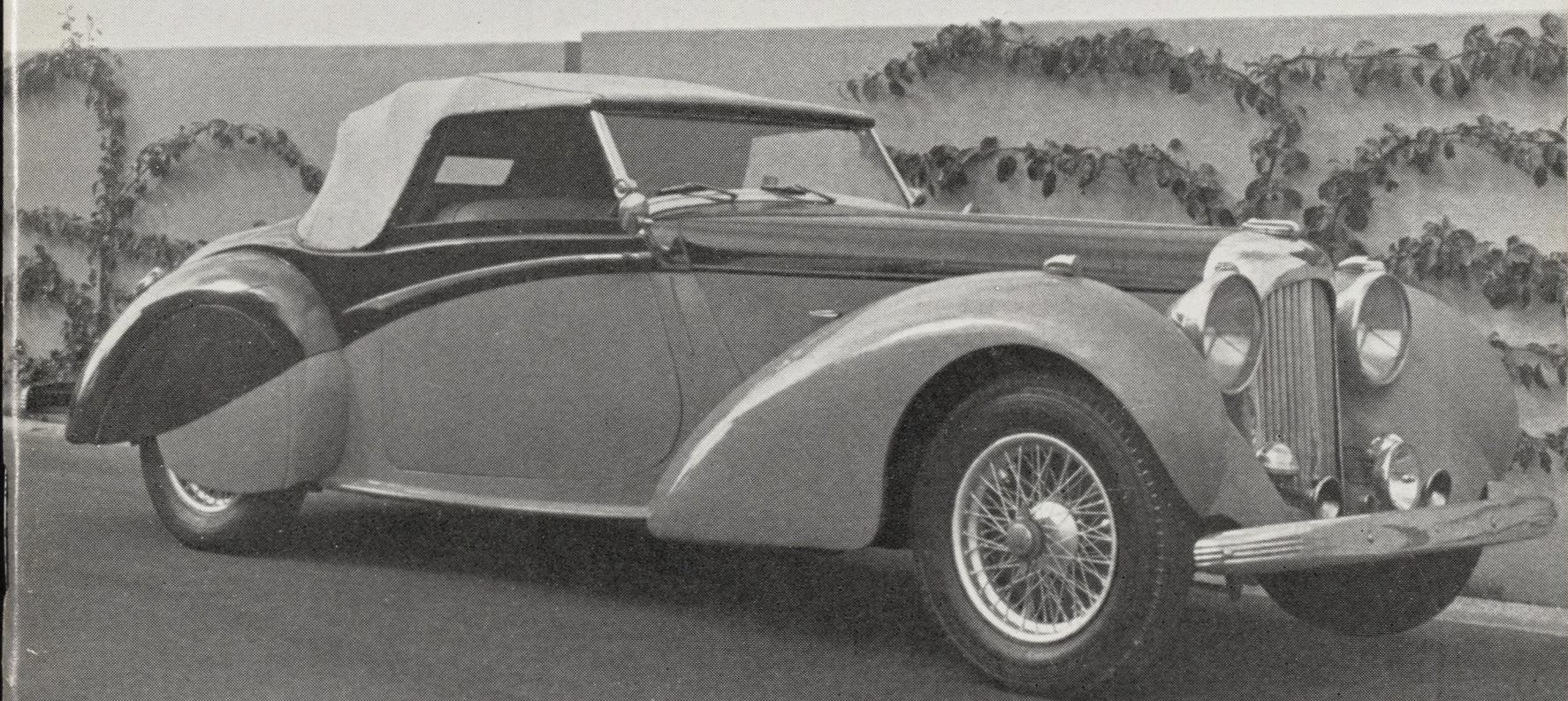


THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 73 Spring/Summer 1971





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MAGAZINE

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

FRONT COVER: A very fine LG.6-R belonging to American member John R. Bond.

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

It is regretted that it was not possible to produce a Spring issue of the Magazine owing to the Postal dispute. The strike came at just the time when contributors' copy should have been arriving. By the time things got back to normal it was too late to produce a magazine so it was decided to have a combined Spring/Summer number and indulge in a larger number of pages than is usual.

* * * *

This year marks the 21st Birthday of the Lagonda Club in its present form. Your Committee have arranged a fine programme of sporting and social events to mark this very important stage in the Club's progress—do your best and make a big effort to support as many events as you can.

* * * *

The Club suffered a sad blow earlier in the year with the death of MIKE WILBY which overshadowed

everything else that was happening at that time. Special tribute is made to his memory in this issue.

We have lost a dear friend and dedicated Club member.

* * * *

We are pleased to hear that HENRY COATES is now happily recovered after being laid low for most of 1970 with one sort of illness or another. This was largely brought about by the strain of running a 350-acre farm which was under roughly three inches of water most of the time. It was good to see him at the Annual Dinner and we hope that 1971 runs more smoothly for him—perhaps he will be able to finish his 4½-litre Special and become an active competitor again.

* * * *

Sad to relate that William "Poppa" Hughes died earlier this year. "Poppa" had been in the Club for more time than most members can remember and although no longer a young man he and his wife attended many Club meetings until recent years. "Poppa's" vast long-chassis V.12 was always beautifully turned out and he was willing to support any event. A true Club supporter in every sense of the word, he will be sadly missed. Our sympathy goes to his wife and relatives.



A trio of car badges representing the various stages of the Lagonda Club as we know it today

Photo by Arnold Davey

Northern Notes

Herb Schofield

THE FIRST TEN YEARS. I NOTE WITH SOME HORROR that I have now been an official in the Club for ten years, first as Manchester Area Secretary, but mainly as Northern Secretary. During this time I see that I have organised or co-organised about 30 competitive and social events. I have also written about 35 magazine articles—most of it rubbish!

I get a great deal of enjoyment reading back numbers of the magazine—except my own stuff. In 1964 I was complaining about the number of cars in the Club that were decidedly tatty; well things seem to have changed quite a lot since, not very often nowadays do you see a really rough Lagonda. I suppose this is something to do with the upward trend in prices, which leads me on to the next bit. In 1966 I was complaining about the prices being asked for old cars, currently on offer then was a J type Duesenberg and an 8-litre Bentley, at around the £4,000 mark and I suggested that a new Aston-Martin at the same price was much more sensible. Now of course I'm not quite so sure, the Aston will have dropped well over half in value and will probably be looking a little 'used', the other two cars would by now be worth considerably more than £4,000! I suppose that we now have to accept that prices for old motor cars will always continue to increase in value, rather sad in many ways. I started thirteen years ago parting with £160 for a blown 2-litre. What sort of person forks out well over £1,000 for the same car today!—surely not the 'impoverished enthusiast' that one used to meet so often in the back pages of *Motor Sport*!

In the mid and late sixties exporting of Lagonda cars occupied a great deal of space in 'Northern Notes'. I got really worked up about our gems crossing the Atlantic—but apparently nobody else did, as only one letter appeared in the magazine to support me.

What shows through most of all in the ten years of my magazine articles is a constant pushing of my own cars and achievements and I would hope that my readers might accept this as the final stages of adolescence, and as I advance, as I have done into my thirties, there will be less of me and much more of others.

NORTHERN DINNER DANCE

19th March 1971

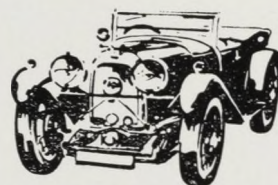
Although completely organised by telephone (thanks to the striking postmen) we boasted an attendance of over sixty. Members as usual came from all over the North (and South!) including Geoff Squire from Glasgow, our Treasurer, Geoff Moore from London, and our Chairman, Jon Abson from Essex—to these members and to all our members who attend year in, year out, may I say a special thank you.

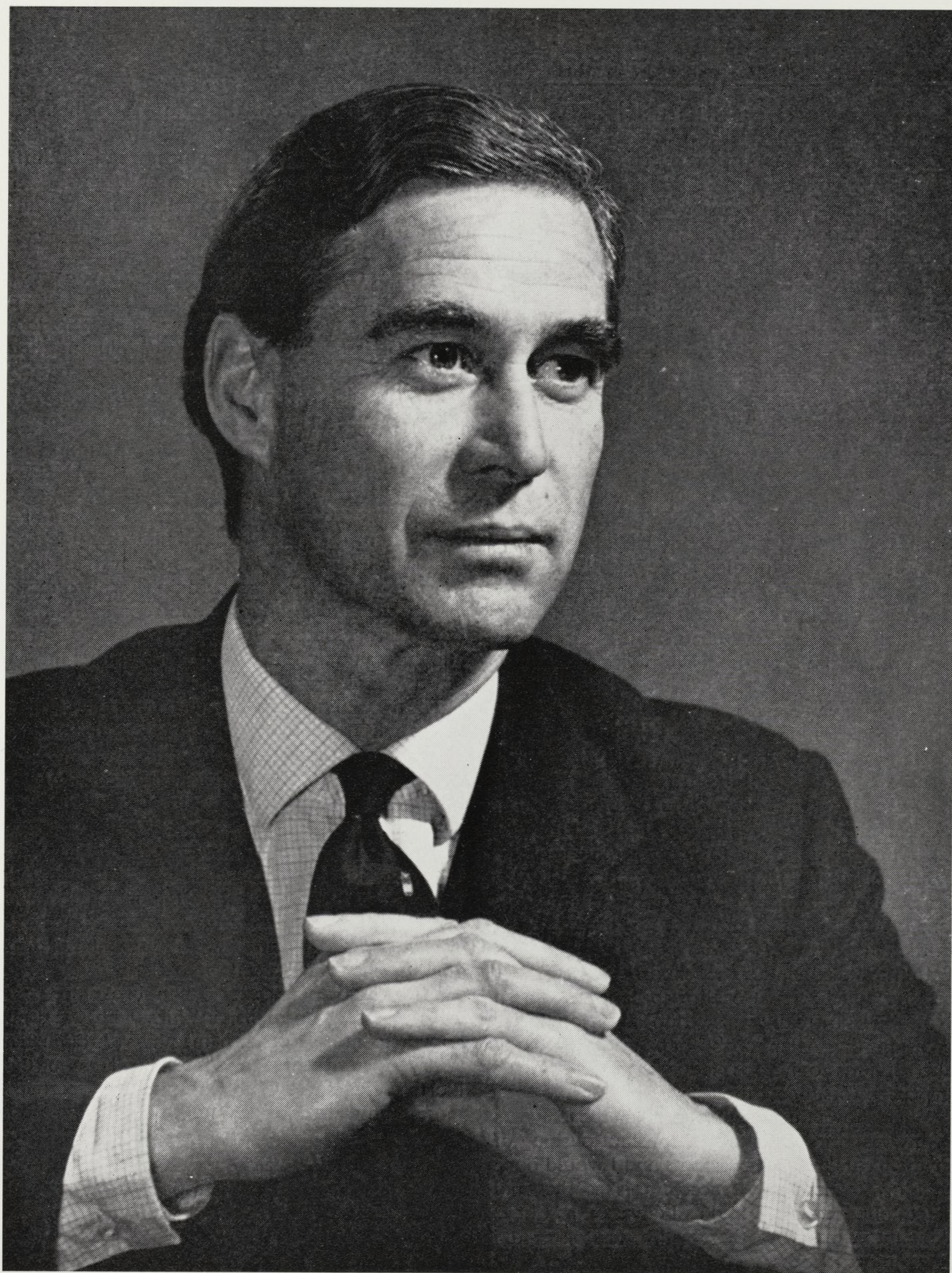
1971 was sort of special for the Northern Secretary who 'celebrates' 10 years of officialdom in the Club. The occasion was suitably marked by a presentation to him of a chain of office and a wooden plaque, both of which had obviously been removed from an ancient public lavatory—still the thought was there!

After dinner was completed Alan Brown stood on his feet (the term is used very loosely!) and gave the opening 'speech' of the evening. It was quite obvious to all present except him that the five pints he had enjoyed before dinner had done their work well, because he didn't seem to make much sense—even after he had repeated himself three or four times. Fortunately we were spared a long session and he was gently persuaded to sit down.

The Northern Secretary then announced that he thought it was the eighth time he had stood up in front of members at the dinner—a remark which seemed to cause some amusement to certain intoxicated members in the immediate vicinity of John Beardow. The Northern Secretary then thanked members for attending despite the postal dispute. He said he would offer no comment on the strike as the Lagonda Club was a true blue non-political organisation, however, he did say that he now had a thing about men with expansive moustaches!

The Northern Secretary then broke the sad news of the death of Mike Wilby who was well known to most Northern members through his visits to competitive and social events in the North. The whole Club will miss him—perhaps more than we realise.





Michael H. Wilby — a tribute

THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF MIKE WILBY IN FEBRUARY brought to a premature end a long and close association with the policies and activities of our Club, the value of which can never properly be measured. There is no doubt in my mind that the success of the Club today is due to a great extent to Mike's unselfish and conscientious work over the years both at committee and inter-Club level. He gave his time and effort unstintingly; his wise advice and counsel were available to anyone who had need of it.

Mike was born in Hampstead in 1921 and grew up in an atmosphere of motoring as his parents were connected with a garage business. He learnt to drive a car at an unusually early age, which no doubt accounted for his very high standard of driving ability in later years. He was educated at Quintin Hogg School and made his chosen career a Chartered Surveyor. All this was interrupted by the war during which he served as a pilot with Bomber and Transport Command in various theatres of action. Mike received the award of the Burma Star for his services in the Far East.

When the war had finished Mike returned to his studies for his profession and at the same time resumed his interest in Vintage motoring. His first 'proper' motor car was a Lagonda Rapier which kindled his personal enthusiasm for the marque. Mike first joined the Rapier Register and then the Lagonda Club in 1953. In a short space of time the dark green Abbott-bodied tourer was a regular contender for honours in the Club and Inter-Club competitions. Mike's own personal skills in organisation and administration also were soon recognised by the Committee and he became our Secretary in 1954. During the years that followed, Mike's concern with the history of the Lagonda Company deepened and he undertook a great deal of personal research into the subject. His contributions to the Magazine on this topic were always something to which I looked forward and were appreciated by all members. His general knowledge of the history of motor racing was considerable, particularly the period of Grand Prix racing in the Thirties which was an interest I shared with him. His efforts to secure the racing records of Arthur Fox for the Club archives made an invaluable contribution to the history and our knowledge of Lagondas.

Meanwhile, the Rapier had given way to an M.45R tourer for a short time but when family responsibilities deemed more practical transport, this was replaced by the VW. Mike's driving ability was not lost to the Competitions sphere as he was able to share drives with Billy Michael in his light-weight M.45R, James Crocker's Rapier Special and with Maurice Leo and his V.12 Le Mans. Curiously enough one of Mike's finest performances in competitions occurred when he was not at the wheel but when navigating. This was when he helped Billy Michael to win the Pomeroy Trophy in 1959. Despite the handicap of manipulating O.S. maps, stop watches and instructions in the narrow open cockpit in bad wet weather, he turned in a 100 per cent performance.

During this time, Mike worked for the Club continuously, tackling at one time or another very nearly every executive duty on the Committee. He also nurtured and strengthened ties between our Club and other one-make Clubs, particularly the Bentley Drivers' Club amongst others. In 1968 Mike's contribution to the success of the Club was recognised and he was elected to the office of President; a position he was to grace for too short a time. None of us realised that the Club's A.G.M. last September was to be the last Club function he attended.

In the ensuing months Mike fought a brave and courageous battle for his life but eventually to no avail and the spark went out on 27th February. To those of us who had the opportunity of being with him during this time he showed a stoical refusal to accept the facts that faced him and one could not help but to admire his bravery and also that of Marion who nursed him with such care and devotion. To Marion and Jonathan we send our deepest sympathies in our mutually tragic loss.

Mike's funeral was attended in strength by his many friends in the motoring world and amply demonstrated the deep affection that we had for him.

Mike always set his own personal standards very high in whatever he did; let us all ensure that the Lagonda Club continues to live up to similar standards in the future in the way Mike would have wished.

A.W.M.

* * * *

Continued on next page

Michael H. Wilby—a tribute (continued)

FROM JONATHAN ABSON:

We have lost more than a friend in Mike Wilby. He represented the Club in many ways for the best part of the last two decades as a Club Officer, but especially as an ordinary member. Because he was always there, always willing to talk to anyone from schoolboy enthusiast to retired owner and, particularly, always willing to listen and to proffer sound and pertinent advice, he did much to build up the solidarity of the Club.

