



News & Record

Issue 76 | Summer 2024





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September 2024

Sunday 1st – Thursday 5th
Tour of Dorset. Based at the
Priory Hotel in Wareham,
Dorset BH20 4ND.
rslwilks@gmail.com

Sunday 21st

Autumn Lunch
The Grange Hampshire, tour of
the vineyard, tasting and lunch.
strone@stronemacpherson.com

March 2025

Saturday 15th – Sunday 16th
AGM and Charles Rolls Dinner
in Cambridge. John Snook and
Mary Narvell are organising
sensibly priced accommodation,
(hopefully) a talk and tour of
the Churchill Archives and
AGM, then coach to Trinity
College to visit one of the
ancient libraries with a music
recital before dinner and
prize-giving. Mary Narvell:
narvell@btopenworld.com

April 2025

Saturday 26th
Spring Lunch in Strone and
Alex's barn - Armsworth Park
House, Hampshire.
strone@stronemacpherson.com

May 2025

Sunday 11th – Saturday 17th
The Irish Georgian Tour in
County Wexford Ireland.
Possibly another (optional) tour
to be added at the end. The
whole thing promises to be
marvellous. John Narvell
narvell630@gmail.com

July 2025

Wednesday 2nd – Thursday 24th
The Baltic Region in Summer
Sir John Stuttard is arranging
a 22-night tour of Finland,
Sweden, Latvia & Estonia.
johnstuttard@btinternet.com

Letters, Emails & Pictures

Dear Johnnie,

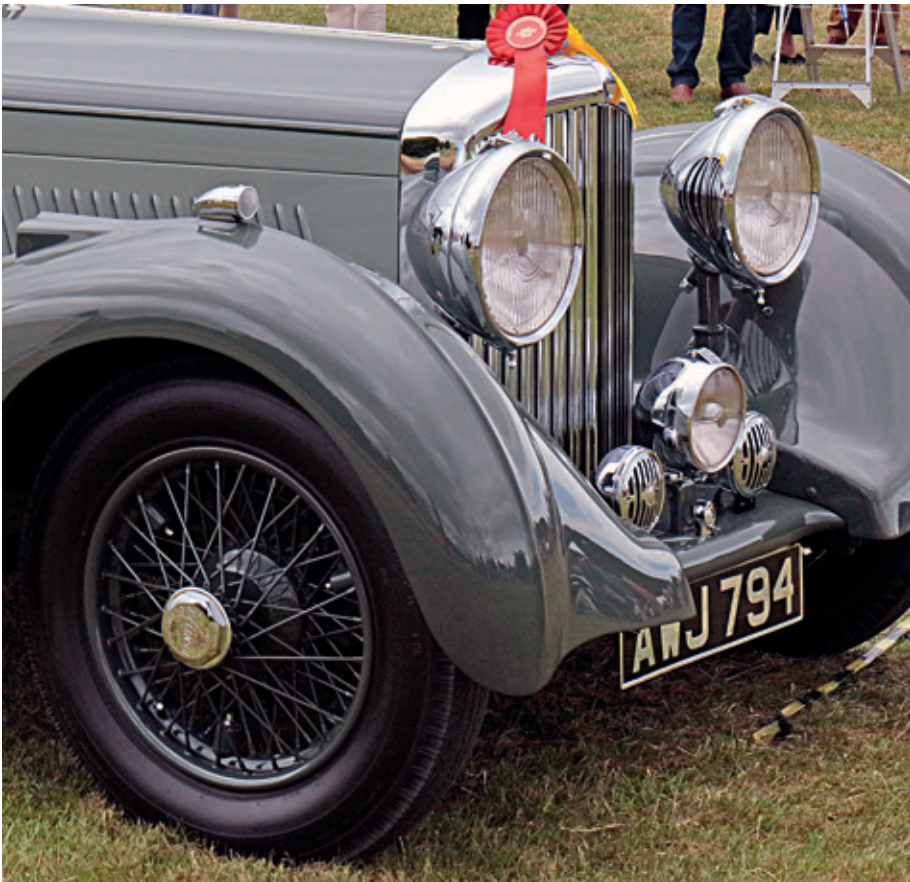
Your article on Steve Wilks' Hooper 20/25 GWE53 (Issue 75 p20) mentions the wing mirrors on this car.

I have seen them elsewhere on pre-WWII Rolls-Royces, but haven't remembered a particular car. To my memory it wasn't on a Hooper body, possibly Thrupp or F&W.

However, in 1972 I did own a 3 ½ litre Bentley B176DG with a Park Ward fully-disappearing hood body that had a similar arrangement. A lovely looking car if in need of a total rebuild which I could not afford. Fortunately it ended up as a potential project with P&A Wood and was rebuilt for Henri Robet. The Bentley was the first of three similar cars built for Florence Pickles and was a copy of an H J Mulliner body shown in 1934 at Olympia on B22BN. The built-in mirror was only on the offside of the car.

When I owned it a previous owner had fitted more modern wing mirrors (deleted in the restoration). Miss Pickles' later cars had side-mounted spare wheels on which wing mirrors were fitted, and which would have obscured the eye line to a mirror of the earlier design.

Best wishes, Colin (Hughes)



Thanks to the many of you who wrote in regarding the horrid picture of the rolled 1937 PIII 3CM65, now owned by Fokko.

I asked about the other car in the photo and Hugh Stephenson suggests: To my eye it looks like a 2.5 Riley RMB, probably a pre-1953 model by the look of the back bumpers. I had one of these back in my "yoof," a 1953 Riley RMF with slightly different bumpers. I could be wrong... but it does look like a Riley. Also looks to be England somewhere: a flattish county, grey thunderous clouds, and the cars appearing to be (initially) driving on the left hand side of the road. The man standing beside the PIII's bumper is either in a hole, or very small, or Fokko's car is very wide... hard to tell! Good luck, Hugh

Steve Stuckey (see honorary membership piece elsewhere in this issue) wrote in to say:

Hi Johnnie

I have just looked at News & Record 75, including the photo of Fokko's 3CM65 after its accident. I don't know where this happened, but the other car is a Riley RMA which was registered KTA 680 in Devon in early 1948. The accident happened in 1954 so the Riley was about six years old. As an ex-Riley RM owner I find the photo doubly stressing! Cheers, Steve

Nick Channing sent through this brilliant shot – man's best friends! Nick's faithful hound Bronte the Leonberger seen here happy inside his equally faithful 1922 SG 42ZG. Nick tells me that Bronte is just a titch at 60 kgs!



I just had to include this shot of our own dear Graham Tyson. So far this year has seen torrential rain and has been jolly cold but nothing stops our Graham from going off in his trusty Landie on his annual camping trip. Graham told me: 'Miles from anywhere, no facilities and no traffic noise, only birdsong – bliss!'



20-Ghost Club new honorary member: Steve Stuckey

It is with delight that Steve has accepted honorary membership of our club. He is a Rolls-Royce historian, Sydney-born, but lived in Canberra for the last 36 years. A graduate in history and politics, and before retirement was CEO of the National Archives. He developed a particular interest in pre-war R-Rs, especially the Phantom III, in the 1980s when working out how relational databases work. He has been a member of the British, American and Australian clubs since the late 1970s, and of the 20-Ghost Club for 8 years; he is a Fellow of the

Phantom III Technical Society, and has written extensively for each of these clubs. Steve spent about three weeks at The Hunt House in the early 1990s researching the 727 PIIs made. In 2015 he wrote the book *The Spectre Arises: The Story of the Phantom III* and in 2019 *Advertising the Rolls-Royce Phantom III*. Steve's own archive contains thousands of PIII photos as well as written material, and he takes great pleasure from researching these cars and their owners, and other mainly pre-war Rolls-Royces.

Steve with the late Paul Hesse's Hooper limousine 3DL134 at a lake near Steve's Canberra home. Paul loaned Steve both of his Phantom IIIs on a number of occasions.



For Sale



Very sadly Seán Reddy has had some recent health issues and with huge reluctance he and Lesley have decided to part with their magnificent 1924 SG 82EM. This is a very fine late Ghost which featured as the centre spread in Issue 69 and also in Harrison Royce's (AKA Sir John Stuttard) article on the Jack O'Lantern in Issue 70 (page 22). Seán asked if any member might be interested in purchasing the car and sent through the following:



82EM is celebrating her 100th anniversary and now seeks a new custodian. She sports a Jarvis body, superbly copied from a 1924 Barker Open Tourer, however this Ghost was bodied as an Armoured Car and starred in David Lean's epic film - *Lawrence of Arabia*. Her mechanicals are all matching numbers and in splendid order, carefully maintained and running as a Ghost should. 82EM is a multiple show winner and has happily completed with vim and lustre 2500 miles over the last year. A new keeper is now sought to enjoy and embrace the distinct charms of this outstanding centurion. Supported with a large history file and provenance. OIRO £165K.

Please contact Seán Reddy on 01261 818845 or 07387 502343 - if preferred a contact through the Club will be fine as well.

2024 AGM

On Friday 15th March 2024 the club held its AGM at Trinity House opposite the Tower of London. The venue was nothing short of superb. The formal AGM was brief but with an excellent address by Ken who took us through the past year and upcoming events. Then the dinner with toasts and awards was super and huge fun. It really was a most excellent event. Huge thanks to Jo Naismith for organising it all and giving us a great night out.

Thanks to Colin Hughes for all the photographs.



New Members

Graham Tyson reports seven new members this time.



Bill and Julie Draper
Burstwick, Yorkshire
1914 Silver Ghost 48YB, Hooper Sports Tourer.



Mrs Frances Dodd
Carlton in Cleveland, North Yorkshire
1915 Silver Ghost 2BD, HA Hamshaw Limousine.



David and Barbara Miles
Poole, Dorset
1926 PI, 69DC Open Tourer.
1939 PIII, 3DL198 HJ Mulliner Sedan de Ville



The Rev Dr Ian Murray
Elgin, Morayshire
1921 SG 133LG Barker style open drive Landaulette.
1934 20/25 GUB51 Arthur Mulliner Limousine



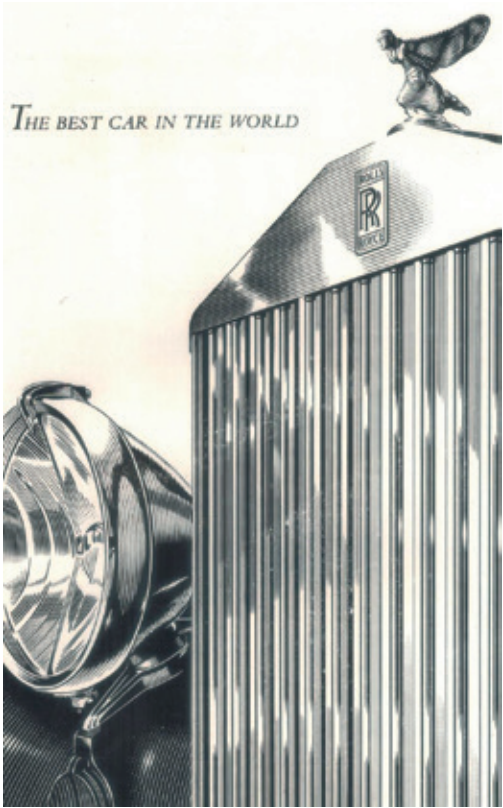
Richard Stanley
South Egremont, Massachusetts, USA
1938 Wraith WXA22, HJ Mulliner High Vision Saloon with division.

Michael and Gail Drayton
Odiham, Hampshire
who are currently seeking a PII.

Trevor and Hilary Kells
Newtownards, Northern Ireland
who are looking for an early Silver Ghost.

A huge welcome to you all

Persuade your friends to buy a pre-war R-R.
Propose them to Graham:
gtyson@outlook.com



THE 20-GHOST CLUB LIMITED REGISTERED NUMBER 5224633

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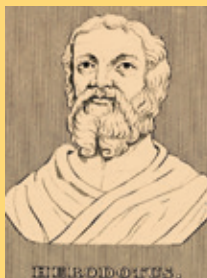
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Just a century ago...

Herodotus casts an eye over R-R related matters within *The Autocar* during April-June 1924.

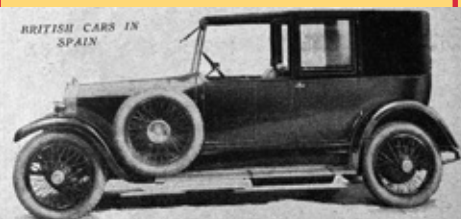


London to Edinburgh Run

In June 1924 the MCC organised a twenty-four run between the two capitals. *The Autocar* photographed Mr J B Bainbridge in his 40/50 Rolls-Royce leaving the breakfast stop in Ilkley.

Bombay to Poona

W F Goose entered his ten-year old 40/50 Rolls-Royce in the Bombay MCC Bombay to Poona Reliability Trial. In the Hill Climb section the car performed remarkably well reaching the summit in 8 min 25.4 sec, only 0.4 sec longer the fastest motor cycle. Mr Goose won a silver medal.

