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## The Lagonda Magazine

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#### FRONT COVER

Florian Brandt competing in the Klausenrace, see page 10.

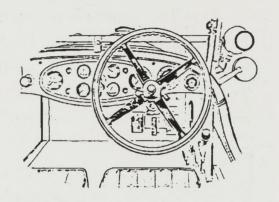
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# From the Driving Seat

by Ken Painter

IF MY MATHEMATICS ARE CORRECT, I am now starting on year sixteen as your editor. Don't get too excited, Tony May was Editor for nineteen years, so I have a long time to serve before I match his proud record. The magazine has seen many changes in the last fifteen years, we have a full colour cover and colour pictures within the magazine itself, full colour advertising, and the magazine text is now sent to the printers on computer disc. This speeds up the production process considerably, but means that your editor has only himself to blame when errors creep in! We are also able to make greater use of photographs sent directly by e-mail, or on computer disc, although some e-mail pictures are not always of the highest quality. More and more of our members now send pictures which have been scanned into their own computers and then printed by them, but it would be greatly appreciated if such contributions were made on photo quality paper only please! Some contributions are far too black in the shadows to be worthy of printing and it is a great pity when they have to be rejected.

In the last issue, I commented on some of the other Club publications that are sent to me in exchange for "The Lagonda". For some reason I completely failed to mention the splendid magazine produced by the Alvis Owners' Club. Always a good read and with a fascinating range of articles on the history of the company, stories of individual cars, or



members, excellent technical articles and with an active and enthusiastic regionally based membership, there is something for everyone in every copy. The remarkable thing though is that the magazine is produced in England, but the Editor, Julian Collins, lives and works in Singapore. Julian is now an old hand at the fine art of club magazine editing, he was the editor of the Malaysia and Singapore Vintage Car Register for 99 editions – and it was a bi-monthly magazine then. I too learned my craft on the MSVCR Magazine, but was only posted to Singapore for long enough to produce 32 editions. For much of his time in the MSVCR editorial chair, Julian produced the magazine from Sri Lanka, where he worked for many years. I take my hat off to him, in comparison I have a wonderfully easy job!

The protracted restoration of the Painter 2 litre saloon has received a very welcome 'helping hand' from David Ayre, who has recently restored a 3 litre saloon with a Weymann body. Before he painted the woodwork, he generously took dozens of digital pictures and sent them to me on CD. The finer details of the peak above the windscreen, which was missing from the skeleton I am all too slowly re-creating, are now revealed and I can see how many of my broken and rotten frame parts should fit together. All I need now is the time to get on with the work. Who ever said that retirement is a time to take things easy?

One final comment on the magazine. In these pages you will find not one, but two advertisements from LMB Racing. This is not a mistake on my part, the company have very generously elected to purchase a double helping of advertising space in each magazine, this will help us maintain and improve the quality in the future and we are very pleased to feature them in this way.

LAST DATE FOR COPY FOR THE SUMMER MAGAZINE IS . . . SATURDAY 28TH JUNE 2003 . . .

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# Friends Bid Farewell

ON A COLD AFTERNOON in late January, more than eighty friends and business colleagues of the late Roland Morgan attended St. Mary Abbots, the Parish Church of Kensington, for a Service of Thanksgiving in his memory. The bleakness of the weather outside contrasting with the warmth of feeling that emanated within the church as the large gathering was welcomed by the Reverend Gillean Craig. Appreciations were heard: one from business colleague, Ronald Jacobson, and the other from Lagonda Club member, Adrian Lead - both longstanding friends of Roland. Rosie Culmer gave the Reading.

Both Appreciations contained affectionate personal reminiscences and reflections which reminded everyone present of Roland's unique character. Somewhat larger than life and born possibly a century too late, he enjoyed life to the full. Roland relished his many friendships made through his work, his leisure interests and of course the Lagonda Club, which was well represented at the service. Amongst the Lagondas Roland owned, older members will remember the emerald-green LG6 and then more recently, his successive two 2-litres.

Generous in spirit and action, a bon viveur, lover of music and nature - Roland's sudden and unexpected death is a very sad loss for us all but not least for Joy Garbett, his close companion in recent years and to whom the Club extends its deepest sympathy.

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RESTORING THE PAST WITH ENGINEERING OF THE FUTURE

# **Hard Times**

# Ivan Forshaw reminisces on Lagondas in the period before and after the war

IN COMMON WITH most manufacturers of motor cars the Lagonda Company were always skating on thin financial ice. Perhaps they put too much work and money into the cars. although this possibly contributed to so many of the cars having survived to the present day.

By May 1935 the company was bankrupt and in the hands of the official receiver. Everything, including the huge site at Staines was extensively advertised for sale by tender. No acceptable offers having been received the company was re-floated as LG. Motors (Staines) Ltd with a capital of £250,000, £179,000 of which was said to have been already subscribed.

Presumably by the men who were in control of the new company who were, A.P. Good as Chairman, W.O. Bentley as Technical Director and R.G. Watney as Managing Director. Alan Good was a well known company doctor, Bentley was just free of his commitments to Rolls Royce, and Gordon Watney was a motor agent with showrooms in Brook Street in London's West End.

It is not known what arrangements had been made with the official receiver.

Cars of rare quality were made until the outbreak of war in September 1939.

The Lagonda Company's great capacity was immediately seen. The Service Department was moved across the river Bridge to premises opposite Arthur Dobson's showroom. Arthur Dobson drove a Works V12 Lagonda at Le Mans. The cars being built were completed and sold, and then the Works were turned over entirely to war production.

At this time I was a despatch rider,

riding from area headquarters at Woking to Bath to which city the War Office had been evacuated from London. I called at the service department and was kindly received and was given my first experience of the awesome power of the V12 engine when I was invited to accompany a car which was going out on test. In the early months of the war petrol rationing was still a distant threat.

The reception desk for the War Office was in the Pump Room and manned by a young man. He said "Where are you from?" "From Woking" I replied. Then he said "I know a good Limerick about Woking and proceeded to proclaim in a loud voice a Limerick so lewd that it has stayed in my mind to the present day, and it is not for repetition here.

A motorcyclist who could be depended upon to find his way to a destination and return in reasonable time was in demand. All road signs and means of identifying a turn or an area had been removed. An enquiry, for directions from a civilian was likely to be met with open hostility and suspicion. The fields were strewn with cars which would nowadays be thought very desirable. This was to prevent the landing of aircraft.

In a field opposite Benson airfield on the Oxford Road they were trying to sell cars which had belonged to pilots who had failed to make it. There was a very tidy 30/98 Vauxhall for £25 and could certainly have been bought for less. Oh bring back yesterday. Bid Time return.

R C Rowland had a small garage in Byfleet. He had been a regular competitor at Brooklands in a Morgan Three Wheeler. He offered me a Lagonda Rapier for £32.10.0 which was about five years of age and had been in use at the Track by the Moss family. It had been cared for by Granville Grenfell and had been supercharged by him. The dynamo had been removed and the supercharger mounted in its place driven from the back of the timing chest with the magneto in tandem. The supercharger had been taken from the car. I bought the car for £30.

Corporal Lee, who was on the permanent staff at Weybridge, had one of the 4 speed Morris Minors which could have been bought eight years previously for £100 brand new. How was it possible to make such a car for such a price? Wages for skilled craftsmen were a criminal disgrace. He was on the point of selling it to the C.S.M. for £10 but I persuaded him not to and borrowed the car from him. I also borrowed a wire tow rope when the storekeeper was otherwise engaged. I towed the Lagonda to Bournemouth with the gallant little Morris. What a car for £100! The Lagonda was steered by a colleague whose wife was living with her parents in the Bournemouth area and he was pleased to have an opportunity of visiting her. All went well until Christchurch when the Lagonda ran over the tow rope and broke it. Not an easy thing to do, I think it must have been broken before.

