

THE *Lagonda*

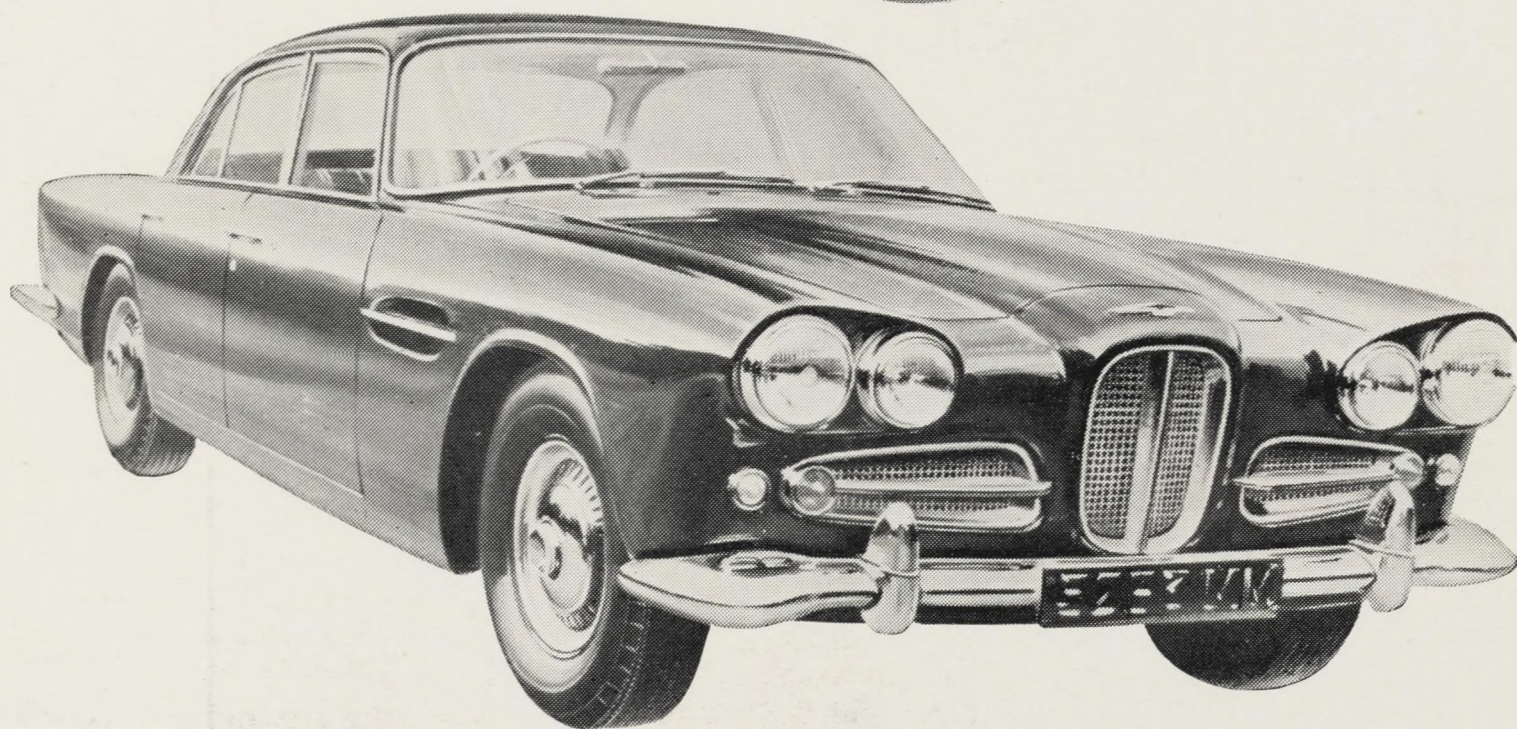
No. 48

Summer 1964



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Once again



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FRONT COVER. The competitive season is on. A fine study of Tweedie Walker and his 2-litre by Roy Paterson.

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

At regular intervals the Northern Secretary makes mention of the Lagonda that appeared in the I.T.V. series "The Avengers". To put his mind at rest he might like to know that it is a 3-litre that belongs to CHRIS LEE and is seen at most of the Southern meetings, no black leather outfits though.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HENRY COATES who has the charming habit of producing good competition cars very quickly from piles of bits, is now turning his hand to his idea of a town (or should it be country) carriage. This involves putting a big diesel engine in a LG6 chassis—should provide cheap and dignified progress through the Yorkshire lanes. Dropping diesel engines in Lagonda chassis has been done before but not quite so single handed as this project—quite an effort.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MIKE WILBY knows of a 16/80 engine that has been completely rebuilt and not run since. Also available is the chassis all set up and the normal, not pre-selector gearbox. Just the thing to keep you busy through the long summer evenings. More details from him if anyone is interested.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We hear from our more racing (horse) minded friends that a horse called "Lagonda" came third in a Handicap Plate race for 3-year-olds at Pontefract last April. The distance was over 1¼ miles which is presumably long enough to get into top gear. (A horse to watch next year says "Tipster"—our Racing Correspondent.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TREVOR PEERLESS is organising an Inter-Marque Invitation event on Sunday, 12th July. It will be in the form of an observation and navigation exercise. One map: O.S. Sheet 170 (7th Series) will be needed and the starting place is the "Tudor Rose", Old Coulsdon at 2.00. This event is open to members of the A.C., Alfa-Romeo, Alvis Register, Amilcar, Aston Martin, Lagonda and Rapier Clubs. Entry fee will be 5s. and full details are available from Trevor at 80, Park Hill Road, Wallington, Surrey. (WAL 2381.)

PJ 9078—does anyone own this Lagonda or know of its whereabouts? It is thought to be a 3-litre pillarless saloon of the 1932/33 vintage. Anyone with information please contact Anthony Barclay of 97, Chestnut Drive South, Pennington, Leigh, Lancashire, who is anxious to purchase this car as it previously belonged to his family years ago.

AN EARLY REMINDER TO BOOK THE DATE SUNDAY, 27th SEPTEMBER IN YOUR DIARY. FILL IN THE BLANK SPACE NOW AGAINST THAT DATE WITH THE WORDS: "A.G.M. AND CONOURS AT OVERSTONE SOLARIUM"

DIARY OF EVENTS

Saturday 4th July . . .

**Northern Driving Tests
and Concours**

Sunday 12th July . . .

Inter-Marque Rally (Surrey)

Saturday 1st August . . .

Bentley D.C. Silverstone

Sunday 23rd August . . .

Brands Hatch Sprint Meeting

Sunday 6th September . . .

**Autumn Social and Concours
d'Elegance (Yorkshire)**

Sunday 13th September . . .

Bentley D.C. Firle Hill Climb

Saturday 19th September . . .

**Rapier Register Driving Tests
Brackley**

Sunday 27th September . . .

A.G.M. and Concours d'Elegance



"Er... I expect you remember asking me to split-pin the big-ends? Well..."

MIDLAND NOTES

SAD TO REPORT THAT DAVID SCOTT-MONCRIEFF, that inimitable purveyor of horseless carriages, has had to return to hospital again following the serious accident which befell him at the International Rally at Brighton last year. He was standing alone in the middle of the road directing the traffic when he was hit by a car which broke his arm and leg and injured his head.

It is an interesting reflection on the quality of the stock of the Scottish aristocracy that, following the accident, the offending tin-ware that had hit him was towed away! Midland and Northern members will long remember "Bunty" coming as an official guest to our Dinner some years ago. We all wish him well and a speedy recovery.

Congratulations to Geoff Samson on being elected to the Midland Committee of the V.S.C.C. Perhaps he will take the opportunity some time of explaining to their Handicap Committee how difficult it is to get a 2-litre round the Silverstone

Club Circuit in less than 1 m. 45 secs. Best wishes, Geoff.

We particularly welcome to the Midland Section Ken Painter, who is in the R.A.F. and has been posted to Stafford. Hope to see you at the Pub Meet in due course Ken, and in the meantime make yourself at home and do not hesitate to seek advice from local members if your 2-litre saloon gives trouble.

C.S.G.

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Northern Notes

from HERB SCHOFIELD

IT IS RATHER DISTURBING TO DISCOVER THE NUMBER of Vintage and Thoroughbred cars which are now being exported to the United States. In the past two or three years quite a number of very desirable Lagondas have gone.

I don't suppose there is any immediate solution to this problem, human nature being what it is we all like to make money, and the Americans seem prepared to pay excessive prices. Nevertheless, one of these days our friends across the water might realise that they are being soaked for their hobby and the trade might slow down to reasonable proportions. Most disturbing aspect of all this lies in the fact that prices are tending to rise in this country for the very desirable models made in limited quantities, demand being greater than the supply.

Northern Dinner and Prizegiving March 5th '64

This was held at Monk Fryston Hall, Monk Fryston, Yorkshire. A splendid Hotel in the correct setting for our type of motorcars (although most came in moderns!). A total attendance of 52 was considered reasonable in view of the date. We were very pleased to welcome James Woollard, our Competition Secretary, and his exceedingly charming wife. They both motored up from Woburn to be with us, and afterwards drove all the way back (not of course in the 2-litre!).

Northern Dinners tend to be rather informal. Toasts were dispensed with, and the only speech of the evening came from the Northern Secretary who briefly thanked all members who in 1963 had helped organise events, and to Northern members in general who had given their support and made the Northern Section certainly the most active in the Club. The Prizegiving took rather longer than it did in the South—there being on show well over 30 awards. All this vast array of silverware seemed to confuse the Northern Secretary as he forgot to hand to James Woollard for presentation awards won by Barraclough (B.D.C.), Ken Pape, and Pat Dearden-Briggs. However, justice was done later in the evening and sincere apologies to all concerned for the oversight.

An excellent film show was then laid on by Bryan and Betty Randles and Roy Paterson.

Some of these films went back to 1960 and it was therefore interesting to see how many of our members have much improved their driving standards. An excellent shot of one bespectacled member negotiating quite incorrectly a simple driving test, complete with fag in corner of mouth, would certainly not be entertained in 1963—how times have changed! The Northern Secretary was seen to demolish a marker drum in his old blown 2-litre, unfortunately however he still does that sort of thing!

Altogether a most enjoyable evening and sincere thanks to Bryan, Betty and Roy for bringing all their equipment along.

Bits and Pieces

David Hine buys an LG45 Saloon as a mate for his M45 tourer. Joe Unsworth I understand is progressing well on the rebuild of his blown 2-litre which you may recall was badly damaged last November.

Henry Coates sells his 4½ special (V.S.C.C. reporter called it a standard touring car!) to Roy Paterson who sells his M45 tourer to John Beardow, who sells his D.B. 2.6-litre to a clergyman! Ted Townsley is completing a rebuild on a 3½ litre tourer and Grayers near vintage 3-litre was seen to be receiving considerable attention at Southport recently. Pamela Woods Lyon from Ormskirk becomes Mrs. Nanson—many congrats! Alan Ogden now comes to Pub Meets in a Rapier, and talking about Rapiers, the Northern Secretary knows of a genuine Eagle bodied 2-seater, newly rebuilt, going quite cheaply, anyone interested? Henry Coates will have or has, depending on when you get this magazine, a new special on the road. At the moment Henry knocks about in an LG45 saloon and is also between farming, dropping a diesel engine into an LG6 saloon, this seems a good idea for an excellent combination of prestige, comfort and economy. Dennis Roberts still has his collection of what could be desirable Lagondas, and work is in full swing on dropping an engine into his LG6 Drop Head. We expect the car to be on the road, possibly by as soon as 1970. At the time of writing however a further car has been added to the Roberts stable, this time a 4¼ Bentley saloon. Following closely on the heels of Dennis in the one-upmanship race is Brian Dearden-Briggs who adds a late 2-litre saloon (or is it a 16/80 with 2-litre engine) to his LG45

saloon and LG45 tourer. Congratulations to John Davenport LG45R on taking the Premier Award in the North Riding Rally and the Northern Spring Social. Congratulations also to Roy Paterson for gaining awards in the V.S.C.C. Buxton Rally and Measham Driving Tests.

Brian Green of "Skerbeck", Noctorum Road, Birkenhead, Cheshire, can provide new 21-in. tyres, at a discount too, so if you are having difficulty, contact him.

And finally, a recent Lagonda Club (male members only) evening trip to Manchester proved that there are other things in life besides motor-cars. Southern and Midland Members on business in Manchester could do worse than contact Member S.12 for details of the right sort of places to go for the wrong sort of amusement!

New Spares

Some years ago plans were laid to manufacture new spares for the more troublesome parts in our cars. We were asked to write and state our requirements. Unfortunately however this did not receive the response it should have done. Our cars are getting older and spares will become very much scarcer and dearer. I therefore



wonder if the time is ripe to try and get the new parts scheme going again, what do other members think?

North Riding Rally, March 14th 1964

This is reported elsewhere in this issue. Suffice to say that this event was held in one of the most terrible rain/snow storms of all time, turning the roads into rivers and frightening watersplashes. Anyone who finished was either quite brave or had prepared his car well. Full marks then to John Davenport LG45R in taking the Premier Award. John has just the right attitude towards Club competition and it is therefore a good thing that he has been so justly rewarded for so many years of support.

Northern Spring Social, April 19th 1964

Clashing as it did with a Bentley Drivers A.G.M., and the Second Annual Veteran and Vintage crawl from Manchester to Blackpool, we were quite lucky to have a good entry for this event. Weather was quite foul. The Rally was really in two sections. One the usual sort of thing but section two required navigators to identify a selection of photographs which they took round with them. It obviously paid to have lots of keen eyes but even so the Northern Secretary thought it would all prove quite difficult, but as in previous years he under-estimated the intelligence of the average competitor, and in fact John Davenport and his merry crew only dropped one mark closely followed by Dr. Keith Gardiner and Brian Dearden-Briggs who tied for second place.

The Rally started and finished at the "Moor-side" Hotel, Higher Disley, Cheshire, where we had a bar extension all afternoon. This I am sure was most welcome as entrants returning from the Rally were thus able to take advantage of some warming liquid and a big fire. We must extend our sincere thanks to the management for their very great help and understanding.

