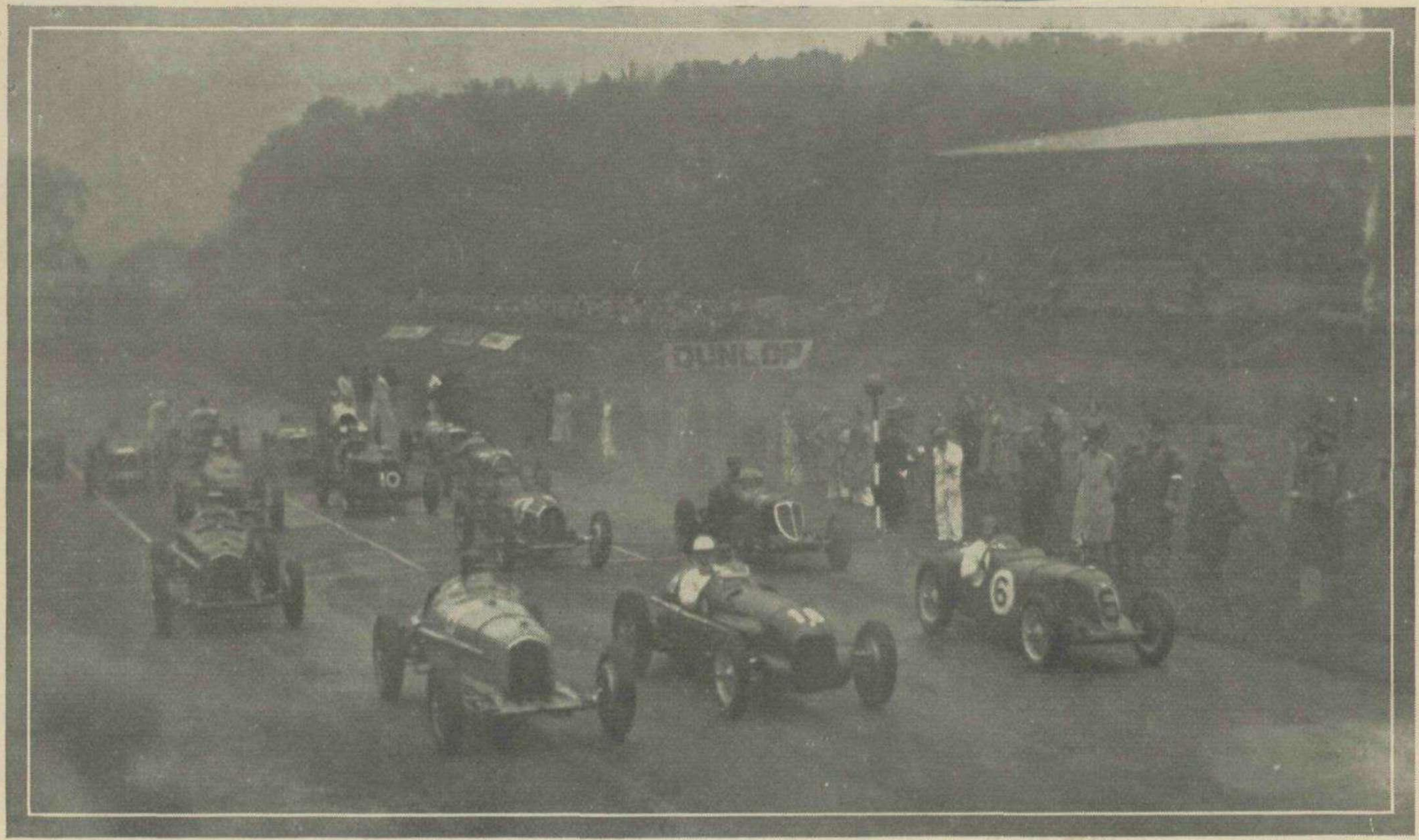
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MOTOR SPORT

INCORPORATING **Speed**

ONE SHILLING MONTHLY

Norman Riddell



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SERVICE FOR THE SERVICES

Adlards Motors, Ltd., once makers of Allard Specials, now on big-scale overhaul of Army vehicles.

MANY enthusiasts now serving with our mechanised forces must wonder what becomes of their vehicles when they are reported unfit for further service. They will be interested to know that vehicles which have served them faithfully, perhaps in the heat of battle, are not reduced to scrap when their active life appears, from an Army viewpoint, to have terminated. Back in "civvy street" highly-organised repair shops are continuously restoring to 100 per cent. condition these weary, worn-out or smashed lorries and cars.

To go round any such depot is to appreciate that here the civilian, man or woman, is doing his or her share of war-winning under highly specialised conditions, such as must interest anyone who has planned motoring competitions or run a racing stable or pit before the war. MOTOR SPORT had the good fortune, last month, to visit one of these Army auxiliary workshops, where additional interest was lent by reason of the fact that S. H. Allard, who put his Allard Specials into small-scale production before the war and was one of our most successful competition drivers, was managing director of the firm, Adlards Motors, Ltd., who control this workshop.

The Ministry of Labour leaves the organisation of each repair centre very largely to the firms concerned, and it is very much to Allard's credit that, starting from scratch, he has built up the premises, worked out the scheme and developed the shop until it represents one of the largest and most efficient of its kind. Our world can take much of the credit, for besides Allard himself, who is on the spot all hours of the day and night taking a very practical part in the smooth running of this complex organisation, Reg. Canham is manager of the vast stores, and Harold Biggs supervises the intricate stock records. Several other enthusiasts, less well known in the realm of the Sport, are among the managing staff.

In 1939, when Allard Specials could no longer occupy their former place, and Ford service seemed to have lost much of its meaning, Adlards Motors took over further premises and began Army repair work, taking in Humbers, Hillmans, Bedfords and Fords and sending them out fit for further work. As the need for speedy service became more apparent and, after Dunkirk, more extensive, a decision was made to concentrate on vehicles of Ford manufacture only, and, for the better part of two years, Allard has developed and improved a system of complete renovation of such vehicles. In cold figures, five vehicles are completely overhauled each working day, and in two recent months a total of 282 vehicles was passed out. A good week clears 42, and an average of 33 has been maintained for some time. Think of that, you who took a couple of years to assemble a "special"! It is a comforting thought, too, for those who have been under fire and have seen the need for a continuous stream of new vehicles being fed to the mechanised forces. The aforementioned figures suggest a vast plant, but the interesting fact is that the actual workshops are not staggeringly extensive, and only 225 workers are employed—intensive organisation and willing co-operation on the part of shop and office staff is the solution. Albeit the depot *is* large in the light of the work undertaken by the firm in peace-time, and this is yet another instance of how the British Motor Industry has adjusted itself to the task of smashing the Axis. The man-in-the-street should (but probably doesn't !) say, with fervour, "Thank God for our Motor Industry!"

All the Army versions of the Ford come to Adlards. In the reception park you see W.O.T.6 and W.O.T.8, W.O.T.2, and W.O.T.1 vehicles (English-made four-wheel-drive, in two chassis lengths, and 15 and 30 cwt. trucks, to the uninitiated). Then there are 2004s, Canadian 3-tonners, 2019s, Canadian four-wheel-drive jobs, W.O.C.1s, personnel-carriers, staff cars, and two versions of the ubiquitous "Jeep"; mostly we saw F.W.D. lorries. These cars are towed, five per day, into the first bay of the repair shop, although sometimes the vehicle is a real warrior with war scars that obviate any such easy means of handling; a line scheme may be used at a later date, the vehicles then progressing through the shop on a track. In the case of a normal overhaul, which means in all probability most units are in need of reconditioning or replacement, the renovation goes ahead on what is known as the "fast moving" method.

First of all a report is made out on the general condition, missing and damaged parts being specially noted. The body having been removed by an overhead crane, the chassis then moves into the shops. In two hours the entire front end, with the engine and radiator, has been dismantled and both axles removed. The next two hours see the bare chassis thoroughly cleaned by a squad of girls and reconditioned axles installed. Meanwhile, the axles which have been removed are themselves being overhauled in readiness to being fitted into a later job. The last four hours of the journey through the shops are devoted to fitting a "new" engine and radiator and finishing details.

The engines are completely reconditioned units and this work, to W.D. standard, is carried out alongside the general overhaul. A "float" of something like 100 virtually-new engines must be maintained and units direct from the Ford Motor Company are brought in to effect this at times when the week's output is making new records. This engine section interested us especially. Adlards have designed, and constructed in their own electric-welding shop, a very neat portable engine stand, which allows one person easily to move a V8 unit to whereever it is required. There were about 50 of these mobile stands in operation at the time of our visit. After overhaul, each engine is given a two-hour run on one of two test benches to ensure complete satisfaction and reliability when the engine is installed and, due to the ease with which mechanics can get at the components, makes final check and adjustment a matter of extreme sim-

plicity. A Crypton tester is freely employed at this stage

We hasten to point out that, whilst the chassis overhaul is going on, the pre-removed body has been receiving attention and is refitted during the last four-hour stay in the shop.

This vehicle overhaul may appear superficial to the onlooker, occupying, as it does, a mere eight hours, and it seems to be singularly free from pitfalls. Nevertheless, every component, every accessory, is stripped, examined and renewed if the smallest fault or sign of wear appears.

Fourteen operatives work on dismantling and reassembling "front ends," six remove and replace axles, two recondition gearboxes, four attend to steering gears, five overhaul front axles and six rear axles, two concentrate on road springs, nineteen, mostly female (and some exotic blondes among 'em) strip and replace faulty chassis details such as gauges, piping, wiring, etc., whilst half a dozen experts cope with the electrical department. Fourteen welders repair torn wings and metal bodywork, ten look after trimming and upholstery, and sixteen carpenters are busy on repairs to woodwork, body repairs and the making of new floorboards, etc., seven men remove, replace and renovate cabs, including the fitting of screens and windows, in conjunction with the eight responsible for the removal and replacement of the actual body. Finally, some twelve are engaged on rectification and final test before handing over to the Ministry of Supply tester for passing out. This, then, is the working plan for the fast-moving repairs, *i.e.* those which literally roll through the shops on their own wheels, there being no chance of hold-up on operations or spares supply. That five vehicles a day can be dealt with so thoroughly is largely attributable to two things. One is the cunning method of overhauling the engine and axles separately so that the chassis can be kept moving on axles reconditioned previously from another vehicle, with a new engine dropped in at the appropriate stage. The second is the use of an auxiliary or "line" stores actually beside the repair line, which is supplied each day with everything required for the type of vehicle on the line at that time, and is augmented when necessary so that workers can get the parts they require without delay, almost without leaving their job. That alone is a nice bit of planning, but one which needs definite organisation, as anyone with a knowledge of the complexity of modern vehicles can well imagine. Naturally, a check must be kept on the progress of each vehicle, for which purpose each "patient" has a large job number painted on its screen on admission. This number is then entered on a "blackboard" in the progress office, where coloured discs indicate at a glance exactly what stage the repair course has reached. If a bad hold-up develops a red disc goes up, and that particular vehicle can then be by-passed so that the flow is uninterrupted.

As we have stated, the foregoing applies to fast-moving repairs. Other vehicles, which present especial problems, usually because they have been crashed or "blitzed," are not neglected. They are dealt with separately by four gangs of five men apiece, particularly skilled in this class of renovation. Four men, incidentally, are kept very fully occupied merely marshalling vehicles in the reception park and making out the relevant condition reports after tools and other loose equipment have been removed and stored. Here we may mention that the Army mostly delivers its own vehicles, and a canteen is available to the drivers, now mostly A.T.S. girls who arrive in groups of from twenty to thirty on busy days, returning in a single collection van. We believe that there is no truth in the rumour that men get beer and the girls "a lovely hot cup of tea" in the Adlard canteen, but they *do* get a piece of cake!

The stores needed to cope with the complete restoration of upwards of 30 vehicles of so many varied types per week is something at which the mind boggles. The main stores is binned to cover 14 Ford models, and comprises over 5,000 bins holding parts worth about £20,000. Everything is there, from copper-lead lined bearing shells to engine-driven tyre pumps. The Ford Motor Company's part numbering system, common throughout their various models, facilitates the task of keeping check on this gigantic stock. In a separate and smaller stores bins bearing "G.P." prefixes contain parts for two types of "Jeep." Twenty people "man" these stores, including three girls, who keep an immense card index which ensures that stocks of all parts, even to the smallest nut or washer, are kept above the minimum set by the production requirements. This ensures that production is not held up by shortage of vital parts. Before leaving the stores department we must mention an additional building, larger than the main stores, which is reserved for heavy and bulky parts such as wings, road springs, unit assemblies and the like.

Bodywork is handled at this depot, but the paint-shop is a separate establishment presided over by Denis Allard, better known to motor-cycling "fans."

That, then, is one method by which your Army vehicle, which has served you in this country or overseas, is given a new lease of life. Britain has at last mechanised its Army and given it the best possible of first-rate equipment. We are glad to be able to tell those who are fighting with these vehicles that, at home, the civilians at these repair depots are doing all they can to keep up the supplies, and to give you back overhauled vehicles that are every bit as dependable as when they were new. They have but one aim—to get more and more vehicles back to you in a given time without lowering the standard of repair. All they would ask you, were they permitted, is—treat your vehicle fairly so that the maximum time elapses before they see it again!

Enthusiasts will be particularly interested to know that Sydney Allard has been responsible for the depot described, and we can assure them that he has plenty of right-minded people around him whom we shall expect to see competing against, or serving, fellow enthusiasts after the war. On the store office walls hang many photographs of Allard Specials, one of "S.H.A." taking Prescott's nastiest corner in his Allard, another of him on the line at the Track with his Morgan 3-wheeler. Outside, a tattered B.A.R.C. plaque adorns the windscreen of a well-worn Tazio-red Fiat "500," but the folk at Adlards talk little of such things. Their aim is to get back into service as many Army vehicles as they can.

We should not be surprised to hear that the present two months' record of 282 vehicles cleared has been exceeded ere these words are read. In any case, we believe that Adlards can claim the highest output of any such Army auxiliary workshop.



Army trucks, stripped of their bodies, going through the Adlard's shops. This Army auxiliary workshop is under the supervision of Sydney Allard, the successful trials driver of pre-war times.

Cecil Clutton Crystal Gazes

In this extremely erudite and absorbing article Cecil Clutton does his share of gazing into the future—a habit which excellent war-news encourages. His suggested designs have their claims carefully explained, and Clutton also offers us a new basis of comparing existing sports cars.—Ed.

I SPENT a day of my last leave stirring up my motoring file with a slide rule, with a view to ascertaining what is likely to count for sports-car performance in the next few years. Some of my conclusions may be worth writing down, if only as a basis for discussion.

As a prelude, I made a graph of existing performances, and I can very well recommend anyone sufficiently interested to do the same for himself. No reliable curve can be made of maximum speeds and high-speed acceleration, because streamlining and other factors are so upsetting; but I take it that 0-50 and 0-60 m.p.h. acceleration is mainly a function of b.h.p. weight ratio, although small irregularities will occur owing to improper gear ratios and slow gear changes. To construct the graph, you take several cars of which you know the b.h.p. and weight. You then divide the b.h.p. by the weight in hundredweights, and these figures are plotted on the horizontal axis of the graph. You then look up the 0-50 and 0-60 figures and plot them against the vertical axis, which should be divided in seconds. Having done this for several cars two curves can be interpolated with considerable accuracy, and the results are very interesting. From it, knowing any two of the three factors of weight, brake-horse-power and acceleration of any car, the third can be determined within fairly close limits. One can also test the veracity of claimed horse-powers, and the like. For instance, I had always wondered why the touring Darracq only claimed to give 115 b.h.p. from its 4-litre engine at 4,200 r.p.m., while the no faster competition Delahaye offered 120 b.h.p. from a 3½-litre engine at 3,850 r.p.m. Well, the graph supplies the answer—it doesn't. The V.12 Lagonda has a similar claimed b.h.p./weight ratio to the Delahaye, and very similar performance figures, so that it, too, is down on schedule. This, I think, is a fairly natural consequence of a high-speed, short-stroke, unblown engine, which is not at its best at low speeds. That is, the Lagonda probably wasted a lot of time reaching 20 m.p.h. The 4¼-litre Bentley is another car which does not show up to the best advantage, while the 4.3-litre Alvis is two seconds faster than it should be on its claimed b.h.p. of 137, and a weight of 35 cwt. Conversely, it is interesting to note that a "Phantom III" Rolls-Royce probably puts out about 170 b.h.p.

Here are a few cars which run very true to figures:—

Make	b.h.p./ cwt.	0-50 (secs.)	0-60 (secs.)
328 B.M.W. ...	5.5	7	9.5
V.12 Allard ...	5.3	7.5	10
3½-litre S.S. ...	4.9	7.5	10.7
4-litre Darracq ...	3.8	9.7	13.7
H.R.G.	3.8	9.7	13.7
Lancia "Aprilia"	2.6	15.5	25

Unfortunately, I know of no reliable figures for the 57 S.C. Bugatti (220 b.h.p.) and the 2.9-litre Alfa Romeo (180 b.h.p.), both of which generally weigh about 25 or 26 cwt. (chassis 19 cwt.). What is rather humiliating is to recollect that Lycett's Bentley does 0-50 in about five seconds, and 0-60 in about seven seconds. The graph becomes rather vague for figures of this kind, but suggests an output around 320 b.h.p., and certainly indicates that even the 57 S.C. would have to get up uncommonly early to rival it, while the Alfa-Romeo might as well save itself the trouble, and stay in bed.

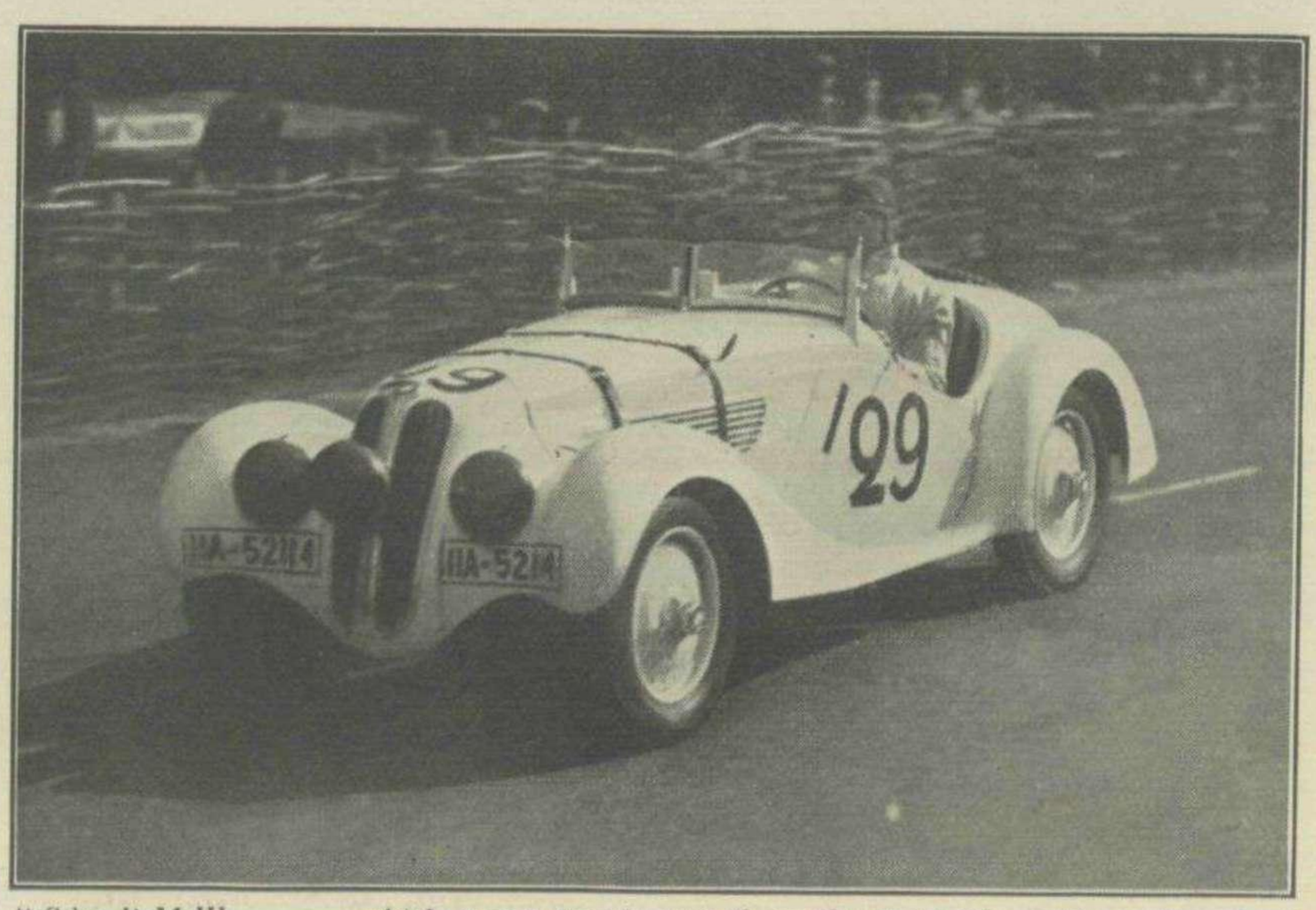
Taken as a whole, the figures are not particularly inspiring, and one is led to wonder what standards of performance might be expected if an intelligent manufacturer really applied his mind to manufacturing a sports car.

