



# **THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB**

**Number 74    Autumn 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 tribute to "W.O." A particularly fine example of a V.12 owned by Tony Steward of New Zealand.



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## NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### "W.O."

WALTER OWEN BENTLEY died on 13th August, aged 83. Between 1919 and 1930 the name Bentley became the byword for fast sporting cars in a variety of forms but all bearing the touch of the master's hand. By these cars he will be most remembered by the motoring public. His early fame however, tends to overshadow the excellent design work he produced while working for Lagonda Ltd. at Staines between 1935 and 1946. W.O.'s improvements in the 4½-litre range resulted in a series of elegant fast cars still treasured by those fortunate enough to own one. But the V.12 remains his masterpiece and W.O. himself recently said that his work in producing this car gave him the most satisfaction. All the more pity that circumstances intervened to prevent him from realising his ambition to develop fully the potential of the V.12. Despite the War, W.O. laid the plans for the post war Lagonda—the 2.6-litre, whose engine was also to power the Aston Martin BD.2. So his work spanned the pre- and post-war eras. In his retirement he lived quietly with his memories but it was not until comparatively recently that the significance of his contribution to the development of the sporting motor car was more widely appreciated. While his cars survive so his memory will remain evergreen. Our deepest sympathy goes to Mrs. Bentley.

\* \* \* \*

### Our Patron

ARTHUR W. FOX, M.B.E., regretfully also died earlier this year in April, never having fully recovered from the effects of a motoring accident. So another link with the sporting triumphs of Lagondas in the 20's and 30's is broken. His entries of 2- and 3-litre, M.45R and finally LG.45 two- and four-seater Lagondas earned him a high reputation for racing management and a string of notable successes. The 1935 Le Man 24-hours, T.T. races and Brooklands were the scenes of his triumphs. The Fox Trophy, as many members will know, was the trophy Arthur Fox won as a Team Prize in the B.A.R.C. 6-hour Race at Brooklands in 1929. This important trophy in

the Club Awards will serve as a permanent reminder to a person whose skill and preparation did so much to further the name of Lagonda.

The Committee and Members send Mrs. Fox their deepest sympathy.

\* \* \* \*

### Our New President

JAMES W. T. CROCKER has accepted an invitation by the Committee to become President of the Lagonda Club following the late Michael Wilby. James's connections with the Club go back a long way and for many years he was our very able Chairman. In recent years, despite the pressures of sorting out his client's problems as their solicitor, he has managed to find time to sort out the problems of racing his very potent Rapier Special and has achieved a number of successes. We are all glad to welcome him back as an official of the Club and know that his deep knowledge and wisdom in motoring matters will prove of immense value in guiding the fortunes of the Club.

\* \* \* \*

The MICHAEL WILBY MEMORIAL APPEAL has met with a steady response of contributions from Club members at home and abroad. The plans for the research and writing of the 'History of the Lagonda' are being formulated but there is still a long way to go to reach the necessary figure required to finance the publishing of the book. The importance of this appeal cannot be underestimated so please keep those contributions rolling in to Geoff Moore.

\* \* \* \*

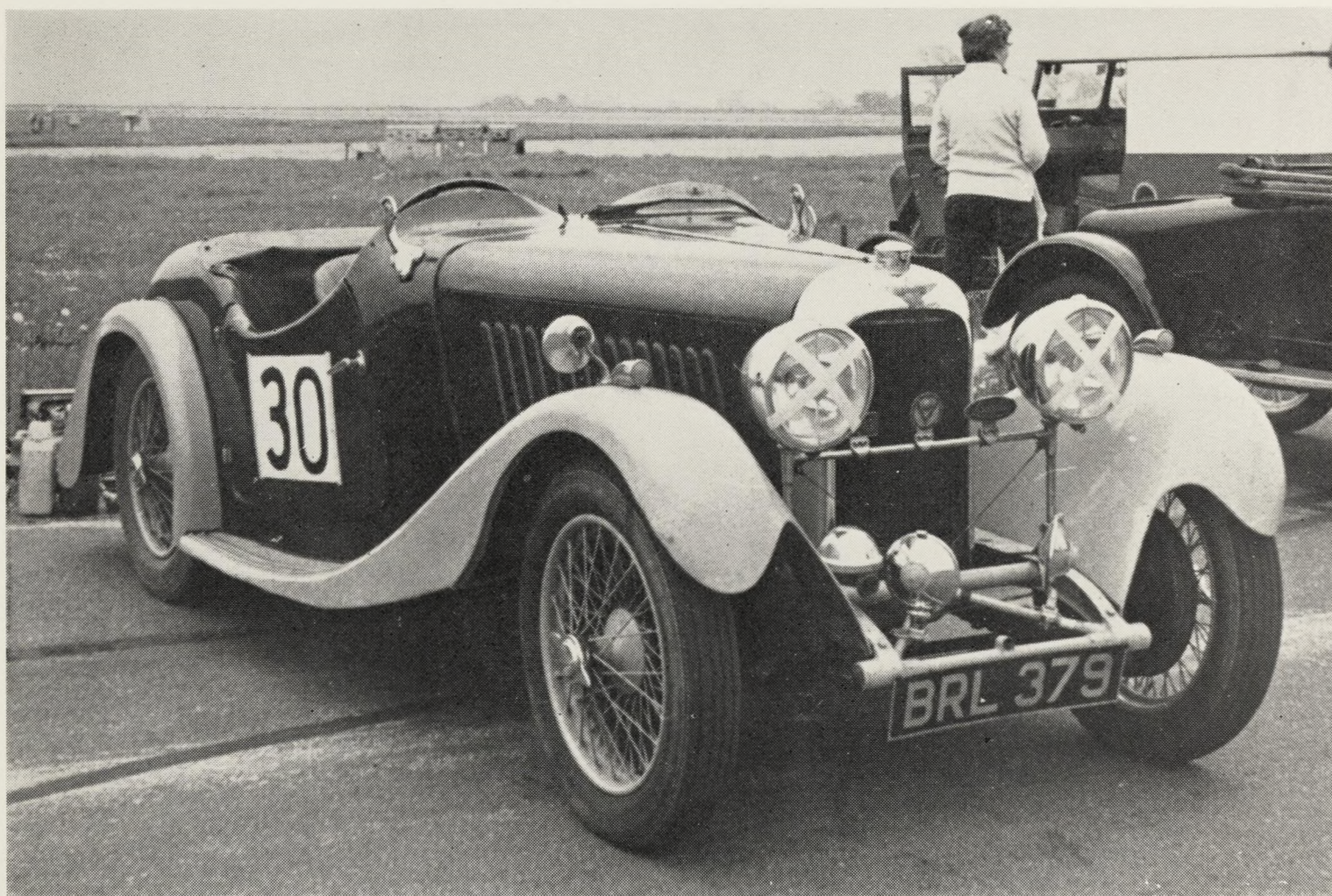
Congratulations to W. ALEXANDER whose ultra-fast driving in his perfectly standard M.45 this season has earned him such success in the *Motor Sport* Trophy. This is an excellent follow-up to James Crocker's exploits last season in the same competition.

\* \* \* \*

The Club Christmas Card is now available. See the current Newsletter for details.

The Winter Magazine will be published in January. All copy from Regional Secretaries and contributors should be in the Editor's hands by 20th November.





Tony Wood and John Batt's supercharged Rapier

*Photo: Tony Wood*

## Alexander's V.S.C.C. Curborough 1971

THERE IS AN OLD CLUB SUPERSTITION THAT IT always rains at Curborough. At a rough guess the last twelve years or so would tend to confirm that, but this year maybe it was because the B.D.C. spirit had moved to Gaydon or maybe because the six Lagondas and their seven drivers entered added up to lucky thirteen, anyway the sun shone on a May day so warm that bees buzzed contentedly and butterflies fluttered by. Old hands like John Batt turned up in gumboots and Sou'westers; Elliot Elder arrived early enough to park the bus on the only bit of hard standing off the course, hotly pursued by Neil Corner with the old Ecurie Ecosse transporter.

Practice at V.S.C.C. sprints is informal. Everyone (or at least the drivers) walks round the Course or signs a book to say they have. The serious ones spent a lot of time looking backwards at the corners, the less serious meet long

lost friends on the perambulation and discuss pubs or hub caps, or cars I never understand like a '36 24/35 of unspecified and apparently curvaceous body. As if to prove that the fates were indeed kindly, Witteridge (M.45), Alexander (LG.45 Special), Tomlin (LG.6 Special) and Morgan (Eccles Rapier Replica) set off for practice runs and came back highly satisfied. Elder, who was seen walking away from his new very pretty single seat special with driver Abson muttering that the noise was no worse than it always was, was soon seen back at the innards extracting a broken cam follower pivot shaft and Wood and Batt were seen blowing the prettiest white smoke rings from the exhaust of their supercharged Rapier. People kept on complaining of the funny smell these rings made while Batt/Wood tore into the carburation of the Woodbatt to eliminate the misfiring that went with the rings. Bernard Bugatti Kain solved the problem by diagnosing paraffin in the fuel. The tank was drained into a nearby field and the Elder bus provided new methanol to make up new fuel. The fates were still kind and Wood, Batt and



Abson all just squeezed in practice before it closed.

Witt Witteridge circulated very competently in the over 1,500 c.c. Standard Sports Car Class, but Bob Alexander provided the first and second surprise of the day, first of all he entered as a Standard Sports car. Well the mechanical bits are standard but the body was hardly inspired by Staines, and secondly he won his class and beat the record held by Collings in his Bentley of 45.0 seconds. Bob did 44.7 seconds. Tomlin with a very clean LG.6 had only one run in the modified Sports Car Class and returned a very creditable time but unfortunately collected a marker on the way which added on a five second penalty. How nice to see an LG.6 competing for a change.

Wood, Abson, Morgan and Batt all contested the racing cars up to 1,500 c.c. Paul Morgan was so consistent as to do an identical time on each run but collected a marker on the first so got a five second penalty. John Batt gave the handicap trophy a scare but didn't quite make it and Jon Abson came second to Hamish Moffatt in an E.R.A.

Witteridge	..	LG.45	48.6	49.8
Alexander	..	LG.45	45.8	44.7
Tomlin	..	.. LG.6	51.4(M)	
Wood	..	.. Rapier	47.1	46.8
Morgan	..	.. Rapier	51.0(M)	46.0
Abson	..	.. Rapier	42.3	41.1
Batt	..	.. Rapier	45.1	44.3

JONATHAN ABSON

## Border Rally 1971

THOSE WHO HAVE COMPETED REGULARLY IN THE Border Rally were not the least dismayed when they opened their eyes on 19th June to find it pouring with rain.

It never rains for the Border! So sure enough it cleared up by ten to allow even those coming long distances to drive up in the dry.

Doc. Turner who came farthest—from Shipton—said it cleared up as soon as he got to Newcastle and as usual the sun shone all afternoon.

We are deeply indebted to Bernard and Amy Raine who have asked that the Raine Trophy (which they presented for a Road Event) should be given each year to the winner of the Border Rally.

Unfortunately some "organiser" in the London Office decided that the Border Rally should be held on the same date as the V.S.C.C. Oulton

Park Race Meeting and Concours d'Elegance.

This is the nearest major V.S.C.C. Meeting to our area and it also attracts both the sportsmen and the Beauty experts and is popular with Northern members.

However, what we lost in quantity we made up in quality and a really enjoyable afternoon in the sun resulted.

Route sheets were distributed fairly promptly at 2 p.m. and after a fair amount of head scratching the cars moved off uncertainly.

The route was shown in the form of a straight line with roads sticking out at funny angles and designed to mystify all but psychologists—when you look at the results you will see that doctors feature prominently at the top. Dick Hore is not actually a medical doctor but he has been doing this rally regularly for about ten years and is obviously becoming affected!!

The straight line of the route sheet, when traced out on the map looked much more like a clove hitch on a running bight, and of course at the point where all the loops came together you had to pass the same road junction at least three times. This became a little confusing, especially as the route planner sat there all afternoon laughing his head off. He also took unfair advantage of the fact that the roads had changed a bit since the last ordnance survey revision.

