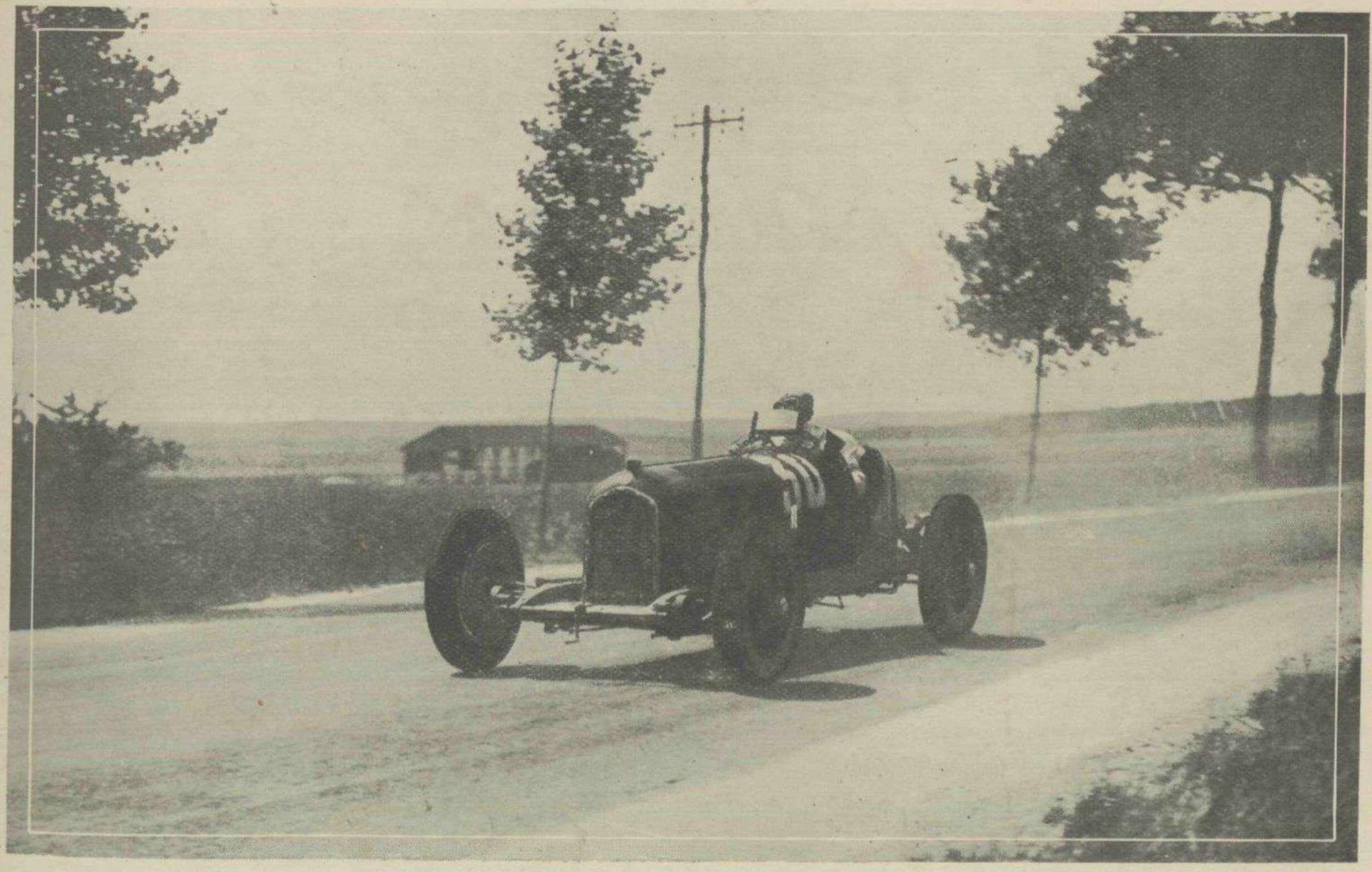
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MOTOR SPORT

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Speed

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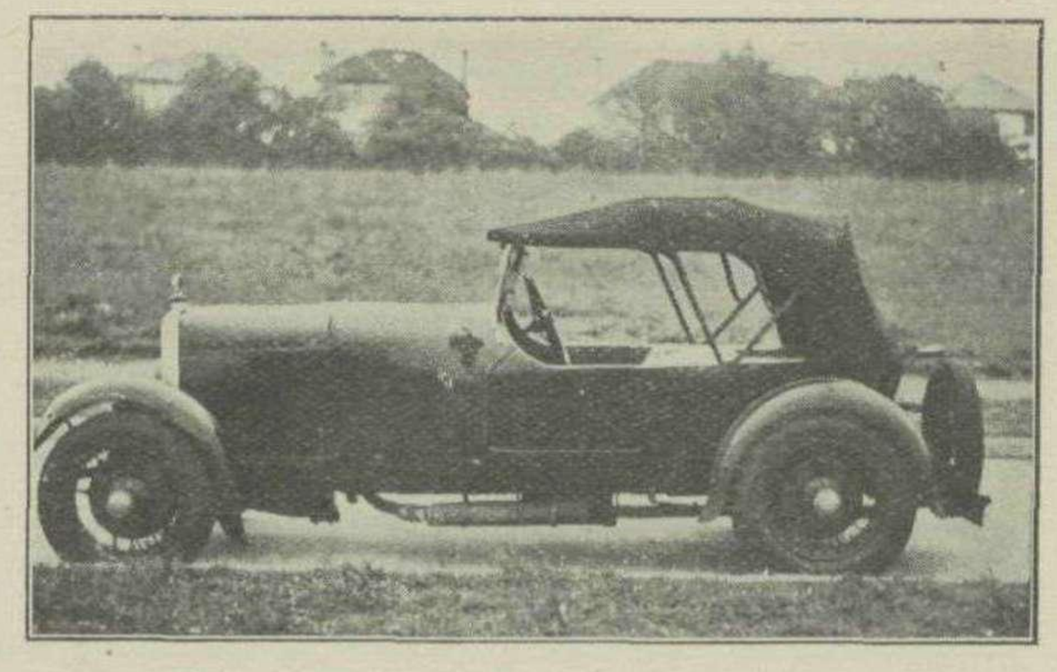
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"This Organisation"

AT the Second Motor-Racing Brains Trust on March 28th last, the announcement of an advisory panel to assist Messrs. S. H. Capon, A. Rivers-Fletcher and Peter T. C. Clark to organise these meetings was announced. It is evident that this organisation, for which a suitable name is required, hopes to exert a considerable influence on motoring sport after the war, quite apart from advising the organisers of future Brains Trusts. At the time of writing it comprises five persons: Captain A. W. Phillips, secretary of the R.A.C. Competitions Committee, which is the governing body of motoring sport in all its four-wheeled aspects; A. Percy Bradley, late clerk of the course at Brooklands Track; H. J. Morgan, who succeeded Bunny Dyer as secretary of the Junior Car Club; Eric Giles, hon. secretary of the exclusive club for Bugatti owners, and A. S. Heal, member of the committee of the Vintage Sports Car Club and collector and exerciser of veteran racing cars. Naturally, the coming together of these well-known personalities in this capacity has given rise to a number of rumours, which, as their future policy has not been so much as hinted at, is not surprising. It has, for instance, been suggested that this panel will, in future, replace the body of aged gentlemen comprising the present R.A.C. Competitions Committee, and will thus control the Sport in this country. While some of its members might well be elected to the aforesaid committee, we understand that Captain Phillips has no intention, nor, indeed, the power, of handing over national control of the Sport to any fresh body of men. It has been rumoured that this panel may set about running a few good races and trials after the war, to obviate a return to the over-crowded calendar of pre-1940. While this may come true to some extent, we believe that Captain Phillips is very anxious to preserve the individual character of the smaller clubs. One hears that this new organisation seeks to popularise motor racing with the general public, which could be quite a good thing, provided no revolutionary change distasteful to drivers, manufacturers and enthusiastic followers of the Sport is brought about by an overdose of enthusiasm. In the absence of any statement of concrete aims and objects, there is little that one can say about this organisation, save that any attempt to give a better status to motor racing, to bring live persons on to its controlling committee, and to stand up for the rights of its participants and supporters, must, on the face of it, seem highly commendable. If this new body develops into nothing more than a committee of representative club secretaries who are able collectively to discuss their club's events before finalising plans and seeking a Permit, it should do invaluable work for the betterment of the Sport as a whole. If it (or anyone else) attempts to commercialise a New Motor Racing, by linking up with cyclists, footballers and hikers and staging "circus-dices" for them, then it (or they) must be disbanded before incalculable harm is done. For the time being, we refrain from comment—the five present members are sufficient guarantee for us to wish this organisation well and to ignore mere rumour.

THE BAMFORD & MARTIN ASTONS

Some Notes by F. W. Ellis



The earlier Aston-Martin cars, made by Messrs. Bamford & Martin, Ltd., of London, under Lionel Martin's supervision, before the present company came into being at Feltham to build cars to Bertelli's designs, are *now amongst the rarer of the vintage sports cars.* Nevertheless, they still arouse much interest, and are of such exclusive design that we have no hesitation in publishing these notes about them, by that very staunch supporter of the type, F. W. Ellis. His remarks qualify an article which appeared in Motor Sport of April, 1938, and will doubtless set many enthusiasts hopefully searching for remaining examples of this unique and desirable British 1½ litre. Mr. Ellis is anxious after the war to form a club for owners of what he enthusiastically terms the "real" Astons, and he suggests that a move be made now to get such owners together. He personally knows of fourteen cars still in existence. These comprise ten side-valve cars *and four twin-o.h.c. cars* as follows : Ellis's own two cars, Johnson-Ferguson's famous 2-seater, G. R. Brook's car up in Huddersfield, the ex-Forbes car, which was mainly the subject of the above-mentioned article and is now owned by F/O. Anthony Phelps, a side-valve owned by D. B. Tubbs, two such cars being rebuilt by Grosscurth, at Maidenhead ; Farmer's Anzani-engined car, Romero's 3-seater, Tubbs's twin o.h.c car "Razor Blade," the ex-Morris Goodall twin-cam 2-seater which Ellis has bought and the immortal "Bunny," now believed to be in Scotland and to have wire wheels, a Sunbeam back axle and probably a twin o.h.c. engine. In addition, we believe the car run by G. P. Green (XP 311) to be still in existence and a few others probably survive. Will those interested in the club or in these cars please write to Mr. Ellis at 11, Christleton Avenue, Heaton Chapel, Stockport. These cars were beautifully made and represented the first effort to make a car in this country which was of the same capacity as the 16-valve Bugatti and would yet stand no nonsense from it. Consequently, these notes should be of interest both to those who are rebuilding examples of these cars and to those who merely wish to learn more of Lionel Martin's outstanding production.—Ed.

I HAVE spent many pleasant and enjoyable hours reading and re-reading the "Cars I Have owned" series, and it seems quite queer to me that so many people who have owned such a wide variety of cars seem to have missed owning specimens of the famous side-valve Aston-Martin. The Bamford & Martin Aston is one of the most exclusive of all the vintage cars and I cannot help but think that many enthusiasts have missed something in motoring which very few cars can give. Therefore, these notes may prove of interest and help prospective and present owners of the type. Also, may I be forgiven for having a one-track mind where these cars are concerned, as in all my experience of cars, and it is a fairly wide one, I have yet to find a more satisfactory and pleasant piece of machinery to handle ?

The history of the s.v. Aston-Martin has been dealt with very fully in past issues of MOTOR SPORT and, therefore, it seems hardly necessary to dwell on this, but I do hope that when all my data are collected I shall be able to write a very full account of the history and achievements of these cars.

I first became Aston-Martin-minded in 1922, when the twin o.h. camshaft Grand Prix cars were produced, and although quite a small boy at the time, my mind was made up, and from time to time I used to build scale models of these cars ; no doubt very crude, but they gave me no end of pleasure. In this state I first made the acquaintance of Lionel Martin. I found him most interested and helpful and he sent me some very fine photographs and catalogues, etc., which are still among my treasured collection.

In 1926 a very fine 3-seater appeared for sale in Coventry, for the sum of £260, and my father had been almost persuaded to buy, when the General Strike came and squashed all hopes for the time being. Sundry cars came along in the meantime and in 1936 I bought my first Aston-Martin. This car, which I still have, was a clover-leaf 3-seater on the standard 8' 9" side-valve chassis, with large radiator and cycle-type wings off a T.T. Lea Francis. To keep this car company I bought another s.v. Aston in 1940 ; this time a close-coupled 4-seater with normal wings and the same chassis as the 3-seater. About the same time I paid a deposit on the ex-Morris Goodall twin o.h. camshaft car, and I am anxiously waiting the time when I can collect this, although as it is about three-hundred miles from here, it presents quite a transport problem.

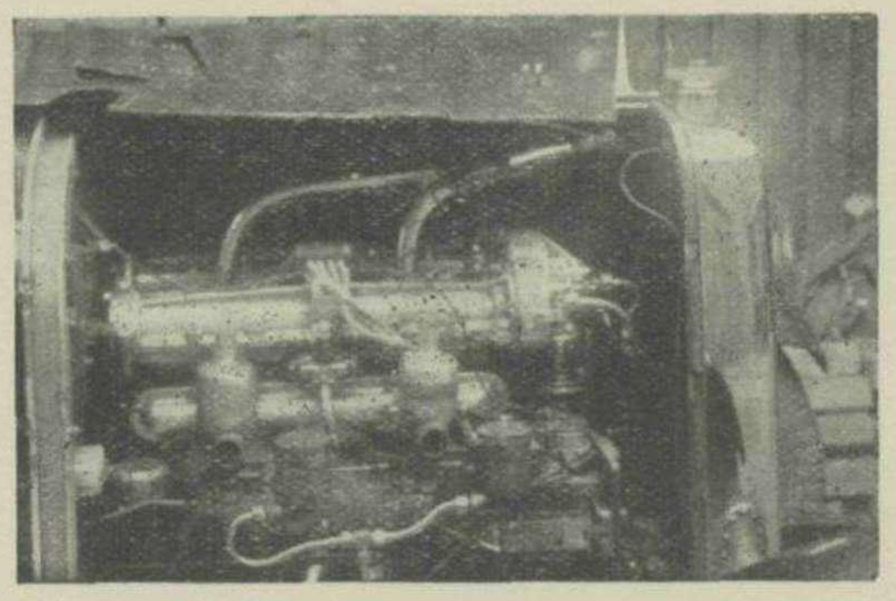
After running the 3-seater (No. 1951) for about twelve months I set about rebuilding the chassis and body. The whole job was stripped down to the bare frame, the body being completely scrapped except for the panels, which were aluminium. A small racing radiator with a built-in stone guard was acquired, and this was fitted in place of the larger type.

The aluminium bulkhead was then cut down to follow the lines of the new radiator, and when the chassis had been completed the new body took shape. This was still a 3-seater and on the same lines as before, but much narrower, with a detachable scuttle and a large bulge for the brake pedal, like the Grand Prix cars. New ash was used throughout, and the final job was upholstered in green leather, with Dunlopillo seat cushions. The detachable scuttle was found to be a great asset, as refilling the Hele-Shaw clutch was made much easier. The car was run in this form for about three years and then the body underwent another change. This time it became a 2-seater and the petrol tank was placed behind the seats and over the rear axle. The two spare wheels were then carried in a trough where the tank was originally fitted. At the end of June this year this car came off the road for the duration of the war, and it is now once again dismantled, enjoying another "birthday."

The 4-seater (No. 1966) has also had the engine taken out for a rebuild, and when No. 1951 is finished again I shall go right through this car in like manner. The twin camshaft car needs some attention to the engine, so I have before me much work in my very meagre spare time.

A description of the side-valve chassis may be of interest, so here goes :

The engine is a 4-cylinder of 66.5 mm. × 107 mm. with fixed head. No. 1951 has been re-bored and has 20 thou. oversize pistons by Hepworth & Grandage, but I am not so sure about No. 1966, as she has Zephyr pistons, and these may prove to be the original ones fitted. The block is a very nice piece of foundry work, the ports being exceptionally smooth and of ample proportions ; the inlet is circular



The Henri-designed twin o.h.c. sixteen-valve Bamford and Martin engine.

and the exhaust square in form. The block is cored through and a copper tube inserted for the induction, the carburetter being bolted on to the off side, the mixture passing through the block via this copper tube and thence forward to a very beautifully made copper branch pipe on the near side. This obtains on No. 1951, but No. 1966 has a cast aluminium branch pipe. The valves are in the usual position and have cast-iron guides and two springs. The diameter of the valves is $1\frac{7}{16}$ in. approx., and all are of uniform size and shape. Very large bronze valve caps are used and the sparking plugs are carried in the caps over the inlet valves. There is a bronze plug in the centre of each cylinder, and it is, therefore possible to use a sparking plug over the top of the piston, although I cannot say if this shows any improvement over the inlet valve position, as I have never tried it. Bronze tappet guides are used, held in position by double forked bronze claws, one claw holding down two guides. The tappets are adjusted by using three spanners. The water outlet is a three-branch copper pipe on No. 1951, but No. 1966 differs, as it has a cast aluminium pipe with the name " Aston Martin " on it. The crankcase is an aluminium casting of very sturdy structure, carrying four bearer arms, with a solid web between each pair of arms. On the near side this web acts as the magneto table and on the off side carries the control levers, which are worked from the steering wheel. The crankshaft has three bearings of very ample proportions, and these are held down by ½-in. B.S.F. studs. The crankshaft proportions are ample, the diameter of the big-ends being 1½-in., and detachable balance weights are fitted. The timing wheels are at the front end and are stamped so that an error when assembling is impossible, and the cams are high lift. The connecting rods are machined all over and carry bronze-backed white-metalled bearings.

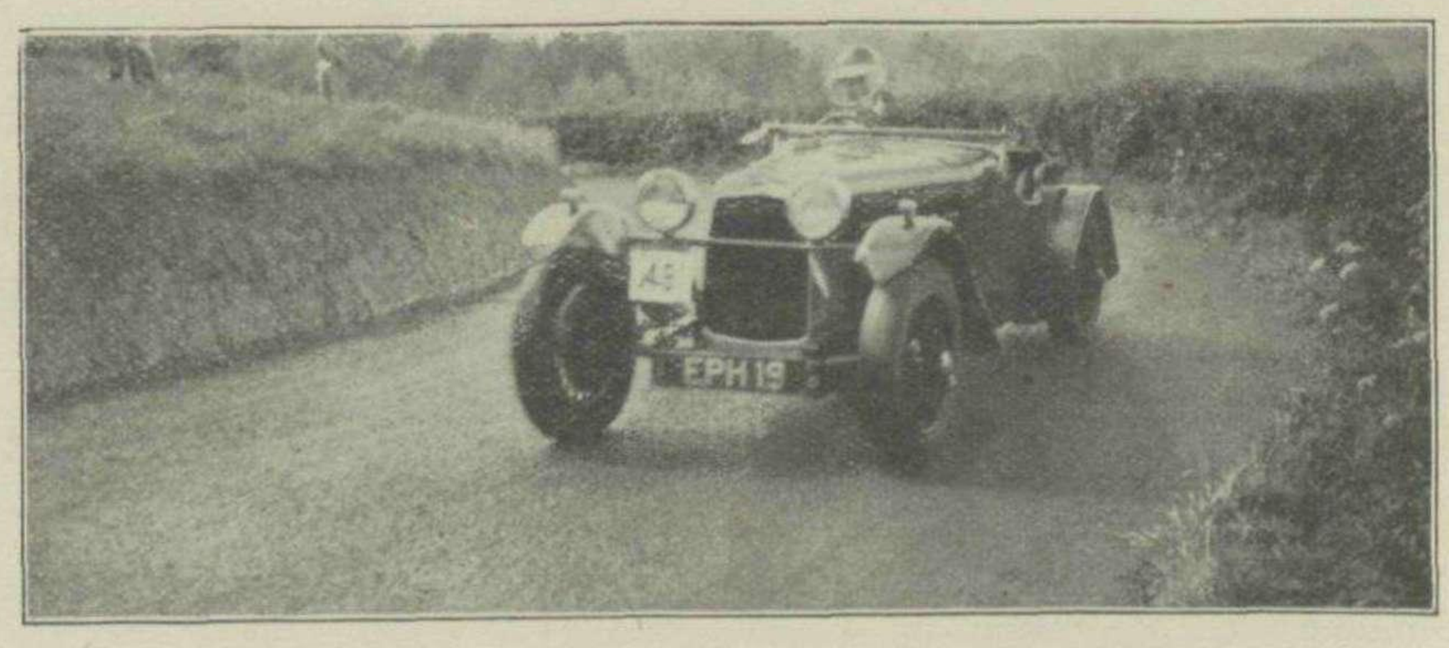
The sump is very large and carries a gear-type oil pump ; this is efficient, but skimming a little off the face plate after the wheels have bedded in slightly improves oil pressure greatly. In my own case 0.010 in. was taken off this plate to even matters up. The pump is driven from the camshaft by skew gears. Nine pints of oil are carried and a large gauze covers the oil. This gauze divides the sump into two compartments and it is impossible to overfill, as when the oil filler lid is open a tap is automatically opened and this gives the correct level. The oil filler itself carries a filter and pressure-line filters are carried in the near-side back bearer arm. There are three filters in all, fitting one inside the other, and these, I believe, formed the subject of a patent ; it is possible to remove and clean them without disturbing the sump. All oil pipes are carried outside wherever possible and are of large diameter. The oil pressure gauge lead comes from the back of the crankcase behind the filters and the correct running pressure is 60 lb. per square inch. Water circulation is controlled by a pump which is driven from the magneto. I have arranged an oil supply from the timing wheels which attends to the needs of the water-pump rotor shaft, which is inclined to become pitted in fullness of time ; after five years, however, my own shaft (which was fitted new then) is still as new.

