



News & Record

Issue 72 | Summer 2023





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Front Cover: Forgive me, because I have used this image before (on our 2022 calendar) but it is perfect to use it again given our members are on the 2023 Alpine as I type. It is Alan Fearnley's superb evocation of James Radley's Silver Ghost at speed.

Letters, emails & pictures

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Tyson Holds Forth

Page 12. Our Graham provides fun, wit, and thoughtful reflection.

Just A Century Ago...

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Back Cover: On guard! John & Mary Narvell's 1939 Wraith WEC27 James Young four-light saloon 'Yasmine' is well protected outside Hartwell House Buckinghamshire. Photo Mary Narvell.

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1932 Rolls-Royce 20/25 GAU69

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2023 AGM

Page 56. Photographs from our AGM in London.

The Last Word

Page 58. Johnnie gets the final say!

July

Tuesday 4th – Thursday 6th
Glorious Gloucestershire.
brianhfdler@aol.com

Sunday 30th

Family & Friends Day &
CANCELLED
Concours, Sandhurst.
jgallop66@gmail.com

September

Monday 4th – Sunday 10th
Tour of The Loire Valley.
Châteaux, Abbeys and Wines.
johnstuttard@btinternet.com

Sunday 24th – Wednesday 27th

Autumn Tour to Highgrove.
ashley@aacarmichael.co.uk

March 2024**Friday 15th**

AGM & Annual Dinner at
Trinity House, London.
jo.naismith@yahoo.com

Date TBC

Spring Lunch. Date and venue
to be arranged.
strone@stronemacpherson.com

June 2024**Friday 7th – Tuesday 18th**

Champagne to Provence.
johnstuttard@btinternet.com

July 2024**Date TBC**

Family & Friends Day &
Concours, Polesden Lacey.
Date and venue to be arranged.
johnstuttard@btinternet.com

September 2024**Sunday 1st – Wednesday 4th**

Tour of Dorset.
rslwilks@gmail.com

July 2025**Thursday 4th – Thursday 25th**

The Baltic Region in Summer.
johnstuttard@btinternet.com

Letters, Emails & Pictures

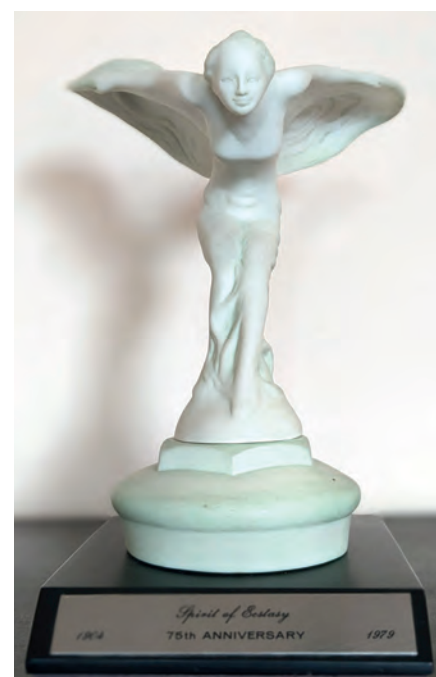
Dear Johnnie,
I thought you might be interested to see this ceramic Spirit statuette which Hilary and I bought at auction a few months ago. We couldn't recall having seen one previously. A little bit of probing on our behalf by Professor Google showed there was a production of around 100 by Cybis Porcelain of Trenton, New Jersey as a commemorative piece for the 75th anniversary in 1979. The body and facial image are a reasonable facsimile of the Charles Sykes original, but the wings are flattened and lack the vivacity of Sykes's sculpture. The model was produced at a time when limited edition 'collector' pieces of porcelain were in vogue and were promoted as sound investments. The idea of a Rolls-Royce anniversary investment appealed to David Brandt, owner of Cybis, and to Rolls-Royce of America, so a licensed edition was agreed.

Curiously, this item was never advertised by Cybis, nor appeared in their catalogues. Marketing

appears to have been in 'The Flying Lady' and a couple of other motoring journals, and one piece was given to the R-REC.

Rather an oddity, but it makes a conversation piece. However, as an investment opportunity with growth potential... I don't think so!

Best wishes Bob Vass



Dear Johnnie,
Graham Tyson should take heart after his article in the Spring issue - contrary to the Lanchester claim it was indeed Royce who first invented the crankshaft vibration damper.

He did so, accidentally, whilst solving a problem on the troublesome 30 h.p. of 1906. He began to fit his new damper retrospectively from late 1908 and of course it was standardised on the 40/50 in 1911. Lanchester invented and patented his form of a damper in 1910 to help

Daimler with their poppet valve 6-cylinder engines. He pursued Royce in court but Royce was able to produce dated 1908 photographs of his earlier but unpatented invention.

It's a dispute that got a big hearing in two books published in 1964. The Bird & Hallows book (supporting Lanchester) and the Bill Morton book (arguing it was Royce). The actual photographs would only re-emerge many years later.

Yours in Royce, Tom Clarke

Dear Johnnie,
News and Record issue 71 received, a great job as always; but just one issue on page 56, my trophy was done in 50YB, my 1914 Ghost not 1701.

I can keep quiet about it if you can but perhaps we should come clean?

Re 1701 very careful revitalising, by my good friend Carl Ford, has transformed the car which was suffering from a decade of lack of use. A real sports car now...

KBO John Snook

John Snook with his 1914 Silver Ghost (50YB) Holmes of Derby Tourer (Photo by Kimberly Shaddock)

Further to the piece in the last issue about Rolls-Royce dealers Car Mart our arch proof-reader Peter Brown sent through the following link to a short movie from 1935 *Car of Dreams* available on YouTube.

Hot on the heels of this Tom Clarke sent through a photo of the very car featured in the movie 1935 20/25 GSF53. Here it is seen on the north side of Leicester Square, London in 1955.



*Watch the film here:
 Use the QR code for
 a direct link to the
 YouTube video.*





Dear Johnnie,

I hope this finds you well and that you are enjoying a pleasant Easter weekend!

Please find attached a photo from a drive yesterday. We have now completed 1,050 miles since the engine rebuild was 'finished!' last May (are these cars ever finished in terms of restoration and/or projects?!). We took a drive around the Malvern Hills before the heavy cloud set in.

I am sorry to read your tale of woes about Fiennes in the last issue. Thankfully, Alpine Eagle are stocking many small HP parts and I believe this will only ever be increasing. I have also set-up a small business, Goshawk Engineering with the aim of taking on maintenance and service jobs whilst I have time over the Summer and days off with the Army.

Kind regards, Hamish

www.goshawkengineering.co.uk

Along with this edition you should have received the flyer for the 2024 Champagne Tour of France which looks stunning. However Sir John Stuttard is working on yet more exciting adventures for us and is preparing a tour of the Baltics in 2025 which will be a 20-night tour of Finland, Sweden, Latvia & Estonia from Friday 4th July to Thursday 24th July 2025. A full flyer and the usual email will follow in due course but if you would like any more information in the meantime then contact John: johnstuttard@btinternet.com

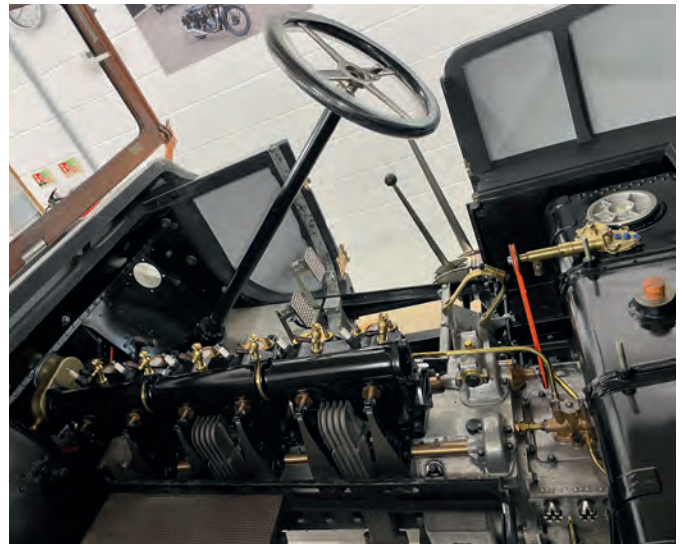
Ashley Carmichael has secured a very special visit for us to King Charles' garden at Highgrove and has combined this within a short tour of the area between 24th -27th September. Ashley has mentioned to me that he has a few spaces left so please be quick and contact him on: ashley@aacarmichael.co.uk to secure your place .



A face only a mother could love

In the last issue Graham Tyson mused on the wonders of the Lanchester motor car. Jonathan Wood sent through a couple of pictures of a car he is restoring together with a period shot of the same car as originally sold to H.H. The Maharajah of Rewa. It is a 1912 38hp and features the engine and gearbox mounted as one unit located in the chassis between the driver and front passenger. Jonathan

says that the engine has overhead valves at 90 degrees to the bore. These are operated via long rockers, linked to the valves by a shackle, and returned via leaf springs! It has a three speed pre-select gearbox with a pressure feed lubrication system offering silent gear changes without double declutching. As Graham pointed out last time this is amazingly sophisticated for 1912... but just look at it!



Dear Editor

One day in March I was set to take my PII to Carl Ford whose workshop is in Thame, Bucks, for its annual service. Before leaving I checked the fuel gauge and was concerned to see that it was a little low. To be on the safe side, and as I had a full 10 litre can of E5 in my garage, I decided to pour that into the Phantom's tank.

It's awkward to get the spout of the 10 litre can into the Phantom's filler pipe. So a few years ago I made a special adaptor, consisting of a 12 inch length of flexible washing machine hose, which slides snugly on to the pointy end of a normal funnel. So far so good and the petrol went in nicely. When, however, I came to remove the funnel the length of washing machine hose somehow slid off the end of the pointy bit of the funnel and went straight down the car's filler pipe into the car's fuel tank. Oh dear! But I had a bright idea. I attached a sharp steel hook (about the size of a nappy pin) to the end of some expanding wire which I pushed down into the fuel tank filler pipe hoping that the hook would catch the edge of the washing machine hose which I could then retract.

But it just made things worse, as when I pulled the expanding wire out of the filler pipe it came out without the hosepipe but also without the hook! So now there were two bits of debris floating around inside the fuel tank. Rather than attempt to drain the fuel tank myself (which I admit I was not at all sure how to do) I decided to leave it to Carl.

Hoping that the debris would not prevent fuel flowing properly to the carburettor, I set off. I was pleased that the car started, for the first time in 6 months, on the second push of the starter. But after a couple of miles the engine began to cough and to run very roughly. At one point it almost stalled even though I was doing 50 mph. I put it down to fuel starvation caused by the debris in the tank and was worried that I would not make it. But I got there – just – and Carl agreed the engine was not running anything like it should.

He disconnected the fuel pipe where it joins the carburettor, put a small plastic bowl under the end and asked me to switch on the ignition. We could see fuel flowing nicely from tank to carburettor. But then Carl spotted that the starting carburettor switch on the dashboard was in the 'Starting' position. Thus I had driven all 50 miles from London

to Thame with the starting carburettor switch in the 'Starting' position, causing the mixture to be running far too rich. Oh dear!

