



News & Record

Issue 63, Spring 2021



NEWS & MEMBERS

Page 6304, emails, new members, anecdotes & lots of Scottish pictures.

THE FORBES REPORT

Page 6312, Our chairman gives an update and throws in a few pictures too!

JUST A CENTURY AGO

Page 6314, Herodotus reports on what was trending in The Autocar in early 1921.

TYSON HOLDS FORTH

Page 6316, Our Graham's view!

FROM ACROSS THE POND

Page 6318, Kimberly writes from the USA.

LONDON TO EDINBURGH 2011 AND 2021

Page 6320, Nick Naismith looks backwards...and forward to this September.



Cover image: Geoffrey Summers in his 1920 Silver Ghost 39TW navigates The Quiraing on the Isle of Skye - see page 6326 (Photo George Abraham, hand colouring Bella Hoare)

Left: Nick Naismith (with Mark Dixon of Octane Magazine) leads the way in 1911 Silver Ghost 1606 Barker Tourer see page 6320 (pic Rolls-Royce Cars)

Above: Canada 2017, Steve and Kim Haines in 1911 Silver Ghost 1513 Balloon Car see page 6318 (picture Kimberly Shaddock)

Rear Cover: 'Maroon Reflections' (picture Kimberly Shaddock)

BY SILVER GHOST TO SKYE IN 1920

Page 6326, Harrison Royce tells of a magical tour accompanied by a series of stunning photographs.

SO GOOD HE BOUGHT IT TWICE!

Page 6342, Michael Sapsford on 20HP GA11

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Page 6345, Spring 1961 with a lightweight 1926 PI

LAST WORD

Page 6346, Johnnie G

News & Members



More on the 'From the Archive' mystery

Readers will recall my error over the registration number of 1934 20/25 Thrupp & Maberly saloon GYD29. It prompted quite a few emails but eventually we worked out that the car is now owned by Peter Jordan-Hill in Victoria, Australia. Peter wrote in to explain that back in 1960 the car was the property of Edward Hatchett of Ealing London; an engineer who made scale steam engines for a large track in his garden.

Readers will also recall that in the last issue we ran a piece on Roy Minter's 20HP, GYK2 (page 6240). Imagine my surprise to receive the following email from Roy:

I was fascinated to read in the News & Record that Peter Jordan-Hill's 20/25 was once owned by Edward Hatchett - I remember it well.

Edward was a very good friend of my Father and they both shared a love of cars and steam. Edward was indeed a very skilled engineer and I had to turn to him on several occasions for help with the odd missing part on my Bianchi which featured in the magazine last month. He had a very good little workshop at the back of his garage, well equipped with lathes etc. However that was a hobby - he was a senior actuary at Prudential and indeed I believe a director.

Mention of the 'large track in his garden' brought back long-forgotten memories. In fact the track was run along one side of an adjacent allotment site. Attached is a photo I have found of my brother and I with one of Edward's engines at the very spot. I am the curly haired one and it would have been taken in around 1950. I was often a passenger on the train.

I am also attaching a photo of a GWR King Edward VII locomotive which was a present from Edward to my Father and which I now have.

As far as I recall Edward also, or later, had a Standard Steel Bentley R Type - certainly he travelled in convoy with us in my Father's R Type Mulliner Sports Saloon, which I now own, to the odd race meeting at Silverstone.

It is indeed a small world. Best regards, Roy



Ghost Maintenance

Irvine Laidlaw kindly emailed through a few Scottish pictures. There is a great shot on P6307 but I had to include this image of Irvine (right) and his 'car-guru' Phil Stainton (left). The happiness we derive from properly maintaining our cars just couldn't be any clearer!

The car is Silver Ghost 19MA, a Colonial landaulette built for India.

Phil Stainton is kindly helping to arrange the New Forest tour 12-15 July. Details coming asap.

A dog's life!

In a fitting conclusion to our series on R-R owners and their hounds, Philip Hall has sent through this image of Henry Royce at his home in Derby in 1909. The car is Silver Ghost chassis 1200 which was an experimental and trials car. Sold in 1915 with registration number R-736 to C A Merton of London; in 1919 it was bought by Sir George Macpherson-Grant of Ballindalloch Castle. Sir George was a relative of our own Strone Macpherson and we are due to visit the castle on our Scottish tour.

There has been a little debate on the name of Royce's dog in the picture and it's thought to share a name with Wing Commander Guy Gibson's hound.

By the way, Philip believes that CH-R-10 is a trade plate, but I'm amused that personalised numberplates were a 'thing' in 1909!



New Members

Since our last issue Graham Tyson has been busy welcoming lots of new people to our club!

Ilkka Brotherus from Hyvinkää, Finland. Ilkka owns 1936 PIII Barker Touring Limousine 3AX67; 1931 PII Brewster Croydon Convertible Coupé AJS261 in dark blue (pictured right) and, a year ago, purchased 1924 SG All Weather Tourer in light blue 16RM (Tim Forrest's old car).



Adrian and Catherine Dickens live near Cambridge and own a 1937 PIII Barker Sedan de Ville in dark midnight blue, chassis 3BU176.



Steve and Anne Wilks from Brockenhurst Hampshire own a cream & black 1934 20/25 Hooper Sports Limousine GWE53.



Shane and Zuzana Houlihan live in Dungarvan Co Waterford Ireland and own a 1913 Silver Ghost 2500E London to Edinburgh style tourer.



Perry Butt & Cherie Reddon are in Port Williams Nova Scotia, Canada; 1937 25/30 Arthur Mulliner Limousine GRP46 needs restoration and Perry has recently stripped it to bare metal.

Last, but not least, Elliott Anderson in Gullane, East Lothian Scotland has joined us. Elliott doesn't own a car just now but has first refusal to purchase his late father's Wraith.

Welcome to you all!



A super shot from Irvine Laidlaw of the 2007 20-Ghost Club tour to Scotland, here at Cameron House Hotel on Loch Lomond which, sadly, recently partially burnt down.

Acceptable modifications to Silver Ghosts

Following on from Harrison Royce's article in issue 62 (page 6226) Tom Colbert emailed in:

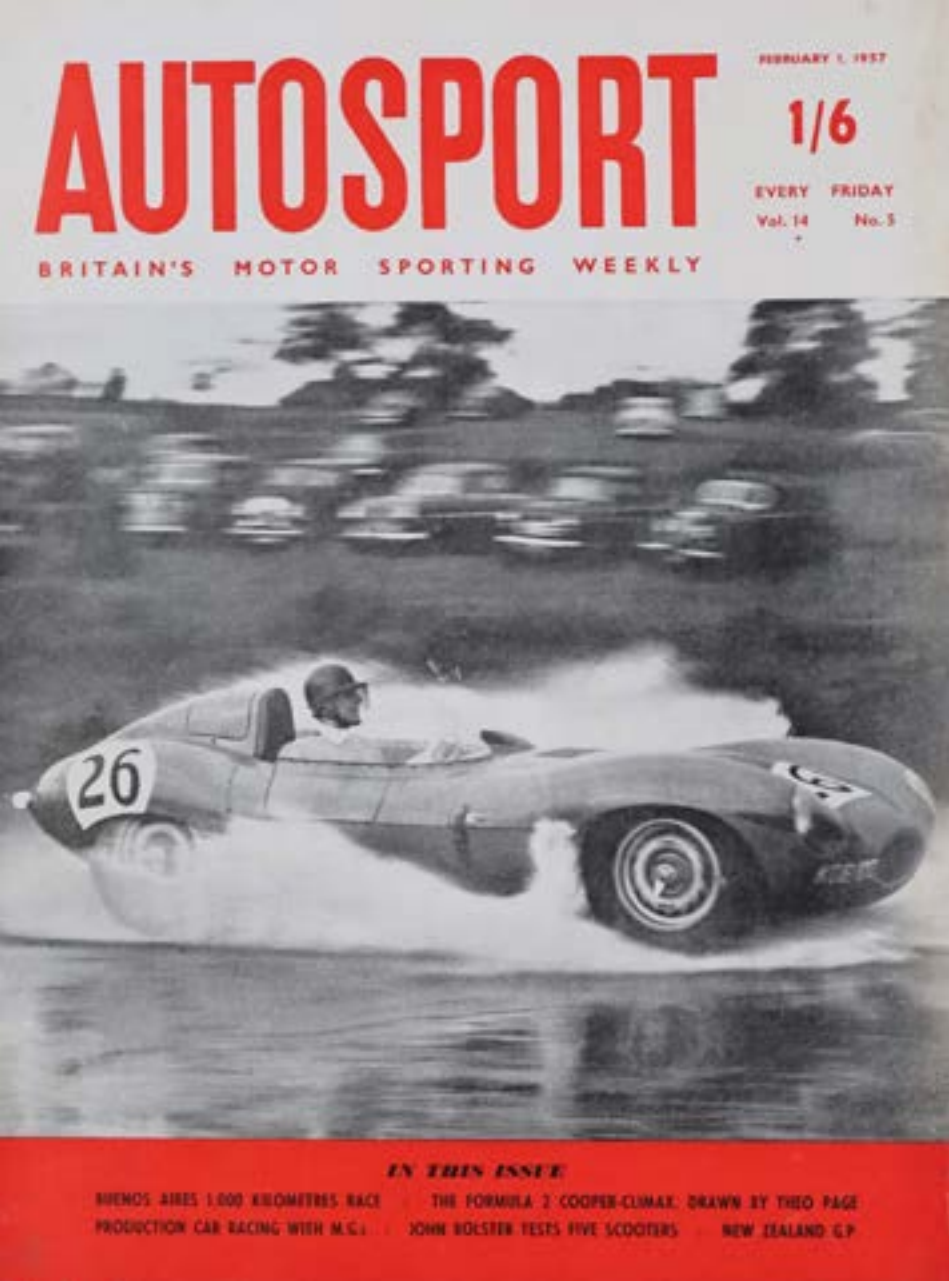
Absolute originality in a Silver Ghost is difficult to find and not necessarily easy to live with.

Over one hundred or so years of multiple ownership, Ghosts have been returned to the factory for upgrades, bodies often exchanged for newer, self starters and electrification installed, etc. The reason these modifications have and continue to be made is that Ghosts are such remarkable cars in their performance and longevity that relatively minor upgrades can make them even more so. This becomes of greater significance when one wishes to tour with his or her Ghost. Of course these modifications should be kept track of and be easily reversed. Two additional "acceptable modifications" for toured cars would be higher compression pistons and the small alternator sold by the SGA club store.

Be prepared to pay the price for these enhancements though; when my 65UE was on the show field at Pebble Beach a couple of years ago the first thing the chief judge did was get down on his hands and knees, look under the car, and yell out in a voice loud enough to be heard from one end of the field to the other (or so it seemed), "Gear Vendors overdrive!"

Regards

Tom Colbert, Ithaca, N.Y., USA



Peter Blond

As mentioned in the last issue, sadly, Peter Blond passed away in January. He joined the 20-GC late in life and so wasn't a member for long but was a well known motoring enthusiast and 1950s racer.

Rosemary interviewed him in issue 59 (page 1197) - well worth re-reading or look it up on the website. Henry Fitzhugh dropped me a note:

One bitterly cold day in late November 2020, while I was having some minor work done at a garage we both use, I was gratified to see Peter Blond turn up in his open 20, one of his four Rolls-Royce cars. In fact, he had told me previously that it was a "project" suggested by his late wife. It was an open car, and he was delivering some bits to have made into side windows. He seemed in fine shape, but a bit stiff getting out of the 20 in a heavy fur coat. We exchanged familiar greetings, having known each other from long before he joined the 20-Ghosts. He went for the first covid jab, but felt poorly immediately after, and then succumbed to covid itself. He was 91. We can take heart from a fine example of living and driving to the last. His passage through the 20-Ghosts was like a comet - short but brilliant.

