not be relied upon with its rather vague indication of contents, and with the car consuming premium fuel at the rate of a gallon every 14 miles, a tank capacity of 16 gallons, including a reserve of three, is just not enough. The petrol tanks are on each side of the cavernous boot interconnected by a large bore pipe and filled via a single orifice in the rear deck which has the cap released electrically from the dashboard. The battery is carried under the rear seat cushion, with which I'm afraid I'm not in favour.

To sum up, a person who is going to spend nearly £5,000 on a motorcar is going to demand motoring of a very special nature, with reliability, finish and performance of the highest order. The Rapide definitely approaches this ideal, though the alloy body

does not, I think, provide the best possible medium for good finish with large areas of unrelieved smooth surface which show up, startlingly, both slight strain ripples (in spite of the multi-tubular construction whereby none of the body strains are taken by the alloy sheet which is wrapped over the tubes) and the slightest scratches, even those caused during washing.

The Rapide on the stand at the 1962 Motor Show was fitted with extra sound-deadening material, has a slightly larger glove locker, and is now claimed by the works to record a fuel consumption of 17 m.p.g. on normal touring, an increase of some 14%.

Viewed from a distance, the Rapide has a simple form without any accent being placed upon penetration by streamlining, while aesthetically many would not agree with the front end treatment. I myself would like to have seen a grill on the lines of the Aston

Martin DB4 (from the same stable), coupled with the four headlamp arrangement (which gave ideal illumination for all conditions we met). But then, as I said a couple of weeks ago, we would then be having yet another car looking exactly like one of its contemporaries from a distance!

For my money, the optional manual gearbox with floor change and synchromesh on all four forward ratios would enhance this car considerably, the selector on the car I used not being, to my mind, one of the best. But then, at £5,000, you want to be a bit choosy

And as Mr. David Brown himself said when the Rapide was first announced—"It has long been my ambition to produce a car which would be equally suitable to drive or be driven in There is such a similarity between modern cars that one is fearful of the day when all will look, and be, alike"

"Trafficator"



Our former Editor, Ian Smith, had to get his Lagonda washed and polished when he acted as chauffeur for his friends on this happy occasion. He is now reported to be suffering from polisher's elbow.

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“MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE CAR, WHO IS THE BIGGEST NIT BY FAR?”

APRIL 1962. I WAS WORKING LIKE MAD reassembling the engine of my 16/80, the first engine that I have ever stripped. After an expensive complete overhaul, a repair specialist had left a big end loose, and the engine had vibrated like mad and clapped out big ends, small ends and crankshaft inside 3,000 miles. So I paid for a mechanic's assistance to remove and install the engine, and stripped it down myself. Once installed the re-overhauled engine started, but only with eighteen volts across the starter. Still it ran well and I started to run it in carefully.

Three weeks and 200 miles later the car headed for the Southern Rally driving tests at Ruislip. The brakes were badly out of adjustment and only about 30% efficiency was available when the pedal was forced down to the floorboards. It made driving in the tests rather difficult. One test involved driving round the circumference of a circle and then entering a 'garage' placed just inside the circle with the entrance facing outwards. The girl friend at the time took a series of photographs throughout the test:—

- (a) sliding around the arc of the circle and smiling impudently at the camera;
- (b) arms working furiously correcting the slide and pointing the car towards the garage;
- (c) sitting inside the car with the remains of the garage around me having completely misjudged the braking and demolished almost the entire garage.

One thousand miles later came the Club Sprint at Brands Hatch. As well as the 16/80 I entered my 1952 2.6-litre which has a superbly smooth engine. The 2.6 got through scrutineering O.K.; but the 16/80 did not. Unfortunately the car is rather scruffy and it immediately gets a 100% looking over by the

scrutineer who invariably finds some trifling point. They are extremely fond of testing the throttle return spring by opening and closing the throttle with the result that the linkage works loose whilst driving. During practice the throttle linkage came adrift due to centrifugal force generated on Druids. The car coasted to a halt besides the Clerk of the Course who told me to have it re-scrutineered. All wrong because the R.A.C. regulation merely stipulates that throttles must close if the linkage breaks; and so the car was quickly re-passed by the scrutineer. He did, however, indicate that if I could not drive into the scrutineering bay without catching the car wings on the gate, I should not really be allowed on the track.