We put the Lagonda in a garage behind our business premises and I did not see it again for more than 6 years. I spent half the night splicing the rope together and surreptitiously returned it to the store the following day.

Contrary to popular opinion many factories made no money during the war and Lagonda was one of them, when hostilities ceased Lagonda was bankrupt once again and this time there were no angels waiting in the wings to rescue them.

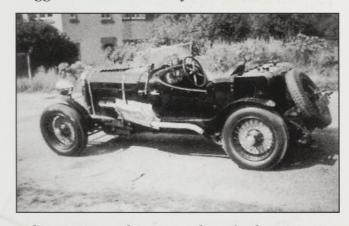
Up the road at Feltham Aston Martin were in the same desperate state.

Finally David Brown, himself a racing driver before the war, in an act of faith for which he will always be remembered bought both companies and amalgamated them as Aston Martin Lagonda making fine cars, many of which survive to this day.

After many vicissitudes of fortune, particularly after Sir David Brown's era, the Company is now owned by the Ford organisation and is apparently prosperous making cars of great quality.

The Lagonda Company was established at the very beginning of the twentieth century at the dawn of motoring and has survived the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune for more than a century.

Where next for Lagonda? Sadly after more than a century I was given to understand that the name has now been dropped by Aston Martin, but the article on our Board's recent visit to the factory suggests that this may not be true.



This is a photograph of the Rapier bought by Ivan Forshaw for £30, taken after the War. He replaced the dynamo and sold the car for £375 without difficulty. The profit very welcome to a cash-strapped ex-officer still suffering from a close encounter in the North of Italy.



# The Klausenrace

## Florian Brandt tries a hill climb that makes Prescott seem like a gentle frolic

EACH COUNTRY PRODUCES his own hero, Churchill or Moss for the UK, Kennedy or Masten Gregory for the US, Wagner or Caracciola for Germany and William Tell for Switzerland. For me, it is not clear who is the real hero, Tell, or the poor little boy who tries to survive the shot with the arrow into the apple he had to carry on his head. The Swiss saga says that he survived (not the apple).

As well as its heroes, each country produced memorable racing circuits and hill climbs. In the Swiss Alps, you start flat out between healthy green meadows and lazy looking brown-white cows. On cobblestones first to the right will be like Lavant, immediately followed Orchard, next will be a tricky Pardon, then a bumpy Stowe, a blink later, a nasty Copse. Madgwick, Beckets, again Pardon, Orchard, Pardon, a tunnel, Stowe, Pardon, St Mary's a frightful wet and oily Club, followed by Stowe and Pardon will lead again into an unlighted tunnel... The challenge is to go uphill all the time and produce a ballet with your feet and arms. It is amazing to storm more than 1237m uphill, after 21.5 Km one arrives on the Klausen Pass (1937 meters) - the air is very thin, the water hot, the carburation weak, the blood boiling and the heart pounding!

When you storm uphill the real trick is to follow only the road exactly with your eyes. You have to avoid looking left or right as it will offer the driver a most tremendous panorama of the Alps and the chance to throw your car into the air before falling 200 meters down. Listen, don't look left or right, just straight.

In 1922 the drivers had to appreciate this Swiss rule by heart. The first Klausenrace, with its 21.5 Km again for public traffic (hic!). They created a wonderful atmosphere of a very special blend: the mixture of petrol and Castrol R, gleaming eyes and the smell of high altitude farming.

But sometimes the behaviour of

"Event Management" is hard to understand, as they tried very hard to create a genuine British atmosphere and this, sadly, not only for the British competitors (mainly VSCC members). It rained during the whole weekend, dogs and cats, fog and, all over, huge puddles with oil (Castrol R!) offered all drivers the feeling of absolute liberty – on the bumpy road the car went everwhere, whatever you tried to do with the steering wheel or the spinning rear wheels.

Most cars arrived at the windy Klausenpass, they all piled up there in the rain and produced a rare sight of Swiss parking discipline! Alfa Romeo, ERA, Vauxhall, Frazer Nash, Amilcar, Salmson, Jaguar, Mercedes Benz, Auto Union, Bentley, Bugatti, Steyr, Invicta, Lagonda and many others gathered together in the damp and cold. One week later they all would have seen the first snow!

Two days before Silverstone my Lagonda LG45, FPK 7, blew its engine while testing on the German Autobahn, a long and expensive repair followed and the Klausenrace proved to be the ideal "running in" event. As usual everything went wrong days before the event, but on the track the car didn't miss a beat. During the third run I tried to save weight by throwing a wing, this led to constant water-cooling for the ambitious driver!

All in all, everything went extremely well and my three children were very proud of their father – and I was satisfied with my personal FTD under "running in" circumstances. Some others managed to be quicker, the Morgan three wheelers flew up the hill. Despite the British weather, nobody could be faster than Julian Mazjub four years ago.

The Klausenrace should be appreciated by all who love their cars moving, who love a good raincoat and who like Swiss apples too.



The LG45 receives TLC before the event



Paddock parking. Swiss style!



A fine action shot as Florian Brandt drives up the course.



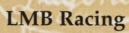
The cars line up for the start.



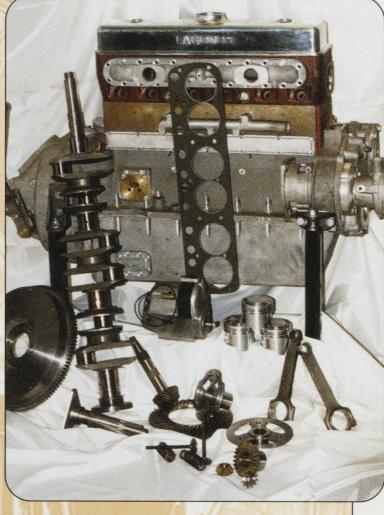
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This was e-mailed to Colin Bugler, it shows Florian Brandt and his wife, Sabine, with their children Julius, Claudius and Camilla.



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# Lagonda Personalities No. 2

# Hamish Moffatt. Michael Drakeford reflects on the life of a remarkable man

MANY WILL HAVE READ about the sad demise of Hamish Moffatt last year. Here was a man who gave much to the Lagonda club in the 1950s, and some may say enhanced our cause by his exploit with his 1923 11.9 Lagonda, PU 5800, when he crossed Africa in 1952.

I repeat below the article written by Hamish and printed in 'The Lagonda' in edition number 11 published at Christmas 1953. For those who might say that it is old hat and they remember reading it first time around, hard luck. For those that want to be amazed by a car that not only crossed the African continent, but was also nearly 30 years old at the time, read on.

Before we start the incredible journey, let us recall the man. I have noticed many asides in the Automobile, the VSCC magazine and other periodicals relating to Hamish. I cannot possibly hope to reach that personal knowledge thereby displayed. I thus start nearer home.

Looking through early copies of our magazine I stopped at the first one. It was a report on the Hog's back Regatta. It was 4th of February 1951, cold, wet and windy. Nothing changes. It was an map reading Treasurer A K Audsley won in 3hrs 25minutes: comment was made that he must have been a powerful swimmer. 20 took part. The remark was made that "Whilst they were ruminating on all this, something really unbelievable happened, for a real live Puck popped up before our very eyes, as the saying is, but after all it was only Hamish Moffatt in practically no clothes at all." The mind boggles. He had been driving PU 5800, started last, and retired from the event.

In March 1952 he of iron constitution, Hamish Moffatt is recorded as planning to celebrate his discharge from the army with a tour of half Europe. Co-drivers were sought. In the club arena a first class award was given to Hamish at the 1952 Southern rally driving Mrs Audlsey's 11.9, named Titus, registration XN 4927, and in the same car gained a silver in the MCC Lands End Trial. In 1953 Hamish was 4th in the Southern Rally.

