



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 72 Winter 1970





GILBERT & RICKARD

SYON HILL GARAGE · GREAT WEST ROAD
ISLEWORTH · MIDDLESEX · TEL. 01-560 1720

Late of Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd. we have
formed this company to offer to Lagonda
owners a total of

45 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

IN PANEL BEATING

We tackle anything from repairing small dents
to building complete bodies. Coachwork
spraying also undertaken. We are aluminium
specialists.

For the best coachwork service phone 01 - 560 1720

THE LAGONDA CLUB

Patrons:

SIR DAVID BROWN
THE EARL HOWE, C.B.E.
ARTHUR FOX, M.B.E.

President:

M. H. WILBY

Vice-President:

P. A. DENSHAM

COMMITTEE 1970-71

Chairman:

J. D. ABSON

Treasurer:

G. C. MOORE
20 Hillside Gardens,
Highgate, London, N.6.

Competition Secretary:

J. C. WOOLLARD

Midland Secretary:

P. A. DENSHAM

Northern Secretary:

H. L. SCHOFIELD

Spares Registrar and Technical Adviser:

IVAN FORSHAW
415 Ringwood Road, Parkstone, Dorset
Telephone: Parkstone 3149

J. A. BATT	D. S. JOHNSON
A. BROWN	J. G. ODY
A. DAVEY (<i>Registrar</i>)	G. T. PREECE
R. C. DAVY	D. WESTALL

Secretary:

MRS. V. E. MAY
68 Savill Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath,
Sussex

Editor:

A. W. MAY

Border Secretary:

I. G. MACDONALD

Scottish Secretary:

J. MCKELLAR-CAIRNS

Club Equipment Officer:

H. C. LONG

Australian Representative:

E. J. WHITEHEAD
23 Pibrac Avenue, Warrawee, N.S.W.

U.S.A. Representative:

R. T. CRANE
10 Crestwood Trail, Lake Mohawk, Sparta,
New Jersey 07871. U.S.A.



MAGAZINE

Issue No. 72

Winter 1970

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Editor: A. W. MAY

Editorial Committee:

ARNOLD DAVEY J. G. ODY J. W. T. CROCKER

CONTENTS

Notes, News and Announcements	2
Staines Again	2
Northern Notes	3
BDC Silverstone	4
Report from West London	6
The 4½-litre Lagonda Rapide	7
A True but Nasty Story	9
Paris-Deauville—1970	10
The Restoration of JBG 492—Part 7 ..	15
Jottings from Scotland	18
King for a Day	19
Garda Veteran Raid	20
The Development of an Eccles Rapier ..	22
The Art of Motor Vehicle Restorations ..	25
Some Ramblings of a Lagonda Owner (II)	26
Letters to the Editor	28

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

FRONT COVER: The Lagonda V.8 Prototype. Four door version of the 170 m.p.h. Aston Martin DBS V.8. This is a development project only—there are no plans to put the car into production. (Photo by courtesy of Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd.)

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Club members everywhere will be sad to learn that MIKE WILBY has recently been in hospital but glad to report that he is now back at home again and although far from 100% fit, he has been making progress. His enthusiasm for the Club remains undimmed and he has threatened to contribute some more mystery photographs for the magazine! The last one seems to have baffled everybody except PETER DENSHAM whose answer appears elsewhere. I gather from Mike that he has had several inspired guesses sent to him direct. Mike recently changed his long-standing affection for V.W.'s to join the rapidly growing ranks of Fiat owners in the Club. Without prejudice to Lagondas of course.

We all wish Mike a speedy return to good health.

* * * *

Continental rallies for vintage machinery seem to be growing more popular each year. It appears to be catching on that these events combine in one attractive package all that is desirable in a Continental rally—vintage motoring in easy stages; good food and wine at frequent intervals en-route and in some cases free petrol! If decent weather is also provided what more can one want? MIKE GABER writes in this issue about the recent Paris-Deauville Rally which had an entry of three Lagondas—the only British make represented. I can see the numbers increasing next year.

* * * *

A few months ago it became known that a new distributor was required to handle Aston Martin and Lagonda cars in Warwickshire and Worcestershire. Four members of the Aston Martin Owners Club—Alan Simpson (DB4 GT & DB5), Peter Densham (Lagonda and DB4 GT), Don Aylet (DB3 S team car and DB5 Vantage) and Harry Taft (DBS V.8) supported by advice from member David Parmenter (DBS) formed Aston Distributors Ltd. A site on the Walsall Road close to the M5/M6 motorway link was chosen which already has a magnificent show-room and forecourt. This is to be a ten bay, 6,000 sq. ft. service centre with panel shop, lube bay and spares depot—all due to be completed soon.

Staines Again

ON SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 1970 65 LAGONDAS made their way to Staines for the 20th A.G.M. of the Lagonda Club. One of the points raised was 'What shall we do to celebrate our 21st birthday next year?' Well. One thing we could all do is—Come to the A.G.M. in 1971! Just think of it, 600 Lagondas.

Apart from the homeward bound traffic jams which I fear we must all have suffered it was one of the pleasantest motoring days of the year. The complete informality of the occasion and the non-violent atmosphere that prevailed made it seem, even more than usual, as if for one day the clock stood still, that the calendar had flipped back to gentler times.

Think of 60 Cortinas in a field. What could you find to say about them? but 60 Lagondas is a different matter. Not one of them lacked character; not one of them could have been dismissed lightly.

Of all the cars there I liked particularly those that bore unmistakable signs of regular use. My own personal prize must go to the lean, purposeful LG.45 Rapide of G. H. B. Dodd; used daily, owned by him for thirty-five years.

Immaculate is an overworked word these days but I applied it to Richard Hare's LG.6. M. Valentine's V.12, Geoffrey Seaton's 3-litre. Horwood's black and grey 2-litre and J. Cope's 2-litre.

Other notes I made concerned David McAlpine a very new member who had brought a 1928 2-litre, a 1930 3-litre and a 1933 16/80, and who admitted that he had enough bits to make four or five more: a young man to be watched.

The Lagondas parked in sight of the main road attracted a considerable crowd of passers-by and at one time the Anglers' car park was completely full. In the very centre of all this activity and parked beneath a yellow banner proclaiming LAGONDA stood gleaming our one and only DBS V.8 Lagonda; Sir David Brown's personal car, kindly lent to us for the day by the works. Our thanks are due to Messrs. Wallinger, Roger Stowers, John Stott and Geoffrey Swallow all of Newport Pagnell who had driven down for the day.

Looking back on the event I can't help wondering what prevented all the other members from being there. They missed a wonderful day.

P.A.D.



Staines 1970 AGM - Le Mans M.45R

Photo : J. McMurdy

NORTHERN NOTES

from Herb Schofield

APOLOGIES TO REGULAR READERS FOR LACK OF 'Northern Notes' in last issue of Magazine.

Well another competition season has ended and so far as this scribe is concerned one that is best forgotten. The recently constructed LG.45 Racer boiled and did all sorts of other horrible things at Oulton Park and at the only other meeting attended had a flat tyre on the line for the Lagonda Race! However, the car must have potential and should be going quickly next season in the hands of co-builder Alan Brown (presuming of course that he can stand the power jump-up from a 2-litre!) The Northern Sec. has opted out and at present is working on another rebuild in time for next season. (Thinks—just how much spare time has he got?) Actually rebuilding cars with our present set-up is extremely enjoyable and not very complicated. The garage where we

work consists of two levels with a total capacity of perhaps fifteen cars, half the building is rented by a coachbuilder and panel beater, and we occupy the other half. We have access to all sorts of labour saving tackle like band saws, drills and welding equipment, etc. Lagonda Club members at present installed include Nigel Hull (LG.45 rebuild), Alistair Barker (LG.45 rebuild), Mel Riding (V.12 rebuild), John Davenport (LG.45R rebuild), David Hine (V.12) and Alan Brown (LG.45R replica) and of course the Northern Sec. (M.45R Le Mans replica).

It seems such a long time since the last 'Northern Notes' and I haven't had a chance to say a really big thank you to John Broadbank and Ken Pape who superbly organised the Northern Gymkhana at Sandtoft in July—not only organised but also provided free beer as well which is something the Northern Secretary never did. Another big thank you to Ted and Mrs. Townsley who once again welcomed us to their house in early September. The Concours d'Elegance at this meeting was won by Michael Brown and his delightful 11.9 Lagonda in which

the Northern Sec. was privileged to ride—perhaps it was just my imagination but it actually seemed a little quicker than a 2-litre from zero to about 30 m.p.h. The 11.9 is certainly the right car to own to win races these days, which brings me to the Bentley Driver's Club Race Meeting.

What a great event this always is, everything from the 11.9 Lagonda to a well known and bearded motoring journalist driving the equally well known 1935 Le Mans winning Lagonda, now looking a little untidy and not running very well either. This is probably the reason why there was no mention in *Motor Sport* which is probably very tactful. The Lagonda race has probably been written up by the Competition Secretary in this issue so I will say no more only thank you B.D.C. for providing us with such a pleasant weekend.

The West Towers pub meetings continue successfully but there is a bit of a dropping off in attendance figures but what is more alarming is the number of Lagondas actually being used on the road, as far as I can discover only Bill Allsager, Alan Ogden and Northern Secretary now run pre-war Lagondas throughout the year in the immediate Manchester area which is very sad.

OTHER NEWS

Rumour has it that Bob Alexander is looking for a buyer for his M.45 Sports/Racer. Nigel Hall of Stalybridge who in recent years has conducted Alan Brown's LG.45 at various race meetings buys a collection of LG.45 spares to build up into a sporting car. Alistair Barker of Knutsford buys two LG.45 chassis and is doing the same thing. Brian Minshall I understand contemplates the purchase of a V.12 saloon with a view to converting it to a drophead, which sounds a good idea if he can get hold of hood irons and quarter lights. Brian Green and Lawton Warren (surely our most enthusiastic club members—80 miles in an evening to attend pub meets) press on with their various rebuilds, Green's being nearer completion, and we are promised that his car will definitely be used on the road (hooray soon we will have four Lags. at West Towers!) Alan Brown has for immediate disposal a complete David Brown 3-litre 4-door saloon which he will sell or swop for a V.12 Rapide (cash adjustment either way!). It would appear from casual observation that either Mrs. David Hine is putting on weight at an alarming rate or will shortly be giving birth to another offspring (funny she always seems to

have a child nine months after David is successful in some event or other with the V.12!)

FINALLY

Make a note in your 1971 Diary now of the date for the Northern Dinner and Dance, which will be held as usual at Monk Fryston Hall on Friday 19th March. Early application for night accommodation is recommended by 'phoning the Manager at South Milford 2369. Full details of this important event will of course follow in a future newsletter.

BDC SILVERSTONE

August, 1970

"I WONDER", ASKED ONE OF THE EDITORIAL Committee, "whether you would find it possible to write a page or so on the B.D.C. Silverstone Meeting?". He admitted it was a dirty trick—the request came a week *after* the event! So, don't blame me if it is not quite correct in all its details—or in any of them!

This year the Lagondas got a seven lap handicap race to themselves, having amassed an entry numbering no less than 19, and this took place early on in the proceedings, which allowed everyone to rush for the Bar immediately afterwards and stay there for the rest of the day! Except, that is, for the intrepid few who were competing in other races as well. On looking at the programme again, this seemed to be at least half the entry, so perhaps that last comment is only half right.

Anyway, following last year's hiatus on handicapping, when the presence of Aston Martins in the Lagonda Race (Gad, Sir!) caused a few headaches, this year there were only Lagondas to handicap. But what a motley selection they were! They ranged from Freda Roberts' 11.9 K Type, through David Johnson's 14/60 Saloon (very sedate!), several 2-litres, Rapiers in various states of tune, LG.45 Specials, Witt Wittridge's M.45 Special (recovered from its VSCC Silverstone conflagration), the 1935 Le Mans winner M.45R (driven by none other than Denis Jenkinson), David Hine's fine V.12 Le Mans Replica, to Maurice Leo's ferocious DB V.12 Le Mans. How would you like to handicap that lot? Someone did, and put Maurice Leo on scratch,

with Jon Abson driving Elliot Elder's single seater 1½-litre Rapier on 5 sec., Paul Morgan's and John Batt's single seater blown Rapiers on 55 sec. together with the LG.45 specials and David Hine's V.12. The 2-litres got two credit laps and the 11.9 and 14/60 Saloon got three credit laps. A difficult job!

Fun and games were apparent during the morning when it was seen that the "Woodbatt" Special Rapier was having starting difficulties. Various diagnoses were put forward, the most calamitous being a blown head gasket, but immediately practice had finished, the cause was found to be a stuck carburettor piston! (The piston is hidden from view behind a fine mesh gauze to prevent the ingress of stones to the blower). Consequently, as no practice had been done the car had to be scratched.

So to the race. The first two cars away were the 11.9 (not actually driven by Freda Roberts although the programme said it was) and David Johnson's 14/60 saloon, both with three credit laps plus 1m. 40s. As they crept under the "Motor" bridge, Denis Jenkinson in the M.45R left the line to be followed almost immediately by Allan Brown in the 2-litre special and Paul Morgan with the two-stage blown Eccles Replica Rapier. Then followed the rest of the field, a most unusual sight being the final four cars to leave, these being Maurice Leo's V.12, Mike Wilby in James Crocker's 1,230 c.c. Rapier and Daniel and Golding in their 2-litres. Where, other than in a race of this sort, would you see such diverse types of motor car leave the line together?!

