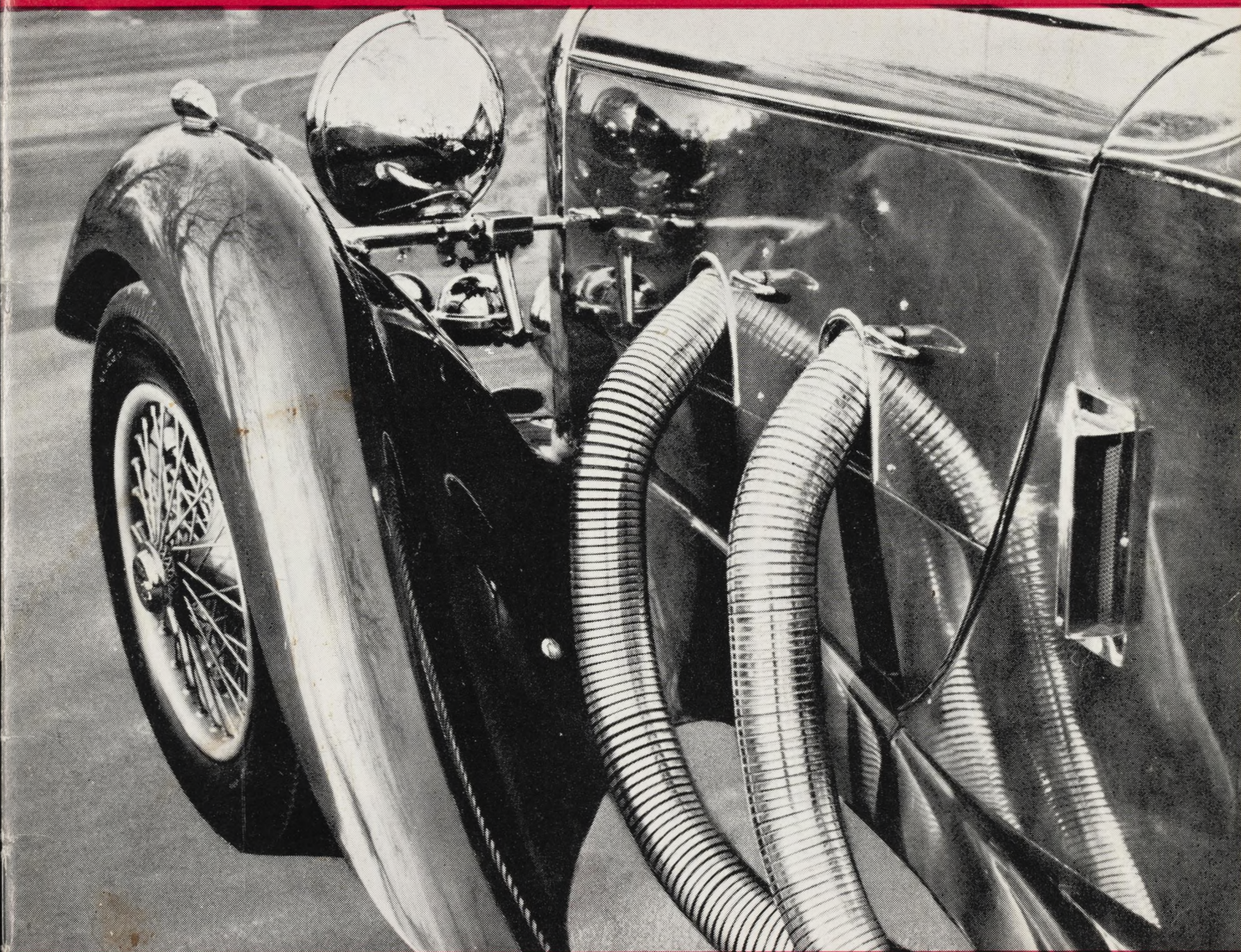


THE *Lagonda*

No. 57

Winter 1966/67



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

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MAGAZINE

Issue No. 57

Winter 1966/67

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Editorial Committee:

A. W. MAY, M. GABER, J. W. T. CROCKER,

M. H. WILBY

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

FRONT COVER: H. L. Schofield's LG45R.
Photo by owner.

NOTES, NEWS AND COMMENTS

A PILGRIMAGE TO STAINES has been suggested to take place during 1967. Lunch, tea or dinner could be taken at the Anglers' Hotel which is on the river close by the old Lagonda works. It is envisaged that local publicity might encourage ex-employees of Lagonda who still live in the area to turn up at the reunion. Sunbeam Register periodically visit Wolverhampton for a similar purpose and there is no reason why a "Staines Day" should not attract a great deal of support from club members. Interested! Good, then drop a postcard to the Editor so that he can let the Committee know this excellent idea has some solid support. Plans can then be formulated and published.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

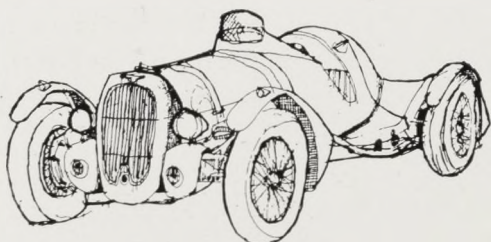
ANOTHER IDEA FOR SUMMER months ahead. Old Warden at Biggleswade in Bedfordshire houses the Shuttleworth Collection of vintage cars and aeroplanes. James Woollard asks if someone would like to organise a club picnic in the parkland in which Old Warden stands. Volunteers forward!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SUMMER MAGAZINE. To enable the publishing date of June 15 to be kept would all contributors send copy and or photographs to the Editor by **April 28th** at the latest. The Spring Issue has now been closed for press.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUB MEETS. To enable up-to-date details of Lagonda Pub Meets to be published in the magazine would all organisers please send confirmation of dates and places to the Editor as soon as possible. Thanks.



PARLIAMENT: TUESDAY

HOUSE OF LORDS

Two old lags dismissed

The LORD CHANCELLOR took his seat on the Woolsack at 2.30 p.m.

The Lee Valley Region Bill was read a second time.

LORD WALSTON
Foreign Office, inter-
ment the inter-
settlement of
states and

The

IO
Ho
of

Reprinted from a recent
copy of *The Times*.

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NORTHERN NOTES

from Herb Schofield

Profiles

These are surely one of the best things that has happened to Automobile Publishing in years. In this writer's opinion the main advantage being that you don't have to buy an expensive book of which only a portion contains cars you are really interested in.

The Lagonda 4½-litre was quite good and contained many previously unpublished photographs of the team cars in action (why have they never appeared in the magazine?)* Photographically perhaps too much emphasis was laid in this direction and it is a great pity that no prints were included of a standard M45 tourer, an LG45 tourer, an LG45 coupe nor were the photographs of the LG6 coupe the best that are

available. The photographs of the LG6 Saloon and LG6 Rapide are in fact V-12 models, but as the bodywork on both models was virtually identical I don't suppose it matters very much.

The write-up was quite fair and critical the author obviously not being an enthusiast for the marque. This is not true of some of the other Profiles a number of which tend to be rather overdone in their praise.

* For the simple reason that the Editor was unaware of their existence. *Ed.*

Tuning the 4½-litre Lagonda

Technical articles in the magazine are obviously very necessary, and the re-print from *Motor Sport* of Col. Michaels articles for that magazine in 1960 is probably worth including, although in truth a great many members interested in tuning the 4½-litre will probably already have the article. Unfortunately what Col. Michael doesn't tell us is what needles we should use in the 1¼" or 2" carburettors to obtain the claimed substantial increase in B.H.P. Can he tell us please?

NORTHERN NOTES CONT.

The 'Sunday Times'

On October 9th the *Sunday Times* published an article on old cars. Anyone wishing to read a well-informed article must have been somewhat dissatisfied. It is a great pity that a supposed quality paper like the *Times* cannot take more trouble to get some of its facts right. Thus we had the Lagonda described as the "poor man's Bentley", which is silly and as stupid as saying that the Alvis was the poor man's Lagonda, or the Railton the poor man's Alvis. The writer also suggested that the market price of an LG45 Rapide would be in the region of £500 when in fact three or four times that amount would be more correct.

Odds and ends

Peter Clarke will be organising the Lancs. Spring Social which will be our first competitive event for 1967. Please give this social your support. The other events for 1967 will be pretty much as last year. The Northern Driving Tests in July will I hope be attended by more members than was the case in 1966.

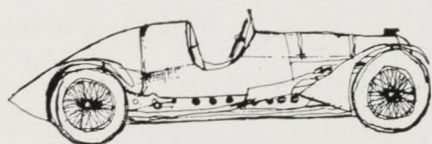
Best wishes to Richard Weir and Jean on their forthcoming marriage. The couple will be carried (or pushed!) in style by the Dearden-Briggs 3-litre tourer. The car I understand is available for this type of work most weekends and a price list can be obtained from him.

I wish to make it quite clear that the informal sprint held after the 1966 Northern Driving Tests was in no way connected with the Lagonda Club. The distance of the sprint by the way was 475 yds and not 775 yds as printed in the magazine.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to Alan Brown and David Hine for giving up most of their weekends from October to the end of December in getting the Rapide ready for the road once again.

And finally, Peter Weir promises to do a write-up for the magazine on a recent trip he made from Huddersfield to Blackpool,—by Camel.

H.L.S.



RUSSIAN RALLYING IN 1910

IF INTERNATIONAL SOVIET RALLYING COMES OFF, Russia will be brushing up on an exercise she pioneered in Europe just half a century ago. The St. Petersburg-Moscow-St. Petersburg reliability trial of 1910 was the second event in an annual series; so, the Monte Carlo pilgrimage having started in 1911, the Russians were in the rally business two years ahead of the Monegasques.

It's true these early Russian trials didn't bisect any frontiers, so in one sense they weren't international; but by 1910 the field included crews from Britain, France and Italy. This gave the contest quite a cosmopolitan flavour.

The first leg, from St. Petersburg to Moscow, via Pokov, Vitebak, Minsk, Kiev, Kharkov, Krusk and Tula, was indecisive. Several cars of assorted nationalities reached Moscow with only minor penalties, posing the problem of how to establish a clear-cut order of merit on the second stage.

According to plan, the trial made a one-week stopover in Moscow, during which the cars were put on public exhibition and the organisers bludgeoned their brains for something effective in the way of an eliminator.

Well, they found one. From here on, crews were told, they could either stick to the scheduled itinerary and timetable (involving several daily stages and a leisurely speed average, like the first leg), or try to make St. Petersburg in one day by the most direct route. The straight inter-city distance was a bit over 400 miles, and nobody had ever attempted it in a day before.

This proposition, sweetened by the offer of a special prize for any crew that made it within the time limit, drew exactly one taker—Wilbur Gunn. Gunn, the reformed opera singer from Lagonda, Ohio who had founded the *marque* Lagonda at Staines, England, was the entrant of the only Lagonda in the trial. He had two reasons for making the choice he did: one, he had implicit faith in his product, and welcomed an opportunity for demonstrating its superiority over the competition; two, he was getting sick of Russia and, most unaccountably, homesick for Staines. Anything that might shorten his stay in northern latitudes was fine with Wilbur.

With four persons aboard—Gunn himself, his factory manager, the Lagonda sales representative

for the farflung Romanoff domains, and an observer appointed by the Russian government—the Lagonda reached St. Petersburg in fifteen hours. This performance satisfied the conditions of the contest and made Wilbur's Gunn metal the outright winner of the trial. Divesting himself of the sword and spurs that protocol prescribed—he was a cavalry officer in professional life—the observer hurried straight to Lagonda's St. Petersburg dealership and ordered himself a replica of the victorious 16/80; which, incidentally, was a perfectly standard car, apart from having Russian instead of British tyres. And when Czar Nicholas II heard the tidings, he presented the Lagonda company with a special commemorative certificate. Until fairly recent times this document hung in an office at the Lag factory.

The impression made on the general citizenry of St. Petersburg was terrific, and Gunn, the hero of the occasion, was lauded as befitted the capitalist equivalent of a Merited Master of Sports.

At least one member of the successful crew the late G. H. Hammond, Gunn's factory manager, confided some recollections of the 1910 St. Petersburg-Moscow-St. Petersburg trial to a writer for *The Lagonda* magazine some years ago. This memoir emphasised the underdeveloped state of Russia's communications in the century's first decade. The main Moscow-St. Petersburg highway, for instance, was so overgrown with grass that Gunn and partners had constant difficulty making out where the road ended and the shoulders began. Cruising at speeds up to 50, they had to concentrate to distinguish between the thin grass sprouting from the brick pavement and the slightly thinner crop on either flank.

On this decisive Moscow-St. Petersburg run, the Lagonda came through unscathed mechanically. Outbound for Moscow, on the other hand, it had been temporarily crippled in circumstances strongly redolent of sabotage. A vital nut in the steering gear, which all members of the crew remembered seeing securely split-pinned before the start, quietly dropped off en route. In the resulting prang the front axle was badly bent. Hammond dismantled it, hiked across country to the nearest smithy, straightened it on the anvil and stuck it back on.