The starting carburettor switch has, as readers know, three positions: 'Starting' for when the engine is cold, 'Oil only' for when the engine has been running for 30 seconds or so, and 'Running' which is where the switch should be as soon as the engine has warmed up even just a bit. I can't tell you how silly I felt having left the switch in the 'Starting' position all the way from London to Thame. This is so silly that you will understand why I choose to sign this letter.

A Nonymous

PS Carl managed to extract the length of hosepipe and the steel hook from the fuel tank via a hole in the top of the tank where the balance pipe fits. The hole is actually a smaller diameter than the errant hosepipe so it was a little tricky - similar to keyhole surgery! I enclose a picture of the blessed hosepipe and hook post extraction.

Editor: *I think most of us have made exactly these type of howlers! Obviously to publish an image of our above correspondent's Phantom would give the game away so here's a super shot of 90MY 1933 Continental Sedan de Ville formerly owned by David Pearson – anybody know its current whereabouts?*

The debris after extraction





Members will be delighted to learn that our very own Katie Forrest and her partner Edward Towers have become engaged. *Fabulous news!*



Dear Johnnie,
I heard from recruitment agents Saxton Bamfylde asking if I could suggest names for a new chairman for the Montagu Motor Museum. The Museum has advertised the role but without success, do you think any member of the 20-Ghost Club could be interested?

All the best, Strone

Editor: If any member might consider putting themselves forward, or can suggest a good candidate, then please contact Strone: strone@stronemacpherson.com



Major George Tyson, son of Graham and Sarah leads the Royal Dragoon Guards in the coronation day parade. A justifiably proud Graham told me that George marched 7 miles that day.

New Members



Graham Tyson reports two new members this time.

Bill and Carol Kennedy

Illinois USA.

Bill is very well known in Rolls-Royce circles and has an extensive collection of Silver Ghosts which apparently 'just multiplied' in his garage! Shown above is 1907 60547 which is the earliest known Ghost still in existence. (Pic courtesy RM Sothebys)

1907 SG chassis no 60547 Open Drive Limousine coachbuilder Rippon

1911 SG chassis no 1521 Roi des Belges coachbuilder Crailville

1911 SG chassis no 1797 OD Limousine Landau coachbuilder F.R. Woods

1912 SG chassis no 1996 L to E Tourer coachbuilder Horner & Ward

1920 SG chassis no 37LW Service Vehicle coachbuilder Brewster

1925 SSG chassis no S106MK Tilbury Special coachbuilder RRCCW

1926 SSG chassis no S333RL Arundel Limousine coachbuilder RRCCW

1926 SSG chassis no S385RL Piccadilly Roadster coachbuilder RRCCW

Persuade your friends to buy a pre-war R-R.

Propose them to Graham:

gtyson@outlook.com

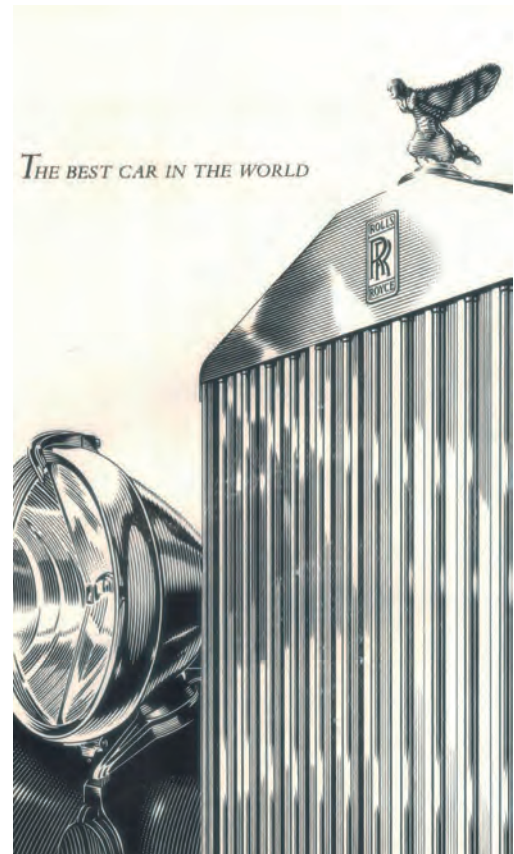
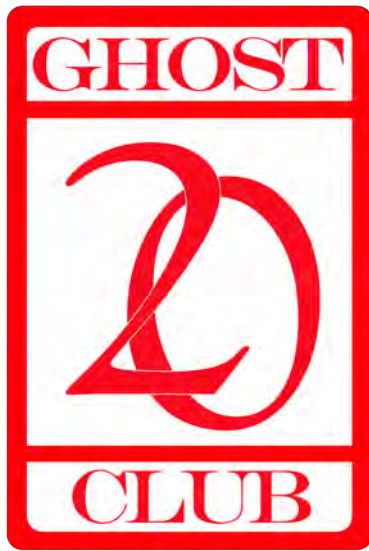
Chris and Alice Lackner

Twickenham

1937 25/30hp chassis no GAR41 Sports Saloon coachbuilder Vanden Plas



A huge welcome to you all



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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!



Whilst trawling through some obscure papers I came across a piece written by a reporter on The New York Times in 1925 which forms an amusing postscript to my article in the last issue (71) as his assessment of the New Phantom was scathing! 'Too big, too heavy, and too expensive... not a car for the common man.'

The comments were met with outrage by Rolls-Royce owners. Accused of jealousy and of not understanding the true value of a Rolls-Royce the writer apologised. The incident ended up further cementing Rolls-Royce as the ultimate symbol of luxury and prestige.

Following my last article and specifically the issue of four-wheel brakes I would like to thank those who took the trouble to contact me, especially Tom Clarke and Bryan McGee. We have had some fascinating and quite technical discussions. Tom revealed that the Hispano servo used a drum and, as a consequence, it didn't work in reverse. Royce

adopted a disc in the servo, which had the advantage of operating the brakes in both directions but had the defect of lag at low speeds. That sounds alarming!

Tom also revealed that whilst most sources say, as I did, that Hispano were the first to employ four-wheel brakes commercially he believes that Renault were using a servo disc system by 1922. Perhaps Royce would have paid royalties to Renault rather than to Hispano – the records don't actually tell us.

I saw that *The Automobile* had an article in May 2023 about the 1912 Isotta Fraschini Tipo PM: *The Best That Money Could Buy?* That car debuted four-wheel braking in 1910, giving an enormous advantage over rivals, but it failed to find favour with purchasers.

So it seems that neither Royce, Hispano, Renault nor indeed Duesenberg were the first to use four-wheel brakes, which does at least confirm my view that Henry was way behind the curve when it came to efficient braking systems. The plot thickens!



1912 Isotta Fraschini Tipo PM

*...and now for something completely different
(thank you Monty Python).*

Earlier this week our dishwasher gave up the 'Ghost'. The man who came to look at it (why do all repairers call themselves 'engineers?' It really irritates me) found a mouse nest in the electrical gubbins and the little blighters had eaten through all the wires and destroyed the motherboard. New machine required.

I can hear you ask 'what on earth does this have to do with Rolls-Royce cars'? Well nothing really, apart from the fact that when we purchased it some years ago the salesman referred to it as 'the Rolls-Royce' of dishwashers!

We had our family and five little grand-daughters descending on us and, faced with the possibility of having no dishwasher, were in panic mode. I happened to mention our quandary to my good friend Charles Rentoul, he of the wonderful PII Continental sports saloon, who suggested doing something called 'washing up'. Apparently is something one can do whilst wearing rubber gloves and brandishing a small brush.

I had no idea what he was talking about so he kindly sent me a little video showing somebody doing this 'washing up' thing which looked deeply unpleasant especially when I realised there was another process involved called 'drying the dishes.'

It was all too much to absorb but fortuitously the new machine arrived the following day - a very narrow escape, far too close for comfort!

I wager this is the only time one will ever see a dishwasher featured in *News & Record*!



Graham with Henry Fitzhugh at the Spring Lunch, no doubt reflecting on the relative merits of kitchen appliances! (pic from Rosemary J)



My word for the issue is: **Begab.**

First documented use 1297

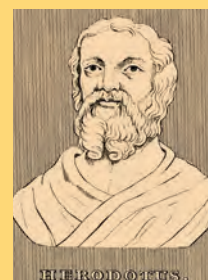
Verb: To fool with words, to mock, to deceive, to delude; to impose upon

Example: "....And wend [bat] he begabbit had bene Be wesche-crafte"

From: Legends of the Saints in the Scottish dialect of the fourteenth century
St Clement c1375

Just a century ago...

Herodotus casts an eye over R-R related matters within *The Autocar* during April-June 1923.



Slow down in Gorgonzola

In a photograph of the town of Gorgonzola in Italy, *The Autocar* drew attention to a warning notice to motorists above a women's outside laundry. A Rolls-Royce is seen parked on the opposite side of the road.



King of Siam

Under the heading of An up to date Monarch, the *Autocar* described the King of Siam as an ardent motorist and a generous supporter of the British motor industry. It showed a photograph of him with his 40/50 Rolls Royce car while inspecting the Siamese Boy Scouts who form honorary members of the palace guard at Bangkok.

Sacrifice

Advertised by Barker & Co as an exceptional bargain was this Rolls-Royce 40/50 HP 4-door saloon cabriolet, completely equipped and ready for the road. Owing to the car not now being required by the owner, it was to be sold at a sacrifice.

The price was not stated.



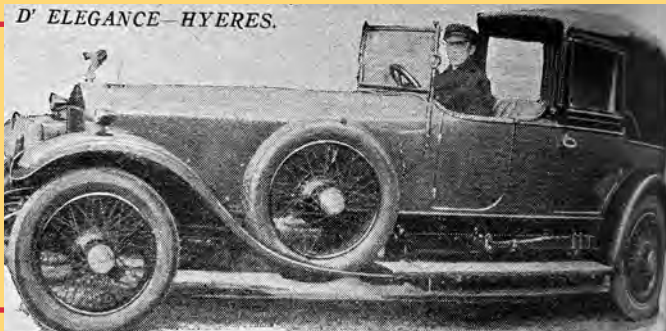
An Exceptional Bargain

NEW 40/50 h.p. ROLLS-ROYCE with BARKER 4-door saloon cabriolet completely equipped and ready for the road. Owing to car not now being required by owner, it is to be sold at a sacrifice.

On View

BARKER & CO. (Coachbuilders) LTD.
66, South Audley Street.

Phone: Grosvenor 2420.



Elegance Winner

A Rolls-Royce 40/50 HP Barker Salamanca cabriolet was awarded first prize in the Concours d' Elegance at Hyeres. The car is the property of Mr W D Batsholt.

Lord Montagu's cars

The photograph shows two cars owned by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, a 40/50 HP Rolls-Royce which had been in his service for several years and a very old 6 HP De Dion Bouton, which was used by the electrical engineer to the Beaulieu estate. The Autocar remarked that the Rolls-Royce was one of the first cars to be fitted with extra-large tyres, in this case 7" Palmer cords which had given excellent service in India, Europe and at home. The caption stated that it was interesting that these two widely differing vehicles had consecutive registration numbers.