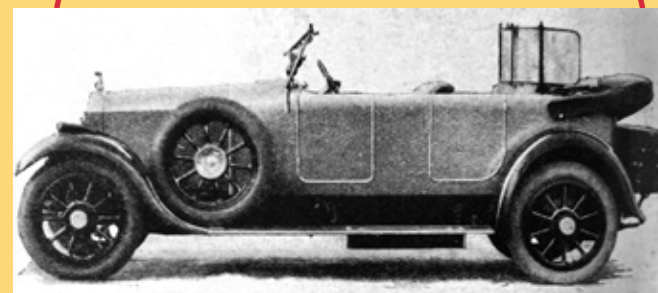


Spanish Motor Show

Rolls-Royce was one of the British Exhibitors at the Spanish Motor Show in Barcelona in April. The marque was represented by a 40/50 with cabriolet coachwork by Barker, and a 20HP brougham by Hooper. The 20HP, described as a smart carriage, was priced at £1805.

Latest Tendencies

The 40/50 HP Rolls-Royce brougham de ville depicts the latest tendencies in the development of the coupe de ville type.



For Australia

Windovers is responsible for the very elegant coachwork fitted to this 20HP Rolls-Royce chassis (pic 4a) which has recently been completed for the special requirements of Mr Peat, the Rolls-Royce representative in Sydney, for his own use. Special features of the car are adjustable driving seats, triple ventilators in the scuttle dash and provision of a locker at the back of the driving seat, in which the rear screen can be stowed when not in use. A large luggage trunk can be carried at the rear. The colour of the car is café au lait and it is upholstered in brown leather.

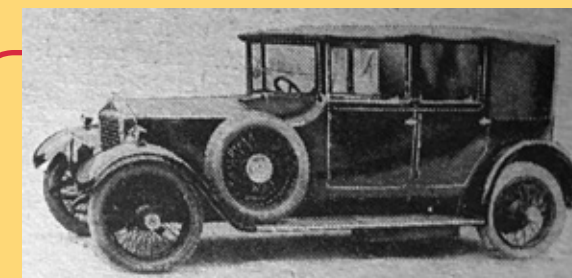
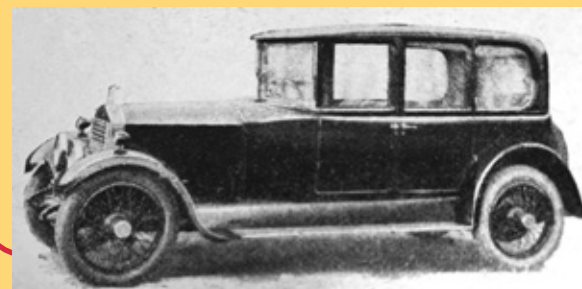
Park Ward Convertible

The Autocar had noted an increasing tendency to fit sporting two-seated (sic) coach work to large chassis. As an example it showed a Rolls-Royce 40/50 with coachwork by the Cunard Motor and Carriage Co Ltd. The rear seat carries one person and is constructed on the lines of an aeroplane cockpit.



Coachwork at the British Empire Exhibition

The British Empire Exhibition featured open and closed British bodywork at its best. Among the examples shown were a 40/50 Rolls-Royce fitted with a Barker patent cabriolet de ville body, a Joseph Cockshoot four-light 20HP saloon, and a Windovers 40/50 HP enclosed drive limousine.



Luxurious Carriagework

Although it is equally popular with an opening touring body, the larger Rolls-Royce was shown at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, only with enclosed coachwork: a Barker enclosed drive limousine with a partition behind the driving seat and with many accessories for the convenience of the occupants, and a Hooper limousine landaulet, a magnificent town carriage representing the most luxurious form of motoring, and priced at £2818.

The Forbes Report

We are now well into our programme of events with our motor cars for this year, which started, as usual, with a very convivial Spring Lunch. It was a very welcome return to Strone's barn in Hampshire and this is an event that appeals to a wide range of members, so always oversubscribed. An eclectic mix of cars and members were present. Many thanks to Strone and Alex for the work that goes into putting on this event. A report on the Irish Georgian trip to N Yorkshire appears in this edition and I hope this will inspire more members to join this unique tour next year, which will be in S Ireland. We hope to have a 20-GC extension tour to link in with this, so if you are interested in helping us organise this, do please get in touch.

Our major tour was to Provence in June, organised by John and Lesley Stuttard, which included a wide range of international members. The intention was to have a more relaxed tour, with several nights in most hotels, to give a chance to explore some of the premier wine growing areas of France. Unsurprisingly this was widely appreciated, as were the fabulous daily excursions. As is so often the case on our tours, the highlight for many was when we were hosted by a local family for a lunch in their garden. That this was a multi-generational family Champagne house, hosted together with their neighbour, Laurent Perrier certainly helped! There were many special photo opportunities of the cars with chateaux backdrops and we look forward to seeing Kimberly Shadduck's great pictures in due course. No doubt Johnnie will select some of the best for the next edition.

With the Tim Forrest Tour and the Dorset Tour to come, there are plenty of events to follow this. We will finish with an Autumn Lunch at the Grange Vineyard on 21 September. If you want to participate in any of these events, contact the organiser as soon as you can to get your name down.

On the business front, a major project for this year is the upgrading of our website to enhance the information available and access for members. It will also be based on industry standard software, making it more durable and flexible to develop in the future. We will also replace our very old renewals system. More on this to come.

Thanks to Steve Wilks, the board now receives quarterly management accounts, so we are able to monitor our finances with timely and accurate information. Sound finances are a key part of any club's success.

Enjoy the rest of the summer's driving opportunities, whether on a club event or at home.

Best wishes




Ken and Jane's 1924 Silver Ghost 68RM at rest at Château de Chailly on the recent French tour – more to come on this in the next issue!

A 1929 Rolls-Royce Estate: GXO85

Michael Power describes the purchase and restoration
of the ultimate post-war Utility Vehicle



Three woodies at Goodwood House. The 25/30 in the centre belongs to His Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon. On the right is GXO85 and on the left is the French bodied 20/25 estate belonging to local friend Tony James.

Our wonderfully enthusiastic Editor encouraged me to write a piece on my 1929 woodie. Sir John Stuttard has done some meticulous research on the car which has helped enormously in putting together its chequered history.

GXO85 was ‘Off Test’ at Derby on 25 November 1929. It’s an early 20/25, which was originally allocated a 20HP chassis number (GVO75) but then upgraded to a 20/25 engine. The floorboards are the original ones with the chassis number stamped into the wood. It’s possible to see where the V and 7 from the 20HP number have been gouged out and the X and the 8 of the 20-25 number over stamped.

“My late wife
enforced a strict
one-in one-out
policy...”

The chassis, with raked steering, was delivered on 29 November to The Connaught Motor & Carriage Co Ltd of 34/36 Davies Street, London W1 for the fitting of an owner-driver Enclosed Limousine for their customer, TB Desnos of Hillside House, Richmond, Surrey. The completed car was delivered to the customer on 26 February 1930.

It was sold in 1935 and between then and 2015, when I bought it, the car had six owners, most notably for 18 months in 1947/48 Alfred Moss, father of Stirling Moss. It was Alfred Moss, I believe, who had the limousine converted into an estate car, by P and A Coachworks of Guildford, and the young Stirling then used it to tow a horsebox containing his racing car. These estate car conversions were not that unusual in the immediate post-war period. The converted cars ranked as commercial vehicles and attracted more petrol coupons and this I understand was one of the main motivations behind these conversions.

I have a longstanding penchant for estate cars, especially woodies, as a previous owner of a Morris Traveller, an Alvis TA14 woodie and, in the late 80s/early 90s, a Rolls-Royce 20/25 woodie GKT35 which had been used as a prep school bus. My late wife Victoria enforced a strict one-in one-out policy and the Rolls-Royce went in order to make way for a 20.9 Sunbeam which I still have. So when the ex-Stirling Moss estate car appeared at auction the urge to step in was very strong.

426
The ex-Stirling Moss family
1929 ROLLS-ROYCE 20/25HP 'WOODIE' ESTATE CAR
Registration no. PG 6659
Chassis no. GXO85
Engine no. Z7D

- Early production chassis
- Used by Stirling Moss's father to transport Stirling's Cooper racing car

Production of the Rolls-Royce 20/25hp commenced with the 'GXO' chassis series, the first of which was off test in August 1929. Tom C Clarke's definitive work, The Rolls-Royce 20/25HP, lists chassis number 'GXO85' as completed with limousine coachwork by Connaught and first owned by one TB Desnos. It is not known when the current body was fitted.

The immediately preceding owner purchased the Rolls-Royce in 1998 from an elderly gentleman who lived abroad. It is understood that he had last driven the car (which is believed to have belonged to his father) in 1959, on which occasion he had backed it into a bollard on Boat Race night, damaging the tailgate. He then returned the car to the barn at the family home where it remained for the next 40 years.

Having purchased the Rolls with the intention of restoring it, the preceding owner then consigned it to his own barn for the next ten years. When he collected the car an elderly lady neighbour informed him that it had once belonged to 'a famous racing driver' and subsequently it was ascertained that it had belonged to Stirling Moss's father.

At his 80th birthday celebrations at Motor Sport's offices, Stirling confirmed that a horsebox transporter was hooked up to the Rolls to take him and his racing car to his first ever event. It is still fitted with the tow-bar.

While the Rolls was in the previous owner's possession, the wheels were rebuilt and tyres fitted; the engine and gearbox were removed, and the cylinder head, block and crankcase separated for inspection. 'GXO85' was in this partly dismantled state when it was purchased by the current vendor at Bonhams' sale at the R-REC's Annual Rally in June 2009 (Lot 205). The engine has since been rebuilt and the body's timber framework replaced where appropriate, leaving the next owner to complete the restoration. The Rolls was driven a short distance with brakes, steering and gearbox all functioning well. Accompanying paperwork consists of sundry invoices, an old-style logbook and a V5C registration document. A super opportunity to acquire a rare sporting Rolls with a racing association.

£20,000 - 30,000

£28,000 - 42,000

2015, auction particulars



1998, broken headlight, flat tyres and dented bodywork clearly visible in this picture with the then vendor, Dr Barnes.

The car was complete but in very questionable condition. The picture shows no bonnet but the bonnet did fortunately come with the car separately.

The full ownership history is:

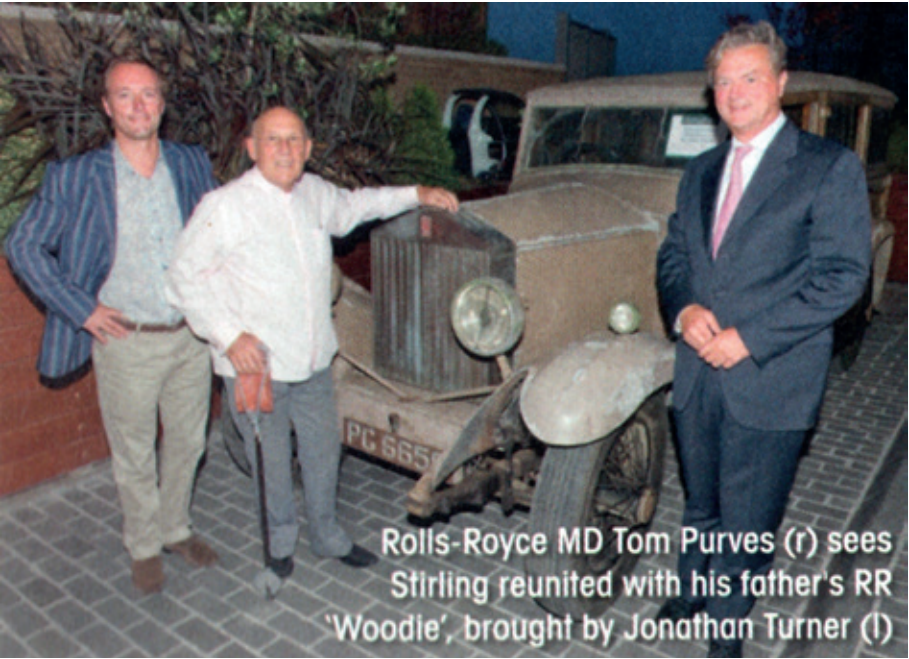
TB Desnos	February 1930
OC Summers	June 1935
AE Moss	April 1947
S Dickson Moyse	October 1948
Dr Barnes	Early/mid 1950s
Tony Scott Andrews	1998
Jonathan Turner	June 2009, Bonhams
Michael Power	June 2015, Bonhams

The low point in the car's life was around 1998 when Tony Scott Andrews bought the car from Dr Barnes, who had reversed it into a bollard on Boat Race day in 1959! It then languished in his family's barn until Tony bought it. Tony has provided pictures of the day of removal.



1998, the rear end damage is clearly visible with the main LH corner post completely removed above the waistline and the top tail gate broken up and the bottom tail gate in pieces in the back.

