



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 81 Autumn 1973



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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 V.12 d.h.c. after reconditioning by the Works in 1951. Where is it now?

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

IAIN MACDONALD keeps the Lagonda name prominently to the fore with some very consistent driving in this season's events. Currently he is leading the field for the *Motor Sport* Brooklands Memorial Trophy against tough opposition. JAMES CROCKER aided by PETER HUNT did well in the "vintage" Nurburgring international meeting earlier this summer by winning two of the races held. His blue Rapier's turn of speed took the Germans by surprise. *Ach so!*

* * * *

The Club XMAS CARD is proving very popular. Have you ordered yours yet? If not, contact Mrs. M. Abson, 11 Highfield Green, Bury Lane, Epping, Essex. Send cheque/P.O. with order please. £1.00 for 12.

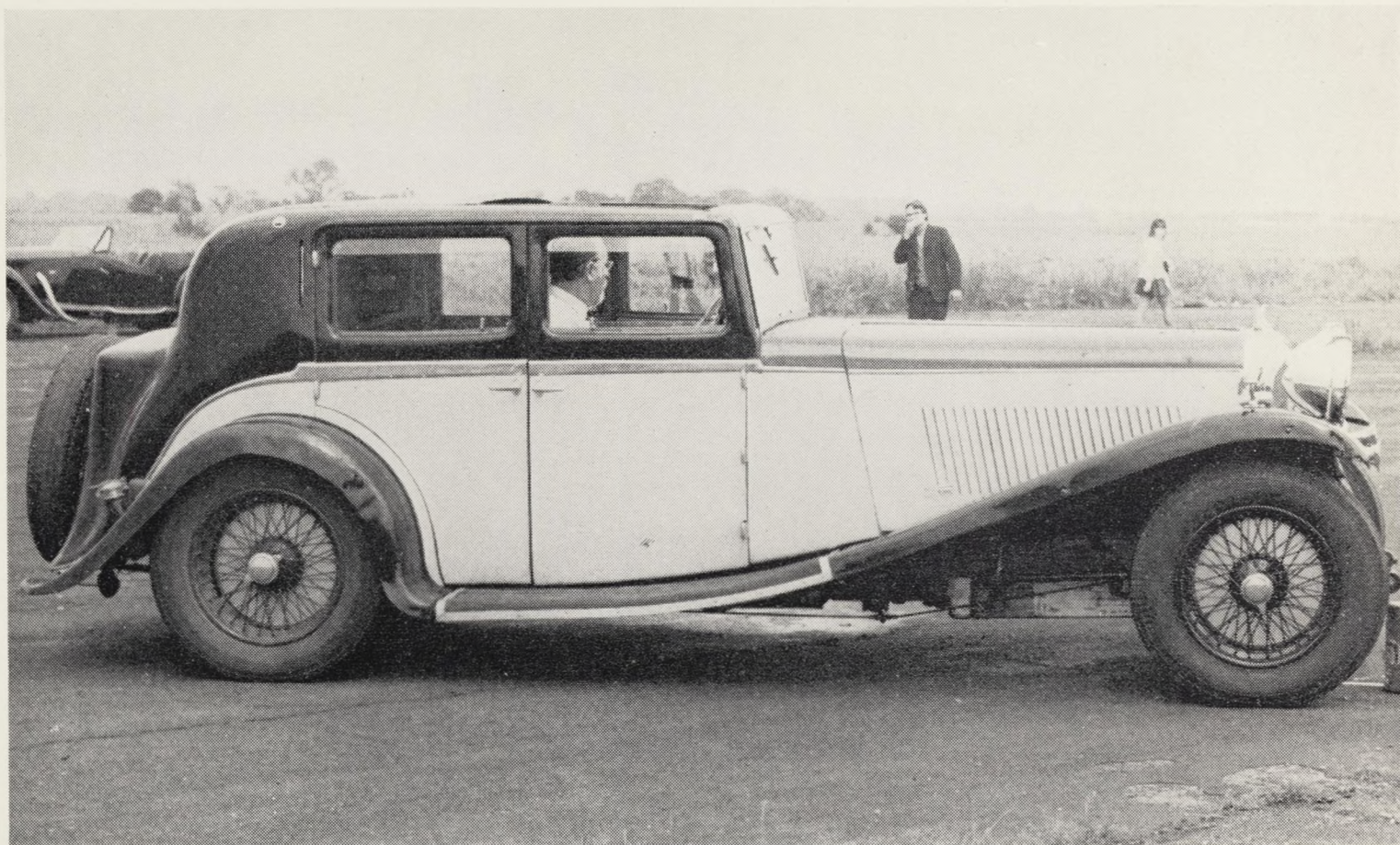
In the next issue there will be a fascinating reconstruction by TIM NICHOLSON of the 1903 GORDON BENNETT RACE which took place in Ireland. Apart from being an exciting account of road racing by those intrepid drivers and their mighty machines, it is the first recorded occasion of the adoption of British Racing Green by the English competitors for their Napiers. We are indebted to *Veteran Car* for permission to reprint this article.

* * * *

Edward McClintick of Ohio sends us an interesting account of the LAGONDA CLUB—the gentlemen's Club of Springfield Ohio built in 1895 as a meeting place for the "prominent young men" of that city. It still stands today but sadly it has been converted for the more mundane purpose of commercial offices. The front cover of *Lagonda* Autumn issue 1964 showed Ed's car outside the main entrance. The article tells of the building's former glory and if the times had coincided what an excellent venue it would have made for "prominent young men" with Lagondas. This will appear in the next *Lagonda*.

Photographed at the Southern Driving Tests—Herb Schofield, Denis Jenkinson, Alan Brown and John Beardow





Brian Minshull, winner of the Northern Gymkhana

Photo: John Davenport

NORTHERN DRIVING TESTS 7th July

Herb Schofield

THE WEATHER WAS NOT AS GOOD AS WE HAVE experienced in recent years, nevertheless despite ominous looking clouds it didn't actually rain. A good entry of twenty cars was received backed up by numerous spectators, some in Lagondas. There must have been the highest concentration of 'Rapides' for some time from Hill's M.45 version to the three LG.45R models of Schofield, Davenport and Hine. Davenport's car is now back on the road after a five-year rebuild. The car looks much prettier with the normal type of Rapide rear wings instead of those previously fitted for the Monte Carlo Rally of 1936.

Martyn Pollard motored up from the Midlands with his 3½-litre tourer whilst from the far North Julian Reisner and a large gang of his school lads, who expertly marshalled for us in the tests—well

done and thank you again Julian. David Townsley came in father Ted's LG.45 roadster whilst Dad came in his modern Aston-Martin. Brian Minshull complete with a new permutation of facial hair (sometimes moustache only, sometimes beard only, sometimes both, but *never* without) was in his sporty M.45 saloon! Taylor came with his David Brown 3-litre D/H. However, star of the Lagonda turnout must have been Henry Coates' new Lagonda—one hesitates to use the word 'special' for this would give the wrong impression. Suffice to say it is a beautiful piece of workmanship executed by Henry himself. Other Lagondas included Roy Paterson's Special (another ex-Coates car) and Alan Brown's pre-selector Special.

The heavy drinking types started arriving at the pub at least two hours before kick-off where they were met by the Northern Secretary and Alan Brown who had already been there an hour! Naturally as the booze drifted downstairs so did the conversation. The 'Gents' of course was in constant use and surprisingly for a pub, miles from anywhere on the road to nowhere, actually boasted a "dispensing machine", one cannot imagine a very rapid turnover and David Hine's

annual half dozen must justify the retention of the thing!

At about 2.30 the vast assemblage was persuaded to motor off in the general direction of the airfield for the serious business ahead, and about this time the Northern Secretary made a mental note to try and organise a toilet tent for next year. A number of members would be suffering considerable discomfort during the afternoon, especially at one of the tests which involved the pouring of water into a beaker—an action guaranteed to bring tears to the eyes of anybody desirous of obeying a call of nature and being unable to do so.

No point in describing the tests in detail suffice to say that the premier award went to Brian Minshull in his M.45 saloon, with "special" drivers Brown and Paterson filling the next two positions. Minshull drove with skill to achieve his result with a standard saloon car.

COMPETITION NOTES

by John Batt

THE EDITOR HAS ASKED ME TO WRITE A FEW NOTES at the Season's close. With only *VSCC Llandow* to run it seems we have had a good competition year. A fine start was the January issue of the fixture list and the several new names which have appeared on entry forms. I now have 165 members on my Club Competitors List which goes a long way towards the justification of running events both competitive and of the more social type. In the latter category falls Alan Elliott's Rally Tour which was a new venture this year.

The *Border Rally* went very well indeed with Iain Macdonald assisted by members of the Morgan Owners Club and son John is preparing a route. A report will appear no doubt elsewhere, however a note to say Muir Laidlaw won in his beautiful Rapier with A. F. Adams 2nd—Triumph 2000, and Julian Reisner 2-litre 3rd. G. Done in his Lagonda ran 4th.

The Fox and Nichol Trophy was run for the first time at *VSCC Silverstone* on 21st July. This

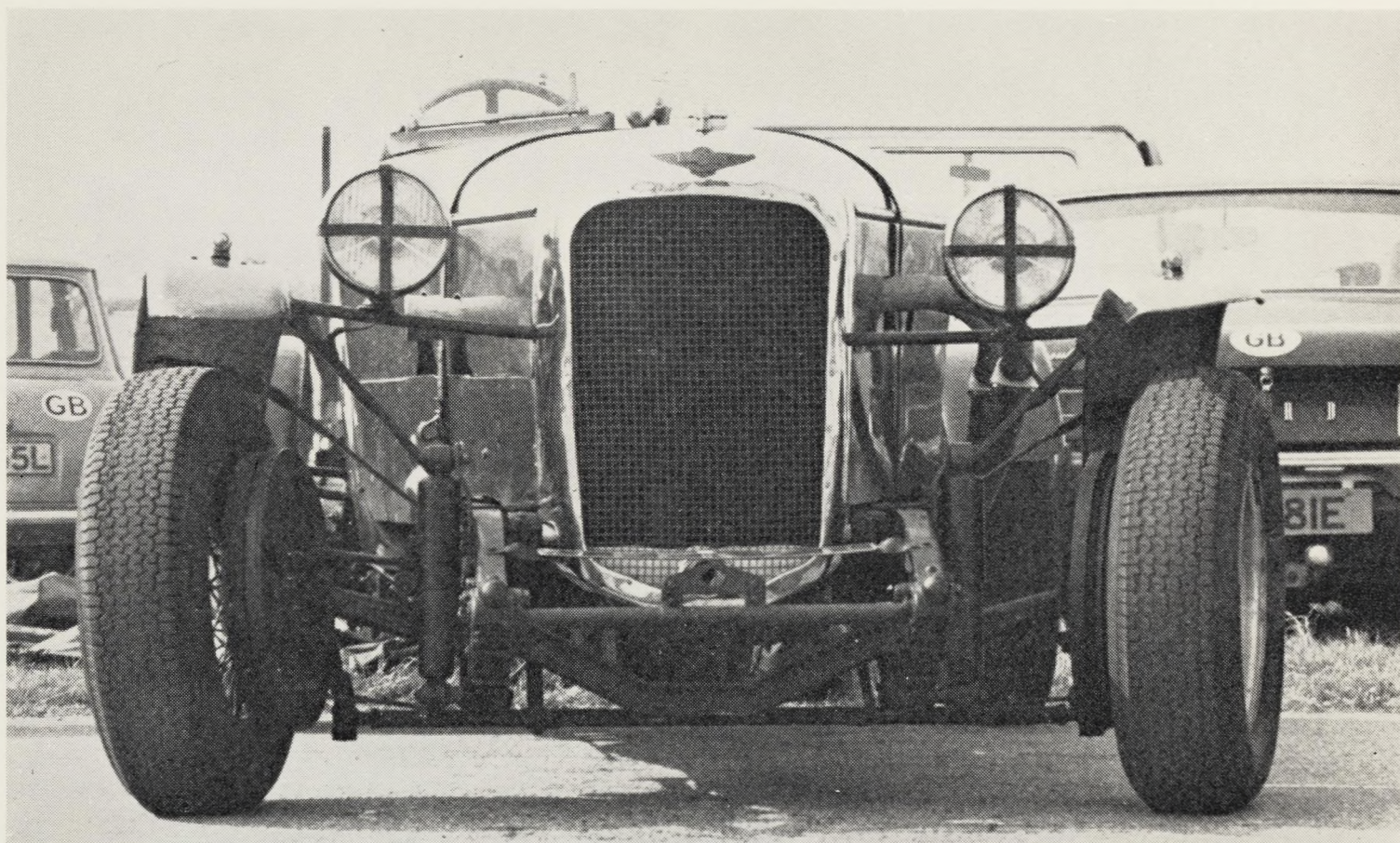
is the trophy presented this year by the Lagonda Club to be competed for annually, by vintage and PVT sports cars over 3-litres. The VSCC had a full entry of Bentleys, Railton, Alvis, Invicta, Delage, Talbot, Bugatti, Vauxhall, Delahaye, etc., and 6 Lagondas—these to be driven by Denis Jenkinson in Robbie Hewitt's 4½ Le Mans team car, Roy Paterson, Alan Brown, Iain Macdonald, Herb Schofield and Andrew Cheyne in 4½s.