Northern Pub Meets

A reminder for you to note that beer drinking sessions are held at regular monthly intervals throughout the North, and you are strongly advised to leave the telly, girl-friend, wife or mistress alone for one evening every month and motor off to your nearest for a natter. Attendance has tended to dwindle slightly at West

Towers recently. Talking about enthusiasm the V.S.C.C. held a film show at Mottram, and as it fell on the same evening as our April Pub Meet at West Towers, we decided to cancel our own Meeting and attend at Mottram instead. The place was packed with enthusiasts. Most prominent vocally and carwise (sound odd) being the Lagonda Club members. One or two in the rear entertaining us with very rude comments on the cars being shown on the screen, presumably because no Lagondas ever appeared. Someone else thought it would be very funny to stand with his head in front of the projector for some considerable time, but all this didn't really matter as the V.S.C.C. films were silent and because of this rather uninteresting.

After the Show a number of motor cars, plus a much larger number of bottles, plus Dearden-Briggs, Ken Pape, Ken Winder, Alan Brown, David Hine, Bill Jupe (older members will remember him), Dennis Roberts, Martin Pollard and members of the V.S.C.C. descended on the Northern Secretary's house, there to consume the ale. A very good evening!!!

Technical Note

If the water boils in your radiator and nothing will shift the muck, then you should use 'Harpic' the well known toilet cleanser. As in your toilet it will move very rapidly anything undesirable and even a pleasurable whiff of spring-time is emitted from the radiator when the cap is removed. Seriously this is not a joke as it really does work, but make sure you flush it all out. However it is not suitable for shaggy radiators.

I have no connection with the manufacturers of 'Harpic' other than being a very satisfied user, and this hint comes from Bernard Raine.

Forthcoming Attraction

Northern Driving Tests, early July, see you then?

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OF RATES ON PAGE 10.**

NORTHERN CARS AND FACES

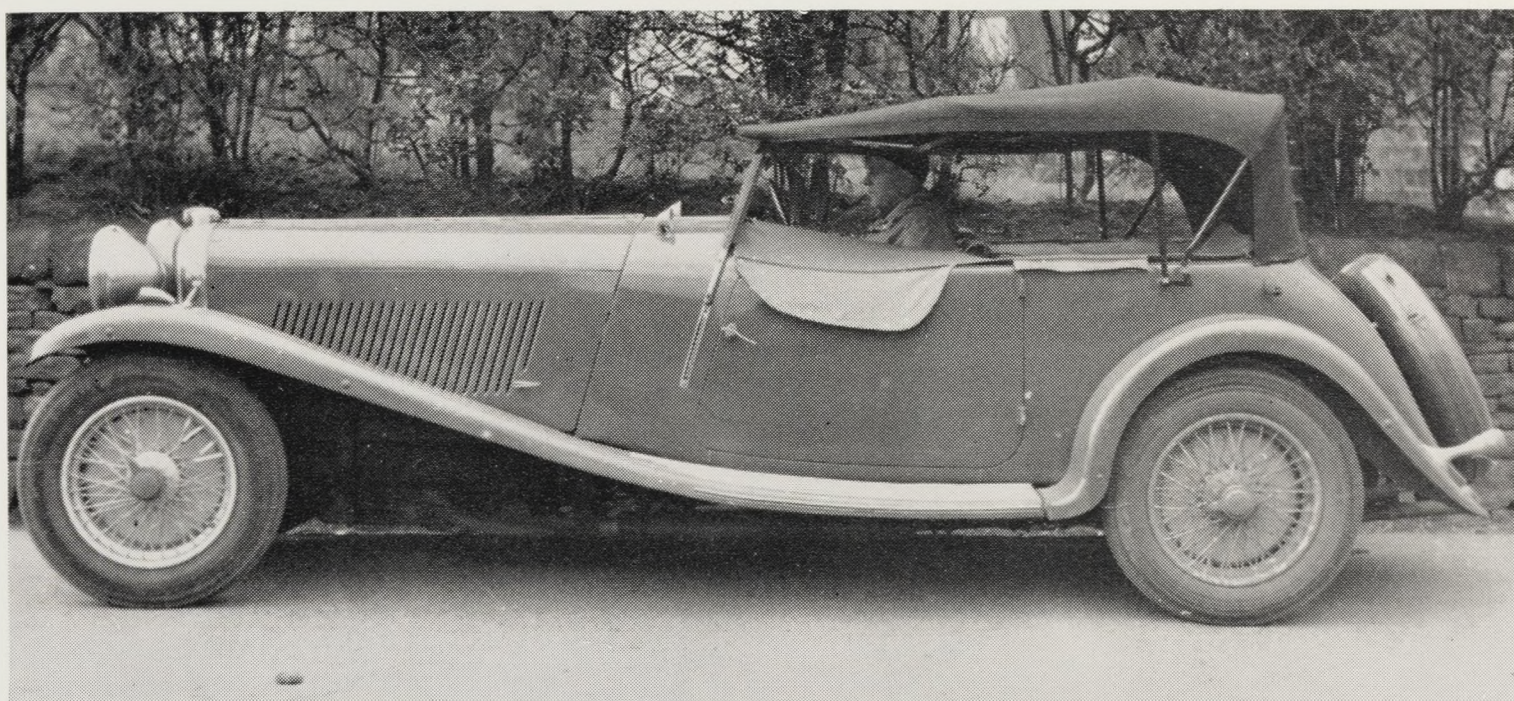
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DOC (PETER) EVANS

A Club Member for many years and prefers the clean but handsome lines of the vintage style Lagondas. This is evident by the various models he has owned—

16/80 Tourer, High Chassis 2-litre Tourer, M45 'Rapide' Tourer and his present attractive and very original M45 photographed right. His favourite Lagonda—the 2-litre, and it is his ambition to eventually own one of these cars again and endow it with acceleration approaching that of the 4½-litre.

Photos: HERBERT SCHOFIELD



THE FIRST THREE YEARS ARE THE WORST

by Ron Gee

IN SEPTEMBER, 1956, I DECIDED TO BUY A SPORTS car. My appetite had been whetted by a 1930 Aston Martin advertised in perfect condition at £185. However, I missed buying this by just a few minutes and it was not until the following week when looking through some ads that I saw another interesting car. A Lagonda 16/80.

I went along to Hampstead to view the car. The owner painted a glowing picture of a speedy, economical motor car in 100 per cent condition. He asked me to wait in a nearby coffee bar while he went to get the car out of the garage.

Knowing what I know now he employed this ruse as he probably tow-started the car. Now, I would be extremely suspicious but at that time I had a zero knowledge of the buying and selling of cars. The 16/80 was produced and we went for a demonstration run. This over I promptly bought the car for what I now estimate to be three times its proper value. No doubt many rounds were drunk that night on my behalf!

I collected the Lagonda and set off for home. I found at first the gear change difficult to master due to the wrong-way gate, clutch stop adjustment, darkness and London's traffic. I got the hang of selecting second and top gears and continued on my way ignoring the advance and retard lever. The headlights did not work properly and of course it soon came on to rain. Needless to say I had not looked at the hood and found it to be full of holes with the framework rusted to the point of disintegration.

The windscreen wiper worked (!) but had to be switched on by the joining together of two pieces of bare wire. Despite all this the car ran well until I was but two miles from home when it started to misfire badly. The cause was a sticking exhaust valve which allowed the pushrod to slide sideways away from the rocker arm. The valve was then held shut by the spring and the exhaust gases were escaping through the carburettor on every other cycle. I was unable to ascertain the cause of this at the time so I drove slowly home; fortunately escaping the attention of the law.

The next day a few amused friends were collected and an attempt was made to restart the car by pushing it down a hill. No luck.

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Someone checked the batteries to see why they would not turn the starter. At this one of the batteries fell through the floor and hung suspended by the cables. Someone else checked the petrol supply. Plenty of that—it was dripping out of the updraught carburettor onto the exhaust pipe. A second attempt was made at push starting. This time the car started, backfired, and caught alight at the well-supplied carburettor. The author made a lightning exit in spite of the close proximity of gear lever, steering wheel, etc., on the opposite side of the car to the fire, of course! Unfortunately my father kept his head and extinguished the fire by promptly smothering it with a large cloth. Unfortunately because the car was well insured, and a fire would have saved untold trouble. The car was then towed to a nearby garage and left there to be put right.

Shortly afterwards I was able to re-use the car. Petrol consumption was high due to the leaking carburettor. The second gear (supposed to have been newly installed by the ex-owner) became unengageable. So I drove the car back to the local garage for gearbox attention. On the way there, a bolt came loose on one of the Hardy Spicer couplings, the transmission jammed and some more gears smashed. A trip to Maurice Leo's suggested that a secondhand Alvis gearbox would be the cheapest solution. This was carted back to Sidcup and installed by the local garage. I also asked them to get a new carburettor for the updraught manifold. This made the starting and running even worse.

I gave up regularly running the car and for the next three years it sat in the front garden acquiring a local reputation of never moving. Occasionally I would run the car after fitting a new Kigass system or something. In the end, a standard manifold and a pair of S.U.'s were purchased from Ivan and the car then ran fairly well. Nevertheless there were thousands of faults to put right—wiring, worn bores (I used to carry a spare battery so that I had 18 volts for starting), worn brakes, etc.

Still I console myself with the fact that I have learnt a lot about cars through having to put the car right. The car can now be used daily and is a joy to drive in London due to the big flywheel, smooth clutch, and Alvis gearbox. This year I drove the car to Cumberland overnight. So if any new members are despairing over a clapped Lagonda, remember perseverance will win in the long run.

RON GEE

Annual Dinner-Dance and Prize-giving

THIS YEAR'S EVENT WAS HELD AT THE NOW familiar Osterley Hotel on the 15th February. Harry Gostling again found time to tear himself away from his Continentals and provisionally booked the hall and band almost a year before so that everything was "spot on" on the day. By the time you read this he will have sorted out his accounts and made a profit or at least covered his losses. (Profit for the Club.)

Members and guests numbered ninety-one, slightly down on last year but maybe that chap St. Valentine took his toll. Harry can only assume that since the majority of persons present were more than satisfied with the location and set up at Osterley, the formula is right. This year we missed our Club Chairman who was recovering from a conflict with a Medicine Man, getting sunburnt at the same time. Peter Densham graciously accepted the Chair for the evening, our guests of honour being Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Fox. To those younger members

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and those not up with their history, Arthur Fox was a partner of Fox & Nicholls who tuned and raced Lagondas successfully before a lot of our members were born—judging by those who gave demonstrations of the more exotic movements caused by the hypnotic effects of the modern strains of the music after dinner. Those of us who went to great trouble to learn the Twist since last year found ourselves out of date, but were able to join in more dances than last year!

The meal itself was adequate being specially designed so that it gave good foundation for later glass lifting activities or just the excuse for sitting down and relaxing, basic ingredients being Turkey and Plum pudding.

Peter Densham made a short sharp speech explaining the fact that he was Chairman left him speechless and that was more or less that. Mrs. Arthur Fox assisted by Mike Wilby presented the trophies, 60 per cent. going way past Apex Corner and so home. Perhaps the Northern and Southern Driving Tests should be North v. South matches to show that on average each is as good as the other but alas many people down South seem to think that three miles over to their "local" is a long way, whereas up North anything up to thirty miles is only ten minutes down the road.

Music was by Wyn and her Rhythm, they gave an excellently balanced mixture from Old Time to the latest, satisfying every age and taste. One of the older members and possibly the tallest was even presented with a pint of reviver by one of his partners for his efforts in the Twist. Donald Overy was seen doing the Gay Gordons properly, while some other members showed that some of the more modern techniques can be adapted to the older tunes.

Looking forward to next year, same time, same place "WALLFLOWER"

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16-80 LAGONDA TOURER

The Self-changing Gear Box in Terms of Average Speeds: Fine Finish Throughout and Highly Practical Bodywork

WHAT IS THE LAGONDA LIKE WITH THE SELF-changing gear box? That is the immediate question. The car itself is well known, of course, the 16-80 six-cylinder 2-litre model having by now become firmly established, but very great interest lies in the effect of the new type of gear box—for this make—upon the general behaviour and handling of the car. It is not too much to say that from the viewpoint of the majority of drivers a transformation is brought about in the general character of the machine, as well as in the performance, by the fitting of this box.

A point that is absolutely relevant and should perhaps be stressed is that though the Lagonda as a make is regarded by most people as being a sports car, as indeed it is for its performance, it is also very much a touring car because of its general tractability, comfort, and what can only be called a softness, making for a car that is pleasant and not in the least tiring to handle or to ride in. For those who prefer it, the sliding-pinion type of gear box is still available, the E.N.V. self-changing box costing £25 extra, as described in *The Autocar* of June 30th. It will be remembered that the chief point of the layout on the Lagonda is that a right-hand gear lever, working on a quadrant below the floorboards, is used.

Inherent simplicity of gear changing and the rapidity of movement possible between gear and gear are by now well known where the pre-selective type of box is concerned, but there is unquestionably very distinct added charm due to the right-hand lever as fitted to the Lagonda. The movements in changing gear are so close to those adopted with an ordinary gear box that for the enthusiastic kind of driver interest is likely to be retained. Actual engagement of the ratios is effected, as usual with this type of box, by depressing the left-hand pedal, and the action of this pedal is not heavy. The lever itself outwardly resembles exactly the lever for the ordinary kind of gear box.

Where this box is particularly pleasing, and even more so because of the right-hand lever, is that, contrary to the view of some people, there still remains scope for the driver who is really

interested in getting the best from his car to exercise his skill, since even with this box, on a car giving high maxima on the indirect gears, there can be considerable difference between just moving the lever and pressing the pedal, representing the process in its simplest form, and intelligently anticipating road and traffic conditions by adjusting the engine speed so that when the change is actually made a smooth take up is secured on the higher or lower ratio engaged—in other words, by accelerating or decelerating the engine correspondingly. When handled properly it is practically impossible to detect a gear change, only the variation in the pleasing but not conspicuous exhaust note indicating to anyone outside that it has actually taken place.

Running up to 4,500 r.p.m., which is well within the safe limit of the engine, extreme speedometer readings of 26 on first, 46 on second, and 67 on third gear are reached.

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Questions of sheer maximum speed are regarded as important by some people, but are very apt to be exaggerated, and what counts far more in the general usefulness of a car for ordinary purposes is the speed which can be comfortably maintained and averaged for a given journey. In this connection roadholding, stability as a whole, steering, and the power of the brakes, all added to good acceleration, are by far the most important considerations. These qualities the Lagonda has for long possessed, and now, with the self-changing box, the acceleration possible by full use of the gears, and available to anyone of quite average competence, is of such an order that even without using a high maximum speed on any occasion very fine averages can be put up.

