

THE



REGISTER BULLETIN

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An index to Technical Items in this Bulletin may be found in Issues 53, 71, 91, 108.

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COVER PICTURE

A beautiful setting for a beautiful car. Rodney Shortell's Adelphi by Kylemore Abbey, Conemara.

(Photo acknowledgement: Rodney Shortell)

EDITORIALS

1 For some while now the Bulletin has been "going haywire" with too much copy for too little space. The Editor is extremely grateful to the Committee for allowing him to have this "bumper" issue in order to "clear the log jam".

Over-large Bulletins, however, bring associated problems. They are bulkier, they are heavier, and they cost much more to post. In order to rationalise the position and to save space without detracting from the appearance of the magazine "Letters to the Editor" are grouped together in an Annexure which is printed on lighter paper and in a manner which is economical with space. Readers who find this presentation unattractive are asked to remember the reason behind it, and to accept the Editor's assurance that normality will be resumed as soon as possible.

2 Gerry Dick has been making extensive enquiries into proposed E.E.C. regulations concerning exhaust emission limits.

It is encouraging to be able to quote from a letter written by Peter Bottomley of the Department of Transport to Gerry's M.P.

"As with all previous Community Directives controlling vehicle emissions this new Directive will only apply to new vehicles. There is no possibility of it applying to vehicles already on the road, including the historic cars about which Mr. Dick is concerned."

THE H.K.R. SPECIAL – A FURTHER UPDATE

In a welcome letter Gordon Hayward relates how he — in company with Joe Kempe-Roberts — went to Attleborough and saw the H.K.R. Special in the hands of its new owner.

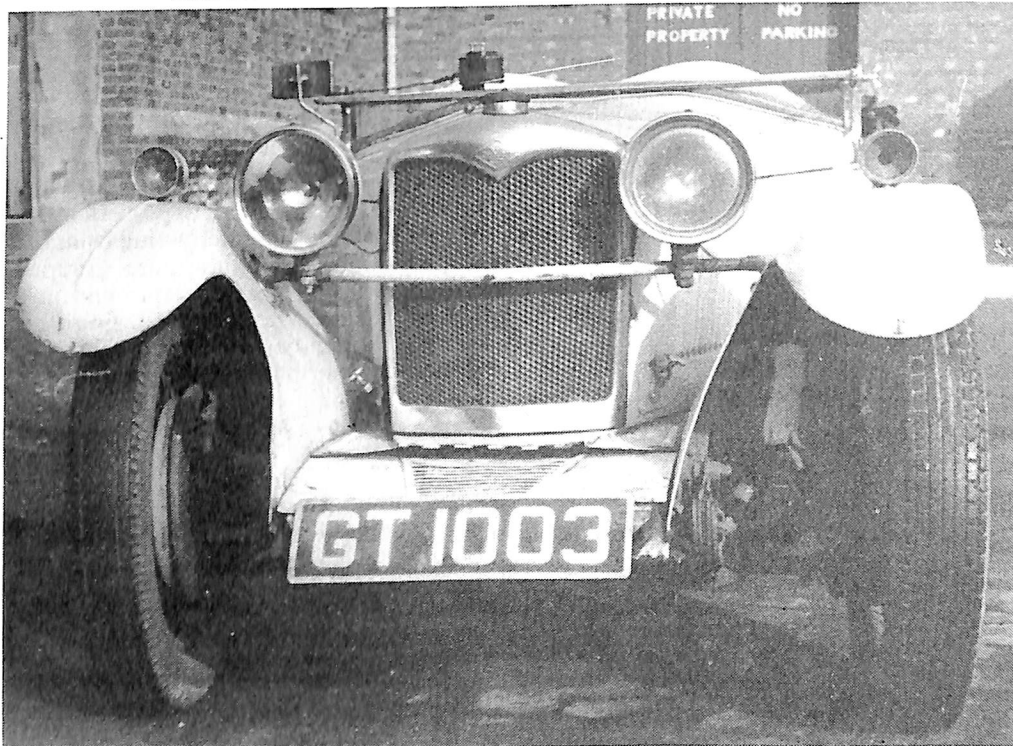
The new owner (Mr. Herbert) and his wife were full of enthusiasm and were pleased with their acquisition. They were not daunted by the vast amount of work ahead of them in restoring the (by now) considerably deteriorated car, and had already stripped it down to the chassis.

We are extremely grateful to Messrs Hayward and Kempe-Roberts for their interest and co-operation and also for the interesting photographs.

★ ★ ★ ★

Between the arrival of Gordon Hayward's letter and the printing of this Bulletin the Editor learnt that he had died.

This helpful man who had contributed so much to the world of motoring over a long life will be sorely missed. A great supporter of the St. John Ambulance Brigade he was, last year, made an Officer of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, one of the organisation's highest awards.



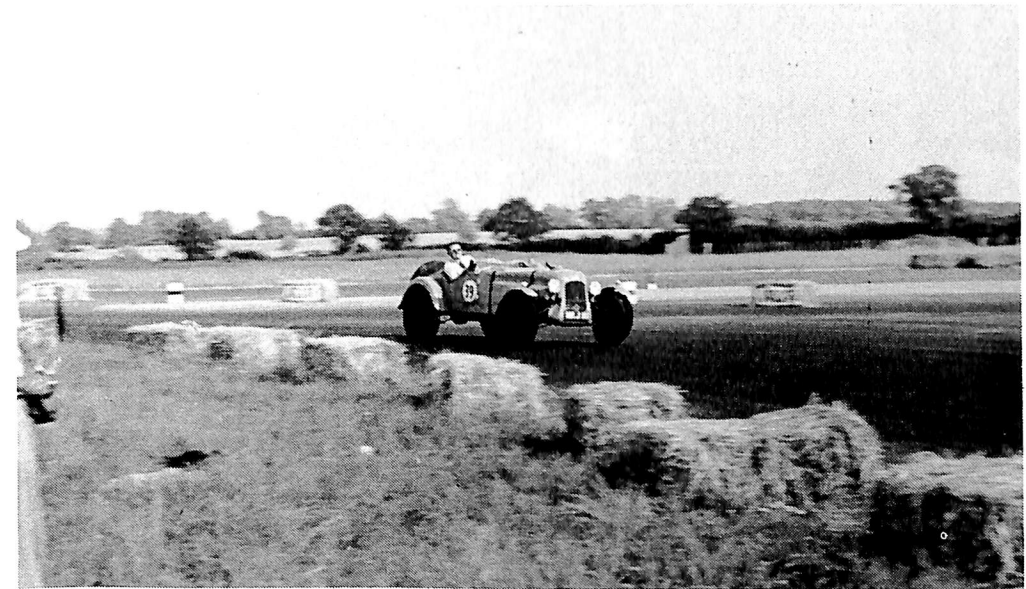
The original Gamecock.

(Photo acknowledgement: Gordon Hayward/ Joe Kempe-Roberts)



The chassis frame showing the Citroen suspension bolted on.

(Photo acknowledgement: Gordon Hayward/ Joe Kempe-Roberts)



The car in its finished form taking part in a speed event at Silverstone.

(Photo acknowledgement: Joe Kempe-Roberts)

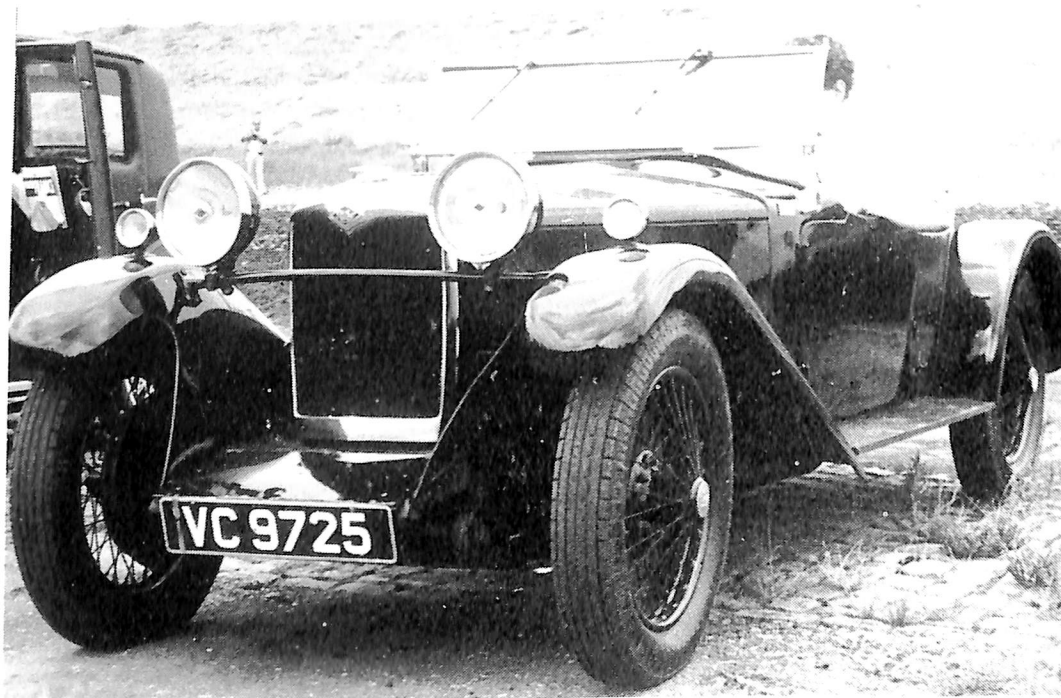
THE INS AND OUTS OF THE GAMECOCK

by Chris Briggs

It was my own fault for drawing attention to the flat running-boards on V.C.9725 in the 1938 rally picture. A Gamecock was promptly reported to me from Holland with flat running-boards and wings without ribs. The owner G. M. v.t. Hoog sent me a photo, via Arie Vermeer, which I enclose, and lo and behold, it is our old friend V.C.9725, alive and well. This caused me to lay out my pictures together, and it was only then that I realised that this was the self-same car which was road-tested by Motor Sport in 1932, and which I mentioned in my recent letter as having Lucas side-lights.

My photostat of the article is not clear, but the car definitely had aerofoil running-boards in 1932, and, I think, ribbed wings. The car (car no.6015025, engine no. 33316) is described as "the first Gamecock to leave the works" and, by March 1932, it had "covered an enormous mileage on demonstration work". This seemed to settle the matter and I was just dusting-off my red-herring, when I heard of what was obviously an earlier car.

Nick Sieveking put me in touch with Tom Hall of Durham, who sent me a photo and details of a car which he once owned. Tom thought P.J.683 (car no. 14399) to be a prototype as the back of the trim bore the legend: Gamecock E.X.90, and the body is mounted on a



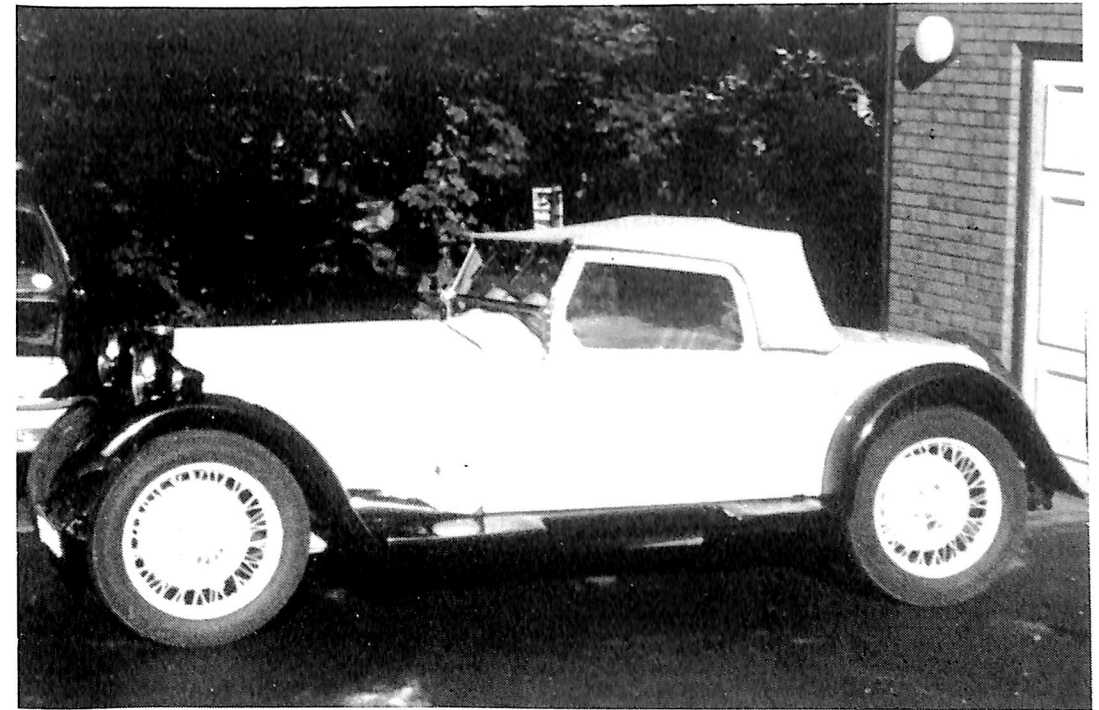
A recent picture of VC.9725.

(Photo acknowledgement: Chris. Briggs)

Plus-series chassis with a deep sill beneath the door. The boot-lid is divided transversely, and opens fore and aft. The domed helmet wings are of aluminium and the door sill resembles the car illustrated in Motor Sport in December 1983, showing Mrs Goodwin at Shelsley Walsh. According to Mike Hill (Bulletin 113, p.113), this car is V.C.8804, and, as it was in existence in July 1931, it must be on a Plus-series chassis, like P.J.683.

So, it appears there were at least two prototype, or at least, pre-production series Gamecocks on the earlier chassis. I agree with Chris Cliff (Bulletin 92) that V.C.6787, the car on the Brooklands chassis, appears to have a fabric body, and seems to have been a blind alley, but, taken in conjunction with the other two cars, it indicates that the designers had a clear concept in mind and were looking for a way to achieve it.

Aft of the seats the designer had no problem, but, for the rest he had certain fixed points. On P.J. 683 the engine is set as low as possible on the chassis using the conventional mounting bar, and this, with the thermo-syphon system, presumably controlled the height of the radiator, as this ratio remained constant through to the production model. A virtually horizontal bonnet and scuttle line seems to have been an essential part of the design and this is where the problems began. To insert an adult male, even one of the homunculi beloved of



PJ.683 (now owned by Peter Clews)

(Photo acknowledgement: Tom Hall)

the Riley graphics department, it was necessary to mount the floor-boards on the lower chassis rail, hence the deep valence under the door, as this served to cover the chassis.

I was able to meet P.J.683, and her new owner Peter Clews, at V.S.C.C. Cadwell Park, and the meeting was most informative, though inconclusive in the matter of running-boards. Peter reckons that the boot has been modified at some time, and the wings, which are beautifully made, are not in any Riley tradition, the aerofoil running-boards being made up to match. All this seemed unimportant however when I came to consider the sill. It is not difficult to wriggle your legs over that ledge, but Rileys intended the Gamecock to have more popular appeal than the Brooklands, and I suspect that sill gave cause for concern. Given the emphasis placed by the contemporary press on ease of entry and exit, and that Rileys themselves were soon to make elaborate experiments with roof-doors, etc., in response to what they saw as current trends, I suspect they paused for thought.

It was quite a long pause, several months in fact, in which time they produced the Plus Ultra chassis with its pronounced down-sweep of the side rails. Did the development work on the Gamecock bring about this new design, or was it coming anyway and they just held back production to wait for it? It is tempting to believe the former. Certainly they took the opportunity to place the Gamecock floor-boards on top of the chassis and do away with the obtrusive sill.

The engine height was raised about 1½" in the new chassis and the radiator to match. The driver sat a little higher than in the prototype but they omitted to redesign the windscreen which, in my car, is too low for anyone over about 5' 9". The Company seems to have recognised this, as, when the one-piece screen was introduced in 1932, they made it taller by about 2".

The new chassis gave the opportunity to revamp the ageing Monaco as an altogether sleeker design, paving the way for the Kestrel and the successful models of the mid-thirties. If my suspicion is right, the hesitation over that door sill could have been an important stepping-stone in Riley development.

I have just been given the chance to study the 1931/2 sales brochure, which proclaims the Plus Ultra chassis on every page, and which, rather charmingly, then proceeds to illustrate one of the prototypes on the earlier chassis! And the running-boards? Aerofoil section of course! Red herring duly eaten.

To delve even further into minutiae, we now have another Gamecock in Suffolk, and this one has a lower scuttle hump on the passenger side than on the driver's. I saw a reference to such a peculiarity recently, so, unless this is the same car, even this odd feature is not unique.

A FISHY STORY

Seen in the shops just before Christmas — a toy car with a label proudly proclaiming "Porsche Turbot".

SEATING

In an appreciation of an Autovia limousine published in a motoring magazine one finds this passage:

"The chauffeur, incidentally, rides on leather in his slightly cramped driving compartment. The passengers by contrast are seated upon and surrounded by Bedford cord. Class, it seems, extended in the 1930's even to what you sat on."

Reading this brought to mind the story about Freddie Dixon's seating arrangements. He found that the saddle of an Indian motorcycle he was to race at Brooklands was too slippery for his liking. He obtained some sandpaper and stuck it to the saddle. This treatment proved effective in preventing slip. Too effective in fact, for halfway through the first race the abrasive surface wore away the bottom of Freddie's leathers. He finished the race bloodied but unbowed.

RILEY DETACHABLE WHEELS

(continuation of Alan Teeder's article)

1912 No. 18,604

Improvements in Detachable Wheels and in Spanners for Fixing and Unfixing the same.

(Victor Riley and Stanley Riley) Illustrations 9-11

This specification is derived from the previous one. It only describes the nut and locking system.

Projections 26 on the inside of the ring spanner fit in grooves 23 in the outside of the nut to turn it. Two variations are shown for disengaging the pawls.

In the first arrangement the heads of the pawls 10 pass through slots 12 in a "claw plate" 9. These slots have inclines 14 machined in them. When the claw plate is rotated anticlockwise relative to the rest of the nut 1, the heads of the pawls are lifted by the inclines. Cut-outs 24 on the outer edge of the claw plate engage with the projections 26 on the inside of the spanner. The cut-outs 23 in the outside of the nut are longer than those in the claw plate so that the latter rotates and fully lifts the pawls before the spanner tries to undo the nut. A projection 27 at the back of the spanner catches behind the nut and prevents it from being removed from the nut when the claw plate is rotated into the lift position, in similar manner to that described in the 1910 adverts (see 2,297/1909 patent above). A spring loaded ball 19 is forced into a detent 20 to retain the claw plate in the safe position.

For the second arrangement the heads of the pawls are brazed to a ring 30, which forms the outer cover of the nut assembly. Lifting ramps 32 on the spanner catch under lugs 33 lifting the whole ring when it is rotated anticlockwise. Otherwise all details are the same.