At the end of July came a rather interesting hill-climb at the Valence School for Spastic Children near Westerham. All the proceeds go to the school, and it gives the children unusual entertainment.

On August 8th the 2.6-litre was entered for the B.D.C. Silverstone. I had just fitted a Smiths Electronic Tachometer and I was interested to see if it would agree with the speedometer. On the M1 with three people aboard it did 26 miles in 20 minutes. Speeds over 90 m.p.h. were shown by both the tachometer and the speedometer; uphill as well as downhill; and without using full throttle. My car was passed by scrutineers but Colin Bugler's 2-litre was rejected due to its steering box. As this was too big a job to rectify in the paddock, Colin was forced to spectate all day. Very disappointing after Colin had driven to Silverstone from Southampton the previous day. The 2.6 went well on the circuit reaching 80 m.p.h. just before the corners, and the thermo-plastic brake-linings proving their anti-fade properties. After practice the Clerk of the Course sent for me. Apparently he had reports of reckless cornering from round the circuit. Well, I cannot help it if the 2.6 pitches and rolls a bit. His final words were: "If during the race I am forced to black flag you, don't take offence, just come in quietly." When the race started, I got the starter's flag together with Peter Davey (Rapier). The 2.6 had the slight edge on acceleration and I just beat him into Copse Corner. Out of the corners the

2.6 had a bit more acceleration, but Peter caught up on braking all round the circuit and followed the sliding 2.6 all through the bends. At Woodcote just at the end of the first lap, I took a look in mirror to see which side Peter was trying to overtake. The view in the 2.6's mirror is very poor and by the time I had located Peter's position the 2.6 was off line and going into Woodcote too fast. Chris Hillier was watching just there and he says that my first look of determination changed to extreme fright with big staring eyes visible even through my sun-glasses. Peter Davey whipped through as I took to the grass, no doubt giving the 2.6 a wide berth. Why the black flag did not materialise I do not know; but perhaps as I was now last the Clerk of the Course decided I could quietly crash without hurting anyone else. I finished last with the consolation of being singled out for special notice by the commentator.

Next on the calendar was J.D.C. Silverstone in September. I lent the 16/80 to Chris Hillier for the race and took the 2.6 for myself. Only six Lagondas turned up; Peter Davey (Rapier); Colin Bugler with a Forshawed steering box; Alan Brown (2-litre); and Bryn Edwards with a new M45; but with his old engine. If there were bets on the race, I would have had my money on Alan Brown who, in his second time at Silverstone, was lapping in 1 min. 44 secs. compared with 2 minutes in August. However the organisers obligingly rehandicapped us and gave me one lap start on the 2-litre cars and two laps start over Peter Davey. The time-keepers watched the two Bentley cars in the race and were going to drop the flag when the first Bentley had finished 15 laps. Morley led the Bentleys and hurtled round in his 8-litre. However, going down the back straight he threw away his certain first place by blowing up his engine. The explosion left an opaque grey smoke cloud right across the track. I went into this at about 40 m.p.h. thinking that a car must be burning on the track and praying hard. Williamson in the other Bentley then slowed right down and foxed the man with the chequered flag. I do not know how many laps I did, but towards the end the 2.6 was suffering from brake fade; and, although I passed Bryn Edwards in the pits with a

burst tyre about three laps from the end, he was awarded second place in the race. Colin Bugler again had bad luck and ran a big end on the first lap. Chris Hillier in my 16/80 said that it was the first time at Silverstone that he had time to look at the scenery.