The next few minutes were hectic, as Maurice Leo attempted to make up three laps in seven over the limit men. I have to confess to being completely lost as to the positioning of the cars as they circulated. Only the experts hunched over their lap charts and stop watches in the time-keeper's box could give any idea of this. I did note, however, that David Hine's V.12 was sounding and going as splendidly as it did at VSCC Silverstone and Paul Morgan's blown Rapier also sounded great, the revs. being almost astronomical as the car went under the "Motor" bridge. "Jenks" in the M.45R was going well until the car began to cough and splutter, possibly due to fuel starvation (regret I can't confirm this). I heard afterwards that Herb Schofield in the LG.45 Special had atrocious luck as he left the paddock to do his warming up lap. He picked up a piece of metal in one of his tyres which deflated

rather rapidly and caused him to withdraw.

The race ended in a positive flurry of motor cars which, when sorted out, gave Freda Roberts' 11.9 1st; Witt Wittridge 2nd in the M.45 Special and M. D. Tomlin in Buckton's LG.6 3rd. This latter was a fine effort as I understand this was Tomlin's first attempt at this sort of thing. The 11.9's handicap time was 10m. 4.2s. with Witttridge only a fraction behind with 10m. 4.4s. whilst Tomlin recorded 10m. 17.2s. Another gap and then came David Hine, 4th, in 10m. 29.2s. The full list is appended at the end of this account.

As mentioned earlier, several of the Lagondas were also entered in other races, notably the VSCC Members' Race, the All-Comers' 10 lap Handicap and the STP Challenge Trophy. James Crocker was due to drive Maurice Leo's V.12 in the Historic Sports Car Scratch Race, but was noted to retire off the line before the race started as the car was dropping oil.

Other calamities included the Morgan Rapier sticking in top gear—I understand this was due to the change gear pedal binding up, and the Elder Rapier which had fluctuating oil pressure thought to be due to a faulty pump gasket.

So another excellent BDC Silverstone came to an end, the weather having been marvellous and a splendid day's racing having been enjoyed by the big crowd. A special mention for Tomlin Russell-Floyd, Daniel and Golding who were appearing for the first time. Perhaps there will be more "first timers" next year to swell the numbers over the 20 mark!

TONY WOOD

Complete List of Lagonda Times

68.	Roberts	10m. 04.2s.
41.	Wittridge	10m. 04.4s.
56.	Tomlin	10m. 17.2s.
64.	Hine	10m. 29.2s.
117.	Russell-Floyd	10m. 50.4s.
54.	Morgan	10m. 50.8s.
99.	Wilby	10m. 52.6s.
61.	Hall	10m. 57.0s.
62.	Daniel	11m. 02.2s.
114.	Elliott	11m. 04.4s.
120.	Johnson	11m. 10.4s.
108.	Golding	11m. 21.2s.
109.	Leo	11m. 24.0s.
23.	Brown	11m. 35.0s.

Report from West London

THIS AREA HAS RECENTLY RECEIVED A WELCOME and attractive shot in the arm; if you read the Autumn Magazine there are no marks for guessing the circumstance.

The Lady in question not deterred by snowstorms in the South of France earlier in May has recently taken her own 3-litre, plus the 2-litres of Gaber and Morgan on the Paris—Deauville Rally. Already there is talk of the Paris—Nice in 1971. Well done Robbie, carry on with the good work.

Bits of car and advice continue to get swopped around in these parts; A Rapier has been given a new aluminium body by our friend Mr. Rickard of Messrs. Gilbert & Rickard. A sad owner is still searching for a 16/80 radiator. The 2-litre bonnet for disposal turned out to be off a low chassis car and unsuitable for the high chassis version. (You live and learn.) My recent activity with the big wooden spoon stirred up more than I had expected and my notes about 2-litre brake drums produced orders for some 38. As the orders came in so the old subconscious began to tick and the message eventually surfaced—where are you going to put that number of heavy chunks of metal? I had vaguely thought of the spare bedroom but now began to visualise them coming through the ceiling and landing on my head one by one. Regretfully orders had to go direct to the maker; I still have the address if anyone missed the bus.

In our last report a search was being made for glasses for the P100 headlamps, I can now report that we discovered a supply on our own doorstep. Word got around that the Automobilst Trailer would be at the Master Robert on the Great West Road one evening and quite a few turned up to inspect the wares. They have got some. We have had no success in finding a manufacturer of air-cushions, yours truly was used as a guinea-pig and for a week or so the driving seat of the Continental was cushioned by a plastic transparent container normally used to transport long life milk to odd parts of the world. I can report with feeling that it is not the answer.

The A.G.M. is still a recent memory and I have a large bee in my bonnet on this subject so what better to do than to let it out; mentioning that it is my personal opinion. A year or so ago I was

at the meeting where the Bentley Boys had their A.G.M. and much to my astonishment it was all over in about half-an-hour. Could we not do likewise by sending out the various reports beforehand with the statement of accounts, this way every one would see them. As it happened I got to the Anglers' late and spent the whole time looking at the cars and nattering but I could not help but notice that other members were doing the same thing. While at the Anglers' I had a long chat with the Designer, Mr. Feeley, I am still trying to get an article out of him on the DB 2.6. He has, however, another project in hand and is collecting the names of the Lagonda men with a view to fixing up meetings with the club members.

When I read Peter Densham's letter in the magazine it reminded me of the time, many years ago, when I did an idiotic thing and sold my Lagonda. I soon came to regret what I had done and was able to buy my way back again at the same price. Anyone doing the same thing now would find it an expensive business. Curiously I saw the car for the first time while on the Vintage Presteigne Rally when it pulled up and stopped right behind me.

To follow on with another coincidence; two years ago one of the local members went off to Australia by road and ever since his return I have been badgering him for the story with no success. Lo and behold, a few days ago Duckhams, the oil people, dropped an advert. through my letter box and what should it contain but the story written by the other member of the party. It has been sent off to Tony so if Duckham's don't come round your way you might see it in the magazine.

HARRY GOSTLING

Editor's note: The article to which Harry refers will appear in the Spring issue.

* * * *

WELL DONE JIM!

Congratulations to JAMES CROCKER on achieving second place in the *Motor Sport* Brooklands Memorial Trophy for 1970. James reached a total of 52 points during the season in his 1934 Rapier and pays tribute to his team of helpers, in particular PETER HUNT who prepares the car for racing.

The 4½-litre Lagonda Rapide

"The Motor" Rationalized Road Tests

A New Model of Outstanding Performance Proves Capable of 108 m.p.h. Road Holding and General Controllability Reach High Standards.

BUILT FOR REAL MOTORING AND DESIGNED TO appeal to those who enjoy driving for driving's sake, the new 4½-litre Lagonda Rapide is a grand car for the true enthusiast. Although based to some extent on the successful Lagonda racing models, it is quite tractable on the road, is by no means uncomfortable and has quite a mild exhaust note.

Setting out from the Lagonda works at Staines in heavy rain, we soon obtained an excellent impression of the qualities of this motor car, covering 50 miles in the first hour over roads swimming with water, and reaching Porlock (some 158 miles distant) only 3½ hours after leaving the factory. A run such as this, made without taking any chances or over-stepping the limit in restricted areas, is only possible when liveliness and a high cruising speed are matched by exceptional controllability and good braking.

Subsequently, in trials at Brooklands track, the car proved capable of covering the flying half-mile at 108.2 m.p.h., complete with wings and normal equipment and with the windscreen folded flat over the scuttle.

Acceleration figures were also obtained and are reproduced in our usual graphical form after allowing for the fact that the speedometer was slightly slow—an unusual kind of error. Although very high geared, the car will accelerate quite smoothly from 10 m.p.h. on top if the ignition timing is handled with discretion. On the third-gear ratio of 4.3 to 1 the car will "jump to it", reaching 70 m.p.h. from 10 m.p.h. in 20 secs., and will exceed 80 m.p.h. without overstepping the reasonable limit of 4,000 r.p.m.

First and second gears are also high and on these ratios the car will reach 50 m.p.h. from a standstill in 9.4 secs. These are exhilarating figures and enable every opportunity of getting ahead to be turned to advantage when negotiating heavy traffic.

Part of the charm of handling this car lies in the modest rate at which the engine is turning;

when a normal main-road cruising speed of 70-75 m.p.h. is maintained, on top gear, the big engine runs at only 2,700 r.p.m.: a rate of revs. which is reached at a mere 40-45 m.p.h. in many medium-sized cars.

Lively on Hills

Although high-geared, the Lagonda has a fine performance on hills. For example, a very quick climb was made on Porlock, using second gear throughout. Subsequent Tapley tests showed that the "steady speed" limits of gradient are as stated in the tabulated data. The Girling brakes proved very safe in their action on steep gradients, on corners and at high speeds.

Gear changing is quick and easy and the right-hand lever is conveniently located. Our only criticism here is that the gears are a trifle noisy.

The engine of the Rapide is the same, in all essentials, as that of the ordinary 4½-litre model, but has a higher compression ratio and develops 150 b.h.p. The specification includes two S.U. carburettors, a pair of Scintilla Vertex magnetos (serving 12 sparking plugs), push-rod-operated overhead valves and two efficiently designed exhaust manifolds which lead into a pair of external pipes enclosed by plated flexible tubing. The gear ratios are considerably higher, and are more closely spaced, than those of the standard car. Tecalemit automatic chassis lubrication is fitted.

The suspension is modified to some extent and gives great stability, with very firm control of springing movements, but owing to skilful design and the insulation provided by extremely comfortable upholstery, the car does not shake the occupants uncomfortably.

Light and Accurate Steering

The steering is first class, being light, fairly direct and extremely accurate. On a long main-road curve, or on the sharp bends encountered on by-roads, the car handles with a delightful ease and precision characteristic of Mr. W. O. Bentley's views as to how a real sports model should behave.

The four-seater body is substantially built and, although the width is somewhat curtailed as compared with the normal tourer, it is sufficient to enable the driver to handle the wheel freely with a passenger of normal size seated alongside. Each front-seat cushion measure 18 in. across and the rear-seat width is 40 in. Similarly the

headroom beneath the hood is adequate, the clearance above the seat cushions being a full 36 in. The spare wheel is enclosed in the streamlined tail.

The car has slim and very attractive lines set off by bold and sweeping front and rear wings. A detail worth mentioning is that the cut-away portion of each front wing enables one to stand close to the engine should it be necessary to change a plug or effect an adjustment. The fascia is mounted just below the slanting windscreen, where it is not obscured by an overhanging rail, so that all the instruments are clearly visible. Our speed tests were made with the screen folded flat, but the acceleration tests were carried out with the hood and all-weather side screens erected.

Summed up, this is a very attractive car which provides the enthusiast with an alternative to the normal 4½-litre Lagonda tourer. Incidentally, the makers list these two models at exactly the same price, so providing one of the rare instances in which additional expenditure is not involved in securing extra speed and performance.

TABULATED DATA—LAGONDA RAPIDE

CHASSIS DETAILS

Engine: Six cylinders; push-rod-operated overhead valves; 88.5 mm by 120.64 mm (4,453 c.c.); manually controlled dual ignition by magnetos; two carburettors. Rating, 29.13 h.p.; tax, £22 10s. per annum.

Gearbox: Four forward speeds; right-hand control; synchromesh for third and top. Ratios: 3.31, 4.30, 5.56 and 8.66 to 1.

PERFORMANCE

Speeds on Gears: Top, best timed speed for flying half-mile, 108.2 m.p.h.; third, 82 m.p.h.; second, 62 m.p.h. Minimum speed on top gear, 8-10 m.p.h.

Acceleration: From standstill through the gears—to 50 m.p.h., 9.4 secs.; to 60 m.p.h., 13.2 secs. Standing quarter-mile, 19 secs. (average speed, 47.3 m.p.h.).

Tapley Performance Figures: Maximum pull in lb. per ton on gradient—top, 230; third, 300; second, 380. Corresponding gradients climbable at a steady speed are 1 in 9.7; 1 in 7.5 and 1 in 5.9.

Petrol consumption: Driven hard, 16 m.p.g.

Braking Efficiencies: Measured by Tapley meter, using the pedal only—87 per cent from 30 m.p.h.; 72 per cent from 50 m.p.h. Corresponding stopping distances are—34 ft. and 116 ft.

DIMENSIONS, ETC.

Leading Measurements: Wheelbase, 10 ft. 9 in.; track, 4 ft. 9¾ in.; overall length, 15 ft. 4 in.; width, 5 ft. 8¼ in.

Wheels and Tyres: Wire wheels with knock-on caps. 18 in. by 6 in. Dunlop Fort "90" tyres.

Turning Circles: Left and right, 44 ft. diameter.

Weight: As tested, with two up, 32 cwt.; unladen, 29 cwt.

Price: £1,050.

Reprinted from 'The Motor' November 10th, 1936, by kind permission.