It was a splendid race in the VSCC Handicap style with Roy Paterson soon into the lead. Alan Brown was also seen pulling up through the field together with Iain Macdonald who was really motoring. He later took the lead only to spin at Becketts, however Iain managed to recover and stormed through to a good win with Alan Brown 2nd and Roy Paterson 4th. Very fitting indeed that a Lagonda should win the Trophy first time out don't you think?

Finnmere on 22nd July followed VSCC Silverstone as usual and was a fine sunny day. We attracted 40 entries split 50/50 with Bentleys and also John Lees in his Austin 12/4 saloon in really excellent condition. His Lagonda is still in bits! Special mention is made of Maurice Tomlin who almost beat the Bentleys at their own game and ran first Lagonda. Well done Maurice. Another good point—we made a profit for the Club this year which can't be bad! Full results at end of article.

Thirteen entries were received for the Lagonda 10-lap handicap race at *BDC Silverstone* on 25th August. In previous years the event has only been eight laps but this year it was decided to run a scratch start with handicaps adjusted accordingly. This proved a very good idea and also made the working out of the results much easier. Results at end of article.

Amongst the two Bentleys on the front row was Jon Abson with Elliott Elder's 1.5-litre Rapier. He made a particularly good start and at the end of the first lap was running 4th behind Eastick, Thompson and Wilson in Bentley specials. The story of the race is easily told with Barry Eastick in his Mark VI Bentley Special winning on the road with ease followed by Jon Abson who just managed to beat Bill Thompson with his Mark VI special to the line. Iain Macdonald—4½ Lagonda was 4th. There were several interesting scraps going on mid field. Alan Brown was having a good race but ran a bearing, James



Iain Macdonald's 4½-litre Special

Photo: Tony Wood

Crocker also suffered mechanical problems when a piston collapsed, Brian Naylor was going well in his Bertelli Rapier though at the back of the field whilst it was interesting watching the 16/80 of Dick Sage dice with the 2-litre of Alan Elliott. These cars are very well matched so it would seem there is little to choose between the 4 cylinder and 6 cylinder types. Alan just got to the line first.

Although Jon Abson won the Lagonda race on the road he had not been fast enough to beat the handicap. Final results read:

- 1st Iain Macdonald—4½ Special
- 2nd Peter Russell-Floyd—3½
- 3rd Maurice Tomlin—4½ Special

Congratulations are due to Iain Macdonald for another splendid performance and an excellent follow-up to the Fox and Nichol Trophy.

Herb Schofield unfortunately had his bearings run in practice so couldn't start. It seems James Crocker was trying the car at the time but didn't seem to be extending it in any way! There must be a story there or possibly a tale of really bad luck, then on top of this James then broke his own car in the race!

Nice to see Peter Russell-Floyd out in his 3½-litre again and running 2nd. Also Andrew Cheyne

with his 4½-litre Special with the handsome aluminium pointed tail body work.

I would like to say here that our entry would have been up to the required twenty for a full Lagonda race this year had it not been for a number of members indicating they would enter then having change of mind. Well O.K., but from where I sit there are two events which competing Club members should make every effort to support. One is Finmere, the other our race at the BDC meeting. I add these comments at the end of my first year as Competition Secretary as the turnout of Lagondas in 1973 has been very good but somehow where a good entry really matters we always miss the boat so I hope you will give your full support in 1974. I will also add a special thanks to those who have competed and given the Club their support and I am sure had fun with their Lagondas this season.

Jeff Ody, James Woollard and Colin Bugler in 2-litres and Dick Sage in 16/80 were the only Lagondas at Prescott this year at what turned out to be an incredibly hot day. They seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly but where have all the Rapiers gone and what about 4½-litre entries? Perhaps 1974? Prescott is a superb venue and whilst I admit with the possible exception of

Rapiers, the bigger Lagondas don't stand much chance of winning or putting up class records, this meeting *has* to be recommended.

BDC LAGONDA SILVERSTONE

RACE MEETING

SATURDAY, 25th AUGUST, 1973

FINAL RESULTS

LAGONDA CLUB MEMBERS' 10-LAP HANDICAP

			Corrected Time
1st 53	MacDonald, Iain—LG.45	11' 24.2"	
2nd 43	Russell-Floyd, P.—3½-litre	11' 29.2"	
<i>Fastest Lap</i>			
45	Abson, J. D.—Rapier	1' 17.8"	
			Speed 74.41 m.p.h.

COMBINED DRIVING TESTS

at FINMERE

23rd JULY, 1973

PROVISIONAL RESULTS

1. INTER-CLUB CHALLENGE

Ten Best Bentleys	1085.2
Ten Best Lagondas	1343.6

2. LAGONDA TEAMS

1. Team No. 2	389.2
2. Team No. 1	417.0
3. Team No. 3	441.0

BEST IN EACH TEST

Test	BDC		LAG	
1	Eastick	24.2	Tomlin	24.8
2	Hine	15.4	Tann	17.2
3	Eastick	6.2	Brown	6.2
4	Eastick	22.6	Tomlin	22.0
5	Shoosmith	21.6	North) Paterson)	25.0
6	Mountford) Hine)	12.8	Brown	17.8

LAGONDA CLASSES

I	1	Tann	16/80	135.0	
	2	Sage	16/90	139.6	
	3	Elliott	2L	142.4	
II	1	Tomlin	4½	115.0	
	2	North	4½	124.2)	same car
	3	Paterson	4½	127.6)	
	(4	Weatheritt	DB.2.6	132.4)	

BORDER RALLY RESULTS 1973

Name	Car	Total	Position
W. M. R. Laidlow	Rapier	150	1st
A. F. Adams	Triumph 2000	145	2nd
J. Reisner	Lagonda	134	3rd
G. Done	Lagonda	130	4th
J. Broadbank	Vauxhall Viva	125	5th
D. Jarvis	Lagonda	120	6th
W. H. Golding	Lagonda	110	7th
H. Coates	Aston-Martin	90	8th =
J. Cairns	Lagonda	90	8th =
J. Piper	Lagonda	54	10th
H. Schofield	Lagonda	44	11th
C. Boylan	Triumph	42	12th
W. Symons	Alvis	-20	13th

MIDLANDS AREA REPORT

by Tony Wood

LAGONDA ACTIVITY IN THE MIDLANDS THIS summer has been reasonably good but the area is so big that it really needs splitting up into sections. Appeals were made early in the year for volunteers to arrange pub meets in their localities but regrettably only one volunteer was forthcoming. This was Neil Frabjis of Burton-on-Trent who got a meet off the ground at Normanton-on-Soar, near Loughborough. This has been a success, with about nine or ten members attending. However the pub is being changed as the Plough gets very crowded. The new venue will be the Gate Inn at Osgathorpe between Ashby and Hathern. It is not too late for other people to volunteer to start up a pub meet. Meanwhile the regular Meriden pub meet continues to flourish and it is hoped that some sort of award can be made at the end of the year for the most regular attender. Actually most regulars attend every month so it could be a tricky situation!

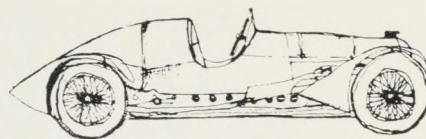
There has been one outing so far, with another one on the calendar for mid-September. Several members gathered for a Sunday lunch at The Royal Oak, Whatcote, just South of Stratford-on-Avon on 3rd June and this was thoroughly enjoyed, especially the local brew, which has not

yet been adulterated by a Big Brother brewery. The outing still to come is to the Donington Collection on 15th September and this is being organised by Neil Frabjis.

There has not been much activity by individual members but mention should be made of Witt Wittridge's splendid effort in entering his M.45 in the Vintage race at Le Mans where he had the misfortune to run a big end on the second lap. He managed to continue at greatly reduced speed and finished the race. What is more he then drove the car back to England! However, it is not yet back on the road at the time these notes were written. The Midlands Area Secretary (who shall remain anonymous) formed 1/5 of the Rapier party which toured Germany and Holland in July. All five Rapiers got back under their own power, so it goes to show that one does not necessarily need a big banger type of motor car to tour the Continent.

Finally, a word of commiseration to Paul

Morgan who got all crossed up at Shelsley Walsh with the single seater Rapier and overturned it. Both he and the car were damaged slightly but although Paul will have a bit of a gummy grin for a time, he has assured everyone that both will be mended well in time for next season.



Success at Nurburgring

Photographed below are James Crocker and Peter Hunt fresh from their successful sortie in Germany. James won two out of three races. The Rapier's superior roadholding on the tight bends enabled it to compete on favourable terms with faster cars.



James Crocker and Peter Hunt

Photo: East Surrey News Group

Cars I have Owned

by Peter Cavanagh

"The Voice of them All," so well known to B.B.C. Listeners, writes of his Motoring Experiences

Reprinted from Motor Sport April 1954 by kind permission.

LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEARS, IT SEEMS THAT apart from the practice of owning other people's "voices," I have indulged in the ownership of some twenty cars, at least as varied in character, and in many cases as difficult to master.

I well remember the severe "telling off" administered by father when caught in the act of "twiddling" in the seat of his Prince Henry Vauxhall, as I sped my imaginary way along the lanes of Knockholt. Such exquisite pieces of machinery were not designed as the playthings of small boys and polishing the headlamps was as near as I got to the driving seat thereafter; he had kept it in perfect preservation and it was the "apple of his eye." Before long, however, my father passed on, and with him motor cars passed out of our family for some years until, at the age of 17, I became apprenticed to the motor industry and part-owner of a 1927 two-seater bullnose Morris. The car was used to collect spares, and I was allowed to use it at weekends after being taught to drive by another apprentice of extremely small stature—which necessitated my driving with my knees under my chin, as he had bolted the seat in position. I paid 10s. a week and at the end of the year it became mine. My visits to race meetings especially at Brooklands (*oh how we mourn its loss*) became more and more frequent, especially if Sammy Davis was participating, as he was my absolute hero, equalled only at times by the great "Tim" Birkin in the single-seater Bentley; after that I believe came the Hon. Brian Lewis in the Talbots and George Eyston in the "mint humbug" M.G. Come to that any racing driver of repute was to me at that time "out of this world." It was on such a journey to Brooklands that I nearly removed Fox and Nichol's front window as I emerged round the corner in what I imagined to be a "drift." The garage had used the Morris the day before to assist at a breakdown job and about 3 cwt. of steel chain, hooks and tackle had been left in the boot. Added to the worst performed example of a drift, the

centrifugal throw of this ironmongery against the side of the boot caused me to execute a geometrical evolution which would baffle description, even by John Bolster. I proceeded to Brooklands at a crawl with the painful realisation that I was no Nuvolari.

The very nippy old bullnose was traded in for a fabric-bodied Morris Isis saloon and after some patching gave good reliable sluggish service, which infuriated me and delighted my mother. The trade crisis loomed up and alas the Isis was exchanged for a push-bike. The circumstances exasperated me beyond endurance, and I would beg or borrow a drive from anyone either mad or sympathetic enough to loan me a vehicle.