Sir Stirling and Jonathan Turner at Sir Stirling's 80th birthday party. Behind Tom Purves's left shoulder you can see the missing rear pillar. (Photo courtesy of MotorSport).



When Jonathan Turner acquired the car in 2009 the engine had been dismantled and no work had been done to the damaged bodywork. He had got someone to repair the wooden framework and someone to put the engine back together. I managed to speak to the engine rebuilder who confirmed that nothing had been done in the way of restoration but that the engine had run.

I bought the car in this state. It had indeed run but couldn't be described as a runner and my first objective was to get the engine going. The two immediate concerns were electrical wiring and proper petrol supply. I completely rewired with correct wires from now defunct Fiennes. The dynamo and starter motor were rebuilt. On inspection the petrol tank was full of thick tar representing 50 years of gone-off petrol which had to be gradually extracted and lines cleared. I had understood that it had been running on magneto by filling the autovac with petrol. I reinstated the ignition system and then I had a runner, but only just!

I was trying to understand the engine number but could make no sense of it until I realised that it was not a 20/25 engine but had been retro fitted with a 20HP engine.

With a 20HP engine in poor condition the car was pretty gutless and on its first outing to Goodwood Revival could barely climb Bury Hill

on the A29 in second gear. It was not a usable proposition. I was not inclined to spend a lot of money restoring the wrong underpowered engine and cast around to find a 20/25 engine. This proved surprisingly difficult as 20/25hp engines seem in short supply, but somebody who was helping me, David Bevan, told me that he could source from one of his clients a 3.5 Bentley engine but it would need a rebuild. I was told that the 3.5 Bentley block is in fundamental respects identical to the 20/25 engine. I therefore bought the engine and commissioned David Bevan to undertake the rebuild.

Some months later he came down to Sussex with the engine and by the end of the day it was mated on to the gearbox (that fitted straight on) but still hanging from the chain hoist because the engine mountings whilst similar were not identical. It was necessary to get plates made to fine tune the height and breadth of the chassis supports at the rear and to make adjustments to the front engine mountings. There was then a lot of fiddly detailed work required to mount the ancillary equipment and to design and make up new linkage systems for the carburettor. I managed to source two Bentley SU carburettors on ebay which were genuine but also genuinely seized

Sir Stirling with me and the car at Bicester Heritage in 2016.

up. However eventually the parts separated and were rebuilt with new needles and jets.

The performance of the car was significantly improved and became wholly usable and not an inconvenience to other road users.

There was a lot of bare aluminium metal on the body which required some treatment to protect it. After some thought painting seemed best. There appeared to be a greenish colour underneath the



Annie and Jim Strudwick with their grandson in the car at the Goodwood Revival in 2021. They were St John Ambulance volunteers at Goodwood when Sir Stirling had his crash in 1962 and who rescued him.



The car as it is today.

rather military khaki colour and I chose a paint colour, not place, called Bethnal Green. It was sympathetically painted by the gate keeper at Bicester Heritage in a style which suits me, protects the car and shows the bumps and wrinkles of a 94 year old car which has seen a hard and, at times, neglected life.

I was thrilled to be able to show Sir Stirling the car when he came to Bicester Heritage in 2016 for their Flywheel event.

In September 2021 we took part in the Stirling Moss tribute at the Goodwood Revival. There was a wonderful cavalcade of the cars he had owned and raced. We brought up the rear. Our passengers in the back were Jim and Annie Strudwick, a delightful couple who, when they were a young couple back in 1962, were volunteering with the St John Ambulance brigade on the corner where Sir Stirling had his crash. It was thanks to them that he survived.

While the car was at the Revival it was spotted by the son of a previous owner, Tony Scott Andrews. Through Goodwood we got in touch with each other and Tony has been very helpful, enabling the missing pieces of ownership history to be put into place.

The most recent improvement this year has been the fitting of a Payne overdrive. This has raised comfortable cruising speed from 45mph to about

55mph. The car has recently participated in the Hero-ERA Flying Scotsman Rally, coming first in the Lite class. This necessitated a drive from Sussex to Chester, three days rallying through the Lake District and south west Scotland, finishing at Gleneagles, with the support crew in attendance not needed by us at any point. The car then completed the 490-mile journey back to Sussex in one long day. The numerous hills did, however, highlight the need for some attention to the brakes, probably new shoes at least on the rear.

I think the car now looks very much as it would have done when it was a limousine, the exterior being original back to the bulkhead. The interior retains the chauffeur bench seat and wind-up glass division, jump seats and cocktail cabinet, all suitably distressed.

I fully recognise that the car is not shiny and perfect. The radiator and other bright work have been dulled down by sixty years plus of non-polishing. To me this has become part of the history of this post-war utility vehicle. To purists the Bentley engine transplant may be an affront to both Rolls-Royce enthusiasts and Bentley ones alike. My defence is that it is in effect a Rolls-Royce engine, which fits perfectly on to the gearbox. It merely has a go-faster carburettor and camshaft. Furthermore I think Stirling Moss would have been amused and would have approved.

The Irish Georgians take on Yorkshire with a little help from the 'Holy-Ghosters'

Mary Narvell describes the eventful, funny, and occasionally damp 2024 IG-Tour



Birdsall House dates from the late 16th century but was remodelled in 1749.

Right

Bramham Hall, owned by the Lane-Fox family, is also the venue for the annual Leeds Rock Festival – although our intrepid explorers didn't participate in that event!

As tulips fade and cowslips bloom, 20-Ghost Club drivers sense the May arrival of their annual trip with the Irish Georgian Society. When our glorious cars are invited past normally closed gates to meet the squires in their country piles, we cannot resist the temptation to travel twisting lanes. This year Yorkshire was our destination.

A few new drivers joined veterans in a convoy of 10 cars eager to participate in this nearly 45-year tradition. 20-Ghost Club members and Irish Georgians unanimously agreed that our four days of touring would honour the late Jimmy Valentine, the inventor of this trip and sadly lost in 2023 to his beloved wife Janet, our trip companion.

Connoisseurs of vehicles, our drivers were thrilled at Hovingham Hall, the ancestral home of Katharine Worsley, Duchess of Kent, to see a 1935 3.5L Derby Bentley, Reg BLK-5. Previously owned by automotive journalist 'Captain' Jeff Smith, its Thrupp & Maberly body in chic grey and navy was a one-off design obviously treasured by Hovingham owner Sir William Worsley. It signalled that Hovingham would have many transport connections. Sir George Cayley, an ancestor of Lord Worsley, was the father of aviation, laying foundations that evolved into Rolls-Royce aero engines.

Aided by Sat Nav blessedly replacing past directions fondly known as 'clues', we arrived at Constable Burton. A tyre puncture did not flatten our enthusiasm over lunch when our host Mr D'Arcy Wright, handsome as his Austen near namesake, described his Palladian villa designed by native son John Carr of York. Our 100 miles of driving concluded at the idyllic walled garden of medieval Norton Conyers. Reputedly the inspiration for Jane Eyre's Thornfield Hall with its attic captive Mrs. Rochester, one of our navigators sought her own escape. Bored and mistaking the Baronet's wife for an Irish Georgian, she thankfully did not ask "can we butt out early to get a G&T back at the hotel?"





Left to right: John & Mary Narvell's 1931 PII 67GX, Clayton & Helen Banks' 1922 SG 34MG, and George & Monique Howitt's 1929 20HP GFN39.



Doug Magee's 1912 SG 2092.



Left: Cars as already mentioned. Right: Through the window 34MG is joined by Michael Power's 20/25 GXO85 (see page 16).



Perhaps only the promise of the glory of Harewood House could have persuaded drivers and Georgians to brave the apocalyptic rains our second day. Before we could marvel at the famed Palladian masterpiece record making in its collaboration of four masters – John Carr, Robert Adam, Thomas Chippendale, and Capability Brown – we had to ford flooded lanes peering through foggy windscreens. Unsurprisingly, the desire of landed estate owners to hide their homes down tortuous byways behind locked gates isn't welcomed by travellers attempting to storm the citadels in leaky cars with failing Rain-X. But intrepid souls prevailed to see the rare as hens' teeth Edward VIII coronation banners at Bramham Park, our stop before Harewood, and through the close of our soggy day at Ribston Hall. The tapping tail of the owner's Labrador was a calming mantra against our travel stress. We wondered as we listened to the house history, who was more smitten - the owner with the polychrome plasterwork of his famed Harlequin Saloon, or his dog with the stuffed chicken toy he begged each of us to throw? The Lab won... paws down!

Under drier skies, we drove out to experience a day of unexpected, sumptuous interiors masquerading as 'family homes', at least as their owners described them. At Sledmere, Sir Tatton Skyes Bt, affectionately nicknamed Sir Satin Tights, unwilling to don eight coats as had his ancestor or fuel the Saudi exchequer, had recently installed one of the many wood chip burners about which we heard in our visits. Toasty, we marvelled at palatial rooms where celebrated personalities, as diverse as the Queen Mother and

Mick Jagger, had enjoyed country weekends. It was easy to concur that the Great Library modelled after the Roman Baths of Caracalla, with a smattering of the Palazzo Farnese, resulted in a space of majestic proportions and grandeur. But we remained unprepared for the tiled Turkish Room where one expected a Pasha to emerge from a haze of hookah smoke. Against the backdrop of priceless Chippendale Chinese commodes and family portraits gazing down on us at Birdsall House, we lunched in the staid dining room easily understanding how Yorkshire mining wealth could support generations in comfort. Travelling past banks of rhododendron in peak bloom to the Regency Villa Brockfield Hall, home of House and Garden editor Hattah Byng, our cars rivalled the beauty of the North Yorkshire landscape.

The treasure house Castle Howard completed our tour on a high. Vanbrugh's masterpiece is a monument to the magnificent Baroque, even as its setting for Brideshead evokes Waugh's 'bright young things' motoring to parties in similar cars to our own. It was a fitting end to a week where not one home could be called a scene of the "grime", an occupational hazard of some family piles high on heritage but short on cash. The largest county in the UK, Yorkshire felt intimate and more hospitable to us than its windswept moors of Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* would augur. Our cars found a shire of grandeur and grace where any Rolls-Royce would feel at home in luxury. Are we off to Ireland next year? As one of the Irish Georgians said, "We certainly hope the drivers of the Holy Ghost Club chauffeur us."

Jimmy walked at my speed.

Jimmy Valentine died last year and Sir John Stuttard's obituary of our former chairman and great friend appeared in issue 73. Jimmy's memorial service was held 19th April and copied below are excerpts from the eulogy delivered by his nephew, Ian Valentine.

Francis Anthony Brinsley Valentine was born on the 3rd of September 1935, and quickly rechristened Jimmy by his big brother, a nickname which stuck for the next 87 years.

Jimmy loved playing with model trains and Meccano. As a young lad, he invested many weeks in constructing a television set with a soldering iron. He was naturally bright, becoming one of the 70 King's Scholars at Eton. Aged 17, he stripped and rebuilt his first clock, stirring a passion that would remain for the rest of his life.

Jimmy went up to Magdalen College, Cambridge, where he studied physics. Whether it was due to extra-curricular distractions or the fact he would have rather studied engineering he didn't get the degree he hoped for. No matter, he had a lot of fun in the process, and was almost immediately head-hunted to become a patent attorney at Reddie and Grose, a job he enjoyed for the next 5 decades.

No recap of Jimmy's life is possible without extensive mention of Auntie, the 1929 Rolls-Royce Phantom I that he first travelled in before he was born. Auntie was certainly part of the family, later joined by Niece (a 1954 Silver Dawn) and more recently the 1909 Darracq, all of which gave Jimmy great joy.

In 1958, Jimmy, his mother and Auntie were invited to join the 20-Ghost Club, which is eligible to pre-war Rolls-Royces and remains the oldest Rolls-Royce motor car club in the world. In those early days, you were blackballed for asking to join. But if the R-R wasn't too tatty and the owner wasn't too tatty either, then you would be invited to sign up. Jimmy was recruited as young blood – the youth policy – and was an essential member of the club for the next 65 years, including a period as chairman and vice president.

Jimmy chauffeured his mother on many 20-Ghost Club tours, cheekily compared to Bertie Wooster and his favourite Aunt Agatha.

There were some perks to the role. In 1969, Jimmy took Auntie on the maiden voyage of the QE2 from Southampton to New York. In 1973, the club was invited to participate in the 600th anniversary celebrations of the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of friendship, all expenses paid. In return, the cars were expected to proceed in convoy to various functions.

However, Jimmy and his mother went sightseeing on the Algarve and had to speed back to join the festivities. Auntie - all 2 tons of her - reached 50mph and her leather bodywork began to pitch like a yacht in rough

seas. At this point, a small car sped past them. A commanding voice from the back seat boomed: "That was a mini that overtook us, Jimmy. You cannot allow that to happen."

Also in the 1970s, Jimmy took some friends to Brittany in the Silver Dawn, a car that is exquisitely appointed with fitted tables, cut-glass tumblers and decanters concealed in the rear seat rests. The group were enjoying their picnic aboard whilst waiting for the cathedral at Quimper to open, when a passing couple said: "Ah les pauvres Anglais, zey have zer beautiful car but zey cannot afford a restaurant."