I am always astonished in road rallies to see other competitors coming the other way but this one took the biscuit, he passed Muir Laidlow rushing off in the opposite direction no less than three times in the first twenty minutes. Congratulations by the way to Muir on taking the Novices Award.

At one stage in the afternoon we were thoroughly enjoying watching Dick Hore tearing up a mountain road in the wrong direction only to arrive three or four miles later at a point from which it was obvious that we were on the wrong road. Retracing our steps to the last checked position we soon found ourselves tearing up the same mountain road at a speed we hoped was even faster than Dick.

In spite of all our misgivings we returned to find an excellent high tea at the Collingwood Arms and even Dick was not turned away hungry as we had earlier feared might be the case.

So congratulations to Doc. Turner on being the first Border Rally Winner to have the Raine Trophy for a year and to all the others, better luck next time.



LAGONDA CLUB RAPIER REGISTER  
BORDER RALLY 19th JUNE 1971  
RESULTS

	Fixed Clues (Max. 18)	Undetermined Clues (Max. 14)	Extras (Max. 8)	Total (Max. 40)	Position
Doctor Turner					
Daimler	15	8	8	31	1st
Doctor R. A. Hore					
Krautwagen	14	8	8	30	2nd
Muir and Mary Laidlaw					
Rapier	16	6	8	30	Novice Award
Mr. J. C. Boylan					
Crossley	10	10	8	28	4th
Mr. R. Colquhoun					
Lagonda 2-litre	10	8	8	26	5th
Mr. T. Adams					
Alvis 4. 3-litre	11	8	6	25	6th
Mr. H. Golding					
Lagonda 2-litre	6	6	8	20	7th
Mr. I. G. Macdonald					
Lagonda 45	10	8	0	18	8th

Thank you for your support, we hope you enjoyed the meeting and will come again next year.

I. G. MACDONALD

## The Restoration of JBG492 PART 9

THE SHEET METAL COVER WHICH FORMS THE CENTRE of the front floor of the V.12 and which shrouds the clutch and gearbox is made of sheet steel. Mine was rusted through in places and in any case, having moved the gear lever fulcrum back some nine inches, it would no longer fit. I decided to make a new one of aluminium in one piece running from the bulkhead to the back of the gearbox as this could be done without reference to the body. The coachbuilders will make the actual propellor shaft tunnel when the body is in place. As I am a very bad sheet metal worker this took me a long time. I first made a skeleton frame of 1" x 1" angle and then welded many small pieces of sheet to this. As the structure grew the quality seemed to deteriorate but I kept consoling myself that the whole thing would eventually be covered by carpet so why worry. My main agitation was that the highly skilled metal bashers at the coachbuilders were bound to see it and would have a very loud laugh. So when it was finished I mixed a large quantity of Holts Cataloy and trowelled it on and then filed up a respectable finish. This and a coat of matt black paint worked wonders. I lined the underside with ½" thick Plastazote expanded polyurathene sound and

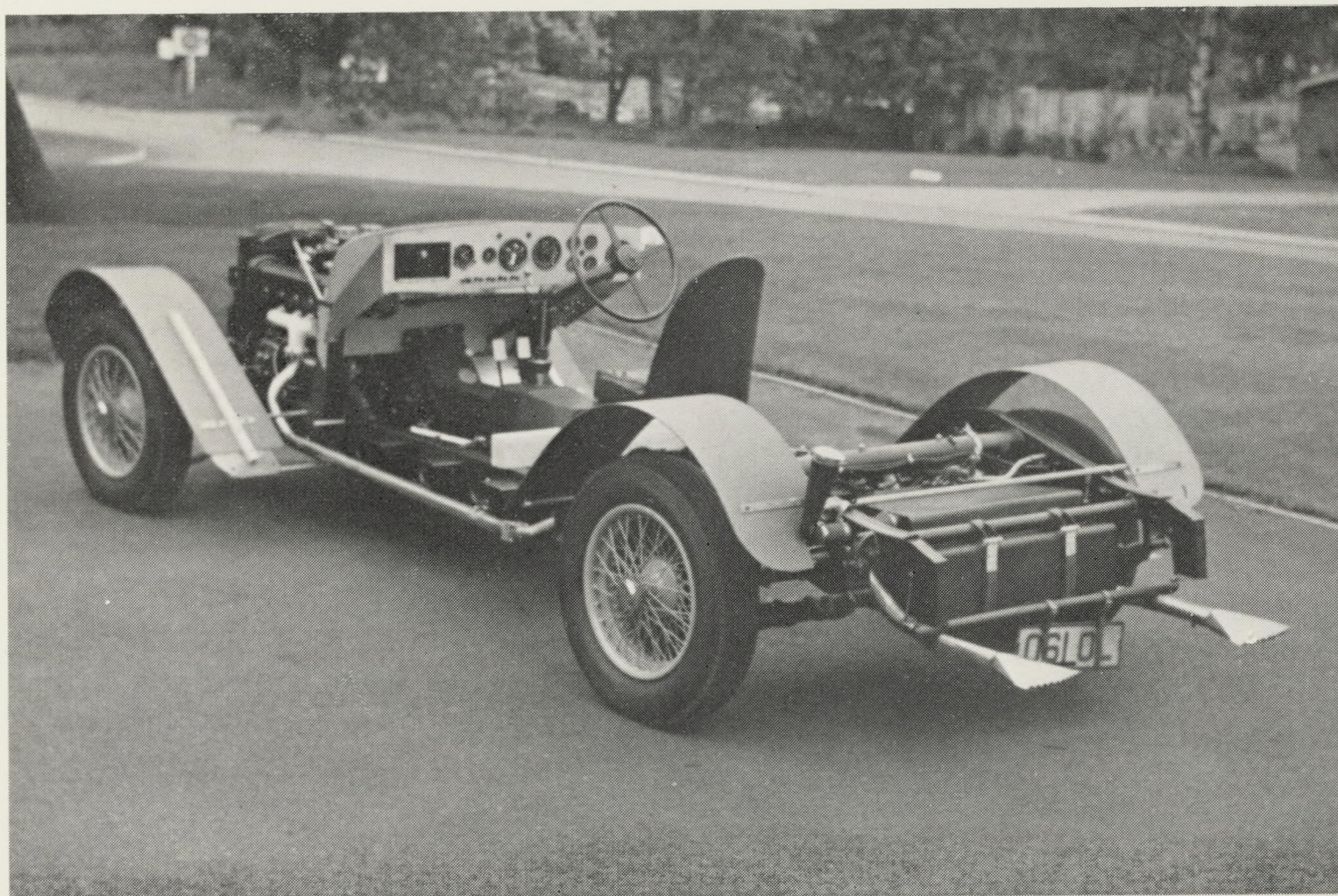
heat insulator as a further effort to keeping the inside of the car habitable. This done the bulkhead was completely dismantled and the various parts vapour blasted and anodised. Anchor nuts were then fitted to the accessory bolt holes and the bulkhead built up with 1" thick Plastazote infilling in the cavity wall. Finally all the reconditioned accessories were bolted on and I must say that the general effect looked very satisfactory.

I got a sheet metal worker to make me an exact replica of the old petrol tank which had rusted through in places and into this I put a level gauge tank unit from an MGB to which I fitted a longer float arm made of stainless wire to cope with the deeper tank. The original tank unit had completely rusted away. Readings on the gauge will now not be strictly accurate due to the different shapes of the tanks but they will be correct at the empty and full positions which are the really critical points.

I used the original petrol tank fixing straps which are made of spring steel and being well cadmium plated were as good as new. As a further protection against salt I covered these in rubber cut from bicycle inner tube which is just the right size. A new petrol pipe was next installed passing through a large filter mounted in the chassis side member. I used metal braided flexible pipes at appropriate places in view of the rubber mounted pump and engine.

It now seemed appropriate to wire up the complete chassis and to save my failing eyesight I had a photostat copy of the wiring diagram from the instruction book enlarged to twice the original size. I then made alterations such as excluding the electric gauge cluster, including flashing indicators and the R.R. dashboard switchbox and numbering all the wires where they were to pass from the dashboard through a multi-pin plug and socket for ease of dashboard removal. The whole diagram was then redrawn to a large scale. Next supplies of wire and sheathing were bought. I do not understand colour coding and so I have used all black PVC covered wire employing 14 x .012" for up to 10 amps., 28 x .012" up to 20 amps. and 36 x .012" for over 20 amps. Other than behind the dashboard the wiring is all enclosed in PVC sheathing and clipped at regular intervals. Across the front of the bulkhead it is enclosed in a metal conduit. At each of the four corners of the frame the lamp wiring was ended in a junction box for ease of connection after the body has been fitted. A 24 pin plug and socket





JBG 492 ready for road testing

rated at 15 A per pin was mounted on the back face of the bulkhead and all dashboard wiring passes through this. The end of each wire either had a tag soldered to it or was soldered into a solid end where a grub screw type of terminal was employed, so preventing fraying of the strands and making a better connection.

With the usual trepidation the master switch was turned on and the various circuits tested. All seemed well and so at long last there was no reason for not attempting to start the engine. This was a signal failure as despite rapid rotation by the starter not a peep of life would emerge. I was glad I was on my own and had not arranged an engine starting party. Realising it was no good going on exhausting the battery I put this on charge and as rapidly as possible lashed up four hardboard mudguards and a bucket seat. We then towed the chassis round the block at gradually increasing speeds and suddenly after about half a mile we had a burst of life but on six cylinders only. I had got one distributor timed 180° out but why all the towing was necessary to get the other six cylinders running I shall never

know. After that the engine has never failed to start in one revolution.

The starting up happily coincided with the first day of a one week holiday during which I made innumerable sorties and gradually got rid of all the small snags. On the first run the most apparent cause for alarm was violent oversteer which had me somewhat perplexed as the castor angle is literally quite non-adjustable. A friend pointed to the obvious cause being that the back springs were relatively unloaded and the resulting slope of the frame was giving a negative castor angle. Twenty gallons of petrol in the tank and winding up the front torsion bars restored the frame level and gave a complete cure. A very persistent leak from the water pump gland was eventually traced to my not having a sufficiently good finish on the new graphite ring which I had machined. I finally lapped this to a very high finish with a disc of 400 grade emery cloth and cured the trouble. By now I could easily remove the pump blindfold. The oil pressure is 90 p.s.i. which is rather cheering.

In the early stages of testing I could not get the



tickover down below 1,500 r.p.m. With four large carburettors on a 4½-litre engine it only requires the merest crack of light showing round each butterfly to keep the engine going at this speed and so I had to dismantle these and spend a morning getting the discs to bed perfectly in their bores. This got the tickover down to 700 r.p.m. which I find perfectly acceptable today although I don't think that the original customer would have liked it. They were mad on slow tickovers before the war. The straight-through exhausts were much too noisy despite the Tubex fishtails and I had a pair of small rectangular silencers welded up in stainless steel to fit either side of the propellor shaft. More by luck than any knowledge of the subject of silencer design this has given just the right blend of sportiness without annoyance.

Finally with all the obvious faults rectified I enjoyed a few miles of motoring just for fun. Of course, without the weight of a body the performance is extremely lively and although I was care-

ful not to overdo things with only about 70 miles covered it was extremely easy to find the speedometer up in the 60-70 m.p.h. bracket before one had realised quite what was happening. When the week's holiday was over I rather reluctantly took off the mudguards, dashboard and bucket seat, loaded the chassis onto a lorry and delivered it to Wilkinson's at Derby where the body shell will once more be restored to its proper place and the upholstery, trimming and painting completed.

So here my tale must end, the job so far has taken 27 months of my spare time and in a few months I hope that at least some of my readers can see the finished article and judge for themselves whether it was all worthwhile.

BRIAN MORGAN

*I am sure all members will join me in thanking Brian Morgan for finding the time to narrate in such careful detail the story of this most interesting restoration. We all look forward to seeing the finished result in the near future. Ed.*

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## Report from America

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HAVING BEEN ADVISED OF THE 21ST ANNIVERSARY Edition of the Lagonda Club Magazine, I am very happy to fill in on the activity of the Club on this side of the water.

