

THE 20-GHOST CLUB RECORD



Vol. 1 No. 1. SPRING, 1960



GLEN MORRISTON, Inverness-shire. 1929 "Phantom 1," Barker Tourer, 109 W.R.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is with very great regret that we received the news that, owing to extreme pressure of work, John Anderson had to ask to be relieved of the Editorship of our Newsletter, and also of the Chairmanship of the Events Committee. We really do appreciate the excellent work which he has done for the Club over a considerable period, and would like to thank him most sincerely for his most untiring efforts for the benefit of the members.

Volunteers were called for to fill these vacancies, and the following appointments have been made: Chairman of the Events Committee, Lieut. Commander J.C. Dymock-Maunsell, R.N.; Editor of the News Letter, Ian S. Hallows. We are very grateful to these gentlemen for coming forward to help.

This is the first issue of the News Letter under the new editorship, and it has been decided to change the size and style of the publication, in order to make it easier to bind or file for future reference, and also to change the title to one more appropriate to the new style. The new Record will appear each quarter, and it is hoped that members will approve of these changes.

The Editor urgently requires articles for inclusion. Now this is your Record, and its success depends upon your contributions; so please send in anything of interest. A description of your car for instance, or how you acquired it, or restored it, or special journeys or tours you have made. There is very wide scope in this direction.

Events for this season are to be few, but really interesting, and I hope enjoyable. The first and main item will be the visit of the Rolls-Royce Owners Club of America, who are chartering two special planes for a party of approximately 150, arriving on April 30. They are particularly anxious to meet us and see as many of our cars as possible, and suitable arrangements are being made.

Let us hope that we shall have another summer of good weather to make our events doubly enjoyable, and that members will actively support them.

Stanley Searg

CLUB NEWS

By the generous action of a member who wishes to remain anonymous, the new Record will be provided each quarter with a fresh cover, including a photograph of a Rolls-Royce in a suitable setting. The Committee would like to express their gratitude on behalf of members as a whole.

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On February 29, our president, Stanley Sears, was married at Ashill Church, Norfolk, to Miss Hester M. Phinn, a lifelong friend of the family. All members will wish to join us in offering our best wishes for their future happiness.

* * *

Amendments to the List of Members will be issued with the next number of the Record.

* * *

The Annual General Meeting will take place on 19 May 1960 at the Eccleston Hotel, Eccleston Sq., London, S.W.1. The meeting will start at 7 p.m., and a bar will be open at 6.30 p.m.

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By virtue of their powers under Rule 29, the Committee have by unanimous resolution authorised the use of the Club Badge on post-1939 Rolls-Royce cars owned by members. Members who wish to take advantage of this authorisation are reminded that Rule 3 states that any member who owned a pre-1940 Rolls-Royce car when elected to the Club will cease to be a member if he or she ceases to own such car and must return any badges issued.

* * *

Nearly 90 members and guests were present at the Annual Dinner held at the Hyde Park Hotel, London, S.W.1, on 6 February. Before the start of the dinner, the president paid a brief tribute to Rollo Waterhouse, Publicity Manager of Rolls Royce Ltd., who died in a car crash on the night of Tuesday, 26 January. An honorary member of the Club, he had given a great deal of assistance to it in many ways. The sincere sympathy of club members was extended to his widow and children. Those present then stood for a short while in silence in his memory.

Although attendance at the dinner did not quite reach the record figure of the previous year, the attractive

menu that had been arranged helped to make the evening one of the most enjoyable yet. The toast of 'The Guests' was proposed by Stanley Sears and that of 'The Club' by Dr. Llewellyn Smith, to which John Anderson responded. After-dinner discussion was then carried on until the last possible moment.

* * *

Members are reminded that, under Rule 9, any member whose subscription was not paid by 1 March will be notified thereof by letter and in the event of non-payment by 1 April his subscription will be deemed to be in arrear and he will cease to be entitled to enjoy any of the privileges or take part in any of the events of the Club. If his subscription is not paid by 30 April, he will cease to be a Member of the Club. Notifications are being sent where required by this Rule on the return of the Hon. Secretary to this country: it will be remembered that the subscription for Ordinary Members is now 2 guineas.