Starter and dynamo are carried on the off side of the crankcase. Provision is made for a cooling fan, but this is not a necessary fitting. So much for the engine itself.

The clutch is of Hele Shaw manufacture and is a most excellent piece of work. I have never had trouble of any kind nor any sign of slip. It must, of course, be treated properly ; that is, if the car is in regular commission, the oil level must be kept topped up. This is done by turning the engine over until one of the brass plugs is at the top, which will bring the other plugs to the sides. Remove one of these and then, when oil is poured in at the top and runs out at the side, the correct level is obtained. A special light oil was prepared for me by the Vacuum Oil Co., but a successful compromise is 50/50 engine oil and paraffin. The racing, or small, clutch has 19 plates, and I believe this unit is slightly wider and of a different shape from the standard, or large, clutch. As a general rule the large clutch was fitted to the long-chassis cars while the short-chassis cars had the racing clutch, but an exception is provided by a side-valve long-chassis car which has just come to my notice, which has the racing clutch ; this car is No. 1956, owned by Mr. G. R. Booth, of Huddersfield. (It is still possible to buy plates. These are sold by Platt Brothers, of Oldham, Lancashire, who handle all Hele Shaw spares. I believe the price is 6s. and 6s. 6d., respectively, for bronze and steel plates.) A clutch stop is incorporated and the drive to the gearbox is taken by laminated spring leaves.

The gearbox is a very fine, robust piece of work with an aluminium casting which has solid bearers carried right to the frame and held in place by four bolts. The layshaft is carried alongside the driving and driven shafts, thus making possible very easy examination of all the working parts. No oil filler is provided as the lid is secured by two levers which work a clip-and-locking arrangement (modern manufacturers, please note) making it possible to remove the top of the gearbox in about five seconds. It takes about as long to replace it. Roller bearings are used throughout, except for ball thrust races, and bronze housings carry the extremities. These housings being bolted to the outside of the box, give a very workmanlike appearance. The selector mechanism is on the right-hand side of the box, a large bronze housing being bolted on behind to take an aluminium tube, plentifully webbed, which carries the gate. This is adjustable for rake and has the top gear slot forward, a very desirable thing, as a flick of the lever back into third is about as pleasant a movement as you could wish for. The constant mesh wheels are, of course, at the back.

The speedometer is driven from the front of the layshaft by two open gear wheels and adjustment is provided for this shaft at the back end. At the back of the box is a large bronze housing which comes up flush with the centre cross member, inside which is the universal joint for the final drive. On the other side of the cross member is a further bronze cage which covers the ball end of the torque tube. Eight ¼-in. B.S.F. bolts are used to couple these three units together.



The s.v. Aston-Martin run before the war by Gordon Green, brother of " E.R.A. Club " Green.

The rear axle has an aluminium centre housing and bolted to this are the steel tubes which form the entire axle casing. As the rear axle is of the fully-floating type the sleeves take only the weight and the axle shafts look after the drive. At the spring ends of the axle sleeves split bronze bearings are used, which are carried in cast aluminium housings, these in turn being secured to the springs by long U-bolts. Internally, the rear axle is very sturdy. The pinion is carried on roller bearings, the whole unit being assembled into a bronze case which fits into the split halves of the differential casing. A 12/48 crown wheel and pinion are standard and the differential is of bevel type. I believe that the racing axles were solid. The axle shafts cannot be withdrawn from the axle end, the diff. and axle shafts being a complete unit when assembled. The back plates for the brakes, both front and rear, are very sturdy aluminium castings and these carry two aluminium shoes lined with Ferodo; the brake drums themselves are aluminium castings lined with cast iron. Each drum has three ribs. The mounting for the springs is extremely good as non-ferrous metals are used for the spring shackles, the spring lengths being, front, 31½ in.; rear, 48 in. on the standard chassis, and 30 in. and 40 in., respectively, for the racing chassis. The steering is Marles and is really amazing, since on each of my Astons not a trace of wear is evident. This is really incredible when one thinks of the condition of some modern boxes after quite a short time; three-quarters of a turn of the wheel takes one from full left lock to full right lock, and while the actual steering lock does seem inadequate this does not seem to have the least effect on the cornering capabilities of the cars, in fact, the faster you go round them the better they like it. [We believe that Messrs. Bamford & Martin took very great care over assembly of these steering boxes.—ED.]

A longer drop arm would have made all the difference and on the later of my two cars the drop arm is 1 in. longer than on the older car.

Great care has been taken with the placing of the controls. The handbrake is about 2 ft. long and consequently has plenty of purchase. The pedals are nicely spaced and the design of the accelerator is unique insomuch as it carries two arms, one on one side of the steering column which carries the foot pad, and the other on the other side of the column which attends to the links with the carburetter. All pedal foot pads are bronze. The unit which carries the pedals is adjustable on a toothed device which allows forward and backward movement. The front wheel brakes are Perrot type and are very effective; here, again, much use is made of non-ferrous metals, a point which is evidence of the care and money spent in the design and construction of these cars. The radiator is flexibly mounted on aluminium rubber-bushed brackets and is of Serck manufacture, with nickel case.

The 16-valve cars differed very little in chassis design from the standard cars; there were, however, a few points worth noting. The chassis was much shorter and the frame level slightly lower. A very neat little radiator, with built-in



The s.v. car rebuilt by Lambert for Forbes and, as will be seen, re-registered. It is now the property of F/O. Phelps, A.T.A.

stone guard, was fitted and the brakes on the racing jobs were adjustable from the cockpit. They were cable-operated and the cables passed over a series of pulleys which tensioned them by the movement of a pair of hand wheels, one for front and one for rear set of brakes.

The accelerator pedal, as described above, was shaped like a horse-shoe and fitted round the steering column, which made it possible to operate it with either foot. Hand pressure was provided for the petrol feed, as against Autovac on the standard cars, and the petrol tank was carried on the chassis over the rear axle, and not between the dumb-irons as on s.v. cars.

The 16-valve engine was one of the designs of the famous M. Henri and followed Ballot practice very closely. It had a fixed head and the twin overhead camshafts were driven at the front end by a rather complicated arrangement, taking the form of a vertical shaft-drive from the front end of the crankshaft and a housing which carried a pair of bevels and three spur gears which drove the camshafts. Further down, a secondary train of gears drove the magneto, which was mounted vertically (in the early '20s it gave a fair amount of trouble, as most of the racing failures of these cars were caused through a burnt-out magneto). The valve springs and stems were enclosed in pistons working directly on the camshaft, adjustment having to be made by shims. From the same drive as for the magneto the water pump and, below that, the oil pump were driven. Most engines were of the dry-sump type, but I know of one or two which had an ordinary wet sump, the oil filler being a huge affair, I should think big enough to hold nearly half a gallon. All oil pipes are outside and therefore very easy to keep clean. The bottom half of the engine is similar to the s.v. cars, but it does differ in some details. The small racing Hele-Shaw clutch is used.

About 1925 a twin o.h. camshaft 8-valve engine appeared; this, again, was very different from the 16-valve engines.

In this case the drive to the camshafts was through a train of gears at the front end, the valves were operated in the same way as before through pistons, but the oil filter was on the carburetter side instead of the exhaust side and the magneto was on the same side as on the s.v. engine. I have a notion that one of these 8-valve engines was used in H. W. Cook's car in the 1925 200 Mile Race, but of this I am not certain. Confirmation of this would be very welcome. An engine was exhibited in a chassis at Olympia in 1925 and this is all I know of this 8-valve twin o.h.c. job. If anyone can give me any news of it I shall be most grateful, as all the data I have is a small photograph which I cut from the *Light Car* in 1925.

In 1921 a *single* o.h.c. 16-valve engine was made and apparently was intended for one of the 200 Mile Race cars, but nothing more seems to have come of it. This engine had four valves set vertically in each cylinder and operated by rockers, removable plates in the valve chamber sides giving access to the valve gear. Otherwise, the layout followed that of the twin o.h.c. 16-valve engines, the in-line drive for the vertical magneto, water pump and oil pump being identical, and the wet-sump lubrication system incorporating a huge filter like that used on Tubbs's twin o.h.c. car.

The performance of the Bamford & Martin Astons is extremely good, but much depends on the condition in which the car is maintained. It is essentially a car for putting up high average speeds and for this quality, along with economy, I have nothing but praise. My 2-seater (No. 1951) has been reduced in weight until I think I have got it as low as is reasonable, *i.e.*, about 12½ to 13 cwt., and therefore the car is probably faster than most of the existing examples. A genuine 75 to 80 m.p.h. has been attained on the Blackburn road, and the car will genuinely cruise at 65 without any fuss, the engine feeling like a dynamo, but I am searching for a 3.5-to-1 final ratio when I hope to get another 10 m.p.h. The short-chassis 2-seater, in racing trim, did close on 100 m.p.h.

The maximum safe engine speed is 4,000 r.p.m., but I have heard of this being exceeded by a large margin. I feel that the 4,000 limit must be adhered to and that in their standard form these engines should not be expected to exceed this figure. As I have mentioned before, the correct oil pressure is 60 lb./sq. in., but much depends on the internal condition of the engine and if a steady 40 lb./sq. in. can be maintained no harm will result. The engine will respond to various types of carburetters. For instance, in my own case the following have been used: Single S.U. ex-Morris *Ten*; *Zenith*; twin S.U.s large bore and 45° S.U. (similar but of slightly less bore than a "Red Label" 3-litre Bentley type).

The following results were obtained:—

1. Single Morris-type S.U., needle M. 8, standard jet. Maximum speed 68 to 70 m.p.h., consumption 35 to 37 m.p.g. on long runs—30 in town.
2. 45° S.U., No. 8 needle. Maximum speed 78 to 80 m.p.h., consumption 32 m.p.g.—25 to 28 in town. With M. 8 needle, consumption 41 m.p.g., but maximum speed dropped to about 60 m.p.h. and acceleration was poor. A No. 6 needle gave slightly better acceleration than No. 8, but for all-round really good performance the No. 8 is better.
3. The Zenith was not very successful as it was much too rich. It gave about 25 m.p.g. with a maximum speed of about 60 m.p.h., and other jets could not be obtained.
4. The twin S.U.s are another story as when fitted a power bulge of phenomenal dimensions was required, and, to my eye for slimmish lines, this was not satisfactory. The engine looks good and goes really well with them, however, so I may fit them to the large-radiator car.

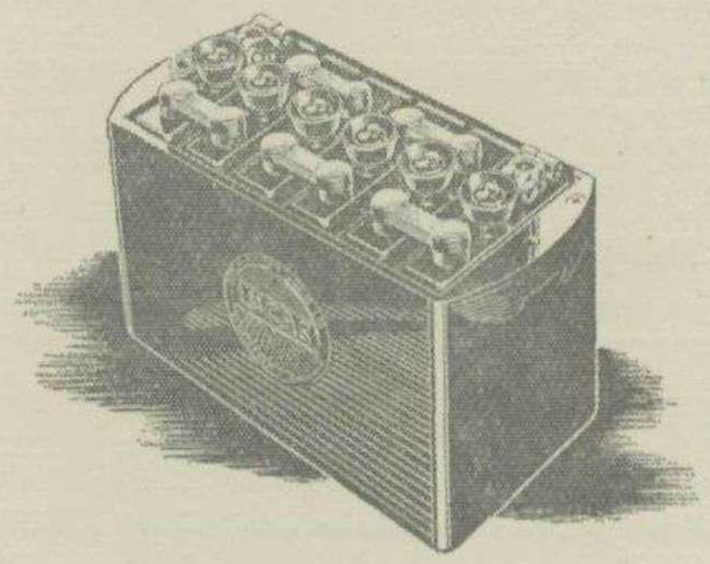
I found it was a great advantage to cylinder wall and gudgeon pin lubrication to remove the baffles from the top half of the crankcase. This does not materially alter oil consumption and is well worth doing. The water pump has a habit of shearing its driving key, but this is easily replaceable and if good quality steel is used the trouble will not persist. I believe that valve seats were liable to crack, but here again the drop in performance does not seem of any consequence; also I believe that it was hardly worth welding. Bamford & Martins specified that double Shell heavy oil should be used for engine, gearbox and back axle. I find that any of the recognised sports oils, such as Mobiloil "D," Essolube "Racer," Castrol and Shell, give similar results, and it is definitely an advantage to use a light oil in the gearbox and rear axle as in winter thick oil takes many miles before it is warm. The clutch stop is adjustable and very rapid gear changes can be made, and in point of fact once the habit of dispensing with the clutch altogether is acquired, much fun can be had. Gear ratios vary. The earliest cars (1921) had 13.2, 6.9, 4.87 and 3.73 to 1 on the then long chassis. "Bunny," I believe, had a bottom gear of about 9 to 1. In 1922 the following ratios were quoted: 13.2, 6.8, 4.9, 3.7 to 1, and in 1925 14.1, 7.4, 5.2 and 4.0 to 1.

No. 1951 has a bottom gear of 10.0 to 1, the other three ratios being approximately 7, 5 and 4 to 1, but 1966 varies insomuch as bottom is about 14 to 1. The twin-cam car has a top ratio of 3.5 to 1. The standard rear axle has a spiral bevel and pinion, whereas the o.h.v. cars' axles are straight-toothed.

It was once suggested in MOTOR SPORT that a club for Bamford & Martin Aston owners should be formed. I am all for this, and the sooner we are able to get together the better. Present-day conditions are extremely difficult, but I see no reason why we should not become better acquainted and leave the rest until happier times.

Since completing this manuscript, I have read with interest Mr. Robson's experience with an s.v. car. I rather think he has slipped up when he says 180 s.v. Astons were made, as to the best of my knowledge, the serial numbers commenced at 1900, and in the three log books which I have we get the following: Twin Cam: engine No. Mark III B, chassis No. 1913, first registered 1923; 2-seater: engine No. 1951, chassis No. 1951, first registered 1925; 4-seater: engine No. 1966, chassis 1966, first registered 1926. Since production started in 1921 and finished in 1925, it will be seen that, commencing with a serial of 1900, 66 or so cars were produced up to the end of 1925 and this includes quite a number of twin camshaft cars.

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THE SECOND MOTOR-RACING BRAINS TRUST

THE Second Motor-Racing Brains Trust went off very successfully at the Rembrandt Rooms on March 28th, and every credit is due to Messrs. Capon, Rivers-Fletcher and Peter Clark for organising it. The 150 tickets which were available were all sold, and everybody who is anybody in our world who could attend did so. At the luncheon preceding the brains session, Capt. A. W. Phillips was in the chair. Rivers-Fletcher addressed the assembly and said that "this organisation" (apparently referring to the panel of advisers who now guide the three organisers aforesaid), existed to keep alive the spirit of motoring sport during the war, and particularly to stimulate good ideas concerning post-war planning, which they feel to be an important job. He said, "There may be a job for us in the re-organisation of motoring sport generally and perhaps improving the lot of the sporting motorist on the road." He announced the advisory panel as comprising Percy Bradley, H. J. Morgan, Eric Giles and A. S. Heal. Other names may be added later, he explained, and if the approval of motoring enthusiasts is forthcoming after the war, particularly the approval of those released from H.M. Forces, of the R.A.C. and of the clubs, the panel might be delegated an important post-war job in the re-organisation of motoring sport. He could now announce that Capt. Phillips, secretary of the R.A.C. Competitions Committee, was on the panel and in the chair of this meeting. A toast to Capt. Phillips followed.

Capt. Phillips said a name was needed for "this organisation," and he did agree that the panel may be called upon to do a good job of work when the war is over and that its existence may be almost essential to the continuation of the Sport. Clubs have generally shut down and will not find it easy to pick up the threads as quickly as they would perhaps like. He paid tribute to Capon, Fletcher and Clark for organising the Brains Trusts, and he did think there should be some official status for the encouragement of the Sport. [The greatest official blessing should, of course, be from the R.A.C. itself.—ED.]

He thought that Rivers-Fletcher and his confederates would be advised to put their panel on a rather more solid foundation and give it an entity. The R.A.C. was just as deeply concerned in the future of the Sport as the Brains Trust organisers and those present, and would work and strive to give them what they needed.

Capon then opened the Brains Trust, explaining that, very unfortunately, Mr. McCullough, Question Master of the B.B.C. Brains Trust, could not be present, but that Capt. R. L. de Burgh Walkerley would kindly deputise. He also announced future 750 Club meetings.

Arising out of a suggestion made in MOTOR SPORT when reporting the last Brains Trust, a stenographer took down the questions and answers and a complete report was sent out to the Press within four days of the meeting. This is a creditable arrangement, but the report appears to miss some of the better points brought out by the assembled brains and has an irritating habit of changing from the third to the first person in reporting statements of the individual brains. The stenographer also appears to have mis-fired somewhat and to have misconstrued some of the brains' findings. The Editor of MOTOR SPORT was motoring on the day of the meeting, but we arranged for J. Lowrey to report the proceedings for this paper. We prefer his report, which follows, to the official account sent out to the Press. Amongst those present were Robin Jackson, Mike Couper, Robert Waddy, Bill Humphreys, H. J. Morgan, John Bolster, Prideaux-Brune, H. J. Ripley, B. Gibson, John Cooper, George and Peter Monkhouse, Douglas Tubbs, Marcus Chambers, Eric Findon, Austin Partridge, F/O. Donald Parker, R. D. Poore, P/O. Mallock, J. V. Bowles, Leslie Ballamy, Alan Hess, Peter Clark, Trowbridge, Gordon Woods, P. J. Baker and the "Scuderia Impecuniosa" in force.

March 28th and the Rembrandt Hotel were the time and place of the second Motor Racing Brains Trust, and compared with the earlier effort there was certainly a "bigger and better" trust.

The Rembrandt rooms were suitably decorated for the occasion, mainly with drawings and photographs loaned by Klemantaski and *The Motor*, and formal proceedings commenced with a belated lunch. On this occasion speeches were few and brief. Rivers-Fletcher stressed the importance of organising now for after the war, Capt. Phillips, of the R.A.C., sought a name for the self-appointed committee which is attempting this organising and concluded with the slightly blue story considered suitable for these occasions, and Capon put in a few words concerning future 750 Club meetings.

The Brains Trust session proper followed lunch and took place in a lower room. O/C Brains was Capt. Walkerley, lately "Athos" and "Grande Vitesse" of *The Motor* and one-time Assistant Editor of MOTOR SPORT. The Brains were provided by Raymond Mays, artist Roy Nockolds, designer Peter Berthon, photographer Louis Klemantaski, motoring journalist Laurence Pomeroy and designer Georges Roesch.

The first question to be put before the Brains Trust concerned the prospects of making motor racing pay. Mays expressed the opinion that if racing can be popularised so that a good gate means not 20,000 but 200,000, then racing can certainly pay, at least from the promoters' aspect. Pomeroy opined that a manufacturer could not make racing pay, for a man willing to spend £50,000 to win £60,000 will inevitably be beaten by a man willing to spend £100,000 to win £60,000. Q.E.D. Roesch expressed the opinion that if racing is used to develop cars, as distinct from wingless aircraft, it can offer value for money as a form of technical development.