Members that knew him recalled a man who could be very complex, outgoing yet private, one that had made up his mind about something was adamant that the task would be completed. A crash in a Ferrari in the 1980s seemed to make him even more amenable and many found him to be a very likeable and generous friend.

His interests were not confined to the Lagonda clan. He was keen on Bugattis. He owned two grand-prix cars, a type 35B and a type 35T, as well as a Brescia which he bought for £12.10s in 1952. For more ordinary motoring he had a 1928 Italian OM Tourer. He was a well respected racer and won more than 200 trophies in the 1960s and 1970s, racing his own type 35 variants and a borrowed single seat Type 35B. Sadly his first marriage was dissolved in the late 1960s and he took to living out of the back of an MGB GT in between welcome sojourns at the houses of generous friends. He distracted himself from his domestic problems by driving himself across Australia in his OM and becoming an aeroplane enthusiast.

In the early 1970s he bought a farmhouse in Herefordshire because it was said to be an ideal site for an airstrip. Set amidst beautiful English countryside it was, in fact the least suitable of places to land and take off. The ground ran up a considerable slope: there was a precipitous falling away of the land on one side, and a rising bank and a duck



Two shots of the Moffatt 11.9, taken at the Finmere Driving Tests in 1974.



pond on the other. Hamish came to admire the sang-froid of anyone flying in to visit him.

He owned a Pobjoy-engined Comper Swift, a pretty little British machine of the 1930s, but it was demanding to fly. He later owned several planes but his favourite was the 1928 American built de Havilland Gipsy Moth biplane. He was inordinately proud of the fact that its compass had originally been fitted to Amy Johnson's record breaking Gipsy Moth, Jason.

Hamish found the bureaucratic requirements of aviation tiresome, but less onerous than filling in the plethora of paper required to race at Silverstone or Oulton Park. He therefore gradually withdrew from motor racing and took to the air where he attracted some notoriety. He was reprimanded and fined by the Civil Aviation Authority for bombing vintage car friends in his local pub car park with bags of flour from his Moth. This was enjoyed by all but contrary to officialdom's view of good airmanship.

After he died on 7 June 2002, he was buried beneath the turf of his airstrip, near to his hanger, and beneath the flight path of his ducks returning home to roost.

Hamish wrote up his epic journey for 'The Bulletin' of the VSCC which was reproduced in 'The Lagonda' at Christmas 1953. With the consent of our Editor, I repeat it verbatim, as a tribute to this quite incredible feat.

#### AFRICAN ADVENTURE

"Towards the end of 1952, I was faced with the opportunity of taking my 1923, 11.9 Lagonda to Africa.

After making a few tentative enquiries for passengers and receiving negative results I decided to do the trip alone, thereby saving time and consequently expense, supporting the idiom that he who travels alone travels quickest.

In February 1951 a friend had driven his 1921, 11.8 Calcott across Kenya, Tanganyika, and the Rhodesias, and the experiences he encountered made me resolved, finances permitting, to cover as much as possible of Africa, north to south.

Four weeks were needed to prepare the car, obtain the necessary visas and endless documents, and to fit the extra petrol tanks, etc., for the Sahara. The final preparations being completed the

evening before departure.

For the technically minded the car is of 1,420 c.c. with overhead inlet and side exhaust valves, and develops 24 b.h.p. — magneto ignition and thermo-syphon cooling. A transverse leaf spring in front and quarter elliptics at the rear support a four-seater touring body. The car has original bores, bearings and big ends, the only replacements to the motor being a set of new exhaust valves and new rings. There are no front wheel brakes and no shock absorbers. The original bead-edged wheels had to be converted to well-base and the motor was stripped cleaned and carefully reassembled.

At 6.45 a.m. on Sunday 21st December, after much burning of the midnight oil, we slipped out of Hampstead with a friend who was coming as far as the airport, through the damp and deserted streets of London and

out on the A2.

At Lympne, courteous and extremely speedy service on the part of Silver City Airways authorities cleared the documents and I drove the car into the gaping jaws of a Bristol freighter. A representative of David Brown, the present manufacturers of Lagonda and Aston-Martin, arrived in a glittering DB2 to wish me bon voyage, and in twenty minutes we touched down at Le Touquet. Here was the same experience and the Lagonda was soon let loose on the roads of France.

We had to be in Marseilles by 3 p.m. the following afternoon to load the car on to the ship, which entailed driving gently for most of the intervening time. I gave the new rings about 300 miles to bed in, and then settled down to the car's comfortable cruising speed of 38 m.p.h. Endless stops for cups of black coffee during the night were followed by a change to the spare magneto at dawn, due to the points (new in London)

having burnt out. I had some nougat at Montelimar which regrettably attached itself to the steering wheel, and was alongside at Marseilles shortly after two.

We sailed at noon the following day, by which time I had purchased another

set of platinum points.

On the day over to Algiers I made the acquaintance of four members of the Italian Moretti team for the Algiers/Cape Rally, and also four Australians who were motoring overland to Kenya. We docked at 6 a.m. on Christmas Eve.

Followed Christmas Day, an extremely festive occasion with the entire Italian Moretti and Egyptian teams for the rally aboard the Lagonda, racing through Algiers from wining place to dining place. Then a desperate week obtaining more visas and trans-Sahara

permits, etc.

The first day's run to Mascara over the Atlas Mountains, was eventless except for an Arab funeral procession. At Mascara, due to a bureaucratic slip-up, I had to make a detour of some 200 miles to cash traveller's cheques. This entailed making for the Foreign Legion town of Sidi bel Abbes and then striking south to

pick up my original route.

Unfortunately there was no track in one part where I had hoped to find one, which meant making my way in the general direction by stars and compass, motoring across the desert. After five or six hours I saw in the distance a light which proved to be in the village of El Aricha. From here I was able to take a track to Berguent in Morocco, and from there pick up the route from Oudjda to Colomb Bechar, passing en route the desert memorial to General le Clerc.

On the run to Bechar a knock developed in the engine which on stripping proved to be big end trouble. The bearings are located by a small white metal dowel which in this case had sheared, causing the bearing to turn in its housing and starve itself of oil. The bearings are fed by splash lubrication. In Colomb Bechar I was lucky enough to find an old lathe and a blowlamp, and with some pieces of white metal from a scrapped truck managed to turn up an

apparently satisfactory new bearing.

In Colomb Bechar a young European asked me for a lift to Gao on the other side of the desert, to which I readily agreed. At midnight, as the New Year came in, we set off for the next oasis of Beni Abbes. Running steadily on a wellindicated track we arrived between four and five the following morning. Then through to Reganne, where there is a pretty little oasis and military post the commandant of which refused to allow us to continue until another vehicle arrived with which we could travel in convoy. After four days nothing appeared, and to our relief he told us we could depart early the following morning with the object of arriving at the military post at Bidon V. with whom he was in radio communication the same night. This was achieved quite comfortably, in spite of the fact that we had to dig ourselves out of the sand some seven or eight times. The terrain all day was entirely flat, and there was always a fairly clear indication of the way made by previous vehicles and marker drums dotted along the desert. Mirages of an uninteresting nature, were frequent.

At Reganne we had both been unfortunate to get dysentery due to the lack of all but salt water. At Reganne also we had taken on thirty-five gallons of petrol from the dump there to last us through as much as possible to Gao. In Africa one can never predict very accurately the petrol consumption, due to gradient, altitude and the nature of the surface; even humidity appears to have a

marked effect.

We decided to continue without delay and I decided to allow my passenger to drive. Unfortunately, due most likely to the fact that sandy surfaces are not easily discernable at night, he put the car into a big hole, out of which it bounced and landed on a soft mound of sand with all four wheels in the air. Excavation proved not difficult, but the front spring was broken which meant changing the spare.