In 1978, Jimmy drove Lady Freda and his fiancée Janet behind the Iron Curtain to what was then Leningrad, marking the first Rolls-Royce tour to visit the USSR since the start of the Cold War.

On a trip from Vienna to Budapest, they took Auntie up the Grossglockner pass completing 36 hairpins to enjoy the wonderful alpine views at the summit. Auntie made three-point turns round corners with dizzying drops on one side. The road had streams that crossed at regular intervals, providing ice-cold water to fill up the radiator.

Jimmy's ability to drive such a massive car round the narrow lanes and steep turns of Devon and Cornwall with no power steering or power brakes won the admiration of his fellow club members. Auntie's crash gearbox meant that Jimmy double declutched on the way up and down. Narrow bridges would spook some drivers, but Jimmy charged straight over them. His accuracy was all the more impressive given he relied heavily on one eye to see properly.

Jimmy was also the driving force behind a coalition of the Irish Georgian Society and the 20-Ghost Club in which the society members are driven to magnificent private homes in magnificent Rolls-Royces. The treat of hosting a fleet of pre-war Rolls-Royces in the driveway has convinced many owners to open their doors and provide privileged access.

From Devon to the Lakes, north Wales to Kent, Jimmy was quietly responsible for getting all those wonderful events together. In the evenings, Jimmy

was never the loudest voice at the table, but the seat next to him was always quickly filled.

Jimmy was a family man and beloved father of Sibella and Robert. When Sibella was two months old, Janet left the house for a breather, leaving dad in charge. Jimmy had to use all his problem-solving skills to tackle his first solo nappy and Janet returned to find them both looking rather proud of themselves.

Jimmy was also a much-loved husband. In fact, there is no Jimmy without Janet. Theirs was a wonderful match. Two halves of a whole. Like the best double acts, their names trip off the tongue. They say that the couple that plays together, stays together, and on the many car tours, they were inseparable and hugely popular with the other members.

During a famous expedition to New Zealand, Jimmy was driving Janet up a steep hill in Auntie with a high bank on one side and a deep canyon on the other. "It's a bit tight on the right," said Jimmy happily. "Well, there is no Left," replied Janet.

Several years ago, Jimmy was asked to share the happiest time of his life. He didn't say mending clocks or driving Auntie. He said simply: it was after I met Janet.

Jimmy enjoyed words and if we looked up Jimmy Valentine in a thesaurus, what synonyms might we find? Friendly. Helpful. Mechanically able. Dependable, honest, modest, a details man. A quintessential gentleman who had no side to him whatsoever. Self-deprecating as a driver. A quiet wit which was always to the point. Calm and never flustered. Jimmy walked at my speed. One of the loveliest people that we knew. The last of his kind. A decent man with a really good sense of humour. Hugely missed. Perhaps that last one captures it best of all.

Editor: Janet mentioned to me that Auntie, their 1929 PI (chassis 10R – the last series), is going to need a good new home soon. Auntie has been in the Valentine family since 1934 when Jimmy's parents bought her from Jack Barclay. If of interest then do email Janet direct: janetsvalentine134@gmail.com



1931 Phantom II Continental 20JS was bought and owned by Michael Graham Hoare for decades but has now passed over to his son and daughter-in-law Charles & Becky Hoare



Entrance to Paco da Gloria

Olive Oil & Fresh Lemons

Rupert & Jan Grey's Portugal Diary

March 31st: Off the boat and into bright early morning sun. We motored west towards Cape Finisterre, turning south just short of Oviedo. Grand to be back on the road, with snow-covered mountains flying past and the smooth purr of a finely-tuned motor. Not for long. The hiss of a duff exhaust pipe penetrated my consciousness. By the time we got to Leon the finely tuned motor sounded like a pre-war tractor. Just like India, remarked Jan, but without the blacksmiths.

Hostal da San Marco was formerly a monastery and now a parador. Camino pilgrims strolled past with large rucksacks. We dined, talked, recalled other journeys, decided what we must write down before we die, but most important of all asked Juan, our waiter, if he knew of a good mechanic.

April 1st: As it turned out Ruben's garage was just round the corner. We liked him and returned in the evening to check progress. By then he had discovered the India film. Out with google translate. Honoured he was, Google reported, to meet us and to be able to help.

3rd: Motored south with our cool-sounding new silver exhaust pipe as Ruben had got carried away and sprayed the whole thing. It was 250kms to the Portuguese border along a dull but relaxing motorway through a bleak flat landscape and over a modest range of dull green mountains flecked with snow

Over the unmarked border into Portugal, where the land was green and spring flowers lined the roads. We stayed in a convent in a fort in Chaves. Not far from there the Romans had built a sort of thermal baths supermarket in 100AD. Jan and I emerged from its modern incarnation feeling like a million dollars, took coffee in the market square, jumped in the Rolls and sped 100kms to a mountain village called Monetegre where we settled in a restaurant for a leisurely lunch on the side of steep hill.



Casa da Castro, Ponte da Lima.

Afterwards we felt there was still time to get to Paco da Gloria, an C18th mansion on the far side of the mountains. Our new friend Antero recommended what he called the quickest route. “You’ll get there in no time” he said as he waved us off. Higher and higher the road went, narrower and narrower it became, colder and colder it got with fewer and fewer cars around. Eventually we came to a desolate moorland plateau where the wind whistled through the window, the sun fell further down the sky, and the petrol gauge got stuck on 4 gallons.

We descended into a deep valley and came to a village of small houses built of massive blocks of hewn granite. A sign read: “Desvio” (diversion) but with no other instruction or direction. The GPS had expired and the village was not on the map. We had no idea where we were let alone where we were going. We met a woman bearing a pitchfork who rightly regarded us as interlopers but reversing was not an option. We inched round granite blocks, crept up steep inclines and emerged by a precipice at the bottom of which flowed a mighty river. Night was falling fast.

Thankfully we arrived at a real road where a man in a felt hat with a wheelbarrow waved us on. By the time we arrived at Paco any glimmer of daylight had gone; we dined, drank a large bottle of local vino verde and slept.

13th: Our arrival in Porto was alarming. We drove to the docks on the Douro down steep cobblestones to the wharves. Our destination was ‘The Ode’, the proprietor of which restaurant, Cristavoa, is a good friend of a good friend. Our task was to deliver, as a present from one to the other, one of the first bottles of whisky ever distilled on the Isle of Harris. For this purpose Cristavao had given us the much sought after code to lower the dockyard bollards and drive in. The Douro docks are the Portuguese answer to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard: absolutely no motorcars.

The Rolls was immediately surrounded by a thousand mobile phones. We had no idea where to go. At this critical moment Antonio appeared grinning broadly. He offered to lead us and jumped onto the running board. By the way, the Portuguese word for running boards is estribos, literally:



Jan taking coffee in the market square in Chaves.



Narrow roads in Tras as Montes.

“*Is that wine you’re drinking... it should be!*”

stirrups! He waved the crowds out of the way with commendable authority and off we drove trying to look as though we did this sort of thing all the time. We motored past medieval-style ships, sailing boats, water taxis and ice-cream vendors until we came to The Ode. Waiters came out to greet us. Antonio and I took our bags to our nearby apartment. Jan guarded the Rolls.

Two fine women from Bradford emerged from the crowd. “*Can we take a picture?*” “*Of course*” Jan replied, recognising a Yorkshire accent. “*Is that wine you’re drinking? No? Well it should be! You need it after driving that thing round here!*” Half an hour later they re-appeared with a bottle by which time I was guarding the Rolls and Jan was in The Ode. “*Where’s that lovely wife of yours?*” “*In The Ode*” “*Well we’re going to find her*”. Into the restaurant we went and suddenly a Yorkshire party was happening! They fell in love with Jan and she with them. I was “*just a posh type*”, and the waiters of The Ode were greatly astonished.

Eventually, they went on their Yorkshire way but the party continued, with Cristavao (who turned out to be a doctor of gastronomy) and his team. It was a celebration of the finest food, the best of wines, the perfect black ham, the ultimate olive oil, and stories of life on the road and the new friendships they brought. We retired to bed in a room with a view over the Douro and the great Cellars of Portugal on the far bank. It doesn’t get better than that.

17th: Three nights in Bussaco was magic. More than that would warp the brain. Built in the late C19th for the last King of Portugal (sadly assassinated shortly after) it was like that giant chair with the broken leg outside the UN building in Geneva with everything on a different scale. Vast rooms with excessively ornate ceilings depicting massive scenes of mythical landscapes. A forlorn Don Quixote in oils was in one room with a ferocious Duke of Wellington, sword raised in anger, in exquisite blue and white tiles was in the next. The latter won the battle for which Bussaco is famous in 1809 and slept the night in a small room in the convent we overlooked from our bedroom. The sole occupant of that room now is Our Lady, garbed in an ochre robe with a light blue collar.

I was reading on the verandah when an expensive convertible drew up. Out of it climbed three young women attired to catch the eye. It turned out that one of them was a social media influencer. I hadn't met one of those before. The other two spent a great deal of time photographing her. In due course they approached me: could the influencer drape herself over the Rolls for a photoshoot? By this stage I decided that she was decorous but dull and explained that her brand (partially clad nubile youth) did not chime easily with ours (elderly owners of elderly car) so instead I took a photograph of Jan looking down on the Rolls from our bedroom window.

18th: Lunch with Tiago and his wife Isabel in a village high in the hills of central Portugal. They have two museums nearby, in Caramulo and one of them contains one hundred rare vintage cars. Tiago emerges in a 1920 Silver Ghost and we swap. I haven't driven one of these before. He shows me how to start it, jumps in our Rolls and sweeps off up a steep mountain road, leaving me to locate the accelerator in my new R-R supercar. Off we go, Jan and I, with grave caution. Second gear is elusive but gradually my confidence builds and we go faster.

We catch up with Tiago at his workshop a mile away, by which time we are singing along with gay abandon at 20 mph. The workshop is a hive of activity with famous cars on the floor, and giant photos of famous cars on the walls. He takes us round – here is the car that won Le Mans in 1934, this one belonged to the president of Portugal, another carried the Queen (ours) to dinner in in Lisbon in 1957; another crossed a desert.

21st: A good-looking couple approached us as we left the Maritime Museum in Lisbon. She mentioned that she had inherited quite a few vintage Rolls-Royce motorcars but didn't know what to do them. I suggested they motored in one of them to India but Jan told me to stop talking nonsense. Later we discovered he was her tour guide. We had 200kms to go, so we waved goodbye and Jan consulted Google maps. I prefer paper maps. This is sometimes leads to matrimonial disagreement. Jan usually wins.

We motored along a magnificent highway across a rolling landscape dotted with cork trees in the afternoon light whilst eating oranges. We went past giant pylons bedecked with storks' nests and entered

Elvas as evening fell through a narrow tunnel in the town walls and came to an ordinary looking town-house at 11 Rua de Figueria.

Here I took possession of an C18th walnut chair with sweeping arms which stood on a Persian carpet and wrote for four days. Jan took over the chintz sofa and read three books. The Rolls remained parked at a rakish angle in the square outside the balconied and be-shuttered windows. We are the sole occupants of ten bedrooms, eight drawing rooms and a swimming pool in which we did not swim. Rowan, a young Sudanese woman with a striking smile, brings us wine.

The town walls of Elvas, which are massive, enclose steep cobblestone streets, medieval houses, churches with bells, a convent, a castle and, the internet reports, 51 restaurants. Most of the latter are closed but we made friends with the Café Sao Domingo, where locals take coffee and smoke cigarettes on plastic chairs. We could hear the bells of the church on the other side of the square as children played in the streets, for there are few cars and fewer tourists. Nearby is an antiquated museum which speaks of Portugal's colonial past. We had it to ourselves.

25th: While Thomas, a new friend, helped load our suitcases this morning, he remarked that Jan and I “*carry our ancestors in the Rolls*”.

We thought about this as we motored slowly north across the rolling plains of Alentejo on rolling country roads. Jan preferred the idea that our children, who had grown up in the Rolls, had a presence in the back; I favoured ourselves, for it was the Rolls which conveyed us from the church to her family home in Yorkshire in 1977. And I thought of my father, on whose medical rounds the Rolls conveyed him from 1959 until his death in the eighties. As we motored past verges strewn with poppies and fields of blue and yellow flowers bright in the morning sun we settled on the notion that in some indefinable way the Rolls stands for permanence in our swift-passing electronic lives.

In a land of giant umbrella pines we came to a small town where a large and cheerful man served us local wine in carafes in a cafe packed with locals and children causing a marvellous chaos. No word of English was spoken.



The docks at dawn on the Douro in Porto; on the opposite bank are the great Port Houses of Portugal.



Fellow patrons of the Sao Domingo .



Umbrella Tree on the Alentejo plains..



The bars in the small towns through which we passed were crowded with people celebrating Freedom Day.