How to make the public appreciate motor racing was what the second questioner wished to know. Pomeroy said hold races in prominent places like Hyde Park, and maybe the worst objectors will die of apoplexy. Klemantaski said race roadworthy cars, not Grand Prix freaks. Berthon, on the contrary, said the public must have a spectacle, and sports car racing just didn't offer that. Mays considered the essential was a live organisation to foster the interests of those desiring to motor rapidly either on or off the race track.

Two interlinked queries concerned the most æsthetically satisfying era of racing, and the best racing car to illustrate. Klemantaski regarded the 1938 G.P. cars as the most beautiful, but preferred illustrating earlier Bugattis and Maseratis. Nockolds also favoured the Bugatti as a subject, owing to the amount of interesting external detail to be portrayed. Pomeroy thought the 1938-39 G.P. cars were the easiest on the eye, but the Le Mans Bentleys were good artists' subjects—because they filled the picture and you could always wonder why the hell they were ever built like that! Brains-Boss Walkerley, venturing a personal opinion, liked the looks of the "monoposto" Alfa-Romeo, but regarded the dusty 1900 era as the racing artist's heyday.

A question from B.O.A. Pilot Whincop concerned the ban on supercharged sports cars in the T.T. race and the effect it had had on development. Roesch thought that it was no more illogical to classify cars on the basis of whether they were blown or not than to classify them on a cubic capacity basis, so what? [Thank you, Mr. Roesch; we always did want to classify cars by piston area rather than swept volume.—J.L.] Pomeroy, who was once closely concerned with the Zoller compressor, suggested measuring the blower size and gear ratio rather than the size of the engine, putting an unblown 4½ litre on a par with a 1½ litre blown at 30 lbs. [A nice idea, till some poor scrutineer is faced with a centrifugal or exhaust driven supercharger.] Berthon approved Pomeroy's scheme, and Klemantaski put forward the view that all the best sports cars were continental and unblown anyway, Delahaye and Talbot-Darracq being examples. As unskilled lip-readers, we feel sure Pomeroy said "Alfa-Romeo" under his breath!

Next came a sticky question as to the why and wherefore of those subtle characteristics, understeering and oversteering. Roesch said a little of either passed unnoticed, but a lot of either was bad. Berthon said oversteering, caused by rear axle steering, was a trouble on racing cars: understeering he thought best, since in racing power can always be used to swing the tail round. Mays thought the best characteristics were a matter of the driver's personal taste. Pomeroy said the real "aces" do best with understeering cars, which they corner in four-wheel slides, but normal mortals are safest with oversteering cars which turn round fairly harmlessly when overdriven. Walkerley added a personal reminiscence of the way in which the Brooklands Riley would suddenly fly off the handle without warning—

conversely, a Ford V8 lets you know when you corner too fast !

An *agent provocateur* of the name of McDonald sent in a query, or suggestion, that photographers should have a monopoly of action pictures in racing, artists working only on drawings of pit scenes and the like. Nockolds, with great restraint, merely pointed out how a (licensed) artist can give an impression of speed. Klemantaski said he wished he, like artists, could portray scenes without being there ! The camera cannot lie (?), and the artist shouldn't. Pomeroy drew an analogy between the artist-photographer matter and the old saying "If it's in *The Motor* it never happened; if it's in *The Autocar* it isn't news." Berthon thought the impressionistic drawing and the factual photograph were complementary, and not comparable to each other.

Following on the " surprise " questions, the Brains Trust replied to a pair of open questions, whether modern G.P. racing has served to advance touring car design and what the next G.P. formula should be. Mays thought touring cars had learnt from racing cars, but not as much as they should have done, and he instanced hydraulic shock absorbers as a racing development applied to touring cars. [? The hydraulic shock absorber was standard on all American automobiles by 1932, and was not adopted on G.P. cars until 1934.] Berthon said G.P. racing cars wanted speed at any price, and the only useful development was of accessories. For the future, the public must have its show, so speeds of 150 m.p.h. are essential: he suggested a 1,500-c.c. formula, with no limits as to blowers, weight, or fuel. Pomeroy said racing develops cars for fast long-distance touring, not for Saturday afternoon journeys to Southend ; it has certainly shown up the value of the De Dion axle, soft springs, tubular frames, etc. A new formula should lead to cars capable of about 160 m.p.h., fast enough to be spectacular but slow enough for plenty of drivers to be able to handle them. To obtain a varied entry of large and small cars, a 4½-litre blower capacity limit would have merit.

Roesch said just compare the production and racing Mercédès and Auto-Union models, and you will see that modern G.P. racing is of little direct value. [But the excellent handling qualities of the continental cars surely admits a subtle, if not immediately apparent, association between racing and catalogue cars. The late R. J. B. Seaman and George Monkhouse have expressed written agreement with this view.—ED.] His suggested formula would call for a car having a " kerb " weight of under 1 ton, complete with fuel for 200 miles, room for 4 people, with lights, starter, mudguards, etc. Walkerley said the Roesch formula would produce some very fine sports cars, but the only *real* Grand Prix formula was *formule libre*, open to all and the fastest car wins.

A few remaining minutes were devoted to questions from the crowd, requested to be " remotely associated with motor racing."

On the subject of the future of Diesel touring cars, Roesch said the diesel and petrol engines were tending to converge. [We presume he was thinking of such things as the Hesselman spark ignition oil engine and the German petrol injection aero engines.] Pomeroy said that he thought it desirable to point out that Dr. Diesel committed suicide.

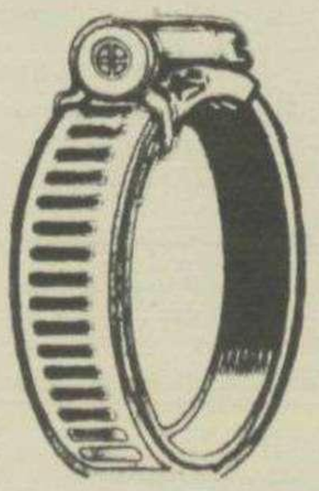
Asked whether women should race, Mays said yes, but not against men ! With a bunch of cars jostling one another into a corner, it was too natural to see a woman and give way. Berthon said racing is a man's job, and no woman had ever reached the top. Pomeroy said he seemed to recall Madame Junek leading in the Targa Florio, while Doreen Evans was a faster driver than either of her brothers, but he thought men and women should race separately. Walkerley recalled a ladies' race in Picardie when a lot of identical Renault saloons were used : one driver got ahead at the start, and stayed there by wig-woggling all over the road.

John Bolster enquired how the Brains Trust would stop the daily Press writing up motor races as events in which dukes, earls, millionaires and blondes try to have the bloodiest accident. Klemantaski thought the job almost impossible—only after the Donington G.P. did a popular daily normally show a racing picture other than one of an accident. Mays thought this was one task for " the organisation " of which so much was heard during the afternoon. Pomeroy said suppress the motoring papers, who get all the best writers working for much too little cash, so that the dailies just can't compete. Berthon didn't say how it was to be done, but motor racing would have to get a good Press before it could succeed in a big way.

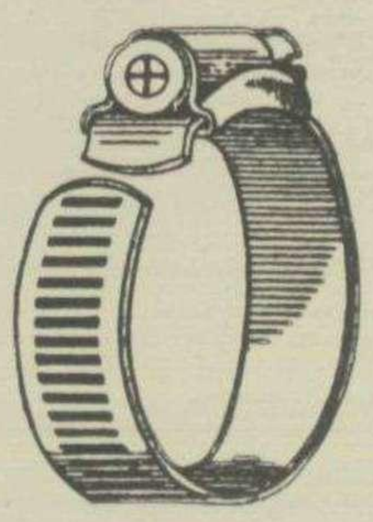
So the Brains Trust session concluded, and the company adjourned for tea and talk ; probably the party has finally broken up by now, but when racing enthusiasts get talking . . . !

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A Flying Officer Describes His Cars

F/O. Donald Parker recalls the motoring he has had during two-and-a-half years in the R.A.F.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

HAVING, for some time now, been reduced, like so many of us, to such modest forms of locomotion as a pedal cycle and my own two legs, I find some comfort in looking back upon some of the happy times of the not too distant past, and I see truth in the expression that pleasures, viewed in the light of retrospect, are very often better than the actual experiences. Reflecting on some two-and-a-half years in the Royal Air Force, I recall a number of happy memories in connection with cars that I have owned—if only for a brief period.

The modest sum of six pounds paid for a 1933 water-cooled 172-c.c. S.O.S. two-stroke motor-cycle and made me a member of that "die-hard" community who extract so much noise and vibration from a gallon of petrol. The S.O.S. was, in my hands, an unreliable machine and had womanish tendencies. A stubborn resistance to starting would sap one of strength and sanity, and when on the point of breaking every pipe in its framework, all resistance would melt and abundant healthy power would be on tap and all would be forgiven. During these periods of co-operation amazing power would be given off at the cost of very little petrol—about 90 m.p.g. was usual, and cruising at 55 m.p.h. would have proved satisfactory had it not been for seizures and a tendency for the plug to jump out. Being my first "stink wheel" I did not appreciate its possibilities and foolishly sold it for a "tenner."

With winter approaching, I brought out my Type 130 rear-engined Mercédès-Benz of 1937 origin. There were only eight 130s in this country and a short description of such an unusual and little-known car may be of interest. The engine is a 4-cylinder side-valve, of 70 × 85 mm. (13 h.p. rated) and follows very closely the design of the Ford 14.9 unit. An overdrive is incorporated in the 3-speed gearbox and gives a road speed of 62 m.p.h. at 3,200 r.p.m. (which is quoted as maximum, from 26 b.h.p.). The gearbox, however, is both difficult and unpleasant to use. The car, being well streamlined, will hold 55 m.p.h. in luxury and silence, but it takes many seconds to reach that speed, which, due to the gutless engine, cannot be maintained up any appreciable grade. For a car weighing only 17 cwt., with a 1,300-c.c. engine, the performance is ridiculous. Very excellent Lockheed brakes are fitted and deceleration can be in sharp contrast to the acceleration! The suspension is independent all round, with two transverse springs in the front and coil-spring swing-axles at the latter end. This type of springing is most desirable provided that one can afford a heavy replacement bill for tyres. Roadholding and cornering are good normally, but if corners are taken very fast the outside wheels are inclined to judder; however, no rolling is experienced. The body finish and quality of the upholstery is poor by English standards.

I made several attempts to improve the performance without much success. The cylinder head was skimmed twice, removing, in all, ⅛ in.; this mainly increased pinking and had little effect on performance. Finally, I decided to bring brute force to bear and fit a Ford V 8 engine—a modification that would have been relatively easy. However, the project has been temporarily shelved on account of a mêlée with a heavy lorry, out of which the Mercédès came badly mauled. Fortunately, the body got the worst of it and the suspension and works survived. I spent many afternoons off, with another enthusiast, removing the remains of the body with a tin-opener and a hacksaw blade. On these occasions we were always tired and would sometimes arrive complete with tools and overalls, only to spend the time basking in the sun outside the stable, in which the car was kept, too lazy to get started. However, the body *was* eventually disposed of, allowing the springs to relax and so lift the chassis about four inches higher, which caused the rear wheels to cant-in on their swing-axles and assume a very comic attitude. When circumstances permit I intend to fit a Ford engine and build up a body of welded pipes covered with doped fabric. Such a car should be useful as a trials special.

A 1929 unsupercharged 2-litre Lagonda open 4-seater then came into my possession. I bought it for £10, as it stood, in a blitzed garage. But it takes more than some hundredweights of lath and plaster to incapacitate a Lagonda, and it started immediately after having been extricated and cleaned. It proved to be a very reliable car. Acceleration was fairly poor, but 55 m.p.h. could easily be maintained. The brakes were good and needed little attention once correctly set. Roadholding and cornering were really first class, due largely to an immensely strong chassis. Petrol consumption averaged about 20 m.p.g. (with the single, water-heated Zenith), but I believe this figure can be bettered. My only criticisms are—the noisy gearbox (which made me self-conscious about changing down when there were people about) and the ridiculous doors fitted to the Van den Plas body, which were as awkward to negotiate as man-holes.

My next car was a 1937 1½-litre Riley "Falcon" saloon (with standard-type engine) which had only done 15,000 miles and was in excellent condition. So as to improve an already good car I immediately had the body resprayed (the paintwork on Rileys seemed to be very thin at this period) and a top overhaul undertaken on the engine. The result was very pleasing from the point of view of appearance and performance. After the Lagonda it seemed very smooth and easy to drive, which suggested that it was a "ladies' car"—if this was the case it certainly performed very well into the bargain. The "help-yourself" gearbox was a distinct assistance when accelerating, and the car was silent and reliable, but lacked something in appeal. I am always frightened of over-driving these smooth engines; they do not protest, and give no indication of just how happy or unhappy they are, whereas the Lagonda would always scream before it was hurt. Nevertheless, I frequently "belted" the Riley, keeping it near its top speed (about 75 m.p.h.) for long distances with no apparent harm. The Girling brakes were powerful and needed little maintenance and petrol consumption was about 26 m.p.g. The steering was delightfully light and accurate and was fairly high-geared, being of the type that requires rather pressure on the steering wheel than a turn to take a corner. I found the Luvax automatic chassis lubricator most excellent and think that it is a refinement that should be fitted to all cars. It saves much trouble and expense and also increases the life of the bearings it supplies. When I stored the car the mileage was 24,000 and there were no signs of wear.

Readers must excuse me for mentioning my next possession—an open 2-seater 1937 Morris Eight. Although not a sports car, I think that if it bore a label that savoured of castor base or was of some little-produced vintage stock, in a mildly tuned form, it would be acclaimed "une vraie voiturette sportive," instead of regarded as just domestic hardware. With mine I merely raised the compression ratio by fitting Series E pistons (which come up 3 mm. higher than Series I or II) and milled one-tenth of an inch off the head. The ports were also slightly polished. The net result was a quite startling increase in power. A top speed of just over 60 m.p.h. was limited by valve bounce. The engine was fussy and (with most of the baffles missing from the silencer) a glorious impression of performance was gained on full throttle. Indeed, it was a very practical and well-behaved little motor car. Eventually, when a big-end went, I laid it up with the Riley and commissioned a 1934 M.G. Magna open 2-seater. From the point of view of seating position and the placing of the steering wheel and gear lever, etc., the Magna scored high marks. Clever designing along these lines has always been a strong point with M.G.s, and it means a great deal. The added joy of a snappy gearbox, of the more silent variety, together with excellent steering and brakes (if kept frequently adjusted) made the Magna a pleasure to drive. The engine "revved" like a dynamo—noisy but smooth, and it did develop horses (mostly by virtue of its high speed). However, the petrol consumption was on the heavy side, being between 20 and 24 m.p.g. Maximum speed was about 75 m.p.h., but with some mild tuning over 80 m.p.h. can be achieved. A second dynamo was the most useful spare that I carried—Magna owners will know why!

Next, I became the possessor of a 1928 open 4-seater "12/50" Alvis. I had seen this car in the district on several occasions and found that it was owned by the local vicar. He was a sportsman; he sold me the "12/50" cheap and obtained a 1939 1½-litre M.G. to take its place. I soon found the Alvis to be in first-class order,

Continued at foot of next page

SOME ALTERATIONS TO A 1½-LITRE A.C.

The old gearbox-in-back-axle A.C., which recalls so vividly the great pioneer S. F. Edge, is a rare car now. But it was an attempt to offer a light-weight 1½-litre, and the alterations carried out by Signalman D. Hings to one of these cars are consequently of more than passing interest.—Ed.

SOME time ago an interesting car was sought to replace an Anzani Frazer-Nash, which, unfortunately, had to be disposed of some months before, because of the war. During a tour of some breakers' yards, a 12-h.p. A.C. of 1927 vintage was discovered, possessing what appeared to be an Anzani engine, although "A.C." was embossed on the cylinder head. Subsequent enquiries proved that it was made by Anzani, and is similar to those fitted to the early Frazer-Nashes. The car was of very light construction, with an aluminium 2-seater body, and, in fact, appeared to be almost entirely made of aluminium. The body was in quite good condition and even possessed a good hood, two undamaged side-screens, and a radiator muff. Needless to say, the former two items will not often be used! The car was shod with five quite reasonable tyres, and the only apparent mechanical faults were a split carburetter float and a leaky radiator. These defects were cured by somewhat crude plumbing, and the engine started easily, appearing quite healthy, with reasonable compression.

According to a road-test of an earlier model, top speed is only 50 m.p.h., but the very creditable petrol consumption of 35 m.p.g. was obtained. It was felt that considerably better performance could be expected, so the following modifications were carried out.

First, the minute Solex carburetter, befitting an Austin Seven or Fiat "Mouse," was replaced by a 30-mm. S.U., this being the size of the inlet manifold, which, incidentally, is water-heated, as it passes through the block. For the fly-wheel the makers went to the other extreme, and fitted one eminently suitable for a steam-roller! This will have to be lightened considerably when peace returns and such jobs can be done without priority certificates, etc. Fortunately, a lot can be taken off without interfering with the clutch. To provide anchors on all four wheels, the front and rear axles of the 2-litre model were fitted without any great difficulty, these also giving a wider track and improved appearance, as they have Rudge wheels instead of the discs. The wheelbase is 8 ft. 9 in. and the track is now approximately 4ft. 2 in.

The chassis is of channel section and rounded at the front, following the shape of the radiator. A cross-member amidships supports the front end of the torque tube through a universal joint. Quarter-elliptic springs are used back and front, and it is extremely doubtful whether the front ones will behave themselves when subjected to any degree of braking, as nothing is provided to take the torque. However, the 2-litre car apparently behaved itself satisfactorily in spite of this, as they were quite popular; incidentally, the front brake drums were considerably smaller than the rear. The 1,496-c.c. side-valve Anzani engine develops 45 b.h.p. at 3,600 r.p.m., at which speed the piston velocity is still quite appreciably below 2,500 f.p.m. The weight of the engine is only 160 lb., so it is a pretty efficient little s.v. unit, and, as John Bolster so aptly said in his article "G.N. Gen" last November, it "gave more power than it had any right to do." This urge is transmitted through a dry, single-plate clutch to the gearbox situated in the back axle casing. Incidentally, stronger clutch springs will be required to deal with the increased urge, for on the only test run possible, clutch slip was noticed when changing up.

The whole of the propeller-shaft tube and rear axle casing are of light alloy. The gear ratios are 5 to 1, 7.3 to 1 and 14 to 1. The gear lever is on the off side; surprisingly enough, very quick and easy changes can be made, although no clutch stop is fitted. Possibly the friction in the universal joint and various bearings would account for this. The maximum engine speed gives 66 m.p.h. in top and 46 m.p.h. in second, but an alternative final drive of ratio 4 to 1 is available, this giving a (very) theoretical top-gear maximum of 82 m.p.h. with 55 m.p.h. in second. No doubt the car would be most unmanageable if this speed was attained, but the advantage of the higher ratio would be a comfortable cruising speed of 55–60 m.p.h., although bottom gear might prove to be too high. However, the car is little if any heavier than the 'Nash, which had a bottom gear of about 10 to 1.

The steering is high-geared, requiring 1½ turns from lock to lock, but did not seem very accurate. Increasing the castor angle would no doubt improve it, as would the fitting of shock absorbers all round. The driving position is set well back, and visibility is good, due to the low bonnet. The total weight is about 13 cwt., and this gives the weight/capacity ratio of 1 lb. per c.c., the same figure as that for a Triumph "Tiger 80," a motor-cycle of no mean performance.

The test run mentioned took place along the North Circular Road with three up, and proved very enjoyable. The original silencer having almost completely rusted away, a motor-cycle Brooklands type silencer was temporarily affixed to comply with the law, and for this same reason a suction horn with a particularly unpleasant note was attached; judging by the looks of amazement on the faces of several "buzz box" drivers who were overtaken, our progress must have been truly inspiring. If in happier times to come you should meet YP 7469, a rather old and sedate-looking A.C., please do not be too rude!

