

The 20-Ghost Club Record



Volume 24
1984





20-Ghost Club Record

Volume 24

1983

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Library

Members are reminded that the Club Library contains a considerable amount of Rolls-Royce literature, most of which may be borrowed from the Librarian. This includes issues of "The Flying Lady", instruction books, Rolls-Royce Bulletins and files of cuttings.

Insignia

Car badges and club ties are available from the Secretary.

The Record

Back copies of some issues exist. Write in first instance to the Secretary.

Note: Opinions expressed in articles, letters or editorials may not be constructed as being necessarily those of the 20-Ghost Club.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

If you are neat and tidy in your reading habits this is likely to be the first piece you will read, whereas it is in fact the last to be written.

Planning and thinking about the 'Record' during the year is a pleasant pastime. This year I had hoped to include many more illustrations although it hasn't worked out that way—perhaps the next issue will look more lively. But the luxury of planning and thinking is over and it's now as I scribble this note for the typesetter (bless his heart), when it becomes a hard grind to get everything ready for the platemaker, and I wish I had never taken on the job. Once I hear the presses running it will be downhill for me for another ten months. How about some of you giving me a gentle shove towards the next 'Record'? Your help is still needed in the form of old photos of interest to others, jottings which may be of little interest to you but club members may find fascinating. A letter or two would tell me I had a reader or two (thanks to those who wrote last year), or perhaps a secret technical hint you should really pass on. Happy motoring to you all in 1984.

Digby Wills

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

1983 has been another year of pleasing events and good fellowship which are the hallmark of our Club. We started off in late January with one of the most gala dinners we have had in many years, made so by the splendid setting—the Lord's Dining Room in the House of Lords at Westminster. This was made possible by our President, the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine. Over 80 members and guests attended. The Annual General Meeting was held first, followed by a conducted tour of both the upper and lower houses of Parliament before we settled down to the dinner itself. Dennis Miller-Williams, former Manager of Public Relations at Rolls-Royce spoke and the Club's annual trophies were awarded by Lady Elgin.

In May we held our fifth annual joint week-end with the Irish Georgian Society, a relationship which seems to get better and stronger every year. This year we went to Derbyshire where, over three days, we visited 13 stately homes. A full report of this pleasant event will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The first week-end in July found us at Monmouth in Wales as guests of the local Council and Chamber of Commerce, where we helped them celebrate their Festival of Welsh Castles. We also had our annual driving tests which were won by John Squire, and had an informal concours, with the general public casting the most votes for Jack Woolleys beautiful 1912 Silver Ghost.

Our regular Concours d'Etat, held at Charlecote Park near Stratford-on-Avon in mid-September, was better attended than last year's and won by our hard-working Hon. Secretary Ken Smedley with his immaculate 1927 Twenty.

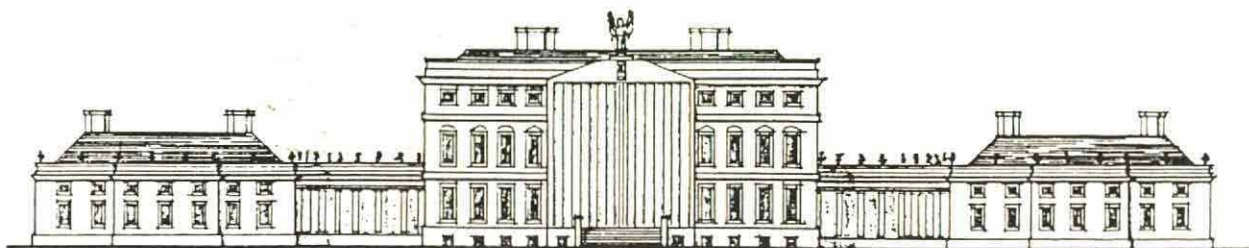


Your Committee is already at work planning events for next year, the highlight of which will certainly be a tour of the Burgundy region of France. This is being organised by Lord Elgin and is expected to be in late September. It will be heavily subscribed and members may have to be limited so make your plans early. Further details about it appear elsewhere in this issue. *page 13*

Now for a few personal notes. There have been no changes in the Committee during the year, with the same group continuing to keep the Club viable and the events to your collective liking. Sadly I must announce the death of Joan Watson, wife of our long-time Hon. Secretary-Treasurer and President Fred Watson, and a great supporter of the Club over many years in her own right. Our deepest sympathies go out to Fred, Gay and Sebastian. Finally it should be noted with pride that Bryan Goodman, our current Hon. Treasurer and past Hon. Secretary was elected earlier this year as Chairman of the Veteran Car Club, a large, active and worthy organisation well known and supported by many of our own members. Congratulations Bryan.

And best wishes and happy vintage motoring in 1984.

Lynn A. Brua



A DERBYSHIRE TOUR WITH THE IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY

For the fifth consecutive year we had a joint event with the Irish Georgians, this year over the May Bank Holiday week-end. From the 28th through the 30th we visited 13 stately homes, only two of which are in the National Trust, so most are still getting the loving personal care which in some cases means 400 to 500 years of continuous family ownership and accumulation of contents. This personal touch very much carried over to our tour, for in almost all cases the present owners conducted us round the houses and grounds themselves, giving us the background and flavour which no guidebook can impart.

From our base in and around Matlock in Derbyshire 45 people, of which 18 were from our Club, set out each morning in mostly rainy conditions in ten Rolls-Royces, including three Silver Ghosts and only one post-war model, the Valentine 1955 Silver Dawn because "Aunty", their 1929 Phantom II, was badly damaged in a collision on the way home from last year's Irish Georgian tour. "Aunty" is reported to be convalescing nicely and will be up and about by the end of the summer, fitter than ever.

These joint week-ends always impress one as a gathering of experts. Nick Thompson of the Irish Georgians, who has organised all of our outings, is a prominent London architect with vast knowledge of period structures and the specific history of each place we visit. Also in the I.G. group were two other architects, a Christies art and clock expert, an art restorer, an Ancient Monuments employee, an interior decorator, an artist, and a university lecturer, to mention only some. Needless to say there were some old car experts around too, such as Henry Wilkins, Andrew Taylor, Peter Heilbron, Ken Smedley, Digby Wills, Jimmy Valentine, Leo Williams and Peter Collinson. (No ranking intended in this non-alphabetical enumeration). Despite these experts and the usual car talk about problems, the worst malfunction of the week-end was Lynn Brua's Phantom II blowing

a headlamp fuse when he dipped his beams on a dark road in the rain. It took about two hairy minutes to replace it. Most of the cars did between 500 and 600 miles over the three days.

Our junket had an auspicious beginning at Chatsworth, where we spent all of Saturday morning. It is arguably the finest stately home in Britain, and we were to be privileged to a tour of the private apartments as well as the State rooms. We were ushered into the family dining room only to find the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire still at breakfast there with two house guests. Instead of beating an embarrassed retreat, the band of intrepid intruders carried right on to view the paintings, furniture and silver which adorned the room, with an occasional sidelong glance to see if it was kippers or ham gracing the ducal table. When she had finished the Duchess showed us through all the family rooms, splendidly furnished as one might expect. The "view from the loo" was especially admired by some for the throne-like wicker necessity gave a superb view over the grounds which the ubiquitous Capability Brown laid out for the 4th Duke in 1761.

The Duchess, in addition to writing the authoritative book on Chatsworth and its contents, has evidently taken an expert and firm hand in restoration and display of the entire place. It is said that the present Duke only accepts responsibility for the bedside reading material in the many guest rooms, and judging from an impromptu survey his taste is decidedly light and humorous. Incidentally, he drives a Bentley, nothing so ostentatious as a Rolls for his Grace.

To list even the principal masterpieces in the house would be too lengthy for this account, but the three outstanding late Rembrants give a clue to the riches. The house today contains the best of the furniture, pictures and other objects taken from Devonshire House and Chiswick in recent years so the collections are finer than ever before.

We went on to Ashford Hall, seat of Col. W. H. Olivier, a cousin of Sir Lawrence the actor, for a picnic lunch. The cold and rainy weather drove us

indoors for it but we ate overlooking a picturesque lake formed out of the River Wye, one of the few places in England where rainbow trout breed naturally. The house is small but grand on the Palladian style, built about 1785. It always had close connections with the Dukes of Devonshire until the present owners purchased it from the estate in 1954.

Our visit to Hardwick Hall consumed most of the afternoon. Built by the renowned "Bess of Hardwick", gaoler of Mary, Queen of Scots, it was completed in six years in the 1590's. Bess was her own Clerk of Works, only had the help of her local vicar in supervising the construction, and she did not start it until she was 70! As a practicepiece she had built Chatsworth some 30 years earlier and is the direct ancestor of the Dukes of Devonshire. Today this fine and relatively unaltered Elizabethan mansion contains perhaps the finest collection of tapestries and embroideries in the country, most of them collected by Bess herself 400 years ago.

Late on Saturday we went to Renishaw Hall, seat of the Sitwell family since 1625, where our hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Reresby Sitwell, showed us the house and grounds and served us a buffet supper. This was the house where the famous poetess and authoress Edith Sitwell grew up, and she is not only still in evidence around the house in paintings and sculpture, but in the wit and charm of her nephew, Reresby. The house itself is entirely Jacobean in style and H-shap in plan, its most memorable feature being its very long hall with the Prince of Wales feathers displayed in the plaster work ceiling to commemorate a ball given for him there in 1806. After the collapse of the family fortunes in 1846 the house was shut up and many of its treasures sold. Sir George Sitwell, grandfather of our host, came to the rescue and restored it, much as one of our members might find a gem of a Silver Ghost rusting away and lovingly bring it back to life.

Sunday morning we went to Tissington Hall in the village of the same name. The owners being in Scotland we were unable to enter the 350 year old house, but we did visit the grounds and, even better, the charming village. The Norman church, almost totally original and unspoiled, constituted the highlight for those whose explorations led them to it.

Next came another splendid Georgian house, the finest in Derbyshire, Kedleston Hall, seat of the Viscount Scarsdale and his illustrious Curzon ancestors including the Marquis who was Viceroy of India when the Empire was at its zenith. The house is one of the most notable of Robert Adam's



Ashford Hall Δ

Photo: Digby Wills



Renishaw Hall Δ

Photo: Janet Valentine



Photo: Digby Wills Tissington Hall Δ

many creations, and although a bit cold as a result of all the formality and symmetry, is a noble setting for such esoteric souvenirs of the Viceroy as a set of ivory chairs, gift of an Indian nabob, and a 2000 ounce (small bathtub size) silver wine cooler. The house has just been accepted for the nation in payment of capital transfer tax, thus ending another long family association with a great house. Longer term, the country will surely be the poorer for the institutionalizing of such monuments for the sake of relatively minor additions to the Treasury's coffers.

Thrumpton Hall was the last house visited on Sunday, and we were given a tour of it and the gardens by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. George Seymour. Although the manor of Thrumpton goes back to Doomsday, the present house dates from the beginning of the 17th century when Gervase Pigot bought it and commenced a several generation building programme on the much favoured H-shaped plan. The most splendid addition was the introduction of a new elaborately carved central stair, among the most notable of its time and kind. In 1696 the Pigots sold the property to John Emerton and it has been passed down through the family, sometimes via nieces or nephews, to the present owners. After our tour we were served a delicious supper in the 1790's dining room.