As an instance, a certain main road journey of under 100 miles in length, with good surfaces, was covered in a shorter time, partly at night, than happens to have been recorded in any of these tests and without exceeding 58 m.p.h.

The car holds the road remarkably well and feels solid in the right way. Curves and corners are scarcely noticed at all, the steering has proper caster action and is light except when making the sharpest turns, and the brake power gives complete confidence besides being even in effect, which is most important. For the brake test, by the way, the racing type hand lever was used as

well as the pedal, though with the pedal alone good figures were also obtained. The timed speed run was taken, with the windscreen open, and the speedometer recorded just over the 80 mark; with the screen closed a timed run at exactly 75 m.p.h. was made.

The latest car, with modified body and swept wings, is particularly good and well balanced in appearance, besides which the new mudguards are more practical. Apart from those points, the four-seater open body, for long a feature of the Lagonda range, is a really comfortable, thoroughly practical touring type of coachwork. The occupants sit well down in the car, the seats, with their pneumatic upholstery, are extremely comfortable, and the back seat, for both the cushions themselves and the comfort of riding, is excellent. There is a centre folding arm rest, in addition to side armrests, all softly upholstered.

During the test the car was tried with full load, and by passengers not accustomed to an open sports type of car, and very high praise indeed can be given in these respects of comfort just mentioned. Also, the side screen equipment is remarkably complete, and stows away well, there being, in addition, two panels which can be fixed to form a most valuable V-shaped rear windscreen, complete with waterproof apron.

At the rear, normally concealed, is a useful luggage platform, and throughout the car is notable, as has been remarked on previous occasions, for the care obviously bestowed upon the finish and points of detail. The engine, too, is beautifully finished. The plugs are truly accessible, as also is the oil filler in the top of the overhead valve gear cover, whilst the standardised hydraulic jack and the starting handle are clipped firmly and neatly to the forward face of the dashboard. The shutters for the radiator are opened and closed by a thermostat and businesslike, well-made clip fillers are used for the radiator and fuel tank.

Continued overleaf

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16-80 LAGONDA TOURER DATA FOR THE DRIVER

16 h.p., six cylinders, 65 × 100 mm. (1,991 c.c.). Tax £16. Tyres: 18 × 5.5 in. on Rudge-Whitworth knock-off wire wheels.

Engine—rear axle gear ratios.	Acceleration from steady speed.			Timed speed over $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
	10 to 30 m.p.h.	20 to 40 m.p.h.	30 to 50 m.p.h.	
15.42 to 1	—	—	—	77.59 m.p.h.
9.087 to 1	7 $\frac{3}{5}$ sec.	8 sec.	—	
6.291 to 1	11 $\frac{2}{5}$ sec.	11 sec.	11 $\frac{4}{5}$ sec.	
4.66 to 1	15 $\frac{4}{5}$ sec.	17 sec.	17 $\frac{3}{5}$ sec.	

Acceleration from rest through the gears to 50 m.p.h., 17 $\frac{1}{5}$ sec. Acceleration from rest through the gears to 60 m.p.h., 26 $\frac{1}{5}$ sec.

Speed up Brooklands Test Hill from rest (1 in 5 average gradient), 17.16 m.p.h. (on first gear). 15 yards of 1 in 5 gradient from rest, 4 $\frac{2}{5}$ sec.

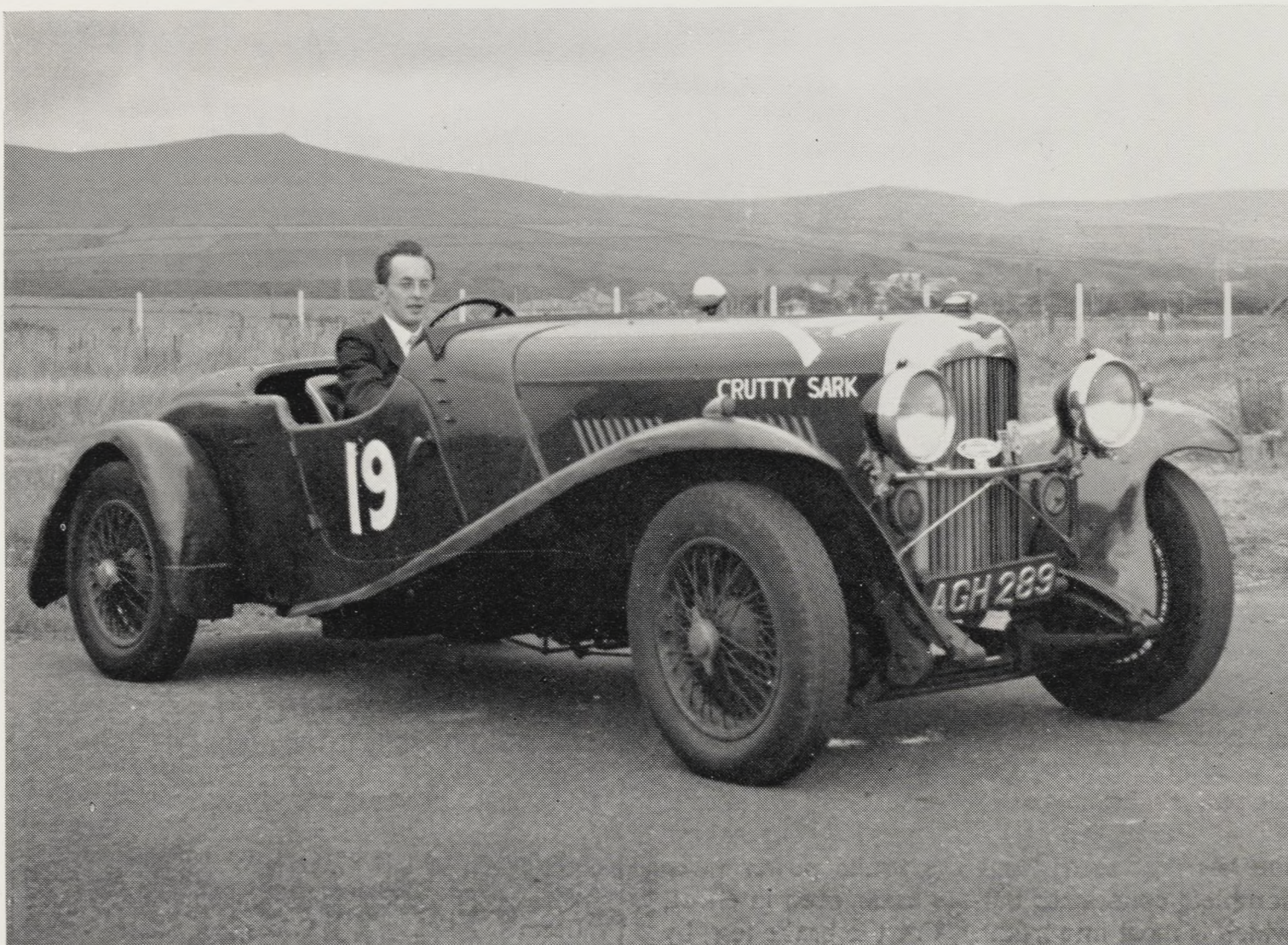
Turning circle: 40 ft.

Tank (rear) 14 gallons, fuel consumption, 20-22 m.p.g.

12-volt lighting set cuts in at 20 m.p.h., 9 amps. at 30 m.p.h.

Weight: 30 cwt.

Price, with open four-seater tourer body (with self-changing gear box), £665.



Ron Gee and 16/80.

THE M45 SINGING GEARBOX

ALL THIS HAPPENED A WEEK OR TWO AGO DURING the Northern Spring Social Rally. Three lads in my open M45 were "purring" through the Cheshire Plain in torrential rain trying to identify some sodden photographs and find some abstruse clues and thoroughly enjoying it when the singing began.

I don't know whether readers are all the same but I for one always approach a road cutting with high walls with a certain amount of trepidation. The reason being that reflected from the same walls come all sounds of which one is normally happily oblivious. For instance, dry wheel bearings, spokes loose, wayward rockers, etc., etc. In this case came a noise that rather resembled the choir in Beethoven's 9th. It only happened in 2nd gear and was most ethereal—to start with—of course. By the end of the rally it was a downright jangle which I won't compare with any composer for fear of upsetting a modernist's feelings !!

Monday night found me in my garage astride a rapidly rotating prop shaft, with one wheel off the ground, trying to stop the car lurching back and forth while I engaged 2nd gear. The jangle was quite faint due to the fact that 2nd gear does not grind so much when off-load but it was enough to identify the trouble which was the clutch brake disc. The ring disc was loose on the centre casting causing it to vibrate with the gearbox.

To remove this the central "spider" coupling has to be removed and then the fabric disc removed from the offending brake disc. The brake disc can then be slid forward into the recess in the chassis member, that is if your gearbox is true in the chassis.

The whole assembly was made of cast steel and can be welded by the blacksmith in his fire. After welding the casting should ring like a bell, but it is unlikely that it is true any more and will require skimming up on the lathe. I clamped a splined shaft I found in my junk into the 3-jaw chuck, slid the plate on it, held the plate in position on the shaft with an old 2-litre gear wheel and fixed that with a jubilee clip. It was all quite rigid and the plate and disc could now be trued up. I found this very necessary because if there is much misalignment in the fabric

coupling vibrations in the transmission are set up at high rev's—over 3,000.

When reassembling the disc and "spider" it's easier to put all the bolts and nuts in before the split cotters as half of them have to go in first. Do not miss any of the cotters—if the bolts came undone the transmission would hammer on the chassis—quite amusing to fix in evening dress.

The moral of this tale is not to sweat up the clutch brake in order to get an ultra fast change up on the M45—after all those MGB's won't last 30 years !!!

DAVID R. HINE



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. Last 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 each month.

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

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

The Spring Social

April 1964

THE EVENT STARTED FROM THE "RED LION" AT Hatfield at closing time (mid-day!) and was organised by Arnold Davey. The layout of the route showed that he has an extensive knowledge of Hertfordshire pubs with the name of "Chequers". He also has a fiendish mind where route-cards are concerned. Each point seemed to take twenty minutes for the competitors to plot and called for knowledge of confluences, advanced geometry and contour lines which led navigators from one corner of the map to the other. Fortunately there was no time limit and careful reading of the instructions enabled one to plot all the points without ambiguity.

Our Secretary and Magazine Editor, Valerie and Tony May respectively, came along to speed competitors on their way. As they had helped Arnold to double-check the route the previous day they knew what was in store for the competitors! This author was gratified when the Editor made some kind remarks about his articles for the magazine. Lulled into a false sense of security it was not long before he found himself agreeing to writing-up this Social for the next magazine and so here we are! ("How to win Friends and influence People" is recommended reading for all aspiring Editors.—Ed.)

The Rally attracted twenty cars which included eleven Lagondas. A. Whitelegge brought his 4½-litre Bentley but unfortunately retired. Other "foreign" cars included a smart red M.G. crewed by Jeff and Jill Ody, who were still happily married at the end of the run but there were times en route when evidently a bitter silence prevailed.

Four cars came through the route with maximum marks—the placings being decided by mileage. The winner was M. B. JONES (2-litre); second was RON GEE (2.6-litre) who navigated for his driver Mark Bleakley; third place went to TREVOR PEERLESS in his immaculate 2-litre which proved that it is actually *used* between winning Concours events, and fourth was our Comp. Sec. JAMES WOOLLARD in his M.G. 1100—just one mile more than Trevor.

Mrs. Geof Love apparently got her Mini stuck on a part of the route whimsically sign-posted as "Unsuitable for Motor Vehicles". This section we were all told by Arnold before the start was in fact passable, so the Loves must have been unlucky as the others who dared to chance it appeared to get through unscathed. Other close finishers included Mike Gaber (2-litre); Harry Gostling (2-litre); Richard Hare (LG45); and Jeff Ody (M.G.); who all missed only one point en route.

A courageous entry was that of Julian Reisner in his 2-litre. This car is "ripe for restoration" as the property dealers say, and appeared to be giving the driver trouble before the event. With a lot of determination Julian finished the event an hour after opening time (evening!) shedding on the way his mudguards and a headlamp. He also used some ten gallons of water. (I feel that there must be a story here somewhere.—Ed.)

However, an interesting run and a vote of thanks to Arnold Davey for the preparation and organisation of this event.

R.G.



Organiser Arnold Davey busy organising.

