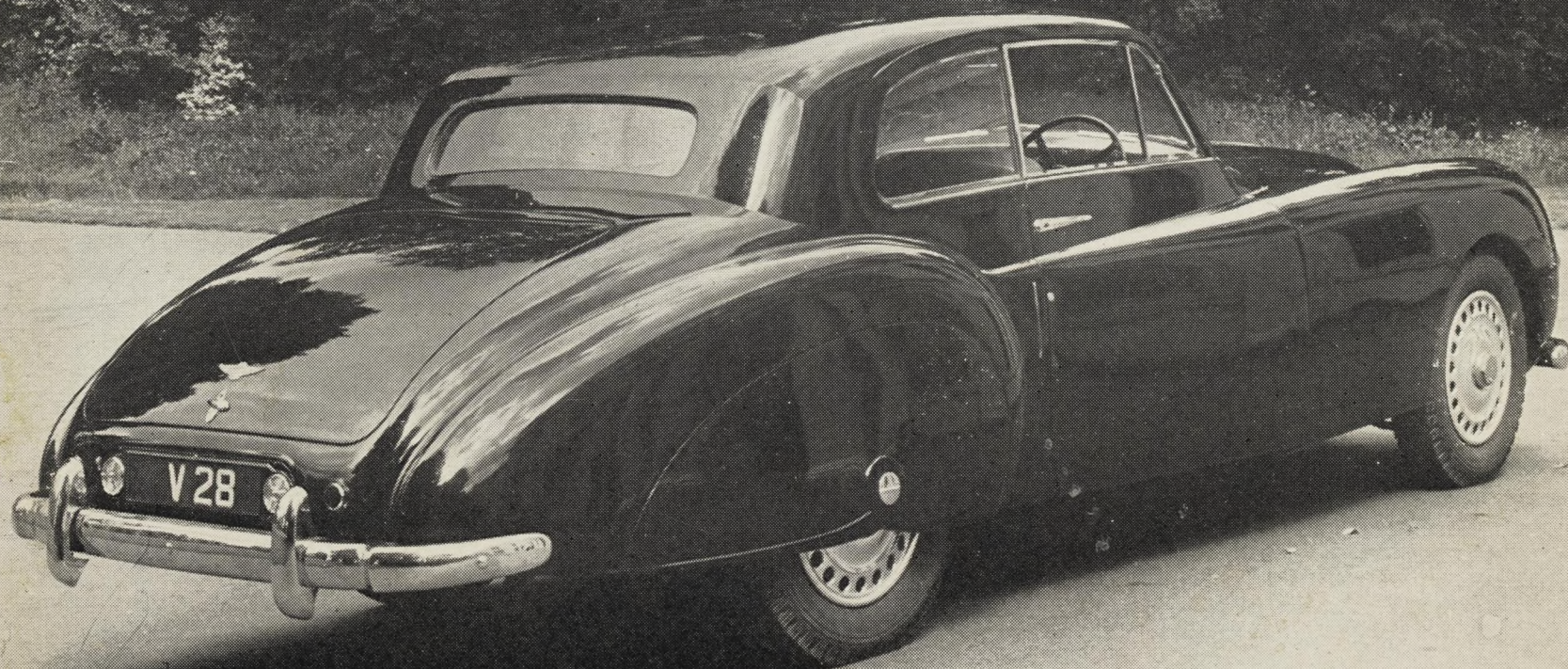




THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

Number 84 Summer 1974



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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 Lagonda with special Mulliner coachwork. Where is it now? *Photo: The Motor.*

NOTES, NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fourteen years to rebuild a 2-litre... is this a record? Its owner L. D. NICHOLS thinks that it might be. The result can be seen below when the Lagonda was used to carry his daughter, Helen, to her wedding in Harlow earlier this year. The Lagonda has a Carlton body and is a 1932 Speed Model.

* * *

The well-documented and comprehensive Road Test Report of the V.12 by MICHAEL VALENTINE apparently missed one vital accessory. CHARLES ELPHINSTONE tells us that a feather duster was available as an extra and was kept in a special pocket in the boot!

* * *

It is one thing to win a Lagonda race where all the drivers are in Lagondas; it is another thing to win an all-makes race while driving a Lagonda. To that list must be added the name of BRIAN NAYLOR in his Rapier at Oulton Park.

* * *

It is not unusual to hear of a Lagonda travelling widely in foreign parts. It must be unusual for a pair of M.45s to journey together like the two belonging to the FAMILY ROBINSON. Since buying them in Singapore they followed their owners to South Africa, Texas and are now domiciled in Alaska! Are there any Lags further north than that?

* * *

BOB CRANE sends us a very nice plaque that was given to cars attending the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Classic Car Club of America in January this year at Buck Hill Falls, P.A. The Lagonda marque was represented as usual and the plaque takes its place in the Club Album. Thanks Bob!

Photo: See opposite page.

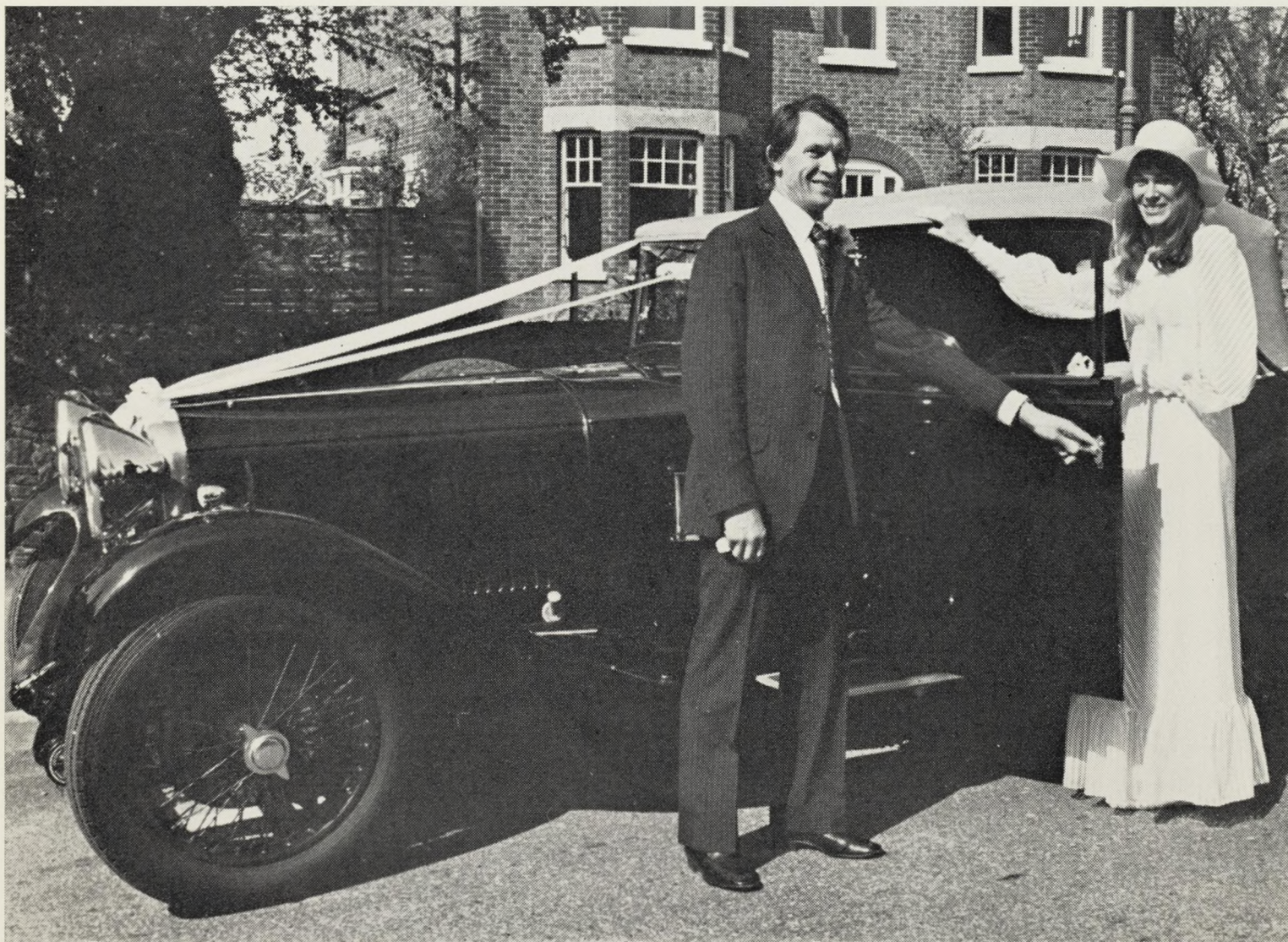


Photo: London & Essex Guardian



The Northern Dinner

March 29th, 1974

from Herb Schofield

MY APOLOGIES IN ADVANCE, BECAUSE YOU WILL have to make do with a rather hurried account of the above as the worthy member who had originally agreed to do the write-up never actually got round to it, anyway, here goes.

As usual the weather was sunny and warm as we arrived at our now traditional venue at Monk Fryston Hall, and amongst those who came in the appropriate car were Alan Brown—M.45 tourer, Alan Ogden—M.45 tourer, David Hine—Bean, Lawton Warren—2-litre, Herb Schofield—LG.45 Rapide, Brian Naylor—Rapier, and stoutest effort of all the intrepid Mike Gaber with a full load of friends from London—what a magnificent sight the car must have presented as she pulled strongly up the motorway with her sail erected! A strong contingent of southern

types apart from the Gaber (by the way, has he got back yet?) we had our social secretary Robby Hewitt coming up North for the first time to see how things are done. Nice to see our competition secretary John Batt and wife. From Henley-on-Thames, the dissipated captain, Alastair Algernon Barker and his brother Freddy who owns a Talbot, poor chap. The rest of us, some sixty all told, came from various regions of the North, we were pleased to especially welcome and to further embarrass Iain Macdonald and wife.

Following the years of adverse publicity, most members looked reasonably smart, although we did observe that someone ought to buy Macdonald a new club tie. Nice to see Doc Turner again, complete with an enormous cigar clenched between his national health choppers. Alan Brown was noticeably slimmer but just as noisy, whilst Roy 'Hermes' Paterson, looked superb in his new tweed suit. John Beardow was offering his cigarettes round (at a very reasonable price too!) whilst out in the car park many people admired Lawton Warren's 2-litre rebuild.

The drinking, as usual, started about three hours before the dinner, with the usual end result

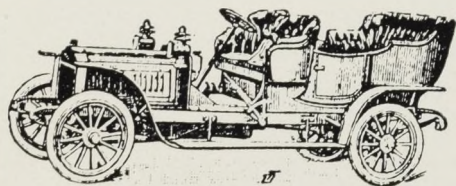
of a steady procession of people going backwards and forwards during the meal. The dinner was excellent, spoilt only by the price of the wine which we considered excessive. At 9.30 p.m. there was a loud cheer indisposed with a few raspberries, some genuine, some not, as Alan Brown, with some considerable difficulty, stood up and facing the wrong direction delivered the first speech of the evening, after a short while it became evident that he was wasting his time and he eventually sat down to thunderous applause and a few raspberries (most of them genuine!).