For the most part the weather was mild, which was lucky for Gunn and fellow travellers because their Lagonda had no top, sidescreens or wind-shield. Briefly, however, three days out on the first leg, it rained with such ferocity that all

occupants were over their ankles in water. The cars of the period had finger holes in their floorboards as an aid to service operations, but drainage through these holes couldn't keep pace with the aquatic input. Making up for deficiencies in the Lag's weatherproofing equipment, all passengers wore voluminous rubber ponchos, so maybe the observer's sword, spurs and full-dress uniform didn't suffer as badly as they might from rust and tarnish.

Perhaps the worst hazard, as Mr. Hammond recalled it, was from the shower of edibles rained on them from the sidelines by impressionable natives of the villages and townships the trial traversed. Soft fruits, landing haphazardly in the tonneau, were welcome offerings, but when it came to 4 ft. branches laden with hard green plums, the thing began getting out of hand.

The organisation *per se*, though, was of a very high standard. The mobile observers, one to every car, were scrupulous in enforcing the exacting speed schedules; and by way of insurance against competitors ingratiating themselves unduly with an individual observer, a new one was assigned to every car after each night stop. The whole itinerary, 3000 versts in length (one verst equals 3,500 feet), was planned to follow the route of a main inter-town railroad; and a special train, rigged with full hotel amenities including luxurious sleeping quarters, restaurant and laundry facilities, was harnessed to the trial, reaching overnight stops ahead of the roadborne cavalcade and welcoming it with open doors.

Le Rallye, Romanoff style, surely mixed the smooth with the rough. Interesting to see how its latterday counterpart compares.

DENNIS MAY

Reproduced from *Car and Driver* by kind permission.

Magazine Copy. The Editor still urgently requires both copy and photographs of general and specific motoring interest for *The Lagonda* magazine.

A.G.M. REPORT 1966

by Arnold Davey

BECAUSE IT WAS FOGGY AND LIKELY TO REMAIN SO, it was decided to move the meeting forward half-an-hour. Thus we started dead on time for once. James Crocker, addressing the meeting for the last time (he hopes) in the capacity of Chairman was suitably gloomy at the depleted numbers, whether due to the fog, lack of interest or other attractions nobody can say. He passed on Valerie May's apologies for her absence. Apparently she had originally feared that a sick daughter would prevent her coming and then Valerie caught whatever it was that the daughter had. Without her blushes to put him off, James was able to explain to anyone who didn't know, how much we owe to Valerie and how much work she does for the club. Later in the meeting, Peter Densham would be retiring from the Treasurership and Charles Green from being Midland Secretary. The Chairman went on to discuss the inflated prices being paid for our sort of cars nowadays and the vague feeling in some members' hearts that somehow it was immoral to ask

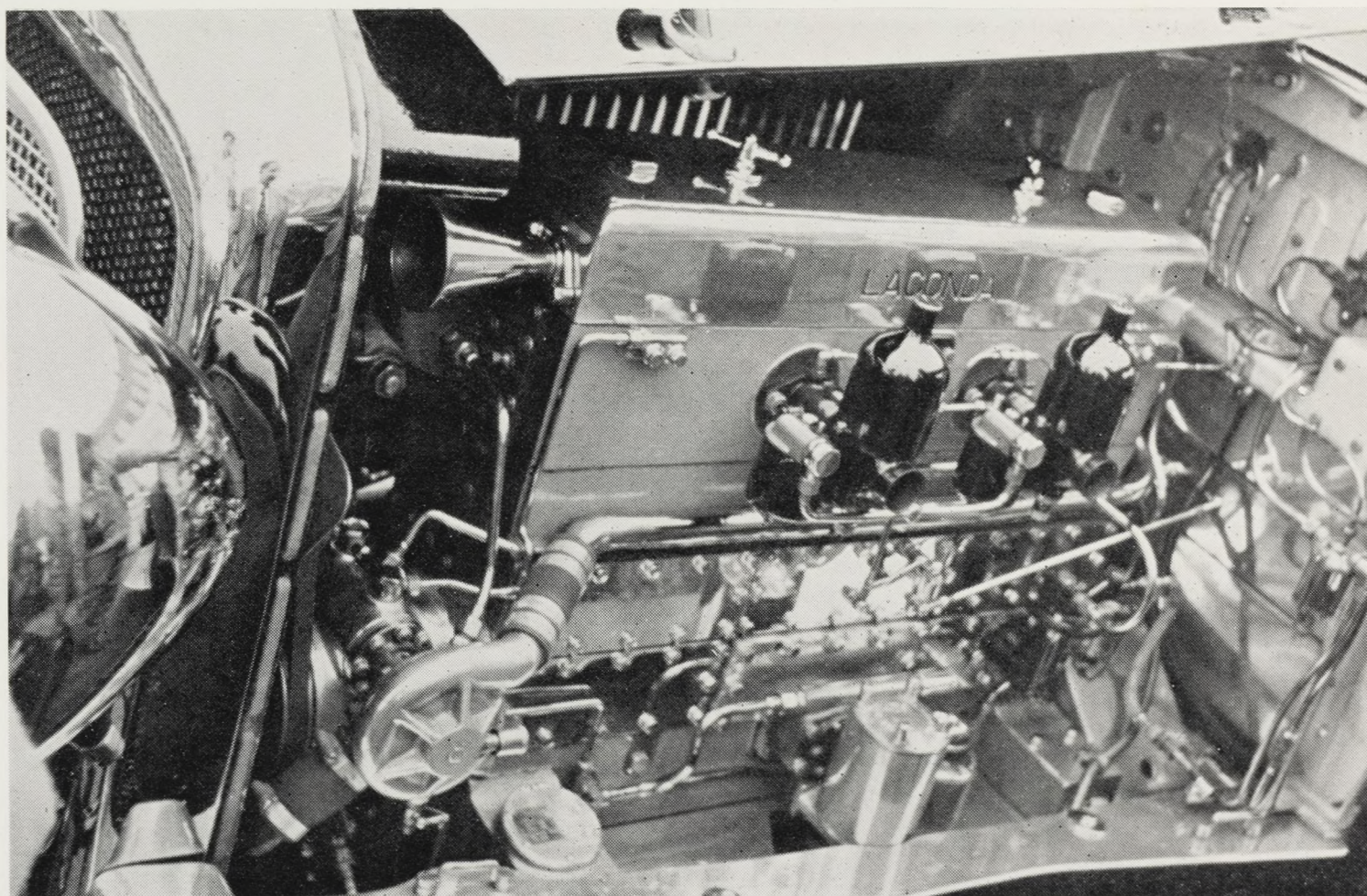
these high prices, particularly if the purchaser was a fellow-member. He didn't agree and said you should always charge whatever the market would allow; if you under-price the buyer's enthusiasm always proves transient and he makes a fat profit on the subsequent re-sale. On the other hand, he would hate to see enthusiasts elbowed out of the vintage movement to make way for rich businessmen in search of tax-free capital gains.

James Woollard had been round counting the numbers and announced that there were forty-seven Lagondas present consisting of three DB3's, five Rapiers, five 3½-litres, six LG45's, ten 2-litres, three 16/80's, three 14/60's, two DB2.6's, one 3-litre, two 2-litre Continentals, three LG6's, two V-12's and one LG45R. Yes, I know that makes only forty-six but they are James's figures, not mine. Perhaps there was a secret prototype there. And that reminds me. Last year, after my A.G.M. report had appeared in the magazine, the publicity bloke of the Rapier Register wrote to the Editor complaining that I had ignored the hordes of Rapiers present and attributing all sorts of unsavoury motives to me as a result of this omission. Knowing this to be untrue, I re-read



Part of the line-up.

Photo: Arnold Davey.



Seaton's immaculate 3-litre.

Photo: Arnold Davey.

the article and found that he was partly right; I hadn't mentioned the Rapier once. But then I hadn't mentioned any other model either, except the David Brown V-12's. Anyway, the list above should placate all the pressure-groups and to get right of danger I will add that there were no Tri-cars, 11.1's, 11.9's, 12/24's or DB Rapides present, or if there were I didn't see them.

Getting back to James Woollard's report, he said that the 1966 season had had an undue number of cancellations and the greatest difficulty was being experienced in running any road events at all. The RAC approval and licensing scheme was thoroughly overloaded by the mountains of paperwork made necessary by the new regulations and on occasion we have had approval of an event granted after the date had passed. Next year, obviously, we will concentrate on off-road events. Of the events that had been held the Curborough sprint was the best attended and will be repeated next year, still in conjunction with the Bentley DC, but on a Sunday this time. The Border Rally and the Southern Rally had been successful, despite the latter being held in dreadful weather. The Northern Rally had not,

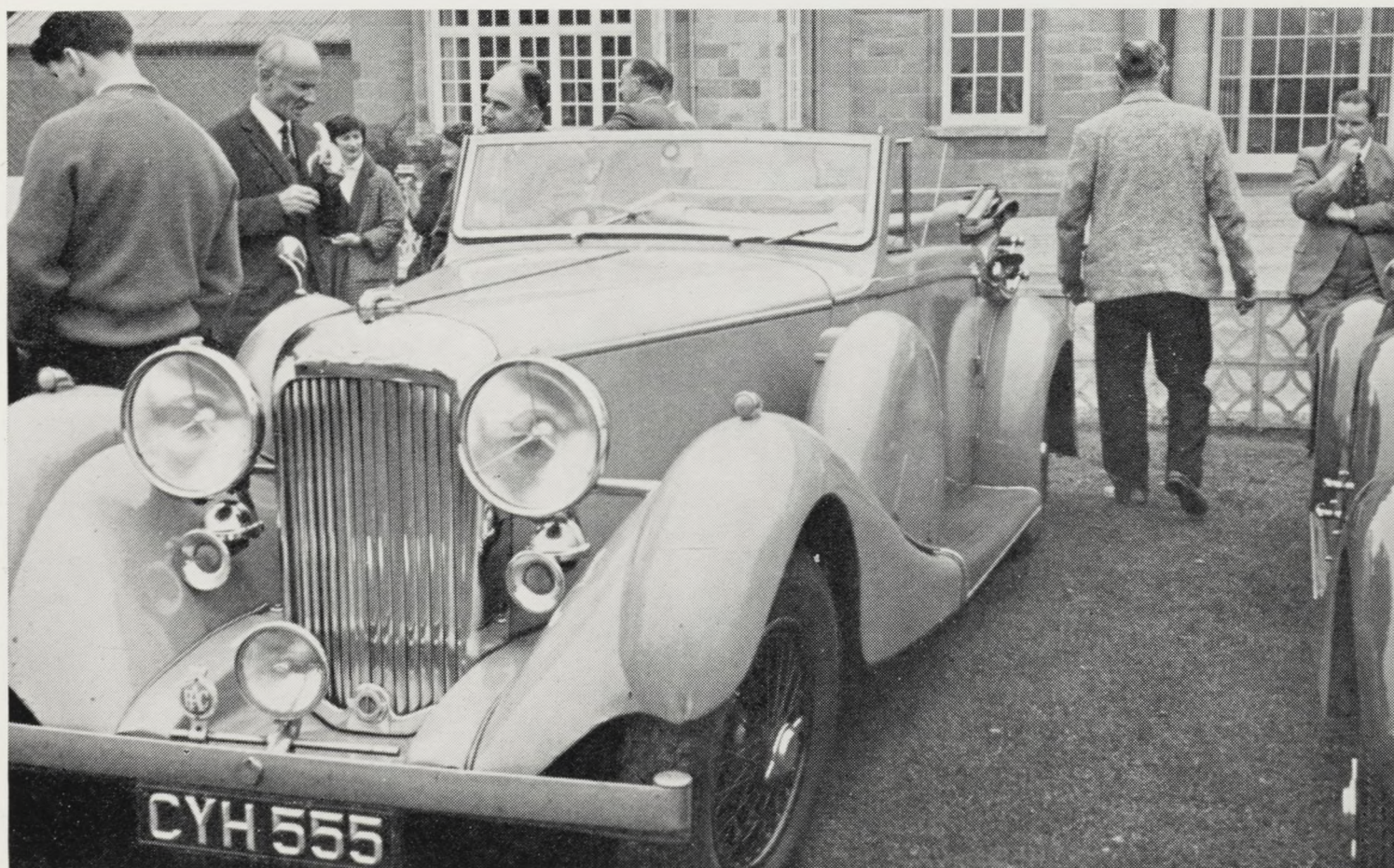
this year, attracted as many southern entries as usual although nobody knew why. There had been seventeen entries for Bentley Silverstone but Firlie had been cancelled, due to a legal action pending about rights of way. The November Rally was all ready to run but depended on getting a date from the RAC. Most probably, it would be held over until next year now. The co-operation with the Bentley club was to be extended in the future and we will organise joint driving tests somewhere near Oxford which will replace our Southern Rally and their regional driving tests. In return, we are invited to a sprint to be held on the airfield at Ford, near Chichester. On a less energetic note, the Beaulieu picnic and outings had been well attended and much enjoyed. He would like to see a similar affair organised further north.