There are, of course, two ways in which he can improve performance. First, by hitching more horses to his buggy and, secondly, by streamlining it. For many years, advances in horse-power have been slight; streamlining was just coming into its own before the war, particularly in the later Le Mans and 1940 Mille Miglia racers. As a pointer to performance we have the 328 B.M.W., which many people regard as the most advanced sports-car of the day. It achieved a very fine performance on a modest output of 80 b.h.p. In the 1940 Mille Miglia it was giving some 135 b.h.p. (still unblown) and this was enough to drive its streamlined saloon along at 135 m.p.h. A similar output would not move an unstreamlined saloon of similar frontal area at more than 100 m.p.h. What exact relationship this engine had to the 328 I do not know, but I have heard from what should have been an entirely reliable source that B.M.W.'s were working on a twin-cam edition before the war, and crankshaft speeds in excess of 7,000 r.p.m. were mentioned.

In trying to assess power outputs of the future it is perhaps before anything else necessary to consider what sort of crankshaft speeds are likely to become current in the near future. Everyone knows, of course, that the i.c. engine, even with poppet valves, can operate satisfactorily at 10,000 r.p.m., but I suggest that a number of factors are likely to make much more than 6,000 r.p.m. unusual in production motor-cars.

In the first place, very high engine speeds call for very small cylinders and very short strokes. These may be compatible with sports-car practice up to 1½ litres, but above that, the complications attendant upon upwards of eight cylinders would not, I think, find favour in any but the largest sorts of car. Furthermore, to fill the cylinders at such high speeds a very large valve overlap is necessary, and this produces intractable running at low speeds. Equally, a large overlap leads to fuel wastage, which is necessary as an internal coolant, to remove some of the excessive heat generated at such speeds, but which would not be tolerable in a road car. I suggest that about 45° is the greatest overlap which is likely to be practicable in a sports car, and I believe that neither the Bugatti nor Alfa-Romeo has anything like as much.

Valves are wonderfully reliable things, and in the future it is to be anticipated that they will have sodium cooling to help them. Hairpin valve-springs are



"The B.M.W. . . . which many people regard as the most advanced sports car of the day."

not beloved of motor-cyclists without good reasons, but perhaps there would not be room to fit them in on a multi-cylinder engine. Of course, if rotary valves come into their own, the r.p.m. question at once has to be reconsidered, since many of the objections to high r.p.m. then disappear, and it is worthy of note that a single-cylinder, 350-c.c., touring type, unblown Aspin engine has developed over 30 b.h.p. at 8,000 r.p.m. This figure is equivalent to 90 b.h.p. per litre, and 143 b.m.e.p., and it has been exceeded in racing form. Even so, such speeds raise the problem of high piston speed, and although these may be indulged in by racing engines, they are wasteful, demand expensive construction, and are not conducive to long life. This again, coupled with the objection to the very small cylinders compatible with racing practice, suggests a maximum of some 6,000 r.p.m. for sports cars. It may, of course, be that the development of light alloy pistons and connecting rods may promote a second revision of existing ideas about piston speeds, similar to that which was brought about when aluminium ousted the cast-iron piston, but that seems to be looking rather unnecessarily far into the unknown.

Reverting to piston speed, a maximum of 3,500 f.p.m. seems to be an extreme figure, since, if it is exceeded, the cruising speed has to be so very far below the maximum. This means that top gear has to be arranged so that nothing like peak revs. can be attained in it, while the power available at cruising revs. is undesirably low.

Assuming, therefore, a maximum of 6,000 r.p.m. we are tied down to a stroke of not more than 85 mm. Cruising revs. can then be about 4,400 r.p.m., which is certainly a useful speed. So far as the bore is concerned, too wide a piston is difficult to cool, and it is also heavy. Current practice suggests that 75 mm. is to be regarded as a maximum for high efficiency engines. We therefore find ourselves with a 75×85 cylinder, of 375 c.c. capacity which, incidentally, are the exact proportions used in the V12 Lagonda. They give us a 4-cylinder 1½-litre, 6-cylinder 2¼-litre, or 8-cylinder 3-litre engine, which is convenient from a class competition point of view.

Now, the more or less square engine, especially with inclined valves (as any really high efficiency engine must have from a cooling point of view, alone) has very large valves, relative to the swept volume, and the gas speed is therefore low. This apparently means poor turbulence at low speeds, and a rather bad falling off in power at the bottom end of the range. Equally, with a short-stroke engine, it is impossible to obtain an even moderately high compression ratio.

It therefore seems essential that the engine should be supercharged in order to make the most of itself; and because it also needs assistance at low speeds it seems that a Rootes blower, running at 1½ to 2 times engine speed, is the most suitable kind. A touring machine which is lacking in punch at low revs. is a maddening thing to drive for long. This is of importance, because a Rootes blower is not practicable at more than 15 lb. pressure, and probably around 12 lb. per sq. in. is the most at which it can profitably operate. This means to say that we can look for roughly a 70 per cent. increase upon whatever power output we can obtain with atmospheric induction, and this is the next thing to estimate.

It is difficult to find an unblown production engine which produces 50 b.h.p. per litre; probably the 57S Bugatti is the only one which does so, though the V12 Lagonda reached this figure in its slightly-tuned Le Mans form. An experimental 6-cylinder 2-litre Scott two-stroke engine has attained 50 b.h.p. per litre at only 4,500 r.p.m., which is equivalent to 145 b.m.e.p., as against about 115 or 120 for the Bugatti. Even the Bugatti cannot be used as a direct analogy, since the compression ratio had to be reduced by two atmospheres before a blower could be fitted, which would bring the power down to about 43 or 44 per litre.

At the same time, a glance at racing practice suggests that these figures are not as good as they well might be. Very comparable is the excellent output of the unblown 1923 G.P. Sunbeam which gave 108 b.h.p. and 140 b.m.e.p. at 5,000 r.p.m. running on straight petrol (which then meant a very low octane value) and about 7.4 to 1 compression ratio. These engines had by no means excessive valve timing. Let us also look at the 1927 1½-litre G.P. Delage engine, which is, to this day, probably the most efficient engine that has ever been made. What makes it particularly comparable is that the valve overlap is only 43°, which is within the limits of sports car practice. As run by Seaman it had a compression ratio of 7½ to 1 and a blower pressure of 7½ lb. per square inch. After deducting the effect of the blower this leaves a b.m.e.p. of 135 lb. per square inch at the peak speed of 8,000 r.p.m. Now, even allowing for the extraordinarily high mechanical efficiency of this engine, which might be expected to give it a 10 per cent. advantage over a plain bearing production job, the inference is that the breathing arrangements of this 16-year-old design are far in advance of anything which has been done since. I have not seen the Delage power curve, but it can be assumed that if it shows 135 b.m.e.p. at 8,000 r.p.m., it will be at least 150 b.m.e.p. at 5,500 r.p.m., at which our hypothetical engine may be expected to peak. From this must be deducted 10 per cent., to bring it down to the mechanical efficiency of a plain bearing production engine, leaving us at 135 b.m.e.p.

A further deduction would have to be made to allow for a reduced compression ratio, at which the engine would operate on pump fuel; but having regard to the very moderate boost and compression ratio, and the improvements in cooling and post-war high octane fuels, which, alone, are likely to bring about a 10 per cent. increase in power output, this factor can probably be ignored.

Now, 135 b.m.e.p. at 5,500 r.p.m. means 57 b.h.p. per litre, to which we have to add a 70 per cent. bonus as a result of our intended 12 lb. boost; which reaches a total of 95 per litre. This is certainly a 50 per cent. increase over anything at present available, but unless there is some very bad flaw in my argument it does not seem an unreasonable figure.

It is, of course, allowed that a 7½ to 1 compression ratio and 12 lb. per square inch boost would without doubt call for an alcohol fuel (such as 50 per cent. alcohol and 50 per cent. benzole) if the car were to be used for racing, or any other purpose requiring prolonged use of full throttle. But my satisfactory experiences of driving such supercharged cars as the 1924 G.P. Sunbeam, 57 S.C. Bugatti 2.9 Alfa-Romeo and blown "Phantom I" Rolls-Royce, all on pool petrol, lead me to suggest that, on an 85 octane fuel (such as we may apparently expect in commercial production after the war) such a compression ratio and boost would be perfectly satisfactory for all normal running.

One must also remember that even the most advanced of our current machines, namely, the 57SC Bugatti and "2.9" Alfa, are based on the 1928–1934 era of Grand Prix racing design, which was a very long way behind the standards of design during the previous 2- and 1½-litre formulæ.

We have now got a 1½-litre engine developing some 135 b.h.p., and we must see how fast it will go when fitted into a properly streamlined outfit. Fortunately, this happens to be exactly the same b.h.p. as the Mille Miglia B.M.W., and as that body was basically a perfectly practicable one for regular road use it seems not unreasonable to expect a speed of 135 m.p.h. or, say, 130, to allow for contingencies. By applying the cube root rule we are also able to calculate the maxima for the 6- and 8-cylinder editions, since these need have no greater frontal area. Furthermore, assuming that the 1½-litre car would weigh 19 cwt., which is not unreasonable, and that the 6- and 8-cylinder versions would weigh 22 and 25 cwt. respectively, we can assume that the 1½-litre would be a little inferior to Lycett's Bentley on low speed acceleration, and that the other two would be a little better. The maxima would be as follows:—

1½-litre 4-cylinder, 135 b.h.p., 130 m.p.h.
2¼-litre 6-cylinder, 210 b.h.p., 150 m.p.h.
3-litre 8-cylinder, 280 b.h.p., 165 m.p.h.

These figures certainly sound quite staggering judged by existing standards, but there does not seem to be any reason why they should not be attained in the light of existing knowledge. They are arrived at solely with regard to the limitations of fuel, fuel consumption, flexibility and mechanical complication necessary in a car intended for regular road work. There seems no reason why the 8-cylinder car should be more expensive than a 57SC Bugatti (chassis £1,070 with the then favourable rate of exchange) though the chassis layout would be different, a de Dion rear axle, i.f.s. (probably of the hydraulo-pneumatic kind which will undoubtedly be in prominence) and tubular chassis being a likely arrangement.

This is certainly talking in terms of Money for most of us, and one's mind next turns to the sort of sports car which will be available for the pecuniary "polloi." Much depends on the standards of road-holding which become prevalent on production cars, and the extent to which streamlining becomes popular.

Performance is always expensive, and while there is a certain number of people who are willing to put up with bad road-holding if they can have high speed, I think that the discriminating enthusiast places the greater insistence on proper handling. For such people there was really quite a wide choice, even before the war. In the cheapest range, the D.K.W., Citroen "Light Fifteen," Peugeots, and any car in the Fiat range offered respectable performance (according to size) and first-rate road-holding; while in the under £500 class came Lancia, Type 320 and Type 55 B.M.W., H.R.G., and the 16- and 20-h.p. Rovers, which were notable value for money, and an excellent example of what can be done with non-independent suspension if properly designed. Much the same could be said of the 2-litre Triumph.

Any of these cars, if fitted with streamlined coachwork, could have given an outstanding performance, and if streamlining does not meet with popular acceptance after the war, it seems apparent that there will be a good opening for anyone who markets any of this type of machine with a standardised streamlined body at a reasonable price.

Probably the first manufacturers to do so were the Fiat people, and their streamlined 1,100 would undoubtedly have met with a riotous reception from enthusiasts had not the war intervened. For details, readers are referred to the magnificent road test by Gordon Wilkins in the *Motor* for July 25th, 1939, but some details may be recorded here, as a pointer to the type of performance which may be brought within the purse range of a very large number of people, and as an example of what may be done with a light, simple, lightly stressed, short-stroke engine.

In standard form, the 1,100 Fiat developed a very modest 32 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m., had a 70 m.p.h. maximum, and sold in saloon form at £198. The weight was 16½ cwt., and the cylinder dimensions were 68×75 mm., which meant that the engine could cruise at practically any speed it was likely to attain. In point of fact, it must have been capable of roughly 5,500 r.p.m., and its ability to maintain such speeds undoubtedly contributed largely to its racing successes in the hands of Gordini and others. The streamlined car developed 42 b.h.p. on the moderate compression ratio of 7 : 1, probably weighed about the same as the standard car, and sold at £375. This is a lot of money compared with £198, and there seems no valid reason why the model should not have sold for well inside £300 when it got into serious production.

Within very small limits this machine has the same b.h.p./weight ratio as an "Aprilia," but its 0-60 acceleration is no less than six seconds faster than the very good Lancia which, itself, is by no means aerodynamically inefficient. Incidentally, the Fiat seems to have been geared to give about 16 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m., having 15″×5″ wheels, and the excellent overall ratios of about 3.5, 5.1, 8.1 and 13 to 1. This means that it must have reached about 5,500 r.p.m. at its maximum of 90 m.p.h. The 0-50 acceleration time was 13 seconds; 0-60, 19.1 seconds; standing quarter mile 21 seconds (an amazing figure). Petrol consumption, 40 m.p.g. at 60 m.p.h. (even more amazing).

It certainly seems that, coupled with the already excellent handling of the Fiat, the ordinary enthusiast could not reasonably ask for more, though if the car could be improved without additional expense, it would be by manufacturing it with front wheel drive, whereby the road-holding would be even further improved, and the body space increased without increasing the overall height.

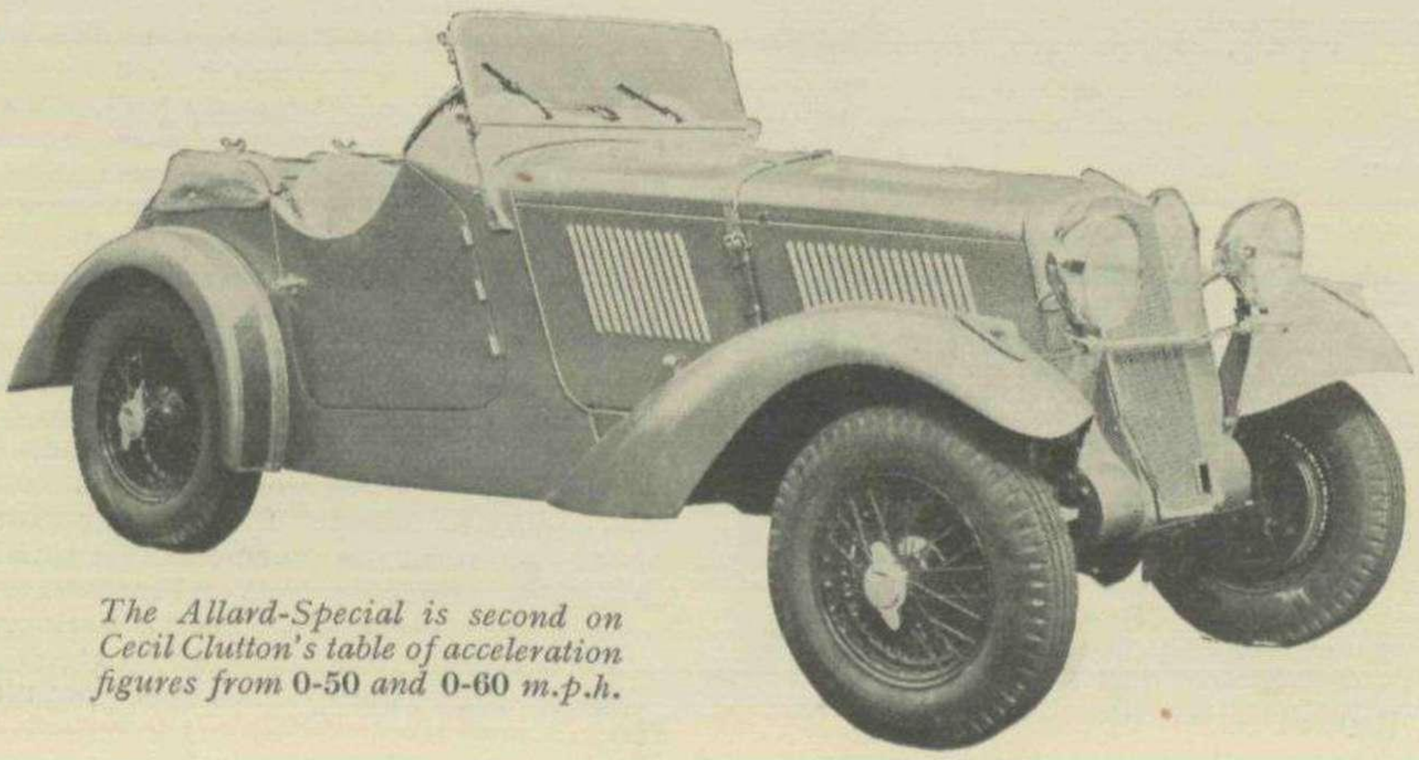
Considering the popularity of the "500" and "1,100" Fiats in this country I have often wondered why the "1,500" model did not sell in larger numbers, for it is a really excellent car. In particular, it is rather more solid in construction, and the general finish is much superior to the smaller models. Possibly the 15-h.p. R.A.C. rating operated too much against it. The 65×75 engine developed 45 b.h.p. at 4,400 r.p.m., and ministrations similar to those accorded to the "1,100" streamlined car should, therefore, bring the output up to 60 b.h.p. which, in streamlined form, would be ample to secure a maximum of 100 m.p.h. The price, in standard saloon form, was £298, or £215 for the chassis.

Finally, if the horse-power tax is removed, one wonders if there might not still be a future for the "husky" type of vintage car, coupled with moderate streamlining and modern suspension. It may be remembered that I outlined the form such a machine might be likely to take, in an article in the *Motor* of February 11th, 1942. I still believe that there is a tremendous thrill to be had from cylinders of not less than 1 litre each in capacity, though clearly they are not practicable in closed bodies, and will only appeal to the genuine enthusiast. What I do dislike are the highly-tuned engines with cylinders around the 600 and 700 c.c. capacity, which are now so popular. They have neither the smoothness of the high-revving engine with cylinders not larger than 400 c.c. each, nor the virile punch of the big four, with not less than 1,000 c.c. per pot. Experience certainly suggests that these engines are cheap to make, exceedingly durable, and very easy to maintain.

As a slight extension of this type, I have sometimes wondered if a magnificent, small production, fast tourer could not be made round such an engine as the de Havilland "Gipsy Major," which powers the Tiger-Moth and so many other light civilian aircraft.

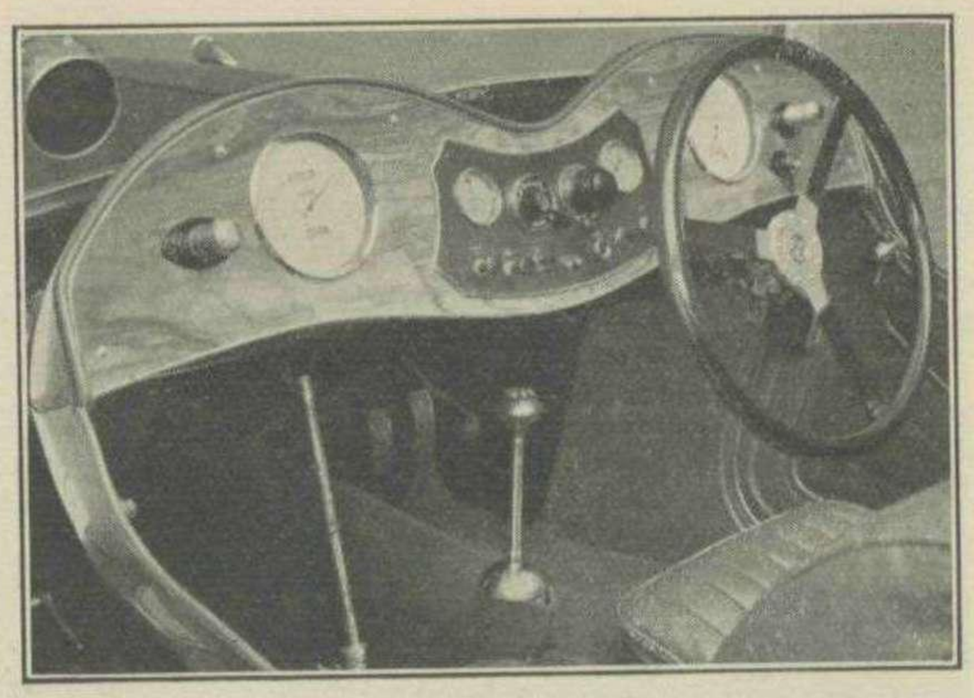
This superb engine has a capacity of 6,124 c.c. (roughly 117×140), develops 130 b.h.p. on 73 octane fuel, has a maximum of 2,350 r.p.m. and cruises up to 2,100 r.p.m. Cruising at about 80–90 m.p.h. air speed they are expected to run 1,300 hours without even a top end overhaul, and I believe they have gone as much as 1,600 hours without an overhaul. Just imagine a car that ran 100,000 miles without even having to be decarbonised! It is, of course, difficult to tell in an aircraft whether the engine would be sufficiently flexible for road use, but it gives no indication to the contrary. The fact that it is air-cooled need be no disadvantage in a car, as we know from the Franklin, or K.D.F., and the lubrication would need very little attention to make it work the other way up (the engine sits upside down in an aeroplane). With an increased compression ratio and four carburetters (the separate cylinders just beg for a carburetter apiece) the power output could certainly be raised to between 150 and 160 b.h.p., and as the whole outfit only weighs 310 lb. it could be fitted into a car of not more than a ton total weight. The overall dimensions of the engine are perfectly reasonable, *i.e.* approximately 3′ 4″×1′ 7″×2′ 5″, or about 1′ 8″×1′ 2″ at the bearers. With moderate streamlining this would be good enough to give us 115 m.p.h. and a cruising speed of 100 m.p.h. at 2,000 r.p.m. With 32″ wheels suitable overall ratios would be roughly 2, 2.6, 4 and 7 to 1. This would combine the thrill of high-powered Edwardian motoring with modern brakes and bodywork, and I believe that it would appeal very strongly to any true enthusiast. I have certainly never taken anyone in the Itala who was not immediately captivated by the savage punch of the huge, slow-speed engine, coupled with really big performance. I should expect the "Gipsy" engine to give at least 13 m.p.g. on the road; probably more.