Eventually I entered into part-ownership with a student of a dilapidated "2.3" Bugatti tourer, which was, however, gratifyingly fast and had just about the hardest suspension I have ever had the misfortune to drive over a tram track. It had a hood like a colander and an exhaust like a pack of hounds. My friend was fined for "noise" and "driving without due care and attention," and we sold the Bugatti to a vicar's son as a last resort to find the money. I often wonder what happened to both parties. I left the garage eventually, having been offered a considerably better salary on the sales staff of an accessory firm, and from there on to a large electrical manufacturers, and was at the same time "entertaining" in my spare time. Eventually after some years I became a professional and owned a Riley Falcon and also a Riley Lynx, but once again my career was cut short by the war.

During the five years of my Service life I had a "go" at almost everything on wheels, including a large Austin ambulance which I backed into a pond through looking at an attractive A.T.S. driver instead of where I was going. *Cherchez la femme* was all very well, but to have to be towed out by two of them was better than the severest reprimand. Came 1946 and I was in "civvies" again and was able to earn a reasonably respectable living owing to the kindness of friends at the B.B.C. who had given me broadcast contracts during my "leave" periods; to them I am eternally grateful. I purchased a Riley Alpine which had been about twice round the clock in the hands of a farmer, and prices being astronomical I took it as it was and set about a rebore. In that year I owned three Rileys, an Alvis Speed Twenty (1933 tourer), and then settled on a very lovely

Kestrel which had been completely rebuilt by an acquaintance and, after bartering somewhat and flogging the Gamecock to a publican, BXU became mine. One of the most amusing experiences of my life happened with this car. My wife, declaring that she had an "urgent call" to make, vacated the car in a wooded section of the road over the "Hog's Back," and whilst waiting I switched on the radio which had been left at full volume; before I could adjust it, the voice of Dick Barton shouted loudly, "Come out, you swine, I can see you." With a stifled scream, my wife leapt out and attempted to dash for the car, completely forgetting that her legs were in captivity; strangely I have never since had a radio in a car.

The following spring I bought a Jaguar 2½-litre saloon as my growing family required more room for luggage and I had been offered an exceptional price for the Kestrel. The Jaguar spent an uneventful life with me, except that I shall always associate her as the car which conveyed me to Windsor Castle to do my first private show for the late King George VI and his gracious family. A wonderful man, and a wonderful memory indeed. Returning home in the early hours, the Jaguar nearly ran down a row of policemen who jumped out into the road waving lanterns. I realised that they must be checking road traffic into London, as just prior to Christmas a considerable amount of black-marketeers were at work; also it was during the period when all basic petrol allowances had been curtailed. Seeing we were all in full evening dress I fully expected demands as to "why on essential petrol?" The inspector inquired firmly "Where have you been?" To which I replied truthfully, "To see the King and Queen." Expecting a retort of not to be "funny," I was saluted, and wished goodnight. To this day I am convinced that policemen know the truth when they hear it!

I exchanged the Jaguar for a Rover Sixteen and, whilst the motor was extremely smooth, the steering seemed to transmit an abnormal amount of road shock and would waltz somewhat at 70 and over in spite of all being apparently correct, and soon I fell for a very pretty "Martin Walter" special-bodied 1½-litre Jaguar coupe. The body was, however, so low-built at the rear that changing a wheel in the middle of Epsom High Street at midnight became a major gymnastic feat, even when assisted by two R.A.F. types and a gentleman so like Jean Chassagne in appearance

that I fully expected to hear the words "Maintenance c'est a moi" as he laid down his coat. After several "flats" I could no longer stand the rigmarole which had to be gone through, which was all right if one was not dressed to appear in public, which was inevitably the case. (I bought it from a doctor, so perhaps he had had to change a wheel also.)

I then took delivery of my first post-war car, an Alvis Fourteen coupe. It steered as a thoroughbred should, and the suspension was excellent, except that it seemed incredibly hard compared to other people's, and it was while I was thus pondering that I was offered a 3½-litre Vanden Plas pillarless saloon Bentley at a very reasonable figure. It was impressive, silent and yet extremely "gutty," and went considerably faster than many 4¼ R.-B.s I had driven. I sold the Alvis the day it came out of covenant, and used the "R.-B." for some months when I decided to exchange it for a very beautiful 1937 Park Ward 4¼. The engine was like silk, the gearbox like velvet, and suspension to fit. It was the most beautiful car I have ever owned of its type, and the Rolls servo-assisted braking system made it equally the safest, and *there* (for *me* at any rate) was the snag! It was *too* perfect, and twice I had nearly fallen asleep at the wheel for sheer lack of engine noise.

No! I decided. This was somehow not my make-up, and it was once again in the moment of indecision that my mind was made up for me when a friend arrived in a large blown Lagonda and wanted me to accompany him to Granville Grenfell's workshop at Weybridge. The ride ruined me completely. I had become once again the slave of audible exhausts and throbbing machinery.

Within a week I drove out of Davis Motors the owner of a 4½ Lagonda coupe. I had defeated myself in a fight against my better family self which told me I wanted a Rapide tourer, my wife influencing me in the end when she saw a photo depicting three "outside exhausts" which literally terrified her with the thought of speeds over the "ton." She has never really liked speed and feels an uncontrollable desire to recede down towards the floorboards as the needle progresses round the clock. Any driver exceeding 50 is liable to find her wrapped round the clutch pedal, in fact several have. It was about this time that she flabbergasted me by telling me she was going to take up driving herself. So we decided that two cars was the way out of many arguments, one for family use and

one for my journeys and speed events, etc., and thus we bought "Mirabelle," a Morris Eight whose adventures I will not dwell upon, nor upon "Ada," a Standard Nine, for that matter. I had used the Lagonda, however, at Brighton, Gosport, and Firle hill-climb, having modified her somewhat, and, prior to selling her, took the final bend at Gravesend speed trials in such a manner that Gordon (Jaguara) Parker swore that the timekeeper bolted from his table, thus giving me a faster time than I had made. As Victor Herne and Cliff Davis stood around looking at me as if they agreed I presumed that I must have looked somewhat alarming, but protested that I had realised just what I was doing, to which Gordon retorted that he had hoped I had for whatever it was I had certainly done it, and proved it by showing me a fantastic photo a week later, about which he has pulled my leg ever since. This car seemed to enjoy odd situations for on my return from Firle I had been directed inadvertently by Freeman-Wright's mechanic to a rather posh private estate where the houses had large grass lawns as pavements in front of the gates. Being dark and misty and unsure of our way, we suddenly discovered, *via* a jar to our spines, that we had dropped into a deep gulley about the width of a tyre across and covered by grass growing over the edges. This drainage gully, it appeared, stretched the entire length of the road and we were firmly locked up to the running board and looked like spending the night there. We selected a large property with a light showing in the window and pulled on a large iron contraption which started up a chorus of bells which would have awakened the dead, accompanied by snarling and growling at the letter-box. A lady holding a mastiff by the collar opened the door and, being mindful of our somewhat dilapidated appearance (boots, duffle coats, caps, goggles, etc.), we doffed our caps with oily hands, and asked if we might use the phone. I completely forgot that I was carrying a large copper wheel clout in my other hand, which must have convinced our hostess that we were a couple of "coshers." She nodded extremely nervous approval and we clattered over her parquet flooring on tip-toe with dog snarling at our rear. I got through to Mrs. Wright and explained our difficulty and asked her to send the "boys" along (a foolish word to choose).

Our hostess gazed from the doorway and, when Mrs. Wright asked "Which Peter?" and I replied

"Peter Cavanagh," was convinced I was not only dangerous but using someone's name to try and fool her into the bargain. We got the car out and someone "borrowed" a flagstone from a front drive, which I fear was not returned in "as new" condition. I remember we did mention we were enthusiasts from the Bentley Drivers' hill-climb, and I had visions of Colonel Berthon being set upon by a fierce army of landscape gardeners.

For a short period I owned an S.S.100, which was not a clever buy as far as luggage went, and my large case balanced on the ledge behind the seats would deal my pianist a frequent slap on the back of the neck. This car was decidedly nose-heavy without a full petrol tank and on one journey when I foolishly dashed up to Harrogate in a gale actually "took-off" on a couple of somewhat distressing occasions when the howling wind got under the flat sail-like front wings, and was not altogether assisted by coming over a bridge face to face with a flock of sheep. She would think nothing of half revolving in front of a tram on wet wood blocks at the slightest application of the brakes and, though all appeared correct on examination, we were convinced that there was something "odd" about "Bee-bee." It was either pig iron for a passenger or a perpetually full tank (which on "basic" was impossible).

A Citroen Light Fifteen followed, and here I will add my bit of praise to what has already been said by the "F.W.D. brigade." It felt "safe," cornered "on lines," and it went like a little arrow, ignoring snow and wet alike, and only owing to gear positions *re* my wife did we change for a Vanguard, only to find that the soft suspension didn't agree with the children's tummies—but the Citroen had gone elsewhere. A night of climatic beastliness on top of Hindhead owing to a dud condenser and coil decided me to carry a box of small spares, for most of my journeys find me winding along the roads of Britain at two and three o'clock in the morning. We changed the Vanguard for a very fine Railton drophead coupe and some money back. Why these fine cars have such a low secondhand value I cannot understand. They have excellent power-weight ratio, giving vivid acceleration and economical fuel consumption, coupled with a fine suspension, and an hour in one of these cars will convince anyone that Reid Railton certainly knew what he was doing. She gave trouble-free service over many a long distance during the year in which we had her, and is now, I believe, in South Africa giving an equally

good report of herself.

About this time I bought a 1935 Le Mans 4½ Lagonda tourer and she was rebuilt to factory condition over a long period, including such "mods." as raised compression, Martlets, twin exhaust system, large-capacity sump, dual-stage oil pumping, etc. I entered her for Firlie and her practice run was encouraging. On my first official run I came ripping up to the first tight bend when out of the corner of my eye I got a split-second glimpse of two men watching from the bank, Bertie Moir and "W. O." It may sound odd to my younger readers that such a situation should have any repercussion on a driver about to take a fast bend, but upon me the effect was instantaneous. I eased off, corrected my slide with all the military precision I could muster, and prayed that my "line" might be that of a slide-rule, for one sign of "chancing it" or "hammering it" and I would wish the hill to swallow me up, such is my respect for those men, their records, and what they stand for. As soon as I had disappeared round the bend my magneto cut out and I climbed the remainder on coil and one set of plugs. The rain started and, with thoughts of only half-power and executing that wet corner under the eyes of the "masters," I farked it. I would not expect anyone to understand why. Just embarrassment, perhaps; but I am like that!

I entered her for "Brighton" the following season after more body rebuilding, etc., and she got away well with considerable wheel-spin as the torque low down was quite tremendous for the weight, and just over the halfway mark my power dropped off and I suspected fuel starvation. It was, however, the "Jonah" magneto again, and in the circumstances 37 sec. dead did not seem too bad. I ran her very little during ownership as the rebuild was continually in progress and having renewed the magneto got her in peak condition when health troubles intervened, upsetting work, and I dutifully sold her with deep regrets. She is, I believe, overseas—a very beautiful motor car which should be a delight to her owner. Between times I co-drivered a friend's Fiat Ballila at Brands Hatch speed trials and we won our class.