Because of his long association with the Club, Mike, I suppose, was known to and knew more members than many of us are ever likely to. But it was Mike's special quality that these acquaintances were all friends. Friends because of his attention to detail, the fact that no letter went unanswered but got a considered, detailed and prompt reply; that retired owners spoke to other owners, that nothing to do with Lagondas was too obscure or trivial to merit all his attention and concentration. It was because of these qualities that many who never even met him will regret the passing of a friend and of part of the Club.

I first met Mike at a Northern Driving Test many years ago, but we had corresponded several times, and I had seen one or other of his activities mentioned in the Magazine so often that on my side I regarded him as a friend even before we met. Certainly his councils on Rapiers then, and latterly on Club affairs will be keenly missed not only by me, but I'm sure also by the whole Club.

FROM HENRY COATES:

The members from this region would like to join me in adding our tribute to Mike Wilby.

We all appreciated him as a friend as well as an energetic officer of the Club and particularly the way he made sure that any newcomer at a distant affair was made welcome.

It must be almost twenty years since we first met and I valued his friendship and his expeditions North—first as competitor in the Rapier in our early driving test meetings and later to stay with me here.

FROM JAMES CROCKER:

Reliable, affable, imperturbable. That is how Mike will be remembered. During my more explosive moments at Committee meetings, with members' hackles rising, I can hear him saying, "I think what James means . . ." The recipient of many a complaint but never a complainer. He

was a fund of information concerning people, cars and events, a godsend to the more butterfly-minded. I wonder if Members realise just how much of his time, indeed his life, was spent on Lagonda matters, resolutely directing what must surely be the most unorganisable body of car owners.

Rapiers were Mike's particular interest. And what a useful chap to have around when problems arose on these cars as I learnt to my benefit over the years. Early this year we were discussing what we would do to my Rapier, which we ran jointly during the coming competition season, both of us knowing that the season would be unlikely to be completed: it was not even to be started. I have lost a good friend; and so has the Club.

Restoring a Lagonda

by
John R. Bond

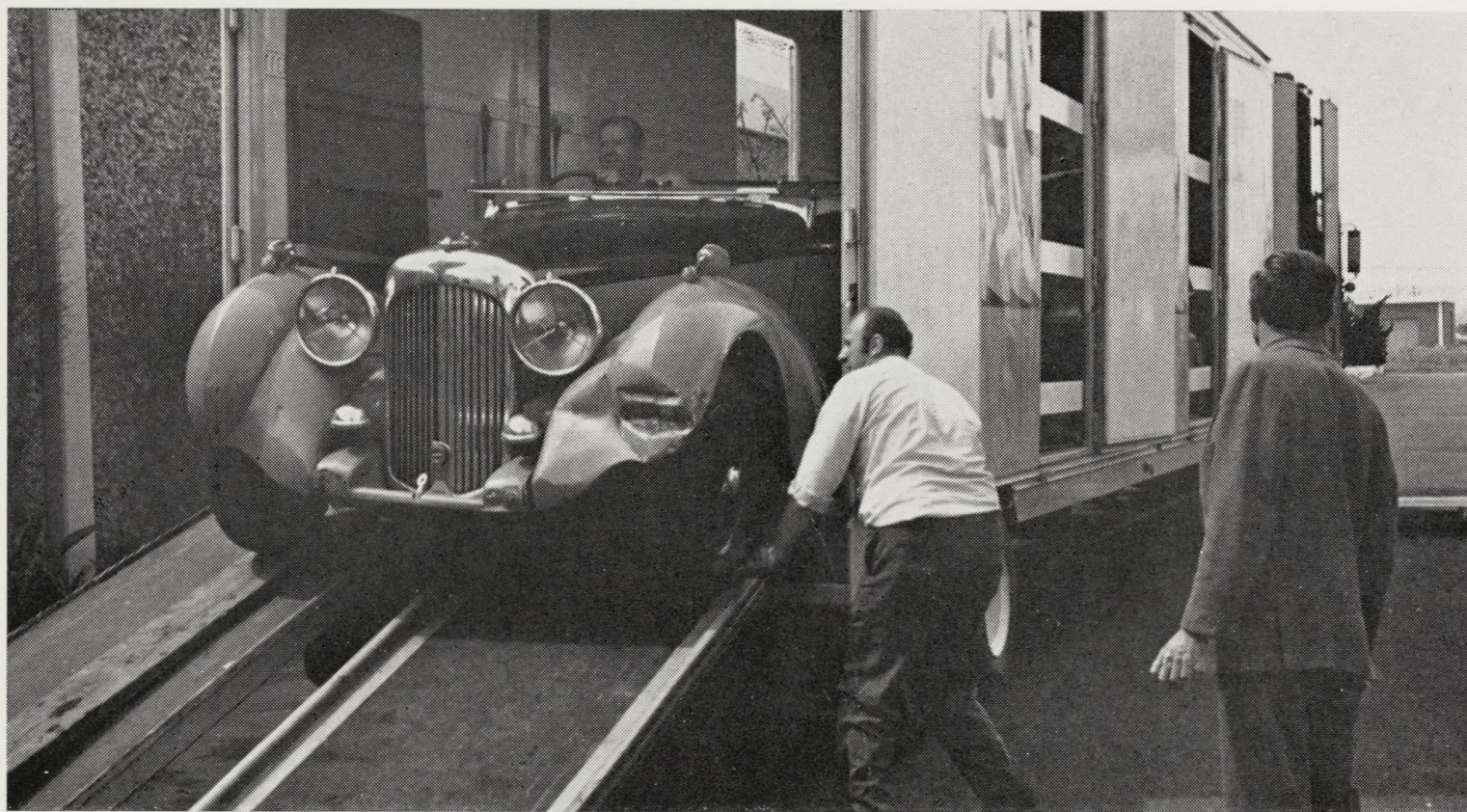
IT ALL STARTED IN THE SUMMER OF 1940. AT THAT time I was working as an engine designer for White Motors (trucks) in Cleveland, Ohio, and had just purchased my first brand new car, a 1940 Chevrolet club coupe. And the World's Fair was on in New York City.

Armed with a new (second hand) Zeiss Ikonta-A camera and a few dollars we were off to see the fair.

New York and the fair were tremendous for a Hoosier/Buckeye and the resultant pictures turned out to be excellent despite the fact that I couldn't afford an exposure meter. (Thanks to latitude with Plus X.)

What does all this trivia have to do with restoring a Lagonda? Quite a bit, as we shall see. Among the projects for a first visit to the great city was a check through the Yellow Pages of the phone book for foreign car establishments. Somewhere between the Fair and the Rockettes I managed to visit Inskips (Rolls); Zumbach's, the famous Germany car rebuilder; Emile Reicke, the BMW motorcycle dealer; Liberty Motors, run by Ray Gilhooly of Indy spin-out fame; George Rand's used car sales room, and the Brewster Bldg., both in Queens, L.I.

At Inskips I saw my first Lagonda. It had belonged to Jock Whitney, they said, and was for sale at \$3,000. As best I can remember it was an



The LG6-R arrives at Briggs Cunningham's Museum—the "bash" necessitated a whole new front wing

Photo: John Bond

M.45 tourer and I was in love. At Zumbach's I saw a Mercedes 540 K being repaired. The bill for a supercharger and carburettor overhaul was \$800! It was there too that I first saw a BMW-327 and a 328. Reicke's price for a flat twin motorcycle was, then, \$825, unbelievable to me. Ray Gilhooly of Liberty was very courteous and had a huge warehouse full of fabulous cars at bargain prices. I was especially intrigued by a Lancia Aprilia at \$750.

John Oliveau at Rand's showed me a beautiful pair of Talbot Lago coupes but an MG TA drophead by Tickford at \$925 held me spellbound

We welcome this article from Mr. Bond who has recently joined the Club and is better known for his publishing activities including, for example, 'Road & Track'.

though still helpless. (The new Chevrolet I'd just bought cost \$822 and I owed the White Motors' Credit Union \$300 on that.)

In the Brewster Bldg. nearby I saw literally hundreds of Rolls and Bentley cars in storage. The body shop was barely operating but there were a few major repair and alterations underway. Down in the basement I was shown most of the mechanical components of a car I knew nothing about: stupid me, it was a Bugatti Royale which

was being offered for a few hundred dollars because the block was cracked and the body was in terrible shape. This was the convertible coupe later purchased and restored by Charles Chayne and now in the Ford Museum at Dearborn.

Again, how does all this relate to restoring a Lagonda? While looking at the tourer at Inskips, I was given the address of the Lagonda sales and service place: 127 W. 52nd St. It was there I found that the Whitney Lagonda tourer at Inskip could be bought for \$1,800.

More importantly, it was there that I saw my dream car, an LG-6 Rapide. Yes, the V.12 had a little more urge but, as an engine designer, W.O.'s masterpiece was the epitome of poor design to me. (That's another story, for another time, but it was a very bad engine from a practical standpoint: fully equal to Bugatti's worst.)

The pictures I took of the Rapide went into my memory book: The price quoted was \$8,000, which represented over three years of my total salary, at the time.

But the memory, the dream, lingered on. Early in 1970, Bob Crane, the U.S. Lagonda Club registrar, put me in touch with a Rapide for sale in Connecticut. It sounded good and the price was right but I was involved in a real estate shuffle and couldn't come up with the cash. But

the jungle telegraph system exists among Lagonda-ists and in April I had a phone call out of the blue from Desmond Fitzgerald of New York City. He had two Lagondas—a V.12 drophead and an LG.6 Rapide—for sale.

To make a long story short I flew to New York and bought the Rapide, intending to drive it back to California. But it didn't work out that way because the dream car wasn't really up to the trip without some major electrical and hydraulic surgery. So we shipped it by truck—at fantastic cost because the trucking strike was on at the time. Oh well, C'est la Vie, now it's here and the restoration begins.

PART 2—RESTORATION

So the 31-year-old Rapide arrived in California on 4th May 1970. The immediate problem was the brakes, or lack thereof. Off came the wheels and drums except for the left rear one. That was a problem because it wouldn't move. After three applications of heat, via welding torch, plus two pullers (we wrecked the first one), the hub let go with a snap and then we found the problem. The intricate cast aluminium backing plate was broken. At a cost of over \$100 this item was welded and remachined to original. The lesson we deduced from an examination of the lever system is that one doesn't lock up the hand brake when the drums are hot.

While the brakes were being repaired we were lucky enough to find a panel basher to fix the left front fender. In fact we removed it and when he saw how badly caved in it was he suggested making a new one. This he did and very successfully too.

So now, with relined brake shoes, honed cylinders, a solid rear backing plate and a new fender we were ready to go. Not so. First, there was the problem of fuel supply which was intermittent to say the least. The U.S. electric pump was removed and the original dual SU unit was rebuilt and installed. Still the fuel came in dribbles. After a thorough check of all fuel lines, etc., the trouble was found at the reserve valve. This we threw away and good riddance.

The Sanction 4 engine was reputedly rebuilt and seemed to run fairly well, albeit with a little smoke via two very un-standard dual mufflers. This system was changed to standard except for a glass-pack muffler and it remains to be seen whether the 100 per cent engine overhaul (before purchase) is successful.

The electrics were really in sad shape. Ultimately we re-wired everything. This included a new battery, a new 12/6 volt resistor (as required by a part of the instrumentation) and a rebuild of the starter motor. We also re-plumbed the fuel feed system and (contrary-wise to the fuel pump) installed an American battery master switch.

Ready to go down to the Motor Vehicle Department and get properly licensed? Not quite. On sneak testing there were some funny thumping and bumping noises; the clutch clattered and the brakes were still spongy. The noises were from the rear motor mounts, the fabric front driveshaft couplings and the clutch release bearing.

Out came the clutch and the short driveshaft. The clutch was obviously all wrong to start with: it took both feet to depress it. The pressure plate load proved to be 2,200 lb. whereas 1,400-1,500 lb. is all that should be needed for 220-240 lb.-ft. of torque at 2,000 r.p.m. New, lighter springs were installed and the driven plate was relined. A new throwout bearing with proper bronze ball retainer was found and the steady bearing which is a part of this package was also replaced. We also managed to find rubberized fabric material which was machined to replace the original U-joints. The engine was jacked up and shimmed at the rear mounts with $\frac{1}{8}$ in. spacers made of the same material as the U-joint material.

For the brake problem, somewhere in the dim past someone had installed an American single-cylinder master cylinder in place of the catalogued twin system. This was rebuilt since we had no idea (then) how to find an original. Also, there was a non-standard auxiliary brake fluid reservoir on the engine bulkhead; a fine idea but it leaked. In trying to repair that, it broke and so was deleted.

While we were down there among the pedals we decided to restore the Tecalamit chassis lubrication system. To say that it was a mess is putting it mildly. Pipes were bent into curlicues, pinched off and missing. Worst of all the die cast base unit of the Tecalamit lubricator (Part No. 19046 in case anyone has one) was almost useless with numerous stripped threads. We salvaged it by making up a pair of strap steel clamps and long bolts to hold it in place. Stripped threads for the six outlet nipples were screwed in with epoxy cement. Bent and missing feed lines were repaired with the aid of 3/16 in. tubing and solder because 5/32 in. copper lines and fittings

are not available in the U.S.A., as far as we know. Success in this area remains to be proven and it is our intention to make it work via some suggestions in a recent Lagonda Club Bulletin which suggests a separate oil reservoir—which makes sense even though we were lucky enough to find a proper engine oil filter element for the full flow engine system.

Other miscellaneous work, to date, includes a thorough rework (strengthening) of the front fender support braces, all new floor-boards and trunk floor, removal of the American interior heater, rework of the electric wiper system, moving the head lamp dimmer switch to the facia (to clean up the floor boards), installation of a remote control for the rear deck latch because the original handle was gone and not replaceable and then the jacks.

I'd almost rather not talk about the jacks. But they are there and theoretically should be made to work. The central three valve system with pump did work though it's not quite as accessible as the LG-6 handbook would lead one to believe. (On the Rapide you don't just slide the seat back, you remove it.) But on the initial test in front, the car stood well supported for about two minutes and then there was a loud bang as the right front unit blew out and the corner dropped. They work at the rear though one leaks. After this setback we haven't had the heart to tackle the shock dampers but the adjustment linkage is intact and working—which is something to be thankful for.

Projects for the future include a complete strip to bare aluminium, new top (hood) and upholstery, plus painting of course. In addition, to confound our English friends and U.S. concours judges in particular I think we'll eventually convert the car to L.H.D. This will be a major project, dependent somewhat on how attached I become to the car. Driving a large R.H.D. car such as this, with very limited rear end visibility with top (hood) up, is very precarious on California freeways where passing on either side is semi-permissible. I've converted my 1934 Railton to L.H.D. for the same reason and since it was very easy to do, in that example, I'm not sorry even if it might lose points in the purists' eyes.

COMPETITION NOTES

NO DOUBT THE MORE OBSERVANT OF OUR MEMBERS will have noticed in recent Newsletters mention of a certain Peter Loe, who has been drawn onto the Committee to assist James Woollard deal with the enormous flow of entries for this season's competitive events.

Since this year marks the twenty-first year of the formation of the Lagonda Club, let us see some new faces at our competitive events for this coming season—you will be most welcome and just to give the necessary encouragement your Committee have decided to pay 50 per cent of the fees of the first twenty-one entries received for the Lagonda Race at the Bentley Drivers' Club Silverstone meeting on the 28th August. Let's keep them to it!

Will any members, particularly those new to the Club, who wish to receive entry forms and who are not as yet on the Competition mailing list please write to me at Old World End, Church End, Paglesham, Essex. While you have your pens and paper out, remember that Bob Davy is the Club's Chief Marshal and he would like to hear from anyone who would be willing to give him some support by marshalling at any of this year's events. Bob's address is: St. David's, Crawley Drive, Camberley, Surrey.

As you will have seen in the Newsletter the Bugatti Owners Club have invited us to enter a four-car team for an inter-club contest at their Prescott Hill Climb on 4th July. Response to this has been good and we have our team, but we still need some reserves—do please write to me.

The Finmere Driving Tests will take place on 25th July. This is the Club's major sporting event so let us have a bumper entry. With any luck there should be some new tests.

Turning to the social side, a visit has been arranged to the Aston Martin-Lagonda works at Newport Pagnell on Friday 25th June. Will those interested please write to me as soon as possible. First come—first served.

PETER LOE

**MARSHALS WANTED URGENTLY—ABLE BODIED MEN REQUIRED BY
BOB DAVY TO HELP CONTROL THIS SEASON'S COMPETITION EVENTS**

The Restoration of JBG492

PART 8

THIS PARTICULAR PART OF MY STORY COULD BE summed up in one sentence. I seem to have spent the whole of the last three months making the new insulated bulkhead and have still not finished it. Full stop. However, to relieve the boredom I have allowed myself to be diverted onto a few other interesting little jobs and having survived the usual Christmas orgies perhaps I can fulfil my contract with the Editor to fill a couple of pages after all.