Much of this article is necessarily of a highly speculative nature; some of the reasoning and assumptions in it may be quite fallacious—perhaps other readers may be able to throw more authoritative light on the matters discussed.



The Allard-Special is second on Cecil Clutton's table of acceleration figures from 0-50 *and* 0-60 *m.p.h.*

SUBJECTS for DEBATE



The T-type M.G., the "office" of which is seen here, is one of the modern sports cars mentioned by "Two-Point-Six."

OF recent months in these pages we have had Peter Hampton explaining to Mr. A. F. Brookes why he prefers Continental cars to British, and Mr. Brookes explaining that Hampton is barking up the wrong tree. This popular subject for debate invariably starts up that other happy business of vintage cars *versus* the moderns. So it has been in this instance, and we have duly received a screed which both debunks the vintagent and touches on the Continental *versus* British controversy. It is written by someone who asks to be known as "Two-Point-Six," and we publish it because several of the points raised should be brought into the light, and because some of the arguments presented ring true. Contrary to opinion in some quarters, MOTOR SPORT has no wish to foster vintage sports cars at the expense of post-1931 high-performance cars, or *vice versa* for that matter. But we do feel that "Two-Point-Six" and others like him rather lose sight of one important fact. That is, that unless a person is definitely hostile to the vintage car, *merely as a buying proposition*, it has an initial advantage over the modern type of sports car. Because the Trade assesses the value of a car on age instead of condition, and because modern-type cars intended to run at high engine speeds, to carry light bodywork and to sell comparatively inexpensively, wear more rapidly than vintage machinery, the latter invariably presents a better proposition than the former *for a given expenditure of money and hard labour*. Consequently, lots of enthusiasts run the older cars for financial reasons, some, indeed, because they can afford nothing else. Fortunately the inherent quality of the vintage car often renders even very early examples quite practical after nothing more by way of overhaul than relining of brakes and renewal of transmission couplings and tyres. Without actually embarking on the vintage-modern argument as such, a sound case for purchase of the former type can be proved. So there is no real reason for "Two-Point-Six" to set out to convert the majority of (acting) vintagents to the appeal and superiority of the modern sports cars. In a considerable number of cases they are no doubt quite open-minded already and merely buy old cars cheaply and restore them to good order because they dislike using any sort of car that they are unable to overhaul, and can only afford that overhaul if first cost is low. Given better financial resources they would probably buy moderns, albeit it is to the credit of the old car that, due to excellent workmanship and sane design, its "secondhand" condition for its age is usually no worse than the condition of younger (and consequently more expensive-to-buy) secondhand moderns—which is just what enables those with little cash but plenty of energy to do their sums and get the correct answers. There are still the dyed-in-the-wool incurables to contend with—from the man who is quite happy with a £20 vintage sports car because he really thinks it superior to a £40 post-vintage device, to fortunate folk like Forrest Lycett, Anthony Heal, McKenzie, A. C. Clark and others, who rebuild and use vintage cars when they could well afford moderns. To such we present "Two-Point-Six's" article and offer them the freedom (within reason!) of our correspondence columns. Here is what "Two-Point-Six" says:

"Half this vintage stuff is affectation"
—"Two-Point-Six"

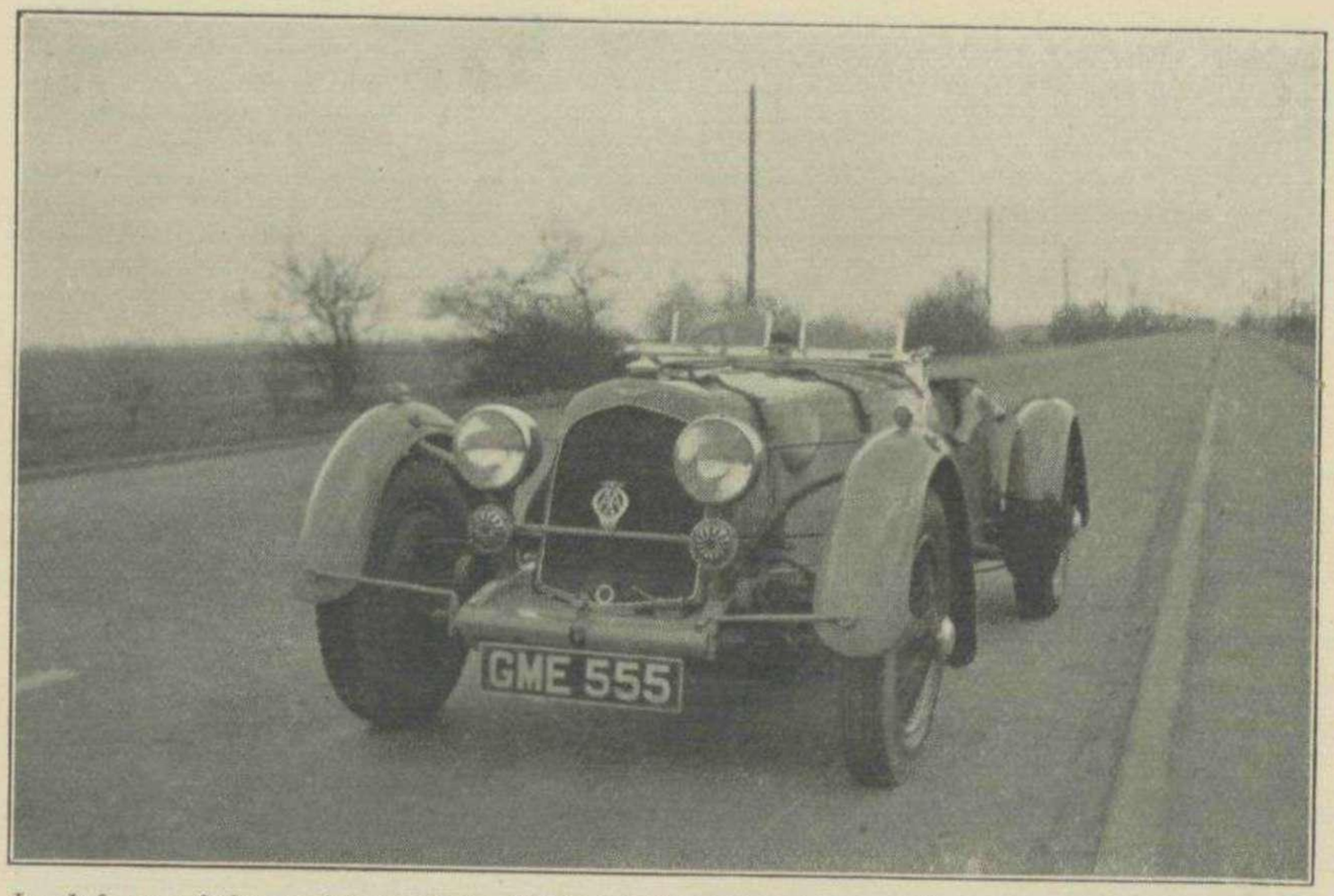
I have a feeling that many people, including some of my personal friends, are not going to be exactly pleased with this article of mine, but as I have always wanted to write on modern sports cars, and as MOTOR SPORT encourages enthusiasts to express their views, I have decided to put pen to paper and fulfil my ambition. For private reasons, however, I fear I must write anonymously.

Like Mr. B. FitzPatrick (July 1943 issue) I am rather surprised to find that many readers of this journal, including my aforementioned friend, boost up vintage cars to the detriment of the moderns, but, unlike Mr. FitzPatrick, I do not believe that the best modern sports cars come from places across the Channel. But more of that anon. The really difficult point when arguing against the Vintage Cult is not how to defend modern machines, but how to "get at" the vintagents, who do not really seem to be very clear what it is about their "bolides" that they like so much. In fact, my personal opinion is that half this vintage stuff is affectation! For instance, they claim, or at least most of them claim, to "enjoy" a 300-mile drive in the depths of winter, with snow-clad roads and a blizzard, in an open car of pre-1932 manufacture, a "Red Label" Bentley for choice. Now, exactly what is there to appeal to anyone in that? Is it the drive itself, the scenery, that they like? If so, a 1½-litre M.G. saloon would fit the bill admirably. Is it performance? On bad roads it can't be that; on good roads, what's wrong with a 2.6 M.G., 2½ S.S. Jaguar, Riley "Kestrel," B.M.W. and the like? Finally, is it the "he-manishness" that appeals? It is? I thought so! It really boils down to the fact, then, that what these vintage blokes really enjoy, or at any rate profess to enjoy, is *discomfort*. Well, if anyone enjoys discomfort, try wearing a hair shirt and a busby in heat waves; you'll get discomfort all right.

Then, again, the vintagents earnestly claim that it isn't speed that really counts at all. It doesn't matter whether their cars do 70, 80 or 100 m.p.h. Or so they tell you. Then they obligingly contradict that statement a few minutes later by saying that a "Red Label" Bentley can out-perform any modern sports car of the same horse-power. It's funny, but none the less true, as I have discovered in many arguments with my vintage-minded friends.

Another thing that is sure to send your vintage enthusiast absolutely crackers with joy is the sight of some 1928 junk-heap crawling slowly and painfully along the highway at 25–30 m.p.h. He waves to the driver, who stops his mechanised bedstead, and then immediately they fall to discussing the good old days when sports cars were really sports cars, and not just streamline shells which do not look anything like what a sports car should be. The discussion over, the two enthusiasts, now firm friends, spring joyfully into the coffin which once more trundles happily, if noisily, along His Majesty's highway, viewing the tail ends of M.G. Midgets, B.M.W.s, and other so-called sports cars with majestic disgust.

However, enough of vintage exponents and their contrivances. Let us examine some modern jobs. Of all modern sports



In defence of the moderns "Two-Point-Six" calls up the 2-litre Aston-Martin "Speed Model," the unstreamlined version of which is depicted above.

cars the "15/98" Aston-Martin "Speed Model" is one which springs to mind as being a typical representative of Britain. If you read the *Speed* road test of this superb car in March, 1939, you will recollect that in shape the car was like a peardrop, with a V windscreen and a tail rather like the jaws of an alligator. I believe the headlamps were, in a sense, sunk in the body, but I am not sure, and possibly this is incorrect. The entire car was beautifully streamlined from stem to stern and presented a picture of beauty and liveliness very seldom noticed in other cars. The price was £775. At this stage, perhaps, a summary of its specification would be helpful. The engine was a 4-cylinder o.h.v. unit, 78 mm. × 102 mm., 1,949 c.c., 15.09 h.p. by R.A.C. rating.

The gear ratios were: 1st, 11.39 to 1; 2nd, 8.33 to 1; 3rd, 6.11 to 1; top, 4.4 to 1. The brakes, which were Lockheed hydraulic, are reputed to be "superlative," stopping the car in 27 feet from 30 m.p.h. The engine is very easily "got at," and presents a very clean and neat picture. As to the performance, the maximum speed is 100 m.p.h. or thereabouts, while the acceleration figures of 0-50 in 9 secs., and 0-60 in 14 secs. speak for themselves.

To come down a bit in size and price, the well-known M.G. Midget still presents a challenge to those who claim that no decent sports cars were made after 1931. The latest Midgets, the TB type, and, slightly older, the T type, are both capable of a genuine 80 plus. One much-discussed unsupercharged T type is claimed to have done 90 plus. [Please! —ED.] Petrol consumption works out at about 32–36 m.p.g. according to the run, and acceleration is definitely lively for the size of the car. You got all this, plus dependability of the highest order, for £222 before the war.

It would be a waste of time to go on mentioning in detail names such as Riley, Singer, Alta, B.M.W., Lancia, Delahaye, Talbot, Darracq, and other modern "bolides," all of which are, in my humble opinion, considerably better than their ancestors of ten years before, not only in looks but in performance, economy and reliability.

Then, again, all sports cars are not necessarily open cars, since many saloons, owing to their aerodynamic efficiency, can leave open jobs standing, and surely speed has some connection with our Sport? At Le Mans, for instance, in 1939, there was a goodly number of Alfa-Romeo, Talbot-Darracq and B.M.W. saloons showing their paces. Admittedly, they got hot inside, but doubtless given time this snag will be overcome. Again, admittedly, at Le Mans the saloons did not do particularly well, but against that you can put the B.M.W. Mille Miglia win in 1940, which definitely was a great step in a new direction.

No enthusiast for modern sports cars denies that the "Red Label" Bentley, Lancia "Lambda," "Ulster," Aston-Martin and other vintage machinery had their points. Neither do they deny that in their day they were really marvellous cars, but remember that once they, too, were modern, and that they, too, were decried by the vintage enthusiasts of that period, just as one day B.M.W.s, "15/98" Astons and others will be supported by a new generation of vintagents. Then, as now, "modern cars" will be condemned by a few, then they, too, will in their turn become vintage jobs. That is really what Progress is, and however much you dislike it, you can't stop it. Witness the futile efforts of that professor who doesn't like cars, but who will have to "endure" (?) them just the same.

Finally, then, my private opinion is that whilst greatly admiring the sterling qualities of the vintage car, I feel that to support them rather than their modern counterparts is to slow down Progress in this country. As Mr. FitzPatrick says, if we are going to continue to regard the 4½-litre Bentley as the best car in the world, once again we shall suffer in the foreign markets.

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Before the vintagents themselves offer comment, we would like to make a few remarks ourselves on the particular points "Two-Point-Six" raises. The answer to the question, "What is wrong with a 2.6 M.G., 2½ S.S., Riley "Kestrel," B.M.W. or the like?" is either the cost of such cars, *vide* our previous remarks, or their inferior "feel" when driven fast over snow, the latter being a matter of opinion, of course. We disagree that vintage cultists enjoy the sight of 1928 junk-heaps crawling slowly and painfully about. The genuine vintage sports car enthusiasts have it as a sort of unwritten law that before their cars take the road they shall be thoroughly overhauled, decently turned out, and well-groomed. When the Vintage S.C.C. was in its hey-day not every member could live up to this exacting standard, but, even so, only those vintage cars which were still capable of giving good performance and sound service in spite of low purchase price, commanded respect. Vintage sports cars of inferior design, mediocre performance, or bad disrepair were regarded no more favourably than the new cars then current. Naturally, the vintage car, by its rarity, has far-reaching appeal; our contributor's picture of total strangers stopping such cars to compare notes both rings true and represents food for thought for those who buy their cars from manufacturers and motor under a guarantee. In suggesting that when the 3-litre Bentley and Lancia "Lambda" first came on the market they were shunned by "vintage enthusiasts of that period," and that one day cars like the B.M.W., "15/98" Aston-Martin and others will be supported by "a new generation of vintagents," "Two-Point-Six" surely makes an error common to most people who set out to debunk "this vintage affectation." The Vintage Cult came about because its advocates found that in the early nineteen-thirties the design of the majority of cars was taking a retrograde path and that old cars, suitably overhauled, were more than a match for new productions. Later, as this "bad period" passed, not nearly as many enthusiasts remained true to the Cult, and, as we have explained, vintage-car popularity was then largely bound up with purchasing economy. Cecil Clutton himself did what he could to debunk the "vintage only, always" creed in these pages in August, 1940. Consequently, we can assume that after the 1914–18 war Bentley and Lancia were hailed as an advance over things like T-head Hispanos and outsized Benz, and were bought by those who could afford them; just as, unless another period of dry-rot amongst manufacturers sets in, we may imagine that in 1950 those who can do so will have current sports cars and that B.M.W.s and "15/98" Astons, etc., will be bought, not on account of their "vintage-appeal" but, as vintage cars are now in the majority of cases, on account of low purchase price —that is, assuming that they are not, as "moderns," completely worn out by the time they have been on the road long

enough to rank as scrap in the eyes of the Trade (!)

We have no desire to take sides in this evergreen vintage-modern argument, but having published "Two-Point-Six's" anti-vintage screed, we cannot refrain from concluding with L/Cpl. L. Motler's account of the cars he has owned. Quite by coincidence this was the very next contribution we received after "Two-Point-Six's" and, giving, as it does, the experiences of one who went from a vintage sports car to modern types and back to vintage stuff, it presents a case for the older cars equal to a direct entry into the controversy on their behalf.

L/Cpl. Motler writes:

"After the war . . . something definitely vintage"
—L/Cpl. L. Motler

Like many enthusiasts, I started my motoring career on 2-wheelers. My first love was a 1919 belt-drive Levis purchased for the sum of £7 in 1927, complete with "sit up and beg" handlebars, footboards, etc., but by dint of hard work with crowbars and other implements, I altered the appearance to something more sporting. This was a wonderful little bike for its age, and very reliable apart from the belt, which was always prone to slip. After six months of the Levis I decided that I must have something more potent, and located a Model 80 Sunbeam in a local showroom. Investigations showed that this machine had been well cared for, and after a talk to my father, who more or less ruled my finances at the time, I did a deal and became the proud owner of a 'Beam. This was a lovely machine—wonderful finish and quality, beautiful gear-change and crisp performance. I ran this for two years without trouble of any kind, but during this period I was involved in three crashes, and under pressure from my parents, decided to sell on the understanding that I had a 4-wheeler in the near future.

After inspecting various cars from a "Gordon England" Austin Seven Cup Model to a straight-8 Bugatti, I eventually persuaded my father to do the necessary and purchase a "12/50" Alvis. This car was a 1924 model with the classic polished-aluminium pointed-tail body. No front-wheel brakes were fitted, but after I had owned the car for some time a set of Whitehead brakes were added and made a big improvement. This was a grand motor-car, with fine road-holding and steering. The maximum was around the 70 mark with a good 60 in third gear; this gear was badly worn and had to be held in place with the right hand. Some trouble was experienced with the body, which seemed very soft, and this was constantly cracking around the joints. Another worry was the rattle from the timing wheels. I went to the expense of fitting a new set, but after a short mileage the row was as bad as ever; I have since learnt that this is quite common to the "12/50." The oil consumption was on the heavy side, and whilst the timing wheels were fitted I also had a new set of Brico rings, which improved matters very considerably, the oil consumption then being about 1,000 miles to the gallon. As regards the body, I soon gave up trying to keep the aluminium polished and had this painted in the traditional black with red line; this, I think, improved the appearance of the car.

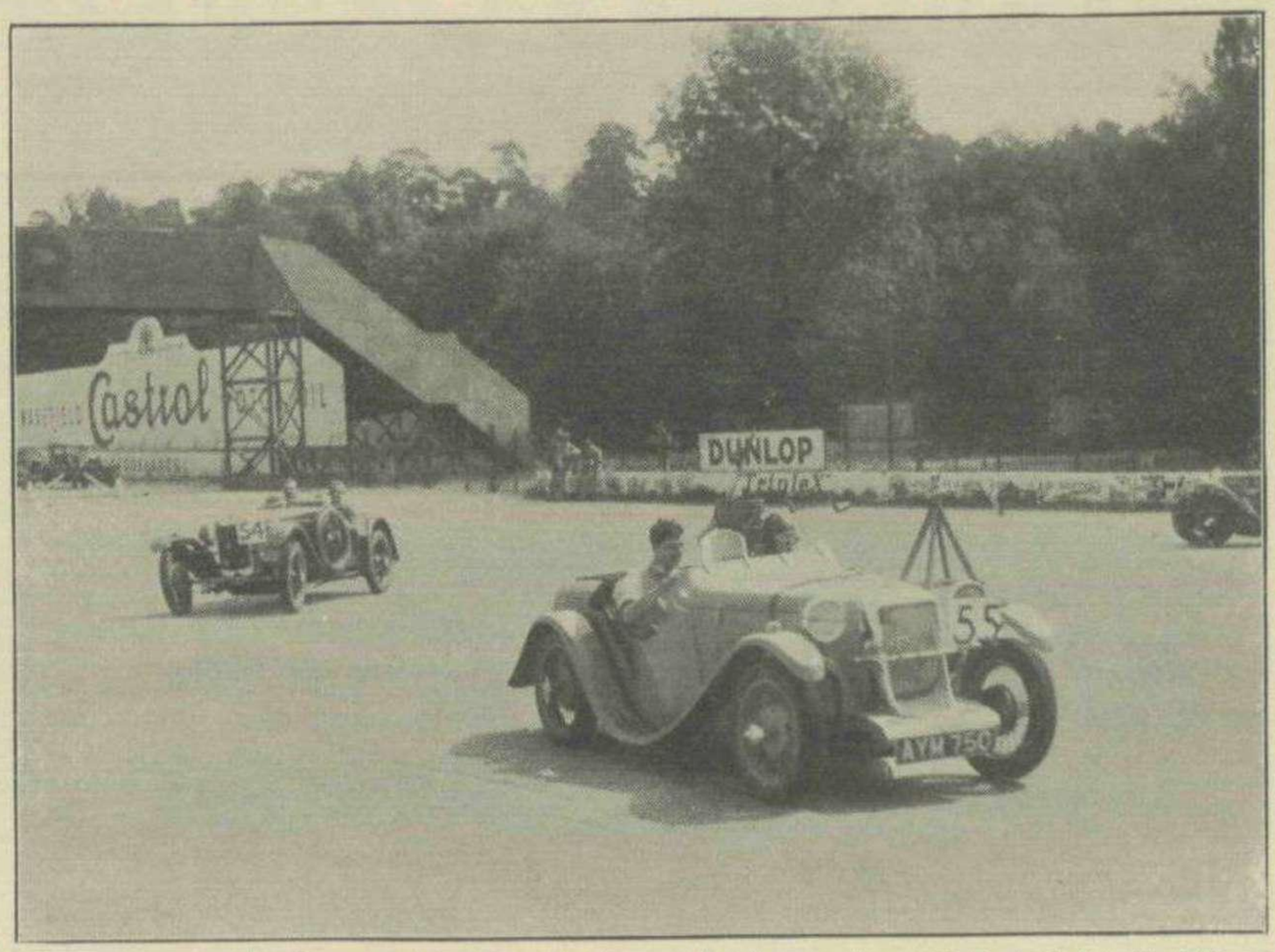
Around about this time the M.G. "Midget" made its bow. A friend purchased one of these cars and I was very impressed with it; on normal runs I couldn't get away from him, and on congested roads the M.G. more than held its own. What impressed me most was the smoothness of the M.G., although the actual maximum was well below that of the Alvis. After a few more months had passed I decided to try to do a deal for an M.G. "Midget," and this I did, although with many regrets.