A week later was Firle. I entered the 2.6 expecting a better time than in the 16/80. However, the car hurtled up to 5,000 revs./min. in bottom and then I had to change into second, and into a region of no torque. The car does not get into its stride until about 3,000 r.p.m. and there was just no acceleration.

The final track event was a sprint at Long Marston. This is usually a Go-Kart circuit with sharp bends which made steering the 16/80 hard work. I give the Go-Karts their due in that anyone who wins must have nerve. The circuit is concrete; but, at the edge of the track, the concrete just ends and there is a deep rut. Long Marston had the nicest scrutineer I have met. He was interested in all the cars and showed competitors how to make adjustments. He even referred to the Cutty Sark (16/80) as an old lady.

In November I decided to enter the 2.6 for the Handicap. I let a friend drive and took on the navigation. We were progressing fairly well when the fan belt went slack and the dynamo stopped charging. After a while the lights dimmed and we lost our way. We had to stop and adjust the fan belt which is not the easiest job in daylight, let alone by torchlight with a hot engine. Still, we finished one of the best Rallies I have ever entered.

Thus ended 1963. I had a good time, met lots of people at meetings, got engaged to Sheila in October, and somehow was awarded the Allison Trophy. Thank you, Competition Committee.

RON GEE

Change of address: Please note that all correspondence for Mike Wilby should be addressed to him at 26 Howitt Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

A LONG WAY FROM HOME



In lieu of our American Notes which are held over until the next issue we are pleased to publish this excellent photograph taken by our American representative Bob Crane. All the cars in this imposing line-up are owned by Club members in America. It is interesting to see that the Team car at the end of the row still bears its English licence number.

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SPARES AND TECHNICAL TOPICS

by the Spares Registrar-Technical Adviser

IT IS INTENDED TO RESUME THE ABOVE, IN THE same form as before, as a regular feature of the Magazine. In addition it is hoped that each issue will contain at least one article of purely technical interest, and suitable contributions of this kind will be welcomed.

In general the supply of spares is better than at any time in the history of the Club. Large stocks of used parts in good condition are available for all models, including Rapier, V12 and David Brown 2.6-litre cars. Many important new spares have been specially made, and the following list of such parts for the 2-litre model is an illustration of the scope of these endeavours.

Decarbonisation sets of Engine Gaskets, including exhaust manifold gaskets for high and low chassis cars.

Engine Valves, Valve Guides and Valve Springs.

Valve Spring Compressing Tools.

Pistons and Cylinder Liners.

Sets of Timing Chains and Connecting Links.

Helical Fibre Timing Gears.

Water Pump Shafts and Bushes.

Ball and Roller Races for all parts of the car.

Clutch Steel Driving Plates and Rivets.

Clutch Friction Linings and Rivets.

Clutch Splined Output Shafts and Coupling Spiders.

Greasing Adaptors for Clutch Driving Pins.

Hardy Fabric Universal Couplings for Engine to Gearbox driving shaft—all types.

Hardy Fabric Couplings for Bendix starter drive.

Bendix Starter Pinions and Sleeves, and Male and Female Clutches, Recoil Springs, etc.

King Pins, Bushes and Cotter Pins.

Leather Gaiters for Road Springs, and for Steering Joints.

Spring Shackle Bolts.

Brake Linings and Rivets.

Grease Guns of the pattern supplied originally with the cars, and having connectors for Hexagonal Lubricating nipples.

Moulded Rubber Spats for the bottom ends of front cycle-type wings.

Wherever possible, the above replacement parts have been manufactured by those firms which supplied them originally to the Lagonda company.

BROKEN REAR AXLE SHAFT

Applicable directly to all 2-litre and 16/80 models and to 3-litre cars prior to 1932. Applies generally to later cars of all types also.