After some pondering I decided to make an entirely new bulkhead from two layers of aluminium sheet with a 1 in. gap between filled with insulating material. The original extremely handsome cast aluminium side supports were still employed and the rest built onto these from .093 in. aluminium sheet. As soon as this decision had been reached plenty of snags were immediately apparent. The first is that anything fixed to either side of the bulkhead has to be provided with anchor nuts inside the insulating space and so obviously one has to build the whole edifice, decide where the accessories are going to be fitted, take it all to pieces, fit the anchor nuts and put it together again hoping that nothing has been forgotten. I finally decided that I would not put the battery under the bonnet and found that Exide make a long narrow 78 ampere hour battery that fits conveniently between the cruciform and the torsion bar on the near side of the chassis. I made up a suitable battery carrier to fit in this position which can be inspected by lifting the front floor boards.

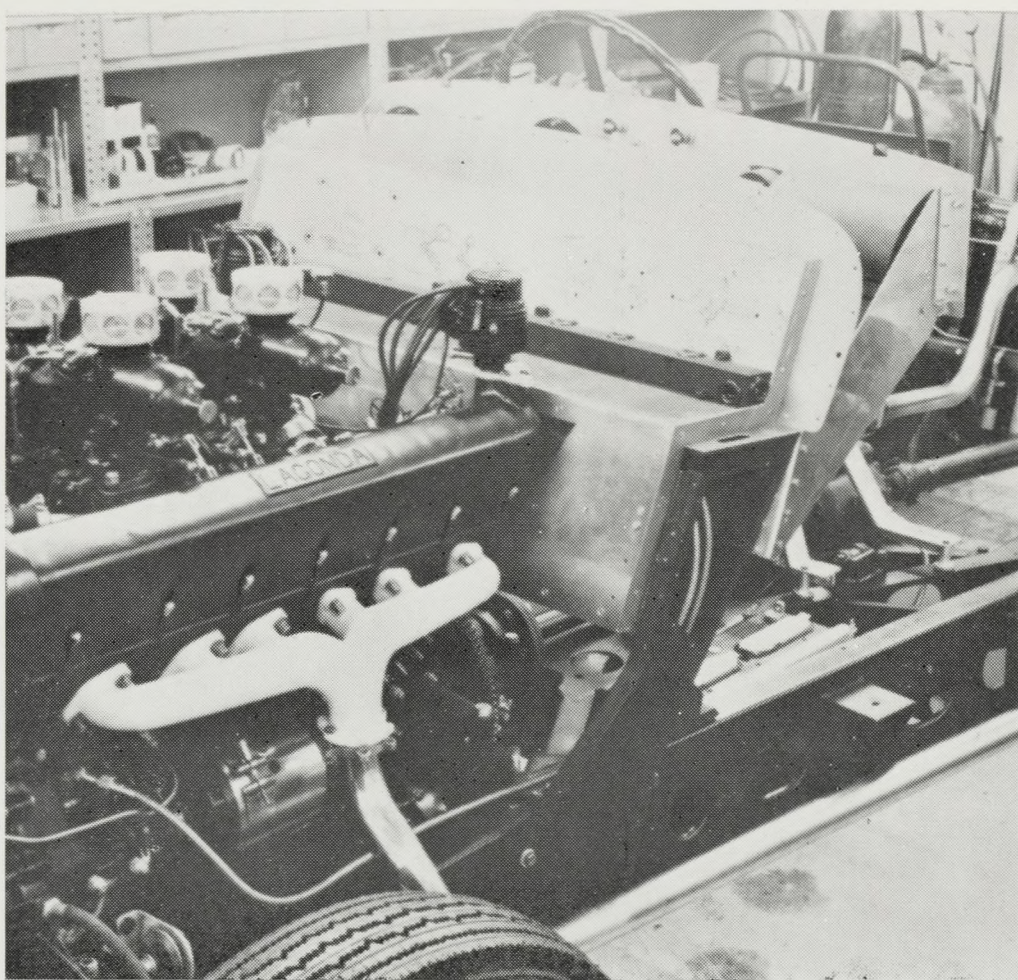
Next I built up the main bulkhead structure in a temporary fashion using 3/32 in. thick hand rolled aluminium sheet spaced apart round the edges with 1 in. thick hardwood strips. The only place where the double skin is impossible is behind the near side cylinder head which was very close to the original firewall. Here I shall have to rely on insulation inside the body.

Having got some sort of structure in place all the accessories which had been attached to the bulkhead were lined up for inspection. I decided to put the petrol pump, the coils, the voltage control and the two fuse boxes on the engine side of the bulkhead, the petrol filter into one of the

chassis side members and such modern pieces as the flasher unit, flasher relay box and horn relay on the back face where they will not show. A diversion was now allowed to sort out these accessories. The pump was sent to S.U. who returned it fully reconditioned in two days, the old fuse boxes were scrapped as identical new ones are still a current production at Lucas, two new Delco coils were bought, identical to the originals and the voltage control unit sent to Lucas for overhaul. All the appropriate holes for fitting these were then drilled in the bulkhead.

The steering column support bracket which is bolted to the off-side bulkhead side member has an enormous range of rake adjustment, presumably in case the works were called on to make a V.12 hearse. The bracket had been badly mauled in order to get an even lower rake than the bottom end of its slot normally allowed and so I fabricated a new and much smaller bracket giving only a very small range of rake and which looks considerably neater. I must mention here that I am not a skilled welder of aluminium but there has recently come on the market a so-called aluminium brazing rod made by Peter Stubs of Warrington. This can be used to join together any aluminium alloys in the same way as one would use brazing with other metals and it is simplicity itself to make a first class job after trying a few practice runs on something that does not matter.

The exhaust system on my car had gradually been reduced over the years to a botched up series of pieces of flexible joined to rusty lengths of what remained of the original pipe and was fit only for the scrap bin. From what I could deduce there had never been any silencers, the whole silencing effect depending on a Tubex fishtail on the end of each pipe. As another diversion from bulkhead making I rebuilt the whole affair with the help of my local tube manipulator. The manifolds were first fettled up and metal sprayed in aluminium. The remainder was made in 2 in. diameter 16 swg. stainless tube. On each side of the car this was divided into three portions joined with square bolted flange joints and all new suspension units were made up in stainless to the original pattern. These are rubber mounted to the chassis to allow for the rocking of the engine. The original Tubex fishtail which were chromium plated steel were still intact but very thin and my tube bending friend did a masterly reproduction of a pair of these in stainless steel. So I don't



The new bulkhead temporarily assembled with the "dashboard"

think the exhaust system should give me any trouble from corrosion but it remains to be seen whether it will pass the law regarding the noise.

As the starting handle was entirely missing I made a new one from $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. mild steel tube with a welded up box section crank and an aluminium tube hand grip. This took a whole day to make and I suppose it will only be used for setting the tappets.

While I was making the exhaust pipes I had to put the petrol tank temporarily in place to be sure that the pipes cleared it. The tank was in the usual revolting state on the outside and had about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of thick red syrup inside so I put the whole thing into a degreaser. When it came out the bottom was just like a sieve where it had rusted through. It was also clear that at some time a back spring had broken and the back axle had come backwards and dealt the tank a mighty blow which had not improved its shape. So I decided to have a new one made and this is at present in progress.

Having now had sufficient diversion from bulkhead manufacture I returned to it and took out of stock the new dashboard which I made about three years ago. I rigged this on temporary

brackets off the bulkhead in the position which it will occupy when fitted into the body. I did this in order to see what sort of holes I would need through the bulkhead for electrical connections and pipes. Fittings were made for the oil pressure gauge pipe and oil and water thermometer capillaries and their respective positions marked. Two new flexible drives for the rev. counter and speedometer were made by Speedometer Supplies Limited in their usual speedy manner and they also supplied me with a right angle gearbox for the engine end of the rev. counter drive which gives a neater run to miss the exhaust manifold. I shall eventually wire up the dashboard with quickly detachable plugs so that it can be removed and replaced when the body is fitted without my having to lie on my back for hours wiring up all the instruments.

The original sealing of the steering column, where it passes through the bulkhead, left a lot to be desired and I have remade this piece with a very positive seal. One of the greatest heat leaks from the bonnet to the cockpit must have been the electric cable ducts which are cast into the bulkhead side members and I shall pay particular attention to sealing these when the wiring is

complete. As the horns were missing from my car and they were not originally fitted externally I decided to fit the lightest and smallest which I could find and to hide them where they would not be seen. I chose a pair made by Marchal which come complete with a relay and as a matter of interest the whole outfit weighs less than the original relay only and fit very conveniently under the radiator. As an added bonus they make about twice as much noise as those previously fitted.

Just as I was about to remove the bulkhead for final drilling and reassembly I realised that the

transmission tunnel fits up to its back face above the flywheel. I dug out the old one from stock and it was in a deplorable, rusty battered state and so I resigned myself to the inevitable and have just started to make a new one. At least I can do this in light alloy instead of steel and pay a little more attention to the heat insulation than did the dear old men at the Works who I am quite sure were forced to turn out this prototype body in three days flat on pain of instant dismissal and whatever the gaffer wasn't going to see was done in the quickest possible way regardless of any niceties.

The Lagonda Car Club

WHILST LOOKING THROUGH SOME OLD BOUND volumes of *Motor Sport*, I came across the following extracts referring to the origins of the Lagonda Car Club, which I thought might be of interest to members. The fact that Mr. C. G. Vokes (the specialist on filtration) originated the Club was of particular interest to me, as I own, and use regularly, the 3-litre tourer KY 1700 which was one of the fleet of six Lagondas that he owned in pre-1939 days. Another of the fleet, a 3½-litre tourer, WS 2774, is still owned by Mr. Anthony Vokes, son of the originator of the Lagonda Car Club.

Extract from *Motor Sport* issue December 1932

We have received the following letter from Mr. C. G. Vokes, which will be of great interest to all owners of Lagonda cars.

"I am endeavouring to get together a Lagonda Car Owner's Club on similar lines to the well-known Riley Motor Club and others and should be glad to have the names and addresses of those who are interested. I have got about 100 addresses to start with and we hope to have a meeting one afternoon as soon as convenient at maybe Brooklands, or one of the London Air Clubs such as Hanworth or Heston, whichever is thought most suitable to get the members together for the first time and to elect officers, etc.

The tentative subscription suggested is one guinea, and a very attractive badge is being designed. The Rallies will be held in different parts of the country so that all owners will have an equal chance of participating.

If you could make any mention of this in your esteemed Journal, we should be very grateful indeed in the interests of the Sport Journal."

Extract from *Motor Sport* issue January 1933

Following the suggestion of Mr. C. G. Vokes (which appeared in the December issue of *Motor Sport*) that a Lagonda Car Club should be formed, definite steps have now been taken to start the club, and at a recent meeting the following officials were elected: *President*, General F. E. Metcalfe; *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*, Mr. C. G. Vokes; *Hon. Trials Secretary*, Mr. W. M. Couper; *Assistant Hon. Secretary*, M. H. Selby; *Committee*, Major W. H. Oates, *in the chair*, E. d'C. Carr, A. D. Jaffe, P. J. Fields-Richards, C. C. L. Brown.

The annual subscription is £1 1s. and a most attractive club badge can be obtained for one guinea.

Extract from *Motor Sport* issue May 1933

Following the formation of the Club recently, as already announced in *Motor Sport*, the inaugural meeting was held on 25th March at Hanworth Air Park.

An interesting programme was run off, which was a happy combination of rally, gymkhana and air display. The car events were a potato race, a parking test, musical chairs, and a prize for the member arriving from the greatest distance. Demonstrations were given of the Autogiro and the Lockheed Vega, and an interesting spectacle was a race between "Planettes". A dance in the clubhouse concluded the meeting, which everyone decided was a great success.

ROBBY HEWITT

Extracts with acknowledgments to *Motor Sport*.

The Lagonda Car Club (continued)

History

In the Autumn issue of the Club magazine I was most interested to see the double-page centre-spread photograph of the T.T. at Donnington Park, showing a very rare left-side view of the LG.45R Lagonda EPE 97. In the accompanying article by Mike Wilby he mentions the stub axle breaking, which put the car out of the race. No doubt many members will recall the photograph in *Speed* at the time, taken as the right front wheel was parting company with the car and before the driver had realized what had happened. It was reported as a broken stub axle in the motor magazines at the time and no one doubted it, but recently I read the following in Anthony Blight's remarkable tome *Georges Roesch and the Invincible Talbot*.

"(the Lagonda) went out four laps from the finish when a front wheel came off at the end of the straight. Once again, this was no fault of Fox and Nicholl. On factory instructions they had left the car behind after Le Mans for a Frenchman to drive in the French Grand Prix; he had crashed it there, and in the subsequent rebuild had confused the front stub axles so that they were refitted on the wrong sides, the nuts holding on the hubs tending to slacken instead of tighten under braking . . ."

Now this was an interesting Lagonda snippet to read in a Talbot book, but it did not give the full answer. Presumably Blight is talking about the large castellated nut inside the hub, in which case braking would have no effect on it, it would be the forward rotation of the wheel which would tend to unwind the nut, and presumably sheer the split pin. He could not have meant the winged hub nut for one of the mechanics must surely have checked their tightness before the race, and would have seen instantly that it was on the wrong side. Could the trouble have been that the rotation of the hub *tightened* the castellated nut to the point of seizure of the wheel bearings and subsequent sheering of the stub axle? Not having an LG.45R hub to hand I cannot say whether the right side stub axle should have a left or right-hand thread, but I would like to know more about that incident.

DENIS JENKINSON

* * *

HULL AND EAST RIDING MEMBERS NOTES

SOCIAL

Firstly the white wedding and our link is that yet again John Beardow's tourer has been selected as the bridal carriage. Maureen, daughter of Ted and Eleanor Townsley, was the bride, and Peter was the bridegroom. Maureen used to be a Lagonda Club member in her own right and together with her fiance has often marshalled and catered at northern events. The photograph shows their arrival for the reception at Monk Fryston Hall, scene of our last few Northern Dinner and Prizegiving functions.

We offer them our congratulations and best wishes and still hope to see Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dawes quite often.

The Autumn Social was once again generously laid on by the Townsleys, and there was an appreciative Hermes contingent.

Ted was also in the papers just before the wedding. There had been a plane crash and reporters were buzzing about from all over. One paused at Ted's garage to ask for directions, saw the Lagondas, took pictures, wrote it up, and made about a half-page feature.

NOVEMBER HANDICAP

We proudly claim to have supported this more than any other pub meet, with four starters out of the twelve. Ian and Mary North handicapped themselves from the Committee Trophy this year by turning up in their Riley Lynx, with John Spencer. Ken Pape took his merry crew, including John Broadbank, in a Vauxhall. There are some Lagondas still functioning hereabouts and Roy Paterson and Don Hoggard competed in the former's two-seater whilst B. Naylor went in his Rapier. He was short of a navigator and said so at the previous pub meet, so Henry Coates introduced him to neighbour Henry Johnson who, as an 'invited clubs' members has entered his pvt Bentley in a number of our events. The Rapier crew earned the Committee Trophy this time; two years running has it come to Regionalisation Area No. 5.

MAPS

A word of advice to prospective rally entrants. Lay the maps in early. Hull's biggest bookshop

was out of stock of Sheet 121 but not to worry, replacements were already in the pipeline as they like to keep up their complete selection. There was minor panic when they had not materialised the weekend before the event, so one member sent an SOS with LSD to DSJ, Secretary of the Meeting. (The jobs those volunteers let themselves in for!) He had no better luck so Pape and Paterson motored down to the start without a map between them. Consequently Ken's morning was spent tearing round Nottingham bookshops, keeping his engine running on the double yellow lines while John Broadbank sprinted across the pavements. The following weekend Sheets 121 were on the local shelves again.

WORK

A resurgence of repairs and rebuilding lately in which Henry Coates, John Beardow, and Ian have played prominent and helpful parts.

MARSHALLS

The Chairman and Managing Director of a sizeable local concern has recently noticed that one of his vans has been putting in more miles for us than it has for the firm. This is because of the number of night rallies round Yorkshire for which four or five Hermes reps. make themselves into a marshalling team, as on that dry moonlight night in the middle of the Cropton Forest Special Stage of the RAC Rally. A very good night was had by all, but we shudder to think what would happen to our prized Lagondas if so hard-driven.