I now became the possessor of my first new car, a 1931 M.G. "Midget," with large sump and several improvements over the 1930 model. I personally collected this car from Abingdon and carefully ran it home to Manchester. I gave it a most thorough running-in for 1,000 miles, but at about 8,000 miles the oil consumption was very heavy although the actual bore wear was small, so I fitted Brico rings once again and effected a great improvement. I have read some bad reports of these little cars, but have nothing but praise for mine; the performance was brisk and satisfying, although not in the fast-car class. Top speed about 60, with a good 40 m.p.h. in 2nd, and after having the new rings fitted I decided to do a spot of tuning and had the ports and cylinder head polished and also fitted a thin copper gasket.

The R.A.G. carburetter was in the news at this time, so I fitted twin R.A.G.s and also double valve springs. The performance after these modifications was much improved, with brisker acceleration, a higher maximum, and better second gear performance, which was now around the 50 mark. I don't think that this did the crank any good although I never had any trouble in this respect.

Some very good averages could be put up without exceeding 60 m.p.h., mostly due to the excellent acceleration and road-holding. The body, of the fabric type, gave no trouble apart from the upholstery, which was rather papery. After the car had covered about 20-odd thousand miles the oil consumption became excessive once more and I decided to change, but the choice was rather limited for my pocket; also, after the Alvis, I hankered after something that was rather of lower engine speed than the M.G.

Whilst drawing petrol one day at the local garage I spotted a "Brooklands" Riley Nine over the pit, and on enquiry found out that this belonged to Reggie Tongue. The car had a broken crank, was being repaired, and would then be for sale; needless to say I fell for it, and after some wangling, etc., the deal was done. Whilst the crank was fitted everything was given the once over. The bores were in very good condition, being sleeved; also, the main bearings and big ends were in good fettle. The crank fitted was standard and I have always regretted not having the special one at the time. I found this car a great change after the "Midget." The top speed was in the region of 80 m.p.h., and it was very quick up to 70, but a long wait was necessary after that for the other 10 m.p.h. I put this down to the high top gear, about 4 to 1 I believe; the body was also rather heavy for a "Nine." Road-holding and steering were quite different from anything that I had tried before, but the seating position was very



Vintage versus *Modern.* *Actually, the Frazer-Nash may be said to embody the best of both eras.*

uncomfortable, possibly because I am rather long in the leg.

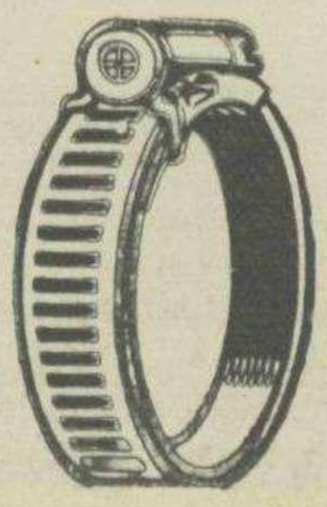
After owning the car for about six months I decided to go the whole hog and spend a bit of money on the engine. I communicated with Thompson and Taylor and arranged to run it down there and have a chat with them. The old snag came up again—the crankshaft. This I think was the weak spot of the Riley Nine. I was advised not to put the compression up to above 7 to 1, but if I watched the r.p.m. the crank would be O.K. T.T.'s lapped down the cylinder head and polished the ports, etc., and also fitted two Zenith Triple Diffusers. They also carried out several other modifications to the chassis. The great day came for me to collect the car, and the acceleration and crispness and general behaviour were most noticeable. I could never keep the carburetters in tune and the tick-over was non-existent. As I used the car for business trips the constant tinkering with the carburetters and the changing of plugs did not go down too well, but with everything well warmed up and a long run in front of one, the car was ideal.

Around this time my father had a 1927 "14/40" Vauxhall, and I was very impressed with this car. It had a very advanced engine for 1927, with aluminium head, balanced crank and extensive use of light alloy; the body and wings were all aluminium, and this car was the smoothest 4-cylinder that I know. Being an open tourer he decided to go in for a saloon and handed the Vauxhall over to me. After driving this car for some considerable mileage I learnt to appreciate it more and more. The gears were wonderfully quiet, the springing was rather woolly on corners until a set of Hartfords made a big improvement, the steering and general handling were full of character, m.p.g. was 25 all the year round (which I considered good for the size of the body, which would take three across the front and back), and the only trouble experienced in 60,000 miles was a stripped fibre timing wheel, which was replaced at a very low cost. Tyre wear was very light and averaged about 25,000 miles, front and back. The behaviour of this car made me wonder what a "30/98" Vauxhall would be like. I had never ridden in one of these cars but had always admired them, so I got in touch with MOTOR SPORT, and they put me on to Guy Warburton. Much to my surprise I found that he lived only a few miles away from my home, so I called round and had a chat with him and he showed me his stable. After this look round, and the sight of his Vauxhalls, the Riley fell out of favour, and a trial run convinced me that this was the car for me.

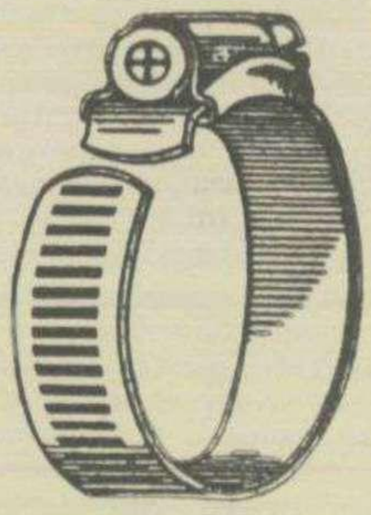
Once more a change of cars and this time I was the proud possessor of a "30/98." This was a 1924 model, with the unbalanced crankshaft and the cable brakes. After the Riley and other "revving" cars that I had been used to, the performance was a revelation—wonderful flexibility in top gear and power at low speeds; I think that my motoring really began with that Vauxhall. Of course, the brakes were almost non-existent, but somehow fine averages were put up without trying very hard. The old car seemed to eat up the miles without effort, and I do not think there is another touring car with quite the same appeal. By using the gears and the clutch stop a wonderful get-away could be made, which put many a small M.G., etc., in the shade. This car had a Solex carburetter, which seemed to me to be on the small side for the Vauxhall engine, so I popped round to Warburton to ask him about it. Whilst there he showed me a very fine 2-seater "30/98," one of the last to be built. This was a really magnificent car with a special body by Jarvis, finished in cream and red, of the boat type, with dickey seat, and the decking finished in mahogany, with copper rivets. It had run at Shelsley and Southport, and the engine was rather loose and woolly and was out of the chassis undergoing repair. Eventually I decided to purchase the car without engine and have my 1924 engine installed. This was done and the engine was fitted with a Zenith aeroplane-type carburetter and given a top overhaul. The performance was vastly improved by these alterations. This car had hydraulic brakes, and when they were used in conjunction with the handbrake, very good braking could be had. I never had any trouble with the brakes apart from the rubber washers in the pistons rotting and letting the fluid pass into the drums. A special rev. counter and several other refinements were fitted and the body was really comfortable for long-distance travel. Two petrol tanks were fitted, one at the rear holding 12 gallons, and one in the tail holding 14 gallons; petrol consumption averaged about 18 miles to the gallon, while oil consumption was very light. Mechanically the engine was very quiet, the only sound being the hiss of the big Zenith and the unmistakable "30/98" exhaust note, to my mind the most fascinating exhaust ever; alas, it is heard all too rarely these days. I think that these engines will wear for ever with reasonable maintenance; mine

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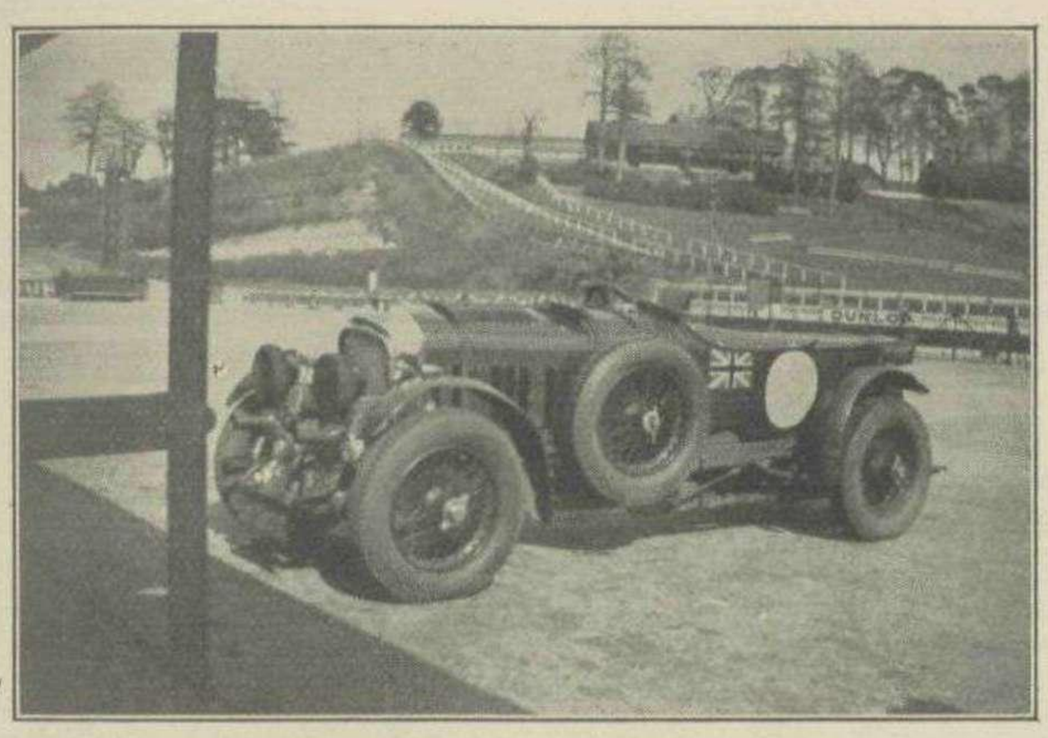
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The vintagents' claims are bound up in matters beyond "tradition." Performance, for example, as typified by this blower Bentley.

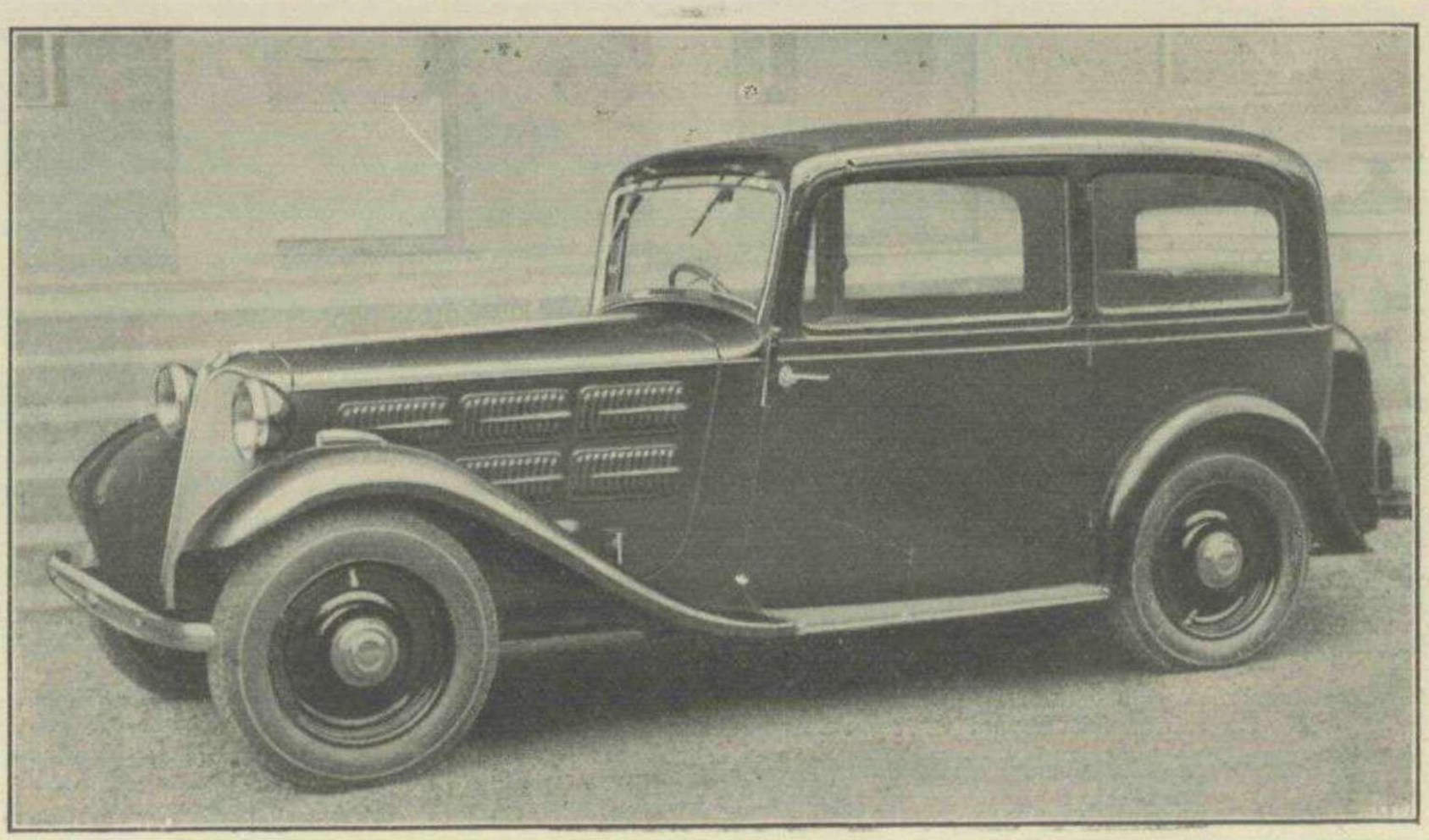
must have done many thousands of miles without rebore or bearing attention, and the performance seemed to be as good as new. I had well over 90 m.p.h. on the East Lancashire road and could reach the 80 mark at any time. Third gear performance was limited by the crankshaft, which was unbalanced, and at about 60 in third vibration set in. It was my ambition to have the balanced-type engine installed, but I could never find one for sale. The only trouble I had was in the gearbox, the spigot bearing collapsing, but after this had been replaced there was no further trouble. I was told that the rear axle was always liable to crack-up on these cars, but never had any trouble in this respect; also the duralumin rods never gave any cause for worry.

All this time I was running the "14/40" Vauxhall and had become really a Vauxhall enthusiast by now. In 1936 I sold the "14/40" for a fiver, a thing that I have always regretted, as these cars are very rare and it would be difficult to pick up a good one. I continued running the "30/98" until the war, when I had to part with it, which was the hardest knock of all. After the war I don't think the funds will run to a "30/98," but if not, then it will have to be a "14/40" if there is one left. Failing this, something that is definitely vintage; no doubt Motor Sport will come to the rescue, as always.

The numbers of my cars were as follows: Alvis (WU7633), M.G. (TF3518), Riley (VM4723), "14/40" Vauxhall (KA5943), "30/98" Vauxhalls (UC770 and FJ3349).

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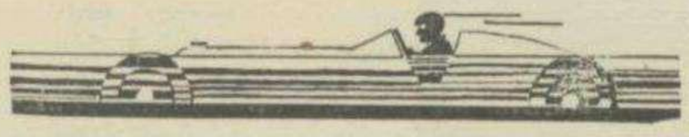
Finally, while we are on these subjects, let us look a little more deeply into aspects which affect both the vintage-modern and British-*versus*-the-Continentals discussions, namely, that of the less easily definable qualities of handling and controllability. Apart from measurable performance, reliability, economy, relative first-cost, finish, interior appointments, ease of running and divers lesser factors, a car is judged on its handling and controllability—which is largely a matter of a combination of elusive characteristics to the sum total of which we give the term "feel." When Motor Sport was able to conduct road-tests, it attempted, in its reports, to analyse this matter of "feel" very painstakingly under different headings, and those who set out to pass judgment on the merits and demerits of any given car, or types of cars, would be well advised to do likewise. This matter is usually loosely disposed of as embracing steering, road-holding and cornering. If a car is reported to possess good steering it is often taken to imply that it corners well. Actually, steering can be smooth, nicely-castored, free from vibrations and reactions, and the wheel well located, yet the car so endowed may roll when changing direction or skid without warning. On the other hand, a car which goes from A to B (B being round a 90° curve from A) very rapidly indeed, can still feel positively horrid to steer. Still going from A to B, one car may feel very unstable at X m.p.h. and another very safe at the same speed, yet go up to X+5 m.p.h. and it can be the latter car that flies into the ditch while the unstable affair, even though it seems to be about to fly over the hedge, will actually still be on the road as point B is reached—and beyond that, we hope. Do not say that a car has admirable road-holding when you hate cornering it fast or tramping on its anchors in the wet, and what you really want to imply is that a duchess could ride on the back seat over *pave* without complaining to the duke. In short, by all means take the factors which add up to "feel" into consideration when forming an opinion of cars of different nationalities (or ages), but first be careful to sift all the evidence, which is best done by defining it under the very separate headings of road-holding, steering, cornering and riding. Those who criticise from armchairs are apt to dismiss lightly this very important matter of "feel" and to pass on to measurable factors in making a comparison, especially if they can prove that the cars under consideration will actually go equally rapidly between our afore-mentioned points A and B. But a sane person who is about to put his signature to a cheque will carefully consider how well he liked that little dice between A and B, and, if he is really wise, will then let someone else go and try to repeat it at +5 m.p.h., before making his choice (between, for example, a well-equipped family car held down by sheer avoirdupois and a race-bred car with all that such a pedigree implies).



The B.M.W. is inevitably cited by supporters of the Continentals. Here it is seen in Type 45 2-litre saloon form, good for 75 m.p.h.

CARS I HAVE OWNED

In which Norman D. Routledge writes mainly of war-time motoring and mostly of Riley and Alvis cars.—Ed.



MY ardent love of cars and fast motoring was born in me, and fostered by my father.

In my youth I remember with pleasure many runs in an old Phœnix, a Saxon, a Star and a 3-litre Vanden Plas Bentley owned by my father.

The last I myself possessed for three brief months between father's decease and the winding-up of his business.

Although I could handle our previous car—a "20/60" Star—quite well, I must admit I found the Bentley a handful. Eventually, by much application and practice I finally mastered the gearbox, and since then no other has troubled me greatly.

The old Bentley was a superb motor. I did some 9,000 miles in her all told, including several very fast runs, one from my home in West Yorkshire to Newcastle and back inside five hours (average speed about 44 m.p.h.), but she was tiring to drive fast and not too good on corners.

After I parted with her—it nearly broke my heart—I was without a car of my own for a year or two, during which time I got married and proceeded to educate my wife to a state of motoristic lunacy.

To do this correctly and in every sense of the word, also to satisfy my own desires, I procured for a song Riley No. 1, a 1928 tourer with light fabric body (VJ1078).

With the aid of my wife, everything except the gearbox was stripped right down, and after cleaning, laid out for inspection.

The big ends were taken up, new bushes made for the con. rods, and new rings, new crown wheel and pinion, new king pins, etc., fitted. Much "spit and polish" was applied to the engine, the exhaust and inlet manifold ports were mated with those in the head (I marvelled at the overlap between these) and, finally, an old Riley trick was tried, the substitution of an exhaust camshaft for the existing inlet one to give a 30° greater valve period. With much pleasure I record that she started first swing after the two Zeniths had been flooded.

On the road she proved quite lively and fast, but the back wheels bucked at over 55 m.p.h. A friend timed her to do 70 once, but he could not pass me with his "Inter." Norton as I was jumping all over the road. (Incidentally, I had hold of my small daughter by the neck to assist the force of gravity to keep her seated!)

Time showed, however, that this car was under-geared and I tried, by fitting very oversize tyres, to remedy this. Alas, one day during a hectic blind down A2 *en route* to see my mother-in-law (the run there and back being the only pleasure I got out of these trips) No. 2 rod hopped off the crankshaft and modified the block.

Now in our vicinity there lived a certain Mr. Penfold—long may he live and prosper. I hied me to his "wreckers" yard at Gravesend and bought a complete engine, less sump, for a mere "quid and a quarter."

So once more we motored, but this time the engine was not hotted up, it was just slapped straight in. We (the wife and I) considered ourselves good at this by now.

Perhaps I would still be running this car if I had not seen an advertisement in the *Motor* extolling the virtues of a "Brooklands" Riley Nine with "red wheels, huge brakes." We went, we saw, we all got in, wife, child and self, and it conquered. £40 was handed over and she was ours.

The day I collected her it rained, the battery was flat, the mudguards rattled like Sid Walker's barrow, and the (censored) hood would not work; this last complaint was soon caught by the wiper, and by then it was dark.

We got home somehow, and during the next few weeks I took the "lid" off and tickled the valves with great care and tuned the twin S.U.s with more care than skill. The mudguards were fixed—the rear with ease; the front nearly beat me until I gave up trying to fit them on the brake back plates and stuck them on the chassis. One early morning in Ilford I stopped at the traffic lights and was horrified to see that the whole of the nearside front guard had gone—due to the exhaust. I never heard it depart. However, a search revealed it a little way back, and it was stowed inside, where it spitefully wrecked a pair of silk stockings before we got home. Later, I am happy to say, I mastered these errant guards.