Monday was another busy day but at last the weather improved and by noon the sun was shining. We began at Wootton Lodge, a splendid 17th century mansion set in the centre of a many

hundred acre estate. About ten years ago it was bought by J. C. Bamford, founder of the well-known excavator firm. Because of wood rot and general delapidation it was necessary to completely gut and restore the interior, which has been done with the utmost care and good taste. Many changes in the landscaping were also made, including the creation of a large lake, terraces and rockeries.

After the perfection of Wootton Lodge, the National Trust's Sudbury Hall left most of us unimpressed because of its bareness and unlived-in atmosphere.

Nevertheless we were graciously received and guided through the house by its Curator, who explained that its design combined in a unique way both Jacobean and Restoration features. In 1660 George Vernon inherited the old manor of his ancestors and immediately began to rebuild on a grand scale without any professional architectural help. The house contains much fine stone and wood carving executed over many years, including a spectacular overmantel by Grinling Gibbons, for which Vernon paid £40 in 1676. The Long Gallery contains a most elaborate plaster-work ceiling which features whimsical creatures such as crickets, spiders and grasshoppers among the scrolls and squiggles. Much of the work is so elaborate that it stands free of the ceiling itself causing, according to the Curator, many dusting problems. These have been solved by alternate annual vacuumings and blowings. ▶



Wootton Lodge

Photo: Digby Wills

The most recent work on the house has been by the National Trust who carried out a major restoration between 1968 and 1970, after it had been given up by Lord Vernon in satisfaction of death duties.

Lunch followed at Melbourne Hall, then we went on to Calke Abbey which was interesting mainly because of its run-down condition. The first house on the site was built in 1131 and the present one in 1703 by Sir John Harpur, and it remained in that family until 1981 when Mr. C. R. Harpur-Crewe died. It has now been offered to the Treasury in lieu of taxes but it is expected that the offer will be rejected and the house and contents dispersed; another sad end to a once great house.

Calke Abbey

Our final destination was Melbourne Hall, seat of the Marquess of Lothian. This house is said to incorporate part of a medieval residence of the Bishops of Carlisle, but the oldest visible fabric is 16th or 17th century. Remodelling of the garden "to suit with Versailles" was started in 1704. We said our various 'goodbyes' in one of the main avenues which lead from the house.

Thus ended our fifth annual outing with the Irish Georgian Society. We thank that organisation and especially Nick Thompson for the great care and attention that went into making it such a success, and express the hope that these joint affairs may continue for many more years to come. ■

Midge and Lynn Brua

Photo: Janet Valentine

Susan Taylor and Jean Heilbron

Photo's: Janet Valentine

Some of the 'scrolls and squiggles' of Sudbury Hall





EARLY MOTOR REMINISCENCES

Charles Rolls address to Ladies' Automobile Club

"I have been asked to give some reminiscences of the early motoring days. It is rather difficult to choose the best out of a pretty good variation, but my own experiences began in France in 1894. The first car I brought over to England was a Peugeot carriage of 3½-h.p. This was considered a very powerful and almost dangerous machine, the most powerful one previously made being 3¼-h.p. It was rather a top-heavy vehicle, hung on three springs, and it used to sway terribly when going down hill; it had a V-type Daimler engine behind. The four mile an hour regulation, of course, made motoring almost impossible in this country. I managed, however, to get a kind of permission from the Chief Constables of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, who kindly said that they would instruct their men to look the other way when I came along.

This enabled me to start on my first journey from London to Cambridge. We deemed it advisable to run by night only, and the first part, as far as Potter's Bar, was covered according to law, each of us taking it in turns to carry the red lantern. At one point the monotony was relieved

by giving a lift to a policeman. I happened to be walking in front at the time, and got into conversation with the Bobby. "Evening," said he. "Evening," said I. It was about two in the morn. "One of these 'ere 'orseless carriages," said he. "Yes," said I. "Don't see many of them here things about here, but I **should** like to have a ride on one; they does seem to me so huncanny," said he. "Jump up!" said I. So up he got into the car and said, "Now you can just let 'er go as 'ow you please down this 'ere hill," holding himself on with one hand and his helmet with the other, "for there ain't no one on the beat for another mile and a 'alf." So away we went, greatly relieved at being able to let her out, after having crawled so long at four miles an hour with the engine hot. After Potter's Bar we were free, but the car was not going well—much time was lost stopping for water, which was often very difficult to find; we frequently had to get into private gardens and draw from people's wells. But the fun was when we stopped in a village the car made so much noise that it woke up everyone in the place, and night-clad figures appeared at every window.

Of course, there were no radiators in those days, and you could never run more than ten miles with the same water, for the pump would not work above a certain temperature. You had to ascertain if the pump was working by sticking your hand under a pipe in a box behind, and as it was usually boiling hot, the passenger got tired of being burnt, and got into a habit of saying 'Yes', whenever he was asked if the water was circulating. This eventful run, after many troubles, ended in our arriving at Cambridge at 9.30 a.m.; this made a total time of 11¾ hours, or an average speed of 4½ miles per hour. So tired were we that I went to sleep momentarily several times while driving, and was awakened by feeling the car going off the crown of the road; my passengers slept all the latter half of the journey."

"In those days your passage through the districts was recorded in every local newspaper, and if ever you dared to stop in a town for a moment, to take in benzoline or anything, you had to fight your way back to the car. Out in the country, on the other hand, every other man climbed up a tree or telegraph pole to get out of your way; every woman ran away across the fields; every horse jumped over the garden wall as a matter of course; and every butcher's cart that was left at the side of the road with the tail-board open bolted off, scattering various spare parts of animals about the road. While up at Cambridge I often **nearly** got into a row for arriving back late at night after

a breakdown, but I squared numerous venerable dons by taking them out on the car; a good many of these runs, however, ended in pushing the car home with the assistance of my venerable passengers, who often thus presented a very comic picture, arrayed, as they often were, in caps and gowns. In November, 1896, I had my first smash—and this occurred, unfortunately, the night before the anniversary run from London to Brighton. I was on my way up from Cambridge to London for this run, and when going down hill at Hatfield the right front axle broke clean, and the whole car went over on its side with a tremendous crash. The car had a big canopy, and was very top heavy. Neither of us in front was hurt, but there were two passengers sitting behind, who had been fast asleep; when we shouted to them, all that we got was a grunt, but, fortunately, as it turned out, neither of them was badly hurt.

We had, as usual, been out about ten hours doing forty miles, and it was now about 10 p.m., so we had some difficulty in collecting the wreckage and getting the car to a stable. This done, we adjourned to a small inn, where our shaken passengers were attended to. We were then given the state bedroom (which was so small that you could not find the window), and proceeded the next day by train.

My next adventure (at Christmas, 1896) was a run of 140 miles from London to my home in Monmouthshire, which took me three days. After numerous difficulties and breakdowns we reached Cirencester, and had to negotiate one of the steepest and most dangerous hills in England, called "Birdlip Hill." Had we known what we were in for, we should certainly not have dreamt of taking such a hill with the inferior brakes we had in those days.

However, we started cautiously down the first and steepest part of the hill, which was almost like climbing down a precipice. The brakes had to be kept pretty hard on, and while we were still on the steepest part I felt my hand brake lever suddenly yield and go up against the top—a feather had sheared—and there was an end to the side brakes; that left a miserable foot brake, which pressed so hard that the lever bent, and the pedal sat on the floor.

That settled it; away went the car down this awful hill. I did not know the road; I did not know what curves there were, or what might not be on the road. There was nothing to be done but to try and keep her on the road and trust to luck. The car kept on accelerating, it swerved terribly from side to side—then came the first corner.

She literally jumped round this corner, dashing across the road from one side to the other, and then I hoped the hill was over. But not a bit; there was a long, straight stretch ahead, with a steady down incline. To add to the difficulties we had a canopy, which made the car top heavy; we also had the front glass down, and this, coupled with the darkness that was just coming on, made it extremely difficult to drive and to see which way the corners went. Well, on we sped down this stretch, wondering if we should get round the next corner, when suddenly we caught sight of a light right bang ahead of us. I said to myself, "Now we're done for!" for we were swaying about the road so much that we could not possibly have got past a vehicle of any sort. We were gathering up speed, waiting for the crash, being by this time quite resigned to our fate, when I suddenly discerned another bend in the road, and the light, happily for us, turned out to be a house on the side of the road. We dashed round this corner somehow, and again came a gleam of hope that we might be saved; but still the road went on, downhill and downhill, until it really became a sort of nightmare, and not until two more stretches were covered, and two more bad corners negotiated did we find ourselves at last slowing up, and then it seemed to us miles before the car actually stopped. Such is the hopeless feeling of being on a car with absolutely no brakes of any kind—and when the car did come actually to a standstill we felt a relief which it is quite impossible to describe, for it really was the narrowest escape of our lives. I still do not know how we got round those corners; the hill turned out to be a mile and three-quarters in length, and the car literally jumped from one side of the road to the other all the time, but I think it was the fearful swaying of the car that checked its speed to a considerable extent and enabled the turns to be negotiated, which otherwise could not possibly have been got round. On walking up the hill with a lantern afterwards, to look for a bag which had been dropped, I noticed the very wide skid marks which the car had made, and which sometimes went within a few inches of heaps of stones. There was a very strong smell of burning when we stopped, and all the brake leather was burnt up, so we adjusted them up as best we could, and decided to put up at Gloucester for the night.

Here an amusing incident occurred. While the engine was running in the hotel yard, the clutch pedal struck down, and I stooped down in front of the car to release it, but had stupidly left the

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Chepstow Castle

WELSH CASTLES WEEK-END

Wales is usually associated with wetness—of the rain variety at least!

However for the Twenty Ghost Club and the Midland Rolls-Royce Club combined Welsh week-end, rain clouds remained off the agenda, whilst sunglasses were definitely on it! A total of nine cars and eighteen people were involved in the week-end which was loosely centred around Wales' Festival of Castles. Our base was the comfortable Kings Head Hotel in Monmouth.

Since castles were the main focus of the week-end, especially Saturday, and one always associates castles with the age of knights and chivalry, it was perhaps fitting that the day should start with a damsel in distress! Alys Woolley, although first down to breakfast, was last to receive it—her pleas for sustenance were finally answered, not by a knight in shining armour unfortunately, but by a Spanish waiter! Ah well! one can dream!

The various cars: Lynn Brua's Phantom II; Geoffrey Price's 20/25; Digby Wills' Silver Ghost; James Hand's Phantom I; John Squires' 20/25; Jack Woolley's Silver Ghost; Phil Taylor's Twenty; Sue Taylor's Wraith and Bob Knight's Phantom I; had been left overnight in the local Monmouth bus garage. The day began with the week-end's only major casualty, Geoffrey Price,

in his 20/25 had developed a puncture. It was apparently a further stage in the on-going saga about Geoffrey's tyre which had begun on the Twenty Ghost Club's Continental tour to Denmark last year. Attempts to mend the inner casing of the tyre with Elastoplast had proved unsuccessful. Perhaps Geoffrey took Elastoplast's slogan of providing "cushioned protection" a little too far! Anyway, the ailing tyre was administered to by Phil Taylor and a helpful man at the garage. To officially begin the week-end, the nine cars were assembled at the parade ground of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, whose HQ is now Monmouth Castle. As is perhaps usual, the cars attracted a great deal of attention from the general public. One is perhaps tempted to make an analogy between Kentucky Fried Chicken and Rolls-Royce—whilst one is "finger-lickin' good", the latter is "finger markin' good!"