At this point, East Riding member Ian North, stood up from the floor of the Hall and inquired why there was only one Yorkshireman on the top table; the Northern Secretary's reply to this impertinent remark will be forwarded to any member who would really like to know, in a plain envelope.

The Northern Secretary followed, and from his copious notes thanked everyone for attending the dinner and for helping, organising, and competing in Club events during the 1973 Season. The rest of his speech (which went on for nearly half an hour) was in general, rather rude and in parts extremely so, and for this reason will not be reproduced. Prizegiving followed and this was left in the capable hands of Robbie assisted by the Northern Secretary. Most of the chaps thought it rather nice to receive a kiss as well as a cup (no, off Hewitt, you fool) but things started to go a bit far when Brown was seen approaching for his cup minus trousers. The Club's original stalker was at it again, but fortunately had covered up the front bit with a Club badge; and so the evening wore on and degenerated even more into the usual sort of Club event with odd couples dancing, dozens lounging round the bar, and a few falling asleep.

One of the great aspects of the Northern Dinner is that we literally take over the Hotel with a majority of members staying overnight, which is rather fun. David Hine was in the next bedroom to me but fortunately didn't disturb me too much as he slipped in and out of his Nazi uniform.

A great evening and we made a profit for the Club!



MIDLANDS NOTES

by Tony Wood

THE HON. MIDLANDS SEC. IS FINDING IT MORE AND more difficult to devote enough time to running the Midlands area and much regrets that he will have to throw in the towel at the next A.G.M. You will be lucky to be reading this report, really, as it is being written well past the deadline for the Summer Mag. The main reason for this is that I have been working full chat on the "Woodbatt" Special for the last few weeks to get it ready for Oulton Park—a steadily losing battle at the moment, owing to other commitments—but I *think* the car will make it. It didn't help to find, when fitting a tow bar to the Rover 2000 which will be towing hack, that some twit in the past has backed into something and bent one of the bumper supports so that nothing short of fire and brimstone will straighten it out again. It also took three hours to get the bumper off! Badly rusted bolts and a severely restricted space for a hacksaw caused the air to take on a bluish hue for most of those three hours!

Enough of the Hon. Sec's woes! On to other topics. Witt Wittridge is progressing with the rebuild of the Abbott DHC Rapier he bought last year. The engine and gearbox are now in the car but it has not run yet. The bodywork is now in red primer, but the rumour is that Witt doesn't like dealing with bodywork and shuts his eyes each time he walks beyond the scuttle. I suppose he could drive around on the bare chassis! Meanwhile his M.45 continues to give yeoman service and is an everyday motor car.

A motley collection of Lagites (UGH!) were present at VSCC Curborough in May, some competing (not in Lagondas) and others marshalling. Among the latter were the Hon. Mid. Sec. and Stuart Pettifer, who was seen at a late stage in the proceedings, gathering to his bosom a tottering pile of empty plastic cups. Now either he was being litter conscious or the Bar had run out of containers and he had a giant thirst on! Witt Wittridge, too, was marshalling but spent a cushy day in the Paddock whilst the Hon. Mid. Sec. risked life and limb making sure that all the nice racers got through the Esses without mishap. I

must admit it is definitely more interesting there than in the spectators' enclosure!

Three outings have been arranged for the summer, the first already having been held. It should be reported elsewhere in this Magazine. The other two are on Sunday 21st July and Sunday 15th September. Watch out for details in the Newsletter.

Finally, the Pub Meets are still well attended and anyone in the vicinity will be welcome. The Manor Hotel, Meriden, 2nd Tuesdays and The Gate Inn, Osgathorpe (between Ashby and Kegworth), 3rd Tuesdays.

Stop Press! Many congratulations to Berndt and Helga Andrae on the birth of a daughter. The family returns to Germany after several years in this country, in June, and we wish them all the very best for the future. The M.45 and the Club membership are being retained!

Midlands Outing

2nd June

SOMEWHAT BELATEDLY, AT THE MAY PUB MEET AT Meriden, it was agreed that it was about time the Hon. Midlands Sec. did something about arranging an outing or two for the summer season. As the turnout at the Pub was the best for some time (14 people) it seemed as good a time as any to fix something up. So that fount of knowledge of the Warwickshire countryside, Ben Martin was once more prevailed upon to suggest a suitable venue for a Sunday lunch. This year he came up with the New Inn at Wroxton, near Banbury, whose landlady had expressed interest in seeing a great pile of Lagondas in her car park. Thus it came about that on Sunday 2nd June, a pilgrimage to the New Inn took place.

The equivalent outing last year had seen only three Lagondas but this time the pile in the car park amounted to six, which was not too bad considering. Considering what? Well, to start with, the weather had decided to misbehave, and after several weeks of warm, dry conditions, it was cold, windy and showery. Ideal conditions for Lagonda-ing really!

The Mid. Sec. in his Rapier met up with the Wittridges and the M.45 and an uneventful run

was completed to the New Inn. Only two minutes after we arrived, Robin Colquhoun and family arrived in their 2-litre, having screwed it together at the last minute. Berndt Andrae was carrying his M.45s starter motor in a cardboard box on the back seat, which did not make for easy starting! He kept himself fit for most of the day by starting it on the handle. After recommending the venue, Ben and Mary Martin didn't make it on the day. Something to do with Rolls Royces, I gather. Rolls Royces? Whatever next?!

Anyway, soon there were six Lagondas in the car park and the gathering was complete. The ones not already mentioned were the Buckton V.12 saloon and the Pettifer 2-litre Continental. Despite rather protracted prior arrangements, our arrival appeared to off-put the management to some extent; the fact that we ordered the food as one big order didn't help either. Apparently, it should have been ordered table by table! The Lag Club is nothing if not different! When the food was finally sorted out it turned out to be really excellent and full value for money. The beer, although not the nectar of last year, was also very good, and gradually the gathering got noisier as the lunch wore on. Eventually, the Hon. Mid. Sec. had to do his sums (which was never a strong point) and the total amount of money was found to add up to slightly more than the bill! Whew! What a relief!

Then we all went out to the cars again, into the somewhat cool and blustery wind, and a photographic session took place. The Bucktons had to set off home straight away, but the remainder then gathered into a huddle to try and guess what the Hon. Mid. Sec. had up his sleeve for "afters". This part of the programme had been kept quiet beforehand, not to give any sense of mystery you understand, but purely because there hadn't been time to decide where to go! However, this was no problem to the inventive lot present, and after vetoing the more outlandish suggestions, it was decided to have a look at Compton Wynyates, an especially fine manor house of mainly Tudor construction, but the origins of which go back much earlier to the early 13th Century. This visit was greatly enjoyed and the conducted tour was excellent. The house is still owned by the descendants of the original family, the Comptons—now the Marquess of Northampton—and is remarkable for the unbroken line of descent since the early 13th Century.

So the outing drew to an end, and we all

returned to the car park to find envious admirers around the cars, and prepared to wend our way home. Berndt Andrae gave a final demonstration of his prowess with the starting handle, and it was all over.

The day was much enjoyed, if the remarks of the participants can be believed, and I must thank all who came along and helped make it a success, especially the representatives from the North of the area, Bill Wright and his wife, and Neil and Pat Frajbis.

TONY WOOD

The Autobiography of "LEL"

QUITE A LOT OF MY LIFE IS NOW SOMEWHAT indistinct but I will endeavour to tell you as much as I can remember. My engine and chassis were born at Newport Pagnell in 1949. As far as I can make out in 1950 I was sent with two sisters to Bournemouth to Messrs. Tice & Co. for our bodies to be added. This means I could now be unique for I have been unable to trace one of my sisters—the other is in bits among the Lag spares at Longham. We three of course were very different from those creatures which emanated from Newport. I will try and tell you some of our differences a little later.

It wasn't until 1951 that I was christened LEL 282 and went on the road. Perhaps I ought to have explained before (if you haven't already realised) I am a 2.6 DB Saloon—the last brain-child of "W.O."

I spent the first part of my life up in Yorkshire as a director's car—quite the proper thing for a lady! I was there for 18 months, then I went to the seaside for ten years. In 1963 I came to Notts where I was in Nottingham for 12 years, then to Chilwell for a few months and Bramcote for a short period.

One day in 1966 I was feeling thoroughly dejected, all my wings had huge dents, my front offside a tear about 2 ft. long, my roofing material was hanging down, my electrics had gone to pot, my door handles were sheared off, my chrome was black, my polished timber looked as though

it were rotten, my finish had been badly chipped, I was only on three cylinders, I needed a new clutch plate (to mention a few items) but worse than that my owner had to move me from where I was, as the garage (where I had to stand outside) was selling out and he now had nowhere to leave me. All round it looked as though I were destined for the breaker's yard. Then I heard of an advertisement in the local paper and one day along came a stranger. He seemed very interested in me and my hopes grew a little. He asked if he could have a ride in me—I realised I had to be on my best possible behaviour—it was perhaps my last chance. I really moved on my three cylinders—I don't know how I did it! and when asked to brake did so immediately without the slightest judder. Then the stranger asked how much and my boss replied "make me an offer otherwise I am afraid it is the breaker's yard". I could see the stranger didn't know what to say—I reckon if he had offered a fiver he would have got away with it, but I don't think he wanted to hurt my feelings and so he said £25. My boss nearly snapped his hand off. Of course I had no M.O.T. or tax, probably no insurance as well—but somehow I arrived at my new home—an old barn, but cosy and comfortable, particularly after being in the open. I soon realised that the stranger thought a lot of me—he wanted to bring back as much as possible of my pristine beauty and performance, but he didn't know very much about me—nor apparently did many motor mechanics either. I suppose with me being blueblooded only the very best mechanics knew much about me. Whilst my new guv'nor was looking around for a suitable mechanic he cleaned up my chrome which had been black (some was rusty too), his son polished my woodwork (which had looked almost rotten). I had some new door handles, my boss knocked the dents out of my wings, the wing tear was welded, I was hand cellulosed where necessary, my roofing material was replaced and my electrical gear was rectified.