Then through Tesalit to Gao, where the military entertained us in a truly French manner. Timbuktu is close at hand. My friend, Gerrit by name, now asked if he might continue with me as far as Kano.

We were now regrettably passing out of the Sahara proper. It was such an interesting place, with everything constantly and rapidly changing, from the hour by hour topography as each set of dunes or mountains unfold to the tremendous change in temperatures at sunrise and sunset, the latter being indescribable beauty.

After Niamey, Gerrit again driving, he had the misfortune to put the car into a river over quite a considerable drop. Luckily it was almost dry, and after vigorously wiping the magneto I was

able to drive it out.

However, the drop had broken the front spring and the back ones, fractured the mudguard and windscreen supports

and cracked the chassis.

The mudguards and screen supports were removed and stowed carefully in the back; blocks of wood between the axles and the chassis, firmly secured, dealt with the broken suspension, as I had no more spare springs, while a wooden splint roped into place gave strength to the chassis fracture.

As such we continued the journey, the ride over corrugations being somewhat akin to that of a pneumatic drill, but we soon found that driving slightly faster than our normal pace relieved the strain slightly as the corrugation speed was somewhat higher.

The next day a big end suddenly collapsed, number three, the replaced at Colomb Bechar, and for no reason that I can think of than bad metal. The other three bearngs were perfectly sound. In a few hours we were off again, having replaced number three with the original spare. The car now had four 1923 big ends and we felt happier.

difficulties, although troublesome, were nothing compared to the constant irritation of tyre trouble. Before leaving London, I ordered a set of 5.00 x 19 tyres. The people concerned unfortunately, due to a slip, fitted a set of 4.50 x 19, and by the time I received them there was no time to have them

changed. I think these tyres must have been just insufficient to support the weight of the car, as the internal fibres were constantly working loose, causing abrasive pressures. On reaching Kano the score was twenty seven punctures and one burst. Another harassing difficulty at this stage was the way that a seam in the radiator kept on opening due to there being absolutely no suspension at the front.

On the evening of Saturday 10th January, we arrived in Kano., completely covered in dust and sand, made our way to the European hotel and had an extremely welcome bath and cooked

meal.

I stayed in Kano a week, watching the Rally come through, looking around the district and repairing the springs, etc., of the car. I met the Australians again, who had taken the Haggar route without mishap except petrol pump trouble. The Lagonda had taken three days less to arrive in Kano than both the Australians or the Rally, the latter of course having to keep to a schedule.

While Kano in I made acquaintance of Captain Hill, a B.O.A.C pilot, who very kindly arranged to collect and subsequently deliver to me in Nairobi another spare connecting rod and big end from England, to replace that

already used.

Gerrit, my companion, had various irregularities in his papers, and asked if I would take him over the border into Equatoria, where he would find his nearest consulate.

A good run through Maiduguri and Fort Lamy, passing en route countless flamingos and crossing one ferry. After Fort Lamy we came across a considerable amount of wild life, including two herds of elephant and innumerable smaller beasts, panthers and leopards etc. We also had the misfortune to hit a skunk, which 'stayed' for a day or two.

Just before Fort Archambault the surface of the track became appalling, causing the three wheel studs on the nearside rear brake drum to snap. The wheel raced ahead of the car, which took on a very down-at-the-heel appearance. The cure for this was to remove the break

drum, knock out the old studs, bolt the wheel to the brake drum with some bolts I had with me, and, without the hub cap, replace the whole unit and do up the half-shaft lock nut.

After Fort Archambault, Gerrit made his departure, and I went on through Fort Crampel to Bambari, where I again met the Australians. Shortly before Bambari, extremely kind American missionaries put me up for the night, providing interest great entertainment with their local stories.

After Bambari, I had a spot of bother with some natives, and again while in the village of Oubangui-Chari stopped at a mission village. Here a native requested a lift to another village some eighty miles away. We had not been driving for twenty minutes when he led me off to a mud hut where he said we would find beer. With slight misgivings and visions of the warm fermented mealie beer that the natives brew, I entered to find some bottles of a very good brand of Dutch Pilsener.

We continued a now somewhat erratic course. and shortly magnificent Negro dressed in a loin cloth and my duffie coat, as the night was chilly, halted me at a small native village. Here we went into one of the circular mud huts again and sat down to a sumptuous meal of stewed antelope, sweet potatoes, rice and sweetened milk.

With some sadness I dropped this splendid man in his home village and gave him a pullover as a parting present, bringing tears of delight to his large

round eyes.

Crossing the River Bombu at Bangassou brought us to the Belgian Congo. The ferry there is made up of a raft capable of holding a large lorry, which is secured transversely to eight long canoes hollowed out of tree trunks. The natives sit in he stern of these canoes paddling with long pointed paddles, chanting the while to a big drum made from a hollowed out log. In the bows stand natives steering with long poles that reach the bottom. The crossing takes twenty-five minutes.

In the Congo I again broke a front spring and had to resort to a block of

wood, which again caused radiator trouble. This time I came across a native village at dusk, removed the radiator, heated up a tyre lever in their fire, and by using battery acid, as a cleaning agent, and a small piece of solder that I had on board, managed to effect a good repair: soldering pieces of an old oil can on to the split.

The Congo, like the Sahara, is quite the most fascinating territory to pass through, with its exotic vegetation and flowers, brilliantly coloured birds and its many and very different native tribes. In the Congo also, I felt the pleasure of accepting the kindness of numerous

We passed through Bondo, Buta and Paulis, with the car going extremely well, to Mombasa, in pygmy country. Between Mombasa and Beni there is an extremely narrow and twisty ninety-mile track, so much so that it is only one-way traffic: that leaving Mombasa having to wait until after 6 p.m. I passed along the track in a really thundery, black and menacing tropical night, with the jungle meeting in a high arch overhead through which the moon occasionally filtered. I think I enjoyed that night's run more than any other.

After Beni, through the Albert National Park to the Uganda border post on the foothills of Ruwenzori mountains. According to local legend there are only sixty days in the year when it is clear enough to see the top of this glaciated snow-capped mountain situated so close

to the Equator.

Just before Mbarara something rather extraordinary happened. The same wheel came off again for the same reason, raced ahead of the car down the length of the headlight beam and almost hit a lion standing in the middle of the road. This was the one and only lion I saw on the whole trip, and he regarded my wheel in the same way that a very small kitten might look at a very large ball of wool. Fortunately it bounded off into the scrub, leaving me petrified in the car. I was not carrying any arms as it involves so much extra red tape at the customs and various frontiers and being in an open car I felt a little vulnerable.

After an age I plucked up courage to go and collect the wheel but could not find the hub cap, which being vintage and rather beautiful I did not want to be without, so I curled up in the bottom of the car, firmly clasping a tyre lever, to wait for the light of dawn, when I effected the same repair and continued

towards Kampala.

A Jowett Javelin saloon went through the Uganda-Kenya border post at Busia just ahead of me. I met this car twenty minutes later, completely overturned on its back off the road; the driver, having crawled through one of the broken windows, was standing, bleeding and somewhat dejected, gazing at the loose rear wheel that caused the trouble. We attached a rope to a chassis member of the Jowett and the front axle of the Lagonda and rolled it back on to its four wheels. Very little work soon made it serviceable, and we continued in convoy to the next town.

Shortly after Kakamega, now a ghost town where gold mining once boomed, I again stayed with a missionary, made the more enjoyable by the fact that his wife

held a culinary degree.

On Tuesday, 3rd February, we had a very good run into Nairobi along what was for the most part an excellent road, and having crossed the Equator for the third time since being in British East Africa, on this occasion near Molo at

nearly 9,000 feet.