Amongst the people there was a Mr. Joe Higgins, a retired teacher, who was avidly taking pictures of all the cars. He was apparently an amateur film-maker of 25 years' experience, who was making a documentary about Monmouth and all its aspects, as it had been his childhood home. His keen interest in the cars was illuminated by the fact that Colonel Harding-Rolls had been the gentleman's commanding officer during the Second World War. Definitely a case of "small world, isn't it?" Unfortunately, not everyone showed such a healthy respect for the cars—one particular

newspaper reporter began to literally leap all over the cars, especially Jack Woolley's Silver Ghost, and it was rather indeterminate whether he was taking pictures or trying to impress the army personnel who were present by demonstrating an army assault course! The next stage of our journey began with the local Mayor waving us off with a Welsh flag. Phil Taylor had earlier made the comment that he didn't mind being waved off with anything as long as it wasn't a Communist flag. That would surely have been a rich irony—a convey of nine gleaming Rolls-Royces sent on their way by a Communist flag!

By now the weather was hot and sunny and this set the precedent for the rest of the week-end. We rolled (excuse the pun) along through beautiful Welsh countryside. However, some of the bends were a bit 'royceky'. (Aah, it gets worse!).

Chepstow Castle, the first castle we stopped at on the very border of England and Wales, was highly impressive in that it was actually incorporated into the limestone cliff upon which it was built. Only partly ruined, many of the rooms were still intact, giving a hint of how the castle must have looked during the sixteenth century. On a hot Summer's day, the rooms were cool and refreshing, but one could imagine how the situation would have been reversed during the winter, making the huge fireplaces an absolute necessity. To give an idea of the castle's size, the whole township would have lived inside the castle walls, in times of siege or battle.

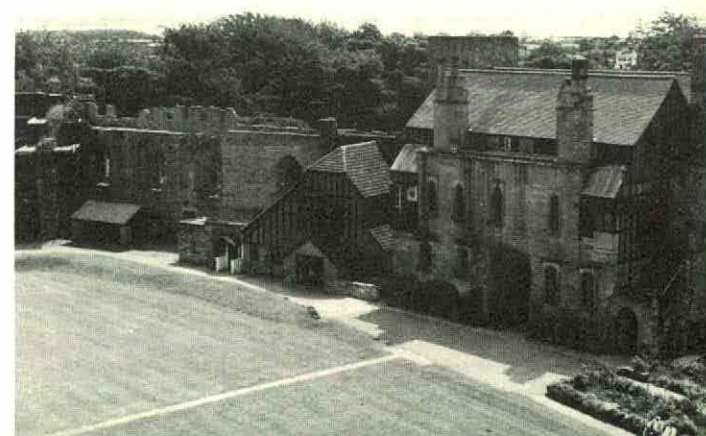
Just a few miles up the road in Gwent lay our second port of call. Caldicot Castle was part conventional style castle, with a keep dating from the twelfth century, and part Tudor manor house. Even though it was architecturally less stark than Chepstow, this did not mean that its defences were any less effective or numerous. The curator gave a rather gory list of how an attacker's attempts to invade the castle might be thwarted by either: being drowned in the sewage-filled moat; squashed by the drawbridge or impaled on the portcullis! "I see they had an alarm system too" observed Jack Woolley spying a blue alarm box at the entrance to the castle! It seems that modern technology is now preferred to more traditional and some would say more effective methods of deterring potential intruders. Even though the castle is now owned by the local council, it has retained a homely and used atmosphere, partly due to the period furnishings in the rooms on show and partly due to the immaculate gardens tended by the curator herself. A small costume museum at the castle was given an added interest by one exhibit—a Victorian toilet, rather strangely



Penhow Castle



Raglan Castle



named 'The Puritas'! By this time rumblings of hunger could be heard amongst the assembled party! After a superb buffet lunch at a local Vicarage which was in the process of restoration, we arrived at Penhow Castle. This was perhaps the most unusual and certainly the smallest of the four castles we visited. It was a conglomeration of periods, ranging from the twelfth to the nineteenth century and for much of its history had been connected with Jane Seymour's family. Sadly, seemingly like much of Britain's architectural history, it had fallen into disrepair but fortunately since 1978 had been in private hands and was in the process of restoration. Penhow Castle was less an imposing monument but rather more a family home. In fact, during the Victorian era, efforts had been made to disguise the fact that it was a castle at all, by having a front door placed in one side of it!

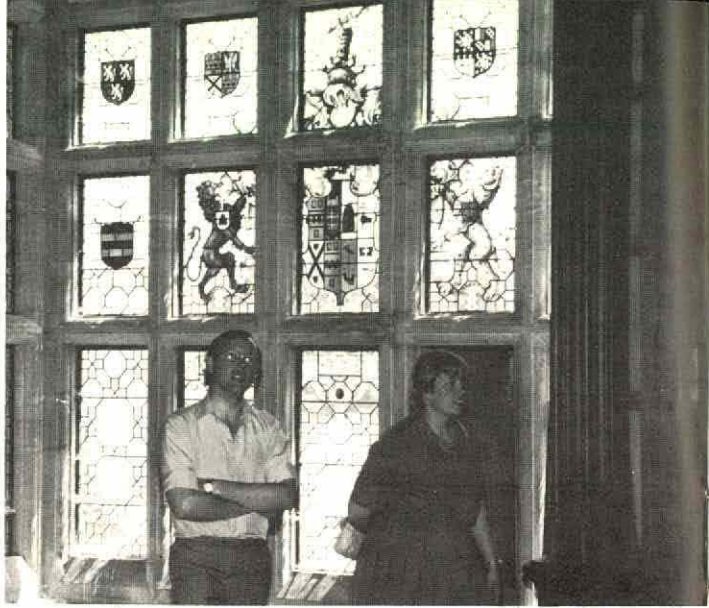
Water became an important commodity at our visit to the fourth castle, Raglan. The sun had taken its toll and by mid-afternoon, most people were gasping for liquid refreshment. Raglan was the only castle of the four we visited which had water in its moat. The sight of this proved too much for some. Luckily however, an odd assortment of 26 cups of tap water were provided by the warden before anyone actually threw themselves into the moat to quench their thirst and cool off! Never before had 26 cups been so eagerly seized upon and for a while the medieval ramparts were ignored. As we walked around this most imposing castle, with its hexagonal towers and shell-lined alcoves, John Squires made the comment "I see that they had medieval Coke cans!" after peering down a tower with a refuse-littered bottom.

In all we travelled about 8 miles, a surprisingly short distance, considering the variety of castles we visited.

From Raglan we travelled to Dingestow Court, home of Mrs. Thorneycroft, a member of the Irish Georgian Society. She had kindly invited us back for a refreshing glass of wine. Whilst there, we were joined by a highly original Speed 6 Bentley and a superb Derby Bentley. Everyone was quite reluctant to leave such peaceful surroundings, but a mad dash was required in order to make it back to the Hotel for the Civic dinner in the evening. However, no-one got lost en route due to some kind 'waiting at corners' by Geoffrey Price and Jack Woolley.

At the Civic Dinner we were joined by the Mayor of Monmouth, Major and Mrs. Harding-Rolls and several members of the local Chamber of Commerce. After a splendid meal, short

Susan and Andrew Taylor in the Hendre



speeches were made by Lynn Brua, the Mayor and Major Harding-Rolls. The latter passed on especially warm sentiments from his father, Colonel Harding-Rolls. He said that his father was sorry that he could not attend the meal but added that "his thoughts are always with you". This was a particularly touching way to end the meal and Saturday's events.

Sunday began with much spit and polish in the bus garage and then the owners presented their gleaming cars. Sunday also brought an addition to our number with Andrew Taylor arriving in a Silver Shadow Drophead Coupe. Unfortunately though, his car remained inactive for much of the day, since the fan had been bent by a stone flying into the engine. After assembling at the parade ground of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers 'again, we travelled to Major Harding-Rolls' house for morning coffee. A highlight of the journey there, besides the glorious Welsh scenery and equally gorgeous weather, was the sight of Colonel Harding-Rolls sitting outside Rockfield House, waving his panama hat to our convoy of Rolls-Royce as it passed. Water was yet again a feature of the visit as many people looked longingly at Major Harding-Rolls' swimming pool! Longing looks were also cast at several Persian kittens who provoked much maternal cooing from several members. Betty Price, clutching one particularly noisy infant, said "This one'll suit me—it's chatty!"

Next on the agenda was lunch at Hendre, Charles Rolls' childhood home. Part of it has been turned into a golf course and much of the grounds were distinguished by smooth rolling greens and sandy bunkers. Lunch itself was served in the clubhouse. This was of special interest since it had originally been Rolls' garages. However much of the undeniable history of the place was distin-

guished by orange painted beams and nylon carpeting. A slightly clearer view of how the garages must have looked in their heyday was given by the coach house opposite. There beams and flooring were left, along with dust, to create an atmosphere of discovery. This air of discovery was further enhanced by the find of a neglected and dust-covered Mark Six Rolls-Bentley providing a reminder of bygone days at Hendre.

A further and perhaps greater sense of history was provided by Charles Rolls' test track in the grounds of Hendre. To any casual observer, this was merely a stretch of narrow road and in flat terms was just a place where Rolls drove his cars. However, in reality, the road represented two miles of motoring history. It was perhaps here that Rolls' enthusiasm for cars was fired, causing him to help launch the most prestigious car in the world—the Rolls-Royce. It was therefore an extra-special treat for me to take my 'maiden' drive in my father's Phantom I upon this historic road. This for me, was one of the highlights of the week-end and gave a sharper focus on just how important the Rolls part of the name Rolls-Royce really is.

After some abortive driving test (John Squires being the eventual winner), we were left to explore Hendre itself. This proved to be rather sad. The house itself was completely empty of furniture and one could only gaze at the beautiful wood-carving on the ceilings and imagine how the house had once been. There is perhaps a sense of irony that Rolls' first venture with Royce should have been called the Silver Ghost. The former's cherished childhood home was now empty, save for ghosts. Although walking along the dank, empty corridors was a very sobering experience, it was gratifying,

as one walked in the sunshine, to see the nine gleaming Rolls-Royces. At least some legacy of the Rolls-Royce is still cherished and respected—the car that bears his name. How lovely it would be if the same thing could eventually be said of Hendre.

In order that the cars could be officially shown off to the public, a Concour was held back at Monmouth. The judging was undertaken by the local people who returned Jack Woolley's Silver Ghost as the best car in the show. The latter was presented with an engraved silver tray which was suitably admired around the various tea tables back at the Hotel.

To round off the week-end, we were given a magnificent buffet supper at Monmouth Museum. The Museum itself housed an impressive collection of Lord Nelson memorabilia presented to the Museum by Charles Rolls' mother, as well as a temporary exhibition about Charles Rolls himself. Lynn Brua made a short speech of thanks to the Mayor and the Chamber of Commerce for making us so welcome in Monmouth. A vote of thanks was also given to Sue Taylor for working so hard and making the week-end such a success, which was heartily reciprocated by us all.

The finale to the week-end was an old Victorian entertainment presented at the Magic Lantern Theatre in Monmouth. Although a Victorian atmosphere was evoked very well, it made one realise how sophisticated modern entertainment is and how much more we expect from it.