During 1939 I frequently visited grass track circuits near home, at Ashford, Brands Hatch, Layhams Farm, Eastry, and also the Palace, and a desire to drive in the Imperial Plate assailed me. I made a study of Crystal Palace track and decided at the end of September to pull down the "Brooklands" and rebuild and hot her up. Then came the war, but my plans were not interfered with, only slowed down, and owing to the panic I was able to pick up Riley No. 2, a saloon (JD1545) to use as a hack.

However, to return to the "Brooklands" model (WK7162). Enquiries have proved that she belonged to Peacock and was raced by him in 1929, and her last appearance on the track that I can trace was in the Relay race at Brooklands in 1935. I am pretty certain that she had not the original engine in when I became her owner. So I started from scratch; off came the body and out came the "woiks." Much very careful thought was given to hotting her up. The head and valves were copperised, new pistons obtained giving a compression ratio of 8.2 to 1, new camshafts fitted, giving a terrific lift very quickly, all the "insides" were polished and four Amal carburetters were fitted, using a Ki-gass injector for starting and dispensing with the air slides. I used No. 60 jets and found by experiment that the bottom-but-one slot was best for the needles.

To tune these carburetters I set them all roughly the same, and then at about 1,000 r.p.m. cut out any two plugs and made adjustments until the results were the same whichever plugs were "cut."

The off-side door was cut away for elbow room, the near-side sealed up and the exhaust system run fairly straight through a "Brooklands" silencer and terminated just aft of the rear axle.

Meanwhile I had procured Riley No. 4 (NG1961), a black alloy-bodied saloon that had been bored out .060" due to a gudgeon pin floating unduly and scoring the block. This was a grand car despite a slight rear axle whine. She could beat up a local Riley "Gamecock," she handled well, steered to a thou., and the brakes were excellent. The single Solex carburetter gave better economy than any other Riley I have had, and she started superbly on the coldest morning, despite the fact that she always slept out—the "Brooklands" had the garage. During the time I ran her she impressed me very favourably and her staid appearance certainly belied her performance. Then it happened!

I heard of a Riley "12/6" "Kestrel," a beautiful-looking car, and so this last "Nine" and some cash changed hands for this 1934 Riley (WD6248), and work on the "Brooklands" carried on.

The "12/6" was a flop; the performance was poor after my "Nines," she was extravagant, and a sudden throttle opening caused her to sneeze like a man with hay fever. I could not cure this annoying sneezing, whatsoever I did; hot or cold, a sudden jab produced a cough-cum-sneeze and a jet of flame through the bonnet louvres.

Then, as though I had not had enough, Jerry bombed the factory where I worked and knocked the "12/6" about a little. This was easily repaired, but it is a pity it was not a direct hit. Another playful bomb blew the garage window in and the door out, but the "Brooklands" wasn't damaged.

I now had to move to Bedford with my employers, so September, 1940, saw the "Brooklands" hastily finished or, at least, made ready for the road.

I licensed her for the last quarter of 1940, and on the first of that month, in a blinding rainstorm, we dashed round Rochester together in ecstasy. The tuning up had been a success, she was faster, and banging the throttle open produced really good acceleration. So in October we moved lock, stock, barrel and cars.

We went *via* Gravesend ferry and I opened the "Brooklands" out on the Southend arterial road; a speed of 72 in third gear and 84 in top was reached.

Whilst at Bedford every Saturday afternoon was given up to the "Brooklands," and my friend Bully, with his Norton, used to accompany me, and he took several very good snaps of the car on corners.

I attained a speedometer reading of 87–88 m.p.h. on one of these jaunts, and I have reason to believe that this is just about accurate, as the Norton was very hard put to pass me—he seemed to take an age to travel past the length of the car.

Bedford did not suit me, so at the end of October the "Brooklands" was

stored and we moved to Yorkshire again, the "12/6" taking us the 142 miles from Bedford in 4½ hours and with umpteen spits and sneezes. Here I was employed as outside representative with an aircraft manufacturer—I still am—and I needed a reliable fast car for my work. As finances were strained and the "12/6" was showing signs of strain, too, an epic journey was taken to Bedford to collect the "Brooklands."

We started off from Leeds one night at 6 p.m. early in February, 1941; all told the crew was self, Bully, wife, daughter, aged five, and son, aged six weeks (we train them young), and at 6.30 it started to snow. Near Newark the wiper pinion sheared and a repair had to be effected. Luckily the wiper was on the near side, so two nuts were locked together on the spindle in place of the band lever, and these were turned by the passenger with a box spanner to provide visibility.

The rise out of Grantham nearly beat us, but we did it at last and reached Bedford after losing our way at least 100 times, at roughly 9 a.m. the next day (we had planned to get there in six or seven hours).

Nothing daunted, we had breakfast, saw a few friends who rightly thought us mad, collected the "Brooklands" and set off for home about 2 p.m., the roads still being very much under the weather.

To save fuel the "12/6" towed the "Brooklands," and I in the latter collected all the slush. Also, any traffic we met covered me with icy water.

Time drew on and eventually it was decided to start the "Brooklands" and continue separately. The push rods were fitted (they had been removed to ease the valve springs) and soon she was proceeding under her own power. It was late now, about 8 p.m., and as I was cold and tired I set the pace and sang and slapped my face to keep myself awake. Towards 9 p.m. the roads were frozen and rutted, so progress was slow and we eventually got home about 1 a.m. on yet another day, tired, grimy and unutterably weary. By 2.30 a.m. we were in bed, and were up again at 6.30 a.m.; all for the love of a Riley!

Soon after this trip the "12/6" threw No. 3 rod which fractured the middle main bearing housing. Another motor was indicated and the "Brooklands" was forthwith used on work of national importance, so now, possibly for the first and last time, nine horses and four Amals were on war work!

Often I gave Service personnel lifts, and I wonder what they thought of her and me; they had no screen, and the rush of wind, coupled with the screaming gears and howling exhaust as we passed people in third gear, must have been nerve-racking for the uninitiated; still, they got what they thumbed for!

At last the "12/6" was ready, and as I sometimes had to take passengers about, I reluctantly laid up the "Brooklands" and once more went around the countryside in the "12/6."

Despite all my efforts and a reconditioned engine, she was not a success, and mindful of previous experiences, I turned my thoughts to a "12/4" of some renowned make. I just missed a Riley and then I found an Alvis "Firefly" sports saloon. I did not like the engine—in theory it still appears to be far from perfection—but here was a "12/4," and I bought it.

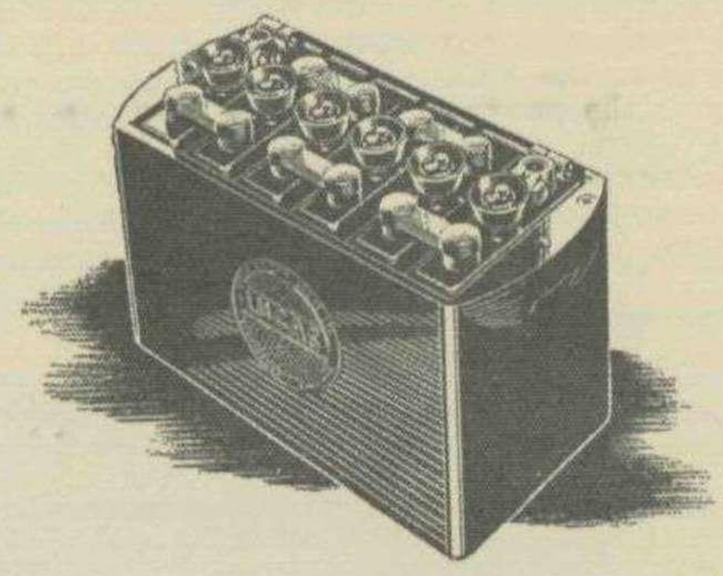
The first week or two I wasn't at all impressed and then, as I got to know and understand her, I grew to cherish her as much as I did the "Brooklands." First registered in Glasgow, she had, I believe, been a police car (US2938) and no 1½-litre saloon could touch me.

The engine still appears wrong to my idea, theoretically only; practically I regard it as extremely good and the last word in real reliability. "Alvivacity" has made another conquest.

The Alvis and I got on fine together; we wandered all over England and Scotland doing as many as 430 miles in a day, often with only one or two stops. I drove her from Leeds to well north of Inverness, some 427 miles, inside 9½ hours, stopping only to refuel. I ate as I drove, and arrived very fresh—in fact, I went out shooting the same evening!

My record mileage for one month was nearly 2,500, and the first eight days realised 1,600 of this total; for sheer reliability she is unequalled. Seldom did

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I need to lift the bonnet, except between trips of well over 400 miles. Fuel consumption could be 26.7 m.p.g. not exceeding 3,000 r.p.m., but as I had to hurry it was, as a rule, nearer 23 m.p.g. Three things only do I criticise. The seats were too low and I had to peer over the scuttle until I fitted wood blocks to raise them—this fault is a complaint of every "Firefly" owner I have met. Next, the front wheels have a habit of fracturing round the heads of the spokes if one corners very fast; I may be wrong, but I believe a wider front track would cure this. Lastly, the running boards were swept back from the front guards and got in the way when one had to get in or out, and they "hit the deck" on the hump-backed bridges in one district of Scotland, so I hacked them off just forward of the front doors, and all was well.

After some 12,000 miles I became convinced that there is nothing like an Alvis, except another, and I got an urge for a f.w.d. model, as yet unsatisfied.

Then, in October, 1941, it happened. I was coming home on a ring road near Leeds, and I assumed he would stop at the major road sign he was approaching. He assumed he could get across before I reached the crossing, and we were both wrong. In a desperate effort to avoid him I slewed the Alvis round and slid into his Morris, making contact with the front off-side dumb-iron; this had an adverse effect on the alignment of a perfectly good Alvis chassis, and wrecked one Morris saloon.

As I had been living in a furnished house and had had to meet some heavy expenses, I had not many shekels to spare. I had parted with the "Brooklands" not two months before this. So I decided to buy an ancient Austin Seven "Swallow" saloon (WX954) and use this throughout the winter, after first checking over the power unit.

This was done and I became an "Austineer." The "Swallow" had guts, although its radiator was too small, and boiled like the deuce when the car was driven hard. I got to know every pool, well, stream, and horse-trough between here and Stranraer, and always carried a two-gallon can of coolant as spare.

The winter of 1941–42 stands out in my memory as one of snow and ice; every trip to work was a "Monte Carlo" in itself, and a spade was added to my spares in the back.

This ancient infant Austin ploughed her way through many a foot-deep drift, even assisted by myself at the rear and a well-designed hand throttle, on a few rare occasions. Despite the fact that the starter would not work when the car was cold, I was always first away from the factory on the coldest days.

On my Scottish trip, as Bowes Moor was snowed up I had to take the coast road, and had the misfortune to collapse a wheel on the bad surface, so I continued less spare. At Perth I stopped to enquire the state of the roads through the Grampians, and had to mend a puncture on the pavement outside Perth police station.

When I reached Inverness I was bent like a bow and very tender in parts, and after completing the rest of the journey I set off back home, and succeeded in cramming 300 miles of hectic rut-hopping into one terrible day during which parts of my anatomy became even more tender, and I had to repair two more punctures *en route*.

On arriving home my wife asked me to take her to town. I did so, and then told her I hated the sight of the x—!=! Austin.

That Austin had a heart as big as the *Ark Royal* and never knew when it was beaten; it is now a sort of rotor tiller in the hands of a market gardener friend of mine.

A very rare motor succeeded the Austin; it was a 2 L.T.S. Ballot Weymann saloon (YO9064) of about 1927 or 8 vintage. I got this more for fun than anything else and to satisfy a need for a big car after my "Austinette," and also because I was compiling a composite Alvis, using a "Silver Eagle" chassis, Van den Plas coupé and my "Firefly" engine and gearbox, I needing a trusty hack.

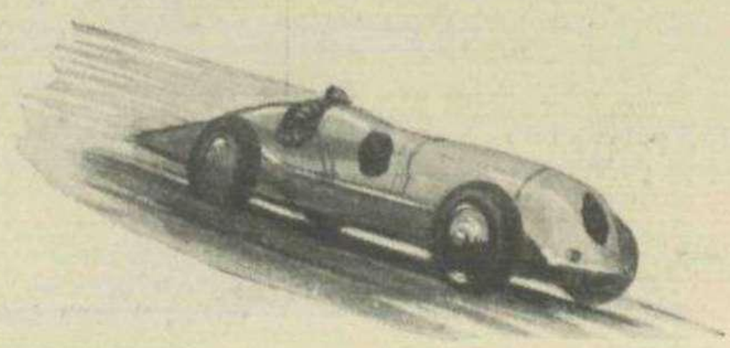
The Ballot arrived by train and was delivered without running. After a de-coke (my excuse to look inside) I tried to start her and found I could not understand the *carburetteur*, which was very French, and that the magneto was very dead.

So I changed the gasworks in favour of a trusty S.U. and had the magneto overhauled. Apart from constant trouble due to gum scaling off the inside of the 17-gallon petrol tank and choking the pipes, she was a great success. She was a colossal structure, literally yards long, and had the most amazing top-gear performance I have ever known, despite a 4 to 1 top gear and 6.00″×20″ wheels.

We trundled around together for some six months, and very good fun it was, too; 75 was about the maximum, and the r.p.m. limit about 3,500 to 4,000 as the stroke was 130 mm. She had a rather Bentley feel, and handled beautifully, the steering being particularly accurate and the servo brakes quite efficient.

After the initial trouble the car always started instantly, and had it been of more reasonable proportions would have been a great success. I used to tell friends, "That's my car outside, the one 100 yards long!" However, I once gave eight people a ride and all but two were seated, and none was cramped; I believe a family of two could live in the thing.

Work on my Alvis-Special proceeded as rapidly as possible, bearing in mind the coming winter and the draughty Ballot fabric body. I had the engine sleeved and generally re-conditioned, with new valves, springs, etc., and fiddled about with the cylinder head and manifold, polishing the interiors with emery cloth to promote efficiency. I took the moquette seats out and fitted the leather ones—ex "Firefly," also upholstered the interior in leatherette to match. The woodwork was taken out and painted, the steering raked as low as possible, wheel in your lap style, and several of my whims pandered to. The screen was modified to open fully, in the event of fog or severe icing, a large brake pedal was fitted to the clutch lever, and the self-change was altered from the steering column to normal gear lever position. The latter alteration cut out some five pivot points and reduced the amount of lost movement to the minimum. The aluminium mudguards were stiffened up at the attachment points, a very necessary job, as I like my shockers tight, and, lastly, the whole car was re-wired.



I had spent about six or seven months on the job and was very pleased with the result, although as I had used a 4.5 to 1 final drive ratio the car is rather high geared. Eventually I intend to fit a blower giving about 5–6 lb./sq. in. boost, which will improve the power output and cope with the high gear ratio to advantage. This Alvis was re-registered EWR621, being my first three-lettered car.

My present Alvis handles even better than the first, due no doubt to the wider track, which bears out my previous remarks. I still think that crab-tracking would prove even more successful and I hope to incorporate this feature in another "special" I am building.

Since October 1st Alvis II and I have done some 7,000 miles with no trouble at all bar one radiator leak, which was cured with a tin of "dope." Since the car was run-in I have never spared her, and I have a game with myself on certain corners between here and work as to just how fast I can get round them.

Experience has shown I can better the figures of Alvis I without spoke trouble, again proving my point, and I can nearly equal the "Brooklands's" figures on one corner; this is due to the Wilson box as I had to change down on both cars, but have the "hands on" advantage with the Alvis.

I honestly believe that a really good Alvis "Firefly" is equal to any standard unblown 1½-litre. I would back mine—were it possible—against my old 3-litre Bentley, the latter having the advantage only on overall speed. The Alvis would excel on corners and ease of handling, with equal reliability and acceleration. Using the Wilson box seconds could be gained on the getaway from lights or other hold-ups. No doubt this expression of my views invites criticism, but that is my opinion—the Bentley was not the "speed model" by the way.

At present I am building another "special," and my ideals are concentrated on an unblown 1½- or 2-litre job with vivid performance and high power-to-weight ratio. I am using my first Alvis chassis, modified, of course (with, possibly, i.f.s. ex Alvis or Lancia "Lambda," if I can adapt one, to give me a crab track). Engine still doubtful, but I fancy a 4-cylinder for reliability, with, if possible, a close-ratio Wilson E.N.V. gearbox. The Alvis rear axle will be used with either a 5.22 to 1, 4.77 to 1, or 4.5 to 1 axle ratio, depending upon the type, of course.

My objection to blowing is that the "blower class" are usually experts—I am not, so I must take my place with the amateurs in, I hope, the near future.



How to Get Rich

If you do not object to commercialising your enthusiasm for fast motor-cars, there is an infallible method awaiting you of entering a business which requires little capital and aims at an immense turn-over. There is really no need to know much about cars. All you require is a backyard, or two or three lock-up garages, a regular order for the motoring weeklies and a regular supply of this paper. When a private owner advertises a sports car at a reasonable and fair sum, either you or an accomplice call on him, enthuse over the car, and purchase it. The next step is to tow it to your premises and plaster it with paint, preferably Italian racing red. All that now remains is to advertise the vehicle in the motoring papers as "recently overhauled and resprayed, very fast, owner joining up," at the same time putting up the price to about six times what you paid for it. You then sit at your telephone awaiting some young sucker who is desperately keen to acquire a car of the make concerned. If your glib exaggeration of its condition, its past owners and its racing career fail to sell it, you can be sure that, sooner or later, another vendor will grow jealous of your stock and will buy it up—admittedly not at six times its value, but making you a fiver or a tenner on each car. If this doesn't happen you can always dispose of the remains to a breaker after trying your luck with it for a couple of years, at the price it will then be worth, and still you have only lost a tenner or so. Actually, trading on the growing desire on the part of those now in the Services and other organisations (who are winning the war for you) to own sports machinery, you should do very much better than that. Youngsters without experience will fairly easily believe your fantastic claims for m.p.h. and r.p.m., and it is surprising how new paint and some judicious polishing of visible parts attracts attention away from worn gears and spent engines. In any case, if you do not always manage to sell that elderly Frazer-Nash you bought for £15, for a round £90, or get rid of that Bugatti you got in pieces for £35 and somehow threw together, for £150, you will still have a fairly pleasant existence out of the Army, with petrol to burn, and a chance to unload your more unsaleable "bargains" on to your fellow vendors and then "sink-their-ship" by telling as many clients as possible just what fearful cars these were. Moreover, to safeguard yourself from complete insolvency, you can, if you wish, go to work in the ordinary way and run your business from your office and in the evenings. Of course, by asking such stupidly high prices for old or spent cars you keep them away from the real enthusiast who would like to rebuild them, until they are so aged or soiled as to be all but worthless. But what price the enthusiast, if you catch your sucker? There is just a possibility that after the war things may not be so easy for you. Authority, they do say, will



Wooding's Talbot leads Elgood's famous 4½-litre Bentley and the Bowler-Hoffman-Special on the Brooklands banking.

frown on unskilled folk who seek to possess trade plates and garage businesses. Owners of cars such as the Bugatti may tumble to your little game and take great care that they sell only to *bona fide* private owners when they decide to dispose of their cars at a fair price. Genuine enthusiasts, while having no compunction about getting the highest reasonable sum of money when selling a personal car in order that it may make way for another, may grow suspicious of club members whose cars always look far smarter when they are for sale than when they are on the road and who change such cars with considerable frequency, almost always at a nice profit. They may decide not to have dealings with vendors who patently know very little, historically or mechanically, about the cars they have to sell. After all, they can always get a fair deal from those in the Trade who race their own cars against those of their clients, so that they make a name for themselves in a world hard enough in all conscience to enter, and because, in any case, they enjoy doing so. However, until that day dawns you should do quite well if you decide to become an amateur motor-car vendor and you stand a chance of becoming quite rich.

* * *

The Future

The Motor has been publishing a valuable series of interviews with leaders of the Industry in an attempt to collect their views about the future. Let us see how the results of some of these interviews seem to the enthusiast. H. F. S. Morgan's keynote is economy, with emphasis on engines capable of running 80,000 miles without a rebore, automatic chassis lubrication to obviate early wear of chassis parts, a 4-speed gearbox with a high top ratio to reduce fuel consumption, and so on. He stated, however, that he would hate to see the roads crowded with cars of very low power and performance, regarding them as more dangerous than fast cars. He hoped that, if the horse-power tax has to remain, it may be considerably reduced. G. van Vestraut hopes for better accessibility, smaller engines achieving a m.e.p. of anything up to 180-200 lb./sq. in. with sleeve valves, using 100 octane fuel, a reversion to separate gearboxes, and increased employment of i.f.s. W. R. Turner, of Standards, dislikes the idea of standardisation, and very much dislikes the horse-power tax. He hopes for a combined tax on fuel and engine capacity. He is interested in plastics and believes that design has not yet reached anything like finality. C. M. van Eugen, of Wolseleys, considers that future design will be governed by political and economic conditions, and recognises that each country builds a different sort of car. He thinks in terms of typically British cars, rendered inexpensive by increasing standardisation. Edward Turner, of B.S.A.s, thinks mainly along lines of engineering progression, embracing integral construction, smaller wheels, air-cooling and fluid flywheels. He would like to see taxation based on fuel and on the area occupied by the car. Tom Brown, of the Nuffield Organisation, seeks stronger, lighter cars, economical operation, and a new tax that will encourage these things. He deplores suggestions for rationalisation of the Industry and hopes to see 90–100 octane fuels normally available. These ambitious interviews, of which the above extracts are taken from only a few, clearly indicate that the British Motor Industry intends to enter the peace with plenty of fighting spirit. However, regarded solely from the viewpoint of the enthusiast, the findings are a little disappointing, sensible though they are to those seeking to purchase better transportation. No one seems to have thought in terms of complete designs, such as those outlined last month in this paper by Capt. Moon, and this month by Cecil Clutton. If cars of this calibre do not become available to the sporting motorists after the war, they will probably prefer to buy and recondition existing and vintage high-performance cars rather than speculate in the new-car market.