FOR SALE

Obtainable from the Secretary, at the prices shown:

Car Badges	35/- each
Lapel Badges	5/- "
Terylene Ties	17/6 "

Instruction Manuals:

16/80	45/- each
14/60 2-litre High Chassis	45/- "
2-litre Low Chassis	45/- "
3-litre & 3½-litre (one book)	On application
3½-litre	45/- "
Rapier	45/- "
LG.45	45/- "
LG.6	45/- "
M.45	45/- "
DB 2.6 lt. and 3 lt.	45/- "

Workshop Manual for DB 2.6 lt. and 3 lt. Not available

V.12 Instruction Manuals available to order through the Secretary or direct from Ivan Forshaw "Motor Trader" Service Data 72/6 "

Sheets for V.12 15/6 "

LG.45 Wiring Diagrams 4/- "

Photostat copies of original Sales Catalogues:

1926/27 2-litre	25/6 each
1929 2-litre High Chassis, all models, and 16/65 and 3-litre cars	37/6 "
1930 2-litre and 3-litre (one book)	47/6 "
1932 (2-litre and 3-litre (one book)	40/- "
1932/33 16/80 Special Six	16/- "
1934 16/80, 3-litre and M.45 4½-litre (one book)	35/- "
1936/37 Rapier	18/6 "
1937 LG.45 4½-litre	45/- "
1939 LG.6 and V.12 (one book)	60/- "

THE COMMITTEE WISH ALL MEMBERS
A HAPPY AND TROUBLE-FREE YEAR OF
MOTORING IN 1971.

A TRUE BUT NASTY STORY

—to be the first of a suggested new series, "My best Lagonda disaster".

IN THE SPRING OF 1958 I BOUGHT AS THE FAMILY car a 1936 LG.45 drophead coupe for £80, price to include new radiator block. This may have represented a record price/weight ratio, but the car had been standing in a London street all the winter, so its condition was unspeakable. However, after such complicated technical adjustments as connecting seven plug leads, charging the battery and adding petrol at the back, it started.

About six months later, several pints of Gunk, paint, rust remover and polishes and numerous cracked finger nails had restored it to a fairly presentable car, the engine had been tuned so that it would get to 50 m.p.h. in 13 seconds and the number of holes in the exhaust system had been reduced by Gun-Gum to the statutory one. Even the boiling had stopped.

My wife and I decided to take it to the Highlands and camp in it. (If you take the front seats out of an LG.45, substitute two lilos and rearrange the back seat you have an excellent six foot long double bed. What the Maxi has today, they were doing down at Staines in 1936!—though my wife, whose condition was distinctly interesting at the time, did complain about being on the steering wheel side.)

So the boot and the whole of the back of the car were filled with luggage, camping and cooking equipment and my wife and I filled more with hope than discretion set forth for Scotland one bright Saturday morning. We purred happily from Putney to Hendon and on to the A1, which was the road you took in those days. All was going well until I noticed a lack of power and the odd misfire. I thought it was probably overheating a bit, but not seriously as the temperature gauge had not operated. This was a special arrangement on this car. The dial was disconnected, and instead overheating was signalled by large quantities of very hot orange water being projected from the radiator cap with great accuracy over the occupants. As this had not happened I knew all must be well.

But it was not (you guessed?). Gradually the engine got rougher, then quite quickly died

altogether. It was just then it started to rain. We coasted to a stop and I got out and opened the bonnet. What a sight. The exhaust manifold was a dull red, and smoke from boiling oil was seeping through all the gaskets. The rain spat and crackled as it landed on the engine. The reason was obvious. The rearmost aluminium water transfer port had chosen this moment to corrode through and all the water had been efficiently pumped on to the road—some way back by the look of things. "It'll never go again", I said to my wife. "Try it on the handle", she said, ever practical. I did, but could not move it an inch. "What happens now?", we said.

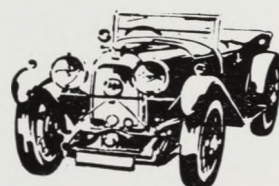
What happened was a very large lorry stops and there emerges a very large driver who offers help and to whom I tell the sad story. "If you can turn it, it'll be all right", he says, and grasping the handle in a huge hand, spins it round like a clockwork key. He then tows us into Biggleswade and finds us a garage with an open workshop—a few worked on Saturday afternoon in those evil times. Having completely restored our faith in humanity our lorry driver leaves us, and the garage patches the hole with steel wool and Loy plastic metal, which makes a very makeshift repair (nowadays Plastic Padding would have done the job properly in ten minutes).

In went the water and then came the acid test—would it start? After a bit of chewing at the starter the old thing throbbed to life again—somewhat indignantly we thought. We paid the bill of 12s. 6d. labour charge and were on our way once more, the engine a bit rough but still willing, arriving in Hull, where we were staying with friends, at 1.30 a.m. instead of tea time.

We got to the Highlands, the consumption of water about equalling that of petrol. We chugged our way back to London without further incident (except for a brake rod falling off outside a garage whose proprietor was conveniently already welding something), but the old thing didn't ever again go *quite* so well after its misfortune.

And the moral is that it takes more than total seizure to get a good Lagonda down.

MICHAEL VALENTINE





PARIS-DEAUVILLE—1970

Organised by the Club de L'Automobiliste

PARIS! I FORM AN IMAGE OF A CITY, A CITY OF extravagant charges, murderous traffic, devoid of a single decent signpost except to show you where you've just been, a city not for 2-litres.

The picture Robby Hewitt conjured up of the Paris-Deauville Rally certainly did not include such unsettling shadows.

Instead, the Glory of France began to form—wine and food, first-class accommodation, Paris birds, free petrol, vintage cars, more free petrol, a deluge of wine, the whole scene bathed in a rosy glow, as viewed through a Dubonnet and soda. 300 N.F.'s all in, for two people and a car. Yes, yes, the Paris of my dreams!

And Deauville, wasn't that where they train their racehorses, south east of Paris, or was it north west, somewhere near Bordeaux? Just follow the car in front.

Always easily led (last time to Australia) my cheque was despatched to M. Michard, Paris. My 2-litre was committed. I was up to my waist. Boat booking for two people and one short wheelbase Lagonda, Newhaven to Dieppe, return, and it closed over my head.

I am always dismayed at the prospect of the drive from London to the port of embarkation. It seemed inconceivable I couldn't quite place

Newhaven, let alone Deauville.

Friday, the 15th of October, 1970. The weather perfect. The trip down to Newhaven without incident. The tank was topped up at the quay garage. Passports were more concerned in describing the Lagonda with two birds in it that had passed that way three days earlier, and so failed to notice my Smoky Joe's stamp, six years old and undetected. Customs wanted to know how much English currency we had. They got the reply they deserved.

We rumbled into the boat. I'm convinced that the hold will one day be the scene of my serious accident; the blame shall fall on the bloke in the blue jersey, yes, that one there, encouraging that short-sighted clown in the Rover behind to close the distance between our cars to five thou. of an inch.

A flawless crossing; the slight internal murmurings were put down to the tinned G ss.

Twenty-one inch tyres rolled out onto French soil. Around us English faces adopted that superior set, to be held even when navigating the first French roundabout in a clockwise rotation.

We chose the N.15, passing north of Rouen, a suitable route for a 2-litre, quite out of place on an autoroute. The destination was Marines, 45 km. from Paris, just the right distance to allow us victorious entry into the City by 8 a.m. the following morning, Saturday. My 1951 Michelin

guide assured me of a Routier in Marines—a Routier with accommodation.

An exhilarating drive along straight French roads, and, good grief, we're in Marines! It's those damned kilometres, you know, they're shorter than miles. I can't stop now because of the blasted tanker on my spare wheel. Oh well, there must be other accommodation up in front. I'm *not* losing control. I don't want to end up in Pointoise tonight because it looks a bit too near Paris, and a lot of . . .

With magical abruptness we were in Pointoise. The light had failed, it was obviously the rush hour and it's petrifying. Where the hell have all the road signs gone, and look at the size of the truck behind us. I couldn't see anything for the wall of lorry in front, but there must be a filter otherwise all those cars wouldn't be taking a short cut along the pavement. Cold fright blew on my clammy brow.

We crept forward, acutely tuned to sounds of Lagonda bodywork being savaged; and there, a gendarme and a sign to Paris. Stick your arm out, Bill! Never mind, we're round now. The fool overtaking on the inside realised the bridge parapet was too narrow for his Peugeot, and fell in behind. An impression of unbelievable chaos amongst the oncoming traffic, and we were off out Pointoise.

Physically exhausted by now, I had made no effort to align the P.100's, and a wary application brought an insane reaction from every oncoming vehicle. Steering into the forecourt of a Peugeot agent, the lamps were moved over, and my only yellow bulb was inserted into our offside lamp.

Off we went in the direction of Versailles. VERSAILLES! How the hell did we get on that road? Let's try for St. Germain-en-Laye. We must get some food and rest tonight, for the Friday night excursion was not included in the Rally organisation. Paris lay just down the road, and I couldn't face the city in the dark.

We stayed in 'L'Ermitage des Loges', in St. Germain-en-Laye. To my peasant soul extravagant, but at least safe for the 2-litre. I opened my mouth to protest, but after all, it was only for one night.

I was inside, around me the atmosphere of soft lights, a blazing log fire, discreet waiters, and the sensual smell of good food. We dumped our tatty luggage, washed, changed and wandered nonchalantly into the dining room. (Thank God the waiters speak English. At least we know what we

are about to receive.)

A dance was in progress at the back of the hotel, and this, at last, was France. A sweet fluid accordion played "Under the Bridges of Paris", wonderful, romantic, drowsy France. Snapping awake a split second before my face fell into "L'ananas au Kirsch", it was obviously time for bed.

At six o'clock the next morning it was dark, and shockingly cold. Our bill had been settled the previous night, for no one could be expected to desert bed at such an hour, Monsieur, and Dejeuner, Petite or otherwise, C'est Impossible. Full of foreboding and nothing else, I drove a moisturised 2-litre off into the cold dawn, and Paris.

It was so exquisitely simple. Very little traffic and the usual dearth of signs. An excursion up a one-way street, narrowly escaping death in the process, and navigating visually by the top of the Eiffel Tower, we were at the Arc de Triomphe. Round L'Etoile and down the Champs Elysées, and instinct took over. A right turn, over the Pont Alexandre III and into Les Invalides gardens, and we pulled up in good time for the start of the Paris-Deauville Rally.

8 a.m. The cars came gathering in. A f.w.d. Tracta, Amilcar, Bugatti, Rolland Pilain, Ford, Lorraine Dietrich, Lagonda, Lancia, Citroen, Delahaye. Now we had a Lagonda team, a 3-litre and two 2-litres. More cars arriving each moment. Two gendarmes on B.M.W.'s, our escort, gave an official air to the gathering. Paris breathed around us, mellow in the misty sunlight. Each driver collected a bulky envelope, containing tickets for free petrol, tickets for food and accommodation, a programme of entries and events, a route plan, a map of Deauville, a lapel badge, and a rally plate to be fixed to the front of the car.

8.30 a.m. Petrol by courtesy of Total. Each car drove around to the underground garage, and tanks were topped up. On emerging, a topless model displayed herself briefly in front of the 2-litre to be photographed. The purpose of this escaping me.

Now the Rally was underway, a blast of two-tone horns from the leading B.M.W., and the cars began to string out. Back we went over the Pont Alexandre III left into the Champs Elysées, deserted on the Saturday morning. The police encouraged us through the traffic lights, red or green, vintage cars choosing their own routes

around Parisian vehicles, impotent to complain. A brief screech of rubber, a metallic crunch as the D.S. struck the back of the V.W. along side. Of course, he should have been looking where he was going, but I felt sympathy for the D.S., for we were all guilty.

I kept the 2-litre behind the little clinker-built Amilcar in front, our friendly guide out of Paris. Roland was behind me, Robby, in pursuit of a Bugatti, disappearing out of sight.

The Arc de Triomphe loomed up in front, and then we plunged down the underpass, surfaced, and there was the Arc in the mirror, dwindling. I felt cheated.

Then the 2-litre began to run a temperature, 85° . . . 90° . . . we halted in traffic . . . 95°. A little too high, so I pulled into an adjacent garage and opened the restrictor valve to the top tank. Roland, Amilcar, had all disappeared when we rejoined the traffic. Where the hell do we go? There's a roundabout coming up, traffic lights everywhere, gendarmes waving us through, to the left, to the left. I caught a glimpse of the Amilcar and Roland on the right, how about that, *they've* gone wrong. We had a breather, my car's temperature falling, while they caught us up.

It seemed all Paris was being rebuilt as we drove under soaring concrete spans, through jungles of columns, weaving through diversions. I briefly glimpsed a 3-litre pursuing a Bugatti.

Paris thinned out around us, and we were on our way to Evreux. The road straightened before us, and with a grateful wave we passed the Amilcar, Roland already ahead.

We cruised comfortably on at 50-55 m.p.h. through the crisp morning air, the sunshine enhancing the countryside around us. A downhill slope, a long straight, and in front sun reflecting from vintage cars lined up on our side of the road.

A rattle of gravel, dust, and we joined the gang. Into the warmth of the bar opposite; smell the air rich with Gauloise and coffee. Noses were red, time for Cafe Cognac. The patron, overwhelmed slightly by the custom, looked for payment while we looked for our coffees. Then back to the cars, and the next stretch of the trip.

At no time were we expected to look for clues, or, indeed, navigate in any way other than head gradually for Deauville, via Evreux. Pointless? Not a bit; time to absorb the atmosphere of the towns and villages we passed through, the excited children, the amused adults. Halted at traffic lights, we were professionally scrutinised by

mechanics from nearby garages. *Ah, fantastique!*

The three Lagondas settled down to cruising around 60 m.p.h. As Robby overtook a truck in front I saw her stoplights shine, the truck swept out, Roland kept going, I braked and pulled in, expecting trouble. We backed towards Robby's car as while a small peasant ran towards us under the trees. Robby must have run over his goat. Good grief, it's Denis Jenkinson in plastic boots, looking delighted. A coincidence there should be a bar opposite once more, but we all needed that drink!