1971 SEASON

Two Lagondas—Two Awards. Good start to this season's motoring. In the VSCC Nidderdale Rally our only Lagonda entries were B. Naylor (Rapier) and John Batt (2-litre). Both gained a Third Class Award having only 14 penalty points. Strictly speaking we cannot claim John Batt as a regular Hermes attender but as he has just moved into the north of the country we include him in case no-one else reports this 100 per cent Lagonda success. Ian and Mary North also completed the course but they had bad luck in the morning section and in any case they were not in their 16/80. Anyone want to buy a Riley Lynx?

ON THE ROAD

A Christmas card was received in Hull containing the information that member W. Roland Hill has now had his car on the road again. Private

road prior to MOT testing. His car is of course one of the really original M.45 Rapides.

TRANSPORT CAFE

Winter motoring in a vintage tourer is a thing on its own for exhilaration, always providing the motorists are suitably clad. Ours were as they went along in convoy. Break for refreshment at a transport cafe—implied insult to our one lady member. Weather dry but bitterly cold, pre-war flying helmets, old sheepskin jackets, ex-service greatcoats, long woolly scarves, and hirsute countenances.

Assistant behind the counter—Er, you're not on motorbikes are you?

Spokesman—Certainly not madam. We've arrived in vintage sports cars. Why do you ask?

Assistant—Thank goodness for that sir. It's more'n my job's worth to serve anybody on a motorbike. If we do the police won't help us if there's any bovver.

And at that two uniformed policemen came from the kitchens and went out. To check our vintage cars? Mary North is certainly no motorbike moll!

HERMES

NOVEMBER HANDICAP

HANDICAP IS THE PRECISE TERMINOLOGY, SO immediate congratulations to the winning Beedhams. They had a mere 2304.2 penalty points whilst the last qualified finisher amassed 7687.3. Presumably the computer could not cope above 9999.9 hence five drivers failed to qualify. One of them was Don Hoggard who drove quietly and capably throughout, even managing 19 m.p.g. overall, but was unable to overcome the inexactitudes of your special correspondent in his unaccustomed role of navigator, the better—he thought—to make notes for this report commissioned in the car park at very short notice. There were three non-starters. If only the organisers had known they could have saved themselves a tremendous amount of time, trouble and worry on the admin. side as regs. for small number events are negligible. Hard luck D. S. Johnson and friends. Despite the high number of penalty points there are no complaints, and potential entrants for the next Handicap should not be deterred.

It was a great day. After early morning rain it soon became dry, the hoods were down, the sky was blue, the sun was never clouded; and the Peak District National Park was a picture with steep hills, hairpin bends, bleak moorland tops, precipices, and motionless cascades of glorious autumn colours layering down to the bottoms of the valleys where little bridges humped over tumbling streams keeping company with the wayside lanes. And virtually no traffic impedence. Every enlightened participant must have thoroughly enjoyed it. Yes, a Great Day.

The cunning of the Handicap began at the planning stage as was obvious to one marshall. He is convinced that the route had been finalised during a quick tour just after a heavy shower and the checkpoints sited where the biggest puddles remained. An apparent leakage resulted in a dire shortage of marshalling gentlemen and last minute re-allocations to different time controls led to some hectic competition between marshall and competitor to arrive there in the appropriate order. The former just made it to number one. Must have been quite a spectacle to see the doctoral Daimler limousine being flung round the bends with his family wedging themselves in the seats. Another little joke was a later puddle with considerable olfactory discomfort, rather too close to a farm with a powerful muckheap. Here there was a sudden commotion and great squawking followed by a mechanical cacophony from which a young assistant timekeeper forecast the imminent appearance of the first old Lagonda. Fortunately it heralded the appearance of an off-colour three-wheeler. Presently the ill-surfaced lane was straight as a die for miles and from afar a strange lonely waiting figure could be seen. He could not be a marshall because (a) he was alone and they should always be in pairs, and (b) there was no car in sight and marshalls are not pedestrians. It transpired however that he was a low E-type marshall, low car of course and hidden by a slight dip in the road. On second thoughts the term E-type also referred to the marshall. Excellent in approach, charming in manner, and giving absolutely nothing away. Exemplary. Another control was so remote that the untroubled staff were eventually glad to hear an aeroplane as a sign that civilisation had not yet ceased. But what of the start?

Start Control was in the comfortable lounge of a decent hotel with four star mod cons and spacious car parks. Signing in was beside a

vintage nautical chronometer with John Turner presiding over his daughters sealing the re-set watches, and not into the usual cumbersome vulnerable glass boxes either. D. S. Johnson was firmly in command and distributed his firm's cattle-market tally labels as competition numbers front and rear. Unfortunately they didn't stimulate any big bids for my machine. Committee members Ody and Woollard played their parts believing in the adage 'If you're not competing, marshall.' Members of the Bentley Drivers' Club had been invited, and they were there. Navigators were to report for briefing, but somehow that was off. No wonder five of them went astray.

Our particular car park was full of interest, from a recent DB Aston Martin to the Stephen Weld 1930 Silver Crossley pictured in magazine No. 70. Oldest of the cars was a 1928 Bentley 4½-litre with cabinet-maker's polished wood bonnet boards, but a technical colleague's interest evaporated when he saw it had a complete Jaguar front suspension—"Might be a Jag chassis as well . . . but it's certainly not a Jag back axle." Another Bentley was L. Wilton's 1929 tourer looking most original. First among the Lagondas must be mentioned the 1935 Le Mans winner lent for today's occasion to Julian Down and his crew. Fancy having a priceless specimen like that and lending it out for competitive roadwork and driving tests. One supposes that will be typical of the owner remembering the adage 'If you're organising, then lend your Lagonda.' (Henry Coates did the same way back in '63 when he lent his car to the undersigned. Come to think of it there is a fair amount of lending in our club.) The bare polished aluminium bonnet of Saw's 3½-litre Lag must have been embarrassingly dazzling to its crew in the noonday sun, while the rich blue of the paintwork complemented the heavens above; yet Naylor's cream Bertelli Rapier would have won the concours class if there had been one. The remaining pvt Lagonda was one of those exclusive creations by Monsieur Henri de la Colline aux Porceaux. J. Caine's 2.6 DB partnered the winner's DB3 in the post-war department where M. Johnson's Mk VI saloon was the Bentley representative. Ian and Mary North were in their Riley Lynx this time. The antics of the owner were reminiscent of Laurel-and-Hardy motoring as he stood on the running board bending very low under the uplifted bonnet while being briskly circulated round the car park by John Spencer. Seriously,



Scenes from the November Handicap



they were trying to locate trouble. They must have done their diagnosis well because later with Mary behind the wheel (and last year's Committee Trophy behind her) they finished second overall. Not bad with a dicky speedo. Had they been in their 16/80 they would have won that trophy again, but they had to settle for best pre-war car other than Lagonda. Our member Ken Pape in his Ventora completed the starters.

The first section had to be covered at a speed just faster than the four minute mile, viz., one mile every $3\frac{3}{4}$ minutes. At one time my driver must have worked his way to the front because when we stopped to pass the time away—what would you do dear reader with a spirited throughbred $4\frac{1}{2}$ and a 16 m.p.h. average?—most of the others passed us, each and every one slowing down further to ask if we needed help. Encouraging thought for members contemplating their first entry. Navigation was by tulip method, the one that is easy to follow. On the move we unexpectedly found the Rapier on our tail. Confidently we turned left. They went straight on. The Ventora caught us up. (16 m.p.h. average remember.) We went straight on there. They turned a different way and we saw them no more. We became unsure and switched off to consult the instructions, the maps, and each other. A rasping sound rent the air. We speedily homed on this and caught up the rip-roaring Riley as Mary North once again decelerated and let all Derbyshire know it. We followed them into a time control. But they snorted away and we lost them in spite of their sound signals. This section finished at Crich Tramway Museum. Bentley L. Wilton the only one with no time penalties at this stage. Busy time at Crich. Two driving tests, (1) Le Mans start, (2) Forward and reverse, to place rear nearside wheel in box. Best time for tests, G. P. Saw. Interesting terminus but top up car, make little adjustments, work out all navigation for next section, have snack, and re-pack impedimenta. No time to see interesting exhibits. No star toilets.

* * *

Section Two was by map references and higher average speed. Only snag was encounter with a pack of hounds, huntsmen, horses and hangers-on homeward plodding their weary way back to the kennels. This section must have been twice as easy because two crews had no time penalties, Wilton again, and Caines. It ended at a very superior transport cafe, toilets four star.

Section Three was the conundrums. During the preliminary mapwork in the cafe I overheard "How do we recognise a spotheight?" "What's a triangulation point?" and "Do the arrows on a steep hill point upwards or downwards?" The light began to fail on this section and I was thinking either I had made a mistake or the instructions might possibly be wrong when we found ourselves on Wilton's tail. And where I didn't know which way to turn, he did. Neither did he pull into the side and wave us on as some crafty ones had done, he gave a magnificent hand signal and let us follow him right into a control. The marshalling Turners thought I had done very well. The Bent went left, the Lag followed. Others did not turn but we felt secure behind the experts. Soon they stopped. We stopped. But they were investigating strange noises down in the works, listening intently to their bearings. We had to ask for ours. They decided it was an exhaust gasket, assured us they could fix it, and wished us well. We had gone out forty yards when there was an almighty explosion, a voluminous exhaust cloud, and their car disappearing into its own smoke screen, rapidly and in reverse. They managed to make it to the finish but had run out of time. Hard luck, they had been going so well.

* * *

Section Four. Completely dark now and the bitter cold of a radiation night. I do know that at one point it was a shock to come upon the team car at the side of the road, massive headlights blazing, and devoid of crew. Mystery? Tragedy? No, they were squatting round their map outspread on the road surface some yards ahead. Was this their moment of truth, deciding whether to continue and freeze or cut back to the hotel and thaw out? Over the years November Handicaps have a tradition of combining a number of sections each with a different navigating method, and 1970's was no exception. Further details of this last section may be obtained from any finisher.

* * *

Another spiel that had been played at the planning stage was the shooting off of a spool of film. A full set of prints was issued to each crew and en route they had to spot where the shutter had been clicked and supply all the map references. Congratulations here to the Crossley navigator who proved to be best at this. It was

all her own work too, her driver admitted he had given no help.

* * *

It was a busy finish, checking in of route sheets and answers, collecting the modified road books, and counting the photographs. The finish was at the start if you see what I mean, the welcome warm comfy Post House Trust House, Sandiacre. Most crews stayed on for dinner but some had to set off for home right away, missing what promised to be quite a party.

I heard later from Stephen Weld as follows:

"Things really went quite according to plan, although we did rather seem to get later and later at subsequent checkpoints as dusk wore on, due to lack of both direction, and intelligence to understand the instructions (clues?).

Elizabeth, my navigator did very well really. She had to look out for windpumps, old factories, non-existent churches, scrabble around with maps and instructions, read all the signposts, and keep our position on the map. As dusk fell, and the Peak National Park assumed the appearance of a sort of Himalayan wilderness, only darker and colder, we found ourselves on a nice road going from somewhere to somewhere else, which was very nice except that it didn't seem to have much to do with any rally instructions. So we stopped—to be immediately accosted by a Police Mobile Patrol. They were very helpful and enquired after our welfare, to which I replied that we knew exactly where we were, but we were lost. However, we came through in the end!

I always feel that marshalls do a great job on these rallies: I well know what it's like. I think all competitors should do a stint of marshalling from time to time (as I'm sure they do) just to remind themselves what hell it can be!

Anyhow, it was a very pleasant day, and the Park was looking quite marvellous."

For the record: Thanks to the BDC for their support and thanks to all who helped and especially David Johnson. And finally:—

THE AWARDS

Winner, First overall, Night Trial Trophy—G. Beedham, Lagonda DB.3; Best Lagonda, Committee Trophy—B. Naylor, Rapier; Second overall, Best Pre-war Car Award—Mary North, Riley Lynx; Best Bentley, BDC Eastbourne Trophy—M. Johnson, Mk. VI.

Finishers—K. Pape, S. Weld, H. Harben (1928 Bentley 4½-litre).

ROY PATERSON

RE-BIRTH OF LAGONDA

New Design 2½ Litre Luxury Car

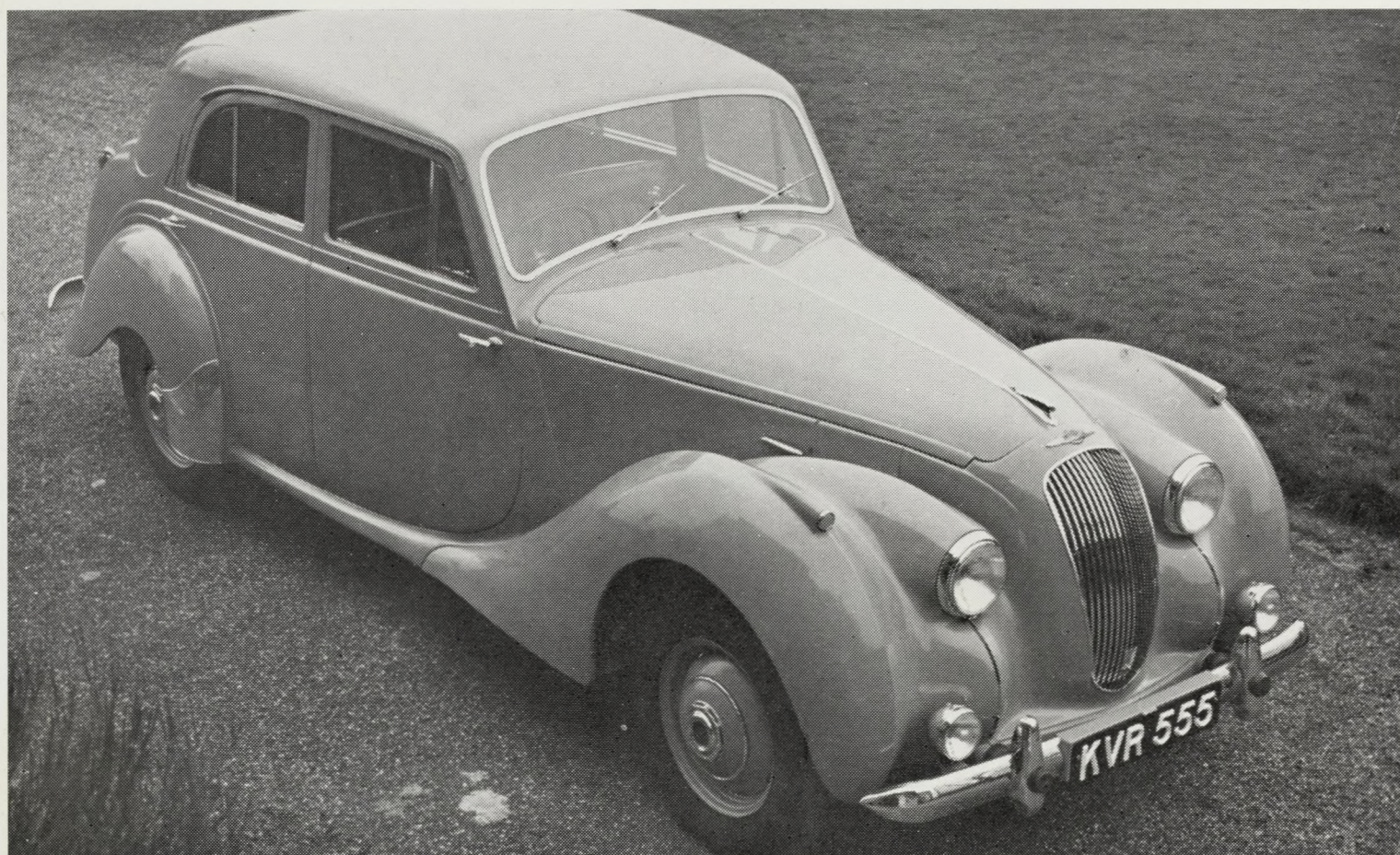
EXTENSIVE PROGRAMME OF PRODUCTION
EXPANSION

The Lagonda Co., Ltd., held a dealer convention at the Hanworth Park Hotel, Feltham, recently, to celebrate the re-birth of the Lagonda Company and the 50th anniversary of the name as applied to petrol engine vehicles. A large and representative gathering attended the convention, at the invitation of Mr. David Brown (of David Brown Tractors, Ltd.), who are developing the new company.

Staines has been proudly associated with Lagonda cars from their earliest inception, when in 1898, Mr. Wilbur Gunn, a young American engineer, came over from America and teamed up with British colleagues, to produce a single-cylinder motorcycle. The first of these was actually built on the lawn of Mr. Gunn's house at Staines, and later there grew up the Lagonda factory. From this beginning, Gunn developed the Lagonda tri-car, which won the Gold Medal in the London—Edinburgh reliability trial in 1908. The following years saw an extension of their design, and an expansion in the production of the now famous V.12 car, which was the first production car to exceed 100 m.p.h. Its long, sleek, powerful appearance is familiar to thousands of people.