In the Dartmoor National Park

Ring O' Bells Hotel

CHAGFORD
DEVON

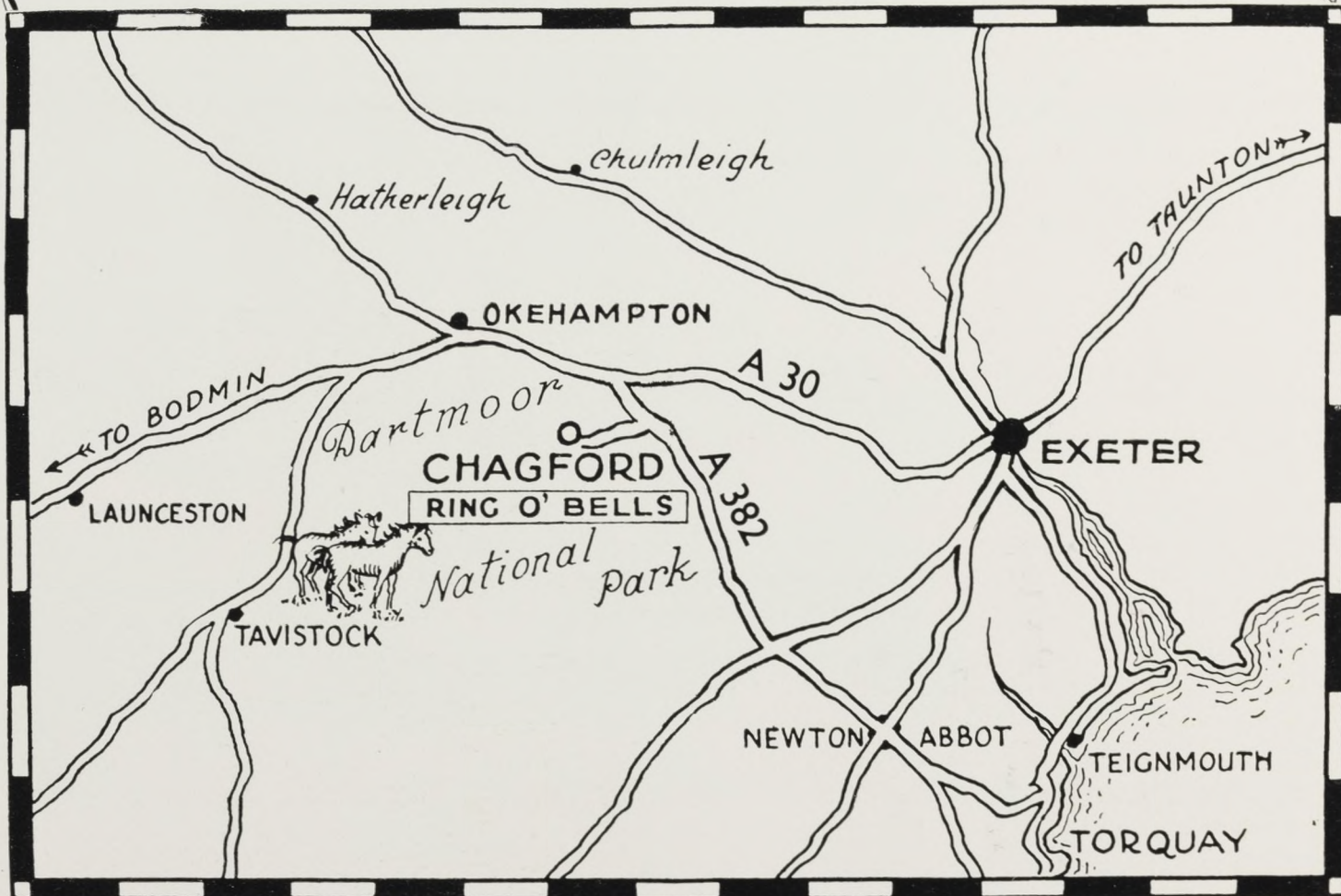
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NORTH RIDING RALLY

March 1964

REGATTA WOULD PERHAPS HAVE BEEN A MORE accurate title for the event this year. Country lanes were miniature rivers, the driving tests, on an apparently flat airfield, started in three inches of water. A competitor, having completely cut his ignition by over hasty entry of a "puddle" was warned—"Don't get out, it's over my Wellingtons". A water-splash prevented marshals from getting to their post, and one set of road cards could not be scored because the ink had run. There were four less marshals than had been expected.

There was a rally though, and many thanks to those who saw it out—we hope you are all dry now.

The first section consisted of about an hour of finding signposts. Most of the entry found the signposts, but several took rather longer than the allowed time. This section led to the test arena, where it was thought kinder in the circumstances to set up only the three potentially quicker tests.

1, The ever-popular (?) "wobble-wobble", 2, "Accelerate and brake", and 3, a variation of the "three posts". In Test One, Paterson, Dearden-Briggs and Schofield shared best time with 12 secs., with Winder getting down to 8 secs. in his Hillman, just slower than a visiting Ford. Davenport tied for best time in Test Two with modern Ford, MG.A and MG.1100. Winder was outstanding in Test Three with 3 secs., less time Liddle's Ford and Mrs. Holliday's MG.A. Best pre-war effort was by Johnson in a 3½ Bentley at 35 secs., then a good second, Paterson at 39. Best totals in the tests in each class were scored by "us"—Class 1 Paterson in his new (?—fresh) machine, and Class 2, Winder in the Hillman.

The short section to tea was illegible.

After tea the more desperate part of the road section began. Working towards Wensleydale by straightforward plotting, with time checks and route checks, Section 2 penalised all but Duke in MG.1100. It was on this section that some marshals foundered in the heavy seas, so some controls could not count.

Section 3 entailed crossing and recrossing a certain line—with acknowledgments to the organisers of the November Rally—though the narra-

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tive was rather different! Only one car managed to complete the section with no penalty, again Duke, who did very well in the conditions prevailing.

The chief perpetrator, owing to being short staffed, had to take the last control, and got too far on the grass and so was late back.

In consequence results were also late, and are as follows:—

Premier: J. L. Davenport with 560 penalties on the road and test time total of 65—very creditable indeed on such a night.

Class 1: B. Dearden-Briggs, 660 on the road and 76 tests.

Award of merit and only other finisher:
H. Johnson, 3½ Bentley (MG. Car Club), 930 and 65.

Class 2: This might be headlined “Triumph for Dagenham”! Winner, J. Liddle, Ford, 40 on road 47 tests; Merit, K. Appleyard, Ford, 230 and 64; and A. S. Martin, Ford, 660 and 94.

Other members competing were J. Broadbank in his Special 4½, D. P. Crow, 3-litre tourer, H. Schofield getting his lovely car rather grubby for once, and R. Paterson. Broadbank had fitted a hood for the benefit of his navigating wife. One is led to understand that the hood was not complete protection against the damp—but adjustments will no doubt be effected. The late owner of Paterson’s 2-seater was disappointed to hear that Paterson and his sister were considerably wet—it turned out the hood was grand—the wet came in from below—discouraging the ignition on the way too. It was splendid to meet Crow all the way from Shrewsbury in his lovely 3-litre.

A particularly welcome entry was that of P. A. Densham. Very good indeed to have him taking part—we hope he will come again and see our country when the sun is shining. How many of us remember when he had to stop using the bank as an address because the manager was not amused at large pieces of machinery being delivered there?

All finishing within the time limit were Pape in his “souped-up” Mini, Dr. Turner in the peoples’ wagon, and Winder, whose son must be congratulated on a first rate early attempt at navigation.

D.H.C.

FOR SALE

The following articles may be obtained from the Secretary, at the prices shown:

Car Badges	25s. each
Lapel Badges	5s. each
Terylene Ties	16s. 6d. each
Instructional Manuals for 2-litre high chassis, 3-litre, 3½-litre, LG6, LG45, M45	45s. each
2-litre low chassis and Rapier ...	63s. each
V12 Instruction Manuals available to order through the Secretary or direct from Ivan Forshaw... ..	63s. each
Meadows ESC Catalogues	25s. each
“Motor Trader” Service Data Sheets for V12	12s. 6d. each
LG45 Wiring Diagrams	1s. 6d. each
Photostat copies of the following original Catalogues:—	
1926/27 2-litre	20s.
1929 2-litre High Chassis, all models, and 16/65 and 3-litre cars ...	25s.
1930 2-litre and 3-litre (one book) ...	35s.
1932 2-litre and 3-litre (one book) ...	30s.
1932/33 16/80 Special Six	10s. 6d.
1934 16/80, 3-litre and M45 4½-litre (one book)	22s. 6d.
1936/37 Rapier	10s. 6d.
1937 LG45 4½-litre	32s. 6d.
1939 LG6 and V12 (one book) ...	40s.

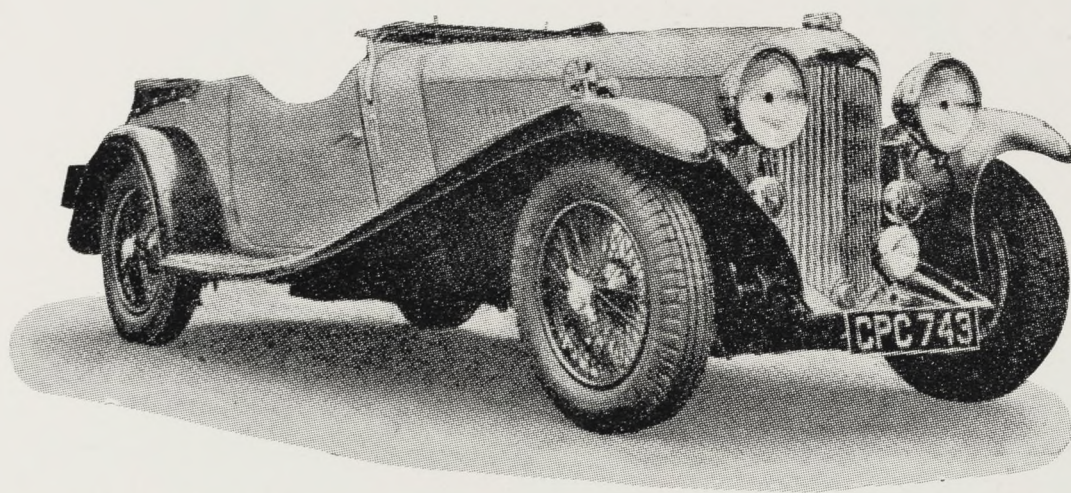
Issues of magazines back to No. 31 available at 2s. 6d. each.



THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE will be held on SUNDAY, 27th SEPTEMBER at the OVERSTONE SOLARIUM, OVERSTONE PARK, NEAR ECTON.

(On the A45 between
Northampton and Wellingborough)





T. H. WISDOM,
writing in the "Daily Herald," after
his test of the LAGONDA RAPIDE:

"This car, as I proved for myself at Brooklands,
with all its equipment, will exceed 100 m.p.h.
Britain's fastest production type car.

"Its superior road holding, excellent brakes,
certain steering and immense reserve of
power enable one to average amazingly
high speeds in such safety as would be
impossible with most other cars

" 10 to 50 m.p.h. in $7\frac{1}{5}$; rest to
60 m.p.h. in $13\frac{4}{5}$. They are the best I
have ever obtained in any road test."

Rapide Tourer £1,000.

Rapide Saloon £1,250

Chassis £825

Britain's safest sports car.



DUNLOP TYRES . TRIPLEX SAFETY GLASS . CERRIC FINISH . STANDARD on the ALL-BRITISH LAGONDA

LAGONDA LIMITED . STAINES . MIDDLESEX

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? No. 5

WHEN this advertisement appeared in March 1935, the M.45R as this model was known had been in production since the previous autumn.

It came about as a direct result of three cars prepared and run in the 1934 T.T. by our President, Arthur Fox. The engine, although following the basic Meadows unit used in the ordinary M.45 had been strengthened considerably. As it was originally designed for use in boats running continuously at moderate revolutions, it was felt to use something like 4,000 r.p.m. throughout a race was asking for trouble. Consequently the connecting rods were redesigned with a stouter section, the bearings were increased in size and the crankcase was cast in alloy of a different strength. Also the compression was raised and the valve gear lightened. These not inconsiderable modifications gave the required safety for the increased revs. and much great power. In fact this bottom end was to remain virtually unchanged throughout the LG.45 and LG.6 series. The chassis at 10 ft. 3 in. was 6 in. shorter than the M.45 and the brake operation was of the Girling system (as was the Rapier of the same period).

With light bodies the cars ran well in the T.T. finishing 4th, 5th and 8th and immediately afterwards the model was put in production normally bearing the coachwork shown in the illustration.

The words of Tommy Wisdom, a well-known racing driver, are true and "the immense reserve of power enable one to average amazingly high speeds" can still be quoted under present day conditions. Look at the acceleration figures, even after almost 30 years still very respectable. But they do not tell the whole story, they do not tell of the effortless cruising at 70 m.p.h., hills not even being noticed, nor of the immense torque available almost from zero revs. which at times give the 4½-litre the feeling of a train. The original batch of production cars were fitted with free wheels which may have helped the smoothness of running but they were not a success and were soon dispensed with.

The styling, characteristics, and handling, were so different from the M.45, some say not so good and it is true the "Rapide" feels nose heavy, that it stands as a model in its own right and not just a modification from earlier design. Truly one of Britain's safest sports cars.

CPC 743 is a famous car, it belonged to Miss Eileen Ellison, a racing driver of the day, and although plans to run it in the Mille Miglia never materialised, it was used in rallies, sprints, and hill climbs. Later it was owned by Leslie Charteris, the author of the "Saint" books.

What of it now? Happily it is still with us, owned by Dr. Cree in Yorkshire, who is slowly and painstakingly rebuilding it to its former glory.

M.H.W.

Advertisement opposite first appeared in the *Autocar*, March 8th, 1935, and is reproduced by kind permission of the Editor of that journal.