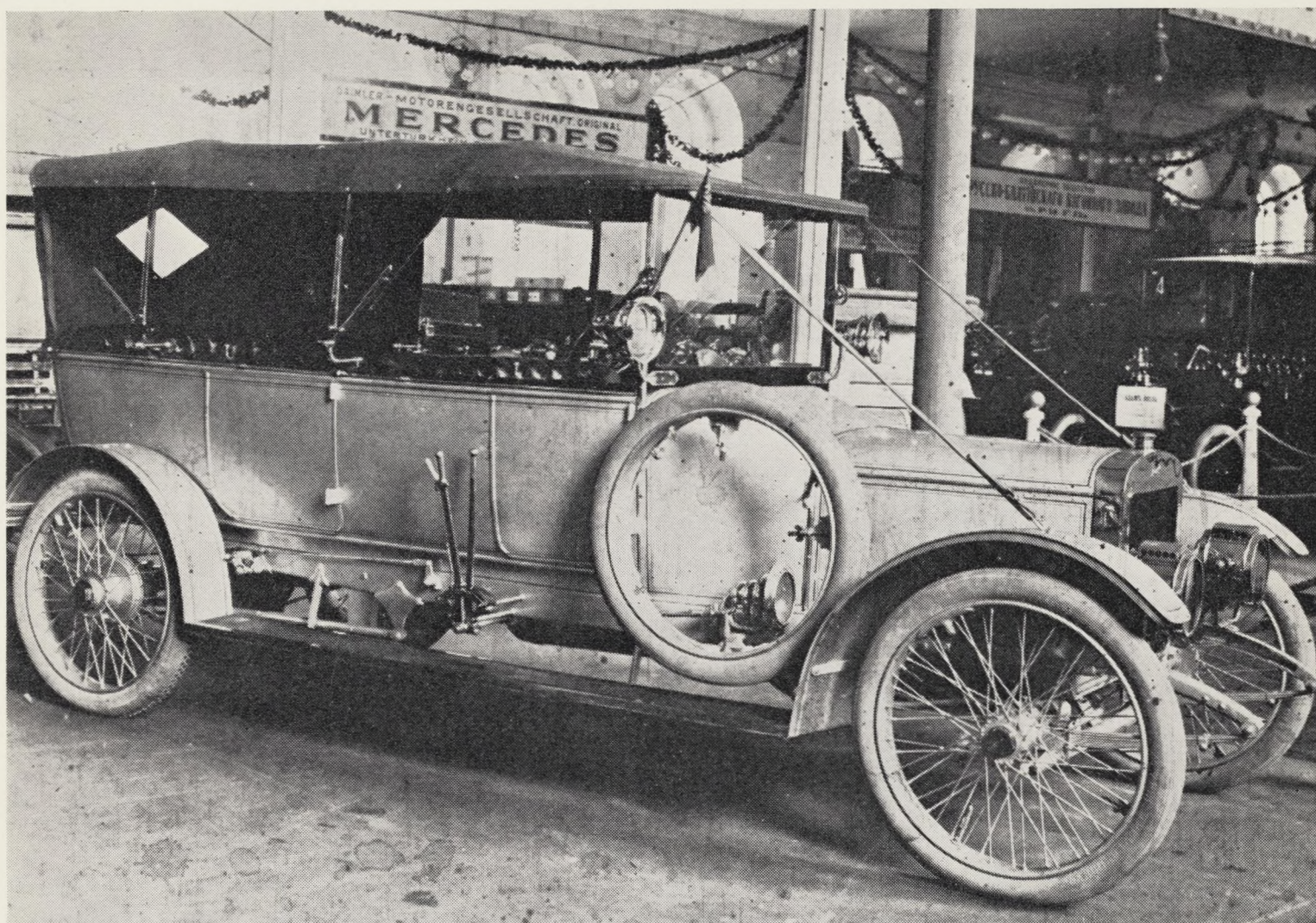
Today I own a Mille Miglia Healey saloon and I am going to say here and now that I confess I am delighted with her. She is hearty, robust, and has that indescribable something of a "vintage" car about her. The almost-racing car chassis and suspension gives a confidence which I have yet to find in a post-war modern (under the three-

thousand-pound mark), and with "over the ton," 30 m.p.g., and more acceleration I can take the family shopping or wait for the starter at will.

I have learnt much from my motor cars and, like all of us, have cursed and praised them alternately. I have always kept them scrupulously clean under the bonnet, for to me the man who never lifts the lid until something fails, and leaves the mud of winter until it is covered by the mud of autumn, is an assassin who has no respect for his motor car and should not expect it to have respect for him. I have always found that care lavished upon my mechanical friends has been amply repaid. Having driven many miles in borrowed motor cars, I have often been appalled at the condition which people seem to think "safe," let alone anything else, and I am sad to say this has not always excluded sports-car owners. As for brakes! I wonder if some people know such things exist.

As my average journey in a weekend is usually somewhere around 200 miles I get ample time to study other vehicles, and I have come to the conclusion that "Joe Dokes" doesn't seem to think anything unusual of wheels which have rims like a switchback and wobble at various angles, and although I may stick out the proverbial neck when I mention "bobbing birds" and "dangling dollies," it is perhaps wise for their fanciers to carry on using them as it gives one fair warning to be prepared for unpredictable behaviour! "Family" saloons driven at the high speeds available in these times continually give me heart failure when I see them coming round bends, not for my own car or for my ability to avoid them, but for the poor wretched suspension and the blissful ignorance of the drivers who do not apparently realise that their mounts were built for the purpose of conveying them in comfort to their destinations at a good average speed and not to emulate Gonzalez in the B.R.M. This is no state of complacent smugness, but bitter experience learned from my own failures and stupidity in earlier days, when, thank the Lord, I had the road to myself; and I often leave in the middle of the last race to avoid becoming enveloped in a sea of "popular ironmongery". I have an incurable love of motor cars and admit to being a "dyed in the wool" enthusiast and, who knows, some day I may be able to say a DB3 Aston Martin is a "Car I have owned"!

PETER CAVANAGH



A New Car with an Old Name

The British-built 20 h.p. Lagonda

NO DOUBT MOTORISTS OF SOME YEARS' STANDING will recollect that at one time powerful tricars were extremely popular, that there were very many put on the market of such very indifferent quality that the tricar's vogue was brought swiftly to an end, but that a few really fine machines were made. Amongst the best and the most famous was the Lagonda, designed and made in a thorough engineering way, and it is therefore interesting to learn that Mr. Gunn, the moving spirit of the old-established Lagonda Motor Co. at Staines, has for several years been giving his attention to the manufacture of quite large cars, chiefly for export to Russia.

Quite recently the Burlington Motor Co., Ltd., have acquired the British rights, and it is therefore to be expected that the Lagonda car may soon make for itself in England the reputation

once possessed by its three-wheeled predecessor.

The 20.1 h.p. (R.A.C.) type, with a 90×120 mm four-cylinder engine, strikes even the casual observer as being an exceptionally careful and well finished job. Closer examination strengthens the idea, and also discloses many ingenious points in the design, together with a thoroughness of detail deserving of all praise. In proceeding to describe the car, one is tempted to reverse the usual order of consideration, and give attention firstly to the back axle, which is of unusual design. The sleeves are composed entirely of cast mild steel—somewhat expensive, but very reliable material, and rather stronger than malleable cast-iron. Aluminium is used for the worm casing, and there is a stout adjustable tie rod. The road wheels run on the outside of the sleeves, the ball bearing being spaced well apart, so as to give good lateral rigidity, while inside the casing the differential box is backed by huge double thrust bearings, these bearing taking all side pressure from the road wheels as this is transmitted through the conical outer ended driving-shafts. An excellent feature in the design is that the axle

is stayed by four rods, two outside and close to the frame and two nearer the centre. While the first pair end at lugs below the axle, the second terminate at points a little above it, and the effect is to constrain the axle as a whole always to move quite vertically. An axle so controlled is to be preferred, because with it the most violent bump does not cause any variation in the rotational velocity of the wheels, and such is destructive to both transmission and tyres. Of course, the difference between the Lagonda arrangement and the ordinary torque rod staying is not very great, but all theoretical advantage is in favour of the former. It is claimed, too, that the car is very steady, and our own experience on a short run is that it does hold the road in a most unusual manner.

Between the axle worm and the gear box there is, of course, a double-jointed shaft, the joint being of good size and very well cared for with respect to lubrication. In the box provision is made for three forward speeds, and, although there is no especial peculiarity in the design, one seldom sees such large ball bearings as are employed, and rarely, if ever, thrust bearings to guard against accidental axial loads on the shafts. Three-point suspension is used for both engine and gear box, both having two arms on one side and one central arm only on the other. These two are carried on slightly dropped separate sub-frames, and are connected by a short shaft with truly universal jointing.

A place where the careful nature of the design shows up is in the foot brake, which has two shoes drawn together by means of quick pitch, square thread screws, so that one shoe does not pull against the other, but both are dragged inwards towards a central fulcrum. This fulcrum, too, is mounted on the frame with one eccentric setting that allows its position relative to the brake drum to be adjusted. This ensures the two shoes coming into action at the same instant, giving thereby a very smooth and powerful retarding effect, which is enhanced by a Raybestos lining.

Another unique feature is that the castellated shafts and even the teeth of the gears themselves are ground all over after being case-hardened, and we can vouch for the quietness of the indirect speeds on at least the one chassis we have been able to try. The gate is much longer than usual, being higher up the change lever, because the latter is pivoted extra low down, and this

seems to make changing very easy.

For the clutch an internal leather cone is used with aluminium centre, and there is a clever clutch brake, forward movement of the pedal actuating a little bell crank, which brings a leather pad in contact with the clutchshaft, or, rather, with a collar on the clutch itself.

Although possessed of no abnormalities, the engine is a very clean job, with pair cast cylinders, light cast-iron pistons, and a robust crankshaft with three big plain bearings. The valves, all on the near side, are enclosed, and the camshaft is silent chain driven, a neat, effective, and theoretically correct means for adjustment being provided, the importance of which is likely to be realised more fully in years to come. Lubrication is performed by a Rotherham pump, which delivers oil at a pressure of about 75 lb. per square inch to the main bearings. Thence the overflow is conducted to trays in which the big ends dip, while there are separate leads to each of the chain sprockets.

The C.A.V. magneto is situated on the off side and driven through a long universal coupling, while there is also a platform to take a C.A.V. lighting dynamo, which is then in position to be driven by a short Whittle belt from the magneto sprocket-shaft. At the other side, on the end of the camshaft, there is a pulley for driving the fan, and an eccentric adjustment is provided in the mounting of the latter. Cooling is performed by a highly efficient Lamplough radiator and pump circulation, the pump driven from the camshaft. A Polyrhoe is the standard carburetter, with both hand and foot throttle control and the ignition timing is variable.

Lack of space precludes a detailed description of many other parts, but it will suffice to say that both main and sub-frames have been strengthened at all places of natural weakness, and that the steering gear has throughout ball bearing of such size that the wheel moves to the lightest touch. Taken altogether the car, by its comfort, its convenience, the accessibility of its vital parts, and its quietness, is essentially the work of not only a good engineer, but an experienced motorist. In conclusion, it may be mentioned that the standard tyres are 810 x 90 mm which seem on the small side, and Riley detachable wheels are always fitted as standard.

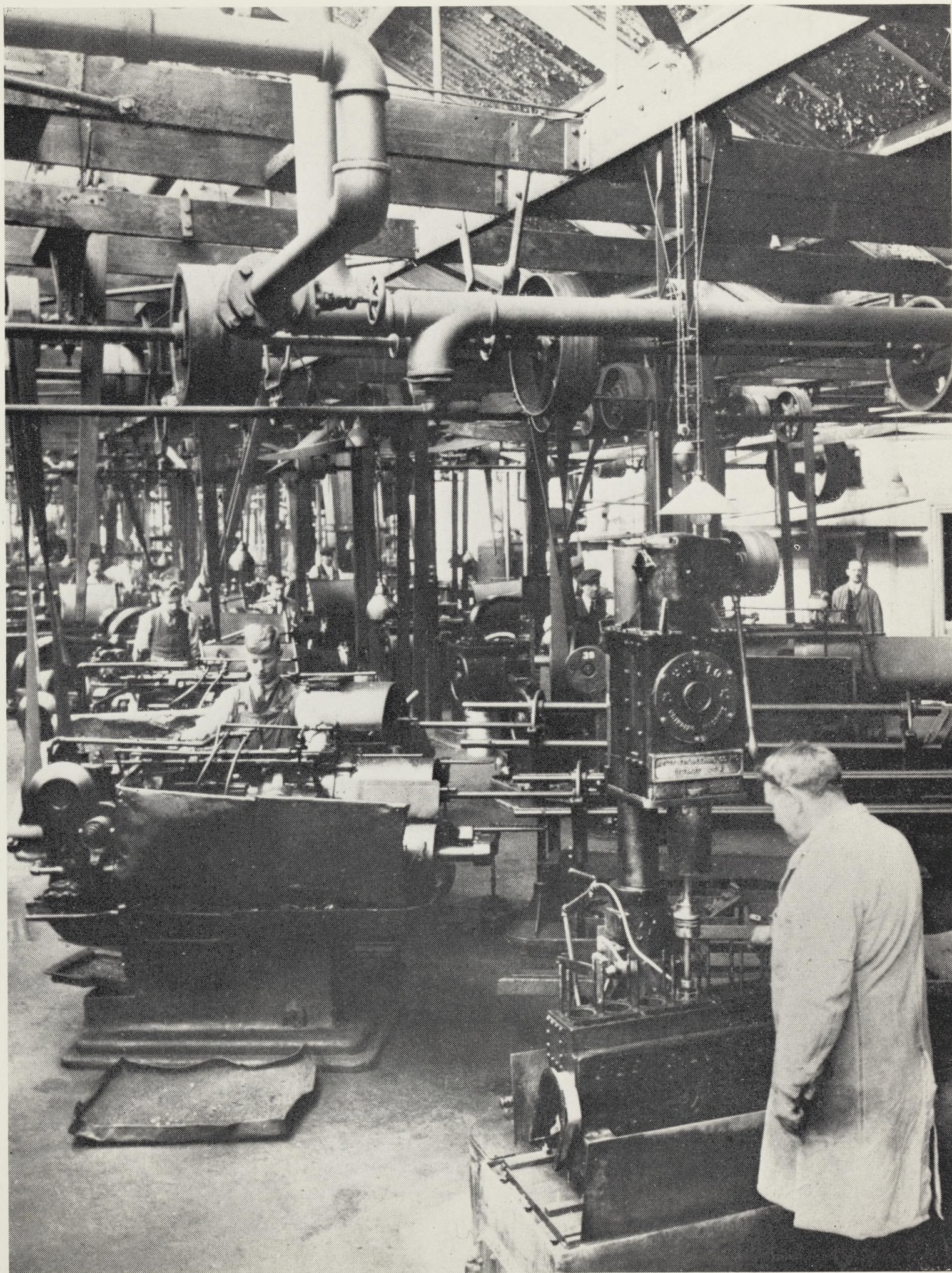
Reprinted by kind permission from THE AUTO-CAR, November 4th, 1911.