The shaft will almost certainly be broken at the root of the splines where it enters the differential movement; the splined portion will remain lodged in the differential after the broken shaft is removed. The quickest and most economical way of identifying the broken shaft, clearing the broken pieces, and putting the car back into service will be to draw *both* axle shafts and remove the axle centre as a complete assembly. Proceed as follows:—

Jack up rear axle securely; remove road wheels; remove brake drums—these are secured by 8 nuts each, and in the same pitch circle as these nuts are two diametrically opposed tapped holes for the insertion of $\frac{5}{16}$ " BSF bolts to jack the drums off their registers. On this type of axle the axle shafts, *complete with their hubs, bearings and bearing housings*, are conveniently removed as one unit each. Behind the hubs (the brake drums having been removed) will be seen a ring of 8 bolts; 6 of them secure the bearing housing to the end of the rear axle casing, the housing being relieved to clear the remaining two diametrically opposed bolts (which secure the brake gear, and for the purpose in hand should not be disturbed); remove these 6 bolts and the axle shaft may be pulled out as a complete unit as above—large tyre levers or similar tools can be used to help take it out. Withdraw both axle shaft assemblies as above. The splined Rudge hub must now be removed

from the broken shaft; lock the shaft in a powerful vice; remove the split-pin from the castellated nut on the end of the shaft, inside the hub—a loop of wire will be useful in straightening the legs of the split-pin; there is a hole in the hub to assist in getting it out—try not to brutalise or damage the pin, as this will not help what is a rather fiddling operation. Now with a powerful box spanner remove the nut from the end of the shaft—good strong tools are essential for this work; the nuts on both shafts are normal right-hand threads, and a hard blow on the box spanner tommy bar with a rubber or copper hammer may assist in starting the nut (the *outer* end of the box spanner should be strongly supported on a block before striking). The best tools for pulling the hub from the shaft are the original Rudge Whitworth screw-on type, but with modern garage equipment no difficulty should be experienced. Following removal of the hub, the bearing housing may be tapped off the bearing with a copper hammer; the replacement shaft to be supplied by the Club will be complete with fitted bearing.

The axle centre may now be removed *as a complete unit*; cast off the propeller shaft; remove the ring of 12 nuts round the outer edge of the differential housing and pull out the complete centre of the axle—gentle jarring with a mallet on the pinion shaft housing will start it. The broken piece of shaft may be poked out with a rod of *less than $\frac{3}{8}$ "* diameter, a hole of this size being left in the differential spider for this purpose. All loose metal must now be carefully cleared away and the centre portion of the axle casing thoroughly cleaned. Reassembly of the axle with the replacement axle shaft is the reverse operation to the above procedure.

A point of great importance concerns the lubrication of the axle. Many of these axles were originally set up on *Castrol R*, an oil of vegetable base. *Mineral and vegetable oils will not mix*, and to introduce the two together into the same assembly is to invite disaster. If a change-over from one base of oil to the other is contemplated, normal flushing methods are not sufficiently effective because of the difficulty of finding a proper solvent for *Castrol R*. The only *truly safe way of making*

such a change-over would be to dismantle the assembly completely and to clean thoroughly all the individual parts, which is not practical except at the time of a complete overhaul. The best way of meeting the situation is to identify with care the base of the oil at present in possession of the axle, and to *continue to use oil of the same base*. *Castrol R* is readily identifiable by its peculiar and distinctive smell and its sticky consistency; it is practically colourless when new. It is still quite readily obtainable. If a mineral oil is to be used, any of the modern extra pressure gear oils of good make of, say, SAE/140 rating will be suitable.

Whilst the axle shafts are drawn, the opportunity should be taken to pack the axle shaft bearings with grease by hand, as on this model there is no provision for lubricating from an external source. Duckman's HBB or Filtrate Super Lithium are very suitable for this purpose.

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MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPHS

The Editor's store of photographs suitable for inclusion in the Magazine is rather low. If members take any interesting shots at Club events or of Lagondas in any shape or form he would be pleased to receive a print, which ideally should have a glossy finish. Colour prints or transparencies are unfortunately too expensive to convert to black-and-white printing. Payment cannot be made for any photographs sent, but if the owner prints his name and address lightly *in pencil* on the back of the print his efforts will be suitably acknowledged if the photograph is published in the Magazine.