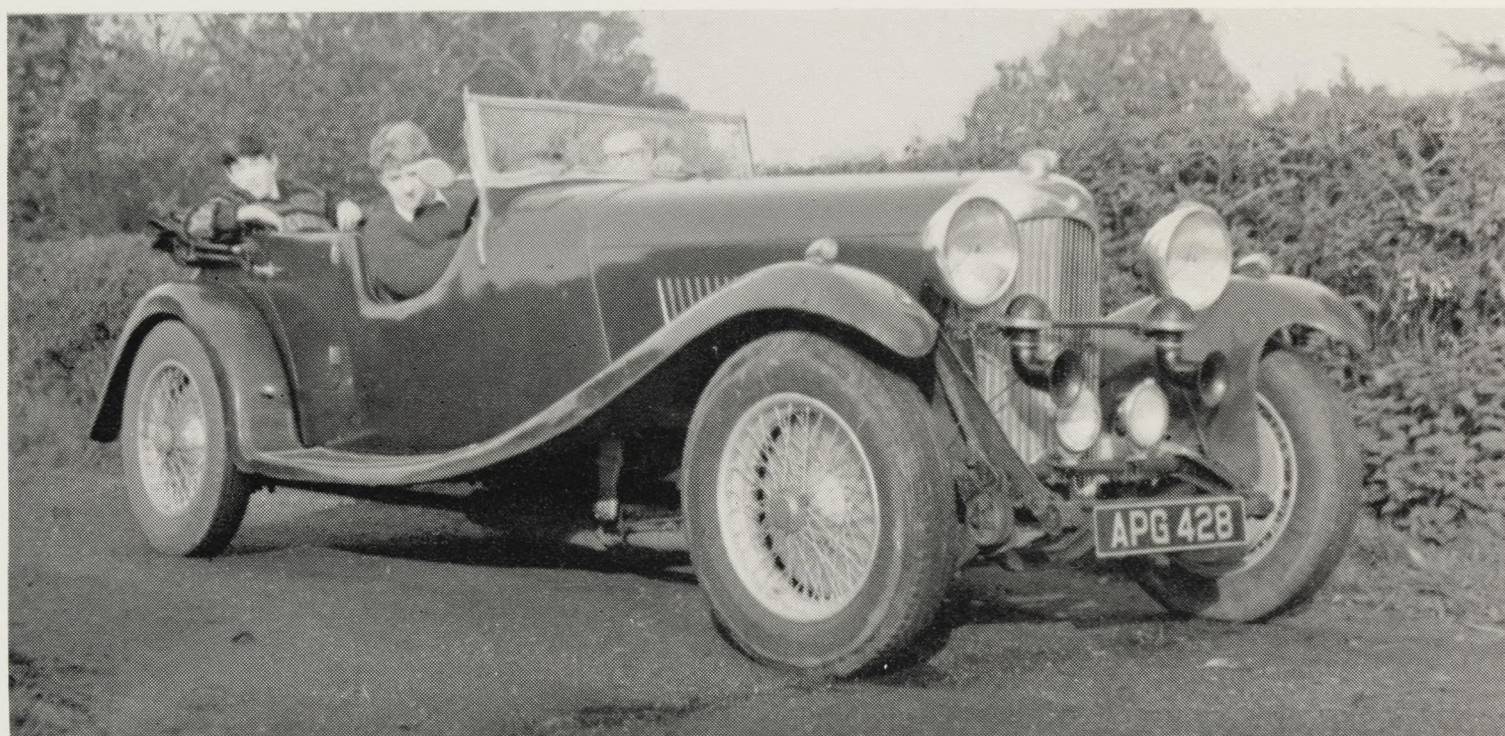
REBUILDING A 3-LITRE

I SUPPOSE MY LIKING FOR LAGONDA REALLY started about 1933, when a really nice 2-litre used almost to live at the "Chequers Hotel", Horley (that is, during opening hours), but at that time it was quite out of my grasp. However, early in 1955 a great friend of mine—probably well remembered by members of the Club—the late Mr. Ron Hunt, of Salfords Garage, Horley, rang me to say that a client had offered him a 1933, pillarless saloon at what seemed to him (an expert) a reasonable price. I made an appointment and bought the car without haggling. Needless to say, it was not really the open motor I so well remembered back in the 30's, by which I mean, an open body instead of the pillarless saloon, but having joined the Lagonda Club, and making my requirements known to our mutual friend, Captain Forshaw, it was not long before he let me know that there was a crashed open one at Longham if I liked to go and see it. This I did, with one, John, who tries hard to keep machinery of the earth-moving type (by which I make a meagre living) going, and although it was agreed that the body was nine inches shorter than the 3-litre chassis I possessed, we decided to come down later and cart away the rather badly

crashed body. In November 1962 we started from here, Outwood, near Redhill, at 4.0 a.m. in a 7-ton tipper to collect it, arriving, after a good breakfast, in time to find the Captain busy with some of his clients, collecting odd spares. After the very smallest amount of haggling, I decided to buy the body, and we proceeded to load. This was not simple from the start, as the body was not easily get at-able and had only back wheels, which had, in the crash, become almost at right-angles to the chassis; this did not aid manoeuvrability. However, with the help of block and tackle brought down with us and attached to the front of the tipper body in the tipped position, we managed to haul it in and returned home. Then, of course, a really bad winter set in and the body lay on two 40-gallon barrels in an open shed from November until March 1963, by which time the snow had melted out of it. At that time I took the "pillarless one" off the road (the boot end by now being in a parlous condition). After much hard work the body was removed and the chassis thoroughly cleaned and painted, but as this was only a spare time job, time seemed to pass without much progress. From the photograph below you will see some of this work in hand, and a full nine inches had to be put on the running boards to meet the rear wings. Not being a panel beater,



Early stages in the rebuilding. *T. H. Roberts.*



The finished result. *T. H. Roberts.*

this presented some difficulties, but by much trial and error a (I hope) reasonable job was made of these troubles. These photographs do not, perhaps, tell the entire story as unfortunately I did not take one with the door post missing, or one which gives any real idea of the damage to

the rear near-side. By September I had a spell in hospital, which again delayed things, but by October 18th I had much pleasure in licensing the now open tourer you see in the above photograph, which brings me nearer to my memory of that beautiful car I remember so many years ago.

T. H. ROBERTS

BOOKS RECEIVED

"Classic Cars" by J. R. Buckley. Published by B. T. Batsford Ltd. 71 pp. 12s. 6d.

For collectors of coloured illustrations of P.V.T. and Vintage cars this book represents excellent value for money. Twenty-four cars are depicted, each with a short supporting text, and there is an extremely well-written introduction by J. R. Buckley.

The cars chosen range from such diverse vehicles as the 1924 Vauxhall Velox 30/98 to the Auburn 851 Speedster. The marque Lagonda is ably represented by Maurice Leo's 1938 LG.6 drop-head coupe.

The standard of printing is high throughout the book and it is pleasing to note that a good many of the photographs were taken by Jeremy Mason whose work often appears within the covers of this Magazine.

"The Maintenance and Driving of Vintage Cars", by Richard C. Wheatley and Brian Morgan. Published by B. T. Batsford Ltd. 168 pp. 30s.

Described by the publishers as a companion volume to the same authors' earlier book "The Restoration of Vintage and Thoroughbred Cars", this work in-

deed carries on from where the other one left off.

The chapter headings quoted here will give an idea of the scope of this book: Motor Vehicle Regulations; Driving and use of controls; Maintenance of Running gear and engine; Maintenance of bodywork; Maintenance of electrical equipment; Use of car in rallies and speed events; Garage and workshop; *et cetera*.

Despite this I feel that this book will not offer a great deal of help to the average Club member. The theory of maintenance and driving is admirably described here but nothing teaches as well as experience. Dare I say that perhaps the authors are out of touch with reality and that in fact the majority of vintage car maintenance appears to be carried out in what in their eyes would be quite unsuitable conditions, i.e. a crowded garage with barely room to wield a spanner, let alone operate a lathe. The average Club member however is blessed with qualities of patience, determination, adaptability and manual skill which enable him to overcome the difficult conditions imposed on him and is not the satisfaction of the finished job thereby greater?

Nevertheless this book is an enjoyable one to read and the printing quality is up to the usual high Batsford standard.

A.W.M.

THE 2½-LITRE
LAGONDA
DROP-HEAD COUPÉ

*Reprinted from the Autocar's
Series of Road Tests, March
2nd, 1951, by kind permission
of its Editor.*

APPROACH TO THE LAGONDA, NOT FOR THE FIRST time as a type but now in the shape of the drop-head coupé, is made in the knowledge that it is one of the more interesting designs of the day and, of course, one of the upper price British cars hand built in limited numbers as a highly individual car. The chassis itself is unusual in consisting of a true cruciform, the main members being formed into an elongated X. Also it is the only example of British production car for touring purposes to have independent rear as well as independent front suspension, whilst the twin overhead camshaft six-cylinder engine is one of the finest extant examples of British high-efficiency quality design.

A car selling at the price of the Lagonda has to make out an above average justification for itself. The assessment, however, cannot be attempted in terms of performance alone, high though that is. A good deal that is abstract, or at all events not measurable, is obtained by the buyer of this calibre of machine. The name is a good one, it has gained further credit to itself since the war with an entirely new design and a different organisation behind it, and apart from the more practical considerations there is a cachet value attaching to such a car.

From the purely practical viewpoint the machine feels unusually solid and as if it would stand a great deal of hard work, although again such points as these are incapable of being measured, or even really effectively judged, within the limits of road testing experience. The car tested, show-

ing over 14,000 miles on the mileometer, had seen appreciably more service than the general run of those presented for this purpose. What is ascertainable is that with a quite large and by no means light body built on fully touring lines the engine is able to propel it with a notable feeling of satisfaction to the driver and passengers up to speeds of about 85 m.p.h., and more for those who are interested, where room exists to build up speed. Within the distance available for recording maximum speed—approximately 1·25 miles—the top figure seen was 84 m.p.h. true reading, but it may be noted that the saloon model of otherwise identical specification, tested by *The Autocar* in 1949, attained 91 m.p.h. true speed. For some reason the present coupé had an excessively optimistic speedometer, which, again, did not apply to the saloon previously tested.

As is well known, the same engine as is used in the Lagonda is fitted in the companion Aston Martin, a lighter and more nearly streamlined car which has a tremendous performance for those who want a sporting type of vehicle. The Lagonda, therefore, can be content with a more subdued all-round performance in keeping with a different style of bodywork that gives full seating space.

A 2½-litre engine that is quiet and also entirely tractable and flexible on top gear, and does not pink to any noticeable extent even on low-octane Pool petrol, is by no means large for so substantially built a car as the Lagonda. The result is that revs need to be maintained by making use of the gear box. It is an engine that seems to delight in revving and that "comes to life" at 2,500 to 3,000 r.p.m., going on happily then up to the 5,000-plus region. Therefore, speeds on the indirect gears can be unusually high, and there is no mechanical fuss at even 70 m.p.h. on third gear, for instance. Given less use of the gear box the car is still remarkably pleasant to drive and the minimum top gear speed from which it will pick up smoothly is as low as 6 m.p.h.

This is a car seen at its best on a journey of some length, cruising happily as fast as the road will permit up to its limit, and putting over 50 miles into an hour with ease on any route that gives it a chance. Therein is the Lagonda's true value, which is not to imply that it is not suitable for quieter motoring and everyday in and out of town use. It is entirely amenable to close traffic conditions of driving, but, again, for brisk re-



The drop-head model of the 2½-litre Lagonda is an example of traditional British individual coachbuilding which achieves dignity combined with a touch of the modern appearance.

sponse from low speeds the gears must be used. Whatever this car is doing, running at speed on a main road, being driven leisurely in urban districts, or taken swiftly and satisfyingly up a by-way hill with sharp corners and a gradient in the 1 in 6 region, 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.

An illustration of the difference that can be made to the results obtained according to the method of handling was seen clearly on a stiff hill off main roads, where the response was comparatively sluggish after a sharp corner was taken on second gear, and to have employed first and utilised the engine's revving capabilities would have been the most effective way to tackle this particular hill. On another somewhat similar gradient where a faster approach was possible a lively climb was made on second throughout.

The handling characteristics of a car that has independent rear springing by torsion bars, as on the Lagonda, in addition to i.f.s. by coil springs, are of great interest. Basically, it is extremely

stable and liberties can be taken with it on bends without getting into trouble. It is not by any means easy to judge what are optimum speeds for given bends in, say, the plus-60 m.p.h. region, but unquestionably there is real stability, and very little body roll or tyre scream is experienced. The rack and pinion steering has a great deal to commend it, not being heavy at any time, having pronounced caster action, being quite high geared for these days, and thus giving a quick response and an invaluable impression of providing safe control. It is steering that can be said to be virtually free from vices.

An impression was gained that the suspension was firmer by comparison with that of the saloon model tested in 1949. Riding over a variety of surfaces is extremely satisfactory, and back seat passengers experience at all times practically as high a degree of comfort as those in the front seats. During a comprehensive test in which a good deal of high-speed driving was included, and a considerable proportion of the time spent on wet roads or in heavy rain, the car handled with exemplary steadiness, promoting confidence, and

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the hydraulically operated brakes had their due share in maintaining these favourable impressions. Fairly appreciable pedal pressure is required for maximum braking, but the retardation is obtained smoothly and surely.

The steering-column gear change is a good one of its kind. The synchromesh on second, third and top gears is of the first-rate baulking ring type, and quick changes can be made without overriding the synchromesh. To keep the clutch pedal depressed in a traffic halt requires rather more pressure than is usual today.

The driving position is well arranged with a spring-spoked steering wheel of a plainer and more functional type than is common today, well suited to this kind of car, and it is set at a very satisfactory angle. The left-hand wing is just within view and outward vision to the front is very satisfactory. In addition to the fore and aft adjustment of the front seats there is a most useful adjustment for height and rake. The back rests extend well up the shoulders, although, as so often today, more lateral support would be acceptable, especially to the passenger.

As regards rear quarter and full rearward vision with the body closed, the drop-head coupé shows the faults of its type rather sharply, and the view given by the driving mirror through small rear windows in the head is not really adequate. Some inconveniences attaching to this style of body are probably acceptable in return for the benefits of open car motoring in suitable weather, to those to whom this style still appeals. The head is a fairly large and heavy one to manipulate, and opening and closing it cannot be said to be really a one-man operation. Luggage space is useful. The rear seats are most comfortably upholstered, and they have a central folding armrest. The heating and demisting installation proved quite effective with the blower fan in operation; a red light which provides a reminder of the fan being in use seems unnecessarily bright. There are also warning lights, of different colours, to indicate when the starting carburettor is in action and to show that the reserve petrol supply—a now rare and much appreciated provision—has been brought into use. Another sound fitment is a battery master switch.

Instruments are well done, and include an engine water thermometer. Their lighting at night is effective without being bright to a degree troublesome to the driver. In detail, it takes some time to remember the identities of the un-

labelled minor switches on the facia, and the accommodation for the usual impedimenta in pockets and cubby holes is underdone; a lidded container in the left of the facia has the merit of being lockable, but it is small. Absence of sun vizors is rather markedly felt.

The head lamps provide a quite good beam, though not one fully adequate to the performance on an unknown road. In starting from cold it was found that the engine fired at once, even when the car had stood in the open overnight, but that it required appreciable running, in spite of use of the starting carburettor, before it would settle to steady pulling. An admirable and too rare item of the equipment is a screenwasher with spraying nozzles in the top of the scuttle, supplied from a water container under the bonnet when a button in front of the driver is pressed. Another excellent feature is an under-bonnet oil tank providing automatic lubrication of the steering kingpins.

DATA FOR THE DRIVER

PRICE, with drop-head coupé body, £1,970, plus £547 19s. 5d. British purchase tax. Total (in Great Britain), £2,517 19s. 5d.

ENGINE: 22.6 h.p. (R.A.C. rating), 6 cylinders, overhead valves, 78 × 90 mm., 2,580 c.c. Brake Horsepower: 105 at 5,000 r.p.m. Compression Ratio: 6.5 to 1. Max. Torque: 133 lb. ft. at 3,000 r.p.m. 18 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m. on top gear.

WEIGHT: 30 cwt. 1 qr. 21 lb. (3,409 lb.) LB. per C.C.: 1.32. B.H.P. per TON: 67.34.

TYRE SIZE: 6.00 × 16 in. on bolt-on steel disc wheels.

TANK CAPACITY: 19 English gallons. Approximate fuel consumption range, 18-20 m.p.g. (15.7—14.1 litres per 100 km.).