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1960 EVENTS

- 30 April (Sat.) - Meet R.R.O.C. members at London Airport.
- 1 May (Sun.) - Rally at Battersea Park - drive to Bolney - return to London.
- 19 May (Thur.) - Annual General Meeting, Eccleston Hotel, 7 p.m.
- 27 May (Fri.) - Informal dinner, East Arms, Hurley, near Maidenhead.
- 26 June (Sun.) - *Driving Tests, Camberley. Arrive 11 to 11.30 a.m.
- 8 July (Fri.) - Informal dinner, Wentworth Country Club, Virginia Water. Tea, bathe beforehand if desired.
- 24 July (Sun.) - Concours d'Elegance, Blenheim Palace, near Oxford.
- 17 or 24 Sept. (Sat.) - Lunch, Tea, Films, Elvetham Hall, near Basingstoke.

*Not finalised

VISIT OF R.R.O.C.

Details have not as yet been confirmed with the officers of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of America, so that what follows is only a preview of what we are planning.

On Saturday April 30, cars from RR Ltd., 20-Ghost Club, V.S.C.C. R-R Section, and R.R.E.C. arrive London

Airport during the morning and park in special area allocated. Cars will be parked in three groups according to the numbers of R.R.O.C. members wanting transport to the Dorchester, the Savoy and Grosvenor House. Arrangements have been made for B.O.A.C. to take the luggage to the hotels.

On Sunday May 1, cars arrive at Battersea Park 10 a.m. R.R.O.C. arrive Battersea Park by taxi 10.30 a.m. and depart at 11 a.m. for Stanley Sears' magnificent garage and grounds at Bolney just off A23. There will be a buffet lunch provided by the generosity of Rolls Royce Ltd., after which those attending will be able to view Stanley Sears' collection and R-R exhibits. The time of departure is not yet finalised. It is considered that we will have a sufficient number of cars on both days; numbers of cars from R-R section of V.S.C.C. and R.R.E.C. have not yet been settled.

Those who have Silver Ghosts may not want to take their cars in London traffic on Sunday, May 1. If they would like to go direct to Bolney, they are asked to contact Lt-Cdr. J.C. Dymock-Maunsell, H.M.S. Excellent, Portsmouth, Hants, direct: because of the lack of space at Bolney, this privilege can only be extended to Silver Ghosts.

The Events Committee are more than grateful for the numerous offers of help that have been extended by members for the visit of the R.R.O.C. Members are once again reminded of the very high standard of the R.R.O.C. cars, and that their cars should be well up to 'concours' standard on both days.

Final instructions will be sent as early as possible, but because of the difficulties in making detailed arrangements across the Atlantic, they may not in fact be ready until a few days before the events.

INVITATION TO ROLLS-ROYCE ENTHUSIAST'S CLUB EVENTS

The Chairman of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiast's Club has most kindly stated that he would welcome any 20-Ghost members at their events. Those interested should write to Miss G.M. Harris, Paternoster Farm, Yarnton, Oxon. Their provisional programme is as follows:

- 3 April (Sun.) Rally and Engine Concours at Hatherop Castle, nr. Cirencester.
8 May (Sun.) - Rally at Sulgrave Manor, Northamptonshire.
*26 June (Sun.) - Concours d'Elegance at Blenheim Palace.

* Subject to confirmation

ALPINE TROPHY

To date, 14 cars have been entered, ranging from a 1911 Silver Ghost to a 1937 Phantom III. All models are represented except a 25/30 and a Wraith. Entries for this competition close on March 31.