Laindon Hill Climb

A 40/50 HP Rolls-Royce is shown making a fine ascent at a Hill Climb at Laindon.

The car is Cunard-bodied tourer, chassis No 72MG, which was later owned by club member, the late Michael Evans. The car was painstakingly restored by Mike over a period of some 50 years

Touring in India

British cars of the highest class are in great request in India and examples of the new 20HP Rolls-Royce are already gaining popularity. The photograph shows one of these cars drawn up beside a 40/50 HP Rolls-Royce in Western Slants.





The 2023 Irish Georgian Tour

Mary Narvell reports on Camelot(s) in Hereford

“It’s May, it’s May, that lovely month when everyone goes blissfully astray.” So, as annually, the Irish Georgians (IGS) in green tweeds joined the 20 Ghost Club drivers, this year to explore Herefordshire. Transportation gods needed early appeasement. Several IGS members’ train stalled at Bristol with signal problems. Nor were drivers spared woes: a last-minute withdrawal, a car arriving by flatbed, and rumours of tricky dynamos and Autovacs did not augur well. Yet optimism reigned. Looking again to Lerner and Loewe, we hoped anoraks wouldn’t be necessary. After all, “in Hereford, hurricanes hardly ever happen”.

We gathered at the cathedral grateful for the itinerary of Hereford resident and preservation architect, Nick Thompson. Fortunately, when an Old Etonian was sought to interpret a stained-glass window depicting the venerable school, Jimmy Valentine was available. A few men cringed at the martyrdom of patron Saint Ethelbert. His future in-laws, not finding him up to snuff, ordered him snuffed (and my husband thought his in-laws were rough!). Guides explained treasures while we prayed the 18th century collapse of the west tower would not reoccur.

Despite the evensong officiant summoning heavenly host protection for 20-Ghost Club drivers, car trouble darkened bright Saturday skies. A 1924 20HP Tourer failed to proceed while pigeons with diarrhoea pelted a modern Bentley. Still eight cars (7 Rolls-Royces and one Bentley) processed past red clay fields and Hereford beef cattle grazing. A vast cloud pruned hedge bordered Brampton Bryan Hall, a family seat since the Domesday Book. Related to Earls of Oxford and naval hero Admiral Rodney, the Harleys have tended the land and stylistic periods of their home for generations. No surprise that *The Remains of the Day* was filmed here. The current stewards, Edward and Victoria Harley, live in relaxed splendour amidst beloved artefacts. The garden’s castle ruin recalled two Civil War sieges chronicled by a valiant female ancestor in coded emotive letters. A Harley Street sign hinted at the family’s long-ago ownership of London’s famed medical centre while neighbouring villages of Wigmore and Wimpole offered similar reminders.

Our cars convened at Shobdon Church alongside blackcurrant vines supplying Ribena. Its interior, an unexpected wedding cake confection of ivory and blue Gothic Revival decoration, owed much to the Indo-Chinese taste popularised by Horace Walpole. Crossing a teeny bridge enroute to Moccas Court, we were amazed to have our toll paid by an admirer of our yellow Rolls-Royce! At this home owned by fashion designer LK Bennett, ladies strategised how to surreptitiously discover her shoe closet. Equally hard to find was the river on which the house was set. Why couldn't we see the Wye? The architect had deliberately arranged the rooms for a tour de force reveal of the river from the round Adam dining room. Its beautiful Réveillon wallpapers were saved from a French Revolution fire sale.

Sunday, we followed directions (affectionately called "clues") to the wrong portcullis. Eventually we arrived at Kentchurch Court, the Scudamores' home. Portraits of colourful ancestors gazed down amidst Grinling Gibbons carvings, not least the "Bonking Viscount!" Best character: the rogue grandfather who, having his license remanded, donned female attire to evade capture when continuing to operate his Rolls-Royce.







Our cars seemed magnetically drawn to The Hendre, the Rolls' family seat. A Gaumont newsreel flickered the final minutes in the life of the Hon Charles Stewart Rolls at the Southbourne Aerodrome, Bournemouth where his biplane crashed on July 12, 1910. All were moved by a display of his death certificate - "Cause of death: concussion with laceration of the brain arising from a fall from a biplane." Fascinating, too - a photo of George, Duke of York being driven by C.S.R. himself from the very forecourt where we re-joined our cars after lunch.

Down a **long** drive crossed by hopping pheasants, Whitfield appeared at last. Owner Edward Clive waved us in; expertly positioning our cars. Generous legacies of ancestral cousin Clive of India funded the estate's purchase and generational rebuilds. Describing Whitfield "as altered as altered can be", our genial host unravelled the multiple wings destroyed to "unpick a Georgian pearl from within the Victorian Gothic oyster."

Amidst topiaries and water features, we enjoyed tea. After a quick-change coach trip to Brinsop Court for our al fresco dinner, a sunset Pimms welcomed us alongside swans protecting their goslings in the moat. Our host bemoaned the barbarous descent of some homes to wedding venues. The owner's novel retirement money making scheme: to create a divorce venue!

Apple blossoms in dappled light led us to Perrycroft, magnificently sited overlooking the spectacular Malvern Hills. Designed for an Edwardian industrialist rich from match manufacture, its Voysey Arts and Crafts interiors did not light the fires of many IGS members. Yet the terraced gardens entranced.

I was teased by the similarity of my habitual black and white wardrobe to timber framed buildings in Ledbury near Eastnor Castle. What effrontery to ask Rolls-Royces to pass the Land Rover Experience as we sought guides for the home's famed Pugin Drawing Room! While



Page 17: 1939 Wraith WEC27 owned by John & Mary Narvell.

Page 19: Outside Brampton Bryan Hall.

Page 20: top left then clockwise, 1937 PIII Barker Sedan de Ville 3BU176 owned by Adrian and Catherine Dickens, 1928 PI 65CL Anthony & Gilly Armitage, 1939 Wraith WEC27, 1930 PII Hooper Tourer 62GY Strone and Alex Macpherson.

Above: Charles Rolls residence The Hendre.

Below: 62GY looking imposing

informed Eastnor was Italy in Herefordshire owing to an Earl's Grand Tour acquisitions, few interiors resembled a castello unless Pugin had a fratello. Our 2023 tour concluded under the crenellation of Hampton Court Castle. Four score younger than the similarly named Thames side palace, its armorial rabbits played on the name of Georgian owners, the Coningsbys. (Coniglio in Italian.)

Frequently my friends ask about this joint IGS/20GC venture. Including myself in my description – a trip taking old people to old houses in old cars – pardons me. Sometimes moth-eaten textiles (not only on the furniture!) are encountered. The aroma of ancestral grime is identified as one distinguishes a vintage wine bouquet. But Herefordshire excelled with exceptional houses lovingly maintained by enthusiastic family stewards. In a shire with only five miles of motorway, we travelled back millennia to beautiful historic architecture and interiors. Let's meet again in 2024.



The 1913 Alpenfahrt



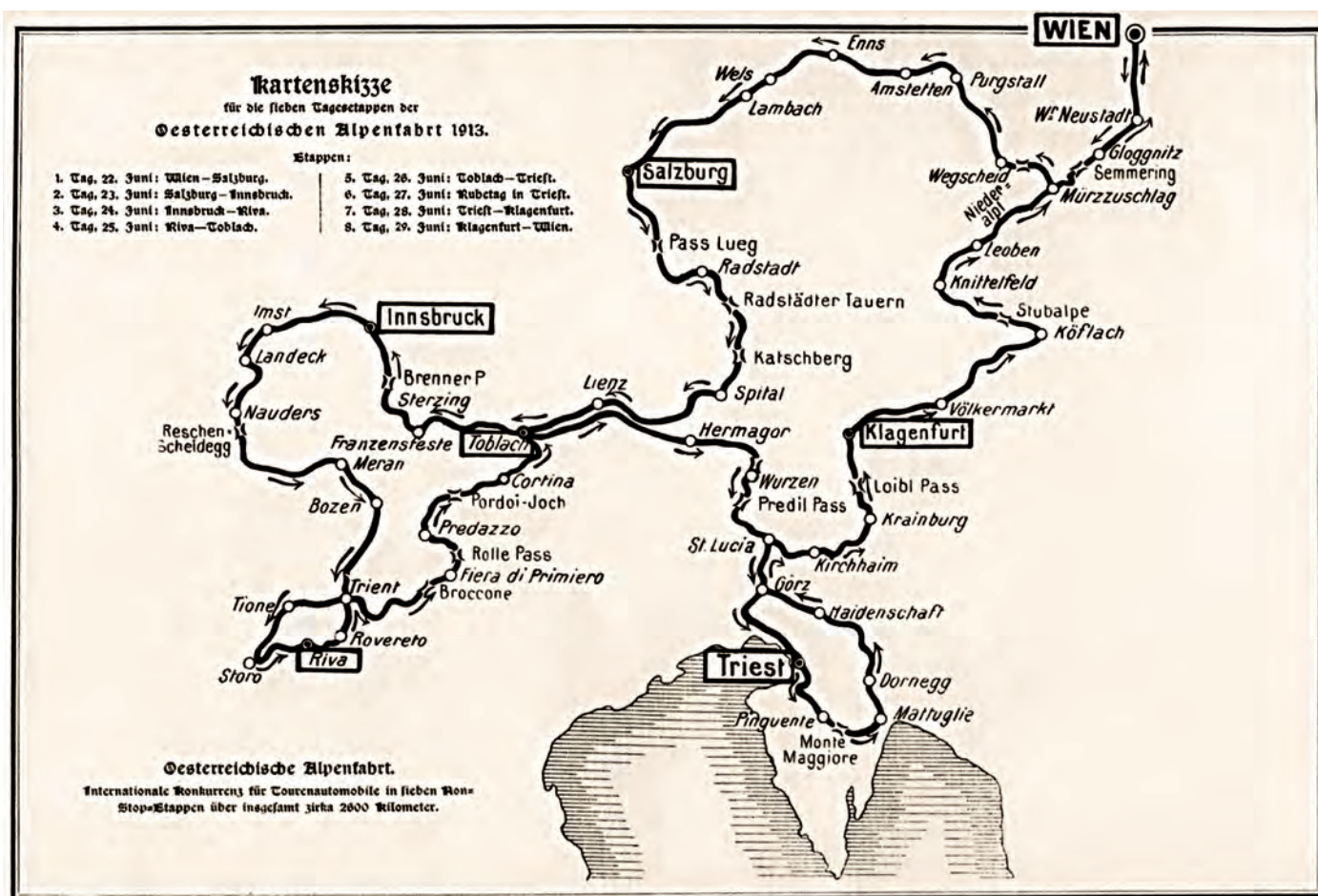
Reputation Restored

In the previous issue (Issue 71 page 24) Sir John Stuttard explained the events leading to the 1913 Alpine, including Radley's 1912 failure and the improvements made afterwards. Now, calling on earlier writings, Sir John tells of the company's triumph – a triumph our members are celebrating once again in 2023. A report of this year's Alpine will follow in the next issue.

The text and photos in this article were taken from papers written by the late Tim Forrest, a former Chairman of The 20-Ghost Club for *The Roycean*, Number 4, 2013, the Club's Historical Record of the 2013 Centenary Alpine Trial and the Club's 70th Anniversary Book published in 2019.