* * *

Auction Sale

Auction sales at breakers' yards are a sufficiently rare happening to warrant a little attention. At Ash Vale, near the military town of Aldershot, such a sale was held last month and the first shock was the extreme tidiness of the yard. So neatly were the various components laid out that the enthusiast had no great difficulty in spotting rare items like a Kissle front axle and Bianchi front and rear axles, and radiators that once graced "12/50" Alvis, "30/98" Vauxhall, "18/80" and 2-litre M.G. and 2-litre Lagonda amongst a staggeringly large stack of utility spares. Engines there were in plenty, including Bayliss-Thomas, o.h.c. Chater-Lea, etc. A 21-h.p. Talbot engine went for 3s., Lea-Francis, Wolseley Hornet and M.G. back axles fetched 2s. apiece, a Riley pre-selector gearbox £1, a 1936 Morris Ten engine 2s., while a complete Morris Ten Series M body and chassis unit fell under the hammer for a mere half-crown. A Riley Six radiator cost the buyer 5s. and 4- or 6-cylinder engines of this make went for 2s. a time. More expensive were a single-cylinder de Dion of about 1910 vintage, in poor condition, and a 4-cylinder pre-1914 Metallurgique 2-seater; Goodey, the Twyford breaker, got these for 29s. and 67s., respectively.

* * *

A Useful Book

Readers who amuse themselves with solid-scale models of aircraft—incidentally, why not of cars?—will find "Camouflage, 1914–1918" most interesting on the subject of last-war aircraft and their correct markings and colouring. It is available from the *Aero Modeller* offices, price 3s. 6d., and contains photographs and colour plates of most of the 1914–18 types—aircraft which Dick Nash and Richard Shuttleworth, of our world, took considerable trouble to preserve.

* * *

Odd Spot

From the *Evening Standard*:—"Early the next morning we heard the rumbling of heavy motor-cars. They were British!" The exclamation mark is theirs.

NOTICE!

It has been reported that a certain person has been masquerading as the northern representative of MOTOR SPORT.

We would like our readers, and anyone else whom it may concern, to know that MOTOR SPORT has not appointed a northern representative. If at any time an appointment is made it will be duly announced in MOTOR SPORT. In the meantime we shall be pleased if our readers will report any inconvenience caused. On definite evidence proceedings will be taken.

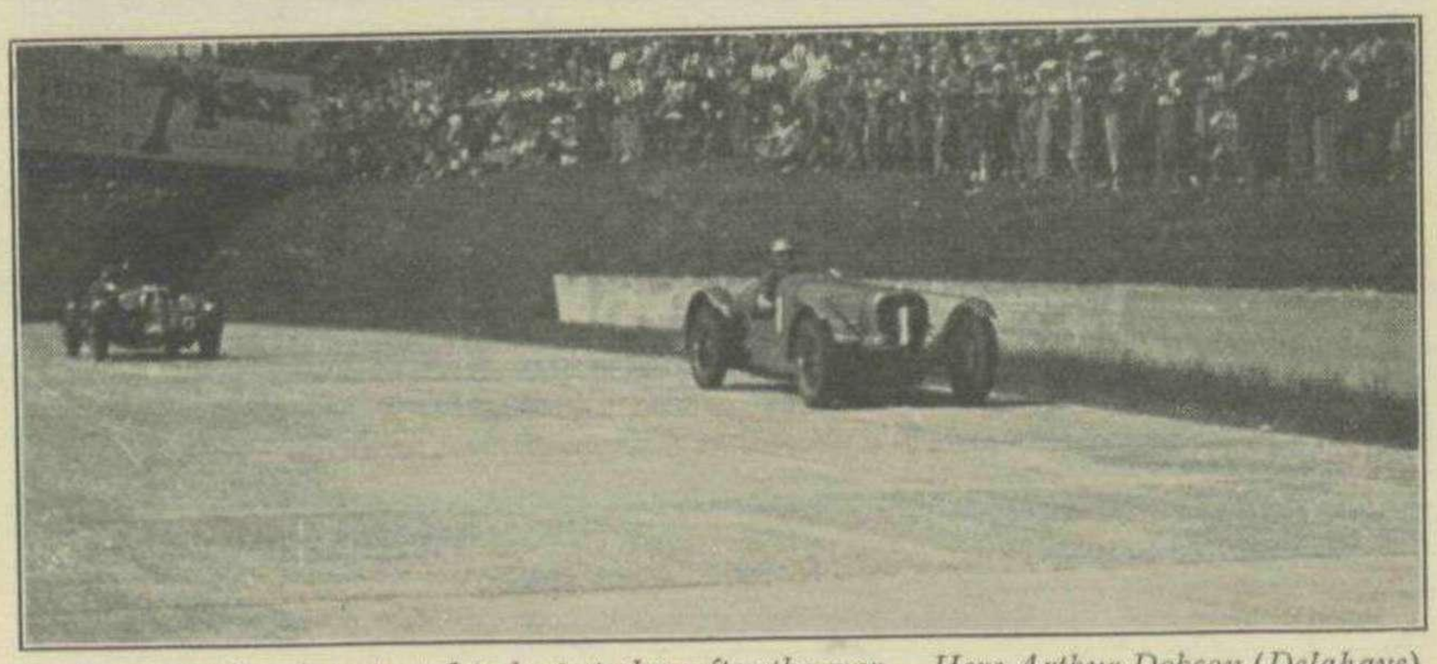
Club News

WE HEAR

F/O. G. L. Weaver still has his 1925 s.v. Aston-Martin stored away and hopes some day to give it the attention it deserves, although he has not seen it since he joined the R.A.F. early in 1940. Two pre-1914 cars present themselves for saving—a 1912 15.9-h.p. 4-cylinder Star tourer, with dual ignition and beaded-edge tyres, in London, and a 1914 12-h.p. Newton-Bennett in "showroom" order, with varnished touring body, rear screen, acetylene headlamps, etc., in the Midlands. Both are looking for good homes and would dispose of themselves in return for about £20 in each instance. Then, under "Wanted," is an open body for a 3-litre "Blue Label" Bentley which is in course of complete renovation, and an instruction book for a 7th Series Lancia "Lambda." Ian Metcalfe has for sale a most imposing open Lancia "Dilambda," with new hood and tonneau, good boots and an appearance enough to give the committee of the Pedestrians' Association a distinct communal headache. His own car is now a Lancia "Augusta" saloon. Early small cars are in no danger of fading away—we told some while ago of an Eric-Longden which is carefully preserved, and this has resulted in a letter from a possible former owner, now an R.A.F. Flying Officer, who ran his car as late as 1933, and who remarks that it had an aluminium 2-seater body with outside copper exhaust system, whose only silencer was a small cast fish-tail, "quite inadequate for the 1933 police." The number was XO2508, if anyone knows more of this interesting device. A Scarborough garage is reported to have a 1926 Cubitt tourer in use as a hack, and in the same area is a 1926 "12/22" Lea-Francis, possibly for sale, a 1922 Sunbeam tourer in fine condition, on N.F.S. duties, a Type 40 Bugatti with lorry body, carrying cow cake, and a 5-litre Bugatti on A.R.P. duties. We also hear of a 1926 Leyland "Lion" omnibus still in use in Scotland, and have noticed in London a very old A.E.C. lorry, its radiator tubes liberally plugged where breakages have occurred.

Cecil Clutton's R.A.F. duties have taken him to the North, where he has been seen in company with Kenneth Neve, Porky Lees, and others. Neve has sold his "30/98" Vauxhall and bought a 9′ 9″ wheelbase 4½-litre Bentley, while the T.T. Humber was started up momentarily in honour of Sam's visit. John Cooper sold his dismantled Type 38 Bugatti to Rex Motors and has for disposal a 1934 Alvis "Firefly" with a body from a 1929 big-port Alvis "12/50," the whole in 100 per cent. mechanical condition, for which he asks £27 or near offer, the car needing finishing and painting. He has acquired a 1929 Aston-Martin "International" 2-seater about which he is being advised by Beebee, an R.A.F. enthusiast, who owns a 1931 "International" and the ex-Morris-Goodall 1933 Le Mans Aston-Martin, AMD333. Julian Fall is busy negotiating for a side-valve "30/98" Vauxhall 4-seater from Shortt, and he is joining the Bugatti Owners' Club, having acquired Saunders's Type 22 Bugatti. E. J. Steel has had the engine of the early Alldays-and-Onions running; he bought it through the Motor Sport Register, we believe, for £7 10s., and it seems likely to be of "Brighton" antiquity. E. R. Nichol is said to have enough work on hand for enthusiasts at Hounslow to keep him busy for some two years. He recently installed a reconditioned Ford V8 engine into a Lancia "Lambda" and is altering M. E. Nixon's Atalanta to his special requirements, taking out the Talbot engine and substituting a blown 2-litre Lagonda engine. He has also completely stripped down a 3-litre Sunbeam and has two 3-litre Bentley engines, a T.T. Replica Frazer-Nash, a Rapier engine and a Riley chassis awaiting attention. Sports cars on official duties seen recently in the South include various M.G.s, one comp. shod and one a T-type coupé, two 3-litre Invictas, a "Hyper" Lea-Francis saloon, an Aston-Martin and several old-school Bentleys. Denyer has a 1928 "Hyper" Lea-Francis 4-seater, his well-known "12/50" trials Lea-Francis, a 2-seater Lea-Francis with two-port Meadows engine which he used for continental holidays, a Rover saloon which he ran in an M.C.C. High-Speed Trial, a Ner-a-car, and an outboard motor-boat, all in safe storage. His present mode of transport fluctuates between a bicycle and an M.A.C. Velocette, while D. S. Jenkinson is rebuilding a K.S.S. Velocette. Then Sharp has acquired an excellent 1929 T.T. Replica Scott and has a magnificent Maybach-transmission 3-litre Lagonda saloon, once owned by Ogle, and before that by Arthur Baron, in storage. Scroggs has his immortal Trojan again in commission, now with wire wheels. First photograph for the Motor Sport Album of Readers' Cars is of C. J. L. Mertens's 1928 4½-litre Bentley, which has done some 85,000 miles without trouble, will still exceed 90 m.p.h. and, handicapped by a cone clutch before McKenzie fitted it with a Borg and Beck, climbed Lewes in 29.59 secs. Veteran news from the North, contributed by Lt. R. S. Shapley, R.E., is that York Autowreckers have a 1913 10-h.p. Stanley steamer and an 1899 Weston steamer, *not for sale*, and are storing an early Wolseley Twenty for Fl. Lt. Thompson, who was responsible for rebuilding the 1906 Colibri, which is now in Kirk Museum, York. The same breaker, who is a genuine enthusiast, sold a 10-h.p. 3-cylinder Turner-Messe flash-boiler steamer to a Hull dealer, and someone is rumoured to be sending it to a museum. A most interesting completely underslung chassis, on the lines of the "flat-iron" Thomas-Special, which is apparently the 750-c.c. car on which Thomas was working at the time of his death, has come to light and will, we hope, be saved. Apparently it has ½-elliptic front springs, ¼-elliptic rear springs, and a wheelbase of 9′ 6″, and there are enough spares to build a second chassis. Sydney Allard motors professionally in small Fords these days, but has bought his brother's Ariel, with 500-c.c. engine in a 350-c.c. type frame, and Canham uses a Fiat 500, as do Biggs and Marcus Chambers. The type-setter who made Denly into "Denby" in the Editor's account of the 1933 Mille Miglia last month has duly been made to write the thing out a few thousand times! The Editor's private address is now 70, Bolingbroke Grove, Wandsworth Common, London, S.W.11.

Rowland of Byfleet has for sale an early blown 1,100-c.c. Alta and the ex-Reiss "Musketeer" M.G.



Sports-car racing is expected to be popular after the war. Here Arthur Dobson (Delahaye) outdrives Hugh Hunter (Alfa-Romeo) in the "Fastest Sports Car" Campbell Circuit race at Brooklands.

COVER PICTURE

This month's cover picture is topical, representing as it does the start of the Donington G.P., run early in October. It shows the cars leaving the line in the 1935 race. The front row, left to right, comprises Sommer's Alfa-Romeo, Farina's V8 Maserati, which led to half-distance, and McClure's Riley. Shuttleworth's Alfa-Romeo, Howe's "3.3" Bugatti and Featherstonhaugh's "2.9" Maserati make the second row. Shuttleworth won at 63.97 m.p.h. from Howe and Charlie Martin on "3.3" Bugattis.

★

750 CLUB

The monthly meeting for September was rather better attended than that of the previous month, although not many club officers were present. We were glad to see Christopher Brown and his lady, after a long absence, and Lt. Marcus Chambers, R.N., turned up after lunch. Interest in racing for unblown 750-c.c. road-equipped cars seems to be growing, but to obtain permission to use decent circuits, or otherwise to find a suitably non-circus-like course, is the problem. M. E. Nixon suggests buying up a disused gravel pit, explaining that such land is the cheapest to buy, a circuit on its floor would be out of public view, plenty of trials-going would be had, and usually a pub is found close by. The next "Chez August" meeting, at which this and kindred matters can be discussed, will be on Sunday, October 3rd, at 1.30 p.m.

★

A CLUB IN N. AFRICA

An airgraph from Sgt. Wythe, of the British North Africa Forces, dated August 10th, tells us that he hoped to gather together a dozen or so enthusiasts in khaki, for just the same purpose for which we get together at club meetings over here. Wythe cheerfully remarks that, although he hadn't seen a real sports car for some nine months, the local cars being mostly F.W.D. Citroens, if one excludes a Georges-Irat in full flight (British industry take note!) he and his friends hoped soon to come upon some 1½-litre Alfas or Maseratis. Although this was written before the surrender of Italy, they were looking forward to an early return to places like Lewes, Brighton, and Dancer's End, and to seeing Mays and "Bira" racing again at the Palace.

★

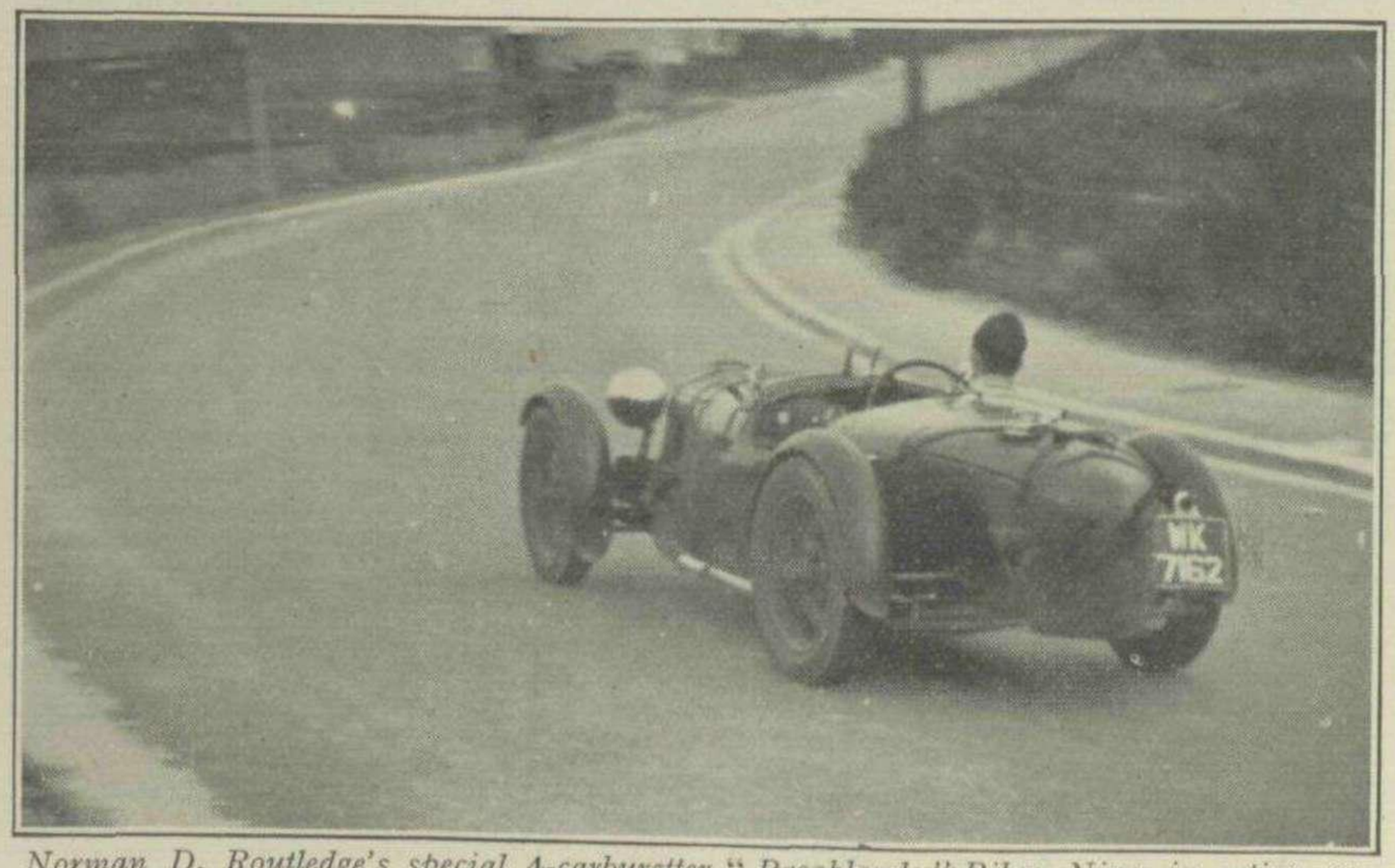
LEAMINGTON SPA M.C.

This club is now an established fact, and hopes, after the war, to co-operate with similar organisations. The entry fee is 5s. and annual subscription £1 1s., and vintagents are especially welcome. Hon. Secretary, G. Sanders, 72, Holly Walk, Leamington Spa.

★

VETERAN CAR CLUB

The V.C.C. meeting at the Waldorf Hotel on September 18th was very well attended. Mr. Allday, the club's chairman, made the only speech and was commendably brief. He was able to announce that the club's scheme for purchasing veterans for non-profitable resale to members is going right ahead and embraces the Edwardians, and that several new members had recently been elected, in spite of the war. Anthony Heal, Anthony Brooke, Lt. Neal, Hutton-Stott, Douglas Tubbs, Julian Fall, Jackie Masters, Capt. Wylie, and the Editor of MOTOR SPORT were amongst those who attended. Southall was absent, due to a chill, but his excellent film of Veteran C.C. rallies and competitions, Shelsley and Prescott hill-climbs, and Donington racing, etc., was brought down from Birmingham by Wharton, who used to race an Austin Seven at Donington and who is most anxious to see 750-c.c. racing, perhaps confined to single-seaters, developed after the war. The A.A. film was also shown, and we wonder what the makers of Austin, Hillman, Packard and Chrysler cars thought when first they saw their products featured in the breakdown shots! One veteran of pre-1904 vintage also appeared to self-commence after being stopped by an A.A. scout, but doubtless this was camera-justice.



Norman D. Routledge's special 4-carburetter "Brooklands" Riley Nine in action on "Pool." See "Cars I Have Owned," page 208.

Sorting Out Speed!

(Continued from the August issue.)

Having thought about how and when 100 m.p.h. was achieved in various classes over varying distances, the next exercise would seem to centre round about 120 m.p.h. This speed was first recorded on January 26th, 1906, by Marriott, whose Stanley steamer covered a kilometre at 121.57 m.p.h. and a mile at 127.66 m.p.h. This was a one-way timing at Daytona, and represented a big increase over the previous (petrol-car) record. By 1924 Parry Thomas and the Leyland-Thomas had run 10 miles at 120.46 m.p.h., but it was not until 1926 that the Hour Record stood at over two miles a minute, when Ortmans and the Panhard averaged 120.24 m.p.h. for this period. The excellent early runs pale into insignificance, in a way, when it is remembered that in 1937 Berndt Rosemeyer did a *standing* mile in an Auto-Union at 134.5 m.p.h. and, later, using an Auto-Union of only 5-litres capacity, covered a mile, again from standstill, to the tune of 125.3 m.p.h. So far as road-racing cars are concerned, their absolute speed is always hard to assess accurately, but by 1924 Sunbeam and Alfa-Romeo could exceed 120 m.p.h., and it seems likely that the 1923 blown 2-litre Fiat could almost, if not quite, do this speed, while it is probable that the same is true of the 1921 3-litre Fiat and Duesenberg cars. So far as class speeds are concerned, at the end of 1925, the first season in which the new International distances and divisions were recognised, Eldridge's 1½-litre Eldridge-Special held the 5 miles and 10 kilos. records at just over 120 m.p.h. in Class F and Divo's G.P. V12 2-litre Delage held the flying kilo. record in Class E at no less than 134.07 m.p.h. The only other class showing over 120 m.p.h. was Class B, with Thomas's 124 m.p.h. short-distance records with the 7¼-litre Leyland Thomas, although in Class C Howey's 5-litre Ballot had done over 118 m.p.h. By 1926 the 1,100-c.c. class joined in. Morel's twin o.h.c. Amilcar Six taking two records at over 121 m.p.h. The first 750-c.c. car to exceed 120 m.p.h. was an M.G. handled by Eyston in 1932. Looking at reliable maintenance of this speed, class by class, we find that no 750-c.c. car has yet run at 120 m.p.h. for an hour, the best performance to date being Charlie Dodson's 113.99 miles in 60 minutes at Brooklands in 1936. In the 1,100-c.c. category, George Eyston did 120.88 miles in the hour at Montlhèry with the inevitable M.G. in 1934. Curiously, no 1½-litre car has equalled this performance, the existing record, which Veyron established in 1933 at Montlhèry with a Straight-Eight Bugatti, being 0.99 m.p.h. short of 120. In the 2-litre class Mrs. Stewart has motored her Derby-Special for an hour at 121.75 m.p.h. Divo's Bugatti holds the Class D record at 124.68 m.p.h., established at Montlhèry in 1932, and Kaye Don exceeded 120 m.p.h. in Class C as long ago as 1929, with a Sunbeam, at Brooklands, while the absolute British hour record stands to the credit of Parry Thomas and the Leyland-Thomas, at 121.74 m.p.h., dating back to 1926.