(Please turn to foot of p.9)

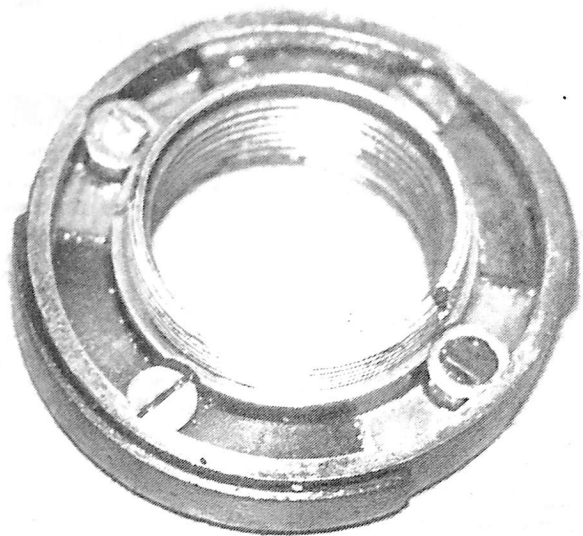
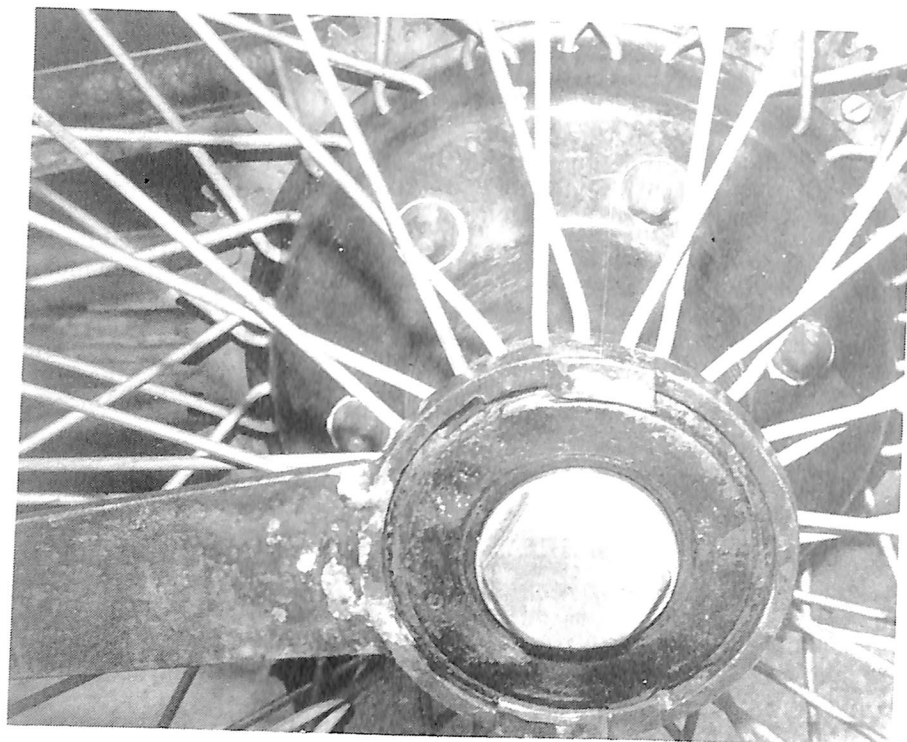


Illustration 9. Patent 18,604/1912 ("Spare" wheel for AF 676).

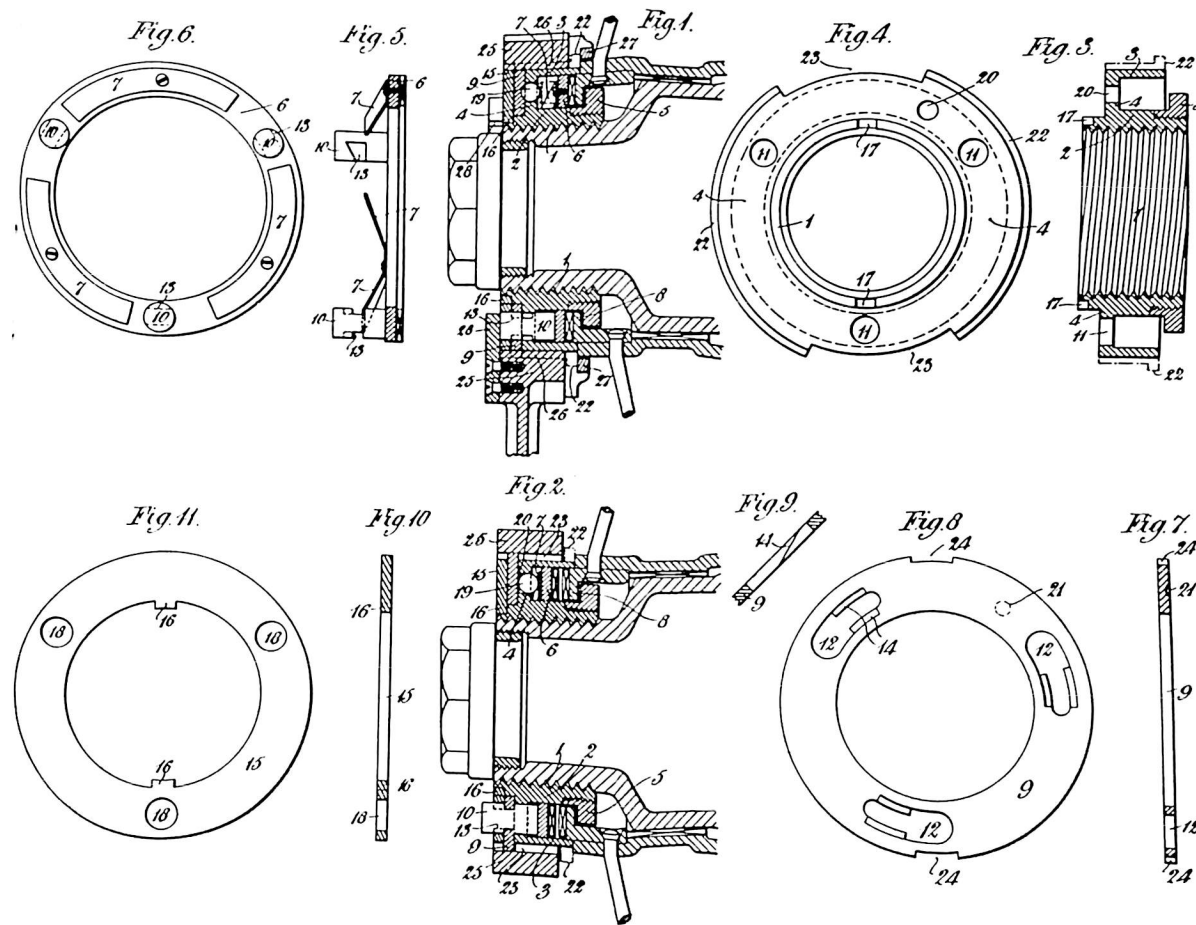


Illustration 10. Patent 18,604/1912 (First arrangement).

With both arrangements of this patent the safety covers in the previous 19,797/1910 design are dispensed with, complete reliance being placed on the springs.

Last year I acquired a pair of wheels to this second arrangement. In the patent drawings three sets of pawls are shown, but mine were only fitted with two.

This type of nut was new at the autumn 1912 motor show, together with the splined hub of patent No. 21,942/1912.
(To be continued).

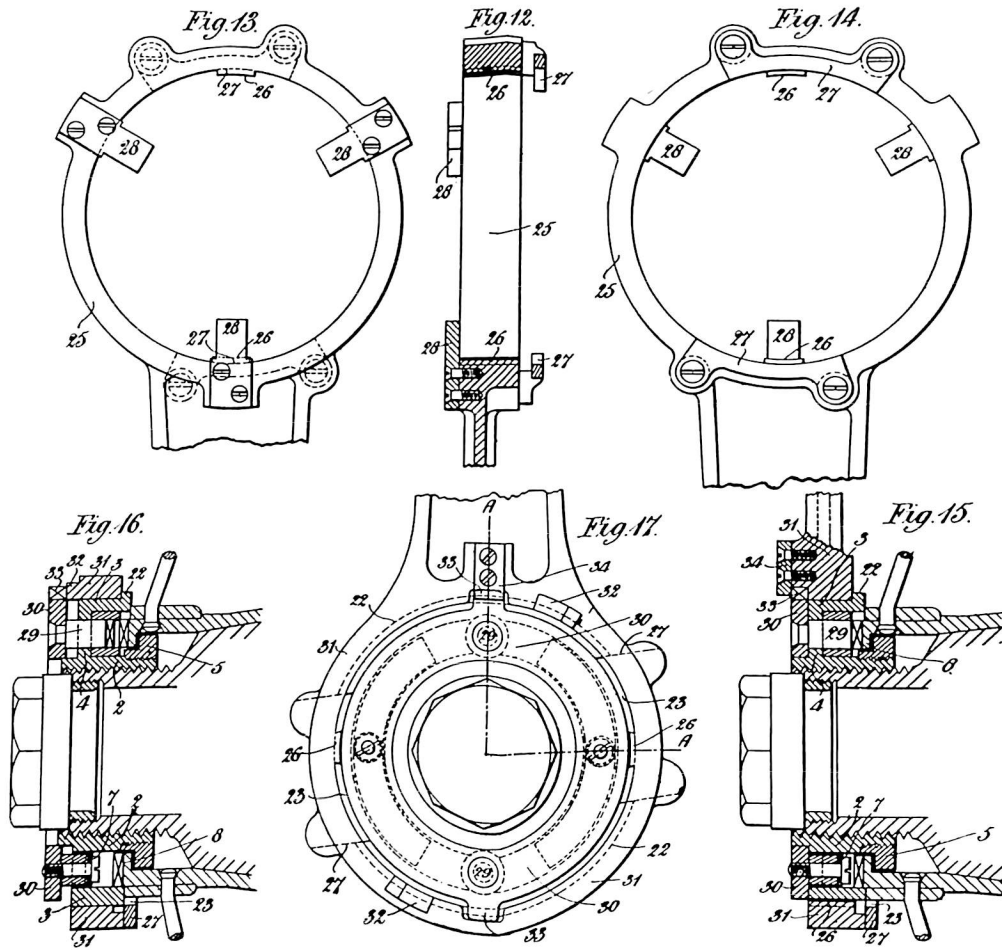


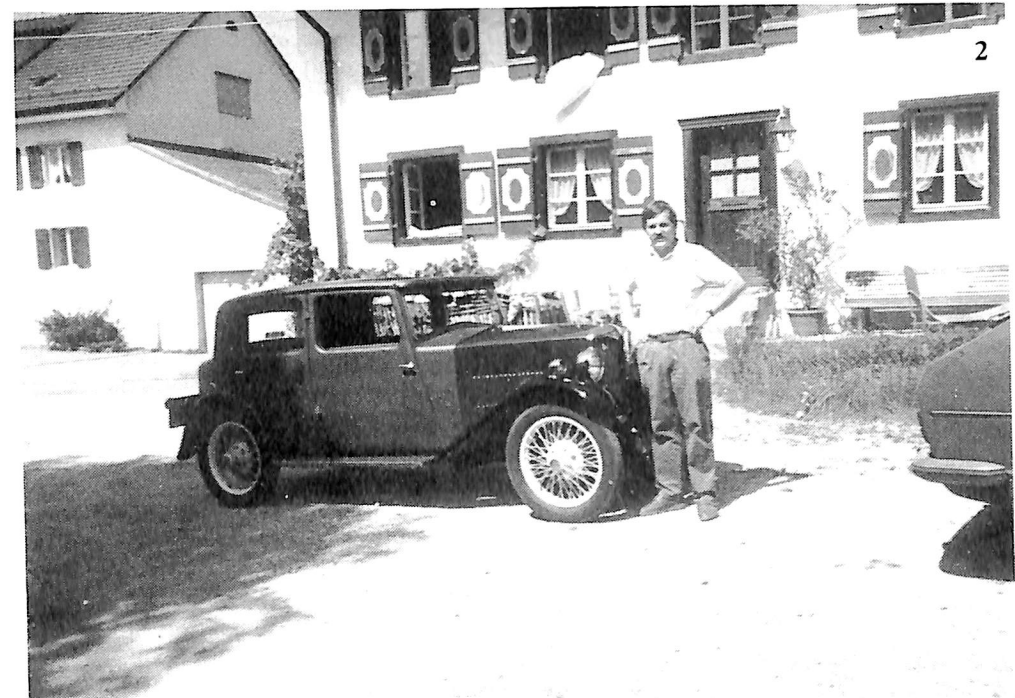
Illustration 11. Patent 18,604/1912 (Second arrangement).

PICTURES FROM EUROPE

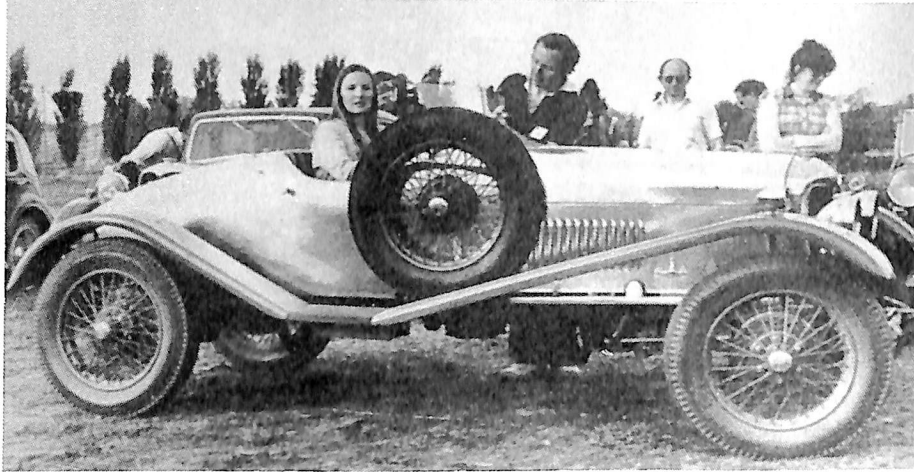
Jean and Gerry Dick send these interesting pictures taken on their recent continental trip.

No. 1 was taken on the Dutch Riley weekend and shows Robin Cameron's M.P.H. with washing out to dry.

No. 2 shows Andre Wieland outside his farmhouse near Zurich. The car is Gerry and Jean's Monaco.



A REDWING STORY



The Editor is very grateful to Peter Witt for sending the photograph of the Redwing pictured here, and also a couple of interesting stories about the car. The first story is written by Alan McKay and tells how he acquired his 'Pink Slip' (the annual roadworthiness certificate which is issued by authorised service stations). He writes:

"We like to keep Redwing on full road registration and hang the expense. Call it pride if you like — Redwing's, not ours. Besides, once you've done the trick over the pits, you don't feel like giving it away. Trouble is, it means the hassle of getting the pink slip once a year. A quick polish, solder up a couple of dicky lights, pump up the tyres, and it's off to the tame garage proprietor. He'll ignore the fine spray of oil on her chassis (to be expected); he'll turn a blind eye to the six inches of play in the steering wheel which has no appreciable effect on the direction she chooses to go (the true meaning of power steering).

Trouble is, I abandoned my tame man after last year's bitter episode. Redwing took instant dislike to the churlish youth he'd put onto the job. No respect for age and dignity. Noticed the oil slick straight off and made comment. Redwing pumped a dollop onto his driveway. Even asked me to dip the lights. Redwing got huffy on the way home.

My new man for this year ran a wrecking yard. Dunno why, but I thought he'd have more sympathy. Heard me coming a block away and said she sounded like a Kenworth. A humourist. I told Redwing to be flattered. In third gear she sounds like an excavator. Depressed her a bit, parked there all pristine in the middle of a graveyard. There but for fortune . . .

I got out, taking my full two minutes. The wrecker joshed me with such jewels as "need me sunnies to look at her, mate" and "too much rust in her, mate." Redwing's vain about her aluminium body. Off to a bad start. Gunna be a rough half hour. He sniggered and started on the

first of his eight circumnavigations. Three other rustic wits sauntered over from the repair shop next door where they'd been fitting cardboard panels onto an oriental runabout. Comedy time.

"Forget to put the driver's door in, mate?"

"Is that miles or kilometers on the speedo?"

"Looks like your hydraulic brake lines have fallen orf, mate." The last one almost brought a round of applause. Redwing sniffed somewhere in the depths of her radiator. Steady. Why do they do that? One fancied himself as a stylist. "The exterior exhaust spoils her lines," he said. "If it was mine, I'd shroud it in one of them chrome cowls, like on them Harley Davidsons," he said. Redwing choked in her bowels. I didn't need the pink slip that badly, did I? There are other garages. Be patient. Down to the serious business of looking at the "donk". Donk? Redwing lifted her skirts — but only after a struggle. "What's them linkages passing through the sump?" Advance retard. Rude giggle. "Why do you keep your oil rag under the carburettor, mate? Drips a bit, does she?" Redwing gurgled. I prefer to think of it as a discharge of excessive enthusiasm. True seekers after knowledge, these boys.

"I bet the exhaust makes a noise."

"I bet it gets hot."

I bet it does. Unique that. Redwing begged one of them to stick his peasant hand on it.

The wrecker, being the first on the scene, assumed an air of authority. "Car this primitive wouldn't have brake lights and flashers, eh?" Primitive? Don't boil, girl. He was fingering the bald patches on her nickel plated headlights. It was all a bit indecent. Redwing and me looked at the dismembered corpses surrounding us. They looked back sadly.

We got the pink slip but we'd paid dearly. The wrecker dismissed us and took to destroying a helpless Holden with all the zeal of a craftsman dedicated to his art. I backed out, sounding nothing like a Kenworth. The dead cars looked the other way. Going home, Redwing coughed and spluttered and belched blue smoke. I reminded her that it was improper for a car of her age and dignity to use such language."

★ ★ ★ ★

The second story is an earlier one and comes from Noel Lockley, a former owner of the car. He writes:

"It would have been in 1934 that I bought a Redwing Riley from G. D. Warton of Vaucluse. As it was not in running order it was decided to tow it home to Collaroy with my father's 1924 Cadillac.

After picking it up all went well until we approached the intersection of Condamine Street and Pittwater Road, Brookvale where a tram was approaching along Pittwater Road. My brother was driving the Cadillac and thought that he could make the intersection before the tram but had not reckoned on the extra load imposed by the Riley.

The tram driver did not make much effort to slow down and the tram hit the Riley on the front right hand side bending the dumb iron

on that side very badly.

I managed by much heating and hammering to restore the bent chassis to the original shape but was unable to remove a number of dents and marks which marred the finished job. To cover these I had steel formed to slip over the curved chassis between the radiator and the front spring anchorage, with a second piece to fit the other side so that the finished job looked as though it was an original part of the car. This modification enabled me to recognise the car after it was bought by the present owners about 1970.

I carried out work on the car over a period of some months and when finished took the car to Manly and had it registered in the morning and left that afternoon with my brother to drive to a friend's place out of Moree to do some shooting.

The car went well but by the time we reached Wyong it had lost a lot of water. Luckily we had a four gallon drum with us and this became our water supply. We drove through the night topping up the radiator regularly and when we came to a town we would look for a tap to refill the drum, often having to go into front gardens to do so.

Driving through the night on the unsealed roads as they were then was very trying on the eyes as the light coloured road lit by the headlights was a bright spot in contrast to the surrounding darkness and this made the eyes very tired after a while. It was a great relief going through towns where the road was sealed in black bitumen. With the tired eyes I nearly fell asleep several times during the night and seemed to just doze off when the exhaust seemed to bring me back with a fright which would keep me awake for some time.

In the early hours of the morning the petrol pipe came loose in the union at the tap at the bottom of the petrol tank and petrol was running onto the flywheel just below it . . . luckily it did not catch fire and the pipe was repaired on the spot. Thereafter there were no further incidents and we got to our destination and later had an uneventful trip home.

On this trip we used more water than petrol and when we got home found that the valve timing was out. I also found that the radiator was different to most others as there were large water passages down each side of the core, so that the water could circulate without going through the core. The outside of the radiator body was also the water container. I opened up the underside of the radiator and blocked the side passages and found the radiator was the more effective.

Because we lacked garage space I later decided to sell the Redwing but got no reply to my advertisements so I left it with a motor dealer in William Street to sell on my behalf. But I got no sale and the K.L.G. sports plugs were taken out and some old ones substituted. I later managed to sell the car with a motor cycle and side car as trade in to a Bernie Meredyth in 1937. But in those days there was not the demand for a sports car as there is today and the selling price was low . . . I have forgotten the exact amount.

FOOTNOTE: The shooting expedition at Moree was not a complete success. My brother and I with others chased pigs through the

high reeds of the watercourses. We were on horseback armed with pistols. I was hot on the tail of a pig when my horse tripped over another pig lying in the reeds. Down went the horse and I went hurtling over his head to put my shoulder out. The pig suffered no damage."