FLYING OFFICER'S CARS

—*continued from page* 95

although the untaught invariably doubted the fact when they heard the engine. But it is well known that good healthy rattles are both safe and normal with this model. The "12/50" responds considerably to the size of the carburetter main jet (in the case of the updraught Solex). This fact was borne out in some tests that I made recently on a 250-mile duty journey. The petrol consumption figures are fairly accurate, as the car has a conveniently accessible fuel system utilising a tank under the dash, which has a drain tap.

I started off with a 125 main jet, which allowed poor acceleration and produced a "flat-spot" at about 25 m.p.h. in top gear. For the first hour I kept the maximum speed at about 45 m.p.h. but, the road being sinuous and narrow, I was prevented from maintaining this all the time. However, I was very gentle on the throttle and seldom changed gear, making use, rather, of the ignition control. No towns were encountered and 35 miles were covered in the hour. During the second hour the maximum speed was increased to just over 50 m.p.h., but I still nursed the engine. The performance on hills was reasonable, a change rarely being necessary. Two small towns were encountered and for the rest the roads were fast, although somewhat hilly. In this hour 38 miles were covered. The petrol was then checked and the rate of consumption was found to be 28 m.p.g. For the rest of the journey a 140 main jet was used. This improved acceleration and hill-climbing vastly and also reduced pinking; furthermore, the flat-spot disappeared. The car was then driven as it should be. A top speed of 72 m.p.h. was recorded on the speedometer, which I believe to be correct. During this period 21 m.p.g. was the calculated rate of petrol consumption and for the whole trip 700 m.p.g. was recorded for oil. This oil figure seemed unexpectedly bad, as the car does not smoke or leak. I have since tried a 145 main jet and notice a further improvement in performance. For ordinary economical running I think that a 130 jet would be the most suitable. The "12/50" Alvis is not a well-behaved car and possesses a very difficult gearbox. If you can drive such a car well then indeed you can drive anything . . . I understand that at 4,500 r.p.m. the fly-wheel is apt to disintegrate, which only goes to show that you cannot kill the engine but you may kill the driver! Nevertheless, it is cars like these that make people wonder if a decade and a half of experience and development has produced a substantially better article.

My real pride and joy is a 1929 4½-litre unblown Bentley. It bears an open 4-seater Van den Plas body. The whole car is in excellent condition as the previous owner had it completely reconditioned before he laid it up, and subsequently sold it to me. If you were to peep under the dust sheet you would find the old stalwart immaculate and complete, just waiting for the Happy Day. All I know about the performance is what the previous owner has told me. I understand that the top speed exceeds 90 m.p.h. I was frightened to enquire about the petrol consumption; however, let's hope that after the war this restriction will not be with us.

Three Years of Wartime Motoring

George Foxlee Makes Our Mouths Water

IT must at the outset be clear that I fully realise that I have been one of the lucky ones as far as motoring goes, since I have been able to keep up all, and possibly more, of my peace-time mileage, and, to my delight, mostly on vehicles of my own choice.

When war was officially introduced in 1939, one very nice sunny morning I smartly packed a kit-bag lately used for the more pleasant pastime of camping and got a girl friend of mine to drive me round the East Coast ports trying to persuade His Majesty's Navy that I would like to assist them to mine-sweep. I think they must have run out of brooms or else they just didn't like me. After several more experiences of this sort I departed to the Midlands, where I was initiated into the mysteries of those funny round engines which they hang on several yards of bicycle tubing, by an old friend of mine, C. A. Broomhall. Here, also, were Percy Maclure and Leslie Innes. The latter had a very nice 328 B.M.W., which went to the local almost by instinct and as if it was very thirsty indeed. "C. A. B." had a large Chrysler, which took us six miles to work and back each day in great comfort until we ran out of puddle. "C. A. B." then purchased a little two-stroke of 98 c.c., on which his 6 ft. 4½ in. looked somewhat droll. But, as he said, he could not fall off, as he only had to put his feet down to lift the little beast clear of the ground. I bought a 1938 Francis-Barnet "Cruiser" of 250 c.c.; a very fine little machine. In the meantime, Robson and the girl friend towed up my caravan with the old trials Alvis, to which indignity the "12/50" did not object. Then I got bitten with the idea of going to Scotland and seeing what really happened when the engines aforesaid met up with the airframe, so the Alvis was again attached to the van (with Cruiser inside) and a tow of some 400 miles commenced. This trip went off without incident, except for a visit to D. D. Clapham at Derby on the way. The Group Captain seemed rather astonished at the arrival of one very stripped Alvis - with - attachment, covered in mud, due to snow on Bowes Moor, arriving outside his office, but offered a corner of the 'drome for me to park on. This I gave up rather quickly, as I found the van got frightened at the close passage of Spitfires about 2 ft. off the roof and tried to take evasive action; also I found I was much too handy when things "went wrong!" We moved to an adjoining farm. . . .

After a while I discovered a very fine line in trials hills going up the side of the Carricks from the sea, with a real gradient and a loose shale surface. At this time, also, a lovely coloured liquid was obtainable which, mixed with puddle and some oil, made the Alvis quite lively. Much of my time off duty was taken up with climbs of this "find," in company with Robson, whom I had persuaded to come up and work with me, and Bertie Gilmore. The local farmer was quite happy about it, and when (and if) you got to the top there was a magnificent view up into the Kyles of Bute and across to the Northern Rock off Belfast. On one occasion I found the Army about half-way up off the road and hopelessly stuck in a peat bog with an open truck. I was able to talk the C.O. into letting me show them how to get it out without the aid of several rolls of wire netting, pickaxes, shovels, and a number of swearing, hot and incredibly dirty men. I made them let the tyres down and remove various tree trunks they had carefully blocked the wheels with, then got all the men in the truck. To the accompaniment of "Bounce, you b——s, bounce," conducted by the C.O., she sailed. Truly a strange medley of sounds in the old Scotch hills, but very familiar to trials men. . . .

In the winter of 1940, in the middle of the worst cold spell for years, I got a sudden urge to visit a friend who was living at Annick on the extreme North Coast of England. Looked up on the map, the only way seemed to be up to Edinburgh and then down the coast, or down to Carlisle and over to Newcastle. As I had only four days' leave this didn't seem very good, until I remembered a track I had seen while flying over these mountains. I looked this up on a flying map and found it ran from Sanquhar over the summit of Wanlock Head down to Peebles. This suited me very well. Obviously it was unsuited to even a trials car, even if I had the petrol, so it meant the little "Cruiser." I started off on ice-bound roads as soon as it was light, in flying boots, helmet, and leather coat, plus a large sweater. In two miles you could scratch your name in the ice on the tank; but this wore off, and I began to enjoy myself while taking due care not to drop the model at this stage of the trip. Leaving the main road at Sanquhar I took to the track, which was loose gravel frozen firm, and started to climb. As I got high up the sun came out on the mountain-side, giving a pink glow to everything, the trees weighed down with snow and the stream at the side of the track frozen solid with long streamers of icicles hanging down and reflecting the light. I was very glad I had gone on. At the top I came to the highest inn in Scotland. I eventually arrived at Annick for tea, having had no trouble at all and having retained my seat. Two days later I set out for Carlisle across the Northumberland moors, and was astonished to see the inhabitants of one village gaily skating on the Tweed. "C. A. B." was at this time at Carlisle, and I spent the night with him, setting out north again in the morning. The trip was the worst of any I can remember; just black ice and fog, so that a run of 104 miles took six hours, including dodging a telegraph pole which suddenly assaulted me at a most odd angle. Still no sign of trouble from the little beast, and there never was until I sold it a year later.

The next spot of fun came on New Year's Day. The 'drome was practically deserted, it being Scotland, but sunny and dry, with the tarmac having a nice coating of ice all over it. I "borrowed" a very nice fire engine made by Mr. Crossley, of the six-wheeler type, with open bodywork and no windscreen. This, I found, could be made to do beautifully controlled slides and figure eights, but while the onlookers got a lot of fun out of it, Authority pointed out that there might be a fire and they really did want it all in one piece, which was a pity.

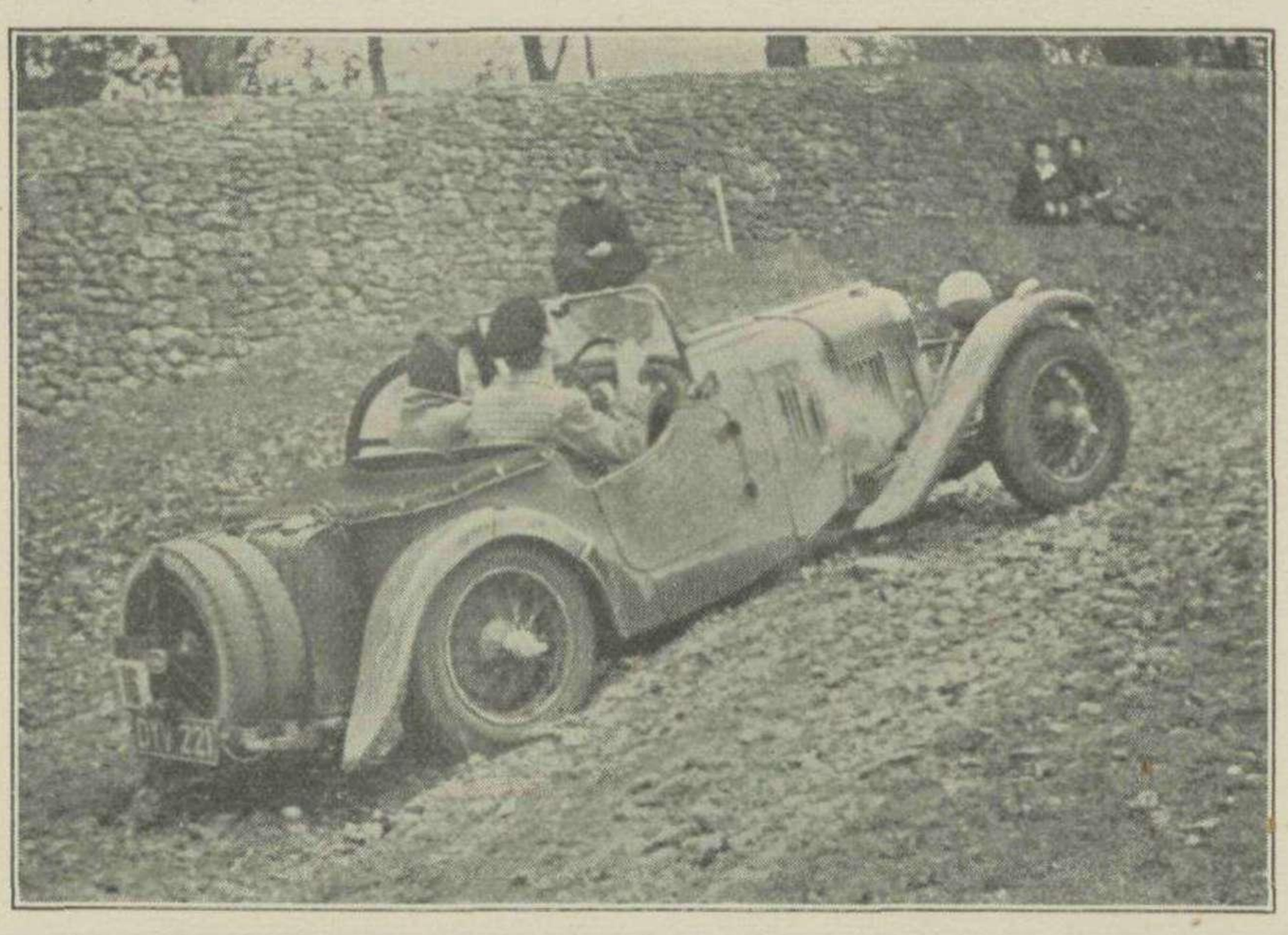
Then one day I was nearly knocked down by a large Humber, and on being somewhat pointedly rude to the driver, found it was Joan Crossley of the Vintage S.C.C., so we arranged to meet for dinner and try the Alvis. This led to our spending our time together during the winter and the purchase of a Triumph, as Joan didn't like the "Cruiser's" tail end. This little car did very well for a while, the Alvis, after several fast runs to Carlisle, being laid up permanently. Then I got posted back down south, so Joan, who is with Air Transport Auxiliary, got posted back also, and the Triumph did its last run to the local registry office, where Joan and I were married. Then came the question of a car to take us south. I was lucky enough to find a "12/50" Alvis with a really large two-seater body. With this car I towed the van, plus luggage with Joan and her sister in the car, in heavy snow as far as Scotch Corner, 430 miles, in two and a half days, to White Waltham.

Just for a fortnight I owned a 500-c.c. "Sloper" Ariel bought to pay a rapid visit to my mother at York. It steered like an inebriated donkey and tossed me smartly on my nose coming out of an S-bend, so I sold it.

The new Alvis then settled down to some very hard work, running all over the South of England. On one trip to Scotland during the Battle of Britain, covered with Hurricane parts, the rear wings began to come off on Bowes Moor so, on returning, I completed the process and fitted light ones and no running boards. This brought much rude comment on my head from various R.A.F. brass-hats, who, when a visit to a local airfield was proposed, would say, "I think we will take my car, old boy!" As I wanted to overhaul the brake gear and do one or two other small jobs, I bought a 2-litre Triumph saloon, which was very nice and much less tinny than most modern cars, but soft. I ran it until I had completed the Alvis. At about this time I had a very fine run to Castle Bromwich with Michael May in the ex-Powys-Lybbe T.T. "Silver Eagle" Alvis, and had the pleasure of driving it on the return trip. Even though it is getting rather tired and its owner has no time to rebuild it at present, it was still a great joy to drive. May also has a Vincent H.R.D. "Rapide," the makers of which claim 0–100 m.p.h. in 25 seconds. I have no reason to doubt this, as I had it from 0–97 m.p.h. in a surprisingly short distance.

In order to continue motoring on basic I bought a 500-c.c. H.R.D. "Comet."

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Finis! The H.R.G. comes to rest on the notorious Nailsworth Ladder, after an attempt which resulted in broken piston rings.

Peter Clark ponders

HOW WERE

In this unusual article Peter Clark, well known exploits at Le Mans, is modest enough to admit beginners who

THOSE of you who were at the "Rembrandt" party last September may remember my remarks about "spurious experts." This is not a hit at Pomeroy, nor even at Sam Clutton. Nor am I, in this instance, thinking of technical knowledge. I am thinking of actual driving skill, or lack of it.

As we no longer have to demonstrate the state of our proficiency before a critical audience and against keen competition every week-end, we drivers (or some of us) now cherish an exaggerated idea of how good we were. I have therefore been looking through a collection of photographs showing myself in all manner of undignified positions. This has a salubrious effect, and in the hope that it may jog the memories of others who may not at present have access to their own albums. I have caused some of these miserable episodes to be here reproduced. Unfortunately, I cannot reproduce all of them, nor do the photographs always show the full horror: I have, therefore, also tried to paint some sort of a picture in words, to which end I have been assisted (and greatly entertained) by looking through many old route cards.

Very often one got up the difficult hill and (swollen with conceit) failed on an easy one. I can recall climbing Simms and Boccombe in torrential rain in the 1936 M.C.C. "Torquay," only to become firmly wedged on Waterworks, where I did not merely fail but did considerable damage to both running boards of my Jensen by crashing clumsily from bank to bank.



The author's H.R.G. runs backwards on Warren in the 1938 Colmore Cup Trial.

Four months later I put up a simply disgraceful show in the M.C.C. "Sporting" (Buxton). I like to think this was largely due to my listening to a learned dissertation by Alan Whiddington on how to climb Jenkin's Chapel. "Look out for the lump of rock on the inside, and take it wide," he said. I was so busy looking at the aforesaid lump of rock that I paid no attention to the outside, and the car came to rest with a monumental crash. On a subsequent occasion, with my Alvis "12/50," I sailed round the difficult right-hand hairpin, only to run out of road on the far easier left-hand corner which follows. Reverting to that awful 1936 "Sporting," I was so angry about Jenkins that I approached Taddington in a fury and very nearly failed on that too. It is one of the easiest hills in the British Isles and is often included unobserved. I did manage to get up Litton Slack, but had another expensive accident with the gateposts at the top. Bamford Clough is admittedly fairly difficult, and needless to say I made a mess of it in the mood in which I was.

I think I should like to apologise, once and for all, to all the marshals and other patient officials to whom I fear I may have been intolerably rude on such occasions.

I always liked the Kentish Border Club's trials—probably because I was fairly successful in them. Nevertheless, in spite of climbing Stowting quite regularly, one was always liable to be caught out on the "trick" hairpin at Shrubbs Wood, of which more anon.

The 1936 "Gloucester" was another costly venture, as part way up Middle Drag the Jensen's camshaft broke in the middle leaving me only four cylinders to play with. I have a photograph taken at the precise moment when this disaster occurred, but beyond a slight smoke haze behind there is nothing special to indicate the cause of the stoppage. A four-cylindered attempt at Hodgecombe was, of course, abortive. I was not in a friendly humour, and following an argument with my navigator-wife (who was right) took a wrong turning and skidded off the road in the snow into a ditch. My wife had to sit on the running board to prevent the car slipping further in and overturning, whilst I had to walk back to Hodgecombe, to enlist the aid of the official horse, "Major." I had to wait until the entire entry had passed before "Major" was available, by which time we were both in a low humour. "Major," in fact, broke his chains five times, by starting off at approximately 20 m.p.h.

as soon as he was attached to the Jensen.

We arrived back at the Bear Hotel, Rodborough, in time to find almost everyone gone except Maurice Zwick, whose Rapier had blown up. We towed him back to London (on four cylinders). Readers may remember that, by sheer perseverance, Zwick ultimately made that car into a really excellent and reliable trials job ; if I remember rightly, he threw away the body and fitted a supercharger in its place.

The Sunbeam M.C.C. trial on the "tank busting" ground near Bagshot was almost the maiden voyage of my Alvis "12/50." As I have mentioned on a previous occasion, when writing in some detail of the various cars it has been my good fortune to own, this was my first attempt at home building, and it was too long and too light at the back for trials. But it was a grand car on the road. The 1937 M.C.C. Land's End saw my Jensen teamed with another Jensen (Derek Silcock's) and a sort of Hudson-ish device (Keith Silcock's). I don't think any of us drove very cleverly, and my chief recollection is of our frantic efforts, at each observed section, to dissuade Keith from his threats to drive home, and of our fears that we should find he had disappeared before the next

upon

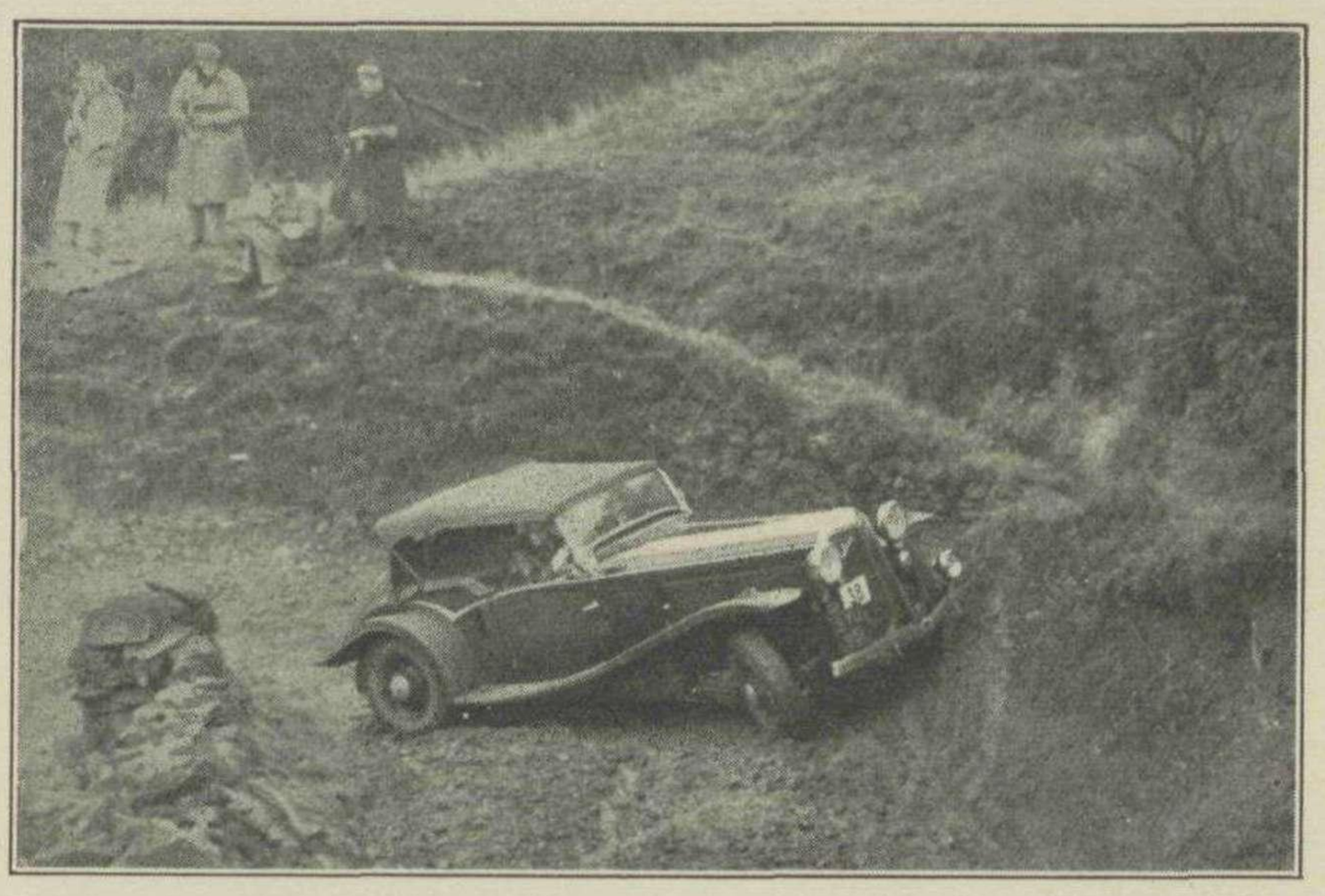
THE "MIGHTY" FALLEN . . . !

s a successful trials competitor and for his o early mistakes, which should be useful to ll ponder.—Ed.

section. Also both Derek and I had rather frightening punctures on the last leg to Land's End in the dark. Derek was using Invicta Z-tread tyres, one of which came clean off and went into a field, where we had to go looking for it with torches.