Unexpectedly, Ivan Forshaw was put on next, protesting that he was under-rehearsed and had no chance to "scintillate". He recommended the organising of picnics to anyone wishing to appear public-spirited at minimum effort. All that was needed was to ring up Valerie to agree a date and then ring up a pub. After that it grew

of its own accord. He felt that the A.G.M. should move further south, not for personal reasons, as he hastened to add, but because a map of the distribution of club members would show that the majority lived in what could loosely be called the Thames valley. Certainly we have never reached the numbers we got at Ascot anywhere else. As is his way, Ivan's discourse touched on many subjects but eventually he got on to spares affairs. Longham continues to attract visitors like a combination of the Crown Jewels and the Science Museum and once inside they are very difficult to dislodge. Some sort of security check may be needed to make sure everybody has gone when Ivan goes to bed. More and more frequently now, some of the most expendable items are having to be made as the supplies of secondhand parts dries up. In the sort of numbers that are all we can afford, this is a very expensive process and members will have to accustom themselves to this. He finished by pointing out that with this meeting he completed twenty years as Spares Registrar. Worn out, he will nevertheless soldier on.

"Forshaw", said Peter Densham, "is just a boy!" He, Peter, had been in the club twenty

years and three months. For his final report as Treasurer he described how he had spent his first year trying to discover how the club worked, financially speaking. Having found out, he spent the second year trying to put the subs up and the third year paying off the debts and consolidating. We were now pretty sound, but costs continued to climb. The increased subscription had not affected membership numbers to any great extent. We always have a turnover rate of about 12% every year and this year had been no different. His successor would be Carl Nolten, a relatively new member who has his own machine shop, one of the biggest in Birmingham (Really, Peter, what about BMC, Rover and other fair-sized businesses?) Of this about a 1,000 sq. ft. is set aside for Lagonda. Mr. Nolten was asked to stand up so that the members could meet him. One of the troubles of being such a long-standing member, said Peter, was that he knew everyone so well. "Look here, Bill", he would say, "You haven't paid your subs for three years". "My God"" says Bill, "Have a beer", and he is so overwhelmed he doesn't pay then either. Carl Nolten, on the other hand, being newer and not yet in the "old boy" net, will be able to use a



The judges confer.

Photo: Arnold Davey.

more distant approach, more on the "Sir,-Unless" lines and this is bound to be more effective. Finally he asked if anyone could explain the balance sheet to him. Nobody could. Which is rather surprising since the committee spent 'till half-past-ten one evening doing just that.

James Crocker was re-elected Chairman but warned that this was the last time. He had enjoyed being Chairman and would be sorry to go but it was time for a change and they were making him work long hours now, so it was unavoidable. The committee then did the annual rotation bit, with the exception of André Kenny, who, now that he is the President of the Newcomen Society, finds his spare time dwindled right away. A new face will be that of David Johnson who has already done a lot of work in subsidising the new instruction books and in organising the November Rally. Carl Nolten was elected Treasurer as expected and Harry Wareham takes over for the second time as Midland Secretary.

To close the meeting, James Crocker read out the Concours d'Elegance results, which are as follows:

Overall winner	G. A. Seaton	3-litre
4½/V-12 Class	B. J. H. Martin	LG6
Other Class	E. Harris	16/80
Merit Plaques	R. Davy	LG6
	M. Leo	V-12
	E. Townsley	LG45
	N. H. Gale	LG6
	L. Buckton	LG45
	J. A. Knight	3½-litre
	N. Prestwich	14/60
	M. Sherwood	Rapier

By half-past-four it was all over and after a quick tea, people started scuttling home before the fog clamped right down.

**I know its rather naughty
To be doing over 40.
So, mirror, mirror, tell me
true
Do you reflect two lads in
blue?**

M.H.

MISCELLANY FROM SCOTLAND

LET US BEGIN WITH A STORY.

Some time ago—about 4-5 years, so far as we know—a young enthusiast living in Penicuik, a small village 12 miles, south of Edinburgh, purchased from a local scrap yard, a M45 saloon. The car was apparently driven home, and kept on a piece of ground beside our hero's home, while he tinkered, and saved enough money to pay for the usual licence, insurance, and a full tank of petrol (thinks, not a hero, an optimistic hero) judge his surprise to find that overnight and without being seen or heard, persons unknown had carefully removed the engine leaving no trace, save the usual and standard size oil patch. Our hero was a trifle hurt and showing great inventive genius and strange engineering talents, fitted a Ford Ten engine and gearbox, driving thro' the normal box, this giving a multiplicity of levers, similar to a Selector Special allied to a performance I leave the reader to judge.

The story doesn't end, one evening after the hero's return from work up and down a fair selection of hills, he parked his M45 creation, and on his return the next morning found that the car had gone! He cycled to work, found it quicker and less tiring, and has never yet found out where his engine, nor his hybrid Lagonda went. Has anyone, any solution?

Not very much happened in Scotland, a few of us went to the Border Rally, hereafter to be known as "The English Benefit." We admired the various cars, kicked a few tyres and departed.

The day was enlivened by a small driving test, which displayed the organiser's thoughts of Lagonda speed and brakes. I would explain that this was a secret test and the signal to stop was given a good quarter of a mile before the actual test.

We have gained several new members, but lost one or two, chief among them being Jonathan Abson, who deserts our fair country for London, and the Harris family leaving a Pulp Mill. Both Jonathan and Elliot Elder have achieved considerable success with "The Rapier" and Schofield's carping criticisms have we trust, been stilled by Elliot's purchase of a 40-seater bus to convey "The Rapier" to future meetings. We

thought ourselves that the Hine/Schofield venture might well be driven to and fro the various meetings. It seems a docile creature and seems unlikely to frighten the lorry drivers who don't know that the 70 m.p.h. restriction does in theory, if not practise apply to them also.

Some small repairs are in progress. Robin Brownlie puts a hood on his 2-litre, George Donne explores the intricacies of woodwork repairs on a 2-litre saloon, and Betts Brown removes the pistons from his LG6, all stout work lads and press on.

The Thornton Gunn rebuilds are suspended in deference to the credit squeeze, and Swan from Dumfries wins a prize in a rally. We really must see this car.

MAY YOUR GEARBOX NEVER GRUNT!

J. MCK.-C.

A most faithful old car

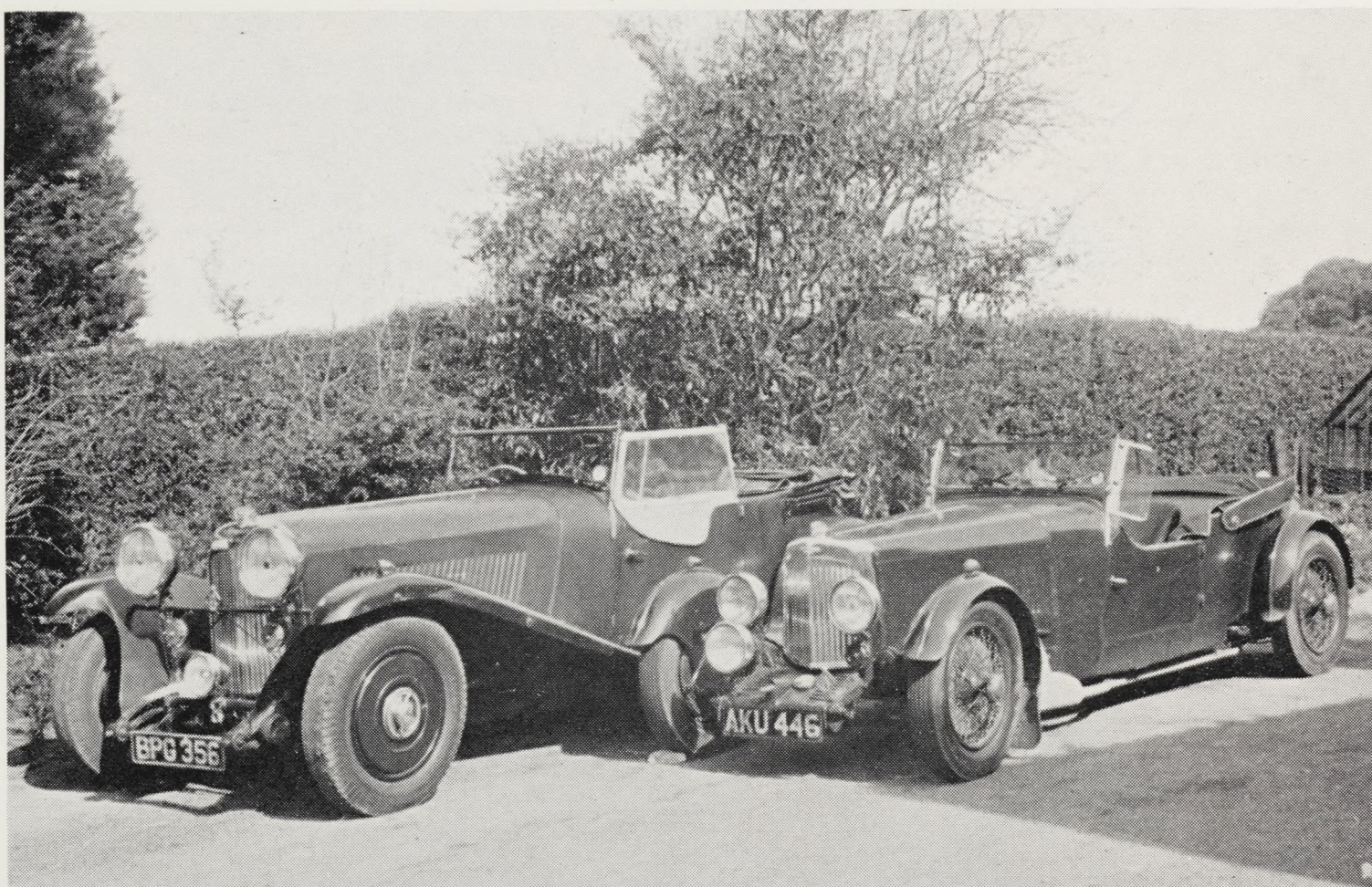
by

Lt. Colonel C. E. Bowden

REGARDING THE EDITORIAL APPEAL FOR WORDS ON Lagondas of the past, I offer a few personal but I fear unexciting reminiscences of years gone by up to today, for I believe I am one of the dwindling few who have kept a 4½-litre 1934 Lagonda from new to the present day. It still runs as it did when it was new, quietly and powerfully, with extraordinary few replacements. The M.O.T. testers will find hardly any more play in the steering than when I bought it. The mileage is prodigious, and yet repairs have cost me so little. The head has only been off once! A new timing chain has been fitted, with new silencer—radiator retubed—a little work of a minor nature done to the gearbox when one gear jumped out, and brakes relined only once. Friend Ivor Forshaw has fixed me up with a couple of replacement carburettors which have brought back all the car's joy of life and smoothness of early life. The brakes with the Dewandre servo were always splendid, and without any replacement work on the servo, they still are. Incidentally the same Ivor Forshaw nowadays has some splendid vintage motorcycles which he jealously guards from acquisitive people like myself with similar interests.

Why this happy old age—of the car I mean—and why so few replacements? I suppose the reason is reasonable driving habits and careful lubrication according to its needs, which sounds almost like a doctor's prescription for the human frame.

The old 4½-litre has inevitably become a great and most trusty friend, and a part of life. Why did I buy the Lag, and why have I kept it all these years, in spite of a roving Army existence, and when I had "been through" so many other vehicles on two and four wheels? My youthful years were spent with a whole series of exciting period motorbikes, in the days when a young man had a motorbike to do his "walking out" with as he now does in a sealed Mini. These machines were interlaced with a series of "sporting" open cars, probably coloured in shape and exhaust note by flying the old open cockpit biplane aeroplanes of the first war and after. The "cars" I best remember were a belt driven 90 degree twin G.N., a splendid but noisy vehicle that negotiated all the Cornish hills around the 1912 era. Several Grand Prix and Aero Morgans, all watercooled V twins, followed. An aircooled flat twin A.B.C. fourwheeler with the luxury of hood and spare wheel was a highlight of slightly later years. This was followed by my first four-cylinder French Mathias car, a delightful little performer of 7 h.p. that hummed up all the big hills like Lynton and Porlock on its balloon tyres and solid backaxle as a matter of course when my parents lived in that area. India for a few years saw an A.V. Monocar which I raced, and used together with an A.B.C. motorbike and a huge four-cylinder American Henderson two wheeler, and a horse. On returning home another A.V. Monocar was followed by several Scott motorcycles and the real stuff in the form of a Riley Red Winger Car. This automobile had the most beautiful streamlined cigar-shaped polished aluminium two seater body, and has been the only open car that I have known to have no backdraught that even failed to disturb the most fastidious female hairdo. It had a curved sloping windscreen that blended in with the aerodynamically clean body lines that are a largely forgotten art today, with cars having square box-like structures that remind one of the foul box-like modern buildings. But it had only two rear brakes, and the streets of York where I was then stationed, saw some intriguing skids, one of which was involuntarily



The M45 and its stablemate, a 1935 Aston Martin.

executed right under the gaze of the G.O.C. issuing from his headquarters.