Look, we've got six minutes to do twelve kilometres. Down the road there were the cars lined up by the Aeroclub, the gendarmes cruising past the column on their B.M.W.'s, urging us to all start moving. And so we drove into Evreux for lunch, the cars left in the railway station yard, lined up and cooling down. First an aperitif, then food, glorious food: pate, steak, salad, wine, dessert, more wine, then back to the cars for it's Deauville this afternoon, *mes enfants*.

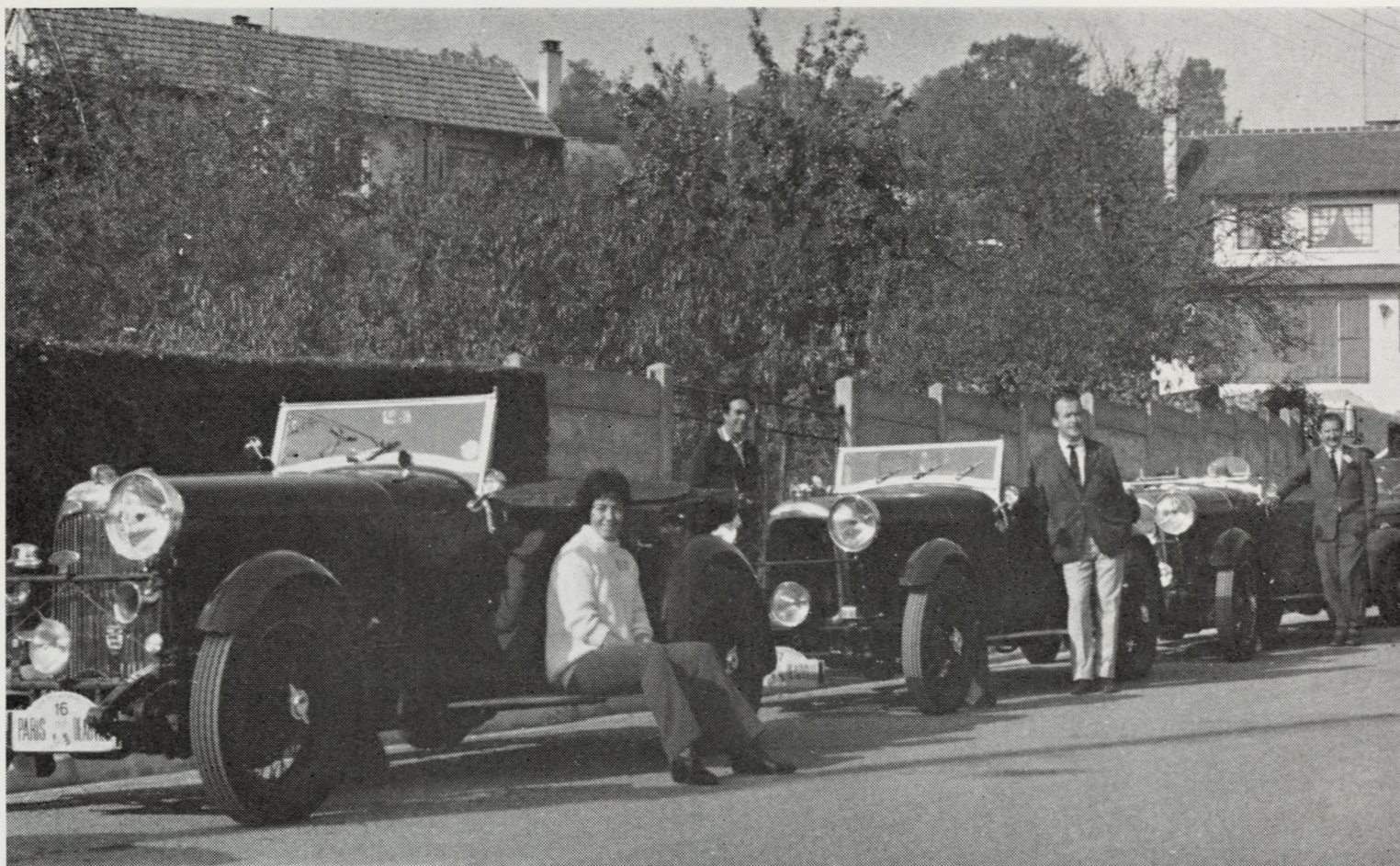
We gathered speed on the last part of the Paris-Deauville, out of Evreux, and wow, the gendarmes just steered us to the left in time. Good job there was nothing behind, they'd have nicked me if they hadn't been on our side.

Now we were off the main road, driving through the countryside, the road running arrow straight ahead. M. Ketterer in his Lancia Lambda overtook us, his daughter photographing us in the process. We were invited to pass for more, a small panic to avoid an oncoming car, and we motor on.

Up in front a suggestion of figures in the road, cars on the side, and we pulled into the forecourt of a delightful thatched Bar-Restaurant. Here was a wonderful setting for vintage cars, jigsawed into the tiny area, Lagondas, Bugatti, Amilcar, De-Dion, a Rolls over at the back; and what colour in the sunlight. Madame stood in the doorway, beaming. More cars were lured in, the Lambda, Lorraine Dietrich, and the instigator? Mlle. Lagonda, of course. I hope Robby can pinpoint this bar for future reference.

Rather reluctantly, I feel, we set off for the conclusion.

Deauville! The whole population turned out to welcome the cars, and the procession gradually concertinered between two walls of enthusiasm. We made small progress down to the Summer Casino (ferme) and gave up, switched off and left the car to join the happy crowd. The pretty girl



The Lagonda Team rest between bars

in the Jacky Coogan cap, unable to extricate her V.W. from the press behind, also gave up.

M. Michard managed to get us moving on to the Total garage and our last free petrol. Then back to the covered Market, and the cars were left there, safely guarded for the night.

We made our way to the Hotel Normandy, Mlle. Michard kindly taking our luggage on to the hotel in her 1930 C4F Citroen tourer. Now we stepped into the foyer of a luxury hotel, somewhat shabby figures under the chandeliers. Our rooms were allocated by an understanding reception, and we took the lift to oppressive comfort and hot baths. The windows were opened to allow cool air to flow in from the sea, sombre in the twilight.

The Gala Dinner began at eight sharp that night, for the Mayor would address us. No problem there, and at ten minutes to eight we wandered downstairs and into a deserted foyer . . . ? A ghastly suspicion entered my mind. An enquiry confirmed that the dinner Monsieur, was over at the Salle des Fetes, not at the Hotel as in previous years. This will teach me to read the flaming Rally notes, even if they're in Chinese. We've got five minutes to make it in, where ever it is.

Of course, the tickets had been left in the rooms, and this meant moving at an indecent speed up to the third floor and down again. I braked sharply, and sauntered through reception. My precarious veneer of elegance was beginning to fade, perspiration appearing. Outside we broke into a lumbering trot, beginning to look for targets for our irritation. The end of a perfect day. I tried to shut from my mind the moment of entry into the seated gathering, the Mayor pausing in mid-sentence. Three panting figures scaled the steps of the Salle des Fetes, and entered a foyer full of chattering elegant people. On God, it *can't* be the wrong place. It was at first difficult to identify these people with vintage cars. Where the hell did he carry that dinner suit in the Amilcar? In the tool box? But damn it, we weren't too obviously flustered, and the insularity of our language gave us an air of mystery, or so I liked to think. We entered the hall, and managed to get seats on one table, Harriette and Roland, Brenda, Bill and myself, no mutilated French necessary.

And so began another enjoyable meal, earlier fears unfounded. Wine appeared, relaxation settled over us, rich food, more wine, amusing conversation, champagne, and finally . . .

Calvados. At this point, disaster was imminent I imagine that Calvados has been the downfall of more than one gourmet, but we emerged intact from that joyous evening into the chill air outside with its sobering influence. A detour was made to the covered Market, just to make sure the cars were all still there. The ladies captivated the rightly suspicious guard and after one last expensive nightcap back at the hotel (generously provided by a dismayed Roland) we all retired to our boudoirs.

I admit to being rather difficult to start the following morning, Sunday. All those intending to participate in the Cote du Golf Concours de regularite were expected to be on parade at 0900 hours. At 0800 hours I galloped blearily down to the Market to find all the cars intact and not a soul in sight. I strolled back to the hotel appearing to return from a sinstitutional.

Breakfast was ordered and large cups of black coffee began to dispel the old not-quite-there feeling. Once more downstairs, and now others were appearing. I imagined that Robby muttered something about "a bloody hill-climb on a cold engine". Back to the Market, and a somewhat reluctant-to-fire Lagonda. It had been a cold night, indeed.

Driving back to the hotel, the luggage was stowed into the 2-litre, and we set off for the hill climb. This proved to be a winding climb up to the Hotel du Golf, laughable to imagine a 2-litre accelerating up through those bends. It would take courage to attempt a change out of first. Jenks was down the bottom of the hill as we arrived and suggested a dummy run before they closed the road. What? This professional jargon was outside my field. We seemed to have no alternative but to go up, so the 2-litre, with a complement of three, plus luggage began a laborious ascent. I found no humour in that climb. We crawled past a cluster of confident competitors, with first gear whining, and lumbered miserably through the bends, grateful to reach the top at last out of earshot to those below. The fact that the hood was erected spared my blushes. What folly! Going down again it was only too obvious the type of gradient suited to a 2-litre.

Joining the gathering, to my relief it was not required to race up, nor necessary to return to the very bottom of the hill. It was also obvious that I could not escape participation in the event. Jenks was most comforting; it *wasn't* a speed

event, and offering to accompany me. *Me*. Shades of a Mille Miglia! Simple. You did one climb, timed, and the second run you duplicated your time. Easy. Take an hour if you like (that was quite possible.) It's old history now. In spite of forgetting to reliease the handbrake Robby got within three-tenths of a second of her first ascent; of course, Jenks' stop watch was invaluable. The superlative crew behind were five seconds out.

All the cars returned to the Town Hall in Deauville for refreshments and prizegiving. A picturesque setting, and much excitement as the names were called. Robby collected armfuls of booze; such sensible prizes.

Lunch was next on the agenda, and the cars formed into procession for the drive to Villeville, and the Repas Regional at the Manoir du Grand Bec, situated high overlooking the sea. The meal was, of course, superb; cider being drunk with it. Thoroughly enjoyable and the sparkling sea far below, viewed through the window, gave the impression of feasting in an airship anchored above the Normandy coast. The tables cleared, M. Michard gave a short speech, thanking the English cars for their participation in the Rally, and Robby having travelled furthest to take part, and being essentially feminine, was presented with yet another trophy, this time unconsumable; a Marchal medallion. How well our French friends entertained us.

From Villeville we drove back to Pont L'Eveque and the Calvados distillery of Pere Magloire, famous too for cheese manufactured here. Everyone crowded unbelievably into one very warm room and champagne and canapes were served. This was positively the last celebration of the Rally, and my concern now was to ensure that my passengers and the car were safely aboard the ferry the next day, Monday, bound for Newhaven. We needed accommodation that Sunday night, and Jenks suggested the Hotel of Jacky Pichon at Cleres, a nice three-quarter hour run from Dieppe. Not too much effort to get there that night, our future was secure, Robby supplying the map to enable our route to be as direct as possible.

The last celebration of the Rally, did I say? A little premature, as usual. We had thanked M. Michard for the excellent organisation of this most enjoyable Rally, and I had almost promised to be present at the start of the Paris-Nice next May. I had settled myself in the 2-litre, when Brenda and Bill came galloping up to shout the

ominous news of an invitation for a quick drink, only eight kilometres down the road.

I have never been in complete control of my own car, I thought. Outnumbered two to one, my protestations about the trip in front of us were lost in the unanimous acceptance. Robby and Jenks listened in disbelief. A third passenger joined us, our guide. GUIDE. Where the hell were we going.

With waving arms we swept out onto the road and it was only too obvious our destination lay in the totally opposite direction to Cleres. Sufficient now to say those eight kilometres were the longest I have ever covered. We were received graciously by the charming French family at our destination, entertained with whisky and food, joined later by M. Michard and his daughter. Over two hours later the gathering began to disperse. Farewell once more to our friends, and we were, at last, on the road to Cleres.

The rally story has been told, unprofessionally I am afraid, and for which I tender my apologies. The last stage of the tale I shall abbreviate.

Of the drive in the dark and the mist, thanks to my fun loving passengers, now both blissfully asleep; the expensive crossing of the Tanqerville bridge. The missed turnings in the misty night, and the final triumphal entry into Cleres, only to discover the hotel in darkness; the night spent in the car after all. Of waking from an uneasy sleep, for the sixteenth time, once more back in the V.W. and India, hyenas and monkeys clamouring in the night. But it was only the Zoological Gardens of Cleres after all. The appalling noise of the church bell which finally made sleep impossible.

Breakfast in the Hotel Cheval Noir (I was determined to enter Jacky's establishment; the too shorter time spent in M. Pichon's museum of veteran and vintage cars, beautifully restored. There will be a further visit to this. Jacky Pichon, devastated that we spent the night *outside* his hotel, gave us a bottle of Cognac, God bless him.) Of the ghastly drive to Dieppe in torrential rain, the boat crossing in mountainous seas, the sickness on board to which, thanks once more to tinned G . . . ss, I participated.