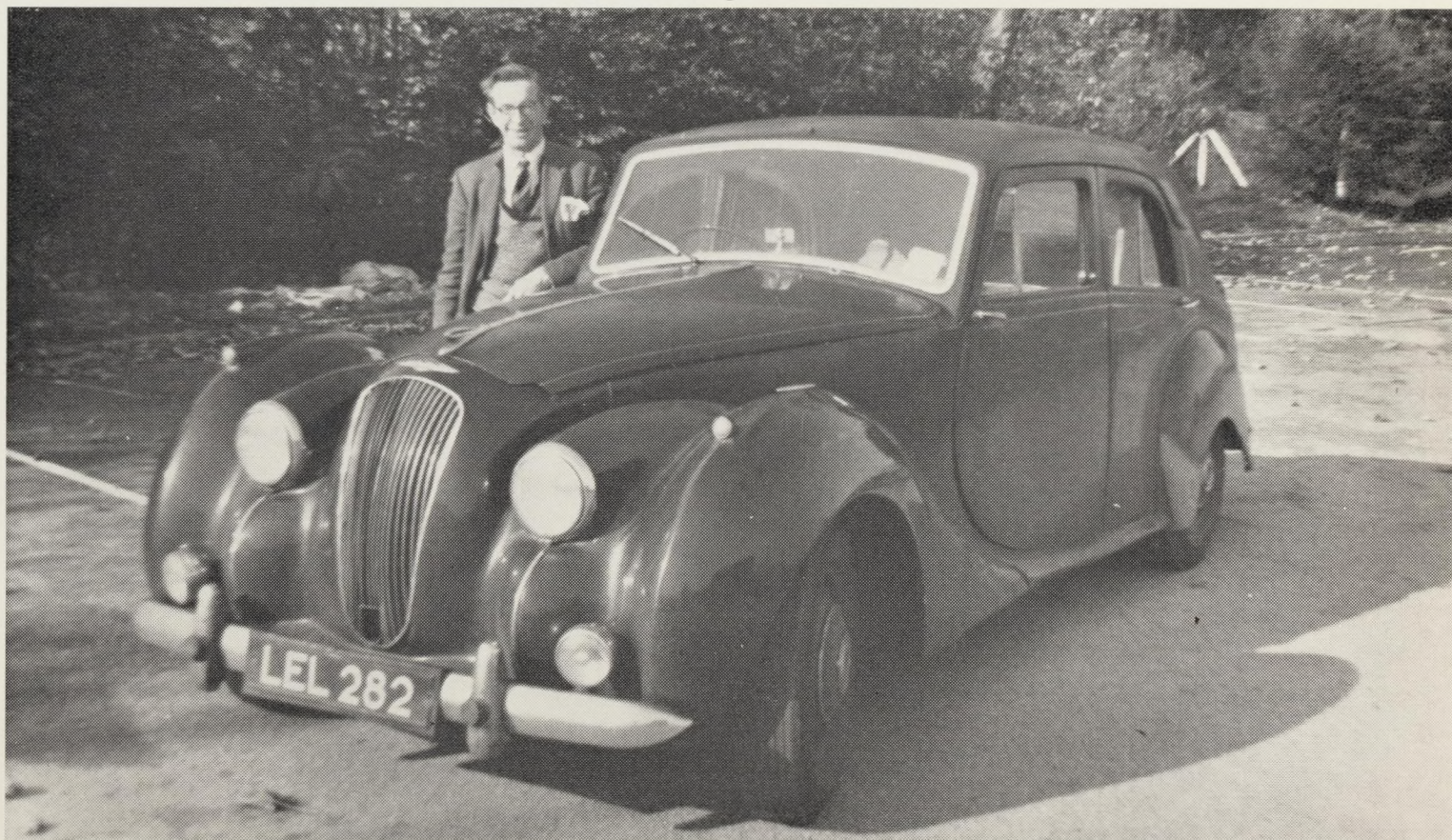
Generally I began to feel a bit smarter and a bit happier. Then along came another kind of guv'nor who was going to put me back on the road—in his day he had owned two Lagondas, a 4.5 and a 2-litre, a front wheel drive Alvis, a Brescia Bugatti, a G.N., a Talbot, M.G., Jag., Healey Silverstone, etc.—he had doctored them all and raced many of them. First of all my engine had to come out to fit the clutch plate (a bit awkward with that cruciform chassis of mine),

then my engine was taken to pieces and slowly reassembled, my small ends being remettaled. Gradually I was feeling much less jaded and more like my old self. In due course I was considered ready for the road—I wasn't by any means finished, somehow I don't think I ever shall be finally completed! Yes we managed our M.O.T. and taxed and insured I sallied forth. I could still move—but my boss, he's too scared to explore my full potentialities—he never really has let me go. The most he has let me do is 85 and I know I could do a lot more than that, because when I did that 85 I was gathering speed like mad. I reckoned in another second I should have been doing a ton and the boss was hardly touching my accelerator.

From time to time we've had problems. For a long time my exhaust made me (and everyone else—boss!) quite seedy. For a time we couldn't understand why we were getting overheated and losing power, but when Sercko cleaned out my radiator of everything bar the kitchen sink we felt a lot better. Of course, being very blue blooded I don't like going shopping and I invariably go sulky and oil my plugs or do something else really wicked, but if the boss says we are going down the motorway, well that's fine. I'm not generally awkward then. For a time we had trouble with my gear linkage but after various

endeavours to rectify a new one solved the problem. I don't know if any Club member can help me, but whilst my reverse gear works, my boss has to hold my column change lever in position, otherwise we shoot out of gear. The experts have suggested twiddling the adjusting screws on top of my gear box—but to no avail.

I had a very nasty experience one day. I was taking the boss to work quite sedately when all of a sudden out of a side road, straight over a white line came a Wolseley 15/60. He landed on my offside wing and bounced back on to my nearside wing. He made a mess of both points of contact and also smashed my bumper bar and lamps. The boss said he didn't feel a thing—I did—but I took him on to the office. They just towed the Wolseley away. Another dreadful thing happened last March—fortunately I was near home. As I was just leaving an island I lost a rear wheel and down I went wallop; it really shook me. It must have been twelve months since that wheel had been off and apparently two nuts had been tightened and three left hand-tight as two bolts had sheared and the bolt holes had worked out over the nuts. My wing caught on the road and pulled out some of the wheel arch. However we managed to get the spare wheel on (three studs anyway). Oh yes, my exhaust was in a mess as well. To help matters on, snow descen-



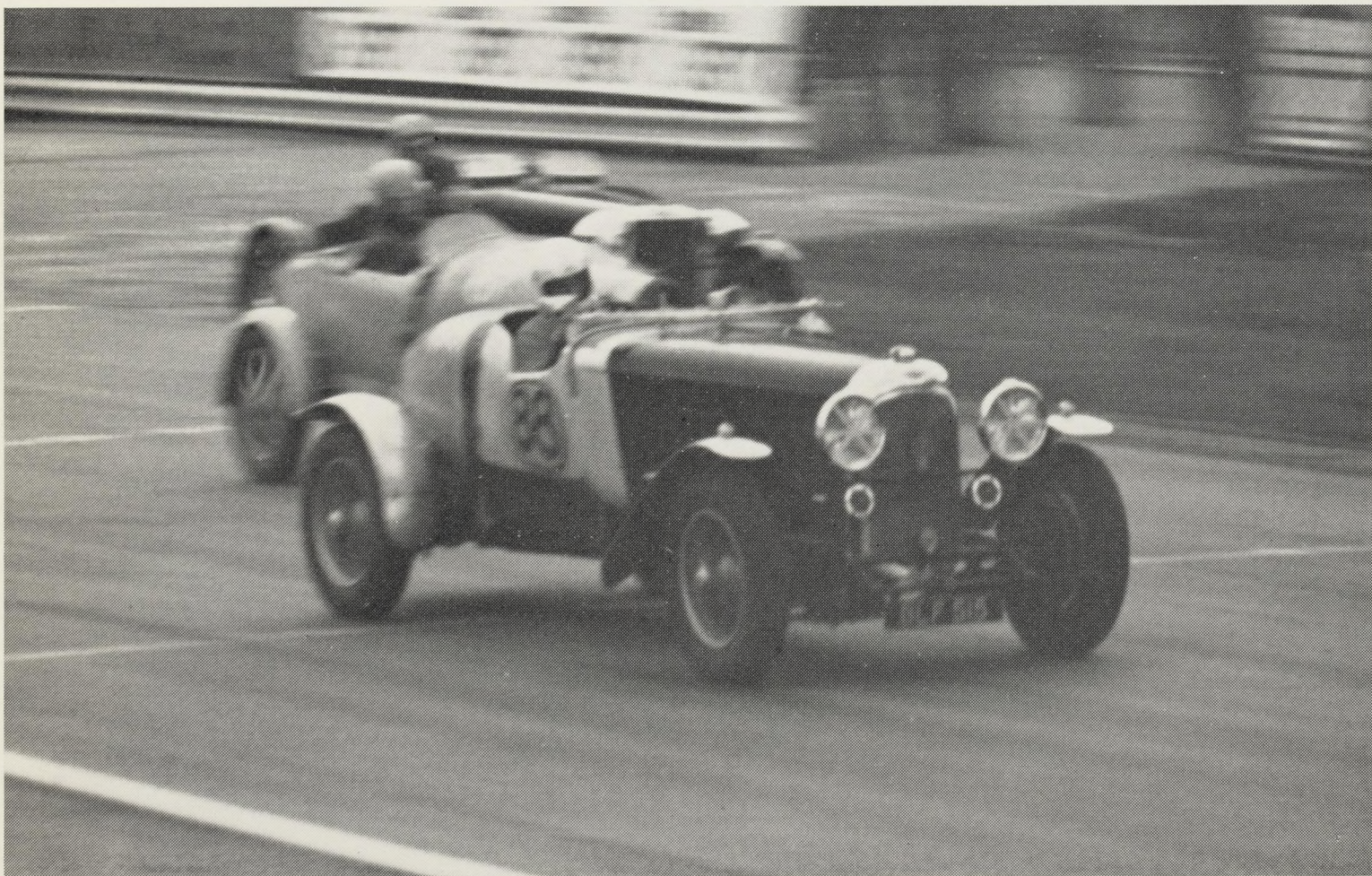
ded very rapidly, but I got my boss home. I think he was a bit worried, wondering if my rear assembly was about to collapse, with my exhaust belching forth and with snow coming down so fast it was difficult to see anything. However, we made it! The things I've done for England, home and beauty.

I almost forgot to tell you about the differences between myself and the more common types from Newport. My windscreen and rear window are different in shape. My rear window has a chrome surround—the Newport shower haven't. The rain gullies are longer and don't drip the rain on to my handles. My front door is an inch wider and my rear door an inch narrower. The metal strip between my doors is nearly twice as wide, the door hinges and quadrant fittings are different, my bonnet is of a much stronger construction, the instrument panel is different with a different layout, bonnet and boot fastenings are in a different position. Personally I think I look a lot better than the Newport girls—although I must confess I am still suffering as an aftermath of losing that wheel—my offside rear door doesn't close properly and I don't think my wheel arch

is quite right.

I haven't said anything about how I fill my time in. I reckon to take the boss to the office every day and sometimes go out on office duties except of course when I play up. We try to attend a few Lag. meetings and I am always on the lookout for my sister. But there is one thing which takes me all over the country, my bosses' son is very interested in showing dogs, a strange pursuit methinks—I suppose they are like a Concours. As he has one of the best dogs in England and America (International Show Champion and Best Gundog 1972) I am taken to championship shows all over the country. In the last few weeks I've been up to Dumfries in Scotland, to Blackpool, Paignton, Windsor, Ardingly. He also judges at these shows and on this lark I've been to Guildford and somewhere in Essex. Recently I've also taken the boss and his wife up on the Yorkshire coast for a short holiday. Wherever I go I seem to raise interest; I often have people standing in front of me and saying "She's a beauty, they don't make them like that nowadays".

That seems a good place to finish—perhaps another day I'll remember some more.



Andrew Cheyne makes his racing debut. See article opposite.

ONE MAN'S SEASON—1973

PERHAPS IT WAS WHILE HELPING MY BROTHER IN the paddock of the Spring Silverstone that I decided to have a go at racing. He had entered his side valve Aston-Martin for the first time. I seemed to be doing all the hard work split pinning those awkward nuts that the scrutineer seems to pick on, while he was getting all the fun driving round the circuit. That is until one of the Beaded Edge tyres came off on Woodcote and he had a harrowing few moments watching the rest of the field trying to avoid him as he sat stationary in the middle of the track. Perhaps it was the split pins or perhaps it was listening to him telling the story over and over again afterwards. "Peeled a bead at Woodcote old boy . . .", anyway I decided to have a go myself.