Many thanks must again be extended to Sue Taylor for organising such an interesting week-end which without doubt everyone found highly enjoyable.

Tracey Hand

Driving Tests 1983 — The Hendre RESULTS

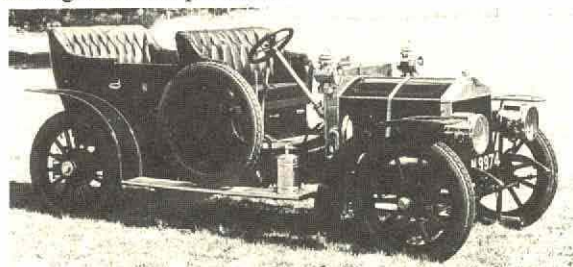
Competitor					Penalty Points	
		1	2	3	Total	Position
J. Squire	20/25	2	2	nil	4	1st
S. Taylor	Wraith	7	7	nil	14	2nd
L. Brua	P.II	0	21	30	51	3rd
B. Knight	P.I.	10	10	50	70	4th
P. Taylor	20hp	15	22	90	127	5th
D. Wills	SG.	1	21	106	128	6th
J. Woolley	SG.	7	4	165	176	7th
G. Price	20/25	15	11	160	186	8th
J. Hand	P.I.	14	4	205	223	9th

ANDREW TAYLOR, Secretary of the Meeting

THE SEARS COLLECTION

On October 22nd, 1983 Christie's offered by auction 'The Stanley Sears Collection. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars 1905 - 1938'.

We salute the passing of an era. From the start of the 20-Ghost Club, thirty three years ago, these cars set the standard that other owners worked towards and seldom attained. Each car was, in its own way, an ideal, and the sight of them together in the motor-house at Bolney was an unforgettable experience.



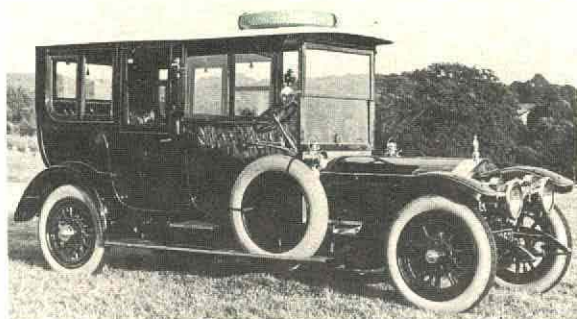
1905 Light 20 Chassis 26350

The historical importance of this model in the history of Rolls-Royce cannot be over emphasised, and the section on it in C. W. Morton's 'A History of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars' does full justice. The book also gives the detailed story of how Stanley Sears found one incomplete chassis (40520) in an old garage at Lemon Quay near Truro, and a more complete one (26350) at Brae Cottage, Royce's old house at Knutsford.

In 1953, the appearance of the restored light 20, with its elegant body copied from the Tourist Trophy car, at the Veteran Car Club's Coronation Rally was breathtaking. In May 1956 it returned to Derby to be inspected by the company's directors and personnel. Before dinner, Lord Hives (Hs) took the wheel, and set off, changing up without a sound and having no difficulty with the high-gear steering. "His face assumed the expression of a delighted schoolboy", wrote Stanley Sears.

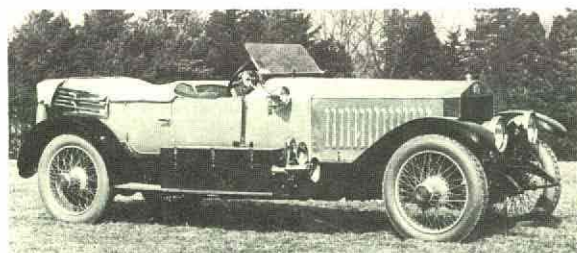
The last word could come from Kent Karlake (From Veteran to Vintage): "All in all I believe that in its class this Tourist Trophy Rolls-Royce is the best veteran car that I have driven; and, much as I admire its luxury car successors, I cannot fail to deplore the fact that this Rolls-Royce sportscar had no heirs".

The remains of the other 4 cylinder 1906 20-h.p. 40520 was also in the sale; many of us had never seen these unrestored pieces and the sight was fascinating. By today's standards there is enough to merit reconstruction.



Silver Ghost chassis 1721

This beautiful blue Hooper Limousine was retired to a barn on Lord Wavertree's estate in Oxfordshire and left for years until Jimmy Skinner heard of it in 1945. The value of a 1911/12 40-50 in those days was less than £50 for a non-runner. With remarkable speed Stanley Sears acquired the car, put it back into running order, and had it superbly repainted by H. E. Griffin of Haywards Heath in time to appear in the 1946 Calvacades. John Oldham ("The Rolls-Royce 40-50 h.p.") devotes a chapter to the car and surmises from a study of the chassis cards that it may originally have been intended for royal use.



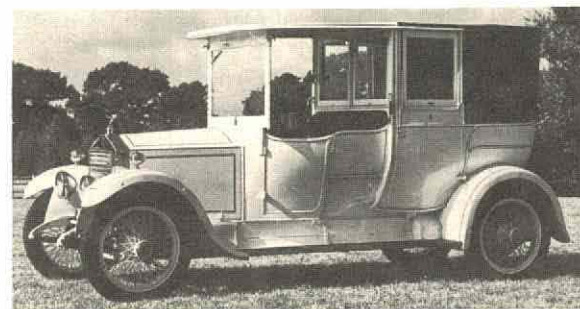
1914 40-50 h.p. 17RB

Everyone knows the story of how James Radley's car was defeated by an Austrian pass in 1912, and the sequel—the specially prepared cars that dominated in the 1913 Austrian Alpine Trial. Jimmy Radley was a lone entry in the 1914 event with chassis 18PB. The chassis used were L to E type, with 'Colonial' modifications (higher ground clearance and four speed gearbox), louvred bonnets and large radiators. Additional petrol tanks were fitted, with change-over cocks to transfer the air pressure. (So much simpler to have had a larger tank). The name 'Alpine Eagle' was often used for cars made to this specification, but was not a 'company' name. But this car is an ideal 'Alpine' Rolls-Royce.

Portholme coachworks (one of James Radley's interests) made the body for 17RB. The car worked hard, and in 1939 the body was removed and 17RB was used by Park Ward for carrying aero-

parts. Fortunately the body was not destroyed and was refitted after the war.

To quote from Karlake again: "as one opens the throttle of the Alpine Eagle a delicious wriggle seems to ripple down its chassis in a manner which I have only encountered in this particular type of Rolls-Royce, and one can without the slightest difficulty imagine it eating up the long miles of continental road."



1923 20-h.p. 58-51

There are many cars of lesser or greater merit carrying coachwork of a more recent date than the chassis, but there can be few indeed in which the coachwork is so clearly of an earlier era than this early 20 with Hamshaw landaulette body.

There is a legend that a sports-car was defined by a dowager as "any car through which I cannot pass without removing my hat", and it was in this spirit that the Earl of Lonsdale disdained current trends in coachwork for his new Rolls-Royce, and in 1923 ordered the body from his 1910 Daimler to be transferred to the new chassis.

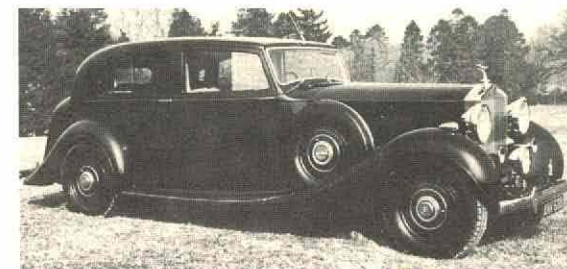
The car is appropriately finished in the 'Lonsdale Yellow' beloved of the Earl; and on its frequent visits to race courses must have been recognised, and saluted, from afar.



1934 Phantom II 3RY

The famous Phantom I with petit-point interior trim was absent from the sale, but the second of the Sears trio was there, elegant as you could

expect. How few pre-war Rolls-Royce have survived so complete and so little used; 33,000 miles is all that this Barker Sedan de Ville has recorded. The presence of a rev-counter (non-standard) is a reminder of the fine performance of this stately machine.



1938 Phantom III 3DL76

This Thrupp and Maberley touring limousine came straight from the 1938 Earls Court motor show to the Sears family and has been, all its life, kept up to the highest standards. Originally maroon, it was repainted in deep metallic green. The great twelve-cylinder Phantom III, the model with no post-war successor of comparable design, was the one that Stanley Sears respected above all others.

Robin Barnard

All photos by Christies, South Kensington

PROPOSED TOUR TO BURGUNDY —

1st to 8th October, 1984

Our President, Lord Elgin, has sent us preliminary details of the 1984 Burgundy Tour. He is suggesting we start in Reims on the 1st of October at the main office of Lanson Pere et Fils. Thereafter to journey South to Romaneeche Thorins when M. Jean Thorins will take over and conduct us around South and North Burgundy, finishing at Beaune. M. Thorins is an old friend of Lord Elgin and has been his host on several occasions. The Thoran family have been producing wine for over 300 years. Our host with his fluent English and his intimate knowledge of wine, will surely prove to be excellent company.

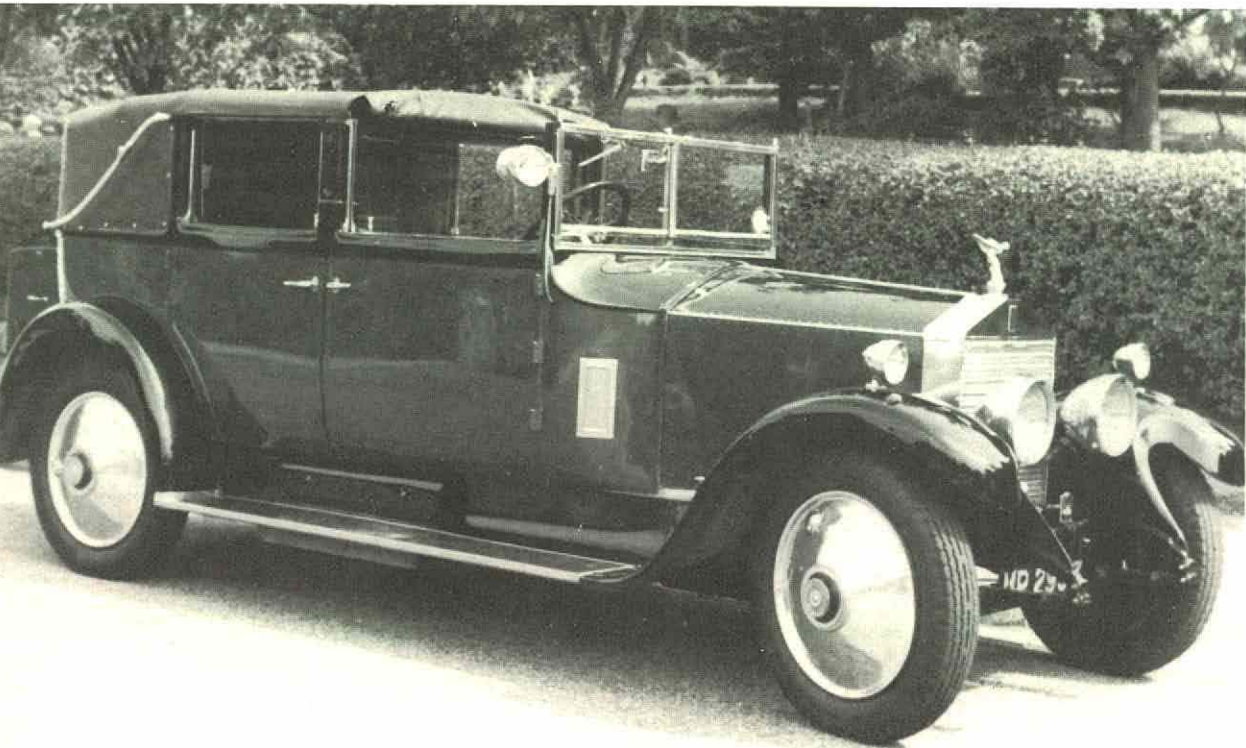
On the cards are visits to the Confrerie du Tastevin at Clos Voujeot and the Stag Hunt—Le Pic de Bourgogne. Good restaurants abound, with terrace garden situations for lunch; and for dinner—well let your imagination run riot—only prices will inhibit the choice.