The puncture score at Nairobi was fifty-seven, the purchase of two new Goodyears being an excellent investment, as they gave no trouble all the way to Cape Town. I spent a week in Nairobi looking round the district, working on the car, buying tyres and visiting friends, and again met Captain Hill, who, true to his word, turned up with my con-rod. I also made the acquaintance of two Dutchmen and one Italian who had come from Europe, overland the former in an army lorry, the latter on a motor scooter, which he had however loaded on a lorry for the Sahara crossing. While in Nairobi it was very pleasant to come across some vintage machinery again, including a fine 3-litre Bentley and a blown 1759 Alfa-Romeo, also an extremely elegant and pristine Phantom 1 tourer.

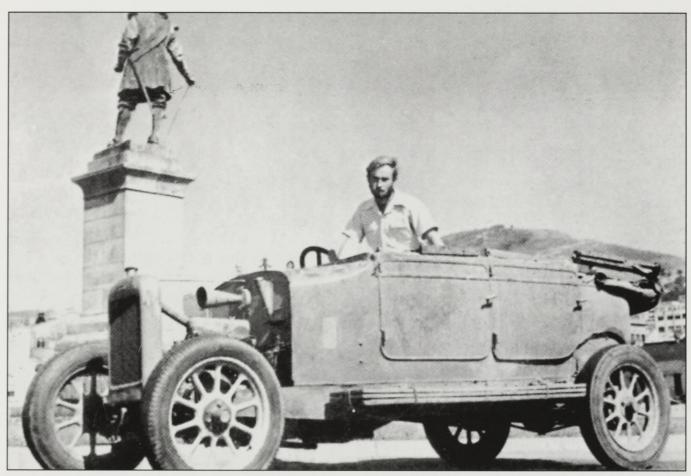
The first day's run after Nairobi to Babati in Tanganyika produced various forms of wild life: giraffe, bucks and wildebeest grazing fairly close to the road, comparatively unruffled by the car.

I filled up at Babati, having climbed the Pinnear heights, came to a barrier where I had to drive the car into a large wooden shed to be sprayed for tsetse fly. Then through the delightful village of Kondoa Irangi to Dodoma, where I stayed for two days at the kindness of Dr. John Robson and his wife, a fellow member of the V.S.C.C. An amusing time was had in a P.W.D. yard there sorting out a spot of spring trouble when a touring film unit took some photos of the car and a native who was driving a tractor. The native, 4ft 6 in. in bare feet and the most enormous straw hat, immediately demanded higher pay as a film star.

And so to the very lovely Southern Highlands province of Tanganyika, through Iranga, over the M'mporotos at 9,700 feet down to the customs at Mbeya. I arrived at Mbeya at dusk and decided to continue to the border post of Northern Rhodesia at Tunduma, 71 miles distant, where there was a small rest-house,

before turning in.

As I drew up in the darkness outside this rest-house, a man framed in the light of the doorway said "Hey, there is a car out here nearly as old as yours". A small avalanche produced Paul Fawcett, the owner of the aforementioned 1921 and previous Calcott my daily England. companion in We previously met some five months earlier while both on holiday in Marseilles. He had no idea I was in Africa, and I was fully thinking that he was in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. The Calcott was some miles down the road in Nyasaland, the magneto having burned out, and Paul was on his way with two friends from Abercorn, where he was temporarily living, to collect it in a lorry. As our routes crossed at Tunduma it was quite extraordinary that we both appeared on precisely the same day, and it is with but few regrets that I say that four of us dried up the beer stocks of that rest-house that



Hamish Moffatt and his 11.9 pause by the statue of Van Riebeck with Table Mountain in the background. Photo reproduced from 'The Lagonda', Summer 1953.



Hamish in his Gypsey Moth. Photo courtesy of 'The Daily Telegraph'.

evening.

The next morning we drove to where the Calcott was stranded and fitted my spare magneto to it. What a meeting! How marvellous to have together again after exactly two years and one day two cars and two people previously inseparable, and in the middle of Africa. We motored back to Abercorn, 150 miles away, together just as of old on the roads of England, quite an unforgettable run. We got bogged at a river crossing, but some nearby natives hauled us out.

I spent a very delightful ten days at Abercorn, at the foot of lake Tanganyika, while Paul finished his work there, and we then crossed Northern Rhodesia together. The rains were now in full spate in the Rhodesias, causing much havoc to the earth roads. I went over the most appalling bump which yet again broke the front spring. The chassis landed heavily on the track rod, which being fairly solid, and unable to articulate vertically, broke the offside track arm. Fortunately I had a spare, which was replaced, and I reset the toein adjustment, in the most appalling thunderstorm.

Shortly after Kapiri Mposhi the Calcott landed in a steep rut which broke the main oil pipe from the pump, losing all its oil before Paul realised it. We did not have sufficient spare oil, so the Lagonda took the Calcott in tow to Broked Hill, where a repair was effected. In Broken Hill the next day we met Michael Stafford with a very beautiful

1928 Morris Cowley.

At Kifiri Bridge, the old Waterloo Bridge across the Thames, we parted: Paul to return to Salisbury, myself to continue through Livingstone and to the Victoria Falls. As I watched the pretty little two-seater Calcott disappear down the road I could not help wondering under what conditions and where the two cars would meet next. The falls are certainly not to be missed by anyone within striking distance. I was lucky to see them really raging due to the current heavy rains.

Some miles outside Bulawayo I came across a modern American car with petrol pump trouble, which the Lagonda towed into a garage there.

Over the border at Beit Bridge to the good roads of South Africa and an uneventful run to Johannesburg, where the Automobile Association of South Africa entertained me for a day.

After Johannesburg the road to Cape Town is all tarmac, providing good fast motoring. People came past who had read about the Lagonda in the Johannesburg newspapers, were handing me bunches of fruit and newspapers while on the move. All through South Africa I met extreme kindness and hospitality. On the last morning of the trip I had to forsake the car for the first time and hitch-hike fifty miles through the Karroo to get a new tube.

At the top of the Du Toits Kloof, with fifty miles to go, I met some people with a welcome crate of beer, and at the bottom some representatives of the Mobiloil firm of South Africa.

Over the last few miles down a magnificent dual carriageway I let the car out just to see if it was still capable of its normal performance. The engine rose steadily in the revs. with that healthy edge to the exhaust note telling of a motor basically good at heart.

Drifted around the Van Riebeek statue, still with wooden suspension, and, with 12,500 miles in six weeks' actual driving, pulled up outside the Automobile Association offices, seemingly all too soon.

\* \* \*

Thus ended a great adventure. I wonder how many would dare to do the same trip today. The fear of breakdown did not seem to exist, knowing that the car was rugged and of relatively simple construction. Using the same tracks and roads, some would prefer this Lagonda to any small modern. As for Hamish, he appeared to appreciate not only the car, but the people he met, the wildlife and flora, and most of all Africa. His sense of daring and adventure never really left him. What an enthusiast.

# S.P.C.C.C. Ronald Press can't turn a good car down

(Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Classic Cars)

WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL QUIRK or other ingredient is involved in the make-up of a classic car enthusiast is an imponderable, which, I suppose, will never be adequately explained. My wife takes a rational view of cars, unlike me, and believes that our modern whizzomobile, with a host of gizmos to cater for just about every creature comfort, is all that one could wish for. Experiences during my early years might just point to factors influencing my outlook.

My first ride in a motor vehicle was, when I was a baby just a few weeks old being transported home with my mother, in the sidecar of an outfit owned by my father in 1933. I had been born a week or two earlier than expected when my parents were visiting relatives. Perhaps the rush of air, the sound of the engine, or the smell of exhaust fumes, somehow infiltrated my immature brain.