It should be understood that the United States extends some two-thousand miles North and South and over three-thousand miles East and West. Under those circumstances, it can be appreciated that meetings of a hand full of car owners spread over this rather vast area becomes almost an impossibility. My attempt to achieve some co-ordination can best be judged from the following brief history of my activities over here.

My fascination with Lagondas began in 1950 when I attended my first post-war hill climb in Vermont. I observed among the many MG's, ERA's, Fraser-Nash, HRG's, etc. as well as a number of American made specials, a vast, stark, lengthy beast with a mile-long bonnet, bucket seats and little more, slither around the hairpins and then roar away up the straights. This turned out to be an LG-45R, suitably lightened for competition. Obviously, with the many more agile contestants, the car, which I eventually learned was a Lagonda, did not score. However,

score it did in my minds eye and never left until I owned one.

The next winter, I found this same car in Florida, then belonging to Fred Sills. More fascination and more irresistible urge to own one.

In the Fall of 1952, I found 14058, a V.12 drop-head in a pretty sad condition. After a whirlwind courtship, she was mine and I shall never forget getting her home from Pennsylvania (65 miles from home) being followed by my wife in a new XK-120 Jaguar. The chap from whom I bought her couniled that the front end was quite worn and to avoid any speed over 30 m.p.h. After a half-hour of such foolishness, I gradually stepped up the speed to 31 m.p.h. Suddenly (as described by my patient wife, the whole thing seemed to go into a wild gyration, in what seemed like an attempt to tear itself apart. Enough of this, finally we reached home and the restoration started, which is still in progress, 19 years later.

Knowing of only the one other Lagonda owner, I immediately started a search for kindred souls. Membership in the SCCA in 1951, The Lagonda Club in 1954, The Classic Car Club of America in 1955 each brought a few more Lagondas to add to my list.

As some older readers of the Club Magazine may recall, in 1955 I attended a CCA Football meet with the V.12 and found it a very pleasant



day. From that time on, I used this meet as an opportunity to invite Lagonda owners from far and near to join me. We are now in our 16th anniversary year and I have had as many as nine Lagondas with an average of five, every year.

In the meantime, I have visited many owners as far West as Denver, North to Quebec and South to Florida.

Correspondence with English members has resulted in visits over here from several and visits with members in England on three trips.

In 1959 and 1960 I visited Springfield, Ohio investigating the past history of the Gunn family. I found one man who had known Wilbur when they were both young boys. I also talked with a man who had been one of the incorporators of the Lagonda Company. Eventually I traced the family to the daughters of Newton Gunn, Wilbur's younger brother, but never was able to meet them. More on this at some later date.

In 1966, James Crocker and his wife visited us on a Sunday following one of the Football meets. At that time we had five Lagonda owners and their wives to meet James. The picture shows this group.

The following year we met James Crocker, Mike Wilby, Ivan Forshaw, and not to forget Maurice Leo in England. All wonderful and friendly people. We were all deeply distressed to learn of Mike's death—a sad blow to the Club.

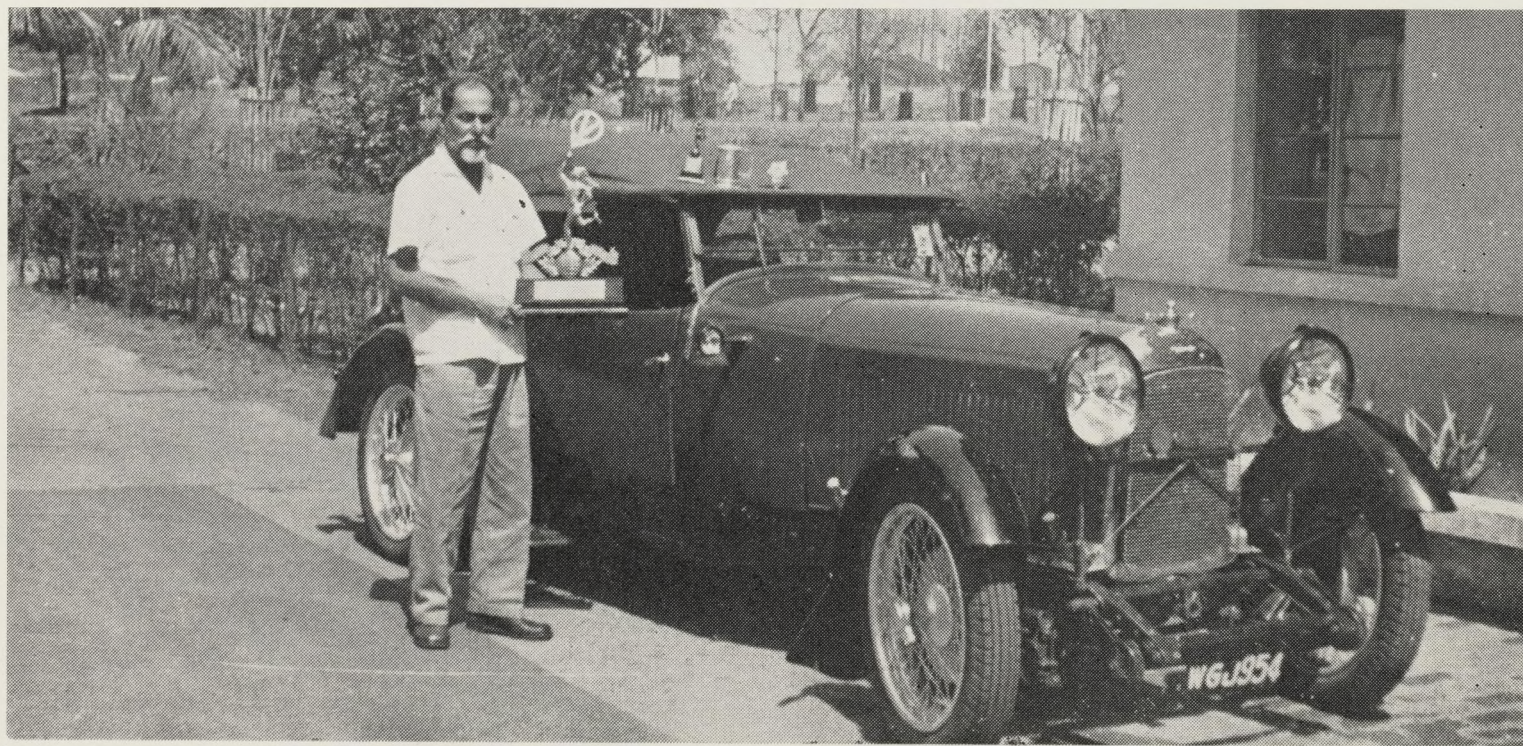
During this period I have followed all leads and now have 165 Lagondas catalogued in this

country. Also, during this period, I have participated in three "Classic Caravans", with the Lagonda. Two were to Canada and last year to South Carolina. These runs averaged some 1,500 or more miles a piece. Never a serious problem.

Of the Lagondas over here, that I know of, the break-down is one 11.1, twelve 2-litres, five 3-litres, eighteen M.45's, six M45.R's, seventeen LG.45's, three LG.45R's, ten LG.6's, four LG.6R's, thirty V.12's, ten V.12R's, eight Post war including two 1962 Rapides. In addition there are one 14/60, one 16/65 and nine 16/80's. Also eight Rapiers. For a time many of the cars seemed to have been bought by speculators wanting to sell at a profit. Now, most are in the hands of enthusiasts. Several are in famous collections, several have been restored and have won top concours prizes and most are being driven regularly by proud owners.

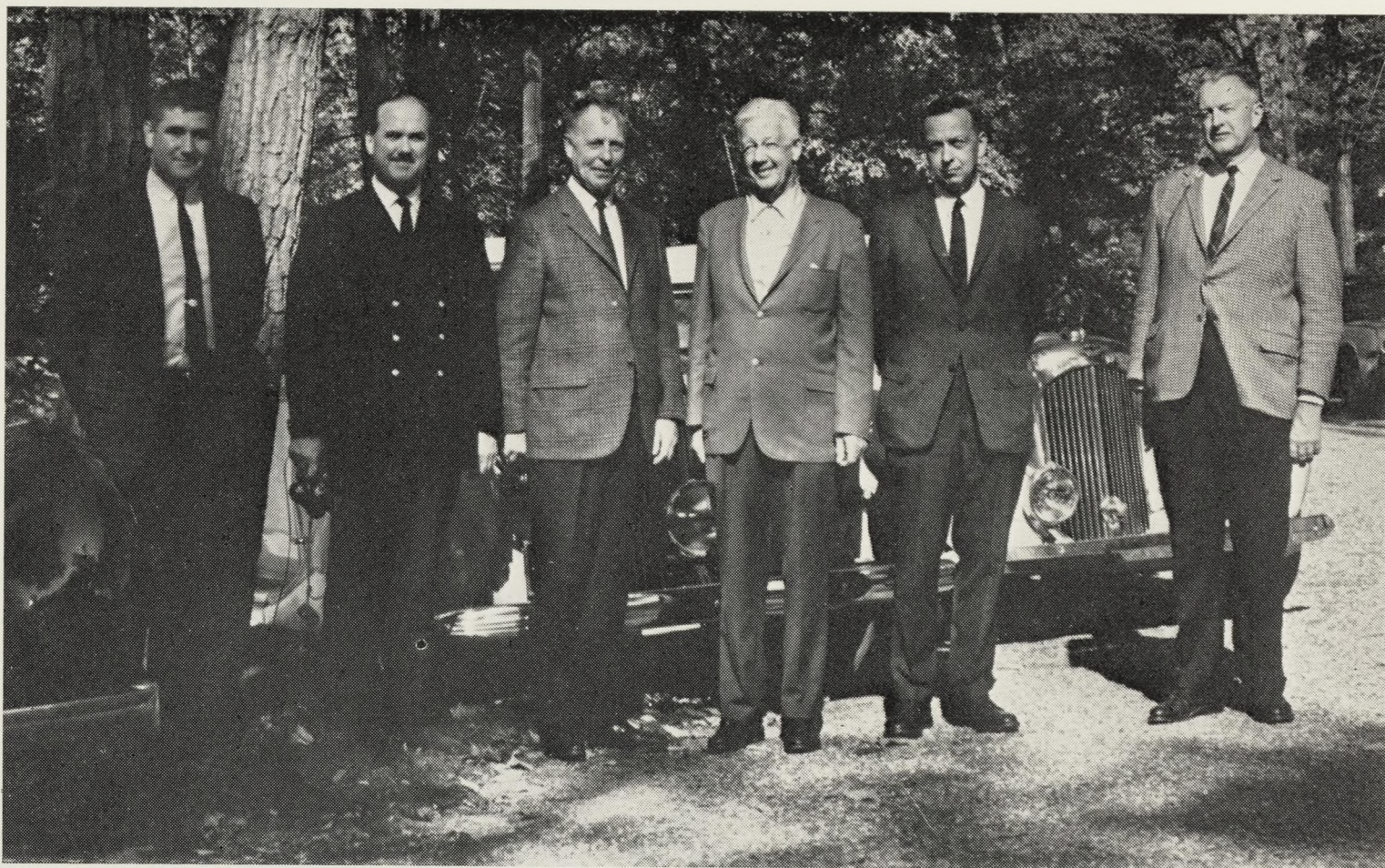
So far, while we have a number of very interested owners, I have not been successful in promoting other centres of interest in different parts of the U.S.A. Mr. Earl Kulgoske has been very helpful, having published several American News Letters. It is my hope that we can find owners who will organise local events that will be able to attract nearby owners. It is important for us to do this, for carrying on letters with some 165 owners have now become a real chore. Hopefully, we can thereby add more chapters to the Lagonda in the U.S.A. story.

BOB CRANE



H. Banerjee proudly displays his rally trophies gained in India this year—see 'Letters to the Editor'





Bob Crane introduces James Crocker to some American Lagonda owners

## Gaydon Pursuit Sprint Meeting

15th May

THIS EVENT, RUN BY THE BENTLEY DRIVER'S CLUB at R.A.F. Gaydon, Warwick, with the Lagonda Club invited, replaces the erstwhile co-promoted Sprint at Curborough. The change of venue represents a change to the good, overcoming most of the irritations and frustrations of the old circuit.