★ ★ ★ ★

The Editor showed the picture to Richard Odell who says that it shows a perfectly standard Redwing sports two seater. He points out that the car is heavily over tyred, the tyre on the spare being so fat that it will not fit between the wing and the scuttle, necessitating the "perching up" of the spare wheel. The louvres on the bonnet side are not standard to U.K. models but could well have been standard fitment on cars destined for countries with warm climates. The braked front end fitted to the car was offered as an option from the Motor Show of 1924 (for 1925 models). This modification was 'brought in' originally and then as demand increased became partly factory manufactured. The option was described in the 1925 brochure thus:

"Front Wheel Brakes (patented). Automatically compensating. Adjustable, independent of rear brakes. Flexible shaft introduced between the operating cam and lever making front wheel skid as a result of brake seizure impossible. All mechanism self-contained on the axle and entirely separate from the frame. Extra £20."

★ ★ ★ ★

Sincere thanks are tendered to Peter Witt, Allan McKay, Noel Lockley and Richard Odell for their co-operation.

Footnote

A note from Peter Witt re the bonnet louvres: "As far as I am aware the body was largely re-panelled during the restoration and the louvres may have been added at that time — though the possibility of them being pressed for a lot longer cannot be discounted. Certainly they do not appear on Ray Black's car in Victoria."

PROGRESS

by 'Anon'

In longing to be civilised the human race has realised
That living must be organised, with thought and labour minimised
And modernised and mechanised and finally computerised.
To date, or so I am advised, computers have economised,
Have memorised and analysed, have scrutinised and synchronised,
And soon will have (unauthorised) our life and work monopolised.
Beware lest they, uncriticised, by foolish men are idolised
Until we are all mesmerised and hypnotised and terrorised,
And finding that we are organised, devitalised, dehumanised.
Thus, longing to be civilised, we'll end up being fossilised.

ENJOYING A BROOKLANDS

During the war Mr. C. N. Mackie found himself a Lieutenant in the R.A.S.C. stationed in Malta. While there he wrote the story of his motoring experiences whilst he was an apprentice at "the Leyland", a story which Motor Sport published in February 1945.

That part of the story dealing with a Brooklands Riley follows (with acknowledgements to original source).

"My eighteenth birthday was approaching and I put in such effective pleading for a car that, when the day arrived, to my great astonishment I was given a limit of up to £60 and told to go and buy one myself. This was more than I had bargained for. I caught the first train up to town, and within half an hour of my arrival the car I had tentatively ear-marked was mine – a 1928 "Brooklands" Riley – and returned home the following day at fantastic speed and unmentionable r.p.m. (or so they seemed to me at the time), fairly bursting with pride in my new possession. My parents took it very well, but they were unable to hide their chagrin completely.

However, this rosy state of affairs did not last for long and one day, pulling away smartly from some traffic lights on the outskirts of Wigan, an "expensive noise" suddenly happened. Fortunately, one of the works' testers "happened" about the same time, and we completed the journey to Leyland on tow behind a massive Leyland "Beaver Six", attached by a very short rope and praying fervently that the rear ballast weight, which weighed about a ton, would not fall off and squash us. It didn't.

Upon dismantling the engine it was found that No. 1 connecting rod had parted from the piston at the little-end. The piston had jammed in the top of the bore and the rod, being just too long, had stayed put and not poked itself through the side of the crankcase in the usual manner. Two new valves, a piston and a connecting rod would soon put this right, but as the piston was a H.C. over-size Martlett which had to be specially made, the intervening time was devoted to a complete overhaul of the rest of the car. I undertook this myself with the assistance of an ex-tool-room chargehand.

The crankshaft main bearings were skimmed up on a lathe and new bearing shells turned up, remetalled and bored out. The big-end journals were reduced by hand from .005-in. ovality to less than .005-in. This sounds pretty keen, and it was, too. About eight hours must have been devoted to each bearing, but the care then expended was well repaid later. The big-ends were remetalled and bored and, the piston having arrived, the engine was reassembled. Doing this I made (as far as I know) my first mistake, due to my lack of experience and, apart from smearing a little oil on all the obvious places, I was too stringent with it, the result being that the motor very nearly seized up when first started, before the oil pressure gauge came to life. During the running-in period the clutch thrust race began to utter some alarming shrieks, the dashboard parted company from the scuttle, and the gearbox gave symptoms that all was not well. So after 750 miles of careful running-in, the engine was taken out and the bearings examined

and found to be in first-class condition. The gearbox was dismantled and the rear mainshaft bearing was found to be worn and turning in its housing. A new bearing was obtained and, copper-plated round the outside, became a nice press fit into the housing. A new clutch thrust race, a new dashboard made of 1/8-in. sheet aluminium, and the inevitable brackets for the o.h.v. inspection plates, and we were ready for some motoring.

The first time out 5,000 r.p.m. was clocked with ease, but over that a regular missing note crept in, and about an extra 100 r.p.m. was all that could be achieved. However, the performance up to 5,000 r.p.m. was so satisfactory that I didn't worry overmuch at first about the missing 500 r.p.m., and vaguely suspected valve bounce, which I was not then in a financial position to cure anyhow. This was all settled for me in a very short time. Whilst proceeding along Watling Street one day the engine suddenly cut out dead, and upon investigation, it was found that there was no urge to the plugs. Further probing revealed a broken make-and-break spring. As we had come to rest 50 yards from a garage we were able to procure and fit a new spring in a very short time.

As soon as we started off again I realised that the elusive 500 r.p.m. had been found at last! The run to town was completed at a very brisk pace, and at one time such was my *joie de vie* that I let the motor run up to 5,750 r.p.m. in third gear without it suffering any ill effects. After this incident I had no further mechanical trouble at all for about 8,000 miles. During this time I enjoyed some very fine runs and the car put up some phenomenal averages (none of which I have the slightest intention of revealing), some of them remaining unbeaten to this day in spite of all my efforts in larger and faster cars. Although I did not realise it at the time, I think the splendid performance of this car was considerably aided by the body. This was not a standard "Brooklands" job, but one of the few which were made with a fabric fixed-head coupé. By the time the car came into my possession the roof, of course, had been sawn off. The tail was cut off square just aft of the rear shackles and the spare wheel mounted on it. It must have been considerably lighter than the standard "Brooklands" model and, indeed, it was its very flimsiness which gave me more trouble thereafter than anything else. The rattling and distortion frayed wires all over the place and I was continually subduing minor fires, not to mention its disconcerting habit of shedding bits of itself at awkward moments. I think the most amusing of these incidents was when I decided to visit my school with another old school friend for the final of the bumping races. Arriving at a brisk pace it was necessary to take a sharp right-hand turn into the car park. My friend, entering into the spirit of the occasion, had most unwisely seated himself on the near-side door, or rather a piece of plywood which was doing duty whilst the proper article was being repaired. The combination of his weight and the extra thrust as we sped around the corner was too much for the substitute, which parted from the rest of the body with a series of horrible cracking noises and, together with my friend, who was too surprised to make any noise, went neatly tobogganning down the centre of the road for fully 50 yards. All this before the astounded gaze of assembled parents and to the ecstatic delight of their several offspring.

All good things come to an end and the Riley chose to do so one Christmas Eve at about 10 p.m., on the outskirts of Wigan. It had been an exasperating day altogether, as I had intended to start for home immediately after breakfast. The collapse of the autopulse petrol pump and water in the feed line, heaven knows how, combined with a temperature well below freezing point, all helped to delay the start until after 5 p.m. Then the dynamo packed up and I could not afford to use the headlights, and snow began to fall on top of an already ice-coated road, so I suppose we were quite fortunate to get to Wigan at all. Then, pulling away, ever so gently, from the identical traffic lights where I had had my previous misfortune, there was a soul-searing "clunk" from the engine, with two or three further dying gasps and then complete expiration. Although I had only a vague suspicion of what had happened I, at any rate, realised that the "clunk" was too definite and expensive to entertain any further hopes of the car reaching home. So the car was pushed to the side of the road and abandoned after all removable items had been taken out, and I finished my journey by train. My appearance about 1 a.m. on Christmas morning caused quite an uproar. I hadn't packed properly before leaving Leyland — such is the general habit with car owners — but had just chucked everything I thought I would want, plus Christmas presents, into the back of the car. Of course I looked more like a Christmas tree than any Christmas tree has ever looked before. A sponge bag and an attaché case contained my more intimate items of clothing. The rest was just hooked on — two pairs of shoes, tied together with their laces, round my neck, seat cushions, a fire extinguisher, a spot-light, a mackintosh, presents and, just to put the lid on it, I had been inveigled into buying my parents some young bulb shoots as an "original gift" and, of course, the only way to prevent these from getting damaged was to carry them, upright, one pot in each hand!

My worst suspicions of the car's ailments were correct (they nearly always are), and it was found that the crankshaft had broken at No. 4 journal. This meant a lot of work to fix the engine up again in its original trim, and I felt I would rather expend my energy on some other type. So a secondhand crankshaft was procured, the engine patched up, and the car disposed of. I cannot remember much of technical interest about the Riley, I'm afraid, after all this time and at this remote distance. I carried out one or two minor modifications, such as fitting a Tecalemit grease nipple on the clutch cover plate with a piece of copper tubing, so arranged that, with periodic injection, oil would drip on the thrust race and lubricate it, but I think this is now a fairly well-known tip. I later on fitted double springs to the make-and-break as a precaution against losing any performance from that source. The brakes, fortunately, never gave any trouble and were always adequate, for which I was thankful, as I did not fancy having to play about with the horrible cat's-cradle arrangement of cable. The gearbox was not a very good oil retainer. It used to ooze down the column of the remote control gear lever, and I often suspected it of leaking down the torque tube into the rear axle. At any rate, the latter never wanted topping up and the former did, much too often. Although the Riley gave me about as good a performance for its size and cost as probably anything else I

could have obtained at that time (about 1935), I did not fancy two-bearing crankshafts any more, so early in 1936, after looking round, I finally purchased a Type 37 Bugatti."

THE JOLLY OLD JUDDER!!

by J. W. Baker

Adrian Vine's mention of the infamous front end judder with rod braked machines brought back some memories of our experience of this phenomena. The first time it happened without warning after some years of driving this motor — came with an undescrivable din that made folk in the vicinity think a Jumbo Jet had pancaked — when all that was in sight was a rather sedate old fashioned motor with a somewhat bemused driver looking at the still intact front end with some surprise and relief!!

We did have reoccurrence of this judder at odd times in the following years but on these occasions we ignored it with dead pan faces — just enjoying the various horror struck expressions of the people in front who probably thought that the clot behind them with the vicious looking protruding dumbirons had demolished the rear end of their ducky little tin box!! With regards Mr. Vine's remedy of only using the foot brake in the case of absolute emergency — we have done this too — but not for the same reason — we have always found that by assessing road conditions well in advance whenever possible — made easy usually by the high driving position of early motors — that with judicious use of gearbox and a flick of the handbrake if necessary — we have always found that braking can be kept to a minimum — however we digress from the dreaded judder!!

The only cause that comes to our mind is that wear — usually excessive on those we have studied — on the ball that fits in the socket beneath the axle beam — also wear or slack fitting of the ball dog coupling housed in the backplate — the play in either or both of these could allow the shoes to snatch on and off rapidly thus causing the violent vibration. The amount of lead cut on the brake linings and or loose fitting shoe anchor pins could also perhaps contribute but we think unlikely or it would occur on all brakes not just the front. Coming to eccentric or even daft sounding remedies — we had an old friend who was a real old type pre-war first class mechanic who had been involved with motors all his life and talking to him one day we mentioned the judder antics and his face lit up with obvious instant recollection — "Ah" — he said "Just put a few flakes of graphite on the linings". Although we always admired his vast motoring experience we did have doubts about this suggestion — was he pulling our leg? Well to end this literary ramble we took his advice and we never had judder again — nor did it apparently affect the braking efficiency either!! — yes there are strange things in heaven and earth — but none so strange as Riley's!!

THE EVER-INCREASING TAPPET CLEARANCE SYNDROME, A REMEDY FOR.

by J.F.

This is quite an alarming malady in which even a moderate trip of 50 miles means that at least one tappet clearance has grown to the extent that adjustment is urgent, sometimes to the point that delay can mean that the pushrod can literally jump out, leaving the valve permanently shut. This had happened on a Lynx I once bought, the previous owner was not technical and pressed on, on three cylinders with the exhaust valve on No. 4 out of action, until after 30-odd miles the crankshaft broke. Not surprising when you think how many times it must have withstood the hammer-blows of an intake charge firing, shoving the piston down and then having to compress the still-burning gas which should have been nipping down the exhaust pipe. It must have been firing back through the carb like mad, but my laddo never noticed . . . Then again, I heard recently of a chap who knew precisely why one tappet clearance was always increasing, but, to keep on the road, took the pushrod out, sawed it in half and welded in a short length of rod to make it longer and take up the wear. I think he deserved to get away with a trick like that, it wouldn't have occurred to a one-track brain like mine.

The usual cause is, of course, a worn cam-follower, or tappet if you prefer. Once the case-hardening has worn through, the rate of wear is phenomenal, and action becomes of the essence. In a fairly recent article it was described how cam-followers can be changed without inverting the engine or turning the car upside-down (see issue 120 and 122 – Ed.) If you have a serviceable spare follower, an afternoon's work and you're back on the road, but if not, and particularly if you've got your engine out and stripped, here's one answer.

Sort through all your followers and put on one side any which are worn on the top face where the cam bears. By that, I mean if you put a straight-edge (A good six-inch rule, for example) across the face and use feeler gauges to measure the amount of 'dishing', you can form some idea of how much hardness is left. I've no idea of what the depth of hardness was originally, but I doubt it would have been more than ten thou (0.010 inch). Therefore if you can get much more than a 5-thou feeler in, it's time to do something while you have the chance.

The answer is to build up the worn face with a hard-facing material. There are some fairly recent hard-facing welding rods made for just this purpose, and a reputable welding firm will advise you on this. Also, of course, there is the old stand-by, Stellite, which anyone who can use an oxy-acetylene welding set can apply. British Oxygen used to supply it, but there must be other sources as well. You need Grade 6 Stellite (Grade 1 is the hardest and also very brittle, you want reasonable hardness and some toughness too).

Before starting, there are two points, one important and the other MOST IMPORTANT. The first is simply to put a radius around the edge of the face which is worn; nothing special, just take off the corner by running it round a medium emery wheel. This is because Stellite will

not flow right up to a sharp corner, it recoils from it in the same way as you would if you found yourself standing on the brink of Beachy Head, but given a radius it will flow up to, and just nicely round, the lip. The second, and vital, point is to remember that the followers are hollow, sealed by the pushrod end cup which is pressed in to the body. Sometimes these literally fall out, but usually they are immovable, particularly those without a lip around them to get hold of. Nonetheless, however tight they may be you can bet your life that in all the years they have been in an engine, some oil has got inside the follower. The result will be that as you happily heat the top end to a dull red and start to watch the Stellite flow, there will be a report like a rifle-shot and the pushrod end cup will disappear into the middle distance, doing ooh-nasties to anything in its way. The way to avoid this, if the cup won't come out peaceably, is to drill a tiny hole, say 1/32-inch, about 3/8-inch below the joint of end cup and follower body; this will vent pressure and save inconveniences like inquests. Afterwards, you can just leave the holes or fill them with solder if you are fussy.

Applying Stellite is no problem if you can do simple oxy-acetylene welding. You need a 'soft' flame, i.e. adequate in volume, and slightly carburising, that is with a little excess acetylene, evidence by a slight yellow envelope to the blue core flame. Warm the tappet surface evenly until you see the steel start to sweat, then run the Stellite on and you will see it spread evenly over the surface. When enough has gone on, do NOT withdraw the flame suddenly, but gradually, and you will be left with a quite smooth surface. Taking the flame away suddenly will give you a cratered surface, like the moon.

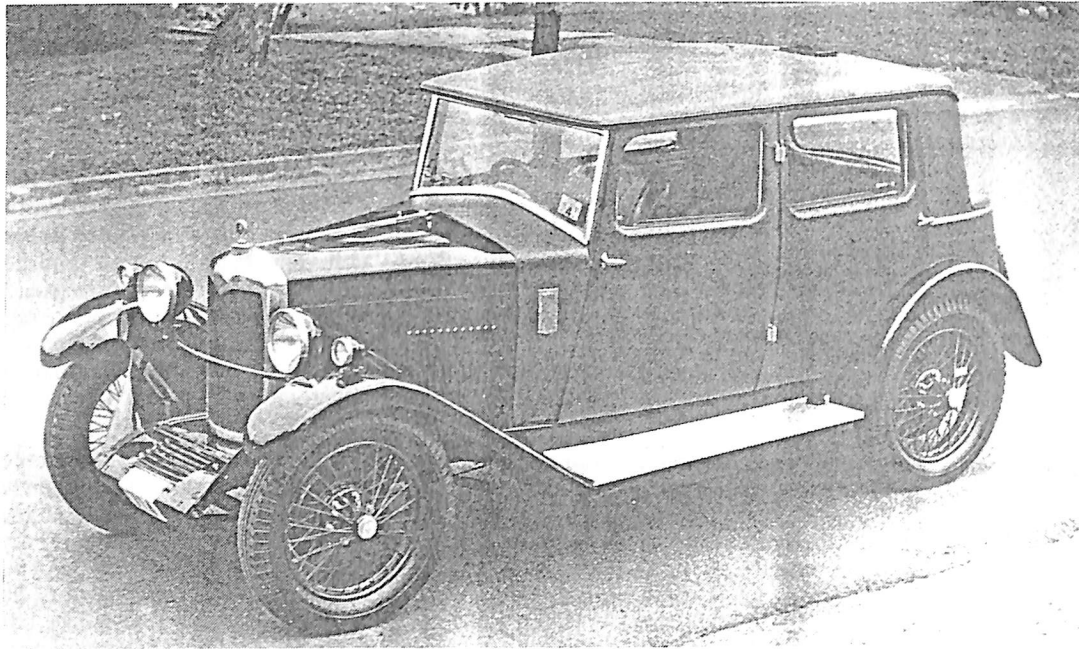
Getting the surface reground is the next problem. Ideally, a friend with a surface grinder, or membership of an evening class at your local Tech is the answer. You need a smooth finish, naturally, and ideally one which is every-so-slightly convex, so that the follower will rotate as the cam wipes it, but this last is generally the impossible ideal to which none but those with access to well-equipped engineering works can aspire.

Oh, there is just one more point to check on. You will need to have enough hardness left on the noses of your cams; otherwise you can be left with the dreaded Nearly Round Cam Syndrome, the symptoms of which are a maximum speed of 20 mph with acceleration to match. So check before you start; if you've no access to a hardness tester, a rough-and-ready guide for any hardened surface is to try to scratch it with a sharp scriber, or run a new, fine file over it. If you succeed in making an appreciable mark, you are obviously through the hard case. In the matter of camshafts, this is a question of having the cams built up and re-contoured, an expensive and, I understand, possibly a perilous business, depending on the firm you choose. I hear that the Register has knowledge of dodgy firms; let the wreck-buoys of others be your sea-marks, as dear old Tony Hancock said in *The Blood Donor*.

RILEY REGISTER REGALIA

Available from: Mrs. Dick, St. Winifreds, Eldon Road,
Dobbs Weir, Hoddesdon, Herts.

A VINTAGE MONACO



The Monaco pictured here was "Lot 217" at a sale of Special Interest cars conducted by Sotheby's in November at Bendigo on the occasion of the Australian National Autojumble.

The specification printed in the catalogue is published below (one wonders about the 'cone clutch').

We are extremely grateful to Alan Chambers, Editor of *Classic & Old Car Enthusiast* magazine for sending us this information.

1929 Riley 9 hp Monaco Five Seat Fabric Saloon

Registration: Non-transferable Queensland
Vintage registration QV 714

Chassis No. 607990

Engine No. 19298

Engine: Four cylinder, twin high camshaft overhead valve, water-cooled monobloc; bore 60.3mm; stroke 95.3mm, capacity 1089cc; for speed gate change gearbox; cone clutch; magneto ignition; semi-elliptic spring suspension front and rear shaft and spiral bevel drive. 4.50 x 19in. (front) and 4.75/5.00 x 19in. (rear) tyres. Wheelbase 8ft. 10in.