Above: Peter Blond in his D-Type Jaguar at Oulton Park, 18th Aug 1956. He came 6th that day but finished 1st at Snetterton the following month. With kind permission of Autosport

Strone dropped a line to say:

For Christmas I was given:

"Steel Chariots in the Desert" lively stories of WW1 Silver Ghost armoured cars and Alpine Eagle 40/50s by a driver S.C. Rolls (no relation). It is a good read and accurate.

ISBN 1-84677-005-X
www.leonaur.com
£9-99

Ed: I bought the book on Strone's say so and confirm it's excellent. See the short extract opposite.

'Yalla! Imshi! Clear off!' I shouted to the first of the Arabs who was making his camel kneel.

He paid no heed, so I swung my hands at him, palms forward as one shoos chickens. Looking now, for the first time, full into his eyes, I had a shock. They were steel grey eyes, and his face was red, not coffee-coloured. Instead of the piercing scowl there was laughter in those eyes. *'Is your captain with you?'* He spoke in the cultivated Oxford manner. I dropped my cigarette in sheer astonishment. *'Who the...? What the...?'*

He placed his hand for a moment on my shoulder. *'My name is Lawrence,'* said he, *'I have come to join you.'*



Whilst our cars are regularly drafted for wedding duties I felt the Scottish theme suited this issue perfectly.

The new Mrs Clemmie Oliver (née Macpherson) roars away from the church next to her husband Rich only to get caught behind a piper!

I think we can all agree that the bride and groom look very fine in Strone and Alex's 1930 PII Dual Cowl Hooper 62GY. I wonder whether it made it back to the Macpherson garage after the honeymoon or if the happy couple decided 'it's a keeper'!



Charles Rentoul relates his first association with Rolls-Royce:

From a very early age I have been mad about cars. In 1953 as a 9 year old schoolboy I went to the Motor Show at Earls Court after school (Arnold House in St John's Wood, London) had finished for the day. Entry was half price for children.

Inside the enormous hall I collected as many brochures as I could of the different models on display. I had it in mind that I would cut out and stick the photos of some of the more exotic cars on my bedroom wall at home. Most of the salesmen on the various stands were very obliging but I came unstuck at the Rolls-Royce stand where, unlike all the other stands, the cars were cordoned off with a great big red rope and the commissionaire at the entrance to the stand would not allow me in, even though I had explained to him that I only wanted a brochure. So I went home rather disappointed at not having been able to collect a glossy brochure for the best car in the world.

But I was not prepared to be thwarted by an officious commissionaire. So when I got home I typed a letter on my parents' typewriter addressed to the Managing Director of Rolls-Royce at the company's premises in Hythe Road, London. In my letter I explained that I was thinking of buying a new Rolls-Royce and I politely asked if they could send me one or two brochures showing the various models they had for sale. I signed the letter 'C P Rentoul' thus giving no indication of my age.

Two days later when I got home from school my mother told me that a salesman from Jack Barclay had unexpectedly called that morning at our house. He had asked my mother if he could speak to Mr Rentoul, explaining that he had been passed the letter which 'her husband' had written two days earlier, and which he then showed to my mother. She quickly cottoned on, said that her husband was not at home, but that if the salesman would care to leave a couple of brochures with her (which he did) she would pass them to her husband that evening. The brochures were waiting for me in my bedroom.



Lovely anecdote from Charles above, but rather than illustrate with 1953 Motor Show pictures I thought you might enjoy some pages from the 20-Ghost Club Rally brochure from the same year. As you can see the first owner of my particular brochure noted down the results of the concours in the margin; not only did Stanley Sears write the foreword he won trophies as well!

20-GHOST CLUB CORONATION RALLY, KENSINGTON GARDENS JULY, 1953-1954					
LIST OF ENTRANTS					
No.	Entrant	Year	Class	Notes	Remarks
1	W. D. Wilson	1953	Open	Open	Winner of 1st Prize
2	W. D. Wilson	1954	Open	Open	Winner of 2nd Prize
3	W. D. Wilson	1955	Open	Open	Winner of 3rd Prize
4	W. D. Wilson	1956	Open	Open	Winner of 4th Prize
5	W. D. Wilson	1957	Open	Open	Winner of 5th Prize
6	W. D. Wilson	1958	Open	Open	Winner of 6th Prize
7	W. D. Wilson	1959	Open	Open	Winner of 7th Prize
8	W. D. Wilson	1960	Open	Open	Winner of 8th Prize
9	W. D. Wilson	1961	Open	Open	Winner of 9th Prize
10	W. D. Wilson	1962	Open	Open	Winner of 10th Prize

THE 20-GHOST CLUB LIMITED REGISTERED NUMBER 5224633

PRESIDENT: HRH The Duke of Gloucester

CHAIRMAN: Ken Forbes kennethforbes@btinternet.com

HON. VICE-PRESIDENTS: Brian Fidler, John L Kennedy, Sir John Stuttard, Jimmy Valentine

COMPANY SECRETARY: Brian Fidler

WEB: Dr Henry Fitzhugh henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net & John Narvell narvell630@gmail.com

TREASURER: Philip Hall

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Graham Tyson gtyson@outlook.com

OTHER UK DIRECTORS: Ashley Carmichael; Johnnie Gallop; Rosemary Jeffreys; Fokko Keuning; Strone Macpherson; Doug Magee; Nick Naismith; John R Redmill; John Snook.

Magazine submissions and letters to Johnnie at jgallop66@gmail.com

Please see the website for full contact details of our committee and directors

AUSTRALIAN CHAPTER:

Chairman: Rory Poland;

Vice-Chairman: David Davis;

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The Forbes Report

Firstly, thanks for all your responses and voting forms for the AGM. It is no doubt a reflection of the sad times we live in, but I had 10 returns in the first 10 minutes after the email went out! It is always encouraging to have the usual enthusiastic messages from 20-Ghost Club Members, even for this procedural event. It is a true reflection of the regard members have for the Club and much appreciated. Following unanimous approval at the EGM, the AGM will be an online only meeting.

We used to look forward to foreign travel – now I just look forward to a haircut! The current position on events has been emailed to all and the website updated. We remain hopeful for events from late June onwards, but we have to wait to see how things develop. At least our remaining events for 2021 are UK based, so there is a better chance of at least UK members being able to participate. Brian Fidler has also arranged that the Concours and Summer BBQ at Mallory Court will be open to all members as a one day event on 23 June. We will look to add other regional one day events once restrictions are eased.

The Club is already holding substantial tour deposits and payments, so we decided not to take bookings for new tours until we are reasonably certain that they can take place. This refers specifically to the tour of the New Forest in July and the London to Edinburgh in September, but we hope to open these up for bookings soon. To help us plan for numbers, Nick Naismith would be pleased to have any new expressions of interest for the L to E.

The major tour for 2022 will be the postponed Habsburg Tour in June with an Alpine Commemoration in July 2023. This will be a more leisurely 'highlights' tour for 18 days, starting in Salzburg, rather than the full re-enactment of the 1913 trial which we did 10 years ago. As this is expected to be a popular event, we are again working with Mindworks (who did the previous Alpine for us) to do the tour organization. There will also be a short tour of the Loire Valley in September 2023, thanks to local member, Alain Nieperon.



Following their invitation to a picnic and viewing of the new Ghost at Goodwood in September, Rolls-Royce Motor Company are keen to provide support. This is most likely to be with a professional photographer and video team to record the special moments on both the London to Edinburgh and the Alpine which makes it feasible for us to produce a commemorative album of these events.

With no current events to report on, but with the postponed Scottish Tour in prospect for September, Johnnie thought it would be fun to feature stories of previous tours in Scotland in this issue, aided by some evocative pictures of a tour in 1920 that follows a similar route to the first part of our tour. It will be fun to compare the scenes 100 years on. I am pleased to say that the ferries and bridges have improved somewhat in the last 100 years!

One of the by-products of lockdown is it allows plenty of time to sort out old photographs and remind ourselves of the special times on tour, be it the camaraderie tending to our cars together or enjoying a drink in splendid surroundings. Opposite there are a couple of relatively recent shots of us in Switzerland in 2019, but also a rather old image of me – with my first car!

Many thanks to Johnnie for producing another action-packed edition of N&R for us to enjoy, whilst otherwise frustrated and confined at home. A huge amount of work goes into producing each edition, but it is greatly appreciated by us all.

Best wishes
Ken

Just how many people does it take to oil a sphere?! Roy O' Sullivan, Doug Magee, Terry Bramall and Ken all look very pleased with themselves in the garage at the Hotel Waldhaus in Flims. 'It was snowing outside, so we were very grateful for a warm and dry garage.'



Above: Sir John Stuttard, Roy O'Sullivan and Ken are The Men in Black! 'Lausanne's Hotel Beau-Rivage Palace is in the background and the boat trip was across Lake Geneva to Evian for the final Gala Dinner. A great dinner, but even more memorable for the return trip. The driver got lost and took us up a cul-de-sac in the dark in a mountain village. Turned out he didn't have the pass for the motorway nor did he know the way!'

'I must have been about four or five in the pedal car - my memory does not stretch to the make/model, but I do remember my knees hitting the dashboard. Too tall for a sports car even then!'



Just a century ago...

We are delighted to welcome *Herodotus* – as a new regular reporter casting an eye over R-R related issues within The Autocar magazine 100 years ago.

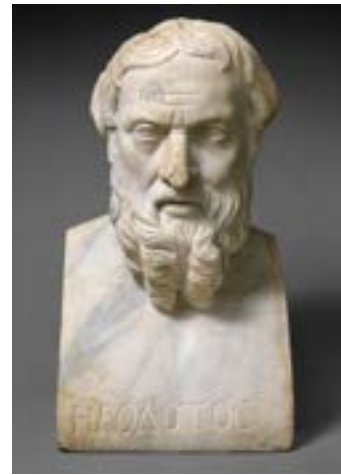
'In 1995 Dr Robin Barnard kindly donated his collection of the Autocar magazine to The Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation. Robin, a 20-Ghost Club member, had spent many years collecting copies of the magazine and having them sumptuously bound in gold-blocked green leather. He had acquired a full set from the first issue in 1895 up to the 1970s, but he later sold the issues prior to 1904 as they were of lesser interest to him because they contained nothing about Rolls-Royce... Sadly in the 1980s, Robin became blind, and thought the Foundation would be the ideal home for his fabulous collection.'

Rolls-Royce took a full page advert in the first Autocar of each month. The 5th March advert is pictured below. 'Rolls-Royce' and 'economy' are not words often associated with each other!

Coachbuilders were also regular advertisers, including Flewitt, Gill, Park Ward and Vanden Plas. They all placed half-page advertisements featuring their creations on Rolls-Royce chassis.

Each issue featured a page showing examples of stylish coachwork. These featured many Rolls-Royce cars an example of which was a Mann Egerton saloon (chassis 129BW). The caption to this commented on 'the very perfect moulding of the back panel and the artistic curve of the roof'. Another showed a cabriolet by Maythorn for the Indian Motor Exhibition in Delhi.