We found a bed just as darkness fell in a modern 2-star hotel with balconies in a 2-star town called Belmonte. A party of Frenchmen and women rolled up in dusty Land Rovers one of which had a flat tyre. This was the exclusive focus of their attention until one of them saw the Rolls. We watched from our balcony. I nobly refrained from calling down to them, glass of Douro wine in hand, that Rolls-Royces don't get punctures (usually).

27th: Today's journey was nearly 600km, the longest we have ever done in the Rolls in one go. We set out in the early morning and followed narrow country roads through an empty mountain landscape until we crossed the river Douro into Spain in perfect sunshine.

Thereafter the land became flat and the heavens opened. As Eliza Doolittle observed, *'the rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain'*. The Rolls' windscreen wipers, never its strongest point, flapped like a chicken. We passed through empty towns and villages with boarded up houses and broken windows and, which was of more immediate import, no restaurantes. At 3pm, just as we despaired of lunch, a restaurant hove into sight. In it were white tablecloths, a bearded Spanish restaurateur, a large plate of thinly sliced Iberico ham, a bottle of green olive oil and another of cold white wine from the Douro.

From this bounteous feast it took half an hour's sleep in the front seat to recover. The sun even came out briefly. But now it was motorway driving and we swept north under darkening clouds past flat fields with no hedges, trees, wild flowers or birdlife.

As darkness fell a storm descended. The rain fell fast and turned to hailstones which danced on the bonnet like dervishes. As night fell our headlights seemed even less effective than usual. Our normal cruising speed of 65mph fell to 50. The thunder of the skies competed with the thunder on the bonnet and lightning split the night. I asked Jan what would happen if we were struck by lightning. "Not to worry", she said. *"the rubber tyres will save us"*. I wasn't wholly convinced and suggested a word with Our Lady might be in order. The storm duly subsided.

We reached the Convent of Santa Maria in Palencia, where we slept deeply until 10am dreaming of

storms and Audrey Hepburn (who played Eliza Doolittle in the film of *My Fair Lady*) and axle-breaking culverts.

28th: This morning our Rolls failed to proceed! In fact, it failed to start at all. The ferry deadline was 1pm sharp. We had 130kms to cover and didn't know the way. It was now 10.15. The next ferry was next week.

Jan remarked, rather unhelpfully I thought, that this is what happens when you cut things fine. I thought of Churchill's reply to his wife in the handsome cab when she complained they were going to miss the train: *"My Dear Clemmie, you have to give the train a sporting chance to get away"* but decided not to offer the same advice to Jan.

There was not a moment to lose: manpower or another car were needed – and fast. I asked Esther the receptionist for three men, and quickly. A minute later she came running out. *"No men but I've got three women!"* "Yes please!" I shouted back. They duly came. Then two men appeared. Then a car. Jan and I rapidly unloaded the back to lift the mahogany floor. Suitcases, wine-cases, olive oil boxes, the library box, and camera bags were strewn over the convent courtyard and leads extracted from the boot. By this time the head-chef and waiters and most of the domestic staff had arrived to help. With jump-leads connected the Rolls sprang to life to loud cheers. Chain-gangs re-loaded the back and within minutes, after much hooting and more cheering, we were flying down the road at 70mph with a duff battery and, it turned out later, a blackened regulator, with just enough time to catch the ferry if they held out.

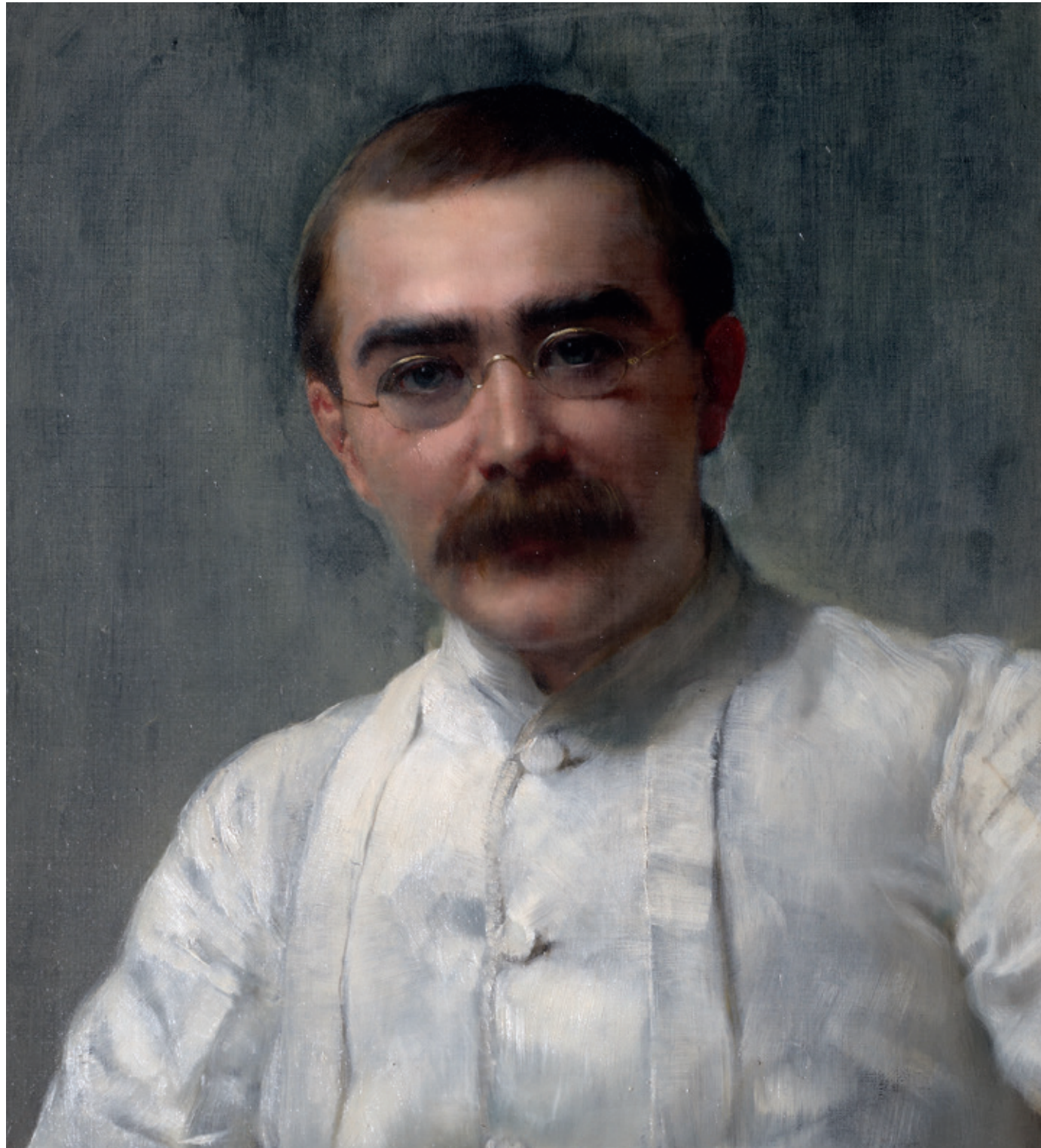
The passport man in Santander pulled his window back and smiled. *"Welcome Peaky Blinders"*, he announced as he took our passports. Fellow-passport checkers gathered round. He checked his phone. *"You're on Netflix"* he cried. *"Can't wait to tell my Grandma! It's her 95th birthday party today – we're all going to watch it!"*

We moved on to Customs. The chief looked the car up and down, *"Well now, Bonnie and Clyde, what you got in there – guns?"* "Oh no, just olive oil and fresh lemons". *"Off you go then and good luck to you!"*

Rudyard Kipling

The Rolls-Royce Enthusiast

Sir John Stuttard explores the much loved author and early motoring enthusiast's passion for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars



The name Rudyard Kipling conjures thoughts of Victorian Imperial India and memories, as a child, of reading *The Jungle Book*, in which Mowgli, the man-cub is raised in the jungle by wolves. Born in Bombay in 1865 to parents of British origin, Kipling was sent to England at the age of five to be educated, as was the custom, to be safe from disease. He returned to India in 1882, aged almost 17, having been brought up for most of his childhood, like Mowgli, by foster parents.

From 1882 to 1889, he worked as a journalist in British India, for local newspapers such as the *Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore and *The Pioneer* in Allahabad. He soaked up a knowledge of India and its customs. The soldiers of the Empire inspired him, and he wrote passionately about them and the mutual colonial surroundings which they shared. He became 'the' poet and 'the' author of the British Empire, glorifying the common soldier and the colonial yeomen in his many articles and early books, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888) and *Soldiers Three* (1888). Children's classics were to follow *Jungle Book* (1894), *Stalky & Co* (1899), *Kim* (1901) and *Just So Stories* (1902). He was a prolific writer and with his many popular short stories and books he gained recognition, fame and, in due course, wealth.



In 1889 Kipling returned to England via the Far East, the Pacific and the United States, where he met Mark Twain. Both were impressed. In 1892 he married Caroline (Carrie) Balestier, and they honeymooned in America and Japan. 'Rud' or 'Ruddy', as he was known to family and friends, and Carrie began their own family and as sadly happened in Victorian times, one of their children (their first daughter) died young – aged six – of pneumonia. He loved travel and, in early 1898, the Kiplings travelled to South Africa for their winter holiday, so beginning an annual tradition which would last until 1908. He also loved the outdoors and, in 1902, they acquired a house, Bateman's, with outbuildings, a mill and 33 acres, in Burwash, East Sussex. This was to be the family home until Kipling's death in 1936.





Kipling's study at Bateman's.

His writings proliferated and were much admired. In 1899 and again in 1903 he was offered a knighthood, which he declined. Carrie later stated that Kipling felt he could *'do his work better without it'*. Kipling also declined the Order of Merit in 1921 and again in 1924. In 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature and, later in 1926, the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature.

In September 1914, Kipling was asked by the British Government to write propaganda articles, an offer he accepted gladly in his belief that Britain and the Empire were a cause for good. He enjoyed a very close relationship with his only son, John. The boy wished to enlist and begged his father to help arrange his commission which was being thwarted by John's poor eyesight. John's death at the Battle of Loos in autumn 1915 was to haunt Kipling who wrote *Epitaphs of the War*. Many people believe that Kipling wrote *If* as guidance to his (then infant) son and *My Boy Jack* in his memory although historians question this as the facts are more complicated.

After the War, Kipling and Carrie embarked on a four-year hunt to find John's body. With regard to post WW1 politics Kipling became known for his stance against communism and later spoke against the rise of Nazi Germany.

Kipling and Carrie were also known for their love of motoring, as well as their wider interest in engineering generally. In October 1899, their friend and newspaper magnate Alfred Harmsworth, drove down to Rottingdean on the Sussex coast, to show Rudyard and Carrie his treasured Panhard car. They took a 20-minute trip and were enthralled. As Kipling later wrote in *Something of Myself* the outing left them *'white with dust and dizzy with noise – but the poison worked from that hour'*.

They began by hiring a Lutzmann Victoria (made by Opel), which they christened *The Embryo*, and then acquired an American Locomobile, known as the *Holy Terror*. But as Carrie wrote in her diary in December 1899 *'The car broke down'*; the Kiplings were disappointed with both cars due to the slow speed and the recurring failures. Their third motor was a 1902 Lanchester 10/12HP, with which they were well pleased. It was delivered personally by Frederick Lanchester and was followed two years later by an 18/20HP Lanchester, *Amelia*. However, frequent breakdowns continued as well as problems with tyres. Nevertheless, despite the occasional disappointments, the motorcar began to figure importantly in his work, particularly in the stories, poems, letters, and diaries of the fin de siècle years. It features in ten of his stories and is the subject of