Of the arrival at Newhaven, and the trip back to Chiswick in the dark with my headlamps, off course, accurately and intensely aimed onto the windscreen of every oncoming car.

M. GABER

* * *

The Restoration of JBG492

PART 7

I WILL NOT BORE MY READERS WITH A DESCRIPTION of assembling the off-side cylinder head which is exactly the same as the near-side. This once in place I made two new cross connecting pipes for the hot spots in stainless tube, the old ones being corroded nearly through. Next new ignition harness tubes were made from 1 in. bore ebonite tube and the H.T. leads were connected up.

With the valve timing now correct I could replace the front timing cover followed by the water pump. Fitting this pump needs careful attention to fit and clearances and should be put together without jointing compound as a dummy run before final assembly if, as in my case, any machining has been done to clean up the casing. There are shims between the casing and the timing cover and one should aim to get about .010 in. clearance between the casing and the back of the impeller by putting the impeller onto its shaft and moving the casing back and forth on its studs with a feeler gauge behind it until the desired clearance is obtained. All is then dismantled, the correct shimming inserted and finally put together. A depth gauge measurement from the front of the casing to the impeller when compared with a similar measurement on the water intake cover will ascertain the front clearances of the impeller and suitable machining can adjust this again to about .010 in. if it is necessary.

I left the fan pulley off the end of the crankshaft until the engine was installed for fear of damaging it when dropping the engine into place.

Elliott Elder had impressed upon me the absolute necessity of lining up the engine and gearbox before putting in the shaft that runs through the two. I therefore turned up a disc with a concentric peg on it which was a push fit into the hole in the end of the clutch shaft. I then turned the engine with a dial test indicator first on the face of the disc and then on its periphery to check that it was true with the clutch shaft. The engine is adjustable up and down with shims under the back bearers and so is the gearbox but the gearbox fixing-bolt holes in the frame had obviously been elongated originally to line it up sideways. I dropped the engine into place with

no shims and fixed the dial test indicator onto a rod bolted into one of the three holes in the gearbox spider. By rotating the gearbox shaft readings could be obtained both on the face and periphery of the test disc. Only a half turn is possible but this is quite sufficient. By jacking the engine up and shuffling the gearbox about I eventually reached a point where the maximum error was .005 in. At this I bolted the gearbox rigidly in place, measured the shims necessary for the engine, lifted the engine out, fitted the Hardy discs and finally lowered the engine into place complete with its coupling shaft. All a most patience-straining procedure, but if Elliot says it is necessary then I am sure that it must be.

The throttle linkage coupling together the four carburettors is somewhat crowded together but I managed to replace the old worn out ball joints with Rose spherical aircraft control rod ends and made a nice system free from any backlash. Luckily, having solenoid operated starting carburettors there is not a similar link-work for the jets. I noticed on Lord O'Neil's Le Mans car that they fitted an intricate but very light system to flood all four float chambers from a dashboard control.

At this point I tipped three gallons of oil into the sump and was gratified to see the float indicator worked. About a week later I was infuriated to see a very small pool of oil on the floor. The sump drain tap was leaking and as this necessitates taking off the sump to do anything about it I am just giving the tap regular exercise in the hope that it may cure itself.

On stripping the fan I found that the packed-for-life roller bearings were perfect and so I put them back for another 30 years. It seemed as though I had done as much as I could to the engine for the time being and so I stripped the steering column. It is a Marles cam and roller of standard design and seemed in excellent condition. I took the steering wheel to Excelloid Limited of Lichfield who renewed the celluloid covering at a very modest charge. As I have dispensed with the ride control there was no point in leaving the lever for it and I filled in the quadrant with a piece of ebonite and turned the throttle control to face vertically downwards in the centre of the wheel, thus restoring the symmetry. The drag link ball ends were renewed as a matter of safety but I am extremely puzzled that both ends of the rod are screwed left hand. Perhaps the Works found that they had an excess stock of left hand

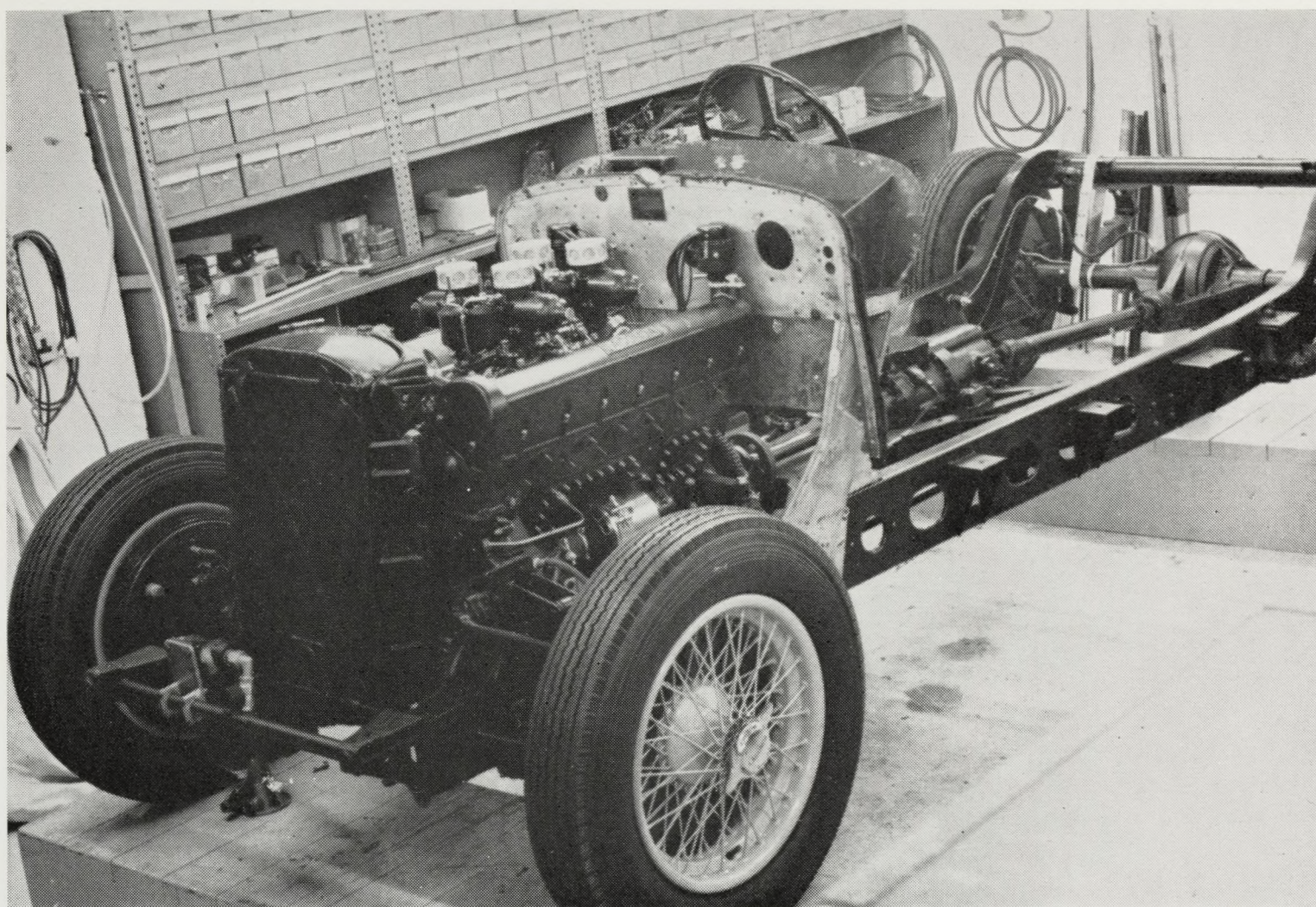
threaded ball ends and did this to reduce the stock. The steering column outer tube was stove enamelled, a new seal obtained for the drop arm shaft and I was ready to assemble. It is very important to get the drop arm onto the right spline as once on the car this cannot be removed. Luckily I had marked the spline before taking off the drop arm. I replaced the felt seal in the clamp for the control tube which passes through the steering box with an 'O' ring of suitable section and then fitted the whole assembly onto the chassis. I had taken a note of the column rake before dismantling and was therefore able to set the drag link length correctly to have two spokes of the wheel horizontal with the road wheels in the straight ahead position.

Next the brake and clutch pedal assembly was attended to. All in very good order except the pedal rubbers. As I could not imagine these being obtainable I made complete new pedal pads out of dural slab with a pattern milled into their working surfaces which I must prefer to rubber in any case as they are less slippery in wet weather. Lockheed supplied me with a reconditioned duplex master cylinder which was not fitted and the necessary pipework run round the chassis in Bundy tube.

At about this time I was lucky enough to have a ride in a V.12 'E' type Jaguar which will soon be the first British V.12 on the market since the Lagonda. I must resist the temptation to elaborate on this experience except to say that it will make a complete nonsense of buying one of those expensive Italian machines.

Reverting to my V.12, the hand brake system was the next job on the list. There was absolutely no wear in any part of this and having done the necessary cleaning and fitting the hydraulic reservoir was filled and the braking system was then complete. The built-in adjustment for the back brakes mounted on the hand brake lever and working through a compensation shaft is much appreciated and avoids grovelling under the back of the car to take up the brakes.

One of the modifications that I had allowed myself was to fit a Vokes full flow oil filter. I spent some time trying to locate this article so that it did not spoil the original appearance of the engine and was at the same time reasonably accessible. I eventually decided that the only solution was to have it lying horizontally under the dynamo and mounted on the frame side member. However, having had the radiator



Chassis so far with unrestored bulkhead temporarily in place

recored and offering it up to see if it still fitted I suddenly realised that on my particular car there is a great gap between the front of the radiator and the actual cowling. This means that there is adequate space to fit the filter between the radiator and the cowling. Here it is easily accessible and not visible when the bonnet is opened. Two $\frac{5}{8}$ in. bore flexible pipes connect the engine to the new filter.

I now felt that the time had come to tackle the bulkhead assembly. This is standard V.12 and originally had the batteries mounted in one of the top compartments. I have learnt from previous owners that whereas normal V.12's get fairly hot inside after a long run, my particular car is like a furnace. In an attempt to cure this someone had removed the batteries to positions either side of the propellor shaft and installed a large electric blower in the original battery compartment. This was fed with air by a 5 in. diameter pipe from in front of the radiator and blew into the cockpit. As the feed pipe ran above one exhaust manifold and was made of

very thin aluminium I would guess that the air wasn't very cool by the time it reached the cockpit and in any case the whole affair was very unsightly so I have got to think of some better way of insulating myself. So far I have stripped and roughly cleaned the pieces of the bulkhead and put them temporary in position to see if any ideas occur to me. I would like to put the batteries back in their old position where they are easy to service. The great snag is that the front of the battery box is within $\frac{1}{4}$ in. of the near-side distributor so that obviously no real thickness of insulation can be put on this side. I am toying with the idea of an air filled cavity wall bulkhead and front floor boards with the possibility of air being pushed into the cavity at the top and exhausting underneath the car but having no wind tunnel at my disposal to find the high pressure points on this particular body shape I think that we shall end up with glass fibre or some such material.

BRIAN MORGAN

JOTTINGS FROM SCOTLAND

SOME TIME HAS ELAPSED SINCE LAST WE APPEARED in print, but we are free again, apart from that irritating man from the parole board that is.

Sad to relate Scottish members did not figure in the Border Rally prize list—good luck Boylan—good old Iain Macdonald always, or almost always, contrives to arrange good weather in fact, he almost beats Harry Gostling at this, it must be something to do with the night Iain seemed to have mislaid his LG.45 Tourer but managed to bring it along—just to make us all envious I suppose—to a combined driving test held at Cornhill in October. In spite of the time of year a good turn out consisted of a goodly—it was a Sunday—number of vintage cars of which a high proportion were for sale. In spite of having read the regulations very carefully and thus driving over markers (no penalties) instead of into markers (many penalties) Iain failed to win, however, another McDonald, John, managed to win, driving a post-vintage invalid carriage. Second was R. G. Collins with a very pretty Fiat Ballila and third was Hamish Davidson with a Hillman Super Minx or some such device. Hamish has a nice post war 3-litre which he bought in kit form, all the important pieces being in sacks—makes a change from tea boxes but times change, some tea comes in bags—and which he proceeded to screw together quite well, Hamish displays a touching faith in both his own workmanship and Lagonda's by driving around without any tools other than a jack and a wheel key. Anyway Hamish is now engaged in a body overhaul of the 3-litre that is.

Elliot Elder continues to do well, although dogged by some bits of bad luck, he has acquired a new 'bus and re-acquired BLA 6 his first Lagonda Rapier, Elliot says it's quite amusing to come across temporary repairs carried out ten years ago, so does the writer who having carried out temporary repairs to temporary repairs can raise a laugh by merely lifting the engine bonnet.

In addition to all the work which Elliot has with his own cars he has extended his activity to tuning Lord Doune's V.12, this V.12 normally lives at Lord Doune's splendid museum near Callendar which houses many splendid cars, any ordinary mortal might remain content with V.12 but he has exotic things like pairs of Hispano-

Suiza's. Seriously folks, this museum really is worth a visit.