In a letter to the editor, an owner sang the praises of his old two-cylinder Rolls-Royce which he described as a 'dandy bus'. He sent a photograph which showed the registration to be CX-446; this is chassis No 20261, dating from 1905.



Another photo captioned Dignity and Impudence compared the 'aristocratic Rolls-Royce' to the 'democratic Ford Model T'. The picture showed chassis No 91AE which had all-weather coachwork by Offord.



A polished aluminium tourer by Vanden Plas on chassis No 2RE was captioned a touch of brightness.



In January 1921 the horse-power tax for vehicles came into force, causing much anger and dismay to motorists, and the Autocar's columns abounded with both explanation and criticism. It was at this time that it became compulsory to display a circular tax disc, and plethora of advertisements for licence discs holders appeared in the early months of the year.

The bureaucrats had been hard at work in defining where and where not the disc should be placed, and the Autocar published several articles explaining this. One showed the disc positioned on the windscreen of a Rolls-Royce (the registration number indicates that the car was 21CB). A further article used an open-drive limousine to show the statutory dimensions.

In March the Autocar reported on a Levée (a formal reception at which military officers of the armed services were presented individually to the sovereign) at St James's Palace in which 'cars played a great part'. It showed a photograph of three Guards officers in full dress uniform about to enter a Rolls-Royce cabriolet.



Elsewhere a report mentions a hill climb from Monte Carlo to Mont Agel on the Riviera which was won by a standard 40/50 HP Rolls-Royce with full touring equipment. The car averaged 25 mph over its 16 minute run.

Lots more to report on in the next issue!

ADVERTISEMENTS. MARCH 5TH. 1921.

ROLLS-ROYCE

ECONOMY.

PETROL CONSUMPTION

The following are average fuel figures based on the average of which are available for inspection by anyone interested.

18 MILES PER GALLON.	"Here is another 'trial'. London to London via Westland 100 miles on 6 gallons, almost exactly average 18 m.p.g. A very heavy load, 5 persons and luggage. Ref. No. 417.
20 MILES PER GALLON.	"The following figures are with a mixture of Road and street. The best result was on a run of 75 miles, when the consumption was just under 20 miles per gallon. Under ordinary conditions for one week, say, 30 miles, 18 miles per gallon. Ref. No. 418.
17.7 MILES PER GALLON.	"London to Lancaster, 252 miles, and Lancaster to Tynemouth, 266 miles, for an average of 27 miles per gallon, consuming 127.7 miles to the gallon for the whole journey. Ref. No. 419.
15 MILES PER GALLON.	"The average consumption in the motor, 15 miles to the gallon. Ref. No. 420.
15-17 MILES PER GALLON.	"My consumption of petrol was 15 to 17 miles to the gallon, and I never found her over on running. Ref. No. 421.

ROLLS-ROYCE, LTD., 15, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1.



Herodotus (well known to our very own Philip Hall) suggests you set up a standing order to
Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation,
 Sort code 20-20-15 A/c No 90525952

£20 a month would be fabulous and you might not even notice it.
 Send Philip an email and let him know: pah.rr@btinternet.com

Tyson Holds Forth

Graham Tyson, our membership secretary, owns a fine 1920 Silver Ghost (97AE) fitted with a touring body made by Cunard. Fearless of controversy he provides a regular source of fun, wit, and thoughtful reflection!

Scottish motoring journalist James MacFarlane said the first car in Scotland arrived in 1894 and was a second-hand Daimler Dogcart purchased by Glasgow engineer George Johnston (1855 – 1945). But I'm not so sure this is accurate. On October 28th 1895 Mr Johnston was to be found at Leith Docks waiting for a Panhard-Levassor car to be unloaded, together with a barrel of petroleum spirit, having been shipped from Antwerp. He did not know how to drive and so the car was taken by rail to Glasgow from where it was towed by horse to his family seat Mosesfield House on the edge of Springburn Park where he finally learnt to start it and gained some skill driving around his grounds. The fact that Johnston did not know how to drive makes me doubt he had already bought a car in 1894.

Incidentally 'Petrol' was a tradename created by Haltermann Carless in 1870. One of the stated uses of their new product was to remove nits (we can but hope that the health and safety executive of the day suggested a policy of no smoking as otherwise the removal process might have been rather extreme). The arrival of John Hare Leonard to the business in 1872



and the discovery that their Petrol was the perfect fuel for the internal combustion engine helped the company prosper. Capel Carless Leonard reverted to Haltermann Carless in 1913. On a personal note I stepped out with Miss Leonard, great grand-daughter of JH Leonard, for a while in the 1960's – if only I had known!



The next car in Scotland was the same model of Panhard imported just two months later, in January 1886, by Mr T R B Elliot of Clifton Park near Morebattle. Elliott and Johnston were thus the first motorists in Scotland in the accepted sense of owning four-wheeled petrol-driven vehicles. Elliot sold his Panhard-Levassor to Johnston for £110 in October 1896. Early Panhard's had Daimler-patent engines and perhaps journalist Macfarlane mistook a Daimler engined Panhard for an actual Daimler.

In November 1895 George Johnston persuaded Sir William Arrol to finance a new factory to become the first car maker in Scotland and, in fact, in Britain. Initially known as the Mo-Car Syndicate the name later changed to Arrol-Johnston. Arrol was impressive; he started work in a cotton mill aged 9, trained as a blacksmith aged 13 and went on to create an international engineering concern, Sir William Arrol & Co. His best known achievement was the Forth Bridge completed in 1890 and he was knighted in the same year.



Sir William Arrol, creator of the Forth Bridge, backed Arrol-Johnston the first car maker in Scotland and, in fact, in Britain.

The first Arrol-Johnston was powered by a 10hp 2-cylinder opposed piston engine under the floor started by pulling on a rope. A wooden dogcart body seated six in total in three rows with the driver being in the second row (where else?!)



The original car was fine in 1895 but looked decidedly old fashioned by 1906 when it was finally dropped in favour of a new design. By the way, Lanchester built their first car (often erroneously hailed as the first British motor car) a couple of months after the first Arrol-Johnston.

In 1902 steel producer and battleship builder Sir William Beardmore (later Lord Invernain) bought Sir William Arrol's shareholding and became Chairman when the company went public.



William Beardmore

Arrol-Johnston became well-regarded producing everything in-house (apart from tyres, springs and lamps) at its 4.5 acre Paisley factory, they even made their own magnetos. The cars they produced were rugged and well suited to the atrocious Scottish roads of the time.

George Johnston left the company that bore his name in 1906 following a disagreement. He formed the All-British Car Company of Bridgeton in March 1906. This failed rather dramatically two years later and Johnston was declared bankrupt. He left for Mexico where he managed a mining company for some 20 years developing new extraction methods (sadly also a failure). He returned to his native Scotland around 1930 and died in Edinburgh in 1945 unmarried aged 90. His achievement, creating the first British car, was overshadowed by his later failures. As a result Johnston is largely unknown today – very sad given his outstanding contribution to early motor car manufacture.

Arrol-Johnston merged with Aster of Wembley in 1927 to become Arrol-Aster. The new company lasted for just two years before succumbing to receivership.

Sir William Beardmore kept an interest in Arrol-Johnston until its demise in 1929 but also became involved in aviation in 1913. He acquired the British manufacturing rights to Austro-Daimler aero-engines and later for D.F.W. aircraft. During the first war he made aero-engines and 650 complete aircraft.



A preserved Sopwith Camel built by Beardmores.

He launched his own cars in 1919 and by the end of 1929, when vehicle production in Scotland ceased, Beardmore had produced around 500 cars but also over 6000 taxis, for which the firm was better known. Taxi production continued in London until 1967.



Beardmore 12/30 tourer 1925

Finally, my carefully chosen Scottish word for the day is:

FEART (Adj) frightened, without good reason "I was so feart trying to write this note, I almost gave up." But you're worth it!

From Across the Pond

Kimberly Shadduck

Kimberly and Dave Shadduck own a Springfield Ghost (S131MK) and Springfield Phantom I (138FR). Kimberly is a photographer noted for her images of cars in motion as well as informal shots capturing both the spirit of our motors cars and our club.

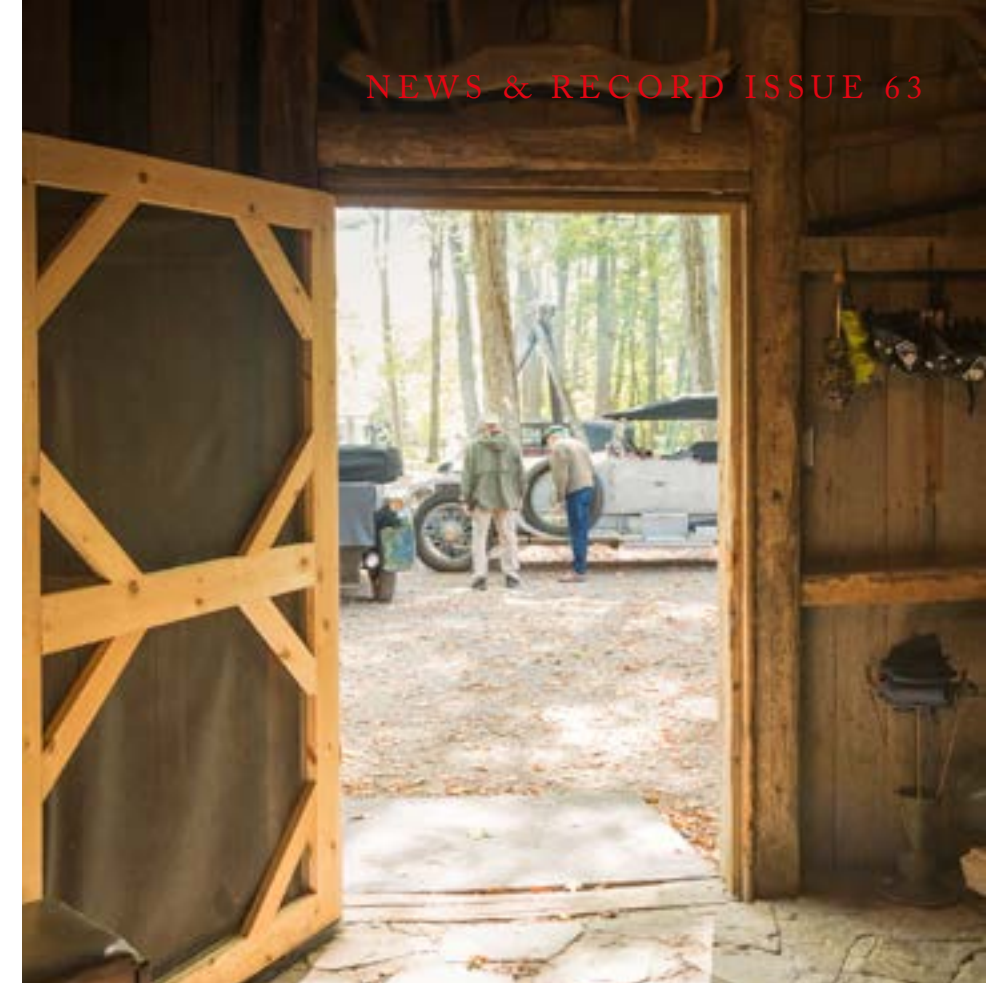
Once a year I like to pull out my bucket list to see what needs to be checked off (always a good thing!) and then decide what needs to be added (an even better thing!) Visiting Scotland has been in the top five of my list for a very long time. So when the 20-Ghost Club announced back in early 2019 that the June 2020 Scotland tour was open for registration, Dave immediately signed us up. I'm hoping that a year from now that I will be able to cross off visiting Scotland from my bucket list.