The Company was eventually taken over by David Brown Tractors in September, 1947, and it was then announced that Lagonda cars would no longer be built. The current Lagonda is an entirely new design throughout. Its 2½-litre engine develops 105 b.h.p., and it has a unique chassis frame, a pure cruciform with independent suspension on all four wheels. It is the most advanced chassis in the world. The performance is outstanding, with a top speed of well over 90 m.p.h., and its superb comfort and road holding qualities are rapidly becoming a by-word in the motoring world.

Mr. David Brown was in an ideal position to develop the new car. The tremendous resources of his company, the craftsmen, and all the engineering skill necessary for so great a project were readily available.



Since the concern was taken over by Mr. David Brown, whose firm is the third largest tractor producing company in Britain, the original design by W. O. Bentley has been much modified as a result of experience on the road, and much has been done to make the 1950 Lagonda one of the most attractive cars on the road. The bodywork is entirely craftsman-built at the Feltham Works of Lagonda Ltd., tailored to suit the buyer, and available in any colour scheme, with either saloon or coupe body. Styling is modern but restrained, the familiar early type Lagonda radiator cowl being almost submerged into a smooth, streamlined frontage, which blends admirably into the lines of the coachwork.

Lagonda engines, hitherto built at Feltham, are now manufactured at an associated factory at Farsley, near Leeds, so that the Feltham factory is given over to body and chassis manufacture. This is one of the first benefits of the new association with the David Brown Group of Companies. Another is the facilities for development of high-performance transmission components from the Huddersfield plant of David Brown & Sons Ltd. A third advantage of the new tie-up is the assistance given by the parent company in producing jigs and tools for modernising assembly methods at Feltham.

It is hardly surprising that such a car should have taken so long to develop and to put into production. It was first necessary to overcome the usual teething troubles inherent in all new type cars, and then to ensure a continuous production in the new works before turning attention to body and equipment refinements.

A visit to the works suffices to show the care and precision which goes into the car's construction. Assembly is carried out by skilled men, some of whom were with the Staines organisation for many years—as were the body engineer and many of his assistants. The body is a true coach-built type, rare in these days, and it is with some pride that Staines, pioneer town of so great a car, can look forward to the continuance of that name in the commercial development of the Lagonda as a specialist car, worthily upholding the finest reputations of British design and craftsmanship.

The data of the new car is interesting. A six cylinder engine with twin overhead-camshafts, a rating of 22.6 h.p., gives a maximum speed of more than 90 m.p.h., the speed being limited only by the type of road. It has a 19-gallon petrol tank and averages 18-20 miles per gallon.

Vibration is almost entirely absent through the whole speed range, and it purrs effortlessly up steep gradients. In top gear the smooth silkiness

of its performance can be gauged by the fact that speeds as low as eight m.p.h. are possible. The use of Lockheed hydraulic brakes permits of smooth, powerful braking, so necessary in a car such as this. Driving vision is good and the car can only be described as a "dream".

(Reprinted from the *Staines Herald*, March 1950 with acknowledgements.)

A Visit to Brian Morgan's Workshop

I AM QUITE SURE THAT EVERY MEMBER OF THE Club has at some time found a comfortable corner in his garage and there, within sight of his car and the work he is engaged upon, allowed himself the luxury of imagining himself the owner of a private workshop.

By the kind invitation of Brian Morgan a dozen Midland members and their wives met on the 8th December and for all too brief an evening saw how such a dream had become reality. I had hoped that I might have been able to give members a description of what we saw but I found myself quite unprepared for the size and the scope of the project and realised that I was technically unqualified to do justice to it. Rather reluctantly I asked Brian Morgan if he would help; by return of post came the attached description which needs no further introduction.

We have been reading in the magazine an account of the rebuilding of the V.12 Lagonda and I am particularly anxious not to encroach on these preserves. However, I feel bound to tell you that the written word gives no real idea of the absolute perfection of the work already completed. The day approaches when the car will be on the road again. I am hoping that it may be in time for our Jubilee meeting at Staines next autumn, as we could have no more fitting centre-piece for our celebrations. I feel that we as a Club should be grateful that the resources of so splendid a workshop should be put to the restoration of a V.12 Lagonda.

The feelings of the Midland section were voiced by Les Buckton who thanked Brian Morgan for this most interesting evening.

P. A. DENSHAM,
Midlands Secretary

MY WORKSHOP

CLUB MEMBERS MUST BE GETTING TIRED OF HEARING about my V.12 and after reading the above I shall be scared stiff of bringing it out for public scrutiny. Peter has been very kind in what he has said but I must be allowed to say that there are plenty of other vintage and PVT cars that have been restored to higher standards than I have the patience to attain.

A description of my workshop and its contents are roughly as follows. The building is attached to my house and is a long rectangular construction of some 65 x 25 feet. Because it is built on sloping ground the front 25 feet is two-storey with the ground floor used as the everyday car garage above which is a loft. The remainder of the building has a floor level six feet higher than the front part and is single storey. Access to the rear part by car is up a sloping drive along the side of the building with a car wash at the higher level and a 14 ft. up-and-over door opening into the workshop at the rear of the building. The front garage will hold one large car (mine), one medium car (my wife's), one small car (Paul's), one tiny car (the de Dion) and one motor bike. The loft has an access door from the workshop at about three feet above floor level so that with strong planks, a trolley and a winch quite large pieces can easily be parked out of the way when a car is dismantled. The floor of the loft was stressed to 3 cwt. per sq. ft., so that there is no fear of a large and heavy engine suddenly descending through the ceiling onto the cars below.

The workshop itself is divided into a machine shop and an erecting shop with double swing doors between. The reason for this is that the erecting shop eventually has to serve as a garage for the finished product which can arrive home covered in snow and the consequent humidity can play havoc with machine tools if no separation exists between the two. From previous experience I found that one is nearly always working in artificial light however many windows one may have and so I decided to have no windows at all. As wall space is always at a premium I also decided to have the heating in the form of hot water pipes at a height of 7 ft. above the floor which gives clean walls up to this height all round. In the erecting shop the walls are mostly taken up with steel shelving and nests of drawers for the

myriad of stock items one tends to collect. The heating system has proved excellent and keeps the whole place at a constant 65°F. A lifting beam with 10 cwt. block spans the width of the erecting shop so that an engine can be lifted out and put onto an engine stand or onto a trolley and wheeled up into the loft.

The only working equipment permanently installed in the erecting shop is a pair of soldering benches and the oxy-acetylene gear. These create fumes which are corrosive to machine tools. There are two extractor fans built into the ceiling in case the fumes become too dense. I also have an air compressor in here with air piped round the whole building with snap in connectors at convenient intervals. This is used for swarf blowing, paint spraying (done outside on fine days only), tyre inflation and for a gas blowpipe used for brazing and soldering.

As Paul and I share the workshop we have slowly accumulated enough equipment to have one each of the essentials. He has one side of the erecting shop and I have the other and so we don't get in each other's way. We do share the wash-hand basin and so share the blame for the filthy state of the towel when it gets traded in for a clean replacement from the distaff side of the household. Talking of towels reminds me that we have completely solved the dirty rag problem by using paper rag torn off an 18 in. wide roll. This is wonderful for all uses except polishing and, for some psychological reason, hand drying.

Coming now to the machinery we have two reasonably modern lathes. I have a Colchester Triumph 2000 which will swing 7 in. radius above the bed. This is a most excellent tool with plenty of power for making full use of carbide tooling and a speed range up to 2,000 r.p.m. which is very useful when turning small pieces. Paul has a Wilson 7 in. which used to be mine and again there are very few motor car parts that cannot be got into this machine. Both lathes are fitted with pre-set tool holding which allows instant tool changing with no packing pieces necessary.

We have a pillar drilling machine, Paul's is a normal $\frac{1}{2}$ in. capacity sensitive machine but mine is rather more robust with a speed range from 40-2,100 r.p.m. and capable of driving up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. cutters.

My milling machine is a G. H. Alexander "Toolmaster" which has both horizontal and vertical spindle attachments, a dividing head and a rotating table. This can be used as a jig borer

if needed. Paul has a very ancient but still accurate vertical miller which I bought and overhauled about 20 years ago and which is still a very useful and robust machine.

We each have a band saw with about a 12 in. throat. These use $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide saws and are fitted with back gearing so that their speed range will cover cutting stainless steel at the low end up to wood at the high end.

Finally we have between us a very small CVA centre lathe which is of model-makers proportions but which is useful for making small screws and odd little pieces, a Taylor Hobson engraving machine, ex W-D in 1948 for £5, and fun for putting the lettering onto the odd inscribed plate that has to be made occasionally and a vertical belt finisher which takes the hard work out of filing and fettling things that don't have to be accurate.

That completes the list of machinery and the rest of our equipment consists of a good solid bench each and the usual selection of hand tools that one accumulates over years of playing with motor cars. Building a new workshop did give me the opportunity of laying it out exactly as experience had taught me would be convenient. Good lighting is essential and we have daylight coloured vapour tubes in the ceiling with all the walls painted white. All the machines use a 400v, 3 phase supply and I put in 230v sockets at regular intervals all round the walls as well as hanging down from the ceiling in the centre of the erecting shop.

That is a rough description of the place where I spend so many happy hours. It has all slowly developed from a pre-fabricated wooden shed which I first put up at the bottom of the garden of my previous house in 1947 and which was just large enough to hold the 1914 G.P. Opel which I had bought during the war and which was my first old car restoration. No heating, 2-60 watt bulbs, no lifting tackle, no space to work but the beginning of a life long hobby.

BRIAN MORGAN

The Autumn magazine will be published on 28th September. All copy to be in the Editor's hands by 1st August please

Twelve into One will Go

or

The Story behind a Special Exclusive Creation

OUR CHERISHED LAGONDAS, BLESS 'EM, RESULT from many and varied approaches. Occasionally one hears of one with a Jaguar engine. Or one overhears snatches of conversation such as

Member A: You don't know where I can get hold of an old London bus chassis do you? I only want it for the gearbox. For my new special.
or Member B: Let me have a drive in your car and you can have a go in mine. You've never met a gearbox like it. Alvis of course. It's a lot better than the old T.8.

Or the following is enacted.

Members M and V. (Evening. A deserted field near Carlisle.) Enter these two gentlemen disguised as mechanics. They approach a model and begin their manhandling; it is an early three litre. They work hard and late dismantling, because most of the parts are to be transported in a plain van—Lagonda, commercial!—doing the long trip on two nights. As one of the members was in holy orders and the other had a name for truth, there is no doubt that when they offered to help with a Lagonda Special the parts supplied were 100 per cent ex vintage Lagonda.

GAZETTEER

Barwick-in-Elmet, Beverley, Bridlington, Buxton, Camerton, Carlisle, Carrutherstown in Dumfries-shire . . . and so the list could be continued. What is common to these places? They have all been sources of spares that have been sent to the Hill Farm Workshop, the fixed focal point of this writing.

For decades its owner has here attended to Lagondas of many shapes and sizes, sometimes removing parts from his current car to send them all over the place to members in dire and urgent need.

MAGAZINE BACK NUMBERS

Number 30 included his 'Lagonda Log by Henry Coates' giving information on his cars up to 1958, but no inkling of his next one. Suddenly it appeared, at the Northern Rally in July 1959. In No. 32, B.D-B reported . . . 'an excellent piece of hybridery which is yet entirely Lagonda and

which performed extremely well on its first time out.' Extremely well includes Class Award on its maiden voyage. The cover picture of No. 39 was the car in working rig with farm trailer attached, no doubt filled with driving test cones, balls of string, coils of rope, crates of beer, and other competition impedimenta for a Northern Rally. Then in No. 42 appeared the 'History of a Contraption'. This interesting discourse set out the reasons for producing such a car and reported on its early competition life. To my disappointment there was nothing of the bit between the reasons and the competitions, no revelation of what went into the car and how it was engineered on the workshop floor at Swine.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Swine happens to be the name of the village in the East Riding of Yorkshire where Hill Farm and its workshop are.

The car itself has been as diversely misnamed as: M.45 Special 2-Str. (1962 Members Register), 2/4½L Spl. 1935 (1968 ditto), 4¼-litre, Lagonda a la cart (Mag. No. 39), The Red Devil (49), and the Swine Large Special (61). As for Contraption? I ask you, after reading B.D-B above, and his continuation . . . 'There is a certain fitness one feels, in having bodywork which is contemporaneous with the rest of the car, as in this case.'

THE POINT

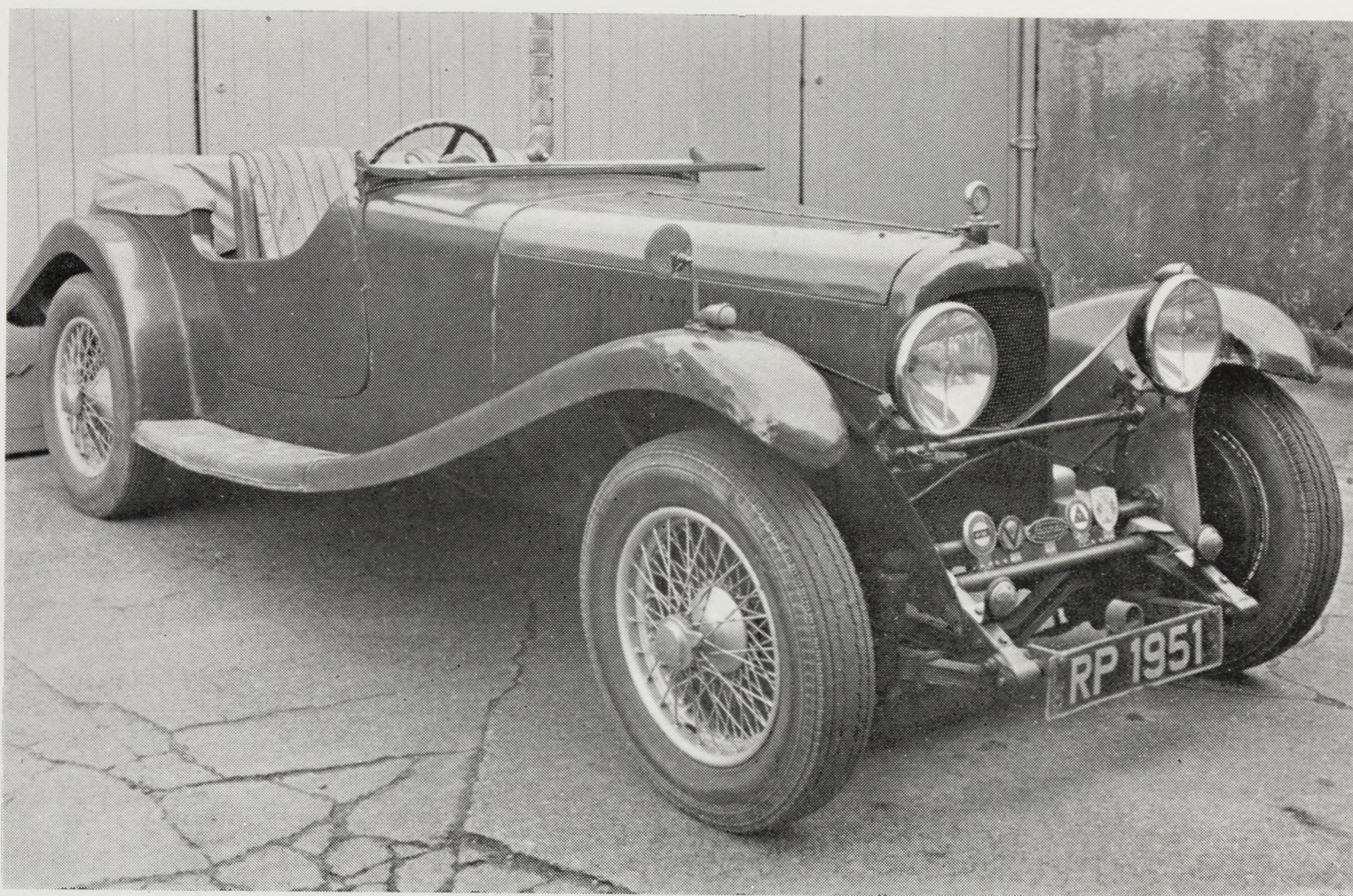
However, I digress. Let's concentrate on the moving focal point of this feature, the car itself. Throughout its existence other people have looked upon it as somewhat of a mystery. So I attempt to put the record straight—then let it be laid to rest after all has been revealed.