George Done finishes his accident repairs and then finds out that his differential isn't all that it could be, however, after a great deal of work and an even greater amount of ingenuity George has his 2-litre rolling again, not by courtesy of E.N.V. but Solihull. I know that George won't thank me for this mention of his solution to axle troubles, he at present drives the car with his fingers crossed, a copy of the rescue squad list in his tool box and Susan noting the position of the last A.A. box. We have more faith in George's work than the A.A. who have their wires crossed.

The last copy of the *Readers Digest Supplement* complains that modern cars rust away too quickly, goodness some of them don't, a local worthy was heard to define a 1952 Austin A40 as vintage.

We haven't seen Hamish Gunn for too long and so 2-litre cars running in Scotland are only the aforementioned Done saloon and Robin Brownlie's tourer. Recently fitted with twin S.U in place of single, Robin claims to notice a difference—in consumption—and, stop press. A recent emigre Peter Thomson.

Geoff Squires carries out extensive repairs to his 4½ and the writer fits flashers to the 16/80 (double filament bulbs in the side lamps) and recommends the idea.

On a books read basis *Battle Over Britain* by Francis K. Mason has on page 249 a 16/80 or 3-litre, and *Armoured Crusader* by Kenneth Macksey which is the autobiography of Brigadier Hobart refers to Hobart's penchant for fast runs round his area command in a high speed saloon, as Hobart's brigade included 'Funnies' like the crocodile tank courtesy of Lagonda it might just be that his fast saloon was a V.12. Does anyone know?

At this time of year it seems even more fitting to wish all and sundry the best of everything for 1971. Incidentally I make it thirteen large whiskies, and that reminds me that we haven't seen Alex Dick for a long time although we did read a splendid letter he wrote to *Car* magazine, so we should say fourteen large whiskies to look forward to at the monthly meeting at The Commodore Hotel, Marine Drive, Edinburgh, first Thursday in the month—see you there.

Long may your gears change.

J. MCKELLAR-CAIRNS

KING FOR A DAY

by Peter Densham

THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING AT STAINES on the 27th September will know the remarkable chain of events which led to my driving for a day Sir David Brown's V.8 Lagonda; the same car that was on display at The Anglers during the A.G.M.

Last September's Birmingham Festival of Motoring ended with a grand cavalcade of motor cars through streets cordoned off by police and lined by thousands of spectators. The Festival had been a slow starter but by now, the 14th day, everyone even remotely connected with motoring had climbed on the band wagon. It really was a magnificent occasion with the police turning a deaf ear to such things as open exhausts and full-blooded GP cars mingling with ordinary city traffic. And there in the middle of it all was your Midland secretary gazing awestruck at the row of switches and dials that confronts the driver of the one and only V.8 Lagonda.

We were parked in a side street awaiting the signal to go. All round us were the sounds usually associated with Silverstone: at last the moment came and I turned the ignition key. There was a distant whirring, rather like a sewing machine, to be replaced after quite a long time by a muted roar as the fuel-injected V.8 engine started up. Various warning lights on the dash ceased to glow and the rev. counter needle quivered.

With the shift lever in D for drive I rested my foot on the accelerator and released the hand-brake (another light went out) and the car glided forward. I slid my foot across to the brake pedal and the car stopped. For the next ten miles that was all I had to do: it was ludicrously easy and I had plenty of time to wave to the Lord Mayor and look hopefully for friends on the pavements.

We made two circuits of the City and then headed out of town where the Aston Martin Lagonda contingent were to grace a garden fete near Stratford upon Avon. The Lagonda is a very big car but was no trouble at all in suburban traffic, particularly as other cars simply melted away from it. I suffered at first from a bad attack of noblesse oblige. It was so easy to stop and let others come out of side streets. So pleasant

to bow slightly to their amazed forelock touching and so effortless to regain 40 m.p.h. in a matter of seconds.

Not so for the poor little A40 behind me; madly stamping on his brakes and then wildly stirring at his gearbox and no forelock touching in his direction.

The last lamp-post was soon left behind and the Lagonda went faster and faster and faster. There was still no need to drive it, one felt insulated. The gearbox was working away somewhere, the engine was far too complex to bear a moment's thought and as the rev. counter needle swung badly it was impossible to tell what was going on—but why worry?

We came to an island much faster than I meant. On the exit side I wasn't sure where the front wheels were pointing; there is a drain cover which normally I can feel and which tells me exactly where I am. The Lagonda suspension ironed this out completely and I suppose that this was what confused me momentarily.

We passed strings of Saturday motorists, they simply fell back and I expected to see them fluttering like leaves in our wake. At one point the road narrowed though continuing dead straight. In overtaking five or six cars we reached 70 m.p.h. at which point we were very near the right-hand gutter where the camber was steep and the surface bad. I would prefer to have felt all this through the steering wheel but did not.

On the one occasion when I needed to kick-down to get out of trouble there was a sickening three-seconds pause during which Sir David's face appeared clearly before me. Moreover, when the drama was over and we were skimming along at some speed I had no idea which gear we were in and there was no steadying influence from the engine. Of course the experienced driver would have been 'holding' in second and I am sure that by doing so the performance of the car might be fantastic. It was quite definitely not for me to experiment on this occasion and I can only say that, driven entirely automatic, the overtaking performance between 40 and 70 is far from positive.

The garden party was something of a failure. Cold rain started to fall and few of us were properly clad, we were glad when it was time to depart. How shall I describe the sheer luxury of that brief forty-mile homeward journey? Say what you will of the red plush upholstery. It is magnificent to sit upon, warm and comforting

and superbly non-slip. No need for seat belts to hold you in place. The heater, once I had mastered the several controls, puffed warm air about us in the most refined manner while the radio filled the car with perfectly modulated sound. Small wonder that I lost the will to win and contentedly followed the car in front.

I parked the car outside the show-rooms in Perry Barr and sadly returned the keys. To describe the car in one sentence: 'a gorgeous car to be driven in!' And to end my tale I would like to say to Roy Bamford, Sales Director of Aston Martin Lagonda, thank you for allowing me to drive the car and for affording me one of the greatest motoring experiences of my life.

GARDA VETERAN RAID

HAVING BEEN FOILED LAST YEAR BY THE WHIMS OF the organisers of the Sardinian Rally (our non-entry was only confirmed on our arrival at the start at Genoa Docks) it was with some trepidation that I entered the Crossley for the Garda Veteran Raid in September, having received advance notification from the Rally Organizers. The Italian Lakes in late September sounded too good to miss.

Preparation and pipe-dreaming about such ventures is always thrilling, but just what to do to the car is always a problem. The answer, as long as the car is functioning properly in the first place, which it was, is to do no more than the normal service—oil changes, adjustments, etc. But one has to strike a healthy balance between letting sleeping dogs lie, and catching a stitch in time. After fiddling about I decided that the car was always ready for such a venture anyhow (being a Crossley), and that I would take the minimum of essential spares (bulbs, insulating tape, gaskets, etc.) and a spare magneto. I duly set off from Harrogate, to spend the weekend at home, attend the Lost Causes Rally at Beaulieu, and collect my navigator/passenger. This first part of the journey was 300 odd miles—three times the total length of the Raid!

I suppose Northern France is always so boring because one always wants to be at the other end. There is some lovely country there too . . . The Crossley is rather a light car, or was before I loaded it to the gunwales with a 14-stone passenger, camping gear and rations, and with narrow 21 in. tyres control of the car on pave, or pave

covered with tar was distinctly approximate, and it was a relief to arrive for our third night at a beautiful camp site at Raron in the Rhone Valley, surrounded by rosy apple trees, wasps, and for some reason the Swiss Army on an Air Defence Exercise!

The following day brought us the Simplon Pass and Italy. In perfect weather, 6,000 odd feet worth of straight cut, Crossley gears echoed from crag to crag, with little effort except that the cooling system didn't much like grinding up the steepest part of the pass behind a cement lorry. This is an excellent road, except where it isn't, and there 'they' are constructing covered ways, presumably as protection against avalanches. We stopped at the top for a coffee, and once more met the rest of the Swiss Army on their Air Defence Exercise. Apart from the noises of battle, the silence was over-powering and the air still and keen. The descent called for discretion as the Crossley's new brake cables still seemed to be stretching!

There were two possible start points for the Rally; Verona and Brescia. Having chosen the latter we decided to relax for a day or so before the start and spent a couple of nights on the shores of Lake Iseo, some 20 miles from Brescia, giving us a chance to complete essential maintenance to ourselves and the car. Iseo is a pleasant spot and at this time of the year the tourist business has died and the town resumes its normal identity. The car received superficial injuries here when a motor cycle was hurled at it by an irate Italian who could not start his Fiat 500. This strange act did not make it start either! On remonstrating with a well-known international sign, I think I was told to jump into the lake—which I didn't. We were also locked out of our camp site that night. A warning to campers in Italy—always carry a hacksaw.

Brescia is an attractive town, dating from 225 BC when it was known as Brixia. It was hot, noisy and packed, and all the streets seemed to be one way—the wrong way. Eventually, we found the Palazzo della Loggia and the assembly area. The Piazza Loggia is a delightful old square dominated by La Loggia or the Town Hall. Into the Piazza were jammed about 60 vintage and veteran cars and thousands of spectators, all getting in the way of each other, the cars, the organizers . . . in true Italian style they were finally expelled. We were welcomed by the Mayor, with a long speech in Italian, followed by

a tumultuous dive for the bar, and lunch, except that the Communists had decided to hold a demonstration here so lunch was arranged at a brewery on the outskirts of the town. This was not the only evidence of Communist activity we met; we were forced off the road by a blaring cavalcade of cars near the foot of the Simplon, advancing in close column down both carriageways.

The organizers did well here to arrange both an impromptu lunch, and a swift exodus for all competitors from the Piazza Loggia before people started seeing red.

Other British entrants were Woolley's 1897 Daimler (towed by a Reliant Scimitar), Lightfoot's 1902 Mercedes, Colling's 1913 Brixia Zust, Harris's Gordon England Cup Model Austin 7 of 1926, Mays' Speed 6 of 1929 and Seys' delightful blown Alfa, oddly enough the only Alfa in this Italian Rally. The Italian entry consisted largely of Fiats—some nice Balillas and Bugattis. No Lagondas! Il Presidente pounded around in a Lamborghini Muira.

The rally was a very gentlemanly affair over two days around the shores of Lake Garda. We first met up with the starters from Verona, that was after the brewery lunch, and then preceded in grand procession through Salo to Gardone Riviera and our hotels. The first test was at 9 o'clock that evening, where we were required to drive, if that's the word, coax is more apt, our machines over 500 metres along the promenade in x minutes, followed immediately by a second 500 metres in the same time, to the nearest one-tenth of a second. My excellent wrist-watch is fine for the Measham, but this . . . ! We were staying in 'top class' hotels in Gardone Riviera, all free too, except for the £20 rally entry fee and a bill at the end of it all for £6 odd for breakfast and some ironing. A mere nothing.

The second day (Sunday) saw the PVT class (i.e. tough modern cars) touring around the northern end of the lake, through Riva and Garda, whilst the remainder staggered three miles to the ferry at Modena from whence we crossed the lake to Torri and thence to Garda. Here we had some more tests. I imagined 'tests' to be reversing long cars with almost no steering into series of minute garages, or as is the case when I do these things, driving around aimlessly with marker drums wedged under the car. However, here we had to cover 500 metres in one to three minutes, one kilometre in twice the time plus a percentage,

2 kilometres in four times the time plus a percentage. This meant driving very, very slowly, in fact almost undriving.

We had a superb lunch at Desenzano, finishing at about four o'clock, when we all processed our way to Salo, where we virtually had the freedom of the town. I understand that Gasparo invented the violin in Salo. Parts of our route through the town were very narrow, and at times, I was afraid I might collect the odd Italian on the Rudge Whitworths. We were presented with miniatures of American Whiskies here (I'm not sure why, but I didn't mind). Thence back to Gardone Riviera, a bath (there was *one* on the first floor of my five star hotel) and a formal dinner and presentation of awards. We had been specifically asked to bring dark suits for this occasion—all very proper. All competitors were presented with a very nice plaque. Prizes were generous; outboard motors, scooters and things. In all a social rally rather than a driving rally; we consumed more wine than petrol.

The morning after inevitably arrived, and saw Italians laboriously loading their cars onto trailers and transporters while the British solemnly packed their cars in preparation for continuing their tour round Europe, or as in our case for the mad dash back to Calais. We had allowed four days for this, but Chamonix was so delightful that we spent two nights nearby at Sallanches. I have seldom seen Mont Blanc in such form, shining loftily in a clear blue sky. There were no other Crossleys in Chamonix, so reluctantly we set off and did our longest drive of about 350 miles, before stopping for the night near Fontainbleau.

The remainder of the journey, via Abbeville, was uneventful and quite agonising over some of the most awful roads. We did have to stop on the outskirts of Paris to repack the water pump gland—16/80 owners will know that they are a frequent cause of trouble (the pumps, that is). This may be the reason why Lagondas changed the position of the pumps on the later 16/80s. The trouble was that I had repacked the gland with too soft a packing, and it had gone all sad and disappeared. It now has the original packing back in again, and is perfectly alright!

16/80 owners may be interested in some facts and figures. Our overall fuel consumption was 24 m.p.g. and over 26 m.p.g. after a good run on the Autostrada (1929 *Autocar* road test: 21 m.p.g.). Oil consumption is fairly high at about 200 m.p.p.

although for this engine this seems normal and has remained the same for the last 30,000 miles. Oil pressure when hot is 38-40 lb. at 2,700 r.p.m. The Crossley did not like the 'normale' grade (84-88 octane) petrol, and pinked more than usual. This can be remedied, of course, by use of the advance/retard lever, although performance is rather woolly.