First my car. I have owned the Lagonda on and off since about 1961 and consensus of opinion is that it is a 3½-litre chassis with an M.45 4½-litre engine. Most of the bits are about 1934. The car, or special for that is what it really is, was built, I think, from an old saloon. The 4½ engine originally drove through an ENV preselector gearbox to a 4½ back axle. However, the ENV was from a smaller car and unequal to the task of transmitting the power and soon fell apart. I now have a 3½-litre gearbox with a conventional clutch mechanism in the car.

The body was substantially rebuilt by Messrs. Gilbert & Rickard a few years ago to my own design. This has been both dismissed by one of the archpriests of the VSCC as being 'rather too Brooklands don't you think', and admired by others.

So, I entered for the July Silverstone, then about three months ahead. A competition licence and a medical certificate were obtained quite simply and then I had a good look over the car. A read of the RAC Motor Sport Regulations soon convinced me I was in no shape to race, what with talk of 2-litre catch tanks and mudguards subtending angles of 120 degrees and so on. However, going through the points in detail I found I did not have to make too many changes to the car—

—A detailed check of *every* nut and bolt revealed 13 unpinned or unlocked. These, of course, needed fixing.

—A supressor is required to be fitted by the

regulations.

—The ignition switch—the standard C, M, C & M type was covered with a piece of paper and letraset letters to give a clearer ON-OFF indication.

So with a reel of sticky tape for the headlamps and a brand new crash helmet I set off to the first meeting. Determined to make full use of the practice I went up the day before. So eager not to be late, I was the first car in the paddock out of a total entry of nearly 150 cars!

Scrutineering was a very thorough affair. The spokes of each wheel were tested with the scrutineer's pipe. He ran the stem of his pipe round each wheel listening to the noise the spokes made before putting the pipe back in his mouth. Through first time and then out to practice. This is a little alarming to start with—some of the cars are very quick indeed and having a group of the fast ones on your tail as you go into one of the corners, can be rather frightening.

After a few laps I soon found that I had time to concentrate on the driving and it was really surprising to me how much difference it made going somewhere near the correct line on a corner. Getting it wrong could cost yards and getting it right could mean you get the tremendous satisfaction of overtaking the man who had just come hurtling past you on the straight. In all I managed about 20 practice laps during the various sessions and strongly recommend anyone racing for the first time to get lots of practice in.

The race itself was a five lap handicap. It passed in a whirl of noise, rubber smoke, oil and heat. I can only remember two things, firstly feeling pleased that I had out accelerated the 1938 Bentley who was starting with me and secondly, moments later, wondering why everyone was suddenly going so slowly. The race, of course, had finished and I had not noticed we were on the slowing down lap.

Encouraged by this I entered for two races at BDC Silverstone. This time massed starts which are quite something. Wall to wall Bentley radiators in the mirror and clouds of smoke in front from exhausts and spinning tyres. I was quite an old hand by this time and was sporting rather smart numbers cut from black and white Fablon—a tip graciously passed down from a Bugatti owner. I was to finish neither race however, as a water hose burst on the fourth lap of each race.

The effect of this was instantaneously and completely to obscure the vizzor of my smart

crash helmet whilst approaching Becketts rather too fast. The first time this happened I drove straight on up the Grand Prix circuit from where I watched the rest of the race and heard the announcer commenting on the Formula 1 line I had taken.

The second time this happened I left the car on the edge of the track just beyond the Becketts hairpin, while I retreated into the fields to safety until the end of the race. Just as I had left the car a driver still competing lost it completely on the hairpin and passed just outside my abandoned car—backwards—fortunately missing it by inches.

Later in the Paddock I discovered that the overflow pipe from the radiator header tank had become blocked and the water system was pressurizing to the point where a hose blew out. This is the first time I have ever heard of this happening—let alone twice in an afternoon.

The last race of my season was at Llandow in South Wales—a long drive down the M4 in the Lagonda and an overnight stay in Cardiff enabled me to get some practice early on Saturday morning. This circuit is only about a mile long and is on the site of an old airstrip. The track

itself is really bumpy. This has two effects, the first is that quite a lot of physical and mental effort is spent in trying to keep your body inside the car, and secondly the corners themselves become very exciting, for it is largely a matter of chance which, if any, of the wheels are in contact with the surface at any time so the cars tend to go around the corners in a series of hops.

The race was not good for me, though doing better than in the previous events a nasty rattle on the last lap indicated trouble. A huddle of experts in the paddock diagnosed a broken piston in about three seconds flat, and so it turned out to be and a long tow home to Welwyn Garden City completed the season.

The engine is now in bits all over the garage and already several improvements are under way for next season. I have just moved to this area and would be pleased to welcome any Lagonda enthusiasts at 8 Mardley Heights, Welwyn, Herts. Tel: Welwyn 5773.

I have really enjoyed this first season at motor racing and urge you to have a go and at least enter for the Fox and Nichol Trophy Race and the BDC meeting in 1974.

A. G. CHEYNE



Hull & East Riding Members Notes

INITIALLY,

Herbert's
Enjoyable
Repast
Made
Everyone
Smile

at the Northern Dinner. For the very first time a member from this region was on the top table. Another Northerner made a speech from the top of a table. There were more speakers than ever before, quite witty and brief. At the end of the prizegiving we uncovered an extremely well-kept secret.

Acting on the hunch that the West Pennine Syndicate of special builders must have been working on a new model, the numerous Hermes party included their undercover espionage agent Flashgun Mike just in case he could pick anything up. He did. We are delighted to be able to blow the gaff to any absentee who would like to know what the opposition will be next season. In the past they have always been frank enough about any new project they have had on the stocks, and seriously they have produced some very fine cars in their short existence. By their very silence, our hunch said that it was something very very special this time.

At about 2300 hours, in a quiet corner of dim light when nobody else was around, Flash seized his opportunity, and shot off three quick frames with his Pentax. After careful perusal thereof, our local experts guess that the basis is a 1931 chassis with modern wide boots and a stiffish suspension supporting an unusual weight distribution with rather more than average at the front. It is a tricky business for a non-technical scribe to draw an adequate word-picture of a suspension system, but he certainly knows a wishbone when he sees one, and none was visible here. Nothing revolutionary mark you, just equal length upward and downward moving elbow-jointed arms, any dampers and shock absorbers being hidden by the bodywork. We doubt whether the tank capacity will be up to the enormous thirst—three

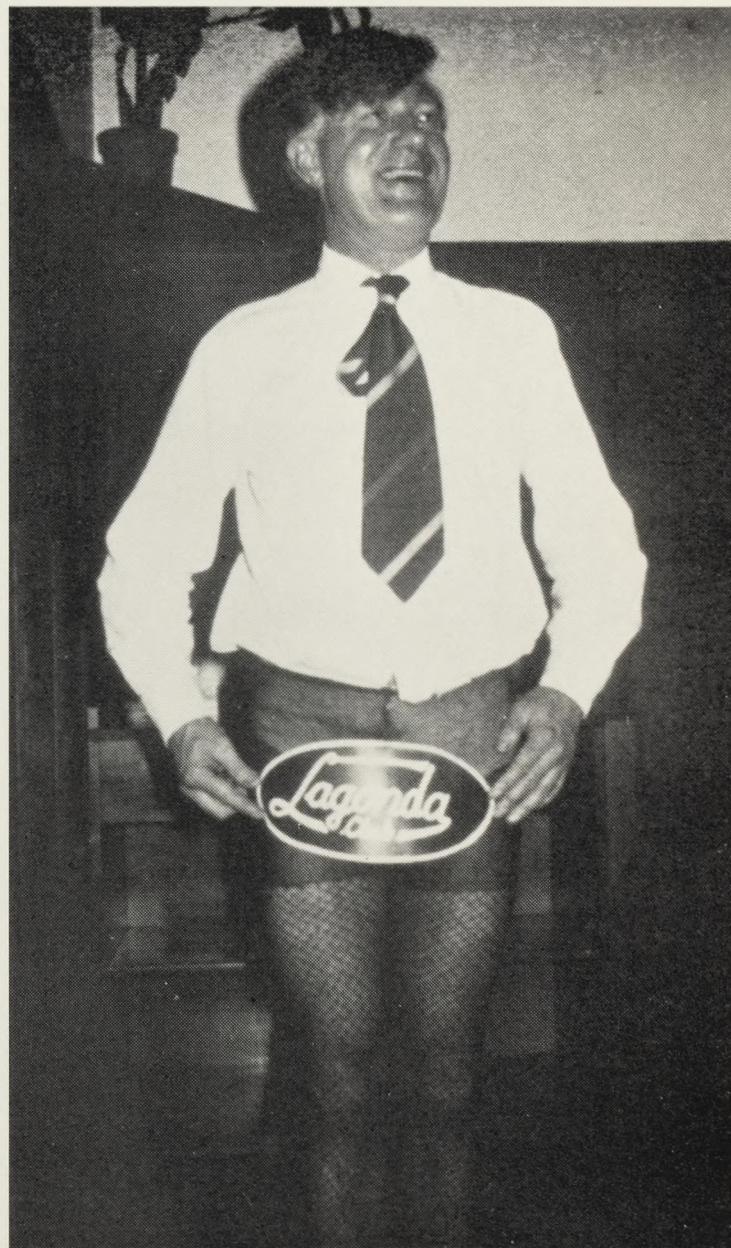
star preferred—and refrain from mentioning the number of pit stops necessary. All the Humber-siders agreed on the finish. It was indescribable. The main difference of opinion was on a relatively unimportant detail, the proportions of the well-executed front and rear Lagonda badges; some said too large, others said definitely too small.

We are certainly unanimous on one most important point, and that is in passing our hearty vote of thanks to Herbert Schofield and his aides for a Great Occasion.

Readers, incidentally, may form their own opinions on the badge diversification if they care to see below.

HERMES I

New model unveiled at the Northern Dinner.



Personalities on Parade at Oulton Park

THE WEATHER ONCE AGAIN WAS GLORIOUS FOR this meeting and enabled one to renew old friendships in other places than the bar.

It was noticeable that the "Manchester Mafia" were there in full strength if disguised, their leader with Tart Trap bedecked in flowers complete with beard, and sunglasses, posing as Danny la Rue; Alan Brown wearing trousers this time—but no shirt; David Hine posing as the Captain of the good ship Venus, Nigel Hall trying to look like the happy expectant father and convincing everybody. The new London branch of the Mafia well in evidence with Fred and Alastair Barker, and at first glance at the latter's trousers I thought the Lagonda Club were once again going to score another first, "a streaker down the straight".

During the course of the meeting I was threatened at least five times by the so-called leader of the syndicate but as usual the drink never materialised. While the syndicate were in conclave the following conversation was overheard: Robbie Hewitt, "Whose knickers are these?" Mafia boss, "I don't know, but drop them".

From early morning it was seen that high tension was developing between John Batt and Tony Wood and only a spark was needed to cause the right explosion. After practice they duelled with camshafts throughout the heat of the day. Although there were many magnificent rapier thrusts neither could perfect the timing, and there was much advancing and retarding of the opponents. By 3 p.m. with both opponents drawing blood the contest was declared a draw by the marshall, Eliot Elder.