Automotive historians regard the Riley 9 hp in general, and the Monaco in particular, as a major milestone in motoring development. the revolutionary 'Monaco' fabric bodywork was first seen by an astonished motoring public in the summer of 1926 at Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb in England, on a Riley prototype Nine known as the Mk X.

It caused a sensation when it was officially unveiled at Olympia late in 1926. Low and rakish, it was one of the first bodies to make use of recessed footwells and enclosed boot. The Monaco bodies were made from fabric over expanded mesh, and proved to be both very light and rattle free. While fabric bodies were not new, it was unusual to find it on a production model light car of the period, and together with Percy Riley's excellent 1089 cc engine (incorporating twin camshafts and cross flow head with hemispherical combustion chambers) superb handling towards the top speed of 65 mph was assured.

This delightful example has been in Brisbane, Australia, nearly all of its life. Believed to have been purchased in London in 1929, it was brought to Brisbane by its original owner soon after.

The Riley carries an original English Monaco body rather than an Australian built version, and has never been equipped with either the Colonial higher ratio differential or a cooling fan. The scuttle carries the original chassis plate and the assembly date 9.9.9 (9th September 1929) is visible on the engine block below the cylinder head. A pencilled date (6.2.29) and a signature are visible on the internal timber frame of the front passenger door. The car was run by the original family until 1963 and still bears that year's registration label. It then changed hands three times before the present owner, a long standing member of the Riley Motor Club, purchased the little car in 1981, and commenced an extensive restoration, completed only this year, encompassing a full engine and chassis rebuild. Twin SV carburettors and a change over to two exhaust camshafts ensure excellent performance. The Riley has taken out two "Best Riley Trophies" at concourse events in Queensland and has recently had a bare metal repaint, in red over black.

A spare engine block including crankshaft and rods and a gearbox are available by negotiation to the successful purchaser.

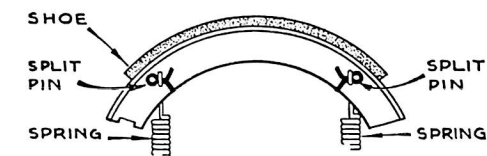
A brilliant spirited rally car well suited to exciting, long distance driving.

\$14,000/18,000.

BRAKE ASSEMBLY

Have you ever had trouble when fitting Girling brake shoes of the type on which the pull-off spring fits into holes in the shoe web due to the springs slipping out of the holes?

It has been found that split pins inserted between the web and the spring eye before assembly will retain the springs in position. When the shoes have been positioned the pins can be withdrawn quite easily.



RASH STATEMENTS

Occasionally the Editor makes a rash statement in the Bulletin. Sometimes he does this quite deliberately in the hope of provoking informative response. At other times he has done it because he is just "plain thick"!

Without revealing the reason behind the statement about the wings of the Sprite EMB.136 in issue no: 128, the Editor is pleased to print the following comment from Ian Hall (who is a walking storehouse of Sprite information).

"I think it was Mr. Clutton who said in a Bulletin emanating from another place words to the effect that there is no fact about the history of the automobile that someone will not try to prove untrue. This thought occurred to me when I looked at the caption to the photograph of Brian Lloyd's Sprite, EMB 136, in the December Bulletin.

I have to disagree with the categorical statement that the wings are original, although I am sure it is true that the car was not fitted with the usual full wings when delivered to Lady Mary Grosvenor.

However, in all the car's pre-war appearances it did not have the fixed cycle type front wings shown in the photograph but long blade type front wings which to all intents and purposes look identical to those fitted to some Brooklands models. Rather nicer than the close fitting front wings at present fitted in my opinion.

The back wings I agree are as original and they also look like Brooklands to me.

EMB also had the normal Sprite Bi-flex headlamps, larger than those now fitted, but did not have the external exhaust system which it seems to have acquired shortly after the war. There is clear photographic evidence that the outside exhaust was a later addition on page 161 of *Motor Sport* for August 1942."

MOUNTAINEERING

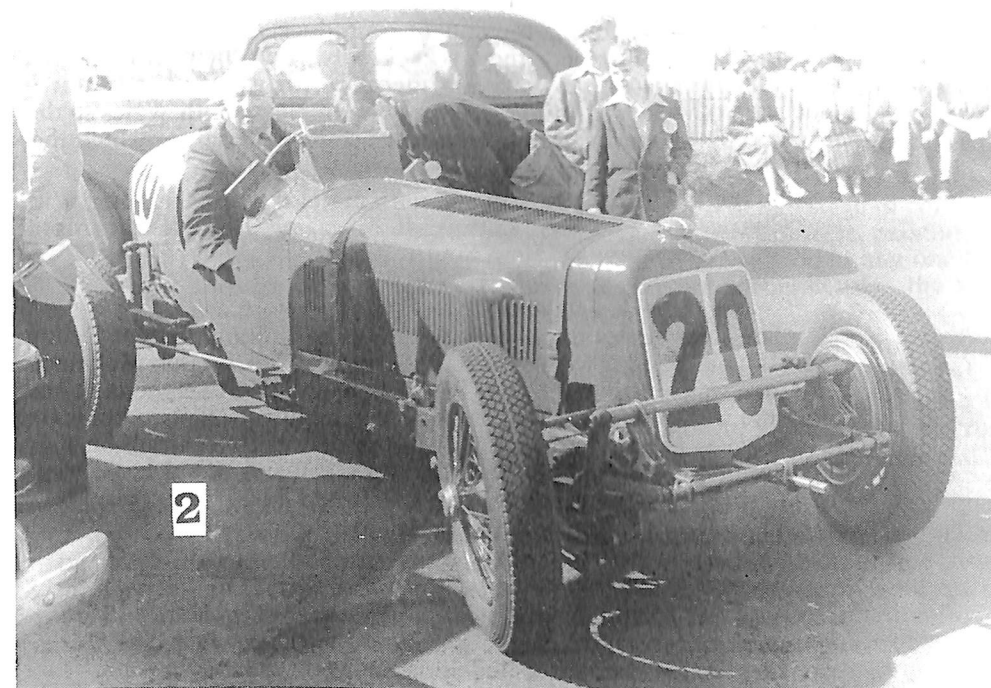
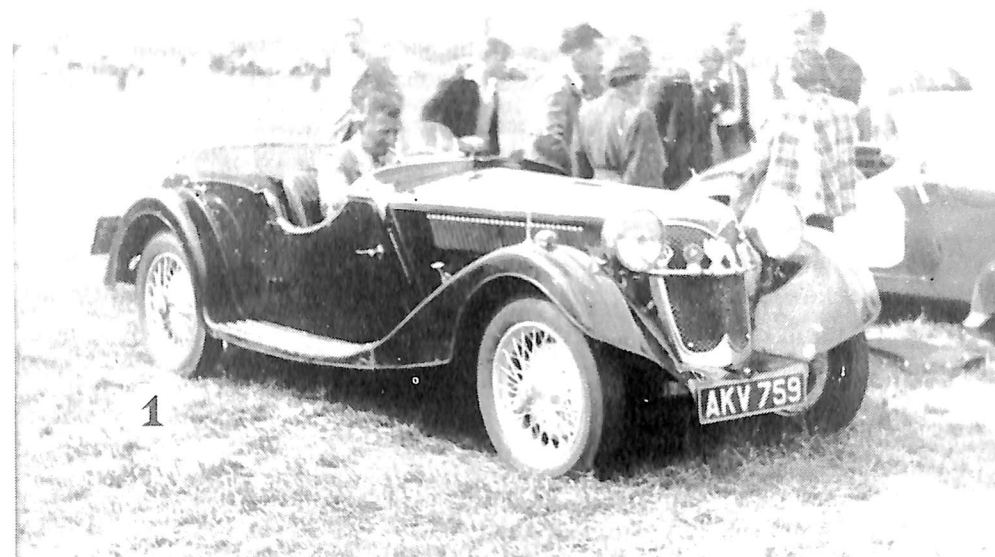
This item appeared in the Autocar of 25th September 1920: "We understand that the Shropshire Wrekin hill, hitherto reported as unclimbed by a motor car, has been scaled by a standard 11hp Riley chassis, fitted with a test body carrying three occupants."

ULSTER TROPHY RACES

We are extremely grateful to Alexander Beck for the pictures shown here, both taken at Ulster Trophy Race Meetings.

No: 1 was taken in 1950 and shows a spectating Lynx. (The car bearing the number 25 was a competing Lea-Francis).

No: 2 was taken in 1951 and shows the late Jimmy McMahon on the E.R.A. R.9.B which was owned and driven by E. J. Wilkinson. This car is now in the hands of Peter Mann.



SHEFFIELD

When the Riley family were making motor-cycles, cars, etc. in Coventry, other organisations were doing the same thing in Sheffield.

In conjunction with Sheffield City Libraries, Stephen Myers has carefully researched all the available information, and now a book has been published — "Cars from Sheffield". Nicely produced and fascinatingly illustrated the book contains a wealth of information on the contemporaries of our Rileys — famous makes such as Sheffield Simplex, Charron Laycock, Stringer, Richardson, etc.

Published by Sheffield City Libraries at £9.95.

AUSTRALIAN BODIES

The fact that many Rileys were exported to Australia in chassis form, there to have locally made bodies fitted, is fairly widely known. There has, however, been little information on the design and manufacture of these bodies, and the tendency has been to give a shrug of the shoulders and say "Oh, must be an Australian body" when confronted with a picture of a not quite orthodox car.

It, was, therefore, with great interest that the Editor studied some photo-copied material sent to him by Peter Witt recording the history of an Australian coachbuilding firm.

The article had appeared in the magazine "Classic and Old Car Enthusiast" and the Editors of this publication responded enthusiastically to a request for permission to reproduce their material in the Bulletin. Not only that, they very kindly sent their own original bromides for the illustrations. Furthermore, they put your Editor in touch with the Motor Traders' Association of New South Wales so that he could obtain permission to reproduce some material for which they held the copyright.

So the following comes to you with grateful thanks to Peter Witt, to "Classic and Old Car Enthusiast Magazine" and to the Motor Traders' Association of New South Wales.

★ ★ ★ ★

The story traces the history of the Body Building firm of Diskon and Molyneux and is written as told to the magazine by Bob Molyneux. The firm was set up in 1926 by Bill Diskon and Bob Molyneux. These two were working for a large company which built specialised bodies on many makes of cars. When this firm decided to concentrate on mass produced bodies on mainly American cars, Bill and Bob decided to set up on their own to carry on the specialised body work.

The magazine article continues:

"As well as the special bodies we now started to build a standard type body on Riley 9HP chassis for the agents Williams, Hill & Cameron of Darlington. Some of these Riley bodies were of conventional construction with glued wooden framework and all steel panels, others were of the fabric type.

The fabric bodies were called the "Weymann" type, a French technique being built with no connection between the timbers of the frame. The timbers were bolted together with steel brackets so that when they flexed there was no creaking or noises, etc. The bodies were framed up and the required shape was brought about by nailing on a very heavy canvas cover over the wooden framework. This was then overlaid with coarse horsehair filling that was hand stitched with twine to hold it in place. Another layer of heavy canvas was then held in place over the horsehair to see if the shape was suitable, removed and restuffed with more horsehair until the shape was correct, then the top layer of canvas was tacked on permanently. The fabric was precoloured and it was easily cleaned with boot polish and it wasn't lacquered.

The "Weymann" bodies were far easier to shape up than steel bodies, lighter in weight and quiet on the road, but fabric cars were not popular for long probably because the fabric hardened and became brittle. We didn't build many, perhaps only twenty or so. I remember we also built some fabric bodied Triumphs as well.

The Riley was a very interesting car, being very low they had a special seating cushion arrangement which was exclusive to the Riley as far as I know and of a particularly high class as far as comfort and support was concerned. The arrangement was called the "Mosley float on air" system which we bought through agents from Britain, and was used on both bucket and bench seats. The principle was like an air bucket and it consisted of tubing built in between the trim and the seat frame on both the seat and squab i.e. up the back of the seat also. The tubing consisted of an outer and inner circuit that could be pumped up to different pressures so that the driver and passengers were very well supported and very comfortable. The Riley was a fairly expensive automobile in its day, I think the 1½ litre (12HP) Riley chassis was about 750 Pounds in 1935 and we charged about 150 Pounds for a complete body and price varied according to extras or design variations or special paintwork. My attitude was that the Riley in its day was the Rolls Royce of the sports saloons.

We had individual tradesmen for each separate stage of construction; bodybuilders for the wood framework, panelbeaters, painters and trimmers. Four or more cars would be in production at any one time with about one special body produced per fortnight plus the more standardised bodies on the Rileys, etc.

Just as a point of interest (these figures are a bit rough as they are from memory only) the costs for bodywork varied from 100 Pounds or thereabouts for a Riley 9hp body or the small Singer, 150 Pounds for Humber 12 HP up through 750-800 Pounds on Sunbeams. Armstrong Siddleys and Talbots up to 1200 Pounds for Bentleys, Rolls and an occasional Bugatti.

When the cars came to us they were all as a bare chassis, all had bonnets but some did not have a dash. Only the more expensive chassis had a dash and instrument panel. On the Rileys and Humber's the instruments were supplied loose in a box and we fitted them onto our own instrument panel. A mechanic from the agent would come out at the final stage, wire up the instruments, fit the battery, start up the car

and deliver it.

Our name plates were always fitted on the near side scuttle panel just above the running board and were either small oval (blue and silver) or rectangular (yellow and silver).

I would do the design on a drawing board to full size and have the owner come along to pass it. Some of our physically large clients came in for a special seat fitting, to position the seats so they would have a comfortable driving position, this was during the trimming stage. Some would come in several times to be fitted correctly.

The body framework would be built up by an individual body builder who did the entire construction including swinging the door frames and boot lid. We only used Queensland Maple which, in my opinion, is probably the best coach-building timber available in the world and definitely the best for an Australian built car. We have never had a Queensland Maple built body rot to my knowledge. We bought at the time (early 30's) for thirty five shillings per hundred super feet with sizes up to 3" x 12" x 20 foot long at times. Some of this timber was beautifully grained . . .

After panelling, the joints were leadwiped and the car went to painting — no body filling putty was needed as the shapes were almost correct direct from the panelbeaters. We mostly used Brolite Paints and after surfacing we used to put on about five coats of colour, buff with cutting compound and finally polish with cornflour to give a brilliant shine.

We always used leather during this period for seats, door linings, body sides, arm rests and also sometimes on instrument panels. We kept a fairly comprehensive stock of hides, we might have enough hides to last us twelve months stacked up properly so they could breath. We had both Australian and Connolly hides. The biggest hide we ever had was about eighty square feet I think; we believed it was the biggest hide ever to come to Australia, anyone would think it came off an elephant instead of a cow, as most of them were around sixty to seventy square feet, which were still quite large hides. We kept a large stock because you would never know what the owner wanted in colouring and style of leather . . ."

The story then continues about a period when the firm started to take on the assembly and fitting of bodies for American cars which were shipped from the States in C.K.D. form, and we read:

"Customs officers used to come out and check on the crates as we opened them up in case there was contraband inside. The only contraband in fact was some discarded workers' lunches and on one occasion a small terrier dog that was still alive. This dog had survived by licking the grease from the body panels and on some scraps of food; it ran for its life without a single bark at us.

These C.K.D. bodies were rather difficult to build in some respects because if the right number of parts were not packed originally at the factory in America we couldn't finish the cars we were working on at the time. So eventually we got the agents in America to add about 5% of small parts to each lot of cars as they were delivered. These were

not the large parts but the small parts such as nuts, bolts and door handles, etc. Ultimately we ended up with an excess of these items in stock.

There were a few slip-ups from the American factories. At one stage they sent us six sets of panels for Packards all marked "reject" as they were dented and wrinkled from pressing. We dressed them up to normal quality, thanks to the ability of our panelbeaters. On another occasion we received a shipment of Packards with left hand drive chassis and parts but with right hand drive body panels, so we had to correct the hydraulics and steering, etc. It ultimately proved to be less difficult than we first expected."

Returning to Riley matters, the story has this to say about 1½ litre Kestrels:

"Also at this time a few 1½ litre Riley Kestrels were produced prior to the local Sydney agent closing down. I found the Rileys to be particularly interesting with a well designed and reliable chassis to build on. The Kestrel chassis had a low profile and as a consequence we felt the need to come up with a satisfactory solution to give adequate head and leg room within the cabin. We lowered the seats and mounted them directly on the chassis rails and constructed foot wells between the chassis rails. This gave us an independent mounting of the seats and floor pans directly to the chassis and not via the body as in previous designs. In this way we achieved excellent comfort and space within the cabin in combination with the "Mosley float on air" seat cushion. A very similar method to this had been used by us in the late 20's on the Riley 9 HP sedans. The object on that occasion had been to reduce the stress reflected onto the bodywork by the seats and squabs, so these were fastened directly to the chassis. This enabled a lighter body to be constructed and was fastened to the sides of the chassis."

After the war the firm worked for a time on commercial vehicle bodywork and then branched out into restoration work on Veteran and Vintage cars. A nice tribute is paid in these words "Diskon and Molyneux have made some remarkable achievements building automobiles of distinction."

In the same magazine there is a feature detailing the Stands at the 1929 Sydney Motor Show. The firm of Williams, Hill and Cameron were showing a complete range of Sunbeam, Armstrong Siddeley and Riley cars. Of the Riley range we read

"The Riley models will include a Special 9 Monaco fabric saloon, a Standard 9 with a four-passenger sports touring body, a Brooklands 9, and a new Riley six-cylinder Saloon. This is the first occasion that one of these six-cylinder Rileys has been on display in Australia, and it was exhibited for the first time before the public at the recent Olympia Show in London. It is constructed on similar lines to that of the 9 h.p., having separate overhead inlet and exhaust valves and also including the famous silent 3rd gear which has been such a successful feature in the smaller car.

The Brooklands model is similar to the one which recently won its class in the Ulster T.T. Race, and should appeal to those motorists who look for ample speed and road-holding qualities, together with

maximum comfort. The guaranteed speed is 80 miles per hour, but to this may be added at least another 10 miles.”

It is believed that many of these cars were fitted with Diskon and Molyneux bodies.

Postscript:

Two interesting extracts from a later letter from Peter Witt:

“I have confirmed . . . that all drawings were produced in Sydney. Unfortunately I was not able to establish just how they were able to come up with designs which were (frequently) close in design to those of the Factory. It may have been from photos, or perhaps D & M travelled to the U.K. at appropriate times to make sketches.”

(and the Editor had always assumed that Australian Coachbuilding firms were supplied with Works drawings!)

“. . . most, if not all, of the Australian bodied saloons I have seen have been fitted with a camping-body. i.e. bench type front seat with bottom-hinged back which is normally held upright by a leather strap which spans between the door pillars.”

AFTERTHOUGHT

With issue no:2 of the Classic and Old Car Enthusiast Magazine comes a very helpful letter from its Editor, Alan Chambers. Alan has been “doing a bit of digging” on our behalf as the following extracts from his letter show:

“. . . for the purpose of import duty and other taxation benefits we find that many automobiles built/assembled in Australia were classified by these companies as “British built”. We have seen pictures of Chevrolet Commercial vehicles with badges on the bonnet sides with the words “British built”. This on a product of the U.S.A.”

Reference is then made to an advertisement for a 1934 Chevrolet car issue 2 of the magazine and the letter continues: “What company would import these vehicles from Britain in 1934? it would be impracticable. All Chevrolets were built at Holden’s Body Works in Victoria or South Australia.

In regard to Rileys Bob Molyneux informs us that his company received from the importer only the chassis, engine and most of the front of the vehicle, sometimes even the cowl and bonnet were missing.