CONCOURS D'ETAT

Sunday, September 11th was the coldest September day for 5 years, and it was also the day of our Annual Concours D'Etat. The slight drizzle and cold wind, however did nothing to daunt our spirits or our determination to enjoy the company of friends together with their polished cars.

The venue was Charlecote Park in Warwickshire, the park surrounding Charlecote House—a beautiful Elizabethan house built in 1558 on the site which has been the home of the Lucy family since the 12th Century.

The surrounding park—by tradition the scene of a youthful exploit in the life of William Shakespeare—is stocked with fallow and red deer and a breed of Spanish sheep whose ancestors were brought there by a Lucy 200 years ago. The red brick Tudor house and its detached gatehouse are situated at the end of an avenue of young elm trees—an extremely beautiful setting for our Rally.



It should be pointed out that Queen Elizabeth the First stayed in the house in 1572 and that Lady Freda Valentine followed suit in approximately 1913, Lady Freda having been invited as a guest to Charlecote House for a shooting party.

Soon after our arrival we partook of a super picnic (each course brought round to our cars), in view of the inclement weather. The food had been prepared by a professional caterer who had concentrated on fresh, home-made delicacies. Our congratulations to Susan Taylor for locating this cook.

After lunch, whilst the judges were hard at work noting all the "black spots" visible on our cars, we were joined by a pair of peacocks, which strutted up the driveway to have a closer look at us, one being hotly pursued by a cute 12 months old grand-daughter of Jack and Alys Woolley.

There were 12 cars entered in the Rally, one of these being the 1957 Silver Cloud, owned by Claude Curtis. How happy we were to see Peggy and Claude again after rather a long absence due to ill-health.

The outright winner of the Rally—by a very decisive lead—was Ken Smedley's 1927 20 Cabriolet de Ville, which even the most knowledgeable of the members present found it hard to fault. Ken's car, with its louvered radiator, is quite original, even to the lady's "set" neatly built into a tray at the back, consisting of an engagement book and cut-glass smelling-salts bottle (still containing some grains of the original salts). Of further interest is the 'telephone' from the back to the driver—a useful appliance for the 'back-seat driver'. At one time this car was stored for 30 years without turning a wheel.

The runner-up in the prize order was Susan Taylor's 1939 Wraith (Park Ward) Touring Limousine.

The next runner-up was Philip Taylor's 1927 (Hooper) 20 Tourer. This car is a favourite with many of the lady members, and is interesting as it has 3 spare wheels, no door handles and the back doors are a different size to those of the front.

James Valentine brought along his 1954/5 Harold Radford Convertable hatch-back. I was particularly interested to be shown the sliding arm-rest which revealed a fitment for bottles and drinking vessels, possibly intended for a secret drinker installed in the back! Amongst other fascinating distractions fitted into this car is a wash-hand basin incorporated in the boot.

Jack and Alys Woolley brought two cars—the sleek 1932 Phantom II Sedan Coupe (James Young coachwork), also the 1912 Silver Ghost, the previous owner of this car being Bill Pitt, a descendant of William Pitt.

Andrew Taylor's 1926 Phantom I was a new addition to club events. This gracious-looking car was once owned by Dymock-Maunsell, a past member of the club who has arranged many Concours in the past.

Geoffrey Price joined us with his 1936 20/25 (Park Ward) saloon. Indeed, this was the last of the 20/25's to be made, and also the last car to be fitted with a cobra bulb horn.

Lynn Brua brought his pretty 1932 Phantom II (Hooper) Continental sports saloon. It is worth remembering that this car has been driven through the United States of America, Japan, Russia and Europe by Lynn and Midge Brua.

The remaining two cars at the event were Digby Wills' 1921 Silver Ghost 2 seater and Jim Hand's 1927 Phantom I. The latter was introduced to Jim whilst it was lying under the bows of SS Gt. Britain in the Bristol timer-yard. This elegant Phantom I has lucidus head-lamps, monograms on the door-handles inside and silver mounts all the way through. Also of interest is the fact that the design of the rear interior is the identical design as that commissioned for the late King Edward VIII.

This was a very happy day for us all—most of us having toured the House, this containing a vast quantity of antique furniture and pictures of historical interest, also a great deal of marble.

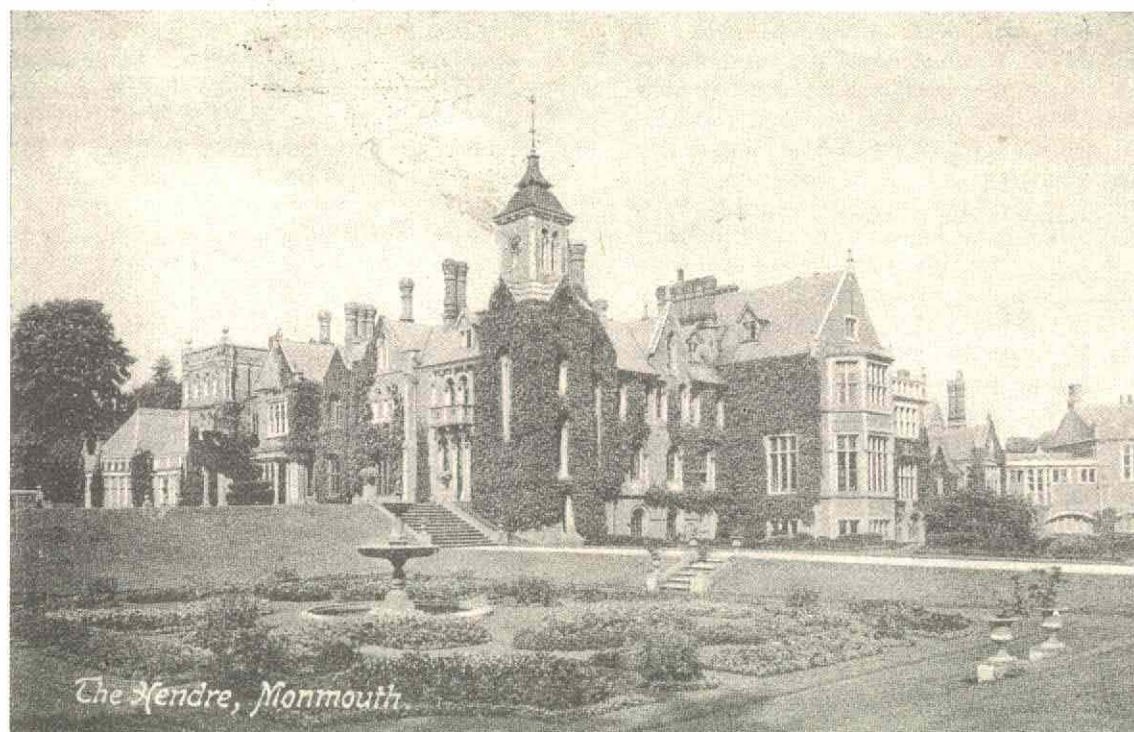
The afternoon was rounded off with a welcome cup of tea in the Orangery.

Our grateful thanks are due to Susan Taylor who, once again, meticulously organised a successful event. Thank-you Sue from us all.

Margery Wills

20-GHOST CLUB, 1983 CONCOURS D'ETAT
Charlecote House

Owner	Reg.	Chas. No.	Type	Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
D. F. Wills	NK2898	9AG	S.G.	1921	75	60	85	95	80	225	620
J. Woolley	KT2059	190SE	S.G.	1912	60	60	65	60	90	200	535
A. Taylor	YO8869	20TC	P.I.	1926	70	75	65	80	85	225	600
J. Woolley	DXA7	8MY	PII	1932	70	60	90	75	85	225	605
L. Brua	GY7719	36MS	PII	1932	95	90	75	85	110	225	680
P. Taylor	XV4	GAJ42	20	1927	95	90	90	85	110	225	695
G. Price	WS8586	GTK25	20/25	1936	95	90	90	85	105	220	685
S. Taylor	HLL34	WHC77	Wraith	1939	99	95	95	95	120	225	729
F. Valentine	MSR33	SRH84	S.D.	1955	80	80	75	80	90	200	605
C. Curtis	YOKI	SDD16	SC	1957	85	85	80	80	130	200	660
K. Smedley	MP2953	MP2953	20	1927	98	95	98	98	145	220	754
J. Hand	YH2900		P.I.	1927	70	60	65	95	130	200	620
Column	1. Interior	100	maximum	4. Chassis	100	maximum					
	2. Exterior	100	maximum	5. Originality	150	maximum					
	3. Under bonnet	100	maximum	6. Mechanical	250	maximum					
				Total	800	maximum					



The Hendre, Monmouth.

The Home They Left Behind Them

Vast extension were made at 'The Hendre', dating from 1830, when Mr. John Rolls made it his principal seat. He died in 1837, and his son, John Etherington Rolls, the father of the first Baron Llangattock, died in 1870. The house is beautifully situated on the banks of the meandering Trothy, close to all the loveliness of the Wye Valley scenery, and the Welsh Mountains. The mansion is about four and a half miles from Monmouth, the main entrance to the park being two miles from the town. At the end of the drive (which is about two miles long) stands the many-gabled house, which has some similarity to Sandringham, the Norfolk home of the late King Edward and our beloved Queen Alexandra. There are two lodges on the way up, both of which were built, and also the drive made, to find employment for some 400 men, when vast numbers were out of work, and his lordship was anxious to tide as many as possible over a very anxious period. In the first Baron's days about a thousand deer roamed about the park. There were well stocked preserves for Royal and other private shooting parties who revelled there in the sport provided. The house, under the artistic tastes of the first Baron and his lady, came to rank amongst the stately homes of England. It must be seen before

anyone can realise what a delightful home it really is. In the great hall is the organ which the second Baron played so well and loved so thoroughly. On the ceiling and over the handsome fireplace of the dining-room are carved mottoes, arms and quarterings. All these mottos spoke the heart feelings of the host and hostess who gave in that baronial hall so much real pleasure to so many faithful friends. Here are a few which I kept a record of: "Open house—open heart." "When friends meet, hearts warm," "A gude wife and health is a man's best wealth," "He is worth nae weal that can bide nae woe," "Keep thy tongue, keep thy friend."