Way back in the nineteen thirties my parents, my brother and sister and I lived in a lovely old thatched cottage at Wroughton near Swindon in Wiltshire and during the late nineteen thirties the sound of racing motorcycle engines could be heard at weekends from our garden. A grass-track existed then on the edge of the South Downs quite close to the village. Motorcycles raced round a torturous route including a climb through a valley with steep banks from which the action could be viewed. It was a great treat to be taken to the race meetings by my father and the sight and sound and the smell of racing fuel has lingered with me, and, in my opinion, exerted an influence over which I have limited powers of control. Unfortunately this wonderful circuit had to be closed due to the advent of the 1939-45 war and the need for the building of a muchneeded aerodrome.

It was not until I had completed National Service that I was able to buy my first car, a 1932 Austin 7.What a revelation! The freedom that owning a car gave one was truly amazing!

From the first days of Austin 7 ownership to the present time my interest in cars has never wavered. All sorts of interesting machinery and motoring experiences have come and gone but, with advancing years, it seemed only sensible to decide upon a particular classic car model and then to stick to it. Eventually I acquired a Jensen Mk 111 CV8 which needed some T.L.C. to bring it back to something of its former glory.

Refurbishment was started with terrific enthusiasm but, like all classic car renovations, times come when little progress can be made for one reason or another. It was during one of these 'little or no progress' periods that my resolve wavered and I found myself suffering from withdrawal symptoms and a driveable classic was needed and so a 3 litre Reliant Scimitar was purchased which provided enjoyable classic driving until the Jensen was fit for the road. The Scimitar was then passed on to my eldest son who also appears to suffer from some sort of inner compulsion to dabble with classic machinery. With the passing of the Scimitar I thought that my need for classic motoring would be met and the wonderful roar of a V 8 helped to keep me happy for quite some time but I hadn't bargained for fate to prove



There is something about Lagondas that appeals to people, whether it is the styling, the fine engineering or the quality of the coachwork. Whichever it is it certainly attracted me, I have owned and enjoyed Lagondas for forty years. This company was founded because of them and our long established team of craftsmen and engineers have now restored over 700 motor cars in our Staindrop workshops (not all of them Lagondas!)

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me wrong.

Our local garage was run for many years by Ned Needham, a mechanic of the old school, who has an interest in classic cars, has owned many interesting machines over the years consequently built up a wealth of knowledge. He has proved to be invaluable in helping me to sort out Jensen re-commissioning problems but unfortunately for me he is one of those characters who somehow just smells out the whereabouts of intriguing motors and one just has to try to 'turn a deaf ear' when yet another tasty sounding motor is mentioned and which languishes unloved, somewhere in a dark, damp, shed or barn and just needs the owner to allow it to change hands and move to a caring home.

During one of my visits to Ned's garage he just dropped into the conversation the fact that he knew of an unusual classic car which was for sale because of the death of the owner. I just knew that I ought to have stopped Ned from volunteering any more information but somehow just hadn't the willpower

to 'cut and run'.

Ned explained that the car in question was a Series 1 three litre Lagonda drophead coupe with a power hood. It was manufactured in 1954, the owner had bought it in 1956 when operating as a bookie and had used it to travel to race meetings. At a later stage the owner ran a hotel and the car became neglected, eventually being stored by relatives when he retired.

During the year 2000, the owner, who was in his eighties, decided to send the car to an auction and got as far as filling in the necessary forms but died before the car could be sold. His widow wanted the car to be disposed of but didn't want to be involved personally with the sale.

I tried to be sensible and strong and make it as clear as possible that I really didn't wish to get involved with yet another classic needing T.LC. but somehow my mouth didn't respond to

common sense and by the time I'd left Ned's garage, arrangements were being made to move the Lagonda to his garage so I could have a serious look.

As I'd never owned a Lagonda before I thought that some research was necessary and, after making several phone calls, was pointed towards Aston Service, Dorset, as I learnt that the company owns the Lagonda factory records and has access to some club records. Simon of the Aston garage kindly went through factory records and reported that, as far as he was able to determine, 57 Series 1 cars were made including 12 convertibles of which just four had power hoods:

July 1954 Chassis Number 30 - In New Zealand (owned by club member).

July 1954 Chassis Number 57 - in Dorset (owned by club member)

Sept. 1954 Chassis Number 60 - fate unknown.

Oct. 1954 Chassis Number 61-the car I was researching.

The Lagonda was moved to Ned's garage; the flowing lines of the Tickford bodywork hooked me, S.P.C.C.C. thoughts entered my head, so eventually a deal was struck and Ned and I set about assessing rebuild needs and parts. We also checked sourcing carefully some old hand-written bills which came with the car from Aston Service Dorset and came to conclusion that the last serious attempt to get the car back on the road had been in the seventies or early eighties but for some reason or other it never made it.

Ned informed me that he was intending to close his garage permanently in about four months time and so I decided that it was best to attempt all major mechanical tasks whilst full garage services and equipment were available locally. Many hours of intense activity were put in and heartening progress made, until, when the engine was run up to operating temperature, a cracked cylinder head was discovered. Was this the reason why re-commissioning was abandoned many years ago?



The newcomer on the day of delivery, hiding a multitude of headaches.



Power hood working and being observed by a neighbour.



MOT 30 Nov 02. Success at last! Ned on the left and Ronald on the right.



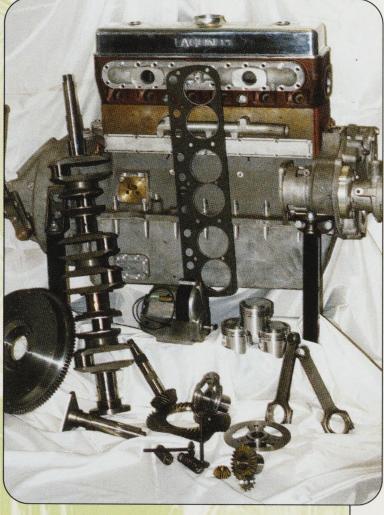
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Ready for its first MOT, which it failed.



The missing car, found on the Internet.

The car was transported back to my home as it was occupying much-needed garage space and I set about trying to find a second hand cylinder head. For once the gods smiled on me and a second hand cylinder head was obtained from Mr. Christiansen, who advertised in the Lagonda Club newsletter that he had spares for sale. The precious cylinder head was placed in the hands of a specialist for a complete rebuild including bronze exhaust valve guides. When the work was completed a car transporter was hired once again and the car moved back to Ned's garage. I do believe that my neighbours thought that a classic which only moves when a car transporter is available isn't much fun.

Once again really serious effort was put in and the Lagonda was presented for an M.O.T. but failed the test due to a rear brake defect which was a surprise as the braking system had been overhauled and all parts renewed as were thought

necessary.

As Ned's garage was due to close for good in a couple of weeks there was nothing for it but to have the car driven to my house and then to look for clues as to what had caused an 'impossible' problem after so much careful work

After the closure of Ned's garage we were able to get together to try to come up with a logical or even inspirational cause and Ned discovered that, even when the foot brake was released, there was still pressure at the offside rear wheel. Then something happened when the engine was ticking over at its operating temperature; the exhaust started to belch thick white fumes, so dense that I couldn't see my next door neighbour's house and I heard the sound of the hasty shutting of windows.

It was pretty obvious that brake fluid was passing through the system via a faulty servo, an item which had been retro-fitted, as I understand Series 1 cars didn't have servos. A reconditioned Jaguar servo was fitted which should help to stop such a heavy car.

There are moments, as all members

of the S.P.C.C.C. will know, when resolve, above the call of duty, is needed and at this point in the restoration I wondered whether there are nervesteadying pills especially for classic car enthusiasts when a first M.O.T. is desperately needed.

The crucial day came at last and Ned drove the car off to the M.O.T. testing station and I followed after waiting for a discrete period and arrived to find Ned beaming from ear to ear as an M.O.T. had

been obtained at last!!