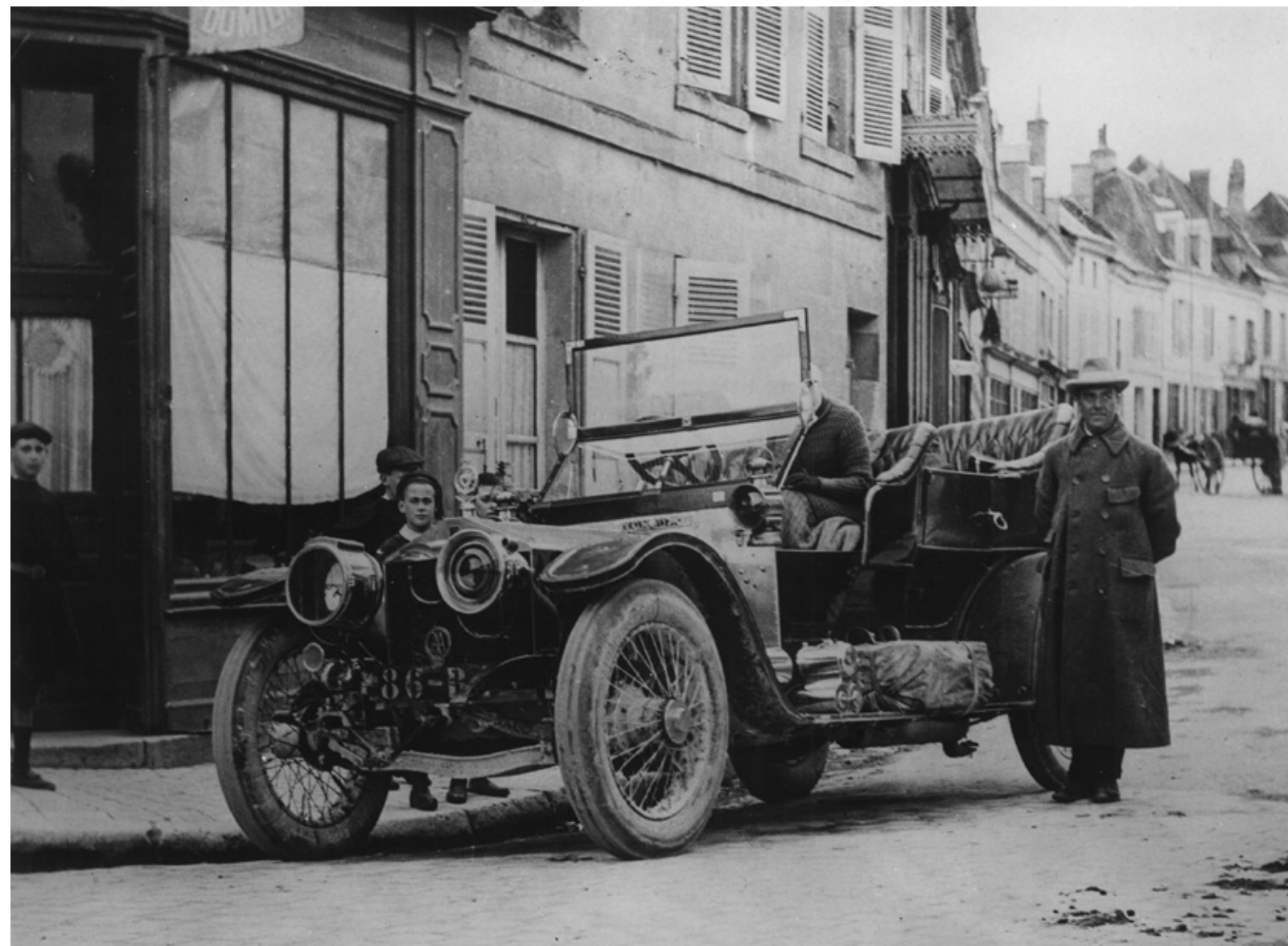
witty celebration in *The Muse Among the Motors*, his 1904 motoring column for Harmsworth's *Daily Mail*, where he parodies the best of the classic English poets to salute the fast speed of the car, the freedom of automobility, as well as the hardships and travails of early motoring.

Kipling's enthusiastic acquisition of motor cars continued. After the Lanchesters, he bought a 1905 Siddeley 18HP and then a 1906 Daimler which was much admired by the then Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII.

However, a major revelation occurred in March 1910. They decided to stay for a few days at Vernet-les-Bains, in the French Pyrenees, where they met Lord Montagu of Beaulieu who was an admirer and became a friend. Rudyard and Carrie had come by train as the Daimler was undergoing repairs to its engine. Montagu had travelled from Great Britain in his Silver Ghost (chassis 60751 known as ' ') and took the Kiplings for a ride. Kipling was smitten.

Claude Johnson (CJ), the General Manager of Rolls-Royce, was also in Vernet-les-Bains at this time and saw Kipling as a potential celebrity customer. He offered to lend the Kiplings his Silver Ghost and, since Kipling did not drive, he also offered to lend them his chauffeur/engineer, Harry Fleck, who drove them to Paris, some 700 miles away [See Issue 75 page 11]. Kipling later wrote to his son, John: *'Fleck's way of driving is marvellous, a revelation even. He never brakes too strongly, never drives too fast, never skids at a turn and never complains about pedestrians'*. *'The Admirable Fleck'* acted as chauffeur for the Kiplings on many future occasions. In return, Fleck found Kipling *'a delightful master with exquisite manners who put everyone at their ease'*. Fleck was also astonished that Kipling recalled meeting him previously in South Africa in 1898. The Kiplings became great friends with CJ, who was cultured, a patron of the arts and moved freely in artistic and literary circles. Indeed, on CJ's death in 1926, Kipling wrote the words which appear on his memorial at the Derby factory.

Lord Montagu's 1908 70HP Silver Ghost (60751) Barker Roi-des-Belges, known as Dragon Fly.





CJ's memorial plaque at the factory in Derby.

Later that year, on 14th December 1910, Kipling ordered his first Silver Ghost (chassis number 1494) to be bodied by Barker. However, a fire at the coachbuilder's Shepherds Bush workshop destroyed six Rolls-Royce chassis and while 1494 survived, it may have been damaged or, certainly, delayed. In the meantime, the Kiplings were due to be in Vernet-les-Bains for their March holiday and CJ arranged the loan of a Silver Ghost, together with Harry Fleck, until 1494 could be delivered. In Carrie's diary, Kipling refers to this car as a 'Spectre'. In fact, it was none other than chassis 1601 (The Silver Spectre) which had been used as a Trials car by CJ and had been rebodied in March 1911 as a Limousine by Labourdette. Of course, the car came complete with Fleck and was photographed with 1601 in Auxerre,



France in Spring 1911 (when Rolls-Royce introduced their mascot, the *Spirit of Ecstasy*). The hotel garage was used as a base for cars on test. The Kiplings were conveyed to Vernet-les-Bains. On their return via Paris, they had a collision which bent the front axle which was immediately repaired by Fleck.

1911 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (1494) Barker Landaulette

1494 was On Test on 30th December 1910 and, on completion, with 'A' rake steering suitable for being chauffeur driven, was delivered to Barker & Co Ltd for the construction of a Limousine Landaulette body. Kipling had requested a landaulette which could open at the back, with the chauffeur's compartment open at the sides. The livery was specified to be dark green, with a fine white line, and dark green Morocco upholstery, Kipling's favourite colour scheme. Rolls-Royce records show that this car was registered LC-7507. This was a 1905/06 registration number perhaps transferred from Kipling's 1905 Siddeley or 1906 Daimler. Either Kipling or Claude Johnson wished to name the car *Green Goblin*.

The fire at Barkers meant delivery of 1494 was postponed until June 1911. Carrie wrote in her diary on 13th June 1911 'Our new R.R. motor comes down and has to be returned – faulty carriage building – a great disappointment'. Whatever the problem with the Barker body it must have been overcome. Rolls-Royce records do not mention faults or refunds. Indeed, the records show that the balance due of £1,000 for 1494 was paid on 20th June and the complete car was delivered on 21st June, perhaps after the fault with the body had been rectified.

It is not known whether Kipling was unhappy with 1494 or, perhaps more likely, he might have learnt about the improved chassis series after 1700, because he placed an order for his next Rolls-Royce motor car on 13th July 1911 just weeks after his first had been delivered. It is assumed that Kipling kept 1494 until 1723 was delivered on 18th December 1911. At that point the registration number LC-7507 was transferred across and 1494 was, at some stage, given the number R-1066.

1910 Silver Ghost (1601) Labourdette Limousine, known as *The Silver Spectre*, lent by CJ to Kipling in Spring 1911, with Fleck on the left.

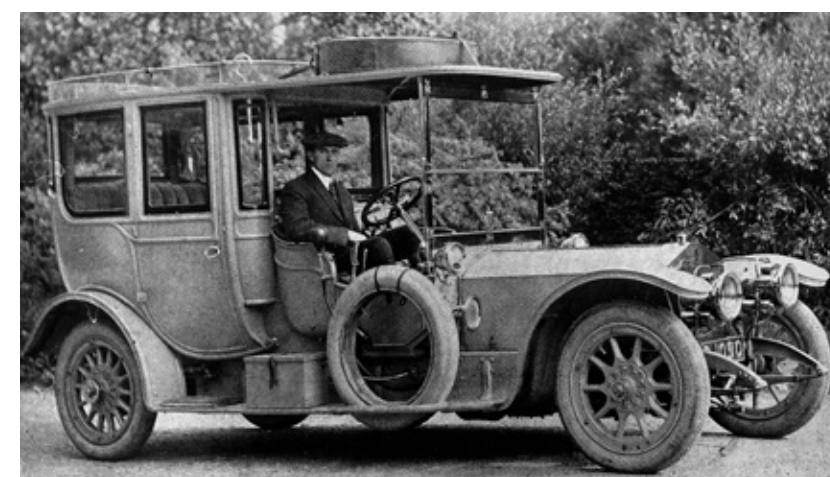
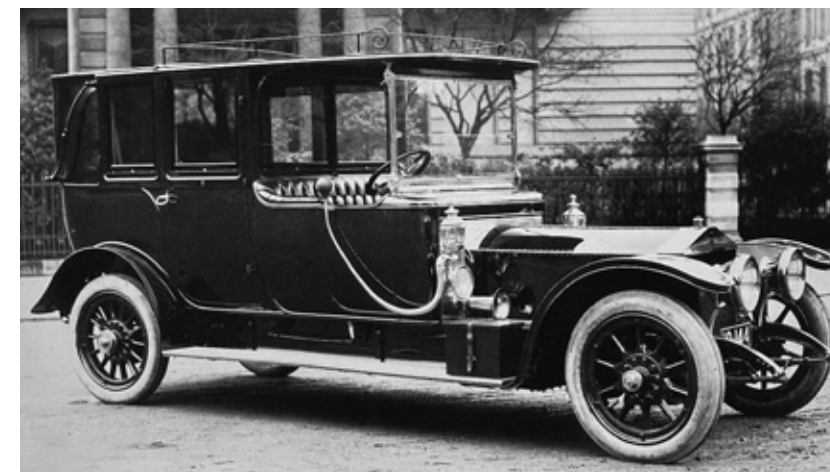
Chassis 1494 was sold to its next owner, FJ Tennant of Lympne Castle, Hythe, Kent, who took delivery in June 1912. During the First World War, 1494 was used by the War Office and, according to Rolls-Royce records, 'Car used by Military on Home or Active Service. European War 1914/19'. Frank Tennant is recorded as having reacquired the car in 1925 but its whereabouts are not known after that time.

1911 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (1723) Barker Limousine Landaulette

By now Kipling had fully switched his allegiance to Rolls-Royce, commenting 'it is the only car we can afford because they do not break down'. Chassis 1723 was ordered by and sold to Kipling on 13th July 1911 for £800 (presumably in part exchange for 1494). Off Test on 23rd September, the long chassis with 'A' rake steering and a Nightingale exhaust whistle, was sent to Barkers for the construction of a Limousine body. As with 1494, the livery was painted green with a fine white line and the upholstery with dark green Morocco lace to match. Initially registered R-2098, the car was delivered on 18th December 1911 and later re-registered as LC-7507 (transferred from 1494). The name *Green Goblin* was also transferred to the new car.

It seems that Kipling was pleased with the performance of 1723. He wrote to his son, John, on 8th May 1912, that a Rolls-Royce inspector (Hanbury) came down to overhaul the *Goblin* and was pleased to say that it 'was in excellent condition and needed nothing being done to her'.

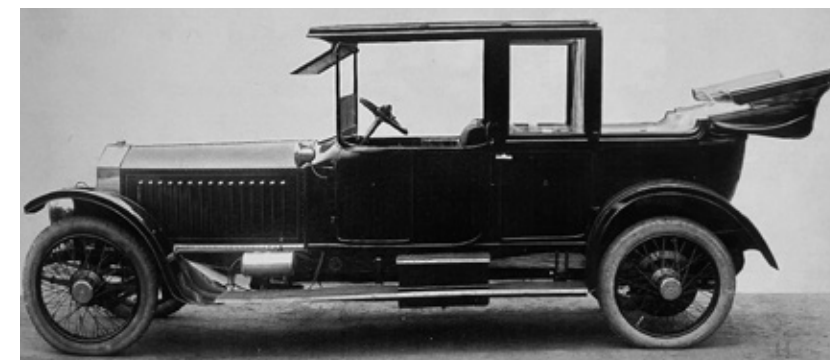
In 1913, perhaps aware of the new A Series of Silver Ghost which was being introduced, Kipling acquired his next Silver Ghost (27NA) and was given £1,050 by Rolls-Royce in part exchange for 1723 which was last recorded by the company as 'On Active Service in the European War 1914/19'.



There are no photos of Kipling's 1723, but it might have looked like these Silver Ghosts with Barker bodies on 1734 and 1728 (photos supplied by John Fasal)..

1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (27NA) Hooper Limousine Landaulette

27NA was sold by Rolls-Royce Limited to Kipling on 3rd November 1913 for £1,254. The chassis was On Test on 13th November, with engine number 38G, and delivered to Hooper & Co Ltd for construction of Limousine Landaulette coachwork (body number 5099). As with *Green Goblin*, the livery was dark green with cloth upholstery (number 3938) to match. Once again registration number LC-7507 was transferred to 27NA and car became known as *Duchess*. The guarantee was issued by Rolls-Royce on 20th April 1914 and, on the same day, 27NA was delivered to the Kiplings.