In November, 1937, the Torbay and Totnes "Riviera" Trial was another of those ghastly exhibitions. I think it all started because I had my H.R.G. sent down by train in order that I could attend a business conference in London the evening before and come down myself on a sleeper. There was a good deal of delay and argument getting the car unloaded at Newton Abbott, and then it wouldn't start because it was frozen. In the end I was nearly late for the start, which is always a bad thing. Anyway, to borrow an apt expression from Dr. Benjafield, "I drove like a housemaid." It was a very difficult trial and I don't remember getting up anything.

The 1938 Colmore was an almost equally disgraceful exhibition. Two of my photographs show me failing (*a*) on Warren and (*b*) on Nailsworth Ladder. In the former, the car has just sunk backwards into the retaining rail, breaking it (and my tail-lamp). I seem to be clutching the driving mirror, and my infamous



Peter Clark readily admits his early errors. Here his Jensen has gone too wide on the hairpin at Jenkin's Chapel in the 1936 *M.C.C. Sporting Trial.*

beret has been shoved desperately to the back of my head. On Nailsworth I have just ended a perfect day breaking a crop of piston rings by over-revving. There are no photos recording my failures on Leckhampton and Juniper, nor of my team mate, Louise Redfern (Mrs. Gordon Claridge to you) standing up on her seat and roundly abusing me for mis-leading the team over a rocky field where she grounded her sump with a mighty wallop.

The 1939 Colmore was not much better, in fact I think I am allergic to Sunbac. This time I had Jack Fry as navigator, so that we lost our way frequently, added to which my 3-litre Bentley misbehaved for the only time in its normally blameless career, inasmuch as the exhaust manifold split and we kept catching fire. This was about the only occasion when I, too, became discouraged and failed to complete the course.

Another photograph (not reproduced here) gives a picture of the Bentley marring a nice day's Wye Cup (Margate and District C.C.) outing by failing on Shrubbs Wood. Most of the entry came sliding down straight at the camera-man, but I thought I had everything taped. A moment after the photo was taken I opened up too much, too early, and we went straight through the hedge on the right whence we were with great difficulty extricated ; Ken Hutchison looking very scornful. I believe it was in this same trial that I held up the whole entry by getting a fair-sized tree jammed between the hand-brake and the body.

After these exhibitions, how *dare* the fellow air his views in MOTOR SPORT ?



The author going better with the Jensen in an M.C.C. classic.

POLITICS

BETTER motoring conditions for motorists in general mean better conditions for those who own and drive individualistic cars. Consequently, we are very interested in a letter concerning the injustice of the present scale of private car taxation, which the Motor Legislation Committee has addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We do not appear to have heard nearly enough of the Motor Legislation Committee, for, although we were aware of its existence, we did not realise, until this letter reached us, that it was such an influential body. Its secretary is Albert E. Cave, J.P., and its chairman is Lt.-Col. J. Sealy Clarke. Its notepaper bears the names of such influential organisations as the R.A.C., the A.A., the S.M.M.T., the M.A.A., the R.S.A.C., the B.C. & M.C. Manufacturers and Traders Union, the Institute of British Carriage & Automobile Manufacturers and the Scottish M.T.A. The M.L.C.'s address is Palace Chambers, Bridge Street, London, S.W.1 (WHI 8971). If it wishes to plug away at trying for better *motoring conditions there is plenty for* it to do. We shall watch what effect this letter has on the Chancellor's next Budget. We should also like to see a similar letter addressed to the D.P.O.'s on behalf of those whose business suffers on account of insufficient petrol, while that strange creature the "taxi" appears to have multiplied exceedingly with the finish of "basic," particularly around public-houses, hotels, theatres and railway stations, where the private car on work of national importance dare not venture. This is not only in London, but in every provincial town and country village. The letter which the Motor Legislation Committee addressed to the Chancellor reads as follows :

THE RT. HON. SIR H. KINGSLEY WOOD, M.P.,
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,
THE TREASURY,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

Sir, *March 5th*, 1943.

TAXATION.

Private Motor Cars and Motor Cycles.

The Motor Legislation Committee, representing the users, manufacturers and retailers of private motor cars and cycles, desires respectfully to bring to your notice the unfortunate and inequitable position in which many owners of these vehicles are placed as a result of the restrictions necessitated by war conditions.

With the drastic rationing of petrol and the urgent need for rigid economy in the use of rubber, private cars and motor cycles are now confined solely to essential business or domestic journeys, a necessary restriction in which the Government has had the wholehearted co-operation of the motor organisations. On the other hand, the Government has recognised that this use, however limited, of private cars and motor cycles is essential to the war effort, and to the maintenance of the everyday life of the community, as evidenced by the continuance of petrol allowances for these essential journeys.

Moreover, in the case of certain defence services, *the Government not only sanctioned the use of* petrol, but have relieved the owners from the obligation to pay tax and insurance on their vehicles. It is the contention of the Motor Legislation Committee that those private motor vehicles which are not directly employed in these defence services are nevertheless performing work of equal importance in their use for purposes directly associated with the war effort or for essential needs. Consequently, the owners of these vehicles are justified in asking *for the sympathetic reconsideration of their position* as motor tax payers.

To explain the position it is necessary shortly to review what has happened in the last four years. The Finance Act, 1939, was, of course, introduced some time before the war broke out, and it imposed a heavy additional tax on private cars and motor cycles. The increase was no less than two-thirds of the amount previously payable. The outbreak of war and the consequent rationing of petrol introduced a factor which could hardly have been contemplated when this heavy additional taxation was imposed. But the result was that on January 1st, 1940, when the new tax actually became operative, the owners of private motor cars were faced with an increase of sixty-six and two-thirds per cent. in their tax, coincident with a seventy-five per cent. reduction in the extent to which their cars could be used.

Since then the situation has developed far more unfavourably from the standpoint of the motor tax payer, first by the reduction of the basic ration, followed by its complete abolition, and finally by the restriction of use to essential purposes. And thus to-day a situation has arisen in which the owner of a private car is still required to pay the peace-time taxation increase of sixty-six and two-thirds per cent., although owing to wartime conditions the use of his car has been reduced to a small fraction of normal use.

It is realised that to seek a reduction in taxation during wartime may appear to be an unusual step and difficult to justify. It is submitted, however, in this instance the injustice is such that it could be no argument merely to say that this is one of those burdens that must be borne because of the war. The real question at issue is whether the tax on the individual is *equitable* and whether in the circumstances he is being called upon to pay far more than his fair share towards the war effort, and is thereby being unreasonably required to carry a burden which should more properly be distributed over the whole community.

Our Committee wishes again to emphasise the fact that the owners of private cars and motor cycles have no desire to avoid the payment of their fair share of any form of taxation which the Government may consider necessary under the present abnormal conditions, and in asking for the fullest and sympathetic consideration of this memorandum it is assumed that it cannot be the considered policy of the Government to continue to impose an inequitable burden of special taxation upon one section of the community in addition to their obligations as ordinary tax payers.

The concrete suggestion made by the Motor Legislation Committee is that in the forthcoming Budget provision should be made for the repeal of the increase in tax of 10s. per unit of horse-power, and the increase in motor cycle taxation as provided by the Finance Act of 1939, thus bringing the tax back to the pre-war level at which it previously stood, and affording some relief to motor owners in respect of the inequitable burden they have borne with increasing effect during the period of the war.

The Committee has put this case before you in the form of this memorandum, trusting that it contains all that is necessary to convince you of its justice and equity. Should, however, there be other aspects upon which you would like further information the Committee would welcome the opportunity of elaborating its case by means of a deputation.

It should be added that this request is made solely to meet the situation which has arisen, and is without prejudice to any representations which the Committee may find it necessary to make under post-war conditions.

We are, Sir,
Your obedient servants,
J. SEALY CLARKE,
Chairman.
ALBT. E. CAVE,
Secretary.

Another instance which may indicate that at last the motorist, through his representative bodies, is beginning to wake up and take care of his interests is this letter, addressed by The Guild of Master Motorists, whose president is Sir Noel Curtis-Bennett, K.C.V.O., to the Press :

March 8th, 1943.

Sir,

The tyre, if Lord Woolton will allow me to say so, is more important than the potato ; yet compare our present awareness of the one with our alarming indifference towards the other.

How long will our existing tyre stock last ? What do new sources of rubber supply mean in numbers of tyres available—and when ? If the shortage is as grave as it looks would it not be as useful to tell the car owner about it as to blazon to his wife the latest incarnation of the potato ?

Nobody does tell him.

Somewhere around 70,000 tons of rubber is needed, I am told, to put tyres on every car and commercial vehicle with four or more wheels. That is one fact ; another is that many of the tyres now being made will probably not last for more than a year or so because the rubber shortage has compelled manufacturers to de-grade their tyres.

The supply of this 70,000 tons of rubber is clearly a vital fact in the war situation. Where is it to come from ? How does it balance against (1) the volume of rubber now in the country ; (2) the tonnage of crude or synthetic rubber on which we may *reasonably* rely from overseas before the year is out ?

The truth is that the tyre situation is critical ; for months, indeed, it has been front page news in U.S.A. The sooner British car owners are told more about it officially the quicker will they co-operate in saving the situation, for none respond more willingly to a national call once they have the facts.

Yours faithfully,
M. GRAHAME-WHITE,
(Lt.-Comdr., R.N.V.R.)
Hon. Secretary,
The Guild of Master Motorists.

N.Z. SPORTS AND RACING CAR CLUB'S HILL CLIMB

ON February 7th, 1943, the N.Z.S. and R.C.C. held its first competitive event, in the form of a speed hill climb. The venue was a 1,300 yard long section of narrow, twisty, gravel-surfaced road, some twenty miles out of Wellington. The climb embraced every type of bend, right- and left-hand, acute and gradual, plus a climbing hairpin, providing a very adequate test of men and machinery.

The surface is hard-packed gravel, but due to recent wet weather, clay worked its way to the surface as the meeting proceeded, resulting in some unpremeditated sliding. However, no one ran out of road, and a high bank on one side, plus a stout fence on the other, provided a good safety factor.

Due to petrol shortage, competitors were small in number, but they certainly made up for this in enthusiasm. Each competitor made one practice run and two official runs.

First away in practice was Easterbrook-Smith (1.85-litre Ansaldo), who clocked 2.01⅘. The Ansaldo was running with the Arnott carburetter fitted down-draught, tank pressure being provided by a hand-pump mounted on the off side of the body. This appeared to be of rather too small a capacity, the driver having to pump rather frantically. The Ansaldo ran less spare wheels, battery and rear seats, and appeared to sit down very well.

Next run was made by Jock Brough (3-litre short-chassis Bentley), his time being 1.54⅘. The Bentley looked and sounded magnificent and cornered very neatly, in true Nuvolari style, in a succession of short skids, instantly corrected. This car is a very fine example of a "Red Label" Bentley, and is notable for its enormous rev. counter, which, by the way, is no mere ornament, as it was registering "three-five" on more than one occasion.

The Bentley was followed by Barney Ferrier's 2½-litre S.S. Jaguar saloon, a very potent motor car, which, in spite of its driver's almost complete ignorance of the course, took only 1.50⅘, a very creditable first attempt. The S.S. was particularly steady.

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More About the Marlborough-Thomas in New Zealand

IN MOTOR SPORT for September, 1942, we published an account of a Parry-Thomas car which is now in New Zealand and which, as stated in a "Stop Press" column in the November, 1942, issue, was subsequently found to be one of the Marlborough-Thomas cars. This article has inspired a letter, reproduced below, from F./Sgt. Douglas E. Wood, R.N.Z.A.F., of Auckland, giving further details of this interesting car, which was at one time owned and driven by him. It will be seen that he adds further evidence to prove that the car is a Marlborough-Thomas and not one of Thomas's 4-cylinder Thomas-Special single-seaters, as we at first supposed. These Marlborough-Thomas cars were 2-seaters and were raced in this country by Parry Thomas and George Duller, one also appearing as a sports car, with abbreviated flaired wings, at the 1924 Show. In the 1923 200 Mile Race at Brooklands Thomas's car retired after 45 laps and Duller's after 60 laps, and in the 1924 200 Mile Race these cars again retired, Thomas experiencing much tyre trouble and the bodywork also coming to bits. In these races 70×97 mm. (1,493 c.c.) engines were used, but at Kop early in 1924 Thomas ran with a 70×120 mm. (1,840 c.c.) engine in one of these cars, making a rapid and steady ascent. In its New Zealand form the car is said to be of 1,100 c.c. A letter from G. Easterbrook Smith, joint secretary with E. Sharrock of the New Zealand Sports and Racing Car Club, dated December 12th, 1942, informs us that he was mistaken in saying that the car had a camshaft-drive reminiscent of a 3-litre Bentley, as eccentrically-driven rods are actually employed, as used on the Leyland Eight and Leyland-Thomas cars, and, in somewhat different form, on the 6½-litre and 8-litre Bentley engines and the twin o.h.c. Sports Maudsley. Douglas Wood's letter reads as follows :—

Sir,

I have just finished reading the September, 1942, copy of your most excellent publication and was pleased to read the article on the Thomas-Special, written by my friend Geoffrey Easterbrook Smith, of Wellington. As I used to own and drive this veteran, I thought a few more notes and one or two corrections might not be amiss.

As "E.B." says, the car came to New Zealand in 1928, being imported by one, Paul, of Wanganui, who used to take it to the then reasonably numerous race meetings throughout the country. Most of these were beach meetings, and as the gearing was exceedingly high the car never showed up its best. After about four years Paul disposed of it, and from then on it has never stayed in the hands of anyone for very long, and to my knowledge has had seven owners. Very few of them have understood the car, and when I purchased it, it was very sick. For years I had watched the car on different tracks, where it always started off well and after two or three laps started missing till it finally faded out. The car was well known as a very poor stayer. When I took delivery, a case of spares and a box of carburetters came with it. I've never seen so many different sorts of gas-works! There were Zenith, Claudels, S.U.s, R.A.G.s, Solex, Tillottson, Stromberg, Binks Mouse Traps, Smiths and Carters, with manifolds to suit. There were three sets of pistons of various compression ratios, spare crown wheels (two ratios), magnetos and the usual bits and pieces that go with a car of its type. The various carburetters had all been tried by different owners in attempts to effect a cure and ensure reliability, without avail.

Not unnaturally, the first thing I did was to pull the engine to bits to endeavour to understand it. The workmanship was of the highest order, and internally the works were in good nick. No 1½-litre crankshaft ever appeared, and from what I could ascertain, had ever reached the country. However, for 1,100 c.c. the car was fast enough. I decided to resort to cunning to cure the erratic running and obtained the valve timing of a fast "Brooklands" Riley Nine, which was performing well out here, the design and performance of the two cars being similar. I fitted the medium compression pistons and used aviation spirit and hoped for the best. Enquiry revealed that the original carburation was from a single Zenith, so acting on the presumption that Parry Thomas knew best, I fitted that and scrapped others.

The results were pleasant, though not perfect, as at about 5,500-6,000 r.p.m. an occasional cough and rough running signified trouble yet to be found. I tried the spare magneto. It was worse. To cut a long story short, I found the magneto was at fault, and after the armature was rewound I had no more trouble, and the old car would run sweetly right up to 6,000 r.p.m. without a murmur. For racing I used the high-compression pistons and a benzole mixture. The car was definitely not suitable for anything but a concrete track, as the top gear ratios are either 2 to 1 or 3 to 1, according to which crown wheel was fitted. Only once was the 2 to 1 ratio used when I had it ; top gear then felt like an overdrive!

You mention in parentheses in the September notes that the car may have had disc wheels and two brakes. Wrong, both times. Wire wheels and very good four-corner braking. The wheels are of the old type not often seen, with which Singer Nines of 1930-32 were fitted—Dunlops with a very large hub. To lower the ratios for beach work I borrowed a complete set of similar wheels of only 20 in. diameter from a 10-h.p. Berliet, a big tourer in the French style, with the most diminutive motor. On these wheels my best lap speed on Hennings track at Langere was 87 m.p.h. [This all confirms that the car is a Marlborough-Thomas, as it was the single-seater 4-cylinder Thomas-Special that had disc wheels and no front brakes. —ED.]

Despite everything I'd been told the car was easy to drive, and the torsion bar suspension was amazing. Each axle was fitted with hydraulic shockers as well as a patent spring wire rope affair wound round a drum, and by varying the shock-absorbers the car could be made to ride like a town limousine. The ground clearance also could be altered by varying the position of the radius-arms on the splines of the torsion bars. No electrical equipment was fitted, so the car was not used for much road work, although it was tractable enough ; in fact, in all its phases and speeds it was a docile car. I've met many stock model cars with far more vices.

I was very interested in the speeds you quoted [actually for the Thomas-Special and *not* the Marlborough-Thomas.—ED.], and can well believe the car capable of the performance, especially if the engine was in tune, and *left alone*. A later owner fitted a makeshift electrical installation ; provision had been made in the design for the fitting of a generator between the front engine foot and the magneto. A long brass shaft with Simms couplings took up the space which would otherwise have been occupied by an armature shaft. One of these couplings parted once, while I was running the engine at 5,500 r.p.m., and with a whizz and a clatter the shaft flew across the hangar and punched a hole in sheet iron. I will never know how it missed the dozens of Moths parked there by unsuspecting owners. Rather than risk a recurrence of the episode I mounted the magneto on the generator platform and turned up a much smaller coupling. I had remarkably few breakages, considering the experimentation I carried out on the chassis. One night coming back from the track I broke a camshaft bearing casting, due to valve bounce. Later, a so-called friend of mine broke my 3 to 1 crown wheel through getting the car stuck in the sand at a beach meeting.

Easterbrook Smith says he thinks the car originally had a long tail, broken off at Henning's Speedway. Wrong again. The Thomas has never had a smash, and body is still, I believe, the same shape as it was originally. [Actually, from the photographs, the tail looks different from that used at Brooklands.—ED.] The car which did climb a tree at Mangere was Dick Messengart's "Special," a Fronty Model T Ford, developing over 100 b.h.p., which by most ingenious use of two Ford epicyclic boxes and a special differential, had four speeds with a top gear of about 2½ to 1. Alas, the chassis failed to make the grade and the motor dragged it up the bank.