To be concluded.)

Letters from Readers

Sir,

In these days of toil and salvage, when petrol and tyres are only obtainable by the lucky few, most of whom don't really appreciate them, we, who call ourselves enthusiasts, have to be content with memories and dreams.

So far Motor Sport has given us countless memories of cars and of adventures, but few have really dealt with dreams. Dreams of the future, dreams which we hope will one day come at least partially true.

I claim to be one of the many who love cars because they are a delicate piece of machinery which requires skill to handle. Most of my cars have been of a very ordinary type, but they have given me the freedom of the road and many hours of pleasure.

Looking back on the past, the most noticeable fact that stands out above anything else is the pleasure I got from my "old crocks." Up to 1936 I never paid more than £22 for a car, whilst my best car (not the most expensive one by any means) was a 1932 Riley Nine saloon which cost me £59.

When the war is over and I am demobilised from the Army, what do I look for? First, petrol and tyres and a reduction, if not total abolition, of the h.p. tax. What sort of car do I want? One that is a joy to drive whether in a hurry or dawdling; one that is at home in a garden party or taking my boss out, and at the same time capable of putting up a reasonable show in my inexperienced hands; one that will take me to work at 9 a.m. every morning. I know what you will all say! Unless I pay something about £1,000 for my car, "I've had it," to use an Army expression. My answer is that one car won't do. Anyway, here are my dreams for what they are worth, and I hope they amuse my unfortunate readers as much as they have me.

Firstly, I am looking for a long-distance car. I think a 14-h.p. DIS or DISS open Delage will fill the bill. A "12/50" Alvis, "14/40" M.G. or "12/40" Lea-Francis are all suitable. Cruising speed of 50–55, reasonably economical on fuel, an interesting gearbox, that unknown quality which we call "feel" and yet, when in good condition and properly maintained, reliable. What more can an impecunious enthusiast ask? For short runs and taking me to work, etc., I am thinking in terms of 11-h.p. Windsor, two examples of which I still know and on which I have first refusal. A "10/23," or even "8/18," Talbot also jumps to my mind, and many others completely forgotten but for the enthusiasts who save them from the breaker's hammer and rebuild them. These cars are interesting to drive, not very fast perhaps, but reliable enough in their day. I always maintain that there is no earthly reason to be ashamed of an old car, provided it is in good condition, well cared for, and behaves in exemplary manner in the way of starting and ability to get to its destination in a proper way.

Now all my requirements are met save trials. Obviously the aforementioned cars cannot be used if their general appearance is not going to suffer. I think a mild special will fill the bill. A 1929 Morris-Cowley 2-seater with "14/40" M.G. engine is my dream. Not very ambitious, I hear my reader murmur; but think a moment. We know that quite a reasonable performance can be expected, it would have a good ground-clearance, plenty of guts, any amount of cheap spares, and would have the advantage of being untimed and ready at short notice to take the place of any of the other cars. Such a "fleet" could be run comparatively cheaply provided there was no standing tax, such as the h.p. tax, to contend with. There are, of course, plenty of other approaches to my problem. This is simply my own idea of a solution and, I might add, not my only idea by any means.

A problem which immediately arises is the question of tax. What tax should we have, if any? Some suggest a complete abolition of the h.p. tax and no additions, but I can hardly see a fatherly Chancellor agreeing to that, in spite of the increased yield from indirect sources. Ot! ers suggest a petrol tax, and no h.p. tax. What about a tax on tyres? I feel that there is much to be said for a tyre tax. The car manufacturers will be encouraged to pay particular attention to weight distribution and brakes. The standard of driving in the country might be expected to improve, as violent acceleration and braking would be avoided. The vintage owner would be at an advantage, since his car hasn't, usually, terrific acceleration; its brakes are frequently doubtful but its weight distribution is often first-class.

May I end on a different note. I should like to take this opportunity of publicly thanking Mr. Boddy and staff of Motor Sport for their magnificent work. Without their labours the vintage cause would be in a bad way and the Sport would be almost dead. As it is, as soon as petrol and tyres are available, the Sport will burst into action stronger than it ever was, with everybody knowing everybody else. Thank you, Mr. Boddy, and all your collaborators, for my monthly ray of sunshine and for all you are doing. May the day be not too distant when I can offer you a nice, pre-war strength pint of good ale.

I am, Yours, etc.,

"R. R. D."

[This is typical of how so many impecunious enthusiasts see the peace. Let us hope officialdom—and vintage car vendors—will not impair their brave new world.—Ed.]

Sir,

I rush to the assistance of your correspondent, Mr. Ansell, and hope you will excuse any inaccuracies or omissions in my reply, as I am writing from memory.

His "12/50" Alvis is an S.C. model, of 1925 vintage; this was the standard sports model of that year. I thought the wheelbase of that type was 9′ 4½″, but if his is 9′ I stand corrected. The standard tyre size was 4.95″ ×21″. The cone clutch was standard in all models up to the end of 1925; his car has no connection with that owned by Mr. Swain.

The port sizes of the standard small-port head are: inlet 32 mm., front and rear exhaust 35 mm., centre exhaust 37.5 mm. The inlet ports may, of course, have been ground out to 35 mm. The exhaust system is standard for the model, as is the updraught Solex carburetter, though I was not aware that the type fitted as standard possessed a barrel throttle. The pistons, steel connecting-rods, belt-driven dynamo, timing gears, starting-handle and axle ratio are all standard pattern. The depth of the combustion chamber was 16.5 mm. on the sports models, and it would seem that some metal has been removed! I am surprised that (*a*) the water jacket has not been broken into; (*b*) that the valves do not do violence to the pistons. In any case I should have thought that the compression ratio is now too high, and reducing it might prove beneficial.

The crankshaft is standard; all Alvis crankshafts are marked "Ambrosia," which merely certifies that they were made by Ambrose Shardlow & Sons, Sheffield. Without details of the valve timing I cannot, of course, say much about the camshaft, but I believe at that date all those parts were made by E.N.V., the Alvis Co. not possessing the necessary cam-grinding machinery till a year or two later.

Tubular connecting rods have never been fitted; the later sports "12/50" engines had H-section duralumin rods with fully-floating gudgeon-pins.

Mr. Ansell appears to be very fortunate in possessing an example of these motor-cars in such perfect condition. If he will write to the manufacturers, quoting the number 8621, they will be pleased to inform him of the exact date of manufacture.

I am, Yours, etc.,

J. A. Cooper.

Leicester.

* * *

Sir,

I was very interested in the letter from Mr. A. E. Ansell regarding his Alvis. While I do not claim to be an Alvis expert, I have a "12/50" chassis and a "12/60" saloon at present. I think that I can shed a little light on this car.

The 9′ 0½″ wheelbase was used on the first "12/50" in 1924 on the S.A. chassis. The rest of the car seems to be an S.C.

chassis of 1925. The chassis number is about right for this ; the cone clutch is 1924 or 25. I am not sure what the " dastardly form of split rim " is, but the S.A. was originally fitted with 28" ×3½" S.S. cord tyres on wire spoke detachable rims. The S.C. was fitted with 29" ×4.95" on steel detachable wheels.

The outside exhaust and brass manifold seem to be S.C. as far as I can remember. The other engine details I leave to the Alvis experts, but I feel that this car was either made as a special for fast motoring or else it was made during 1925 for some other special reason.

With regard to the Sequeville-Hoyau, the car you have seen was made in 1920, in fact it was the second car made that year. The cylinder bore was 60 mm., stroke 110 mm. The price is given as £595. The clutch is single plate. Top gear ratio 4.55 to 1, this is a very rare bird.

I wonder if anyone knows where there is a Phœnix car of pre-war vintage. My father was designer for this firm for many years and I would like to find one of them. I had my first car ride in one and I can vividly remember the smell of real petrol coming from the tank filler in the middle of the dashboard, the Cape cart hood with wide straps down to the equally wide front mudguards, the joys of motoring in wet weather with the screen wide open in the pre-windscreen wiper days, and worst of all, trying to navigate in a fog with paraffin side-lamps on lamp irons alongside the screen, and no other illuminant.

I am, Yours, etc.,
N. J. BOWYER-LOWE, M.J.Inst.E.
Letchworth.

* * *

Sir,

Up to the age of about ten I was mad about trams ; what I saw in the Carlisle trams I can't think, but there you are. Then taxis took my fancy, inevitably leading to motor-cars.

My earliest motoring days were spent in a 1924 Morris-Oxford, 1922 Morris-Cowley, and a 1926 " 10/15 " Fiat 4-seater tourer, with occasional runs in a 1923 Buick 2-seater and 1912 12-h.p. Sunbeam. I shall never forget doing 60 m.p.h. in a 1927 " 20 " Sunbeam. We were racing one of the new, and very little heard of, Straight-Eight Wolseleys of about 1928. The Wolseley won, I regret to say.

My family didn't own a car until 1929, when a Morris-Cowley 4-seater, 1927 vintage, joined the home. This was followed, in December, 1930, by a 1931 Morris-Cowley tourer. This car served us nobly until July, 1937, by which time we all owned our own cars. Thanks to my brother's care and common sense, the old Cowley did 72,000 miles without a major overhaul of any sort. She frequently towed the local beagles in a trailer over many of the Cumberland hills, but she never missed a beat all the time we had her.

My first car was a 1927 Fiat 2-seater bought for £10 in 1934. It was incredibly slow, due no doubt to its considerable weight, but it was at least reliable. However, its clutch finally decided to die at an inconvenient moment, so it was sold at a slight loss and replaced by a 1929 Austin Seven. This Austin was just about dead when I got her ; I killed her. A twin-overhead camshaft G.P. (?) Salmson followed. I realise now that it was the solid rear end which scared me, but at the time I had her she completely put the wind up me by sliding and skidding wherever she went. Needless to say she didn't last long. My next motor-car was a 1926 Bull-nose Morris-Cowley, with a 4-seater touring body. The finest looking part of the car was the hood, which was new. The remainder rather resembled a scrap-yard on wheels. In this state we set off from Leeds to Donington for the first meeting of 1936. Apart from a few choked jets (Smith's 5-jet carburetter) which had to be cleared, we got there in reasonable time. However, the float level had been upset and it was only after hours of work did I succeed in getting home, amid loud explosions. As a result I scrapped the Smith's 5-jet and fitted an S.U. carburetter from a 1929 Morris-Cowley in its place. After some fiddling about I found the old car could hold a Ford Eight everywhere, would do about 58 m.p.h. (speedometer reading), and 35 m.p.g. She once managed Leeds to Carlisle, *via* Great North Road, in three hours, and on another occasion climbed Shap Fell in top gear. We didn't miss one car meeting at Donington that year. Alas, the Law frowned on her and my cash was low.

In August, 1937, having been a curse to all my friends all the year by making them take me to all possible race meetings, I was presented with an almost new 1937 Morris Eight tourer. If only this little car had had a 4-speed box ! I once managed to drive from Leeds to Carlisle (Leeds Chapel-Town Corner to Carlisle Railway Station) in 2 hours 45 minutes by my watch. A 1932 Riley Nine " *Monaco* " *saloon with single carburetter* was my next choice. While her performance was not exciting, I always look on this car as my best, and the one of which I was most fond. Her steering was just right, brake pretty good, suspension a little hard, but acceleration was almost non-existent without using the gearbox, which was, in itself, a joy. It was in this car that I took to hill climbing. Whenever I saw a climb that looked interesting, up I went. There was only one method possible with this car : bottom gear and give her the gun. It never failed, although many good Yorkshire hills were tackled. I tried an S.U. carburetter on the Riley, but my old magneto, which had done 80,000 miles at the time, seemed unable to give a fat enough spark for the engine. As it was, the acceleration was vastly improved, but the engine was horribly rough. A 1939 Austin Eight followed the Riley for a short time, to be followed by a 1937 B.S.A. " Scout " (Series II or III). I found the B.S.A. a first-class war-time car. Acceleration was fair, road-holding incredibly good, and the car generally has a solid " feel " on the road. The body and accessories need tightening up periodically, and the brakes are slightly affected by the F.W.D. at times but not seriously. The engine has proved very reliable and economical. Petrol consumption worked out at about 40-45 m.p.g. running about on H.G. work, and very little oil was being used when she was laid-up at 33,000 miles. Tyres lasted only 5,000 to 10,000 miles on the front wheels, but were as new after 10,000 miles at the rear, even though half-worn when I got the car at 22,000 miles.

So much for the past. What of the future, to which we all look and plan so longingly ?

The B.S.A. is to be replaced by something larger. I am thinking in terms of " 12/50 " Alvis, Lancia " Lambda," or " 14/40 " Delage, etc. Then I hope to add an Austin " 65 " or a similar car for trials, and maybe a few local speed-trials. Finally, although I have never owned one before, and have had little experience of riding, I crave a motor-cycle of about 250 c.c. for short-distance work.

A word about the Sport. As I've been moving about the country a good deal in the last year or two, I have had very little chance of contacting any motoring enthusiasts, but thanks almost entirely to MOTOR SPORT I feel that, should I meet any of these enthusiasts, I shall be thoroughly up to date with everything. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you from the bottom of my heart for the grand job you are doing.

Best of luck.

I am, Yours, etc.,
R. R. Dove.
Carlisle.

* * *

Sir,

I was most surprised, upon opening July copy of MOTOR SPORT, to see one of my own photographs appearing in same.

The photograph I refer to is of Peter Neale's A.C.N., and just to make sure that my eyes were not deceiving me, I compared it with the actual photograph I have in my possession here. Incidentally I have also another similar to the one published, that I took at the same time, but it shows the car from the exhaust side.

I was privileged to see quite a lot of the car during the course of its construction, and have many amusing memories of same. Every week-end the owner was to be found working upon the car, and often the peace of Stamford Bridge was shattered as it was tested in the drive and grounds of the owner's house. The sound of the engine could be heard from afar, and as soon as it got cracking one would invariably remark, " Ah, Peter got the car going again ! " Then there was a mad dash to his house to see how things were going, and invariably upon arrival the A.C.N. would misbehave itself and catch fire. Hastily the car was stopped and hessian, sacking or any other suitable and handy material rammed up the intakes of the S.U.s to prevent the whole car going up in flames ! Naturally I followed the appearance of this car with great interest, and well remember its first appearance at Shelsley with a long single-seater fabric body, which proved most unsuitable for this type of event, whilst the steering wasn't all it should be. Its next appearance was minus a body altogether, the chassis being painted a rather vivid " water-can " green, which I can well remember hastily assisting in applying the week-end before the actual event. However, its teething troubles were eventually overcome, and in 1939 it got cracking to advantage, with the

results that Peter mentioned in his letter and, needless to say, I am eagerly looking forward to the day when it is to be seen on the starting line at Shelsley or Prescott again.

Let's hope that that day won't be too long in dawning; meanwhile, until then, keep up the good work.

I would also like to take this opportunity of sending my kindest regards *via* you to Peter Neale, whom I have not seen for a considerable time.

I am, Yours, etc.,
L.A/C. M. M. USHER.
R.A.F.

* * *

Sir,

I think it is possible that there may be readers who, like myself, are wondering what type of car will be available post-war to provide the sort of motoring that they enjoy.

You publish, from time to time, extremely interesting articles and letters from people who have reconditioned comparatively old but high-grade cars, and I think it might be very interesting to have the views of some of your readers with experience of this sort, in regard to the post-war possibilities.

I will first of all set out the characteristics of a car that would interest me and, whilst other people's requirements may very probably be different, I do think there is likely to be a substantial similarity.

Horse-power: This should, for taxation purposes, not exceed about 15.

Number of Cylinders: Four: this condition is due partly to the fact that the petrol consumption of 6-cylinder engines is usually poor; also it is my personal opinion that a fairly large "four" is more pleasant than a "six."

Body: Open 2- or 4-seater, with the possibility of fitting effective and convenient weather protection.

Steering: This must be absolutely beyond reasonable criticism.

Brakes: Obviously these must be good and should not require frequent adjustment.

Springing: This must be fairly good, but a reasonable degree of hardness can be tolerated.

Reliability: This is an extremely important point. In my case the car would be used for driving to business and for pleasure runs, mostly at week-ends. I should not expect to be continually troubled by minor failures such as defective electrical equipment, oiling plugs, etc.

Performance: A speed of not less than 80 m.p.h. to be obtainable without difficulty, at all times, on the level. The top gear ratio should be high, something like that of the Lancia "Lambda"; in fact, if it were possible to obtain the type of performance given by the Seventh Series "Lambda," but with the maximum speed extended, it would be just about ideal.

The car would usually be driven at fairly low speeds, that is to say, a cruising speed of about 50 to 55, and the maximum performance would generally be demanded only on hills and but very occasionally on the level. The acceleration must be good in order that one can, if desired, quickly pass other fairly fast traffic, when, of course, there would be no objection to using the gearbox. A speed of not less than 60 should be available in third.

What really interests me now is the question as to whether there are available any old cars which, if thoroughly reconditioned, would give the above performance. I would not mind spending a good deal of time and a certain amount of money in the process, but I should want to feel quite sure that when the work had been done I should have a car that would satisfy me.

It is extremely annoying and wasteful to spend a lot of time and money only to find, in the end, that the particular vehicle never was, and never could be, satisfactory.

I know one of the difficulties is likely to be the question of spares, and any information on this point would be helpful.

It seems to me that it is likely to be a long time after the end of the war before any interesting car is available at a reasonable price—certainly British-made. For years before the war the only British car that one could seriously consider was the Rolls-Bentley and, of course, the price was far too high for what I have in mind.

I am hoping that the matter will be of sufficient interest for you to publish my letter and that comments may be made by some of your readers, which will either make it clear that I must abandon my idea, or else indicate the lines on which to go ahead.

I am, Yours, etc.,
C. H. STEPHENSON.
Stratford-on-Avon.

* * *

Sir,

I must thank Mr. B. FitzPatrick for taking up the torch I have been bearing for a number of years, and Mr. C. W. P. Hampton for so ably following him. I was beginning to despair of ever arousing any feeling in the motor industry, or even among enthusiasts themselves. Before the war the population of this country grabbed what they could get and rushed somewhere in it in an endeavour to prevent themselves having time to think. Those who saw the trash being dished out, avoided it by buying vintage or Continental machines, a form of escapism which was so bad as to prevent those involved concerning themselves about the ultimate fate of the British automobile industry if such a state of affairs were allowed to continue. When the war called a halt to any active decay the escapism continued, as witness the multitude of nostalgic memories in the columns of this paper. In an effort to wake up the motoring population I have attempted to start constructive arguments, or to seek information. I have suggested a renaissance of design by fewer and larger pots with higher gear ratios, combined with modern improvements such as i.f.s., forced induction, etc. I have attempted to make racing enthusiasts turn their faces to the light by seeking information upon the possibilities of four-wheel-drive. I have tried to "snap 'em out of it" by publishing a controversial design for post-war cars. I have set out the plain, distasteful truth in regard to the present position of automobilism, and I have related the parallel

READERS' SALES AND WANTS

To meet the repeated demands for something on the lines of the old Spare Parts Announcements, we have instituted a system of inexpensive advertisements. Each announcement must be limited to **twelve** words, plus the advertiser's sufficient postal address, and the charge will be 1s. 6d. per announcement, payable at time of posting.

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GRAND PRIX BUGATTI
SPARES AND SERVICE
F. O. CLEVELAND HARMER
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83, Old Oak Road, Acton, W.3
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SINGER Le Mans set of wings, hood, etc. All as new. Offers. L. Powell, 5, Syddall Avenue, Cheadle, Cheshire.

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FOUR 6.50 x 17 Rudge Wheels and 2 Competition Tyres. Large down-draught S.U. Carburetter. Lamburn, 230, Broadstone Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

1496 c.c. S.V. Anzani Engine, ex Frazer-Nash. Price £15. Sound Frazer-Nash Radiator, £10. Norris, Gladsmuir House, Hadley Common. Barnet 4800.

WANTED

BUGATTI, 1½, 2 or 2.3-litre Grand Prix, complete, or parts for same. F. O. Cleveland Harmer, 83, Old Oak Road, Acton, W.3.

12/50 ALVIS engine or 6-cyl. A.C. complete, mag., carb., starter, dynamo. Norris, Gladsmuir House, Hadley Common. Barnet 4800.

COMPLETE set of hydraulic shock absorbers, with Telecontrol, front and rear separate control. Battersby, 20, Highfield Avenue, Newbold, Chesterfield.

OIL regulating tap for supercharger. Little, Bridgefoot House, Potters Bar, Middlesex.

SINGER Nine Le Mans Speed Engine, gearbox, condition immaterial if cheap. Also screen frame. C. W. Morgan, Ashby House, Town Street, Bramley, Leeds.

30/98 VAUXHALL, Type 40 Bugatti, late Lancia "Lambda," around £20. W. B., 70, Bolingbroke Grove, London, S.W.11.