Lagonda Days—40 years ago

CONTINUING IN THIS SERIES OF LOOKING INTO past days at the Lagonda factory, we have a scene in Grinding Department. As Arthur Thatcher says in his notes accompanying these photographs, this shows only part of what was a

large department. Typical of most motor car manufacturers of a similar size at this time, parts were made in the factory rather than bought out in the trade. The second photograph takes in a section of the Machine Shop. Again a veritable tangle of overhead power lines and ducting, is evident. The roof appears to be of corrugated iron which must have created considerable echoes to the noise going on round about. The operator in the foreground is engaged on skilful honing.





Lagondas and Publicity

by Henry Coates

THE GREAT WILBUR GENERALLY DISDAINED THE advertisement pages of the motoring press. Rather would he climb on to a machine and by the expedition and ease of his progress to, say, Edinburgh, so impress sufficient of the spectators that his order book was sufficient to ensure full employment for some time to come. As most potential owners of powerful Tri-cars would make it their business to study such contests, and as the Lagonda did it usually very well, there seems much to be said for his usual disdain.

So too, when Mr. Hammond accomplished so many *versts* on the Steppes in the manner he did, there was little time, or real need, to cultivate the home market. In fact one suspects that these models were virtually unknown to the English press as a description in 1911 of the 20 h.p. chassis, opens with a paragraph which seems to imply that the writer hardly believed there was such a model.

The co-operation of the press was, however, sought more frequently when the 11.1 was on the market. Usually part pages, a picture of the coupe, with a modest eulogy on its comfort and fitness of purpose. As competition successes came its way, awards were discretely catalogued. This pattern would continue for the 11.9 and 12/24. The trials and successes continued and awards lists were at times quite impressive. The 14/60 did not immediately supersede the 12/24 and full and part pages are found with both listed. Sometimes 14/60 adverts could be found hiding coyly in the Roman Numeral (advert page) section—quite small ones. A picture of the engine was recognisable but differed in detail from the later 2-litre car.

The 16/65 got star billing, with the 14/60 in support, but when the 2-litre Speed Model came out a little rapture was allowed to creep in—. . . from a purring 70 to a humming 80. . .” Some pleasant charcoal drawings of Conquistadors and Dick Turpin, and a “Passant” Speed Model, are coupled with somewhat embellished owners’ experiences—a character had done York to Southampton at 43 m.p.h. average and it was suggested that he would be less flurried than the

famous highwayman after HIS ride, and so on. These subsequent displays took the full page, with occasional ventures on to the Front Cover!

A happy chance—though “chance” may not be truly accurate—was that S. C. H. Davis took a 2-litre on a trial, and subsequently wrote a couple of pages of eulogy on the general handling and performance of the car, both in the hills and to and from them, and on the main road dash home.

In trials the 2-litre was expected to, and usually did, provide the high spots—from 1928 to 1931, blown and unblown—and trials reports must have cheered up the sales manager no end. He did not apparently pass on the information, or his enthusiasm, to the advertisement chappy though.

A racing programme is usually undertaken to get the name in print rather than have a bit of fun—both results could well have been achieved except perhaps by the bloke who wrote the cheques. As a sales boost for Lagondas one wonders whether this racing was a vast success. A biggish car with a moderate sized engine is not usually as fast as a big car with a big engine or a small car with a moderate engine. The knowledgeable would appreciate the quality of the performances which were put up, and which were highly creditable, all things considered. They could not however WIN big races and hit the headlines of the popular press.

It was the Rapier that got the most “plush” send-off, with a party at “Great Fosters.” A stripped chassis was on view along with several complete cars, and Malcolm Campbell diced one round the rose beds. Advertisements returned to the rapturous—often a black-and-white drawing with very small driver in a tearing hurry in an open tourer—Lagondas were not alone in depicting out of scale passengers to add stature to the car. Disappointing was the claim “. . . a momentary 90 . . .” culled from a road test which quoted that as the speedometer reading when the timed maximum was below 80 m.p.h.—One hastens to add though that claims as to handling and road-holding were more than amply substantiated on the road.

Use was made fairly liberally of bits culled from road tests of the 4½. There is no doubt that the performance of this and the subsequent Rapide was rather an eye opener. The press duly had its eyes opened, and Lagondas, quite legitimately took advantage. T. H. Wisdom wrote



A MODERN TURPIN'S RIDE FROM YORK

From York to Southampton—over 280 miles—and he reached the coast in under 7 hours at the expense of but 10 gallons of spirit . . .

With the power of sixty Black Besses, in comfort of which Turpin's richest victims never dreamed, with a seemingly courtesy of which all true Gentlemen of the Road would approve, he yet contrived to average 43 milestones to every hour . . .

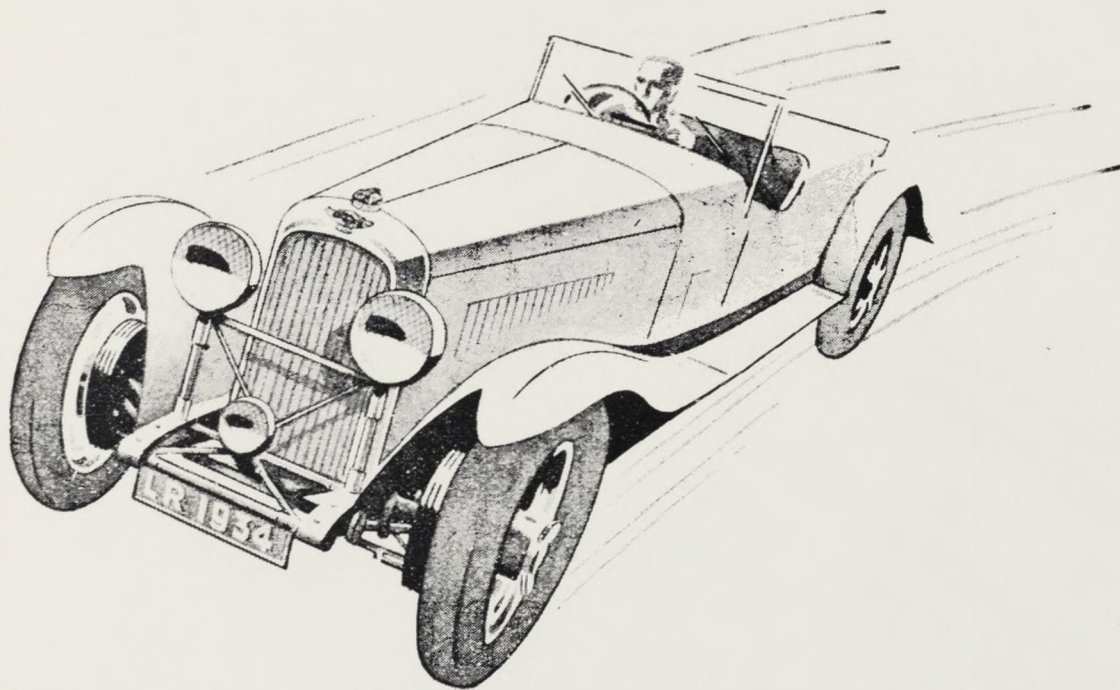
And the documentary evidence of this modern highwayman's ride from York, is it not written for all discreet men to behold in the Chronicles of the breeders of his flying steed—his speed model Lagonda.*

LAGONDA

PRICES FROM £650.
Dunlop Tyres and Cerric finish are standard on the All-
British Lagonda and Triplex Class to all Speed models.
LAGONDA LTD., STAINES, MIDDLESEX.
Telephones: Staines 122-123. Telegrams: "Lagonda Staines."
Lagonda Distributors (London) Ltd., Lagonda Distributors (Manchester) Ltd.,
40, Albemarle Street, W.1. Deansgate House, Deansgate, Manchester.

*The original letter from which the figures quoted above have been taken can be seen at the Lagonda works.

"It gains revs as though supercharged" says the AUTOCAR



LAGONDA RAPIER

NOTE.—The present Lagonda Rapier cannot, in our opinion, be improved in any way. Therefore we have no intention of changing the design for at least a year.

Chassis **£270**



Woodwright

Their most exhaustive test also produced the following comments:

"A full 60 can be held as a happy cruising speed."

"Speedometer readings varied between 82 and a momentary 90."

"It feels 'right' throughout."

"It does not become fussy, it is not harsh, and there is no vibration."

"The car is altogether remarkably stable and safe feeling."

You will admit, we think, after a run, that the Rapier offers you something entirely new in thoroughbred motoring.

WOULD YOU LIKE A CATALOGUE?

LAGONDA LIMITED, STAINES, MIDDLESEX.

some very quotable stuff in the *Daily Herald*. Leslie Charteris bought a Rapide to celebrate the publication of his 25th Saint novel, and got his picture in the press. Later this picture with Mr. Charteris blocked out was used in advertisements (CPC 743).

Le Mans 1935 must have cheered up Mr. Good and Mr. Watney quite a lot, though it surprised Mr. Bentley. A fairly extensive programme of long distance racing was undertaken, with varying success—good places sometimes, but no big win. Alan Hess did 100 miles in the hour at Brooklands in one of the racing cars to which had been added wings and lamps—it had been much quicker in the 500 mile race. Later Earl Howe did a few more miles in a saloon V.12 and a saloon LG.6 almost equalled Hess's distance.

The V.12 was hailed as "W. O. Bentley's Masterpiece." Some advertisements consisted of a panel containing excerpts from a road test topped by "W. O. BENTLEY the MASTER" and at the foot "LAGONDA the MASTERPIECE"

Others included a good photograph—sometimes a saloon or limousine in a desirable residential area, an open tourer or drop head in the country—with comforting words beneath explaining how nicely everything happens. Usually no occupants, but Lord Waleran on occasion has a companion that any of us would be happy to have with us—in town or country.

By 1939 the claim was "the supreme car of the generation" supported by a reminder that though the Lagonda was usually thought of as a fast car, it was also comfy.

A nice series during the war included only a panel in an almost blank page, footed by the badge and "quoted again by Lagonda Motors Ltd., Staines". The quotations were usually opposite to the war situation, and varied from the ancient Greeks to Winston Churchill—

"SEVERITY... "Severity is allowable when mildness is in vain"

Corneille, "Heraclus" (1606-1684).

NEW CONFIDENCE... When we face with a steady eye the difficulties which lie before us, we may derive new confidence by remembering those we have already overcome".

Winston Churchill (1941).

As Hitler showed signs of yielding to treatment, cars began to figure again. Lord Waleran seems to be in trouble with a speed cop—and well he

might—no headlamp masks, and it's difficult to imagine how the war effort will benefit by his being in that wood with *that* passenger.