About this time in the Twenties, Aston Martins and Bugattis were the cars to own, for those who could not afford a Bentley. So I got a side valve Bamford Aston with four wheeled brakes. From that day I was introduced to a new form of stable motoring with road holding of a new order. These cars were wonderfully reliable and easily got at to service. The youngsters of today should know that the SIDE valve Bamford Aston of only 11.6 horsepower rating had a guaranteed speed of 65 m.p.h. on purchase, with a maximum of close on 80 m.p.h., not far off many an 11 h.p. car of today, and it pulled an unhurried top gear of 3.73 to 1 with great mechanical quietness and a fuel consumption of 32-35 m.p.g. Some of these side valve Astons did over 90 on Brooklands, and George Eyston averaged 86 m.p.h. in a 50 miles handicap race on an "old" Bamford Aston in 1927. Not bad going for a little sports car that you could buy and tour in.

Unfortunately I replaced my Bamford by the later "International" Aston in the so called cause of advance. This was a disappointment after the Bamford although I was stationed at the

time at Feltham with my Depot virtually next door to Bertelli and his Aston works where my car and I became quite well known. It was an expensive period. But you will say when are we coming to Lagondas?

A transfer to Scotland occurred, and the year 1933 saw the motor press talking enthusiastically about a new and exciting Lagonda of 4½-litres about to burst onto the market for 1934. The joys of its big six-cylinder engine sweeping majestically over hill and dale with those unimpeded roads at the time were extolled. The reader may have noted that the top gear ratio 6.3 to 1 was very close to the beloved Bamford Aston Martin, of 3.75 to 1 but here we had huge torque and power added. I tried a 3-litre and a 4½-litre Lagonda, but the extra low down torque and lazy power of the 4½-litre with its modest 6 to 1 compression ratio easily won for fast touring as a top gear machine.

The brand new dark green monster with its red leather upholstery to order eventually arrived, and I recall its first imposing run North of Glasgow past that noteworthy stretch of experimental roadside monorail, which proved to be before its time, but like so many good ideas is

only now just coming into prominent thought translated to a hover monorail system.

The noble unflurried performance and magnificent braking of this splendid car altered my car way of life, and I settled down motorwise. I still have the fine old Lag, and its quiet unhurried but speedy travel is still available on tap. I admit there have been temptations from time to time to go with the times and change to modern machinery, paperthin and ungetable. However all that has actually come between me and the old Lagonda has been my wife; Ford borrowed surreptisiously in really bad weather when an open car is not so tempting even with the excellent easily raised hood of the Lag. These backslidings—have included but always with the Lagonda as master in the Garage—two Austin Sevens as a contrast for minimal motoring, and later the irresistible urge to relive those fine Aston Martin days which were to me the highlight of small cars in the great days of motoring adventure. So still retaining the solid background of the faithful Lagonda, I added a secondhand long chassis 1935 Mark 2 Aston, to keep the Lag company. The two have now lived side by side in great sympathy for quite a number of years. When the summer press of traffic abates the robust old Lagonda still sweeps over hill and dale in unhurried quietness, and I am still smugly conscious of observing the fantastically low revolutions on the huge rev counter in front of my eyes, and note that enormously long bonnet full of engine ahead given dignity by the P100's, and knowing the car was built to last my lifetime.

I recently read two descriptions in old motor journals of the past, that I feel adequately sum up the 1934 4½-litre open Lagonda tourer. The first was: "A 4½-litre six-cylinder car which will create a stir on account of its remarkable performance." The second description ran: "The remarkable part of the car is that, quite apart from its tremendous acceleration the gears which might be expected in view of the engine size, the top gear performance is exceedingly good, so that the car can be brought down practically to a walking pace and accelerated away on the throttle alone without needing skilful handling of the ignition control, and the car then gathers speed in a rapid, almost dead silent sweep, so easily and deceptively that even at 70 m.p.h. there is no indication of the actual speed, and it is still possible to carry on conversation in normal tones."

C.E.B.

COMPETITION NOTES

COMPETITIONS BEING OUT OF SEASON, BY AND large, at this time of the year, these notes must necessarily consist of looking back and looking forward. However, by the time the winter issue of the magazine reaches members, all the plans and fixtures for the new season must have been finalised. Ideally, this is so, but each year it becomes more difficult to arrange dates and locations to meet every requirement.

Politically, the days of road events of any kind, are numbered. The new regulations and stipulations required by the Ministry and R.A.C. are so designed to trip up any would be organiser to such an extent that he finally gives up in a fit of anger and despair. The R.A.C. competitions department report a large increase in the number of requests for information about suitable venues for meetings off the public highway, a sure sign that all clubs are finding the same trouble as ourselves over rallies. This leads on to the problem of finding large enough areas of concrete in good condition on which to run events off the public highway. Almost all wartime airfields are now beyond repair, having been returned to agricultural use. By the time you read these notes a site for the Lagonda/Bentley driving tests will undoubtedly have been found, but this will have been the result of about four months hard searching. A list of possible sites suitable for driving tests, sprints, or hillclimbs is very much needed, so if anyone knows of such places locally, please let the H.C.S. know, together with as much relevant information as possible—i.e. name and address of owner, his views on motor sport—fees etc.

The following are provisional dates for some of the major fixtures for 1967:

Sun. April 2nd.—B.D.C. Sprint at Ford in Sussex.
Lagonda Club invited.

Sun. May 21st.—B.D.C. Lagonda Club Sprint at Curborough.

Sat. July 1st.—Northern Driving Tests.

Sun. July 30th.—Lagonda/Bentley inter club Driving Tests. (South Midlands)

Sat. Aug. 19th.—B.D.C. Silverstone meeting—Lagonda Race.

Sun. Sept. 17th.—B.D.C. Firle hillclimb—Lagonda invited. (Provisional fixture)

Sat. Nov. 11th.—Night Rally.

March 10/11th 1968.—North Riding Rally.



Maurice "The Body" Leo looks critically at his V-12 body while James Crocker just looks critical.

Photo: A. Davey.

If all these events came to pass, as planned, they will provide an exciting and varied season. Social events will be organised as usual but will not all appear in the Fixture Card which should be with you in time for the Dinner Dance.

Many members have no doubt visited the Shuttleworth collection of vintage cars and aeroplanes at Old Warden, near Biggleswade in Beds. Many of these were used in that rollicking comedy film "Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines".—With the beautiful parkland surrounding it, Old Warden is a "natural" for a club picnic sortie, which some enthusiastic member might like to organise. Like Ivan Forshaw, all you need to do is announce the date, tell everyone where to assemble, and the rest just happens!

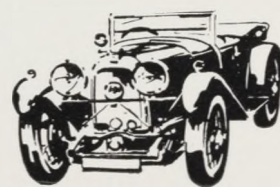
The writers' 2-litre is now back on the road; after an extensive engine rebuild and an exhaustive search for an elusive knock whilst idling, which still persists after nearly three thousand miles! (no suggestion please!) Having made her debut, as it were, at the V.S.C.C. Macclesfield driving

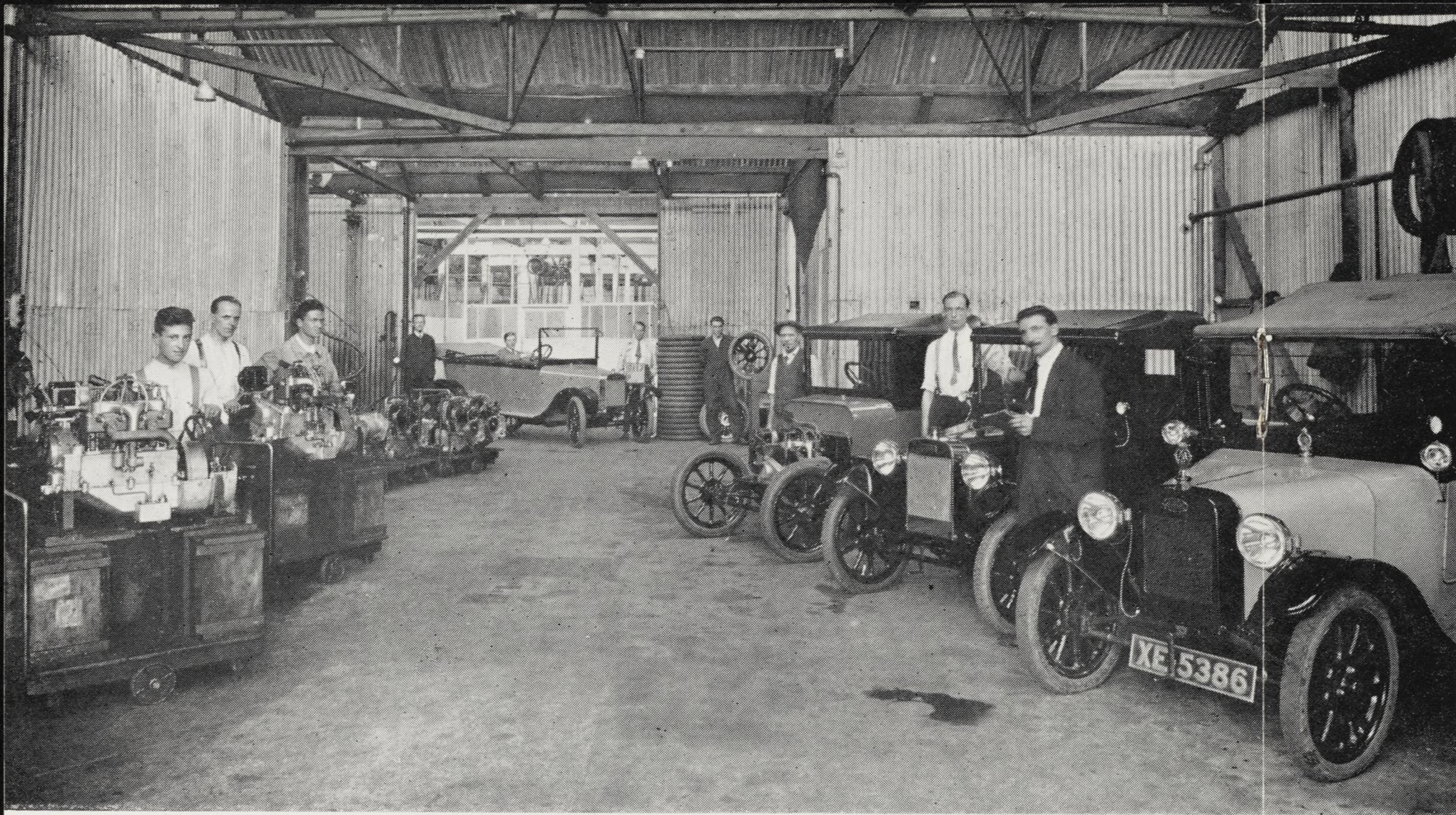
tests in September, the car was then entered for the Eastern Rally in October, winning a 2nd class award with the help of two good navigators!

Macclesfield is a very pleasant spot for a vintage gathering, although the tests are somewhat restricted by the narrow drive. Very well supported by spectators, the W.C.S. was pleased to see several Lagonda members among them. The Eastern Rally is even more popular, with no less than seventy entries this year, the whole thing went like clockwork, so ably run by the Peterborough M.C. for the V.S.C.C.

Having returned to Lagondic motoring the competition secretary hopes to be amongst you pot-hunters next season—See you at the Prize-Giving!

J.C.W.





Unit construction started with Mini's you say? How about Lagonda production in 1919? Look at the 11·9's rolling off the line just waiting for the engines to be popped in. As can be seen this model had a light section channel frame to which the body was riveted to hold the whole lot together. The fact that it did is evident today when a 11·9 rattles a lot less than a car made 40 years later.

This is the age of Bert Hammond when craftsmen did a loving job by hand, and maybe even took time off to stand back and look at their work critically. Is the "young lad" in the foreground still rubbing away by hand or is he now managing director of a major coachbuilding firm? Presumably the number chalked on the baulkhead is an assembly one but whether 704 is a day's production, or a week's, or even a year will not be known unless one of these stalwarts comes out of retirement to tell the tale of Staines of so long ago.