Some of the team at the Vienna start. From the left: Hives, Platford, Parsons, Sinclair, Radley and Friese 2260 (Reg: R-1706) was Platford's car, which was driven by Curt Friese, who was in charge of the new R-R Vienna depot. Friese's car finished without penalty and won Archduke Leopold Salvador's prize. (Photo courtesy of John Fasal)





The official map of the Alpenfahrt route for 1913

The 1913 Alpenfahrt was held between 22nd June and 29th June, starting and finishing in Vienna, covering 1,657 miles (2,667kms) in seven stages over 15 passes, the highest of which was the Pordoi at just under 7,400 feet (2,255 metres).

In total 47 competitors entered of which 16 were Austrian, 14 were German, five were British, four were Belgian, three were Swiss, three were Italian and two were French. Ahead of them were 17 prizes donated by the Austrian Automobile Club.

The five British cars comprised a Daimler of 6.3 litres and then the four 1913 Silver Ghosts, the first three of which were Company cars and the fourth was owned by James Radley, with their drivers as follows:

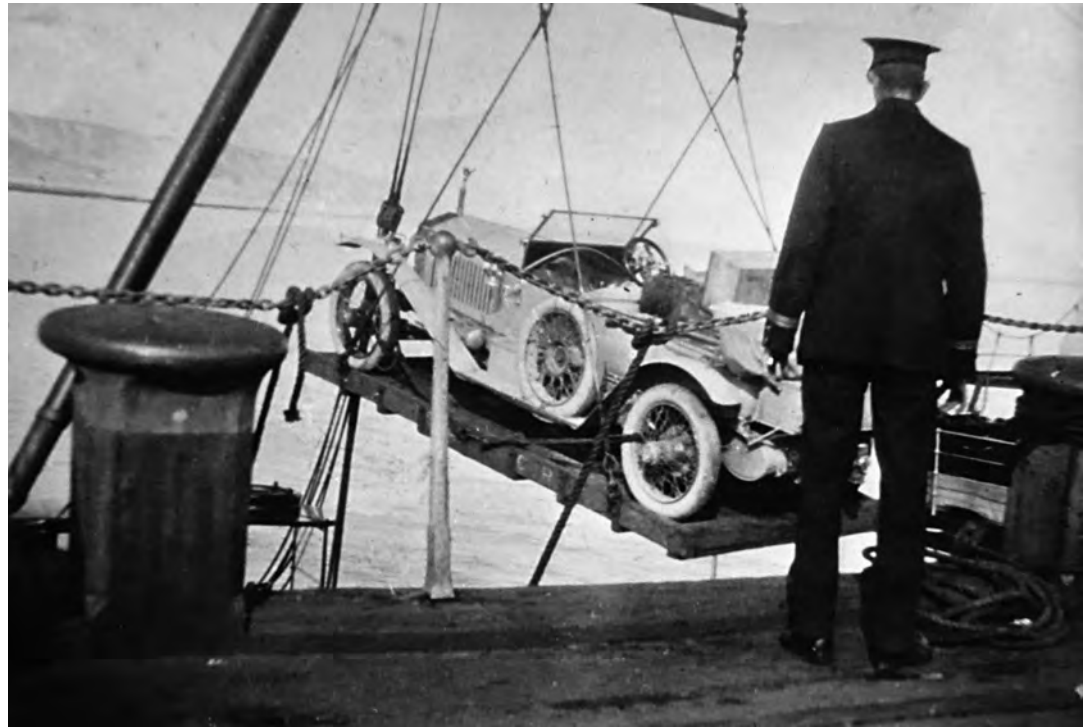
- No 1: 2260
(Mulliners of Birmingham Tourer)
Reg: 1706 – Curt Friesse
- No 2: 2224
(Holmes of Derby Torpedo)
Reg: R-1705 – Ernest Hives
- No 3: 2212
(Holmes of Derby Tourer)
Reg: R-1492 – ‘Jock’ Sinclair
- No 4: 2260E
(Radley-Morison Tourer)
Reg: R-827 – James Radley

Radley had agreed that he would enter a car independently, backed financially by the Hon Mrs Assheton Harbord, the wealthy balloonist, aviator and motorist, and that he would act as pace car for the official Rolls-Royce team in the Trial.

The three company cars, under the overall supervision of the Company’s Chief Tester, Eric Platford, set off for Austria on 2nd May 1913, heavily laden with spares. Over the next seven weeks until the pre-event inspection in Vienna on 21st June, they had plenty of opportunity to test all of the cars.

James Radley set off a few weeks later and, like the other three Silver Ghosts, experienced snow in places, again good experience for what was to come.

*The Austrian Trials cars were shipped across the Channel.
(Photo courtesy of
Rolls-Royce Motor
Cars Limited)*



Below
*Radley's car (2260E)
being dug out of snow
en route to Vienna.
(Photo by Reginald
Hooton Hope, courtesy
of the SHRMF)*





THE ROLLS-ROYCE

MINIATURE BROOKLANDS

DESCRIPTION
OF



TESTING
TRACK.

THERE is certainly no motor-chassis in the World which is so thoroughly tested by its makers as is the case with every one of the chassis made at the Rolls-Royce Works at Derby.

In the first place, each engine is submitted to an individual test on the engine bench before it is attached to the chassis. This test is of so heroic a nature that any weakness must be discovered, and the manufacturers feel satisfied that when once the engine has passed through this searching test it is never likely to cause difficulty on the road, provided always that there is oil in the engine.

Each gear box is similarly submitted to an individual trial (before it is put in the chassis) on the special gear box testing apparatus, and it is not allowed to pass out of the gear box testing building until the gears have passed through many tests, including the noise test, that is to say, until it has passed Rolls-Royce standards of excellence.

The back axle gears are tested in a separate shop, with a special machine, designed by Rolls-Royce, Limited, and are required to attain a certain degree of silence before they are allowed to be fitted to a chassis.



On arrival in Vienna, the four cars were checked at the Rolls-Royce depot before being presented for official inspection. As they were lined up for scrutineering, the Silver Ghosts were greatly admired. At 7.4 litres, the Rolls-Royces had the largest engines in the event and were known to be fast – the story of their success in the Spanish Grand Prix had reached Vienna. As a result, they were allocated numbers 1 to 4.

The four Silver Ghosts performed magnificently and typically completed each day's event by one or two o'clock, with Radley leading most of the way. On the second day, the cars purred up the Katschberg Pass, the scene of Radley's failure in the previous year. Indeed, on this occasion, the event's officials became rather agitated because the Rolls-Royce cars had steamed ahead of the official pilot car when it faltered on the Katschberg and had not waited for it to catch up. An instruction was conveyed to the Rolls-Royce drivers to curb their enthusiasm and their speed for the rest of the Trial.

The four Rolls-Royces being scrutineered on 21st June 1913 before the start at Vienna. (Photo by Heinrich Schuhmann, Wien, ex James Radley Album, John Kennedy Alpine Collection)

Opposite top
The trophies won by Rolls-Royce Ltd in 1913.

Opposite bottom
One of the company's adverts from that year.

On each of the first five days of rallying the four Silver Ghosts were the first four cars to finish. Nothing could match the performance of the Rolls-Royces, but it was clear that the Audis, although not as fast were running very consistently. On the final day, a Minerva driven by a non-competitor drove into the side of Sinclair's car which up to that point had been free from penalty. The impact pushed the Rolls-Royce hard into a telegraph pole creating further damage. Sinclair was uninjured and kept the engine running but the nearside rear wheel was broken and the tyre burst. On the offside the running board had been swept away, the rear wing crumpled, and the change-speed and handbrake levers damaged. Nobody was hurt and, after the wheel was changed, Sinclair found that he could still engage third gear and so he drove the rest of the way to Vienna in third. The delay meant that this was the only day on which Rolls-Royce did not fill the first four places at the finish. The Minerva in question had previously harassed two of the other Silver Ghosts before crashing into Sinclair.

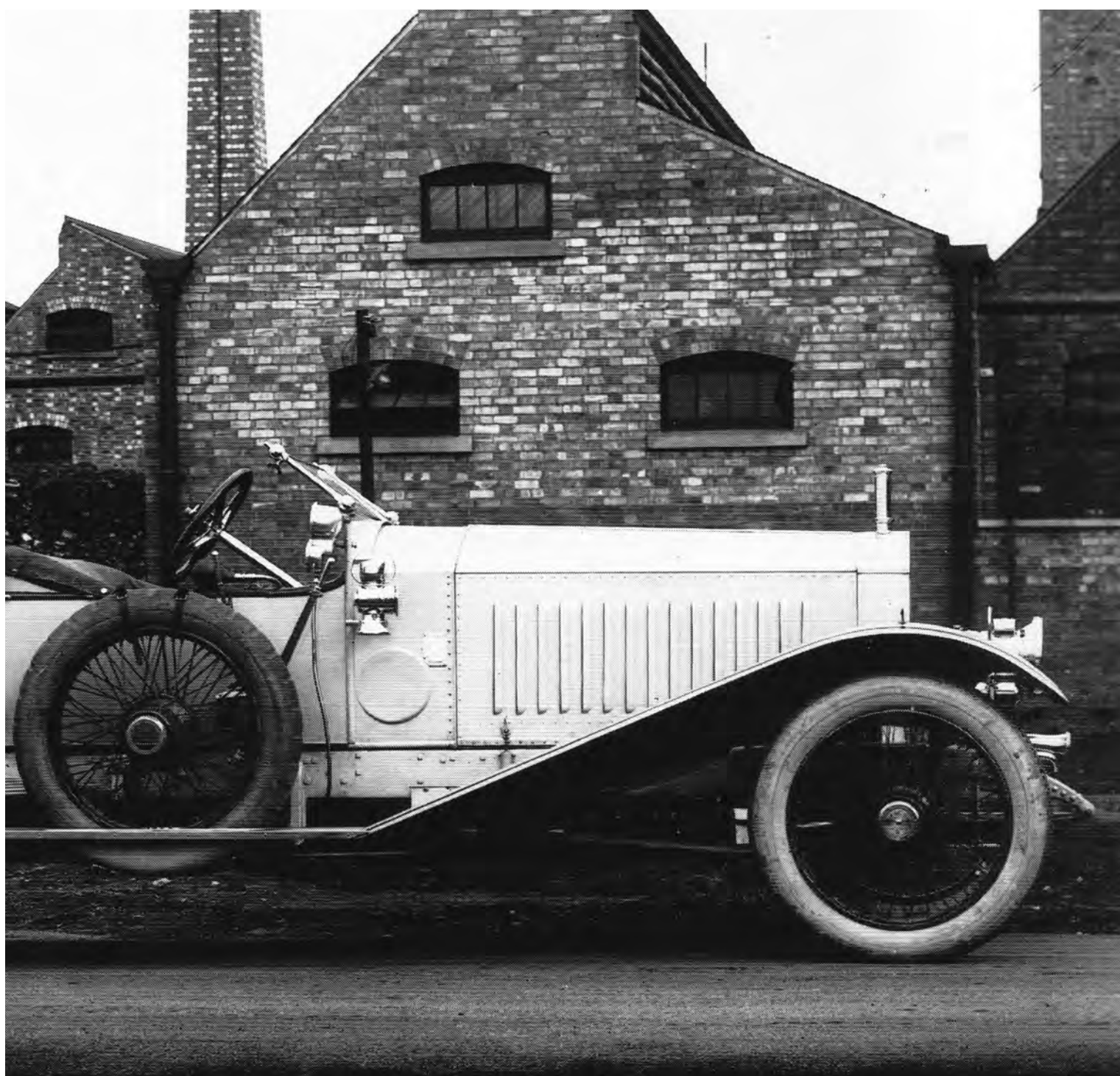
The Audis had been consistent and two of their cars were penalty free. Three of the Rolls-Royce cars had incurred penalties through minor stalling from a stationary position or, in the case of Sinclair, after being delayed by the Minerva crashing into his car. Rolls-Royce missed the team prize, but the Company had shown that their cars were by far the fastest, quietest and strongest cars in the event. The faultless performance put up by Friese in Platford's car, combined with the speed, won the car (2260) the most prestigious prize, in effect the first prize, presented by the Archduke Leopold Salvator. Radley won the City of Trieste's prize and Hives the Freiwilligen Automobilkorps (Austrian Motor Volunteer Corps) prize. Rolls-Royce cars Nos 1, 2 and 4 also received a silver badge and No 3 a bronze.