TURNING CIRCLE: 38 ft. (L and R). Steering wheel movement from lock to lock: 2½ turns.

LIGHTING SET: 12-volt.

MAIN DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase, 9 ft. 5½ in. Track, 4 ft. 8¾ in. (front); 4 ft. 8¼ in. (rear). Overall length, 15 ft. 8 in.; width, 5 ft. 8 in.; height, 5 ft. 4 in. Minimum Ground Clearance: 7 in.

ACCELERATION

Overall gear ratios	From steady m.p.h. of		
	10-30	20-40	30-50
	sec.	sec.	sec.
4.56 to 1	12.1	12.1	12.8
6.06 to 1	8.6	8.6	9.1
9.02 to 1	5.6	5.8	6.7
13.30 to 1	4.3	—	—
From rest through gears to:—			
	sec.		sec.
30 m.p.h. ...	5.8	60 m.p.h. ...	18.8
50 m.p.h. ...	12.7	70 m.p.h. ...	26.6
		80 m.p.h. ...	40.8

SPEEDS ON GEARS

(by Electric Speedometer)	M.p.h. (normal and maximum)	K.p.h. (normal and maximum)
1st	26—34	42—55
2nd	40—50	64—80
3rd	56—77	90—124
Top	84	135

Speedometer correction by Electric Speedometer:—
Car Speedometer Electric Speedometer

		m.p.h.
10	=	6.5
20	=	16.5
30	=	26.0
40	=	34.0
50	=	43.0
60	=	51.0
70	=	59.5
80	=	67.0
90	=	75.0

WEATHER: Damp surface, cold; wind negligible.
Acceleration figures are the means of several runs in opposite directions.
Described in "The Autocar" of January 10, 1947, and October 15, 1948.

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WHITHER THE A.G.M?

FOLLOWING THE SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING TURN-
out at the A.G.M., the Committee decided to
conduct a poll to discover, if possible, the reason
for the poor attendance. A reply paid card was
sent to all U.K. Members. The text read as
follows:—

"1. I did attend the A.G.M.

2. I did not attend the A.G.M. because:—

- (a) It was too far away, i.e. miles from home.
- (b) I was otherwise engaged.
- (c) Sorry, I was not interested."

Members were asked to "delete as necessary" and to post. No signatures were required. The card was kept as simple as possible to encourage completion without undue effort! Out of 640 cards sent, 394 were returned which was a greater number than the more cynical amongst us expected. Our thanks to those who did manage to make the post box: to the others, well—least said.

Additional comments were made by many people, even by those who attended the A.G.M. One stalwart said he had turned out, "... even though I ran a big-end at Doncaster and had to return to Bradford for tin-ware to do it". Some said they liked the venue, others hated it and one chap, "loathed M.1"! Those who thought the event too far away also had their comments, e.g., "Anno domini—driver not car"; "engine unreliable *after* overhaul" (poor fellow); "140 miles—10 gallons each way" (a supercharged V.12?) and a perfect *essay* from a schoolmaster. The most cheering reply in this category was from a gentleman in Mallorca who took the trouble to write a letter, God bless him!

From the "otherwise engaged" section emerged tales of Lagondas in various states of disrepair. Other reasons included, "wife producing infant bugler" (sounding the retreat?); "emergency at home. Some mothers ...!" and "Navy as usual" (shouldn't have joined if he can't take a joke).

As might be expected the "not interested's" had nothing interesting to say. A number of people found they were unable to classify themselves under any of the printed reasons for non-attendance and have been separately grouped. These included, "got lumbered with a Dolly" (mechanical or otherwise?); "no money! School

fees just paid"; "personal life a mess"; "Lag sick—me? Broke". And three members had the courage to say that they, "just forgot".

Which all goes to show what a pleasantly eccentric lot we are. You are not eccentric, Sir? Do you own a Lagonda? You do? Well, need I say more.

J.W.T.C.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: One more reply was brought to my attention. Section 2(a) had been filled in with "3000 miles from home". This stemmed from Ronald Coyne in Central Africa.]

COMPETITION NOTES

AT THE TIME OF WRITING, ON A PLEASANT APRIL evening, one has a feeling that things are moving. Spring is at last with us, and the season has started. To add weight to this, I have in front of me various notes on events that have already taken place this year, with several new names appearing in the entry lists.

First off in the calendar was Henry Coates' North Riding Rally which took place on that fearful March weekend when it snowed six inches on Saturday and rained another inch on Sunday. Full report appears elsewhere in this issue.

V.S.C.C. Silverstone, 18th April

The first vintage Silverstone is usually a very enjoyable affair as everybody is fresh out after the winter, and everything goes with a swing. Especially so this year as the day dawned as perfect as any day in high summer, and the rain held off until the last race. Looking through the programme of events, it was very pleasing to see no less than ten Lagondas down to race that day, though not all of them ran. George Stanton in his high chassis 2-litre was down to run in event 4, and we were all hoping to see some spirited motoring from this intrepid driver, but unfortunately a fractured oil-pipe forced his retirement after only one lap, leaving oil on the track at Woodcote which caused some interesting moments later in the race!

The high spot of the afternoon for Lagonda members was the duel between Jack Kibble and James Crocker. James, driving again with all his old skill, was having to nurse his car round the corners as the new brake linings fitted only the day before, were not bedding down too well. On each lap, as the two cars came past the pits, James pulled slowly away from the team car,

only to be passed again by Jack coming down the straight into Woodcote. As the flag came down, both cars came round Woodcote together, with Kibble just ahead as they went over the line. Great stuff this, and just the sort of fun that we like to see at Silverstone. It was good to see our Chairman back in the seat he likes best, and good luck to him during the rest of the season.

Spring Socials, 19th April

On the evening after the two socials, Herb writes to say that so far there were three competitors tying for first place in the Northern event, but that they were hoping to find a winner. In the Southern Social, a winner was easily found. Out of about twenty starters, thirteen reached the finish, with M. B. Jones in his low chassis 2-litre easily the winner. Arnold Davey arranged the event, and very successfully too. Pity it rained so hard, making those Hertfordshire lanes a bit tricky for the bigger cars, but as time did not seriously count for anything, it was a very fair and well organised event.

In reading these notes, it becomes apparent that the events this year are being very well supported, so far, and it is hoped that this will encourage more new people to have a go at some of them. The Competition Secretary is always interested to hear from anybody who has been waving the flag in events outside the Club, and willing to help anyone who would like to compete in events but who isn't quite sure how to go about it.

If you couldn't get to the Southern Rally, why not run up to the Northern Driving Tests on 4th July, and give those Northerners a bit of competition. It is very pleasant to see them come down to so many of the meetings in the South, but it is certainly time for a few Southerners to go up and fetch back some of those awards that have been up North too long!

Don't forget the Lagonda handicap at the B.D.C.—SILVERSTONE meeting on 1st August. If the early season enthusiasm continues, it looks as though there should be a jolly good field. How thrilling it would be to have enough entries to raise a 2-litre handicap, followed by a 4½-litre handicap. Impossible? By no means; if all the regular competitors had all their cars in running order at one time, that alone would present quite a formidable array! Still, it's a nice thought, and you never know.

J.C.W.

FIRE ENGINES AND FEARSOME LAGONDAS

ONE DAY, A FRIEND ASKED ME WHETHER MY 1933 Austin 7 was for sale. Knowing that I would want a replacement vehicle if I did sell him the Austin, he mentioned that he knew someone who had a "Gondola" car that he wanted to get rid of.

I realised at once that this could only be a Lagonda which is a rarity here in South Africa. I met the owner and was soon standing in front of a very sad and dilapidated Lagonda which had remained in the open and sported a fine crop of built-in weeds. There was no upholstery left to speak of, the dashboard and wiring were in a chaotic state and there were all manner of spare bits and pieces left in the back of the car.

The Lagonda had suffered at some time or

another damage to the rear mudguards and boot lid. The wooden framework had been attacked by rot. Despite this, I bought the car and eventually got it home. My children were at first somewhat frightened by the Lagonda and complained that it "kept on looking at us".

I started the renovation by stripping the car lengthwise down the right hand side, where possible preserving the wood that was not too badly eaten away. Clear saligna and laminated plywood was used for rebuilding the frame. I was fortunate enough to have friends to help me on the various machining jobs and I took a few lessons at the local transport company workshops on panel-beating and spray-painting.

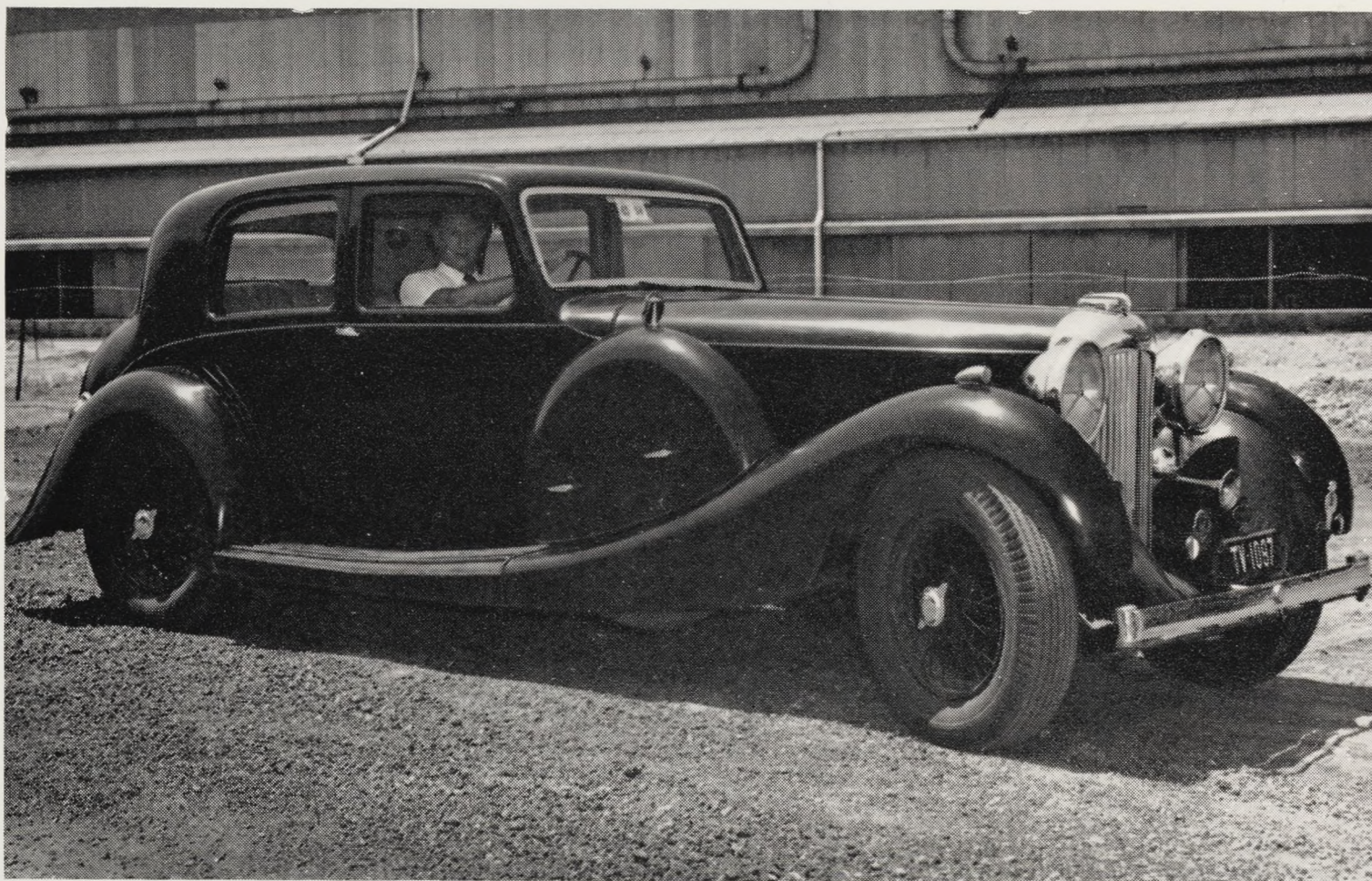
The engine was in a decent state as it had been shipped to England for an overhaul, complete with gearbox, by a previous owner.

I therefore carried on with the bodybuilding and complete the right hand side of the body frame before starting on the left and so eventually the complete body was finished using aluminium panels and fibreglass.

I then tackled the rewiring armed with diagrams obtained from Ivan Forshaw which proved of great assistance. Meanwhile the upholstery



Where's that fire!



Proud owner.

was being repaired by a professional firm. Most of the bright parts were re-chromed, some of these I did myself using a chromic acid bath.

Some two and a quarter years later the Lagonda was again roadworthy and I am pleased to say passed its road test first go, drawing with it much admiration from the Traffic Department.

Since the end of 1963 I have acquired a 1924 Dennis fire engine and restoring this has taken up quite a lot of my time. Last February I entered this vehicle in a Courtesy Drive and Rally at Johannesburg which meeting marked the official opening of the Transport Museum there. A friend drove the Lagonda on my behalf and both vehicles gained trophies! Needless to say I was very thrilled by these successes and the local newspaper gave me quite a write-up.

The Dennis originally had solid rubber tyres but these were altered in 1926 to pneumatics. The windscreen was also a later fitment. I intend entering the fire engine in this year's National Vintage Rally which is run from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town and will involve me in a round trip of some 2,000 miles.

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THE 2-litre LAGONDA WATER PUMP

by Ivan Forshaw

TECHNICAL ARTICLES APPEARING IN THE MAGAZINE should always be studied against the background of description provided by the maker's instruction manuals, copies of which are available from the Secretary. The purpose of the articles is to amplify general information appearing in the manuals, and to set out a procedure for dismantling, examination and overhaul which may be of practical assistance to owners in maintaining and repairing their cars. Design weaknesses made apparent by time are also indicated, and ways are suggested of overcoming such weaknesses.