Dick preserves with loving care one of the old 1914 T.T. Sunbeams, as you may know. Funny how these old cars gravitate to the Antipodes. Count Zborowski's 1924 Miller raced successfully here for many years, finally wrapping itself around a pole in Victoria, N.S.W., when it went over to Australia. One of Mrs. Wisdom's Rileys came out here a few

Continued on page 105

RUMBLINGS

Expert Opinions

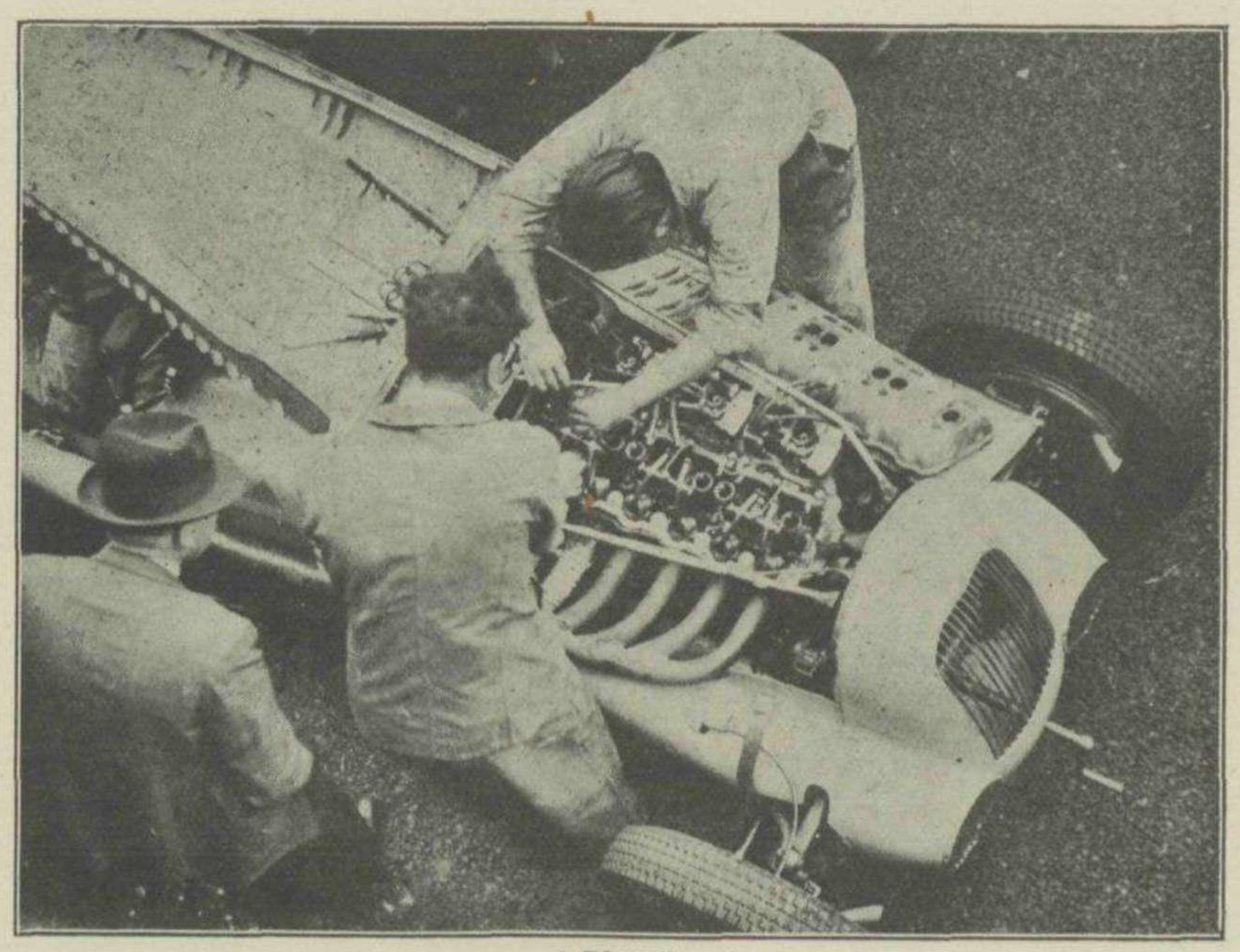
The Second Motor-Racing Brains Trust is reported elsewhere in this issue, but it is interesting to consider in greater detail some of the points raised. Let us take the vexed topic of under- and over-steering. Roesch thought that neither mattered much if the effects were negligible, but that, if excessive, either characteristic resulted in a bad feeling of instability. Berthon said that the later E.R.A. had decided understeering, the rear axle tending to give negative steering. He thought that for touring cars the need to provide this was less acute, while Raymond Mays felt that it was all a matter of individual driving tastes, remarking that the effects, either way, are greatly accentuated on light cars. Pomeroy virtually seconded this view and Berthon said understeering is very desirable on a racing car because wheel spin already exists to swing the back of the car round on corners. It is interesting that Raymond Mays feels that racing should undergo a radical change after the war, and would like to see entry fees waived and encouragement given to people to build racing cars and find drivers to drive them. He wanted to see an organisation set going after the war to educate the public to appreciate motor-racing's possibilities and thought the daily Press should be persuaded to assist. Klemantaski voted for T.T. racing to aid these ends, whereas Berthon wanted to gain the day with faster stuff. Just how big the problem of post-war race organisation is going to be is nicely instanced by the diverse views of these experts on the matter of the "next" formula. Thus, Pomeroy evolved a truly Pomeranion blower capacity limit; Berthon backed the 1½-litre formula, while Roesch hoped to see contests for fully-equipped 4-seaters, carrying a large tank of fuel and limited in weight. In actual fact, it seems likely that international racing and the construction of racing cars will not quickly revive with the peace, and so we shall expect racing at Brooklands, Donington and the Crystal Palace around 1945-7 to be contested by quite fast, if old, Maseratis, E.R.A.s, Bugattis and Altas; which will suit lots of people very well indeed, thank you!

* * *

Odds and Ends

First of all, that sad, bad "brick" over last month's cover picture—perhaps partially excusable as the Editor never gets time to pay so much as a brief visit to City Road these difficult days, all liaison being done via the G.P.O. However, Borzacchini does his stuff for you on the Alfa at Rheims this time; the April cover picture showed in error the 3½-litre Delahaye which won the Three Hour Sports Car Race at Brooklands in 1938 at 63.46 m.p.h. Then we blundered badly over Battersby's Type 57 Tatra, which is a push-rod o.h.v. 4-stroke and not a 2-stroke.

A visit to the pleasant-sounding village of Fiddler's Hamlet resulted in intense worship of J. V. Bowles's recently-acquired Type 37 Bugatti, which was bought from Rayner and sent to its new home by train. Rayner, of course, drove it from Bristol to the Zoo rally at Regents Park, last year. Already the new owner has worked very hard on the car, and not only is its Molsheim-blue paintwork spotless, but the engine positively shines in the sunlight. After four suck-ins, partially choked, off it goes every time with one pull-up on the handle, and it appears able to tick-over indefinitely at a fantastically low speed without oiling-up. The single brass-bodied Solex carburetter is retained on the off side and ignition is by a Scintilla Vertex magneto. The cylinder block has provision for two plugs per cylinder. One refinement that



"Plugs"

Bowles has added is a clutch stop comprising a band-brake which closes down on the clutch shaft when a tiny bronze lever in the centre of the cockpit is operated, obviating any noise in getting into bottom gear which no amount of skill can otherwise overcome. The little lever is no more than 6 in. long and operates via a short Bowden cable. The brake is sufficiently powerful to stop the engine altogether if it is ticking over really slowly and the workmanship is fully in keeping with the car to which it is fitted. Mr. Bowles has kindly given us a blue-print of the whole rig to pass on to any other Bugatti owner who is interested. He intends to race this car after the war and hopes to get some steady racing at rather over 90 m.p.h., running it stripped. His partner, who used to run a 4¼-litre Bentley and who, just before the war, bought a B.M.W. motor-cycle, equipped it very fully and ran it in the International Six Days' Trial by way of a holiday, has also acquired a Bugatti. This is a

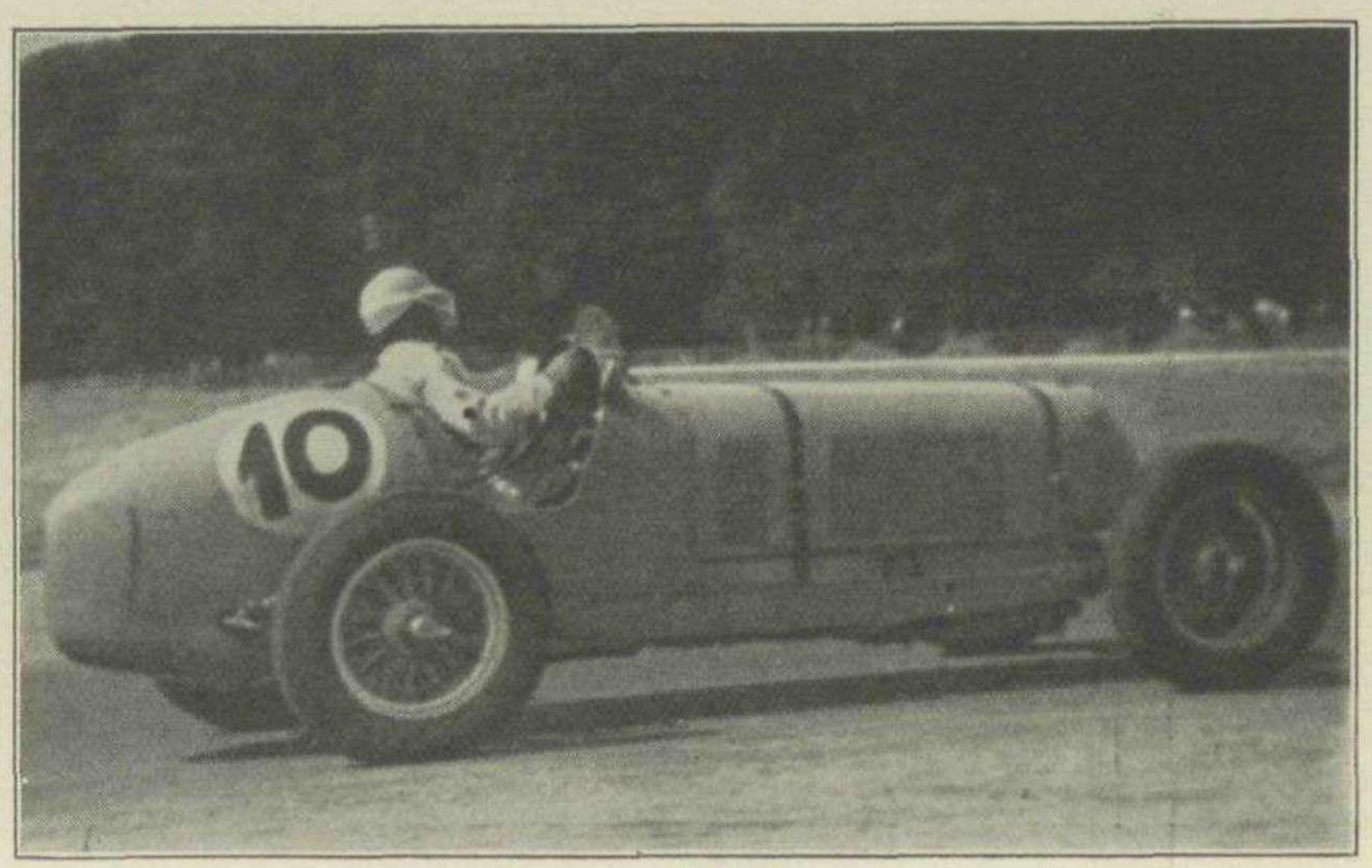
Type 40, with a heavy Jarvis touring body. It was located in Manchester and ran a big-end, the resultant protest being a very mild noise indeed for such a severe malady. It came home by train and Bowles already had the engine stripped down. His little workshop, which constitutes his business and his hobby combined, is by way of being an enthusiast's dream, with very full equipment, including some excellent high-speed Desoutter pneumatic drills. He retains his 6-cylinder Marendaz-Special and is also engaged in supercharging his "Ulster" Austin Seven. Further visits resulted in an appreciation of H. L. Biggs's very extensive library of motor-racing books and scrap albums, an appreciation from *him* of his Fiat 500, which is in daily use, painted Alfa red and still displaying a tattered B.A.R.C. pass on its screen—Biggs has hopes of making it a practical 70 m.p.h. car after the war—and inspection of his trials Austin Seven. The latter has a 2-seater body made from a cut-down coupé, an L.M.B. front axle, a "Speedy" engine with down-draught inlet manifold to which a Marshall supercharger is being added, and a 4-speed gearbox. As G. H. Symonds has an ex-works blown trials Austin, post-war competition should be keen.

We met Geoffrey Taylor, of Altas, now a very busy man with little time for visitors, but still hoping to go back to car production, although probably not to racing, unless conditions improve. H. R. Godfrey, too, is very busy, and does his share of factory fire-watching into the bargain—he has got together the parts to build up "Kim," but that's all, so far. Curtis has left H.R.G.'s to look after his Grand Union Canal and Halford is now an Army Captain; but Robins is still there. A.C. Cars, Ltd., proved another hive of activity and a little uncertain whether car production will even be resumed "afterwards."

Then we were able to lunch one day with the Monk-house family, all 100 per cent. enthusiasts. Peter has no great outlet for his mania for motor-racing now, engaged as he is on important production work, but he gets along in Standard Eights, S.S., M.G. and such-like and hopes to relax by constructing model railways. Definitely he has ideas for after the blitz and is amongst those who would like to see real road-racing happen in this country. Peter Clark had Klemantaski with him when we impinged on his very pleasant retreat in the country, where his garage is, if anything, bigger than his house. The 1914 G.P. Mercédès was duly admired and we noted that the Le Mans H.R.G. is now thoroughly stripped down. Peter also preserves the ex-Lanfranchi "22/90" Alfa-Romeo, a Home Guard M.G. Magnette, his Fiat "500" with new engine and Wyer-ised carburetter "for the afterwards," and a Brough-Superior for a friend. Certain superchargers lying around suggest that the M.G. and Peter's own H.R.G. may go faster yet, one of these days. The ex-Fry Bentley is also in use on Home Guard duties, as is Peter's ex-gas fed Ford Eight—his gas-producer trailer with Lancia suspenders being for disposal due to lack of fuel, if anyone is in need of such.

Later still we paid a brief visit to Anthony Heal's stable, perhaps the finest of all. Just to see the two Ballots, the 1924 G.P. Sunbeam, his 1910 Fiat, the 1921 T.T. Sunbeam, with that immensely long straight-eight twin o.h.c. engine, the stately Hutton, and the 1914 T.T. Sunbeam chassis keeping company with the well-known "30/98" Vauxhall, is a sight for the gods. We were intrigued to learn that the 2-litre G.P. Sunbeam was driven down from Birmingham on "Pool," and, although being carefully nursed, nevertheless achieved a cool 100 m.p.h. Apparently it is surprisingly tractable in spite of being supercharged. A 3-litre Sunbeam chassis and a solo Scott complete the picture. Heal's great collection of early motor-racing photographs is no less absorbing.

Then, as to letters, they provide a very pleasing background to the task of getting this paper to bed each month. Amongst recent ones, ten closely-written pages from L.A.C. Hull, R.A.F., Middle East Forces, stand out. Hull is a 100 per cent. Frazer-Nash advocate, but tells of adventures in the desert with an R.A.F. tractor, recalls happy peace-time runs in Austin and Morris Eight cars, to spectate at events with his mother and sister, also great enthusiasts, and, indeed, generally exudes the usual keenness. He asks whether we really anoint the pages of MOTOR SPORT with "R" and describes it as a real oasis in the desert. He ends up a "just another impecunia" and admits his greatest ambition is to enter for an "Exeter" with a Frazer-Nash, the passenger's seat of which is reserved for his sister. May his wish come true! Then "Sam" Gibbons writes from Auckland, on the notepaper of the New Zealand Military Forces. He owned his first car in 1904 and for ten years ran a 1923 3-litre Bentley modified to 1925 "Speed Model" specification, until he bought his present possession, a 4½-litre low-chassis Invicta. This latter is the car built for Fontes and driven by him in the 1934 T.T. and at Southport. She was discovered by Douglas Hawkes and only arrived in New Zealand a few months before the war. The chassis is No. S 163, believed to be one of the last to leave the works, and the Meadows engine is No. 8021. The owner would be pleased to learn more of the car's history and to hear of Meadows and Invicta spares.



"Here's Howe!"

Club News

750 CLUB

The future of the 750 Club was discussed at a committee meeting called on March 27th, and attended by the secretary, S. H. Capon; the chairman, L. M. Ballamy; the captain, H. Birkett; A. Frost and W. Boddy. Birkett and Boddy moved that, excellent as are the "Rembrandt" meetings, they do not cater expressly for the impecunious 750 Club members, and they called for further meetings of the sort held up to the end of the "basic" era. It was agreed that, in spite of difficulties brought about by the motorless-age, further such meetings should be given a trial, and provisional plans were laid for gatherings at Shepperton and at Old Compton Street, London. The future of the club *Bulletin* was discussed and its continuance guaranteed. Capon then read a statement on future club policy in general and disclosed that an advisory panel of club secretaries and other well-known personalities had been formed to advise the organisers of "Rembrandt" meetings. He felt that his representation of the 750 Club on this organising committee would be highly beneficial to the club, and he felt that popular motor-racing should be inaugurated after the war, which might well become the main concern of the panel.

The Shepperton meeting was scheduled for April 18th and the Old Compton Street luncheons will happen on the first Sunday in each month, if southern enthusiasm justifies them.

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MIDLAND MOTORING ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB

Some forty persons attended the meeting of the M.M.E.C. on March 3rd, when E. S. Tomkins gave a Lantern lecture on "Motor Racing Memories." There was also a very good attendance on April 7th. The next meeting will be on May 5th, at the "Bull's Head," Bishopsgate Street, Birmingham. It has been decided to increase the subscription, as from January 1st next, to £1 1s., with 5s. entrance fee for new members, as the existing 5s. subscription would not, it was felt, put the club on a sufficiently sound financial footing for peace-time activities. Country members living twenty or more miles from Birmingham Town Hall will pay 10s. 6d. subscription and, for the duration, members of H.M. Forces will only be charged the 5s. entry fee. A Bulletin is now issued. Chairman, Stewart Forrest, St. John's Hotel, 5, Duchess Road, Birmingham, 16.

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WE HEAR

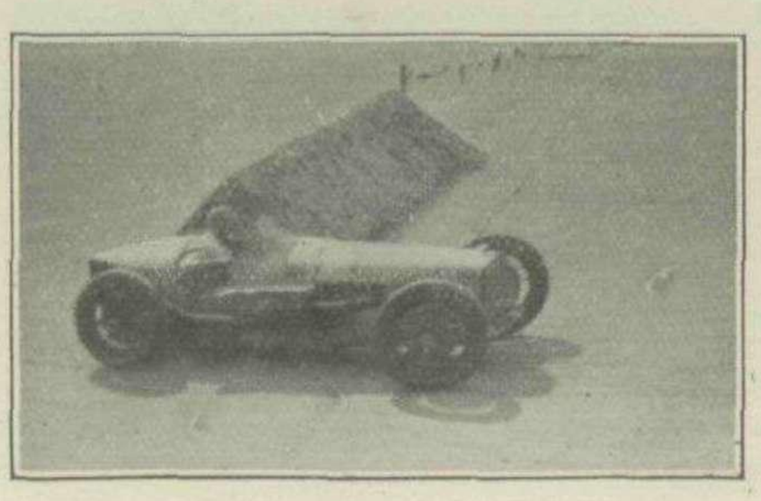
There continues to be a good demand for interesting sports cars, which enthusiasts want to rebuild for after-the-blitz motoring. We hear that a most interesting Sizaire-Freres with all-round independent suspension, of about 14 h.p. and around 1930 vintage, is for sale in London. What could be a very excellent vintage acquisition has come to light near Cambridge, in the form of a superb open touring "23/60" Vauxhall with five new tyres, which would be sold for about £25. Austin Partridge writes to say he is still working hard on his 2-seater F.W.D. Alvis and knows of ten such cars either in course of reconstruction or carefully stored. He admits, however, that this is not a very popular car, but certain people, he observes, do appreciate them.