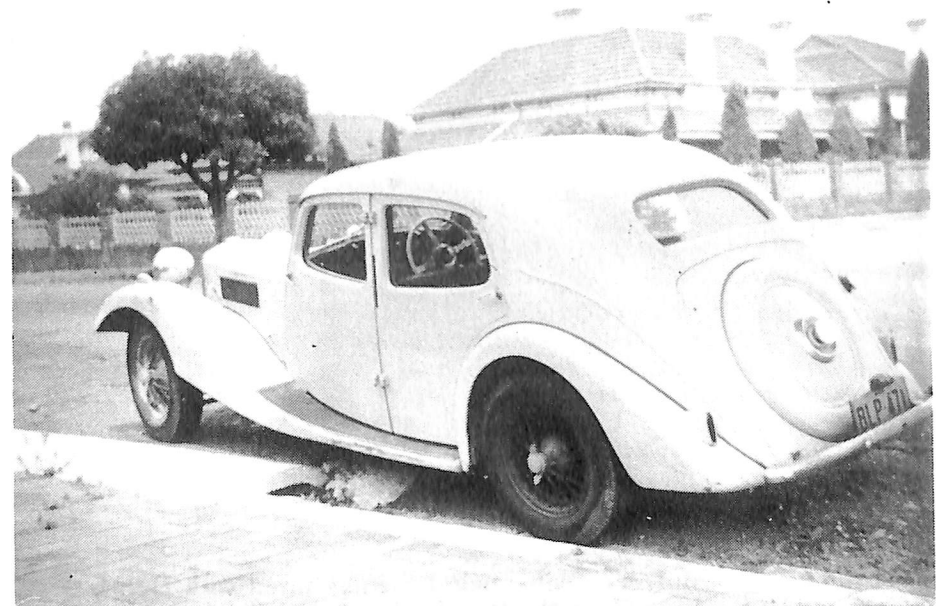
Now to the cars in the Motor Show picture we sent you. We know Diskon and Molyneux held a contract to assemble Rileys for Williams/Hill/Cameron. They cannot of course be sure if any of their products were on display on that stand. Unfortunately Australians in the 1920/30’s had some bad habits when selling cars (or anything else for that matter) one of them being CREATIVE ADVERTISING.”

The letter concludes with a statement that the writer has been able to contact a daughter of Bill Diskon and also the wife of Williams of Williams/Hill/Cameron the Riley Distributors. He very kindly promises to send any further information these two contacts may be able to produce.

(To Alan Chambers we offer a very big THANK-YOU — Ed.)

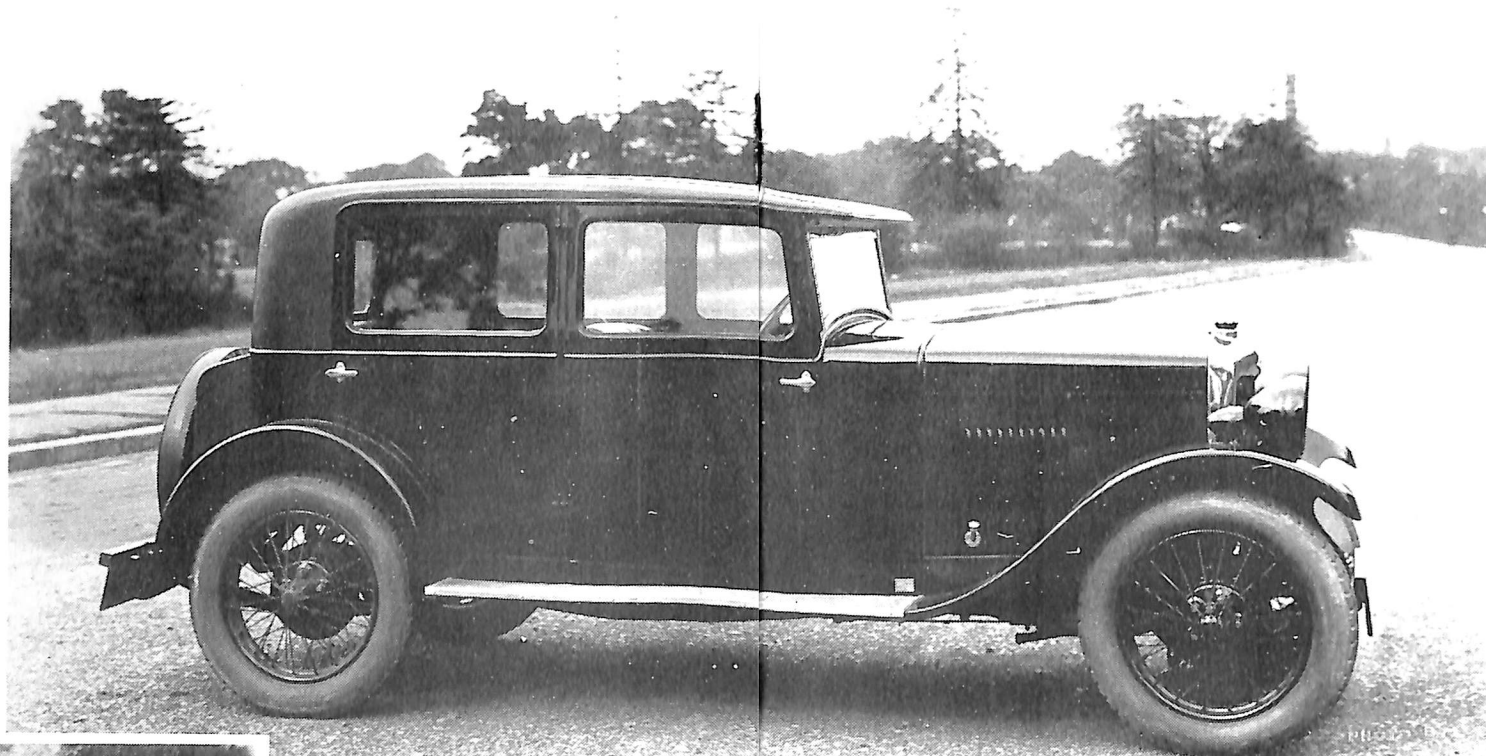


The Riley Stand at the 1929 Sydney M.T.A. Motor Show.
(Photo acknowledgement: Classic and Old Car Enthusiast Magazine)



A D&M bodied car photographed in 1960.

(Photo acknowledgement: Peter Witt)



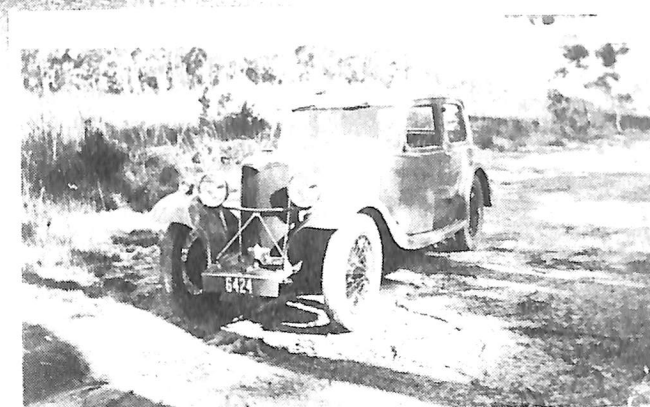
A special body panelled in aluminium on a Riley '9' chassis. (Reputed to be lighter than a single seater). Note body plate at foot of scuttle panel.

(Photo acknowledgement: Classic and Old Car Enthusiast magazine)



Gladys and Bob Molyneux with their 1 1/2 Riley fitted with D&M Kestrel type body.

(Photo acknowledgement: Classic and Old Car Enthusiast magazine)



A close-coupled four-seat saloon body produced by D&M in 1933.

(Photo acknowledgement: Classic and Old Car Enthusiast magazine)

BODY DESIGN

Through the good offices of Dave Nortcliff the Editor was put in touch with David Williams, now living in retirement in Coventry. The two Daves met at an Autojumble and from their conversation it emerged that David Williams used to work for "The Riley".

Although he was not old enough to have had contact with Register type Rileys, he did know Harry Rush, and in a letter to the Editor he writes:

"During the war I was given a job by the late Harry Rush with Riley . . . in the Drawing Office, which was dealing with sub-contract parts. In a side office was a draughtsman, Bert Holmes, drawing a new car on a full size layout, communing with bodymakers behind locked doors, and nearing breakdown when his tobacco supply was subject to wartime shortages. This I could see and comprehend, but with my lowly status I was not privy to a job contravening Essential Work Orders, nor to the fascinating art of skinline development. Body draughtsmen were still very much in rapport with model makers in timber, though for my generation of Body Engineers steel presswork was the expanding technology, and stylists became separated into their own little world. Nevertheless my experience allows me to state with certainty that whilst a body draughtsman can design a credible body (as one has done for competitions) no mock-up work would be sanctioned until management had called for numerous sketches to select one, or bits from this and that. Then when you consider that even at school I considered myself competent to judge style (and so no doubt did you), can you imagine anyone in a Director's chair will not enjoy influencing style, exuding "I know what I like" without fear of contradiction (which might happen in technical matters) when the mock-up takes shape." Which gives us something to think about.

HEAT RANGES OF SPARKING PLUGS

by Ted Broadhurst

Some people swear that Champion plugs are best, and others say they are useless. The same is said of Lodge, K.L.G., and probably every other plug that has ever been invented. The truth is that, provided one uses the right plug for the job in hand, ALL are good. But how does one know which is the right plug?

First, by the makers recommendation, if you have the handbook, and if that particular plug is still manufactured at all. But often with collectors cars, motorcycles, stationary engines, etc., etc., this information is lacking, and this is where some understanding of types can help.

The physical size is the first criterion. Starting from the largest of the common sizes, the threads are 7/8" SAE often wrongly described as 22mm, then 18mm, 14mm, 12mm and 10mm, all quite common metric threads except the first, which is American in origin. There are various thread lengths, known as the "reach", and 2 common varieties of

seating, flat, with a gasket usually copper asbestos; and taper, without gasket. There are some other less common types too, but usually the people that use them do know exactly what they want.

But then there is the mysterious "heat value". Let us try to dispel the mystery. The purpose of any spark plug is to convert an electrical impulse at high voltage into a spark, at precisely the correct moment in the cycle, to cause the mixture to start burning. Please note, NOT "to explode". It is very important indeed that the mixture burns fast, but in a controlled way, and explosion results in the phenomena called "pinking", always undesirable and sometimes even destructive.

Since the plug is always at the centre of the burning, it tends to become very hot indeed. The outside is in direct contact with the cylinder head, and is cooled by whatever cools the head. But the cooling of the centre is very indirect, via the insulator and its seal, to the outer casing, and thence only to the head. So the centre part is critical.

If it gets too hot, then it may become hot enough to fire the mixture without waiting for the spark, which makes the timing all wrong. Perhaps the engine will continue to run when switched off. So the centre must not be allowed to get too hot.

But fuel, other deposits, and especially lubricating oil, do get splashed on to the plug, and would soon foul it sufficiently to prevent a spark at all, except that the plug is so designed as to run at a temperature which will burn off such unwanted fouling.

Various engines in themselves tend to run at quite widely varying temperatures, and even similar engines used for different purposes may vary. Yet the plug centre in all must run at more or less the same temperature, hot enough to burn off any fouling, yet not too hot to cause pre-ignition. This is the reason for plugs of different "heat values", and the terms used in description are unfortunately not very consistent.

A plug designed to perform correctly in an engine which tends to run rather on the cool side, either by reason of its type of construction, or the use to which it is put, is known as a "SOFT" plug, or a "HOT RUNNING" plug. Hot running because if one thinks of the plug itself, it will try to retain its heat, to sufficient extent to prevent fouling. This category includes cars which are never driven hard, marine engines always fed with cold water from sea or river, tractors which always have very efficient radiators due to their slow speed, etc.

The converse happens with an engine which tends to run hot, possibly due to being normally worked hard. This will need a "HARD" plug, otherwise known as a "COLD RUNNING" plug, to combat the pre-ignition tendency. Examples are air cooled engines, racing engines, etc.

But there are not just 2 kinds, hard and soft. There is a whole range between the hardest and the softest, which gives the opportunity to suit the plug to the engine and to its use. If one type tends to foul, then try the next softer grade in the same physical size. This can often be useful in prolonging the life of an old engine which is tending to throw more oil into the combustion chamber than it really should. If

you don't want to thrash it, use soft plugs to alleviate fouling.

If a certain engine suffers pre-ignition, or "running-on", then a harder plug type may be the answer. Please note, I say MAY be, and not WILL be, because wrong plugs are only one possible cause of these symptoms.

Most plug manufacturers do provide equivalent lists to other makes, and used with some care they can be very valuable. But they are not foolproof, and one severe reservation can be with the suggestions for replacements of obsolete types. Sometimes the suggestion is the nearest currently manufactured, but it is not a true replacement. This is where some understanding can be a very great help.

Apart from all of the foregoing, there are plugs with one, two, or three earth electrodes, projecting noses, copper cores, and various other exotica. In their proper place, there is but little doubt that each will behave excellently. For the likes of us, dealing with engines long since forgotten by their designers, provided that we can get the physical size correct, and understand the variation in heat ranges, we are well on the way to successful sparking plugs. Do watch the projecting noses on some types — they are not always counted as part of the "reach".

Finally, detachable and non-detachable types. Why did both exist? Going back to the 1920s and 1930s, almost all plugs were "detachable". That is to say, they could be taken to pieces, the insulator and centre electrode being removed from the outer case, for cleaning purposes. Not only could be, but frequently were, as plug fouling was then far more common than it is today.

During the 1930s, non-detachable plugs started to appear. At first they were not popular with users of older cars, but before long there was little choice. The manufacturer's story was that the seal between the centre assembly and the outer case was so critical that it should not be disturbed. The fact that the whole job was cheaper did not figure in the public announcements, though it may well have done so far as charges to car manufacturers were concerned. Retail price of spark plugs remained at 5/- each, almost regardless of type, for very many years, though even in pre-war days there was a steady but gentle inflation.

Detachable plugs are still loved by users of old historic engines and vehicles, and can be found at auto-jumbles, and stockists of collectors' parts, but so far as ordinary types are concerned, are no longer manufactured.

PUSH

An elderly man recalls that when a boy he lived near a motor car factory "north of Watford."

When new cars left the factory they had to ascend a steep hill before reaching the main road. Boys used to hang around the factory in the certain knowledge that they would be paid 1d. a time for helping to push the new cars up the hill.

No — the cars were not Rileys!



Two pictures taken on the 1932 R.A.C. Rally
Miss Riley, Miss Pinder and Miss Carter taking refreshment just
outside Torquay (top) and in the Hotel yard (bottom).
(Photo acknowledgement: Mrs. Jarred)

FORTY YEARS WITH 44 T 101

(Conclusion of the story by A. K. Baker)

It was clear that 44T 101 could not be left in disorder whether or not it went with us to Queensland. The only pressing problem was the engine rebuild and this was assigned to Ian Gladstone's Blue Diamond Services. In July 1985 whilst I was back in U.K. finally winding-up the pay-packet, the nicely prepared engine was slave-bolted into the still grotty chassis.

There was some instinctive guidance in our move to Queensland — we elected to ship those possessions that had given us pleasure for many years. Therefore, a second sweeping-up consignment consisted of KV in a container with all its bits and enough workshop equipment to get the act together. From ship's hold to the top of our one in five drive on the Obi Obi road, is a distance of 90 kilometers or six long weeks when unions are in dispute. In contrast, winching misjudgement by private enterprise, decanted KV the final stage in about six short milliseconds. However, with no loss or significant damage and with our Queensland registrar, Ian Henderson, having subscribed to a smooth passage through Customs, any misgivings quickly evaporated. It is said that bonded warehouse security did not prevent one or two Brisbane Rileyists from having a "sticky beak" (8) at the newly arrived sample from U.K.

To get 44T 101 rolling again has been the immediate target and refurbishment is going better than was anticipated. Most of those earlier indiscretions have been righted and KV is on the way back to near-original configuration. The aim is to enjoy again that stylish family car enhanced by its special place in the "Kestrel" story and to attend our first Riley function together. The Australian National Rally is programmed for April 17th - 19th, 1987 and it is Queensland's turn to host the event at Ipswich and Brisbane. Unless some exceptional elixir appears on the shelves there will not be that many replays of the National for me. Not so KV — she should be set for another sighting of Halley's Comet which shone so benignly through the workshop window last March.

For the first time ever it has been possible to study 44T 101 objectively whilst doing the things that need to be done. Previously it was mostly a case of back on the road by Monday. Therefore, whether justified or not, I have indulged in the probability of her being one on her own yet the first of many. Scrawled on the back of the off side door trim panel is "KV 2481" which endorses the works number listing in David Styles "As Old as the Industry". One can imagine the drive to bring into being a new concept of body lines — fresh ideas being thrown around, old practices and current components incorporated; chippies shaping to chalk lines, a panel beater fairing in — "a bit off here, Bert" — all the motions that go hand in hand with one-off building. That prototype picture with the rear mudguard tips flared in and somebody else's bonnet just for the photograph says it all.

To monitor construction in the hands of their craftsmen for sure the Riley family would be around with the design staff, rationalising

what they saw with what had been schemed. For sure there would be those from gaffer to apprentice who, as the new project grew would sneak a preview, slip broody like into the mock-up seat and go through the same motions, waggle the wheel, try the handbrake, jiggle the gear lever, scan the dash and shove on the pedals. Notes would be taken, sketches made and flattering photographs contrived with a Motor Show rapidly closing in — and all who had a part to play together with their principals, the Riley brothers — would not their hands have been many times on KV's steering wheel?

I suspect lessons were quickly learned during the test runs of 44T 101 with harsh practical and commercial decisions having to be taken. Awkward two door access would not be adequate if the "Kestrel" were to be described as a saloon although "shell" strength — demonstrated by KV's durability over 55 years — might be diminished. Headgear other than a flat cap demands a fully open sunshine roof and a Twiggy format is a pre-requisite for dignified entry into the rear quarters. Extra doors for a start might keep the salesman out of the bar.

44T 101 had the stamp of a sports saloon and when one contemplates other marques whose later successes stemmed from an adventurous profile one could debate whether there might have been potential for the "Kestrel" as originally visualised. There might have been some vigorous arguments at the time.

It is not easy to fully understand or convey to others what KV means to our family. She was always there as our children grew up and she is known to our grandchildren. She is totally memorable to old friends and frequently figures in conversations with those we meet along the way. This "inanimate" KV has made a mark we cannot erase and as if to affirm her place in our future she has again become a legitimate road user. Sailing through a roadworthiness test this morning of the 6th February 1987 she is now accepted as an historic vehicle in Queensland.

The odometer rolled for the first time in twenty three years from 00660 to 00702 and those forty two miles of Blackall range called up long neglected skills and muscles. Slick gear changes are, for the present, gallingly elusive and the seduction of power steering and a softer mattress has taken its toll. The doors rattle and the engine beats are distinct but with a real radiator ahead, the sunshine roof slid back, windows and ventilators open, the magic is there. KV has not changed over the years — it is for the junior partner to readjust.

Notes:

- (1) Queniborough, Leicestershire. An historic village with a church that is worth a visit for its spire and a pub affectionately known as "Stubby's". Prince and Johnson's buildings on the Syston — Rearsby road made way for development some years ago.
- (2) At Tree Tops on the Obi Obi Road and not far from Mapleton Falls.
- (3) Two years into married life we were living at my parent's farm house "The Bushes" at Gaddesby, which is on a straight line between Leicester and Melton Mowbray — just about halfway. A lovely village

with a very fine old church and "The Cheney Arms". See page 194 of the "AA Book of British Villages".

(4) This "Kestrel" nine had 4 doors, flat running boards, slightly odd rear sweep, twin carbs and violent needle tremor on the oil pressure gauge. The latter was eventually traced to the replacement of the air bell by a George VI halfpenny soldered over the union. It was a very nice motor car and sadly all we have left is the mutilated halfpenny.

(5) Christchurch aerodrome was close by Mudeford then in Hampshire — now in Dorset and submerged in housing. Set up as a shadow factory by the Airspeed/De Havilland association, the main project from 1944 was the Ambassador air liner later known in BEA service as the "Elizabethan" class. Refer to "Airspeed Aircraft since 1931" by H. A. Taylor. Published by Putnam (SBN 370 001109). Readers of Nevil Shute novels will find references to his connections with the original Airspeed Company.