Jonathan Abson looked most relaxed on his campbed and from the drink in his hand I thought he was doing a commercial for Sch-h-h-h you know who. I wouldn't be surprised if Fletcher-Jones has renamed Knicker Brook, Slippery Brook. Or had the syndicate been up to some devilry on his car?

Also assisting the syndicate as required was that well-known pirate of Northern Waters, Brian Minshall. The masculinity of the Royal Air Force was once again proved by Ken Painter and four children and D. C. H. Williams and his

three. It was also pleasant to chat to Alan Ogden, W. H. Golding, David Royle and Roy Paterson. And apologies to those people whose names I have omitted.

It has often been said that the social life of the Lagonda Club is equal to the competitive. This was certainly so at Sue Batt's parents after the meeting. "The pâté and beer served as one alighted from the car, this was only excelled by the dinner served afterwards". I must write to Egon Ronay and recommend the establishment. And to cap this a beautiful blonde came and sat on my lap for at least an hour. What a pity Sally is only two!

The 150 mile journey home was uneventful but I will have to learn these road signs right. "Well, I was only there for the beer." Ian North did all the driving. One dangerous moment, however, conversation as follows:

John, "Ian, the brakes are binding. Can't you smell them?"

Ian, (a slow relaxed smile spreading over his face), "By hell, that Robinson's Bitter is good." All car windows opened.

J. L. BEARDOW

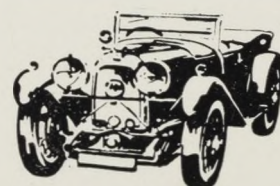
Lagonda Days

A further photograph from the collection of Mr. Arthur Thatcher of the Staines factory in the early thirties.

This view is of the Engine Department headed by the redoubtable MR. GRIFFIN. Every piece of work carried out by his staff had to pass his expert scrutiny and he took complete responsibility for all the engines the department produced.

The reliability of Lagonda engines produced at this time was largely due to him. He is seen centre right in the photo looking sternly at work being carried out on the right hand bench.

Everyone appears to be working assiduously under his command and it was thanks to the integrity of foremen such as Mr. Griffin that the company's reputation for high standards of craftsmanship was maintained.

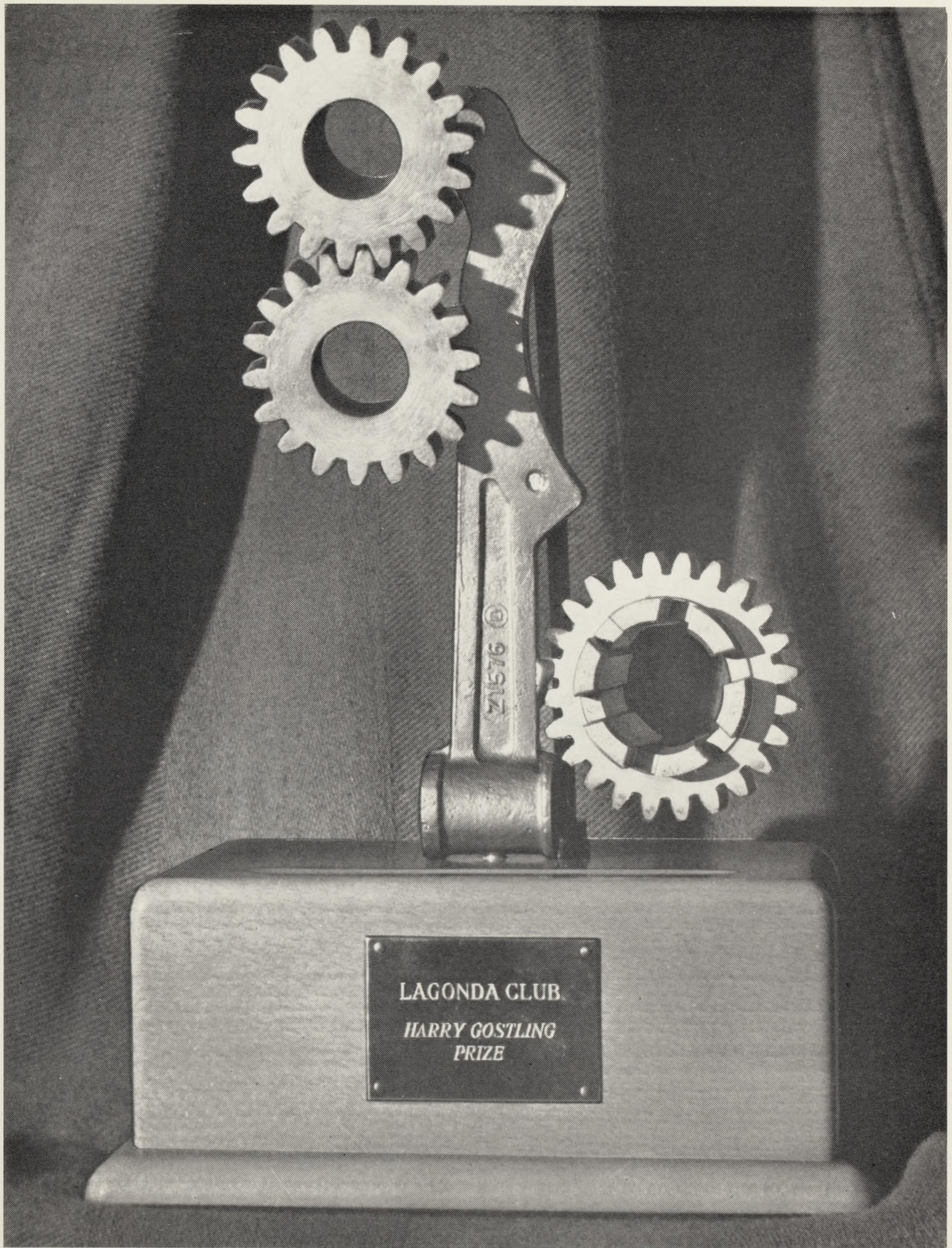






THE GOSTLING PRIZE—presented to the Club by IAN GOSTLING in memory of his brother HARRY. Manufactured from 2-litre bits and pieces and mounted handsomely on a wood plinth through the good offices of Richard Hare, it is awarded each year to the contributor of what the Editor considers to be the best article in the Lagonda magazine. The winner also receives an engraved Parker pen to keep as a memento.

* * *



A New Parker

I FOUND MY WRITE-HAND ITCHING TO USE THE pre-initialled presentation Parker pen recently awarded to me and I thought what better to show my appreciation than to offer the Editor a bang-on blow by blow report on Lagondas racing at the VSCCs April Silverstone meeting. Somehow I never contacted him in advance but I went, I saw, and now for better or worse, here is the result.

Hopes began to rise on seeing 11 Lagonda entries in the programme. Then a more detailed perusal failed to reveal the names of a few expected entrants who had won awards at last year's meeting. Next I heard that Brown, Hine, and Schofield of the Northern Lagonda Factory had recently finished re-assembling their machinery and had entered "just to get the cars run in; and Nigel's run off, to Casablanca . . . or somewhere".

B. Naylor was in event one, the high-speed trial. He was unexpectedly far back into the first corner and then, consternation, at the end of the first lap he was up into the pits. Was this trouble? Or his scheduled pit stop? He was away again and it was trouble. He completed his second lap at walking pace. Then after re-pitting, he found he could use his accelerator again. The Rapier went well and Brian quickly corrected little twitches round wet Woodcote, but failed to qualify. This set the pattern for the rest of the Lagonda results. All credit due to the drivers though for their perseverance in unpleasant conditions. It was a day of sharp showers and wet practices and bitterly cold persistent high wind. Indeed, it was reported that the medics had had to treat a marshall for exposure.

Our most consistent Lagonda driver at this circuit, if my Register of Members is still correct, must be P. B. Kingston. There is no if about the car, which is a low chassis 2-litre tourer. For a good many meetings now it has been the course car, circulating quietly and efficiently at the close of each race bearing the holder of the official white flag. It is not the most eyecatching of vintage cars but it always looks very presentable. I feel that the driver does a good job for Lagondas in this work and am pleased to extend this acknowledgement, the official programme having omitted to do so. I've been to many meetings

under other club banners where their programmed thanks list includes details of the course car(s). I trust that at future VSCC meetings we shall still see the driver doing his rounds in TF 23.

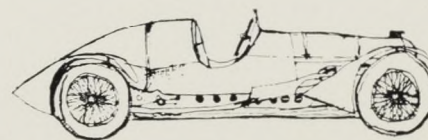
There are always other non-racing cars to be scrutinised too, they are one of the joys of attending. And here Lagondas must be on the up and up. Fourteen of them were counted in the VSCC Members' car park, with even more parked in more strategic positions for spectating or marshalling. A good show in this respect.

There was a neat show, too, by Rileys of the RM series in their close gathering. I hope our own committee will arrange something similar but better for next year to remind everyone that 40 years previously a Lagonda was first in the Le Mans 24 hour race. The committee might also decide to nominate next season's Fox and Nichol Trophy Race at Vintage Silverstone to be one of the qualifying events for our own Fox Trophy Award—yes, I consider that would be most appropriate.

During 1973 I logged over 20,000 miles of private motoring and I was always on the lookout for Lagondas, both pre-war and post-war. I doubt if I saw half a dozen. So for 1974 I am noting all that I see of the breed apart from Club and Vintage events. I have just spotted my first, near Ladybower Dam in North Derbyshire. From afar I saw this green Lagonda approaching so I pulled into the side of the road, stopped, and gave a magnificent salute as it swept impressively by. It was COX 385, an LG.45 saloon. The driver did not notice, perhaps because I was in the other of my ideal pair. COX 385 has not been in the register since 1962 so presumably the driver is a potential new member if only someone can catch up with him. And what, one wonders, will be the ratio of non-members driving our make to members driving them? The date of this first sighting happened to be 28th May . . . can anyone beat that?

The date of our first local event this season is 7th June, another Ken's Evening Jaunt but this time arranged by the Broadbanks so that Ken can compete for a change. I understand there might be 11 cars there, plus one Lagonda. Cheers.

ROY PATERSON



Great British Success in 1931 Monte Carlo Rally

**First and Fourth in Each Class
Brilliant Performances of Invicta,
Lagonda and Riley Cars. Bignan
(Fiat) First Ever to win Through
from Athens. Many Victories in Hill-
Climb and Coachwork Competition**

THE MONTE CARLO RALLY OF 1931—THE GREATEST and most strenuous reliability trial the world has ever known—was remarkable in more ways than one. To begin with, among a huge number of entries there was a very large proportion—about 30 per cent—of British drivers. Moreover, 22 British cars and two others of British design reached the finish, as against 20 French cars and nine Americans, which speaks volumes for the stamina and performance of cars from this country.

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An Epic Performance

Even more sensational is the news that, for the first time since the Rally has been held, in a matter of ten years, a competitor actually succeeded in getting to Monte Carlo from Athens by road in four days—and this in the very depths of winter. This stalwart driver was Jacques Bignan, a Rally winner on previous occasions, and his car, which stood up amazingly under appalling conditions, a 3,740 c.c. Fiat saloon.