THE DETAILS

Here are the details of the Henry Coates Special as it is today.

Chassis—From an old 4½-litre shooting brake provided by Carruthers of Carrutherstown. Chris Slater sent the chassis down by train. The front part was better than the rear; the gearbox was sold. Meanwhile there was a 3½-litre at Beverley with its front end crumpled and all its rivets loose. The rear part of this chassis was strengthened and joined to the front of the Scottish chassis.

Springs—Fronts were with the chassis. Rears are from a high 2-litre chassis which also arrived by train in the far-off days when there was a railway service to our neighbouring villages.



The Henry Coates Special

Front axle—From an 'as new' 3½-litre chassis provided by Jack Foster of nearby Newport. This axle was meant to remain with the chassis complete, but in an emergency it was transferred to the hybrid car after it had been on the road for several hard-working years.

Back axle—The casing, but not the present 3·6 diff. unit, is from the Carruthers brake.

Engine—There was once a beautiful blue 'concours' LG.45 saloon with extra chromium on its Sanction One engine. Eventually it became neglected and joined the Dennis Roberts collection. As a 'ropey saloon' it was bought from his Peak District premises and set off for Swine, but in point of fact never travelled further than Ted Townsley's at Barwick, where the engine was removed. After a couple of seasons in the special, it was replaced for a short time by an LG.45 engine from Glasgow, a Sanction Four, but the original Sanction One is now back after a routine and a later emergency rebuild incorporating the usual spares from Ivan.

Gearbox—T.8.

Radiator—Early three litre due to the efforts of Messrs. Hilary Morse and Verity in that

aforementioned field, and also indirectly to Chris Slater again. The shell was in poor condition and so was painted the same as the car, a convenient and contemporaneous touch just like J. W. T. Crocker's thrustful Rapier. Although from a 3-litre, it cooled the 4½ engine without even a fan until a few seasons ago. Lately it has sometimes boiled with the fan refitted, but unfortunately replacement radiators are playing hard-to-get.

Radiator Cap—From a special 2-litre, the once well-known Pig-Truck which made those two overnight trips to Carlisle. Its remains were bought by Ken Pape of Beverley many years ago and earmarked for reconstruction, a work now in progress but far from completion. Until then I have the tommy-barred cap on extended loan. Nevertheless I look forward to the time when it is back where it belongs and we have another vintage Lagonda on the road.

Bonnet—When Jack Allison was a member he had for a time a 3-litre tourer with a 2-litre engine. This bonnet is from that.

Tank and sides of boot—From a 3½-litre saloon, the boot sides being cunningly inverted.

Seats—Exceptionally comfortable and from a scrap LG.45 saloon discovered in Bridlington.

Steering wheel—Ex some other LG.45.

Front wings—From a 16/80 found in a field near Camerton.

Hood frame—Supplied by the Spares Registrar and extended to fit.

What else is there to mention? Oh yes, rear wings, boot lid, and folding screen, etc. None just taken from a car but all craftily tailored to measure.

SUMMARY

To summarise: one man has constructed into a harmonious whole the bits and pieces supplied through at least ten Lagonda friends and from a minimum of a dozen cars... yet entirely Lagonda, as that reporter said.

Opinions may differ on the appearance of the car, but I maintain that it is presentable and purposeful. I count myself most fortunate to be the second owner, and therefore prejudiced in its favour; so I include an illustration and trust that most readers will agree with me.

On that first appearance it gained that award. There were further innumerable awards for its constructor, a dozen or so for me, and also a cup for a friend on the occasion that I let an 'other-makes' driver have a go. No-one can deny that it is a very successful sports-car.

But it is a mouthful to have to describe it truthfully every time as a 2/3/3½/4½ model.

JO PADILLA

He's not a Lagonda Club member, so where does he come in? Well, I've produced one or two 8 mm cine films of local members enjoying their cars, and CARmen seemed an appropriate suite for background music to accompany these motoring sports, but I wondered whether my own car could have its individual signature tune. I decided to try the ReliCARio. The music emphasises the get-up-and-go character of the car, and the car reflects the spirit of the music. Thus I'm pleased with Jo. He composed the piece and supplied the title, which is translatable and quite apt.

CONCLUSION

Now if I had to give my car a pet *nom de guerre*, EL RELICARIO would be it. (Sounds just right for a one-off Lagonda.) And if you had to select a musical theme for your particular car, what would your choice be?

ROY PATERSON

The Art of Motor Vehicle Restorations

(CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE)

Bodywork repairs were left until a fairly late stage in case of any damage during the rebuild. As with most coachbuilt cars there was a certain amount of woodrot. Fortunately this was mainly confined to the back end of the car. All the rotted wood was cut away, and using the remnants as a pattern a new framework was built up, using teak and marine ply. Fortunately another friend of mine, skilled in the use of hammer, saw and chisel was lured round by devious means and between us quite a respectable job was made. The new framework was attached to the original wood, cut back to beyond the point of wood rot, using Cascomite and coach screws (I can see Brian Morgan wincing!) and provided, once again, proper support for the rear mudguards and boot-lid (I plastered everything resembling wood with about three coats of silver wood-preserve, as experiences with a previous car had caused me to have recurring nightmares about creeping wood-rot!)

The running boards were also removed at this stage and new marine-ply strengtheners laminated for the underside before their re-fitting. My attention was now turned to the actual "carosserie" and the car was sent to a local panel beater who soon removed the various dents and other unpremeditated coachwork modifications. The back wings in particular having suffered from being run into during the course of the car's existence!

When I got the car back I still had to fit the shaped strip running under the boot lid. This, I discovered to my discomfiture was concave where it should have been convex (probably a legacy from the same bump that did for the wings!) Using methods I shall not describe here (I can only say that mole-grips, large hammers and Isopon were utilised!) I managed to make the strip fit once again, and after being bolted to the previously prepared teak frame, was smoothed into the wing-valances, ready for spraying. The rear lights were also missing, however this problem was solved when I discovered some pre-war rear light units, ideal for the job in my firm's electrical stores. (In fact I bought up all the old lights they had for a fairly nominal sum and

subsequently did quite a brisk trade with local "vintagents". I still have a few left folks!) A new rear number plate mounting also had to be made as the original had suffered the ravages of time (among other things) and to this was fitted a nice vintage-looking dee-light doubling as a stop/tail light and number plate light. I also turned up a pair of knurled knobs like the originals, so that the number plate and light can be resited when the boot is open. These, along with the headlamps and hub nuts were replated at a very reasonable cost by Advanced Anodising Ltd., of Islington. A lot of the little fiddling tasks which always seem to take such an age were also carried out at this stage such as the stripping and re-varnishing of the interior woodwork—organised by yet another friend.

While this work had been going on, I agreed to have the car ready to use for the wedding of another friend, one Peter Hill.

There were several reasons for this. On Peter's side he wanted to use something out of the ordinary. And on my side, I firstly thought that having a target date might instill me with some sense of urgency, to get the car complete and running (which it did) and secondly I thought it would be a good method of conning Peter into providing assistance, in this, I might add I was also 100 per cent successful!

Peter is a bit of a dab hand with a spray gun, and at the time he was also the work-study engineer at an electrical manufacturing company. By devious means he managed to obtain permission from the hierarchy to borrow their sprayshop to respray the Lagonda. Having meticulously rubbed the bodywork down, to the detriment of my patience and benefit of my biceps the car was towed along to the factory, minus windscreen, lights, trim, etcetera and work was begun. I had decided to use a two-tone scheme as I felt that on a car the size of the LG one colour would be too much. When I bought the car the colour scheme was all silver to the waistline with a black bonnet and roof. This was altered after much deliberation to aubergine wings, silver sides and aubergine again above the waistline. This was done as I felt that the wings were rather vulnerable and it is almost impossible to match up silver if it is scratched.

We elected to do the aubergine bits first and religiously masked up the appropriate parts after having first sprayed the whole lot in a flat primer. Two long evenings were spent spraying coat after

coat of aubergine, religiously rubbed down between coats and all the blemishes removed. (It is amazing how a surface, apparently smooth can look like the Atlantic in a storm when sprayed over!)

The wings and upper section complete, the masking was carefully removed and we remasked the car, covering all the aubergine. Spraying the silver proved to be a mammoth operation, as to get the kind of finish required the paint had to be put on in coats so thin that it was not until about the fifth that there was any discernible change in the base colour. The task was finally completed, the silver being a gratifying uniform colour (something that Peter and myself certainly were not!)

The car was then towed back to the flat, fortunately quite close at hand, at about 1 a.m. with a terrifyingly illegal lack of illumination, fortunately without mishap.

The wedding was drawing inexorably closer and the following weekend was spent painstakingly rubbing the paintwork down with 600 grade Wet-or-Dry paper and finally with anti-haze compound, as it is much milder than rubbing compound and less mucky than Brasso.

When I had finished this task the car looked magnificent, the paintwork looking quite up to Rolls-Royce—or should I say Staines—standards! I also acquired even more massive biceps.

Still more work remained to be done, all the fittings, trim and lights had to be replaced. I breathed a sigh of relief when the electrical wiring was O.K. as the lights, etc. had not been fitted before and I had visions of the windscreen wipers being operated by the horn push.

Eventually the whole lot had been completed, even down to replacing the window channelling and the results of two years hard, if somewhat sporadic work could at last be seen. I now had a car which anyone could be proud of and I had not spent a prohibitive amount of money. I did not keep accurate records but I think I spent less than £350 in total. What this figure would have been had I not obtained a large proportion of the materials through the good offices of many kind people, I shudder to think. As for the labour costs—of which there were virtually none—I am still amazed by the willingness of many friends to work long hours, in what can only be described as sub-Dickensian conditions for the sole reward of the occasional pint (as conscience and current finances dictated!)

CHRIS MANN

ALFIE

ALFIE AND I FIRST MET AT BIGGLESWADE IN THE autumn of '28. We were introduced to each other by my employer, a caravan dweller obsessed with a desire to see every schoolchild in Great Britain photographed at fourpence a head. In pursuance of this ideal I had been allocated the counties of Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire, and made such an impression on them with the aid of a bicycle that he felt we had only to cut down the idle(?) time between schools to produce a gratifying boost in the flow of fourpences.

Alfie turned out to be quite a character. He was an ABC that had known better days and was the product of an aero-engine firm that had turned to cars when their normal market had folded up after the 1914-18 war. His ancestry was clearly betrayed by his features. His engine was an air-cooled horizontal twin with beautifully machined cylinder fins that you could play tunes on with your finger nails, while the dash might have been lifted straight out of a Bristol Fighter. To strengthen the illusion he was a two-seater without any doors—you just climbed into the cockpit. Like all his contemporaries he was an individualist; affecting a vertical gear change, a false radiator into which one poured the petrol, a tendency to stall below twenty in top, and a refusal to start on cold mornings unless you gave his plugs a preliminary warm-up in the oven.

During the introduction the boss let slip a little aside which, phrased less happily, might have caused me some embarrassment. He said: 'Of course, you have driven?' This enabled me to answer 'Yes' without any hesitation or elaboration—such as the fact that my total driving experience amounted to five minutes at the wheel of a R.A.F. Crossley tender plus some twenty-minutes intensive instruction in my brother's Bean up and down the quiet residential roads of Kew.

But Alfie and I only really began to get acquainted when we left Biggleswade en route to my headquarters at Guildford. My immediate aim in this exciting new friendship was to master the gear change. By Stevenage I had got the measure of the lower gears but the upward movement of the lever into top eluded me right up to our arrival at Golders Green in the gathering dusk. By which time Alfie was almost red hot round the cylinder heads, terrifying noises were

issuing from the exhaust, and he was bone dry and very angry. So the only thing to do was to let him cool off at a garage for the night while I seized the opportunity of calling on my wife, who was still living in town and awaiting a call to the country as the next development in her husband's latest fascinating career.

By the following morning Alfie had cooled down and it was possible to pat him anywhere without going 'Ouch!'

During the run down to Guildford an understanding grew up between us to the point where—somewhere between Staines and Chertsey—he allowed me to get into top gear. I found this such a delightful experience that when the necessity arose for going down among all those awful low gears again, I put it off until it was too late and he stalled. Got quite nasty about it he did, and flatly refused to start again until he had taken a breather. During which time I twiddled everything there was to twiddle and had some nice healthy exercise with the starting handle, accompanied by vocal encouragement from a fair slice of the local populace that seemed to have nothing better to do. Eventually, and for reasons completely beyond me, he decided to start up again. This was to become a characteristic of our association; I never did discover the precise combination of circumstances which led him to start.

The rest of the journey was uneventful, if we exclude being allowed into top gear again and an amusing little incident half way down the slippery slope of Guildford High Street. It was necessary for us to turn off to the right and during this manoeuvre Alfie spotted a gentleman pushing a very long ladder on a pair of outsize perambulator wheels. This was too much for Alfie's sense of humour and he couldn't resist catching his near-side wing under one end of the ladder and giving the very surprised ladder-pusher a gentle little swing across the High Street. The onlookers were delighted and Alfie, whom I already suspected of having a weakness for playing to the gallery, completed the rest of the journey in fine fettle.

With his assistance the remaining fourpences in that corner of Surrey were rapidly mopped up and we moved over the border into Hampshire, establishing new headquarters at Liss. But not for long, for shortly afterwards I rented a furnished cottage embedded in the hillside at Steep and my wife was summoned to sample the delights of life in the countryside during the

merry month of November—including tramps with a partiality for passing an occasional night in the wood shed at the bottom of the garden. Ahead lay the worst winter I remember, whatever the experts and their records may say. For the only time in our lives (so far) we were to awaken with icicles scratching our faces, our breath having frozen on the rather hairy blankets. But all this was still to come. Meanwhile, the trees still carried the colourful remnants of their autumn glory and we only froze when doing the washing-up, the kitchen door being on the side of the health-giving breezes for which those parts were noted.

Ivy Cottage, background to most of the Alfie saga, was almost as much of a character as my four-wheeled friend. The rear wall helped to hold the Steep—Meon Valley road in place, the road surface being roughly level with our heads when in bed. A flight of steps led down to the front door round at the back (if you follow me) and the garden sloped away into Hampshire at an angle that discouraged jaunts down to the bottom on account of having to climb all the way back again.

A wooden garage at road level provided a rather tight-fitting home for Alfie and was supported on stilts at the rear end which stood about six feet above the garden. Alfie, in one of his moods, once refused to pull up and pushed the back right out. The sight of him glaring down at the neighbouring town of Petersfield was an impressive one as viewed from below. Fortunately, his front wheels were still in the garage (but only just) and Peg and I were able to gently prod him back to safety with the aid of a couple of poles. The thought of Alfie exposed all night to those health-giving blasts, and his resultant mood the next morning, was such that by nightfall we had most of the boards nailed back into place, thus ensuring a sound night's sleep for all parties.

Speed is something I do not appear to have touched upon as yet. Alfie was at his best at about forty in top—above or below it he could best be described as a handful. The hilly country around Steep was not at all to his liking, and while he would take the lower slopes at a rare old clip he would rapidly lose interest, just about making the summit by the time you had run out of gears and retarded the ignition to vanishing point. On one memorable occasion, about five yards from the top, I had to nip smartly out and shove—otherwise he would never have made it.

He boasted a speedometer that came to an end at 60 m.p.h., but given a fair stretch of road and the right mood he would have the needle banging itself to pieces against the '60'. Not that I encouraged him in such antics. On the rare occasions when he was allowed his head he frightened the life out of me with a front wheel wobble that no amount of frantic juggling with the steering could master. So, as in all cases of disagreement with Alfie, there was only one thing to do—shut everything off, come to a standstill, and start afresh.

Alfie always sounded fast, especially when double-declutching, when he would produce a very impressive range of Grand Prix noises from the missing portions of his sadly battered silencer. This, of course, led us to be viewed with a highly suspicious eye by the local constabulary, particularly when passing through the narrower and more resonant parts of a town. And as the only hope of keeping Alfie going in such places was to keep changing down (he couldn't abide crawling in top) there was nothing I could do except cultivate a suitably innocent expression.

A week or two after settling in at Ivy Cottage we were cruising happily along a sunken road on the outskirts of Petersfield when a black saloon suddenly shot across our bows. This was too much for Alfie, who promptly rammed the offender amidships and followed this up with a very creditable attempt to climb the side of a nearby house. I have a vivid recollection of the driver of the saloon being temporarily suspended in space in a snowstorm. The 'snow' was cigarettes—he was a traveller for a tobacco company.