(6) Unfortunately, on his first long trip — north to Newcastle — in a closer encounter than advisable, the prominent knock-on hub cap of the Invicta somehow severed the rear mudguard from a Daimler limousine near Market Harborough. In Northumberland the following day a rush of blood and a skittish back end cost Mr. Bradshaw 20 yds of roadside fencing before the farmer would let him out of his field.

(7) The Auster Flying Club at Rearsby was encouraged and partly financed by the Auster Aircraft Company. One especially memorable incident at this time was the club Auster which took off pilotless being swung on an "accidental" throttle setting. Being trimmed for take-off (and therefore, glide) it climbed and circled for what seemed like an eternity. It then descended elegantly and had it not been for a tree sided without fore-thought about 8 miles way and a hundred years previously, observers (including a critical police presence) alleged that the landing would have been faultless. KV was one of the tracking vehicles (after the driver emerged from the air raid shelter).

(8) For those unversed in the specialities of the Australian language, "sticky beaking" is the practice of being inquisitive. An interesting nursery cant phrase that has developed around this word is the set answer to a child's question "What's that?" — "Flypaper for a sticky beak!" For those wishing to broaden their knowledge in this direction try "The Australian Language" by Sidney J. Baker (no relation), published by the Currawong Press and distributed in U.K. by Hutchinsons (ISBN 009 1363608).

Editorial footnote:

Chris Treen was John Treen's brother.

GENERAL DATA

RILEY "KESTREL" KV 2481 (at 6th Feb. 1987)

Date of original registration: 9th November 1932
1st Registered ownership: Boon & Porter
2nd Registered ownership: Major R. E. Clarke to 1944
3rd Registered ownership: A. K. Baker, 1944
Chassis No: 44T 101, Engine No: 14T 101
Model: "Kestrel" Saloon
Original colour: Black & Green

Riley Register U.K. No: B 827
Queensland Historic Plate No: 1457
Mileage: 1932 - 1944: 22,000
1944 - 1964: 78,660
Wheelbase — 9'5½" Track — 3'11¼"
O/A Length — 13'2" O/A Width — 4'8½"
Shoulder width at front seats — 3'11"
Back width at rear seats — 3'2"
Maximum Head Room — 3'2"
Wheels and Tyres — 18" x 4.50 4.75 — Six Stud.
Gear Box: 4 Speed Silent third with remote extension, central short lever in gate, reverse lockout.
Gear ratios: 1st gear 21.5/1 : 2nd gear 13.13/1 : 3rd gear 8.13/1 : Top (Direct) — 5.63/1 : Reverse 21.5/1.
Steering: 2 turns lock to lock S/W O/D 17½"
Steering column rake: 22° ± 2°
Engine: 6 cyl./60.3mm x 95.2mm/1633cc/13.53 h.p.

The engine stamped T 101 identifies with the Mark 4 series model M in most respects. According to the original log book 14T 101 was the engine number with bore 60.3mm and horsepower 13.53. The picture caption in "The Book of the Riley" describes the incomplete vehicle as the "prototype Kestrel body on the 12/6 chassis. In "As Old as the Industry" the chassis listings show 44T 101 as KV 2481 (factory registered car) Kestrel 12/6 two door. There would seem to be no contradictions here for in general terms the new Kestrel body was built on what was recognised as the 12/6 chassis. As a prototype it could well be that the decision on which engine to deploy would be taken at a late stage of construction. Furthermore, the installation of a brand new engine might be unlikely in view of immediate road tests and demonstration runs. It seems more logical that a run-in factory unit would be used and a token number T101 allocated.

THE ANTILL TRIP

The Editor has been shown photo-copies of two letters.

The first is on the letterheading of C. C. Wakefield & Co. Ltd., of 44 St. George's Terrace, Perth and confirms the departure of Antill's Riley from Freemantle Post Office at 4.30 pm on an attempt to lower the Perth to Sydney motor car record. This is dated 22 April 29.

The second is on the letterheading of the Sydney Bicycle and Motor Club Ltd. of Wynyard Square, Sydney and confirms the arrival of the Riley at Sydney General Post Office at 12.30½ pm on 28 April 29.

Whilst these letters may not be of especial interest in themselves, it is worth noting how confirmation of Antill's record was established.

The certificate of departure — strangely — refers to "Mr. Antill's single-seater Riley '9' touring car."

A HARD LUCK STORY

The luck in some hard luck stories is considerably harder than in others. For the ultimate in hardness how about this story of the owner of a Riley '9' tourer in Australia?

A rebuild not being completed in time for the car to be driven to the National Riley Rally the man decided to take the car on a trailer. A wheel came off the trailer, then the tyre came off the other trailer wheel, then the tourer's "lid" became detached from the screen and blew back, breaking the hood bows.

The final blow came when the tourer was being loaded for the journey home — a rear axle broke.

A report says that he won the hard luck trophy without really trying.

TOUR OF IRELAND – 1987 (In a 50 year old Riley)

by Rodney Shortell

Most of you will doubtless have heard of the Circuit of Ireland Rally, which is a well known sporting event staged annually in the Emerald Isle. Essentially it is a modern event, which by the very nature of the sport of Rallying, is over in a fairly short space of time.

I decided earlier this year that for our summer holidays, my wife and I would undertake a 'Circuit of Ireland', but by a slightly different mode of transport and at a much more stately progress! The vehicle we were to travel in was my 1937 Riley Adelphi, and the main reason for such a trip was to celebrate its 50th Birthday in some practical way, as well as taking a well earned break!

DZ 3737 is a well known example of this six-light saloon in Ulster Riley Club circles and because of this and its good condition, I purchased it from a members brother some three years ago. The car was (and still is) very original and had been run fairly continuously since 1937, except for a short period in the sixties.

I had decided to embark on a few months remedial work on the car before setting off as there were some items which needed attention, like the brakes, lights and exhaust system. I started to work at the car in earnest during late March, which left me three months in order to get the car ready, as we had booked off the first 2 weeks in July. My goal was to have the car MOT'd, taxed and polished at least a week before our departure.

However as I started into the work, more problem areas appeared and the list grew ever longer! Towards the end of the period I was working most nights and weekends in order to be ready, but by dint of sheer hard work, some help from fellow Ulster Riley Club members and some good luck, I had the car ready the night before the MOT test, which incidentally was the day before we were due to go away!

It was all a bit of a rush, but the goal was mainly achieved in that the MOT was passed (despite some remarks from the examiner about worn kingpins and steering) and I even managed to get some Road Tax on the afternoon of the MOT test day.

We eventually set off on our journey on Sunday 28th June, packed up with suitcases, folding chairs, cool box, and of course vital spares for the car such as hoses, fanbelts, bulbs, etc. Also carried was spare fuel, a good quantity of oil and a reasonable tool kit. However I was fairly confident that the work that had been undertaken would minimise any use for the tools and spares, but I knew to leave them out would be inadvisable. This decision turned out to be correct.

The first leg of the journey was made from Belfast to Dunfanaghy in Co. Donegal, which is situated in the North West corner of Ireland. Despite this location, most people from Northern Ireland who cross the border into Co. Donegal, described this action as "going across into the South", this meaning the South (or Republic) of Ireland. We have some friends who live in this beautiful but rugged part of Ireland, and they had asked us to stay for a few days before moving on in our

anticlockwise progress of the Island.

The car performed faultlessly during the three hour drive to Donegal, which was reassuring as it was the first real distance that I had travelled in the car since all the work had been completed. I had taken the precaution of installing a modern electrical temperature gauge to replace the inoperative alcohol tubed standard instrument. The car had never boiled on previous runs and normally ran fairly cool, so I had fitted a thermostat to get the car to run a little hotter. In any event the needle stayed just in the 'normal' area, only rising to 'Hot' when ascending long hills.

Mind you, the temperature inside the car was quite warm due to a new carpet being fitted by a fellow member the night before departure. This also had the benefit of reducing certain draughts and mechanical noise as well as looking very tidy. My mother-in-laws ex-bathroom carpet will never look quite the same!

During our 2 days with our hosts in Co. Donegal, a visit was made to a local Garage man, a certain Mr Eddy Ferry, who had a collection of old and elderly cars. Of interest to me were 3 RM's and a recently acquired '37 Falcon, imported from England, and allegedly worth £3,000!

After saying farewell to our hosts, we proceeded on to Donegal town to take on some supplies. When we returned to the car, a man who was parked beside us in a Toyota van, wound his window down and proceeded to tell us about a faithful '36 Falcon he had owned during his student days in England. This occurrence was to become a regular feature of our trip, as the sight of an old car obviously stirred up some happy memories with a number of middle aged and elderly folk.

Our first calamity was a puncture which happened just outside Ballina in Co. Mayo. The changing of the offending wheel would have been much easier except for a really inefficient modern siccior jack, which had a badly bent handle that would have tried the strength of Sampson to turn!

The reason for the puncture (and others that we were to have) was the absolutely diabolical state of the roads in the Republic which are a constant combination of humps and hollows, pot holes and amateur road mending. The punctured tyre had split, and simultaneously on entering a vicious bump in the road, had ripped the tube. However, a tyre depot was soon found and a patch and gaiter were fitted. This so called 'repair' was to give trouble at a later juncture . . .

Our first Bed and Breakfast stop was Achill Island in Co. Mayo, which is a beautiful and scenic place in the West of Ireland, blown and dashed by the Atlantic winds and waves. During our evening meal at a small hotel, a procession of tourists and local people stopped to gaze or touch the car, which was parked majestically outside the front door.

After some days touring the rugged West of Ireland we passed through Galway City and on down the Co. Clare coastline, with the car performing very well despite consuming vast quantities of expensive Irish petrol, at IR£2.70 per gallon! The engine also burnt half a litre of oil every 2 days which I thought was fairly acceptable.

Our road progress was interrupted by a short sea crossing via the car Ferry at Killimer. This journey only took 20 mins and was very smooth, which was a very pleasant change from being thrown around the pot holed roads! Once landed on the other side at Tarbert, we found ourselves in Co. Kerry, which in my view is one of the most pretty counties in Ireland.

We decided to take things a little more slowly (!) now that we were in 'real' Ireland, and stop off more regularly at places of interest. This we did on the Dingle Peninsular, where we stayed 2 days at a very nice Farmhouse B+B. This is a Gaelic speaking area, full of Celtic charm and tradition and I felt we were in the right vehicle and frame of mind to enjoy its scenery and general aura.

The lakes of Killarney are a popular feature in any tour of Ireland, so we decided to make a slight detour inland to circumnavigate this area. Killarney is also famed for its profusion of jaunting cars and horses which can take you on short trips of the area at extortionate prices. One favourite tourist spot is known as the Gap of Dunloe which is a very dramatic mountain pass to the west of Killarney, negotiated mainly by jaunting cars and horses on a very rutted track.

I had not been up or down this pass before, so was in ignorance as to the 'road' condition which clearly was unsuitable for vehicular traffic. However, on a very hot and clear Sunday morning, we came through the pass from the top side, which did not have signs of any description to either prohibit cars from going into the pass or even direct you to where it started!

As we started our bumpy and tortuous descent, we passed a number of jaunting cars, filled mainly with eleated American tourists, but it was clear from the stony expressions on the drivers faces that our presence was not welcome. This was made even more apparent at the start of the pass, at a place called Kate Kearns Cottage, where the horsemen gathered in a group and wouldn't let us through for a while. I then caught sight of a prominent sign advising of the unsuitability of the road for vehicular traffic! At this juncture I had my number taken by one of the horse men who no doubt was going to report me to the local Gardai (police).

Having felt very pleased with this major accomplishment we rejoined the Kerry Coast road at Kilorglin, which is the start of the crescent shaped tourist coast road known as the "Ring of Kerry". A stop was called for, and where better in the blistering heat than a good beach.

Rosebeigh Strand is reputed to be 3 miles long and it was pleasant to park up and relax for a while overlooking the sea. We decided to be devils and go for an invigorating swim and when we returned we were met by an elderly man who seemed knowledgeable about older cars and Rileys in particular. He had owned an MG J2 and a Wolseley Hornet sports special and gave a graphic account of both vehicles history. It obviously made his day to be able to recount his life with cars to a (younger) fellow enthusiast.

The puncture that was 'repaired' in Co. Mayo, eventually gave up near Valentia Island and another cursing and swearing session

developed due to the virtual collapse of the siccor jack! However, after about half an hour stuck underneath the car with different make shift 'handles', the wheel was eventually changed.

After Kerry we headed to the most South Westerly point in Ireland, Mizen Head which would be Irelands equivalent to Lands End in Cornwall. The weather at this rocky headland was glorious so an extended stay in this area was called for. A very pleasant 2 days was spent in and around the sandy beaches and coves of this most beautiful part of West Cork.

The next leg of our trip from Mizen Head to Waterford, was to prove the most frustrating due to some mechanical problems, but thankfully they were overcome allowing our journey to continue without too much delay.

The first problem to occur was an exhaust manifold leak which was steadily getting louder until the car sounded like it had no exhaust system at all. A close examination of the manifold at the roadside revealed that a brass blanking plug in the 'hot spot' outlet had come loose hence allowing the escape of exhaust fumes and noise. An attempt was made to temporarily cure the problem by an application of instant gasket around the plug, but the ambient temperature of the manifold proved to be too hot and the din recommenced.

A visit to an Engineering Shop in Youghal was made in order that the plug could be welded up by a proficient cast iron welder, but unfortunately the welding did not "take" to the old type cast iron manifold and this new "plug" became loose also after about 20 miles. As a final resort, at our stop at Waterford, I generously smeared some exhaust putty in and around the loose manifold plug and thankfully the repair has lasted to this day!

During our two day stay in Waterford City with some friends, we decided to visit some racing Riley enthusiasts that we had heard about in Kilkenny, some 25 miles away.

One of these enthusiasts who incidentally ran a Nissan dealership, owned a very presentable Riley 'Brooklands' racing car, which had been owned, amongst other people by Billy Cotton the band leader, who was a keen competition driver pre war. The other enthusiast was a qualified chemist, who unfortunately was too busy to show me some of his Rileys, but was to prove invaluable the next day . . .

Sunday July 12th dawned a glorious hot day, and it was indeed a great pity that we were to make our way back this day through Dublin to Belfast and leave this good weather.

Two of our hosts wished to have a short drive in the car before we left that morning, so a short expedition to the paper shop was made. One of my passengers had not dressed yet, so he sat in the back in his pyjamas perusing through the Sunday papers. About three miles from the house the car was negotiating a steep hill when it suddenly went on to 3 cylinders. A cursory check of the spark plug caps revealed that all were secured, so I knew instinctively that it had to be a blown cvlinder head gasket, as this problem had occurred once before.

My pride was naturally dented as we limped home, barely able to

negotiate the steep drive way to our hosts bungalow. Thoughts of abandoning the car or going home for a new gasket flooded into my mind, as I had not brought a head gasket with me.

Upon our return I decided to strip down the engine to confirm my diagnosis, and to see if a temporary repair could be made. After some hours of anxious dismantling, the cylinder head was removed to reveal a broken head gasket between the third and fourth cylinder. The only solace I could draw was that my diagnosis WAS correct but unfortunately the 'Halite' type gasket was destroyed beyond repair upon removal.

There then followed many frantic phone calls to various Riley contacts in Northern and Southern Ireland and England to secure a replacement gasket in order to get us home. One of the people I phoned was the Chemist from Kilkenny, Kieran White whom I had met the previous day. He thought he could not help me but phoned back two hours later to say he had found a used gasket and would this do?

'Any port in a storm' goes the old adage, so this gasket was duly collected from Kilkenny, where we had a chance to view a number of Riley cars in the throes of restoration. This Chemist, as befits his profession, appeared to be very particular and knowledgeable about the restoration of Rileys in particular and it was all thanks to him that we had the means to get home.

Upon our return to Waterford, I set to the task of rebuilding the engine to see if the gasket would hold. I took the precaution of heating up the copper gasket in the oven for a short period of time in order that it would be more ductile and ease the 'bedding in' of the gasket.

I worked at the engine for about two hours until an evening meal interrupted the proceedings. However I had reached the crucial and final stages of the repair, water filling and testing, so the meal was convened without me.

As I filled the radiator, I could hear water dribbling under the car somewhere and to my horror found that it was escaping out of the cylinder head gasket. My only hope was that the 'gap' would be taken up when the engine warmed up and expanded.

This proved to be correct (thankfully) and a test run was



The offending plug.

(Photo acknowledgement: Rodney Shortell)

negotiated without problem or much misfiring. Thankfully now we could leave under our own steam with our pride restored. I joined the dinner party, some what relieved and in a much better frame of mind to enjoy the remainder of our extended stay.

Our return home to N. Ireland was put off until the following day in order to allow time for contingency plans, etc., but as it turned out our triumphant return (well nearly) was uneventful apart from a tyre blow out, close by the now infamous Slane Castle, the scene of many Rock Concerts.

When we eventually arrived home, I had mixed feelings of relief and pride. All things being considered, the car had done very well despite its 50 years, and the 1600 mile round trip returned a petrol consumption of 24 mpg.

It certainly was an unusually holiday and one that we will remember vividly for many years to come.

Editorial footnote:

The registration number of Rodney Shortell's Adelphi is DZ.3737. The registration number of his new V.W. Jetta is DDZ.3737. Coincidence, or planning or just good luck? one wonders.



A road which is unsuitable for vehicular traffic really should have a sign at each end!

(Photo acknowledgement: Rodney Shortell)

CLUBS FOR RILEYS

On page 33 of the September Bulletin the Editor referred to “. . . what is really the West Australia Branch of the Riley Car Club of Western Australia” — a statement which was made at the request of an Australian member.

Peter Hocking has written about this statement, and the Editor is pleased to publish his comments in the hope that it can stand as a definitive statement on the subject. Here is what he writes:

“There are two errors here; firstly, **one** of the Australian Riley clubs is the Riley **Motor** Club of Australia which has area branches in New South Wales, Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and South Australia. Incidentally, the New Zealand Riley club is called the Riley **Car** Club of New Zealand. Secondly, the **other** Australian Riley Club is the Riley Motor Club of Western Australia Inc., which was founded in 1966 by West Australian Bob Hadaway who has since rejoined after many years absence.

I joined the Riley Motor Club of Western Australia in 1969 and have been a continuous member (and still am) of that Club ever since, and at no stage has the RMCWA ever been an area branch of the RMCA although we do enjoy excellent relations with them, particularly with spares and in more recent years, with national rallies.

I should be grateful if you would correct this misunderstanding; my copy of David Styles' book is still in Australia, but I think I am correct in saying that the same mistake is made there too.”

MAINLY FROM THE RILEY ANGLE

Coverage of events in this feature was extremely “thin” during 1987 because for a number of reasons those who had undertaken to report on certain events were unable to produce any copy.

The Editor now asks for members to cover RAC authorised events in 1988, submitting their reports within a fortnight of the event. Please volunteer quickly stating the event or events you would like to write about. Offers will be accepted on a “first come” basis.

It would be a pity to let this feature die as it forms a record of the continuing participation of Rileys in motor sport — but die it will if volunteers do not come forward.

AT THE SALES

The Auctioneer's catalogue contained this reference to one of the lots — a Thrupp and Maberley bodied PVT car:

“There is obviously more room for investigation into the car's colourful history.”

In a comment on the catalogue a motoring magazine said:

“May we suggest there may be room for investigation into this particular car before the history.”