As part of its contribution to the Coronation Rally, in 1953, Rolls-Royce Limited presented to The 20-Ghost Club the pair of decanters won by CC Friese and subsequently given to the Company. At the time of the presentation the Company expressed the wish that one of these should be retained by the Club's then President, Stanley Sears. At its meeting in July 1954, the Committee agreed that the decanter won by him at the Coronation Concours d'Elegance should, indeed, be retained by him permanently and that the second decanter should be awarded annually or periodically to a Club member, according to the ruling of the Committee. This second decanter is shown below.

Rolls-Royce's success was celebrated in the UK's national Press as well as in the Autocar. On the Continent, this was widely reported as were Rolls-Royce's successes in the Spanish Grand Prix (see last issue) and the subsequent Moscow to Paris Rally.



*1913 Silver Ghost (2260) – winner of
The Archduke Leopold Salvator prize.
(Photo courtesy of John Fasal)*





Michael Joy sent in this stunning shot of 1927 PI, 74RF. Members will recall that Michael has begun an occasional series of articles on the comprehensive rebuild of this car – watch this space!



The Moscow to Paris Rally of June/July 1913

Sir John Stuttard and Maxim Kartashev



Nikita Ponizovkin (Photo courtesy of Lyubov Smirnova)



The Moscow to Paris Rally was organised by the Moscow Automobile Society and was the first sporting event to be held by a Russian organisation outside Russia. One of the Society's members was Nikita Ponizovkin, a successful businessman from Yaroslavl, a city 160 miles northeast of Moscow. He and his two brothers owned five pre-First World War Silver Ghosts (2288, 2414, 2459, 32EB and 40GB). Ponizovkin drove from Moscow to Paris and back, before the start of the official event and collected valuable information for the participants. It is not known what car he drove, but possibly it was his 1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (2288) Mühlbacher Brougham.

The rally took place between 25th June and 10th July 1913. Initially, 20 crews entered although two of them failed to start.

The organiser described as "the Commander", was Vladimir Alekseyev (born Moscow 1878 and died Paris 1919). Alekseyev was the agent and representative of Rolls-Royce in Moscow. In May 1913, he was involved with the IVE Salon International De L'Automobile in St Petersburg where Rolls-Royce motor cars were on display.

To support the Russian sales activity, Rolls-Royce Limited entered a new 1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (2236) London to Edinburgh Mulliners of Birmingham Torpedo, owned by Automobiles Rolls-Royce (France), in the Moscow to Paris Rally. The car was not entered as a participant but in the name of Alekseyev, as commander and driven by him. The only Rolls-Royce to participate, 2236 was given plaque Number One.



Vladimir Alekseyev sitting in the driver's seat of 2236 outside his office, Number 26, Tverskoy Boulevard in Moscow before the rally. Harry Fleck is sitting alongside him, and Harry Leach is standing in the background.



2236 with her new Prowodnik Columb tyres.

Richard Wright Whitworth (1881-1961), operating from the Rolls-Royce Paris depot, repaired cars in Russia from 1911 to 1914. He was engaged on the rally to provide mechanical assistance as required. The team comprised Alekseyev, Whitworth and Fleck. Whitworth is seen above at the start of the rally leaning on the nearside door of 2236. He was later to perform a more exacting role.

2236 is also shown with new high quality and very reliable tyres made by Prowodnik, the Latvian company based in Riga. Founded in 1888, the factory was one of the four largest rubber factories in the world. The tyres were imported into the UK by the Russian Tyre & Rubber Import Co, Ltd.

**"12,611 MILES
OVER ALL CONDITIONS OF ROADS"**

A further testimonial illustrating the excellent service given by the

**PROWODNIK
'COLUMB' TYRE**

The Russian Tyre Co., Ltd.,
162, Shaftesbury Avenue, London.
Gentlemen, - We think it might interest you to know that we have recently sold a pair of your Prowodnik
tyres to a customer of ours, who has just taken one of your Prowodnik cars (a Daimler) which
has run 12,611 miles over all conditions of roads. We ourselves are not surprised at this mileage, as
personally we have used them for the past three years with the most satisfactory results. Further,
we might add that last month we took off 2 Prowodnik tyres from different cars each of which had
done over 10,000 miles. Finding them present superior we are looking forward to a large increase in
business next spring.

We remain, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully, for Seymour, Collins & Co.,
(Signed) C. COLLINS.

Investigate the Prowodnik complete descriptive list on request.
THE RUSSIAN TYRE & RUBBER IMPORT CO., LTD.,
162, Shaftesbury Avenue, LONDON, W.C.

Telegram: - RUSSIAN TYRE, LONDON. Telegram: - RUSSIAN TYRE, LONDON.

Photo courtesy of Tom Clarke.

1. В. А. Алексѣевъ,	авт. Рольсъ-Ройсъ	27 НР. (внѣ конк.) шоф. Флекъ и Витвортъ.
2. В. И. Барышевъ,	„ Мерседесъ	16 „ „ „ Давыдовъ.
*3. Л. Г. Кольсорнъ,	„ „	37 „ шофферъ Н. Грибовъ.
4. С. Н. Мамонтовъ,	„ Лоррэнъ-Дитрихъ.	47 „ „ О. Глезеръ.
*5. Н. Н. Шерупенковъ,	„ Бенцъ	33 „ „ Н. Даколинъ.
*6. Н. Ф. Головлевъ,	„ Минерва	26 „ „ А. Романъ.
*7. М. И. Николаевъ,	„ Берлізъ	25 „ „ А. Лебедевъ.
*8. Э. Л. Кайданскій,	„ Митчель	25 „ „ В. Ольшанченко.
*9. М. М. Сычевъ,	„ Берлізъ	25 „ „ А. Субботинъ.
10. В. Н. Шустовъ,	„ „	25 „ „ Е. Кузьминъ.
*11. І. С. Габай,	„ „	25 „ „ М. Абрамовъ.
*12. В. Л. Мандль,	„ Лоррэнъ-Дитрихъ	22 „ „ Прессъ.
*14. М. В. Барышниковъ,	„ Н. А. Г.	20 „ „
*15. Т. А. Шамшинъ,	„ Берлізъ	17 „ шофферъ П. Митрохинъ.
*16. Н. Н. Кехлинъ,	„ Пежо	18 „ „ Діени.
18. В. И. Оловянишниковъ,	„ Мерседесъ	10 „ „ Кузнецовъ.
*19. А. Ф. Шиллеръ,	„ Н. S. U.	8 „ „ Н. Бѣловъ.
20. Я. И. Стейнеръ,	„ Опель	19 „ (внѣ конкурса) шоф. Г. Лауэръ.

При этомъ №№ * записаны на соисканіе переходящаго приза ВЕЛИКАГО КНЯЗЯ МИХАИЛА АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧА.

Автомобили № 13 г. П. И. Кашевичъ и № 17 г. А. Н. Орлова на осмотръ не явились за отсутствіемъ свободнаго времени у ихъ владѣльцевъ.

Командующій войсками Московскаго Округа генералъ П. А. Плеве любезно предоставилъ Обществу помѣщеніе Манежа для размѣщенія тамъ автомобилей.

An English translation of all 20 cars was included in the 20th of July edition of *L'Aero*:

1. V.-A. Alexeiev (aka Alekseyev) in a Rolls-Royce taxable 27hp (real 48hp) (did not arrive in Paris as an official entrant)
2. V.-I. Baryshev in a Mercedes 16hp
3. L.-G. Kolsorn in a Mercedes 37hp
4. S.-N. Mamontov in a Lorraine-Dietrich 47hp
5. N.-N. Scheroupenkov in a Benz 33hp
6. N.-I. Goloviev in a Minerva 26hp
7. M.-I. Nicolaiev in a Berliet 25hp
8. E.-L. Kaidansky in a Mitchell (an American car) 25hp
9. M.-M. Sytchev in a Berliet 25hp (did not arrive in Paris as an official entrant)
10. V.-N. Schoustov in a Berliet 25hp
11. I. S. Gabai in a Berliet 25hp
12. V.-L. Mandl in a Lorraine-Dietrich 22hp
13. P.-I. Kashevitch in a Fiat 22hp (car did not leave Moscow)
14. M.-V. Baryshnikov in a NAG 20hp
15. T.-A. Schamchine in a Berliet 17hp
16. N.-N. Kechlin in a Peugeot 18hp (Peugeot agent in Moscow)
17. A.-N. Orlov in a Rex Simplex 29hp (car did not leave Moscow)
18. V.-I. Olovyanischnikov in a Mercedes 10hp
19. Monsieur & Madame A.-F. Schiller and two children in a NSU 8hp. No points lost the whole way.
20. Y.-L. Steiner in an Opel 19hp

Alekseyev fell ill and had to leave the rally in Berlin. Thus, 2236 did not officially arrive in Paris although, the car actually arrived ahead of all the other participants. According to the rules of the run, all participants had to decide for themselves how they would return to Moscow.

The rally received widespread publicity, as shown from this cutting from *The Sparks* magazine 29th June. Commander Alekseyev is announcing the start in the middle photo bottom row.



A splendid collection of trophies and prizes was given to participants.