One of the major reasons that I want to visit Scotland is I'm Scottish. I'm Clan MacDonald which is one of the oldest and largest clans in Scotland with ancient roots in the Western Highland and Islands of Scotland. More importantly, I want to purchase a kilt and other garments made with MacDonald tartan!



Dave and I cannot wait to drive our Rolls-Royce through the Highlands as we weave along the pristine coastline beneath the rugged granite peaks. I can't wait to photograph the iconic castle on top of the hill in Edinburgh and the picturesque fishing villages on the Isle of Skye. Strolling through the gardens at the Castle of Mey and having a pint with the locals at the pubs are just a few more reasons we look forward to the Scotland tour. Will I meet any other MacDonalds? I hope so!

This will be the first tour outing for our 1929 Phantom I and it's in tip-top shape and ready for the adventure. One of the benefits of our PI is it has wind-up windows, unlike our Silver Ghost!



As I write this I'm reminded of several obstacles that could still prevent us from not being on the tour: vaccinations, new travel rules, new travel restrictions, quarantines and of course shipping the PI. However, we're hopeful and can't wait to be touring again with you all and meeting even more 20-Ghost members.

Now I don't have any Scottish photos...YET! So here are some Canadian shots from 2017, hope you enjoy them. Chì mi thu a dh 'aithghearr dear friends!

Above: Sucrierie de la Montagne 'The Sugar Shack' - in the heart of a maple forest!
Below: Boldt Castle is impressive but I think Scotland's castles will have a longer history.



London to Edinburgh 2011 & 2021

Nick Naismith recalls the run 10 years ago and is excited to repeat the feat this September.

The London to Edinburgh Centenary had long captured my imagination and back in early 2011 the prospect of organising the centenary re-enactment in the September of that year was very exciting. Was it really possible to drive from London to Edinburgh and back in top gear and then lap Brooklands at 76mph? I couldn't imagine how it was possible 100 years ago with unmade roads and no support services and I certainly had my doubts about how we could achieve it in 2011 with modern traffic and traffic lights.

Our dear friend Tim Forrest, who is sadly missed, was the fountain of all knowledge and spent many hours researching the actual route which they took, there being surprisingly little published information about it.

We were lucky to have so many beautiful London to Edinburgh cars present including the original 1701 which made the trip in 1911, Chip Connor's 1884, Sir Michael Kadoorie's 1958, Lukas Huni's 2104 and Bill Ives's 32PB, they resembled thoroughbred steeds powerful, light and purposeful.

We assembled on the 10th September at the Royal Automobile Club almost 100 years to the day since 1701 performed her amazing feat.

P&A Wood had machined up some blanks to fit in the gearbox gates, fixed in place with wire and a lead Rolls-Royce seal, this effectively blanked off all but top and reverse so there was no going back now! The seals were optional and 9 of the 14 cars had them fitted.



The start was set for 6am on the Sunday morning and the cars made a spectacular sight lined up in Pall Mall in front of the Royal Automobile Club against a glistening wet road.

After turning right at the end of Pall Mall our first challenge was the traffic lights at the top of the hill turning into Piccadilly where a lot of judgement was called for to avoid falling at the first hurdle.

The route followed around Piccadilly Circus and up Shaftsbury Avenue to the Angel Islington and then onto the route of the Great North Rd. It was a surreal feeling gliding through central London with our historic cars gleaming under the fluorescent streetlights, we certainly caused quite a stir with the late night revellers who were still falling out of the night clubs.

After a while we adjusted to our very high geared steeds, the clutch was acting as a giant torque convertor coupled to a single speed transmission— it's amazing how much abuse these leather lined mechanisms can take in transferring the power to lug these heavy cars away from standstill in direct top gear.

The technique was to give the engine some revs to produce enough power to get the car rolling while slipping the clutch, once the road wheels were just turning the clutch pedal could be fully released, the clutch then continued to slip for a moment, protected by the egg cup full of oil, before drive was fully engaged allowing the torque from the big low compression engine to pull top gear from virtually no revs - quite incredible!

The route out of London was surprisingly straightforward and proved very enjoyable as we motored in procession up Highgate Hill through Whetstone, Barnet, Potters Bar and Welwyn Garden City. The desire not to stop considerably improved our driving technique and made sure that we all looked a long way ahead to predict what was happening at the traffic lights and junctions.

After Baldock we joined the A1 and were able to let the horses run as we cruised up to Stilton for our first stop at the Bell Inn for coffee and croissants. We all rejoiced in the performance of our Ghosts happy in our knowledge that it might just be possible to achieve our dream of going all the way in top gear.

Feeling emboldened our next challenge was Stamford with its winding, uphill high street and traffic lights, we passed the George Hotel a historic coaching inn frequently used as a stopping place on runs to Edinburgh. We were feeling good as we had a more relaxed and less challenging afternoon as we motored on past Doncaster and Pontefract to our overnight stay at the Woodhall Hotel Wetherby.

The roads from Wetherby onwards were very pretty and we motored on through Northallerton, Darlington, Durham and on past the Angel of the North statue. All the cars were now getting into their stride and we zoomed up the A1 towards Newcastle at a good 55-65mph. Even the long steep sections out of Newcastle couldn't stop the relentless charge of our valiant steeds.

We lunched at the White Swan Inn after passing through the massive stone gateway of the historic walled town of Alnwick built in the 15th Century by the Duke of Northumberland.

But further north, up along the east coast, the weather turned against us and a severe north-westerly gale began to make forward progress difficult. It got worse - much worse actually. At times it was difficult to breathe without turning your head away from the prevailing wind. It was necessary to drive with 5° of opposite lock to maintain a straight course and prevent being blown across the road. Tim and Susie's Taj Mahal (aka Nellie!) had all sails set and its progress reminded me of a yacht beating up to windward.

The storm hardened the resolve of our intrepid band to make it to Edinburgh, to our right the horizontal spray dancing off the white horses of the distinctly unfriendly looking North Sea, meanwhile the Ghosts didn't miss a beat, there couldn't have been a better test of man and machine.

And by 5pm all the cars and their windswept crews had safely arrived at the finish in Holyrood Park under Arthur's Seat. Magnificent!

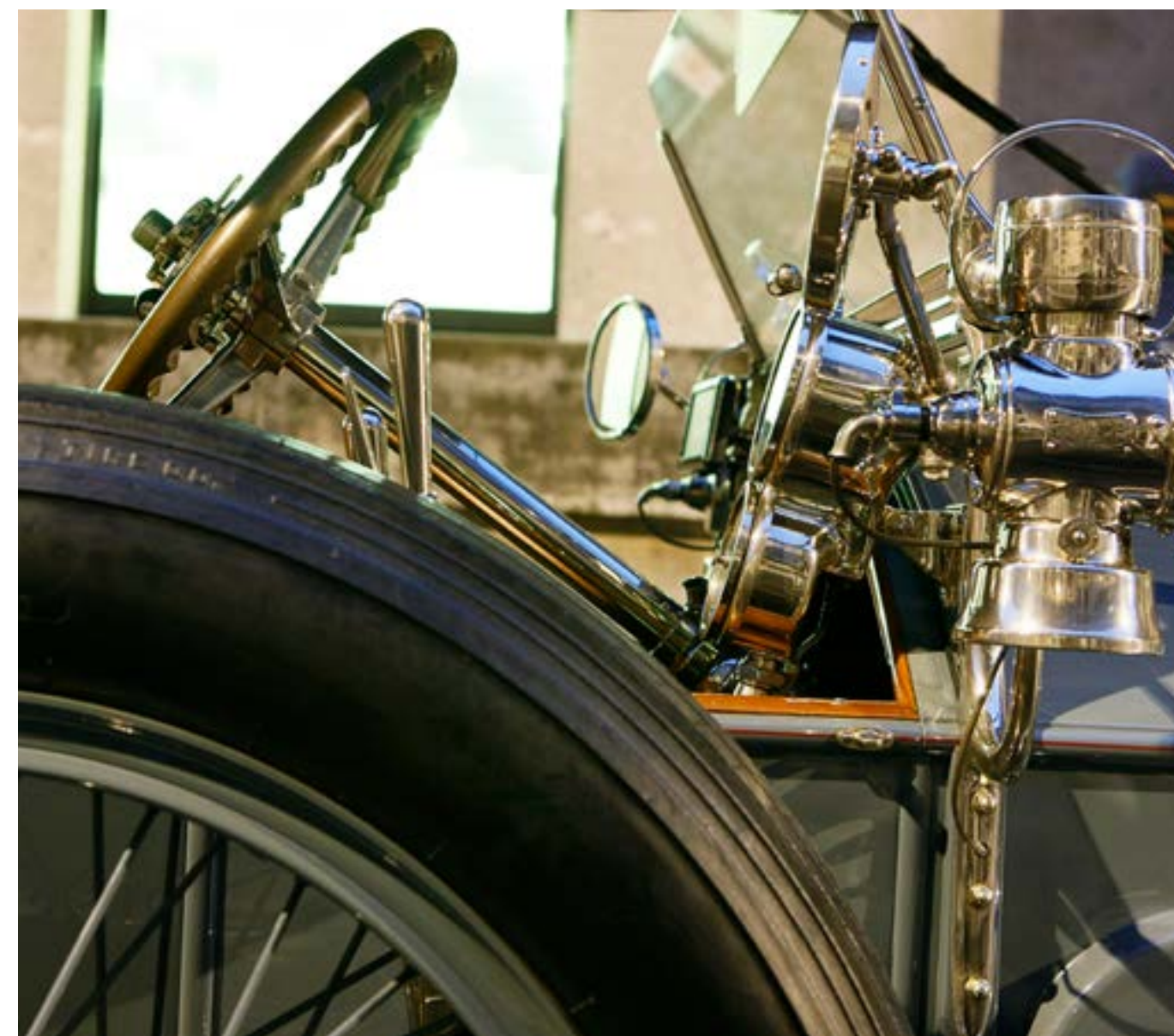
That evening there was no time to rest as we were due on the Royal Yacht Britannia at 7pm where we were joined by Lord Elgin's son Alex Bruce and his wife Vikki, who had given us such an entertaining Whisky tasting when we visited Edinburgh on the Prince Henry Tour earlier in the year.



We were treated to a private tour of Britannia and viewed the Queen's Phantom V in its garage on board before sitting down in the State Dining room to a sumptuous meal followed by a wonderful display of Highland dancing.

The London to Edinburgh Trophy was awarded to Lukas Huni who had achieved the best fuel consumption 14.57mpg over the 423miles, still some way off the 24.32mpg at 19.59 mph that 1701 had achieved in 1911, albeit that our average had been nearer 28mph. Being a competitive racing driver Lukas had taken the competition very seriously and had weakened the mixture on the overrun and coasted down the hills – I wish I had thought of that!

We are really looking forward to the 110th re-enactment of the London to Edinburgh, which is open to all cars and you are welcome to join us whether you wish to attempt it in top gear or not. We will again be hosting a fantastic dinner aboard Britannia on our arrival in Edinburgh before joining the start of the Club's two-week Scottish Tour.