The frustration of the long straight roads and appalling surfaces was broken in the Abbeville area by the appearance, travelling in a southerly direction, of a splendid early GHOST, in full period costume. An inspiring spectacle—what the French think of Les Anglais, I cannot think—no wonder they are not keen on our entry to "their" Common Market—an instinct of self preservation perhaps! We eventually crossed the channel, into the setting sun and in a rising gale. I got locked onto the car deck until released by a deck hand: the lounge was much more comfortable really. I must confess to some sense of relief on arrival at Harrogate. We used one tail lamp bulb and fiddled with the water pump—otherwise we had no trouble over the 2,500 miles trip.

It's now time to prepare the Crossley for another winter in Yorkshire. Ominous piles of salt and sand have already appeared beside all local hills. There's a heavy crop of berries this autumn too!

S. C. E. WELD (*Capt. R.E.*)

The Development of an Eccles Rapier

THE PRESIDENT WHEN WRITING TO MY FATHER about some matters concerning V.12s also asked him to con me into writing some notes on the Rapier engine. As my replica Eccles Rapier has now finished a season's racing I felt it might be useful to reflect upon some of the mods I carried out on the engine, some of which a year's racing has proved to be unsatisfactory and others to be advantageous.

Previous to stripping the engine I had heard from Rapier owners that the design of the big end bolt heads left a little to be desired as if the eccentric bolt head tends to turn in its counter-bored hole in the rod it is likely to start a crack which will result in rod failure. On careful inspection of my set of rods I found no sign of cracks but I decided to change them for a set of 4.2-litre Jaguar connecting rods which though $\frac{1}{8}$ in. longer and $\frac{1}{4}$ in. larger in the big end eye were of much greater strength. After various experiments I found the best solution to the difference in big end diameter was to metal spray the crank pins and use either white metal shell bearings or direct metallised rods as Elliot Elder



Staines AGM—The V.8 Prototype created a lot of interest

Photo : D. Johnson

does. Before reaching this conclusion, however, I tried using lead bronze competition shell bearings on the silicon sealed metal sprayed crank but these picked up badly as the crank was not hard enough. It is probably worth noting that these shells may only be used on nitrided or otherwise hardened crankshafts.

The extra length of the rod also required new pistons, the design of which I based on the original 7:1 pistons only to find they were in fact 6.3:1. I find those in my spare engine are the same and so the figures quoted in the instruction book would seem to be a little optimistic. The compression ratio of an 1100 engine is easily checked by turning a piston to T.D.C. on the firing stroke and measuring how much paraffin or thin oil may then be poured through the plug hole. 52 c.c. = 6.3:1, 46 cc. = 7:1 and 42 c.c. = 7.5:1. Guesstimation indicates how much oil drains down the bores while filling by watching how rapidly the level drops when the combustion space is full and a garden syringe removes the oil before endeavouring to restart the engine.

Further inspection of the engine components indicated that the magneto would burst at 7,500 r.p.m., the oil pump skew gears would strip under repeated acceleration and that for racing the clutch and flywheel assembly were unnecessary when using a pre-selector gearbox. To overcome the magneto problem I fitted a Lucas polar inductor instrument which produces four sparks per rev. instead of two and this needs only to be driven at half engine speed. I therefore made a 2:1 chain reduction to fit in place of the dynamo which was also discarded as I had decided not to have a starter. I also made an adaptor to fit a B.M.C. Mini oil pump (or is it B.L.M.C. nowadays?) to the triple sprocket in the front timing chest. This draws oil from the centre of the sump and returns it to an external port on the full flow oil filter. I also fitted an aluminium guard across the top of the sump to prevent oil starvation round long corners as in this condition the oil in a sump may assume a position similar to tilting the engine at 45 degrees.

The final mod was to drive a Shorrock 142B super-charger through a toothed belt from the rear of the crank at 0.82 engine speed, this drive taking place of the normal clutch and flywheel assembly. The above drive ratio gave a boost of 15 p.s.i. at anything over 3,000 r.p.m. when the blower was in good condition. I seem to be singularly unsuccessful with Shorrock super-

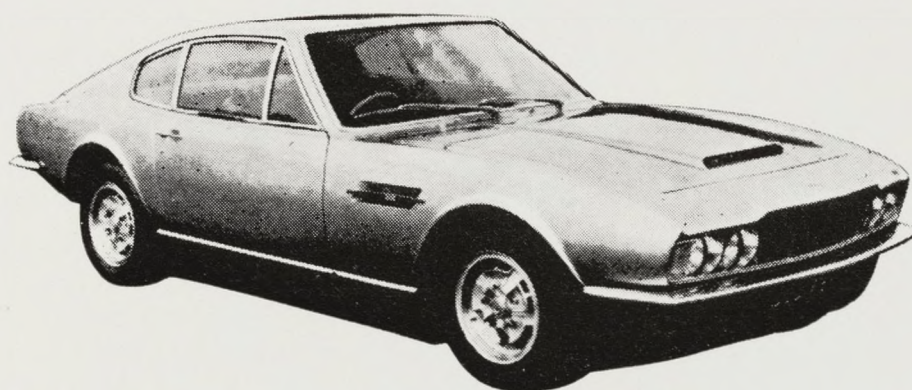
chargers as this one had a series of disasters by either seizing or bending its blades due to the pressure caused by a backfire despite having six relief valves in the induction manifold. I have more recently fitted a new blower of this type to a modern engine used for development work and after 1½ hours running on a test bed one of the gas seals seized so working on the theory that if the works can't build them right no one can, confidence was restored in my ability to assemble blowers properly. Incidentally it is not wise to drive this make of blower with a toothed belt as crank vibrations travel up the belt and eventually break the blower drive shaft so V-belts should be used if possible.

I subsequently had the Rapier engine on a test bed and in standard form it gave 33 b.h.p. at 4,500 at the prop. shaft but this was raised to 80 b.h.p. at 7,000 r.p.m. when blown which I thought was rather low but I hope that a higher boost and perhaps more exotic chambers may raise this a little. It is also worth remembering that the blower requires about 15 h.p. to drive it and the gearbox absorbs about 5 h.p.

On putting the engine into the car and subjecting it to repeated acceleration I found the water pump drive dogs were prone to shear as they were designed very weak presumably to prevent breaking the pump if it froze and the fibre half time pinion now looks rather worn so I think that an aluminium replacement is required. I also found the Weller spring blade tensioners were prone to breaking so I replaced them with 13 tooth sprockets mounted on ball races. To keep the bonnet line low I fitted a Mini radiator to save hacking the original one about but this is not large enough for racing and throughout the season I suffered boiling problems which in the end temporarily distorted the head sufficiently to burn out No. 3 exhaust valve. I also parted company with the Shorrock blower half way through the season and replaced it with three Marshal cabin blowers arranged in two stages, two low pressure and one high pressure, which are of sufficient capacity to give a pressure of 35 p.s.i. if need be, though at the moment I'm still at 15 p.s.i.

I hope the above may be of some use to both Rapier and Lagonda owners generally and I would like to thank Elliot Elder and all the other Rapier owners who have given me invaluable gen and lent me tools on many occasions.

PAUL MORGAN



"If ever a car owed its existence to enthusiasm it is the Aston Martin"

Sammy Davis *Autocar* April 1970

ENTHUSIASM

- . . . has brought to you Great Britain's only solus
Aston Martin Distributor
- . . . with a fine new showroom for the whole range of
Aston Martins
- . . . with 6,000 sq. ft. workshops designed, built and
equipped just for Aston Martins
- . . . with a service department under "Andy" Chapman,
long experienced at Feltham and Newport Pagnell

TO MAKE IT EASY FOR YOU TO OWN AND ENJOY YOUR
ASTON MARTIN OR LAGONDA

ASTON DISTRIBUTORS LTD

Distributors of Aston Martin & Lagonda Cars for the counties of Warwickshire & Worcestershire

66-70 Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham 22B

Telephone 021-356 8699 (Temporary)

The Art of Motor Vehicle Restorations

IT ALL STARTED WITH AN ADVERTISEMENT IN A wellknown weekly publication. The text read: "1936 LG.45 Lagonda, needs attention, £80". At the time I was running a Triumph Vitesse sports saloon of similar vintage and was not really looking for another car. However with the insatiable curiosity of the pre-war (dare I say vintage?) motor car enthusiast I rang the number listed below the advertisement. I must shamefully admit that my knowledge of Lagondas was, at that time distinctly sketchy and I was a little taken aback to discover that the capacity of the beast was no less than 4½-litres. I decided to go along and see the car 'out of curiosity'.

As soon as I saw the car, a Lagonda bodied pillarless saloon of impressive dimensions I fell in love with it and decided to buy it, despite its somewhat bedraggled appearance. Thus, a few weeks after my nineteenth birthday I became probably the youngest and certainly the most impecunious Lagonda owner in England.

Having bought the car the next problem was to transport the thing back from New Malden. A friend of my parents, living in Roehampton kindly offered me the use of his garage while I arranged other accommodation for it at home.

To tow two tons of Lagonda is asking rather a lot of the average motor car and so another friend, Tim Davis (who, providentially owned a 1 ton Morris army truck) was called in.

We arrived at New Malden one evening, having spent the day fiddling about with Tim's boat at Chertsey. After a lot of pushing, shoving, manoeuvring and swearing we managed to position the LG behind the army truck. We then gaily set off for Roehampton.

Now I was under the impression that I knew the road from New Malden to Roehampton fairly well, however, I had never previously been aware of the massive concentration of 1 in 3 hills—all in the wrong direction—between these two places. The army truck, which admittedly had a burnt exhaust valve, puffed and wheezed its asthmatic way onwards. The truck finally expired about a third of the way down Roehampton Lane, which, surprisingly enough was one of the few downhill stretches in the whole journey! After trying all the usual things—tapping the petrol tank,

thumping the carburettor and distributor, with the largest available adjustable spanner, swearing, etc.—the vehicle still wouldn't go. We finally decided to give up after about an hour of messing about, whereupon, at a last despairing stab on the starter the lorry burst into life. Tim and I dashed to our respective places and set off for the last 300 yards of the journey. We finally arrived at Roehampton Close at about 11.15 p.m. looking exceedingly undesirable, as we were driving round to the garage a large and uncompromising figure emerged from the Porters Lodge and enquired as to what two long-haired, dirty, scruffy individuals were doing bringing two long-haired, dirty, scruffy motor vehicles into a respectably run establishment like his. Well rehearsed, I smoothly (well as smoothly as one can in torn jeans and with a quart of pre-war sump oil liberally distributed over one) replied that "we had been instructed by Mr. Bevan to deposit his new car at his garage. Looking very sceptical the porter wandered off into the night, shaking his head and mumbling something about things never having been the same since they abolished National Service. We finally deposited the "Lag" in the garage and gratefully staggered back to the army truck to make our way home.

The next task was to clear a place for the car at home. This done, the Lagonda had to be transported from Roehampton to Kenton.

Restoration was a slow process, the engine was partially dismantled and had to be re-assembled. Fortunately the unit was basically sound and there was a complete, virgin set of engine gaskets nestling in the back seat. A certain amount of machining had to be done, two of the water transfer ports had been replaced by new phosphor-bronze castings, the third I was able to resurrect by facing it on a shaper. The same process was also needed for the o/s water port.

The next problem was the radiator which was completely u/s, so the original was scrapped and a new one made, using the original bottom and header tanks, by Viking Radiators Ltd. of Harrow. The other slight problem in the cooling system was the lack of a water pump, which, it appears was in the hands of Ivan Schh . . . you know who. As soon as time and weather permitted, a nasty trip down to the Forshaw den was taken to retrieve the pump, which was in something of a state. Two consolations however were Ivan's cheerful company and the discovery on examination of a V.12 engine, that however

great my problems were, anyone who wished to have anything done to one of these massive engines would have to employ an eight-armed two-foot three inch contortionist!

On my return I examined the water pump. The impeller seemed to be new, and was probably a replacement. The pump shaft was about an eighth of an inch smaller than the bearings and there appeared to be no sealing method for the shaft. This required some thought. Firstly I searched our local vintage "goodie shop" for a carbon seal the same size as the pump shaft. I then removed the existing pump bearings, bushed them down to the correct shaft size and cut a recess in the bearing facing the impeller, to take the spring-loaded carbon water seal. A new key was made to hold the impeller on the pump shaft and the whole lot was then assembled. A snag arose when I came to fit the pump back in. The aluminium face plate was cast with a large spigot on the front, holding an adjuster screw to take up any slack in the pump-shaft. This, when the pump was in place rested against a chassis crossmember, so that as soon as the engine started the face-plate would thump resoundingly against the chassis cross-member with all sorts of undesirable results! I cured this by machining off half the spigot and turned up a sealing screw in place of the adjuster, which I felt was now unnecessary, due to the spring-loaded water seal. The pump now seemed to work quite adequately!

The carburettors were carefully cleaned, replaced and adjusted and caused no problems. This could not be said of the fuel pumps. Having made quite a few defunct S.U. pumps work, I mistakenly thought I could do the same to the Lagonda pumps. After spending two fruitless weekends messing about, (buying new diaphragms into the bargain) I gave up and invested in a new set. At the same time I replaced some of the pipery which had but sadly withstood the test of time.