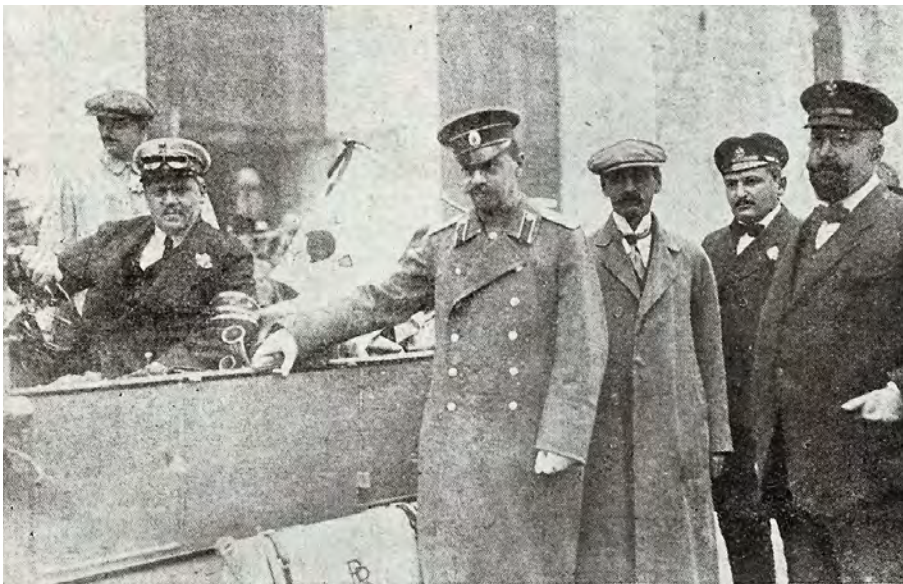
The most important trophy was given by His Imperial Highness Grand Duke (Michael) Alexandrovitch (1878-1918), the youngest brother of Czar Nicholas II. The Grand Duke owned the 1911 Silver Ghost (1682) Labourdette Limousine and the 1913 Silver Ghost (2429) London to Edinburgh Mühlbacher Torpedo. The Grand Duke's trophy was awarded to all participants who personally drove at least 2,120 kms. Eight people received this award: their names engraved on the trophy.

The Kayutov Prize was given for those participants who returned to Moscow, in the same car before 14th September. Only two crews received such a prize: number 5 in a Benz and number 19 in a NSU.

Below Alekseyev is in the driver's seat at the start. In the middle, with his hand on the car, is Vladimir Svechin, Vice-President of the Imperial Russian Automobile Society. Behind him are Victor Giraud, Alexander Babanin, and Andrey Kayutov..



The Kayutov Prize.



Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch.



*Andrey Kayutov Vice-Chairman of
the Moscow Automobile Society.*



Vladimir Svechin



Vladimir Alekseyev during the sealing of 2236's bonnet, before the start.

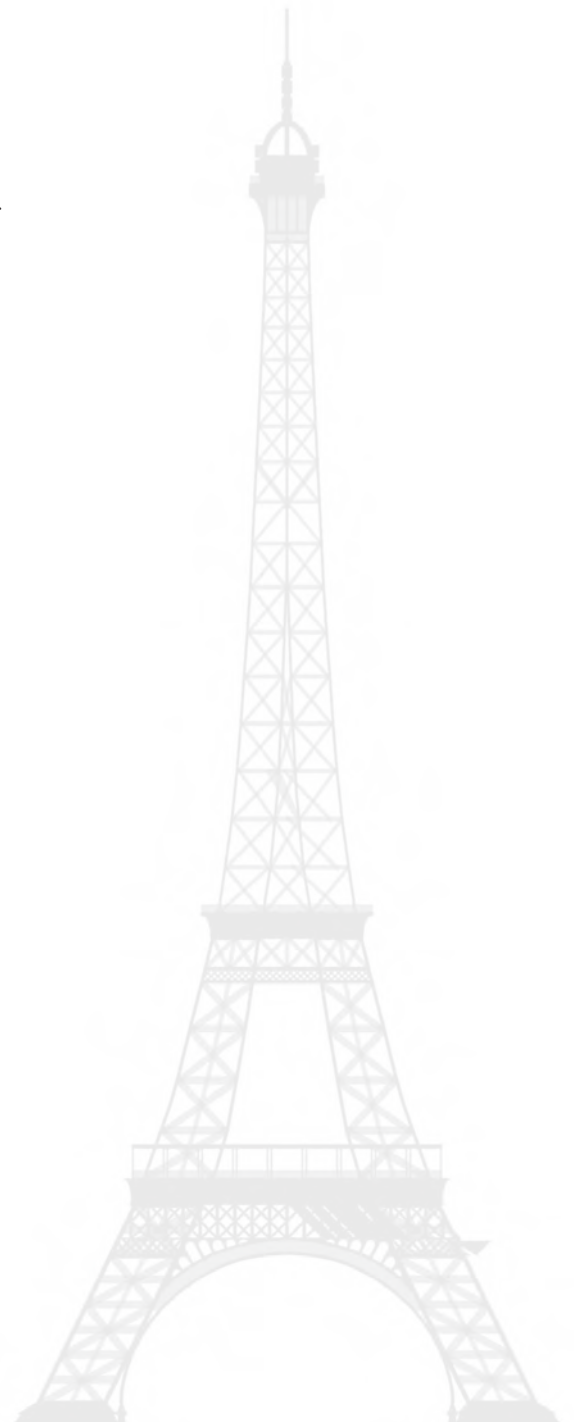
A supper was given on 22nd June for all the participants at Vorobyovy Gory (Sparrow Hills), one of the highest points in Moscow. 70 members were present, and a massive silver cup was presented to the participant who came to supper in his car in the most difficult way. This was awarded to Alexander Babanin who loaded his car onto a raft at the Crimean Bridge, sailed along the Moscow River to Vorobyovy Gory; then the car was unloaded by 30 specially hired peasants and pulled with ropes up to the restaurant.

Further along the St Petersburg Road, at the entrance to the city of Tver (110 miles from Moscow), the participants were warmly welcomed by officers of the Dragoon Moscow regiment named after Emperor Peter the Great and invited by them to the regimental assembly, where a banquet was held. The banquet was, apparently, very lively and ended late at night. Early in the morning, they departed to the sounds of the Dragoon regiment orchestra.

On the second day in the town of Torzhok, workers learned that there was a doctor among the participants. His medical advice, delayed departure by one hour. After Torzhok, 2236 is shown at the front near the town of Vyshny Volochyok.



The route from Moscow started towards St Petersburg. Pausing after 50 miles for this photo.





2236 at the front near Vyshny Volochyok.

Reports in the *L'Aero* included:

- Riga, Latvia: At 7pm, 18 participants of the Moscow-Paris car rally arrived. They were met in Zegewold by the Baltic Automobile Club. During their stay in Riga, a steamboat trip was arranged for the participants of the run (see below).
- Danzig, Germany (now Gdansk, Poland): 16 cars participating in the Moscow-Paris run arrived at midnight in torrential rain. The General German Automobile Club and the Russian Consul General greeted the arrivals. The participants of the run left through Kolberg, Stettin to Berlin.
- Berlin, Germany: At 8.30pm arrived from Stettin, in 17 cars, 41 participants of the Moscow-Paris automobile race, including eight ladies. In the suburbs of Weissensee, they were met by representatives of the Imperial Automobile Club, who invited the participants of the run to a dinner arranged in their honour. Of the 18 cars that left Moscow, 17 arrived here. Three arrivals went from Moscow to Berlin without penalty.
- Leipzig, Germany: Participants in the Moscow-Paris car rally arrived in 16 cars. The commander Alekseev (sic), fell ill in Berlin. His car dropped out of the competition. Despite Alekseyev leaving the rally, 2236 continued and was photographed in Leipzig at the local car club (see bottom left).
- Nancy, France: Participants of the Moscow-Paris car rally arrived. Members of the Lorraine Automobile Club went to meet them.
- Paris, France: 16 cars that took part in the Moscow-Paris run arrived at 5pm at the Porte de Vincennes.





Map of the route.

Based on the Gregorian calendar, the key dates for the rally of 1,987 miles were:

1. 25th June Moscow
2. 25th June Tver, Russia
3. 26th June Novgorod, Russia
4. 27th June Pskov, Russia
5. 28th June Riga, Russian Empire (now Latvia)
6. 30th June Tilsit, Germany (now Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia)
7. 1st July Danzig, Germany (now Gdańsk, Poland)
8. 2nd July Kolberg, Germany (now Kołobrzeg, Poland)
9. 3rd July Berlin, Germany
10. 5th July Leipzig, Germany
11. 6th July Frankfurt, Germany
12. 8th July Strasbourg, France
13. 8th July Nancy, France
14. 10th July Paris, France



Commemorative medal presented to Wright Whitworth.

The participants of the run were warmly welcomed everywhere in Germany and France. 1913 was a golden time in Europe and the Moscow to Paris run was a symbol of peace and friendship among European nations.

Mention should be made of the Russian correspondent Volk of the *Automobilist* magazine. He was with the Berliet (Number 9). when this car dropped out on the road between Riga and Tilsit He decided to move on with the Mitchell car (Number 8 driven by Kaidansky). In Tilsit, Volk received an invitation from Alekseyev to transfer to his Rolls-Royce and rode in 2236 all the way to the finish.

Although Alekseyev left the event in Berlin, through illness, we know that the Rolls-Royce stayed with the group all the way to Paris. Wright Whitworth drove the car on the final journey from Berlin to Paris and arrived 29 minutes ahead of the next car even though it couldn't be the official

winner because it was the commander's car and not an official entrant.

Commemorative medals were presented to all participants, including Commander Alekseyev.

Incidentally the son of Ponizovkin, who conducted the recce for the rally (mentioned at the beginning), was Andrey Ponizovkin, a famous Russian motorist (the Russian equivalent of Sir Malcolm Campbell). With a two-stroke engine, derived from a German racing motorbike, his car, *Zvezda 3* (or *The Star* in English) reached a top speed of 173kph in 1949.

Maxim Kartashev is the co-author, with John Stuttard, of *Russia and Rolls-Royce - The First 25 Years*, the third edition of which (October 2022), with added information and photos, can be purchased from Philip Hall, pah.rr@btinternet.com

Thanks also to Tom Clarke for his help in the preparation of this article.



The medal presented to Mikhail Abramov, in No11 a Bierlet car. Photo credit: State Polytechnic Museum, Moscow.

Zvezda 3. Photo credit: Oldtimer Gallery of Ilya Sorokin.





Yorkshire Caviar

Johnnie ventures to Ilkley without a hat!

Fact: the best fish and chips in Yorkshire is served in The George in Hubberholme. No, there isn't a picture - I'm not one of those daft millennials who photographs the meal as it's put in front of me. Just take my word for it. Use it as a question when you're setting your next pub quiz. We are in Yorkshire so it's haddock, obviously, none of that nasty cod nonsense that we softy southerners normally settle for, plus very healthy portions of both chips and 'Yorkshire Caviar' [see below for translation]. And it comes on a very long wooden board because the kitchen doesn't have a plate wide enough to accommodate what was once a very happy fish (apologies to vegetarian readers).

Adrienne and Lisle Richardson are relatively new members of the 20-GC but fairly long term R-R owners having purchased their 20HP in 1998. 'Come and see us in the Spring' said Lisle so I jumped on a train to Ilkley and did just that. The forecast was for rather heavy weather but as we pulled out of Kings Cross I was optimistic and was proved right. The dales in May are stunning. There is an eruption of colour of blossom and flower but I have to gaze upon the vivid greens of the grass and leaves as they unfurl. Perhaps spring arrives in Yorkshire a little later than down south but the power of nature is no less explosive.

Lisle scooped me up from Ilkley station in the Twenty and after a restorative Yorkshire brew we headed out. I have been to the dales before, of course. I well remember the tour organised by Terry Bramall a couple of years back when Bella and I ventured off piste in our own Twenty and negotiated some stunning roads. I recall thinking then that the Twenty is the perfect car for Yorkshire and Lisle and Adrienne agree.