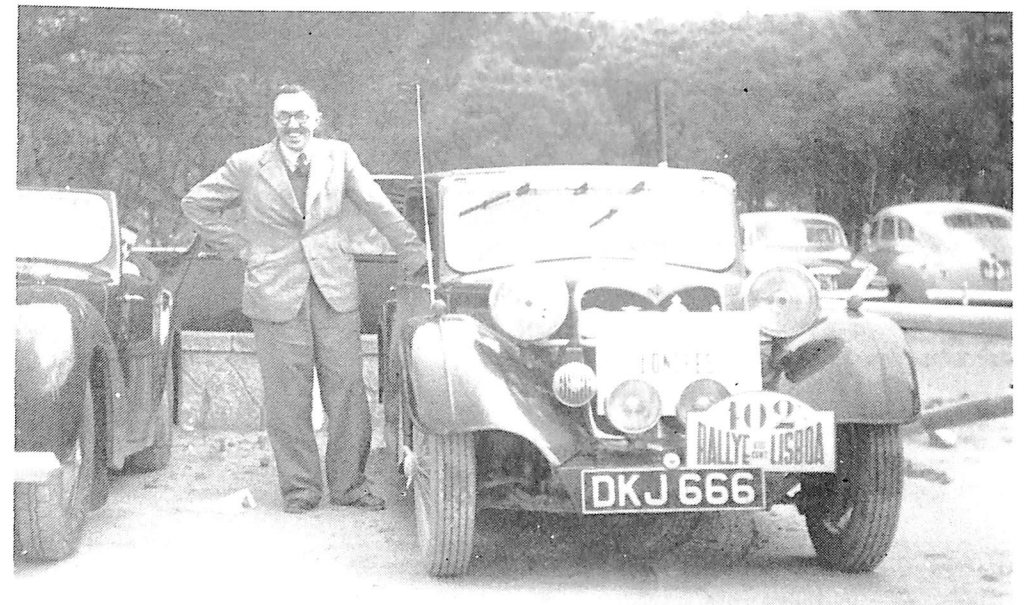
AN INTERESTING KESTREL-SPRITE

When writing about the H.K.R. Special, Gordon Hayward also enclosed some pictures of a Kestrel-Sprite.

Of this car he says:

“DKJ.666 was my father's car. I think 1938. He had promised it to me hoping to have a Riley 16, but war work had started at the factory so my father was without a Riley for the first time for years.”

The pictures show the car on the Lands End Trial, and with its ‘Premier award’ plaque at the end of the Lisbon Rally (with Joe Kempe-Roberts alongside). Both events were in 1947.



RILEYS IN THE AUSTRALIAN G.P.

Rees Mackay has been delving into the history of the Australian Grand Prix, and has prepared an interesting table showing the winning cars down the years and also details of Riley participation, with interesting notes.

- 1928 Winning car — Austin 7
Rileys — Riley '9'. J. W. Williamson. Finished 12th and 2nd class B (slightly lowered and fitted with pointed tail. Damaged when rolled in practice. Seized gearbox in race, repaired on circuit).
- 1929 Winning car — Bugatti 37A
Rileys — Riley '9'. J. Williamson DNF (Entered by Riley distributors. broke oil pipe on lap 24).
Riley Redwing. M. Rouse DNS.
- 1930 Winning car — Bugatti 37A
Rileys — Brooklands. J. Wall. DNF
Brooklands. D. Antill (of Perth/Sydney light car record fame) DNF
Brooklands. W. Johnson DNF
Brooklands. Barney Dentry. 7th, 1st, class B. (wife Bess as riding mechanic. Lay 2nd for most of race until delayed by valve trouble).
- 1931 Winning car — Bugatti 39
Rileys — Brooklands. Dentry. 4th & 1st in class (considered fitting blower but didn't)
Brooklands. Joan Richmond. 5th.
- 1932 Winning car — Bugatti 37A
Rileys — Brooklands. W. Williamson. 9th
Brooklands. Dentry. 10th (last). Car used Ulster engine provided by Factory. Lubrication problem in practice resulted in radio message to UK. Problem persisted during race.
- 1933 Winning car — Brooklands. Bill Thompson. (Works car tended by factory mechanics en-route to New Zealand)
- 1934 Winning car — Singer le Mans
Rileys — Brooklands. Dentry. 8th (last) (two long stops in race, one for plugs, other for bonnet repairs).
4 seater. Williamson. DNF. (Said to be Joan Richmond's Monte Carlo car).
- 1935 Winning car — MG. 'P'
Rileys — Brooklands. Dentry. 5th. (car now radically streamlined) Imp. Williamson. DNF. (Gearbox failure lap 8) (Off pace in spite of special equipment)
Brooklands. Wreford. DNF. (Oil pump trouble lap 5). (Said to be Trevaux's 1934 le Mans car).
- 1936 7 Winning car — MG. 'P'
Rileys — Brooklands. Dentry. 5th. (Fitted with ex-Eyston factory motor)
Imp. O'Leary.
- 1938 Winning car — E.R.A.
Rileys — Brooklands. Dentry. 16th (Two early Pit stops)
IMP. Thane. DNF (Crankshaft broke on lap 3)
- 1939 Winning car — M.G. 'TA'
Rileys — Brooklands. Downing. DNF (Completed 7 laps)
- 1947 Winning car — M.G. 'TC'
Rileys — *Dixon 2L. Bartlet. DNF (Stopped with no oil pressure. Later found guage fault)
Imp. Myers. 12th
- 1948 Winning car — B.M.W. '328'
Rileys — Imp. Head. 10th
*Dixon 2L. Bartlet. DNF (Magneto failed on lap 32)
- 1949 Winning car — Delahave
Rileys — Special. A. Rizzo. 3rd. (A Sprite engine in a 1932 '9' chassis) (Made several Pit stops with plug trouble).
- 1950 Winning car — Ford V8 Special
Rileys — None
- 1951 Winning car — Reed Special (Ford V8)
Rileys — None
- 1952 Winning car — Lago Talbot
Rileys — *Dixon 2L. Bland. DNF
The Rizzo Special. Mossetter. DNF
Imp. Mildren. DNF
- 1953 Winning car — Lago Talbot
Rileys — None
- 1954 Winning car — HWM Jaguar
Rileys — The Rizzo Special. Tobin. 6th
Imp 'replica'. Downing. DNF (Overheated on lap 8)
Rizzo Special. Mildren. DNS. (Another special built by Arthur Rizzo. Rizzo chassis with 1½ Riley engine). (Damaged on rough road during practice).

* This would be the car imported into England by Gerry Dick. Now owned by Nick Jarvis.

SPRITE NEWS

Ian Hall met a Mr. E. B. Kay at Silverstone and was given a photograph taken on the 1949 Lands End Trial which he has kindly forwarded to the Editor.

The picture shows (left to right): CNF.640 with E. B. Kay. DYV.241 with an unknown lady, Dr. J. Spiridion and Jack Zillwood (two well known Cheltenham competitors) CPO.302 with Eric Grindod.

All three cars still exist. CNF is John Golder's. DYV is Julian Majzub's and CPO is the one sold at Sotheby's sale last winter to a Mr. Ferranti.

The results of the 1949 Lands End Trial show that Spiridion gained a first class award, Kay a second and Grindod a third.

Ian Hall is keen to see any similar pictures of Sprites in rallies, trials, etc. (either pre-war or very early post-war). If anyone would be prepared to lend pictures to Ian he would be glad to hear at 2 The Laurels, Great Coxwell, nr. Faringdon, Oxon. SN7 7NF. Any pictures entrusted to Ian would be treated with great care and would be returned within four weeks.



WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Mike Hedges sends this picture showing Kestrel '9' AXX.216 proceeding along Lewes High Street. The picture is not dated, but a study of the other cars serves as a useful guide to the period.

Does anyone know the fate of this Kestrel?



AN OLD TIP

There is a saying "the best jokes are the old jokes." This can be twisted to "the old tips are the best tips."

Here is an old tip which may, however, be new to some members. If experiencing difficulty in removing a nut on account of bolt rotation, and you are unable to reach the head of the bolt to hold it with another spanner — try cutting a slot (with a padsaw) in the nut end of the bolt and using a screwdriver to prevent it from turning.

BRUCE WINDER

Just before Christmas the sad news was received that Bruce Winder had died on December 8th. Described as a "great bloke" by his friends, Bruce was an ardent Riley enthusiast. He will be sadly missed, and the Register tenders deepest sympathy to his family.

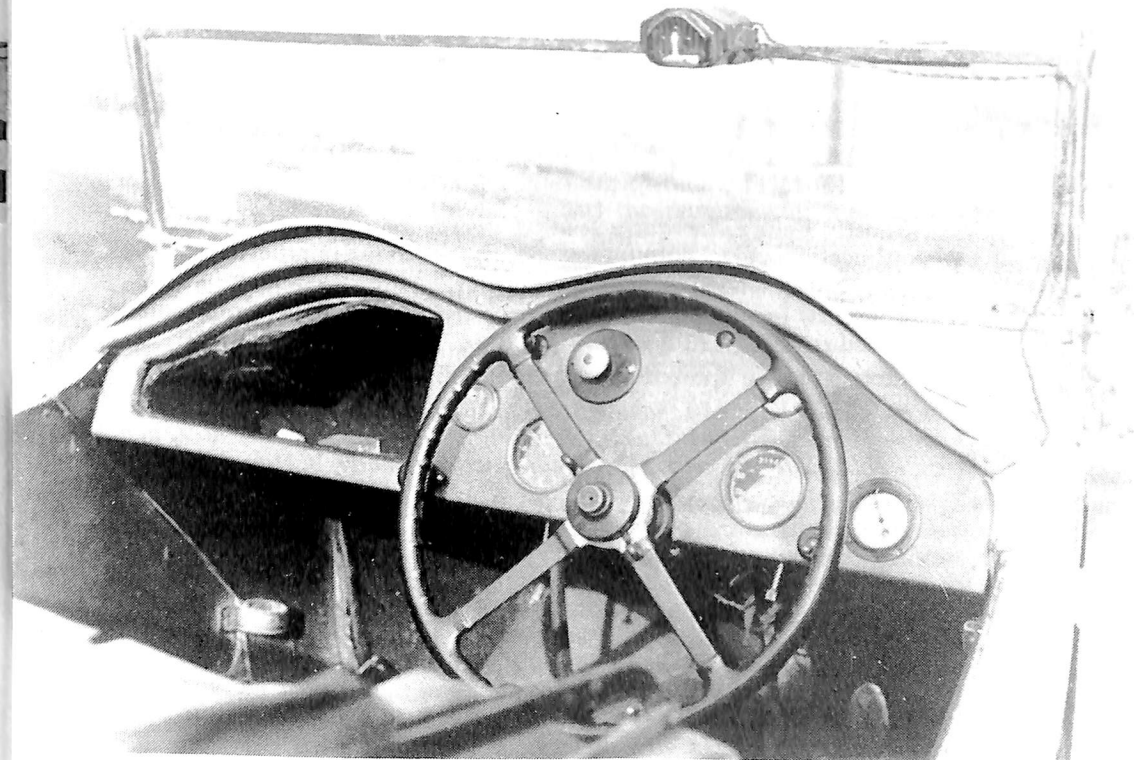
GAMECOCK NOTES

The Editor has been taken to task (in a very gentlemanly manner!) for his comment about the date of GT.1003 — the Gamecock which was the basis of the H.K.R. Special.

"Of course it was pre 1931" writes a correspondent, pointing out that the type of dashboard in the accompanying photograph seems only to appear on the pre-production series cars. (He has evidence of three examples). It is the same as PJ.683 (the car now owned by Peter Clews) and he is certain that it had a *plus* series chassis.

The starter switch illustrated is a simple, massive switch in the starter cable — a type which was discontinued with the plus ultra series, being replaced by the solenoid system for the 1931 Show cars.

Peter Clews confirms that his car has loops for the sidescreens (as in the picture) instead of the more common tubes let into the tops of the doors. He says that his car was fitted with a vacuum wiper when he bought it, and it is noted that the replacement wiper on GT.1003 has been inverted to improve vision. Plus series cars had vacuum wipers — did they change in October '31? and does this relate to windscreen height?



A PLURALITY OF GAMECOCKS

The correct word for a plurality of Goldfinches is "charm".

It would seem appropriate to borrow the word and say that this picture (forwarded by Chris Briggs) shows a charm of Gamecocks.

Pictured (L to R) are: Michael Brillenbur-Wurth (just out of shot), Chris Tavener, Chris Briggs and Ewout Bezemer.



TORQUEING ABOUT NUTS

Shortly before the war a leading piston manufacturer sponsored the publication of a "common-sense" book about engine overhauls.

One point which is stressed (and it is a point which is often overlooked by inexperienced operators) is the importance of tightening up procedures.

Here are two quotations which highlight the point:

1 = "Cylinder head nuts should always be 'followed up' after the engine has been run for a few hours. Gaskets and cements settle down under heat, and may allow water to enter the cylinders unless finally tightened."

2 = "... a torque wrench should be used for tightening connecting rod bolts, and main bearing stud nuts. Ovality of the bearings due to too much or too little tightening can cause bearing failures. It is important to remember that torque wrenches need checking regularly and adjusting accordingly — they seldom retain their original setting for long periods of use. Failures can also be caused by "cap shift" sometimes inadvertently done by having a socket wrench whose outside diameter interfaces with the cap. Pulling on the wrench handle forces the cap into an unnatural and shifted position. The bearing offset makes the corner of the bearing scrape the oil off the shaft surface."

A RISING SCALE

Unwrapping spares which have been tucked away for many years can reveal fascinating items of information. A '9' valve was recently produced from a piece of an old magazine which told us that in 1910 the rate of motor fuel tax was 3d. per gallon, giving a total annual revenue of £321. By 1952 the annual rate had risen to 18p and the total revenue for the year was £125,550.

Better not try to sort out the figures for 1987!

VINTAGE NEWS AND VIEWS - 4

by Adrian Vine

I should like to ascertain which Mark I to Mark IV Nines (up to chassis 60 6770) were fitted with artillery wheels. If anybody has such a car, or has any period photographs of cars fitted with these wheels, I would be most grateful for the information. Also, I would like to know if there are any vintage Nines with a Watford clock and speedometer. 'Watford' was the trade name of North and Sons Ltd., of Watford, and this firm had no connection with the Smiths/Jaeger concern that I know of. The innards of the Jaeger and Smiths instruments were identical during the late twenties, early thirties, but the Watford mechanisms were completely different.

The radiators fitted to the early Nines are of interest. To start with, one made of German silver was fitted to all cars. This radiator had a small diameter filler neck — $2\frac{3}{32}$ " outside the thread — and the neck was threaded externally. I think this radiator was standard on cars up to Mark III. The radiator remained unchanged for the Mark IV cars, except for a larger filler neck which now had an external thread — $2\frac{7}{16}$ " inside the thread — and the radiator cap was the flatter sort which continued to be used at least until 1934. All the caps were covered with a moulded Bakelite material which was better than metal for handling when hot, but the difference in the rate of expansion between these two very dissimilar materials, not to mention the frequency of occasion to expand and contract, resulted inevitably in the breaking-up of the Bakelite moulding. This accounts for the extreme rarity of an undamaged radiator cap to be seen on a Riley radiator today, and why owners who do happen to have good original caps have to remove them when they leave their cars unattended. Finally, about March, 1929, (at chassis 60 6771), when the re-styled bodies were fitted to the improved chassis (cable brakes, etc.), so introducing the Mark V, a new radiator was used. For the first time a cowling was made which covered the real radiator underneath. Strictly speaking, the word 'cowling' applies to an aeroplane engine cover, but it also describes the radiator 'cover' better than any other word I know, which is why I use it. I believe I am right in thinking that the cowling was nickel, and not nickel-plated brass. All dimensions remained the same, so that the new radiator could be fitted to an earlier car and vice versa. The Riley badge was soldered to all radiators, not fixed with a screw. A neat Boyce Motometer was a Riley-approved extra, and this was used without the wings mascot

which was popular at the time. The Wilmot Calormeter was also available at this time, having successfully overcome the patent infringement of their first radiator thermometer by increasing the length of the stem of their instrument so that it recorded the actual temperature of the water, not the air space above the water as the Boyce device did. Of the two instruments, the Wilmot is by far the easier to read from the driver's seat, and although my own Boyce Motometer has never worked, I should think that it would be impossible to read it at night or when it is raining. These details concerning the early radiators are based on my own observations only, so I would be happy to hear from anybody who is able to point out any errors in my little thesis, bearing in mind that radiators, being so vulnerably situated, are very easily damaged and just as easily replaced — not always with the type originally fitted.

A useful wrinkle, while I'm on the subject of radiators. The German silver, and the nickel also, I suspect, are not the easiest of materials to keep clean. Nothing looks nicer than a freshly-polished radiator, but a short shower of rain can quickly nullify an awful lot of effort. Winter is naturally a particularly bad time for the polished radiator and I've learned the hard way that it is quite hopeless to try to keep it gleaming at this time of the year. But it is also unwise to just leave it until the following spring. Such neglect can mean a good morning's hard work in removing the accumulated tarnish. The thing to do is to coat the radiator brightwork with a water-repellent film, then leave it strictly alone. In the late autumn I smear a thickish coat of **Limousine** wax car polish on my radiator immediately after I have given it the final polish of the year. I think a coat of engine oil (better not use a detergent oil) will do a similarly protective job if the car is not to be used on the road, but stored in the garage. This coat of wax or oil is **easily** removed with **Solvol Autosol** the following spring, and with a minimum of trouble, too.

I include a wiring diagram of the early Nines with these notes. I know this will be of some interest to many of you because of its scarcity. I had never seen this particular diagram published in any Riley book before, and that includes 'official' works such as handbooks. Peter Thorpe sent me a copy of the diagram which was taken from a Rotax booklet, and I was most grateful to receive it. I had to re-draw it as the photocopy of the original was not too good. During the copying, I noticed a small error on the original diagram which I've corrected on my drawing. The 'A' and 'S' terminals on the **Type F cut-out** were transposed. Does anybody remember if these little Rotax booklets were issued with the cars when new? I think that a booklet was also printed by Zenith for the carburetter.

The literature offered by Riley fifty-odd years ago was not at all good when compared with that offered by other motor car manufacturers. The handbooks for a Riley and a Morris in 1929, to take an example, were hardly to be compared. The Riley manual was a thin affair which contained very limited information and left a great deal to the imagination. The Morris publication on the other hand was a veritable book, in which every aspect of repair was most fully dealt with. The

how to look after his car and so on. In addition, he could buy a very thick magazine each month called the **Morris Owner**, and this magazine really did make the comparable **Riley Record** look amateurish. I wonder why Riley did not place more emphasis on informing the people who bought their cars? It would not, in my view, be sufficient explanation to say that the average owner of a Riley car would have had 'more about him' mechanically than the average owner of a Morris at that time. I personally can think of reasons why Riley would not invest more money in this direction than they did, and I also think that it was perhaps a big mistake on their part.