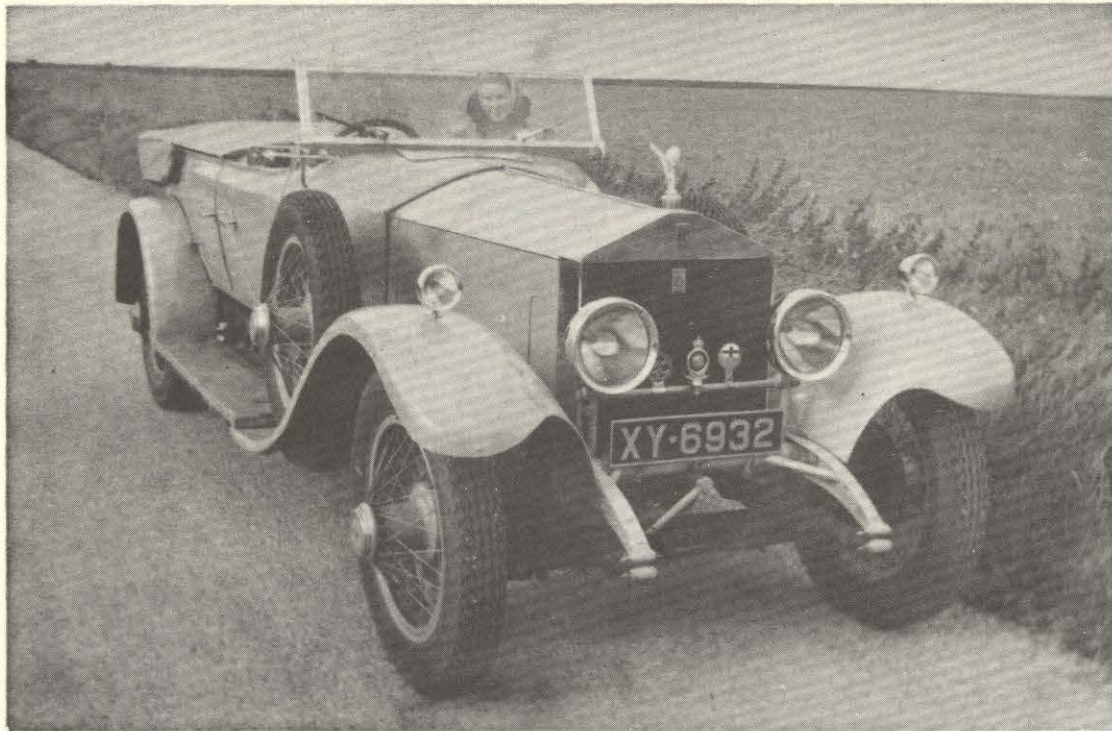
Jonquil and Elleston Trevor's Wraith WRB 9 photographed near the tomb of Victor Emmanuel, Rome.

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OTHER NEWS

A 16 page illustrated booklet describing the travel services offered to motorists by the R.A.C., under the title 'Motoring with Your Own Vehicle', may be obtained from the R.A.C. Travel Service Ltd., 66, Haymarket, London, S.W.1. These services are available to both members and non-members of the R.A.C.

HISTORICAL RECORD



John Hampton's Silver Ghost 120 EU

It is intended to include, as a regular feature in the Record, a series of illustrated descriptions and histories of some of the more notable cars in the Club. The original idea was to commence with the two models from which the Club's name is derived and follow on in order of production. Unfortunately, full details of the most suitable 20 were not available in time, and therefore the first articles will concern a Silver Ghost and a Phantom III - something old and something recent. It is hoped to follow, in subsequent issues, with examples of the 20, Phantom I, 20/25, Phantom II, 25/30 and Wraith. When all the models have thus been covered in order of production, the cycle will be repeated.

It is hoped that members who have discovered particularly interesting stories concerning their cars, will let me have the facts and photographs (size 6½ in. by 4½ in. or 5½ in. by 3½ in.). Some members have already done so, and to these I would say, if any new information comes to light, please let me have it.

Although some of the oldest coachwork and much that is unique is to be found on Silver Ghost chassis, the most interesting stories do not only come with this model. The Club records already show that even the little 20 has its share of anecdotes.

So many different things have happened to our cars that some of their tales must be well worth relating. For example, some Silver Ghosts have served in diverse roles through many years before being reclaimed and restored by members. I know of one which was found as a bare chassis in a West Country breaker's yard, and another which was found derelict after serving as a glider-launching winch car. Other, more fortunate examples, have remained in the same family and have been well cared for all their days.

Quite as interesting tales cling to other models. The member whom I have already mentioned as having found a bare Silver Ghost chassis, restored it, and built and fitted an appropriate body to it. Another member had to work the opposite way first. He acquired a crashed Phantom III and had to strip it right down to the bare chassis, which required straightening. Having made a good job of that, he had to rebuild his chassis and repair and refit his coachwork.

All of us who love these cars know that the result more than repaid the effort, in both these instances. Some of us, who prefer the Silver Ghost for its very nature, would enjoy possessing one we had ourselves restored. Others would choose the Phantom III, believing it to be the finest car ever made. Most of us like to hear about these things, particularly if circumstances do not permit us to do the same.

You may think you know most of the history of your car but one day, perhaps at a rally, someone may recognise it as an old friend and come forward with some new information. This has happened to our President, Stanley Sears, on more than one occasion and I hope to relate these stories later.

It is possible that someone, reading one of these articles about a particular car, may recall an incident concerning that very vehicle, and may take the trouble to write in to see if the owner is aware of the anecdote. The Record will then have helped to uncover some more history for the records.