Known as a Pursuit Sprint, the course at Gaydon is almost ideal, with plenty of fast left and right-hand bends, some good straights, and slight undulations, over a distance of 1.3 miles.

Cars start off at 10 second intervals with a maximum of four cars on the circuit at any one time, thus providing spectators with an interesting visual comparison of performance.

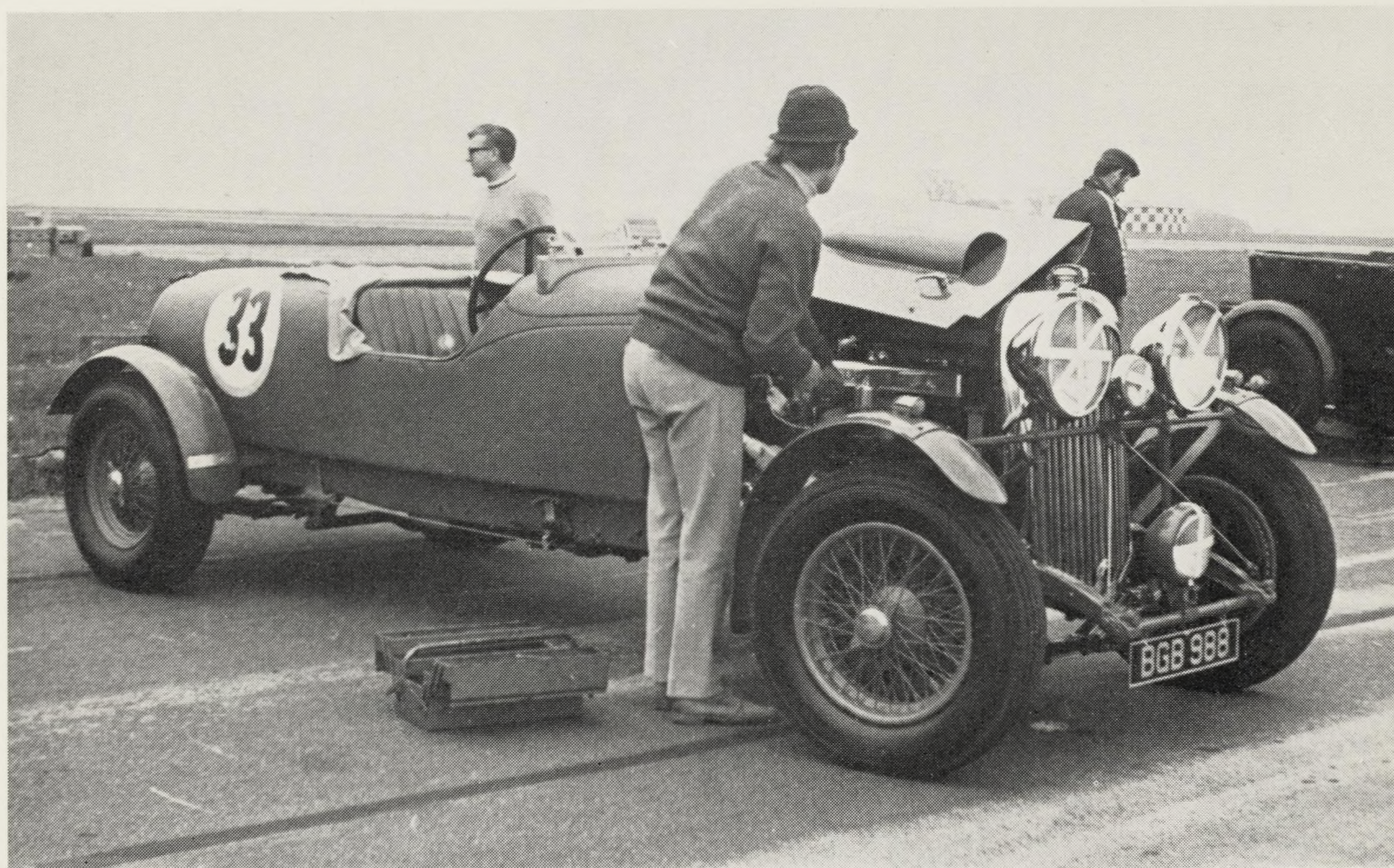
The day started off dull and threatening. The entry list consisted of 27 Bentleys, 11 Lagondas and eight others. Practice in the morning was just completed in the dry, but rain was falling heavily during the official runs which were inevitably slower than in practice.

The following list shows the individual times in first and second runs. In most cases the slower times in the second run were due to the extremely wet conditions. The fastest Lagonda time was made by Bob Alexander in his M.45 Special in 2' 57", a very creditable effort, as this was achieved in even worse conditions than the F.T.D. of 2' 28" by Harvey Hine in Llewellyn's 3/8-litre Bentley. David Hine in the V.12 Le Mans replica and Witt Wittridge in his M.45 followed up with a worthy 2nd and 3rd place with times of 3' 00.4" and 3' 05.2" respectively.

Two interesting cars were Len Bucktons' LG.6 Special, which looked very potent, and Herb Schofield's LG.45 Special, now resplendent with a new body in the style of David Johnson's 1935 team car.

Despite the rain, the day can be considered a success. The meeting was run at a loss due to the lack of sufficient entries, but it is to be hoped that more support will be forthcoming next year for an event which is geographically well situated, good fun for competitors, without too much strain on their cars, and interesting for spectators who are able to view the whole circuit from one vantage point.





Herb Schofield's new LG.45 Special

Photo: Tony Wood

#### Final Results Class Four—Lagonda

No.	Entrant/Driver		1st Run	2nd Run
28	Brown, A.	Lagonda 2-litre	3'36.4	3'30.6
30	Wood, J. A.	Lagonda Rapier	3'42.8	4'06.8
31	Roberts, Mrs. F.	Lagonda 11.1	4'56.8	5'01.4
32	Buckton, H. L.	Lagonda LG.6	DNKC	3'40.4
33	Schofield, H. L.	Lagonda LG.45	3'20.4	3'28.2
34	Alexander, W. R.	Lagonda M.45	DNCC	2'57.0
35	Russell Floyd, P.	Lagonda M.35R	3'14.4	3'29.2
36	Hine, D. R.	Lagonda V.12LM	3'00.4	3'08.4
37	Johnson, D. S.	Lagonda M.45R	3'16.4	3'22.0
38	Wittridge, A. H.	Lagonda M.45	3'05.2	3'27.4

#### Class Five VSCC Members in Vintage Sports Cars

No.	Entrant/Driver		1st Run	2nd Run
1	Morten, H. A.	Bentley 3/4½	3'00.0	2'59.6
2	Wilton, L.	Bentley 3	3'30.0	3'26.0
39	Tomlin, M. D.	Lagonda LG.6	3'09.2	N/S
38	Wittridge, A. H.	Lagonda M.45	3'04.8	DNCC
46	Glass, M.	Bentley 6½	3'29.0	3'17.2
31	Roberts, Mrs. F.	Lagonda 11.1	4'52.8	N/S

#### Class Six BDC and LC Members driving other makes

No.	Entrant/Driver		1st Run	2nd Run
40	Roberts, J. W. S.	Cooper Bristol Mk. 1	2'48.6	2'51.6
41	Gibb, Dr. S.	AC ACE Bristol	3'08.0	3'09.2
42	Bradwell, A. F./ Harben, H.	Cox GTM	3'09.8	3'19.4
43	Sargeant, M.	Cooper S	3'00.0	3'00.6
44	Gooda, A. R.	Maserati Indy	3'11.6	3'02.8
48	Bradwell, A. F.	Cox GTM	2'52.4	2'57.8
45	Whitehouse, R. H.	B.M.W.	3'21.0	3'15.8
47	Glass, M.	Maserati 4CM	N/S	N/S
29	Morgan, P.	Morris 1300	3'14.6	3'16.6

JAMES WOOLLARD

## Report from West London

WE LIKE TO THINK WE ARE A FRIENDLY CROWD OUT in the suburbs and over the years we have welcomed all sorts of vehicles, from pre-war Austin 12's and Riley 9's to post-war bread and butter saloons. The other evening it was a World War II or perhaps even World War I "tin hat", the ensemble completed by a belt of what appeared to be .303 bullets of similar vintage. In a discreet sort of way I was vastly interested, the neck of the fair young thing bearing the adornment did not look strong enough to carry the weight; I seemed to remember from years long ago that if you looked down the blasted thing fell off. If it didn't the strap was so tight it made your chin sore.

I have now got my new 2-litre brake drums, I hope that every one who has had them is as pleased as I am; the car even stops in the wet! Having just got my other 2-litre on the road again I was more than pleased to find that the horrible front axle tramp appears to have gone away. As a matter of interest what I have done is to set up the springs and renew the shackle bushes and



bolts. Two of us have had bothers with the bolts which hold the Bendix spring on the starter shaft. Does anyone know what obscure thread they are as nothing we have will fit? Another member is still looking for a 16/80 radiator and for information on restoring the cam-shaft for the same car. Listening to my 'B'-type gears grinding away the other evening I thought it was about time we got together and organised some new 2nd and 3rd gears for the lighter box. Step forward one willing volunteer.

We have welcomed some new faces recently and also missed some familiar ones, but older members will be interested to learn that the Ron Newman 3-litre has come to light again in the right hands. This brings back memories of some of the best days in the club; the early fifties when the Bentley Boys first invited us to their Silverstone Meetings. Bags of enthusiasm and enough Lagonda entries to fill two races—some 34 types roaring round trying to find out what it was all about—great fun. The 3-litre in the hands of Ron the 'Demon Driver' used to show the 4½'s the way round. Many is the time I chased him down Knightsbridge after the Avery Row Meetings with his rear lights well away in the distance—and we never got nicked.

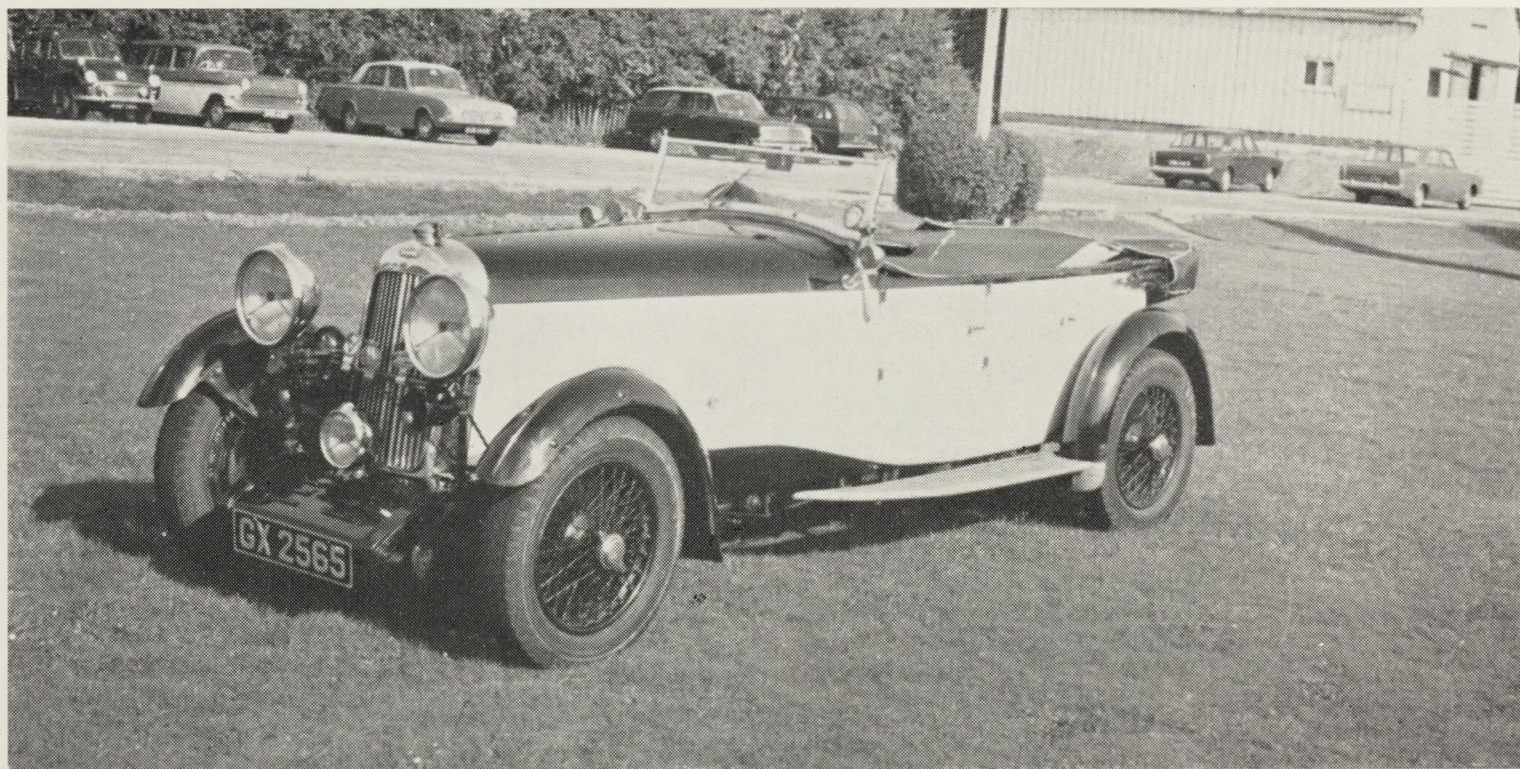
We have been sorry to lose our two stalwarts Brian and Jackie Horwood who have taken themselves off to Sussex together with the dog and the two Lagondas. They are on the phone so