This is where Lagonda Motors began to get into trouble too. "The products of Lagonda and the designs of W. O. Bentley have always been fine fast cars... and a proud possession... It is worth reflection that they have not always been large cars..." There was no harm of course in dropping hints about a new smaller car, but Rolls-Royce took umbrage at this bandying of Mr. Bentley's name, and the wound to their pride cost rather more than Lagonda could decently afford to stitch up. They kept Mr. Bentley secret after that but continued to tell us to look out for a smaller car. It is odd to think that if they had not spent so much on advertisements they might not have offended Derby and might even have been able to afford keeping on making cars.

(This interesting look back at Lagonda publicity was complemented by advertisement reprints from both the *Motor* and *Autocar* to whom acknowledgement is made. Ed.)

Henry Coates



Rebuilding an M.45

by C. Forssman

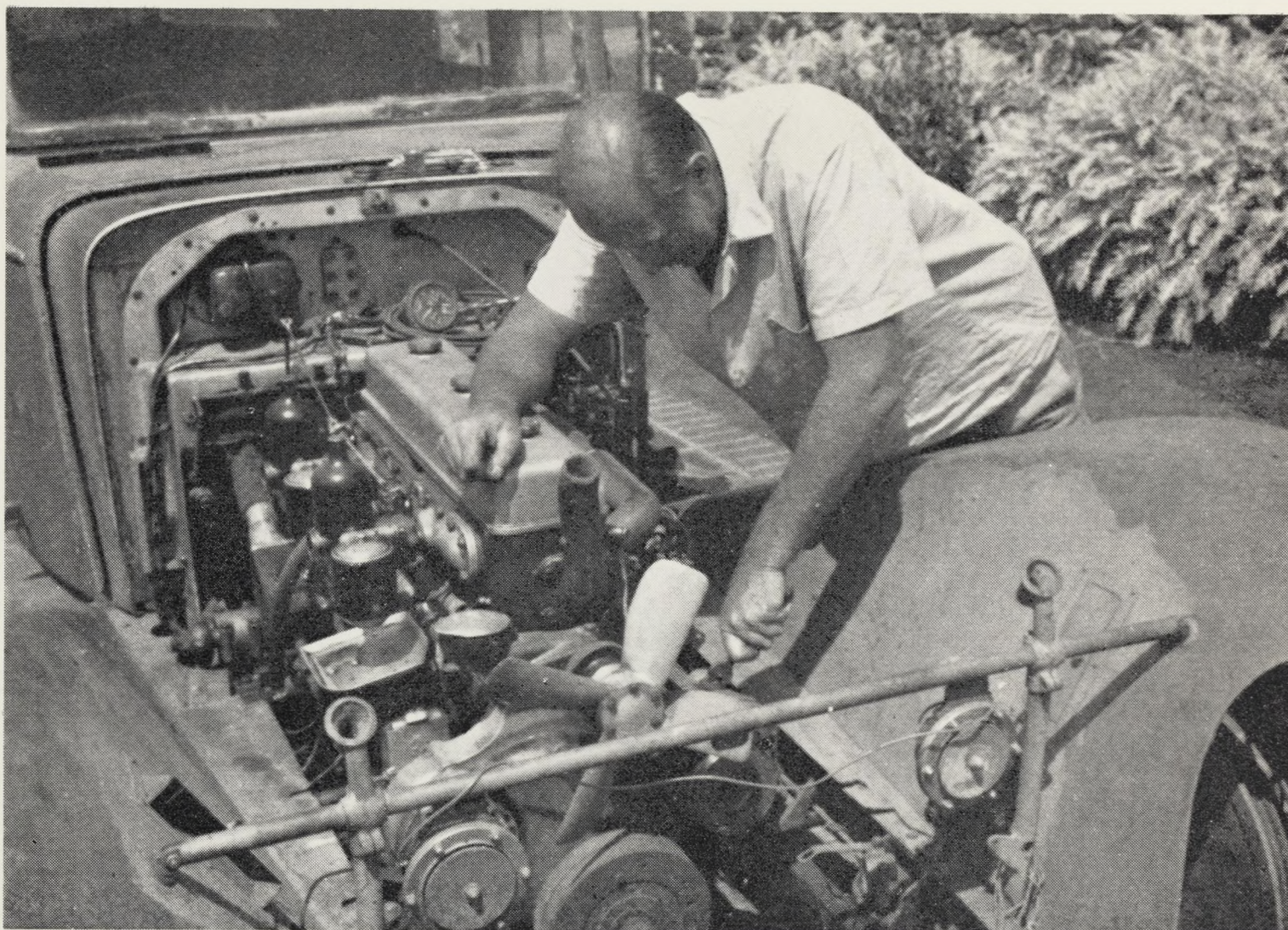
OUR MEMBERS MIGHT LIKE TO READ ABOUT AN M.45 Pillarless Saloon Lagonda which I am in the process of rebuilding.

Some 10 years or so ago I called at a cousin's house late one afternoon and noticed a large old Sedan motor car parked on the drive-way. Having been enthusiastic about motoring matters many years ago I had a casual glance at this motor car and left it at that. About a month later I again had occasion to call on this fellow only to find that this Lagonda was parked in exactly the same position and to make matters worse it had been raining for about 10 days and it was completely sodden inside and looking absolutely deserted. It immediately occurred to me that if the vehicle was not salvaged it would deteriorate completely and simply vanish by probably ending up in a motor scrap yard—about 10 days later I was dismantling the entire machine with the enthusiasm of a maniac not for one moment giving the question of replacement parts any thought. The body was removed from the chassis and all components such as springs, axles, gear box and back axle, etc. were removed from the chassis. Fortunately the rust factor was negligible and after a thorough cleaning the chassis was repainted, the suspension bushes replaced where necessary. Fortunately odds and ends were available locally though one had to persuade people to look for old stocks.

At this stage my employers obviously reasoned in their interests that I was spending far too much time running around looking for Lagonda parts and I found myself transferred from Pretoria to Johannesburg. This caused enormous difficulty as I had rather a comfortable set up in Pretoria and had to move into a flat in Johannesburg with the result that I had to make arrangements to store the Lagonda in a dismantled condition for the time being. After a short while, however, I made arrangements and obtained workshop facilities at a friend's garage in Alberton and had to get the Lagonda to a stage where I could tow it. This was done by hooking it behind a 1939 Ford V8 which seemed to do the job fairly readily. This also had to be done at a time when there was likely to be the least number of traffic policemen

on duty as we didn't want to be bothered with such formalities as provisional insurances and the likes. Fortunately the trip was incident free other than my having to brake heavily at one stage on a down hill causing the Lagonda chassis to ram into the back of the towing car. Both being old cars there was virtually no damage.

It was about this stage of the rebuilding that I started running into problems with the Lagonda engine spares and as luck would have it I met a fellow for whom I had once done a considerable favour and I knew that he had in fact worked for Rolls-Royce. I told him what my problems were and shortly after that three boxes of engine parts arrived from the U.K. at a cost then of about £50. As I had made no arrangements for permits to import these spares we had a little drama which after a short while we managed to sort out. The last thing I wanted at that stage was to have the spares impounded or confiscated. The engine was completely rebuilt and should now be as good as new, all moving parts having been replaced. The big end journals were ground down about 10 thou though the cylinders were bored out some 20 thou. The compression ratio has been increased to about 8.75 to 1 which is not excessive for this altitude. A great deal of the work was done by myself though the machine shop work was done by motor engineers. To date I have not been able to obtain the little cups which come over the valve ends so that the rocker arm does not actuate on the valve stem itself. The gearbox had to be overhauled though the gears themselves apart from being a little noisy appear to be in good order. Certain ball-races had to be replaced. The clutch itself was in good working order though a new clutch stop and linkage had to be made. The back axle seems to be in good order though one of the brake back plates had to be welded up as it has a crack. The transmission, universals and flexible coupling also appear to be reasonably good. The body-work, however, and electrical system were absolutely finished, we managed to obtain a wiring diagram and drew this out on a large piece of paper about 48" x 48" and then set to work rewiring the entire vehicle. This used an enormous amount of wire probably 200 feet. As far as the bodywork was concerned an Italian P.O.W. called Antonio Paretti who since came to settle in this country and who also became a very good friend of mine did the metal work and re-shaping of mud guards, etc. He also made a new boot-lid as the original one had torn



off its hinges due to its weight and had become so badly damaged that it had to be discarded. A lot of the woodwork had rotted and had to be replaced. At all times during the body restoration Paretti insisted that the restoration must be as he used to say "similar original". While this restoration process was being carried out I resigned my job and went into the property business in Johannesburg which meant even less time at my disposal for work on the Lagonda. Suitable accommodation had to be found in Johannesburg which proved to be impossible with the result that I again moved from Johannesburg to a small village called "Irene" situated between Pretoria and Johannesburg. Here I set to work building a house with the aid of some sub-contractors which took about 2½ years to complete. Needless to say I have built fairly adequate garage and workshop accommodation so that once the summer comes again I should be able to finish the Lagonda, the major tasks now being spray-painting and upholstery. It is obviously going to be enormously difficult to get the upholstery done

as it had originally been done in England, that standard of work is simply not available locally. I have in fact considered sending the seats over to the U.K. to be redone as I understand this may be cheaper than having it done locally and it would certainly be far better done.

While writing to you perhaps your readers may remember what the original colour schemes were as it would appear that this car, at some stage, was a dark maroon colour.

So far I have merely given broad details of the restoration to date but as you know the process is really never ending. Tyres for example, at one stage, proved to be difficult to obtain but fortunately Dunlop in Johannesburg managed to find seven 650 × 19 tyres and a couple of tubes. Other than the valve stem cups which I have already referred to I still need two original tail-lights and the beading that comes on the side of the body-work immediately above the left rear mudguard, also two flexible vessels for the Andre Tele-control shock absorbers. Incidentally something left out earlier is that the fabric insert in the

roof top has been replaced with aluminium so as to make it more serviceable.

This vehicle was apparently originally sold to a certain Col. Mockford though it apparently had two subsequent owners and it is interesting to note that I actually spoke to Col. Mockford on the telephone who is now farming in Natal. Col. Mockford purchased the Lagonda in England. Incidentally Col. Mockford's name was written in white chalk under the right front seat. The details of the car are as follows:

Engine No. 2739

Bulkhead Type M.45-St.44

Car No. Z 10989

Crank case M.45-339

Well that is about the lot but you may be interested to know that I have managed to find, here in South Africa, a V.12 which, if I am able to obtain it, I shall probably at a later stage muster up enough energy to tackle that one as well. I would also not like to let this opportunity pass without complimenting you on your quarterly magazine which when one files together with earlier editions certainly makes comprehensive publication. I am enclosing some photographs with comments on the back. These photographs may be kept.

FOR SALE

The following are available from the Secretary:

CAR BADGE £1.75 (U.S. \$5.35, o'seas £2.00).

LAPEL BADGE 25p (U.S. 62 cents).

TERYLENE TIE (Green, blue, maroon) £1.25 (U.S. \$3.15, o'seas £1.30).

OVERALL BADGE 60p (U.S. \$1.50).

INSTRUCTION BOOKS FOR ALL MODELS (except 11.1, 11.9 and DB 2.6/3-litre) £2.25 (U.S. \$6.80, o'seas £2.75).

MEADOWS ENGINE CATALOGUE—await stocks. Price to be announced.

V-12 *Motor Trader* sheets—await stocks. Price to be announced.



R. Baillie's perfect trio—see "Letters to the Editor" p.28

Meandering at Michelham

ONCE AGAIN THE WEATHERMAN SMILED ON THE social meeting at Michelham Priory.

We were pleased to see five Lagondas and four visiting cars at the Gun Inn plainly all good drinkers as the car park was almost filled by 12.30. Particularly welcome was Mr. G. H. B. Dodd, home from Mexico with his beautiful LG.45 Rapide which has been in his family since new and Dick Shaw with his very original supercharged 2-litre. Dick is not a member although he was on the 2-litre Register and has owned the car for over 20 years. A membership form is being forwarded.

With great difficulty everyone was persuaded to leave the Gun and to drive down to the Priory where Graham Thyer was arranging the abstaining members and guests into formation under the apple trees within the Priory grounds.