The next major task was to rewire the car. With the aid of a wiring diagram and an electrically minded friend (Jonathan Angell whose help, together with his father's, was, during the whole course of restoration gratefully received) the operation was completed in two weekends, leaving indelibly printed on my mind the task of persuading about nine wires to go down a seemingly endless length of conduit tubing!

Chris Mann's article to be continued.

SOME RAMBLINGS OF A LAGONDA OWNER

(continued from the Summer issue.)

I shall remember that evening for many years to come. We had brought a short wave receiver with us, and suddenly a group of people came up begging us to tune into the local station. News was just coming through that the Russians had invaded Czechoslovakia. There were quite a number of Czechs staying at the camp site who, because the Czech frontiers had been closed, were cut off from their homes. The men gathered round portable radios listening intently while the women just stood, stunned, many with tears pouring down their faces. Our hearts went out to these unfortunate people, but there was nothing we could do. Later we learned that the Yugoslav authorities, in a humanitarian gesture, were allowing the Czechs to stay at campsites without charge for as long as the borders remained closed.

The next day we got lost. Somehow we took the wrong turning on leaving Bled, and found ourselves travelling along what are known locally as second-class roads. I had been warned that Yugoslavian roads were bad. Their second-class roads are very bad. We drove for many miles at 20 m.p.h. or less, desperately trying to avoid the many boulders and potholes which decorated the road surface. We missed all of the boulders except one and were immediately rewarded with a considerable increase in exhaust noise. Eventually we reached a civilized road and pressed on to Postojna. The famous caves here certainly deserve their reputation. The system is the third largest in the world and our two hour tour with an English speaking guide was most interesting and enjoyable.

Then on again to Lovran, a pretty little village near the port of Rijeka. Here we decided to make a base for a few days, so we pitched our tent at an attractive site on the edge of the Adriatic and went off in search of sustenance.

The next morning found me crawling under the Lag. to inspect the damage inflicted by the boulder. A cracked downpipe and an almost detached stone guard seemed to be the extent of the damage, apart from a number of loose screws. So the stone guard was completely detached and the downpipe removed. We carried the latter to

the only garage in the village where we held it out appealingly to a young lad of fourteen or so, who seemed to be the sole occupant. Because of our unfamiliarity with both the Slovene and Serbo-Croat languages, conversation was necessarily restricted, but the lad got the message and welded the pipe while we waited. The cost of such good service, five shillings. The weld is still intact 18 months later.

After several glorious days here, we had to start our homeward journey. We made our way northwards over the dreaded Wurzen pass to Klagenfurt and then on to Hallstatt. This is a tiny village, set on the edge of a lake and surrounded by mountains, about 50 miles south of Salzburg. For my money it is one of the prettiest places in Austria. Here we dined magnificently in a restaurant cut into a cliff face. After the meal we listened to strains of Viennese waltzes coming from a band on a decorated boat anchored out in the lake.

The next day was not a good one. In the morning we drove into Salzburg to have a look at that beautiful city. Here, while walking along a crowded pavement appraising the local talent, my head made an unexpected and severe contact with an ill-sited road sign, causing slight loss of blood and considerable loss of composure. Later, we set off along the autobahn and soon joined a long queue of traffic moving toward the Austro-German border. After 15 minutes or so of travelling at walking pace under a hot sun, the by now familiar puffs of steam started to emerge from the sharp end, and as we drew level with the customs post, a miniature geyser shot up in front of an amused officer. Moving on again, it became obvious that the engine was overheating more than usual and an examination of the fan belt showed that its replacement was a matter of priority. However, it was time for lunch so we stopped at the first likely spot for a picnic. Unfortunately the local wasp population knew about this spot and made their presence felt in the way that wasps do. After the meal a short experiment showed that a stiff V.12 with slipping fan belt can be kept at a reasonable temperature if the car is driven at a steady 40 m.p.h. So driving at the aforementioned speed we made for a garage where a helpful mechanic produced a tractor fan belt which turned out to be a fair fit. Pressing on again, we came to Memmingen where we decided to camp for the night. After pitching the tent and unloading some essentials, one of the

more observant members of the party noticed that a back tyre was no longer doing its job of supporting that corner of the car. It seemed a good time to go and get drunk.

The following day was much better. The inner tube of the deflated tyre was replaced by a nearby garage. A mechanic had to make a journey of several miles to obtain a tyre of the right size and also gave the four of us a lift to a café for morning coffee while on his way. The cost? About thirty shillings. The service from these continental garages is really good.

That night, the last before reaching Ostende, we camped at Zwiebruchen near the French border. It had rained continuously during the latter part of the day, so before pitching the tent, we examined the site to find the driest spot. This done we went into the town for food and drink, which we found at the Teutonic equivalent of a Chicken Inn. After an enjoyable meal we drove back to the site and went to bed. An indeterminate time later I was brought back to reality by my neighbour in the tent complaining loudly that he was getting wet. The tent was awash. Cigarette packets, shoes and a wallet were floating gently around, and there was a steady drip from the ridge pole. After a brief salvage operation we made our way to the car in which the rest of the night was spent.

Next morning it was still raining. After changing into swimming costumes, we paddled over to the tent, dismantled it and packed it on to the luggage grid along with sundry other damp items. Then, after the morning routine of washing, shaving and dressing we set off for Luxembourg. Here we stopped for lunch and had a look round the city and its beautiful gardens. Then back into the car and on to the last leg of the journey to Ostende. Here of course, the usual last minute shopping for presents and the search for a restaurant *not* featuring English teas or fish and chips, followed by a trip round the bars and night clubs. Then on to the ferry for the night trip across the channel.

Apart from a puncture, a cracked exhaust pipe and a slipping fan belt, any of which could have occurred on the newest of cars, the Lagonda provided reliable and comfortable transport for four people and a considerable quantity of luggage for 3,000 miles of varied and enjoyable motoring.

T. OVERY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mystery Photo—The Ghastly Secret

Dear Sir—Reference the ship-board photograph. Would it help Mike Wilby to know that I am pretty sure that every single one of them was a master at my prep. school in 1927?

P. A. DENSHAM
Solihull, Warks.

1970 AGM

Dear Sir—Very many thanks to Gordon Preece and others for the fine organisation and for giving us such an enjoyable day at the Anglers' Hotel this year. It was a most beautiful day, and enjoyed by a very large gathering, where one met a number of old friends. They have the satisfaction of knowing it was a terrific success.

With best wishes to the Club.

RAYMOND D. WICKHAM
Brenchley, Kent.

News from California

Dear Sir—Thought you might be interested. My LG.45 took Third in its class at the 1970 Silverado Concours d'Elegance at Napa, California. I enclose a picture. The body is by Salmons and Sons. I'm looking for a hub for the right rear wheel and a wheel. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated. I certainly enjoy your magazine and the newsletters. There's a more humorous attitude than in some of the stodgier American Clubs. I hope to be in England in January and would love to see some Lagondas.

LOWELL LEVINGER
Inverness, California.

MAGAZINE COPY

All contributions for publication in the SPRING 1971 issue should be with the Editor by Feb. 5th. Copy for Summer 1971 magazine by April 25th please.

Letter to the Secretary

Dear Madam—Thank you very much for the courtesies extended to Messrs. Stowers, Wallinger, Stott and myself and for the pleasant meeting that you held at the Anglers' Hotel, Runnymede.

It was very gratifying to see such a wonderful turn-out of older cars, each depicting the excellent engineering of the days when craftsmen were in abundance. I would also like to express our thanks to all your members for making us so welcome.

I am sure that it is a day that we will all remember for a long time.

J. K. SWALLOW
Assistant Manager—Parts,
Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd.,
Newport Pagnell, Bucks.

Vintage News from Down Under

Dear Sir—Probably with a sense of loss I have to tell you that I have sold my LG.45. It had given me quite a few miles of pleasure but I was always wishing that it had the original motor. Anyway it has gone to a Lagonda enthusiast in Sydney N.S.W. who owns an M.45 and a 2-litre.

Although now a non-owner, I was pleasantly surprised to receive No. 70 Lagonda magazine, as I have just bought a 1929 15.7 Crossley (so that I am still associated with Lagonda's even if only remotely) similar to the one owned by Stephen Weld.

Vintage car matters over here are very active at present and quite a few of the Queensland Vintage Car Club members are contemplating competing in the International Rally in New Zealand in 1971. If finances allow I will probably be going myself. It may be interesting to note that there will be a section for P.V.T.'s also.

I still own a 1931 Riley 9 Monaco saloon, and also have the remains of a 1925 Star 11.9 tourer.

In the last months I have been hunting around for a car before buying the Crossley and have come across the following interesting machinery. A 1922 Rochet Schneider with rear wheel brakes only and a 4-litre 4 cylinder motor. A 1924 Chenard-Walcker with rear wheel brake only about 3-litres I think. Also a fellow member of my club has just acquired a 1911 Napier truck (which he drove home) with a radiator over 6 ft. high (4 cylinder).

Hoping that all goes well for Club and members during the ensuing year.

DEREK H. SMITH
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

REGIONALISATION

Below are listed the names and addresses of local representatives and the meeting place:

Area No.		Monthly Meetings, 8/8.30 p.m.			
1	N. Ireland	J. Longridge, "Rockville", 22 Warren Road, Donaghadee, County Down	North Down House, Comber, Co. Down. 1st Tuesday		
			The Globe Tavern, Joy's Entry, off High St., Belfast. Lunch each Friday for any- one in Belfast on business.		
2	Eire	L. C. Thorn, 5 Grange Road, Rathfarnham	West Country Hotel, Chapelizon, Dublin. 1st Monday		
3	Scotland	J. McKellar-Cairns, 22 Rullion Road, Penicuik, Midlothian	The Commodore Hotel, Marine Drive, Edinburgh. 1st Thursday In conjunction with V.S.C.C.		
4	Border country	I. G. Macdonald, 37 Oaklands, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne	Red Bar, Ridley Arms, Stannington, Northumberland. Last Wednesday		
5	N. & E. Ridings	D. H. Coates, Hill Farm, Swine, Nr. Hull	Duke of York, Skirlaugh—on A165 and about 9 miles N.N.E. of Hull. Last Tuesday		
6	W. Riding, Notts, and Lincs	Dr. J. G. Rider, The Range, Hatfield, Doncaster	The Hatfield Chace, Hatfield—on A18. 2nd Thursday		
7	Lancs, Cheshire, N. Staffs & Derbys	H. L. Schofield, Foxhill Stables, 271 Mottram Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire	West Towers Country Club, Church Lane, Marple, Cheshire. 2nd Thursday		
8	South Wales	John Batt, 7 Grays Walk, Druids Green, Cowbridge	Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, Glam. 1st Thursday V.S.C.C.		
9	Gloucestershire, Bristol, N. Somerset & S. Worcester	J. Organ, 'Onaway', Chalford Hill, Stroud, Glos.	The Compass Inn, Tormarton, Glos. 4th Friday		
	and for the Northern part of this area	J. Organ	The Royal William Hotel, Cranham, Glos. 3rd Thursday		
9a	Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, N. Wales	D. P. Crow, 181 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Salop.		White Horse Inn, Wenlock Road, Shrewsbury. 2nd Friday	
10	Warwicks, S. Staffs & Leics	C. H. Noltan, 29 Hollyhurst Road, Banners Gate Sutton Coldfield		Manor House Hotel, Old A45 at Meriden (not by-pass). 2nd Tuesday	
11	Essex & East Anglia	J. D. Abson, 11 Highfield Green, Bury Lane, Epping		The Old King's Head, Stock (S.W. of on B1007, Essex. 8.30 p.m. 1st Wednesday	
12	Bucks & W. Herts & Bedfordshire	D. D. Overy, The Old Cottage, Bourne End, Boxmoor, Herts.			
13	Berks & Oxon	M. B. Jones, 4 Grass Hill, Caversham, Reading		The Bull, Sonning. 3rd Friday	
14	W. Home Counties, Middx & W. London	A. H. Gostling, 8 Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, Middx.		Anglers Hotel, Staines. 2nd Wednesday	
15	Kent	L. N. Buck, 21 Willow Walk, Culverstone, Meopham		Park Gate Inn, Hollingbourne, Kent. On A20, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from M20. 2nd Wednesday Sir Jeffrey Amherst, between Sevenoaks and Plaxtol on A25. 3rd Thursday	
16	Surrey & Sussex	N. T. Walder, Old Park House, Ifield, Crawley		Star Inn, Rusper, Nr. Horsham. Last Friday	
17	Wiltshire, Dorset & Hampshire	D. J. Palmer, North Carolina, Quibo Lane, Weymouth		Hambro Arms, Milton Abbas, Dorset. 2nd Friday	
18	Devon, Cornwall & Somerset	Dr. A. Young, 'The Towers', Hookhill Road, Paignton, Devon.		To be arranged	
19	London			Coach & Horses, Hill St., W.1. 1st Thursday	

LAGONDA SERVICE



We have a large stock of useful spare parts for Lagonda cars still available. Although the demand for parts has diminished 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.

New parts are made up in small batches and consist of gaskets, valves and valve guides, pistons, cylinder liners, clutch and brake linings etc.

We also have a stock of used parts taken from dismantled cars. Often we supply Lagonda owners with cylinder heads, crankshafts, cylinder blocks and similar components which are very difficult to obtain when required.

Send your enquiries to:

MAURICE LEO LTD

Gregories Road Garage · Beaconsfield · Bucks · Tel: Beaconsfield 5538