Sitting on the grass verge and soothing our nerves with the aid of cigarettes that were lying around like confetti, we decided that the collision was the fault of nobody but the unknown whose job it was to erect warning signs. Neither of us had had the slightest idea that a road was going to appear suddenly out of the blue. Fortunately the damage was slight. Alfie, being blessed with a pair of dumb-irons that could ram a house without giving an inch, needed only the scars of combat removing from his wings, while his opponent had got away with little more than a badly savaged running board. This unconventional way of meeting led to a friendship which resulted in my wife and I becoming frequent visitors to the tobacco man's flat, which was happily situated in the yard of an old coaching inn.

BENTLEY DRIVERS' CLUB

SILVERSTONE - 28 AUGUST 1971

The LAGONDA Race at this meeting is one of the big events in our sporting calendar. Make it a successful one by giving it the support it deserves. A good entry of Lagondas is vital. Contact James Woollard or Peter Loe NOW! The first 21 entries they receive from members will qualify for a 50% reduction in entry fees!

Books Received

"The World's Motor Museums" by T. R. Nicholson. 10 in. × 7½ in. 143 pp. Published by J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., Aldine House, Bedford St., London, W.C.2. £3.00.

An ambitious work by any standard in which Mr. Nicholson has gathered together detailed information on the world's major motor museums and its exhibits and presents it in a concise and readable form. I understand that this book replaces an earlier work by the same author which dealt with European museums but which is now out of print. The new work makes interesting reading in finding out where some of the more rare motors have gone and comparing the relative numbers of museums of various countries. Not surprisingly, the U.S.A. tops the list with sixty-six while we have but twenty-one. Altogether there are some 177 museums open to the public throughout the world.

The book is well illustrated and will provide a useful source of reference to the motoring student and historian alike.

A.W.M.

1971 FIXTURES

- Saturday, 3rd July—*Northern Gymkhana.
- Sunday, 4th July—B.O.C. Prescott Hill Climb—team invitation.
- Sunday, 25th July—*Lagonda/B.D.C. Driving Tests—Finmere.
- Saturday, 28th August—*B.D.C. Silverstone—Lagonda race.
- Sunday, 5th September—Northern Autumn Social.
- Sunday, 26th September—A.G.M.—Staines.
- Saturday, 6th November—*November Rally.
- Friday, 10th December—Film Show—London.

*Events starred count towards Fox Trophy.

With the advent of Christmas it was decided to take Alfie to Suffolk to meet the old folks, taking in the marriage of an old R.A.F. friend on the way. We expected to be back in five days but in actual fact it turned out to be nearer three weeks. But then, you never knew with Alfie.

He was in fine form all the way up to town and on the next day's run to Stoke-by-Clare, despite some very post-wedding driving. A good time was had by all over Christmas and it was not until we were on the return journey, some miles short of Saffron Walden, that Alfie did the only really mean thing I remember his doing. He chose the moment we were passing a steam-roller—of all things!—to blow his top and completely block the road. He had broken a valve and punched a hole in one of his pistons.

This, of course, was a god-send to the road repairers, who promptly ceased playing with their little pieces of flint and took to leaning on their shovels and making comments liberally besprinkled with 'Arrhh's!' And for all they cared, we might have still been there had not a square-jawed, brown-voiced woman in a furry pork-pie hat not driven up and thrown us a rope. 'Give you a tow!' she shouted in what, I imagine, she regarded as a normal tone of voice. So we had to follow behind her like a prize poodle on a lead all the way to Saffron Walden and the full length of its main thoroughfare. I can never forgive Alfie for that.

The garage man took to him on sight and was the soul of helpfulness. He would, of course, have to carry out a nation-wide search for spares, Alfie coming, as he did, from a family which besides not being very large, had ceased reproduction some years back. But he was confident of being able to run a piston and a pair of valves to earth somewhere and would inform of his success immediately. So we gave him my brother's address and boarded a coach for London Town.

A week or two later we received the glad tidings, and after somehow managing to scrape up enough for our fare and the bailing out of Alfie, thanked our host and departed. Finance was now becoming even more of a problem than usual as a result of the holidays and the children of Great Britain finding a better use for their fourpences. Still, there was always the hope that with the re-opening of the schools, the flow of such fourpences as Father Christmas had failed to get his grasping hooks on could be induced to flow our way again.

The garage man seemed almost reluctant to part with Alfie and kept running his fingers over the cylinders the while he muttered: 'They don't make them like this any more.' However, we at last got Alfie away from him in exchange for our total assets, less a few shillings he must have overlooked, and set off for Steep with all available horses in fine fettle. I had never known Alfie to be in such fine form and concluded that the rest had done him good.

It was, therefore, somewhere round about Ascot and with the onset of darkness, rather discouraging to find that switching on the lights was a waste of time. So we pulled up at a Bagshot garage where, after the usual mysterious rites associated with electricians and the fitting of a couple of new bulbs, sufficient light was forthcoming to witness the departure of our last remaining shillings. As a bonus we added our grateful thanks before setting off in the direction of Farnborough. At which place, and just as I was pointing out to Peg the actual barrack-block window from which one of the lads gave a wolf whistle to the C.O.'s wife and got us all an hour's pack drill, the lights failed again and we realised just how smart they had been at that garage.

By dint of tucking ourselves in behind buses and other vehicles blessed with lighting systems that worked, we managed to make Farnham without any further incident of note. But going out of Farnham was plunging into outer darkness with a vengeance. For the next few miles the road was unlit and, judging by the absence of other users, not a very popular route. Which is understandable seeing that it led to Bordon Camp. Fortunately there were little white posts at intervals along the verge, and thanks to peg peering round the windscreen into the icy blast and shouting 'Oi!' everytime we nearly hit one, we were able to stay on the road.

But approaching Petersfield disaster nearly overtook us. We were having a comfortable and reasonably carefree ride in front of a bus when the road took a sudden turn to the left and dived under a railway bridge. I have never seen such solid blackness as we waited for the lights of that bus to come round the corner. When they did so it was only just in time—their rays revealed that Alfie was just beginning to nuzzle the brickwork!

Praying hard that none of my constabulary friends were abroad on such a night, we sneaked through Petersfield and set Alfie at the wooded darkness that lay beyond. Apart from heading up

a long drive leading to one of England's stateliest homes, and pulling up just in time to prevent Alfie entering the public bar of 'The Cricketers', the rest of the journey was uneventful except for the onset of blindness.

Alas, the subsequent weeks of skating about the frozen highways and byeways of Hampshire (including a slide down Stoner Hill which culminated in the discovery that the brake cables had snapped) did nothing more than confirm my worst fears—Father Christmas had worked to such good effect that knowledgeable schoolmasters estimated Easter as the earliest time before the fourpences were likely to flow my way again.

Biggleswade was not, however, prepared to accept this appreciation of the position and felt very strongly that a man of initiative, courage and what not would find little difficulty in coping with such a situation. And with regard to my complaint about the increasing cost of maintaining Alfie, Biggleswade could only suggest that a little hard

work would soon produce the necessary funds. Relations between H-Q and the outpost at Steep became increasingly strained.

It was at this critical stage in Alfie's affairs that I received a letter from an air survey company asking me to join them straight away. This meant a return to my old love and an end to hunting for fourpences. Unfortunately, it also meant goodbye to Alfie.

He was very upset about parting. On the final morning, when he was due to be ignominiously parked at a local garage to be called for by Biggleswade, he flatly refused to leave me—despite my use of every trick acquired during a seeming lifetime of learning how to keep on the right side of him. So poor Alfie finally had to go out of my life on the end of a tow-rope and looking the picture of dejection.

That last picture is still with me—and I still feel a bit of a cad when I think about it.

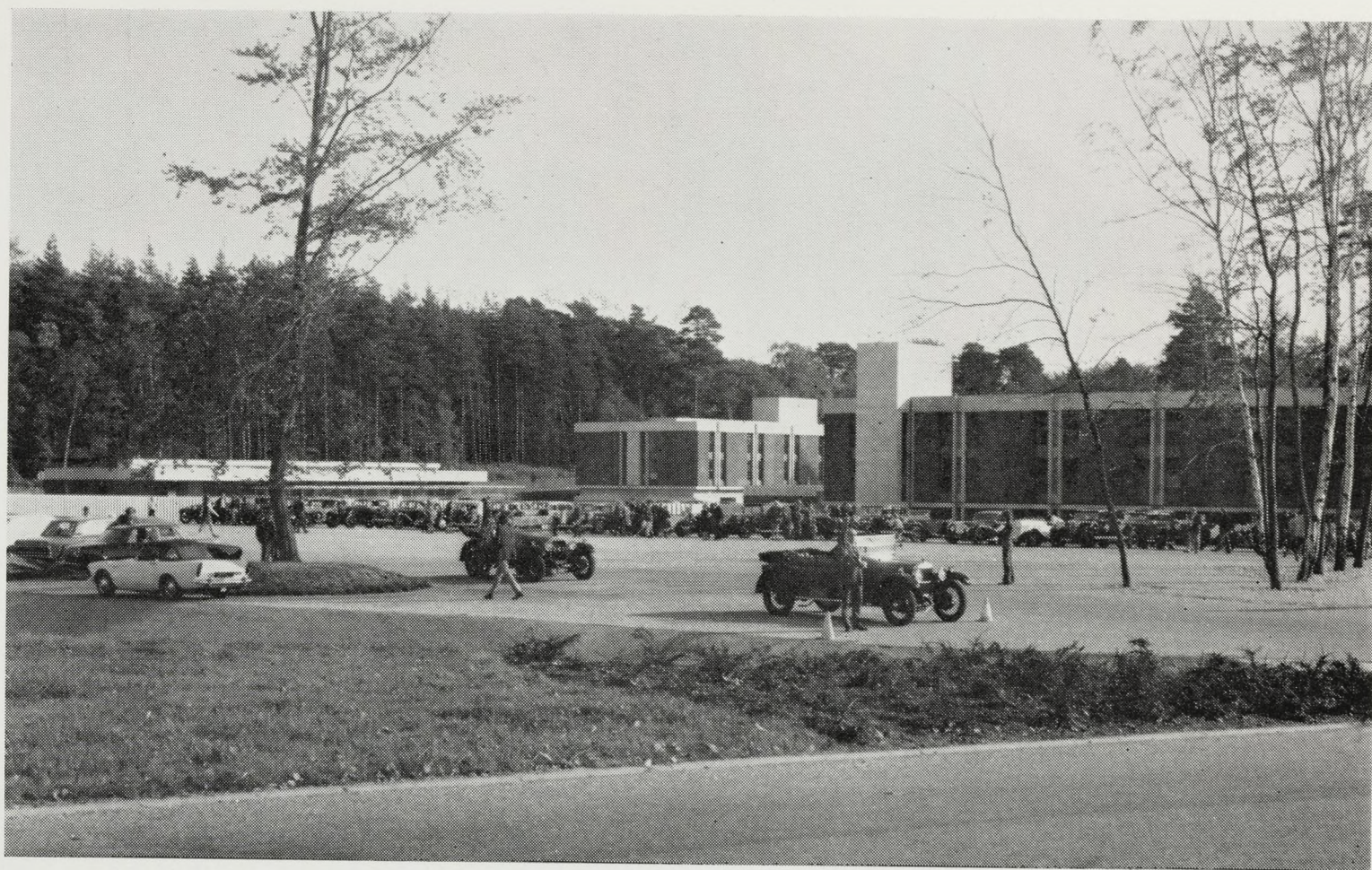
F. E. CHASEMORE

THE LAGONDA BDC FINMERE DRIVING TESTS

—◆—
SUNDAY 25 JULY
—◆—

Make a note in your diary of
this most important date in
the Club's competition calendar.

Has James Woollard got
your entry?



A Lagonda at Sandhurst

USUALLY THE S.T.D. (SUNBEAM TALBOT AND Darracq Register) hold their Sandhurst driving tests on the day of our A.G.M. and I can only compete at secondhand by lending cars to friends; we even towed my 1908 Hillman down behind my 23.8 h.p. Sunbeam coupe! I might add that I am a member (paid up) of the S.T.D.

This year I ambled down in the Le Mans car to see if I could help but ended up by being an unofficial entry. So after a cold collation at the Hawley Hotel and a chat with various members a convoy of 35 odd cars moved off to the Royal Military Academy in the grounds of which the event takes place.

We met and were marshalled very efficiently by the R.M.A. Motor Club who run the event with military precision but without any sergeant majorish 'bull' however. The first test was a short sprint with a quick manoeuvre round a statue on a concrete plinth; no one hit it! The second test was a sprint round between two buildings after a garaging test to stop on a slope from which the third test started to finish with a garaging test and a wiggle-wobble and the fourth a quick spin

round two pylons. We were told that the tests were such that more powerful cars had no advantage but the Lagonda did about the fastest time in each test and if I hadn't knocked down a couple of pylons I would have won very easily; as it was I was third—unofficially; they could not give me an award but as I hadn't paid an entry fee nothing much was lost! I wonder if it counts towards our club trophy! There was a splendid line up of Sunbeams with the usual few Talbots and no Darracq as is characteristic in the same way as our ratio of post war and PVT to Vintage and 11.9, etc. Peter Moore was there with a gaggle of cars including his superb 1921 24 h.p. Limousine and the Talbot Brooklands (Type 105) which came on the 'Paris—Nice' with Robbie Hewitt and I last year. A superb effort was the Sunbeam saloon driven down from Scotland by Mr. Harper which came second; a very original car with a low mileage it is used regularly and has proved its worth.

The event drew entrants from all over England with Anthony Blight from Cornwall, their Mr. Forshaw from Yeovil, Mr. Rawlings from Kenilworth, Messrs. Chester and Costigan from Yorkshire and Mick Collis from the Bath area; in fact there is a strong West Country contingent.

D. S. JOHNSON

Greece Revisited — by the Land Bridge

BEFORE THE OUTING WHICH IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS article I promised Jeff Ody that I would write another so-called technical article. But, instead, I had to go off to Crete. I could not take a Lagonda, as I had done on one of my earlier trips (1950), so I went in the Triumph van, part of my everyday transport, in which I had made the journey before. I will now flatter the Spares Registrar by imitating his technique at A.G.M.'s and telling you a story which has nothing to do with the matter in hand. On my return I sprained the little finger of my right hand and decided to see if the local hospital would help me. I duly saw the Sister in Casualty and replied to her questions while she wrote down the answers on a little form. When it came to "What is the matter with you?" I answered truthfully "Sister, I have got finger trouble". She wrote this down and gave me the form saying, with great charm, "Take this to Psychiatry, second door on the left."

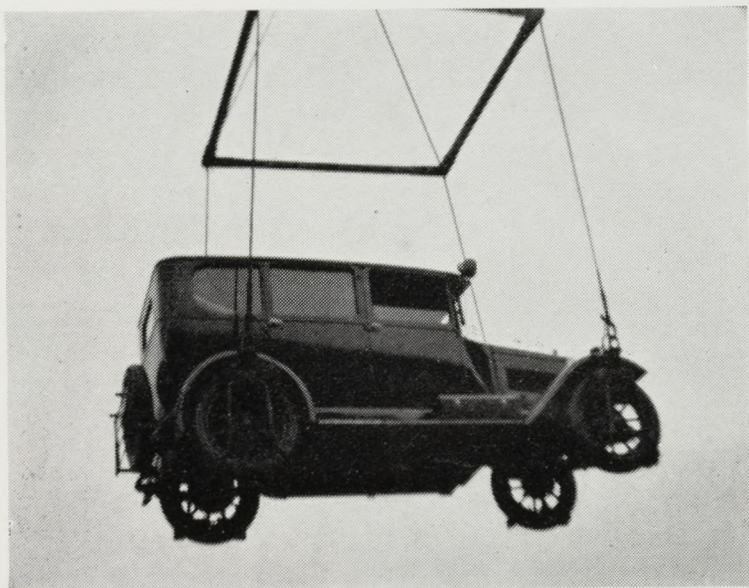
I first started motoring to Greece in the autumn of 1933, when I found myself with a travelling studentship and a brief to compile the Greek sheet of the International Map of the Roman Empire. I had been to Greece for a few months in 1932 at the expense of the University of Cambridge, and had decided I liked the local drinks and local colour and wanted to go back.