we will be able to arrange to meet at the usual places. I met them again up at Oulton Park where they had gone in the 2-litre. Pouring rain the whole way; I had watched it from a train window. It was my first visit to this track and it will not be the last. The Vintage Meeting is well worth the long ride to the Southerners. For my part, I met again many of the Northerners I used to see when I had the energy to take myself up to the Northern Driving Tests! Nice to see you again Folks—hope to come again before too long. Incidentally there was a very good turnout of Lagondas in the races and the weather was fine; a welcome change after the miserable April Silverstone Meeting. Two of our members, them with the itchy wheels, have been off again on their Continental travels—the Paris to Strasburg Rally this time. I gather that one of the cars showed a spot of temperament on this occasion, but no names—no pack drill.

As I write in the middle of July the active types are preparing for Vintage Silverstone followed by our own Driving Tests the next day. Then there is Vintage Prescott and the Autojumble at Beaulieu.

A final last word for some of the newcomers to the area; earning the odd crust of bread seems to take up more and more of my time these days and I apologise for not chasing after you. How about you coming after me? Better still, turn up at one of our meetings!

HARRY GOSTLING



Harry Gostling's 2-litre Continental

Photo: J. Longworth



# BDC/Lagonda Bournemouth Rally 1936

These regulations for a Rally back in 1936 organised by the then Lagonda Car Club in association with the B.D.C. and B.O.C. have recently come to light. We hope they will be of interest and they show that our association with the Bentley Drivers' Club goes back a long way. We have no records to show who won this Rally—can any member throw any light on this? It has been noted that it must have been difficult for a competitor to calculate his starting time in order to average 24 m.p.h. to finish at Bournemouth if he did not know how long he would be at Fordingbridge—even if the "dead" time is calculated.

## FIRST LAGONDA CAR CLUB BOURNEMOUTH RALLY

(Incorporating an Eliminating Test at  
FORDINGBRIDGE, Hants)

**Saturday, 22nd August, 1936**

Open to all Members of  
THE LAGONDA CAR CLUB,  
BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB  
& BUGATTI OWNERS CLUB

All competitors will report at the "As You Like It" Roadhouse, Fordingbridge, Hants, where the eliminating contest will be held.

Run under the General Competition Rules of the Royal Automobile Club and the Supplementary Regulations of the Lagonda Car Club. R.A.C. Permit No. A/112.

*If any Member, who cannot enter, would be willing to act as Marshal at Fordingbridge, his assistance would be very welcome.*

## SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

### 1. Capacity

This event will be open to cars of any capacity.

### 2. Drivers

The Drivers may be persons of either sex, and every car must carry at least one adult passenger. Any of the occupants of the car may drive. Each person driving a car must be a member of one of

the three Clubs named.

### 3. Numbers

Each competitor will be provided with two Competition Numbers, one of which must be fixed to the front of the car and one at the rear of the car. These Numbers will be issued to Competitors on arrival at Fordingbridge.

### 4. Indemnity

Neither the promoting Club nor the R.A.C. will be responsible for any damage or loss to or by competitors' vehicles, or their appurtenances, either by fire, theft or accident, during any part of the Rally or while they are in charge of the Club Officials. Any entrant is personally responsible for any civil or criminal proceedings which may be taken against him (or her).

### 5. Insurance

All Competitors must comply with the provisions of the Road Traffic Acts regarding Insurance.

### 6. Entries

The Entrance Fee will be 10/- per car for members and 15/- per car for members of invited Clubs. All Entries, together with the Entrance Fees, must reach the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Sieger, on or before Friday 7th August. Entry Fees are not returnable after the date of entries closing. If a postponement or abandonment occurs from any cause, the Committee may in their discretion return part or all of the Entry Fees.

### 7. The Start

Competitors may start from any place of their own selection, which must be clearly stated on the Entry Form, and this cannot be altered after the entries have closed.

## BOOK RECEIVED. "Veteran and Vintage Cars in Colour".

Introduction and Notes by Michael Sedgwick. 144 p.p. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Published by B. T. Batsford Ltd. £1.50.

This new motoring book from Batsford is a pictorial representation of part of a unique collection of veteran and vintage cars owned by one man, Baron J. O. Raben-Levetzan. Started in 1956 the collection is now so large that only 250 cars can be on exhibit at any one time (!) Housed in Denmark it contains cars from most car manufacturing countries in the world. A Lagonda Tricar is shown. The excellent colour photographs are captioned with notes by Michael Sedgwick.

A.W.M.



## 8. Control and Eliminating Contest

There will be an intermediate check and eliminating contest at the "As You Like It" Roadhouse, Fordingbridge, Hants. This is situated about 1½ miles outside Fordingbridge on the main Bournemouth—Salisbury road. The details of the Eliminating Contest to be carried out will be given to drivers at the time they are allotted their numbers at Fordingbridge. *The total time taken for the Eliminating Contest and delay at Fordingbridge during the contest, will be deducted from the competitors' total time so as to enable them to maintain their average speed of 24 miles per hour from start to finish.*

## 9. The Finish

The finish will be at Westover Garage, Bournemouth.

## 10. Starting Time

(a) Competitors must work out their own starting time, so as to arrive at the Fordingbridge Control, (as set out in Regulation No. 8) and finally at Westover Garage, Bournemouth between 4 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. on Saturday 22nd August, having averaged 24 miles per hour from start to finish, disregarding the time taken for the Eliminating Contest (as per Regulation No. 8). For the purpose of working out the time they are due to start, due at the Control, and finally at the Westover Garage, Bournemouth, Competitors must base their calculations on the mileage which will be sent them upon receipt of their completed entry form. (Mileage will be worked out by the most direct route irrespective of road conditions.)

(b) Before starting, Competitors must send a telegram addressed Lagonda, Westover Garage, Bournemouth, giving the name of the entrant and the starting place. The Post Office Time on the Telegram will be accepted as the competitor's official starting time.

## 11. Marks

*Marks awarded:*

*Marks*

For every one mile (up to 105 miles) covered from the starting point to Bournemouth, based on the official mileage allotted to the competitor before the start .. .. .	1
For every mile over 105 but under 300 .. .. .	$\frac{1}{2}$
For every mile over 300 but under 500 .. .. .	$\frac{1}{4}$
For every mile over 500 .. .. .	$\frac{1}{8}$
For each Competitor who passes the Eliminating Contest and whose time is within the average time .. .. .	50
For the best time in the Eliminating Contest .. .. . PLUS	25

For the second best time in the Eliminating Contest .. .. . PLUS 10

*Marks deducted:*

For Dynamo and/or Electric Starter, Screen Wiper or Horn not working (if fitted) ..	10
For each Head, Side or Tail Lamp not lighting .. .. .	5
For every one minute more than ten minutes late in arriving at Bournemouth after his schedule time .. .. .	10
For every one minute early in arriving at Bournemouth before his schedule time ..	20
For every one minute more than ten minutes late at Fordingbridge .. .. .	10
For every one minute early at Fordingbridge	10
The time Competitors are due at Bournemouth and the Control en route will be based on their starting time (as shown on their telegram from their starting point) and allowing an average of 24 miles per hour.	

## 12. Calculation of Time

The onus of working out the time of starting and the time due at Fordingbridge and Bournemouth rests entirely on the Competitor.

## 13. Failure to send Telegram

Any Competitor failing to send a telegram from the starting point cannot qualify for any award.

## 14. Awards

Prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the Rally in order of merit to the Two Competitors obtaining highest marks:

*First Prize:* Pair of Engraved Tankards.

*Second Prize:* One Engraved Tankard.

A Plaque will be awarded to each Competitor completing the Course and passing the Eliminating Test within standard time.

*In addition* to the above, a Tankard will be awarded to the Competitor securing the highest marks in the Eliminating Contest.

*Visitors:* Similar awards will be presented to competitors of Bugatti Owners Club and Bentley Drivers Club.

## Dinner and Dance

It is proposed to hold a **Dinner and Dance and Cabaret** at The Burlington Hotel, Bournemouth at the conclusion of the Rally, and since the arrangements for this are entirely dependent upon the number of entries, will you be good enough to state on the Entry Form in the place marked, whether you will be able to attend and with how many guests. (Evening Dress). The charge will be 12/6d. per head, exclusive of wines.



## A New 1,100 c.c. Sports Model

# The Lagonda Rapier Two-seater

### Good Road-holding and Controllability

SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION AT OLYMPIA LAST YEAR the Lagonda Rapier has created an unusual amount of interest in sporting circles, due partly to the esteem in which other Lagonda products are held, partly to the attractive specification, but chiefly to a conviction that the Rapier would be something out of the ordinary.

The model tested is the Warwick Wright Special two-seater, a goodlooking, well-equipped model with a particular appeal to the high-performance enthusiast.

The Rapier is a car which comes fully up to expectations. In the first place the general road-holding is outstanding and inspires the driver with immediate confidence. The car can be thrown round corners or down into the gutter from a high camber in a most heartening way, proving that it is one of the "safest" of small cars. This "safe" feeling is perhaps the outstanding characteristic at all speeds, and the Rapier is capable of a genuine 75 m.p.h.

#### Cornering and Steering

On corners one is entirely unconscious of the tail following, so that there is a sense of an effortless sweeping motion, with no suggestion of roll, and coupled with the sensitive, high-g geared steering which allows one to place the car to an inch, this gives an extraordinary fascination in handling the car. The car takes all open bends as fast as you wish.

The brakes, of the Girling type, are above reproach, giving a smooth pull up from all speeds in response to the lightest pressure. Their efficiency is constant right up the scale of speed, and in our test they gave exceptional stopping distances. Whether used for a positive stop or merely to slow down slightly they impress one as being unusually powerful and pleasant.

All these qualities help the Lagonda Rapier towards outstanding general performance, yet this is further enhanced by the preselector gear change, allowing instantaneous changes up and giving an electrifying getaway from a traffic block. The lever moves in a quadrant fitted in the normal right-hand position. One can imagine the advantage of this type of gear change in the timed section of a trial, yet in every-day driving it proves to be an almost indispensable advantage, once one has become accustomed to it.

The chassis is right, then, the steering, the brakes and the gearbox, so that with the controls in the right places, as they are on the Rapier, the enthusiast can want nothing more. For a car to feel right—an elusive quality—and to behave properly is to have much to be thankful for. Cars are too often judged by performance figures alone. Yet even if the Lagonda were judged purely by those standards it would still be a car out of the ordinary, for the performance is thoroughly satisfying, enabling high average speeds to be accomplished.