Determined efforts were made by a visitor Aubrey Baddiscombe from Somerset to overshadow the Lagonda line up as he arrived in state in a unique 20/25 Rolls-Royce close coupled Saloon with Schutter Van Bakel of Amsterdam coachwork, a truly magnificent car, three owners and 64,000 miles from new.

A rare sight was of two supercharged 2-litres standing side by side both with blowers fitted, Dick Shaw's with an original Cozette and Phil Ridout's with the nicely engineered cabin blower installation. Gordon Withers' 1930 all-metal bodied car and my own made up the 2-litre contingent.

Two 16/80's, two 4½'s, two Rapiers and one D.B. 3-litre were in attendance together with two 12/50 Alvis's one TA 21 and one TD 21 Alvis. Last but not by any means least R. A. Mayo brought his immaculate black D.B.3 Aston-Martin. Valerie and Tony May parked their Fiat in the orchard.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the only available Sunday that did not clash with another event was in August as the turn out of only 11 Lagondas was not good to say the least, particularly when

you think that 113 members live in Surrey, Sussex and Kent excluding London postal areas, and this event was organised to meet the demand for a meeting in the South East!

Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely looking around the house and grounds and nattering to old and new friends, so come on everyone let us see more of you, if not in your car come wearing your Club tie that is better than staying away!

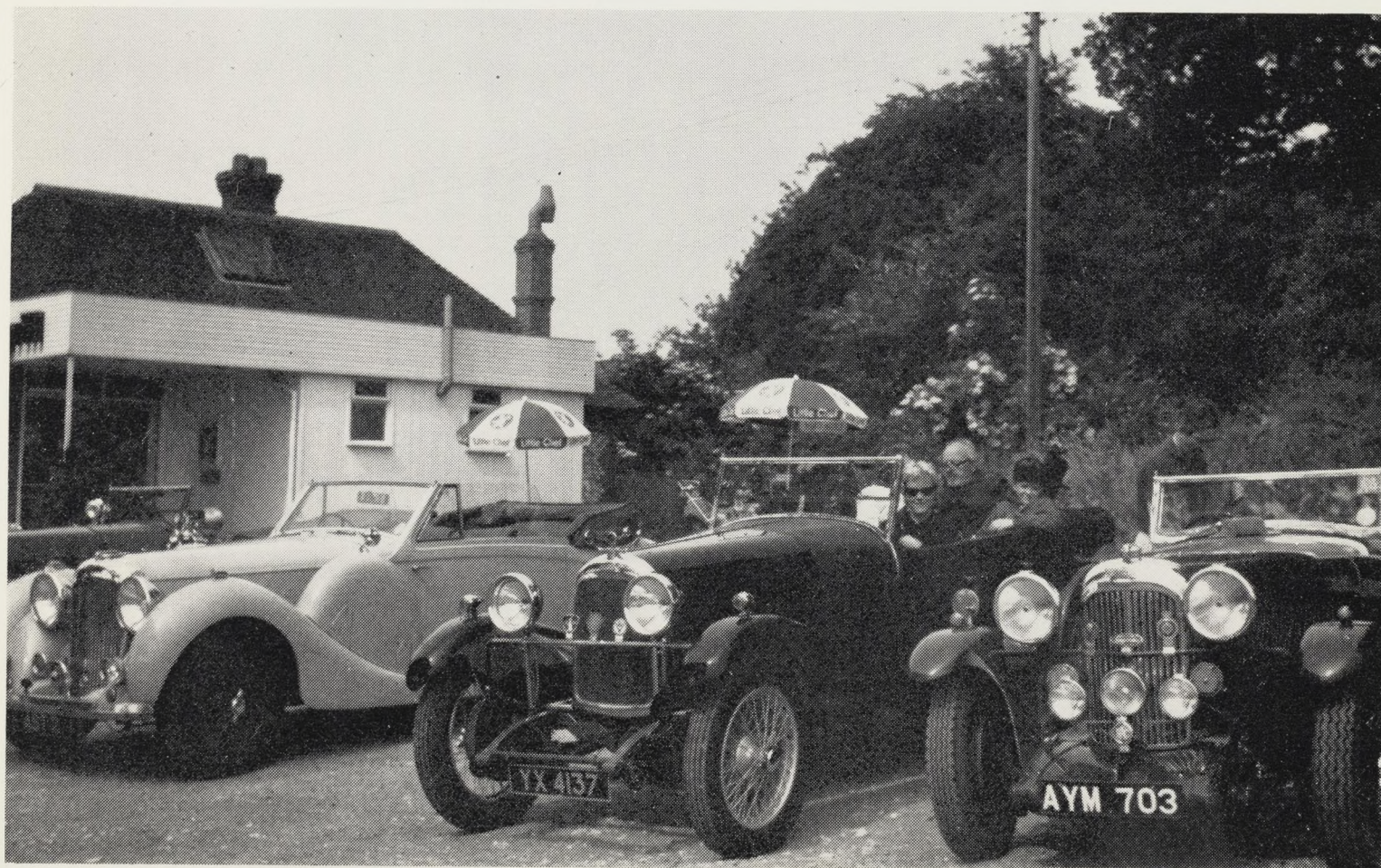
Among those present:

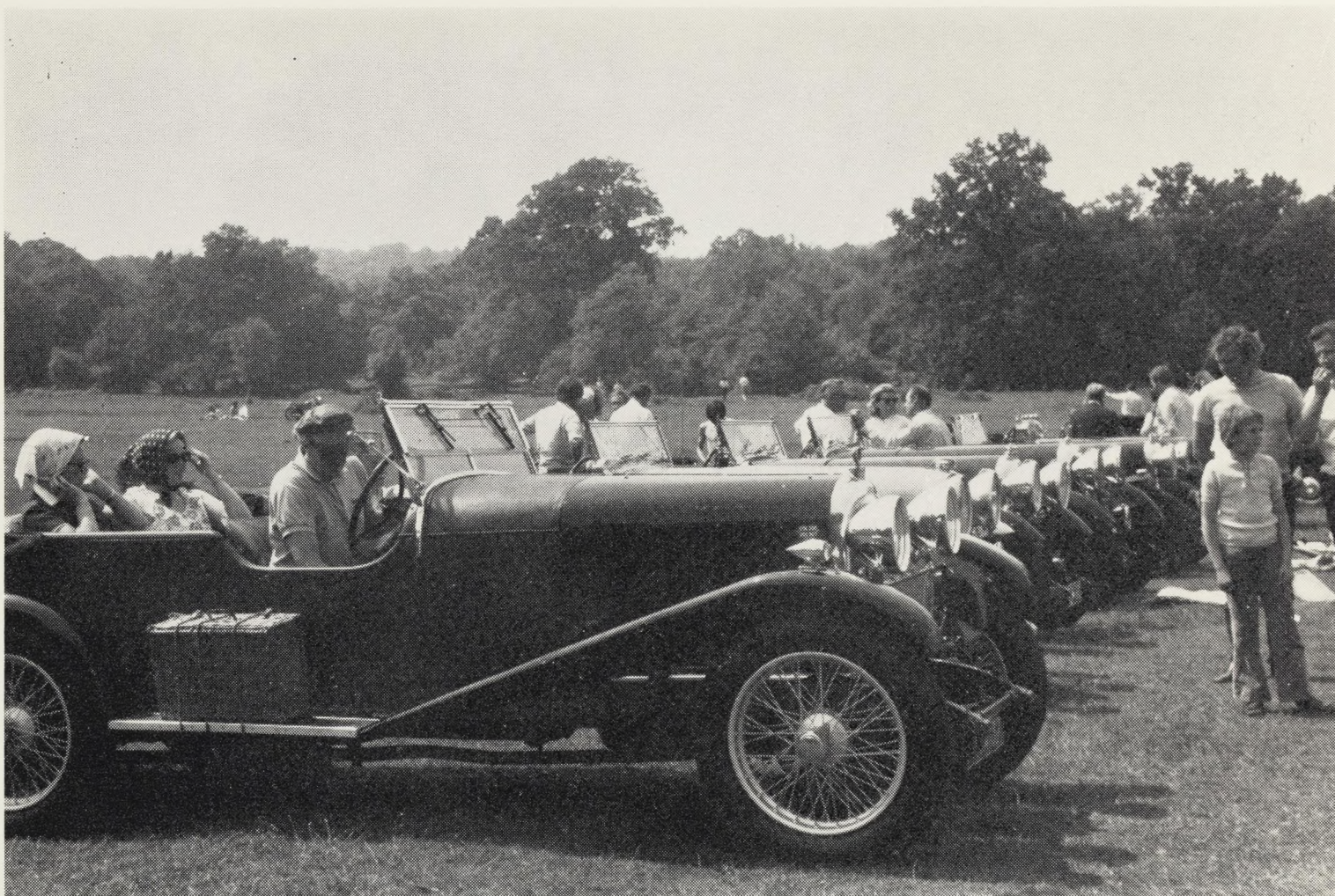
Wally Warrington
1926 12/50 Alvis
Phil Ridout
1931 Supercharged 2-litre Lagonda
Dick Shaw
1930 Supercharged 2-litre Lagonda
B. J. Horwood
1930 Supercharged 2-litre Lagonda
Gordon Withers
1930 2-litre Lagonda
Aubrey Baddiscombe
1934 20/25 Rolls-Royce close coupled saloon
Schutter Van Bakel Amsterdam
Mervin White
1934 Rapier Abbott Drop Head Coupe
R. H. Mayo
1957 Aston-Martin D.B.3
Graham Davis
12/50 Alvis
Ken Hill
1932 16/80 Lagonda Tourer
Raymond Wickham
1933 M.45 Lagonda Tourer
Mr. Drew
3-litre D.B. Lagonda Tickford Coupe built by
Factory on 2.6-litre chassis
G. H. B. Dodd
1937 LG.45 Lagonda Rapide
G. Davey
1934 Rapier Abbott Fixed Head Coupe
Roger Clarke
Alvis TA 21 Drop Head Coupe
A. J. L. Sadlier
1960 Alvis TD 21
Tony Neale
1933 16/80 Lagonda Tourer
Brian Saville
1928 12/50 Duck's Back Alvis
BRIAN HORWOOD



New Forest Rally: Dick Sage and Stuart Halsall nearest camera

Halsall's crew seem to have lost their driver





At the finish: Stuart Halsall's 1928 2-litre

NEW FOREST RALLY

THE EVENT TOOK PLACE ON SUNDAY, 24TH JUNE under ideal Lagonda conditions, a warm spring morning, a picturesque route, and very little other traffic to spoil the vintage style motoring. The Rally itself attracted five entries, somewhat disappointing after the work put in to organise it, and one of these entries, Brian Baron with his 1952 2½-litre car non-started due to oil-pump trouble. His was the most modern car entered—it's the old-uns which are the most reliable!

The route led from the start near Alton to the lunchtime finish at the "Sir Walter Tyrell" near the Rufus Stone. On the way competitors had to answer twenty questions, some of which were easy, some more obscure. The date of the Methodist church in King's Somborne caused some confusion, as there are two of them, and one road sign used as a clue had disappeared on the day of the rally. Still, you can't blame the organisers for that!

At the finish, the hardy competitors were astounded to find a long row of Lagondas assembled on the greensward on the edge of the forest. Obviously more Lagonda owners prefer drinking beer in the sun, and talking about their cars, than actually driving them.

The winner of the rally was announced during lunch, and resulted in victory for Dick Sage in his 16/80, in spite of an all-night party prior to the event. Second was Alan Hitch's 1930 3-litre, third Stuart Halsall's 1928 2-litre high chassis car followed by Bob Davy in the 1939 LG.6.

Well known members present for the picnic included Ivan Forshaw, Geoffrey Seaton with his 3-litre—the best Lagonda in the world, Phil Ridout with the blown 2-litre, and many others. Richard Forshaw arrived with the ex-Ken Wharton DB.3S Aston-Martin. We let him stay provided he parked discreetly at the end!

Members lingered until mid-afternoon in the sunshine, and a few set off to visit the museum at Beaulieu. Perhaps the event can be repeated next year, and who knows, we may attract more competitors.