The 2-litre Lagonda water pump consists essentially of a cast aluminium body, into which is fitted a bronze housing for the pump shaft and gland assembly. The shaft is, or should be, of stainless steel, and is supported by a phosphor bronze bush pressed into the housing. The shaft is lubricated by a Stauffer grease cap of the screw-down pattern. The shaft diameter is $\frac{7}{16}$ in., and a driving tongue is provided by milling flats on the end of it. The pump rotor is of bronze, and is fitted by six $\frac{1}{8}$ in. rivets to a flange on the shaft. At the back of the pump body is a threaded brass union incorporating an extension which bears on the end of the pump shaft, providing a thrust pad which prevents the rotor drifting and cutting its way through the body. The extension and union are drilled, and water is fed from this point by copper pipe to the jacketed manifold on single carburettor engines; the outlet from the hot spot is connected by pipe to an elbow at the rear of the cylinder head. Supercharged engines, and those fitted with twin-carburettor arrangements, have no provision for a water hot spot, and the union on the pump is sealed off.

The only change in water pump design throughout the whole period of production was to the method of attaching the feed pipe from the bottom of the radiator. Prior to 1931 this was secured by a threaded brass union of large size;

the feed pipe looped beneath the engine bearer, and the bottom of this pipe was the lowest point of the water circulation system—there should be a tap here for draining. Later pumps have a two stud flange fitting for the feed pipe, which now passes above the engine bearer.

The water pump is carried in an aluminium cradle secured to the back of the timing chest by four studs, and removal of the pump does not involve disturbing this cradle. The pump is held in the cradle by a single castellated steel ring nut which is readily accessible behind the gland adjustment, and which has a normal right hand thread. A peg spanner was provided in the toolkit for this nut, but it does nothing which cannot as easily be accomplished with a light hammer and a slender brass drift or punch. To remove the pump from the engine disconnect the water feed pipe, and the pipe to the manifold hot spot; remove two bolts securing the aluminium water elbow to the cylinder jacket sideplate, and unscrew the steel ring nut holding the pump to the cradle.

To dismantle the pump remove the six cheese headed screws securing the bronze gland and shaft housing to the body. It is one of the less endearing features of Lagonda design that wherever possible screws and bolts are allowed to pass through into water. Some of these screws may shear, and if so they must be drilled out and the holes retapped during the overhaul; the thread here is $\frac{3}{16}$ in. Whitworth. The gland housing may now be jacked out of the pump body by screwing two $\frac{1}{4}$ in. B.S.F. bolts into the tapped holes provided for the purpose. The pump shaft and bush should be replaced if worn, or excessive water leakage is inevitable; tightening the gland packing would effect only a very temporary cure, as the soft packing material cannot be made to act as a bearing. Brass or copper rivets should be used to secure the rotor to the shaft. The phosphor bronze bush is a simple press fit in the housing; remember to drill the grease hole after fitting the bush. A badly corroded pump body should be replaced. The thrust pad is either sweated on to, or a machined part of, the brass union at the rear of the body; a worn thrust pad must be replaced, or built up by brazing and finished to a length which allows the rotor to spin freely in the body but does not permit it to drift endwise and cut its way through the aluminium; it may be possible to turn up a brass thrust "button" to push into the existing

pad, which is shortened as necessary, and such a button would be a replaceable thing.

Asbestos string soaked in melted tallow is a good packing for the gland. The gland nut should never be tightened any more than is necessary to stop water leakage; if over tightened the soft packing will seriously score the pump shaft. Use only water pump grease in the Stauffer cap. When reassembling the pump the gland housing should be so fitted that the greaser is at 3 o'clock, as this will allow clearance for the front carburettor if two instruments are fitted.

Many water pumps are seen to be fitted with a brass plug at the bottom of the body. This should always be replaced by a tap, and the pump drained when the system is emptied in frosty weather; otherwise a well of water remains in the body—this will freeze and grip the rotor, and if the engine should be turned under such conditions damage will certainly be done; the rotor may be detached from the shaft, the shaft itself may shear, or the female driving dog at the back of the timing chest be splayed open. It is by no means unusual to find the female dog turning around the pump shaft, without driving it. The thread on the tap for the pump body will be $\frac{1}{8}$ in. gas.

The lowest of the screws in the gland housing acts as a dowel when fitting the pump to its cradle. There is a hole at the bottom of the cradle to drain away water which may leak from the pump shaft, and it is essential that this hole should be kept clear. If it becomes blocked the cradle may fill with water, which would be fed immediately into the engine by the Acme oil return thread behind the timing chest driving dog. A badly leaking pump might cause considerable quantities of water to be transferred to the sump in this way, and could give rise to suspicion of serious trouble elsewhere in the engine.

Much of the trouble with 2-litre water pumps stems from the inadequate size of the shaft and its tongue. Modifications providing a broader driving tongue have not been an unqualified success, as these have involved screwing a specially machined tongue into the existing small shaft diameter. Reconstruction of a more basic kind is now under review, and details of this will be published in due course. It is unfortunate that the pump bodies should have been aluminium castings, as many have been seriously corroded over the years by the action of the salts in the cooling water. But in fairness it should be said that neither the Lagonda designers nor

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anyone else would have believed that the cars would still be actively in service nearly forty years after they were made.

The following new replacements for the water pump are available from me:

Pump Bodies in aluminium or bronze.

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MY DEAR OLD 16/80

By K. H. Rutherford

IT WAS NOT ALTOGETHER LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, for my first decision was not to buy it; however, I must start at the beginning. Like many another motorist I first took to the roads—over thirty years ago it was, in those days when one could motor for pleasure—in a small mass-produced car. But it was not long before the low sleek lines of a Lagonda caught my eyes, and from then on I longed to possess one—a longing which became more intense when I read the Road Test of the new “16/80”. In those days £600 was a lot of money, and a new Lagonda—list price £595—was quite out of the question; so I began to scan the advertisements for likely second-hand models. The first one I tried was not quite what I wanted, and the second one I looked at was too shabby. Strange to relate, I saw that car again, many years later, completely restored and lined up for the Concours d’Elegance at a Lagonda Meeting! The third, my present car, was quite a different proposition. Even so, I decided against it at first; but when re-offered I accepted. That was in 1937 and it is still with me. I often recall how its previous owner, extolling its merits, said it had the special Vanden Plas body and would still look modern five years later. Little did I think I should still be running it twenty-six years later!

It has a great personality, my 16/80; it is almost human, and like humans it is very temperamental. Sometimes the engine will burst into life immediately I touch the button; on other occasions no amount of cranking, priming, cajoling or swearing will produce the slightest reaction. If the Lagonda doesn’t wish to start that’s that—it’s no use arguing! There have been many times when I have just had to put off the journey because the Lagonda has been un-

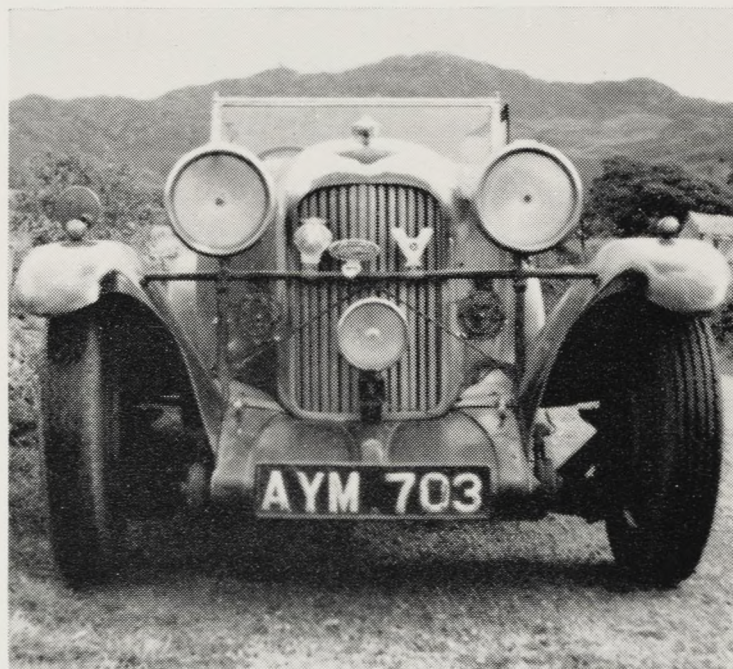


Photo by K. H. Rutherford.

willing. I well remember one cold March morning, not many winters ago, when I intended driving to Church. The Lagonda, however, had not the slightest intention of bestirring itself at that hour on a Sunday morning, so I was forced to abandon the idea. A few days later, without any special attention to the engine and without trying any expedient that I had not tried before, I got a perfectly easy start! Weather? Maybe, but I still say it’s temperament. I cannot predict its every whim, but on the whole there is a deep sense of understanding between car and driver. Particularly when I am returning late at night, along familiar country lanes, I get the impression that I am being driven rather than driving, that the Lagonda knows every turn and every gradient, and would be quite capable of delivering me at my destination without my guidance.

It seems odd to reflect that I have had my Lagonda throughout almost a lifetime of schoolmastering. When I took up my first appointment it had not been born, but it joined me at my second school and has been with me ever since. From school to school, familiar to generations of old boys, it has been my inseparable companion. Through glad days and sad days, through sunshine and storms, over motorway and mountain-track it has been my faithful friend. “What do you call it?” I am often asked. Amy, Bessie, Lily, and various nicknames, not always complimentary, have been put forward as suggestions. None, however, is officially recognised. To me it is just my dear old Lagonda.

SHORT STORY - IT'S TRUE

WHEN DRIVERS OF FINE OLD MOTORCARS FEEL conspicuous this is not merely some psychological complex. They are conspicuous. The police notice them. So do others.

I had just returned from a summer holiday. My telephone rang and it was John Beardow, which did not surprise me as he is a keen local member. What did surprise me was his preamble that a charming young lady on his staff had asked for a confidential interview on a very personal matter, and he hoped I would not mind his telephoning. (I wondered what on earth was coming next!)

She had several times been interested to see a large red old open tourer about the city centre and from the first glimpse had said to her little self that when she became a bride that particular car would be her ideal bridal carriage. Eventually she ascertained that it was a Lagonda. Knowing that her boss had a Lagonda—albeit a grey post-war model—she put two and two together and enquired if he knew the driver, perhaps, of the car of her dream-day.

And so it all came true. The 4½ was lent for the occasion and in the car of her choice she was driven to Skidby* church with its 13th century lancet, by a smiling John Beardow in an early 20th century Lagonda.

Yet that is not the end of the story. A month or two later it transpired that a bottle from Scotland had been sent with compliments to the driver.

Believe it or not, but I am recently returned from the following summer holiday when a friend of the bride, also in John's office, approaches him with a similar request. This time I remember another John—Barleycorn—and offer to do the chauffeur act myself. John comes as footman.

In open trim (have you ever paused, dearly beloved, to calculate how much confetti can be cascaded over a bridal couple in an open car?), sun blazing, we glide through the village. Now comes the delay. Instead of the trunk-road traffic hustling by and out of the way they decelerate to stare

With great elan John and I give them something to think about as we home along the new by-pass after the reception. Just imagine the consternation of drivers in cruising moderns on being suddenly overtaken by a tall and elderly

but very clean-heeled vintage thoroughbred, then their immediate confusion on being enveloped in its huge halo of an equally quick cloud of multi-coloured confetti!

You probably guess the end of this story. No, we do not hear anything from the local constabulary. But after transporting two of his staff in the Lagonda bridal carriage John comes up with another request. This time—Yes, he now owns the car!

R.P.

*FOOTNOTE—Skidby, pronounced Skidbi, not skid-by. John did stop.

FOR SALE

4½-litre, 1934 Lagonda Tourer with all original parts. One owner, £150 o.n.o. Not in running order. A. H. MANN, 71, CORNWALL GARDENS, LONDON, S.W.7, or at 7, CAVENDISH CRESCENT NORTH, THE PARK, NOTTINGHAM (42207). Car is at Nottingham.

LG.45 1937 Saloon, Sanction III engine. Descriptions are pointless, I think it is worth £160. RAFIQUE, 2, ROSECROFT WALK, PINNER, MIDDLESEX. (PINNER 3103.)

M.45 Saloon, 1934, in immaculate and original condition throughout. Superb chrome, gleaming black cellulose. Kept garaged and hardly used during my two years of ownership. M.O.T. tested. £200. For spare parts, an identical car (less body). Contains superb "Rapide" engine and Alvis 4.3 gear-box adapted to fit. £35 the lot. M. CHEETHAM, "LITTLE WOOD", ROOK LANE, CHALDON, SURREY. (CATERHAM 45538 before 11 a.m. or after 6 p.m.)

1932 Lagonda **16/80 Special Six**. Van den Plas bodied 2-seater with dickey. Sound, original, and reliable. Owner facing imminent deportation overseas. £210.

D. NURSE, IMPERIAL COLLEGE FIELD STATION, SILWOOD PARK, ASCOT, BERKS. TEL.: ASCOT 1054.

LG.6 Saloon. Good body and upholstery, tyres. Recent extensive engine overhaul. £100.

BOOTY, 66, KINGTON ST. MICHAEL, CHIPPENHAM, WILTS. TEL.: KINGTON LANGLEY 203.

WANTED

Vintage **3-litre** Tourer. Very good one preferably, but potential considered. Also: **Rapier** 2-seater for competition, original bodywork or successful special. B. DEARDEN-BRIGGS, FIELD HOUSE, LONGWOOD, HUDDERSFIELD. TEL.: MILNSBRIDGE 2680.

RAPIER BODIES

by MIKE WILBY

AS MOST PEOPLE KNOW, DURING THE PERIOD THAT the Rapier was produced by the Lagonda Company (i.e. from mid-1934 to mid-1935) it was sold only in chassis form. It was left to the individual customer to arrange the coachbuilding to suit his own requirements. In practice, of course, one or two of the leading coachbuilders of the day bodied the Rapier and it was sold through distributors as a complete car.

By far the most popular and the nicest-looking bodies were those produced by Messrs. E. D. Abbott of Farnham. This firm built bodies for other models of Lagonda and even produced a replica of the 1935 Le Mans winner which looked very handsome with long swept wings in place of the short racing type.