The suspension is stiff, but not by any means "dead". Bad roads can be taken fast without discomfort, shocks being damped by the long springs and Hartford shock absorbers. There is no roll or sway, the whole car possessing a delightful "solid" feel.

After nearly 400 miles of road work, in which the foregoing opinions were formed, the car was taken to Brooklands and subjected to our usual tests.

#### Tests at Brooklands

After a few circuits of the track at the easy 60 m.p.h. cruising gait, to warm up, a flying  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile was covered at a shade over 75 m.p.h. This speed was slightly increased when the wind was following, and 80 m.p.h. should be possible in favourable circumstances on the road.

A lap was covered at 66.5 m.p.h.

For a 1,100 c.c. car, weighing 17 cwt., the acceleration figures are notable, 60 m.p.h. was attained from a standing start, in  $21\frac{4}{5}$  secs., using first, second and third gears. A speedometer reading of 70 m.p.h. was obtained on third, but the instrument on the car tested was somewhat optimistic, although a genuine 70 m.p.h. could doubtless be obtained as a limit figure, using the effortless revving capabilities of the engine, 5,500 r.p.m. being a very quickly attained rate of revolution.



The Test Hill was climbed in first gear from a standing start in  $14\frac{4}{5}$  secs., and second was sufficient for the gradient with a "rolling" start. The hand brake, of the racing-ratchet type, held the car easily on the steepest section. The convenient position of this, combined with the sweet clutch made restarting a worry-free matter.

### Special Braking Tests

The braking system on this car proved to be so exceptionally effective as to demand special tests. The Tapley meter which we ordinarily employ records an efficiency of 100 per cent. when the stopping distance is 30 ft. from 30 m.p.h., this being a figure seldom exceeded. The Rapier, however, gave this meter reading so readily as to suggest that an even shorter stopping distance could be achieved.

We therefore made some special tests with a device which marked the road with paint at the instant of brake application. After allowing for a slight speedometer error, a distance of 25 ft. from 30 m.p.h. was recorded, which is shorter than the minimum distance ordinarily accepted as the limit for four-wheel brakes.

Although the turning circle left something to be desired, from the point of view of the trials driver who may require to negotiate really sharp hairpin bends occasionally, it is understood that a modified drop arm is to be introduced, giving a

turning circle of 35 ft. The other minor criticism is directed against the lack of door on the driver's side. This seems a pity when the other roomy dimensions are concerned—spacious head and leg room and a general touring (not sports car) standard of comfort.

### Coachwork Features

Behind the seats there is plenty of suitcase room, normally enclosed by a three-piece tonneau cover. In touring trim the flare screen can be detached and slotted on to the side pillars of the main windscreen, to act as auxiliary wind-deflectors.

The Lagonda Rapier is a car of high-grade workmanship—a glance at the exterior of the beautifully finished engine will reveal that—and sound design, with a very definite and lasting appeal to the enthusiast.

### Tabulated Data

#### CHASSIS DETAILS

**Engine:** 4 cylinders; 2 camshafts; overhead valves; magneto ignition; 62.5 mm by 90 mm (1,104 c.c.); tax £10.

**Gearbox:** Four forward speeds, Wilson type pre-selector; lever moving in right-hand quadrant. Ratios, 5.28, 7.18, 10.56 and 17.95 to 1.

#### PERFORMANCE

**Speeds on Gears:** Top, 75 m.p.h.; third, 64 m.p.h.; second, 45 m.p.h. Minimum speed on top gear, 10 m.p.h.

**Acceleration:** From standstill through the gears to 60 m.p.h., 21 seconds; to 50 m.p.h., 13 seconds.

**Tapley Performance Figures:** Maximum pull in lb. per ton on gradient: top, 140 lb.; third, 240 lb.; second, 360 lb. Corresponding gradients climbable at a steady speed are 1 in 16, 1 in  $9\frac{1}{2}$  and 1 in 6.

**Petrol Consumption:** 25-28 m.p.g., driven hard.

**Brake Efficiencies:** By Tapley meter, using the pedal only: from 30 m.p.h., 100 per cent.; from 50 m.p.h., 95 per cent. Corresponding stopping distances, see text.

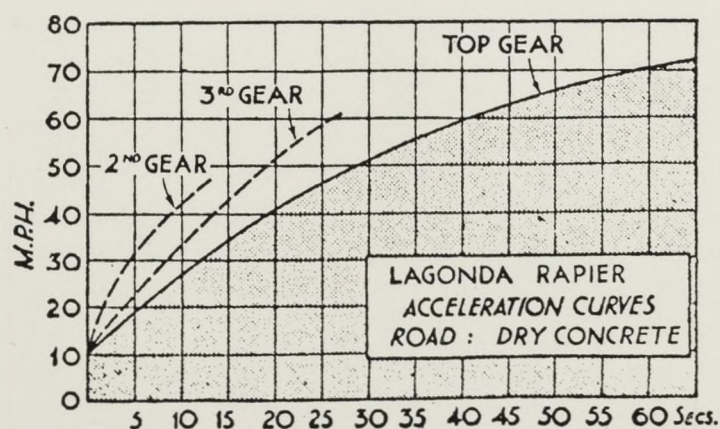
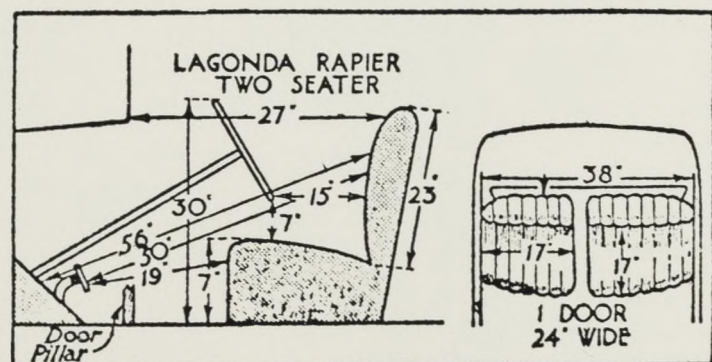
#### DIMENSIONS, etc.

**Leading Measurements:** Wheelbase, 8 ft. 4 in.; track, 4 ft. (rear), 3 ft.  $11\frac{3}{4}$  in. (front). Ground clearance,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in.; overall length, 12 ft. 10 in.; width, 5 ft.

**Turning Circles:** Left and right, 43 ft.

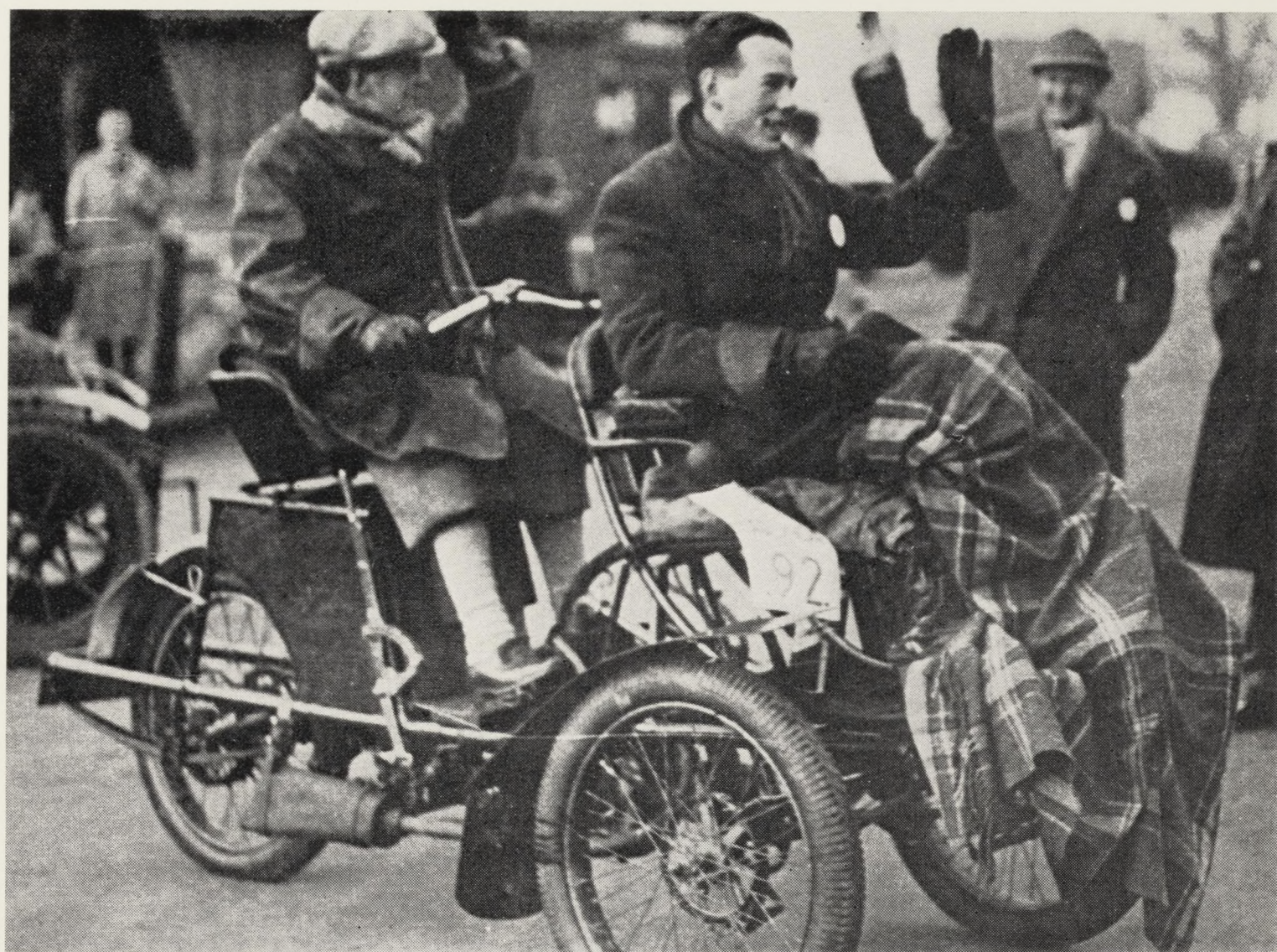
**Weight:** 17 cwt., unladen.

**Price:** Warwick Wright Special 2 seater, £375.



Reprinted by kind courtesy of the Motor





## An Old Lag makes a break for Brighton

Philip Southall

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SHE WAS WICKED AND that she has led many astray, as she was to lead my twin and me. She had a particular disdain for the police and seemed to enjoy breaking the law. A real old lag.

Old is a relative term. When you are in your teens, as we were, anyone more than 25 is old, and she was more than 30 then; decrepit, worn and an out-dated old fogey. To brother and I she was beautiful and destined to become of considerable influence over a long period of our lives. Let me tell you of the period when I first knew her.

She was conceived by one Wilbur Gunn—an American living in England. He named her Lagonda, which is the rather beautiful name American Indians had given to a river. Her

forbears were single cylinder Tricars. In 1904 Gunn thought two was better than one, and put two single cylinder engines to work a common crank and created a twin, a problem, and our particular Lagonda Tricar.

This, the prototype twin, in which he left many difficulties unsolved, was later sold to an unsuspecting doctor in Belfast. Just what effect that Lagonda may have had on Irish medicine is unknown. But others soon followed.

The periodical *The Field* described Wilbur Gunn's latest creation as the motor cyclists' Mercedes, an over-powered monster capable of 50 m.p.h. and quite unsuitable for English roads. Come to think of it, putting a 1,000 c.c. engine, that is the size of a Morris Minor, into a tubular chassis little different from a triangular bed, which when complete weighed only 3½ cwt., was rather venturesome and the result certainly potent.

It was a great many years later that we met; 1936 to be precise, when I was 19 and, with my



twin brother, trying to park our bicycles in the University cycleshed. It was "something made by the students for the Carnival", the Porter said. This didn't ring true. There were both good design and clever ideas here, admittedly wedded to the grotesque, but Wilbur Gunn's genius shone through and appealed for a new home.

The Porter didn't know who it belonged to, but agreed for half a crown to find out from Mr. Burton. A few days later he had found that it belonged to him, and a further five bob clinched the transaction. An elder brother's car and a rope brought her home.