Page 6321: 1914 46MA, reg LL-1524 HJ Mulliner Tourer leads the contemporary Ghost
Opposite: 1913 32PB, reg AX-216, now owned by James and Tanya Clarke, storms out of London

All pictures with thanks to Rolls-Royce Motor Cars



2104 driven by Lukas Huni with passenger Miguel Gonzales, who is obviously sharing a joke with Paul Wood driving the original L-E car 1701 (now owned by John Snook) with Andy Wood in the passenger seat. Photograph: Rolls-Royce Motor Cars

By Silver Ghost to Skye in 1920

Harrison Royce recounts a Rolls-Royce tour 101 years ago, following the discovery and donation of a wonderful series of photographs

In summer 1920 Geoffrey Summers, accompanied by his motor engineer, set off in his brand new Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost motor car (39TW) from his home in North Wales initially to collect George and Ashley Abraham from Keswick. Summers' objective was the Isle of Skye, the largest island in the Inner Hebrides archipelago, known for its stunning scenery and great climbs – Summers was an accomplished mountaineer as well as keen motorist. The Abraham brothers had first climbed in Skye in 1895 and both had gone on to write books describing their ascents on the isle. They were thus the ideal travelling companions.

Their subsequent 180 mile journey to Perth [see map overleaf 1] would have been relatively straightforward. Travelling at speeds between 50 and 60mph, with four in the car, they put up the hood to stop the two in the back being buffeted by the wind. But, once they reached the Highlands the road surfaces became more challenging, the speed was reduced and the hood came down – as the scenery became spectacular. As George Abraham wrote in *Motor Ways at Home & Abroad*, 'To tour in a saloon car, especially in the Alps,

is to miss much. For seeing the glories of nature through which one travels, the open touring car is supreme, and really healthy withal'.

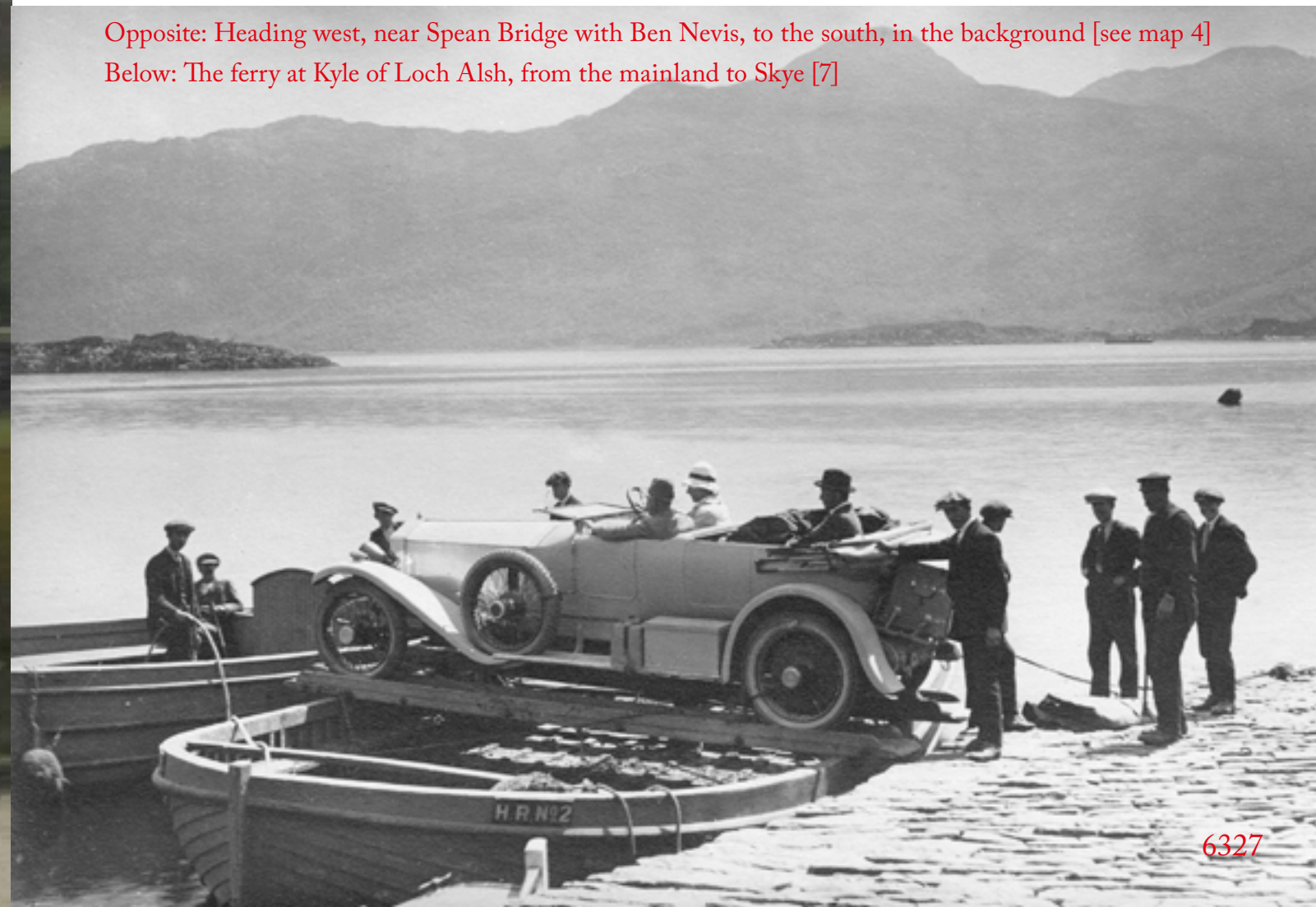
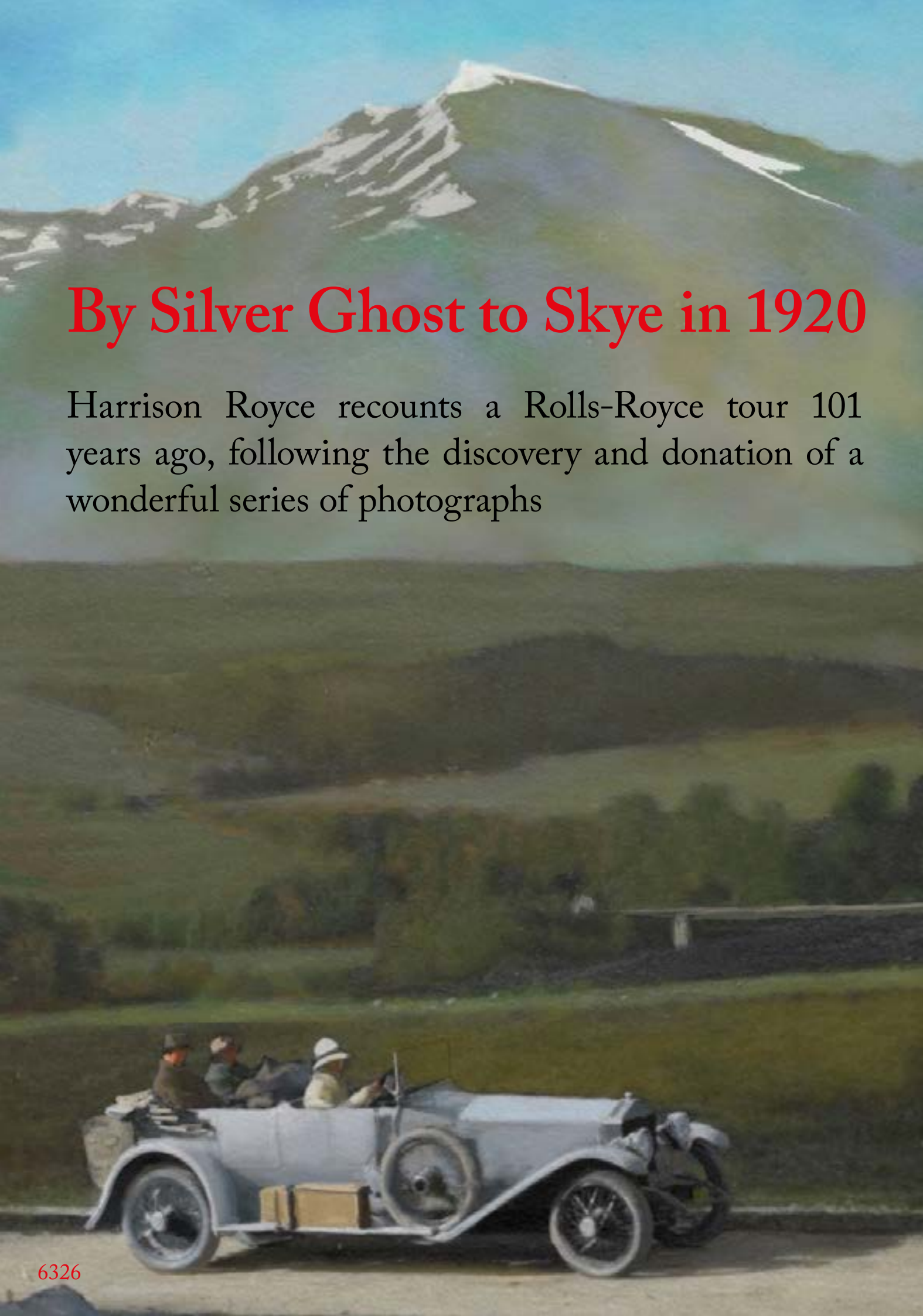
In the 1920s the roads in parts of Scotland were little more than dirt tracks, with metalled sections between the villages. In the years before road bridges became the norm crossing rivers and lakes was a hazardous business with the Silver Ghost strung across the top of a large rowing boat or strapped to a pontoon and towed.

Dalwhinnie, by the edge of the Cairngorms, is noted for its single malt and their first night was spent at the Loch Erich Hotel [2], a favourite fishermen's haunt.

The second day was just 35 miles but a short cut over the moors to the Spey Valley saw the first of the rough mountain roads. The Silver Ghost made light of the climb in top-gear but conditions worsened as they approached Loch Laggan where the road was covered in dust on top of a torn surface owing to the heavy timber traffic.

Opposite: Heading west, near Spean Bridge with Ben Nevis, to the south, in the background [see map 4]

Below: The ferry at Kyle of Loch Alsh, from the mainland to Skye [7]



Loch Laggan [3] is known for its brown trout as well as salmon and sea trout and featured in the BBC TV series *Monarch of the Glen* (as Loch Bogle). At the northern end of the lake, the 19th century baronial mansion Ardverikie House also appeared in *Monarch of the Glen* as well as in a number of films, including *Mrs Brown*, *Outlaw King* and *No Time to Die*. The road alongside the loch was good and the car sped to the local hotel at Spean Bridge [4] ‘a most comfortable hostelry, which gave unexpected guests a real Highland welcome’.

There was a spirit of adventure in the air the following morning as the group set off to travel the 100 miles west to Skye; ‘Whirling through the woods of Spean on to the high moors, the great mass of Ben Nevis loomed on the backward view, gleaming grey and white in the early morning sunshine’. Ben Nevis, at 4,413 feet (1,345 metres), is the highest mountain in the British Isles. Even in the late summer there is often snow on the top.

Sir Geoffrey Summers Bt, CBE, DL, JP (1891-1972) was son of Henry (Harry) Hall Summers (1865-1945) and grandson of John Summers (1822-1876), who founded John Summers & Sons which became one of the UK’s largest iron and steel producers, latterly based at Shotton, North Wales.

Geoffrey was educated at Uppingham and Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, graduating in engineering. In 1913, he joined the family firm where he was a director from 1921 until 1967. During the First War, he served with the Royal Engineers and later went on to chair Flintshire County Council and become High Sheriff and a Deputy Lieutenant. In 1942, he was awarded the CBE and, in 1952, was given a baronetcy for political and public service. He died in 1972 at St Asaph, Denbyshire.