On his way, he told us, he met terrible conditions; miles of oozy mud and very little snow made it such heavy going that non-skid chains on each wheel would barely stand up to their work for more than a few miles. In all, Bignan got through seven sets of chains between the start and finish of the Rally! His car was equipped in every conceivable manner for a cross-country journey often with no roads to follow, and in view of his epic performance in getting through at all it is extremely hard lines that he should lose an award through being just five minutes late at the Strasbourg control.

Of the eight drivers who attempted to cover the journey from Athens none except Bignan won through. André Boillot, driving a little 1,090 c.c. Peugeot, got next farthest, and did not retire until after having reached Budapest.

Under these conditions, therefore, it was inevitable that the chief prize winners in the Rally should be found amongst those who started from Stavanger, in Norway, the next farthest point to Athens—2,261 miles—thus fulfilling the forecast made a few weeks ago by *The Motor*.

The two most "fancied" men were Lord de Clifford, with a supercharged 2-litre Lagonda, and Donald Healey, with one of the new ultra-low 4½-litre Invicta sports models. The actual winner of the "big car" class (over 1,100 c.c.) in the Rally proved eventually to be Healey.

Plucky British Drivers

Both of the competitors mentioned first had endured appalling hardships in open four-seaters in typically severe Norwegian winter weather, and as the cars were both low-built sports models they were slowed down tremendously by the deep snow encountered on the narrow, bad and twisting roads between Stavanger and Oslo. They deserve the fullest possible credit for their arduous and praiseworthy efforts.

Indeed, the drivers in the little band of Englishmen and Englishwomen that won through from Stavanger were as remarkable as the cars they handled, and showed an amount of grit and perseverance that astonished the other competitors.

Take Norman Garrad, for instance, on a 3,198 c.c. Golden Crossley. After covering the first 650 miles in snow and ice, being obliged to keep on non-skid chains all the way, he had lost so much time that he had very little in hand before the intermediate controls closed. If he had arrived at any one a minute late he would have lost all hope of an award.

Leaving Brussels in a thick fog, he went off the road at a fork and shot down a steep embankment. Getting the car back on to the road he found the radiator leaking like the proverbial sieve. He had no time to effect repairs and had to stop to fill up with water every 15 miles all the way from Brussels to Monte Carlo—about 1,000 miles!

Donald Healey, too, skidded off an ice-bound road in Scandinavia, cut a telegraph pole in two and put the axles of his Invicta out of line, so that he had perforce to drive almost crabwise the

entire distance. He and his crew, in this open car, endured appalling weather, but came through smiling. For long stretches in deep snow not more than 14 m.p.h. was possible with such a low car, so one can imagine what feats of driving were required to make up time on the less difficult sections.

Mrs. Vaughan, who was driving a Riley Nine, arrived almost exhausted at the start at Stavanger, with a woman passenger. In spite of this, she set off pluckily on the Rally, earning the admiration of the other drivers for her fine sporting spirit. Unfortunately, she got into a bad skid on the ice-bound road south of Oslo, and both she and her companion had to be taken to hospital, along with the victims of six other car crashes.

Dr. van Eijk, who won the Rally in 1929, told us that all down the road he saw cars in the ditch, cars smashed beyond hope of repair and cars on their roofs with all four wheels in the air. He drove his veteran Graham-Paige, which already has some 300,000 kiloms. to its credit.

Lord de Clifford (Lagonda supercharged) and J. W. Whalley (Ford) were involved in a crash in Norway when six vehicles collided at a cross-roads all at once. The Lagonda driver succeeded in running into the piled-up snow, but Whalley was bumped between two cars and his Ford suffered considerable external damage.

Lady Eda Jardine, with two mechanics dressed like Arctic explorers, got through from Stavanger in an open Lancia-Lambda, an achievement which deserves the highest possible praise, while V. E. Leverett also had a no-trouble run from the same point in his ivory-painted Riley Nine saloon. He attributed much of his success to the fact that small cars could be driven much faster on the narrow Norwegian roads, but all who reached Monte Carlo know what driving skill, too, is needed to get a car through from such a northern point at this time of the year.

Woman Driver's Great Effort

One of the epic performances of the Rally was put up by Mme. D. Jeanne, a charming woman, who got right through from Stavanger in a 747 c.c. Rosengart, the French-built Austin Seven. When, in common with the other cars, she had to tackle the ice-bound Tronaasen Pass, she found her little saloon too highly geared, with its heavy additional load, to tackle the 1-in-4 gradient. She therefore tried to get up in reverse; but, even so, only succeeded in getting up after removing her

rear tyres, going up on the chain-shod bare rims. A single false move on one of the many acute hair-pin bends would have sent her hurtling to her death over a precipice. Those who do not know this pass can have no conception of what it means to cross over it in winter. Mme. Jeanne checked in at Monte Carlo as soon as the control opened.

The John o' Groat's Contingent

With little hope of winning unless the weather conditions were unusually severe in Northern Europe, a party of 21 competitors started for the south from John o'Groat's, facing some very real obstacles and a long and tiring run for the sheer love of the game. They encountered unusually severe conditions, for it is rare to strike much snow north of Inverness. On this occasion the road was not only under snow for almost the entire distance—some 350 miles—to Glasgow, but more was encountered on the high ground between Penrith and Scotch Corner.

Nevertheless, every car got through without the use of non-skid chains, although in the deeper snowdrifts and on particularly ice-bound slopes it was often a case of "touch and go."

Four of the starters drove small cars. These were Jack Hobbs (Riley Nine saloon). F. H. B. Samuelson (M.G. Midget coupé), D. E. M. Douglas-Morris (Triumph Seven) and F. M. Montgomery (M.G. Midget sports). They started early, for they had only to average 22 m.p.h. to Monte Carlo, as compared with the 25 m.p.h. average (including all stops) required of cars having engines of over 1,100 c.c. capacity.

An Outstanding Performance

The first away from John o'Groat's was Samuelson, accompanied by his wife, at 5 p.m. Imagine the loneliness of the Gramparians at midnight! Picture the tiny car plunging through snow-drifts, being buffeted by the blizzard, with the snow falling more thickly every moment! Yet this plucky pair blazed the trail for all the others, and, continuing, reached Glasgow before the control opened, and in due course got to Doncaster and London early enough to snatch about three hours' sleep at each. Thereafter, right across France, the little M.G. Midget, with its cosy coupé body, hummed along at a steady 50 m.p.h. or more, earning the unstinted praise of the other competitors.

Montgomery, in the other Midget, did not

start until about midnight, while the Triumph and Riley drivers also set off late. T. Craig Eaton, in a 4½-litre Bentley, preferred to allow himself plenty of time, and set off, first of the large car class, at 2.28 a.m. on Sunday, January 18th. By doing so he, of course, lost a certain number of marks for failing to keep up to the 25 m.p.h. average imposed.

He had not got very far, however, when one of his rubber non-skid bands flew wide, hooked the tip of his rear wing and pulled it right in on the tyre. When we passed him an hour later he was still hammering out the battered muguard. At 3.36 a.m. started C. S. Montague Johnstone in a six-cylinder Riley.

Next away was J. B. Bainbridge (Rolls-Royce), followed at five-minute intervals by S. C. H. Davis (Armstrong Siddeley), Norman Black (M.G. Six) and H. B. Browning (Sunbeam), in whose car *The Motor* representative was travelling. A. H. Grubb, in a tank-like sports Chenard-Walcker, set off immediately afterwards.

The remaining cars, such as A. H. Pass's Sunbeam, a trio of Talbots, a Darracq, a Lancia-Dilambda, and another Rolls-Royce, set off not much later, the last to start being Agar, in a Morris Six, who left at 8.15 a.m.

The weather was at its worst. A howling gale blew snow and sleet almost horizontally across the roads, the boisterous side wind making steering extremely difficult. Add to this the fact that it was pitch dark, and you may form some idea of what the competitors had to face. With the high wind there was grave danger of the road over the Grampians being blocked by snowdrifts. Indeed, by the time it was fully light—somewhere about 9.30 a.m.—some of the drifts at the roadside were already deep enough to bury a full-sized saloon car.

However, with the exercise of a certain amount of caution, it was possible to get along at a quite satisfactory average speed.

Not everyone chose the shorter route over the mountains, cutting out the detour via Tain, but we found it passable and looking wildly picturesque owing to the heavy snowfall. On this section Grubb skidded with great force into a bridge and bent his Chenard-Walcker rather badly. He was able to continue, however.

At Inverness we arrived dead on schedule, despite the fact that we had made no allowance for bad weather conditions. At the Station Hotel here the head waiter excelled himself, serving a

magnificent breakfast before 8 a.m. so quickly that we were off again within 10 minutes.

As we climbed towards the Grampians the snow became steadily deeper. Where the wind had caught it the surface was frozen hard and very slippery, so that corners had to be treated with a great deal of circumspection.

At Dunkeld there was again a choice of routes, for the wide main road, winding round by Perth, was a few miles longer than the narrow, hilly road through the Sma' Glen and Crieff. The latter, moreover, was more likely to be covered with snow or ice. We did not regret our choice of the Sma' Glen route, even though it did prove slippery and rather perilous, for, lovely as it is in fine weather, it took on a new beauty under a mantle of snow, and was well worth seeing.

With Browning's big Sunbeam running more sweetly every mile, we reached the Glasgow control ahead of any of the other "large" cars, and enjoyed an excellent luncheon as the guests of the ever-hospitable Royal Scottish Automobile Club. Then off again, making the most of the daylight. On the outskirts of Glasgow we overtook Douglas Morris humming steadily along in his Triumph "Little Boy Blue." J. B. Bainbridge, when leaving the city, crashed into a fast-moving motorbus and bent a stub-axle, besides damaging a wing, but he continued without much loss of time.

After Carlisle and Penrith came Brough and the snow-covered Bowes Moor, where a blizzard was blowing so hard that one could only see a short distance ahead. For a long way, as he was making use of our powerful headlights, Montgomery followed us, his M.G. Midget going wonderfully well. He arrived at the Doncaster control soon after H. B. Browning, and there we saw Mrs. Grove (16 h.p. Austin), J. Hobbs (Riley) and Samuelson (M.G. coupé). The last-named had already been there for three hours and had had a good sleep.

At the Doncaster control Capt. Edward Jackson had organized everything very nicely and dispensed hospitality with his usual cheeriness.

Very patchy weather followed. Between Doncaster and London, which we reached at 12.30 a.m., we met with rain, fog, and, at intervals, fine weather and dry roads.

In London

Quite a number of the competitors and their passengers got to London early enough to get a few hours' sleep before hurrying to Folkestone to

catch the boat. What little trouble developed during the night was mainly of an electrical nature. C. Montague Johnstone burnt out his cut-out and got a new one fitted only just in time by the Piccadilly Circus Garage. D. Willoughby Osborne, in the big Lancia had ignition trouble, T. C. Mann (Lagonda) had trouble with his lights, while H. B. Browning and his crew spent all their spare time attending to a troublesome dynamo brush. Quinet (Panhart) turned up very late, for in Penrith he took the wrong turning in a fog and got to Kendal. Thence he struggled back via Kirkby Stephen and Tebay to Brough—a hazardous enough journey, in the dark, for a Frenchman who did not know the country. Craig Eaton (Bentley) went to sleep at the wheel and hit a bank, thus damaging yet another wing.