In any case I had nothing else to do, not yet having acquired a Lagonda. In 1932 I had flown out via Marseille, completing the journey in a French four-engined flying boat. This was

subject to French maritime law, which prescribed one litre of wine per passenger per day, and the flight took two days from Marseille, via Corsica, where we collected a piece of tree on one of the wing-tip floats, and Corfu. In 1933, knowing that my work would take me all over Greece, I decided to take a car. This was a bit of an innovation for me, since my transport was then a Morgan 3-wheeler, and the only four-wheeled experience I had had was strictly professional, on 3-ton trucks on solid tyres. This all proved to be to the good, for my choice fell on a 1928 Morris Oxford six-light 15.9 h.p. four cylinder saloon. This had a four speed box, heavy duty suspension, leather upholstery and many other soothing characteristics, including roller blinds, with tassels, all round. It was on 5.25 x 21 tyres, and Mr. W. H. Harper of King & Harpers, Cambridge from whom I bought the car for £20, let me have five new ones for £2 10s. each (you remember the old shilling?) He also did an engine overhaul for £5, and sorted out the steering. I was ready for the journey for just about £40. Food and petrol on the way cost another £30. There was no recently paved roads in those days beyond Vienna, but there was no Iron Curtain either, so one went to Budapest and thence via Belgrade, and a little bit of real road in Servia, to Sofia, and thence by way of Siderokastro (the Iron Fortress, Demir Hissar, of the Turks) to Salonica. The Morris was not stopped by anything, but needed new valves by the time I got to Athens.

My next trip to Greece was not to be until 1947, when I went under United Nations auspices, a very poor class of auspice I found, to be a sort of umpire in the Greek civil war and see that the communists didn't cheat. This was a good life while it lasted, with plenty of motoring in 4s x 4 and some flying. Flying wasn't very popular in the mountains because aircraft were shot at, but we only lost one pilot, and he was killed by poor flying: his cigar smoke got in his eyes when he was landing and he flew into the deck on Florina landing ground. This ground was mined every night by the opposition, and one of my chores was to sweep it on days when a drop or landing was expected. Then the late lamented had to make a hole right in the middle of it, for which he got no sympathy.

In 1949 I took an M.45 saloon to Salonica by sea and used it for about a year in all parts of Greece, on roads and tracks and river beds. I had no trouble except with the fuel system and



Folkestone Docks - 1933

the brake servo. The fuel trouble was rocks through the tank, on the one hand, and throttle sticking wide open on hairpins on the other. The brake servo was put out of action by little plant seeds in the spring and summer, and by a shroud of ice in the winter. This car survived its hard life, and I drove it back to England in 1951, via Marseille. I shipped it thus far because I had had to leave it in Greece for a year while I came home and got cured for the time being of malaria and dysentery.

Then no more outings until 1966, when I went out via Villach and Belgrade to join an archaeological expedition led by a Cambridge man near Corinth. This was in the Triumph, which was then only a year old.

This time I had no trouble at all except for the air filter gnawing its way through one of the radiator hoses. This caused a spectacular seizure in the middle of a hairpin. The overheating caused the distributor cap to crack, and the oil in the sump to boil: on stripping the engine back in England I found that the crankshaft had blued and replaced it with a balanced one.

On 6th October 1970 I left again for Greece, on a BAF flight from Southend to Le Touquet. Slight modifications had been made to the van since 1966, one was the fitting of 165 x 13 radial tyres and an anti-roll bar. Anti-roll bars are standard on the cars but are not fitted to the vans at the works. The result of the two things is an almost vintage ride and great stability—the wheels simply cannot tuck themselves under the car. The journey was uneventful, with night stops at Laon, Belfort, Hall-in-Tirol, Villach, Nova Gradiska and Nish. The Park Hotel at Nish is renowned for its food and its pop group, which includes an electronic organ and is by far the noisiest I have ever heard. Next day I was in Greece by midday and stopped over at Katerini. An easy days drive brought me to Athens, where there were many new one-way streets and even new streets. However, a call at the police station near Omonia and the mention of the fact that I wanted to get the boat for Crete produced an unofficial but most effective motorcycle escort. I got on the boat with a few minutes to spare.

The car ferries to Crete proclaim themselves to be the largest ships employed on this service in the world. They are 20,000 tonners which look as if they have been converted from whaling depot ships. They are cheap, the return fare for a car is about £8 for some 200 miles each way, and a

bed in a tourist cabin costs about £5 10s. return. They are also extremely good sea boats: only one has been lost in the last six years, and this is said to be because the vehicle deck doors were not properly secured. They are most particular about this now. All the vessels on the run claim a speed of 22 knots, but in fact the 200 miles takes 13 hours or more. This is called economy, for no doubt if more than the scheduled amount of fuel is used on any trip the cost of the excess is charged against the Chief Engineer's pay.

However, to return to motoring, I was three months in Crete and went over most of the roads, real and imaginary, in the island. The main roads are excellent. Some idea of the difficulties of making them can be got from the cost of the National Road now being completed along the north coast, which averages out at £1 million sterling per kilometre. The cost of the mountain sections, which compare in difficulty with the most spectacular in the Alps, must be much more than this. One winter they lost several km of new road near Sitia at the east end of the north coast and had to start again from the beginning. I have been over both pieces of road and would not have said that many chances were taken the first time. Excellent hard limestone for road metal is ready to hand almost everywhere, but there are many stretches where the road rests on inclined beds of slimy schist which slide into river beds or into the sea with little provocation (for instance a slight earth tremor). But it is when you get off the main roads and take the so-called agricultural roads which lead to the smaller villages that the fun begins. These are mostly one track wide and are made by driving a bulldozer where you want the road to go. Then you leave it and the traffic does the rest. Rough and ready as these roads are they have transformed the life of the villages, since where there is a road there is a bus. Also, where there is a bus there are trucks—Mercedes and Volvo turbo-charged diesels. The law also allows farmers to use light tractors and trailers free of licence duty. These will carry 750 kg. or six adults, and have led to the growth of a class of commuter farmers. The prosperity of the farmers, whatever they grow, is shown by the fact that the farmer's favourite car is a Mercedes. The number and size of the taxis is also remarkable: Oldsmobiles, Chryslers, Mercedes, Holden are all represented. Toyota and Mazda appear among the private cars and light trucks, but do not seem big enough for taxi duty. Japanese taxis

occur in Athens, but are not popular with the owners, who have to put notices on them saying "go easy with the doors". Triumphs are making good headway in Greece as a whole as well as in Crete, although spares are a great trouble to get. The agent in Crete has a complete stock of all the paints which were ever used on Triumphs, and some side and stop lamp bulbs, but that is about all.

The keynote of life in Crete is expansion, in farming, in industry, in transport and in the tourist trade. Much new land is being brought under cultivation, some factories and a brewery are being built, and the sea-shore pullulates with *plages*. Iraklion is now an international airport and will take the big jets. These have to avoid Athens, or so we were told, and 454 direct flights from London alone are expected at Iraklion this year. No account of life in Crete would be complete without reference to the national drink, called variously *tsipouro* or *tsikoudia* or sometimes "the Greek whisky".

It is a pure distillage from grape residues, colourless and without the roughness of *grappa* or of a new *marc*. A malt drinker might recognise in it the fire and body of a Laphroaig, and it can have a classic smoothness. Some people like to think that it was this spirit which the poet had in mind when he sang "Hail to thee, white spirit, Turps thou never wert": also it is sometimes thought that the line "Swallow, O my sister, Swallow" does not refer to the poet's effort to inebriate his sister at a May Ball, but to an incident which occurred with an "honorary" (perhaps even not his own) sister in Crete. This, however, is a digression, for I set out to write the account of a journey, not to make an unwarranted excursion into literary criticism.

The most striking difference between present-day European motoring and that of 1933 is in the reduction of formality at frontiers. In 1933 one had to have, in addition to an International Vehicle Certificate, a *Carnet de Passages en Douane*. The particulars on these, such as engine and chassis numbers, owner and destination were all carefully checked on entering and leaving each country and one's baggage was given more than a passing scrutiny. In the Balkans this was mainly from curiosity, because foreigners did carry such queer things, soap, for instance, or cooking stoves. Also, a motorist might be the only new face the frontier official saw that day, and they liked to stop and chat, so that to be cleared in

half an hour was quick work. Also, an unhurried traveller aroused less suspicion, as showing he had an easy conscience. Now, with the numbers of cars crossing frontiers, not to mention trucks and buses, any form of examination is unusual unless suspicion is aroused. I saw, on my way home this year, a good instance of this. Normally one thinks of the Austrian customs and immigration people as being pretty easy-going. I had passed the frontier post on the Austrian side of the Loibl pass, and the next car was a very clapped-out Vauxhall Velox on British plates. This had been behind me for sometime, and I had noted that it was not being expertly driven. The passengers in it seemed to provoke the Austrian guards to fury: they were as follows, the driver, an obscenely fat Pakistani brandishing a very dodgy looking British passport, and then nine others, fortunately small in size, with no passports at all. The leader and his passport were greeted with a lot of Carinthian noises and a flat refusal of entry. I cleared off before he could refer to me as another Britisher to help him deal with these foreigners. They had no insurance card either and this became a major obstacle, although the fact that mine had expired was glossed over by the payment of a few Schillings.

The normal attitude at frontiers is to see that every person has a passport of some kind and that every driver has a green insurance card and then to wave them on as quickly as possible. The Greeks are at present having a blitz on narcotics and tend to look closely at anyone who looks like a hippy. This is fair enough, since for a year or two Greece has been the "new place" for hippies. Most of them seem to be of a new sort too and travel in small parties in Bedford vans or even Landrovers. I visited one colony in a village on the south coast of Crete and found them well settled in and doing no harm to anyone. Some were a bit short of food, but none seemed to be starved of alcohol. There is a story that one colony were chased out of a village by the police, and at once the villagers got up a petition to have them allowed back.

Even a couple of years ago Yugoslavia was thought of as a pretty uncomfortable country for travellers, even for those in transit on the *Autoput*. This has now changed very much for the better. Petrol is cheaper than in England, and there are excellent hotels, even off the main road. At these one is made to feel welcome, even when one arrives late and in gum boots knowing no local

dialect at all. Food seems to be available until a very late hour in great quantities and of excellent quality. In many places water *au naturel* is not drunk, and they make a point of issuing fizzy water in little bottles or in jugs. This is picturesque but slivovitz is a better drink on a cold night, although not so thirst-quenching. The road surface of the *Autoput* has been terribly knocked about by the heavy international truck traffic, with the result that better surfaces are often found on other roads. One takes one's chance, however, since some of these have not been surfaced since the 'thirties, and some never at all. It is on the side roads that the nicest people and the most spectacular scenery are to be found. An attempt to get to Sarajevo was unsuccessful, owing to the passes being snowed up, but it led to a lot of exciting and enjoyable snow motoring. A word here about the Dalmatian coast road: I went along this from the southern end in 1967 at the end of the summer, and found it to be so crowded with nose-to-tail traffic that I could pay little attention to the scenery. The first hundred miles or so north of Kotor were clear. Hence the thing seems to be not to go there at the peak holiday period.

I should perhaps say something about the advantages and disadvantages of Vintage, P.V.T. and modern cars for outings of this kind. In the matter of reliability I think the Morris Oxford showed up best, with only one involuntary stop, which was caused by the union on the oil pressure gauge pipe coming loose. This was found and cured in under one minute. This car had also the worst conditions to deal with in actual roads and gradients. I had with me spare springs and shackle bolts, but needed none of them: valves had to be replaced in Athens after only 3,000 miles, but the new ones, of American origin, fitted there gave no more trouble and lasted out the life of the car. One Bendix spring broke, but this was not a serious inconvenience. The M.45 was not, in retrospect, a very suitable car for the job, but in the event never let me down. The suspension was too hard and one had to drive with great circumspection to avoid damage to the body. In Athens the "Mad Mile" as we afterwards called it on Syngros Avenue could be taken in style, and the performance in the mountains of Macedonia was wonderful and well worth the care that had to be taken in other places. This car has now been rebuilt and is in service, though not in my possession.

The Triumph Courier van, on the Herald 1200 chassis is in my view a good example of the not too cheap small cars now in use. The heavier springs on the van with the addition of the anti-roll car and the 165 x 13 radial tyres make the suspension adequate for driving as fast as one can over any kind of road. The balanced crankshaft was certainly worth fitting, or else the original one was very rough. It means that high engine speeds can be used with no fear of any trouble. However, if high engine speeds are kept up, the radiator cannot cope with the flow of water from the water-pump. The result of this is familiar to all drivers of M.45s with modern (not real honeycomb) radiator blocks. When the engine is really boiling the sprung radiator cap acts as a safety valve and makes a loud noise reminiscent of an American steam locomotive whistle. This must be the modern substitute for a water temperature gauge, but it tells you too late. If this fails there is always the smell of boiling oil from the sump, which is much more too late. So, when driving a car with no water thermometer one learns to keep one's ears open, both winter and summer. The parts of the car which really suffer on bad roads are the inboard universal joints on the rear drive shafts to the wheels. They give some warning before actually giving way. Indeed anyone who could ignore the grindings and bangings which come from these joints when they are badly worn must be of phenomenal insensitivity. They can be felt on take-off, as well as heard all the time. Hence, anyone motoring further than the corner of the road is well advised to take at least one spare pair with him. It isn't as if they were easy to fit, either. The only thing you don't have to take off at the back end of the car is the differential unit. This is fitted before the body, so it is just as well. Perhaps the worst part of the job is bleeding the brakes, which is done through a nipple which would be considered inaccessible on a kangaroo. Georges Roesch might have made the job more difficult: more I will not say. However that may be, the Triumph did well, and gave fair warning if anything was about to go wrong. Also, even at six years old the car inspires confidence that one will get where one is going. The only snag is that British Leyland have not yet appointed a Spares Registrar, and it is therefore advisable to take as much as you can with you, including all your tools, a can of brake fluid and a little piece of tube.

ANDRE KENNY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Marion Wilby

Dear Sir—I should like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Club for its sympathy and the many beautiful floral tributes for Michael.

We were fortunate in having many wonderful friends and relations who helped us both a great deal during the last difficult months of his illness. The memory of Michael's own tremendous courage and fortitude, together with the knowledge that I have so many kind friends helps to give me strength now to try and live my life and look after Jonathan as he would wish me to.

All my memories of the many motoring events in which Michael participated and on which I accompanied him are happy ones, and the Lagonda Club has become so very much a part of my life that I will endeavour to continue to take part in as many Club activities as possible and look forward to doing so.

Sincerely,

MARION WILBY,
26 Howitt Road,
Hampstead,
N.W.3.

November Handicap

Dear Sir—Through you Sir we should like to thank D. S. Johnson and his outfit for their labours for the November Handicap. From our point of view it was all most enjoyable.

It is interesting to note here the difference in insurance for the event. Amongst us, the lowest payment was just one pound and the highest was three pounds. It seems to us to be a bit much for a few hours vintage motoring, including a whole section at 16 m.p.h. We wonder what members in different parts of the country are charged for similar events.

Reverting to the Handicap, we only hope the Committee will thank Mr. Johnson profusely, and will persuade him to run another event in those parts next season. Preferably with the same route sheets and photographs!

HERMES

More Memories

Dear Sir—It is gratifying to know that the 'Letters to the Editor' are read and sometimes answered. Please thank Mr. Frank Chasemore for 'More Memories'. I have enjoyed his earlier contributions and I trust that you will keep pressing him to write for many more issues.

ROY PATERSON

Hull.

(Mr. Chasemore contributes an entertaining article on his reminiscences of "Alfie" in this issue. Ed.)

From Harry Wareham

Dear Sir—I cannot let Arnold Davey's paragraph about me appearing in the Duckhams Oil Advertisement, which he refers to in the December News-Letter, pass by without any comments.

Firstly, I must congratulate him for recognising the old Lagonda Car Club Badge. As I imagine most of the current Club Members are not aware of the old design, which I still consider to be much better than the one the Club now uses! My own badge has 'adorned' one car or another for over twenty years.

Not all the cars I have owned were mentioned in the advertisement, and far from the omission of my Lagondas being a 'pistols at dawn bit' whatever that may mean, the fact is simply that Duckhams Oil was not used in the Lagonda engines, a 'straight' oil was used, this I obtained from the Regent Oil Company. In the interest of accuracy I consider it wrong to mention any specific makes of car in which I have not used the oil being advertised, and there is nothing more sinister about the omission of the name 'Lagonda'.

The 405 Bristol is the second car I have owned to cover a quarter of a million miles, the other being my old 4½-litre M.45 Rapide, registration number CPD 937.

With the price of Lagondas becoming prohibitive may I recommend to readers the purchase of a Bristol! After all, ex-committee members Charles Elphinstone and Iain Macdonald are owners and Bill Michael was a great enthusiast for the marque in the days when he had to drive himself!

T. H. WAREHAM
Warwickshire.

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, ¼ 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.

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