Visions of driving along leafy lanes in the sun began to enter my brain but the 'old girl' was about to spring another surprise. Ned reported that the clutch wasn't all that happy and so it was decided to fit a new one, get the power hood and Jackall systems working and then, hopefully, sun-lit leafy lanes would welcome a true classic.

Many hours were spent accomplishing these tasks and heady driving visions flitted through my 'classically' punch-drunk mind but once again I found that a Lagonda can stretch one's T.L.C. type of resolve to and beyond the limit as a mysterious popping started through the new exhaust system and suggested that perhaps an air leak or some other obscure electrical problem had arisen.

After much head- scratching, the cause could not be readily determined and so I decided to lock the car away and recharge my own batteries. I picked up the phone, booked a ferry and four days later my wife and I arrived in France for a three week tour with our We really did need a caravannette change especially as I believe that my wife thought that it was time for me to move into the Lagonda's garage on a permanent basis. The trip was very enjoyable but the great god of the Classic Car World gave me a gentle hint that I still had work to do back home. During one of our cross-country drives I glanced into my rear- view mirror and noted that I was being followed by a convoy of three Triumph TR6 sports cars.

On my return to England, after a couple of weeks of 'doing my duty', I was able to consider classic car matters again but my Jensen had to be first to receive some T.L.C. as the Jensen Owners' Club was organising a rally to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the production of the first CV8 and it was hoped that 40 owners would bring their cars to Burghley House. It was a memorable event and 30 cars turned up, the largest gathering of CV8's ever. The English weather was really grotty in the morning which influenced the total number of cars attending, but the sun made a feeble attempt to come out as the afternoon wore on.

After some happy Jensening I thought that it was high time I started to re-orientate my brain and bring the Lagonda brand back into focus. I decided to spend an hour or so trawling through internet web pages suddenly my eyes picked out advertisement from Germany http://www.brinkert.classic driver.com which listed a 1955 Lagonda 3 litre DHC for sale and the text claimed that it was the only car with hydraulic hood! Three photos showed a maroon car and it was quite clearly a Series 1 model. Could this be the missing fourth car I wondered and was the advertiser labouring under a misapprehension? There was no way of knowing immediately. SO after composing myself, I continued with my trawling and happily waded through dozens of 'Lagonda' web pages when my heart missed several beats as right in front of my eyes was an advertisement for a 1954 Lagonda 3.0 DHC on http://www.car classic.com/CY28.HTM. On clicking on to the small photographic images for an enlarged view it became clear that I was looking at the same car I'd been viewing previously. The text also volunteered the information that the car had been fully restored after spending ten years in a museum.

One of the photographic images displayed showed a clear view of the

chassis plate and was easily readable. To my utter amazement the chassis number was 60! What a find! This was definitely the missing car!

Now that the fourth power-hooded car had been located I thought that it would be worth asking Simon in Dorset if he could delve into the factory records once again and, after a few days of waiting, they duly arrived and listed the first owner as The Hon. Peter Ward followed by a Mr.E.F.Sopp. Some vehicles are just meant to survive as at a mileage of only 2441 some serious accident repairs were carried including the front end of the chassis frame being straightened and by 1959 a new engine block was required, together with many other major mechanical components, at a total mileage of 50885. The last entry for work done at the factory was dated 24.3.60 and one wonders where the car has been for the past 42 years and how it got to Germany.

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# Letters

Dear Mr Painter

How wonderful to see my photograph in volume 193 of "The Lagonda" (page 5). I know my driver thinks maturity gives me a certain attraction, but I keep telling him how beautiful I was in my younger days.

I think the photograph was taken just after the 1939-1945 war, when I had received rejuvenation treatment - I am sure that in my younger days, my side lights would have been larger, and eyebrows would have been fitted over my side windows. My driver acquired me after completing national service in 1961 and our forty plus years together have been most pleasurable. He did at one stage acquire an eight cylinder Railton, whilst changing my king pins, but quickly returned me to my number one status.

A small cosmetic surge in the 1970's got me shimmying and coughing rather, but your recent correspondence has finally taught my driver that modern exhaust cams require my valves to open together longer and that messing about with my shims between front axle and

springs was not a good idea!

Unfortunately, I suffer from amnesia and my pre-1947 activities are forgotten and any person who can recall my presence between 1931 and 1947 should kindly let me know what I was doing. I have in my possession a letter from Zenith Carburettors referring to my present carburettors being given to me by a Mr Hewitt of Prestatyn in 1938, and this is the only indication I have of my early life.

You must admit, we little saloons

can still catch the eye.

Yours respectfully

for and on behalf of Geoff Clark-Monks (C12) VU 7775 Dear Ken.

Wheel Shimmy:

One's eyes begin to become misted over by these contributions. even if not by the phenomenon itself. The master himself. Brian Morgan. gives further insight in his original 1957 book on restoration. On steering connections he

savs:

"When tightening the ball-cups onto the ball-pins see that, in their final position, the balls have only a minimum of movement against the pressure springs. The movement should have a fixed stop the length of which should be adjusted so that not more than 0.010 in. of movement against the spring is allowed. The springs have two purposes, one to take up wear and out-of-round in the ball-pins and the other to introduce a small amount of friction into the steering system. Cars which are not so fitted with spring loading in the steering connections and occasionally those which are so fitted, are prone to lowspeed front-wheel wobble, particularly if they have been fitted with larger and heavier tyres and wheels than those originally supplied. The cure for this is either to increase the spring pressure in the steering connections or to introduce some small amount of friction into the system by other means. The weight of the car is sometimes carried on ball thrust races in the king-pin assemblies. If these are replaced by plain thrust washers or if a steering damper is fitted, the low-speed wobble can generally be eliminated. Reducing the castor angle will also tend to diminish the tendency to wobble. Be perfectly certain, of course, that the ballpin is free to turn in its housing and does not jam at any point."

No snippet of sound advice should be overlooked when trying to eliminate

this tiresome bother.

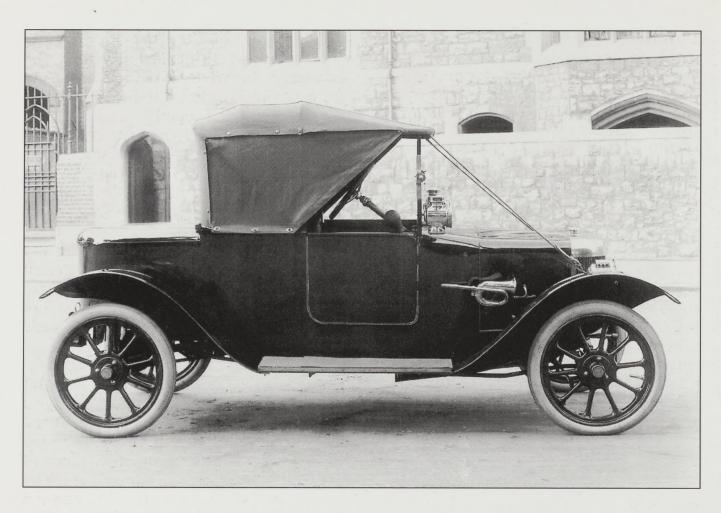
Yours sincerely.