He began a love of mountaineering whilst fell-walking in the Lake District and in Scotland and became a member of the Alpine Club, Climbers’ Club and Arctic Club. In 1923, he joined an expedition to the Svalbard archipelago in Norway as ship's carpenter and engineer. The Expedition was led by George (later Sir George) Binney and included Sandy Irvine, who was to perish on Everest the following year. Of tangential interest, at the time of his death in 1924, Irvine had been named as co-respondent in the divorce proceedings of Harry Summers, Geoffrey’s father (Harry had married a chorus girl, Marjory Thompson, in 1917, when she was 19 and he was 52).

Summers became an experienced mountaineer, climbing in Norway, the European Alps, the Canadian Rockies and the Andes. He was also a keen golfer and an avid motorist. He owned and drove, with his younger brother Dick, a 30/98 Vauxhall, a 37.2 HP Hispano Suiza, a 3-litre Bentley and a V8 Lincoln, as well as at least three Rolls-Royce motor cars over the years (18RB, 39TW and 117MC). He enjoyed motor sport, as well as travel, and participated in motor races at Brooklands and Shelsley Walsh. As a boy and as a young man he read books and articles written by George Abraham. From different backgrounds and despite an age gap of 20 years, the two men shared a love of climbing and of early motoring. They became friends and travelled together widely.



The 1923 Arctic expedition
Summers is lower middle row, second from left;
Irvine is at the top.

Map numbers in text & pictures:

- [1] Perth
- [2] Loch Ericht Hotel
- [3] Loch Laggan
- [4] Spean Bridge & Ardverikie
- [5] Invergarry
- [6] Glen Sheil
- [7] Eilean Donan Castle
- [8] Kyleakin
- [9] Sligachan
- [10] Glenbrittle & Cuillin Hills
- [11] Clach Glas
- [12] Talisker
- [13] Dunvegan Castle
- [14] Portree
- [15] Storr Rock
- [16] The Quiraing
- [17] Duntulm Castle
- [18] Loch Maree
- [19] Inverewe Botanical Garden
- [20] Lochinver
- [21] Beaully
- [22] Fort William
- [23] Glencoe





Over the Moors to Glen Spey
from Loch Laggan [3]

The route zig-zagged west and then north along Loch Lochy to Invergarry [5] with its ruined castle which was, at that time of the year 'ablaze with rhododendrons'. It was nearby on the shores of Loch Oich that Bonnie Prince Charlie massed his army before the bloody Battle of Culloden in 1746 which ended the Jacobite rising.

Then to Loch Garry and Tomdoun where the hotel, built in 1895, is known as a base for fishing in the River Garry as well as stalking and shooting. From Loch Cluanie, a much improved road led through Glen Shiel [6] and then to Glen Sheil Bridge at the end of Loch Duich.

From Glen Shiel Bridge it is a short journey along the north shore of Loch Duich to Dornie, a most attractive town, the highlight of which is the Eilean Donan Castle [7]. In 1911, Lieutenant Colonel John Macrae-Gilstrap bought the island on which the castle ruins stood and began a restoration which was completed in 1932. Today, this castle is one of the most picturesque in Scotland with a narrow stone bridge and causeway providing access from the town.



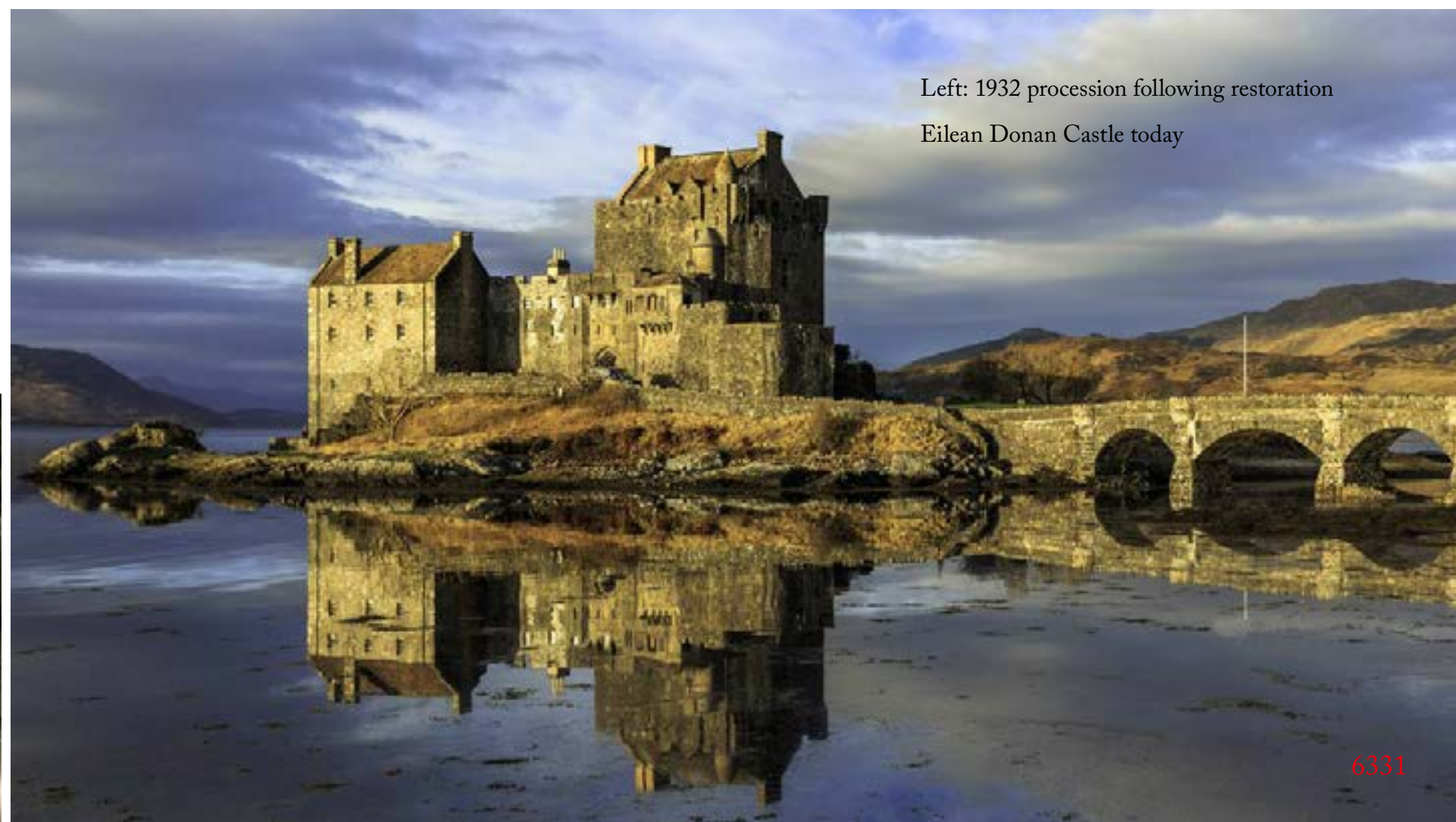
The Summers' Silver Ghosts: In 1914, aged just 22 and with family money, Geoffrey Summers acquired a new Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost 18RB with Tourer coachwork by Watson of Liverpool. The car was photographed by George Abraham during a visit by Summers to the Lake District, shown right near the top of Hard Knott Pass between Eskdale and the Duddon Valley (Photo courtesy of Colin Hughes). The winding road, with hairpin bends, is one of the steepest and most challenging in England.

A 1914 Silver Ghost has brakes only on the rear wheels. Summers would have experienced the same sense of thrill and excitement from driving his car up Hard Knott as he would from climbing the nearby mountains and rock faces.

In 1918 18RB was commandeered for war service and it was not until 1920 that Geoffrey was able to take delivery of a replacement Rolls-Royce. The new car, 39TW, was a 1920 four-seater Tourer, also bodied by Watson and is the car shown in the Scottish photographs.



Climbing Hard Knott Pass, Lake District, in 18RB



Left: 1932 procession following restoration

Eilean Donan Castle today

To reach Skye from the mainland required two hazardous crossings. At Dornie [7], 'the balancing of a big car on a little boat was skilfully managed and the group was rowed across with the haunting lilt of a Gaelic song in our ears'. At Loch Alsh the Dornie authority advised that there were no planks long enough to carry such a large car on the Skye ferry. After an hour's delay special planks were obtained, but on the opposite shore so there was a further wait while they were rowed across. Once the Rolls-Royce was finally loaded onto the ferry the journey was slow to safeguard the precious cargo and it took half an hour to be rowed across.

The Dornie Ferry on Loch Alsh [7]



On landing at Kyleakin [8] 'the car was met with fifty fierce looking cattle waiting for embarkation and, no doubt, over excited by the delay. Eventually the Rolls-Royce was extricated with no real damage to the paintwork despite one animal sitting on the running board. It wasn't until 1995 that the Skye Bridge was built. Controversially it was privately funded and initially a toll was charged but later the Scottish Parliament bought it and abolished the toll.

Landing at Kyleakin, Skye, with Caisteal Maol in the background [8]



Sligachan and Marsco near Sconser - the finest view of the Cuillin Hills [10]

Leaving the ferry the group journeyed through small villages 'where the harvesting of peat was in progress, with the women, young and old, doing the hard work and carrying huge loads on their backs. There were quaint old crofter dwellings and a reek of peat in the air. Here and there the shaggy russet coloured Highland cattle wandered aimlessly'. Turning west the village of Sligachan has an ancient stone bridge and the comfortable Sligachan Hotel had been built in 1830 as a climbing lodge. This was the group's headquarters for a week's stay for sightseeing and rock climbing on the adjacent peaks of the Black Cuillins to the west.

The Cuillin Hills [10] are about one third of the way up Skye. The Black Cuillin is in the west and the Red Cuillin in the east – their names chosen on account of the colours of the rock. They are reached from the south via Kilbride and Torrin, from the east via Sligachan, and from the west via Glenbrittle and Bualintur.

The Rolls-Royce spent its days on Skye being driven on the rough roads through its rugged landscapes with the car's passengers visiting the picturesque fishing villages and medieval castles, as well as rock climbing. Abraham's photos record the raw and unspoilt countryside and the demands placed on the Silver Ghost; demands which it could take in its stride. Rolls-Royce motor cars were built in the inter-war years with strong chassis, springs and shock absorbers to cope with the rigours of rough roads in India, Africa and Australia. The journeys in the south west of Skye, on tracks which even today are unadopted roads, must have been quite adventurous, even perilous, but not at all beyond the capability of a Silver Ghost with its sturdy chassis affording high road clearance, as sure and as confident as a Range Rover might be today.



George Dixon Abraham (1871-1965) was one of the four sons of George Perry Abraham (1844-1923), a photographer, postcard publisher and mountaineer who had a photographic studio and shop in Keswick in the Lake District. Young George had three brothers: Ashley, who was also a photographer and keen climber; Sidney, who was a bank manager in Keswick; and John, who became acting Governor of Tanganyika. George and Ashley both joined their father's photographic and postcard publishing business.

George Abraham owned the first car in Keswick and was one of the pioneers of motor touring. His book *Motor Ways in Lakeland* (1913) was a classic of its time as a guide to travelling in the Lake District long before the Preston Bypass became Britain's first stretch of 'motorway' in 1958. He was a regular 1920s contributor to the Autocar magazine and his later book *Motor Ways at Home & Abroad* (1928) was illustrated with his own stunning photos. He was also a well-known author of many books on mountaineering and his talent as a photographer resulted in wonderful illustrations in his books and on postcards - sold separately as prints in the Abrahams' shop in Keswick.