The steering being defective the two owners ran alongside for the two miles involved and kicked the deflated tyres to steer. There followed some months' research and hard work. The aim was to restore the Lagonda to her full vigour and let her once more take to the roads. But to be in that elite class, a Veteran Car, it had to be made before the end of 1904, and our "Old Lag", as she had become, had been registered in Belfast in February 1905.

### **Proved the Prototype**

But 1905 Lagonda Tricars did not seem the same, and many letters, many hours in libraries and much research later, it was proved that this was the prototype Lagonda twin, made in 1904, used for testing and sold when it had served its purpose. The late technical director of Lagonda, the company itself and "Sammy" Davis, racing driver turned journalist, all helped, as did elder brother who could type letters that looked more authoritative than the youths who signed them.

This was the incentive needed to decide that this lump of old iron would be driven in the next "London to Brighton" for Veteran Cars, the Rally that was a moving history of the motor industry, and which happened (and still happens) every November.

I think the whole episode was based on what I now realise to be the sublime optimism of youth. A tremendous force which was to recur and carry the project and Tricar along better than petrol and from which I have found I can draw strength in later years. Much was missing, much had to be repaired or made. But there was never any doubt that what was needed would be found—you just had to search.

Past owners were traced, and despite protests that nothing was there, their garages, lofts and barns were searched as if we had a search warrant.

After the doctor in Belfast and other owners came a doctor in West Bromwich and finally a Mr. Bache. He warned us of the Lag's evil ways. She kicked abominably, he said. One cylinder would run and then the other but never the two together. It was an unholy alliance, he declared, and remembered that when both cylinders suddenly ran together he went so fast that he ran clean out of road at the next corner.

Righting the thing, he had restarted at a more leisurely pace. Coming to the next bend he turned the steering to the right and was promptly upside down in the left ditch.

The logical explanation, that during the first accident the steering arm had twisted through 180 degrees and now all that turned right went left and all that turned left went right, did not amuse him. The Old Lag was tried, convicted and sentence to languish in some obscure shed. Nevertheless, these searches helped both parts and knowledge and brought the front mudguards, floor platform and forecarriage springs back after years of separation.

Mechanically, every bit was stripped. If worn it was built up or bushed, rubbed down and painted. Slowly the original glory returned. It was incumbent to do all the work possible oneself. Where parts were missing, this meant finding some of similar date and, if possible, type and then adapting them.

This was done for carburettor and ignition, also for the forecarriage. This was an armchair seat which passed for a body and which was mounted right out in front—near the accident, we were to learn. The best we could manage was a 1907 Swift Forecarriage.

That served for the first period and the London to Brighton about which I am writing, but youth's optimism was subsequently justified when some months later a small miracle occurred.

My two brothers were visiting a man at Bromsgrove who had given up breaking cars in 1922 and then made imitation antique Cromwellian clocks. They found some parts for other purposes in a field, including forecar springs which looked Lagonda. Going into the house to pay they noted his armchair by the fire, a resplendent red chair with buttoned leather upholstery. The legs didn't really seem to belong, but it was comfortable and shapely.

On with the business . . . then a second and keener glance. Surely that shape . . . the flanged arms and upturned toe piece . . . A finger ran over



the dull gold on the side. Letters. Scrolled letters. L.A.G.O.N.D.A. But this was our Forecarriage! The last piece that was needed for complete and genuine restoration.

Mr. Smith could not understand. He had sat on that chair for nigh on 15 years and no one was going to take it away. Poor man, he didn't know that he wasn't any longer the owner. Instead he was just a difficulty—the last one that had to be overcome. He was left in false security until another chair had been bought from a local dealer for 10/- and he was persuaded that he liked it better. Cheaper than the acquaintance who had to rebuild a concrete wall for the same man to obtain the Lanchester crankshaft imbedded in it as reinforcement.

### **A Misguided Belief**

But back to early restoration. This went on apace, but so did time. Everything had to be done. Everything must be right. Then she would start and stop as we wished. So we misguidedly believed and worked to a nice set plan. This meant we could not try and start her until everything was together. Tempo increased and sleep decreased.

The Press had noted our name among the entries and came to see us. We said we could not stop and talk, but they could look and photo. Unwise that we were! We learned the valuable lesson—never ignore the Press or they will write what they would like you to have said. Red faces when we read the “interview” that never was and learned that we expected such speed that wind pressure would hold us in our seats!

That engine would not start. Either cylinder would fire but never the twain together. Great theorising on how one cylinder filled 500 cc. with gas and left a vacuum for the other. A study of geometry showed that if a revolution was  $360^\circ$  then the two cylinders set at  $45^\circ$  to each other could not run smoothly. One must fire at  $360^\circ$  plus  $45^\circ$  and the other at  $360^\circ$  minus  $45^\circ$ . But even or not she had run before and she would run again tomorrow. And tomorrow was the last day before she would go to London for the Great Day.

But not for nothing was she called the “Old Lag”. Hour after hour, crank wind, sweat and near tears, but to no avail. Try pushing. No better. A long-suffering father towed. The explosions were deafening, but we were still unpropelled. The entry was made, hotels booked, a truck reserved with the very co-operative G.W.R. What

to do?

Parents can be long suffering and ours had suffered long. Now they were asked to believe that if they towed this vicious, reluctant contraption to the station that Saturday afternoon when she had never run for about 15 years, then by the following morning in London she would not only start and run to Hyde Park, but from there to Brighton during the day.

To his everlasting credit, Father said, “Tie her on, lads”, and called to Mother to pack the luggage and follow. In his 60's he showed what I referred to as the optimism of youth and a belief in conquering difficulties and was as keen to get to Brighton as we were. No time even to wash, let alone change our overalls.

In the train the 12 hours from arriving in London to deadline at 6.30 the next morning were planned. A garage had been booked. They must be made to stay open all night. This and that would be tried and then it would run. But wise parents decreed a meal first. That was why we found ourselves entering the Cumberland Hotel in the oiliest of overalls and black of face and hands.

### **Never a Twitch**

That Hall Porter was superb. His eyes moved from head to foot and up again. But never a twitch. His unbending visage nevertheless seemed to say, “Now I've seen everything”. But there was no colour bar and we were registered and fed.

Back to the garage and we put our theories to the test. Four hours on and around midnight reward came quite suddenly. She ran and on both cylinders and went on running! A match to the lights and let's see if she will really go. Around the square she went with vigour and Brighton loomed almost in front of us. The silencer blew off but she went on running with the most beautiful but tremendous noise we had ever heard.

Then a shattering explosion and silence. Silence only for a short time, for every window around the square seemed to have opened and out peered and yelled what appeared to be a whole regiment of Indian Colonels! A quick push and we melted into the welcome darkness. A darkness which turned Stygian as despair attacked our cold, tired bodies and minds.

Examination showed that a valve retaining cotter had broken and part gone into the engine. All day long people had been helpful and the mechanic left to lock up when we had finished was



no exception. While we made another part and tidied up the tools, he took the engine out and removed the foreign body. So four hours sleep was obtained before we were back at 6.30 a.m. A push and she went.

Of course, we had always known she would, and soon we were at the start at Hyde Park. The scrutineering was yesterday but in those days even secretaries and scrutineers believed rules were made to be broken and there they were, up half an hour early to meet us and pass the Old Lag as fit. A.1 to go to Brighton. What a thrill to be in this august, ancient but magnificent company. Coughing and spluttering in the cold November morning they came, a host of gleaming, polished and cherished horseless carriages. The Old Lag took her place with the rest. She took over now. We were her driver and passenger but she was the star.

#### **Now We Were Four**

All went well for 12 miles. We were four by now as a cyclist had attached himself to The Lag and said he would follow us to Brighton. And he did. Behind him our tender car had our long-suffering parents abroad. Then; bang! And she stopped. The cotter had broken again. Half was left this time and it showed it should have been hardened.

We carried material and tools, but to harden—that was a problem. Out of the gathering crowd appeared the inevitable helpful man. He'd got a good fire going. We could heat it in his kitchen and quench it there too. Waving aside his wife and her complaints, he removed the Sunday joint and put the dampers out while we made the part.

Soon on again, until freewheeling down a hill our cyclist came by pedalling like mad, waving a carburettor. How funny! Some poor wretch must need that. Same type as ours too. We open the throttle to climb—it is ours—the engine is dead! Every few miles produced a problem and, thankfully, a solution.

One problem that had to remain with us was the roasted right foot. It was only really safe to use the rear brake. The front wheel brakes, made three years before they were officially invented, took charge of the steering. And the pedal of the rear brake was alongside the red hot front cylinder.

A stout shoe had gradually charred and so one could only brake for very short intervals or suffer agony. It was like some ingenious medieval torture.

I won't bore you with the traffic, the breakdowns, the time spent running along the right-hand pavement with Police blessing and all to endeavour to reach Brighton by 4 o'clock.

At last we entered the town. It was touch and go, but go she did, although now on only one cylinder. Nothing seemed between us and success and a medal, except 200 yards, too many people and another colossal explosion with the knell of clanking metal. No need to look. She had done her best and broken the main crank pin in the endeavour.

Two hundred yards and four minutes to go. Out leaped the passenger and pushed like one possessed. The driver stayed to weave around obstructions. These included Beelzebub, Sammy Davis's Leon Bollee living up to her name in clouds of smoke and whose driver waved us past.

At last the line and at least one minute left. Relax. All is well but for a sad and silent engine.

But soon the elation is shattered. We are listed as late. All was in vain. An angry council of war, but we decided "No protest". But a protest went in all the same. From the good Sammy Davis who was booked in before time and insisted that we came in in front of him. Investigation showed that in jumping out our front number was covered by the rug and a harassed marshal had not booked us in at all. All was well and we were reinstated. The Lagonda had triumphed in the end.

This is the story of youth and age. I am glad to say that age was rejuvenated by our hearing of a spare engine that night. This was acquired on the way home and a quick transplant started her heart beating again. Youth learnt a lot. Much has been forgotten on the way, but I still find myself, when faced with major difficulties or the supposed impossible, muttering "Old Lag" and drawing strength from the memory that optimism plus determination got the Old Lag to Brighton.

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#### **GRAND XMAS FILM SHOW AND DINNER**

**The BARLEY MOW, HORSEFERRY RD.,  
LONDON, S.W.1.**

**FRIDAY 10th DECEMBER**

**See November Newsletter**



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# Lamps, Lagondas and the Law

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By Arnold Davey

THE FOLLOWING IS A CONDENSATION OF THE ROAD Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1971, which is a consolidating set of rules covering all vehicles in the U.K. I have excluded references to trailers, caravans, milk floats and four-wheeled bicycles so that these rules as summarised apply only to cars. Where dates are quoted, these are the date of first registration of the vehicle in each case. Where distances are given as "apart", the lamps must be symmetrical about the longitudinal axis of the car and heights are measured unladen with tyres at normal pressures. Needless to say the extracts are very much abbreviated and if you really have a problem, it is wise to refer to the original Act; and the very best of British luck to you!

## Side Lamps

Two required on all vehicles used at night. White. Minimum wattage not specified, maximum wattage 7.

Height: Up to 31/12/51 (maximum 5ft.) (no minimum specified. After 1/1/52 (maximum 3ft. 6in.) (minimum 2ft.).

Width: Not more than 12in. from edge of vehicle.

Size: Not specified, but glass must be frosted or diffused.

## Tail Lamps

Two required on all vehicles used at night. Red. Minimum wattage 5, maximum wattage not specified.

Height: Up to 31/5/71 (maximum 3ft. 6in.) (no minimum specified). After 1/6/71 (maximum 3ft. 6in.) (minimum 1ft. 3in.).

Width: Up to 31/5/71 Not more than 2ft. from edge of vehicle. After 1/6/71 Not more than 1ft. 4in. from edge of vehicle.

Position: Not more than 2ft. 6in. from rear of vehicle.

Size: Not less than 2in. dia. or equivalent area.

## Head Lamps

Two or multiples of two required on all vehicles used at night if registered after 1/1/31. White or

yellow but both must be the same.

At least one pair must dip (see previous magazine article, Spring 1969). One pair may turn with the steering.