At Folkestone about half the competitors put their cars on the Southern Railway's ferry, and they were the ones who scored, for they were landed first at Boulogne before the cars shipped at double the cost by passenger steamer. Consequently, nobody got away from the Boulogne control until about 2 p.m., and there was a great rush to try to make Rouen by daylight. As a result, the cars got spread out a great deal.

As we entered Rouen we found Black (M.G.) just in front of us, and understood that Samuel Harris (Rolls-Royce) had passed through already.

In the gathering dusk we set off, lamps blazing, down the road to Le Mans. Between Greé and Lées the road surface was so bad as to force many competitors to crawl over it in terror of broken springs.

At Alençon we had our first impression of the amazing enthusiasm which the Rally was arousing among the ordinary people in the west of France. Crowds of people, clustering at every cross-roads, excitedly called out the number of each car as it passed.

But if the people were excited at Alençon it was nothing to the reception we received at Le Mans. A crowd of several thousands had been standing for more than an hour in the Place de la République waiting to see the competitors arrive.

Hardly had we done so, however, when an official of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest rushed up to us and implored us not to stop for anything, but to drive at all speed to see M. Berthier, the secretary-general of the club at the Hotel de Paris.

A Halt for Speech-making

Fearing some calamity, we dashed off, only to

learn the true reason of the excitement. It appeared that M. Gaston Gourdeau, Under-secretary of State for Public Works and Touring, had just arrived in Le Mans and was interested in the Monte Carlo Rally, part of which was, at that very hour, passing through the city. Would *The Motor* representative please delay his departure for Nantes in order to make a speech, on behalf of the British competitors?

Consequently, soon after 9 p.m. we were ushered on to the stage in the Town Hall, all begrimed and bearded after about 40 hours' driving, and had to address several thousand people and M. Gourdeau. No sooner had we mentioned that we had come 2,000 kilometres since early the previous morning than a storm of cheering broke out. It was certainly a wonderful reception.

Having made what we hope was a fitting speech, we raced back to the car, and tore off down what must surely be one of the fastest roads in France, through La Fleche, to Nantes.

Hearing that we were going to dine at the Hotel du Saumon, the A.C. de l'Ouest had presented the hotel with umpteen Poulardes de la Flèche, a special and very succulent fowl bred in the district. These were served up as part of the menu, together with a descriptive notice, specially printed in English by the A.C.O., telling us all about the birth, upbringing, moral outlook and social standing of these paragons of Poultry! Even as late as midnight, when some of the competitors reached Le Mans, the dinner at the Hotel du Saumon appeared freshly cooked and piping hot. What is more, including wines and liqueurs, the cost worked out at under 5s. per head!

The speech-making made us rather late getting to Nantes, but we managed to get some sleep before checking in at the control and continuing to Tours, the next control. The route led all along the Loire Valley and every mile was packed with interesting sights—vast chateaux, immense castles, fine old churches and the curious dwellings, cut in the cliff face, of the cave-dwellers of the Lire Valley.

From Tours we proceeded through Viezon and Bourges to St. Pierre de Moutier, where we joined N.7, one of the famous main roads to the south. It was while waiting at a level crossing here that we learned that poor Montague Johnstone had broken a spring and had had to return to Nantes. He did not reach the finish before the

control closed. He turned up the next day.

Next we reached Lyon, the City of Innumerable Bridges, with the lights twinkling, reflected from the black waters of its twin rivers. Here we filled up with oil and petrol, dined and prepared for the last stage of the journey.

The scene at the control was indescribable. Very sportingly, the Automobile Club du Rhône allowed us to sign our log books in their presence before the control was officially opened. They kept all our books and at 9.09 p.m. every driver could snatch up his book and tear back to his waiting car. The result, needless to say, was a sort of Rugby scrum, in which those with their books fought their way through a tall, narrow doorway against a powerful inpouring stream of those who had not yet got their books.

Then there was a rush of pattering feet in the narrow street, a banging of doors, a grinding of gears, and the 60 or 70 survivors in the Rally shot off at 60 miles an hour through the tram-lined streets of Lyon!

For a time the road south might have been part of a road-racing circuit, so many cars were there and so fast did they travel. Then the inevitable spreading out began. People took wrong turnings in towns; others filled up with petrol.

At Olarge the writer took the wheel, being scheduled to drive as far as Aixen-Provence, but long before that a thick blanket of fog descended and he, being gifted by Nature with abnormal eyesight in fog, was told to continue.

Sitting here on a balcony of the Hotel de l'Hermitage at Monte Carlo, the hot sunshine pouring down out of a cloudless blue sky, it is hard to realize that only the night before we were sliding about on ice-covered corners in a thick fog!

Ice is not a thing one often meets with so far south as Aix, but ice it was, and of a particularly slippery kind. Before we realized that the white stuff on the road was frost and not lime we had had an almost too thrilling broadside skid down the mountain. After that we had to be more careful!

P. Charles Combe met with disaster on this section. His beautiful straight-eight Delage hit a tree, was completely wrecked and burst into flames and was utterly destroyed.

At Frejus, near which town Willoughby-Osborne overtook us while filling up, Browning took over from the writer and, fearing more fog on the Esterel Mountains, kept to the narrow,

twisty Corniche d'Or, between St. Raphael and Cannes. As it happened, there was no fog over the Esterel and we could quite well have taken the better road.

It was dawn when we reached Cannes: a lovely, rose-pink dawn with the sun, hot even at 7 a.m., rising out of a sea as smooth as glass, while over away to the left the snow-covered peaks of the Alps gleamed rosy in the early morning sunlight.

And so down the hill into "Monte" itself, to find bunting fluttering everywhere from flower-decked poles, all got up in honour of the Rally competitors.

Then the occupants of each car were weighed, the ballast checked, and we were sent off on the final test—acceleration over 250 metres and braking over 10 metres, with a sporting chance of going over the quayside into the sea if one brake worked more powerfully than the others. The more brakes and tyres squeaked, the more the crowd cheered. Once this test was completed we were free to go to our respective hotels and the Rally *per se* was over for another year.

The following is the complete list of placings:

OVER 1,100 C.C.

	Points
1. D. Healey, Invicta (S)	255.250
2. J. P. Wimille, Lorraine (S)	255.240
3. L. Schell, Bugatti (S)	253.260
4. Lord de Clifford, Lagonda (S)	253.110
5. Dr. J. Sprenger van Eijk, Graham-Paige (S)	252.960
6. M. Schaar, Chrysler (S)	252.880
7. J. Blaivie, Lorraine (S)	252.825
8. E. Vaumund, Buick (S)	252.820
9. A. Johansen, Ford (S)	251.990
10. J. Olsen, Overland (S)	251.470
11. P. G. Cristea, Dodge (J)	251.370
12. H. S. Hansen, Ford (S)	250.920
13. J. W. Whalley, Ford (S)	250.170
14. Lady Eda Jardine, Lancia (S)	248.180
15. J. Ripper, Praga (J)	248.020
16. N. Black, M.G. Six (JO)	247.560
17. C. A. Cochrane, Talbot (JO)	247.490
18. R. E. V. Kurz, Steyr (S)	248.020
19. D. E. Calder, Darracq (JO)	245.170
20. S. C. H. Davis, Armstrong Siddeley (JO)	244.960
21. Major D. Willoughby-Osborne, Lancia (JO)	244.950
22. C. Agar, Morris-Oxford (JO)	244.840
23. N. Garrad, Crossley (S)	244.624

24. A. H. Grubb, Chenard-Walcker (JO)	244.570
25. A. H. Pass, Sunbeam (JO) ..	243.990
26. H. B. Browning, Sunbeam (JO)	242.971
27. S. Harris, Rolls-Royce (JO) ..	242.360
28. C. S. Grant, Talbot (JO) ..	240.905
29. J. Richard, Delahaye (LW) ..	240.550
30. K. Martinkus, Oakland ..	239.838
31. J. J. Cuinet, Panhard-Lavassor (JO)	239.760
32. W. T. Townend, Talbot (JO) ..	239.560
33. T. Craig Eaton, Bentley (JO) ..	239.545
34. T. C. Mann, Lagonda (G) ..	239.491
35. J. B. Bainbridge, Rolls-Royce (JO)	236.833
36. W. Leonhardt Czn, Hispano (K)	230.756
37. M. Reboulet, Donnet (B) ..	230.540
37. G. Van Manen, Amilcar (B) ..	230.540
39. D. Marchand, Chenard-Walcker (BO)	227.000
40. T. M. Van Dorth, Willys-Knight (A)	224.820
41. Mrs. J. A. Grove, Austin (G) ..	222.090
42. C. Angeloglou, Citroen (P) ..	219.760
43. M. Harris, Harris, Leon Laisne (P)	219.268
44. Castelbarco, Talbot (M) ..	217.370

S denotes starting from Stavanger, JO from John o'Groat's, G from Glasgow, M from Milan, P from Paris, LW from Lwow, K from Koenigsberg, B from Berlin, BO from Boulogne, A from Amsterdam, J from Jassy.

CUP WINNERS

International Sporting Club Cup—D. M. Healey (Invicta).

Riviera Cup—V. E. Leverett (Riley).

"Le Journal" Challenge Trophy—D. M. Healey (Invicta).

"L'Illustration Automobile" Challenge Trophy—D. M. Healey (Invicta), J. P. Wimille (Lorraine) and L. Schell (Bugatti).

The Prince Ghika Cup—P. G. Cristea (Dodge).

The Country Club Cup—Lady Eda Jardine (Lancia).

Mediterranean Cup—Madame D. Jeanne (Rosengart).

Roumanian Automobile Cup—P. G. Cristea (Dodge).

Barclays Bank Cup—N. Black (M.G. Six).

Condamine Cup for most points in the acceleration and braking tests—T. C. Mann (Lagonda).

Norwegian A.C. Cup—D. M. Healey (Invicta).

Ford Cup—A. Johansen (Ford)

Ladies Cup—Under 1,100 c.c. Mme. Jeanne (Rosengart); over 1,100 c.c., Lady Eda Jardine (Lancia).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Spares Liaison—how it works

Dear John—I have received a copy letter addressed to Captain Ivan Forshaw and this reply is to endeavour to clarify the situation regarding the supply of spare parts.

Ivan Forshaw has provided in the past and is currently providing a new and used Lagonda spare parts service that is the envy of most of the one make car clubs. However, some of the requirements of the present club members cannot be met from the stock of used spares that he has collected over the years.

From time to time individual club members have had spare parts manufactured for their own cars and the club committee has decided that it would be worthwhile appointing someone to co-ordinate these activities to the benefit of all the members.

This effort is designed to supplement the work done by Ivan and is financed by the members with their orders. The way it works is as follows.

A member notifies the Spares Liaison Officer that he intends to arrange for the manufacture of any spare. A notice is put into the News Letter mentioning this and inviting an indication of those interested in obtaining the item and of course a notification from any other member duplicating this effort. The price is obtained from the manufacturers and the interested members *then* pay for the spare and await delivery. A small margin is built into the price to enable the club to hold a stock of some of the most popular items.

You will appreciate that due to the very large sums of money involved the spares liaison

**Copy for the Autumn Magazine
should be sent to the Editor by
September 1st. please.**

service will never be in a position to offer such items as pistons, bearing shells for the later cars, connecting rods, etc. All of which require production runs of thousands before any manufacturer is interested.