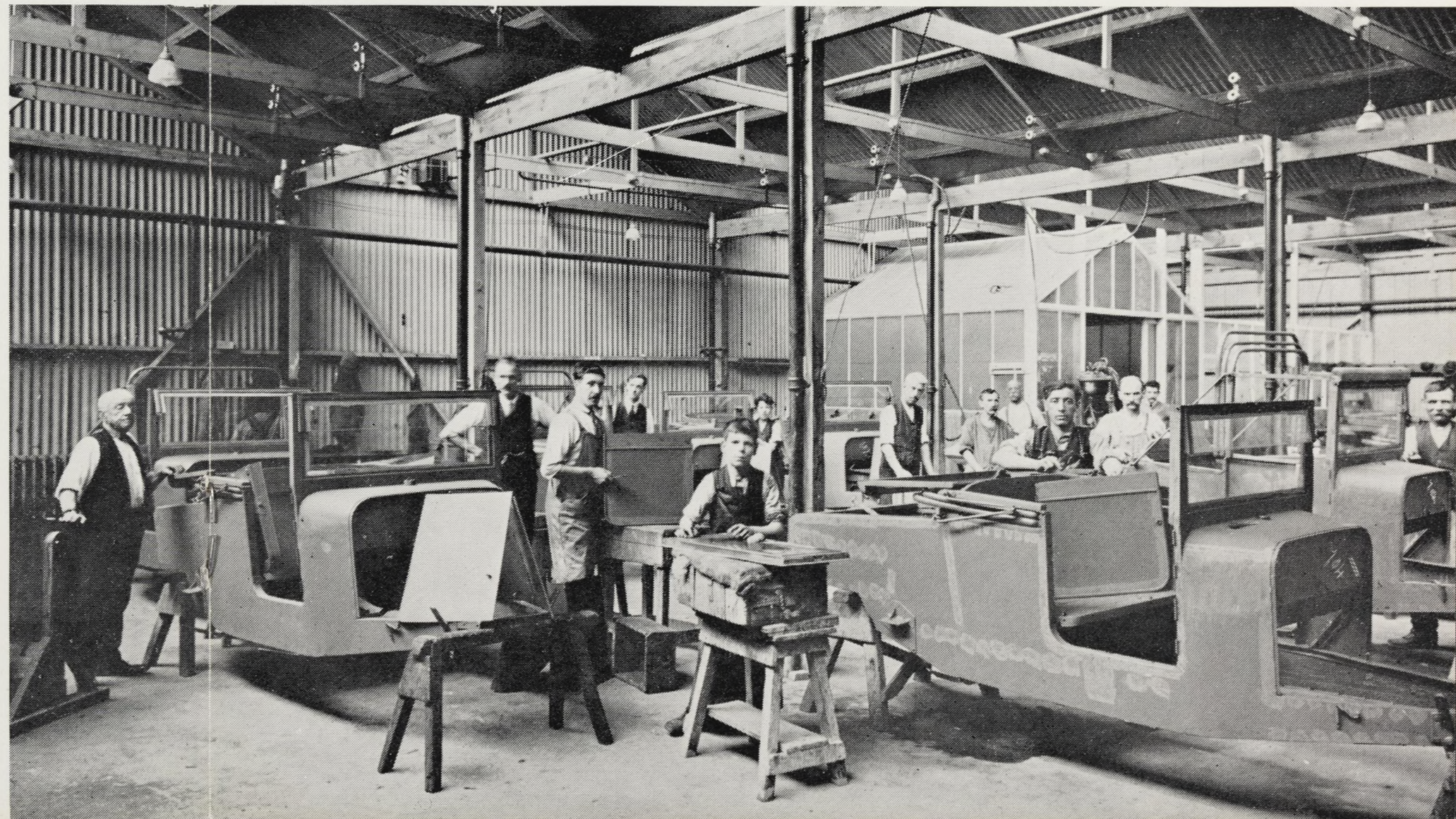
M.H.W.

Not exactly a modern super heated workshop, nor indeed modern high speed production line, but at least it shows that the 11·9 Lagonda was produced at steady intervals.

One might guess that this was final check, and possibly service bay, but quite what the engines are doing there is somewhat of a mystery unless of course the production line happened to pass that way!

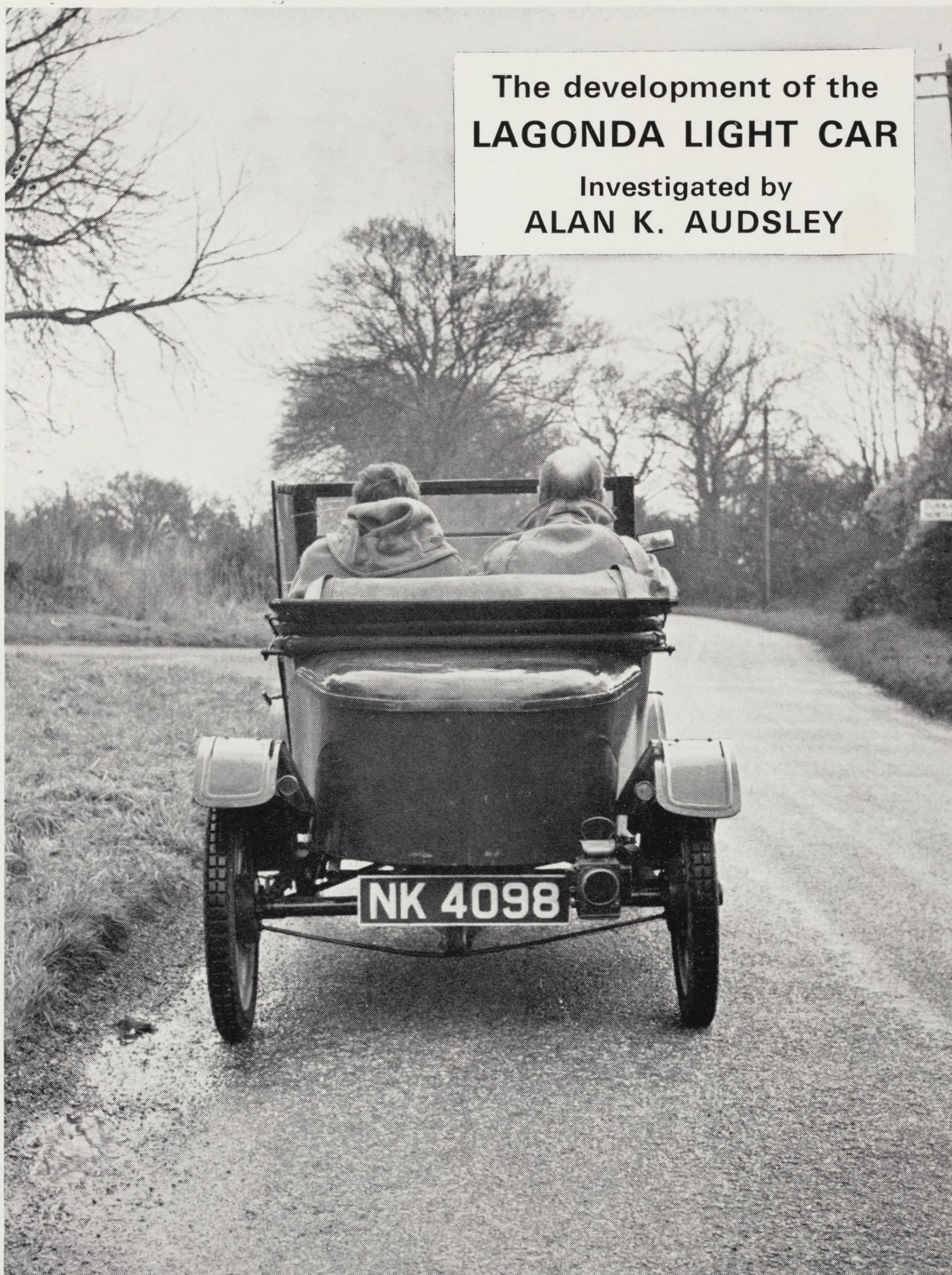
The stack of tyres by the door is interesting and one supposes that the chap holding the wheel claps it on the car if the customer has ordered the no doubt optional extra of a spare wheel. One seems to remember that most things except the basic car were extra in those days, the lighting often was, so one well known modern sports car that today has the ash tray on export models only and makes home customers pay for it as an extra is not starting a new fashion. No need for an ash tray on the 11·9 however, it was flicked between the gaps in the floorboards.

LATTER DAYS AT STAINES



The development of the
LAGONDA LIGHT CAR

Investigated by
ALAN K. AUDSLEY



PART TWO

Continued from the Autumn Issue

THE FIRST PART OF THIS "LIGHT CAR" ARTICLE WAS titled by our Editor "Technical Survey".

Part II will therefore be non-technical: perhaps the businessman's approach to his "Pleasure Car" and also the competitor's approach to the same car.

It was not only reliability for which the 11.1, 11.9 and 12/24 Lagondas were known but also for the high standard of finish and the completeness of the detail equipment. It was in fact Lagondas who were the first in this country to fit windscreen wipers as standard equipment.

The earliest form of Lagonda light car was the "Beetle"; the two-seater with rounded tail and round tubular radiator. This car was devoid of all embellishment but was nevertheless comfortably furnished and with excellent all-weather equipment. The hood was of leather and made to fit closely the wooden framed slide-up windows in the two doors. The windscreen frame was also wooden and the top half hinged outwards for additional ventilation. Upholstery was in Rexine, spring mounted. No adjustment was provided for the length of the driver's legs, but the car was designed to provide adequate room for the tallest person by the seat being placed very far back. Most small cars designed to-day seem to be designed to the other extreme. Visibility, except to the rear quarters, was very good and the car gave an extremely good ride on its shock absorberless suspension and excelled on pot-holed roads such as one only meets to-day near new building sites. The controls were light and the steering remarkably good once one was familiar with the very positive action which required about a third of a turn of the wheel from lock to lock. The foot transmission brake was very effective forwards but rather lacking in reverse. Poor cooling was its main defect and a short down hill run could easily fill the interior with thick smoke which rose through the central gear gate. The cone clutch was typical of its type and a smooth take-off was best achieved by nearly stalling the engine as the clutch was let in. The relatively heavy flywheel and the wide spacings of the gears made gear-changing a slow operation, but the car had such a good top gear performance that

the very delightful remote control gear lever had very seldom to be used.

Stability on corners was good; very much better than a certain car in present production on which an anti-roll device has recently been fitted by the makers, this device being identical to that fitted to the Lagonda light cars.

In 1914 one could buy the 11.1 in four-seater form. This car was of necessity slightly longer in wheelbase, and although from the scuttle forward resembled the "Beetle", the tourer rear was a complete departure, being very angular and high.

The "Beetle" cost £135 and the four-seater £145.

When the 1914-18 war ended and Lagondas turned back to peaceful production again the value of money had changed and the price was now £335. The 11.1 continued for a short time after the war, but probably prompted by the extra weight of the four-seater car, Lagondas decided to increase the power output from the engine, and in so doing raised it to a rating of 11.9 h.p.

Then the first radiator change took place and the vertical tube "Bullnose" type was replaced by a square-edged nickel radiator with honeycomb core. The rounded tail then disappeared from the two-seater model and all cars now having the longer wheelbase the two-seaters were fitted with occasional seats in the dickey.

Lagondas were retaining their former standard of high finish and completeness of equipment, but this was forcing the price up and whereas the 11.1 was originally competing for the low price market the cars were now verging on the luxury class.

In an attempt to be in both markets it was decided to produce a popular model to sell concurrently with the better-equipped cars, and in 1922 this cheap model appeared on the market. The mechanical specification remained unchanged but during its duration of manufacture several improvements appeared on other models which were never incorporated in the cheap models. The cheap car cost £225 and so lacking was it in refinements (starter, side screens, etc.) that a compromise model also appeared. This car was probably more successful than the very cheap car as until two years ago we had no evidence that the cheapest car was ever sold. We now have one in the club, owned by Freda Roberts.

In the more expensive class the engines underwent their second big change when the rocker gear was enclosed under an aluminium cover and then the radiator became taller and finally changed its form to a more curved type which formed the basis of subsequent Lagonda radiator design.

These cars were getting heavier, fitting bigger section tyres, and in turn this demanded lower and lower axle ratios.

The four-seater could be purchased in saloon form, open with wind-up windows, open tourer with side screens which stowed away in pockets in the doors, and for those who wanted it the front seat could be made to fold flat to make a double bed in the car. In all models in this range the coachwork was of high quality even if the overall weight was deviating somewhat from light car ideals.

Sprung upholstery was replaced by pneumatic, and the last refinement recorded was the optional extra of front wheel brakes.

It is a great pity that we know so little about the story of the 11.9 Lagonda racing cars. The Brooklands records tell us of actual speeds and successes, and Bert Hammond was luckily able to supply us with photos of these cars and tell us of his experiences. Unfortunately, there is much we still do not know: What was done to these cars to enable them to reach such speeds? What did they weigh? and What happened to them?

Two types were used: a single-seater and a two-seater. The photographs available indicate that the chassis may well have been standard except that front shock absorbers show in one photo.

Which model or models they were we do not know, but it is recorded that Oates lapped Brooklands in June, 1921, at 83.56 m.p.h. in a race in which he came third. Later that year he won a race averaging 78 m.p.h. with a fastest lap of 84.13.

He broke five light car class records that year including the mile at 86.91 m.p.h. and covering 79.17 miles in one hour. In 1922 Oates' fastest lap was 88.62 m.p.h.

It would be interesting to know the axle ratios used. The highest ratio known to have been fitted was a worm drive of 3.9 to 1 in the early two-seater 11.1 cars. This would have meant that the engine would have been at least up to 4,500 r.p.m. It is of course that a special axle

ratio was used, but Bert Hammond recollected that these engines were running at about the 4,000 r.p.m. figure. This is remarkable stamina for the little two-bearing splash fed crankshaft, and to an owner of an 11.9 Lagonda other problems come to mind, notably the elimination of valve bounce.

Perhaps Oates had developed the car to its maximum by 1922, and it was thereafter out-classed for we hear no more of it at Brooklands and Lagondas themselves are able to provide us with no records.

Any mention of achievements with 11.9 Lagondas would be incomplete without reference to the journey by Hamish Moffatt across Africa in his 1924 model 12/24. It was a personal achievement for Hamish to make this journey alone in a car older than himself, and it was to the credit of the car that it survived such hard treatment so late in life. Apart from the engine which had only recently been fitted the car was almost original and most of the troubles which he did have were tyre and spring troubles. Under adverse conditions and with the most primitive equipment he coped with the ills that befell the car. Only once did he have to resort to the Lagonda Club's spares service and have a part flown out.