Lisle's first car was a 1935 Morris 8. 'A basket case, but I loved it - although Adrienne had to get out and walk up the hills because the Morris couldn't cope - and there are a lot of hills round these parts!' Sadly they parted company with the Morris. Family life demanded something a tad more reliable. But we all know how that first car gets under your skin and there is always a hankering for something similar.

It is also of note that Lisle isn't afraid of a little spanner-work if required. He is an electrical engineer by training and career and has recently passed the family business, JA Richardson Electricals, over to his son Nicholas who is now the fifth generation engineer in the family. With two grandchildren now studying engineering at Oxford and Durham. Quite an achievement.

Anyway-back to cars, the 'engineering/spannering' in Lisle brought about the purchase of a 1948 MG TC 'another basket case, but a car which I managed to improve to become a thoroughly lovely and reliable motor. But as a two seater it was perhaps a slightly selfish car to own and I decided I wanted something more fitting for friends and family.'

Lisle noticed an article in The Automobile extolling the virtues of pre-war R-Rs. He had never thought of owning the ultimate motorcar but having studied the article and the classified adverts realised that Rolls-Royce motoring was accessible. This was the late 1990s. The internet was not a thing and auction details came through on the company fax machine. He dragged Adrienne down to a Coys sale in Islington London where they first saw GSK26. He went over it very carefully. It was certainly scruffy but it was all there and had a current MoT. A really good Barker

style tourer body - the family would love it. In the auction room he was able to turn the engine over but wasn't allowed to start the motor.

The hammer came down. The Richardsons had bought the car but alongside the elation of an auction win I reckon many of us will recognise that slight feeling of apprehension and misgiving which wells up inside your tummy.

Despite Lisle's ability to work on the car himself he was wise enough to send it to an expert in the first place. And so it was Messrs Horsfields of Halifax who discovered that the engine sounded like a bag of spanners going round inside a twin-tub washer. Regular purchasers of Rolls-Royce Motorcars at auction will, of course, recognise this sound. But we all know that with expertise, time and money everything can be fixed.

Today, over two decades after the engine rebuild, GSK26 is still running like a dream and pulling up the dales with ease. In addition to the engine rebuild Lisle has had the car re-trimmed, fitted a new hood, fitted a valvestat (to control the water temperature without having to fiddle with the radiator louvres), and added LED lights and indicators plus an overdrive.

But I know why you've read through this article to the very end...you just want to know more about the fish and chips at The George in Hubberholme. Well it's where Lisle and Adrienne took me on our jaunt. It's hidden right in the middle of the dales. Nobody knows it's there apart from Lisle, Adrienne, me, and now you. Shhh it's a secret!

'Yorkshire Caviar' = mushy peas!



Gosh, I didn't expect that!

Graham Tyson tells us about his other automobile adventure



Okay firstly a few random comments before I get into the nitty gritty. It is a 1912 Type 38 Delahaye, chassis no 6900 with a side valve four cylinder engine size 3750c.c. and it has a seven seater tourer body - it is massive. It actually stands seven feet from the ground to the top hoop of the hood. The body is steel so that is why after it had been stripped back it has been given a quick coat of primer to prevent rust until I start the long process of painting.

Before I bought it in February 2018 it had sat in an outbuilding on the estate of the late Count Franco Ferniani since before WW2. The estate is in the Brisighella district of the province of Ravenna in Northern Italy. My dealings were with the late count's son Serina, who I initially thought was his widow - oops! I do not speak Italian and Serina does not speak English so we conversed via Google translate which made matters interesting to say the least. What attracted me to the Delahaye was that it was totally untouched - remarkably complete and original - and appeared to be in decent condition apart from significant worm which had eaten the visible timbers.

The Count died in 1976 when Serina was young but had been a well-known motoring enthusiast who founded some aristocratic automobile clubs in Romagna. The car still bears its original Reale Automobile Club d'Italia licence plates. The club lost its royal appellation in 1946 when the monarchy was abolished. Sadly I have thus far had no success finding any records of the car registration details at the Italian motor vehicle agency.

I was slightly concerned about getting it out of Italy. The late Mike Worthington-Williams said I ran a risk that the Italian authorities may try and charge me road tax for the period since it had last been on the road - about 80/90 years or simply prohibit its export. In addition it had no papers whatsoever. I would have to rely on a sales contract and sworn Affidavit. I was all set to drive down to collect it myself with the trailer but Sarah forbade me - and she was correct to do so of course - so I found (on the internet) a Romanian with a transporter who agreed to bring it to about 30km of Calais. We thought this was far enough away from the port to preclude any possibility of illegals trying to hide under the trailer or in the car itself.

We had a couple of amusing incidents, whilst we were waiting for the Romanian to arrive at the agreed aire de service. There was a sudden influx of twenty white Police Nationale vans swooping in and parking all around us. The Police were armed to the teeth but after a few heart stopping moments I realised they were merely stopping for coffee and croissants and not out to arrest me! The next one was when we were coming up to the UK customs post at Calais in a long line of vehicles. Everybody else was waved through, except us. A stern looking officer came out of the kiosk and put on his peaked hat. Thoughts rushed through my head, I had no proper documents, had he heard something from the Italian authorities etc. He came over to my window looked like thunder – paused - and said *“Excuse me sir, what age is this car?”* I replied *“Err it's 1910”* I stammered, that being the date Serina had told me.

He broke into a broad grin, swung round to face his colleagues who were all pressed against the kiosk window and with his thumbs up said *“Yes, I've won the bet!”* Apparently they had all had a wager on the age of the car when they first saw it on the trailer in the queue. He then waved us through and wished us a good journey.

When we got it back to the workshop it became apparent very quickly that the worm was far worse than originally thought and that the car would have to be dismantled and restored properly, so much for my thoughts of a quick one. The first thing I did was to ask Club Delahaye in France if they could confirm its date. The club's President no less did this by return confirming it in a letter and sending me a very impressive certificate. They also advised me that it was the only Type 38 left anywhere in the world and were so excited about it they did an article for their club magazine. However I then searched the internet and found a second one in a private museum in South America. I subsequently went to the VCC to ask for help in getting it registered and Toby Ward (who has been amazingly helpful) came to look at it and did the usual VCC thorough job. He proved that it is, in fact, a 1912 model, so much for Club Delahaye! It did not bother me it was two years younger than I had been led to believe; it was still pre-WW1 by a comfortable margin.

We carefully removed all the upholstery and found to our utter astonishment that the original stuffing was nothing more glamorous than common or garden hay with horsehair in the 'fat' rolls around the edge. I have retained it in case a future owner





wants to re-use it (I do not). The leather was then sent to The Leather Conservation Centre who restored and re-hydrated it with strengthening to the back, where required, over a two years period. It is about to be re-fitted.

When the chassis was revealed we discovered that one of the cross members had broken in two places and had been crudely repaired by a piece of steel bolted across it which had also broken in the same two places. Obviously a design fault which we have solved by adding two diagonal strengthening bars. When I stripped the front axle I found the word 'Nickel' stamped into it, surely it cannot have been made from Nickel? But it does not react to a magnet. Perhaps it merely has a high proportion of Nickel in it - why? One of the things I found rather charming was that on every piece of metal in the engine, gearbox, and pedals was stamped with a miniature Delahaye radiator logo. This car was clearly a prestigious vehicle and it has been very interesting to compare its build quality with my

Silver Ghost - there is no comparison. I will just need to add a sentence of clarification here.

Apart from the broken cross-member no particular nasties have been found. The skirts of all four cast iron pistons were cracked but those have been repaired. The wings are the only non-original items which look as though they were made by the local blacksmith. I am having new ones made to the correct shape. The car arrived sitting on four Sankey type steel wheels plus two original wooden ones (both wormy) and so I am having six new wooden ones made by the amazing Mike Rowland & Sons who operate from Colyton East Devonshire and who were By Appointment to HM Queen Elizabeth II. They trace their family firm back to the 14th century which is quite astonishing.

Incidentally the tyres look quite good! They had not been inflated since the car was first moved to come to me. They are really really old, I do not think they are actually holding air, and believe they have hardened so much they have virtually become



solid. Certainly there is no 'give' in them. It is a relief to know they will not have to be removed from the rims due to the new ones being made.

I am going to paint the car myself by hand and had some practice when restoring many of the parts of the car such as the front and back axles, springs, steering arm, linkages et cetera. I am currently wrestling with the question of colour. The car has always been painted Prussian Blue with black upholstery and green carpets, a slightly odd combination. The problem is

that I do not like Prussian Blue, it is rather dreary in my view, but should I change it and if so to what? I had thought of Burgundy which would show off well against the brass, but a dark colour is not very forgiving as it shows up imperfections in the body surface, goodness knows what I shall do.

The car was missing its side lights and, having studied pictures of various Edwardian Delahaye cars, I was able to purchase some replacements on eBay. One could not see they were brass and they had been

converted to electricity but I bought them and spent a pleasant few weeks over last winter restoring them on the kitchen table before taking them to my workshop and converting them back to oil, they look gorgeous as can be seen in the photograph.

By the way, Mike Worthington-Williams ran a piece about my discovery and purchase of the car in *The Automobile* July 2018. I think that is about it. I could go on for ages, as you know my motto is why use one word when ten will do, but I think I should end here.

1932 Rolls-Royce 20/25 GAU69



The story of its several owners

Sir John Aird



GAU69 at Chateau de Blois in 1939 with Sir John Aird 3rd Baronet (1st Owner) and his chauffeur behind.

The Aird family were originally farm workers at Avoch on the Black Isle in Scotland, north east of Inverness. In 1815, the year of Waterloo and during a harsh depression, 15 year-old John walked with his parents the 500 miles from Avoch to London in search of work. His father Robert was killed in an accident building the Regent Canal two years later, leaving John to support his mother - who only spoke Gaelic.

He found work with the Phoenix Gas Company and they lived in his employer's yard in Blackfriars Road, 'a very sordid part of London next door to a Knackers Yard.' John taught himself to read, write and the rudiments of engineering. He became superintendent of the gas company but by 1846, had established his own business employing 100 men.

Soon he was working all over Britain, Holland, Denmark, Germany, and Russia. He laid the gas and water mains for the Great Exhibition in 1851 and in 1852-1854 dismantled Paxton's great hall and re-erected it as the Crystal Palace in Sydenham. By 1858 he employed 30,000 men and his son – also John – became involved in the business.

The next John Aird was tall with prominent features, blue eyes, a deep commanding voice. His beard became longer and more splendid as he grew older! He made a striking impression, modelling himself, consciously or not, on a renaissance prince, then a fashionable image. He tried to appear to be three times as rich as he actually was and lived in great style. He was a superb showman, which was not a façade hiding a weakness, but the expression of a great, if crude, vitality.