A Pilot Officer in Lowestoft seeks one of these cars, or an Aston-Martin, while E. R. M. Hardie has acquired a 1928 supercharged 4-cylinder version and wants another, or bits, for spares. Hardie's stable, by the way, includes a fine Van den Plas 3-litre Bentley, a Type 35A Bugatti, a Type 55 Bugatti and a supercharged Balilla Fiat, which may or may not arouse envy! Frank W. Roberts, 2, Norton Road, Chelmsford, Essex, is willing to supply data to anyone interested on the subject of 1928-9 "12/50" and "Hyper" Lea-Francis and would appreciate hearing from others about these cars; in particular, he wants to get hold of a power-curve for the "Hyper," blown or unblown. Yet another sports car in use on aircraft development work is a green Anzani-engined, pointed-tail 4-speed Frazer-Nash, which is *sans* screen and hood.

Grosscurth works whenever he gets home-leave on his side-valve Aston-Martins and tells us that Lionel Martin himself rode over on his tricycle to see them not long ago. Grosscurth also has one of the best-preserved old-school Bentley 2-seaters we have ever seen. The engine being in an extremely high state of polish, while he may acquire a very fine example of the 3-litre Sunbeam in addition to the rather sick car of this type now on his hands. E. A. W. Morris, of Alton, has kindly sent in Instruction Books for 1929 "Short Fifteen" and 1934 "Long Fifteen" Armstrong-Siddeley cars and some accessory books; and he reports that his 1,100 c.c. H.R.G.—the original car of this model—is still in use for business and Home Guard purposes, with about 28,000 miles to its credit. It now has a large rear tank, as on the 1½-litre Meadows-engined cars and a special facia with oversize speedometer and rev. counter.

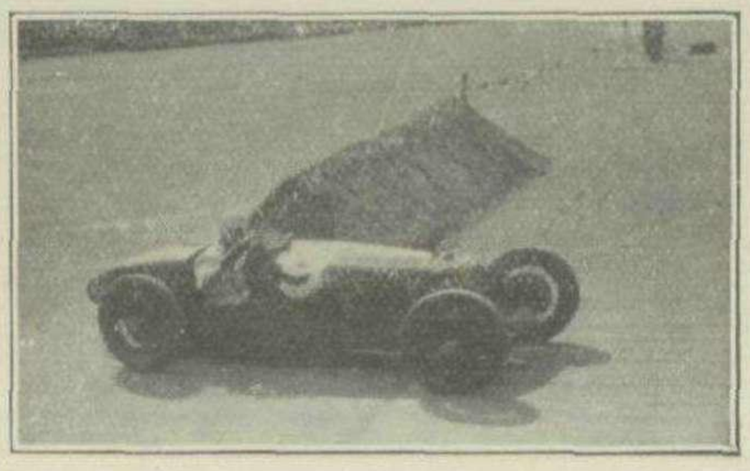
Lowrey's 1,100 c.c. H.R.G. is also used fairly often in connection with his flying tasks. Lambert, who was responsible for the rebuilding of the s.v. Aston-Martin now owned by F/O Phelps, A.T.A., and who used to run an incredible twin-carburetter 1916 Morris, has returned to London from wild Wales. D. A. Jarvis, whose address is 35, Stone Hall Road, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21, would welcome advice on the purchase of a car of low secondhand price that has a capacity not exceeding 3 litres, will do 80-85 m.p.h., approximately 20-25 m.p.g., and possess excellent roadholding, acceleration and braking. He recalls the acceleration figure of 0 to 50 m.p.h. in 6.0 secs. of the Type 328 B.M.W. and asks what would occur were this car stripped and supercharged! Also adds to our blushes by saying he has read us for some eight years and always regards MOTOR SPORT as *the* paper by the enthusiast for the enthusiast. Sydney Allard is to be congratulated on the arival of a son and heir.

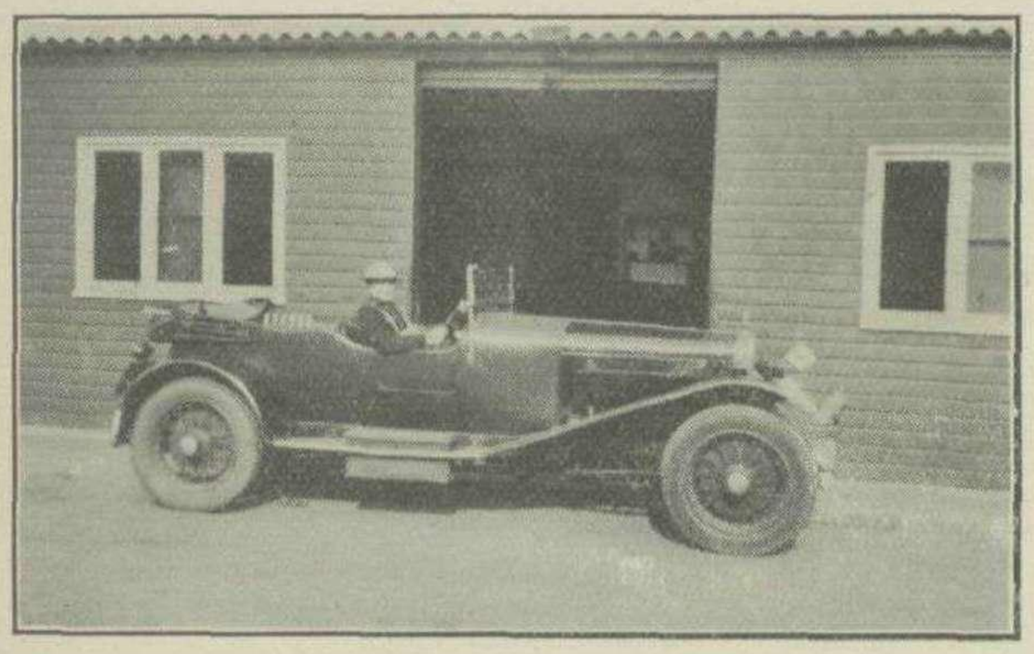
Of veteran news, the Dover "Chitty" is reported to be out in the open at the mercy of the elements, a 2-cylinder Renault is believed to exist in Epping, and a 2-seater Metallurgique has been brutally reduced to scrap in Hampshire. Two Swift Tens, a "12/40" Lea-Francis 2-seater and a Lanchester "Forty" converted to a lorry, were recently



Left—One of the 1½-litre Delage cars at Brooklands in the British G.P. of 1926, when the exhaust system worried the drivers.

Right—The 1926 1½-litre Talbot was fast, but not sufficiently reliable, although Segrave's car, shown here, made fastest lap in the 1926 British Grand Prix and led the field for 10 laps.





A. Rivers-Fletcher, one of the Brains Trust organisers.

observed at garages in and around London. Yet another valuable veteran has been saved through MOTOR SPORT publishing readers' finds of this sort. The old car noted as being at a dealer's in Southampton has been checked up on and turns out to be a 1903 6½-h.p. Century, built by The Century Motor and Engineering Co., Ltd., of Cumberland Park, Willesden Junction. It has been purchased by the Veteran Car Club under their recently-launched acquisition scheme.

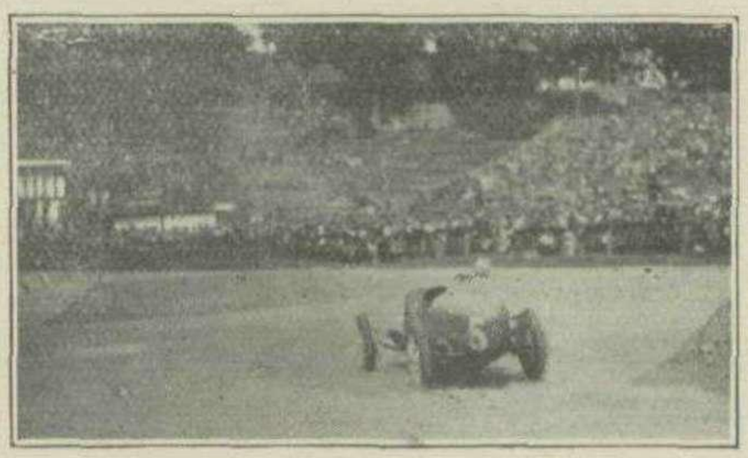
Garry Adams, of Birmingham, has recently acquired a single-cylinder, Aster-engined 5-h.p. Speedwell of about 1902 vintage, with Bozier 2-speed planetary gears, wire wheels and shaft drive to a Hanzer rear axle. Hutton-Stott has a pre-1914 3½-h.p. Indian motor-cycle for disposal for a modest sum. There is a 2-litre Lagonda saloon (unblown) derelict in a breaker's behind the Monaco Garage, Watford. We know of two 3-speed Super Sports Morgans for sale at £25 and £35, respectively, and a really cheap o.h.v. "Aero" Morgan.

Peter Wike is now overseas with the R.A.F. The Sequeville-Hoyeau turns out to be quite true and seemingly in very good order, but we have not yet had an opportunity to inspect it closely.

Lander's Le Mans 4½-litre Bentley, a magnificent 3-litre Bentley, a lowered "30/98" Vauxhall, another old-school Bentley and an engineless Type 30 Bugatti are in storage at Hartley Wintney.

The "Ulster" Austin Seven once raced by Strang, Centric supercharged, has turned up in Watford. Robert Newell is now in Ireland and has his immaculate Sixth Series Lancia "Lambda" with him. He is improving it still further and has designed tulip valves for it. His Scott motor-cycle is now with Heal, who, incidentally, appeared recently in a Bagshot Heath trial on a Home Guard motor-cycle. Grosscurth wants to hear of s.v. Anzani spares and is running the ex-Ashwood 4-seater Lea-Francis on important official journeys. The editorial second string turns out to be a 1922 "12/40" Alvis, which originally had a s.v. engine, being converted by Lacy into a "12/50" with considerable thoroughness. It is shortly to have a long-stroke "12/50" engine with big-port head installed, and the front axle is from a "Silver Eagle." Meanwhile, the gen-getting coupé has run into a four-figure mileage with no worse malady than a punctured radiator and some quite notable motoring personalities have been coaxed into its capacious dickey.

The Instruction Book library flourishes, for James Watt, of S.S. Cars, Ltd., promises two manuals on S.S. cars, mentioning, incidentally, that he met the new owner of the B.N.C. works in this country and was told that these cars would have been racing during 1939 but for the war. Then Yank Harrison, whose address is Beau Lodge, Tunstall, Catterick, Yorkshire, and who would like to hear from any members of the International Speedway Team which visited Spain in 1939, kindly sends Instruction Books for "14/45" Talbot, G.N., Norton and V/5 Matchless motor-cycles, and the books of the Douglas motor-cycle and T-Ford car. He remarks



that they are rather dirty but only from Castrol "R"! F. W. Roberts has sent some useful miscellaneous Instruction Books on B.S.A. motor-cyles. So the Instruction Book library continues to increase its scope and is now able not only to help over motor-cycles and accessories but over veterans as well!

Leonard Potter has acquired the Type 55 Bugatti, once owned by Whincop and wants an Instruction Book and a spare engine and gearbox. His Type 44 Bugatti is doing 25 m.p.g. and 80 m.p.h. "in true Bugatti fashion" and he has a Fiat 500 with S.U. carburetter. Then he has a J2—not an M.G., but a 1912 11-h.p. Unic 2-seater which has a gearbox bigger than the 65 × 110 mm. s.v. engine. Rear suspension is by ¾ ellipties and the foot-brake works on the transmission. Cowell, who used to race Altas, now flies Mustangs. We regret to learn of the death, in action off Holland, of Lt.-Comdr. R. P. Hitchins, D.S.O.; he used to own the 16-valve Aston-Martin that Ellis is waiting to take delivery of. Maurice Hudlass, well-known Brooklands scrutineer, is a Captain in the R.E.M.E.

ENTHUSIASTS CAR CLUB

Another *Bulletin* has arrived and enthusiasm is evidently very strong indeed in the now less-frozen north. The Lea-Francis Owners' Club has teamed-up with the E.C.C. for the duration, but hopes to produce an ambitious book of words for its own members in due course.

★

JUNIOR CAR CLUB

Guests at a last council luncheon included Col. A. R. C. Waite, F. S. Bennett, Col. Charles Jarrott, Lieut.-Col. A. T. Gardner, Lieut.-Col. A. G. Douglas Clease, Brian de Grineau, "Tass" Mathieson, Major Bale and Wing-Comdr. T. H. Wisdom.

★

OTHER HAPPENINGS

MacLagen still contrives to issue his news-letter to his Scuderia, another *Bulletin* has arrived from the New Zealand Sports Car Club, and contains a very interesting alphabetical account of sports cars owned by one of its members, and the Irish Motor Racing Club is still alive.

★

OBITUARY

We have all been shocked by the sad news of the death of Lt.-Col. J. Clutton, Cecil Clutton's father. He used a veteran car, his wonderful old 1909 Fafnir landaulette, quite seriously before ever the Vintage Sports Car Club showed the possibilities of such carriages, and father, no less than son, worked very hard indeed in furthering that altogether successful club. War-time overwork hastened Col. Clutton's end and, in offering our sympathy to his son, we also wish to pay tribute to one who did much exceedingly good work for vintage and veteran interests in a quiet way behind the scenes, where the limelight doesn't shine and isn't wanted.

THE MARLBOROUGH-THOMAS IN N.Z.—*continued from page* 101

years ago and I had a fair amount of experience with one of the last factory blown s.v. single-seater Austins. In fact, throughout the country one comes across specimens of many fine marques which have a continental past.

Sports motoring in this country is now practically at a standstill, and though never numerous, the sight of a pair of Rudge nuts is something to remark upon. We have a petrol ration each month for those folk not able to obtain a petrol licence (1 gallon per month for 7-8 h.p., 2 for big stuff), so pleasure motoring is stagnant. I myself get in a fair monthly mileage, mostly on my willing Austin Seven (very definitely vintage), the remainder being made up on Velo. 2-strokes, V 8s, 2-ton trucks, vans and tractors, plus a few yards in Oxfords and Hudsons. One of these latter is making the night hideous outside now, running up its engines and using enough petrol in doing so to propel my Seven for a year.

This letter is beginning to ramble, so without wasting any more of your space, I'll wish you the brightest future for your splendid publication.

I am, Yours etc.,

DOUGLAS E. WOOD,

Auckland, N.Z. F/Sgt. R.N.Z.A.F.

Letters from Readers

Sir,

After reading of your instruction book scheme it occurred to me that there might be readers in Birmingham and district who would be interested but do not know that there are a number of instruction books in the Birmingham Technical Reference Library. They are mostly 1936-38 books, some earlier, and can, of course, only be read at the library and not taken away.

I mention the following as perhaps of particular interest to your readers :

A.C., Alvis (several models), Bentley 4¼-litre, Lagonda V 12, Lancia "Augusta," Mercédès-Benz 260D (Diesel), Riley (Nines and 6-cylinder), Rolls Royce, S.S.

Those interested in the technical side of motoring will also find a good selection of books in this library, though some, I fear, are a little out of date (1920-ish).

I am, Yours etc.,
J. H. BALLENY.

Birmingham, 16.

* * *

Sir,

As one of the staunch supporters, I was most interested in the notes you published in the February issue dealing with the Team Bentleys.

A glance at my notebook reveals the additional information which follows.

The 3-litre which Clement and Duff drove to win in 1924 at an average of 53.75 m.p.h. was still going strong some ten years later. The chassis mounted an enormous saloon body, and the ensemble bore the Registration No. XT 1606, and I am indeed glad to see that it has been discovered.

"Old No 7," often referred to as "No. 3," was registered as MK 5206. What a tragedy it is that this car, made immortal by S. C. H. Davis in *Motor Racing*, should have been crashed and discarded.

The finest of them all was undoubtedly No. 4 of the 1928 race.

As a 3-litre it crashed at Le Mans in 1927. The chassis was afterwards fitted with the first 4½-litre engine to be raced ; the 3-litre radiator was retained.

Le Mans 1928—known to some as "the battle of the cylinders" because of the straight eight Stutz opposition—was essayed by three team cars, all of 4½-litres capacity ; No. 2 Bentley was handled by Clement and Benjafield, No. 3 by Birkin and Chassagne, and the redoubtable No. 4 by Barnato and Rubin.

It will be recalled that Birkin's disintegrated tyre and subsequent wheel collapse put his car well behind the field. The fact that this car eventually climbed up to finish fifth was in itself a wonderful achievement.

"No. 2," which had occupied the lead for a time, suffered a succession of minor ailments and finally lost its water through a pipe crack ; it had a new type radiator. As water could only be replaced after a definite number of laps, nothing could be done.

"No. 4," the "No. 1" of the previous year's race, increased speed and "gobbled" past the Stutz on the sixty-fourth lap. It won at an average speed of 69.11 m.p.h.

In 1929, "No. 4" entered, I think, the fray for the third time, still wearing her 3-litre radiator. Everyone will remember the magnificent run put up by Birkin and Barnato in the winning 6½-litre Bentley, and how the Bentleys crossed the finishing line like a squadron of battleships in "line-ahead." "No. 4" was registered as YH 3196 and Barnato's Speed Model 6-cylinder, which won at an average of 73.62 m.p.h., ran on the road as M T 3464—it was, incidentally, the first British car to win the Rudge-Whitworth Cup.

I always felt that "No. 4" was worthy of a saga and wonder if this car has been preserved.

Other Registration Nos. of interest are : 1928 race "No. 2" Y W 2557, ran as "No. 10" in 1929 race to finish third and in "Double Twelve" of the same year, as "No. 6"—just beaten by Ramponi's Alfa-Romeo. At Le Mans it suffered cooling system trouble again, but not seriously ! "No. 3" of the 1928 race—Y V 7283.

I am, Yours etc.,
H. HEATH,
Major, R.A.

Windsor.

* * *

Sir,

This is just a short letter to say how glad I am that you are continuing publishing MOTOR SPORT. I have always appreciated your journal, but when I hear from so many friends of mine in the Services how much they look forward to reading MOTOR SPORT, it does make me realise—in spite of so many difficulties—the value of your continuing, particularly with a view to after-the-war motor racing.

I wish you had been able to attend the Brains Trust affair on Sunday last, as I think you would have found it very interesting. I feel that the "ball was set rolling" in the right direction for after-the-war planning. I am dead keen that something should be done in a great endeavour to place motor racing on a very different footing to pre-war days.

I am, Yours etc.,
RAYMOND MAYS.

Bourne.

* * *

Sir,

Judging by the sports gossip and newsflashes in the motoring Press, it is evident that large lumps of energy and time, plus somewhat smaller quantities of solid cash, are being, and will in the future be spent, on the resuscitation and renovation of sundry sports and racing vehicles, with an eye to amateur competition in speed events after the war. Very heartening and infectious it all is, and tremendous fun for all concerned, as well the writer knows. But things being what they are, and cash being a commodity liable to be in somewhat short supply to the public at no distant date, just how many of these interesting embryos will come to maturity, one wonders ? Many, based on unsuitable materials ("J. J. Snooks is anxious to obtain a "22/90" Alfa engine to install in his lightened Baby Peugeot chassis") will end as costly and unsatisfactory liabilities, whilst others, constructed on sounder and more promising foundations, will be found too complicated to maintain as even moderately successful racing machines by impecunious owners with limited spare time.

Let us take the case of the sailing man with modest means, who aspires to racing experience. Does he rush round the ship-breakers endeavouring to buy a second-hand "Velsheda," or a part-worn "Blue Marlin" ? With sound common sense he leaves the "J" class to those with purses long enough to enjoy it, makes a start with an inexpensive one-design dinghy, and gets lots of first-class racing and much valuable experience therefrom.

I would advocate some such scheme in motor racing ; not a rigid "one-design" class, leaving no scope for individuality or development, but rather a "nursery" class, racing an essentially simple, well-constructed cycle-car of ultra-lightweight design ; a single-seater, obviously, driven by a 500-c.c. motor-cycle engine operating by chain via a motor-cycle gearbox and incorporating independent suspension to the owner-designer's taste. I imagine that 75 per cent. of the problems involved would concern road-holding, and I think the owners would gain vastly in valuable experience whilst overcoming them.