Minimum wattage 30, maximum wattage not specified.

Height: Up to 31/12/51 (maximum 5ft.) (minimum 2ft.). After 1/1/52 (maximum 3ft. 6in.) (minimum 2ft.).

Width: Up to 30/9/69 At least 350mm apart. 1/10/69 to 31/12/71 At least 600mm apart. After 1/1/72 Not more than 400mm from edge of vehicle.

Size: Not specified.

## Fog and Spot Lamps

Not required by law but if used to replace head lamps, two must be used. White or yellow but both must be the same in the above conditions. No wattage specified.

Height: Maximum 3ft. 6in. Minimum 2ft. unless used in fog or falling snow only.

Width: Up to 31/12/70 At least 350mm apart. After 1/1/71 Not more than 400mm from edge of vehicle.

Size: Not specified.

Note: The above applies to fog lamps to be used instead of head lamps. If they are to be used as well as head lamps or in a lit street only, the dimensions and colour rules do not apply, but then the lamp isn't much use anyway.

## Reversing Lamps

Not required by law. Maximum of two permitted. White. Minimum wattage not specified, maximum wattage 24 (each). Must not dazzle—same definition as for dipped head lamps. No dimensions specified. If not automatic, switch must be illuminated if registered after 1/7/54.

## Stop Lamps

One required on vehicles registered after 1/1/36. Shall be on centre line or right side of vehicle. Red.

1/1/36 to 31/12/70 Position and wattages not specified.

1/1/71 to 30/6/72 Minimum wattage 15. Maximum wattage 36. Minimum height 400mm. Maximum height 1500mm. If two fitted, must be more than 600mm apart. Visibility angles specified (refer to Regs.).

After 1/7/73 Dual-intensity rules added to above.



### Reflectors

Two required on all vehicles. Red. Must comply with and be marked "BS 2515" or "AU 40". After 1/7/70 only the latter permitted on new vehicles.

Height: Maximum 3ft. 6in. Minimum 1ft. 3in.

Width: Not more than 1ft. 4in. from edge of vehicle or less than 1ft. 9in. apart.

Position: Not more than 2ft. 6in. from rear of vehicle.

Size: Not less than 1½ in. dia. or equivalent area.

### Indicators

Required on all vehicles registered 1/1/36 or after. Four sets of rules to cover semaphores and flashers. Any vehicle may carry indicators which apply to a later set of rules than strictly apply to it but not indicators that comply with an earlier set. "Hazard warnings" (all flashers going) permitted. Must have audible or visual warning unless the driver can see them.

### Semaphores

Apply 1/1/36 to 31/8/65

Minimum length 6in., thickness ¼ length. May be steady or flash. Must alter outline of vehicle by 6in. and be at least 6in. wider than body behind driver's seat. Must not be more than 6ft. behind base of windscreen (except for pillarless saloons which are specifically exempted). Additional arms permitted.

Colours: Amber if showing to both front and rear. Amber or white if showing to front only. Amber or red if showing to rear only.

Height: Maximum 7ft. 6in. Minimum 1ft. 5in.

Flashing rate: See below. Wattage not specified.

### Flashers—1st regulations

Apply 1/1/36 to 31/8/65. Colours as above.

Flashing rate: More than 60/min., less than 120/min.

Minimum wattage 15. Maximum wattage 36.

Height: Maximum 7ft. 6in. Minimum 1ft. 5in.

Width: If on front and rear of vehicle, not more than 1ft. 4in. from edge of vehicle.

Size: Minimum of 3½ sq. in.

Position: If only one on each side of vehicle) Not more than 6ft. behind base of windscreen. (Pillarless saloons *not* excluded).

Can be combined with side/tail lamps.

Additional (side) flashers permitted. No wattage specified.

### Flashers—2nd regulations

Apply 1/9/65 to 30/6/73. Colour—amber only. May not be combined with any other lamp. Side indicator required if over 19ft. 8in. long.

Flashing rate: As above.

Minimum wattage 15. Maximum wattage 36.

Height: Maximum 7ft. 6in. Minimum 1ft. 3in. (front and rear)—1ft. 8in. (others).

Width: Not more than 400mm from edge of vehicle.

Size: Minimum of 3½ sq. in.

Visibility angles specified (refer to Regulations).

Side flashers permitted, no wattage specified.

### Flashers—3rd regulations

Apply after 1/7/73

As 2nd regulations but dual intensity requirement for night time use laid down.

June 1971

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## THE CLUB CHRISTMAS CARD



This year's Christmas Card is attractively printed in three colours. Priced at 10 cards with envelopes at £1.00 there is bound to be a big demand. Details in the current Newsletter.





The Woodbatt team in confident mood

## PRESCOTT 1971

by A. T. Elliott

THE V.S.C.C.'S ANNUAL HILLCLIMB WAS HELD ON the old course on Sunday, 8th August, with an entry list of over 100 cars. Prescott was at its best, with excellent weather and the usual garden party atmosphere in the paddock—the right crowd and no crowding.

For those unfamiliar with the course, it was discovered by Tom Rolt (not to be confused with Tony Rolt) and introduced to the Bugatti Owners Club through the V.S.C.C. It forms the approach road to Prescott House and runs up through the trees with magnificent views over the Cotswolds. The first meeting was held in 1938, hence it is one of the very few pre-war courses still in use. The start is slightly uphill, and curves gradually to the left under the bridge before one brakes hard for the right-hander at Orchard. The rush up the short straight to Pardon, which is a

steeply climbing hairpin, is followed by a slightly curving section through the trees to the Esses. After this the road becomes more open, climbing up to the semi-circle, a long right-hander, leading to the finishing straight. The total length of the course is 880 yards.

The entry list included nine Lagondas. David and Richard Fletcher-Jones Rapier looked ready for a concours, and was also very fast. Tim Blishen (who won the first 5-lap handicap at the July Silverstone meeting) managed one run with his Rapier, and then suffered head gasket trouble. James Woollard with his well known and very original high-chassis 2-litre discovered he was suffering from incorrect valve timing after his first run. He and Jeff Ody made a heroic effort in dismantling the engine to correct the trouble before their second run. Unfortunately there was not enough time to adjust the magneto correctly, which spoilt the second run. The other 2-litre was my low chassis model. My second run was slower than the first due to an attack of the dreaded axle-tramp on the somewhat bumpy approach to Orchard. Bob Alexander's big 4½-litre machine left the line in a cloud of blue smoke.



He is having a very successful season and at the time of writing is in the lead for the Brooklands Memorial Trophy. Iain Macdonald's 4½ was a non-starter. Tony Wood and John Batt thoroughly enjoy their motor racing, John making the faster time. Their single seater Rapier is now running without its blower. Paul Morgan's blown Rapier Special, after the fashion of the Eccles outer circuit Brooklands car, won the 1,100 cc racing class.

Other (inferior) makes of car were also competing at the meeting and FTD was made by Allan Cottam in the 2-litre Connaught in a time of 43.83 seconds.

So ended an excellent meeting, hill-climbing being a superb sport which can be thoroughly recommended. It has the great advantage over racing that you cannot get mixed up with the "other chap's" accident. With cars running one

at a time no-one can spin off in front, or involve you in any way, and there is little chance of expensive and financially crippling damage to the car.

A. T. ELLIOTT

### LAGONDA RESULTS

No.	Name	Model	Date	c.c.	Best Time
14	D. F. and R. F. Fletcher-Jones	Rapier	1934/5	1,086	55.31
20	T. Blishen	Rapier	1934	1,232	58.31
28	B. Naylor	Rapier	1936	1,140	66.20
31	A. T. Elliott	2-litre L/C	1930	1,954	66.56
37	J. C. Woollard	2-litre H/C	1927	1,954	72.69
66	W. R. Alexander	4½-litre	1933	4,453	52.78
79	J. A. Wood and J. A. Batt	Rapier Special	1936	1,086	53.34
81	P. Morgan	Rapier Special	1935	1,098(s)	50.82



Obviously near to hysteria, Ody and Woollard try to fit it together again

Photo: A. T. Elliott



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### Attention N.E. Members!

Dear Sir,—I thought it might be a good idea to drop the Club a line to let people know what I am doing these days. Jessie Scott and I were married last March, we are living at Blaydon-on-Tyne.

Last Summer I took up an appointment at this intermediate approved school to teach metal work. I have three small lathes, a small shaping machine, welding equipment and bench tools. I could do some small jobs for people if there is anybody interested in the area. If anybody has trouble while in this area I have plenty of space which could be used outside teaching hours.

If there is anybody within 40 miles of Newcastle who could offer me and a small group of boys a visit round a factory or farm I would be very grateful. Half the problems here are due to homes where the boys' parents have never worked and the lads think they can follow parents.

Finally if there is anybody with any engineering equipment they are thinking of throwing out I would be very interested. There are so many things I cannot do because of lack of equipment.

JULIAN REISNER

17 Axwell Park School,  
Blaydon-on-Tyne,  
Co. Durham.

### Rally Successes in India

Dear Sir,—You might be pleased to know, that, my 2-litre Lagonda has appeared in two Vintage Car Rallies this year. One was on 31st January, Ranchi to Jamshedpur, 80 miles run and another on 28th February at Calcutta, the 4th Statesman Vintage Car Rally. In the Ranchi—Jamshedpur Rally, she won a cash prize of Rs. 100/- and in Calcutta she was adjudged as the best maintained car from outside Calcutta, to win the Valvoline Trophy amongst 87 entries of different make. The trophy is a statue of Mercury, made up of bronze and silver of 26" height.

H. BANERJEE

West Bengal,  
India.

(See photo on p.8)

### Alright for some!

Dear Sir,—I have just read Arnold Davey's account of the very successful Southern Spring Social, in which he says that the supper on the canal boat had to be cancelled. This was not so. I and a companion spent a most romantic three hours enjoying a delightful dinner 'a deux', and cruise on the canal with the boat to ourselves. With the owners of the boat we waited half an hour before casting off, for a party of six who had booked like ourselves, but who didn't turn up. I was glad they didn't!

ROLAND A. MORGAN

Kensington Church St.,  
London, W.8.

### V.12 in New Zealand

Dear Sir—You may be interested to hear of my V.12 (see front cover. Ed.) which I have had the great pleasure of owning for seventeen years—over half its life in fact.

The car which is still running beautifully and certainly looks as magnificent as it ever did came into my proud possession in 1954 when I was living in England, and appeared in the magazine after that year's A.G.M. under registration number MG 6484.

I joined the Club that year and have been a member ever since. I remember also with pleasure my year's membership in England and the friends I knew then—Richard Hare, Mike Wilby, Maurice Leo who was of great assistance sending parts out for a major overhaul, and others.

Returning to New Zealand in 1955 with the only V.12 in the country I soon met other Lagonda owners. Only the day after my arrival I walked out early in the morning to observe with alarm a pair of legs protruding from beneath the V.12, but then relief to see behind it a battered 3-litre which I soon found belonged to the legs. I know of and have seen a beautiful Rapier, an LG.45 pillarless saloon, an LG.6 saloon and some DB models and know that these are not the only Lagondas here. As these owners have always lived a good distance apart, it has never been possible for us all to get together unfortunately.

I look forward very much to receiving my magazine and have kept all sixty-eight of them since I first joined the Club. With best wishes to the Club and Members.

TONY STEWARD

Auckland,  
New Zealand.



# 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, ¾ mile from M20. 2nd Wednesday Sir Jeffrey Amherst, between Sevenoaks and Plaxtol on A25. 3rd Thursday	
16	Surrey & Sussex	N. T. Walder, Old Park House, Ifield, Crawley		Star Inn, Rusper, Nr. Horsham. Last Friday	
17	Wiltshire, Dorset & Hampshire	D. J. Palmer, North Carolina, Quibo Lane, Weymouth		Hambro Arms, Milton Abbas, Dorset. 2nd Friday	
18	Devon, Cornwall & Somerset	Dr. A. Young, 'The Towers' Hookhill Road, Paignton, Devon.		To be arranged	
19	London			Coach & Horses Hill St., W.1. 1st Thursday	



# LAGONDA SERVICE



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

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

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

Send your enquiries to:

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