Perhaps some disused barn will one day reveal one of the 11.9 racers. Until then Club handicap races are the place where one of these cars is likely to claim a place in a race and as yet this has not been achieved.

Tuning an 11.9 appears to have very little effect on the car's speed, and unless modifications such as weight reducing are undertaken it would appear that lap speeds will always fall very short of Oates' figures at Brooklands. Even if extra speed could be obtained in plenty, two-wheel brakes on an unbanked race track has a limited future.

Experience on the Club circuit at Silverstone with "Titus", Nancy Audsley's 1923 11.9 semi-cheap model shows a very low lap speed.

In 1954 this car had a top road speed of 42 m.p.h. with an axle ratio of 4.7 to 1. Valve bounce determined this maximum.

The lap time on the Club circuit was 2 min. 25 secs.

A 4.4 to 1 axle was fitted in 1955 and this raised the top road speed to 54 m.p.h. The circuit at Silverstone was not long enough on any of the straights to enable the car to get up to this higher speed as the acceleration had suffered by the ratio

change. The net effect was to reduce the lap speed by 2.4 secs. only, and this in terms of average speed was a modest 36 m.p.h. and the speedometer never exceeded 42 m.p.h.!

Valve bounce had been largely eliminated by the fitting of stronger springs, but it would appear that the higher axle ratio was a mistake for this particular track. Strong valve springs and the low ratio axle would probably be a better proposition for this car unless the overall weight could be reduced.

Recently we have seen only the one 11.9 Lagonda on the track, but it is to be hoped that Charles Elphinstone will be able to tax the handicapper's brains even more by entering his 1914 11.1, Giralda, and that Freda Roberts will challenge Nancy Audsley in her 1922 11.9. It would be interesting to see what the 12/24 will do in comparison with the earlier models.

To be the only 11.9 in a Lagonda handicap race is a race that is different. It starts with an air of leisure as one surveys the empty track during the long pauses on the only two gear-changes to be made during the whole race: 1st to 2nd, and 2nd to Top, a few yard from the start line. After only a few minutes motoring the other cars are unleashed and the peace of the track is broken. From then on the same cars seem to flash by over and over again. As the last lap is half covered the entire field is right over the other side of the track, but as the finishing line appears almost in reach one is conscious that the whole field is closing in from behind. With the handicapping as good as it is in the Club the last straight sorts itself out into a finish as exciting for the driver of an 11.9 as a 4½ team car. A.K.A.

Photo on Page 16 by Autocar.

BOOKS RECEIVED

NUMBERS UP

MEMBERS MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE BOOKS compiled by Noel Woodall of Blackpool. He published his first "Car Number Galaxy" in 1960, since when there have been several others, and put his interests to a worthy purpose inasmuch as the profits went to his favourite Good Cause, Trueloves School for seriously crippled boys.

Interest in special number plates is growing, as a glance at the ads. in any issue of the *Sunday*

Times or *Motor Sport* will show. The fashion has so spread that Woodall has now produced "Car Number Galaxy Who's Who 1966" which is a well turned-out volume. There are over 150 pages of good quality paper well printed with a variety of notes, some regarding items of motoring history while others include snippets of chit-chat and how people have acquired their own pet numbers. There are dozens of photographs, but unfortunately for us, none of Lagondas. Indeed, on the initial glance through the pages I could spot only four references to the marque.

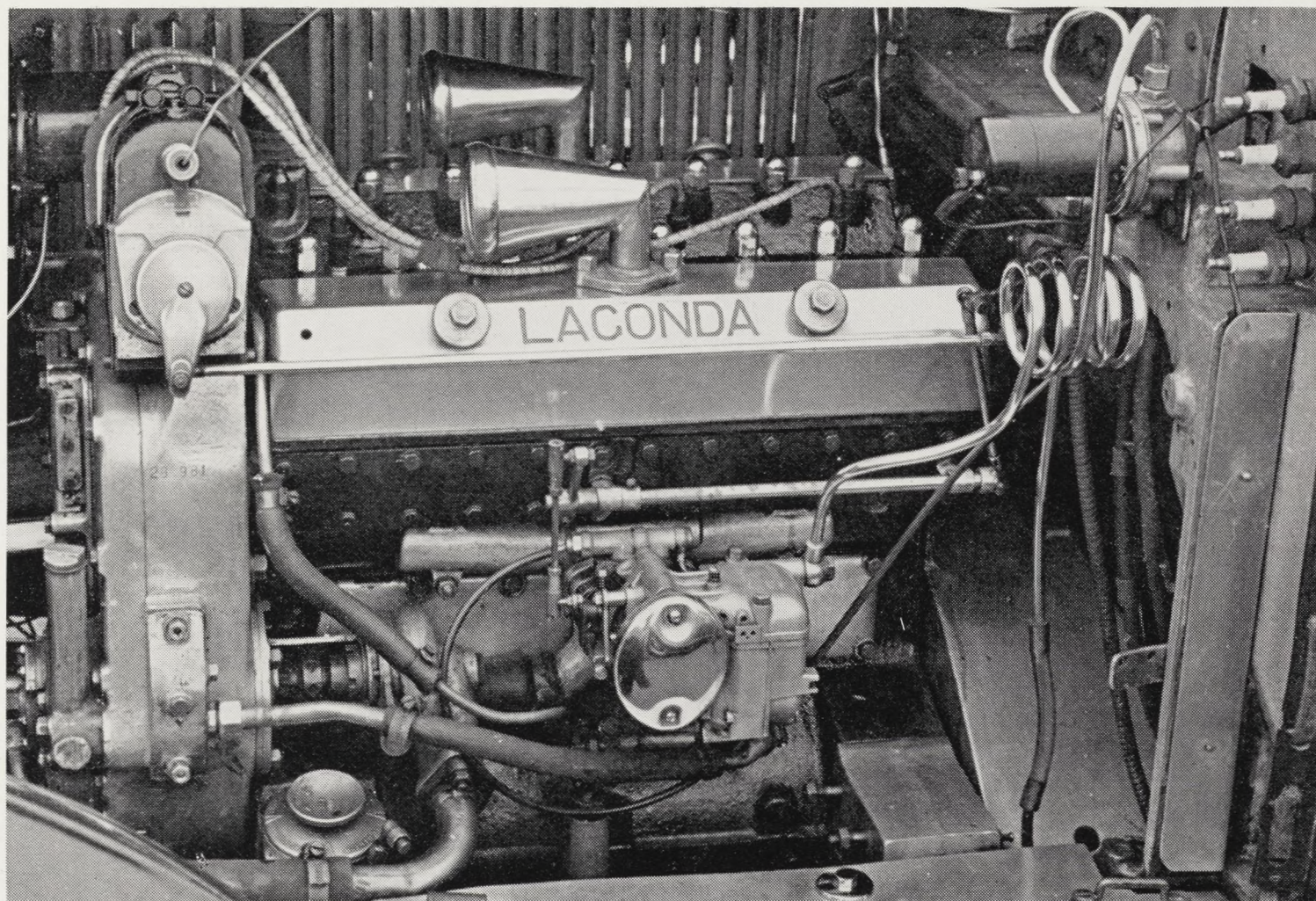
Lagondas are rarer than we think.

It occurs to me that there are a number of them to which reference should have been made; team cars and competition cars that still exist, and cars that have been with their present owners for many years. There are also several cars bearing the number 1 on their number plates, especially perhaps BYP 1 which I think has been quoted as the Sir Malcolm Campbell Rapier and which was inexplicably omitted from the list of Noteworthy Lagondas in the Register of Members and Their Cars 1962. There must be some autonumerologists in the Club or the list would not have been produced in number plate form. Then again, did not our Chairman compete in driving tests in a Bentley limousine with a number 1 plate?

I feel there may be many members who find interest in having this little-publicised book in its present edition (23s. post free from the compiler at 16 Boston Avenue, Norbreck, Blackpool). The next edition would be better for us and do well for the name Lagonda if owners of cars with number plates having some story behind them would submit details for future inclusion. I am confident they would be welcomed.

R.P.

Back numbers of *The Lagonda*, especially early issues, will always be welcomed by the Secretary for re-distribution to newer members of the Club.



Swan's 2-litre engine

Photo: George A. Oliver.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE 2-LITRE SPEED MODEL LAGONDA

We feel that there are many owners of 2-litre Lagondas who will appreciate this article, reproduced from "The Autocar" of 21st June, 1929, on Care and Maintenance of the 2-litre Speed Model.

ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT DECARBONISING is the first process which the engine will need, it is probably the best starting point when dealing with the car as a whole. Before decarbonising it is well to arrange that the motor house shall be thoroughly tidied and cleaned, and the car placed in a good light, after which a box should be obtained into which the various parts can be placed as they are removed, and in which such spares as rubber hose for the water pipe, a gasket, and particularly the cork washers required for the head can be temporarily stored.

Ordinarily, the actual decarbonising is best effected with the special set of tools which can be obtained from various manufacturers, or with an old but sharp set of wood chisels. First drain the water from the radiator by the tap provided below the pump, in addition, if necessary, also remove the plug at the bottom of the radiator itself. The pump tap, by the way, is the only one which should be used if it becomes desirable to drain the water from the whole system in exceptionally cold weather. The radiator plug hole does not drain the water pump casing, and if ice forms in the latter the vanes of the pump may be damaged. The water system holds three gallons and one quart of water.

Next the twenty-one nuts which hold down the cylinder head should be undone and put in the box kept for parts, the upper of the two rubber water pipes disconnected and the oil pipe union at the back of the head also undone. The exhaust pipe and carburettor need not be disturbed. The sparking plug cables should be removed, the plugs themselves unscrewed and set aside.

The head can then be lifted off the studs. It carries with it the cranked levers which operate the valves, and the valves themselves. If the head be then turned upside down on the bench the carbon can be carefully scraped away, leaving a clean, polished surface everywhere. Particular care should be taken not to leave loose carbon in the combustion space.

The piston crowns can be decarbonised by bringing each in turn to the top dead centre, care again being exercised to remove all the carbon that is scraped away. The face of the head and the surfaces on the top of the cylinder block should be spotlessly clean when the head is refitted. The gasket also should be thoroughly clean and the cork washers which make the joint between the camshaft tunnels and the cylinder head should be replaced by new units if the job is to be carried out effectively.

While the cylinder head is off the valves can be removed and ground to their seatings with fine emery powder. First, the rocking levers must be detached, this being effected by unlocking the nuts, holding the spindle of the lever to a boss in the casting, unscrewing those nuts and withdrawing the spindle sideways. In doing so make sure that the bronze washer belonging to the fulcrum pin is not lost, and that the hardened cap is retained on the end of the valve.

For removing the valves or changing a spring there is a special tool of the type indicated in an accompanying sketch. A suitably shaped block of wood should be placed on the bench to fit into one of the combustion spaces and to rest upon the heads of the valves. The tool should then be screwed into position, the distance piece on one arm resting on the machined face of the cylinder head, and the screw at the other end of the arm operating the fork which engages with the valve spring retaining collar. The valve spring itself can then be compressed until the split cotters can be taken out. Incidentally, these split cotters are quite easily removed by magnetising the tang end of a file.

When the cotters are withdrawn the inner and outer valve spring and the retaining collar can be released and removed and the valve itself can then be withdrawn. Note that the valves are marked to correspond with their seatings, the valves in No. 1 combustion space, which is the one normally nearest the radiator, being marked 1 and 1E, 1E being the exhaust valve. The valves should not be replaced in the wrong seatings.

On top of each valve is a hardened thimble which should be kept to its allotted valve stem. If eight holes are drilled in a block of wood to receive the valves after they have been extracted, they will more easily be kept to their proper positions.

Valve Grinding

Each valve is ground in by making use of the screwdriver slot in its head, a screwdriver being preferable to any other means for this work. The face of each valve should be ground until it presents an even surface free from pits, and the utmost care should be used to wash away every trace of carborundum powder, especially from the neighbourhood of the valve guides. The valve guides, by the way, can be driven out of the head and replaced if badly worn. A worn valve guide allows extra air to enter the inlet pipe. When replacing a guide it is better to pull it in with a long thread bolt rather than to knock it into place as this may damage it.

When each valve has been returned to its seat and the spring and cotters put back, the rocking lever can be reassembled on its fulcrum, care being taken not to overlook the bronze washer or the thimble on the end of the valve. When the assembling is complete, the head can be replaced, care being used not to damage the rockers when engaging with the camshaft. The twenty-one nuts must be tightened in rotation in such a way that the head is pulled down evenly all round.

The valves must then be set again at .004 in. clearance, whether the engine is hot or cold, this clearance being maintained between the valve stem and the end of the rocker arm. Adjustment of clearance is effected by using a tommy in one end of the eccentric spindle carrying the rocker arm and rotating the spindle one way or the other until a feeler gauge shows the gap to be .004 in., at which point the nut and lock nut can be tightened home to secure the spindle in position. Always check the clearance again after locking.