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INSTRUCTION BOOKS

The Secretary would be interested to hear from members if they know of anyone who can produce the Club's Instruction Books at an equivalent to trade prices. The work consists of photostating the original book and then collating and making-up the sheets into book form with a simple plain card cover. Unfortunately the Club's original suppliers can no longer produce these books for us. Quantities ordered would be small.

FOR SALE

LAGONDA 1928—2-litre High Chassis Speed Model. Completely original. Excellent mechanical condition with recent engine rebuild. Brakes relined 1963. Two new tyres. £140, will haggle. Fletcher, 22a Osborn Rd., Fareham, Hants.

1929 2-litre, special d.h.c. body by Park Ward. Very good condition. This car is known in the Club as "Sheba". R. J. Fancy, Crickets Hill, Golf Club Road, St. George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

V.S.C.C. MADRESFIELD

Dear Sir,

I have just read the report of last year's V.S.C.C. Madresfield. Judging from the treacherous remarks of your reporter Geoff Samson I feel that this must be a *nom de plume* covering a real name of "Delilah".

I should like to bring it to the notice of any Lagonda entrants for this year's event that, by that time, my son Bruce will have attained his majority and that I shall no longer be responsible for any of his actions. He has, however, been instructed that in future he should apply a sharp kick to the shin of any R.A.C. Steward observing a Lagonda attempting to stop in a hurry. That is, of course, providing that the intrepid observer is still anywhere in the vicinity after his first horrified glance!

The big green flag which you report me as using, was not in fact stolen from our railways, but was the fabric off the only door of my 2-litre and was only used for sentimental reasons whilst it is off the road.

Yours low chassisy,

G. TWEEDIE WALKER
Solihull, War.

OUR MAN IN PUERTO OLVIDADA

Amigo Mio,

I write you again for since last time such wonderful happenings!

First we proudly announce vehicle designed and built in my country, the Donicar which is make in two models. Beneath bonnet is burro with two little holes for ears to stick out, and in place of radiator is perspex screen so dangling carrot can be observe by engine, which is also audible warning of approach.

Just like Lagonda it make click-clock noises and also with need to burro under bonnet—and so economical—ten kilometres to litre of beans—and what crisp exhaust note!

The second model is for the ladies suitable. In place of burro is put senora, and holes for ears at side. Wedding ring or new hat is dangle in place of carrot.

Also must speak of opening of Autostrada Grande. H.E. Presidente Aroldo Macmillan could not spare time for ceremony as so busy persuading us to join up with the Sex (us—I ask you!). But all other Big Heads present including U.S. Consul and four mothers-in-law all in one Cuddleac and French Ambassador in his Torride—very hot-rod this. All watch Senor Marpilio, our Minister of Transportations sever telephone line with golden scissors. Then all calmed down after much apologies extended to Minister of Communications and cut rubbon and then autostrada gleaming white and beautiful open to all who proceed joyously at hundred kilometres per hour. But alas unfortunate, as Senor Ingenerio forget tell not enough cash left bridge to finish, so much splashings and swimmings and swearings and poor Senor Marpilio's bicycle eaten by alligator.

You ask Lagonda Club lend us cash finish Bridge?

All my salutations to you and Senora Lagonda, and no doubt, Quien Sabe? the little minigondas.

Subscribing myself,

I remain, amigo mio,

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DIARY OF EVENTS



Saturday	Northern Driving
6th July	Tests/Concours
Sunday	Surrey Treasure
14th July	Hunt - Forrest Green
Saturday	Bentley D.C.
3rd August	Silverstone (Lagonda)
Sunday	Yorkshire
1st September	Treasure Hunt

THE NEXT ISSUE

will be published

EARLY SEPTEMBER

Members should send contributions and photographs for publication in the Autumn issue as soon as possible and certainly not later than the end of the second week in July.