27NA in more recent times.

The family used 27NA for a holiday in France in 1914 but, as the First World War began, they acquired a smaller car, a Model T Ford, for conveying family members and guests to and from the railway station. With so many men engaged in war effort, there was a shortage of chauffeurs and engineers to look after motor cars left at home and, in April 1916, Kipling mothballed all the family cars.

When war ended, 27NA was used again for outings, such as a visit to Scotney Castle in Kent on New Year's Day, 1919. He and Carrie resumed their yearly motor tours of France where, as Kipling was now a War Graves Commissioner, they visited battlefields and inspected the British war cemeteries. At times 'it tore the heart out', he wrote, remembering their son, John. On a lighter note, Kipling wrote a large number of articles, mainly in *The Autocar*, about his experiences with *The Duchess*, travelling to the Côte d'Azur in France, with comments about hotels and restaurants. The entire nation followed his exploits in *Duchess* which became famous as a result. In 1921 Kipling wrote a letter extolling the virtues of an electro-mechanical device that had been acquired from the United States which enabled the windscreen wipers to be operated electrically rather than by hand. In March 1922 he also wrote to CJ praising Rolls-Royce for their service and relating the story of a spring and an exhaust pipe being damaged in Avignon and being repaired overnight (on Good Friday) at the

Costebelle Hotel in Hyères on the French Riviera, at no cost, by unseen Rolls-Royce engineers who, on completion of their mission, left for Nice. However, after eight years, 27NA was beginning to show signs of wear and, although reliable, there were a number of workshop repairs.

After the Kiplings acquired their next Rolls-Royce (6UE), in June 1921, 27NA was sold to Sir Peter Mackie, Bt (1855-1924) of Mackie & Co (Distillers) Ltd Glasgow. Mackie had famously created the blended whisky brand, *White Horse*. After Mackie's death 27NA was sold in October 1924 to GA Palfrey of 46 Mount Row, Carlos Place, London W1 and five years later was acquired by JF Fletcher Ltd, for use by the Managing Director, Albert Foyer MBE. He arranged for the original Hooper coachwork to be replaced by a saloon body and used the car until he died, after which his widow sold the car on 22nd September 1954 to a breakers' yard just outside London.

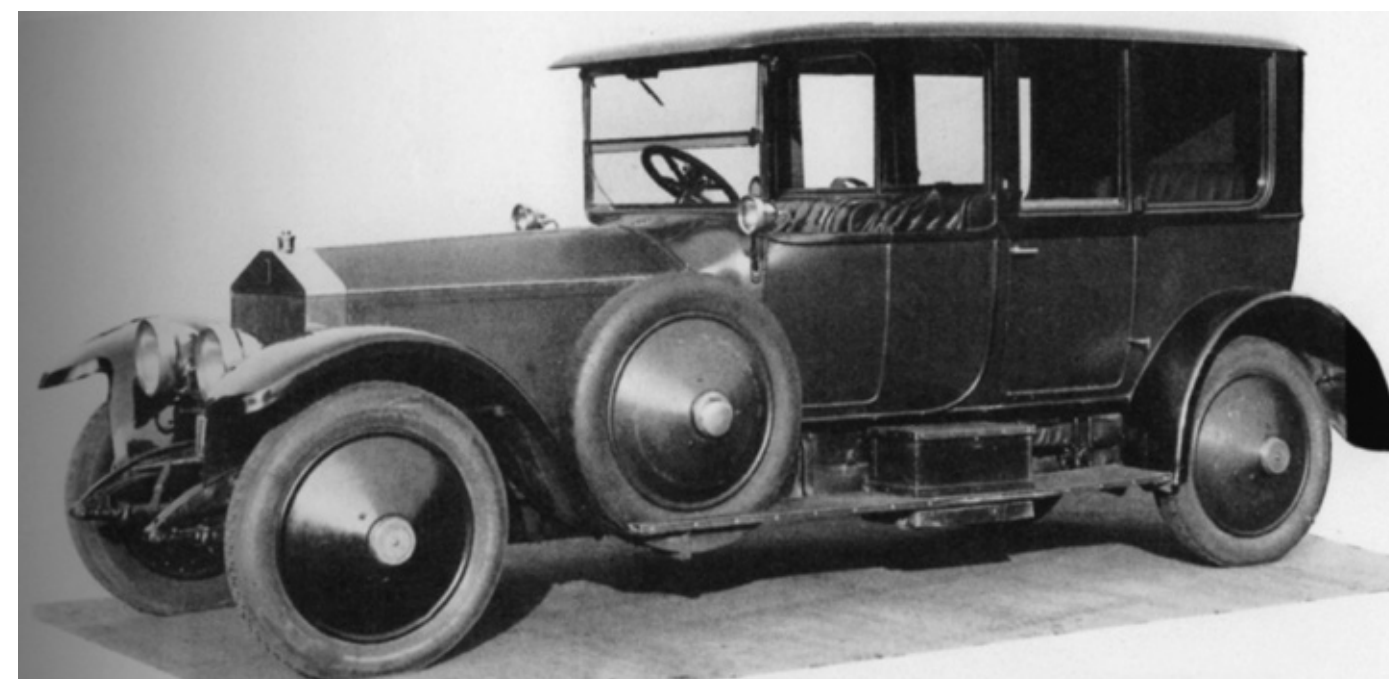
27NA was rescued in January 1958 by AJM Brownridge of St Albans, Hertfordshire who bought it from a scrap dealer and built an open two-seater Tourer body. But he then took the plunge and, with the involvement of coachbuilders Wilkinson & Son of Derby, created a Roi-des-Belges body which still graces the car.

Following two further brief ownerships 27NA appeared at the RREC's North of England Rally in

July 1981. Since 1984 it has been owned by Philipp Vandenberg of Germany who wrote a comprehensive history in the RREC *Bulletin* (issues B322 and B323). It still carries registration number LC-7507, which was not transferred to 6UE.

1921 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (6UE) Hooper Limousine

Chassis number 6UE with engine number N36 was sold for £2,100 to Kipling with an allowance given for 27NA of £1,550. The chassis was On Test on 16th October 1920. After testing, it was delivered on 14th February 1921, with 'A' rake steering, to Hooper & Co who built a Limousine body (costing £1,065, including extras) with a livery of Dockers Deep Royal Green (B807), with black wings and upholstery of grey cloth to rear and with black leather to front seats. The completed car was delivered to Bateman's on 2nd June 1921. 6UE was registered AP-8145 and given the name *Esmeralda* and was sometimes known as the *Fourth Duchess of Tours*.



6UE (photo supplied by Tom Clarke, courtesy Farnham Museum).

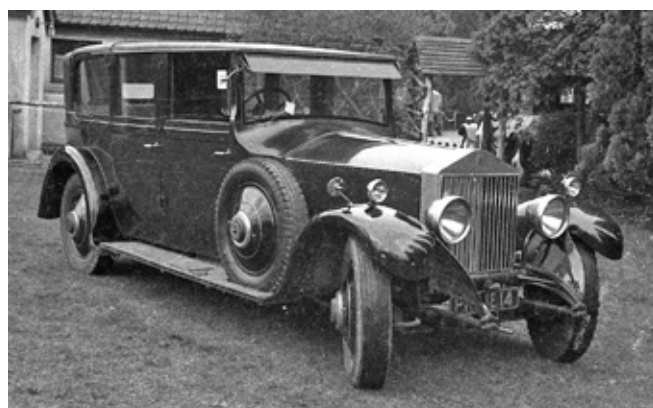
Over the next seven years, 6UE was to perform excellent service to the family on long distance journeys on holiday to Scotland and, of course, to France. There were occasional hiccups (broken magneto, smashed spring on a rough road) but Kipling felt minded to write, in 1926 'the restored and reconditioned *Duchess* pulls like a cyclone and her present 45mph comes as easy to her as the old 40 used to'. But after Rolls-Royce had introduced the New Phantom, it was time to change although, slightly belatedly, it was not until May 1928 that they made the decision to part company with their third Silver Ghost.

In part exchange for Kipling's new car (20AL), 6UE was acquired for £350 by the company who promptly sold it for £450 to Rolls-Royce Ltd in Bombay for their Indian customer, Bahadur Singh Singhi. The car left England on 12th January 1929 on *S/S Mulbera* bound for Calcutta. There it was sold on to the Howrah Temple Trust in Calcutta, where the main passenger section of the body was removed and replaced by a miniature temple. Had Kipling been alive today he might not have appreciated this change as much as it gives pleasure to the inhabitants of Calcutta on religious days.

1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom I (20AL) Hooper Limousine

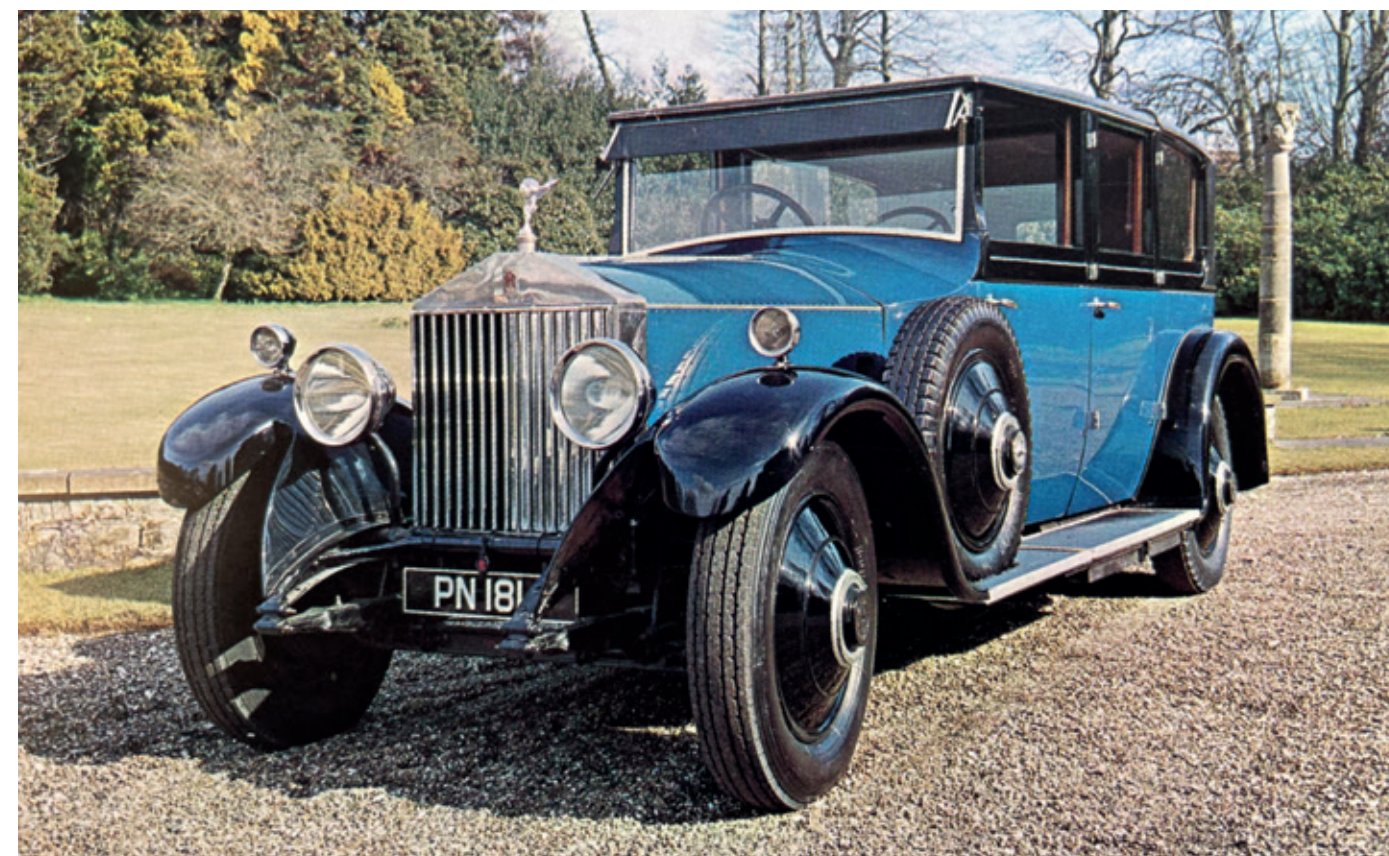
20AL was Off Test on 23rd May with engine number 0055. With a long chassis, nickel fittings and 'B' rake steering, it was sent to Hoopers for the construction of a Limousine body (drawing 2593B). The livery was green, with black wings, and the upholstery was furniture hide to the rear with black leather to the front. Kipling paid £2,834 and his new car was delivered to Bateman's on 27th July 1928. It was registered PN-1814 by East Sussex County Council.