Attractive features of the house are the small old oak panelled dining room, which formed part of the original house, and the Elizabethan bedroom, with its old oak richly carved bedstead.

Then there is the valuable Cedar Room, whose doors, panelling and all fitments are of carved cedar wood. The sweet savour of this room will ever remain a pleasant memory. Over the mantelpiece here we read,

"Seek home for rest,

For home is best."

The Library, Smoking Room and Billiard Room are all in the same good taste.

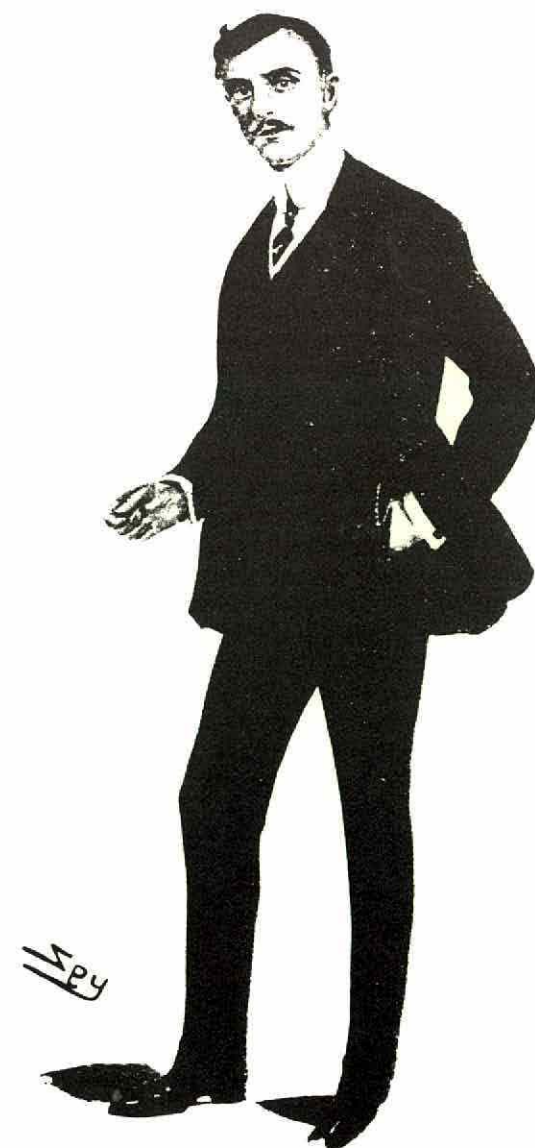
If you pass from the house into the garden and grounds you see evidences of that same love of beauty so manifest within the building. The well-

kept lawns and the twenty-one carefully clipped shrubs of Golden Privet which, I believe, were planted when the late heir came of age. The beds depicting the colours of the various Scottish Clans, which Lady Llangattock had planted, the Sycamore tree planted by the King, and the Lime planted by the Queen, when, as Duke and Duchess of York, they spent a week with the family at The Hendre. Then there is the pretty lake, with its swans and moorhens, and the old Russian goose that has lived there for over forty years, and still swims on these same waters, coming at the call of her ladyship to receive her food in blissful ignorance of the more precious lives that have passed from the house near by in those forty odd years. Talking with Mr. Coomber, the head gardener, recently, he recalled with pride the brightness of those forty odd years. Never were there such pines as he had brought on there, carrying off prize after prize for the best specimens grown in England at the horticultural shows. Grapes and nectarines, peaches and oranges from the houses, wall and orchard fruits for the table, for the hospital, for friends, and for the sick poor. It is impossible to escape having sad regrets at the loss of two such good masters, two of the straightest and best men that ever breathed.

It was in this happy home that Master Charles first gave signs of his love for things mechanical. Friends of his boyhood say that in his early attempts at tobogganing around the Hendre and elsewhere they trace his after love for the swift moving vehicle, just as they look upon his conversion of a bathchair into a velocipede and the piloting of the estate steam roller as proof positive that he was a born mechanician. His home always had a great charm for him, and there it was that he worked out some of his most important life plans and purposes. It was here too that the rich toned organ under the touch of John pealed out its sweet music, and added to the happiness of those in the house.

That, then, was the home of the brave brothers as well as I can describe it. It was here that Charles and John both entertained their friends. Being men of different tastes, the company was always varied—the music and conversation, jests, good stories and good humour made home a joy. After the fatal accident to Charles, the Hendre home life was never quite the same. It seemed as though a bright light in the house had suddenly gone out, leaving every room darker. His father's death less than two years later (1912) left the Hendre darker still. ■

Extract from 'Two Brave Brothers'



WELCOME BACK T20 TO THE 20-GHOST CLUB

On 24th June, 1983, ownership of 1926 Rolls-Royce New Phantom 20 TC Park Ward was transferred to me. Older members, or should that read members of long standing, will remember the car well. Lt. Commander Dymock-Maunsell had owned it since 1954, and had taken her on many rallies. There is a list of club tours, 98 in all including Monte Carlo, Denmark, Loire Valley, Scotland and the North American Tour in 1969 on the maiden voyage of the QE2. She was the only car too large for the 6ft. 9ins. entrance and had to be hoisted on board. On arrival in New York it was discovered the sling for lifting had been left behind. She was eventually lifted, after a few slips, only to hit the side of the ship on the way. She must be one of the few cars to have been in collision with the QE2!

Recently she went to Ulster on the TT celebration rally and transported Eddie Hall around the course.

The car is a large limousine, and the early Park Ward body is still in a very original condition. It has the correct 33 x 5 wheels and tyres, these tyres are due to be replaced as they are pre-war truck and bus tyres which have been recapped twice. It has the original trunk with cases and the Brookes patent over centre catches all complete with keys. Most of the tools are in place including the original Michelin jack. One very nice item is a leather pouch containing all electrical spares. I had never seen one of these before acquiring the car; the handbook is also in place. There was also a spare set of wheels and magneto, autovac parts etc. In fact it's all ready for its next tour!

Most of the maintenance until recently was done by Hythe Road, Bill Savage doing the routine stuff. Recently the clutch and brakes have been relined, and a new carburettor hot spot fitted.

The Lt. Commander telephoned and said he was thinking of letting the car go and would I be interested. I said yes and arranged a date to see her. On arrival in Weybridge I had a good look round and went for a long drive. What impressed me most was how light the car was to drive and how well she went, but I found changing gear very difficult with the locking gate and clutch top. I'm happy to say that my



Photo: Philip Taylor

gear change technique is now much improved.

My parents owned a very similar Phantom I Park Ward limousine of 1927 vintage from 1946 to 1954. In fact they used it for their wedding and I travelled many miles in it in my pram!! In view of this, perhaps I should not have been so surprised at how much at home I felt driving it.

I drove home thinking how nice the car was. The question of price had been left to me to make an offer, he did say though it has to be worth between £1,000 and £30,000!! I telephoned and made an offer on the following night, more than I could afford, but less than the car was worth. It was accepted and Lt. Commander Dymock-Maunsell was off on holiday the following day; we collected her early the next morning. On driving home we stopped at Oxford and were asked how long we had owned the car. We were 'tickled pink' to be able to say—"two and a half hours". Since then I have used the car quite a lot—four rallies, and commuting between cottage in Worcestershire and Birmingham. Fuel consumption seems to be about 8 mpg around town or in the urban cycle, and about 12 mpg on a run. This winter I hope to fit new tyres, to remove the petrol tank cover and fit indicators. I have always liked large limousines and at the moment am having great fun using it for shopping and general running around.

I do hope I can keep her in the present condition for the next 30 years at least.

I am very grateful to Lt. Commander J. C. Dymock-Maunsell for letting me have the opportunity to take over custody of the car. ■

Andrew Taylor

from page 7

gear lever in the first speed, with the result that as soon as the pedal flew up, the car started ahead, and although I struggled to get out of the way, I had to lie down, and get run over by my own car! I lay there for a moment looking a pitiable sight, wearing an old mackintosh, the cape of which had been drawn over my head. I looked to all intents and purposes dead. My friend was standing there, and he told me afterwards the thoughts that flashed across his mind. He said, "Here's a nice position for me to be in; there's the motor that's killed Rolls, its running away, and I don't know how to stop the thing, and there's Rolls like a sack of bones—dead as mutton—and I've got to tell his people that he's been run over by his own car; and I don't know them, and I don't even know where they live!" All of a sudden, however, I jumped up and ran after the car, just as it smashed into a dogcart. The whole situation was so comical that we spent the rest of the evening roaring with laughter in front of a fire, and so ended one of the most amusing and adventurous days of my life.

The following morning we spent repairing the dogcart and doing up our brakes; and after considerable difficulty in finding any benzoline in the town, we at last got away, but made very slow progress that night, for we had trouble with the pump, and got stuck on a long hill in a lonely part of Gloucestershire with the engine seized up; but the worst of it was that the lamps would not keep alight in the gale that was blowing, and all our matches were soaked with rain, so that we had to do all our work in pitch darkness. We spent all that night on the road, and suffered extremes of discomfort—for the weather was bitterly cold, and it was snowing and sleeting all the time. However, we got to Monmouth at 2 a.m. on Christmas morning, where they had been waiting to see us pass through for two days and two nights! I had many runs of a similar nature to this one; in fact, in those days you never went out without knowing you were in for a lively time.

Everything used to go wrong excepting the tyres, which were solid, and even those used to come off sometimes and catch in the chains or tyre brakes. In no case could you run much more than ten miles without stopping, for fresh water was then required, and, as I have said, it was often a difficulty to get water just when you wanted it. ■

Extract from 'Two Brave Brothers'

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. G. G. S. Ashby, 54 Clanville Road, Roseville, Sydney, S.W. Australia.

1922 Silver Ghost saloon rebodied 1926 by Queensland Motor, Brisbane. Originally Tourer by Jackson, Jones and Collins.

R. Duce, Langham Manor, Rutland LE15 7JE. PII Reg. ALP 178. Continental-James Young Chas-31MW.

J. C. Lawson, 2 The Ridge, Purley, Surrey 1912 Silver Ghost, Rois des Belge (Replica).

A. J. Norcott, Holly Lodge, Lodge Green Lane, Meridan, Warwickshire.

1930 20/25 Sports Saloon by Thrupp and Maberley.

K. Sedgewick, 23 Grasmere Close, Tetenhall, Wolves WV6 9DP.

20hp Cabriolet Chas-GMKIO. Reg. CXU 466. By Henri Binder: 20/25 Sedenca Chas-GTR4. Reg. XAN 83. By H. J. Mulliner: 20hp Estate Conversion Chas 89K7. Reg. SD 7695. By J. Croall.

Mr. Scott-Isquick, Rockefeller Building, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

J. Zimble, Stage Head House, 2 Silverstone Rd, Whittlebury, Northamptonshire 20/25.

TROPHIES WINNERS 1983

Fred & Joan Watson: Ken Smedley

Alpine: John Tanner

Messervy: Andrew Taylor

Dymock-Maunsell: Digby Wills

Stanley Sears: Lynn Brua

Harding-Rolls: Susan Taylor

Phoenix: Not awarded

Fergusson-Wood: Not awarded

From Major Cox's Scrapbook

Cx



Major W. L. Cox is still very active at the age of 97. He regularly plays a game or two of snooker each week and not so long ago gave up riding his motorcycle. No such prudence as far as his car is concerned as he still drives himself about in a Renault 5 automatic.