I hope this letter will clarify the position regarding the Spares Registrar, and the Spares Liaison Officer and will be very pleased to hear from you if you wish to take advantage of any of the items to be manufactured advertised in the various News Letters.

BRIAN J. HORWOOD

Mayfield, Sussex.

(The above letter was sent to an American member, Mr. John Fitzpatrick. The Committee agreed that it should appear in the Magazine as it sums up very clearly what the Spares Liaison Service is all about. Ed.)

"A Traceable V.12"

Dear Sir—the Autumn 1973 edition of the Magazine, No. 81, has reached me here in the backwoods of Australia, and I was pleased to recognise the V.12 coupé which adorns the cover, and establish its present whereabouts.

Perhaps a brief résumé of its history would be of interest. Car No. 14038, fitted with engine No. V.12/70 was ordered on the 12th May 1938, but as the purchaser, Ian Fraser-Marshall, Esq. (also referred to as the Maharaja of Janhor) of Burntshilds, Kilbarchan, required some non-standard finishes, such as unusual upholstery, black ebony interior fittings inlaid with pewter, and a crest, it was not delivered until the 23rd of June.

The service history sheet indicates very regular visits to Staines for maintenance until August 1939, understandably from then on there were no entries until December 1946, when a complete engine, gearbox, differential, brake and suspension overhaul commenced. This suggests the vehicle had been stored during the war period.

Some time during 1951 the car changed hands and was again sent to Staines for a mechanical overhaul and body modifications. The spare wheel was removed from the mudguards and relocated in the boot—which if filled quite nicely! The running boards were removed, and rear wheel pans added, modifications all in the style of the V.12 Rapide coachwork. In addition, the ebony pewter-inlaid finishes were replaced with

the standard polished walnut.

From then the car's activities remain an enigma to me until 1962, when my father placed a wanted advertisement in *Motor Sport* for a V.12 whilst on a trip to England. A solicitor in Wales offered the only reply, and he purchased the vehicle sight unseen. In fact he did not see it or learn anything of it until many months later when it landed in Sydney, and with pleasure we discovered it was 14038.

Its condition was not disappointing, but demanded mechanical and body attention before it could reside proudly in our stable, which then comprised three other V.12s, a blown 2-litre, DB 2.6 and 3-litres, and three 4.3 Alvis's.

However, in the course of time one of my father's partners, Mr. Frank Dick-Smith, came to so covet this car, and being both acquisitive and persuasive, by some means or other—certainly not financial—he prized it away from us in 1965.

Being both meticulous and thorough as well, he had it overhauled again, fitted a new hood and repainted it black, and it is indeed a very impressive automobile in fine condition.

Where is it now, the magazine asks. It is garaged some three miles from my parents' home in Sydney, but where it may journey in the future I am unsure, as Frank Dick-Smith died suddenly at about the time of the Magazine's publication, and 14038 will be looking for a new home in the near future.

MARK WHITEHEAD

New South Wales,
Australia.

(Very pleased to receive news from "Down Under" and in particular from the Whitehead family. Many thanks, Mark, for solving the question. Ed.)

News from Milwaukee

Dear Sir—For some years now I have been wanting to write to you, but what with one thing and another the time has slipped by and my good intentions were temporarily forgotten.

I want to compliment you and the other responsible persons of the Lagonda Club for your very well done News Letters, and Magazines. I look forward to receiving them, even though they reach me slightly late.

Mr. Forshaw and John Batt have been most helpful in securing parts for me in my restoration

of CPD 937 M.45R. Also Mr. Wareham has been most kind in sending me a detailed history of this M.45R which he tells me was the original "works" prototype M.45 Rapide.

Hopefully the car will be complete for the summer rallies.

My only regret with the Lagonda Club is that I do not live in England and thus cannot take part in your interesting activities. My cars are all driveable and this is what I do with them, rather than concours polishing.

Perhaps sometime I will be in England and can come to one of your activities.

Again, all thanks and best wishes for all your good work.

FRED BERNDT,
Milwaukee,
U.S.A.

To race or not to race?

Dear Sir—I always enjoy the magazine and persuing the Autumn number has prompted me to write this letter. I wonder if you would be interested in the opinions of an American Lagonda owner?

I have owned my Lagonda for almost eight years, and attended the A.G.M. in 1970 and 1971, so I am not exactly a stranger to the club nor the marque.

Nevertheless, American owners continue to be alarmed by one long-standing feature of the club, the club racing.

In the Autumn number alone, the following instances were noted of damages incurred: "ran a bearing", "collapsed piston", "run bearings", "broke his own car in the race", "run a big end", "overturned" and "damaged slightly". In addition to this, we read that one of the oldest Lagonda service garages is closing its door to Lagonda's, and rumour has it that Lagonda parts will no longer be exported, but held to satisfy the needs of English owners. Much of this consumption is a result of sheer recklessness, which is inexcusable.

I can only conclude by stating that hopefully the demand curve for classic (thoroughbred) cars is moving upward and to the right at such a pace that eventually the only people who can afford these cars will have sense enough not to deliberately abuse them.

Incidentally, I have deliberately avoided the subject of "specials" or replica bodied cars, which

I can only characterize as desecration.

I recently gave a talk on the Lagonda to the members of the New Jersey region of the Antique Automobile Club of America, the largest automobile club in the world. Few of them had ever heard of the marque! Does this feel you something?

Finally, on a more positive note, I can supply negative and/or prints of all cars which attended the 1970 and 1971 A.G.M. at cost to those who might be interested. As an example, I will supply a custom professional quality colour print suitable for professional sale or display size "24 x 38" for \$32.50, which is a 41% saving.

BRANDES S. ELITCH
New York,
U.S.A.

Reply from the Chairman

Dear Sir—The Committee is, of course, always interested in members' views; they help us to keep a finger on the pulse of the Club at large.

The Club has never presumed to dictate to its members how they should or should not use their cars: long may it remain so. Mr. Brandes is mistaken in thinking that racing is consuming "inexcusably and recklessly" a hoard of spare parts specially kept for British consumption. There are virtually no mechanical spare parts available to anyone.

Careful re-reading of the two reports quoted shows only four incidents. Our scribes have padded their articles with repetitions. White metal for bearings is readily available—no spares involved here. James Crocker's pistons are not Lagonda's, off-the-shelf "moderns" in fact! Paul Morgan's body work is 1970's vintage—not even a true replica.

It is understandable that overseas members should feel strongly that racing is using up valuable spares, but I can assure Brandes that the regular British competitors have long ago found out that they have to improvise with modern parts if they wish to continue.

Whether racing is desirable or not is, I think, a different question, but any member is free to use his Lagonda for what purpose he likes, and if that means racing and repairing it regularly rather than polishing and preserving it, then it is his right to do so.

JONATHAN ABSON
Chairman.

That "Captain" again!

Dear Sir—What a range of good Club reading in the last magazine, and what a goodly percentage of new writers! M. R. Valentine's script photos drawings, graphs and tables were surely a once-in-a-lifetime inspiration, but I feel that readers should remember that he also competes in the same car, at Finmere, for instance.

I should also like to draw the attention of your readers to notice, creeping in elsewhere, the sinister *nom-de-guerre* of ... "The Captain". Through the kindness of your columns, Sir, Ian North and I would like to remind this personage—or his ghost writer—that we were playing skittles at a certain tavern long before any of those northern builders had ever heard of it, and if this Captain does not guard his locations as a top priority military secret, the next time he and his squad try to book in, they will find it is already overflowing with enemy troops.

ROY PATERSON

Cottingham.

P.S. Nevertheless I trust, as contributors to the Magazine go, The Captain is a Regular.

Those "Specials" again

Dear Sir—Whilst digesting (very tasty) my Spring '74 Magazine I see that our Honourable Competition Secretary is at it again.

Quote "Most people agree there are far too many Specials about which are well outside the spirit of the Vintage movement!"

It will be known by only a minority of members that he is, I believe, half owner of that notorious special—the "Woodbatt". He also is the proud possessor of the last Henry Coates' special which should be seen out again later this year and to cap it all he has another mixture in his garage which is a 2-litre with a 3-litre engine.

One must presume that he thinks that his ownership of 2½ specials is well within the spirit of the *POST* Vintage movement. Although I don't recall any Lagonda or Rapier specials that are outside this spirit.

Lastly I hasten to mention that although it is a few years since I have appeared in my own Lagonda and that it may be a considerable time before I am seen again in my own car—building tandems and modern rallying, etc. keep getting into my rebuilding programme. I am still interested and occasionally venture to our local

pub meet to get an "enthusiasm" injection.

This is the best way to keep in touch with Lagondas without being too painful to pocket, family or other hobbies.

Sorry about this but had to start round two of my Anti-Batt campaign as it is nearly Loo erecting time again.

IAN D. NORTH

Keyingham,
Hull.

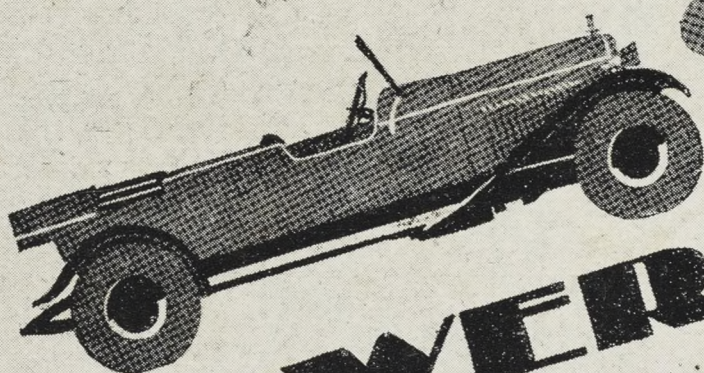
South African Veteran and Vintage Rally

Dear Sir—It may be of interest to you to know that the 15th International Veteran and Vintage Car Rally that was to have been run from Cape Town on 12th March 1974, finishing in Durban, over 1,000 miles away on 22nd March, and has, of course, been postponed for at least a year due to the fuel situation, drew entries exceeding 160 pre 1931 cars. Nearly 50 were to have come from countries outside South Africa, Rhodesia and South West Africa—Namely—U.K. (18) Argentina (16), U.S.A. (5), Australia (4)—and the rest—Canada, Germany, Guernsey, New Zealand and Kenya. The most common one-make entry was not Ford (only 22 combining "T"s and "A"s) but Bentley 2.4 and Rolls-Royce, a close third with 21. Lagonda was to have been represented by two South African entries, another 1928 of R. Blackwood-Murray and my 14/60 (engine No. OH 1097, Chassis No. 9352, original U.K. registration FF 2922). I don't know the other Lagonda, but neither appear in the latest published Club register. My car was the one chosen by John Lloyd to represent the Marque and posed for the photograph on page 143 of his book *The Worlds Veteran and Vintage Cars* (Macdonald 1960). It was there captioned as a "1927 2-litre". She is only distinguishable from the photograph of Mr. Rouse's 16/65 (Magazine No. 75) after a second glance. The coachwork differs only by the shape of the trail of the front wings—and colouring.

Maybe the Rally will be held next year—we are holding thumbs and hoping for a miracle—in the meantime there is an ambitious programme of work on the Lagonda that would otherwise have been delayed.—Best wishes for an improvement in the U.K. situation about which I am so concerned—not forgetting the World—if it lasts?

R. V. TWENTYMAN-JONES

South Africa.



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