Abbott's, who today are one of the few remaining independent coachbuilders, have good records and it appears from these that during the period mentioned above they completed 120 fixed-head coupés, 100 four-seater tourers and 26 drop-head coupés. What is so surprising is this large number of fixed-head coupés that were built and the relatively small production of the drop-head coupé. Of these types of bodies, the tourer has survived the years in greater numbers perhaps because in early years they were considered more desirable

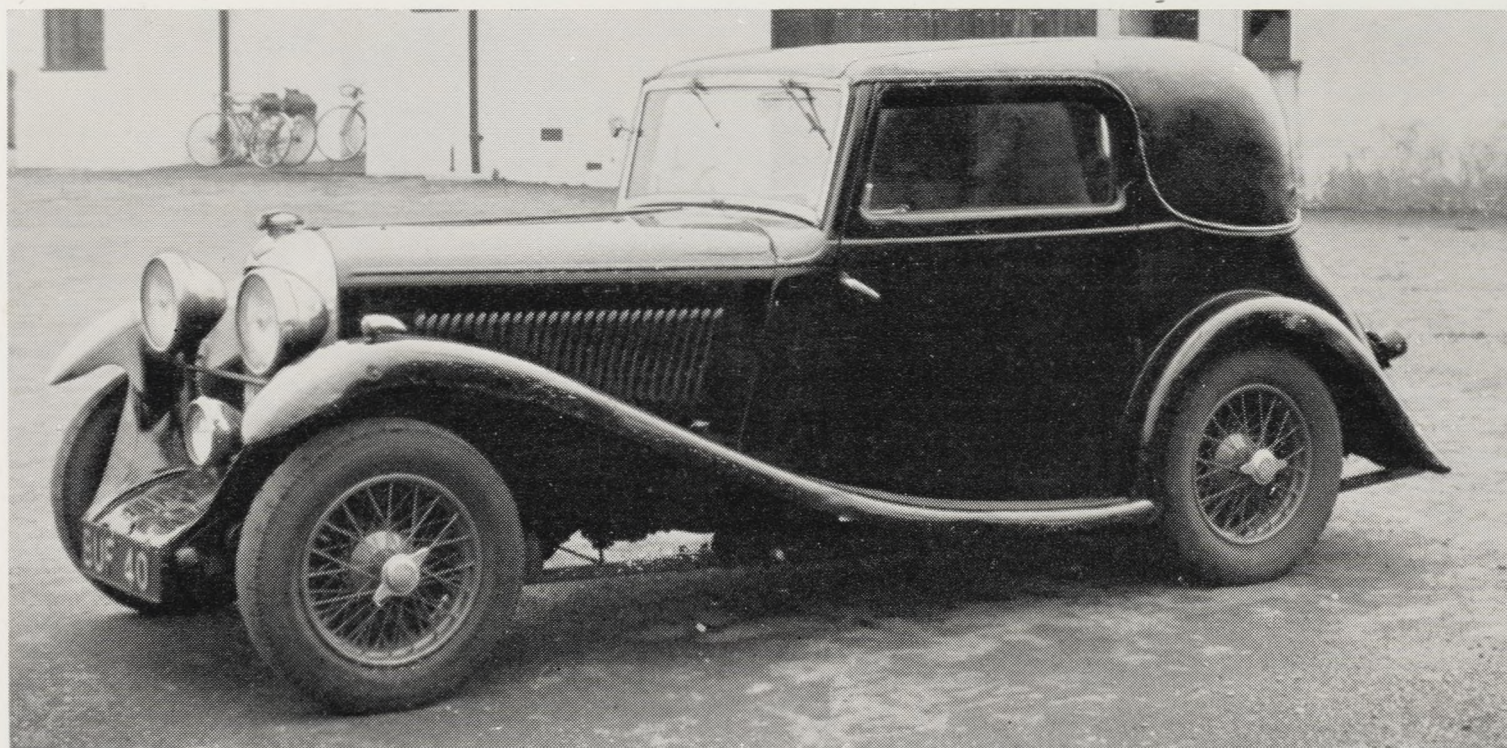
by the enthusiasts and also because they stood up to wear and tear better than the coupés with their large heavy doors.

Of the other cars known, the Rapier Register has evidence of three Abbott two-seaters; three D.H.C.'s by Maltby; one tourer by Silent Touring Bodies Ltd. (cannot imagine either the car or the body was very silent!); two Corinthian tourers; eight with bodies by Eagle (one saloon and seven pretty two-seaters); one tourer by March (who also made the body for the prototype); two Bertelli two-seaters, and surprisingly only three De Clifford cars (one of which was a saloon).

This arrives at a total of nearly 270 which must represent nearly the entire Rapier production.

During the years when the production was continued by the Rapier Car Company (spasmodically from 1936-1939) the car was sold complete with body in both tourer and coupé form. Ranalagh were responsible for this coachwork which did not, in my opinion, have the good vintage grace of the earlier bodies.

If it can be assumed that the Rapier Company produced something like 100 Rapiers, then the grand total production is around 400. This confirms an earlier belief that about half of this figure have survived today, although some have been much modified in the bodywork. This may prove that the vintage layout of stiff springs and flexible chassis does not treat good coachbuilding very kindly!

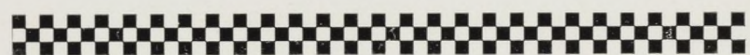
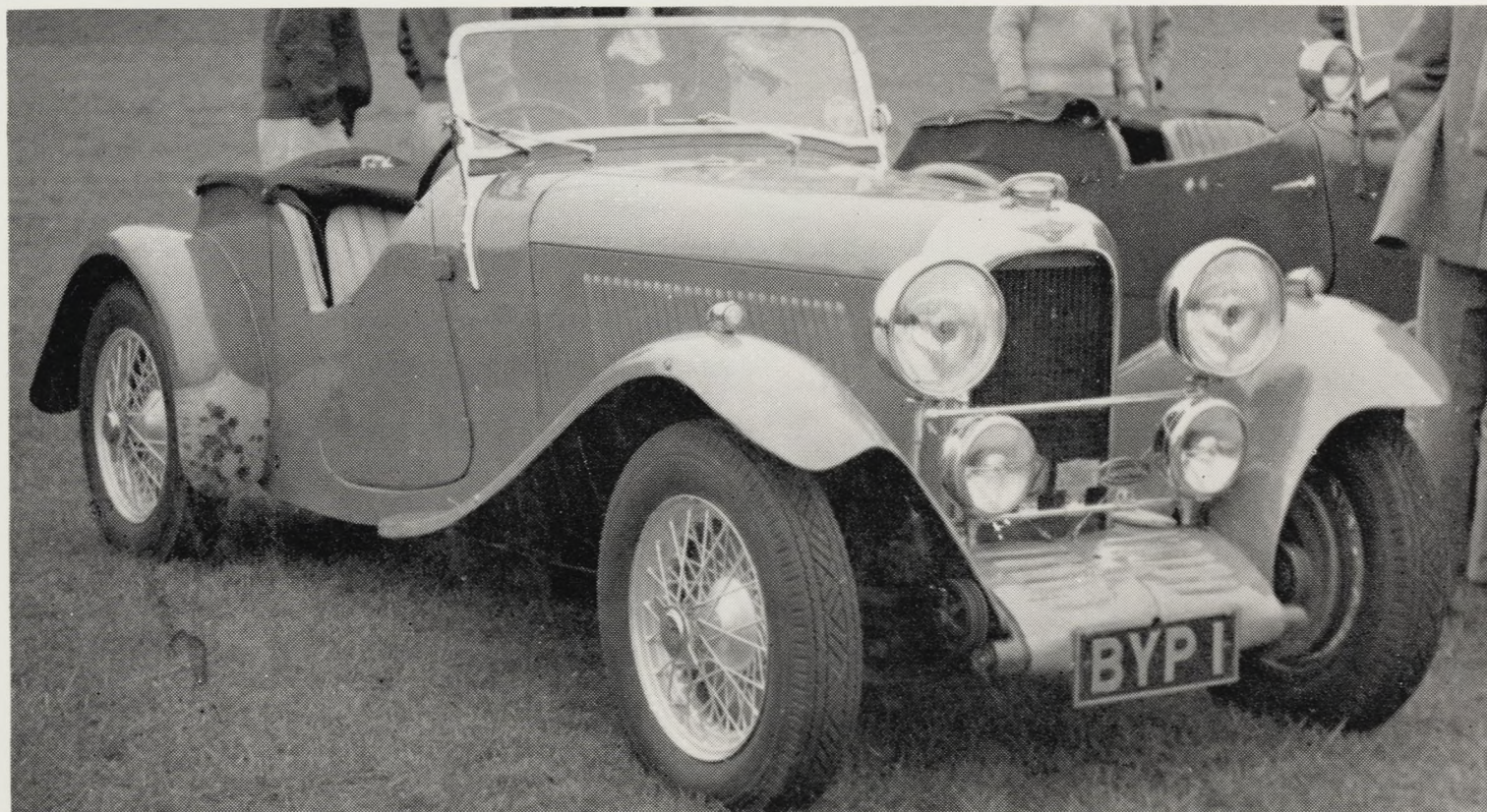


1935 Fixed Head Coupé by Abbott.

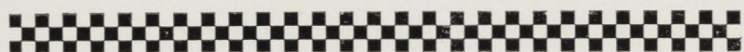


Above—The Ranalagh Tourer.

Below—The Original Eagle Two-seater.



The Secretary would be pleased to receive from Members, or ex-Members, unwanted issues of the Club Magazine. So please do not throw them away!



The next issue will be published in September. Members should send to the Editor contributions and photographs for publication as soon as possible and not later than the 25th of August.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pub Meet

Dear Sir, I am a very lethargic member of the Club which is why it has taken me some years to write this letter. I scan avidly each issue of the Magazine to see if anyone has started a Pub Meet in my area but I am always disappointed.

Why is it that Meets appear to be found mainly in the North, South-east and Dorset? Are there no Members in the centre of England or do those there not drink?

If there are any keen people in this part of the world perhaps something can be organised.

W. R. MCCONNEL,
Exstable, Alvescot, Oxon.

Raine's Epic Journey

Dear Sir, Further to the description in the Spring Issue of Bernard Raine's journey to the last A.G.M., may I say that we set off from Shipley in Yorkshire and not Silverdale. The nappy situation concerning my wife was a little white lie as I fear that she has the dreaded lurgi so far as Lagondas are concerned and she is a difficult case to treat! There are Freudian undertones to this as the honeymoon chariot was a 16/80 and this fact was not sprung on her until the wedding reception—(Charming!—Ed.).

Antihistamine therapy in the form of: "It's a nice sunny day, let's go out in the Lag", produces a reply to the effect that it is always breaking down so let's go in the VW.

Attempts to reduce sensitivity by graded micro-therapy such as "I'll help wash up the tea things and then you can help me get the cylinder head on" seems to make matters worse. I would be interested to hear from other workers in this field because the success rate, according to published papers*, is very low.

BERNARD'S FRIEND.

(*Lagonda Magazine Nos. 1-47, most pages.)

The Eccles' Rapier

Dear Sir, I was most interested to read Mike Wilby's article in the Spring Issue. Can it be explained why the supercharger shown in the photograph on page 18 of that issue is a Centric, yet a Zoller is mentioned in the text? I always understood that this Rapier was fitted with a Zoller.

I can also remember seeing a car in the Bournemouth area which had a Wade supercharger with the usual type of drive and no obvious adaptor. Perhaps a Member knows of this car and can tell us more about it.

I have also been told that 1500 c.c. Rapiers were used in competitions—is this true?

D. A. WESTON,
Henley-on-Thames.

[Mike Wilby replies: It is true that in the days when the car was used by Roy Eccles it was fitted with a Zoller blower. The photograph referred to was taken in recent years at Prescott, when the car came out for the first time since the War (not very successfully). I do not think 1500 c.c. Rapiers ever appeared in competitions. There were supposed to be a couple of blocks in existence that gave this capacity and, although Richmond may have had one, I know of no-one who has actually seen it.]

Bud Habersin's Rapier

Dear Sir, I was most interested to read in the Spring issue, Bud Habersin's report on the rebuilding of the Rapier in far away Florida. How restful it must be to sit in golden sunshine scraping paint from the chassis!

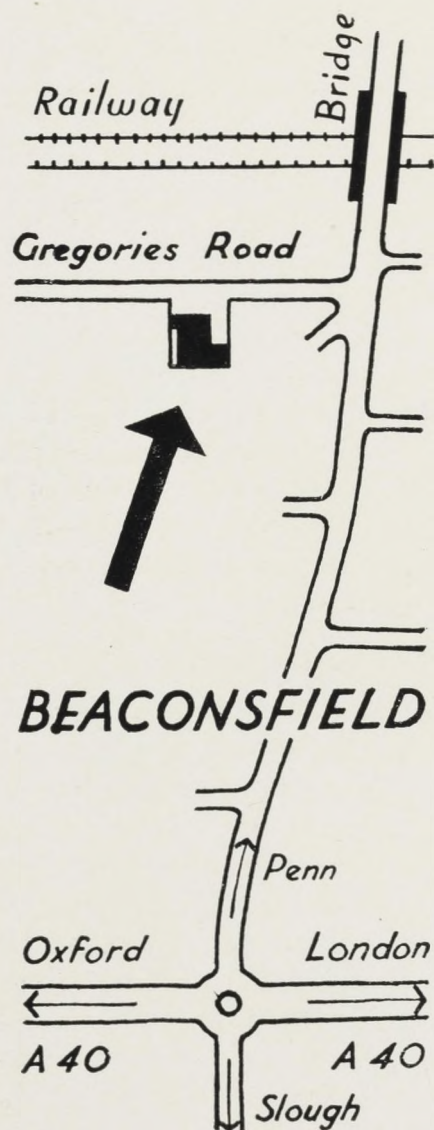
Having looked at the photographs shown, I am sure the body on his car is from a Singer Le-Mans of the same period. Several things point to this, the shape of the doors, the louvres in the side of the scuttle, the windcows and many other features. A Rapier ran only once at Le-Mans in 1934, and the body on this car was doorless and of much lighter construction.

I have seen two other Rapiers fitted with similar Singer bodies (although these cars had a wheelbase of about 7 ft. 7 in. they seem to fit well) in fact some years ago a front spring went from my collection of spares to help one of these on the road again. If Mr. Habersin's car was green, it may well be the one!

MIKE WILBY,
Hampstead, N.W.3.

4½ LITRE OWNERS

PLEASE NOTE !!



We now have available Rapide High Compression Pistons 7.25:1. These pistons are specially manufactured by Hepolite. They are most suitable for improving the performance of all 4½-litre engines built after 1935 that incorporated the heavy-type connecting rods.

Full advantage of the present-day High Octane fuels can now be obtained by fitting genuine Rapide pistons. Standard size only. Cylinder liners are also available.

Let us assist you with your spare part problems. Goods will normally be dispatched the same day when parts are available from stock.

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