PALL MALL GAZETTE

December 14th, 1922

COMMENTS OF A MOTORIST

The New Rolls-Royce

By W. E. H. HUMPHRYS

When the Rolls-Royce people asked me to have a trial run a few days ago upon one of their new 20-h.p. models, the car which created such a sensation at Olympia and at the Paris Salon (though in point of fact it was not shown at either) I gladly took advantage of the offer. I was keen to see what degree of excellence one could command by paying £1,100 for a 20-h.p. chassis. I wanted to see what superiority such a chassis would possess over one of more moderate price, and therefore, as numbers go, of greater sale and popularity. I wanted to see whether the radical differences between Rolls-Royce practice in the ever-popular 40-50 h.p. model, and Rolls-Royce practice in their new production, appeared to be justified in results.

Let us recall the changes for a moment. Unit construction, central gear levers, a new design of high efficiency engine with detachable head and overhead valves therein, and a single monobloc casting; abandonment of cantilever springing, and a new policy of braking whereby instead of

following Continental practice and having front wheel additional brakes, the new Rolls-Royce now has both foot and side brakes operating side by side, expanding in the interior of a single brake drum in each back wheel, and not even in concentric drums, as is the practice in the 40-50 h.p. model.

Behaviour on the Road

On a car like the Rolls-Royce, where such meticulous care has been expended upon design, it is dangerous to criticise on theory alone. Practice is safer to abide by. When I returned from the trial run I felt that, if ever I wanted to spend £1,100 on a chassis, it would have to be a 20-h.p. Rolls-Royce. On it one appreciates the meaning of silence. Apart from the rush of the wind as it struck the wind-screen, the only sound audible was the movement of the arbor of the speedometer on the dash, which was being tried out to see whether it was sufficiently silent.

The car glides away from the start, and continues gliding until it stops, and it is rare, indeed, that any but the top speed is required, which is of course, the direct drive, for the car is a three-speeder, and the second speed is used for the start off. The quickness of acceleration is a matter for wonder. One turns round the corner of a street at foot pace, and almost at once the speed runs up to forty miles an hour, and as quickly drops off as another corner is reached. But there is no sensation of braking. It is merely the suppleness of the engine and its ability to accelerate rapidly from about 150 "revs" up to 3,000, which means a car speed on top of from four miles per hour up to sixty, at which latter speed the engine gives off about 50 h.p.

Safety First for the Brakes

In the country opportunity offered to test the brakes, and it was evident that their smoothness and efficiency of operation are such that over here, at any rate, they are ample for all emergencies. "Mr. Royce may later adopt the four wheel brake system," said Major Cox, my driver, "for he has long been experimenting with them. But he will not be satisfied to adopt them until he finds some system which he considers absolutely safe for any driver". This seems to me an adequate reply. One knows that front-wheel brakes are exceedingly valuable in racing, and even also in touring abroad, provided—and this is important—that the driver is expert and knows how to use them and how not to use them. One knows of

accidents that have occurred through front-wheel brakes, and therefore I, for one, will not criticise Rolls-Royce adherence to the policy of safety first for owners of their cars.

For the rest, the car seems to be a delight to drive, and though the width of the front seats is what one might call cosy, the central gear lever does not in any way interfere with the passenger sitting beside the driver.

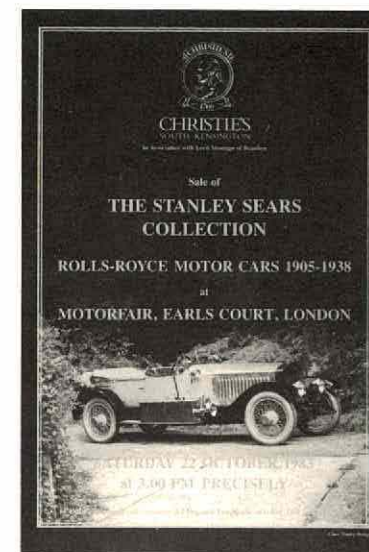
A delightful fitment on the car is the radiator shutter, operated by a lever on the instrument board. Beside the lever is the dial of the thermometer giving the temperature of the water in the cylinders, and by this lever the temperature can be regulated to a nicety. It is a fitment that all cars should have. ■

THE GRAPHIC

March 11th, 1922

Top gear demonstrations look like reviving their popularity. I see that the Napier people recently carried out a top gear run from London to the Pyrenees, and I recently enjoyed a sixty-mile run of the same sort on a Rolls-Royce that was as convincing as if it had been ten times as long. For it began in the very heart of London traffic—the most difficult of all top gear conditions—and wound up there after embracing some racing practice on the unfrequented stretches that include the Hog's Back beyond Guildford. We travelled at the rate of a mile an hour, and without anything more than opening the throttle and advancing the ignition, we changed rapidly into something more than a mile a minute pace. That does not convey—nothing, indeed, could adequately—the smoothness and apparent effortless-ness of the transition, a tribute to the power and flexibility of the Rolls-Royce engine, and also the consummate driving of Major W. L. Cox. I have had many top gear demonstrations in my time, but never one so flawless as this one. It is difficult to believe that a car weighing over two tons can be started from cold on its top gear and immediately set at, and accelerated up, a steep hill without a falter, or that it could be tooled into and out from a crowded garage at considerably less than a walking pace, but it was done so unhesitatingly, so simply and certainly, that one might well ask why fit a gear-box? We are all not so expert as Major Cox, however, and a clumsy foot on the clutch-pedal, or a slight previousness with the ignition lever, would not take long to convince us that the gear-box not only has its uses but its virtues to commend it. ■

Edwin Campbell



Imagine, if you can, how Stanley Sears must have felt on Saturday afternoon 22nd October knowing that the fruits of a lifelong hobby—no that's not the word—crusade would fit better, was under the hammer. The cars he had worked so hard to gather together and then cherished so lovingly, were very likely to be scattered over the world, into the hands of people he had no knowledge of.

Christies had made sure that everyone with any interest in vintage cars knew all about the sale, and quite a few others as well. Posters and Ads. kept popping up and hitting between the eyes: even a double-page spread in the Sept.-Oct. issue of *The Flying Lady*, which must have been the result of much forward thinking. A beautifully produced colour poster which will probably become a collectors piece in a few years—I managed to grab two.

In my view the cars were poorly displayed at Motorfair. The lighting was harsh and the display itself unimaginative, but I suppose that security was all important and that was the reason for a back to the wall position in a backwater of the gallery. It didn't stop the visitors to the stand nor the simple admirers who just stood and looked and looked and looked. It certainly didn't deter the crowd in the auction room at 3 p.m.

There must have been almost five hundred people in the Warwick Room waiting for the magic moment. Mind you it's not much of a hall, just a cold concrete cavern where the sound reverberated from one stark pillar to the next. So bad were the acoustics that most of us, when

we heard the first announcement from the rostrum, thought the position hopeless and that the auctioneer would never be understood. In the event, with the volume turned up; and supreme concentration, everyone seemed to get tuned in and the sale progressed. For two hours most of us sat on the edges of our seats waiting for the cars to come up. During that two hours 154 lots of varying automobilia passed before our eyes. Christies displayed everything on TV screens around the hall, in fact it could well be true to say that items were better seen on the screen than on view at the back of the main stand. Bidding was brisk and those around me were wondering who would be the first to break up his Ghost into small pieces. On Sunday motoring in mine I looked with great respect at my petrol air pressure gauge—an identical one fetched £100 (£109) the bracketed figure is the bid price plus the auctioneers buyers premium.

I am not well enough versed in R-R prices to know if prices fetched were good or bad. I only know that the one item I went along to bid for went well over my limit, although I did find myself walking out with a bulb horn. A few examples: A pair of Bleriot acetylene headlamps £1,200 (£1,310) 63 volumes of Autocar 1895 - 1914 £5,000 (£5,460). 2 Brass radiator shells £1,100 (£1,200) each. A whole pile of Silver Ghost parts from a front axle to a petrol tank for a total of around (£14,600). The first mobile piece went for £4,000 and you have to provide your own muscle power to get it going, it was a Tandem Tricycle circa 1888. The F.N. 4Cyl Motorcycle 1908 realised (£7,100).

The real excitement was to follow quickly. A pregnant hush descended on us to watch the 1905 Light Twenty show off it's paces on the screen. The chap sitting next to me thought he had got it at £55,000, but then it went bounding on to £62,000 (£66,700). The Light Twenty parts which everyone said would make another car fetched £13,000 (£14,200). Lord Lonsdale's 20-h.p. was soon sold for £26,000 (£28,400). The beautiful P11 Sedanca went bounding along to £48,000 (£52,400) and surprise surprise the P111 £60,000 (subsequently learnt not sold). But now the block-busters. In the event the prices for the 1911 S.G. Hooper Open Drive Limousine and 1914 Alpine Eagle were somewhat an anti-climax at £85,000 each (£92,800).

It was a real social occasion worthy of Jennifer's Diary. Everyone was there from Lord Beaulieu down to me. Will there ever be anything quite like it again? ■ Digby Wills



AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

Annual General Meeting and Dinner House of Lords, January 28th, 1983

Lord Elgin, our President, had been kind enough to arrange for us to hold our Annual General Meeting and Dinner in the House of Lords. We first made our way to one of the committee rooms where our A.G.M. was to be held. This meeting must have broken all records for brevity. I did not time it, but no contentious issues were raised and it must have been over in less than ten minutes.

We were then treated to a conducted tour of both Chambers and Westminster Hall. Westminster Hall and St. Stephen's Chapel had been the only parts remaining after the Palace was destroyed by fire in 1834. The present 'Palace of Westminster' is therefore mostly comparatively modern, having been reconstructed between 1840 and 1867 in the Gothic Revival style. The Commons was burnt out in the last war and was restored and reopened in 1950. A striking feature of both the Commons' and Lords' Chambers is the unexpectedly small size—70 ft. and 97 ft. long respectively. Indeed, the Commons cannot seat all the elected members simultaneously.

After the tour we were shown to the Lords' dining room where we had pre-dinner drinks before taking our seats. The food and wine were most agreeable and we were left with the impression that the Lords certainly had their priorities right.

Lord Elgin spoke first after dinner. Mr. Dennis Millar-Williams, a familiar figure in Rolls-Royce circles, and latterly the Company's Public Relations Manager, was our guest speaker and entertained us with some of his many R-R anecdotes. The trophy presentations were introduced by our Chairman, Mr. Lynn Brua and made by our President's wife, Lady Elgin.

This was a very pleasant and successful evening. Attendance by both members and guests was high—a very civilized event which will be hard to follow next year. ■

John Townrow

ON DRAIN TAPS



The water system drain taps fitted to our cars are generally of the tapered plug type used by the Romans and known by the French as carrot valves. The valves controlling access of hot water to the interior space heater (where fitted) are of similar construction (but not so the regulating valves for controlling heat output).

The brass body of the tap has a tapered bore into which open the inlet and outlet passages. The tapered part of the plug fits snugly in the tapered bore and has a transverse passage to connect the inlet and outlet when the plug is turned to its 'ON' position.

Beyond its thinner end the plug has an extension with first a square base portion and then a rod portion. The squared portion is engaged in a square hole in a thrust washer bearing against the underside of the body. The rod portion carries a helical spring which is held in compression between the thrust washer and an outer washer, which in earlier models is held by a split pinned nut and in latter models by a brass split pin alone.