ALAN ELLIOTT

Hull and East Riding Members' Notes

ALL DELIGHTED TO WELCOME ANOTHER KEEN Club visitor. This time it was that dynamic, enthusiastic, man-of-action, competition secretary John Batt, together with Sue and their two children. He combined his visit with a holiday and found a film-show and a private rally laid on for him. This turned out to be Ken's third evening jaunt. Ken had been hoping to participate with the rest of us in a Henry Coates pre-harvest frolic, but unfortunately Henry was suddenly and unexpectedly taken ill, so Ken took over the job of organising the route, having worked closely with Henry in running those great dark North Riding Rallies of the early sixties. John Broadbank decided on the pubs (he's good at that) at which to start and finish. There was a tasty meal to conclude, and it was all a reet good doo.

Scene—a quiet country crossroads. Entrant A frantically waves down B.

A Do you mind if we follow you mate?
We're not taking it seriously and answering questions but we want to make sure we get to the pub at the finish.

B Why? Haven't you got a map?

A Oh yes, Ken lent us his.

B What's the matter then?

A Well we've come from a party that started at two o'clock so we've only one pair of specs between us.

B (Noticing that the navigator bent over the borrowed map had also borrowed the driver's glasses and that these were of the lower semicircular Douglas-Home type, reading, for the purpose of) . . . and that's only half a pair! Follow me John.

This report also preserves the anonymity of the crew in question. The name is popular round here, only one of the competing cars did not have a John.

It was John Broadbank who answered most questions (he's good at that too, with a bit of help from Gill). Surprisingly, John Batt's borrowed local navigating ace was not among the awards this time. We hope the Hon. Competition Secretary and his family enjoyed their Mini-holiday North as we enjoyed their company, also John's remarks on the two new rebuilds he was taken to see.

Earlier we had had another good day at Sandtoft. VSCC member John Spencer and his crew turned up to support us, and immediately went off to a distant Rapier stranded en route. He got it in, thereby adding to his already long list of good turns done to home and away Lagonda Club members.

Henry Coates was there with his new two-seater, the lines of which are truly *d'elegance*; to such an extent that even the mascot of a silver porker seems quite comely. But what must surely be the ultimate in unique finishing touches only became apparent on a surreptitious opening of a well-fitting door, a polished new coachbuilder's plate bearing the name in bright red immaculate cursive script

"Carrosserie Cochon"

Definitely a vehicle eminently worthy of a good sympathetic home. (For the information of newer readers Henry is a farmer and pig-breeder near a village named Swine.)

Another not-to-be-forgotten sight: Herbert Schofield driving his number one pride and joy concours LG.45R with about eight of Julian Reisner's young marshals aboard. Thanks to Julian for their help and we hope that they didn't scratch the car.

Ian North competed in his L — — — — a pillarless saloon. We cannot recall who designed this particular coachwork but it must be the optimum suncar-funcar, not only pillarless but doorless too. Ian just lifted them off their hinges leaving the roof to shade him from the bright sunshine. So functional. He lent the car to another competitor who had even better times. Members may be wondering what desirable model this is with its i.f.s. and extreme manoeuvrability. Hint; it will not be found in any L — — — — — a catalogue, having a 1352 c.c. engine and being produced in Torino.

A welcome entry was Rowland Hill at last in his M.45R tourer, and another rarity was an M.45 Saloon, Brian Minshull at the wheel. In familiar two-seater, Roy Paterson wondered whether he would complete his hat-trick this third year. In fact he was driven into third place by Alan Brown in his selector special and overall winner Brian Minshull in that prim cinematic saloon. Congratulations to both.



"Hermes" Members: Back—Beardow, Paterson, Pape, Coates, Wilshire.
Front—Hoggard, North, Broadbank. Cars are Henry's Specials.

Local enthusiast Don Hoggard did not enter his eye-catching purple metallic E type Jaguar, so he spent the afternoon driving a borrowed cine camera and captured a superb sequence of Brian driving with a big smile above his beard on his way to outstanding victory. It was also a special change to record Johns Beardow and Broadbank concentrating so on a glass of water instead of the usual tankard of ale.

As always after a Sandtoft event one query remains. Why don't a few members come up from the South to join us?

In our turn we endeavour to support most events and hope that Iain Macdonald was pleased to note that our entry in his Border Rally this time had doubled. John and Gill "third last year but not so good this . . ." and Henry and Vivienne rallying again, albeit in Viv's modern Aston "we pressed on a bit coming home".

We've also had entries and spectators, though mostly the latter, at VSCC Oulton Park, Prescott, and Silverstone, also Lag/BDC Fimmere.

Overheard on Fimmere Eve—

Respected Northern Official (after night out at the Silverstone Club) I'm not competing tomorrow. I'm going to enjoy myself just spectating and taking a few photographs for the magazine.

Our members will be interested to see the new issue because whenever he was seen the RNO was in the middle of a crowd in the beer tent; he wouldn't have much change left, he certainly enjoyed himself, but the pictures must be doubtful.

Another member swears he overheard the following at signing on time.

First Bentley Driver. Not many Lagonda chaps here yet are there?

Second B.D. It's much too early for them old boy. The pubs'll only just be opening.

Ian North had a double entry with Roy Paterson to make up a Northern team with Alan Brown just for old time's sake. They did the same thing a couple of years ago. There must be a thing

about lending cars this season. They go better for the borrower!

Two points more. Many thanks to ex-Hermes Ken Painter who so generously fixed up Roy Paterson—after months of worry—with a replacement magneto. And on a medical note, Henry Coates is now much better, but regrettably has to take life more quietly.

HERMES

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Perfect Trio

Dear Sir—Re your paragraph on the “Perfect Pair of Cars” in the Summer Magazine: although not strictly a pair, or in use at the present time, perhaps the enclosed “snap” may be of interest.

My late wife and I had this trio in 1938 and I subsequently changed the Bentley and 16/80 for an M.45 tourer which I kept for twelve years: the car which probably gave me the most pleasure in all my 50 years of motoring!

On another matter: I was most interested in Mr. Speight's article on the Rapier. We had a couple of these at different times: by far the best handling small car produced before the war. But I am intrigued by the knowledge that the car was designed on the lines of a performance car yet the engine was of 1104 c.c., which put it just outside the 1100 c.c. class, where it should have had an excellent chance of success. I always understood that this was deliberate, in order to keep it out of competition? Over to Mr. Speight. The de Clifford car was modified to get it below 1100 c.c.

R. BAILLIE,

Crowborough, Sussex.

(Photo on p.22 Ed.)

Perfect Pair

Dear Sir—I meant to write to *Motor Sport* about this but was too busy. Now you give me a second chance.

I am enjoying my perfect pair already in my successful Lagonda two-seater tourer and my Citroen 1220 GS Club. The latter I regard as the most underrated everyday car of the present time. Can any reader produce an equivalent four door family saloon with comparable boot capacity and similar performance with such a modestly sized

engine and thirst? And the ride. After a full day out in the back seat with four adults up, a friend said, “Without a doubt that's the most comfortable back-seat ride I've ever had.” His own cars, admittedly not all at the same time, have included vintage and modern Bentleys, Jensen FF, and Rolls Royce. Praise indeed. And after the watercooling problems instanced in our own magazine and the sight of many cars cooling off on the hard shoulder this holiday, the GS is air-cooled. Why some enthusiast has not seized upon this Citroen engine, built it into a modern high performance special and made a name for himself in modern club racing and Motoring News, I cannot understand. I had one of the first small GS models when they first came out, changed it for the bigger engine when that was produced, and have been so enraptured by both that now my sister has a 1220 too.

Regular readers will have seen and heard more than enough about my Lag. Well it may not be a perfect car at the moment I confess, but if it were in concours condition and first rate mechanical fettle it would be.

ROY PATERSON

Cottingham, Yorkshire.

More News from the North East

Dear Sir—I am just back from a long holiday. Huge post waiting including three Lagonda items.

- (1) 1972 Trophy which somehow had not materialised at the Brown-Schofield Northern Dinner last March. I don't blame them. And thanks to John Batt and Bob Davy for taking the necessary action. Perhaps also thanks to neighbours here for being honest. The parcel was left on my front door step, I can only guess how long it had been there.
- (2) Magazine No. 80. Immediately read this from cover to cover. Noted closing date for No. 81 had already passed by.
- (3) Lagonda Club postcard soliciting copy for next issue by a date even earlier than (2) above.

It was a good motoring holiday from centres established in St. Andrew's and the Isle of Mull. Weather kind. Never saw a single Lagonda but was not in mine either. Spotted derelict remains

of a car near Ulva Ferry. Rusty chassis members on four rusted through wheels with and without 20 inch tyres, vestiges of petrol tank under drivers non-existent seat, broken steering wheel and bits of screen frame. Sizeable scuttle. Eyecatching feature was the chrome frame of the side-mounted scuttle ventilator . . . in better condition than the plating on many a last-year's modern. But my main thought on holiday was how much more enjoyable it would have been if my car had not been a 1973 saloon but rather a roomy four door tourer, or better still a full cabriolet for the odd Scottish shower, with deep seats, armrests, picnic tables, and capacious trunk on the luggage grid; preferably, say, on the LG.6 chassis.

Oh well, better forget all that. Out with the pen and burn the midnight oil.

Hoping you, sir, receive the contributions compassionately, and all power to the Editorial elbow towards your next ten years.

ROY PATERSON

Cottingham, Yorkshire.

Rapier Supercharging

Dear Sir—It's always a pleasure to see the *Lagonda Magazine*—fascinating reading and very well produced indeed.

I was interested in Geoff Speight's reference to the Emery Rapier. This was the tubular chassis car run by Paul in early post-war voiturette events, and later cannibalised to make the 4½ Duesenberg engined FI car. Paul is still very much around, preparing phenomenally fast Imps, and last year was British Champion driving Midgets—based on the American designs—on oval circuits.

I would question the Shelsley performance of the Emery Special, but VSCC members will remember its outstanding run at the co-promoted VSCC and CUAC event at Gransden Lodge, the first proper race to be held here after the war. The most interesting thing about the car was that it was the first British machine to use 2-stage supercharge.

Using a Roots type blower, efficiencies drop off markedly when the pressure differential is more than about 1 ata. across the blower. Mercedes showed how to use two blowers in series, but were very reticent about how it was done: however, the publication of Cameron Earl's report on the German GP cars immediately after the war let the cat out of the bag. The trick was to use a large primary blower feeding a smaller secondary

one, and then the engine. Paul arranged this very neatly by using a pair of chain driven cabin blowers, and fiddling the drive ratios to get an appropriate amount more out of the first stage. Ratios were settled very simply by using a pressure gauge across each stage and swapping sprockets until both were doing the same amount of work.

From the point of view of present owners, the most interesting point was that the engine ran at up to 28 psi overall boost, producing a quite indecent amount of power. I don't think it ever went on a brake, but it was capable of holding anything in the country at the time short of the 3.8 blown Alfa. Despite the obvious increase in the loads on everything, the engine internals were totally standard—Paul didn't even change the bearings, reckoning that this was an unwarranted extravagance!

I have no details of Daniel Richmond's car, but know that it was also blown at very high pressures. I gather that it was on the ragged edge of reliability, and have heard that one truly monumental blowup was thought to have been caused by pre-ignition set off by a tiny sliver of metal projecting from a spark plug thread.

The other answer to 2-stage boost is, of course, Paul Morgan's layout using a pair of primaries and one secondary. I'm sure it's heavier than the Emery answer, but it looks super.

Speaking as one of the last of the unashamed special builders, I always wonder why nobody has set about building a really effective single seat Rapier chassis in recent years. I looked one over, and came to the conclusion that a modest amount of cutting and shutting would allow a chassis frame to be produced on ERA lines—in other words, a narrow, stiff single seat frame using the original spring base, with shackles on outriggered supports. Substantial weight reduction should be possible, quite apart from the psychological advantage of driving a proper centrally seated car rather than an offset machine. I found this to be a very real advantage with the Phoenix GN, as opposed to the 2-seaters which I had raced previously, and if you want testimony from a more responsible source I suggest that you read the views expressed by one S. Moss on the offset G-Type ERA.

SANDY SKINNER
VSCC Bulletin,
6 Ruston Mews,
London W 11

LAGONDA OWNERS



It is with considerable regret that I have to announce that after many years of providing spares and servicing of Lagondas, I must now withdraw this facility. The daily work of the garage on modern cars has increased considerably, therefore I cannot continue to provide economically a service to Lagonda owners.

My grateful thanks is extended to all those in the Club for their past support. I will of course still remain a member of the Lagonda Club.

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