There are in the Club quite a number of very notable cars which could form the subject of most interesting articles in this series, provided their owners let me have

the information and a photograph. An interesting story may be attached to quite an ordinary looking car. A neat little 20 coupe may have had a really exciting period in its history.

It is understood that the Silver Ghost featured in all the exciting and amusing journeys in Dornford Yates' stories but just as many miles have actually been covered by the other models in just as stimulating conditions. Once I saw a Phantom I with the most unusual coachwork. It was like a sportman's decked tourer, but it was a closed car. I believe it had been found in India by a R.A.F. officer. That is all I can tell about that Phantom I; perhaps there is much more to be told and we shall hear it one day.

A few years ago I found, in a dealer's hands, a beautiful little 20 coupe of about 1926 vintage. It had been carefully stored for over ten years. I was too late myself as it was already sold, but there remains a hope that a club member has it now. If it is so, and it is in the historical record, its story should ultimately appear in this series.

K.A. Steel

MEMBERS' CARS DESCRIBED.—I

Model: Silver Ghost Coachwork: Barker open tourer
Chassis no: 120 EU First registration: 3 June 1925
Total mileage: 78,426 Number of owners: two
First owner: Henry Thomas Present owner: John Hampton

Owner's Remarks: The chassis went on test in December 1924, and the car was delivered on 3 June 1925 having had the body built in the meantime, so the car's official date as registered at Conduit St. is the June one.

The original owner had only three cars in his long lifetime. His first car was in 1903 and then in 1909 he purchased new an overdrive Silver Ghost which he used continuously, covering the enormous mileage of 309,000. At the October show of 1924 he ordered the car I now own. While it was at Barker and Co. having the coachwork constructed, Rolls-Royce told the owner they were announcing the New Phantom (the car we now know as the Phantom I): this had an identical chassis, and he was given the opportunity of having his body transferred on to the latest chassis. The New Phantom had an OHV engine and single plate clutch, the engine giving 33% more power, running at a lower rate of HP tax, on account of a smaller bore and larger stroke. Incidentally, it is interesting to

compare the results. The Silver Ghost bore is 114.3 by 121 stroke, giving a cubic capacity of 7,428: the Phantom I and II bore is 108 by 140 stroke, giving a cubic capacity of 7,668.

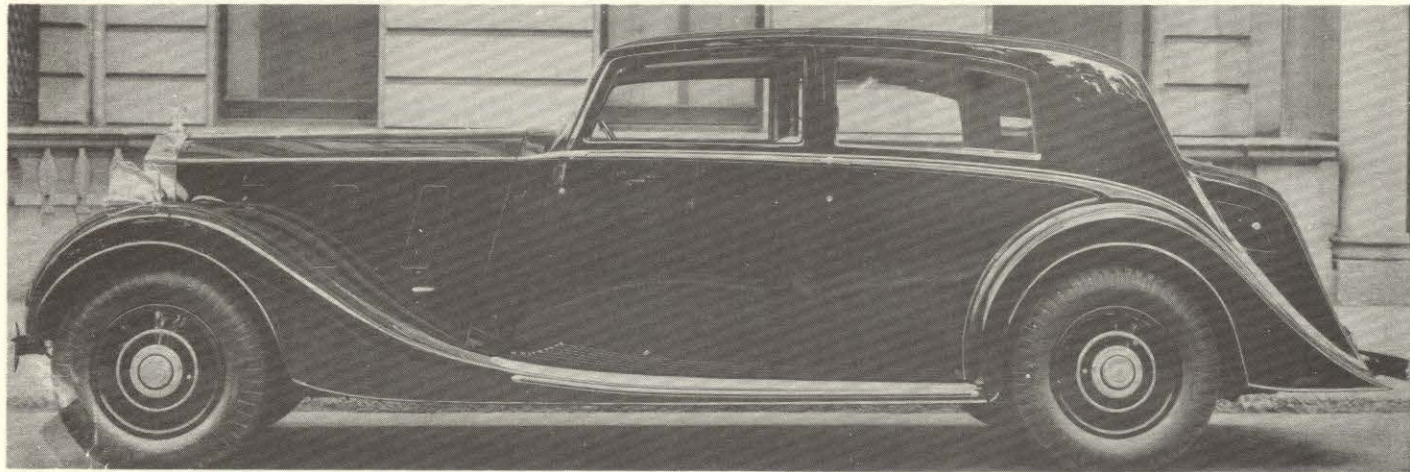
The offer of the later chassis was refused, as Mr. Thomas had established such faith and affection for the S.G. side valve engine and the sweetness and smoothness of running that he decided to have the same again and I think he was right. The car was driven regularly at weekends from 1925 until November 1934, the mileage then being 59,158. It was then laid up by Rolls-Royce and brought out again 12½ years later in July 1946, when it was used until Mr. Thomas drove the car for the last time in his 88th year on 20 December 1953, the total mileage from new then being 68,805.