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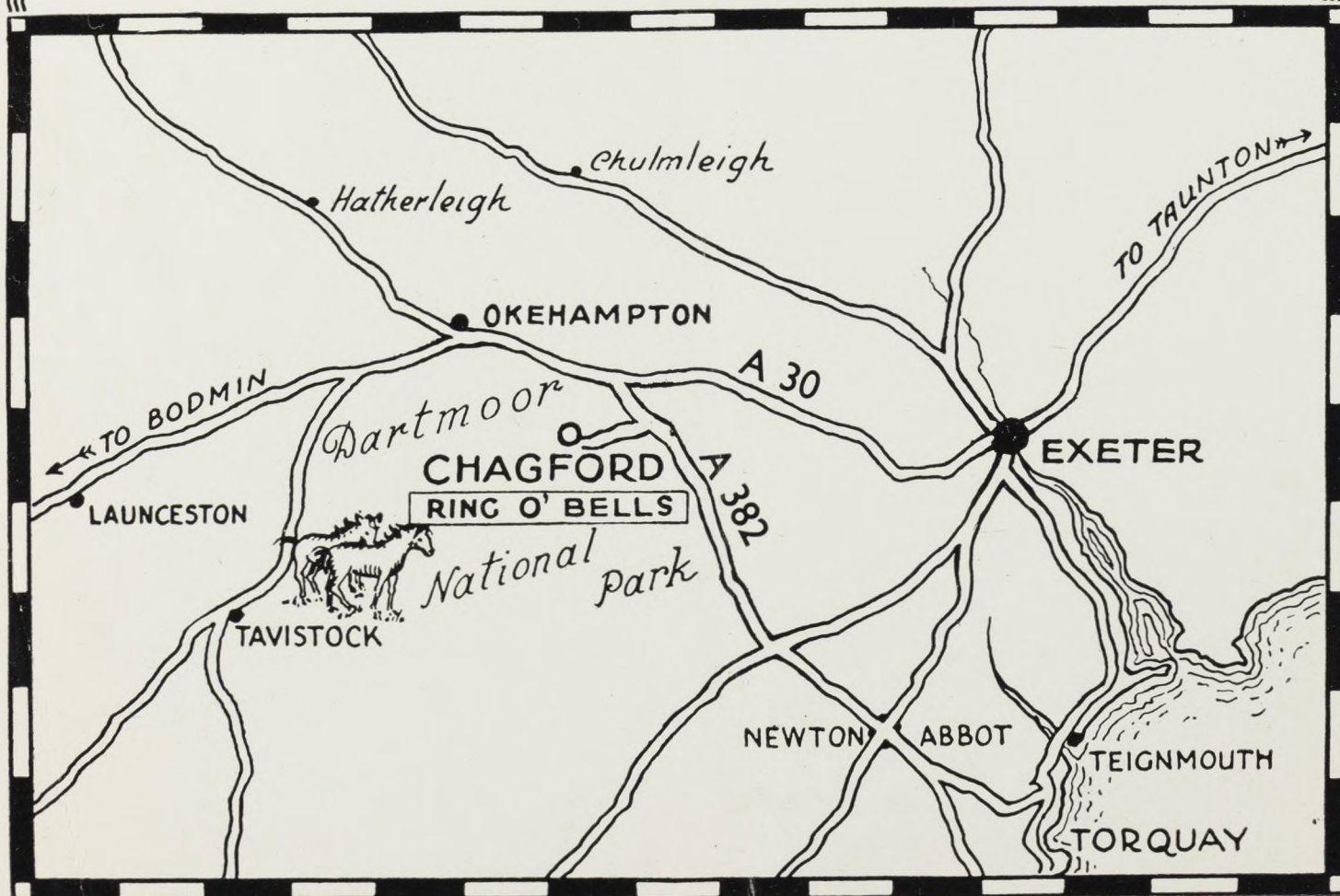
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