Useful Special Tool

Actually, it is possible to remove the valve springs without detaching the head, a special tommy being inserted through the plug orifice of the cylinder concerned to hold the required valve on its seat while the special tool already described depresses the valve spring washer, allowing the cotters to be withdrawn. Concerning this operation there is one important point, namely, to see that the cylinder is on the top dead centre of its

compression stroke, so that both valves are on their seats. In no circumstances should the engine be turned whilst the special tommy is projecting into the cylinder, as otherwise the valves will be considerably damaged.

When the plugs and wires, water pipe and oil pipe are once more in place and the cooling system is full, the engine should be started and run for some little time, care being taken to run it light on a small throttle opening, and then the nuts holding down the head should be tested again to ensure that they are really tight. It is a wise precaution to go over these nuts once more after the car has had its first run subsequent to removal of the head. It is quite extraordinary how play and slackness can develop unless this point is carefully attended to.

(To be continued)

Article reprinted by courtesy *Autocar*.

TALE OF A RAPIER

THIS CAR STARTED LIFE AS BASICALLY A COMPLETE chassis so far as this story relates. The start of MMF240 began as an advert advertising a crushed Rapier for sale. A journey up to Derby and examination of the car resulted in the crushed car being towed in November 1945 down to London in atrocious weather, I might add bodyless. Examination some two or three days later revealed a seriously bent chassis and it was decided to purchase a new chassis. A Mr. Bartlet in London who had purchased all available Rapier spares supplied to the owner of MMF240 a new chassis, a Moss 4-speed crashbox and so began the painstaking rebuild. Whilst the chassis was being assembled the engine was sent to Laystalls to be rebuilt and balanced. The radiator was then sent to Sercs and shortened some 2-3 in. at the same time a special stoneguard was made by Sercs and fitted to the shortened radiator.

Work proceeded on the chassis and every mechanical component was stripped, rebuilt and various parts replaced where worn, the leading brakes were fitted with air scoops and the clutch and brake pedal arms drilled to tighten them.

The complete chassis when finished was as original and no shortening or modifications were carried out.

The engine when it came back from Laystalls revealed the engine output was 4 b.h.p. higher than that quoted by Lagonda's this was obviously a disappointment as the original conception being to use the car in short sprints. No attempt was made to hot up the engine so the b.h.p. stated I suppose could be expected.

With the chassis finished, details then had to be decided upon bodywise. A two-seater Sports/Racing was decided upon

The body is a two-seater, two-door ash-framed and Ali panelled, door catches being internal, the body tapers inwards from cockpit scuttle towards radiator, two side plates enclose engine with original Rapier bonnet catches either side. Bonnet top cover is lowered down both sides and held in position by twin leather straps. Cockpit width was restricted to two slim individuals. Twin bucket seats completed interior trim. All Rapier instrument were fitted, only the original Rapier clock being absent, this has since been rectified.

Upholstery amounts to blow up original seat squabs. Cockpit is twin curved cowls and handbrake is placed outside with small blister concealing pawl arrangements.

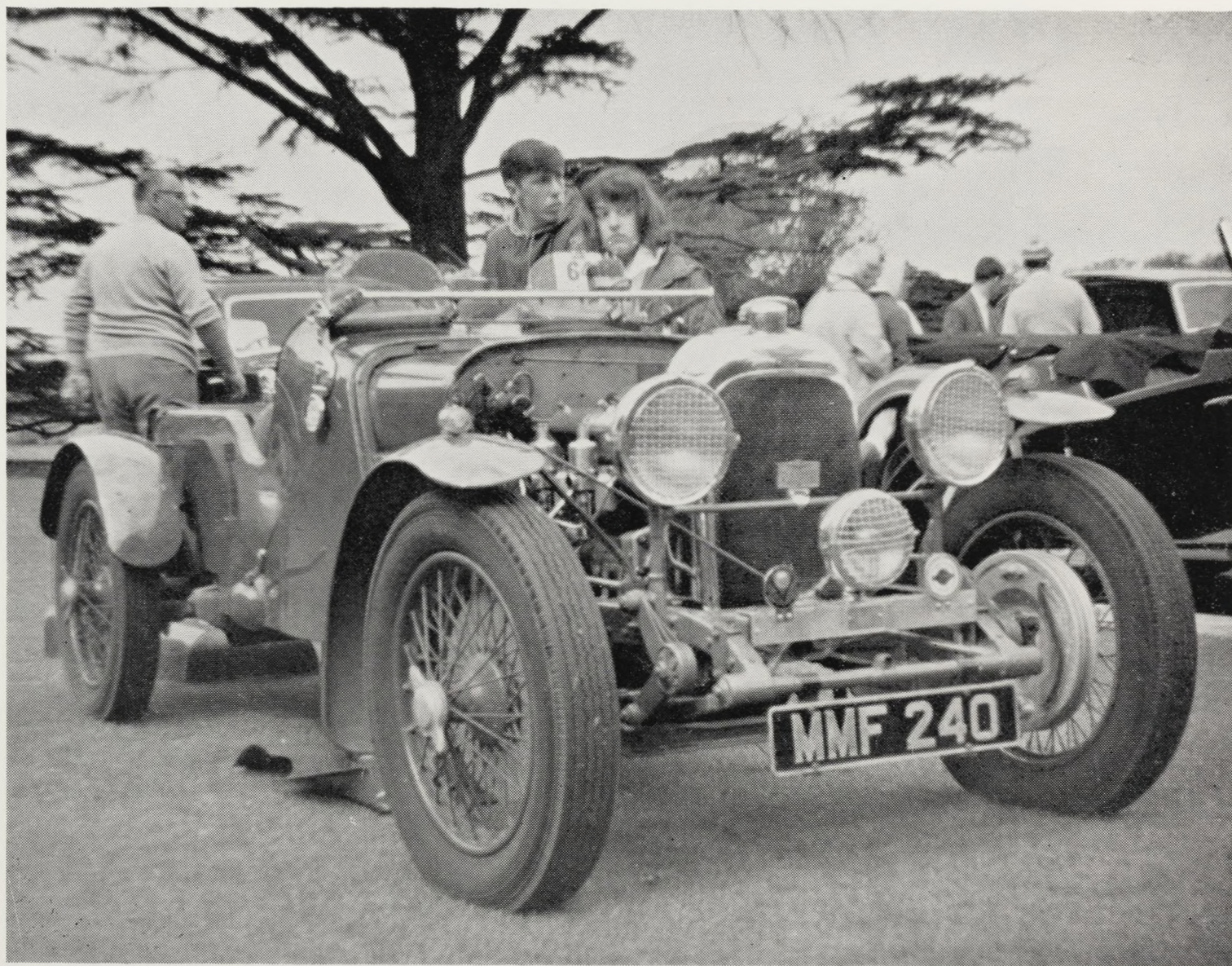
Fuel system is supplied by vertical 22 gallon slab tank with fitted splash plates. Original Rapier filler caps is fitted on tank top. A large blister conceals the standard twin. S.U.'s Magneto ignition is retained. Instrument panel is polished, Ali engine turned. Wheels are standard type except I have now fitted 18 in. Boranni wire wheels with oversize rears. The complete rebuild took just under two years and resulted in an overall cost of over £900. The car was then re-registered the original log book did not change hands.

For two years the car remained in its restorer's hands but then departed and changed hands for £450 being advertised in *Motor Sport*, from 1948 to 1950 history is unknown but in 1951 the car turned up in Nottingham. In 1955 the car changed hands again but remained in Nottingham. In 1958 the car went to an owner in Derbyshire so finally the chain of events had completed a complete circle and returned to her original birthplace. From 1958-1964 she remained in Derbyshire. Whilst visiting my own home in Derbyshire I got to know about this car, I went to see it and found the engine lay in the owners coal house stripped, the rest of the car being in his garage.

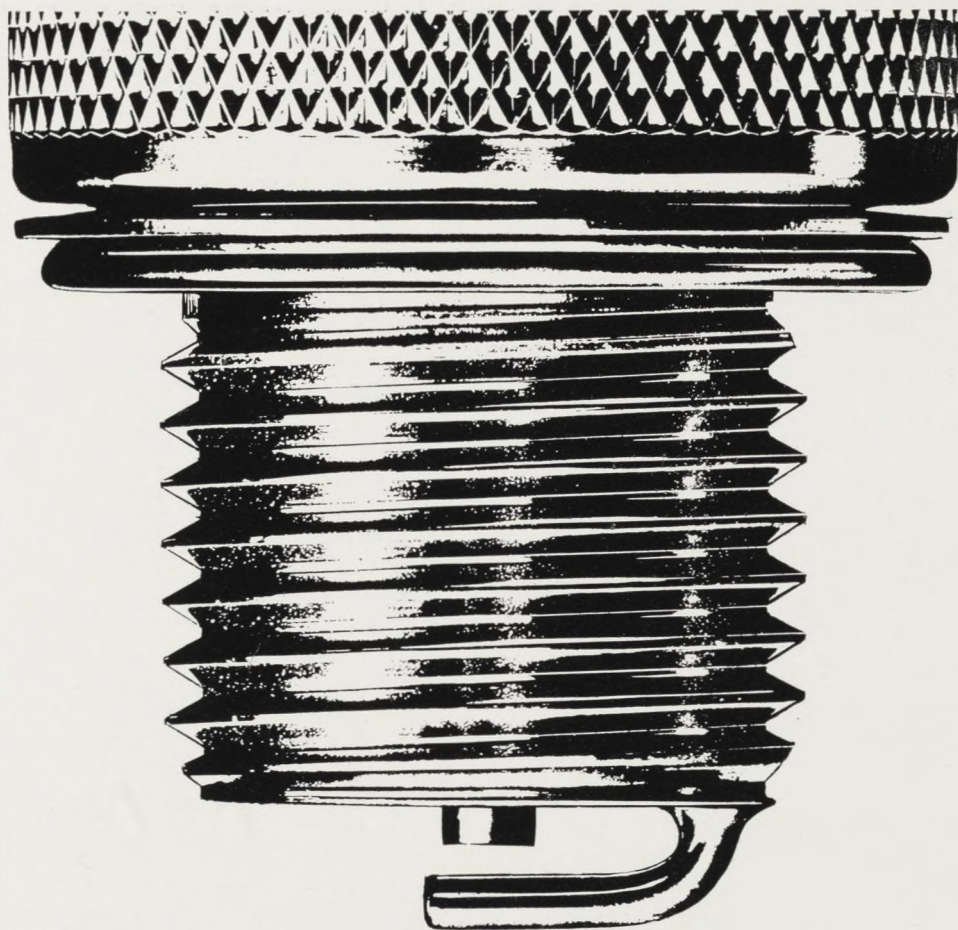
The car was in B.R.G. colours had odd size wheels, odd headlamps and was in moderate condition but in running order once the engine was fitted. I bought her for £130 and drove her to Chester where I now live. I then set about restoring her and re-shod the car with new tyres, I purchased 1 pair of Rapier wheels and fitted spare wheel carrier and wheel to car. I replaced both headlamps with vintage style matching pair, I also fitted stoneguards to lamps. I fitted new vintage style side lamps. I bought and fitted Rapier twin dash lamps. Dynamo and magneto were overhauled as was the twin carbs. New timing chains and tensioners were fitted as were one replacement cam cover which was cracked. Original stop light switch was fitted and wired up. Centre spot was fitted and reverse light. Complete chassis was repainted Leaf Green. Body was

brush painted Pillarbox Red. I've also fitted tonneau cover. Hub caps remain to be re-plated and seats require upholstering, floor now needs re-designing, windscreen re-chroming and a new hood then my restoration will be complete. Up to press roughly £130 has been spent on the car but the number of hours actually worked runs into hundreds, nevertheless the satisfaction I derive from all this is the appreciation shown by the enthusiasm by admirers. So far the only trouble I've had with the car is one U/S petrol pump, two broken timing chains and one hot valve shim cap. My last calamity being the water pump gland which has yet to be rectified. So for the time being I have to rely on purely thermo syphon cooling. This concludes my story of MMF240.

RAY LUNDER



Ray Lunder's Rapier.