For 30 years, from 1890 to 1920, George and Ashley Abraham (the Keswick brothers as they were known) pioneered new climbs in Lakeland, Scotland and Wales. With their photographs and writings, they did more than anyone else to popularise the sport, as well as to promote the Lake District. Their photographs are of the highest quality as a result of using the best traditional equipment available. A tripod, an Underwood whole-plate camera, two or three lenses and a dozen glass-plate negatives weighing around 20lbs would be carried up hills, along escarpments and over passes to capture the best images of climbing in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras.

Top: George Perry Abraham standing at the back (the father of the family) with his sons left to right, Ashley, John and George.

Left: Kern Knotts Crack, Great Gable, Lake District, 1897 (Photo by George Abraham with thanks to the Fell and Rock Club)

On more than one occasion during their stay at Sligachan the party journeyed to Glenbrittle [10], near Bualintur, on Loch Brittle to climb the Black Cuillin Hills and enjoy the landscape. The roads in the Cuillin Hills in the 1920s were probably the most primitive on Skye. Apart from gaining access to some classic walks and climbs, Geoffrey and the Abrahams were able to see the magical fairy pools.



Their first important climb, accessed via Glenbrittle in the west, was Sgùrr Dearg (3,235 feet or 986 metres), described somewhat cautiously and erroneously by Ordnance surveyors as 'inaccessible' because of its Pinnacle, a tall fin of rock, on the top. The first successful ascent had only been made in 1880.

From Kilbride and Torrin in the south, the road leads to the shores of Loch Slapin, from which one can climb Blà Bheinn, a magnificent mountain by any standards. Believed to mean 'blue mountain', it is a great isolated citadel of rock with fabulous views and all the character of the main Cuillin Ridge.

The ascent to its height of 3,050 feet (928 metres), was straightforward but very rocky. 'Our party, however, preferred the jagged granite crest of Clach Glas [11] (2,579 feet or 786 metres), well known as the Matterhorn of Skye.'

After a week at Sligachan, the group travelled north via Talisker [12], home of the famous whisky: 'known as the whisky of the forty falls'... 'which relates to the water from which it is made and not the results of over-indulgence'.

Dunvegan Castle [13] is situated on the north west coast of Skye, protected from the Atlantic by a loch. It is one the great Hebridean castles and the only Highland fortress to have been continuously occupied by the same family for 800 years. While the castle dates from the 13th century, it was subject to a romantic restoration and enlarged in the mid-19th century.

A memorable feature of the group's visit to Dunvegan Castle [13] was being received by the aged chieftain, Macleod of Macleod, who always took an interest in climbing on the Cuillin. The huge walls of the castle, some 17 inches thick, had defied the stress of many battles of the clans as well as winter storms. They also guarded some treasures such as Prince Charlie's waistcoat, Rory O'More's drinking horn and a drinking cup dating from the 10th century. There was a letter from Dr Johnson, who stayed at the castle with Boswell during a tour of Scotland in 1773, thanking Lady Macleod for her hospitality.

At Coire na Creiche, south-west Skye [10]
Top: The Fairy Pools



The Macleods were firm believers in fairies and the entrance to the castle was through Fairy Woods and over Fairy Bridge. The chieftain showed Geoffrey and the Abrahams the fairy flag which holds the luck of the Macleods.

Sir Reginald MacLeod (the 27th Chief) was the first chieftain to open Dunvegan to the public in 1933 for charitable purposes two days each week. Since then, the castle has become an important visitor attraction but, with the significant size of the different buildings and gardens, it never feels crowded.

After their visit to Dunvegan, the party returned to Sligachan. Then, on the following day they set off for 'the finest run in Skye - there are few to equal it in Britain - round by the north coast to The Quiraing'

Portree [14] is the capital of Skye, with an attractive harbour fringed by cliffs and a pier designed by Thomas Telford. Continuing north from Portree is the spectacular Storr Rock [15], a magnificent granite pinnacle which can be seen for miles.

The Quiraing is in the north east of the island and is one of the wonders of Skye; a spectacular range of high cliffs which are three miles long and very photogenic. [16 and cover image]

Equally impressive are the ruins of Duntulm Castle [17], dating from the 14th century and formerly the seat of the chiefs of Clan MacDonald of Sleat. The castle was built when the area was subject to feuds between the rival MacLeod and MacDonald clans. The defences were improved in the 16th century and, by the early 17th century, the MacDonalds finally gained the upper hand in the area. Legend has it that the castle was abandoned after the chieftain's infant son, who was in the care of a nursemaid, fell from a window and was dashed on the rocks below.

On their way back to Sligachan that day they called at Uig, a port on the west of Skye, due south of Duntulm Castle [17]

After a week on Skye, the group visited Loch Maree [18], back on the mainland but to the north, before heading home. It was not advisable, or even possible, to take the car on the ferry across the Inner Sound and Loch Carron to Strome Ferry. Indeed, this was clarified when the group learnt that the road between Strome Ferry and Strathcarron was entirely missing.

However a telegram three days previously had allowed the stationmaster at Loch Alsh to procure an open truck for the car so that it could be conveyed, along with its passengers, by rail to Strathcarron. Before the Rolls-Royce could be loaded onto the train: 'Twelve gallons of petrol in the tank had to be emptied out - into the loch, or where we liked, the stationmaster curtly said - we were in somewhat of a dilemma. Moreover it was doubtful whether petrol could be obtained at the end of the short journey. Eventually a dealer at Loch Alsh bought the contents of the tank and we found ourselves landed at Strathcarron with no petrol available. Luckily a passer-by supplied enough to run the engine to Jeantown, by Loch Carron, three and a half miles away, and there sufficient precious fluid was obtained'.

Loch Maree is one of the largest freshwater lochs in Scotland. The party lodged at the Loch Maree Hotel, where Queen Victoria had stayed in 1877. Her Majesty was by no means the first to be captivated by the loch and its islands, the history of which is shrouded in legend. Back in the 7th century, St Maelrubha, a Celtic Missionary, established a cell on Isle Maree, one of several islands in the loch. The area is well known for its nature trails and bird life.

Top right: En route to Loch Slapin, Skye
Bottom left: The restored Dunvegan Castle [13]
Bottom right: The Fairy Woods at Dunvegan





Above: A car is carried on the Highland Railway between Kyle of Lochalsh and Strathcarron in the early 1900s. The loco is (so far as I can tell) number 88 an L-Class designed by David Jones and built in 1895. Although the loco was not named this class were known as 'Skye Bogies'. Can anybody identify the car?



On the cliffs, above the sea, on the way to the Quiraing, Near Staffin [16]

At the north west end of Loch Maree the River Ewe leads to Poolewe on the shores of Loch Ewe, a sea loch. Just one mile north of this is the celebrated Inverewe Botanical Garden [19]. Starting in 1862, Osgood Mackenzie, the son of Sir Francis Mackenzie, 5th Baronet and 12th Laird of Gairloch, began to carve out a walled garden on the barren, rocky land beside the loch. He built a mansion in Scottish Baronial style and began to create a garden on a rocky headland jutting into Loch Ewe. He planted over 100 acres of woodland to screen the garden from the effects of the wind and help create a more moderate climate for the sub-tropical plants which he introduced. It is one of Scotland's great gardens. Thereafter, the route north of Inverewe to Lochinver [20] was 'the finest motor run in Britain'.

Duntulm Castle [17]



The tour had come to its end and it was time to travel south. 'After hours of pothole dodging', the route taken was over Glen Docherty to Achnasheen and by Strath Bran and Dingwall to Beaully [21], just west of Inverness. From there it was an easy run south west on the Loch Ness shores of the Caledonian Canal. Fort William [22] provided a night's stopover before Glencoe was reached via the Ballachulish ferry.

Situated on the south shore of Loch Leven, not far from Fort William, Glencoe [23] is known for its waterfalls. Sadly it is also known for the massacre of 1692 in the wake of the Jacobite uprising of 1689 after King James II of England (and VII of Scotland) had been deposed in the Glorious Revolution. And there, in Glencoe, George Abraham's photographic record of the 1920 tour of the Highlands and the Isle of Skye ends.

His wonderful photos illustrate the beauty of the landscape, the challenges and the excitement of a motoring tour of Scotland, focused on the Isle of Skye, just over a century ago. They also demonstrate the robust and reliable nature of their means of transport – Geoffrey Summers' 1920 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (39TW) Watson Tourer.

Post Script by Sir John Stuttard

Last year the Club heard from Dr Ian Gordon, research director at the University of Edinburgh Business School, that his ageing father-in-law, Ernest Ireland, owned a collection of photographs taken by George Abraham in 1920.

In discussion with the Club and the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation, through Ian Gordon's good auspices, Ernest Ireland agreed to bequeath to the Foundation the collection of 33 magical photographs. Sadly, soon after this generous gift, Ernest Ireland passed away.

Thus the preceding article both illustrates George Abraham's photographic genius and serves as a memorial to Ernest Ireland's kindness in making this collection available for posterity. I am grateful to a Scottish friend, Peter Berry, CMG, for deciphering the location of each of the photos.

I also hope it will whet appetites for our September 2021 Scottish tour when participants will be able to visit some of the spots photographed by George Abraham in 1920.

Inevitably, space in our magazine is limited; the article has been abridged and only 16 of the 33 Abraham photographs have been used. A dedicated booklet is currently being prepared, so that members can enjoy the full article and, importantly, all the glorious photographs. This will be available before the summer for those wishing to have a copy before the Scottish tour in September.



Above: In the woods near Loch Maree [18]

Right: Skye, south of Duntulm Castle [17] descending to Uig Bay



So Good he bought it twice!

Michael Sapsford on his 1923 20HP GA11 KK-9630

I come from a generation that had the advantage of doing National Service! After training I was asked where I would like to be posted. I said that I would like to go to Hong Kong for, in the 1950s, one could only dream of such faraway travel. "We'll send you to Dover, it's on the way!"

So I found myself in Dover with one other junior officer, Barry Motion. For transport Barry had a 12/50 Alvis two-seater which he had pulled off a scrap heap in Chichester for £15. The low price was explained by a run big end. There were a couple of spare 12/50 engines in the yard and Barry took a good rod out of one of them. Thereafter we did many miles in this car which was nice to drive and, like all Alvises, had a very good gearbox.

Needing a few spares we were directed to one John Lott who told us about a VSCC meeting at a nearby pub. Looking over the cars parked outside I saw an early RR 20HP with a small cabriolet body by H.J. Mulliner. Turning to the chap standing next to me I said what a nice car it was. "Would you like one?" he said - for he had one to sell.

It was a 1923 two-seater and dickey 20HP by Hooper with a shredded hood and tyres with very little life left in them.

"We will go for a run" said the owner and plonked a battery on the running board and connected up the jump leads to the ballast resistor. I looked round for the nearest fire extinguisher but she started easily and ran well.

I was impressed by the fact that the car went all the way up the Dover Hill out of Folkestone in top gear. The price? '£110'. I hesitated - where was I going to get tyres and replace the hood? As I hesitated so the price came down. Eventually I paid £90 with a new hood and battery.