I do not know as yet (I fully intend to find out at the earliest opportunity) what safe minimum weight could be achieved, but I imagine that if 4 cwt. were aimed at, utilising a seasoned ash frame, suitably braced, and a really light body-shell to streamline the driver to some extent, a healthy 500-c.c. motor, in reasonably (as opposed to super) tuned condition, would produce a more reliable and satisfactory performance than that usually given by an elderly sports car of twice to three times the capacity, despite the pounds and stones of superfluous ironmongery hacked, drilled and filed away by its industrious owner. Such an engine could be stripped and re-assembled in half-a-day by its owner, working single-handed, though, in my opinion, its chief charm lies in the fact that this precaution would not be frequently necessary.

Before going further, let me avoid a charge of plagiarism by admitting that in this matter I am inspired by, and am quoting in place, no less an authority on rapid cycle-caring than John Bolster,

who built the original "Mary" on the assumption that the really quick supercharged cars wouldn't always be supercharging themselves properly, whereas a simple car with a good power-weight ratio and an engine not tuned to the borderline of expensive noises would be easy to maintain at maximum efficiency, and would be capable of taking an occasional place in sprint events. It is unnecessary to stress the success he achieved, but I think that in the end he would admit that by developing his machines to the *n*th degree he defeated his own object. But the wheel came full-circle, and at the outbreak of war he was planning a 500-c.c. machine whose simplicity would enable him to prepare and drive it in minor events in comfort, and with time to spare.

I do not wish to advocate that several hundred "Bloody Marys" should be loosed on an already nerve-shattered world after the war. The proportion of amateur drivers with Mr. Bolster's skill and ability must be small indeed. The cars I have in mind are less ambitious, and would not compete in the unlimited classes, but at most against the unblown 750s, or indeed in a 500-c.c. class of their own, provided that sufficient support was forthcoming. They would cost little more to run and maintain than a solo motor-cycle, they would be safer than many of the hybrids which have passed the scrutineers from time to time, being built solely with one purpose in view, and above all they would teach the impoverished but aspiring competitor to take a brisk walk before breaking into a run.

So what about it, Mr. Editor? May I hope to enter for the MOTOR SPORT Cup of 194?, to be competed for on a decentralised basis at, say, Lewes, Prescott, Bristol and Wetherby?

I am, Yours etc.,

G. H. W.

Wylam-on-Tyne.

[The suggestion that attention should be given to a 500-c.c. class in post-war sprint events was made in this paper in the early days of the war. Considerable interest was shown, but we have yet to hear of "specials" of this sort which are well under way, and probably we shall not do so until the clubs give a decision on the subject. So we welcome this letter and would bring it to the notice of Leslie Wilson, Eric Giles and other secretaries of speed-trials organising clubs, no less than to the notice of amateur constructors.—ED.]

* * *

Sir,

The following verbal utterance is credited to a well-known authority, at least so it is reported by my secret agents: "Blowing a Bentley is like training an elephant to win the Grand National." Having recently become the owner of one of these "blower" cars, and always having been a Bentley enthusiast since very tender years, I cannot but take umbrage at such an observation.

I would like to point out that the aforementioned "elephant" very nearly won the "Grand National" in 1930—namely when finishing 2nd in the Grand Prix at Pau. This and other outstanding performances at Le Mans, Brooklands and in Ireland stamp it as a very active "elephant," and if a little more time could have been spent on the breeding and training, both of which, owing to financial reasons, had to be suspended (or rather abandoned), I am of the opinion that the "elephant" would have given quite a number of the accepted "racehorses" much food for thought.

It may be that there would have been some difficulty with the question of "jockeys," because drivers of the stamp of "Tim" Birkin are very few and far between, and taking these "elephants" round a road circuit and competing against actual "racehorses" called for a skill above the ordinary.

However, I feel that the "elephant" could and still can hold its own against most other standard sports cars, both past and present.

I am, Yours etc.,

C. J. L. MERTENS.

Ruislip, Middx.

* * *

Sir,

I have followed with interest the extremely instructive articles and correspondence both in MOTOR SPORT and in what the House of Lords would term "another place," upon suspension and steering. But it seems to me that in both cases a very important consideration has been forgotten, viz., that the values of the various characteristics involved change with the use to which a car is put, and the purposes for which it is designed. To-day we see a distinct divergence between racing and touring practice in regard to the size and number of cylinders employed, because, for all except the idle rich, time and economy demand fewer and larger pots for road use. Similarly, in suspension matters, the time has come when the two types should be regarded separately, except where their needs are identical.

For racing purposes one cannot, I think, disagree with Mr. Clutton's statement that a controlled four-wheel skid is the best method of cornering. In considering the vehicle's desirable features, however, we must not overlook the fact that every racing car, no matter what its basic qualities, is potentially an oversteerer, by virtue of the surplus power available to spin the rear wheels at any time, so that, to whatever extent the front wheels are sliding, the driver has it in his power to slide the tail to a greater or less degree, thus controlling the direction of travel. Mr. Clutton states that a well-balanced car is required, and I agree that this is necessary, but the final adjustment of balance rests with the skill of the driver rather than the designer. The surplus power available is usually considerable, so that to permit the most rapid cornering, and liberal use of the accelerator, the front wheels should be encouraged to slide. I rather feel that Mercédès and Auto-Union may have had this in mind when fitting "parallel" or "vertical" i.f.s., thus matching, so far as possible, the sliding powers of both ends of the car, reducing pure rear-wheel skids, and minimising the tendency of the car to lose its line of travel under fierce acceleration.

The tourer is a very different proposition, because, owing to its complete lack of surplus power, if it is basically an

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. The system will be governed by the following rules:—

(1) Each announcement to cost 1s. 6d. and be limited to twelve words and the advertiser's address. Box Numbers cannot be used.

(2) The publishers accept no responsibility for loss of advertisements, non-publication, late publication, or incorrect wording, but will endeavour to insert announcements in the next issue, if posted within eight days of the publication of the previous issue.

(3) No advertiser may submit more than **two** announcements per issue and each must apply to a separate article. Only spares for sale, spares or cars wanted, or **really cheap** cars for sale, should be announced. Prices should normally be quoted.

(4) The proprietors of MOTOR SPORT offer this scheme for the mutual benefit of enthusiasts and can take no responsibility of any sort whatsoever. All transactions must be made to the published addresses and no correspondence can be entered into in respect of announcements, transactions or any other matters arising from the scheme.

(5) Announcements should be sent within eight days of the publication of the current issue of MOTOR SPORT, accompanied by stamps or crossed postal orders to the required amount. Cheques or coin cannot be accepted.

FOR SALE

14/75 ALVIS tourer 1928/9, two new tyres, brakes relined. No battery, £17 10s. D. Lawrence, 45, Orchard Avenue, Shirley, Surrey.

1931/2 RILEY Nine chassis, springs reset, engine overhauled, 100% condition, £15. B. Salmon, 71, Hillberry Road, Warlingham, Surrey.

TWO Wheels for Fiat "500," £2 10s., or offer. Legh, 206, Latymer Court, London, W.6.

COMPLETE range of 2 and 2.3 litre Grand Prix Spares. F. O. Cleveland Harmer, 83, Old Oak Road, Acton, W.3. Shepherds Bush 5022.

WANTED

SIX Cylinder Scintilla Vertex Magneto, any condition. F. Harrison, Beau Lodge, Tunstall, Catterick, Yorks.

STARTING handle and dumb-iron apron for "J.1." M.G. Handbook for "Lambda." Legh, 206, Latymer Court, London, W.6.

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.

WANTED—12-h.p. Sports tourer or saloon. Reasonable condition, up to £35 paid. Veness, 5, Roland Way, S.W.7.

Spares Section,

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

understeerer, it remains so under all circumstances. From personal observation I can agree with Mr. Lowrey that there is a tendency to understeer on the majority of modern touring cars. It is excellent to be able to use both hands to light one's pipe on a rain-soaked straight road at sixty, but it is quite another matter when essaying a rapid corner to keep the hand-brake at the ready, and one eye estimating the available area to leeward. Therefore, racing practice is to be reversed for touring cars; the former require reduced front wheel adhesion to match the rear, while that of the latter should be increased for the same purpose, and "vertical" and "parallel" i.f.s. systems should be carefully avoided for road use, their leaning qualities, combined with the roll of the higher centre of gravity, tend to make it lose its front end far too soon under cornering stress. Freedom from roll is equally desirable, but springing in general should never be more than "medium-soft," because the comfort, if any, which is lost by the elimination of a "knees bend" softness at the front is more than made up by the ability to motor fast over rough ground, where softer springs would hammer at their stops.

To sum up my beliefs, a car should be so designed that under all circumstances it will slide its rear wheels first, but, the greater the proximity, also under all circumstances, of the back and front sliding points the better.

MOTOR SPORT is to be congratulated on its occasional probes into the theoretical design of cars, and at present when the more physical joys of motoring are absent it can perform a very real service, not only by settling the "whys and wherefores" of the pre-war models, but by fixing now the essential bases for post-war vehicles. I should be grateful, therefore, if someone would throw a little more light on the problem by considering the effects of four-wheel drive. As I see it, this should increase the safe cornering speed enormously, even when sliding, but now a definite basic degree of oversteer is necessary, because use of the accelerator merely promotes a four-wheeled slide, and Mr. Clutton's built-in balance is imperative, because the extent to which the driver can perfect it is very limited.

I am, Yours etc.,

GRAHAM C. DIX.

Birmingham, 14.

* * *

Sir,

Recently a member of the Royal Air Force asked for an article on the 3-litre Super-Sports Sunbeam; I hope you can find room to publish the following notes, which I think will be of interest:

Introduced in 1924 the 3-litre twin overhead cam Sunbeam sports was intended for the Grand Prix d'Endurance of that year. As is all too often the case in motor racing, insufficient time for development and preparation caused the entry to be scratched. A wise move in view of what can happen when machines are raced before really ready.

At this point I would mention that these notes are written while in, as MOTOR SPORT so aptly terms it, "exile"; therefore are largely from memory.

Although there is, naturally, a family resemblance, the sports 3-litre was not a scaled-up edition of the successful 2-litre Grand Prix racing machine, as is often inferred. The fixed head carries one exhaust and one inlet valve per cylinder, operated by twin o.h. cams, the inlet opening around 8° b.t.d.c. and the exhaust 45° b.b.d.c. Twin Claudel-Hobson, type AZP, mounted on the off side, supplied the gas. The front of one camshaft provides the drive for the magneto, a position that makes adjustments very easy.

The crankcase has extensions either side to form trays and present a neat appearance under the bonnet. The four-speed right-hand-change gearbox gives ratios of 14, 9, 6 and 4 to 1, discounting the odd "points"; unit construction is employed.

The chassis, in spite of a wheelbase of 10′ 10″, is not unduly heavy for a car of 3 litres and carrying, if required, a full 4/5-seater four-door saloon; the chassis weight was some 25 cwt.

The suspension followed Sunbeam practice of the time in that the rears are cantilever, the fronts are the normal half-elliptic; both axles controlled by Hartford shockers. The writer has never seen a 2-seater body mounted on this chassis and should imagine that it would look pretty ghastly anyway. From almost every view the standard open 4-seater body makes a handsome motor car, the absence of running boards and the characteristic cycle-wings giving the car a distinctive appearance. Narrow, comparatively, the body carries at the rear twin vertically mounted spares and a neat undershield finishes off the job.

A single car ran in the 1925 Le Mans, driven by S. C. H. Davis and J. Chassagne, the latter already famous for his exploits with Sunbeam cars, including winning the R.A.C. Tourist Trophy in 1922 on an 8-cylinder 3-litre. Despite troubles with body, shockers and a rear axle damaged when driven off the road by another car, the Sunbeam finished second, the first British car to finish and only 45 miles behind the winner, the 3½-litre Lorraine.

In 1929 a number of supercharged cars were built, one of which was entered in the Irish Grand Prix and driven by M. Campbell. The Cozette supercharger was mounted on a cradle cast integral with the crankcase on the off side and driven by a short horizontal shaft from the timing case. Fuel was supplied by an A.C. mechanical pump mounted near, and driven from, the inlet camshaft. In this form the unit gave 140 b.h.p. at 3,800, with + 6 lbs. boost, and a road speed of 115 m.p.h. in full road trim. Chassis alterations were mainly concerned with larger brakes, operated by Dewandre vacuum servo.

During the actual race the car had bad luck, and trouble in one form or another caused Campbell to retire from the race. Later one of the blown cars was driven by B. O. Davis and Barker at Brooklands, and recorded 107 m.p.h. lap speed. Major H. O. D. Segrave at one time used an open 4-seater for personal transport and apparently shocked the U.S. speed cops no end by holding over 90 m.p.h. on the way to Daytona, where he drove the first "200 per" in the 1,000 h.p. Sunbeam. A 3-litre covered the greatest distance in one of the Essex Car Club's Six Hour races at the Track, but its racing successes are not many. For some reason the model was never pushed at all by the company. I have no hesitation in suggesting that had the machine received the same enthusiastic development as was lavished upon the Bentley, even greater would have been the British victories in sports-car racing and the prestige of the Sunbeam, the premier English racing marque.

I hope the member of the R.A.F. who recently asked for an article on the 3-litre will be interested in this collection of notes.

Incidentally, the writer would like to hear of a 4-seater suitable for re-building for post-war motoring.

Many thanks for keeping MOTOR SPORT in print.

I am, Yours etc.,

H. PRATLEY.

London, E.18.

* * *

Sir,

May I point out what appears to me to be an error in the excellent article on Racing Car Evolution which appears in the April issue.

It is stated that the 6-cylinder Amilcar was fitted with a Cozette blower; in actual fact the supercharger used on these incomparable little cars was a Roots, built by Amilcars for the job. I never had any trouble from these blowers, which is more than I can say for the Cozette.

I have had no experience of the 8-cylinder Salmson which your contributor mentions as having a Roots blower; the fast 4-cylinder cars of this make had Cozettes—why the change of type?

I am, Yours etc.,

HAROLD BIGGS.

Enfield, Middlesex.

[Possibly the troubles mentioned by our correspondent led Salmson to adopt a Roots blower for their straight-eight "1,100."—ED.]

THE APRIL COVER

. . . I am a lover
Of MOTOR SPORT, and thus I write
To verify on last month's cover
There was an error slight.

I am not a great gen-man,
But venture here to say
The car that you depict there,
It is a Delahaye.

Of course, I may be wrong here,
My knowledge it is faint;
But a Monoposto Alfa,
Oh, *that* I'm sure it *ain't.*

To point out every error
I do not make a rule,
But though a humble A.C.2,
I'm not an April Fool.

WILLIAM GENGE (*R.A.F.*)

[This matter is referred to in "Rumblings," page 102.—ED.]

WARTIME MOTORING

—continued from page 97

This really brought back the joy of living. "C. A. B.," now down here with M.A.P., got a 600-c.c. "Square Four" Ariel, and we managed to persuade our wives to ride astern and had a week's holiday in Devon with a very nice spot of really fast motoring. This I repeated later with Gilmore, who got a 500-c.c. Levis "D-Special." On arriving back from this trip I found that a Humber "Super Snipe" was due to be taken to Scotland, and I duly collected it from the R.A.F. M.T. in London, tied the Levis on the back, and Bertie and I set out for the north. I do not wish to start the old bogey of average speeds again, so I will content myself with the observation that we thought it rather quick. We found that once one got over the feeling that the thing was going to capsize it continued the corner at this queer angle, and just went on going round. This learnt, we got along quite well. In Scotland we made a rather hurried trip over the Fennock Moors to Glasgow in Bertie's D.K.W. In September, 1941, while visiting the 'drome, I put the Alvis trials car back on the road, and in warm sunny weather, with the screen flat, drove her back to White Waltham; the most perfect 430 miles of motoring I have ever had and certainly the fastest. It was my first really long trip in the car at high speed since its last modification, and it far exceeded my hopes and expectations. It averaged 29 m.p.g. An R.A.F. officer to whom I gave a lift for some 150 miles did his utmost to buy it from me, but I'm afraid he didn't understand that while I might break it up one day to build another, I would never sell it.

Meantime, my establishment had been growing, and with the blessings of the powers that be a 1931 "12/50" Alvis was bought and converted into a van for one of my staff, with the aid of Jock Parker, whom I discovered near here. Jock was the works chief at Alvis in times of peace, and many of us are grateful for "12/50" assistance in the past. This car had the close-ratio gearbox: I got it from Anthony Heal and completely re-built it.

Before the "basic" ceased lots of people used to turn up here for week-ends and some good fun was had. One of the most frequent was Robson, and it was not unusual to find various cars in pieces in the meadow, including Gilmore's Lancia "Astura," which is perhaps the best car to work on I have ever met. All that will have to cease except when people manage to get here without cars and we hold a working party in my workshop. I still get a lot of good runs, but slowly, to conserve rubber. I have collected a lot of Alvis spares and am building up certain components, so that I can rebuild the trials car as soon as things look more reasonable; I think that will be a long time ahead.

In passing, one car which gave me some fun was a blown "17/50" Alfa-Romeo which Stamer asked me to come and try, as he thought of buying it. He did, and on the way back he drove it and I drove his Frazer-Nash, and it was rather surprising to notice that I could not be left on the twisty roads, but was, of course, out of it on the straights.

One piece of work the present "12/50" did was to tow up a 1931 "12/60" Alvis from Chippenham to Gloucester, and to White Waltham via Fish Hill, which it did with no bother at all. I discovered the car through John Wyer, of Solex and Sunbeam fame, and it was just the car a friend wanted to rebuild. It has a beetle-back body, close-ratio box, etc., so it should be at least one more good Alvis "for afterwards." We had an excellent week-end out, calling on Robson for the night, who was most surprised to find two "12/50s" outside his van when he came home.

Well, here's wishing all the best to MOTOR SPORT and all who read it, and that the Sport comes back sooner than we may think possible.

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N.Z. HILL CLIMB

—continued from page 100

After all cars had returned to the foot of the hill, Brough made another fine run in the Bentley, reducing his time to 1.48⅕. A perfectly judged climb, the Bentley's war cry echoing off the hills, beautifully controlled sliding—in short, an excellent driver taking very full advantage of a fine vintage car.

The S.S. went away next, *sans* silencer and sounding much better, recording the splendid time of 1.45⅕. For sheer urge the S.S. was unbeatable and was very ably conducted by its enthusiastic owner. The S.S. is a far better marque than it is given credit for and Ferrier's 2½-litre is a really fine example.

In the meantime, Red Hansen had arrived after severe trouble with an inlet manifold blowing in his long-chassis 3-litre Bentley. He elected to run as a *beau geste*, the gasket still blowing badly, and the carburetter hopeless in consequence; but, in spite of this being his first run up the hill, plus a 10′ 10″ chassis, which was really far too long for such a twisty course, clocked 2.01, which, under the circumstances, must be considered very creditable.

The last run before lunch was made by Easterbrook-Smith, the Ansaldo sounding very healthy, much vigour again being expended on the air-pump, a time of 1.58⅕ recording hard physical labour.

After a pleasant picnic lunch, Hansen's Bentley made first run, but failed near the top due to lack of fuel—the gasket trouble had played havoc with the petrol consumption and the meagre monthly ration simply could not cope.

Easterbrook-Smith made his final run in the Ansaldo in 1.56⅖, the 9′ 1″ wheelbase showing to advantage on the hairpin.

Brough followed in the Bentley with Sybil Lupp, enthusiastic 4½ owner from Blenheim, as ballast in the back seat. What would have been a very fast climb was spoilt by a violent overslide at the hairpin which brought the car almost to a stop, his time being 1.57⅕.

Ferrier's final climb was the fastest of the day, a beautifully judged effort in 1.43⅘. He was going faster and faster as he learned the hill and made full use of his car's very evident power. He thus becomes "bergmeister" of the N.Z.S.and R.C.C., and he and the S.S. will be a hard combination to beat in future events.

Petrol being particularly short, members had abandoned pleasure motoring for some months previously and saved hard for one glorious day's sport.

R. C. ROWLAND MOTORS

of

BYFLEET, SURREY

Telephone 270

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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
Triumph 2-litre "Vitesse Six" saloon	April 1935
Triumph 10 h.p. "Gloria Southern Cross" 2-seater	June 1935
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
Triumph "Dolomite" 14/60 h.p. saloon	June 1937
VAUXHALL 20/60 h.p. "Hurlingham" 2-seater	Feb. 1930
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
Wolseley Hornet (12.08 h.p.) saloon	Sept. 1930

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