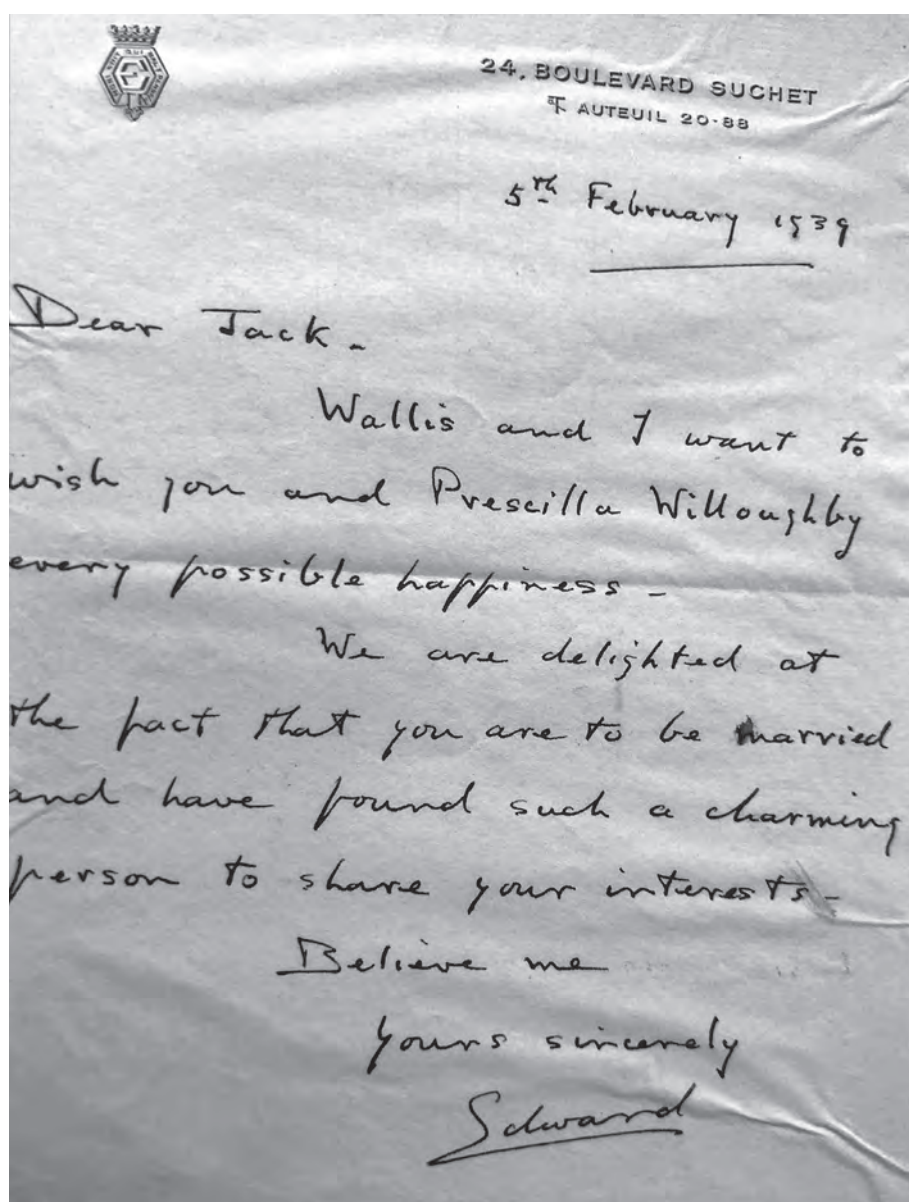
He built the firm of John Aird and Sons into one of the major engineering firms of the 19th Century, building:

- The Albert Hall
- The Royal Victoria Docks
- The West Highland Railway
- The 1902 Aswan Dam in Egypt

He was created a Baronet in 1901 and became the 1st Sir John Aird.



Jack Aird and wife Priscilla née Heathcote-Drummond-Willoughby at the Warwickshire point to point 1939.



Order for GAU69 from Rootes Ltd with 25% discount.

Letter from Edward Prince of Wales to Jack Aird on his engagement to Priscilla Heathcote Drummond Willoughby 1939.



Jack Aird with Edward, Prince of Wales in 1936 ashore during their cruise on the Nahlin when they were accompanied by Wallis Simpson.

Sadly however, his son - the 3rd generation - the 2nd Sir John Aird - was not a good engineer and the firm John Aird & Sons was liquidated after a disastrous contract to build new docks in Singapore. But it is with his son (4th generation) where our story begins.

Major John Aird was born in 1898 and known as Jack. During the first war he served as an officer in the Grenadier Guards and was awarded an MC aged 19 for conspicuous gallantry. After military service he became equerry to Edward Prince of Wales, and Rolls-Royce 20/25 GAU69 was delivered to him at St James Palace in London.

His father died two years later in 1934 and Jack became the 3rd Sir John Aird.

I think Jack had decided upon a Rolls-Royce as a suitable car for a bachelor and negotiated a good 25% discount on the purchase price through Rootes Ltd. The coachbuilder was Thrupp and Maberly which had been acquired by remarkable salesmen William and Reggie Rootes.

That said, the purchase of GAU69 from Rootes Ltd may also have been aided by Billy Rootes's friendship with the Prince of Wales. They used to go and shoot grouse with Rootes on Billy's Scottish Estate in Glenalmond.

Jack owned GAU69 from 1932-1946 though, in common with nearly all cars in private hands, it was laid up during WW2. In 1946 Jack Aird changed GAU69 for a 1946 Hillman Minx Estate car, more suitable for post-war Britain and continuing petrol rationing. He sold GAU69 to Kenneth Diplock KC.

Kenneth Diplock was born in Croydon in 1907, the only child of Irish solicitor Herbert Diplock and his wife Christine. He attended Whitgift School in Croydon and University College, Oxford, where he read chemistry and graduated with a second-class degree. He later became an Honorary Fellow in 1958.

Diplock was called to the Bar in 1932. He left practice in 1939 to serve in the war; in 1941 he joined the Royal Air Force, in which he reached the rank of squadron leader.



Top: Sir John and Lady Aird at the start of the London to Edinburgh run in September 2021.

Middle: GAU69 at speed on the road to the Scottish capital.

Bottom: The Crystal Palace as re-erected by John Aird & Sons at Sydenham Hill in 1854..



John Aird at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. He is the young man in blue circled at the front of the image.

He returned to practice after the war and was made a King's Counsel (KC) in 1948, at the age of 41. In 1956, he was appointed successively to the High Court, and the Court of Appeal.

He was also a foxhunter with the Quorn Hunt in the days before fox hunting became a criminal activity and he had a horse called 'Circuit' which he had difficulty controlling. He was frequently seen galloping past other horses, shouting 'No Brakes! No Brakes!' If you called his Chambers and he was out hunting, His Clerk would say: 'Mr Diplock is out on Circuit.'

He became a Law Lord in 1968 with the title Baron Diplock, of Wansford. As Lord Diplock, he chaired a commission set up in 1972 to consider legal measures against terrorism in Northern Ireland. At the time of his death in 1985, Lord Diplock was the longest serving Law Lord.

He owned GAU69 from 1946 to 1970 when it was purchased by James N Tuttle of Mesa, Colorado, USA. It was brought back to the UK in 1990 by Real Car Co who carried out extensive restoration work.

It saw service as a wedding car between 1992 and 2002 when owned by a Mr Painter. But in 2002 Real Car sold it again to Dr Goldring of Newton Abbott.

In 2004 GAU69 was purchased at auction by a Mr JF Pannel, a retired BA dispatcher and who owned a hotel in the New Forest. He and his wife cared for GAU69 lovingly and only drove it 2000 miles in 12 years.

Mr Pannel had the original invoice for GAU69 addressed to Major John Aird at St James's Palace for £1103 and contacted Sir John Aird 4th Baronet asking for any history of the car. One thing led to another and in 2018, Mr Pannell sold GAU69 to the son of the 1st owner. Sir John Aird 4th Baronet, born 1940 – me!

I enjoyed very privileged early years. My godparents were King George VI and Field Marshall Lord Gort VC. I was a page to my uncle the Earl of Ancaster at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and a Royal Page from 1955-1956. Then I was fortunate to be educated at Eton, Christ Church Oxford and Harvard.

Following my great grandfather's lead I practiced as an engineer all my life albeit on a much more modest scale. I started out working on large dams in Africa at Kariba, on the Zambesi in Rhodesia, and on the Blue Nile in the Sudan. Later I built plants for the pharmaceutical, food-processing and other industries across the world.

I'm so fortunate to be married to Fen who, in the days before China competed in the Olympics, was the champion high jumper of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army.

She is very keen on family history and in 2017 introduced the Chinese custom of 'honouring ancestors'. She organised a Service of Thanksgiving for the life and achievements of the 1st Sir John Aird, attended by 120 of his descendants.

Under our stewardship GAU69 has been fitted with an overdrive which enables us to cruise comfortably at 60mph, an engine oil filter and a new set of tyres. The Rolls-Royce is showing its years, but remains a good runner albeit highly unlikely to win a concours d'elegance!

Editor: As you know from Ken's recent email, very sadly, Sir John Aird died on 4th May. He and Fen had not been 20-Ghost members for that long but became very active participants in club events. Conversations with John were always animated, well informed and, most of all, fun. Sometime ago he sent me this article relating to his car and I'm truly sorry to be publishing it posthumously.

2023 AGM



This Year's AGM was held at the glorious Stationers Hall in London. Ken gave an excellent state of the union address, and several other members also provided reports. Dinner afterwards was excellent and the trophies were handed out to the deserving recipients (please see Issue 71 page 56 for full details). Huge thanks to Jo Naismith for organising such a brilliant evening for us all.





The Last Word

Hello all, I have to start with an apology; as you will see from the diary on page 4 the Sandhurst day on 30th July is cancelled. I was tasked with arranging our visit but sadly I couldn't make sufficient headway with Sandhurst to be sure it would go smoothly. As I type John Stuttard is seeing if he can sort out a visit to Polesden Lacey in Surrey a little later in the year so please watch out for an email on this.

Pictured right is a super shot of me with Lisle and Adrienne Richardson's 20HP GSK26 – thanks to Lisle for the photo. I hope you enjoyed the article on their car; it was a great day and easy for me to jump on a train from London. I'm keen to travel to meet members, play cars, take lots of photos, and write up a story. If we can fit in a pub lunch along the way then that always makes me happy! But I'm also looking for members' articles on their cars – or even their 'other' cars such as Graham's Delahaye also in this issue (what a restoration!) Do pick up the phone or drop me an email if you fancy talking something through before you write it. Photos are key – always try to take pictures on your phone as often as you can. Remember I have to have them in full resolution (often the email apps automatically truncate the size – which means they can't be used in the magazine).

You might have noticed a few changes to the design and style of this issue. I'm trying to give the magazine a slightly more contemporary feel and have had huge help from designer, Jaz Wiseman, a good friend locally. Can you let me have your feedback? The other 'first' is using a QR code on page 5. All you do is get your phone, open the camera app, and point it at that strange crosswordy looking thing. After a second or so you should see a yellow box appear on your screen. Click the yellow box and that should take you to a video which plays. I hope we can do more of this – if you like it then we can get videos of our cars for you to watch alongside reading the magazine.

Now I need to stop writing and go fire up The Doctor. I'm off to Waitrose to buy cake for tea this afternoon. Yes, yes, I know I should make a cake – but then I wouldn't have an excuse to drive my superb Rolls-Royce motor car on this gloriously sunny June Saturday!

Have a wonderful summer and see you all soon, best wishes



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