It seems as though Kipling experienced some problems with this car, in particular corrosion with the new aluminium cylinder heads, and it was traded in for a 20/25 four years later. Before the War, 20AL had four separate owners. Then a further five owners post-war before finding itself in the 1960s, at the Jack O' Lantern Garage run by Wade Palmer and Rick Ford.



20AL at the Jack O'Lantern Garage

The history of its coachwork thereafter is a little confusing. In 1961 it was advertised in *Motor Sport* for sale for £500 as a Sedan de Ville and with different registration, probably erroneously. It has been described as a Freestone & Webb two-door Drophead Coupe which was replaced by a Windovers Limousine body. Then, it was sold, described as carrying a Windovers body, at a Christie's auction in 1977, for £12,000. After this, it was acquired for £15,000 by Jack (later Sir Jack) Hayward, OBE (1923-2015) who spent a further £6,000 rebuilding the body before presenting it to the National Trust in May 1982 to be housed at Bateman's. It was described in the *RREC Bulletin* (issue B132, 1982) as carrying a Freestone & Webb body. This was corrected by André Blaize in a subsequent *RREC Bulletin* (issue B179, 1990) who described it as a Windovers Limousine.



1928 Phantom I, 20AL, is the car on display at Batemans

At the dawn of the 1930s Kipling noted that the fun was going out of motoring; careless drivers and accidents were proliferating. As a non-driving passenger himself, he could see all the more clearly that the day of the pioneer motorists whom some had called '*maniacs*' was over, and the day of the real maniacs was dawning.

By 1932, Kipling had reached the age of 67. He was writing, but at a slower pace and with less success than before. He scripted the first Royal Christmas Message, delivered via the BBC's Empire Service by King George V in 1932. In 1934, he published a short story in *The Strand* magazine, *Proofs of Holy Writ*, postulating that William Shakespeare had helped polish the prose of the King James Bible. But the toll of living in India and the relentless production of articles and books was beginning to have an impact on his physical wellbeing.

1932 Rolls-Royce 20/25 (GKT27) Abbott Enclosed Drive Limousine

With the increasing cost of Rolls-Royce motor cars, Kipling decided that his next car would be the lower priced model, a 20/25, which was proving to

be just as reliable a workhorse as the Silver Ghost had been – and easier to maintain and drive. It also meant that the annual road tax would be halved. He bought it from ED Abbott of Farnham, Surrey on 19th February 1931 after it had been used by Rolls-Royce's Inspection Department. Off Test on 9th May 1932, long chassis GKT27, with engine number Z5K and 'C' rake steering, was delivered on 11th May to Abbott's to be fitted with an Enclosed Drive Limousine coachwork. Kipling specified a tall body with plenty of ventilation and so that he could wear his top hat in comfort. This was Kipling's fifth Rolls-Royce motor car and it was registered PN-9820. During the early 1930's Rudyard and Carrie often toured in the UK and, as usual to the south of France, although by then they sometimes arranged for their chauffeur to drive the car there while they went by train.

On 12th January 1936, Kipling suffered a haemorrhage, he underwent surgery but died at Middlesex Hospital in London on 18th January, aged 70. He was cremated at Golders Green Crematorium in north-west London, and his ashes were interred at Poets' Corner, part of the south transept of Westminster Abbey next to the graves of Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy.



GKT27 - The chassis of Kipling's 1932 20/25 Abbott Saloon sold for £3,488 at the H&H auction, Imperial War Museum, 16th October 2013



WXA73 - the original purchase invoice

After Kipling's death, Carrie continued to use the 20/25 before selling it to acquire a Wraith in August 1939. GKT27 was next recorded, in June 1942, in the hands of well-known pre-war dealers, Messrs George Newman & Co of 369 Euston Road, London NW1.

Then, some 71 years later, in 2013, GKT27 was sold for £3,488 at auction at Duxford, Cambridgeshire after being discovered in a barn in Leicestershire.

939 Rolls-Royce Wraith (WXA73) Park Ward Touring Limousine owned by Carrie Kipling

WXA73 was 'Off Test' on 7th November 1938, with engine number A9WB, and delivered to Park Ward to be fitted with a Touring Limousine body (body number 4404, based on drawing number 13124). The livery was dark maroon and black with the guarantee issued on 23rd November 1938. The car, registered FLD-93 by the London County Council, had been used by the Inspection Department. Mrs Kipling acquired the car on 19th August 1939 for £1,550, with an allowance of £350 for GKT27. Sadly, Carrie died in December 1939, after which the car was probably laid up during the ensuing war years. It was recorded in the United States in 1966, owned by Clinton Plympton of Troy, Michigan and then, in 2016, in the hands of Gretchen Dahm of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

To conclude

Kipling's contribution to the introduction of the motor car in Great Britain was nicely captured in a recent article by Eva Chen: *The Adventure of Technology: Kipling, the Motorcar, and National Regeneration*. As a 'rhapsodist of motor cars' and Britain's 'poet motorate', Kipling was one of the earliest voices to champion the motoring movement. His imaginative relationship with the motor car was linked to his call for the cultivation of a toughened, resilient, and resourceful masculinity. The motor car came into his life at a time when his thoughts centred more and more on England, hoping to reinvigorate the nation from within and by recourse to older, more robust sources of localized energy. The car's fast speed and its transcendence of time and space seemed to offer a magical medium to tap and retrieve that tougher, harsher old England.

Over the years, so many wealthy and often very talented, people have acquired Rolls-Royce motor cars because of their reliability. In Kipling's case there was much more. He was passionate about the Empire, its purpose and the contribution it made to mankind. Great Britain was a force for good. These beliefs are not so fashionable today. But he also believed in the quality and the reliability of British products. To him Rolls-Royce motor cars were exceptional and added great pleasure – a matching dimension to someone whose articles and books were much loved. A great man appreciated a great car.

In researching and writing this article, I am grateful to the following people and organisations for information and photographs:

- The RREC, SHRMF and the RROC
- John Fasal, author of *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce*.
- Tom Clarke, author of *The Rolls-Royce 20/25 H.P.*
- Lord (John) Cope and a speech entitled 'To Sing the Song of Steam – Kipling the Engineers' Poet' to the Kipling Society by The Rt Hon Lord Cope of Berkeley on 4th May 2011.
- An article by Philipp Vandenberg entitled *The Duchess Story*, published in the RREC Bulletin.
- John Walker – for help with editing and advice on Kipling's life, including a well-researched and comprehensive paper *Kipling's Cars*, by John Walker, Honorary Librarian of the Kipling Society, based on his review of the Kipling's diaries and other articles and publications by Kipling, in 2020.
- *The Adventure of Technology: Kipling, the Motorcar, and National Regeneration* by Eva Chen, Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bateman's, The National Trust.

WXA73 - The photo below was sent by 'Larson' and provided by Tom Clarke.



The 20-Ghost Club 2024 Spring Lunch



Lunch at Strone and Alex Macpherson's wonderful Hampshire home has long marked the start of the 20-Ghost motoring year. In fact, Strone says that this is the 27th year they have run the event which is actually rather astonishing!

The other great thing about the Spring Lunch is that the sun always shines and this year proved no exception. I must say, though, that it was a little nippy and there was no danger of the plentiful fizz losing its chill as the 45 attendees wandered, happily, among the 23 cars, and into Strone and Alex's delightful gardens.

The younger generation were well represented, Hamish was there, along with Anna Maltin, Tom Hopewell, Phil and George Macpherson as well as George's Evgenia. So good to see our next-gen owners and members coming through. One star was Katie and Teddy Forrest-Tower's son Frederick – just a few months old. The most wonderful baby, he slept through the whole thing!

Lunch was the traditional pie made from unsuspecting shepherds followed by treacle tart and delicious it all was too.

Great also to see a good mix of our cars represented. George Howitt brought along his immaculate 1929 20HP drophead coupe whilst Rob and Jane Pedler had their 20HP Barker tourer. A great selection of Silver Ghosts and 20/25s – on display, as ever, but also a smattering of Phantoms including Charles and Deborah Cole's Springfield PI (see Issue 75 page 38) which your editor hadn't laid eyes on in the flesh before and was a joy.

Obviously if you're reading this you should be making plans for coming along to the 2025 Spring Lunch (pop it in your diary for 26th April 2025) but before then Strone is also organising our Autumn lunch, which this year will be held at The Grange Vineyard on Saturday 21st September. There are full details elsewhere in this issue but this will be really worth signing up for: the tour will be great and lunch will be delicious (given the quality of the wines on offer it might be one to be navigator rather than driver!).

Opposite

A small part of the line up, Michael Power's woodie 1929 20/25 GXO85 (see elsewhere in this issue!), George Howitt's 1929 20HP GFN39 and Steve and Anne Wilks' 1934 20/25 GWE53 (see cover of Issue 75).

This page

Top: Charles Rentoul greets John Snook and Sandy Sayer as they arrive in 1911 SG 1701.

Middle: Strone greets George Howitt.

Bottom Rob Pedler examines Strone & Alex's 1930 PII 62GY.



The Club Mileage Trophies

Our trophy master John Snook with a plea to start your engines then note the mileage.

Our club is proud custodian of many elegant and prestigious trophies, donated over the years by Rolls-Royce and members. It is a great privilege to award these at the annual dinner for almost any endeavour in a pre-war Rolls-Royce.

The raison d'être of the 20-Ghost Club is to encourage members to use their cars exactly as Sir Henry intended. Indeed, as past winners have proven, a sensibly maintained Rolls-Royce will cover prodigious distances, even in appalling conditions, with total reliability: entirely as befits "The best car in the world." In particular, there are three mileage trophies:



The Alpine is awarded to any car covering the highest mileage, on a formula multiplying the annual mileage by the age of the car. This rightly favours high miles done in early cars. The trophy is a copy of the one won by Rolls-Royce in 1913 for the Alpine Trial and presented by Archduke Leopold of Austria; a victory which transformed the reputation of the company and the cars. Although it is the car that qualifies rather than the owner, past custodians of award-winning cars have included Fokko Keuning (for regular epic high speed drives in Europe), John Dolan (for long distances covered in the US) and Gerald Davies (who regularly covers major mileages in Africa).

The Woodmansee is for the highest mileage in a Ghost. I have won this a couple of times simply by using my car regularly and driving to and from club tours. Nick Channing is the current holder for driving to, partaking in, and driving home from last year's Alpine.

The Small Horse Power, as the name suggests, is awarded to 20, 20/25 and 25/30 cars which enjoy regular use. Good examples in recent years have been Sir John Aird and Rosemary and Henry Fitzhugh. Rosemary and Henry go everywhere in their car... all the time.

So, please use your Rolls-Royce, keep a record of the mileage (1st December to 30th November) and put your name forward for a trophy; don't be shy!



The Alpine Trophy.



The Woodmansee Trophy presented by then chairman Tim Forrest to Mermie Karger in 2012.

The Last Word

Well I can't pretend that I have achieved much R-R driving so far this year. The Doctor (1929 GFN80) remains with Jonathan Wood waiting for a new steering nut and worm. This has finally been milled and is being fitted as I write. Sadly the car won't be ready in time for the Tim Forrest tour but I have to say, much as I love Peabody, I have really missed our 20HP. It's been said in these pages before but whilst the sheer power of the large horsepower cars is fabulous the nimble manoeuvrability of the smaller cars - and especially a lightweight 20HP fitted with 4-wheel brakes - is something you really should experience.

In April, Bella and I, accompanied by stepson Tom, zoomed off to the Spring Lunch in Peabody (1933 GHA16) and had a great blast to Strone and Alex's in Hampshire. On the way back however the engine began to stutter. We pulled over on the A303 and I diagnosed a problem with the coil but found we didn't have a spare. So, and with heart in mouth, I managed to switch over the 20/25 to magneto ignition. It worked! And it got us home the final 25 miles.

Bella was very impressed!

But if Bella was pleased with me at being able to switch the 20/25 to magneto she earned my gratitude in spades recently in France. We took our 1961 Bentley S2 LWB (James Young) over to Arras for a few days with some friends who own an S3. Whilst there I drove off from a petrol station situated on a slope and forgot to take the handbrake off.

The rear drums got red hot and, when I realised what I had done and stopped, the brakes seized on. The car was stuck solid.

Not my finest hour!

I rang the AA (we had Euro-cover) but they cocked a snook...you see it was a Sunday in France. Nothing happens on a Sunday! Our post-war cars are expertly maintained by Stuart Worthington at Phantom Motors in Crondall. He took my call (despite being in the middle of a bike ride) and explained I needed to slacken off the brake shoes by getting under the car and loosening the appropriate nut on each rear wheel. The problem here was that my head/torso was just too big to fit under the Bentley. Should have taken the R-R with greater ground clearance! But Bella - who is far more slender than me - was quick to the rescue and got us back on the road. Albeit with just front brakes so the remainder of the trip saw fairly ginger driving.

So here's to trouble-free motoring for us all! Thanks for your company as ever, and see you next time,

Johnnie