M.G., condition immaterial, to rebuild for after war. Reasonable offer much appreciated. A. A. W. Myers, 116, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

CRANKCASE, crankshaft, camshaft, oil-pump, flywheel, bearings, gears, tappets, 1931 1½-litre Meadows engine. Good condition. R. G. Phillips, Peatswood, All Stretton, Church Stretton, Salop.

2-LITRE Lagonda Tourer. Any condition, but preferably fairly good. Page, The Flagstaff, Leigh, Tonbridge, Kent.

Spares Section,
MOTOR SPORT,
21, CITY ROAD,
LONDON, E.C.1

example of what happened in the cycle industry. All this has had no effect at all, and one was beginning to wonder whether motorists had reached the final comatose stage, or if perhaps a course of psychological treatment. . . . One is, therefore, more than grateful to Mr. FitzPatrick for his strong support, and to Mr. Hampton for his continued and unwavering allegiance to the truth ; but it is a little discouraging, even to the most steadfast, to find so eminent a "professional" as Mr. Metcalfe ignoring the technical modernity of the Continentals while admitting that during the last decade no British factory was able to build a car to meet with his requirements. As for spot-welding, he should examine a D.K.W. to see just what the moderns can do with nuts and bolts.

I think Mr. FitzPatrick is a little hard upon many vintage enthusiasts, for they do realise the true worth of Alfa, Lancia, B.M.W., etc., but, unfortunately, although the Continental has nearly all the æsthetic qualities of the vintage machine, one has to pay hard cash for the technical improvements. There are other difficulties, too, such as the length of time taken to obtain spares, and their high cost, while it is not easy to get parts made to metric measurements. Elderly Continentals with brothers on scrap-heaps to be robbed for spares are few and far between ; the many unfortunates have to buy British, and they have the choice of (*a*) models which in their day had been among the best in the world, and had cups to prove it, or (*b*) their degenerate' offspring, reared in the hothouse atmosphere of the 1930s when manufacturers thought that export did not matter, and that the imports question was effectively sewn up by retention of our unique legislation, taxation and regulations. Their chassis were puny, their engines were undersized, their springs were flabby, and their steering about as steady as the hands of degenerates always are. For ten years these designs were basically unchanged, the manufacturer occasionally giving them a new, well-padded 50s. overcoat to hide their shame—changing the radiator grille, the shape of the boot, or even the name, creating a larger market by psychological play upon suburban mentality. They cared nothing that their products retained all their old faults and added some new ones, due to altered disposition and augmentation of loads, etc. That was the position, and our enthusiasts in their apathy were content to leave it so, giving no heed to the time when the new cars of to-day will be the vintage models of to-morrow, and when the continued replacement of worn parts for to-day's examples will exceed the bounds of human ingenuity.

For the first five years of the decade all was well in the manufacturers' world, and they did not see the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand." But people were going abroad, and one soon encountered an occasional Citroen, Fiat or Chrysler. The clouds gathered rapidly until, in 1939, these and others were here in large and growing numbers, proving that the man in the street, despite all that has been said of him, is learning to appreciate good vehicles. American motors catered for the commerce section completely, and towards the end the most loyal of all, the sportsmen, began to feel that the denial of a modern motor at a reasonable cost was too big a price to pay for the patriotism which inspired their own *passe* machines.

This war has given our motor industry a second chance, one which, in the opinion of many, they ill deserve. Be that as it may, every motorist in this country would wish British cars to be "tops" in the post-war era. Mr. FitzPatrick appears to suggest that we must learn from the Continent how to make real cars. That is not so ; we have made them in the past, and even now our designers could teach the Continentals plenty. It is our trade and finance sections which are lacking. If we are to keep our industry alive after the war our designers will have to be allowed a free hand once again, and to permit this the financiers must drop their parsimonious attitude ; old models must be scrapped, technical improvements must be incorporated as they arise, and the practice of using the Continental factories as experimental shops must cease. In addition, the industry must give its full support to all endeavours to abolish restrictive legislation, and then the only remaining obstacle to be overcome will be popular prejudice abroad, engendered by a decade of bad products.

Our home consumption of automobiles is but a small part of the world's needs ; if we can capture the foreign trade in our own sizes of vehicle, we shall have good, cheap cars. But if the foreign trade remains foreign, then it is too much to demand unmerited patriotism, and it would be a good thing for motorists, though probably calamitous for the nation's finances, if the motor industry in these islands got what it has been so assiduously asking for. We, practically its only customers, its only friends, ask it to change its selfish and ultimately suicidal attitude. For ten years motorists have borne the burden of its miserly thrift and insular isolation. Now it is up to the industry to save itself before it is too late.

I am, Yours, etc.,

GRAHAM C. DIX.

Birmingham.

[Much of what Mr. Dix says is an enlargement of recent arguments, to which reference is made in "Subjects for Debate" elsewhere in this issue. He, too, makes the error of thinking that the cars encouraged by the Vintage S.C.C. around 1935 were chiefly meritorious because they were old but, as we have attempted to show in the aforementioned article, they were favoured because of their superiority to sports cars of early thirties, or because of their low cost. Old cars, in themselves, are not necessarily "vintage."—ED.]

* * *

Sir,

I enclose herewith a slightly-edited copy of a letter, one of many I have received recently from a friend of mine and great enthusiast, whom you know, Capt. J. R. A. Green, now in the Middle East. I feel his chatty writings, typical of a man exiled from his beloved cars, deserve circulation amongst those who appreciate such things.

We who love the Sport await MOTOR SPORT eagerly, wherever we may be, so keep up the good work, and here's hoping for the rapid return to happier times.

I am, Yours, etc.,

W. HAMILTON ELLIS.

Highgate, N.6.

[We publish Capt. Green's remarks below, as received from Mr. Hamilton Ellis.—ED.]

I've found two enthusiastic fellow officers, one a Riley fan, t'other Lancia.

The Lancia boy has owned several interesting motors, notably a "24/100" Mercédès (12-ft. wheelbase), sort of smaller edition of the "33/180." He could leave V8s from the lights with this motor. He has also driven the Duke of Grafton's "36/220" 4-seater, now owned by R. Arbuthnot—it is rumoured it is now fitted with the "elephant" blower off the Conan Doyle 2-seater. I very much doubt this, as in my opinion there is not a genuine "elephant" blower in England. I will admit it may be the larger type as banned at Ulster when Caracciola turned up with what seemed to be a non-standard motor. The genuine "elephant" blown job is surely the S.S.K.L., of which only five were made. Von Brauchitsch had one which he retained as his personal property, as also did Von Stuck ; a Norwegian had one which, I gather, went to his home country. Of course "Caratch" raced his, and there was, I understand, a works car used for experimenting on. These cars did about 150 m.p.h. when stripped, and could show a clean "pair of heels" to any Bentley blower 4½ or speed 6. They had all possible chassis members drilled and were very short wheelbase, 9′ 9″ I believe, with 7′ of bonnet ! The nearest approach to one I have ever seen is the ex-Campbell car at Arbuthnot's, in fine condition and finished metallescence blue. A desirable property ! I think one of these cars could contest the world's fastest sports-car challenge.

Earl Howe's open 2-seater Bugatti, Type 57 S.C., could do 130 m.p.h., I should say, flat out, as would Hugh Hunter's Alfa, or the other one owned by Capt. Cook, I think. Lycett's Bentley is not standard and therefore would not be eligible. [It is, however, a "road-equipped car."—ED.]

I cannot think of any Maseratis, other than the T.T. and "Double-Twelve" cars, produced as sports cars. Of course, there are several built to special order in Italy and some found their way to Eritrea, two having been bought by two of our officers serving out there. The Lancia laddie I mentioned saw them ; also a "2.6" Alfa, a "racer" with wings and some sort of lamps, rather tied-on affairs, such as we are rather familiar with !

A friend of his bought a genuine 1½-litre Straight-8 Bugatti for £5 and a spare chassis for 20 cigarettes ! It had a 3-speed Chevrolet box fitted, as presumably its ham-fisted Italian owner had been unable to cope with the original, which isn't altogether surprising as most of the boxes up to 1933 were distinctly

tricky. Jack Hyslop's (now possessed by Ian Metcalf ?) is a specimen ; those of 37 and 37A were, I fancy, among the trickiest.

These lads used to average 77 m.p.h. for 16 miles of twisty roads from the works to their billets in the Bugatti, after the 4-speed box out of the spare chassis had been fitted.

One night one of the lovely alloy wheels disappeared, because it had a new tyre on it, so the back axle was changed, as the spare chassis was from the 4-cylinder 1½-*litre model. This car, too, was red,* but with an Italian owner I suppose this was almost allowable. Most of these cars are to be seen in Asmara, and an old 1¾-litre Alfa crept down to Massowa while I was there.

I've told you about the 1½-litre G.P. Bugatti in Cairo ; it was probably the Straight-8 job originally, as it has the integral brake drum-alloy wheels and 4-cylinder engine (I looked).

It's nice to think that 1930/31 saw the production of the world's fastest sports car and I'm sure the Delahaye and Darracq and Delage could not beat a Mercédès, fast though they are. I'll admit the S.S.K.L. would take much more handling, and on a tricky course would possibly be outclassed, but I do not think much would pass one on the run down to our place in Norfolk, for instance !

You must try to get one, Tony ! I suggest you volunteer for the Army of Occupation and clean up France's fine Bugattis, an "1,100" Amilcar, a nice "2.3" Le Mans Alfa, or the S.S.K.L. Mercédès. Try them all out on an Autobahn to see if they can hit the high spots !

Another Bentley fan came along the other day to our mess as my guest, a Major Tule, owner of a special 4½ built up by Speed Models. Incidentally, he was the previous owner of the 3-litre Jack Norris owned [now also owned by Ian Metcalf.—W. H. E.].

Look at MOTOR SPORT containing Peter Hampton's "Cars I Have Owned." I'm sure the 3-seater fabric-bodied Amilcar is our original one ! I note he considered the S.S.K.L. had a performance second to none, so it's up to you, Tony ; a genuine S.S.K.L., please ! After all, they were your favourite motors ; even if you cannot afford to run it, it will look very nice beside a blower 4½ (we hope) and a "2.3" Bugatti twin-cam ; a "2.3" Le Mans Alfa would complete the picture.

I am looking forward to notes by Peck on the "22/100" Austro-Daimler ; I am pretty sure it is the "19/100" T.T. car fitted with a 2-seater body. The T.T. car had, of course, a 4-seater body very like a Van den Plas Bentley, fabric, and rather square in appearance and with big rear tank. Two types of wings were fitted, one like the 4½ Le Mans Bentley's and the other like the 3-litre Le Mans Bentley.

There is an Isotta-Fraschini sports torpedo 4-seater in Cairo. Major Tule has seen the 3-litre Le Mans Bentley and the 4½, and when he was in Baghdad saw a 6½-litre 2-seater Barker-bodied Bentley, polished-wood body and green bonnet, etc. He believes it had a smash, and an Indian officer bought it as it was, for rebuilding and use for pukka purposes, pig sticking, by Gad, sir ! after this show.

To see the two vintage Bentleys at Cairo, and in that setting with their Army owners, made me feel that the 1926 era was again being lived. No matter what motors are built there will never be another Bentley !

You know, all four Birkin cars seem to be different. I'm certain that Mavrogordato's is the 9′ 4½″ wheelbase job as well as Robertson Roger's, in spite of the notes I saw to the contrary that two 10′ and *one* 9′ 10″ only were built. "Mavro's" was second in a 500-mile race. Now this one is the car Roy Slater and I fell upon in Great Portland Street one day outside Jack Smith's about 1933, when, if I remember correctly, we came about one foot unstuck in our previous calculations and were told that it was shorter than standard ! This car we have seen at Brooklands and it has a very hacked-about bonnet as opposed to Peter's, which is made with, I think, one proper hole in the bonnet, *not* hacked ! Also "Mavro's" has, I am sure, the usual Bentley cut-away for the driver's arm, whereas Birkin's car had a curved cut-away the same as on Mr. Emmens's "500" car. The one Lt. Winstanley has is a full 4-seater Van den Plas body, pretty standard in appearance apart from the cut-away to accommodate the hand-brake at the bottom of the body. Both "Mavro's" and Winstanley's have full-length scuttle, whereas Birkin's car has a *short* scuttle, the bonnet coming over half of it, to give access to the instruments, presumably. Then, of course, there is Lt.-Comdr. McGregor's presumed team car ; if this is the ex-Dr. Appergis car it has all the features of Laurie's car (L. E. Dalton's ex-W. B. Scott 1929 "500" and "Double-12" car, UU5580), *i.e.*, the beam behind front seats, tool-box position, etc., but a 45-gallon tank and cover for the blower. I do wish I had seen it at Barnet, as I should have liked to have been able to check this point. The 4½ unblown car I saw at Bentleys when Laurie was buying his 4½ also had this beam, and the same aeroplane-like seats as has Laurie's and Dr. Appergis's cars, the only other two Bentleys I have seen with these seats, although the late Roddy Seys's 4½ replica had them, but no beam and no tool-box at rear. The one I saw at Bentley's, then, is, I reckon, the ex-Birkin 4½ that Peter Ward sold in 1942 and for which he asked £350, I think. It was road-tested by MOTOR SPORT, but its fuel line was duff and only 75-80 m.p.h. could be obtained.

Incidentally, I believe this car and Laurie's were finished green originally, with red leather upholstery, as has the Le Mans 3-litre in Australia. Dr. Appergis had green leather, however. That car had definitely been through Birkin's hands and was reported to have been practised with at Phœnix Park, but did it bear the Dorothy Paget plaque on the facia ?

I would so like a genuine blower car under my garage roof, if only to look at ! Here's to "The Day."

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RECENT MOTOR SPORT ROAD-TESTS

IN the issue of May, 1937, we published an Index of all the road tests conducted by this paper since it was founded, as *The Brooklands Gazette*, in 1924. From this Index we have been publishing extracts, but these did not embrace the tests published during the last six years. In order to make good this omission, we give below a revised selection, including tests published from May, 1937, to the present issue. Read in conjunction with the Index of May, 1937, it provides a reference to all the MOTOR SPORT tests—251 in all. Readers' accounts of their cars and technical descriptions of new models, moreover, are not included in this Index. Many of the issues concerned can still be supplied, at the prices given below. Please quote date of issue when ordering.

Make of Car	Issue
A.B.C. 11 h.p. 2-cyl. 2-seater	Feb. 1926
A.C. 2-litre, short-chassis, 15.7 h.p. 2-seater	July 1936
A.C. 2-litre, 16/40 h.p. 3-seater	Oct. 1927
A.C. 2-litre, 16/66 h.p. 4-seater	June 1934
A.C. "Ace" 16/80 h.p. 2-seater	July 1937
Alfa-Romeo, 1½-litre supercharged 6-cyl. Charles 2-seater (1929)	March 1934
Alfa-Romeo 1½-litre supercharged 8-cyl. "Zagato" 2-seater (1932)	July 1934
Alfa-Romeo 2.3-litre supercharged 8-cyl. "Zagato" 2-seater (1933)	Aug. 1936
Alfa-Romeo 2900B, Type 8C supercharged 2-seater (1937)	Jan. 1942
Alvis 6-cyl., "Silver Eagle" 4-seater coupé (1929)	Aug. 1931
Alvis 3½-litre saloon	Feb. 1936
Alvis Speed Twenty 4-seater	June 1932
Ansaldo 2-litre, 4-cyl., o.h.c. 4-seater	Sept. 1924
Aston-Martin Mark II, 11.9 h.p. 2-4-seater	Jan. 1935
Aston-Martin Ulster 11.9 h.p., T.T. 2-seater	Oct. 1935
Aston-Martin 11.9 h.p. 2-seater	Jan. 1930
Aston-Martin 1½-litre Ulster racing 2-seater	Aug. 1937
Aston-Martin 2-litre Speed Model 2-seater	May 1938
Aston-Martin 1½-litre Mark II, long-chassis 4-seater (1934)	Aug. 1940
Aston-Martin 2-litre streamline saloon	June 1942
Atalanta V12 saloon	March 1939
Auburn 30 h.p., 8 cyl. supercharged 2-seater	June 1935
Austin Seven Boyd Carpenter 2-str.	Sept. 1930
Austin Seven "65" 2-seater	Jan. 1934
BENTLEY 4½-litre, 6-cyl., Park Ward saloon	June 1936
Bentley 8-litre "Special" 2-seater (1931)	April 1938 & Dec. 1940
Bentley 4½-litre drophead coupé	Aug. 1938
Bentley 4½-litre Mark V saloon	Feb. 1941
Bentley 3-litre "Blue Label" "Special" 2-seater (1928–9)	Feb. 1939
Bentley 4½-litre "Le Mans" 4-seater (1928)	Jan. 1942
Bugatti 2.3-litre 8-cyl., Type 43, supercharged 4-seater	May 1930
Bugatti 3.3-litre 8-cyl., Type 57 saloon	May 1934
Bugatti 3.3-litre Type 57 saloon	May 1939 & June 1939
Bugatti 3.3-litre Type 57C supercharged saloon	June 1939
Bugatti 3.3-litre Type 57 SC supercharged coupé	Aug. 1942
Bugatti 5-litre Type 46 saloon (1929)	April 1942
CROSSLEY 20/70 h.p., 4-cyl., s.v. 4-seater	Nov. 1925
Crossley Ten, 1,122 c.c. 4-seater	April 1932
Crouch Anzani 12/30 h.p. 2-seater	Aug. 1924
DAIMLER 2½-litre 18 h.p. saloon	June 1940 & Nov. 1941
Darracq 12/32 h.p., Weymann saloon	Sept. 1924
Delage 8-cyl., sports saloon	April 1930
Delage D8/180 drophead coupé	May 1938
Delahaye 3.5-litre "Coupé des Alps" drophead coupé	Aug. 1936
D.K.W. "Special" saloon	Feb. 1938
Dodge 25.3 h.p. "Custom Six" saloon	May 1938
EXCELSIOR 5½-litre, 6-cyl., super-sports test chassis	Sept. 1927
FIAT "Balilla" saloon	May 1934
Fiat "Balilla" 10 h.p. 2-seater	Jan. 1935
Fiat 6 h.p., Type 500 coupé	March 1937
Fiat "Balilla" 1,100-c.c. saloon	March 1938
Ford Eight "Anglia" saloon	Aug. 1940
Ford V8 "30" Estate car	Oct. 1938
GEORGES-IRAT 2-litre f.w.d. 2-seater	May 1940
HILLMAN Fourteen saloon (1939)	June 1941
Hotchkiss 3½-litre "Grand Sports" saloon	July 1939
H.R.G. 1½-litre, Meadows engined 2-seater	June 1937
H.R.G. 1½-litre Le Mans racing 2-seater	Dec. 1939
INVICTA 4½-litre saloon	Dec. 1929
Invicta 4½-litre Estate car	June 1941
LAGONDA 4½-litre 4-seater	May 1936
Lagonda 4½-litre 4-seater	Jan. 1934
Lagonda 4½-litre, 6-cyl. saloon	Sept. 1939
Lanchester Eighteen saloon	Feb. 1938
Lancia "Aprilia," Type 238 saloon	June 1938
Lea-Francis 1½-litre supercharged T.T. 2-seater (1929)	June 1934
Lea-Francis Fourteen saloon	Dec. 1938
Leyland Eight 2-seater (1927)	Feb. 1938
MERCEDES-BENZ 12/40 h.p., supercharged 2-seater	June 1925
Mercédès-Benz 33/180 h.p., supercharged 4-seater	Aug. 1927
Mercédès-Benz 2.3-litre saloon	April 1938
Mercédès-Benz 1.7-litre, Type 170V 2-seater	Feb. 1939
M.G. Midget "J1," 850 c.c. 2-seater	Sept. 1932
M.G. Midget "T" 2-seater	Jan. 1937
M.G. 14/40 h.p., 4-cyl., super-sports 2-seater	May 1927
O.M. 6-cyl., 2-litre 4-seater	Oct.-Nov. 1928
PEUGEOT "201" 4-cyl., 1,122 c.c. saloon	Sept. 1931
RAILTON 8-cyl. Cobham saloon	Sept. 1938
Riley Nine 4-seater	June 1931
Riley 16 h.p., 4-cyl., "Kestrel" saloon	June 1938
Rover Ten "Special" 2-seater	Aug. 1939
Rolls Royce Twenty, all-weather (1927)	March 1942
Rolls Royce "Phantom I," supercharged	Nov. 1942
SINGER Nine 4-seater	March 1933
Squire 1½-litre, 4-cyl. 2-seater	Aug. 1935
Steyr Type XII, 14/35 h.p., Weymann saloon	Aug. 1928
Stutz "Black Hawk," supercharged 4-seater	Jan. 1930
Stutz 5-litre, 8-cyl. 4-seater	Dec. 1927
Sunbeam 3-litre, 6-cyl. (twin o.h.c.) fabric saloon	Nov. 1927
TALBOT "90," Brooklands-bodied 2-4-seater	April 1931
Talbot "105" sports saloon	April 1934
Talbot 3½-litre saloon	March 1936
Talbot Ten "Rally" 4-seater	Oct.-Nov. 1936
Talbot "105" Vanden Plas 4-seater	Nov. 1932
Talbot Ten tourer	June 1938
Terraplane 29 h.p., 8-cyl. 4-seater	July 1935
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Triumph 10 h.p. "Gloria" saloon	Jan. 1934
Triumph Nine "Southern Cross" 4-seater	June 1932
Triumph Eight "Gnat" 2-seater	Aug. 1931
Triumph Eight, supercharged 2-seater	Dec. 1929
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Vauxhall 17 h.p., 6-cyl., "Cadet" saloon	Sept. 1931
Vauxhall Twenty-five saloon	Aug. 1937
WINDSOR 4-cyl., 11 h.p., "Special" 2-3-seater	Nov. 1926
Wolseley Hornet Swallow 2-seater (1933)	April 1934
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