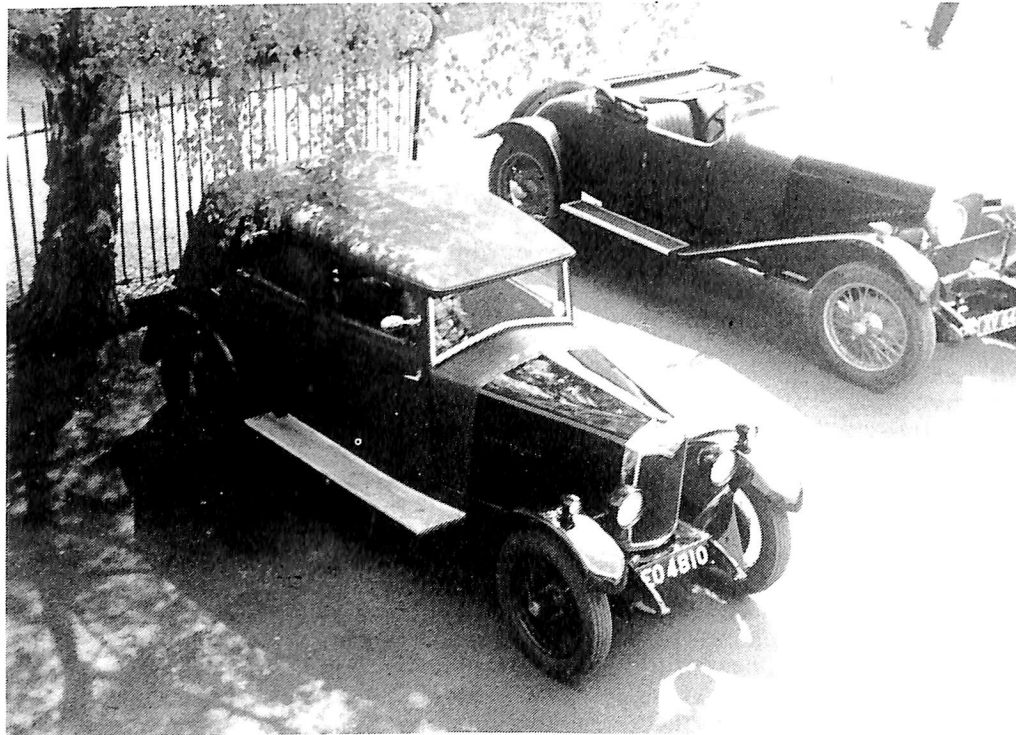
I would like to thank those owners who have sent me photographs of their cars when writing with details. These pictures are very much appreciated and will be kept in a file containing the details and known history of their cars. Eventually these particulars will be published, along with many of the photographs. I have now completed much work on the Mark I to Mark III models, and will shortly make a serious start on the Mark IV and Mark V cars up to chassis number 60 11012. Clearly the task of compiling an accurate list of these cars is going to be much greater than that which I've just completed, on account of the fact that more Mark IV and Vs were produced than all the other marks put together (6,718 cars as opposed to 4,291). It would therefore make my job so much easier if anybody owning a Mark IV or a Mark V car would write to me with details of chassis, engine and registration numbers, date of registration, present condition and non-standard modifications, with any known history. I have twenty tubes of **Solvol Autosol** which I will give away at the 1988 Coventry rally to the first twenty people who request them, and who have sent me full details of their vintage Nines.

In the last *Vintage News*, in the lists beside the Mark I and Mark II cars, I mentioned round and square rocker box lids. This is plain confusing. What I referred to was the valve rocker boxes themselves and not the lids. The rocker box fitted to Mark I cars (Part No. 9E51) had a rounded top, and the modified pattern (Part No. IE195) had a squared top. This later type, with only minor changes, was fitted to all Nines up to 1934.

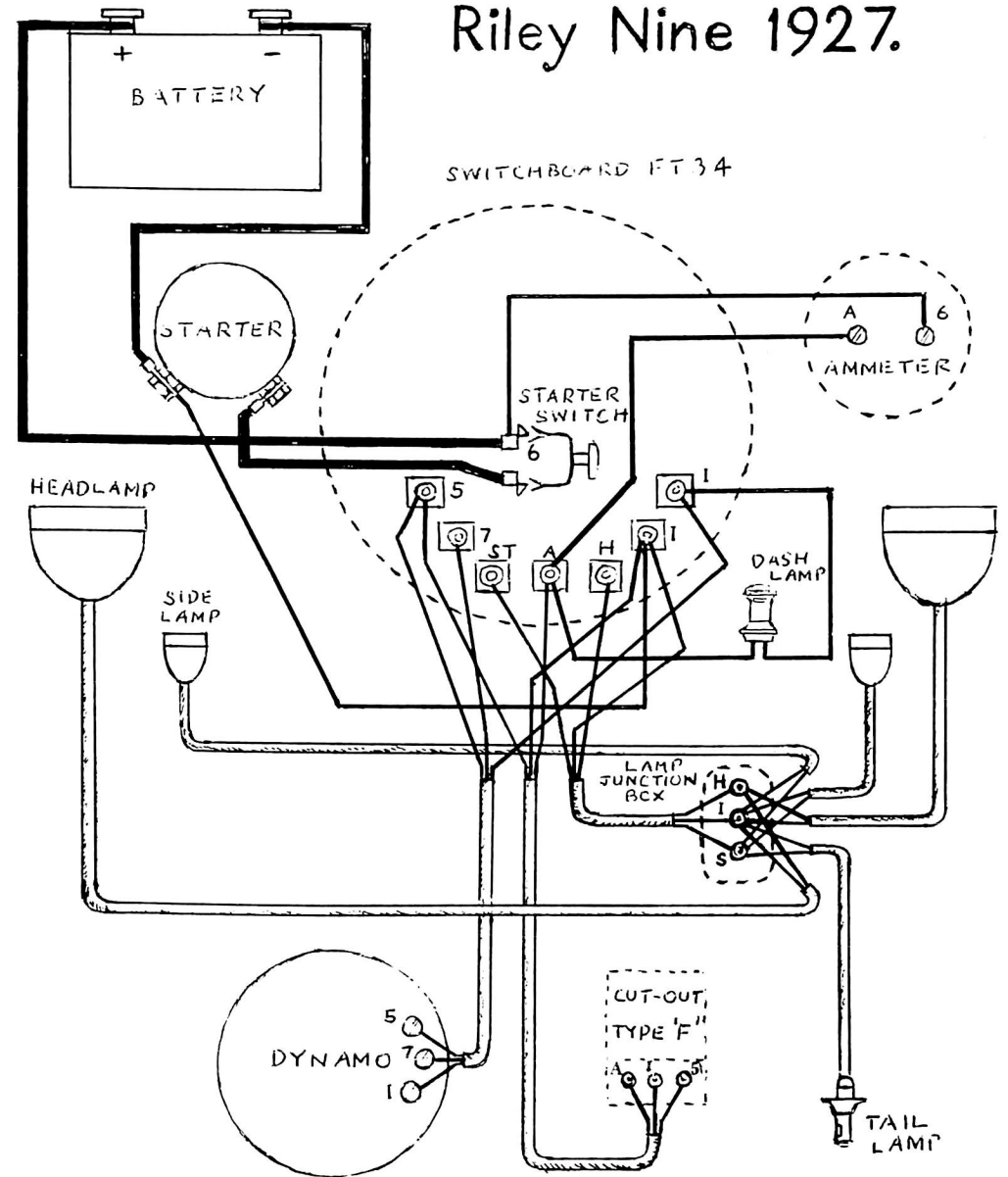
The BTH magneto was commonly fitted to the Nines from 1927 to 1932, but on the earlier cars at least, the ML magneto was also fitted. I do not know whether a prospective owner of a Nine had to stipulate which magneto he preferred, or whether the BTH was standard and that some owners chose to change to an ML. Both magnetos were acknowledged in Riley literature. What were the relative merits of these magnetos? I can tell you with confidence that **both** were very good devices, and that in soundness of design and quality of workmanship you would be hard put to it to choose between the two. The ML, however, worked on quite a different principle to the BTH, in that the magnet was not static, but itself revolved. It is a much rarer magneto than the BTH, so if you have one fitted to your car you will find that spare parts are much more difficult to come by, and that this fact alone might make it advisable to opt for the BTH if you are in the happy position of having a choice in the matter. Incidentally, do not imagine that you can remove and replace the magneto on the Riley engine with

impunity — for you cannot. A moment's thought will tell you that the meshing of the magneto pinion with the inlet camshaft timing gear is of some little importance. Shims were originally fitted to ensure that this meshing was correct, and although I regret I can not tell you how to set up the position of the magneto correctly, I can at least say — albeit negatively — that if you do not get it right, rapid wear of the non-ferrous pinion will result. Informed comment on this subject would be most welcome.

To finish with, I have chosen a picture of a Monaco, EO 4810, now owned by Mike Dawes of Surrey. The photograph was taken in May, 1987 at Brooklands. This car has been 'in the Club' for many years now, and as you can see, it is in very good condition still. Even the fabric is believed to be original. This car is of particular interest because it illustrates the difference between a Mark IV and a Mark V. This car, chassis number 60 5426, is a Mark IV. It has the six-stud wheels, cable brakes and so on, but it has the old Mark III coachwork. Compare this car with the Mark V, an excellent illustration of which is to be found on page 79 of Birmingham's book (first edition), or page 89 of the second edition. The same photograph will be found on page 87 of Styles, but disregard the 'plus Series' caption. The main differences in the coachwork styles are the boot and the toolbox under the running board, also the headlamp bar and dumb iron valence, which, although not visible, are fitted only to the Mark V. Of the 6,718 post-Mark III cars made, 2,477 were Mark IV, the remainder Mark V.



Riley Nine 1927.



ABOARD THE 9/16

by Dave Jermy



Another year, another cold February day; an invitation from Chris Pack. Would I like to crew the 9/16 Special on the Wessex Trial. The day warmed, indeed, positively glowed. One small cloud on the horizon loomed, as the crewman I was also the navigator. As a navigator I am not of the first rank or even the third. For years I thought that Longitudinal tables were something to put one's coffee cups on, and if grid references were so important why didn't they put them on signposts? Naval Officers can be short of patience particularly if the crewman can only reassure him that "I'm sure we're still in Somerset"!

Some 12-14 years ago I entered a couple of VSCC Eastern Rallies and I say with some pride that I got to the Northampton area and back in good time. It was the four hours in the middle that I found perplexing. The majority of the afternoon was spent driving in the opposite direction to the mainstream of vintage traffic. I ended the afternoon convinced that a time control was a clock tower somewhere. This Falklands business — how did they find these small islands. I mean to say there are no spot heights or Church steeples about at least not above the waves. Needless to say I needn't have worried. The area of the Wessex has contracted somewhat since I last crewed. Also I kept a close watch to see where everyone else was going.

Since I last crewed, the 9/16 has changed in a couple of departments. Bodily the rear petrol tank (a la Bentley) has gone

underneath so extending a smooth line giving a more balanced appearance from the side view (I liked it the way it was as well so this is not a criticism). The gearbox is now a 3-speed plus overdrive which apart from slipping out of overdrive on occasion, gave first rate results.

The engine has higher compression pistons. The performance is absolutely exhilarating. Except for a run in Ian Stronach's '16' Ulster Replica (now sold) a couple of years ago I've ridden in nothing to touch it.

To give a 'blow by blow' account of each hill can be, and is, a bore, so I won't bother you with that. The car suffered from an annoying misfire on the Saturday afternoon which put paid to any thought of pot hunting. Initially it was thought to be a plug fault and the leads were detached one by one and a new plug (well nearly) tried on every pot without improvement. Waiting one's turn on the hills made things worse while a run of 3-4 miles seemed to improve matters. The question arose "Do you put hot plugs in hot engines, or cold, or vice versa?". The answer didn't matter too much as we only had the one spare. These 'Wessex' hills which were as dry as I'd seen them can be terribly rough on a car and on one hill we managed to ground (indeed heartily clout) the exhaust which bent the bracket and detached the tail-pipe from the silencer. C.P. said that Carol (his wife) has never been too happy about his rallying great coat — ex NFS — (National Fire Service vintage 1940s to you younger members) but it has its uses other than warmth when you're flat on your back straightening brackets.

C.P. had a dinner date on the Saturday evening but still found time to change the distributor before enjoying the pleasures of the table. This gave us some improvement but the underlying symptoms were still there when engine temp reached 80 degrees odd. Grounding on the Sunday morning hills bent the dynamo bracket and the radiator fan bracket which didn't help the over heat problem one bit. We had to miss a couple of hills due to the queue. Couldn't switch off and couldn't idle too long. For Chris, perhaps a disappointment, for me — a thrill of a lifetime.

Back at Priddy (Sunday lunchtime) spotted Spares Colleague Wavell Urry arriving. His beard seemed to be at the correct angle so guessed his magneto had kept sparking. Wavell really has had the most appalling run of bad luck with his mags on the Wessex. Ian Hall, in the other Sprite, cleared every hill but brushed a marker (unfortunately adjacent to a marshal) so missed a First, Class award. Whether the hills on Trials or Prescott Ian seems to go up competently or fast, whichever the case may be. Also in case I incur some further charges, he's a good solicitor as well. The worst fortune I saw over the weekend was the Riley which came off the curb on the way to the start and took his sump drain plug off. This sort of luck is enough to make a Sister of Charity make off with the Mother Superior's best dinner service.

The trip back to Hawthorn was most memorable. Acceleration and cornering was used to the full. We were running on 17" tyres instead of 16" which affected the handling and carrying 1½cwt bricks but . . . That evening over a pint of B.B.B. I re-savoured every mile.

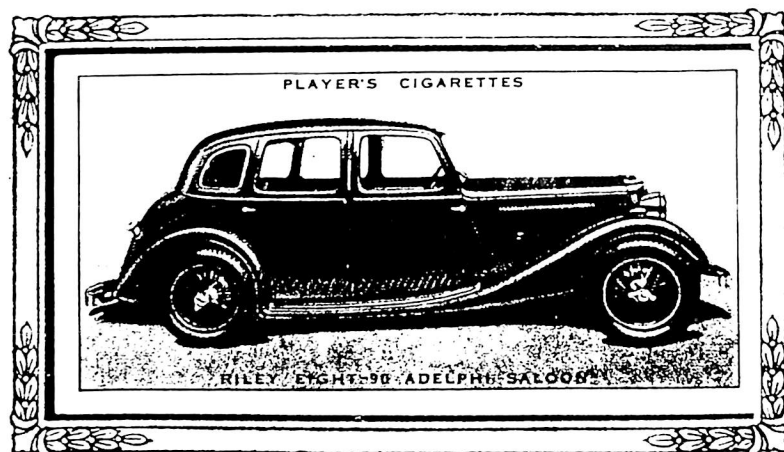
"Do you ever get the thrill of anticipation driving the 9/16 after weeks at sea or at the Admiralty?" "Yes". The terse answer spoke volumes, I know how he must feel.

CIGARETTE CARDS

The Editor is extremely grateful to the several members who have very kindly sent copies of pages from their Cigarette Card Albums.

Here is one of the most popular.

RILEY EIGHT-90 ADELPHI SALOON. This car is fitted with an engine which is the first V-eight of wholly British design, and which can be described as a pair of the famous Riley Nine engines working on a common crankshaft at an angle of 90 degrees to each other. Actually more than twice the horsepower is said to be developed, and the car has a maximum speed of 90 m.p.h. The eight-cyl. engine is of 60.32 mm. bore, 95.25 mm. stroke and 2,178 c.c. cap.; the R.A.C. rating is 18.05 h.p. and the annual tax £13 10s. There is a pre-selective gear-box and a centrifugal clutch. The chassis has a 9 ft. 4½ in. wheelbase and a 4 ft. 3 in. track. The car is priced at £450. (No. 33)



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SIDEVALVE CARS

Peter Witt has very kindly responded to the invitation on page 33 of Bulletin 127 by submitting notes on the Australian Sidevalve Rileys, (although he does not claim to be any better informed on Sidevalves than on the niceties of authenticity in pre-war Rileys generally).

Here — with grateful thanks — is what he writes:

"S.V. cars in Australia known to me

- 1 Ray Black (Victoria) — 2 seat Redwing
- 2 Kurt Schultz (Victoria) — 4 seat Redwing
- 3 Lynn Hardman (NSW) — 2 seat Redwing
- 4 Alan and Leslie McKay (NSW) — 2 seat Redwing

This car is the one referred to by Geoff Golding as belonging to Geoff Dryden — as far as I am aware Geoff D. no longer retains an interest in the car. Previously he had a half share with his sister Leslie (now McKay).

- 5 June Thomas (referred to by Geoff Golding as June Hoare — her former name) — 4 seat tourer — glass weather equipment — good condition.
- 6 Graeme Pinkney (SA) — chassis only, model unknown.
- 7 Bill Bennett (Victoria) — tourer (artillery wheels)
- 8 John and Lynn Doenson (Victoria) — under restoration, I believe it is a tourer)
- 9 Paul Baée (NSW) — collection of bits to be rebuilt as replica Factory Service van.
- 10 John Laumets (NSW) — large collection of bits, sight unseen by me.
- 11 The car that was rebodied in the late 20's to early 30's as a strange coupe (featured some time ago as a Tailpiece in a 'Bull'. Still exists, seen by John Laumete this year).

(Cars listed now are from Register Membership list no: 7 (May '84)

- 12 Rod Amos (Victoria) — 2 seat Redwing
- 13 Neal Brandt (Q'land) — ? (Although I have met Neal at a number of National Rallies I never knew, or have forgotten, that he had a S.V. Perhaps it has changed hands).

★★★★★

In an article written for the Australian National Riley Magazine of 1980 Geoff Dryden makes the following observations about S.V.'s sold in Australia:

A The Overseas Chassis The S.V. was often chosen by the British Government for use in the Colonies and on expeditions. A special heavy duty chassis with a track of 4' 8" was developed for this duty. The model was fitted with extra cross-members, additional cross bracing on the headlights and a larger radiator. The front brake linkages were mounted above the axle to improve ground clearance and prevent damage over rough terrain.

B A four seater sports prepared by Lukins, the Australian Agent, won the Phillip Island race in 1925.

Only 6 2/str and 2 4/str sports were imported into Australia between 1922 and 1927. During this period 20 other S.V.'s were imported. Bodies were also made in Australia. An attractive 2/str sports body on similar lines to the English model was built in Australia. The body appeared to be lower and wider than the English version. The seats were not offset as in the English 2/str and the mudguards were valanced down to the chassis to reduce road dust.

C The following extract from the Australian publication *Motor Life* indicates the performance of the S.V. The test was conducted using a bare chassis with wicker seats

- 10-30 mph in top gear — 12½ seconds
- 10-30 mph in 3rd gear — 7 seconds
- 10-30 mph in 2nd gear — 5½ seconds
- Max speed in 2nd gear — 43 mph

Max speed in 3rd gear approx 60 mph (though owing to road conditions we were only able to obtain 53). (The last sentence defines the performance requirements of the period!)

★★★★★

Incidentally I once accompanied Geoff as passenger in the Redwing that he then part-owned (the car written about in Allan McKay's article). We drove over 100 miles of various terrain and the car never missed a beat. 50-60 mph on good roads. It was a real joy. I also accompanied Geoff and his other sister (I was in my RME) over a lengthy trip back to NSW from a National Rally in Victoria. Again the car performed really well and reliably — a credit to all concerned.

The Editors Notebook



Mr. David Williams of 11 Gibbet Hill Road, Coventry has a Publisher's bound volume of the Riley Record for 1936, a little limp, but intact, some pages damp stained. £60 if anyone is interested.

Ever since issue no: 66 your Bulletin has been printed by Newbury Weekly News (Printers) Ltd and from that issue the make-up of the magazine has been supervised by Eddie Jones, Shop Overseer. His cheerful help, common sense and ever readiness to give advice have contributed substantially to the production of the Bulletin. Now the time has come for Eddie to retire. We wish him a long and happy retirement and say "THANKYOU" for all his help.

"Why the 'E&OE' at the foot of the information table at the back of the Bulletin?" asks a member.

Because the table can only be as accurate as the information which is supplied to the Editor. Sometimes when there is a change of Official or when an Official changes address, the Bulletin Editor is one of the last to hear about it!

A request. Please don't use paperclips on photographs. Clips tend to 'cripple' the edge of a print and leave marks which can be visible after the picture has been processed.

During a recent phone conversation, Neil Eason-Gibson told the Editor that the man in white bending over the Frazer Nash on the cover of Issue 128 is his father, the late John Eason-Gibson. John was, of course, famous for his activities with Rileys at Brooklands and for building unusual cars.

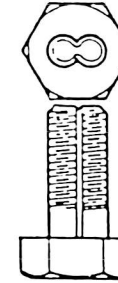
The Sprite (GNW.265) pictured on the centre spread of issue no: 127 in the hands of Joe Hepworth is still "going strong". It is now owned by Cyril Bradford of Welwyn Garden City.

AIDS FOR SPECIAL BUILDERS

Purpose made bolt Type. 6

This is a binocular bolt for use when coping with double drilled holes.

(Note: It is essential that the special nut be used with this type of bolt. A normal nut will not fit).



TAILPIECE

Jean and Gerry Dick, on their recent travels, met a Riley owning Baker in Switzerland and were able to view his private collection of a baker's dozen interesting cars.

The picture shows a Riley loaf specially prepared by this enthusiast. It is doubtful if this is what the author of "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam" had in mind when he wrote:

"Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough,
A flask of wine, a book of verse and thou."