I acquired 120 EU from the trustees and collected her from Cheltenham at the end of March 1954, and I have had nothing but pleasure and enjoyment from it ever since. I had the upholstery, carpets, hood cover and tonneau renewed, the windscreen altered to one piece and various parts plated. The chassis has had the brakes relined 5 years ago, and last February the engine was rebored by Rolls-Royce, as it had 14 thou. wear on the bores, largely brought about by their being no valve in the thermostat when I had it: also, the extra oil supply to the cylinders had been disconnected for some reason. These two important items being amiss, combined with the fact that when driven by its late owner it rarely exceeded 30 m.p.h., I am sure were entirely responsible for the excessive wear, as I am given to understand that the Silver Ghost engine, properly maintained and driven, gives a mileage more like 176,000 instead of 76,000 before attention is necessary to its cylinders.

The car has taken part in quite a number of 20-Ghost Club rallies in the six years that I have had it. One memorable run we did together was to Crewe, and I found that without rushing the car along I knocked 1 hr. off my calculated average, arriving at noon instead of 1 o'clock. I reached Warwick from Guildford (97 miles) in 2½ hr. - nearly 41 m.p.h. and an average of just over 35 m.p.h. for the whole trip. Moreover, we returned to Guildford the same day, covering in all 367 miles and averaging 13¼ m.p.g. on Power petrol. The comfortable cruising speed is 50, and Devon hills, with the exception of a few of the very steepest, are taken in the excellent 3rd gear that has immense pulling power. The total mileage now covered is 78,426 and I am looking forward to many more years of driving what is, in my opinion, the finest chassis of all time.

J.G.H.

MEMBERS' CARS DESCRIBED.—2



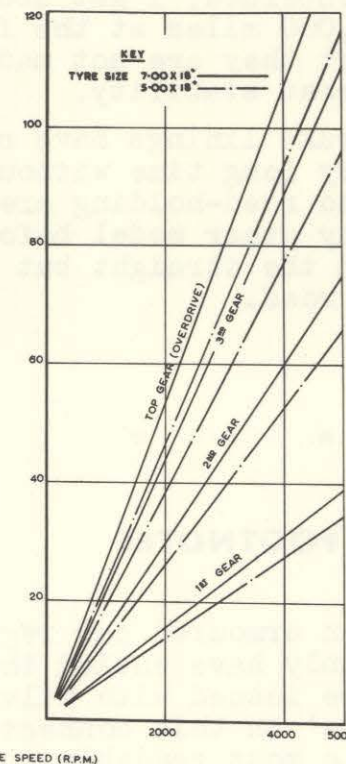
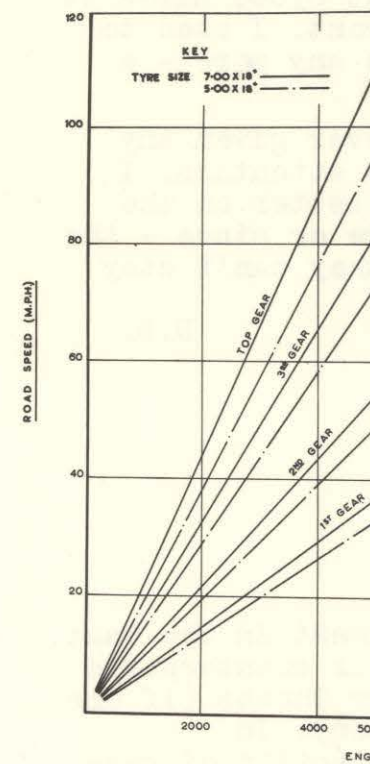
Denis Becker's P III 3BT65

Model: P III. Coachwork: H.J.M. sports limousine
Chassis no: 3BT65 First registration: May 1937
Total mileage: 240,000 Number of owners: two
Present owner: Denis Becker.