Mike Pilgrim

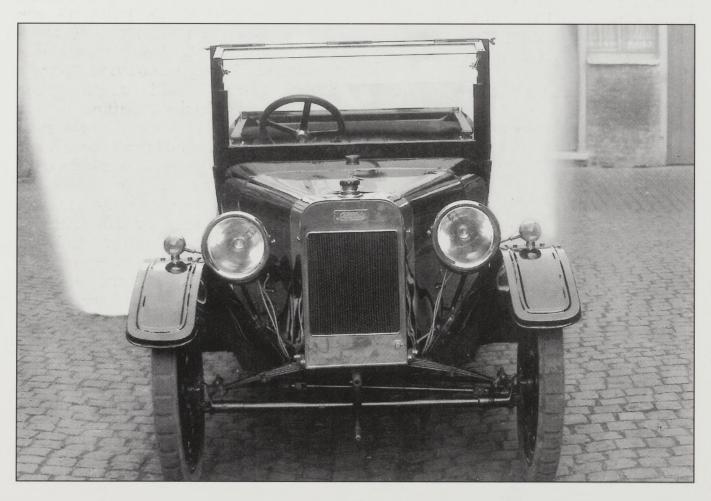


See the letters from Arnold Davey on Page 37.





 $More\ pictures\ from\ Arnold,\ see\ his\ letter\ opposite.$ 



Dear Ken,

I do love a good puzzle and the attached photograph will do for April.

It came to me from John Warburton, the VSCC's Bulletin editor, who got it from a member who had bought a bundle of photos at an auction and passed on the ones he didn't want. There is no information at all on the back, but some of the others have come from the late T.A.S.O. Mathieson, so this might have as well.

With a watchmaker's glass on the original, the event is the Coupe Internationale des Alpes, but irritatingly, the second half of the date is obscured by the 2 Litre's dumb iron. If we assume it is prewar, and the clothes suggest this, the rally ended at San Remo, which is confirmed by the marshals' armbands being in Italian. Now the only prewar Lagonda entrants for this rally that we know of are:- 1932 No.56 Mike Couper in JH 2463, which had long wings No. 4 A. Grosch in a 3 Litre

1934 No. 8 A.E.Dobell in an M45 Rapide So it is clearly none of these.

There was a postwar entry we know nothing of, J. Frye in 1949. We don't know what model he drove and I have always assumed a DB 2.6 as any prewar car would have been a little slow by then.

The car's number plate in the photo is unreadable, even in the original picture and may not even be British, and couple this to the absence of a tax disc, I begin to wonder if the Lagonda was foreign owned. If so, this might explain why prewar motoring journals would have ignored it.

Can any member throw any light? The car is a low chassis 2 Litre, possibly blown, since it has the diamond stoneguard although this was a popular addition to any model and the radiator cap is the unblown type. It carries a very early AA badge, plus a forest of other badges, including an RAC full member's badge and one with a black eagle on a shield which might be the ADAC.

Please assist a poor Registrar trying to file this nostalgic picture.

Regards,

**Arnold Davey** 

Dear Ken.

I enclose three prints from the twelve photos we have recently acquired from Bryan Goodman. I felt all twelve would be a touch repetitive, as some are hood up/hood down but otherwise identical. All are 1914 11.1 HP Lagondas.

The young lady is driving the 1914 version of the original coupe, which you will note has been fitted with electric lighting. The coupe has a rigid windscreen frame with an opening top pane and also the doors have external handles. There is no indication where this picture was taken, but I rather suspect this is Runnymede, only a mile or so from the works.

The profile view is of the "twoseater", first introduced in 1914 and a bit cheaper than the coupe. The windscreen folds back at the top and as a result the front of the hood has to have those very Edwardian straps to hold it in place at the Eleven's breathtaking top speed. The doors have only internal handles and the driver has to be something of a contortionist to see anything to the side when the hood is up. I haven't any knowledge where this photo was taken, either, but most of the twelve were in this location and I fancy it is outside St.Paul's School in Hammersmith Rd, just up the road from Tollemache & Griffin.

Having said they are all 1914 cars, the head-on shot isn't. I can't prove it but I am pretty sure this is LW 6295, the only 11.1 to have a flat radiator. It was the works development car for the 11.9 and was extensively used by Bill Oates in trials. "The Autocar" borrowed it for an extensive test, written up in the issue of 8th May 1920. As the front axle was shackled at both ends, the steering was a trifle approximate until a Panhard rod was introduced in 1919. This can be seen in the picture, as can the pressed steel wings replacing the flat section prewar ones. Electric lighting had become standard. This picture was taken in the yard at 195 Hammersmith Rd and two men have held up a white sheet behind the car to obscure the background and

then waved it about to put it out of focus. This same sheet featured in works photos for the next twenty years, by which time it had become a pale shade of grey.

We are indebted to Bryan Goodman for making these pictures available to us and the club has now bought the 10" x 8" glass negatives to add to our archives.

Regards,

**Arnold Davey** 

Dear Ken,

When I read the article in the last Lagonda club magazine it brought back

many memories to me.

I moved with my parents from Chiswick, West London, to Hanworth in 1933, Hanworth at that time being considered as in the country! I left school the following Easter. Finding a job in a rural area was not easy, other than in the local market gardens. I eventually got one, working for British Klem aircraft (of which at least one still exists in the Shuttleworth Collection, and I'm informed, is flown from time to time). At that time they shared a shed with Aston Martin on the Feltham side of Hanworth Airpark.

One small door was the only entrance to the premises of both firms, unless a fuselage or a car was being moved in or out. The two businesses were divided by a Hessian type material hanging from the apex to the back of the workbenches of each firm. The offices of each were fixed to the back wall approximately 8 feet up, and reached by a very rickety set of wooden stairs. So here was I walking between rows of Aston Martins, five days a week, morning, noon and evening (some hope). There were six maybe eight cars at any one time in the workshop.

By November it was extremely cold, and at two (old) pence an hour, forty hours a week (six shillings and eight pence a week!), I moved on.

After the war flying had stopped at the Airpark enabling Aston Martin to take over the hangars, which had been built during the years 1940-46. I seem to recall, also, that they took over the club house to use as offices. Nice large new signs appeared on the gate, saying ASTON MARTIN LTD.

My how times have changed, since those early days.

Yours,

**Alec Downie** 

Dear Ken,

Victor Gauntlett

Valerie and I were sorry to learn that Victor Gauntlett had died suddenly at

the untimely age of 60.

In 1980, as club members at that time will remember, it was he who championed the cause of Aston Martin Lagonda by taking a personal stake in the company when its future was looking rather uncertain. We had the pleasure of meeting him shortly after at a club event and there was no doubting his energy and enthusiasm. For the next few years the situation at AML looked brighter but even his famed business drive could not alone sustain the cash-strapped company beyond 1987.

But by persuading Ford to buy AML in that year, Victor Gauntlett ensured that the marques survived. He remained AML's chairman until the early 1990s.

While all this activity was going on, he continued to be deeply involved with the oil industry. During his career he had founded two independent oil companies, first Pace Petroleum and then later Proteus Petroleum, both of which achieved considerable trading success. No mean achievement in a market dominated by the giant oil conglomerates.

Victor Gauntlett was a remarkable man by any standard and the business world, I am sure, will be the poorer for his passing.

Yours sincerely,

**Tony May** 

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## From Snowy England to the Cheetahs of Africa



We rebuilt and prepared Nigel Broderick's High Chassis NLC Invicta for the Safari Challenge in February and have given him 200 BHP to outrun the Cheetahs and hopefully the other competitors!

We would like to congratulate Mark Lewis who in Simon Bull's Invicta won the VSCC Ford Trophy and came 5th in the Brooklands Trophy last year.

(Since this car was rebuilt by us in 1994 it has been campaigned very successfully by Martin Stretton, used as an everyday car by Simon Bull and raced for the last seven years by Mark Lewis without the cylinder head ever needing to be removed)

It may appear that we only restore Invictas, but we have seven Lagondas in the workshop at present, two V12's, two M45's, an LG 45 and a brace of 2 Litres as well as an SS100, a Vulcan and of course two S Type Invictas!

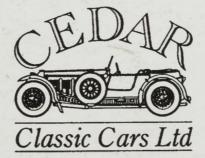
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