In time, the plug becomes very stiff to turn and, specially with anti-freeze mixtures, the tap may leak with the formation of external corrosion. To overhaul, drain the water system, detach the tap (using a second spanner where necessary on the other half of the union to exert a counter-torque) and dismantle. Metal polish does not by itself effectively lap the tapered surfaces into a smoothly turning coolant-proof fit. Instead, smear a little FINE valve grinding paste on to the tapered surface of the plug, insert the latter into the tapered bore and then turn the plug to-and-fro under LIGHT pressure a few times, lift the plug a short distance, re-insert and repeat once or twice. Clean off the paste with paraffin and check that the surfaces have a uniform appearance indicating all-over contact. If not repeat the lapping step. When reassembling, smear a very small amount of water-pump grease (not enough to squeeze out as a blob into the water passages) on to the tapered surface of the plug and reassemble. If the thrust washer has lugs to engage a lug on the body as limit stops for the ON and OFF positions, check that you have refitted it in the right orientation—test the assembled tap by blowing into the inlet or outlet and turn the plug to check that the tap works as you intend. The mating faces of the thrust washer and body should also be lightly greased.

A new brass split pin should be fitted. On no account use a mild steel one. Most of it will rust away, leading to premature leakage and accelera-

ted corrosion, leaving a stump to be drilled out of the softer brass. In extremis, fashion a new split pin from a length cut from an all-brass, split key-ring or re-use the original brass split pin if it does not break. ■

Care of Battery



Perhaps everyone in the Club but me knows all about batteries, in which case what I have to impart is old hat.

It has been my practice to put my PII in the garage each autumn at the end of the events season and forget it until the next spring. I go on the theory that if I want it in the winter I will put the battery on slow charge for a day and all will be in running order again. Most years the car has a six or seven month complete rest.

This year was different. After the usual recharge I could not get it to start. I suspected the starter, a short circuit, fuses, everything but the battery itself. I finally got it going and went to a good car electrics firm where it was given a thorough examination and declared marginal. I commented that the battery was only about five years old and had only given about 15,000 miles of service. When I explained my winter benign neglect lay-up practice the man said that was the problem and that with proper care the battery should have lasted twice as long as it had.

The prescription for prolonged periods of inactivity—put a load on the battery such as leaving some lights on until it is completely discharged then, within a week or two recharge it with the usual small charger. Follow this within a few weeks of another complete discharge and repeat the cycle perhaps a half dozen times throughout the winter. "Regular car batteries are designed to be charged and discharged continually and if they are they will last for many years", said my expert. "You can buy batteries for stand-by lighting, for instance, which are specifically designed to hold a charge for a long time, but such is not the case for cars". ■ Lynn Brua

Reatec Temperature — Indicating strip

Those who lack the refinement of a water temperature gauge or lack confidence in the gauge they have, may find these strips useful. Attached (they are adhesive) to the radiator water inlet pipe, the maximum temperature reached during a trip is recorded by an unambiguous colour change to a clearly defined temperature figure on the strip. Details from Barbie Engineering, 10 Beresford Avenue, Twickenham, London, TN1 212. Tel: 01-892 3431. ■ Digby Wills

CLUB SHOP

Car Badges

Red or black enamelling. Deposit £10 with £8 refundable on return.

Ties

£5 including postage.



Cufflinks and Brooch

Once again we are able to offer silver-gilt and sterling silver cufflinks enamelled with Club emblem and R-R logo in red. They make an ideal birthday gift for any member. **Lady members please note** price only £20.

Also we now have similar design as a brooch or lapel pin **Gentlemen members please note.** Price only £12.

Send your cheque to: Hon. Secretary.



Your Letters

1954 LONDON AIRPORT PICTURE

Vol. 23 1982

Our new Editor recommends a course of Iron Jelloids to stimulate the correspondence columns. These I do not possess, but I still have a greasy cellophane packet containing a yellow mess which was once Six Duckhams Adcoids—would these do?

The 1954 London Airport picture appeared later in 1954 in a Rolls-Royce bulletin, but as our

record gives a better definition I enclose a few notes on the cars that I can recognise. Others mainly in the form of Dr. Robin Barnard may be able to improve on my efforts. Several cars seem to have vanished altogether.

The Left Hand Column

26530 Stanley Sear's 4 Cyl. 20 HP

2260E Fred Watson's Radley Alpine Eagle

1543 Tulip—now with Victor Crabb

Right Hand Column

XP 1298 Not known to me but could be the Cooper coupe sold by John Fasal about four years ago

HU 3132 Hooper Limousine. Could this be the one that the Neale brothers restored beautifully about five or six years ago? I well remember an identical car for sale at the White Cliffs Hotel, Dover as a bad debt in about 1960. I could not afford the £40 asked and bid £25. Smartly shown the door!

GA11 Hooper Coupe. Acquired by myself shortly after the photograph was taken when it froze up and was scrapped. I paid £90 with a new hood and a new battery. This car now lives with Robin Ball at Robertsbridge.

Next Another Hooper Limousine not known to me.

GYK 30 A Jack Compton replica. This looks identical to the car now owned by Jack Wakeley.

GSK 80 Very handsome Barker Tourer long time owned by Clifford Meachen.

Next Limousine—not known.

Next Replica again not known.

GPK 2 Looks like the Park-Ward car, now superbly restored by Harry Watson.

GHJ 12 Getting very distant but could be Frank Hellins' car. Can he confirm?

Back Row furthest from the camera

3AZ68 PIII F & W saloon belonging to W.A.L. Cook.

24 PY Park-Ward Continental PII owned by Laurie Dalton.

Next right — not known.

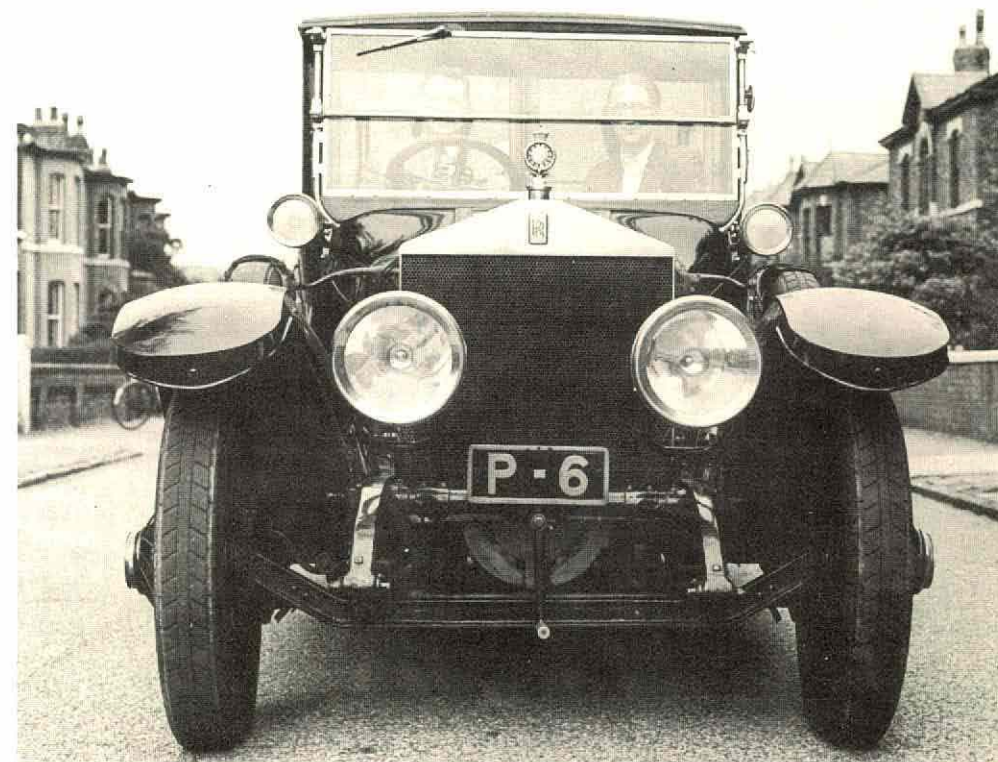
GBK 56 All weather by Offord—a Dymock-Maunsell car.

66 H5 Last on the right in the back row is the H. J. Mulliner 2 seater owned for many years by Major Lennox Jamieson.

OK, so who is going to argue?

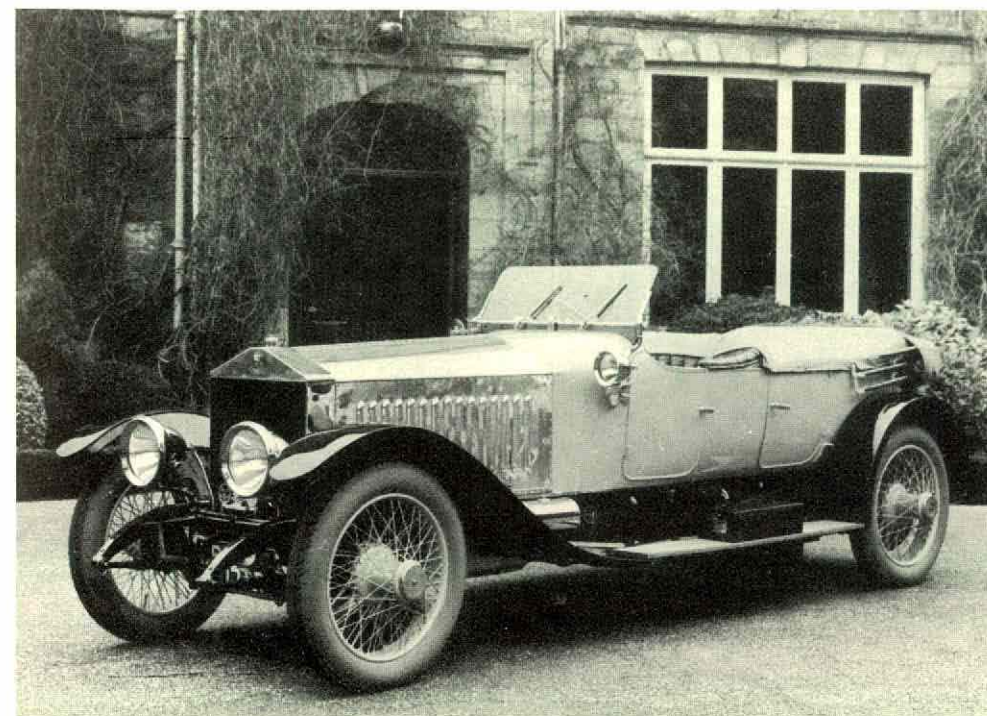
Yours sincerely,

Michael Sapsford



1914 40-50hp. 60RB Barker Cabriolet. In the Sears collection after 1945, but disposed of many years ago. It still survives in original condition.

Scrapbook



1914 40-50hp. 17RB. Body by Portholme.



Touring in the 1920's

An evocative photograph by Percy Northey presented to the Club by Harry Grylls.



Events Calendar 1984

A.G.M. and Winter Dinner, Caledonian Club

27th February

Spring Luncheon and Driving Tests

15th April

Irish Georgian Tour, Somerset

26th - 28th May

Concours at Submariners Museum, Gosport

Date to be advised

July

Burgundy Tour

1st - 8th October