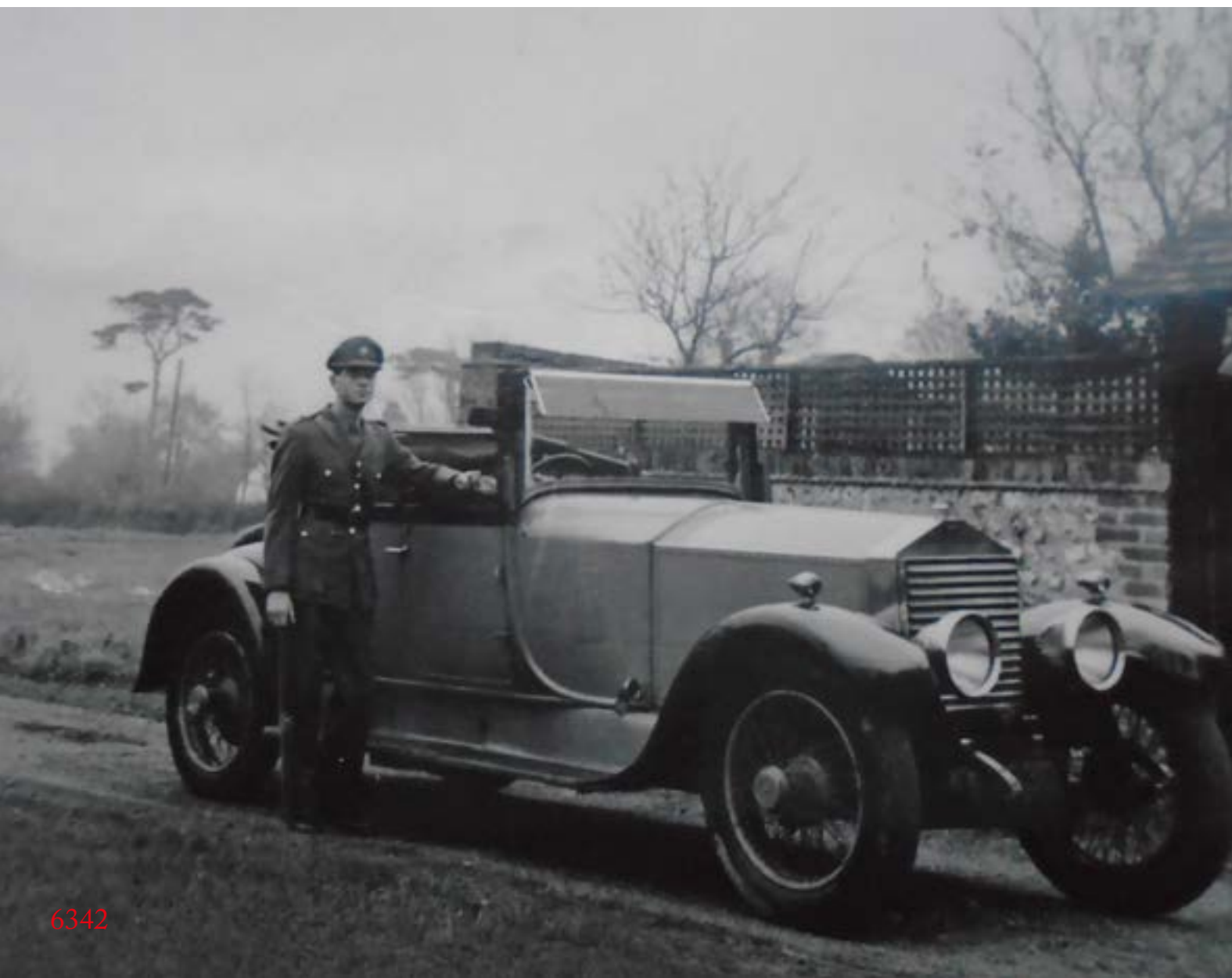
The 20HP was my only car and I must have travelled over 15,000 miles with no trouble. Having been made a present of the Wheatley & Morgan restoration book I decided this was the thing for me. Why do we always attack the engine first? In those days there were many shops that did overhaul work so getting the crankshaft ground and the bearings remetalled was no problem. But paying for it was!

Rolls-Royce supplied parts as they were needed almost by return. Pistons were not unreasonably priced, so a new set were ordered at .035". When they arrived there was no way they would begin to enter the bore. I complained and the company asked me to bring the cylinder block to Hythe Road. The doorman looked somewhat askance as I swept up in a tatty Austin A40 pick-up.

A couple of weeks later Rolls-Royce rang to say that it was all done and the charge would be £15. I am still rather embarrassed about the letter I wrote to Ron Haynes but it did result in a reduction in charges. It was however a very thorough job including removal of the water plate doors, acid pickling the block, as well as honing each bore to fit.

The rest of the engine went together well which was a relief as I could not have afforded to replace tappet pins and rollers. There was very little information available about valve timing, but I worked it out eventually.

Some senior members may remember that vehicle registration was handled by the County Councils at that time and were available for inspection. I went along to my local office with a few sheets of paper and wrote down all the owners over the years which showed continuous use up to 1940. All the logbooks bar one were there, the first of which in 1924 was of a very different format to the later versions.



THE 20-GHOST CLUB RECORD



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I mentioned this to the clerk in charge who said, "Take it; I don't suppose we will miss it"! It is still in the file. Of course I didn't realise then that all the records would be destroyed later so it was fortunate. It turned out that the last owner, Surgeon-Commander Weston lived in Battle, just 10 miles away.

I called on Commander Weston who was delighted that the car had survived. In 1954 it had frozen up and damaged the cylinder head and block. The insurance company paid up and took the car away. He then gave me all the bills over the years that he had had the car. He told me that he paid £15 for it in 1939 to prevent it being scrapped. He put some tyres on and took it all round Scotland on his honeymoon. The bills make fascinating reading, starting with aforementioned tyres; Caffyns, (the local agent) towing the car in and getting it running after the war, and a complete rewire at Hythe Road in 1952.

It appears that the poor frozen car was sent for scrap (second time in its life) to a yard in Kent. Fortunately, in the same yard was a derelict 20HP limousine with a sound head and block. So GA11 was running again and came to me in 1957.

The Hooper body is of high quality with an elaborate window mechanism where the glass hops over to prevent any water getting into the door, solid walnut door cappings and the complicated hood joints with springs in brass tubes to aid lifting the hood. Originally, the body cost £650 less 10% to Rootes of Maidstone as their demonstrator.

In my ownership, quite a bit of work such as relining the brakes, overhauling the steering and all maintenance was done by me because I could not afford pay anybody else to do it. As well as the engine overhaul, over the years I managed to find the proper split rim wheels, side lights etc. The Hooper build sheet says the car was painted "Stanley Grey". I have not been able to find out any more about this but the first logbook says "Grey Green" so my interpretation of grey green is what you see today. The paint was done in 1961 so now is looking a little faded - like its owner!

In 1964 a growing family needed a house so the car was sold to help the finances. I sold it to a man in Gillingham, Kent called Robin Ball who had a collection of cars.

When Robin died his collection was sold up but not the two-seater. However about 20 years ago his widow phoned to say that her daughter's growing family did not fit into a two-seater any more - would I like it back?

So it is now back home having done no more than 500 miles since it left. Robin Ball had bought a new Cloud III from James Young and as a consequence persuaded them to restore the three-panel windscreen, renew the upholstery, and make a new leather hood.

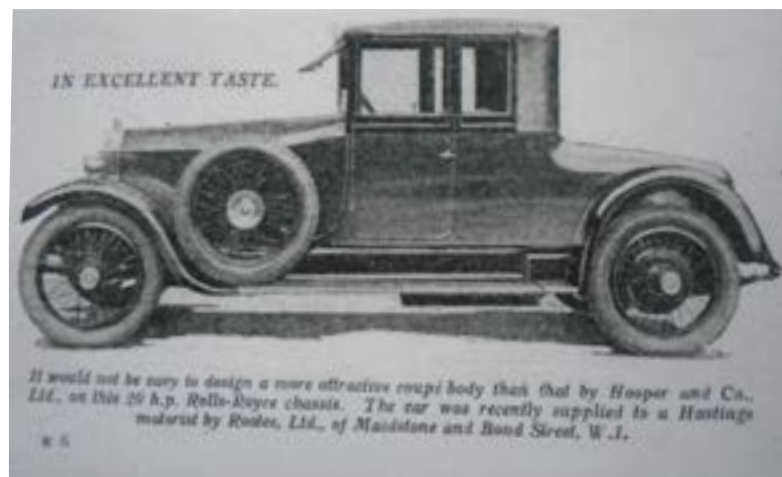
20HP cars have a reputation for lacklustre performance but this car is lively, certainly compared to other vintage cars. Ghosts and Phantoms have engines twice the size. Having driven this car for so many miles I have no problem with the two-wheel brakes and the early cars are so much lighter.

The car was an early member of the 20-Ghost Club, taking part in the visit to London Airport in 1954. Rolls-Royce's house magazine 'Bulletin' published a picture in December of that year.

The cars were handed over to my sons several years ago but I remain allowed to drive them in return for maintenance and cleaning! GA11 has to share outings with other cars but she generally does about 1000 miles between MOTs, mostly local or South of England rallies.

Previous page: Michael with GA11 first time around and the car today.

Below: The Autocar 1923, reproduced with kind permission



1926 "NEW PHANTOM" 21 s.c. at Llyn Gwynant, North Wales

Apologies that the picture is set in Wales rather than Scotland but it is the edition we ran 60 years ago and anyway the car, 1926 New Phantom 21SC registration YN-9160, is lovely. Given so many of Phantom Is were heavy limousines it's great to see the Barker Coupé Cabriolet body here. Our website says the car was at Bonhams at Goodwood in 2001. Does anybody know where 21SC is now?

The Last Word

Here Comes the Sun is such a brilliant song, the guitar work is sublime, but for me it's about the lyrics: 'It's been a long cold lonely winter, it seems like years since its been here.'

Well today (23rd Feb as I write) the sun shone, and it did indeed seem like years since the sky above us here in Wiltshire had turned from steel-grey (or worse) to blue. It was still a cold winter-sun, but it was bright and dazzling and if you stood in exactly the right position, out of the wind, you could feel just a little warmth on exposed skin. But I made a mistake. Instead of firing up Peabody (1933 20/25 GHA16) or The Doctor (1929 20HP GFN80). I decided to take another car out for the first 2021 dusting of cobwebs.

I won't mention what it was (Graham Tyson would never speak to me again) but it came from Crewe in the late '90s and has an electric hood....which promptly failed, rather like the Grand Old Duke of York, neither halfway up nor down.

So, rather like a scene from an old advert for Hamlet Cigars, (with apologies to overseas friends who won't get the cultural reference), I looked over at Peabody and smiled. Having poured just a little fuel into her carburettor, she fired instantly. Set the ignition. Set the governor and the mixture. A couple of pumps on the oil pedal and off we went with no particular route in mind.

The roads were fairly dry, and we dodged around the little patches of mud dumped from tractors here and there, but thankfully the salt and grit of a few weeks back seemed to have been washed away. Peabody rolls and creaks a little on the road, but nothing untoward and she came to temperature and stayed there. We have an old airfield close to us and on a straight bit of perimeter track I pushed on a bit. She can do 60mph but doesn't like it much and why should she? At 30-50 mph she glides along bringing smiles and waves from every dog-walker, jogger and cyclist. The picture below didn't catch me grinning, but I was!

Here comes the sun!

Johnnie

PS, please get in touch with me on:

jgallop66@gmail.com

home: 01747 841565

mobile: 07930 531231