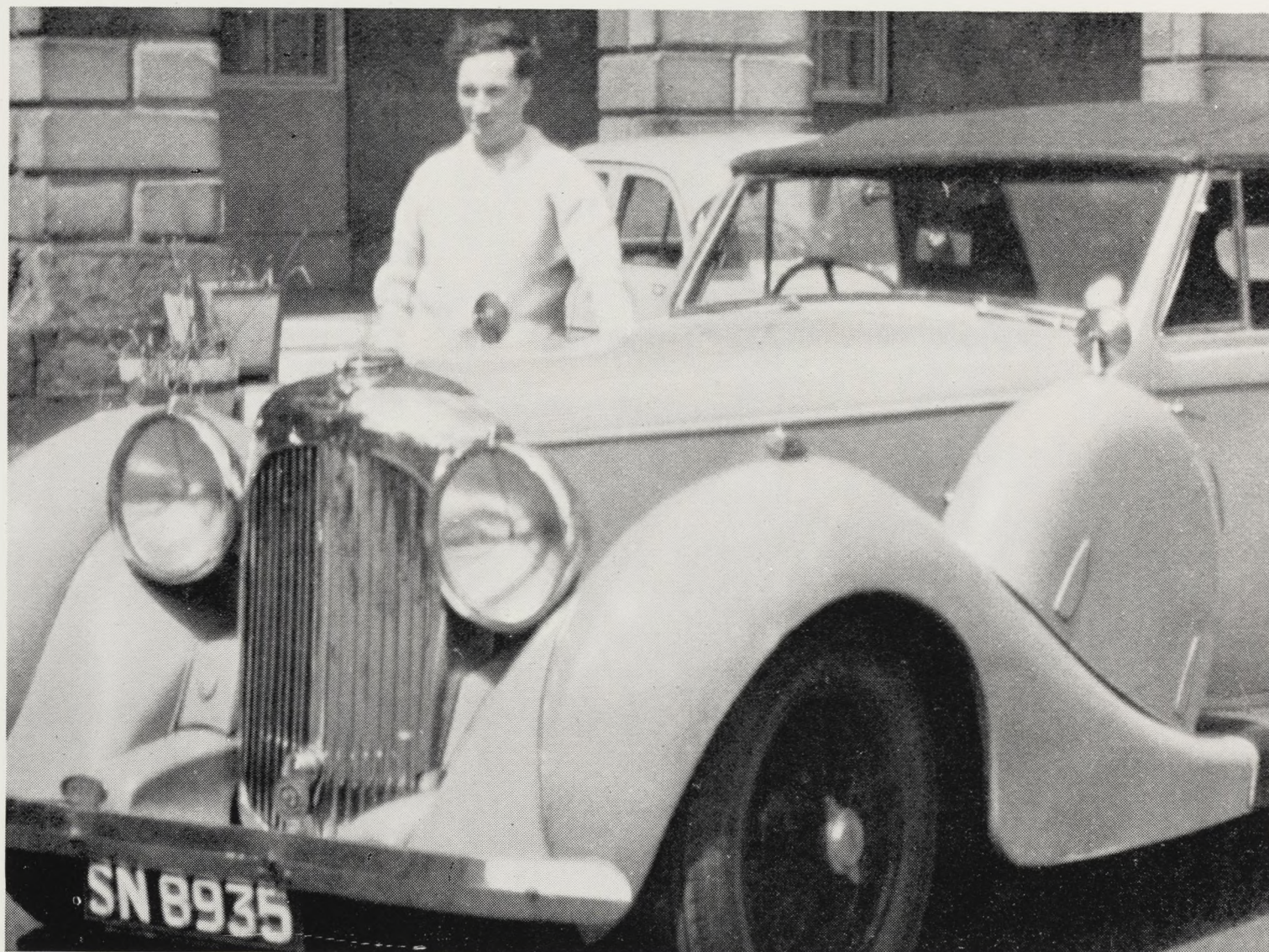
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NORTHERN CARS & FACES

No. 9

DENNIS ROBERTS

A name very familiar to people who advertise Lagondas' for sale in *Motor Sport*.

Dennis has been a member for many years and at one time or another probably owned your car.

His present collection consists of an LG6 coupe photographed above, an LG6 saloon with unusual fungus upholstery and full air conditioning (no windows). An LG45 long wheelbase with 2-seater coachwork and flushing W.C. (most useful if you go out driving with him!) and finally the ex Hugh Howarth racing 4½-litre.

Unfortunately none of the above cars are on the road at the present time.

HULL & EAST RIDING NOTES

CHARLES BATTE IS A GOOD FRIEND THOUGH NOT A member. He is V.S.C.C. and has owned the same Delage for over thirty years. Since finishing a lengthy rebuild he has won several awards therewith, and has now begun to rebuild another. He has been good enough to conduct local members round his garage and workshop to see the work in progress. Now we are full of good resolutions concerning our own progress!

J.L.B.'s unique tourer is in the news again. Last time it was cover picture on a national trade journal and then featured in the local press. Now its cleanliness and dignity on the road has caught the eye of one of our main area distributors (for another make) who has persuaded the owner to let the M45T be used as a main feature in a large showroom display. In return, J.L.B. agreed to allow certain work to be done on the springs of his car. J.L.B. in his full titular dignity is of course John Lucky Beardow, Esquire.

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Henry Coates still means business. A new welding (no misprint) plant has recently been noticed in his workshop.

Rowland Hill is at last working on his M45 Rapide. This is an honest-to-goodness unmodified original and it is a pleasure to know that it will soon be on the road again. We claim Rowland as H. & E. R. because he lived here until he removed to Ilkley, and in any case his car used to belong to Ken Pape.

Ian North marshals for the V.S.C.C. and competed in their November Trials, albeit not in his LG45. Between times he pursues his rebuilding.

Amongst events supported by members as keen spectators was the AOC Driving tests at Riccall, indeed, Ken Winder competed in Henry's original two-seater (N.B. Still owned by R.P.). It was here we were all entertained by Ted Townsley with a first-hand account of how he appeared in his new LG45R. (There is an article—and a bit of drama too—behind that Mr. Editor, worth a page in itself.)

Three members have given parties for the others and these have been very enjoyable.

John Broadbank and Pauline organised the last event of our northern calendar, from Ilkley, and we have not seen them since. We are hoping that John is working on his cars and Pauline is doing the spadework in organising another Christmas Dinner.

Does the Editor wonder how many members viewed BBC2 on 4th November expecting to see some Lagondas and hear about their value, only to find no reference to the marque despite the announcement in the *Radio Times*?

There were several here.

“HERMES”

The V.S.C.C. WELSH RALLY

I AM SORRY TO SAY THAT NOT A SINGLE LAGONDA was entered for this event, restricted as it was to pure vintage cars. Before anyone comes in with: why a report? I will say that many of our members with their cars were among the spectators and a small minority were marshalling or adding weight and bounce to a competing car.

The interesting part of the event for the on-looker takes place on the Sunday when the more suitable cars do a round trip from Presteigne

through observed sections on the mountains of Radnorshire. The scenery alone is well worth a visit and is better than the Cotswolds. Over the years the organisers have discovered the tracks most suited to their purpose, their very names bring into mind something by Constable: CRUG, HEYOPE, LLANGOCH, DISCOED and last but not most famous THE SMATCHER.

With memories of the most unfriendly welcome given to night trials it is most pleasant to record that this event is welcomed by the locals: the crush of onlookers on Smatcher now necessitates the use of ropes to keep the track clear. The crowd of Vintagents also fills up all the hotels for miles around on the Saturday night and provides a kind of annual reunion; the kind that leaves a sore head in the morning.

The list of entrants includes pretty well every make one can think of: ALVIS, AUSTIN 12 and 7, BENTLEY, BUGATTI, CROSSLEY, FRASER NASH, HUMBER, JOWETT, LANCIA, LEA FRANCIS, RILEY, TROJAN, VAUXHALL. It makes one wonder why the name Lagonda is missing, there are some 126 2-litre cars of 1930 or earlier. Forty-six of them in the Vintage Club (I've counted them.)

Anyway, if you are looking for a pleasant and interesting event with which to wind up the season you now know where to go.

CHOTA WALLAH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following letter from American sportsman Briggs Cunningham is reprinted as it will be of interest and tells how Mr. Cunningham acquired his V-12.

Dear Sir—I must apologise for not answering your letter of 11/7/66 sooner, but I misplaced it, and just now found it under some papers!

Yes, "Road and Track" did a very kind article on the Museum, and it has brought a lot of people to see it. You surely have my permission to use any part of it you like, but best check with them first. I don't know their policy on these matters.

We are just now in the process of doing some photos of all our cars, and I will get you some of the V-12 Lagonda as soon as I can. Don't have any just yet.

I don't have much of anything interesting to tell about the Lagonda, excepting how and why I got it!

As I remember, I came to England in the Summer of 1939, and purchased a used 3½-litre Rolls Bentley Tourer, which I drove around a bit, then took off for the Grouse Shooting in Scotland, about 10th August something serious happened to the car, and I phoned a friend of mine at Rolls Royce, to get the loan of a car of some kind so I could continue my journey, and use the car for several weeks while shooting. This couldn't be accomplished, so I phoned Dick Watney at Lagonda in Staines, and asked if they could loan me a car. This they did, and sent it right up to wherever I was broken down en-route to Scotland. I used the car for several weeks, then got to like it so much I ordered a new car from Dick, and traded in my Bentley. Just then War was declared, and we rushed back to London, and I went to Staines and met W. O. Bentley, and discussed my order. I tried unsuccessfully to buy one of the Le Mans cars then and there, but no luck. Anyway, W. O. promised me a similar engine to the Le Mans cars, with the four carb. Manifold, etc., etc. The car finally arrived in New York in December, I believe, and I have had it ever since!

Best regards,

BRIGGS CUNNINGHAM,
Costa Mesa, California.

News from the North

Dear Sir—It was a poor season for weather in 1966, practically every race meeting and driving test was wet. Two exceptions spring to mind however, the BDC and the Northern driving tests. The former was an excellent meeting and so potentially was the latter. Herb Schofield had organised it very well—good interesting tests, well spaced out and all giving great enjoyment both to spectators and drivers.

Plenty of beer was consumed during the day and a grand dinner was laid on in the evening. However, for this most important club event we only got nine Lagondas—I wouldn't blame Herb if he threw in the sponge!

What's happened to the "get you home" service that was started last year? I've had no anguished requests for aluminium water castings required on the M6!

How kind of our members over the water to offer us the Lags back, I'm just trying to scrape up £4,000 for that V-12 saloon but my bank manager doesn't seem very keen on the project.

Actually I don't consider a reverse flow of Lagondas from the colonies will ever become a reality. I think we must be content to maintain the status quo. I should hate to arrive at the West Towers Pub meet and try to feel thrilled at the sight of a couple of LG45 saloons!

Yours faithfully,

DAVID R. HINE,
White Barn House, Alderley Edge.

Open Season for Peasants

Dear Sir—As requested, please find enclosed some notes that may prove of use—if not too late.

Please excuse the delay. Your postcard arrived here the day following the commencement of the peasant shooting—and there isn't an "h" missing.

Yours Sincerely,

J. MCKELLAR-CAIRNS,
Penicuik.

Is it a Good Thing?

Dear Sir—The report on Curborough Sprint Meeting lamented the fact that there were very few 2-litres racing, mentioning that given sufficient money a 2-litre could go as fast as a standard 4½. Now this prompted me to think—who wants to make a 2-litre go as fast as a 4½? In fact, lets go further—why should anyone want to alter a Vintage or P.V.T. car to go any faster than it was designed to go and thereby lose what must be one of the pleasures of owning an old car and that is in possessing an original piece of machinery which is a tribute to the craftsmen who made it.

Admittedly there is a thrill in speed and acceleration as such but it seems hypocritical to profess a love for Vintage machinery on one hand and on the other to go and chop up bodywork, saw pieces out of the chassis, drill holes everywhere, fit different gearboxes, rebuild wheels to take Dunlop racing, etc. The mania for butchering up a fine car to increase the performance was exemplified to a fearsome degree in some of the Bentleys running at Curborough, some of which bore very little resemblance to a true Vintage Bentley; a walk round the paddock at any V.S.C.C. meeting will illustrate my point.

If these men want to race why not buy a mini and a roll of go-faster tape or better still, if funds permit, a genuine Vintage Racing Car and then devote some of their time to restoring a thoroughbred car. They would end up with something that the layman would admire and that they could be genuinely proud of instead of an Emmett-like contraption of Dexion and straggly exhaust pipes.

I will admit that some specials are a tribute to the builders and this seems a better fate for absolutely clapped out saloons than being set on fire.

Wishing to remain a member of the club and not to be attacked on a dark night by Messrs. Edwards, Hine, Schofield, Weir, etc. the name and address will not appear; the penname will serve as useful reference to the hordes of irate special builders who I hope are now taking up a vitriolic pen to fill up further space in the next issue.

"RESTORER". (Name and address
supplied. Editor.)

Pub Meets

Dear Sir—I attended the October meeting at the Coach and Horses last Thursday. Admittedly the weather was pretty foul but surely eight members and one Lagonda (my Rapier) is a poor turn out for a club of this size. Our own Rapier Register meeting (first Thursdays at "The George", Borough High Street, S.E.1) on 6th October attracted six members plus several friends and wives and two Rapiers, one 2-litre and a Mark II Aston Martin. This was a little below average (we usually get at least eight members) possibly due to even fouler weather than that on the night of the Lagonda meeting. The Register considers this to be a pretty fair attendance considering it has only 120 or so members. So what about it you Lagonda Club chaps? Are you going to let a club only eighth the size appear to be more enthusiastic?

Yours Sincerely,

TONY WOOD,
London, N.W.6.

Dear Sir—Sorry to disappoint Geoffrey Walker writing in the Spring number of the *Lagonda Club Magazine*. Owing to my bad writing the number of my Continental Saloon got printed as KY2712 when it is really 2717.

PIERS BESLEY, Stowmarket.

LAGONDA SERVICE



We have a large stock of useful spare parts for Lagonda cars still available. Although the demand for parts has deminished over the last few years and prices have increased considerably, we can still assist Lagonda owners with the majority of parts required for re-building and servicing the numerous pre-war Lagonda Models.

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