Owner's Remarks. The first owner crashed the car completely at 4,000 miles, and when I first heard of it the chassis was at Derby and the body at Mulliners, for it had knocked down some concrete posts and landed upside down on its roof. When I bought the car, the chassis had been rebuilt and guaranteed for three years by Derby and the body had been rebuilt and guaranteed for one year by Mulliners. The car has been modified up to DL specification, complete with overdrive gearbox, and Wraith-type cams have been fitted which give less movement to the tappets and has completely eliminated the old trouble of wear of the quick drop cams. The smaller movement at the cam end of the mechanism has been compensated for by eccentric bushes in the rockers which, by varying the respective lengths of the two levers, have given the original or improved movement to the valves themselves. She also has lead-bronze bearings on all but the intermediates, and a straight through exhaust system with 3 in. tail pipe which has the historical interest of being the largest tail pipe ever fitted to a Rolls-Royce car.

A continental type speedometer adapted by the makers that has been fitted registers up to 140 m.p.h. At the revs. we used to do with the old gear-box at 102 m.p.h. (which was the best I could get out of her) she would with the overdrive box, in theory, do 130 m.p.h. but in practice,

on the flat in both directions, owing to the enormous headlamps, etc., and complete lack of fairing, she evens out with the air pressure at about 102 m.p.h. in overdrive.



ROAD SPEED CHARTS

Left.- 8.34 rear axle ratio; 4-speed gear-box; final drive ratios. 4.25:1 (top), 5.60:1 (3rd), 8.45:1 (2nd), 12.64:1 (1st); wheel turns per mile 655 (7.00 tyres) and 730 (5.00 tyres).

Right.- Overdrive gearbox; 1:4.25 rear axle ratio; 4-speed gearbox; final drive ratios 3.52:1 (over-drive), 4.25:1 (direct 3rd), 6.15:1 (2nd), 11.50:1 (1st).

On the Autobahnen down hill we have had her up to 127 m.p.h. on the clock. The reason why we couldn't reach the theoretical 130 m.p.h. was that the centrifugal weight of the back tyre tread at that speed tore the cover through the wire at the rim and let the tube out like a balloon which went off with a tremendous explosion. The curious fact was that nothing happened to the steering and it was reducing speed that brought the rim down to the road at, I suppose, about 90 m.p.h. When the rim did hit the road, the car did not deflect at all from her course, and I was amazed by the perfect geometry which must have been responsible for this.

The car was laid up from 1941-45 in riding stables at Holyport, where half the crown-wheel rusted and had to be replaced. Apart from this period, my mileage has been fairly steady at an average of around 13,000 a year. During that time, the car has been completely overhauled twice and repainted twice.

Today, the car, which has always been maintained by

Rolls Royce, is as good as new except for a main block which has been eaten into by anti-freeze. This will be replaced with one of the only two main blocks remaining at the next major overhaul in 20,000 or 30,000 miles time. As far as tyres are concerned, I get about 8,000 miles at the rear and up to 20,000 miles at the front. I used to have 7.50's behind, but they are not made any more - a pity, for they gave great stability.

The clutch and brake linings have never given any trouble. They go a very long time without attention. I believe that brakes and road-holding are better on the Phantom III than on any other model before or since - the new cars are faster on the straight but they can't stay with you on a winding road.

D.B.

* * *

FOOTNOTES

Anyone who served in an armoured car regiment in the last war must almost certainly have envied their counterparts during 1914-18 who were issued with Silver Ghosts (if one can use the word 'issue' in this connection). In 'Unofficial History', a most readable collection of reminiscences published last year by Cassell and Co., Field-Marshal Sir William Slim tells the story of a Silver Ghost that was rebuilt towards the end of the Mesopotamian campaign by a Light Armoured Motor Battery from the chassis of one write-off and the engine of another. A box body was made for the car by the unit carpenter, as the write-offs were no longer on the strength of the unit concerned. In 1919, the Silver Ghost was brought back to England in an ingenious manner described in some detail by the Field-Marshal, and remained the private property of the officer who had commanded the battery. Members will probably be wondering whether the car is still in existence: as the Field-Marshal does not quote a chassis number, it might be difficult to trace it, but it would be interesting to know any more of the car's history. (N.B.- Even if one had been able to liberate a Daimler armoured car during the last war, the engine would have been at the wrong end.)

I.S.H.

COVERS PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHERS

THE 20-GHOST CLUB

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